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7<sup>th</sup> December 2016

Dear Louise,

Session R4. Action point 5: Disputed Sites

Further to the Inspector's request, I have set out below my concerns as to why a number of sites identified for development by the Borough Council will not provide the full number of completions forecast by the Council in the given period.

H1 (4) Oakapple Lane, Barming.

No planning application has been submitted for this site, although it was forecast that such a submission would be made towards the end of 2016. It is therefore contended that the timing of development should slip one year from that proposed by the Council, resulting in a loss of 40 units from the five year total.

Kent House, Romney Place, Maidstone. (137 units)

Prior Notification was granted for the conversion of this office block to 137 units on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2015, with a requirement that the work had to be completed by 30<sup>th</sup> May 2016. The Council is now admitting that work has not started but that it forecasts that all completions will take place within the year 2018/19. However, the Council has also reported that the agent for the owners/developers has informed them that work has started but only 123 flats will be provided. It therefore sounds as though work allegedly being undertaken is in breach of any planning permission/prior notification

Brenchley House, Maidstone (89 units)

Prior Notification was granted for the conversion of this office building to 89 units on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015, with an informative that the use of the building for Class C3 must be completed by 30<sup>th</sup> May 2016.

A subsequent Prior Notification permission was granted on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2016 for 183 units. This, however, was after the base date for the Council's housing land supply calculations, of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016.

The Council is nevertheless forecasting that the first PN permission will provide all 89 flats in the year 2019/20 -some three years after the expiry date of that permission.



Cornwallis House, Pudding Lane, Maidstone. 27 units

Whilst checking the situation regarding Kent House and Brenchley House as large office blocks with permission granted under the Prior Notification procedures, this site was also scrutinised. Permission was granted on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2015 for 27 units, with an informative that the work had to be completed by 30<sup>th</sup> May 2016. The Council, however, in its Housing Topic Paper 2016 (November 2016 Revision) forecast development will take place during the single year 2018/19.

Springfield Park. (192 units)

Permission was granted in August 2006 (reference MA/05/2350). Since then, there have been stories in the press and forecasts as to when development will begin. However, no start has been made. In these circumstances, no reliance can be placed on the Council's latest forecast that there will be 30 completions in year 2 (2017/18) and 50 per annum thereafter.

There is further uncertainty about other sites in this area that have had their start dates put back. The County Council's Springfield Library site obtained permission for residential development under MA/09/0862. A subsequent outline application, (ref: MA/12/2032), was permitted on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2014 but is not due to see its first completions until 2023/24. Furthermore, the proposed allocation at the Springfield site, Monckton's Lane, for 500 (H1 (11)) is supposed to produce its first completions in year 4 (2019/20)

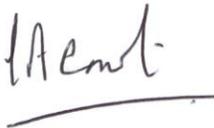
Against this background of delay and uncertainty, it is very difficult to accept the Council's latest forecasts of completions as being realistic and reliable.

H1 (29) New Line Learning Academy, Boughton Lane.130 units

A Planning Inspector dismissed an appeal on this site, following which the County Council, as owners of the site, requested that it be withdrawn as a housing allocation. Indeed, it would be impossible for the County Council to seek development of their land in a location such as this when, at the same time, criticising the impact of development on the road network in this part of Maidstone.

If any further information is required, then please contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Peter Court  
Director