

Design Statement for Land East of Wykin Lane, Stoke Golding, Leicestershire

1.0 Overview

1.1 The purpose of this document is to explain the design thinking for the proposals for the proposed Davidsons development at Stoke Golding. The document has been produced to be as concise and as focused as possible and is in support of Condition 2 (22/00595/CONDIT):

2) No development shall commence until plans and particulars of the reserved matters relating to:

(a) the appearance of the development including the aspects of a building or place that determine the visual impression it makes, including proposed materials and finishes; and

(b) the landscaping of the site including treatment of private and public space to enhance or protect the site's amenity through hard (boundary treatments) and soft measures and details of boundary planting to reinforce the existing landscaping at the site edges; and

(c) the layout of the site including, the location of electric vehicle charging points, the way in which buildings, routes and open spaces are provided, the housing mix, and the relationship of these buildings and spaces outside the development. This should include a design statement that sets out how consideration has been given to lower density to edges of site and higher density along main routes; and

(d) the scale of each building proposed in relation to its surroundings

have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

1.2 The document should be read in conjunction with the submitted Planning Layout, Elevations and other plans and materials submitted.

The designers on this project were:

Iain Pickering, Design Director.

Matt Sanders, Urban Design Manager.

Charlie Stringer, Urban Designer and Architectural Technologist.

Scheme design

- 2.1** The project designers visited the site to understand the site and its wider context; identifying and appreciating both opportunities and constraints.
- 2.2** A number of key opportunities were identified:
- To retain a high percentage of existing trees and the dense vegetation along the site frontage, protecting the character of the lane.
 - Retain perimeter landscaping along the southern and eastern boundaries.
 - Provide a pedestrian connection to Stoke Golding Park.
 - Achieve a good standard of design in layout and building design through the arrangement of streets, building blocks and the way in which building blocks are 'filled' with individual houses.
 - To strengthen a section of the south eastern boundary with a new hedgerow.
- 2.3** By way of an overview, the development proposals offer 55 new homes across both market (33 homes) and affordable tenures (22 homes). Homes vary from 1 to 5 bedrooms.

Scheme features and qualities

- 2.4** A positive gateway to the village is created by the house type selected and positioned on plot 1. This dual aspect house type (DH501) performs the role of a marker building. This home is orientated to face in a southerly direction, ensuring that glimpse views into the development as a person arrives into the village are welcoming. The 501 design is a double fronted home with good proportions and rich traditional detailing. Thin cheeked dormers on the roof reflect traditional architectural characteristics whilst a generous and well-proportioned chimney stack reaches above the ridge line.

As you walk into the development and look to your right, you will be greeter by another 501 home. This dual aspect home offers two strong elevations to the public realm with the side elevation towards the lane ensuring that there are no dominant blank or largely blank walls intruding into the street scene.

Arrival street and building line

- 2.5** Leading on from plot one a series of homes line the arrival street, with careful attention afforded to stitching the building line ensuring a strong street composition is created. These first homes gently follow the line of the street before arriving at a focal space from where two streets lead off further into the development.

When reviewing the layout as a whole is it clear to see that the consistency of the building line extends throughout the development. This avoids the haphazard stepping forward and back of buildings that is often seen on new build developments. When this is done, the blank or largely blank side elevations of homes are presented to the street.

Focal space

2.6 At this focal space another marker building has been placed (plot 30). This acts as an end stop finishing a key view within the development. This home also acts as a memorable building.

2.7 The focal space includes a small green space for a tree and is well framed by buildings. It is important to note the use of an angled home (plot 51) which helps to reinforce the enclosure of this space. Angled buildings are used to follow the line of the street and can be found in the following locations: plots 14/15 and 29. Without angled buildings awkward spaces are created between buildings that have no clear public or private function.



Without angled buildings, it is not possible to wrap corner well.

Perimeter blocks

2.8 A series of well-formed perimeter blocks have been created whereby there are clear public fronts and private backs. Private gardens interlock with existing back gardens or the landscape corridors; or interlock with other new back gardens. Lower density and scaled development with longer back gardens has been used along site edges with higher densities in the centre of the site.

As previously mentioned corners and changes in street alignment are well resolved through the use of dual aspect cranked and angled house types. These house types also assist in creating a strong and cohesive building line. These house type designs help to utilise land to best effect whilst also guarding against inactive (or 'dead') side elevations of buildings presenting themselves to the public realm.

Street and wider movement framework (circulation)

2.9 The principal street (Road 1) form a key structuring element of the site with its proposed pedestrian link to the park. A potential to provide a pedestrian connection to the park has been incorporated into the development proposals.

Car parking

- 2.11** A mix of car parking solutions (side of home and front of home) have been utilised to provide sufficient car parking whilst also carefully integrating car parking into the street environment. This mix of solutions helps to reduce the visual impact of car parking whilst also providing a good balance of homes with non-tandem (i.e. side by side car parking arrangements). Front of home parking is balanced with soft landscaping, avoiding the creation of street scenes where the edge of the street is dominated by a line of car bonnets. A small number of car ports are also proposed to help reinforce the building line.

All homes benefit from e-charging points.

Appearance

- 2.12** The house type portfolio illustrates the range and quality of new homes with traditional proportions, detailing, colours, textures and materials that draw on the positive and distinctive characteristics in the village. Particular attention is afforded to high quality facing (brick and/or render) and roofing materials in addition to the provision of chimney stacks of a variety of designs, scales and details to reflect the distinctive roofscapes of the village. Tiles are of high quality with Forticrete Gemini tiles (small format tiles with thin leading edges) used alongside Forticrete SL8 tiles that feature a very thin leading edge.

Homes are designed tenure blind, in addition all homes are provided with e-charging points.

Landscape design

- 2.13** A comprehensive landscape strategy is proposed (please refer to Detailed Landscape Proposals). This shows the relationship between existing and proposed landscape features and the extent of new tree planting.

Public and private spaces are clearly demarcated with amenity protected and enhanced through boundary and other landscape treatments. Landscaping contributes towards the integration of the required sub and pumping station.

The high quality landscaping scheme is complemented by high quality hard landscaping with areas of block paving in the key focal space within the development. Existing landscape at the site edges has been retained. A new section of native species hedgerow has been shown. This along with other boundary and vegetation planting and grassland ensures a good landscape setting.

Layout

The way in which buildings have been arranged integrates well with existing buildings whilst also defining and positively addressing new streets and public open spaces that

will be created. The integration of frontage landscaping along Wykin Lane creates a soft and sensitive relationship and ensures the development integrates well with adjoining land and development.

Scale

The height and form of development has been designed to relate sensitively to the village and adjacent homes with the use of detached homes along the northern boundary. In addition we chose to use detached homes with side of home parking and garages (as opposed to integral/front of home car parking house designs). This creates space between buildings, breaking up the built form along this edge, reflecting the space between homes on Stoneley Road and Arnold Road; stitching into the urban grain of the area.

3.0 Building for a Healthy Life

3.1 Building for a Healthy Life is a nationally recognised design tool; promoted in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF (Paragraph 133) states,

“Local planning authorities should ensure that they have access to, and make appropriate use of, tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development. These include workshops to engage the local community, design advice and review arrangements, and assessment frameworks such as Building for a Healthy Life...”

Davidsons has adopted the Building for a Healthy Life considerations as its preferred method of designing and reviewing the quality of their developments.

3.2 A Building for a Healthy Life review of the scheme has been completed by Dr. Stefan Kruczkowski, urban designer and part of Davidson's Homes Group Urban Design Team.

Reviewer credentials

3.3 Stefan is a principal author of the Building for Life methodology. Originally published in 2012, subsequent editions were published in 2014, 2015 and 2018 including a version for the Welsh Government in 2017: ‘Adeliladu am Oes 12 Cymru: Arwydd o le da i fyw ynddo’. He has used the Building for Life methodology extensively and has conducted pre-completion and post-completion Building for Life based assessments of residential developments across England in a wide variety of contexts.

In 2020, Stefan co-authored the latest update of the Building for Life methodology called Building for a Healthy Life. Endorsed by Homes England, the Home Builders Federation, Design Network and the Urban Design Group, Building for a Healthy Life was written in partnership with NHS England and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (now called the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities). The methodology is a proven design tool for structuring discussions relating to the design quality of residential led developments, informing local authority

decision making and securing design quality consistent with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Design Guide.

- 3.4** Stefan served as both a Design Council Built Environment Expert, having previously served as a CABI Enabler within the Urban Design and Homes Team. CABI (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) was the UK government's advisor on architecture, design and public space. Stefan's work for CABI was primarily focused on supporting local authorities in understanding and applying the Building for Life principles; training and auditing Building for Life assessors.

Within CABI Stefan was responsible for delivering Building for Life training and advice to local authorities and developers across England. Stefan was also part of a small team assessing the design quality of housing schemes seeking funding from the (then) Homes and Communities Agency's £1.06bn Kickstart fiscal stimulus programme following the global credit crisis. Kickstart assessors were selected by CABI on the basis of their skills in robustly using the Building for Life methodology (i.e. score robustness).

- 3.5** Stefan serves on the design review panels for Design Midlands, Design West and advises Homes England on the design quality of proposed developments on either its land or seeking its financial support.

- 3.6** Stefan served a fixed term as External Examiner at Anglia Ruskin University (MSc. Urban Design) having been appointed by its Senate. He is a visiting lecturer at the University of Nottingham and previously worked as a Lecturer at Nottingham Trent University leading the PG Cert Planning, Urban Design and Sustainable Development course he created.

- 3.7** In 2018, Stefan was awarded a PhD for his research into the effectiveness of Building for Life 12 as a regulatory mechanism in development management practice. This was the first doctorate awarded based on Building for Life 12. His empirical research was based on the use of the Building for Life methodology on developments comprising of over 15,000 homes.

Summary: Building for a Healthy Life

- 3.8** The Building for a Healthy Life review (separate document) states that a total of nine greens lights have been achieved with no red lights. The minimum threshold for a 'good' standard of design is set by Homes England as eight green lights and no red lights.

The Building for a Healthy Life methodology requires schemes to achieve as many green lights as possible, with no red lights and any amber lights justified. The Building for a Healthy Life report states that the three amber lights are justified.

Conclusion

The submitted material and supporting document, combined with the review by Dr. Stefan Kruczkowski (an official accredited provider of reviews) robustly demonstrate that the proposals are well designed.

The proposals have been carefully considered to respond sensitively and respectfully to their surroundings by virtue of new and existing landscaping, built form (layout, scale and amount of buildings), materials and details, house types, hard landscaping and the provision of e-car charging to every home.

Building for a Healthy Life is aligned to the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Design Guide. By meeting the requirements of Building for a Healthy Life (a tool encouraged in the National Planning Policy Framework) the proposals achieve a good standard of design.