

**Land adjacent Bilberry Close and
Albert Road Whitefield Bury M45 8BL**

Planning Statement

Venturia Limited

March 2023

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Introduction and Background

Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Venturia Limited to accompany an application for full planning permission for a scheme of 7 No. true bungalows on the site adjacent Bilberry Close and Albert Road, Whitefield, Bury. The purpose of this statement is to assist Bury Metropolitan Borough Council in its consideration of a detailed planning application for:

“Residential development of 7 new bungalows with associated curtilages, access and other ancillary works.”

Having regard to Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, this statement considers the applications conformity with the Development Plan, relevant national policy, as well as any other material considerations.

In addition to this Planning Statement, the planning application is accompanied by the following:

- Completed application forms;
- Plans of the proposed development
- Design & Access Statement;
- Phase 1 Site Investigation Report;
- Preliminary Ecology Assessment
- Topographical Survey;
- Bio-Diversity Net Gain Assessment
- Open Space Assessment Report
- UUPLC Water Main and Sewer records
- Invasive Weed Management Plan report
- Statement of Community Involvement
- CIL Form 1

Report Structure

The remainder of the report is structured as follows:

- Section 2.0 The Site and Proposed Development;
- Section 3.0 Planning Policy Context
- Section 4.0 Planning Considerations
- Section 5.0 Conclusions

Environmental Impact Assessment

- 1.5 We have considered the proposed development in the context of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations 2011.
- 1.6 In our view, the nature of the proposals does not give rise to significant environmental effects that would result in the need for EIA.

The Site and Proposed Development

Site Location

- 2.1 The application relates to a single parcel of land for 7 no. new true bungalows with direct access directly off Albert Road and Bilberry Close. The application site shown edged red on the Location Plan covers an area of approximately 0.33 ha (0.81 acres).
- 2.2 The site is generally flat. Level differences are shown on the Topographical Survey Plan.
- 2.3 The site is bounded by a mix of land uses:
- To the North, East and South is existing suburban residential development whilst to the West on the opposite side of Albert Road is a fenced grassed area belonging to St Michael's RC Primary School.

Site Description

- 2.4 The site is currently laid out as an area of managed grass with shrubs and trees on the northern and eastern boundaries and a surfaced footpath running through the centre of the site connecting Albert Road and Bilberry Close.
- 2.5 The entire application site is according to the EA Flood map for planning located in Flood Zone One (Low Probability) on the Environment Agency Flood Map, which is defined in the Framework – Technical Guidance as having less than 1 in 1,000 (<0.1%) annual probability of river or sea flooding.
- 2.6 The site is not within a Conservation Area.
- 2.7 There is an existing footway which runs through the site and connects Albert Road and Bilberry Close. It is proposed that permission is granted for the scheme of development proposed that this footway will be permanently closed and a new adoptable 2 m wide footway constructed directly adjacent to Bilberry Close to provide a safe pedestrian route between Albert Road and Bilberry Close.
- 2.8 Due to the size of the application site (i.e. less than one hectare) a flood risk assessment and drainage strategy is not required as part of the application, Furthermore the site is located in Flood Zone 1.

Planning History

- 2.9 The site has no recent planning history, which is relevant to the current application.

Development Proposals

- 2.10 The development now proposed comprises the construction of 7 new true two bedroomed bungalows associated works, including new accesses, driveways associated engineering operations, hard and soft landscaping, walls and fences and drainage and other systems associated with the construction of new dwellings as shown on the Proposed Site Layout Plan (Please see below).



- 2.11 The proposed dwellings comprise a mix of dwellings comprising 6 no. two bedroomed semi-detached true bungalows and 1 no. two bedroomed detached true bungalow.
- 2.12 The overall scheme equates to 21.2 dwellings per hectare (8.6 dwellings per acre) based on the application site boundary, which is appropriate taking into account the existing sewers which reduce the developable area of the site and sustainable urban location and the existing character of the surrounding properties.
- 2.13 The proposed dwellings will be constructed of brick external walls and plain concrete tiled roofs. There will be casement windows. Front doors will be a simple design. The front elevations and roof designs have been designed so as to complement the existing vernacular in the area.
- 2.14 All of the houses will have private garden areas which will afford future occupants appropriate levels of private amenity.

Consultation

- 2.15 A formal pre-application consultation has been undertaken with the Local Planning Authority.

- 2.16 The LPA response confirmed that the site is designated as Protected Recreation Provision in the Urban Area in the Bury UDP under Policy RT1/1.
- 2.17 The Bury Greenspace Audit and Strategy (February 2015) categorises the site as amenity greenspace and concludes that there is a quantitative surplus of this type of open space in the Whitefield and Unsworth area of the Borough.
- 2.18 Given the limited size of the site and the constraints imposed by the easements, on balance, and given the identified surplus of amenity greenspace in the Whitefield and Unsworth area, a proposal to redevelop the entire site would be considered acceptable in planning policy terms.
- 2.19 In addition the applicant has undertaken a community consultation with Local Ward members and local residents the results of which are included in a statement of community involvement which is submitted with the application.

3.0

Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework

3.1

Regard should be had to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) as it provides the basis for the Government's planning policy guidance. The Framework (Paragraph 4) is a material consideration in the consideration of planning applications.

3.2

Paragraphs 7 & 8 of the Framework identify three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. It indicates that to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system.

3.3

Paragraph 14 states:

"At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking."

3.4

For decision making this means:

- Approving proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
- Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting planning permission unless:
 - Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole; or
 - Specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.

3.5

Paragraph 15 of the Framework is unequivocal that:

"...development which is sustainable should be approved without delay."

3.6

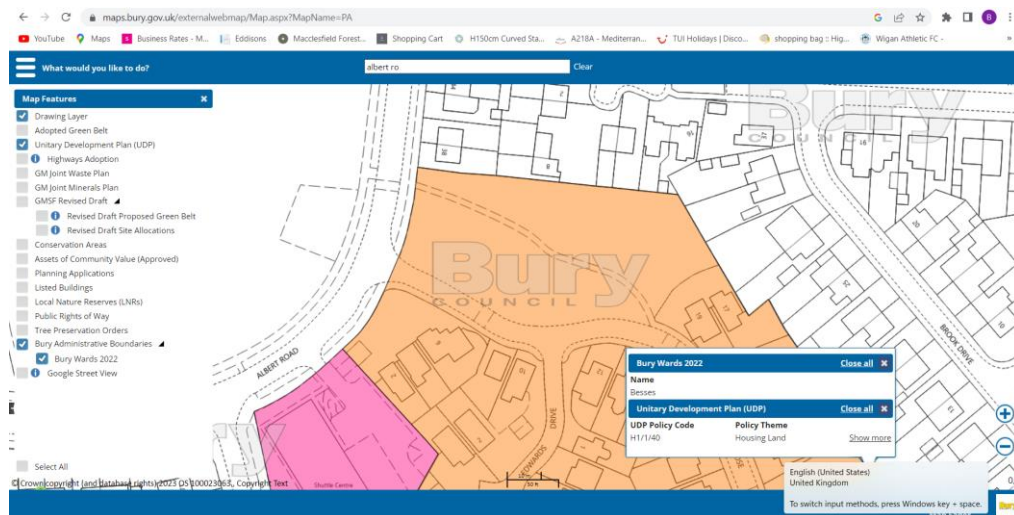
Paragraph 17 of the Framework contains 12 core land-use planning principles, the most pertinent to the application proposals are summarised below:

- Proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, businesses and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs. Every effort should be made objectively to identify and then meet the housing, business and other development needs of an area.
- Always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.
- Encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously development, provided that it is not of high environmental value.

- Actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.
- 3.7 Section 6 relates to housing and at paragraph 47 identifies a need to significantly boost the supply of housing. In order to achieve this it advises local planning authorities:
- “use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, as far as is consistent with the policies set out in this Framework.”*
- 3.8 Paragraph 49 of the Framework confirms that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 3.9 The Framework adopts a broad definition of economic development which includes not only B Use Classes but also main town centres uses including retail. There is however a distinction between economic development and employment uses. Employment uses relates those operations within the B Use Classes.
- 3.10 Paragraph 22 of the Framework states that:
- “Planning policies should avoid long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for that purpose...Where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for allocated employment use, applications for alternative uses of land or buildings should be treated on their merits have regard to market signals and relative need for different land uses to support sustainable local communities.”*

Development Plan

- 3.11 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 3.12 In this instance, the existing Development Plan comprises the Bury Unitary Development Plan.
- 3.13 The latest Proposals Map shows the site is designated as Protected Recreation Provision in the Urban Area in the Bury UDP under Policy RT1/1.
- 3.14 The Bury UDP also identifies the site as being allocated for housing (Ref: H1/1/40). (Please see UDP Plan Extract below).



Planning Guidance Documents

- 3.15 The Council have a number of SPD guidance documents
- 3.16 In terms of the weight that should be applied to the policies contained within the above documents, it is considered that the only those sections which are in-line with the new NPPF policies should be afforded full weight.

Other Material Considerations

Evidence Base

- 3.17 It is clear that following the pre-application consultation that subject to receipt of planning permission re-use of the site for residential development is the most appropriate use.
- 3.18 The Bury UDP identifies the site as part of Besses Housing Land allocation (Policy H1/1/40), which suggests residential redevelopment would be in accordance with the adopted UDP.
- 3.19 Furthermore notwithstanding that the Bury Greenspace Audit and Strategy (February 2015) categorises the site as amenity greenspace, it goes on to conclude that there is a quantitative surplus of this type of open space in the Whitefield.
- 3.20 It also confirms that there are deficiencies in the quantity of other types of open space in the Whitefield and Unsworth area (i.e. parks and gardens, outdoor sports and allotments), however the site is considered unsuitable for use as parks and gardens, outdoor sports and allotments due to its limited size; it's location directly adjacent existing roads and residential properties, and the fact existing adopted underground sewers run through the site.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 The following section provides an analysis of the key policy and related issues pertinent to the consideration of this application.

Principle of the Proposed Use

4.2 The redevelopment of the application site is considered acceptable in principle, by reference to the National Planning Policy Framework and the policies in the adopted Bury Unitary Development Plan (UDP) which both encourage the redevelopment of previously developed urban land in sustainable locations for residential use.

4.3 There is a surplus of Open Space in Whitefield and the sites reuse for residential purposes would be appropriate in this location and make best use of the subject site.

4.4 Furthermore the site is allocated for housing in the Bury UDP (Ref: H1/1/40).

Residential Amenity

4.5 The application proposals would lead to a number of other environmental benefits, including the provision of gardens and landscaping that will provide new habitats for wildlife and therefore biodiversity gains.

4.6 The principle of residential development is also considered acceptable because the proposal:

- 1 Will concentrate new housing development within a sustainable and highly accessible location and delivers environmental improvement through the redevelopment of an underused site;
- 2 The site is located within Flood Risk Zone 1 and its redevelopment will not result in any additional flood risk;
- 3 Encourage travel by non-car modes of transport by being located close to public transport;
- 4 Provide high quality residential development, including attractive landscaping;
- 5 Have regard to local character in the layout and design of the scheme;
- 6 Will not prejudice highway safety, including pedestrian safety, or free flow of traffic;

4.7 The proposals will comply with key national and local planning policies.

4.8 The proposals would ensure that site is redeveloped and in the process provide much needed new true bungalows for which there is a demonstrable need.

Housing Supply

- 4.9 The proposals would represent an important component of future supply that will help to address the pent up demand and need for the provision of new energy efficient housing in the area.
- 4.10 Paragraph 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework confirms that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Housing Need

- 4.11 Section 6 of the Framework relates to housing and at paragraph 47 identifies a need to significantly boost the supply of housing. In order to achieve this it advises local planning authorities:

“Use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market housing in the housing market area, as far as is consistent with the policies set out in this Framework.”

Additional Considerations

Design

- 4.12 The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement which explains the design approach and outlines the applicant's vision for the site. This includes:
- A sustainable development that is integrated with the surrounding residential development;
 - A high quality design delivering a mix of housing;
 - Best practice principles and good design solutions based on local character and incorporating local materials and colour; and
 - A residential layout which has been designed to discourage crime, and encourage interaction between neighbours in attractive public spaces.
 - All the houses will be two storey in height. The overall scheme density of 21.2 dwellings per hectare which is appropriate for this sustainable urban location and respects the character of its surroundings.
- 4.13 It is therefore considered that the proposals fully comply with the Core Strategy.

Access and Highways

- 4.14 As the driveways serving the new properties all will be connected directly to the existing adopted highways a Transport Statement (TS) has not been prepared to accompany the application.
- 4.15 It is however clear that The proposed dwellings will generate a relatively low number of additional vehicle movements onto the existing highway network

and these will not have a material impact on the operation or safety of the existing highway network.

4.16 There is no justification for any highway or transport objections being raised towards this planning application.

4.17 It is therefore considered that the proposals fully comply with both local and national policy requirements.

Ecology

4.18 An Preliminary Ecology Survey and Bio Diversity Assessment has been undertaken and accompanies the application.

Flood Risk & Drainage

4.19 The site is with Flood Zone 1 (least risk of flooding) and due to the fact the site has an area of 0.33 Hectares a Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment is not required. The site is suitable for the proposed scheme and will not increase flood risk elsewhere.

4.20 Surface water will be drained into the existing adopted sewers. It is anticipated and expected United Utilities PLC will impose its standard conditions regarding flow rates. Attenuation of flows will be incorporated as required.

4.21 Foul drainage will discharge into the existing adopted sewers. It is understood the existing system has adequate capacity to take the additional flows.

4.22 It is therefore concluded that the proposals will be in complete compliance with both national and local policy requirements.

Contamination/ Ground Conditions

4.23 A Phase1 site investigation site assessment has been prepared and accompanies the application.

This study was undertaken to permit formulation of an opinion as to the potential for hazardous substances or conditions to exist on, at or near the site at levels or in a situation likely to warrant mitigation or consideration appropriate to residential uses and establish geological conditions to aid safe and economic development design.

The applicant would be willing to accept a planning condition requiring further site investigation and if contamination is identified which would adversely affect the proposed use that a suitable condition be imposed to ensure the site is remediated so as to be suitable for the proposed development.

Scale/Massing

4.24 The application seeks approval to the scale of development. All new bungalows will be single storey with pitched roofs with the majority of existing buildings in the immediate area being two storey houses.

Energy Efficiency , Air Quality and CO2 emissions

4.25 In view of the fact that Central Government has revoked Level 4 under the Code for Sustainable Homes, and due to viability constraints, all the new homes would instead be built to current building regulations standards i.e. New Part L which provides over 30% improvement on dwellings constructed to building regs prior to June 2022.

4.26 Bury Council has been identified by DEFRA as an area requiring to significantly improve air quality. The required measures to do this are currently under discussion. Due to this requirement, the applicant is willing to accept a planning condition along the following lines to be placed on any grant of permission:

Air Quality Condition: Prior to occupation the applicant shall provide one electric vehicle (EV) charging point (minimum 7kW) per unit (dwelling with dedicated parking).*

**Mode 3, 7kW (32A) single phase, or 22kW (32A) three phase, and for 50kW Mode 4 rapid charging may be required. British Standard BS EN 61851-1:2011 to be used (note this version was replaced by BS EN 61851-1:2019 on 5 July 2022).*

5.0

Conclusions

5.1

This report has demonstrated that the proposal will if approved create a high quality and well-designed small scheme of residential development that will enhance and help towards regenerating the local neighbourhood. The development has also been specifically designed to address and meet local needs by introducing true bungalows to the area.

5.2

To provide an overview of the proposals and the overall assessment of the proposals in the context of the Bury Unitary Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework this section considers the compliance of the proposed development with the principles of sustainable development as set out in the Framework. It demonstrates that the proposals perform a positive economic, social and environmental role and therefore a presumption in favour of granting permission with the Framework (Paragraph 14).

Sustainable Development

5.3

The proposed development performs a positive economic, social and environmental role in following ways:

Economic

5.4

The economic role and impact of the proposals on the surrounding area has been considered and are summarised below:

- The development of the site will sustain on-site construction jobs and support additional off-site jobs in construction related industries equating in additional GVA. The construction of the site may also provide training opportunities, in the form of apprenticeships.
- In the longer term it is expected that new residents will spend more in the local area which will boost the local economy and sustain local jobs. It is anticipated that some direct jobs may be created in the local economy as a direct result of the development.
- It is also estimated that each household will spend money on first occupation expenditure relating to goods and services that are purchased to make a 'feel like home'. A proportion of this expenditure would be captured locally.
- Bury MBC stands to benefit through the Government's New Home Bonus Scheme and additional annual council tax income.

Social

5.5

The social role and impact of the application proposals has been considered in detail and the main benefits are as follows:

- The application responds to the need for new energy efficient market true bungalows in Whitefield;

- The proposals provides a mix of dwelling types which will help create a well balance and inclusive community.
- The site is within easy walking distance of local facilities.

Environmental

- 5.6 The environmental impacts of the proposed development have been considered in greater detail in a number of the technical reports that accompany the application. However the key environmental benefits relating to the application site are summarised below:
- No designated nature conservation sites will be affected by the proposed development.
 - The proposals include gardens and landscaping that will provide new habitats for wildlife and enhance biodiversity.
- 5.7 The application site is located within the urban area in a highly sustainable location. There are good local bus services in particular means that the site benefits from good connections to Bury and Manchester, the sub region and beyond.
- 5.8 It is therefore concluded that the proposed development forms a positive economic, social and environmental role and comprises sustainable development in accordance with the provisions of the Framework (Paragraph 7). As a result there is a presumption in favour of granting planning permission for the proposals (Framework paragraphs 14-49).

Overall Conclusion

- 5.9 It is therefore concluded that the proposed development performs a positive economic, social and environmental role and comprises sustainable development in accordance with the provisions of the Framework. As a result there is a presumption in favour of granting planning permission for the proposals (Framework 4-14).
- 5.10 The application proposals relate to a site which is surplus to current requirements.
- 5.11 The scheme will be built to current building regulations standards
- 5.12 A Flood Risk Assessment Report has not been required as the site is less than 1 hectare in size and is in Flood Zone 1 (least likelihood of flooding) and therefore the site is suitable for the proposed development..
- 5.13 The redevelopment of the site would lead to a natural infill of a currently underused urban site with residential development and be entirely appropriate for the location.
- 5.14 In addition to the emerging evidence demonstrates that there is an urgent need to increase the supply of housing in Bury and Whitefield. This proposal will assist in helping to address this need.

5.15

Therefore, in accordance with the balance of considerations in the Framework and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, we therefore consider that planning permission should be granted for the proposed development.