South Gloucestershire Core Strategy Examination

STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

BETWEEN

South Gloucestershire Council

AND

Boyer Planning on behalf of Heron Land (representor number 2880673)

In respect of North Yate New Neighbourhood (Matter 21, Policies CS30 & CS31)
Declaration

The contents of this paper are agreed for the purposes of South Gloucestershire Core Strategy.

Signed on behalf of Heron Land Developments Ltd

Position: Bayer Planning Ltd

Date: 21/6/12

Signed on behalf of the South Gloucestershire Council

Position: Head of Strategic Planning

Date: 21/6/12
North Yate New Neighbourhood

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1. Overview

1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) has been prepared jointly by South Gloucestershire Council and Boyer Planning on behalf of Heron Land Developments Ltd (HLD).

1.2 The SOCG has been prepared to confirm the points of agreement between the Council and its development partner in relation to the Council’s Core Strategy (incorporating Post Submission Changes, December 2011), to assist the Planning Inspector at the forthcoming Examination in Public (EiP).

2. Background

2.1 The North Yate New Neighbourhood Housing identified in Policy CS30 and CS31 at North Brimsham, Yate proposes a development of 3,000 houses (of which 2,700 will be delivered by 2027), up to 9ha of employment land, open space, transport and community services and facilities to support the new community on approximately 118 hectares of land currently in agricultural use.

2.2 The site is bounded to the north by Tanhouse Lane, to the west by the Bristol to Gloucester railway line, to the east by the foot of a ridge of land known as Yate Rocks and to the south by the existing development at North Brimsham.

2.3 The New Neighbourhood Area has been the subject considerable community engagement and pre-planning with the development partner. An outline planning application has been received by the Council and was registered on 1st June 2012. The developer has agreed to a deferment of any decision on the planning application, pending receipt of the Inspector’s Report.

2.4 The North Yate New Neighbourhood site is controlled by several land interests, with the majority land interest held by Heron Land Developments (HLD).

3. Matters of Agreement

3.1 Boyer Planning made several representations to the Core Strategy at each consultation stage of the document. The following Matters are agreed between the Council and Boyer Planning on behalf of HLD.

Location of development and Distribution of Housing

3.2 HLD supports the Council’s allocation of new development in North Yate in Policy CS31. HLD has recently submitted an outline planning application to the Council which demonstrates the new neighbourhood area is available, suitable for development and deliverable.

Comprehensive development

3.3 Both Parties agree that development will be comprehensively planned and delivery will be co-ordinated to ensure full integration between the different land ownerships for the provision of ancillary facilities and supporting infrastructure required by the New Neighbourhood.
Policy CS31 Flood Risk Assessment

3.4 Following detailed modelling work, the Environment Agency has confirmed a flood map change, which recognises that the original extent of flood risk within the site shown on its records was inaccurate. HLD has prepared a flood risk assessment for North Yate new neighbourhood which has the agreement and support of the Environment Agency. The Environment Agency has also confirmed that the design approach to development adopted by HLD will ensure that no additional surface water volumes are conveyed downstream and that an overall betterment to the catchment is achieved.

3.5 Both parties are agreed that the level of information submitted to and agreed by the Environment Agency is sufficient to support the allocation of North Yate new neighbourhood area as a strategic housing location.

Sewerage

3.6 HLD and Wessex Water have agreed a memorandum of understanding to confirm that the delivery of strategic sewerage infrastructure required to deliver the North Yate New Neighbourhood is not a constraint to the progress of the scheme.

3.7 A second agreement between HLD and Wessex Water confirms the availability within the existing system of capacity for 500 dwellings in the area north of Randolph Avenue and Leechpool Way.

3.8 Both parties agree that these memoranda of understanding are sufficient to demonstrate the developer’s ability to deliver 3,000 new homes at North Yate.

Transport

3.9 HLD has undertaken work to confirm the capacity of the highway network to support the delivery of 3,000 new homes at North Yate. This position has been independently reviewed and confirmed by Atkins. Working with the Council, HLD has established the principles of a multi modal transport strategy for the scheme which demonstrates the potential for effective investment in public transport, cycling and walking, consistent with the Yate and Chipping Sodbury transport package from which the town as a whole will benefit.

3.10 The parties are agreed that there is potential for effective investment in off site improvements to the local highway network public transport, cycling and walking, to ensure the proposals are consistent with the Yate and Chipping Sodbury transport package and will offset any impact arising from the New Neighbourhood.

Green Infrastructure

3.11 The Council has proposed an amendment to Figure 12 to distinguish the area of Green Infrastructure falling within the new neighbourhood and therefore required as part of the development. Both parties are agreed that Herons objection relating to the Green Infrastructure notation on Figure 12 has been resolved.
Employment

3.12 Boyer Planning on behalf of Heron Land has made representation on policy CS31 regarding the reference in the first sentence of para.5 to provide 'up to 9ha of employment land'. The Representor would like to see the words replaced with 'approximately 5ha'.

3.13 The Council's position is that the policy wording provides certainty regarding the future provision of employment land to ensure the employment needs of the new community are met and at the same time provides a measure of flexibility for managing any changes to this position.

3.14 Both parties are agreed that the policy wording on employment provides a practical approach and clear policy process for managing any change to the amount of employment land. The parties also recognise that additional employment will be generated in the scheme through the neighbourhood centre, primary schools. The parties consider that any outstanding matters can be addressed through the development management process.

4. Matters of Disagreement

Gypsies and Traveller provision

4.1 Boyer Planning on behalf of Heron Land has made representation to have the reference to the provision of pitches for gypsies and travellers removed from Policy CS31. In their view, Policy CS31 is in conflict with Policy CS21, which sets out the criteria by which sites will be considered appropriate for use for Gypsies and Travellers. Their position is that suitable sites for the provision of pitches should be identified and assessed through the Policies Sites and Places DPD process, (as per the approach taken on Policy CS22 for Travelling Showpeople) rather than pre-determining the outcome of a site selection process by requiring provision on the new neighbourhood at North Yate.

4.2 The Council's position is that this wording is consistent with the policy wording set out in Policy CS21. The New Neighbourhood is a suitable, sustainable location available to meet the provision of all housing needs, including the provision of housing for Gypsies and Travellers. The criteria set out in Policy CS21 can be met through appropriate master planning to contribute to the identified housing need.

4.3 Therefore the Council and the Representors are unable to reach common ground on this matter. The parties are however agreed that this matter does not undermine the suitability and deliverability of the new neighbourhood and that the Inspectors decision non this matter will be respected in the determination of HLD's planning application.

Policy CS15 Phasing of Delivery

4.4 Boyer Planning on behalf of Heron Land has made representation on policy CS15 Distribution of Housing and supporting paragraphs 10.5a, 10.6, 10.6a, 10.7a and 10.7b. It is their position that the policy and supporting text do not provide sufficient flexibility over the delivery of housing at the North Yate new
neighbourhood and artificially restrict the number of houses to be delivered over the plan period. In their view it is feasible to deliver 3,000 houses at North Yate during the plan period. Moreover, in their view, it is sensible to encourage the maximum delivery of housing from each of the sites, to be sure of securing the Council's annual housing targets.

4.5 The Council's position is that there is no policy in the Core Strategy that prevents or restricts the delivery of the New Neighbourhood sooner and faster than set out in the housing trajectory (policy CS15). The Council's position is that the policy has been written to be flexible to allow housing at North Yate New Neighbourhood to come forward, provided that the required strategic infrastructure is capable of being delivered.

4.6 HLD acknowledges that their objection is met in these circumstances but considers that the amendments they seek are required to give certainty.

Revised Policy Wording for CS31 North Yate New Neighbourhood

4.7 The Council is proposing to revise the wording to all the New Neighbourhood policies. Their intention is to introduce a consistent approach to planning and co-ordinating the delivery of comprehensive development across the new neighbourhoods. The revised wording for North Yate sets out that the preparation of SPD is the preferred route to securing comprehensive development within the new neighbourhoods.

4.8 Boyer Planning on behalf of HLD takes the view that the proposed alteration in the policy creates a less flexible process for planning and delivering the new neighbourhood at North Yate. The development management process is an equally valid way to secure comprehensive development in this case and the policy should reflect this. HLD has submitted an outline planning application to the Council which demonstrates their case.

4.9 The parties are unable to agree on this matter.

5. Process

5.1 The North Yate new neighbourhood is the subject of an Outline Planning Application (App Ref PK12/1913/O).