

STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND
PLAN FOR STAFFORD BOROUGH
STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT LOCATIONS
LAND NORTH OF STAFFORD

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Statement of Common Ground is to establish the broad areas of agreement, identify the main areas where further work is required for completion before the Plan for Stafford Borough independent Examination to prove soundness to the Inspector and refer to the main areas of disagreement between the parties and Stafford Borough Council. Further information and work outstanding linked to this Statement of Common Ground is set out in the Stafford Borough Infrastructure Strategy Stage 2 Report (the Infrastructure Delivery Plan) published in July 2012. This Statement of Common Ground should therefore establish a range of actions and rough working assumptions, including timings, for the delivery of land north of Stafford.

SITE ADDRESS AND DESCRIPTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT:

Land North of Stafford.

Residential and employment developments, new primary school provision, neighbourhood and local centres, public open space, Northern Access Improvement Scheme, other accesses, parking and landscaping.

DEVELOPERS:

Maximus Strategic Group (Pegasus Planning Group)
Akzo Nobel UK Ltd (Jones Lang LaSalle)
Cantrill Family – not signed at this stage

LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:

Stafford Borough Council

This statement addresses the following areas of common ground:

1. Description of the site.
2. Description of the area.
3. Development Plan context.
4. Main Areas of Agreement.
5. Main Areas requiring further work.
6. Main areas of Disagreement / Dispute.

1. Description of the Site

The housing and employment sites making up the Strategic Development Locations (SDLs) proposed by Stafford Borough Council extend to 173.5 hectares as set out in Appendix 1.

The SDLs to the north of Stafford are located approximately 3 km north of Stafford town centre beyond the main residential areas to the north of the town between the M6 motorway and Ministry of Defence land at Stafford.

The SDLs have principal access from the A34, Beaconside (A513) and Sandon Road (B5066) along existing adjacent vehicular routes.

2. Description of the area

To the north of the housing SDL is open countryside whilst to the south are the existing residential areas north of Stafford town at Parkside. To the west of the housing SDL are existing employment areas and to the east is open countryside and Ministry of Defence land.

To the north of the employment SDL is open countryside and to the south is existing employment areas at Primepoint. To the west of the SDL is open countryside and the M6 motorway and to the east of the SDL is the A34 and open countryside.

3. Development Plan context

Stafford Borough Council is preparing a new Local Plan known as the Plan for Stafford Borough. Issues and Options on the new Plan were published in February 2009 and a Pre-Publication Draft was published for consultation in September 2011 with a further re-consideration of Strategic Policy Choices for development set out in a further consultation in June & July 2012.

At the end of November 2012 the Full Council for the Stafford Borough area is meeting to consider approving the new Local Plan to 2031 for the pre-submission stage and 6 weeks to formally receive representations on soundness and legal compliance for the subsequent Examination next Spring / Summer 2013. Therefore this is the Council's final version of the Plan for Stafford Borough which it considers to meet the statutory tests of being sound having been positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy as well as complying with the Duty to Co-operate.

Significant work has been progressed on proving deliverability of the new Plan through on-going engagement with key stakeholders interests, particularly for the Strategic Development Locations at Stafford and Stone. However further work is now immediately required to reduce the risk of difficulties at the Examination and potential delays by addressing the following key questions:

- Is the land north of Stafford capable of delivering the scale of development as set out in the Plan for Stafford Borough based on the land area (i.e. approximately 3,100 new houses and 36 hectares of employment land)?
- What are the infrastructure requirements for land north of Stafford?
- Can the land north of Stafford be delivered with the resources made available and is there sufficient commercial viability?
- What level of affordable housing provision can be delivered for land north of Stafford?
- How should the land north of Stafford be developed and is this scale of development, with associated infrastructure and open space best accommodated in the area identified within the Plan for Stafford Borough?
- Is there a need for a greater number of dwellings to be accommodated on land to the north of

Stafford?

4. Main Areas of Agreement

There are no issues of contention and it is common ground between the parties that:

- The principle of growth north of Stafford is agreed
- The infrastructure identified by the Infrastructure Delivery Plan is anticipated to be required to support growth north of Stafford, subject to access options being agreed following testing;
- A sustainable, well designed mixed use development will be delivered by 2031. Any application for development on a part or the whole of this area must be preceded by, and consistent with, a Master Plan for the whole Strategic Development Location which has been submitted and agreed by the Council

Housing

- Delivery of approximately 3,100 new homes (developers seeking additional housing);
- The site can deliver 30% affordable housing subject to the provisions of Policy C2;
- A mix of housing types, tenures, sizes and styles will be delivered with proportions of 2, 3 and 4 bedroomed properties, subject to the provisions of Policy C1;
- Provision of new extra care and specialist housing will be delivered as part of the SDL;

Employment

- The SDL will deliver at least 36 hectares of new employment land with comprehensive links for a range of transport modes across the A34 to housing areas;

Design

- The development will take place on a 'neighbourhood' approach with the provision of a mix of uses including local retail facilities, public open space, social and physical infrastructure, primary school provision, community and health facilities;
- The development will be based on maximising opportunities to use sustainable construction methods in line with Policy N2;
- Proposals must relate to the whole Strategic Development Location or if less will not in any way prejudice implementation of the whole development;

Environment

- Necessary measures to avoid and mitigate the impact of development on the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation including Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace will be provided
 - Existing hedgerows and tree lines being retained and enhanced to support the provision of a network of green infrastructure, where feasible, including wetlands and water corridors, play areas, green corridors allowing wildlife movement and access to open space;
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 - A comprehensive drainage and flood management scheme will be delivered to enable development at the Strategic Development Location and to alleviate flooding and surface water management on Marston Brook and Sandyford Brook;
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- The development will maximise on-site renewable or low carbon energy solutions including associated infrastructure to facilitate site-wide renewable energy solutions in the context of Policy N2;

Transport

- An access, transport and travel plan strategy will be provided for the Strategic Development Location that maximises travel and accessibility by non-car transport modes via safe, attractive and conveniently designed street, pedestrian and cycling connections within the development and to Stafford town centre, nearby existing and new employment areas. The strategy shall identify access points to the site and between the site and the existing settlement. It shall identify construction access arrangements that do not disrupt existing residents. It shall also deliver improvements to transport capacity along the A34, A513 Beaconside Road and the Redhill roundabout, where necessary;
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- There will be an interconnected network of streets serving the development producing discernible and distinctive neighbourhoods and places integrated and linked to existing areas.

Infrastructure

- New primary school provision as well as a new secondary school or extensions to existing secondary schools (to be clarified through further work)
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 - The development will include creation of a new destination park, to be investigated, for children's play areas and multi-use games areas in association with SANGs requirements if provided on-site
 - Standard telecommunication connections will be provided to link to the Stafford exchange enabled with Superfast Fibre Access Broadband
 - Gas infrastructure serving the employment land north of Primepoint will be re-inforced. Gas infrastructure up-grading is not required for the housing development other than standard connections into the system
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- Primary health care provision will be delivered by increased capacity at existing facilities
 - Developer contributions will be required to provide the strategic infrastructure needed to achieve a comprehensive sustainable development at this Strategic Development Location

A Concept Diagram proposed by Stafford Borough Council is attached (see Appendix 2). An initial sketch layout will be provided by the developers by the end of November 2012 to demonstrate a

feasible solution to deliver new development of approximately 3,100 new houses and associated land use requirements taking account of the key constraints for the area.

Based on current information from the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and all parties working in partnership it has been established that the scale of development proposed by Stafford Borough Council is capable of delivering the infrastructure requirements listed below:

- Highway capacity improvements, either through or around the perimeter of the site, or along Beaconside, will be required North of Stafford to accommodate the new residential development on the SDL. Enhanced bus services and improved bus reliability, through bus priority, will be required along the A34 between the site and the town centre as well as real time bus passenger information, increased frequency of existing and new bus services. This infrastructure will overcome severance issues along the A513 Beaconside road to integrate existing areas with the new developments to the north. It should be noted that work to Beaconside adjacent to Parkside has already been committed as part of the planning approval for HP13 of the Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001.
 - Suitable Accessible Natural Greenspace (SANGS) on-site / off-site through provision / management at Cannock Chase to provide recreational areas for communities to use rather than using the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation.
 - Connection to the grid in order to meet the needs of the new communities
 - Flood management scheme and agreed greenfield surface water run-off rates to Sandyford Brook and Marston Brook through open water storage solutions, maximising opportunities for multifunctional open space provision. This infrastructure will address surface water run-off issues and contribute to new green infrastructure north of Stafford.
- There are no ground or geo-environmental issues which would prevent the development of the site as proposed and which cannot be resolved or addressed by planning condition.
- There are no ecology or bio-diversity issues which would prevent the development of the site as proposed and which cannot be resolved as part of the planning application or addressed by planning condition.
- There are no noise or noise attenuation issues which would prevent the development of the site as proposed and which cannot be resolved or addressed by planning condition.
- There are no flood risk or site drainage issues which would prevent the development of the site as proposed and which cannot be resolved or addressed by planning condition.

All parties agree that s.106 planning obligations should be capable of agreement to secure the relevant and necessary matters listed above, through the formal planning application process.

All parties will be working towards the completion of planning obligations which will be negotiated and prepared, through the formal planning application process.

All parties will also work on a series of conditions which will be negotiated and prepared, without prejudice to any parties case, through the formal planning application process.

5.. Main Areas requiring further work

The main areas where further work is required between the parties can be summarised as follows:

- a. Testing of design and layout options, in particular reflecting work on SANGs, flood relief, drainage and access to deliver approximately 3,100 new houses.
- b. Highways including access options to be tested and agreed
- c. Master Planning and public consultation. The Concept Diagram at Appendix 2 will be

amended in the context of a strategic plan being prepared by the developers and to be subject to public engagement and consultation for growth at land north of Stafford.

- d. Impacts and standards of provision for Suitable Accessible Natural Greenspace to be agreed with Natural England
- e. Economic viability testing for infrastructure costs and affordable housing to ensure that contributions are properly balanced against other costs associated with delivery of the development.

Further information is required to establish that the scale of development is capable of delivering the infrastructure requirements listed below from the Infrastructure Delivery Plan:

- Awaiting outcome of Staffordshire Highways traffic modelling
- New secondary school or extensions to existing secondary schools
- Open space provision and a commuted sum towards on-site open space if such open space is to be adopted by the Council
- Cost of the County Council to monitor the implementation of the Residential Travel Plan

6. Main areas of Disagreement / Dispute

The main area of disagreement between the parties can be summarised as follows:

- The land areas shown at Appendix 1 of this Statement of Common Ground identifies insufficient land to accommodate a sustainable well designed mixed use development at the scale shown by the Local Planning Authority
- The developers consider that North of Stafford can and should accommodate a higher level of growth
- The developers do not agree with the Concept Diagram at this stage, which needs to be subject to further master planning work and public engagement.

Signed on behalf of the Developers

Signed on behalf of Local Planning Authority

Date:

Date:

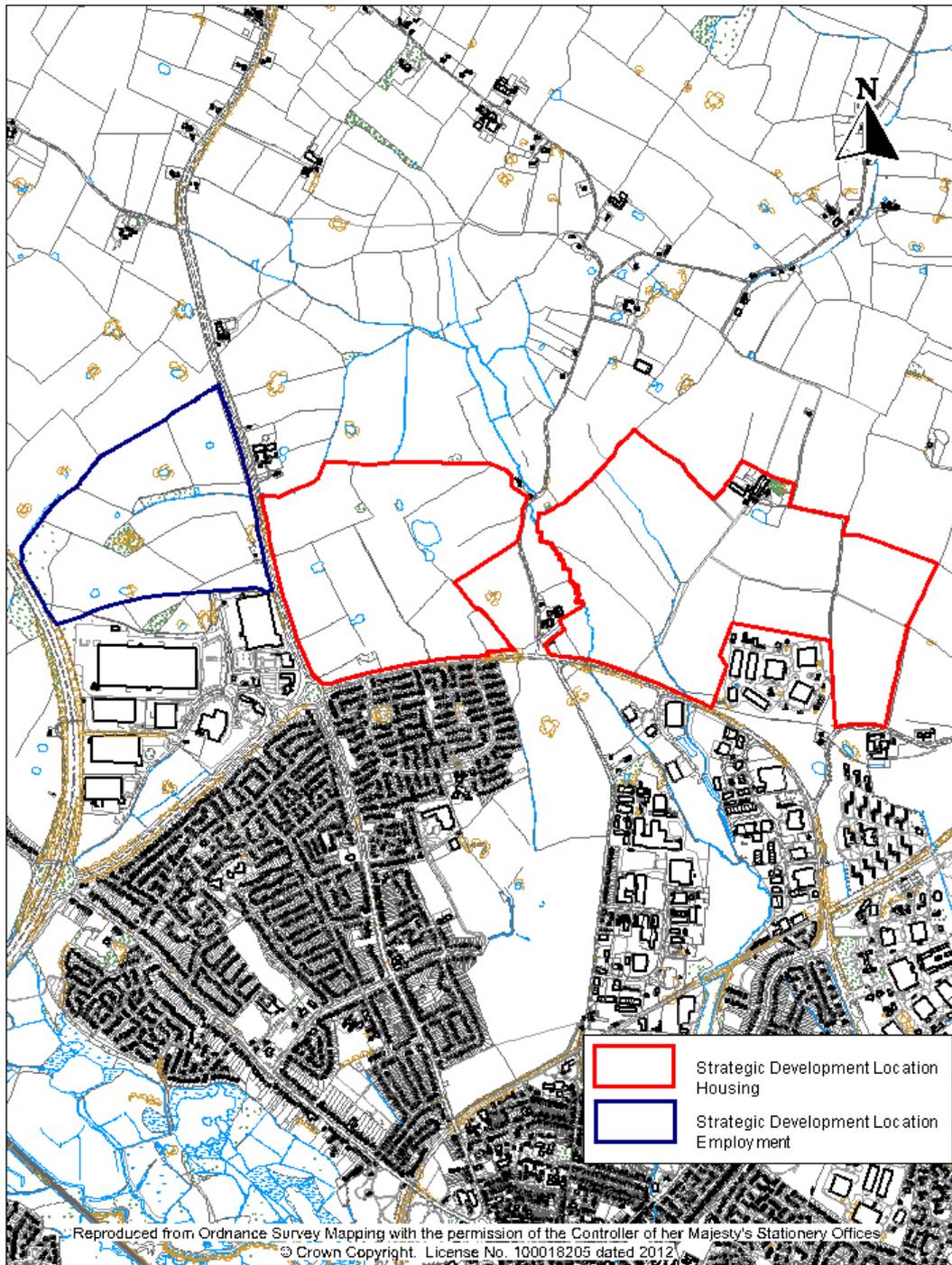
Position:

Position:

APPENDIX 1

LAND NORTH OF STAFFORD AREAS

Development North of Stafford Town



APPENDIX 2

ILLUSTRATIVE CONCEPT DIAGRAM

Stafford North Concept Diagram

