

**CHRISTCHURCH AND EAST DORSET COUNCILS JOINT CORE STRATEGY
EXAMINATION**

STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

NORTH EASTERN VERWOOD NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD (VTSW5)

**STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND BETWEEN LINDEN HOMES
STRATEGIC LAND (REPRESENTED BY BOYER PLANNING) AND EAST
DORSET DISTRICT COUNCIL**

1 Agreed Matters of Fact

1.1 The site was considered as part of the Local Plan Inspector's Report, October 2000. Although the Inspector concluded that the site was not required as a result of the findings in relation to housing land supply, he made a number of positive conclusions. He felt that the site was *'very well contained by existing housing and woodland' and that 'the woodland edge would make an excellent, defensible boundary for the green belt.'* Overall the Inspector concluded that he had no doubt that the site would warrant further consideration in the future and that he could *'understand the logic of taking this field out of the green belt'* as:

'The purpose of designating it as green belt is relatively limited, given its isolated nature, well divorced from the open countryside. Views out from the site to the surrounding countryside are non-existent. The woodland would make a very good new edge to the town here.'

1.2 The VTSW5 site is identified in the East Dorset 2008 SHLAA (published March 2008) as having the potential to accommodate approximately 62 units. It was classified as a physically developable site within the Green Belt, but was considered unacceptable at the time in context of the adopted Green Belt policy.

1.3 Broadway Malyan prepared the *"East Dorset New Neighbourhoods Stage 1 Baseline Report – Additional Sites"* dated January 2012. It describes the site as having no landscape constraints and summarises that there are:

- No identified ecological designations within the site
- No identified archaeological designations within the site
- No flooding issues
- No abnormal infrastructure costs.

1.4 Site VTSW5 was proposed for allocation under the Pre-Submission Core Strategy.

1.5 The East Dorset 2011 SHLAA (published February 2012) identifies the site as having the potential to provide 50 dwellings, with reference made to Pre-Submission Core Strategy Policy VTSW5.

1.6 The capacity of the site was restricted to 50 units so that the SANGs mitigation could be in the form of a financial contribution.

1.7 The allocation was deleted as the location of the proposed residential development would be likely to cause harm to Ebblake Bog, which is part of the internationally protected Dorset Heaths. It was, in the Council's view, uncertain whether the impacts of the development could be mitigated.

1.8 Richard Henshaw on behalf of East Dorset District Council confirmed by email dated 14th January 2013 that *"if Nick Squirrell agrees that you can provide the necessary mitigation this will be passed to the planning inspector and we will confirm that this overcomes the reason why the site was deleted as part of the Proposed Changes."*

1.9 A SANG strategy has been prepared by Tyler Grange on behalf of Linden Homes Strategic Land. The strategy is to provide a number of enhancing features and is summarised as follows:

- To attract dog walkers away from the Dorset Heathlands SPA, a variety of attractive, waymarked circular walks of up to 2,350m linked to the development site would be provided, with leaflets informing new residents of their presence;
- The existing plantation woodland containing the SANG would be made more diverse and hence attractive to dog-walkers than elsewhere by creating open glades supporting heathland vegetation, and through the restoration of mire habitats that will make the area wetter;
- Paths and surrounding habitats would be maintained, as required;

- To seek to avoid adverse effects to sensitive habitats in Ringwood Forest, signage would state the need to pick up dog litter, and open space in the development site will include dog litter bins and a pond for dogs to use; and
 - The SANG features would be secured in perpetuity
- 1.10 Natural England and the Forestry Commission have confirmed the acceptability of the proposed SANG strategy.
- 1.11 A planning application for the development of the site was submitted on 28th May 2013 and was given the reference number 3/13/0480/OUT. The application was accompanied by a Planning Performance Agreement which stated the following:
- “EDDC will report the application for determination to the earliest relevant Planning Committee available within six weeks of receipt of a positive letter from the Inspector following Examination of the Core Strategy; unless both parties agree otherwise. Should a positive response not be received from the Inspector by 31st October 2013 the determination period will be reviewed on a four weekly basis to agree if the application should proceed to determination or should remain undetermined. Should agreement not be reached either party can request that the application proceed to determination.”*
- 1.12 Natural England agreed the Linden Homes SANG Strategy on the 14th February 2013. This was then passed to the Inspector by Linden Homes as part of their Statement, and during the EiP it was made clear that this overcame the reason for deletion. However, the Council maintained its position that the document under consideration at the EiP was sound.

This Statement has been agreed by the aforementioned parties.

Dated: 25 October 2013