

Our Ref: Land East of Windmill Inn, Brascole Lane.
Planning Reference: 24/00854/REM

Hinkley and Bosworth Borough Council
Hinkley Hub
Rugby Road
Hinkley
Leicestershire
LE10 0FR

27th November 2024

Dear Matt,

Reference: Application for Reserved Matters (layout, scale, and landscaping) of outline planning application 22/00277/OUT for 239 dwellings with associated internal road layout, car parking, drainage and landscaping.

I refer to the comments received on 26/09/2024 in relation to the Housing Mix that is proposed for the site.

Planning History

Outline Planning Permission was granted for 239 dwellings on 17 May 2024. The supporting documents of the planning approval proposed a development of up to 239 dwellings at a proposed density of 35dph. The parameters of the outline planning approval also provide 4.95ha of open space to be provided as publicly accessible, including 3.5ha of ecological enhancements and an equipped children's play space.

Proposals

The planning application considers the approved Parameter Plan (n1741 004 Rev D) that indicates the developable area for houses.

Background

Newbold Verdon Character Assessment

When referring to the Newbold Verdon Character Assessment the area adjacent to the proposed development ("Village Area 2") is classified as residential private developments circa 1960/1970 – Gilberts Drive, Hornbeam Road and Laburnum Avenue, Peters Avenue and Brascole Lane.

The assessment states that '*the estates are comprised of semi-detached and detached houses with some bungalows. The detached houses were built as 3-bedroom.*

accommodation but many have extended over the years both upward and outward.' It goes on to state that 'detached houses have fairly generous spaces between them'.

When referring to The Hinkley and Bosworth Housing Needs study 2024 the below is the recommended mix sought to be provided over the whole of the administrative area.

Housing Mix: the recently published Housing Needs Survey outlines a recommended mix as follows:

	Market	Affordable home ownership	Affordable housing (rented)	
			General needs	Older persons
1-bedroom	5%	20%	25%	40%
2-bedrooms	35%	50%	35%	
3-bedrooms	40%	25%	30%	
4+bedrooms	20%	5%	10%	60%

The HBBC Housing Need Study recognises that each individual application should be considered on its own individual merits. Paragraph 5.37 states: -

"5.37 Although the analysis has quantified this on the basis of the market modelling and an understanding of the current housing market, it does not necessarily follow that such prescriptive figures should be included in the plan making process (although it will be useful to include an indication of the broad mix to be sought across the Council area) – demand can change over time linked to macro-economic factors and local supply. Policy aspirations could also influence the mix sought."

It goes onto state: -

*"5.38 The suggested figures can be used as a monitoring tool to ensure that future delivery is not unbalanced when compared with the likely requirements as driven by demographic change in the area. The recommendations can also be used as a set of guidelines to consider the approximate mix on larger development sites, and the Council could expect justification for a housing mix on such sites which significantly differs from that modelled herein. **Site location and area character are also relevant considerations for the appropriate mix of market housing on individual development sites.**"*

Where requirements are specified within a local plan policy, it is usually necessary that the evidence is scrutinised and that the wording controls how it should be applied across the whole administrative area.

It is therefore our opinion that the above referenced housing mix needs to take into consideration the whole Borough when reviewing housing mix for individual sites. The evidence and mix outlined in the HBBC Housing Needs Survey should apply to the entire local authority and accept there is a need to differentiate between areas with markedly different housing markets and physical characteristics. The distribution of housing should take account of the distinct characteristics of the area. It would be expected that in urban

areas, brownfield infill sites, towns, and cities a higher density would be more reflective of the area.

It is also of note that the average size of private sector new builds has been increasing at a time when household size has not, Housebuilders are therefore reacting to market demand rather than 'need'. An additional bedroom may involve a marginal additional cost as part of the overall property transaction but would provide flexibility to people reacting to working from home. It is commonplace that home purchasers are buying properties with more bedrooms than their specific need which accounts for changes in working practices.

It is also evidenced through market research that people often wish to buy a property with more bedrooms than they are told that they need. A home office, which could alternatively be a bedroom, is increasingly the norm, and many people wish to have a spare bedroom.

There is also evidence that the 'help to buy' has enabled first time buyers to obtain a larger house than would have been the case previously, meaning they will not have to move when starting a family.

New dwellings will form part of the housing stock well beyond the plan period. Whilst one-bed dwellings may suit current demographic trends, they offer little flexibility for either the current lifestyle of the initial occupant or evolving requirements.

In this case the site is in a semi-rural, edge of village, location where houses as opposed to flats are more typically found. It is of note that we are not providing 1 bedroom properties in this area as the market in Newbold Verdon would not support single professionals. As such there is a shift towards the 2- and 3-bedroom properties. Given some of the 3-bedroom properties are not significantly larger than the 2 bed properties, they are likely to be attractive and suitable for younger couples which are seeking to stay in the area through the provision of smaller properties. Many younger people prefer the flexibility that comes with a 3-bedroom house at little additional cost.

In this specific case the below is the breakdown of the housing mix proposed.

Overall housing mix

	Market	Affordable	Whole Site
1-bedroom	0%	6.3% (6 dwellings)	3%
2-bedroom	16.1% (23 dwellings)	55.2% (53 dwellings)	32%
3-bedroom	28.7% (41 dwellings)	38.5% (37 dwellings)	32%
4+ bedroom	55.2% (79 dwellings)	-	33%

The above table demonstrates that an even mix of property types is being provided through market and affordable homes with a density and design that is commensurate with the semi-rural location of Newbold Verdon. The density and housing mix closely reflects the characteristics of the surrounding area with a design that reflects the Newbold Verdon Character Assessment of detached and semi-detached properties with generous spaces between them.



Given the above assessment it is our opinion that the mix of housing proposed is commensurate with the locality. A denser development with flats and semi-detached properties would not reflect the character of the Conservation Village and would create an urban approach to this existing village.

In light of the above it is considered that this is a robust justification of the proposed mix.

Yours sincerely,

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