

2nd October 2015

Dear Sirs,

LAND AT HUNNINGLEY LANE, WORSBOROUGH DALE – BARNSELY - INDEPENDENT SUSTAINABILITY & DELIVERABILITY ASSESSMENT

We write further to our initial letter dated 16th September 2015 and to our subsequent telephone conversation with yourselves yesterday. We have now looked into the matters that you queried and of which you have sought my clarification.

Peter Brett Associates (PBA) was employed by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (BMBC) to undertake a strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) on a large number of sites throughout the Barnsley Borough. This Study was undertaken during 2013 and the findings of which would assist the Council in assessing and identifying land suitable for housing development for inclusion in the Barnsley Local Plan.

Your Land at Hunningley Lane was allocated SHLAA reference 547. I attach the relevant site assessment details which identify that the site performed very well against the **suitability criteria** and **availability criteria** and that the site was also shown to have “**good achievability (can be used in five year supply)**”.

Despite these high scores, the site was recorded as a category 2 site, with category 1 being the highest score and category 3 being the lowest score.

The attached site assessment identifies under subheading ‘*Housing Quality Constraints*’ that the site scores less favourably, obtaining a C grade. It is suggested that the site would only be moderately attractive to the market. Likewise, under subheading ‘*Suitability of Location Constraints*’ the site again scored less favourably, obtaining a C grade, as it is stated that the site is located **adjacent** to urban Barnsley, as opposed to being within.

It is apparent that the inclusion of the two ‘C-grades’ which relate to the site’s *achievability* has led to the downgrading of the site’s overall score, resulting in it obtaining a category 2 rating.

Due to the number of sites PBA were required to assess as part of the SHLAA process they would not have been able to review each of the sites in a detailed manner. Furthermore, given that the study took place in 2013 there is also the potential for a site’s deliverability characteristics to change in the intervening two year period to today’s date.

As set out to you in our letter dated 16th September, we have reviewed and assessed a number of documents which have previously been submitted to BMBC, including a report prepared by PBA dated January 2015, in which PBA clarify:-

“The only reason the site achieved an overall category 2 rating rather than category 1 is because it was thought likely to be “moderately” attractive to the market, and because of its location adjacent to (as opposed to within) Urban Barnsley. Regarding the first point, as we explained above, Persimmon Homes has subsequently confirmed its interest in the Hunningley Lane site, and two further national House builders (Barratt Homes and Bellway Homes) have also expressed a firm interest in the site. This recent evidence confirms that the site is more than “moderately” attractive to the market”

“Regarding the latter point, the site is actually within Urban Barnsley; as confirmed by the plan from the UDP entitled ‘Diagram 1, Community Areas’.”

In addition to the above, our own review of the site’s *achievability* as part of our deliverability assessment of the site led us to conclude in our letter dated 16th September that:-

“On account of our experience of the housing industry and local housing market, we are extremely confident that a viable housing development can be delivered on the site within the next 5 years. We are aware that the national house builders Persimmon Homes, Bellway Homes, Barratt Homes and David Wilson Homes have expressed an aspiration to develop the site for residential use. Prior to the progression of development sites these companies undertake a thorough marketing and economic viability assessment for each site, including an assessment of any site specific abnormal costs. Therefore, the site is considered to be achievable for residential development now as there is a realistic prospect that the site can deliver new homes within the next 5 years.”

In conclusion, in light of the clarification provided by PBA in their January 2015 report to BMBC’s Planning Policy department, the site is;

- I) More than moderately attractive to the market as opposed to only “moderately”
- II) Located within Urban Barnsley as opposed to being adjacent to Urban Barnsley.

We believe that the original PBA assessment undertaken as part of the SHLAA process at the request of the BMBC should now be amended to show the site as a **“Category 1” Deliverable residential site**.

We trust we have adequately addressed your concerns and should you need any further information, or clarity on any of the specific points made, then please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,



PAUL BUTLER
Director

Enc. Appendix A – PBA SHLAA Site Assessment Ref. 547

