

**3/20/2328/FUL: Land to the rear and adjacent to 13 Port Hill, SG14 1PJ
Response from the Chair, Bengeo Neighbourhood Area Plan**

1. The above site is within the Bengeo Neighbourhood Area Plan boundary. The draft Plan is at the Examination stage and the expectation is that it will go to public referendum in May 2021.

Redevelopment of commercial and industrial sites

2. It's noted that prior to development, two outhouses and a storage unit would be demolished. Criterion I of Neighbourhood Plan Policy HBH4: Brownfield Development supports proposals for development on brownfield land when they are consistent with other policies in the Plan and when they demonstrate that regeneration will:
 - a) significantly improve the visual appearance of the site or building
 - b) complement the design and heritage of nearby buildings
 - c) protect the amenity of nearby residents and business occupants.
3. The 'Site Perspectives' images, dated 14/11/20, suggest that the south elevation of the proposed 3-bedroom dwelling would be exceptionally close to the rear of 9d Port Hill, potentially impeding access for gutter, fascia and soffit maintenance at 9d. This would be inconsistent with criterion 1c) of Neighbourhood Plan Policy HBH4: Brownfield Development. Planning consent should be conditional on the provision of evidence which demonstrates that the proposals are compliant with this policy and also with criterion Ii) in Neighbourhood Plan Policy HBH2: Design and Layout, which says that development proposals should aim to protect the amenity and privacy of existing and future residents.

Resident and visitor parking

4. The proposals indicate the provision of 4 car parking spaces for 3 dwellings. Whilst this site is within accessible, level access to a supermarket and other town centre facilities, development could exacerbate on-road parking pressures. The site is a restrictive one for 3 dwellings plus a number of vehicles. It's unclear from the images provided (in the site and aerial perspectives) whether there would be sufficient, safe, turning space, particularly given that the turning area to the north of the site, would accommodate two cars as well as parking for up to 6 cycles.
5. Paragraph 4.65 in the Neighbourhood Plan says: *'Parking in urban parts of the Ward is challenging. At the Policy consultation in March 2019, parking issues generated more responses than any other.....and pavement parking, and parking close to road junctions, were also highlighted as a safety issue'*.
6. The proposals make no reference to how visitor parking would be accommodated. Criterion 1d in Neighbourhood Plan Policy HBH2: Design and Layout says that design proposals should aim to incorporate visitor parking to *'avoid adding parking pressures to overloaded local roads'*.

7. Local County Councillor Andrew Stevenson has introduced a number of initiatives to try to address excessive pavement parking which inhibits walking, including walking to school. The initiatives include a long stretch of bollards by Bengo Primary School, at the northern end of the Neighbourhood Plan Area, to improve the safety of the children's walk to school. Mill Mead Primary School, also within the Plan Area, is located on the adjacent road to Port Hill. It's vital that this, and any other local development, does not increase levels of on-road or pavement parking.

Cycle Parking

8. Proposals to incorporate 6 cycle parking spaces are welcome. The plans indicate that these would be located adjacent to the rear one-bedroom dwelling. Criterion 1c) in Neighbourhood Plan Policy HBH3: Landscape Design says that landscaping schemes should incorporate '*sufficient, secure, covered cycle parking to encourage active travel*'. We recommend that all cycle parking should be secure and covered.

Bin Storage

9. The application form and Aerial Perspectives image indicate that a bin storage area for 9 bins would be located at the entrance to the site, adjacent to 11 Port Hill. Criterion lg) in Neighbourhood Plan Policy HBH2: Design and Layout says that development proposals should aim to provide '*discreet, accessible, bin storage*'. Locating 9 bins at the front of the site does not suggest they would be discreet, or that they would contribute to improving the appearance of the site. Planning consent should be conditional on bins being located in a more discreet location, or on the production of more information, including representative images of how 9 accessible bins could be located at the entrance, without detriment to the aesthetic appearance of the site.

Design

10. The proposal for the dwellings to be constructed using reclaimed bricks and timber framed windows is welcome as this would be in keeping with materials used in neighbouring properties and consistent with Criterion 1b) in Neighbourhood Plan Policy HBH4: Brownfield Development.

Trees

11. It's understood that a revised Arboriculture Impact Assessment is being provided to more accurately reflect that there is one tree (Ash) on site, not a number of trees. The impact on the amenity of neighbours in George Street should be evaluated before consent for removal of this tree is given. The proposals indicate that a replacement tree would be provided in a planter to the front of the 3-bedroom dwelling. Neighbourhood Plan Policy HBN4: Nature Conservation, encourages the replacement of trees, removed as part of development, with native species, in suitable locations.

Conclusion

12. The Design and Access Statement is limited in detail. Although some additional information is provided in the application form, greater clarity should be provided on:

- a) the potential impact of development on neighbour amenity, particularly the proposed proximity of new dwellings to existing homes
- b) whether and how safe and sufficient turning space for vehicles would be accommodated on site
- c) how visitor parking would be accommodated
- d) how the development would avoid adding parking pressures to local roads
- e) how discreet and accessible bin storage would be accommodated on site

13. Until additional information, as above, is provided by the applicant, further comment cannot be made, or support considered for this application.

Chair, Bengo Neighbourhood Area Plan