Session 2: Main Modifications relating to Harlaxton and Site ADD17

1. The purpose of this additional statement is to confirm English Heritage’s position with regards to Harlaxton and the representations made on the Main Modifications. We do not intend to appear at this hearing session, but hope this statement is of assistance.

2. As stated in our representation to PHMM31, we greatly welcome the proposed deletion of Site LSC1e (Land at Swinehill, Harlaxton) and welcome the revised site assessment and sustainability appraisal. As the revised village assessment demonstrates, Harlaxton is less suitable for development than other Local Service Centres.

3. We note that the promoters of Site ADD17 are continuing to argue for the allocation of their site. As stated in our hearing statement for Session 7 last autumn (paragraphs 3.3.5 and 3.3.6), we consider that Site ADD17 presents many of the same negative impacts on Harlaxton’s heritage assets as Site LSC1e. It is only located a short distance further west than Site LSC1e, and although not within the registered park and garden of Harlaxton Manor, would impact on the significance and setting of many heritage assets including the Grade I listed manor and Grade II* registered park and garden. There are also archaeological issues regarding the proximity of the old manor house to the north.

4. We have recently provided pre-application advice to the District Council for a proposed development scheme of 40-50 houses at Site ADD17. Our advice elaborates on our hearing statement and highlights the harm that would be caused to several heritage assets by the development of this site. In terms of the impact of the proposed scheme, our advice includes the following assessment:
“In English Heritage’s view the proposed scheme would be very harmful to the setting and significance of Harlaxton Manor, its registered park and garden and Harlaxton Conservation Area through the introduction of a substantial new development into this area of evident rural character. It would be a substantial modern extension to the village of Harlaxton which would not preserve or enhance its character as an historic, tightly knit estate village. The current rural setting of the conservation area as seen from the higher ground from the south would be substantially eroded. Given the topography, there will be views from within the registered park and garden (including from listed buildings) to the site, and the site will appear in eastward views across what are currently fields towards the registered park and garden. Despite the existing row of bungalows on Swine Hill the proposed new houses would be visible in views west from Harlaxton Manor and from within the registered park and garden. They would also intrude into views towards Belvoir Castle from the high ground within the registered park and garden. We would advise that development of the site would also potentially be detrimental to undesignated archaeological remains.”

5. To conclude the allocation of Site ADD17 would render the plan unsound as it would not be justified, effective or consistent with national policy.

6. It would not be justified in terms of being the most appropriate strategy when considered against reasonable alternatives. The District Council have reassessed the suitability of Harlaxton for housing development and concluded that there are more appropriate locations elsewhere in the district.

7. It would not be effective in terms of being deliverable against major heritage asset constraints including the significance and setting of heritage assets at Harlaxton Manor and Harlaxton Conservation Area.

8. It would not be consistent with national policy, including paragraphs 17, 132, 133, 134 and 152 of the National Planning Policy Framework. There would be harm to a range of heritage assets, and even if that harm is considered to be less than substantial, there would need to be sufficient public benefits to outweigh the harm. Given that housing can be delivered in other locations in the district, the public benefits of this site are not considerable.

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English Heritage
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