

## DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Client: D Brown Building Contractors Ltd

Project: Residential development, Wignall's Gate, Holbeach, Lincolnshire

Ref: 071605

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### INTRODUCTION

The proposal is for 100 no. new dwellings and public open space provision to the south-western side of Holbeach. The site is currently an agricultural field. The application is for outline planning permission with all matters reserved except 'access' (matters reserved to be 'appearance', 'landscaping', 'layout' and 'scale'). The site is located within a flood risk zone and reference should be made to the Flood Risk Assessment and the engineer's drainage strategy which form part of this application.



*View of site from Wignall's Gate*



*Proposed access point off Wignall's Gate*

### USE

The proposed use of the site is that approximately 56% of the site would accommodate 100 dwellings (for domestic residential purposes) and approximately 44% of the site would become public open space.

The applicant's affordable housing contribution would be to SHDC policy.

### AMOUNT

The site area is approximately 8.2 ha. The dwelling mix is varied and will be as follows:-

- 6 no. 1 bedroom houses (2 storey).
- 32 no. 2 bedroom houses (2 storey).
- 28 no. 3 bedroom houses with garages (2 storey).
- 15 no. 3 bedroom bungalows with garages (single storey).
- 19 no. 4 bedroom houses with double garages (2 storey).

### LAYOUT

The detail of the layout would be determined at Reserved Matters stage.

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Notwithstanding this, the submitted drawings PD02 & PD03 demonstrate a well considered layout that incorporates the IDB 9m easement zone, provides single storey dwellings behind existing Wignal's Gate and The Laurels properties and terminates to the south with a generous public open space.

The opportunity has been taken to create a 'soft edge' to all exposed edges of the site. A ribbon of green open space runs parallel to the main drain. Soft landscape screening throughout provides a subtle transition between the built environment and the rural landscape.

Furthermore, great consideration has been given to the adjacent Cemetery. A wide band of open space plus a further band of soft landscape screening separates the new housing from the Cemetery.

The new road meanders through the residential area, punctuated with a swathe of open space mid-way along its length.

Car parking has been carefully designed so that wherever possible garages are located back from the front of dwellings. The majority of parking is, therefore, to the sides of the homes. This helps create a better streetscape when viewed from one end as the cars are much less prominent.

The overall layout is designed to minimise overlooking into neighbouring properties. The layout and position of windows facilitates casual surveillance of gardens, footpaths and driveway areas.

Bungalows are proposed behind the existing Wignal's Gate and The Laurels properties to reduce visual impact and to avoid overlooking.

## SCALE

The detail of the scale would be determined at Reserved Matters stage.

Notwithstanding this, the proposed scale shown on drawings PD02 & PD03 is sympathetic to the immediate context and its setting.

The scale varies from single storey to two storeys and from 1 bedroom without garage to 4 bedroom with double garage.

The single storey buildings are generally to the north so as to reduce visual impact to existing Wignal's Gate and The Laurels properties and also to avoid any overlooking. The larger houses (3 and 4 bedroom properties) can be of a scale and form that allow the garages to be less prominent by pushing the garage back from the main front face of the houses. Mid range 2 bedroom houses can be of a cottage scale and form.

The overall development has a scale and form which is varied and is reminiscent of traditional rural homes in the area.



*Scale of 1-4 The Laurels off Wignal's Gate*



*Scale of 39-47 Wignal's Gate*

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## LANDSCAPING

The detail of the landscaping would be determined at Reserved Matters stage.

Notwithstanding this, an integral part of this proposal is a generous proportion of public open space, far in excess of the SHDC 14% requirement. The applicant is offering a unique opportunity where almost half the application site is dedicated to soft landscaping. The scheme shown on drawing PD02 is a suggestion as to the possible types and variety of open space that can be achieved.



*Grassed earth mounds provide a safe and inventive place for play*



*Wooded area provides a relaxing place for dog walking or exercise*



*A grassed open area lends itself to ball games and space to run around*



*Wooded and semi-wooded areas provide opportunities to engage with nature*

From our discussions with planning officers it is clear that there is a drive towards wooded areas, nature areas, dog walking routes and natural play areas for children. Holbeach is currently under-provided in terms of public open space and this proposal would offer a significantly large expanse of open space to the south-western area of Holbeach.

The entire site has a soft green edge [in varying degrees] which provides variation, interest and integration into the wider landscape.

Hard landscaping to publicly accessible areas will comprise generally of tarmacadam. Private areas will generally be a mixture of paving flags for pathways and block paviors for drives and parking areas. All plots would have soft landscaping comprising lawned front gardens. Trees would provide additional screening and a back-drop to the built form.

## APPEARANCE

The appearance would be determined at Reserved Matters stage.

Notwithstanding, this, the applicant is extremely enthusiastic to deliver homes of a high design standard that will appeal to a wide cross-section of buyers. The applicant is already pressing forward with the construction of

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similar homes in Whaplode and it is envisaged that the style of homes on this application site will be of the same quality of design.



*Indicative style of homes proposed*

The dwelling design takes much of its influence from the traditional rural houses and agricultural buildings of the South Holland area.

A palette of materials would be chosen that provides cohesion to the scheme but also provides plenty of variation and interest. Materials would also be chosen that suit the typology of the building and form.

## **ACCESS**

The site is approximately 15 minutes walk from the centre of Holbeach. It has good transport links to Spalding, Boston, Kings Lynn and Peterborough. The site fronts onto Wignall's Gate which has a 30mph speed restriction.



*View eastwards from site towards Hallgate*



*View westwards from site along Wignall's Gate*

Every effort has been made to work with the topography in a way which affords accessibility wherever possible and within the constraints of the site.

The new properties will comply with the Building Regulations Part M and will include gently sloping ramped approach to principal entrance doors, level threshold and ground floor accessible toilet. Car parking is designed to be close to the dwelling to which it serves. External lighting will be provided to the bulkheads of porches (or next to front doors) with PIR activation and dusk to dawn sensors.

Jon Sharpe of LCC Highways has been consulted throughout the design process and he is supportive of the access, pedestrian and highways proposals. Further consultation has been carried out in relation to the highways drainage strategy and a Surface Water Drainage Strategy accompanies this application.

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## PLANNING

### SOUTH HOLLAND LOCAL PLAN 2006

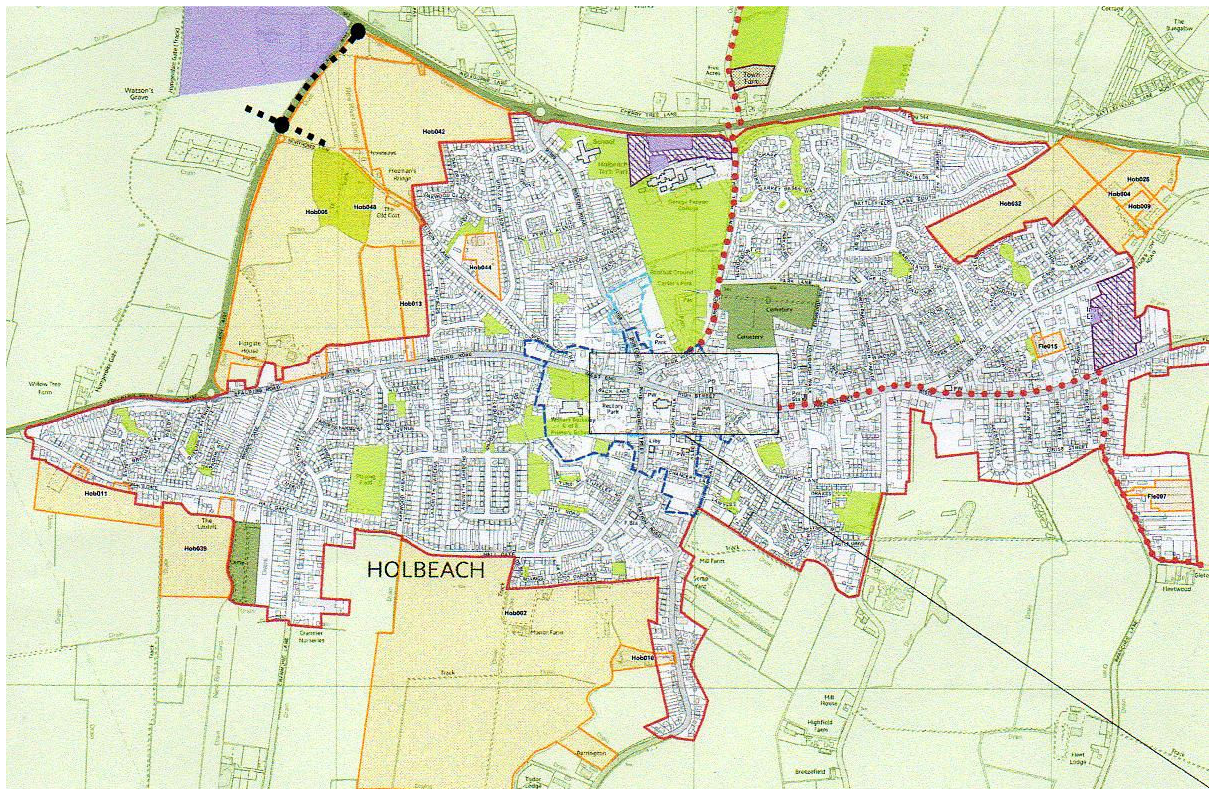
The location of the residential development is partially within and adjacent to the defined settlement limit for Holbeach, and is, therefore, categorised by the South Holland Local Plan as being in open countryside. As such the relevant policy within the Local Plan would be Policy HS7 – New Housing in the Open Countryside including other Rural settlements.

At the present time, however, SHDC does not have a 5 year supply of housing land in place and the guidance within the NPPF takes precedence over the Local Plan, and the relevant Housing policies within the Local Plan cannot be considered to be up to date.

Criteria 1 of Policy SG2 states that although priority is given to brownfield sites within defined settlement limits, and then Greenfield sites within defined settlement limits, it does then allow land adjacent to defined settlement limits to be used for development.

### DRAFT SOUTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE LOCAL PLAN

The site was included on the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan – Draft (Jan 2016), under reference 'Hob039' of inset map 5.



Extract of inset map 5 (Jan 2016) showing 'Hob039' in context of Holbeach

The site was excluded on the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan – Draft (June 2016) inset map 5. The remaining Preferred Housing Sites being Hob002, Hob004, Hob010, Hob032 & Hob048

In the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan: Housing Paper - Holbeach (July 2016) it states its conclusions for not including Hob039 as a Preferred Housing Site as follows:-

*'The sustainability appraisal scores Hob039 with one positive (green) impact being recorded for housing delivery, and two negative (orange) impacts relating to landscape character and air, water and soil quality;*

*The site is behind frontage development and runs to the side of Holbeach Cemetery. It has open boundaries on all sides except for the residential properties on Wignall's Gate. Although the impacts are not significant, the site*

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would have more of an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of its surroundings than alternative sites.'

It is considered that the submitted proposals overcome issues of landscape character by virtue of its positive contribution to landscaping and its high proportion of green open space provision. The proposals respect the adjacent cemetery and provide a high level of soft landscape screening between the Cemetery and the start of private rear gardens.

In the South East Lincolnshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment - Findings (July 2016) it states for land reference 'Hob039' that the site is 'suitable' and that the site has a classification of 'developable'. It goes on to explain the following in support of the site for housing development:-

- *'The site is in scale with the 1,420 dwellings which the emerging Local Plan seeks to be developed in Holbeach.*
- *Environmental impacts – it will not have adverse impacts on natural, built or historic assets.*
- *Infrastructure – It will not lead to the loss of, nor place undue burdens on, existing infrastructure, such as open space, green infrastructure or community facilities.*
- *Location – It is accessible to Holbeach's existing services and facilities and is located adjacent / within Holbeach's existing built-up area (defined settlement limit).*
- *Site characteristics – The site is behind frontage development and runs to the side of the Cemetery. It has open boundaries on all sides except for the residential properties fronting Wignall's Gate. SHDC Environmental Health identify that the site is on a list of potentially contaminated sites requiring further investigation.*
- *Transport – Services and facilities are potentially accessible by foot, bicycle and public transport. Bus stops are on Wignall's Gate and Main Road. The frontage on to Hallgate appears sufficient to accommodate the required radii and visibility splays. The offset with Wignall's Gate is sufficient and has right/left configuration suitable for safe access.*

*Consequently the site is considered suitable.'*

In terms of flood risk, site Hob039 compares much more favourably than four of the sites chosen as Preferred Housing Sites and is no worse than the fifth site chosen as a Preferred Housing Site. The following table highlights Hob039 compared with the five sites chosen as Preferred Housing sites:-

Comparison of Hob039 against the Preferred Housing Sites (June 2016)

Hob039	Zone 3a	No hazard	No hazard
Hob002	Zone 3a	Low	0m to 0.25m
Hob004	Zone 3a	Danger for some	0.25m to 0.50m
Hob010	Zone 3a	No hazard	No hazard
Hob032	Zone 3a	Danger for most	0.25m to 0.50m
Hob048	Zone 3a	Danger for most	0.25m to 0.50m

*Flood risk information extracted from the South East Lincolnshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment – Findings (July 2016).*

## NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

An objective of the NPPF is to '...boost significantly the supply of housing...'. Its paragraph 49 establishes that where local planning authorities cannot demonstrate through an adopted and up-to-date local plan that they have a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites, housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Paragraph 55 of the NPPF promotes sustainable development in rural areas where it will maintain or enhance the vitality of rural communities. As the proposed development is close to the centre of Holbeach, and within walking distance of local shops and amenities, the proposal complies with paragraph 55 of the NPPF.

Paragraph 118 of the NPPF promotes the enhancement of biodiversity, stating that, 'Opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged.'

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NPPF Section 8 encourages social interaction and the creation of healthy, inclusive communities. Paragraph 69 states that planning authorities should aim to achieve places which promote *'safe and accessible developments, containing clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas.'* Paragraph 73 states that, *'Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.'*

## CONCLUSION

This proposal stands out from other residential developments because the applicant is offering a significant open space provision that is far in excess of the minimum standard. Holbeach is under-provided for public open space and this scheme sets out a strategy as to how the space could be creatively utilised for recreational activities whilst simultaneously contributing positively to the enhancement of biodiversity. Furthermore, it embraces a drive towards healthier lifestyles and increased social interaction.

In the South East Lincolnshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment - Findings (July 2016) the site was considered as 'suitable' and was given a classification of 'developable'. Furthermore, the site had no environmental impacts, would not place undue burdens on existing infrastructure, is accessible to Holbeach's existing services and facilities (which can be reached by foot, bicycle and public transport), and has a frontage to Wignall's Gate suitable for a new access road.

The site is less of a flood risk than four-out-of-five of the sites selected as 'Preferred Housing Sites' and is equal to the fifth site.