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Proposed Residential Development at Hill Street, Elsecar

Design & Access Statement

1. This Design & Access Statement is prepared in accordance with the requirements set out in Section 3 of Circular 01/2006 issued by the Department for Communities & Local Government. It accompanies an outline planning application for permission to redevelop land at Hill Street, Elsecar for housing purposes. The application is accompanied by a site location plan and indicative proposals prepared by Oasis Urban Design & Architecture Limited. Those proposals are shown on drawing SK-1 at a scale of 1:500.

2. The proposed redevelopment shows access taken from Hill Street at approximately the same point as the existing entrance to the site. The highway is extended in cul-de-sac form to service five groups of apartments. Sketch elevations to Hill Street are intended to demonstrate that the proposed housing can be provided utilising dwelling types that produce an overall design that is appropriate to the area. Because of the location of the site, the scheme has been designed to a high density, providing 56 two-bedroomed apartments in line with the "Guide to Residential Development in South Yorkshire".

3. The buildings will be designed to be sympathetic to the local architectural "language" with simple facades and varying rooflines. The main access point has been reduced to 6 metres in width to improve access to the site, whilst maintaining a reasonable "flow" for pedestrians who use the footway on the southwestern side of Hill Street.

4. In accordance with previous discussions with the Council's representatives, the proposed development allows for an area of public parking for the use of the Elsecar train station along, if acceptable, with a new point of access to the south platform. The applicant will be prepared to provide a footway link with the open space system

to the west and north of the site and to enhance local open space facilities from within his residual ownership (edged blue on the site location plan).

5. The orientation of the development is set to maximise the views to the south created by the elevated position of the land. There is an excellent panorama over the countryside to the south and of the development within Elsecar's lower levels.

6. The parking allocation has been provided at 112% which, due to the proximity of the local transport routes, is in line with the guidance in "Better Places to Live in South Yorkshire". Reference has also been made to the Council's publication in respect of the Local Development Framework "Barnsley Housing Sites – Preferred Options" October 2005. The applicant agrees that it is important that all sites are developed in a way that help makes places more interesting and more pleasant to work in. It is considered that this proposed development will achieve an excellent standard of development enabling, especially, a balanced mix of housing in this community.

7. This document aims to be clear in its explanations in line with the CABE publication "Design & Access Statements" 2006. Accordingly, it is referenced by considerations in respect of the proposed use, the amount of development, its layout and scale, the proposed landscaping, the appearance of the buildings and proposed access.

8. The site is broadly rectangular in shape and is generally level, arising from its historic use as a railway goods yard. Hill Street falls in a southerly direction. Within the southern boundary is a relatively steep embankment that is quite heavily vegetated. Reference has been made to the regular immediately adjacent public transport services.

9. The main constraining factor is the proximity of the green belt and open spaces to the west. Otherwise, the site is well located to the existing settlement framework and it is understood to lie within the intended settlement framework limits for Elsecar that will

form part of the proposed Local Development Framework. Relevant other planning policies are contained within the Barnsley Metropolitan Unitary Development Plan. Relevant Government policies are contained within PPS3.

10. Planning Policy Statement 3, published in November 2006, at paragraph 16 indicates the issues to consider in relation to the design quality. Development should be easily accessible and well-connected to public transport and community facilities and services and should be laid out so that all the spaces is used efficiently. It should be safe, accessible and user-friendly. Since this site is adjacent to a wide range of facilities offered by the centre of Elsecar and it is adjacent to very significant public transport opportunities, those objectives are fulfilled. PPS3 also indicates that developments should provide or enable good access to community and green and open amenity and recreational space. The proposed apartments will have their own private amenity space and the landscape setting to the south will be retained with additional buffer planting. There will be accessibility to open space facilities to the north and west.

11. PPS3 also indicates that developments should be well integrated with, and complement the neighbouring buildings and local area, more generally in terms of scale, density, layout and access. The scale, massing and general form of the buildings at this site will be appropriate and will reflect densities seen in the local area. Subject to a reserved matters submission, the layout and design detailing will be finalised in accordance with the Council's requirements.

12. This Statement also considers the points highlighted in the December 2007 document "Planning & Climate Change, the Supplement to PPS1". This indicates that the efficient use of resources should be employed during construction and that developments should seek to adapt to and reduce the impact of, and on, climate change. The proposed buildings here will incorporate, where appropriate, sustainable materials and they will confirm to the Building Regulations in terms of their energy

efficiency. The urban design principles which will be applied will improve building performance by providing standards of thermal efficiency, utilising modern methods of construction.

13. National planning guidance also seeks to promote a design-led approach to the provision of car parking spaces that are well integrated with a high quality public realm and streets that are pedestrian, cycle and vehicle friendly.

14. Car parking is carefully positioned within the proposed layout and the development will be immediately accessible within very easy walking distance to the rail facilities and bus routes and by means of a safe access. The parking allocation is intended to meet the Council's guidelines. Additional planting will be incorporated within and around parking areas to create a high quality area.

15. It is accepted that, in accordance with further guidance, developments should create or enhance a distinctive character that relates well to the surrounding and supports a sense of local pride and civic identity. The density and materials of construction will take inspiration from that scene in the vicinity and will be applied to a layout that creates a "sense of place" by the use of main elevations facing open space, engaging the streets and absorbing the views. The initial site analysis process has informed this design, so helping to retain the character of the area and introduce new development in a satisfactory manner. The general height and mass of the buildings are shown on plan SK-1.

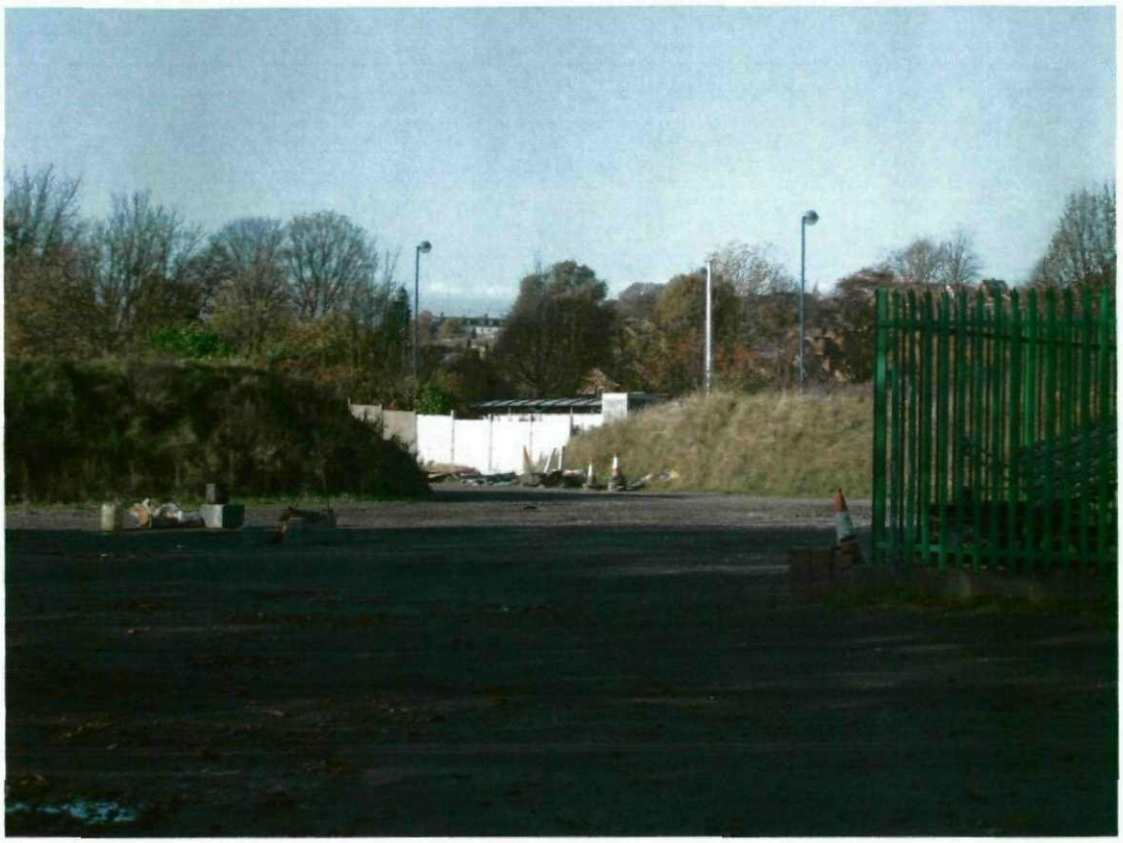
16. Insofar as the retention or re-establishment of biodiversity is concerned within residential environments, the existing tree screen along the southern boundary will be retained and enhanced wherever possible. Supplementary planting will also be carried out within the development, in accordance with proposals to be prepared at reserved matters stage.



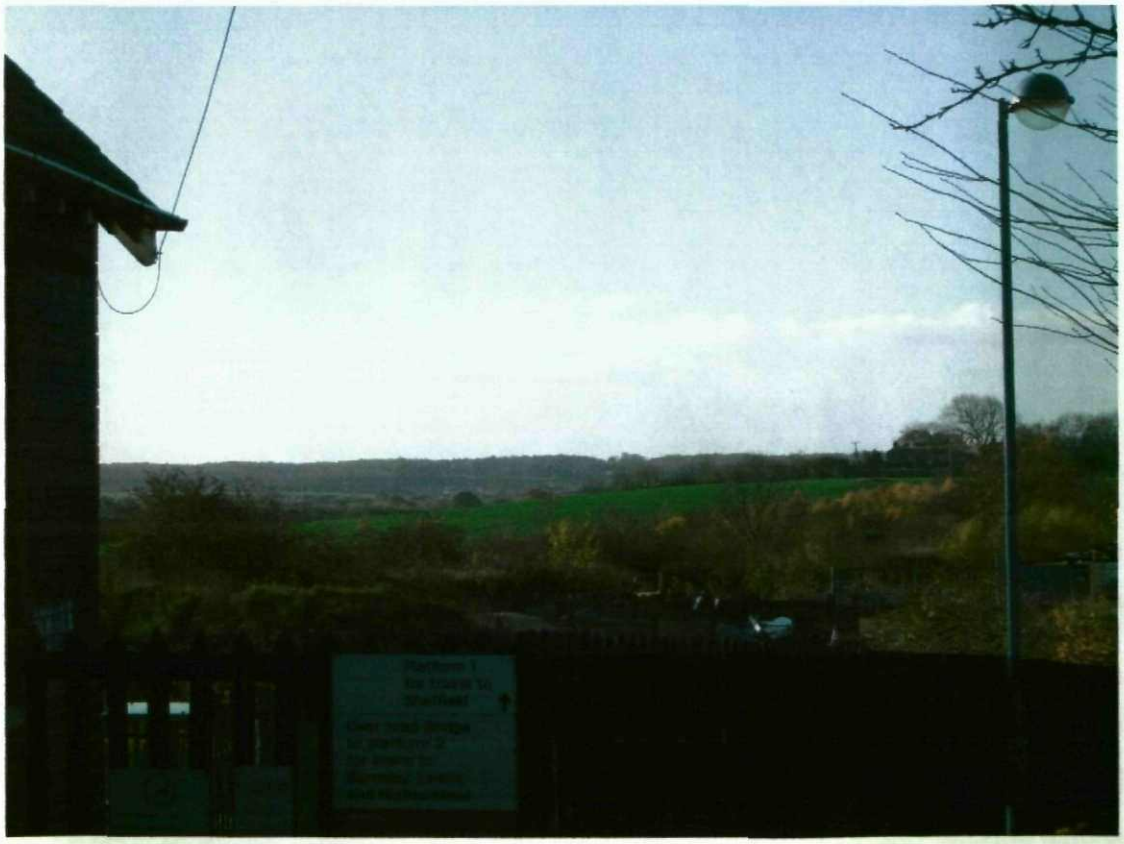
Photograph 1: The existing access and site frontage.



Photograph 2: Open storage and materials compounds at the existing employment use within the site.



Photograph 3: Further open storage and stockpiled materials adjacent to the railway station.



Photograph 4: Views over the site showing open countryside to the southwest.





Photographs 5 & 6: The site's accessibility to bus and rail services is a key factor. Open storage within the site can be seen beyond the waiting rail users.

17. Details in respect of the intended use, the amount of the development, and in respect of its layout, landscaping, appearance and access have been set out in this Design & Access Statement and the letter accompanying the application.

18. The detailed site analysis and recommendations prepared by GRM Limited provide evidence that the site is capable of being redeveloped for housing purposes without demonstrable harm to any interest of acknowledged importance arising. Whilst the site adjoins the adjacent rail line, the layout has been designed to ensure that dwellings within that part of the site closest to the railway have no windows in their flank elevation or are bespoke units designed to take into account the proximity of the railway. Nevertheless, rail traffic after 2300 in the evening is relatively light and the reduced pattern of movements, particularly by passenger trains, continues throughout the night until after 0600. The number of movements certainly does not meet the "several times per hour" level set out as being potentially injurious to residential amenity in PPG24.

19. The site does not lie within a Flood Risk Zone so, accordingly, a Flood Risk Assessment has not been considered necessary arising from the site area of one hectare. Both foul and surface water drainage are, however, capable of being discharged to the local drainage infrastructure in accordance with usual practice. The foul drainage will discharge to the existing public drains in Hill Street. Surface water will discharge either to appropriately designed soakaways or to an approved surface water discharge system. Grey water from the roofs of the new dwellings may be discharged, as an alternative to soakaways or an approved surface water drainage system, to water butts or similar underground means of collection and storage. Rainwater will then be held in a proprietary storage retention system so that it can be used for either toilet flushing, watering of the gardens or washing down of private vehicles.

20. The proposed development should lead to a considerable reduction in local noise levels, bringing with it considerable benefit for occupiers of adjacent properties. There will be significant improvements to visual amenity arising from the removal of open storage that is at present located close to the site boundaries, particularly within the eastern sector of the land.

21. The existing employment use of this site has a capacity for significant light emissions, particularly during the winter months. Future local lighting levels will be that commensurate with a housing development of this nature.

22. All dwellings can be designed and constructed to compliance with modern building practice. This seeks to limit carbon emissions and the applicant is confident that the proposed development will meet all normal requirements in this regard. Facilities for the removal of household waste and for recycling will be provided in common with those for the adjacent residential areas at and near to Hill Street.

23. Access to the site will, as indicated in the drawing prepared by Oasis Urban Design & Architecture Limited, be from approximately the existing position on the western side of Hill Street. The cul-de-sac layout proposed will ensure that all the apartments are accessible to car parking facilities. Arising from the generally level nature of the site, access from garage positions and parking areas will be readily available by means of a shallow, suitably surfaced gradient, constructed in slip resistant materials, so enabling all external doors to be reached by disabled persons, particularly those confined to a wheelchair. Entrance door thresholds will be designed to be level but, if a threshold is unavoidable, its height will not exceed 15mm and any upstand higher than 5mm will be provided with a chamfered or rounded edge. Internally, the design of the dwellings will be aim to ease the movement of a disabled person confined to a wheelchair. The interests of disabled persons will be paramount in the preparation of reserved matters at the detailed design stage. It is hoped that the detailed proposals to be prepared will also follow the recommendations of the publication prepared by

the Association of Chief Police Officers': "Secured by Design", the contents of which are supported by the South Yorkshire Constabulary.

24. Having regard to all these considerations, it is considered that the development is generally compliant with the provisions of the Development Plan for the area and national planning guidance contained in PPS3: "Housing" (2006), and that important relevant material considerations by far outweigh any perceived conflict with the site's notation on the UDP Proposals Map.

If, however, during the Council's consideration of the planning application and this accompanying Design & Access Statement, any further elaboration of details contained within the application or this statement are necessary, please contact me at the address below.

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