Proposed residential development at Balmoral Way, Holbeach



STUDIO11 architecture

Sustainability Statement

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Sustainability Statement accompanies a full planning application by Benchmark Properties for the development of a site off Balmoral Way, Holbeach.

1.2 The proposal seeks to develop the site to provide a private and affordable residential scheme comprising of forty seven 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom homes, together with associated parking, private and communal amenity space. The proposal at its heart aims to create an affordable, sustainable high quality development that will contribute to the settlement of Holbeach.

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

In particular this statement considers measures to be put in place to minimise negative impacts upon the environment and bring about positive social and economic change. It begins by describing the site and the context for development, before considering how the development will contribute towards the achievement of a sustainable, balanced community.

2.0 The Site and Surrounding Area

2.1 The application proposals relate to the development of land off Balmoral Way. The site itself is situated off Balmoral Way, a residential road off Kings Road/ Foxes Low Road. Foes Low Road provides a key link from the northern A17 to the town centre.

2.2 The site is currently vacant agricultural land with some outbuildings present on the southern site of the site. The site area is 1.75 hectares with access to the site from Balmoral Way and Foxes Low Road.

2.3 To the south-west and south-east the site currently borders residential housing and the settlement boundary as defined in the Local Plan 2006.

2.4 To the north-west the site abuts agricultural fields.

2.5 To the north - east the site abuts vacant agricultural land, the site is predominantly overgrown with dilapidated outbuildings.

2.6 The area surrounding the site is predominantly residential use with some light industrial use off Foxes Low Road. Balmoral Way is predominantly residential in character and largely comprises of single and two storey dwellings.

2.7 The application site is outside the conservation area for Holbeach and not within the visual curtilage any listed buildings.

2.8 Holbeach is identified as an 'area centre' within the district and as such the application site benefits from access to a full range of local services and facilities.

Carters Park is located centrally within the town and provides a good source of local amenity including children's play space.

2.9 Bus routes pass through Holbeach along the A151and provide frequent services to Spalding to the west and Kings Lynn to the east. Both Spalding and Kings Lynn have their own train stations which provide easy access to London in the south and Edinburgh to the north via the east coast mainline, as well as links to the east via Ely.

3.0 Proposed Development

3.1 The evolution and detailed design criteria of the proposed development is set out in more detail in the accompanying Design and Access Statement. The proposed development is a combination of site constraints, planning officer comments, feedback from the general public and experienced knowledge from local development professionals.

3.2 The proposal seeks to develop the site to provide a residential scheme comprising of forty seven 1, 2, 3 and bedroom homes, together with associated parking, private and communal amenity space. The proposal at its heart aims to create an affordable, sustainable high quality development that will contribute to the town of Holbeach.

4.0 Planning Policy & Guidance

4.1 A detailed analysis of the proposed scheme design and its relationship with the agreed principles of sustainable design are outlined within the Planning Statement accompanying this report.

5.0 Developer's Approach

Developer's Commitment

5.1 Benchmark Properties has a clear commitment to provide high quality developments which are consistent with the principles of sustainable development. They place considerable importance on promoting economic development, whilst balancing this against social and environmental considerations. The proposed development at Balmoral Way has been developed with these considerations in mind. The proposals reflect the need to draw investment into the area and revitalise the town centre. In so doing the development will contribute towards the ongoing revival of the area and, ultimately, enhance the quality of life of both existing and future communities.

Design Process

5.2 A detailed review of both current and emerging policies relating to sustainability, together with a review of best practice methods and technologies was undertaken as part of the design process. This was used to gain an understanding of the site and the potential to ensure that the principles of sustainable development were firmly embedded in the construction and operation of the final design. Key objectives for the site are summarised below:

- encourage the use of renewable energy systems where feasible;
- reduce the need to travel by car;
- minimise waste production and encourage recycling;
- improve the quality of the environment;
- respect and enhance the character of the local area;
- conserve features of historic or cultural interest;
- assist in the creation of sustainable communities through improvements to the public realm;
- ensure that local communities have access to a wide range of shops, services and leisure facilities;
- incorporate measures which reduce crime and the fear of crime;
- stimulate the local economy;
- maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre.

6.0 Key Sustainability Issues

6.1 The following section considers how the proposed development will deliver its sustainability objectives and make a lasting and positive contribution towards sustainable development. The basic framework for analysis corresponds with the three key sustainability issues set out in planning and environmental legislation, guidance and best practice.

Environmental Issues

6.2 ***Energy*** – The need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, particularly carbon dioxide (CO2), and adapt to effects of climate change is recognised as a global imperative. A key objective of the scheme has therefore been to encourage energy efficiency in all aspects of the development, including design, procurement, construction and use.

All walls, floors and roofs will be highly insulated and the building airtightness will be improved beyond current Building Regulations to provide a development of highly energy efficient homes.

Each home will be provided with 100% low energy lighting and a high efficiency gas central heating.

To accompany the 'fabric' improvements each home has been designed to allow the future installation of solar water heating and/ or photovoltaic panels should the residents wish. It was felt that cost and ancillary design issues made the use of other technologies such as biomass, wind power and heat pumps prohibitive on this scheme.

6.3 ***Water and Flood Risk*** – It is understood that there are no major water courses flowing through the site and therefore the risk of water pollution is very low. There is a drain to the western boundary and all necessary precautions will be taken during construction to prevent waste materials and debris from entering this drain and any other local water sources causing pollution.

The use of water at the site will be regulated by fitting low consumption technology. Each home will have its water restricted to 125 litres/person/day, in accordance with current Building Regulations.

The site lies within Flood Zone 3 and a site specific Flood Risk Assessment accompanies this statement confirming that the application site is not at risk of flooding. The surface water generated on site by the proposed development will discharged to the drain to the south of the site maintained by the Internal Drainage Board.

6.4 ***Transport*** – Given its location, the site benefits from excellent access to the local public transport network. Various bus routes pass through Holbeach providing links to Spalding and Kings Lynn with their national public transport links via the East Coast Mainline rail link to London, the north and the east via Ely.

6.5 ***Waste*** – Sustainable development demands a fundamental change in the way we design, produce, use and dispose of the products we consume. Every effort has been made to design out the production of on-site waste.

Each home will be provided with dedicated internal bins within the Kitchen to allow the separation of recyclable and kitchen waste from landfill waste. These bins in-turn can be emptied into the relevant sacks for collection by the Local Authority.

6.6 ***Biodiversity*** – The proposed development occupies an agricultural field on the outskirts of the town centre. As such, its ecological value is inherently low. There are no species of nature conservation interest living at or near the site and soft landscaping is currently very limited. The landscaping strategy will therefore aim to retain existing landscaping where possible and include new tree and shrub planting to enhance the development and improve local wildlife habitats.

Economic Issues

6.7 ***Local Economy*** – The development will bring substantial benefits to the local economy in terms of offering new and existing residents of Holbeach an alternative to living in private rental properties, apartments or houses that are in a poor condition.

6.8 ***Consumer Choice*** – A key part of the proposal is to address the lack of vitality and variety in the area. In general terms the provision of an affordable alternative to private rental properties, apartments etc will not only add to consumer choice and satisfy local demand, it will ultimately result in a more competitive and diverse market place.

6.9 ***Regeneration Benefits*** – Notwithstanding the direct economic benefits associated with the proposal the development of the site will have significant off site benefits in terms of lifting the profile of the town and enhancing its overall attractiveness to visitors. The location of the site on a key route into the town centre makes it an ideal location for development.

Social Issues

6.10 ***Sustainable Communities*** – People's neighbourhoods have a significant impact upon their quality of life. A sustainable community cannot function without providing attractive places where people want to live and work, which respects the built environment and contributes to a thriving and diverse local economy. The proposed scheme pursues each of these aims in an integrated manner, delivering substantial benefits to the local community.

6.11 ***Historic and Cultural Environment*** – The site in its current form is of little cultural significance and it is felt that the proposed scheme would create an integrated community on site and within the local community of Holbeach.

The site is not close to the historical areas of Holbeach and therefore will have a negligible impact upon Holbeach. Indeed, there is considerable scope for improving the setting of this key entrance to the town of Holbeach by reinforcing a sense of place and identity.

6.12 ***Local Identity and Sense of Place*** – Local residents will derive considerable benefits from the enhanced appearance of the site and its contribution to the wider area. The Design and Access Statement details how the scheme has evolved and the key urban design principles which have been applied to achieve this.

A key objective was to complement other new development in the area and reinforce links with the town centre. Accordingly the existing urban grain was used to inform the layout of the development.

The scale of the development is entirely appropriate for this location, responding positively to its urban context, presenting a strong sense of presence and responding to commercial limitations on the site. The introduction of the proposed development will add visual interest and in doing so, the development will reinforce a

strong sense of place and local identity.

Security and Crime

6.13 High levels of safety and security will be afforded to all users of the development. Public areas will be well lit and overlooked to deter antisocial behaviour, reducing the fear of crime. Lighting will be located to minimise vulnerability to vandalism and automatically controlled with fittings vandal resistant.

A high level of natural surveillance will be afforded with all buildings having windows overlooking both the frontages of the properties but also parking courts.

Inclusive Access

6.14 Both residents and visitors to the site will have access to their properties and parking courts.

Community Cohesion

6.15 The development of the site will create a modern, vibrant place where people feel comfortable and safe.

6.0 Conclusion

This statement has demonstrated how the proposed development will meet all relevant sustainability objectives and contribute towards the continued regeneration and revival of the local area. It is clear that the scheme will significantly improve the local economy and contribute towards the creation of a sustainable community.

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