

BR/341/10.

HENRY ADAMS

PPS25: SEQUENTIAL TEST

**DEMOLITION OF DERELICT TWO STOREY OFFICE BUILDING AND ERECTION OF 8 NO.
TWO BED FLATS AND 6 NO. ONE BED FLATS**

UNITS 17 & 18 DURBAN ROAD, BOGNOR REGIS

1. Background Legislation

- 1.01 Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk, requires at paragraphs 16 and 17 that Local Planning Authorities adopt a sequential test in allocating land in LDD's to demonstrate that there are no reasonably available sites in areas with a lower probability of flooding that would be appropriate to the type of development or land use proposed.
- 1.02 Planning Policy Statement 25 Practice Guide, requires that the sequential test should also be applied to individual planning applications relating to development proposals outside of specifically allocated sites.
- 1.03 The sequential test is applicable for sites identified as being within Flood Zone 3 and it is confirmed that the planning application site falls within this flood zone area.
- 1.04 Paragraphs 4.20 – 4.29 of the Practice Guide provide advice on applying the sequential test for individual planning applications.
- 1.05 The guidance confirms that where a site has not been sequentially tested in the LDD process that the sequential test will need to be applied at the individual site level. In these cases the developer will need to provide evidence to the LPA that there are no other reasonably available sites where the development could be located.
- 1.06 The principal evidence of the sequential test is the availability of "reasonably available" (suitably developable and deliverable) sites in the relevant area with a lower flood risk that could be used to accommodate the development.
- 1.07 "Reasonably available" alternative sites can be identified from evidence based documents which feed into the development of LDD's e.g. Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments as required by PPS3.
- 1.08 In that regard it has been held through the appeal system that the following criteria should be adopted in site assessment for the sequential test:-
 1. Be available – the site is available now.
 2. Be achievable – there is a reasonable prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within the immediate future.

3. Be commensurate in size – the site must be of a similar size and character to accommodate the proposed development.
4. Be economic – the costs of developing the site would not render the planning application proposal unviable.

2. Sequential Test Methodology

- 2.01 In accordance with the advice given within the PPS25 Practice Guide, a search has been undertaken of The Arun District Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2009 to establish whether there are any sites within the Bognor Regis area which would meet the sequential test criteria in providing alternative suitable sites to accommodate the development subject of the planning application.
- 2.02 3 sites have been identified within lower flood risk areas which are commensurate with the planning application proposal in terms of the type and level of development.
 1. Jones Garage Site, Belmont Street, Bognor Regis Ref: BR/120/08 14 flats planning permission granted on 04.07.08
 2. Jones Garage Site, 18 Lennox Street, Bognor Regis Ref: BR/234/08 14 flats dated 13.10.08
 3. 55-57 Victoria Drive, Bognor Regis Ref: BR/389/07 7 houses and 6 flats

3. Site Commentary – Analysis

- 3.01 Sites 1 and 2 identified above being the W Jones Garage premises in Belmont Street and Lennox Street, Bognor Regis were subject of extensive marketing during June to September 2008 and details of the sites and planning permissions were sent to 63 potential purchasers.
- 3.02 The sites were advertised in The Estates Gazette in July and also in the Chichester Observer Series.
- 3.03 The marketing campaign only generated 5 interested parties including local housing associations, but no offers were made due to market conditions, potential build costs of the flats and the ability to secure funding.
- 3.04 The market and land values have declined further since 2008 and the redevelopment of both these sites remain unviable and will not proceed unless there is significant change in the housing market and funding regimes which is considered most unlikely.
- 3.05 The sites therefore cannot deliver the development which has been granted planning permission, they are therefore “not achievable”.
- 3.06 In respect of site 3 i.e. Land at 55-57 Victoria Road this permission relates to both housing and flats but has not yet commenced due to the problems of market conditions and viability.

- 3.07 Notwithstanding the economic problems with the site, it is clear that as planning permission has been granted for housing that this is a more viable option than flats and therefore the site is most unlikely to revert to a development solely comprising flats especially as funding is extremely difficult to achieve for this form and size of development.
- 3.08 We therefore consider that the site could not viably accommodate the planning application scheme and is therefore "not achievable".
- 3.09 Other sites identified in The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment for housing development in Bognor Regis have either commenced or are of a size and form of development which could not accommodate the planning application scheme in a viable manor.
- 3.10 Finally the planning application site is highly sustainable and having regard to the District Council's housing needs, sustainability and the provision of new housing comprise principal objectives of both the District Council and Government Guidance.