

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

on the

**FORMER MIDLOTHIAN GARAGE,
NEW MILL ROAD,
HOLMFIRTH**

for



DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

NOVEMBER 2015

PREPARED BY



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INTRODUCTION

This statement has been prepared on behalf of Prospect Estates Limited and forms part of an Outline Planning Application for the residential development on the former Midlothian Garage, off New Mill Road, Holmfirth.

The purpose of this document is to establish the principles behind the design as well as consider access solutions for the development of 56 no. dwellings and associated car parking.

The following sections of this document aim to clearly set out the aspirations of the client, the intentions of the designer and the expectations of the planning authority and local residents.

POLICY

All relevant policies and guidance relating to the proposals are covered in the Planning Support Statement by Roger Lee of Roger Lee Planning Consultancy Ltd.

SITE

Location

The site is the former Midlothian Garage, located just off New Mill Road an A Road from Holmfirth to Huddersfield. The site is located in an established residential area.

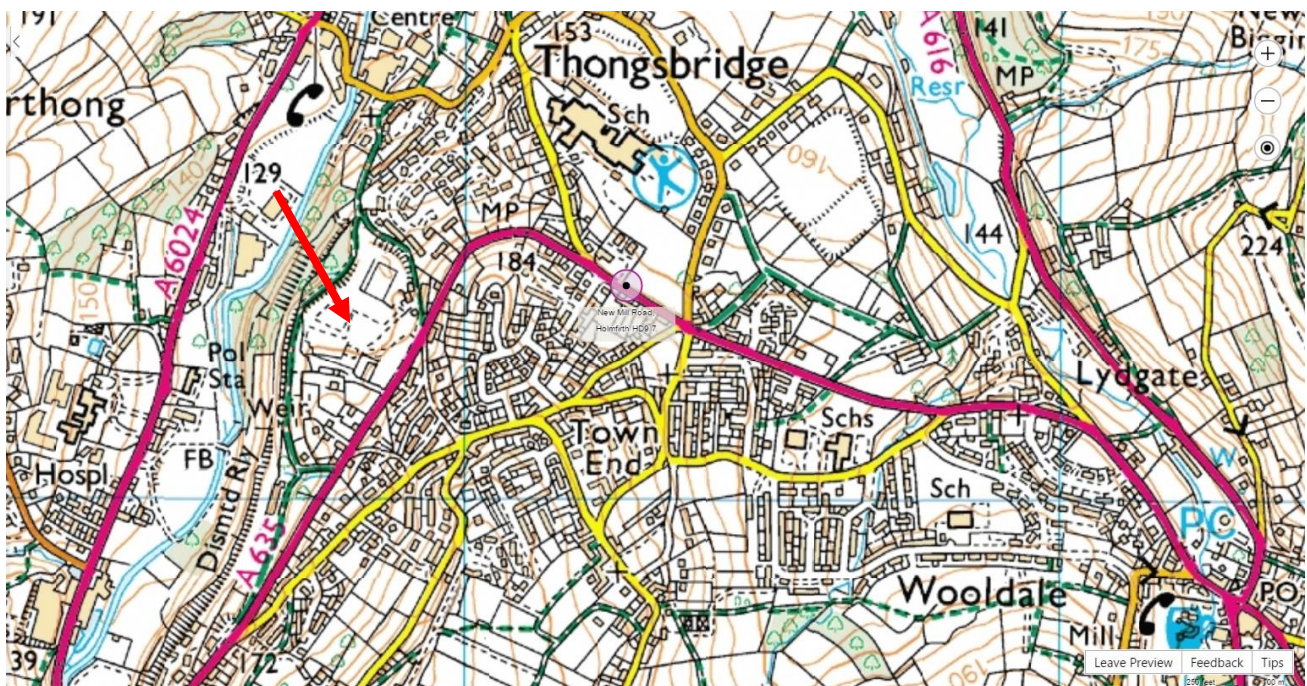


Fig. 1 OS Plan

To the north of the site is a tennis club, an area of open space & woodland leading to existing housing with a small number of local businesses. To the east is New Mill Road and existing housing. To the west is a dismantled railway, part of Berry Bank Lane and the River Holme. To the south is Glenview, a large detached house in substantial grounds and other similar houses.

The site is split into two main areas, the top section next to New Mill Road is currently used for car parking by the public but it should be noted that the land is privately owned and this parking is illegal. Its status is un-surfaced, un-marked, un-registered for this use. The bottom section of the site is the former Midlothian Garage now removed and is appropriately blocked off to vehicles with earth bunds to try and prohibit the site being used for fly tipping, travelers vacating the site, etc. It is overgrown and

un-kept. The access road is maintained as access is required to the adjacent buildings to the north of the site, i.e. the tennis club, a small number of local businesses and Berry Back Lane.



Fig. 2 Aerial photograph

Amenities / Transport Links, etc.

The site has a short car journey to the Centre of Holmfirth (10 to 15 minutes) which enjoys a full range of services, i.e. banks, shops, council offices, police station, health centre, library, post office, supermarket, etc. It is important to note that other local amenities are located along the route towards Huddersfield Town Centre, i.e. local businesses, convenience stores, take-aways, hairdressers, pubs, etc.



Fig. 2 Holmfirth Town Centre



Fig. 3 Holmfirth Town Centre



Fig. 4 Holmfirth Town Centre

Bus stops near the site provide public transport to Holmfirth, and the adjacent villages of Brockholes, Thronsbridge and Honley as well as Huddersfield, Halifax, Leeds, Bradford & Sheffield.

The Penistone train line runs / links Huddersfield - Lockwood - Berry Brow - Honley - Brockholes - Stocksmoor - Shepley - Denby Dale - Penistone - Barnsley – Meadowhall and Sheffield. Brockholes is the closest station to the site. From Huddersfield, Barnsley & Sheffield connections to further locations such as Leeds, Bradford, Manchester, London, etc. are possible.

The proximity of the site to a variety of services and public transport makes this a sustainable location.

Summary

The site is currently un-used and if left undeveloped could become a long term nuisance site, attracting fly tipping, travelers, vandals, drug users, groups of youths etc. resulting in vandalism, litter and other problems for the local area - an undesirable part of an otherwise pleasant residential area.

DESIGN

Design Philosophy

The proposals have been established with proven residential principles and other supporting documents such as the Kirklees Street Design Guide, CABE, Manual for Streets, Home Zone Design Guides, Kirklees Core Strategies, etc.

Inspiration has come from the architectural elements of the existing buildings within the surrounding area, site constraints, topography, site context, security issues and the applicant's / future developer's or user's requirements.

These principles are outlined as follows:

- Achievability, deliverability and functionality of the project,
- Accessibility for all people (i.e. disabled, elderly and young families),
- Sensitivity to the surrounding environment,
- Creating a sense of community,
- Contextual aesthetics expressed as a theme through the design.

Design Restrictions

As highlighted above most sites have constraints that can limit as well as direct a designer. This site is no different. The main issues that have dictated the layout are as follows (with the appropriate action taken);

- Site Levels – the site slopes excessively from the east to west and gently from north to south which does create some difficulty in terms of developing but also offers the designer an opportunity to create some interest in the design by split level units and altering roof lines.
- Site Access – the site has two means of access – one from New Mill Road (highlighted red) and Berry Bank Lane an un-adopted lane (highlighted blue).

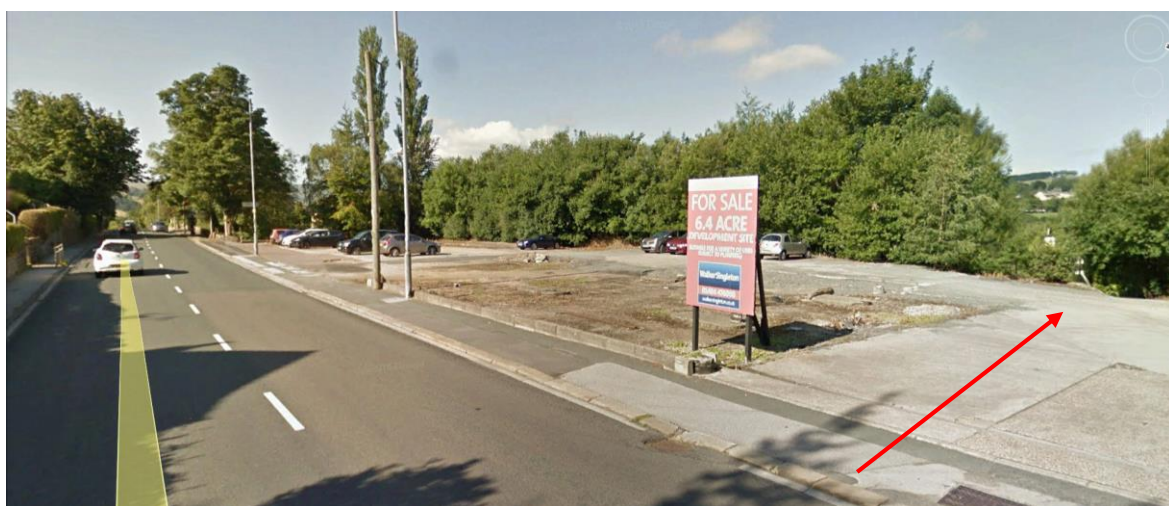


Fig 5, 6 & 7 New Mill Road

Access from Berry Bank Lane is prohibited by its gradients, limited turning and forward visibility, lack of pavements and the existing buildings, which are outside the applicant's ownership.

It should also be noted that some of these business have a right of access from the main site to Berry Bank Lane, including the adjacent tennis club (highlighted green) which must be maintained as part of any scheme proposals.



Fig 8 Berry Bank Lane

Both means of access are steep and any means of access will need to adjust the existing levels which further prohibits the Berry Back Lane route due to the above-mentioned buildings. A new access can be formed from New Mill Road which can also be regarded to a more suitable road gradients with complaint visibility lines, etc.



Fig 9 Tennis Club Access

This has been discussed with Kirklees Highways as part of the pre-application enquiry.

- Surrounding Properties – as explained above, the site is located in an established residential area which comprises of a general mix of houses ranging from typical cottages and terrace houses, large detached family houses, bungalows, ex-council house and housing association properties, etc. in a full spectrum of materials, i.e. stone, brick, render, with stone rot blue slate roofs, concrete tiles, pantiles, etc.

If the proposals are to be in keeping with the above the scheme will need to comprise of a predominately semi- detached and detached houses to create much needed new family accommodation – all confirmed by local agents.

As the scheme is an outline planning application details of the fenestration of the surrounding

properties has not been studied as the house designs / elevations will be determined at a later stage.

- Trees & Hedges – the site enjoys established trees and hedge throughout. The majority of these are overgrown and un-maintained.

The Proposals

As part of the proposals all existing boundaries are to be retained / repaired where possible. New boundaries treatments as described under SECURE by DESIGN.

As highlighted above, the site is sloping from east to west and north to south which will affect the accessibility of the site and some re-grading will be required.

This has been taken into consideration in the design of the development in order to be accessible to all groups, for example the roads has been designed to be one continuous road with limited junctions to allow the road gradients to follow the site gradients where possible. In highway design, junctions need to be designed ideally level not on a gradient to allow more easier turning movements to occur whether this is undertaking a three point turn or simply changing direction when in a vehicle.

The existing embankments along the east to west axis have been retained as these are sufficient in scale and the proposals have been designed to suit these existing site features. As the level changes from north to south are much gentler the site will be slightly re-graded on this axis.

The proposed layout is simple and creates an effective urban environment, logical and easy to understand providing a variety of semi-detached and detached house types of varying sizes (56no. in total) all with parking served from one means of access point, contacting to Berry Bank Lane to address legal requirements in terms of means of access for the adjacent properties.

All plots are semi-detached or detached which allows curtilage rear garden access to all plots thus eliminating any communal paths serving rear gardens.

Garages are located next to each other where possible to increase front garden spaces for additional soft landscaping next to the road network.

The arrangement of these units on the site has been given careful consideration with houses being placed to create framed focal points within the scheme / at the turning heads, etc.

The type and size of units are completely compatible with the nature of the area and have been developed in line with strong urban design principles.

Open Space

Current planning policies proposes an on-site open space provision of 30 sq m per unit is created which totals circa 1680 sq m (0.42 Acres) – this being based on the housing scheme only – we assume the care home will be an off-site contribution.

The applicants acknowledge the above requirement and has provided 2913 sq m / 0.29 Acres of on-site open space on a section of land under their ownership, located between the proposed development site and adjacent / existing housing estate.

This proposed area of open space can be accessed via an existing footpath also in part ownership of the applicant - please reference the site plan.

Care Home

In addition to the private housing, the applicant proposes a circa 62 bed care house to the south east of the site, complete with 9no. parking spaces, over 3 storeys, with its own communal area and bin / cycle store. This will address a portion of local elderly care / housing needs as confirmed by local agents.

Affordable Housing

The proposals provide 8no. affordable units comprising 5no. 2 bed houses and 3no. 1 bed apartments, to the front of the site / facing New Mill Road.

Landscaping

Landscaping is an important issue when considering the development of any site because as it defines the quality of the development and helps to create a sense of place.

Existing hedges and trees are to be retained, if in good condition and reinforced where possible but the key design to the soft landscaping is manageability. Pruning / cutting back will occur to protect and enhance on-site planting.

In addition to the above points, parking spaces have been positioned together where possible to create areas for key tree and large shrub planting adjacent the road network plus space in front gardens to accommodate smaller shrub planting, all to help break up any hard landscape elements of the proposals thereby enhancing the overall attractiveness of the scheme.

Each property enjoys a private rear garden which can be used to further enhance the planting areas to the front elevations / road as well as define the existing boundaries, etc. giving the site a lush green appearance that will complement and enhance the local area and woodland.

The landscaped spaces to the estate road, mews court and private drives are overlooked and will be kept to species that will grow no higher than the ground floor window cill, addressing 'secure by design' requirements whilst the private gardens offer a degree of seclusion, there is also an element of overlooking for a sense of security, representing defensible space.

As highlighted above, the site is split into three areas, the main development site (split into two areas by existing woodland / embankments), an area to the north of the site this being an opening in the existing woodland and part of a public footpath to the bottom of Berry Bank Lane. The open area to the north of the site is proposed as the open space, as mentioned. With this being part of the woodland it is envisaged that this will not be a formally set out and retained as is with the exception of some maintenance, land drainage, definition of boundaries with the use of say 1m high timber post and rail fences, etc. It is not envisaged that this will have planting within this area due to the surrounding trees.

More detailed proposals will be prepared for later application, subject to securing the outline planning consent but the above hopefully provides an overview of the principle design considering and inclusions for this element of the project.

Density

The site covers an area of 2.25 hectares gross / 5.56 acres of which 1.653 hectares gross / 4.09 acres is developable less the open space provision. The proposed 56 no. houses equates to 33.9 dwellings per hectare and is in keeping with the character of the area. It is appropriate for the size and topography of the site.

The carehome site has an area of 0.29 Acres / 0.132 Hectares.

Scale

The scale and proportion of detail has been considered carefully and all elements are domestic in both scale and nature. The occupants of the new dwellings will feel both comfortable and secure with the scale of development proposed.

ACCESS

Access has been considered in the broadest sense to cover the needs of all building users and visitors who may have sensory, mobility and/ or hidden impairments plus others including elders, children and parents with young children.

The site will be accessed off New Mill Road via a new estate road which has been elongated to help deal with site levels. This estate road leads into mews courts and a private drive. Various turning points have been provided throughout the new road network together with a link to Berry Bank Lane – reference the earlier comments on the access / legal requirements for the adjacent property owners.

The new estate road will include footpaths to both sides and the mews courts will include one footpath to accommodate pedestrians.

All roads will be adopted with the exception of the private drive.

The breaking down of the road patterns (and use of different types and materials) create a logical theme to the road hierarchy in addition to reduced lengths of roads as well as angled sections, all contribute to reducing traffic speed throughout the scheme.

The road layout in the site has been designed to allow removal / refuse vehicles, emergency services, etc., easy access throughout the scheme but also following the informal principles outlined above.

The site is privately owned and as such has no formal public right of ways.

Access to the proposed houses has been considered for all groups with minimum 1m wide paths to level thresholds and accessible accommodation in line with current building regulations. As the proposed dwellings are new-build this allows current disabled doorway widths, ground floor WCs and other requirements such as even paths to front doors, level thresholds to front entrances, etc. to be incorporated into the design, in line with current building regulations.

Bin storage will be located in the rear gardens with path access as shown on the site plan.

In terms of parking, all units have a minimum 1 no. off street surface parking and a single garage (internal dimensions of 3m wide by 6m long which is sufficient to accommodate cycles as well as gardening equipment, plus a car).

All parking spaces will be 3m wide by 6m long – separate paths to front doors will be formed to each property to separate cars and pedestrians for added safety.

No formal visitor spaces have been proposed as each house has 2no. parking spaces plus the road network incorporates footpaths to both sides of the carriageway on the estate road (and to one side of the mews court) which can be used for visitor on-street parking.

PRE - APPLICATION ADVICE & STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The applicant has undertaken a pre-application meeting with John Ritchie of Kirklees Planning. Details are provided in the Planning Support Statement.

SUSTAINABILITY/ RENEWABLES

As stated before, this is a matter that will be decided at a later stage of the design and planning process but the proposals can embrace green technologies and follow good eco principles to deliver a sustainable development.

Sustainability items such as the site location, access to public transport, local amenities and other facilities, etc. is covered in the Planning Statement.

Cycle storage will be accommodated in the garage.

SECURE BY DESIGN

The Police Authority has not been consulted on the proposals at this stage however the principles of 'secure by design' can be incorporated into the proposals.

CONCLUSION

This Design and Access Statement has been provided to demonstrate how the scheme has been developed with reference to the surrounding urban area.

It has been considered that the proposals provide a high quality and attractive development and represent a significant opportunity to secure the positive development of a former Midlothian Garage, which will, in our view, enhance this site and New Mill Road / Berry Bank Lane as a whole.

Overall, careful thought has been given to the design, layout and massing of the proposed development. As such it is considered that the design of the proposal is appropriate, and it is our view that the new development will bring about considerable improvements over and above the existing situation.

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November 2015