

CAPITA LOVEJOY

URBAN DESIGN SUMMARY PROOF OF EVIDENCE

PARKGATE, SHIRLEY

REF SMBC6/1

**THE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF SOLIHULL
(SHIRLEY TOWN CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT)
COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2007**

**SECTION 226(1)(a) OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
AND SECTION 13 THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS
PROVISIONS) ACT 1976 AND THE ACQUISITION OF LAND ACT 1981**

Prepared by:
ANDREW WILLIAMS of CAPITA LOVEJOY
Document no. 4896RAW110408
Date: 11 April 2008

CONTENTS

	<u>Page No</u>
1. Personal background	1
2. Current planning / urban design policy and guidance	2
3. Urban Design Audit	3
4. Urban Design / Landscape Architectural issues raised by objectors	4

1. PERSONAL BACKGROUND

- 1.1 My name is Andrew Williams. I am a Qualified Urban Designer, Chartered Landscape Architect and Managing Director of the Birmingham office of Capita Lovejoy (formerly Lovejoy), an international Town Planning, Urban Design and Landscape Architecture practice, containing over 25 professional staff in its Birmingham office.

- 1.2 All of my professional work has been at the interface between built development and the public realm and I have advised on projects, often in sensitive areas such as AONBs and Conservation Areas, where the concept for development along with its built layout, massing, design, environment and visual impact are key considerations of its success.

- 1.3 I present urban design and landscape evidence on behalf of Shirley Advance in support of this CPO Inquiry with regard to the Parkgate (formerly Heart of Shirley) development.

2 URBAN DESIGN POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

The following national, regional and local urban design policies and guidance are deemed to be of relevance to this inquiry.

2.1 NATIONAL POLICIES

PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development

PPS1 Companion – By Design - Urban Design in the planning system: towards better practice

PPS 1 Planning and Climate Change Supplement and Code for Sustainable Homes

PPS4 Consultation Draft: Planning for Sustainable Economic Development

PPS6 Planning for Town Centres

PPS6 Companion – Planning for Town Centres: Guidance for design and implementation tools

2.2 REGIONAL POLICIES

West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy

QE3 – Creating a high quality built environment for all

UR1 – Implementing Urban Renaissance – the MUAs

2.3 LOCAL POLICIES

Solihull MBC Unitary Development Plan

POLICY ENV1 MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT

POLICY ENV2 URBAN DESIGN

POLICY S4 SHIRLEY TOWN CENTRE

POLICY R2 PROTECTION OF EXISTING OPEN SPACE

POLICY R3 PROTECTION OF PLAYING FIELDS

POLICY R4 NEW AND IMPROVED OPEN SPACE

3 URBAN DESIGN AUDIT

- 3.1** The Urban Design Audit will follow the structure established within CABE's 2007 publication *Design Review – how CABE evaluates quality in architecture and urban design*.

The urban design audit is structured into the following sections:

- 1. Understanding the context**
- 2. The project in its context**
- 3. Planning the site**
- 4. What makes a good project**
- 5. The project in the round**

3.2 Conclusion

- 3.7.1** The urban design audit has highlighted that the proposed scheme has addressed the following design process issues to a successful conclusion:
- It has shown a clear understanding of the site and its context, including surrounding uses, characters, constraints and movement.
 - A synthesis is evident from this contextual analysis as to how the site should respond to its context.
 - The site planning is thoughtful and has considered the quality of public realm, legibility of movement, ambition for urban design and land use efficiency in the preparation of the masterplan.
 - The masterplan delivers the development brief requirements in qualitative and quantitative terms.
 - The proposed scheme will create a legible, high quality regeneration scheme that is of benefit to the future of Shirley.

4. URBAN DESIGN AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURAL ISSUES RAISED BY OBJECTORS TO THE CPO

4.1 The following issues have been raised by objectors and have a relationship with urban and landscape design matters:

- That the proposed scheme harms the character of Shirley Park
- That the proposed scheme is not sustainable
- That land within the CPO is not required to deliver the proposed scheme

4.2 The proposed scheme harms the character of Shirley Park

The issue of encroachment within Shirley Park is addressed by the production of an outline appraisal of the existing park and the impact of the development.

4.2.1 Conclusion

4.2.1.1 The existing character of Shirley Park is significantly influenced by the form of human activity taking place within it (either the use of sports fields or formal play equipment). A further key component of its character is the mature trees that sit within hedgerows running west – east through the park. A negative aspect of the existing character is the screening of pedestrian routes, the lack of surveillance from adjacent buildings and the exposed rear of properties fronting onto Stratford Road.

4.2.1.2 The impact on the character of the Shirley Park – Playing Fields character area is beneficial due to the benefits of the presence of residential development addressing the park, providing surveillance and a sense of enclosure. This is supported by the retention of key mature trees and the proposed planting of semi-mature trees to create an appropriate green edge to the park. These benefits outweigh the potential detriment of loss of hedgerow to part of the eastern boundary of the site.

4.2.1.3 The impact on the perceived character of Shirley Park – Playing Fields character area is very similar to its actual impact. The exception to this is that built form is viewed from a more distant viewpoint and as such built form appears to 'nestle' into the park as a more secondary element.

4.2.1.4 The visual impact of the proposed development on Viewpoint 1 (see Figure 11A within Proof Appendices) is significant (as the change is moderate and the setting is sensitive). The nature of effect is beneficial due to the positive visual influences (appropriate park edge treatment, semi-mature tree line, screening of the rear of

Stratford Road properties and visible human activity) more than compensating for the loss of hedgerow demarcating the parks eastern boundary.

4.2.1.5 The visual impact of the proposed development on Viewpoint 2 (see Figure 11B within Proof Appendices) is significant (as the change is moderate and the setting is sensitive). The nature of effect is beneficial due to the positive visual influences (appropriate park edge treatment, semi-mature tree line, screening of the rear of Stratford Road properties and visible human activity) more than compensating for the loss of hedgerow demarcating the parks eastern boundary.

4.3 The proposed scheme is not sustainable

4.3.1 When assessing the sustainability credentials of this scheme it is important to consider both the wider sustainability performance, relating to the social, economic and environmental factors, as well as the detailed sustainability performance of the proposed buildings.

Wider Sustainability Credentials

4.3.2 The proposed scheme performs well in sustainability terms, due to the following features:

- It is centrally located within Shirley town centre
- Social cohesion is promoted through the proposed community uses
- Public transport options are maximised
- The local economy is supported through the proposed retail offer
- Cut and fill balance is addressed through the adjustment of surface levels
- The scheme promotes a well overlooked, secure public realm
- Vegetation loss is mitigated through improvements to Shirley Park

Detailed Building Performance

4.3.3 An independent BREEAM pre-assessment has identified that the proposed retail buildings and foodstore performs to 'good / very good' standard, scoring 61% on a scale ranging from:

Pass	33%-52%
Good	48% - 62%
Very Good	58% - 72%
Excellent	>70%

It is worth noting that a pre-assessment identifies the scope for further improvements, which would raise the building performance, as tested at the construction stage.

4.3.4 An independent Code for Sustainable Homes Assessor has identified that the proposed residential buildings perform to 3* standard, on a scale ranging from:

1*	10% better than Building Regulations Part L 2006
2*	18% better than Building Regulations Part L 2006
3*	25% better than Building Regulations Part L 2006
4*	44% better than Building Regulations Part L 2006
5*	100% better than Building Regulations Part L 2006
6*	Carbon Zero

4.4 Land within the CPO is not required to deliver the proposed scheme

4.4.1 This matter appears to refer specifically to Westminster House, which is an existing three storey office building with car parking provided at ground floor (partially beneath the existing building) fronting Stratford Road.

4.4.2 Conclusion

The redevelopment of Westminster House as a comprehensive component of the Parkgate (previously 'Heart of Shirley') scheme is an absolute requirement, due to:

- The need to provide a high quality, coordinated urban design statement at the entrance to the scheme to ensure its success and to meet the necessary urban design standards
- The need to provide a vibrant retail and mixed use scheme
- The need to provide continuous active frontage between Stratford Road and the foodstore
- The need to provide a visual connection from Stratford Road pedestrians to both the foodstore and Shirley Park
- The need to provide 777 car parking spaces (600 visitors, 177 staff) in a basement arrangement.

