

Statement of Common Ground

Between

Bloor Homes Ltd and South Staffordshire Council

Relating to Proposed Allocation of site 519 - Land East of Bilbrook

South Staffordshire emerging Local Plan Review 2023-2041

7th November 2024

Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) relates to Site 519 - Land east of Bilbrook. The site is proposed to be allocated for residential led development by South Staffordshire Council within its emerging Local Plan Review 2023-2041. Bloor Homes Ltd have a contract to purchase the site from the landowners and are promoting the site for residential development. The purpose of the SoCG is to provide the Inspector with clarity and certainty on what Bloor Homes and South Staffordshire Council have agreed will be delivered on Site 519 - Land east of Bilbrook

Site description

- 1.2 The site is 39.6ha in size and is located to the east of Bilbrook. The site includes 12.5ha that is identified as safeguarded land in South Staffordshire Council's Site Allocations Document (2018) and so is not within the Green Belt. The remaining 27.1ha of the site is located in the Green Belt. The Codsall/Bilbrook Development Boundary will be amended to include the site in accordance with Policies DS1 and SA1.

Masterplan

- 1.3 The parties agree that the site should come forward as a comprehensive master planned site in line with Policy MA1 and SA1 and should deliver a minimum of 750 homes. The development should broadly align with the indicative Concept Plan and Vision and Objectives (see Appendix A) for the site detailed in the Local Plan Review 2023-2041.

Site specific policy requirements (Policy SA1)

- 1.4 It is agreed between the parties that Site 519 - Land east of Bilbrook will deliver the following requirements as set out in Policy SA1 (below), subject to the policy requirements being found sound at Examination:

Policy SA1 – Strategic development location: Land East of Bilbrook

A strategic site for major housing growth is identified at Land East of Bilbrook in the location shown in Appendix B of this document. The key spatial principles for delivering this level of housing growth at Land East of Bilbrook are illustrated through the indicative Concept Plan for the site shown in Appendix F. The development should be delivered in accordance with the requirements of other policies in this Local Plan and an approved site wide Strategic Master Plan as required under Policy MA1, informed by the Concept Plan, vision and objectives for the site contained within this document and requirements set out within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The site-specific requirements should include:

- a) A minimum of 750 new homes, including affordable housing and a specialist elderly housing element (e.g. sheltered or extra care) of at least 40 units in accordance with other policies within the local plan;
- b) A Community Hub focused around a central area of communal green space, well connected to the site wide green infrastructure network, to contain:
 - Small local convenience retail to serve the day to day needs of the neighbourhood
 - Flexible community space

- A new first school (1.3ha)
- c) Vehicular accesses onto Pendeford Mill Lane, Lane Green Road and Barnhurst Lane and appropriate public transport provision to support sustainable travel from the scheme;
- d) High quality active travel links through and beyond the site, including to the recreational green space to the north, local shops and rail station in Bilbrook and the Sustrans network to the east;
- e) An integrated and connected network of accessible green and blue infrastructure informed by the indicative layout on the Concept Plan, in accordance with the most up-to-date evidence and standards and informed by engagement with the local community/Parish Council, providing for high quality Sustainable Drainage Systems, open space, play, biodiversity net gain and active travel, including a large central green space at the heart of the development and additional compensatory Green Belt improvements on the land identified as off -site green infrastructure to the south of the site in accordance with Policy DS2;
- f) Enhancement of and provision of additional playing pitches and associated facilities in the existing recreational open space to the north of Pendeford Mill Lane, including improved active travel links from the new neighbourhood;
- g) Any necessary historic environment mitigation for the site, as identified in the council's Historic Environment Site Assessment Stage 2 (2022), including setting back development from the site's eastern edge and reinforcing planting within that boundary and any mitigation required as a result of archaeological investigations;
- h) Necessary contributions towards offsite infrastructure, including highways and active travel mitigation measures, education, leisure and health provision;
- i) Development of the site should be in accordance with the recommendations set out in the Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment detailed site summary table and should provide a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment which shows development laid out as to avoid the floodplain and finished floor levels 600mm above the 1 in 100 plus climate change flood level; and
- j) Consideration of potential amenity issues and any mitigation requirements as a result of proximity to existing commercial units to the east of the site.

Other policy requirements

1.5 It is agreed by the parties that the development will deliver the following policy requirements subject to outstanding policy specific objections and these policies being found sound at Examination:

- To provide 30% Affordable Housing in accordance with Policy HC3
- To provide an appropriate housing mix in accordance with Policy HC1, to reflect the latest housing needs evidence particularly with reference to the latest Housing Market

Assessment, and to include provision of homes for older people in accordance with Policy HC4.

- To provide new dwellings of appropriate dwelling design, internal and external space standards in accordance with Policies HC10 and HC12
- To provide a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain as part of the development in accordance with Policy NB2
- In accordance with Policies HC17, HC19, NB2 & NB7 to provide an appropriate level of on-site open space, SUDs and other Green Infrastructure.
- To provide connectivity to existing habitats, open space and other green infrastructure networks in accordance with policies NB1, NB2 & HC19
- To provide necessary education contribution agreed through dialogue with the School Organisation Team at Staffordshire County Council in accordance with Policy HC15 (assuming they are found to be CIL compliant)
- To provide necessary contributions to health and playing pitches/sports facilities agreed through dialogue with the Internal Care Board and Sports England in accordance with Policies HC14 & HC18 (assuming they are found to be CIL compliant)
- To meet other applicable development requirements set out in the emerging Local Plan Review

Matters of disagreement:

Requirements outlined in Policies NB6A & NB6C. If, following EiP these policies are found to be sound, the requirements can be delivered on site.

Education provision

- 1.6 Bloor Homes will provide and service 0.8ha of land to Staffordshire County Council sufficient to accommodate a 1FE First School. In addition, a further 0.5ha of land will be safeguarded adjacent to the school site, to allow for future expansion to mitigate the impact of other housing proposals in the wider area. The safeguarded land will be released subject to appropriate financial compensation being agreed for this land. South Staffordshire Council, Bloor Homes and County Education will work together proactively to ensure the safeguarded land for the school will be made available in a timely manner, to facilitate the delivery of the other allocated housing sites in the wider area. The land to be provided, in line with the concept plan and emerging masterplan for the site, is of regular shape, level topography and is free from contamination and other adverse ground conditions; and appropriate drainage and vehicular access are achievable.
- 1.7 A proportionate financial contribution towards the delivery of the new First School, based on the total number of homes delivered on site, will also be made towards the cost of the new school building in line with the latest School Organisation Team (SOT) formula for financial contributions (or subsequent updates). This is on the basis that proposed growth on the site necessitates the need for a 1 FE first school. The relevant triggers for securing the new school site will be agreed through the development management process and included within the S106 agreement.
- 1.8 Further proportionate financial contributions towards middle and high school infrastructure may also be required to mitigate the cumulative impact of the proposed development within the Codsall/Bilbrook school catchment.



Proposed site delivery

The site is suitable, available now and achievable for residential development and will be delivered in accordance with the relevant Development Plan policies. The following trajectory is considered to be a realistic starting point for estimated minimum dwelling delivery on site. Year 1 represents from either when the emerging Local Plan is adopted or if a permission is granted for the site prior to the adoption of the emerging Local Plan, whichever is first. Opportunities to expedite earlier delivery will be agreeable to both parties:

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
0	40	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	70

Pending planning applications

1.10 This SoCG is signed without prejudice to the position of both South Staffordshire Council or Bloor Homes Ltd with respect to any pending planning applications relating to the site.

Declaration	
The contents of this document are agreed for the purposes of the South Staffordshire Council Local Plan Review 2023-2041 Examination.	
Signed on behalf of Bloor Homes	Signed on behalf of South Staffordshire Council
Signed:  Date: 03/12/24	Signed:  Date: 03/12/2024
Position: Planning Consultant (Evolve)	Position: Lead Planning Manager

Appendix A: Vision and Objectives and Concept Plan

Vision

Land East of Bilbrook will create the new arrival point into the existing settlement of Bilbrook, providing a distinctive and attractive gateway and sensitive edge to the countryside. It will be a sustainable, well-connected neighbourhood for Bilbrook, centred around a new first school together with flexible community/employment space, potential convenience shopping and a central green, with residents having excellent sustainable links to existing facilities and employment opportunities, such as the shops/amenities on Bilbrook Road, the nearby train station, the enhanced Bilbrook playing fields and i54. The new neighbourhood will have a diverse character, focussed around new and existing green and blue infrastructure, with green corridors and effective flood management creating a network of multi-functional communal space. The homes will be highly energy efficient and sustainable, providing a variety of styles and accommodation to suit a range of established needs. The development will focus on achieving high environmental standards, energy efficiency and a net zero carbon community.

Objectives

Environmental

Transport & Movement

- The new neighbourhood will contain a network of connected tree-lined streets, with strong cycling and walking routes within the site. This network will be well-connected through multiple access points to the surrounding area, including convenient access to sustainable travel infrastructure and key off site walking/cycling routes, such as the i54 Sustrans route 81 (A National Cycling Network protected route) and nearby Bilbrook train station.

Housing & Built Environment

- The new neighbourhood will contain a number of character areas, drawing inspiration from relevant smaller historic village cores in the surrounding area and responding positively and relating well to the site surroundings, such as the canal corridor, street hierarchy, greenspace to the south, countryside edge to the north and existing urban grain of Lane Green Road etc. There will be a variety and mix of house types to accommodate a range of people including first time buyers, young families and elderly persons, with a focus on high environmental standards, energy efficiency and a move towards a net zero carbon community.

Active, Inclusive and Safe

- A range of suitable homes will be provided to meet established needs in respect of size, type, tenure and affordability in order to realise a balanced community.

Environmentally Sensitive

- New safe and attractive walking and cycling routes will be provided that link to existing, nearby green and sustainable routes, such as the canal corridor, and the Sustrans route 81 and to the existing Bilbrook playing fields. Existing ecological features such as hedgerows will be maintained and wildlife habitat enhanced as part of the creation of high-quality Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), that align with the new greenspace and green routes to create multi-functional amenity spaces and biodiversity corridors. A

central green space will be created to form the heart of the neighbourhood and tree lined boulevards will create an attractive main route and promote biodiversity.

Social and Economic

Well served

- A new first school will be provided in a central location, adjacent to the green space and accessible by walking and cycling as well as by motor vehicles. This will create a focal point for the neighbourhood, where other flexible space for community/local employment uses could be introduced. Local convenience retail will be provided in the new neighbourhood to cater for those local needs, with good walking and cycling links provided to Pendeford Mill Lane and Lane Green Road, enabling access to Bilbrook village centre.

Thriving:












- The new neighbourhood is located within easy reach of local businesses, i54 and Wolverhampton City Centre, where employment opportunities exist. The scheme will connect with and contribute towards the improvement of sustainable transport links to both key employment locations.

Well run:

- The existing and new residents within the community should be engaged to consider the future stewardship of the place and in particular the design, delivery and future management of the new facilities such as the neighbourhood centre/community space and green infrastructure network, including the potential for a future Community Trust to be established.

East of Bilbrook Indicative Concept Plan

Key Note: SUDs will need to be designed in.

-  School site at the heart
-  Community hub
-  Development area
-  Vehicular, pedestrian and cycle connections
-  Pedestrian and cycle connections
-  Primary routes (hierarchy of route sizes not shown)
-  New arrival point
-  Cycleway: Sustrans route 81 linking to route i54
-  Access to existing local rail
-  Walking & cycling linking homes to central green space
-  Access route to local shops and rail

