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BY EMAIL

Dear Sirs

Canterbury Local Plan Options Paper 2021 Consultation

Homes England in its capacity as promoter/landowner of the St Martin's West site in Canterbury supports the Council's vision and objectives of the proposed new Local Plan. With regards to housing delivery, the proposed strategy to focus development at Canterbury is supported, although it is important not to restrict development in the smaller settlements. The proposed Preferred Option of delivering between 14,000 and 17,000 new homes is considered to be a sensible approach allowing the expansion of Canterbury to enable further opportunities for economic growth and investment in local transport infrastructure, as well as supporting facilities within the City centre and surrounding communities.

The draft objectives as set out in the consultation document are supported, in particular the delivery of high quality and affordable homes to support local needs. Homes England is the Government's housing accelerator, developing public sector land and investing in communities and collaboratively working with others to deliver homes faster, helping to improve neighbourhoods and grow communities. High quality design is very important to Homes England as are the principles of ensuring that new communities are designed with healthy living and nature at their heart. As such, Homes England is committed to delivering high quality homes and landscape as well as accelerating housing delivery to assist with meeting these objectives.

With regards to housing mix, the preferred option to set specific housing mix targets and identify opportunity sites for specific types or tenures is considered to be a sensible approach. It is important that new housing can be delivered to meet existing and future demands, and that there are no significant barriers to this delivery. Therefore, whilst site specific targets may provide the greatest benefit ensuring that the housing mix supports local housing needs, this needs to be based on the viability of the scheme, and allow for flexibility where the required mix cannot be achieved or where it changes over time. The opportunity for delivery of alternative types of accommodation or tenures is welcomed.

The inclusion of set densities for the housing allocations that reflects the individuality of the site is considered to be appropriate. The preferred option would assist in ensuring that new development reflects the character of a particular area creating a cohesive development with existing communities.

Homes England supports the preferred option to make the best use of brownfield land through re-development and regeneration opportunities, such as the proposed re-development of the former St Martins Hospital site at Canterbury which is allocated under adopted Local Plan policy HD1 for up to 200 homes. The development will deliver a mix of housing, including affordable homes, and landscaped open space for the local community.

The current housing trajectory for the St Martin's Hospital site in the adopted Local Plan indicates that these homes would be constructed between 2019/20 and 2021/22. Homes England is currently in pre application discussions with Canterbury City Council and preparing an outline application for the St Martin's Hospital site which will be submitted



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later this year. Subject to achieving the relevant planning approvals, it is expected that a housebuilder could start on site in 2023 and that the site could be delivered in full by 2026/27.

I trust that these representations will be taken into account when preparing the next stages of the Local Plan.

Yours faithfully

Helena.Deaville

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