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1. INTRODUCTION

Figure 1 is the site of Overend Street, West Bromwich, commonly referred to as Eastern Gateway Phase 2.

This site is in private ownership and has been allocated for future residential use within the West Bromwich Area Action Plan (AAP) adopted in December 2012 (Proposal Site: WBPr15).

The site area is approximately 0.7 hectares and is considered suitable for a residential scheme of medium to high density.

It is recognised that the successful redevelopment of this site will be essential in delivering the overall regeneration strategy for West Bromwich. It will contribute significantly to the development of Eastern Gateway Phase 1.
2. VISION

‘The site, located in the heart of West Bromwich Town Centre provides an excellent development opportunity to deliver a high quality, sustainable and contemporary living environment that will contribute significantly to the sustained regeneration of the town. It has the benefit of being situated close to the town’s many amenities, excellent public transport links and motorway network and to the most popular public open spaces situated in Sandwell’.
3. KEY OBJECTIVES

This site is located directly opposite the site of Eastern Gateway (Phase 1 / Urban 180). Phase 1 of this scheme will provide 63 new and affordable homes, alongside a 15,000 sq ft new office / residential block, incorporating retail units at ground floor.

Phase 1 will deliver high quality contemporary homes, which will include a range of family houses and apartments. All homes will be built to Code Four of the Government’s Code for Sustainable Homes.

All two, three and four bedroom energy efficient homes will be built to the highest standards, to include the sustainable use of materials and photo-voltaic panels.

The whole scheme is expected to be completed by Spring 2014.

It is essential that future residential proposals bought forward for Phase 2 reflect fully and complement the standard, quality and design of Eastern Gateway Phase 1 (Figure 2).
Figure 2: Eastern Gateway Phase 1
The key objectives are;

1. Deliver a high quality sustainable and contemporary residential environment. A maximum density range between 50 to 60 dwellings per hectare (dph), net developable area, would be expected for this site;

2. Potential to provide a range of housing types and tenures;

3. Provide housing and apartments to sufficiently high densities to support local facilities;

4. Provide innovation in housing design and sustainability;

5. Maintain a safe network of footpaths through the site which are afforded natural surveillance and enhance local pedestrian connections;

6. Minimise the impact of vehicular traffic within the development.
4. THE SITE

4.1 TOWN CENTRE CONTEXT

The regeneration of West Bromwich is seen by the Council and its partners as a key priority. A strategy for growth has been pursued over a number of years, which has proved successful in attracting significant levels of public and private sector investment.

West Bromwich is well positioned to benefit from regeneration. The area benefits from excellent road links in particular by the M5 motorway and the A41 Expressway / Black Country New Road. The area also has an excellent public transport system with the presence of the Metro light rail and a number of bus routes which connect the town with other towns in the sub-region and to Birmingham City Centre.

Over recent years several major regeneration projects have either completed or are currently under construction. These include;

- The site of Astle Park for new retail and leisure uses;
- The Public (Town Centre Arts Centre) and new town square;
- The Lyng Health Centre;
- Providence Place providing up to 245,000 sq ft of new office space;
- Lyng housing scheme providing 362 new homes, including 114 affordable units;
- A new underpass at the A41/All Saints junction designed to relieve congestion on the Expressway connecting J1 of the M5;
- The restoration of Dartmouth Park to include a new community pavilion, performance area, skateboard park and refurbished Childrens Play Area;
- A new 3-storey West Midlands Police Operational Command Unit (OCU);
- Sandwell College, a contemporary high quality building introducing a new landmark on the skyline of West Bromwich;
- A 16 hectare retail expansion to the north of the town to include a Tesco Extra store, additional retail units, cafes restaurants, leisure units, new public realm, pedestrian and cycle paths, car parking and a petrol filling station. Phase 1 completed June 2013, Phase 2 completed September 2013.
4.2 SITE CONTEXT
The site is located on the eastern edge of West Bromwich High Street and is situated close to Junction 1 of the M5 and the A4031 (Trinity Way) forming part of the Town Centre core area. The area for many years has provided an uninspiring, tired gateway to the town centre that generally feels separated from the existing town centre core.

The immediate area exhibits a small number of active uses. Currently these include a builders yard, use class Sui-Generis, and an electrical wholesaler, use class B8. Some land to the west of the site is currently used for the temporary storage of building materials.

Considering the wider context of this part of the town centre it is evident that many independent retail uses currently operate within close proximity to the site, situated on High Street. There is very little representation from recognised retail multiples or nationals in this area. It is therefore considered that businesses in this part of West Bromwich cater both for specialist markets and serve the day-to-day needs of those local communities who live within walking distance, along High Street / Birmingham Road.

It is also important to consider the site in relation to its prominent location to significant areas of open green space, in the form of Dartmouth Park and Sandwell Valley Park Farm. Dartmouth Park is the main town centre park for West Bromwich and a significant opportunity exists to improve the link between the park and town centre. In addition, the park also forms a valuable link to Sandwell Valley Park which is Sandwell’s primary event and visitor attraction.

The majority of the site fronts Overend Street which is undergoing significant redevelopment. A mixture of contemporary and sustainable housing types will be provided in this location. More traditional forms of housing are located north of the site. These range from approximately 40 to 50 dph and, in the majority, are 2 storeys in height. Ground levels across the site are relatively level.
4.3 SITE HISTORY & GROUND CONDITIONS

The site has been occupied by a mixture of light industrial premises for much of its history.

The site does not lie within a Zone 2 or 3 floodplain. There is negligible risk of surface flooding at the site. The risk of groundwater flooding is very low.

The site is not affected by shallow mine workings in any seams. There are no disused mineshafts either on the site or within influencing distance of the site.

There are no current or historic landfill sites within 250m of the site.

Investigations in the immediate surrounding area generally indicate granular made ground to c. 2.50m. Silty, sandy clays (glaciofluvial deposits) >15.45m. Groundwater at c. 4.20m bgl. Methane 0.1 - 0.2% / Co2 0.1 - 0.2%.

General Geology Glaciofluvial deposits to 20.00m-25.00m thick onto keel formation mudstones and sandstones.

Potential development constraints may include; Existing services, ecology (flora and fauna), contaminated soil & ground waters, unrecorded pumps and wells, influence of trees and hedgerows and storm water disposal.

A comprehensive Geo-Environmental assessment for the site was completed in February 2013, this document is available on request.
5. PLANNING POLICY

The aspiration to deliver a high quality residential scheme is supported within a strong framework of planning policies at the national, sub-regional and local level.

5.1 NATIONAL POLICY
The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.

The social role is the most applicable dimension to the proposed development of the Overend Street site. It supports strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations, and by creating a high quality built environment with accessible services that reflect the community’s needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being.

5.2 SUB-REGIONAL POLICY
The Core Strategy (2011) is a spatial planning document (dealing not only with land use but also environmental, economic and social issues) that sets out the spatial vision, objectives and strategy for future development in the Black Country up to 2026. This document sets out a regeneration corridor approach and contains broad proposals, core policies and a monitoring and implementation framework.

5.3 LOCAL POLICY
5.3.1 Site Allocations Document (SAD) December 2012
The SAD is based on the spatial strategy as set out within the Core Strategy, looking at the concentration of development within regeneration corridors and centres. West Bromwich is the strategic centre for Sandwell and the focus for much of the regeneration taking place within the Borough. The Corridor takes in much of the western part of the town centre. The development proposals for the town centre are covered in the West Bromwich AAP.
5.3.2 West Bromwich AAP
December 2012
The West Bromwich AAP provides the planning framework for areas where significant change or conservation is needed. A key feature of the document is to encourage sustainable economic growth by improving accessibility and movement to and within the area, improving the quality of the public realm and built environment and seeking to improve the attractiveness of West Bromwich as an area to live.

5.3.3 Housing
The Housing Stock Analysis report (2007) indicates that there is a shortfall of affordable housing units in the West Bromwich area. A proportion of affordable units will be required in accordance with the Affordable Housing Policy in the Core Strategy on sites of 10 dwellings or more. However, within the core area where the urban form may result in a particular property type the precise make up of this contribution may need to be dealt with in a more flexible way, being more representative of the scheme.

Where new housing development is proposed on sites currently in alternative use the Council will require proposals to come forward on a comprehensive basis in accordance with broad outcomes, principles and standards set out within this development prospectus.

Within the town centre core, flats, apartments or town houses are generally considered to be more appropriate than family housing and a density of 60 units per hectare is generally considered appropriate in this location. Family housing, as represented on Eastern Gateway Phase 1 will also be considered appropriate for this site.

5.3.4 Parking
Given the good public transport infrastructure and proximity to a wide range of facilities low parking standards will be encouraged in the town centre. In addition, Policy WBP14 supports the reduction of vehicle speeds and improved road safety measures through the introduction of a 20mph zone within and around this site.
5.3.5 Open Space
The provision of open space within residential schemes in
the Town Centre core area will generally be dealt with via
the provision of commuted sums for the improvement of
existing open space within the locality. This will also include
public realm improvements to improve pedestrian linkages
to gain access to open space provision (Policy WBP3).

As this site is likely to generate more than 10 dwellings, the
proposal will be subject to, policy EOS4 (Community
Open Space, SAD) and DEL1 OS8 (Infrastructure Provision,
Core Strategy).

A commuted sum is likely to be directed to Dartmouth
Park or to contribute to public realm improvements, including
the upgrading of adopted footpaths located in close
proximity to the site.

5.3.6 Sustainability
The Council will look to the developer to demonstrate a
genuine commitment, in the design and construction of
the proposed dwellings, to
delivering a scheme of good sustainable qualities.

Therefore the inclusion of green technologies in architectural design,
construction and layout of the development will be encouraged.

This may include;
• house types that maximise passive solar gain;
• gardens or communal spaces that are located on the south side of houses;
• implementation of sustainable drainage systems;
• provision of facilities for collecting rainwater;
• installation of efficient appliances that enable reduced water and energy consumption;
• the use of sustainably managed, sourced and recycled materials.

(please note this is not an exhaustive list of all potential solutions).

Policy ENV3 (design quality) within the Core Strategy requires developers to meet
Code for Sustainable Homes Level Three or above.
In addition, it requires development to include design features to reduce ‘the urban
heat island’ effect such tree cover, green roots and the inclusion of green space in the
development scheme.

5.3.7 Noise & Air Quality
The site is located within close proximity to a busy road. An
independent noise assessment to determine noise levels on the site
will be required. This must identify any noise mitigation measures
that might be required to meet the standard of BS8233:1999.

A scoping air quality assessment has been undertaken in this area.
This confirms there are unlikely to be exceedances of the National Air Quality Objectives
within the boundary of the site. There would be no requirement to undertake an
air quality assessment.
6. URBAN DESIGN

New development will be required to be of the highest quality of design and demonstrate how physical and functional integration with the existing surroundings is to be achieved through:

- Appropriate location, siting, orientation, scale, massing, design and means of access;

- Providing appropriate physical pedestrian and visual linkages;

- Placing particular emphasis on the relationship between new development and street frontages to promote activity and surveillance;

- Promoting safe and secure public and private spaces through appropriate design and layout, incorporating appropriate levels of lighting and possibly CCTV if considered necessary;

- Addressing key nodes and routes with the appropriate mix of uses and density of development to define neighbourhoods and character areas;

- The introduction of taller buildings at key landmark locations which assist in improving the built form and legibility of the area;

Particular care will need to be taken with the design of town centre housing in order to establish strong communities. Thus they should offer generous internal space standards and good quality accommodation capable of meeting the minimum standards set out in the Residential Design Supplementary Planning Guidance.

For further information please access the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on residential design (web link provided below)

http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/1230/residential_design_spd
6.1 SITE DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Key design considerations for the site:

- To follow the built form pattern along Overend Street, whilst providing sympathetic height and massing;

- Provide active edges to the street and parking spaces where necessary;

- Provide a variety of sustainable housing types and tenures;

- Development to face the street, with building lines informed by the variety of front/side parking;

- Direct and practical pedestrian access to the front of the property to allow space from building faces to parking areas;

- Provide a visual focal point at key points and road entrances;

- Parking can not dominate the streetscene and should work proactively with the general plot arrangement and design of the street and landscape spaces, helping to promote a sense of place;

- Pedestrian access to streets, parking areas and private amenity space will need to be direct, convenient and overlooked;

- The scheme should promote robust boundary treatments but develop an opportunity for green soft planting including trees and hedges to help soften the street scene.
Access
- It is essential that clear, safe, direct and usable pedestrian access is provided from Overend Street/Nicholls Street;
- Limit vehicle speeds to a maximum of 20mph;
- An opportunity to develop a cul-de-sac road from Overend Street. Calming measures will be expected in relation to Policy WBP14;
- Vehicular parking will be discouraged along Overend Street/Nicholls Street within 20 metres from any proposed new road junction;
- Any road access must incorporate appropriate turning facilities.

Amount
- The gross site area is approximately 0.7ha. An appropriate density based on the developable area shall achieve a minimum of 35 dph in line with the Core Strategy unless mitigating measures apply.

Use
- A mix of housing and apartments is considered appropriate;
- The most appropriate location for apartments is at the eastern edge of the site;
- Houses and apartments shall not share the same private vehicular access or amenity spaces.

Scale
- Building heights should respond positively to Eastern Gateway Phase 1 (2 storeys to 2.5/3 storeys at key positions to provide focal points);
- Massing can be a mix of primarily semi-detached and detached housing units;

Landscaping
- A balance of hard and soft treatment along primary road frontages will be expected to help provide enclosure, clearly defining public, private and defensible space. A landscape masterplan should accompany any development proposal.
Appearance
In terms of the vernacular appearance the site should embrace the style of Eastern Gateway Phase 1 as to achieve legibility along the street;

- A mix of roof profiles for new housing;
- Use of high quality, durable materials;
- Architectural detailing to add visual interest to the public realm;
- Good quality boundary treatments to establish site security and defensible space. Brick walls will be provided where they are highly visible to the public realm particularly for side and rear boundaries.

Conservation
The site is not located within the High Street, West Bromwich Conservation Area. There are no listed or locally listed buildings contained within the site.

Security
In relation to the site the Architectural Liaison Officer for West Midlands Police has been consulted. It would be expected that any future proposals seek Secured by Design accreditation. This accreditation has been achieved on Phase 1 of the site located directly opposite.

For further information please access www.securedbydesign.com
A key Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council objective is to positively influence its local economy, local people’s skills and local employment prospects. To help achieve this objective the Council ensure that the use of ‘Community Benefits’ clause in purchasing power is fair and transparent to help maximise prosperity and increase employment that will provide social and economic benefits for the people of Sandwell.

The proposal of ‘community benefits’ within planning developments will provide a diversity of employment in the area. This may include construction posts during development and a range of employment in the longer term including retail and office based posts. The developments could also provide a range of opportunities for local businesses.

It is therefore recommended that any recruitment, training or purchasing requirements recognised in new and existing development works may be delivered via the following provisions:

‘THINK LOCAL’ Economy, Employment & Skills:
0121 569 2157

FIND IT IN SANDWELL Local Purchasing: 0121 569 2104
www.finditinsandwell.co.uk
Disclaimer
This Development Prospectus has been produced on the basis of information available to and policies practiced by the Council at the time of its preparation. It has been produced in good faith but should not be solely relied upon, and prospective purchasers should make their own enquiries as appropriate. Developers should be mindful of this when reading the brief because the accuracy of this information is time limited.

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