

Our Ref LDU/PCL/1609
Date 25th April 2017



Robert Young, Programme Officer
Site Allocations Plan Examination
c/o PP15, Town Hall,
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Dear Mr Young,

NORTH SOMERSET SITE ALLOCATIONS PLAN (SAP) EXAMINATION FURTHER WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS

We write on behalf of our client Mr Sanders, in relation to the forthcoming Examination of the '*North Somerset Site Allocations Plan*'. We have provided representations on behalf of Mr Sanders previously in our letters dated 28th April 2016 and 7th December 2016.

We wish to re-iterate our previous comments, which are made following receipt of the Draft Programme for Hearings (version 2) and the Matters and Issues which have identified by the Inspector.

We wish to comment as follows:

Matter 6 – Other Matters

6.1 Is there evidence to demonstrate that each of the sites listed under Policy SA10 Schedule 5 are required to be safeguarded?

Policy SA10, Schedule 5 includes land West of Bridge Road, Bleadon, to be safeguarded as 'Strategic Open Space'. As set out in the schedule, this designation is carried forward from the Replacement Local Plan (adopted 2007). The Council do not appear to have provided any new or historic evidence in relation to the continued designation of the site for open space. However, having reviewed the paperwork associated with the Replacement Local Plan, it is clear that the designation was made because the site was considered suitable to accommodate new outdoor play space incorporating playing pitches and children's play equipment to meet an "*identified under-provision*". The designation was not made because of the visual or functional importance of the

site as it stands. Instead it was made because of the Council's aspiration to deliver improved play provision to meet an alleged shortfall. The site has been safeguarded since 2007 on this basis. This long term aspiration has not been met, largely as a result of a lack of enabling development to facilitate its delivery.

It should also be noted that the site has more recently been assessed as suitable for a new school site. The below extract is taken from the document entitled '*Summary of comments made on the March 2016 Consultation Draft of the Site Allocations Plan and the Council's Response*' (referred to herein as the Consultation Statement):

| <u>Chapter</u> COMMUNITY USE ALLOCATIONS | <u>Summary of Responses</u> | <u>Council's Response</u> |
|---|--|--|
| Bleadon | A new school would be required if development in the vicinity which are subject to planning appeals were to be allowed | The Site Allocation Plan does not allocate any significant development in the Bleadon area. If this changes or developments are granted on appeal then this will need to be reviewed. The only suitable site would be the site allocated for Strategic Open Space (West of Bridge Rd) and a note to this effect will be added to Schedule 5 |

The appeals to which the above comments refer are:

- Appeal ref 3142927 (15/P/01670/O) – Land at Bleadon Hill; Outline planning permission for the creation of up to no. 79 open market and affordable dwellings, public open space and associated infrastructure. All matters reserved for subsequent approval except for means of access.
- Appeal ref 3151660 (15/P/0983/O) – Land at Wentwood Drive; Outline application with all matters reserved except access for up to 50 no. dwellings with associated parking, hard/soft landscaping and open space, drainage and infrastructure.

These appeals have now been determined and planning permission has been granted on the site at Wentwood Drive (a total of 50 units).

There is also a proposed allocation in the SAP, known as Bleadon Quarry, which seeks to provide 42 dwellings.

Given the above, and the Council's recent assessment of the site, the current plan presents an opportunity to roll forward a community/education safeguard for both a school and play space. Whilst our client does not object to this in principle, it must be recognised that in order to deliver accessible and serviced land for community/education use, there must be some form of enabling development associated with this. Without this, the delivery of the safeguarded site will remain little more than a long term aspiration of the Council.

Our client would not be adverse in principle to facilitating the release of land to deliver a new school. Mr Sanders also owns the adjoining field, which should be considered as part of any allocation. In order to make it viable to facilitate the release of serviced and accessible land for a school/play space, the inclusion of the adjoining land to support enabling development would be necessary. We contend that this would enable a mixed-use scheme to be delivered on the site (education/residential/play). Therefore, we respectfully request that the site is considered for allocation on this basis.

Site Sustainability

The document titled *Reviewing the sustainability and settlement hierarchy of settlements in North Somerset – Executive Summary Report*, dated October 2016 assesses the sustainability of Bleadon. The delivery of a school on the site would improve the overall sustainability score of Bleadon by adding to its local facilities.

The delivery of the allocated site, Bleadon Quarry, which provides a mixed use development and thus will improve the sustainability score in relation to the number of job opportunities in Bleadon. The overall sustainability score of Bleadon, which lies 5km from Weston-Super-Mare, would clearly be improved.

This improved sustainability score would justify the enabling development necessary for the release of land to deliver the school.

The site is therefore well located in respect of the existing local centre and we would concur with the Council's statement:

"the only suitable site would be the site allocated for Strategic Open Space (West of Bridge Rd)" (page 101, Consultation Statement).

It is therefore clear that the Council accept that this site is appropriate for some form of development. Thus, the development of the site may be acceptable in landscape terms.

The delivery of a new school is a significant strategic infrastructure item of great community benefit.

If you have any questions related to the content of this letter, please do contact me.

Yours faithfully,



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For PCL Planning Ltd

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