

**Statement of Common Ground between (i) Stroud District Council (SDC)
Council and (ii) the Promoter – Canal & River Trust**





Local Plan Site Name and Policy Reference: Sharpness Docks PS34
Date: February 2023

This Statement of Common Ground has been prepared by the two parties to establish the main areas of agreement between Council and site promoter and to identify any areas where further work is required for completion to prove soundness and deliverability to the Inspector.

1. Description of the site	The Sharpness Docks Estate, located adjacent to the tier 3a settlement of Newtown & Sharpness and north of the tier 2 town of Berkeley, is a working port on the River Severn and the start of the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal. The Estate is located within the parish of Hinton and has a gross site area of 96.23 hectares.
2. Local Plan context	The site is allocated in the adopted Local Plan (November 2015) under Policy SA5 for a mix of tourism, leisure and recreation, dock uses and dock related industrial and distribution uses. A planning application was submitted in 2017. As a decision on the current planning application is pending the policy now forms part of the Draft Stroud District Local Plan (submitted October 2021).
3. Relevant promoter representations	None.
4. Main areas of agreement.	<p>Housing: Up to 300 dwellings, including 90 affordable dwellings, unless viability testing indicates otherwise. Hotel, holiday lodges and fixed camping uses.</p> <p>Employment: Expansion land (7 hectares) for new development. An expanded marina basin including ancillary retail and food and drink uses. Tourism and recreational related facilities, including a community football pitch, community gardens, informal green space and equestrian development.</p> <p>Transport/Access: In Sharpness Docks South, vehicular access via the internal dock roads below / including the low level bridge. In Sharpness Docks North, cycle and pedestrian routes through the development, connecting with Oldminster Road and the Severn Way, including the restoration of the former railway bridge link and improvements to the high level swing bridge. Vehicular access from Oldminster Road with links under the former railway bridge into the north east and via the high level bridge to the north west, including safe access and egress during flood events. Traffic calming measures within the development and locality, as approved by the Highways Authority. Bus stops and shelters at appropriate locations to serve the new development. Contributions towards bus services to improve bus frequencies and quality and to connect the development with Berkeley and Dursley.</p>

	<p>Infrastructure: Contributions towards education provision.</p> <p>Environmental: Landscaping incorporating existing hedgerows and trees. The acceptable management and disposal of surface water, including sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). A sequential approach to site layout and flood risk, with more vulnerable development being located within Flood Zone 1. Planning applications for Sharpness Docks must ensure no adverse effect will occur on the integrity of the Severn Estuary SAC/SPA/Ramsar site, otherwise planning permission will not be granted.</p> <p>Other matters: The disused rail line will be protected, should it prove feasible to reinstate the Docks rail link.</p> <p>Both parties agree to accept a modification to Policy PS34, agreed with Gloucestershire County Council, for an additional sentence to be added to the policy: "Future dock uses and dock-related industrial and distribution uses will not prejudice the efficient and effective operations of safeguarded minerals and waste infrastructure."</p>			
5. Main areas of disagreement / dispute/areas requiring further work.	There are no matters of disagreement.			
6. The promoter's anticipated start and build-out rates.	2020-2025	2025-2030	2030-2035	2035-2040
	/	170	130	/
7. Promoter's Deliverability/Viability Statement	<p>The development has previously been through testing as part of the examination process of the Local Plan and was found to be sound and the principles of the development as expressed in policy SA5 accepted. In allocating the land for development, the regeneration strategy for the Sharpness area is identified as an important objective in addition to delivery of homes and employment space. The delivery of development set out in policy SA5/PS34 will deliver the Council's regeneration objectives for the Sharpness area.</p> <p>Following the adoption of the Local Plan the Canal & River Trust (the Trust) submitted an outline planning application for the comprehensive development of the land at Sharpness included within policy SA5. This included a detailed Environmental Statement which addressed potential impacts on the environment and in particular the designated SAC.</p> <p>The application was submitted in April 2017 and, over the course of the next few months, issues raised by consultees on matters including heritage, ecology, noise, highways amongst others were fully addressed in additional information that was provided.</p>			

	<p>Positive discussions continued with the Council however issues raised by the Highway Authority proved harder to reach agreement on.</p> <p>In January 2022, following the submission of a comprehensive set of additional documents, agreement was reached with the Highway Authority, and updated ecology surveys of the application site have been undertaken given the time that has elapsed since the original surveys. This work confirms that there have been no material changes to the site.</p> <p>The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) commented on the planning application, recommending restrictions on the scale of development and location of uses in response to the consultation zones at the Docks. These comments were in line with pre application discussions with the Trust which had resulted in the design and layout of the masterplan being amended prior to the submission of the application. The HSE have not objected to the application and there is agreement with the HSE and the Council that the issue can be managed through a combination of suitably worded conditions and a S106 agreement.</p> <p>The Trust is committed to bringing forward the SA5/PS34 allocation which will contribute to the regeneration of Sharpness and continues to actively work on progressing the planning application. Although a complex and challenging site the Trust will use its extensive experience in successfully bringing forward brownfield waterside regeneration projects to deliver a mixed use development which will include significant wider public benefits to the area. The policy SA5/PS34 allocation remains deliverable and the Trust continues to works to deliver the objectives.</p>
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<p>Signed on behalf of the Promoter - Canal & River Trust</p> 	<p>Signed on behalf of Stroud District Council</p> 
<p>Date: 16 February 2023</p>	<p>Date: 15 February 2023</p>
<p>Name: </p>	<p>Name: </p>
<p>Position: Planning & Development Manager</p>	<p>Position: Head of Planning Strategy and Economic Development.</p>