James Road, Crowland

Design Principles and Design Code

March 2018

Client: Naylor Farms

Project: Outline application for the erection of up to 12 self build/ custom dwellings

Project no: 414

STUDIO11
architecture

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1.0 Introduction

1.1

This Design Principles and Design Code document accompanies an outline planning application for the erection of up to 12 self build/ custom build homes with access from Battlefields Lane North.

1.2

The application has been submitted in outline with all matters reserved. An illustrative site layout, house design, design code document and illustrative artists impressions have been provided which indicates how the site could be developed to provide a safe sustainable environment for the occupants of the new homes.

1.3

This statement forms part of a series of reports and documents submitted in support of the planning application.

1.4

The Council is currently unable to demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites. In this context, local planning policies relating to the supply of housing are considered to be out of date and the principle of residential development is acceptable subject to other material planning considerations.

This planning application responds to the significant shortfall in housing, in particular in the self build/ custom build area of the market.



2.0 The Vision

2.1

The vision for these proposals is driven by an aim to create high quality, highly sustainable homes which contribute to the general housing need as well as the need for self-build/ custom build plots within the District.

The proposals also aim to promote the Governments aspirations to improve the supply of land for self-build/ custom building by providing a site of sufficient size and density which would be an attractive proposition for self-builders. The provision of self-build serviced plots adds diversity and variety to the housing market, offering an alternative to mass developer housing. Currently there are 38 applicants on the South Holland District Council register and these proposals aim to make a contribution in reducing the number of applicants awaiting serviced plots within the South Holland District.

3.0 Local Character Analysis

3.1 Road Pattern Analysis

Holbeach is a typical Fenland settlement, located along the A17 between Spalding and Kings Lynn. The historic centre of Holbeach is defined by roads radiating from the original crossroads to the west of the main High Street.

As the settlement has grown from the main routes in and out of Holbeach road forms and patterns have evolved according to the prevailing design aspirations at the time. This has lead to stronger road dominated patterns with buildings set back from footpaths in areas of post second world war development. More recent developments off the main routes incorporate cul-de-sac type road arrangements.

3.2 Character of Historic Core

The historic points of interest are the historic High Street along with the Grade 1 listed church of All Saints on the corner of the High Street and Church Street.

Holbeach displays a blend of traditional architecture at its heart bounded with more modern constructional types of the last 100 years. Most buildings along the High Street and West End date from the eighteenth Century and are interspersed with buildings from the nineteenth and twentieth Centuries.

The majority of buildings are now a mix of ground floor shops and residential apartments above. Beyond the centre of the town most buildings are residential in composition with some commercial uses at key areas.



Holbeach Road Pattern Diagram

3.3 Urban Form

Buildings towards the centre of Holbeach are generally two or three storey in form, with a mix of single, two and three storey buildings in more recent post second world war development off the main routes into the town.

There is some variety in scale and type of frontage to buildings. Streets at the centre of Holbeach take the form of continuous terraced blocks with forms taking that of semi-detached or detached properties on the outskirts of the town.

Battlefields Lane, Low Lane and Washway Road are a mix of two and single storey homes predominantly post second world war social housing typical of the South Holland area.

3.4 Materials

The central core of Holbeach displays a varied palette of materials due to the sporadic nature of construction throughout its history.

Buff/ red brick and white render are predominantly found around the town centre with some historic buildings painted brickwork. Most brickwork is relatively plain with contrasting window heads. Roof materials are predominantly grey slate with some red clay pantiles and more recent concrete replacement tiles.

With younger properties towards the outskirts of Holbeach materials become more generic with a mix of red, orange and buff brickwork combined with concrete interlocking roof tiles.

Chimney's are present on the houses along Battlefields Lane



Diagram of Listed Buildings & Conservation Area within Holbeach

and these are seen as important details at roof level.

3.5 Architectural Detailing

The details of the majority of the buildings within the centre of Holbeach are in keeping with their period, with Georgian and Victorian windows, doors, arches and lintels very typical. A significant amount of the buildings at the core of Holbeach have retained their original sash windows; however, retail development and the installation of shop fronts have influenced the cohesive street scene at ground floor level in many cases.

More recent residential developments to the outskirts of the town centre are typically very plain in appearance with little brick detailing and the use of double-glazed casement windows.

Houses and bungalows along Battlefields Lane are very simple in form and detailing. Most have been extensively modified during their life and could be said to have very little architectural quality of their own.



Existing post second world war Local Authority housing along Battlefields Lane North



Existing commercial building to the north-west of the site



Existing bungalows off Battlefields Lane North



Existing bungalows to the north of the site

3.6 Streets, Lanes, Drives

Holbeach has a mix of both wide streets with footways on both sides and narrow lanes with limited footways. Most roads are tarmac finished with a strong kerbline which dominate the street scene.

Drives are a mix of gravel, tarmac and block paving.

Parking is a mix of on-street parking and on-plot parking. Informal shared accesses are apparent throughout the town which lead to on-plot parking adjacent to properties.

3.7 Landscaping

Holbeach benefits from several areas of good quality Public Open Space as well as general landscaping associated with the buildings around the town.

Carters Park is approximately 15 minutes walk from the site and offers comprehensive recreational facilities such as Children's Play Equipment, an open air Gym and Tennis Courts.

Landscaping to homes is domestic in type and scale with low level hedges and general planting to domestic front gardens. Public buildings such as the University Academy Holbeach and William Stukeley School have large open landscaped areas.

Frontage is a mix of open plan together with fences, walls and hedges to plot boundaries.



Variation of drive materials and arrangements along Battlefields Lane North



Homes with fencing, walls and hedges along the back of the footpath

4.0 Proposed Development

4.1 Road Pattern

As the site is limited in numbers it is felt that simple private drives with appropriate turning area are the most appropriate road pattern. This generally follows existing road patterns along Battlefields Lane North.

4.2 Architectural Form

The illustrative Site Layout that accompanies this application demonstrates that up to 12 dwellings can be accommodated on the site in an architectural form that sits well with its surroundings. Buildings around the site are limited in architectural style and therefore it is felt that simple principles should be used in the composition of buildings within the proposals. It is therefore proposed that simple blocks are used with modern architecture that creates an interesting street scene with variation and interest.

4.3 Materials

Holbeach has a reasonable variation of materials with the high quality materials being mainly apparent within the town centre. The proposed site sits on the outskirts of Holbeach and as such is not seen in relation to the high quality materials of the town centre but rather in relation to the post second world war housing on the outskirts of the settlement. On that basis it is felt that a compromised materials palette that reflects good quality materials and creates its own sense of place is the most appropriate solution.

Given that this would mix traditional and modern materials it is felt a modern architectural interpretation would be best suited to using these materials within the scheme.



Illustrative Housetype

4.4 Landscaping

Where possible the proposals aim to retain and enhance landscaping on the site. The site is bounded to the south by mature landscaping and it is intended that this landscaping is retained.

Detailed landscaping will be dealt with as part of the Reserved Matters application but in general terms it is proposed that a landscaped bund is provided to the southern and eastern boundaries to soften the edge of the scheme in relation to the open fields surrounding the site.

4.5 Sustainability

The general site wide sustainability principles of the scheme are covered in detail within the Design and Access Statement. However, it is felt that it is worth demonstrating how energy efficient the proposed homes will be in relation to the mass developer housing currently under construction within the District. The best way to demonstrate this is through the use of a SAP assessment which in turn informs the Energy Performance Certificate for the property..

The Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) is adopted by Government as the UK methodology for calculating the energy performance of dwellings. The calculation is based on the energy balance taking into account a range of factors that contribute to energy efficiency:

- Materials used for construction of the dwelling
- Thermal insulation of the building fabric
- Ventilation characteristics of the dwelling and ventilation equipment
- Efficiency and control of the heating system(s)
- Solar gains through openings of the dwelling
- The fuel used to provide space and water heating, ventilation and lighting
- Energy for space cooling, if applicable
- Renewable energy technologies

The calculation is independent of factors related to the individual characteristics of the household occupying the dwelling when the rating is calculated.

The SAP rating is based on the energy costs associated with space heating, water heating, ventilation and lighting, less cost savings from energy generation technologies. It is adjusted for floor area so that it is essentially independent of dwelling size for a given built form. The SAP rating is expressed on a scale of 1 to 100, the higher the number the lower the running costs.

It is proposed that all dwellings on the site should meet the minimum criteria of being an A rated home (SAP score of 92 and above) through the final EPC for the dwelling. By way of comparison, most mass developer housing currently under construction would achieve an EPC rating of C or D.

5.0 Design Code Requirements for Reserved Matters Planning Applications

5.1 Introduction

Design Codes can be a useful tool for delivering high quality, co-ordinated development of sites. The use of Design Codes to help deliver quality development is underpinned by paragraph 50 of the NPPF:

' Local plans and neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of the development that will be expected for that area.'

The advice from Government has been consistent over the past six years; specifically that design coding has a place in supporting the creation of high quality development.

Design Codes are generally for use on large sites where a consistent approach to delivery of the scheme is required. The principle remains the same but on a much smaller scale for the proposed application site. The purpose of this Design Code is to ensure that future Reserved Matters applications are consistent with the aims of the outline planning application of a high quality, sustainable scheme which ensures that the home occupants are free from the danger of flood water.

The remaining areas of this section deal with the design parameters to which the detailed design of each home must adhere.

5.2 Monitoring & Enforcement

Monitoring and enforcement is crucial to the long term success of Design Codes. Without the appropriate enforcement, the effectiveness of codes can be significantly undermined. Government advice outlines that monitoring and enforcement can be undertaken by both Local Authorities and private stakeholders. Where the Local Authority takes on this role it is mainly through exercising normal planning controls.

Monitoring of compliance to a code will be provided by ensuring that Reserved Matters approvals and discharges of relevant conditions are in accordance with the code or are clearly justified in terms of any key areas of non-compliance and that there is always a statement to this effect attached to any such approvals. On site monitoring will be focused around ensuring that development is being constructed in accordance with the Reserved Matters and discharge of conditions approvals.

It is felt given the size and complexity of the scheme that the Local Authority is best equipped to monitor and enforce the Design Code.

Creating a 'Sense of Place and Quality'

5.3 Road Layout

Given the shape and size of the site private drives are proposed as the most appropriate solution.

5.4 Frontages

Frontage character typology is seen as a crucial aspect of the street scene within the scheme. Where possible all plots should adhere to the following criteria:

- Set back from the road, staggered where possible;
- All plots should be detached of varying sizes;
- Frontages may include garages, hedges and fences such as estate rail fencing. Solid walls and fences are felt to be intrusive within the street scene and therefore inappropriate;
- Distance between each house frontage and street should vary between adjacent plots if possible.

5.5 Rear Private Gardens

It is felt that rear private gardens should be designed to the choice of the occupants, however the minimum must be Included in each plot:

- Provision of a minimum 5000 litre rainwater harvesting tank;
- Provision of a Kitchen garden to enable the occupants to grow their own fruit and vegetables if they wish;
- Provision of a compost bin of at least 330 litres;
- Provision of a garden/ tool shed with a minimum of 1m2 floor area for the purpose of tool storage.

5.6 Building Scale

Building scale is crucial within the generally flat landscape of the Fens. Landscaping is limited and views across open fields are prevalent. This is the case on this site and views into the site from the A17 are considered to be of importance.

On that basis it is considered that 2 or 2.5 storey homes are most appropriate with a height to the roof ridge not exceeding 9.5m above finished ground level.

5.7 Architectural Detailing

Given the location of the site in relation to the town centre of Holbeach and the analysis that has been carried out as part of this report it is felt that all new homes within the scheme should be designed in a modern context. The success of any modern architecture is generally thought to be in the architectural detailing which is generally very simple in origin.

It is therefore proposed that all homes are designed in a modern context which take into account the nearby commercial building and neighbouring dwellings.

5.8 Materials Palette

The aim of this section is to encourage a thoughtful selection of materials for the buildings to maintain a high quality of design. The materials palette is designed to ensure that the scheme has a distinctive character that draws inspiration from the vernacular architecture of Holbeach and the sites immediate surroundings.

It is of high importance that the scheme should be a place that ages well with carefully detailed and durable exterior finishes that will look as good in 10, 20 and 30 years time as they do when new. To achieve this it is important to consider the long term maintenance regimes from the outset and select materials appropriately.

Proposed Materials

Walls


Black Cement Sheet


Timber & Zinc Cladding


Red multi facing brickwork


Coloured Render

Roof


Slate


Weathered Zinc


Profiled Steel Sheet


Stained/ Charred Timber

Windows/ Doors


Grey Aluminium


Black Aluminium



Oak/ Coloured Front Door




Grey/Coloured Garage Doors

Proposed Materials

Rainwater Goods



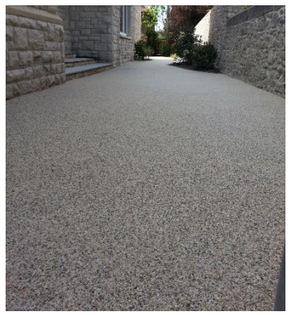


Black & Zinc Rainwater Pipes

Roads & Drives



Block Paving



Bound Gravel



Tarmac Drive

Front Boundary Treatments



Estate Rail Fencing



Hedges

Screen Fences



Willow Woven Panels



Screen Fences



Modern Batten Fence

5.9 Sustainability Measures

Sustainability is key to the proposed scheme to ensure that the homes use as little energy in their use as possible and therefore the following measures are proposed:

- Each home should achieve a minimum EPC A Rating (2012 SAP edition);
- Each home should generate some of its own electricity where possible in achieving the above EPC rating;
- Each home must incorporate at least one permanent electric car charging point;
- Water consumption within each home should be restricted to 125 litres per person per day.

The purpose of these measures is to set a minimum standard of energy efficiency but also allow self-builders the flexibility to look at alternative solutions to those illustrated.

6.0 Conclusions

This proposal for 12 self-build plots addresses a clear need within the District and this combined with an aspiration to create high quality homes within the scheme with a clearly defined Design Code is exceptional for the District.

The proposals also aim to offer a design solution for new homes within the Fens. Scale and form within the flat landscape of the Fens is crucial and this scheme demonstrates that this can successfully be dealt with through considered design solutions.

Careful consideration has also been given to the sustainability of the scheme and the proposed homes are designed to significantly save energy as well as being located in a highly sustainable location.

It is therefore felt that this scheme is exceptional for the District and will make a significant contribution to housing need and in particular serviced plots designed for self-builders.

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The Sparkhouse

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