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Our ref: 40b – Planning Conformity/final responses/Calderdale Mixed Use Dev, Shaw Lodge Mills, Nov 07

20 November 2007

Julie White
Planning Services
Calderdale Council
Northgate House
Northgate
Halifax
HX1 1UN

Dear Julie

Planning Application Number: 07/02146/OUT

Redevelopment of former employment site to form mixed use development to create 300 residential units, approximately 11,500 sq m B1 (including medical centre) 1,500 sq m B2, hotel, ancillary A1 (shops) A3 (restaurants and cafes) and A4 (drinking establishments), gymnasium (D2), uses and to include 650 car parking spaces (Outline)

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above application. It appears very similar to an application the Assembly responded to on 4 October 2006.

As you will be aware, in our response to application – 06/01574/OUT (dated 4 October 2007), the Assembly overall felt that the proposed development would help to implement the existing and draft RSS. Therefore the Assembly's position has not changed, despite some of the floorspace figures being reduced. We would therefore wish to reiterate our original comments made on the 4 October 2007. The original response to application 06/01574/OUT is attached in Annex A.

I hope that you find these comments helpful. If you have any further queries about our response, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jenny Poxon', written in a cursive style.

Jenny Poxon
Head of Service
Planning Delivery and Conformity

Our ref: 40b – Planning Conformity/final responses/Shaw Lodge Oct 06

4 October 2006

Richard Seaman
Planning Services
Northgate House
Northgate
Halifax
HX1 1UN

Dear Richard

Consultation on Proposed Redevelopment of Former Employment Site to Form Mixed-Use Development at Shaw Lodge Mills, Halifax, HX3 9ET.

Planning Application number: 06/01574/OUT

The Assembly is grateful for the opportunity to comment on this proposed development. 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 for Yorkshire and Humber (based on the Selective Review of RPG12) was issued by the Secretary of State in December 2004. 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.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) and Circular 08/2005 make it clear that a draft RSS submitted to the Secretary of State is a relevant regional policy against which strategic applications can be considered. This Assembly response therefore also highlights relevant issues that arise from the Yorkshire and Humber Plan (draft RSS) December 2005 – the RSS submitted to the Secretary of State.

Both the existing and draft regional spatial strategies aim to achieve a more sustainable pattern and form of development, investment and activity across the region, putting a greater emphasis on matching needs across the region with opportunities and managing the environment as a key resource. There is a particular emphasis on achieving the regeneration and renaissance of the region's city and town centres by making them the focus for housing, employment, shopping, leisure, education, health and cultural activities and facilities in the region (for example Policy P1, existing RSS, December 2004 and Policy YH5, Draft RSS, December 2005).

In seeking the implementation of these policies across the region, the Assembly therefore offers the following comments on the proposed redevelopment of former employment to form a mixed-use development at Shaw Lodge Mills, Halifax.

The proposed development does raise a number of issues for the implementation of RSS that need to be considered. These relate to the type, scale and intensity of the development, the level of housing provision in relation to annual housing targets and development on employment land. Overall, the Assembly feels that the proposed development would help to implement the existing and draft RSS.

Type, scale and intensity

The proposed redevelopment of the site as an urban village is clearly a significant one in its local context. From a strategic policy perspective, it would seem to be a good opportunity to provide a mixed use development on an accessible, edge of centre site which otherwise could remain vacant once the company is moved elsewhere. Both existing and draft RSS see the city and town centres of the region as the appropriate focus for development (Policies P1 and E1 of existing RSS and Policies YH1 to YH8 of draft RSS).

In the draft RSS, Halifax is identified as a sub-regional centre, which should be the 'prime focus for housing, employment, shopping, leisure, education, health and cultural activities and facilities in the region' (Policy YH5). Policy YH5 supports high quality, modern, accessible developments in sub-regional centres that will help to transform them into places that people will want to live, work and invest. This policy also supports investment that will help to create new and improved networks, corridors and areas of green space. Whilst matters of design, density of development and other details are not ones on which the Assembly would wish to comment, the principle of the scheme would be supported by regional policy.

Level of housing provision

Draft RSS (December 2005) sets out an average annual net completions rate of 500 dwellings for Calderdale between 2004 and 2011. Whilst this single application would provide nearly the average annual provision target, this does not necessarily raise concerns from a regional policy point of view. As a sub-regional centre, Halifax should provide the focus for housing provision in the area and this is a 'brownfield' 'windfall site', the availability of which could not have been predicted. Revised ONS household figures might lead to an increase in the annual housing

targets for the region as a whole. If this were to happen, the Assembly is proposing that these additions should be focused on regional and sub-regional centres (including Halifax) to help the implementation of the regional spatial strategy.

The Planning and Design Statement submitted with the application refers to the need for the applicants to consider the appropriate mix of housing on the site. In discussing this element of the proposal with the applicant, the Assembly would encourage the Council to take into account policies H4 in existing RSS and H3A of draft RSS. Policy H4 of existing RSS encourages local authorities to carry out Housing Needs Assessments, from which targets for the provision of affordable housing can be set. Policy H3A of the draft RSS suggests that in areas of 'low need' (including Halifax) up to 29% of homes (on sites of 15 homes or more) needs to be affordable.

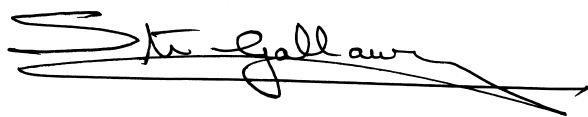
Development on employment land

The site is allocated as a Primary Employment Area in the UDP (August 2006). Both existing RSS (December 2004) and Draft RSS (December 2005) set out the need for local authorities to carry out employment land reviews and to set out policies for the amount, location and types of employment land in light of such a review (Policies E3, E4 and E5 of existing RSS and Policies E3, E4 and E5 of Draft RSS). Such reviews are sought in the context of an oversupply of employment land across the region as a whole. If, in the light of an up to date review of employment land, the local authority wishes to safeguard land the Assembly would support such safeguarding (in line with Policy E5 of Draft RSS).

In this case, the proposed mixed-use development would replace a single use and, given the nature of the proposal, it is not suggested that loss of employment land is a policy concern.

If you have any queries about these points, please do not hesitate to contact Jenny Poxon on 01924 331555.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Galloway', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Stephen Galloway
Chair, Regional Planning Board
Yorkshire and Humber Assembly