

SAPELE DESIGN

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LAND TO REAR OF REED HOUSE, JACKSONS LANE, REED, ROYSTON, HERTFORDSHIRE SG8 8AB DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT (DAS)

March, 2025



1. Overall view of the proposed site to be developed (currently garden belonging to Reed House)

Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Sapele Design, on behalf of David Tait, to support a full planning application for 14 homes on land to the rear of Reed House. The site is previously developed land, and was designated as a domestic garden by North Hertfordshire District Council in October 1993 (reference 93/0961/1) and extends to 1.4 hectares.

A Planning Statement has been prepared by Strutt & Parker, which sets out the planning policy context for the proposed development.

The purpose of this document is to demonstrate the design evolution via our initial design studies and pre-application discussions. The aim is to illustrate that the proposed scheme is entirely appropriate for the site. The statement focuses on the relationship the proposals have with the local vernacular, density and site constraints.

The site will contain a number of affordable homes, and a range of house types, which will provide a suitable mix based on local authority aspirations and local need.

The document will also explain how the scheme has evolved to cater for vehicle movement, pedestrian linkages and connectivity, open space, and the prevention of crime through secured by design principles.

Design Brief

The owner of Reed House wishes to develop the rear garden to the north into residential dwellings utilising the existing access from 'The Joint.'

As discussed in further detail below, the site has a detailed planning history and the design has been amended so as to reflect previous comments made.

The brief includes:

- Appropriate housing to a mix required for the area.
- A layout and design that responds to the key issues and concerns raised by the LPA and previous inspectors comments.
- Appropriate affordable housing.
- Provide high quality amenity space for the residents and visitors that is well connected and surveyed, respecting the sites edge of settlement position and location on the edge of the Conservation Area.
- Parking provision both allocated and unallocated, to a level that reflects current standards to avoid on-street parking, including EV charging.
- Provide housing development adjacent to the settlement boundary of Reed and in a sustainable location (in terms of its proximity to local shops and services).

Approach to Site

From the A10 from London towards Cambridge, via Royston, the village of Reed is situated on the southern side, about 3 miles from Royston. Approach to the site is off a road known as 'The Joint' from the A10 towards Barkway.

The village – Reed

Introduction

Reed is situated half way between the towns of Royston to the north (approximately 3 miles) and Buntingford to the south, which is connected by a former Roman road, Ermine Street. The A10 runs north to south, approximately 300m west of Reed Conservation Area. Reed forms part of the group of Saxon villages established on the chalk ridge, which dominates the area. This village has a Primary school, village hall and a church.

Setting of Conservation Area

Reed Conservation Area is set within a wider landscape of open farmland. The village is surrounded by farmland and an associated network of winding lanes and footpaths. Scattered farmsteads and wayside dwellings complete the rural setting of Reed Conservation Area.

Role in settlement hierarchy

Reed is identified as a Category 'A' village in the settlement hierarchy. A settlement boundary is shown on the Policies Map. The remainder of the parish is classed as rural area beyond the Green Belt.

Character

The current layout of Reed Conservation Area continues to reflect the early pattern of medieval settlement. Groups of cottages and farmsteads, as well as an unusually high number of moated manorial sites, are scattered around three historic greens and tracts of agricultural land. The Conservation Area follows an unorthodox arrangement encompassing a roughly square space defined by four lanes (Church Lane, High Street, Jackson's Lane and Driftway). These bound a central expanse of open farmland. The Conservation Area, therefore, can be characterised by extensive tracts of agricultural land with a low density of historic and modern buildings fronting the country lanes. Accordingly, the character of Reed Conservation Area is highly rural with a strong countryside setting.

Heritage

The village is located just east of Ermine Street, the old Great North Road that is known as the A10. The Saxon parish church of St Mary is a Grade I Listed building. The village is mostly covered in the Conservation Area. The village has a loose-knit layout, with fields, open spaces in and around the village forming part of the village's character.

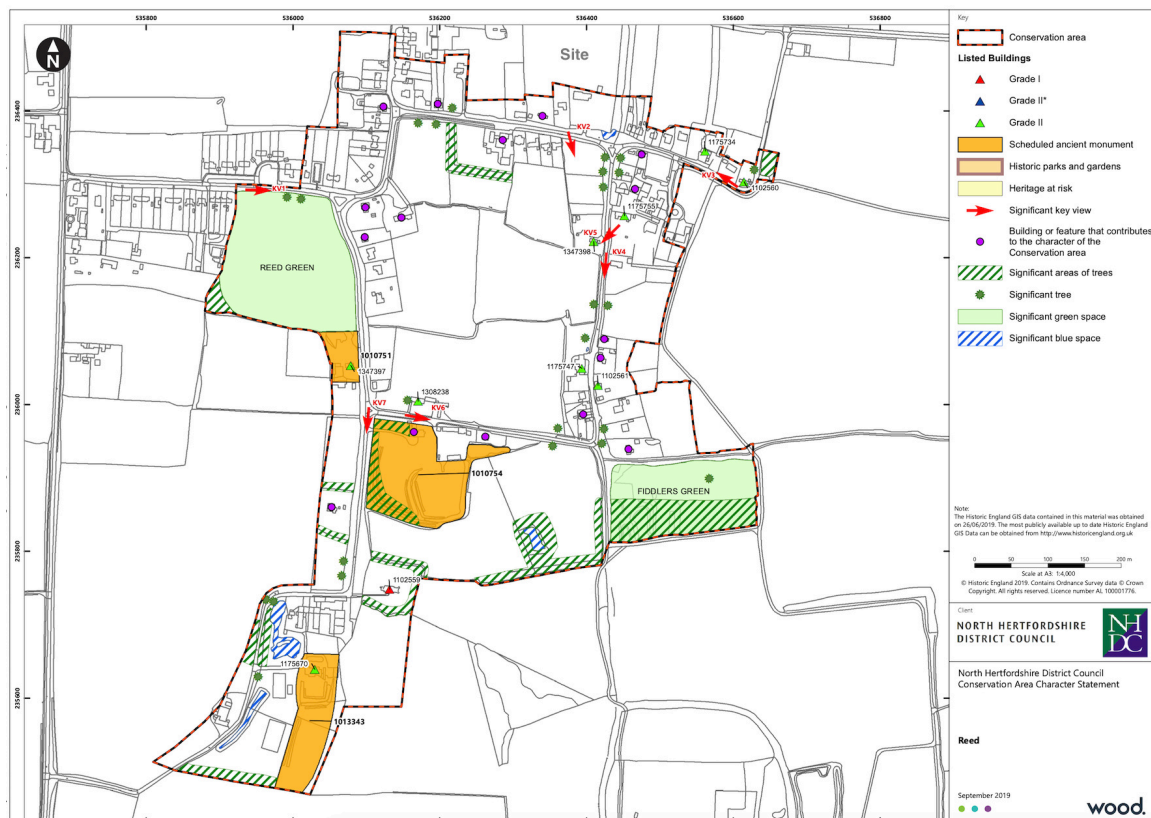
Designated Heritage Assets

Scheduled Monuments

List Entry	Name	National Grid
1010751	Moated site, Goodfellows	TL 36057 36065
1010754	Double moat and fishpond, Queenbury	TL 36198 35877
1013343	Reed Hall moated site, Reed	TL 36019 35571

Listed Buildings

There are ten listed buildings within the village, but none the listed buildings are located within or adjacent to the proposed development site.



2. Figure 1 - Reed Village Conservation Area map.

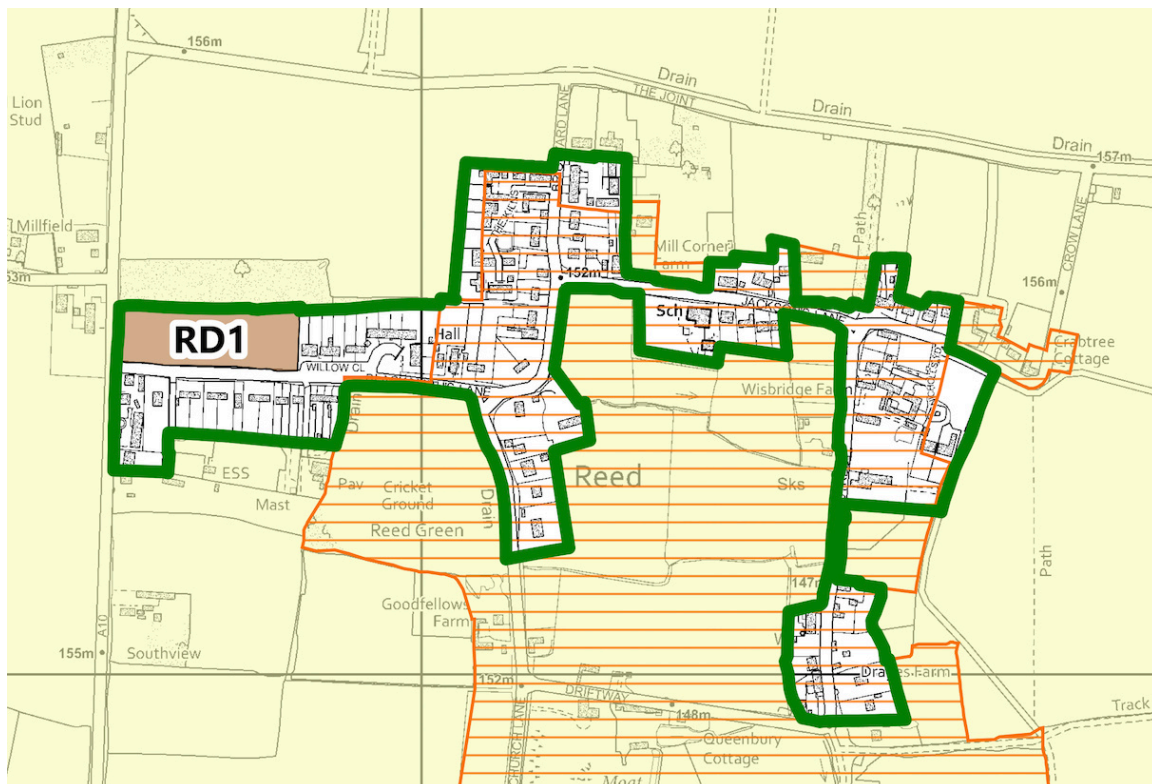
Existing Site

The site is located north of the existing residential dwelling known as Reed House. The site is currently used as a residential garden (1.36 ha), considered previously developed land, which is situated off Jacksons Lane, a minor road towards the east end of Reed Village. The grid reference of the centre of the site is TL 363 363.

To the north of the site there is a road known as 'The Joint' and beyond, are open fields looking towards the town of Royston. To the east of the site beyond extensive trees and hedging is Public Footpath 013, and further on the village of Barkway. To the south of the site is Reed House and neighbouring properties, which are accessed from Jackson's Lane. To the west of the site is Mill Corner Farm. Existing trees and hedgerow largely define the existing site boundaries. The site can also be accessed from 'The Joint'. The site is situated wholly within Flood Zone 1 and is at low risk of surface water flooding.

A Topographical Survey was undertaken and shows that the site typically falls towards the south west.

The proposed site is located adjacent to the north of Reed's settlement boundary and Conservation Area (highlighted as an orange hatch as illustrated in Figure 3 below) and is in the North Hertfordshire District Council's Rural Area beyond the Green Belt.



3. Figure 3 – Existing Site Location (North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2031, Policy Map F)

The site was granted permission to be used as a garden associated with Reed House under permission 93/00961/1.

Planning History

The below table sets out the relevant planning history on the site.

Reference	Description	Outcome
83/01311/1	Formation of additional vehicular access	Conditional Permission granted: 29.09.1983
93/00961/1	Change of use of agricultural land to (1.9 ha, my brackets) garden within the cartilage of existing dwelling house	Conditional Permission granted: 13.10.1993
02/01213/1HH	Formation of new vehicular access onto The Joint, Reed.	Conditional Permission granted: 03.01.2003

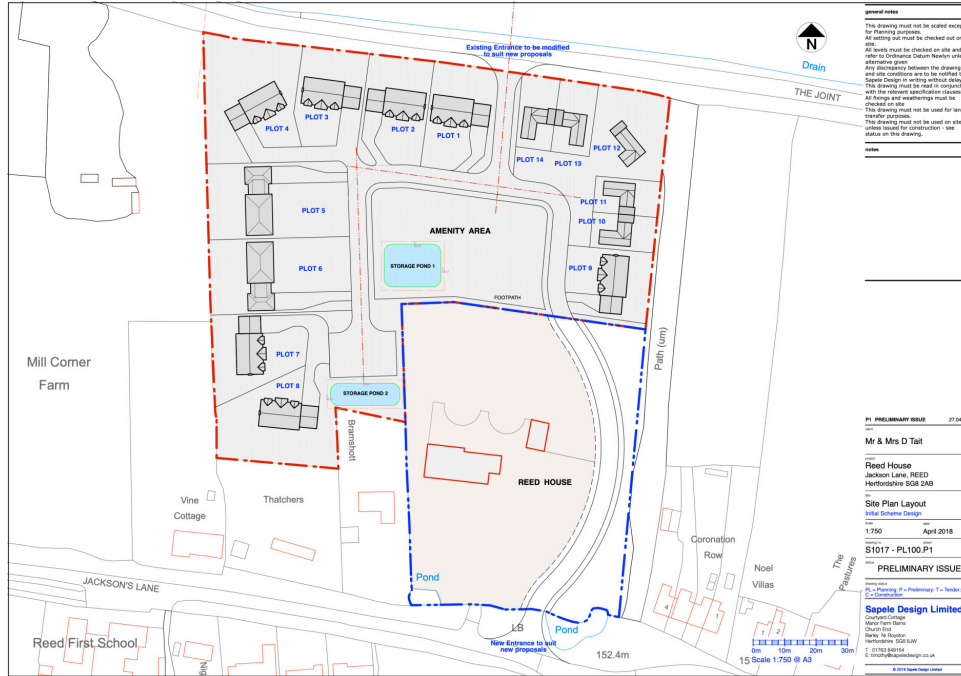
Reference	Description	Outcome
04/01397/1	Outline Application: Erection of 24 detached and terraced dwellings with garaging, open space, estate road and formation of vehicular accesses onto Jackson's Lane and The Joint. (Design, external appearance and landscaping reserved).	Refused: 30.09.2004
11/02254/1	Erection of 13 dwellings (outline application - appearance, landscaping and scale reserved)	Refused: 25.11.2011 Appeal dismissed: 2012
13/01999/1	Erection of 13 dwellings and a business / I.T building (outline application - appearance, landscaping and scale reserved)	Refused: 28.03.2014 Appeal dismissed: 04.03.2015
15/02724/1	Outline application: Erection of 12 dwellings (all matters except access reserved)	Refused: 22.02.2016 Appeal dismissed: 03.08.2016

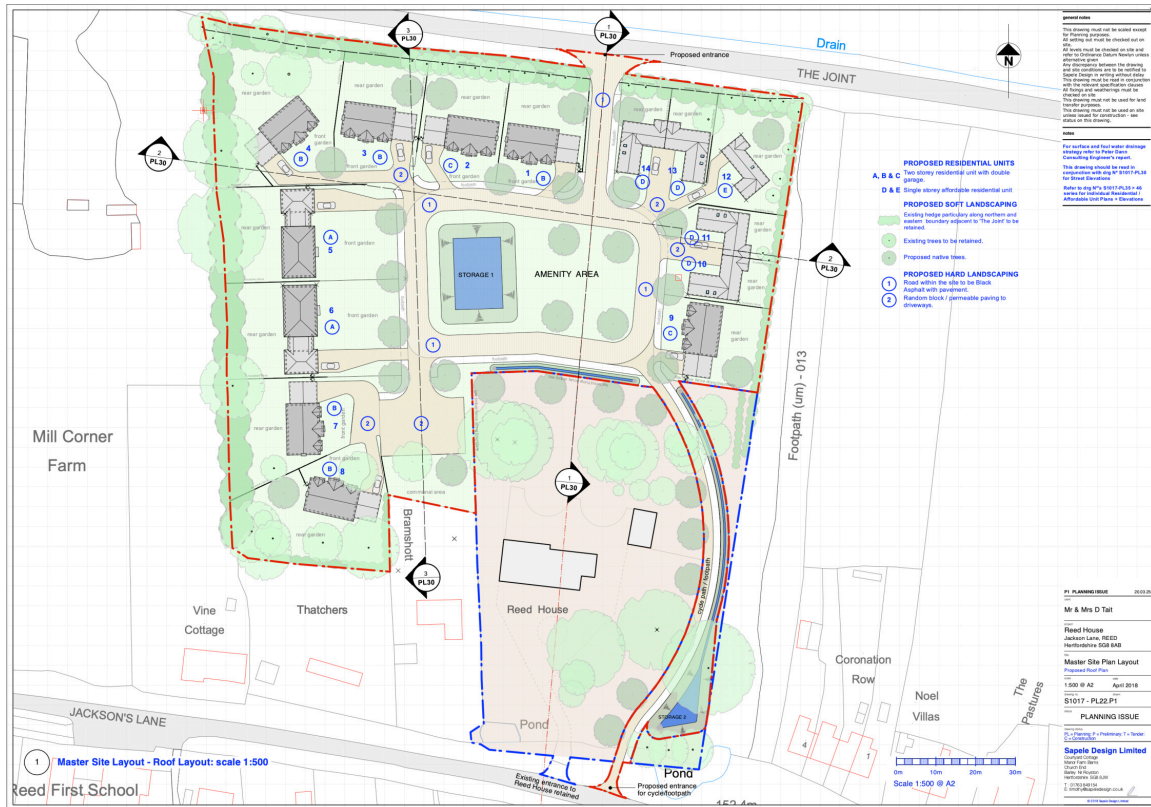
The Planning Policy

The adopted Local Plan is the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031, which was adopted in November 2022. It replaces the saved policies of the District Plan Second Review and Alterations. The Development Plan consists of the Local Plan, Neighbourhood Plans and the adopted Materials Local Plan and Waste Local Plan for Hertfordshire. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is also a material consideration.

Design Evolution

Over the past four years there have been two pre-applications concerning this site, one under Ref: 20/01474/PRE and more recently under Ref: 23/00694/PRE and outline the main differences between the three layouts submitted are as follows:





6. Current Proposed Master Site Layout – (Sapele Design Limited – 2025)

- Residential Units (along the northern boundary) moved into the site to maintain the existing trees and hedgerow.
- Cycle / footpath from proposed site to southern boundary and onto Jackson's Lane.
- South Eastern boundary reconfigured.
- Central Amenity area has been altered to incorporate a continuous internal road layout to serve the residential dwellings, which was due to the South Eastern boundary being reconfigured.
- The proposed site has been updated to allow for the incorporation of the cycle / footpath from proposed site to southern boundary and onto Jackson's Lane.
- Indicating the retention and removal of some existing trees and vegetation.
- Incorporating dry swales and storage pond N° 2 (adjacent to Jackson's Lane) as outlined within the surface and foul water drainage strategy report and the proposed site has been updated to accommodate these and the o/a site is now 1.46 ha.
- Adding footpaths adjacent to drive way entrances to all residential dwellings and omitting the footpath around the perimeter of the amenity area.
- Plot N° 7 repositioned to be in line with neighbouring Plots N°s 5 + 6.
- Repositioning of plot N°s 5, 6 + 7 on the western side and Plot N°s 9, 10 + 11 on the eastern side of the proposed development
- Addition of proposed native trees.

The Development Proposals

The current proposals are for the construction of up to fourteen residential units (including policy compliant affordable residential units), showing three groups of buildings around the edge of the site, with associated car parking and landscaping. The proposals include an amenity area of open space with a SuDs Attenuation.

The proposals are in keeping with the general overall character of the village. The density has been worked out allowing for the existing settlement pattern, physical shape and character of the site.

Access to the development will be from the road known as 'The Joint' utilising an existing access but enhancing visibility in line with the requirements of the County Highway Authority who have previously raised no objections to development proposals on the application site, subject to conditions.

Cycle and pedestrian access will be provided from the site to Jackson's Lane.



7. Proposed vision splays (Sapele Design Limited – 2024)

The Proposed Layout

The site layout – refer to drg N° S1017-PL22.P1, reflects a well-designed, spacious and sympathetic design, in keeping with the character of Reed. The layout shows that the site has a large amount of open space, identifying four groups of residential dwellings located around the perimeter, with amenity space in the middle. The layout also shows the existing vegetation, hedgerow and trees, which are to be retained on the existing

northern boundary, as well as the eastern and western boundaries to minimise any adverse impact on the character and appearance on the area.

Housing Mix

There are five types (A, B and C) of residential dwellings with integral garages consisting of 7 x 4-bed dwellings, 2 x 3 bed dwellings, 4 x 2 bed dwellings and 1 x 1 bed dwelling. 5 of the homes will be affordable in accordance with the planning policy.

Boundaries and Green Infrastructure

One of the key decisions made in connection with the proposed site was to maintain the existing boundaries, consisting of trees, hedges and vegetation, thus retaining the existing natural habitat. There will be some adequate maintenance to be completed during the operations on site and there will be adequate protection to these areas during the construction phase.

It is important to integrate into the design the green (soft areas, plants and trees – existing and proposed) such as an amenity area reflecting natural space, plants with each the front gardens allocated to every residential dwelling, with the blue (swales, ponds and storm drainage) that makes the rural spaces more resilient, pleasant and healthy places to live, work and play.

Landscape

All the residential dwellings, including the affordable would have private gardens and any proposed landscaping would be to the owners discretion. The gardens are all of a reasonable size, allowing for privacy with no overlooking. Some clusters of appropriate trees have been incorporated into the design of the layout to make the visual effect similar to the existing character of the village. Locations have been chosen to improve aspects within the site and will assist to soften the effect of the harder surfaces and materials of the houses to make the overall surroundings familiar and desirable.

Social Integration

A public cycle/footpath is proposed to connect the site via a route through Reed House, which will be a safe and secure link directly to Jackson's Lane to provide access into the village, easy access to the school, thus avoiding any further parking congestion and ensure a socially integrated development.

The village is served by a good range of local services and facilities including a primary school (70m west of the site), church (950m south of the site), village hall (450m west of the site), cricket club and recreation ground (500m west of the site). The nearest bus stop is 350m west of the site. A café is located 450m west.

Ecology & Biodiversity

There are no statutory designated sites within the site. A biodiversity Net Gain Assessment has also been undertaken in support, which identified a deficit in habitat area units. This deficit will be off set by the purchase of units from an offsite provider.

Arboriculture Planning Report – Tree Survey Documentation

Preparation of an arboricultural impact assessment showing the realistic constraints and opportunities to develop the site.

Full record of the established trees is documented.

This includes the boundary screening hedging. This boundary screening hedge will be fully protected and will remain in place following completion of the development.



5. Photograph 1 – Existing northern boundary (hedgerow and trees to remain)



6. Photograph 2 – Existing northern / eastern boundary (hedgerow and trees to remain)

Access

Access to the proposed site is included in the application for approval. Access to the site is proposed from 'The Joint' as previously stated, agreed and suitable radii and visibility splays can be provided for vehicles in accordance with the County Highway Authority standards and conditions.



7. Photograph 2 – Looking towards Barkway



8. Photograph 3 – Looking towards A10

There is no speed limit on 'The Joint' except for the statutory 60mph and deceleration splays will be incorporated as required by the County Highways Authority. The County Highway Authority previously recommended the imposition of highway and access conditions on previous proposals and again this is anticipated and can be complied with. The access road into the site and local spurs, have pavements provided in certain places for ease of circulation by foot within the site. Each dwelling will be connected to the local spurs with crossovers again to the County Highway Authority requirements and have a minimum of two parking spaces, some within integral garages.



9. Photograph 4 – Existing access to site looking from 'The Joint' and existing northern boundary.

A cycle and footpath is proposed on the land currently owned by Reed House, to connect the development with the village via the southern boundary that links with Jackson's Lane. This is to provide access into the village and to ensure a socially integrated development.



10. Photograph 5 – Existing southwest corner of the site.

The Design / Appearance

The proposed dwellings will adopt vernacular designs and use materials to match-in with those already predominant in the village i.e. brickwork and render. The sloping roofs will be clay tiles and slates. Although some design duplication may occur, materials will be chosen to avoid any replication or awkward relationship and maintain individuality within the overriding village vernacular.

Provision for the disabled

The houses will be designed taking current standards for the design of the disabled into account, requiring minimum adjustments internally to allow for the possibility of both ambulant and wheel-chair users. The internal layouts will be planned for ease of use, rooms of a good size and for minimum circulation, in particular approach, access to entrances which will be step free and ramped. The design of the dwellings will be in accordance with the relevant Building Regulations Part M1 (1 and 2), providing 50% of the dwellings being M4(2).

Corridors and passageways in the entrances will be sufficiently wide to allow convenient circulation by a wheel chair and internal doors of suitable width to facilitate wheel-chair manoeuvring. Also, a WC will be provided in the entrance storey of each dwelling with a minimum width of 900mm.

Provision will be made within the boundaries of each of the plots for a disabled person to approach and gain access into the dwelling from the point of alighting from a vehicle, which may be within or outside the plot. Footpaths will be provided at one side of all access roads on the site. The proposed development shall be provided with a car free, cycle/footway that will connect to the village to the south of the proposed site.

Internally, the locations of fittings and equipment, sockets, switches etc. will be assist those people whose reach is limited to use the dwelling more easily and applies to vertical circulation and staircases in accordance with the current Building Regulations Part M1.

Appearance and materials



11. Existing surrounding dwellings within the village.

Pitch - many of the surrounding buildings within the village have steep roofs, which is commonly seen around the local area that takes its background from Medieval Masonic Tradition, likewise the application reflects this.

Materials - there are two main shades of brickwork (similar to London Stock) and the traditional soft red brick that is seen on many building within the surrounding area. There are other building that utilise render also.

Proposed materials – The elevational drawings illustrate the use clay tiles for the roofs, oft red brick either 900/450 high plinth from ground level with a light render (ivory in colour) with high quality matching aluminium windows. There will be a couple of buildings (Type A) that will be wholly brick with high quality grey aluminium windows, External doors shall be high quality timber - refer to street elevations. Where building incorporate three bays, the centre bay will consist of brick and the rest shall be render - for details refer to street elevations and individual unit elevations.

Sustainability and Carbon Reduction

The National Planning Policy Framework requires developments to adopt pro-active strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change. With the transition to National Housing Standards, only energy performance and water efficiency will be assessed as part of any planning application.

The design of the dwellings will seek compliance with the current Building Regulations Part L1A; Conservation of fuel and power in new dwellings, which states:
Reasonable provision shall be made for the conservation of fuel and power in buildings by:

- a) Limiting heat gains and losses.
- b) Providing and commissioning energy efficient fixed building services with effective controls, and
- c) Providing sufficient information on maintenance requirements so that the building can operate in such a manner as to use no more fuel and power than is reasonable in the circumstances.

A 'fabric-first' design principle is to be adopted whereby the fabric of the proposed new houses will be designed towards keeping the energy requirements to an efficient level and the envelope; external walls, floors and roof etc., effectively retain heat. The overall level of energy consumption will be reduced to an effective minimum and this also includes fittings lighting and heat producing appliances etc.

Substantial insulation levels will be significantly better than the current Building Regulations. These will be provided in accordance with the U-value requirements to the current Building Regulations Part L1A with appropriate combinations of high specification window types and ventilation, fittings to control thermal overheating and cooling when required.

Air source heating systems shall be used to give energy efficiency, which also reduces carbon emissions. Sustainable materials will also be considered as far as possible regarding the structure and finishes of the buildings. This is particularly relevant to fit in with the original agricultural character of the village, as materials would no doubt all have been sustainable at the time and sourced from the local area.

Emergency Services

The proposed site will be accessible for emergency services as required.

Waste Collection from individual residential dwellings

The layout accommodates waste storage within the curtilage of each dwelling. The standard service is offered by the LA, is a kerbside fortnightly collection of residual domestic waste. Mixed dry recycling and paper shall be collected fortnightly on the alternate week, in separate containers. Food waste shall be collected separately, but weekly. Each dwelling shall receive a standard service with only one bin of each type. Residents shall also have an option of paying for a fortnightly collection of garden waste.

Conclusion

The scheme has evolved over recent months, layouts being refined and designs altered to take into account local designations, character and constraints of the site, which have been utilised as opportunities to provide a charismatic residential environment that is also accessible for the community to enjoy.