

Written Statement re Further Matters, Issues and Questions

December 2020

Examination of North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031

Matter 30 – Barkway and Site BK3

Statement from Barkway Parish Council

Introduction

1. I am Jacqueline Veater, BA, BTP MA, MRTPI, of Govresources Ltd, Planning Consultant for Barkway Parish Council.
2. This statement supplements our previous representations on the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2031 relating to the village of Barkway, our comments on the proposed Main Modifications to the North Hertfordshire Local Plan, our responses to the Further Matters, Issues and Questions, January 2020 and the updated Further Matters, Issues and Questions, August 2020.
3. This statement addresses the Inspectors Further Matters, Issues and Questions, December 2020 **Matter 30 – Barkway and Site BK3**.
4. Barkway Parish Council fully supports North Herts District Council's (NHDC), suggested deletion of Site BK3 from the plan and that the land should not be within the Barkway village boundary, as detailed in published note ED210, paragraph 15.
5. The second part of the proposed NHDC amendment, in paragraph 16 of ED210, to revert Barkway back to a Category A village would be preferable to it remaining a Village for Growth, however, Barkway Parish Council believes that Barkway would more appropriately be placed in Category B of the settlement hierarchy.

Matter 30 – Barkway and Site BK3

The justification for allocating Site BK3 for housing

30.1 Should the site be allocated for housing, either with or without the land reserved for education purposes?

6. Site BK3 should not be allocated for housing either with or without the land reserved for education purposes. Our case has been stated in all of the previous submissions by Barkway Parish Council.

a) Is there a reasonable likelihood that the land identified for primary education will be needed for that purpose during the plan period?

7. In answer to question 30.1 a), there is no evidence and in Barkway Parish Council's opinion, no likelihood, that the land identified for primary education will

be needed within the plan period. This stance is supported by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and NHDC.

b) If the identified land were not to be developed for primary education purposes, is there a reasonable likelihood that housing on the remainder of Site BK3 would be capable of visually integrating into the existing village?

8. The site originally proposed for housing and identified as Site BK3 in the submission version of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan is located remotely from the village and it is not capable of being visually integrated into the existing village.
9. Barkway Parish Council has maintained this stance consistently from our comprehensive Objection to BK3 at Regulation 19 (<https://documentportal.north-herts.gov.uk/GetDocList/PDFs/01408433.pdf>). Our evidence included reference to landscape character, and the location of the site on the Chiltern's Ridge, which is visible from some 30 miles away. It is set within green fields and would not be seen as part of the village.
10. Since the initial objection representation at Regulation 19, a Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for Barkway & Nuthampstead. The Neighbourhood Plan has completed its Regulation 14 consultation and is being finalised for submission under Regulation 15. The Neighbourhood Plan includes a policy on Priority Views (Policy BN NE4). View 5 of this policy identifies a Priority View across the land identified as BK3 from Cambridge Road. The site is also identified in the Neighbourhood Plan as lying adjacent to Cockenach Grade II Historic Park and Garden.
11. In addition to comments made about the impossibility of integrating BK3 into the village visibly, throughout the Local Plan Examination, Barkway Parish Council has also submitted a number of extensive comments in response to the current planning application on the site. (2 x documents: https://documentportal.north-herts.gov.uk/GetDocList/Default.aspx?doc_class_code=DC&case_number=18/01502/OP and also see comments on pages <https://pa2.north-herts.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=consulteeComments&keyVal=P9T378LKI7K00> and <https://pa2.north-herts.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=consulteeComments&keyVal=P9T378LKI7K00&consulteeCommentsPager.page=3>)

c) If not, would the deletion of Site BK3 be necessary for soundness, or would there be a more appropriate course of action?

12. Barkway Parish Council has recommended, at each opportunity throughout the examination of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan, that the deletion of Site BK3 is essential in order for the Plan to be found sound.

30.2 If the site is allocated for housing, should the land identified also be allocated for primary education purposes?

13. The site should not be allocated for housing and if it were to be then the plan could not be found sound. The site in between the BK3 housing site and the existing village should not be allocated for primary education as there is no likelihood or need for the site to come forward in the life of the plan.

The spatial strategy and Barkway's place within the settlement hierarchy

30.3 Depending on the preceding questions, what tier of the settlement hierarchy should Barkway be categorised as, and why?

14. The Parish Council has made previous representations to the effect that with a single primary school year group being taught in Barkway and no other facilities, besides community halls and a pub, the village does is not a sustainable location for growth and should be considered a Category B village.

30.4 If it were necessary for soundness to delete Site BK3 from the Local Plan and no alternative land were proposed to replace it:

a) would this affect or undermine the Local Plan's spatial strategy and the aim of directing new housing development to the most sustainable locations?

15. Housing has already been allocated in Barkway (BK1 and BK2). BK1 is already built. In addition, Barkway has grown, in a manner commensurate with its size and facilities at an appropriate rate over the last plan period. The Neighbourhood Plan allows for growth to continue and provides policies to guide that growth, within the Housing Section.

c) would this affect or undermine the demonstration of the exceptional circumstances required to 'release' land from the Green Belt around other settlements for new housing?

16. As stated in our previously submissions, the minimal contribution of Site BK3 to housing requirements in North Hertfordshire would not undermine the demonstration of the exceptional circumstances required to release land from the Green Belt around other settlements for new housing.

The supply of land for housing

30.5 What bearing, if any, does this have on the supply of land for housing?

17. Barkway Parish Council submitted a statement in August 2020 in response to the Inspectors Updated Further Matters, Issues and Questions August 2020, which supported our assertion that the removal of housing site BK3 from the plan would make such a marginal difference that it would have no impact on the supply of land for housing in North Hertfordshire. The site contributes only 1% to the Districts OAN.

30.6 If it were necessary for soundness to delete Site BK3 from the Local Plan, would it also be necessary for soundness to allocate alternative land for housing, either in Barkway or elsewhere? If so, how much land, where and why?

18. Following on from our comment above in response to question 30.5, sufficient housing is already allocated in Barkway for the needs of the village and the immediate area. If it was felt that alternate land was to be allocated to compensate for the loss of housing numbers on BK3 then this allocation should be in a sustainable location and not in Barkway.

Amendments to the Plan

19. In summary, we agree with NHDC, that BK3 and the reserve school site should be removed from the plan.
20. Barkway should not be referred to as a Village for Growth. The village could remain a Category A village without detriment to the Spatial Strategy and hierarchy of settlements in the plan. However, Barkway Parish Council feels that the village could more appropriately be a Category B village and continue to grow in an appropriate manner within the village boundary.