

Planning Policy Comments

Application No: 69463

Location: Station Works, Bury Road, Radcliffe, M26 2UA

Proposal: Development for 30 no. dwellings with associated road, landscaping and infrastructure works.

The application site is currently vacant having previously been occupied by a warehouse/industrial buildings. As the site was last used as an employment site the principle of any proposed development should be assessed against UDP Policy EC2/2.

Under Policy EC2/2, the Council will seek to retain the employment use of sites unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the land and premises are no longer suited, in land use terms, to continued employment use.

SPD14 provides additional guidance on how the Council will implement Policy EC2/2 and, in doing so, sets out a more flexible approach whereby, in addition to assessing the suitability of the site from a purely land use perspective, also considers whether there is a realistic prospect of an existing site being retained in employment use – including consideration of whether there is market demand.

The Council has undertaken a comprehensive assessment of all employment sites within the Borough and this concluded that the site is suitable, in land use terms, for continued employment use.

An outline application for a mixed-use development comprising two apartment blocks and employment building was approved in 2020. The approval of the mixed-use scheme and, in particular, the inclusion of an element of employment development was seen as being sufficient to offset the loss of the wider employment site.

This current proposal is for a 100% residential scheme and the applicant is contending that the mixed-use scheme (as was previously approved) is not viable. In order to clearly demonstrate that this is the case, the applicant should, in line with paragraphs 3.10 to 3.17 of SPD14, clearly demonstrate that the employment element of the previous approval has been actively and robustly marketed at a realistic price that reflects the employment use. Evidence of marketing for the employment – including the marketing particulars – should be provided so that full consideration can be given to how robustly the employment market has been tested and whether this was marketed at a realistic value for continued employment use.

If, once this evidence is submitted, the Council is satisfied that there is clear market evidence that there is not currently any realistic prospect of the employment element of the mixed-use approval being delivered, then the Council may consider alternative uses subject to a one-off payment to compensate for the loss of the employment site.

As noted above, the inclusion of an element of employment development

in the approved mixed use scheme was seen as being sufficient to off-set the loss of the wider employment site. However, if the whole site is to be lost to residential, it would need to be off-set through a one-off payment. For a site of this size (0.57 ha.), the contribution would amount to £222,300.

Officer: DW/FS
Date: 28/07/2023