

Planning Policy
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21st December 2018

Dear Sir/Madam,

HLM035/FP/ELW

**RE: Malvern Neighbourhood Plan: Regulation 16
Consultation**

On behalf of our client, Hallam Land Management (HLM), we submit the following representations to the Regulation 16 Consultation of the Malvern Neighbourhood Plan (MNP).

HLM promotes and delivers schemes across the UK and has an established reputation in delivering new investment in homes and infrastructure. HLM control land within the north west of the Neighbourhood Plan area (land at Cales Farm).

Hallam Land Management has previously submitted comments to emerging drafts of the Malvern Neighbourhood Plan (MNP) and its evidence base, and in doing so welcome the initiative of the Town Council in preparing the Plan to enable the local community to influence development in their local area.

General Comments

It is clear that the draft Plan has been prepared with regard to the South Worcestershire Development Plan (adopted in 2016), and the MNP preparation benefits from the strategic approach to growth as established through the SWDP. However, a review of the SWDP is underway, consultation on the Issues and Options report, to which HLM submitted representations, has just closed.

The SWDP review is likely to have significant implications for the future growth ambitions for the Neighbourhood Plan area, particularly in respect of needing to identify additional sites for housing.

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Furthermore, whilst the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) dated 2012, will continue to apply to plans submitted for examination of plans up to 24th January 2019, and therefore will apply to the MNP, Hallam consider that regard should be had to the policies and guidance within the updated NPPF.

Given the changes in both national and local plan policy, HLM support the proactive approach adopted by the Town Council to review the MNP following the submission of the SWDP Review for Examination, as set out at paragraph 7.8.

Strategy

HLM support the proactive and positive approach to meeting future housing needs outlines in paragraph 4.4 of the MNP, which states ‘the MNP accepts that proposals for further residential development will come forward within the NPA’.

This is particularly important in light of the publication of the SWDP Issues and Options which identifies the need to plan for additional housing, in addition to those commitments already made in the adopted SWDP to meet housing need to 2041.

The SWDP Issues and Options Consultation (November 2018) sets out a series of options through which growth could be accommodated. If the current and adopted SWDP development strategy is retained in the SWDP Plan review, which directs growth to the most sustainable settlements (including Malvern), a strategy which HLM support on the basis that Malvern Town is well placed to accommodate additional sustainable growth within the NP area, the MNP should provide a supportive framework to help achieve this aim.

Policy MV1: Key Views

Draft policy MV1 seeks to ensure that development proposals do not adversely affect, and where possible enhance character, quality and value of Exceptional Key Views as identified on Figure 5.3. HLM are in broad support of this policy objective, provided that it does not unnecessarily inhibit the growth potential of the town.

HLM support the amendments made to Figure 5.3, Key Views Plan, which now appropriately focuses solely on “exceptional” key views.

The amendment to Figure 5.3 positively responds to and reflects amendments made to the Visual Study, for which HLM submitted representations to in October 2018. Overall, HLM consider that the revised Visual Study strikes a better balance between protection of views and the need for growth and results in a more positive context within which to deliver sustainable development.

HLM strongly maintain that not all visual change is harmful; and where considering potential development proposals, a professional and technical assessment of potential future changes to views, including whether those changes would be of an adverse or beneficial nature, should be undertaken to ensure that future opportunities for growth in Malvern are not unreasonably restricted without adequate assessment, and of course that assessment having regard to appropriate masterplanning design. This approach is supported in the revised Visual Assessment report (para 3.8 ii)

MD1: Building Design and Accessibility

Criteria B of Draft Policy MD1 requires masterplans and design codes to be prepared for major development (over 100 dwellings). HLM consider that this blanket imposition of design prescription is not helpful as it draws no distinction between the particular forms and scales of development some forms of which may need limited design guidance.

The National Planning Policy Framework considers that design codes may be an appropriate design tool but does not suggest that this should be the only one. For these reasons, HLM consider that an amendment to the policy wording should be made that refers to the role that Design and Access Statements can make and that if further design prescription is needed one such approach could be in the form of design guides and masterplans, but in appropriate circumstances.

MT1: Transport and Development

Draft Policy MT1 relates to transport and development and sets out a list of criteria for which development proposals for major development should comply with. Part 2 requires development to be ‘appropriate’ in terms of its impact on local highway network but gives no further clarification on what might be deemed ‘appropriate’. The wording to this MNP policy should therefore be amended to be consistent with the approach to the assessment of transport impact as presented in the NPPF which states that development should only be

prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe (para 32).

Policy MH1: Housing Mix

Whilst Draft Policy MH1 provides an element of prescription in relation to housing mix, HLM do however, support the flexibility offered by the wording that requires development to take into account both current and future housing need based upon the most up to date SHMAs, and local housing needs assessments. However, the MNP could be made more effective by the inclusion of reference to site specific circumstances, such as scale, location and viability, having regard to market intelligence and developer assessment. This is the approach taken to identifying market mix in the adopted SWDP.

Policy MH2: residential development within the development boundary

Policy MH3: new residential development beyond the development boundary

The SWDP I&O acknowledges of the likely need to review development boundaries to accommodate additional growth to meet future housing needs.

The MNP as currently drafted proposes separate policies for new residential development within the development boundary (Policy MH2) and for new residential development beyond the development boundary (Policy MH3). Notwithstanding the acknowledgement within the MNP that refers to the need to review the NP to reflect the SWDP review, HLM considers that an amendment should be made to Policy MH3, either in the policy, or within the explanatory text that acknowledges that development boundaries can be reviewed within the lifetime of the MNP to plan positively for housing growth and to support sustainable development options.

As currently drafted, Policy MH2 supports new residential development within the Development Boundary, provided the location is 'environmentally acceptable'. There is no clarification as to what would be considered 'acceptable' from an environmental perspective. The policy could be made more precise and therefore more effective if this were further defined.

We trust these comments are helpful and should you have any questions, or require any additional information at this stage, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully



FRANCESCA PARMENTER
SENIOR ASSOCIATE

Email: 

cc: Hallam Land Management Ltd