

**North Hertfordshire  
Local Plan 2011-2031  
Examination In Public  
Hearing Sessions**

**Week 6  
Matter 11 Codicote  
(Tuesday 27 February–Afternoon)**

**Statement Prepared on Behalf of:  
Mr J.W Hodge (Land Owner)  
And Jarvis Homes Ltd (Developer)  
In Respect of Local Housing Association  
CD3 Land North of The Close**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This statement has been prepared on behalf of Mr John W. Hodge, 5 Tollhouse Close, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1SE who is the sole freehold owner of Local Plan proposed local housing allocation CD3 and Jarvis Homes Ltd, Burgundy House, 21 The Foresters, Harpenden, AL5 2FB who have exchanged on an Option Agreement to buy and develop the site.

Its purpose is to support the District Council's development plan and in particular the allocation of CD3 and to assist the Inspector and other parties to the Examination in confirming that the land is available and deliverable. It is capable of contributing to housing supply to meet the objectively assessed (housing) need and to do so comfortably within the plan period. Specifically having agreed terms, Jarvis is currently instructing a range of consultants, ourselves included, to prepare an outline planning application.

This statement sets out the facts for the Examination. Presently it is not considered necessary to take up the right to appear and speak at the Examination but, should the Inspector wish to question any matter or others question either the availability or deliverability of this site, then we shall be pleased to do so. It is set out as follows:

1. History of site and promotion
2. Jarvis Homes and the Option Agreement
3. The Planning Application

### **1.0 HISTORY OF SITE AND PROMOTION**

- 1.1 The land has been in the ownership of the Hodge family for many years and in the sole ownership of John Hodge since 2008. The Land Registry Title document confirms this and is attached. Mr Hodge and his advisors have subsequently resolved discrepancies between the actual and definitive routes of footpaths which pass close to the southern and eastern boundaries of the site and also registered a Section 31 Deposit in respect of any lawful sports and pastimes (e.g. dog walking) which persons may have indulged in upon the land (also attached).

1.2 Since Mr Hodges' sole ownership this firm identified and promoted the site on his behalf via the emerging replacement plan, site allocation documents, SHLAA's etc within which it consistently featured as an available and deliverable parcel of land. The process culminated in its inclusion as a housing allocation in the final iterations of the Local Plan.

1.3 At this stage having promoted the site Mr Hodge and his advisors sought a suitable developer. Mr Hodge was involved in farming and business in Hertfordshire but has now retired and lives full time in Sussex and does not wish to develop the site himself.

## 2.0 **JARVIS HOMES AND THE OPTION AGREEMENT**

2.1 The option agreement with Jarvis runs for 36 months from 1 September 2017. Jarvis Homes Ltd is a subsidiary of Jarvis Group Ltd. Jarvis Homes was incorporated in 1971 (as Jarvis (Harpenden) Homes Ltd) but this Harpenden based family owned business has been building houses in Hertfordshire since 1905. Its recent and varied developments on both brown and green field sites have provided up to 66 dwellings each so a green field site (with an estimated capacity of 48 dwellings) at a settlement in Hertfordshire is a precise fit for their market and expertise.

## 3.0 **PLANNING APPLICATION**

3.1 In parallel with Mr Hodge seeking an appropriate developer for his land the outline planning application (17/01464/1) was submitted on the Cowards Lane site in Codicote (proposed allocation CD1) and this remains pending. Informal discussions with officers indicated that whilst the Council was not encouraging such applications (on Local Plan allocated sites) and, subject to applicant agreement, would defer any determination until such time as this Examination is complete, and the Inspector has reported, as a matter of fact an application demonstrated serious intent in terms of delivery.

3.2 In this regard Mr Hodge has entered into a binding Option Agreement with Jarvis. It has an end date (for the issue of a planning approval consistent with the Local Plan allocation) of 31 July 2020 and Jarvis is already committing to the not insubstantial cost of an outline submission. In terms of timing it is anticipated that the application would be submitted during the second quarter of 2018 and formal consultation will be well underway at the likely time of the Inspector's Examination Report. On the assumption that this recommends the plan for the Council's adoption then a resolution could be made during the third quarter and a decision issued in the final quarter of this year.

3.3 If Reserved Matters and the discharge of other outline conditions were then submitted and approved by the first quarter of 2019 it would be reasonable to expect the site to be substantially completed by the end of 2020. Even allowing for some slippage in the progress of either the Local Plan or the various applications, then it is not unreasonable to expect that a significant site should have delivered its housing by the mid-point (2021) of the plan period.

#### 4.0 **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

4.1 The purpose of this statement is to establish that the sole freeholder of CD3 continues to make it available for development. This is evidenced in his entering into an Option Agreement with an established, respected and locally based housebuilder which has committed to a short option, is preparing an outline application and, if the plan proceeds, should be able to realise the housing by 2021 being the mid-way point of the Local Plan. On this basis it is commended for inclusion in the Plan with demonstrable commitment to its availability and deliverability.