

Name of Applicant	Proposal	Expiry Date	Plan Ref.
Mr Mike Fletcher	Reserved matters application for the erection of 14 no. dwellings following outline planning permission 18/00119/OUT (Matters for approval: access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale)  Stoke Works, Pumping Station, Weston Hall Road, Stoke Prior, Bromsgrove B60 4AL		20/00684/REM

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- a) MINDED to **APPROVE** Reserved Matters
- b) That **DELEGATED POWERS** be granted to the Head of Planning and Regeneration to determine the Reserved Matters subject to the satisfactory views of Worcestershire Highways
- c) And that **DELEGATED POWERS** be granted to the Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure to agree the final scope and detailed wording and numbering of conditions as set out in the summary list at the end of this report

### **Consultations**

#### **Stoke Parish Council**

The Parish Council has no comment to make on this application. However, they do ask that a requirement be included on the site for a plaque in relation to the historic Pumping Station which was on that site and formed part of the former Salt Works.

#### **Canal and River Trust**

Following initial comments received, the scheme was revised, the Canal and River Trust updated comments are as follows:

The design and layout of the houses have been improved by the alterations to materials and the revised layout for plots 1 & 2 which now front the canal and the removal of some of the car parking facing the canal. However, the scheme could be improved further by the removal of the access road and parking from the Canalside and a redesign of the layout.

The removal of the boundary wall may not be in accordance with the council's local plan policies BDP20.2, BDP20.3 or BDP20.9 or the Draft conservation Area appraisal, however the Canal & River Trust will accept guidance from the Council Conservation Officer with regard to compliance with these policies, the level of information needed to make a judgement and the Importance of retaining the wall and repairing it rather than replacing it.

Following a more detailed survey, the optimum outcome may be piecemeal demolition and the salvage and reuse of as much of the original brickwork as possible along with the

addition of a suitable heritage style brick & mortar so that then new wall is a mix of old and new.

If the Council feel that the loss of the wall is acceptable then details of the height and materials of the replacement should be provided in order to discharge condition 17 of the outline permission. The height of the wall should be designed to screen parked vehicles behind it. The railings fixed on top should ideally be black painted and straight bars rather than hooped. The proposal does not include details of the towpath access and any gate should have brick piers either side to create a focal point on the towpath access within the boundary.

It is also noted that during our discussions the idea of planting adjacent to the railings was discussed in order to minimise views through them. This does not seem to have been incorporated in the revised plan. This would improve the appearance of the development from the canal and further details of landscaping, to include alongside the canal boundary should be included to discharge condition 15.

### **North Worcestershire Water Management**

The site falls within flood zone 1 (low risk of fluvial flooding), however it does appear to be susceptible to surface water flooding in places, particularly around the Eastern part of the site. This has potential to reach above 300mm in places. As a major application, there is an expectation for SuDS drainage to be incorporated on site to manage the quantity and quality of surface water on site.

If appropriate to do so NWWM have requested a drainage condition.

### **Conservation Officer**

The Stoke Works Pumping Station site is located to the south of The Worcester and Birmingham Canal Conservation Area at Stoke Works, just to the east of Westenhall Road, and to the west of the Corbett Salt works site, latterly owned by ICI and recently redeveloped for housing. Access to the site is from Westenhall Road. Until a couple of years ago the only structure on the site, backing on to the Canal, was Brine Pump Cottage. A 19<sup>th</sup> century house which was unfortunately damaged by a fire and subsequently demolished rather than repaired. Reference was made at the time of the 2018 application to disused brine extraction points being present on the site but no further information was been provided then or as part of this application, as to the nature or significance of these. The site is clearly within the setting of the Conservation Area.

The applicant has not submitted a heritage statement as part of the application, although the Design and Access Statement makes some reference to the character of the Conservation Area and the applicant also refers to the draft Conservation Area Appraisal. The canal side dwellings within the conservation Area generally front the canal, being set back behind a small garden with a brick garden wall separating the garden from the towpath. There are also a couple of dwellings which are sideways onto the canal, one where the side elevation is immediately adjacent to the canal, and the other where the side elevation is separated from the towpath by a high hedge. The houses here will be separated from towpath by small front gardens but also by an access road, which is at odds with the historic positioning of buildings in relation to the canal. It would be preferable to have the access drive sited to the rear of the dwellings.

The site is currently separated from the towpath by a low brick wall of some age. It would appear that it is proposed to replace the wall with a white picket fence. Again, this is at odds with the character of the Conservation Area where brick walls generally form the boundary treatment as noted above.

It is appreciated that there is outline permission for a residential scheme on this site. The site is clearly within the setting of the W&B Canal Conservation Area, however the detailed proposals for the scheme do not reflect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. It is considered the scheme will detract from the immediate setting of the Conservation Area, and due to the close proximity of the site to the Conservation Area, fronting the towpath running alongside the Canal, will harm the significance of the Area, as the proposed development in terms of siting and materials will be at odds with the character of buildings within and in close proximity of the Area. The scheme would therefore not comply with the requirements of the Bromsgrove District Plan as noted above or the requirements of the NPPF. The harm to the significance of the Conservation Area would amount to less than substantial which would have to be weighed against the planning benefits of the scheme. Although in this balancing exercise great weight is attached to the conservation of heritage assets.

The Conservation officer has also commented on the updated proposals and comments as follows:

It is good to see that the revised proposals show a wider use of brick for the houses nearer to the canal, although I note that 13 is still proposed to be rendered, which will detract from the setting of the canal especially as the neighbouring houses are all proposed to be constructed in brick. The relocation of units 1 and 2 to a position directly fronting the canal is also welcomed. It is disappointing that units 8, 9, 10, 12, 13 and 14 remain separated from the Canal by the service road. Overall it is considered that the scheme will detract from the setting of the CA and will harm its significance as noted in the earlier comments.

### **Highways – Bromsgrove**

The application as submitted did not comply with the design guide (in terms of the layout as being unacceptable due to the issues which would be created to the highway user).

The applicant revised the proposal to comply with the issues raised by County Highways. At the time of writing this report there is ongoing discussions regarding these matters. Final comments awaited.

### **Waste Management**

No objection

### **Publicity**

31 letters sent to surrounding properties on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2020 (expired 16<sup>th</sup> July 2020).

1 site notice was displayed on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2020 (expired 12<sup>th</sup> July 2020).

An advert was placed in the Bromsgrove Standard on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2020 (expired 13<sup>th</sup> July 2020).

1 objection has been received raising concern regarding the development exacerbating on street parking issues along Weston Hall Road.

**Relevant Policies****Bromsgrove District Plan**

BDP1 Sustainable Development Principles  
 BDP2 Settlement Hierarchy  
 BDP3 Future Housing and Employment Development  
 BDP6 Infrastructure Contributions  
 BDP7 Housing Mix and Density  
 BDP12 Sustainable Communities  
 BDP19 High Quality Design  
 BDP20 Managing the Historic Environment  
 BDP21 Natural Environment  
 BDP24 Green Infrastructure  
 BDP25 Health and Well Being

**Others**

Bromsgrove High Quality Design SPD  
 NPPF National Planning Policy Framework (2019)  
 NPPG National Planning Practice Guidance  
 National Design Guide

**Relevant Planning History**

18/00119/OUT Residential development comprising 14 units providing a mixture of 2-4 bed homes Approved 14.12.2018

**Assessment of Proposal****Proposal Description**

Members may recall that outline approval for 14 dwellings was granted permission under an outline application reference 18/00119/OUT at 10<sup>th</sup> September 2018 planning committee subject to the signing of a s106 agreement. A copy of the outline decision notice is included in Appendix 1 of the committee report. This reserved matters application for the development provides details regarding Access, Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale for 14 dwellings (including 5 affordable). The layout plan shows the provision of one means of access to the scheme off Weston Hall Road.

The development comprises the following dwellings:

Unit	Unit Nos.	Storey Height	No.	Mix %
2 Bed	3,4,5	2	3	21.3
3 Bed	1,2,8,13,14	2	5	35.8
4 Bed	6,7,9,10,11,12	2	6	42.9
		<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100</b>

The dwellings would be a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced units. Car parking has been provided as in curtilage or grouped car parking.

## **Site Description**

The site is located on the southern side of Stoke Prior and comprises a triangular piece of land measuring 0.52 hectares. It was formally occupied by number of buildings, specifically a residential cottage, ancillary outbuildings and 3 disused brine extraction points, which have been capped at ground level.

The former dwelling, known as Brine Pump Cottage was in severe disrepair after being damaged in a fire in August 2016 and has since been demolished following a structural survey, which demonstrated the building was beyond economic repair.

The site is bordered by Westonhall Road to the south, The Birmingham to Worcester Canal to the north west and the former Polymer Latex Works to the east, where Barratt Homes are currently building homes under planning permissions 15/0687 and 17/00761/FUL for a total of 216 dwellings.

## **Principle**

Members will recall that the principle of residential development was considered favourably at Planning Committee in 2018. This application is the reserved matters application for the scheme.

## **Layout**

The proposed layout shows 14 dwellings arranged around a shared surface. The site can be read distinctly in two parts, the canal side and Westonhall Road frontage. The access is to be taken directly from Westonhall Road in the form of a shared surface, which creates a social space for new and existing users of the area. Both Westonhall Road and the internal access road (shared surface) creates a front road frontage, with parking set back or behind the road where possible. The shared surface then creates a road link running parallel to the Canal and Tow path. The dwellings off this new road create a Canal side frontage, again with parking to the side or rear of the properties to allow the hard and soft landscaping to take precedence. The dwellings all benefit from car port or garages, with external stores for bins and cycles that are set back from the main frontage(s) within the site. All plots would be provided with landscaped gardens. A shared parking area serves the dwellings to the west of the site, from a private access drive.

The layout of dwellings arranged around the internal site access road in a cul-de-sac type layout is supported. The development would relate well to the existing pattern of development in the new housing estate.

In terms of the location of the affordable houses, these would be arranged in a terrace facing onto Weston Hall Road (units 3,4 and 5) and two semidetached dwellings (units 1 and 2) further into the site facing onto the canal. It is considered that on a small site such this, pepper potting throughout the site would create a less satisfactory layout and could result in less units (including affordable) to be located on the site. It is also less desirable for affordable housing providers to have units dispersed throughout a site from a management and maintenance perspective. As such, I find that the siting of the affordable houses in the form of a terrace and in the other location satisfactory.

Overall, the development would have a suitable layout which would harmonise with the surrounding area in accordance with Policies BDP1 and BDP19 of the BDP and the High Quality Design SPD.

### **Appearance & Scale**

The proposals include for a variety of different house types, reflecting both housing mix requirements and the built and natural context at the site. The scheme proposes 7 different house types across the 14 units creating a vibrant and mixed built environment. All the dwellings would be two storey in height.

The proposed external appearance of the dwellings responds in a contemporary manner to both the existing residential area and the wider Canal conservation area context. The houses proposed include steeply pitched roofs with a mix of material finishes (including brickwork plinth, in a local blue brick use of render and brickwork finishes), the use of brick detailing at eaves, rise and fall rainwater bracketry, verge and reveal, and large expanses of glazing to provide a cue to the Georgian and Victorian context within the conservation area.

The affordable houses would be smaller than the market houses on site reflecting the need for smaller units in the area. The submitted plans indicate that the market houses and the affordable houses, notwithstanding their difference in size, would have a similar design and materials and would not be visually distinguishable. In my view the affordable houses would successfully integrate into the site and would not stand out as noticeably different.

Therefore the proposed development would not significantly harm the character and appearance of the area. As such, it would accord with Policies BDP1, BDP7 and BDP19 of the BDP, which, amongst other things, seek to ensure that development respects visual amenity and maintains character and local distinctiveness and is of a high quality design.

### **Effect of the Proposal on Heritage Assets**

As this proposal is situated adjacent to and within the setting of, The Worcester and Birmingham Canal Conservation Area, the development must be considered against paragraph 196 of the NPPF in terms of its impact on the significance of designated heritage assets.

The comments of the Conservation Officer and Canal and River Trust are noted in relation to this matter in relation to the design of the scheme and the proposed works to the boundary wall. The proposed canal boundary treatment is now proposes a new wall along the entire frontage. This is paired with a railing at a height that will provide both a sense of enclosure and security along the tow-path, but also allow views to the canal from within the site. The applicant considers the change is in line with the discussions and conclusions made at our meeting with the C&RT. The sectional information details the proposed levels and wall have been provided.

In terms of the NPPF any harm which is considered to occur would amount to less than

substantial harm and would have to be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme in accordance with Paragraph 196. The significant public benefits in this case include:

- Helping to address the significant identified shortfall in deliverable housing land across the District;
- The delivery of 5 affordable dwellings on-site
- Economic benefits in the construction stage in terms of jobs and expenditure;
- Increased revenue spending from new residents;

Taking into consideration the impact of the scheme on heritage assets, by virtue of the developments location, layout, design and scale, any 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of the heritage asset is considered to be outweighed by the significant public benefits identified, in particular the provision of on-site affordable housing.

### **Highways and access**

Final comments regarding highways are awaited and will be provided as part of a written update. It is considered that sufficient car parking will be provided on site and as such there is no reason to consider that this development would result in additional on-street car parking in the area.

### **Amenity**

The Council's High Quality Design SPD recommends that private amenity space will be required to be of a useable size, with a minimum of 70 sq m. In total therefore 3 dwellings across the application site have garden areas which do not meet the SPD guidance albeit that some only marginally fall below the guidance. Whilst it is recognised that the proposal does not fully comply with the Design SPD in respect of amenity areas, it is also recognised that the individual requirements for a private garden area do vary significantly between residents. Considering the scheme holistically, it is not considered that this matter is significant enough to warrant a refusal of planning permission. Furthermore, the apartments are located immediately adjacent to an area of public open space.

The SPD suggests that a distance of 21m should be considered the minimum separation between the rear elevations of dwellings to achieve an appropriate degree of privacy. The layout largely achieves this requirement. However, there are a few minor breaches in terms of the distances between units 13 and 14 and units 3,4 and 5. The breaches noted are considered to be minor. Each proposal should be judged on its own merits and good design in new housing layouts will not be achieved solely by adherence to the guidelines suggested. The proposed houses have adequate separation distances from existing houses within the Barratts development.

Overall the level of amenity achieved across the site is considered to be acceptable having regard to Policy BDP1 and the High Quality Design SPD.

## **Drainage**

A drainage condition was included within the outline permission, this would still have to be formally discharged, therefore it does not need to be included as part of any reserved matter permission.

## **Planning Obligations**

Members will recall that a Section 106 Agreement formed part of the outline application, Therefore, matters such as affordable housing, contributions towards open space enhancements and education have already been secured for this residential scheme

## **Conclusion**

Overall, the submitted details of access, layout, scale, appearance and landscaping are considered to be acceptable as set out above and in accordance with the policies listed above.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

- a) MINDED to **APPROVE** Reserved Matters
- b) That **DELEGATED POWERS** be granted to the Head of Planning and Regeneration to determine the Reserved Matters subject to the satisfactory views of Worcestershire Highways
- c) And that **DELEGATED POWERS** be granted to the Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure to agree the final scope and detailed wording and numbering of conditions as set out in the summary list at the end of this report

## **Conditions:**

- 1) The approval must be read in conjunction with outline planning permission 18/00119/OUT and the conditions attached thereto.

Reason: The outline permission and the approval of Reserved Matters must be considered together.

- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the Approved Plans listed in this notice:

P01\_LOCATION\_PLAN-827900  
08 EXISTING SITE SECTIONS  
09C PROPOSED SECTIONS  
10 VISIBILITY SPLAY  
22328-01A TRACKING  
SK01F UNITS 1 2 PLANS  
SK07E UNIT 13 14 PLANS



SK11E UNIT 1 2 ELEVATIONS  
SK12E UNIT 3 4 5 ELEVATIONS  
SK13D UNIT 6 10 ELEVATIONS  
SK14D UNIT 9 12 ELEVATIONS  
SK15G UNIT 8 ELEVATIONS  
SK16E UNIT 11 ELEVATIONS  
SK17F UNIT 13 ELEVATIONS  
SK18B UNIT 7 ELEVATIONS  
SK20A UNITS 6 12 13 CAR PORT  
SK21A UNIT 10 GARAGE  
SK22A UNIT 11 GARAGE  
SK23A UNIT 9 CAR PORT  
SK24A UNIT 8 CAR PORT  
SK25A UNIT 14 SHED  
SK27A UNIT 14 ELEVATIONS  
SK2C UNITS 3 4 5 PLANS  
SK3C UNITS 6 10 PLANS  
SK4C UNITS 9 12 PLANS  
SK5D UNIT 8 PLANS  
SK6D UNIT 11 PLANS  
SK8A UNIT 7 PLANS  
05J PROPOSED SITE PLAN

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

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