

Supply Statement Guidance

Purpose

The Local Plan requires the provision of a Supply Statement for all applications proposing the loss of existing employment uses where it is claimed that there is a suitable supply of available comparable employment sites/land in the local area.

Researching local sites will assist applicants in satisfying the requirements of the relevant Local Plan policies. It should be recognised that this is part of a sequential approach, and all other criteria within relevant policies to the proposal will be considered in the determination of the application.

Criteria on what will be considered an adequate Supply Statement is set out below:

Use Class and Distance

A Supply Statement must contain a list of comparable, suitable and available 'alternative sites'. All alternative sites detailed within the Supply Statement must be located within East Devon and within a 5 mile radius of the site relating to the application (the 'applicant site'). The alternative sites included within the Supply Statement must have planning permission in place for the same Use Class as the applicant site, or any uses that are in accordance with permitted development rights. Sites based on potential uses for which consent is required but has not been obtained, particularly where such a use is contrary to established planning and conservation policy, cannot be included with the Supply Statement.

Suitability

All alternative sites detailed within the Supply Statement must be suitable for the same permitted uses as the applicant site and should be considered on a like-for-like basis. Where the applicant site is undeveloped land with planning permission, the alternative sites identified should also be undeveloped land with planning permission. Where the applicant site is an existing building, the alternative sites identified should also be existing buildings. The size of the alternative site should be a similar to the applicant site, with a 20% leeway permissible, not including curtilage or any other space which is not relevant to the operation and functionality of the site. Alternative pre-developed sites should have adequate services in place, including utilities, broadband and site access. Buildings and other types of sites which are unusable, and land which is undevelopable, will not be regarded as suitable alternative sites for inclusion within a Supply Statement. Any information available regarding operating costs, such as mortgage/rent, business rates, typical utility costs, etc. should be detailed and compared against the applicant site where possible. At a minimum, the purchase cost or rental value of the alternative site should be included, and should be similar to the applicant site, with a 20% leeway permissible. The location of the site should be considered, including whether the

alternative site is situated within a similar type of area to the applicant site, such as within a town centre, industrial estate or open countryside for example. Other factors such as the design of the site or the character and amenity of the local area, etc. may also be included where appropriate.

Availability

All alternative sites detailed within the Supply Statement must be 'available'. A site is only regarded as available if it is being actively marketed as an available site to purchase or lease. Sites which are currently up for sale, or where an existing lease is due to expire within the next six months, will be regarded as available assuming the opportunity to purchase/lease the site is being actively marketed and no new sale or lease has been signed. A site is regarded as being actively marketed when there is a stated opportunity to purchase or lease the site marketed within journals, online via the internet or physically through a site banner. Applicants are expected to contact the agent, or the site owner where there is no agent, to confirm whether the site is still available. All enquiries should be fully recorded along with details of each site. A proper audit trail detailing a list of agents/owners and their contact details must be compiled so that, if necessary, a 'follow up' can be made to determine the accuracy of the information provided.

Preferred Alternative Site

Within the Supply Statement the applicant is required to specify an available site which they believe is the most suitable alternative. This 'preferred alternative site' should be the most comparable site to the applicant site, in terms of size, location, layout, operating cost, service provision, etc. The total floorspace of the preferred alternative site must also be stated, along with the specific employment use space, curtilage and any space which is not relevant to the operation and functionality of the site. Should planning permission for change of use be granted, the employment use floorspace of the preferred alternative site will be regarded as compensating for the loss of employment use floorspace at the applicant site. As a result, a preferred alternative site specified within the Supply Statement of a successful change of use application cannot be selected by any future applicants for any future change of use applications for at least the remainder of the Local Plan period. The purpose of this requirement is to ensure that loss of employment space does not exceed availability over time.

A list of preferred alternative sites that have been selected for previous applications can be found here [insert document link].

Summary

In summary the Supply Statement should include:

- A list of eligible alternative sites and details regarding their suitability
- A record of all estate agent enquiries
- A specified and eligible preferred alternative site