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L 151217 PB Wroughton Submission NP



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Dear Sir

### **Response to Submitted Wroughton Parish Neighbourhood Plan on Behalf of Thames Water**

We are writing on behalf of our client Thames Water in response to the consultation being undertaken on the submitted Wroughton Neighbourhood Plan.

Savills made representations in response to the draft Neighbourhood Plan in November 2014. In these we objected to proposed policy HE3 which stated that:

“Any proposal or development which has an adverse impact on the setting of Wroughton’s historic reservoir and its associated buildings will not be permitted”.

The submission Neighbourhood Plan has carried forward Policy HE3 without any changes and therefore Thames Water wish to maintain their objection to the policy. This is because it seeks to protect the buildings to the north of the reservoir. The buildings have not been required for operational purposes for some considerable time and have therefore fallen into disrepair.

Being a previously developed site located within the settlement boundary of Wroughton, the buildings to the north of the reservoir represent a highly sustainable site for new housing, for which there is a need in the village and indeed the wider Swindon Borough.

The current arrangement of the buildings makes it difficult to convert them into residential accommodation that would be able to meet modern standards and requirements. Without any viable alternative proposals for the buildings, Policy HE3 will mean that they remain empty and fall further into disrepair causing increased environmental nuisance. Redevelopment of the buildings will therefore help to deliver housing and address an amenity issue.

The Swindon Borough SHLAA identifies the buildings to the north of the reservoir as being capable of delivering housing within the first 5 years of the Local Plan period. The development potential of the site was confirmed during the Examination of the Local Plan, with it being included in the Council’s list of sites to be relied upon in meeting their 5-year land supply requirements.

Policy HE3 is not therefore consistent with the Council’s aspirations for the site and accordingly it can be concluded that the Neighbourhood Plan is unsound. To remedy this we request that the wording of Policy HE3 be amended as follows (new text underlined):

“Any proposal or development should reflect the local character and improve the appearance of this previously developed site, managing the transition between the established residential neighbourhood to the north with the reservoir embankment to the south.”

Thames Water also want to object to proposed Policy EN4, which indicates that the land at the reservoir will be designated as open space, in order that discussions can be opened with the owners about allowing wider public access.

The boundary relating to Policy EN4 indicates that it also includes the redundant buildings at the northern end of the reservoir. For the reasons set out above, in connection with Thames Water's objection to Policy HE3, Thames water consider that it is inappropriate to seek to designate the buildings as open space. For this reason Thames Water requests that the boundary for Policy EN4 is redrawn to exclude the buildings.

We trust that the basis for Thames Water's objections is clear and that the Council will take steps to ensure that amendments are made to the Plan in order that it can be found sound at its Examination.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Philip Brown". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and "B".

**Philip Brown BA (Hons) MRTPI**  
**Director**