

Application Response of Planning Policy

Application No:	APP/23/00187
Site Address:	Unit 1, Victoria Road and 234 London Road, Waterlooville, PO7 7ET
Development:	Outline application for construction of 13No. one bedroom and 16No. two bedroom apartments (total 29), following demolition of existing bungalow and commercial property.
Case Officer:	LR
Comments by:	JB
Date of Comments:	30 March 2023

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 the Borough.

NB - Pre-Application Advice was based given under reference GEN/21/01069, which took into account the adopted plan, but also the emerging Havant Borough Local Plan. It should be noted that since that advice was given, the emerging plan was withdrawn. In advance of a new Local Plan being drawn up, the Council has adopted a [Housing Delivery Position Statement](#), which is not part of the development plan but is a material consideration in the determination of applications at this time.

Waterlooville Town Centre

The site lies in Waterlooville Town Centre. Policy CS6 of the Core Strategy sets out regeneration ambitions for Waterlooville Town Centre and supports a sustainable mix of uses. More detail on acceptable uses is set out in Policy AL3 of the allocations plan. The focus of this policy is on the retail frontages. This site fronts onto Rockville Drive, which is not an established retail frontage and as such the policy to retain a percentage of the frontage in retail use does not apply.

There are no policy provisions aimed specifically at this location within the town centre. While the town centre policies in the adopted plan do not address this specific scenario, I consider that a wholly residential scheme is acceptable in this location in principle, subject to detailed design, amenity and development quality considerations, as well as the other provisions in the development plan.

Loss of Commercial Units

Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy seeks to resist the loss of employment (B class) uses, unless it has been demonstrated that the land or premises are not fit for purpose and financially unviable for B use class purposes, including through an active marketing exercise. No such marketing appears to have taken place and the loss of these units has not been addressed in any detail by the applicant's submission. Policy DM3 has therefore not been complied with.

Five year housing land supply

The Council's [Five Year Housing Land Supply Update \(March 2023\)](#) indicates the Council has 1.81 years supply with a 20% buffer applied. There presumption in favour of sustainable development therefore applies (para 11d of the NPPF).

The proposed scheme would contribute 29 units to address the five year housing supply requirement.

- Five year requirement with 20% buffer = 3,096 dwellings
- 3,096 / 5 years = 619.2 dwellings a year
- 29 dwellings / 619.2 dwellings = 0.05 years

The scheme has the potential to contribute up to 0.05 years' supply of housing (rounded). While this is not a significant number, it must be given weight in the decision making.

Significantly, it does not follow from the supply position that planning permission should automatically be granted for development which would boost housing supply. The Housing Delivery Position Statement explains further how housing proposals should be considered in the Havant context. Decision Making Principles 1, 2 and 5 are most relevant to this application.

Decision Making Principle 1 sets out in headline terms how the tilted balance will be applied in Havant. Weighed in that balance must be the loss of the commercial units and the context on DM3, together with all the other policies of the development plan and the NPPF.

In Decision Making Principle 2 of the Position Statement, sites have been listed where the Council considers that residential development is acceptable in principle. Waterlooville Town Centre is included in that list. This further supports the principle of residential development.

Development Quality

Decision Making Principle 5 sets out what is expected of all residential development in terms of development quality, to demonstrate that the proposal constitutes sustainable development in the context of the tilted balance. The applicant has noted this principle in their planning statement but has not provided a detailed development quality standards checklist as suggest in paragraph 2.34 of the Housing Delivery Position Statement. The limitations at outline applications stage are acknowledged. However, the ability of the detailed scheme to meet these requirements at the reserved matters stage should be considered at this outline stage as far as it is possible to do so.

Some of the development quality matters overlap with considerations in the adopted plan, including those in policy CS9 'Housing' (density, affordable housing, dwelling mix)

In terms of density, Policy CS9 of the Core Strategy includes general provision that development should achieve a suitable density of development for the location, taking into account accessibility to public transport and proximity to employment, shops and services in addition to respecting the surrounding landscape, character and built form. Decision making principle refers to a minimum of 40 dwellings per hectare. The scheme provided 29 dwellings on a site area of 0.15ha, meeting this threshold.

The applicant proposes a level of 30% affordable housing, which is compliant with both the Core Strategy and the Housing Delivery Position Statement.

Policy CS9 of the Core Strategy requires dwelling types, sizes and tenures to meet local need. There is an acknowledged need in Havant for a mix of sizes in dwellings, with a particular need identified for two bedroom dwellings. The proposed 16 out of 29 of the flats as 2-bed dwellings is welcomed. This also exceeds the requirement of 35% as set out in Decision Making Principle 5.

Parking Provision

Policies DM13 of the adopted plan and IN3 of the emerging plan require an adequate level of parking provision for both cars and cycles. Details are set out in the Council Parking SPD.

The proposed scheme includes 25 communal cycle spaces (with additional in flat storage) and 8 car parking spaces.

The car parking provision falls notably below the level of one per dwelling expected in this location by the SPD. It is however, acknowledged that the SPD describes parking standards for Waterloooville Town Centre in terms of a maximum, and a policy objection cannot arise on this basis. The applicant has provided a transport statement which sets out the assumptions regarding residents and visitor's use of nearby public car parks and on-street spaces, as well as public transport use etc. Relevant officers may wish to comment further on the acceptability of these assumptions, and whether they are satisfied that the lower level of provision would not result in displacement of parking pressure into nearby residential areas.

Contaminated Land

Given previous uses on the site, there is the possibility of contamination, and therefore policies DM17 of the allocations plan is relevant. The views of Environmental Health officers should be sought.

Conclusion

There is no policy objection to the principle of residential development in this part of Waterloooville Town Centre, and such development is supported in principle here through the Housing Delivery Position Statement. The Council is currently unable to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply, which tilts the balance in favour of permission. Nevertheless, the proposal must still demonstrate that it constitutes sustainable development and the policies in the Development Plan, together with the requirements of the Housing Delivery Position Statement in relation to Development Quality should be considered in detail in weighing up the benefits and impacts of the scheme in the planning balance.

Note

In addition to these comments from the Planning Policy Team it is suggested that consultation with the Council's Regeneration Team may also be of benefit, to further understand the Council's ambitions for the town centre, and whether any comprehensive planning is taking place which may indicate that the development of individual sites such as this one is premature or could compromise a wider vision.