

APPENDIX A – RELEVANT APPEAL DECISIONS

315-319 Mill Road (APP/Q0505/W/15/3035861)

Planning permission was refused on 24 September 2014 for the development of student housing consisting of 270 rooms, communal areas, bicycle parking, refuse store, plant room, office, new substation, infrastructure and access. The application was refused on 7 grounds, 5 of which were considered resolvable through conditions, the remaining two comprise the effect the development would have on the supply of housing and conflict with the emerging local plan. The land is identified in the proposals schedule of the Local Plan (2006) as part of a site allocated for housing which is also safeguarded in the local planning policy to ensure the Council meets their housing target, therefore the proposal to develop the site wholly for student accommodation would not accord with local planning policy.

A main concern was that the provision of student accommodation would result in the loss of the delivery of 30 residential units which would have been delivered at the site. However, the Inspector noted that the anticipated yield would remain a small proportion of the 14,000-dwelling requirement by the end of the plan period and other identified sites would also be capable of a greater number of units to take up any shortfall. The Inspector then refers to Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) which enables student accommodation to be included towards the housing requirement, Reference is made to Cambridgeshire County Council, indicating a ratio of 3.5 student bedspaces to one house released, which, if applied to the student scheme, would equate to the release of approximately 77 houses

Furthermore, the Inspector acknowledges that increasing the availability of PBSA in a location suitable for those students would facilitate the return of private space to the general housing market or help to meet an unsatisfied student demand would thereby reduce the overall pressure. This policy position is made clear in the supporting policy text of the New London Plan for PBSA identifying that 3 student bedspaces equate to the delivery or release of 1 conventional dwelling. The Inspector's concluding remarks states *"it is difficult to see how there would be no beneficial effect on the availability of housing in the City, even if it is not possible to exactly quantify it" ..."Student accommodation is a form of housing and there is no reason to consider that its provision should not reduce demand for other types of dwellings, to relieve the overall pressure for housing in Cambridge. The high residential densities possible with student accommodation would maximise this effect by making the best use of the land. Furthermore, the site is not required to meet the current 5-year supply."*

Fish Strand Hill, Cornwall

Planning permission was refused at Fish Strand Hill on 9 November 2016 for the development of purpose-built student accommodation with a mixture of studio rooms/cluster rooms and town house rooms, associated amenities spaces and staff office. A reason for refusal was that the application site was not specifically allocated for PBSA in the emerging Cornwall Site Allocations Plan and was therefore not considered

as a suitable site for student accommodation and would therefore conflict with local planning policy.

The Inspector notes that the Council's single reason for refusal, is that the proposal would prejudice the community led emerging local plan which allocates suitable sites for student accommodation and does not include the appeal site which would be more suitable for other forms of development. However, it was considered that the benefits of the proposal would outweigh this and are summarised as: *"firstly helping to meet a significant need for PBSA; secondly, by providing PBSA in Falmouth, this will free up existing housing, especially HMOs, currently occupied by students, for use by the residential population; thirdly, the proposal would assist in the growth of universities themselves; fourthly, it would provide short-term and long-term economic benefits; and fifthly, the development of a sustainably located site would help regenerate the town"*.

It was also highlighted that the 'Officer's report does not acknowledge the identified pressing need for student accommodation, and its value in reducing pressure on the existing housing stock, other than a brief reference, which is surprising, particularly considering the length of the Officer report in relation to the proposal, that this important material consideration has been side-lined'. The Inspector concludes that the proposal would not be contrary to the adopted and emerging local plan strategies which seek to prevent further unallocated PBSA developments.

Ocean Bowl, Cornwall

Planning permission was refused on 11 August 2017 for the development of purpose-built student accommodation block comprising 190 beds, communal facilities, with ancillary infrastructure. Similar to the appeal decision at Fish Strand Hill, the main issue for refusal was that the site was not allocated in planning policy for PBSA development and therefore not considered suitable. The Inspector commented 'the earlier versions of the emerging local plan indicated that the appeal site would be suitable in principle for PBSA; however, the most current version is no longer supportive of such developments at this location and would therefore be at odds with the emerging strategy. However, the Inspector considers *'the benefits of the scheme would outweigh this conflict and notes the development would free-up existing HMOs in the town which would relieve pressure on the existing stock of housing in an area where it is acknowledged there is considerable pressure. In addition, there is no evidence that the proposal would adversely affect the existing housing stock or the LPA's supply of deliverable housing sites or its ability to meet its adopted housing requirement, in fact, the proposal would help this'*.