

PLANNING APPLICATION RESPONSE OF HOUSING

Application No:	APP/18/00234
Site Address:	Wellington Way and 95-101A London Road, WaterlooVille.
Development:	Residential-led mixed use scheme comprising of 264 studio units being built specifically for rent (Build to Rent)
Case Officer:	David Eaves
Comments by:	Julie Clark
Date of Comments:	06/07/2018

Housing:

Current planning policy requirements Core Strategy policy CS9. 2, the Havant Borough Housing SPD (July 2011), and the governments Ministerial Statement published during the summer of 2016, mean that developments of 11 units or more would be required to provide 30-40% affordable housing on site; Havant Borough Council Draft Local Plan 2036 states that town centres should be able to include 20% affordable housing. This proposal would normally require a minimum of 53 units however the applicants have included a viability assessment that shows this development would not be able to support any affordable units due to high construction costs. The viability assessment concludes that this development will be very challenging to bring to completion and will require an increase in investment yield and a reduction in delivery cost to make it viable. This may translate into higher rents than those stated, the use of different construction materials, or an increase in the number of units proposed.

The applicants have confirmed that their intention is to provide all units as Build to Rent. As its name suggests these homes will be built for renters, but usually funded and held by long term institutional investors rather than buy to let landlords who currently own the vast majority of private rented accommodation in the UK.

The applicants state a rental value of £600 pcm for the studio apartments and suggest that this is far more affordable than other market rented units in the area. However, their evidence compares the £600 pcm with a median rent for Havant of £785 pcm which is calculated on all bedroom sizes. If we were to compare just the one-bedroom accommodation in the WaterlooVille area with a median rent of £646 pcm (home.co.uk accessed 09/04/2018) these new units are only 7% cheaper than their more traditional market equivalents.

The current Local Housing Allowance rates for 1-bedroom accommodation is £505 pcm, this means that those people reliant on Housing Benefit either long, or short term to cover illness or redundancy, would struggle to sustain a tenancy in this block taking into account the shortfall that they would be expected to contribute.

The demand for truly affordable housing remains high within Havant borough; as at 6th July 2018 there were 1826 households registered on Hampshire Home Choice seeking accommodation in our area and of these 876 (48%) are waiting for a one-bedroom home, and current waiting times are up to 6 and a half years for this type of property. If these proposals proceed to development then I will require information as to how applicants to Hampshire Home Choice can access these homes, and how the owners will ensure that these homes go to tenants whose housing needs would not be met by the market.

I am very pleased to see that the applicants have included 10 disabled/larger studios with lift access within their proposal. The location of the development within the town centre and the proximity of services (bus transport, retail, medical, and educational) should help to create a mixed and well integrated community.

If this proposal progresses to completion it will provide a high number of new dwellings which will help with the overall housing numbers required in the Borough. However, these new homes will not necessarily help to reduce the numbers of applicants currently registered on Hampshire Home Choice and waiting for affordable rented accommodation.

Julie Clark
Housing Manager (Development)
06/07/2018