

Introduction



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About Ashberry



Ashberry Strategic Land was established in 2015. We specialise in finding and promoting land for high quality, sustainable residential developments. We work with landowners to secure allocations in Local Plans and planning permissions.

Ashberry is part of Bellway Homes, a Home Builders Federation ‘5-star’ housebuilder formed in 1946. Bellway delivers new homes of exceptional quality and has a reputation built on trust and customer service – won through achieving consistently high standards.

Delivery Track Record

 **54** sites

over 5,000 new homes – mix of types and sizes

 since **2023**

planning permission on 11 sites
(Over 650 plots)

Birch Hill
Aldridge

Ashberry



www.avisonyoung.co.uk/birchhill

The Site



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Ashberry Strategic Land is in the process of preparing an Outline Planning Application for the development of land to the immediate east of Aldridge. The proposal is a scheme of up to 355 new homes, 40% of which will be affordable, and 3.72ha of public open space. The development will be accessed from Stonnall Road.

The site is currently within the West Midlands Green Belt but qualifies as Grey Belt – a type of land that the Government is keen to see released for housing and other forms of development, subject to the proposals satisfying certain nationally prescribed criteria.

The site was proposed to be allocated for housing development in the Black Country Plan. This was a Development Plan Document that Walsall MBC was preparing jointly with the other Black Country authorities until it was withdrawn in late-2022.

Although that Plan is no longer being pursued, Walsall MBC has assessed the merits of the site for the purposes of that Document and deemed it to be an appropriate location for housing development.

The Vision



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The plan is to create a **high quality, attractive development** containing a broad range of new homes, including a significant number of affordable homes for rent and to buy. The development will be set back between 30-70m from the eastern boundary, **creating a 'soft' landscaped edge, new habitats for wildlife and a**

diverse collection of open spaces for use by both new and existing residents of the area.

The mix of homes available will lead to the creation of a inclusive and balanced community in what is a sustainable location on the edge of the conurbation.



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The Natural Environment



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Protecting and enhancing the natural environment is a key priority.

An assessment of the habitats on site has been undertaken, together with a full suite of surveys for protected species. Some of these will continue on through the Summer in line with Government guidance. The layout and landscaping of the site will create new and improved habitats for wildlife and there will be an environmental management plan prepared by an ecologist and agreed with the Council.

Trees and hedgerows are proposed to be retained where possible with new planting within the development to compensate for any loss of vegetation

The development will include a Sustainable Urban Drainage System that will retain all surface water on site and will create extensive new habitats for wildlife.

The design of the development will be landscape-led, with the open space on the eastern side of the development reaching across to the western boundary, creating corridors of green for views and wildlife.



Access & Movement



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The development will be accessed via Stonnall Road. Two points of access / egress are proposed, one at the western end of the site and one at the eastern end. An internal road will run between the two, enabling people to enter and leave by either route.

Within the development, there will be a network of footways and cycleways, enabling residents and visitors to move around freely and safely using sustainable modes. Footways will extend into the open spaces, creating trails for leisure and exercise.

There are existing local shops and services within walking distance of the site and public transport links will be provided, either by way of upgrades to the existing 36A bus service (which runs along Malvern Drive) or through using demand responsive services.

We are assessing the effect that the proposed development is likely to have on the local highway network and, in particular, a number of key junctions in the vicinity. The modelling undertaken to date is indicating that these will continue to operate within their design capacity with the development in place.



Technical Matters



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Drainage

The site is within Flood Zone 1 which means it is at low risk of flooding from rivers and canals. Parts of the site are at risk of surface water flooding and a Sustainable Urban Drainage System is proposed that includes a series of attenuation basins to manage surface water. Managing surface water 'on site' will be a benefit to Stonnall Road and land owners to the south of the road who presently suffer the effects of run-off during strong storms. Foul water will be discharged to the local mains network.

Heritage

There are no heritage assets within or adjacent to the site. More distant assets, such as the Listed Buildings at the south western end of Stonnall, would not be impacted by the proposed development. Part of the site has been subject to a geophysical survey to assess whether it might contain archaeological remains. This has indicated that such remains are not likely to be present.

Minerals

The whole of Walsall is identified as a Minerals Safeguarding Area. To the east of the site is an Area of Search for Mineral Extraction (Sand and Gravel). It is not considered feasible to extract minerals from the site itself and we are assessing whether mineral extraction is at all likely on the land to the east.



Development Framework



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Development backing on to surrounding property boundaries.

Active travel network linking key spaces within the layout and providing access to countryside edge.

Focal green space with elevated views to the south and east including play spaces/activities.

Development arranged in perimeter blocks with private gardens secured to the rear.

Feature spaces and key nodes to create points of interest and help with wayfinding.

Eastern landscape buffer incorporating SUDS, natural green space and tree planting.

Tree-lined Primary Route.

New vehicular access off Stonnall Road.



1 Play Area



2 Green Edge



3 Tertiary Street

A preferred Development Framework has been formulated that supports the vision for the site and responds to the key technical matters (transport, drainage, ecology etc.) The Development Framework provides the team's current thoughts how designs for development should come forward and how public open spaces will function as part of the proposals.

Building a Community



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We work with communities to ensure that our schemes deliver long term benefits for new and existing residents.

Our vision for Birch Hill is a development consisting of a broad mix of homes, 40% of which will be affordable. We will create a sustainable community and provide a variety of green spaces that are accessible to all.

It may be that, to avoid the development putting unacceptable pressure on local infrastructure, investment will need to be made via S106 Planning Obligations.

Benefits of the Proposal



355

new homes – mix
of types and sizes



142

affordable homes



3.7ha

of public open
space



10%

min. biodiversity gain
with new habitats



1,200

jobs supported
or created during
construction



£70m

in economic output
during construction



£850k^{pa}

in Council Tax
revenue



£5m^{pa}

to the local economy
post-completion

Next Steps



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We are aiming to submit a planning application to the Council in September 2025. However, before we finalise the proposals, we are inviting local people to comment on the proposals and feedback your thoughts. We are doing that in three ways. On 5 August, we held an in person event at Druids Heath Golf Club. That gave people the opportunity to speak with us face to face and complete a paper questionnaire. On 7 August at 6:30pm, we are hosting a webinar during which we will provide information on the proposals and will answer any

questions that people might have. You can register for the Webinar by clicking on this link: **<https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/e3673af3-b401-4058-af7a-f6ed658eb805@7e86ca72-6bd1-4f50-a078-23b4b1f3b691>**

You can also comment on the proposals by completing the survey on this webpage.

We will carefully review and have regard to all comments received by 22 August 2025.