

SEPTEMBER 2013

**PROPOSED AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AT THE HOPE AND ANCHOR PUBLIC
HOUSE, LEEK ROAD, CELLARHEAD**

STATEMENT OF SITE SELECTION

FOR SEDDON CONSTRUCTION AND YOUR HOUSING TRUST

DOCUMENT REFERENCE SED2/1/B

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1.00 INTRODUCTION

- 1.01 A planning application has been submitted by Ascent Housing LLP for a scheme of 22 dwellings comprising 17 affordable homes to meet local needs along with 5 open market dwellings. Since the submission of the planning application, Staffordshire Moorlands District Council have requested a sequential test to be carried out.
- 1.02 This sequential test has been produced by Knights LLP on behalf of the applicants to assess the availability of alternative suitable sites for a proposed development of 22 dwellings (17 affordable, with 5 open market dwellings) to the application site; land adjacent to the Hope and Anchor Public House in Cellarhead. This statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted planning statement by Knights LLP along with other supporting documents to the planning application.
- 1.03 The proposed development seeks to provide predominantly affordable dwellings to meet local needs, particularly those identified in the Cellarhead and Werrington area. Both the settlements of Cellarhead and Werrington are situated within the Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Administrative Area.
- 1.04 A search for sites for the proposed development has therefore been based upon the above geographical area as suggested by Gavin Clarke (planning policy officer) at Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.
- 1.05 This statement sets out the approach that the sequential site search has taken and how the optimum site has been selected. This approach has been hitherto agreed with Gavin Clarke.

2.00 METHODOLOGY

2.01 This sequential test has been produced based upon a search of potential sites. The methodology for undertaking the site search has been agreed with officers at Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (telephone conversations with Gavin Clarke, Planning policy).

2.02 The site search area has been based on the broad location of the settlements of Cellarhead and Werrington focussing on both sites within the existing settlement boundaries as defined on the extant Local Plan Proposals Map, and then potential sites outside, but adjoining the existing built up area boundaries.

Site Search Sources

2.03 A search of potential sites has been conducted using the following datasets:

1. Sites previously explored by the applicant;
2. Land and buildings advertised for sale via the *Estates Gazette Property Link* web site, which lists all sites advertised by a multitude of agents and surveyors;
3. Land and buildings advertised for sale via the *Rightmove* web site, which lists all sites advertised by a multitude of agents and surveyors;
4. Direct contact with Staffordshire County Council and Staffordshire Moorlands District Council estates/property departments to ascertain if any publicly owned land is available;
5. Sites identified in the Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA);
6. Land allocations in the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan;
7. Land allocations proposed in the emerging Staffordshire Moorlands core strategy;

Site Evaluation Criteria

2.04 Suitable potential sites were evaluated against the following factors:

Availability for Purchase

Land use development planning policy

Existing land use compatibility

Development plan policy

Environmental

Ecological sensitivity

Landscape value/visual intrusion

Built Heritage

Technical Constraints

Can the proposed development be accommodated on the site in a deliverable and viable manner?

Transport/Travel/Accessibility

Local highway access

Access to public transport

Access to local services and facilities

Proximity to school catchment

- 2.05 The outcome of evaluation is summarised in the table at **Appendix 1**, which identifies each site, and provides information on travel distances to access local services and amenities, as well as highlighting any technical constraints.
- 2.06 It is emphasised that the assessment is for the purposes of comparison only. It does not express any judgement as to the fundamental re-developability of those candidate sites which did not emerge as the optimum site.

Basic Locational Requirements

- 2.07 In terms of location, the site should be within or as close as possible to either Werrington or Cellarhead in order to provide affordable homes to meet local needs.
- 2.08 In terms of the site location, the proposed residential development should be ideally located in an area with convenient access to public transport and local services. In addition, there is a general presumption that the re-use previously developed sites should be encouraged before the use of greenfield sites in accordance with paragraph 111 of the Framework.

2.09 As stated in the planning statement, the Hope and Anchor site is considered to be located in a relatively sustainable location, and it also comprises previously developed land.

Site search Criteria

2.10 It was determined that the site search exercise should be conducted if necessary in two sequential parts. First any potential brownfield sites within the existing settlement boundaries of Werrington or Cellarhead (category 1 sites). Second, if no site were to be found by that means, potential sites which were:

1. Potential greenfield sites within the urban area which would satisfy the basic locational requirements (category 2 sites);
2. Potential brownfield sites outside the urban area which would satisfy the basic locational requirements (category 3 sites);
3. Potential greenfield sites outside the urban area which would satisfy the basic locational requirements (category 4 sites).

2.11 The obvious preference above is to find category 1 and 2 sites, however should no category 1 or 2 sites be available, then category 3 sites would be the next best option.

2.12 Where more than 1 potential suitable site has emerged within each category, then each site is compared when considering access and proximity to local services and amenities. In order to draw comparison relating to services and amenities, each site has received a score based on proximity to local services and amenities as follows:

- 0m - 500m = 1
- 501m – 1000m = 2
- 1001m – 1500 m = 3
- 1501m – 2000m = 4
- 2001m – 2500m = 5
- 2501m + = 6

2.13 The above scores were based on the proximity of a site to the following services and facilities:

- Local shop
- Post Box
- Playground/Amenity Area
- Post Office
- Pharmacy
- Primary School
- Medical Centre
- Public House
- Library/Children's Centre
- Bus Stop

2.14 The outcome of the sustainability scores are shown at **Appendix 2**, with each site being ranked based upon their accessibility score.

3.00 SITE SEARCH

3.01 A search for suitable sites to provide affordable housing by the applicant has been ongoing for some time.

3.02 The only significant sites that have come to market in Werrington and Cellarhead in recent years are as follows:

- The Bowling Green Public House which is now a health and sports rehabilitation centre;
- The former Werrington Primary School, which was subject to previous planning applications in 2005 and 2007 for residential development;
- The Hope and Anchor Public House, which has been marketed (and still is) for over 5 years;
- Withy Stakes Farm, Ash Bank Road, which is currently on the market with planning permission for a replacement dwelling.

3.03 Other sites that might have the potential to deliver housing have been identified in the SHLAA. A list of all sites that have been investigated are summarised in the table at **Appendix 1**.

3.04 In summary, a total of 49 sites have been reviewed as part of this sequential test. Save for two sites that have been identified within the existing settlement boundaries of Werrington and Cellarhead, all of the remaining sites that have been identified are located outside of the settlement boundary. Both Werrington and Cellarhead are surrounded by land designated as Green Belt. As such, all of the sites identified that are located outside of these settlements are subject to relevant local and national Green Belt policies.

3.05 There are a large number of sites that have been assessed as part of the sequential site search. The location of these sites are shown at **Appendix 3**. The summary table at **Appendix 1** gives provides an initial assessment. Having undertaken the assessment, there is no site that is free from any planning or technical constraint. The majority of the sites that have been identified are not readily available, and many are subject to Green Belt policy constraints.

- 3.06 A large majority of sites are located within reasonable proximity to existing schools and public transport (bus) provision. Most sites perform well from an accessibility point of view. Most sites that might be located further away from some services do have an opportunity to access nearby facilities using public transport.
- 3.07 As such, suitable sites have been assessed on their availability and their sequential preference. Sites have been identified in category 1 and category 3. No sites have been identified in category 2, and the largest proportion of sites have been identified in category 4.
- 3.08 In terms of possible available sites that are sequentially preferable, the applicant has investigated the availability of:
- the former Werrington Primary School site (a category 1 site);
 - the existing guide and scout headquarters (a category 1 site);
 - the Hope and Anchor Public House (a category 3 site);
 - Building plot at Pleasant View, Hulme Lane (a category 3 site).
- 3.09 In terms of sequential preference, the former Werrington Primary School and the scout and guide headquarters perform well. They are predominantly previously developed sites within the existing settlement boundary, and in terms of their sequential preference, they fall under category 1. However, the existing scout and guide headquarters is an existing community facility that is still in use. The land is not currently being marketed for sale, is not currently available, and cannot be considered further for development.
- 3.10 With regard to the former Werrington Primary School, this site has been identified as a category 1 site. The SHLAA identified that the site is being marketed for sale by Staffordshire County Council. The site has been subject to previous planning approvals for 34 dwellings in 2007 under application number 07/01468/REM_MJ. Contact has been made to Staffordshire County Council confirming the availability of this site. Staffordshire County Council have confirmed that the site has previously been marketed and that the site is currently in the process of being sold to another (un-named) housing developer. As such, the site is not currently available.
- 3.11 In light of the fact that there are no category 1 sites available (brownfield sites within the urban area), the next category for the sequential search is category 2 (greenfield sites within the urban area). The sequential test did not identify any category 2 sites

within the existing urban area that were available or actively being marketed for sale. As such, the next sequential search relates to category 3 sites (brownfield sites outside of the settlement boundary).

- 3.12 The site search identified two sites. The Hope and Anchor Public House and a building plot at Pleasant View, Hulme Lane, Werrington. Both sites are brownfield sites, and both are actively being marketed for sale. The Hope and Anchor site has been marketed for a period of 5 years by Butters John Bee, and the Pleasant View site is being marketed by Bagshaws.
- 3.13 The Pleasant View site is a small building plot with planning permission for a single replacement dwelling. The site is washed over by the Green Belt, and there is no capacity on the site to deliver any additional affordable homes that would meet local needs. The site only has the capacity to deliver one dwelling, and with a price of £80,000 being sought for the plot, the site is being marketed for an open market dwelling.
- 3.14 The Hope and Anchor Public House has been subject to 5 years of marketing for commercial use, as outlined in the marketing report by Butters John Bee. The site includes a large area of car park. The building itself is Grade II listed, and requires a significant amount of renovation works in order to secure its future and make the property attractive to prospective operators. This has been highlighted in the marketing reports provided by Butters John Bee. In order to facilitate the renovation of the property the release of some of the existing car parking areas for housing development has been proposed. Given the location of the site in Green Belt, it is considered that a development comprising of predominantly affordable housing would be more acceptable.
- 3.15 In terms of the sequential test, both sites fall within category 3. As such, comparison of the two sites needs to be drawn with regard to any technical constraints and their proximity to local services and amenities.
- 3.16 Both sites are located within the Green Belt, so both sites carry with them the same planning policy restrictions. In terms of technical constraints, both sites have few constraints to overcome, and it is considered that both sites would be deliverable. As such, with regard to proximity to existing services and facilities. The Hope and Anchor site performs much better than the Pleasant View site. Whilst the Pleasant View site is located closer to some facilities than the Hope and Anchor and vice-

versa, the Hope and Anchor site is located within a short walk of public transport services that provide convenient access to local services and amenities. The site also has readily available access to the existing highway network, whereas the Pleasant View site is more isolated and located on more rural roads. The Hope and Anchor site is also better related to the urban area, being located on the very edge of the settlement boundary, whereas the Pleasant View site is isolated by comparison.

- 3.17 In addition, the Hope and Anchor site can deliver a greater number of affordable homes to meet identified local needs as well as district wide needs, and as such, is considered to be the most suitable available site identified in this sequential test.
- 3.18 Given that the sequential site search has not identified any available category 1 or 2 sites, available sites have been identified in category 3. The Hope and Anchor site is considered to be the most suitable site that is available in category 3. As such, there is no need to search for category 4 sites.
- 3.19 All of the category 4 sites that have been identified are greenfield sites that are located within the Green Belt. The development of these sites would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, but the resulting loss in the openness of the Green Belt would be greater if these sites were developed before a brownfield site. In addition, all of the category 4 sites are not currently available for purchase on the open market.
- 3.20 As such, this sequential search for suitable sites to deliver affordable housing concludes that the Hope and Anchor site is the most suitable site to deliver affordable housing to meet local needs that is readily available.

4.00 CONCLUSION

- 4.01 This statement of site selection has been produced by Knights LLP on behalf of the applicants to assess the availability of suitable sites for a proposed development of 22 dwellings (17 affordable, with 5 open market dwellings) on land adjacent to the Hope and Anchor Public House in Cellarhead. This statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted planning statement by Knights LLP along with other supporting documents.
- 4.02 The proposed development seeks to provide predominantly affordable dwellings to meet local needs, particularly those identified in the Cellarhead and Werrington area. Both the settlements of Cellarhead and Werrington are situated within the Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Administrative Area.
- 4.03 A search for sites for the proposed development has therefore been based on the above geographical area as suggested by Gavin Clarke (planning policy officer) at Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.
- 4.04 This statement has out the approach that the sequential site search has taken and how the optimum site has been selected.
- 4.05 The sequential search for sites was broken down into four categories as follows:
- Category 1 – previously developed sites within the urban area
 - Category 2 – greenfield sites within the urban area
 - Category 3 – previously developed sites outside of the urban area
 - Category 4 – greenfield sites outside of the urban area
- 4.06 The sequential search identified two category 1 sites, however neither of those sites are available to the applicant. As such, their lack of availability means that they cannot be considered further.
- 4.07 No category 2 sites were available, so the next step in the sequential search was to identify category 3 and 4 sites. Two sites were identified in category 3. These were a building plot at Pleasant View, Hulme Lane, Werrington; and, the other was the Hope and Anchor Public House at Cellarhead. Both sites are currently available, however when assessing both sites, the Hope and Anchor Public House performs better in terms of accessibility from the local highway network, accessibility to public transport

and relationship to the built form and settlement boundary of Cellarhead. As such, it is considered that this site is the optimum category 3 site that is currently available.

- 4.08 Given that suitable category 3 sites have been identified, it is considered that there is no need to search for category 4 sites.
- 4.09 All of the category 4 sites that have been identified are greenfield sites that are located within the Green Belt. The development of these sites would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, but the resulting loss in the openness of the Green Belt would be greater if these sites were developed before a brownfield site. In addition, all of the category 4 sites are not currently available for purchase on the open market.
- 4.10 As such, this sequential search for suitable sites to deliver affordable housing concludes that the Hope and Anchor site is the most suitable site to deliver affordable housing to meet local needs that is readily available.

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