



ALLANWATER
H O M E S

ALLOA PARK PHASE 9

DESIGN STATEMENT

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF 86 HOUSES WITH ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE AND LANDSCAPING; AND THE RELOCATION AND PROVISION OF 2NO. NEW RUGBY PITCHES PLUS 1NO. COVERED TRAINING PITCH WITH ASSOCIATED DRAINAGE AND INFRASTRUCTURE LAND TO THE SOUTH OF FORTH CRESCENT, ALLOA, CLACKMANNANSHIRE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

CONTEXT

This application is for phase 9 of the Alloa Park Masterplan development and is the final land parcel concluding the overall development. The wider site has a long history of consents dating back to 2000 and these proposals build upon the approaches adopted over time and more recent changes in development guidance and expectations.

STATEMENT AIMS

The purpose of this Statement is to support the Planning Application by Allanwater Homes (Ltd). It is to be read in conjunction with the submitted Planning Statement, Access Statement and supporting reports.

Combined, this suite of reports are intended to demonstrate that in accordance with current local and national design guidance, a well informed, balanced, integrated and creative solution has been formulated for this site.

The documents consider the development constraints and opportunities, urban design and landscape concept and principals, and summarises technical aspects such as drainage and environmental considerations and the like.

Given the foregoing outlined history and supporting statements and reports, this is therefore an abbreviated design statement, as many of the aspects of the wider site are covered within the reports or have been addressed through multiple previous submissions.

2.0 LOCATION AND BACKGROUND

The proposed development is located within an area to the western end of the Masterplan first granted Outline Planning Consent in March 2000. That consent set the general principle of development and the strategy for a phased approach.



Outline Consent Masterplan March 2000

It provided for 10 development zones across the wider site and encompassed areas of strategic green space such as woodland to the north and south as well as the rugby fields to the west.

Shortly after Outline was granted, Allan Water acquired the site and began work on formulating a more detailed set of proposals to address the conditions of the consent. A Reserved Matters application was submitted in 2002 and consent was granted in May 2003. This consent addressed a number of necessary changes which resulted from further detailed analysis of the constraints and capacities of the site.



Reserved Matters Consent Masterplan May 2003

Whilst maintaining the general principles established within the Outline consent the Reserved Matters consent acknowledged the need to vary the proposals, to meet the current standards and to ensure a viable and robust proposal could be delivered.

Subsequent applications addressed individual development parcels, with further fine tuning of the road pattern and boundaries to accommodate localised constraints and requirements.

The completed sections of development now extend from phase 2a in the north east to phase 7 which sits central within the Masterplan, south of the former St Mungo's primary school. To the west of this are identified housing phases 8, 9 and 10 which remain to be developed and which abut the existing rugby fields and club.

3.0 DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

In assessing the remaining phases of development land two significant constraints were identified resulting in the need to review and reset the development strategy.

SPORTS FACILITIES

Firstly, the rugby club had been experiencing long term change in their pitch facilities as a result on inadequate drainage arising from surrounding development of former green fields. The loss of a training pitch over a period of time and the constant battle to maintain a usable pitch surfaces for the remaining two, leaves the future of the rugby club at this location in jeopardy.

SEPA FLOOD PLAIN ADVICE

The second constraint arose from a change within the guidance issued by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) on overland flow within the wider Alloa area. SEPA suggest that in the event of a significant storm and a coincidental collapse of an existing underground culvert passing through Alloa town centre there would be potential for water to rise (in the vicinity of the Shillinghill roundabout), to a level which would overtop at Shillinghill and then make its way down toward lower ground and the Black Devon. This would generally travel via Auld Brig Road, the Tesco Car Park, Alloa Tower, the existing housing north of Forth Crescent and then through the area identified as phases 9 and 10 of Alloa Park. Although detailed analysis indicates that such a catastrophic event would only arise in the coming together of a very exceptional set of circumstances, nonetheless the decision was taken to ensure that any surface water flow via this route, could be accommodated within the development plan. It was also recognised that there was an opportunity to mitigate the effects of the existing risk on a number of existing properties outwith the development area, by channelling any potential surface flow away from them and through the site. A detailed analysis of the constraint and proposed solution is provided within the Flood Risk Analysis and Drainage Assessment.

ACCESS

A further constraint is that of vehicular access. The original masterplan anticipated an access entering Alloa Park off Forth Crescent from the extreme western boundary close to its junction with Harris Court. However, given the constraint highlighted above by SEPA, it would no longer be possible to utilise this route through a potential flood plain. There is an opportunity to connect to Forth Crescent on the north side of the proposed phase 9 development, but there is intermediate land not within the control of the developer and therefore, whilst provision could be made for future linkage, it would not be appropriate to assume a right of access here. The Access Statement addresses this matter in greater detail.

LANDSCAPE

The application site has a number of distinct areas which vary in character. North of phase 8, there is an area of parkland with mature trees which has the capacity to provide an attractive and useful amenity area for the development and wider community. Adjacent and north of this area are the existing sports pitches which, as mentioned above, are in poor condition due to drainage issues. West of the Rugby Club building there is an area of open grassland, which is underutilised and currently provides minimal amenity. The southern extended section of the site consists open fields/parkland, but it is not intended to be developed save to reshape the topography where the channelling of the overland flow is to be routed. This has been addressed through a planning consent issued in April 2020 (Ref: 20/00035/FULL).

TOPOGRAPHY

The area of the site proposed for housing development is currently the location of the sports pitches and as such it is relatively level. This presents what is perhaps a more unexpected constraint, but nonetheless one which must be taken account of in the development of a design solution. The problem relates to the need to achieve a sufficient gradient for roads and drainage to ensure the surface and waste water can be conveyed to the drainage network. Therefore, some engineering of the general topography of this localized area will be required. Further topographic engineering will be required within the area west and south of the rugby club to form what is in effect to be an enlarged swale which

will serve to direct surface water flow in the event of an event occurring along the lines described by SEPA.

4.0 STRATEGY

SPORT'S FACILITIES AND FLOOD PLAIN/OVERLAND FLOW

In order to address the two main issues of overland flow and failing sports facilities, an intensive review of the development proposal was undertaken. The design team liaised with the Council in relation to the overland flow matters and worked with Alloa Rugby Club to find a solution to address the threat of them losing their facility to poor ground conditions. The resultant design solution focused upon amending the original development strategy to accommodate and channel any potential surface flow through a large green space within Alloa Park. To create this green space, phases 9 and 10 of the original proposals would have to be sacrificed. However, as such a catastrophic storm and culvert collapse event is, in relative terms, highly unlikely, it was felt that the green space created would present a viable opportunity for developing a new enhanced sports facility for the rugby club. In turn the vacated pitches could provide mitigation for the loss of development land and so enable the successful completion of the Alloa Park Development.

ACCESS

There is an opportunity to accommodate a vehicular access off the road leading from phase 7 to phase 8 with an additional link back through phase 8 to form a loop. Given the overall unit numbers to be served from the access roundabout west of phase 7, it is felt that the addition of an occasional emergency vehicle access would be of benefit. This can be accommodated by providing a reinforced path link to the route of the existing cycle path leading from Forth Crescent in the north east corner of the site, to the phase 8 development.

LANDSCAPE

The existing parkland feel of the area north of phase 8 is of great value in providing enhanced amenity to the development and thus it is intended to retain this. The green space to the west may offer opportunities for enhanced amenity as well.

5.0 PROPOSALS

ENHANCED SPORT'S FACILITIES

The proposals incorporate the relocation of the existing sports pitches to a new facility on the western side of the development. Two new grass pitches design to the appropriate national standard will be provided with the addition of a covered artificial grassed training facility. The club building will be retained with its existing separate access and dedicated car park. The position and level of the new pitches will accommodate the need to provide mitigation of any potential overland flow which may occur. The pitches will fall very gently southward towards a swale position which in turn will direct any flow outwith the site toward the Black Devon. Further details of these mitigation proposals are contained within the submitted drainage strategy.

LANDSCAPING STRATEGY

The section of land which is to be developed for housing will bound the existing parkland area, which will provide a set back from phase 8 and afford both developments a high level of usable amenity space. The use of path links through the green space will provide connectivity between the neighbourhoods and encourage use of the space as an active open space. Adjacent properties with active frontages overlooking the parkland will offer passive surveillance as well as individually benefitting from enhanced amenity. Similarly there are a few mature trees outwith the existing sports grounds, but within the development zone which merit retention. These are to be integrated into the design as local green spaces which properties can also overlook. They will assist orientation of the development marking key locations. A SUDS basin is located within the parkland area and overlooked by adjacent properties. This will, for the majority of time, be a dry grassed depression within the green space and will therefore provide secondary amenity.

To the east of the development, an existing pedestrian/cycle route running north south, will be bounded by a linear green space providing an attractive active travel route, privacy for the adjacent housing and a potential green corridor for wildlife. Outwith the northern boundary there is an expansive green verge bounding the development and Forth Crescent. A combination of hedgerow, shrub and tree planting will enhance this green edge.

Tree cover is specified throughout the development with larger trees in areas of open space to give scale and smaller more decorative trees within garden spaces. Where possible fastigate trees have been incorporated to main routes to increase impact of height whilst limiting canopy spread and potential intrusion close to buildings. Additional tree planting throughout the development and the remaining open spaces will provide enhanced habitat and foraging opportunities for wildlife, add interest and achieve longevity as sustainable green spaces. Trees and hedgerows planted within many of the front gardens will ensure the early establishment of a green street scene and will enhance connectivity of the green spaces.

Shrubs within gardens and on boundaries have been selected to promote colour and amenity value and wherever possible to encourage invertebrates – particularly bees. This helps to promote biodiversity goals and has a wider impact on the environment beyond the site.

PLACEMAKING AND STREET DESIGN

The development will be in accordance with PAN 78 on inclusive design and the current building regulations. This will apply to the buildings and public realm, and will include all footpaths, open space and access to the public transport network and local facilities, as well as full level access to and within all new homes.

The principal access is to be taken from the existing road linking phases 7 and 8 and will lead to a street pattern where shared surfaces are designed to induce slower traffic speeds and safe pedestrian use. Variation in geometry, surface texture and colour have been introduced to inform and direct the pedestrian and vehicle users.

A more traditional road and footpath section leads from the main access point to arrival squares providing visual and physical transition to shared surfaces. Tactile and contrasting coloured paving will alert visually impaired users of transition points, while lowered kerbs will facilitate ease of use for those with ambulatory impairment. All houses will be designed to incorporate accessible entrances and in-curtilage parking provision.

Street narrowing and planting beds will both assist in restraining traffic speed and offer visual relief to views along the street. Short sections of shared surface link roads and short cul-de-sac connected at node point junctions will aid orientation and neighbourliness, avoiding long uninterrupted and uninteresting vistas. This pattern of shared streets will reduce the dominance of the motor vehicle, whilst remote footpaths will provide choice for active travel and safe routes to school passing through well supervised green spaces.

BUILT FORM

The layout accommodates 86 two storey units of three and four bedroom semi-detached and detached dwellings, designed to complement the adjacent phase 7 and 8 developments. The architecture and form of the new neighbourhood will reflect the buildings and tradition of the Alloa Park area. Dwellings will be simple in form with pitched roofs and traditional fenestration.

The properties are carefully orientated to ensure active frontages to all street and green spaces are achieved. Primary elevations address streets providing positive frontage, with dual aspect corner turners used in appropriate locations. Active frontages will also be provided to public open space and will assist with passive surveillance.

Detailing will be kept simple and traditional and the proposed palette of materials will allow colours and finishes to be chosen which will enhance and define the character zone. Nodes and key building will also ensure that the new neighbourhood reads as a complete and coherent place.

6.0 CONCLUSION

This Statement has been prepared to illustrate the design concept and principles behind the proposals submitted with the application and should be read in conjunction with the drawings and supporting material submitted.

The application to which this statement relates represents a unique opportunity to tie the existing and recently consented new homes together to form one unified cohesive neighbourhood, Reinforcing the Forth Crescent frontage and completing the rejuvenation of this section of Alloa, improving the local environment, sport's facilities and housing choice.

The layout will deliver a new neighbourhood which will be traditional, legible, permeable and attractive. The site is well located to take advantage of existing facilities with active travel routes to the town centre and will integrate with the surroundings, recent and ongoing development to the south and east. The design and form of the new neighbourhood is informed by the local character, and the use of materials and arrangement of new homes will ensure that a pleasant, safe and stimulating place to live is realised.