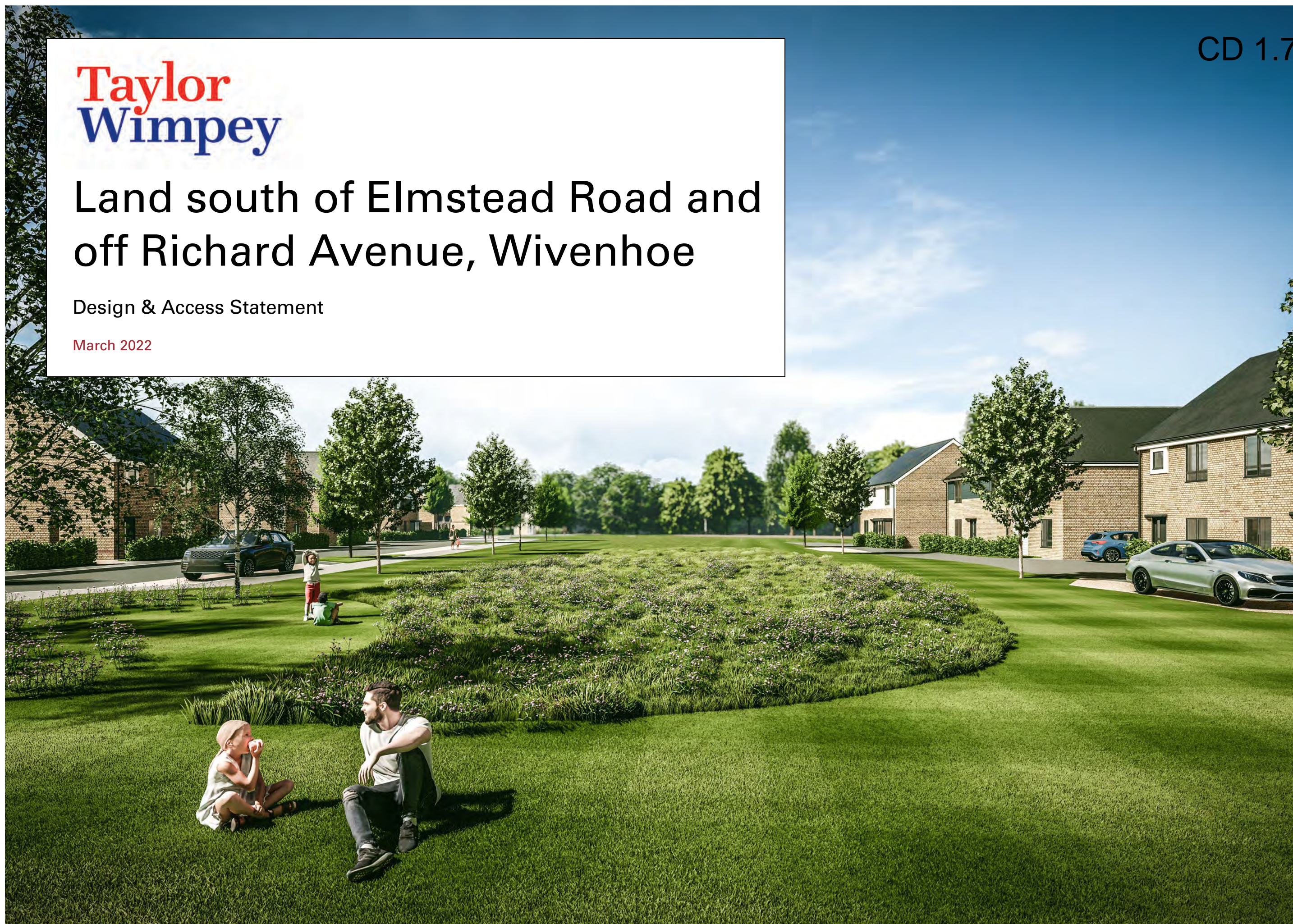




Land south of Elmstead Road and off Richard Avenue, Wivenhoe

Design & Access Statement

March 2022



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Vision

Taylor Wimpey are one of the largest homebuilders in the UK, operating from 24 regional offices across England, Scotland and Wales. They build a wide range of properties, from one and two bedroom apartments to five bedroom detached houses, with a broad price range including both private and affordable homes. They understand that development is about more than creating homes and provide millions of pounds worth of infrastructure (such as roads, sewers, landscaping and community facilities) every year across the UK. The company's aim is to develop vibrant communities with a true sense of place that fit into their surrounding area and meet the needs of local people.

Taylor Wimpey is seeking planning permission to create 120 new family homes, pursuant to *Policy WIV 29: Land behind Broadfields* in the Wivenhoe Neighbourhood Plan. Access to the site for vehicles is from Richard Avenue, but an alternative route for pedestrians and cyclists is available from Elmstead Road and Broadfields through the new public open space that wraps around the north side of the town. The site is on the northern edge of the town but is within easy walking distance of local services and facilities, as well as enjoying good connections to bus services on Colchester Road.

The scheme will retain the existing trees and use them to define the outer edges of the site, forming a focus for a new area of public open space that stretches north from the new homes. The proposed scheme will also provide affordable housing in addition to new homes for private sale on the open market so that a mixed community is created, in addition to delivering planning obligations that will create benefits for the wider community. Our vision is to create a new community in Wivenhoe that provides a healthy environment for people to live, relax, exercise and work.

Introduction

This Design and Access Statement accompanies the submission of an application for planning permission to construct 120 no. two, three and four bedroom houses plus associated infrastructure and public open space on the land to the south of Elmstead Road and off Richard Avenue, Wivenhoe. This statement has been written in accordance with the requirements of Article 9 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

The site is allocated for development in the Wivenhoe Neighbourhood Plan, which sets nine conditions that the proposed scheme must meet. A detailed assessment of the site was undertaken as part of the creation of the site layout and the application for planning permission is accompanied by reports and assessments that confirm that mitigation measures can be implemented to address potential impacts, covering areas such as ecology, drainage and traffic generation.

This Design and Access Statement builds upon the parameters set out in the allocation in the neighbourhood plan, drawing on the supporting text to Policy WIV 29 to guide the proposed form of development. As such, the principle of residential use has been accepted but a fresh assessment of the site has been undertaken to better understand the constraints and opportunities that it presents, re-starting the design process to ensure that the detailed scheme makes the best use of the site and creates a high-quality extension to the built-up area, responding to the requirements set by the neighbourhood plan and reflecting the character of the northern side of the town.

This statement forms part of the application for planning permission and should be read in conjunction with the package of information that has been submitted in support of the proposal for the development of the site.

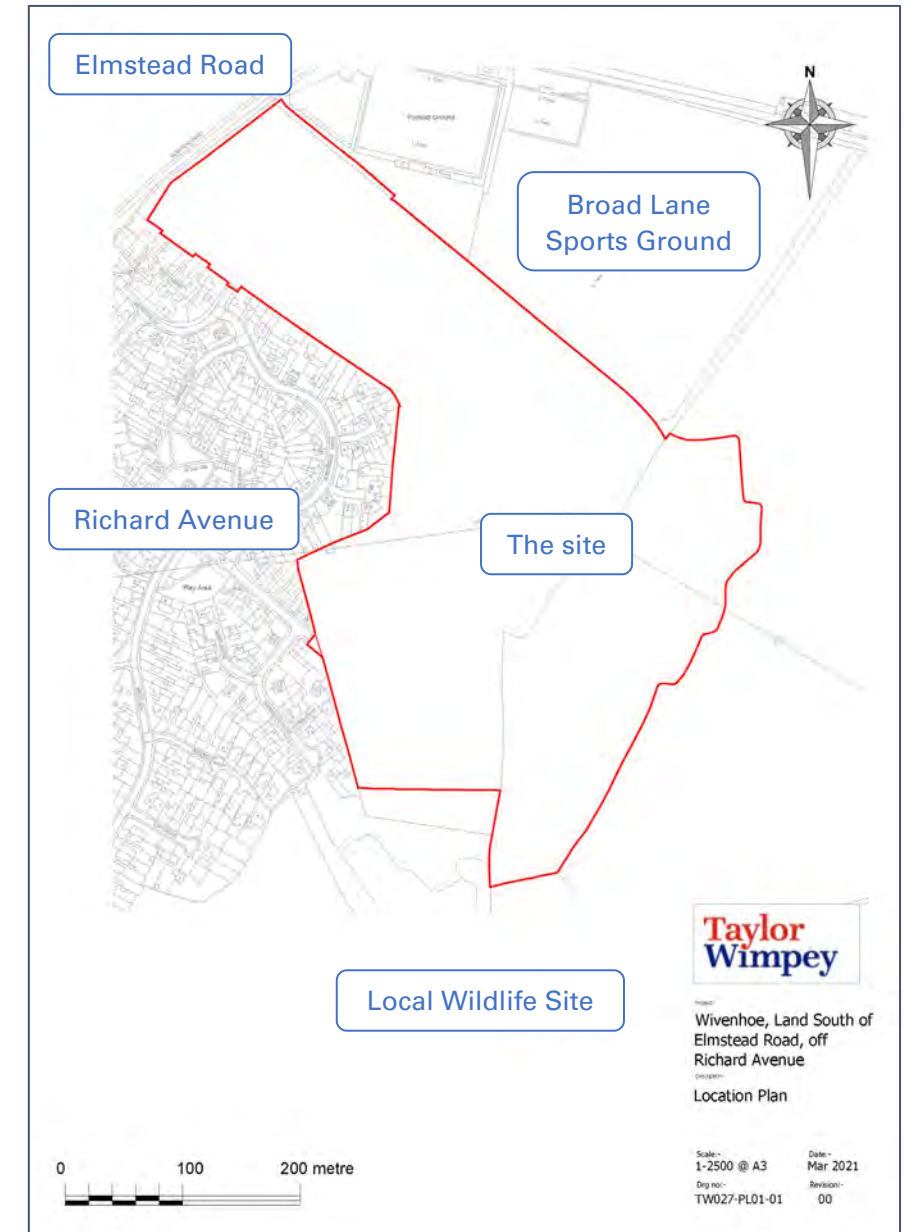
Place

Location and context

The neighbourhood plan describes Wivenhoe as *"located on the north bank of the River Colne where it gradually widens into a wildlife and bird-rich estuary, surrounded on both sides by wooded areas and open agricultural land that affords distant views. It has a much-prized rural feel that belies its proximity to the larger conurbation of Colchester and its ready commuter access to London"*. It goes on to summarise the history of the town, confirming that it was *"mentioned in the Domesday Book, it grew as two villages. One had its focus on the river with fishing and boat-building, boat maintenance and later, sailing with workers who earned their living in the winter trawling for sprats and in the summer crewing for wealthy yacht-owners on the South Coast and in the Mediterranean. The other was Wivenhoe Cross, just a short step away, with a more agricultural feel, although the chimney at the rope works would have dominated the sky-line. Today, these two communities have become one"*.

The plan is proud of the town: *"Wivenhoe itself is a thriving community with a strong sense of identity. It has a substantial number of local organisations, clubs and societies, many local artists and a history that all give it a distinctive character. The highly valued river, countryside and green spaces also combine to give it a unique flavour, to which is added a reputation as an interesting and caring community. The University, and its many students, academic and administrative staff who choose to live in Wivenhoe, add another dimension to life here. Wivenhoe is considered by the majority of residents to be a very friendly, attractive, open-minded community, who also value the proximity to Colchester, the University of Essex and the rail connection with London. All these aspects of the town provide a rich diversity of opportunities for leisure and work that greatly enhance the quality of life here"*.

The site is on the northern side of the town, wrapping around the existing built-up area and comprising the fields in agricultural use in the gap between Wivenhoe Town Football Club and the housing estate served by Broadfields, Alexandra Drive and Richard Avenue. The football club and sports facilities enclose the northern edge, with farmland to the east and the remaining parts of Wivenhoe Quarry to the south east. An existing Local Wildlife Site is within the eastern and southern parts of the application site, with more public open space to the south. Vehicle access to the site is through the existing built-up area, with Richard Avenue running up to the site boundary and designed with capacity to accommodate an extension into further residential streets. The site is within Flood Zone 1 (it is at the lowest possible risk of flooding) and is not within a conservation area and does not contain any listed buildings, scheduled monuments or non-designated heritage assets. It is relatively flat and mostly open, and is currently used as farmland.



Neighbourhood Plan Policy WIV 29

Residential development on the site is allocated through *Policy WIV29: Land behind Broadfields* in the Wivenhoe Neighbourhood Plan 2019 – 2033. The plan on page 94 (right) shows the extent of the allocation and the supporting text explains the background to the allocation and the relationship with the allocation for open space uses in the Colchester Local Plan, most of which is retained and will address the requirement identified by the Wivenhoe & District Sporting Trust – it is understood that it will be merged into the facilities that they already manage to the north of the site at the Broad Lane Sports Ground. The new homes will create an increase in the demand for sports and recreational activity, therefore the allocation includes:

- Two hectares of land as additional sports pitches adjacent to the Broad Lane Sports Ground.
- An all-weather shared use footpath/cyclepath that connects the new homes to the sports ground.
- A new footpath/cyclepath alongside Elmstead Road from Broadfields to the sports ground.
- A contribution towards improvement of community facilities, which could include a new hall for sports and other social recreational activity at the sports ground.

The creation of 120 new homes on a little over four hectares of land equates to a density of development at 30 dwellings per acre and the supporting text confirms that although the scheme will extend development beyond the settlement boundary and into the countryside, the allocation is considered to relate reasonably well to the existing built-up area and urban grain. Vehicle access from Richard Avenue is confirmed, along with the network of footpath/cyclepaths listed above that includes a new connection on the south side of Elmstead Road and a route across the new open space

to the sports ground that will create a traffic-free route to the community facilities from the existing estate. Works to the south of the site are also mentioned, comprising an upgrade to the existing public footpath around the eastern edge of the built-up area from Henrietta Close to The Cross, although this is also included as part of the allocation to create a minimum of 25 new homes and a care home on the land off Croquet Gardens in Policy WIV 28. The adjoining scheme will also deliver new allotments and improvements to the existing open space and meadow, including informal car parking and improved footpath/cyclepaths through it.

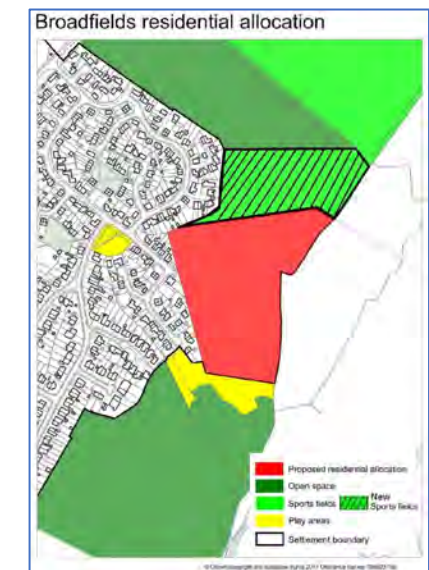
Policy WIV29 reads:

The land behind Broadfields shown in Figure 35 totalling 4.06 hectares is allocated for a minimum of 120 dwellings subject to the following conditions:

- a minimum of 45 dwellings shall be provided with one or two bedrooms which should be designed as homes suitable for older people, single people, or for young couples. They could be bungalows, terraced properties or apartments; and*
- the number of dwellings with four bedrooms or more shall not exceed 25 (these could include an office for home-working and / or an annexe to accommodate a relative); and*
- dwellings, of whatever size, designed for older residents or active retirees should preferably be built to the Lifetime Homes standard; and*
- 20% of all properties should be affordable housing or that percentage relevant under national or Borough policies at the time the planning application is submitted subject to viability considerations; and*
- it can be demonstrated that the development will not have a detrimental impact on wildlife, as evidenced through an appropriate wildlife survey; and*

- vehicle access into the residential part of the site shall be provided from Richard Avenue; and*
- 2 hectares of land to the northern part of the site adjacent to Broad Lane Sports Ground as indicated on Figure 35 shall be provided for additional sports pitches; and*
- a dedicated footpath / cycleway along Elmstead Road to link up Broad Lane Sports Ground with the built-up part of Wivenhoe shall be provided; and*
- a shared-use footpath and cycle track shall be provided directly linking the development to the facilities at Broad Lane Sports Ground and linking with the public footpath to the south of the site; and*
- a contribution shall be paid towards the creation of a combined footpath/cycle track linking the new development to the public footpath (FP No. 14) from The Cross; and*
- contributions towards open spaces, sports, recreational facilities and community facilities shall be required in line with Borough Policies current at the time any application for planning permission is made.*

Proposals to include some self-build plots within this site allocation will also be supported.



Opportunities and influences

The allocation of the site for residential development in the Wivenhoe Neighbourhood Plan sets several parameters for the preparation of a detailed site layout. There are also elements of the site that will influence the scheme, and some of those influences are not reflected by edges of the land allocated for residential use.

There are several “no build” zones where new homes cannot be placed. Most significant is the route of the high voltage electricity cables that runs from east to west: pylons are positioned close to the boundaries and they are connected by an easement that extends 7.5 metres to either side of the cables. Unlike the existing estate, it will not be possible for the new homes to be laid out under overhead wires as if they are not there – instead, there will be gap in the built development, crossing the land that is identified for residential use in the neighbourhood plan. It is estimated that around 0.5 hectares of developable land are lost as a result, equating to more than 10% of the residential element and therefore requiring the density of the development to be increased across the balance of the site to deliver the minimum of 120 new homes allocated in the local plan. However, the cables are suspended high above the ground and do not restrict access to the land beneath, creating the opportunity for linear open space to split the residential area in two and adding extra prospects for the creation of a perimeter block form.

The belt of trees and hedges on the eastern side of the site separate the new homes from the land that is already designated as a Local Wildlife Site. It will act as a physical barrier, restricting access to the land with biodiversity value, and as a visual barrier, marking the edge of the public realm that will enclose the land allocated for the construction of the new homes. To protect the existing landscaping and to give it space to grow in the future, a buffer measuring ten metres from the site boundary will be used to ensure that there is an appropriate offset from the construction activities. In addition, the buffer also creates the edge to the site and can be used as public open space, providing an opportunity for a circular walking route to be established and taking advantage of the new homes facing outwards to provide surveillance of the public realm.

A surface water drainage easement runs along the south western boundary and to the rear of the existing properties in Richard Avenue and Henrietta Close. A six metre wide buffer is required and it can be handled in the same manner as the offset on the eastern boundary, creating room for public open space, a circular walking route and the new homes facing outwards. Existing trees on the western side will be retained as part of the setting of the scheme; some are within the site and others are at the end of the gardens of the existing properties that are placed side-on or rear-on to the land allocated for residential use. The relationship with the adjoining homes is an important consideration, with care needed to create an appropriate relationship that protects the amenity of the gardens that abut the site – overlooking (and the perception of overlooking) of the gardens must be avoided but, at the same time, the gardens should not be opened up to disturbance from users of the open space.

The land falls gently from north to south, requiring space to be reserved for surface water drainage infrastructure at the southernmost end of the site. An attenuation basin will provide storage for rainwater during storm events, holding back water within the site boundary so that the existing discharge rate can be maintained and the scheme has no impact on flood risk elsewhere.

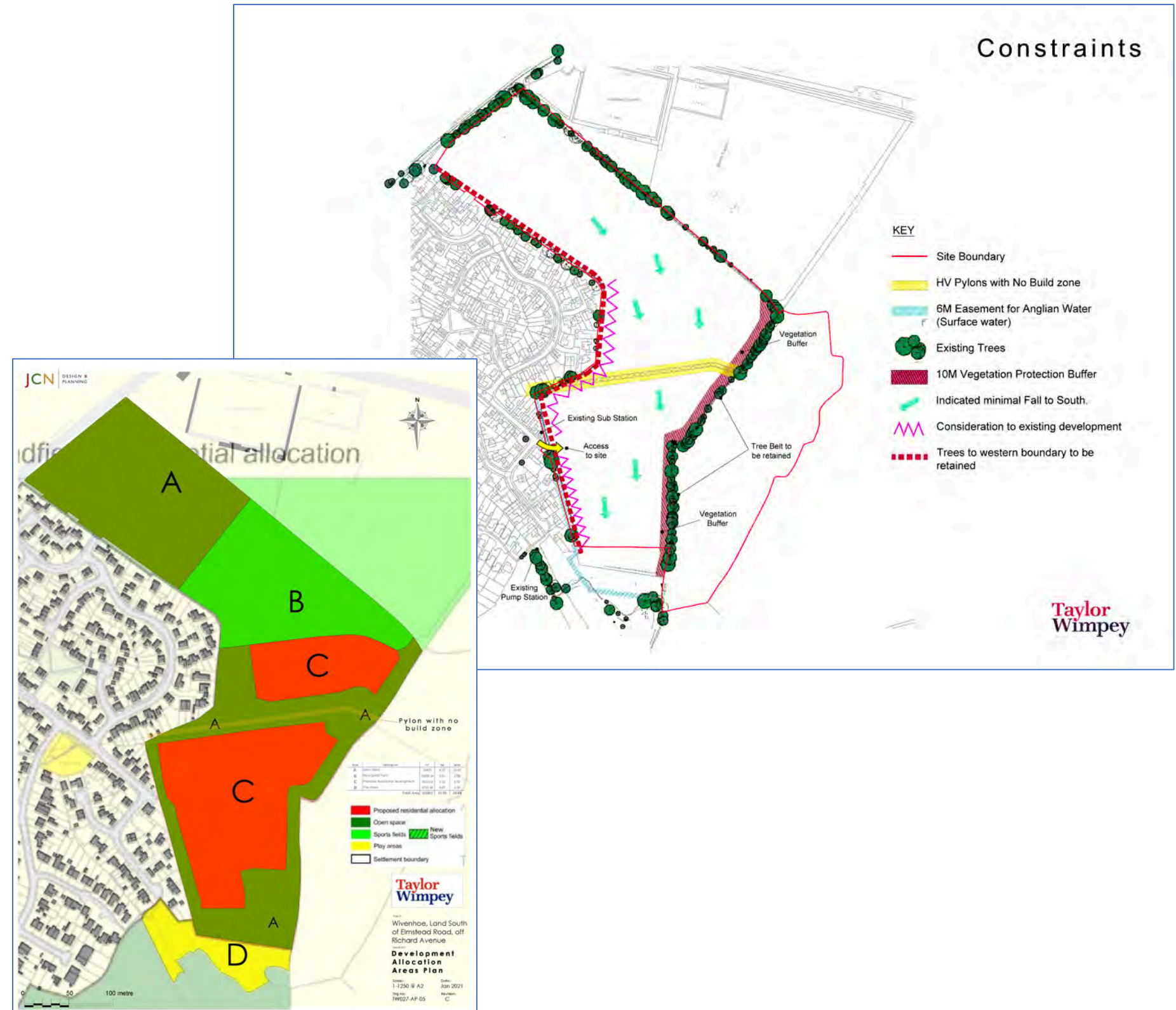
Heading north from the land allocated for new homes, the neighbourhood plan anticipates that the extension of the playing fields at the Broad Lane Sports Ground stretch across the site, running up to the rear of the existing houses. The perimeter block form should be continued around the north side of the residential area, taking advantage of the long views over the sports facilities and providing surveillance of the public realm. Care is needed to ensure that the houses are set far enough from the sports pitches that there is no nuisance from the adjoining use, but that they are positioned so that a consistent edge is created in response to the long distance views from the north.

Several reports are submitted in support of the application for planning permission and they play an important role in defining the form of the proposed scheme and the issues that need to be taken into consideration, including:

- landscape and visual impact
- tree survey and arboricultural impact assessment
- flood risk, including the creation of a system of SuDS and attenuation features to provide sufficient storage to avoid flooding within the site during the 1 in 100 year storm event + 40% allowance for climate change
- Biodiversity/ecology
- Transport – both traffic generation and delivering connections on foot and by cycle.

Even though the constraints have reduced the developable area from 4.06 hectares to 2.81 hectares, the list of opportunities is much longer, highlighting that the creation of the new homes will bring a range of positive impacts to the town that are secured by the allocation in the neighbourhood plan, including:

- Provision of a sustainable development, which can accommodate up to 120 dwellings (including affordable housing) and is supported by public open space, landscaping and new drainage attenuation works.
- Retention and integration of existing trees and boundary hedgerows to enhance the setting of the development, which will assist in creating a “sense of place”.
- A minimum of 45 of the new homes will have one or two bedrooms and therefore be suitable for older people, single people or young couples.
- No more than 25 dwellings with four or more bedrooms so that the overall mix of accommodation favours the creation of family homes.
- Creation of new links for pedestrians and cyclists through the site and to adjoining community facilities, as well as facilitating the option for circular walking routes.
- Creation of public open space for residents of the new homes and existing residents of the surrounding area.
- Habitat creation within proposed attenuation basins, landscaped areas, public open space and to the edges of the site.
- Opportunity to create quality architecture that takes design cues from the local area and responds positively to the existing built form that surrounds the site.



Character assessment

Wivenhoe has a distinct character that separates it from nearby towns and villages, retaining a rural “feel” thanks to all approaches running through the countryside and benefitting from a clearly defined historic centre running down to the waterfront. However, the application site is at the northern end of the town and the character of the surrounding area reflects the town’s post-war growth. Ribbon development on Colchester Road and Elmstead Road suggests that there is a great deal of variation in the organic growth of the town during the second half of the 20th Century, but the frontage to the main routes is not representative of the suburban streets that are hidden behind. South of Elmstead Road and east of Colchester Road, the streets are laid out in a series of planned estates, although none is particularly large and each is visually different from the next. Closest to the town centre, the density of development is relatively low and there is a significant proportion of bungalows – streets such as Field Way and Vine Drive are lined by large front gardens, leaving plenty of room for landscaping and for cars to be tucked away on drives to the sides of the dwellings, most of which are either bungalows or chalet bungalows.

Heading north on Mede Way, a connection is made with streets that were constructed at a later date and there is a subtle change in character. The streets (Richard Avenue, Broadfields, Alexandra Drive and the turnings off them) display design elements from the 1973 version of the Essex Design Guide (“A Design Guide for Residential Areas”) but also reflect some elements of the low density streets immediately alongside. The scale of the houses lining the streets is greater, mainly comprising two storey houses and with a significant proportion of semi-detached properties introduced. There is a significant number of bungalows, but they are mixed into the street scene and not segregated into separate cul-de-sac streets. The edge of the public realm also becomes harder, with the houses closer to the street, low walls enclosing some front gardens and much less space for soft landscaping to the front of the properties, resulting in very few trees and only a limited amount of soft landscaping in the street scene. Conversely, public space is introduced, including the play area at the northern end of Mede Way and the greensward on the north side of Richard Avenue, which add highlights to the public realm and help to define a sense of place. A traditional palette of materials is used, including brick, render and profiled roof tiles.

The following images are a cross-section of the buildings and streets scene in the streets that lead to the application site, illustrating the mixed character of the area. Following discussions with the case officer, we have looked at an alternative approach to distinguish the proposed scheme from the existing streets. These are set out later in this document as part of the description of the proposed scheme.





Layout

New footpath/cyclepath on the Elmstead Road frontage creates a safe and traffic-free route to the Broad Lane Sports Ground as well as the first stage of the strategic route to Croquet Gardens (route D in the neighbourhood plan).

Connection to Broadfields gives existing residents traffic-free access to the new public open space, the cycleway link and the sports facilities.

Landscaped edge against the rear of the existing properties and the new playing fields to be laid out as sward using a tussock mixture and a two-yearly cutting regime so that a defensible boundary is formed without needing to erect fences or other hard treatments.

New footpath/cyclepath runs to the rear of the existing houses and through the open space, forming part of the link around the east side of the town that is created in the neighbourhood plan.

Buffer of landscaping protects the amenity of the existing houses and preserves the setting of existing trees.

Only point of vehicle access to the site is from Richard Avenue, extending the existing street into the heart of the expanded residential area.

Perimeter block form provide the opportunity for surveillance of the undefended space along the side and rear of the existing properties, as well as creating a continuous "public face" for the scheme.



Sports pitches placed at the northern end of the site as an extension to existing facility at the Broad Lane Sports Ground, taking advantage of the existing pavilion, changing facilities and car park.

Mown paths through the species-rich grassland create a circular walking route through and around the new public open space, reducing pressure for residents to exercise their pets at the coast.

Street leads to the open space, using the new homes to frame the vista from the built-up area to the adjoining countryside.

Landscaped edge to the site creates a clear boundary for the built-up area, establishes a buffer against the Local Wildlife Site and presents an opportunity for a circular walking route.

Linear park follows the alignment of the overhead power lines and splits the residential scheme in two, allowing more homes to enjoy an open aspect over the landscaped area and public open space.

Estate road runs straight, allowing the new homes to frame the vista through to the landscaping on the site's boundary and delivering a glimpse of a potential destination from the main street.

Surface water attenuation basin placed at the lowest point and incorporated into the landscaping scheme to deliver visual amenity and an outlook for the new homes in the corner of the site.

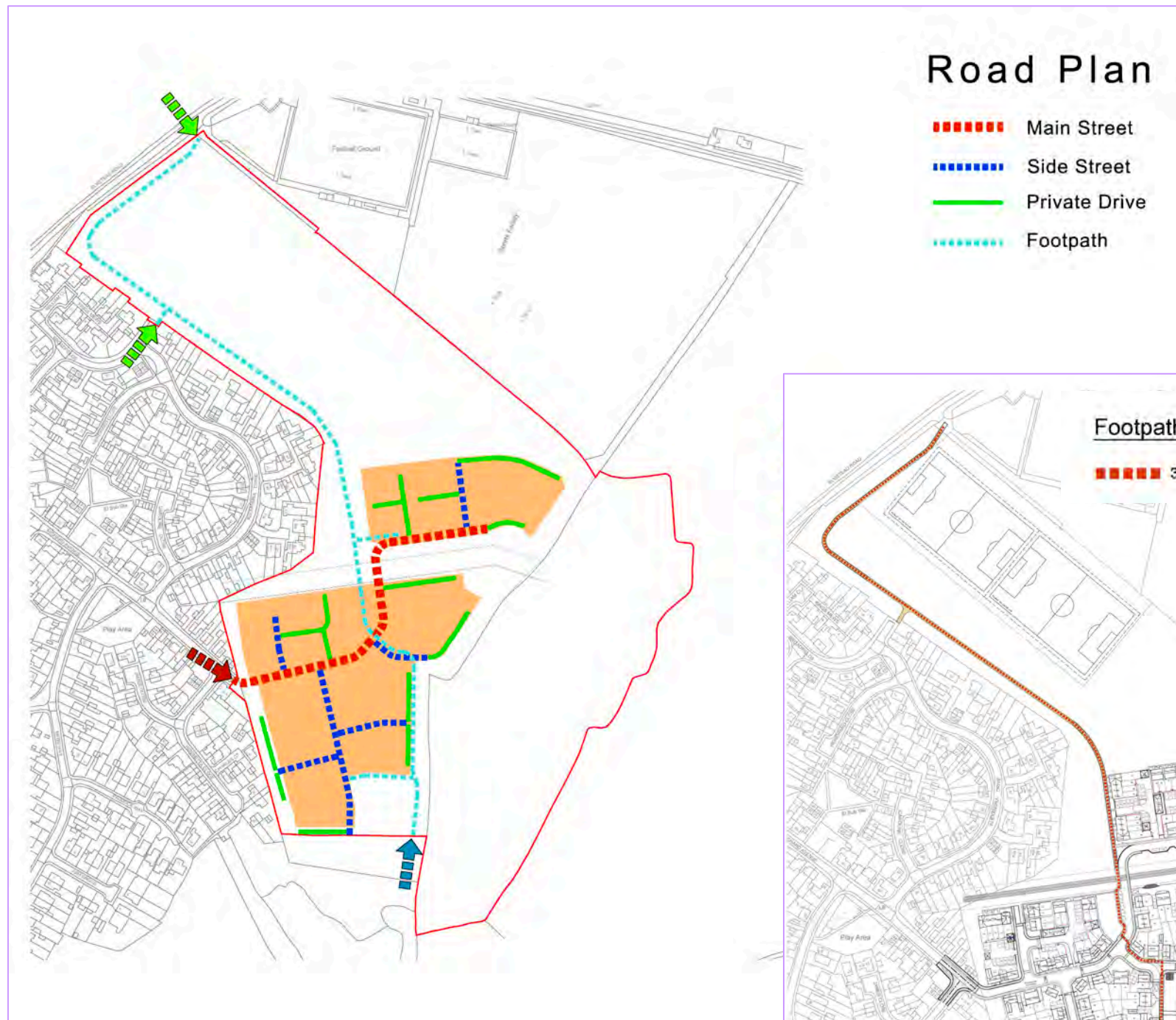
Footpath/cyclepath from Elmstead Road facilitates future connection to the land to the south that is delivered through policy WIV 28, including an extension to the existing allotments and improvements to the permissive footpaths and rights of way.

Scale

The adjoining estate has a straightforward scale that is simple to understand, mainly comprising two storey, semi-detached houses. However, there is variation to be found, including blocks of apartments on key corners, detached houses grouped around mews courts and bungalows that create gaps and variation in the roofscape and street scene. The same principle is applied to the proposed scheme: the majority of the new homes comprise two storey detached and semi-detached houses, laid out to enclose the street and highlight the route through to the next junction or node; it is important that the height, mass and volume of the new homes is in keeping with the scale of development in the surrounding area and that appropriate relationships with the adjoining properties is created.

Variation is also created, although in a different way to the existing streets so that the new homes create their own "sense of place". Single storey development is limited and mainly restricted to garages, whilst 2½ storey properties are introduced to add height to the street scene in selected locations where they will become a feature. The form of the taller buildings matches that of the rest of the proposed scheme, adding rooms in the attic space and repeating the same design themes, including a landscaped frontage, traditional materials and detailing of doors and fenestration, so that there is continuity in appearance that helps to manage the change in scale.





Public and private space

Throughout the site, the relationship between public and private space is clear and well defined: the public open space and the footpath/cyclepath link through the site from north to south are the public realm; any land that is hidden from the public realm behind buildings or garden walls, or that is accessed by turning off the estate roads, is private. There is no access to private areas directly from the public realm – the private amenity space to the rear of the properties is protected by a lockable gate.

The narrow front gardens to the houses in Richard Avenue are continued into the site to maintain the existing character, using the built form close to the edge of the street to tightly define the public realm. However, the gardens are filled with hedging to create a softer edge, highlighting that the suburban character to the west changes to a lower density, semi-rural appearance on the edge of the built-up area. All houses are provided with private gardens to the rear, separating the properties from one another where back-to-back or back-to-side relationships are proposed, avoiding the creation of un-neighbourly relationships and preventing any overlooking of habitable rooms.

The classic cul-de-sac form favoured by the Secured by Design initiative has been used so that the boundaries between public and private areas are clear, minimising opportunities for anti-social behaviour and making it easy to spot anyone that strays from the public realm, thereby helping to reduce the fear of crime. Long views from the vehicle entrance and along the pedestrian routes into and through the site mean that there is surveillance of the public areas. Views through also play an important role in making the new traffic-free route around the eastern side of the town an attractive option that reduces the number of short journeys that will be made by car.

Appearance

The proposed scheme will create a newly defined edge to Wivenhoe, establishing a coherent relationship with the open countryside to the north and east, most of which is in agricultural use. This is important to the design of the development, ensuring that the relatively low density of development, predominantly two storey scale and the character of the scheme is harmonious with the existing properties that line the street which runs up to the site. Following discussions with the case officer, the proposed scheme has been amended to present a more contemporary appearance than the adjoining streets, reflecting that the proposal will be built some 40 years after the streets that lead up to it – examples of similar development in Colchester are set out below.

The dwellings will be constructed with modern materials that use the minimum of energy and resources in their production. These accord with the current standards and regulations and, in some cases exceed them, to meet the required levels of quality, safety and energy efficiency. Modern methods of construction will be employed wherever possible, delivering an efficient construction process and ensuring that the new homes will be ready for occupation in a timely manner.



A simple palette of materials is proposed that includes a single facing brick and roof tile and a contrasting brick band. Enlivened by boarding, render, bay windows, a detailed roofscape and door canopy detailing. In addition, selected variations in house design respond to the constraints of the site, ensuring that a neighbourly relationship is created with the existing properties to the north east and east.

As such, the scheme seeks to define a distinct character, but responds sensitively to its location at the edge of the settlement, particularly because it will be the backdrop to long views from the extended Broad Lane Sports Ground, the new public open space, and Elmstead Road – houses on the north side of the residential area will be the first part of the town that can be seen from Brightlingsea Road. The landscaping design has driven the form of the development with a distinct edge to the perimeter block form of the residential zone, framing the dwellings that are enclosed by the public open space. The hard and soft landscaping creates the setting for the buildings and highlights the public realm on the street frontages, through the traffic-free route around the eastern side of the town and in the new open space as an integral part of the appearance of the proposed development – it is described in more detail in the following section.



Proposed materials

Bricks:	Wienerberger Sandalwood Yellow Multi or similar. D.Blue/Black brick band.
Roof tiles:	Tile, Grey
Boarding:	White (cedar finish) (WB1) Grey (cedar finish) (WB2)
Render:	Envirowall, White (RD1) Envirowall, Sand (RD2)
Windows:	Grey uPVC
Front door:	Hardwood, painted black
Garage doors:	Steel up-and-over door, white
Fascias:	uPVC, white
Rainwater goods:	uPVC, black





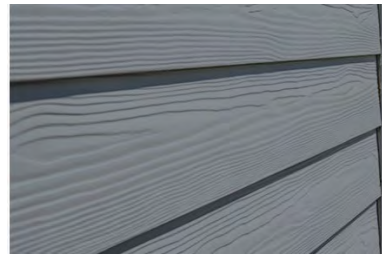
Brick: Sandalwood Yellow Multi



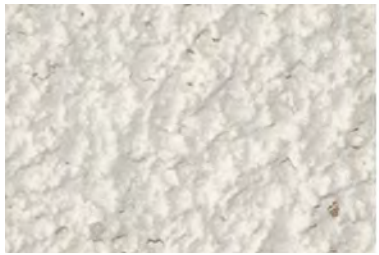
Roof tile: Dark Grey



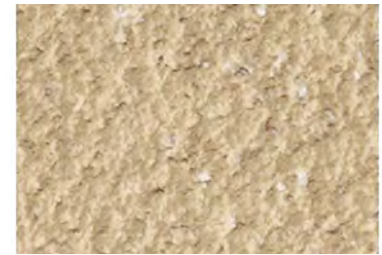
Boarding WB1: White



Boarding WB2: Grey



Render RD1: White



Render RD2: Sand

Street Scene 'B1'



Street Scene 'C1'



Landscaping

Detailed landscape proposals have been prepared by the consultant landscape architect and are submitted in support of this reserved matters application.

Soft landscape concept

The aims of the landscape scheme are to soften proposed built form and where appropriate link the site within the surrounding landscape fabric as well as the existing Wivenhoe settlement edge. It will also create a pleasant environment for the new residential owner/occupiers as well as other site users.

Soft landscape layout and spaces.

The landscape layout will comprise existing vegetation complimented with new landscape elements. Existing tree groups and vegetation belts along the boundaries will be retained in accordance with the arboricultural consultant's recommendations. These will be reinforced with additional tree planting in gaps along the western site boundary where this abuts the edge of the existing settlement. Also a rejuvenated layer of ground flora positioned beneath the existing site boundary canopy will be introduced to further strengthen the landscape structure.

Landscape spaces within the layout consist of significantly sized areas of public open space to the north of the site between new residential development and Wivenhoe Road. Additional landscape and public open space is positioned immediately adjacent to the residential land parcels within the central and southern site zones. In these locations the landscape spaces comprise areas to the east and western site boundary, open space beneath existing power lines and between housing groups, as well as a smaller area of public open space to the south-eastern boundary.

These spaces will be designed to reinforce the existing landscape structure consisting of indigenous hedgerow, tree belt and grassland habitats. New areas of native tree and hedge planting will be introduced while species rich grassland will be developed to both increase visual interest as well as biodiversity.

The open spaces will be laid out in order to absorb new residential site attenuation facilities, formal sports pitches, informal recreation areas and an informal circular footpath network, ultimately linking to the existing offsite footpath system. This will allow these spaces to be utilised both by owners of the new residential properties as well as those existing occupiers adjacent to the site. This arrangement will allow the spaces and facilities to be enjoyed by all.

Street trees have been added to the proposed scheme, reflecting the latest guidance provided by paragraph 131 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Detail soft landscape design

In detail planting proposals within the residential sections of the site have been developed to reinforce the street scene as well as to create individual identity within different areas of the scheme. In this respect, the street tree planting and frontage hedgerows provide the landscape framework along the primary and secondary routes and spaces. Different streets are assigned different tree species as well as single species hedges. This allows identifiable changes in the street scene and a sense of place to be identified. Along the tertiary routes, as well as within the smaller housing cells, peripheral areas of the scheme and where built form abuts open space, a pallet of shrubs, ornamental grasses and herbaceous planting has been selected to create the individuality and variation in texture, colour and form. This also reflects a change to either smaller scale or a softer character of development type.

Tree species have been chosen to provide vertical elements between structures without adding pressure for trees to be heavily managed to avoid conflict with built form in the future. Therefore tall but narrow form has been utilised within the residential streets and private spaces, or those species with a proven track record of successful use within residential development. In the larger open spaces there is the ability to absorb larger scale trees of taller and broader size. This will create a suitable relationship between surrounding buildings and the size of space available. Within these locations species are indigenous. They have been chosen to link with those vegetation types already adjacent to the site or the boundary zones, either through direct species choice or by selection of new species that directly replicate similar size, scale and stature.

Tree, hedge, shrub, ornamental grass and herbaceous species have been selected for their ecological and biodiversity value. Consequently, these are mainly indigenous, semi native or ornamental with a proven track record of wildlife value. Individual species have also been selected for low maintenance characteristics, ease of establishment as well as year-round interest. The species mix will provide flower, berry, stem and foliage texture and colour variation allowing seasonal interest. This will create a changing dynamic and interesting environment for all site users.

Grassland species and mixes have been chosen to reflect a range of functions dependant on location within the site. Mixtures resistant to high wear and strong mowing will be utilised adjacent to footpaths, mown paths, hard surfaces and residential curtilage. Grass possessing species richness will be utilised within the wider open spaces as well as peripheral and remote areas of the site in order to attract a wide range of wildlife and increase ecological value.

Access

The preparation of the scheme has been undertaken in line with current best practice contained in BS8300:2018 (Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment) and Building Regulations Approved Document M (2016 edition). It is the intention of the applicant that everyone can enjoy the new homes with no discrimination and no barriers.

The site is already broadly flat, therefore all routes throughout the sites and all approaches to the buildings can be designed to be step-free and to minimise gradients. Careful design of roads and paths will also ensure that level access can be achieved to every house. Car parking is conveniently located in relation to the home it serves, connected by step-free and well-lit routes.

Access to the site has been designed to incorporate the following features:

- Provision of a new six metre wide access road from the site to Richard Avenue, approximately 14 metres to the east of the junction with Henrietta Close by way of extending the existing cul-de-sac into the site.
- The site access will curve into the site (from north west to east) and the design speed of the internal access road is 20mph. The site access is designed as a speed control bend, with a curve greater than 45 degrees with a centre line radius of less than 13.6 metres to manage traffic speeds and not require additional speed restraint measures.
- Additional signing will be provided to advise drivers of the 20mph speed limit within the site which is complimented by the additional raised table vertical speed restraint measures at the internal site junctions.



- The internal access road will be 5.5 metres wide throughout the site with cul-de-sacs also provided at 5.5 metres width. Some shared surface areas are provided, each at a minimum width of 6.0 metres.
- 2.0 metres wide footways will be provided on either side of the main site access road connecting with Richard Avenue and on one side of cul-de-sac streets within the site.
- Bellmouth radii of 6.0 metres will be provided at all main internal site junctions with vision splays of 2.0 metres x 25 metres to comply with requirements for 20mph design speed vehicle to vehicle inter-visibility.
- Swept Path Analysis has been undertaken at the site access and internal junctions and turning areas for a suitable size waste vehicle.
- Car and cycle parking is provided in accordance with the Essex County Council Parking Standards (September 2009).

Traffic generation

The methodology for the calculation of the number of vehicle movements is set out in the Transport Assessment; it concludes that there will be 67 two-way vehicle movements on the morning peak (19 to the site and 48 leaving it) and 67 two-way movements in the evening peak (46 to the site and 21 leaving it), which equates to just over one vehicle per minute and an increase in traffic levels at up to 15%. It is expected that most vehicles will use Richard Avenue to reach Elmstead Road (with only a few using Vine Drive for access to Colchester Road) and this level of traffic is predicted to be well within the capacity of the junction.

Public transport

There are bus stops on Colchester Road that will serve the site, with the most convenient walking route following Mede Way and Vine Drive, taking around seven minutes (approximately 650 metres). The stops in both directions have shelters and seating, with raised kerbs to help boarding and alighting on the southbound side.

A high quality, frequent service of eight buses per hour is split across three routes:

- 61 – every 15 minutes from the centre of Wivenhoe to the University, Colchester's town centre and Highwoods.
- 62 – every 20 minutes from Brightlingsea and Alresford, through Wivenhoe, to the University and Colchester's town centre.
- 74 – hourly service from Clacton and St. Osyth to Wivenhoe, the University and central Colchester.

Journey times are 21 minutes to Colchester's town centre, 27 minutes to Brightlingsea, 36 minutes to Clacton, eight minutes to the University and four minutes to the town centre and railway station in Wivenhoe.

The railway station is at the southern end of the town, close to the river. A journey on foot would take 27 minutes, but only seven minutes to cycle; the station is provided with 40 cycle parking spaces that are protected by CCTV. The station is served by trains to London Liverpool Street, Stratford, Chelmsford, Colchester, Clacton on Sea and Walton on the Naze. There are four trains per hour in the peak period and two per hour off-peak from Monday to Saturday.

Local services and facilities

The site is well connected to a comprehensive existing footway network serving all of Wivenhoe via footways on both sides of Richard Avenue, Mede Way and Vine Drive and then on to the centre of Wivenhoe via Colchester Road. The footway network between the site and the centre of Wivenhoe, schools and Railway station is generally of good quality, continuous and in good repair. The signalised crossing on Colchester Road just north of Vine Drive provides a good quality crossing facility that enables access to the town centre and services and facilities on the west side of the town.

Broomgrove Infant and Primary Schools are located on the west side of Wivenhoe, approximately 1.1 kilometres from the site access (approximately 15 minutes' walk or scooter). The same journey by bicycle would take approximately five minutes. The site is located within a six minute walk of local services and facilities at the western end of Vine Drive. These services include a foodstore, chemist, takeaway, public house and a hairdresser.

Access to the University of Essex Colchester Campus is possible via a good quality off-road pedestrian/cycle route on the west side of Colchester Road. Journey times by bicycle to the centre of the Campus from the site is approximately 11 minutes.

Sketch views





Building for Life

The Building for Life campaign is about guiding the better planning of new development through urban design that is safe and provides everything that should be expected of a new community. Urban design is about the spaces between and around new homes that can sometimes be overlooked by focusing on the building and its interior, but which are vital to the quality of a place, its attractiveness, functionality and feelings of safety. The Building for Life criteria are presented as a Q&A checklist for the quality of placemaking and, when done well, are a clear indicator of a development's potential to grow into a popular new address. It uses a traffic light system rather than a points score and a well-designed scheme should perform well against all twelve of the questions; the top score is twelve greens.

Integrating into the neighbourhood

1. Connections

Does the scheme integrate into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones, while also respecting existing buildings and land uses along the boundaries of the development site?

Green. Integration with the town is a key feature of the allocation of the site for development in the neighbourhood plan. Policy WIV29 dictates the position of the vehicle access (from Richard Avenue, part vi), the creation of a footpath/cyclepath parallel to Elmstead Road (part viii) and the inclusion of a footpath/cyclepath across the site that links the Broad Lane Sports Ground to the footpath to the south (part ix), thereby ensuring that the proposed scheme reinforces existing connections and creates new ones. In addition, care has been taken to create appropriate relationships with the existing houses to the north east and east of the site so that rear gardens are protected and a perimeter block form provides informal surveillance of the public realm that marks the site boundary.

1a *Where should vehicles come in and out of the development?*

A single point of vehicle access is defined by the allocation in the neighbourhood plan. No part of the scheme proposes to create a through route for vehicles from Elmstead Road.

1b *Should there be pedestrian and cycle only routes into and through the development? If so, where should they go?*

Yes – as noted above, connectivity is important and new pedestrian and cycle links through the site and parallel to Elmstead Road are designed into the proposed scheme.

1c *Where should new streets be placed and could they be used to cross the development site and help create linkages across the scheme and into the existing neighbourhood and surrounding places?*

The scheme is proposed to be laid out as a single cul-de-sac, with all vehicle access via the eastern boundary, as envisaged by the neighbourhood plan. However, there is a hierarchy within the public realm that promotes linkages for residents travelling on foot or by cycle and emphasises pedestrian access to the adjoining streets and, in return, to the new area of public open space on the northern side of the site.

1d *How should the new development relate to existing development? What should happen at the edges of the development site?*

Care has been taken at the edges of the site to avoid the creation of unneighbourly relationships. The inclusion of a buffer of landscaping protects the amenity of the existing properties and ensures that the private space behind existing dwellings is not exposed to the new public realm. On the "outside" edges where the proposed scheme marks the new boundary between the town and the surrounding countryside, a softer landscaping treatment is proposed by using the perimeter block form and the open space to create a transition between the land uses.

2. Facilities and services

Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs or cafes?

Green. An extension to the playing fields at the Broad Lane Sports Ground and a new area of public open space are proposed, directly addressing the demand generated by the residents of the site and also providing a new facility for the residents of the whole town. The site is within walking and cycling distance of the existing services and facilities in the town, including shops, schools and the railway station.

2a Are there enough facilities and services in the local area to support the development? If not, what is needed?

Yes – the allocation in the neighbourhood plan was adopted on the basis that the creation of a minimum of 120 new homes would be a sustainable form of development. The new public open space will serve a wider area, but where improvements to other facilities and services are required, they will be funded via planning obligations secured by a legal agreement attached to the planning permission.

2b Where new facilities are proposed, are these facilities what the area needs?

Yes – there is a deficiency in public open space provision within the north side of the town and a deficiency in sport pitch provision for the town as a whole that is addressed by the proposed scheme.

2c Where new facilities are proposed, are these new facilities located in the right place? If not, where should they go?

The new public open space is positioned on the northern side and incorporates the extended playing fields, taking advantage of the setting created by a new, permanent and landscaped edge to the town. The new homes face towards the parkland, offering informal surveillance and making it safe and secure to use.

2d Where new facilities are proposed, does the layout encourage walking, cycling or using public transport to reach them?

Yes – the new public open space is designed as a local facility and it is intended that journeys to it will be made by foot or cycle.

3. Public transport

Does the scheme have good access to public transport to help reduce car dependency?

Green. The town has good access to public transport: bus routes run from north to south through the town and on to the university and the centre of Colchester; the railway station is served by trains between Colchester and Clacton on Sea or Walton-on-the-Naze. The site is also close to local services and facilities in the town.

3a What can the development do to encourage more people (both existing and new residents) to use public transport more often?

Bus services are already good and there are bus stops close to the site on Colchester Road, providing quick and easy access to the town centre, railway station and onwards to the services and facilities in Colchester. Greater use of the already good bus service by the new residents will make it more viable, potentially leading to an increase in the frequency of the service.

3b Where should new public transport stops be located?

No new bus stops are required: the existing stops on Colchester Road will serve the site.

4. Meeting local housing requirements

Does the development have a mix of housing types and tenures that suit local requirements?

Green. The mix of new homes for sale is based on extensive market research and comprises a mix of two, three and four bedroom houses in terraced, semi-detached and detached forms. The provision of affordable housing is intended to meet local needs, having been discussed with the council's housing team, with provision comprising two, three and four bedroom houses to deliver accommodation for families.

4a What types of homes, tenure and price range are needed in the area (for example, starter homes, family homes or homes for those downsizing)?

A mixture of homes is required, as the housing market in the area is quite varied. The homes for sale will primarily provide family accommodation, serving local people wanting to stay in the town, commuters heading to the nearby towns and people wishing to move to a semi-rural location.

4b Is there a need for different types of home ownership (such as part buy and part rent) or rented properties to help people on lower incomes?

20% of the new homes are designated as affordable housing and will be made available in several different ways to serve the local housing market and to meet the identified housing need.

4c *Are the different types and tenures spatially integrated to create a cohesive community?*

Yes – the relationship with the adjoining properties and the countryside leads to a reduced density on the outer edges of the site, but there is a general mix of accommodation across the site, including positioning the affordable housing in discreet groups of tenure-blind appearance where smaller properties can fit within the wider design concept.

Creating a place

5. Character

Does the scheme create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character?

Green. The proposed scheme has been prepared to reflect the character identified by this Design and Access Statement, with the suburban appearance helping to create a “sense of place” in parallel to the traditional shapes of the buildings and familiar materials that respond to the colours and textures found in nearby streets.

5a *How can the development be designed to have a local or distinctive identity?*

The scheme proposes to interpret the Essex vernacular in a modern way, using traditional building forms and materials, but applying them to buildings that meet the 21st Century performance standards. Dividing the site into perimeter blocks of residential development with the estate road running through the middle, a lower density of development on the outer edges and public open space to the north of the built-up area allows the appearance of the proposed scheme to be themed, giving separate parts of the site a distinct identity within the overall character.

5b *Are there any distinctive characteristics within the area, such as building shapes, styles, colours and materials or the character of streets and spaces that the development should draw inspiration from?*

Yes. The combination of a suburban layout and the Essex vernacular is quite distinct and has been used to create a sense of place within the residential part of the scheme.

6. Working with the site and its context

Does the scheme take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), trees and plants, wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimate?

Green. The site was formerly in agricultural use, mainly comprising fields used to grow crops, meaning that there were few features and no buildings that can be used to the benefit of the proposed scheme. The existing field boundaries and the trees on the outer edges of the site are used to give the landscaping scheme an immediate maturity, whilst the opportunity has been taken to place the houses so that the perimeter block form delivers habitable rooms that face outwards, making the most of the open aspect and solar gain.

6a *Are there any views into or from the site that need to be carefully considered?*

There are no views from the site that need to be considered apart from ensuring that the entrance emphasises that the existing road continues eastwards to serve the new homes. However, views from outside the site are important and the scheme will create a new edge to the built-up area of the town and it is intended that it will be a more permanent and attractive edge than the current mixture of gardens fences. The perimeter block form and the landscaped edges in particular will create a much more attractive edge to the town and will respond to longer distance views from the playing fields, new open space and, potentially, from passing traffic on Brightlingsea Road.

6b Are there any existing trees, hedgerows or other features, such as streams that need to be carefully designed into the development?

No, the site was formerly in agricultural use, therefore all trees and hedgerows are restricted to the edges of the land and were previously parts of field boundaries.

6c Should the development keep any existing building(s) on the site? If so, how could they be used?

There are no existing buildings within the site.

7. Creating well defined streets and spaces

Are buildings designed and positioned with landscaping to define and enhance streets and spaces and are buildings designed to turn street corners well?

Green. The houses play an important role in defining the edge of the public realm, lining the streets so that the active frontage is continuous and supported by strong landscape frontages, as well as facing outwards to define the extent of the built-up area where it meets the public open space that surrounds the new homes. Across the site, the buildings are close to the back edge of the road to replicate the form of a traditional street and emphasise the suburban character that is borrowed from the adjoining estate. Corner-turning house types are used on all street corners, taking advantage of a dual aspect design to provide active frontage where it is required.

7a Are buildings and landscaping schemes used to create enclosed streets and spaces?

Yes. All streets are enclosed by the buildings and boundary treatments. Trees and hedgerows have been used to define the edges of the public open space that circles the new homes.

7b Do buildings turn corners well?

Yes. Dual aspect buildings are proposed to be used on all street corners.

7c Do all fronts of buildings, including front doors and habitable rooms, face the street?

Yes. All buildings are accessed from the street and no properties with side doors are proposed. Where dual aspect properties are proposed on corners, the house types are designed to have a clear primary and secondary elevations, demonstrating to visitors where the front door can be found.

8. Easy to find your way around

Is the development designed to make it easy to find your way around?

Green. The proposed scheme adheres to the character analysis and the assessment of opportunities and influences in this Design and Access Statement. The design of the layout has been evolved to enhance the wayfinding through the site and emphasise the permeability from Elmstead Road, into the new public open space, across the new streets and into the land to the south.

8a Will the development be easy to find your way around? If not, what could be done to make it easier to find your way around?

Yes. The layout adopts a simple grid pattern of streets that are short and straight, making wayfinding easier and allowing the end of the public realm to be seen from a distance.

8b Are there any obvious landmarks?

Yes – the public open space that encloses the new homes and heads away to the north is a landmark in itself. The site is not felt to be large enough to require landmark buildings to be created, however, because most routes run across the site and end with open views to the adjoining landscaping.

8c Are the routes between places clear and direct?

Yes. The grid pattern and single point of access means that the road layout is clear and direct, with a layer of extra detail added by the footpath network between the cul-de-sac roads and the creation of connections to the north and south.

Street and home

9. Streets for all

Are streets designed in a way that encourage low vehicle speeds and allow them to function as social spaces?

Green. The only vehicle access into the site is from Richard Avenue and is clearly designated as the main movement space for vehicles, emphasised by the creation of a new landscaped setting at the entrance where the road crosses the buffer of open space. Inside the site, the streets do not connect to one another as loops and are designed to facilitate much lower vehicle speeds, with the number of vehicle movements reducing further with each step through the hierarchy of space. At the bottom of the hierarchy, it is anticipated that the number of vehicle movements in the cul-de-sac streets and on the private drives will be minimal and will be restricted to residents and their visitors, allowing the streets to be used for children's play and to encourage interaction between residents.

9a Are streets pedestrian friendly and are they designed to encourage cars to drive slower and more carefully?

The main route into the site is designed as a corridor of movement, with the traditional form of footways raised above the carriageway. The geometry of the streets and progressive changes in the road hierarchy means that vehicle speeds will be kept low, with junctions, driveway accesses and other features encouraging careful driving.

9b Are streets designed in a way that they can be used as social spaces, such as places for children to play safely or for neighbours to converse?

Yes, the cul-de-sac roads across the site are well-suited to be used for informal play and as social spaces, as the limited number of homes served will lead to very few vehicle movements.

10. Car parking

Is resident and visitor parking sufficient and well integrated so that it does not dominate the street?

Green. Parking provision is made in accordance with Essex County Council's standards, with most houses provided with parking within the curtilage of the property. On-plot parking is overlooked by the property it serves or by properties across the street, making it secure and minimising opportunities for anti-social behaviour, with spaces located to the side of buildings so that parked cars do not dominate the street scene. There is room for visitors to informally park on the streets or within designated lay-bys that are spread evenly across the scheme.

10a Is there enough parking for residents and visitors?

Yes. Parking is provided in accordance with Essex County Council's standards.

10b Is parking positioned close to people's homes?

Parking is provided within the curtilage of the property it serves or in a shared courtyard immediately alongside. All parking is connected to the home it serves via a step-free and well-lit route.

10c Are any parking courtyards small in size (generally no more than five properties should use a parking courtyard) and are they well overlooked by neighbouring properties?

Small parking courtyards are proposed to facilitate the perimeter block form of development, omitting drives around the outer edges of the higher density elements on the northern and north eastern sides of the scheme. The courtyards are enclosed by the new homes that they serve, creating a semi-private space and ensuring that they are overlooked and secure.

10d Are garages well positioned so that they do not dominate the street scene?

All garages are set back from the street frontage and will not form part of the street scene.

11. Public and private spaces

Will public and private spaces be clearly defined and designed to have appropriate access and be able to be well managed and safe in use?

Green. The boundary between public and private spaces is well defined, with care taken to ensure that suitable boundaries are proposed. All public areas are overlooked by the new homes, making them safe and secure to use. It is expected that the main roads will be adopted by Essex County Council as part of the highway, whilst all areas of public open space will be adopted and managed by the town council (details to be agreed).

11a What types of open space should be provided within this development?

The provision of the extended playing fields and the new open space is secured by allocation of the site in the neighbourhood plan (policy WIV29), with the extent and details of the new community facility set out in this application for planning permission. The open space is intended to be used for informal recreation and incorporates the trees and hedges in the existing field boundaries so that they can be enjoyed by residents of the site and the surrounding area.

11b Is there a need for play facilities for children and teenagers? If so, is this the right place or should the developer contribute towards an existing facility in the area that could be made better?

No play area is proposed within the scheme, although the layout of the new public open space provides for and encourages informal play. The scheme is not intended to be a hub for children's play and this role will be retained by the existing facility at the junction of Mede Way and Richard Avenue.

11c How will they be looked after?

It is expected that all areas of public open space will be adopted and managed by the town council, with arrangements to be made after planning permission has been granted.

12. External storage and amenity space

Is there adequate external storage space for bins and recycling, as well as vehicles and cycles?

Green. A level hard standing space for bins and recycling will be provided in the rear garden of each plot, plus space for bins/sacks at the front of the dwelling on collection days. A garage, driveway or allocated space for car parking is provided for each dwelling and independent access to rear gardens to accommodate secure storage of cycles.

12a Is storage for bins and recycling fully integrated, so that these items are less likely to be left on the street?

Yes. External bin stores are not proposed, but each house has independent access to the rear garden to allow bins and recycling to be stored out of sight.

12b Is access to cycle and other vehicle storage convenient and secure?

Yes – independent access to the rear garden for every house allows cycles to be kept in a secure location. Parking provision is made in accordance with Essex County Council's standards, with all the new homes provided with parking within the curtilage of the property or in adjoining shared courtyards. On-plot parking is overlooked by the property it serves or by properties across the street, whilst the courtyards are enclosed by the homes that they serve, making all parking secure and minimising opportunities for anti-social behaviour.

Conclusion

The proposed scheme has been designed to take account of the opportunities and influences presented by the site, the parameters set by the allocation of the site for development with new homes, playing fields and public open space, and the potential for the new homes to create their own character in the context of the allocation for strategic growth on the northern side of Wivenhoe that is set out in the neighbourhood plan. The new dwellings are designed with an appearance that reflects their residential use and suburban location, but care has been taken to ensure that the scheme successfully manages the transition from the existing built-up area on the south western side of the site to the new homes that will form the new northern edge of the village. Care has been taken to ensure that the scheme meets the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, Colchester Borough Council's development management policies and the requirements that are set by Policy WIV29 in the Wivenhoe Neighbourhood Plan. In addition, the proposed scheme will also secure a range of planning obligations and community benefits through a legal agreement attached to the planning permission.

The retention of the existing trees and field boundaries, together with the creation of a substantial new area of public open space that incorporates new playing fields on the north side of the town will establish a new facility that will serve the residents of the new homes and the wider community alike. The new homes will offer surveillance and informal policing of the public realm, including the footpath/cyclepath that will be part of a new traffic-free route around the eastern side of the town that connects the sites allocated for development in the neighbourhood plan. The new streets and the boundaries between the public and private realms are well-defined and care has been taken to minimise the opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour.

The result is a scheme that has a clear residential character, a distinct appearance and includes new open space as a permanent northern edge to the town. New family homes will be created in a pleasant environment that includes mature trees, retained field boundaries and a landscaped buffer around the site that protects the amenity of the existing properties to the west and south west. The site is well served by public transport and the frequent bus services on Colchester Road in particular, as well as being in a location that takes advantage of the services and facilities already available in Wivenhoe.



Accommodation Schedule

Private Development

No	Unit Ref	Name		Type	Size Sqft
36	PA25	Canford		2 Bed	689
13	PT37	Yewdale		3 bed	931
6	PT36	Easedale		3 Bed	931
21	NA32	Byford		3 Bed	976
2	NA42	Huxford		4 bed	1173
10	NA44	Manford		4 bed	1385
8	NT42	Waysdale		4 bed	1549

96 Total

Affordable Dwellings

No	Unit Ref	Name	Tenure	Type	Size Sqft
6	NA20	Ashenford	Rent	2 bed	771
3	NA20	Ashenford	SO	2 bed	771
1	HAM4(3)	M4(3) House	Rent	3 Bed	1194
8	NA34	Coltford	Rent	3 bed	1020
1	NA34	Coltford	SO	3 bed	1020
4	NA49	Janford	Rent	4 bed	1141
1	NA49	Janford	SO	4 bed	1141

24 Total

Taylor
Wimpey

