



LAND OFF RADWINTER ROAD,
SAFFRON WALDEN

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

57183 - December 2013



URBAN DESIGN
MASTERPLANNING
HOUSING

An architectural sketch of a street scene. The drawing shows a wide, paved street lined with multi-story brick buildings. In the foreground, a person is pushing a stroller with a dog on a leash. Another person is walking a dog on the right side of the street. The trees are sketched with fine lines, and the overall style is a light, airy architectural rendering. A blue rounded rectangle is overlaid on the center of the image, containing the text.

VISION

The creation of a carefully designed new district, providing homes, a retirement village and business accommodation set within a high quality public realm including landscaped greens, avenues and squares.

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- 7.1 Conclusion

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INTRODUCTION

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- 1.2 Document structure
- 1.3 The Consultants
- 1.4 Summary of proposals
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INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Purpose of the Statement

1.1.1 This statement has been prepared and coordinated by McBains Cooper on behalf of Manor Oak Homes. The purpose of the statement is to explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the proposed development and how issues relating to access to the development have been dealt with.

In accordance with The Town and Country Planning Order (2010), it states the following requirements, which are set out as the main aspects covered in this statement:

Amount

Layout

Scale

Landscaping

Appearance

Context

This statement will also explain the policy adopted for access, and what consultation has been undertaken on issues relating to this proposed development.

1.2 Document Structure

1.2.1 This document is divided into 7 sections excluding any appendices.

1. Introduction - Establishes the background of this document.
2. Assessment - Consideration of the site and its context in terms of the physical, social and economic aspects.
3. Evaluation - Identification of the site's constraints and opportunities and presents the design concept and principles that underpin the proposals
4. Design Principles - A presentation of the design principles that have been derived from a combination of Government Policy, site assessment, public consultation and design evolution
5. Involvement - outlines the stakeholder participation and consultation undertaken
6. Design Proposals - Sets out the uses and amount of development proposed, access, arrangements, layout of the development, scale of buildings, landscaping treatment, appearance and use of resources.
7. Conclusion

1.3 The Consultants

1.3.1 This document has been prepared by McBains Cooper, with contributions from the following consultants who have provided accompanying documents:

Framptons

Planning Statement
Statement of Community Involvement
Housing Statement
Sustainability Report
Draft Heads of Terms
Forms
Notices
Cover letter

REC

Air Quality Assessment
Noise
Environment Management Solutions
Site Investigation Report/Geo Environmental Prelim

First Environment

Arboricultural Report
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)
Ecology

JPP Consulting

Transport Statement
Drainage
Flood Risk Assessment
Foul Sewerage and Utilities Assessment

Oxford Archaeology East

Archaeological Assessment

McBains Cooper

Drawings
Design and Access Statement
Masterplan

1.4 Summary of Proposals

1.4.1 The proposed development will form part of an urban extension to the east of Saffron Walden, under a draft allocation by Uttlesford DC. The drawings contained within this statement are for illustrative purposes only. Detailed consideration has been provided on the use and amount of development and access.

1.4.2 The site forms the northern part of an area of land stretching between Radwinter Road and Thaxted Road to the east of Saffron Walden. The site is bounded to the north and west by largely commercial uses at Shire Hill, Tesco and Turnip Hall Farm, together with residential. To the east is open countryside and to the south is arable land at Shire Hill Farm. This forms the remaining part of the aforementioned allocation, including with land to be developed by Kier Homes facing Thaxted Road.

1.4.3 The aim of this proposal is to create a carefully designed new district, providing homes, a retirement village (use class C2) and business accommodation set within a high quality public realm including landscaped greens, avenues and squares that positively contributes to Saffron Walden and creates a new, stimulating place to live.

1.4.4 Key benefits:

1. Contribute the Council's housing shortfall.
2. Deliver new housing, affordable housing, play space and open space.
3. Deliver new areas of employment.
4. Providing accommodation for the elderly.

1.4.5 To complete this aim, the proposal illustrates the following:

- ① Up to 230 dwellings including affordable housing in a variety of types, sizes and tenures.
- ② A retirement village (use class C2).
- ③ B1 employment space.
- ④ A series of play areas.
- ⑤ A network of open space in compliance with planning policy.
- ⑥ A high quality road link to Shire Hill.
- ⑦ A high quality road connection to enable a future link from Radwinter Road to Thaxted Road.



Fig 1: Current site layout showing 7 main proposals



Fig 2: Site Location Plan (not to scale)

1.5 Key Facts

Site Area
13.9 hectares approx.

Current land use

Arable farmland and one field of grassland

Access

Existing access off Radwinter road and a Secondary access off Shire Hill Road

Proposed uses

Residential
Employment B1
Retirement village C2

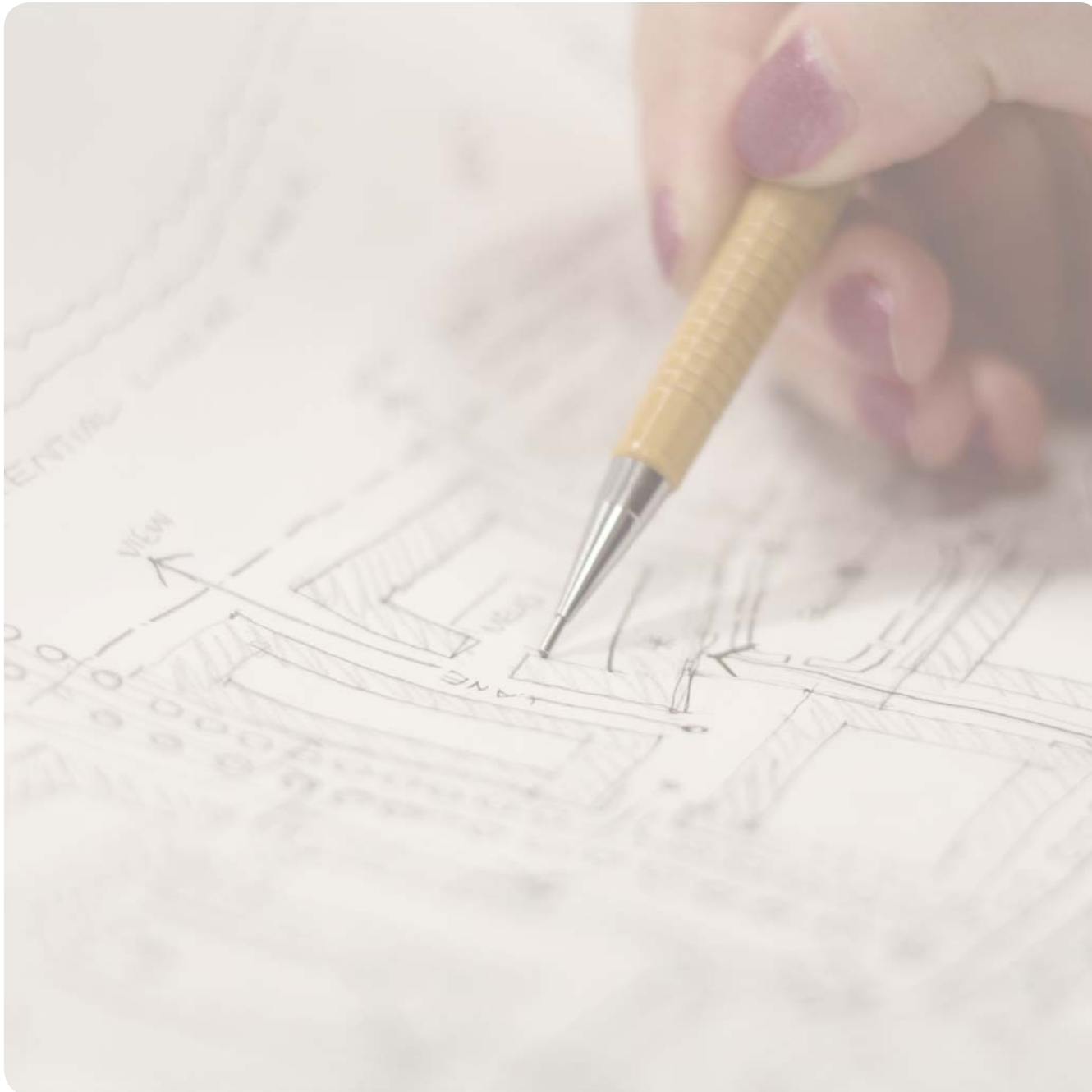
Proposed number of dwellings

Up to 230





Fig 3: Illustrative Masterplan



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ASSESSMENT

- 2.1 The Site
- 2.2 Built Context
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- 2.4 Neighbourhood Character Assessment
- 2.5 Saffron Walden heritage and local character
- 2.6 Saffron Walden Materials
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ASSESSMENT

...a baseline analysis of the existing strategic and local context of Saffron Walden and an assessment of the site.

“...a more rigorous appraisal of the context is required which examines uses, how an area operates, and the housing needs and demands on services and facilities within the local area.” (Essex Design Guide pg 19)

2.1 The Site

2.1.1 The site lies to the east of Saffron Walden forming part of a draft allocation of land proposed by Uttlesford District Council to form an urban extension to the town. The site is located in the northern part of this allocation to the south of Radwinter Road. It addresses Radwinter Road to the east of Tesco, and between business premises at Turnip Hall Farm and a residential property known as Wild Hedges.

The site wraps round the heavily wooded boundary of Tesco. To the west is the Shire Hill business area which faces the site across a wooded boundary. To the south is arable land and just beyond a strong hedge line flanking Shire Hill farm which is located at the centre of the land allocation mentioned above. A short section of the site also faces countryside to the east.

Saffron Walden is the most significant town between Cambridge and Bishops Stortford. Established in 1141, the medieval market town of lies just 50 miles from London and 4 miles from the M11.

TOWN	DISTANCE (miles)
Cambridge	15
Bishops Stortford	11
Royston	13
Stevenage	27

Table 1: Distances to key locations from Saffron Walden

2.2 Built Context

Historic development

2.2.1 With its narrow streets and ancient houses, Saffron Walden is the quintessential English market town. By-passed by the direct results of the Industrial Revolution, it has retained many elements of its medieval street pattern and there is much to delight the eye, both open to view and tucked away.

Saffron Walden was named as a result of large growth in popularity of the spice from which the town prospered heavily until competition emerged in southern Europe. Due to this wealth, the town continued to expand and grow, coupled with the relative remoteness compared to industrial cities. Saffron Walden was spared both fires and bombing in the Second World War, and the central street pattern and character remain largely intact. Over the course of the last century the town expanded considerably from the historic core primarily to the south, east, and north east, being constrained to the west by the Audley End Estate.

Conservation areas exist at two places in the town centre (see drawing SS01 in the LVIA by First Environment) where there are many listed buildings. Today the town comprises of a multitude of independent businesses with chain shops/restaurants in the minority. A bustling market takes place in the picturesque market square.

Existing land uses

2.2.2 The site is principally arable farm land, with a grass field adjacent to Radwinter Road. The land is set within a network of hedged and wooded field boundaries together with semi-mature screen planting bounding Tesco.



Fig 4: Image location plan

Surrounding land uses

2.2.3 The site is flanked by arable land to the south and east. Also to the east are business premises known as Turnip Hall Farm. To the north the site wraps around a dwelling 'Wild Hedges' and fronts Radwinter Road. An underground fuel depot and redundant commercial space face the site across Radwinter Road. A Tesco superstore with filling station is enclosed by the site on three sides and there is a short section of frontage to a residential area. On the western side there is an estate of business premises at Shire Hill Road. To the South West is the edge of a small parcel of greenspace which extends into the neighbouring residential area at the end of Monks Hill.

Existing access

2.2.4 The principle access to the site is from Radwinter Road to the east of Tesco with a secondary access off Shire Hill Road.

Boundaries and edges

2.2.5 The northern boundary is formed by wooded screen planting to Tesco, the residential area at Horn Brook and the dwelling 'Wild Hedges'. A densely planted boundary also acts as an edge between the site and Radwinter Road itself, which includes a drainage ditch. The southern boundary is set to provide an offset from a mature wooded hedgerow at the crest of the hill beyond which lies the Shire Hill Farm buildings. A rough hedgerow and belt of trees act as an edge to the Shire Hill Road business area to the west and provide a development edge.

Public rights of way

2.2.6 There are no public rights of way on the site, however an informal footlink has evolved connecting the desire line between Tesco and the Shire Hill commercial area.



Photo 0: Large trees in distance mark eastern boundary to north



Photo 1: View of lane facing towards Radwinter road on east side



Photo 2: Trees in centre of image indicate existing property



Photo 3: View looking west along Radwinter road from site entry



Photo 4: Tesco store entrance off Radwinter road



Photo 5: View into site, trees on left mark boundary of house

2.3 Landscape Context

Landscape setting and vegetation

2.3.1 The site forms part of an existing arable farm, and includes sections of 4 fields, divided by hedged and fenced boundaries. Established sections of hedge, trees and vegetation surround much of the site, particularly to the south.

Topography and Terrain

2.3.2 The site slopes gently up from the north to the south up to a maximum of about 9m. This slope has a slightly raised section in the centre acting as a watershed to the north west and north east. The hill continues to rise up to Shire Hill Farm before sloping back down to Thaxted Road.

The valley bottom is to Radwinter Road where there is a drainage ditch and the site rises again to the north.

Flood Risk and drainage

2.3.3 The site is located within Flood Zone 1, hence, it is deemed to be at a low risk of flooding from rivers. There are no other sources of flooding identified which will affect the site. The site generally falls from north to south with a north south ridge from which levels fall to the east and west. This north south ridge results in two distinct drainage systems in order to prevent overly deep drainage.

Archaeology

2.3.4 There are no Essex Historic Environment Records for the site and no previous archaeological investigations having occurred here.

Aerial photographic evidence indicates that prehistoric field systems previously existed nearby, implying the possibility of some survival here also. Geophysical survey and fieldwalking of an area 400m to the south in 20012-13 identified previously unknown ring ditches and artefact scatters. The potential for prehistoric remains here is therefore

moderate.

A Roman road may run along part of the northern boundary of the site. Farmsteads, on average, would be expected every c.1km to 1.5km and as the proposed development area is fairly large (13.1ha) the chance of Roman occupation is moderate.

This road linked Walden to Swards End from at least the Saxon period. There was probably a settlement from this time at Shire Hall Farm and the site was probably within its field system. The likelihood of remains of Anglo-Saxon date, other than of an agricultural nature, is thus considered to be low. The possibility of medieval settlement within the site is extremely low, the reasons being identical to those for the Saxon period.

An 18th century map indicates the earlier field systems continued. The probability of former medieval field boundaries surviving within the site is therefore considered to be high. Field names recorded within the site include 'chalk pits' and 'small bridge field'. It is possible that both names originated in the medieval period and remains of these former features may have survived.

The 1843 title map records the site post-enclosure, with the land turned into several enclosed fields that mostly survive to the present day. The likelihood of post-medieval settlement remains within the site is thus considered to be low.

Air quality

2.3.5 The development site is located 300 metres east of an area identified by the UDC as an Air Quality Management Area due to exceedance of the Air Quality Limit Value for nitrogen dioxide. Therefore any traffic generated by the proposals has the potential to cause adverse impacts to existing pollution levels within this sensitive area. Additionally, construction works may cause air quality impacts as a result of fugitive dust emissions.



Fig 5: Image location plan

The accompanying Air Quality Assessment indicates that the impacts of nitrogen dioxide concentrations during the operational phase of development are predicted to be negligible. The impact of dust generated by earthworks, construction and trackout activities are also predicted to be negligible.

Based on the results of the Air Quality Assessment, air quality issues are not considered a constraint to planning consent.

Highways

2.3.6 The proposed development has an existing access of Radwinter Road. A Transport Assessment has been completed to determine the impact of the development on the surrounding highway infrastructure. It is determined that the proposed development will not have a significant impact on the surrounding infrastructure.



Photo 6: View down slope on west boundary facing north



Photo 7: Western site boundary



Photo 8: Typical site topography



Photo 9: Properties of Monks Hill backing onto site boundary



Photo 10: Pocket park adjacent to SW corner



Photo 11: Existing access road flanked by fields



Photo 12: Established hedgerow marking southern boundary



Photo 13: Industrial estate visible on western boundary



Photo 14: View south from northern boundary showing slope

2.4 Neighbourhood Character Assessment

Urban form and layout

2.4.1 Passing along Radwinter Road east out of the town centre, largely Victorian/Edwardian housing predominates set back from the road. More recent developments are located beyond the traffic lights, including a scheme of retirement apartments under construction.

The Radwinter Road context to the north of Tesco comprises poor quality tired commercial frontages set back behind parking areas. Across Radwinter Road from the site is a very large redundant metal clad commercial building, which is being proposed for redevelopment.

Tesco to the north is a typical brick and tile faced superstore with a prominent clock tower, and extensive surface parking, the ground having been terraced up from the Radwinter Road to form development plateaus, and largely enclosed by landscaping.

Frontage properties

2.4.2 Two storey post war housing to the north at Upshers Road close to the site is set in a cul-de-sac arrangement and is largely brick and render finished. Radwinter Road passing east becomes more rural in character, with hedged boundaries and the underground fuel depot to the north.

The Shire Hill business area to the west is largely metal clad warehouse and trade type retail buildings arranged around a road network centred on Shire Hill Road, with typical forecourt parking arrangements set back from the road.



Photo 15: Radwinter road facing east towards Saffron Walden



Photo 16: Radwinter road facing west, away from Saffron Walden



Photo 17: Shire Hill industrial estate adjacent to site



Photo 18: Upshers road: Housing development adjacent to site



Photo 19: Upshers road: Housing development adjacent to site



Photo 20: Horn Brook development facing south

2.5 Saffron Walden Heritage and Local Character

2.5.1 Saffron Walden has a delightful historic core, much of which is a conservation area, with many listed structures.

A network of streets, lanes and alleyways connect a variety of characterful spaces within a wide yet cohesive architectural framework. Buildings within the core represent a variety of architectural styles including Medieval, Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian.

The overall character is rich and harmonious and offers appropriate cues in terms of townscape, detail and materiality for any new development in the town.



Photo 21: Victorian town hall



Photo 22: High Victorian council offices



Photo 23: Detached house on Radwinter Road shows the diversity



Photo 24: Mixed styles in close proximity



Photo 25: Medieval and colourful



Photo 26: New traditional: Good example of design

2.6 Saffron Walden Materials

2.6.1 The materials palette within Saffron Walden is varied. Brick, Render, Timber frame, Boarding and Stone are well represented, with ornate pargetting and coloured render finishes being of particular note. The following photos show some of the styles and materials within the town.

Vernacular: There is an obvious abundance of flint in the area, it is used for adorning building facades, creating footpaths and walls.

Medieval: Timber framed, wattle and daub or replica usually in black and white. Clay roof tiles.

Victorian: Brick construction, with either facing brick or painted brick facade. Usually clay or slate roof tiles

High Victorian: Brick construction, facing red-brick facade with elaborate stone headers, string courses. Few buildings are as elaborate as the council office (photo 22) but there are certainly some buildings from this period.

Vernacular New build: Mixture of construction but generally brick and render. Often responding to those buildings around it (photo 26).



Photo 27: Street scape showing range of colours and styles



Photo 28: Medieval building in the centre near the church



Photo 29: Carriage arches with parking court off Church street



Photo 30: Ornate jetty on street-facing building



Photo 31: Ornate Georgian portico with pilasters



Photo 32: Victorian building on the corner of George street



Fig 8: Architectural analysis

2.7 Local Open Spaces

2.7.1 Saffron Walden benefits from a number of successful open spaces. These are both formal and informal in character, and could influence the nature of open space in future developments.

'The Common' acts as a focal open greenspace in the town centre and is well used. Tree-lined footpaths weave from the common out into the town.

'Bridge End Gardens' are formal in character with topiary and clipped hedging.

'Jubilee Gardens' is an attractive, well defined open space with a focal bandstand.

Saffron Walden also benefits from adjacency to Audley End House and Gardens, an Estate managed by 'English Heritage' offering formal gardens and walks.



Photo 33: Pocket park near the site



Photo 34: Residential surrounding and facing The Common



Photo 35: The Common



Photo 36: The Common



Photo 37: Bridge End Gardens. Victorian formal garden, very central in the town, receiving lots of use



Photo 38: Jubilee gardens and bandstand. Small intimate area of open space surrounded by a mixture of old and new residential buildings. Very good precedent for future development

2.8 Local Facilities

Facilities and services

2.8.1 Saffron Walden benefits from a number of successful open spaces. These are both formal and informal in character, and could influence the nature of open space in future developments.

- ‘The Common’ acts as a focal open greenspace in the town centre and is well used. Tree-lined footpaths weave from the common out into the town.
- ‘Bridge End Gardens’ are formal in character with topiary and clipped hedging.
- ‘Jubilee Gardens’ is an attractive, well defined open space with a focal bandstand.
- Saffron Walden also benefits from adjacency to Audley End House and Gardens, an Estate managed by ‘English Heritage’ offering formal gardens and walks.

2.8.2 The town has a high street with many independent shops, areas of employment, primary schools and community facilities. Most of the town is within easy reach of some very good quality open spaces, including the surrounding countryside.

2.8.3 The local facilities plan shows various educational, open space, retail and medical facilities all within walking distance of the site.

Health and community facilities

2.8.4 There is a hospital opposite the site.

Shopping and services

2.8.5 There are many shops in the centre of town and a large Tesco supermarket adjacent to the site.

Sport and recreation

2.8.6 Saffron Walden has a number of sports and recreational facilities, many based at schools in the

town. One minet skatepark, and an established football club feature within the town.

Public Transport

2.8.7 Audley End Train Station serves Saffron Walden which is only 10 minutes from the town. In addition the following buses are in service:

Cambridge – Saffron Walden – Citi 7

Cambridge - Saffron Walden – 132

Stansted Airport (Bay 16) – Saffron Walden – 301

Bishop’s Stortford – Saffron Walden – 301

Note: For further details see Transport Statement prepared by JPP Consulting