

Planning application no.	17/00671/OUT	
Site	Goodyear Tyre Factory, Stafford Road	
Proposal	Outline application for residential development (up to 230 dwellings) with all matters reserved apart from access	
Ward	Bushbury South and Low Hill;	
Applicant	St Modwen Developments	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor John Reynolds Cabinet Member for City Economy	
Accountable Director	Richard Lawrence, Director of Regeneration	
Originating service	Planning	
Accountable employee	Phillip Walker	Senior Planning Officer
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1.0 Summary recommendation:

1.1 Delegated authority to grant subject to a Section 106 Agreement.

2.0 Application site

- 2.1 The Goodyear site is located approximately 1.75 miles north of the City Centre to the east of Stafford Road. Goodyear previously occupied 35.6 hectares of land, although much of the northern part of the site has now been redeveloped for housing, retail, leisure and community uses.
- 2.2 The application site comprises the remaining 7.85 hectares of the Goodyear site. This formed the southern part of the Goodyear site. The factory closed in July 2017. The demolition of the buildings commenced earlier this year.
- 2.3 The Aldi Supermarket, new housing, public house and cleared former industrial land is to the north and north-west. The land is adjoined by the rear gardens of houses on Stafford Road to the west, Bushbury Lane Academy, formerly Oxley Primary School, is to the south and Bushbury Lane and commercial development is to the east.
- 2.4 Access is off Stafford Road, via Donington Grove and Mercury Drive to the north and by Bushbury Lane to the south / south-east.

3.0 Application details

- 3.1 This planning application seeks outline consent for residential development, up to a maximum of 230 dwellings, with all matters reserved for later approval except for access.
- 3.2 The application proposes that the site be accessed from Stafford Road, via Donington Grove and Mercury Drive to the north and Bushbury Lane to the south.
- 3.3 The applicants are proposing improvements to Bushbury Lane Academy. These include the creation of a public open space in front of the Academy and new staff parking and pupil pick up/drop off area.

4.0 Relevant policy documents

- 4.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- 4.2 The Development Plan
Wolverhampton Unitary Development Plan (UDP)
Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS)
Stafford Road Corridor Action Plan

5.0 Publicity

- 5.1 No responses received.

6.0 Consultees

- 6.1 Transportation, Environmental Health, Archaeology, Ecology, Staffordshire County Council Flood Risk Management Service, Severn Trent Water and Fire Service – No objections.

7.0 Legal implications

- 7.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report (LD/16082018/F).

8.0 Appraisal

- 8.1 The main issues in this case are the principle of the proposed residential use, housing supply, public realm improvements, access and the Section 106 obligations.

Principle of the proposed residential uses

- 8.2 The Stafford Road Corridor Area Action Plan identifies the site as High Quality Employment Land. The proposed residential use would not be in accordance with this policy allocation.
- 8.3 The applicants, St Modwen, have put forward a case for allowing residential use contrary to the development plan allocation. This is that:

- For planning policy purposes, the site is no longer High Quality Employment Land because the site was bespoke to the Goodyear operation at the time of the preparation of the Area Action Plan and is no longer in active use; the buildings have been demolished; it has poor access arrangements; and the site has a low score in the Black Country Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) Study.
- Therefore, the site is Local Quality Employment Land where the policy tests for redevelopment to alternative uses are less demanding than for High Quality Land. The loss of Local Quality employment land is acceptable under Core Strategy Policy DEL2 – subject to certain tests, particularly as no safeguarding of existing businesses who operate on the site is required.
- Redevelopment of the site for employment use is not viable, because the site would need to be new build and potential rents would not be high enough.

8.4 It is agreed that the site no longer functions as a High Quality Employment Site. The site can therefore be assessed against the policies which apply to Local Quality Employment Land. BCCS Policy DEL2 “Managing the Balance between Employment Land and Housing” requires that the proposal demonstrates that “the site is no longer viable and required either for employment use, including relocation of businesses displaced from sites released to other uses, or for other employment-generating uses”.

8.5 The applicants have submitted a financial viability case, including an illustrative employment scheme, to show that the site should be allowed to be redeveloped for residential use as the redevelopment of the site for industrial uses is not economically viable.

8.6 The District Valuer has appraised the illustrative employment scheme. He confirms that this would be unviable and states that the financial viability gap is £3.8 million. As such, it would not be financially viable to deliver an employment scheme at this site and it would not be an attractive location for new employment development. The loss of this employment site and reuse for residential purposes would therefore be acceptable and in accordance with BCCS policy DEL2.

Housing Supply

8.7 The proposal will provide an additional 230 dwellings at a highly sustainable location with good access to local facilities, including the new neighbourhood park. This represents a substantial contribution towards meeting the housing needs of the City. This is particularly important in the context of the current Black Country Core Strategy review, which has highlighted a 22,000 home shortfall in the Black Country urban area up to 2036, and recent changes to the NPPF, which place greater emphasis on achieving a robust supply of deliverable housing sites.

Bushbury Lane Academy Improvements

8.8 The applicants are proposing improvements to the school frontage, including the creation of a public open space and staff car parking and pupil drop off /pick up. These design and access improvements will greatly improve the Academy and ensure that it

successfully integrates with existing and new housing. They can be secured through a s106 obligation.

Access

- 8.9 The site is located in a highly accessible location and the proposed access points are acceptable, subject to limiting the number of vehicles that can access the site from Bushbury Lane and the provision of a pedestrian crossing on Bushbury Lane. These are matters that can be required by condition.

Section 106 Agreement

- 8.10 In accordance with adopted planning policy the following are required:
- 25% affordable housing
 - 10% renewable energy
 - Any necessary highway works
 - Targeted recruitment and training
 - Management company for external communal areas
- 8.11 The applicant is seeking a reduction in Section 106 obligations on the grounds of a lack of financial viability.
- 8.12 Should it be demonstrated that the development would not be sufficiently viable to fund all the requirements, it would be justified to reduce affordable housing and renewable energy requirements, commensurate with the lack of viability, in order to support early development.
- 8.13 It is recommended that any reduction applies on a pro-rata basis to all dwellings that are ready for occupation within three years from the date that a lack of viability is demonstrated with the full amount applying on a pro-rata basis to all those that are not.

9.0 Conclusion

- 9.1 The development scheme results in significant regeneration benefits, including the provision of 230 new homes, the reuse of a vacant site, new jobs during construction, and improvements to the public realm and enhancement of facilities at Bushbury Lane Academy. The redevelopment of the employment site for residential purposes is justified as it has been demonstrated that the site no longer functions as high quality employment land, and it would not be financially viable to bring forward new employment uses at the site. The development is in accordance with the policies of the development plan.

10.0 Detail recommendation

- 10.1 Delegated authority to the Strategic Director for Place to grant planning application 17/00671/OUT subject to:
1. Completion of a Section 106 Agreement to include:
For the whole development:
 - Highway works, including traffic regulation orders and provision of a pedestrian crossing on Bushbury Lane

- New staff car park and pupil drop off/pick up for Bushbury Lane Academy
- Creation of a public open space in front of Bushbury Lane Academy including the removal of the acoustic fence
- Targeted recruitment and training
- Management company for external communal areas

If viable:

- 25% affordable housing
- 10% renewable energy

If not viable:

A reduction in affordable housing and renewable energy, commensurate with the lack of viability with the reduction applying on a pro-rata basis to all dwellings ready for occupation within three years of the date that a lack of financial viability is demonstrated and the full requirement applying on a pro-rata basis to all those that are not ready for occupation at that time.

2. Any necessary conditions to include:

- Outline conditions including submission of reserved matters
- Timing
- Phasing
- Construction Management Plan
- Drainage
- Electric vehicle charging points
- Levels
- Boundary treatments
- Cycle and pedestrian routes
- Ground remediation
- Noise attenuation
- Travel Plan
- Archaeology - requirement for a desk based assessment
- Implementation of landscaping
- Implement in accordance with ecology recommendations

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