

LAND AT BROWNS LANE, TAMWORTH

BUILT HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

JAC23011
Land at Browns Lane,
Tamworth
Draft
Original January 2018
Updated January 2019

REPORT

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Prepared by:

RPS

Jessica Jones
January 2018

Updated by:

Jennifer Cooke
January 2019

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This Built Heritage Assessment has been prepared in order to assess the potential impact on the historic built environment arising from proposed residential development at Land at Browns Lane, Tamworth.
2. This report demonstrates that the proposed development has the potential to impact the significance of the Grade II listed Perrycrofts and the Wigginton Conservation Area. It is demonstrated that the proposed development, which includes specific mitigation measures to reduce any potential harm, will not pose harm to the significance of Perrycrofts, whilst any harm to the significance of the Wigginton Conservation Area will remain at the lower end of the spectrum of less than substantial harm.

Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	II
1 INTRODUCTION	4
2 LEGISLATIVE AND PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK	5
3 HISTORIC BUILT ENVIRONMENT APPRAISAL	13
4 PROPOSALS AND ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT	20
5 CONCLUSION	23

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Built Heritage Assessment has been researched and prepared by the RPS Group (formerly CgMs Ltd), on behalf of Summit BLT Developments in order to assess the potential impact on the historic built environment arising from proposed residential development at Land at Browns Lane, Tamworth (the Site).
- 1.2 The Site does not contain any designated heritage assets, however there are three listed buildings within a 1 kilometre search radius of the Site. In addition, Wigginton Conservation Area, in its entirety, lies within this 1 kilometre search radius.
- 1.3 This Built Heritage Assessment forms part of the requirement under paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework to identify and assess any heritage assets likely to be affected by a proposed development, including consideration of their settings. It also provides a detailed assessment of the likely impacts to that significance. All archaeological considerations are dealt with in a separate report (CgMs Ltd 2017).
- 1.4 This report refers to the relevant legislation contained within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and both national and local planning policy. In addition, relevant Historic England guidance notably GPA3 The Setting of Heritage Assets and Conservation Principles has been consulted to inform the judgements made. Relevant information, including the listing citations for the relevant heritage assets and the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) prepared by Pegasus Environment (dated 2017) have also been consulted in preparing this report. The conclusions reached in this report are the result of detailed historic research, a walkover survey of the Site and publicly accessible locations in the surrounding area, map studies and the application of professional judgement.
- 1.5 The findings of this report are based on the known conditions at the time of writing and all findings and conclusions are time limited to no more than three years from the date of this report. All maps, plans and photographs are for illustrative purposes only.

2 LEGISLATIVE AND PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 The current national legislative and planning policy system identifies, through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), that applicants should consider the potential impact of development upon 'heritage assets'. This term includes: designated heritage assets which possess a statutory designation (for example listed buildings and conservation areas); and non-designated heritage assets, typically compiled by Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) and incorporated into a Local List or recorded on the Historic Environment Record.

Legislation

- 2.2 Where any development may affect certain designated heritage assets, there is a legislative framework to ensure proposed works are developed and considered with due regard to their impact on the historic environment. This extends from primary legislation under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 2.3 The relevant legislation in this case extends from section 16/66 of the 1990 Act which states that special regard must be given by the decision maker, in the exercise of planning functions, to the desirability of preserving or enhancing listed buildings and their setting.
- 2.4 The meaning and effect of these duties have been considered by the courts in recent cases, including the Court of Appeal's decision in relation to Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Ltd v East Northamptonshire District Council [2014] EWCA Civ 137.
- 2.5 The Court agreed within the High Court's judgement that Parliament's intention in enacting section 66(1) was that decision makers should give 'considerable importance and weight' to the desirability of preserving (i.e. keeping from harm) the setting of listed buildings.
- 2.6 Section 69(1) of the Act requires LPAs to 'determine areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' and to designate them as conservation areas. Section 69(2) requires LPAs to review and, where necessary, amend those areas 'from time to time'.
- 2.7 For development within a conservation area section 72 of the Act requires the decision maker to pay 'special attention [...] to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area'. The duty to give special attention is considered commensurate with that under section 66(1) to give special regard, meaning that the decision maker must give considerable importance and weight to any such harm in the planning balance. However, unlike the section 66 duty, there is no specific requirement to protect the setting of conservation areas.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, February 2019)

- 2.8 The NPPF is the principal document that sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- 2.9 It defines a heritage asset as a: 'building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest'. This includes both designated and non-designated heritage assets.
- 2.10 Section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment relates to the conservation of heritage assets in the production of local plans and decision taking. It emphasises that heritage

assets are ‘an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance’.

- 2.11 For proposals that have the potential to affect the significance of a heritage asset, paragraph 189 requires applicants to identify and describe the significance of any heritage assets that may be affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail provided should be proportionate to the significance of the heritage assets affected. This is supported by paragraph 190, which requires LPAs to take this assessment into account when considering applications.
- 2.12 Under ‘Considering potential impacts’ the NPPF emphasises that ‘great weight’ should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, irrespective of whether any potential impact equates to total loss, substantial harm or less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage assets.
- 2.13 Paragraph 195 states that where a development will result in substantial harm to, or total loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset, permission should be refused, unless this harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits, or a number of criteria are met. Where less than substantial harm is identified paragraph 196 requires this harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposed development.
- 2.14 Paragraph 197 states that where an application will affect the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, a balanced judgement is required, having regard to the scale of harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
- 2.15 Paragraph 200 notes that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. It also states that proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to, or better reveal the significance of, the asset should be treated favourably.
- 2.16 Furthermore, paragraph 201 states that not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. When determining the impacts arising from the loss of a building or element that does positively contribute, consideration should be given to the relative significance of that building and the impact to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

Significance is defined in the NPPF as:

- 2.17 *The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site’s Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance’.*

National Guidance

Planning Practice Guidance (DCLG)

- 2.18 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) has been adopted in order to aid the application of the NPPF. It reiterates that conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is a core planning principle.
- 2.19 Key elements of the guidance relate to assessing harm. It states that substantial harm is a high bar that may not arise in many cases and that while the level of harm will be at the discretion of the decision maker, generally substantial harm is a high test that will only arise where a development seriously affects a key element of an asset’s special interest. It is the degree of harm, rather than the scale of development, that is to be assessed.

- 2.20 The PPG also provides definitions of the different types of heritage interest as follows:
1. Archaeological interest: As defined in the Glossary to the NPPF, there will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
 2. Architectural and artistic interest: These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture.
 3. Historic interest: An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

Overview: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning

- 2.21 The PPS5 Practice Guide was withdrawn in March 2015 and replaced with three Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes (GPAs) published by Historic England. GPA1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans provides guidance to local planning authorities to help them make well informed and effective local plans. GPA2: Managing Significance in Decision-Making includes technical advice on the repair and restoration of historic buildings and alterations to heritage assets to guide local planning authorities, owners, practitioners and other interested parties. GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets replaces guidance published in 2011. These are complemented by the Historic England Advice Notes in Planning which include HEA1: Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (February 2016), HEA2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets (February 2016), HEA3: The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans (October 2015), and HEA4: Tall Buildings (December 2015).

GPA1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans (March 2015)

- 2.22 This advice note focuses on the importance of identifying heritage policies within Local Plans. The advice echoes the NPPF by stressing the importance of formulating Local Plans based on up-to-date and relevant evidence on economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area, including the historic environment.

GPA2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (March 2015)

- 2.23 This document provides advice on numerous ways in which decision making in the historic environment could be undertaken, emphasising that the first step for all applicants is to understand the significance of any affected heritage asset and the contribution of its setting to that significance. In line with the NPPF and PPG, the document states that early engagement and expert advice in considering and assessing the significance of heritage assets is encouraged. The advice suggests a structured, staged approach to the assembly and analysis of relevant information:
1. Understand the significance of the affected assets;
 2. Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance;
 3. Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF;
 4. Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;

5. Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance balanced with the need for change; and
6. Offset negative impacts to significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected.

GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Second Edition; December 2017)

- 2.24 This advice note focuses on the management of change within the setting of heritage assets. This document replaces GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (March 2017) and Seeing History in the View (English Heritage, 2011) in order to aid practitioners with the implementation of national legislation, policies and guidance relating to the setting of heritage assets found in the 1990 Act, the NPPF and PPG. The guidance is largely a continuation of the philosophy and approach of the 2011 and 2015 documents and does not present a divergence in either the definition of setting or the way in which it should be assessed.
- 2.25 As with the NPPF the document defines setting as ‘the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve’. Setting is also described as being a separate term to curtilage, character and context. The guidance emphasises that setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, and that its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset, or the ability to appreciate that significance. It also states that elements of setting may make a positive, negative or neutral contribution to the significance of the heritage asset.
- 2.26 While setting is largely a visual term, with views considered to be an important consideration in any assessment of the contribution that setting makes to the significance of an asset, and thus the way in which an asset is experienced, setting also encompasses other environmental factors including noise, vibration and odour. Historical and cultural associations may also form part of the asset’s setting, which can inform or enhance the significance of a heritage asset.
- 2.27 This document provides guidance on practical and proportionate decision making with regards to the management of change within the setting of heritage assets. It is stated that the protection of the setting of a heritage asset need not prevent change and that decisions relating to such issues need to be based on the nature, extent and level of the significance of a heritage asset, further weighing up the potential public benefits associated with the proposals. It is further stated that changes within the setting of a heritage asset may have positive or neutral effects.
- 2.28 The document also states that the contribution made to the significance of heritage assets by their settings will vary depending on the nature of the heritage asset and its setting, and that different heritage assets may have different abilities to accommodate change without harming their significance. Setting should, therefore, be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- 2.29 Historic England recommends using a series of detailed steps in order to assess the potential effects of a proposed development on significance of a heritage asset. The 5-step process is as follows:
1. Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected;
 2. Assess the degree to which these settings and views make a contribution to the significance of a heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated;
 3. Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on the significance or on the ability to appreciate it;
 4. Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm; and
 5. Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

Local Planning Policy

- 2.30 In considering any planning application for development, the planning authority will be mindful of the framework set by government policy, in this instance the NPPF, by current Development Plan Policy and by other material considerations.
- 2.31 In considering any planning application for development, the planning authority will be mindful of the framework set by government policy, in this instance the NPPF, by current Development Plan Policy and by other material considerations.
- 2.32 Local planning policy for the Site is currently prescribed by Tamworth Borough Council and Lichfield District Council, with all except a small area within the southern portion of the Site falling within the jurisdiction of the latter. The relevant policies of both authorities are therefore reproduced below.

Tamworth Local Plan 2006-2031 (adopted February 2016)

Policy EN6: Protecting the Historic Environment is directly relevant to this report. It states:

- 2.33 *'Development that affects designated heritage assets including conservation areas, listed buildings, scheduled monuments and non-designated heritage assets including locally listed buildings and undesignated archaeology, will be required to assess the impact of the development on the asset through a heritage statement and statement of significance and clearly demonstrate how the significance, including its setting, will be protected, conserved and, where possible, enhanced. Where sites are located in a conservation area or an area of high archaeological potential, particularly the historic town centre core, the Council's Conservation Officer and Staffordshire County Council Environment Team (Historic Environment) should be consulted at an early stage. Proposals will be required to pay particular attention to:*
- a. scale, form, height, massing, detailing and materials of the development, the existing building and physical context to which it relates;
 - b. historically significant boundaries, street layouts, open spaces, landscape features and structures identified in the conservation area appraisals including walls, railings, street furniture and paved surfaces;
 - c. important views of listed buildings, scheduled monuments and historic townscape as identified in the conservation area appraisals'.

It goes on to state that:

- 2.34 *'Where practical and viable, development should address issues identified in the historic environment evidence, in particular the Extensive Urban Survey and, Conservation Area Appraisals. Development of allocated housing and employment sites should have regard to the Heritage Impact Assessment. Particular attention will be paid to enhancing key buildings in the town centre, the Creative Quarter initiative, positive redevelopment or enhancement of negative features, public realm improvements and proposals that will enhance buildings classified as 'at risk' and 'vulnerable' in the Heritage at Risk Survey'.*

Policy EN5: Design of New Development is also relevant to this report. It states that, inter alia:

- 2.35 *'High quality buildings and places will be achieved across Tamworth with particular attention paid to the enhancement of the town centre, conservation areas, the Sustainable Urban Extensions and Regeneration Priority Areas. Poor design or design that fails to take the opportunities available to improve the character and quality of an area and the way it functions will be refused.*
- 2.36 New developments will be expected to:

- d. respect and where appropriate reflect existing local architectural and historic characteristics but without ruling out innovative or contemporary design which is still sympathetic to the valued characteristics of an area;*
- e. take into account the impact of the proposal on the significance of heritage assets;*
- f. be of a scale, layout, form and massing which conserves or enhances the context of the development; and*
- g. utilise materials and overall detailed design which conserves or enhances the context of the development.*

Lichfield District Local Plan

- 2.37 The Lichfield Local Plan is made up of a number of documents, with the primary document being the Lichfield District Local Plan Strategy 2008-2029 (adopted February 2015). The following policies of the Local Plan Strategy are relevant to this report.

Strategic Priority 14 involves built heritage and aims:

- 2.38 *'To protect and enhance the District's built environment and heritage assets, its historic environment and local distinctiveness, ensuring an appropriate balance between built development and open space, protecting the character of residential areas, protecting existing open spaces and improving the quality of and accessibility to open space and semi-natural green spaces.'*

Core Policy 14: Our Built and Historic Environment states that:

- 2.39 *'The District Council will protect and improve the built environment and have special regard to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment through positive action and partnership working. The historic environment contributes to sustainable communities, including economic vitality, and new development must make a positive contribution to the historic environment's local distinctiveness.'*
- 2.40 *The significance of designated heritage assets including nationally protected listed buildings and their settings, ancient monuments, archaeological sites and conservation areas and their settings, will be conserved and enhanced and given the highest level of protection. Other heritage assets including locally listed buildings, and locally important parks and gardens will also be conserved and enhanced. In conjunction with Policy NR5, landscapes that form the setting to the built and historic environment will also be conserved and enhanced.'*
- 2.41 *Change will be directed to the most appropriate locations taking into account the District's heritage assets and their settings, including the historic landscape, as informed by the local evidence base. Development proposals which conserve and enhance a heritage asset or its setting will be supported where clear and convincing justification has been provided through an assessment of the significance of the asset or its setting.'*
- 2.42 *The sustainable re-use, maintenance and repair of listed buildings and other heritage assets will be supported, particularly those that have been identified as being at risk. In conservation areas, the built form will be protected and enhanced and there should be no net loss of trees, with physical improvements to conservation areas linked to the objectives contained within conservation area appraisals and their management plans where appropriate.'*
- 2.43 *Opportunities to improve understanding of the District's heritage assets will be supported through partnership work with local communities and societies using a range of historic characterisation tools, the County Council's Historic Environment Record, the expansion of the local list and the programme of Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans.'*

- 2.44 *The District Council will seek to maintain local distinctiveness through the built environment in terms of buildings and public spaces and enhance the relationships and linkages between the built and natural environment and through the realisation of proposed major new development.'*

Wigginton Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (December 2018)

- 2.45 The Site falls outside the boundary but within the setting of the Wigginton Conservation Area. The Wigginton Conservation Area was designated in 1979 and covers 6.96 hectares. The 2018 appraisal and management plan updates the 1979 Wigginton Conservation Area document which was published at the date of designation. The purpose of the appraisal and management plan is to provide a basis for development control decisions and for developing proposals and initiatives for the area in the future.

Wigginton, Hopwas and Comberford Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2029 (made December 2016)

- 2.46 The Site also falls within the boundary defined within the Wigginton, Hopwas and Comberford Neighbourhood Plan. The following policies are relevant to built heritage:
- 2.47 **Policy WHC1** - *The existing rural environs of the Neighbourhood Plan Area shall be maintained to ensure that there is a clear distinction between the villages of Wigginton, Hopwas and Comberford and the urban area of Tamworth. Any proposed development shall have regard to this distinction and shall only be allowed where it is supported by evidence that the distinctiveness as defined is not adversely affected. There shall be no coalescence with Tamworth.*
- 2.48 **Policy WHC3** states that *'new development throughout the Plan Area should protect assets of the historic environment and enhance those characteristics, qualities and features that contribute to the local distinctiveness of the Plan Area's environment in particular.*
1. New development should be of a scale, mass and built form that responds to the characteristics of the site and its surroundings, care should be taken to ensure building(s) height, scale and form, including the roofline, do not disrupt the visual amenities of the street scene and impact upon any significant wider landscape views.
 2. Due regard shall be had of all identified heritage assets to ensure that new development does not detract from the designated and undesignated components of the historic environment, particularly where heritage assets are part of the visual character of the area.'

Policy W1 relates to development in the vicinity of Browns Lane and states:

- 2.49 *'There shall be no coalescence of any development with Wigginton. New development should have regard to the approved housing development off Browns Lane with respect to separation distances from Wigginton. In this respect the western boundary of any development proposed in accordance with Policy North of Tamworth should be the Birmingham-Derby Railway Line'.*
- 2.50 It should be noted that a consented residential scheme is currently being built west of this railway line, immediately adjoining the Site to the south east.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 2.51 Both Lichfield District Council and Tamworth Borough Council have adopted a series of supplementary planning documents which have relevance to the Site and the proposals. In particular:

1. Lichfield Council's Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Document (adopted December 2015), which provides further guidance on development within the setting of designated heritage assets, has been referred to in the production of this report; and
2. Lichfield District Local Plan Allocations 2008-2029 (adopted 16 July 2019) also referenced in this report

3 HISTORIC BUILT ENVIRONMENT APPRAISAL

3.1 Introduction

3.2.1 The Site is centred at SK 21175 06072 and comprises two adjoining field parcels, currently in agricultural use. The Site is irregular in shape and the topography slopes gently downwards, broadly from north to south. The principal access is off Browns Lane to the south.

3.2.2 The Site adjoins open fields to the north and east. To the south, it is bounded by residential development dating largely from the post-war period, as well as a residential development currently being built out at Chestnut Walk. To the west, the site adjoins Main Road and ribbon development along Sill Green. The Birmingham to Derby railway line passes a short distance east of the Site. On the eastern side of the railway line running parallel to the Site up to Syerscote Lane is land allocated for the residential development of 1000 homes (Policy NT1 of Lichfield District Local Plan Allocations 2008-2029 adopted 16 July 2019).

3.2 Historic Development

3.2.3 The history of Tamworth is well-documented: the focus here is on the historic development of the Site and its immediate vicinity.

3.2.4 The full map regression attached within the Appendix to this report demonstrates that though the Site has remained undeveloped agricultural land for much of its history, its surroundings have undergone extensive change.

3.2.5 A settlement is known to have existed at Wigginton during the early medieval period, occupying a strategic position on what may have been a trade route used for transporting salt from the River Mease at Edingale to Tamworth (now Main Road, adjoining the Site to the west). Little evidence survives of this earlier settlement other than earthworks situated at the northern end of the village and the majority of standing buildings date from the eighteenth century or later. The growth of the village in the post-medieval period relied on links between the settlement and the surrounding agricultural land.

3.2.6 The 1775 Yates Map of Staffordshire mapping shows the Site as situated considerably closer to Wigginton than to Tamworth, with some ribbon development adjoining the Site at Sill Green to the west. By 1845, 'Wigginton House' (now known as Perrycrofts, discussed below) is clearly depicted, to the south of Browns Lane. The railway line is also marked as running east of the Site.

3.2.7 The 1882 OS Map shows the Site divided into a number of field parcels, with a structure (presumably a field barn) situated within the south west field and a trackway running through the western reaches of the Site. The 1882 OS Map shows the construction of further cottages at Sill Green, whilst by 1924 allotments are shown beyond Sill Green immediately to the west of Main Road. Otherwise, late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century mapping shows limited changes in the vicinity of the Site.

3.2.8 Tamworth grew rapidly in the post-war years, taking on much of the overspill population from the West Midlands conurbation, situated to the south west of the town. The dramatic expansion of the northern fringe the town is apparent by the 1964 OS Map, which shows extensive residential development around Wigginton Road to the south of the Site and isolated dwellings adjoining the junction with Browns Lane. Perrycrofts is marked as 'Wigginton Hotel' by this stage. To the north of the Site, further ribbon development to the northern end of Main Road has eroded any former sense of separation between Wigginton and Sill Green.

3.2.9 By the 1978 OS Map, further intensification of development is apparent, stretching along Browns Lane and entirely enclosing Perrycrofts. Later OS mapping shows further infill development along

Main Road between Sill Green and Wigginton, as well as the construction of estate housing along Walrand Close to the western side of Main Road.

- 3.2.10 The Site now sits within an increasingly suburban context, particularly to the south and east, with further residential development currently being built adjoining the Site at Chestnut Walk. Further substantial residential development of 1000 homes is envisaged to the east of the Site between Ashby Road and Syerscote Lane as set out in the Lichfield District Local Plan Allocations 2008-2023 (adopted 16 July 2019).

3.3 Assessment of Heritage Assets

- 3.3.1 In order to identify and assess those built heritage assets potentially affected by the proposed development a search radius of 1 kilometre has been used. There are three listed buildings within 1 kilometre of the Site, although the Site is not considered to form a part of the setting of the two of these by virtue of the Site not sharing any inter-visibility, or sequential views with these listed buildings, and the lack of any apparent functional or direct historical link between the Site and these heritage assets. Accordingly only Perrycrofts, situated circa 60m south west of the Site, is considered to have the potential to be affected by the proposed development.
- 3.3.2 The Wigginton Conservation Area is located within 1 kilometre of the Site and may also be affected by the proposed development of the Site. Consideration is, therefore, given to each of these heritage assets within the following section which provides an assessment of each built heritage asset's significance, including the contribution that their settings (including the Site) make to this significance.

Perrycrofts (Grade II; NHL 1293064)

- 3.3.3 Perrycrofts is thought to have been constructed in circa 1810, originally intended as a modest private residence, but now subdivided into flats. The building is in classical style, with elevations of brick incorporating ashlar dressings set under a hipped tiled roof. The front aspect is to the east, with an ornate classical porch featuring Doric columns clearly demarcating this as the principal elevation. A substantial brick-built extension was added to the west of the building in the mid to late twentieth century.



Plate 1: Perrycrofts, viewed from the north, showing front elevation (left), side elevation (centre) and twentieth century extension (right).

- 3.3.4 Historic mapping demonstrates that the Perrycrofts was originally set within a predominantly rural context, with Browns Lane providing a sense of physical separation between the Site and the building. The immediate setting of Perrycrofts is now tightly constrained and defined by the surrounding post-war residential development, both within and beyond its historic grounds south of Browns Lane. Consequently, the building is almost entirely visually enclosed. This development is at odds with the character of the building and can be considered a detracting element of its setting.
- 3.3.5 The Site is situated approximately 80m north east of Perrycrofts. Views between the Site and the listed building are limited by intervening post-war development around Lyneham Close and by tree planting adjoining Browns Lane. Very limited views are however available from the southern portion of the Site, taking in the roofline and part of the uppermost storey of the north (side) elevation of the listed building, in the context of the surrounding post-war housing. It is possible to identify the asset as a building of some size and scale, but beyond this, these views allow for no meaningful experience of the aesthetic or historical illustrative values which underpin the asset's significance; thus limiting the contribution made by these views to the significance of the listed building. Furthermore, the Site, which forms part of the extended setting of the listed building, is entirely screened by the surrounding modern housing in return views.



Plate 2: View towards Perrycrofts (beyond modern dwelling with yellow brick elevations, centre) from the south western portion of the Site, demonstrating the limited nature of these views, with the building experienced in the context of surrounding post-war development.

- 3.3.6 Perrycrofts is a heritage asset of high (national) significance, which is primarily derived from the building's special architectural and historic interest, including its aesthetic value, principally experienced in views of its principal (east) elevation. The building also possesses some historical illustrative value as a substantial, classically-designed residence of the Regency period.

The significance of the listed building has been considerably eroded by successive alterations to its fabric and changes in use; notably in the mid to late twentieth century when the building was converted to flats and its grounds redeveloped as estate housing. The Site forms a part of the

extended setting of the listed building, with part of the Site permitting partial views of the roofline and uppermost storey of the north (side) elevation of the building. These views make a very slight contribution to the significance of the listed building in providing very limited sense of its remnant historic rural setting.

Wigginton Conservation Area

- 3.3.7 Wigginton Conservation Area was first designated in 1979 and a document called Wigginton Conservation Area was jointly produced by Lichfield District Council and Staffordshire County Council at this time. An updated Conservation Area Appraisal document (the Appraisal) was published in December 2018 which updated and expanded on the original.
- 3.3.8 A brief overview of the character, appearance and overall significance of the Conservation Area as identified in the Appraisal is referenced below, with the following assessment also based on a Site visit and historic research.

Description

- 3.3.9 The boundary of the Conservation Area is tightly drawn around the historic core of the village, which forms a largely linear settlement along the section of Main Road running southwards up to the northern boundary of Walrand Close. A small area of open land, apparently historically associated with an adjoining farmstead, is included within the Conservation Area boundary to the north west. The Conservation Area has a mixed character, with the majority of buildings dating from the post-medieval period, constructed in the local vernacular tradition, incorporating brick elevations and simple architectural treatment. There are some stone elements and some rendered properties and a small number of buildings have painted brickwork. As demonstrated above, the medieval core of the settlement is thought to have been situated some distance further north along Main Road. The Conservation Area also includes a number of twentieth-century dwellings which vary in design and use of materials, further illustrating the historic evolution of the village core.

Significance of Wigginton Conservation Area

- 3.3.10 The significance of the Wigginton Conservation Area arises predominantly through the architectural and historic interest of its built form and its relationship with the largely linear historic street pattern, which still constitutes the spine of the settlement today. The Conservation Area contains several historic buildings which are separately listed in their own right, including the Church of St Leonard (Grade II) and 104 Main Road (Grade II); none of which are visible from the Site.
- 3.3.11 The rural setting of the Conservation Area also contributes to the character of the Conservation Area and its significance. The main views that support this contribution are identified in the Appraisal as those out of the village down Comberford Lane and Syerscote Lane.

Setting of Wigginton Conservation Area

- 3.3.12 The setting of the Conservation Area can be considered to include much of the surrounding rural landscape, which as agricultural fields are likely to have historically supported the settlement. The Conservation Area is generally relatively inward-looking, with limited views available from within the Conservation Area boundary taking in the surrounding rural landscape. However, the Appraisal does identify views that it deems as adding to the character of the Conservation Area and should be taken into account when considering proposals for new development. These are referenced in more detail below.

Views from the Conservation Area to its setting

- 3.3.13 Long distance views looking out from the Conservation Area are predominately across rolling countryside. However, those to the east and west are the most intact. Outward views, to the south

west, are curtailed by obtrusive modern housing development along Walrand Close which is a detracting element of the Conservation Area's setting. Mid to late twentieth-century ribbon development to the south of the Conservation Area along Main Road is also a detracting element, and has eroded the historic separation between Wigginton and the former hamlet of Sill Green.

- 3.3.14 Shorter views from the Conservation Area are identified in the Appraisal as being confined to specific localities through routes and spaces, framed by development. Whilst the Appraisal references the view along Main Road this is in the context of the clearly visible strong building line which emphasises the linear character. The views the Appraisal identifies as important and those that significantly contribute to the character of the Wigginton Conservation Area are those out of the village down Comberford Lane and Syerscote Lane.

Views from the Site

- 3.3.15 Long-distance views looking out from the Site are available from the south west part of the Site, as well as from the northern reaches of the Site, taking in the southern part of the Conservation Area, in the context of Sill Green, post-war development south of the Conservation Area boundary and the surrounding rural landscape. These views allow for some understanding of the significance of the Conservation Area as a rural settlement which evolved distinct from Tamworth to the south; however, they allow for very limited experience of the architectural quality of the built form or its relationship with the linear historic street pattern which underpins the Area's significance.



Plate 3: Typical view of Conservation Area from south western reaches of the Site, in the context of Sill Green, post-war development south of the Conservation Area boundary and the surrounding rural landscape.

Views of the Site from the Conservation Area

- 3.3.16 Partial, long-distance return views of the Site from the Conservation Area are available from the southern tip of the Conservation Area. These views include the south western reaches of the Site, in the context of post-war development adjoining the Conservation Area to the south, ribbon development along Sill Green, and the northern fringe of Tamworth beyond. These views make some contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area, providing a sense of rural context and separation between Wigginton and Tamworth. The majority of the Site is, however, screened in these views by the surrounding topography and post-war development along Main Road discussed above.



Plate 4: Long-distance return views from the southern part of the Conservation Area, showing the south west portion of the Site (centre), beyond ribbon development along Main Road and Sill Green.

- 3.3.17 The Site is visible in sequential, kinetic views along Main Road, which as the name suggests is one of the principal approaches to the Conservation Area. The Site again provides some rural context in these views, reinforcing a sense of separation between Wigginton and Tamworth. This means that while there is limited direct inter-visibility between the Site and the Conservation Area at this point, the undeveloped, agricultural character of the Site does positively contribute to the significance of the Conservation Area. Owing to the Site being set at some distance above the level of the roadway, however, other than the hedged boundary to the western perimeter of the Site, which is a prominent feature in these views, the majority of the Site is screened from view; thus limiting the contribution made by much of the Site in these views.

Site's Contribution to significance of Wigginton Conservation Area

- 3.3.18 The Site shares little inter-visibility with the majority of the Conservation Area. Visibility is generally restricted to close or longer distance views from the north, in which the Site is seen in context with the existing (and emerging) urban edge of Tamworth. However, it is considered to make some positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area as part of the wider rural setting of its southern fringe.

- 3.3.19 The presence of twentieth-century development to the south of the Conservation Area along Main Road does, however, form a strong demarcation between the Site and the Conservation Area, further reducing the rural and agricultural context it provides. Although the Site lies immediately adjacent to Main Road (the principal approach to the Conservation Area from the south) the prevalence of existing ribbon development to the eastern side of Main Road stretching from the junction with Browns Lane, continuing to Sill Green and beyond to the southern fringe of the Conservation Area, means that other than part of the hedged boundary forming the western perimeter of the Site, the majority of the Site, whilst undeveloped, makes limited contribution to an understanding of the significance of the Conservation Area as an historic rural settlement. The railway line to the east of the Site also provides a further urbanising influence which reduces the rural context provided by the Site to the Conservation Area. The Site therefore makes a minor contribution to the overall significance of the Wigginton Conservation Area.
- 3.3.20 In summary, whilst the rural setting is a positive contributor to the significance of the Conservation Area, the Site plays a less important part in this context. This is due to the existing twentieth-century development between the edge of the Conservation Area and the Site boundary, the limited views to and from the Site and the already changing nature of the Site adjacent to the existing urban edge of Tamworth and the railway line.

4 PROPOSALS AND ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

4.1 Proposals

- 4.1.1 The proposals include the redevelopment of the Site for residential use, as shown on the indicative masterplan below.
- 4.1.2 Development is focussed within the eastern field parcel, with the western reaches of the Site retained as open space. Existing hedgerows and landscaped boundary treatments will also be retained as part of the scheme, and will be augmented by further planting interspersed throughout the Site.
- 4.1.3 It is important to note that in July 2019 Lichfield District Council published a Local Plan Allocations 2008-2029 document. Policy NT1 of this document allocates land running parallel to the east of the Site and Wigginton Village for the substantial residential development of 1000 homes between Ashby Road and Syerscote Lane. As such the context of the Site is due to change considerably over the coming years.

4.2 Assessment of Impact



Figure 1: Indicative masterplan showing proposed development of the Site.

- 4.2.1 The following section will assess the likely impact of the proposed development on the significance of those heritage assets identified and assessed above.
- 4.2.2 In both cases any impacts to designated heritage assets will occur as a result of new development within the setting of those heritage assets.

Perrycrofts (Grade II; NHL 1293064)

- 4.2.3 There will be limited alteration within one part of the extended setting of this listed building arising from the proposed development. This will include the reduction or alteration of long-distance, glimpsed views of the uppermost storey and roofline of the listed building currently available from within the southern part of the Site, with some of these views being partially blocked by the proposed residential development within the south east reaches of the Site. The proposed retention of the western reaches of the Site as open space, from where the majority of these views are available, however, will limit the alteration in these views. These views currently make a very small contribution to the significance of the listed building, providing some limited sense of its remnant historic rural setting; however they do not allow for any meaningful understanding of the significance of the listed building as a substantial classically-designed residence of the Regency period, or an appreciation of its historical illustrative or aesthetic values. The loss or alteration of these very limited views will not fundamentally change the setting of the listed building, which is already experienced primarily within the context of post-war residential development. Consequently the proposed development will have no impact on the significance of Perrycrofts.

Wigginton Conservation Area

- 4.2.4 As identified in section 3 above and in the LVIA, the western section of the Site and the views to and from it play a role in retaining the setting of the Conservation Area and its separate identity from the northern urban edge of Tamworth (paragraph 5.21 of the LVIA). The retention of the western reaches of the Site as open space will provide a buffer between the Conservation Area and the proposed residential development, retaining a sense of separation between Wigginton Village including the Conservation Area and the northern edge of Tamworth. To the east of the on-Site hedgerow, the development envelope is also tapered to the east, to accommodate the countryside view corridor that extends across this part of the Site (LVIA 5.22).
- 4.2.5 The proposed siting of the dwellings in the eastern parcel of the Site and retention of the western buffer means that there will be a limited impact on the visual setting of the Conservation Area. Return views of the Site from within the Conservation Area boundary will be largely unaltered, with the portion of the Site perceptible in views from Main Road within the southern boundary of the Conservation Area still experienced as undeveloped open space (Plate 5). The approach into the Conservation Area from the south along Main Road will also remain unaltered, with the Site continuing to provide rural context in these views. Although the construction of built form within the eastern reaches of the Site will lead to a partial erosion of the rural context provided by the Site to the Conservation Area, (already limited by the urbanising influence of the railway line to the east and the adjacent northern edge of Tamworth) the retention and augmentation of boundary planting to the Site's northern boundary will ensure that the Site's rural character is largely maintained.
- 4.2.6 As identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal, the important views that significantly contribute to the character of the Wigginton Conservation Area are those out of the village down Comberford Lane and Syerscote Lane. These views will remain unaffected by the proposed development on the Site.

- 4.2.7 The Conservation Area is tightly drawn around the historic core of the village. Its significance arises predominately from the architectural quality of the built form and the relationship with the linear historic street pattern. Development of the Site will not impact this architectural and historic interest. The development proposals which will extend the edge of Tamworth further to the north-east, amount to a minor extension of Tamworth that will be experienced in the context of the existing settlement. Omitting built form from the entire western part of the Site avoids physical and/or visual coalescence between the edge of Tamworth and the Conservation Area (LVIA 6.32). Retention and enhancement of existing vegetation will contain the development envelope such that there will be a very limited change in views to and from the Conservation Area. As such the development proposals will result in a **negligible impact** to the overall significance of the Wigginton Conservation Area, equating to a low level of less than substantial harm. This harm is weighed against the wider public benefits articulated in the planning statement that accompanies this Built Heritage Assessment.

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 This Built Heritage Assessment has been prepared in order to assess the potential impact on the historic built environment arising from the proposed development of Land at Browns Lane, Tamworth.
- 5.2 It has been demonstrated that the proposed development has the potential to impact on the significance of one listed building, Grade II listed Perrycrofts, in addition to the Wigginton Conservation Area.
- 5.3 The report has demonstrated that the proposed development will result in no harm to the significance of Perrycrofts, with its special interest being preserved. It has further been identified that the proposed development will result in a negligible impact to the significance of the Wigginton Conservation Area. As recommended in step 4 of GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets, the proposed development has explored ways to minimise this harm most notably through the Site layout. This impact can be further mitigated through design, materials and orientation of the proposed dwellings. As the harm is considered to be less than substantial in magnitude, specifically at the lower end of that spectrum, thus engaging paragraph 196 of the NPPF, this limited level of harm is required to be weighed against the wider public benefits of the scheme. The planning statement that accompanies this Built Heritage Assessment articulates the wider public benefits of the scheme.
- 5.4 This Built Heritage Assessment meets the requirements of the NPPF and local planning policy and is considered to provide sufficient information and assessment to identify the potential impacts arising from the development of the Site on the historic built environment.