

**Statement submitted on behalf of Genesis Housing Association**

**Southend-on-Sea Central Area Action Plan (SCAAP)**

**Examination in Public**

**May 2017**

**Introduction**

The responses set out below are submitted by GL Hearn on behalf of Genesis Housing Association (GHA) in response to Key Matters, Issues and Questions raised within the SCAAP examination in public discussion note and agenda issued by Inspector Mike Fox BA (Hons) DIPTP MRTPI. GHA is the freehold owner of the Baxter Avenue site (SCAAP site ref. PA8.2) and GHA is actively pursuing a development proposal to deliver high quality new housing, including affordable housing, at the Baxter Avenue site, including 250 dwellings within the SCAAP plan period.

**Matter 1: Legal Compliance**

**1.2 How does the SCAAP relate to the main recommendations of the Sustainability Appraisal ?**

**GHA Response**

- 1.1 The SCAAP responds positively and proactively to the main recommendations of the Sustainability Appraisal.
- 1.2 The SCAAP seeks to reduce reliance on the private motor vehicle and encourages a modal shift to public transport, walking and cycling. Proposed SCAAP development sites, including the Baxter Avenue regeneration site, provide for higher density residential within close proximity to the employment, retail and leisure uses within Southend town centre, as well as benefiting from excellent access to Southend Victoria railway station and bus services. The proposed redevelopment of the Baxter Avenue site (site PA8.2) and the wider Victoria Gateway neighbourhood area will also enhance accessibility, permeability and sustainability of the area for both existing and future residents. The Baxter Avenue development will re-integrate the site within the Victoria Gateway area, encouraging walking and cycling from existing and proposed new housing, notably providing enhanced connectivity with Southend Victoria Railway station and the town centre retail, employment and leisure offer.

- 1.3 The Sustainability Assessment also recommended that the SCAAP should provide specific information on housing implementation, including timeframes for housing delivery. The SCAAP has been positively prepared to identify a strong and quantifiable supply and delivery of housing across the plan area within the SCAAP period to 2021. The Baxter Avenue site (site PA8.2), which is controlled and owned by GHA, is already being progressed towards development, with architects working on site layout options. Initial consultation with existing residents is well underway, and informal pre-application discussions have been held with the Council's planning and housing departments. The SCAAP also responds positively to the Sustainability Assessment recommendations to focus on regeneration and improvements to the built environment. The Baxter Avenue redevelopment, alongside regeneration of other extensive sites fronting Victoria Avenue, will significantly enhance and improve the quality and safety of the built environment at this key gateway to the town centre forming the principal approach to the town from the A12, and the point of arrival from London at Southend Victoria railway station.

**1.3 How does the SCAAP relate to the Localism Act, the Government's Planning and Housing White Paper, the national Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the national Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) ?**

**GHA Response**

- 1.1 The SCAAP relates positively and proactively to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Proposed developments identified as allocations within the SCAAP, such as the Baxter Avenue site (site PA8.2), will deliver high quality new homes that will encourage use of existing public transport as well as providing enhanced connectivity to encourage walking and cycling for existing and future residents to the town centre and Southend Victoria railway station. Through the application of high quality and good design, including green infrastructure and green links, the proposed development of sites such as the Baxter Avenue site will foster healthy communities. The recycling and regeneration of brownfield sites within the SCAAP area will also contribute towards a reduced requirement and need to release additional Green Belt land around Southend to meet future housing needs. The SCAAP is therefore strongly in accordance with the NPPF in securing the delivery of sustainable development.
- 1.2 The SCAAP is similarly strongly in accordance with the government's Housing White Paper. Southend Council has brought forward the SCAAP in a timely and efficient manner to ensure that a key up-to-date development plan document is in place. The SCAAP also responds very positively to the emphasis within the Housing White Paper of placing great weight on the value of using sustainable brownfield land within existing settlements for new homes. Most importantly, the SCAAP responds in an effective manner to the additional focus to be

given to delivery of new homes, without delay, and with the SCAAP setting out expected timeframes and expected housing delivery yields throughout the SCAAP period.

- 1.3 The SCAAP is also fully in accordance with the Estate Regeneration Strategy, issued by the DCLG in December 2016, by setting the vision and planning policies to transform neighbourhoods and people's lives through delivery of high quality, well designed housing and improved public spaces. The SCAAP is a clear example of a Local Authority taking a leadership role to support estate regeneration and renewal. GHA supports the policy initiatives set out within the SCAAP, and GHA is committed to progressing a high quality development at the Baxter Avenue site by engaging throughout the development process with existing residents.