

PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Land east of Henderson Road, Thorpe-le-Soken
M Scott Properties Ltd
August 2021



1. Introduction

This Planning, Design and Access Statement accompanies a detailed planning application for:

“Construction of 28 no. 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom bungalows, with associated parking, roads, site infrastructure and hard and soft landscaping.”

at Land east of Henderson Road, Thorpe-le-Soken, CO16 0EQ (“the Site”).

This document should be read in conjunction with the supporting plans and documents:

- Application Form
- Location Plan
- Block Plan
- Floorplans and Elevations:
- Topographical Survey
- Transport Statement
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Landscape and Visual Appraisal
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
- Phase 1 Desk Study
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment

2. The Site

Location

The Site extends to 2.01 ha (4.9 acres) and is located to the east of the Henderson Park (Bellway) development, adjacent to Henderson Road. The Site is bounded by open farmland to the north and east, and by an area of vacant scrubland to the south.



Figure 1: Satellite image of the Site and immediate area (with Site shown edged red)¹

The Site is located within the Settlement Development Boundary of Thorpe-le-Soken as proposed within the emerging Local Plan. It is located less than a 1km walk from the High Street, which benefits from a doctor's surgery, a pharmacy, Tendring Technology College, a primary school, a convenience store, and numerous other facilities including local businesses, pubs, restaurants, a recreation ground and a church. Several bus stops are accessible from the Site, the closest of which is c.500m to the south-west, providing regular services between Harwich and Clacton-on-Sea, as well as between Thorpe-le-Soken and Weeley. Thorpe-le-Soken train station is located less than 2km from the Site and is also accessible by bus.

Thorpe-le-Soken is classified as one of six 'Rural Service Centres' within Policy SPL1 of the emerging Tendring District Local Plan, designated as such for its good range of local services and facilities, with the potential for limited growth in homes and jobs. The Transport Statement which accompanies the planning application concludes that the Site is well located to a range of services and facilities.

Description

The Site is currently split between agricultural (arable) use in the northern part, with an area of vacant scrubland in the south which has recently been used for the storage of materials for the adjoining development site. The northern part of the Site has an open eastern boundary with the rest of the field, whereas the southern and eastern boundaries of the southern part of the Site comprise predominantly established oak trees.

¹ Google Earth (image date May 2020)

3. Technical Assessment

Flood Risk and Drainage

The entirety of the Site falls within Flood Zone 1 and is not at risk of flooding from rivers or the sea, with small linear areas of the Site considered to be at a low risk of surface water flooding. Infiltration testing demonstrated a necessity for surface water storage in the form of on-site attenuation, which is proposed to discharge surface water run-off from the development into the existing ditch network along the Site's northern boundary, with flows limited to the 1 in 1 annual probability greenfield rate calculated for the area. The attenuation basin will be sized to manage the 1 in 100-year annual probability storm inclusive of a 40% allowance for climate change. The short section of the road to the north of the Site will drain to a roadside planter/grassed filter drain, connected to the attenuation basin with a perforated underdrain.

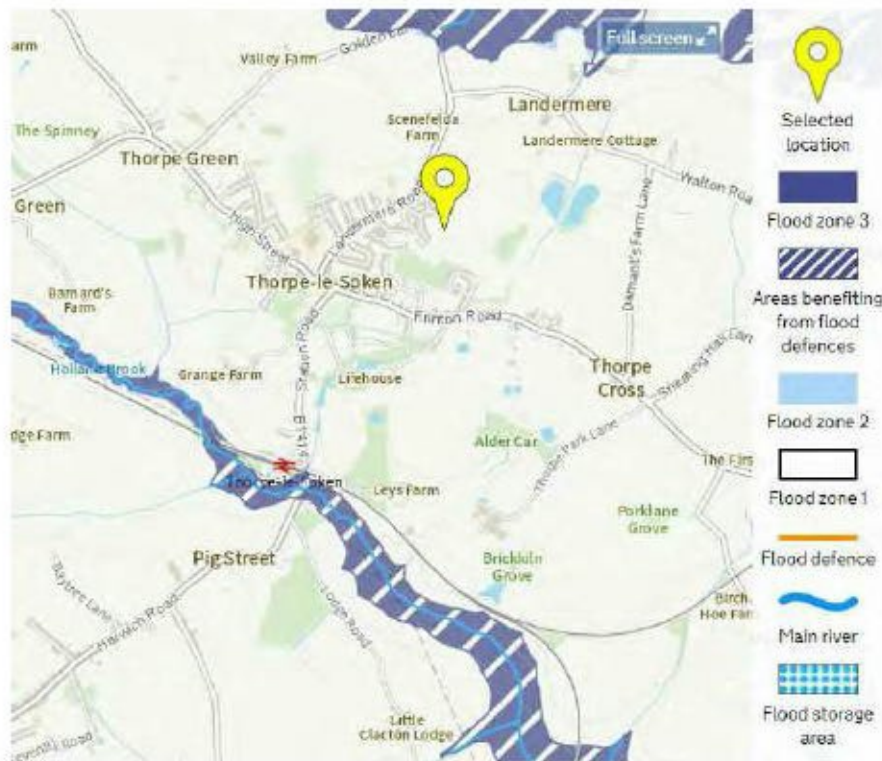


Figure 2: Flood Risk Map (with location indicated)²

In accordance with Policy SPL 3 of the emerging Local Plan, the proposed development reduces flood risk through the integration of sustainable drainage methods, which also provide amenity areas and promote biodiversity.

Transport

Vehicular and pedestrian access to the Site is in the form of an extension to Henderson Road to the west. Henderson Road comprises a 6.75m carriageway with a 2m footway on the northern side and a 3.5m shared footway/cycleway on the southern side. A 5.5m wide carriageway with a continuous 2m wide footway will be provided from Henderson Road into the Site to serve the development.

Swept path analysis has been carried out as part of the Transport Statement, using an 11.2m refuse vehicle and a fire tender which can be accommodated within the proposed development. This

² Flood Map for Planning (21/07/2021) © Crown copyright and database rights 2021 Ordnance Survey 100047325. Taken from page 3 of the Flood Risk Assessment prepared by Canon Consulting Engineers submitting with the planning application.

confirms that the internal road layout complies with the ECC Technical Design Guide, and therefore also complies with Policy LP 4 of the emerging Local Plan, which requires internal road layouts to safely and comfortably accommodate emergency services, waste collection and other large vehicles.

The Transport Statement submitted with the planning application concludes that the proposed development is acceptable in terms of highways and transportation issues. It also confirms that the Site is well located for a range of services and facilities, with access to sustainable modes of travel including walking, cycling and public transport. The proposed development has been designed to link with the existing network and is therefore considered to comply with Part B of Policy SPL 3.

Landscape

The Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) which accompanies the planning application reviews how the proposed development may fit into the setting and how this may affect the character of the countryside and appearance of the settlement in the landscape. It also considers the potential visual effects upon nearby receptors, including footpaths, roads and surrounding dwellings.

The LVA confirms that the adjacent Henderson Park development would provide an established development edge context and backdrop for the proposed development. Owing to the single storey nature of the proposed dwellings, the LVA concludes that these could be accommodated on the Site without resulting in notable intrusion or compromise to the character and appearance of this area.

The level of landscape and visual effects likely to result from the proposed development are concluded to be modest, thereby reaffirming the suitability of the location for the development. This adheres to the criteria of Policy SPL 3 of the emerging Local Plan, which requires new development to enhance local character and relate well to its surroundings.

Heritage

The Site is not within nor does it abut the Thorpe-le-Soken Conversation Area, and there are no listed buildings within close proximity. The listed assets are predominantly clustered within the centre of the settlement, adjacent to Frinton Road, with two listed buildings along Walton Road to the north of the Site. The closest to the Site is the Grade II listed Police Station to the north of Landermere Road, which, in common with the other listed assets within Thorpe-le-Soken, is visually separated from the Site by existing residential development and intervening landscape buffers.

Ecology and Arboriculture

The planning application is accompanied by the Preliminary Ecology Appraisal (PEA) carried out in 2016 for a wider survey area, which included the Site and the adjacent Henderson Park development site. A further ecological assessment was undertaken in July 2020.

The 2016 appraisal recommended further surveys to establish the presence/absence of Great Crested Newts, Reptiles, Bats and breeding birds, all of which were undertaken between April and June 2016 with the findings summarised below. No further surveys recommended as part of the 2020 assessment.

No Great Crested Newts were identified during the surveys carried out between April and May 2016, with the 2020 assessment confirming the proposed development would not affect any Great Crested Newts on the Henderson Park development, if present.

The Reptile surveys undertaken between April and June 2016 established a potential for the survey area to support a low population of Common Lizard, which were translocated as part of the Henderson Park development. The public open space on the Site has been positioned adjacent to

the open space within Henderson Park, and sensitive methods of vegetation removal will be employed as part of the development of the Site.

Bat foraging surveys were undertaken between May and June 2016, with trees with bat roosting potential noted around the survey area, particularly within the southern half, as confirmed in the updated assessment in 2020. In accordance with the recommendation of these surveys, the trees and hedgerows along the Site's boundaries will be retained, with the inclusion of additional tree planting and a sensitive exterior lighting scheme. The area of public open space in the south of the Site will provide a buffer between the built form and the existing trees.

The breeding bird survey undertaken in April 2016 and June 2016 identified 20 species within the survey area, and concluded that two species under conservation were seen, but not considered to be using the survey area to breed. The updated assessment confirms that the loss of any trees, hedgerows and scrub as part of the development proposals can be mitigated through new planting along the boundaries and in garden areas. The recommendation for public open space to be located in the south of the Site in order to reduce the impact on Abbey Street 'Potential Wildlife Site' to the south has been incorporated into the proposed development.

The Arboricultural Impact Assessment submitted with the planning application identifies the presence of one Category A tree, ten trees and one group of Category B, and one tree and four groups as Category C. The Assessment concludes that the impact on these trees is considered to be minimal, with the majority of trees retained and protected during the works. Tree Preservation Order 10/00007 includes 18 Oak trees along the southern border of the Site, although the trees along this border will not be disturbed and will be separated from the built form by the proposed open space in this area.

Utilities

Connections for electricity, gas, foul water and fibre are being taken from the adjoining Henderson Park development, with appropriate rights having been reserved for this.

4. Development Parameters

Use and Amount

Detailed planning permission is sought for:

“Construction of 28 no. 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom bungalows, with associated parking, roads, site infrastructure and hard and soft landscaping.”

Scale

All properties proposed are single storey with rear gardens and on-plot parking, and the accommodation schedule below provides a summary of the proposed dwellings.

| Plot No. | Beds | Configuration | GIFA (m ²) | Garage | Garden Area (m ²) |
|--------------|-----------|---------------|------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | 3 | Detached | 110.0 | Detached | 132 |
| 2 | 3 | Detached | 106.6 | Detached | 162 |
| 3 | 3 | Detached | 106.0 | Integral | 113 |
| 4 | 3 | Detached | 106.0 | Integral | 129 |
| 5 | 2 | Detached | 81.2 | Detached | 86 |
| 6 | 2 | Semi-detached | 81.0 | Integral | 97 |
| 7 | 2 | Semi-detached | 81.0 | Integral | 83 |
| 8 | 4 | Detached | 130.4 | Detached | 210 |
| 9 | 3 | Link-detached | 110.0 | Adjoining | 140 |
| 10 | 3 | Link-detached | 110.0 | Adjoining | 130 |
| 11 | 3 | Detached | 113.9 | Detached | 130 |
| 12 | 2 | Detached | 85.0 | Detached | 85 |
| 13 | 3 | Detached | 110.0 | Adjoining | 110 |
| 14 | 3 | Detached | 106.6 | Detached | 110 |
| 15 | 3 | Detached | 119.2 | Detached | 133 |
| 16 | 2 | Semi-detached | 81.0 | Integral | 75 |
| 17 | 2 | Semi-detached | 81.0 | Integral | 75 |
| 18 | 2 | Detached | 81.2 | Detached | 90 |
| 19 | 3 | Detached | 113.9 | Detached | 151 |
| 20 | 2 | Detached | 85.0 | Detached | 76 |
| 21 | 2 | Semi-detached | 71.4 | - | 75 |
| 22 | 2 | Semi-detached | 71.4 | - | 79 |
| 23 | 2 | Terraced | 71.4 | - | 85 |
| 24 | 1 | Terraced | 55.7 | - | 50 |
| 25 | 1 | Terraced | 55.7 | - | 61 |
| 26 | 2 | Terraced | 71.4 | - | 89 |
| 27 | 3 | Detached | 99.6 | - | 100 |
| 28 | 3 | Detached | 99.6 | - | 106 |
| Total | 69 | | 2,595.2 | | 3,132 |

Layout

The layout of the proposed development follows from the extension of Henderson Road currently under construction. Henderson Road is extended to the eastern boundary of the Site providing access just to the field beyond. This access will be used only occasionally in connection with the management of the field.

The new road extends south from this extension of Henderson Road to serve the proposed development. The first section of the proposed road has properties on a single side addressing the planned public open space which is to be extended into the application Site and suitably planted so that the area reads as a whole.

The proposed road continues towards the south and has been arranged in a way that ensures the retention of the existing trees on the eastern boundary. The road terminates at a proposed public open space that is a further extension of the existing public open space approved on the adjacent site. The proposed properties in this section have been arranged to front onto the open space.

Within the Site the properties have been laid out considering the approved layout to the west so that the development reads as a natural extension to that development which is under construction. The closest plots and/or those with active frontage to the Site are plots **48**, 47, 46, 45, 44, **36**, **35**, 34, **14**, **13**, **12**, and **11**, with those shown in bold being single storey also.

The open space is located predominantly within the south of the Site, with pockets to the east and west of the main access route. The attenuation basin to the north will provide a further natural area, promoting biodiversity and assisting in creating attractive green spaces throughout the Site. The total provision of open space on the Site extends to 0.45ha (22%) excluding the attenuation area, comfortably in excess of the 10% requirement as set out in Policy LP 4 of the emerging Local Plan.

The density of the proposed development is 14.7 dwellings per hectare, reflective of a scheme which comprises single storey properties with private gardens, generous provisions of on-site open space and associated infrastructure. It is considered that this is compliant with Policy LP 3 of the emerging Local Plan, which requires a housing density which has regard to a number of factors, including inter alia, accessibility to local services, compliance with the nationally described space standards and the context and character of development.

Parking provision has been made in compliance with the Essex County Council Parking Guidance (2009), with each plot having dedicated off-street parking, either to the front or adjacent to the property, in accordance with Policy LP 4 of the emerging Local Plan as proposed for modification³.

Appearance

The development to the west has been designed as predominantly two storey houses with a mixture of detached, semi-detached, and terraced family dwellings. The proposal to construct bungalows meets an established need in the area for this type of property and also has the benefit of reducing any visual impact from the west, acting as a transition between the open fields including the Site of Special Scientific Interest and the two storey development on the rising land to the west. The single storey design also avoids any impact of overlooking to the adjacent development.

The bungalows themselves are to be built in traditional construction, mostly with brick external walls under tiled hipped roofs. Similar designs have been developed by the applicant and tested on previous schemes and found to be very popular. The designs have been further tailored to suit this Site. The floor areas and room sizes are in excess of the Nationally Described Space Standards.

³ MM12.1 [MOD E] Tendring District Local Plan – Section 2 Main Modifications

Private amenity areas (gardens) have been calculated to meet or exceed the areas required by policy, and many of the bungalows have conservatories included that provide covered amenity space in addition to the garden.

Overall, the design on this area of allocated housing land is a logical extension to the existing development under construction and is carefully considered in this proposal. The open spaces approved on the adjacent scheme are logically expanded and due consideration is given to the retention of existing trees and hedges.

The proposed single storey development will have minimal impact on the adjacent countryside and act somewhat as a visual buffer to the principally two storey development adjacent. The quality of the proposed dwellings, as demonstrated by the applicant on previous developments (Avocet Place in Thorrington and Gainsford Gardens in Clacton-on-Sea), has been further enhanced by modifying the designs for accessibility and adaptability.

All properties are rated 'B' in terms of energy efficiency and come with integrated low energy appliances and wiring for electric car charging points.

Accessibility

All properties are to be built to at least M4(2) standards (Accessible and adaptable dwellings), which exceeds the 10% requirement in Policy LP 3⁴ of the emerging Local Plan. Plots 27 and 28 to be built to M4(3) standards (Wheelchair user dwellings) as requested by the Council. This will increase the Council's stock of such affordable dwellings by 100%.

Affordable Housing Statement

In accordance with the requirements of Policy LP 5 of the emerging Local Plan, 30% of the proposed dwellings will be provided as affordable, equating to 8 no. dwellings. Pre-application discussions with Officers at Tendring District Council have informed the proposed mix of affordable housing, which is set out in the table below:

| Plot No. | Beds | Configuration | GIFA (m ²) | Garden Area (m ²) |
|----------|------|---------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 21 | 2 | Semi-detached | 71.4 | 75 |
| 22 | 2 | Semi-detached | 71.4 | 79 |
| 23 | 2 | Terraced | 71.4 | 85 |
| 24 | 1 | Terraced | 55.7 | 50 |
| 25 | 1 | Terraced | 55.7 | 61 |
| 26 | 2 | Terraced | 71.4 | 89 |
| 27 | 3 | Detached | 99.6 | 100 |
| 28 | 3 | Detached | 99.6 | 106 |

The above mix represents a mix of 25% 1-bed properties, 50% 2-bed properties and 25% 3-bed properties. All of the affordable properties will be constructed to either part M4(2) or M4(3) of the Building Regulations (accessible and adaptable standards), as detailed above.

⁴ Proposed for inclusion within Policy LP 3 through the Tendring District Local Plan – Section 2 Main Modifications, formerly contained within Policy SPL3.

Occupancy Restriction

An occupancy restriction is proposed to ensure that the proposed dwellings are only occupied by people aged 55 and over, or those who due to medical reasons would benefit from living in single-storey accommodation. The proposed wording for inclusion in the S106 Agreement is provided below. Given the nature of the occupancy restriction it is expected that the proposed development will not be required to make S106 contributions in respect of Education.

Schedule 1 - Occupancy Restriction

In this Schedule unless the context requires otherwise the following words and expressions shall have the following meaning:-

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| <i>“Disability”</i> | <i>means a physical or mental condition which has a substantial and long-term impact on the ability of an individual to undertake normal day-to-day activities and medical advice is that the individual would benefit from being resident in a property on one level.</i> |
| <i>“Permitted Occupier”</i> | <i>(a) the spouse or co-habiting partner of a Qualifying Occupier irrespective of age of the spouse or co-habiting partner; or (b) any resident dependent or dependents of a Qualifying Occupier irrespective of age of the dependent; or (c) a resident carer of a Qualifying Occupier irrespective of age of the resident carer.</i> |
| <i>“Qualifying Occupier”</i> | <i>(a) a person who is aged fifty five (55) or older; or (b) a person who has a Disability; or (c) the surviving spouse or co-habiting partner of a person referred to at ‘(a)’ or ‘(b)’ above irrespective of age of the surviving spouse or co-habiting partner PROVIDED THAT the surviving spouse or co-habiting partner was occupying the relevant Dwelling as their main residence at the time of death of the person referred to at ‘(a)’ or ‘(b)’; or (d) a surviving resident dependent or dependents of a person referred to at ‘(a)’ or ‘(b)’ or ‘(c)’ above irrespective of age of the dependent(s) PROVIDED THAT the surviving dependent(s) was occupying the relevant dwelling as their main residence at the time of death of the person referred to at ‘(a)’ or ‘(b)’ or ‘(c)’ above.</i> |

The Owner covenants with the Council to incorporate into each of the transfer deeds of a Dwelling upon the sale of the Dwelling between the Owner and the prospective purchaser of the said Dwelling an age and disability restriction whereby the Dwelling shall only be occupied by a Qualifying Occupier and that such a restriction shall be registered at HM Land Registry as a restriction against the title to each of the Dwellings and expressly included in any lease, tenancy agreement or licence (or any other form of occupancy agreement) relating to the Dwellings provided that a Permitted Occupier shall be entitled to occupy the same Dwelling as a Qualifying Occupier at any time.

5. Planning Summary

Planning History

The Site itself has no planning history. It is however located immediately east of the 98 dwellings granted outline planning permission in April 2017 under application reference 16/01169/OUT, on the land to the east of Landermere Road. Reserved matters consent was granted in December 2017 (17/01482/DETAIL) and this development has now been consistently delivering homes under the name of Henderson Park (Bellway Homes). The development subject of this request would provide a modest extension to Henderson Park, within the Settlement Development Boundary of Thorpe-le-Soken as proposed within the emerging Local Plan.

Principle of Development

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission are determined in accordance with the policies of the relevant development plan documents, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Regard must also be had to the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). The NPPF sets out at paragraph 11 a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which performs three core roles of economic, social and environmental sustainability.

For decision-taking, the NPPF specifies that this means:

- approving development proposals which accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

In this case the development plan comprises the adopted Tendring District Local Plan 2007 (“the ALP”), the adopted Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond: North Essex Authorities’ Shared Strategic Section 1 Plan (2021) and the emerging Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond (“the ELP”) which is currently being examined prior to adoption.

When assessing the weight to be applied to the policies of the ELP, the provisions of paragraph 48 of the NPPF should be considered. This states that local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in the emerging plans according to:

- a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- c) the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).

The ELP has undergone Examination in Public (EiP), with the Main Modifications consultation underway at the time of writing, scheduled to end on 31 August 2021. The Inspectors’ letter dated 19 May 2021 proposed a number of main modifications necessary to make the ELP sound, and

following consideration of the responses received through the consultation, it is expected that the Inspectors will issue the final conclusions as to the soundness and legal compliance of the ELP. The ELP is therefore at an advanced stage of preparation.

With regards to unresolved objections, the Council has considered the representations received through the consultation on the ELP, these having been addressed through various iterations as well as the modifications now subject to consultation. It is noted that there are no unresolved objections in relation to the proposed inclusion of the Site within the Settlement Development Boundary, nor are any objections identified within the published Schedule of Representations and Responses to the ELP⁵ in respect of the Local Plan Map for Thorpe-le-Soken.

The ELP, which is being examined under the Transitional Arrangements set out in Annex 1 to the NPPF, is not considered to be inconsistent with the policies of the NPPF, proposing a sustainable strategy to ensure delivery of the required housing numbers as confirmed through the examination of the now adopted Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond: North Essex Authorities' Shared Strategic Section 1 Plan (the "Section 1 Plan").

We consider that the above demonstrates that substantial weight may be given to the policies of the ELP, and this Assessment seeks to demonstrate how the proposed development complies with these.

Policy SP2 of the Section 1 Plan sets out the Spatial Strategy for North Essex, confirming that existing settlements will be the principal focus for additional growth. It confirms that each local authority will identify a hierarchy of settlements where new development will be accommodated, according to the role of the settlement, sustainability, its physical capacity and local needs.

Policy SLP 1 of the ELP identifies Thorpe-le-Soken as a Rural Service Centre, where opportunities for smaller scale growth will be supported. Policy SPL 2 confirms that within the Settlement Development Boundaries, there will be a general presumption in favour of new development subject to detailed consideration against other relevant Local Plan policies.

Policy LP 2 requires a mix of dwelling sizes and types on new developments and states:

"The Council will support the development of bungalows, retirement complexes, extra care housing, independent living, starter homes, self-build and other forms of residential accommodation aimed at meeting the future needs of older and disabled residents as well as family housing. Support will also be given to innovative development proposals subject to consideration of other Local Plan policies."

The proposed development provides total of 28no. bungalows, comprising a mix of 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedrooms, suitable for those aged 55 and over as well as those who may benefit from such accommodation for medical reasons. These are provided within a sustainable location, within close proximity to facilities and services and within the Settlement Development Boundary of Thorpe-le-Soken. Sections 3 and 4 of this Assessment provide a technical overview and describe the detailed aspects of the proposed development, including how these comply with the other relevant ELP policies.

The principle of development on the Site has been the subject of extensive public consultation through the Local Plan process. Prior to the submission of this application, Scott Properties contacted Thorpe-le-Soken Parish Council providing the Block Plan and a description of the proposed

⁵ Examination Document RR20 Schedule of Representations and Responses – ELP Appendix B – Local Maps B.25 to B.31

development, along with an offer to meet to discuss the proposals and any additional consultation required. No response had been received at the time of writing, but Scott Properties remains committed to working with the Parish Council to address any feedback they may have.

Economic Benefits

The construction phase of the proposed development will support the employment of 86 people⁶ with further job opportunities being created through the ongoing maintenance of the communal spaces and the properties themselves. A 2016 study by the Institute of Customer Service found that older people are more likely to spend money on goods and services locally, providing a potential further boost to local businesses. The proposed development will also generate significant direct revenue to the Council through S106 payments, New Homes Bonus and Council Tax receipts.

Social Benefits

The proposed development will provide single storey accommodation for people aged 55 and over, as well as those who may benefit from such accommodation due to existing medical conditions. The emerging Local Plan provides support for properties aimed at meeting the future needs of older and disabled residents, and it is considered that the provision of 28 single storey dwellings will assist in achieving this objective. Further, it may also bring together people who may otherwise be lonely and isolated by establishing a 'community within the community', which will provide a positive environment for physical and mental wellbeing. The inclusion of a substantial amount of public open space also assists in promoting health and wellbeing, creating an attractive area for future residents,

Of the proposed dwellings, 8no. will be affordable, two of which will be constructed to Part M4(3) (wheelchair-user standards). All of the proposed properties will be built to Part M4(2) (accessible and adaptable standards). This is considered to be a significant social benefit, which will allow occupants to remain living independently for as long as possible.

Environmental Benefits

Owing to the current intensive agricultural use of the Site, the proposed development provides the opportunity to achieve a net biodiversity gain. The proposed areas of open space, additional tree and hedgerow planting as well as the attenuation basin provide potential new habitats which will assist in creating an attractive and biodiverse area.

⁶ HBF Housing Calculator.

6. Conclusion

This Statement provides a framework for the proposed development and sets out how this is suitable for the Site and its setting. It also contains a technical overview, and provides a brief summary of the relevant planning policies in accordance with which it is expected the proposals will be determined.

The Site presents an immediate development opportunity inside the Settlement Development Boundary of Thorpe-le-Soken as proposed in the emerging Local Plan, and in a highly sustainable location. The proposals can be delivered in the short-term and will make a meaningful contribution to housing delivery in the District, as well as provide much-needed accommodation for older people in the form of bungalows, a development to which support is attributed through Policy LP 2 of the emerging Local Plan.

The proposed development delivers a policy compliant level of affordable housing, including a provision for dwellings built to M4(2) and M4(3) standards considerably in excess of emerging Policy requirements, which is considered to be of significant benefit.

As confirmed within the technical reports accompanying the planning application, development of the Site would not result in any adverse landscape, arboricultural or ecological impacts. Safe and sustainable access can be achieved, with the proposals assessed as likely to have a low impact on the surrounding transport network.

Having regard to the Framework and all other material planning considerations, the proposals are considered to represent highly deliverable and sustainable development, and should therefore be approved without delay.