

SUMMARY PROOF OF EVIDENCE – URBAN DESIGN

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF 103 DWELLINGS AND ASSOCIATED ACCESS AND INFRASTRUCTURE AT EAKRING ROAD, BILSTHORPE

ON BEHALF OF KEEPMOAT HOMES LIMITED

**TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)
PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004**

PREPARED BY: MICHAEL CARR (BA HONS DIP LA DIP UD RUDP)

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1. SUMMARY URBAN DESIGN PROOF OF EVIDENCE

- 1.1 This summary proof of evidence is produced on behalf of Keepmoat Homes Ltd specifically in relation to reason for refusal:

"The application site forms part of the site allocation detailed Policy Bi/MU/1 of the Allocations and Development Management DPD. In respect to the residential element, the policy envisages around 75 dwellings to come forward with one of the requirements of the allocation being for development to demonstrate an appropriate design which addresses the site's gateway location and manages the transition into the built up area.

The proposal for 103 units would, by virtue of its density, fail to secure an appropriate transition to the open countryside with parking and turning areas being proposed close to the northern boundary with little opportunity for landscaped screening. In addition to this, there are significant design compromises whereby the skew towards larger unit (in terms of number of bedrooms) not only fails to represent the preferences of the latest District wide housing needs evidence but also leads to a significant proportion of the proposed four bed units being served by three parking spaces in tandem. The Local Planning Authority consider that this will lead to parking on the street rather than in plot which consequently will detrimentally affect the efficiency of the internal highways network. Moreover, the size of a number of the proposed units are modest in their floor space again as a result of the overall number of dwellings far exceeding the number of anticipated on a site of this size in this location."

- 1.2 The location of land uses, extent of the built form and street typologies have been tailored to respond to the area's constraints and opportunities.
- 1.3 The design team has worked with the Council to refine the design during consideration of the application to the point where there was a recommendation for approval.
- 1.4 I have explained the logic behind the design approach and highlighted the balance that needs to be drawn between different design principles. It is therefore important to recognise that individual aspects of a design approach, such as density preferences, cannot and should not be viewed in isolation.
- 1.5 The layout, takes cues from the locality, including urban form, scale and proportion, materials amongst other characteristics. Overall, the design process has resulted in a scheme that makes appropriate use of the site and appropriate reference has been

made to the Council's design related policy and guidance and relevant elements of the NPPF (CD. 5.1).

1.6 In overview:

- i. Density is a simplistic method to judge design and should not be used in isolation to assess if a development provides the appropriate design response into the local surroundings;
- ii. There are many other design components that establish a character 'fit', including:
 - Urban Form and built use disposition;
 - Building Detail and architectural appearance;
 - Scale and proportion;
 - Materials and enclosure details;
 - Streets and Parking; and
 - Key spaces.

1.7 All these are prominent by their absence from the reasons for refusal (CD. 4.2) which suggests the Council are happy with the vast majority of the design components.

1.8 In addition, density does not prescribe character, for example a 4 bed house can be the same size and shape as a 2 bed semi-detached house, but the semi-detached dwellings will be double the density.

1.9 In any event, average development density in the region of 34dph as an overall should not cause concern as it will not be the determining factor in the proposals fitting in. Furthermore, a density in the region of 31dph along the northern boundary is not overly dense. The average site density is one that delivers predominately 2 storey family housing, like the surroundings and is compliant with the Councils policy requirements.

1.10 There is logically slightly higher density in some areas and lower density in other areas (as density is rightly in my view not a monoculture across the site); the northern area is at an average of 31dph, for example, and some areas are designed

to be slightly higher density in some areas to encourage character definition, as prompted by good design practice.

- 1.11 The NPPF (CD. 5.1) also promotes efficient use of land; lower average densities would be poor, inefficient use of land.
- 1.12 The density when viewed in combination with the other design approach components will, in my view, create a polite addition to the character of the adjoining area and will be seen as a logical and complimentary addition to the area without detrimentally affecting the character of the area. Simply speaking, the proposals will 'fit' in.
- 1.13 In fact, the proposals will create attractive new streets and places to enjoy, with open spaces and links through the development that will in many ways be a positive contribution to the area.
- 1.14 I do not consider that the appeal is sub-standard because of the density, I am confident the development can be satisfactorily and appropriately accommodated, it will constitute a design with a balanced design approach across a number of design objectives.
- 1.15 It is only within the Council's Statement of Case (CD. 6.13) that additional design components, outside of the original reason for refusal (CD. 4.2), were brought into question.
- 1.16 My evidence demonstrates that the design and layout of the proposed development has been formulated following a well-considered design. The design approach is founded on good urban design practice.
- 1.17 I am therefore content that proper consideration has been given to the design approach and that the design is appropriate to the context.
- 1.18 In line with paragraph 127 of the NPPF (CD. 5.1), in my view the proposals at appeal will:
 - i. Function well and add to the quality of the area with creative new streets and open spaces;
 - ii. Be visually attractive with good architecture, layout and landscaping;
 - iii. Be sympathetic to local character, including surrounding built environment and landscape setting, with some changes to create new spaces and places;

- iv. Establish and maintain a strong sense of place through the creation of streets and spaces and the use of buildings and materials;
- v. Optimise the potential of the site with an appropriate amount and mix of development; and
- vi. Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible with a high standard of amenity.

1.19 The developer and design team have done as paragraph 128 of the NPPF (CD. 5.1) states and engaged proactively with the Council. The development addresses the intent to deliver beautiful, enduring and successful places set out in the National Design Guide (CD. 7.4), despite this guide arriving after the application was submitted.

1.20 The Appeal Scheme, in my view, will pass the Building for Life 12 (CD. 7.2) design assessment test as referred to at NPPF (CD. 5.1) paragraph 129. It will also, in my view, pass the more recent BHL 12 (CD. 7.3) criteria.

1.21 More importantly and more appropriately it will in my view pass the test of Policy DM5 (CD. 5.20).

1.22 In conclusion, there is, in my view, no reason in design terms to refuse planning permission for this appeal.