

ONE HORTON HEATH

F.A.O Rebecca Altman
Principal Planning Officer
Eastleigh Borough Council
By Email Only

Appeal by The Trustees of The Mulberry Investment Pension Scheme

Site Address: Land off Cobbett Way, Botley, SO30 2ET

Appeal ref. APP/W1715/W/24/3350858; LPA App ref. O/23/96432

I write in respect of the above Appeal and the Appellant's queries to the Council over the delivery of One Horton Heath, as set out in their email of the 30th October 2024. A response is provided to each of these questions in the remainder of this document.

1. That Cabinet resolution (2) and the agreement to award the main residential contract at Lower Acre relates to the first 126 dwellings only?

This is incorrect, the contract is for the full 381 units, with an Option to omit some of the parcels (totalling 126 units) as per (6)

2. Whether that contract has now been awarded?

Not to date.

3. If that contract has not been awarded, does the Council intend to proceed with the Cabinet resolution to award the contract? If so, when?

Yes, the Council intends to proceed as per the Cabinet Resolution. The contract is expected to be issued on the 3rd December 2024. The expectation is therefore it will be signed before the end of the calendar year.

4. The intended delivery programme under the above contract (noting at para' 67 of the December 23 Cabinet paper reference to instructing in 3 or more sections over a 20-month period following an assessment of the performance of the successful contractor)?

The delivery programme is subject to constant review, as would be standard for any development. Delays to signing the main residential contract are 3 months and it is anticipated that this time could be recovered during the construction process. First occupations are still expected in Summer 2025 with all units delivered by December 2027.

5. Whether agreement of the price for parcel 2 is to be reached at the end of October 2024 as intended?

No formal agreement on the price to date, as the contract is still pending. Extensive and active discussions with the contractor have taken place and this matter is substantially progressed.

6. Whether the details of the Lower Parcel and Section Plan at Appendix K of the Report are consistent with the NMA to the Phasing Plan for application ref: F/20/89500 FRP-PP-001 Rev B amended 18 June 2024 and, if not, confirmation of timings for any further amendments required following the 31 July Decision.

There are differences between the two Phasing Plans referenced by the Appellant. A Non-Material Amendment (NMA) is at an advanced stage of preparation to address minor elevational changes and amendments to the Phasing Plan can be regularised either in this application or a separate NMA.

7. The timescale for preparation, submission, and determination of application proposals for the redesign of blocks A2 and A3 in Parcel 1A.

Preparation of applications for the redesign of blocks A2 and A3 began in August 2024. Submission is targeted for December 24 / January 25 and is on schedule.

The redesign has been subject to discussion and scrutiny by stakeholders in advance of submission and as such it is expected to be determined within statutory timescales.

8. The housing trajectory assumptions applicable to informing the 31 July 2024 Cabinet Report (for examples paras 30, 40 and 62 refer) and confirmation of any update to the trajectory following the 31 July Cabinet meeting to award the contract for Phase 1 only.

Paragraphs 30. and 40. of the 31st July Cabinet Report relate to re-tendering the procurement of the Main Residential Contractor to build the Lower Acre. The Cabinet minutes (2) agree to award the main residential contract to the sole bidder.

Para 62. in terms of recruitment relating for two new posts - Tenancy Services Manager and the Housing Maintenance and Contracts Manager. At the time of writing the former post has been filled but the latter has not.

9. Whether the trajectory, and assumption for delivery per phase/parcel, applicable following the 31 July Cabinet meeting is consistent with occupation of the 400th eligible dwelling by 2027.

The School Opening date is defined in the s106 as the commencement of the academic year (that is during the first week of September of that year) following the occupation of 400th Eligible Dwellings (i.e. a dwelling with at least 2 bedrooms that is not specialist older persons' housing).

Work to date suggests that the construction, sale and occupation of the 400th dwelling will be in the middle of the second phase (Quobleigh Breach) in 2028. The Primary School is expected to be required by September 2028.

10. Whether estate agents have been appointed (further to paragraph 54 of the Report) and confirmation of target dates for the delivery of the sales complex and show homes (further to paragraph 56).

The contract for the estate agency support has been awarded, we are just completing legal formalities.

We are currently planning for delivery of the sales complex and show homes in Summer 2025.

11. We also note within para's 73 and 74 of the July 2024 Cabinet paper that the delivery of affordable housing at the site is financially restrictive and requires Government grant (previously estimated at £125,000/dwelling) for it to be achieved. Also, that there is no new grant programme in place beyond 2026, and until such time that a new funding programme is formally announced there is a risk that the Council will be unable to provide Affordable units directly as it would not be financially viable.

Please confirm whether a new grant programme to secure the affordable housing delivery has now been announced, or if this remains a risk?

There is no formal affordable housing programme beyond the current 2026 one. However, the message from Government, Homes England etc is that the provision of Affordable Housing is a top priority so there is every expectation that there will be at least an extension on the existing programme at the least.

In the highly unlikely event no grant, or alternative provisions, for the delivery of affordable housing become available it would mean the units would be converted to market units.

I trust the above is acceptable.

Kind regards



Sarah King CPFA

Deputy Chief Executive - Eastleigh Borough Council