

Urban Design Proof of Evidence.

Michael Carr (BA HONS LA DIP UD RUDP).

Land north of Browns Lane, Tamworth, Staffordshire.

Outline Planning Application for up to 210 dwellings, public open space, landscaping, sustainable urban drainage and associated infrastructure.
All matters reserved except access.

On behalf of Summix BLT Developments Ltd

Date: June 2024 | Pegasus Ref: P24-0530 | CD 7.5

Appeal Ref: W/24/3340089

LPA Refs: 18/00840/OUTMEI (Lichfield District Council) & 0241/2018 (Tamworth District Council)

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1. Witness Background and Particulars

- 1.1. My name is Michael Carr, and I am the Director in charge of Design and Masterplanning at Pegasus Group. I have over 25 years' experience of designing the built environment.
- 1.2. I hold a First-Class Bachelor of Arts Honours Degree and received a distinction for a subsequent Graduate Diploma in Landscape Architecture. Following this I studied for a Graduate Diploma in Urban Design. I am an affiliate member of the Royal Institute of British Architects and an approved Urban Design Group Recognised Practitioner. I am also a member of the Gloucestershire Design Review Panel.
- 1.3. Pegasus provides design consultancy services for a variety of developments including residential, commercial, leisure, education, and retail projects throughout the United Kingdom. I am regularly asked to present evidence and this is informed by my project work, which involves design from concept to implementation.
- 1.4. A number of projects I have worked on have won RTPI awards and Building for Life accreditations. The housing minister has in the past commended two developments I have been involved with, the redevelopment of the former airbase at Heyford Park and Spirit Quarters Coventry, in his speech to a Design Quality Conference.
- 1.5. The evidence that I have prepared, and provide in the Proof of Evidence, is true and is given in accordance with the relevant guidance. I confirm that the opinions expressed are my true and professional opinions.



2. Introductions and Scope of Statement

- 2.1. I am instructed on behalf of Summix BLT Developments Ltd (Appellant) to present an independent Urban Design Review that demonstrates the urban design quality of the proposals. I shall demonstrate the proposals satisfaction of the urban design related policies raised within the Reason for Refusal 2 (RfR) from Lichfield District Council (Appeal A), which states:

“2. The proposed development would extend the northern edge of Tamworth much closer to the village of Wigginton, of which the historic part is a designated Conservation Area. The proposed development would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the Conservation Area by virtue of causing detriment to its setting, in particular with regard to views in and out of the Conservation Area, which make a positive contribution to its setting. None of the public benefits associated with the proposals would outweigh this harm. The proposals are therefore contrary to policies CP1 (Spatial Strategy), CP3 (Delivering Sustainable Development), CP14 (Our Built and Historic Environment), BE1 (High Quality Development) and NR5 (Natural and Historic Landscapes) of the Local Plan Strategy 2015, Policy BE2 (Heritage Assets) of the Local Plan Allocations Document, the Historic Environment SPD, the Sustainable Design SPD, Policies W1, WHC1 and WHC3 the Wigginton Hopwas and Comberford Neighbourhood Plan (2016) and the National Planning Policy Framework.”

- 2.2. It is noted that RfR2 is read primarily as a heritage and landscape issue and no specific urban design related RfRs have been issued. However, the citation of urban design related policy and guidance requires high quality design approach to be demonstrated.

- 2.3. It is further noted that the Inspector in their pre-CMC Agenda & Note highlights “the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, with regards to spatial and visual separation of Hopwas and Wigginton”. Within discussion during the CMC this was principally considered a landscape issue, however there are some urban design related considerations with respect to settlement legibility that would be helpful to address to assist the Inspector.

- 2.4. I am also instructed to present evidence that demonstrates the urban design quality of in the proposals in respect of RfR1 from Tamworth Borough Council (Appeal B), which states:

“1. The area of the site within the boundary of Tamworth Borough Council is connected to a wider development which is not allocated for development. Approving this part of the development where Lichfield refuse their application would potentially permit an access road to a development site with no planning permission. The development therefore would be out of character with the surrounding area and not conform to Tamworth Borough Council Policy EN5 and the NPPF.”

- 2.5. The Inspector also raises “the effect of the proposed access on the character and appearance of the area, having regard to the development subject of Appeal A” as one of the issues for Appeal B.

- 2.6. It is noted within the Tamworth SoC (CD5.3) at paragraph 2.9 that ***“Should the appeal be allowed there are no significant design issues of note”*** (my emphasis) in respect of the development proposals falling within their administrative area.

- 2.7. This is confirmed further within the Tamworth Borough Statement of Common Ground (SoCG, CD5.5), which explains the RfR is as a result of LDC refusing the principal area of development within its own administrative area, Tamworth Borough Council could not approve the planning application which could have resulted in an access to development that would not come forward. It is agreed common ground that should the Inspector be minded to allow the appeal, the rationale for Tamworth BC RfR will fall away. As such, this review will primarily address urban design related policy adopted by Lichfield District Council.



- 2.8. I became involved with the site after the refusal of the application, I was asked to review the validity of the Council's urban design related concerns in relation to the application.
- 2.9. For the avoidance of doubt, this Design Evidence considers the site as a whole, rather than separate applications within each respective administrative area. I shall differentiate between administrative districts where applicable to design factors.
- 2.10. It is noted that the key issues identified within the agreed Statements of Common Ground (SoCG, CD5.4) in respect of the RfRs as being:
- I. Spatial Strategy;
 - II. Affordable Housing Provision; and
 - III. Impact to Wigginton Conservation Area.
- 2.11. Further confirmation that design does not form part of the RfR is contained within the SoCG Addendum at paragraph 3.1 (CD5.6).
- 2.12. This Urban Design Proof of Evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the proposals are a suitable form of development in response to the local context and in accordance with local and national design policy. I defer to others in respect of technical matters and the application of weight to be applied.
- 2.13. I will demonstrate the proposals ability to create an appropriately designed built form that at the appropriate detailed design stages will provide development consistent with the local character. Furthermore, the proposals ability to satisfy RfR cited Policies BE1 and Policy EN5 within Lichfield District Council and Tamworth Borough Councils adopted Development Plans respectively (CD3.1.1 & CD3.2.1).

3. Design Related Planning Policy and Guidance

- 3.1. Relevant Government and local planning policy and guidance will be discussed within planning evidence. From a design perspective, there are a number of policies and guidance documents (National and Local) that I will consider. This section sets out those most relevant from which the assessment of design related RfR will be carried out in later sections.

National Planning Policies

- 3.2. The NPPF states at Paragraph 8 that the planning system has three interdependent key objectives, which when pursued in a mutually supportive way, can achieve sustainable development. The three key objectives are:

- I. An economic objective;
- II. A social objective; and
- III. An environmental objective.

- 3.3. There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out at Paragraph 11.

- 3.4. The National Planning Policy Framework establishes the emphasis to be placed on good design at Section 12: Achieving well-designed places. Paragraph 131 states:

“The creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities...”

- 3.5. The NPPF is clear at paragraph 135 that design planning policy and decision making should ensure that developments:

“a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to the local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users, and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”



3.6. I also note that at NPPF paragraph 139 states:

"139. Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:

a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or

b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings."

3.7. The NPPF is accompanied by the on-line Government resource Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). The Design: Process and Tools PPG provides guidance on the methods and processes available to both applicants and local authorities to ensure the delivery of well-designed and high-quality, long lasting places with considered design solutions, under the following headings:

- I. Planning for well-designed places;
- II. Making decisions about design;
- III. Tools for assessing and improving design quality; and
- IV. Effective community engagement on design.

3.8. The National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) states at paragraph 1:

"Well-designed places can be achieved by taking a proactive and collaborative approach at all stages of the planning process, from policy and plan formulation through to the determination of planning applications and the post approval stage."

(para. 001, PPG, ID: 26-001-20191001, October 2021)

3.9. Being published in October 2021 by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), the National Design Guide (NDG) further reinforces the delivery of quality places.

3.10. I note the NDG states at paragraphs 58:

“Where the scale or density of a new development is very different to the existing place, it may be more appropriate to create a new identity rather than to scale upon the character of an existing place in its context. New character may also arise from a response to how today’s lifestyles could evolve in the future, or to the proposed methods of development and construction....”

(NDG, October 2021, Para 58)

Local Policy and Guidance

3.11. Reference is made to the relevant policies and guidance where appropriate. Those which are relevant to this site include:

Lichfield District Council Local Plan Strategy (2008 – 2029)

3.12. The urban design related policy referred to in the refusal for this site is Policy BE1: High Quality Design, as primarily a heritage issue. It is further noted the citation of Landscape Character policies. I defer to the relevant Appellant witnesses in respect of Heritage and Landscape matters, referring only to those most relevant to urban design.

3.13. Policy BE1 contains a number of strands, either bulleted or as separate paragraph parts, which detail requirements that will enable the delivery of high quality development in the district:

“All development proposals should ensure that a high quality sustainable built environment can be achieved. Development will be permitted where it can be clearly and convincingly demonstrated that it will have a positive impact on:

- I. The significance of historic environment, such as archaeological sites, sites of historic landscape value, listed buildings, conservation areas, locally listed building and skylines containing important historic, built and natural features (in conjunction with Policy NR5);***
- II. Reducing carbon emissions, by appropriate use of sustainable design and renewable energy schemes (in conjunction with the relevant sections of Core Policy 3, & Policies SC1 and SC2);***
- III. The built vernacular. New development, including extensions and alterations to existing buildings, should carefully respect the character of the surrounding area and development in terms of layout, size, scale, architectural design and public views;***
- IV. Public safety, health and reducing inequality, including the latest ‘designing out crime’ principles;***
- V. Amenity, by avoiding development which causes disturbance through unreasonable traffic generation, noise, light, dust, fumes or other disturbance;***
- VI. The natural environment. Effective hard and soft landscaping including tree planting will be required and should be implemented in an integrated manner, making use of green corridors for movement of people as well as for biodiversity (in conjunction with Core Policy 13, NR3, NR4 and NR6); and***

VII. Sustainable Transport. New development should be located in areas which have good safe access to public transport to reduce the need to travel by private car and should optimise choice of sustainable travel, particularly walking, cycling and public transport, creating new public transport nodes where necessary (in conjunction with Core Policies 3 & 5 and Policy ST1).

New development will have a positive impact on the public realm and ensure high quality, inclusive design. This will be achieved by an appreciation of context, as well as plan, scale, proportion and detail. Specifically designed features, including public art where appropriate, should be integrated into developments in order to enhance the bespoke nature and individuality of design solutions.

Innovative and contemporary designs will be supported where they are sympathetic to the setting and context of the surrounding area and existing development.”

3.14. A summary of the proposals against the urban design related strands of Policy BE1: High Quality Development is contained in following sections.

3.15. There are, of course, a number of additional design related policies contained within the Local Plan, however these are not specifically included within the issued RfRs.

Lichfield District Council Sustainable Design SPD (2015, and updated in 2019)

3.16. Supporting a range of Local Policies, the SPD provides further guidance on a number of urban design related topics. The topics covered range for conceptual principles to guide outline applications through to detailed matters typically covered by RM or Full applications such as applicable parking standard requirements. The sections most relevant to the Appeal proposals are:

- I. Section 2: Connections & Integration; which reflects national and local policy in the delivery of new places which are well connected and permeable, supported by integrated infrastructure (physical, green and social/community) and provides for affordable housing, amongst other requirements; and
- II. Section 3: Layout & Density; which requires new development to incorporate a number of measures that will ensure the delivery sustainable design with the appropriate mix of land uses; development density; and integration with existing communities amongst others.

3.17. Rather than set out individual parts of the SPD, I shall refer to those parts most applicable throughout this evidence.

3.18. It is noted there is reference to a Residential Design Guide SPD, at the time of writing this Guide is under consultation. Reference is made to the emerging SPD where applicable.

Tamworth Borough Council Local Plan (2006 – 2031)

3.19. The urban design related policy referred to in the refusal for this site is Policy EN5: Design of New Development. It is noted that this is in the context of the LPA being unable to approve the development of the access road in the absence of an approval from Lichfield District Council for the remainder of the scheme.

3.20. Whilst the principal envelope for built development is within Lichfield District Council, it is important to note that Policy EN5 of the Tamworth Borough Council LP which contains a number of strands that detail



requirements that will enable the delivery of high quality development in the district. The policy parts are listed below and generally reflect the policy strands contained within Policy BE1 of Lichfield's LP:

“a) 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.

b) Take into account the impact of the proposal on the significance of heritage assets.

c) Be of a scale, layout, form and massing which conserves or enhances the setting of the development.

d) Utilise materials and overall detailed design which conserves or enhances the context of the development.

e) Be outward facing with active frontages which incorporate landscaping and boundary treatments appropriate to the local context.

f) Be legible and allow users to navigate the area with ease by providing landmark buildings at key locations and a choice of routes to walk, cycle or drive along.

g) Minimise or mitigate environmental impacts for the benefit of existing and prospective occupants of neighbouring land. Such impacts may include loss of light, privacy or security or unacceptable noise, pollution, flooding or sense of enclosure.

h) Pay particular regard to highway safety and servicing requirements, the capacity of the local road network and the adopted parking standards set out in Appendix C.

i) Incorporate landscaping appropriate to the site, using native species wherever possible.

j) Maximise health benefits through the incorporation of usable open space and footpaths and links to the wider green infrastructure network, in accordance with Policy EN3.”

- 3.21. Given the position expressed within the Lichfield Borough Councils SoC and the agreed common ground between the parties in respect of the site access and the outcome for the rationale of their RfR should the Inspector be minded to allow this appeal, I consider the urban design related strands set out to be satisfied or capable of being fully satisfied through detailed design of the wider scheme within Lichfield's administrative area. Simply put, demonstration of accordance with the relevant Lichfield urban design related policy will also satisfy the Tamworth urban design related policy.
- 3.22. Rather than assess or set out the individual Tamworth policy parts, I shall refer to those parts most applicable throughout this evidence
- 3.23. There are, of course, a number of additional design related policies contained within the Local Plan, however these are not specifically included within the issued RfRs.

Tamworth Borough Council Design SPD (July 2019)

- 3.24. The Design SPD is provided more detailed advice and guidance on design policies set out in the Local Plan. It includes character area studies of the district, going on to highlight principles of good design for the district. It also sets out detailed design guidance, such as recommended separation distances, garden areas and space standards.



- 3.25. Rather than set out individual parts of the SPD, I shall refer to those parts most applicable throughout this evidence.

Commitment to High Quality Design

- 3.26. Notwithstanding the proposals are made in outline, it is worth highlighting the Appellants commitment to high quality design. The proof of evidence is accompanied by a revised Design Statement at appendix UD01, which explains the amendments made to the proposals during the course of the application. It provides justification for the changes and further explains the evolution of the design.
- 3.27. It is noted that a draft condition requiring a masterplan is (at the time of writing) proposed, this could be accompanied with a masterplan document that will help give confidence that the detailed design will deliver an appropriate development.
- 3.28. The use of Masterplans and/or Design Codes aligns with NPPF paragraphs 128 and 129 and informed by the National Model Design Code.

4. Site Context

- 4.1. A brief summary of the site description is contained within the Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) (CD5.4, CD5.5 & CD5.6). In addition, I set out below my brief analysis of the existing context to provide the background for the discussion of the design issues to be addressed in this evidence.
- 4.2. As set out and described within agreed SoCG, the site straddles the administrative boundaries of Tamworth Borough Council and Lichfield District Council. The majority of the proposals fall under Lichfield District Council, with the portion of land between existing properties on Browns Lane falling within Tamworth.
- 4.3. Located on the northern periphery of Tamworth, the appeal site is currently accessed from Browns Lane to its south. The site comprises two medium sized fields which are broadly regular in shape which jointly extend to approximately 12.65ha. The site is bounded by a mixture of highways land and associated landscape (Main Road and Browns Lane); rear and side residential boundaries and existing vegetation. The two field parcels are bisected by existing vegetation.
- 4.4. Topographically speaking the site generally slopes down from south west to north east.
- 4.5. Separated by a field parcel and intervening existing vegetation, the village of Wigginton is located to the north east of the appeal site. The village presents generally ribbon development arranged directly from Main Road on both sides.
- 4.6. On leaving the village, heading towards Tamworth, development reverts to single sided development (on the eastern side of Main Road), before stopping. Users then travel approximately 150m along Main Road (when measured on Google Maps from built form to built form) before experiencing the first instance of residential development within Tamworth. The appeal site is located on the east; however, the combination of rising topography and existing vegetation mean views into the site are generally not possible.
- 4.7. From Browns Lane, a very limited portion of the site (approximately 25m when measured on Google Maps) is visible. Existing vegetation and a small vehicular access define the site from this public realm. This part of the site is read in the context of the existing residential development arranged around Browns Lane.
- 4.8. To the south east of the site, accessed from Browns Lane is the recent development by Taylor Wimpey, known as Chestnut Walk. Further to the east of the site is an existing railway line, beyond which the development associated with Arkall Farm is located.
- 4.9. Public Right of Way (PRoW) Wigginton and Hopwas No.1 crosses the western field of the site in a broadly north/south axis. The Wigginton and Hopwas No.3 PRoW is located to the north of the site.

Settlement Pattern and Existing Layout

- 4.10. Layout is defined in the National Design Guide: Planning Practice Guidance for beautiful, enduring and successful places (NDG) (updated in October 2021) by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (CD3.3.3) as follows:

“A layout shows how routes and blocks of developments are arranged and related to one another to create streets, open spaces and buildings.”

- 4.11. The emerging Lichfield District Design Code SPD (CD3.1.7), provides an initial character assessment of Wigginton and the North of Tamworth at page 35. The emerging SPD identifies Wigginton as being primarily characterised by the ***“Village Area Type, consisting of 2 storey detached houses and cottages with residential densities of around 10-25 dwellings per hectare”***. In contrast the area of land North of Tamworth, which the appeal site is located within is identified as being characterised by ***“new development***

reflecting the Inner Suburban Area Type...Overall, residential dwellings in this area are generally 2 storeys, comprising detached and semi-detached houses with a density of 20 – 35 dwellings per hectare”.

- 4.12. With regard to Tamworth itself, the settlement origins and pattern of growth is described in the adopted Tamworth Design SPD (CD3.2.2) within section 2.0. Of particular note, Tamworth contains a historic core generally located around the Town Centre, with later development radiating outwards. Most recent development continues this north and eastwards pattern of growth as evidenced through the below aerial extracts.

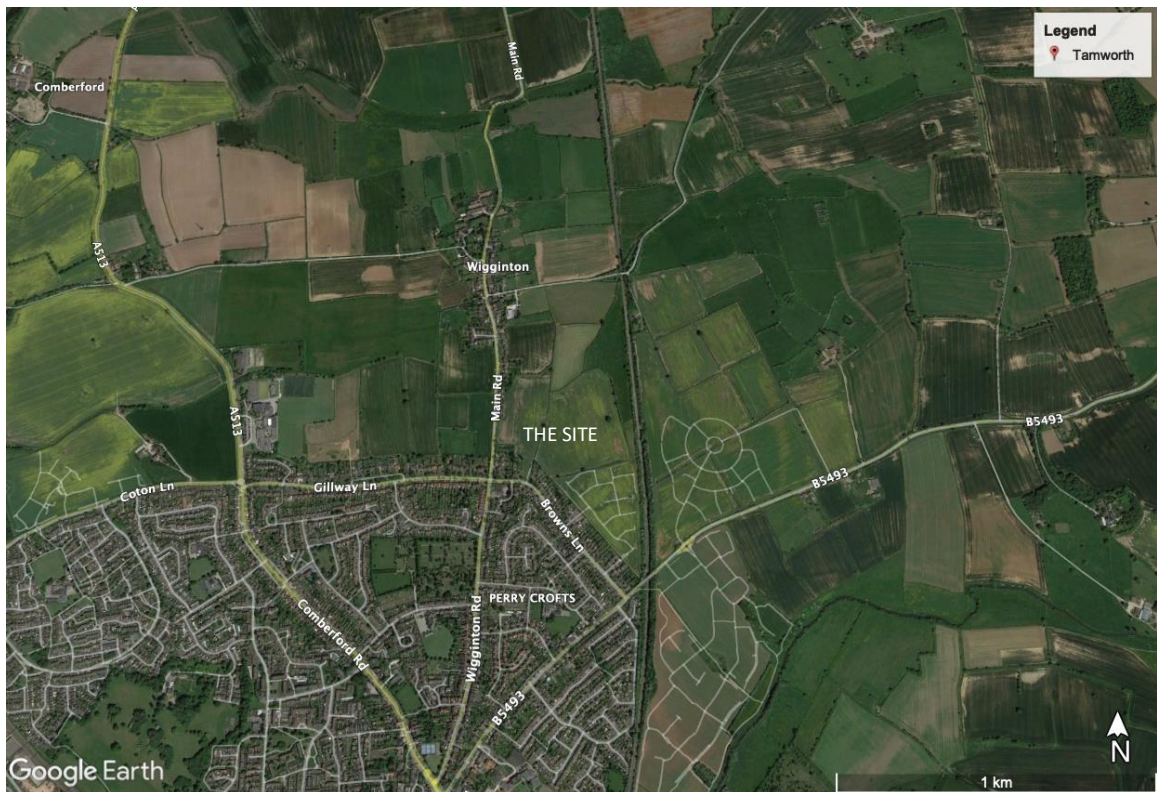


Plate 1: Aerial Imagery, 2013 (source Google Earth) – much of the towns growth during the 1960’s onwards extended the settlement outwards from the historic core. The imagery above demonstrates the north of Tamworth after this earlier period of expansion. Of particular note is the distance between the most southerly built form of Wigginton and the northerly most built form associated with Tamworth along Main Road is already established as set out above (my para 3.6).

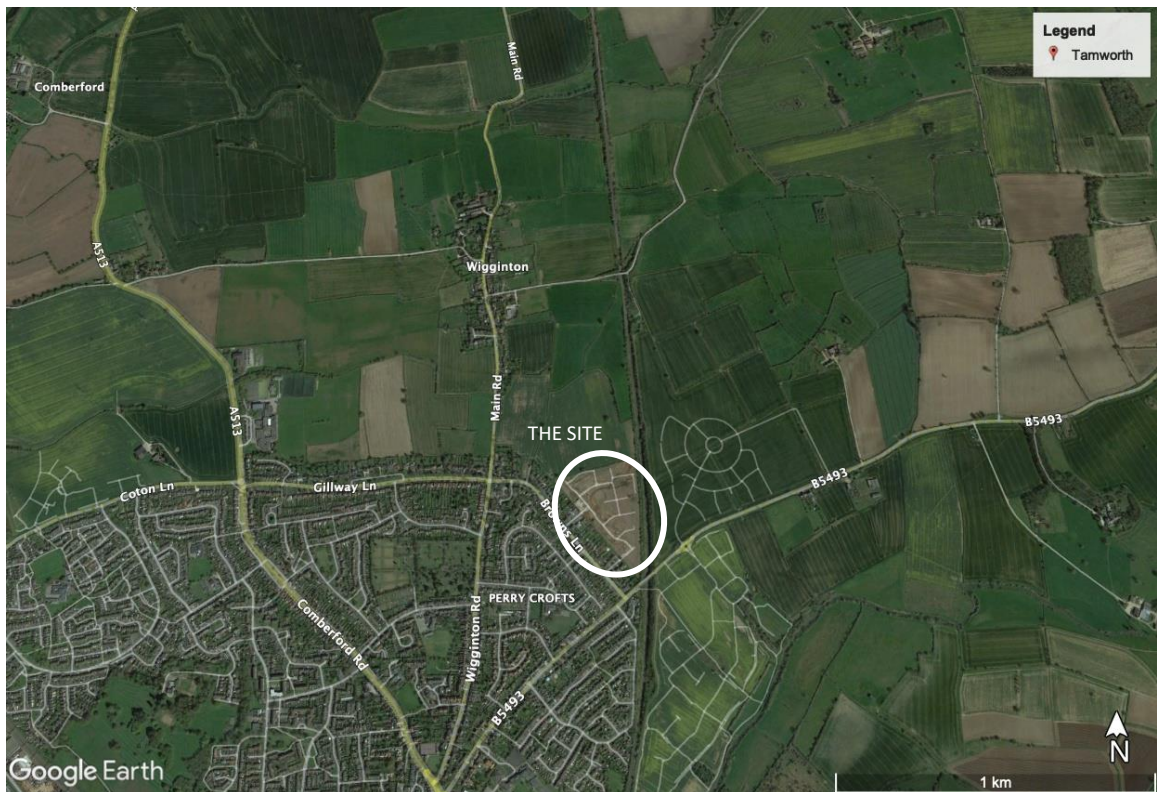


Plate 2: Aerial Imagery, 2016 (source Google Earth) – By 2016, Tamworth begins its expansion north and eastwards, with the groundworks of Chestnut Walk are visible.

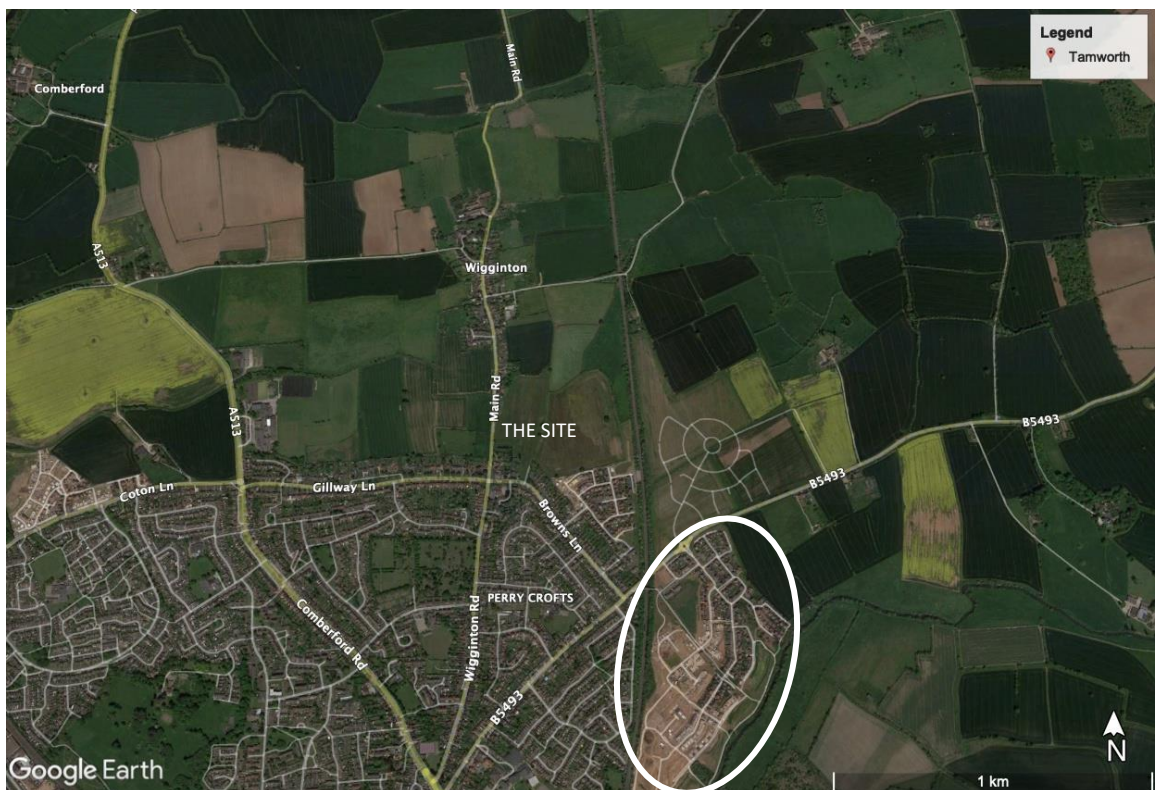


Plate 3: Aerial Imagery, 2019 (source Google Earth) – Further development becomes evident east of the town. With the Chestnut Walk development almost complete.



Plate 4: Aerial Imagery, 2023 (source Google Earth) – The Arkell Farm development has begun with ground works extending north towards Syerscote Lane evident.

- 4.13. It is in the context of Tamworth and the associated existing and consented residential development that the site is most closely related. Within this immediate residential setting of Browns Lane dwellings are set back from the carriageway by either front gardens and/or wide tree lined grass verges. Vegetation is a strong feature along the street scene, with examples of private realm and public realm planting evident.
- 4.14. Browns Lane itself is a link road, set amongst a series of loop and link roads within the area, thus creating individual perimeter development parcels. Active frontages are arranged towards the public realm thereby creating private rear spaces. Examples of cul-de-sac developments are also seen within the area; however, these are not a defining development pattern.
- 4.15. Distances between front of house and back of pavement tend to be generous along Browns Lane, often incorporating frontage parking and/or front gardens. In more recent developments, such as Chestnut Walk this setback distance is reduced, however in both instances the building line is generally consistent creating strong, frontages to the street scene.
- 4.16. The layout and development patterns exhibited by existing residential context north of Tamworth reflects a character more closely related to town/suburb characters.
- 4.17. In contrast, and as identified by the emerging Design Code SPD, the village of Wigginton presents a less formal character more akin to village developments which have developed over time. It was not planned out as one or even as a series of development, and it has a distinct and recognisable character and form.
- 4.18. The route of Main Road bisects the village and varies in width along its route. Built form is arranged directly off it with setback distances varying, thereby presenting a variable frontage building line that narrows and widens along the route of the carriageway. There are some instances of development in depth, but this is limited. Boundary treatments vary within the village.

Scale

4.19. As defined by the NDG, scale is the:

“height, width and length of each building proposed within a development in relation to its surroundings. This relates both to the overall size and massing of individual dwellings and spaces in relation to their surroundings, and to the scale of their parts. It affects how a space can be used and how it is experienced”.

4.20. The predominate scale of the immediate context is residential, 2 storeys. There are exceptions, with single storey and 2.5/3 storey evident.

4.21. Spaces between dwellings are generally consistent, often incorporating in-curtilage parking/driveways to the side of the associated dwelling. In areas, the spaces between buildings varies between increased spaces between dwellings and decreased space between to create continuous frontages.

4.22. Spaces between fronts of dwellings are often wide incorporating instances of frontage parking and/or front gardens and wide streets, particularly along Browns Lane. Carriageways are often wide enough to incorporate informal and formal on-street parking and will generally have footways to both sides. Browns Lane also exhibits a wide tree lined verge which separates the carriageway from the footway on both sides.

4.23. Within Wigginton, built form is predominately 2 storeys, with limited examples of single and 2.5 storey built form evident. However, the natural topography of the area provides variation to the roof line that would ordinarily be achieved through changes in height. This is particularly evident upon entering the village from the south, with built form on the eastern side of Main Road noticeably higher than those on the western side.

4.24. Spaces between dwellings vary throughout the village, as does the space between fronts of dwellings. Continuous frontages set close to the back edge of pavement are more prevalent within the historic core of the village. More modern development on the outer limits of the village creates wider spaces particularly where noticeable changes in the natural topography is evident. The variety in space between sides or fronts of dwellings is part of the individual character of Wigginton.

Existing Massing

4.25. Massing can be described as how the bulk of individual or groups of buildings are shaped into a 3D form, where bulk is defined as the volume of the building and the form is the three-dimensional shape and modelling of the buildings and the space they define.

4.26. A variety of massing can be found within Tamworth, from short terrace runs through to detached dwellings providing a variety of widths, lengths and depths. The immediate site context in particular is generally semi-detached or detached dwellings. Short terrace runs tend to be limited in instances.

4.27. In plan view, dwellings generally present regular, rectangular footprints with evidence of projections i.e. gables/steps in the building line.

4.28. Similarly, Wigginton generally presents regular, rectangular footprints again with evidence of projections and steps in the building line. However, in contrast to Tamworth context, the width of built form varies more with a greater proportional mixture of terrace properties (of varying lengths), alongside semi-detached and detached dwellings.

Existing Character & Appearance

- 4.29. The originally submitted Design and Access Statement (DAS, CD1.2.1) provides assessment of the elements of character and appearance that can be found within the surrounding area through a series of context photographs, illustrations, mapping and explanatory text.
- 4.30. Furthermore, both the adopted Tamworth Design SPD and the emerging Lichfield Design Code SPD offer some initial guidance of locally prevalent detailing and materials.
- 4.31. Both Tamworth and Wigginton provide contextual reference for future detailing and materials palette and, in the case of recently approved and currently under construction development north of Tamworth the design quality that is to be expected.
- 4.32. The more recent developments north of Tamworth show how new development can respond to the local vernacular and 'belong' to the local context without detracting from locally distinct village settlements. A mix of walling materials, including red brick, contrasting brick detailing and occasional render alongside appropriate roofing materials and detailing can be utilised to reflect traditional development, without being pastiche.
- 4.33. It is worth noting, the appeal proposals are made in outline, as such detailed appearance matters are for later design stages should the Inspector be minded to allow this appeal.

Overview

- 4.34. In summary, Tamworth and in particular the immediate residential context of the application site is predominately residential scale with, generally, regular footprints that are arranged around the principle of perimeter development parcels. Tamworth is a settlement with a historic core, from which later development radiates out from.
- 4.35. In contrast, Wigginton is a ribbon settlement typified by a traditional village character. This village character is distinct and unique from Tamworth, albeit there is shared materiality e.g. the use of common facing materials such as white/light coloured render or contrasting brick details.

5. Design Approach

- 5.1. An explanation of the background to the application is set out in the planning evidence and in the documents accompanying the application, in particular the DAS.
- 5.2. In line with National and Local Government Guidance and Policy considerable importance needs to be placed on achieving a high standard of design across the site. Successful urban design is dependent upon achieving an appropriate relationship between policy requirements, community needs, development form, design components and a positive response to local conditions.
- 5.3. It is important to recognise that the design approach has evolved via a logical, well-considered process, that was led by townscape and landscape analysis. The application's Design and Access statement included an existing site and context analysis, that the LPA have made no specific objection to.
- 5.4. The Development Parameter Plan under consideration (CD1.1.7) includes the following key design principles:
- I. 210 affordable dwellings comprising a mix of dwelling sizes;
 - II. New access onto Browns Lane;
 - III. Provision of associated infrastructure;
 - IV. Pedestrian and cyclist links providing routes within the development and connecting with the wider pedestrian network;
 - V. Large areas of public open space consisting of formal play opportunities, existing and new trees and hedgerows; community orchards, biodiversity habitat improvements and natural and semi-formal public open space;
 - VI. Tree-lined primary streets; and
 - VII. Green corridors.
- 5.5. As set out on the Development Parameter Plan the proposed development area will be contained to the eastern most extent of the appeal site, where the existing built up area of Tamworth is located. Green corridors will form the initial boundaries along the eastern and southern boundaries from which new development will be set back. The remainder western portion of the site and some of the northern will remain as open space, albeit as either formal or informal open space. The existing PRow running north to south towards Wiggington will remain in situ within its open space setting.
- 5.6. To assist the Inspector, key design principles of the proposals under consideration are set out below.

Design Principles

The Journey through the Proposals

- 5.7. The Design Statement my appendix UD01 illustrates the the design approach.
- 5.8. The proposals will be accessed from the south at Browns Lane and designed to accord with the technical standards contained within Staffordshire Residential Design Guide which require a 6m carriageway with 2m wide footways alongside both carriageway edges.

- 5.9. Upon entering the proposals and passing between the existing properties on Browns Lane, travellers will immediately view the substantial area of open space to the west and north of their incoming view before residential built form becomes apparent to their east. The carriageway will create a formal avenue with tree planting to both sides with built development on the east and open space to the west.
- 5.10. A primary loop road is indicated that will enable residents to access the eastern-most areas of the proposed development. This loop road will also provide an opportunity to create a focal space centrally within the development area that will aid the legibility and creation of character at detailed design stages.
- 5.11. Returning to the primary road, this continues to travel northwards terminated at the northern most area of proposed open space. From the primary road and primary loop road, lower category street typologies will radiate outwards enabling access to the remainder of the site and views to the wider landscape features.
- 5.12. Built form is to be arranged around the principle of perimeter development block, which intrinsically provide active frontages within the public realm whilst enclosing private rear spaces. The massing of which will vary depending on the nature of public realm to be created at the appropriate detailed design stage.

General Landscape & Open Space Principles

- 5.13. A significant proportion of the site is retained open green space (approximately 58%), which for the most part is retained on the western portion of the site thereby maintaining separation between the proposed built form and the built elements of Wigginton. The proposed landscape includes the following key principles:
- I. The western field will retain much of its agricultural character to maintain the open views out to wider countryside; the PRow and existing landscape boundary features will also remain in situ; the vegetation being enhanced where appropriate and some wildflower meadow planting could be included to increase the opportunity for biodiversity enhancements come detailed landscape design stages;
 - II. Formal open space typologies such as equipped play areas and SuDs are located on the eastern side of the appeal site, closest to the proposed development area. The more formal open space typologies will be separated from the more natural, semi-formal western open space by the existing landscaped field boundary running north -south between the two;
 - III. Green corridors will run along the eastern and southern boundaries from which development will be set back ensuring appropriate relationships with existing development and existing open space are created;
 - IV. Green infrastructure networks are connected via strengthened field boundary vegetation and/or the placement of additional green corridors;
 - V. Existing PRow retained within landscape context with opportunities to be enhanced with additional informal connections and routes;
 - VI. Retention and enhancement of existing landscape features as much as possible, where losses are unavoidable, they are to be appropriately mitigated; and
 - VII. Incorporation of street tree planting and landscaping within the built envelope.
- 5.14. The existing vegetation along the eastern boundary, and particularly along the limited length abutting Main Road is to be retained and where appropriate enhanced, thereby maintaining the current experience when travelling along Main Road of a route enclosed by rural landscape features.

- 5.15. The principal of concentrating the development area to the east of the site is intentional in order to ensure the village of Wigginton continues to sit within its own open space.

Movement Legibility

- 5.16. As previously described, the site will be accessed directly from Browns Lane which falls under the jurisdiction of Tamworth. As set out within their SoC there are **“no design issues of note”**. From which the route will form a tree-lined street that extends along the western edge of the development parcels to the northern extent. A principle central loop road will then extend within the development parcels providing access to the core and eastern extent of the development. From the central loop road, a series of lesser hierarchy streets, mews and lanes radiate from enabling further access to the development.
- 5.17. Furthermore, it is worth highlighting that no vehicular connectivity is proposed between the proposals and Wigginton. The proposed access will be experienced and read in the context of the existing built environment arranged around Browns Lane. The experience of arriving to/departing from Wigginton (from or to Tamworth) will remain within the same highways arrangement as is current.
- 5.18. In terms of townscape terms, the legibility of the entrance to Wigginton is and will remain distinct from the development access. It is clear that you are arriving at two very different places.
- 5.19. It is important to note that the street hierarchy proposed is indicative and that whilst high level principles are established, their precise route and design is subject to detailed design stages. Only the proposed access to the site is sought in detail.
- 5.20. With respect to pedestrian connectivity, a number of formal pedestrian routes will be provided alongside the internal vehicular movement associated with the development parcels. Furthermore, recreational routes set within the open space will be provided to connect with the existing PRoW in the locality as well as existing footways along Browns Lane.
- 5.21. For the avoidance of doubt the existing PRoW running within the appeal site, will be retained in situ, within the area of informal open space within the western portion of the site.
- 5.22. At the appropriate detailed design stage, a mixed approach to parking provision is likely to be taken to accord with the relevant parking provision standards at the time.

Density, Massing and Scale Strategy

- 5.23. An average net density of approximately 40 dwellings per hectare (dph) set within a developable area of 5.19ha is proposed. This equates to a gross density of 16dph based on 12.9ha. In reality, the measured densities of any future detailed design scheme are likely to vary across the scheme depending on the nature of public realm to be created.
- 5.24. It is likely that the experienced density within detailed design proposals will reflect the street hierarchy as described. Higher density built form typologies i.e. terraced units will be located along principal routes and the core of the development reinforcing the principal loop road. Larger built typologies often associated with medium and lower density experiences will radiate outwards. The spaces between dwelling may also increase as the built form moves towards the edges of the development envelope.
- 5.25. With respect to massing, it is likely that this will reinforce the street hierarchy outlined previously.
- 5.26. As set out within the updated Design Statement, building heights are to be predominately 2 storey with occasional use of 2.5 storey built form at key locations. Furthermore, and where appropriate 1 and/or 1.5 storey dwellings could be placed adjacent to existing reduced height built form. At the appropriate detailed

design stage, key spaces/buildings will be defined through an appropriate mix of soft and hard landscape features, building animation and typologies.

Indicative Character Areas

- 5.27. A series of indicative character areas, that take inspiration from the local area have been set out within the updated Design Statement. These can be summarised as:
- I. Urban Edge Boulevard – Located along the western extent of the development area this character area will provide users the first impression of built form. Formal in nature and tree lined to both sides, the over-riding experience will be of a formal avenue similar to the Browns Lane;
 - II. Green Streets – these areas will provide the transitional character between built form and wider open space. They will be informal in nature and provide positive frontages towards the open space; they will likely be served via minor category streets and/or private drives. Density patterns are likely to be low with increased spaces between dwellings;
 - III. Central node – Located within the core of the development and arranged around a focal space, this area will be the built heart of the scheme. Functionally, it will enable users a choice in routes that enables access to the wider development area, however a combination of built form and landscape at detailed design stages will signify this space as a key moment within; and
 - IV. Mews Court – Mews areas are located within the core of the development areas and will create intimate streets where pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles share the space. Frontage parking will be incorporated within the street scene and balanced with landscape features. Experienced density will feel higher to the green streets with uniform building lines/set back distances and distances between dwellings.
- 5.28. Further to the above character areas, a series of indicative Street Scene principles and materials have been included to reiterate the Appellants commitment to high quality design that is inspired by the locality.

Detailed Design Matters & Design Code

- 5.29. Notwithstanding the above general design principles, the proposals are made in outline and as such, the precise detailed design is still open to negotiation and refinement at the appropriate juncture.
- 5.30. To help give confidence that the design approach will deliver an appropriate development at the reserved matters stage, a Design Code could be required by condition should the Inspector be minded to allow this appeal. The use of Design Codes is well established and the use of such a Design Codes aligns with NPPF paragraphs 128 and 129 and informed by the National Model Design Code.
- 5.31. It is noted that there are no specific urban design concerns outside of the heritage and landscape context set out and clarified within the relevant SoCGs and SoCG Addendum.

6. Design Analysis of Reasons for Refusal

6.1. It is important to reiterate that the Decision Notice nor the LPA’s SoC raised no specific urban design related RfRs. However, the citation of policy BE1 in its entirety within RfR2 requires demonstration of the urban design related policy parts in order to assist the Inspector. The below summary table is provided to do so.

Policy BE1

Policy BE1: High Quality Development		
All development proposals should ensure that a high quality sustainable built environment can be achieved. Development will be permitted where it can be clearly and convincingly demonstrated that it will have a positive impact on:		
POLICY PART	DISCUSSION	COMMENT
The significance of historic environment, such as archaeological sites, sites of historic landscape value, listed buildings, conservation areas, locally listed building and skylines containing important historic, built and natural features (in conjunction with Policy NR5);	N/A to Urban Design evidence	Addressed through Heritage Evidence
Reducing carbon emissions, by appropriate use of sustainable design and renewable energy schemes (in conjunction with the relevant sections of Core Policy 3, & Policies SC1 and SC2);	Detailed design matter	To be fully addressed at appropriated detailed design stage
The built vernacular. New development, including extensions and alterations to existing buildings, should carefully respect the character of the surrounding area and development in terms of layout, size, scale, architectural design and public views;	The developable envelope is purposefully contained to the eastern portion of the site, closely related to existing development and maintaining a gap between Wigginton and Tamworth. The acceptability of this gap is landscape terms is addressed through Landscape evidence. In urban design terms, similar residential land uses are placed adjacent to one another. Building heights will not exceed 2 stories, therefore reflective of its residential scale context. Precise layout and architectural design are matters to be dealt with through detailed design stages	Outline urban design elements satisfied . Landscape matters to be addressed through Landscape Evidence. Detailed matters to be addressed via the appropriate future planning stage.

<p>Public safety, health and reducing inequality, including the latest 'designing out crime' principles;</p>	<p>Detailed design matter to be fully addressed through the appropriate detailed design stage</p>	<p>Detailed design matter</p>
<p>Amenity, by avoiding development which causes disturbance through unreasonable traffic generation, noise, light, dust, fumes or other disturbance;</p>	<p>N/A to urban design</p>	
<p>The natural environment. Effective hard and soft landscaping including tree planting will be required and should be implemented in an integrated manner, making use of green corridors for movement of people as well as for biodiversity (in conjunction with Core Policy 13, NR3, NR4 and NR6); and</p>	<p>An indicative landscape strategy forms part of the proposals under consideration. A general summary of the approach is given above. It is important to note, this has been informed by LVIA and other related technical inputs such as Ecology.</p> <p>Nevertheless, detailed landscape proposals will form later stages of detailed design.</p> <p>I see no evidence to suggest an appropriate landscape strategy cannot be implemented at the appropriate design stage.</p>	<p>Satisfied</p>
<p>Sustainable Transport. New development should be located in areas which have good safe access to public transport to reduce the need to travel by private car and should optimise choice of sustainable travel, particularly walking, cycling and public transport, creating new public transport nodes where necessary (in conjunction with Core Policies 3 & 5 and Policy ST1).</p>	<p>A series of indicative routes and spaces have been set out by the proposals to establish the principals of a well-connected development and easily accessible.</p> <p>Furthermore, there are no RfRs in relation to the principles of sustainable transport addressed by this strand being advanced by the LPA</p>	<p>Satisfied</p>
<p>New development will have a positive impact on the public realm and ensure high quality, inclusive design. This will be achieved by an appreciation of context, as well as plan, scale, proportion and detail. Specifically designed features, including public art where appropriate, should be integrated into developments in order to enhance the bespoke nature and individuality of design solutions.</p>	<p>These are predominately detailed design matters; however, a range of high level principles have been set out to guide future detailed design of the site. These principles have been informed by assessment and understanding of the local context as set out by both the originally submitted DAS and the updated Design Statement.</p>	<p>This strand is considered Satisfied as much as possible at outline stage.</p>

<p>Innovative and contemporary designs will be supported where they are sympathetic to the setting and context of the surrounding areas and existing development.</p>	<p>Detailed design matter to be fully addressed through the appropriate detailed design stage</p>	<p>Detailed design matter</p>
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6.2. In light of the above, and my previous sections summarising the design approach, I can see an outline scheme that will be able to deliver an appropriately design development that will satisfy the outline urban design relevant policy strands of BE1. Furthermore, in the fullness of time and after detailed design has been undertaken, there is nothing to suggest that full satisfaction of the detailed elements of BE1 cannot be appropriately addressed.

6.3. The high level design strategies submitted through the DAS and subsequently updated Design Statement will ensure appropriate, high quality development is delivered. This could be further reinforced through the requirement of a site Masterplan (with or without a Masterplan Document or Design Code) and then subsequent reserved matters application.

Delivering High Quality Design

6.4. Noteworthy in their absence, are any specific urban design related concerns within the LPA’s RfRs or SoC. As such it is impossible to predetermine design components and details that are not decided at outline stage. The illustrative masterplan within the Design Statement represents just one way in which the development could be brought forward.

6.5. There are a wide range of design components that will establish a character ‘fit’ and the preparation of a Design Code at the appropriate stage will allow these to be brought forward in a way that will deliver a successful development.

6.6. No concerns have been raised in relation to the following principles contained within submitted application documents:

- I. Land use disposition and placement;
- II. General placemaking principles;
- III. General landscape strategy;
- IV. Movement hierarchy principles;
- V. Density strategy;
- VI. Scale and Massing strategy;
- VII. Key spaces and frontages strategy; and
- VIII. Edge principles.

6.7. The extent of and principles established by a site wide masterplan, as currently proposed within the draft conditions is likely to be established through negotiations with officers, however it is likely to address the following:

- I. Block Structure;

- II. Conceptual landscape plans for open space;
- III. Character Areas;
- IV. Key spaces and frontages;
- V. Movement framework, including connections within the development and with the surrounding area;
- VI. Street types and frontages;
- VII. Parking Strategy
- VIII. Building typology;
- IX. Boundary treatment strategy;
- X. Feature spaces (including public realm and principles); and
- XI. Edge principles and relationships between green infrastructure and built form.

6.8. The following are matters that can be resolved at reserved matters stage:

- I. The appearance of individual buildings;
- II. The internal layout of buildings;
- III. The detailed siting of buildings;
- IV. Detailed design of streets, including street materials;
- V. Detailed parking strategy (including cycle provision);
- VI. Boundary treatments
- VII. Detailed landscape design;
- VIII. Sustainable construction (approach and principles); and
- IX. Detailed building materials and palette.

6.9. In this context and given so few design components that drive character are being decided at this outline stage, I can see no reason why appropriate, high quality design cannot be delivered by the proposals.

7. Conclusions and Summary

- 7.1. Having reviewed the proposed layout against the urban design related principles set out in Policy BE1 of the Local Plan I can see a design that is well related to the existing settlement in terms of location and development form. Furthermore, and related to the corresponding policy parts, I can see a design that the proposed development:
- I. Establishes high-level, site specific design principles, which in the fullness of time can deliver high quality sustainable development;
 - II. Will be able to deliver a development that will reduce carbon emissions through the appropriate use of sustainable design and renewable energy features;
 - III. Establishes high level design principles that can respect the character of the surrounding area and development in terms of layout, size, scale, architectural design and public views when developed further through appropriate design stages (i.e. Site wide Masterplan Condition and/or RM application stages). Furthermore, the outline proposals have responded positively to the sites existing features such as adjacent land uses and existing vegetation;
 - IV. Will be capable of promoting public safety, health and reducing inequality and incorporate latest 'designing out crime' principles;
 - V. Will avoid causing disturbance through unreasonable traffic generation, noise, light, dust, fumes or other disturbances through the placement of compatible proposed and existing land uses and then further detailed through future design stages;
 - VI. Establishes high level design principles that will effectively incorporate hard and soft landscaping that makes use of green corridors for the movement of people as well as biodiversity;
 - VII. Incorporates sustainable transport principles that will provide good, safe access to public transport opportunities and provide residents with active travel choices that will be fully detailed in future submissions; and
 - VIII. Establishes high-level, site specific design principles will have a positive impact on the public realm and ensure high quality inclusive design principles that have been informed by an understanding of the local context, its settlement pattern, scale, proportions and detail.
- 7.2. In urban design legibility terms, the proposals will maintain a legible gap between Wiggington and Tamworth with the experience of arrival and departure along Main Road relatively unchanged.
- 7.3. The historic, village character of Wiggington that has been incremental over time is part of its individual charm and its experience from Main Road will remain.
- 7.4. Tamworth with its town character, demonstrates planned growth in a consistent direction north and east of the northern extent of the settlement, the proposals will in many ways be a logical next step. The delivery of which can be supported by a Site Wide Masterplan to ensure high quality design is provided across both administrative boundaries.
- 7.5. There will be a very clear, legible difference in character between Wiggington village and the proposals, which will be not only be read but also physically accessed from Tamworth.



- 7.6. The proposals will relate well to the existing settlement of Tamworth, whilst respecting the village of Wiggington, there will be clear, legible separation and different arrival and departure experiences from both.
- 7.7. The outline principles enable the creation of attractive new streets, places and significant areas of public open space for existing and new residents alike. The open spaces include a variety of open space uses and typologies for the benefit of all. In many ways the routes, spaces and open space areas will be a positive contribution to the area.
- 7.8. In conclusion, there is, in my view, no reason in design terms to refuse planning permission for this appeal.



Urban Design Appendices.



UD01: Design Statement



Browns Lane Tamworth

DESIGN STATEMENT

MAY 2024

platform
●●●● housing group



Application Site

Main Road

Browns Lane

> Aerial view of the Site looking north east.

Contents

- About Platform Housing Group
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PLAT230731 Browns Lane, Tamworth - Design Statement					
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Revision	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5

About Us

Platform Housing Group

Platform Housing Group is one of the largest housing associations in the Midlands who own and manage in the region of 50,000 affordable homes across the UK.

We pride ourselves in providing quality new homes which meet housing and support needs for individuals, neighbourhoods and local communities.

We are passionate about creating new places for all, which is proven through our reputation as a trusted and reliable development partner of choice for all housing developers, contractors, land agents, local authorities and Homes England across the Midlands and surrounding areas.

Platform Housing Group focus on delivery, affordability, efficiency and innovation which begins with identifying sustainable development locations that demand affordable housing.

The Group seek to ensure high standards of design, specification, space and quality are delivered on all new development projects which they undertake, building homes that are:

- **Affordable** - to own, rent and manage.
- **Energy Efficient** - with design solutions focused on energy and water efficiency, sustainable sources of heat and power, materials and air quality / ventilation.
- **Sustainable** - with good infrastructure and access to local amenities.
- **Compliant** - with all current statutory requirements.



➤ Top and above: Examples of the well designed dwellings provided by Platform Housing Group

Platform Housing Group Provide:



General Needs Rented Housing

Providing new social and affordable rented homes to help meet housing needs for individuals, neighbourhoods and local communities.



Shared Ownership and Rent to Buy

Shared Ownership offers flexibility and accessibility for buyers by lowering the initial deposit required and mortgage payments, while paying below-market rent on the other amount. Similarly, Rent to Buy allows individuals to rent a new home at a reduced amount which enables them to use the remaining amount to save a deposit over a fixed year period.



Housing for Older People

Working with providers to create extra care retirement villages as well as alternative types of housing for older people that support independent living.



Supported Housing

Sustainable supported housing that meets local needs such as abuse victims, homeless households or adapted homes for disabilities. Alongside private rent and open market sale housing as required.



➤ Colonel Wright Close, Derbyshire. Platform Housing Group pride themselves in creating homes that integrate with their local setting, whether that be traditional or contemporary in architectural style.



➤ Colonel Wright Close, Derbyshire. In June 2022, the project was named Midlands Small Residential Development of the Year at the Insider Media Awards.

Building a better future through new homes



Section 1.0

Introduction and Background

1.1 Background

This design statement has been written by Thrive Architects in support of the Outline application for up to 210 dwellings, public open space, landscaping, sustainable urban drainage and associated infrastructure at Land North of Browns Lane, Tamworth. It is an addendum to the previously submitted design and access statement to illustrate the revised development parameters and the subsequent improved place making strategy.

It demonstrates how Platform Housing Group could provide much needed affordable housing to the residents of both Lichfield and Tamworth, through the delivery of an all affordable development proposal.

Further consideration to landscape and heritage constraints has been given. As such the overall developable area and Site massing has reduced accordingly.

This document summarises how this deliverable development, in a sustainable location can successfully integrate with both the urban and landscape context of the surrounding area by increasing the amount of publicly accessible green open space.

This alongside well considered streets, their associated densities and character areas will ensure the creation of an attractive residential setting where people will wish to live.

1.2 Context

It is important to understand the Site context which was presented at Outline submission alongside the constraints and opportunities, as part of this design narrative. Therefore in summary the Site is as follows:

- **Size** - Approximately 12.65 hectares across two open fields.
- **Location** - It is located to the northern edge of Tamworth with Main Road to the west and Browns Lane to the south. Further north lies agricultural fields and the main part of Wigginton village. To the east is Birmingham-Derby railway line with new residential development beyond.
- **Administrative Boundaries** - The site sits within both Tamworth Borough Council and Lichfield District Council.
- **Features** - An existing public right of way crosses the western most field of the Site on a north/south axis.
- **Heritage** - Wigginton Conservation Area is located centrally to the village north west of the Site.

1.3 Constraints and Opportunities

Constraints

- Existing vegetation;
- Existing ecological habitats;
- Existing residential boundaries;
- Site high and low points;
- Noise filtration;
- Consideration of Wigginton context;
- Existing Public Right of Way; and
- Existing utilities.

Opportunities

- Established road network for site access;
- Natural screening from existing vegetation;
- Improved public access to green infrastructure;
- Enhanced green spaces and ecological habitats;
- Utilise low points for SuDS and biodiversity features;
- Integration with surrounding infrastructure;
- Efficient land use; and
- Housing to address local need.

Constraints and Opportunities Plan Key

-  Application site boundary
-  Primary point of access
-  Existing trees and hedgerows
-  Public Right of Way
-  Gradual fall of land
-  Views from site
-  Views into site from neighbouring dwellings
-  Countryside view corridor
-  Potential noise from adjacent railway line
-  Sewer and 10m easement
-  Proposed development to respect neighbouring amenity



➤ The Site as viewed from the northern boundary looking south.



➤ The Site as viewed from proposed access point from Browns Lane.



➤ The Site as viewed from the eastern boundary looking west.



Section 2.0

Parameters

Further consideration has been given to the landscape context, as such the development proposals have been reviewed and updated to illustrate how this residential setting can sensitively integrate with its local context for the benefit of new and existing residents. The following parameter plans highlight key updates to the design strategy.

2.1 Original Application Submission - Land Use Strategy



The original masterplan indicated a 46.5% of development area. It sought to have a lower density, organic development edge to the west and north with an identified development core that sensitively increased density in accordance with the identified character areas.

2.2 Revised Application Submission - Land Use Strategy



The proposed developable area is still concentrated towards the eastern part of the Site. An increased amount of open space and green infrastructure is proposed to the west to mitigate any negative impact to the wider landscape and to safeguard natural open space that is enjoyed by local residents in this location, and beyond. The proposed masterplan now indicates 42% of development area at 5.4ha hectares, which is a reduction of 10% from the original.

Section 2.0

Parameters

2.3 Original Application Submission - Landscape Strategy



The landscape strategy ensures full retention and enhancement of existing features such as native hedgerows, ditches and green corridors. It provides a physical and visual separation between Wigginton and the development proposals through the retained agricultural field to the west. A natural landscaped area was proposed to the north east with SuDS features and play space centrally to the west. The overall onsite green provision equated to 5.5 hectares at 37% of the total site area.

2.4 Revised Application Submission - Landscape Strategy



The proposed landscape strategy largely follows the original concept but seeks to deliver additional accessible green space to the west of the development area. This not only facilitates more community benefits such as a community orchard and greater offsetting to play provision, but also helps mitigate any negative impact to the Wigginton development boundary. The overall onsite green provision is now 7.47 hectares, which equates to 58% of the total Site area, an increase of 21% to the original strategy.

Section 2.0

Parameters



2.5 Original Application Submission - Housing Strategy



The proposed indicative masterplan sought to deliver approximately 210 no. dwellings via a balanced approach to the provision of housing and green space. The indicative density equated to approximately 35 dwellings per hectare and allowed for the provision of a range of dwellings of varying sizes and tenures.

The development proposed a 30% provision of affordable housing, comprising of affordable rented and shared ownership. An indicative housing mix set out how 84 no. dwellings could be split into the required 65% Rented (54no.) and 25% Intermediate (30no.) provision based on recent SHMA requirements.

The height and massing of the proposed indicative masterplan was predominantly 2 storeys. The occasional 2.5 storey structure was proposed at key locations such as the development core, street junctions and at ends of vistas to create focal points and landmark buildings.

New block structures abutting existing residences could be reduced to 1.5 to 2 storeys to assist with successful integration into the existing urban area of Chestnut Walk and dwellings north of Browns Lane.

Section 2.0

Parameters

2.6 Revised Application Submission - Housing Strategy



The proposed indicative masterplan aligns with previous design iterations and comprises approximately 210 no. dwellings. The development proposal seeks to make efficient use of land whilst promoting densities that are sensitive to the landscape context and local area.

The indicative developable area is 5.19 hectares which equates to a net density of approximately 40 dwellings per hectare and a gross area of 12.9 hectares at 16 dwellings per hectare. The development will facilitate a varied range of dwelling size and tenure through a 100% affordable housing provision.

This design approach will create an inclusive development that provides much needed affordable housing for not only first time buyers, but also the elderly and local residents who require supported or rented accommodation which is currently in short supply.

The internal layouts of houses will consider market preference and modern ways of living to allow for flexibility and adaptation in order to encourage residents to stay for longer depending on life circumstances.

With regard to scale and massing, the design proposals align with the previous design concept and propose predominantly 2 storey dwellings with feature landmark buildings not exceeding 2.5 storeys in height.

Section 3.0

Indicative Masterplan

3.1 Design Proposals

The development proposals still seek to deliver 210no. dwellings through a more efficient use of land.

It will deliver 100% affordable housing and a well considered network of green spaces. These will include; amenity green space, semi natural open space with children's equipped play spaces and the provision of green corridors that enable pedestrian movement around the development and beyond.

Access to the Site remains unchanged and the indicative masterplan proposes that vehicular access would be taken from Browns Lane to the south of the Site.

3.2 Key Development Features

1. 210 dwellings comprising indicatively a mix of 1 bed, 2 bed, 3 bed and 4 bed properties;
2. Formulation of a new access onto Browns Lane;
3. Feature hard landscape area/focal point;
4. Locally Equipped Area for Play (LEAP);
5. Local Area for Play (LAP);
6. Tree-lined primary streets;
7. Proposed tree planting;
8. Retention of existing trees and hedgerows;
9. Proposed hedges;
10. New footpath links across the public open space;
11. Community orchard;
12. Sustainable urban drainage systems;
13. Wildflower meadow;
14. Green corridors; and
15. Natural and semi-formal public open space.





Section 4.0

Place Making

The Site affords an opportunity to create a sustainable new development to complement the settlement of Tamworth. As a deliverable Site, this emerging proposal can facilitate the delivery of much needed new affordable homes and community facilities for residents of both Lichfield and Tamworth.

The concept for the development of the Site is founded on a strong landscape framework, focusing on a landscape-led approach to placemaking through the creation of a multitude of open spaces. The 58% green infrastructure provision largely to the west of the Site will create a strong defensible edge to Wiggington, whilst also providing significant benefits for biodiversity and the local community.

In placemaking terms, the Site creates a fantastic foundation for growing a new place through the inclusion of public places and spaces. To deliver a successful health and well-being agenda, play spaces and a significant amount of enhanced public open space network will be included.

The emerging masterplan proposal will encourage all forms of sustainable connectivity and will encourage walking, jogging, cycling and other recreational activities.

The Site has the potential to provide land to create vibrant multi-use spaces for multi-generational enjoyment. These spaces will include landscaped areas of natural planting, copses, orchards, large open green spaces and new connections with the existing housing areas to the south and east. As such flexible points of connectivity have been made possible.

Platform Housing Group aim to create a positive legacy for the community, working with the planning authorities of both Lichfield and Tamworth to bring forward a scheme which delivers characterful housing with a well articulated sense of place and genuine benefits for the local community.

They want to build partnerships with the community, the Local Planning Authority and stakeholders to ensure their vision to create a special place for the District is an achievable concept.

To this extent, the proposed emerging concept creates a landscape-led scheme that works with the existing structure of the place and the landscape; protecting and enhancing it for generations to come. A strong landscape response will create structure, framed views, vistas, glimpses and excitement in both short and long range views, whilst being sensitive to the visual context within the wider setting.



Section 4.0

Place Making

➤ *Integrated play areas for all ages to encourage outdoor activity.*



➤ *Biodiverse planting and integrated SuDS.*






Section 5.0

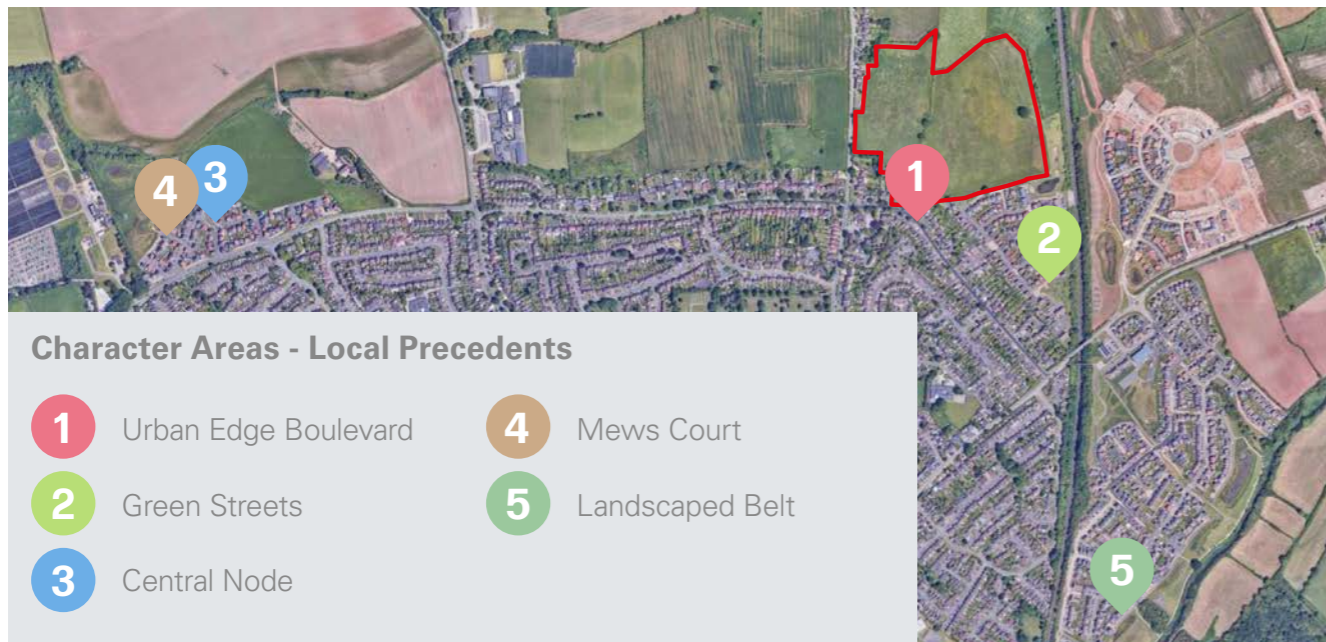
Character Areas

The structure of the masterplan has a functional rationale, which continues to be informed by contextual observations and Site constraints. The development will comprise of several key urban design elements, such as defining the development edge, development nodes and the creation of landmark buildings at key vistas. All of which contribute to the creation of character areas across the scheme, ensuring there is a strong sense of place that will promote a safe, and legible environment to new and existing residents of Tamworth.

Such character areas are achieved through a well considered hierarchy of streets, such as boulevards, mews, lanes and green streets. These have been illustrated to show how they form an attractive setting that respects the context of the surrounding area.

-  Site Gateway
-  Urban Edge Boulevard
-  Green Streets
-  Central Node
-  Mews Court
-  Landscaped Belt





Character Areas - Local Precedents

- 1 Urban Edge Boulevard
- 4 Mews Court
- 2 Green Streets
- 5 Landscaped Belt
- 3 Central Node



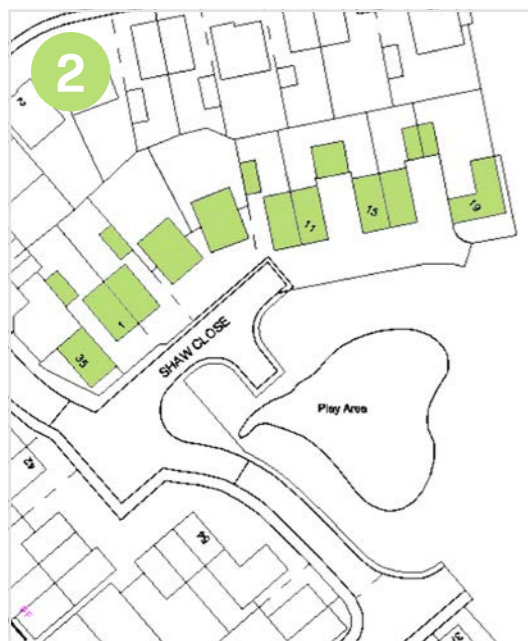
➤ Green Gateway at Lillingstone Avenue.



➤ Tree lined streets at Browns Lane.



➤ Feature mews to the edge of Spicer Close and surrounding development.



➤ A mix of semi detached and detached housing frame public open space at Shaw Close.



➤ Natural open space clearly defined to the development edge at Stonecrop Road and beyond.

Section 5.0

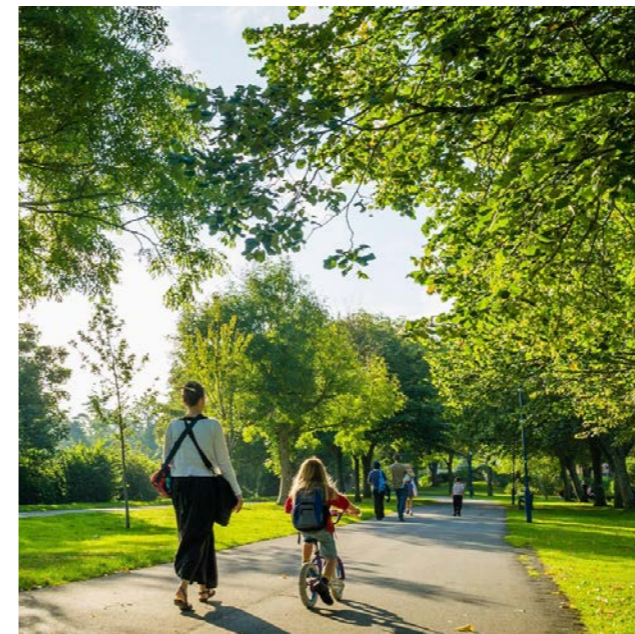
Character Areas

The Gateway



A landscaped gateway from Browns Lane will create a natural extension to this existing tree lined street and form a visually appealing entrance that successfully integrates with the landscaped area to the west. Not only will this foster a strong sense of arrival to this proposed development, it will also contribute towards the envisaged healthy, sustainable urban environment that seeks to respect and improve on-Site landscape features.

Built form fronting this primary route will be of a uniform rhythm with on plot parking to facilitate grass verge planting to both sides of the adoptable highway, in the creation of a boulevard street.



Section 5.0

Character Areas



Section 5.0

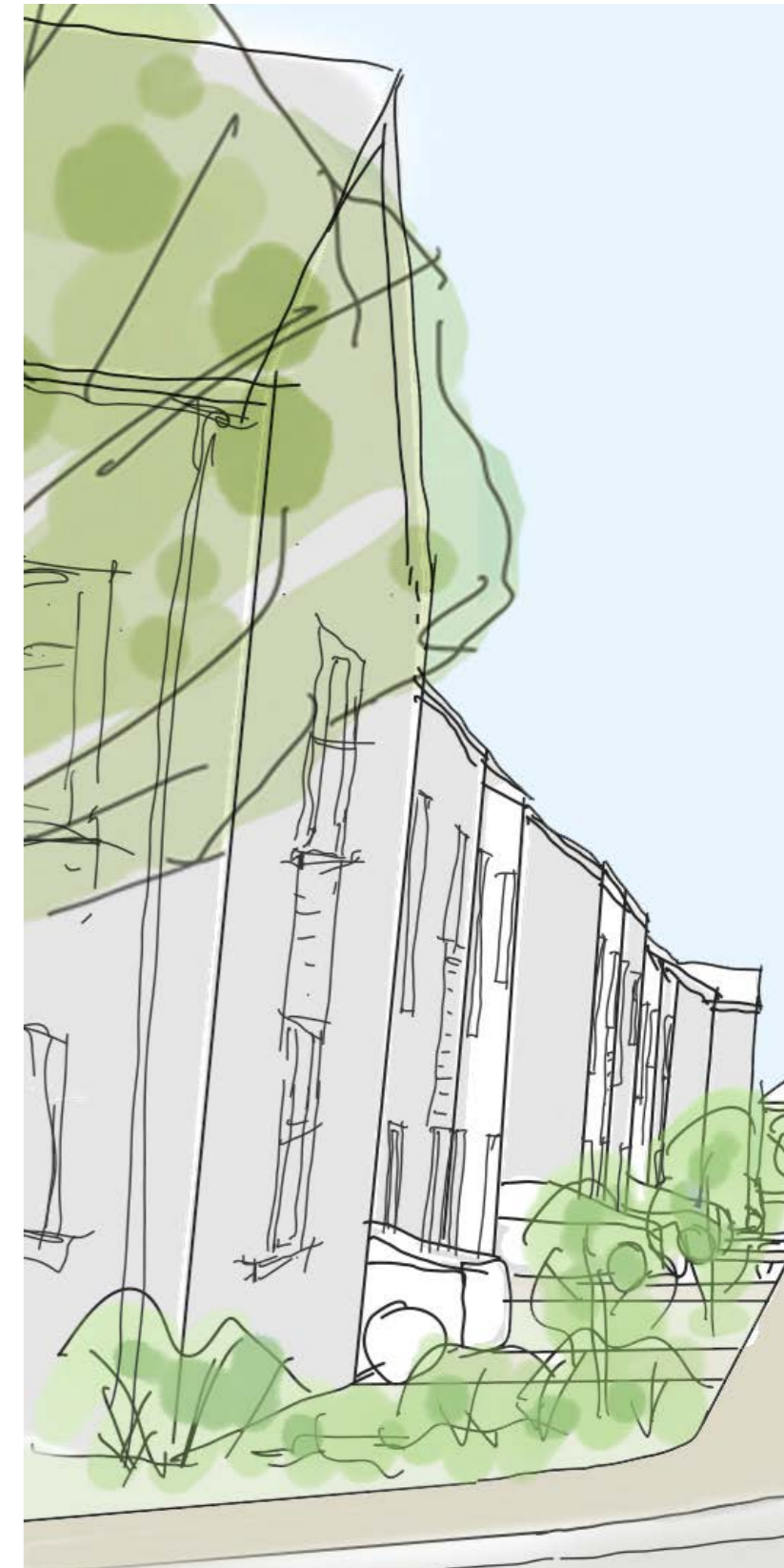
Character Areas

Lanes and Mews



A series of mews and lanes will naturally branch out from the primary loop road to encourage a more inclusive and slower-paced environment through the specification of shared surfaced roads. This street design fosters a sense of community and encourages pedestrian activity. It also creates landscaped opportunities that will soften the urban edge and clearly define public and private realm.

Built form to these character areas will generally be higher in density to achieve much needed urban efficiency with distinctive typologies such as terracing, that are symbolic of the traditional mews design concept.



Section 5.0

Character Areas



Section 5.0

Character Areas

Green Node



A strategically placed green node serves as a central focal point for greenery, landscaping, and a continued approach to sustainable design. It successfully integrates natural elements into the built environment to help soften the appearance of medium density secondary streets to the development core. This attractive landscaped area not only seeks to promote environmental sustainability by providing further opportunity for mature planting and rain gardens, but also aids with wayfinding for an inclusive development proposal.



Section 5.0

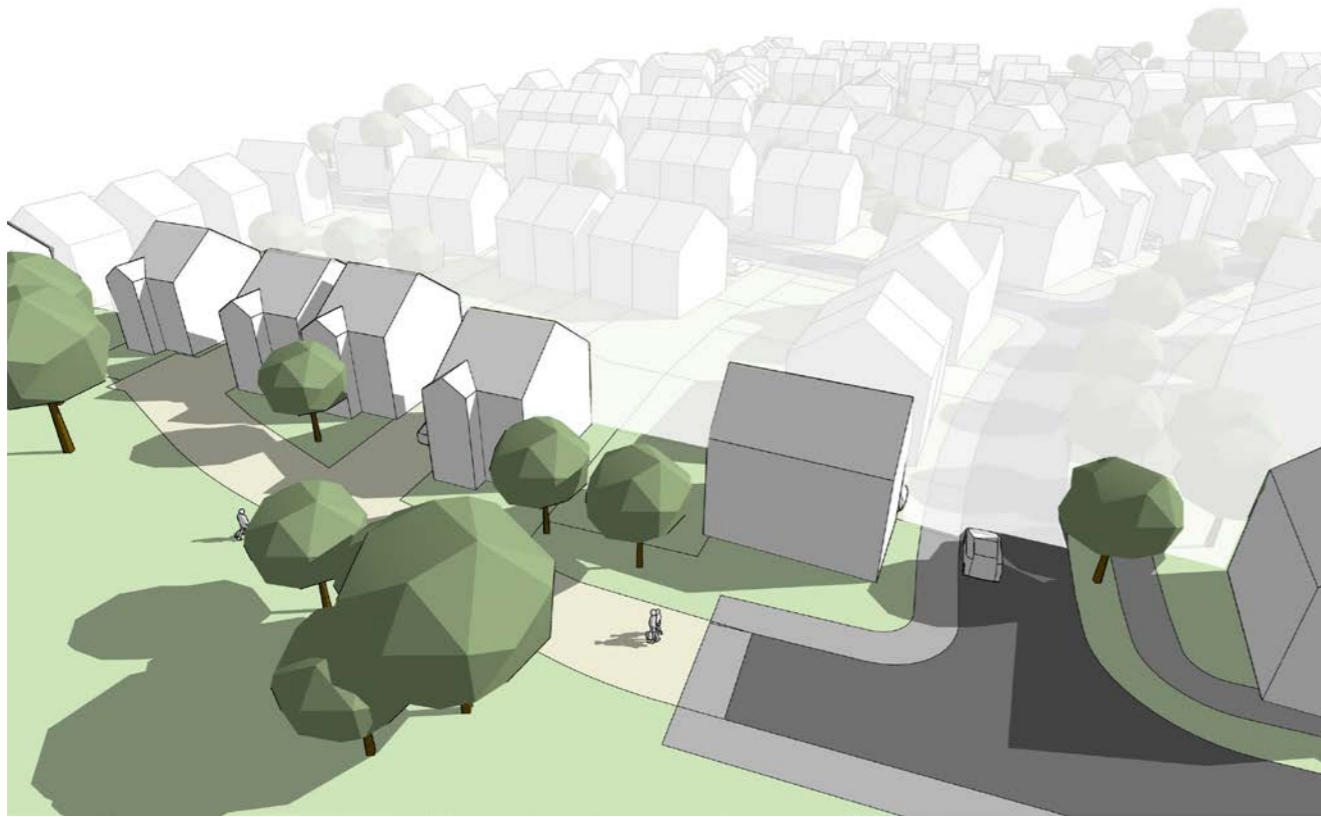
Character Areas



Section 5.0

Character Areas

Green Streets



Green streets, also referred to as rural lanes, are located to the development edge throughout the scheme, forming a soft transition from urban to green space. This is achieved via lower density housing and the reduced width of hard surfacing to the street. These narrow lanes reduce traffic speed and allow for safe pedestrian movement. They also allow for generous landscaping around homes which create a rural aesthetic that seeks to integrate swales and hedgerows into the landscape.

Built form is typically detached or semi-detached with on plot parking to reduce vehicular dominance on the street.



Section 5.0

Character Areas



Section 6.0

Street Scene



These character areas will be representative of the northern Tamworth vernacular as described in the supporting Design and Access Statement. Development will be of a medium density with a modern street scape that is predominantly 2 storey gable and eaves fronted dwellings, relative to the architectural style at Browns Lane.

Landscaped streets are a key feature of this development, as such green verges will be introduced to key routes requiring on plot parking and defined boundaries to delineate public and private ownership.



Surrounding local vernacular to help inform indicative streetscene and character areas



Detached gable fronted dwellings help form visual gaps in lower density streetscenes.



Staggered terraced typologies appropriate for mews and lanes.

Section 6.0

Street Scenes



➤ A mix of gable and eaves fronted, detached and semi-detached dwellings help create variation in streetscenes.



➤ Feature buildings at key vistas and primary route junctions.

Section 7.0

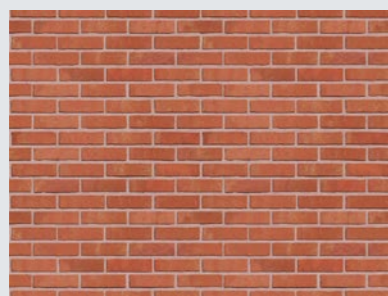
Appearance

The proposed materials palette whilst still subject to reserved matters approval includes:

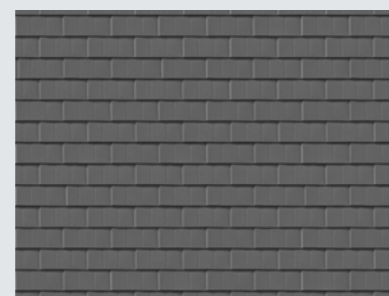
- Red and orange blended brickwork;
- Tile hanging / feature panelling to compliment brickwork and create elevational interest;
- Grey and brown plain roof tiles.

And may include architectural details such as:

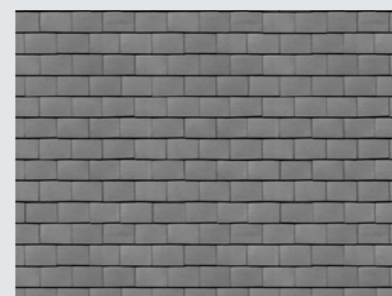
- Brick plinths;
- A range of door styles with glazed view panels;
- Flat and pitched canopies;
- Gables;
- Brick banding and dental coursing;
- Reconstituted stone and / or brick quoins; and
- White bargeboards.



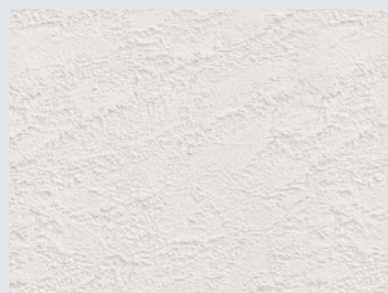
Red / orange blend brick



Tile hanging



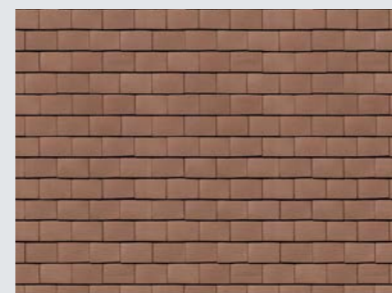
Grey plain roof tiles



Smooth white / cream render



Feature panelling



Brown plain roof tiles



➤ Pickersleigh Grove, Malvern - adjacent to a Conservation Area and the Malvern Hills National Landscape.



➤ Skylark, Wisbech - development approaching final completions - images taken December 2023.



➤ Chevenham Court, Colwall - set in the Malvern Hills National Landscape.



➤ Rose Avenue, Worcester.



➤ Norwood Farm, Northampton.

Section 8.0

Conclusion

This document has set out a Vision for the development of land at Browns Lane, Tamworth. The proposals are demonstrably deliverable based on the Site assessment work that has been carried out to date. The Illustrative Masterplan describes a high quality, landscape led development that sensitively integrates with the local vernacular. It demonstrates how an extensive provision of green open space can be retained and enhanced, whilst also delivering much needed affordable housing to this northern edge of Tamworth.



The benefits of the proposal include:

- Delivery of up to 210 affordable dwellings to boost local housing need in a sustainable location within the District;
- A mix of house types and sizes, catering for varied local housing needs;
- An attractive, 'landscape-led' residential development, providing a rich variety of connected landscape spaces, strengthening the defensible edge to Wigginton;
- Areas of play overlooked by homes ensuring a safe and welcoming space for recreation;
- New footpath links from the Site connecting to the adjoining recreational facilities and wider area of Tamworth;
- Delivery of community benefits including new play areas and community orchards, alongside a variety of open spaces with leisure routes promoting healthy lifestyles;
- An opportunity to reinforce the existing landscape character through the retention and enhancement of existing hedgerows and the planting of new trees and hedgerows;
- The potential to create biodiversity enhancements achieved through the proposed planting of new trees, SuDS features and the introduction of strengthened green infrastructure;
- The ability to deliver exemplar design standards through built form and green infrastructure allowing both new and existing residents the opportunity to live, work and play; and
- Direct and indirect jobs created through the construction of the development, stimulating the local economy.

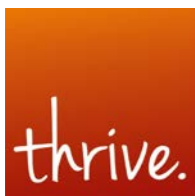




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