

PLANNING STATEMENT

**The Windmill Inn Public House & 34 Mill Lane, Rustington, West
Sussex. BN16 3JN.**

*Redevelopment for retirement living accommodation for older people comprising 28 retirement apartments
and 3 retirement cottages, including communal facilities, access, car parking and landscaping.*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- i. This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a revised detailed planning application for the proposed retirement living development at The Windmill Inn Public House & 34 Mill Lane, Rustington (the Site). The application proposes the erection of 28 retirement apartments and 3 retirement cottages, together with access, parking and landscaping. The revised submission has been made following the refusal and dismissal of an appeal in July 2025 for an identical scheme on the sole grounds of surface water drainage. This revised application is made following new ground testing and winter groundwater monitoring at the site and proposes a drainage strategy approach for ground infiltration which is sat at the top of the drainage hierarchy.
- ii. The UK faces a rapidly growing and ageing population. The Government aims to ‘significantly boost the supply of housing’. The PPG is unequivocal in its message that “the need to provide housing for older people is *critical*”.
- iii. The provision of retirement housing releases under-occupied family homes back into the housing market. This should be afforded significant weight in the determination of the application. In November 2021, the then Housing Minister, Christopher Pincher sought to encourage older people to downsize, highlighting that there were over 3 million people unable to downsize due to lack of suitable housing. The Government is currently looking at ways to remove barriers to the development of the later living sector.
- iv. There is a clear need for older persons housing in the Arun district. The Council have recently released a Draft Arun Housing Need Review (2023) which acknowledges the ONS 2021 Mid-Year data estimates as being heavily skewed towards an older demographic, with 28.5% of the population being 65 years and over in Arun. This is coupled with the 2021 Census Data showing an increase of 19.3% in people aged 65 years and over between 2011 and 2021.
- v. Based on this ageing population, the Arun Updated Housing Needs Evidence (2016) identified the projected need for suitable older persons housing in the District. This concluded a potential need for 2,257 specialist homes for older people between 2011-2031 to be able to keep up with the demand. Given this data set is now nearly a decade old, it must only be presumed that with the upwards trend in the ageing population within the District, as identified by the 2021 Census Data, that the demand for this type of specialist accommodation has continued to increase. This would therefore suggest that there is currently a significant shortfall of suitable housing.
- vi. The PPG is clear: “*where there is an identified unmet need for specialist housing, local authorities should take a positive approach to schemes that propose to address this need.*” When considering the planning balance, substantial weight should be given to the proposal considering the high levels of specialist housing need identified.
- vii. The proposal is on a brownfield site. In accordance with the NPPF (para 125c) substantial weight should be given to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes.
- viii. The site is in a highly sustainable location. It offers fantastic opportunity for the future residents to walk to local shops and services in Rustington. The site is also in close proximity to the public transport networking, providing local and national travel opportunities. Substantial weight should be given to delivering development in a highly sustainable location.
- ix. The principle of development is considered acceptable, this has been determined by undertaking extensive research into the continuing deficiencies of the site as a viable public house. The site is also a sustainably located brownfield site, which takes pressure off the redevelopment of greenfield sites in this area. The proposal therefore accords with Policy SD SP2, OSR DM1, EMP DM1, H DM1, H DM2, Policy 6 of the Neighbourhood Plan, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

- x. The scheme has been carefully designed to reflect the character and scale of the surrounding area whilst making efficient use of this sustainable brownfield site. Substantial weight should be afforded to the efficient use of land as required by paragraph 125 of the NPPF.
- xi. There are numerous economic, social and environmental benefits associated with the application. Achieving sustainable development through these three pillars is at the forefront of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023), with particular reference to paragraph 8. These benefits respectively should be afforded substantial weight in the determination of this application.
- xii. Overall, the proposal will provide redevelopment of a brownfield site in a sustainable location. It will provide much needed housing for older people, providing social and economic benefits and environmental benefits. Therefore, delivering a sustainable development that is in accordance with policies within the Development Plan and the NPPF.

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Planning Issues Limited, on behalf of Churchill Living, in support of a detailed planning application at The Windmill Inn Public House & 34 Mill Lane, Rustington.
- 1.2 The planning application seeks permission to redevelop the site for 28 retirement living apartments and 3 retirement cottages, including communal facilities, access, car parking and landscaping. The mix comprises 19no. one-bedroom apartments and 9no. two-bedroom apartments, plus 3 x 2no. bedroom cottages.
- 1.3 This statement accompanies a detailed planning application. It should be read in conjunction with the following supporting documents which accompany the application:
- Planning Statement by Planning Issues Ltd;
 - Design and Access Statement by Churchill Living;
 - Ecological Appraisal; Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment and Bat Survey Report by Tetra Tech;
 - Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment by The Civil Engineering Practice;
 - Landscaping Strategy and Masterplan by James Blake Associates;
 - Statement of Community Engagement by DevComms;
 - Transport Statement by Paul Basham Associates Ltd;
 - Tree Protection Plan, Arboricultural Method Statement and Manual for Managing Trees on Development Sites by Barrell Tree Care;
 - Energy Statement by FOCUS Consultants.
 - Viability Report by Savills; and
 - Economic Infographic by Lichfields.
 - Draft S106 Agreement.
- 1.4 The application includes the following plans:
- 20091RT_PL001 Rev P1 – Site Location Plan
 - 20091RT_PL002 Rev P1 – Site Plan
 - 20091RT_PL003 Rev P1 – Ground Floor Plan
 - 20091RT_PL004 Rev P1 – First Floor Plan
 - 20091RT_PL005 Rev P1 – Second Floor Plan
 - 20091RT_PL006 Rev P1– Roof Plan
 - 20091RT_PL007 Rev P1 – Elevation AA
 - 20091RT_PL008 Rev P1 – Elevation BB_CC_DD
 - 20091RT_PL009 Rev P1 – Cottage Plans
 - 20091RT_PL010 Rev P1 – Cottage Elevations
 - 20091RT_PL011 Rev P1 – Site Distances & Levels Plan

- 1.5 This statement briefly explains the concept of retirement living; the national and local planning policy; an analysis of the scheme against the policy context and wider material considerations.

OLDER PEOPLE HOUSING

- 2.1 On 26th June 2019 the Planning Practice Guidance was updated to include ‘*Housing for older and disabled people*’ to assist Councils in preparing planning policies on housing for older and disabled people. The Guidance sets out that providing housing for older people is ‘critical’¹.
- 2.2 It is well documented that the UK faces an ageing population. The recently released Census 2021 data shows that on Census Day 2021 there were more people than ever aged 65 years and over in England, with more than one in six people (18.4%) being over the age of 65.
- 2.3 The recent House of Lords Built Environment Committee Report sets out that this ageing population must be reflected in the types of new homes built, particularly as there will be an increase in older people living alone (January 2022).
- 2.4 The House of Lords Built Environment Committee Report sets out that this ageing population must be reflected in the types of new homes built, particularly as there will be an increase in older people living alone (January 2022). The Government’s aspirations are set out in the Adult Social Reform White Paper published in December 2021. They seek provision of a greater range of specialist housing for older people with the aim of increasing choice and allowing people to live independently while having better access to care and support.
- 2.5 Recognising the issues being faced, the Government has recently set up a task force to help improve the housing options for older people. The task force will work across housing, health and care sectors with the aim of driving an increase in the volume and range of housing options for older people.
- 2.6 Previous Housing Minister Rachel Maclean has recently stated “*Making sure older people can access the right homes that meet their needs in later life is a government priority. And by unlocking more housing for older people, we can also have a hugely beneficial impact on their health and wellbeing*”².
- 2.7 Offering older people a better choice of accommodation to suit their changing needs can help them live independently for longer, feel more connected to their communities, and help reduce costs to the social care and health systems. Therefore, an understanding of how the ageing population affects housing needs is something to be considered from the early stages of plan-making through to decision-making.
- 2.8 The Applicant has specialised in the provision of purpose-built apartments for older people since 1998 and has provided development proposals throughout England and Wales.
- 2.9 The accommodation proposed is specifically designed to meet the needs of independent retired people and provides self-contained apartments for sale. A key aspect of the design is that the units are in a single block. This is essential for control over access, with safety and security being a key concern for individuals as they age. It also provides much greater benefits for social interaction. This is enhanced with the communal space, in particular the owners lounge, coffee bar and garden.
- 2.10 The type of housing proposed is defined as retirement living or sheltered housing within the PPG. It sets out:

“Retirement living or sheltered housing: This usually consists of purpose-built flats or bungalows with limited communal facilities such as a lounge, laundry room and guest room. It does not generally provide care services, but provides some support to enable residents to live independently. This can include 24 hour on-site assistance (alarm) and a warden or house manager.”

¹ Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 63-001-20190626. Available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-for-older-and-disabled-people>

² Government unveils taskforce chair to boost older people's housing - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

- 2.11 Without a range of housing options for older people, they are left with no choice but to stay in their own home, which can become unsuitable as people age, with lots of steps, or maintenance requirements. This puts additional pressure on social care services to deliver additional care at home, before people move in to high dependency care homes.
- 2.12 Providing opportunities for people to downsize into suitable and adaptable accommodation, with support on hand should they need it, meets the Government's agenda of encouraging much greater independence in old age, and reduces the pressure on social care services.
- 2.13 The communal facilities proposed are:
- A lodge manager employed by a Management Company to provide assistance and security for the owners of the apartments;
 - A video entry system which is linked to the owners' television in their apartments;
 - An owners' lounge is provided for use by all residents and their guests within the building;
 - Communal lifts are provided for use by residents and visitors;
 - A communal toilet for use by residents and visitors;
 - A communal landscaped garden area;
 - A guest suite for use of relatives of property owners who wish to stay overnight;
 - A communal car parking area for use by residents who have a car (unallocated);
 - An area for mobility scooters and bicycles to be sorted and charged; and
 - A communal refuse store.
- 2.14 The apartments are sold by the Applicant with a lease containing an age restriction which ensures that only people of 60 years and over with a spouse or partner of at least 55, can live in the development. It is suggested that this is secured by the following condition.
- "Each of the apartments hereby permitted shall be occupied only by:*
- *Persons aged 60 or over; or*
 - *A spouse/or partner (who is themselves over 55 years older) living as part of a single household with such a person or persons; or*
 - *Persons who were living in one of the apartments as part of a single household with a person or persons aged 60 or over has since died; or*
 - *Any other individual expressly agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority."*
- 2.15 Notwithstanding the age restriction, the average age of purchaser of the apartments are 78 years old, with the average age of all occupiers being late 70s. Typically 70% of apartments are single occupancy, often occupied by a widow. The decision to purchase this type of development is predominantly needs based, with residents forced to move as their existing property is no longer suitable or they can no longer access the shops or services they need.
- 2.16 A recent report '**Too Little, Too Late?**' sets out that downsizing is key to tackling the national housing crisis. It acknowledges that under occupation is greatest among the elderly population but current housing stock in the UK limits their options. If more family homes are freed up by downsizing, the benefits would be felt across the housing market, with families being able to 'upsize' and smaller homes becoming available for first time buyers. This is further supported by a report '**Chain Reaction**' (August 2020) which finds:
- Circa 3 million older people in the UK aged 65+ want to downsize.
 - If those that wanted to were able to do so, this would free up nearly 2 million spare bedrooms, predominantly in three bedroom homes with gardens, ideally suited for young families with children.
 - The chain impact would be a major boost for first time buyers with roughly 2 in every 3 retirement properties built releasing homes suitable for first time buyers.

- 2.17 Speaking to the House of Lords Built Environment Committee on 2nd November 2021, Housing Minister, Christopher Pincher said he wants to encourage older people in large homes to downsize and make way for first time buyers. He stated that four in ten homes were too big for their owners and that Michael Gove, the Communities Secretary was looking at ways to “identify and remove the barriers to development of the later living sector”. He reiterated the 3 million people that can’t downsize due to the lack of suitable housing. He noted that in the early 1990s something like 31% of properties were under-occupied, now that percentage is 38%.
- 2.18 A report by Knight Frank acknowledges that whilst there is an increase in the number of older people’s housing units being developed, this rate is still dwarfed by the rapidly ageing population. By 2037, population projections suggest that one in four of us will be over 65. Thus even while delivery of older people’s housing may increase, in real terms the numbers of older people housing units per 1,000 individuals is expected to drop. Thus a **step change in new delivery** is required if the imbalance between need and supply is to be addressed.
- 2.19 In addition, the majority of existing retirement housing is within the social rented sector, thus only available for those in need of affordable housing. A large proportion of older people are owner occupiers, and particularly own without a mortgage. They are therefore unable to apply for social rented housing, and in many cases wish to retain equity and so would be looking for a property to buy.
- 2.20 The ‘**Happier and Healthier**’ Report (2019) clearly sets out that this type of retirement living accommodation will save the NHS on average £3,500 per person per annum compared to mainstream housing.
- 2.21 In recent evidence within a report ‘**Silver Saviours of the High Street**’ has shown the significant economic benefits that retirement living developments can have on local high streets. The residents are ‘basket shoppers’, often walking into town on a daily basis to get the shopping they need. They will also utilise the high street during the week, when it’s typically at its quietest. Through downsizing residents often have more disposable income and more time to use local facilities.

THE SITE AND PLANNING HISTORY

The Site

- 3.1 The 0.31ha site comprises of The Windmill Inn Public House, with associated garden area and parking court, as well as 34 Mill Lane – a residential property with front parking and rear garden area.
- 3.2 The site is located along Mill Lane, a main route into the eastern end of Rustington town centre. The surrounding area comprises of residential dwellings with industrial uses located to the north of the railway line.
- 3.3 The site is located to the north of Rustington main centre, with a host of services and amenities, as well as being located circa 1km from Angmering railway station which is to the east. As such, the site is located in a very sustainable location.

Planning History

- 3.4 The most relevant planning application and decision on this site is the applicant's previous application for 28 Retirement Living apartments and 3 Retirement Living cottages (PR/143/24/PL) which was refused by the Council in February 2025 on two grounds of failure to provide an affordable housing provision contrary to policy AH SP2 of the Arun Local Plan, and a failure to demonstrate that on-site infiltration is not viable contrary to policy W DM3 of the Arun Local Plan and policy 4 of the Rustington Neighbourhood Plan and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.
- 3.5 The applicant chose to appeal (APP/C3810/W/25/3361225) the Council's decision and whilst the matter of affordable housing provision was resolved the Inspector agreed with the Council in respect to the scheme not being able to demonstrate an acceptable drainage strategy solution in accordance with the SuDs hierarchy. Accordingly, the appeal was dismissed in July 2025.

Community Engagement

- 3.6 Churchill Living carried out public consultations with the local community as part of their design process and to present their proposals to the local public with the previous application.
- 3.7 An online public consultation was held between 8th July to the 14th July 2024 on a dedicated website, where plans were available to view, together with an interactive feedback form. A copy of the information boards is appended to the Statement of Community Involvement.
- 3.8 Letters were issued on 2nd July 2024 to circa. 266 residential and commercial addresses bordering and within close proximity to the site.
- 3.9 In addition, a press release was issued on 8th July 2024 and was published by the Sussex Express on the same day.
- 3.10 The project website received 728 views from 89 people from during the event. Five feedback forms were received during the public consultation. Feedback acknowledged that the proposed development would provide significant benefits to the local economy and reduce pressures on NHS services.
- 3.11 The most common response was to support the principle of development with 80% of respondents confirming support for the principle of redeveloping this brownfield site for retirement housing. Therefore, the need for older persons housing in this area is recognised.
- 3.12 Overall, the feedback was generally positive, with any queries raised throughout being responded to within the SCI which has been submitted in support of this application.

FRAMEWORK

- 4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Development Plan

- 4.2 The Development Plan for Arun District Council consists of the Adopted Arun Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted in July 2018) and the Made Rustington Neighbourhood Plan (adopted in 2014). Arun District Council are in the process of adopting the Arun Local Plan Update 2023-2041. At this time, the Council have consulted on the Direction of Travel Document which ended on the 13th May 2024.

- 4.3 The planning policies from the Arun Local Plan 2011-2031 (2018) relevant to the redevelopment of this site to older persons housing on this proposal site are listed below:

- SD SP1 – Sustainable Development
- SD SP2 – Built Up Area Boundary
- RET SP1 – Hierarchy of Town Centres
- H SP1 – The Housing Requirement
- H DM1 – Housing Mix
- AH SP2 – Affordable Housing
- H DM2 - Independent Living and Care Homes
- D SP1 – Design
- D DM1 – Aspects of Form and Design Quality
- D DM2 – Internal Space Standards
- EMP DM1 - Employment Land; Development Management
- ECC SP1 – Adapting to Climate Change
- ECC SP2 – Energy and Climate Change Mitigation
- OSR DM1 – Open Space, Sport & Recreation
- T DM1 – Sustainable Travel and Public Rights of Way
- ENV DM5 – Development and Biodiversity
- W DM1 – Water Supply and Quality

- 4.4 The planning policies from the Rustington Neighbourhood Plan relevant to the redevelopment of this site to older persons housing on this proposal site are listed below:

- Policy 2 – Housing Design
- Policy 4 – Sustainable Drainage
- Policy 6 – Local Employment

- 4.5 There are also a number of Supplementary Planning Documents which have been reviewed to inform this application:

- Arun Parking Standards SPD (2020)
- Arun District Design Guide Update (February 2024)

- 4.6 As set out above, Arun District Council is preparing to adopt the Arun Local Plan Update 2023-2041. In March 2024, the Council published their Direction of Travel Document which was consulted on up until May 2024.

- 4.7 At this time, no draft emerging Local Plan has been published and therefore there are no emerging policies. In addition, the Local Development Scheme identifies adoption is not expected until Winter 2026.
- 4.8 Therefore, for the purposes of this application, the Arun Local Plan 2014-2031 and the Rustington Neighbourhood Plan have been reviewed.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.9 National Planning Policy Framework was updated on 12th December 2024 and sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The latest version of the NPPF replaced the previous National Planning Policy Framework published in March 2012, and revised in July 2018, February 2019, July 2021, September 2023 and December 2023.
- 4.10 Paragraph 8 of the revised NPPF highlights three dimensions to sustainable development being economic, social, and environmental objectives.
- 4.11 The revised NPPF at paragraph 11 states that for plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development which for decision making this means:
- "c) Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or*
 - d) Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
 - ii. Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.*
- 4.12 Paragraph 48 identifies that planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible, and within statutory timescales unless longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing.
- 4.13 The Government's policy, as set out in the revised NPPF, is to boost significantly, the supply of housing. Paragraph 61 reads:
- "To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, **that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed** and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay."*
- 4.14 The NPPF looks at delivering a sufficient supply of homes, Paragraph 63 identifies within this context, the size, and type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies including older people requiring retirement housing.
- 4.15 Paragraph 73 of the revised NPPF acknowledges that small and medium sized sites and make an important contribution to meeting housing requirement of an area and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of good mix of sites local planning authorities should support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes.

- 4.16 Paragraph 90(f) of the NPPF sets out planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation. Planning policies should recognise that residential development often plays an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and encourage residential development on appropriate sites.
- 4.17 The NPPF identifies at Paragraph 125 that planning policies and decisions should:
- c) give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land
 - d) promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained, and available sites could be used more effectively.
- 4.18 The Government recognises at Paragraph 129 that planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:
- 'a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;*
 - b) local market conditions and viability;*
 - c) the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;*
 - d) the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and*
 - e) the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.*
- 4.19 The NPPF places a strong emphasis of achieving well-designed places at Paragraph 135 advising that new developments should ensure that they:
- 'a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
 - b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
 - c) 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);*
 - d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
 - e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodation and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
 - f) 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; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.'*
- 4.20 The overriding message in the NPPF is one of sustainable development.

Planning Practice Guidance

- 4.21 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) is a material consideration when taking decisions on planning applications. The PPG provides guidance on how policies in the NPPF should be implemented.
- 4.22 In June 2019 the PPG was updated to include a section on Housing for Older and Disabled People, recognising its importance. Paragraph 001³ states:
- “The need to provide housing for older people is critical.** People are living longer lives and the proportion of older people in the population is increasing. In mid-2016 there were 1.6 million people aged 85 and over; **by mid-2041 this is *projected to double to 3.2 million***. Offering older people a better choice of accommodation to suit their changing needs can help them live independently for longer, feel more connected to their communities and help reduce costs to the social care and health systems. Therefore, an understanding of how the ageing population affects housing needs is something to be considered from the early stages of plan-making through to decision-taking” (emphasis added).
- 4.23 Paragraph 003⁴ recognises that “*the health and lifestyles of older people will differ greatly, as will their housing needs, which can range from accessible and adaptable general needs housing to specialist housing with high levels of care and support.*” Thus a range of provision needs to be planned for.
- 4.24 Paragraph 006⁵ sets out “plan-making authorities should set clear policies to address the housing needs of groups with particular needs such as older and disabled people. These policies can set out how the plan-making authority will consider proposals for the different types of housing that these groups are likely to require.” Therefore, recognising that housing for older people has its own requirements and cannot be successfully considered against criteria for general family housing.
- 4.25 Paragraph: 016⁶ sets out that “Decision makers should consider the location and viability of a development when assessing planning applications for specialist housing for older people”. It goes on to clearly state: **“Where there is an identified unmet need for specialist housing, local authorities should take a positive approach to schemes that propose to address this need”** (emphasis added).
- 4.26 Furthermore, in September 2020, the PPG updated its guidance on Town Centre and Retail, recognising the importance of diversifying our town centres. Paragraph 001⁷ emphasises the benefit that residential development in town centres can have in ensuring vitality and viability, whilst providing clear guidance that: **‘Local authorities may wish to consider locating specialist housing for different groups including older people within town centres of edge of centre locations.’**

Draft Consultation National Planning Policy Framework (December 2025)

- 4.27 On the 16th December 2025 the Government published a Draft National Planning Policy Framework for consultation alongside a written ministerial statement. The draft National Planning Policy Framework closed for consultation responses on the 10th March 2026. The draft National Planning Policy Framework is capable of being a material planning consideration but it is considered at the current time that limited weight could be afforded to it. The progress of this planning application may coincide with the progress of the draft National

³ Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 63-001-20190626. Available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-for-older-and-disabled-people>

⁴ Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 63-003-20190626. Available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-for-older-and-disabled-people>

⁵ Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 63-006-20190626. Available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-for-older-and-disabled-people>

⁶ Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 63-016-20190626. Available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-for-older-and-disabled-people>

⁷ Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 2b-001-20190722. Available here: [Town centres and retail - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/town-centres-and-retail)

Planning Policy Framework and the weight to be afforded to the draft may change and indeed may become national planning policy by the time of the determination of this application.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The Proposed Development

- 5.1 The proposal subject to this application is for the redevelopment of the site to form 28 retirement living apartments and 3 retirement cottages. The site is located within the settlement boundary of Rustington.
- 5.2 The development will utilise one of the existing access points (currently used by 34 Mill Lane), as well as the stopping up of the other two existing access points which serves the northern aspect of 34 Mill Lane, as well as the Windmill Inn's parking area. The access will lead into a parking court that contains 13 parking spaces, with 3 spaces allocated for the cottages. A mobility scooter store is located along the eastern side of the parking court, catering for circa 5 scooters. There are also several pedestrian access points from Mill Lane.
- 5.3 The proposed development will include a high-quality landscaped amenity space in the form of communal garden area which will be maintained in perpetuity by the applicant's sister company, 'Churchill Estates Management'. In addition, there will be internal communal areas including the Owner's Lounge and guest suite. Each of the cottages will also have their own private amenity space with back gardens.
- 5.4 The proposed apartment development is 2.5 storeys in height, constructed of red brick and render. The frontage also comprises of a central linking element in black weatherboarding, this section also has contrasting roof tiles to the main element of the building, as well as UPVC windows, doors and rainwater goods. The cottages are of a lower scale and of 1.5 storeys in height in similar palette of materials.

Principal of Development

- 5.5 The Development Plan used by the Council consists of the Arun Local Plan (adopted in 2018) and the Rustington Neighbourhood Plan (adopted in 2014).
- 5.6 The site falls within the settlement boundary and Built-Up Area boundary of Rustington, Policy SD SP2 (Built-Up Area Boundary) from the Local Plan states development should be focused within the Built-Up Area boundaries and will be permitted, subject to consideration against other policies of this Local Plan.
- 5.7 Rustington is identified as Local Service Centre as per Policy RET SP1 (Hierarchy of Town Centres). The policy states Rustington will maintain its existing role as a centre providing a good range of shops and serving the local population, together with a range of other services and facilities.
- 5.8 The site currently comprises of the Windmill Inn Public House, which is considered a community facility within the Development Plan under paragraph 14.1.1 of the Local Plan – *'Community facilities in this context include both open spaces and built facilities for recreation, leisure, sport, arts and cultural activities'*.
- 5.9 Policy OSR DM1 (Open Space, Sport & Recreation) from the Local Plan states existing open space, outdoor and indoor sport, community, arts and cultural facilities should not be built on or redevelopment for other uses unless: a) a robust and up to date assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the facilities to be surplus to requirements; or b) the loss resulting from the proposal development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision of open space, outdoor or indoor sport, community arts and cultural facilities, which will be assessed in terms of quantity and quality and suitability of location.
- 5.10 Moreover, Policy EMP DM1 (Employment Land; Development Management) identifies that existing employment sites and premises will be protected where there remains a reasonable prospect of employment use. It goes on to identify a set of criteria which would enable the change of use from Business Class (B1-B8), or similar Sui Generis uses, this includes demonstration that the site is no longer required and is unlikely to be re-used or redeveloped. This should be clearly set out in marketing or viability appraisal.

- 5.11 As part of the original planning application submission, a Viability Study was produced by Savills which assessed The Windmill Inn's financial viability as a public house. Some of the key findings of the report have been set out below which provides evidence that the site as a public house is no longer a financially viable business.
- The current owners appointed Guy Simmonds, a specialist pub agent, to offer the freehold for sale in April 2019. During the 8 months that the pub was promoted, only one viewing was undertaken, with no offers received.
 - In March 2021, the owner was approached by an independent hotel operating who made an acceptable offer and subsequently submitted a planning application for the remodelling and extension of the property to provide a small hotel. The planning application was subsequently approved by Arun District Council in August 2022 (Planning Reference: R/60/22/PL. However, in September 2023 the hotel operator withdrew their offer prior to exchange of contracts.
 - There are circa 40 pubs listed as available for sale and/or let in West Sussex.
 - The Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) was used to test the viability of the pub. When assessing the viability, there are several factors to consider which have been listed below. Upon review, the report concludes that the existing business satisfies all but the car parking test set out by the test of viability to substantiate an alternative use for the property including it being marketed for sale.
 - Location and physical characteristics of the property and local competition
 - Review financial information recording trading performance, in order to assist in making a judgement as to the future trading potential
 - Reviewing the Campaign for Real Ale "Public House Viability Test"
 - Upon review, the report concludes that the existing business satisfies all, but the car parking test set out by the test of viability to substantiate an alternative use for the property including it being marketed for sale.
- 5.12 Paragraph 97(c) of the NPPF also requires decision makers to guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs. In light of this, the Savills Report (June 2024) also reviewed the current provision of public houses in West Sussex which are listed as available for sale freehold and leasehold, or being offered for lease to a new tenant. This research concluded that there were at least 40 pubs listed as available should a prospective pub operator be seeking representation in this region.
- 5.13 In addition to the above, the community's ability to use public houses would not be diminished with the loss of The Windmill Inn as there are a number of public houses, bars and restaurants within the immediate local area. Within a 2.2mile radius, at least 10 alternative venues have been identified, including but not limited to Quill (106 The Street, Rustington) at 0.7 miles from The Windmill Inn which provides drinking facilities and Establo Lounge, (1-5 Ash Lane Rustington) circa 0.8miles away providing food and drink. Another similar establishment is The Lamb (73 The Street, Rustington) located 1.2 miles away, providing food and drink.
- 5.14 Therefore, it is considered that as per paragraph 97(c) of the NPPF, there is sufficient provision of food and drinking establishments in the local area to meet the community's needs.
- 5.15 Similarly, upon review of Policy EMP DM1, the Viability Study produced by Savills clearly meets the criteria which would enable the change of Sui Generis uses to an alternative use. In this case the change of use relates to residential (Use Class C3) as it is demonstrable that the public house is no longer viable business.
- 5.16 In addition to the above, this proposal seeks to redevelop the site to housing for older persons. Policy H DM1 (Housing Mix) from the Local Plan states over the plan period a proportion of the housing provided should be of a type that meets the needs of older people, as identified in the most recent SHMA. Such housing could be

provided as part of the general mix of one and two bedroomed homes but should be designed to meet the needs of older people.

- 5.17 Policy H DM2 (Independent Living and Care Homes) from the Local Plan states new and extended independent living and care homes will be permitted where applications can demonstrate the following and where the proposal is consistent with all other Local Plan policies:
- a) The scheme is located within the Built-Up Area Boundary if it is a new facility.
 - b) The scheme shall be easily accessible either by foot or public transport, to community and social facilities e.g. shops, post offices, healthcare, community facilities.
 - c) The design of the scheme shall be such that it can be easily adapted to the varying needs of the users of the scheme.
 - d) The design and scale of the scheme shall be appropriate to the local context
 - e) Amenity space shall be provided
 - f) Overall, the scheme should be located where it would support and encourage the continuation of a healthy, active lifestyle.
- 5.18 In conjunction with the above, the original application was also supported by an Infographic produced by Lichfields (found at Appendix B). This infographic which is still relevant demonstrates the economic benefits the proposed development of 31 units of specialist accommodation will have on the local and wider area. In terms of job creation, the proposal will generate 69 jobs during the build programme per annum, 77 supply chain jobs per annum, as well as a further 2 direct jobs supported by the new retirement development and 2 supported jobs from increased expenditure in the local area. Therefore, this mitigates the jobs lost as a result of the loss of the public house. So, in that respect, there is no impact to employment and therefore accords with Policy EMP DM1 (Employment Land: Development Management) and Neighbourhood Plan Policy 6 (Local Employment).
- 5.19 In conclusion, it must be agreed that The Windmill Inn is not a financially viable pub - this has been consistently evidenced through the account for the last 5 year showing an overall loss, as well as recent planning history to turn the pub into an operating 20-bedroom hotel. This must also be reviewed in conjunction with the clear and evident steer in policy to support the delivery of older persons housing in the Arun District.
- 5.20 Therefore, in balance, the development of older persons housing and the subsequent benefits in terms of social, economic and environmental sustainability this scheme delivers to the local and wider community clearly outweigh the loss of this public house facility.
- 5.21 Therefore, the principle of redevelopment to form older persons housing (Use Class C3) on this site has been considered appropriate and as such accords with Policy SD SP2, OSR DM1, EMP DM1, H DM1, H DM2, Policy 6 of the Neighbourhood Plan, and the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 5.22 It must also be noted at this stage that the Council are unable to demonstrate a housing land supply (calculated at 3.23 years) and have a failed Housing Delivery Test with 70%. Therefore, paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF (2024) the '*titled balance*' is engaged.

Housing Delivery

- 5.23 There is a significant national drive to increase housing delivery. Paragraph 61 of the NPPF is clear, the Government intends to significantly boost the supply of new homes. There is an intention to deliver 300,000 new homes a year. The Government has made planning reform a priority, to speed up and plan for the homes we need.
- 5.24 The planning system has a clear role in ensuring it delivers homes where they are most needed. As set out in paragraph 119 of the NPPF this means making as much use as possible of previously developed land. The Government is championing the take up of brownfield land by encouraging the remediation of degraded or

contaminated spaces, promoting the development of under-utilised land and opening up opportunities to build upward.

- 5.25 Within the adopted Local Plan 2011-2031, Arun District Council have a housing provision target of least 20,000 dwellings to be delivered between 2011-2031. Of the 20,000- dwelling target, 847 of these will be delivered on windfall sites.
- 5.26 Brownfield sites such as the application site are essential in bringing forward sustainable housing in Rustington and this proposal will aid towards the housing provision.
- 5.27 Paragraph 70 of the NPPF acknowledges the benefits in terms of delivery offered by small and medium sized sites and encourages authorities to give great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within settlements for homes and at paragraph 124(c) that substantial weight should be given to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes.
- 5.28 As identified in the Council's latest Authority Monitoring Report (published November 2025), Arun District Council was able to demonstrate a 3.23-year supply of land.
- 5.29 In terms of the Housing Delivery Test (2023), Arun District Council achieved 70% of their housing requirement, having completed 2,366-dwellings against their 3,360-dwelling requirement.
- 5.30 In light of the above, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged as the Council have only achieved 70% in their Housing Delivery Test.
- 5.31 Notwithstanding the 3.23-year housing land supply calculation, the proposed development of older persons housing, which will be delivered within the next five years, will **significantly assist the Council in meeting its housing targets and should be given substantial weight when considering the planning balance.**

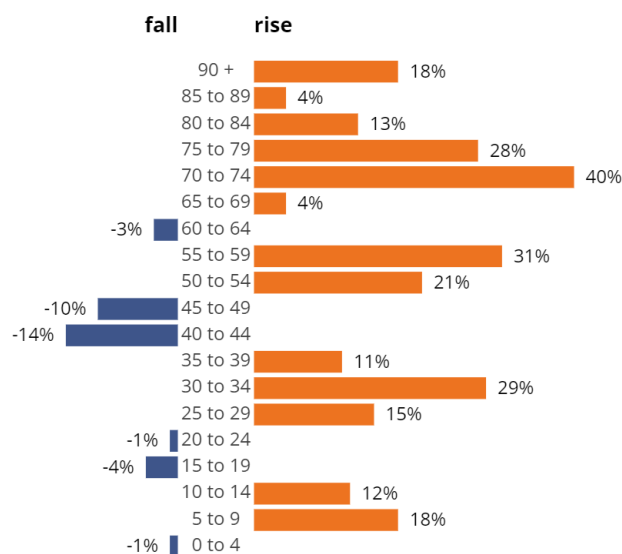
Older People Housing Need

- 5.32 On 26th June 2019 the Planning Practice Guidance was updated to include 'Housing for older and disabled people' to assist Councils in preparing planning policies on housing for older and disabled people. The Guidance sets out that providing housing for older people is 'critical'.
- 5.33 It is well documented that the UK faces an ageing population. Life expectancy is greater than it used to be and as set out above by 2032 the number of people in the UK aged over 80 is set to increase from 3.2 million to five million (ONS mid 2018 population estimates). The House of Lords Built Environment Committee Report (January 2022) requires new homes to be built that reflect our ageing population, particularly as there will be an increase in older people living alone.
- 5.34 The Homes for Later Living Report (September 2019) notes the need to deliver 30,000 retirement and extra care houses a year in the UK to keep pace with demand. Currently in the UK, we build around 8,000 retirement properties a year. This is despite the PPG setting out that the need to provide housing for older people is 'critical'. This is distinctly below the level of need and demand.
- 5.35 Recognising the issues being faced, the Government has recently set up a task force to help improve the housing options for older people. The task force will work across housing, health and care sectors with the aim of driving an increase in the volume and range of housing options for older people.
- 5.36 Housing Minister Rachel Maclean has recently stated "Making sure older people can access the right homes that meet their needs in later life is a government priority. And by unlocking more housing for older people, we can also have a hugely beneficial impact on their health and wellbeing".
- 5.37 The Government's reform of Health and Adult Social Care is underpinned by the principle of increasing independence in old age. Without choice and diversity in the housing market to allow this, many older people

are faced with limited options but to remain in often large and unsuitable accommodation, with lots of steps, or maintenance requirements. This puts additional pressure on social care services to deliver additional care at home, before people move into high dependency care homes.

- 5.38 Providing opportunities for people to downsize to suitable and adaptable accommodation, with support on hand should they need it, meets the Government's agenda of encouraging much greater independence in old age, and reduces the pressure on social care services.
- 5.39 In addition, the majority of existing retirement housing is within the social rented sector, thus only available for those in need of affordable housing. A large proportion of older people are owner occupiers, and particularly own without a mortgage. They are therefore unable to apply for social rented housing, and in many cases wish to retain equity and so would be looking for a property to buy.
- 5.40 Policy H DM1 (Housing Mix) from the Local Plan states over the plan period a proportion of the housing provided should be of a type that meets the needs of older people, as identified in the most recent SHMA. Such housing could be provided as part of the general mix of one and two bedroomed homes but should be designed to meet the needs of older people.
- 5.41 Policy H DM2 (Independent Living and Care Homes) from the Local Plan states new and extended independent living and care homes will be permitted where applications can demonstrate the following and where the proposal is consistent with all other Local Plan policies:
- g) The scheme is located within the Built-Up Area Boundary if it is a new facility.
 - h) The scheme shall be easily accessible either by foot or public transport, to community and social facilities e.g. shops, post offices, healthcare, community facilities.
 - i) The design of the scheme shall be such that it can be easily adapted to the varying needs of the users of the scheme.
 - j) The design and scale of the scheme shall be appropriate to the local context
 - k) Amenity space shall be provided
 - l) Overall, the scheme should be located where it would support and encourage the continuation of a healthy, active lifestyle.
- 5.42 People are living longer lives and the proportion of older people in the population is increasing. **In mid-2016 there were 1.6 million people aged 85 and over; by mid-2041 this is projected to double to 3.2 million.** Offering older people, a better choice of accommodation to suit their changing needs can help them live independently for longer, feel more connected to their communities and help reduce costs to the social care and health systems.
- 5.43 The 2018 Sub-National Household Projections also show that there has been a significant increase in persons aged 65 years and over in Arun. In 2018, there were 45,866 persons aged 65 and over which is estimated to increase to 68,659 by 2043. This shows an increase of 66.8% of people over the age of 65 between 2018 and 2043.
- 5.44 As recorded in 2021 Census, there are more people than ever aged 65 years and over in England. Subsequently, more than one in six people were aged 65 years and over on Census Day in 2021.
- 5.45 In Arun this is no different, there has been an increase of 19.3% in people aged 65 years and over between 2011 and 2021. Most notably, people aged between 70 to 74 have increased by 40% during this period, showing an exponential increase in older persons.

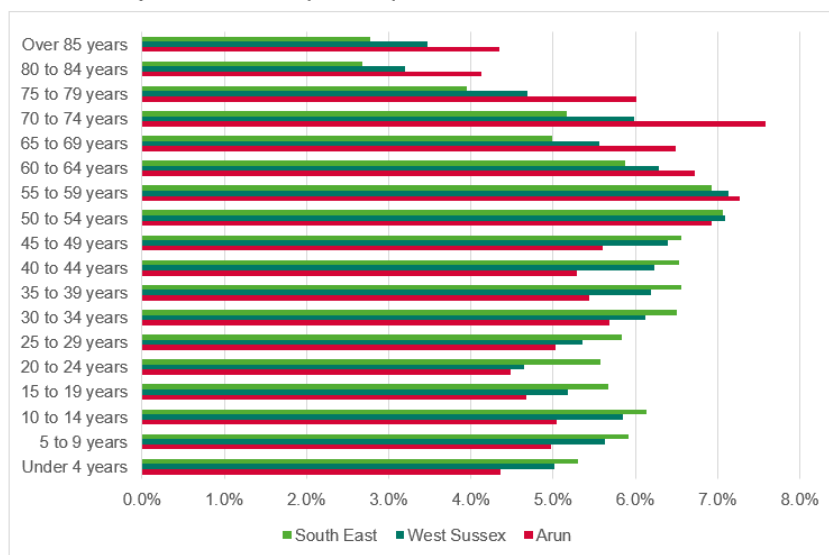
Population change (%) by age group in Arun, 2011 to 2021



5.46 As identified in the government data on Productive Healthy Ageing, Arun falls within the '25th to 75th Percentile' for life expectancy in both female and male, 86.3 years, and 83.7 years respectively.

5.47 Arun District Council have recently released a Draft Arun Housing Need Review (2023) which acknowledges the ONS 2021 Mid-Year data estimates as being heavily skewed towards an older demographic, with 28.5% of the population being 65 years and over. The table shown below highlights the ageing population in Arun in comparison to West Sussex and the Southeast.

Table 3.1 Population Structure (mid 2021)



Source: ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates

Figure 2: Population Statistics (South East, West Sussex and Arun)

5.48 In addition to the above, in 2016 the Council published their Updated Housing Needs Evidence (2016). The report identifies in 2015, it was calculated a total supply of 2,750 units of specialist older persons housing were existing in the district, this includes 1,647 units of market specialist housing and 960 affordable housing units. In conjunction with the ageing population in Arun, the Council conclude a potential need for 2,257 specialist homes for older people between 2011-2031 to be able to keep up with the demand.

Table 25: Current Supply of Specialist Housing for Older People (2015)

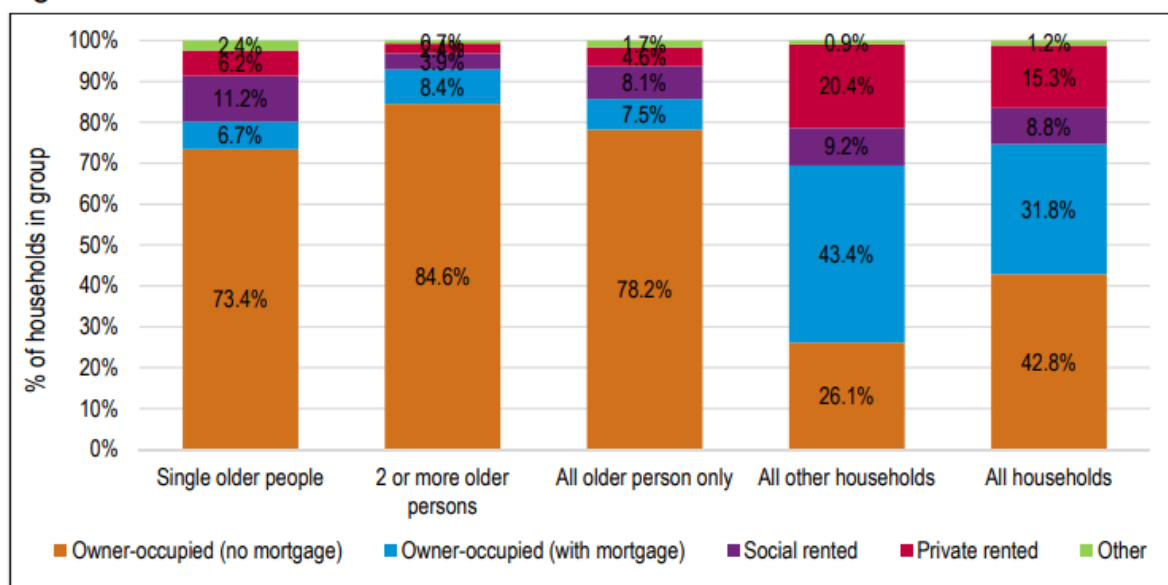
Type of housing	Market	Affordable	Total	Supply per 1,000 aged 75+
Sheltered	1,647	960	2,607	121
Extra-Care	68	73	141	7
Total	1,715	1,033	2,748	128

Source: Housing LIN

Figure 3: Current supply of specialist housing for older people (2015)

5.49 In terms of home ownership, the 2016 report goes on to identify older person households in Arun are typically owned outright (no mortgage), this equates to 78% of older person households. This shows that most occupiers have significant equity which can be put towards the purchase of a new home.

Figure 8: Tenure of Older Person Households – Arun



Source: 2011 Census

Figure 4: Older Persons Housing Tenure - Arun

5.50 This demonstrates that the development of older persons housing in the Arun District area would free up other types of housing within the housing market area. This is demonstrated in the Lichfield's Infographic Report produced specifically for the redevelopment of the proposal site in Rustington (see Appendix B). The Infographic shows that 62 potential existing homes would be released into the housing market as a result of the redevelopment of this site.

5.51 From an online review, the current retirement living schemes in the Rustington area have been listed below:

- Milliers Court, Worthing Road, East Preston, BN16 1AR (built in 2007) – comprising of 68 flats (leasehold)
- Oakhurst Gardens, Rustington Hall, Station Road, Rustington BN16 3AY (built in 1960) – comprising of 86 flats (social rent).
- The Cavendish, Station Road, Rustington BN16 3BH (built in 2017) – comprising of 10 flats (leasehold)
- Abbotswood, Station Road, Rustington BH16 3BJ (built in 2011) – Extra Care scheme comprising of 62 flats (social rent and shared ownership)
- Compton Court, Shopfield Close, Rustington BH16 3JQ (built in 1986) – comprising of 34 flats (social rent)
- Nordseter Lodge, Sea Lane, Rustington, BH16 2RE (built in 1988) – comprising of 27 flats (shared ownership)
- Chestnut Court, Sea Road, East Preston, BH16 1SR (built in 1988) – comprising of 24 flats and bungalows (leasehold).

- 5.52 This shows there is a supply of 311 retirement apartments in the Rustington area, however when reviewing this further it is clear to see that many of these (209 units) are for social rent or fall under the shared ownership scheme. Similarly, 171 of these units were built prior to 1988. This therefore only leaves 78 units being developed in recent times which are leasehold tenure.
- 5.53 From an online review (Source: Rightmove) it appears there is only one 2-bedroom apartment for sale at Milliers Court and there does not appear to be any apartments for sale in the Cavendish (Renaissance). This therefore presents extremely limited availability for any older person looking to downsize to a retirement apartment in the Rustington area.
- 5.54 Therefore, despite an estimated increase in the ageing population by 45% by 2031 and a housing target of 2,257 specialist homes between 2011-2031, there has been very limited development of retirement living schemes in the Rustington area. This presents a significant unmet need.
- 5.55 The PPG is clear: ***“where there is an identified unmet need for specialist housing, local authorities should take a positive approve to schemes that propose to address this need.”***

Impact on Health and Social Care

- 5.56 The proposal seeks to provide housing to assist older people to live as independent lives as possible. The Government’s reform of Health and Social Care is underpinned by the principle of people living in their own home as long as possible. Thus, providing specially designed housing is important in helping to address this.
- 5.57 The PPG is clear: ***“where there is an identified unmet need for specialist housing, local authorities should take a positive approve to schemes that propose to address this need.”***
- 5.58 Paragraph 001 of the PPG on Housing for Older and Disabled People is unequivocal in its message that ***“the need to provide housing for older people is critical”***. In this context, the benefits of the scheme in delivering older people’s housing against the identified needs must be given substantial weight in the determination of this application.

5.59 In accordance with the above, the 'Campaign to End Loneliness' estimates the potential national costs of loneliness to health and care services, for a cohort of people aged over 65, to be in excess of £1,700 per person over a 10-year period.

5.60 There is evidence showing that providing purpose-built retirement accommodation reduces the impact on the NHS. The **Happier and Healthier Report** (2019) clearly sets out that this type of retirement living accommodation will save the NHS on average £3,500 per person per annum compared to mainstream housing.

5.61 For the proposed 31-unit scheme, it is estimated this will lead to a fiscal savings of £141,000.

5.62 Social isolation has been identified as an age-related illness. As shown in figure 5, the site falls within an area of high risk, and is located just north of an area of very high risk (darker blue).

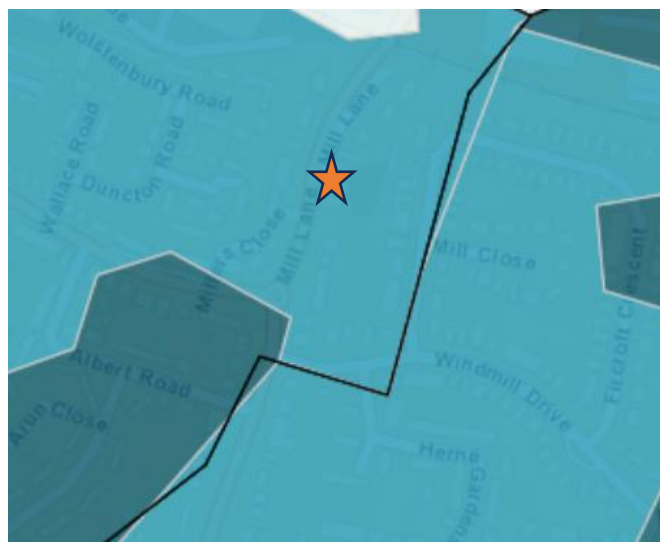


Figure 5: Risk of Loneliness - Rustington (Source: Age UK)

5.63 Depression remains the most common mental health need for older people. There is clear evidence that retirement living accommodation significantly reduces loneliness and social isolation. Residents live in accommodation with like-minded individuals. There are social gatherings in the communal lounge, ranging from coffee mornings to fish and chip suppers, to Bridge clubs. There are film nights and formal garden parties. In addition, there are daily informal interactions and residents chat to neighbours in the communal areas or the lodge manager on their way in and out of the building.

5.64 Loneliness and depression within the ageing population has been recognised by the World Health Organisation. The WHO have acknowledged that focusing on improving the wider determinants of health that affect an older person can lead to improvements in mental health and life expectancy. Within this, supportive housing and the provision of security and freedom has been recognised as important factors to help prevent these issues.

5.65 People often chose to move into retirement living accommodation after a significant life event, such as a fall or death of a partner.

5.66 Government data on Productive Healthy Ageing identifies in Arun the number of emergency hospital admissions due to falls in people aged 65 years and over is 2,100 per 100,000 which falls just outside of the worst-25th percentile in England. Arun maintains this position falling just outside of the 25th percentile in people aged 80 years plus, with 5,425 per 100,000 (data set shown below).

Falls & Fractures									
Emergency hospital admissions due to falls in people aged 65 and over	2022/23	↓	1,120	2,100	1,840*	1,933	3,130		728
Emergency hospital admissions due to falls in people aged 65 to 79	2022/23	→	340	953	866*	928	1,737		389
Emergency hospital admissions due to falls in people aged 80 plus	2022/23	↓	780	5,424	4,662*	4,845	7,628		1,709

Figure 6: Emergency Hospital Emissions Due to Falls (Source: Productive Healthy Ageing Data)

5.67 The consequence of falls can have a significant impact on health and social care services. It can lead to the need for regular care at home or even admission to a residential care home if the house is no longer suitable. Options such as the proposed retirement living scheme offers a specifically designed environment, with level access throughout to enable older people to live safe and independent lives.

- 5.68 Furthermore, the proposed development will not be creating new residents. Evidence from Churchill Living's existing schemes is that at least 50% of residents come from a 5-mile radius around the site. These residents will already be within the local health service and will not place any increased pressure on the local facilities.

Design Considerations

- 5.69 A detailed assessment of the local character has been undertaken to greater understand the site and its wider setting. The Design and Access Statement has also been produced to evaluate the character and setting of the surrounding area. This section should be read in tandem to the Design and Access Statement.
- 5.70 The proposed main development consists of a 2-2.5 storey stepped linear apartment building. Materials are proposed to include red brick, white render, as well as a central element comprising of black weatherboarding. The main building also comprises of brick detailing, tile hanging, as well as contrasting red and grey roof tiles. The cottages are chalet style standing at 1.5 storeys, comprising of a similar materials palette of red brick with red roof tiles.
- 5.71 The main apartment building, although a singular building, the design approach has been detailed in a way to appear as two detached residential dwellings, with a central linking element proposed in the black weatherboarding. This reduces the overall scale and mass of the building to ensure it sits appropriately within its setting.
- 5.72 Furthermore, the building has been broken with varying roof heights and two gable frontages to break the overall scale of the building. The step in the building line also ensures the building does not appear as one large building and provides visual interest.
- 5.73 The main elevation of the building fronts Mill Lane, which predominantly comprises of residential dwellings. The proposed building footprint follows the same building line as the current public house which currently sits as an anomaly along Mill Lane by way of being set forward when compared with neighbouring dwellings. The proposal also shows an area of soft landscaping at the front of the site, which is a common feature of residential buildings along Mill Lane.
- 5.74 The main entrance of the building is located along the eastern elevation which is demarcated with a timber framed entrance in an arts and crafts style. This can be accessed from the main parking court and leads onto the internal Owner's Lounge and reception.
- 5.75 Additionally, the cottages are located in the north-eastern corner of the site. The cottages are shown as a detached and pair of semi-detached chalet style with private rear gardens. Access to the cottages is afforded from the parking court. The layout of the cottages has been designed around the site boundaries and minimise disturbance with neighbouring uses.
- 5.76 The proposed apartment building comprises a mix of 1 and 2 bed apartments, as well as two-bedroom cottages, which provides an appropriately dense development for this sustainable location. As such, the proposal accords with Policy D SP1 of the Local Plan, and Policy 2 of the Rustington Neighbourhood Plan, as well as paragraph 124 of the NPPF.
- 5.77 Overall, the proposal is considered to create a building with high-quality design. All site-specific factors have been extensively reviewed and subsequently incorporated into the design to ensure the building sits appropriately within its context. Therefore, the scheme is in accordance with Policy D SP1, Policy 2, paragraphs 124, 128 and 135 of the NPPF, as well as paragraph 124 of the National Design Guide (2021).

Scale, Height and Mass

- 5.78 The proposed development shows a 2-2.5 storey building, and 1.5 storey cottages which are considered appropriate and in keeping with the surrounding townscape.

- 5.79 As identified above, the overall scale and mass of the building has been broken up by a varied design and materials palette. The building is visually subdivided into two residential dwellings along the site's frontage, with the building extending partway into the eastern extents of the site with the parking court located adjacent. The cottages are located in the northern extents of the site.
- 5.80 Therefore, the building has been designed to ensure it does not appear overall dominant in the streetscene. This has been achieved by a varied materials palette, with varying roof heights and dormered accommodation. Furthermore, varied fenestration details also provide visually interesting elevations, so as to not appear anonymous and out of context with the residential area.

Siting and Layout

- 5.81 The development potential of the site has been assessed which can be found within the supporting Design and Access Statement.
- 5.82 The proposal is for a staggered linear building that fronts onto Mill Lane, amenity space is proposed along the east and west elevations, as well as further soft landscaping and parking court to the eastern extents. The main entrance to the main apartment building is situated along the eastern elevation toward the northern end of the building, access is provided from the parking court.
- 5.83 The cottages are proposed as a pair of semis, as well as a standalone cottage, all of which are located in the northern aspect of the site. Private amenity space is provided to the rear of each property with side pedestrian gates. Access is afforded from the parking court, where each cottage has an allocated parking space.
- 5.84 There are two main areas of amenity space, the first is adjacent to the Owner's Lounge, where residents will have direct access onto a patio area with outdoor seating facilities. This patio leads onto an area of landscaped gardens running along the eastern elevation. Similarly, on the western side of the building is another area of soft landscaped gardens.
- 5.85 The siting and layout of the building has taken influence from the current building located on site which sits forward of the building line along the eastern side of Mill Lane. Consideration has also been given to the extant consent for the hotel extension, with specific regard to the relationship with the neighbouring properties to the north.
- 5.86 The cottages have also been sited according to the trees to be retained along the eastern boundary.
- 5.87 The orientation of the building is considered to provide future occupants private and useable amenity space, as well as addressing the main western elevation along Mill Lane.

Density and Mix

- 5.88 The NPPF strongly promotes the efficient use of land; paragraph 125(c) identifies that substantial weight should be given to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlement for homes.
- 5.89 Policy D SP1 (Design) from the Arun Local Plan identifies that all development proposals should seek to make efficient use of land but reflect the characteristics of the site and local area in their layout, landscaping, density, mix, scale, massing, character, materials, finish and architectural details.
- 5.90 Similarly, Policy D DM1 (Aspects of Form and Design Quality) also stipulates higher densities will be more appropriate in the most accessible locations.
- 5.91 The Arun District Design Guide SPD (February 2024) also provides further design guidance on Density and Uses (Section G.02). Figure 77 sets out indicative density ranges within Arun District, and for Rustington which is a designated Local Service Centre, flatted development should be approximately 40-60 dwellings per hectare.

- 5.92 It is considered that the proposal accords with policies D SP1 (Design) and D DM1 (Aspects of Form and Design Quality) of the Arun Local Plan through its building layout which takes consideration of the current building layout on site, as well as the extant consent for hotel use, as well as through an appropriate selection of materials and design detailing which break up the overall scale, mass and height is appropriate for its context.
- 5.93 It is considered that the proposed development makes an appropriate balance between making an efficient use of land, whilst respecting the local character and context.
- 5.94 The proposal provides a mix of 1 and 2 bed apartments, as well as 3 cottages which allows for best use of the site situated in a sustainable location close to Rustington service centre. This is therefore in accordance with paragraph 125 of the NPPF.
- 5.95 In addition to the above, all proposed units meet M4(2) standards. This subsequently exceeds the policy requirement, as set out in Policy D DM2 (Internal Space Standards) which requires Nationally Described Space Standards.
- 5.96 Arun District Council have also published Accommodation for Older People with Disabilities Guidance which identifies at paragraph 4.2 for schemes between 11 and 50 units, a minimum of 30% of all units to be designed to M4(2) standards. This proposal therefore also exceeds these requirements.

Appearance and Materials

- 5.97 The proposal has been designed to ensure the building integrates successfully into the pattern of urban form with similar materials and fenestration detailing. This has been achieved through an in-depth review of the surrounding buildings and architectural detailing, as well as a choice of materials. As such a sensitively selected palette of materials has been proposed.
- 5.98 With regards to the main (west) elevation, the proposal presents three contrasting details including red brick and tile hanging detailing, ground floor render, as well as an internal linking element comprising of black weatherboarding, with a contrasting grey roof tile. Window heads and cills have also been shown in a red contrasting brick on windows and doors.
- 5.99 Through the building's layout and use of materials, the main elevation appears as two separate dwellings with two gable fronts and residential style porches which have been incorporated to provide further visual interest to the elevation. As shown in Elevation AA, the set-back linking element allows for the appearance of two asymmetrical dwellings which are sits well within the street scene. The use of contrasting material is also emanated throughout the site.
- 5.100 Windows, doors, as well as fascia's and soffits, will be white UPVC casement. Black UPVC casement has been proposed on the central linking element to compliment the black weatherboarding. Rainwater goods will also consist of black UPVC.
- 5.101 The proposed balconies, consisting of both juliette and full walk-out balconies will be black painted metal. Balconies have been proposed on the east and west elevations.
- 5.102 Therefore, it is clear the design has taken reference from the traditional design features and materials found within the surrounding area. As such, it is considered the proposed development will fit seamlessly and appropriately along Mill Lane and surrounding area.

Neighbouring Amenity

- 5.103 Policy QE SP1 (Quality of the Environment) from the Local Plan requires all development to positively contribute to the quality of the environment and ensure it does not negatively impact upon residential amenity.

- 5.104 Given the site is surrounded by predominantly residential uses, separation distances and the protection of neighbouring amenity has been carefully considered. This is to accord with Policy QE SP1.
- 5.105 In terms of the building's relationship with the surrounding residential dwellings, in particular the properties to the north (44 and 46 Mill Lane), the current building on site has a very close relationship with the northern boundary, with a number of small outbuildings located along this boundary. Similarly, as part of the extant consent for the hotel use (Application Ref R/60/22/PL), the approved Site Plan (PL-02 Rev D) shows a number of bedrooms, a treatment room and an internal courtyard area along the northern boundary.
- 5.106 Therefore, the building footprint as part of this proposal is proposed at 2.2m away from the northern boundary, which is commensurate with the current buildings on site, as well as the extant consent. It is also noted that there are several outbuildings located within the southern extents of the garden of number 44 and 46 Mill Lane, thus providing an additional buffer between the proposed building and the neighbouring amenity.
- 5.107 All windows on the northern elevation have been shown as obscure glazing which eradicates any concerns regarding overlooking of the neighbouring properties. A majority of the windows along this elevation are secondary windows to apartments 11 and 12, as well as kitchen windows. This will therefore not impact on the future occupier of the apartments.
- 5.108 In terms of the relationship between the proposed building and the eastern boundary, there are a number of mature trees along this boundary which provide sufficient screening. Separation distances are also shown as circa 20m from the proposed building to the eastern boundary (where there is current tree coverage) and circa 35m to the neighbouring dwellings located along Fircroft Crescent.
- 5.109 Moreover, it is considered that as the current use of the north-eastern aspect of the site is a beer garden, the proposed parking area will provide a betterment in terms of noise impact to neighbouring amenity.
- 5.110 Overall, there is no concern over the impacts of loss of daylight/sunlight, overlooking or loss of privacy from the proposed development.
- 5.111 With the above in mind, it is considered that the development is in accordance with Policy QE SP1, the Residential Design Guide (2024) and the NPPF.

Access and Parking

- 5.112 This application is supported by a Transport Statement undertaken by Paul Basham Associates Ltd.
- 5.113 The site is currently accessed via 3 separate access points, this includes the existing access to the Windmill Inn pub parking court, as well as two private access points serving 34 Mill Lane. As part of the proposal, 2 of the 3 access points will be stopped up, with the southernmost access point, associated with 34 Mill Lane being widened, to facilitate the new access point to the development. The new access measures 6.0m in width, formed as a shared surface arrangement with priority given to pedestrians and buggy users. This new access arrangement is suitable for two cars to pass simultaneously without conflict.
- 5.114 The proposed access arrangement has been considered through the WSCC Stage 1 Road Safety Audit which shows that safe and suitable access in this location is achievable.
- 5.115 In terms of visibility splays, as demonstrated visibility of 2.4m x 43m is achievable to the north of the site access, while 2.4m x 31m is achievable to the centre of the carriageway, on the splitter island of the Mill Lane roundabout. Similarly, pedestrian visibility splays of 2m x 2m are available to both the north and south of the access.
- 5.116 With regards to parking provision on site, Arun District Council's Parking SPD (January 2020) does not provide standards for age restricted C3 residential.

- 5.117 On the basis of the above, the independent surveys undertaken by Churchill Living in 2024 has been utilised to assess the parking demand for this development. The research shows a demand for 0.28 spaces per apartment. Residents often move into a retirement development to be situated closer to local shops and services therefore, reliance upon cars is significantly reduced. As the development age, a pattern has emerged that residents usually given up their cars within 6 months as they no longer need it.
- 5.118 In total, 13 parking spaces have been provided – each cottage will be provided with an allocated parking space (ratio of 1 parking space per unit), leaving 10 spaces for use for the 28 retirement apartments (ratio of 0.36 spaces per unit). This is above the evidenced need of 0.28 as stipulated in Churchill’s parking survey evidence.
- 5.119 The proposal also includes a secure mobility scooter charging and storage area which is located in the parking court. This will provide space for 5 buggies.
- 5.120 In terms of trip generation, it is anticipated that the proposals would result in a reduction of 101 trips across a 12-hour period. It has also been demonstrated that the proposed development will not result in any detrimental impact upon the safety or operation of the local road network.
- 5.121 Furthermore, the scheme has been designed to allow a fire tender to get within 18m of a dry riser in accordance with Building Regulations by utilising the turning head provided in the northern extents of the parking court.
- 5.122 In accordance with the above, the site presents an opportunity to create a sustainable, non-car reliant development. The proposed development is located within close proximity a host of amenities and services found in Rustington. This includes café’s, food stores, dental and doctors surgeries as well as the local St Josephs church – all within minutes’ walk of the site. it is therefore concluded the site provides an excellent opportunity to create a sustainable development.
- 5.123 The local pedestrian routes also benefit from pedestrian footways the entire way to the services and amenities of Rustington, with the inclusion of signalised pedestrian crossings, dropped kerbs and tactile paving.
- 5.124 The closest bus stops are located approximately 170m south of the site, along Mill Lane. This service provides access to Littlehampton and East Preston (north and south respectively). There is also a bus stop located along Station Road, approximately 500m south of the site. Services 9 and the 700 Coastliner provide services to Shoreham-by-Sea, Arundel, Brighton, Hove, Worthing and Littlehampton.
- 5.125 The closest railway station to the site is Angmering, located approximately 1.2km east of the site. Angmering station is accessible by the 700 bus services. This railway service provides direct access to Brighton, London Victoria, Southampton and Portsmouth.
- 5.126 The NPPF strongly promotes sustainable transport. Developers should not be expected to provide more parking than required unless there are clear and compelling justifications, taking into consideration the accessibility, type, mix and use of the development.
- 5.127 Overall, within the Transport Statement, it is demonstrated that safe and suitable access to the site is achievable, and the proposed development would not result in a severe impact on the operation or safety of the local road network.
- 5.128 It is clear within the NPPF paragraph 115 that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

Refuse

- 5.129 Refuse collection will continue as per the current arrangements for the pub, which involves collection from the eastern side of Mill Lane.

- 5.130 The refuse store is located to the north-west of the site, within a 10m drag distance of Mill Lane, with a footpath provided from Mill Lane within the site to enable movement of refuse workers.
- 5.131 The proposed cottages refuse will also be stored within the same refuse storage area, which is within the acceptable 30m carry distance for residents.
- 5.132 Churchill Living have developed a detailed understanding of the typical waste requirements based on experience of their existing lodges. The majority of flats are single occupancy. The owners are daily basket shoppers with a low carbon footprint who generate small amounts of waste. The proposed refuse store is therefore suitable to meet the required needs.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 5.133 The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment undertaken by The Civil Engineering Practice.
- 5.134 Policy 4 (Sustainable Drainage) from the Neighbourhood Plan requires development proposals to follow the sustainable drainage design features as appropriate for the ground conditions.
- 5.135 Policy W DM3 (Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems) has also been considered as part of this proposal.
- 5.136 The site in its entirety is located within Fluvial and Tidal Flood Zone 1 and is not susceptible to surface water flooding.
- 5.137 Following the appeal dismissal last year on the solitary drainage ground the Applicant has revisited the site and carried out further site investigation work including groundwater monitoring through the winter of 2025-2026 with soakage testing undertaken in accordance with the BRE 365 guidance. The full details of the findings are included in the flood risk assessment and the geotechnical report but concluded that based on the site investigations and infiltration testing soakaway solutions allowing infiltration to the ground are feasible. This is the material change from the previous application and previous geotechnical advice provided to the Applicant.
- 5.138 A surface water drainage strategy has been prepared based on infiltration to ground with soakaways located at a depth of 4.2m AOD. This complies with the SuDs hierarchy and complies with policies W DM3 of the Local Plan and policy 4 of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.139 In terms of the foul drainage strategy, the foul drainage will be discharged by gravity to the existing public foul sewer located beneath Mill Lane if possible, reusing the existing onsite connection.
- 5.140 In light of the above, flooding has not been considered a constraint for this site, and a suitable drainage strategy can be implemented in compliance with national and local planning policy and guidance.

Affordable Housing

- 5.141 Policy AH SP2 (Affordable Housing) from the Local Plan states for all developments of 11 residential units or more the Council will require a minimum of 30% of the total number of units proposed on site to be provided as affordable housing on the same site in the first instance. The policy acknowledges the requirement to maintain development viability and would allow reduction of the target provision where demonstrated by robust supporting viability evidence. The policy allows provision on-site, off-site or by way of a commuted sum.
- 5.142 An affordable housing and viability assessment was submitted with the previous application and assessed by independent consultants on behalf of the Council. Following discussions between the applicant and the Council's advisors a sum of £95,353 was agreed as being available whilst retaining development viability for the proposed scheme. The applicant maintains the offer agreed with the previous application of £95,353.
- 5.143 A draft S106 agreement for £95,353 based on the drafting of the previous agreement has been submitted with the application.

Amenity Space

- 5.144 The amenity space proposed in both its extent and design will meet the needs of its user. A Landscaping Strategy by James Blake Associates has been submitted with the application showing the high-quality landscaping proposed.
- 5.145 Policy H DM2 (Independent Living and Care Homes) requires proposals for specialist accommodation for older people to incorporate amenity space.
- 5.146 Furthermore, Chapter H.04 – Residential Outdoor Amenity & External Space Standards from the Residential Design Guide (2024) identifies communal residential spaces should be safe, usable, designed to a high standard and well managed.
- 5.147 The applicant has considerable experience in delivering retirement developments nationwide and as such this has provided a clear understanding of the use and need of amenity space.
- 5.148 The quality of amenity space is important to residents. Typical purchasers are 78-year-old widows, and it is considered high quality amenity space is far more important than quantity. Residents wish to have a pleasant outlook, often with activity and with high quality planting. This is valued far more than large areas of green space.
- 5.149 As set out above, landscaping is an important feature of the development and the accompanying design provides an indication of the proposed planting levels to make the most effective use of the space as well as make a positive contribution to the amenity value, making it a more pleasant environment. The landscaping design is of an extremely high standard and will improve the environmental quality of the site for prospective residents.
- 5.150 Residents use the space in a fairly limited respect; this involves sitting out on the patio and tending to flowerpots which are located immediately outside ground floor apartments or on balconies.
- 5.151 Further to the external amenity space, there is the internal communal lounge and coffee bar. This is a highly valued social space, where residents meet for coffee or to play card games and is useable all year round. Film nights, book clubs, wine and cheese evenings, fish and chip suppers, as well as summer garden parties are organised for the residents. Residents value this internal amenity space far more than large, grassed areas and it is usable all year round.
- 5.152 Given the balance of achieving efficient use of land as set out in Paragraph 124 of the NPPF combined with the clear understanding of the needs of the residents and the emphasis on high quality landscaping it is strongly considered that the level and quality of amenity space is acceptable.
- 5.153 Overall, it is considered the landscaping proposals for this scheme meet the requirements of the Chapter H.04 of the Design Guide SPD (2024), as well as meeting the criteria of Policy H DM2.

Ecology

Habitat and Protect Species

- 5.154 This application is supported by an Ecological Report undertaken by Tetra Tech.
- 5.155 The site currently comprises of the Windmill Inn public house, with associated beer garden and parking court, as well as a 1.5 storey residential dwelling with rear garden. Habitats across the site include modified grassland, introduced shrubs, scattered trees as well as developed land and buildings. The habitats within the site are all negligible - local ecological importance.
- 5.156 The site was considered to have potential for roosting bats, and as such a separate Bat Emergence Survey Report has been recommended once the season opens to check for roosting bats. The previous bat emergence surveys carried out in 2024 did not find any roosting bats in the two building on site.

- 5.157 Notwithstanding the above, common pipistrelles were observed on the previous surveys in proximity to the buildings and gardens. Therefore, to avoid any adverse effects to the bats a number of mitigation measures have been proposed, this includes a sensitive lighting scheme, additional tree and hedgerow planting to enhance florist biodiversity for foraging, as well as the avoidance of non-bitumen roofing membranes. A number of construction phase measures should be implemented during the construction phase as well by way of reducing light and noise pollution.
- 5.158 In addition to the above, Policy ENV DM5 of the Arun District Plan requires enhancements to biodiversity as part of any development. With this, the proposal seeks to provide a better quality of habitats with greater ecological importance compared to the habitats currently present on site. This is proposed through the Landscaping Plan produced by James Blake Associates which incorporates further tree planting and wildflower areas.
- 5.159 Furthermore, integrated bat bricks and swift boxes have been proposed, as well as the planting of native plants to attract a variety of insects and the erection of bird nest boxes.
- 5.160 The Ecological Appraisal concluded; no features of significant ecological importance have been identified. Additionally, mitigation measures can be controlled by a reasonable worded CEMP condition, to protect fauna species which may occur on the site during development, as a precautionary approach.

Biodiversity Net Gains

- 5.161 Policy ENV DM5 (Development and Biodiversity) from the Local Plan identifies development schemes shall, in the first instance, seek to achieve a net gain in biodiversity and protect existing habitats on site.
- 5.162 A separate Biodiversity Net Gain report has been undertaken by Tetra Tech, in accordance with the landscaping plans produced by James Blake Associates.
- 5.163 The findings of the report conclude that there is a 15.69% increase in biodiversity on site. This has been achieved through species rich planting landscaping, with the implementation of woodland and meadow mix grassland. In line with Policy ENV DM5 green walls have also been incorporated into the proposal – these have been afforded ‘High Strategic Significance’. These have been located around the substation to provide further screening from the substation itself.
- 5.164 In addition, 26 new trees will be planted across the site, with individual trees predominantly located adjacent to the site boundaries to enhance the boundary screening. This results in a net increase of 22 trees as part of this proposal.
- 5.165 It has also been identified that net gain is not required for hedgerow units and watercourses as there are no hedgerow units within the pre-development on-site baseline, nor are watercourse considered in this assessment.
- 5.166 As such, this proposal is in accordance with Policy ENV DM5, as well as meeting the trading rules of the Environment Act 2021.

Trees

- 5.167 The application is supported by an Arboricultural Impact Appraisal and Method Statement by Barrell Tree Care.
- 5.168 Policy ENV DM4 (Protection of Trees) seeks to ensure developers are adequately protecting trees that are TPO protected, located within a Conservation Area, form Ancient Woodland or contribute to the local amenity. The policy goes on to state for trees which are removed as part of the development, at least an equivalent number of a similar species are planted on the proposed development site.

- 5.169 The proposal includes the removal of 4 trees, 3 of which (T1, T2 and T11) are considered to be low quality due to their condition and structural form – it has been established that the loss of these trees will have no adverse impact on landscape character or visual amenity.
- 5.170 In terms of the removal of T10, which is considered marginal moderate quality due to its existing structural form but is unlikely to be sustainable in the longer term in its current size and dimension. It is considered its loss is unlikely to result in an adverse impact on landscape character due to the retention of other trees along the eastern boundary of the site.
- 5.171 In line with the above, the proposed scheme ensures the significant boundary tree cover is retained, and none of the trees proposed for removal are prominent as skyline features in the wider setting.
- 5.172 As part of the redevelopment proposals and in accordance with achieving a Biodiversity Net Gain on site – 26 new trees have been proposed. These will be strategically placed around the site to ensure there is suitable boundary screening, as well as enhancing the local amenity.
- 5.173 During the construction process, a number of mitigation measures have been considered to ensure the retained trees are not harmed as a result. This includes permeable no-dig surfacing – this will be installed before any demolition any demolition or construction access. This will prevent inadvertent damage to the RPAs from the construction activity.
- 5.174 In addition to the above, the mobility scooter store is proposed in the outer RPA extents of tree T5 and as such it is proposed that all ground based supporting elements will have hand dug footings and any poured concrete will be prevented from contaminating the soil by using an impermeable hole liner.
- 5.175 It has also been concluded that no trees are close enough to the proposed buildings and their associated amenity that would result in interference or future pressure to fell.
- 5.176 Overall, it is understood that the proposals comply with Policy ENV DM4 (Protection of Trees).

Sustainable Development

- 5.177 Policy ECC SP2 (Energy and Climate Change Mitigation) from the Local Plan states all major developments must produce 10% of the total predicted energy requirements renewable or low carbon energy generation on site.
- 5.178 Policy W DM1 (Water Supply and Quality) states to ensure that all new development of two or more dwellings are water efficient and reduce pressure on water abstraction sites, it must include measures that meet the option water standards of 110 litres/person/day.
- 5.179 The Applicant is fully aware that sustainable development is a major concern of Climate Change. The applicant implements various initiatives within its schemes that address this issue. A sustainability group within the company are constantly reviewing the latest guidance and technologies with a view to reducing the carbon footprint of the retirement housing developments.
- 5.180 This application is also supported by an Energy Statement undertaken by Focus Consultants. This report highlights the sustainable nature of the proposed development. The report concludes the following:
- The predicted Dwelling Fabric Energy Efficiency (DFEE) is shown to provide a 7.88% reduction against the notional Target Fabric Energy Efficiency (TFEE).
 - Target CO2 emissions (TER) of the development to be 22,892.70 kg/CO2/yr. Whereas the Predicted Carbon Emissions (DER) are demonstrated to be a substantial improvement against this – showing a 48.18% reduction against the notional amount.
 - The use of PV panels amounts to accounting for approximately 41.48% energy consumption. This goes beyond the 10% requirement set out in Policy ECC SP2.

- Noted improvement over Building Regulation requirement of 110 litres/person/day and therefore according with Policy W DM1.

- 5.181 The Applicants scheme utilise previously developed sites in highly accessible locations close to community facilities and shops, with access to alternative modes of transport enabling a reduction in car numbers and ownership but make provision for battery operated buggies and cycles. Furthermore, construction of the development incorporates many energy saving devices, which is assisted by the containment of the apartments in a single block.
- 5.182 The Applicant continually reviews their environmental policies examining the newly evolving sustainable systems for incorporation into their developments where appropriate. Indeed, the use of roof mounted Solar Photovoltaics within the development proposal demonstrates Churchill Living's commitment to the principles of Sustainable Development and for on-site energy generation.

Economic Considerations

- 5.183 In recent evidence within a report '**Silver Saviours of the High Street**' has shown the significant economic benefits that retirement living developments can have on local high streets. The residents are 'basket shoppers', often walking into town on a daily basis to get the shopping they need. They will also utilise the high street during the week, when it's typically at its quietest. Through downsizing residents often have more disposable income and more time to use local facilities.
- 5.184 There is significant evidence linking poor health with unsuitable living conditions. As set out above, each person living in a home for later living enjoys a reduced risk of health challenges, contributing fiscal savings to the NHS and social care service of approximately £3,500 per year (**Homes for Later Living September 2019**). Residents generally remain in better health, both physically and mentally, in comparison to being in unsuitable accommodation and for many being isolated. Doctors, nurses, and care workers can visit several occupiers at once.
- 5.185 With 31 units proposed, there is estimated to be **fiscal savings to the NHS of £141,000 per annum directly from the proposed development**, in comparison to mainstream housing. This is significant economic benefit.
- 5.186 Retirement housing releases under-occupied family housing and plays a very important role in recycling of housing stock in general. There is a 'knock-on' effect in terms of the whole housing chain enabling more effective use of existing housing. In the absence of choice, older people will stay put in properties that are often unsuitable for them until such a time as they need expensive residential care. **It is estimated that the proposed development will open up approximately 62 existing homes within the housing market through a chain reaction.** The proposal will therefore assist with meeting wider family housing needs.
- 5.187 Substantial weight should be afforded these economic benefits.

Social Considerations

- 5.188 Specifically designed housing for older people enables residents to be as independent as possible in a safe and warm environment. Older homes are typically in a poorer state of repair, are often colder, damper, have more risk of fire and fall hazards They lack in adaptations such as handrails, wider internal doors, stair lifts and walk in showers. Without these simple features, everyday tasks can become harder and harder. Retirement housing help to reduce anxieties and worries experienced by many older people living in housing which does not best suit their needs by providing safety, security and reducing management and maintenance concerns.
- 5.189 There are huge benefits from new found friends and companions. Loneliness is linked with damaging health impacts such as heart disease, strokes, depression and Alzheimer's. Loneliness and isolation have become even more apparent in older generations through the lockdowns faced during the COVID 19 pandemic. However,

residents within existing Churchill Living schemes have expressed huge praise for their Lodge Managers in looking after them.

- 5.190 Churchill developments offer a formal coffee morning as well as a number of informal coffee gatherings. Residents often organise bridge clubs and weekly film nights in the communal lounge. There are also group trips into the town centre for coffee and shopping. Even just to say hello to neighbours in the corridor or a quick conversation with the Lodge Manager can significantly help. Churchill also organise a number of events each year such as summer parties, cheese and wine nights, and musical nights.
- 5.191 Residents can walk to local shops and services, or use their mobility scooter, giving them independence if they are no longer able or wish to drive. This is important as people age, reducing reliance on formal social care or help from family and friends.
- 5.192 The **Housing for Later Living Report (2019)** shows that on a selection of wellbeing criteria such as happiness and life satisfaction, an average person aged 80 feels as good as someone 10 years younger after moving from mainstream housing into housing specifically designed for later living.
- 5.193 The requirement of the NPPF at paragraph 96 to achieve healthy, safe and inclusive places are a fundamental part of the scheme proposed. These are key benefits that residents are looking for when they seek to move to a Churchill Living scheme.
- 5.194 Overall, it is considered that substantial weight should be afforded to these social benefits.

Environmental Considerations

- 5.195 The proposal will make efficient use of brownfield land thereby reducing the need to use limited land resources for housing.
- 5.196 The site is in a highly sustainable location. Shops and services can easily be accessed on foot thereby reducing the need for travel by means which consume energy and create emissions. The site is also located in close proximity to a host of bus routes and Angmering train station, therefore allowing journeys further afield.
- 5.197 Providing shared facilities for a large number of residents in a single building makes more efficient use of material and energy resources. The proposal will be constructed with an energy efficient fabric and building services specification.
- 5.198 As identified in the Energy Statement produced by Focus Consultants, the proposal achieves a 48.18% reduction in CO2 emissions from the notional amount. This far exceeds adopted policy and building regulations. Solar gains will also be made by implementing PV panel son the roof the proposed building.
- 5.199 The proposal is able to achieve a +13.22% increase in biodiversity on site which has been achieved through a number of landscaping measures (such as green walls and species rich planting and grasslands), with a net gain of 22 trees to be implemented across the site.
- 5.200 Substantial weight should be afforded to these environmental benefits.

Planning Balance

- 5.201 Notwithstanding the fact we consider the proposal to be in accordance with the Development Plan it is necessary to undertake a planning balance.
- 5.202 As set out above, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act sets out that planning application should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The proposal is not considered to be in conflict with any policies within the development plan.

- 5.203 As identified in the Council's Authority Monitoring Report (published November 2025), Arun District Council was able to demonstrate a 3.23-year supply of land. This therefore shows there is a shortfall of land supply and therefore the titled balance is engaged in this case. This a reduced supply of housing land available from when the Council determined the previous application at the end of 2024.
- 5.204 This proposal for 31-units will significantly boost this housing land supply and should be weighted accordingly.
- 5.205 The application should therefore be approved unless material consideration indicates otherwise. It is considered that the material considerations weigh heavily in favour of the grant of permission.
- 5.206 It is evident there is '*critical*' need for the delivery of older persons housing and a significant pressing need within the administrative boundary of Arun District Council. Therefore, this planning application will contribute towards delivering these much-needed homes. That contribution can be considered as a substantial benefit which weighs strongly in favour of this planning application.
- 5.207 The planning benefits with the weight to be given for this proposal are set out below:

Planning benefits of the current proposal	Weight to be given
Provision of much needed housing for older people where the need for such accommodation is 'critical'	Substantial weight
Development of previously developed, brownfield land.	Substantial weight
Development in a sustainable location, town centre location within immediate proximity to local services and facilities	Substantial weight
Efficient use of land	Substantial weight
Provision of 31 market dwellings	Substantial weight
Freeing up under occupied local housing stock	Substantial weight
Economic benefits of the proposed scheme through job creation and increased spending in the local area	Substantial weight
Social benefits of the proposed scheme, reducing social isolation and benefits to health and social care systems	Substantial weight
Environmental benefits of the proposed scheme including the delivery of ecological enhancements	Substantial weight

- 5.208 Recent appeal decisions have been noted below that effectively present the planning benefits of specialised accommodation for older persons, this includes a decision allowing for 31 retirement living apartments in Fleet, Hampshire; a decision allowing for 56 retirement living apartments in Basingstoke and a decision allowing for 45 retirement living apartments in Wigginton.

Appeal Decision Former Fleet Police Station, 13 Cookham Road, Fleet (APP/N1730/W/20/3261194) (May 2021)

- 5.209 The weight to be attached to the planning benefits of specialised accommodation for older persons was considered at a site in Fleet, Hampshire, by the Planning Inspectorate. The appeal was allowed for 31 retirement apartments by Churchill Living.
- 5.210 In weighing up the planning balance the Inspector set out at para 70:

“The following benefits would arise: (i) much needed housing for older people... significant weight should be given to this benefit; (ii) the development is of previously developed land (substantial weight); (iii) the development would be in a sustainable location (substantial weight); (iv) the development would make optimum use of the site (moderate weight); (v) the development would provide 31 market dwellings and is a clear benefit (substantial weight); (vi) the provision of the appellants payment to the delivery of affordable housing would be a significant benefit (substantial weight); (vii) there is a benefit releasing under occupied housing stock (substantial weight); (viii) the site would provide economic benefits by generating jobs, in the construction and operation phases of the development and by residents spending locally (substantial weight); (ix) there would be social benefits in specialised age friendly housing (substantial weight); (x) the environmental benefits of the scheme are a clear benefit (moderate weight). Cumulatively, these 10 benefits weight heavily in favour of the appeal scheme especially given the critical need for housing for older people as identified at nation level in the NPPF and PPG and at a local level.”

5.211 The Inspector goes on to state in para 71:

“Therefore, even if I had reached a contrary conclusion in terms of this appeal and found that there was a conflict with the development plan, any harm which might be identified as arising from the appeal proposal come nowhere near significantly and demonstrably outweighing the many and varied benefits of the appeal proposal. There is no reason to withhold planning permission in this case and I conclude the appeal should be allowed.

5.212 A copy of the decision is included at **Appendix C.**

Appeal Decision Basingstoke Police Station, London Road, Basingstoke RG21 4AD (APP/H1705/W/20/3248204) (June 2021)

5.213 This appeal decision in Basingstoke was allowed for 56 retirement apartments. In considering the planning balance, the Inspector sets out:

“The proposal would provide much needed housing for older people. In this respect, I note from evidence that there is a shortfall within the Borough for the provision of this type of accommodation and that there are no specific allocations for such development. Therefore, the Council is reliant on windfalls for their delivery. Such provision of specialist housing also allows for the release of under-occupied housing stock... In light of the advice contained within Para 59 of the Framework to significantly boost the supply of homes, and to meet the needs of groups with specific housing requirements, it is appropriate to give significant weight to these benefits.

The proposal would involve the re-development of previously developed land, which is located within close proximity to the town centre and all the associated services and facilities that this has, thereby making the site sustainable in this respect. It is therefore appropriate to attach substantial weight to these benefits.

The proposal would provide economic benefits through generation of jobs, during both construction, but also once the development has been completed. Further benefits would also be delivered through increased spending by residents locally. Given the scale of the development proposed, it is appropriate to attach substantial weight to these benefits.

Further benefits would also be delivered through the optimum use of the site for new development, along with some environmental improvements through the reduction in hardstanding within the site. It is appropriate to afford these benefits moderate weight.”

5.214 The Inspector goes on to conclude:

“In this instance, there is clear and convincing evidence with regards to the suitability of the proposal. The delivery of specialist housing weighs substantially in favour of the appeal scheme, especially given the

critical need identified at national level in both the Framework and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), along with the identified shortfall in terms of the delivery at local level. As a result, even if I had reached a different conclusion in relation to the heritage issues and found there to be harm to the identified designated heritage assets, any harm would have been clearly outweighed by the significant public benefits of the scheme. Therefore, in this case, I find no reasons to withhold planning permission."

5.215 A copy of the decision is included in **Appendix D**.

Recent Appeal Decision - 11 The Village, Wigginton, York YO32 2PL (APP/C2741/W/23/3314331) (July 2023)

5.216 At a recent appeal in Wigginton (July 2023), for 45 retirement living units, the Inspector concluded:

- The provision of housing against no 5-year land supply attracted significant weight (paragraph 113).
- The provision of older persons housing to the existing unmet and critical need attracts significant weight (paragraph 113).
- The release of underoccupied housing stock attracts significant weight (paragraph 113).
- The site is in a sustainable location which attracts significant weight (paragraph 114).
- The redevelopment of the brownfield part of the site together with the environmental benefits of more suitable landscaping would also enhance the biodiversity and should attract significant weight (paragraph 114).
- Redevelopment of an underutilised site which attracts moderate weight (paragraph 114).
- The economic benefits attract significant weight (paragraph 115).
- The health and social benefits attract significant weight (paragraph 116).

5.217 The Inspector concludes at paragraphs 118 and 119:

"I have found no harm which individually or cumulatively would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. As such the proposed development benefits from the Framework's presumption in favour of sustainable development and planning permission should be granted.

5.218 A copy of the appeal decision is included in **Appendix E**.

5.219 Overall the scheme is considered to meet the requirements of the development plan when read as a whole. Paragraph 11(c) of the NPPF provides that proposals which accord with the development plan should be approved without delay.

CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The proposed development is in full accordance with the Development Plan, **there is no policy objection to the delivery of the scheme and as such should be approved as per paragraph 11c of the NPPF without delay.**
- 6.2 The UK faces a rapidly growing and ageing population. The Government aims to ‘**significantly boost the supply of housing**’ The PPG is unequivocal in its message that *“the need to provide housing for older people is critical”*.
- 6.3 The PPG is clear: *“where there is an identified unmet need for specialist housing, local authorities should take a positive approach to schemes that propose to address this need.”* **Substantial weight should be given to the proposal considering the high levels of specialist housing needs.**
- 6.4 The site is in a highly sustainable location being situated in close proximity to Rustington town centre, with access to a host of services and amenities. It offers opportunities for the future residents to walk to a range of services and facilities located a very short distance from the site. This is particularly important as people age, with many having to give up driving. **Substantial weight should be given to delivering development in a high-quality sustainable location.**
- 6.5 Given the site’s current use as a public house, Savills have produced a Viability Study report which clearly demonstrates that The Windmill Inn public house in its current use is not a viable business. This report therefore provides sufficient evidence to accord with policies OSR DM1 and EMP DM1 of the Arun Local Plan, as well as complying with paragraph 97(c) of the NPPF (2023).
- 6.6 The scheme has been designed to reflect the character and scale of the surrounding area, whilst at the same time seeking to make the most efficient use of this sustainable site. **Substantial weight should be afforded to the efficient use of the land.**
- 6.7 The provision of retirement housing releases under occupied family homes back into the housing market. This in turn enables moves throughout the whole housing market, benefiting everyone including first time buyers. **Freeing up under occupied local housing stock should be afforded substantial weight in the determination of this application.**
- 6.8 The economic benefits associated with the application include:
- Savings to the NHS and social care services of £3,500 per person per year in retirement living accommodation (equating to £141,000 for this site)
 - Increased spending in local shops and services – equating to £240,000.
 - Creation of 69 construction jobs and 77 supply chain jobs, as well as 4 direct and supported jobs within the local economy (Appendix B).
- 6.9 These benefits should be afforded **substantial weight in the determination of this application.**
- 6.10 The social benefits of the proposed development include:
- Encouraging independence in later life with suitably designed housing. Reducing reliance on residential and nursing care.
 - Providing safety and security and reducing management and maintenance concerns.
 - Companionship, reducing loneliness and social isolation and the associated health impacts.
 - Entertainment and social gatherings.

- 6.11 These social benefits are vital for mental health and quality of life as people age. **They should be afforded substantial weight in the determination of this application.**
- 6.12 The environmental benefits include:
- Efficient use of brownfield land, reducing the need for greenfield release.
 - Very close proximity to shops and facilities encouraging the residents to walk.
 - Within close proximity to local public transport networks.
 - Shared facilities for residents in a single building makes efficient use of energy and resources.
 - Reduction of CO₂ emissions by circa 48% of the nominal amount.
 - Use of low energy lighting with use of daylight and movement sensor controls.
 - Use of solar gains through roof-top PV panels – generating an energy saving of circa 41% (significantly higher than the Council’s policy of 10%).
 - 15% increase in biodiversity net gain.
- 6.13 These environmental benefits should be **afforded substantial weight in the determination of this application.**
- 6.14 There are numerous and significant benefits associated with the application which must be considered within the planning balance. The redevelopment of this will have significant social, economic and environmental benefits, as well as meeting an un-met housing need which is deemed critical by National Government.
- 6.15 In accordance with the above, the Council are unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of housing land (equating to 3.23-years), as well as failing their Housing Delivery Test (2023) with 81%. Therefore, with this the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as per paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF, is engaged. The scheme should therefore be viewed favourably.
- 6.16 Concludingly, it is considered the scheme accords with the Development Plan when read as a whole, and it is clear that there are significant social, economic and environmental benefits of the scheme subsequently fulfilling the goals of national policy in regard to sustainable development.

APPENDIX A

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023

APPENDIX B

Site Infographic by Lichfields

APPENDIX C

Appeal Decision, Fleet, May 2021

APPENDIX D

Appeal Decision, Basingstoke, June 2021

APPENDIX E

Appeal Decision, Wiggington, July 2023