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Dear Mr Haigh

### **CORE STRATEGY – FURTHER EVIDENCE RELATED TO EDUCATION NEEDS**

1. Further to previous submissions and discussions which have taken place between our respective authorities in relation to core strategy consultation, please find below additional evidence in relation to education needs on behalf of the Children Schools and Families Service (CSF).

2. We positively welcome the ongoing opportunity to engage in discussions with the local planning authority to identify the implications for services. This response attempts to identify how the growth proposed within Broxbourne to 2031 may impact upon service requirements and where additional school places might be required.

3. In forming this response we have considered the Core Strategy consultation document and the draft masterplan for Greater Brookfield. We are also aware of the March 2010 publication of the SHLAA document, and this has been taken in to consideration.

4. We have previously supplied the following information:

- Core Strategy Issues and Options Consultation June 2007 – a response was made on behalf of the county council as landowner and service provider, by Vincent and Gorbings on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2008.
- A response to the first SHLAA consultation on 3 March 2008. Ten sites were identified within the county council's land portfolio as suitable for future development.

- A response to the Core Strategy consultation of October 2008 was made on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2008 (a copy of which is attached for ease of reference.). The impact of development upon service needs was broadly identified in this document and a request was made for a meeting to explore this further. The response established that residential development can cause need for schools to expand or to be relocated or for the provision of new schools and the constraint which green belt policy can inflict upon the ability to respond to this need.
- A number of meetings have been held where both authorities have been present. Notes from meetings held on 12<sup>th</sup> January and 10<sup>th</sup> February 2009 have been circulated and amended (email J Nixon to A Sestini 19.5.09).

5. A process has been developed and followed by the county council to assess demand for school places in response to the Broxbourne LDF Core Strategy document as well as the recent SHLAA documents published by Borough of Broxbourne (BoB). It is recognised that the housing figures set out in the Core Strategy are a response by BoB to the East of England Plan and that this requirement may change over time, possibly in view of the recent change in political leadership following the general election.

6. With regard to education, work has been undertaken to assess future forecast demand, likely to be the result of proposed residential development across the borough. This has been informed by data provided by the Borough of Broxbourne (BoB), following a number of meetings between our authorities. Alongside this a methodology has been developed for assessing the impact of development on school places, with the aim of ensuring a clear and consistent approach across the ten districts of Hertfordshire.

### **Methodology applied to identification of CSF needs at primary level**

7. The methodology which has been applied to identifying the primary needs for CSF is as follows, and is a refinement of the approach previously adopted in statements sent to other authorities as part of ongoing discussions around education provision. The method responds to the need for pupil places in different time frames ie currently; taking into account CSF forecasts to 2015/16 and future housing development beyond 2015/16.

- The balance between existing capacity in the schools and the current needs of the existing community has been assessed to establish the ability of schools to accommodate extra pupils.
- Using the latest CSF forecasts to 2015/16, the need over this period has been established. These forecasts are based on actual data of 0-5 year olds in an area, historic pupil movement as well as an assumed pupil yield from new housing developments. The raw 0 to 5 year old data has also been used to inform discussions. Taking into account surplus places in schools, any additional school capacity needed to meet that need has been identified.

- A small margin to cater for both parental preference and short term variations in pupil numbers needs to be taken into account within the forecast and should be added. The Audit Commission recommends a surplus of no more than 10%. A margin of 5% has been added here.
- It is very difficult to forecast from 2015/16 to 2031 at a time when the national trend in pupil numbers has reversed and is now producing growing numbers of primary pupils after a period of decline. In order to be prudent, a 10% allowance is to be made to allow for the possibility of the current rising trend to continue beyond 2016. This represents a 10% allowance on top of the total number of forms of entry needed in 2016. Capacity allowances under this category should be considered as reserve sites, and it would be helpful if the need for the sites and the question of the appropriateness of their location to meet need arising from the community could be reviewed on a 5 yearly basis.
- The impact of future development ie the need for school places is assessed. This draws upon information gathered from local developments and the number of primary children who occupy them at the time of study. This informs an estimate of the number of pupil places likely to be required to meet demand from new developments.

8. Application of this methodology in Broxbourne means the following;

### **Current Needs and Primary Forecasts to 2015/16**

9. An assessment of current needs, taking into account the 5% surplus referred to above results in that information set out below. A surplus of 5% is identified as being appropriate for Broxbourne to manage fluctuations in demand and parental preference.

#### Waltham Cross and Cheshunt East

It is forecast that by 2012/13 an additional one form of entry (FE) will be required but that there will be limited capacity to provide this.

#### West Cheshunt, Goffs Oak and Flamstead End

In this area current forecasts suggest that there will be sufficient capacity. These forecasts are updated twice yearly and will be continually monitored to ensure sufficient provision is available to meet demand.

#### Hoddesdon/Broxbourne/Turnford and Wormley

In Hoddesdon there is a shortage of places in the north and south, whilst the central areas are showing a surplus of places. The southern part of this area (Turnford and Wormley primary planning areas) is under significant pressure. There is considered to be a shortage of two FE across the area within the current period. However, 0.5 FE is planned to be added at Roselands school, Hoddesdon.

NB. A form of entry at primary level means 30 children per year group, multiplied by seven years, ie 210 children in total.

## **The Impact of Future Housing beyond 2015/16**

10. The information provided below indicates how proposed development will create the need for additional school place provision.

11. Hertfordshire Property and CSF have developed a methodology to aid the consideration of future development and the need for school places. The County Council's demographer (Dr Paul Garcia) has recently undertaken research to assess the number of children occupying modern developments, in order to assess likely child yield for future schemes. Consideration has been given to the 'MAFF' site (now Boundary Park,) Canada Fields and Hammond Street developments. This work indicates that 400 dwellings is producing the need for one FE of pupil places at primary school level. The anticipated yield from future developments will therefore be based on this figure.

12. Development for the plan period (to 2025) has been assessed for the borough considering development in three discrete areas, using the SHLAA document figures for both urban sites and previous advice for strategic green belt sites.

13. It is estimated that there will be no surplus capacity across the area at primary level to cater for the yield from additional development beyond 2015/16 and that additional pupil places will need to be found on new sites.

### **North - Hoddesdon and Broxbourne**

Total Proposed = 1402 dwellings.

Urban SHLAA sites = 802 dwellings

Green belt sites = West Hoddesdon = 600 dwellings

At 400 dwellings/ 1 FE, then = 3.5 FE will be required

14. With regard to development at West Hoddesdon, 600 dwellings is likely to create need for a further 1.5 FE. Consideration may be given to constructing a new 2 FE school on the site. Thought should also be given to the relationship between the new school and the nearby Westfield primary school (currently 1 FE). Provision of a further 1.5 FE is likely to be needed in this area generally and further work needs to be undertaken to assess how that might be provided. It is possible that a reserve school site may need to be identified for this purpose and /or that sufficient flexibility is given from a policy perspective to allow schools to expand, if they are in green belt locations, for instance.

## Central - Turnford and Wormley

Total Proposed = 1203 dwellings, comprising:-

- Urban SHLAA sites = 703 dwellings
- Green belt sites ( Greater Brookfield) = 500 dwellings

At 400 dwellings/ 1 FE, then 3 FE is required in total

15. The proposed development of c 500 dwellings at Greater Brookfield creates difficulty in providing sufficient pupil places at primary level, as this area is forecast to show unsatisfied demand for the existing population in the immediate future.

16. GP data of 0-5 year olds shows an increasing number of pre-school children per year group living on the Canada Fields development. They are currently able to access local schools but as numbers increase will be less able to do so, and historically, application data shows strong parental preference for places at their nearest schools.

17. Consideration has been given to the re-opening of the former Wormley School. However, this would not provide places where they are needed for children living on Canada Fields or in the Greater Brookfield area because of distance and access issues. It has been noted that significant residential development has taken place recently in this area (the regional college site amongst others) and additional school places are likely to be needed for the children from these developments.

18. The closest school to the Brookfield development is Longlands (admission number of 30). Currently the number of children living around Longlands for whom it is their closest school far exceeds the number of places available at the school. Pupils being yielded from new developments will live closer to existing schools and are more likely to secure places than those on the Greater Brookfield development.

19. The next nearest school to the Greater Brookfield development is Churchfield (formerly Mayfield/St Clements). The current number of reception places available is in line with the number of children currently living closest to this school than any other. As well as the children living near Churchfield being allocated places first, those children living nearer to Longlands who were unable to access a place at that school would be more likely to be allocated places at Churchfield under the distance rule than the children living in new housing at Greater Brookfield, so again Greater Brookfield children would not be able to access places.

20. This means that if pupil yield from existing housing continues at the same level, children living at Greater Brookfield would not be able to access places at a local school. As schools further afield are considered, it becomes less and less likely that Greater Brookfield children would be allocated a place under the admissions distance rule as children living nearer to those schools would take precedence. Greater Brookfield children would therefore only be able to access undersubscribed schools.

21. If children were able to access a school place in Wormley (either at the old or new site), their journey to school is likely to be in excess of 1 mile, and could involve traversing busy local roads.

22. If Greater Brookfield were developed with 400-600 units, the yield in terms of pupil numbers, when added to the yield from Canada Fields could be sufficient to sustain a 1 – 2 FE primary school in the local area, providing places where they are needed for the residents of those two areas. Hertfordshire Property is currently considering this issue in detail and has appointed consultant architects to consider suitable locations for a new primary school in and around the Greater Brookfield area.

### South - Goffs Oak and West Cheshunt Waltham Cross

Total Proposed = 2820 dwellings, comprising:-

- Urban SHLAA sites = 1620 dwellings
- Green belt sites : Goffs Oak = 1000 and West of Cheshunt = 200

At 400 dwellings/ 1 FE, then 7 FE is required in total

23. HCC intends to respond to current forecast increases in pupil numbers at Waltham Cross and Cheshunt east by expanding Hurst Drive and Downfield each by 0.5 FE in 2011/12 (subject to feasibility/planning permission). A further 0.5 FE may be required on a temporary basis, pending further feasibility on the capacity to support permanent need.

24. Further demand in the Waltham Cross area is considered to be difficult to manage within existing provision. One way forward may be to consider a new primary school at the Albury Farm strategic site, although feasibility work would need to be undertaken to explore this further. Consideration should also be given to SHLAA sites to check whether any are suitable for school site provision. In view of the number of SHLAA sites in this area which are likely to create demand for school places, provision may be needed earlier in the plan period.

### Additional Capacity

25. The figures above relating to future growth needs amount to 13.5 FE. As the Core Strategy covers an extensive time span to 2031, it would be appropriate to ensure that adequate flexibility exists to allow for future demographic shifts. This is particularly relevant in the context of the current national trend in rising pupil numbers and it would be prudent to plan for a 10% allowance of reserve site capacity across the district. This would equate to an additional 4 FE. It would be sensible therefore, to identify reserve school sites, although at this stage their locations would not be easy to identify, or additional capacity at existing/future schools, where this is feasible, to accommodate potential need.

## **Secondary Education**

26. Information has previously been made available to BoB on secondary schools in the borough, their capacity and brief details on expansion potential.

27. The total number of Year 7 secondary school places in the Borough of Broxbourne is currently 1315. The 2009 PLASC (school census) indicates that there 1209 children at school in year 7. This provides a margin of 8% capacity. The number of children attending secondary school is expected to rise as the primary demand moves through the system over time

### **Capacity and forecasts**

- Cheshunt School has 1 FE spare capacity forecast in 2015/16 and could possibly expand from 6 – 8 FE.
- It is also expected that there will be 1 FE of capacity in the foreseeable future in Hoddesdon schools.
- Broxbourne school (6 FE) may be able to expand to 10 FE
- St Mary's school is likely to be able to expand from 6 to 8 FE
- Turnford School (6FE) might expand if adjacent playing fields in BoB ownership could be utilised.
- John Warner has no spare capacity but detached playing fields may create possibilities.
- Sheredes has no spare capacity but detached playing fields may create possibilities
- Goffs school (7FE) should be assessed after remnant playing fields from the former St Mary's site are brought into use by Goffs school.

28. The information above relates to existing schools. Further work needs to be undertaken to assess matters such as capacity, ownership, educational viability, planning and highway issues and future demand.

## **Provision of new schools**

### **New Primary schools**

29. Where it is not possible or appropriate to expand existing schools, HCC's policy is, to build new primary schools at 2 FE size. 1 FE = 30 pupil places in each year group i.e. 210 pupils plus a nursery. A primary school site will require 2.5 hectares as a minimum, taking into account site constraints such as topography, parking and access issues. This also allows for the provision of other facilities such as nurseries, extended schools and childrens centres.

### **New Secondary schools**

30. An optimum size for secondary schools in Hertfordshire is considered to be between 6 and 10 FE. Taking the median as 8 FE, the site would require 13 ha but up to 15 ha would be required, depending on topography (etc) and ancillary facilities.

## **Funding additional provision**

There has been significant residential development in the borough over the past few years, however, requests made by HCC aimed at securing planning obligations to mitigate the impact of particular development proposals on education provision (and other services), have not been supported by BoB. As a result, Section 106 funds are not available to assist in the expansion of school places across this borough, unlike elsewhere in Hertfordshire. Although HCC has set out proposals to meet the emerging demand for school places from the existing community in the document 'Meeting the Rising Demand for School Places' (HCC Dec 2009), including a commitment to making funds available, this will not extend to core strategy related growth. Funding mechanisms to handle the growth will need to be identified from the development process.

HCC therefore seeks assurance from BoB that in the future, planning obligations will be sought from developers as appropriate, reasonable and in line with Government policy. Consideration of how infrastructure and community services are to be provided in the future is a matter which should be referred to in the Core Strategy document (through both S106 and CIL mechanisms).

## **Conclusions**

### **Primary education**

31. Existing forecasts indicate that an additional 2.5 FE is required at primary level in the short /medium term across the borough to meet the needs arising from the existing community. Work is on-going to establish if this need can be met from existing sites. New development will create an additional requirement for up to 13.5 FE in the borough. The 10% allowance indicates that a further 4 FE will be required for reserve capacity.

32. In total, therefore, there is likely need for an additional 20 FE although of this, 2FE is already planned. Consideration may therefore need to be given to new school site provision, involving the relaxation of green belt policy in certain locations as appropriate and as mentioned earlier in this letter. Furthermore, it is probable that expansion opportunities at new and future schools will need to be considered and this will involve amongst other factors the availability of nearby detached playing fields. The precise location of expanded and new schools needs to be the subject of further work, taking into account strategic growth sites, SHLAA sites and the needs of the existing community.

### **Secondary education**

Further work needs to be undertaken to assess future demand and its provision and will be provided in the near future.



34. HCC is keen to continue the dialogue which has taken place between our authorities over recent months. It must be recognised however, that significant work is necessary to develop the assessments of capacity made so far and to identify solutions to secure future requirements.

Yours sincerely

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