



New Forest National Park Submission Draft Local Plan 2016 – 2036

Proposed additional site allocation – Ashurst Hospital

January 2019

Proposed Ashurst Hospital Site Allocation Policy

1. The Ashurst Hospital site comprises previously developed land with access to a range of local services, including the train station and local shops. The site immediately adjoins the existing Defined Village boundary of Ashurst and is located within Flood Zone 1 for fluvial flooding.
2. Health Commissioners have confirmed that much of the existing accommodation at Ashurst Hospital is no longer fit for purpose and there is an opportunity to make a more efficient use of the site. Large parts of the site have been declared surplus to the operational healthcare requirements of the NHS and are vacant. The more modern Snowden Building at the west of the site currently contains the Birthing Centre and is to be retained. It is likely that this building will need to be extended to accommodate the future healthcare services that will continue to be delivered from the Ashurst Hospital site and policy XX supports this.
3. Policy XX allocates the site for a mix of residential (C2 Use or extra care) and retained healthcare provision. It is considered that the surplus part of this previously developed site can deliver around 30 units - although the exact number will depend on the final form of residential development, which will in turn be guided by the need to avoid impacts on the adjacent protected habitats. Viability modelling for the Local Plan indicates that the redevelopment of the Ashurst Hospital site (including site clearance costs) is unlikely to achieve the 50% affordable housing policy target.
4. The site allocation policy highlights the natural and built environment constraints and opportunities on the Ashurst Hospital site. The site lies adjacent to the New Forest SSSI, SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites and the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Local Plan identifies the potential for a range of possible effects from development on these protected sites, including recreation pressure, urban edge effects including cat predation and the loss or damage to off-site supporting habitats.
5. Policy XX therefore requires development to be confined to the previously developed land to the north of the site and the strengthening of the planted boundary to the adjacent Natura 2000 site designations. Mitigation measures for potential urban edge effects could include the use of legal covenants (e.g. preventing cat or dog ownership) and arrangements for grounds maintenance. The requirement to ensure no adverse impact on the adjacent national and internationally protected habitats will also influence the form of the C2 or extra care residential development on site.
6. Elements of the existing built development on the site date back to the 1830s. The former historic workhouse building is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset due to its 19th Century origins and the degree to which the building has survived to a large extent. The Victorian Chapel on the site was constructed sometime between 1869 and 1896 and the exterior remains in good condition. The former workhouse building and Victorian Chapel have heritage significance and Policy XX confirms the Chapel will be retained as part of the redevelopment of the site. The policy requires a detailed heritage assessment to be undertaken to justify proposals that would result in the loss of the former workhouse building.

Policy XX - Land at Ashurst Hospital

Land at Ashurst Hospital is allocated for a mixed-use development comprising:

- Retained (and potentially extended) healthcare provision in the western part of the site (focused on the Snowden Building) – illustrated in blue on the map below; and
- Around 30 residential units (Use Class C2 or extra care use) on the remaining previously developed part of the site.

Detailed proposals for the site that meet the following site-specific requirements will be permitted:

- (a) The site must be redeveloped in a comprehensive manner and detailed proposals for residential development will need to ensure the retained healthcare uses on the site can operate efficiently;
- (b) Built development will be confined to the previously developed land to ensure the existing green buffer remains to the south of the site and the New Forest's protected habitats.
- (c) The Victorian Chapel will be retained as part of the redevelopment. A detailed heritage assessment and structural survey will be required to justify the loss of the former workhouse buildings;
- (d) Redevelopment proposals must retain the protected trees on the site;
- (e) Proposals for extra care use (that is not C2 Use) must provide on-site affordable housing for local people in housing need as close to the Authority's target of 50% affordable housing as is viable. Viability will be demonstrated through an open book approach;
- (f) Proposals for C2 Use must be accompanied by a legal agreement requiring the occupancy to be limited to those with a local connection;
- (g) All of the dwellings on site will be limited to a maximum total internal floor area of 100 square metres;
- (h) Development proposals must incorporate measures to mitigate potential significant urban edge impacts on adjacent protected habitats. The existing southern boundary between the site and the adjacent protected habitats should be retained and strengthened with the planting of native species. Proposals should seek to enhance both its role in buffering the designated sites and supporting species of principal importance for biodiversity. A detailed application for the site will be subject to a full appropriate assessment; and
- (i) Development proposals must provide a connection to the nearest point of adequate capacity in the sewerage network, as advised by the service provider.

