



PLANNING STATEMENT

(Planning Application Summary)

On Behalf of:
Oakford Homes

In Respect of:
Former Gas Works Site, Ford Road, Arundel

Development comprising 38 residential apartments (9x1-bedroom and 29x2-bedroom units) along with access, off-street parking, amenity space and enhancements to the local footpath network

Date:
July 2019

Reference:
00817/S0002am

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Appendix 1 Officer pre-application response dated 8th May 2019

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Statement, comprising the 'Planning Application Summary' required by Arun District Council for the purposes of validation, has been prepared on behalf of Oakford Homes (from here on referred to as the 'Applicant') in support of their full planning application for the development of the Former Gas Works Site, Ford Road, Arundel (the 'Application Site').
- 1.2 This Application proposes a new residential development of 38no 1 and 2-bedroom apartments ('the Application Scheme'), the principle of which has been established through the allocation of the site for residential development in the adopted Arundel Neighbourhood Plan. This submission follows a programme of detailed pre-application discussions with Officers and an extensive community consultation exercise, both of which have reaffirmed the principle of development and helped shape the final proposal.
- 1.3 The Application is supported by the following documents:
- Planning Statement (Planning Application Summary);
 - Site Location Plan;
 - Block Plan;
 - A full suite of floorplans, sections and elevations, as proposed;
 - Streetscene Montages;
 - Bin Storage and Collection Plan;
 - Parking Plan;
 - Topographical Survey;
 - Design and Access Statement;
 - Ecological Survey;
 - Land Contamination Assessment;
 - Flood Risk Assessment;
 - Foul and Surface Water Drainage Statement;
 - Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment;
 - Acoustic Assessment;
 - Financial Viability Assessment;
 - Transport Statement including swept path analysis and Stage 1 Road Safety Audit; and
 - Arboricultural Survey and Report.
- 1.4 This Statement (limited to 20 pages as required): describes the background to the Application in Section 2; describes the Application Site in Section 3; describes the proposed development in Section 4; reviews relevant local and national planning policy in Section 5; addresses all relevant planning considerations in Section 6; and sets out a clear conclusion demonstrating the acceptability of the proposal in Section 7.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This section sets out the relevant background to the Application Scheme. It describes the planning status of the Application Site and the way in which the Applicant has explored its development potential up to this point. It also includes an overview of the relevant planning history of the site.

Planning Background

- 2.2 The Application Site comprises a rare parcel of previously developed land within the settlement boundary of Arundel. On this basis it presented an obvious suitable housing allocation to be included in current Arundel Neighbourhood Plan, adopted in February 2014. Consequently, it is now identified by Policy 4 of the Plan as one of the town's key housing sites, as follows:

"Land at Ford Road is identified for future allocation through plan review, following the flood risk Exception Test being passed, and subsequently to be delivered in the period 2020-2029."

- 2.3 An extract from the Neighbourhood Plan's proposals map, confirming the allocation of the site and denoting the extent of the allocation (hatched in brown), is included as Figure 1, below:

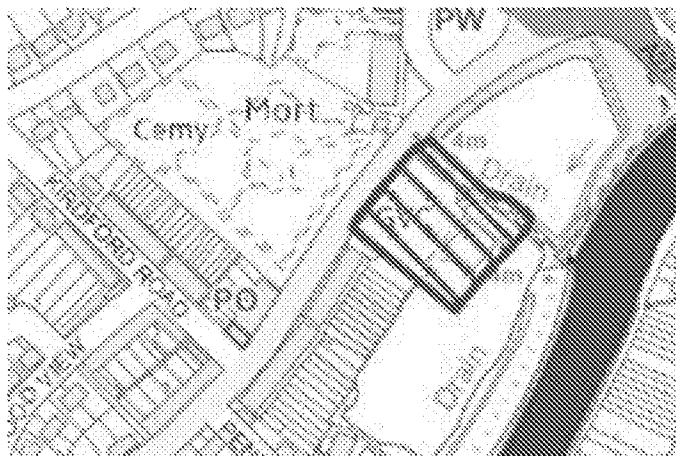


Figure 1: Extract from the Arundel Neighbourhood Plan proposals map

- 2.4 Paragraphs 4.20 to 4.22 of the Neighbourhood Plan set out the context of the site, and the detail that must be considered as part of any planning application. The Plan states:

"4.20 The site comprises the former Arundel Gas Works in the control of National Grid. Redevelopment will deliver important community benefits by removing a prominent and long-term derelict site within a residential area. As the Site Assessments Report makes clear, this outcome satisfies part of the Exception Test of the NPPF (para 102) in respect of managing flood risk.

4.21 The site can accommodate a scheme of up to 37 dwellings, as it is suited to a higher

than average housing density. This will deliver a viable scheme that allows for known land remediation and flood risk management costs to be met. The scheme will create value from fronting both Ford Road (in keeping with the adjoining terrace of houses) and the River Arun.

4.22 It is known there are current land ownership issues and ground condition problems, as a legacy of the previous use, that will have to be resolved prior to, or as part of, the land coming forward for development. For this reason, the site is allocated for delivery in the period 2020 – 2029, with the policy lowering the planning risk of a future scheme. Although all the site benefits from the adjoining flood defences, it remains designated within Flood Zone 3. A future Flood Risk Assessment must therefore demonstrate how such risks will be managed in accordance with the Exception Test.”

- 2.5 As is demonstrated by this Application, all of the constraints referred to in the text above have now been overcome. Land ownership matters have been resolved as the site is now under the sole control of the Applicant. In addition, matters in respect of flooding, contamination and viability have all been investigated in detail to the satisfaction of the Applicant prior to the submission of this Application – none of these matters are now considered to present a constraint to delivery.
- 2.6 Arundel Town Council are now in the process of reviewing and updating their Neighbourhood Plan, to be known as the 'ANP2'. The ANP2 is expected to be adopted towards the end of 2019. Most recently the Plan was subject of pre-submission consultation which ended on 21st December 2018. Whilst the ANP2 intends to include new site allocations it is also the intent of the Town Council to retain the Application Site as a housing allocation in line with the wording of Policy 4 of the adopted Neighbourhood Plan.

Pre-Application Enquiry

- 2.7 This submission was preceded by a pre-application planning enquiry to Arun District Council, dated 25th October 2018. Separate discussions were held with the Council's Tree Officer, West Sussex County Council Highways, the Environment Agency and the Lead Local Flood Authority – the latter two bodies in respect of flooding and drainage.
- 2.8 A detailed written response to the main pre-application enquiry was received from Planning Officers on 8th March 2019 (included at **Appendix 1** of this Statement), followed by a meeting on 19th March to discuss a number of detailed points raised within the report. Combined, the advice of Officers has influenced the form and composition of the Application Scheme. The way in which the Applicant has responded to the Officer pre-application advice is set out in Section 4 of this statement.

Planning History of the Site

- 2.9 The former use of the site was as a gas works. This use ceased around 15 years ago, and it has lain vacant since. Beyond this point the site has no further relevant planning history.

3.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

The Site and Surrounding Area

- 3.1 The Application Site comprises a parcel of previously developed land – largely a concrete slab – extending to 0.43ha and lying within the settlement boundary of Arundel. Throughout the Neighbourhood Plan and Arun District Council's own assessment of the site in support of the Local Plan it has been variously described by its former use, the old gas works, or by its most recent use as an electricity sub-station due to the presence of a functioning junction box on the site. The location of the site is shown at Figure 2, below.



Figure 2: Site Location Plan

- 3.2 The site fronts onto Ford Road in close proximity to the A27 (around 100m to the north east) and is within walking distance of both Arundel railway station and the full range of shops, services and facilities lying within Arundel town centre around 500m to the east. There are also further services and facilities within the immediate locale of the site including a generous area of open space to the north west, a medical centre and a primary school.
- 3.3 The site now lies derelict and untended and, due to its prominent location at the southern approach to Arundel, impacts adversely on the character of the town. Indeed, paragraph 4.20 of the adopted Arundel

Neighbourhood Plan states that *"(the) redevelopment (of the site) will deliver important community benefits by removing a prominent and long-term derelict site within a residential area"*.

- 3.4 One of the most prominent features of the site is the drop in ground level from the front of the site (to the north west) to the rear (the south east). From the highest to lowest points of each boundary the level drops approximately 3.74m including an immediate drop of almost 2m beyond the frontage of the site.
- 3.5 The site is abutted by the gable of an existing two storey terrace of housing (known as California Terrace). These dwellings are considered to establish the built line and set back distance in representative of the character of Ford Road. To the north east and south east are areas of open paddock land which form part of the floodplain of the River Arun which lies beyond. The site is located partly within Flood Zones 2 and 3 although benefits from the existing River Arun flood defences. Arundel Cemetery is then located opposite the site on the north-west side of Ford Road.
- 3.6 While the site itself is not subject to any Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), a number of trees on the adjoining open land to the north east and south east are protected.
- 3.7 The site is served by an existing kerbed bell-mouth which currently provides vehicular access from Ford Road to the electricity substation. This access also comprises an existing Public Right of Way linking Ford Road with the river. The section of this right of way closest to the river narrows to provide footpath access only.

4.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1 The description of the development comprising the Application Scheme is as follows:

"Development comprising 38 residential apartments (9x1-bedroom and 29x2-bedroom units) along with access, off-street parking, amenity space and enhancements to the local footpath network."

4.2 The Design and Access Statement, prepared by Pope Priestley Architects and submitted in support of this Application, explains the design concept and the final proposal in detail. Otherwise the Application Scheme can be summarised as follows:

- A residential development comprising two apartment blocks ranging in 2.5 storeys in height at the front of the site (Ford Road) to 3.5 storeys to the rear with the ground floor level comprising bin and cycle storage and undercroft flood storage voids;
- A total of 38no apartments comprising 9x1-bedroom and 29x2-bedroom market units suitable for first time buyers, small families or downsizing, all of which exceed national internal space standards;
- Level access to all units both from the pedestrian access on to the front block on Ford Road and the car parking below, all accessible via a lift in the internal core of each block;
- Provision of private amenity space through a combination of balconies, communal green space and a raised decked area at the centre of the site;
- Generous levels of off-street car parking in excess of West Sussex County Council standards comprising 55 designated parking spaces and 4 visitor spaces, the latter located closest to the vehicular entrance to the site;
- Provision for electric vehicle charging points throughout the site;
- Secure cycle parking provided in undercroft cycle stores in line with standards;
- Enhanced off-site footpath links from the entrance of the site to the River Arun public right of way;
- An attractive scheme of planting and landscaping befitting of the site's river corridor location including enhanced boundary treatment between the site and the adjacent residential properties fronting Ford Road;
- The relocation of the electricity substation on site to a secure compound on at the north west corner, accessible from Ford Road;
- Innovative flood mitigation features, including a comprehensive site drainage scheme and voids below each block to ensure that the impact of localised flooding is designed into the scheme; and
- Specially commissioned decorative iron-work features designed to celebrate Arundel's heritage.

5.0 PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The submission of this Planning Application follows an extensive programme of pre-application discussions with the Council which has informed the evolution of the scheme.
- 5.2 In addition this submission also follows an in-depth programme of community consultation which similarly has helped shape the final form of the proposal. This was undertaken in line with Arun District Council's own consultation requirements and is investigated fully in the Applicant's own SCI.
- 5.3 The main points raised during the course of the pre-application Officer engagement, the written response to which is included at **Appendix 1**, and the way in which they have been actioned are explained in the table below:

Summation of Officer comments included in the pre-application response 8 th March 2019	Response
Principle of Development	
The principle of development is accepted due to the allocation of the site in the Arundel Neighbourhood Plan.	This is noted and agreed by the Applicant.
Sustainability Matters	
Design	
Whilst it is identified that key views into Arundel should be considered in the evolution of the design, it is concluded that visual impact should be acceptable. It is also accepted that massing and scale in relation to existing development on Ford Road is acceptable. The Officer response did, however, offer a number of suggestions relating to detail and materials.	The positive comments in respect of scale and massing are noted. Otherwise, the Design and Access Statement provides a description of how the more detailed comments provided by Officers have been incorporated into the final proposal.
Amenity	
In respect of the amenity of neighbours the response suggested a number of ways in which noise disturbance and overlooking could be avoided.	As explained within the Design and Access Statement all Officer suggestions have been considered. Additional planting has been included along the north west boundary, any windows that offer the potential for overlooking have been removed.
Affordable housing	
The Officer response confirms a starting point 30% requirement (11 units) for affordable housing. It also notes the intent of the Applicant to submit a viability case on the basis of decontamination and other exceptional development costs.	A full Viability Assessment of the scheme, detailing abnormal and build costs, is provided in support of this Application. This explains that it is not possible to viably deliver any affordable units as part of the development.
Highways and parking	
	The access design incorporated into the Application Scheme is identical to that

It is welcomed that the Officer response acknowledges that earlier response of West Sussex County Council that the location and design of the access is agreed in principle. It is also noted that parking provision of 53 spaces would be agreeable due to the sustainable location of the site.	considered by West Sussex County Council. In respect of parking, 59 spaces are to be provided to ensure that any potential issues relating to on-street parking are avoided.
Sustainable construction The scheme must include 10% on-site renewable energy and electric vehicle charging points.	The points raised by Officers are incorporated into the scheme. In addition, the Design and Access Statement lists a number of additional sustainability measures to be included.
Flooding The Officer response confirms that the sequential test has been passed due to the allocation of the site in the Neighbourhood Plan. The exception test will continue to apply. It is noted that the Council's Drainage Engineer has no objection in principle to the scheme on flooding grounds.	These positive comments, and confirmation in respect of the sequential test, are noted and welcomed. This application is accompanied by a comprehensive Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy prepared by RSK. The design of the Application Scheme incorporates all necessary features to ensure that flood risk is considered throughout the lifetime of the development.
Drainage The Drainage Engineer Comments confirm that soakaways must be investigated for surface water disposal.	Due to the high water table and contamination on site it has been concluded following investigation that a soakaway system would not be appropriate at the site. Surface attenuation is proposed instead.
Trees The Council's Tree Officer raised concerns in relation to the lack of an Arboricultural Impact Assessment as part of the pre-application submission. The Officer response clarifies that, subject to the receipt of such a report as part of any application, this concern would be overcome.	The comments of both the Tree and Planning Officers are noted. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment, prepared by Barton Hyett, is included with this application confirming that no trees will be impacted on by the development.
Public open space It is noted that due to the nature and location of the development there is no requirement for the provision of public open space on site.	This clarification is noted and welcomed by the Applicant.
Light and noise pollution It is confirmed that due to the location of the site in the Arundel urban area light pollution is not raised as a concern. However, a Noise Exposure Category Assessment will be required to consider the impact of road noise from the A27 on future residents.	A comprehensive Acoustic Assessment is included as part of this application which confirms that there will be no adverse impact on residents due to traffic noise.
Contamination	It is accepted by the Applicant that contamination is one of the main issues in

It is acknowledged that the Application Site comprises contaminated land and a detailed Contamination Report will therefore be required.	relation to the site. To this end a full Contamination Report and remediation strategy is included in support of this application.
Biodiversity and protected species It is confirmed that a Phase 1 Ecological Survey should be provided in support of any application. Any recommendations would then be included as conditions to any planning approval.	A Phase 1 Ecological Survey, prepared by Bioscan, is included in support of this application. It confirms that there are no protected species or habitats on site.
Landscape The main issue raised in the Officer response was to ensure that all key trees are retained and that the application is accompanied by a comprehensive landscape masterplan and planting schedule showing how the appearance of the site will be softened in respect of both short and longer views.	A detailed Landscape Masterplan, prepared by CSA, is included in support of this application. In addition, a comprehensive Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, considering both long views and the immediate impact of the proposal on local townscape, is provided in support of the scheme.
Bin storage The equivalent of 240 litres of refuse storage should be provided for each property.	Details of how appropriate levels of refuse storage will be accommodated by the development are set out across the provided drawings and Design and Access Statement.
Planning Obligations	
It is noted that a completed Section 106 agreement will be required prior to the issue of any planning permission. This may cover contributions towards the following infrastructure projects and services: • Health care; • Education services; • Libraries; • Fire services; • Roads and public transport provision; • Off-site footpath improvements and road safety features.	The applicant agrees to enter into a Section 106 agreement to secure all reasonable contributions prior to the formal issue of any planning permission. It is anticipated that the level of and need for any contribution will be specified by relevant consultees during the course of the application.

5.4 The scheme was reviewed and revised in light of the Officer comments and was then subject to a public exhibition, held at Arundel Town Hall on Tuesday 30th April 2019. Full details of the exhibition are set out in the accompanying SCI. However, the following key points were raised that have influenced the Applicant's approach to the proposal and the final form and design:

- Additional attention should be paid to the design and detailing of the scheme to ensure that it is respectful of the setting of Arundel;
- Enhancements to pedestrian access would be welcomed – these could include an enhancement of the footpath to the river, the widening of the footway to the front of the site and provision of a crossing on Ford Road; and
- Suitable boundary treatment is provided to preserve the amenity of existing residents.

6.0 PLANNING POLICY REVIEW

- 6.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan, the starting point for decision making, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. One material consideration of weight is the policies of the NPPF, a document that provides the framework against which development plan policies should firstly be produced and then maintained and one which seeks to guide the approach taken by the decision maker when determining planning applications.
- 6.2 For the purposes of Section 38(6) of the Act the development plan relevant to this Application comprises the Arun District Local Plan ('the Local Plan'), adopted in 2018. It also comprises the Arundel Neighbourhood Plan (ANP) which was adopted in February 2014 and is currently in the process of being reviewed by Arundel Town Council.
- 6.3 National planning policy is provided for by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published on 19th February 2019, with further illustration included within the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) suite which was launched on the 6th March 2014.
- 6.4 The Framework exemplifies the Government's push towards efficiency in the planning system and embodies a pro-development stance. At the core of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development - therefore, in preparing plans, local planning authorities (LPAs) should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area. In taking decisions, it means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay.

National planning policy

- 6.5 Of particular relevance to this application are the following sections of the NPPF:
- Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development
 - Section 4 – Decision making
 - Section 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
 - Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
 - Section 11 – Making effective use of land
 - Section 12 – Achieving well designed places
 - Section 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal erosion
 - Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
 - Annex 1 – Implementation

The Development Plan

Arun District Local Plan 2011-2031

- 6.6 The relevant policies of the Local Plan identified within the Officer response to the pre-application enquiry are as follows:

Policy	Intent
AHSP2: Affordable Housing	A 30% contribution of affordable housing will be required on sites of 11 or more units unless it can be demonstrated that this level of provision is unviable.
DDM1: Aspects of form and design quality	All new developments will have regard to the following aspects of design: character; appearance/attractiveness; impact; innovation; adaptability; crime prevention; trees and woodland; solar gain; public realm; layout – movement; layout – legibility; public art; density; scale; compliance with the Arun District Council Design Guide (once adopted)
DDM2: Internal space standards	Internal spaces will be of an appropriate size to meet the needs of all occupants. National internal space standards should be used as a guide.
DSP1: Design	This policy seeks to secure the highest standards of design through reference to site context and sustainable design.
ECCSP1: Adapting to climate change	Development will be supported that is designed to be resilient to climate change through use of design and energy/water efficiency.
ECCSP2: Energy and climate change mitigation	All major developments must produce 10% of the total predicted energy requirements from renewable or low carbon energy generation on site unless this is unviable.
ENVDM4: Protection of trees	Development will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that any protected tree will not be destroyed.
ENVDM5: Development and biodiversity	Development schemes shall seek to achieve a net gain in biodiversity and protect existing habitats on site.
ENVSP1: Natural environment	The Council will encourage and promote the preservation, restoration and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment through the development process
HDM1: Housing mix	The Council will seek a mix of dwelling sizes on all housing sites to take account of local housing needs.
INFSP1: Infrastructure provision and implementation	Development proposals which provide or contribute towards the infrastructure and services needed to support development will be supported.
LANDM1: Protection of landscape character	Both the landscape and historic character and development pattern of settlements within the District should be respected, taking into account their distinct identity and setting.
LANDM2: The setting of Arundel	Any development at Arundel will be of a high design standard that reflects the quality of the landscape and the setting of the town.
SDSP2: Built-up area boundary	Development within the built-up area boundaries will be permitted, subject to consideration against other policies of this Local Plan.
QEDM4: Contaminated land	The Council promotes, and will permit, the use of previously developed land and the successful remediation of contaminated

	land to ensure that land is brought back into use.
TSP1: Transport and development	Development should provide safe access on to the highway network; contribute to highway improvements; promote sustainable transport, including the use of low emission fuels, public transport improvements and the cycle, pedestrian and bridleway network.
WDM1: Water supply and quality	Development will be permitted where sufficient water supplies can be provided, and water usage can be kept below 110l/person/day.
WDM2: Flood risk	Development in areas at risk from flooding will only be permitted where: the sequential test has been passed; a Flood Risk Assessment is provided in support of the application; the exception test is satisfied; and an appropriate site drainage scheme is provided.
WDM3: Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems	To increase the levels of water capture and storage and improve water quality, all development must identify opportunities to incorporate a range of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS), appropriate to the size of development, at an early stage of the design process.
WMDM1: Waste management	Site waste management must be considered during the course of planning, including the potential to reuse any excavated material.
WSP1: Water	Development will be encouraged to make active use of surface water as a design feature and permitted where it identifies measures to provide additional flood relief.

The Arundel Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2029

- 6.7 The key policy of the Arundel Neighbourhood Plan is **Policy 4: Housing Site Allocations** that identifies the Application Site as appropriate for residential development of up to 37 dwellings, deliverable between 2020 and 2029. Paragraph 4.19 of the Plan confirms that its inclusion as an allocation confirms that it is considered to be suitable, available, achievable and acceptable to the local community.
- 6.8 Paragraph 4.21 of the Plan confirms that the site is allocated with a view to delivering a high-density scheme that will ensure that it can remain viability in spite of known land remediation and flood risk management costs to be met. Paragraph 4.22 then confirms that although all the site benefits from the adjoining flood defences, it remains designated within Flood Zone 3. A Flood Risk Assessment must therefore demonstrate how such risks will be managed in accordance with the Exception Test.

Other material considerations

- 6.9 As identified in the Officer response to the pre-application enquiry the Arundel Design Statement, adopted in 2007, comprises Supplementary Planning Guidance. To this end it is referred to in the accompanying Design and Access Statement.

7.0 PLANNING ANALYSIS

7.1 This section considers the merits of the proposal in respect of planning policy whilst having due regard to all relevant material considerations. It will demonstrate that the principle of development at the Application Site is firmly established and that the proposal accords fully with the development plan in its entirety. To this end, and with regard to paragraph 11 of the NPPF, this section will demonstrate that the application should therefore be approved without delay.

7.2 This section considers the **Principle of Development** before summarising the following **Sustainability Considerations**, most of which are assessed in greater detail within the supporting technical studies:

- **Layout and Design**
- **Flooding and Drainage**
- **Contamination and Remediation**
- **Housing Mix**
- **Highways and Access**
- **Trees**
- **Landscape and Townscape**
- **Ecology**
- **Residential Amenity**
- **Sustainable Construction**
- **Planning Contributions**

Principle of Development

7.3 The principle of development has been established through a combination of the location of the site within the settlement boundary of Arundel and its allocation by **Policy 4** of the adopted Arundel Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2029. The principle of its redevelopment also draws support from the NPPF.

7.4 The Officer pre-application response confirms that *"the application site is situated within the built-up area boundary (BUAB) as specified by Policy SDSP2 which seeks to focus development within the built-up area"*. In addition, paragraph 4.20 of the adopted neighbourhood plan proactively identifies the site as a key residential site at the town confirms that the *"redevelopment (of the site) will deliver important community benefits by removing a prominent and long-term derelict site within a residential area"*.

7.5 Paragraph 4.21 of the neighbourhood plan goes on to state that *"the site can accommodate a scheme of up to 37 dwellings, as it is suited to a higher than average housing density. This will deliver a viable scheme that allows for known land remediation and flood risk management costs to be met"*. The Application Scheme slightly exceeds the 37 units anticipated on the site by a single unit – this, however, responds positively to Section 11 of the NPPF requiring developments to make effective use of land.

7.6 Indeed, paragraph 118(c) provides significant support for the Application Scheme, stating that *"substantial weight (should be given) to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for*

homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land”.

- 7.7 In addition, and since the issue of the Officer pre-application response, Arun District Council has confirmed that it cannot demonstrate an adequate 5-year supply of housing land. The Council’s most recent Authority Monitoring Report, published in June 2019, confirms a 4.7-year supply. We anticipate that over time this position will only worsen due to the Council’s heavy reliance on the delivery of a tapestry of often complicated strategic sites across the District. On this basis paragraph 11 of the NPPF is engaged and the presumption towards the delivery of the Application Proposal is strengthened further.

Sustainability Considerations

Layout and Design

- 7.8 The layout and design of the Application Scheme have both been influenced by a number of factors, not least: local character and scales; site levels; the necessity to accommodate flood mitigation; and the requirement to maximise the potential of the site with a high-density development. The appearance and composition of the scheme have then benefitted from the input of Officers and the feedback received during the course of the community consultation exercise.
- 7.9 One of the driving factors that has informed the design of the proposal was to ensure that it reflected the appearance and scale of the residential properties elsewhere on Ford Road. Whilst the proposal comprises a development of 38 apartments the street fronting block has been designed to reflect the domestic scale of the adjacent houses to the south west, a Victorian terrace known as California Terrace. It has also been set back from the street to match the building line of the neighbouring properties and presents a natural continuation of the built form on this side of Ford Road.
- 7.10 Moving away from the road frontage the site levels immediately drop significantly, by around 2m. This allows the Application Scheme to provide an undercroft area away from Ford Road that accommodates a proportion of the car parking on site along with bin storage, service areas and secure parking for bicycle. It also ensures that the residential element of the development can be elevated above the areas likely to flood in the unlikely event of the River Arun’s flood defences overtopping.
- 7.11 This design approach, using the levels of the site to provide basement level parking and flood storage voids, sees the height of the building increase from 2.5 storeys to 3.5 storeys from the front of the site to the rear. The accommodation is split between two distinct blocks to ensure that the bulk of the development is lessened.
- 7.12 Otherwise, the Application Scheme incorporates a high standard of design and the selection of quality

materials throughout, in keeping with the special character of Arundel. The design approach and palette of materials adopted is described in detail in the accompanying Design and Access Statement, prepared by Pope Priestley Architects.

- 7.13 The Officer pre-application response concludes that *"the general mass and scale of the development is in keeping with the road frontage on Ford Road and the development along the River Arun is acceptable"*. This conclusion was drawn subject to a number of suggested detailed design amends, the list of which are also reviewed and responded to in the Design and Access Statement. Due to the Applicant's positive response to the Officer recommendations the conclusions of the pre-application response apply – that the development complies with **Policies DDM1, DDM2 and DSP1** of the Local Plan, the Arundel Design Statement and the general design policies of the NPPF.

Flooding and Drainage

- 7.14 A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA), including a comprehensive drainage strategy, has been prepared by RSK and is provided in support of this application. This document confirms that sufficient design measures have been included as part of the Application Scheme to ensure that there will be no erosion of flood storage capacity following the development of the site. Void spaces will be included below the main residential block, the accommodation within which will be elevated above the modelled water levels of a peak flood event. It also confirms that a sensitively designed scheme of surface water drainage can be provided that does not increase the current run-off rates from the site.
- 7.15 Whilst the flooding sequential test has been passed due to the allocation of the site in the Arundel Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2029 there remains a requirement for the exception test, as described in Planning Practice Guidance, to be met. This requires both the wider community benefits of the scheme to outweigh the risk of flooding and the demonstration that the development will be safe for users over its lifetime.
- 7.16 Firstly, the FRA demonstrates that necessary safeguards are in place, along with dry access from all new dwellings, to ensure the safety of future residents. In respect of the weighing of the sustainability benefits against the risk of flooding, this test is summarised neatly at paragraph 4.20 of the adopted Neighbourhood Plan, which states:

"Redevelopment will deliver important community benefits by removing a prominent and long-term derelict site within a residential area. As the Site Assessments Report makes clear, this outcome satisfies part of the Exception Test of the NPPF (para 102) in respect of managing flood risk."

- 7.17 The additional community benefit of the delivery of 38 much needed small residential units in a town where development opportunities are limited also counts as a significant positive to be weighed as part

of this balance.

- 7.18 On the basis of the above the Application Scheme complies with **Policies ECCSP1, WDM1, WDM2, WDM3 and WSP1** of the Local Plan and the relevant elements of Section 14 of the NPPF.

Contamination and Remediation

- 7.19 A comprehensive ground investigation has been undertaken by RSK to quantify the extent of contamination on a site that was subject to a former polluting use, one that has since ceased and now leaves the site in need of substantial remediation. Principally, the investigations have concluded that the site currently features contamination from chemicals relating to the former gas works, trapped gasses and remnants of asbestos.
- 7.20 It is clear that, as a result of these findings, further detailed site investigation will be required in order to inform a comprehensive remediation strategy that would include all works necessary to make the site safe to future users and the surrounding environment. Subject to the imposition of suitably worded conditions and the implementation of this work the remediation of the site and its productive reuse would comply with **Policy QEDM4** of the Local Plan.

Housing Mix

- 7.21 **Policy HDM1** of the Local Plan requires that regard is had to the most up-to-date Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for the District, in this instance the Sussex Coast SHMA 2014. The Application Scheme comprises 38 apartment units in total, split equally between the two separate blocks. Within this provision 9 of the units will be 1-bedroom apartments with 29 of the units comprising 2-bedroom apartments. The Council's Housing Strategy Officer responded positively to the pre-application enquiry on this basis, confirming that *"the mix of dwellings is considered acceptable in the light of the Council's evidence of housing need"*. In Arundel this is principally smaller entry-level market units suitable for first time buyers, smaller families and downsizing.
- 7.22 Policy AHSP2 of the Local Plan requires all schemes of 11 dwellings or more to provide a minimum of 30% affordable units unless this would make the scheme unviable. Issues in respect of the potential viability of development on site are recognised within the Arundel Neighbourhood Plan, with paragraph 4.16 stating that *"it is anticipated that the higher development costs associated with delivering viable schemes on previously-developed land may require some relaxation of (affordable housing requirements) but it will be for applicants to demonstrate such circumstances to the local planning authorities"*. In particular, the Neighbourhood Plan recognises that there will be particular abnormal costs relevant to the Application Site relating to contamination and flooding.
- 7.23 Reflecting on the requirements of **Policy AHSP2** the Applicant has undertaken a full viability assessment

in association with the development, prepared by BNP Paribas, which confirms that there is no margin that would allow for the provision of affordable units. A copy of this assessment is included in support of this application.

Highways and Access

- 7.24 The proposed access arrangements were review by West Sussex County Council (WSCC) as part of the pre-application process and agreed in principle. It was confirmed by WSCC that safe access with sufficient visibility splays can be achieved at the site. It was also agreed that the trip generation level of 11 and 12 vehicle movement during the AM and PM peaks respectively would not have a severe impact on the highway in line with Paragraph 109 of the NPPF and would therefore be acceptable.
- 7.25 In respect of parking WSCC confirmed that 53 off-street spaces should be provided as part of the development, reflecting the sustainable location of the site. The Application Scheme actually includes 59 spaces, including four designated visitor spaces, to ensure that on-street parking is avoided.
- 7.26 The Application Scheme allows for a widening of the footway along the site frontage, the upgrade of the Public Right of Way running from Ford Road to the river and an unsignalised crossing on Ford Road to allow for safer pedestrian access to local school, health care, open space and public transport facilities.
- 7.27 The highways and access arrangements to the site, including swept path analysis and a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit, are all included in the accompanying Transport Statement prepared by Paul Basham Associates. On the basis of all of the above and the positive endorsement of the proposals by WSCC it can be concluded that the Application Scheme accords with **Policy TSP1** of the Local Plan.

Trees

- 7.28 Whilst the Application Site does not contain any mature trees it was identified during pre-application discussions that there are several specimens covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) around the perimeter. These have informed the location of the built form and the alignment of the access road.
- 7.29 The Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA), prepared by Barton Hyett Associates and submitted in support of this application, provides a detailed assessment of all trees both on the site and in close proximity. Importantly it identifies the root protection areas of the trees adjacent to the site and demonstrates the way in which any built form, including roads and hard standing, avoids impinging on these areas. On this basis the AIA concludes that there will be no short term or long-term harm to these species and that, accordingly, the Application Scheme accords with **Policy ENVDM4** as well as other policies relating to the setting, character and biodiversity value of the site and its surrounds.

Landscape and Townscape

- 7.30 Due to the proximity of the site to the South Downs National Park and the historic setting of Arundel a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) prepared by CSA is provided. This is accompanied by a detailed hard and soft landscaping plan.
- 7.31 The LVIA, which included a set of viewpoints that were agreed by the Council's Landscape Officer during the course of the pre-application process, concludes that the site is sufficiently well screened by existing mature tree cover to ensure that views of the site are contained to only short-range glimpses. This includes views from the footpath to the south east of the site and from the wider River Arun corridor.
- 7.32 The appearance of the site from the street and from the adjacent public footpath is then softened through the inclusion of a comprehensive landscaping scheme which incorporates native species planting. It is considered that the application complies with **Policies LANDM1 and LANDM2** of the Local Plan.

Ecology

- 7.33 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, prepared by Bioscan, is included in support of this application. It concludes that no specific mitigation required in response to impacts on the existing habitats due to the lack of significant floral interest identified and the highly localise significance of any impact that would be generated by their removal.
- 7.34 The site is identified as having low potential for any protected species, albeit it does recommend the provision of bird and bat boxes across the site, as well as non-invasive ornamental planting, to ensure that the biodiversity value of the site is both preserved and enhanced. To this end the Application Scheme is considered to comply with **Policies ENVDM5 and ENVSP1** of the Local Plan, as well as the general policies of the NPPF in respect of biodiversity.

Residential Amenity

- 7.35 The amenity of both existing and future residents has been an important consideration throughout the development of the final scheme.
- 7.36 In respect of the amenity of neighbours, the issues raised by Officers in the pre-application response regarding disturbance and overlooking have been actioned through the provision of a substantial landscaped screen along the north west boundary of the site along with the removal of any windows which may lead to direct overlooking of private gardens.
- 7.37 A good level of amenity is also provided for future residents of the scheme through the inclusion of a variety of communal spaces throughout the scheme as well as balconies serving the units on the north east and south east elevations. A number of public open spaces then lie within a short walk of the site

on the northern side of Ford Road.

- 7.38 To this end the Application Scheme accords with **Policy DDM1** of the Local Plan and the general policies of the NPPF regarding amenity and healthy lifestyles.

Sustainable Construction and Design

- 7.39 Policies ECCSP1, ECCSP2 and ECCDM1 all contain elements that require new developments to give due consideration to matters such as climate and design. Policy WMDM1 also sets out a requirement for the recycling of site waste as far as is practical.
- 7.40 In respect of sustainable design a number of measures to be integrated into the design and build of the proposal are set out within the accompanying Design and Access Statement, prepared by Pope Priestley Architects. These include measures designed to ensure that 10% of the total predicted energy requirements of the building are generated by renewable or low carbon sources. Where necessary, and where not explicitly included in the planning drawings, these measures can be secured by condition.
- 7.41 In respect of waste management the site does not currently contain any built structures that would yield materials suitable for reuse. The only material that is to be demolished or excavated comprises the likely heavily contaminated concrete slab that accommodated the former gas works, all of which would be safely removed from site and disposed of subject to an agreed remediation strategy.

Planning Contributions

- 7.42 It is noted from the pre-application response that contributions will likely be sought towards health care, education services, libraries, fire services and roads and public transport provision. These will be secured by way of a Section 106 legal agreement. In addition, it is proposed to provide off-site footpath improvements between Ford Road and the River Arun along with road safety features including an unsignalised crossing on Ford Road to the front of the site.
- 7.43 Upon the completion of an appropriately worded legal agreement the Application Scheme would comply fully with **Policy INFSP1** of the Local Plan.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 This Statement, along with the substantial suite of supporting information provided as part of this application, demonstrates that the Application Scheme for 38 apartments alongside the delivery of enhanced pedestrian access and on-site amenity space is sustainable in every respect and complies fully with the development plan when read as a whole. Furthermore, it is clear that the proposal has benefitted from a significant level of pre-application Officer engagement and public consultation.
- 8.2 The principle of the development is established through the location of the site within the built-up area of Arundel and through the allocation of the site for residential development within the adopted Arundel Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2029. The Application Scheme will deliver much needed housing in an accessible location and will ensure both the decontamination and then best use of a long-time derelict former gas works site. Indeed, the benefit of the new homes is only increased due to the Council's inability to demonstrate a sufficient housing land supply.
- 8.3 In terms of design and building on clear Officer advice and the comments received during the course of the consultation programme, the Applicant is confident that the proposal represents the very best scheme of development for the site. Importantly its design and layout have full consideration for local environmental constraints including views from both the street scene and beyond. Importantly the design fully utilises the change in levels, from north west to south east, to ensure that it responds positively and successfully to one of the main constraints at the site, its location within the Flood Zone.
- 8.4 Otherwise, the Application Scheme accords with all other Local Plan and national policy in respect of housing provision, highways, open space, trees and biodiversity, public amenity and contributions towards local social infrastructure.
- 8.5 In light of the Application Scheme's demonstrable accordance with the development plan in its entirety it is clear that this application should be approved without delay.

Appendix 1 Officer pre-application response dated 8th May 2019