



ABE
Community
Land
Trust

Simon Davis,
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BN17 5LF

Nyton Lodge,
Nyton Road,
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PO20 3UL

By Email

21st July 2020

Dear Simon,

RE: AL/46/20/PL – Wings Nursery

I write to convey the comments of the Aldingbourne, Barnham and Eastergate CLT Board on the above application.

Background

When we met with the applicants, southern Housing Association, to discuss their proposals on 10th February 2020 their stated intention was to deliver 100% affordable housing for this site, but they acknowledged that a small proportion of shared ownership or market housing might be included.

A commitment was made that they would consult their lawyers about arrangements for allocation rights for the Aldingbourne, Barnham and Eastergate CLT in order that the principles of “first refusal” on the affordable housing under the s106 agreement on the original 2019 application being given to the CLT would be carried through.

Our understanding, via Aldingbourne Parish Council, is that during consultation with the Parish Council in April 2020 to discuss a new layout plan for 75 homes (not 81) their commitment to work with the CLT was confirmed by their representative, Scott House.

It was confirmed then that 100% affordable housing would not be proposed in the planning application, but that it would be “policy compliant”, for reasons associated with availability of Homes England funding. We understood that arrangements would be made which would enable affordable units to be made available to the CLT and we had understood that a legal agreement would be drafted with the CLT during the planning process and a side agreement set out in the Design Statement and Lettings Policy. The accommodation would reflect the Housing Needs Survey carried out by Action in rural Sussex for ABE CLT (funded by Arun DC), including one bedroom flats.

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Since then there has been no further contact with Southern Housing, which is disappointing but may be because Scott House was furloughed, in which case his colleagues appear to have submitted the application without being appraised of the background. I have endeavoured to check their position again this week, but so far received no response.

Comments

The above application can only be supported by Aldingbourne Barnham and Eastergate Community Land Trust (ABE CLT) on the basis that either all, or if more than 30% affordable housing is provided on the site, a proportion will be subject to a legal arrangement which provides, specifically:

- a) That the ABE CLT to be given the first option on the affordable housing at the site, at the minimum with nomination rights;
- b) The affordable housing to be allocated in accordance with the principles of ABE CLT's draft Housing Allocation Policy and the paper/discussions recently held between Arjan de Jong in your department with the Rural Housing Hub at Action in rural Sussex. The inclusion of a Local Connections Policy on the affordable housing such as that under discussion is important because it will enshrine the Housing Allocation Policy in the s106 Agreement in the event that circumstances were such that another housing provider were to take over from either Southern Housing or the CLT.

This is also important because it would enshrine the long ambition of both the site's original owners and the community that this particular site deliver housing which is available to people with a Local Connection who cannot afford housing at market rents or purchase prices in the area they grew up in or have a long-standing family connection with, with the benefit of mutual family support that provides (childcare, care of older relatives, relieving loneliness).

That ambition led to this site's inclusion in the Aldingbourne Neighbourhood Development Plan revision, without which it would not be available to help meet the housing needs of the District.

We respectfully ask that the expertise of Action in rural Sussex is sought in relation to the wording in this part of the s106 during negotiation, in order to avoid any ambiguity and to avoid any issues over Homes England funding, and the provision of a couple of one bedroom flats is considered so as to more accurately match the Housing Needs Survey (attached).

The Planning Committee will be aware that this site is currently outside the built up area boundary of the Aldingbourne Neighbourhood Development Plan, but proposed for inclusion in its review on the basis that the affordable housing will be subject to Local Connections criteria. The ANDP reg 14 consultation and public meeting due in April 2020 was delayed owing to Covid 19, and that is, we understand, now due to take place in September.

Yours sincerely,

A large black rectangular box redacting the signature of Louise Beaton.

Louise Beaton
Chair

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Barnham Community Hall, Murrell's Field, Yapton Road, Barnham PO22 0AY.**