

Statement of Community Involvement

37 Albion Street, Southwick

Residential redevelopment to provide 32 flats

Applicant: PR Homes Direct Ltd

June 2026

Contents

1.0	Introduction	2
2.0	Planning Policy	2
3.0	Local Plan Process	4
4.0	Conclusion	6

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is produced for and on behalf of PR Homes Direct Ltd in respect of; the residential redevelopment of 37 Albion Street, Southwick,

to provide 32 flats.

- 1.2 It will consider the planning policy position and provide an overview of the relevant material considerations relating to the development plan, following the consultation undertaken through the Local Plan process.
- 1.3 The site is located in Southwick, within the Shoreham Harbour Regeneration Area. It is a previously developed (brownfield) site in an established urban area, currently in sui generis use as car sales and repair premises.

2.0 Planning Policy

2.1 The plan-led system

- 2.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This statutory primacy of the development plan is reflected in paragraph 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF). The development plan is, accordingly, the starting point for the determination of this application.

- 2.3 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. Paragraph 7 of the NPPF confirms that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF identifies three overarching objectives – economic, social and environmental – which are interdependent and should be pursued in mutually supportive ways. The NPPF goes on to state, however, that *“they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged”* (para. 9). The policy paragraphs, footnotes, and annexes to the NPPF should be considered as a whole.

- 2.4 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF confirms that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which for decision-taking means approving development that accords with an up-to-date development plan without delay.

2.5 Paragraph 12 confirms that the presumption does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making, and that where a proposal accords with an up-to-date development plan it should be approved without delay. Paragraph 15 adds that the planning system should be genuinely plan-led.

2.6 Community involvement in the planning system

2.7 The planning system attaches particular importance to community involvement, both in the preparation of plans and in the determination of applications. Under section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, every local planning authority must prepare a Statement of Community Involvement setting out how it will involve the community in these processes; Adur District Council has an adopted Statement of Community Involvement. The importance of early, front-loaded community engagement was further reinforced by the Localism Act 2011.

2.8 In respect of plan-making, paragraph 16 of the NPPF requires that plans are *“shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan-makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees.”* The development plan against which this application falls to be determined was therefore itself the product of community engagement, as set out in Section 3.

2.9 In respect of decision-making, paragraph 39 of the NPPF provides that local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way, working proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.

2.10 Paragraph 40 of the NPPF states:

“Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre- application discussion enables better

coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.”

- 2.11 Early engagement of this nature has been undertaken with the Council at the pre-application stage in respect of the present proposals, as set out in Section 3.
- 2.12 The development plan
- 2.13 The statutory development plan for the area comprises the Adur Local Plan 2017 (adopted December 2017, covering the period to 2032) and the Shoreham Harbour Joint Area Action Plan (adopted October 2019). The Joint Area Action Plan was prepared jointly by Adur District Council, Brighton & Hove City Council and West Sussex County Council and forms part of the statutory development plan; development within the Shoreham Harbour Regeneration Area, within which the site lies, is required to accord with the strategy and policies of the Joint Area Action Plan as well as those of the Adur Local Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 2.14 An assessment of the proposal under the policy context is detailed below and in consideration of the planning matters material to this application. It will be demonstrated that the proposed development not only adheres to the development plan as a whole first and foremost, but also adheres to the policies of the NPPF. Planning permission should be granted without delay where there are overriding benefits in allowing development to proceed.
- 2.15 The site does not fall within an area with either an emerging nor adopted Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.16 A detailed assessment of the proposal against the policies of the development plan and the National Planning Policy Framework is provided in the accompanying Planning, Design and Access Statement.

3.0 Local Plan Process

- 3.1 Consultation within Adur District Council and with the statutory and non-statutory organisations was undertaken through the preparation of the Adur Local Plan 2017, during which the strategy for the Shoreham Harbour Regeneration Area, within which the site lies, was considered. Discussions centred on the suitability and capacity of land in the area, and the potential for regeneration and improvement.
- 3.2 The Local Plan process is also structured to positively engage with the local community. The comments were formally collated by Adur District Council and informed the successive iterations of the Local Plan, which was subject to further consultation with the public and consultees, prior to adoption in December 2017.
- 3.3 The Shoreham Harbour Joint Area Action Plan, which forms part of the development plan for the regeneration area within which the site lies, was likewise prepared by the regeneration partnership through successive rounds of public consultation on the draft plan, prior to its adoption in 2019. The local community therefore had the opportunity to engage with the development strategy for this area through both of the plans against which the application falls to be determined.
- 3.4 Whilst the lack of public comments – relating specifically to 37 Albion Street – does not on the face of it indicate that there were no ‘in principle’ objections to the proposals, this has not altered the engagement subsequently undertaken by the applicant.
- 3.5 The applicant has also undertaken formal pre-application engagement with Adur District Council in respect of the proposals, the advice from which has positively informed the development of the scheme.
- 3.6 Delivery and Construction
- 3.7 The deliverability of a development is an important factor in an assessment as to its sustainability (in terms of its benefits) and in terms of its contribution to the socio-economic supply in the district.
- 3.8 The NPPF defines deliverable:

“To be considered deliverable, sites for housing should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years” and;

“Sites with outline planning permission... should only be considered deliverable where there is clear evidence that housing completions will begin on site within five years”.

- 3.9 The site is considered to be suitable for development, providing significant benefits of much-needed housing, landscaping and high quality design, in an accessible location, and net gains for ecology and biodiversity. There is a reasoned expectation that the development would make a valuable and positive contribution in the short term and at an expeditious rate.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 This Statement of Community Involvement has been positively prepared in accordance with the relevant guidance and demonstrates the steps that have been taken to ensure that local stakeholders have had the opportunity to share their views on the proposed development. The Planning, Design and Access Statement outlines the evolution of the scheme as a result of this engagement. The technical information prepared in support of the scheme is submitted with the planning application and summarised within the Planning, Design and Access Statement. It is considered that the detail provided with the planning application provides clarification on the comments and concerns raised through the consultation process.