
Planning Statement

14-16 Anchor Springs, Littlehampton

Planning Statement

14-16 Anchor Springs, Littlehampton



Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	The Site	2
3.	The Proposals	3
4.	National Planning Policy	4
5.	Planning Considerations	5
6.	Conclusion	8

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide a planning statement for the accompanying Planning Application at 14-16 Anchor Springs, Littlehampton. The application is made on behalf of Foster Wickens Investments Ltd and seeks full planning permission for the change of use of a commercial property within the parade of shops along Anchor Springs from a Citizens' Advice Bureau to a Veterinary Clinic. This statement describes the site and sets out the details of the proposals and how they comply with both national and local planning policy.
- 1.2. The proposed description of development is *"Change of use from Citizens' Advice Bureau (Use Class A2) to Veterinary Clinic (Use Class Sui Generis)."*
- 1.3. The application pack comprises the following, in line with the Arun Planning Application Validation List:
 - Planning Application Form and Ownership Certificates
 - Planning Statement
 - Site Location and Block Plans
 - Existing and Proposed Floor Plans
 - Existing and Proposed Elevations
 - Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Forms
 - Validation Checklist

2. The Site

- 2.1. The application site address is 14-16 Anchor Springs, Littlehampton BN17 6BP. The site comprises the ground floor of a two storey commercial, end of terrace property within a parade of shops. The first floor falls outside of the red line application area and is used as offices by a separate operator. The application also includes two parking spaces to the rear of the site, located within a shared service area.
- 2.2. The site is accessed by members of the public on foot by Anchor Springs. Staff parking and access is provided to the rear of the site using the service yard which is accessed from Duke Street. It also provides access for waste collection, deliveries and other associated servicing.
- 2.3. The surrounding area comprises a mix of uses with ground retail and first floor office uses making up the majority of the parade of shops along Anchor Springs/Duke Street. The immediate area is characterised by commercial premises with areas of public car parking, including a car park immediately adjacent to the application site. The site is also opposite a bus stop.
- 2.4. The site is free of physical or environmental constraints. The site is not listed nor is it located in a Conservation Area. A search of the EA Flood Risk Mapping shows the site to be within Flood Zone 1 (low probability of flooding), albeit near to an area of higher flood risk.

Planning History

- 2.5. An application was made for the change of use of the site from A1 (retail) to B1 (offices) in 1993 (LU/330/93) which was granted approval. Given the historic nature of this consent, it is not considered relevant to this application. There is no other planning history for the site.

3. The Proposals

- 3.1. As shown in the planning drawings, the application includes change of use and internal alterations to the building only and there are no external alterations proposed, with the shop front being retained in situ. The proposed change in signage would be determined under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 either under deemed consent or via a separate planning application, if necessary.
- 3.2. The most recent use of the site as a Citizens' Advice Bureau is no longer required in this location and so the site is currently vacant.
- 3.3. The proposed use of the site is a veterinary clinic. The change in the use requires internal alterations to provide a waiting area, two consultation rooms, areas of veterinary care such as operations and x-rays and an area of kennels for holding the animals within their care.
- 3.4. It is proposed that the clinic will be facilitated by 1 no. vet and 1 no. veterinary nurse working full time. The proposed opening hours are in line with that of retail uses, as shown below:
- Monday to Tuesday 08:30 – 17:30
 - Wednesday 08:00 – 18:00
 - Thursday to Friday 08:30 – 17:30
 - Saturday 08:30 – 17:00
 - Sunday and bank holidays - Closed
- 3.5. To serve the site, there are two parking spaces allocated to the unit within the rear service yard which are proposed for use by the vet and nurse working on site. Parking is available for customers within the public car park immediately to the east of the application site. The site is also within close proximity to a bus stop, opposite the public car park.
- 3.6. It is proposed that the service yard will include separate waste and recycling bins for storage and collection. Any clinical waste is to be stored inside the building within a dedicated freezer and collected weekly by a specialised contractor.

4. National Planning Policy

- 4.1. The Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is material to decision making in respect of all planning applications.
- 4.2. The planning system plays an important role in supporting economic growth. NPPF Paragraph 80 sets out that, planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. To this end, the NPPF advises that, *“significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.”*
- 4.3. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking, the NPPF is clear that this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay (Paragraph 11).
- 4.4. The NPPF is clear that local planning authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan (Paragraph 86). In this instance, the delivery of a veterinary clinic does not conflict with the provisions of policies RET SP1 or RET DM1 of the Development Plan (see section 5).
- 4.5. Chapter 12 of the NPPF promotes the Government’s intention to achieve well-designed places. Paragraph 124 sets out that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.
- 4.6. Paragraph 127 of the NPPF sets out that planning decisions should ensure that development:
- will function well and add to the overall quality of the area;
 - are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
 - are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
 - create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.
- 4.7. Paragraph 108 states that, in considering sites that are allocated for development in plans, it should be ensured that:
- opportunities to promote sustainable transport mode have been taken up;
 - safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users; and
 - any significant impacts from the development on the transport network or highways safety can be mitigated.
- 4.8. Paragraph 109 is clear that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact upon highways safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be **‘severe’** (Savills emphasis).

5. Planning Considerations

- 5.1. The relevant Development Plan documents for this site area are the Arun Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted 2018) and the Littlehampton Neighbourhood Plan ('made' 2014). This section will assess the key planning considerations within the context of the relevant policies of these documents.

Principle of Development

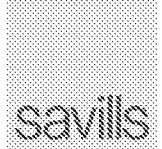
- 5.2. The site is located within the defined settlement boundary of Littlehampton as shown in the Policies Maps. Policy SD SP2 (Built-up Area Boundary) states that *"Development should be focused within the Built Up Area Boundaries and will be permitted, subject to consideration against other policies of this Local Plan"*. In addition, Policy 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development and supports proposals that accord with the provisions of the Neighbourhood Plan. As such, it is considered that the principle of development on this site is acceptable subject to the following considerations being compliant with the Plans.

Town Centre Uses

- 5.3. The Policies Maps also shows the site being located with the town centre of Littlehampton and as forming part of the town's secondary retail frontage. Policy RET SP1 sets out the town centre hierarchy within the District, with Littlehampton being a main focus for a wide range of services. The policy states that *"The Council will positively welcome developments and initiatives aimed at the sustainable economic growth and social wellbeing of the town centres. Such developments will diversify customer choice, aid economic resilience, improve quality both in design and the range of facilities and enhance competitiveness."*
- 5.4. For development within the town centre, policy RET DM1 sets out the overarching criteria for the consideration of appropriate uses and states the developments will be permitted where:
- *"a. The proposal is of a high standard of design, materials and layout and has due regard to the character of the site and its surroundings, however this does not limit the potential for outstanding or innovative design to enhance the character of the area;*
 - *b. It is easily accessible by public transport;*
 - *c. It includes provision for access by cycle and on foot;*
 - *d. It includes appropriate provision to enable access for people with disabilities; and*
 - *e. The design incorporates crime prevention measures."*
- 5.5. The proposed development respects the character of the area through the lack of physical alterations to the elevations of the site including the retention of the shop front and maintains its retail character with a service being provided to the public with access directly from the street. The site is easily accessible by public transport being located opposite a bus stop and is also in a cyclable and walkable area given its location within the town centre. Double doors and stepless access, along with immediate proximity to a public car park allow people with physical disabilities to access the site. Due to the lack of any physical design alterations, there is no potential for an increase in crime related to the design of the scheme. As such it is considered that the proposals comply with policy RET DM1.

Planning Statement

14-16 Anchor Springs, Littlehampton



- 5.6. In terms of the sites location within the secondary retail frontage of the town, Policy RET DM1 focuses on the provision of retail, financial and professional services and food and drink premises (Use Classes A1, A2 and A3 respectively). It does not exclude the use of premises outside of these defined uses. In addition, the proposed change of use to a veterinary clinic complies with the criteria for uses outside of A1, which are that:
- *"a. The proposal would not create a concentration of non-retail uses to the detriment of the vitality of the town centre;*
 - *b. Provision is made for a window display, appropriate to a shop front, which is in keeping with the character of the shopping area; and*
 - *c. There is no detrimental effect on the character or amenities of the area through smell, litter or noise."*
- 5.7. The proposed change of use would not result in the loss of an A1 retail unit as the most recent use of the site fell within A2 and will therefore not undermine the viability or vitality of the secondary retail frontage.. The scheme proposes to maintain the shop front as it currently exists, with clear pedestrian access from the street and a shop window clearly showing the use of the premises. In addition, the proposals do not create an increase in smell or litter. Any clinical waste is to be stored inside the building within a dedicated freezer and collected weekly by a specialised contractor. It is not considered to have a detrimental impact on residential amenity as a result of any noise from animals on site (as set out in paragraph 5.10).
- 5.8. From a review of the retail policies mentioned above, it is considered that the application is acceptable in terms of its location within and impact upon the town centre of Littlehampton.

Parking and Access

- 5.9. The application site is accessed primarily on foot via Anchor Springs. Customers are able to park adjacent to the site within the public car park or other nearby public car parking within the Town Centre. The site is also opposite a bus stop making public transport a feasible option for customers. The number 700 service between Brighton and Chichester stops in this location, around every 20 minutes, plus the more local number 9 service every hour. The staff parking, as well as servicing, delivery and waste collection is accessed via Duke Street which leads to the rear of the property. The Arun Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document (January 2020) does not set out standards for a veterinary clinic due to its nature as a Sui Generis use and therefore it is judged that the parking for such a use should be considered on a case by case basis. The provision of 1:1 staff parking and nearby public parking for customers is considered appropriate in this town centre location.

Noise and Amenity

- 5.10. Given the limited number of residential properties within the vicinity of this town centre site which is characterised by commercial uses, it is considered that there is limited prospect of distribution to residential amenity. The closest residential properties to the application site are located across the service yard to the rear of the site, on the corner of Duke St and the service yard itself. It is not anticipated that the change of use of the application site would create any change in the amount of comings and goings in this area. The potential for increased noise from the application site due to the change of use is limited due to the limited size and scale of the proposed use. However, should the Local Planning Authority consider it necessary, assessment and mitigation can be explored via a suitably worded planning condition.

Planning Statement

14-16 Anchor Springs, Littlehampton



Planning Obligations

- 5.11. The Arun District Council Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule (January 2020) sets out the chargeable rates for different types of development within the District. All development that falls outside of residential, older persons housing and retail is zero rated. As such, CIL is not applicable to this application.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1. As shown in this planning statement, the proposed change of use of the application site from a Citizens Advice Bureau to a veterinary clinic is fully compliant with National Planning Policy, as well as the provisions of the Development Plan. The scheme provides a valuable service to the town centre of Littlehampton whilst creating limited impact in terms of design, transport and amenity.
- 6.2. It is therefore requested that the application be approved without delay.

Bryony Stala
Associate Director

Joanne Prichard
Senior Planner

2 Charlotte Place
Southampton
SO14 0TB

2 Charlotte Place
Southampton
SO14 0TB