

Southbourne Parish Neighbourhood Plan Review 2019 – 2037
Policy SB6 Using Scarce Employment Land Efficiently
Supporting Evidence SB6.EV2

Employment Land Allocation – Conclusions (20/8/19)

Commentary

- 1.** As with previous Local Plan employment land allocations for Southbourne Parish no guidance is available within Local Plan Evidence Base Documents. A review of documentation was undertaken of both CDC Local Plan: Key Policies 2014-2029 and Chichester Local Plan Review 2035 – Preferred Approach together with evidence supporting the current Southbourne Parish Neighbourhood Plan. A note was prepared as a basis for discussion with CDC and with other interested parties.
- 2.** A meeting was held with Karen Neglia, Economic Development Officer CDC, 05th July 2019. It was agreed that there was no detailed breakdown within CDC supporting documents as to the type and extent of employment land to be allocated to support proposed Policy AL13. However, it was agreed generally that any allocation should reflect the changing nature of employment and be best related to provision of facilities for hot desking, co working and easy start up facilities. Example facilities in the Chichester area had been identified and a series of meetings with the providers arranged.
- 3.** Meeting with Fernhurst Community Centre, 30 July 2019. Whilst this provision represented the bottom end of the scale it was useful in identifying approach, funding and management. It was made clear from the outset that the facility was expected to be financially viable, to operate as a charity and limited liability company. Rather than resulting from additional development it reflected the requirements of a relatively rural location and its needs. Although small it reflected the provision of a “community hub”.
- 4.** Meeting with Chichester Community Development Trust, 01 August 2019. The Trust, established in 2009, as a direct result of development being undertaken on the sites of Roussillon Park (ex MoD facility), Graylingwell Park (ex NHS facility) and Lower Graylingwell/Keepers Green. Land and building assets have been transferred under 3 separate S106 agreements together with developer undertakings for refurbishment. Employment land facilities of some 10,000sq ft (955sq m) small units will be provided through the refurbishment of the Marchwell Studios. Again, operation both under charitable status and as a limited liability company were made obvious. All facilities are expected, and do, operate as financially viable. A significant difference between CCDT and Fernhurst is that each householder makes an annual payment of £50.00 to CCDT. However, what is clear is that the provision of building assets requiring refurbishment together with different S106 agreements has lengthened the timescale within which a “community hub” can be achieved.
- 5.** Meeting with Rume2, Sussex House, Crane St, 12 August 2019. This facility is a commercial venture founded by 2 business women and is almost exclusively run as a co working creative hub. The distinction between hot desking and co working becomes clear as the later requires very high speed WiFi, good furniture/ambiance, casual meeting areas, kitchen facilities, frequent events and 24/7 access.

6. Freedom Works, Metro House 12 August 2019. This facility is a commercial venture – one of 4 facilities in West Sussex. Combination of modular offices (14) and hot desks (10). As with Rume2 provides break out areas, boardroom and kitchen facilities. However, it does not appear to be as well occupied by creative co working activities.
7. Chichester Enterprise Gateway. Developed by CDC, managed by Base Point. Does not lend itself to hot desking and it is understood that some conversion will be undertaken to increase co working. As with other co working facilities it provides breakout areas kitchen facilities, boardroom, holds events. Appears to have a more complicated charging regime.

Previous proposals in Southbourne

8. The Business and Economy focus group of the first Southbourne Parish Neighbourhood Plan considered proposals for the development of a small business centre providing small flexible modular units capable of build up/break down floorspace combinations which would allow activities to expand/contract in line with economic circumstances, enable those working from home to rent space, provide meeting room and conference space. In addition consideration was given to the development of 5 live/work units which would have provided ground floor workshop space with residential living space above.
9. The Chichester Local Plan – Key Policies 2014 – 2029 and the Chichester Local Plan Review 2035 – Preferred Approach both seek to safeguard well used and beneficial community facilities unless replacement premises are provided (eg Age Concern Southbourne and Mens Shed) (CLPKP Policy 38, CLP Review Policy DM7); whilst none of the proposals have been progressed to date, provision within a multiple use complex would be sought.

Possible conclusions

10. Provision of flexible office space providing an element of hot desking – say 8 to 10 spaces and the potential for co working facilities of around 30 – 40 desks together with meeting rooms, boardrooms/conference rooms might be suggested together with kitchen facilities. It is suggested that these should provide at least 350 sq m of floorspace within a “community hub zone”; such a zone would separately contain other community facilities such as Age Concern, Mens Shed, a nursery and “pack and play” facility thus allowing those working from home the opportunity to hot desk/co work with child care being charged at an hourly rate rather than a day rate; these facilities would be available to others as well.
11. In addition, it is suggested that at least 4 x 65 sq m (300 – 400 sq m) workshops could be provided in close proximity to the hub to cater for demand from self-employed home-based traders who may wish to rent workshop space. In addition an element of purpose built secure storage space should be provided to allow local tradesmen to store materials/equipment for their use. Sufficient vehicle parking spaces should be provided which can jointly be used for both the community hub and associated employment activities as demand is unlikely to overlap.
12. In all it is suggested that between 800 sq m -1,000 sq m of employment associated floorspace is provided.

- 13.** The community hub should incorporate re-provision of the village hall with professional sound and lighting equipment, provide café/restaurant facilities which are available for use by other activities as well as the employment facilities and contain changing facilities for sports facilities such as football pitches and a cricket ground.
- 14.** A single multi purpose community hub established as a charitable organisation and limited liability company would ensure effective management with uses being charged for to cover at least maintenance costs together with an element of return. Any trust should not be required to fund activities without return.