

LOCAL LETTINGS PLAN

Farriers Fold - Aelfgar Development Site - Rugeley

Character Description

The site is in a mainly residential setting to the west of Rugeley Town centre, with adjacent existing housing, shops and small businesses, together with some larger commercial ventures and industry locally. This is surrounded by semi-rural and rural communities and Cannock Chase, served by main routes including the A51 and A460, plus local and national rail services.

The Aims and Objectives

To achieve sustainable and balanced community which can contribute to meeting varying housing needs of applicants who are included on the Cannock Chase Council's housing register.

To create a safe and secure environment in which tenants can live peacefully and harmoniously and with a commitment in helping to create and maintain a vibrant community. Whilst the lettings plan is designed to afford the best possible chance of creating and maintaining a stable and safe community, the Council is also committed to meet housing need in the area.

The existence of the lettings plan may mean that vacancies will not always be allocated to the applicant who can demonstrate the greatest housing need. Applicants with a lower priority or - by exception - not living in the area may be considered for any allocation if their housing may help to maintain a stable community.

The Area

The Aelfgar site is a near-rectangular site situated within the boundaries created by Church Street to the North West, Taylor's Lane running clockwise from Church Street, along the North and Eastern edges of the site and the existing residential housing sitting on the West and North sides of Bow Street, Sheep Fair and Lion Street, until it's junction with Church Street.

The immediate area surrounding the site is made up of existing residential accommodation, along with community facilities, including town council buildings, community centre, church, police station, medical centre and some small local shops /businesses.

Rugeley Town Centre (Brewery Street Shopping Centre and the local bus station) is an approximate 10 minute walk / 3 minute drive from the furthest side of the site (Church Street). A further 8 minute walk /2 minute drive leads to the city train station, while Rugeley Trent Valley train station is about a 16 minute walk but only a 2 minute drive. In addition:

- There are a high number of local primary schools, a large secondary school and an all-through school (nursery to post-16) close by
- A Local newsagent, grocery store and public house run along the edge of the site
- Rugeley Leisure Centre is about 15 minutes walk / 5 minutes by car
- Elmore Park is only around a 6 minutes walk / 2 minute drive away with the Cannock Chase Heritage Trail, which is mainly off road, also close by
- There are nearby road links (by car or bus) to the rest of the Cannock Chase District, to Cannock Chase itself and - with the train services mentioned – close by areas such as Stafford and Lichfield or beyond.

In view of the position of the site within a mixed tenure community, which will be in the heart of the Rugeley, close to the town centre and adjacent to existing accommodation, sensitive allocations are required to ensure any anti-social behaviour (ASB) and noise nuisance are kept to a minimum.

The Scheme

The Scheme is a mixed development site of 29 open market properties to be sold directly by the developer and 29 affordable housing properties for rent: these are the properties to which this local lettings plan applies.

All properties are two storeys, with bedroom sizes of:

- 2 bed, 4 person houses: 15
- 3 bed, 5 person houses: 12 (there are 2 types, 6 of each)
- 4 bed, 6 person houses: 2

Tenancy Type

- An Introductory Tenancy for first time tenancy which may be converted into secure tenancy in 12 months. This decision will be made at a 12 month review following meeting and discussion with the tenant and will be subject to the conduct of the tenancy throughout this period.
- Secure Tenancy for transferring tenancy

Lettings

Letting will be via the Council's housing register. The vacancies will be advertised through the Council's Choice Based Lettings system entitled 'Housing Online'. The property advertisement will be worded to identify a Local Lettings plan is in place.

In order to achieve and maintain a settled and stable community we will sort applicants in order to try and maintain a good mix for the community taking into account affordability, scheme layout and density, household size, age and make-up.

A balance in meeting housing needs, facilitating social mobility for existing tenants (resulting in further housing vacancies for others) and the overall balance of the community will be struck in terms of identified housing types, circumstances and needs.

This will include an ongoing assessment of the density of the development. If every property were let to its maximum person occupancy in full on first letting, this would mean 132 people and almost 100 children/dependants. This is not always conducive to a stable community and does not allow space for families to grow within the same development over time. We will therefore consider:

- Potential under-occupation of some dwellings by up to one bedroom
- Letting a mix of properties at full occupation and below the full occupation levels (e.g. one child in a bedroom which can accommodate two)
- A balance of child/ dependant ages in the lettings made

These collective measures will help ensure a balanced community at the scheme from the start.

It is therefore envisaged that transfer applications (including managed moves) will form at least 50% of accommodation offers, as this in turn releases other accommodation for other applicants on the housing register. The resulting properties will be prioritised for households owed a relief or main homelessness duty. We also propose a ratio of need, to support balanced communities to be allocated based on:

- Managed Moves and Band 1 applicants - 40%
- Band 2 applicants - 30%
- Band 3 and 4 applicants - 30%

Exclusions

Any refusals will be made in accordance with the Council's Allocation Policy, published at <https://www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/residents/housing/housing-allocations/allocations-policy>

For existing Council Tenants, their present accommodation must be in good decorative order, no damage or alteration to their homes without permission and they must have maintain a clear account.

All applicants that are not Council tenant will be required to have a landlord reference with specific questions relating to their past conduct and that of household members.

Council tenants and applicants:

1. Must have a clear rent account and no current breaches of their tenancy (including being subject to a court order or notice of intention to take legal proceedings).

2. In order to seek to attain and maintain the base targets contained within the local lettings plan, under-occupation by no more than one bedroom will be permitted, if required, to ensure that child density is controlled. Appropriate advice will be given on Welfare Reform and families advised of the reduction in housing cost support for under-occupied properties.
3. All applicants will be subject to pre-tenancy checks, including affordability

Diversity

The Aelfgar site is designed to provide housing to small and larger general needs families. The lettings plan ensures the fair allocation of properties to applicants requiring these homes, in line with the Council's equality and diversity policy, while achieving a balanced and sustainable community for the benefit of the local residents within the development and beyond.

Monitoring and review

Careful monitoring of the allocations process and the management of the scheme will routinely take place, as an on-going process. On initial letting of the completed development and then as a minimum at every turnover of the tenancy we will identify whether the local lettings plan might need to be reconsidered in respect of future allocations within the scheme.


The following will be carefully monitored

- Number of refusals of offers and reasons
- Number of transfers out of the area being requested and the reason for this
- Number of Mutual Exchanges out of the area being requested and the reasons for this
- Number and type of complaints
- Number of children housed by age group
- Diversity of those housed
- Origin of applicants
- Number of re-lets
- Reasons why tenants have chosen to leave the area

Monitoring of the lettings plan will then be on an annual basis. The purpose of the annual review will be to;

- Identify trends and common complaints
- To consider targets not met or exceeded
- To review and, where considered necessary, set new targets
- To consider overall success of the lettings plan at a review in six months

Approved by: Nirmal Samrai - Head of Housing and Corporate Assets

Signature: 

Date: 14th April 2026