

ROSSENDALE LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

MATTER 15: EMPLOYMENT AND MIXED-USE SITE ALLOCATIONS

HEARING STATEMENT OF THE PEEL GROUP (REPRESENTOR ID 5160)

Issue – Are the proposed employment and mixed use allocations justified and deliverable and in-line with national policy?

Introduction

- 1.1 The Peel Group ('Peel') submitted representations to the Pre-submission Publication of the Rossendale Local Plan consultation in October 2018.
- 1.2 Paper 3 of Peel's submission identified a number of points of unsoundness in respect of the identified housing land supply which, as a result, would mean that the proposed housing requirements of the Local Plan would not be met. This included evidence that individual sites were either not proven to be deliverable or developable or where the Council had over-estimated the plan period yield. Further, these representations reveal that the Council has failed to put in place an adequate contingency plan in the event of under-delivery, including a sufficient flexibility allowance.
- 1.3 Paper 3 also identified that the spatial distribution of development would mean that little affordable housing would be provided, contrary to the evidence of need, due to reliance on allocations within weak housing market areas where affordable housing was unviable based on the Council's own evidence base. Further this assessment revealed that the housing land supply was not distributed in a sustainable manner with under provision in the most sustainable settlements of the Borough, most notably Rawtenstall, relative to less sustainable settlements.
- 1.4 Collectively these issues render the Local Plan unsound being in conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework, not justified by reference to a robust evidence base and not effective in being unable to meet the identified development needs.
- 1.5 Peel has submitted a number of Hearing Statements to the Local Plan Examination which should be read in conjunction with each other. Of most relevance to this Matter 15 Hearing Statement are Peel's Statements in relation to Matters 2 and 19. These consider the housing land supply as a whole including, building on its Pre-submission Publication representations, whether, when assessed on a cumulative basis, this supply will meet the overall housing requirement of the Borough, including the need for affordable housing (Matter 19), and is appropriately distributed in a sustainable manner (Matter 2).
- 1.6 This Matter 15 Statement considers individual mixed use allocations. Each site is considered independently. Hearing Statements in relation to Matters 9 to 14 follow the same approach.
- 1.7 The General Questions (GQ) set out will be answered against each site and where appropriate the site specific questions will also be addressed:

M1: Waterside Mill, Bacup

Local Plan proposal: 39 dwellings during Years 6 to 10

- 1.8 The site's suitability for residential development has not been supported by evidence. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2017 (SHLAA) (Evidence Base document EB0005) confirms that the site is adjacent flood zone 2, there is a high risk of surface water flooding and there are potential land contamination issues. The SHLAA highlights that Waterside Mill is a Listed Building (Grade II) and is within Bacup Town Centre Conservation Area. The land owner has not been in recent contact with the Council and therefore it cannot be assumed that the land owners' intentions remain to develop the site.
- 1.9 While there is a historic planning permission at the site, this has now lapsed and there is no evidence of a willing developer on board.

Conclusion: the site is not proven to be suitable or developable and should be removed from the residential allocations.

M2: Spinning Point, Rawtenstall

Local Plan proposal: 28 dwellings within Years 1 to 5

- 1.10 A screening opinion request (LPA reference: 2018/0048) was submitted in January 2018 which included the following in relation to the description of development:
- "The proposal also includes scope for 30 residential units or a 72no. bed hotel on the 1st and 2nd floor of the aforementioned retail/ café/ leisure units. The proposal is Phase 2 of the wider Spinning Point development."*
- 1.11 The screening letter provides further details on the possible size of a hotel building.
- 1.12 As there is evidence to suggest that the site may be developed for other uses and there is no clear evidence that a developer is on board for the development of the site for housing, the site is not proven to be developable.

Conclusion: the site is not proven to be developable and should not be included as an allocation in the Local Plan.

Summary of Draft Residential Allocations

- 1.13 Based on the above assessment, it is Peel's position that the cumulative and proven developable capacity of proposed mixed use allocations is 16 dwellings, compared to 83 suggested by the Council.
- 1.14 A number of sites are not proven to be developable, in being affected by ownership constraints which is necessary to underpin their allocation in a Local Plan. The Council has therefore overestimated the five year supply from mixed use allocations.
- 1.15 Based on the assessment of mixed use sites, it is evident that the identified housing land supply is insufficient to deliver the Borough's development needs. This renders the plan

unsound, principally in being at odds with the requirements of paragraph 67 of the NPPF and not being effective.

- 1.16 This conclusion is reinforced through the assessment of other proposed residential allocations across the Borough (see Matter 9 – 14 statements) and in considering the housing land supply as a whole (see Matter 2 and 19 statements).