

INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement supports an outline planning application for residential development (50 dwellings) on land south of Paddock Road, Woodford.

It has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the relevant planning legislation and regulations, and has regard to:

- Government advice in DLG Circular 01/2006 concerning the purpose and content of Design and Access Statements; and
- Good practice guidance published by CABE in 2006 (Design and Access Statements: How to write, read and use them)

The purpose of the Design and Access Statement is twofold:

- to explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied in formulating the proposed scheme, having regard to the surrounding context of the site and development opportunities and constraints; and
- to explain how the access arrangements to serve development have been formulated. No Supplementary Planning Guidance, such as a Village Design Statement, has been issued by East Northamptonshire Council in respect of Woodford. However, the Council is currently undertaking public consultation in respect of the proposed designation of the older part of the village as a Conservation Area, and the associated documentation contains useful background information.

The proposed development has full regard to design considerations set out in Policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy relating to General Sustainable Development Principles.

CONTEXT APPRAISAL

Woodford is a relatively large village with an estimated population of 1,448. It has a good range of facilities, including a primary school, medical centre, post office and shop, and is reasonably well served by public transport. As such it is an appropriate and sustainable location for limited additional housing development.

Woodford lies within the valley of the River Nene and occupies elevated land on the western valley slope. The southern part of the village, which generally comprises the older buildings, lies within a part of East Northamptonshire that is recognised as being an area of landscape value.

The historic heart of Woodford lies in its south-east part around The Square and is subject to proposed designation as a Conservation Area. In post-war years the village has experienced expansion in the form of modern estates, which are typical of their periods in terms of their layout, design, and materials. The main areas of expansion have been to the north and west.

The site lies on the south-west edge of the village, to the south of Paddock Road, adjacent to the existing built-up area. There is a recently completed housing development to the north of the site, whilst to the east is inter-war housing accessed off West Street.

To the south of the site is a large playing field with sports pitches, whilst to the west is agricultural land.

There is a public footpath adjacent to the southern boundary of the site, which provides convenient access to the village centre and the school.

DESIGN COMPONENT

Amount

The number of dwellings proposed is 50, which represents a density of 30 dwellings per hectare (net). This figure accords with the national indicative minimum net density of 30 dwellings per hectare referred to in PPS3 Housing.

As this is an edge of village site, the area of the site to be developed has been reduced from 2.3 hectares to 1.63 hectares, in order to accommodate structural planting adjacent to the western boundary and landscaped open space adjacent to the southern boundary. This will ensure that the site is satisfactorily integrated with the surrounding area and that there is no conflict between the proposed development and the adjoining sports pitches.

The amount of development proposed is considered to be a reasonable response to the requirement to use land efficiently, yet at the same time respect the local context and site specific development constraints.

Layout

The layout has been based on the following design criteria:

- a single point of access in the north-west corner of the site to link in with the estate road (Paddock Road)
- the estate road layout needs to include a loop system in order to satisfy highway authority requirements for emergency access
- the retention of the existing hedgerows on the site boundaries, strengthened where appropriate
- the creation of a structural planting belt on the western boundary to provide a good standard of visual containment
- the creation of a landscaped open space adjacent to the southern boundary to provide a buffer area between the proposed housing development and the adjoining sports pitches, so as to prevent any conflict between the uses
- the opportunity to create a link to the existing public footpath to the south of the site, which provides access to the village centre and other facilities, to facilitate opportunities for walking
- the application of Secured by Design principles
- the development should have active frontages and in particular dwellings on the southern part of the site should be oriented so that the public footpath link and associated open space is overlooked and so as to enhance the appearance of the south-east corner of the site where the main footpath link to the village will be located
- the layout of the development should achieve a satisfactory relationship to adjoining existing dwellings
- the inclusion of a range of house types and sizes to respond to expressed housing needs and demand and to provide visual interest

Scale

The proposed dwellings will be predominantly 2 storeys in height with some 2½ storey dwellings, to reflect the general scale of development in this part of the village. In terms of scale parameters for the individual dwellings the upper and lower limits are as follows:

- Height - 8-9 metres
- Width - 4-10 metres
- Depth - 5-10 metres

Landscaping

The layout makes provision for the retention and enhancement of the existing landscape features on the boundaries of the site. In addition a 20m wide structural planting belt, as recommended by the consultant landscape architects, will be provided adjacent to the western boundary together with an area of landscaped open space adjacent to the southern boundary. A landscape management plan will be prepared to ensure that these features are safeguarded.

A detailed landscaping scheme will be prepared as part of the reserved matters application.

Appearance

Details of appearance are reserved for later approval. The intention is that facing materials will be brick, and the roofing materials will be concrete tile; and the latter will have subdued colours. In common with the adjoining development known as The Paddocks, there will be a limited palette of materials and groups of dwellings will have the same combination of materials so as to contribute to a sense of place.

ACCESS COMPONENT

Details of the proposed access are submitted for approval as part of the application. At present the only vehicular access is a field access located in the north-west corner of the site, which links to the estate road (Paddock Road) provided as part of the adjoining development. Paddock Road will be extended to provide vehicular and pedestrian access to the site.

The estate road has been designed to include a loop in order to satisfy highway authority requirements for emergency access and will incorporate design measures to limit vehicle speeds to 20mph.

In terms of pedestrian access, there will be a link to the village from the south-east corner of the site to link with an existing unsurfaced public footpath which runs outside but adjacent to the southern boundary. This will encourage walking as a means of travel for accessing local facilities, including the primary school, post office and shops.

There are bus stops on Mill Road and High Street, which means that all of the dwellings will be within easy walking distance of public transport. The bus stops in Mill Road are within 300 metres of the site.

OUTLINE SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND ENERGY STATEMENT

In the interests of meeting the highest viable standards of resource and energy efficiency and reduction in carbon emissions, the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy (NNCSS) Policy 14 requires that certain matters be addressed by development proposals.

For housing developments of the scale proposed (i.e. less than 200 dwellings), the key matters are as follows:

Sustainable construction and energy efficiency

In this case, it is envisaged that all of the dwellings will be constructed so as to achieve Code Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes (Level 3 is mandatory in respect of affordable housing where public subsidy is involved).

There are various ways in which Code Level 3 can be achieved, although the following are specified requirements:

- energy efficiency of 25% better than required to comply with the 2006 Building Regulations (e.g. by improving the thermal efficiency of walls, ground floors and roofs and reducing air permeability); and
- water consumption restricted to no more than 105 litres per person per day.

Waste reduction/recycling

During the construction phase, a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) will be implemented. The SWMP will highlight opportunities for recycling construction waste.

The dwellings will all benefit from recyclables separation and storage to a standard that will satisfy Code Level 3. The waste storage provision will also comply with the requirements of the Council's Waste Management Services. The Council provides a three box recycling scheme with red (paper) and green (cans and plastics) boxes collected fortnightly on alternate weeks and the blue box (glass) every 4 weeks. Other refuse is collected weekly and is sack based.

Provision will also be made for home composting within rear gardens.

OUTLINE SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND ENERGY STATEMENT

Water efficiency and water recycling

The development will incorporate measures to improve water efficiency to the standard required to comply with Code Level 3. It is proposed that the dwellings will be fitted with low flush toilets and low flow taps and showers. In addition, rainwater harvesting in the form of water butts will also be provided for garden irrigation.

Renewable energy

In order to comply with Policy 14 of the NNCSS, at least 10% of the demand for energy must be met on-site from renewable sources and/or from a decentralised renewable or low-carbon energy supply.

In relation to this development, renewable energy measures will be incorporated within the detailed design of the scheme. These are most likely to take the form of solar thermal hot water systems and possibly photovoltaic panels.

The orientation of the roofs on the indicative layout is such that there ample opportunities for the use of solar thermal technology, which requires roof slopes to face within 45 degrees of south. Further details will be submitted as part of the approval of reserved matters. A detailed Sustainable Design and Energy Statement will be submitted as part of the application for approval of reserved matters. This will include a calculation of estimated energy consumption and the target to be achieved from renewable energy sources.