

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AT OAK CLOSE, CASTLE GRESLEY SWADLINCOTE

Background

This Design & Access Statement is submitted in support of a Full Planning Application for 70 new dwellings at land off Oak Close, Castle Gresley, Swadlincote on behalf of EMH Homes. The site consists of land outlined in red on the aerial view below.

Quantum of Development

The scheme proposes 70 affordable dwellings comprising 26 shared ownership and 44 affordable rent with associated car parking and amenity provision.

The affordable housing consists of 8No. One bed flats, 33No. Two bed houses, 21No. Three bed houses, 4No four bed houses, 2No. Two bed bungalows and 2No. Four bed dormer bungalows.

The site is situated in Castle Gresley, a village located about 1.75 miles south west of the centre of Swadlincote in South Derbyshire. Access is gained from Oak Close, a modern residential development.

The accommodation and density are similar to the existing housing on Oak Close and its surroundings.



Arial View of the site

Use of the Site

The proposed housing development is on an agricultural site adjacent an existing housing estate on Oak Close. It will have good links to the town and open countryside. The site is within easy walking distance of local amenities and transport links.

The site is currently accessible via an opening at the end of Oak Close on its western boundary. The site rises with gradual gradient towards the east and benefits from excellent views across the rural landscape.

Pre-Application Discussions and Assessment

The site is allocated South Derbyshire Local plan (Part 2) policy ref H23K.

Pre-Application discussions and assessments have been undertaken with South Derbyshire District Council in order to benefit from early engagement with the Local Authority. The layout proposals were generally well received and the proposed site layout has been revised in order to respond to the comments received from the Local Authority where possible.



View across the site looking north



View across the site looking east

Planning Statement

A separate Planning Statement has been prepared by The Tyler-Parkes Partnership and is submitted in support of the Planning Application.

The proposed development contributes positively to the character, distinctiveness and significance of the local built environment. The design has taken account of the following characteristics of the surroundings:

- The significance of nearby built form assets and the contribution of their setting.
- The general character and distinctiveness of the local buildings, spaces, public realm and the landscape.
- Landmarks and other features that are key to a sense of place.
- The diversity or uniformity in style, construction, materials and detailing of existing buildings and spaces.
- The site topography.
- Views into and from the site and its surroundings.
- Green landscaping including forestry planting.
- The current differing uses in the area and the urban grain.

These factors have influenced the scale, height, massing, alignment and materials of the submitted scheme design.

The proposals are addressing housing deliver a sustainable development in line with current Planning Policy Statements in terms of addressing jobs, health, housing, education, shops, leisure, and community facilities, to deliver safe, healthy and attractive places to live, to reduce the need to travel and actively manage patterns of growth in the Swadlincote area and focus development in existing centres to make the fullest use of public transport.

In terms of housing policy, the development seeks to increase the supply, quality and breadth of choice of affordable homes in sustainable, inclusive, mixed communities. The proposed affordable homes will be well designed and well-built housing in what is a suitable location, which offers a good range of facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure.

The proposed mix of housing designs allows for a mix of different types of households likely to require housing over a long period of time.

Evaluation

Taking into account the assessment of site context, planning policy and housing needs, the following key points are identified for the design agenda: -

- The site is in a sustainable location for development, with access to a full range of services and facilities.
- The proposals offer the opportunity to introduce a mix of dwelling types to respond to local needs.
- The proposals take account of the landscape theme and features of the area.
- Access should be designed so as to ensure highway safety and access for all types of vehicles needed.
- The site boundaries should be designed so as to be secure and take account of the amenity of existing and future residents.

Layout

The proposed site layout is determined by the following site restraints: -

- Existing gradients on the site have been utilized in the most efficient way to reduce the amount of proposed retaining structures.
- Safe vehicular and pedestrian access points leading to Oak Close.
- Distances to existing dwellings in order to respect and maintain private amenity spaces.
- Provision of private amenity spaces and car parking provision for proposed new dwellings.
- Natural surveillance and assessment of Secure by Design recommendations.
- Parking provision is provided to all dwellings. Two parking spaces are provide to 2 & 3 Bed dwellings and three spaces are provided to the 4 bed dwellings. The flats have one space per dwelling with an additional unallocated visitor space per two flats (0.5 spaces per flat)



Proposed Site Layout

The layout proposes a series of two dwellings joined together in a semi-detached arrangement and eight flats in a terrace format.

A new adopted road will joint onto Oak Close with dwellings fronting onto the new internal street scene with cul-de-sac arrangements towards the west end of the site.

Scale, Height and Mass

The scale of the proposed houses is in-keeping with the adjacent street scenes which are all relatively low rise.

The existing use of the site is agricultural land. The current proposal for small blocks of new dwellings offers a good use of the site.

The addition of soft landscaping and open road network will enhance the site area as a whole.



Typical Street Scene

Appearance & Materials

The proposals will enhance the character of the area with use of quality materials which have been selected to compliment and enhance the character of the development and in particular to deliver a traditional design response.

The proposed housing development will provide a positive contribution to the local built environment. The design, including material choices such as through colour render will offer a colourful, interesting mix of materials the scale of which reflects the adjacent residential developments.

The existing dwellings situated on Oak Close and the surrounding area are predominantly brick, however, some of the dwellings are fully rendered or have rendered panels to front elevations. Our response has been to also utilise predominantly brick but to add texture and interest by using render to a number of dwellings.

The scheme contributes positively to the wider area and by taking the most appropriate principles from the key characteristics found in the area will integrate well into the overall street scene.

Key elevations have windows facing onto circulation routes and main vistas in order to add interest and provide natural surveillance of the wider public realm.



Typical Street Scene

Residential Amenity & Landscaping

A soft landscaping layout has been prepared by Keary Design Associates and is submitted in support of the Planning Application. Also shown on the landscaping drawing is an area of public open space with play area design.

The proposed amenity space around all of the dwellings has been designed to be integral to the overall layout and sympathetic to the area as a whole. The physical site constraints have dictated to a certain degree where elements of amenity space can be located but the overall design is one of cohesion balancing the requirements for privacy of residents and providing an attractive outlook for the wider community.

All of the car parking is in curtilage of each of the dwellings.

Rear pedestrian access is provided to all of the new dwellings to allow for refuse bins to be retained in the private, rear gardens and brought around the houses on refuse collection days.

A secure communal bin and cycle store area are provided adjacent plots 25 to 32 for the residents of the flats.

High quality boundary treatments are proposed to all key elevations within the public realm. Areas of forestry planting have been added throughout the site. See landscaping drawing for details.

Existing Trees

A tree survey has been carried out by RammSanderson Arboriculture and is submitted as part of the planning documents.

Tree T1 (Ash) which is located off site adjacent plots 21 & 22 is 18m high with a crown spread of 10m. It is suggested by RammSanderson that overhanging deadwood to be removed.

Although T1 overhangs the rear garden of plots 21 & 22 the gardens will receive light at sunrise then again in mid-morning and for the rest of daylight hours.

Trees T6 (18m High Ash 10m CS) & T7 (18m High Sycamore 9m CS) are positioned off site to the rear of plots 5 to 8. These trees will receive permanent root protection measures where the ground level slopes away from the trees. Plots 5 to 8 will receive daylight all throughout the day until sunset.

The group of trees to the south western boundary are subject of a TPO (TPO78).

Although there will be trees to be removed within the TPO area to enable the development to be carried out, these will consist of Category C (Trees of low quality) and Category U (Unsuitable for retention).

All Category A (Trees of High quality) will remain in the TPO area and will receive necessary root protection measures during the construction works.

Access

The existing turning head at the end of Oak Close will provide vehicular and pedestrian access onto the site. The new access road will be constructed to adoptable standards.

The housing layout has been developed with dwellings designed to offer dual aspects to both the existing road system and also the new internal layout of the overall scheme.

Hard standing materials to be tarmac, concrete slabs and block paving, as detailed on the site layout drawing 2294 - 12.

All dwellings will have a level access to their front doors, rear and side access to parking and for refuse collections.

Dwellings to Plots 21 & 22 will be wheelchair user dwellings conforming to Part M4(3) all other dwellings will be accessible and adaptable to Part M4(2)

Sustainability

The new dwellings will be built fully in accordance with current Building Regulations approved documents 2013 together with approved SAP & water use calculations.

Conclusion

The scheme provides the density necessary to enable the redevelopment of this area to be financially viable whilst providing much needed housing for the Swadlincote area.

The contextual assessment of the site highlights the sites constraints and opportunities such as keeping open space, shape of the site, proximity of neighbouring properties and existing road system. This evaluation of key design influences has resulted in a responsive, sensitively executed design solution that will enhance the visual interest and appearance of its surroundings and create a place that optimises the opportunities that are available.

The development is designed to be as accessible as possible and comply with relevant legislation on access. The logical, legible layout that is proposed will serve to ensure that the local environment is safe and convenient for all road users. The close proximity to good public transport links will ensure that future residents have a realistic alternative to the private car.

On this basis, it is considered that the proposed design is sustainable and responsive to its physical, social and environmental context, and reflects the requirements of National and Local Planning Policy.

This current Planning Application for the construction of 70 new homes offers positive development for the area, much needed affordable housing accommodation and is complementary and sensitive to its immediate surroundings. The construction of good quality traditional dwellings will be attractive to local residents and future residents and shared owners alike and will integrate the development into this area of Castle Gresley.

It is therefore respectfully requested that the submitted Planning Application should receive the support of the Local Authority and subsequently be granted Approval.