

**O'HARE PLACE  
LEEK  
ST13 6PD**



**DESIGN AND ACCESS  
STATEMENT**

In support of a Full Planning Application  
Submitted in December 2012



Fig 1. View across Novi Lane



Fig 2. View down Novi Lane



Fig 3. View along Abbott Road.

## INTRODUCTION

### INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of Ascent Housing Limited to support a Full Planning Application of a proposal to develop 22 new 1 bed flats for rent on the site at the junction of Novi Lane and Abbott Road, Haregate, Leek. Ascent Housing is a joint venture company formed between Harvest housing Group known locally as Moorlands Housing and Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC) Moorlands Housing are a key local housing provider and manage over 800 properties in the local and surrounding area. Ascent have been formed as the delivery company with SMDC and aspires to develop approximately 400 new affordable homes over the next 3 years on sites across Leek, Biddulph and rural North Staffordshire. The proposed development on Haregate forms part of the Haregate master plan which looks at 4 sites for affordable housing with a new community centre, public realm and improved play space provision.

This statement should be read in conjunction with the detailed planning application drawings and its accompanying documents including the

#### **Ecological Assessment**

prepared by TEP

#### **Flood Risk Assessment**

Prepared by Sutcliffe's

#### **Ground Investigation and Risk Report**

prepared by Atkinson Peck / Sutcliffe's

O'Hare Place is located within the Haregate Estate and is located approximately 1km to the East of Leek Town Centre and extends to approximately 0.250 hectares.

The site itself is owned by Stafford Moorlands Housing Association and was previously occupied by 24 bedsit flats which were 2 storey in height, arranged in an L shape of 3 blocks of 8 Flats each and which had open deck access to the

## BACK GROUND

rear. These flats had proved increasingly difficult to let, due to restrictive size, lack of parking and the general poor quality of the accommodation and as such they were eventually demolished about 18 months ago. The site is seen as a key Ascent site for the provision of 1 bed flats which are needed within the area.



Fig 4. Aerial View of Site

## PLANNING HISTORY

Following the demolition of the bedsits, the site has now been empty for approximately 15 months whilst awaiting a decision on the proposed replacement.

The site does not form part of a Conservation Area and there are no buildings of historic importance within the immediate vicinity.

Due to the length of time the site has been empty, both planning and Highways have confirmed that both the siting of the building footprint and overall car park provision will not be acceptable as per the previous layout and that any new layout should address these issues.

## ACCESS

### POLICY

As part of the requirement to comply with the Building Regulations, Code for Sustainable Homes and Building for Life, the intention is that all units are to be accessible by persons of varying abilities in a high quality environment.

### LOCATION

The town of Leek has a population of approximately 19,000 inhabitants and is located approximately 10kms north east of Stock on Trent and around 21Kms east of the M6 Motorway. The town is served by both the A53 and A523 which offer links to and from towns and cities in the wider region. The site itself is located on the corner of Novi Lane and Abbott Road within the Haregate Estate which is located approximately 1Km to the East of Leek town centre and extends approximately 0.25 hectares.

### PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Due to the sites close proximity to the town centre the site benefits from excellent public transport links with services running through the estate with Bus stops just outside the site and excellent connections along connecting the site to the town centre and wider area.

### ACCESS AROUND LOCAL AREA

There is a small convenience store located immediately opposite the site on the corner of Novi Lane & Abbott Road and there are also a number of other local facilities such as shops , schools, medical centres and play facilities all within a short walk from the site. As can be seen from the previous photos, the area surrounding the site area is generally flat and easily accessible. Leek town centre provides a wide range of retail facilities for the town and its residents.

## ACCESS

### ACCESS TO AND WITHIN DWELLINGS

The aim is to provide 100% on site car parking to all new Apartments along with a number of visitor spaces as per Highways requirements. Following discussions with Highways the general agreement is that access to the site shall be via a new access formed on Abbott Road.

External footpaths will be at least 1000mm wide and any required external ramp will be of a maximum gradient of 1 in 12. Level areas of 1500mm x 1500mm will be provided at the entrances to all new units.

The proposed new dwellings **will be designed to Lifetime Homes standards** and will also be designed to meet **Secured by design & Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes**.

### LOCAL CONTEXT

The local physical context within the estate is a large inter-war housing estate with a mix of tenure largely split between Owner Occupation and social rent. The character is generally two storey in height, with large rear gardens and consist predominantly of semi-detached houses and short terraces. These local characteristics have been addressed in the development of the new proposals and discussed in more detail elsewhere in this Design and Access statement.

The site is reasonably level across the site and there is only one opportunity for vehicular access from Abbott Road, which will developed as part of the scheme proposals.

There is little or no existing trees or shrubs on the site except in the South East corner and these will be incorporated into the proposals.

In terms of the social context the local neighbourhood will benefit greatly from the delivery of new affordable housing on the site by the provision of 22 well designed and constructed

## POLICY

dwelling within private amenity space and with on site parking.

### PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT

Government Guidance in the form of Planning Policy Guidance Notes PPG'S and the Planning policy statements PPS'S set the context within which those involved in the development process should promote excellence in design in achieving a high quality sustainable development.

### LOCAL POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Local Policy and Guidance.

Policy and guidance, which covers the local area, has been utilised to inform the design process. These include

Adopted Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan

Housing for local people and Affordable housing SPD

Public Open Space Supplementary Planning Guidance

Leek Town Centre: Final Master Plan.

Staffordshire Moorlands Open Space Sport and Recreation Facility Guidance Document.

Design Principles for Development in Staffordshire Moorlands.

### PLANNING CONTEXT

The application has been developed to address key local planning policies within the Districts Council's Saved Policy Framework

#### **B13 Design.**

The policy sets out 6 key design drivers to be considered in the development of a design which we believe our proposed scheme address as follows.

Our scheme demonstrates good quality design and is of a scale which is appropriate for its context, using materials which are sympathetic to adjoining dwellings around the site and the context of the estate. The scheme has a traditional appearance with brickwork and duo-pitched roofs and siting, alignment and massing all respect the character of the neighbourhood and is

## POLICY

complementary to the existing estate fabric.

Our scheme has been developed with a balance between enhancing both the public and private space. Details of principal public / private boundary intersections are shown on our application drawings. A robust Landscaping strategy has been developed with our Landscape Architects at TEP and their detailed landscape proposals form part of this application . Please refer to TEP Drawing number xxxxxxxx

Amenity space and window provision reflects the standards required within appendix 3 refer to separate statement within the document.

The site is fairly level throughout the site and access to the dwelling will be accommodate the needs of people with restricted mobility. The scheme has been designed according to Lifetime Homes standards to provide access for all throughout the life of the dwelling.

The scheme has been designed in conjunction with the local ALO officer at Staffordshire Police and a Secure By Design Application will be submitted upon planning resolution.

### **H4 Location.**

This proposal for new affordable housing complies fully with this policy with the need to locate new development within the existing boundaries of towns, where it can be serviced effectively by using existing access roads and utility infrastructure and is sympathetic with the character of the existing area.

### **H14 Local Need.**

The Ascent Programme is a JV between Moorlands Housing and SMDC and has been formed to provide affordable housing. The development programme is only delivered within the SMDC area and its sole aim is to provide affordable housing for local people delivered and managed by a local RSL Moorlands

## **POLICY**

### **Housing.**

Out of the overall programme of 424 units, 245 are rent, 125 are shared ownership and the remaining 54 units for outright sale which in percentage terms is 12.7%. The monies generated from the sale of these units helps to cross subsidize the affordable units within the programme. Residents for both rental and shared ownership units must meet the requirements of local planning policy H14,H15 and Core Strategy Policy H2, shared ownership purchasers will also need to meet the affordability criteria on the homebuy web site. Any units within an individual scheme staircasing for the shared ownership units will be ring fenced for the Ascent programme and reinvested in new opportunities exclusively in the Staffordshire Moorlands area. A more detailed explanation of how this provision will be delivered can be found in the Affordability Document supporting all the Ascent planning applications

### **T14 Roads.**

This proposal embraces the requirements of T14 and complies fully with the need to avoid additional vehicular traffic flow by the brownfield reuse of the former housing site. The previous use of the site was likely to have created far more vehicular parking issues than the new proposals as there was no on site parking facilities available. The development of the new proposals should mean that local residential parking issues should be considerably eased. The applicant recognises the need to develop and submit detailed proposals to the Highway Authority for approval.

### **Appendix 3.**

Our design proposal satisfies these policy conditions by All principle windows are located to comply with Policy A3.4 items (1-3) inclusive, it should also be noted that to ensure optimum natural lighting of deep rooms, some secondary windows have been proposed in some rooms that may not comply with the requirements for principal windows.



## DESIGN

Garden size and length comply with standards identified in Policy A3.4 items 6 and 7 ensuring that Daylighting standards identified in Policy A3.4 items 11 and 12 have been satisfied.



*Fig 5. Proposed Site Plan*



*Fig 6. Axonometric view*

## FLOOD RISK



Fig 7. Flood Risk Map Environment Agency

### Risk assessment

As shown above, information from the Environment Agency website illustrates that the proposed site is not located within a potential flood zone. A Full and detailed flood risk Assessment has been prepared as part of the application documentation by our engineering consultant Sutcliffe

## APPEARANCE



Fig 10. 3D Model

## AMBITIONS

John McCall Architects have produced this proposal based on specific requirements of Ascent Housing who will manage the properties for affordable rent.

The design brief was set to look at various sites which have been provided by SMDC and to investigate their potential suitability for new family housing which would enhance the location and existing estate context.

The general desire is to provide a high-quality living environment which is sympathetic to its surroundings and reflects the distinctive characteristics of the area.

The proposed dwellings, based on our client's current requirements, are a single basic 1b 2p unit type:

- 22 x 1 bedroom 2 person Apartment,

The general orientation of the proposed Apartments needs to reinforce the current street scene, whilst preserving / enhancing the visual amenity enjoyed by the existing residential building that surround the site.



Fig 8 Local context brick



Fig 9. Local context—Amenity Space



Fig 11. Corner of Novi Lane / Abbott Road



Fig 12 Aerial axo



Fig 13. Feature Bays

## GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

In line with our brief, Apartments are to be provided with 'on site car parking areas and private open space to the front, as well as open amenity space to the rear. The car parking bays will be accessible directly from Abbotts Road and the upgraded access .

This general layout should retain a fairly open aspect which will promote natural surveillance by the residents in and around the scheme.

The scheme in general forms part of the Haregate Master Plan providing new, much needed, high-quality units which will further benefit the area by supporting the local schools, shops and facilities.

Distances between the new buildings and existing residential units are defined to form a notional building line and has influenced the type of accommodation that is appropriate.

Our scheme aims to respect its surroundings in terms scale, massing and proportions.

In summary, the initial design principles are to :

- provide a desired range of house types,
- complement the existing urban fabric,
- reinforce current communal amenities,
- foster a sense of pride and identity within the local community.

## PRINCIPLES

As explained above, the proposal seeks to reinforce the existing street scene without unduly affecting the surrounding houses.

The opportunities and constraints of the site have been



## GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS



Fig 14. Ground Floor Apartment



Fig 15. Second Floor Apartment

balanced and utilised in order to respond with a solution which satisfies the original design intentions.

The units themselves are based on a traditional approach with front and rear landscaped amenity space . A simple rectangular plan and double pitched roof characterises the main volume of the units. Projecting features to the main living areas to the front will form covered balconies and provide the scheme with a distinctive character.



Fig 16. Canopies forming entrance into the site from West Drive.

The proposed façade finishes for the scheme are a mix of brickwork and zinc features.

A total of 22 Apartments are proposed. All blocks are massed so as to give variety to the roof line and create visual interest within the streetscape. Units are a mix of 2 and 3 storey and designed around creating a focal point at the corner of Novi Lane and Abbott Road .

All proposed units will allow easy access according to the principles enunciated by the Lifetime Homes standard and achieve a minimum rating of 3 stars for the Code for Sustainable Homes.

The units are predominantly single aspect and front onto the

## GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

adjoining streets of Novi Lane and Abbott Road.

Windows have also been added to gable ends where required to ensure there are no unnecessary blank walls.

From the main road, the massing of new houses is intended to reinforce the street scene with the existing layout of the estate.

Hard and soft landscaping will be carefully integrated to create outdoor spaces which are encouraging to both safe play and social interaction.



*Fig 17. Street view at corner of Novi Lane / Abbott Road*

## MATERIALS

The proposed dwellings will be designed to meet level 3 of the Code for Sustainable homes and incorporate brickwork masonry facades, tiled roofs and zinc features of high-standard detailing. The aim is to provide robust, durable and low maintenance scheme For the Clients Ascent.

The materials proposed have been chosen to sit comfortably within the location while allowing the scheme to have its own sense of identity and modernity. The selected palette should provides a balance between a contemporary solution and a scheme that is in keeping with its surroundings.

Externally we propose to use 'traditional' materials such as

## GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

brick for the main facade along with zinc panelling. The roofs will be thin Tiles with pitches with sufficient falls to ensure that a variety of tiles can be used (after agreement of the Planning Officer).

A common palette of materials, colours and features similar to that of neighbouring properties has been incorporated into the design of apartments. This will help provide a coherent and integrated appearance along with an element of individuality to the development.

The dwellings are set back from the footpath and articulated with projecting boxes, which at ground level contain the entrances.

## BOUNDARY TREATMENT

Low level boundary walls/ railings and gates will provide a clearly defined boundary between the footpath and front of the units onto the street.

The two boundaries to the neighbouring properties either side of the site will retain if suitable the existing fences or will be replaced with new fencing to SBD standards.

## HIGHWAYS

The scheme is of an infill nature and, as much as possible, the existing highways will be retained. Vehicular access to the front of the site will be achieved via new dropped curbs off Abbott Road. As the previous scheme of 24 units had no on site parking at all, this new scheme with 100 % on site parking, should help improve many of the parking problems that have occurred in the past.

## LANDSCAPING

The landscape proposal has been designed by a specialist consultant to complement the final scheme and ensure a

## GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

sympathetic and sustainable proposal.

The site has been laid out to ensure that the area will retain an open and, therefore, naturally supervised nature. Car parking to the rear of the Apartments will be softened by the formation of planted bay dividers and shrubs which will be located in appropriate areas of the site to enhance security, privacy and provide existing / new residences with a greener outlook. As per

the images of the frontage, Landscape has been carefully considered and designed to visually enhance the street scene for the benefit of all.



*Fig 18. View of rear car parking area*

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION

A couple of 'Open Consultation Evenings' were held at the local community centre in Haregate to inform local residents of the proposals for this site. All feedback from the surveys were generally in favour of the site being redeveloped along the lines of the initial scheme proposals which envisaged a development of Apartments on the site.

## CONCLUSION

In developing this proposal, we believe that we have taken on



board the council's aspirations with regards to:

- sustainable development objectives,
- national planning policy guidance,
- regional planning policy guidance,
- social, economic and environmental considerations.

We also believe that the proposed scheme will provide a small scale intervention of high quality, which will complement the existing surroundings and satisfy a key theme of Stafford Moorlands Council in the promotion of a cohesive and sustainable community.