

PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER: P05/0842

Type of approval sought	OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION
Ward	ST. JAMES'S
Applicant	WESTFIELD STAMPINGS LTD
Location:	LAND FRONTING SCHOOL STREET, WOLVERHAMPTON STREET, AND STAFFORD STREET, DUDLEY, WEST MIDLANDS
Proposal:	RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (OUTLINE) (ALL MATTERS RESERVED FOR SUBSEQUENT APPROVAL)
Recommendation summary:	APPROVE SUBJECT TO A 106 AGREEMENT

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

1. The site comprises the stamping works, offices and car park of Westfield Stampings. It is an irregularly shaped site of approximately 0.31 ha with frontages to School Street, Wolverhampton Street and Stafford Street.
2. It is adjoined by terraced residential properties in Wolverhampton Street and School Street, the former dairy (currently being redeveloped for Classes B1, B8 and A3 uses) and a snooker club in Stafford Street and a car repair workshop and further terraced houses in Alexandra Street.
3. The area is generally mixed in character with residential, commercial and industrial uses. Dudley town centre is about 300m to the east.

PROPOSAL

4. It is proposed to redevelop the site for housing. The existing office building on the corner of School Street and Wolverhampton Street would be retained and converted to residential accommodation.

HISTORY

5. The applicant company has been established on the site for many years over which time certain additions have taken place. There have been no applications in recent times.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

6. Letters of objection have been received from three nearby retail outlets, the snooker club and a computer repair firm.

7. The objectors consider the site should be retained for employment use rather than housing and that future residents may suffer nuisance and disturbance from the snooker club and nearby restaurants.

OTHER CONSULTATION

8. The Head of Traffic & Road Safety raises no objection to housing development.
9. The Head of Public Protection also raises no objection but recommends that conditions relating to noise protection and air quality are attached to any permission granted.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

10. Policy 57 Existing Industrial Uses
Policy EE3 Existing Employment Uses
Policy HE5 Buildings of Local Historical Importance

ASSESSMENT

11. The site is currently a stamping works. This is a heavy, noisy use which has often given rise to complaints from nearby residents over the years.
12. However, the stamping industry is rapidly being phased out due to competition from Central Asia and the Far East. The applicant company has been affected and now often operates a three-day week.
13. The site is designated under Borough-wide policies intended to safeguard existing industrial and employment uses i.e. Policies 57 and EE3. However, these policies are flexible in their approach and would permit alternative uses, including residential, if the use is likely to cause environmental problems or has poor access, or where sufficient employment land or premises are available in the locality.
14. The site currently has a Class B2 general industrial use which is also largely unrestricted because of the length of time it has existed. If the site were to be used for other heavy industrial uses within the same use class, this would well give rise to complaints from local residents whose properties are immediately adjacent.
15. Given the close proximity of Dudley town centre and the current and anticipated residential development nearby (i.e. on the former Appleyard site opposite), it may reasonably be considered that redevelopment of the site for housing would be acceptable. Increasing the levels of residential land use within and adjacent to a town centre enhances its vitality and viability and reduces the need to travel (especially by car).

16. As previously stated, the site is adjoined by commercial and light industrial uses which have the potential to affect the future occupants. However, the Head of Public Protection considers that possible noise nuisance to residents could be mitigated against by way of condition.
17. It is considered that the objections from local retailers and businesses would not justify a refusal of permission.

CONCLUSION

18. Though a longstanding employment use, a strong case can be made for the redevelopment of the site for residential purposes. It would otherwise remain a very noisy industrial use which has been a 'bad neighbour' to local residents for many years with clear environmental impacts. Although a small number of objections have been received, these cannot really be substantiated in as much as there is no clearly over-riding case for maintaining the site in employment use.

RECOMMENDATION

19. It is recommended that planning permission be granted subject to:-
 - a) a Section 106 Agreement in respect of affordable housing and a commuted payment for off-site open space and children's play facilities,
 - b) the following conditions, with delegated powers to the Director of the Urban Environment to make amendments as necessary.

Conditions and/or reasons:

1. A01A Submission of reserved matters
2. A02A Details within 3 years
3. The development hereby permitted shall be begun either before the expiration of five years from the date of this permission, or before the expiration of two years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved, whichever is the later.
4. C09B Contaminated Land
5. C10C Contaminated Land (Soil Gases)
6. L01B * Noise protection scheme
7. In the event of any dwellings being sited within 5.0 metres of the kerb to the B4176 Wolverhampton Street and/or B4587 Stafford Street, development shall not begin until an air quality assessment has been carried out and an appropriate scheme for protecting the occupiers of the dwellings from NO₂ due to road traffic has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. All works that form part of

the scheme shall be completed before any dwelling within the qualifying distance is occupied.

8. J02A Landscaping scheme to be submitted

9. J03A * Implementation of landscaping

10. Details to be submitted in accordance with Condition 1 shall include an archaeological assessment of the locally-listed building on the site. The building shall not be demolished without the prior consent in writing of the Local Planning Authority.