

# Stephen George + Partners LLP

Architects + Masterplanners



## Land East of Callowside, Ewyas Harold, Herefordshire

Design + Access Statement

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Contents

1.	Introduction	3	3.7	Drainage	11
1.1	The Applicant	3			
1.2	The Consultant Team	3			
1.3	The Brief	3			
2.	Understanding the Context	4	4.	Conclusion	12
2.1	Location & Access	4			
2.2	Existing Site Use	4			
2.3	Topography	4			
2.4	Landscape	4			
3.	The Design	5			
3.1	Development of the Brief	5			
3.2	Use and Amount	6			
3.3	Design and Appearance	7			
3.4	Scale	9			
3.5	Access and Parking	10			
3.6	Landscaping	11			

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 The Applicant**

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Stephen George + Partners to support a Reserved Matters Application (RMA) for a new development consisting of 38 houses, bungalows and flats.

The Applicant is Beau Homes, a residential property development company.

### **1.2 The Consultant Team**

The Applicant has commissioned the following organisations to prepare supporting documents and submit an application on their behalf:

Stephen George + Partners – Architects + Masterplanners

Potterton Associates - Landscape Architects

### **1.3 Scope**

The RMA is submitted pursuant to an Outline Planning Permission for 38 dwellings - reference P141963 – which reserved matters of layout, scale, appearance and landscaping. This Design and Access Statement accordingly focuses on these elements. For further information in respect of the principle of development, please refer to the Design and Access Statement dated June 2014, prepared by others and submitted with the Outline Planning Application.

Through collaborative engagement with the Landscape Architect from the outset, landscape and character have consciously informed our approach to layout, form, materials and detailing. This Statement should therefore be read in conjunction with the Landscape Statement.

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### **2. Understanding the Context**

#### **2.1 Location & Access**

The site is approximately 2.4 ha, located east of an area called Callowside in the village of Ewyas Harold, Herefordshire. Access to the land is off Elm Green Road, which forms its northern boundary. The immediate context of the site is primarily residential to the north and west, with open fields and woodland to the south and east.

#### **2.2 Existing Site Use**

The site currently comprises greenfield arable land.

#### **2.3 Topography**

Whilst the land appears to be generally flat and even, an inspection of topographical surveys shows a gentle slope generally from west to east.

#### **2.4 Landscape**

The land is an open field bounded by hedgerow to the north and west, with three established trees along the northerly boundary. Two will be retained and the other removed due to poor condition, as set out in the original Arboricultural Assessment. This has partially informed the development line, to ensure Root Protection Zones for these retained natural features are avoided.

Opportunities for biodiversity preservation and enhancement will be consolidated in a soft landscaping scheme prepared by the Landscape Architect to discharge Condition 20.

### **3. The Design**

#### **3.1 Development of the Brief**

The outline planning permit established the principle of development, with all matters reserved except access. Although an indicative layout accompanied the application, as a wholly new design team we completed a 'blind' appraisal of the context, opportunities and constraints, before cross referencing back to the original design and technical documents.

The key objectives arising from this collaborative exercise between Architect, Landscape Architect and Client were:

- The considered placement of roads, POS and building lines - to allow filtered views of open fields to the east and Callow Hill Wood to the south;
- The retention of established hedge and mature trees along Elm Green Road - dictated/constrained by vehicle and pedestrian visibility splays, as well as a failing Oak supressing the adjacent Holly tree. Nonetheless, by way of mitigation:
  - Reinforcement to the frontage and new perimeter hedgerow to the eastern and southern boundaries - to assimilate the development into its surrounds and soften visual impacts;
  - A new legacy of Oak trees lining Elm Green Road or POS;
  - Giving the Holly an opportunity to thrive and frame the access in conjunction with the retained Oak.
- A buffer zone to the northern aspect fronting Elm Green Road to:
  - Set back the built form - minimising visual impact on the approach to the village and creating a soft and attractive focal point for all entrances;
  - Accommodate a new pedestrian footpath connecting with Elm Green Road and Elmdale - self binding gravel proposed for its balance of aesthetic and wearing qualities ie rural in character but durable and low maintenance;
  - Locate SUDS features centrally where they contribute to the amenity of - whilst working technically from a levels and capacity perspective;
  - Facilitate a series of cohesive spaces and functions readily accessible to new and existing residents – optimising natural surveillance and intergenerational use;
  - Incorporate a locally themed Natural Play Trail – eg the derelict railway in close proximity to the site;
  - Maintain tree Root Protection Areas.
- A series of community pocket or linear orchards - to give purpose and ecological benefit to incidental open spaces that in time may otherwise be prone to nuisance or fly tipping.
- New pedestrian linkages with Callow Hill Wood - via a transition zone free of residential paraphernalia;
- Minimise visual impact for residential receptors to the west - through the siting of single storey development.

## Design + Access Statement

### 3.2 Use and Amount

The scheme comprises of the following accommodation:

6 no. 2 bed 3-person bungalows (60 sqm each)

2 no. 1 bed 2-person walk-up flats (approx. 48-58 sqm each)

16 no. 2 bed 4-person houses (74 sqm each)

14 no. 3 bed 5-person houses (84 sqm each)

The mix and size of properties represents approximately 80%/85% of the floor area / bedrooms indicatively proposed at the outline planning stage. This is representative of the predominant need for 2 and 3 bedroom accommodation in the Golden Valley Housing Market Area.

In accordance with the s106 Agreement:

- 9 dwellings are proposed for Social Rent:
  - 2 no. 1 bed 2-person walk-up flats (plots 33-34);
  - 2 no. 2 bed 3-person bungalows (plots 11-12);
  - 4 no. 2 bed 4-person houses (plots 17-18 and 35-36);
  - 1 no. 3 bed 5-person house (plot 4).
- 4 dwellings are proposed for Intermediate Housing:
  - 1 no. 2 bed 3-person bungalow (plot 13);
  - 2 no. 2 bed 4-person houses (plots 31-32);
  - 1 no. 3 bed 5-person house (plot 3).





### 3.3 Design and Appearance

The proposals are derived from the historic architecture in the locality. Whilst the vernacular is varied depending on different building types and historical periods, brick, render and stone repeat throughout the village. Dwellings have a 'cottage' feel with traditional stepped or tooth bonded bricks, with corners in some instances reflecting classical stone quoins. Roofs are generally duo pitched and tiled and there is a frequent occurrence of chimney stacks.



## Design + Access Statement



The present design draws on these traditional features. A simple material palette of Northcot Cotswold Blend bricks, Forticrete Pitched Anstone Black Old Weathered stone and off white render to walls is to be utilised, treated with quoins to corners in some instances. A contrast brick plinth of approximately 600mm high is provided to some house types.

Roofs are to be duo pitched and tiled using a precast concrete interlocking tile, incorporating complimentary slate grey and Welsh blue tones. Parapet gable feature walls and chimneys are additionally integrated into the roofscapes, to reimagine a traditional 'cottage' aesthetic in a way that draws from key local design cues in a contemporary way.

Rainwater goods are to be formed using gunmetal grey UPVC.



Windows are similarly to consist of gunmetal grey coloured UPVC.

External surface treatments will be fully detailed as part of the discharge of Condition 20, but are envisaged to comprise black macadam tar to the roads and home zones, with block paving introduced to parking spaces and driveways. Self binding gravel is proposed to adoptable pedestrian paths and other, more informal walkways are to be finished in wood chippings.

Similarly, the discharge of Condition 19 will deal with external boundary treatments in more detail. Notwithstanding this, a mix of gunmetal grey coloured metal railings or hedgerow is proposed to frontages. 1.8m high close boarded fences are typically indicated to rear gardens, reducing to



1.2m where this will allow residents to take advantage of key views and soften the built fringe.

All units are to be provided with rear garden sheds which are to offer a means of secure cycle storage as required in Condition 15 of the outline planning permit.

### **3.4 Scale**

The scale of the development is no more than 2-storey, as required in the outline planning permit. At 38 dwellings, the proposals deliver a density of approximately 16 dwellings to the hectare or 6 dwellings per acre.



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### 3.5 Access and Parking

Access to the site remains off Elm Green Road as at present. The location of this access has been retained as that currently existing between two mature trees where a break in the hedge occurs.

Visibility splays of 90m lengths by 2.4m depth measured from the nearside edge of Elm Green Road carriageway have been shown at the site access point. The developer shall ensure no building or planting in excess of a height of 600mm above ground is provided within this zone.

It is proposed that the main access road will be adoptable and be provided with street lighting consistent with policy and Highways adoption requirements.

Limited extents of private drive have been designed off the adoptable road.

Car parking is provided at a rate of 2 no. spaces per dwelling throughout.



### 3.6 Landscaping

The Public Open space is located adjacent to the main access to the site, so that it is readily accessible to both new and existing residents, while serving as an active buffer zone that minimises the visual impact from Elm Green Road.

A public pedestrian link is further incorporated into the layout, running from Elm Green Road and creating connectivity with Elmdale and the Public Open Space. Further linkage is created with Callow Hill Wood to the south of the site, affording residents and the public greater opportunities to appreciate and integrate with their natural surrounds.

### 3.7 Drainage

A detailed drainage scheme is to be prepared by consultant engineers at the condition discharge stage, with regard to Condition 25. However, pursuant to the outline drainage strategy, we have incorporated sufficiently sized SUDS, which have been reviewed and developed in consultation with the Engineer and Landscape Architect. The Committee Report recommending approval for the outline planning application noted concerns about pushing SUDS features to the periphery with limited natural surveillance. This issue was also flagged by the Landscape Architect, who introduced the concept of a focal water feature adjacent to the new access. From a technical perspective, due to the fall of the site, it is also necessary to include swales within the active buffer zone of POS fronting Elm Green Road.



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### **4. Conclusion**

The scheme creates a bespoke development of character and quality, contributing to and enhancing the architecture and character of the village.

The development takes cognisance of, and responds to, the local context drawing upon the vernacular in its design and aesthetics.

A simple but highly attractive palette of materials ensures the proposals fit into and harmonise with the village.

Landscaping, to offer an element of biodiversity enhancement wherever possible, and integrating storm drainage swales as features, will complete the design, giving Ewyas Harold a new and attractive contribution to its form and distinctive character.

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