

Design & access statement

Land West of London Road, Handcross



7671-D05

London
76 Great Suffolk Street
London, SE1 0BL
T 0207 928 2773

Sussex
64-68 Brighton Road, Worthing
West Sussex, BN11 2EN
T 01903 248 777

07.04.2026

Bristol
Beacon Tower, Colston Street,
Bristol, BS1 4XE
T 0117 214 1101

W www.ecearchitecture.com

E hello@ecearchitecture.com

Project Team

Client Welbeck Land

Architect ECE Architecture

Planning Consultant Star Planning

Landscape and Arboricultural Consultant Lizard

Highways Consultant iTransport

Ecologist Crossland Ecology

Civil Engineer Stuart Michael Associates

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B	Amended to Consultant comments	01.05.2026	MC	KE



Preface

ECE Architecture have been instructed by Welbeck Land to provide an initial residential masterplan for Land West of London Road, Handcross, leading to an outline planning application.

The site is approximately 2.84 hectares of land that is grassed fields. The site is surrounded by trees with a dense tree belt to the western and eastern boundaries. London Road provides the single vehicular access to the site.

This submission comprises an Outline Planning Application providing;

- A new sustainable and design-led housing development including up to 55 dwellings, which includes a 30% affordable housing provision with a mixture of affordable rent and shared ownership dwellings.
- The residential development proposed comprises a mixture of dwelling types and tenures including both houses and apartments that range from one to four bedrooms, designed to meet the range of dwellings required by Mid Sussex District Council
- The proposed residential development will provide high quality new homes, using locally prevalent materials but incorporating contemporary detailing, large areas of glazing and natural ventilation.
- The scheme design includes a new vehicular and pedestrian access from London Road along with a significant amount of open space, general recreation space, ecological land and public landscaping.

The application seeks the approval of the access only with all other matters (i.e. appearance, layout, landscaping and scale) reserved.

This Design & Access Statement sets out the following to provide an illustrative development proposal:

- The vision and background to the site and the development proposals;
- The key design principles, approach and development philosophy;
- An appraisal of the edge of settlement character, landscape, environmental, transport, service and infrastructure characteristics of the site and surrounds;
- A set of design principles, approaches and an analysis of the overall Masterplan;
- An accessibility and movement network proposal including transport connections, access and permeability;
- An appraisal of street and character areas;
- A set of landscape, environmental and sustainability objectives.



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Executive Summary 1.0



1.0 Executive Summary

1.01 Executive Summary

This Design & Access Statement and the accompanying Illustrative Masterplan has been prepared as part of an Outline Planning Application made to Mid Sussex District Council.

A project design team has been assembled to help inform the scheme design objectives and the proposed Illustrative Masterplan design in order to create an appropriate and respectful development that makes a good use of the land, whilst meeting all key site constraints.

The intention is to deliver a development that will enhance the local area and make a significant contribution to the housing and infrastructure needs of both Handcross and the wider Mid Sussex District communities.

Within this Outline Planning Application, Welbeck Land proposes a scheme for a sustainable housing development of up to 55 new dwellings together with associated public open spaces and ecological enhancements, on the Land West of London Road comprising a total of 2.84 hectares.

The illustrative scheme layout comprises a range of open market and affordable houses and apartments. A significant proportion of the site will be given over to new landscaping, formal and informal public open space and ecological enhancements.

The proposed scheme comprises:

- Up to 55 new homes, 30% of which would be affordable;
- The affordable housing would be a range of apartments and houses (including some accessible dwellings) with both affordable rented and shared ownership properties available for families and single households;
- A mixture of informal open spaces and recreational spaces within the south western corner of the site for dog walking, play and general recreation;
- Retain existing planting to boundaries where possible and trees in the centre of the site to retain the green finger;
- A comprehensive landscaping scheme that will significantly soften the proposed development area and provide visual screening to the key site boundaries;
- A single vehicular access from London Road.
- A focus on sustainability - the scheme will be a high-quality and sustainable development, designed to achieve a significant saving in CO2 reduction over traditional construction and to encompass renewable energy generation;
- A design approach that both creates variety and promotes individuality within the various streets utilising a varied palette of local materials in a contemporary way.

“...a sustainable housing development of up to 55 dwellings, located in an appropriate location within Handcross set within a well designed and highly landscaped environment...”



Introduction^{2.0}



2.0 Introduction

2.01 Vision Statement

The proposed Illustrative Masterplan scheme has been designed to be a sustainable and deliverable semi-rural extension to Handcross that helps to meet local community housing needs, addresses a full range of environmental impacts and makes a significant contribution to the infrastructure requirements of the area.

Overall the Masterplan design philosophy ensures that the proposed residential development comprising;

Up to 55 homes that will reflect the edge of settlement location of the site and function as an integral edge of the built up area, contributing to the distinct character of the surrounding area.

It is intended that the Illustrative Masterplan and associated supporting information will guide the subsequent detailed design at the Reserved Matters Planning Application stage in order to ensure a high quality of design throughout the proposed built environment from inception to completion.

A new sustainable housing development in this location will provide a greater range and opportunity for young people and families to live and work in the area as well as the elderly population, and ensure that people of all ages have access and choice to a good standard of housing.

The proposed development will utilise a variety of materials to create a varied palette throughout the site, providing a distinct, legible residential development that incorporates individual detailing and feature buildings to bring joy and interest to the built environment.

A strong local identity will be achieved through the development of design principles within the Illustrative Masterplan scheme which are informed by their immediately surrounding local context.



2.0 Introduction

2.02 Planning Background

In the Mid Sussex District Local Plan 2021-2039 the site is outside the defined Built-up Area Boundary for Handcross which also excludes the existing built forms of housing and community development located to the south. Handcross is a Category 3 Medium Sized Village which possesses the essential services for the needs of their own residents and immediate surrounding communities.

In the case of Handcross, these essential services include a primary school, shops and recreation and community facilities, including a healthcare centre. The site is well related on foot and cycle to facilities in Handcross. The nearest bus stops are located on London Road about a 3 minute walk away and provide public transport links to higher order facilities and services available in the nearby towns of Crawley and Haywards Heath, as well as Brighton to the south.

Although outside the current Built-up Area Boundary, pursuant to Policy DPA19 in the emerging Mid Sussex District Plan District Plan 2021-2039, the site is being proposed for residential development, in the form of elderly persons' accommodation. Accordingly, the principle of the site being developed for residential purposes has been established.

Rather than being for elderly persons' accommodation, the proposed development is for housing development. The reasons for this are that there is a shortfall in housing land supply within Mid Sussex District, a cumulative under delivery of affordable housing despite demand for such homes and the failure to deliver housing on the allocated sites at St Martin Close, Handcross. Welbeck Land's proposal offers a meaningful opportunity to meet part of the housing land shortfall and deliver much needed affordable homes at above the current policy requirement.

Although within the High Weald National Landscape, based upon the assessment of Mid Sussex District Council the residential development of the Site for elderly persons' accommodation pursuant to the emerging would not be major development. Even if this is not the case, the exceptional circumstances required to justify the proposed development within the National Landscape exist.

As set out in this Design and Access Statement, and the other reports accompanying the outline planning application, the proposals for the residential development of land west of London Road, Handcross would be able to satisfy the requirements of the relevant development management policies and related guidance, including the character and design of the scheme and respecting the site's location within the National Landscape.

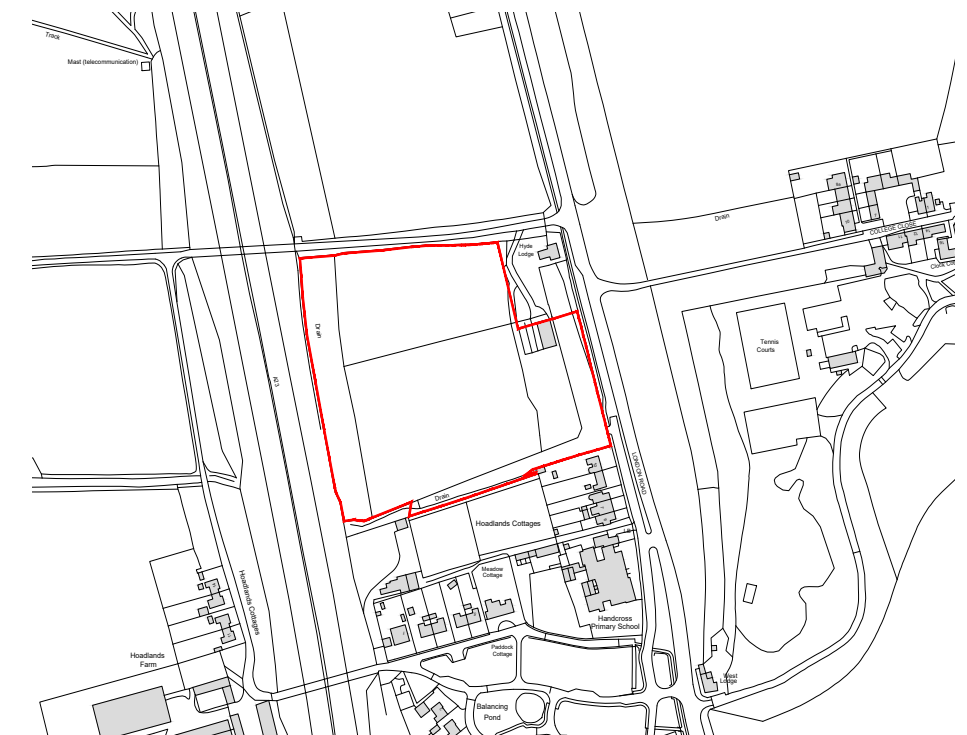
2.03 Development Objectives

The proposed scheme has a number of key objectives acting as drivers to achieve the highest quality in urban design and architecture as set out below:

- The development seeks to deliver a high-quality built environment that responds positively to its immediate context and maximises opportunities for integration with the wider Handcross area;
- The scheme is designed to support the creation of a sustainable, inclusive community, providing an environmentally sensitive and well-connected residential neighbourhood;
- A broad range of dwelling types and sizes will be provided to meet identified housing needs within Mid Sussex District;
- Affordable housing will be delivered at an appropriate level and fully integrated throughout the site, with no visual distinction from market housing, supporting a balanced and mixed-tenure community;
- The development will integrate seamlessly with surrounding land uses and existing development at Handcross, without resulting in adverse impacts;
- As an edge-of-settlement proposal, the scheme aims to act as an exemplar, aligning with the principles of the NPPF and applying best-practice urban design and architectural standards;
- A safe, attractive and legible environment will be created through high-quality design, incorporating well-defined public and private amenity spaces and establishing a clear and distinctive character across the site;
- The detailed design has been informed by recognised guidance, including Building for a Healthy Life and the National Design Guide, to ensure a successful, adaptable and enduring community.



Site Aerial Image



Site Location Plan



2.0 Introduction

2.04 Design Philosophy

Good urban design is at the forefront of the success of any development site. As noted in the Urban Design Compendium 2 (second edition);

'The quality of the places we live in has an impact on all aspects of life. How well they are designed will influence how safe we feel, how easy it is to walk round, whether we have shops, community facilities and schools nearby, whether our children have safe places to play.

Good urban design is essential to deliver places which are sustainable on all counts: places that create social, environmental and economic value. Ensuring that places are well designed should be a priority of everyone involved in shaping and maintaining the built environment.'

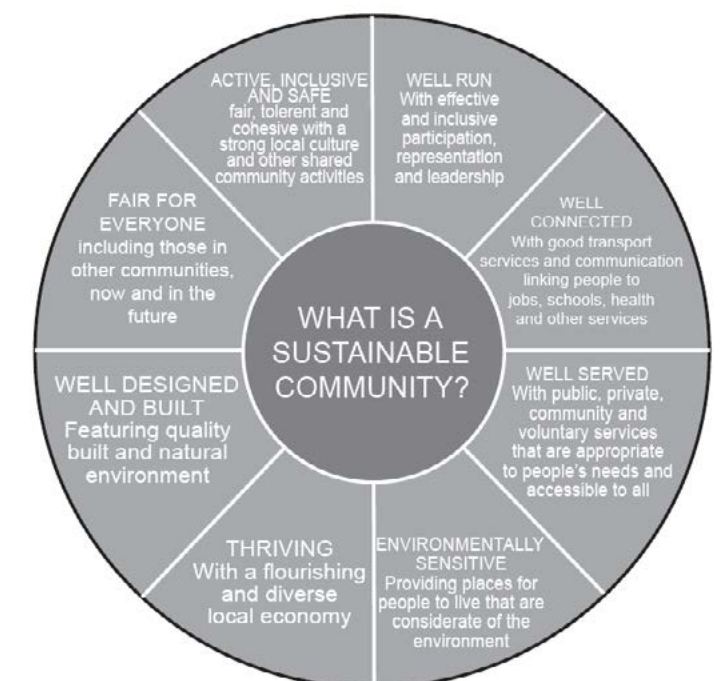
The Illustrative Masterplan is informed by a series of location-specific urban design principles that guide the structure and form of the development, set out as follows:

- Making a Legible Place; The development will be designed as a clear and easily understood destination, with a legible street hierarchy that supports intuitive movement, clear arrival points and strong connections between areas.
- Creating a Development of Character; A distinctive sense of place will be established that responds to the existing character of Handcross. A high-quality public realm will prioritise pedestrian movement and help to moderate vehicular speeds.
- Focusing on Detail; Clearly defined building lines and boundary treatments, active frontages and well-located entrances will animate streets and open spaces, reinforce enclosure and enhance key views and vistas.
- Creating Variety and Quality in the Street; Variation in building form will create visual interest, while attractive open spaces will encourage activity and community interaction.
- Ensuring Permeability; The layout will provide a choice of convenient and direct routes for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, promoting accessibility and ease of movement throughout the site.
- Establishing a Sustainable Community; The development will support a sustainable community by providing a high-quality built environment with access to local services, sustainable transport options and opportunities for social interaction.
- Creating a Safe and Secure Environment; Natural surveillance and active street frontages will enhance safety and security, with public spaces, parking areas and pedestrian routes well overlooked to encourage shared responsibility.

2.05 Key Design Principles

The overall Masterplan design philosophy will act as a set of achievable goals for the development with development principles including:

- Provision of dwellings ranging from 1-bedroom apartments to 4-bedroom houses as a sustainable addition to the built-up area;
- Delivery of 30% affordable housing provision in accordance with the required planning policy, containing a mixture of affordable rent and shared-ownership houses and apartments;
- Creation of a safe main access into and out of the site to London Road;
- A variety of linked areas, with scale, massing and detailed design varying within a shared design framework and materials palette;
- Provision for open space suitable for the whole community;
- A natural play area set within open space, encouraging pedestrian movement through the site and convergence for community interaction both proposed and existing;
- A drainage strategy utilising an appropriate Sustainable Drainage System including permeable paving and other attenuation;
- Using design and layout to promote energy efficiency, incorporating a strategy where possible to deliver low carbon energy generation.



Egan sustainable communities wheel



Site Appraisal 3.0



3.0 Site Appraisal

3.01 Site Description

The site is situated within the village of Handcross on the western edge side of London Road (primary access into the site). Handcross is a village located in Mid Sussex, characterised by a mix of residential, community, and local commercial uses. The village is defined by its semi-rural setting, with surrounding countryside, hedgerows, and open spaces providing a strong sense of place.

The site is largely enclosed by planted tree belts along its eastern and western boundaries, providing visual screening, supporting biodiversity, and helping to integrate the development into the surrounding landscape. Additional trees are present along the northern and southern edges, reinforcing the green character of the site. The development interfaces with the countryside on all sides, except to the south, where it adjoins a mix of residential, community, and commercial uses.

The site area is approximately 2.84 hectares and the site topography falls from the northeastern edge at +145.3 AOD down to +142.4 AOD at the south-east corner.

3.02 Local Facilities and Amenity

Handcross benefits from a range of local facilities and amenities that support day-to-day living. These include nearby primary and secondary schools, local shops, a community hall, and recreational areas, as well as public houses and small businesses. The village is also within easy reach of Nymans National Trust gardens, providing valuable cultural and recreational opportunities. Surrounding countryside offers further space for walking, cycling, and outdoor activity, contributing to the village's strong sense of community and accessibility.



Site Location and Wider Facilities Plan

3.0 Site Appraisal

3.03 Connectivity

The site benefits from excellent transport connections to the wider area. Local bus services provide regular links from Handcross into Crawley, which in turn offers broader connections to surrounding towns and communities.

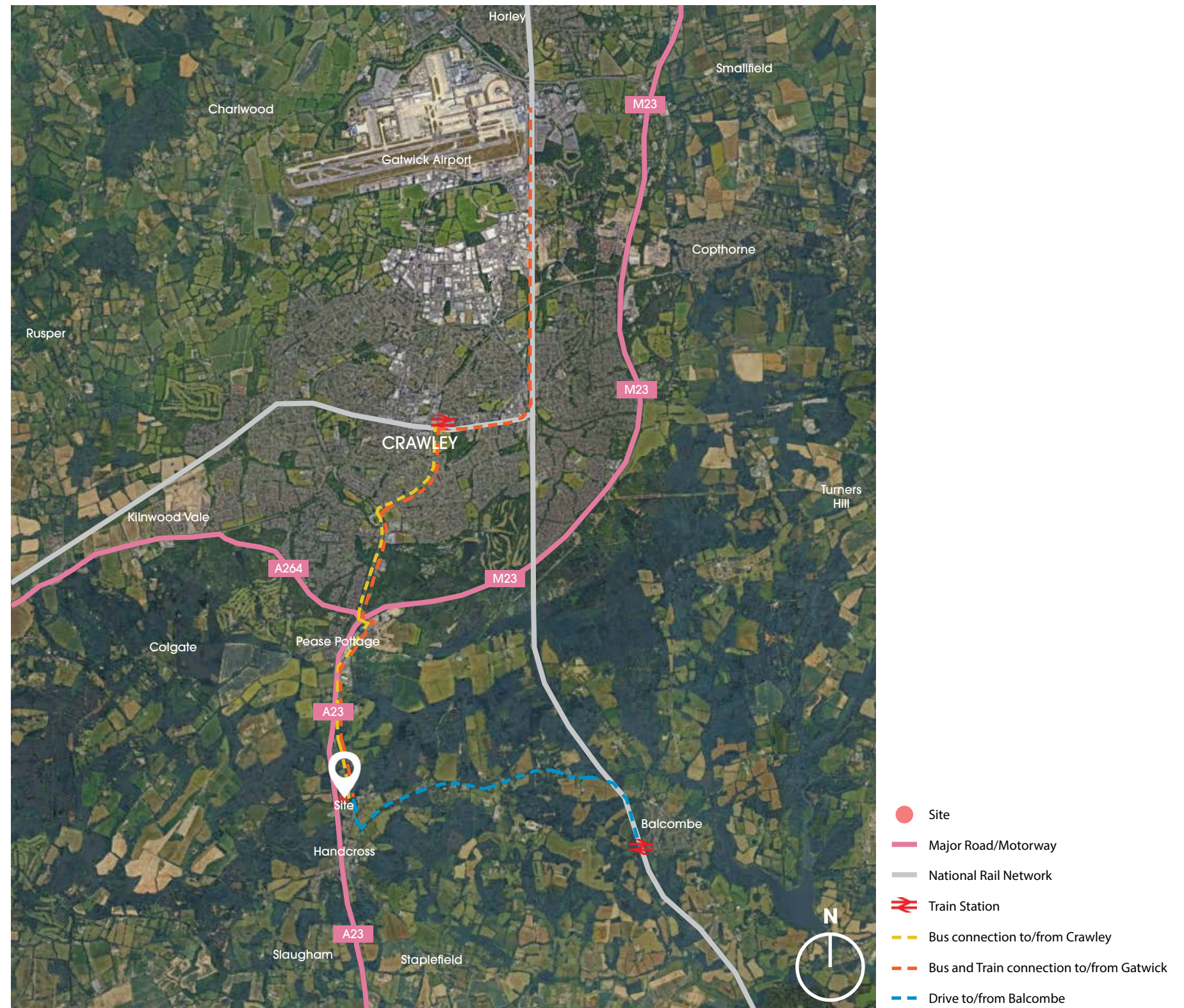
Balcombe train station, approximately a 7-minute drive away, provides regional rail services, while Crawley town centre, just 10 minutes by car, has a mainline station with direct connections to London and beyond.

The site is also well connected by road, with the A23 and M23 providing rapid access to Gatwick Airport, Crawley, and other key destinations across the region.

Journey by Bus	
Site (Handcross) to Crawley	16 Minutes

Journey by Train	
Crawley to Horsham	10 Minutes
Crawley to Haywards Heath	10 Minutes
Crawley to Brighton	28 Minutes
Crawley to London Waterloo	47 Minutes
Crawley to Guildford	60 Minutes

Journey by Car	
Site (Handcross) to Balcombe	7 Minutes
Site (Handcross) to Crawley	10 Minutes
Site (Handcross) to Gatwick	15 Minutes
Site (Handcross) to Haywards Heath	18 Minutes
Site (Handcross) to Horsham	25 Minutes



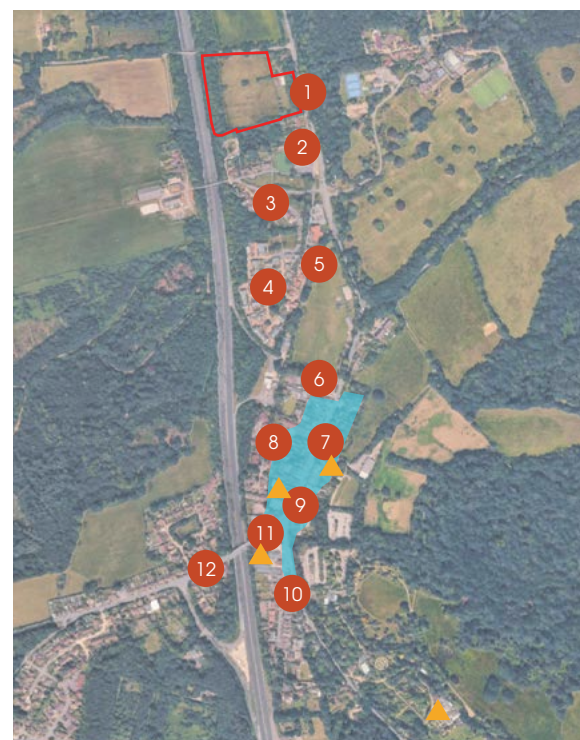


3.0 Site Appraisal

3.04 Surrounding Character

The surrounding character of Handcross is largely traditional in appearance, with buildings typically featuring pitched roofs arranged front to back, alongside gable and mono-pitched porch elements that add articulation to elevations. Chimneys are a common and distinctive feature, contributing positively to the roofscape, with occasional barn-hipped roof forms reflecting local vernacular influences. The material palette is predominantly traditional, including brick, clay roof tiles, timber detailing and areas of weatherboarding, resulting in a cohesive and established village character.

Handcross also benefits from a strong historic and rural identity, reinforced by the presence of a designated Conservation Area and its proximity to the High Weald landscape. Mature trees, hedgerows and green spaces play an important role in shaping the village's setting and visual character, while nearby assets such as Nymans National Trust gardens contribute to the area's sense of heritage and landscape quality. Together, these elements create a distinctive village character that is rooted in traditional architecture and its relationship with the surrounding countryside.



- Site
- Conservation Area
- ▲ Listed Buildings

Site Location with surrounding character key





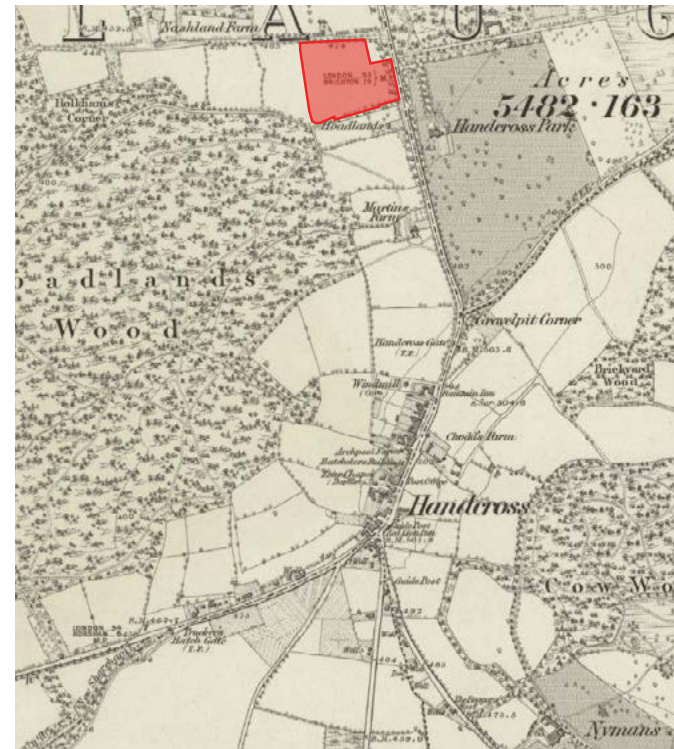
3.0 Site Appraisal

3.05 Settlement Pattern and Urban Grain

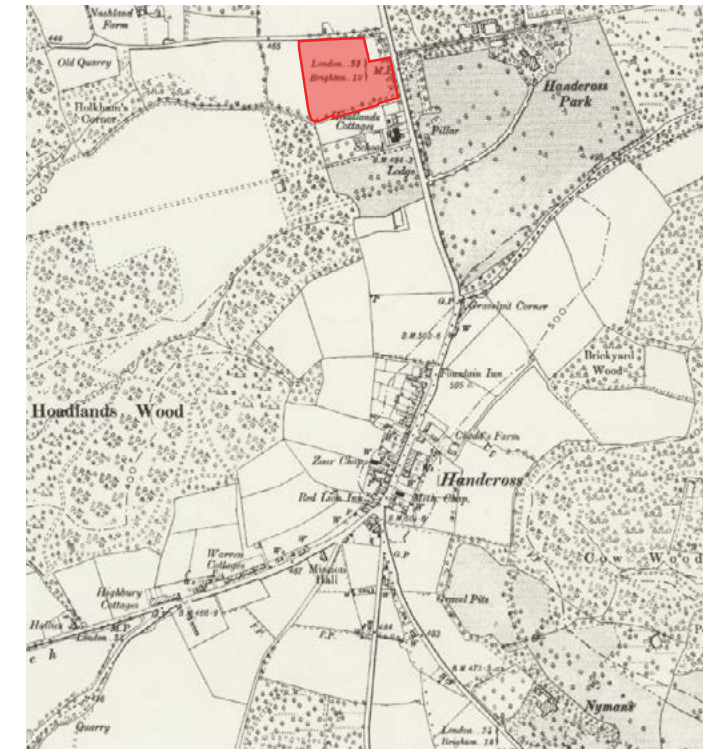
The settlement pattern of Handcross is characterised by a linear arrangement of development along the main routes, with clusters of residential properties forming small, defined pockets throughout the village. The urban grain is moderately dense, with a mix of detached and semi-detached dwellings arranged within clearly defined plots, providing a regular but varied rhythm. Most buildings are one to two storeys, maintaining a human scale and a cohesive streetscape. Generous front and rear gardens, together with boundary treatments and landscaping, help define the public and private realms, creating a legible and well-structured settlement pattern that integrates with the surrounding rural landscape.

3.06 History

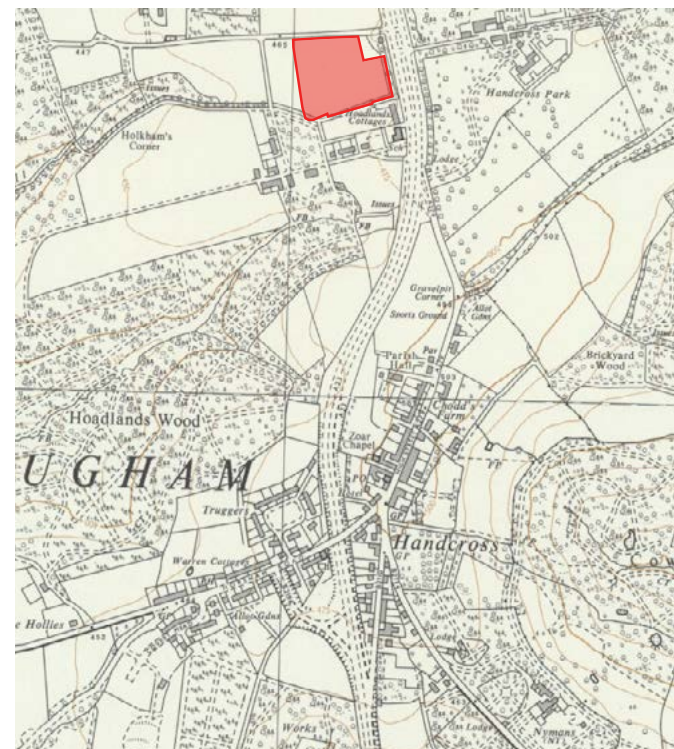
Handcross has a long history as a rural village in Mid Sussex, with origins dating back to at least the 18th century. The village grew around local agriculture and key transport routes, with historic buildings and features reflecting its traditional rural character. Several 19th-century properties and public buildings remain, contributing to the village's historic identity, and parts of Handcross are designated as a Conservation Area, highlighting the importance of preserving its architectural and landscape heritage.



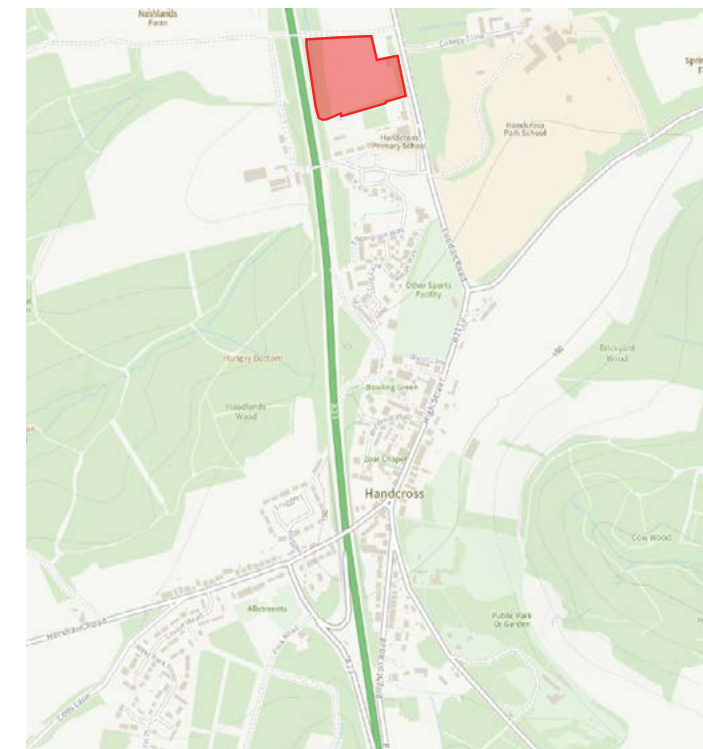
1830-1880



1888-1915



1949-1974



Present

3.0 Site Appraisal

3.07 Landscape Character

The Study Area is located within the High Weald National Character Area, (NCA 122, 2022) and the High Weald National Landscape. At District scale the Site is located within the Worth Forest Landscape Character Area (LCA 8, 2005) described as a heavily-afforested, dissected plateau landscape enclosing a post-medieval rural landscape cut from the forest. Within the Site there is not a strength of expression of the distinctive qualities characterised at District scale within the Worth Forest Landscape Character Area (LCA 8, 2005). The special qualities of the High Weald AONB within the wider Study Area of assorted field systems and ancient woodland would be maintained, with no adverse effect. There would be a local contribution to the objectives of the High Weald National Landscape Management Plan 2024-2029 further to the recommendations provided within this report, including diversification of grassland swards, and control of invasive species.

Regarding settlement pattern and contribution to field pattern, the fields north of Handcross have been progressively subject to development throughout the late C19, mid C20 and more recently C21, which has resulted in a continuous extension of settlement between London Road and the A23 cutting up to the southern boundary of the Site. The dwelling to the north eastern corner of the Site named The Lodge was in place by the late C20th. The remaining field pattern, between the A23 cutting and London Road tapers towards a roundabout and slipway off the south bound A24 some 1km to the north. The development of the Site would be contiguous with that to the south, whilst not substantially disrupting the more dispersed settlement pattern of cottages along London Road, north of the village of Handcross, including The Lodge, Nashlands Cottages and Oak Cottage. There is a local contribution from the field to a pattern of three fields which extend north of Handcross along the western edge of London Road, which are historically characterised as resulting from formal enclosure. The field, beyond its eastern and northern boundary vegetation features does not have time depth within the landscape, having been separated from its former extent and association with woodland by the A24 in the 1980s.

A Moderate adverse effect would result on local field pattern and semi-rural character from the substantial loss of the grassland area within the Site and replacement with residential development. There would be a localised Minor adverse effect on glimpsed views from the adjacent extent of London Road to the east, but without an overall adverse effect on the appearance of the area due to the density of the trees and undercanopy of holly within the woodland shaw to the eastern edge of the Site.





3.0 Site Appraisal

3.08 Heritage and Archaeological Context

Existing situation:

A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) has been prepared to inform the design and support of the proposal. The Site does not lie within any archaeological notification area (ANA), Conservation Area or Registered Park and Garden (RPG) and does not contain any designated assets. Handcross Conservation Area lies to the south of the Site as does Nymans Grade II* RPG. The HER records no finds or features within the Site area, although the walkover survey and aerial photographic analysis have identified the possible remnants of medieval ridge-and-furrow agriculture in the southern part, which is consistent with its use as agricultural land associated with medieval to post-medieval farmstead 'Nashlands'. The area is one of late post-medieval parkscapes with scattered villages and farmsteads.

Archaeology:

The baseline conditions indicate that the potential for significant archaeological activity of all periods is negligible, outside the probable medieval ridge and furrow features on the southern part of the Site. These remains are very poorly preserved, fragmentary and isolated in context, therefore assessment has concluded that they are of negligible significance at best. Evidence suggests that the Site was in agricultural usage throughout the Medieval and Post-medieval periods – although possible comprising heathland in the early-mid 18th century - and had remained undeveloped to the present day. It is not possible to entirely rule out significant archaeology of earlier periods, however the current evidence suggests that the likelihood is negligible.

Heritage:

The Site is located away from any designated assets and is anticipated to cause a neutral effect on this asset class. Any potential visual effect from the proposals is significantly reduced by the A23 and its shelterbelt of trees on the west border of the Site, which also severs the Site from its historical context as part of the landholding to Nashlands Farm and The Hyde Estate. Views into or out of the Site from the east and south are also very restricted due to existing vegetation and only short-range views pertain to the north. The existing vegetation on the site acts to restrict views of the non-designated heritage assets in the immediate vicinity, including Handcross Park to the east and the 19th-20th century buildings close to the south border. The Site forms part of the landholding to Hyde Lodge, an early 20th century lodge at the east entrance to the Hyde Estate, but assessment has concluded that it does not form a meaningful part of its heritage setting.

Potential effects

Archaeology:

No significant archaeological features are anticipated on the basis of the existing evidence. The identified linear features on the south side of the site comprise ephemeral earthworks not immediately identifiable as ridge and furrow and no headlands were discernible. These denuded, partial earthworks have very limited ability to contribute to the body of evidence relating to medieval farming in Britain, beyond recording their location and orientation; they are, therefore, considered to have negligible significance at best. It is consequently not considered likely that a programme of pre-determination archaeological trenching would be proportionate for outline planning permission.

Heritage:

The proposed development is considered to have a neutral effect on the setting of any non-designated or designated heritage asset. No additional mitigation has been identified beyond the embedded measures.

3.09 Ecology

The Site's existing habitats principally comprised of a single grassland field with boundary native hedgerow and trees, with two deciduous woodlands. These boundary habitats are of greatest ecological value within the Site. The proposals seek to retain, protect and enhance habitats of greater value including native hedgerows, deciduous woodland and mature trees.

A suite of ecology surveys are being undertaken to assess potential impacts of the proposals and guide any mitigation and compensation required.

The proposals will secure the delivery of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain labiet some of the habitat units would be secured off-site via a habitat provided. On-site the existing valuable habitats on the site and around the boundaries would be retained and enhanced through management and planting, as well as the provision of new native tree and scrub planting as well as wildflower meadow creation, for the benefit of local wildlife as well as for local residents.

Construction of the proposals will be controlled via a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP: Biodiversity) with any required protected species licences in place prior to commencement, ensuring protection of retained habitats and protected species. Sensitive lighting schemes will also be implemented for construction and operation of the proposals to minimise light spill onto the boundary and retained habitats.

3.10 Vehicular, Pedestrian and Cycle Access

Vehicular access will be taken from London Road, to the south of Hyde Lodge and will be in the form of a simple priority junction. 2.0m wide footways will be provided either side of the access which will tie into the existing footway provision on London Road on the western side of the carriageway in order to provide pedestrian access into the site. Tactile paving and dropped kerbs will be provided on the proposed site access to enable pedestrians travelling on London Road to cross the minor arm safely.

In addition to the proposed vehicular and pedestrian access from London Road, a separate shared footway / cycleway will be provided in the southern most corner of the site. This link will provide an alternative pedestrian/cycle route to and from the site, connecting to the footway infrastructure on London Road. It is also proposed to widen the footway between the main vehicular site access and the separate footway / cycleway to 2.0m wide.

3.0 Site Appraisal

3.11 Flood Risk

EA Mapping indicates that the Site is entirely within Flood Zone 1, is at very low risk of flooding from rivers, reservoirs or tidal flooding. The Site is not indicated to have experienced historic flooding according to the EA historic flood map. The Mid Sussex District Council SFRA indicates that the Site is at very low risk of flooding from groundwater, artificial sources or infrastructural failure.

The Environment Agency Risk of Flooding from Surface Water (Climate Change) mapping indicates that the majority of the Site is at a very low risk of surface water flooding. There is an area of low to high surface water flood risk in the southwest of the Site. The topographical survey indicates that this is the lowest section of the Site. No dwellings are proposed within the areas of the Site at low to high risk of surface water flooding.

3.12 Drainage

In line with national and local planning policy, it is proposed to employ sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to manage surface water runoff close to source using guidance given in CIRIA report C753 'The SuDS Manual' and National Standards for sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) (June 2025). Runoff will be managed both at source and across the Site as a whole.

It is considered that infiltration would not be a suitable method of surface water as infiltration testing results, undertaken in February 2026 by Ground&Water, indicated high groundwater levels on the Site. Therefore, it is proposed to provide a surface water drainage and flood mitigation retention basin in the southwest corner of the Site, within the proposed public open space area. This basin has the storage capacity required for both the attenuation of surface water runoff that the proposed development's impermeable area will create, and for the mitigation of the Site's existing surface water flood risk. The proposed outfall is to an existing ditch that runs along the western boundary of the Site. An existing pipe is located within this ditch which discharges water to another existing drainage ditch located off Site.

Bioretention will be utilised alongside the development's main road. It is also proposed to use porous paving where possible to provide attenuation, surface water conveyance and water quality benefits.

3.13 Utilities

Existing electricity assets are located within the Site. These are proposed to be diverted through the Site. Pre application enquiries have been submitted to the appropriate main utility providers and responses have confirmed that there is capacity within the local infrastructure to support the proposed development.



3.0 Site Appraisal

3.14 Opportunities and Constraints

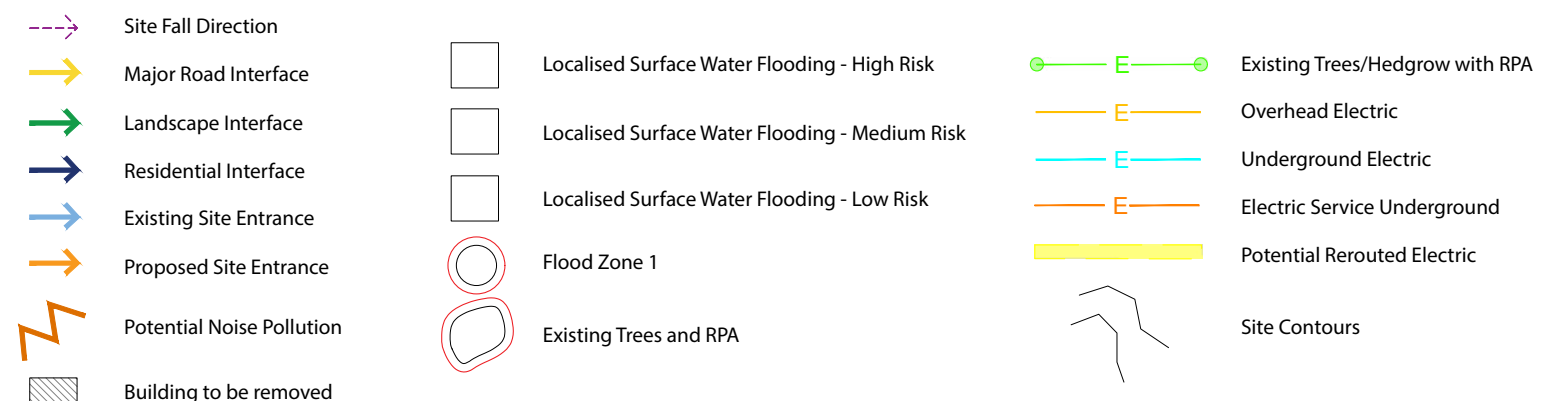
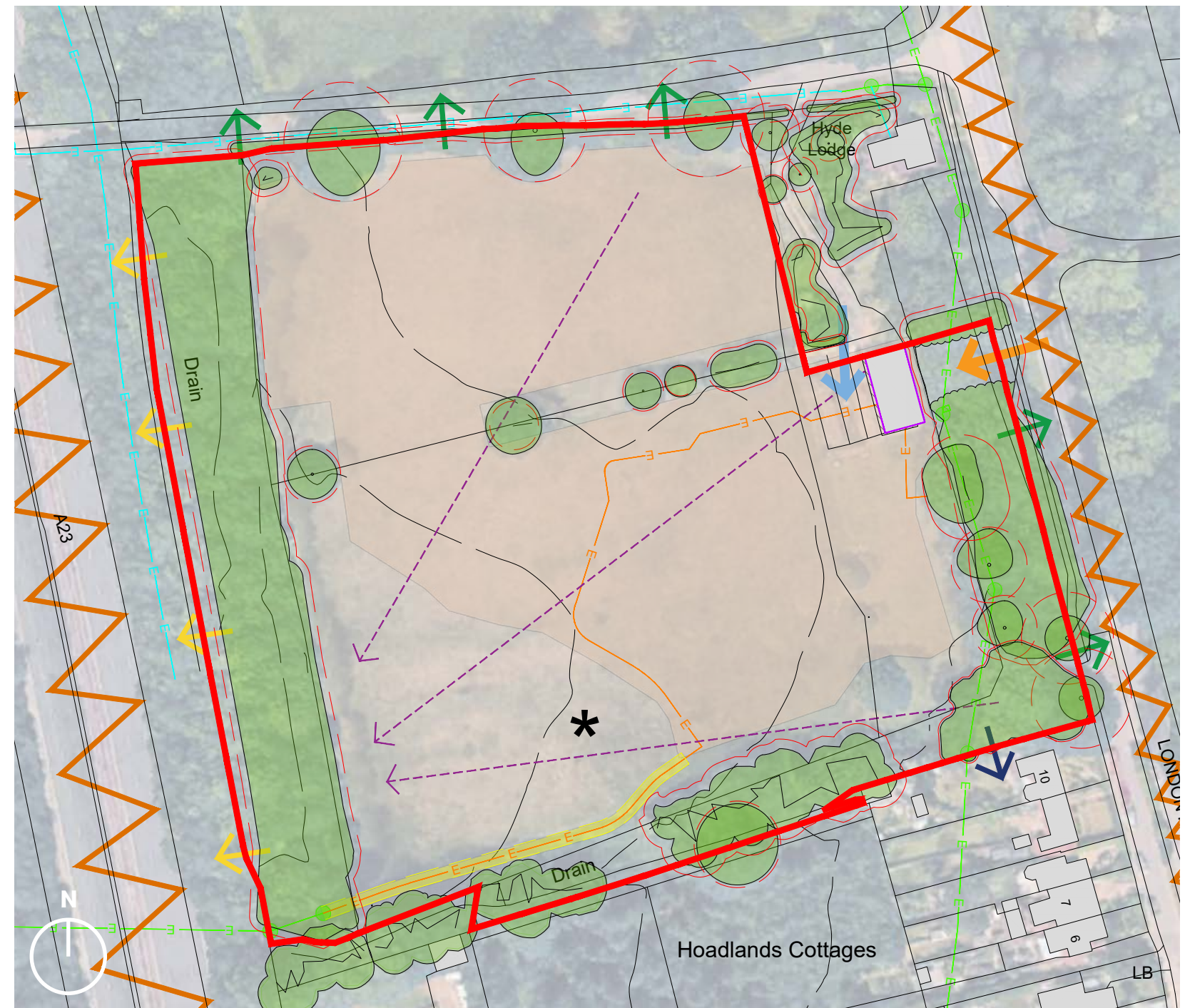
An analysis of the Illustrative Masterplan area has been undertaken to identify both the constraints affecting the proposed development and the beneficial features that can be retained or enhanced. The key opportunities and constraints are summarised as follows:

Opportunities

- The site has a gentle slope, providing a naturally level gradient that is well suited to development, requiring only limited groundworks;
- The site is bordered by established tree belts and individual trees, which present an opportunity to be retained and enhanced to strengthen landscape character and biodiversity;
- Sparse central tree cover offers the opportunity for new planting to improve biodiversity and amenity;
- The landscape framework will be able to incorporate a range of ecological, sustainable drainage and public open space enhancement measures;
- The creation of a network of linked internal pedestrian and cycle routes connecting to the planted site boundaries;
- A range of opportunities for sustainable and renewable initiatives with the site benefiting from uninterrupted natural light and generous natural and green open spaces.

Constraints

- The presence of a surface water flood zone on part of the site restricts development in this area and requires appropriate mitigation measures to manage flood risk;
- Underground electrical services cross the site, which may constrain development and require careful design or potential rerouting;
- The site contains an existing barn that will require removal;
- The current access through the Hyde Estate is not suitable, and a new entrance from London Road will be required;
- Overhead electric cables along the eastern boundary may restrict development in this area.
- Cow Wood and Harry's Wood SSSI to the Southeast of the site.





Masterplan Principles^{4.0}

4.0 Masterplan Principles

4.01 Development Concept

The principal concept of the Illustrative Masterplan is to deliver new housing alongside recreational and landscape-led opportunities, forming a sensitive extension to Handcross that integrates successfully with its surrounding context.

Access will be provided via a primary entrance from London Road, enabling the scheme to function as a sustainable and appropriately scaled addition to the existing settlement, with a density that responds positively to its edge-of-village location.

A robust set of design principles underpins the masterplan, ensuring that the residential development is well proportioned, visually attractive and varied in form, with high-quality detailing that enhances legibility and creates a coherent public realm.

Careful consideration has been given to the relationship between residential areas, open spaces and adjacent land uses, ensuring high-quality settings throughout the site. The design and layout of the proposed homes reflect the overarching aim of delivering a balanced mix of tenures, with all dwellings designed to a consistently high standard.

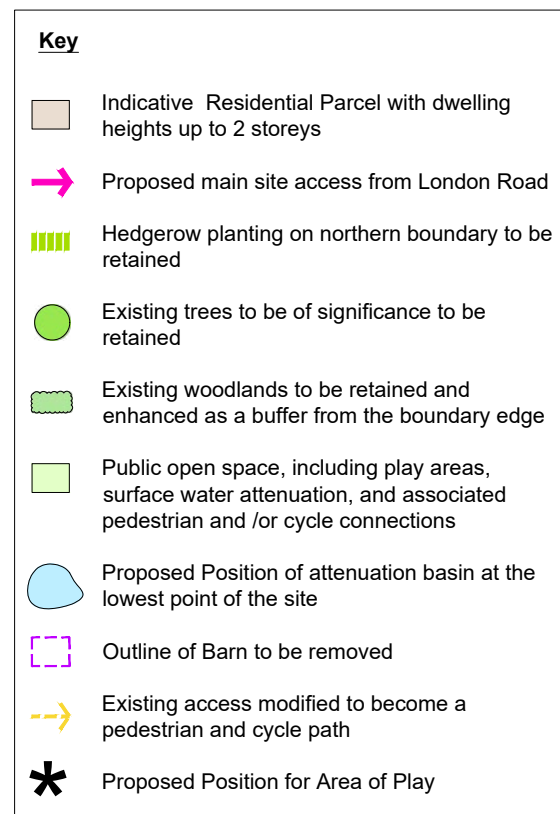


4.0 Masterplan Principles

4.02 Parameters Plan

The Parameters Plan illustrates the key development principles that will guide future detailed design. All dwellings within the residential parcel will be up to two storeys in height, ensuring the scale of development responds appropriately to the surrounding context. In addition, all built development is located outside the Root Protection Areas (RPAs) of retained trees, safeguarding existing vegetation.

Vehicular access to the site will be taken from London Road, providing a clear and legible point of entry. Existing landscape features, including trees and boundary planting, will be retained where possible and integrated into the layout to reinforce the site's character, provide visual containment, and support ecological value.



Parameters Plan

4.0 Masterplan Principles

4.03 An Accessible Development

Pedestrian and cycle access will be provided via a footway into the site, linking directly with the existing footpath along London Road and connecting the development to the wider Handcross area. Within the site, secondary streets are proposed as shared surface, pedestrian-friendly spaces, with dropped kerbs included to support inclusive access.

The layout encourages safe and convenient movement for pedestrians and cyclists throughout the development. The gentle slope of the site also allows homes to be designed with level access approaches, in line with Building Regulations.

Vehicular access to the site has been carefully considered to ensure safe and convenient connections to the surrounding highway network, with site levels and visibility presenting no constraints. The proposed access from London Road has been positioned to avoid any material impact on neighbouring properties and will serve as the sole vehicular entrance, directing traffic onto a suitably wide and well-designed access road. Further detail is provided within the accompanying Highways report produced by iTransport submitted with the application.

4.04 An Intergrated Community

The Illustrative Masterplan has been designed to create an inclusive and integrated community, as an integral part of Handcross.

It is vital that the proposed development is successful in becoming an integrated part of the settlement, with movement routes and visual links necessary to encourage interaction between existing and proposed built form.

The Illustrative Masterplan will look to create 'social cohesion' within the proposed community, aiding integration through the mixed tenures of open-market and affordable dwellings, in order to create an attractive and visually active built-environment and will create areas of publicly accessible open space for the benefit of all residents.

In order to facilitate an inclusive and socially cohesive community, the Illustrative Masterplan is designed to:

- Create a strong development identity, building upon the local distinctiveness of Handcross through a layout that uses scale and density to aid legibility;
- Establish direct visual and physical links between new homes and the public realm, encouraging activity and interaction within public spaces and limiting the impact of the car through both pedestrian-oriented shared surfaces;
- Establish new pedestrian and cycle routes in the form of a shared footpath network to create permeability through the development;
- Create defined and clear boundaries between the public realm and privately owned spaces, avoiding incidental areas of non-ownership;
- Provide a variety of public open spaces, each area with an individual character offering a range of activity opportunities;
- Focus on community safety. The development will be Buildings Regulations Part Q compliant as a minimum requirement.
- Use the principles of 'Building for a Healthy Life' to create homes that are adaptable for a range of future needs;
- All dwellings will be designed to comply with Building Regulations Part M4(2) for accessibility and future adaptation, whilst a limited number of dwellings will be designed to Part M4(3) to allow for wheelchair users. (number to be agreed at Reserved Matters stage).



4.0 Masterplan Principles

4.05 Creating a Sense of Place

A strong sense of place is central to the successful integration of new development, helping to establish identity, character and legibility. This is achieved through the careful arrangement of streets and spaces, the considered positioning and articulation of built form, the use of appropriate materials, and the integration of green spaces and landscaping that respond positively to the surrounding context.

At the heart of the Illustrative Masterplan is a clear hierarchy of streets and spaces, with a well-defined distinction between public and private areas. A strong primary route into the site forms the main organising element of the layout, supported by secondary connections that provide access to the rural edge and areas of differing character. These routes respond to their relationship with the existing settlement and the surrounding countryside, with the main access road designed as a clear and legible feature within the development.

The public realm plays a key role in defining and connecting different parts of the site. Pedestrian permeability, shared surface streets and direct links to on-site open spaces are used to create a cohesive and accessible environment, reinforcing visual and physical connections throughout the development.

4.06 Providing Safer Spaces

The Illustrative Masterplan has been carefully designed to reduce the potential for crime and anti-social behaviour, creating a safe and secure environment for residents and visitors. A single vehicular access point is complemented by continuous natural surveillance from surrounding dwellings, while movement routes are fully integrated within the layout and designed to be actively used at all times, supporting defensible space principles.

Vehicle parking will be provided on-plot or on-street, with direct natural surveillance from adjacent homes. Secondary windows will overlook parking areas, providing additional passive surveillance. Dwellings are arranged to form 'active edges' around the development, maximising visibility, encouraging activity and facilitating movement within the public realm, while clearly defining private amenity spaces. Movement routes and incidental open spaces are well overlooked, supporting a safe and inviting environment.

The community will be encouraged, through a management company, to take shared responsibility for public spaces, with overall maintenance managed in perpetuity to ensure the long-term quality of the site. At a plot level, blank walls are avoided through the use of secondary windows on all façades where possible, and front doors, windows and patio doors will be fitted with laminate glass and locks meeting relevant British Standards. Secure and private cycle storage will be provided for each dwelling, within lockable stores located in rear gardens.





4.0 Masterplan Principles

4.07 National Design Guide

The National Design Guide sets out principles of how schemes should be developed to create good design. The different sections are listed below and the Design and Access Statement submitted as part of this application demonstrates how these principles have been met.

Context – enhances the surroundings.

Identity – attractive and distinctive.

Built form – a coherent pattern of development.

Movement – accessible and easy to move around.

Nature – enhanced and optimised.

Public spaces – safe, social and inclusive.

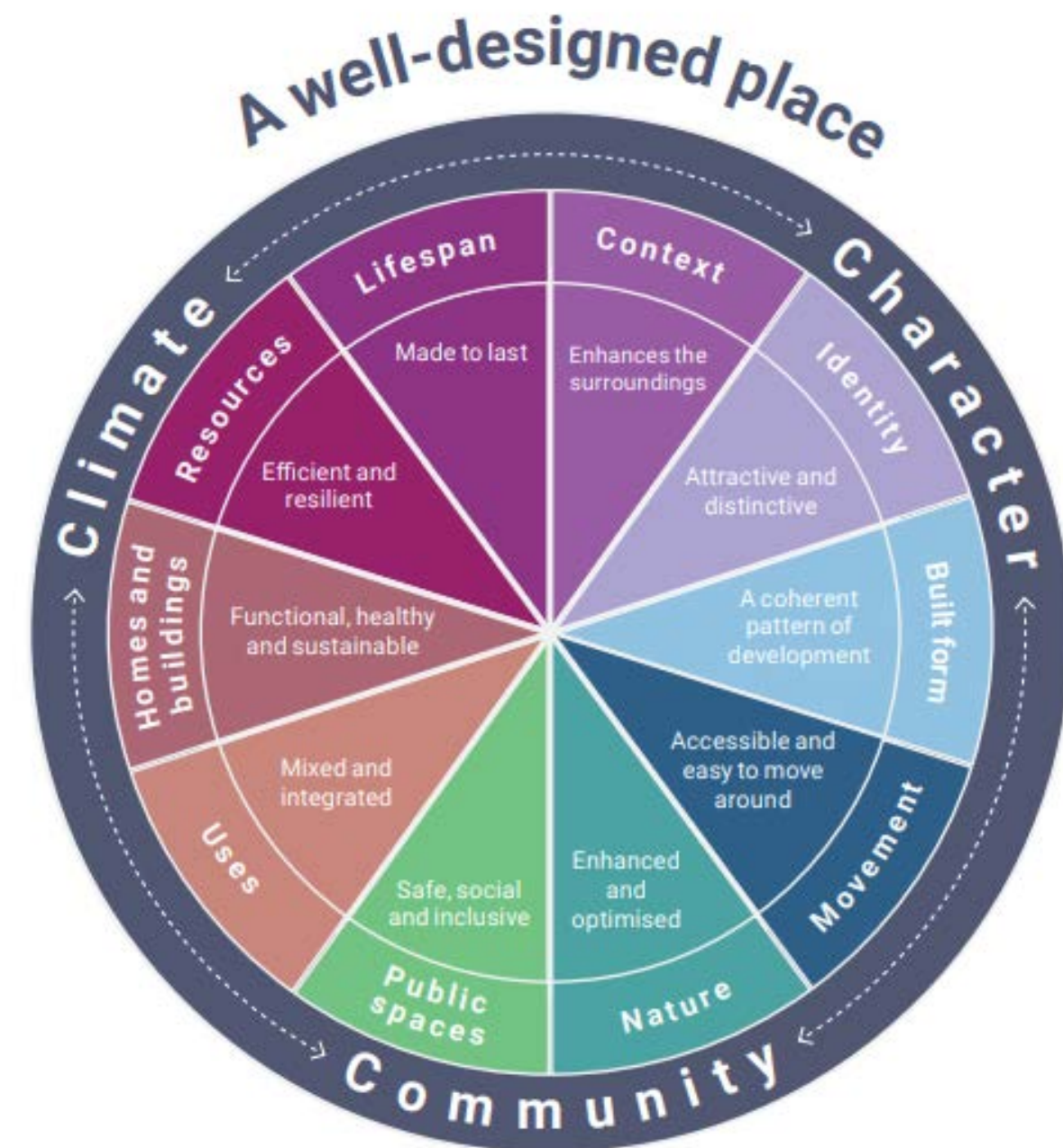
Uses – mixed and integrated.

Homes and buildings – functional, healthy and sustainable.

Resources – efficient and resilient.

Lifespan – made to last.

The outline planning application has been informed by the National Design Guide - Ten characteristics of well designed places.



NDG - Ten Characteristics of well-designed places



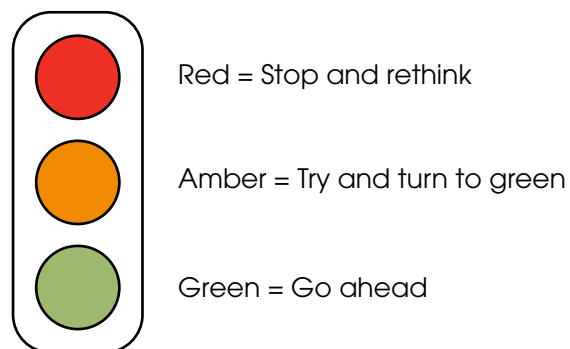
4.0 Masterplan Principles

4.08 Building for a Healthy Life

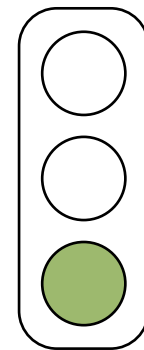


Using the Building for a Healthy Life guide, the proposed outline scheme adheres to the key principles set out in the document which creates a development that has a sense of place and character.

BHL is primarily a design process framework rather than a scoring system. Good practice is shown with a green light, and poor practice with a red light.

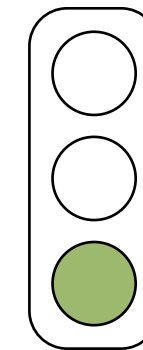


Natural Connections



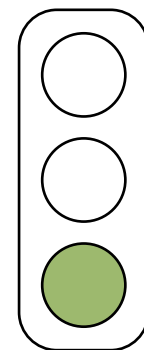
- The design ensures clear edge-to-edge connectivity, with pedestrian links to existing pathways on London Road, providing direct and legible access to Handcross village centre.
- The extensive tree belts and hedgerows around the site will be retained wherever possible, with measures proposed to safeguard their long-term protection and management within the public realm.
- The layout incorporates filtered permeability, reducing through-traffic and creating a low-traffic, pedestrian- and cycle-friendly environment, while maintaining convenient movement for residents throughout the site.

Facilities and Services



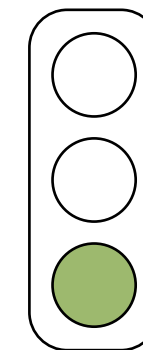
- Houses are positioned to front key locations, creating active and engaging street frontages.
- Land within the south-western corner of the site has been reserved for public open space, ensuring that non-residential uses are located in the most appropriate and accessible part of the development.
- The site benefits from easy access to bus stops on London Road, providing residents with convenient public transport links to Crawley and other nearby towns, supporting sustainable travel and reducing reliance on private vehicles.

Walking, Cycling and Public Transport



- Secondary streets will incorporate shared surfaces, balancing space for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles to create a safer, more inclusive street environment.
- Streets are designed to be cycle-friendly, prioritising and protecting pedestrians and cyclists across junctions and side streets, while encouraging alternatives to car use. Cycle parking would be provided within rear gardens to enhance safe and convenient cycling.
- Secondary streets and changes in paving are designed to encourage 20 mph speeds, supporting traffic calming and safe, low-speed movement throughout the site.

Homes for Everyone

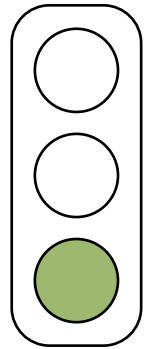


- A mix of affordable and private homes will be integrated throughout the site, with consistent architectural detailing, materials, and landscaping to ensure tenure is not visually distinguishable.
- All houses and apartments are provided with policy-compliant private amenity space, including areas suitable for outdoor clothes drying.



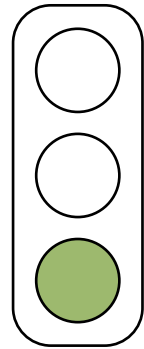
4.0 Masterplan Principles

Making the Most of What's There



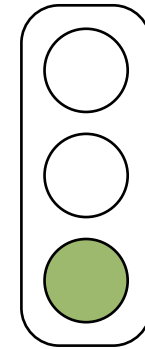
- Site visits and analysis of the local area have informed the design, ensuring that distinctive characteristics of Handcross are understood and incorporated into the development.
- Existing trees within the centre of the site have been retained and designed around, creating a central “green finger” that acts as a natural anchor and informs the layout of surrounding buildings.
- The development has been designed to ensure sensitive transitions with existing Handcross properties, with building heights predominantly 1-2 storeys and typologies coordinated to sit comfortably alongside the surrounding settlement.

Well defined streets and spaces



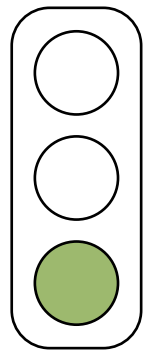
- Streets are designed with active frontages, ensuring buildings engage with and overlook public spaces.
- Building compositions and lines are cohesive, responding to the existing topography and established street layout.
- Front doors always face streets, with corner-turning plots designed to provide active frontages on all key locations.
- Street corner homes are dual aspect.
- The apartment features regular street-facing entrances for natural surveillance, with orientation designed to maximise views and minimise overlooking.

Healthy Streets



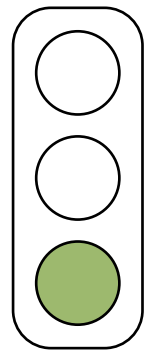
- The main street into the site is tree-lined, providing a healthy street environment that clearly functions as a key wayfinding route.
- Surface changes are used to help achieve 20 mph (or lower) design speeds, reinforcing the 20 mph designation throughout the streets.
- Cycle and pedestrian routes are carefully aligned with desire lines, connecting key locations beyond the site.
- Landscaping, including the attenuation basin and public open space in the south-east, adds visual and sensory richness while supporting biodiversity and amenity.

A Memorable Character



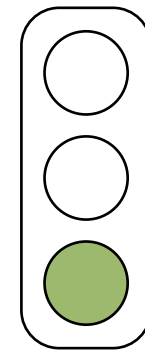
- A clear, illustrative layout has been developed through extensive site analysis, exploring multiple options to identify key issues and arrive at the most appropriate design solution.
- The design draws inspiration from the local architectural character, reflecting the distinctive qualities of the surrounding area and following similar settlement patterns.

Easy to find your way around



- The layout incorporates a central green finger of existing trees running along the main access road, enhancing legibility and helping residents and visitors navigate easily through the site.
- Street patterns are simple and legible, responding to the site's geometry and based on a combination of formal and relaxed grid layouts.

Cycle and car parking

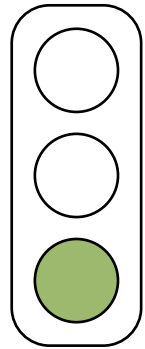


- EV charging points are provided to every house and apartment ensuring the development remains aligned with advancing electric vehicle technology.
- A small, well-overlooked parking courtyard serves the apartment block, with surrounding ground-floor habitable rooms providing natural surveillance and a secure, active environment.



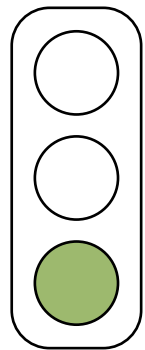
4.0 Masterplan Principles

Green and blue infrastructure



- A connected and accessible network of public open spaces is provided, with footpaths surrounding all areas to ensure easy movement through and around the spaces.
- Biodiversity net gain will be achieved through the retention of existing hedgerows, substantial tree planting along site boundaries, and the creation of species-rich grasslands, enhancing habitats and ecological value across the development.
- Water will be managed on-site using permeable paving and an attenuation basin, helping to control runoff while creating a visible feature that allows people to engage with and appreciate water within the development.

Back of pavement, front of home



- Boundary treatments retain existing planting where possible and introduce new planting to enhance ecological value and reinforce local character.
- All spaces are designed with a clear purpose, avoiding leftover areas without a defined public or private function.



The Illustrative Masterplan^{5.0}

5.0 The Illustrative Masterplan

5.01 Masterplan Approach

The Illustrative Masterplan has been prepared in order to support the Outline Planning Application for up to 55 new homes within Handcross.

The Illustrative Masterplan demonstrates that such an addition to the built up area can be created in a visually integrated, environmentally sensitive and sustainable manner, with housing that is deliverable on the site to meet Mid Sussex District Council's housing needs.

Although the planning application is in outline form, with the access only proposed for detailed approval at this stage, the Illustrative Masterplan demonstrates the intended amount and location of residential development, the positioning, structure and hierarchy of the road network, the location of community open spaces and the overall landscape framework. The Illustrative Masterplan also offers a set of design principles to ensure a high quality development.

The Illustrative Masterplan provides the following key elements:

- The provision of up to 55 new dwellings within a mixed-tenure and highly sustainable development;
- A sustainable addition to the settlement edge that is designed around current urban design best practice guidance to create a safe, inclusive and interactive environment;
- A legible development, with the public realm utilised to visually link individual areas that create varying scale, massing and detailed design within an overall design framework, establishing a strong and unique sense of place;
- Primary access leading from London Road designed to technical constraints for visibility splay and vehicle tracking within the existing road network and hierarchy;
- Provision of public open space, landscaping, informal recreational spaces, community walks and meeting spaces;
- A comprehensive sustainable drainage strategy, utilising a attenuation basin within the site;
- A safe and separate pedestrian and cycle link is provided into the site from the south-eastern corner, enhancing connectivity and promoting sustainable modes of travel.



5.0 The Illustrative Masterplan

5.02 Access Strategy

Vehicular access will be taken from London Road, to the south of Hyde Lodge and will be in the form of a simple priority junction which will be 5.5m wide to allow for all expected vehicles including deliveries and servicing.

The proposed access arrangements provides visibility splays in accordance with current highway design guidance for the observed vehicular speeds on London Road (i.e. 60m to the south and 160m to the north) and are achievable within the public highway.

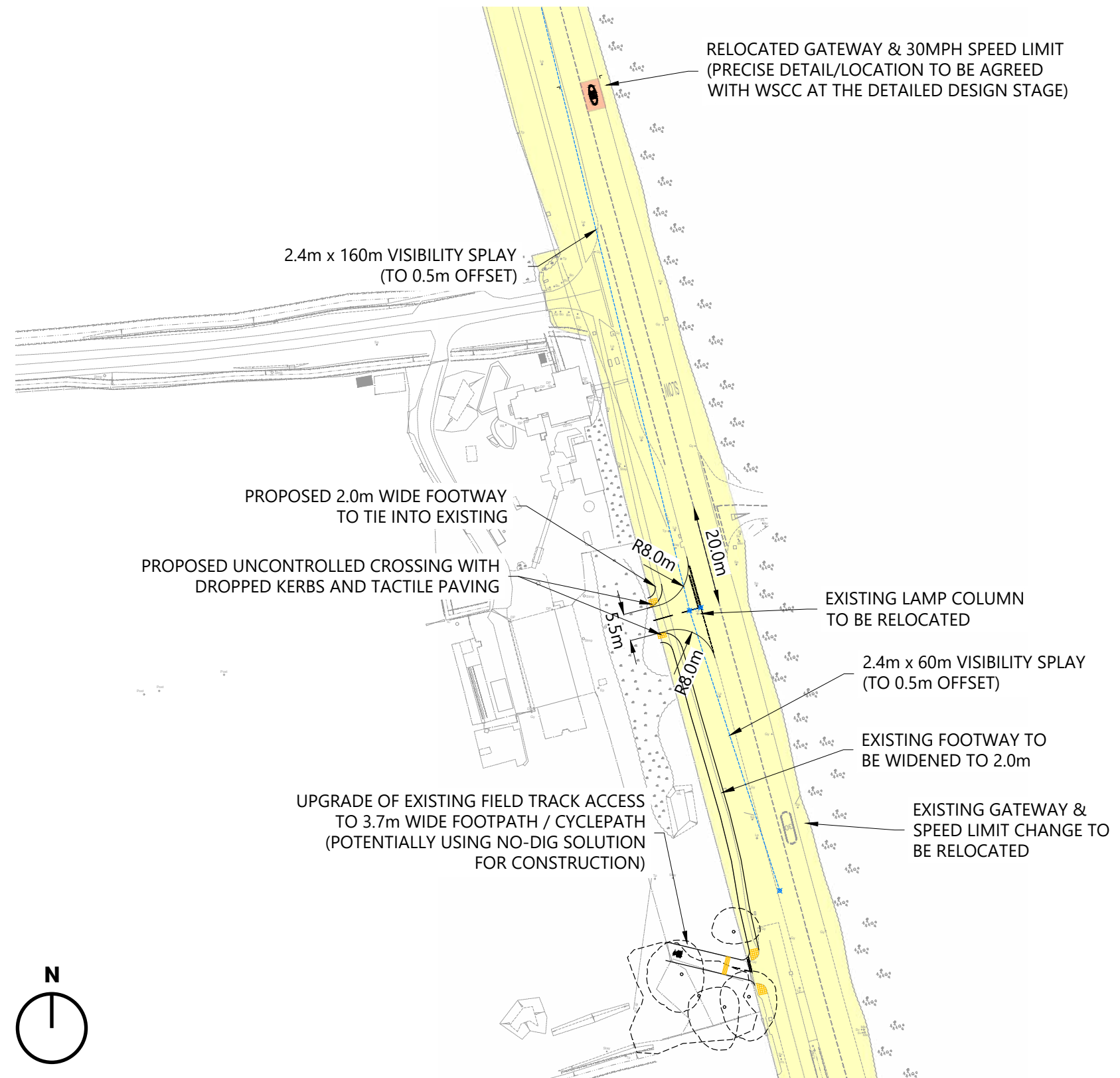
An independent Stage 1 Road Safety Audit will be undertaken for the proposed access and presented with the Transport Statement.

Although not required, it is also proposed to relocate the existing 30mph speed limit (currently located broadly centrally along the site frontage) further north to encompass the proposed development site and provide a new gateway feature to encourage slower speeds on approach to the village (although the scheme is not reliant on the speed limit change).

2.0m wide footways will be provided either side of the access which will tie into the existing footway provision on London Road on the western side of the carriageway in order to provide pedestrian access into the site. It is proposed to widen the existing footway on the western side of London Road from the south-east corner of the site, i.e. the location of the separate footway / cycleway, as far as the main vehicular site access to 2.0m in width. Tactile paving and dropped kerbs will be provided on the proposed site access to enable pedestrians travelling on London Road to cross the minor arm safely.

In addition to the proposed vehicular and pedestrian access from London Road, a separate shared footway / cycleway will be provided in the southern most corner of the site to provide a permeable and well connected development for future residents. This link will provide a 3.7m wide alternative pedestrian/cycle route, connecting to the existing footway infrastructure on London Road. Bollards will be located along this route to stop general vehicular movements from using this connection. It will also be capable of being used by emergency vehicles if required if the main access is blocked for whatever reason.

The proposed development would therefore connect with the existing footway network in the northern part of Handcross, enabling journeys to the village centre and to other key local destination to be undertaken safely on foot.



5.0 The Illustrative Masterplan

5.03 Internal Permeability

The Illustrative Masterplan establishes new pedestrian and cycle links that integrate with the adjacent community and the open countryside.

Following the Illustrative Masterplan objective of ensuring permeability in the public realm, the scheme seeks to provide an edge-of-settlement environment that offers a choice of different movement routes for traveling through the development by pedestrian and cycle means.

There are visual links between the main entrance and a choice of routes around and through the site linking to the open space in the southeastern corner of the site. This includes both direct pedestrian links through the shared surface road network and the secondary network of footpaths /cycleways. The public realm encourages short trip movement via foot or cycle through these direct links.

The creation of a network of pedestrian routes through the site is also intended to make the open spaces accessible for families within the existing settlement as well as future residents.

The pedestrian and cycle routes will offer direct access onto London Road which links to local facilities, services and public transport. Proper provision will be made for people with mobility difficulties and consideration given to the ease of access.

5.04 Movement Hierarchy

Within the site it is intended that the street hierarchy would follow a set of general principles as follows:

- Main Avenue, with a 5.5m wide tarmac carriageway and a 2.0m wide footpath one side and a grass verge the other, bordering onto the site boundary;
- Shared surface Road, 5.0 metre overall width finished in small module block paving, including a 2 metre grass service margin;
- Private Drive, 4.1 metre overall width finished in small module block paving used to access parking for plots with no through road;
- Informal visitor parking spaces are spread across the site as appropriate;
- The hierarchy is intended to achieve an appropriate balance between the various users of the highway network within the different areas of the Illustrative Masterplan;
- The entire scheme is intended to have both vertical and horizontal highway features, including granite setts as rumble strips, raised tables at junctions to ensure a maximum 20mph design standard so that traffic speeds remain low throughout the development;
- In terms of the access hierarchy, it is proposed that the principal means of access leading from London Road will cater for all road users including refuse vehicles, cars, cyclists and pedestrians;
- The remaining routes would all accommodate refuse vehicles, cars, cyclists and pedestrians, but within a pedestrian priority and shared surface network, further reducing the likely vehicle speeds within the development.



- Main Avenue 5.5m with 2.0m footpath
- Shared Surface Road 5.0m wide
- Private Drive 4.1m wide
- Pedestrian/Cycle Link
- Pedestrian Link

5.0 The Illustrative Masterplan

5.05 Urban Form

Within the proposed development, the urban form will be defined by how the dwellings relate to each other within the block layouts, creating streets and spaces.

The urban form will need to vary for different locations, whilst having a common theme in order to create visual quality within the development and provide legible movement routes.

The Illustrative Masterplan has been formulated to take into account safety, permeability, adaptability and parking provision.

The proposed positions of roads, open spaces and pedestrian/cycle routes create appropriate block sizes to allow a variety of dwelling types and tenures with generous private amenity space and achieving no overlooking or overbearing issues.

Vehicle parking is envisaged as generally on-plot driveways and courtyard parking for the apartment block.

Defining the quality of the public realm, building frontages will express the junction between public and private spaces. The frontages vary throughout the Illustrative Masterplan, from relatively close to the primary route, through to dwellings set back behind larger planted front gardens to the development edges.

The use of staggered building lines will avoid the creation of physical and visual corridors through the site, breaking up the built form to avoid an overly urban environment whilst ensuring the natural surveillance and overlooking of public spaces, movement routes and parking areas.

The Illustrative Masterplan acts as an overall framework for the development of the detailed design to be submitted at the Reserved Matters stage.

The Illustrative Masterplan delivers a high quality of urban form through the following;

- A variety of house types ranging in size, with small apartment blocks to large detached houses;
- The consistency of building lines and architecture relating to street type, reflecting the aims of achieving a variety in street typology;
- Appropriate gaps and physical linkages within the street-scene to provide numerous views to landscaping and open space when traveling along the street;
- A focus on detailing to provide strong articulation to elevations, including bay windows, porches, overhanging eaves and ridge detailing.



5.0 The Illustrative Masterplan

5.06 Indicative Scale

Within the proposed development, buildings are predominantly two storeys, reflecting the scale and character of Handcross, with single-storey elements limited to garages. The layout has been carefully designed to ensure sensitive transitions between the new development and existing village, so that building heights, typologies, and tenures sit comfortably alongside neighbouring homes, avoiding any issues of overlooking or overbearing impact.

5.07 Density Approach

Density guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework encourages local authorities to set out their own approach to housing density to reflect local circumstances. This is in order to ensure an efficient use and an appropriate supply of land for housing needs.

The density approach for the Illustrative Masterplan is generally low to medium, with a mix of semi-detached and detached dwellings, and a single apartment block. While overall density is consistent across the site, the hierarchy of streets and positioning of buildings creates a perception of variation, with homes overlooking open spaces or site boundaries benefiting from larger front gardens. This approach balances efficient land use with the creation of a visually varied and legible streetscape that responds to the surrounding context.



5.0 The Illustrative Masterplan

5.08 Affordable Housing Provision

There is a considerable need for both market and affordable housing within Mid Sussex District Council.

Welbeck Land proposes to provide 30% of the homes within the Outline Planning Application as affordable, in compliance with Mid Sussex District Council planning policy.

The affordable provision shown on the Illustrative Masterplan would provide a comprehensive range of dwellings aimed at meeting the diverse requirements in the District, including a mixture of apartments and houses ranging from 1 to 4 bedrooms and including both affordable rent and shared ownership properties.

The Illustrative Masterplan shows the affordable housing located in a two separate areas arranged in various locations around the site. The site is designed to ensure an appropriate spread of tenure throughout the site. The affordable accommodation would be owned and managed by an appropriate Registered Social Landlord.

5.09 Gateway Locations and Landmark Buildings

The Illustrative Masterplan has been designed to create areas where specific buildings define character and add interest to the street scene, while accentuating key views.

The scheme provides opportunities for key 'accent' buildings. A prominent 'Gateway' building is proposed marking the main entrance and serving as the first and most notable built form within the development. Landmark buildings are proposed at main corners within the residential areas, and the apartment block also acts as a landmark due to its larger scale. These buildings provide visual interest, reinforce legibility, and help users orient themselves within the development. While they may feature individual materials or design detailing, they are not intended to alter the overall character of the scheme.

Secondary accent buildings are used elsewhere to create subtle variation in scale, maintain legibility, and highlight key points within the street scene. This may include feature elevations or corner-turning dwellings with distinct design elements to provide visual interest without disrupting the overall harmony of the development.



5.10 Key Built Form Edges

Edges of buildings, corners and detail accents can help to provide a site with character, visual identity and aid legibility by providing points for orientation throughout the public realm.

The Illustrative Masterplan creates buildings and spaces of distinction, designed to provide a visual experience when traveling through the site, focused on a pedestrian perspective.

Built form edges are positioned to work with the public realm to contribute towards creating a community-oriented sense of place, whilst also focusing on maximising daylight and natural ventilation within dwellings through appropriate orientation.

The Illustrative Masterplan proposes a mixture of highly defined edges based on the perimeter block concept. Along the main road dwelling curtilages may be defined by a uniform hedgerow which pulls the whole character area together. The rural edges overlooking the northern and southeastern boundaries will have more sporadic and undefined edges which are more representative of the rural setting.

The treatment of boundaries between the public and private realm is particularly important to the success of the built-form edges. Brick walls, black metal railings and traditional post and rail fencing will be utilised where appropriate to help re-inforce character and to create a sense of enclosure and relate to the built form. Street furniture will vary, with railings defining the private boundaries to the more formal areas and a mixture of post and rail fencing, hedgerow or planting defining boundaries towards the development edge.

Allied to this, landscaping within the public realm will also contribute to the green nature of the edge conditions, such as on-street tree planting, the use of box hedges and the provision of shrub planting beds where appropriate.

5.11 Housing Typologies

The proposed development includes a varied mix of open-market and affordable housing, carefully integrated within the Illustrative Masterplan to respond to the site context. Housing types are arranged in accordance with the street hierarchy to create a coherent and legible layout.

All dwellings are two storeys, reflecting the established character of Handcross. The development comprises mainly houses, including a number of apartments and narrow-fronted semi-detached homes. Buildings are positioned with a formal relationship to the street, creating a rhythm of front doors and windows that contributes to an active and attractive streetscape.

Car parking is generally provided on-plot, either via driveways or garages, helping to keep streets uncluttered and pedestrian-friendly. All dwellings are bespoke designs, tailored to suit the development proposal and ensure a high-quality, coordinated appearance across the site.



5.0 The Illustrative Masterplan

5.12 Car and Cycle Parking

The car parking and cycle provision within the Illustrative Masterplan has been designed to accord with planning policy within Mid Sussex District Council.

Parking will be provided as on-plot spaces and side/frontage parking for houses, dependent on specific dwelling location. A parking courtyard will be provided for the apartment building. Cycle parking will be provided generally within a lockable external shed located in private rear gardens or within communal stores for apartments.

The Illustrative Masterplan identifies the breakdown of car parking per dwelling, however in detail it has been designed and laid out as follows:

- 1 space per 1-bedroom apartment parked within a parking courtyard;
- 2 spaces per 2 & 3-bedroom dwellings, predominantly on-plot driveway parking;
- 2 spaces & a garage for 4-bedroom open market dwellings;
- 14 unallocated visitors spaces across the site, including adjacent to the open spaces and within the road network, to be managed by the nominated estate management company.

In terms of cycle parking adequate provision has been identified within the Illustrative Masterplan as follows:

- 1 space per 1-bedroom apartment;
- 2 spaces per 2/3/4-bedroom dwellings.

5.13 Lighting

The lighting approach seeks to balance the safety and security of future residents with the need to respond sensitively to the site's urban fringe context. Street lighting is therefore proposed throughout the development to an adoptable standard suitable for future public highway adoption.

Residential streets will be served by 6m high columns, spaced at approximately 25m intervals along the main routes, in accordance with local authority specifications. LED luminaires with photovoltaic controls will be utilised to ensure energy efficiency and to regulate lighting levels during periods of reduced activity.

Particular care will be taken where lighting interfaces with areas of ecological value. Mitigation measures will include the use of backing boards or internal louvres to minimise light spill beyond the site boundary. Within private areas and parking courts, low-level bollard lighting is proposed to provide safe and legible routes, designed to prevent upward light spill and also controlled through photovoltaic systems.

At the vehicular access onto London Road, an enhanced lighting arrangement will be provided to address the higher hazard classification associated with the junction. This is expected to include 8m high columns, with detailed design to be agreed with the highway authority through the Section 278 process. Individual dwellings may incorporate external lighting for security and convenience, controlled by occupants.

5.14 Noise

This noise assessment considers the constraints affecting the proposed residential development site, including the impacts of construction activities and traffic generated by the development. Site observations indicate that the dominant noise source in the area is the A23 and the wider highway network.

Predicted façade noise levels have been calculated at the approximate positions of the proposed dwellings, with west-facing façades expected to experience the highest levels. For plots located adjacent to the A23 or with clear views of it, noise levels are anticipated to exceed 50 dB during the day and 45 dB at night. To address this, mitigation measures are proposed to ensure that internal noise levels comply with BS 8233, WHO guidelines, and local planning policy.

With windows and doors closed, all proposed dwellings are expected to achieve internal night-time noise levels of 30 dB, along with daytime levels of 35 dB in living rooms and bedrooms, in line with BS 8233 recommendations. The use of double-glazed windows with acoustically attenuated ventilation will help maintain these standards.

Outdoor amenity spaces are also predicted to perform well, with garden noise levels generally below 55 dB and most falling under 50 dB during the day. In addition, the report assesses the potential worst-case effects of construction noise on nearby sensitive receptors, concluding that impacts can be minimised through the application of best practical measures, while noise from construction traffic along the proposed routes is expected to be negligible.



6.0 Appearance



6.0 Appearance

6.01 Architectural Approach

One approach to the Illustrative Masterplan is a contemporary interpretation of a sympathetic edge of village extension, using the massing of traditional building forms within a more modern context, whilst being designed to fit in with the local surrounding.

The proposed development accords with the High Weald National Landscape Design Guide and the Guidance on the Selection and Use of Colour in Development. The design approach and material palette have been informed by these documents, ensuring that form, detailing, and colour selection respond sensitively to the character of the High Weald and reflect its distinctive landscape qualities.

An underlying architectural style will permeate the development, characterised by deep and generous window proportions, a varied but cohesive use of traditional materials and features such as bay windows, chimneys, porches, gables and barn hips to provide interest and variety in the new streets.

The common architectural language will follow through to the external materials, with boundary walls, hard surfacing and fencing primarily of the Sussex palette, all common through the scheme. The built form will include grouped buildings that will share common materials within a wider palette covering the development as a whole.

Detailing will be specific to material use, and generally common to the scheme design to create an underlying 'Development Identity' that is representative of the location of the site integral to Handcross whilst remaining individual in character.

The proposed architectural approach will be fully detailed as part of a Reserved Matters submission. Other approaches will be discussed at that time.





6.0 Appearance

6.02 Materials

The proposed material palette has been informed by the established architectural character of Handcross, ensuring the development sits comfortably within its context. Predominantly brick is proposed as the primary facing material, with traditional detailing such as soldier courses and quoining used to add depth and visual interest. Areas of tile hanging and white boarding will also be incorporated, reflecting both the historic character of the village and more recent residential development within Handcross.

Roof materials will comprise traditional clay or concrete tiles in muted brown and grey tones, reinforcing the local vernacular and contributing to a cohesive roofscape. Materials will be applied using a largely traditional approach, complemented by carefully considered contemporary detailing where appropriate, to create a high-quality and balanced architectural composition.

Elevational Treatments



Brown Multi Brick



Red Multi Brick



Brown Plain Roof Tiles



Red Tile Hanging



White Weatherboard

Roof Treatments



Grey Slate Effect Roof Tiles

6.0 Appearance

6.03 Street Character

The street character is defined by a cohesive and well-considered use of materials and architectural detailing, creating a strong sense of place throughout the development. Buildings are predominantly two storeys in height, reflecting the established scale of Handcross, with the use of barn hips providing visual variety and softening roof forms at key locations. Feature elevational treatments are applied to corner plots and end-of-vista locations, using changes in material, articulation and roof form to create emphasis and aid legibility within the street scene.

A traditional yet simple approach to detailing has been adopted, including the use of quoining, soldier courses and restrained brick band cills to add texture and interest without unnecessary complexity. The incorporation of white boarding and tile hanging further enhances the character of the streets, reinforcing local architectural references while contributing to a varied and attractive townscape.



Street Scene A-A



Street Scene B-B



Landscape 7.0

7.0 Landscape

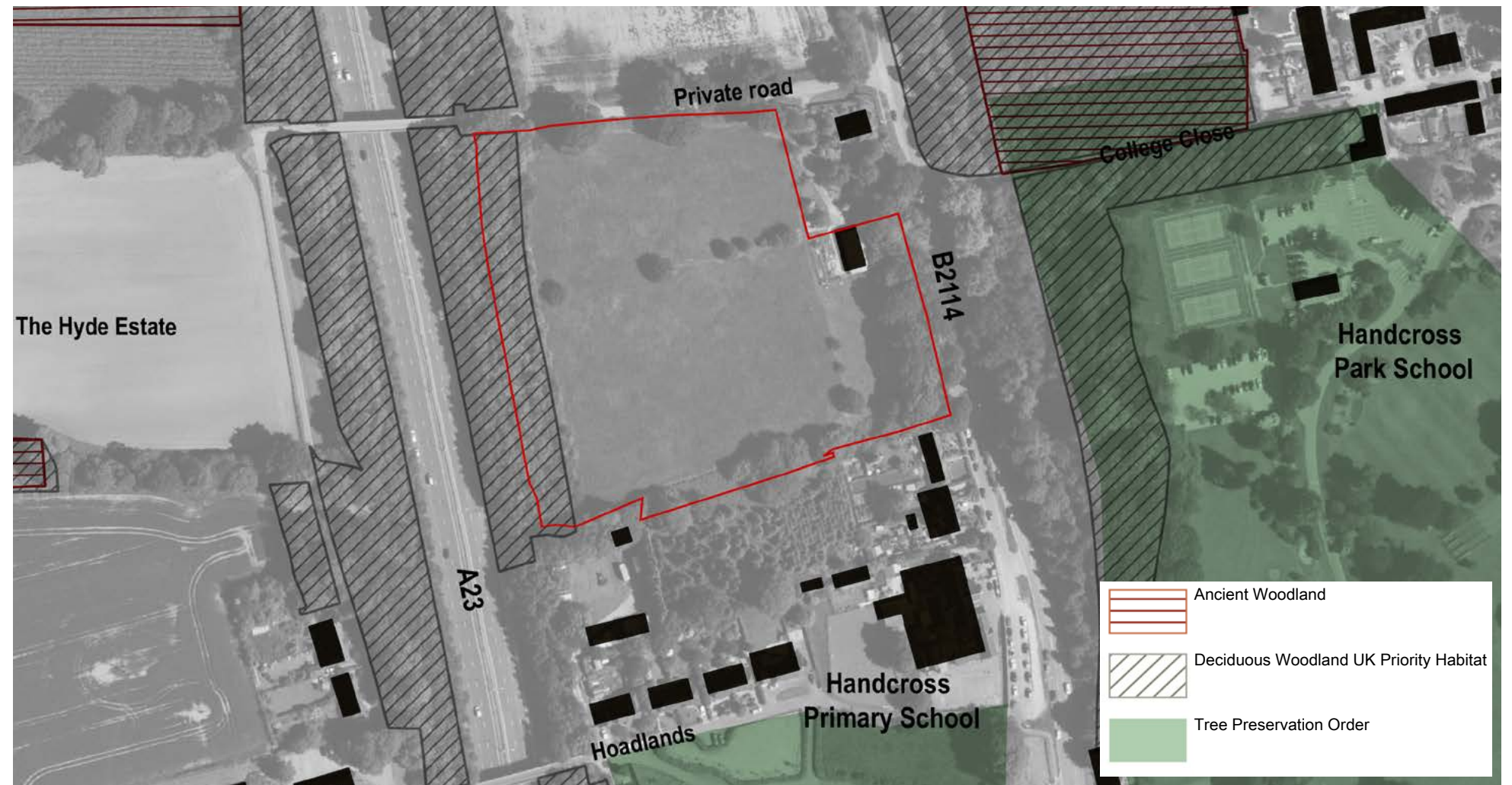
7.01 Landscape context

The site comprises a pasture field enclosed by vegetation on all sides. The High Weald National Landscape / Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty extends across this area.

A belt of deciduous woodland comprising a wooded embankment and ditch extends from the west of the site to the cutting of the A24. A belt of hazel coppice extends along the southern edge of the Site, with some dispersed mature trees within.

The site's eastern boundary comprises a more historic shaw of mixed trees, including hornbeam, field maple, holly and occasional yew. A ponded area is situated to the southern end of this, with a gated access through the trees to the south-eastern corner. The pavement to London Road, (B2144) extends along the main eastern edge of the Site.

The northern edge of the Site is defined by a mixed species hedgerow, including holly, hazel, wild privet and blackthorn, with a dispersed line of mature oak trees with veteran features within. An extensive section of the hedgerow is composed of rhododendron. To the north of this boundary a private access drive outside of the northern Site boundary leads over the 23 as a road bridge into the Hyde Estate.



7.0 Landscape

7.02 Landscape Masterplan

The landscape masterplan supports the Masterplan Principles of placemaking, wayfinding and sustainability detailed in Section 4.0. This is achieved through a hard and soft landscape strategy expressed in the following key elements detailed below:

- 1 Enhancements to Existing Woodland: existing trees would be retained, with remedial works to enhance habitat quality carried out under the supervision of a suitably qualified arboriculturist
- 2 Enhancements to Existing Hedgerow: all rhododendron would be removed, with a variety of native species introduced (including climbing and scrambling shrubs such as honeysuckle and dog rose) to enhance the habitat quality.
- 3 Proposed Incidental Play: utilising naturalistic play elements to harmonise with the semi-rural context.
- 4 Permeable Paving: feature paving would be flexibly laid with porous jointing to facilitate the site drainage strategy.
- 5 Proposed Shared Surfaces: the surface treatment would encourage a cautious approach and create a shared environment for pedestrians and vehicle users.
- 6 Proposed Vehicular Access: the proposed asphalt access road would be fringed with soft landscape and incidental play features.
- 7 Proposed Ornamental Planting: dwelling curtilages would be defined by pockets of hardy, colourful perennial planting.
- 8 Proposed Mixed Native Scrub: a variety of native species would support local biodiversity while engendering a rural quality to the scheme.
- 9 Proposed SuDS Attenuation Basin: seasonally dry, maintained as an accessible wetland meadow.
- 10 Proposed Equipped Play Area: a centrally located playspace for the whole community to enjoy.
- 11 Enhanced Pedestrian Entrance: an enhanced surface and clearly delineated route would provide an immediate connection between the proposed scheme and the existing community.
- 12 Proposed Hazel Shrub Enhancement to Southern Boundary: habitat enhancements to augment the existing woodland edge character and support the local dormouse population.



7.0 Landscape

7.03 Open Space Strategy

The site's public spaces are concentrated in the southwestern corner but extend across the majority of the site's perimeter. The strategy responds the NPPF mandate for "safe, social and inclusive" spaces through the provision of accessible footpaths, clear sight-lines and spots to meet, greet and play.

The attenuation basin represents a seasonally dry soft landscape feature that would also provide incidental play opportunities, while abutting a dedicated, equipped play area enjoying excellent oversight from facing dwellings. Pockets of native shrub planting would punctuate its margins, parallel to the slightly elevated footpath.

Adjacent to the site's northern boundary – and also by the main access route – play-on-the way and other incidental play opportunities are presented. Naturalistic play elements such as boulders, logs and tree stumps would facilitate this.





7.0 Landscape

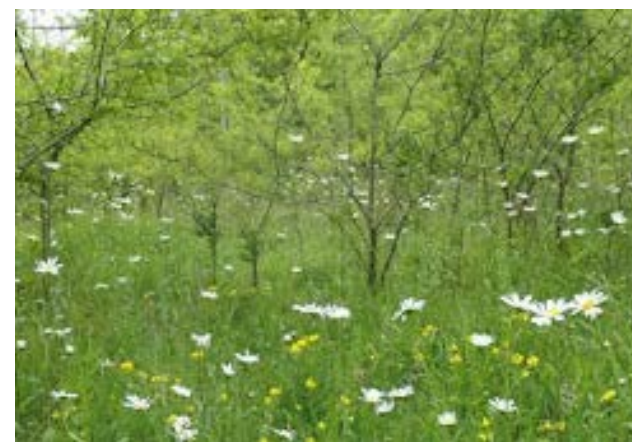
7.04 Soft Landscape Treatment

The soft landscape design bridges the needs of residents, visitors and the creation of biodiverse habitats.

Acknowledging both the immediate context of the historic field boundaries and the wider setting of the High Weald National Landscape, the soft landscape design addresses biodiversity through the enhancement of existing scrub and woodland habitats. Species selection is dictated by provenance, with an emphasis on native species characteristic to the High Weald such as hazel and hornbeam. Boundary hedgerow enhancements would also comprise the removal of invasive species such as rhododendron.

While additional provision of scrub species would be of great benefit to the local dormouse population, the soft landscape strategy prioritises amenity value. Flowering lawns would characterise green spaces and the attenuation basin would be seasonally dry and publicly accessible, rather than a permanent water feature – though wetland meadow species would be specified.

Ornamental planting would delineate public-private boundaries, with hardy, evergreen shrubs defining defensible space and curtilages. Meanwhile, drought-deluge tolerant herbaceous planting would provide seasonal interest.





Sustainability^{8.0}



8.0 Sustainability

8.01 Sustainability Vision and Renewable Energy Objectives

The proposed development embodies the key principles of sustainability across social, economic, and environmental aspects through thoughtful design informed by the site's context.

The following section highlights the principles of sustainable design, including considerations such as energy use, water management, waste and recycling, site location, and transport.

The primary objective is to ensure the development meets, and where possible exceeds, relevant policy requirements. The National Planning Policy Framework promotes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which this scheme seeks to embrace fully.

Particular emphasis has been placed on addressing climate change through measures such as energy-efficient building design and layouts, renewable energy provision, water efficiency, waste reduction, ecological enhancements, and sensitive landscaping.

Beyond meeting policy requirements, Welbeck Land is committed to creating a development that fosters a genuine sense of community and provides a safe, attractive, and welcoming environment. Sustainable development is about more than environmental considerations; it is about creating a place where people want to live and can thrive over the long term. This approach is embedded in the Illustrative Masterplan, with sustainability at the heart of the design.



8.0 Sustainability

8.02 Built Form and Design Standards

The sustainable design objectives for the development are based on current Building Regulations, with particular consideration given to energy efficiency and the potential for renewable energy generation. The scheme will fully comply with all relevant energy performance requirements, and in line with emerging policies of Mid Sussex District Council, it is supported by an Energy Statement demonstrating how energy efficiency and carbon performance exceed minimum standards where feasible and viable, and how opportunities for on-site renewable energy and carbon reduction have been considered as part of the design.

The Illustrative Masterplan has been carefully informed by the natural environment, with measures included to retain and enhance existing landscape features. All homes within the development are designed to meet Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations, ensuring adaptability to meet the changing needs of residents throughout their lives.

Homes are designed to provide generous internal space and appropriate access to accommodate the needs of elderly or disabled residents. In addition, specific dwellings, to be detailed at Reserved Matters stage, will be designed to meet Part M4(3) wheelchair-accessible standards, ensuring the development can support a range of mobility requirements within the community.

8.03 Energy Strategy

It is essential to reduce energy demands as far as possible, in-line with the energy hierarchy, before considering the introduction of energy generation and supply technologies; a 'fabric first' approach.

There are a number of key design elements that have been applied at high level through the development of the Illustrative Masterplan and which will be developed at the Reserved Matters stage for the implementation of the scheme:

Orientation, Passive Solar Design and Daylighting;

- The Illustrative Masterplan has been oriented to enable the majority of dwellings to benefit from an east-west or southerly orientation where possible.
- The medium density of the development ensures appropriate spaces around dwellings, minimising the risk of overshadowing.
- In order to reduce the risk of overheating, a simple and cost-effective enhancement is to reduce the 'g-value' of the glazing.

Thermal Elements

- The buildings will need to be energy efficient structurally. To facilitate this, not only will the individual elements (wall, roof, and floor) be thermally efficient, but the construction will need to ensure that thermal bridges are minimised through the application of Accredited Construction Details, insulated lintels and by ensuring air tightness;
- Building fabric – a highly energy efficient building envelope that meets and may exceed Building Regulations standards.

Ventilation and Air Tightness

- Air tightness of a building is important in reducing heat loss, and in the prevention of draughts. The target for the development will be to ensure domestic properties are built with an air permeability level of 5m³/m²@50Pa or less.
- It is the intention that this development will benefit from natural ventilation through cross ventilation and openable windows. This will enable rapid purges of air and good levels of internal air quality.

Lighting, Fixtures and Fittings

- Further energy savings will be made by maximising the efficiency of appliances, lighting, fixtures and fittings.

Space Heating

- The decision on energy supply for the development has been considered in line with the requirements of criteria 8 of the IPS. To meet these challenging targets, the Applicant has committed to installing low carbon air source heat pumps.

The Illustrative Masterplan incorporates solar thermal and photovoltaic solutions alongside high-efficiency gas boilers. Photovoltaic panels will be integrated within roof slopes where possible and positioned away from public-facing elevations. These renewable energy measures, combined with careful building design, will create high-quality, comfortable, and sustainable homes. By applying these principles at the detailed design stage, the development will deliver an attractive and environmentally responsible place to live. Further details are provided in the accompanying Sustainable Construction and Design Statement.





8.0 Sustainability

8.04 Waste and Recycling

The Illustrative Masterplan approach to waste management, concerning the generation, storage, treatment and disposal of waste, will be through the active use of the Waste Hierarchy which lists the prevention of waste as the top priority.

There will be a number of measures in place that will facilitate high levels of reuse and recycling throughout this period, including but not limited to the development of a Site Waste Management Plan at the construction stage.

The Site Waste Management Plan will;

- Identify all waste streams and plan for their management through the construction process;
- Set targets for waste reduction in building;
- Identify a specific person responsible for the Plan oversight and implementation;
- Require all site contractors to be aware of the importance and requirements of the Site Waste Management Plan;
- Designate areas for waste management and sorting, with colour coded skips and other receptacles provided;
- Designated areas for safe and secure storage of materials prior to use;
- Re-use materials on site wherever possible, such as timber;
- Use only licensed waste and recycling contractors;
- Order materials already cut to size and from sources with minimal packaging.

Within the proposed development, all homes will be provided with internal refuse and recycling bins to split the different recycling streams prior to storage outside. It is intended that composting bins will be provided in gardens in accordance with best practice.

With regard to refuse and recycling, bins will be stored generally within rear garden areas and provided with a suitable hard-standing, to be brought to the fronts of dwellings on collection days only.

All refuse and recycling storage will be designed to be within the required distances specified in The Buildings Regulations Part H to ensure that residents and waste operatives do not have to pull bins any further than necessary.



Surface water drainage can become a landscape feature of informal open space



Low water usage fittings installed in all dwellings



Refuse / recycling storage and water butts to be provided in rear gardens



9.0 Conclusion



9.0 Conclusion

9.01 Conclusion

This Design & Access Statement has set out the locational context, design influences, and key principles that have informed the development of the Illustrative Masterplan for the site on the outskirts of Handcross. It provides one approach for how the site, allocated within the emerging Mid Sussex District Plan, could be developed, with the detailed layout to be agreed at Reserved Matters stage.

The Illustrative Masterplan proposes a sustainable residential development of up to 2-storey dwellings, including a mix of open-market and affordable homes, with car parking predominantly provided on-plot and small-scale shared parking areas where appropriate. The development incorporates a variety of well-designed public open spaces, including a central green finger and a landscaped attenuation basin, and carefully retains and enhances existing tree belts and hedgerows to strengthen the ecological and visual character of the site.

The design has been informed by the local architectural character and settlement patterns of Handcross, ensuring sensitive transitions to neighbouring properties and creating a coherent street hierarchy that enhances legibility. Key landmark and accent buildings provide visual interest and wayfinding, while the layout incorporates principles such as filtered permeability, safe and overlooked streets and courtyards, and pedestrian and cycle connectivity throughout the site and to the wider village.

Sustainable design has been embedded throughout the Illustrative Masterplan, with all dwellings designed to meet Part M4(2) accessibility standards, selected homes able to meet Part M4(3) wheelchair-accessible standards, and energy-efficient measures integrated with consideration for renewable technologies. These measures, alongside careful water management, high-quality landscaping, and biodiversity enhancement, will ensure the development delivers comfortable, healthy, and environmentally responsible homes.

Overall, the Illustrative Masterplan sets out a framework for a high-quality, legible, and attractive development that responds positively to the characteristics of the site and its wider context. It provides a sustainable, inclusive, and visually appealing addition to Handcross, creating a safe and welcoming environment for future residents, while maintaining sensitive relationships with the surrounding settlement and countryside.