SWALLOW HOUSE LANE , HAYFIELD

LANDSCAPE DESIGN STATEMENT 31ST August 2012

(To be read in conjunction with drawings; M1890.10 Landscape layout)

This statement accompanies the Planning Application for the erection of 21 new homes off Swallow House Lane in Hayfield submitted by Bloor Homes North West.

Landscape Context

The development site 'Swallow House Lane' is located off the A624 to the northwest of the town of Hayfield in rural Derbyshire and is within close proximity to the Peak District National Park.

The site is a square plot of land behind the existing properties of 'Brookdale', 'Charnwood' and 'The Orchard' on Swallow House Lane. It slopes considerably towards the southern boundary and consists of open grassland with four obvious trees in the centre of the plot and a number of smaller shrub / tree groups around the periphery of the site. The site will be accessed by a new road off Swallow House Lane and will come between the two neighbouring properties of 'The Orchard' and 'Charnwood' to the north of the site.

The northern boundary is formed by a timber fence belonging to the existing properties described above. The eastern boundary is enclosed by a substantial brick wall adjacent to the grounds of 'Wood House' and the new housing estate of 'Wood Gardens'. To the south and west there is a good line of existing trees enclosing the site from outside the boundary. Here the boundary is formed with a mix of barbed wire and post and rail fencing and lengths of dry stone wall. The line of trees along the east boundary separates the site from Hayfield primary school and the trees to the south form part of the Derbyshire county wildlife site known as HP150 Swallow House Mill Pond. Slightly further south the site is in close proximity to Bluebell Wood local nature reserve which is owned and managed by Derbyshire County Council.

Landscape Proposals

- This application is to build 21no. new homes on the land off Swallow House Lane.

- The spine road is 5m wide and has been designed to local authority adoptable standards. It will follow a simple line through the site to service 19 of the 21 proposed houses. The adoptable spine road terminates in a turning head at which point a narrower, private drive continues to reach plots 16 and 17. The scale and line of this drive has been designed to accommodate the existing, mature oak tree that will be retained. It is proposed that this drive will be formed with a 'no-dig' construction technique that will protect the roots of the tree.

- The proposals include a 1.8m wide service strip on one side of the 5 metre spine road. This has been designed as a grass verge (unless in front of driveways) to enhance the streetscape.

- A public footpath 1.8m wide is proposed that will follow the line of the spine road all the way through the site and connect with the footpath in the neighbouring housing estate of Wood Gardens. This will enhance connectivity with the wider community.

- The frontages to each of the proposed properties have been designed in a traditional style and use a mixture of hedges, shrub planting, low railings and low walls to define the garden boundaries.

- The site is enclosed by an envelope of existing trees that sit outside of the site boundary. The ecological and amenity value of these trees is an important asset to the site. All the trees will be retained and protected with appropriate protective fencing. To minimise the impact of the tree canopies on the properties proposed along the southern and eastern boundaries, generous rear gardens have been designed and the buildings are positioned at least 5m from the existing tree canopy line.

- The envelope of existing trees will be enhanced by a good landscape infrastructure. This will be a key feature of the developments proposals with 51 new native trees or trees with high ecological value and approximately 200 linear metres of native species hedges. Structure trees will line the streets and enhance the existing envelop of trees. Native, flowering ornamental smaller trees will be scattered throughout the development to bring seasonal colour and interest.

- The mature Oak tree that exists on site has been retained and will sit within a generous communal space that creates a focal point for the development. The space will be enhanced with under-planting of woodland bulbs around the tree and additional native trees outside of its canopy.

- Of the group of predominantly Hawthorn trees at the south-west corner of the site 2no. will be retained to maintain some degree of woodland edge in this area. The remaining trees within the group will be removed to create a usable garden space for plots 6, 7 and 8.

- To mitigate for the loss of habitat that these smaller trees provide a new ‘wildlife’ planting area is proposed along the east boundary adjacent to the retained Oak. This will be planted with a number of species that are known to provide habitat for insects that other wildlife such as bats and birds will feed on. In addition to this specific area a number of these same plant species are proposed within shrub borders at the fronts of the proposed properties. All of the structural trees across the site are native species with similar ecological credentials such as Oak, Rowan and Silver Birch.

Summary

The proposed development has been formed sensitively and with sound design principals. The loss of habitat resulting from removed trees has been addressed by planting a greater number of native trees, shrubs and hedges that are intended to promote wildlife as well as provide visual interest. Effective measures have been taken to protect the trees and wildlife areas immediately adjoining the site and the streetscape is simple but generously proportioned and effectively serves each of the proposed properties which sit comfortably within the site.