

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 lies within the urban edge of the settlement of Hedge End, on the eastern side of Kings Copse Avenue. Tanhouse Meadow SINC covers the north and eastern part of the site. The site is allocated in Policy BO3 of the adopted local plan for the delivery of approximately 120 dwellings.

Housing Supply

The Council have an increased housing target, and through the Local Plan Review, are trying to identify sites and increase density on new and existing sites, where appropriate, in order to meet our housing target.

In accordance with revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2024) the Council needs to demonstrate a five-year supply. The most recent calculation shows the Council has a supply of 4.1 years (including a 5% buffer).

Outline application

Number of dwellings

Policy BO3 is an allocation for development to include approximately 120 dwellings subject to meeting criteria as set out in the policy. In the Local Plan, paragraph 4.13 provides supporting text to Strategic Policy S3, Location of new housing. This advises that the site allocations provide an indicative number of dwellings for each site. The Council will consider whether higher dwelling numbers can be justified when determining a planning application, following more detailed work and provided the proposal is in accordance with other policies in the plan.

It is noted the application proposes a housing figure of 192 dwellings, which is higher than set out in Policy BO3. As demonstrated above, the Council are looking to increase density to reach the housing target. Given this context, and the wording in paragraph 4.13 which clearly states site allocations provide an indicative number, the higher housing figure is deemed acceptable.

Detailed criteria for development

Policy BO3 includes sixteen criteria for the site. These require an approved masterplan for the whole site; a range of housing types sizes and tenures; on-site public open space and play areas; vehicular access from Kings Copse, a good quality landscape setting; pedestrian and cycle links; Sustainable Urban Drainage; avoiding

development on areas at risk of flooding; and to examine the potential relocation of the existing overhead power line. Further criteria address access and highways and public right of way improvements, avoiding adverse impacts on protected habitats or species, noise and wastewater infrastructure.

The application meets the majority of the policy requirements including delivering a range of homes, highways improvements and relocation of powerlines that would impact the development. We note the application states it adheres to policy requirements (g) and (h) in relation to biodiversity impacts. We are content these policy requirements have been achieved subject to EBC ecology officers being satisfied.

Policy requirement (i) states development on areas of the site at risk of flooding should be avoided. We also note the Environment Agency have objected to the application as the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is outdated and does not reflect the most current flood zone designations for the site. In light of these comments, a new FRA should be undertaken.

The application does not meet policy requirement (b) of Policy BO3 as does not include provision for play areas to serve the development. It is noted that policy DM33 of the Local Plan states play areas for children should be within a five-minute walking distance (300m straight line 400m actual distance). There are two existing play areas nearby: Little Hats Playground to the northeast, and Norman Rodaway Playground to the southwest. It is considered the required distance to the existing play facilities would be achieved if the proposed access points are provided as shown in the plans.

Conclusion

The principle of development is considered acceptable in this location. The higher housing figures are also considered acceptable considering the council's increased housing target. We recognise not all the policy BO3 requirements have been met. Whilst it is not ideal that policy requirement (b) has not been met, it is considered acceptable on balance. This is due to the need to make efficient use of land and the fact that the application meets Policy DM33 of the Local Plan. We are content policy requirements (g) and (h) have been achieved subject to EBC ecology officers being satisfied.