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SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE CORE STRATEGY
EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC

MATTER 3 – SPATIAL PORTRAIT, ISSUES, VISION
& OBJECTIVES

On behalf of
WELBECK STRATEGIC LAND LLP

May 2012

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1. INTRODUCTION

1. This Statement has been prepared by Dominic Lawson Bespoke Planning on behalf of Welbeck Strategic Land LLP (hereafter “Welbeck”). Welbeck has land interests at Hacket Farm, Morton Way South, Thornbury.
2. This Statement responds to the Inspector’s questions posed for the Matters for Examination as detailed in the Programme for the Examination of the South Gloucestershire Core Strategy, 25 April 2012. This Statement deals with questions relating to Matter 3 – Spatial Portrait, Issues, Visions and Objectives.
3. We also refer the Inspector to Welbeck’s previous submissions on the Core Strategy. Welbeck has submitted representations in relation to the Core Strategy on six previous occasions as indicated in our Matter 1 Statement.

2. SPATIAL PORTRAIT, ISSUES, VISION & OBJECTIVES

4. Welbeck has provided representations on the Core Strategy previously in particular representations of August 2010 (SGC ref 4038145/1539), February 2011 (SGC reference 4038145/15) and February 2012 (SGC reference 4038145) are of relevance.
5. We are providing responses to questions 2 and 3:

Question 2

Are the Strategic Objectives broadly consistent with the aspirations of organisations and the population and do they provide appropriate goals for the Council to pursue?

Response

6. We do not consider that the Strategic Objectives are broadly consistent with the aspirations of organisations and the population for the following reasons.
7. The council's overarching and cross-cutting objective – Delivering sustainable development – is unlikely to be achieved as the amount of new housing proposed does not meet the identified need of the district.
8. The council's objective – **Responding to Climate Change and High Quality Design** – is unlikely to be achieved as its ability to understand flooding and reduce susceptibility to flood risk appears to be confused as it is proposing housing development in areas at risk from flooding (Park Farm, Thornbury) when alternative, more suitable and deliverable sites are available.
9. The council's objective – **Managing Future Development** – is undermined by its proposed housing opportunity area at Thornbury as it does not take advantage of existing services and facilities and does not have higher levels of accessibility compared to alternative and available sites elsewhere in Thornbury such as Morton Way South.
10. The objective – **Managing the Environment and Heritage** – is undermined by the council's proposed allocation of Park Farm as the Thornbury Housing Opportunity site. The site will have significant adverse effects on a number of important and highly significant heritage assets, thus not conserving or enhancing the assets' character and distinctiveness and on the landscape quality of this area.
11. The potential closure of Filton Airfield and the availability of this site to contribute to the objective – **Maintaining Economic Prosperity** – has not been realised by the council. Filton Airfield is strategically located to enhance significant high tech industries such as the aerospace industry.
12. The council is not proposing sufficient new housing across the district which will meet the objective – **Providing Housing and Community Infrastructure**. The total amount of housing needs to increase to a minimum of 33,600 for the plan period 2006-2026, and the housing allocation for Thornbury needs to increase to at least 1,000 new dwellings for the plan period (see Welbeck representation, February 2012, Appendix W1).

Question 3

Are there any Visions which the Council has put forward which are inappropriate or unrealistic?

Response

13. We consider that the Vision for Thornbury is unrealistic for the following reasons.
14. The council is proposing up to 500 dwellings for Thornbury to 2026 (Core Strategy, pp 24 and 25). Welbeck considers this figure is inadequate and will not address the need for housing within Thornbury. In order to fulfill the council's vision for Thornbury additional housing will be required. Thornbury needs to increase its population and in particular encourage young families to remain in and locate to Thornbury. Thornbury's population is ageing and its primary schools are experiencing significant falls in pupil numbers (see Welbeck representations February 2011, para 33; February 2012, para 48). Without additional housing this trend will not be reversed.
15. The Vision fails to take account of the new nuclear power station proposed for Oldbury. Should the power station be commissioned it will result in significant numbers of construction and support workers needing to be accommodated within the area.
16. Welbeck also questions the Vision for the North Fringe as significant amounts of employment land will be lost to housing at Filton Airfield. To achieve the vision for the North Fringe the council will need to ensure high tech industries such as the aerospace industries are not only retained but encouraged to locate and expand in this area. The potential closure of Filton Airfield provides the council with the opportunity to reinforce and expand this employment sector.

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