



**BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK
JOINT LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION**

EXAMINATION HEARING STATEMENT – MATTER 1a

Prepared by Strutt & Parker on behalf of Ruth, Bruce and Fay
Gammer

June 2021

Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Examination

Matter 1a: Legal Compliance

Introduction

This Matter Statement has been prepared on behalf of our clients, Ruth, Bruce and Fay Gammer in relation to land within their ownership at Woodside Farm to the north-west of Stowmarket and should be read in conjunction with their Regulation 19 submission dated 23rd December 2020. We have sought to respond to the questions which we consider directly relate to our previously submitted representations.

Questions

1.1 In preparing the plan did the Councils engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis with neighbouring authorities and other relevant organisations on cross-boundary issues, in respect of the Duty to Co-operate? *[Note: this question concerns the engagement undertaken by the Councils during the preparation of the plan and does not directly relate to the content of the plan and whether or not it is sound which is considered under other Matters]*

In our representation we noted that the plan does not seek to accommodate any unmet need from neighbouring authority areas, including Ipswich which obviously has constraints in respect of its ability to accommodate further significant growth. We note that the examination of the Ipswich Borough Council Local Plan is ongoing and the Inspectors initially raised concerns regarding the plan's ability to deliver a supply of housing land for the first five years of the plan period, after adoption. Proposed modifications seem to have now allayed the Inspectors concerns, however, housing delivery is clearly an issue for the Borough and accommodating some of their requirements should be considered to represent a more sustainable solution.

It was also noted that Haughley Parish have a made Neighbourhood Plan, however, the Neighbourhood Plan area excludes land on the south-western side of the A14. The Neighbourhood Plan notes that this portion of the parish was excluded, thereby making the A14 the natural boundary between Stowmarket and Haughley Parish. The decision of the Haughley Neighbourhood Plan to exclude some of the Parish has thereby effectively deferred the planning of the part of the Parish on the south-western side of the A14 to the Joint Local Plan. It is not clear that this approach has been discussed in any detail by the two parties or is acknowledged in the plan as submitted.

1.2 Has the plan been prepared in accordance with the adopted Joint Local Development Scheme?

No comment

1.3 Has consultation on the plan been carried out in accordance with the Councils' Joint Statement of Community Involvement (and its Addendum) and the requirements of the 2004 Act (as amended) and the 2012 Regulations?

No comment

1.4 Does the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) provide a comprehensive and robust basis to inform the strategy and contents of the plan, particularly in terms of:

- (a) its assessment of the likely effects of the plan's policies and allocations?

No comment

- (b) its consideration of reasonable alternatives, including the nine spatial strategy options?

It is not considered the Sustainability Appraisal has robustly tested all reasonable alternatives. Many sites were discounted early on in the plan making process such as our clients site that are in much more sustainable locations especially when compared to more remote rural locations. In terms of the nine spatial strategy options it hasn't considered blended options or locational options in sufficient detail, for example focusing a higher proportion of growth on one or more the Market Towns such as Stowmarket which is less environmentally constrained and in a transport corridor, although the local plan strategy seems suggest this.

[Note: This question focusses on the legal compliance of the SA in broad terms. The implications of the SA for the soundness of the plan is considered under other Matters.]

1.5 Does the plan include policies designed to ensure that the development and use of land in Babergh and Mid Suffolk contributes to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change?

No comment

1.6 Does the plan include policies to address the strategic priorities for the development and use of land in Babergh and Mid Suffolk?

No comment

1.7 Does the plan comply with all other relevant legal requirements, including in the 2004 Act (as amended) and the 2012 Regulations

No comment