

Marketing & Planning Statement

Site address:

Former Scout Hall at

4 Meyrick Road Bedhampton



**Proposal: planning application to
demolish the former Scout Hall
and redevelop site with two semi-
detached houses**

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Introduction

This Marketing and Planning Statement has been produced to support the planning application to redevelop the former 3rd Havant Scout Group building at 4 Meyrick Road and replace it with two semi-detached houses.

The Marketing Statement forms part of Havant Borough Council's 'Local Requirements' approved in 2014, and is necessary to demonstrate compliance with Policy DM2 of Havant Borough Council's Core Strategy.

The Planning element of this Statement sets out the design approach to this site and demonstrates how the proposal satisfies all local and national planning policies and requirements.

Discussions with Havant Borough Council prior to submission of the planning application

In accordance with paragraphs 188-193 of the National Planning Policy Framework, the applicant has engaged fully with Havant Borough Council in preparing this planning application.

A formal pre-application submission was made to Havant Borough Council in April 2015 and the advice subsequently received has informed the design of the submitted scheme and supporting information.

The pre-application planning advice relied upon by the applicants includes:

- Letter from Mrs H Lealan dated 15th June 2015;
- Advice given by Daphney Haywood at meeting on 23rd July 2015;
- Email from Daphney Haywood dated 5th August 2015;
- Email from Sarah Hains dated 9th October 2015

The site and its context

Meyrick Road leads off the south side of West Street, Bedhampton. The character of Meyrick Road is predominantly residential.

The houses on the eastern side of Meyrick Road close to the junction with West Street have short frontages and use the street for parking. On the western side, a pair of semidetached houses sits alongside the Meyrick Road/ West Street junction, with a detached bungalow immediately to the south. Immediately to the south of this bungalow is the former Scout Hall at 4 Meyrick Road with an electricity substation further to the south.

The site of 4 Meyrick Road was used by the 3rd Havant Scout Group for many decades. As a result of falling numbers the Scout Group was closed in the summer of 2013 and the site has sat vacant since that time.

The application site measures approximately 0.04 hectares in area. The larger part of the site is occupied by the former Scout Hall, a single storey building located at the front of the site, alongside the southern boundary.

The former Scout Hall has an appearance akin to an industrial building. It has corrugated asbestos-cement sheeting on the roof and an unusual mosaic of contrasting bricks and other blocks making up its façade. The metal windows around the building with concrete lintels over complete the 'industrial' appearance. The building does not make a positive contribution to the appearance of Meyrick Road.

Along the northern side of the former Scout Hall building is a wide expanse of concrete hardsurfacing leading to a storage building in the north western corner of the site. Whilst the hardstanding is sufficient to allow a small number of cars to park 'bumper to bumper' there is not sufficient space for cars to turn on the site, or for cars to access and egress individually.

Relevant planning policies and documents

In preparing this planning proposal, the following planning policies and documents have been taken into account:

Havant Borough Core Strategy policies-

- CS9: Housing
- CS11: Protecting and enhancing the special environment and heritage of Havant Borough
- CS14: Efficient use of resources
- CS16: High quality design
- CS17: Concentration and distribution of development within the urban areas
- CS21: Developer requirements
- DM2: Protection of existing community facilities and shops
- DM3: Co-ordination of development
- DM13: Car and cycle parking on residential development

Havant Borough Local Plan (Allocations) policies

- AL1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- DM24: Recreational disturbance to Special Protected Areas (SPAs) from residential development

Havant Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Havant Borough Residential Parking and Cycle Provision SPD

Havant Borough Council Draft Parking SPD

Policy DM2 of the Havant Borough Core Strategy and the protection of community facilities

The initial pre-application advice of Havant Borough Council was provided by Mrs H Lealan by letter dated 15th June 2015. Within that letter Mrs Lealan highlighted that one of the key policy issues to be considered for this proposal was that set by Policy DM2. The full text of that policy is as follows:

DM2 Protection of Existing Community Facilities and Shops

Development proposing the change of use or loss of any premises or land currently or last used as community services and facilities, including local shops, will only be permitted where both the following criteria can be met:

- 1. It has been demonstrated, through an active marketing process that the premises or land are no longer viable for their authorised use or any other use which would provide a beneficial facility to the local community.**
- 2. The facility is no longer required for a community use or that there is an easily accessible existing or new facility for the community it is intended to serve.**

Policy DM2 is accompanied by a number of supporting paragraphs from 10.05 through to 10.10, which set out Havant Borough Council's expectations as to how any marketing exercise should be carried out to satisfy point 1 above.

Whilst acknowledging Havant Borough Council's aspirations any marketing exercise as set out in the supporting text to Policy DM2, the applicants are mindful of the view of Lord Justice Richards in the case of R (on the application of Cherkley Campaign) v Mole Valley DC, who stated that:

"...when determining the conformity of a proposed development with a local plan the correct focus is on the plan's detailed policies for the development and use of land in the area. The supporting text consists of descriptive and explanatory matter in respect of the policies and/or a reasoned justification of the policies. The text is plainly relevant to the interpretation of a policy to which it relates but it is not itself a policy or part of a policy. I do not think that a development that accorded with the policies in the local plan could be said not to conform with the plan because it failed to satisfy an additional criterion referred to only in the supporting text. That applies even where, as here, the local plan states that the supporting text indicates how the policies will be implemented."

The owners of the site have undertaken extensive marketing of 4 Meyrick Road over a lengthy period of time as set out below. Whilst the marketing process has not been undertaken strictly in accordance with the supporting text to Policy DM2, the applicants are entirely satisfied that the robust marketing undertaken demonstrates that this proposal fully accords with the requirements of Policy DM2.

Details of the marketing undertaken in respect of 4 Meyrick Road

As set out earlier in this Statement, the site stopped being used by the 3rd Havant Scout Group in the summer of 2013 and has remained unused since that time.

Marketing of the site effectively began in November 2013 following consultation with Henry Adams LLP. The marketing involved a combination of different approaches by both the Havant District Scout Council and Henry Adams LLP. The marketing process undertaken over that time period is summarised below:

Summer 2013	Scout Hall closed due to falling numbers.
November 2013	Havant District Scout Council consulted Henry Adams on marketing approaches for the site.
December 2013	Havant District Scout Council started marketing the building to other community organisations.
Throughout 2014	Havant District Scout Council raised the availability of the site at the Central Havant Network, by direct approaches to potentially interested community groups and through other channels.
Throughout 2014	Havant District Scout Council provided further details to interested parties, showed interested parties around the site and continued to seek a purchaser.
February 2015	Despite extensive efforts to find a community use for the site no purchaser was found. Henry Adams LLP was engaged to take forward marketing of the site.
March 2015	Site marketing by Henry Adams commenced. Open marketing opportunity enabling any community groups to bid alongside other interested parties.
March 2015	Site opportunity advertised in West Sussex Gazette and Chichester Observer and through websites such as Rightmove.
April 2015	Tenders submitted for the site. No offers received from community uses.
April 2015	Highest bid accepted by Trustees.

Notwithstanding the extensive marketing undertaken by both Havant District Scout Council and Henry Adams LLP, not a single offer was received from any group/business which could be classed as a community use.

Greater details of the marketing process undertaken are contained within the following documents (which are attached at Appendix A of this Statement):

- Letter from Tim Pike, District Commissioner, Havant District Scout Council dated 21st June 2015
- Summary of the marketing exercise carried out on the Scout Hut at Meyrick Road – Henry Adams LLP July 2015
- Letter from Mike Henwood, District Treasurer, Havant District Scout Council dated 13th August 2015
- Letter from Richard Watts of Havant Dynamo Youth Theatre dated 17th May 2014

Suitability of site for community uses

The Core Strategy does not explicitly define 'community uses'. The supporting text to Policy DM2 however states that community facilities include '..... health and education facilities, places of worship, community halls and public houses. These uses typically fall within D1 of the Use Classes Order.'

The existing use of the site as a Scout Hall is widely accepted to fall under Class D2 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended). Other uses within Class D2 include: music and concert halls, bingo and dance halls, gymnasiums or areas for indoor or outdoor sports and recreation.

The use of the building for other Uses within Class D2 would not require planning permission. To use the building for Uses outside of Class D2 would require the granting of a further planning permission by Havant Borough Council.

Setting aside for one moment the extensive marketing campaign which has been undertaken over a period of 18 months (which has not resulted in any offers to purchase for community use), there are a number of factors which weigh heavily against the reuse of the building for community uses:

The building is of some age and is not constructed to meet any modern standards. It does not have any proper insulation or heating system, it does not have any sound attenuation, the roofing contains cement bonded asbestos and the building is in need of substantial refurbishment inside and out. Any purchaser would need to spend a considerable sum of money to bring the building up to modern standards.

The building itself has an appearance akin to an industrial building. Whilst this was not a problem to its historic users the Scouts, to a number of potential owners and occupiers this image will prove a deterrent unless substantial refurbishment is undertaken (and cost incurred).

There is very limited scope for parking within the site; realistically it is only achievable by parking vehicles one in front of the other. On street parking is limited, particularly in evenings.

The close proximity to other residential properties restricts the activities that can realistically take place at the site. Any use which generates noise within the building is likely to cause nuisance to neighbours as the existing building is not attenuated against noise. Any use of the areas outside of the building is similarly going to cause nuisance to neighbouring occupiers.

Historically neighbouring occupiers are fortunate that the site has accommodated a low key use such as scouting. The use meant the building had relatively low levels of use throughout the week, with most car movements occurring if parents dropped off and picked up their children.

The constraints upon this particular building and site mean that it is difficult to envisage other uses within Classes D1 or D2 wishing to occupy it. Not only would the site require considerable investment by them, but the lack of car parking plus the likely conflict with surrounding residential properties highlight the fact that the site is no longer suitable or viable. It is considered highly doubtful that planning permission would be granted today at this site, for an unrestricted Class D2 use served by virtually no on site car parking.

The supporting text to Policy DM2 recognises 'that there can be potential social, environmental and economic benefits from changing the use of land and buildings.' In this particular case the redevelopment of this previously developed land within the urban area, would give rise to such benefits as set out in the following sections of this Statement.

Summary

As a result of the extensive marketing undertaken, it has been demonstrated that the existing site is no longer suitable or viable for community uses. Furthermore the site is no longer needed for a community use. By email dated the 9th October, Sarah Hains of Havant Borough Council acknowledged that sufficient marketing had been carried out and there was no policy objection to the proposal under Policy DM2.

Scouting continues to have a presence at St Nicholas' Church in Bedhampton and another building at Fraser Road nearby. The Bedhampton Social Hall on Bedhampton Road provides facilities to a wide range of community groups.

The proposals to redevelop this site with two residential properties accords with Policy DM2 of the adopted Havant Borough Core Strategy.

Design approach for the proposed houses

The proposal involves the demolition of the former Scout Hall and its replacement by the construction of two semi-detached houses.

The houses are situated towards the centre of the site, with driveway parking and garaging to the sides. The houses are of traditional design and proportions with tiled pitched roofs and brickwork walls.

The two houses would be provided with relatively shallow frontages to reflect the character of dwellings within the immediate locality.

Both houses would be provided with private rear gardens measuring in excess of 10 metres in depth.

Both houses are three bedroomed in scale, each provided with a driveway allowing for at least two cars to be parked. Detached garages are also provided to allow for a car to be parked under cover and cycle storage to take place.

Compared to the former Scout Hut, the proposed houses represent a substantial visual improvement in terms of their individual design and how they relate to surrounding buildings. The redevelopment of the site in the manner proposed will bring a considerable visual enhancement to the road.

The applicants are satisfied that the proposal accords with Policy CS16 of the adopted Havant Borough Core strategy and the Havant Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Other key planning issues

Potential flood risk

The planning application site is situated alongside a 'main river'. Through examination of the Environment Agency's records the applicants are fully satisfied that the site of the houses does not fall within either Flood Zones 2 or 3.

Recreational disturbance to Special Protected Areas (SPAs) from residential development

The applicants have had careful regard to Policies CS9 and DM24 and the work of the Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership. The applicants acknowledge Natural England's advice that a contribution of £174 per dwelling will be required to mitigate against the effects of recreational disturbance on the Solent Special Protection Area (SPA).

The applicants can confirm that they are willing to pay the financial contribution of £348 to mitigate against potential effects upon the Solent Special Protection Area.

Code for Sustainable Homes

The two proposed houses will achieve the equivalent of Level 3 of Code for Sustainable Homes.

Foul sewerage

An existing connection to the foul drainage system already exists within the site close to the site frontage. The two proposed dwellings will utilise this connection.

Summary

The proposal involves the development of previously developed land within the urban area and a sustainable location. The provision of these two family houses will assist the Borough to deliver on its housing requirements.

Extensive marketing has been undertaken over a lengthy period of time which demonstrates that the continued use of the site for community uses is not viable, suitable or required.

A residential use of the site will remove the considerable potential for neighbouring properties to suffer nuisance arising from noise or car parking, if the site were bought back into a 'community' use.

The provision of two well designed houses on this site will enhance the appearance of the street, and relate far better to surrounding development than that which exists at present.

The proposal is considered to fully accord with national planning policy, the adopted local planning policies of Havant Borough Council and all relevant supplementary planning documents.

Appendix A