## **BLACK COUNTRY PLAN: CALL FOR SITES JULY 2020**

## **GRASSY LANE, WOLVERHAMPTON (CFS 2017 site ref 47)**

## **UPDATE & SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**

**KEY ISSUES ARISING SINCE SUBMISSION TO BC CALL FOR SITES SEPTEMBER 2017**

* promotion of Wolverhampton/South Staffs cross-boundary development opportunity in response to South Staffs DC Local Plan Review Issues & Options consultation, December 2018 (see Appendix A below)
* de-designation of Grassy Lane SLINC, January 2019
* South Staffs DC Green Belt Study, July 2019
* promotion of Wolverhampton/South Staffs cross-boundary development opportunity in response to South Staffs DC Local Plan Review Spatial Housing Strategy & Infrastructure Delivery Options, December 2019 (see Appendix B below)
* Black Country Green Belt Study, January 2020

Wolverhampton CC planning officer contact: Michele Ross

**POTENTIAL FOR DEVELOPMENT**

The land at Grassy Lane has no physical constraints on development. It could be developed in isolation in a way that would sit discretely & sensitively within the local landscape, relate well to surrounding property with a mix of house types could deliver around 90 new homes (see illustrative layout plan attached).

However it is also part of a wider parcel of land identified by the South Staffs DC Green Belt Study at page 421 of Appendix 3 <https://www.sstaffs.gov.uk/planning/spatial-housing-strategy-infrastructure-delivery.cfm> as Sub-Parcel S28A Wood Hayes triangle. It concludes that “the release of this land (in conjunction with Black Country sub-parcels to the south) would create a simplified and more consistent Green Belt boundary” with a Low-Moderate assessment of harm, that is in the lowest 2.8% of harm ratings in South Staffordshire.

This finding is echoed in the Black Country Study which at page 410 of Appendix 3 includes the land in Sub-Parcel ref B3A Wood Hayes Road (west) <http://online.dudley.gov.uk/BCP/BCGB-09.19-Appendix3.pdf> . It too assesses the harm from release of the land from the Green Belt as Low-Moderate (that is in the lowest 4.0% of harm ratings in the Black Country and 7.7% in Wolverhampton) and concludes that “its release would not weaken the neighbouring Green Belt to the east, as housing along Wood Hayes Road forms a consistent settlement edge to the north and south. Release of this sub-parcel would increase containment of neighbouring Green Belt land in South Staffordshire, leaving less justification for the latter remaining in the Green Belt; but this would not increase the level of harm to Green Belt purposes”

Taking forward the examination of the potential for additional development adjacent to the Grassy Lane site, the attached layout plans illustrate how it could be developed in conjunction with the land to the east (BC Call for Sites ref 278) and deliver with a mix of house types around 200 new homes: and with the further addition of land to the north (BC Call for Sites ref 65 and S Staffs Call for Rites ref 486a) deliver with a mix of house types a coherent & attractive new neighbourhood of around 330 new homes well integrated with the surrounding area and, as noted above, with low impact on the Green Belt.

Sandhill Estates, the owner of the Grassy Lane site, would be keen to work with the local planning authorities and other interests in the area to consider further, detail & deliver this potential; and urges that the Black Country plan preparation process facilitates this work.

PRW / August 2020

**APPENDIX A**

30 November 2018

Dear SPT,

**SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN ISSUES & OPTIONS CONSULTATION: REPRESENTATIONS**

**GRASSY LANE, WOLVERHAMPTON**
I write on behalf of the owner and prospective developer of land at Grassy Lane which lies close to the administrative boundary between Wolverhampton and South Staffordshire and immediately adjacent to SSDC 2018 SHELAA ref 486a.

These representations aim to set out the key matters that my client wishes to explore in collaboration with the two local planning authorities, individually & together, as Local Plan preparation continues in both areas and an agenda for such discussions which we would hope could start as soon as possible.
At this time, we offer no comment level of housing growth (SSDC condoc Questions 6 & 7) but reserve our position in future consultations. However it is clear that substantial areas of Green Belt will need to be released for development to meet both local and conurbation needs and it is essential that this is formally recognised and addressed in the preparation of the Local Plan.

It is also clear from the published SSDC 2018 SHELAA and responses to the current Black Country LPAs’ Call for Sites that there is considerable interest in and opportunity for both local and strategic Green Belt land releases east of Cannock Road for new housing to meet the full range of needs.
However such a strategy would require cross boundary working between LPAs under the Duty to Cooperate and collaboration between all interests to ensure that development is accommodated in a way that does not harm the strategic functions of the Green Belt in this area, an objective which in my view, given the local landscape and topography, is wholly achievable.

Therefore we would wish to explore with you and other interested parties the prospects for taking forward such a strategy, in line with the discussion at paragraphs 5.10 & 5.11 of your Issues & Options condoc of possible urban extensions on the fringes of neighbouring authorities and in support of Options C and D under Question 19 of the condoc. We could also offer masterplanning expertise to facilitate progress.

I will be copying these representations to Wolverhampton City Council and other interested parties both in the interests of openness and to facilitate the necessary wider dialogue.

We will be in touch in due course to arrange discussion of these issues with you and to take matters forward. However if you feel that anything at this stage is unclear or requires further detail, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Paul Watson BA Hons, Dip TP, MRTPI

**APPENDIX B**

11 December 2019

Dear Local Plans Team,

**Spatial Housing Strategy & Infrastructure Delivery consultation October 2019**

I write on behalf of the owner & prospective developer of land at Grassy Lane which lies close to the administrative boundary between South Staffordshire and Wolverhampton and to the south of Green Belt Sub-Parcel S28A Wood Hayes triangle.

The South Staffordshire Green Belt Study 2019 endorses the view we put to you in our response to the Local Plan Issues & Options consultation that there is real potential for a positive and sensitive cross boundary Green Belt land release in this location. Specifically, the Study states at Appendix 3 page 423 under Sub-Parcel S28A Wood Hayes triangle that "the release of this land (in conjunction with Black Country sub-parcels to the south) would create a simplified and more consistent Green Belt boundary" with a Low-Moderate assessment of harm. Therefore I would ask for your reassurance that this potential is being actively explored with the adjacent LPA, Wolverhampton City Council, and that the slippage in the progamme for the review of the Black Country Plan will not prejudice such work.

For my part, may I reiterate our previous offer that we stand ready to participate in joint working between all landowners and other interested parties in taking matters forward: and in this vein will be copying these representations to Wolverhampton City Council and others in the interests of openness and to facilitate dialogue.

This is particularly important given that your Preferred Option G in the current consultation on spatial strategy comprises "Focusing growth on strategic sites ... in areas near to the source of unmet housing needs in the Black Country" with "Larger urban extensions ... focused to the north of the Black Country conurbation" and that the diagram illustrating this Option includes the Woodhayes/Grassy Lane location in a Proposed Area of Search for Urban Extension.

With regard to two specific questions asked in your consultation doc:-

Q6. We AGREE that Option G is a robust approach to meeting needs in South Staffordshire and to making a contribution towards meeting unmet needs in GBHMA.

Q10. We AGREE that sites which would result in very high Green Belt harm should be avoided in selecting sites to deliver the preferred spatial strategy. Indeed, and conversely, sites where the impact would be in the lower categories of harm should be the focus of attention in site selection.

I hope you find these succinct representations clear & helpful but please do not hesitate to get back to me if you need any clarification or further detail.

I would be grateful if you could formally acknowledge receipt of these representations: and also in due course rejoin with me on the necessary work set out above.

I look forward to hearing from you.

With kind regards

Paul Watson BA Hons, Dip TP, MRTPI

