

Application Response of Planning Policy (update)

Application No:	APP/20/00658
Address:	Former Electricity Board Site, Bartons Road, Havant
Development:	Mixed-use development comprising 175 apartments and two drive-through restaurants
Case Officer:	DE
Comments by:	JB
Date of Comments:	11 March 2021

NB Policy comments were initially provided on 20 October 2020. The applicant has since revised the scheme.

Policy Status

The [Local Plan \(Core Strategy\)](#) and the [Local Plan \(Allocations\)](#), together with the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan, provide the development plan for Havant Borough. The [emerging Local Plan has been submitted for examination](#). It has therefore moved a step closer to adoption since the last comments on this scheme were made. The weight to be afforded to this plan remains limited.

Principle of development

The site lies within the urban area as defined by policies CS17 and AL2 in the context of the adopted local plan. There is therefore a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Residential Development

The site is allocated for 90 dwellings under site reference L145 in Policy LP1 of the Allocations Plan. The housing allocation is reaffirmed by Policy H36 in the Pre-Submission Local Plan for development of around 80 dwellings. The principle of residential development is therefore actively supported through local policy, though the number of dwellings proposed far exceeds the suggested number in the allocations in both plans. It is acknowledged that this scheme would make a significant contribution to housing need. Whether the scheme is acceptable overall, will, however, depend on detailed considerations.

Commercial Development

The commercial element is not envisaged through either of the site allocations. The applicant argues that the drive-throughs would provide local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments. Considering the nature of the use, and its likely impacts on townscape, town centres, residential amenity, and health, it is questioned whether the drive-throughs would achieve these aims. These are discussed further below:

The service a hot food drive-through provides to the local community is considered to be limited, being focussed on a particular type of food, which is unlikely to fulfil a regular day-to-day need. In addition, drive-throughs by their nature serve a much wider catchment than a purely local one, being quite explicitly focussed on the use of the car for access.

There are questions of this site as a location for this use, in relation to nearby town centres. The site lies around 1.5 miles north of Havant Town Centre, which is home to a number of similar facilities, and less than half a mile from Leigh Park District Centre. The NPPF and the adopted and emerging local plans support development which contributes to the viability and vitality of town centres. A commercial use with

the potential to attract users away from town centres is contrary to this aim. In addition, emerging policy C8, supports takeaway uses specifically only in town, district and local centres.

The site is a prominent one, a corner site on a key entrance route into central Havant. While this no doubt makes it attractive to a commercial operator, drive-throughs in this location would do little to improve the townscape in the area. The surrounding area is dominated by low rise residential uses. The NPPF, and both the adopted and emerging Local Plans (policies CS6, CS16 and E1) have an expectation that development should respect and respond to their local context and the create better places.

Focussing in from the wider environment to the site itself, the co-location of the drive-throughs with the residential element of the scheme raises concerns in terms of odour, air quality and noise, in relation to policies DM5 and DM10 of the adopted plan, and policies E22 and C8 of the emerging plan. Environmental Health may provide further detailed comments on this point.

Turning to the matter of health, previous comments had highlighted that the emerging local plan has a greater focus on health, and that emerging policy C8 seeks to restrict hot food takeaways in the borough to an overall limit across the brough, which has been reached. It is accepted that this policy may be given only limited weight at this stage.

In response to this element of the October 2020 policy comments, the applicant has submitted additional information relating to one of the proposed operator's business practices in relation to health. It should be noted that the policy objection to the drive-throughs was not based on the individual operator's business model, menu or corporate attitude to health. Clearly, it is the use that is being considered, not an individual operator.

In the context of health, the applicant accepts that the NPPF seeks to promote healthy lifestyles. The particular format of a drive-through promotes the use of inactive und unsustainable travel, by encouraging the use of the car. This manifestly neither promotes healthy lifestyles, nor broader environmental outcomes

Development Requirements

Earlier comments highlighted expected development standards, which are not repeated here, save to note a couple of matters:

- It is noted that the dwelling mix has been amended to include a greater number of 2-bedroom dwellings, in line with local need and policy expectations.
- While the scheme includes private amenity space in the form of balconies, and landscaping surrounding the residential blocks which may be used by residents, amendments to the layout to not appear to have addressed the lack of public open space.

Conclusions

The residential element of the scheme remains supported in principle in policy terms, subject to detailed consideration of design and development requirements and standards. The drive-throughs are not supported.