

PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT

LAND AT BARROW BROOK

OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF ELDERLY PERSON BUNGALOWS, AFFORDABLE APARTMENTS AND ASSOCIATED ROADS, ANCILLARY WORKS AND LANDSCAPING.

**FOR: Newclose Properties Ltd and Lea Hough Chartered
Surveyors**

OUR REF: MIDD/01

DATE: MARCH 2017

1.0. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This Planning Policy Statement supports an outline planning application for the development of this site with 20 elderly person bungalows and 9no. affordable apartments. This statement explains the reasoning behind the submission and discusses the main issues for consideration.

2.0. ASSESSMENT

THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1. The application site adjoins onto the east side of the settlement of Barrow with vehicular access available to it through the adjoining Bloor Homes residential site to the west. That site is currently being developed for 102 new houses and has vehicular access from the north side from Barrow Brook Close and from there to the A59 on the east side or to Whalley Road, which runs through Barrow, to the west. The A59 runs north south along the eastern boundary of the site. Whalley Road is about 300 metres to the west.
- 2.2. Barrow is a mixed use settlement with large element of residential development, both existing and planned (see history). The settlement has expanded significantly over recent years and planning permission has been granted for about 600 new dwellings. The majority of those (about 500) are to be located on the west side of Whalley Road at a strategic housing site. That site however has yet to be started.
- 2.3. To the immediate east of the application site there is therefore modern housing development. To the north there is Barrow Brook Business Park and Enterprise Park. To the south there is also modern housing development along Whiteacre Lane. To the east, the A59 marks the edge of the settlement beyond which lies open countryside.
- 2.4. The site itself is an open area of land of about 1.1 hectares. There are no features of interest on the site. There are some peripheral trees and there is a well treed embankment along the eastern boundary fronting onto the A59. The site sits above the level of the A59, which runs through a small cutting at this point.

3.0. HISTORY

- 3.1. There is no relevant planning history related to this site. There are many approved applications in Barrow generally relating to new residential and commercial developments. Whilst these are too numerous to recount here, the map reproduced at page 3 of the design and access statement accompanying this application shows where those development areas are in relation to this site. As can be seen from that map, this site is well

related to those other nearby approved developments.

4.0. **PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 The application is submitted in outline but with access applied for at this stage. The plans submitted however show the proposed layout and intended house types for the elderly bungalows. This demonstrates that the site can accommodate the quantum of development applied for. What is proposed for this site is elderly person bungalows. The reason for this is that there is an unmet demand and need for such accommodation type in the area that is not being met by the Council's development strategy. The bungalows proposed are one bedroom, semi detached, of which there are 14 and two bedroom detached bungalows, of which there are 6. There are also to be 9 affordable apartments provided in a three storey block at the northern end of the site. Each of the bungalows is to be provided with garaging and/or off street parking. The affordable apartments are to be provided with a communal parking area, all to the appropriate standards.
- 4.2 There is to be a central point of access into the site. This is on the west side of the site and is a continuation of the estate road that serves the adjacent Bloor Homes development. Internally, those dwellings on the eastern side of the site face towards the A59, whilst the dwellings elsewhere are more inward looking. Along the eastern and northern boundaries of the site a 'green' noise barrier will be erected to protect the occupants of the site from excessive noise.
- 4.3 The proposal offers a significant amount of affordable housing provision in the form of 9 no affordable apartments. In addition, the elderly person bungalows will be marketed first for local people and only after that be offered for general sale if they do not sell locally. These measures can be controlled and are offered by way of a section 106 agreement to the Council and the use of appropriate conditions.

5.0. **PLANNING POLICY**

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012, replacing most of the national planning guidance extant at that time. Paragraph 2 states that "*Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans, and is a material consideration in planning decisions*".

- 5.2. The NPPF describes the overarching aim of the planning system as being to secure sustainable development; paragraph 7 states that there are three dimensions to sustainable development, namely economic, social and environmental and expands on those aspects and issues that are encompassed by each. Furthermore the NPPF details a presumption in favour of sustainable development. In respect of the determination of planning applications this requires the approval of development that accords with the development plan without delay, and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date the granting of planning permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 5.3. Paragraph 17 details 12 core planning principles. They include taking a proactive approach to securing sustainable economic development to deliver the homes and other resources that the country needs; the requirement always to seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings; and actively managing patterns of growth in order to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, focussing development in locations that are or can be made sustainable.
- 5.4. Paragraphs 47 to 55 are concerned with delivering a wide choice of high quality homes. Notably there is a requirement for local planning authorities to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing against their housing requirements to ensure choice and competition in the market for land; to be deliverable sites should be available now. Notably also housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites. Where there is a requirement for affordable housing policies should detail how this will be achieved.
- 5.5. Paragraphs 56 to 68 are concerned with the need for good design. Paragraph 58 requires that planning decisions ensure that developments will, amongst other things:
- *“...function well and add to the quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
 - *establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live ... ;*
 - *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development ... ;*
 - *respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation; and*

- *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping”.*

5.6. Paragraph 60 sets out that ‘*Planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. It is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.*’

5.7. Paragraph 65 states: Local planning authorities should not refuse planning permission for buildings or infrastructure which promote high levels of sustainability because of concerns about incompatibility with an existing townscape,

6.0. **Ribble Valley Core Strategy**

6.1. The Ribble Valley Core Strategy (CS) was adopted on 16 December 2014. The relevant Key Statements (KS) and Policies (Pol) are detailed below:

KS DS1 Development Strategy. Barrow is a Tier 1 Village to which, along with the principal settlements, development will be focussed.

KS DS2 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development. In the determination of planning applications the LPA will reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development detailed in the NPPF.

KS EN2 Landscape. Development should be in keeping with the character of the landscape.

KS H1 Housing Provision. Land for 5,600 dwellings will be provided between 2008 and 2028 with an annual average completion target of at least 280 dwellings per year, and a five year deliverable housing land supply will be maintained.

KS H2 Housing Balance. Planning permission for residential development will be granted where it can be demonstrated that it delivers a suitable mix of housing reflecting local need across the Borough.

KS H3 Affordable Housing. In the circumstances of the application site, requires 30% of the units provided to be affordable on sites of 5 or more houses or that are over 0.2 hectare in area outside Clitheroe or Longridge.

Pol DMG1 General Considerations. Details a number of criteria that will secure better standards of development in respect of design, access, amenity, environment and infrastructure.

Pol DMG2 Strategic Considerations. Requires development proposals in the principal settlements and Tier 1 Villages to consolidate, expand or round-off development and to ensure that it is appropriate in terms of scale.

Pol DMG3 Transport and Mobility. Details requirements of development proposals particularly in respect of transport and accessibility.

Pol DME2 Landscape and Townscape Protection. Development should not have significant harm on landscape features.

7.0. **Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan**

7.1. The Local Plan was adopted in 1998 but all remaining saved policies have now been superseded by the Core Strategy and so it is no longer part of the statutory development plan. However until such time as a revised set of proposals maps are prepared as part of the Housing and Economic Development DPD the Local Plan proposals maps will remain in use.

7.2. The Barrow proposals map indicates that the application site adjoins onto the settlement boundary.

8.0. **Housing and Development DPD**

8.1. The Housing and Development DPD (the DPD) has been out to its first public consultation under Regulation 18 Issues and Options. This is stage 2 of the LDF and provides more detailed coverage that includes allocations and settlement boundaries. The DPD has not however reached an advanced stage such that it cannot carry any weight in the decision making process. However in regards to this site, the site is shown on the proposals map as adjoining the defined settlement boundary.

9.0. **EVALUATION**

Principle of Development

9.1. The development plan does not allocate residential development on this site. Further whilst it is adjacent to the development boundary of Barrow, it does not fall within it. Therefore, as a site for general market housing it would not be compliant with the location strategy for new housing development in the development plan. The main issue is however whether the site is a suitable location for the proposed residential development having regard to the development plan and other material considerations.

9.2. The application proposals are for age exclusive housing (with an element of housing need). As such, the application presents *other material considerations* that the applicant says, are

sufficient to outweigh the development plan. Whilst the weight to be attached to those material considerations is a matter for the decision maker, they are such that they indicate that these proposals should be determined otherwise than in accordance with the development plan. These matters relate to :

- achieving sustainable development and
- the need for age restricted housing and;
- is this a suitable location for the development.

Sustainable development

- 9.3. The framework (NPPF) advocates a presumption in favour of sustainable development and the need for development to be sustainable is a constant thread running through local and national policy. Core Strategy policy DS2 incorporates the presumption in favour of sustainable development into the development plan. Paragraph 7 of the framework explains that there are three dimensions to be considered: economic; social and environmental. Paragraph 8 states that these should not be undertaken in isolation because they are mutually dependent.
- 9.4. The development would fulfil an economic role through the provision of housing that brings with it employment associated with construction as delivery, as well as the additional population that would support local services in Barrow by increased local expenditure as well as increased revenue for the Council. In terms of the social role, the provision of age restricted housing fulfils an identified aim of the Council's housing strategy and this is discussed in the section below, with reference to the submitted Pinder's Elderly Housing Need Assessment. It meets that need by providing for accommodation for older people which the Council has found difficult to secure. In terms of the environmental dimension, the development would result in a limited visual impact, filling the gap between new housing site and the A59, which is well screened and not prominent in the landscape. Neither is the site in a restricted environmental location and nor is it a site where specific policies of the framework says should be restricted (paragraph 14 footnote 9). It is close to accessible local services in a settlement identified as a Tier1 settlement in the development plan. This is particularly relevant as the large number of residential planning permissions approved at Barrow, is indicative of its sustainable location. This issue is detailed below in considering whether the site is suitably located. Therefore, the proposals achieve sustainability overall and therefore the presumption in favour of sustainable development advocated in the framework applies.

The need for age restricted housing

9.5 The Pinder's report that accompanies this application, which takes a five mile radius of the site as its 'catchment area', says there is an identified projected increase in people over the age of 65 within the next 20 years, that increase being by over 33% by 2036. This results in an associated increase in demand for age restricted housing.

9.6. That increase in need for elderly housing is recognised by the Council. This recognition is taken from the Council's SMHA and housing waiting lists that confirm the need for elderly bungalow accommodation. This has been represented in a report to the Health and Housing Committee in September 2015, which provides the Council's Addressing Housing Needs policy. That report goes on to state:

'Developers are reluctant to provide bungalows on sites as they deliver less units per m² that the equivalent of apartment type accommodation. However, evidence from the SHMA and housing waiting list confirms the need for bungalow accommodation.'

And goes on further to state :

'The Housing waiting list has 445 households registered for bungalow accommodation'.

The report is unequivocal that developments are not providing the needed elderly bungalows stating that from 2012 to September 2015 only three sites in the Borough had brought forward any bungalows. This is put down to developers not wanting to provide bungalows because they deliver less per m³ than apartments. The report indicates that the housing waiting list has 445 households registered for bungalow accommodation.

9.7. The Council is therefore aware of the need for the provision elderly bungalows across the Borough and indeed sees this as a priority. The Council attempts to address this by requiring 15% of larger housing sites to be for the elderly, with a minimum of 50% of those to be affordable. The provision of elderly bungalows is therefore reliant on a number of factors that includes the bringing forward of sites and deliverability of sites to meet that need. Added to this is the identified projected increase in the elderly population, identified in the Pinder's report, which is going to increase the pressure to deliver bungalows for the elderly.

9.10 The application site is available now and its construction would go some way to meeting the identified elderly bungalow need. The identified level of need for elderly bungalows outweighs the current supply and this material consideration is in favour of the development .

The suitability of the location and accessibility.

- 9.11 Paragraph 7 of the framework makes clear the importance of accessible local services. This site performs well in this regard. That is because Barrow is classed as Tier 1 settlement in the development plan which means that it is recognised as being one of the more sustainable locations for development outside the strategic site and the principle towns of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley. Policy DMG3 of the development plan emphasises the importance of the availability and adequacy of public transport and associated infrastructure to serve development proposals. In Barrow there is a primary school, business village, petrol station with convenience store and fast food outlet and regular and frequent buses through Barrow for access to the wider area. The recent significant housing commitments and permissions granted at Barrow indicate its sustainable location. Therefore future residents would be well served by services and facilities, including the potential for the use of public transport as opposed to the private car. The development of this site therefore would not conflict with policy DMG3.

10.0 CONCLUDING REMARKS

- 10.1 It is a matter for the decision maker to weigh the considerations in any planning judgement. In this case, the application site, if developed for market housing, would be considered to be contrary to the provisions of the development plan. The statutory priority of the plan needs to be weighed against other material considerations. Those considerations are that the framework contains a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that government guidance should command significant weight when considered against these proposals and that the identified priority of making elderly bungalow provision in the borough is not being met. The provision being made in this application would boost the supply of such elderly bungalows and in the context of the framework's objective to boost significantly the supply weighs in favour of the application. These benefits of the development outweigh any limited harm that can be identified and as such they outweigh the conflict with the housing policies of the development plan.

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