



Case Study:
Residential Sector

Eccleshall Staffordshire

Key Benefits

- 130 residential homes with 40% provided as affordable
- Contributions to local amenities such as education via S106 agreement
- Provision of bungalows
- A Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA)
- A community green incorporating equipped children's play (LEAP)
- Creation of a wildlife corridor
- Open space for public use



The Project

Richborough Estates secured a position on this 9.46 acre site in early 2014 at a time when Stafford Borough Council had a 20 year Local Plan which was adopted in June 2014. The Plan for Stafford Borough was to be accompanied by a Site Allocations Document in due course. In addition, a number of Parish Councils within the Borough were progressing Neighbourhood Plans, including Eccleshall Parish Council.

The site's sustainability credentials were very positive, furthermore total housing growth directed to the Key Rural Villages equated to 1,200 dwellings. Just over 50% was committed through existing planning consents at the time. The Richborough team was confident that the site would be considered favourably by the Council during the preparation of the Site Allocations

Document and by the Parish Council in respect of their emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

The site is adjacent to the built up area of Eccleshall and comprises four fields of grassland and arable land classified as grade 3a i.e. good quality agricultural land. On the ground, it featured improved and semi-improved grassland, arable land, a woodland belt and ponds. Each field was bounded by hedgerows and there were a number of trees on the site.

The site was identified in the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment as 'developable' which confirmed that the site was in a suitable location for housing development and would contribute to the creation of sustainable communities.

The Approach

The Richborough team selected a number of consultants to undertake all the necessary reports and surveys required to underpin a full master planning exercise in advance of a planning application. There were a number of highways, heritage and drainage challenges to overcome during the lifetime of the project.

Despite the fact that the site was adjacent and well-related to a key sustainable settlement in the Borough that was identified to accommodate housing growth, the planning process was complicated and challenging.

The team engaged fully with the Parish Council and local residents in formulating proposals for the site. This included a

meeting with the Parish Council and a public consultation event in April 2014. Further discussions took place with both the Parish Council and local residents which resulted in refinements to the proposals. The indicative masterplan and the detailed parameter plans and design framework contained within the Design and Access Statement sought to address the concerns raised, particularly by residents within properties that adjoin the site on Badgers Croft.

The aim was to produce a new residential environment of the highest standard, with a clear and recognisable identity that reflects the local built form, landscape features and contextual views.



The master plan was created:

- To provide a sustainable development comprising family houses, public open spaces and areas for play
- To create a development to enhance the appeal of Eccleshall as a place to live and work, incorporating valued aspects of local character, ecology, landscape and biodiversity
- With vehicular access via a new roundabout junction and provision of a new pedestrian/cycle route off Badgers Croft
- With an extension of the existing 30mph speed limit on Stafford Road and provision of a new gateway feature to reinforce the speed limit change
- To include a network of pedestrian footways which link residential streets to public open space, children's play areas and the existing bus stop
- To emulate as far as possible, local patterns of built form and densities
- With the provision of bungalows to the rear of Badgers Croft
- With a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) to the rear of houses on Badgers Croft and a 'community green' which incorporates a Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP)
- Incorporating a wildlife corridor along the eastern boundary of the site
- With the retention of ponds, trees and the woodland belt along the northern boundary

During the promotion campaign it was becoming evident that the Parish Council would support the delivery of homes on the site and it was hoped that it would be allocated within the Neighbourhood Plan for Eccleshall. Richborough Estates submitted a planning application in September 2014 for up to 130 dwellings, public open space, green infrastructure and associated works. Richborough's submission highlighted the Council's marginal 5 year housing land supply.

The Result

Stafford Borough Council approved Richborough's planning application during the September 2014 Planning Committee meeting and the site was later allocated in the Parish's Council's draft Neighbourhood Plan. The team managed to secure a planning consent less than 6 months from landowners' signing the Planning Promotion Agreement.

After a period of intense marketing, the Richborough team and landowners chose Bovis Homes as their preferred development partner in May 2015. The entire promotion and sale of the site was undertaken by Richborough and its team of dedicated consultants in just over 12 months.

