

## STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

Date: 16 May 2019

To: Dai Larner, Executive Director - Place

Dear Mr Larner,

### Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan Examination Local Green Space Designations

Thank you for the reassessment of the Local Green Space (LGS) designations.

In my post hearings advice, I referred to paragraph 77 of the Framework. To reiterate the Framework states that the LGS designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used where all three bullet points within paragraph 77 are met. In providing the following recommendations I have also had regard to the advice on LGS designations within the Government's Planning Practice Guidance.

A number of the LGS sites appear to be characterised as open space planned in connection with housing development, some of which are owned by the District or Town/Parish Councils. Examples of these types of open space are references 13, 14, 23, 35, 38, 47, 51 and 52. Whilst these areas provide visual relief and, in some cases recreational value, they are not demonstrably special. I would recommend that the designation of these areas is changed from LGS to open space (**MM**). As open space, protection, would be provided by Policy C2. Policy C2 could be reinforced if the policy itself referred specifically 'to areas identified on the Policies Maps' as noted in paragraph 8.104 of the Plan (**MM**).

For the reasons given in the post hearing advice I do not support the LGS designations at Ox Pasture West and East, Cheddleton (29 and 30) and north of Cotehill Road, Werrington (35). The Werrington site, part of which is used as a play area, should be changed to open space (**MM**).

Site No 25 at Brown Edge is similar in character to the LGS designations at Cheddleton referred to above in that it is privately owned land skirted by a public footpath and with extensive views across it. That said the nature of many settlements in the Moorlands is that they are on higher ground and at locations within them there will be views across the surrounding landscape, often over existing development, and so are not demonstrably special. As with the Cheddleton sites the LGS designation should be deleted (**MM**).

Site No 31 at Cheddleton appears to be used as a beer garden to the pub above it. It does not seem to me to be demonstrably special. In any event I note that it lies within a Conservation Area and is crossed by a public footpath. The site is hemmed in by the canal and rising land to the south. It would not seem to be vulnerable to built development. I would recommend that the LGS designation is removed (**MM**).

The justification for the designation of Site No 39 at Waterhouses as LGS is limited. Unless there is further evidence that shows that the site is demonstrably special it should be deleted (**MM**). Are there other designations that would provide protection such as a conservation area? Alternatively has consideration been given to excluding this part of the village from the settlement boundary?

In terms of Bagnall I can see the justification for the village green (Site No 41) and pub garden (Site No 40) being included as LGS. However, the pub car park forming part of No 40 less so. The car park does not function as green space and would be protected by the conservation area designation that covers the historic part of the village. However, LGS designation would appear to be warranted for the triangular village green on the opposite side of the road and to the east of the No 41 which has not been included. I would recommend **MMs** to reflect these comments.

I was unable to identify anything demonstrably special about the area of grassland adjacent to the stream in Blythe Bridge (Site No 50). Although SD 22.5 indicates that there is evidence of informal public access, I could not see any signs of this on site. I would recommend that this LGS designation is removed from this site (**MM**).

### **Conclusions**

I look forward to a response on my questions about Site No 39. Otherwise the above recommendations should be incorporated into the Schedule of MMs. A draft schedule should be drawn up as soon as possible so that it can be finalised before the June 2019 Council meeting. If you require any clarification let me know via the Programme Officer.

Yours sincerely

*Mark Dakeyne*

INSPECTOR

Inspector: Mark Dakeyne BA (Hons) MRTPI