

West Somerset District Council Local Plan Examination

Matters and Issues Statement made by Savills on behalf of the Trustees of The Wyndham Estate

Matter 5: Deliverability of Sites

1. Land at Watchet

- 1.1. The Wyndham Estate continues to support the Council's allocation of land at Parsonage Farm, Watchet for strategic development. It is considered that the site represents the most appropriate and sustainable location for the future development of Watchet.
- 1.2. The land at Parsonage Farm is considered to be deliverable because it is wholly owned by the Estate and is available for development now. The development of the site is considered to be achievable and viable and there is a realistic prospect of housing being delivered within approximately three years.
- 1.3. The land at Parsonage Farm is considered to be developable on the basis that it is an appropriate location for housing development. The site will be developable beyond the five year period; it is likely that the development of the site will continue throughout the Plan period.
- 1.4. The land is not affected by flooding and is capable of being developed in a manner which will not increase the risk of flooding in those areas of the town where there is an existing flood risk. There is an opportunity to maximise accessibility to local services and facilities by foot and bicycle through the creation of permeable streets that are well connected to the existing route network. Higher land to the west and south will contain the visual and landscape impact of development and ensure that development does not become visible above the ridge that forms the landscape boundary between Watchet and Williton.

2. Land at Williton

- 2.1. The Wyndham Estate continues to support the Council's allocation of land at Williton for strategic development, but disagrees with Historic England's assertion that the part of the allocation that lies to the east of Battlegore barrow cemetery – also described as being north of Danesfield School – should be deleted. As an alternative to the deletion of that part of the allocation, the Estate considers that a more positive approach would be to work collaboratively with officers to develop a masterplan that delivers much needed housing on the eastern portion of the site, whilst on the western portion of the site delivering a structured planting scheme or community open space that respects and enhances the setting of the scheduled monument.
- 2.2. It is considered that the sites represent the most appropriate and sustainable locations for the future development of Williton. With reference to the allocation of land to the west of Williton, meetings with officers from West Somerset District Council and Taunton Deane Borough Council have highlighted the necessity for a strategic allocation at Williton to satisfy Framework policies relating to flood risk. As such the Estate accepts that the land it is making available for housing is not contiguous with the settlement boundary and supports the Council's efforts to plan in a way that minimises flood risk.
- 2.3. The land at Williton, as with the land at Watchet, is considered to be deliverable because it is wholly owned by the Estate and is available for development now. The development of the sites to the west

and to the north of Williton is considered to be achievable and viable and there is a realistic prospect of housing being delivered within approximately three years.

2.4. The land at Williton is considered to be developable on the basis that it is an appropriate location for housing development. The sites – particularly the land west of Williton - will be developable beyond the five year period; it is likely that the development of this site will continue for the rest of the Plan period.

3. Further comments

3.1. The Wyndham Estate would like to impress upon the Council the view that large site allocations, supported by policy wording that makes the development of the site for housing and/or employment space contingent upon the masterplanning and delivery of infrastructure and community benefits, are likely to yield more benefits to the local community than windfall development. In the case of the latter, planning gain is limited to that achieved through the negotiation of Section 106 Agreements and consultations with officers and statutory consultees. This approach also has the potential to be more adversarial than collaborative and reduces the certainty of planning gain for the local community.

3.2. The Estate takes seriously its role as a large landowner and a custodian of the local landscape; as part of this role it is currently undertaking a comprehensive programme of tree planting across its landholdings. The Estate considers that this will contribute to the landscape quality of West Somerset with the additional benefit, once the trees are established, of fragmenting the views of new development that will be delivered in the coming years.