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Sent: 06 January 2025 23:01:51 UTC+00:00
To: "Joanne Fisher" <Joanne.Fisher@midsussex.gov.uk>
Cc: "Nicholas Royle" <Nicholas.Royle@midsussex.gov.uk>; "Melanie Sharp" <Melanie.Sharp@midsussex.gov.uk>; "Andrew Marsh" <Andrew.Marsh@midsussex.gov.uk>; "Helen Blackith" <Helen.Blackith@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: Housing Comments DM/24/2922 - Hollyrood House, Ardingly Road, Lindfield, Haywards Heath

Dear Jo

Please see my comments below

DM/24/2922 - Hollyrood House, Ardingly Road, Lindfield, Haywards Heath
Removal of outbuildings and alterations to the existing buildings and hardsurfaces to allow for a change of use from Class C2 (residential institution) use to a Class C3 (dwellinghouse) use to provide 3 no.1- bed flats, 14 no. 2-bed flats, and 2 no. 3-bed two storey dwellings (and retaining Holy Rood Cottage as a 3-bed dwelling), together with 37 no. car parking spaces, private and communal amenity spaces, landscaping, bin and cycle stores. Alterations to existing access points onto and from Ardingly Road and Park Lane

"The applicant is proposing a development of 20 units on the above site, involving the creation of 19 units (comprising 3 x 1B flats, 14 x 2B flats, and 2 x 3B houses) and the retention and refurbishment of Holy Rood Cottage as a 3B house, which gives rise to a minimum onsite affordable housing requirement of 30% in accordance with District Plan Policy DP31. This equates to 6 affordable housing units since the resultant number of affordable units, if not a whole number, is rounded up to the next whole number as stated in the Affordable Housing SPD.

The 6 affordable housing units required comprise 2 x 1B/2P flats at a minimum of 50m² (1 storey) and 4 x 2B/4P flats at a minimum of 70m² (1 storey). On site provision is always preferred, but in this instance due to the nature and location of the development we would be prepared to accept a commuted sum of £420,000 towards the provision of off-site affordable housing units, rather than on site affordable housing. This sum has been calculated in accordance with the West Sussex Commuted Sum Review letter dated 11th March 2011 for a scheme in Band E as follows: 2 x 1 Bed flats @ £63,000 per flat plus 4 x 2 Bed flats @ £73,500 per flat = £420,000. It would be secured via the section 106 agreement and would be payable prior to Commencement of the Development.

It is noted however that a Viability Appraisal has been submitted alongside the planning application, to support the applicant's position that the scheme cannot viably sustain the provision of any affordable housing. This appraisal also refers to the potential deduction of Vacant Building Credit but this is not applicable in this instance since, as stated in the

Affordable Housing SPD, “the intention of VBC is to bring back into use sites which would not otherwise be developed and not simply to reduce the affordable housing requirement of schemes that would come forward without VBC thereby reducing the supply of affordable housing to meet local needs” (Para 2.69).

“Indeed VBC will only be applicable to sites to bring them back into use if they would not otherwise be developed (see below). It will not apply to reduce the affordable housing requirement of schemes that would come forward anyway without VBC” (Para 2.70). “There may be some exceptional circumstances where the VBC should be applied and would, in line with the intention of the policy provide an incentive for development on previously developed sites containing vacant buildings that would not otherwise come forward for development” (Para 2.73). However, in this instance since, (as advised in the marketing report from Gerald Eve submitted with the planning application), the agents received 10 bids for the site from residential developers looking to redevelop it (in the knowledge of the Council’s affordable housing and other infrastructure contribution requirements), VBC is not applicable.

The amount of the Affordable Housing Contribution which can currently be viably provided in place of on-site affordable housing will however be determined by the results of the assessment of the submitted Viability Appraisal, and a quote will therefore be sought from an independent viability consultant, in order to enable an assessment of the information provided & assumptions used in the Appraisal to be undertaken. A live working Viability Appraisal with a file extension of .wcfx will be required from the applicant in due course together with a signed Financial Undertaking to cover the costs incurred, and also confirmation from yourself regarding the breakdown of the relevant section 106 infrastructure contributions for a 100% open market scheme, before this assessment can commence.

Finally, I can also confirm that further Housing comments will be provided in due course once the results of the Viability Assessment are known.”

Kind regards

Helen

Helen Blackith
Housing Enabling Team Manager

Every Affordable Home Matters

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Please note that I only work Mon, Tue, Thu & Fri