

O/24/98619 Land south of Mortimers Lane, Fair Oak

Outline application for up to 245 dwellings with access from Mortimer's Lane, up to 350sqm multi-functional building (Use Class E - commercial, business or service or Use Class F2 – Community), and provision of public open space, landscaping, natural greenspace and associated infrastructure and engineering works (all matters reserved except vehicular access off Mortimers Lane and potential pedestrian/cycle connections to the site boundary).

Planning Policy Comments 24/1/25 Dawn Heppell

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 adjacent to the urban settlement boundary for Fair Oak. It was part of the Strategic Growth Option for over 5,000 homes proposed in the Submission Local Plan (June 2018). Following concerns raised by the Local Plan Inspector, this allocation was deleted in the final adopted Local Plan (April 2022) and the proposed SGO allocation has no weight in decision making.

The site is within countryside, as designated in the adopted Local Plan policy S5. It is also identified as an HCC Minerals Safeguarding area. It is not located within a settlement gap.

Development in the countryside

Policy S5 sets out the type of development that is appropriate in the countryside and detailed criteria for new development in these uses. For residential development, appropriate uses consist of residential extensions and replacement buildings, limited residential conversions and rural workers' dwellings. It does not include new residential development, apart from on allocated sites. For non-residential uses, buildings can be re-used for employment, community, tourist or visitor uses. The proposal for a new multi-functional building is therefore contrary to policy S5.

The Council has started the review of the Local Plan and an Issues and Options consultation runs until 29 January 2025. The Council is consulting on individual small and medium greenfield sites and larger strategic options that have been submitted by developers and landowners. The area north and east of Fair Oak is identified as one of four strategic development options (SDOs) in the borough. The site is within SDO A, sub area A3. It is included within the two largest options for SDO A which involve extending Fair Oak to both the north and east.

The Local Plan Review will include 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 options presented in the Local Plan review Issues and Options consultation have no weight in decision making.

Housing supply

In accordance with revised 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. This applies the same requirement as the previous NPPF in terms of the need to weigh the benefits of a scheme against any adverse impacts.

Conclusion

This response considers the principle of development in this location. The proposal is for new residential-led development in the countryside. This is in contrary to adopted Local Plan policy and would not constitute plan-led development. 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.