

Horsham District Local Plan (2023-2040)

Hearing Statement Relating to Matter 3
On Behalf of Vistry Group PLC
Relating to Land to the North of Mannings Heath

November 2024

Vistry Group

Gillings
Planning

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Client

Vistry Group PLC

Date of Issue

22nd November 2024

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Hearing Statement has been prepared on behalf of our client Vistry Group PLC ('Vistry') in response to the publication of the Horsham District Local Plan 2023-2040 (the 'Plan').
- 1.2 Our client previously made representations at Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 stages of the Local Plan preparation.
- 1.3 Vistry have land interests within the Plan area at a site known as Land to the North of Mannings Heath.

Mannings Heath

- 1.4 Representations have previously been submitted to the Council's Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 consultation stages on the Horsham District Local Plan on behalf of Countryside Properties ('Countryside'), which is now part of the Vistry Group. This included documentation which set out the significant benefits of the Site, which adjoins the settlement boundary of Mannings Heath.



Aerial photograph showing the Mannings Heath site outlined in red (by courtesy of Google ©)

This Statement

- 1.5 This brief Hearing Statement has been prepared in accordance with the prevailing planning policy and guidance, in particular the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), September 2023 and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).
- 1.6 We do not seek to unnecessarily repeat points raised in the representations submitted by Vistry Group, but we have answered the questions posed by the Planning Inspector in the Matters, Issues and Questions (14th October 2024) where we feel it would be helpful to do so.
- 1.7 Gillings Planning, on behalf of the Vistry Group PLC wish to take a full and active part in the relevant Hearing sessions relating to their interests in the site.

2.0 Our Responses to the Matters, Issues and Questions

Matter 3 – Climate Change and Water

Matter 3, Issue 2 – Whether the approach to water neutrality and flooding is justified, effective, consistent with national policy and positively prepared?

Q1. *Is Strategic Policy 9: Water Neutrality sound?*

e) Has achieving water neutrality been adequately assessed as part of the viability evidence and is this policy flexible enough to deal with changes in circumstances with regard to water neutrality?

- 2.1 As set out in our representations, and not repeated here; we are very concerned that the Plan has not assessed the true level of mitigation that will be available during the plan period to address the matter of water neutrality. We remain concerned that the matter of water neutrality has been used as an excuse to unnecessarily constrain the housing growth in the District and wider housing market areas.
- 2.2 We also remain concerned that the Plan also uses the issue of water neutrality to artificially push housing delivery to the end of the Plan period.