

	TYPED	ORIGINATOR	HEAD OF SERVICE	A.D.	DIRECT-ORATE LEAD OFFICER	LEGAL
INITIALS	JAB	JAB	RD	JW	JM	GB
DATE	30.09.04					

FINANCE	LEAD MEMBER INFORMED	PLAN/OHP APPENDICES/ PRIVATE SESSION	BACKGROUND/ PRESS RELEASE/LEADER	JJ
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**WARDS:**

**NO. AGENDA ITEM**

**DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**BRIERLEY HILL AREA COMMITTEE - 9<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2004**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT**

**DRAFT DEVELOPMENT BRIEF FOR WORDSLEY AND RIDGE HILL HOSPITAL SITES**

**1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of the proposals contained within the Draft Development Brief for the Wordsley and Ridge Hill Hospital sites.
- 1.2 To seek the Committee's support for the Draft Development Brief.

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

2.1 The Council's Development Control Committee approved in principle and for public consultation the Draft Development Brief for the Wordsley and Ridge Hill Hospital Sites on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2004.

2.2 The Council's Development Control Committee supported and approved the preparation of a Draft Development Brief for Wordsley Hospital site

and adjoining land for subsequent consideration by the Committee prior to public consultation in February 2003.

2.3 Prior to this, the Council's Development Control Committee on 18<sup>th</sup> February 1999 approved the Interim Planning Guidance for surplus hospital land property in the Borough.

2.2 The 1999 report was prepared to provide clear preliminary policy guidance to potential developers on the future development potential of the surplus land and property at three existing hospital sites, namely, Dudley Guest, Corbett and Wordsley. The outcome of this report was that a Development Brief should be urgently prepared that will provide more specific design guidance that will help assist prospective purchasers and developers in achieving best design practice.

2.3 This course of action has been largely driven by the Dudley Group of Hospitals Trust (DGOH) current strategy, which involves the major expansion of Russells Hall Hospital, now under construction. This will involve the transferring of facilities from the three existing hospitals to Russells Hall, following the completion of the expansion project. The restructuring is likely to be completed by spring 2005.

2.4 To coincide with the completion of the project, DGOH intends to market the three sites for redevelopment. Wordsley Hospital will be the first to be marketed and sold with the other two hospitals to follow. Consultants working for DGOH have prepared marketing information based on the emerging DMBC's draft development brief, which will assist the sale of the Wordsley Site this Autumn 2004. DGOH expect to complete the sale by December 2004.

2.5 As part of the restructuring of local healthcare parts of the Ridge Hill Site, owned by the Primary Care Trust (PCT) will also become available for redevelopment after 2006. Hence, the proposed Development Brief now provides planning guidance on the redevelopment of both of these sites.

2.6 However, the PCT will be retaining land adjacent to the Wordsley Hospital northern boundary for a new Learning Disabilities Service building comprising 1-2 storey facility that will provide overnight accommodation, intensive treatment facilities and associated car parking. Outline approval with all matters reserved was granted by DMBC on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2003. It is expected that a reserved matters application will be submitted in the near future and that the facilities will begin construction soon after. The PCT is also proposing to retain land adjacent to Pens Meadow School and Gorsteyfields Nursing Home.

Further to this, Government policy is for the closure of long stay hospitals and the resettlement of their residents into more appropriate accommodation in the community. In the case of Ridge Hill the target of closure and resettling of these residents is December 2005.

- 2.8 Two groups, six residents with challenging behaviour and eight residents with high levels of disability on the Ridge Hill site will need to be relocated into suitable places. Two separate developments are required to accommodate these two groups, however site allocation is yet to be established by PCT. Any future proposals will be subject to planning approval.
- 2.9 Due to timescales set for the decant and sale of the Wordsley Hospital site by DGOH and significance of the this site in terms of Council Policy, it is essential that a Development Brief is prepared that will provide more specific design guidance that will help assist prospective purchasers and developers in achieving best design practice.
- 2.10 The Council are working in consultation with DGOH and PCT during the preparation of the Development Brief and this has enabled both authorities to share valuable information that will ensure the most comprehensive planning advice possible.
- 2.11 The Wordsley and Ridge Hill sites fall within the Wordsley Ward, and located approximately 0.5 miles from Wordsley Local Shopping Centre. The Wordsley site fronts onto Auckland Road and on to the A491 Stream Road that forms part of the Boroughs Strategic Highway Network.
- 2.12 The Wordsley Hospital site area comprises approximately 9.3 ha. The site contains the main hospital buildings that are located in the area defined by Stream Road and Auckland Road. In addition, DGOH also owns some of the residential properties that bound the site on Ashdown Drive.
- 2.13 The Wordsley Hospital complex contains a variety of buildings that date as far back as to the 1850's these include the Clock Tower, Administration Block and the Chapel. They are of historic/architectural significance locally and potentially nationally and are on Dudley Council's local list noting their worthiness for protection. The collection of buildings is also of potential historic and architectural significance. The emerging draft development brief advocates, as does Council Planning Policies that these buildings should wherever possible be retained and converted to suitable alternative uses. It is important for any new development proposals that do come forward in the future to complement the architectural spirit of the place.
- 2.14 The brief places a strong emphasis on the preservation of existing buildings that are historically/architecturally important and the established natural landscape which are a primary feature of these sites.
- 2.15 Discussions are currently underway as to the future of the ambulance station and a nursery on the Wordsley site, which front on to Stream Road. However the Council considers these uses would in any event would be suitable to include within any mixed-use element of the scheme.
- 2.16 Both Wordsley Hospital and Ridge Hill Hospital Sites are subject to a blanket TPO. Reference numbers TPD0458, TPD0491, TPD0677.

- 2.17 The Ridge Hill site comprises approximately 13 hectares and has no direct frontage on to the highway network except for a small section adjacent to Auckland Road. The main access into the site is via a long access road that joins Brierley Hill Road at the side of Buckpool Secondary School. To the north is the Wordsley Hospital Site complex with a controlled access point between the two sites.
- 2.18 The Wordsley Hospital and Ridge Hill sites include a significant proportion of open space and undeveloped land. Parts of the Ridge Hill site are located within a Landscape Heritage Area, a Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC), a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and Green Belt. These areas of land are not developable.
- 2.19 It is intended that the title of some of this land will be transferred to Dudley MBC to form an extension to the existing Local Nature Reserve. The Development Brief provides details of a proposal to adopt the open space and sets out a schedule of works required to bring this land to an adoptable standard.
- 2.20 The Ridge Hill site includes the Pens Meadow Special Needs School leased to DMBC and Gorsteyfields nursing home leased to Shaw Homes Housing Association, both of which will be retained following redevelopment unless new information causes DMBC to review the Development Brief in the future.
- 2.21 The Directorate of Education and Life Long Learning has prepared an Inclusion Strategy, which has undergone extensive public consultation. It aims to provide high quality education in purpose built schools and units. The Plan has yet to be approved. It is likely that Pens Meadow School will relocate to a better facility in 2009 or thereafter.
- 2.22 The main aim of DMBC's draft development brief is to bring forward new residential development that is sustainable where communities can live and enjoy a high quality environment that is robust, safe and attractive.
- 2.23 The Draft Brief clearly guides prospective developers through planning policy, physical and natural considerations, key issues, planning and urban design principles necessary for the regeneration of this site. The brief concludes with examples that demonstrate how the principles could be applied to achieve an appropriate development.
- 2.24 The Wordsley Hospital site is allocated in the second draft Unitary Development Plan for residential development and will provide a minimum of 225 dwellings. The Borough Housing Allocation under Policy H1 'New Housing development' of the revised Unitary Development Plan guides this figure. The site is therefore of strategic importance in terms of housing policy and the need to meet the dwelling requirement for the rest of the plan period, as well as a means to secure a number of public benefits.

- 2.25 An overall density of between 30-50 dwelling per hectare is appropriate for the Wordsley Hospital site. The configuration of the Wordsley site, together with the range of building heights and the conversion of some of the older hospital buildings to a range of residential and compatible uses will offer the opportunity to provide a mix of densities across the site.
- 2.26 The Ridge Hill site is more suited to a medium density model due to the strong landscape character, topography, adjacent nature conservation areas and views out of the site, which the Council wishes to preserve.
- 2.27 30% of the total housing provision will be affordable of which the majority should be provided through social renting with opportunities for shared ownership options. Social Housing Grant will probably not be available for this development.
- 2.28 The success of the redevelopment of the hospital sites is based on a number of fundamental development principles. The Council encourages innovative design solutions so that a fully integrated, sustainable development of high quality can be achieved.
- 2.29 The development principles attached to these sites are based around a framework of features, which makes them unique. They offer the opportunity to provide a high quality development by:
- Retaining the natural landscape character of the sites;
  - Maintaining and retaining existing historic hospital buildings that are suitable for conversion;
  - Integrating new development with existing buildings and landscape creates an area that retains a distinctive character.

Further to this, any development scheme will be required to:

- Maximise the opportunities offered by the changes in levels within the site and the variety of existing building heights.
- Work to retain the existing landscape features such as mature specimen trees, established open spaces, water courses and any development proposal should respect the impressive historic landscape views into and out of the sites.

- 2.30 Of particular importance is the need for both sites to be considered together despite the phasing of the sale of the sites. It is necessary that both sites are well integrated and form a comprehensive site and avoid creating a series of unrelated elements. To this end any development proposal should form a link between the Wordsley Hospital and Ridge Hill sites and the surrounding area.

- 2.31 The draft master plan shows how the site could be developed as an integrated whole. This can be achieved by providing a vehicular access that links the Wordsley and the Ridge Hill sites. This will also allow the linking of existing open spaces that will effectively create a linear green

corridor that encourages the migration of existing and new wildlife provides a leisure recreation facility that promotes good and safe pedestrian and cyclist movement in an environment where the car is less dominant.

- 2.32 The redevelopment of these sites is expected to come forward in a phased manner. It is anticipated that Wordsley Hospital site and the Ridge Hill will not be linked with a through road until the final phases of residential development on Ridge Hill has been completed. However cycle and pedestrian links between the sites could be implemented for residents to gain access to local schools, public open space and public transportation on the southern part of the sites.
- 2.33 A copy of the draft development brief is available in the Member's Library.
- 2.34 Full public consultation will be carried out in accordance with the Council's established practice.
- 2.35 Public consultation will commence on 25<sup>th</sup> October and end on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2004 (4 weeks duration) where the draft guidance will be open for comment through a wide range of consultation mechanisms. Copies of the guidance are also available in larger print on request. Consultees are requested to return comments via a feedback form to the Council's freepost address.

Public consultation mechanisms will include:

- General notice will be given through local papers and Council web page. A full copy of the draft guidance and feedback form will be downloadable from the Council's website.
- Copies of the draft guidance will made available for viewing at the Members Library, Wordsley Public Library, local schools, Wordsley Community Centre and other community facilities in the Wordsley & Ridge Hill Area.
- Feedback form
- Local residents in the immediate locality of Wordsley and Ridge Hill will receive a letter drop. Letters will include summary of Draft Development Brief and feedback form.
- A summary/flyer with part translation into appropriate ethnic languages will be produced and distributed to enable people to have parts of the draft guidance translated by the Race, Equality and Communication Services, Woodside Centre.

Series of evening presentations are booked for evening of 28<sup>th</sup> October at the Wordsley Community Centre and the evening of 3<sup>rd</sup> November at The Source, Wordsley Youth Centre.

### PROPOSAL

- 3.1 That the provisions of a Draft Development Brief for Wordsley and Ridge Hill Hospital Sites be supported.

#### **4 FINANCE**

- 4.1 The preparation of the Draft Development Brief is allowed for in existing work programme and budgets.

#### **5 LAW**

- 5.1 The Development Brief will constitute a material consideration when dealing with any planning applications under Section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
- 5.2 Section 111 of the Local Government Act, 1972, enables the Council to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of its functions.

#### **6 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

- 6.1 The preparation of the Draft Development Brief does not conflict with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.

#### **7 RECOMMENDATION**

- 7.1 That the proposals contained within paragraphs 3.1 be approved.

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**J. B. MILLAR – DIRECTOR OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT**

Contact Officer:

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#### **Background documents used in the preparation of this report:-**

1. Dudley Borough Unitary Development plan (Revised Deposit: February 2002) and Current adopted plan: November 1993)
2. Interim Planning Briefs – Surplus Hospital Land and Property, 1999.
3. National Planning Policy Guidance:
  - PPG1: General Policy and Principles (March 2000)
  - PPG2: Green Belt (Jan 1995)
  - PPG3: Housing, (original release date: March 2000)
  - PPG9: Nature Conservation (Oct 1994)
  - PPG 13: Transport (March 2001)
  - PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment (Sept 1994)

- PPG16: Archaeology and Planning (Nov 1990)
  - PPG17: Planning for open space, sport and recreation (Jul 2002)
  - PPG24: Planning and Noise Control (Sept 1994)
3. DETR's publication 'Places, Streets and Movement' (1999) Design Urban design in the planning system (2000)
  4. DLTR 'Better Places for People to Live', a supplement to PPG3.
  5. Urban Design Compendium by Llewelyn-Davies
  6. 'Reusing historic hospitals' by Will Holborow and Sue Taylor, Dec 2001. Publication downloadable from the Institute of Historic Building Conservation website:- [www.ihbc.org.uk/context\\_archive/72/hospitals/reuse.html](http://www.ihbc.org.uk/context_archive/72/hospitals/reuse.html)
  7. CABE's publications, Shaping future homes-issue 3, Creating successful Master Plans, The use of Urban Design Codes, Building sustainable Communities, Moving towards excellence in urban design and conservation, Building for life.

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