

EiP Statement

Warrington Updated Proposed Submission

Version Local Plan 2021-2038 (September 2021)

Bellway Homes (Manchester)

Representor ID UPSVLP 0434 – Deacons Close, Croft

Our ref 64788/02/SPM
Date August 2022

Subject Matter 8: Housing Land Supply

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Hearing Statement has been prepared by Lichfields on behalf of Bellway Homes (Manchester Division) [Bellway] (Respondent No: 0434) in relation to Matter 8 (Housing Land Supply). This Statement has been written in respect of Bellway's land asset at Deacons Close, Croft, allocated in the Warrington Updated Proposed Submission Version Local Plan 2021-2038 (September 2021) [WUPSVLP] (Policy OS1 – Croft).
- 1.2 This Statement has been prepared in response to the Matters, Issues and Questions raised by the Inspector for the Matter 8 Examination in Public [EiP] hearing sessions on Housing Land Supply.
- 1.3 Bellway has previously submitted representations in relation to WUPSVLP Regulation 18 and 19 consultation stages of the Plan in support of the site and concerning the overall strategy and other proposed policies.
- 1.4 Separate statements have been submitted in respect of the following Matters:
- 1 Matter 3 – The Spatial Strategy; and,
 - 2 Matter 7a – Site Allocation – Croft (Policy OS1).
- 1.5 This Statement expands upon Bellway's previous representations made on the WUPSVLP and focuses on the Inspector's specific issues and questions. Where relevant, the comments made are assessed against the tests of soundness established by the National Planning Policy Framework [the NPPF] and the National Planning Practice Guidance [Practice Guidance].
- 1.6 Alongside the land at Deacons Close, Croft, Bellway is also promoting additional land at Tanyard Farm (Policy OS5 – Rushgreen Road) and Land at Golborne Road (Policy OS6 – Land to the north of Winwick) to contribute towards the council's requirement for new homes in the Borough. Bellway supports these allocations within the WUPSVLP.

2.0 Questions

Question 2. For each of the following sources of housing land supply for the whole plan period in turn, what are the assumptions about the overall scale, lead in times, timing and annual rates of delivery? What is the basis for these assumptions and are they realistic and justified?

(f) Each of the site allocations in outlying settlements

- 2.1 The WUPSVLP sets out the spatial strategy for Warrington, which has been progressed based on Option 2, as set out within the Council's Development Options and Site Assessment Technical Report (September 2021) and selected based on the Council's Preferred Development Option Regulation 18 Consultation, undertaken in July 2017. Option 2 involves the majority of Green Belt release to occur adjacent to the main urban area with incremental growth in outlying settlements, of around 800 homes. This option performed the best against the plan's objectives, concluding that¹:
- "Focusing the majority of Green Belt release adjacent to the main urban area is considered to provide the best development option to ensure the sustainability of Warrington's growth as a whole, whilst enabling incremental growth to the outlying settlements that will contribute to their long-term vitality."*
- 2.2 This will see a minimum of 801 homes delivered on allocated sites to be removed from the Green Belt adjacent to outlying settlements with a minimum of 75 homes to be delivered in Croft on Bellway's land asset at Deacon Close, Croft (Policy OS1 – Croft). This should be seen as the very minimum number houses that could be delivered on the site. The initial feasibility study shows that the site accommodates between 90 to 100 homes whilst according with relevant design guidance and delivering the requisite infrastructure provision.
- 2.3 The Council's Settlement Profiles – Outlying Settlements report (July 2017) [O6] identifies that Croft is a sustainable location to accommodate 'incremental growth', with increased opportunities for local facilities and services to thrive and grow as a result of this site allocation in accordance with the NPPF [§79].
- 2.4 The WUPSVLP [§10.6.2] states that development is expected to come forward quickly upon adoption of the Plan. This means the first homes are anticipated to be completed in 2024/25, with the development completed in full within the first 10 years of the Plan period. The WUPSVLP's Housing Trajectory evidence identifies that the majority of homes (52 homes) will be delivered within the first five years of the Plan period, with the remaining 23 homes delivered in year 6.
- 2.5 Bellway has a legal contract with the existing landowners to bring forward a residential scheme on the entirety of the site allocation. It is their intention to submit a planning application for the site at the earliest opportunity and request to the Council that the application be determined upon adoption of the WUPSVLP. This timing will allow Bellway

¹ Development Options and Site Assessment Technical Report (September 2021)

to be on site within 6-9 months of the plan being adopted and all of the homes to be delivered within the first five years of the plan period.

- 2.6 Bellway has undertaken detailed due diligence on the site and has assessed both opportunities and constraints. No technical or environmental constraints that will preclude or delay the delivery of housing on this site have been identified.
- 2.7 On this basis the site allocation is considered to be suitable, available and achievable²³. Bellway considers that the delivery rates should be more ambitious and it is expecting to have completed this site within the first 5 years of the plan period. Consequently, the brownfield and relatively unconstrained nature of the site will ensure housing is delivered early on in the Plan period, to help to meet the borough's identified housing needs in the shorter term.

² Proposed Submission Version Local Plan Site Assessment Proformas (2019)

³ Development Options and Site Assessment Technical Report (September 2021)