

**Land & Partners Ltd**  
**Land at Hook Norton Road,**  
**Sibford Ferris**  
**Statement of Community Involvement**  
**October 2018**

**Prepared by**

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## Summary Statement of Benefits:

- Affordable homes for local people
- Link public routes
- Range of homes and densities – 25 in total
- Delivery of new public open space and allotments to meet identified needs
- High Quality design and layout

### 1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement relates to proposals at Hook Norton Road, Sibford Ferris. Prior to this application being submitted the proposals were the subject of consultation with key stakeholders and the residents of Sibford Ferris. There have also been direct consultations with Officers of the County Council and other statutory consultees.

### 2.0 Background to the Statement of Community Involvement

2.1 The District Council has issued a Statement of Community Involvement dated 2006.

2.2 A further update was published in November 2013 to take account of interim changes in planning regulations.

2.3 Having regard to the size of the application, the expectation is for local engagement, press coverage and an opportunity for the public to examine and comment upon the proposed plans.

2.4 Section 3 of the document 'Community Engagement Methods' sets out the Council's expectation for applicants to carry out consultation throughout the development process. The document expects applicants to have explained their proposals to residents, workers and users of the area around the site of the proposed development and to have requested the views of people in the community; to have considered these views; and where appropriate to have amended the proposals to take the views of the community into account.

2.5 For the application it is considered important to seek wider views in advance of the formal application. The applicant has been mindful of the benefits of consultation in seeking views generally but also specifically so that proposals can be amended ahead of the planning application process. The applicants are firmly of the view that this process is a positive exercise and even where conflicts and concerns arise, it is almost always helpful for the parties to understand each other's positions.

## **3.0 Community and Stakeholder Engagement**

### *3.1 Cherwell District Council*

3.1.1 The site has been promoted through the plan process bringing them to the attention of the District Council.

3.1.2 More recently as part of the preparation of technical reports, there has been consultation with specialist officers at the District Council in their respective fields.

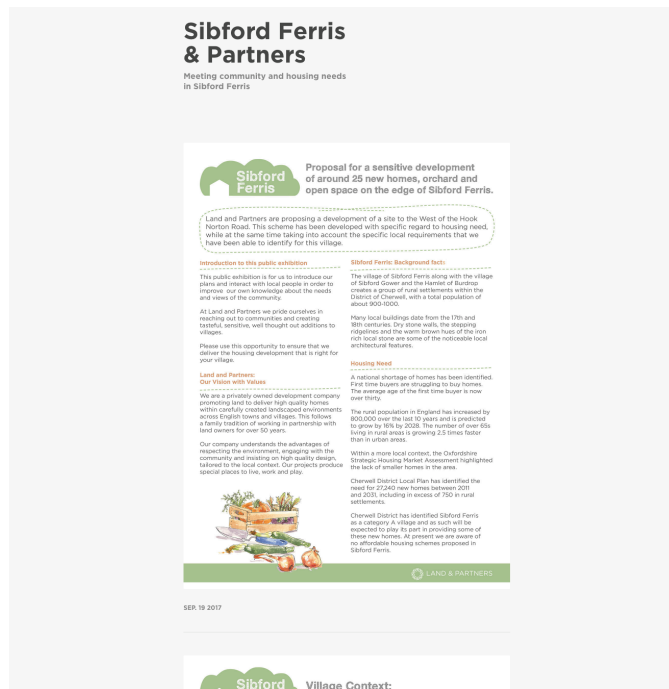
3.1.3 A Pre-application meeting with the Council has helped to inform changes to the proposals, with formal feedback from all the relevant consultees received and considered as part of the current proposals.

### *3.2 Oxfordshire County Council*

3.2.1 The Education Department have provided information on the education needs and the Section 106 contributions in this respect.

### *3.3 Consultation with The Sibfords and Local Stakeholders*

3.3.1 In September 2017 a dedicated website [www.sibfordferrisandpartners.tumblr.com](http://www.sibfordferrisandpartners.tumblr.com) went live which is maintained and updated with general ideas and imagery relating to the project, notifications on progress and events and as a resource for high resolution copies of documents and plans for people to view and download.



Screenshot of Sibford Ferris project website

3.3.2 A Public Exhibition was held in the Sibford Village Hall between 4pm and 7pm on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2017. Details of the exhibition were publicised in the local newsletter 'The Sibford Scene' and also on the community website, [thesibfords.org.uk](http://thesibfords.org.uk). Details of the exhibition were disseminated throughout the parish via leaflets that were distributed to all households in Sibford Ferris and posters were displayed in the local pub and shop.

Ahead of the exhibition a number of questions were posted on the Parish website (and were still available at the time of writing from <https://thesibfords.org.uk/page/hook-norton-road-housing-development>)

The questions are reproduced below with a response from Land & Partners:

- 1. Sibford Ferris currently has about 145 households. The number of new homes proposed (20 - 30) would increase this by a substantial percentage (14% - 21%).**

*We believe this is the least constrained and most sustainable location for housing growth across the Sibfords. The proposal would serve the needs of Sibford Ferris, Sibford Gower and Burdrop, which in Cherwell's planning policy are treated as one Category A Village due to their close proximity and the facilities they share. More homes and residents help support and sustain local services.*

- 2. What other developments have Land & Partners been involved in, how did they start out and what were people's views of the finished product?**

*Amlets Place in Cranleigh is a recent project now under construction. This started with an outline application by Land & Partners which incorporated allotments, an orchard and community building as part of a low density development. After a careful selection process with the landowners the site was then taken on by CALA Homes who are delivering all the key aspects of the scheme. The development has been nominated in the Surrey Property Awards for Best New Homes Development. L&P also promoted the main Neighbourhood Plan site at Winslow near Buckingham with almost unanimous support. The chair of the Town Council commented "We need more enlightened developers like this in the UK. They secured unanimous local support for their major housing scheme in our community of Winslow, Buckinghamshire. Their communication was exemplary and they showed a willingness to listen"*

- 3. Is the village's utility infrastructure sufficiently robust to accommodate such a number of new houses? (Water, sewage, electricity, broadband.)**

*Yes. The new homes would be designed to minimise water and electricity usage, with the potential for some solar electricity generation and electric vehicle charge points subject to detailed design. The nearest foul sewer is along Hook Norton Road and any improvements necessary as a result of the development will be carried out. No surface water will be permitted to drain to the foul sewer to minimise strain on the system, with a Sustainable Drainage System implemented to deal with surface water flows.*

- 4. There will be approximately two cars per house, adding to existing traffic problems in and around the village. For example:**

- There are several serious bottlenecks on Main Street between Lanes End (the turn to Burdrop) and the village boundary at Little London.**
- The Hook Norton Road / Woodway Road corner already sees a large number of near misses.**
- Access to the site from Woodway Road would be problematic from this single track road, extensively used by horse riders, cyclists, joggers, walkers and young families; there are three blind bends on the road and a steep dangerous descent to Temple Mill Farm.**

- ***Hook Norton Road is very busy; the turn into the development would be at the brow of a hill, and close to the main entrance to Sibford School.***

*The proposals do not include a vehicular access to Woodway Road. A new footpath link will be provided to allow an alternative and attractive route for walkers and cyclists.*

*The existing traffic conditions are noted and the design of the proposals ensures that all homes will have adequate off-street parking including that for visitors. The streets will be designed wide enough to allow additional parking to help to reduce on street/verge parking along Hook Norton Road.*

- 5. Need to think about the visual impact both for the immediate neighbours and also from further away. The visual impact on the southern approach road was brought up in the previous application for housing on the site and this development is intended to use more of the field so should that not again be a concern?***

*The hedge along Hook Norton Road will be retained as much as possible, with gaps formed only for access. It is intended to lay a new footpath behind the hedge, rather than along the verge, to retain the rural appearance of the road. The development itself is designed to be low density including green space within the built area and allowing views between buildings.*

- 6. Need to think about the preservation of hedgerows, wildlife etc.***

*All hedgerows are proposed to be retained save for gaps formed for access. A substantial area of this intensively farmed site is proposed to be used for natural greenspace open to the public with native planting and landscaping. We are aiming to produce a net gain for biodiversity on this site, with wildflower areas, native tree planting and a Sustainable Drainage Pond designed to be a wildlife habitat.*

- 7. Construction traffic should be directed away from the village centre.***

*A construction management plan ensuring vehicles are directed away from the centre of the Sibfords can be produced for the detailed stage if necessary.*

- 8. What else might the village get out of any development? Suggestion of an alternative entrance for Sibford School on the eastern approach to the village.***

*Alongside a mix of open market and affordable housing prioritised for local people this proposal includes a community orchard, allotments and a substantial area of natural greenspace with a new footpath to link Woodway Road and Hook Norton Road and connect to the existing rights of way network. In terms of an additional entrance to the Sibford School, we do not control any land at the eastern approach to the village.*

- 9. Would releasing one piece of land for development lead to other sites being developed? The concern is that a spine road could be extended to Woodway Road. (The point was made that putting the power lines that cross part of the site underground will be costly and any developer would want to dilute those costs by maximising the number of houses.)***

*This proposal is for up to 25 homes as this is considered to be the scale of development which best meets the needs of the Sibfords. The development does not create a road link to Woodway Road.*

*This site is one of two found suitable in the District Council's Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment - the other is the smaller site to the north west adjoining Woodway Road. This land is in a separate ownership and we are not aware of any development proposals. However, it is considered to be sensible to design this proposal so that it would not prejudice future development in the longer term of the only other site found suitable in The Sibfords. This would mean that any future proposal in that location would not need to add additional traffic to Woodway Road.*

**10. Is the development necessary? It would be helpful to have clarity about the relevant targets for housing development in Cherwell DC's Local Plans, and the progress already made towards meeting them. The following comments reflect this:**

- **Local Plan Part 2 ("LP2") identified the field behind the proposed site for 20 houses. If the current proposal goes ahead it could landlock the smaller site the owner of which might wish to forestall by developing it in conjunction with the larger site, resulting in a development of closer to 50 houses.**
- **CDC's LP1 does not support sizeable development in this area.**
- **CDC was looking for 13,000 homes for this area and this number has pretty much already been identified.**
- **The Sibfords as a whole are rated as a "Category A" village in LPI, which sets a target of 750 new homes in the period 2011-31 across all 23 Category A villages. In one of the recent updates, 477 applications had already been received and accepted, leaving 270 to be allocated.**

*As previously mentioned, the proposals are designed to avoid landlocking the adjacent site, but this is in a separate ownership and does not form part of the proposals.*

*The comments regarding the 750 homes for Category A villages are noted but it is not a maximum figure or ceiling. This figure is designed to spread a modest amount of growth to each of the more sustainable villages to provide housing to meet local needs and support existing facilities and services. Whilst some villages have seen larger amounts of growth and contributed, arguably disproportionately, to the 750 figure, The Sibfords have seen almost no significant growth over the plan period. In order to meet local housing needs including those on the affordable housing register locally, as well as to allow village facilities to thrive then The Sibfords will require a modest amount of sensitive development. This proposal would mark no more than about a 6% increase in the number of households in the Sibfords and this is considered to be a sustainable level of growth. The development would also meet the identified need in the village for affordable housing.*

**11. Cherwell DC are looking for high density on new developments and if the whole site were developed at that density there would be 180 houses.**

*The proposal is not for the whole field and there will be a range of densities proposed. Cherwell DC want to see land used efficiently and the proposal included some terraced homes in the part closest to the higher density built-up part of the village. However, the density reduces to the south and west to bring the landscape into the development and create a softer, rural edge to the village. Cherwell have identified a need for amenity land and natural greenspace in this area and the development seeks to meet these needs with the inclusion of a large area of open space for public use, as well as allotments and a community orchard.*

**12. Developers should be made aware of the Sibfords Community Plan from 2012.**

*We have considered the Community Plan and it has helped to shape our proposals. We have overprovided parking within the site to ensure that the existing on street parking along Hook Norton Road is not increased and possibly alleviated.*

**13. How many houses in recent village developments have been taken up by local people? Can this information be requested?**

*Cherwell District have a policy of prioritising half of the new affordable homes for people with a local connection. The latest information suggests there are 4 people on the housing register with a local connection to the Sibfords, and it is not unusual to find that people do not register for village housing unless there is a specific opportunity. Indeed, the last Housing Needs Survey in 2010 found a need for 11 homes.*

**14. Do Land & Partners do the development themselves? It needs to be made clear that they may intend to hand the development over to another party.**

*Land & Partners are not a housebuilder. A development partner is selected in conjunction with the landowner after planning consent is granted. A recent example of this process is the Amlets Place development in Cranleigh, where CALA Homes are implementing the vision set out by Land & Partners. The builder is chosen to best suit the type of development that is required.*

**15. Is there scope for the inclusion of self-build or self-finish homes?**

*Yes, we are keen to hear about any requirements for or interest in self-build or custom-build homes. Please contact us directly.*

3.3.3 The public exhibition was well attended by local residents. Four exhibition boards presented the background to the site – with an emphasis on the Parish’s housing need using local area statistics – an analysis of the site and details of the proposed development. The boards also included information of how site will not contribute to flooding in the area.



3.3.4 Members of the applicant team were available to answer questions and discuss any suggestions from visitors throughout the whole period of the exhibition.

3.3.5 Blank comment cards were also available at the exhibition and people were encouraged to complete these. 35 completed comment cards were received, the main themes of the comments, along with specific issues are replicated in the table below along with the applicant's response.

**Table of comments with Land & Partners response**

Theme	Comment	Response
Traffic	<p>Any development will only exacerbate traffic problem on the Hook Norton Road, houses plus allotments, community orchard etc.</p> <p>Too many cars for village already, especially as the school entrance is opposite the development.</p> <p>Traffic bottleneck near village shop, road is already dangerous for pedestrians, development will make this worse.</p> <p>Lack of public transport means all houses will need parking spaces, will add to traffic problem.</p>	<p><b>The community facilities (allotments, play area, open space) will be within short walking distance of existing homes in the village. There will be a new footpath behind the existing hedgerow along Hook Norton Road and this will give access to a new right of way across the site linking into the wider footpath network. This will provide a safe off road route for walkers and cyclists currently using Woodway Road.</b></p> <p><b>The shop is within walking distance of the proposed homes and contributions will be made to support community transport/public transport.</b></p>
Further development	<p>Plan is sensitive but it is important that development stops there.</p> <p>Inevitable that further developments will follow, village will disappear like Hook Norton and Bloxham.</p>	<p><b>The site is suitable for development and it would be sensible to retain the possibility of development that is the most suitable for any future development in future years depending on the needs at the time.</b></p>
Housing density	<p>Experience suggests the housing will be far more high density than</p>	<p><b>The proposal is for up to 25 homes and this will fix the net density to</b></p>

	<p>the concept sketch suggests.</p> <p>Original plan for 6-8 houses on smaller site was more acceptable.</p>	<p><b>around 7 dwelling per hectare over the 3.7ha site and 14.5 dwelling per hectare over the approx. 1.7ha residential land use area.</b></p>
Affordable housing	<p>Mix of affordable housing shared ownership and social rented important</p> <p>Locals should have priority on affordable and social housing.</p> <p>As many affordable homes as possible needed.</p>	<p><b>This is agreed. 35% will be affordable housing, and half of this will be offered to anyone on the housing waiting list with a local connection.</b></p>
Environment	<p>Field is open space of natural beauty with 100-year-old hedge, of environmental importance to wildlife.</p>	<p><b>The hedges will be retained apart from a small section along Hook Norton Road to allow access. An ecological survey has been carried out and the field itself has limited ecological value due to being intensively farmed.</b></p> <p><b>The development should produce a net benefit for biodiversity, through retaining the features of value such as hedges, and creating natural amenity space with native planting.</b></p>
Local amenities	<p>A roadside/pull-in/shed type place for a café with bookshelves is needed, somewhere for the village to congregate.</p> <p>Local surgery and schools may not be able to cope with development.</p>	<p><b>The proposals include a central green with play area as a focus for the development. The south and western parts of the site are dedicated as open space with allotments and potential for a community orchard. There is scope for a small “community shed” if desired.</b></p>
Parking	<p>Better provision for parking needed on site, one-way system through school for drop off and pick up.</p>	<p><b>Parking will meet or exceed standards to ensure no additional car park on existing roads. Visitor parking is also included.</b></p>

<p>Drainage &amp; flooding</p>	<p>Car parking and driveways on the site should allow for rain water to pass through and be drained away to the South towards Hook Norton, not down into the village, old properties are already at risk of flooding.</p> <p>New facilities needed to deal with sewage from new development to not overload the existing system.</p> <p>Flooding has been a problem for housing on north side before.</p>	<p><b>The proposals include a sustainable drainage system (SuDS) which directs surface water run off to a new drainage pond at the lower end of the site. Run off will no longer be uncontrolled and will instead water be stored within the site to be gradually infiltrated. The SuDS pond will also be designed to have benefits for biodiversity.</b></p>
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3.3.6 An additional public exhibition was held on 16<sup>th</sup> October, again at the Sibford Village Hall. Exhibition boards were prepared to demonstrate the changes in the design since the previous consultation. These have been made available on the Parish Council's website at the time of writing.

3.3.7 Additional comments made at this event included the following:

Theme	Comment	Response
Access	The entrance is adjacent to the Sibford School, and this is very busy	<b>The entrance is not directly opposite to avoid impact on the access to the school. The school have their own drop-off facility on site.</b>
Access	Can we have an assurance that there will not be a route into Woodway Road?	<b>The proposals are accessed from Hook Norton Road. A pedestrian through route is proposed to Woodway Road but not a vehicular route.</b>
Construction	Please confirm how the construction traffic will be routed should the development proceed.	<b>If necessary at the detailed stage a construction traffic management plan could be agreed by condition.</b>
Construction	I would like eco-friendly homes.	<b>Noted, the homes will be built to the latest energy efficiency standards.</b>
Further development	Please share any plans or agreements related to the field between the proposed development and the village off Woodway Road.	<b>At the time of writing Land &amp; Partners has a single agreement with the landowners of the proposed development site.</b>
Housing Mix	As a young family that can't afford to live in the village but enjoys all the things the village has to offer we are very excited and impressed by the scheme.	<b>Noted</b>
Housing Mix	<p>What will the affordable houses look like and how will this be maintained after the sale?</p> <p>Will they be freehold or leasehold?</p> <p>Who will decide how the 'affordable' housing is allocated? What defines 'local' in the nominations agreement?</p> <p>Would they just be purchased as second homes by people that don't live in and contribute to the local community and businesses.</p>	<p><b>35% of the homes will be affordable, their appearance is a reserved matter but planning policy demands a 'tenure blind' scheme. They would be managed by the registered social landlord (RSL) which takes the properties on.</b></p> <p><b>This will be a matter for the detailed application and Cherwell's Housing Officer. Local Connections are defined by Cherwell District Council in their Housing nominations/allocation policy. At the time of writing a village connection is defined as:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>• Have lived in the village for the past five years</b></li> <li><b>• Be employed in the village for a minimum of 15 hours per week and</b></li> </ul>

		<p>the employment is not of a short term nature</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have 10 years previous residency if not currently residing in the village</li> <li>• Be over 55 or with a disability needing support on health grounds from close relatives</li> <li>• Have close relatives living in the village for the last five years. Close relatives are defined as parents, children, siblings, grandparents or grandchildren including step relatives, where there is evidence of frequent contact, commitment or dependency.</li> </ul> <p>There is a separate definition for a District local connection.</p>
Housing Mix	<p>If the Sibfords 'share' of the total houses required in the county is only 11 homes, then only 11 homes should be built.</p> <p>The size of the proposal is far too large for the village.</p>	<p>A need was identified in 2010 for 11 homes through a Housing Needs Survey. This does not represent a share of the houses required in the county and pre-dates the latest housing need assessments for the district.</p>
Lighting	<p>We want to try and create a duck sanctuary so can there be no street lighting or if there has to be, can it be minimal (low)?</p>	<p>Noted, street lighting will be considered at the reserved matters stage but standard street lighting is likely to be inappropriate.</p>
Local Buses	<p>The local bus service is not good enough, I would like bus service on demand. If this system worked, potentially more people from the new development would get the bus instead of driving.</p>	<p>Noted, we would support an on-demand service through a Section 106 agreement if such a scheme is identified.</p>
Local Infrastructure	<p>What steps have been taken in looking at the infrastructure, e.g. Doctors Surgery, Halon Hospital, Primary School?</p>	<p>Sibford Surgery currently has 2755 registered patients according to the NHS website. Based on the average household size of 2.3 people a development of 25 homes would represent a 2% increase in patients. Another respondent has noted that the school requires more pupils. The latest admissions policy states that 15 places are available and the catchment area covers neighbouring parishes/villages of Epwell, Tadmarton and Swalcliffe.</p>

Open Space	<p>The public areas of the development must be open to the entire village to not create a closed community.</p> <p>The play area should be closer to the houses so as to be seen, it should not be hidden by the trees.</p> <p>Who will maintain the planned communal spaces and who pays for the ongoing maintenance?</p>	<p>Noted and agreed. The open space includes a public right of way and the area can be dedicated as public open space through the Section 106 agreement.</p> <p>The fall of the land and the positioning of the dwellings in the illustrative layout means that the play area is overlooked. However, the final position can be agreed at the reserved matters stage.</p> <p>The open space will most likely be managed and maintained by a management company, paid for by residents of the development. Alternatively, it could be offered to the Parish Council if preferred.</p>
Parking	<p>Is there going to be enough parking?</p> <p>Are the garages going to be actually wide enough to accept a car?</p>	<p>The illustrative layout has been designed to accommodate parking which meets or exceeds the district's standards.</p> <p>Yes, this is a detailed design matter but the garages will be designed to comply with the latest garage space standards.</p>
Surveys	Make available all Surveys to villages	All surveys will be submitted with the application and made publicly available.
Traffic	<p>Concerns about speeds and visibility at the hill into Sibford Ferris from Hook Norton.</p> <p>Can some consideration be given to the blind bend on the approach from Hook Norton?</p> <p>As part of the development can the 30 mph sign be moved further south?</p>	<p>The visibility splays for the vehicular access have been designed to take account of speeds along Hook Norton Road.</p> <p>An extended 30mph limit can be explored if necessary.</p>
Traffic	<p>The estimated 12 vehicle movements is wrong, there is no employment in the village so all residents will have to drive to work. I recommend an honest re-appraisal of traffic movements.</p> <p>A new traffic survey is needed when school is fully open.</p>	<p>The Transport Statement explains: "A TRICS® analysis has been undertaken to estimate the trip generation associated with the proposed residential development. The trip rate has been based on a TRICS® analysis of privately owned housing sites in England and excludes sites in Greater London. As the proposal will include 35%</p>

	<p>Has traffic from further afield travelling through to get to the M40 been accounted for?</p>	<p>affordable dwellings, which typically have a lower trip rate, the TRICS® trip rates are likely to overestimate the likely trip generation associated with the proposals and adds to the robustness of this assessment.”</p> <p>“Automatic traffic count (ATC) surveys were carried out between Tuesday 6th June and Monday 11th June on Hook Norton Road... The results show that two way flows on Hook Norton Road were 216 vehicles in the AM peak hour and 160 vehicles in the PM peak hour. ”</p>
<p>Village Primary School</p>	<p>We need more children at the Village Primary School - this is the only development locally that could help us. If we don't get more children we could be forced to amend the local offer to parents and their children.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

## 4.0 Conclusion

4.1 The detailed consultations with the residents of Sibford Ferris and other local stakeholders resulted in improvements to the scheme which will, hopefully, enable the formal application to be considered favourably.

4.2 The table of comments shows that drainage is one of the concerns for local residents. This has resulted in the development of a strategy for a sustainable drainage system which is designed into the Green Infrastructure of the illustrative layout, designed to attenuate water run off so that less surface water leaves the site than the present situation. This will ensure that there is a beneficial effect on the volume of water in the existing combined sewer network.

4.3 The strategy is set out in greater detail in the Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy and will be the subject of further detailed design work at the Reserved Matters application stage.

4.4 Another concern the level of traffic through the village. The transport statement submitted with the application sets out that the vast majority of traffic from the development will head south, avoiding the centre of the village. This is one of the justifications for this area of the Sibfords being the most suitable direction for growth.

4.5 Meanwhile, in response to comments about housing mix and design, the overall development vision has focused on providing appropriate density housing with considerable areas of open space which seek to enhance the rural character and setting of the village. The density is varied within the part of the site to be developed for housing, making efficient use of the land. In addition, a substantial area will serve multiple purposes of public open space, allotments, strategic landscaping and a new connecting footpath. At the same time the plans aim to provide a broad range of housing types and options.