



Land at Bird in Eye Farm, South of Bird in Eye Hill, UCKFIELD

Design & Access Statement

Ref: PRB/BIE/221C

July 2024



Contents

01 - Introduction	2
02 – Planning Policy Context	6
03 – Context Assessment	8
04 – Site Assessment	15
05 – Design Principles	18
06 - Consultation	25
07 – Design & Access	27
08 – Appendices	37



01 Introduction

01 – Introduction`

02 – Planning Policy Context

03 – Context Assessment

04 – Site Assessment

05 – Design Principles

06 - Consultation

07 – Design & Access

08 – Appendices

01 Introduction

Introduction

Paul Brown RIBA Chartered Architect has been instructed to prepare this Design and Access Statement, (DAS), on behalf of Croudace Homes Ltd in support of an:

“OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF UP TO 190 DWELLINGS, WITH ASSOCIATED WORKS, PARKING, LANDSCAPING, PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE OPEN SPACE AND SANG PROVISION, WITH ACCESS FROM THE B2102.”

Preface

This site has been subject to an earlier planning application in 2021 and an Appeal that was dismissed in 2023.

Therefore, this Statement addresses the design and layout issues raised during the first Planning Application, Appeal and subsequent Pre-Application request for advice prior to making this new planning application.

Parts of this Statement remain unchanged such as the Site and Context Assessments. The Design Principles and details have been amended and are dealt with at the beginning of each section.

Document Structure

This design and access statement contains information in response to the following criteria:

ASSESSMENT: of the planning and physical context of the site.

EVALUATION: showing the site constraints, opportunities and guiding development principles.

DESIGN: setting out the vision, key parameters and illustrative solutions.

The document describes the design approach taken to develop the site to respond to current planning policies and to illustrate how a sustainable new community may be achieved.

This statement is divided into seven sections:

- Section 1: Introduction
- Section 2: Planning policy context
- Section 3: Context assessment
- Section 4 Site assessment
- Section 5: Design principles
- Section 6: Consultation
- Section 7: Design and access
- Section 8: Appendices

Team:

Developer: Croudace Homes Ltd

Arboriculture: Barton Hyett Associates

Architecture: Paul Brown RIBA

Drainage: Ardent Consulting Engineers

Ecology : The Ecology Partnership

Energy: Energist

Heritage: Montagu Evans LLP

Highways Design: Milestone Transport Planning Ltd

Landscape: C.S.A. Environmental/Planning

Planning: Woolf Bond Planning

Public Consultation: Fairthorn Consultancy

Topographical Survey: Encompass Surveys



Local Context

Site Location:
Land at Bird in Eye Farm
South of Bird in Eye Hill
Framfield Uckfield
TN22 5HA

Developer:
Croudace Homes Limited
Croudace House
Caterham Surrey
CR36XQ

Local Authority:
Wealden District Council
Council Offices Vicarage Lane
Hailsham BN27 2AX

The site location is shown outlined in red on the aerial photograph opposite.

Uckfield town centre with its train station and shopping centre is located approximately 1.5km to the west of the site with Framfield village approximately equidistant to the east. The proposed access is from the B2102 (Bird in Eye Hill), upgrading the existing site access which is on the main route between the two communities.





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The Site

The site has an overall area of 20.08Ha which comprises all the land outlined in red.

The shaded area in the centre is the existing Bird in Eye Farm complex, which does not form part of this planning application.

The land contains a number of mature trees and hedgerows. The topography of the site falls from the plateau of the Farm complex to the west at the Framfield stream which follows the western and parts of the southern boundaries.

Within the Bird in Eye Farm complex is a listed Oast that abuts the application site boundary.

Change Summary

The extent of the site has been reduced in response to the Planning Inspectors conclusion that the development would harm the Ancient woodland. Consequently, the woodland is now outside the application site boundary which also excludes land subject to surface water flooding on the south-west & east sides. The curtilage of the listed Oast has been included within the red line as part of the wider setting of the Oast to be considered in this application.

02 Planning Policy Context

01 – Introduction

02 – Planning Policy Context

03 – Context Assessment

04 – Site Assessment

05 – Design Principles

06 - Consultation

07 – Design & Access

08 – Appendices

02 Planning Policy Context

General

All planning policy matters are addressed in the accompanying Planning Statement prepared by:

Woolf Bond Planning
Chartered Planning Consultants
The Mitfords
Basingstoke Road
Three Mile Cross
Reading
RG7 1AT

National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework, updated in February 2019 sets out the Government's Planning policies for England and how they should be applied. It forms the framework within which the locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced. (para 1.1).

The document states that "The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development" (para 2.7).

At the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development" (para 2.9).

Of particular relevance to this application are the sections on housing (5. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes) and (8. Promoting healthy and safe communities).

Paragraph 5.72 deals with the supply of large numbers of new homes. Whereas paragraph 8.96 addresses the provision of open space and recreation.

National Guidance

The National Design Guide:

produced by the Ministry of Housing
Communities and Local Government

Sets out the ten characteristics that need to be considered during the design process. They are:

- Context
- Identity
- Built form
- Movement
- Nature
- Public spaces
- Uses
- Homes & buildings
- Resources
- Lifespan

The long-standing, fundamental principles for good design are that it is:
"fit for purpose; durable; and brings delight."
(para 4 of the introduction).

It is the objective of this design & access statement to describe how this has been achieved.

Local Policy:

- Adopted Wealden Local Plan (1998)
- Wealden District Core Strategy Local Plan (Feb 2013)
- Affordable Housing Delivery Local Plan (May 2016)
- Wealden Design Guide SPD November 2008

Other Guidance:

- Better Places to live (CABE),
- Manual for Streets - (Dept. for Transport),
- Beyond the Six Acre Standards – (Fields in Trust)
- Building For Life

03 Context Assessment

01 – Introduction

02 – Planning Policy Context

03 – Context Assessment

04 – Site Assessment

05 – Design Principles

06 - Consultation

07 – Design & Access

08 – Appendices

03 Context Assessment

Land Use

The site is located mid way between Uckfield and Framfield village on the B2102. The land is known as Bird in Eye Farm and comprises a cluster of agricultural and industrial buildings within the farm complex that accommodate a diverse range of business activities. There is also a listed Oast house within the complex. Around the complex are open fields and woodland which form the setting for the farm.

Uckfield town is nearby and contains a good range of amenities as outlined on the Bellamy Roberts Isochrone on the following page. These include a train station, hospital and schools as well as shopping facilities that include a Waitrose supermarket and a post office.

Framfield is a small village that has a public house, local church and village school with some specialist small scale trades.



Public & Pedestrian Movement

There is access to public transport by bus just outside the hospital entrance and within 400m of the site connecting to both Framfield and Uckfield.

The public footpath along the B2102 southside stops just before the existing field gate into the site and it is proposed to connect this path to the site to extend access into the proposed open spaces.

In the south there is public footpath Framfield 65b that traverses the southern portion of the proposed SANG land.



Vehicle Movement

The site is located between Uckfield and Framfield on the main B2102 road.

There is good access to Uckfield Town Centre which is 1.6Km (1 mile) away with the local railway station being slightly nearer.

There are also good links to the surrounding road network with the A22 to Polegate in the east and East Grinstead to the north-west, being approx. 2.5Km (1.5miles) away.

Framfield is 1.6Km (1 mile) to the east also reached via the main B2102 road.



Heritage Assets

There is a listed Oast within the Bird in Eye Farm Complex that abuts the application site boundary. The listing is in regard to the buildings technological innovation rather than its setting. However, Montagu Evans have prepared a fully detailed Heritage Statement to accompany the planning application. That deals with both setting and the building.



Landscape

The site is located on the edge of settlement on the east side of the Framfield stream which separates the site from the existing residential areas of Newtown and Ridgewood.

There are a number of landscape features within the site including an ancient woodland, an ancient tree and mature hedgerows and tree belts that form field dividers..

The Framfield stream follows the western site boundary and then the south-western edge of the land proposed as part of the SANG.

Please refer to the LVIA report by CSA that accompanies the application.

The image below shows the existing footpath on Bird in Eye Hill finishing just before the field gate entrance to the site.



Ecology

Ecology Partnership have produced an Ecological Appraisal Condition Assessment as part of this planning application.

The report includes habitat surveys for Bats, Great Crested Newts, Dormice, Reptiles, Badgers, nesting birds and other species.

Please refer to this document and any supporting plans.





Density

The site is identified by the red line boundary on the plan adjacent.

The three housing areas A, B & C have been selected for density comparison calculations. The orange rectangle represents 1 Hectare. The respective densities are as follows:

A: Bird in Eye Hill 11 dwellings /Ha
These are predominantly detached dwellings built last century.

B: Eagle Close 24 dwellings/ Ha
These are also detached houses but built to a higher density than "A" probably within the last 30 years.

C; Kingfisher Close 18 dwellings/ Ha
detached housing built at a similar time to B but at a lower density.

Proposed densities for this site are 19 dwellings/Ha.



Built Character

The older local built character is of a high quality and distinctive.

Local materials include good quality brickwork, tile hanging and render under a mixture of plain tile or slate roofs.

four examples shown here are existing houses on the approach to the site from Uckfield. They are located on the B2102, Bird in Eye Hill and illustrate the high quality local architecture with a variety of styles and a range of materials.

New housing would seek to follow these characteristics.



Built Character

Further good examples of vernacular architecture in nearby Framfield.

Clockwise from top right:

Image shows gateway building in a traditional form with a substantial boundary wall to define the public realm and village entrance.

A variety of roof forms and building heights can add interest to the street scene.

Brick boundary walls and mature hedging clearly define the public realm.

Good use of white painted boarding and patterned half tile hanging adds variety.

Feature gables to a pair of semi's adds distinction.

Vertical tile hanging gives pleasing scale to terraced cottages.



Site Character

The existing site comprises 20.12Ha of irregular shaped land situated to the East of Uckfield and West of Framfield.

The site excludes the Bird in Eye Farm complex, a collection farm buildings that include a listed Oast.

There are specific woodland areas and tree and hedgerows within the site that divide the site into 3 distinct areas.

1. The eastern parcel that forms the proposed Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG).
2. The central section bounded by the ancient woodland to the south a tree belt to the east and a mature hedgerow and Farm to the west. This land is proposed for housing and SANG land..
3. The remaining western parcel surrounds the retained Bird in Eye Farm complex and is bordered by the ancient woodland and the stream. This land is proposed for housing, SANG land and public open space.

04 Site Assessment

01 – Introduction

02 – Planning Policy Context

03 – Context Assessment

04 – Site Assessment

05 – Design Principles

06 - Consultation

07 – Design & Access

08 – Appendices

04 Site Assessment

The Site

The site comprises a parcel of land bounded on the south by an ancient woodland. The northern parcel is further divided by tree belts and hedgerows and surrounds the Bird in Eye farm complex which does not form part of this application.

The topography of the site starts with the farm being on a higher plateau and the land falling away to the west and south. Where the Framfield stream follows the site boundary in some sections.

There is the potential to create an extension to the footpath on Bird in Eye Hill which would facilitate safe walking into Uckfield town centre.

The listed Oast is located within the farm complex and abuts the application site boundary. The curtilage forms part of the application but not the building itself.



Existing site entrance looking south



Lane leading to the Farm complex with the listed Oast house in the centre.



Existing house Lyecroft adjacent site entrance.

Considerations

- Creating a safer main entrance junction and providing for the existing houses to access using the new arrangement.
- Respecting the existing housing along Bird in Eye Hill.
- Respecting the listed Oast.
- Protecting the existing ancient woodland, tree belts and mature hedgerows.
- Extending pedestrian public rights of way onto the site and creating new routes through to connect to the proposed new SANGS area to the east.
- Provide additional landscaping within the site to enhance the setting for new housing, preserve the existing site features where practical.
- Provide a range of new homes that meet current local housing needs.
- Create a high quality new residential community that will support the existing businesses within the locality.
- Enhance the public rights of way and improve the connection to the town centre by foot and cycling.



KEY

Existing site features and constraints

-  Application Site Boundary
-  Area of Bird in Eye Farm not included within the planning application
-  Location of Listed Oast
-  Existing watercourses
-  Existing overhead electricity cables with easement
-  Existing trees to be retained and protected by designated root protection areas

-  Existing Hedgerows to be retained and protected with a 5M protective buffer zone
-  Ancient Woodland outside the application boundary but within the same land ownership
-  15M protective buffer zone to Ancient Woodland
-  50M protective buffer zone to Ancient Woodland
-  5M separation buffers to farm & existing housing within the application boundary
-  Retained vehicular access to Hailwell Farm Bungalow

Opportunities possible with the new development

-  Improved highway road safety with upgraded main site entrance
-  Improved highway road safety with modified accesses to the existing houses adjacent
-  Provision of a new public pedestrian access to connect existing footpath network on Bird in Eye Hill to the proposed open space.
-  Provision of a new area of land designated as a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) with public access
-  Opportunity to provide a significant new area of public open space for use by the wider community

-  Oast
-  Opportunity to improve the immediate curtilage of the Listed Oast and improve the condition of the building structure
-  New public viewpoints from within site
-  Opportunity for public to enjoy closer views of the Oast
-  Pedestrian links to new SANG land
-  Potential areas of land for housing, amenity & associated infrastructure

Constraints and Opportunities

The red line identifies the site boundary. The area shaded grey is the Bird in Eye Farm complex that does not form part of this application.

Existing landscape features within the site would be retained and enhanced wherever practical and landscaped buffers of sufficient size incorporated to ensure the long-term protection of each landscaped feature. The buffers would range from 5 -15m wide.

There are overhead cables running from the site entrance to the south-west corner of the site and their route & alignment has been incorporated into the illustrative layout.

The farm complex contains a listed Oast. The listing relates to the technological aspect of the building only but the setting is being considered as part of this application.

It is envisaged that the open green space at the site entrance would remain with the new road passing over. The existing houses adjacent will have their access arrangements modified to connect to the new entrance to improve highway safety.

There is the opportunity to provide a new footpath connection in the western corner of the site to link with the existing footpath network and a new area of public open space on the steeper part of the site.

The remaining land coloured light brown would be available for new housing and landscaping.

05 Design Principles

01 – Introduction

02 – Planning Policy Context

03 – Context Assessment

04 – Site Assessment

05 – Design Principles

06 - Consultation

07 – Design & Access

08 – Appendices

05 Design Principles

Design Vision

The vision for the land at Bird in Eye Farm remains the same and is to create a new community in response to the housing shortage within the district.

This vision will include providing substantial public open space both in the form of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and in the form of other large areas of public open space ancillary to the housing areas.

The integration of the existing landscaping features around and within the site will ensure that a high quality setting will be provided for the new housing.

The provision of up to 190 new dwellings will help to meet the Councils housing needs at this time. The creation of large areas of open space will be for the benefit of the wider community in Uckfield and Framfield and surrounding areas.

Design Changes following the Appeal

The Inspectors Report considered 6 main issues to be considered and formed the basis of the dismissal.

1. Loss or deterioration of the ancient woodland.
2. Effect of development on Highway Safety.
3. Effect of development on flood risk.
4. Effect of development on drainage.
5. Whether the site is a suitable location for housing.
6. Whether development would preserve the setting of the listed Oast.

Item 4 The Inspector concluded there was no harm caused.

Item 5 confirmed that the site was in a suitable location for housing development.

All the other issues have been addressed as part of this new application, see the Revised Design Principles.

Revised Design Principles

Item 1: The issue regarding harm to the Ancient woodland has been addressed by its exclusion from the application site boundary. The 15m protective buffer remains within the red line and will form part of the landscape strategy for the open space. Reinforcing the protection of the woodland.

In addition a 50m protective buffer has been applied and no development is within this zone. This was added in response to the Inspectors point 25. where the Ancient woodland was considered more susceptible to increased opportunities for deleterious impacts as a result of a high proportion of the woodland being adjacent the housing.

Item 2: Highway safety is a paramount concern and Milestone Transport have produced a completely new proposal for the site access that now incorporates a roundabout. These details are included separately with the application.

Item 3: The updated Sequential Test by RPS is included separately with the application.

Item 6: In the original application the listing for the Oast was in respect for the technological aspects of the building not the setting. However, the setting is now considered important and the proposals have reduced the quantity of housing to facilitate a much large area of open space in front of the building.

During the Pre-Application process this open area in front of the Oast was increased and the housing numbers reduced further from 235 to 190. This is all detailed in a Design Response Statement the description of the process is within the Consultation Section 6 of this DAS.

Other design matters relating to the layout have been raised and are as follows:

Parking: on-plot parking solutions are the Wealden preferred arrangement. Frontage parking and rear parking courts are considered unacceptable. The proposed layout shows the majority of housing as on-plot and all rear parking courts have been removed. Where frontage parking is retained these areas are either in formal squares or in small mews style arrangements with good surveillance. Standards will be in accordance with the Councils parking Calculator.

Apartments: All 2 bed units have now been changed to houses. 1 bed apartments and maisonettes have been reduced in number significantly and have good sized private communal gardens or there own individual private garden. All other dwellings have their own private garden.

Public Open Space: The inclusion of the 50M landscaped buffer, the central open space and the SANG land ensures that there is sufficient provision of open space.

Housing on Slopes: The layout now excludes housing on the steeper parts of the site with the exception of the small group of houses along the northern boundary. This is described in more detail on the following page.

In addition the remainder of this section sets out the design principles adopted for this site. They follow those principles established in the previous application.

Change Summary

The site access is via a new roundabout with the primary route running along the east side of the Bird in Eye Farm complex, away from the Oast. The site area now excludes the Ancient woodland and the housing numbers have been reduced to 190. The open space in front of the Oast has been increased and the Oast curtilage included in the application red line. All 2 bedroom apartments have been omitted and replaced with houses. Play areas have been moved away from the Oast setting. Housing adjacent the northern boundary has been specially designed to respect the Oast.



Illustrative street scenes:

From the top:
The general view of the 10 dwellings from the open space.

Middle:
Enlarged view of the centre range. Long simple roof form over three dwellings that change from a single storey bungalow to a two storey house to respond to the site slope.

Bottom:
Single storey bungalow and 1½ storey cottage with a single storey element on the lower part of the slope.



Key Plan Section B:B

Housing on the Northern Boundary

A small group of 10 dwellings are being proposed along the northern boundary.

This is in response to the need to provide surveillance over the new public footpath/cycleway link that will connect to the existing footway on Bird in Eye Hill.

Their location is in a sensitive part of the site at the edge of the listed Oast setting.

As such they have been designed to a more rural style with simple pitched roofs over a linear range building footprint reflecting the old “Hopper Hut” forms.

The “Hopper Huts” were the traditional accommodation for the hop pickers who would come out from London in the summer months to pick hops, supplement their incomes and have a working “holiday in the country”. They lived in simple low buildings made of brick and timber with plain tiled roofs.

The housing mix includes 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings ranging from 1, 1½ and 2 storeys in height. There are some bungalows with steep pitched roofs to reflect the Oast forms.

Parking is located within cobbled courtyards with garages under 2 bed room loft style apartments.

Land Use & Design

This plan summarises how the land could be divided up to provide the different character areas described in the vision statement.

The diagrams that follow show step-by-step how the illustrative masterplan has been formed.



KEY	
	Site Boundary - 20.08Ha (excludes land required for highways sightlines and the retained Bird in Eye Farm Complex).
	Highways land Boundary - 0.10Ha (land required for sightlines).
	Retained Land for Bird in Eye Farm - 1.50Ha.
	SANGS Land - 8.69Ha
	Open space within housing land - 4.02Ha
	15m ancient woodland buffer within site boundary - 1.21Ha
	Land for Housing only - 6.20Ha
	Quantity and Density: Net Developable Area of 11.36Ha providing 190 dwellings at circa 17 dwellings/ Ha.
	Line of 15M buffer to the ancient woodland.
	Proposed housing set out using a 50M buffer to the ancient woodland.

Site Analysis – Steps 1-4

Step 1 - The site access

The existing site access position will be used but upgraded to a new roundabout that will improve highway safety for the Farm complex, neighbouring houses and the new homes. There is an opportunity to connect with the existing footpath network in the N.W. corner of the site.



Step 2 - Existing landscape

All existing landscape features retained to preserve the site character on the boundaries. A large area of open space to the East will form part of a new SANG that will extend along the southern site boundary providing separation between the housing and the Ancient woodland. The woodland is retained and protected.



Step 3 - History and Archaeology

The proposals will protect the wider setting of the Oast and make improvements to the immediate curtilage. The proposed open space will enable the public the benefit of viewing this rare 19C traditional building close-to.



Step 4 - Main route within the site.

From the proposed roundabout on Bird in Eye Hill a new spine road will form the main route within the layout to link the perimeter street network. This road alignment will follow the site contours.



The eight diagrams on this and the following page summarise the ideas and design steps that have determined the form of the illustrative layout. They show how the existing site features, have set the core pattern for the design and read together provide a clear picture of the design approach taken.

Step 5 - Drainage.

The proposals include a sustainable urban drainage system that enhances the landscape and adds character to the layout. Four new balancing ponds are proposed within the open space to connect to the existing watercourse.



Step 6 - Leisure Infrastructure.

A footpath/cycleway is proposed through the development that links with the existing footpath on Bird in Eye Hill and gives direct access to the new open space, play areas and the SANG land.



Step 7 - Development parcels.

The housing that fronts the road network is arranged as enclosed secure blocks that clearly define the public and private realms. Streets are aligned to give glimpses of the open countryside beyond.



Step 8 - Development Summary.

The proposals will create a new addition to Uckfield with good vehicular and pedestrian links to the surrounding areas that are fully integrated with generous open space, play areas and SANG land for the use of the wider community.





Character Areas

The preceding site analysis plans have shown how a development framework could be established. Overlaid onto this framework, to create variety and interest throughout the site, a series of character areas are proposed.

There are three potential character areas within the housing parcels excluding areas of open space.

Main Street:
Comprising of a consistent grouping of dwellings that clearly define the space with buildings being quite close to the back of footpath. The buildings here will be taller with some two and a half and three storey forms. The architecture can be more consistent to give the impression of continuity of form. This area will be the highest density.

Access Ways:
that will connect the Main Street to the perimeter lanes. These are shared surface roadways with simple semi-detached or terraced forms set within predominately frontage parking within a formal landscaped “squares”.

Perimeter Lanes:
where the typology is much looser with detached and semi-detached houses set in generous plots with individual on-plot parking provision.

06 Consultation

01 – Introduction

02 – Planning Policy Context

03 – Context Assessment

04 – Site Assessment

05 – Design Principles

06 - Consultation

07 – Design & Access

08 – Appendices

06 Consultation

Pre- Application Advice

Design Response Statement

Following the dismissal of the previous application at appeal an initial document was produced for a pre-application advice request.

This document titled Design Response Statement was produced to address the three key harms highlighted in the Inspectors Report. The matter of flood risk being successfully addressed prior to the pre-application submission.

Document Structure

This Design Response Statement contained information that addressed the six putative reasons for which planning permission would have been refused were Wealden District Council in a position to determine the planning application :

The statement was divided into five sections:

Section 01: Introduction

Section 02: Ancient Woodland

Section 03: Highway Safety

Section 04: Listed Building

Section 05: Conclusions and Proposals

Approach

The Inspectors findings regarding three of the putative reasons for refusal were not addressed in the statement:

- Flood risk – Sequential Test not satisfying the Framework or PPG
- Drainage – No harm found or conflict with policies
- Location – Development is in a suitable location

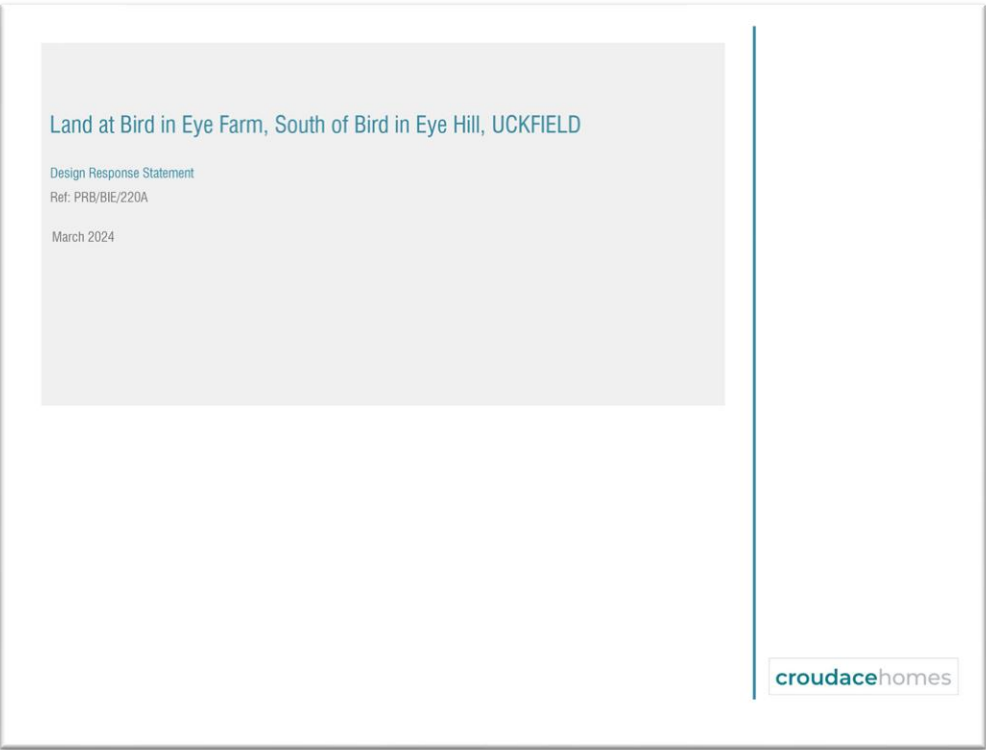
The remaining three reasons for which planning permission would have been refused were in connection with the ancient woodland, highway safety and the listed building.

In each section the appeal decision specifics were listed and the response at the time given with supporting illustrations.

The conclusion combined the additional site constraints with those listed in the appeal decision to illustrate how a new masterplan could be laid out to address all the concerns raised.

Note

Sections 02, 03, 04 and 05 are reproduced in full in this Design and Access Statement on the following pages.



Document cover.

02 Ancient Woodland

Appeal Decision Specifics

S.A.N.G. Land

The previous application included a much larger area of open land designated for use as S.A.N.G. and this includes, abuts and cuts through areas of ancient and semi natural woodland known as “Bird in Eye Shaw” and “Nightingale Wood”.

To achieve a circular route as requested by Natural England (NE) within the S.A.N.G. land an existing “narrow trodden path” through the ancient woodland was proposed to be utilised and upgraded to mitigate any damaging effect increased usage would generate.

The perceived unacceptable loss and deterioration to the ancient woodland that this would create has been a key factor in the development of the new masterplan.

Consequently the area of S.A.N.G. has been reduced accordingly and has been limited to the northern part of the site only. This will ensure that there will be no need to pass through the ancient woodland.

The new site boundary is shown on the plan opposite.

Buffer Zones

A buffer zone to the ancient woodland with a minimum distance of 15m is required by Natural England and this was provided on the previous layout.

However, the Inspectors report concluded that as the ancient woodland was long and narrow, and borders the whole of the southern boundary of the housing site and around half of its western side, it is more susceptible to increased opportunities for deleterious impacts as identified in the NE standing advice.

To address this concern, the design constraints now include a 50m buffer along the southern and western sections of the ancient woodland.

Action Taken

- The reduction of the overall site area to exclude the majority of the ancient woodland and the land to the south of the ancient woodland from the development proposals. All development now being contained within the northern part of the site. (S.A.N.G land, buffers, public open space, housing and infrastructure).
- The extension of the ancient woodland buffer from 15 to 50m. (Some ancient woodland remains within the red line application boundary).
- The S.A.N.G. land is located to the eastern part of the site, (shown hatched) and is in excess of the requirements of the new proposals.



03 Highway Safety

Appeal Decision Specifics

The Inspectors report highlighted the shared use of the proposed access for residents of the new development, visitors to the S.A.N.G. and vehicles associated with the light industrial uses at Bird in Eye Farm.

The Highway Authority (HA) raised concerns in respect of the Swept Path Analysis of 12m rigid trucks turning in and out of the site. The effect of dangerous manoeuvres on a relatively fast road, (Bird in Eye Hill), in the Inspectors view cumulatively constitute an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

Concern was also raised regarding cyclists using the proposed vehicle entrance not having specific provision to turn right onto Bird in Eye Hill.

Action Taken

Milestone Transport Planning have prepared a fully revised access arrangement removing the previously proposed “tee” junction and providing a new roundabout with safe cycle links onto the carriageways in both directions.

Milestone Transport are currently trying to engage with ESCC on the acceptability of this new access design.

See plan below.



04 Listed Building

Appeal Decision Specifics

The Inspector recorded that much of the significance of the oasthouse may be derived from its technical rarity as set out in the listing description. However, the Inspectors view is that this case is concerned with the importance of the setting of the oasthouse and how this contributes to the asset's significance.

Its elevated position above the town gives it a local landmark quality.

“The proposed development is located within the setting of the oasthouse. Consequently, any remaining ability to appreciate the significance of the oasthouse in its historic setting would be largely lost. The level of development proposed would also visually compete with and distract from its local landmark quality. Furthermore, the relatively quiet and tranquil character of the setting of the oasthouse would be significantly diminished by the large-scale residential development proposed”.

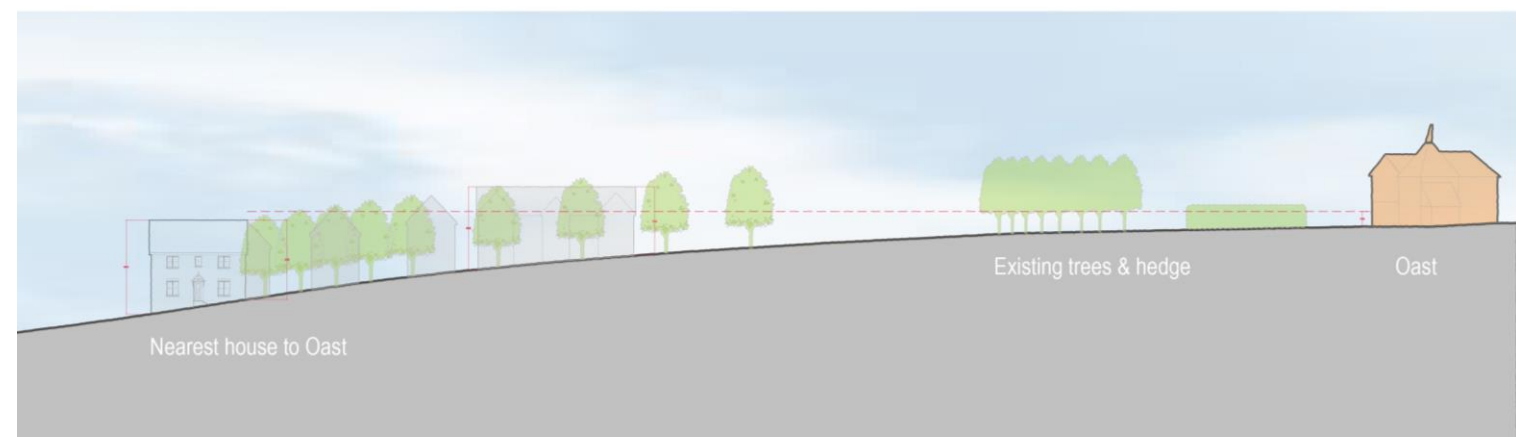
The Inspector stated that the Framework is also clear that in determining planning applications account should be taken of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets.



View looking east from the entrance to Wigeon Way new development adjacent Uckfield Hospital

Action Taken

- Create a much larger open space immediately in front of and to the side of the oasthouse by removing several of the proposed housing areas.
- Where housing is shown on the lower slopes create a wider gap between groups to enable the open space to extend to the western boundary. This will maintain the existing clear view of the oasthouse from the adjacent Uckfield Hospital/new Wigeon Way vantage point.
- Include the immediate curtilage of the oasthouse within the planning application boundary to make renovations/improvements to the immediate hard landscaped setting of the listed building.
- Put in place a schedule of repairs/restoration projects to safeguard the future of the oasthouse.



Section through the site showing the relative levels of the housing in relation to the Oasthouse

05 Conclusion

Ancient Woodland

By removing the southern field from the proposed S.A.N.G. land together with the majority of ancient woodland from the application site boundary the proposals significantly remove the risk of the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland.

The buffer zone increased from 15 to 50m will provide greater protection and less opportunities for disturbance to wildlife from additional people and traffic, fly tipping and the impacts of domestic pets from predation.

Highways Safety

The design of a new roundabout to replace the earlier proposed “Tee” junction addresses all the safety issues in connection with the vehicular and cycle maneuvers at the site entrance.

Listed Building

Extending the open space immediately in front and to the sides of the oasthouse and down to the western boundary maintains the long distance view and its local landmark quality. Proposed housing set further back from the oasthouse boundary reduces the impact on the setting.

Restoration of the immediate curtilage of the building along with a programme of work for the long-term care of the building fabric will enhance and ensure a safe future for the asset.

Design Development

The response to the Inspectors report has created a new set of constraints and the proposed layout has been designed to accommodated these.

Consequently this has meant that there is less land for housing. These new proposals are for 235 dwellings reduced from up to 290 dwellings. This will have a positive impact on traffic movements and use of the open space and has contributed to the setting of the listed oasthouse.

The drawings that follow show the initial design development as a result of addressing the Appeal Decision main issues.

Starting with the amendment of the application red line boundary to include only land to the north of the ancient woodland to incorporate the S.A.N.G. land, open space, housing areas and infrastructure. The extended woodland buffer has defined the southern limit of development.

The land use parameters plan shows how the land is divided into S.A.N.G land, public open space, housing and infrastructure and illustrates the impact of the new constraints.

The illustrative masterplan shows how the layout could look taking into account the concerns raised. The plan shows the disposition of housing and roads within the landscaped setting. Sustainable urban drainage can be located within the 50m buffer and is subject to future design.

The proposals shown take account of the issues raised in the Inspectors report and have resulted in the development of a masterplan that will provide the much needed housing while respecting and maintained local landscape and listed building assets.

The masterplan from the refused planning application is also included at the end of this document for comparison purposes only.

Pre-Application Revised Masterplan

Following the Conclusion in the Design Response Statement a revised masterplan was included along with the refused masterplan for a direct comparison.

The new proposal was for 235 dwellings against the previous numbers of 290 a reduction of around 19%.

Both these plans are shown opposite.

TOP: The revised masterplan showing 235 dwellings with an enlarged open space in front of the Oast and increased woodland buffer to 50M.

BOTTOM: The dismissed masterplan showing 290 dwellings.

LPA Written Response

The Written Response to the Pre-App meeting was received from Wealden District Council dated 04 June, 2024. The following matters were raised:

- Acknowledgement that the Principle of Development was acceptable to the inspector.
- Highways access and design: Understood that this was subject to a separate pre-application engagement with ESCC Highways.
- Schematics: Concern over the western part of the development and access road, the density of the layout generally and the predominance of on-street parking and the significant use of rear parking courts. Questioned if there was enough space within the layout for significant landscaping.
- Ecology: Acknowledgement that the proposed buffers would comply with the minimum requirements of the Natural England Standing Advice.



Revised plan for 235 dwellings submitted with the Pre-Application advice request.



Original proposal for up to 290 dwellings dismissed at Appeal.

LPA Written Response - continued

- Heritage: It was accepted that it is the western part of the site that results in the harm to the setting of the heritage asset. The view that development in the northwest corner should be excluded and the southern portion shrunk back to the easement with the road moved to utilise the original north-eastern access to the eastern part of the site.

Current Proposals

To respond to the concerns set out in the Written Statement the following changes have been made to the layout:

Ancient Woodland:
The 50M buffer is retained on the southern boundary and has effectively been increased on the western edge by the removal of the housing parcels west of the easement line.

Highway Safety:
The roundabout design has been revised to make the main access route via the eastern side of the Bird in Eye Farm complex. There is a small drive to the western part of the site.

Listed Building:
Housing is significantly reduced in the western part of the site and the west side of the easement line. The western access road across the frontage of the Oast setting has been removed.

Some housing is proposed along the north-western boundary to provide adequate surveillance of the new footpath link onto Bird in Eye Hill. See section 05.

Schematics:
Development numbers have been reduced to up to 190. Parking is now mainly on-plot with some frontage parking in specifically defined squares. There is a small area of frontage parking within a mews court. All rear parking courts have been omitted. Most streets have tree-lined routes.

The two plans opposite shown the Pre-Application Layout for 235 dwellings and the current proposal for up to 190 dwellings.



Plan for 235 dwellings submitted with the Pre-Application advice request.



Current proposal for up to 190 dwellings forming part of this application.

06 Consultation

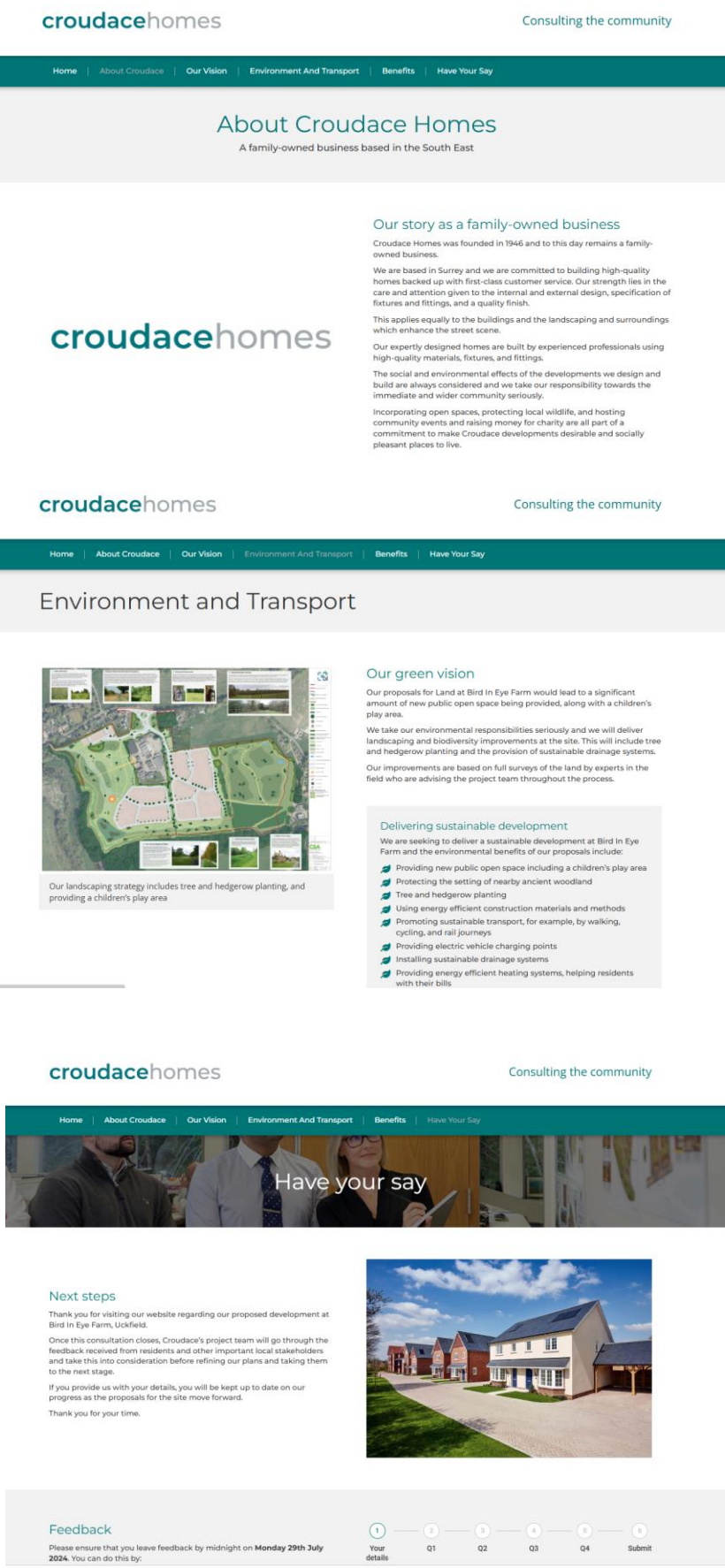
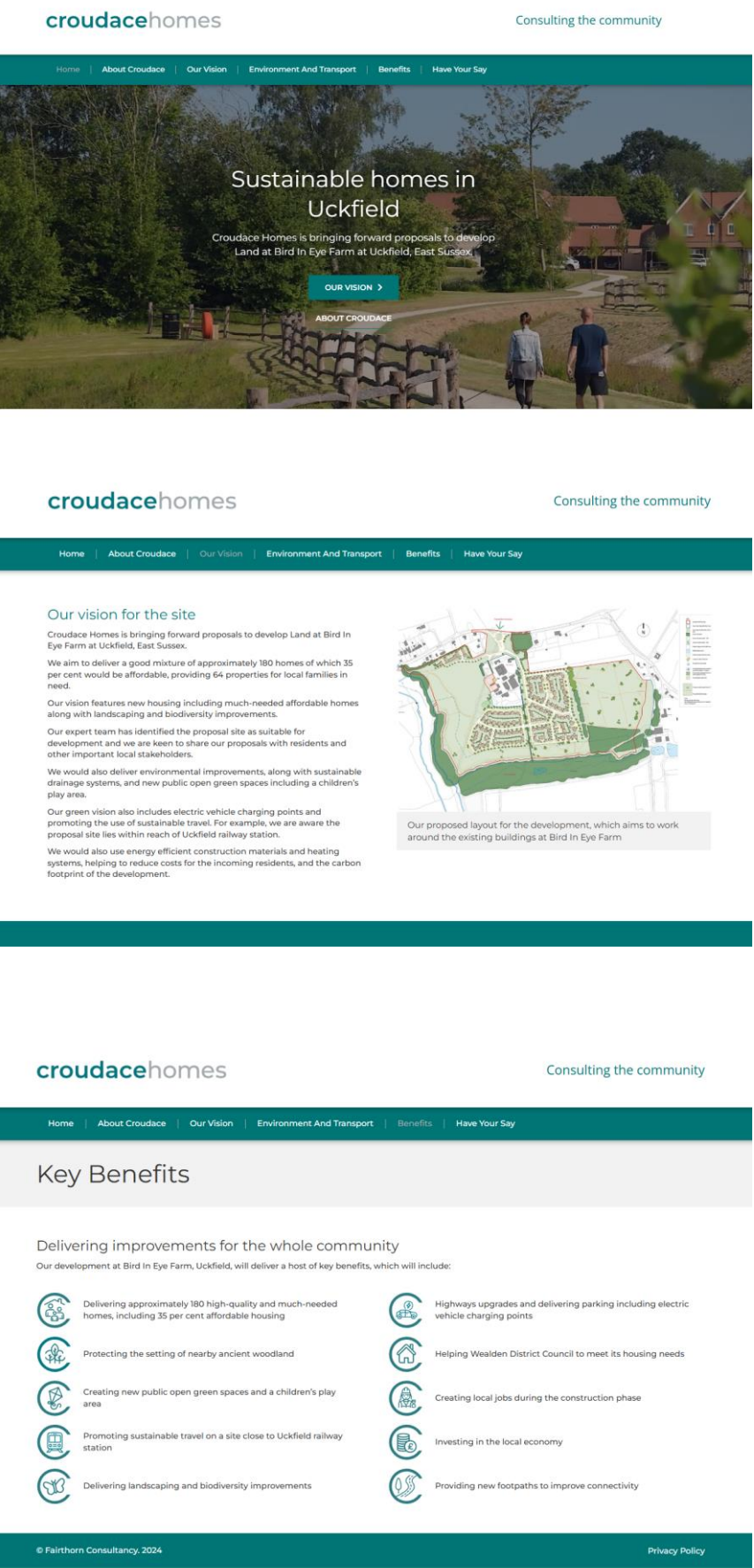
Public Consultation

During July, 2024 Fairthorn Consultancy set up an on-line public consultation platform for local residents to understand the new proposals and provide feedback.

A full report on the responses to the consultation are included in a separate document produced by Woolf Bond and Fairthorn Consultancy as part of this application.

The images on this page show some of the pages that formed part of the consultation website.

In addition flyers were posted to 1000 homes in the local vicinity as part of the consultation process.



07 Design & Access

01 – Introduction

02 – Planning Policy Context

03 – Context Assessment

04 – Site Assessment

05 – Design Principles

06 - Consultation

07 – Design & Access

08 – Appendices

07 Design and Access

Layout

This has been a landscape-led design process from the outset. By identifying the preferred SANG area and the various buffers to the ancient woodland, trees, and hedgerows, it has enabled the available land for housing to be clearly defined.

The master plan layout has been designed to make the best use of the available land while ensuring that the latest principles of urban design are adopted and integrated.

The use of well defined perimeter blocks that clearly separate the public and private realms to aid legibility of the layout and make navigating the internal routes easy has been a fundamental part of the design process.

Within this framework are the open space areas ancillary to the housing areas. These take the form of wider open areas for walking, equipped play areas that all make for an attractive public community places.

The use of perimeter blocks ensures that a permeable movement network is created within the site reducing the need for cul-de-sac designs and improving large vehicle manoeuvrability such as refuse vehicles.

The movement network has various character areas that have been described previously in section 5.

The following pages describe and illustrate aspects of the layout including Use and Amount, the emerging illustrative masterplan scale and appearance and access.

Sustainable Drainage

The proposed development incorporates a sustainable drainage attenuation basin, swales and pipes as a means of mitigating the site's impact on local drainage patterns.

In addition, the ponds and swales will provide a positive landscape asset that will assist in contributing to habitat creation and enhance biodiversity.

Please refer to the following for details:

CSA - landscape strategy

Ardent - drainage design.

Landscape

The site has considerable established landscaping to all boundaries.

CSA Environmental have been appointed to prepare a separate landscape strategy for the site.

The proposals include the creation of a Suitable Alternative Area of Natural Greenspace, (SANG) to the east and south of the site.

The Ancient woodland within the site is being retained and the required buffers for protection are being incorporated into the design.

In addition there are areas of public open space within and around the housing areas that also contain play areas and sustainable urban drainage systems.



Illustrative Master Plan

This illustrative master plan shows how the Analysis & Character Area Plans could be developed into a layout for up to 190 dwellings.

The plan incorporates all the technical input from the whole client/consultant team.

This has ensured that the key constraints have been addressed in terms of access, landscape, ecology, heritage and good urban design principles.

This proposal is for a new community and its success depends on ensuring a robust design approach that is deliverable.

All the existing landscaping is protected and enhanced by the proposals. A new SANG with good access is provided.

The images below show the housing on the North-west boundary, key squares and junctions on the Main Street and Accessway.





Use & Amount

The proposal is for housing with associated open space and infrastructure to meet the shortfall in housing land supply within Uckfield.

This is a major strategic site forming an urban extension to Uckfield. It has the capacity to provide additional housing and public open space, as well as a substantial area of open land as a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) for the benefit of the wider community.

The proposal is for a total of up to 190 dwellings. This will comprise a mix of market and affordable housing.

The affordable housing provision will accord with the Wealden D.C. Affordable Housing Delivery Local Plan at the rate of 35% of the overall total of new homes. This will generate up to 67 new affordable homes with the remaining 65% providing up to 123 homes for open market sale.

The plan opposite is indicative of where the affordable housing could be located within the master plan. The houses will be pepper-potted throughout the layout and be constructed using the same materials as the market houses.

Actual mix and final positions of the affordable housing will be determined in collaboration with the nominated RSL as part of any future Reserved Matters submissions.



Scale

The building heights, footprint size and spaces between determine the character of the masterplan. The relationship to the public realm and alignments make a significant contribution to the variety and interest within the design.

The illustrative masterplan indicates where the variations in scale could occur to provide sign posting, way marking and clear legibility when navigating the plan.

The majority of houses will be 2 storeys in height to reflect the local area buildings.

It is anticipated that variations to this would occur on the spine road where heights could increase to two-and-a-half or even three storey at road intersections and on prominent corners. Single storey elements will be predominantly be at the perimeter edges of the housing areas.



Appearance

This page shows a variety of architectural styles from the local area. They are examples of how buildings can be arranged to clearly define the street scene by maintaining a consistent building line and how a pleasing rhythm is achieved by repeating house typology. Suitable for the main street character area.

Variety is provided by the use of gables, bay windows and ornate eaves and barge boards.

A strong boundary between the public & private realms establishes a setting for the dwellings.

Semi-detached housing on the access ways will be of a simple form of matched pairs or with contrasting gables.

Housing to the perimeter of the site would be more detached with separate drives. The wide frontage typology being especially suited to these locations.

Some 3 storey forms can add interest to the street scene.



Appearance

Croudace Homes

These images show a range of houses that have been built by Croudace Homes. Utilising materials and built form that is characteristic to the local area of Uckfield and Framfield.

Inclusive Access

Access and Movement

Bird in Eye Farm sits on a plateau with the land to the west and south falling away towards the Framfield Stream on the boundary.

The road network has taken advantage of the natural land contours to limit the need for stepped dwellings.

The design of the layout has made provision for a main street thoroughfare in the form of a spine road that connects to the main site entrance on Bird in Eye Hill. There is no secondary vehicular access onto the site.

The spine road incorporates a combined footpath and cycleway which in turn connects to the existing road and footpath network at the north-west corner of the site.

There are informal footpath routes that criss-cross across the proposed open spaces and connect to the Suitable Area of Natural Greenspace, (SANG) to the east.

Open Space Access

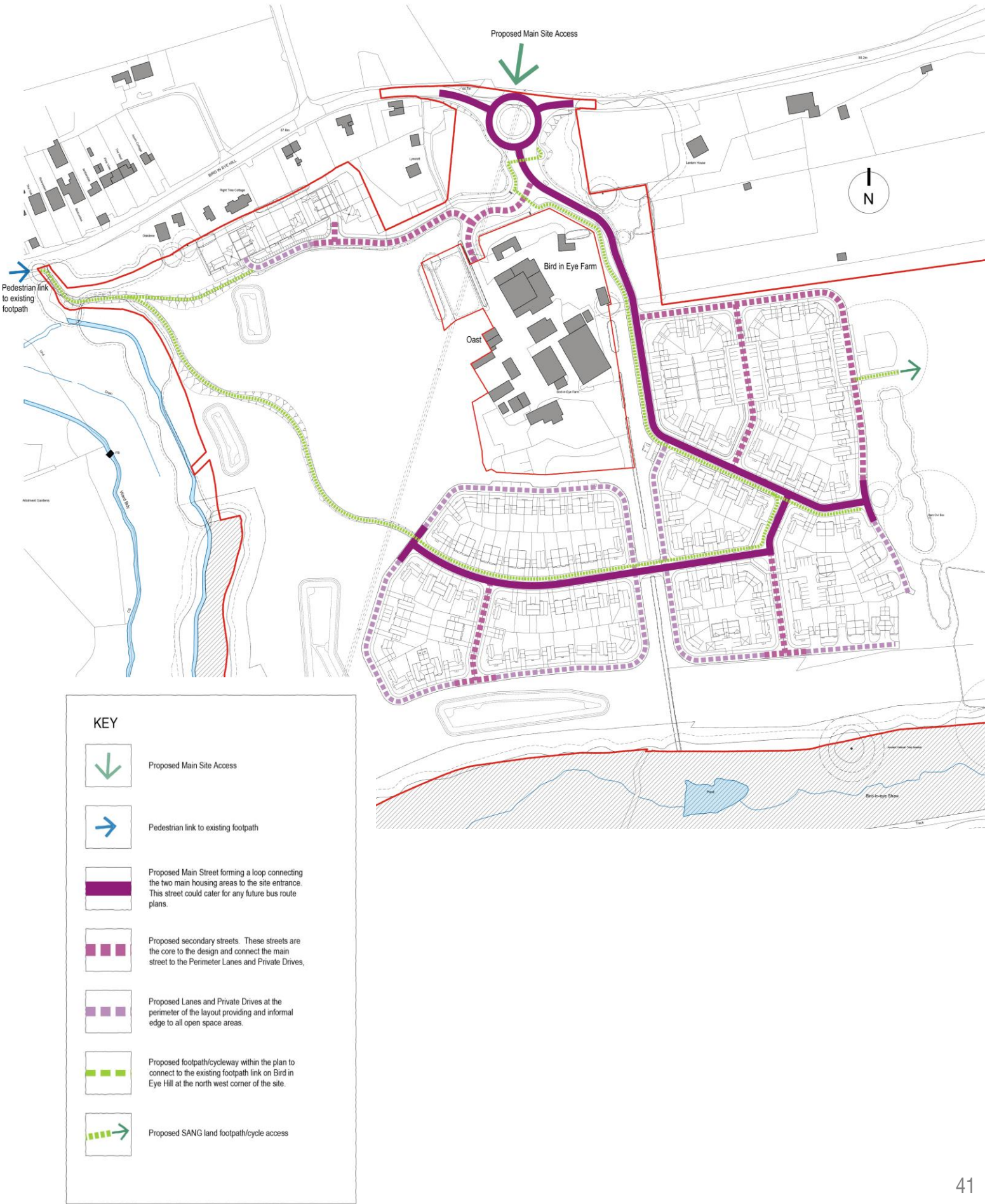
There are multiple pedestrian access points into the SANG land. Refer to the landscape strategy plan for details of routes through this significant new open space.

Existing Properties

The existing houses at the site entrance, Lycroft and No's 18/19 Bird in Eye Hill will have new realigned driveways so that they can take advantage of the new site entrance with its improved sightlines giving greater safety when exiting onto Bird in Eye Hill.

Car Parking

The requirement will be met in accordance with the parking standards at the Reserved Matters stage.



Land Use & Sustainability

A separate full report on sustainable energy use is being included with this application for outline planning permission. Please refer to the specific documents.

Croudace will seek to use the lowest carbon intensive technologies and materials that prove feasible for their homes. In addition, Croudace are part of the Considerate Constructors scheme and implement a site waste management program that will ensure the development has as minimal impact on the environment.

Security and Crime Prevention Measures.

The illustrative master plan although indicative has been designed to accord with Secured by Design Principles.

Dwellings are orientated to overlook the public realm and shared areas to provide a high level of natural surveillance and a strong robust system of boundary enclosure to the public realm will add to the security provision.

Rear parking courts have been replaced with mews courts giving excellent surveillance from several properties.



08 Appendices

01 – Introduction

02 – Planning Policy Context

03 – Context Assessment

04 – Site Assessment

05 – Design Principles

06 - Consultation

07 – Design & Access

08 – Appendices

08

Appendices

Supporting Parameter Plans

The following list of plans are included with this Design & Access Statement:

PRB/BiE/201C Site Location Plan

PRB/BiE/202J Illustrative Masterplan

PRB/BiE/203C Constraints Plan

PRB/BiE/204F Illustrative Parameter/Land Use Plan

PRB/BiE/205D Indicative Street Scenes

PRB/BiE/206 Indicative Storey Heights Plan



Rev:C 19/07/2024 Red line revised to omit Oast.
Rev:B 11/07/2024 Red line alignment revised along southern and western boundaries and around the site entrance.
Rev:A 09/07/2024 Red line alignment revised on southern boundary. Blue line around Farm omitted.





KEY

Existing site features and constraints

- Application Site Boundary
- Area of Bird in Eye Farm not included within the planning application
- Location of Listed Oast
- Existing watercourses
- Existing overhead electricity cables with easement
- Existing trees to be retained and protected by designated root protection areas
- Existing Hedgerows to be retained and protected with a 5M protective buffer zone
- Ancient Woodland outside the application boundary but within the same land ownership
- 15M protective buffer zone to Ancient Woodland
- 50M protective buffer zone to Ancient Woodland
- 5M separation buffers to farm & existing housing within the application boundary
- Retained vehicular access to Hailwell Farm Bungalow

Opportunities possible with the new development

- Improved highway road safety with upgraded main site entrance
- Improved highway road safety with modified accesses to the existing houses adjacent
- Provision of a new public pedestrian access to connect existing footpath network on Bird in Eye Hill to the proposed open space.
- Provision of a new area of land designated as a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) with public access
- Opportunity to provide a significant new area of public open space for use by the wider community
- Opportunity to improve the immediate outillage of the Listed Oast and improve the condition of the building structure
- New public viewpoints from within site
- Opportunity for public to enjoy closer views of the Oast
- Pedestrian links to new SANG land
- Potential areas of land for housing, amenity & associated infrastructure



Rev: F 29/07/2024 Areas updated in key to reflect rev E.
Rev: E 19/07/2024 Red line revised to omit Qast.
Rev: D 12/07/2024 Red line boundaries changed. Extent of SANG land revised. All other areas updated.
Rev: C 08/07/2024 Updated to match latest illustrative site layout.
Rev: B 29/02/2024 Updated to match latest illustrative site layout.
Rev: A 22/02/2024 Eastern field omitted from development area.
Main access modified. SANG land located in eastern field.
Ancient woodland buffer extended to 50M.





KEY	
	2.5 Storey buildings (Enhanced storey heights)
	2 Storey buildings
	1.5 Storey buildings
	1 Storey buildings



Rev:	
1:1250 @ A1	0 10 20 30 40 50 Metres

croudacehomes



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Land at Bird in Eye Farm, South of Bird in Eye Hill,

UCKFIELD

Indicative Storey Heights Plan

Ref: PRB/BIE/206

Jul 2024

REVISIONS:

Revision A 22/07/2024 Consultation Section enlarged with pre-appl. Submission details and Written Response details.

Revision B 29/07/2024 Land Use Parameter Plan updated, pages 5, 21 & 48. Small change to the overall site area and retained Bird in Eye Farm complex land following exclusion of Oast.

Revision C 29/07/2024 Consultant list on page 3 updated.

