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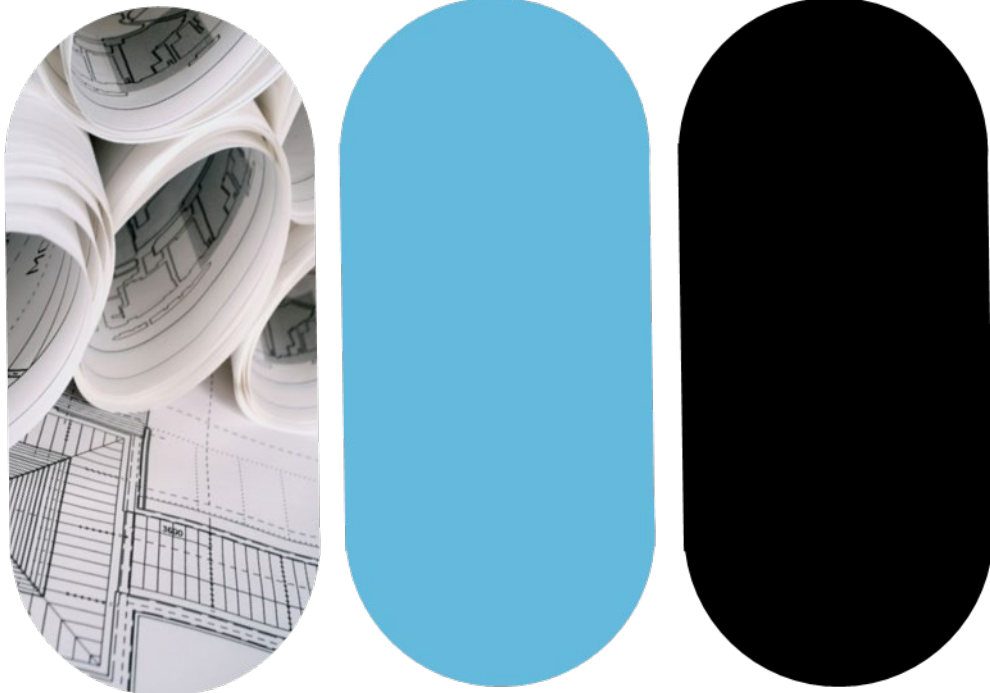
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**WRITTEN STATEMENT IN RESPECT OF THE ASHFIELD LOCAL
PLAN 2023-2040 EXAMINATION**

**MATTER 1 – PROCEDURAL AND LEGAL REQUIREMENTS
INCLUDING THE DUTY TO COOPERATE**

On Behalf of Persimmon Homes Nottingham



Waterfront House, Waterfront Plaza, 35 Station Street, Nottingham
www.marrons.co.uk

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Written Statement is made on behalf of our client, Persimmon Homes Nottingham, in response to the Inspectors' Matters, Issues and Questions for the examination hearings for the Ashfield District Local Plan Examination.
- 1.2 Persimmon Homes Nottingham are promoting two sites; the Land North of Fackley Road, Teversal which is identified as a residential allocation within the plan (allocation reference H1Sl) and Sunnyside Farm, Blackwell Road, Huthwaite which is identified as a residential allocation within the plan (allocation reference H1Sk).
- 1.3 Persimmon Homes Nottingham has engaged in all stages of the plan making process and previously made representations to the Regulation 19 Local Plan consultation (Marrons Representation dated January 2024, Respondent ID 223).

2. MATTER 1 – PROCEDURAL AND LEGAL REQUIREMENTS INCLUDING THE DUTY TO COOPERATE

Issue 1 – Whether the Council has complied with the Duty to Co-operate in the preparation of the Ashfield Local Plan.

Duty to Co-operate

- 2.1 In respect of the Duty to Co-operate, Ashfield District Council has produced a number of Statements of Common Ground to inform the Inspector of the Ashfield Local Plan and other interested parties about the areas of agreement between the Council and the prescribed bodies in respect of strategic planning matters (references DRC.01, SGC.01 – 07 and SGC.09 – 10).
- 2.2 As set out within DTC.01, Ashfield Council approached neighbouring

authorities in May 2022 in respect of their capacity to accommodate some of Ashfield’s identified housing need. All authorities responded to advise they were not in a position to meet any of Ashfield’s local housing need at that stage. This position has subsequently been reiterated at officer meetings.

2.3 SCG.01 sets out that that the parties have agree that:

“All parties seek to meet their own local housing need as informed by the standard methodology. The Ashfield Local Plan proposes to meet the District’s local housing needs to 2038/39 with a review at least every 5 years. It is not proposed that any of this requirement will be met by neighbouring local planning authorities.”

2.4 It has therefore been clearly demonstrated that in line with paragraph 141 of the NPPF exceptional circumstances exist to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries to meet Local Housing Needs given the discussions undertaken with prescribed bodies and signed agreements in place.

Overall

2.5 It is clear that the Council has sought to engage constructively with prescribed bodies on relevant strategic matters during the preparation of the Local Plan and have sought to maximise its effectiveness given the agreements in place. Notwithstanding this, our comments in respect of the how the Plan has effectively sought to meet local housing need are set out further in response to Matter 2.

Issue 2 – Whether the Council has complied with relevant procedural, legal and other requirements.

Plan Preparation

2.6 The Council’s Statement of Community Involvement details four key principles for engagements:

- Front loading.

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- Continuous involvement.
 - Transparency.
 - Providing feedback.

2.7 The Council has undertaken public consultations in line with the Regulations¹ and produced Statements of Consultation for both the Regulation 18 and 19 consultations (SD.07 and SD.08).

2.8 The Local Plan, as submitted, is clear within paragraph 1.3 that “All future development in Ashfield will be guided by the policies included in this draft Local Plan” alongside the made Neighbourhood Plans and Waste and Minerals Plan and that “When the Local Plan is adopted the saved policies from the Ashfield Local Plan Review (2002) will be superseded and will no longer form part of the development plan” (paragraph 1.4).

2.9 We therefore consider that the plan has been prepared in accordance with the Council’s Statement of Community Involvement and is clear in respect of superseding policies on adoption.

Sustainability Appraisal

2.10 The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) (SD.03) appraises the environmental, social and economic performance of the Pre-Submission Draft against a set of sustainability objectives in order to identify the likely significant social, economic and environmental effects. In line with the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Regulations the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan, and the reasonable alternatives to it, are identified, described and evaluated.

2.11 Option 3 in the SA has been taken forward within the Plan as it is considered to represent the best option to deliver sustainable development and meet the Vision for the District. The SA also sets out the reasons why other options were discounted.

¹ The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Plan)(England) Regulations 2012, as amended.

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- 2.12 The SA notes that Option 3: Dispersed Development would provide housing to meet local needs, including within the rural areas, and would be less reliant on longer lead-in times and the provision of infrastructure than options that rely on new settlements/SUEs. Development in the more viable rural areas would also support affordable housing needs.
- 2.13 The Spatial Strategy within the Plan, as detailed in Policy S1, is therefore based on an approach for dispersed development (SA Option 3) with no large sites of 500 or more dwellings. On this basis, the likely environmental, social and economic effects of the Local Plan are considered to be adequately and accurately assessed.