

## Fareham Local Plan 2037 Main Modifications – factual update to Council’s Rebuttal Evidence

### **Overview**

1. The Council reserved the right to update the inquiry with the progress of the Local Plan examination and identify relevant information to this appeal.
2. The Council has been in correspondence with the Local Plan Inspector and a schedule of Main Modifications has been agreed (Appendix 2). A report (Appendix 1) was taken to the Executive, for Fareham Borough Council, on 10 October, which endorsed and recommended to Full Council meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2022, the Schedule of Main Modifications to the Local Plan for public consultation.
3. The public consultation for the Main Modifications is scheduled to run for a 6-week period between 31 October and 12 December 2022. Once the consultation has closed, the comments will be based to the Local Plan Inspector who will then consider them in process of completing her report which will conclude whether the MMs are sufficient to make the Local Plan sound. The Council expects that this will happen without further activity, as the Inspector has indicated further hearing sessions would only be arranged on an exceptional basis.
4. Once the Final Report on the Local Plan is issued to the Council, the modified Local Plan can be taken to Full Council where a decision can be made to adopt the Plan. The Council’s Local Development Scheme timetable estimated that the Local Plan will be adopted in Autumn/Winter 2022, it is likely that the new Local Plan will be adopted within this timescale.

### **Emerging Policy HP4**

5. This policy will supersede DSP40 and it is referenced in the Council’s Housing Evidence. There are no proposed Main Modifications to alter the wording of this policy, although the supporting text does change, as set out in Main Modifications MM084, 085, 086 and 087-087. In particular it is proposed to amend the wording of 5.27 to:

*“Protecting the character and beauty of the countryside is an important objective and so the careful design of any proposal will be a key consideration. Any proposal must be adjacent to an existing Urban Area boundary and designed to ensure it is as well related, and integrated, to the neighbouring settlement as possible. **In the context that the Council has less than five-years’ housing land supply, the test for a proposal in the strategic gap is different from that of Policy DS2 in order to boost the supply of housing in the borough. A proposal will need to demonstrate that it does not significantly affect the integrity of the strategic gap, and the Council would consider permitting applications which affect the physical and visual separation of settlements or the distinctive nature of settlement character. A any proposal will also need to demonstrate that there will be no unacceptable environmental (e.g., Best and Most Versatile Land, heritage,***

*ecology), amenity or traffic implications and that all other relevant policies in the Local Plan have been duly considered.”*

The reason for this changes is cited as being: *“From the examination hearings to improve the effectiveness of this policy.”*

#### **Affordable Housing Evidence and consequential changes to the Housing Requirement**

6. At paragraph 41, of the Executive Decision Report (Appendix 1), the Council have updated the Affordable Housing Background Paper (Appendix 3). This updates the Council’s evidence on affordable housing and sets that the need for affordable housing, between 2021 and 2037 is between 173.9 and 256.7 affordable homes each year (Appendix 3 para 4.12), however the Council consider it to be towards the lower end of this range (Appendix 3 para 3.43 to 3.46).
7. The Local Plan Inspector has already accepted in her Further Post Hearings Letter (CD X para 13) that this background paper is caveated.
8. This is confirmed in the schedule of Main Modifications which does not include a modification to increase the housing requirement figure for Fareham. The Inspector also does not recommend a change to the affordable housing policy itself, but instead Main Modification MM088 has been drafted, which recognises the need for a Local Plan review if the need and supply positions fall out line with one each other.

#### **Stepped Housing Trajectory**

9. Paragraphs 20 to 23 of Appendix 1 set out the context of the stepped housing requirement in the Plan and explain the change to the submission plan’s policy and that the Inspector accepted the stepped approach in her Further Post Hearings letter (CD X), and now confirmed within the Main Modifications.
10. The confirmation of this does not alter the Council’s position where the stepped trajectory has been referred to in evidence.

#### **Deletion of proposed Housing Allocations**

11. Two proposed housing allocations FTC3 – Fareham Station East and FTC4 – Fareham Station West will be removed from the Local Plan by Main Modifications. The Local Plan Inspector did not request replacement allocations for these sites through the examination hearings, or in post hearing letters. This is confirmed by an absence of any such policies in the Main Modifications, or any further requests by the Inspector to do so.