

003_NCO_DudleyMBC_P17_1673_080917

8th September 2017

Dudley Council
Council House
Priory Road
Dudley
DY1 1HL

Sent via email to: blackcountrycorestrategy@dudley.gov.uk

Dear Sir/Madam

Call for Sites Consultation - Land at Ounty John Lane, Pedmore, Stourbridge

Pegasus Group is instructed on behalf of [REDACTED] to make submissions in relation to the current Black Country Core Strategy 'Call for Sites' exercise. [REDACTED] is the owner of the parcel of land referred to as *Land at Ounty John Lane, Pedmore, Stourbridge*. The site is located within the administrative area of Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC), one of the four authorities currently formulating a new Core Strategy to identify appropriate growth targets and a spatial strategy for distributing this growth across the Black Country.

This letter provides information about the site in terms of its context, suitability and deliverability. I attach with this letter a red line plan outlining the site location as well as a completed 'Call for Sites' form.

Background

The four Black Country Authorities (Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton) are inviting land owners, developers and other bodies to put forward sites to be considered for development as part of the Black Country Core Strategy Review.

[REDACTED] submits that Land at Ounty John Lane constitutes a sustainable and deliverable site, which will serve to contribute towards meeting housing needs arising within Dudley Metropolitan Borough and the wider Black Country.

It is submitted that the site has the capacity to deliver approximately 15-35 dwellings, subject to its release from the Green Belt and the appropriate housing mix. The site has the potential to come forward independently or as part of a wider amalgamation of sites to the south of Stourbridge.

Site Description

The site comprises the eastern part of an agricultural field, totalling approximately 1.2 hectares, to the east of Ounty John Lane. The wider field is located immediately to the south of the existing built form of Stourbridge and is bounded by a railway line to the east and further agricultural fields to the south. A pumping station is located immediately beyond the south-eastern corner of the site and there is a Severn Trent Water easement running along the western site boundary.

The site is identified as Grade 3 quality agricultural land on the Provisional ALC map, however these maps aren't suitable for establishing the quality of individual sites. Further survey work can be undertaken as necessary in due course.

The site is located within the West Midlands Green Belt. As such, development of the site would be subject to its release from the Green Belt. The site is located in Flood Zone 1, the area at least risk from flooding. The site is also flat and not constrained topographically.

Planning Policy Context

The four Black Country authorities (Dudley MBC, Sandwell MBC, Walsall Council and City of Wolverhampton Council) collectively produced the existing Black Country Core Strategy, covering the period 2006 to 2026. The existing Core Strategy was adopted in 2011 and includes strategic policies for the Black Country area, whilst various Site Allocation Documents and Area Action Plans have been produced by the individual authorities.

The Black Country Authorities are in the process of undertaking a formal review of the Core Strategy, in light of the identified unmet housing need from within the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area, of which it forms part. The Strategy is being reviewed to cover the period up to 2036 and is anticipated to be adopted in Autumn 2021. The Review is currently at Issues and Options Stage, which runs to 8th September 2017.

Land at Ounty John Lane falls within the administrative area of Dudley MBC and accordingly comprises part of the Black Country administrative area.

Sustainability

The site is sustainably located immediately adjacent to the major built up area of Stourbridge. In terms of services, Pedmore C of E Primary School is located approximately 1.25km to the north-east of the site, whilst Haybridge High School and Hagley Catholic High School are located approximately 1km to the south. The nearest shops and local services are located within Stourbridge Town Centre, approximately 2.5km to the north of the site.

In terms of public transport, the number 288 bus service runs along the B4187 to the east, with the nearest stops located approximately 800m from the site. This service runs six times per day between Stourbridge and Norton. Regarding rail services, the site is located approximately 1km away from Hagley Station, with services frequently running between Birmingham, Worcester, Stratford Upon Avon, Leamington Spa and Kidderminster.

The site therefore benefits from significant and genuine opportunities to utilise transport modes other than the private car.

Development Constraints

The site is located in Flood Zone 1, the area at least risk from flooding. There are no listed buildings within the vicinity of the site and the site is not located within a conservation area.

The site has not yet been subjected to technical assessments, which would further inform the extent of any development constraints.

None of the constraints identified to-date would preclude the development of the site.

Demonstrating Deliverability

Footnote 11 to Paragraph 47 of the NPPF states that in order to be considered deliverable, sites should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years. The paragraphs below demonstrate how the site is suitable, available and achievable to accommodate residential development.

Availability:

The landowner has demonstrated, through the submission of this site through the Call for Sites consultation, that they are supportive of the development of the site to deliver much needed new homes.

As such, this call for sites submission confirms that there is nothing to prevent this site from being delivered immediately upon its removal from the Green Belt and the receipt of the necessary consents. The site can therefore be considered to be available.

Suitability:

The site benefits from a sustainable location immediately adjacent to the Black Country conurbation and is therefore well placed to meet the current and future development needs of the Black Country area.

As identified above, the site is well served by public transport and a number of local services and facilities are within a short distance from the site. The site would therefore be well placed to ensure that future residents would have sustainable access to a diverse range of services and facilities, representing an opportunity to deliver a cohesive, sustainable community that acts as a natural urban extension to Stourbridge and the wider Black Country.

Whilst the site is located in the Green Belt, its development would not result in encroachment towards Hagley beyond the established edge of the Stourbridge conurbation (as defined by Brownwich Lane to the east). Given the above it is respectfully suggested that the site be considered to be suitable for development.

Achievability:

The site is located within Flood Zone 1, the area at lowest risk from flooding. There are no known environmental or historical designations which affect the site.

In terms of access, a new access would be required from Ounty John Lane, subject to detailed highways assessments.

The site is therefore not subject to any major physical constraints which would prevent development from being achieved.

Green Belt

As noted above, the site is located within the Green Belt. It is understood that a Green Belt Review is being progressed at the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area level in conjunction with the Black Country Core Strategy Review.

A brief assessment of the site against the five purposes of the Green Belt as set out within NPPF is included overleaf.

Checking the Unrestricted Sprawl of Large Built-Up Areas

Whilst it can be argued that the development of the site would result in the sprawl of the built area of Stourbridge, the same can be said for any site released from the Green Belt for residential development. It remains that there is an overwhelming housing need within the GBHMA which can only be met through Green Belt release adjacent to the existing conurbation.

Preventing Neighbouring Towns Merging into One Another

The existing edge of the Stourbridge conurbation extends beyond the southern boundary of the site, some 700m south-east at Bromwich Lane. As such, the development of the site would not diminish the existing separation distance between the Black Country conurbation and Hagley. A Green Belt buffer beyond the site would remain along the railway line to prevent merging of Hagley with the urban area.

Assisting in Safeguarding the Countryside from Encroachment

Similarly, whilst it can be argued that the development of the site would result in encroachment into the countryside, the same can be said for all sites located within the Green Belt. It remains that the surrounding land uses are predominantly residential and therefore the release of the site would not result in significant encroachment into the countryside.

Preserving the Setting and Special Character of Historic Towns

The site is not located in a conservation area and there are no listed buildings within the vicinity of the site. The site is located on the edge of Stourbridge and, as such, the release of this site from the Green Belt will not impact upon the setting and special character of historic towns.

Assisting in Urban Regeneration by Encouraging the Recycling of Derelict and Other Urban Land

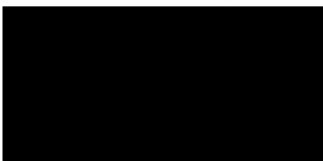
It is recognised through the Core Strategy Review that there is a deficiency of suitable brownfield sites to accommodate the prevailing housing need. As such, the release of this site from the Green Belt would not prejudice the recycling and redevelopment of urban land.

Conclusion

To conclude, Land at Ounty John Lane is a greenfield site located in a sustainable location adjacent to the existing settlement of Stourbridge. The site has the potential to contribute towards meeting the prevailing housing need arising from within the Black Country and the wider Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area, either on its own or as part of a wider amalgamation of neighbouring sites. It has been demonstrated that the site is available, suitable and deliverable, subject to its release from the Green Belt.

If you have any queries regarding the site or attached information, please do not hesitate to contact me. Additionally, if any further information is necessary or could be submitted to provide more detail of the proposals for this site or to assist in its assessment then again please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

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Director

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