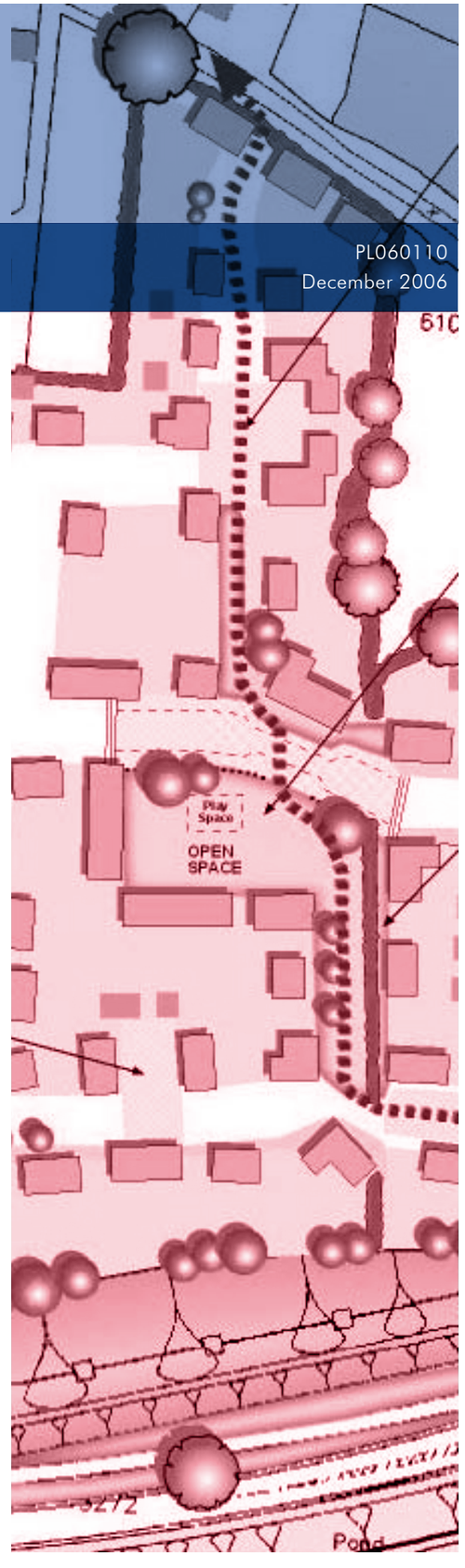
Land South Of Breach Lane, Earl Shilton

Design & Access Statement

PL060110
December 2006



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INTRODUCTION

The design statement provides an analysis of the outline planning consent 03/00295/OUT dated 26/01/07 for residential development on land to the south of Breach Lane, Earl Shilton. The design statement sets out the proposals that have been established & which have guided & informed the design. This statment should be read in conjunction with the drawings that accompany the application.

LOCAL PLAN POLICY

The site is allocated for residential development in the adopted Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan (February 2001) under Policy RES1(j), which requires the following criteria to be met:

"a) Prior to detailed planning permission, details showing a comprehensive layout of the whole site incorporating the principles of development, and addressing the following requirements;

b) A range of house types and densities, with a layout and design which is sympathetic with an urban fringe location;

c) The primary vehicle access to be taken direct from a new junction on the Earl Shilton By-pass;

d) A contribution towards the cost of the junction with the By-pass and other agreed infrastructure works. Provision also needs to be made for safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle links within the development and between existing residential areas and facilities;

e) Substantial structural landscaping along the southern boundary."

Whilst the adopted local plan provides figures regarding the expected capacity of the site (116 dwellings on 5.25 ha) the plan seeks to encourage densities at 27 dwellings per hectare (see paragraph 2.17.4).

In addition, recent government guidance seeks to avoid densities at less than 30 dwellings per hectare. The applicant believes that the sites can accommodate 150 dwelling which derives a density of 31.25 dwellings per hectare. Therefore the traffic assessment has been prepared on this basis.

Site Location

THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

The site is located on the south-eastern edge of Earl Shilton, about 1 km from the town centre where there a range of traditional buildings centred on the main shopping area. Earl Shilton itself is a sizable settlement that has expanded along an east/west axis centred on the A47. The town contains a wide range of local facilities meeting most day to day needs.

The site itself is broadly triangular in shape. Excluding the land required for structural landscaping on its southern edge, the developable area of the site for residential development site extends to about 4.8 hectares.

The land is presently in agricultural use, and comprises a series of regularly shaped field parcels subdivided by evenly spaced hedgerows. An appraisal of the site has identified little ecological features of note.

In the main, the external boundaries to the site are also formed by hedges, although there are short runs of fencing etc around some of the existing properties.

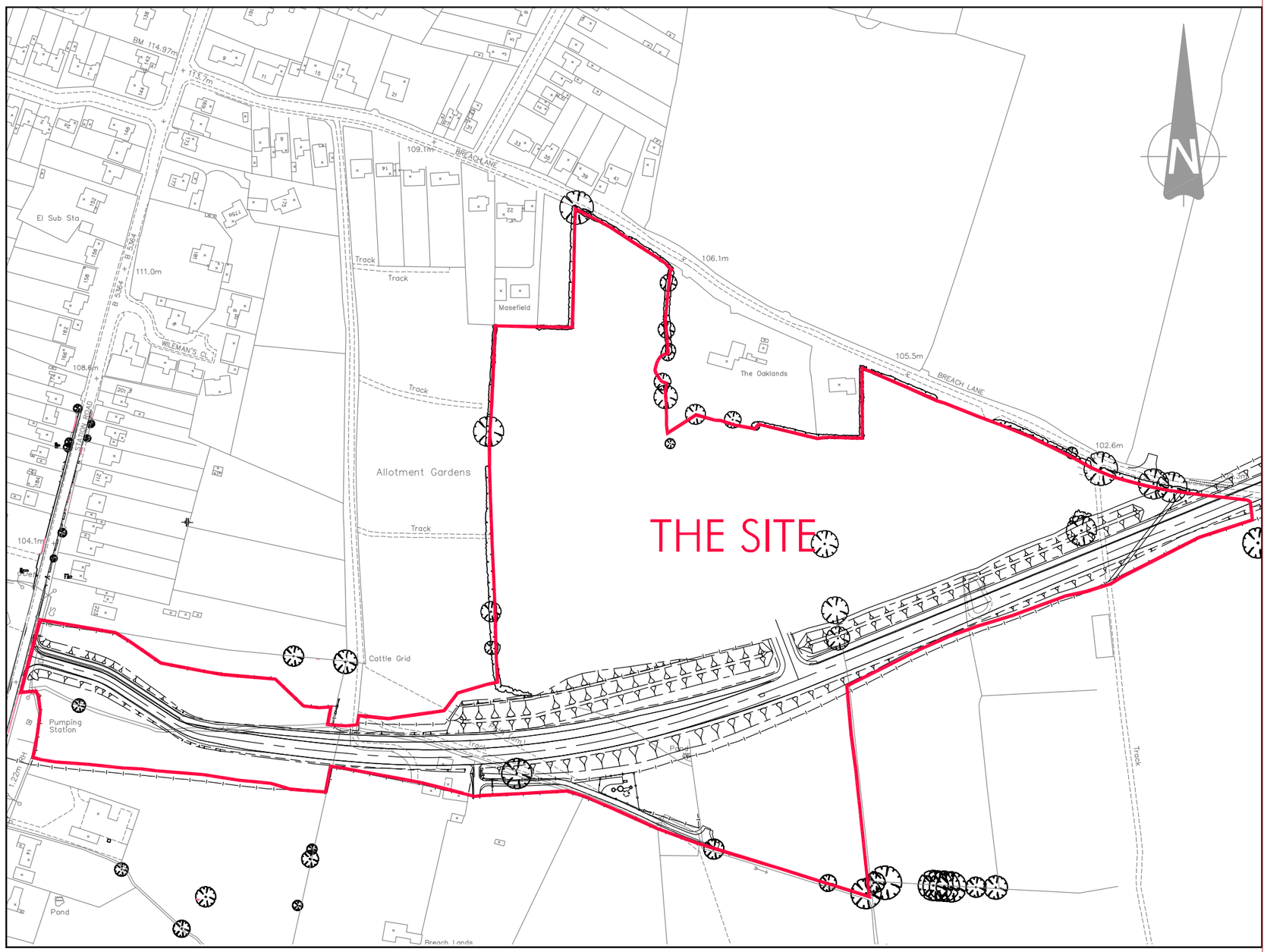
The existing properties are generally set in large gardens some distance from the site boundaries. The site includes the existing buildings at Breach Farm, which are used for a combination of agricultural and equestrian purposes. The complex itself is in relatively poor condition and it is proposed that the complex be demolished.

Along its northern edge, the site abuts existing residential properties on the south side of Breach Lane and has some, albeit limited, frontage to Breach Lane itself.

The southern/eastern boundary of the site is defined by the proposed alignment of the Earl Shilton By-pass, which sweeps around the site. This is currently the subject of a separate planning application by Leicestershire County Council.

The County Councils proposals, which are accommodated in this application, include an earth bund to the south of the residential site. It is intended that this will be landscaped. To the west the site abuts an area of allotments, whilst further a field is a recent residential development and the existing houses along Station Road itself.

The site generally slopes away from Breach Lane in a north to south direction with the town of Earl Shilton on slightly higher ground to the north. The site is gently sloping falling some 6m across the site in its western portion.Towards the southern extremity of the site is a stream, which will be re-routed as part of the county councils proposal for the bypass and associated drainage provision.



Site location plan - N.T.S

- Site Boundary

Context Appraisal

The existing housing in the area is not locally distinctive: it is dominated by houses of typical mid-20th century suburban character.

Similarly there is not clear distinctive local pattern of development. Whilst some houses front the highway, there are also less formal groupings.

Although the character of the site is rural in nature this belies the fact that it is located very close to the town centre and that the built up part of Breach Lane off Station Road is very suburban in character with detached houses and bungalows with generous front gardens.

This is also the character of surrounding streets, although further to the west proportions of semi-detached properties and small residential close's begin to appear.

Architecturally the adjacent housing is fairly modern, dating from the seventies. The style of these houses is typical of the period with windows of a horizontal proportion with top hung lights and low pitched roofs.

Materials are generally red or brown brick, windows upvc and roofs have interlocking concrete tiles.. Overall this type of development does not offer an exemplar as it does not comply with current best practice design.

The high street of the town is predominantly mid to late 19th ments with brick arch or stone/cove concrete lintels over. Roofs consist of slates or plain tiles ,eavs are generally close with some detail coursing evident to some properties. Plots are set very close to the road with either no enclosure or small walled gardens.



Some terraces contain a mixture of facing materials



Terrace with slate roof & stone heads



Brick terrace, chimneys give vertical emphasis



Main shopping street



Simple terrace (original windows have been replaced)



Simple single fronted terrace with projecting bay



2 1/2 storey Public House



Late Victorian terrace



Constraints Plan

Breach Farm

Constraints and Opportunities

Topography

The site falls away from Breach Lane itself, this fall generally follows the north south direction of the existing hedgerows.

Access

The proposed vehicular access for the site will be from the new Earl Shilton by-pass. The location of the access has been agreed with Leicestershire County Council highways department and detailed technical information regarding appropriate vision splays have been integrated into the design. A 7.3 wide principal access road has been designed to provide possible access to future development crossing Breach Lane. Within the limits of this development however the access will stop when it reaches the boundary with Breach Lane.

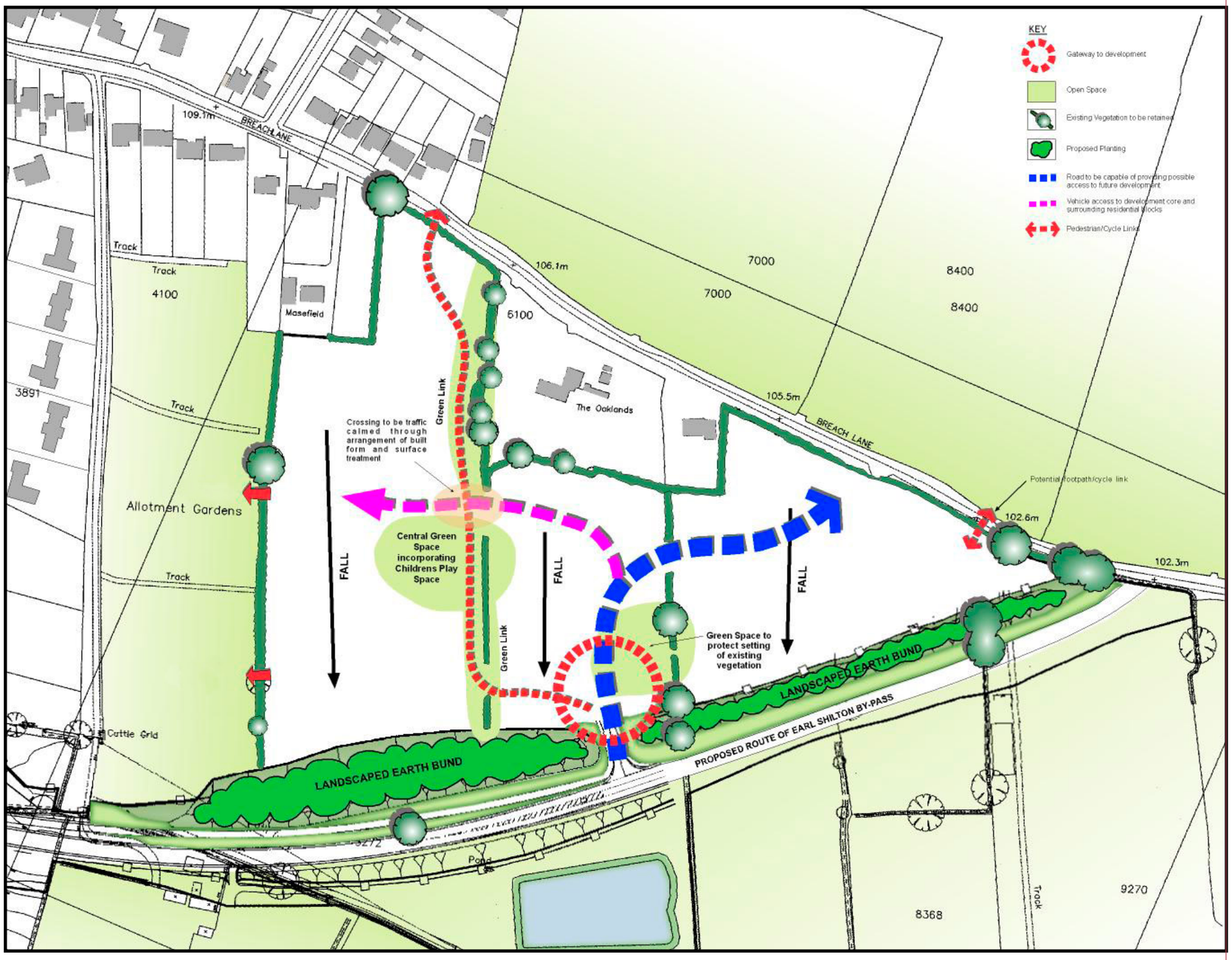
The local planning authority require a pedestrian/cycle route linking the new access with Breach Lane at the sites north-west corner. A Pedestrian/cycle link has also been identified in the south east corner.

Views

Although views are available to the south these are mainly from private land. Views from Breach Lane itself are restricted because of the existing hedgerows that bound the site.

Landscape

The existing trees and hedgerows will be retained and preserved through the provision of green links and open space within the site. Removal of hedgerows for the purposes of access will be the only exception. The retention of hedgerows along the site boundaries will help to retain some of the character of field boundaries that currently exists.



Design Strategy

DESIGN STRATEGY

STREET CHARACTER & HEIRACHY

The main design objective is to produce a legible, closely-knit and intimate environment that has common themes with the older parts of Earl Shilton further a field. The underlying purpose is to achieve a visually cohesive built from with continuous and interesting street facades, creating a clear identity and sense of place.

The finished development is fully permeable and will integrate visually and functionally with the new leisure facility, existing residential areas and the village centre.

DENSITY, DETAILED LAYOUT & DESIGN

The overall development density is 31.25 units to the hectare (assuming 150 dwellings). Differing heights of the buildings will provide variation and contrast. Buildings may include 2 or 21/2 storeys and are drawn tightly to the highway. Traditional railings will define the resulting small frontage spaces adjoining the highway.

Formal landscaping and screen walling which will mask the parking areas from view will provide street enclosure.

In terms of elevational treatment, the proposals make the fullest use of articulation to avoid corners and provide a well-integrated street scene. Visual interest will be provided in the use of buildings of differing heights and elevational treatments whilst avoiding the use of superfluous detail. Above all, the development will read visually as a composite whole, and will be enhanced by formal landscaping to a high standard.

THE DEVELOPMENT IN ITS SURROUNDINGS

The site is spatially and visually from the older part of the settlement being of urban fringe/urban expansion type location.

The relationship between the site and the related highway proposals will create "new" surroundings which need to be considered in addition to the existing character elements in the area. The development can be integrated into the settlement and surroundings by a number of techniques to reflect the opportunities of the site. These include:

- Limited frontage development to Breach Lane itself.
- Housing with arranges "gardens to gardens" in relation to the allotments and existing residential properties.
- Lower density housing on the fringe perimeters of the site with associated structural landscape areas.
- Retention and reinforcement of important hedgerows within the site including those to existing properties.

Open space can be provided within the site to reflect these approaches which may be combined with movement linkages (see Section 4).

The level of provision of open space should reflect the guidance given in PPG 17 (August 2002) which seeks to avoid inflexible national standards, but reflect the particular characteristics of the site.

DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION

The access into the development will be designed as a gateway with 2 ½ storey sentinel buildings with heightened detailing. The access road will then wind around an area of open space on the right designed as a 'village green', containing existing retained trees and hedgerows. The treatment of this space will be informal but it will be contained by a series of 21/2 and 3 storey buildings (principally detached) to provide adequate enclosure.

As the road bears right the development form reverts to mainly 2 storey with the exception of key building at the end of street vistas. These properties have small front gardens areas to reflect the landscape character of Breach Lane itself. A secondary road provides access to a the south east corner of the site. Parking within this area is principally within curtilage or in the form of a small courtyard to reflect the plan form of farm buildings.

Access to the western side of the site is via a left turn off the village green. This street leads directly to an urban green space providing a visual focus and area for equipped play. This central green is also connected to The Earl Shilton by-pass and Breach Lane by pedestrian/cycle link that follows the route of retained hedgerows. To the south of the urban green the development follows a more suburban style of streets with the housing contained by the landscape buffer of the Earl Shilton by-pass. To the north of the urban green the development follows a more informal layout of 2 storey detached houses reflecting the setting of Breach Lane.



Typical Street Scene

4.0 ACCESS ANALYSIS

The site is located on the south eastern edge of Earl Shilton, about 1km from the town centre or within 10 minutes walking distance. The town centre provides a range of facilities including bus services to nearby towns.

As required by policy in the Local Plan, vehicular access to the development will be taken from the proposed Earl Shilton By-pass. No significant vehicular access is proposed from Breach Lane, but there will be connecting links via this route for pedestrians/cyclists at the north west corner and pedestrian link to the north east corner.

The relevant section of the By-pass will be constructed as part of the development.

The works will include the right-turn junction arrangement beyond the point of entry to the site, and provision for an interim access onto Station Road pending completion of the By-pass.

Roads within the site will be designed with the primary aim of creating a safe and pedestrian-friendly environment. This will be achieved by using more informal road types in tandem with a closely-knit layout will combine to suppress traffic speeds. The layout and arrangement of buildings will be an important component in influencing car-user perceptions and creating safer conditions throughout the development. A raised table arrangement will be adopted at the turning into the western side of the site opposite the village green and around the urban green space.

The principle vehicular access to the site is via the new road. Nevertheless, the access network as a whole will be devised on the principle of facilitating safe and easy movement for pedestrians and cyclists. The result will be a highly permeable layout with a well-connected series of safe routes, which will be convenient to use and overlooked by as many properties as possible.

The pedestrian/cycle route will be provided from the site entrance following the line of retained trees & hedgerows through to the north west of the site and onto Breach Lane to reduce the distance travelled by these modes to the village centre. However a dedicated cycleway will also be incorporated into the By-pass route to provide wider linkage once the bypass is opened.

Within the development, the use of dead-ends and culs-de-sac has been kept to an absolute minimum. The creation of safe and attractive streets is intended to encourage pedestrians and cyclists, and to reduce trips by car.

Dwellings will be provided with level thresholds in order to facilitate access for the disabled in line with the regulations set out in Part M of the Building Regulations. This access will be from the front unless the topography prevents this, in which case level access will be from the rear.

The proposed development will be designed and built to enable access by all people regardless of ability with all the necessary provisions as required to ensure that this objective is attained.

CAR PARKING

Modern housing layouts have tendered to accentuate the conspicuousness of parked motor vehicles. The design advice in PPG13 and "Better Places to Live" clearly seeks to reduce the visual impact of cars in the street scene. This principle will be firmly adopted in the proposals.

Wherever possible, parking facilities will be located at the side or to the rear of the buildings they serve. This will in turn bring the buildings themselves into greater prominence, and provide more harmonious street scenes and a better sense of place within the development.

The proposals will make extensive use of secure, gated accesses within individual plots to encourage off-street parking, and ensure as far as possible that vehicles are tucked out of sight behind the building line. Where they are required, parking courts will be limited in size and overlooked by houses opposite the entrance.

SECURE BY DESIGN

The need to design out crime and foster community spirit within the development is paramount. Good design can help to create a development with a 'sense of place', rather than the anonymous housing developments of recent years. This can engender a sense of ownership of all parts of the development helping to deter criminal and anti-social behaviour. The principles of Secure By Design will be applied to the design of the development along with urban design best practice to create an attractive and considered development that is related to its social and environmental context.

The following points detail the main principles influencing the detailed design:

- Provision of natural surveillance of spaces, movement routes and private parking areas through careful design of the layout and individual building designs.
- Well designed public spaces and landscaping.
- Access points to parking areas behind active frontages to be overlooked by adjacent buildings.
- Larger parking areas to be policed by 'sentinel' buildings and/or flats over garages.
- Footpaths and cycleways to be integrated within the street network.
- Where footpaths are segregated they will be overlooked by buildings placed along their route and visibility maintained from either end.
- Boundaries to the side and rear of houses will be of a suitable height and construction to discourage intruders.
- Public routes will be suitable lit to reduce the fear of crime whilst respecting the individual environment.

Master Plan


KEY
Indicative Built Form
2.5 Storey Houses
Open Space
Existing Vegetation
Proposed Planting
Pedestrian/Cycle Links
NOTE
Use of parking courts to be limited to areas adjacent principle roads. Elsewhere on-plot parking will be the norm
Small collections of buildings forming courtyard spaces to reflect local building patterns
Traffic calmed central 'village green', with play space and railings to give separation from through traffic
Existing landscaping retained as feature within development as part of green pedestrian and cycle link
Potential footpath/cycle link
Island with potential feature configured to draw persons to village green
Gated private parking area
BREACH LANE
B 5364
WILEMAN'S CL
Masefield
The Oaklands
Allotment Gardens
Play Space
OPEN SPACE
Parking Court
Cattle Grid
Track
Pond
113.7m
109.1m
111.0m
106.1m
105.5m
102.6m
102.3m
7000
8400
6100
4100
3891
3782
3375
8368
9270

CONCLUSIONS

The development of the site should reflect the existing character of the site and the related infrastructure proposals.

The terms of this statement addresses these aspects by

•Identifying a series of movement links which will integrate the proposals into the area.

•Specific design techniques regarding the proposals and existing and proposed development

•An internal design philosophy, within the requirement to make efficient use of the land, and demonstrate good quality design themes.