Havering Local Plan Examination July 2019

Response to Inspector questions on:

- Upminster (Hall Lane) Miniature Golf / Pitch and Putt
- Site Specific Allocations

At the Local Plan Examination in May 2019, the Inspector raised questions about the Upminster Miniature Golf Course (following her receiving correspondence from a third party about this matter) and the Council’s intentions regarding preparation of a Site Specific Allocations document.

This document sets out the Council’s responses to these two matters.

1. Upminster (Hall Lane) Miniature Golf Course.

(1). Explain how the site will be considered having regard to Policy 18?

For the purpose of this response, it is assumed that the Inspector is referring to Policy 18 of the Havering Local Plan which is the subject of the current Examination. The response to this question (below) refers to the Local Development Framework (which the Local Plan will replace). The policy in the Local Development Framework for open space and recreational facilities is also identified as Policy 18 in that document albeit with the preface DC (so it is Policy DC18) to recognise that it is a development control policy as opposed to one of the strategic ‘Core’ policies which have the preface ‘CP’.

The substantive response to this question is as follows:

As the Local Planning Authority responsible for determining a planning application submitted for this site for residential development, Havering is still considering the application and the supporting information.

The current planning application for the site is being determined under the relevant policies in the adopted Core Strategy and Development Control Policies of the Havering Local Development Framework (2008).

In regard to open space, these are:

- Policy CP7 Recreation and leisure
- Policy DC 18 Protection of Public Open Space, Recreation, Sports and Leisure facilities; and
- Policy DC 20 Access to Recreation and Leisure, Including Open Space

Policy CP7 seeks to retain existing facilities where a need exists.

Policy DC 18 seeks the retention and enhancement of all public open space and recreation, sports and leisure facilities that are in private and public ownership. It allows for the loss of open space if it is surplus to requirements and meets the standards set out in Policy DC 20.
In terms of the potential use of the site for new homes, the relevant policies in the Local Development Framework are:

- Policy CP1 Housing Supply
- Policy CP2 Sustainable communities

(2). Is it correct that the site is currently allocated as Open Space in the Core Strategy?

Yes - this is correct.

It is shown on the Proposals Map (North) as Hall Lane Miniature Golf Course and subject to the requirements of Policy DC18 of the Local Development Framework.

(3). Policy 29 seeks to maintain and expand the network of green spaces and natural features in Havering. Therefore what will be the position assuming that the Local Plan is found sound? Will that existing designation be superseded or will it be carried forward into the Site Allocations Plan?

The site would be shown on the new Proposals Map for the Havering Local Plan as subject to the requirements of Policy 18 of the Havering Local Plan.

As noted above, the current planning application for the site is being dealt with under the policies of the current Havering LDF.

If, in due course, the site has secured planning permission for residential use then it is expected that it will be included within the Havering Site Allocations Local Plan.

(4). Is there an intention to develop the site for housing and is it one of the sites identified in the Housing Trajectory? If so, which site? If it is proposed to be developed, what is the justification for the loss of the Open Space designation?

The Council is considering its options for the future of the site and as part of that process, its wholly owned subsidiary, Mercury Land Holdings, has submitted a planning application for residential development.

The site is not identified on the current housing trajectory for the Havering Local Plan as discussed at the Local Plan Examination hearings.

This was consistent with the approach taken to the other similar sites in the trajectory because at the time of preparing the trajectory the principle of residential development had not been confirmed.

There is no change at present to the Open Space designation.

To assist its consideration of the proposal, the authority has requested additional information of the applicant to enable both the Local Planning Authority and the local community to fully consider the matters further.

Until this is resolved, the Local Planning Authority will not yet reach any conclusions on this planning application.
(5). It would also be helpful if the Council could check whether a duly made representation was received on this matter at Regulation 19 stage of the plan making process either from Lynden Alexander or any other person?

There is no Regulation 19 representation from Lynden Alexander or any other person in relation to this site.

2. Site Specific Allocations

The Inspector commented: ‘I note that the updated LDS states that the existing Site Specific Allocations DPD and the Romford Area Action Plan will be superseded on adoption of the Local Plan. Can the Council please explain the consequences of that given that the Local Plan does not include site allocations, other than for gypsy and traveller accommodation? This links with one of the matters I have asked the Council to consider in terms of Main Modifications to the Plan’.

The Council response is that both the Site Specific Allocations DPD and the Romford Area Action Plan (both in the suite of Havering Local Development Framework documents) will be superseded on adoption of the Local Plan as they relate to policies in the previous Havering Local Development Framework.

A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for Romford is being prepared (in the form of a Masterplan) and the aim is for its adoption to be shortly after the adoption of the Local Plan.

An SPD for Rainham is also likely to be produced.

A new Havering Site Specific Allocations Local Plan document is in preparation which covers the rest of the Borough.

Martyn Thomas
July 24 2019