

**ASHFORD LOCAL PLAN 2030**

**EXAMINATION LIBRARY**

**ED/13**

# **Statement of Common Ground**

As agreed between

**Ashford Borough Council**

And

**Taylor Wimpey South East**

**And Persimmon Homes**

**In respect of Policy S14 (Park Farm South East)**

**17 April 2018**





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**STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND**

**Between**

**Taylor Wimpey South East and Persimmon Homes & Ashford Borough Council**

**In respect of Policy S14 (Park Farm South East) as set out in the  
Submission Local Plan 2030, December 2017  
Examination Library Reference SD01**

**1.0 Purpose of the Statement**

- 1.1 This Statement has been prepared for the purpose of setting out areas of agreement between Ashford Borough Council ("the Council"), Taylor Wimpey South East & Persimmon Homes ("the Developers") in respect of Policy S14 (and its supporting text), as contained in the Submission Local Plan 2030, December 2017, Examination Library Reference SD01. Policy S14 allocates land at Park Farm South East ("the Site) for residential development.

**2.0 Housing Numbers & Delivery**

- 2.1 It is agreed that Policy S14 identifies that the Site has an indicative capacity of 325 dwellings. Pre-Application meetings with the Council have included discussions on a layout that originally showed 376 dwellings, but was reduced to 353 dwellings as result of these discussions and detailed technical assessments.
- 2.2 On 12 May 2017, the Council adopted a Screening Opinion that a development for up to 400 new homes with associated open space and infrastructure did not require an Environmental Impact Assessment to be submitted (Ref 17/00002/EIA/AS). The Developers have since been engaged in pre-application discussions with the Council, in preparation of submitting a Full planning application.
- 2.3 The Developers have committed to submitting a Full planning application, for the development of the entire Site in April 2018. Subject to Planning, the Developers intend to commence development in July 2019. This was confirmed in an email from the Developers to the Borough Council dated 09 February 2018.
- 2.4 The Developers have previously brought forward the Bridgefield development positioned immediately to the north and north-west of the Site, together with other sites throughout

Ashford Town and the Borough. The developers have a strong track record of delivery in the Borough and generally as two of the largest national house builders.

- 2.5 The Borough assessed the Site in the 'Ashford Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) 2016/2017' (ID SD12). Site reference is WE6. It was concluded that the Site was 'Suitable', 'Available' and 'Deliverable'.
- 2.6 It is agreed in principle that there are no impediments to the delivery of this Site.
- 2.7 Policy S14 supports the Council's 'Vision' for the Borough as set out at paragraphs 3.6-3.13 of the Submission Local Plan (ID SD01) and the strategic objectives at Policy SP1.
- 2.8 Policy S14 contributes to achieving the objectives of Policy SP2 'The Strategic Approach to Housing Delivery'.

### **3.0 Access**

- 3.1 The Site is accessible via Finn Farm Road to the west over the bridge crossing of the A2070 and the railway line, from Brockman's Lane to the south and Cheeseman's Green Lane to the north. The Site is also accessible through the Bridgefield development to the north which has two new link roads that connect with the mixed use development at Finberry to the east. The southern link road connects with Finn Farm Road via Rutledge Avenue and is an all-purpose connection for vehicles with pedestrian and cycle links. The northern link road connects with Damara Way and is a bus only route with pedestrian, cycle and bridleway links. The link roads have been built to the limit of the Developers landownership and the final connections into Finberry will be delivered by the developers of Finberry, i.e. Crest. These works are due to commence in the summer of 2018. The links will be open prior to the Site being occupied.
- 3.2 A frequent bus service, running on average every 6 minutes during the daytime and every 20 minutes in the evenings and on weekends, serves the Bridgefield development to the north providing connections to Ashford Town Centre via Ashford International Train Station.
- 3.3 The Site can connect with the existing network of pedestrian and cycle connections in the local area, as well as provide new links over the bridge crossing of the railway line towards the west.



**4.0 Finn Farm Road Junction**

- 4.1 It is agreed that criteria b of Policy S14 seeks to 'investigate the potential' of a direct access from the three-way traffic signal controlled Finn Farm Road junction. It is agreed that a planning application could demonstrate that vehicular access could be achieved from other points as allowed for in Policy S14.
- 4.2 A suitable alternative access arrangement for the site can be delivered via Cheeseman's Green Lane, Finn Farm Road and Brockman's Lane subject to detailed design of the road alignment and access to the site from the south, in accordance with the requirements of KCC Highways and Transportation to Improve Brockman's Lane. This would also involve the closure (in part) of Finn Farm Road on the eastern side of the railway line.
- 4.3 It is agreed that if the Inspectors see fit to remove criterion b of Policy S14 then the corresponding arrow on the accompanying plan should be removed.

**5.0 Rail Station**

- 5.1 The Rail Station referred to at criteria c of Policy S14, relates to land set aside at the Bridgefield development (to the north of the Site) for a Rail Halt until 21 July 2021.
- 5.2 The Council promoted the inclusion of the Rail Station (also known as the Rail Halt) in the Department for Transport 'South Eastern Rail Franchise Public Consultation' document March 2017, which set out service objectives for the following 7-10 years for the next rail franchise. The Rail Station has not been identified as a project or aspiration in the South Eastern Franchise 2017; Invitation to Tender or the Network Rail South East Strategic Business Plan 2019-2024.

**6.0 Other Matters**

- 6.1 The residential development area is not located in a mineral safeguarding zone, as identified in the Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013-2030.
- 6.2 The Site is not subject to any landscape or ecological designations.
- 6.3 There are no designated or non-designated heritage assets on the Site.
- 6.4 The eastern edge of the Site is defined by Flood Zones 2 and 3. Residential development will lie outside this area. The Site is not subject to any other environmental designations.

6.5 The Borough assessed the Site in the 'Sustainability Appraisal SA/SEA Environmental Report, May 2016' (ID SD02) Site reference WE6. The Site assessment at Appendix 3 (pages 100 – 104) concludes the Site is 'suitable' for development.

6.6 Policy S14 was considered by the Borough Council in the preparation of the 'Habitat Regulation Assessment and Appropriate Assessment (update December 2017)' (ID SD11).

**7.0 Supporting Text - Minor Amendment**

7.1 Minor amendments to the wording of para 4.147 are agreed as follows:

**'The site is located adjacent to the new residential development known as Bridgefield. The site is currently in agricultural use. Finn Farm Road Brockman's Lane forms the western and southern boundary of the site, Finn Farm Road the northern boundary of the site and it also adjoins the Ashford to Hastings railway line. Directly to the west is a bridge that crosses the railway line and the A2070 meeting at a three-way traffic light controlled junction joining Finn Farm Road, Brockmans Lane and Cheeseman's Green Lane. The north and north western boundary of the site is formed by Cheeseman's Green Lane which directly adjoins the existing development at Bridgefield.'**

SIGNED BY [REDACTED] PRINT NAME *DAVID BRADLEY* DATE *17/04/2018*  
ON BEHALF OF TAYLOR WIMPEY SOUTH EAST (*SENIOR PLANNING MANAGER*)

SIGNED BY [REDACTED] PRINT NAME *KERRI BLIND* DATE *17/04/2018*  
ON BEHALF OF PERSIMMON HOMES (*HEAD OF PLANNING*)

SIGNED BY [REDACTED] PRINT NAME *IAN CROFT* DATE *17/04/2018*  
ON BEHALF OF ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL