



Date: 15th December 2015

Your Ref: 022

Our Ref:

Planning Policy
Southend-on-Sea Borough Council
Civic Centre
Victoria Avenue
Southend-on-Sea
Essex, SS2 6ER

Dear Sirs,

REPRESENTATION ON THE SOUTHEND AREA ACTION PLAN (NOVEMBER 2016)

We write on behalf of Southend United Football Club (SUFC) to make representations concerning the Southend Area Action Plan (SCAAP) Revised Proposed Submission (November 2016). Our principle objection to the SCAAP is the removal of and the lack of an allocation of the Roots Hall Football Stadium site at Victoria Avenue, for future mixed-use development.

The site, which comprises the stadium, stadium parking, SUFC shop, housing fronting Victoria Avenue and commercial property fronting Fairfax Drive, was formerly allocated in the SCAAP Preferred Approach Document (December 2015). Roots Hall was designated in the December 2015 document for mixed-use development for convenience retail and approximately 290 homes, for development post 2021 (ref: OS13). The SCAAP (November 2016), however now omits the site from any formal allocation. No explanation in the document has been given as to the subsequent exclusion of the Roots Hall site from the Opportunity Sites of the SCAAP (November 2016). And it is of particular surprise to the Club that the site allocation has been removed, despite the advanced stage of pre-application discussions for the relocation of the football stadium to Fossetts Farm and consequential redevelopment of the Roots Hall site.

The Council will be aware of the emerging development proposals for both sites and that subject to securing planning permissions, the developments are capable of commencing delivery from 2018/19 onwards.

The availability for the Roots Hall site for development is subject to the relocation of the Southend United Football Club stadium. SUFC has expressed intent for over 10 years through the planning process, for the club to relocate to a new stadium at Fossetts Farm. Planning permission was previously granted in 2008 for the stadium relocation and enabling development, and the linked permission for the training grounds (within Rochford District Council) is extant. Therefore, the Roots Hall site can be considered to be available for development in the future due to the clear intent of SUFC to create an alternative location for the stadium, and the site should therefore be allocated in the SCAAP.

Moreover, the Club and its development partners have been involved in extensive and on-going pre-application discussions with the Council for over a year on the development proposals for both the Roots Hall and Fossetts Farm sites. These discussions are at an advanced stage and SUFC have

expressed intention to submit the two applications concurrently early in 2017. Therefore, subject to the grant of planning permission, the site could be available for development within the next 5 years (pre-2021).

The redevelopment of the Roots Hall site will provide 675 homes in a strategic, town centre location, in addition to providing up to approximately 4,000sqm of mixed retail including a foodstore and enhancing the shopping frontage on Victoria Avenue as a gateway to the Southend Central Area. This development would support the strategic objectives of the SCAAP and would most importantly contribute towards housing delivery in the Borough in the earlier part of the Plan (pre-2021).

The SCAAP (November 2016) refers to the Core Strategy (December 2007) targets for housing provision in the Town Centre Area and the ability of the SCAAP to meet the outstanding requirement for the remainder of the plan period (to 2021). The Core Strategy target set is 325 dwellings per annum for the plan period (2001-2021). However, the most recently identified objectively assessed housing need for Southend grossly exceeds the plan target at 950-1135 dwellings per annum for the period of 2014-2037 (South Essex Strategic Housing Market Assessment, May 2016). Furthermore, the Council has recently highlighted its difficulty in meeting its objectively assessed housing need through the Local Plan process, in a letter to the Examiner of the Caste Point New Local Plan (dated 18th November 2016), with particular reference to the constraints of the Borough in finding suitable land for development. The Roots Hall site is not only suitable for development, as previously highlighted in the SCAAP (December 2015) and pre-application discussions with the Council, but would be available within the next 5 years, and would therefore deliver much needed housing towards the Council's objectively assessed needs.

We therefore respectfully request that the site allocation for the Roots Hall Stadium site be re-instated in the SCAAP, to include a mixed-use development for convenience/ retail and residential uses, with an indicative capacity of 675 homes. It has the potential to be delivering homes by 2018/19 linked to the delivery of a new stadium at Fossetts Farm.

Please keep us informed of further progress with the SCAAP and other consultation events. We look forward to confirmation of receipt. Future correspondence to PowerHaus Consultancy can be directed to either Mary Power [REDACTED]

Yours faithfully,

PowerHaus Consultancy

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