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BUILDING FOR LIFE ASSESSMENT

FOR

DEVELOPMENT OF 24 DWELLINGS ON,
HIGHER WOODCROFT,
LEEK,
Staffordshire Moorlands

As a major residential development, the construction of 24 dwellings on the specified land at 'Higher Woodcroft, Leek' have been assessed against the 20 Building for Life Criteria set out by CABE. The following tables have been made answering each of the 20 questions about the proposed developments, with an answer for each and a score rating that follows the BFL scoring system of 0, 0.5 or 1.
Ideally the total score should reach over 14 to be classed as 'good', or over 16 to be 'very good'.

Environment and Community

1. Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as a school, parks, play areas, shops, pubs or cafes?	
Answer	Score
The site is close to several schools with most being within walking distance. Such schools as 'Woodcroft First School', 'Westwood college' and 'Westwood First School' are within 1 mile of the site. Many parks are nearby. The main shop nearby is 'Morrison's' supermarket which is 350m away. Leek town centre is a 10 minute walk away which holds the majority of the pubs, cafes and shops.	1

2. Is there an accommodation mix that reflects the needs and aspirations of the local community?	
Answer	Score
The proposed developments consist of 3-4 bedroom developments with a good amount of privacy between each property.	1

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3. Is there a tenure mix that reflects the needs of the local community?	
Answer	Score
The local community around this area live in houses with an average bedroom number of 2-4. This means that bringing in 3-4 bedroom properties will suit the requirements of local residents who like to live in this specific area. There are no bungalows nearby with a variety of semi-detached and detached buildings. This is why the proposed consist of a mixture of detached and semi-detached.	1
4. Does the development have easy access to public transport?	
Answer	Score
The main public transport available are buses. There is a bus stop 340m away on the A53 Newcastle Rd, with another 410m away on Broad Street.	1

5. Does the development have any features that reduce its environmental impact?	
Answer	Score
Better described in the D&A statement, the landscape of the existing site consists a lot of sloping rock. However, to minimize excavation, the proposed houses have been designed around the topography. Having said that, to create a flush opening between 'Woodcroft Rd' and the new street entrance, some of the site will need to be excavated. On the other hand, environmental aspects have been largely taken into consideration. The owner owns a solar panel company and obviously is greatly involved within renewable technology. This is why all south facing roof elevations will hold PV panels. Not only this, but air source heat pumps will provide a percentage of heating towards the development with a wet radiator system in place to replace a gas main.	1

Character

6. Is the design specific to the scheme?	
Answer	Score
Similar to the local area, the brick outer leaf will be 'Hanson Village Sunglow' to match nearby existing buildings. All proposed designs are 2 storey to match local developments.	1

7. Does the scheme exploit existing buildings, landscape or topography?	
Answer	Score
As the existing site is fields, no existing property will be effected by these proposed dwellings. The existing gateway is being kept as the new gateway too. The buildings have been designed around the rough topography however, to create a level access between Higher Woodcroft road and the new estate, some of the landscape will need to be excavated. Trees are to be planted in the new back gardens. The site is split into 4 sections. Area 1 has had tar tanks, gas holder bases and pipework removed from the ground. Areas 2, 3 and 4 are also estimated to have such material within the sub ground and may need to be investigated.	0.5

8. Does the scheme feel like a place with distinctive character?	
Answer	Score
The proposed dwellings are designed to follow the common theme of existing houses throughout Leek. The exteriors of the designs show red brick walls, with feature stone heads and sills. However, the most distinctive part of the proposed buildings comes from the bay windows and gable roofs. Which (shown in the design and access statement) is also a common theme within Leek buildings.	0.5

9. Do the buildings and layout make it easy to find your way around?	
Answer	Score
A clear existing entrance will be identified upon Higher Woodcroft as the new entrance. This opening leads to a simple dead end road with a turning point at the bottom. This road is wide enough for 2 way traffic. For traffic calming measures, a yellow hatched area shall be marked out on the tarmac to warn vehicles to stop and check if it's clear.	1

10. Are streets defined by a well-structured building layout?	
Answer	Score
As shown on the proposed site plan, each proposed development is equally spaced for similar parking and garden sizes. Each building wraps around a single dead end road to minimize the street size and maximize the garden/driveway size. All gable ends don't face the street, with every front elevation orientated towards the shared road.	1

Streets, Parking & Pedestrianisation

11. Does the building layout take priority over the streets and car parking, so that the highways do not dominate?	
Answer	Score
The road runs down the centre of the site to split each house for privacy and to control sound pollution to and from each property. However, this road does not dominate the site.	1

12. Is the car parking well integrated and situated so it supports the street scene?	
Answer	Score
Each proposed house has been given a driveway for 2 cars to park on with some dwellings having a garage too.	1

13. Are the streets pedestrian, cycle and vehicle friendly?	
Answer	Score
The site has a pavement on each side of the road to prevent pedestrians crossing at any time. There is no cycle lane but the enclosed street is small anyway with little danger to fast ongoing traffic.	1

14. Does the scheme integrate with existing streets, paths and surrounding development?	
Answer	Score
The site is rather enclosed and private from any adjoining road. However, due to the site location being quite stray, it's something that can't be changed and has been designed to be integrated with Higher Woodcroft as much as possible. The existing pedestrian path that runs to the side of Croft Cottage is being restored and resurfaced as a pavement to encourage public access to the site from various access points.	0

15. Are public spaces and pedestrian routes overlooked and do they feel safe?	
Answer	Score
The proposed street shall be evenly lit at all areas to prevent any venerable points. Not only this but all dwellings face their front elevation towards the proposed street allowing neighbouring properties to see activity on the street from facing windows and doors. The path that is to be restored only spans a short distance before it reaches the proposed street. However, as this path reaches the woodland, lighting is recommended.	1

Design and construction

16. Is public space well designed and does it have suitable management arrangements in place?	
Answer	Score
All areas of the site have a purpose with no area left undefined. When managing the site, easy access has been a large focal point (D&A Statement).	1

17. Do the buildings exhibit architectural quality?	
Answer	Score
These dwellings are designed to suit family expectations, using traditional principles and materials such as brick walls, stone cills and heads, high quality uPVC windows along with modern doors. The window to wall ratio allows for the interior to be flooded with natural light. Not only this, but internal spaces are large with all main bedrooms having ensuites, each dwelling having an open plan kitchen/dining room and a spacious lounge that is enclosed for privacy and thermal performance.	1

18. Do internal spaces and layout allow for adaption, conversion and extension?	
Answer	Score
The semi-detached dwellings have been built with the possible conversion of 2 connecting houses into 1. Each building has a similar length garden with room for to extend on the rear elevation of each. Each doorway is DDA compliant with suitable widths and level access. The store in certain semi-detached house can be converted into a lift if needed. Each dwelling has a downstairs w/c for the disabled too.	1

19. Has the scheme made use of advances in construction or technology that enhance its performance, quality and attractiveness?	
Answer	Score
PV panels are being used to enhance the environmental performance. Each dwelling has a porch to prevent heat loss and to determine a welcoming front elevation. The paving on the driveway not only states attractiveness but helps with drainage. Modern double glazed uPVC windows and doors will be used.	1

20. Do buildings or spaces outperform statutory minima, such as building regulations?	
Answer	Score
Each dwelling is designed to meet the current housing standards in terms of room sizes, taking floor area and bedrooms into consideration. Each dwelling will have sound insulation in-between floors and adjoining property walls. All main bedrooms have been made spacious with ensuites.	1

Total Score	Rating
18	Very good