

4 ALTERNATIVES & DESIGN EVOLUTION

Introduction

- 4.1 Regulation 18 and Schedule 4(2) of the EIA Regulations require an applicant to provide:

'...a description of the reasonable alternatives studied by the developer, which are relevant to the proposed development and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for the option chosen, taking into account the effects of the development on the environment'.

- 4.2 This Chapter, therefore, reviews the reasonable alternative options studied by the Applicant, including in relation to principal land use and siting, and the main reasons for selecting the chosen option, i.e. the current design for the Development which forms the subject of assessment within the ES. The following three alternative options were considered:

- The 'do nothing' alternative where the Development is not progressed;
- Alternative locations or uses; and
- Alternative design/layout for the Development.

- 4.3 The form of the Development has been influenced by a range of factors, including location, surrounding uses and landscape character, as well as input from ADC, statutory consultees and stakeholders through extensive meetings and workshops.

The Alternative Options

The 'do nothing' Alternative

- 4.4 Under the 'do nothing' scenario, the Site would remain as a decommissioned Royal Navy Air Arm and Royal Air Force aerodrome, where the concrete runways still remain, along with areas of land used for agricultural purposes. Under the 'do nothing' scenario, these uses would still remain and the beneficial and adverse effects identified in the ES would not occur. The purpose of the planning application is to develop the Site for residential mixed-use.

Consideration of Alternative Locations and Uses

- 4.5 In 1980, operations at the airfield ceased. Ford Airfield was then proposed for development as an eco-town in the early to mid 2000s. However, proposals were met with significant local opposition and it were consequently abandoned in 2009.

- 4.6 In 2014, the Ford Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group approached the landowners of the Site with a view to bringing forward development at the Site in order to take control of ad-hoc development that had taken place at the Site, coupled with a desire to realise a number of objectives as part of a comprehensive development. These objectives included:
- Taking control of the future planning of the area;
 - Creating a new 'heart' to the village;
 - Better connection to the local community;
 - Creating local amenities, jobs and education opportunities;
 - Delivering local facilities and community infrastructure;
 - Retaining Ford market;
 - Creating affordable housing for local people; and
 - Creating housing for the elderly.
- 4.7 Over the past five years, extensive community engagement has been undertaken in the Parish, with the community feeding into the design concepts for the Site on an ongoing basis. The community's aspirations have been translated into a workable masterplan that is now being brought forward as part of the planning application. Details of the public consultation that has taken place are provided in Chapter 2 and also set out in the Statement of Community Involvement submitted in support of the planning application.
- 4.8 Accordingly, no alternative locations and types of land uses were considered during the design evolution of the Development.

Consideration of Alternative Designs

- 4.9 The Development submitted for approval is the result of a thorough analysis of environmental constraints and opportunities, access issues and market demand. Consultation with ADC, Ford, Yapton and Climping Parish Councils, Ford Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, statutory consultees and the general public has been a key influence in the design evolution.
- 4.10 Specifically, the design has adapted to respond to the requirements of the local community at several public exhibition events that have been undertaken in recent years, including events in October 2014, March and November 2015 and May and June 2018.
- 4.11 The ideas and key aspirations that have emerged through the engagement process have informed the concept design for the Development. These include the following:
- 'A Vibrant Place' – create a new centre local facilities and community infrastructure, deliver

new employment opportunities whilst retaining the Ford Market and other existing uses;

- 'Enhanced Landscape' – enhance the existing landscape, deliver new open space and retain the visual separation to Yapton and Climping; and
- 'Connected Communities' – provide better connection to the local communities, provide a link to Ford Railway Station and improve access to the countryside.

4.12 Further to the comments raised at the public exhibitions, the following amendments and ideas have been incorporated into the design of the Development:

- The route of the Portsmouth to Arundel canal which cuts through the Site will be reflected in the design of the Development;
- The typologies and amount of new homes to be provided by the Development have been informed by the engagement process, to meet the needs of the community of Ford and the wider ADC area;
- Part of the engagement with the Ford Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group was to explore ideas and set up goals for the proposed Local Centre as part of the Development. This aspiration, which has been incorporated into the Development, is for a diverse range of uses to be co-located within the Local Centre, and to be clustered around a central green open space to create a focus for the new community;
- The amount of new employment floorspace that the Development provides will meet the local demand, to complement the existing offer and insure the viability of the new employment places; and
- Although not part of the Development, the potential location for a new secondary school has been assessed in dialogue with ADC to enable its future delivery as an integrated part of the Development.

Design Evolution

4.13 A number of changes have occurred over the course of the design evolution in relation to key constraints and opportunities on and surrounding the Site. These are summarised below.

Air Quality

4.14 Air quality modelling work was undertaken at the Site which identified a zone within the southern extent of the Site where it was advised that sensitive uses (e.g. residential use) should not be located. This is due to odour emitted from the WWTW operated by Southern Water, located to the immediate east of the Site. Following the results of the modelling work, a 100m standoff zone was implemented into the design of the Development for 'calm conditions' to offset the implications of the odour. As a result, the Development incorporated

an area of open space including SuDS, allotments and formal sports into the zone identified in the air quality modelling work.

Noise

4.15 The identification of various noise sources surrounding the Site have influenced the design of the Development. Noise surveys undertaken to inform the noise assessment for the Development identified the following most significant noise sources:

- Noise from Viridor recycling facility operations, adjacent to the southeast corner of the Site;
- Noise from uses within Ford Industrial Estate, adjacent to the western boundary of the Site;
- Noise from road traffic on Ford Lane, adjacent to the north of the Site and Yapton Road, adjacent to the south-western boundary of the Site; and
- Noise from Grundon Waste Management Facility operations including associated traffic, to the northeast of the Site.

4.16 To mitigate the noise impacts from the above source surrounding the Site, the design of the Development has evolved so that noisier types of use are sited away from residential properties and the inclusion of acoustic barrier/bunds and screening in the Development.

Landscape and Views

4.17 Following a Site survey and desk-based analysis of landscape and visual considerations, the following opportunities were identified:

- Opportunity to consolidate existing tree belts within a wider proposed central woodland, to help screen less desirable land uses adjacent to residential areas and create consistency within the centre of the Site;
- Opportunity to link proposed central woodland (and existing tree network) with surrounding areas and potentially create a new park in the location that links existing and new communities;
- Opportunity to create a new green link to the north of the Site;
- Opportunity to create a new east-west connection between the existing parish settlements incorporating existing public rights of way, where available;
- Opportunity for a green gap to be incorporated in the north and centre of the Site that ensures there is a break between built development from long distance views in the South Downs National Park;

- Opportunity to use the geometry of the existing runways to inform character and design language of the open space to be provided in the Development; and
- Opportunity to allow views to local landmarks such as the South Downs National Park and Arundel Castle.

4.18 The landscape strategy for the Development has evolved and been designed to take the above opportunities into consideration. The landscape concept was based on a 'figure of eight', pinching in the middle where the Development's Local Centre is proposed to be located to connect the neighbourhoods in the north and south of the Development. The design of the southern neighbourhood has been heavily influenced by the geometry of the former runways, whereas the northern neighbourhood has been influenced by the village of Ford and its rural setting. Two large parks are proposed for each neighbourhood that will be shaped by their heritage and setting to create distinctive green spaces.

4.19 In addition, the existing public footpath that runs east-west across the Site will be retained and become a key green corridor through the Site linking the surrounding communities.

[Archaeology](#)

4.20 Initial archaeological assessment work identified the potential for archaeological remains at the Site. Elements of the military remains associated with Ford Airfield (including sections of the concrete runway to the south of the Site) will be preserved. It is also proposed that the line of the former Portsmouth to Arundel canal which cuts east-west across the northern part of the Site will be used as a design feature when future Reserved Matters applications will be brought forward.

[Flood Risk](#)

4.21 The majority of the Site is located in Flood Zone 1 and therefore is at low risk of flooding. However, there is a very small area (approximately 0.01km²) within the northern boundary of the Site, which is located in Flood Zone 3 (high risk of flooding). No Development is therefore proposed within this area of the Site.