OBSIDIAN
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DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Mockbeggars Farm, Uckfield

Obsidian Strategic

January 2022

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This document is best viewed at A3 size across a double spread.
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Introduction

This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by OSP Architecture for Obsidian Strategic to accompany an outline planning application for the development of land at Mockbeggars Farm, London Road, Uckfield to accommodate up to 60 dwellings.

The illustrative proposals will provide:

- 60 new high quality family homes, 35% of which are affordable housing.
- Vehicular and pedestrian access from London Road.
- The provision of a landscape buffers along the boundaries.
- Substantial areas of open space including play areas.

This Design & Access Statement has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 as amended and The National Design Guide (September 2019).

The National Design Guide sets out the three cross-cutting themes for good design from the NPPF (character, community and climate) and from that 10 characteristics that work together, in more detail, to create well-designed places, nurture and sustain a sense of community and positively address environmental issue affecting the climate.

This statement sets out the analysis of the existing site and context, evolution of the design and the proposed concept for the development of the site.

Vision

The development of land at Mockbeggars Farm seeks to ensure that impacts on the local environment are minimised and the area is enhanced.

The vision for the new development is to achieve the following:

- Thriving, attractive place which sits comfortably within its context, protects the countryside to the west and enhances the neighbouring areas.
- Sustainable community with a rich demographic mix.
- Contemporary living and working environment which responds to the topography and respects the location of the site within its context.
- Coherent and high quality inclusive public realm that takes account of the needs of all users including older people.

The design objectives for the new community are summarised as follows:

- Make the most efficient use of available land;
- Retain important landscape and natural features such as trees and hedgerows, incorporating these into the layout, so that they may positively contribute to the sense of place and assist in Biodiversity Net Gain;
- Provide informal recreation space across the site, to meet the needs of existing and new residents;
- Incorporate sustainable development principles including sustainable drainage techniques into the development and maximise energy efficiency through the layout and orientation of buildings;
- Ensure that the scale, massing and appearance of the built form reflects current best practice and the Council's design guidance, whilst also creating a place that is locally distinctive in character; and
- Ensure that dwellings, parking areas, landscape and open spaces are well related to each other and provide a safe and attractive environment.

"Delivery of a high quality and context sensitive residential development through a landscape and ecology led approach."

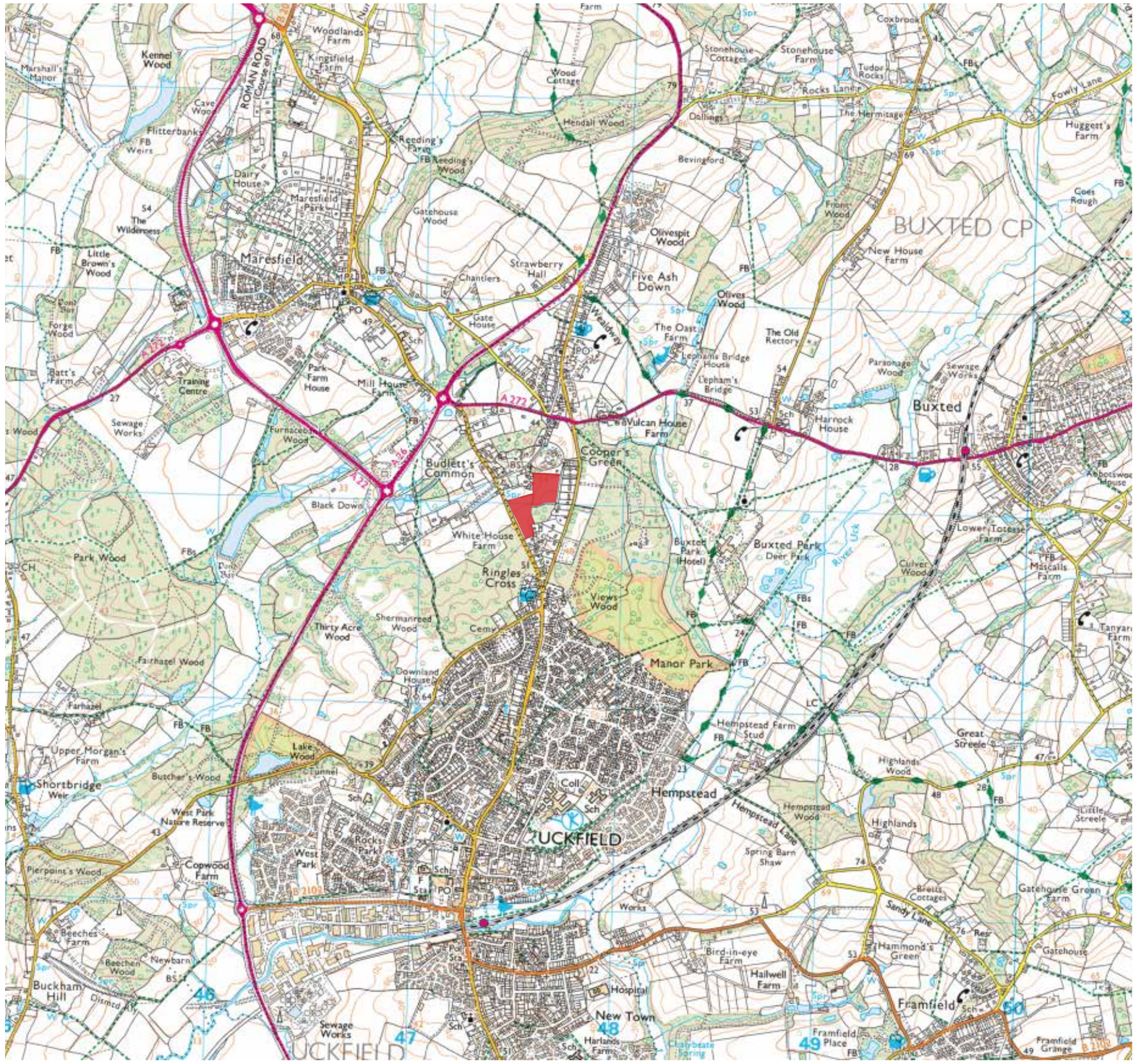
1.1 Site Location

The proposed site is 3.62 hectares in size and is located on the northern edge of Uckfield, Ringles Cross lies just to the south whilst Five Ash Down and Maresfield are located just to the north and north-west respectively.

Uckfield town centre is located 1.3km to the south with its excellent range of shops, amenities and services.

Uckfield railway station is located on the southern side of the town centre with good services to London.

London Road leads north out of Uckfield town centre, linking with the A272 and A26.



Site (coloured red) in relation to surrounding area

1.2 Planning Background

The site is situated outside of the defined built-up area boundary and is within a sustainable location next to existing development on all boundaries.

The site benefits from close proximity to the services and facilities located in Uckfield, Five Ash Down and Maresfield. Uckfield is a sustainable location for new growth and is identified as a 'District Centre' in the adopted Core Strategy (Feb 2013).

An area of Ancient Woodland (Round Wood) sits to the south-east of the site, however, it is not subject to Green Belt restrictions, nor any landscape designation. It is located some 2.5km from the High Weald AONB boundary to the north of Five Ash Down.

Wealden District currently have a lack of a 5 year housing land supply and the Local Plan is out of date.

This Design & Access Statement demonstrates that appropriate development of the site is entirely capable of providing excellent connectivity to the existing settlement, whilst ensuring that the landscape character is not unduly affected. The proposed scheme would deliver a mix of private and full policy-compliant affordable dwellings, and a housing mix that is informed by the 2016 SHMA. The site is also very well contained by existing vegetation and trees plus adjoining development and therefore a sensitive residential development is considered unlikely to have any impact at all on longer distance views.


Five Ash Down
A272
Blue Asia
Leslie Cars
Mockbeggars Farm
Chichester Caravans
White House Farm
Round Wood
London Road
Coopers Green Road
Ringles Cross

2.1 Site Description

The proposed site is located on the eastern side of London Road, separated by a mature hedge along its edge. It is currently divided into two large grazing fields bounded by hedgerows and tree belts. An area of Ancient Woodland (Round Wood) abuts the south-eastern boundaries of the site.

The site is accessed from the existing farm which is located to the north-west. The site is well contained and sits between established residential development which wraps around the southern, eastern and northern boundaries. The eastern edge is relatively undefined, with neighbouring rear gardens exposed to the site.

The site gently slopes down from south to north.









Existing site photos

Existing site photos

2.2 Existing Trees

A tree survey will be undertaken prior to any Reserved matters applications being submitted. It will identify individual trees, groups of trees and hedgerows on the site or adjacent to the site which might be impacted by the proposed development.

The trees will be classified in accordance with BS 5837: 2012:

Category ‘A’ - of high quality and value: in such a condition as to be able to make a substantial contribution). These trees will be retained and protected.

Category ‘B’ - of moderate quality and value: - those in such a condition as to make a significant contribution and will be retained wherever possible.

Category ‘C’ - of low quality and value: currently in adequate condition to remain until new planting could be established.

Category ‘U’ - in such a condition that any existing value would be lost within 10 years and which should in the current context, be removed for reasons of sound arboricultural management.

The majority of trees are located along the boundaries of the site. Tree loss would be kept to a minimum with the vast majority being retained and supplemented by new tree planting.

Round Wood abuts the south-eastern boundaries of the site. This Ancient Woodland will be protected and provided with a 20m minimum buffer from any form of development in line with Natural England standing advice.

2.4 Ecology

The site will be designed in such a way to protect existing biodiversity on site, while providing meaningful enhancements which will provide long-term biodiversity gains and provide a range of mitigation for any impacts on habitats.

An initial Ecological Appraisal undertaken by Aspect has revealed the site to be dominated by species-poor semi-improved grassland fields, a habitat which offers little value in terms of biodiversity. The site is to be subject to a suite of further ecological survey including reptile, amphibian, bat activity and dormouse surveys which will allow a robust scheme of avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement to be devised.

The scheme will seek to retain existing hedgerows and mature trees with suitable buffers to prevent any degradation of these areas. A sensitive lighting scheme will be utilised across the development.

Extensive areas of natural and semi-natural green space will be incorporated into the scheme. These areas will provide commuting and foraging corridors for a variety of species allowing free movement around the site. Areas of natural and semi-natural greenspace will incorporate areas of wildflower meadow with native trees and shrubs with a focus on seed, nut and fruit baring species to provide a foraging resource for invertebrates, bats and birds. Further enhancements will include the integration of bat and bird boxes into new buildings and a sustainable drainage scheme.

By providing extensive new hedgerow and tree planting throughout the scheme, the proposals will achieve Biodiversity Net Gain.









3.1 Surrounding Context

Prior to the introduction of the railway in the mid 19th century, Uckfield was a largely agricultural area with isolated farm buildings scattered either side of London Road. Once the railway had been established, the town prospered with its good transport links to Brighton and London, later becoming a predominantly commuter town, as housing estates expanded the town to the west and east.

As such, whilst the town is predominantly Victorian and later in character, the surrounding areas have earlier buildings interspersed amongst later 20th century infill housing.



London Road, opposite site



London Road, south of site



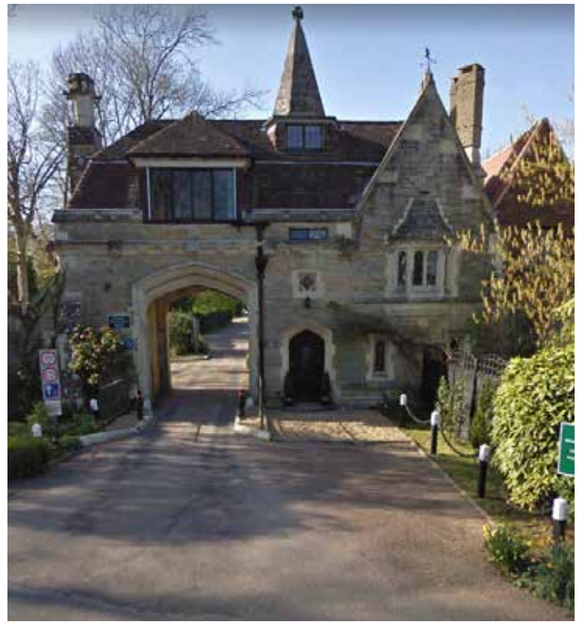
London Road, north of site



London Road, north of site



Five Ash Down



Maresfield



Ringles Cross



Ringles Cross



Five Ash Down



Maresfield

3.2 Connections



Uckfield High Street



Uckfield High Street

The site at Mockbeggars Farm is located on the northern edge of Uckfield and is closely related to its key services and facilities. It also benefits from close proximity to public transport routes.

The site is a 15 minute walk away from the town centre which accommodates a good range of shops. The centre of Uckfield accommodates a leisure centre, library and a good selection of schools. There are also village shops and schools in nearby Five Ash Down and Maresfield.



Uckfield railway station

Bus routes run close to the site with the nearest bus stop approximately 200m away on London Road and on Coopers Green Road to the east. These provide regular bus services to the town centre, Haywards Heath, East Grinstead, Tunbridge Wells, Eastbourne, Lewes and Brighton.

Uckfield railway station lies on the southern edge of the town with good services to London.

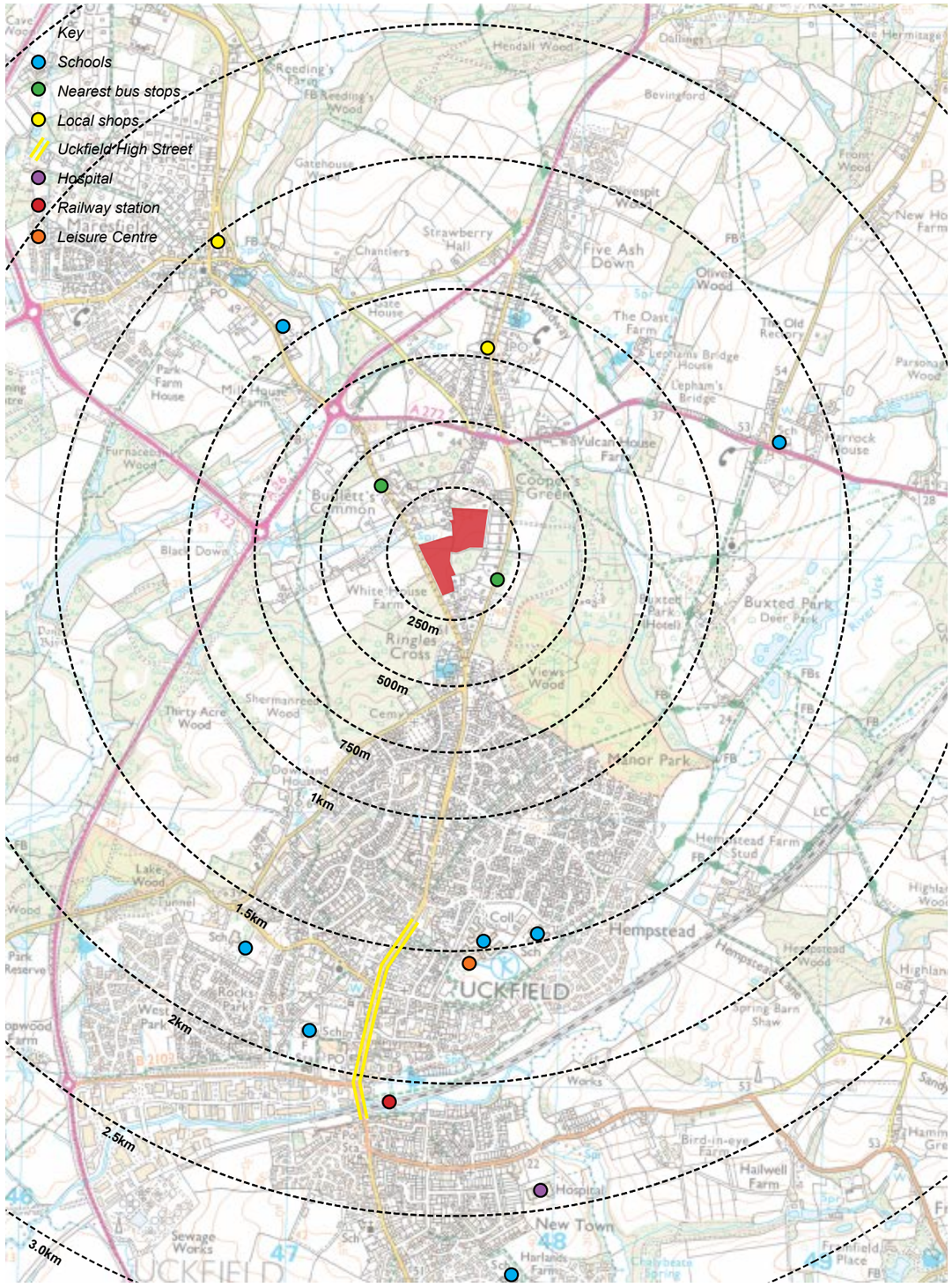
The site therefore offers development in a location which is served by good public transport links.



Uckfield High Street



Uckfield High Street



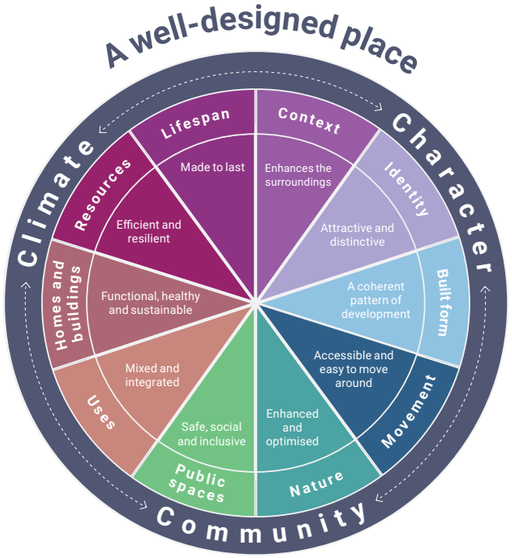
Local facilities plan

4.1 National Design Guide

The National Design Guide was published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in September 2019. It is a response to the 'Creating Space For Beauty' interim report by the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission published in July 2019.

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.

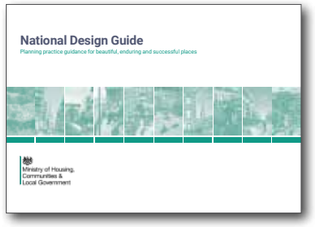
The National Design Guide addresses the question of how we recognise well-designed places, by outlining and illustrating the Government's priorities in the form of ten characteristics. The choices made in the design process contribute towards achieving these characteristics and shape the character of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

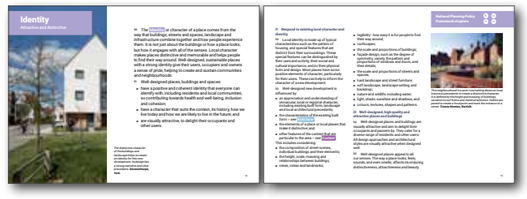


The 10 characteristics of the National Design Guide

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







4.2 Other Design Guidance

In addition to the National Design Guide, the emerging development proposals have been designed with reference to a number of relevant design guides (including the Wealden Design Guide 2008) as follows:

- Manual for Streets (2007) (MfS 2, September 2010)
- By Design: Urban Design in the Planning System – Towards Better Practice (May 2000);
- Better Places to Live: By Design (CABE, September 2001);
- Planning and Access for Disabled People: A Good Practice Guide (March 2003);
- Building for Life (Building for Life Partnership, 2012)
- Safer Places – The Planning System and Crime Prevention (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Home Office, 2004);
- Secured by Design;
- Wealden Design Guide; and
- Urban Design Compendium (English Partnerships, 2000).

A response to the principles of the Wealden Design Guide are included at the end of this document.



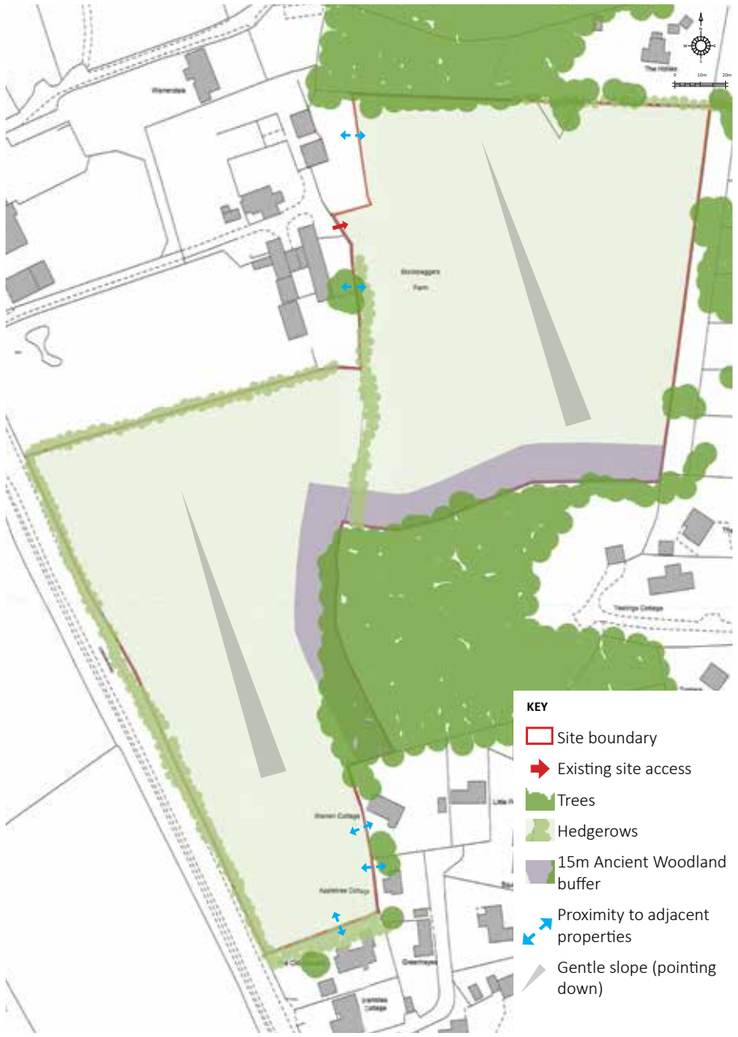
4.3 Site Constraints

When bringing forward proposals, both the site constraints and opportunities are evaluated.

These help to shape the development to ensure that the proposals fully respect and respond to the natural features of the area.

The site constraints are considered to be:

- Existing green infrastructure of boundary hedgerows and tree belts.
- Round Wood Ancient Woodland abutting the south-eastern boundaries. A 20m buffer will be required.
- The existing access from Mockbeggars Farm is unsuitable for new development on the site. A new access will be required from London Road.
- The site gently slopes done from south to north.
- Some existing neighbouring properties (including Mockbeggars Farm) are very close to the boundary.
- The eastern boundary is exposed to the rear gardens of existing neighbouring properties.



4.4 Site Opportunities

The plan highlights the site opportunities which include:

- Provision of new homes to meet the growing housing need.
- Creation of high quality homes in keeping with the character of the existing surrounding context, taking inspiration from the built form of development in Uckfield.
- Provision of a new access point from London Road.
- The inclusion of new footpath and cycle links from within the site to improve connectivity with the surrounding area whilst also promoting sustainable modes of travel
- Enhancement of existing habitats with significant additional tree and hedge planting which will attract a wide variety of species, and the provision of attractive open spaces.
- The site is already well enclosed but additional planting will strengthen boundaries and deliver enhanced visual screening and help the ecological value of the site.



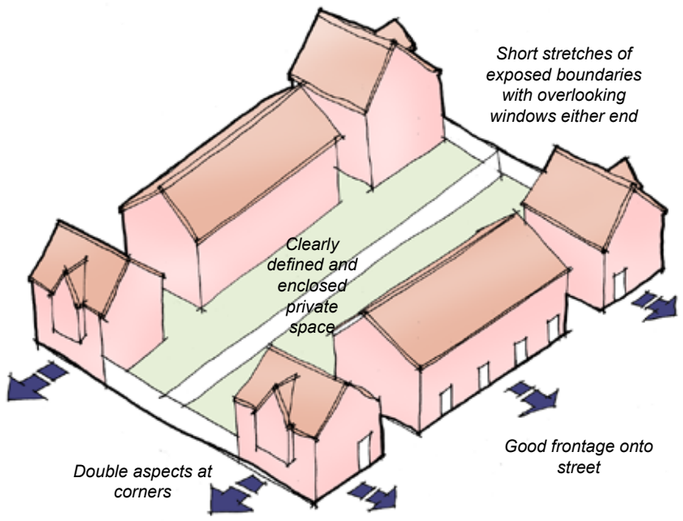
5.1 Layout

The development is arranged around the existing green infrastructure of hedgerows and tree belts including the 20m buffer to the Ancient Woodland. These form part of the extensive open space areas that run through the development, creating a series of varying sized spaces and environments for the benefit of the new occupants and existing neighbouring residents.

Many of the new dwellings take advantage of the green buffers and frontages, helping to create a sense of place influenced by attractively designed and planted green open space. The Ancient Woodland (Round Wood) will be visible from all parts of the development, maintaining a green backdrop to the new dwellings and highlighting its importance within the surrounding context.

The principal route through the site from London Road will wind its way across the site, linking to the different character areas and maintaining a clear movement hierarchy. Further pedestrian and cycle links will provide separate connections from the vehicular routes.

- 60 dwellings consisting of 2-5 bed houses;
- A density of just 16.6 dwellings per hectare based on a site area of 3.62 ha;
- Vehicular access from London Road;
- Additional pedestrian and cycle links;
- Extensive areas of open space and play space;
- Retention and enhancement of existing boundary vegetation with additional extensive new hedgerow and tree planting to achieve Biodiversity Net Gain; and
- Tree-lined streets in accordance with NPPF para 131.



Block principles diagram



Illustrative sketch layout plan

5.2 Layout Principles

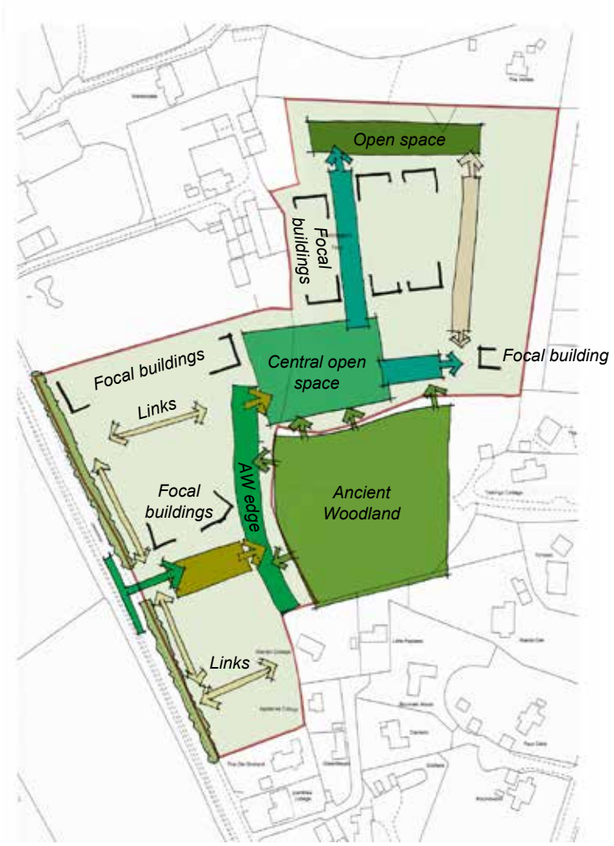
The existing vegetation along the boundaries will be retained and enhanced, helping to screen the development from its surroundings and increasing the ecological value of the site.

The use of smaller development parcels enables the creation of perimeter blocks, where the homes front onto streets and open spaces. This provides definition to and surveillance of the public realm, with active frontages along streets. The indicative layout also enables a clear definition of the public space provided by the public realm, the semi-private space of front gardens, and the private space of the residential properties and their private gardens. These design principles are important in delivering a legible and safe scheme, where frontages are activated and spaces are well overlooked.

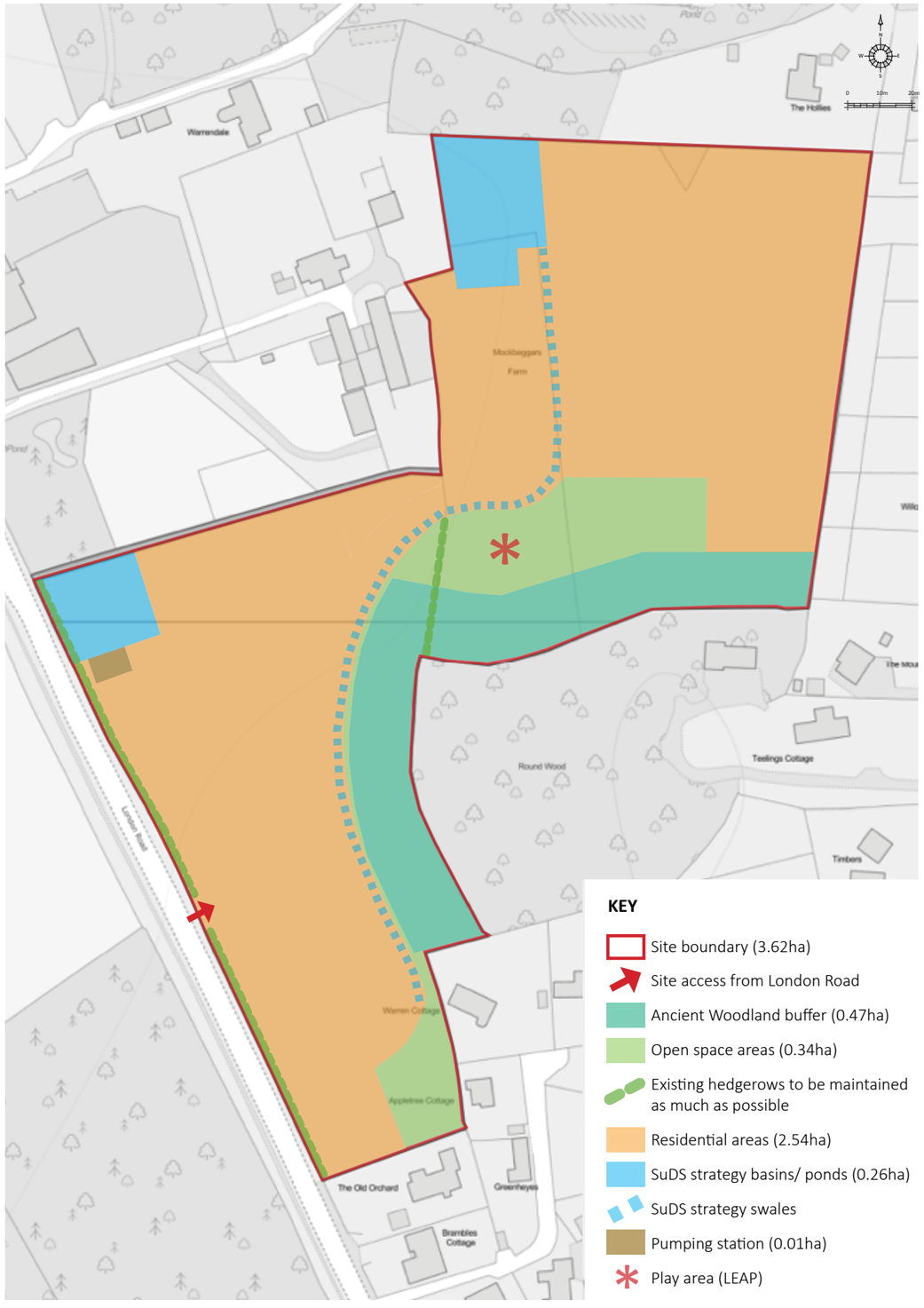
Many plots enjoy frontages onto the site's open spaces and the generously landscaped site boundaries. The landscape buffers and open spaces help to create the setting for the new development and better relate to the surroundings.



Green infrastructure diagram



Spatial relationships diagram



Proposed Land Use Plan

5.3 Amount

The site layout plan provides for 60 dwellings at a density of approximately 16.6 dwellings per hectare (gross) based on a site area of 3.62ha, which strikes a reasonable balance between providing much needed homes and delivering ample green open spaces.

The site can accommodate a range of types and sizes of housing, which will deliver a balanced community to meet a variety of local needs. The dwelling types are terraced, semi-detached and detached houses.

Three of the dwellings (5%) will be for self-build.

All of the units are in excess of the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS).

Affordable	No.
2 bed house	12
3 bed house	8
4 bed house	1
	21
Private	
2 bed house	12
3 bed house	16
4 bed house	6
5 bed house	5
	39
Total	**60**



Housing mix plan



Tenure plan

5.4 Scale

The site layout plan and site sections/ elevations show two-storey dwellings with single storey garages and projections.

The proposed height of the buildings has been guided by a study of the character of the local area which identifies the predominantly two-storey character of the residential development in the local area.

The proposed buildings will be assimilated onto the site and contained within its landscape setting formed of existing landscape features enhanced by new planting.



Building heights plan

5.5 Character Areas

In combination with the street hierarchy, the proposed development site has a number of distinct character areas. These areas sometimes overlap, but provide a coherent structure to the development helping to relate the site with the character of Uckfield and the immediate surrounding context.



London Road Frontage

The entrance area to the site will provide open space and high quality landscaping to protect the setting of Round Wood and retain the existing hedgerow long London Road. The proposed dwellings will front onto London Road or the primary access road which connects the different areas of the development.

Features of this character area include the following:

- Key entrance point to site defined by tree planting on either side of widened verges.
- Post-and-rail fences and high quality planting provide semi-formal parkland character.
- Frontages onto London Road and Ancient Woodland open space.
- Two-storey buildings.
- Terraces and semi-detached house.
- On-street parking or rear parking courts.





Village Streets

The dwellings are arranged around a series of shared surface streets, with the larger houses fronting onto the open spaces and landscape buffers. further detached dwellings back onto the eastern boundary enhanced with new trees and planting.

Features of this character area include the following:

- Shared surface streets. No through routes.
- Two-storey buildings.
- Detached and semi-detached houses.
- On-plot parking with garages/ car barns.
- Robust landscaping to eastern edge.



Woodland Edge

With a backdrop of existing mature trees and planting, these dwellings have a frontage onto London Road, tucked behind the existing retained hedgerow.

Features of this character area include the following:

- Shared surface streets.
- Two-storey semi-detached and detached houses.
- On-plot parking with garages/ car barns.

5.6 Appearance

Whilst details of the appearance of individual dwellings are reserved for future determination, illustrative site sections (overleaf) have been produced to show one way in which the site could be developed.

The composition of the various building elements within the overall design is critical to the coherence of the street scene and the achievement of the required quality of urban design within the overall development. It will be essential for consistency across character area boundaries.

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

The key materials will be a variety of locally sourced bricks, timber boarding and tile hanging with contrasting bricks used for details such as window headers or cills.

Roofs will be a variety of gable or hipped, with plain red/ orange tiles.

Boundary treatments will include native species hedgerows, post-and-rail fences, picket fences and low brick walls.



Typical house elevations



Street Scene A



Street Scene B



Street Scene C



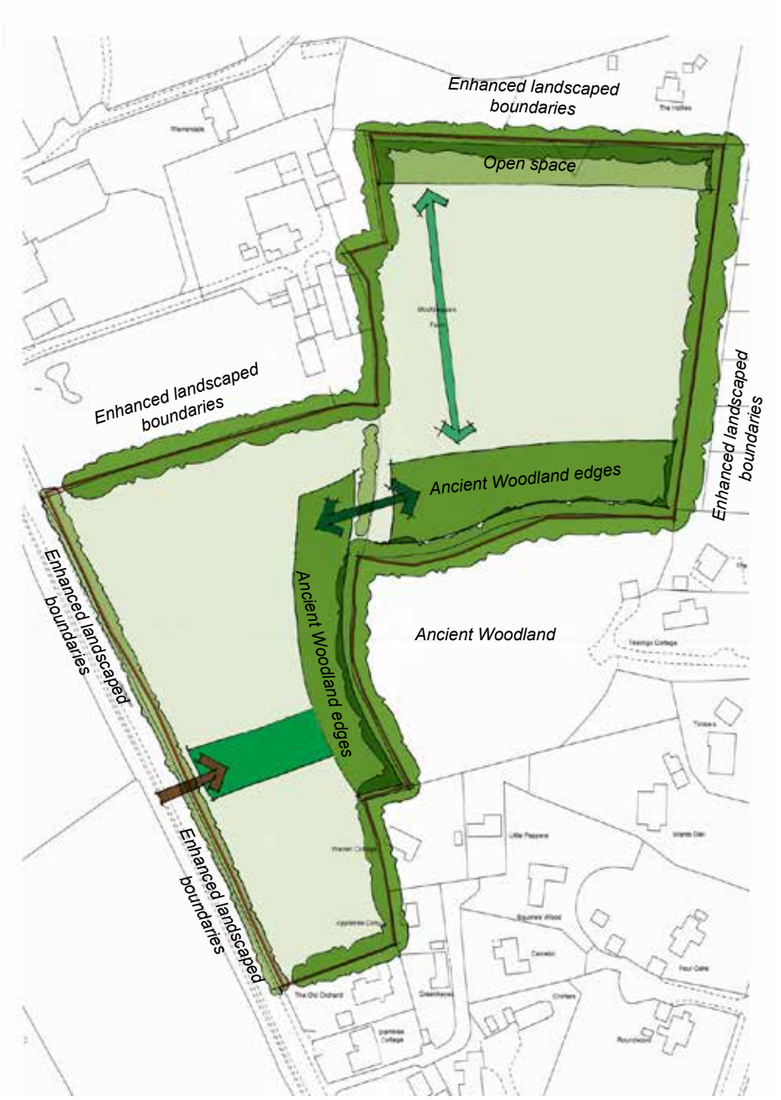
Key Plan (NTS)

5.7 Landscaping & Open Space

While details of landscaping are reserved for future determination, the illustrative site layout plan provides an overview of the areas which make up the key structural elements of the landscape and ecology strategy for the site.

The principal landscape matters that have derived from the landscape and ecological assessments have been used to inform the strategy for the proposed development are as follows:

- Existing vegetation including trees along the boundaries of the site would be retained and strengthened with new mixed tree and shrub planting to filter views towards proposed residential development. By providing extensive new hedgerow and tree planting throughout the scheme, the proposals will achieve Biodiversity Net Gain;
- Attractive mixed, native tree belts with an understorey of mixed, native shrubs would be provided along the boundaries to screen views towards proposed residential development;
- The use of hard and soft landscape features within the development which complement the architectural forms and which reflect the character and appearance of the townscape within the surrounding area;
- A mixture of attractive native street trees would be provided within the development to break up views towards built form and to soften car parking areas;
- Proposed planting would all be native and locally appropriate to increase the biodiversity value of the site; and
- Tree-lined streets in accordance with NPPF para 131.



Landscape strategy plan

Planting

Planting softens the built form, humanises scale, mitigates the microclimate, provides a seasonal sense of place and provides biodiversity opportunities as well as delivering attractive places that people want to use and enjoy. Tree planting in particular can respond to and extend the landscape structure into the site by framing key spaces through the planting of avenues or individual specimen street trees, or within open space. The following principles have been applied to the soft landscape design :

- Selection of plants considers the local context and species found locally.
- Selection of plants which consider the form and eventual scale of the space and elevation, whilst also considering future maintenance requirements of the proposed built form.
- The selection of attractive tree and shrub planting which will enhance the design by responding to the articulation of the space in framing spaces and defining pedestrian connectivity and vehicle movement.
- Planting will be appropriate in terms of setting and will not pose a threat or nuisance, for example through the specification of clear stem trees adjacent to pedestrian routes.
- A strategic response to species selection in terms of suitability to location, considering building shadows etc.
- The selection of plant species to increase biodiversity potential and reduce long term maintenance requirements.

The choice of soft landscape materials is unlimited. A guiding principle on the choice of species is the climate, aspect and soil type of the site. Species selection will fulfil the following:

- To realise the landscape strategy of the private and public / communal realms.
- To illustrate the typical choice of species and establish approval with the Local Authority at an early stage. This will also assist the developer when considering early procurement or contract growing to ensure availability at the correct time.
- To be appropriate to the context of the existing vegetation structure of the site and the intrinsic natural fauna of the site. The selection of native species will provide opportunities for improving and extending biodiversity, throughout the site.
- To be robust for the proposed uses of the development and the technical requirements of the site and its construction.
- To be relatively maintenance free once established.







Informal play, naturalistic, low key and adventurous

6.1 Access

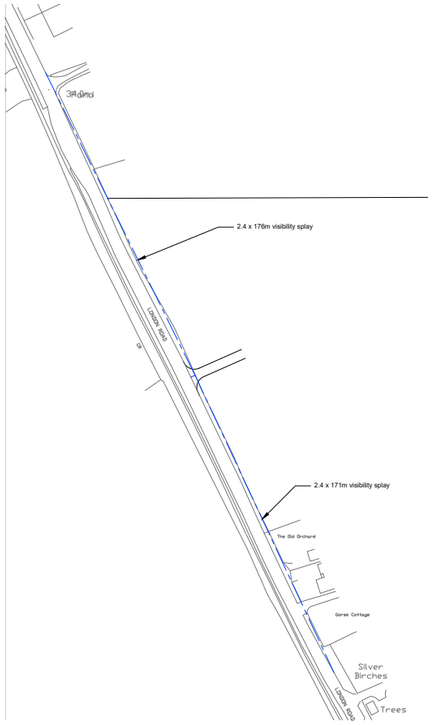
The proposed means of access to the development site is in the form of a simple priority junction from London Road midway along the western boundary to achieve good visibility splays. As much of the existing hedgerow as possible will be retained, allowing gaps for the vehicular and pedestrian access points only.

All traffic will be directed to the principal access route through the site and onto London Road.

The pedestrian layout uses the access described for vehicles, but also allows for additional links and connections.



Vehicular access diagram



Proposed access junction from London Road

6.2 Waste & Recycling Strategy

The refuse strategy has been considered with regard to the requirements of Wealden District Council.

Refuse vehicle turning areas can be accommodated within the site to ensure compliance with the refuse carry and collection distances and to limit undue and excessive reversing distances.

The number and types of refuse bins and recycling boxes provided for each property will comply with the requirements of the local authority. The refuse provision will be in the form of bins kept in rear gardens with rear access, within garages or within sheds.



Pedestrian/ cycle access diagram

6.3 Parking Strategy

Parking is provided to ensure that its impact on the street scene is minimised. A variety of parking solutions will be used including garages, driveways, parking courts or parking bays.

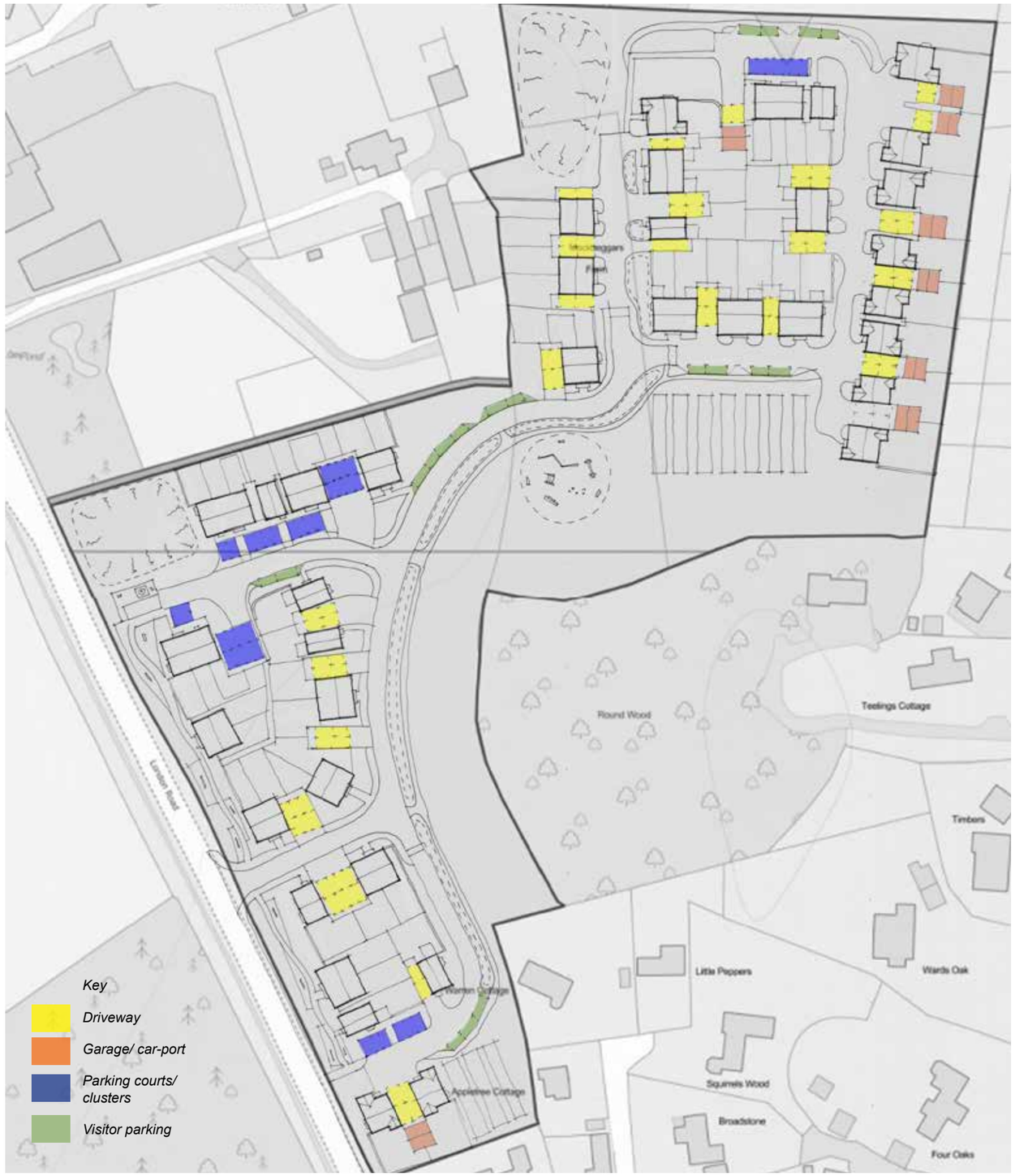
Cycle parking will be provided on-plot, in garages or within rear garden sheds.

6.4 Inclusive Access

Inclusive access for people by a range of modes and for those with disabilities and mobility impairments is an important consideration. The proposed development has been designed to encourage accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling, as well as providing vehicular access.

Future detailed design of the public realm will include consideration of the needs of people with mobility or other impairments. The development has been designed to comply with Approved Document Part M of the Building Regulations (2015 with 2016 amendments) and the requirements of the Equality Act, 2010 as follows:

- The proposed development places an emphasis on pedestrian, mobility impaired, cycle and public transport over car travel;
- The building layout has been designed to take precedence over the highway design and the development has been designed to allow movement choice. Means of travel other than the car are encouraged by the provision of enhanced pedestrian and cycle linkages;
- Speed restraint has been designed into the development. The built form, landscaping, priority junctions, changes in surface material, tighter corners and narrowing will all help to reduce speed; and
- Dwellings will be designed to enable access for people with disabilities as appropriate, including provision of level access to dwellings and internal layouts to allow for wheelchair or mobility impaired access in accordance with Approved Document Part M of the Building Regulations (2015 with 2016 amendments).



Parking allocation plan

7.1 Sustainable Development

The proposed scheme seeks to deliver a sustainable development in its broad sense. The design of the scheme has sought to include a range of sustainability principles in terms of layout, natural resources and minimising environmental impacts. The scheme seeks to deliver a range of enhancements with respect to issues such as the quality of surface water run-off, the ecological and recreational value of the site.

Key aspects of the sustainability of the scheme include:

Building Regulations Part L

Achieving a 20% reduction in CO2 emissions over Part L.

Flooding

To slow down the surface water run-off rates and reduce the risk of flooding elsewhere, the following drainage features could be incorporated into the proposed development:

- The amount of hard landscaping will be minimised, whilst the use of porous and permeable surfaces will be maximised.

Water Efficiency

The scheme will take an integrated approach to water demand and rainwater disposal. Water demand in both construction and occupation phases will be carefully considered, and efficient devices incorporated within the design of the scheme. Rainwater harvesting in the form of rainwater butts will be used for landscape maintenance.

Open Space

The provision of attractive, good quality recreational and amenity space is an important part of sustainable residential development. The proposed scheme is integrated within the wider landscape framework with easy access via a pedestrian and cyclist movement network.

Adaptability

The new homes will be designed to provide the opportunity for residents to work at home, having sufficient space and facilities and being equipped with suitable outlets that will enable the occupants to have data access and necessary power supplies.

Crime

The design of the scheme has addressed the principles set out within Secured by Design. This will ensure a residential environment that puts occupants safety at the forefront and which in turn will create a high quality environment for the long term.

Materials

Consideration has been given to the use of local materials and suppliers where viable to reduce the transport distances and to support the local economy.

Consideration will be given to the following measures:

- Use of 'A' rated materials as assessed using the BRE Green Guide to Specification for Buildings wherever possible
- Use of timber, the source of which is certified by FSC / PEFC or an equivalent approved certification body where practical.
- Use of insulation materials with zero ozone depletion potential.

Cycling

Cycle storage is provided on-plot, in garages or rear garden sheds. Secure storage provision will further encourage their ownership and use.

Ecology

Ecological work completed to date indicates that there are no overriding ecological constraints on the development of the site. The provision of appropriate buffer zones for ecological features, and enhancement of the ecological assets of the site will be key parts of the scheme. By providing extensive new hedgerow and tree planting throughout the scheme, the proposals will achieve Biodiversity Net Gain.

Domestic waste and recycling

Storage and collection of refuse and recyclable waste has been considered as an integral part of the design process.

Provision will be made within dwellings for the storage of recyclable waste to assist in encouraging recycling within the household. This space will generally be provided either in kitchens or utility rooms.

External residual and recyclable waste storage will generally be within rear gardens, garages or rear garden sheds.

Lighting

A lighting strategy for the scheme has been developed which minimises light pollution and provides the minimum level of lighting required for security and amenity purposes. The strategy will minimise the potential pollution from glare and spillage, with particular consideration of the impact on adjoining residential development and wildlife.

Transport

The site is located on the edge of Uckfield, within relatively easy access to local facilities and services, with further access to Tunbridge Wells or Brighton. The scheme encourages cycling and walking through the provision of additional links for these modes.

Scheme layout

The scheme has been designed to maximise solar gain and natural lighting through the orientation of the majority of the dwellings to the south, east and west.

New buildings and the external environment have been designed to adapt to and mitigate for the effects of the urban heat island and the expected increase in hot dry summers and wet mild winters resulting from climate change.

The following principles have been applied:

- All new areas of extensive hard surface will include measures for shading which will include tree planting.
- Street trees have been be incorporated, particularly on south and west façades to ensure that new homes are not subject to overheating resulting from passive solar gain.
- Cooling of new homes will be by passive means or from renewable energy sources only.



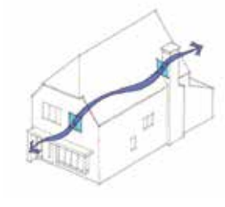
Target 20% reduction in CO_2 over Building Regs.



Trees and landscaping to enhance biodiversity. Potential for food-growing areas.



Separation of refuse and recycling.



Cross ventilation to help cool house in Summer.



Enhanced insulation and airtightness.



Potential for photovoltaic roof panels.



Water use limited to 105 litres per person per day.



Bicycle storage closer to the house than vehicle parking. Electric charging points for cars.

7.2 Secured by Design Principles

The guide has been produced to encourage greater attention to the principles of crime prevention and to the attributes of safer places. The aim of the guide is to show how planning has helped to deliver sustainable environments highlighting the following key requirements to achieve a sustainable community:

- A flourishing local economy to provide jobs and wealth;
- Strong leadership to respond positively to change;
- Effective engagement and participation by local people, groups and businesses, especially in the planning, design and long-term stewardship of their community, and an active voluntary and community sector;
- A safe and healthy local environment with well designed public and green space;
- Sufficient size, scale and density, and the right layout to support basic amenities in the neighbourhood and minimise use of resources (including land);
- Good public transport and other transport infrastructure both within the community and linking it to urban, rural and regional centres;
- Buildings that can meet different needs over time, and that minimise the use of resources;
- A well-integrated mix of decent homes of different types and tenures to support a range of household sizes, ages and incomes;
- Good quality local public services, including education and training opportunities, health care and community facilities, especially for leisure;
- A diverse, vibrant and creative local culture, encouraging pride in the community and cohesion within it;
- A 'sense of place';
- The right links with the wider regional, national and international community.

The guide focuses on seven attributes that are relevant to crime prevention:

- Access and movement: places with well defined routes, spaces and entrances that provide for convenient movement without compromising security.
- Structure: places that are structured so that different uses do not cause conflict.
- Surveillance: places where all publicly accessible spaces are overlooked.
- Ownership: places that promote a sense of ownership, respect, territorial responsibility and community.
- Physical protection: places that include necessary, well-designed security features.
- Activity: places where the level of human activity is appropriate to the location and creates a reduced risk of crime and a sense of safety at all times.
- Management and maintenance: places that are designed with management and maintenance in mind, to discourage crime in the present and the future.

In particular, the development will incorporate the following features:

- Secured by Design principles are to be adopted across the site.
- Pedestrian access and movement routes which are overlooked by the surrounding houses so that they feel safe, both in the daytime and at night.
- Parking which is convenient for and overlooked by the units which it serves.
- Habitable room windows to dwellings providing natural surveillance to all areas of the public realm within the site.
- House frontages which are open to public realm to have a defensible zone in the form of private margin or front garden.
- Lighting will be provided to ensure good standards of illumination of all areas of the public realm within the scheme.

7.3 Healthy Place-Making

As part of the vision for the proposed development and in accordance with Wealden District Council's requirements, the scheme will use a variety of dwelling types and create spaces to encourage a mixed community at different life stages. From a single young person looking for their first home, through to the elderly couple hoping to downsize, the proposed environment will create a series of spaces that can be used by all and are sustainable to accommodate future needs.

Healthy Place-Making

The proposed scheme seeks to deliver opportunities for people to lead healthier lives. The site is located within walking and cycling distance of a wide variety of existing facilities and amenities, and these movement methods will be encouraged over the use of the car. The proximity of green spaces and the variety of residential house types will all help to achieve a strategy for healthy place-making.

Key aspects of the principles for healthy place-making of the scheme include:

- Enable exercise in normal patterns of daily life.
- Provide easy access to education, accessible facilities and available green spaces.
- Limit the causes and effects of vehicle emissions.
- Provide safe, sociable and productive public environments.
- Good urban and transport design.

Some of these principles have been addressed by the location of the site and willpower. However, as the scheme progresses, there are further urban design decisions that can be made to help ease the challenge of health conditions caused by a modern lifestyle.

Shopping - exercise

Due to its location with local shops and facilities in the surrounding area, the proposed site offers the opportunity to function as a "Walkable Neighbourhood".

Local shops are located at Five Ash Down, whilst other shops are available in Uckfield. Some of these offer a home shopping service helping to minimise shopping trips.

Education - exercise

The site is well located for nearby schools, accessed by a good network of pedestrian and cycle routes. Although some car drop-off and pick-up is inevitable, the good accessibility around the site by means other than the car will help limit its use. The proposals will encourage "Safe-routes-to-school" and "Walking bus" strategies.

Employment - exercise

The employment areas of Uckfield are easily accessible from the site by walking, cycling or by bus.

Existing bus routes near the site allow for direct commuting into Uckfield, Tunbridge Wells or Brighton. Uckfield railway station has good services to London.

To help alleviate traffic and avoid the stress of commuting to work, homeworking will also be encouraged.

Leisure - exercise

The site will provide additional extensive areas of open space to those already available in the area, providing a variety of formal and informal outdoor activities, including play areas and "Play-on-the-way" which will also be integrated with the "Safe-routes-to-school" and "Walking bus" strategies. The play spaces will allow for disabled play.

Air quality

The aim for the design is to limit the causes and effects of vehicle emissions by providing alternatives to private car use through walking or cycling to destinations both within the site and those nearby. The use of the bus for longer journeys will also be encouraged.

The landscape buffers around the development site will help to reduce noise and emissions from traffic.

Due to the comparative ease of pedestrian/ cycle access to nearby local centres over that of the car, the proposals should help to minimise any additional traffic.

Loneliness and isolation, through limited social interaction and fear of crime

The proposals for the site will provide safe, sociable and productive public environments which will contribute to a lively social environment both on the site and within the wider community.

The green links, Ancient Wooidland buffers and open spaces will create places to meet allowing interaction with a wide variety of other users.

The inclusion of private rear gardens and amenity space offer the benefits of outdoor activity and the means for healthy food production if required.

Interaction of vehicles, cycles, pedestrians

It is proposed that the site will be limited to a maximum traffic speed of 10 mph and generally promote a pedestrian priority and cyclist environment, which will assist in creating a safe environment for people of all ages.

8.1 Conclusions

The site is located on the northern edge of Uckfield, with existing residential development to the east, south and north-east.

This site represents an opportunity to deliver a high quality and attractive residential development that responds to the future housing needs of Uckfield in a manner that is sensitive to the site and its setting.

Wealden District currently have a lack of a 5 year housing land supply and the Local Plan is out of date.

A key feature of the illustrative layout is the retention of the existing trees and hedgerows along the boundaries and the protection of Round Wood Ancient Woodland with a 20m buffer.

The retention of trees and hedgerow along the London Road frontage will provide a landscaped buffer to the development within. Together with these and extensive new hedgerow and tree planting throughout the scheme, the proposals will achieve Biodiversity Net Gain.

This landscape led approach will enable the provision of a generous amount of open space. There is the potential to provide a high quality landscaped setting on this site with informal open spaces including amenity green space and play areas. Tree-lined streets will be provided in accordance with NPPF para 131.

Consultation with key technical consultants has enabled a thorough assessment of the opportunities and constraints of this site which has, in turn, informed the preparation of an initial concept proposals. These proposals identify key layout and design parameters and advocates a landscape and ecology led approach for this site.



Illustrative sketch layout plan

8.2 Wealden Design Guide

Section 7 of the Wealden Design Guide sets out a number of design principles for new residential development:

Character

Principle 1 - Designing for 'Local Distinctiveness'

The proposals have been informed by a study of the existing surrounding development and landscape as shown in the early sections of this document.

Principle 2 - Integration with the landscape setting

The major feature of the proposed development is the retention and enhancement of the existing backdrop of mature trees (including Ancient Woodland) and hedgerows, together with large areas of open space.

Principle 3 - Retaining existing natural features

The proposed development will be focused on the existing landscape features of trees, hedgerows and open spaces.

Principle 4 - Development should respond to existing 'Traditional' layouts and elements

Section 5.1 of this document shows how the layout has been designed to respond to the existing surrounding area.

Principle 5 – Respond to local building forms

Whilst the proposals will appear subservient to the existing surrounding residential development, they will pick up on distinctive features and details that are used on nearby buildings.

Principle 6 – Consideration of scale, massing and height

The proposals will respect the existing street scene of widely spaced, large houses that are prevalent, and respond to the backdrop of existing mature trees and hedgerows.

Principle 7 – Respecting topography

The proposals have been designed to follow the existing topography of the site,particularly in respect to the SuDS strategy.

Principle 8 – Creating character zones or quarters

Section 5.5 of this document shows how the proposals have been designed around a series of character areas.

Creating continuity and enclosure

Principle 1 – Buildings forming or addressing a street

Sections 5.1 and 5.2 of this document shows how the layout has been designed around a traditional perimeter block.

Principle 2 – 'Active' frontages and 'live' edges

Sections 5.1 and 5.2 of this document shows how the layout has been designed to respond to the street.

Principle 3 – Front or back?

Sections 5.1 and 5.2 of this document shows how the layout has been designed to clearly identify the main elevation of the new dwelling.

Principle 4 – Clearly defining private amenity space

The illustrative layout and indicative street scenes give an indication of how the divide between the public and private realm will be marked.

Quality in the public realm

Principle 1 - Successful residential developments have a clear hierarchy of space

Sections 5.1 and 5.2 show how the series of spaces through the development relate to one another.

Principle 2 –Streets and spaces should be 'addressed' and overlooked

Sections 5.1 and 5.2 of this document shows how the layout has been designed to respond to the street.

Principle 3 - Public spaces should be designed to take account of micro-climates

Sections 5.1 and 5.2 of this document shows how the layout has been designed to respond to micro-climates.

Principle 4 – Materials, street furniture and public art

Section 5.7 of this documents indicates the potential hard landscaping palette that could be used on future Reserved Matters applications.

8.2 Wealden Design Guide

Ensuring legibility (providing a clear, easily understood, image)

Principle 1 – Creating gateways/entrance statements

The proposals have been designed to create a series of gateways/ entrances (whether pedestrian or vehicular) into the development.

Principle 2 – Creating nodes/focal points

Sections 5.1 and 5.2 show how the series of spaces through the development relate to one another.

Principle 3 – Landmarks

Sections 5.1 and 5.2 show how the series of spaces through the development relate to one another.

Principle 4 - Views and vistas

Sections 5.1 and 5.2 show how the series of spaces through the development relate to one another.

Principle 5 – Defining edges

Sections 5.1 and 5.2 show how the series of spaces through the development relate to one another.

Principle 6 - Key corners

Sections 5.1 and 5.2 show how the series of spaces through the development relate to one another.

Principle 7 – Transition Zones

Sections 5.1 and 5.2 show how the series of spaces through the development relate to one another.

Facilitating ease of movement

Principle 1– Establishing a movement strategy

Section 6 of this document shows how people will move about the scheme.

Principle 2 – The walkable neighbourhood

The pedestrian layout allows for additional links and connections over those used by vehicles.

Principle 3 - Creating connected routes

Section 6 of this document shows how people will connect to the existing surrounding area.

Principle 4 - Hierarchy of streets and spaces

Section 6 of this document shows the hierarchy of streets and spaces through the development.

Principle 5 - Pedestrian and cycle access

Section 6 of this document shows how people will move through the site and connect to the existing surrounding area.

Including access and servicing

Principle 1 - Designing for low traffic speeds

Section 6 of this document shows how vehicle speeds will be reduced through the use of different methods.

Principle 2 - Accommodating access

Section 6 of this document and the accompanying technical assessments show how the scheme is serviced by refuse and fire vehicles.

8.2 Wealden Design Guide

Accommodating the car

Principle 1 – Incorporation of on-street parking

Section 6 of this document shows how a variety of parking solutions have been considered.

Principle 2 - Successful integration of in-curtilage parking

Section 6 of this document shows how a variety of parking solutions have been considered.

Principle 3 - Integrating in-court parking

Section 6 of this document shows how a variety of parking solutions have been considered.

Principle 4 - Concealed parking

Section 6 of this document shows how a variety of parking solutions have been considered.

Principle 5 - Sustainable provision

Section 6 of this document shows how parking has been considered.

Principle 6 - The ‘Home Zone’ approach

Section 6 of this document shows the hierarchy of streets through the development and how the streets at the lower end of the hierarchy can be designed as shared surface homezone areas.

Principle 7 - Promoting the use of public transport

Section 3.2 of this document shows the relationship of the site to nearby facilities, amenities and services, which can be accessed via public transport.

Establishing landscaping, private amenity and privacy

Principle 1 - Landscaping within developments

Sections 5.1 and 5.2 show how the existing green infrastructure has been used as a focus for the proposals.

Principle 2 -Maintaining eco-systems

The major feature of the proposals is the retention and enhancement of the existing Ancient Woodland, mature trees, hedgerows and provision of new open space.

Principle 3 -The value of open space

The proposals have been designed to take full advantage of the site’s existing green infrastructure.

Principle 4 - The requirement for outdoor private amenity and privacy

All of the new homes will be provided with good private amenity space as well as access to public open space.

Principle 5 - Front gardens and privacy

Whilst the proposals allow for different set backs from the street depending on the house type and character areas, defensible front spaces will be provided to all of the new dwellings.

Principle 6 - Rear gardens and privacy

All of the new dwellings will be provided with usable rear garden space in accordance with the Design Guide.

Principle 7 - Communal gardens

Communal gardens will not be provided on this scheme.

Principle 8 - Boundary treatments

Boundary treatments will include native species hedgerows, post-and-rail fences, picket fences and low brick walls.

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