

WARRINGTON Borough Council



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Dear Colin

Peel Hall PR 2015/03409

Principle of Development

Peel Hall is not specifically identified in the Local Plan Core Strategy, but is identified in the Council's 2016 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) under the 'Suitable, available and achievable' category of housing site. The principle of a comprehensive residential led development for this site is therefore acceptable in principle.

With regard to the proposed Local Centre, and in particular the proposed foodstore, the Council will require a sequential and retail impact assessment to be submitted as part of the application to ensure that new retail development is proportionate in scale to the overall development and will not have a significant detrimental impact on any existing identified town, district or local centres. This requirement is set out under Policy SN5 of the Local Plan Core Strategy. If required, Officers are able to provide advice on the scope of the assessment, including which local centres should be assessed in terms of impact.

Affordable Housing

The Council's affordable housing policy SN2 requires 30% affordable housing provision to be provided on site of which 50% should be rented and 50% intermediate. The policy acknowledges that the level and tenure of affordable housing will vary on a site by site basis based on viability and individual site characteristics. The Policy also states that the most up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) should also be taken into account.

The latest SHMA, published in January 2016, identifies a net need of 220 affordable homes per annum of which the need for rented homes is 83% and intermediate 17%. The SHMA also acknowledges that consideration could be given to areas with high concentrations of social rented housing where



additional intermediate housing might be desirable to improve the housing mix and to create 'housing pathways'.

Your current proposal is 30% affordable housing on site, all of which is to be provided as starter homes. Your rationale for this offer is because of the high level of rented affordable housing within the existing area together with the Government's stated priorities for affordable housing provision.

As we discussed in the meeting, starter homes are not currently considered to be affordable, although the Government is currently consulting on changes to the NPPF to include starter homes under the affordable housing definition. Having discussed starter homes with the Council's Housing Officers, our view is that starter homes will fall into the 'intermediate' category of affordable housing for the purposes of Policy SN2.

Peel Hall is located in the Poplars & Hulme ward which according to the latest census data does have a high proportion of households in affordable rented housing (39.8%) relative to the Borough as a whole (15.6%). This indicates that Peel Hall may be a location where the Council would accept a higher proportion of intermediate affordable housing, but given the Borough wide need for rented affordable housing, Officers are keen to explore the potential for a wider range of affordable housing than you are currently proposing on site.

At the pre-application meeting there was discussion about providing affordable homes specifically for elderly people and potentially to provide independent living for young people with learning disabilities. Officers would welcome the opportunity for more detailed discussions on these particular initiatives.

Open Space and Sports provision

Officers welcome the principles of the open space strategy which underpins the masterplan for the site. The Council's detailed requirements regarding open space provision are set out in the Open Space and Recreation SPD together with the 2012 Open Space Audit – both of which are available on the Council's web site.

The Council is able to provide a more detailed assessment of your proposed open space provision if you are able to provide a map and schedule of the different types and sizes of open space across the site. This would be a follow up to the initial pre-application charge.

As stated in the meeting, the Council will not be looking to adopt the areas of public open space and therefore it will be your responsibility to lay out the open space and ensure its long term management and maintenance.

With regard to sports pitch provision and the replacement of the existing playing fields, it will be important for you to provide more detailed plans setting



out your proposals to enable discussion with Sports England. As part of these details, it will be important to consider the issue of the new play equipment which has recently been provided within the existing area of open space off Windermere Avenue. As stated at the meeting, this play area serves a wide residential catchment and there would be concern if it was to be lost and not replaced in an appropriate accessible location.

I am still awaiting information from The Council's Sports & Physical Activity Engagement Services Manager regarding team generation rates and information with regard to existing facilities within the area. As soon as I have this information, I will send it on.

Ecology

Detailed advice from GMEU has been sent to you separately to confirm the necessary ecology work that will need to be undertaken in support of the application.

In addition, it was confirmed at the meeting that there should be a Tree Survey of trees and tree groups which are impacted on as part of the outline application. The extent of the Tree Survey needs to be agreed with Simon Twigg, the Council's Tree & Woodland Conservation Officer.

Environmental Protection

The scope of necessary assessments and supporting information was discussed at the meeting and details of the Council's standards are set out in the Environmental Protection SPD which is available on the Council's web site. I understand that the methodology for air quality assessment has subsequently been discussed and agreed with Officers and a further discussion is due to take place on the scope of the noise impact assessment work.

The Council is able to review the outcome of the assessments and potential mitigation measures at pre-application stage. This would be a follow up to the initial pre-application charge.

Education

Education colleagues have provided the pupil place projections for primary and secondary schools within the vicinity of the Peel Hall Site (attached).

For pupil projections the Council utilises the following formulae to determine the impact of any housing development, based on the most recent census information:

Primary - Number of pupils = 0.3 pupils per dwelling x number of dwellings

Secondary - Number of pupils = 0.18 pupils per dwelling x number of dwellings



Using the above formulae, Peel Hall's 1200 dwellings would equate to 360 primary pupils and 216 high school pupils and for the Council's purposes we would assume these are spread equally across all year groups.

On the basis of the impact of the Peel Hall development the projections demonstrate that in the early years of the build, Warrington will already be experiencing a shortage of primary places within 2 miles of the site, so it is important that a contribution is received for the provision of primary school places.

With regard to the impact of the development on secondary school places, the projections demonstrate that in the early years of the build, Warrington will have capacity within the high school sector to accommodate additional numbers, but this will soon expire as pupils already in the primary sector transfer to the high school sector. By the time the development is nearing completion there is predicted to be a significant shortfall of places within 3 miles of the site, therefore it is also important that a contribution is received for the provision of high school places.

To determine the contribution from new housing development, the Council uses the Department for Education's cost multipliers for the cost of providing school places, updated by applying construction cost indices to Q1 2015. The costs for primary and secondary school places are £12,929 and £19,482 respectively.

The contribution sought for secondary school places will therefore be £19,482 multiplied by the secondary school child yield of 216, equating to £4,208,112.

The starting point for the contribution for primary school places will be £12,929 multiplied by the primary school child yield of 360, equating to £4,654,440.

Education colleagues have confirmed they will seek land within the Peel Hall site for a 1.5 FE new primary school, but are yet to reach a final conclusion on whether to provide all provision within Peel Hall site or whether to provide some additional places at nearby schools.

The area of land required for a 1.5FE Primary School is 11,250m².

The value of the land secured for the school will be offset against the primary school contribution with the balance of the contribution being used to construct the school and / or provide additional capacity to existing schools within 2 miles of the site.

Education colleagues will confirm, in due course, with DfE the funding and delivery arrangements for the construction of a new primary school, which will be either an academy or free school.



Given the immediate pressure on primary school places the Council will look to confirm its preferred option for providing primary school places at the earliest opportunity.

In accordance with the CIL Regulations 2010, the Council will name the specific school improvement projects that the primary and secondary school contributions will be used for.

Health

I have discussed your proposals with the Council's Public Health Team, Warrington Clinical Care Commissioning Group (CCG) and NHS England.

The Chief Operating Officer of the CCG has confirmed that based on the geographical location of the site, it is expected that majority of the residents will choose to register with the two closest GP practices which are Fearnhead Medical Centre and Padgate Medical Centre. Warrington's Strategic Estates Plan completed in December 2015 shows that whilst the practices have an open list for registrations neither have a surplus of clinical rooms to accommodate the significant increase in population that the Peel Hall development would bring.

In response to the plans and recent consultation both practices have approached the CCG and NHS England to discuss future options as they are concerned about the practices ability to accommodate new residents. These meetings will be concluded by the end of February. At that point the CCG will have a clearer idea of the plans of both practices. Outline discussions indicate that both practices may require at least an addition of 2 clinical rooms to accommodate the increase required of GP and Practice Nurse time, however the details of any future expansion of either site is what is currently being discussed.

I will be able to provide further detail on the expansion plans and contribution which may be sought from the Peel Hall development once these discussions have concluded.

Highways

The Council requires detailed transport modelling work to be undertaken to establish the impact of the development on the local and strategic road network. As part of this work, Highways Officers have specifically requested that you review the option of opening up the proposed spine road to create a through route to general traffic, not just buses, between the A49 and Blackbrook Avenue.

Highways Officers are currently in discussions with your transport consultants to agree the scope of the modelling work and the assumptions that are feeding into it.



Given the importance of highways and transportation to the deliverability of the development, it is considered important that there is a follow up meeting specifically on these matters when the modelling work has been completed. That will enable Officers to understand the impacts of the development and the requirement for mitigation measures.

Form of Application

The submission of an outline application, with accompanying Environmental Statement, in the form discussed at the meeting is acceptable to the Council in principle.

A phasing plan will be critical to understand how elements of the development will come forward over time and to ensure the timely delivery of infrastructure to support the development of new homes, the local centre and employment floorspace.

You should take care to distinguish between those plans / drawings you are submitting for approval now and those which are submitted purely for illustrative purposes. The detailed design of highway and pedestrian works should be submitted for approval please.

Next steps

I trust the above confirms the Council's view on your proposals to date. I am conscious that there are a number of pieces of outstanding information which we agreed to provide and I will ensure you receive these at the earliest opportunity.

I am also keen to continue discussions on your affordable housing offer and education and health contribution once you have had the opportunity to review the advice set out in this letter. Additional discussions on these topics would be within the initial pre-application fee you have provided.

Following the completion of your transport modelling work it will be essential for Officers to review the impacts of the model and work with you to agree any necessary mitigation measures. For clarity, there will be an additional pre-application following up fee for this work.

Finally, the Council can also undertake a more detailed review of your open space proposals and the outcome of your environmental protection studies, although there will also be an additional pre-application charge for this work.

I must stress that the information provided above is the professional opinion of Officers and is given entirely without prejudice to the Council's determination of a future planning application for the Peel Hall site.

Yours sincerely

Michael DC Bell

Michael Bell
Planning Policy & Programmes Manager