

O/25/99534 Land at Denhams Corner, Snakemoor Lane

Outline application for up to 150 dwellings including 40% affordable housing

Planning Policy Comments

Planning policy framework

The Council adopted the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036 on 25th April 2022. This document now forms the planning policy framework for the borough to 2036.

The site is located on the borough's eastern boundary, to the south of Horton Heath. The site is within countryside, as designated in the adopted Local Plan policy S5. It is not located in a settlement gap.

Policy S5 sets out the type of development appropriate in the countryside and detailed criteria for development in these uses. This does not include new residential development, apart from on allocated sites.

Housing Supply

In accordance with revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2024) the Council needs to demonstrate a five year supply. This is based on the adopted Local Plan target of 729 dwellings per annum as the Local Plan was adopted less than 5 years ago.

It was accepted in the recent appeal for Land to the west of Cobbett Way, Botley (APP/W1715/W/24/3350858), that the Council is unable to demonstrate a five year land supply, therefore NPPF paragraph 11d applies. The latest five year housing supply report prepared by Hampshire County Council has a base date of 1 April 2024 and identifies a supply of 4.3 years. These are based on the planning status of sites, discussions with agents, landowners and developers and recent progress on Council schemes. For the purposes of calculating the current position, the revised NPPF (December 2024) requires a 5% buffer. This reduces the supply for Eastleigh borough from 4.3 years to 4.1 years.

Local Plan Review

The Council is at an early stage in the review of the Local Plan. This will consider and identify appropriate locations in the countryside for residential-led development.

This site was one of the sites submitted in the Call for Sites and was included in the Interim Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA), as part of site BOT001. It was then included in the Issues and Options consultation as part of the small and medium site 12.

The Council is currently considering the comments received in the consultation and is undertaking and has commissioned further technical work to consider the most appropriate locations for development. These include options for strategic scale development in addition to small and medium development sites. The Local Plan Review will identify greenfield sites where the Council would support development in the countryside. However, no decisions have been made on the location of

development at this stage and the sites presented in the Local Plan review Issues and Options consultation (or submitted since) have no weight in decision making.

Outline application

In accordance with the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), where a local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply, a presumption in favour of sustainable development applies (paragraph 11d). For residential planning applications that are contrary to Local Plan policy, the Council will consider the criteria and determine if there are areas or assets of particular importance to be protected (criterion 11di), or if any adverse impacts significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits (criterion 11dii).

The site is currently in agricultural use. It is open countryside, away from the settlement edge and with a limited number of properties to the southwest of the site.

There is ancient woodland to the north, land in flood zones 2 and 3 to the east, a designated SINC to the north and east, and woodland to the west of the site. While the proposal includes buffers to these areas, and to areas of high flood risk to the east of the site, this restricts the links between the site and Horton Heath and limits the opportunities for footpaths and cycle links. The site is also not particularly accessible by non-car modes to local services. It is greater than 1,600 metres away from the nearest local or neighbourhood centre which would create car-dependency. The proposal would therefore be an isolated development, detached from Horton Heath.

The proposal is for new residential development in the countryside. This is contrary to adopted Local Plan policy and would not constitute plan-led development. As the Council does not currently have a 5 year housing land supply, the benefits of the proposal need to be weighed up against adverse impacts. Planning Policy consider that the provision of housing, including affordable housing, does not outweigh the adverse impacts of development in this location.

Conclusion

This response considers the principle of development in this location. The proposal is for new residential development in the countryside. This is in contrary to adopted Local Plan policy and would not constitute plan-led development. As the Council does not currently have a 5 year housing land supply, the benefits of the proposal need to be weighed up against adverse impacts. Planning Policy consider that the provision of housing, including affordable housing, does not outweigh the adverse impacts of development in this location.

The Council has started an early review of the Local Plan Review to address housing supply issues towards the end of the plan period. This will consider and identify appropriate locations in the countryside for residential-led development.