

# LAND TO THE EAST OF THE A49 HOLMER HEREFORD



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## PLANNING STATEMENT

PREPARED BY PEGASUS GROUP | CREST NICHOLSON (SOUTH WEST) LTD | JANUARY 2017 | BRS.5147 - REV A

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# **PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE APPROVAL OF APPEARANCE, LANDSCAPING, LAYOUT AND SCALE OF 41 NO. DWELLINGS, PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND ASSOCIATED WORKS**

## **PLANNING STATEMENT REVISION A**

### **LAND TO THE EAST OF THE A49, HOLMER, HEREFORD**

**ON BEHALF OF CREST NICHOLSON (SOUTH WEST) LTD**

**TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)  
PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Pegasus Planning Group on behalf of the applicant, Crest Nicholson (South West) Ltd.
- 1.2 It relates to the proposed development of land to the east of the A49, Holmer, for residential development.
- 1.3** The application seeks approval for the layout, scale, appearance and landscaping (the 'reserved matters'). The principle of development has already been established through outline planning permission (ref: P141487/O) which approved up to 52 dwellings and a new vehicular access from the A49.
- 1.4 This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the other technical reports submitted as part of the planning application, including:
- Design Compliance Statement (prepared by PAD Design);
  - Arboricultural Method Statement (prepared by Pegasus Group);
  - Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (prepared by Pegasus Group);
  - Landscape Plan (prepared by Pegasus Group); and
  - Full architectural drawings (PAD).



## 2. APPLICATION SITE

- 2.1 The site measures approximately 1.8ha and is located on the northern edge of Hereford in the Parish of Holmer and Shelwick. A Site Location Plan is provided below.

**Figure 1: Site Location Plan**



- 2.2 The site consists of two fields located to the east of the A49 which are currently used as a paddock. The predominant surrounding land use is housing.
- 2.3 The site is bounded to the west by the A49, the other side of which is characterised by development associated with the built up area, including a community hall, church and nursing home. To the north is a burial ground and open countryside whilst to the east are sporadic residential properties accessed from Coldwells Road.

- 2.4 To the south of the site is a paddock which was granted outline planning permission for up to 13 no. dwellings (Ref: 132624/O) in February 2015.
- 2.5 The site slopes gently up from east to west and is bounded by hedgerow to the north, west and south. There are no free-standing trees within the site itself although there are some trees along the northern and eastern boundaries.
- 2.6 There is a Public Right of Way (ref: HO3) which crosses the site from east to west, following the hedgerow which divides the two fields which make up the site.
- 2.7 A context plan is attached at **Appendix 1**.

#### **APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT PLAN**

- 2.8 Holmer is located on the northern boundary of Hereford and forms part of the urban area associated with Hereford. Hereford is the largest settlement in Herefordshire and therefore represents the most sustainable settlement with access to a wide range of services and community facilities.
- 2.9 A footway along the A49 provides a direct pedestrian link to employment opportunities, Hereford City Sports Club, local shops and schools in the north of Hereford, all of which are within walking distance of the site. A bus stop on the A49 is located around 200 metres south of the site and is accessible by the existing footway.
- 2.10 The site therefore represents a very sustainable location for residential development.
- 2.11 Neither the site nor the surrounding area is covered by any environmental/landscape designations. Holmer House (Grade II) and St Bartholomews Church (Grade I) on the opposite side of the A49 to the site are both listed, with the latter also containing three grade II listings and a Scheduled Ancient Monument associated with various structures in its grounds. These are all set back from the A49 by some distance. There is also a Listed Building to the east of the site (Copelands – Grade II), on Coldwells Road, however this is again some distance from the site.
- 2.12 Surveys undertaken to support this planning application confirm that the site has no major constraints to development and is therefore deliverable within the next five years.

### **3. PLANNING HISTORY**

- 3.1 Outline planning permission was granted for the erection of 52 dwellings, parking, landscaping, drainage, and other associated engineering works with vehicular access from A49. This permission (application reference: P141487/O) approved the principle of development and access only.
- 3.2 In February 2015 outline planning permission was granted at Planning Committee for up to 13 no. dwellings on land immediately to the south of the site, accessed from Church Way (Ref: P132624/O). This has extended the settlement boundary of Hereford so that it is now adjacent to the southern boundary of the application site.

#### **4. THE PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 The application seeks permission for the approval of layout, scale, appearance and landscaping for the erection of 41 no. dwellings and associated public open space, hard standing and infrastructure. The following is a summary of the proposals, further information is provided in the accompanying Statement of Compliance including the house types, sizes, and number of bedrooms.
- 4.2 Full details of vehicular access from the A49 were approved as part of the outline planning application.

##### **Layout**

- 4.3 The proposed layout has been informed by a thorough consideration of the site characteristics and surroundings. The layout demonstrates how 41 dwellings can be delivered in a way that maximises the use of a sustainable site whilst representing the wider setting.
- 4.4 A detailed appraisal of the layout is provided in the accompanying Statement of Compliance. In summary the layout:
- Provides the necessary level of Public Open Space (POS) required to meet the needs of the future residents and required by the Section 106 Agreement;
  - Has clearly defined public and private realms;
  - Provides a mix of house types across the site offering a range of family housing as part of a balanced community; and
  - Provides the necessary infrastructure for drainage.
- 4.5 The route of the Public Right of Way (ref: HO3) which crosses the site from east to west will be retained and incorporated as a key feature of the proposals providing a walkway route which is suitable and accessible for all potential users.
- 4.6 All of the house types proposed have dedicated car parking. Several of the larger properties have separate detached garages and driveway parking.



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## **Scale**

- 4.7 All the house types proposed are two storeys. Further specific details on eaves ridge heights and finished floor levels are provided in the accompanying scheme drawings submitted with the application.

## **Appearance**

- 4.8 The appearance of individual plots has been informed by the character of the surrounding area which comprises an eclectic mix of dwellings.
- 4.9 In total a range of seven different house types are proposed to provide a good balance and mix of development which will add to the character of the area. Whilst the specific materials used can be controlled and enforced through the use of appropriately worded planning conditions, the materials schedule submitted include a mix of render, brick and reconstituted stone providing a variety of materials to create interest throughout the site.

## **Landscaping**

- 4.10 Submitted with this application is a Landscape Masterplan. The landscaping scheme has been devised to ensure that the proposed development respects and is in-keeping with its surrounding. The existing boundary hedgerows and boundary trees will be retained where appropriate and supplemented with new planting to ensure a well defined and attractive edge to the development, whilst screening views in and out of the development to secure a sense of security and privacy for residents.
- 4.11 New planting throughout the site will create a green and pleasant environment in-keeping with the low-key rural appearance reflected in the local character. A large central area of open space, incorporating a children's play area will create a focal point that can be enjoyed by residents.

## 5. PLANNING POLICY

5.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires Local Planning Authorities to determine planning applications in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

i) Status of the Herefordshire District Development Plan

5.2 The Development Plan for Herefordshire consists of the Herefordshire Core Strategy (adopted October 2015) and the saved policies of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (Adopted 2007).

5.3 The Herefordshire UDP was adopted in 2007 under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. In line with paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) its saved policies can therefore be afforded due weight according to their degree of consistency with the Framework.

5.4 The National Planning Policy Framework is a significant material consideration for planning decisions, particularly in the absence of an up-to-date Local Plan for Herefordshire.

ii) Development Plan Policies

a) Adopted Core Strategy

5.5 The following adopted Core Strategy Policies are of relevance to this application:

5.6 **Policy SS1** sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The Council will always work proactively to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible and to secure development that improves the social, economic and environmental conditions in Herefordshire.

5.7 **Policy SS4** (Movement and Transportation) states that new development should be designed and located to minimise impacts on the transport network. Where practicable they should be accessible by and facilitate a genuine choice of modes of travel including walking, cycling and public transport.

5.8 **Policy HD1** sets a target of 6,500 new homes for Hereford with major residential development taking place at four locations, including a Northern Urban Expansion at 'Holmer West'.

- 5.9 **Policy HD4** (Northern Urban Expansion) covers the area to the immediate west of the A49 and states that around 500 new homes will be delivered at Holmer West, at an average density of 35 dph, including 35% affordable homes.
- 5.10 **Policy H1** – All open market housing proposals of more than 10 dwellings or 1000m<sup>2</sup> of combined gross floor space hectares will be expected to contribute to affordable housing provision. A target of 35% affordable housing provision is set on sites in the Hereford, Hereford Northern and Southern Hinterlands, and Kington and West Herefordshire housing value areas.
- 5.11 **Policy H3** - Residential developments should provide a range and mix of housing units which can contribute to the creation of balanced and inclusive communities. It sets out specific expectations in particular for housing developments of more than 50 units.
- 5.12 **Policy OS1** - There is a requirement for open space, sports and recreation in proposals for planning applications for all new residential dwellings.
- 5.13 **Policy OS2** - Any new development including open space, sports and recreation facilities must be in accordance with all applicable set standards of quantity, quality and accessibility as 'defined'. Facilities should be located onsite unless an off-site or partial off-site contribution would result in an equally beneficial enhancement to an existing open space, sports and/or recreation facility which is of benefit to the local community. The supporting text sets out that the standards are to be set out via an evidence base within further Development Plan documents, a Supplementary Planning Document, or through Neighbourhood Plans.
- 5.14 **Policy MT1** requires development to comply with both the Council's Highways Development Design Guide and cycle and vehicle parking standards.
- 5.15 **Policy LD1** (Landscape and Townscape) requires development proposals to demonstrate that the character of the local landscape has informed the proposals and protects and enhances the setting of important landscape features and settlements.

a) Saved UDP Policies

5.16 Following the adoption of the Core Strategy the previously relevant Saved UDP Policies have been superseded and, while some Saved Policies remain, none of these are of any relevance to the Reserved Matters proposal.

iii) Material considerations

a) NPPF

5.17 The NPPF, published March 2012 is an important material consideration which must be taken into consideration in planning decisions.

5.18 As set out by Paragraph 14, the NPPF sets a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decisions on planning applications, in the absence of an up to date NPPF compliant plan, this requires LPAs to weigh up the benefits (economic, social and environmental) of a proposal against any significant and demonstrably adverse impacts. Where the benefits are considered to outweigh any adverse impacts planning permission should be granted, unless specific policies in the NPPF indicate otherwise.

5.19 Local Planning Authorities should therefore approach decisions on planning applications in a positive way, looking for solutions rather than problems so that they can approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

5.20 The NPPF seeks to boost significantly the supply of housing and widen the choice of high quality homes. Paragraph 49 specifically states that planning applications for housing should be considered in the context of the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

5.21 Pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as people's quality of life, including widening the choice of high quality homes (Paragraph 9).

5.22 Local planning authorities should not refuse planning permission for buildings or infrastructure which promotes high levels of sustainability because of concerns about incompatibility with an existing townscape, if those concerns have been mitigated by good design (Paragraph 65).

5.23 Paragraph 32 of the NPPF supports development which encourages opportunities for sustainable transport modes and which can be served by a safe and suitable access for all users. Development should only be refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.



## **6. PLANNING ASSESSMENT**

6.1 The principle of residential development (up to 52 no. dwellings) served by a new vehicular access from the A49 has been accepted by approved outline planning application ref: P141487/O. This Reserved Matters application seeks approval for the appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for 41 no. dwellings.

6.2 The main considerations in the assessment of this application are:

- Layout and Design;
- Landscape;
- Drainage;
- Ecology;
- Heritage and Archaeology; and
- Amenity.

### Layout and Design

6.3 Core Strategy Policy HD4 identifies an average density of 35 dwellings per hectare for the Northern Urban Expansion at Holmer West.

6.4 The Planning Layout (ref: 13160/5000 Rev M) submitted within the application illustrates how the proposed development can be delivered in a way that maximises the use of a sustainable site whilst responding to its current characteristics and surroundings. The net gross density shown on the layout represents 23 dwellings per hectare (dph).

6.5 Whilst this is lower than the 35 dph sought by Policy HD4, it was acknowledged at the outline stage that a lower density is appropriate within the context of this site, which forms a zone of transition between town and country. The NPPF encourages Local Planning Authorities to take account of local circumstances when considering density.

6.6 The layout and appearance of the development is based on two design principles; to reflect the character of the surrounding area and also to provide a sense of place. The layout is therefore traditional with properties fronting the street with private

gardens to the rear benefitting from off-street parking. This helps to create a clear distinction between public and private spaces, create a well-defined street scene and legible movement network across the network.

- 6.7 The layout delivers a mix of nine different house types spread across the site, each with their own character and detailing; from larger 5-bedroom detached properties to smaller 2-bedroom houses. These dwellings will be 2 storey only with differing roof treatments to add visual interest and variety within the street scene. In accordance with Policy H3, the proposal provides a mix of housing to ensure a balanced and mixed community. The mix of dwellings proposed is as follows:

2 Bed	8
3 Bed	18
4 Bed	14
5 Bed	1

- 6.8 The proposal provides for 7 affordable units resulting in a 17% provision of affordable housing. While this falls under the threshold set out in adopted policy, this approach has been agreed due to viability implications as part of the s106 agreement appended to the outline planning permission and is therefore a settled matter for the purposes of assessing the reserved matter application.
- 6.9 During the determination of the outline application, concerns were raised regarding the height of the dwellings near the burial ground; these are proposed to be 2 storey dwellings. It is not uncommon for burial grounds to be overlooked by nearby dwellings. There is no inherent reason why a burial ground cannot exist successfully next to a residential development. Burial grounds by their very nature are public spaces so no individual enjoys complete privacy. The proposed development will not prejudice the ability of people to visit the burial ground to enjoy its peace and tranquillity. The proposed layout includes six dwellings along the northern boundary shared with the burial ground. These properties have been positioned so as to retain the existing hedgerow and trees and enable this to be supplemented with further planting. In doing so, this provides a suitable transition between the built form and the burial ground.

- 6.10 Whilst specific materials can be controlled and enforced through the use of an appropriately worded condition, the proposed elevations illustrate a mix of brick, reconstituted-stone and render. This ensures the overall appearance of the development is in keeping with surrounding residential streets on Church Way, Dale Drive and Coldwells Road.
- 6.11 This layout includes the retention or replacement of boundary hedgerows where possible to create a green framework for the development. The position of the Public Open Space has also been carefully considered to ensure it is overlooked and well used. Promoting natural surveillance onto public areas helps to prevent any issues arising from anti-social behaviour. The open space provision also includes a smaller 'gateway' space to provide an attractive pedestrian entrance to the site from the A49.
- 6.12 The route of the existing Public Right of Way (ref: HO3) which crosses the site from east to west is retained as an integral part of the layout.
- 6.13 In accordance with local and national policy the proposed development will therefore relate satisfactorily to its surroundings and protect the amenity of adjacent land uses.

#### Landscape

- 6.14 The effects of the proposal upon the local and wider landscape have been comprehensively considered within the LVIA submitted with the outline planning application. An addendum to the LVIA has been prepared alongside this Reserved Matters Submission.
- 6.15 Studies undertaken by Herefordshire Council note that the local landscape surrounding the site has a rural character despite its proximity to the city. This landscape is particularly characterised by small scale pastoral fields which are bounded by hedgerows and thinly scattered hedgerow trees. The LVIA submitted with the application considers that the landscape sensitivity of the application site is medium.
- 6.16 The character of the site would inevitably change from an agricultural one to a predominantly urban one as a consequence of development taking place. However, this is an inevitable impact associated with the development of any greenfield site and is effectively mitigated through the proposed design and planting.

- 6.17 The application is already surrounded by existing residential development to the east, south and west. The proposed development therefore represents an extension of the existing settlement rather than introducing an entirely new series of elements into the landscape. Furthermore, the site benefits from being both physically and visually well enclosed such that there is little perceived connection with the more agricultural and rural landscape to the north.
- 6.18 In accordance with Core Strategy Policy LD1, the proposals have been informed by and respect the character of the local landscape. The existing boundary hedgerows will be retained where possible by the development and the loss of any hedgerow/trees on site will be mitigated by the provision of new planting. With the proposals in place the existing field pattern, which is a key characteristic of the local landscape, will therefore still be clearly visible.
- 6.19 The proposed development will not cause any unacceptable harm to the local/ wider landscape character or adjacent burial ground due to the location of the housing and retention of the existing boundary treatment.

#### Drainage

- 6.20 The Environment Agency Flood Map shows that the site lies entirely within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at the lowest risk of flooding (less than 1 in 1000 year annual probability). The risk of flooding from fluvial sources is therefore considered to be negligible.
- 6.21 The Flood Risk Assessment submitted with the outline application demonstrated that a suitable drainage system can be provided to deal with surface water and foul flows from the development.

#### Heritage and Archaeology

- 6.22 A Heritage and Archaeological Report was submitted with the outline application. This confirms that there are no heritage assets located within the development site.
- 6.23 There are several designated heritage assets within 1km of the application sites. These are: Church of St Bartholomew and Holmer House to the west of the A49; Copelands on Coldwells Road to the east of the site; and Holmer Park Summer House to the south east of the site.

- 6.24 The impact of the proposals upon these surrounding heritage assets has been comprehensively assessed. It is considered that only the Church of St Bartholomew has a setting which is susceptible to impact. The other designated heritage assets are considered to have intimate settings limited to their boundaries or the grounds within which they are sited.
- 6.25 The Church has always been divided from the community in the east of Holmer by what is the present A49 and this division has been reinforced by the realignment and widening of the A49 during the later 20<sup>th</sup> century. The associated vicarage has also been sold off and extended to accommodate a care home.
- 6.26 In view of the current landscape within which the church is situated it is considered that the development can only ever have a minor impact on the setting of the Church and therefore a minor level of impact upon its significance. This was confirmed by the Council's approval of outline planning application ref: P141487/O.
- 6.27 The frontage of the site with the A49 is marked by a dense hedgerow. Residential dwellings fronting onto the western boundary of the site are set back from the sites edge by 7-12.5 metres. When viewed from the A49 and St Bartholomew's Church (located on the opposite side of the A49) the proposed dwellings will not appear dominant or imposing in the street scene. The proposed layout therefore minimises any limited impact upon the setting of the Church with a new hedgerow planted on the site frontage to ensure the landscape character is re-instated.

#### Amenity

- 6.28 The visual amenity of the application site and immediate surrounding at present is characterised by the hedgerow along Church Way and A49. As a relatively flat area, views to and through the site are limited to properties on Church Way.
- 6.29 There are a limited number of existing residential properties on Coldwells Road which back onto the eastern site boundary. These dwellings have large private gardens and existing boundary vegetation which screens views of the site. Notwithstanding this the layout ensures that houses within the site are positioned so that they are back-to-back with these existing dwellings and that adequate separation distances can be achieved.

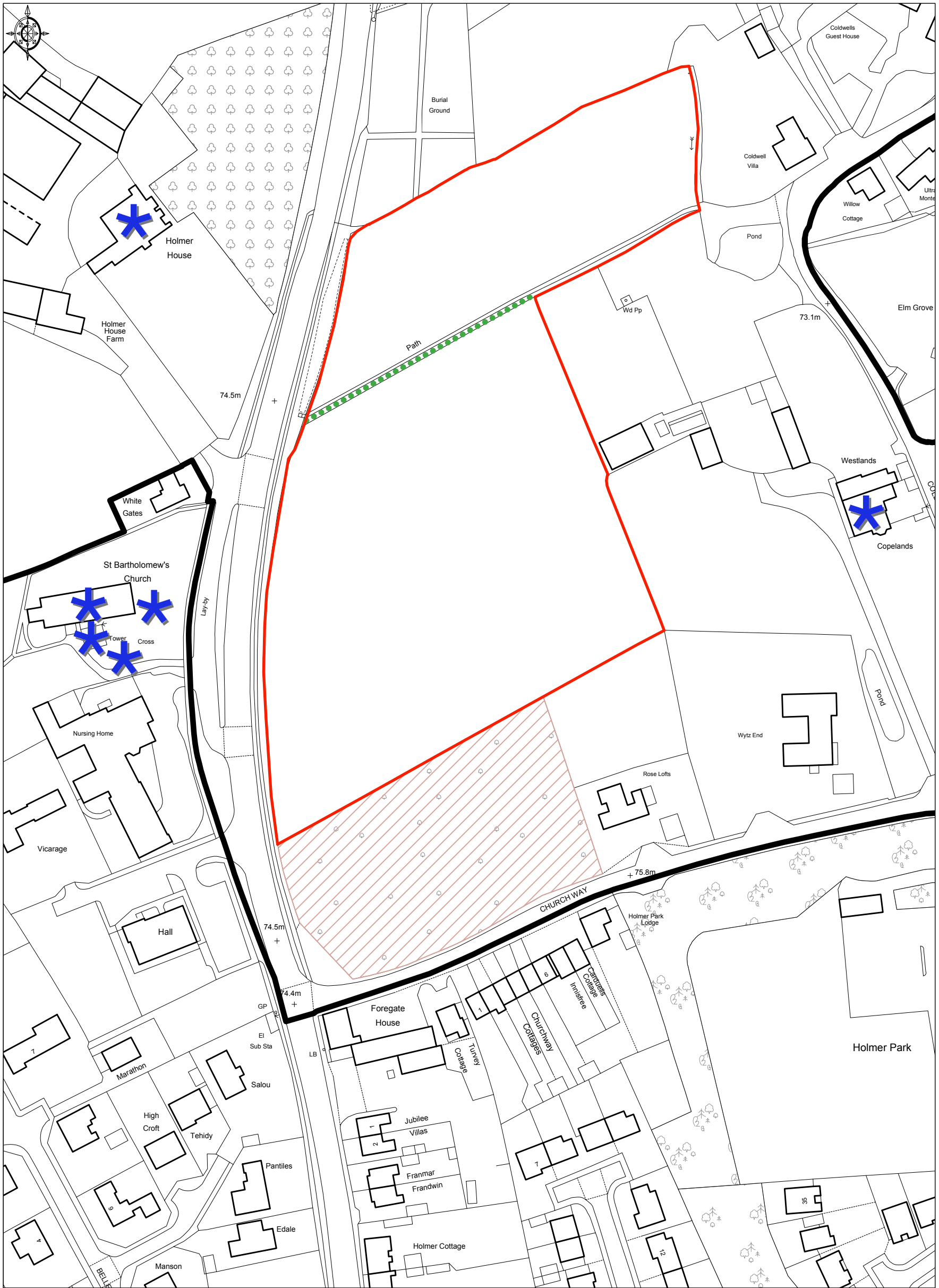


## **7. CONCLUSIONS**

- 7.1 The proposed development is for the erection of 41 no. dwellings with associated vehicular access, parking, landscaping and drainage, on land to the east of the A49, Holmer.
- 7.2 This Reserved Matters submission follows pre-application engagement with Herefordshire Council. The final design is based on the parameters set out by the outline planning permission and will deliver a high quality residential development focused around accessible, overlooked and well planned community green spaces.
- 7.3 This Planning Statement has demonstrated that the proposal complies with all current and emerging planning policies relating to the scale, design, layout, appearance and density of development. Car parking and landscaping requirements will not give rise to any issues relating to loss of amenity.
- 7.4 The proposals therefore meet the requirements of the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development and are compliant with all relevant policies of the adopted Development Plan.
- 7.5 On this basis it is considered that Reserved Matters planning permission should be granted.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **CONTEXT PLAN**



# **KEY**



Site boundary



Defined Settlement Boundary



Public Footpath



Outline planning permission granted for up to 13 no. dwellings (ref:P132624/0)



Listed Building / Scheduled Ancient Monument

Land to the east of the A49, Holmer, Herefordshire

## **Context Plan**

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