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Forest Heath District Council

Single Issue Review Public Examination

Matter 6

**“The effects of the new housing and the traffic generated
by it on European Sites”**

Submitted by Sellwood Planning

on behalf of

The Earl of Derby

September 2017

Regulated by RICS

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This response has been prepared on behalf of Lord Derby who is the freeholder of the Hatchfield Farm site which was previously proposed for 400 homes, a Primary School and a minimum of 5 hectares of employment land under Policy N1(c) of the Site Allocation Local Plan Preferred Options (April 2016). This proposal was assessed in the corresponding SA prepared by AECOM and found to be an appropriate site in the context of the spatial strategy in the adopted Core Strategy (May 2010).
- 1.2 The site was deleted from the pre-submission Single Issue Review (SIR) in January 2017 following the Secretary of State's refusal of an application for 400 homes in August 2016. Since then, High Court has quashed the Secretary of State's decision but not the Inspectors Report recommending approval. The Newmarket Horsemen's Group (NHG) sought leave to challenge this decision in the Court of Appeal, but leave was refused in August 2017. There is no further right of appeal.
- 1.3 The Inspectors have correctly identified the resulting low housing provision in Newmarket and the robustness of the SA as key issues to be examined.

2.0 (Questions 6.1 to 6.4)

- 2.1 Lord Derby has not submitted any representations which directly bear on these questions and will not be seeking to participate at the session. However, the questions do raise wider issues which will be discussed at other sessions of the public examination. These wider issues are whether the distribution of housing proposed by the SIR conflicts with the spatial strategy in Policy CS1 of the adopted Core Strategy and whether the SIR distribution will deliver a sustainable pattern of development.
- 2.2 This first issue is a material consideration for Matter 6 since the SIR housing distribution seeks to focus 63% of the proposed dwellings in the settlements of Mildenhall, Red Lodge and Lakenheath. These settlements are all heavily constrained by SPAs and SACs and their respective buffer areas. In contrast, Newmarket which is

the largest and most sustainable settlement in the district and is unaffected by European nature conservation sites or their buffers, is only proposed to accommodate 9% of the total housing provision.

- 2.3 The conclusion to be drawn from the proposed SIR housing distribution is that it puts unnecessary stress on vulnerable European sites when less sensitive locations such as Newmarket are available. This is not a sustainable approach. It is considered that the SIR and its SA singularly fail to grapple with these key issues or provide a convincing rationale for the proposed housing distribution in the Single Issue Review.