

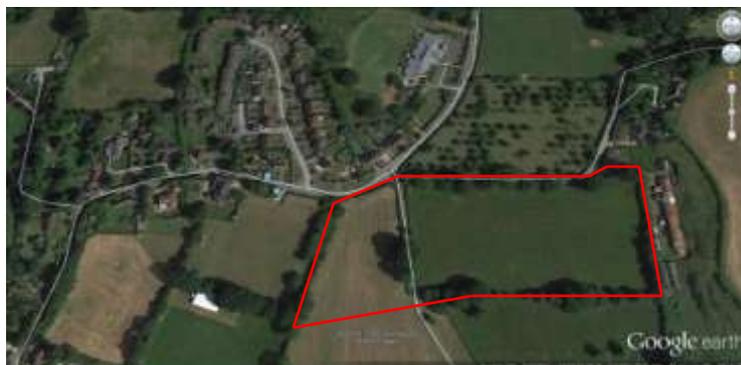
DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Proposed Residential Development, Land at Church Stile Farm, Cradley Near Malvern, Herefordshire



For Terra Strategic Contents

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Aerial view of the application site - Image supplied by Google Earth
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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Design and Access Statement, prepared by N & JC Design Limited, accompanies a planning application submitted on behalf of Terra Strategic, part of the BSL Strategic Ltd group of companies in respect of land at Church Stile Farm, Cradley, near Malvern, Herefordshire, by Bruton Knowles. The development is to be served via a new access linked to an established existing road carriageway.
- 1.2 This Outline Planning Application is for the erection of 29 bespoke designed one to five bedroom dwellings, a local shop/café and for the establishment of a community garden / vineyard facility set within the application site, including landscaping and associated works.
- 1.3 This statement sets out the approach to the design and access for this proposal within its local context. The site is in open countryside set within the AONB, close to other local housing.
- 1.4 Account has been taken in the preparation of this statement of DCLG Circular 01/2006 and CABE guidance on “Design and Access Statements”. The design also accords with new Government guidelines set within the NPPF standards.



View of site entrance location towards Buryfields from
Church Stile Farm



View of site towards proposed vineyard from existing access drive

2 The Process

Assessment

- 2.1 The application site currently comprises open agricultural land for grazing. The site is a generally level area as depicted on the site survey drawing supplied with this planning application though rises to the east to meet the adjacent farm dwellings and storage buildings located adjacent to the proposed Community Garden area. The application site measures approximately 2.454 Ha, providing a new development proposal density of 12.22 dwellings per hectare on the overall application site including all public open spaces and pathways and a development density on the nett developable area of some of 24 dwellings per hectare. The site is located within walking distance of the local primary school. As part of the development a local village shop and café is to be created in addition to a community garden and vineyard. These elements are proposed to provide additional sustainable local facilities for residents in Cradley and Stony Cross by way of appropriate enhancement.
- 2.2 There are significant trees and boundary hedgerows on the site which have been retained as part of the overall development, maintaining a mature landscaped setting. Where existing hedgerow planting is removed for implementation of the new site access, which provides more open views of the Listed Building at Church Stile Farm, appropriate new native species feature landscape planting is to be provided to create an open view through to the new Village Green area and the Eco friendly shop/cafe from the approaches to the site.

- 2.3 Dwellings within the new development will be positioned so as to offer no harmful visual impact or unacceptable overlooking to existing neighbouring residents. The proposed shop/café is also set at an oblique angle to dwellings opposite to minimise impact and to enhance views into the site entrance area.



View of adjacent buildings from site entrance towards Buryfields



- 2.4 There are a wide variety of dwelling designs locally with a mix of terraced, semi-detached and detached properties ranging from 5 to over 20 metres in plot width and between 3.5m to 7.5m eave heights, though generally of single to two storey design. Recently developed dwellings nearby in Old Schoolhouse Close are of a vernacular styling using modern construction. This residential development has enhanced the character of the area and has blended well with the local architecture where the new buildings provide a strong identity and are cohesive with the surrounding context and setting. Our proposed application development seeks to follow the quality and design ethos in terms of style and density. The properties in our application follow the local architectural language with improved detailing and high quality materials.
- 2.5 The proposed design will take details from the local Georgian and Victorian styling selectively utilising those principles and architectural merits to present a themed, compatible and appropriate streetscene.

- 2.6 Locally, building heights vary from 1 to 3 storeys, with a variety of period style features, scale and massing. The proposals as submitted create a themed scheme that would sit well in a Conservation Area and the new dwellings and the Eco-friendly design shop café also seek to compliment the local architectural character and streetscene.
- 2.7 Views across the site from the wider locality are generally limited apart from adjacent properties in the Buryfields as mentioned. The site can only be truly appreciated in relatively close proximity from adjacent fields and parts of the adjacent public road in Vinesend Lane and rural footpath routes which pass by and through the site. The development has been set at the lower levels of the land to maintain glimpsed or incidental views to Cradley Church from the footpaths.
- 2.8 The new dwellings are to be set back from the main road sitting in a clustered form similar to dwellings in the wider Buryfields and western Cradley areas, which informs the local context and setting.
- 2.9 The proposed dwellings will read directly with the access road and informal surfacing driveways, as such the development will be both obvious and legible. The site is to be fully permeated to allow for pedestrian and vehicular movement. The ground floor slab levels of the dwellings will be set in profile with the existing gradient of the land to minimise any perceived impact of the new buildings.
- 2.10 Though this is an outline application careful assessment of the likely positions of windows in the elevations of the proposed dwellings has already been undertaken to ensure that no direct or indirect overlooking occurs between the proposed dwellings and the existing surrounding properties. The Council's design criteria standards have been employed to ensure that adopted separation distances avoid overlooking into private garden areas.
- 2.11 The site incorporates existing boundary tree and hedgerow planting which maintains the mature landscape setting, where retained their root systems will be protected throughout the construction phase by the implementation of appropriate British standard fencing around root protection areas.
- 2.12 Additional planting and landscaping, in addition to the vineyard meadow planting, will be provided to enhance wildlife habitat and biodiversity within the site boundary providing an appropriate and attractive landscaped setting for the proposed development.
- 2.13 It is considered and confirmed that all of the relevant policies of the Planning Authorities Local Plan and adopted supplementary planning guidance, particularly those related to the site and to the setting of the new dwellings, have been fully absorbed and addressed in the design philosophy for this development.

2.14 This application seeks to make an improved and ultimately best use of this land for residential and commercial purposes, in keeping with the thrust of similar recent local developments and current Government guidance and in keeping with the Local Authority’s supplementary and adopted policies for development to meet local housing need.

SITE ANALYSIS LAYOUT



Involvement

2.15 This is an outline planning application for residential development together with a new shop and cafeteria, a community garden and vineyard. All accommodation works to improve the accessibility of the site are to be undertaken as part of a comprehensive development process. Consultations and public presentations were held to promote the scheme, taking comments from locals into account, following which a site meeting was undertaken with Local Authority Planning Officers to discuss the sites constraints and opportunities.

2.16 The proposed development scheme has been designed to achieve a high quality proposal that will be of great credit and enhancement value to the local area, achieving the best use of this land, duly enhancing local sustainability with the provision of a general store. It is envisaged that the store will sell produce from the vineyard and community garden in addition to other general supplies, reducing the need for local residents to travel more limitedly to the wider area supermarket outlets.

- 2.17 There are significant Highways benefits within the design for the access and egress of vehicles and visitors to the new properties. The proposed access improves upon the existing access arrangement. The current Church Stile Farm access will be reduced to a pedestrian and cycle link access and vehicular traffic will access the site via a new road access to be created as shown on the accompanying plans to the application. Vinesend Lane access will become a more clearly defined traffic junction removing potential for vehicle movement conflict.
- 2.18 Care and attention has been paid to provide sufficient ‘on plot’ parking for the dwellings and the local store to avoid any congestion within the site, ensuring that the local area also remain unaffected as a result.
- 2.19 Garages, where provided, have been provided to match with Manual for Streets guidance with 6m x 3m minimum internal sizes to provide comfortable parking space and cycle storage for each dwelling.
- 2.20 This design solution has been undertaken, having due regard to local Planning and Highways requirements. Access visibility splays and safety barriers to cycle paths will be provided to the complete satisfaction of the Council’s Highways Officers.
- 2.21 The number of dwellings produces a development at an acceptable level of density using local design typologies. When taking into account the wider spaces surrounding the site, the proposal maintains a scheme that will achieve sensible limitation of traffic movements to and from the site and minimise general levels of disturbance, whilst protecting the amenity values of neighbours.

An outline scheme is proposed to achieve a development that is coherent with its surroundings, complimentary and compatible to its context, location and setting and appropriate in terms of offering new dwellings to meet local needs, as required by National Planning Policies and the Local Authority’s design criteria. Detailed matters of design will then be more clearly established on dwelling and commercial property designs once the principal has been agreed, though the proposed layout can be used appropriately for a reserved matters application, it is shown for illustrative purposes at this time. It clearly demonstrates how the site can be laid out and what use each part of the proposal site can be designated for. The design and density is compatible by virtue of provision of new buildings with well planned private and public spaces, on plot footprints similar to, but not an exact copy of, the surrounding property network. It will provide complimentary dwellings which increase the availability of high quality market housing stock in this part of the district, matching with the local vernacular character and distinctiveness of the area. The development will provide new dwellings that will enable local people to purchase new properties within this district, to

minimise the need for migration of people away from their established roots in this popular area in a more sustainable way than presently exists. This proposal sits in balance with the existing context and will enhance local vistas, it does not impact unacceptably upon neighbours in terms of traffic movement and it will enhance what is already in existence. The proposal provides a design that is innovative, appropriate and themed, creating a development with its own identity and sense of place, whilst harmonising with its particular context and setting.

3 Design

- 3.1 The Circular and CABE guidance advises that the 6 components of a design should be:
- Use
 - Amount
 - Layout
 - Scale
 - Landscaping
 - Appearance

Use

- 3.2 The existing lawful use of the site is agricultural, as such the proposal results in a material change for part of the site, whilst retaining an agricultural use for part of the land. Public access and thoroughfares will also be improved by the development.
- 3.3 Parking provision to the shop/café, proposed dwellings and for site visitors, is at an acceptable and wholly appropriate level.
- 3.4 This comprehensive solution, as designed, maintains and ensures a balanced and consistent approach to local development principles and one which will achieve a harmonious relationship and pleasing environment with the surrounding properties.
- 3.5 The number of dwellings to be served on the site accords with NPPF standards in terms of making more efficient use of the land in utilising open countryside within the AONB. The proposed scheme compliments the grain and character with a plan arrangement that reads in context with adjacent dwellings, whilst creating a cohesive plan form overall. The development is in a form that provides suitable gaps between the properties set well back from the road frontage, retaining a generally open aspect along the surrounding roads. The site is open in nature as it is also interspersed with retained and improved footpath links to the wider area.

- 3.6 The County Council's refuse management team will be able to achieve easy access to the new buildings, where adequate spaces for bin collection points at the end of the access driveways adjacent to the shared access and turning areas have been provided for the ease of collection of recycling and refuse materials

Amount

- 3.7 In total the site will provide 29 new dwellings together with collective off street parking spaces for all plots. There is a mixture of affordable and market dwellings proposed as detailed in Bruton Knowles supporting documentation, which provide one to five bedroom dwellings. This enables a socially balanced provision.
- 3.8 The approved density of development on the residential parcel of the application site will be 24 dwellings per hectare (dph). This figure should be taken into account, whilst considering the variety in the local existing residential network and open areas which contribute towards a relatively low overall density of development in this part of the district. It is balanced in its context.
- 3.9 The proposed density should be considered acceptable in terms of appropriately designed development suited to its context and general setting, as originally advocated recently in PPS3 and ultimately within the new NPPF standards for rural areas.
- 3.10 The Local Plan refers to the need for the density of development to be compatible with its surroundings. It is clear that the proposal takes account of the local density and typologies whilst making a more efficient use of the land as proposed by NPPF policy.
- 3.11 The proposal provides appropriate levels of private amenity space for residents, with some rear garden amenity spaces set out in similar fashion to the recent properties constructed in Old Schoolhouse Close and others of a more traditional arrangement have deeper garden spaces which accord with adopted Local Plan Policy; The variety of amenity spaces proposed offers choice to purchasers whilst enhancing local character and distinctiveness, creating a greater sense of place.

Layout

- 3.12 It is clear that the residential development is set out in an appropriate form. The proposed driveway will allow for ease of access for residents, visitors, delivery, refuse collection and emergency vehicles to and for the new residential properties. The layout arrangement within the site allows for generally low speed vehicular movement and the ability to be able access and turn safely within the application Site's curtilage.

- 3.13 The proposal seeks to utilise a form similar to that of a Homezone design in the cul de sac areas having shared use between pedestrians and vehicles. This approach minimises travel speeds for vehicles in all areas of the site, creating a pleasing, harmonious and cohesive living environment.
- 3.14 All parking areas are clearly and distinctively designed, to ensure safety of movement. Amendments have been made to the format and layout during the pre-application stages to enhance design features, control the flow of vehicles accessing and exiting the site, whilst also providing the opportunity to achieve reasonable off road parking solutions to the dwellings for the new residents and their visitors, at all times.
- 3.15 The layout achieves enhanced security across the public realm with the benefit of obvious and additional surveillance throughout the site. Though the site periphery may effectively remain open to pedestrians the development provides greater incidental observation and ‘policing’ of the site than presently exists around Vinesend Lane locality.
- 3.16 This pattern of development is already prevalent locally, it can be seen that the relationships created between existing and proposed properties would be similar to those already present in the area. We have paid due regard to the local design guide criteria in the setting out of the site and have formally arranged the proposed dwellings around the access ways to create the most appropriate form of development.
- 3.17 The Councils’ separation distances have been utilised to assist with the arrangement of the site layout plan, to achieve an appropriate form that respects the amenity of adjacent dwellings. It is clear that the dwellings would be sited at an appropriate distance from the nearest existing dwelling houses and would not result in any adverse impact or overlooking to them.

Scale

- 3.18 The proposed development would provide 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 bedroom bespoke dwellings of variable design scale. Typology and plot widths observe the local grain and context, creating a harmonious sense of place, whilst richly enhancing the variety of residential properties within the area. The density of development provides the opportunity for the implementation of the new shop and café building in addition to the provision of the land for local community benefit with the vineyard / community garden. The proposed dwellings depicted in the illustrative streetscenes are clearly of similar scale to the character of the local area and are therefore wholly appropriate.

Landscaping

- 3.19 The landscaping within the layout is informed by the arrangement of the new buildings and the adjacent public open spaces and footpaths, with a requirement to provide a pleasing residential environment. The new buildings sit comfortably within the site curtilage and will be enhanced with new landscape complimentary planting. Together with the retention of existing trees and hedgerows we have ensured that the new dwellings will exist harmoniously in their setting within the local landscape context.
- 3.20 The design of the development achieves an opportunity to provide as much good quality new landscaping as possible, ensuring that existing hedgerows are maintained and enhanced with new planting in beneficial locations. This will minimise any perceived harm or impact in the area creating visual distinctiveness and improved views of the site from the surrounding environs.
- 3.21 Enhanced landscaping will be a main feature of the development frontage areas adjacent to the new access road, helping to provide visual and spatial separation from the public realm whilst also inviting views through the site across the proposed village green area towards Church Stile Farm, through retained visual gaps. In conjunction with proposed variations in surface materials, the landscaped shared private driveway areas will be accessible and pleasant, duly enhancing the setting of the proposed new dwellings.



Existing trees and hedgerows to be retained to provide characterful setting for new Village Green

Appearance

- 3.22 The appearance of the new buildings is to be of a bespoke design using high quality terracotta soft red facing bricks with elements of coursed stonework, render and feature timber/cement boarding. Together with cut stone heads and cills and cambered brick arches in addition to feature barge and soffit boarding, these elements are proposed to create a uniform themed style to the dwellings. Eco-efficient Class A specification white PVCu windows, with coloured front doors and gates, having timber detailing corbel brackets to porches, the proposed exterior materials and features achieve a high quality vernacular styling to the elevations of the new buildings.

- 3.23 Slate and dark brown coloured plain concrete tiled roofing will be provided to all main roofs on dwellings with half round ridge tiles. This will produce typical vernacular features to the proposed elevations when also used with leaded roofing to dormers which will further enhance the quality and variety of the design. It is anticipated that the buildings will be constructed with materials from sustainable sources having an Eco-friendly, carbon neutral, low maintenance fabric design ethos in mind. The dwellings will be designed to satisfy high quality levels of sustainability and will meet the appropriate and current Building Regulation standards.
- 3.24 The colour palette of materials proposed will achieve a development that has it's own identity, but which harmonises with the surrounding vernacular principles. We submit that the scheme will enhance the character of the area by way of its quality of design and appearance, it's well considered and appropriately arranged plot layouts and by the use of the existing characterful constraints of the site.



ILLUSTRATIVE STREETSCENE PROPOSALS

- 3.25 It is therefore anticipated that the development will create a positive local enhancement, with maintained openness, as advocated by Planning Officers at the site meeting, via the views through the public open spaces and rural footpath links around the dwellings. Local residents and visitors, together with patrons of the new buildings, will be able to access the site, park and walk to their destination clearly.
- 3.26 Safe and appropriate road and footway routes within the site will be obvious and legible. The setting of the site along with the new shop/café and dwellings will be laid out in an appropriate and wholly acceptable manner.

- 3.27 Whilst appearance and characterful design is important to the nature of the local area, it is proposed that the site be instilled with positive carbon footprint credentials as part of the fabric of each of the buildings. A low energy building fabric first ethos is proposed by the provision of sustainable and renewable materials achieving high levels of insulation, using robust building systems. Materials for the development are to be sourced locally wherever possible to achieve a lower carbon footprint.
- 3.28 The appearance of the scheme will be that of a Conservation Area style, but the fabric will set out to achieve a development suitable for a longer building life span and a lower maintenance fabric, ensuring a reduced need for continued maintenance work and supply of further materials for the properties.
- 3.29 All materials to be used are to achieve a ‘lifetime standard homes’ approach, using green technologies, including the use of rain water storage butts and other sustainable ‘grey water’ techniques where possible.

Images of local design character and dwelling styles



4 Access

Transport links

- 4.1 The proposed development site is clearly linked to the local main service roads between the town centre and the wider Motorway networks. With connections to the local employment and shopping facilities in West and Great Malvern some 4 miles away the site is within easy reach of local facilities.

- 4.2 The site affords the opportunity via the local footpaths, roadways and cycling network to reach services readily. The use of the motor car as a mode of transport will be reduced by way of the location of the shopping facility on the site and the use of available public transport in this sustainable rural location. This is a significant part of the designs green methods ethos and strategy. It is anticipated that no more than six vehicular traffic movements per dwelling per day will be generated.
- 4.3 The site will be fully serviced via local road networks. Traffic flows on this road are at low to modest speeds generally. With the shared access roadway within the site having internal traffic calming speed measures, along with appropriate off road parking within the plot curtilages, this achieves notable benefits to local traffic safety.

Inclusive Access

- 4.4 The site is generally graded with only a modest rise from west to east within the development areas of the application site.



View towards Vinesend lane approach towards the new site access

- 4.5 The new access to the application site connects to the existing road serving Buryfields with existing public footpath links. Distinctive dropped kerb crossing points are proposed to clearly distinguish the access road and path routes for vehicles throughout the proposed development achieving clear observation and ease of movement. Within the site, residents and visitors cars will be able to enter, turn and leave the curtilage in a forward gear on the shared surface drive,
- 4.6 Waste bin storage and recycling facilities will generally be confined to the rear gardens of the proposed dwellings. Owner/occupiers will be required to facilitate collection of waste materials to the plot frontage on collection days. It is anticipated that refuse collection can be easily undertaken by the Statutory Authorities via the shared Homezone and access roadways.

Image of recent development in Old School Close (green arrowed) similar in form and character to the proposed development scheme



Proposed development - General Arrangement Drawing



5 Summary

- 5.1 This Design and Access Statement together with the associated Planning Statement by Bruton Knowles, demonstrates that the scheme has been designed to reflect the character and distinctiveness of the area and that it works well within its context and setting. It is appropriate and well balanced.
- 5.2 The development represents a suitable use of the site, providing an appropriate continuation of an agricultural use together with providing new dwellings to meet the Council's local housing needs, and a Community service shop and café, offering potential employment use in a layout and scale of development appropriate to the site's size, context, location and setting.
- 5.3 Landscaping and the appearance of the development have been designed with the particular characteristics of the locality in mind retaining existing boundary tree and hedge planting and provided with a high quality future landscape scheme to maintain the pleasing open aspects of the site wherever possible and enhancing the overall aesthetics of the site.
- 5.4 In addition the site would be fully accessible by all persons and is located within easy reach of good quality public transport services and local facilities.
- 5.5 The scheme has been produced in accordance with the Local and National Planning Policy and Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- 5.6 Significant care and attention to detail has been taken in the preparation of this design, with the amenity values of the area and in particular the existing neighbours very much in mind. The existing local public realm spaces have been carefully assessed and fully taken into account in formulating this proposed residential development layout and design.
- 5.7 Taking into consideration those matters given above, together with the associated reports and documentation provided within the submitted application and in light of the need to promote good design with the paramount requirement to make better use of land for such development within the County, we hereby commend this proposed development to the Local Authority for approval.