

PLANNING POLICY COMMENTS

Date: 22 December 2021

Application Number: SMD/2021/0418

Location: Land South East Of A521, Uttoxeter Road, Draycott In The Moors, Staffordshire,

Proposal: Full planning application for residential development of 200 dwellings (Use Class C3), access and internal roads for vehicles, footpaths and cycle linkages, parking, public open space and landscaping, ecological habitats, community orchard, sustainable drainage measures, and associated infrastructure and earthworks.

Background / History:

The site forms part of an allocated site for mixed development in the Local Plan. Part of the site has planning permission for residential development.

Policy Considerations:

National Policy

Para 2 NPPF 'Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.'

Para 11 NPPF 'Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.....approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; or where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date granting permission unless:

- i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- ii) 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.'

Para 12 NPPF 'The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development planpermission should not usually be granted.'

Para 47 NPPF 'Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.'

Para 68 NPPF '.....planning policies should identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites, taking into account their availability, suitability and likely economic viability. Planning policies should identify a supply of:

- a) specific, deliverable sites for years one to five of the plan period; and
- b) specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15 of the plan.

Para 74 NPPF 'Local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement'.

Para 75 NPPF 'A five year supply of deliverable housing sites, with the appropriate buffer, can be demonstrated where it has been established in a recently adopted plan...'

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan

Policies of particular relevance include:

SS2 Settlement Hierarchy It provides a framework to manage development in a sustainable way and to promote development in areas where services and facilities are available. The policy defines the settlement hierarchy for the plan area and the broad approach to development within each tier of the hierarchy. Development will be focused in market towns, with a moderate scale of development in larger villages. The spatial strategy focuses the bulk of rural development in the larger villages and limited development in the smaller villages. Outside these settlements development in other rural areas development is normally unacceptable or in the green belt inappropriate.

SS3 Future Provision and Distribution of Development: Details the future provision and distribution of development. Provision will be made for at least 6080 additional dwellings during the plan period, 25% of which will be located in the Rural Areas

SS4 Strategic Housing and Employment Land Supply: States to meet the housing requirements in SS3 sufficient land will be identified for at least 3763 additional dwellings. These will be met from sites allocated in policy H2 and windfall sites that accord with the spatial strategy and policy H1. Net housing requirement for the Rural Areas will be met from new allocations (totalling 330 dwellings) allocated in Policy H2 and a windfall allowance for small sites (30 per annum) that accords with the Spatial Strategy and Policy H1.

SS8 Larger Villages Areas Strategy: Seeks to ensure the role of the larger villages as rural services centres serving and supporting the immediate surrounding areas and smaller villages is retain and enhanced. The bulk of rural housing and employment requirement is focused in the larger villages having regard to the scale and type appropriate to each settlement.

SS12 Planning Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy: Provision of infrastructure or reasonable costs to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

SD1 (Sustainable Use of Resources) – requires all applications for 10+ residential units to demonstrate that they have considered the energy efficiency, water conservation, sourcing of construction materials and site orientation aspects of the scheme and where possible, the feasibility of integrating micro-renewables. The degree of detail depends on the scale / complexity of the proposal.

SD2 Flood Risk -Sets out the approach to flood risk management and states the Council will follow a sequential approach.

SD3 (Sustainability Measure in Development) – The Council supports developers who propose exceeding the thermal efficiency or water conservation standards required by law for new buildings or extensions, at the time of the application. The Council also supports measures designed to improve the sustainability of existing buildings (such as improved thermal insulation, water conservation, or the installation of micro-renewables).

SD4 (Pollution & Water Quality) - Only permits proposals that are deemed (individually or cumulatively) to result in pollution (including air/ water/ noise/ vibration/ light/ ground contamination) if after mitigation, potential adverse effects are deemed acceptable. This may be achieved by the imposition of planning conditions or through a planning obligation.

H1 New Housing Development: seeks to ensure an appropriate range and type of housing is provided which meets identified need. The policy supports

- Where demand exists for self-build / custom-build plots, residential developments of 10 or more will make a contribution towards this need in agreement with the Council.
- Housing for special groups as identified in the SHMA particularly older people. ...should be of a scale and in a location which is appropriate to its needs.
- A mix of housing in terms of size, type and tenures on sites of 10 dwellings (or 0.5ha) or more including a proportion of affordable housing as set out in Policy H3 unless there are viability or other circumstances. With the final mix negotiated with the developer based on housing needs as informed by the SHMA and other factors such as available supply and market demand.
- Dwellings should provide flexible accommodation which is capable of future adaptation by seeking to achieve adequate internal space for the intended number of occupants in accordance with the Nationally Described Space Standard and delivered to meet accessibility standards set out in the Optional Requirement M4(2) of Part M of the Building Regulations.

H2 Housing Allocations: Allocations sites for housing to meet identified housing need. The local plan allocates sites in the larger villages totalling 330 dwellings including 182 dwellings at Blythe Vale.

H3 Affordable Housing: residential developments of 10 dwellings (0.5ha) or more shall provide 33% affordable housing affordable housing should normally be provided on site and be a mix of 60% social/affordable rent and 40% intermediate /starter homes unless alternative provision can be adequately justified and is agreed with the Council.

DC1 Design Considerations All development shall be well designed and reinforce local distinctiveness by positively contributing to and complementing the special character and heritage of the area. New developments designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, height, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance.

DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting- Provides protection for local landscape character and includes features, qualities and views that can make a valuable contribution to landscape quality.

C1 Creating Sustainable Communities - Only permit new development where the utility, transport and community infrastructure necessary to serve it is either available or will be made available by the time it is needed....

C2 Sport, Recreation and Open Space: Residential developments of 10 dwellings (or 0.5ha) or more will make provision/contribution towards provision of open space, sports and recreational facilities. Provision should be in accord with recommendations in Open Space Study, Playing Pitch Strategy and Indoor Sports Facility Assessment 2017.

C3 Green Infrastructure – Seeks to promote the development of green infrastructure through partnership working in line with the Council's GI Strategy.

NE1 Biodiversity and Geological Resources: details measures to conserve and enhance biodiversity and geological resources.

NE2 – Seeks to ensure the protection of existing trees and woodlands

T1 Development and Sustainable Transport – Seeks to promote development which reduces the reliance on the private car and reduces the need to travel

DSR1 Blythe Vale

Policy allocates the site for mixed use including residential development of approximately 300 dwellings to the north of the site. Development should include a masterplan with an indicative phasing programme to include

- Transport Assessment to include an analysis of the impacts on the surrounding road network including the A50, include potential mitigation measures,
- A landscaping scheme to provide appropriate landscape and visual mitigation measures having regard to the recommendations in the Landscape, Local Green Space and Heritage Impact Study
- Details of surface water discharge
- To liaise with Network Rail regarding the adjacent railway line
- Sustainable transport measures improving the connectivity with Blythe Bridge and GI measures identified in the Green Infrastructure Strategy
- Protection of the cycle path crossing the site.

Evidence Base Documents (assessed the whole of the allocated site)

Local Wildlife Assessment (ECUS, 2017)

Ecus Ltd conducted Local Wildlife Site (LWS) Assessment of the site in 2017 in order to establish potential SBI/BAS status against Staffordshire Wildlife Trust criteria. The improved grassland, arable, hardstanding, tall ruderal vegetation, buildings, species-poor hedgerow and scattered trees were of importance to nature conservation at the site level only and are not listed as important habitats in the Staffordshire SBI guidelines. However, the single length of species-rich hedgerow in the northern area of the site was considered to be of importance at the local level. There is reasonable potential that it may qualify as an SBI or a BAS dependent on further survey following the hedgerow evaluation and grading system outlined in the Staffordshire SBI guidelines. The ponds are of at least local importance to nature conservation and appear to qualify as both an SBI or a BAS. Further survey using the PSYM methodology (Predictive System for Multimetrics) (Pond Conservation, 2002) would be required in order to determine the true ecological value of the site ponds.

Species recorded on site were common and widespread both at a county and national level and, subject to further survey, it is considered unlikely that the site significantly supported any notable protected species. No species listed as important in the Staffordshire SBI guidelines were recorded and therefore the site does not currently qualify for consideration as an SBI or as a BAS under these criteria. However, prior to any future development there would be a need for ponds 2 and 6 to be surveyed for great crested newts, further survey for badgers, survey for bat activity and use of trees and buildings for roosting and survey across the site for reptiles. It would be necessary to conduct nesting bird checks before vegetation clearance or other disturbance during the bird breeding season.

Landscape & Settlement Character Assessment 2008

Not within important landscape setting to the settlement

Landscape, Local Green Space and Heritage Impact Study (August 2016)

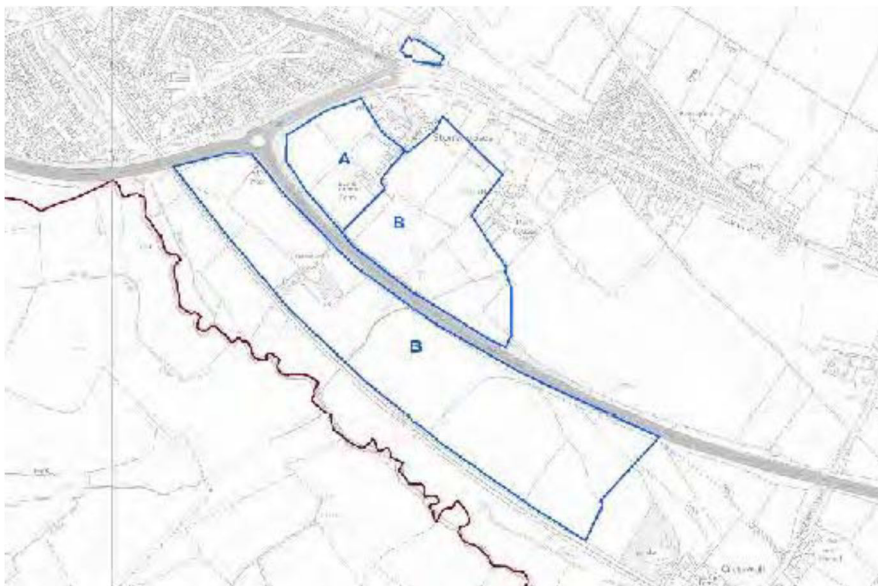
Landscape Assessment

This site is a long standing allocation, having been allocated in the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan which was adopted in 1998 and subsequently included as an allocation in the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy, which was adopted in 2014. The site comprises large areas of agricultural land extending south-east from Blythe Bridge (at the junction of the A50 and A521), and located either side of the A50. The site contains some previous development, comprising residential properties and Stone House Farm on Woodlands Lane, and Woodlands farm to the south of the A50. The site is enclosed by a railway line to the south-west. The existing settlement edge to Blythe Bridge is well-defined and vegetated, with the A50 and A521 providing a strong limit to development. Development of the site could lead to coalescence between Blythe Bridge and Draycott, with physical and visual coalescence potentially arising in the northern section of the site, and visual coalescence between these two settlements arising in the southern section of the site (especially when viewed from higher ground to the south-west). Development of

the site could encroach on the countryside, and adversely affect the existing settlement edge and settlement pattern.

The section of site to the south of the A50 is open with high visual prominence, particularly when viewed from the higher ground to the south-west. The section of the site to the north of A50 is semi-enclosed, with low visual prominence in the north of this section due to screening provided by hedgerows on field boundaries and the tree belts adjacent to the roads. However visual prominence increases to the south of this section as screening reduces, and this section of the site is also visible in long distance views from higher ground to the south-west. Landscape sensitivity of the site is high to the south of the A50. Sensitivity is slightly lower to the north of the A50, and lowest in the northern corner of the site (north of the A50 and to the north-west of Woodlands Lane). In order to limit potential landscape impacts additional planting could be undertaken on the edges of, and within the development, to create a strong vegetated edge and soften the appearance of the development in long distance views. Limits on the size and scale of buildings would also soften the appearance of the development. The development could also be set back from Draycott, with additional planting on this boundary, in order to limit potential coalescence issues.

Section of the site to the north of the A50 and Woodlands Lane (Section A) is of medium landscape sensitivity, remainder of the section north of the A50 (Section B) is of medium-high sensitivity. Section of the site to the south of the A50 (also Section B) is of high landscape sensitivity. Site-specific landscape mitigation measures could include planting within and on the edges of the development, and limits on building sizes and scale. Please note that this study forms part of a wider evidence base to support SMDC's Local Plan. Therefore the conclusions within this report will be weighed against other evidence



Heritage Assessment

There is one Grade II Listed Building within the 400m buffer. Due to the topography of the landscape, there was no intervisibility between the site and the asset.

Development would be highly unlikely to adversely affect the setting of the heritage asset. Development in this area would not adversely affect upon the HLC zone

BFHECZ 2 as a whole (Historic Environment Character Assessment 2010).
Site suitable for development in heritage terms..

Comments

- The Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan was adopted on the 9th September 2020. It provides an up-to-date development plan with a five year supply of deliverable housing sites as confirmed in the Inspector's final report (June 2020).
- The Blythe Vale allocation in the Local Plan is for mixed use with the residential development of approximately 300 dwellings to be located to the north of the site.
- Policy DSR1 relates to the site I would highlight the points regarding landscape and visual mitigation measures and the recommendations of the Council's Landscape, Local Green Space and Heritage Impact Study and the measures to improve sustainable transport routes and connectivity with Blythe Bridge outlined in policy DSR1.
- A S106 agreement should consider the provision of affordable housing, open space and outdoor sports provision, education, highways and any other planning obligations in line with adopted Policy SS12.
- Self build Policy H1 states on sites of 10 dwellings (or 0.5ha) or more where demand exists for self build residential developments should make a contribution to meeting this need. It will be looked at on a case by case basis. The Council maintain a Self-Build Register which provides information regarding the demand for self/custom build housing in the District. The last published figures in the 2019-2020 AMR show there were 29 entries on the Councils Self Build Register.
- Policy H1 states that the final mix should negotiated with the developer based on housing needs as informed by the SHMA and other factors such as available supply and market demand. Below is the ward based census data with a calculation of the percentages of dwellings for Forsbrook ward and the property size and type recommended by the SHMA. The majority of the site is within the Forsbrook ward which also includes Blythe Bridge. The application should bring the housing stock closer to the SHMA recommendations

2011 census merged ward	All categories: Number of bedrooms	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed	5 or more bed
E36005464 : Forsbrook	2,226	76	528	1,286	272	64
	100%	3	24	58	12	3

• SHMA recommendations	• Property type and size
• 1-bed flat / house / bungalow	• 60%
• 2-bed flat/house/bungalow	
• 3-bed house/bungalow	• 40%
• 4-bed house	