



Appeal by Boningale Developments Ltd

Masterplanning Statement

Patshull Road, Albrighton, Shropshire

LPA Reference: 24/02108/OUT



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Document Control

Project Name: Albrighton South
Matter Code: 2503213-24/MS/260812
Report Title: Masterplanning Statement



1. Introduction

- 1.1 My name is Luke Hillson. I am Design Partner at Marrons, a UK-Wide multi-disciplinary design and planning consultancy.
- 1.2 I have been instructed by Boningale Developments Limited to act as an expert witness providing design advice on Masterplanning and Urban Design matters.
- 1.3 This Masterplanning Statement follows on from the Masterplanning Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) and demonstrates how the design proposals will result in a high quality development with good design and placemaking principles.

2. Qualifications and Experience

- 2.1 Luke Hillson BSc (Hons), PG Dip. UD, MRTPI, RPUD.
- 2.2 I have over 20 years experience working as a masterplanner and urban designer.
- 2.3 I studied City and Regional Planning at Cardiff University achieving a Bachelor of Science with Honours (2004) and a Post-Graduate Diploma in Urban Design also at Cardiff University (2005).
- 2.4 In 2005 to 2014 I worked as a Masterplanning and Urban Designer at AMEC, I was then Head of Strategic Masterplanning at IDP from 2014 to 2018, from 2018 to 2023 I was Design Director at Barton Willmore (and subsequently Stantec following a buy-out); and from 2023 to now I've worked at Marrons as Design Partner.
- 2.5 I am a Recognised Practitioner by the Urban Design Group (RPUD) and have been since 2009.
- 2.6 I am a Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute (MRTPI) and have been since 2017. I was the West-Midlands RTPI Chairperson in 2020-2021 and currently Chair the West-Midlands RTPI Urban Design Forum, having done so since 2019.
- 2.7 I am a current Expert Design Advisor to Design:Midlands (Midlands design review panel) and previously acted as a Built Environment Expert for the Design Council (National design review panel).



3. Instructions

- 3.1 I have been instructed by Boningale Developments Limited ('the Appellant') to prepare this Masterplanning Statement and act as an expert design witness for Masterplanning and Urban Design matters.
- 3.2 For transparency, it should be noted that neither Marrons nor I were the masterplanners involved in the original application on 31 May 2024, this was CASS. However, I and Marrons authored subsequent supporting design information including the Guiding Design Principles and Contextual Responsiveness Document **[CD6.4]** and the Updated Illustrative Framework Plan **[CD6.6]** which built upon the initial application.

4. Purpose of the Masterplanning Statement

- 4.1 This Masterplanning Statement ('Statement') relates to an appeal against Shropshire Council's ('the Council') refusal of outline planning application 24/02108/OUT, for which the description of development is as follows:

Outline application to include access for a mixed-use development comprising up to 800 no dwellings, a care home of up to 80 units, a secondary school and local centre with associated access, infrastructure, landscaping and drainage

- 4.2 The application is outline only with all matters reserved (including Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale) reserved other than Access.
- 4.3 This Masterplanning Statement demonstrates how the design proposals will result in a high quality development with good design and placemaking principles. It shows how design decisions and the resultant masterplan follow best practice guidance and are contextually responsive.
- 4.4 It builds upon the Guiding Design Principles and Contextual Responsiveness Document **[CD6.4]**; which outlines both an understanding of Albrighton and sets clear Key Design Principles which a subsequent reserved matters application should be guided by and finally covers some of the key considerations in the future development of the new proposals.
- 4.5 The understanding section of the Guiding Design Principles and Contextual Responsiveness Document provides an overview of the 'Essence of Place' of

Albrighton. The research and analysis looks at the character of Albrighton, covering both the historic core and suburban housing, looking at the urban form, streetscape, local vernacular and roofscape. A summary matrix considers appropriate architectural details, scale and materials.

- 4.6 The Key Design Principles section of the document builds upon this analysis and provides clear guidance on how future development on the site should come forward to ensure that it's contextually responsive to the local character and vernacular of Albrighton. This includes guidance on building form, streetscape, scale, architectural details and materials. It provides guidance on how more detailed design proposals should be shaped at the reserved matters stage.
- 4.7 Finally, the document includes an Indicative Delivery Plan, which captures key design aspects of the illustrative framework plan including nodal points, movement hierarchy and building heights. It emphasises the importance of legible and attractive movement routes, locally distinctive development and integrated landscape into the development.
- 4.8 This Masterplanning Statement when combined with the Guiding Design Principles and Contextual Responsiveness Document demonstrates how the design proposals at South Albrighton will result in a high-quality development that is responsive to the existing character of Albrighton.
- 4.9 It should be noted that how the sustainable development proposals form a well-considered and interconnected development on the edge of Albrighton, including demonstrating that it works with sustainable travel links to local services and facilities, is included within the Transport Proof of Evidence of Miss Anna Meer. The accessibility of facilities within the site, including the local centre, school and usable green space, is covered within this Masterplanning Statement.
- 4.10 The Planning Proof of Evidence of Miss Megan Wilson sets out how the Masterplanning and design principles addressed in this Statement can effectively be secured through the imposition of planning conditions.

5 Best Practice Masterplanning

- 5.1 There is nothing within the appeal reasons for refusal from a masterplanning perspective at this outline stage. Through the Masterplanning SoCG it is recognised that policy 'CS6 Sustainable Design and Development' from the Core Strategy, which considers scale, density, pattern, design and local character and context, forms part of Reason for Refusal 1 (RfR1).



- 5.2 Also, whilst not referred to within RfR1, the Council have subsequently referred to SAMDev Policy 'MD2 Sustainable Design', considering form, layout and how a place functions.
- 5.3 As agreed within the Masterplanning SoCG, given that this is an outline application with all matters reserved other than access, these design aspects will be for consideration at the reserved matters stage and should not form part of a refusal at this outline stage.
- 5.4 Irrespective of this, this Statement demonstrates how the masterplanning proposals incorporate best practice design principles and will result in a high quality development.
- 5.5 Accompanying this Statement, as part of the application is the 'Guiding Design Principles and Contextually Responsiveness Document' **[CD6.4]** and the 'Design and Access Statement' **[CD6.1]** which further provide a commentary on how the design proposals are of a high quality and are both informed by and responsive to their context.
- 5.6 At a national level the National Planning Policy Framework **[CD2.1]** and the National Design Guide **[CD2.9]** cover the "fundamental principles of good design to define what is expected for well-designed places" (Para 6, National Design Guide, **[CD2.9]**).
- 5.7 Additionally, there is the 'Design of New Dwellings SPD' (Shropshire Council, June 2026), 'Type and Affordability of Housing SPD' (Shropshire Council, September 2012), 'Sustainable Design SPD (Part 1)' (Shropshire Council, July 2011) and the 'Albrighton Neighbourhood Plan Light' (June 2013); in addition to policies within the Core Strategy and SAMDev.

6 Delivering High Quality Design

- 6.1 The design proposals including the Illustrative Framework Plan are the output from a design-led process. The proposals are the outcome of a "bottom up" approach, following best practice, by firstly visiting, assessing and analysing the site and context.
- 6.2 Design workshops with a multi-disciplinary team of technical experts informed initial sketches and strategic concept plans for the site, responding to existing natural features on the site and the context and character of the surrounding area.
- 6.3 Initial pre-application discussions date back as far as October 2023 and the design proposals have been refined through discussion with the Council, through engagement



with the local community and review and refinement with the technical team of experts. This has resulted in a design-led masterplan proposal informed by the site opportunities and constraints, the character of Albrighton and the surrounding context and the local community, Council and stakeholders.

- 6.4 As part of the Outline Application, a ‘Guiding Design Principles and Contextual Responsiveness Document’ [CD6.4] was produced. This document looks to go beyond the level of detail usually expected from an Outline Application in order to give greater confidence in the delivery of a high-quality design. Through analysis and documentation, this document demonstrates a clear understanding of the site, context and character of Albrighton. It covers a number of design aspects which contribute to how a place functions, the scale and pattern of development. It provides further design detail and provides the foundations to guide future high quality Reserved Matters discussions and applications.

“A well-designed place is unlikely to be achieved by focusing only on the appearance, materials and detailing of buildings. It comes about through making the right choices at all levels, including:

- *the layout (or masterplan);*
- *the form and scale of buildings;*
- *their appearance;*
- *landscape;*
- *materials; and*
- *their detailing.”*

(Para. 21, National Design Guide, [CD2.9])

6.5 The Layout (or Masterplan) and How a Place Functions

The Illustrative Framework Plan (December 2024) [CD6.5] shows a masterplan structure within which a high quality and well-functioning development of up to 800 new homes, a care home, a secondary school and a local centre could be delivered.

- 6.6 Whilst detailed design will be considered at the Reserved Matters stage, some design aspects have been considered and addressed below, demonstrating how they could be delivered to a high quality at the next design stage within the current proposed strategic illustrative framework plan.



6.7 **Mix (and Location) of Uses** – the proposals are for up to 800 new homes but also include extensive community facilities alongside the residential use. This includes:

- A Care Home Site
- A Secondary School Site
- A Local Centre Site
- Play Areas and extensive Public Open Space

6.8 The proposed location of the community facilities is the result of extensive design development, consultation and engagement. Page 10 of the Design and Access Statement [CD6.1] provides a commentary on the Design Evolution of the site and the changes undertaken following pre-application engagement with the Council and engagement with the local community.

6.9 The resultant masterplan is one that will function well as it accommodates a range of uses ensures that the community facilities are well connected and accessible.

6.10 **Accessibility and Connectivity to Usable Public Open Space and Local Facilities within the Site** – The proposals provide excellent accessibility and connectivity to usable public open space and proposed facilities including the secondary school, local centre and play areas.

6.11 All homes are well within 400m (approximately a 5 minute walk) of usable public open space including LAPs, LEAP's, a NEAP and informal 'play on the way' trim trail opportunities (**IMAGE 6.1**).

6.12 All proposed homes are within a 800m radius (approximately a 10 minute walk) of the Local Centre, Care Home and School (**IMAGE 6.2**).

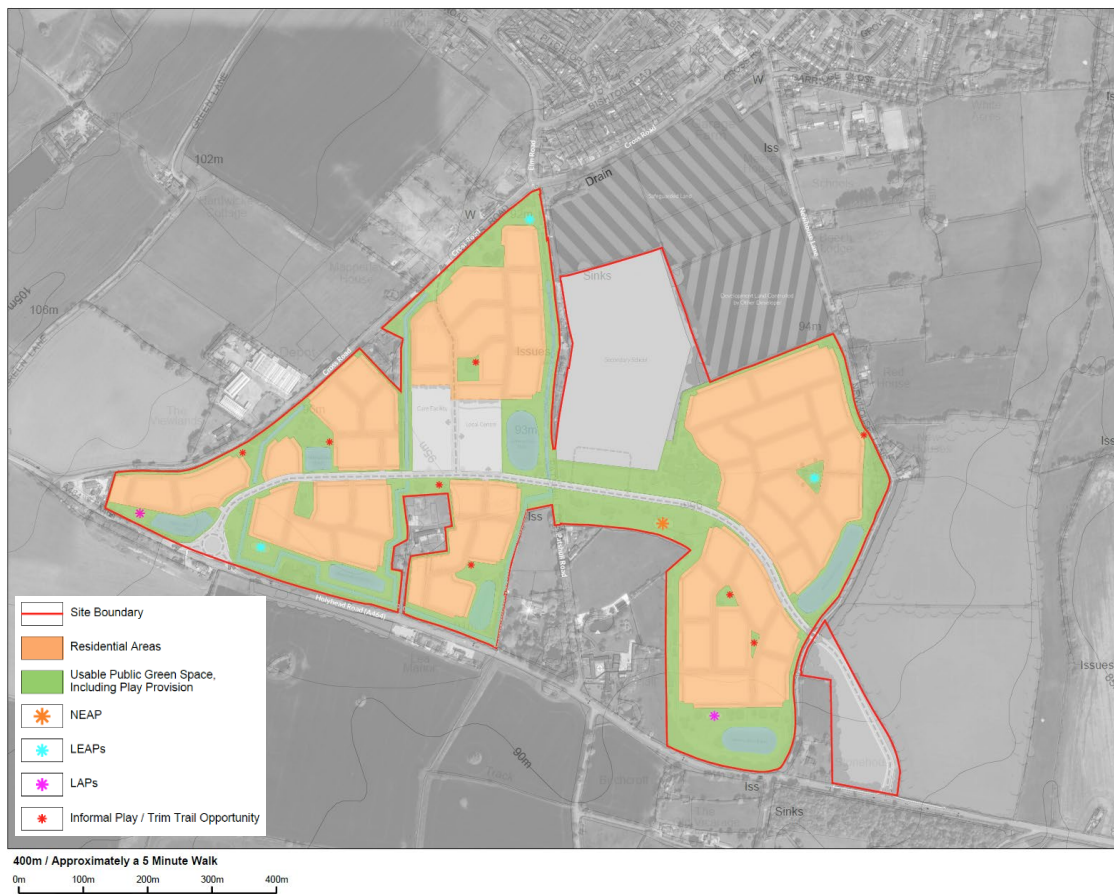


IMAGE 6.1 – Usable Public Open Space Plan (Homes within 400m of usable public open space including NEAP, LEAPs, LAP and Trim Trail)



IMAGE 6.2 – Connectivity and Accessibility Plan (Homes within 800m of Local Centre)

- 6.13 **Streetscape** – the proposals embody good practice principles which include development perimeter blocks which enables ‘public-fronts and private-backs’.

“...the relationship between building fronts and backs, with successful streets characterised by buildings facing the street to provide interest, overlooking and active frontages at ground level” (Para. 69, National Design Guide [CD2.9]).

- 6.14 The ‘Guiding Design Principles and Contextual Responsiveness Document’ [CD6.4] documents an understanding of the existing Albrighton streetscape and urban form (Pages 14-15). It then proposes how future development should be delivered in order to be of a high design quality and contextually responsive to the character of Albrighton (Pages 22-25). The proposals show how appropriate building lines can be achieved as part of the proposals.
- 6.15 Whilst the arrangement of the internal streets will be a reserved matter, the Illustrative Framework Plan [CD6.5] shows a street pattern that has been guided by the historical grain and street pattern of Albrighton (Page 14, Guiding Design Principles and Contextual Responsiveness Document, [CD6.4]), it responds to the existing landscape on the development site, retains trees – accommodating them within the public realm



and has weaving streets and roads, which are not a 'grid-iron' pattern in accordance with the Albrighton Neighbourhood Plan 'Light' (Policy ALB11: Design).

- 6.16 **Incorporating Natural Assets, Responding to Character and Pattern of Development** - One of the key design drivers of the masterplan was to incorporate natural assets on the site as part of the development proposals. The Landscape Masterplan shows where there is some minor removal of existing landscape elements (mostly to facilitate access) otherwise almost all of the existing landscape has been retained (and further enhanced) and incorporated into the proposals within the public realm.
- 6.17 The 'Guiding Design Principles and Contextual Responsiveness Document' [CD6.4] identifies a characteristic of Albrighton as having a pattern of green spaces often with trees or hedgerows within the streetscene (Page 15).
- 6.18 The Illustrative Framework Plan [CD6.5] shows the retention of these trees within accessible and well-overlooked public open space areas. They punctuate the streetscene, will assist with legibility and way-finding, incorporate the existing natural assets and ensure that all residents are within close proximity of one of these greens. As noted above, all homes are well within 400m (approximately a five minute walk) of usable public open space including LAPs, LEAPs, a NEAP and trim trail (**IMAGE 6.1**).
- 6.19 The Albrighton Neighbourhood Plan 'Light' (Policy ALB11: Design) states "*new developments should include the provision of open spaces that reflect the 'village green' character of the older parts of Albrighton*". Landscape is a reserved matter, but the Illustrative Framework Plan demonstrates that the design proposals are capable of delivering development and public open space that reflects the character of Albrighton including the delivery of green public open space within the development clusters.
- 6.20 **Delivering an Appropriate Density** – the proposals for up to 800 new homes would equate to a gross density of 16dph (across the 48.6ha site) and an average net density of 35dph (across a residential area of 22.8ha). These densities are consistent with other similar developments across the country, is an appropriate density for the area in accordance with the Shropshire Design of New Dwellings SPD (Para. 4.8) and aligned with the NPPF in making efficient use of land (Para. 129).
- 6.21 There are a variety of existing densities across Albrighton, density analysis on five areas across Albrighton shows example net densities ranging from 20dph through to 38dph.



IMAGE 6.3 – Density Analysis

Area	NDA	No. of Homes	Density (DPH)
Millfield Road	5.94	205	35
Bishton Road	4.53	109	24
Bushfield Road	2.92	59	20
Woodland Close	2.50	71	28
Ash Grove	1.62	62	38

TABLE 6.1 – Density Analysis

- 6.22 Therefore, the proposed development at an average net density of 35dph (800 homes across a residential development area of 22.8ha) is reflective of the existing character of Albrighton and consistent with existing development within the village.
- 6.23 The contextually responsive proposals accord with the existing density of development within the Village, particularly the more modern existing development of Millfield Road and Ashgrove, which make appropriate and efficient use of land. Furthermore, the National Design Guide encourages more efficient use of land through encouraging the delivery of increased densities.

“However, well-designed places do not need to copy their surroundings in every way. It is appropriate to introduce elements that reflect how we live today, to include innovation or change such as increased densities, and to incorporate new sustainable features or systems.” (para.44, National Design Guide [CD2.9])

- 6.24 **Form, Scale and Building Heights** – the existing scale of most buildings in Albrighton, as evidenced in the ‘Guiding Design Principles and Contextual Responsiveness Document (Page 16) [CD6.4], is two storey with some two and a half or three storey homes and also occasional one storey bungalows.
- 6.25 In terms of the development proposals responding to the local context and character, the Guiding Design Principles and Contextual Responsiveness Document [CD6.4] sets an expectation of predominantly 2-storey homes as part of the proposals with 2.5/3 storey homes being used to emphasise key locations and some use of bungalows to reduce visual impacts where necessary (p28, [CD6.4]).
- 6.26 This approach is consistent with good design (and in accordance with Shropshire Design of New Dwellings SPD, Para. 4.8) in that the appropriate building heights reflect the surrounding area. Using occasional taller homes to reinforce key locations will also assist with legibility and wayfinding and furthermore can provide additional overlooking and active frontages onto key streets and spaces. Page 26 of the Guiding Design Principles and Contextual Responsiveness Document [CD6.4] provides further guidance on enhancing legibility and wayfinding.
- 6.27 The form of the buildings will be determined at reserved matters, but the same document provides commentary at Page 22 and Page 30 on how the form of buildings will relate to and reinforce the existing Albrighton character.
- 6.28 Therefore, the proposed scale of the buildings is appropriate and responsive to the local context and would further reinforce the local character.
- 6.29 **Appearance, Materials and Detailing** – the Guiding Design Principles and Contextual Responsiveness Document [CD6.4] analysis the existing vernacular, appearance, materials, features and detailing of the existing context (Pages 15 to 18). The findings then inform the design proposals and recommendations (Pages 28 to 32). This includes the appropriate use of red brick and buff brick, which can be seen within the local context. It proposes incorporation of porches and bay windows at appropriate points which is reflective of the local character and context.
- 6.30 Whilst these are all reserved matters, the document [CD6.4] demonstrates an understanding of the existing character of Albrighton and provides contextually

responsive design proposals to ensure that the development will be reflective of the existing Albrighton character.

7 Ensuring Delivery of Good Design

- 7.1 This Masterplanning Statement has demonstrated that the design-led proposals and Illustrative Framework Plan incorporate a best practice approach to the delivery of a high-quality development
- 7.2 The Guiding Design Principles and Contextual Responsiveness Document **[CD6.4]** alongside the Illustrative Framework Plan **[CD6.5]** and the Parameter Plan as agreed within the Masterplanning SoCG collectively provide appropriate assuredness at this outline stage that a high-quality development which embodies great placemaking will be delivered on the application site. Those plans and document should guide future reserved matters discussions and applications to ensure that the development is contextually responsive and reflective of the Albrighton character.

8 Summary and Conclusions

- 8.1 The proposed development at Albrighton is contextually responsive, it reflects the character of Albrighton and delivers an appropriate new development. The sustainable development will function well, with an appropriate mix of uses ensuring that local **services and facilities** are easily accessible to residents via high quality safe and attractive routes.
- 8.2 **The development will function well in terms of scale, density, pattern and design** – predominantly two storey homes at a net density of 35dph in a pattern and design reflective of the existing context, will ensure that the proposals are appropriate for the development site and Albrighton as a whole.
- 8.3 The Guiding Design Principles and Contextual Responsiveness Document **[CD6.4]** captures the local character and context and guides future development on how best to reflect and respond to it, including appropriate use of materials and detailing. This will ensure that the development complements the existing **character and appearance** of Albrighton.

It follows that, from a masterplanning and urban design perspective, the proposals are policy compliant and capable of delivering high-quality placemaking.



9 Appendices

- A1. Usable Public Open Space Plan (2503213.24-11A) – Image 6.1
- A2. Connectivity and Accessibility Plan (2503213.24-07) – Image 6.2
- A3. Density Analysis (2503213.24-08) – Image 6.3 and Table 6.1



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