01/2017 | COT | P16-0891

PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF FOURTEEN DWELLINGS AND ASSOCIATED WORKS

PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

TOP O' TH' TRENT PUBLIC HOUSE SITE, WOODLAND STREET, BIDDULPH, STOKE-ON-TRENT

ON BEHALF OF ASTWOOD PROPERTIES

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)
PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Statement has been produced on behalf of Astwood Properties and supports a full planning application proposing a development of fourteen residential dwellings and associated works on the site of the Top O' Th' Trent Public House, Biddulph, Stoke-on-Trent.

1.2 The development proposed at this site constitutes the reuse of previously developed land for housing and is in a sustainable location.

1.3 The following sections of this Statement identify the relevant issues pertinent to the consideration of the application;

- A description of the application site and the surrounding area
- A description of the application proposals
- An overview of relevant planning policy
- An assessment of the application proposals against the Development Plan, NPPF and other relevant material considerations.

1.4 Overall this Statement will demonstrate that the proposed development is in accordance with the Development Plan, the NPPF, and will show that there are no planning reasons that would prevent the approval of this proposal. It is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission should be granted.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT

2.1 The site comprises the Top O' Th' Trent public house, the associated buildings, car park and garden area and so constitutes previously developed land.

2.2 The immediate area surrounding the site is largely playing fields and has been designated in the Site Allocations Preferred Options Proposals Map (2016) as 'public open space' and 'visual open space'. Neither of these designations apply to the proposed site. To the north of the public house and also exempt from the open space designations is the Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academy Primary School. Both the proposed site and the school front Woodland Street. To the east of the proposed site and fronting Church Road is the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses and the Barley Mow public house.

2.3 The surrounding context comprises the residential area to the south of the town centre of Biddulph. The surrounding streets, including Woodland Street, Church Close and St John's Road, are made up of residential development consisting primarily of two-storey semi-detached houses.

2.4 The proposed site is located within the town boundary of Biddulph as per the Site Allocations Preferred Options Proposals Map (2016) but is outside the area covered by the Biddulph Town Centre Area Action Plan (2007).

2.5 The site is proposed to be accessed via a new access road opposite the current junction between Woodland Street and Warwick Street. To the north of this junction, Woodland Street is one-way with traffic restricted to travelling in a southerly direction. Therefore all vehicular traffic exiting the site will either turn left onto Woodland Street or straight onto Warwick Street. The new access road will run straight throughout the site and terminate at the site's eastern boundary.

2.6 The proposed site is highly accessible by public transport, the closest bus stop is located on St John's Road, adjacent Castle View and is 200m from the site. The number 7 bus stops three times an hour and travels from Hanley to Biddulph and the 9 bus comes twice an hour on a route from Clayton to Biddulph. In addition to this, there are a further 12 bus stops on St John's Road, Park Lane and Church Road.

2.7 There are a range of services and facilities in the surrounding area. There are four schools catering to the full range of school ages in the immediate area. There are a small number of local services, including a convenience shop and

pharmacy, which is located on St John's Road to the north of the proposed site. Furthermore, there is a pub, the Barley Mow, located across the playing fields to the east of the site on Church Road approximately 150m from the site.

2.8 Biddulph town centre has a range of shopping facilities and services and is accessible from the site via existing bus services or walking. Therefore, the site offers significant benefits in terms of s sustainable location.

3. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 The application proposes the demolition of all buildings at the site. This would include the Top O' Th' Trent public house. The site is proposed to be redeveloped for residential use.

3.2 The application proposes the erection of 14 two-storey dwelling houses. These are proposed to be 3 and 4 bedroom houses. Twelve of the houses will be semi-detached 3-bedroom properties and the remaining two will be detached 4-bedroom properties.

3.3 Parking will be provided for each dwelling in a dedicated location on each individual plot. Each property will be provided with two parking spaces located either to the front, side or rear of the property.

3.4 The access arrangements involve the creation of new road directly opposite Warwick Street which would bisect the site and terminate at the eastern boundary of the site. This road would provide vehicular access to plots 1-10. The proposed dwellings on plots 11-14 would be accessed directly from Woodland Street in a similar way to the existing housing in the vicinity.

3.5 The buildings have been carefully designed to complement the scale and mass of surrounding development and add to the visual appeal of the area. The proposal of two-storey dwellings reflects the existing built form of the surrounding residential neighbourhood.

3.6 The site is bounded by trees along the northern, eastern and southern perimeters of the site which will largely be retained as part of the development. The trees currently located in the centre of the site, adjacent to the public house are to be removed.

4. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

4.1 In accordance with Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.2 The Development Plan for the area is the Local Plan which consists of a portfolio of Local Development Documents (LDDs). These documents set out the spatial strategy for the District and provide guidance concerning development in the area. The LDDs are at different stages in the adoption process and vary in their spatial coverage meaning that certain documents carry greater weight in decision-making.

4.3 This section provides an overview of relevant planning policy as set out in the Staffordshire Moorland Development Plan documents.

4.4 The Staffordshire Moorland Core Strategy was adopted 26th March 2014 and is in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

4.5 Policy SS1 Development Principles states that new development will make the best use of previously developed land and buildings and will follow a sequential approach to the sustainable location of development.

4.6 Policy SS1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development reinforces **paragraph 14** of the NPPF which states that *"At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking."*

4.7 Policy SS2 Future Provision of Development states that Staffordshire Moorland has a housing requirement of 6,000 additional dwellings over the plan period (2006-2026). Delivery is to be phased across the plan period with annual development rates increasing throughout the plan period.

4.8 The same policy acknowledges that there has been a history of underperformance in dwelling completions so the Council used the 20% buffer when determining the 5-year housing land requirement to 2016.

4.9 Policy SS3 Distribution of Development states that 20% of new housing development should take place in Biddulph. Using the housing requirement figure of 6,000 additional dwellings this means that a total of 1,200 houses are to be

provided in Biddulph over the plan period. Figure 9 calculates a residual requirement for Biddulph of 813 dwellings after completions and commitments have been excluded.

4.10 Policy SS4 Managing the Release of Housing Land states that unidentified (windfall) sites are expected to make an assumed contribution of up to 25% of the annual development rate in urban areas. There will also be a preference for previously developed sites and sites within urban areas.

4.11 The same policy states that "*In the Green Belt and settlements inset within the Green Belt, levels of new housebuilding will be restricted in the period up to 2016 through the phased release of housing allocations and the limited granting of permissions of unidentified (windfall) sites"* This part of the policy has now reached the end of its timeframe and is required to be reviewed.

4.12 Paragraph 8.1.29 clarifies this policy in relation to Biddulph stating that *"Restraint will therefore need to be balanced with the need to improve prospects in Biddulph".*

4.13 In the Settlement Hierarchy, Biddulph is designated as a 'town'. The spatial strategy for the district, reinforced by Policy SS5 Towns, seeks to concentrate future growth in towns and makes provision to allow development in towns that is of an appropriate scale and nature.

4.14 Paragraph 8.1.36 states that Policy SS5 allows for *"development or redevelopment of land to come forward within Development Boundaries which is appropriate to the needs, capacity and character of each settlement in a phased manner."*

4.15 Policy SS5b Biddulph Area Strategy sets out the Council's preferred locations for residential development within Biddulph as being sites within the urban area which have good accessibility to services with additional preference being given to previously developed sites. This policy seeks to improve the local housing market and range of community facilities by:

- Increasing the range of available and affordable house types especially for first time buyers, families and older people.
- Allocating a range of deliverable housing sites both within the urban area and adjacent to the urban area. Sites within the urban area shall be in

locations across the town which have good accessibility to services with encouragement given to previously developed sites.

4.16 Policy SD1 Sustainable Use of Resources focuses on development and climate change and encourages development on previously developed land in sustainable locations.

4.17 Policy H1 New Housing Development states that *"All development will be assessed according to the extent to which it provides for high quality, sustainable housing and to which it meets identified local housing market needs and the strategy for the area having regard to the location of the development, the characteristics of the site and the economics of provision."*

4.18 This policy also sets out appropriate density levels for developments in different locations. In urban areas (other than town centres) this is generally between 30-40 dwellings per hectare.

4.19 This policy also allows for the development of residential schemes on unidentified (windfall) sites up to an indicative maximum scheme size of 9 dwellings within the Development Boundaries of the towns. Exceptionally larger windfall schemes may be permitted where it will provide overriding affordable housing, regeneration, conservation or infrastructure benefits and it would not undermine delivery of the spatial strategy.

4.20 Policy H1 also requires homes to be built to 'Lifetime Homes' standards, provide appropriate amenity for new and existing residents, and to meet sustainable design and construction requirements.

4.21 Policy H2 sets the threshold for affordable housing at 15 dwellings or 0.5 ha and above.

4.22 Policy DC1 Design Considerations sets out the Council's requirements for new development;

- *Be of a high quality and add value to the local area, incorporating creativity, detailing and materials appropriate to the character of the area;*
- *Be designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance;*

- *Create, where appropriate, attractive, functional, accessible and safe public and private environments which incorporate public spaces, green infrastructure including making provision of for networks of multi-functional new and existing green space (both public and private) in accordance with policy C3, landscaping, public art, 'designing out crime' initiatives and the principles of attractive design;*

- *Incorporate sustainable construction techniques and design concepts for buildings and their layouts to reduce the local and global impact of development, and to adapt to climate change, in accordance with policy SD1;*

- *Protect the amenity of the area, including residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, privacy and soft landscaping;*

- *Promote the maintenance, enhancement, restoration and re-creation of biodiversity and geological heritage, where appropriate, in accordance with policy NE1;*

- *Provide for safe and satisfactory access and make a contribution to meeting the parking requirement arising from necessary car use;*

- *Ensure that existing drainage, waste water and sewage infrastructure capacity is available, and where necessary enhanced, to enable the development to proceed;*

- *Ensure, where appropriate, equality of access and use for all sections of the community.*

4.23 Policy C1 Creating Sustainable Communities addresses the development of new community facilities and also resists the loss of existing community facilities. With regard to the loss of existing community facilities, sub paragraph 3 of the policy states:

"The Council will resist proposals involving the loss of community facilities unless:

i) An alternative facility of the same type is available or can be provided in an accessible location in the same locality; or

ii) A viability appraisal including a marketing exercise by a qualified professional demonstrates that there are no options for continued use as a

community facility which are financially viable and it can be demonstrated that the loss of the facility would not disadvantage local residents"

4.24 Policy C2 Sport, Recreation and Open Space includes protection for existing open spaces in the district.

4.25 Policy T1 sets out the requirements for development to deliver on sustainable transport;

- *Ensuring that all new development is located where the highway network can satisfactorily accommodate traffic generated by the development or can be improved as part of the development;*
- *Ensuring that major development is located in areas that are accessible by sustainable travel modes or can be made accessible as part of the proposal;*
- *Referring to appropriate parking standards as laid out in national guidance, or any parking standards that may be produced locally;*
- *Where appropriate all new development shall facilitate walking and cycling within neighbourhoods and town centres, and link with or extend identified walking or cycling routes.*

Other Material Considerations

Site Allocations Preferred Options

4.26 The Council are in the process of producing a Sites Allocation document as part of the Local Plan. Public Consultation on the Preferred Options Sites and Boundaries closed June 2016 and the Preferred Options Policies public consultation closed August 2016. Following on from this the Council intend to publish a draft Local Plan and invite formal representations from November-December 2016. The Plan will then be submitted to the Secretary of State in February 2017 and examined in public in Spring 2017.

4.27 Following the successful completion of this process the Local Plan will be formally adopted and will have full weight as a material consideration in the determination of planning application. At its current stage of progression, the Site Allocation document has limited weight in the decision-making process.

4.28 The Options Site Assessment Map for Biddulph does not allocate the proposed site. It does propose retaining the open space designation of the surrounding playing fields.

4.29 The proposed site is within the town boundary of Biddulph meaning the policies that apply to towns in the Core Strategy are relevant to this application.

4.30 It is not located within the designated town centre of Biddulph meaning that policies referring specifically to town centres or the policies of the Biddulph Town Centre Area Action Plan are not a material consideration in the determination of this planning application.

Space About Dwelling Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG), 1998

4.31 This document sets out guidance from the Council regarding separation distances in order to maintain privacy and daylight amenity for residents. This is a technical document and only Appendix 3 remains relevant to the determination of current planning applications.

4.32 The proposed scheme does not include any elevations with principal windows facing each other therefore separation distances are not an issue.

4.33 Private gardens are required to be at least 11m in mean length and cover an area of at least 65m^2.

Developer Contributions SPG, 2004

4.34 This SPG is intended to clarify for developers what contributions are normally required in relation to service infrastructure. The document does not set a level below which no contributions are required but does state that generally sites including 20 or more dwellings or 0.5ha in size will be subject to developer contributions.

4.35 Affordable housing has a threshold of 15 or more dwellings (as per the Core Strategy) and open space of 20 or more dwellings. As the proposal is for 14 dwellings neither of these categories are relevant to this application.

4.36 In terms of recycling, the SPD states that for housing development schemes of 10-49 dwellings an off-site contribution towards local recycling facilities will be sought.

4.37 Education contributions are required on all developments of 9 or more dwellings, however contributions will only be sought when there is an identified capacity issue at the local catchment schools. The local catchment schools for this proposal are Squirrel Hayes First School, James Bateman Junior High School and Biddulph High School.

Design Principles SPG

4.38 This document illustrates the basic design principles that are applicable primarily in the rural areas of Staffordshire Moorland. The site is located in an urban area so this reduces the weight given to this SPG however care has been taken to produce a good-quality design for this scheme.

4.39 In accordance with the recommendations of this document the scheme concerns a group of buildings that relate well to the existing residential area in terms of scale and proportion and has been designed to complement the existing neighbourhood.

4.40 The roof design is also in accordance with the recommendations of this document as the use of flat roofs and hipped roofs has been avoided. In addition, there are no roof lights proposed.

4.41 Care has been taken to position the windows to allow maximum daylight without 'over-windowing' the elevations. The window design and layout is in-keeping with that of existing buildings in the area.

National Planning Policy Framework

4.42 The Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy was adopted in 2014 after the NPPF was issued and so is in accordance with the principles of the NPPF.

4.43 However, the Council in their Housing Land Supply Schedule 31st March 2016 acknowledge that they are unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing land. As of March 2016 the Council were able to demonstrate a 1.87 years supply of deliverable housing land. Therefore, **paragraph 49** of the NPPF is a relevant consideration as it clarifies that *"Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up to date if the Local Planning Authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable sites."*

4.44 It is evident from this statement that where there is not a five-year supply of deliverable sites, planning policies which physically seek to resist residential development (unless they are specifically referred to in the NPPF) are out of date.

4.45 Policy SS4 intended to phase the release of housing allocations and limit the granting of planning permissions on unidentified (windfall) sites in Green Belt or in settlements inset within the Green Belt, including Biddulph, so the renaissance of North Staffordshire is not compromised. Therefore, Policy SS4 Managing the Release of Housing Land, specifically the section which limits the granting of planning permission for unidentified (windfall) sites must be considered to be out of date.

4.46 Consequently, **Paragraph 14** of the NPPF becomes a relevant consideration as *"where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*

- *Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole or*

- *Specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted (such as Green Belt, SSSI or AONB)"*

4.47 The first relevant test for compliance with the above criteria is the impact of the development. This requires a balancing exercise to be undertaken of the merits of the proposal against any potential harm. The NPPF promotes sustainable development and splits this into three sub-sections; economic, social and environmental. These are the relevant categories for the balancing exercise.

4.48 Economic – the NPPF reinforces the government's commitment to securing economic growth and the planning systems role in supporting this aim. The Home Builders Federation Q1 2015 Facts & Messages Bulletin reported that for every £1 spent on housing £3 gets put back into the economy. During the construction phase of the development jobs are created both in construction directly and in the associated supply chain. The current use of the site as a public house produces little economic activity due to the economic unviability of the public house.

4.49 Social – the proposal will provide new housing in an area that has a housing land supply shortage. The current use of the site produces limited social benefit.

4.50 Environmental – the site is previously developed land which is currently used as a public house and associated car park and beer garden. The proposed residential development will improve the site and the retention of trees at the perimeter will ensure that the development complements the surrounding open space setting.

4.51 Climate Change and Flood Risk – the NPPF gives the planning system a key role in reducing the impact of climate change through minimising vulnerability and increasing resilience. The proposed site is a highly sustainable location for residential development and offers public transport links. In addition, the site's location within an established residential area means there a range of local services in the surrounding area able to serve the needs of residents. The site and the surrounding area is located in Flood Zone 1 so the development is in a location with the lowest risk of flooding.

4.52 Therefore, the proposed development would not produce any adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

4.53 The second relevant test for compliance with the above criteria is specific policies that restrict development. The site is not part of the Green Belt. There are no further restrictive policies that apply to the proposed site, such as SSSI or AONB.

5. ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSAL

Principle of Development

5.1 The application site constitutes an area of previously developed land in the town of Biddulph. The Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy gives clear preference to the use of previously developed land for new development both in general (Policies SS1, SS4 and SD1) and in Biddulph specifically (Policy SS5b).

5.2 The site is not formally identified as a potential housing allocation site but it is not designated for any other use.

5.3 The Core Strategy also makes clear the anticipated contribution of unidentified (windfall) sites to annual development rates in urban areas (Policy SS4). This scheme is proposed on an unidentified site and would contribute towards the development rates from windfall schemes. Although the Core Strategy states the indicative maximum size of windfall developments should be 9 dwellings, it does accept that larger windfall schemes may be permitted where it would provide overriding affordable housing, regeneration, conservation, or infrastructure benefits and would not undermine delivery of the spatial strategy. It is considered that this proposal would regenerate a vacant public house site. The proposal is entirely in accordance with the spatial strategy for the area which encourages residential development on previously developed land and in urban areas with good access to facilities and services and public transport. In addition, the provision of 14 dwellings equates to a density of 35 dwellings per hectare which is in accordance with the density requirements of Policy H1 of 30-40 dwellings per hectare in urban areas.

5.4 The public house on the site is currently vacant. A separate Assessment of Community Facilities has been submitted as part of this application and considers the loss of the public house.

5.5 The site is surrounded by open space, specifically the playing fields at Woodland Street, which are unaffected by the proposals. The site itself is not designated as open space. The proposal would not result in the loss of any designated open space.

5.6 It is therefore considered that the principle of residential development on this site is acceptable in accordance with the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy including policies SS1, SS4, SD1, SS5b, C1 and H1 and the NPPF.

Design Considerations

5.7 The proposed dwellings are to be six pairs of semi-detached and two detached properties. All the dwellings are proposed to be two storeys which is in-keeping with the surrounding residential area which is predominantly two-storey semi-detached dwellings.

5.8 This scheme proposes density levels equivalent to 35 dwellings per hectare which is in accordance with the Council's requirements for urban areas (policy H1). This further supports the proposal for fourteen houses despite it being over the indicative maximum size for windfall schemes.

5.9 Plots 1-2 and 10-14 are oriented fronting Woodland Street providing an active frontage to the street. These plots are composed mainly of semi-detached houses which is in-keeping with the form of the existing residential neighbourhood. Plot 10 is a detached property. The orientation of these houses towards the existing street network is in accordance with good design standards and increases safety through natural surveillance of the public space. The provision of private gardens to the rear is also in-keeping with the character of the existing residential development.

5.10 Plots 3 and 4 are situated to the rear of Plots 1 and 2 and are oriented to face the open space to the east of the site. Car parking is provided to the side of the dwellings for Plot 4 and to the front of the dwellings for Plot 3.

5.11 Plots 5-9 are located to the rear of Plots 10-14 and face the proposed access road with large gardens to the rear of the properties. Parking is provided to the front of the properties with access directly from the proposed access road. Plots 6-9 are semi-detached and Plot 5 is the second detached property.

5.12 The closest existing neighbours will be at 23 Warwick Street. The amenity and privacy of these residents and future residents of Plots 1-2 and 10-14 has been considered in the design process. The existing residents are separated from the proposed development by the public thoroughfare of Woodland Street. Furthermore, 23 Warwick Street has a principal elevation facing Warwick Street rather than Woodland Street further protecting their amenity and privacy.

5.13 The residents of Church Close were also a consideration in the design of the scheme. Church Close overlooks the site from the south across the existing playing fields but is located a considerable distance from the site. The

topography of the playing fields combined with the trees on the southern perimeter of the site will screen the development from these residents providing privacy and amenity for both existing and future residents.

5.14 The proposed access is provided via a new road located in-line with Warwick Street. The new road would run west-east bisecting the site north of the existing public house.

5.15 Appropriate levels of car parking provision are provided on-site with two car parking spaces per dwelling for 3-bedroom dwellings and three car parking spaces per dwelling for 4-bedroom dwellings.

5.16 Each of the dwellings will be provided with its own individual, private garden to the rear of the dwelling. All of the proposed garden length and sizes exceed the guidance set out in the Spaces About Dwellings SPG (1998). Each garden will be enclosed by a fence providing privacy for the residents in their outdoor living space. The provision of generous sized gardens will increase the green space on the site compared to its current use as a public house and car park, enhancing the site and integrating better with the surrounding playing fields.

5.17 The existing trees around the north, east and southern perimeters will be retained as part of this development. This will form a soft boundary between the development and the adjacent playing fields and will ensure that the development complements the surrounding open space. In addition, the retention of the trees forms a natural screen around the development which will safeguard the amenity and privacy of existing and future residents.

5.18 The design of the buildings is in-keeping with the surrounding area, particularly the provision of two-storey semi-detached dwellings. The roof and window design of the elevations is reflective of the existing development in the area.

5.19 The proposed materials are brick and tile. The use of brick and tile for houses is widespread in the existing residential development.

5.20 It is therefore demonstrated that the proposed development would constitute high-quality design in accordance with Policy DC1 and would enhance the local area.

Highways

5.21 Access is to be provided via a new access road which is proposed to align with the existing junction of Woodland Street and Warwick Street. The new road will run horizontally through the length of the site terminating at the site's eastern boundary.

5.22 It is considered that 14 dwellings will produce limited traffic movements on the application site. Woodland Street to the north is one-way only and the road network immediately adjacent to the site is lightly trafficked. Therefore, it is not considered that the proposal would have any material impact on the safe operation of the existing junction. In view of this, the proposal is considered to provide a safe and suitable form of access.

5.23 Plots 11-14 are to be accessed directly from Woodland Street as is the case for existing dwellings.

5.24 Plot 10 is opposite the existing build-out feature on Woodland Street and therefore is accessed via the proposed new road rather than via Woodland Street to take account of highway safety. Plots 1 and 2 have parking to the rear of the properties to allow them to be accessed via the proposed access road and comply with the existing build-out and one-way feature on Woodland Street. The existing build-out feature will be unaffected by the proposed development.

5.25 Car parking is provided on-site for each dwelling. Each 3-bedroom plot is provided with two off-street parking spaces and each 4-bedroom plot is provided with three off-street parking spaces. Parking is to be provided to the front of the dwellings for plots 5-14 with parking provided to the rear for plots 1 and 3 and to the side of the dwellings for plots 2 and 4.

5.26 The Council has no specific guidance on parking provision but a minimum of two spaces per dwelling for 3-bedroom properties and three spaces per dwelling for 4-bedroom properties was considered to be appropriate in terms of established standards and the nature of the dwellings proposed.

5.27 It is considered that there is adequate provision for the turning of vehicles at the rear of the site where the proposed road terminates.

5.28 The Planning Practice Guidance sets out the approach to take when determining whether a Transport Statement will be needed for a proposed development. The criteria to be taken into account include:

- Relevant policies in the Local Plan – Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy Policy T1
- The scale of the proposed development and the potential for additional trip generation
- The existing intensity of transport use and availability of public transport
- Proximity to nearby environmental designations or sensitive areas
- Impact on other priorities/strategies
- The cumulative impact of developments within an area
- Whether there are likely to be particular types of impacts around which to focus a Transport Statement

5.29 In the context of the above considerations it is clear that the proposal will involve the removal of an established commercial site which would have generated transport movements. The travel movements associated with the proposed residential development will be offset against previous commercial transport movements. Transport movements may slightly increase and will take a slightly different form but there will not be a significant or material difference sufficient to merit a Transport Statement for this application.

5.30 The site is highly accessible to public transport. There are few if any developments in the surrounding area and there are no environmental designations or sensitive areas in the vicinity.

5.31 On this basis it is not considered necessary to produce a Transport Statement to support this application.

Flood Risk

5.32 The proposed development site and the surrounding area is located entirely within Flood Zone 1 which means that it has a less than 1 in 1,000 annual

probability of river or sea flooding. Therefore, this development is not subject to significant flood risk nor is it likely to increase flood risk elsewhere.

Heritage

5.33 There are no Listed Buildings or Conservation Areas within proximity of the site.

Noise

5.34 The proposed site is adjacent to playing fields which include a football pitch and multi-use games area (MUGA).

5.35 The MUGA is located 10m from the site boundary to the north and is to the side of the proposed development. Plot 3 is the nearest property to the MUGA and is oriented to face east, across the playing fields. Therefore, no principal windows or doors face the MUGA which reduces the potential noise impact on residents. Furthermore, the MUGA would mainly be used during the day when residents are least likely to experience noise issues.

5.36 The proposal involves the demolition of all existing buildings on the site, including the public house. The surrounding area is comprised of residential development. Therefore, there will be no noise concerns arising from commercial uses in the area.

5.37 Any concerns around noise impact could be dealt with via a relevant condition.

Planning Obligations

5.38 The Council have yet to take a decision on whether to implement the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) therefore schemes in this area have no CIL liabilities.

5.39 In terms of affordable housing, the Core Strategy policy H2 states that affordable housing in towns is required on residential developments of 15 or more dwellings (0.5ha). This proposal is for 14 dwellings in a town so is not subject to affordable housing requirements.

5.40 In terms of Section 106 obligations, in accordance with the Developer Contributions SPG (2004) a scheme for 14 units would be required to make contributions towards off-site recycling facilities and education. However, education contributions are only required if the local catchment schools do not have capacity to accommodate the development. Enquiries with the School

Organisation Team at Staffordshire County Council have indicated the contributions would only be sought for one high school place.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 The proposal offers the opportunity to reuse previously developed land to deliver residential accommodation within an existing residential area rather than encroaching on the green belt that surrounds Biddulph.

6.2 Its use for residential development would be consistent with the local area. The proposals are sensitive and in-keeping with the existing development in the area and would complement the neighbourhood. The scale and massing of the proposed development is appropriate for the location and the positioning of plots on Woodland Street provides an active frontage to the site.

6.3 The location in an existing residential neighbourhood means that a range of local facilities, notably schools, a convenience shop, public house and a pharmacy are located within the vicinity of the site. This increases the sustainability of the site and helps promote sustainable transport choices.

6.4 Access and parking provision are provided and are suitable for this type of development in this location.

6.5 The proposal necessitates the loss of the Top O' Th' Trent public house. The public house is currently vacant and has struggled to be financially viable for a number of years. A separate Assessment of Community Facilities has been submitted with this planning application and deals with issues related to the loss of the public house.

6.6 The retention of trees around the north, east and south perimeters of the site increases the amenity and privacy of both existing and future residents. All plots which face existing housing meet the separation distances set out in the Council's Space About Dwellings SPG. The generous size of the private gardens provided also increases residential amenity.

6.7 In accordance with **paragraph 49** of the NPPF, housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. **Paragraph 14** clarifies that this firstly means approving development proposals that accord with the Development Plan without delay. This statement has demonstrated that the proposal accords with the Core Strategy policies.

6.8 Policy SS4 of the Core Strategy does seek to limit the granting of planning permissions for unidentified (windfall) sites in settlements inset within the green belt, such as Biddulph. However, given that the Council is unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply then policies which seek to restrict housing development must be considered out-of-date. **Paragraph 14** of the NPPF states that where this is the case approval should be granted except when the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits or when specific policies in the NPPF indicate that development should be restricted. This site is not subject to any restrictive policies and this statement has demonstrated any adverse impacts would not outweigh the benefits of development at this site.

6.9 Overall this Statement has demonstrated that the proposed development is in accordance with both local and national planning policy. It is considered that there are no other planning reasons why planning consent should be withheld and therefore it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.