Richborough Estates

Dudley (Jews Lane) West Midlands

Case Study: Residential Sector

The Project

Richborough Estates acquired seven acres of land in the popular Milking Bank area of Dudley for residential development in 2004. Once home to an open cast mine and a boiler manufacturer, the site was originally designated as a 'Special Employment Zone' within Dudley's Unitary Development Plan. The site lay undeveloped for over 20 years due to the high cost associated with redevelopment and remediation, along with a lack of demand for additional industrial use in the area.

The Approach

- The positioning of the mine shafts were located to determine which areas of the site were suitable for residential development and subsequently a programme of remediation measures was devised

- A public consultation was held with the local community to address their concerns, which were mostly from local businesses who felt residents may be unsatisfied by the noise generated from two industrial estates located near to the proposed development

- A planning application was recommended for approval but refused by the Local Authority which the Richborough Estates team challenged by way of appeal

- The site's potential for redevelopment had to be tested and it was proved that there was no demand for significant employment use in this area and that the site had potential for residential development

- A marketing exercise proved a lack of demand for the site's industrial use, and viability appraisals combined with robust negotiation enabled the Richborough Estates team to reduce the affordable housing from 30% to 2%

The Result

- Outline planning consent for 100 residential units with a reduced affordable housing requirement of 2%

- Additional land surrounding the site was acquired in order to deliver an acoustic fence which helped to alleviate concerns from local businesses

- Improvements to existing footpath links to and from the development

- The land was sold to Taylor Wimpey in 2007

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Key Benefits

- 100 residential units
- Noise mitigation measures
- New footpath links
- Use of previously developed land