Hewitt&CarrServices

Building for a Healthy Life Assessment

Full application for erection of 87no. dwellings
Land off Tenford Lane, Upper Tean
For Markden Homes North West Ltd.

Document Reference: 23-302 BHL1
Date: August 2023

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1. This Building for a Healthy Life Assessment has been prepared to accompany a full planning application the erection of up to 87no. dwellings on land off Tenford Lane, Upper Tean.

1.2. Building for a Healthy Life is a design code to help people improve the design of new and growing neighbourhoods. The Assessment appraises the proposed development in the context of the 12 underlying principles and considerations set out within the Building for a Health Life toolkit prepared by Homes England.

1.3. Where an element of design illustrates exampes of good practice it is afforded a green light. Poor practice is highlighted with a red light. Where an element of design falls between a green or red light, it is assigned an amber light. The more green lights a proposed development secures, the better it will be.

1.4. The following assessment has been undertaken having regard to the examples set out within the Building for a Healthy Life Document.

2.0 ASSESSMENT

1. Natural Connections

2.1. The application site responds positively to pedestrian and cyclist desire lines, with the main point of vehicular and pedestrian access onto Tenford Lane located at the westernmost end of the site, where it affords good connectivitiy with the existing pedestrian footways that provide access to the village centre, public transport connections, and nearby playing fields off Wentlows Road.

2.2. The single point of access weighs against the proposal, but reflects desire lines and expected patterns of pedestrian / cycle movement as there is not expected to be significant demand to access Tenford Lane to the east given the narrow nature of the carriageway beyond the site and its associated lack of pedestrian footway. A pedestrian access point could potentially be created at the eastern end of the site, but the need for this is questionable.

2.3. The means of pedestrian and cycle access will be afforded a high degree of natural surveillance. The site layout encompasses, in the main, straight roads thereby making pedestrian routes as direct as possible. The site has good permeability, with easy access to the adjacent areas of public open space, and by virtue of its single access point onto Tenford Lane will preclude rat running within the site. The layout has a central spine road running through the site with shared spaces projecting off it. The existing hedgerows within the site are to be preserved, as will existing trees, and will continue to form part of the public realm.

Score: Amber

2. Walking, Cycling & Public Transport

2.4. The development encompasses various areas of shared space. There are no dedicated cycle paths to be provided, but that would not usually be expected of a development of this size. The road network withint the site is nevertheless cycle friendly and there is good forward visibility throughout. The junctions within the site have tight radii to discourage fast moving traffic.

2.5. The site benefits from close proximity to existing public transport connections on the Cheadle Road some 170 – 180 metres to the west via the existing pedestrian footway along Tenford Lane. There is ample space within each plot for the provison of a garden shed to facilitate cycle parking.

Score: Green

3. Facilities and Services

2.6. The site is located within close proximity of public transport connections available on the Cheadle Road to the west of the site. The layout provides active frontages and a high degree of natural surveillance. Extensive provision of public open space is to be provided on site to the north of the dwellings for use by occupants of the development and the wider populace. The single access point at the western end fo the site reflects the key desire lines that are expected to exist.

Score: Green

4. Homes for Everyone

2.7. The application proposes a wide range of housing types and tenures, including a mixture of two, three and four bedroomed dwellings, and 29no. affordable dwellings. The dwellings sit within spacious plots thereby allowing scope for alteration in the future should personal needs require.

2.8. 25% of the affordable dwellings are to be provided as first homes (7no. units), with 60% of the remaining affordable dwellings to be affordable rented (13. Units) and the rest in shared ownership (9no. units).

2.9. The affordable housing is to be pepper potted throughout the development rather than being consolidated into one area of the site and will be tenure blind.

2.10. All homes on the site have been designed to meet the minimum floorspace requirements set out within the DCLG Technical Housing Standards.

Score: Green

5. Making the Most of What's There

2.11. The development takes its layout cues from the extant permission on the site for the erection of 40no. dwellings. Both that development and the submitted proposal serve to retain the existing boundary hedgerow and trees that enclose the southern boundary of the site (save for the formation of the vehicular access point.

2.12. The existing hedgerows and other vegetation within the site are also to be retained, and encompassed within the areas of public and incidental open space within the site.

2.13. Drainage is to be via Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) with an attenuation pond created towards the southwest corner of the site.

2.14. The scale of built development respects and responds positively to the scale of surrounding built development and is not more impactful than the scheme already approved by the Local Authority.

Score: Green

6. A Memorable Character

2.15. The scale, massing and design of the proposed dwellings on the site is respectful to the varied character and appearance of the surrounding area, and takes its cues from the house types approved on the extant permission on the site, and from guidance contained with the adopted Design Guide SPD. The streetscenes created will be cohesive with complementary structural landscaping and areas of open space provided.

Score: Green

7. Well Defined Streets and Spaces

2.16. The streets within the development site will have active frontages, and well defined spaces with areas of frontage landscaping in front of the dwellings and clearly defined building lines. The front doors of dwellings will face their respective streets with key vistas punctuated by buildings and / or areas of open space. Very few plots present blank elevations to the streetscene, and there is scope to add additional windows to those plots if so desired (Plots 6, 10, 25, 28, 30, 31, 37, 40, 78, 81),

Score: Amber

8. Easy to Find Your Way Around

2.17. The layout of the development will have a clear legibility, with streets used as the main way to help people navigate their way through, what is ultimately, a small development. The principal street will have pedestrian footways on either side, whilst the minor streets will have a single pedestrian footway or no footways at all (shared spaces). Buildings and areas of open space will punctuate the vistas within the site providing legible elements to help navigate within the site.

2.18. The provision of cul-de-sac streets weighs against the proposal in the context of the Building for a Healthy Life document, but that is largely unavoidable on this site owing to its sloping nature and single point of vehicular access.

2.19. Score; Amber

9. Healthy Streets

2.20. Pedestrian movement is prioritised within the site, with the main spine road having pedestrian footways on either side. The applicant is agreeable to the street being subjected to a 20mph speed limit. The layout encompasses tight corner radii and ample places for people to sit and play. The layout also responds to expected desire lines as discussed in section 1 above. Ample opportunity for the planting of street trees within the development as part of wider landscaping proposals for the site.

Score: Green

10. Cycle and Car Parking

2.21. Each plot has ample space for the provision of a garden shed for the secure storage of cycles. There are to be no shared public cycle shelters, but that is not considered to imperil the proposal given that there are no shared / communual house types such as apartment blocks.

2.22. There is only one shared area of parking within the site, but the spaces will be clearly defined and allocated to each plot. The rest of the dwellings will each have their own 'in-plot' parking provision. Landscaping is provided to the front of each dwelling to help soften the impact of parked cars. All parking is afforded a strong degree of natural surveillance. Elective vehicle charging points are to be provided. The provision of tandem parking on numerous plots weighs against the proposal (having regard to the examples given in the guidance) but the adoption of this approach means some of the parking will sit alongside the dwellings thereby reducing their associated visual impact. Such impacts are consequently considered neutral.

Score: Amber

11. Green and Blue Infrastructure

2.23. Extensive areas of public open space, new tree and hedgerow planting and the retention of existing vegetation will ensure that a net gain to biodiversity will be achieved. Movement corridors for wildlife, in particular those along the northern and southern site boundaries will be retained, as will the existing hedgerow that runs in a north / south direction within the site. The public open space is to be managed as that – greenspace available for the use of the local populace. Detailed ecology mitigation and enhancement measures will be detailed within the accompanying ecology reports.

2.24. The proposal also utilises Sustainable Urban Drainage solutions, with soakaways and attenuation ponds to be created on site. All of the open space will also benefit from a good degree of natural surveillance.

Score: Green

12. Back of Pavement / Front of Home

2.25. The site layout encompasses defensible space and strong boundary treatments. A number of those boundary treatments, in particular those to the plots at the northernmost end of the site, will encompass new hedgerows thereby adding to local biodiversity and providing a more visually pleasing aesthetic to the areas of public open space beyond. Waste storage areas are ot be provided down the sides of the properties away from public view, and each plot will have a front garden area to create opportunities for social interaction. All dwellings are to be set well back from the highway behind frontage landscaping / parking.

Score: Green

3.0 SUMMARY

3.1. The table in Figure 1 below summarises the above performance of the proposed development against the 12 criteria set out within the Building For A Healthy Life document for ease of reference:

Figure 1 – Summary of BHL Performance

Criterion	Rating	Criterion	Rating
Natural Connections	Amber	**Well Defined Streets & Spaces**	Amber
Walking, Cycling & Public Transport	Green	**Easy to Find Your Way Around**	Amber
Facilities and Services	Green	**Healthy Streets**	Green
Homes for Everyone	Green	**Cycle and Car Parking**	Amber
Making the Most of Whats There	Green	**Green and Blue Infrastructure**	Green
A Memorable Character	Green	**Back of Pavement / Front of Home**	Green

Overall Green	**8**	Overall Amber	**4**	Overall Red	**0**