

## **Ebbsfleet Development Corporation – Hearing Statement**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC) are the owner of the freehold interest in Ebbsfleet Central. This representation to the Local Plan consultation is specifically as owner of land at Ebbsfleet Central.
- 1.2. EDC completed the acquisition of the freehold interest in Ebbsfleet Central Area in October 2019 and are now progressing the delivery of this Site. As landowner, EDC are committed to the delivery of this Site and are confident that previous constraints to delivery can be overcome. EDC support the allocation of land at Ebbsfleet Central in Policy E4: Ebbsfleet Central Allocation and supporting Diagram 10: Ebbsfleet Central.
- 1.3. EDC, as landowner, have submitted an outline planning application for part of the land at Ebbsfleet Central (known as Ebbsfleet Central East). This application was submitted on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2022 and is currently with EDC (as Local Planning Authority) for validation. The outline planning application does not cover all of the land included in Policy E4 and focuses on the land to the eastern side of the Channel Tunnel Railway Line (CTRL), also known as EC1 and EC2. The decision to prioritise this area of land for the first outline planning application was made due to uncertainty in 2021/22 on the designation of the Swanscombe Peninsula SSSI. With the SSSI now designated, EDC remain committed to bringing forward development on the land, identified in Policy E4, on the western side of the CTRL in the near future, also known as EC4.
- 1.4. In addition to the responses to responses below to the Inspectors Matters, Issues and Questions, EDC request that the policy and the allocation of Ebbsfleet Central (Policy E4) reflect the designated Swanscombe Peninsula Site of Special Scientific Interest boundary which was not confirmed at the time of Regulation 19 consultation.
- 1.5. For clarity, the following information has been appended to this Hearing Statement:
  - Outline Planning Application Red Line Boundary Plan
  - Ebbsfleet Central Development Parcels Plan

### **2. Response to Inspector's Matters, Issues and Questions – Stage 2**

- 2.1. This Hearing Statement responds to Matter 6 – Strategy for Ebbsfleet and Swanscombe, Policy E4 – Ebbsfleet Central Allocation, Question 83, 84, 85 and 87.

#### **Policy E4 – Ebbsfleet Central Allocation**

**83. What is the basis for the scale and range of development types proposed and are these justified?**

- 2.2. Ebbsfleet Development Corporation have been progressing a new masterplan and outline planning application for Ebbsfleet Central and this has considered in extensive detail the scale and range of development types proposed. The starting point for the scale and range of development types is the Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework (2017) which proposes:

*“Ebbsfleet Central will become a dynamic new heart for Ebbsfleet, a major commercial hub and a centre of excellence for medical, education and learning. This dynamic focus of uses will be supported by a diverse mix of residential, health and leisure uses, with associated bars, restaurants and convenience shopping to support active and lively streets.”*
- 2.3. Building on this, EDC have undertaken a review of the potential of Ebbsfleet Central following acquisition of the land in 2019, and the vision for Ebbsfleet Central is:

*“At the heart of the Garden City, Ebbsfleet Central will capitalise on its unparalleled connectivity to deliver the next generation of high quality, flexible workspace, creating a new dynamic and innovative sub-regional business hub integrated through well designed public realm and green spaces with vibrant, sustainable urban neighbourhoods and amenities to support a healthy, happy lifestyle”*

- 2.4. This has formed the basis of updated masterplanning work at Ebbsfleet Central and an outline planning application (which at the time of writing has been submitted but not validated) for the majority of the land allocated under Policy E4. This has included detailed consideration of the constraints and opportunities of the Site, technical assessments of ecology, transport and highways as well as financial and viability testing. The conclusion of this work aligns with the scale and range of development types proposed in Policy E4, which are considered to be deliverable and in line with the vision for Ebbsfleet Central.

**84. What are the expectations in terms of the timing and rates of housing delivery? Are these realistic? What evidence is there to support the anticipated timing?**

- 2.5. EDC have carefully considered the delivery programme for Ebbsfleet Central. This is based on the delivery of 3 overarching phases of development, EC2 as Phase 1, EC1, as Phase 2 and EC4 as Phase 3 (see Appendix 1 for further detail).

- 2.6. The expected delivery programme for Ebbsfleet Central is:

- Delivery of Phase 1 (EC2) Infrastructure: 2024-2027
- Commencement of Phase 1 (EC2) Development: 2027 – 2034
- Commencement of Phase 2 (EC1) Development: 2032 onwards
- Commencement of Phase 3 (EC4) Development: 2034 onwards

- 2.7. The rate of delivery of residential development is included in DBC’s housing trajectory and is based on evidence of the rate of housing delivery within the Garden City, alongside input from the Consultant Team working on the Ebbsfleet Central project for EDC.

- 2.8. The expected programme of delivery of development at Ebbsfleet Central is supported by the approval of the strategic outline case for Phase 1 (for which EDC will act as Strategic Master Developer) by Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and the ongoing procurement process to employ Development Manager partner to support these activities.

**85. What effect does the designation of the Swanscombe Peninsula SSSI have on the amount and timing of development planned at the Ebbsfleet Central Allocation?**

- 2.9. The SSSI designation includes land which prior to designation was proposed for development. Following notification of the SSSI, DBC reviewed and altered Policy E4 to account for this loss of land considered to be developable, with only land outside of the SSSI area remaining within the allocation.
- 2.10. Following the SSSI designation, EDC as landowner and promoter of Ebbsfleet Central, undertook a review of the existing masterplan and the proposed development that could come forward on land outside of the SSSI. This capacity and feasibility testing demonstrated that the level of development proposed in Policy E4 remains deliverable within the land allocated.

**87. Is the policy sufficiently clear as to what is being sought as part of the requirement for a new public transport hub?**

- 2.11. The Implementation Framework (2017) defines the transport hub as:

*“A transport hub will be developed connecting Ebbsfleet International and Northfleet Stations, providing interchange with Fastrack and local bus network as well as the potential requirement to accommodate potential LPER arrivals and departures at the station. Pedestrian and cycle linkages*

*will be improved from surrounding communities, in particular Swanscombe and Northfleet. Improved cycle facilities will be encouraged as part of the hub.”*

- 2.12. The provision of a transport hub in line with these aspirations has been included in the outline planning application (which at the time of writing has been submitted but not validated) and is proposed to be located close to the Ebbsfleet International Station.

## **Appendix 1 – Ebbsfleet Central Development Parcels**





North

Galley Hill Road

NORTHFLEET



Northfleet

EC1

SWANSCOMBE

Ebbsfleet Int/Dom



EC2

Whitecliffe Road

International Way

International Way

EC4

Castle Hill Drive

Ebbsfleet Gateway

River Ebbsfleet

Thames Way

Blue Lake

Ackers Drive

Springhead Parkway

CASTLE HILL

SPRINGHEAD

A2