

[REDACTED]

From: Simon Davis

Sent: 04 March 2022 18:51

To: 'Sarah Sutcliffe' [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Land North of Lee's Yard, Woodgate - AL/141/21/RES

Dear Sarah,

We are certainly not seeking to stifle sustainable development however at the same time, just because we have a HLS shortfall, does not mean that we should approve every proposal without scrutinising it and seeking improvements. The NPPF and other supporting national guidance also emphasises high quality design, maintaining character and striving for beauty. This approach was taken on the Wings scheme and changes were made that enabled us to support the second application. The same is true of one of the Yapton strategic sites where we refused a RM application based on design concerns but approved the resubmission.

If you recall, I wrote to you on 20/01/22 setting out my initial concerns with the proposal. This was in conflict with our policy on not negotiating any changes where pre-application advice was not obtained but I did this, as at that stage, there was plenty of time on the application for alterations to be made and a decision to still be made within the 13 week deadline. Your response to my email was essentially to downplay my concerns. I appreciate that I was not able to provide any senior officer comments until much later in the process but the fact remains that we are 6 weeks further into the determination period and my take from our initial discussions was that you would not agree to any substantial changes. The determination date is now only 2 weeks away. I also note that whilst you did indicate agreement to some minor tweaks, no amended plans have been provided (although I am of course grateful for the supporting statements that you have so far provided).

We are not requesting that you replicate the outline layout but we do feel strongly that there should be a central area of open space and that the houses on the west side of the site should either front or back towards Lidsey Road (not side on). I agree that the outline has very specific parameters in terms of accommodation mix and I can see how this could make it difficult to plan the layout (for example it entirely refers to houses thus ruling out flats – although the Outline could have been varied or a new full permission submitted ala the Wings site to alter this mix). I also accept that the need to ensure a buffer to the industrial site represents a constraint.

Council policy is that all extensions of time must be agreed by team leaders and having discussed this case, I can confirm that we will not be able to offer one. I also don't consider it appropriate to go higher up to ask the question as the Group Head of Planning has already identified concerns with the scheme. If you are willing to withdraw then I can offer informal pre-application advice including potentially a meeting ala the Wings site (subject to agreement with senior colleagues) in order that changes can be made without the need for a formal enquiry.

Kind Regards

Simon J Davis MRTPI
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Directorate of Place



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From: Sarah Sutcliffe [REDACTED]
Sent: 03 March 2022 18:13
To: Simon Davis <Simon.Davis@arun.gov.uk>
Cc: Chris Brake [REDACTED]
Subject: Land North of Lee's Yard, Woodgate - AL/141/21/RES

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Hi Simon,

Thank you for your e-mail (attached for ease), of which we note the content. We are extremely disappointed at the rigid stance taken by ADC in respect of on-going discussions. As you know we have been working to respond positively to comments received since the application was validated in January, and are keen to continue proactive discussions to reach a resolution which all parties are content with.

Importantly, and as you are aware, no fundamental concerns have been raised by statutory consultees with the only holding objection remaining from your Drainage Engineer, however as per my e-mail on Monday (01/03) through discussions directly with Ms Gibbons, to our understanding all matters have now been resolved and these discussions/amendments have been reflected in the submission made on Monday. Therefore our understanding is that there are no technical concerns outstanding.

Our Client, Southern Home Ownership Ltd, fully endorses the Council's desire for design excellence, however we would stress the subjective nature of design and whilst we acknowledge that the Council has a particular desire for the layout to reflect that of the indicative layout submitted alongside the Outline, the indicative layout and its principles do not work alongside the parameters set within the Outline. As we have both acknowledged, the scheme has specific parameters set in terms of open space provision, unit numbers, unit mix and play space with its associated separation distances. These parameters alongside specific technical constraints including the siting and requirements of SuDs features have dictated the revised layout. We would stress that with our Client having purchased the site with the benefit of outline planning permission, they were not party to any previous discussions in respect of layout, however it is evident that the indicative layout which accompanied the outline, was not formed following consideration of all requirements/constraints. The design evolution has been detailed from page 12 of the submitted Compliance Statement, and seeks to detail the reasoning for departure from the principles of the indicative layout – we would urge the Council to review this.

Whilst we appreciate the Council's desire for early engagement, there is no requirement for applicant's to obtain formal pre-application advice. However, in any event we would suggest that the context of this scheme represents an entirely different scenario as you will recall we outlined our submission strategy to you in terms of pre-application engagement through an e-mail on the 6th October 2021. In this correspondence we expressed that due to the prescriptive nature of the Outline in terms of the parameters set through the outline permission in respect of set unit numbers/mix, open space provision, play provision,

ecological enhancements and noise mitigation we did not envisage progression of formal pre-app on the scheme design, however expressing that our client would be seeking to actively engage with the parish, which they did so prior to submission of the RM. Importantly, in this correspondence we stressed that we intended to work proactively with the Council. You will recall, you reverted back on 11th October 2021 raising no objection to this submission strategy stating that: 'I agree that you should discuss the reserved matters submission with the Parish Council. Please ensure that the scheme responds to the guidance in the Arun Design Guide, Arun Parking Standards SPD as well as the Arun Local Plan and the newer Aldingbourne Neighbourhood Plan.' I have attached this correspondence for ease. Evidently following engagement with the Parish which led to the inclusion of community growing space, their objection is disappointing, however our Client will be seeking to engage once again with the Parish Council on outstanding concerns on Tuesday (8th March 2022), and are confident that this objection can be overcome.

As you know, ADC have a significant shortfall in housing land supply, with a recent appeal Inspector calculating this at just 2.63 years earlier this year (Ref: APP/C3810/W/21/3273087). Paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that Local Planning Authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way' and 'Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible'. This site is allocated for development within the Aldingbourne Neighbourhood Plan, has the benefit of Outline planning permission, and is therefore capable of making a significant contribution to housing provision in the locality in the immediate short-term, we would expect an appeal Inspector to therefore take a dim view of a refusal on subjective design grounds, without the council adopting a positive approach to work with our Clients to overcome the concerns raised. We therefore urge the council to take a proactive approach in discussions regarding the submitted RM, and we are happy to agree an appropriate extension of time to reach a resolution and subsequent positive determination. In our view, the outstanding concerns raised are not fundamental, and our Client is confident that through effective discussion a resolution can be achieved.

If the council are agreeable, we would suggest a round table discussion would be appropriate to ensure effective discussion.

Kind Regards,

Sarah

Sarah Sutcliffe
Planning Manager

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