

4.0

DESIGN FRAMEWORK

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This section sets out the key policies and guidance which form the framework within which the design of the scheme has been developed.

Further considerations include the relevant policies of the Planning Practice Guidance and Supplementary Planning Guidance.

For more detailed planning information please refer to the Planning Statement prepared by Boyer which accompanies the application.

4.2 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The NPPF was published in 2012 and has been updated on a number of occasions since, the latest being in December 2024. The document sets out national guidance relating to design. Paragraph 131 states:

"The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process."

Paragraph 135 explains that planning decisions should aim to ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit; e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

4.3 THE NATIONAL DESIGN GUIDE

The National Design Guide was initially published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in September 2019 and updated in January 2021. It is a response to the 'Living with Beauty' report published in January 2020 by the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission.

This guide illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice. It forms part of the Government's collection of planning practice guidance and should be read alongside the separate planning practice guidance on design process and tools.

The National Design Guide addresses the question of how we recognise well-designed places, by outlining and illustrating the Government's priorities in the form of ten characteristics. The choices made in the design process contribute towards achieving these characteristics and shape the character of the place.

The 10 characteristics of the National Design Guide

Well-designed places have individual characteristics which work together to create its physical distinctiveness. The ten characteristics highlighted in the National Design Guide help to nurture and sustain a sense of community and work to positively address environmental issues affecting climate. They all contribute towards the cross-cutting themes for good design set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. The ten characteristics which are set out in the Design Guide and will be extensively considered in the design development of this scheme are:

- Context
- Identity
- Built form
- Movement
- Nature
- Public spaces
- Uses
- Homes and Buildings
- Resources
- Lifespan



*The ten characteristics of well designed places
(National Design Guide, September 2019)*

4.4 LOCAL PLANNING AND DESIGN POLICY

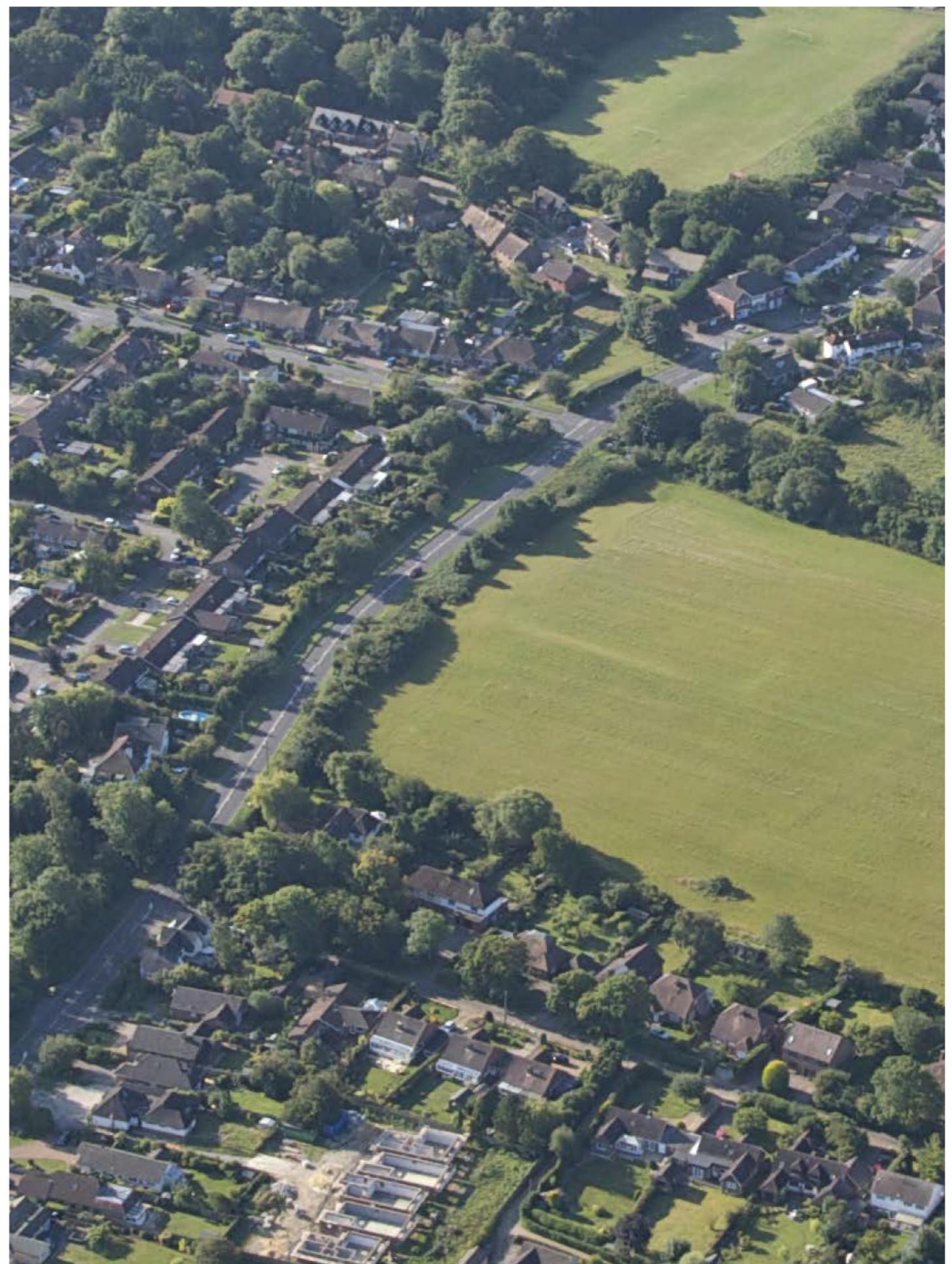
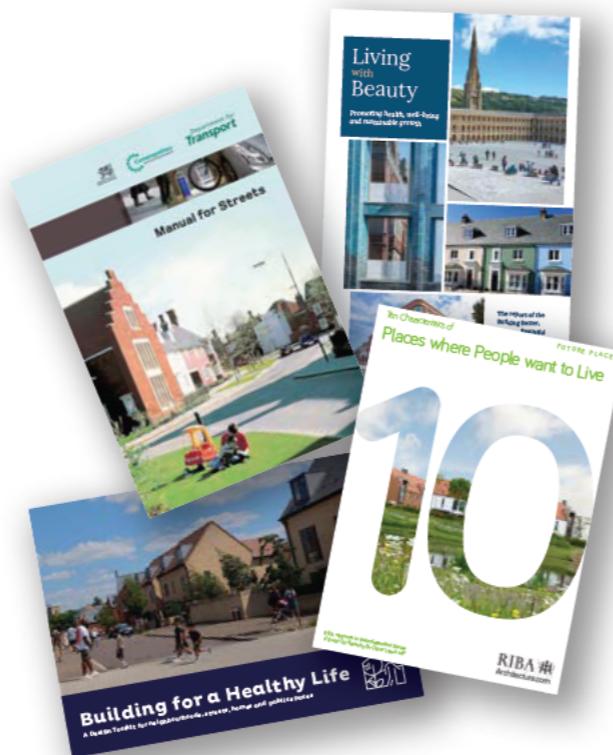
For complete details of the local planning policies affecting design please refer to the Planning Statement by Boyer submitted with the application that includes a review of the local planning policy context.

4.5 OTHER DESIGN GUIDANCE

Other Design Guidance

In addition to national and local policy, the development proposals have been designed with reference to a number of design guidance documents as follows:

- Manual for Streets (2007) (MfS 2, September 2010);
- Secured by Design;
- Living with Beauty (2020);
- Building for a Healthy Life (2020); and
- Places Where People Want to Live (2018).



Aerial photograph showing site frontage to Henfield Road and surrounding context

4.6 SITE CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

There are a number of site features which have informed the layout and design of the proposed scheme. These are illustrated on the plan (right) and include the following:

- Visual impact of scheme on longer distance views from South Downs
- Ecological buffer zones along eastern, western and southern boundaries
- Landscaped buffer zone along northern boundary
- Topography
- Retention of view cone through site towards South Downs (Tottington Mount/ Truleigh Hill)
- Existing trees and hedgerow along eastern, western and southern boundaries



Site constraints and opportunities plan

5.0

DESIGN PROCESS

5.1 PLANNING HISTORY

2015 Planning Application

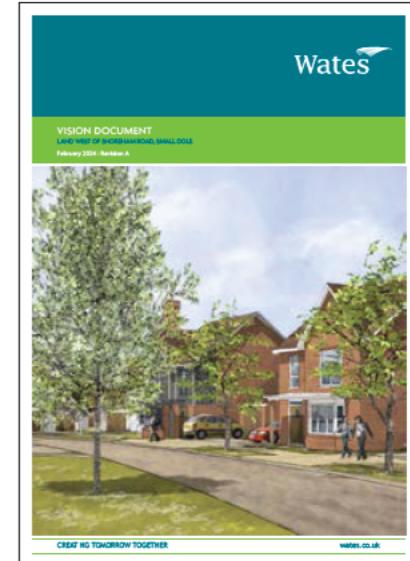
An Outline planning application for 60 dwellings was prepared in February 2015.



2015 application coloured site layout for 60 dwellings

2020 Local Plan Representation

As part of the Local Plan representations for the site in 2020, a vision document was submitted to show how development could come forward, providing a reduced number dwellings (40) and associated landscaping and connections to the village.



Vision document



40 dwelling layout used in the Local plan representation document

5.2 DESIGN EVOLUTION

The current proposals have evolved to suit the updated constraints associated with the site. The focus of the scheme has always been that the development parcels sat to the south and east of the site, to align with the lowest part of the site.

In early iterations of the scheme this was focused more to the east and with back gardens adjoining the southern boundary tree and ecological belt. It was felt that this scheme protruded too far north and that it was turning it's back on an attractive tree belt.

The scheme then evolved into two perimeter blocks that sat in a more southerly orientation and with all plots looking outward to high quality existing or proposed landscaping. Medium density blocks are focused to the

east of the site with a general drop in density as the scheme moves to the west. This scheme is the basis for the final proposals.



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6.0

INDICATIVE PROPOSALS

6.1 INDICATIVE MASTERPLAN

While matters relating to layout are reserved for future determination, the land use parameter plan shown (right) provides a framework to guide future reserved matters applications.

The Indicative Masterplan illustrates an indicative scheme for the site. The various elements of the indicative layout were derived from an analysis of the site, its context and the physical issues restricting its development.

The existing green infrastructure comprising the boundary hedgerows and boundary trees together with the northern and western openness of the site create a framework for development within the site, that respects views in and out of the South Downs National Park.

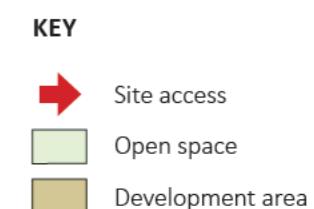
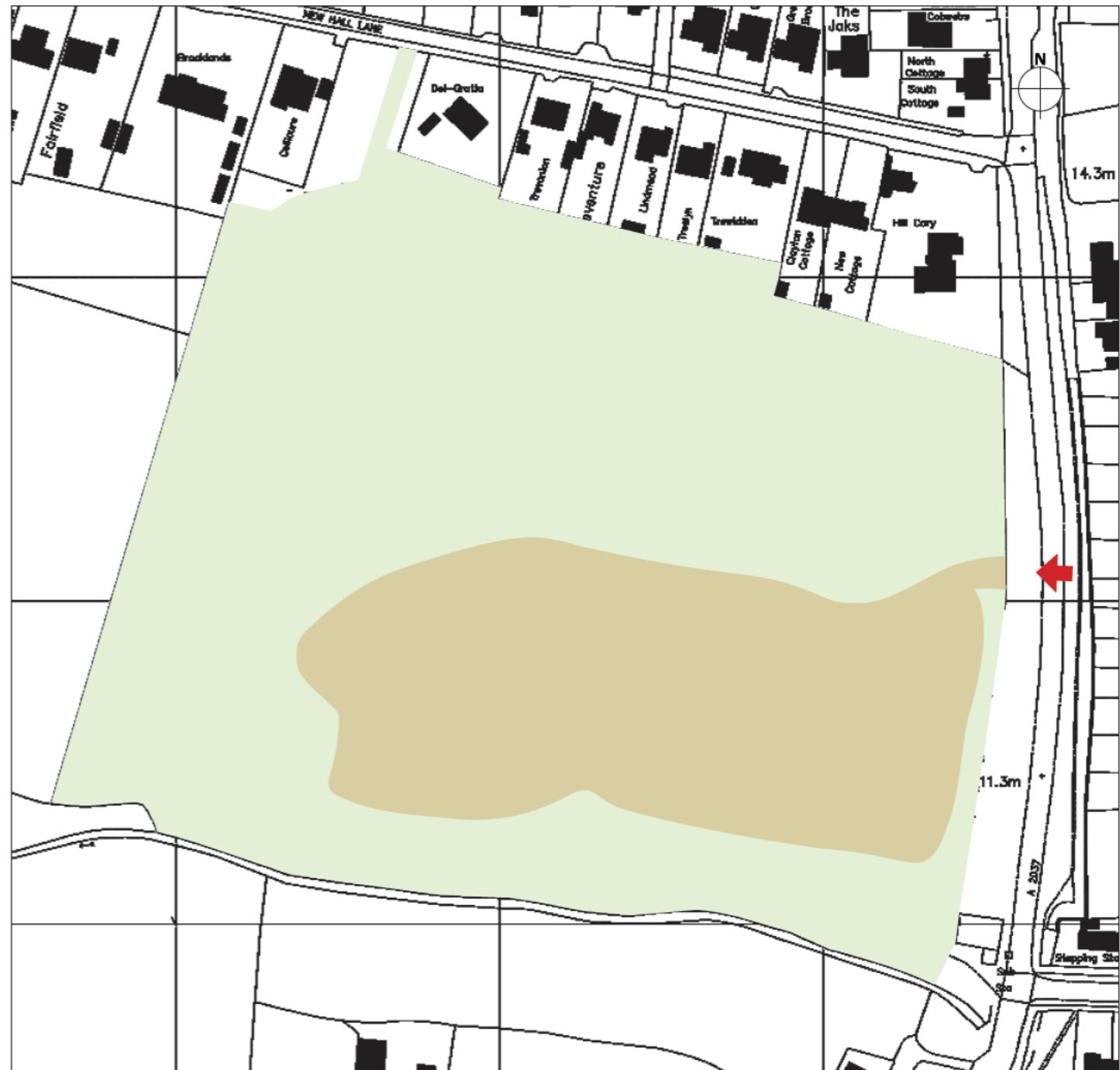
The development is essentially divided into two parcels, all located in the lower level of the site to the south and east. Whilst two storeys is set as the maximum height the scheme moves from flat blocks, to semi-detached, to detached dwellings as you move from east to west, giving the feeling of reduced scale and density as you move into the open space and higher ground. A unifying palette of materials and building elements and details will ensure that the proposed scheme will read as a cohesive place.

The dwellings are set back from Shoreham/ Henfield Road behind the existing hedgerow which helps to maintain the existing character of the road.

The majority of the site is areas of new planting (trees, hedgerows and shrubs) as indicated on the landscape strategy plan.

The overall indicative layout for the site shows the following:

- 45 dwellings to a density in keeping with the surrounding area.
- Accommodation mix of 1 and 2 bedroom apartments and 2, 3, and 4 bedroom houses.
- A density of 31.4 dwellings per hectare net based on a developable area of 1.43 ha;
- Affordable homes;
- Vehicular access point from Shoreham/ Henfield Road;
- Pedestrian/cycle routes within the site and connecting to the village centre;
- Substantial areas of new planting (trees, hedgerows and shrubs) as indicated on the landscape strategy plan.
- In excess of 3.8ha of open space dedicated to informal recreational green space and additional incidental space distributed around the edges of the development including landscaped and ecological buffer zones.
- Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) features which connect with the stream along the southern boundary of the site.
- The retention of as much of the existing boundary hedgerows as possible. Gaps would be strengthened with additional planting. Care has been taken with the creation of the site access to minimise any loss of existing hedgerow.





6.2 AMOUNT

The indicative Masterplan provides 45 dwellings at a density of approximately 8.2 dwellings per hectare (gross) based on a Site area of 5.49 ha. However, based on a developable area of 1.43 ha, the density rises to 31.4 dph. The proposed density reflects a careful balance between the need to deliver homes to meet local needs and the need to respect the Site's local character and context.

Whilst the proposals are in outline form, an indicative mix of housing types has been explored to demonstrate the Site's capacity to deliver a small new neighbourhood as an extension to the village as demonstrated on the dwelling mix parameter plan.

The Site can accommodate a range of types, sizes and tenures of housing including affordable dwellings, which will deliver a balanced community to meet a variety of local needs.

The range of unit types and densities will allow for the creation of a variety of character within the development. Dwelling types include a corner apartment building and a range of semi-detached and detached houses.



Extracts from indicative site sections/ elevations

6.3 SCALE

Matters relating to scale are reserved for future determination. However, maximum building heights are shown on the Building Heights Parameter Plan which is included in Section 10 of the document. The proposed height of the buildings has been guided by the study of the character of Small Dole which identifies the predominantly two storey character of the residential development in the local area.

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) which accompanies this application demonstrates that the 2 storey domestic scale buildings in these specific locations will be contained within the wider landscape setting. The Street Scenes show how the new dwellings will be located on the Site in relation to existing boundary trees and hedgerows which would be retained to screen and "soften" the new buildings.



Extracts from indicative site sections/ elevations



Indicative building heights plan

KEY	
Yellow	One Storey Building
Blue	Two Storey Building

6.5 APPEARANCE

Appearance is the aspect of a place or building that determines the visual impression it makes, including the external built form of the development, its architecture, materials, decoration, colour and texture.

Following consideration of the surrounding context analysis, the proposed scheme will complement the Sussex vernacular, by the use of similar and established materials, details and features.

The development will use a unifying palette of materials, but variations in form, size and style will create a distinctive character area.

Although matters relating to appearance are not part of this outline application, it is anticipated that the key

materials will be a variety of either locally sourced bricks, hanging tile, flint blocks and upper storey timber boarding used across the development site with contrasting bricks used for details such as window headers or cills.

Local details such as chimneys, open porches, steep roof pitches (of 40 degrees or more) and traditional verges or barge boards will be used. Roofs will be a variety of gable, half-hipped or hipped in a clay tile or slate to suit the house type.

A variety of boundary treatments will be used including low walls constructed from locally sourced bricks and native species hedges. 1.8m high timber close boarded fences will be limited to rear gardens or areas where hedges could be planted in front of the fence.



1-6

7-8

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Extracts from indicative site sections/ elevations



Typical local materials, features and forms that could be used on the proposed development

6.6

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY & OPEN SPACE PROVISION

The following landscape practices have been applied whilst progressing the proposed layout to ensure that landscape and visual effects would be mitigated and minimised, relevant policies are adhered to and the proposed development is appropriate within its landscape context;

- Wherever possible, existing vegetation along the site's boundaries would be retained, and reinforced where necessary, to ensure that landscape and visual effects are primarily contained within the site. This approach would also strengthen the site's green infrastructure network and benefit the wider landscape and ecosystem;
- Additional planting in the form of native woodland, hedgerows, orchard trees, street trees, species-rich grassland and ornamental planting would be proposed across the site. This would enhance the landscape and provide multi-functional and inviting open spaces, as well as strengthen the green infrastructure network. The native, structural planting would also further contain landscape and visual effects, help to integrate the development into the landscape and adhere to the Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment (October 2003) management guidelines;
- Built form would be located on the lower ground within the south-eastern extents of the site to help contain the proposed development and reduce visual effects, as well as adhere to the draft allocation requests;
- Housing heights and densities have been selected to reflect the existing developments within Small Dole and adhere to the densities specified within the Horsham District Landscape Capacity Assessment (May 2021); ensuring they are appropriate for this sensitive landscape and limiting landscape and visual effects; and
- The combination of retaining and strengthening vegetation along the south boundary, locating built form on the lower ground and proposing structural native planting throughout the site would soften and reduce visual effects from the elevated positions within the South Downs National Park.



LANDSCAPE STRATEGY & OPEN SPACE PROVISION

Open Space review

In addition to the Landscape Strategy, an Open Space review and design process has been carried out to ensure that the proposed development adheres to the Horsham District Councils open space policy and guidance.

The following table and plan demonstrate how the site fulfils the various open space requirements.

LAND WEST OF SHOREHAM ROAD, SMALL DOLE - OPEN SPACE PROVISION								
Adhering to Policy SD5: Open Space, Sport and Recreation within the Horsham District Planning Framework (Nov 2015) and the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Review (June 2021).								
	Open Space Typology	Recommended Accessibility Standards (m)	Quantity (m ² per person)	Provision required assuming population of 108 (2.4x45 new homes) (m ²)	Minimum area (m ²)	On Site Provision (m ²)	Provision Surplus to Requirements (m ²)	Definitions/ Notes
Multi-Functional Greenspace	Parks & Gardens	1,000m	13.7	1480	500	10968	9488	Definition: Urban parks, country parks and formal gardens, open to the general public. Accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events. For the purposes of this study this also includes greenspace which may currently provide a sports pitch. Given the sloping, primarily rural, settlement edge site, the 'Parks and Gardens' within the site would be focused on a country park character. This space would comprise native planting and a viewpoint area capturing views of the Truleigh Hill, along with a recreational walking route (hoggin footpath) that contributes to a wider circular route within the site.
	Amenity Greenspace	480m	5.8	626	500	7987	7361	Definition: Opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas. Provision comprises informal open space for kickabout football, picnicking and dog walking etc, as well as recreational walking routes (hoggin footpaths) that contribute to a wider circular route within the site. Figures do not include SuDs basins (as per guidance).
	Natural & semi-natural greenspace	300m (local) and 1,000m (sub-district/ strategic)	24.3	2624	500	12028	9404	Definition: Supports wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness. Provision comprises native woodland, tree and shrub planting along with grasslands and drainage basin which would reinforce the green infrastructure of the district. Footpaths within this area comprise mown paths and a timber boardwalk across the drainage basin which contribute to a wider circular route.
Provision for children & young people	Children	400m	0.5	54	100	2 x LAPS 2 x 0.01 = 200	0.02	Definition: Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction such as LAPS, LLAPs, LEAPs and NEAPS. Two LAPS have been incorporated within the scheme to ensure all children can easily access play facilities (within 100m of all dwellings and off the circular walking route). Both areas adhere to the minimum 0.01ha and 5m landscape buffer zone. Given the open spaces rural character, play areas to comprise natural features such as stepping logs, rocks and grass mounds.
	Young people	1,000m	0.2	22	100	*		Definition: Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving open space ball courts, skate parks, bike tracks and sheltered seating. Given the large scale and generally suburban character of these features, they were not deemed appropriate for this sloping, primarily rural, settlement edge site. * Provision required also does not exceed minimum area, however groups of benches have been provided to offer opportunities for young people to gather and socialise.
Allotments	Allotments	1,000m	1.8	194	400	3060	2866	Definition: Opportunities to grow own produce. Added benefits include the long term promotion of sustainable living, health and social inclusion. Given the location of well-established trees around the southern, eastern and western boundaries of the site which would cause shading, allotments would have to be positioned more centrally within the open space or in the vicinity of existing residential dwellings. Combined with the sloping landform of the site, standard allotments were not deemed appropriate. Provision required also does not exceed minimum area. However, given the site's rural edge character and focus on outdoor facilities, micro-allotments and a community orchard have been incorporated to further encourage outdoor use. The orchard has been proposed to the north of the vehicular entrance which would provide an attractive entrance feature and comprise local fruit varieties. It would also encourage a sense of community, enhance the site's ecological value and the species-rich grassland below and nearby, existing vegetation would aid pollination. The micro-allotments have been located close to the development edge to ensure natural surveillance, and in a central location to limit shading. The scale of these plots allows flexibility in whether they are shared amongst the community or informally allocated to individual dwellings.

6.6

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY & OPEN SPACE PROVISION



6.7 BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT

The Ecology Partnership has produced a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment for the proposed development which is submitted as part of the application.

On-Site Habitat Creation

The proposed development includes a residential development in the southern section of site, with areas of other neutral grassland, scrub, orchard, and swale.

The proposal retains and enhances much of the grassland and boundary habitats on site. Wet ditches will be included in swales to provide an increase in watercourse habitats. The proposed habitat areas are shown on the plan (right).

BNG Results

The calculations confirm that the current proposals result in a +18.36% net gain in habitat units and a +10.62% net gain in watercourse units, and all trading rules have been satisfied.

A detailed Habitat Management & Maintenance Plan will be developed at the detailed design stage to detail the long-term management of the proposed habitats to achieve the targeted habitat conditions, over a 30 year timespan.

Conclusion

The baseline value of the site is 24.61 area units, and 2.92 watercourse units.

Post-development, the proposed value of the site is currently predicted to be 29.13 area units, and 3.23 watercourse units, equating to a change of +18.36%, and +10.62% respectively.

To achieve this net-gain the development will seek to enhance all retained areas of grassland and woodland, as well as create new habitats including ditches, scrub, and orchard.

