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**EAST HERTFORDSHIRE**

**DISTRICT PLAN EXAMINATION**

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**PART 2**

**Chapter 7 – Hertford**

**Tues 7<sup>th</sup> November 2017**

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**STATEMENT PREPARED BY:**



**Woolf Bond Planning**  
Chartered Town Planning Consultants

**On behalf of:**

**Croudace Homes Ltd**

**Croudace**   
**HOMES.CO.UK**

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**OCTOBER 2017**

### **Executive Summary**

*Croudace Homes Group owns the 9ha of land to the south of Welwyn Rd and west of Thieves Lane, Hertford, allocated under draft Policy HERT3 (Part III) for 250 dwellings.*

*We support the allocation of the site for housing and consider the general policy approach to be sound, including in relation to the spatial approach to meeting housing needs and the release of land from the Green Belt.*

*A Statement of Common Ground has been prepared with the Council setting out a number of agreed matters in relation to the allocation and future development of the site.*

*We are seeking the deletion of part (c) of the policy on the basis that they we do not intend to make self-build housing plots available on the site.*

#### **Q4**

***Is the Plan sound in its choice of sites to be removed from the Green Belt?***

1. We have addressed this point in our Statements for Matter 5 (Green Belt) (paragraphs 1-7 refer) and Matter 2 (Housing) and we rely upon the content of those Statements in support of the soundness of the allocation of land to the south of Welwyn Road/west of Thieves Lane for approximately 250 dwellings.

#### **Q6**

***Would the criteria set out in HERT3 be sufficient to protect the local environment, in particular Panshanger Park?***

2. Panshanger Park (a Grade II\* Registered Historic Park and Garden) adjoins the southern boundary of the main part of the Site. The woodland and other areas to the south and west of the site are also part of a large Local Wildlife Site. Both

designations are shown on the Proposals Map to the adopted Local Plan Second Review<sup>1</sup> (April 2007).

3. As set out on page 8 of the Development Framework Document included at Appendix B to our Matter 5 Statement, the Park was centred around an existing Deer Park and Mansion House and was designed in the late 1700s by Humphry Repton to include a new Mansion House, woodlands and Meadows along the Valley of the River Mimram. It currently extends to around 400 hectares.
4. The Estate deteriorated after WWI and the Manor House and most other built structures were demolished in 1954.
5. Panshanger Park is currently owned by Tarmac (a gravel extraction company) and there are current and disused quarries on the site. However, the Park retains its character of grazing pastures fringed with beech woods, and parts of the Park have been enhanced to provide habitat for wildlife. It is also accessible to the public. A Map showing the publicly accessible walking routes within the Park is attached at Appendix A. Further information relating to the history of and accessibility to the Park is available at <https://www.tarmac.com/panshanger-park/>
6. As shown on the adopted Local Plan Second Review (April 2007) Proposals Map, Panshanger Park is designated as a Historic Park and Garden (Policy BH16) and a Local Wildlife Site (ENV14). The extent of these designations is also shown on pages 9 and 16 of the Development Framework Document.
7. The proposed development of the HERT3 site will provide a sensible urban extension, with Panshanger Park providing a strong defensible settlement edge which can be enhanced through proposed landscaping strategy as part of the scheme.
8. A 15m wide undeveloped buffer is proposed along the southern and western sides of the site. This is the usual provision for development adjoining ancient woodland. Whilst Cheshers' Plantation to the south (within Panshanger Park) is not an ancient woodland, a similarly sized buffer here would help to separate the new houses from the registered historic park.

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<sup>1</sup> See the South West Quadrant Proposals Map (Sheet C) as well as Inset Map 10 for Hertford and Ware (Sheet F)

9. In relation to heritage considerations, the Panshanger Park and Environs Heritage Impact Assessment (July 2016) (ENV/004) identifies that development on the site has the potential to have an impact upon the designated historic park and garden of Panshanger Park. Figure 4.4 of that Document is a Development Concept Diagram (See also paragraph 5.21) which provided for a landscaped buffer to the south of the site in order to ensure an adequate setting to the Park. As shown in our Development Framework Document (Appendix B to our Matter 5 Statement) (see also Plans 2 and 3 to the SoCG)) this can be accommodated as part of the masterplan approach to development of the site with no impact upon the quantum of development to be delivered. As such, there are no heritage concerns in relation to the proposed development of the HERT3 site for approximately 250 dwellings.
10. The same can be said in relation to ecology which matters are summarised at paragraph 9.2 of the SoCG. Importantly, there is no objection to the allocation of the site from the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust.
11. On the basis of the foregoing, we are of the view that parts (j), (k) and (l) of the Policy provide the necessary criteria relevant to assessing the acceptability of future development proposals upon the Park.

**Q8**

***Are the allocated sites appropriate and deliverable, having regard to the provision of the necessary infrastructure and facilities, and taking account of environmental constraints.***

12. The site to the south of Welwyn Road and west of Thieves Lane has been subject to a thorough technical assessment, which findings have informed preparation of the aforementioned Development Framework Document.
13. A full range of technical surveys have been undertaken to support the allocation of the site for housing. These have been shared with the Council and have been included in support of a recently submitted EIA Screening Request.
14. A Statement of Common Ground ("SoCG") has been jointly prepared with the Council which expands upon the suitability of the site in the manner proposed under Policy HERT3.

15. The land is controlled by Croudace Homes and there are no impediments to bringing it forward for development.
16. Sections 10 and 11 of the SoCG set out the approach to delivery of the site.
17. We note the content of the Council's assumed delivery rates as set out in ED143 but consider their reliance upon 60 completions in 2018/19 to be overly optimistic given the requirement for applications to be subjected to what appears to be a lengthy masterplanning process.
18. As set out in the SoCG, we are committed to preparing a planning application this year and the expectation is that a hybrid planning application (with an outline for the entire site and a detailed for phase 1 comprising circa 100 dwellings), could be submitted in early 2018.
19. Subject to the timely grant of planning permission it is expected that the application would be a hybrid, it is expected that a meaningful start could be made on site end 2018/early 2019. This could result in the following rate of completions:

<b>2019/20</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>2020/21</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>2021/22</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>2022/23</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>250</b>

20. On the basis of the foregoing, the site could be expected to yield approximately 185 dwellings in the five year period to 2022 and would be completed by the end of 2022/2023.
21. The Council's trajectory as set out in ED143 assumes all 250 completions will be achieved by the end of 2021/2022. Such a target might be realised if the masterplanning process were to be streamlined and assuming no delay in the discharge of pre-commencement conditions to be imposed on the planning permission(s). However, and as matters stand, we think the Council's assumptions in ED143 are over-optimistic. Accordingly, we remain of the view that the trajectory set out above is realistic and deliverable. This position is reflected at paragraph 10.1 of the SoCG.

22. For the reasons set out above and as detailed in our Statements for Matters 2 and 5, we are of the view that the site is appropriate and deliverable and can assist in delivering a substantial amount of housing within the first five years of the plan period.

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