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Dear Sir / Madam,

**North Somerset Site Allocation Plan (Consultation Draft) March 2016  
Land at Bridgwater Road, Weston-super-Mare**

These representations have been prepared by Savills on behalf Mr Crow who owns the land referred to as 'Land at Bridgwater Road', Weston-super-Mare. The land is identified on the enclosed plan.

The land shown on the enclosed plan is immediately available for development and there is no restriction to it contributing to meeting the strategic land housing needs for Weston-super-Mare and North Somerset. The site has potential to accommodate 70 plus dwellings.

**Site context**

The site, Land at Bridgwater Road, is proposed as a large site for residential development in the schedule to the Draft North Somerset Site Allocation Plan Policy SA2. It is identified as having capacity for 70 dwellings.

The site comprises approximately 2.63 hectares of agricultural land located to the east of Bridgwater Road and lies immediately outside the settlement boundary of Weston-super-Mare. The A370 Bridgwater Road delineates the site at its western boundary, Bleadon Hill forms the southern boundary and a railway line and cutting for the eastern boundary and sit below the site. A large area of woodland (The Tips) borders the northern edge of the site. The site is level and is predominantly screened by planting on all boundaries. There are no national designations covering the site which may otherwise preclude development.

**Meeting the housing requirement in North Somerset**

In September 2015 the Secretary of State confirmed the new housing requirement in Policy CS13 of the North Somerset Core Strategy as 20,985 dwellings for the period 2006–2026. Land at Bridgwater Road was one of a number of sites allocated to address the housing shortfall identified as a consequence of the new increased housing requirement.

At this stage settlement boundaries have not been amended to take into account proposed new housing allocations. However, when the plan is adopted it is anticipated that the settlement boundaries will be redrawn to take into account the land subject to new housing allocations.

Residential development on this site will therefore provide a logical and substantial addition to the sustainable growth of Weston-super-Mare and will provide a valuable contribution to meeting North Somerset's housing supply over the Core Strategy Plan Period.

## Draft Policy SA2 site specific policy considerations

Draft Policy SA2 of the Site Allocations Plan Consultation Draft (March 2016) outlines a number of site specific policy tests that development proposals must accord with. Whilst it is important and correct for an allocation to be subject to site specific policy tests, it is also necessary to ensure some flexibility remains in order to appropriately facilitate the site's future anticipated development. The site specific policy considerations are thus addressed in turn below:

i) Retention of strong hedge/tree boundaries

Whilst it is agreed that the hedge and tree boundaries provide the benefit of screening for the site, this policy test would benefit from a minor alteration to the proposed wording to ensure that the retention of the boundary features will not unduly compromise successful facilitation of highway access and visibility.

Recommendation: We therefore recommend that this policy test is reworded to read "retention of strong hedge/tree boundaries where possible."

ii) Highway access midway between A370 junction and Devils Bridge

The landowner has commissioned an Access Feasibility Report which considers the most suitable location for vehicular access to the site. Two locations have been assessed on the south boundary of the site leading onto Bleadon Hill including a vehicular access close to the junction between the A370, Bridgwater Road and Bleadon Hill or, as recommended in the draft policy test, midway between A370 junction and Devils Bridge. Vehicular access options that are being considered are subject to further survey work in respect of traffic flows, traffic speeds and highway visibility.

We are in agreement that vehicular access to the site should be obtained via the south boundary leading on to Bleadon Hill. However, the suitability of the location of a vehicular access to the site is not solely predicated on highway considerations. Vehicular access will also need to consider ecological and arboricultural matters.

We therefore request that the scope of this policy test is widened to ensure that various material considerations can be adequately assessed and that an appropriate and suitable balance can be met between highways, ecological and arboricultural matters, all of which are material considerations of equal importance.

Recommendation: We therefore recommend that the wording of this policy test should be amended to read: "Highways access to be delivered to the south of the site, leading onto Bleadon Hill."

iii) Transport Assessment to assess safety aspects of increased vehicular and pedestrian movements at the A370 junction.

Any future planning application submission will be supported by a Transport Assessment including an assessment of the most appropriate location for a safe highway access. This policy test is therefore considered reasonable.

iv) Consideration of fact that site is within 5km consultation zone for Bats SAC

Any future application will be supported by the necessary ecological surveys and reports. This specific policy test is therefore reasonable.

## **Deliverability**

In line with paragraph 47 of the Framework it is important to demonstrate that the proposed development is deliverable and will come forward in the short-term; thus assisting with the identified housing need. The site is available, suitable and achievable. These points are addressed below:

### Available

To be considered deliverable, sites should be available now. The site is under the ownership of the client and is currently vacant so is immediately available to develop.

### Suitable

To be considered deliverable, sites should offer a suitable location for development. The site is in close proximity to a number of services and facilities. It is located close to Weston General Hospital and a number of shops, pubs, a church and school in the neighbouring settlement of Uphill. Further shops, restaurants, sports facilities and schools are located close to the site within Weston-super-Mare.

The site is situated adjacent to the A370 Bridgwater Road. There are a number of bus stops close to the site providing links to Weston-super-Mare and the surrounding area. Weston-super-Mare Train Station provides direct services to Bristol Parkway, Bristol Temple Meads and Cardiff Central, and onwards to the wider rail network.

### Achievable

To be considered deliverable, sites should be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years and in particular that development of the site is viable. Initial technical surveys have already been undertaken and the site represents a viable development which can be delivered quickly.

## **Conclusion**

In summary, the site is sustainably located on the edge of Weston-super-Mare. There are a range of services and facilities such as schools, GP Practice, banks and supermarkets as well as readily available public transport links by bus and rail to nearby settlements including, but not limited to, Weston-super-Mare and Bristol. This site has the potential to provide 70 plus dwellings that will contribute to the housing requirement in Weston-super-Mare and North Somerset as a whole.

The site is immediately available, suitable, and achievable (deliverable and developable) in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF, and is therefore extremely well placed to accommodate the delivery of residential development. We therefore support the emerging draft allocation in policy SA2 of the Draft North Somerset Site Allocation Plan subject to amendments to the site specific policies tests. In this respect, we request that our comments set out under the sub heading 'Draft Policy SA2 site specific policy considerations' are given due consideration in order to ensure that any forthcoming allocation for the site allows sufficient flexibility and does not unduly delay the delivery of residential development.

Yours faithfully,



**Rebecca Windemer BA (Hons)**  
**Graduate Planner**

ENC: *Site Location Plan*