

Our ref: 40b – Planning Conformity/Final Responses/East Riding/Residential Development, Pastures Road, Mexborough, May 08

21 May 2008

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Dear Diane

Planning Application Number: 07/02001/OUTM

Outline application on approx. 16.11 of land comprising residential development, Public Open space and commercial development.

Thank you for consulting the Assembly on the above. I am pleased to forward the following officer comments to you, based on the approved Yorkshire and Humber Plan – Regional Spatial Strategy to 2026 (May 2008).

The Assembly, as the Regional Planning Body, has been asked to comment on this development as its nature and location mean that it could have an effect on the implementation of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The current RSS - The Yorkshire and Humber Plan was issued by the Secretary of State in May 2008. The RSS has the status of a Development Plan Document and forms part of the framework for decisions taken under section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), which means that decisions on all applications have to be taken in accordance with the Development Plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

Regional Policy Context

Policies in RSS seek to focus development on the Region's towns and cities. The Core Approach (Policies YH1 – YH9) makes it clear that most new development,

and high trip generating uses, should be focused on Regional and Sub-Regional Centres and that away from these sufficient development should be permitted in Principal Service Centres to enable them to fulfil their role as service centres (Policy YH7 building on policies YH4, YH5 and YH6 and Policies E2 and T1).

The RSS seeks to discourage development of Greenfield land, and state that priority should in fact be given to the re-use of Brownfield sites within settlements. Second priority should be given to other suitable infill opportunities, and thirdly, to planned growth areas.

Location of development

The proposed development is located to the east on the edge of the settlement of Mexborough. YH7 of the RSS provides for an urban-focussed, transport-orientated approach to development.

Mexborough is identified in RSS as a Principal Town. Policy YH5 of RSS states that away from the Region's Regional and Sub Regional Centres, Principal Service Centres will be the main local focus for housing, employment, shopping, leisure, education, health and cultural activities and facilities.

Policy YH7B of RSS also makes it clear that a sequential approach should be taken in determining applications to ensure that developments are either reusing land or buildings within centres, infilling sites within centres or are sites that are well connected on public transport routes and that can maximise accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling. Policy YH7C requires a transport-orientated approach to ensure that development makes the best use of transport infrastructure is focussed along existing or planned public transport corridors and maximises accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling. It is clear from the information provided that a sequential approach to alternative site selection has been carried out.

Housing

The application states that the proposed development will provide approximately 425 residential units. RSS sets a target of 1230 dwellings between 2008-2026. Therefore this proposal will make a significant contribution to delivering housing in the Doncaster district.

The application provides no details of the type of homes that will be constructed, but does state that there will be a mix of dwellings of all sizes. Housing mix will need to be a key consideration in this development. Policy H5 in RSS (2008) emphasises the need for the current mix of housing in the Region to change so that it better supports the creation of more sustainable communities. The Policy recommends that plans, strategies, investment decisions and programmes should ensure the provision of homes for a mix that reflects the needs of the area, including family homes, to create sustainable communities. It will be important for the local authority to ensure that there is an appropriate housing mix.

The applicant does not state how much of the proposed housing will be affordable. RSS (2008) identifies Doncaster as an area of 'lower need' for affordable housing (based on the Regional Housing Strategy, 2005). Policy H4A of the RSS suggests that in areas of 'lower need' (including Doncaster) up to 30% of homes need to be affordable.

Accessibility

Accessibility criteria are set out in RSS (Table 13.8 and 13.9). These tables include acceptable walking and overall journey times for the population that would be travelling to the site.

It is not clear from the application whether or not an assessment against the accessibility criteria has been carried out.

Car Parking

Policy T2 of RSS (2008) states that the maximum parking standards for new developments must be in line with Table 13.5. There is not sufficient detail provided with the application to assess whether this be the case.

Renewable Energy

The sustainable use of resources is a key theme in RSS (2008). Policy ENV5 states that in advance of local targets being set in DPDs, new developments of more than 10 dwellings should secure at least 10% of their energy from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources.

Conclusion

In conclusion to the comments made the Assembly would support the development in principle as it is within the Principal Town of Mexborough, but on the basis that:

- The housing mix reflects a local needs assessment and the need for an appropriate housing mix, including levels of affordable housing.
- It should be ensured that there is adequate public transport provision and provision for walking and cycling.
- Parking standards should be in line with current and draft RSS.
- The development is in line with Policy ENV5.

If you have any queries about this response, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Andrew L Haigh

Andy Haigh
Acting Head of Service
Planning Delivery and Conformity