

SP BROADWAY

Building Relationships

**Statement of Community Involvement
Land North of Sawbridgeworth, East Hertfordshire**

August 2019

Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
2. Engagement with council officers & elected representatives, 2017– 2019.....	2
3. Engagement with Sawbridgeworth residents, July – August 2019	3
4. Conclusion	7
5. Appendices	8

1. Introduction

This Statement of Community Involvement has been prepared to support Countryside Properties' submission to East Hertfordshire District Council (EHDC) of a Masterplan for development of around 200 new homes on land north of Sawbridgeworth, East Hertfordshire. The Masterplan is a requirement of Policy SAWB4 of the adopted East Herts District Plan 2018, which allocates the land north of Sawbridgeworth for development of around 200 homes.

Countryside Properties has undertaken a process of stakeholder engagement during the preparation of the Masterplan. To date this programme has included:

- Meetings with EHDC officers;
- Meetings with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) officers;
- Meetings with Sawbridgeworth Town Council (STC) and the Town Council's Steering Group;
- Meetings with the Hertfordshire Design Review Panel
- Meetings with a 'Shaping Sawbridgeworth' Steering Group, comprised of officers, local residents and representatives of STC, EHDC and HCC.

Countryside has also instructed SP Broadway to enable engagement with Sawbridgeworth residents before the Masterplan is submitted to EHDC:

- A consultation website has been created, www.landnorthofsawbridgeworth.co.uk, containing information about the Masterplan and the design work behind its creation. This website includes contact details for residents to provide their feedback.
- To notify Sawbridgeworth residents about the existence of the website, a letter was posted to 677 residential and business addresses surrounding the land north of Sawbridgeworth providing information about the website details and contact details.

2. Engagement with council officers & elected representatives, 2017– 2019

Meetings

- Meetings have been held with EHDC officers on 21 December 2017, 4 April 2018, 28 June 2018, 25 July 2018, 10 April 2019 and 20 April 2019.
- A meeting was held with HCC Highways officers on 24 January 2018.
- A joint meeting with EHDC officers and HCC Highways and Drainage officers was held on 11 May 2018.
- A meeting was held with Sawbridgeworth Town Council on 7 February 2018.
- A meeting was held with the ‘Shaping Sawbridgeworth’ Steering Group on 17 May 2018, comprising officers, local residents, and representatives of STC, EHDC & HCC.
- Meetings have been held with the Hertfordshire Design Review Panel on 1 May 2018 and again on 4 July 2019.
- A presentation was made to Sawbridgeworth Town Council’s Steering Group on 27 June 2019.

Project team members in attendance

Members of the project team in attendance at some or all of these meetings included:

- David DeVries – Design Director - Countryside
- Isaac Kibirige - Senior Development Manager - Countryside
- Peter Newton - Director - Barton Willmore

Discussion points

Some points discussed at these meetings included (but were not limited to):

- The sustainability of the proposed development.
- The design and functioning of the main access route.
- The importance of agreeing a set of high-level design principles.
- The need to future-proof the development to ensure it will be fit for the future.
- The need for an urban design strategy to clarify approach to architecture and gateway buildings.

3. Engagement with Sawbridgeworth residents, July – August 2019

Consultation website

Following on from the presentation to the Sawbridgeworth Town Council Steering Group on 27 June 2019, it was decided to launch a consultation website, to provide Sawbridgeworth residents with information about the Masterplan and to provide a means for residents to provide their feedback.

Countryside Properties subsequently appointed communications consultants SP Broadway to create and manage this website. The website, www.landnorthofsawbridgeworth.co.uk, was launched on 14 July 2019 and includes background information about Countryside, about the site presently, about the Local Plan process, and information about how the Masterplan has been formulated.

The website has 13 pages (see Appendix 1) with the following headings:

- Welcome
- About Countryside
- The Site Today
- The Local Plan
- The Vision
- Landscape Context
- Landscape Concept
- Built Form Concept
- Overall Concept Plan
- Design Principles
- The Masterplan
- What Happens Next?
- Provide Your Feedback

Contact details are provided for SP Broadway on the 'Provide Your Feedback' page.

Letter to residents

Once the website was launched, a 1-page letter (see Appendix 2) advertising the website was posted first-class on 15 July 2019 to 677 residential and business addresses surrounding the site, within the following radius:



Copies of the letter were also sent to:

- Cllrs Angela Alder, Ruth Buckmaster and John Burmicz, East Hertfordshire District Council members for Sawbridgeworth ward
- Cllr Eric Buckmaster, Sawbridgeworth division, Hertfordshire County Council
- Mr Richard Bowran, Clerk of Sawbridgeworth Town Council
- All members of the Executive on East Hertfordshire District Council

Hard copies of the website pages and feedback forms (see Appendix 3) were also posted to the Clerk of Sawbridgeworth Town Council, to provide a means for those without a computer to view the Masterplan and provide comments.

Feedback from residents

As of 5 August 2019, feedback has been received from 20 respondents. Key issues raised include:

- **Impact on local roads**

75% of respondents (15) raised concerns that new homes at land north of Sawbridgeworth would exacerbate existing traffic problems within the village, particularly on the A1184 (Cambridge Road).

- **Strains on local public services**

50% of respondents (10) raised concerns that new homes at land north of Sawbridgeworth would exacerbate strains on local public services, particularly schools and doctors' surgeries. A couple of these respondents specifically mentioned the impact on the Princess Alexandra Hospital.

- **Opposition to the principle of development**

45% of respondents (9) expressed opposition to the principle of the land north of Sawbridgeworth being developed for housing at all, questioning the need for this development given the other developments coming forward in the village.

- **Queries about building quality / design issues**

20% of respondents (4) raised questions about issues related to the quality and design of the homes that would ultimately be built on the land north of Sawbridgeworth, raising topics such as energy efficiency & sustainability, and what the homes will actually look like when built.

- **Concern about impact on views from specific homes**

15% of respondents (3) identified themselves as living adjacent to the site and expressed specific concern about the loss of their existing views and what these views will be replaced by.

Response to issues raised

- **Impact on local roads**

A detailed assessment of the land north of Sawbridgeworth, both in terms of its accessibility and the impact of additional traffic from the proposed development, will be included within a Transport Assessment submitted as part of any future planning application for the site. A Travel Plan for the site will also encourage residents to travel using sustainable modes of transport, and will ultimately be a matter for assessment by the County Highways Authority. The Masterplan sets out the design principles that will guide the development of the site, and these include the promotion of healthy lifestyles through sustainable transport measures.

- **Strains on local public services**

The East Herts District Plan 2018 considered the combined impact of the allocated developments in Sawbridgeworth on local infrastructure. Any future planning application for the land north of Sawbridgeworth will include funding for necessary improvements to local services secured through a Section 106 Agreement, to ensure that these local services have adequate capacity to accommodate both new and current Sawbridgeworth residents.

- **Opposition to the principle of development**

The site is allocated in the newly adopted East Herts District Plan 2018 for around 200 dwellings under Policy SAWB4 ('Land to the North of Sawbridgeworth'). The principle of development for the site has therefore been established through this policy allocation and the site has been removed from the Green Belt as a result.

- **Queries about building quality / design issues**

The Masterplan provides an overarching framework of design principles that will guide the development of the site, including a commitment to delivering high-quality residential development. A detailed consideration of the design of the new homes will be undertaken as part of any future planning application for the site and be a matter for assessment by the District Council as the local planning authority.

- **Concern about impact on views from specific homes**

The Masterplan includes indicative developable areas within the site, but does not set out precisely where each individual new home will be located on the site. As set out above, the design details for the proposals on the site will be determined as part of any future planning application for the site, taking into account the precise location, height and orientation of existing homes and their gardens.

4. Conclusion

Countryside Properties has initiated an appropriate process of consultation and engagement regarding the land north of Sawbridgeworth, and this process will continue once the Masterplan has been submitted to East Hertfordshire District Council.

Meetings with officers and members of EHDC, HCC, Sawbridgeworth Town Council and the Hertfordshire Design Review Panel have proved very helpful in developing and refining the Masterplan, and engagement with Sawbridgeworth residents have identified some key issues that will need to be addressed, particularly concerns about traffic on local roads and about the impact of the proposed development on local public services.

Once the Masterplan has been submitted, Countryside will continue to keep all stakeholders abreast of project progress, notifying residents about any future planning application, and updating the consultation website so that all interested parties continue to have an easy-to-understand, always-accessible source of information about the proposals.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Home Page of www.landnorthofsawbridgeworth.co.uk



Land North of Sawbridgeworth



COUNTRYSIDE
They. People. Love.

- ▣ [Welcome](#)
- [About Countryside](#)
- [The Site Today](#)
- [The Local Plan](#)
- [The Vision](#)
- [Landscape Context](#)
- [Landscape Concept](#)
- [Built Form Concept](#)
- [Overall Concept Plan](#)
- [Design Principles](#)
- [The Masterplan](#)
- [What Happens Next?](#)
- [Provide Your Feedback](#)

Welcome

Countryside Properties is bringing forward proposals for new homes and open space on land north of Sawbridgeworth. This land is allocated for development of around 200 homes in Policy SAWB4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

The East Herts District Plan requires that a Masterplan for the site be prepared and approved by the District Council before any planning applications are submitted. Countryside has been working closely over the last 18 months with Sawbridgeworth Town Council, East Herts District Council and Hertfordshire County Council to prepare this Masterplan, which we intend to submit in August 2019.

This website has been set up to provide Sawbridgeworth residents with information about the Masterplan and the thinking behind it. Once the Masterplan has been submitted to East Herts District Council, the website will be updated with the latest information, including the detail of any planning applications submitted to the council.

Click on the links to the left to find out more.

Appendix 2 – Letter sent to Sawbridgeworth residents surrounding the site



COUNTRYSIDE
Places People Love

12346/1

The Occupier
1 April Place
SAWBRIDGEWORTH
CM21 9DJ



15 July 2019

Dear Sir / Madam,

**Re: Masterplan for new homes on Land North of Sawbridgeworth
(Policy SAWB4, East Herts District Plan 2018)**

I am writing to inform you that Countryside Properties will shortly be submitting to East Herts District Council a Masterplan for the site known as 'Land North of Sawbridgeworth', between Cambridge Road and Kecksy's Farm. The site is allocated for development of around 200 homes in the adopted East Herts District Plan (Policy SAWB4).

One of the requirements set out in the Local Plan is for a Masterplan to be prepared for the site and approved by the District Council, and any planning applications for the site would then be determined in accordance with the guidance set by the Masterplan. Over the last 18 months we have therefore been working closely with Sawbridgeworth Town Council, East Herts District Council and Hertfordshire County Council to produce the Masterplan, and we intend to submit the final version to the District Council next month.

In the meantime, we have launched a consultation website, www.landnorthofsawbridgeworth.co.uk, where we have uploaded the Masterplan, set out some of the thinking behind it, and provided contact details for you to send us your comments. Assuming the Masterplan is approved by East Herts District Council, this website will then be updated to provide details on the planning applications that are brought forward for the site.

I very much hope you will take a look at the website and let us know your views. If you are experiencing any difficulty in viewing the website, please call Paul Maudgil of SP Broadway on 020 7152 4042. SP Broadway have been appointed by Countryside to assist us with community engagement on this project. A hard copy will also be available to view at the Sawbridgeworth Town Council offices.

Yours faithfully,

For and on behalf of Countryside Properties (UK) Limited
Isaac Kibirige
Senior Development Manager
Housebuilding (Central)

New Homes & Communities Central,
Turnford Place, Great Cambridge Road, Broxbourne, EN10 6NH
Tel: 01992 367760 E-mail: group@cpplc.com
www.countryside-properties.com

Registered office as above Registered no 61 4864 England and Wales



Appendix 3 – Feedback form posted to Sawbridgeworth Town Council



Land to the North of Sawbridgeworth

Thank you for looking at our Masterplan today. We really appreciate your views, and would be grateful if you could take a few minutes to provide your comments.

Name (optional):

Address:

Postcode: Email: Phone:

Do you represent an organisation? Yes | No

If so please describe that organisation:

I am happy for Countryside Properties or SP Broadway to contact me in the future (please tick): Yes No

Please provide any general comments or suggestions you may have about the proposals in the box below.

Once completed, please leave with Sawbridgeworth Town Council, and we will collect the forms at a later date. Thank you.

If you wish to return this form at a later date, you can leave it with the Town Council or return it to us at to SP Broadway, 50 Broadway, London SW1H 0RG, or email to office@spbroadway.com. We would be grateful if all feedback forms could be received by 5 August 2019. All information is available at <http://www.landnorthofsawbridgeworth.co.uk>