Land at Higham Road, Burton Latimer

Design and Access Statement

Incorporating Planning Statement and Statement of Community Involvement

November 2013

Ian F. Althorpe MRTPi
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Development Site</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Social and Economic Context</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Context</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Economic Context</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Planning Policy</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Planning Policy Framework 2012</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Development Plan Policy</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local Plan for Kettering Borough - Saved Policies</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Site Specific Proposals Local Development Document</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sustainable Design Supplementary Planning Document</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Planning Justification</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Constraints and Opportunities</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Community Involvement</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Design Principles</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Site Use</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Amount</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Layout</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Scale</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Appearance</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Landscape</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Access</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.”

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

1. Introduction

1.1 This statement accompanies an outline planning application for a residential development of up to 110 dwellings on land to the north of Higham Road, Burton Latimer. The land forms part of proposed housing allocation BL/180 identified in Kettering Borough Council’s Site Specific Proposals Local Development Document. A separate planning application is being submitted by Gladman Developments for the balance of the housing allocation. A master plan has been prepared with illustrative details showing how the separate proposals can combine and interconnect to provide a fully integrated development.

1.2 The purpose of this statement is to describe the context and design principles which have guided the proposals. The proposed development will aim to fulfil Kettering Borough Council’s aspiration to deliver high-quality housing schemes, and closely accord with design principles contained in the National Planning Policy Framework which was adopted in March 2012. Our development will:

• function well and add to the overall quality of the surrounding area over the lifetime of the development.

• establish a strong sense of place, with attractive streetscape and buildings providing a comfortable place to live.

• optimise the potential of the site, incorporating appropriate areas of green and public space

• respond to local character by reflecting the identity of local buildings and materials.

• create a safe, secure, and accessible environment.

• be visually attractive, with good architecture and appropriate landscaping.
2. Development Site

2.1
The application site lies to the north of Higham Road on the southern edge of Burton Latimer. It adjoins land with planning permission for housing development along its western perimeter. The site shares a boundary with the remainder of proposed housing allocation BL/180 on its eastern and northern sides. All of the land within proposed housing allocation BL/180 is currently in agricultural use.

2.2
The development area extends to about 3.8 hectares overall, with a frontage of approximately 100 metres to Higham Road.

2.3
The site comprises sloping pasture land in agricultural use. The land varies in height from 73.7 metres AOD to 79.1 metres from west to east on the Higham Road frontage, and from 75.36 metres rising to a maximum elevation of 79.25 metres along the south to north alignment of the principal access road. The site is presently contained within a single field, with hedgerows and a small number of trees around its northern, eastern and southern boundaries.

2.4
Road access for the development will be taken from a new junction on Higham Road. No vehicular access is proposed to the permitted residential development to the west, but a footpath/cycleway connection will be provided. The road and pathway links to the prospective residential development land to the east is indicated on the master plan which accompanies these proposals.

2.5
The site is not traversed by any existing public rights of way. It is intended that the circulation network will facilitate pedestrian and cycle movement from the development to existing and proposed residential areas which adjoin the site, and to the centre of the town.
3. Social and Economic Context

Social Context

3.1 Through their layout and design, the proposals will aim to provide a high quality and distinctive addition to the local residential area. The proposals will seek to ensure a satisfactory relationship between new housing and existing residential properties, both in terms of general outlook, and the protection of privacy and living conditions of existing residents.

3.2 The proposals will provide for a varied mix of housing which will be accessible to a wide sector of the local population. Up to 30% of the development will comprise affordable housing for rent and shared ownership. The precise mix and tenure of the affordable units will be agreed with the Borough Council to ensure that the housing needs of Burton Latimer and the surrounding area are properly met. The disposition of open market and affordable housing will aim to provide the right conditions for social integration within the development.

3.3 The requirement for new school places and other essential community facilities arising from the development will be met through appropriate and legally-binding financial contributions secured as part of the planning permission.

Economic Context

3.4 The development will make a valuable contribution to the local economy. Grace Homes will seek to ensure that the development secures maximum benefit in terms of local employment opportunities, and through the suppliers of local services and materials. When complete, the development will provide valuable additional support to underpin existing community facilities and local businesses.
Aerial Keyplan
Residential Development Higham Road Burton Latimer
4. Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

4.1
The NPPF places sustainable development at the forefront of the planning system. The definition of sustainable development encompasses an adequate supply of suitable building land and the delivery of housing as central planning requirements, along with the creation of high-quality built environments and accessible local services.

4.2
The delivery of high-quality design and a good standard of amenity through development is one of twelve core planning principles identified in the NPPF. Good design is properly regarded as a key aspect of sustainable development. Grace Homes are committed to producing housing developments of high quality, in line with the principles set out in the introduction to this statement.

4.3
There is currently a local imperative to extend the range of developable housing sites within Kettering Borough, which the Council is seeking to address through its Site Specific Proposals Local Development Document. The LDD provides for substantial new housing growth in Burton Latimer, and identifies the application site as a prospective housing allocation. The presumption in favour of sustainable development in the NPPF requires the Council to grant planning permission, unless there are material considerations which dictate otherwise. There are presently no planning considerations which would preclude the granting of planning permission for a well-designed development on the application site.

Development Plan Policy

4.4
4.5
The application site lies outside the limits to development for Burton Latimer identified on the Proposals Map in the Local Plan, where planning permission would not normally have been granted planning permission. Policy 7 Environment: Protection of the Open Countryside, relating to development in the countryside, would formerly have been applied to the proposals. In addition, Policy RA5 Rural Area: Housing in the Open Countryside indicates a general presumption against residential development in the open countryside outside the Inset boundaries shown on the Proposals Map. However, in view of the Borough Council’s current approach to dealing with housing land supply, the recent decision to promote the site as a proposed housing allocation in the Council’s Site Specific Proposals LDD, and the presumption in favour of sustainable development in the NPPF, it is considered that saved Local Plan Policies 7 and RA5 can now be considered to be effectively out of date, and of little relevance to the current proposals.

4.6
Retained Local Plan Policies 39 – Affordable Housing and B5 Burton Latimer: Affordable Housing have also been largely superseded by more up-to-date information regarding affordable housing needs in the Borough, and can also be regarded as out-of-date for the purposes of these proposals.
North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy

4.7
The existing version of the Core Spatial Strategy was adopted in 2008, and is currently being reviewed to cover the period up to 2031. The review includes a re-assessment of housing needs through an *Interim Housing Policy Statement* which introduces more up-to-date information on housing requirements, as well as identifying sites that will contribute to a supply of deliverable housing land over the next 5 years.

4.8
*Policy 7 - Delivering Housing* sets out the overall strategy for ensuring that housing needs are met, with the normal stipulations regarding an adequate continuity of supply and the choice of sites in sustainable locations.

4.9
*Policy 9 - Distribution and Location of Development* focuses development on the growth towns of Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough, with smaller towns including Burton Latimer performing a complementary role in delivering more modest levels of growth. In *Policy 10 Distribution of Housing*, the Strategy envisaged an indicative requirement of 700 houses in Burton Latimer, contributing to an overall Kettering Borough requirement of 13,100 houses in total. These figures form part of the current review process and are now subject to variation.

4.10
All new development is required to be carried out in accordance with sustainable development principles, as set out in *Policy 13* of the CSS. All relevant aspects of the policy have been taken into account in the formulation of these proposals, most importantly in terms of meeting the requirements for high quality and flexible design, a satisfactory relationship with existing property, security for future residents, accessibility to local services, access and parking provision, and the encouragement of non-car modes of transport. The creation of a development which exhibits a strong identity and sense of place for its occupants is the most important guiding principle of the proposals.

4.11
*Policies 14 and 15 Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Construction and Sustainable Housing Provision* are addressed in a separate Energy and Sustainable Design Statement which accompanies the planning application, with additional references in later sections of this statement. A balanced mix of housing types and tenures will be provided by the development, and the Borough Council’s affordable housing requirements will be met through a Section 106 Agreement as part of any planning permission in due course.
4.12 Kettering Borough Council is conducting a more focused study of housing requirements through the preparation of this LDD which will allocate land for housing purposes over the period to 2031 and, when adopted, form part of the North Northamptonshire Local Development Framework.

4.13 The Council is presently undertaking further consultation as part of an assessment of additional housing sites which are capable of yielding a further 2,300 dwellings to augment a revised Borough target of 10,700 dwellings over the period 2001-2031. The purpose of this exercise is to ensure that sufficient land is identified to provide a reasonable over-supply to reduce the risk of failing to find adequate land to meet the growth needs of the Borough over the plan period.

4.14 The site forming the subject of these proposals is now identified as part of a larger housing allocation under Borough Council reference BL/180. The Council anticipates that the allocated site will deliver a total of 348 dwellings. It considers that the site provides a logical extension to the settlement which will have acceptable landscape impacts. The site will make a significant contribution to a revised total of 527 additional dwelling units in Burton Latimer.

4.15 The application site was previously identified and confirmed (under KBC reference BL/058) as a preferred option for meeting the councils housing requirement in the SSPLDD Options Paper which appeared as a consultation document in 2012.

4.16 A separate Energy and Sustainable Design statement dealing with the policy requirements of this SPD accompanies these proposals. Relevant aspects of the SPD are also considered in more detail in later sections of this statement.
5. Planning Justification

5.1 Kettering Borough Council is keen to ensure the continuity of an adequate 5-year supply of housing land, as required by the National Planning Policy Framework, by encouraging developers to bring forward planning applications on favoured sites. The proposals represent a highly sustainable form of development in a settlement which is required to accommodate a substantial number of new homes in future years. Moreover, the Council considers that this site represents an entirely logical and acceptable location for accommodating additional housing growth in Burton Latimer. These considerations outweigh any earlier presumption against the development in terms of Policies 7 and RA5 of the Kettering Borough Local Plan, which are now effectively out of date. Further, the provision of affordable housing addresses a serious shortfall in this type of provision in the Borough.

5.2 The proposals are in general conformity with all relevant policies of the existing Core Spatial Strategy and will be unaffected by the review currently being undertaken by the joint authorities.

5.3 The proposals will exhibit good design, and will contribute positively to the built form of the village.

5.4 The proposals will contain the key characteristics for establishing a mixed community, with a variety of housing for a range of differing households. The scheme will properly reflect local demand for open market housing, and will provide a suitable mix of affordable housing to meet local needs.

5.5 The proposals will make effective and efficient use of land, at a density which conforms with policy and which is appropriate to the local context.
Design Concept Plan
Residential Development Higham Road Burton Latimer

Site Location Plan

Key to site features
- Main Access route to town centre & A6
- Main Avenue into site
- Pedestrian & cycle routes
- Grace Homes development under construction
- Existing vegetation
- Adjacent green space & gardens
- Green Public Open Space

Movement & Access Strategy Plan
Residential Development Higham Road Burton Latimer
6. Constraints and Opportunities

6.1
A well-designed residential extension to the southern edge of Burton Latimer can be readily assimilated into the landscape with minimal adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the local area. These proposals represent a logical continuation of earlier development along Higham Road. The retention and reinforcement of existing hedgerow boundaries will help to soften the built form of the development, and provide scope for enhancing bio-diversity. Physical constraints to development are few, with the principal considerations being:

• To ensure that development provides a suitable relationship with adjoining residential properties, respecting their outlook and privacy.

• To produce a development which is in keeping with the town and its peripheral location, utilising built form and landscaping to reduce its appearance in external perspectives.

• To provide safe access for residents both within the site, and on the wider highway network.

6.2
In terms of opportunities, the site comprises an accessible and well-located parcel of land which relates well to the existing town form. Along with development on adjoining land, the proposals will effectively round-off built development in this part of the town, and reduce the pressure for development in less acceptable locations.

6.3
The site lies within a viable and sustainable community which already benefits from a wide range of facilities. The proposals will help to underpin those facilities and secure their retention and diversification in future. The finished development will lie within easy reach of the town centre, medical centre, and schools, and provide residents with the option of making some local journeys without recourse to the motor car.

6.4
The site provides the setting for a varied and visually attractive form of development which will enhance the southern gateway to the town. The proposals will employ a palette of materials, building styles and architectural detail which will provide a finished development which is fully in keeping with its edge of settlement location.

6.5
The inclusion of a strong landscape component along the site frontage will assist in a satisfactory visual transition between development and the adjoining countryside in this part of the town.
7. Community Involvement

7.1 The proposals formed the subject of an introductory meeting with Burton Latimer Town Council on 26 September, 2013. At the meeting, Grace Homes confirmed their intention to proceed with a planning application to support Kettering Borough Council’s wish to see favoured housing sites brought forward in the planning process. The Town Council was presented with an overview of identified constraints and opportunities having a bearing on development, and a movement and access strategy plan showing the anticipated form which the outline proposals would be likely to take.

7.2 In general, members of the Council appeared to be supportive of additional new housing to the north of Higham Road, and no objections were raised about the principle of development. Other comments related to the issue of traffic safety at the junction between Higham Road and the A6. Additional traffic from the development was seen as having the potential to add to existing problems in the absence of further safety improvements. Members emphasised the importance of retaining existing field hedges as a means of benefiting landscape and nature conservation interests. Confirmation was sought about the adequacy of some existing local facilities, particularly school place provision.
7.3
The proposals were also presented to the general public in the form of an exhibition at the Civic Centre on 10 October, 2013. Although attendance was low, the response to the proposals was generally favourable. A number of matters were raised, including pressure on school places, the effects of additional traffic in the town centre and at the Higham Road/A6 junction, and the quantum of extra housing being proposed overall. The additional support for local services arising from the development was welcomed, along with the prospect of additional family and affordable housing. It was suggested that welcome packs should be made available to new residents to enable them to assimilate more readily into the town.

7.4
The issues raised by the Town Council and members of the public are addressed in this statement and other supporting information provided with the planning application.
8. Design Principles

8.1
Grace Homes are committed to creating high quality residential environments which support the Borough Council’s policies and aspirations for securing better design.

The proposals have taken their lead from the opportunities recorded in the foregoing section, and seek to provide:

• Form and layout which exploit the physical characteristics and topography of the site.

• Development which respects the privacy and living conditions of existing properties.

• Buildings and street scenes which exhibit enduring architectural quality.

• Streets with secure, pedestrian-friendly, and well-structured access.

• Landscaping which enhances built form and reinforces identity.

• Development which respects the existing character and appearance of the town.

• Development with a distinctive character and sense of place.

9. Site Use

9.1
The development of the site for new housing is entirely appropriate in the context of existing and emerging planning policies. The proposals will assimilate readily into the existing settlement pattern, and will not result in any adverse consequences for adjoining land uses or the village as a whole.

10. Amount

10.1
A development of approximately 100 dwellings on a developable area of about 3.8 hectares at 26.3 units to the hectare is broadly consistent with the local and national planning policies which seek to ensure the efficient use of land, whilst protecting residential amenity and safeguarding the character and appearance of existing settlements.
11. Layout

11.1 The proposals seek to provide the development with a well-defined and cohesive layout, with varied and interesting visual compartments, adding up to a clearly recognisable identity and sense of place. An illustrative master plan has been prepared which shows how the development might proceed individually, and in conjunction with the remainder of the BL/180 housing allocation.

11.2 The road layout is relatively informal and makes the fullest use of shared access ways and private drives with differing surface treatments to add texture and variety. The curving alignment of the principal access loop is designed to enhance the visual continuity to the buildings in the street scene, and to provide a more relaxed environment which will discourage vehicle speeds.

11.3 The layout adopts perimeter block principles so that the development presents as much active street frontage to roads and open spaces as possible. As well as providing a more attractive and visually coherent environment, this also ensures a high degree of safety and security for all thoroughfares and public space within the development.

11.4 A clear definition will be made between all private space and publicly accessible areas to minimise problems of ownership and responsibility. This will be achieved through the provision of suitable landscaping or other means of enclosure to the frontages of all properties within the development.

11.5 The layout retains existing landscape features and incorporates a centrally located open space to aid in the provision of discreet compartments of development, set within a cohesive overall plan.
12. Scale

12.1
All buildings will be either two or two and a half storeys in height, with the tallest being a little over 9 metres high. Three storey houses have been purposely excluded in order to avoid unduly prominent buildings in this edge of settlement location.

12.2
The siting and arrangement of buildings will provide ample interest in the street scene, without the necessity to increase scale or massing for visual effect.
13. Appearance

13.1
The master plan seeks to ensure that the development will respond positively and sensitively to its context, and achieve a coherent, visually attractive, and enduring outcome. Particular care will be taken to ensure that the layout and its individual buildings display clear references to the locality in terms of arrangement, built form and external detailing.

13.2
The proposals set out to achieve a balance between the relatively compact urban character of recent housing development nearby and the countryside which adjoins the application site, by adopting a semi-rural character and appearance for the development.

13.3
Individual dwellings will incorporate locally appropriate form, proportions and design characteristics, and resonate well with traditional domestic buildings in the town. Architectural features will include eaves detailing, door surrounds and porches, bay windows and chimneys which take design references from selected local counterparts. Overall, the scheme will comprise an individual range of buildings which are designed to fit well together in coherent groups, and will combine to produce a finished appearance which reflects well in relation to street forms and patterns to be found elsewhere in the town.

13.4
Locally appropriate materials will be selected from a palette of facing bricks and painted, rough-cast render, and timber cladding, along with roofing tiles of traditional shape and appearance.
14. Landscape

14.1 Existing landscape features around the perimeter of the site will be retained except where it is necessary to provide access to adjoining development. The existing hedgerows which define the site on its eastern and northern boundaries will be retained along most of their length, and reinforced with additional landscaping. Care will be taken to ensure that the majority of the perimeter hedging is retained in open positions within the detailed layout which facilitate ease of access and future maintenance.

14.2 An area of open space will be located within the development to provide an area for children’s play and a visual focus for buildings along the main thoroughfare. This space will incorporate a substantial part of the existing hedgerow and new tree planting, employing native species of appropriate scale.

14.3 The Higham Road frontage will be formally landscaped with trees and hedgerow species to reflect the semi-rural location of the completed development.

14.4 Grace Homes will prepare a management and maintenance plan for the open space area which will enable them to be vested in either the Borough or Parish Council, or transferred to a management company.
15. Access

15.1 Vehicular access to the site will be taken via a new junction on Higham Road. The access will be provided with a right turning lane for vehicles approaching the site from the east. The existing 30 mph limit signs in Higham Road will be relocated to the east of the site access, and augmented with additional visual speed warning features. No improvement measures are considered necessary at the Higham Road/A6 and Higham Road/Finedon Road junctions.

15.2 Separate pedestrian accesses will be provided to connect with existing and proposed residential areas, and to link into the wider public rights of way network beyond the site. The proposed development will be within easy walking and cycling distance of the local services which are available in the town centre.

15.3 The main access thoroughfare within the development will be provided with speed restraining features with the aim of achieving an advisory 20mph limit for vehicles. The access network will provide a safe environment for both cyclists and pedestrians.

15.4 The development site lies within easy walking distance of bus services passing through the village. The proposals will consider the need for a contribution towards improved access to public transport through a Section 106 Agreement and encourage the use of services by providing information in travel packs issued to new residents.

15.5 Parking provision will be made within the development consistent with prevailing policies. All parking spaces will be located within the curtilage of individual properties.

15.6 The proposals will make provision for wheelchair access throughout the development. The site layout has been designed to allow full ease of movement for all disabled people including those with visual impairments.