

UPDATE NOTE

Application Reference AB/88/19/PL

Land at Electricity Sub-Station, Ford Road, Arundel

This note has been prepared by way of an update of all matters related to the above site in recognition of the internal handover of our client, Oakford Homes', application for its development with 38 new residential apartments.

Specifically, it seeks to summarise both progress and discussions held with the previous Case Officer (Richard Castro-Parker) to ensure that the case can be moved forward efficiently and without duplication. The update is based on a matter by matter basis framed against what are the key matters relevant to the application. This is led by consultee responses to date.

Principle

The principle of the development of the site with residential uses is established through its allocation in the adopted Arundel Neighbourhood Plan, and the retention of this policy once the ongoing Neighbourhood Plan Review is complete.

The compliance of the proposal with Arundel Town Council's adopted Neighbourhood Plan is confirmed by the Town Council's support for the application dated 13th September 2019.

Highways

A consultation response was received from West Sussex County Council (WSCC) Highways on 1st September 2019 which raised a number of matters requiring further clarification. The response was presented as a holding objection subject to the receipt of satisfactory additional information.

Since this time the applicant's Highway Consultant, Paul Basham Associates, have been communicating with the relevant Officer at WSCC, Stephen Gee, to ensure that all outstanding matters can be satisfied. To date the following work has been undertaken:

- Production of a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit, including a proposal for double yellow lines at the vehicular access to the site in line with the Town Council recommendations, which has now been signed off by WSCC and forwarded to Richard Castro-Parker; and
- Agreement that the proposed level of parking accords with the relevant WSCC parking standards for schemes providing unallocated spaces.

All other matters are to be dealt with by way of an updated suite of drawings that will confirm:

- That the footway in front of the site will be widened into the site itself;
- That the clearance upon entry to the site will be minimum 2.5m (the minimum level of clearance requested by WSCC to ensure delivery vehicles can access the site);
- The provision of a commensurate level of cycle parking; and
- The provision of a segregated footpath along the access road to ensure a clear passage for the PRow.

All of these matters have been agreed in principle with WSCC. These drawings will be held back from submission in the meantime in case any further amends are required in respect of drainage (see below).

In terms of the final point raised in WSCC's 1st September response the requested tracking drawings are actually included at Appendix A of the submitted TA.

In addition Highways England has also responded on 10th September 2019 offering No Objection.

Drainage and Flood Risk

A response from the Environment Agency has been received, dated 1st October 2019. This raises no objection on the basis that finished floor levels of 5.3m AOD and the surface water storage scheme proposed by the FRA are secured by way of condition.

A separate response has also been received from Arun DC's Drainage Officer. They have raised an outstanding objection in respect of the proposed scheme of surface water attenuation in the flood plain and proposals to remove the existing culvert crossing the site.

On the first matter the applicant's Drainage Engineers are keen to refer you to paragraph 9.4.2 of the accompanying FRA. Indeed, it is questioned why such a strong position is taken in respect of the location of surface water drainage in the flood plain as any impact on tidal flood levels would be negligible.

Notwithstanding, in response to both of these matters the applicant is undertaking further work to identify if an alternative drainage solution is possible whilst also seeking to demonstrate conclusively that the culvert leading across the site is disused. We will update you further in respect of these matters in due course.

WSCC, as the Lead Local Flood Authority, largely reflect the comments of Arun's Drainage Officer without offering an objection.

Southern Water

Comments received from Southern Water, dated 16th September 2019. The response states the various wayleave required in the event that development is proposed in proximity to any Southern Water below ground infrastructure. Investigations are ongoing by the Applicant to ensure that there is no conflict.

Trees

Arun DC's Tree Officer offers no objection subject to sufficient conditions protecting off-site trees.

Viability

A full viability case has been submitted in support of the application demonstrating that the provision of any affordable housing would not be possible as part of the proposals due to the complex nature of the build and high level of remediation required to decontaminate what is a former gas works site.

Initial comments have been provided by the Council's viability consultant, Dixon Searle Partnership, which are now being considered by our client's own consultants BNP Paribas. Currently BNP are coordinating a summary Cost Plan as the raw data detailing build cost is lengthy. This will be forwarded to DSP in due course to allow them to secure quotes from a QS for more detailed cost review.

This matter is currently being managed by BNP and DSP between them.

Archaeology

Archaeology Advisor response dated 20th September 2019. No objection.

Rights of Way

WSCC Public Rights of Way Officer response dated 7th October 2019. No objection. It is worth noting that the application proposes an upgrade to the PRow from the road through to the river to be secured by either condition or in the S106.

Ecology

Ecologist response dated 21st August 2019. No objection subject to minor ecological enhancements relating to bat boxes.

Site clearance has recently taken place (during November 2019), undertaken by the current site owner. This observed both the recommendations of an Extended Phase 1 Ecological Assessment, published in February 2019 and those of the Ecologist who stated that clearance should take place outside of the bird nesting season ending on 1st October.

Next steps

Firstly, and importantly, it is understood that the application should be determined under delegated powers as none of the relevant committee triggers set out in the Council's constitution have been hit.

It is intended to submit amended drawings in due course that identify the details requested by WSCC Highways whilst potentially identifying any alterations to the proposed drainage scheme if an alternative solution can be identified.

We will seek to issue the cost plan relating to the build shortly. Whilst the assessment of the viability case is ongoing – we would be grateful if you could push DSP for SQ costing as soon as the cost plan has been sent – we fully expect that the applicant's position will be endorsed.

Whilst it is not anticipated that there will be any implications in respect of the Southern Water response, we will update you if any amends to the scheme are required.

Officer comments in respect of the scheme design would be appreciated. A useful reference point providing a clear view on acceptability would be the Officer Pre-Application Response appended to the Planning Statement. This was authored by Andrew Wood, Principal Planning Officer.

As offered, it may be useful to meet in January 2020 to discuss scheme progress and timescales. The application has now exceeded its statutory determination period. An extension will need to be agreed, likely informed by the turnaround time for the viability work.