Cardiff Local Development Plan Examination
Hearing Session 9 (3 February 2015): Non Strategic Sites

LDP EXAMINATION HEARING STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE CARDIFF AND VALE UNIVERSITY HEALTH BOARD (1027)

ROOKWOOD HOSPITAL (H1.3)

What is the current status of the site?

1. The site is currently in use for healthcare. The UHB is in the process of re-providing some of the services currently provided at Rookwood Hospital in refurbished accommodation at Llandough Hospital. When this process is complete, a large part of the Rookwood site will become surplus to NHS operational requirements and will be disposed of on the open market. Part of the site will continue in NHS operational use – principally the Artificial Limb and Appliance Centre in the north-east corner of the site. The subdivision of the site is shown on the plan that accompanied the UHB’s representations on the deposit LDP (copy attached); the area that will become available for residential use is shown on the plan AS(B)1 in the Alternative Sites Register (Document LDP.050, page 41).

2. The site comprises previously developed land in accordance with the definition set out in Planning Policy Wales Edition 7 (Document WPP.02 updated, figure 4.3, page 58). It is extensively built-up. With the exception of the two listed buildings (see below), most of the buildings on the site are of poor architectural quality, of poor construction and not suitable for retention.

3. The site does not yet have the benefit of planning permission for redevelopment for housing but is identified in the supporting text to Policy 23 Surplus Hospital Sites of the extant development plan, the City of Cardiff Local Plan (Document CC.04, pages 65-66). This policy favours the redevelopment for housing and/or community uses of surplus NHS estate.

Would the site contribute to the aims and objectives of the plan?

4. In summary:

- The site will make a modest but useful contribution to meeting Cardiff’s housing needs during the plan period.
- The site helps satisfy the Council’s aspiration to achieve 60% of new housing on brownfield land.
- The site can provide an appropriate level of affordable housing (the deposit LDP requires 20% on brownfield sites).
- The site is located in flood risk Zone A.
• The site is sustainably located, being within walking/cycling distance of a wide range of community facilities and services.
• The site is well served by public transport: Fairwater Road and Cardiff Road are bus routes; Fairwater railway station is within 0.5km of the site.
• Redevelopment will enable the repair of the listed summerhouse and create a viable new use for the listed main building.
• Redevelopment will enable the clearance of existing unsightly buildings.
• Redevelopment will provide for the retention and management of trees, high quality open space and an appropriate setting for the listed buildings.

Is the level of housing proposed realistic and appropriate?

5. The site is allocated in the deposit LDP with a site area of 2.90 hectares and an estimated capacity of 80 dwellings. In line with the LDP deposit representations, the site area should be increased to 3.40 hectares and the capacity to 90 units. This represents a density of approximately 26 dwellings per hectare (10.5 dwellings per acre). This is considered realistic and appropriate, reflecting the environmental interest of the site (see below) and the fact that the development is likely to include some low-rise apartments set in landscaped grounds.

Are there any significant constraints or barriers to development of the site?

6. In preparation for submitting an outline planning application, substantial survey and assessment work has been carried out including studies of drainage, ecology, ground conditions, traffic and trees. These have not revealed any insuperable, unusual or unduly expensive technical impediments to redeveloping the site.

7. The site lies outside the nearby Llandaff and Insole Court Conservation Areas, but is subject to a number of environmental features, including:

• **Listed buildings** – the site contains two Grade II listed buildings, both of which will be retained as part of the development. The main building (built 1866, extended 1881) will be converted to apartments; the eighteenth century summerhouse will be repaired and retained within a landscaped open space setting.

• **Protected trees** – the site contains individual trees and groups of trees that are protected by two Tree Preservation Orders. All the trees on the site have been assessed for their amenity, condition and life expectancy and, where appropriate, will be retained and protected within the layout.

• **Historic garden** – much of the site is included in Part 2 of the non-statutory register of historic landscapes, parks and gardens, the citation for which refers to informal gardens, fine specimen trees and the listed summer house. Many of these features, which also contribute to the setting of the listed buildings, will be retained as part of the redevelopment.

• **Bats** – all buildings on the site have been assessed for their bat potential. Most have been assessed as low/negligible, but bat presence has been confirmed in two buildings: the main listed building (which is to be retained) and another building.
Appropriate mitigation will be required for any disturbance, together with a European Protected Species licence.

**Are there any infrastructure requirements for the site and how/when will they be delivered?**

8. The site is already substantially built-up and connected to mains services; no abnormal or unduly expensive infrastructure requirements have been identified. From the assessment work carried out already, the position with infrastructure is understood to be as follows:

- **Ground conditions** – there is no evidence of ground contamination at the site but, owing to historical uses, localised contamination may be present. Radon protection will be required (as in many areas of Cardiff).

- **Foul sewerage** – the public sewer network has the capacity to accept foul flows from the redeveloped site.

- **Surface water drainage** – SUDS drainage is considered a potentially viable disposal option, subject to infiltration testing; if not there are two options for connections to the public surface water drainage network, one to the south, one to the north.

- **Access** – the site will probably be served from the existing access from Fairwater Road, although other possibilities exist.

**What are the proposed timescales for delivery?**

9. On current intentions, the site is likely to be disposed of in Spring 2017. The intention would be to obtain outline planning permission for housing prior to disposal, leaving the successful purchaser to obtain approval of reserved matters and listed building consents. It is reasonable to assume that the development would be carried out over a two-year period in 2018 and 2019.

**Has a development viability assessment been carried out? If so, what are its conclusions?**

10. No, but as noted above, substantial survey and assessment work has been undertaken to understand the constraints to redeveloping the site. Neither these nor the costs associated with infrastructure are considered prohibitive. The site is located in a prime residential area and the redevelopment will result in a high quality scheme of houses and apartments set in a managed landscape. The UHB has appointed Savills to advise on the disposal.

**What would be the implications of the site and/or supporting infrastructure not coming forward within the anticipated timescales for delivery of the Plan’s housing and development strategy?**
11. If the site were not redeveloped in the plan period, there would be a reduction in the LDP provision for housing on brownfield land and a commensurate requirement to make good that loss on other sites, potentially greenfield sites.

Any other matters

12. None.