

**SUMMARY PROOF OF EVIDENCE FOR PUBLIC INQUIRY IN RESPECT OF
ISSUES RELATED TO LANDSCAPE MATTERS**

RELATED TO

The outline planning application by Redrow Homes Ltd for residential development of up to 400 dwellings on land to the east and west of Warburton Lane, Trafford, Greater Manchester WA13 9TT. The application includes the creation of new points of access, provision of formal and informal open space, ancillary landscaping, car parking and highway drainage works, with all matters reserved with the exception of access.

Local Authority Ref: 98031/OUT/19

PINs Ref: APP/Q4245/W/19/3243720

Barnes Walker Ref: Landscape Proof of Evidence M3162-PoE-20.03-V6

**ON BEHALF OF
TRAFFORD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

FOR PUBLIC INQUIRY OCTOBER 2020

BY

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Summary Proof of Evidence is submitted on behalf of Trafford Council in support of the Planning Appeal for non-determination of the outline planning application for up to 400 dwellings on land to the east and west of Warburton Lane, Trafford, Greater Manchester (LPA ref: 98031/OUT/19).
- 1.2 Within my main Proof of Evidence I address landscape and visual matters related specifically to putative reasons for refusal 2, 5 and 6 (of six putative reasons for refusal).

Qualifications and Experience

- 1.3 I am Nicholas Folland. I am a Director of Barnes Walker Limited, a firm of landscape and urban designers with offices in Manchester. I hold a BA(hons) degree in Landscape Design (1990) and a post graduate Diploma in Landscape Architecture from Manchester Polytechnic (1992) and I qualified as a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute in 1998. Prior to working at Barnes Walker Ltd, I have worked for two local authorities and 3 large multi-disciplinary consultancies. For the last 15 years I have worked at Barnes Walker Ltd and became a director in 2009.
- 1.4 Over the past 11 years I have gained considerable experience in the design and landscape and visual assessment of residential development in the North-West and in a number of cases, have prepared and presented evidence as an expert witness at Public Inquiries and hearings.
- 1.5 I am instructed by Trafford Council and having visited the appeal site on a number of occasions, I am familiar with the site and the surrounding landscape and townscape.

Summary Content of my Proof of Evidence

- 1.6 Initially I provide a description of the appeal site, before considering the content of the Landscape and Visual Amenity Chapter 6 of the ES Vol 2.
- 1.7 Thereafter I consider the findings of the Landscape and Visual Amenity Chapter of the ES and set out where and why I believe it understates the levels of landscape and visual effect that the development proposals will generate.
- 1.8 Finally, I consider my findings in relation to two scenarios, being the development of an unallocated greenfield site and the Appeal Site's potential to become a future allocated site under GM45. In doing so I explain why I consider the outline application for the development of the Appeal Site to be contrary to planning policy and confirm that I believe Trafford Council were correct in citing Core Strategy Policies L7 and R2 in the putative reasons for refusal 2, 5 and 6.

2. Conclusions Regarding the Proposed Development of the Unallocated Greenfield Site

2.1 Having undertaken a detailed review of the LVIA contained within Chapter 6 of the ES, I have determined that in a number of instances the assessment has in my opinion, understated some of the landscape and visual effects that are likely to result from the implementation of the development proposals.

2.2 Paragraph 6.52 of the ES states *'A landscape or visual effect of Moderate/Major Adverse to Major Adverse significance would typically be considered to be of significance.'*

Landscape Effects

2.3 ES Chapter 6 determines the anticipated landscape effects are either **Minor Adverse** or **Moderate Adverse**, so it does not ascertain any effects considered to be 'of significance'.

2.4 The greenfield Appeal Site forms part of an attractive rural landscape, with a medium sensitivity and it forms part of a recognised Landscape Character Type 'Settled Sandlands' within SPG30 and also forms part of a historic deer park. The proposed development is of a large scale and I have ascertained that the landscape effects will be **Moderate/Major Adverse** consistently across the three time periods assessed (construction, short to medium term and long term).

2.5 In terms of visual effects, ES Chapter 6 considers 12no Representative Viewpoints and each viewpoint considers the views of at least one visual receptor group.

2.6 I agree with some of the levels of visual effect identified by ES Chapter 6, however it is my opinion that in a number of instances, higher levels of adverse visual effect will be generated by the development proposals associated with Sites 1 and 2, some of which, will be visual effects 'of significance', as follows:

- Construction Phase: **Moderate/Major Adverse** – Viewpoints 1, 2, 6 & 10;
- Short to Medium Term: **Moderate/Major Adverse** – Viewpoints 2, 3 & 10;
- Long Term - **Moderate/Major Adverse** – Viewpoints 1, 2, 3 & 6.

2.7 TCS Policy L7: Design requires development to be appropriate in its context, make best use of opportunities to improve the character and quality of an area and enhance the street scene or character of an area by appropriately addressing scale, massing, layout, soft landscape works and boundary treatments, amongst others.

- 2.8 TCS Policy R2 requires developers to demonstrate how their proposals will protect and enhance the landscape character of its countryside assets, one of which is its open countryside landscape character areas.
- 2.9 The development proposals comprise a large scale development of up to 400 houses on an unallocated greenfield site, within a defined Landscape Character Type (Settled Sandlands LCT) that acknowledges sensitivities to development on the fringes of its high quality rural areas and to modern development, that is out of character with the vernacular.
- 2.10 Having ascertained the above higher levels of adverse landscape and visual effect, which are more adverse those identified by ES Chapter 6, and in a number of cases, 'of significance', I believe Trafford Council were correct in citing Core Strategy Policies L7 and R2 in the putative reasons for refusal 2, 5 and 6.

3. Conclusions Regarding the Proposed Development of the Allocated Greenfield Site

- 3.1 It is possible that at some point in the future, the Appeal Site could be allocated under GM45.
- 3.2 In the event that this was to happen, it is imperative that the identified sensitivities associated with the Appeal Site and its adjacent rural landscape, are carefully considered by the design process, to ensure that the proposals respond appropriately to their landscape context, thus minimising any resulting landscape and visual harm.
- 3.3 Having undertaken a detailed review of the LVIA contained within Chapter 6 of the ES, I have determined that in a number of instances the assessment has in my opinion, understated some of the landscape and visual effects that are likely to result from the implementation of the development proposals.
- 3.4 The wooded Red Brook corridor provides effective visual and physical separation between the rural landscape and the existing urban area to the north. In doing so, it moderates the effect of the settlement area upon the character of the surrounding rural landscape and the presence of Warburton Lane emphasises the perception of arriving at and leaving the built up area/open agrarian landscape. Furthermore, the wooded Red Brook Corridor also enhances the sense of separation between Partington to the north and the historic village of Warburton to the south-west.
- 3.5 The presence of the wooded Red Brook corridor combined with an existing wide services easement, present significant constraints to development within the northern parts of Sites 1 and 2. As a result, the parameters plan positions large areas of open space to the north, which offset the developable areas within the two sites, to the south.
- 3.6 This effectively pushes the built form to the south and in the case of Site 1, extends the development very close to its boundary with the existing rural context of Moss Lane.
- 3.7 The proposed development will breach the existing robust landscape edge to the settlement, extend development into the Settled Sandlands LCT and occupy a significant section of the former deer park, thus closing the rural gap between Partington and Warburton Village.
- 3.8 I believe the southern, eastern and western edges of the proposed development should incorporate more significant, deeper landscape buffers in order to create a new high quality, robust edge that will soften the transition between the new settlement edge and the rural landscape beyond. In turn, this will help to moderate the effect of the development upon the rural character of the wider agrarian landscape (ie the Settled

Sandlands LCT), whilst moderating any perceived narrowing of the gap between Partington and Warburton Village.

- 3.9 These measures have the potential to moderate some of the higher levels of landscape and visual effect that I have ascertained and in doing so, proposals would better respond to the guidance recommended within the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment.
- 3.10 I do not however suppose that the proposed boundary treatments generate all adverse landscape and visual effects and I do not believe that the site can be developed without harm to the character of the area and the visual amenity of people using and moving through the landscape.
- 3.11 In addition, the requirement for more substantial, peripheral landscape buffers will naturally exert a pressure upon the potential quantum of development within the site.
- 3.12 Given the existing constraints located to the northern sections of both Sites 1 and 2, the incorporation of landscape buffers with an appropriate depth would likely significantly jeopardise the site's ability to deliver the quantity of houses proposed (up to 400).

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 Having undertaken a detailed review of the LVIA contained within Chapter 6 of the ES, I have determined that in a number of instances the assessment has in my opinion, understated some of the landscape and visual effects that are likely to result from the implementation of the development proposals.
- 4.2 I believe the development proposals will generate levels of adverse landscape and visual effect, which are of a higher adverse nature than those identified by ES Chapter 6 and in a number of cases, these adverse effects are 'of significance'.
- 4.3 I therefore believe Trafford Council were correct in citing Core Strategy Policies L7 and R2 in the putative reasons for refusal 2, 5 and 6 and respectfully request that the Inspector considers my findings, in deciding the outcome of this Inquiry.