

5. APPEALS DETERMINED

(a) Planning Appeals

Appeal Ref: A2014/0008 **Planning Ref:** P2013/0038

PINS Ref: APP/Y6930/A/ 14/2218029

Applicant: M7 Real Estate Ltd

Proposal: Demolish and replace the existing 8 industrial units with up to 34 residential units.

Site Address: Lon Hir, Alltwen, Pontardawe, SA8 3DE

Decision Date: 30 September 2014

Decision Code: Dismissed

The main issues in the determination of this appeal concerned the effect of the proposed reduction in available employment land on the local economy, whether the proposed contribution of the scheme to the supply of local housing would outweigh any harm identified in relation to loss of employment land and any impact upon traffic volumes / parking pressure and local services.

The Inspector noted that the application premises do not represent a bad neighbour use, provide a lower cost alternative to modern, more prestigious units and that there were tenants in more than half the units at the time of the appeal. The Inspector also considered the high occupancy at the smaller sized units at the nearby Alloy Industrial Estate and that it is necessary to provide a stock of medium-sized units at Lon Hir that could allow these locally based operations to grow. The Inspector summarised stating that the appeal premises presently provides a valuable contribution to the local mix of employment sites and concluded that the proposals would harm the provision of local employment sites contrary to Policy EC1 of the UDP.

In relation to the issue of housing supply, the Inspector concluded that the housing related benefits of the scheme were not sufficient to outweigh the harmful effect on the local economy that would arise from the loss of the sites employment function.

Finally, the Inspector noted that the scheme would increase car traffic volumes along Lon Hir but would reduce the volume of heavy goods vehicles. The Inspector also noted objector's comments relating capacity of local services including the health centre and primary school. However, the Inspector concludes that given the scope to impose conditions to mitigate some of these concerns, together with the fact that the Head of Engineering and Transport (Highways section) offered no objection, there would not be sufficient reason to withhold permission for the scheme, had he found it acceptable in relation to the issues of housing supply and loss of employment land.

In view of the above the Inspector dismissed the appeal.