

Old Kings Head, Hampton Wick, London Borough of Richmond

Viability Report



**By Dr Andrew Golland BSc (Hons) PhD MRICS
Andrew Golland Associates**

drajg@btopenworld.com

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1 Background

I am Dr Andrew Golland, BSc (Hons), PhD, MRICS, a Chartered Surveyor. I am a Chartered Surveyor, have a PhD in Development Economics and am the founder of the GLA development appraisal Toolkit.

I have written several leading good practice guides on viability and Section 106, have completed over 80 viability studies for local authorities, and am a retained consultant for several councils across England and Wales on viability matters. I have presented viability appraisals for all the major UK house builders and have worked on several schemes, mainly across London, for smaller developers and land owners. My approach is consistent between public and private sectors with respect to appeal and Core Strategy examination precedent.

I have developed, along with a colleague, Dr Adam Watkins, over 150 development viability Toolkits (the 'Three Dragons model') for local authorities. This model is well received by developers as a way of sorting out viability issues. The model has been tested extensively at appeal and Core Strategy examinations.

I have been instructed by Mr André Jason of Eastmont Holdings to assess the viability of a scheme at the site of the Old Kings Head, Hampton Court Road, Hampton Wick. This was previously assessed in June 2019.

The main objective of the work is to assess the viability of the proposed scheme, and to assess whether it can deliver Affordable Housing contribution that might be sought by the Council.

2 The site and the development

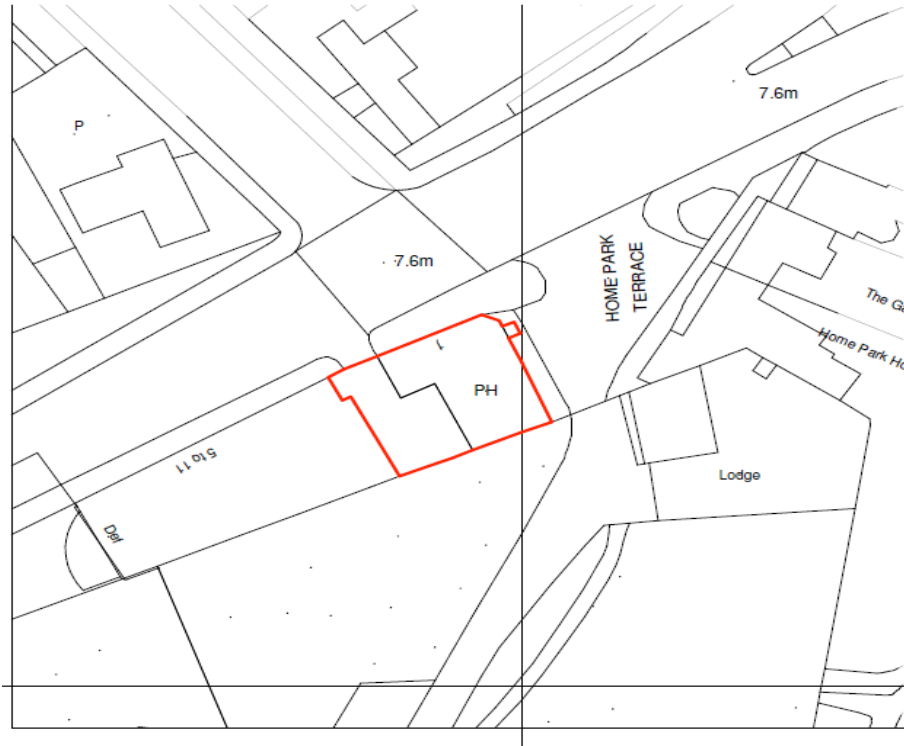
2.1 Site location

The site is located to the south of Hampton Court Road, at the junction with Home Park Terrace. The site is some 400 metres from Hampton Wick Station. The river is some 200 metres to the east of the site. Hampton Wick is located to the south within the London Borough of Richmond.



To the west of the site is a building with offices at ground level and potentially, flats above. Opposite the site, to the north, is green space. To the north east, on the opposite side of the road, is Kingston Bridge House, which I understand are halls of residence.

The location plan is shown below:



2.2 Proposed development

The scheme involves the conversion of the ex-public house.

There will be a storage area in the basement.

The ground floor will be converted for a commercial units and a two bed flat.

The first floor is proposed to be converted to two, further two bed flats.

The second floor is proposed to be converted to a fourth, two bed flat.

The floor plans are set out below:

3 Policy background and viability

3.1 National planning

There are a variety of issues surrounding viability questions at the current time. Initially, at the national level, the National Planning Policy Framework stated (Paragraphs 173 and 174) that:

‘Pursuing sustainable development requires careful attention to viability and costs in plan-making and decision-taking. Plans should be deliverable. Therefore, the sites and the scale of development identified in the plan should not be subject to such a scale of obligations and policy burdens that their ability to be developed viably is threatened. To ensure viability, the costs of any requirements likely to be applied to development, such as requirements for affordable housing, standards, infrastructure contributions or other requirements should, when taking account of the normal cost of development and mitigation, provide competitive returns to a willing land owner and willing developer to enable the development to be deliverable.

Local planning authorities should set out their policy on local standards in the Local Plan, including requirements for affordable housing. They should assess the likely cumulative impacts on development in their area of all existing and proposed local standards, supplementary planning documents and policies that support the development plan, when added to nationally required standards. In order to be appropriate, the cumulative impact of these standards and policies should not put implementation of the plan at serious risk, and should facilitate development throughout the economic cycle. Evidence supporting the assessment should be proportionate, using only appropriate available evidence’.

However, the Revised NPPF (2021) appears to do away with a formal definition of viability; i.e. the previous paras (173 and 174) which dealt with the willing developer and land owner and competitive returns have been removed.

The most relevant paragraphs of the Framework now appears to be Numbers 47, 48 and 58 which deal with the relationship between Local Plans and planning applications:

‘Determining applications

47. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible, and within statutory timescales unless a longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing.

48. Local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to: a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given); b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and c) the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).’

And:

‘58. Where up-to-date policies have set out the contributions expected from development, planning applications that comply with them should be assumed to be viable. It is up to the applicant to demonstrate whether particular circumstances justify the need for a viability assessment at the application stage. The weight to be given to a viability assessment is a matter for the decision maker, having regard to all the circumstances in the case, including whether the plan and the viability evidence underpinning it is up to date, and any change in site circumstances since the plan was brought into force. All viability assessments, including any undertaken at the plan-making stage, should reflect the recommended approach in national planning guidance, including standardised inputs, and should be made publicly available.’

3.2 Local planning policy – LB Richmond

The adopted Local Plan (3rd July 2018) states as follows:

9.3 Affordable Housing

Policy LP 36

Affordable Housing

A. The Council expects:

- 50% of all housing units will be affordable housing, this 50% will comprise a tenure mix of 40% of the affordable housing for rent and 10% of the affordable intermediate housing.
- the affordable housing mix should reflect the need for larger rented family units and the Council's guidance on tenure and affordability, based on engagement with a Registered Provider to maximise delivery.

Where on-site provision is required, an application should be accompanied by evidence of meaningful discussions with a Registered Provider which have informed the proposed tenure, size of units and design to address local priorities and explored funding opportunities.

B. A contribution towards affordable housing will be expected on all housing sites. The following requirements apply:

- on all former employment sites at least 50% on-site provision. Where possible, a greater proportion than 50% affordable housing on individual sites should be achieved.
- on all other sites capable of ten or more units gross 50% on-site provision. Where possible, a greater proportion than 50% affordable housing on individual sites should be achieved.
- on sites below the threshold of 'capable of ten or more units gross', a financial contribution to the Affordable Housing Fund commensurate with the scale of development, in line with the sliding scales set out below and in the Affordable Housing SPD.

No. of units proposed (gross)	% Affordable Housing		
	For conversions and reversions (where there is no loss of former employment floorspace)	For new build development or redevelopment (where there is no loss of former employment floorspace)	For any units replacing employment floorspace
9 units	36%	45%	90%
8 units	32%	40%	80%
7 units	28%	35%	70%
6 units	24%	30%	60%
5 units	20%	25%	50%
4 units	16%	20%	40%
3 units	12%	15%	30%
2 units	8%	10%	20%
1 unit	4%	5%	10%

C. In accordance with A and B, the Council will seek the maximum reasonable amount of affordable housing when negotiating on individual private residential and mixed-use schemes. The Council will have regard to:

- economic viability;
- individual site costs;
- the availability of public subsidy; and
- the overall mix of uses and other planning benefits.

D. Where a reduction to an affordable housing contribution is sought from the requirements in A and B on economic viability grounds, developers should provide a development appraisal to demonstrate that schemes are maximising affordable housing. The developer will be required to underwrite the costs of a Council commissioned economic viability assessment. The Council will rigorously evaluate such appraisals and:

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- assess if the maximum reasonable amount of affordable housing is based on delivering the appropriate tenure, unit sizes and types that address local needs.
- consider whether it is necessary to secure provision for re-appraising the viability of a scheme prior to implementation to secure contingent obligations.
- in most circumstances the Existing Use Value plus a premium (EUV+) approach to assessing benchmark land value in development appraisals and viability assessments should form the primary basis for determining the benchmark land value.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Council has an adopted CIL. I understand that the site falls within the Lower Band, at £190 per square metre. There will be an additional Mayoral CIL – at £80 per square metre for LB Richmond:

Development Type	CIL charge per sq m
Residential development (higher band)	£250
Residential development (lower band)	£190
Offices inside Richmond Town Centre	£25
Retail (wholly or mainly convenience) (all areas)	£150
Retail (wholly or mainly comparison) in Richmond Town Centre	£150
Hotels (lower band)	£25
Care homes (lower band)	£25
Standard Charge (all other uses not covered above)	£0

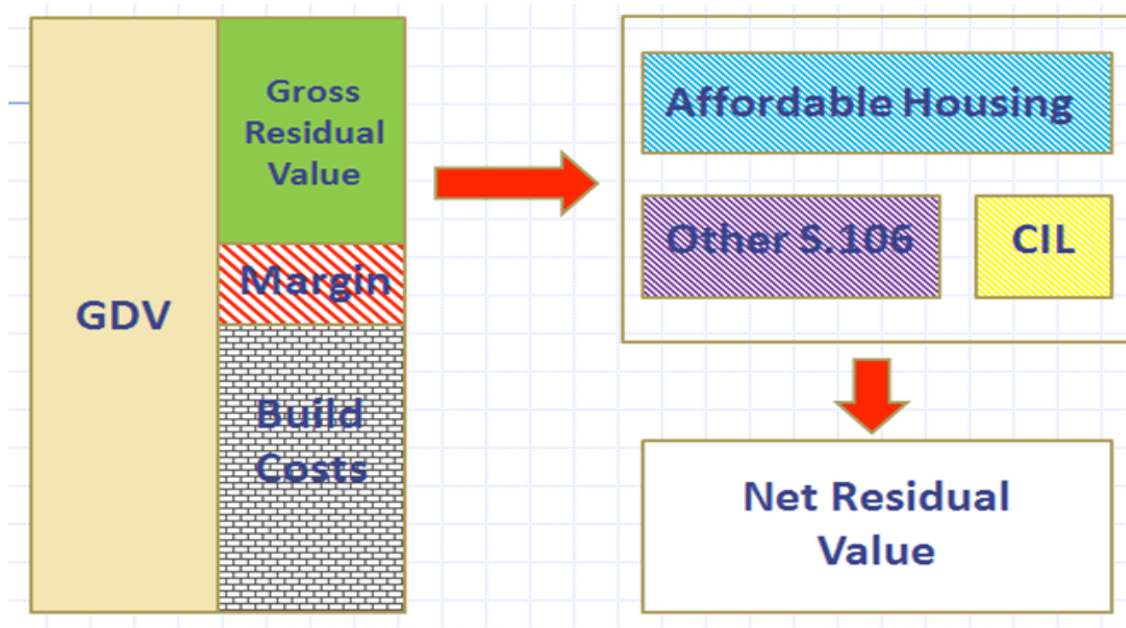
CIL is normally levied on net additional floorspace to a site.

4 Approach to viability assessment

4.1 Overview

It is important to understand how viability is assessed in the planning and development process. The assessment of viability is usually referred to a residual development appraisal approach. Our understanding is illustrated in the diagram below. This shows that the starting point for negotiations is the gross residual site value which is the difference between the scheme revenue and scheme costs, including a reasonable allowance for developer return.

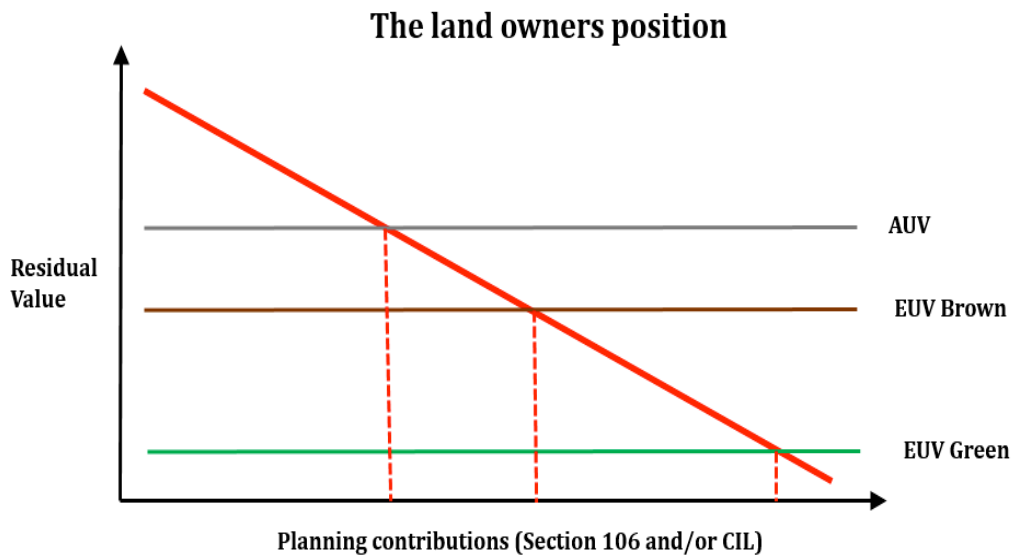
Once CIL or Section 106 contributions have been deducted from the gross residual value, a 'net' residual value results. The question is then whether this net residual value is sufficient in terms of development value relative to the site in its current use.



Calculating what is likely to be the value of a site given a specific planning permission, is only one factor in deciding what is viable.

4.2 Land owner considerations

A site is unlikely to proceed where the costs of a proposed scheme exceed the revenue. But simply having a positive residual value will not guarantee that development happens. The existing use value of the site, or indeed a realistic alternative use value for a site (e.g. commercial) will also play a role in the mind of the land owner in bringing the site forward and thus is a factor in deciding whether a site is likely to be brought forward for housing.



The diagram shows how this operates. The land owner will always be concerned to ensure that residual value clears the relevant land value benchmark.

5.1 Overview

The appraisal work and report relies on a range of information sources. These include comparable market analysis for house prices; this is derived from both my own research and best available secondary data sources. In addition, costs taken from both the BCIS industry standard source.

5.2 Costs

There are normally two main elements of cost analysis: base construction costs and other development costs. The base construction costs include items such as Build Plot costs (sub and superstructure), roads and sewers, landscaping and other external works. Added to these are abnormal construction costs and site remediation works.

Other development costs include such items as professional fees, developer overheads, finance costs and developer margin.

5.2.1 Construction costs

There is no bespoke bill of quantities. I have calculated therefore initially the likely construction costs based on industry standard BCIS costs for new build: