BUILDING FOR LIFE ASSESSMENT
PLANNING APPLICATION FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
LAND OFF THE BIRCHES, CHEADLE, STAFFOPRDSHIRE, ST10 1EJ

1.0   INTRODUCTION

1.1   This statement has been prepared to support the planning application submitted. This statement to establish the Building for Life (BFL) principles with regards to the proposed scheme.

1.2   Within the Council's validation guidance it states that a BFL is required:

For all major housing proposals. An assessment is encouraged (but not mandatory) for all residential development proposals.

Core Strategy Development Plan Document March 2014 Policy H1

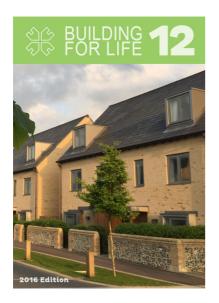*New Housing Development, Policy DC1 Design Considerations*

And that the following is required:

A report providing an assessment of the development against the 20 Building for Life criteria as set out by the Design Council (CABE).

General guidance is available from the Design Council on:

http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/knowledge-resources/guide/buildinglife-12-third-editionCoal

1.3   This guidance now is out of date as BFL has evolved and the latest edition of BFL was published in 2016.

Building for Life now consists of 12 questions that are grouped in three distinct sections:

1. Integrating into the neighbourhood
2. Creating a place
3. Street and home

Based on a simple 'traffic light' system (red, amber and green) it is recommended that proposed new developments aim to:

• Secure as many 'greens' as possible,
• Minimise the number of 'ambers' and;
• Avoid 'reds'.

2.0   Integrating into the neighbourhood

2.1   <u>Connections (1)</u> - *Does the scheme integrate into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones, while also respecting existing buildings and land uses around the development site?*

Yes – The scheme follows the pattern of development that is already in situ e.g. The Poplars and The Birches itself.

2.2   <u>Facilities and services (2</u>) - *Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs or cafes?*

Yes – Cheadle has a wide range of shops and services that you would expect in any town.

2.3   <u>Public transport (3)</u> - *Does the scheme have good access to public transport to help reduce car dependency?*

Yes – Cheadle has a variety of bus services that travel to locations throughout Staffordshire. However, it should be known that most shops and services can be accessed on foot in Cheadle itself.

2.4   <u>Meeting local housing requirements (4)</u> - *Does the development have a mix of housing types and tenures that suit local requirements?*

Yes – The dwellings proposed will allow for a suitable mix of dwellings to serve the requirements of Cheadle.

3.0   Creating a place

3.1   <u>Character (5)</u> - *Does the scheme create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character?*

Yes – The proposed scheme has been inspired by the natural grain of built development in the area.

3.2   <u>Working with the site and its context (6)</u> - *Does the scheme take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimates?*

Yes – The proposed scheme takes advantage of the existing topography of the site and maximizes the benefits from the orientation of the site.

3.3   <u>Creating well defined streets and spaces (7)</u> - *Are buildings designed and positioned with landscaping to define and enhance streets and spaces and are buildings designed to turn street corners well?*

Yes – The proposal has been designed to ensure that the proposal is not dominated by the access road and that the landscaping and orientation of the dwellings enhance the visual appearance of the development.

3.4 <u>Easy to find your way around (8)</u> - *Is the scheme designed to make it easy to find your way around?*

Yes – The layout of the proposed development is very legible, as it has a very simple layout.

4.0 Street and home

4.1 <u>Streets for all (9)</u> - *Are streets designed in a way that encourage low vehicle speeds and allow them to function as social spaces?*

Yes – The whole of the development will act as a social space as the design of the access road will not allow high vehicle speeds. This is helped by the size of the plot itself and the uncomplicated appearance of the layout.

4.2 <u>Car parking (10)</u> - *Is resident and visitor parking sufficient and well integrated so that it does not dominate the street?*

Yes – All vehicular parking is well integrated within the development and located sensitively to ensure that the areas of parking do not dominate the development. The level of landscaping within the development provides sufficient mitigation alone in this respect.

4.3 <u>Public and private spaces (11)</u> - *Will public and private spaces be clearly defined and designed to be attractive, well managed and safe?*

Yes – Although there are no public / communal spaces proposed as part of this residential development, apart from a grassed area to rear of properties on The Poplars, the non-private gardens of the properties will contribute open and attractiveness of the site. This balance has been achieved in order to provide sufficient private areas for future residents, as well as areas contributing to the overall street scene.

4.4 <u>External storage and amenity space (12)</u> - *Is there adequate external storage space for bins and recycling as well as vehicles and cycles?*

Yes – All properties will have sufficient external space for all recycling and refuse bins, as well as vehicles and cycles.

Category	Result
Green	12
Amber	0
Red	0

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 Local Authorities have been encouraged to adopt BfL12, who strongly recommend that they avoid explicitly setting a requirement for every proposed development to achieve 12 'greens'. It is acknowledged by BFL12 that such an approach would not consistent with the creative and collaborative ethos at the heart of BfL12 at a time when there is major under supply of new homes.

5.2 Rather than all development proposals having to achieve 12 'greens', local policies should require that all proposed developments to perform positively against BfL12 with the maximum number of 'greens' secured, with 'reds' avoided and 'ambers' well justified. However, in this instance the proposal has achieved 12 green lights.