

Chris Cousins
Head of Planning Services

Please respond to Stephen Brown
Tel: (01243) 777042
Fax: (01243) 756862
steve.brown@westsussex.gov.uk
www.westsussex.gov.uk

Environment & Development
The Grange
Tower Street
Chichester
West Sussex
PO19 1RH
Switchboard: 01243 777100



Mr Howard Cheadle
Head of Planning Services
Arun District Council
Arun Civic Centre
Maltravers Road
Littlehampton
West Sussex BN17 5LF
FAO: MR KEITH WHEWAY

1st February 2008

Our reference: SWB/BE/0001/08 OUT

Dear Mr Cheadle,

Town and Country Planning Act 1990
Formal Strategic Consultation under Schedule 1, Paragraph 7(2)

Outline application for mixed use employment (Class B1 high quality business park comprising up to 19,500 sq m gross floorspace) and retail (Class A1 grocery store up to 4,459 sq m net sales area) together with parking, new highway & associated servicing, infrastructure & landscaping. Land at Oldlands Farm, Shripney Road, Bognor Regis.

The references to policies in this letter are to those of the adopted West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-2016 (WSSP). In addition the West Sussex Minerals Local Plan 2003 and the West Sussex Waste Local Plan 2001-2016 Revised Deposit Draft may be referred to.

The site, which is some 9 hectares in size, is on the northern edge of Bognor Regis but within the built up area (as shown in the saved Arun District Local Plan). At locations like this, development is encouraged by policy LOC1 subject to the impact on the character of the area and the environment, resources and assets of West Sussex being acceptable. Local Plan Policy Site 5 (iii) and parts of Policy Site 6, allocate the general area for high quality commercial employment uses.

WSSP policy NE5 seeks the provision of employment opportunities suited to local businesses and those seeking to locate in West Sussex. Such provision should be managed over the Structure Plan period. Policy NE6 seeks to assist coastal regeneration. The latter should include scope for the provision of high quality sites and premises in order to attract firms and create additional high quality employment opportunities which offer better paid and higher skilled job opportunities in manufacturing, high-tech and B1 office sectors for the existing workforce as well as for additional workers.

WSSP policy NE10 resists retail development outside town, village, district and neighbourhood centres unless there is an identified need and it would not undermine the vitality, viability and retail function of the established centres. Only if there is clear evidence of a need for the additional retail floorspace and that its provision would not harm existing centres should the grant of planning permission be contemplated. It is for you to determine compliance with this policy, and you may wish to consider if there is a need to restrict the range of goods that could be sold from the proposed retail unit.

The County Council's Landscape Adviser reports that no reference is made in the proposals to the County Council's Landscape Character Analysis which should be used to inform the landscape design approach for large scale developments. Also that no reference is made to increasing opportunities for biodiversity on the site by using structure planting, green corridors linked to swales/SUDS, native species and a landscape maintenance strategy aimed at increasing biodiversity within the site.

Although the landscape design is in outline, the suggestion is that very few species are used; e.g. mass planting of birch groves and fastigate oak avenues. This is not supported, and it is considered that the site would benefit from a wider range of native species, which would enhance the sustainability of the site whilst also fulfilling the design approach. There is no strategy for integrating the new site into the existing landscape, this aspect is absent from the Design and Access Statement and no reference is made to the need for it. Again, this is considered an important part of the design approach given the site's proximity to Shripney village and its context in the wider Chichester Coastal Plain Character Area.

The location of public art – given the examples stated - immediately on the rural fringe is likely to impact significantly on the transition from rural to urban landscape. The avenue planting which is stressed in the report seems quite sparse (trees planted too far apart) and it is hoped that a revised scheme would accommodate greater numbers of more densely planted trees. The eastern boundary of the site has no landscape treatment shown. The staggered avenue of trees along the car park access road to the south seems to be rather sparse; planting more trees closer together would lead to an improvement. The hedge along the southern boundary –it is stated that it would be gapped up – when in fact it could be increased in width as desired and linked into green corridors within the site and beyond.

In conclusion, it is not considered that enough detail has been prepared to reflect the urban/rural fringe nature of this site, or to produce a design which reflects current thinking on sustainability and biodiversity. More information on these comments can be obtained from Veronica Craddock, Landscape Architect (veronica.craddock@westsussex.gov.uk, Tel: 01243 756848).

If the District Council is minded to approve, in principle, this application then consideration must be given to policy CH1 which seeks to maintain the character, distinctiveness and sense of place of different areas and features of the County, and DEV1 which requires that the construction, layout, scale, appearance and landscaping of development is of the highest quality and respects local context.

The County Council's Archaeological Officer reports in his email of the 22 January to you that in the section on Mitigation Measures (5.54 - 5.55) the recommendation of the Drivers Jonas DBA is that a programme of evaluation... *"will be agreed with the County Archaeologist"* and that *"It is anticipated that the results of any further evaluation works required will be available for the determination of the planning application."* The Archaeological Officer suggests that on the basis that the applicant and their agents have made a thorough assessment of the potential impact, will establish the detail of the proposed field evaluation strategy with the West Sussex Historic Environment Team acting on behalf of Arun District Council and will present the results of the field evaluation for the determination of the planning application, that the historic environment/ cultural heritage issues will have been thoroughly addressed. His only caveat would be that ground conditions on the application site are unsuitable for fieldwork given the heavy rainfall experienced in the last month or so and may remain so for a couple of months until Spring (problems with weather conditions on the nearby Felpham Site 6 evaluation undertaken by Wessex Archaeology at the end of 2006 resulted in 55 out of the total of 300 trenches having to be aborted and of those excavated some of the recording was adversely affected by waterlogged/ flooded trenches). For further information, please contact Mark Taylor, County Archaeologist (Tel: 01243 756858, email: mark.taylor@westsussex.gov.uk).

The County's Head of Highways and Transport has yet to formally respond to the proposal. However, to be acceptable, from a highway point of view, the proposal must accord with policy DEV4, which seeks to reduce the need to travel, achieve safe and convenient access by a choice of means of travel and reduce the number and impact of motorised journeys, and policy DEV5, which requires that the level of parking provision is compatible with the need to avoid environmental or safety problems.

In addition, Policy G12 of the West Sussex Waste Local Plan Deposit Draft requires that new waste management facilities be provided to serve new development. These facilities should be close to the point of generation and planned as an integral part of the development. The applicant should be made aware of this requirement.

The formal representation of the County Council is as follows.

Provided that Arun District Council is fully satisfied that there is an identified need for the retail element of this proposal and that it's provision would not adversely affect the vitality, viability and retail function of other existing centres then West Sussex County Council raises no strategic planning objection to the proposal, subject to compliance with the following specific policies of the adopted West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-2016:

DEV1: which seeks high quality development that respects local context;

DEV4: which seeks to achieve safe and convenient access by a choice of means of travel and reduce the number and impact of

motorised journeys;

DEV5: which requires that the level of parking is compatible with the need to avoid environmental or safety problems whilst reducing reliance on the private car;

ERA1: which requires that development proposals should not prejudice the development of adjoining land or the comprehensive development of larger sites;

CH1: which seeks to maintain and, where possible, enhance the character, distinctiveness and sense of place of different areas of the County; and

CH7: which requires that sites of archaeological potential should not be developed without appropriate evaluation, investigation and, where necessary, recording.

The advice in this letter has been issued under delegated powers.

I would be obliged if you would send me a copy of the decision notice when the application has been determined.

Yours sincerely,



for Head of Planning Services



West Sussex County Council is the Data Controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998. Your details will be entered into a database by West Sussex County Council and may be used to inform you about other services. Your details will not be passed on to other organisations. Security safeguards apply to both manual and computerised held data, and only relevant staff / named disclosures can access your information. If you have any queries contact the Data Protection Officer on 01243 642118.