

Proposed Development of 99 Dwellings

Land at Hogshaw Farm, Fairfield, Buxton

Response to Urban Design Comments

(including Building for Healthy Life Assessment & Vernacular Study)

Planning Application reference HPK/2023/0192

July 2024



Introduction

This document has been prepared by eSCAPE Urbanists Ltd on behalf of Barratt Homes in respect of a planning application for 99 houses on land at Hogshaw Farm, Fairfield, Buxton (Ref: HPK/2023/0192).

Background

The planing application was submitted to High Peak Borough Council on 15th May 2023.

A number of consultee responses have been received, including comments and feedback from the case officer. These comments have resulted in a number of changes to the scheme which are summarised within this document.

In addition to the consultee comments, the Council appointed Jerry Spencer Associates (JSA) to carry out an urban design and heritage impact assessment in respect of the proposals. The assessment of the urban design quality of the proposal broadly followed the criteria used in the Building for a Healthy Life guidance and made a number of recommendations on how the scheme may be improved.

Purpose

The document provides a response to the urban design assessment carried out by JSA on behalf of the Council. It outlines what changes have been to the scheme in order to address the comments received and provides additional supplementary information and justification for the proposed design response where appropriate.

As with the JSA assessment, our response is structured around the 12 criteria that form the Building for Healthy Life Assessment (BfHL)Toolkit. Under each of the BfHL themes, a summary of JSA’s comments is provided followed by our response together with other relevant considerations.

This document also includes (at Appendix A) an extensive photographic study within and around Buxton which identifies local examples of housing (including both new developments and older traditional housing stock) which display a similar character to the house types currently being proposed. Indeed, the proposed house type range has been specifically developed by Barratt and David Wilson Homes for the High Peak area and employs materials and architectural details which reference and complement the local vernacular. This vernacular study responds to comments raised by JSA regarding the character and appearance of the proposed house types and their appropriateness within the settlement context.

Summary of Changes

A number of changes have been made to the submitted layout (ref: 499-P-PL01 - J) which are summarised below. Some these changes are in a direct response to the issues raised in JSA’s urban design assessment whilst others relate to comments from other consultees. Some of the changes are a result of technical and sales requirements.

Key changes include:

- Reduction in the number of houses from 116 to 99 in order to retain existing TPO trees, reduce the level of frontage parking and minimise the extent of retaining structures required.
- Revised north-west corner of the site to avoid 30m badger offset.
- Chimneys added to some plots to provide additional references to local vernacular and create more interesting/varied roofscape.
- Repositioning of some plots to reduce the amount of frontage parking.
- Revised Suds design incorporated as per engineering comments and red edge updated to suit.
- Entrance statement added to gateway greenspace.
- Local Area for Play added.
- Repositioning of plots to create strong header buildings.
- Revisions to housing mix to introduce more feature plots/header buildings.
- Revisions to road layout to address LPA comments.
- Changes to the street hierarchy and design including removal of footways from one side of the primary access roads.
- Built form pulled back from site’s north-eastern boundary to avoid protected trees.
- Addition of flat roof canopies to all house types to suit CAT2 requirements.
- All garages updated to pitched roof profiles.
- Multi-use footpath added near to the farm to pick up existing FP2.

Design Response & Building for Healthy Life Assessment

Integrated Neighbourhoods

Natural connections

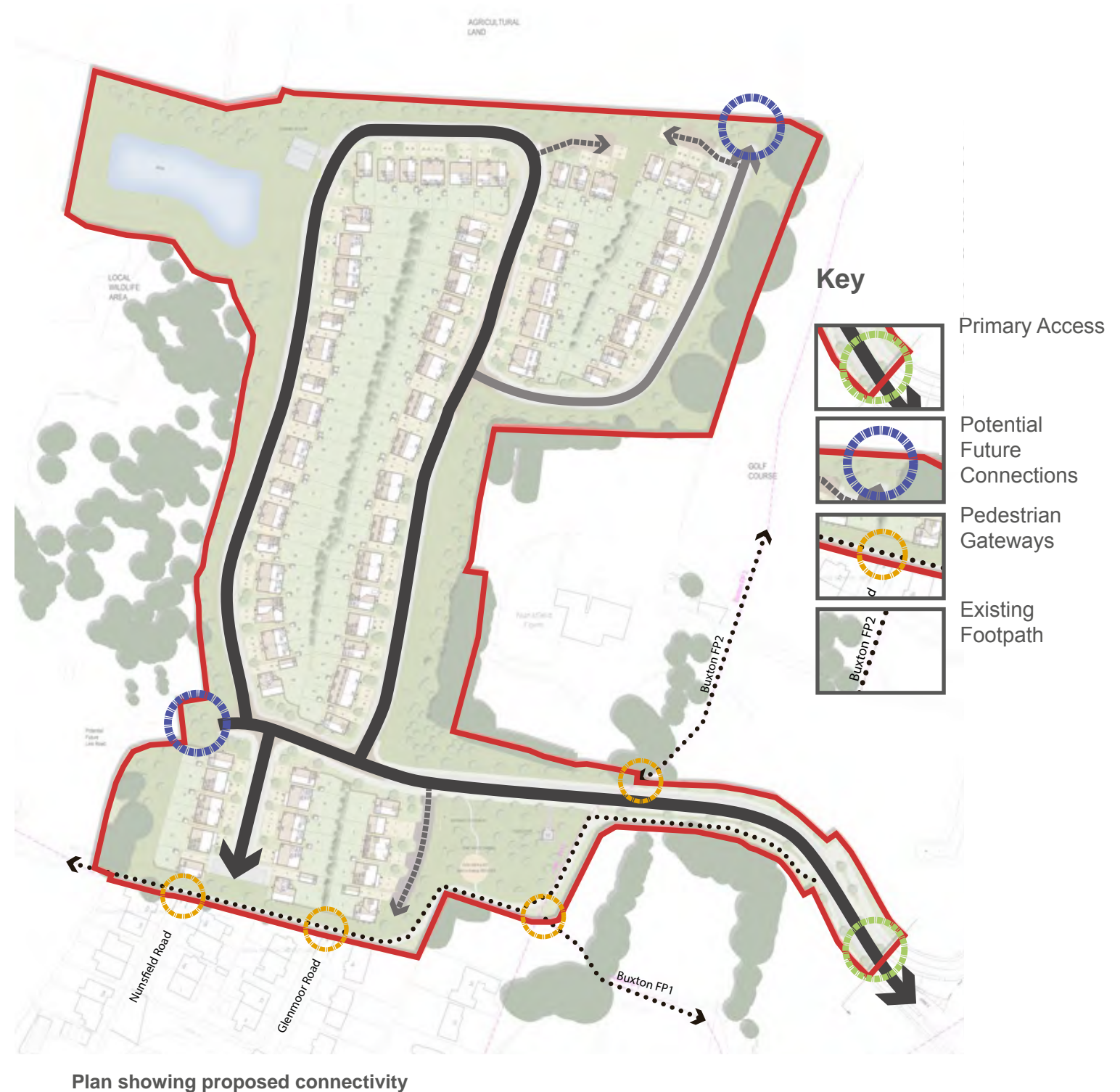
Urban Design Comments (JSA):



- The existing dry-stone walls around parts of the site perimeter should be retained, repaired and maintained.
- The proposed layout retains the one official footpath which runs along the south edge of the site but this is the only pedestrian link proposed with the surrounding area.
- The road link entering the site has no proposed or potential exit, as the one road into the site terminates in all directions leaving a ransom strip at all its edges.

Response/Additional Considerations:

- The existing dry stone wall within the applicant's ownership is to be retained and repaired.
- Pedestrian access into the site is retained via existing footpaths and along footways along the main access road. Buxton FP2 enters the site to the north of the main access road and Buxton FP1 enters the site in the south-east corner. Both routes connect the site to the wider footpath network.
- A footpath connection is proposed onto the existing Public Right of Way along the southern boundary from the play area at the site's south-east corner. Potential also exists for a pedestrian connection from the southern turning head subject to levels.
- Pedestrian access onto Nunsfield Road and Glenmoor Road will be possible from the existing Public Right of Way along the southern boundary.
- A single point of vehicular access into the site is provided off the A6 roundabout. This provides a logical connection into the site which links it directly with the wider neighbourhood. There is no requirement or potential for a second vehicular access into the site.
- Green corridors are retained around the edges of the site that will allow for the movement of wildlife.
- The road layout allows potential for future connections to adjoining land to the west and north off the proposed road network.
- The layout responds to pedestrian and cyclist desire lines with direct north-south and east-west connections along adoptable streets.
- The main access road forms an internal loop through the site creating a highly permeable layout.
- All streets pass in front of people's homes, rather than to the rear, and are well overlooked. Connections through the site will be attractively landscaped with a number of street trees proposed and will be well lit, direct and convenient.



Integrated Neighbourhoods

Walking, Cycling and Public Transport

Urban Design Comments (JSA):



- Lack of links/connectivity
- There are no proposals to extend public transport into the site, although the circularity of the proposed main roads would allow a bus service to circulate through the area with relative ease.

Response/Additional Considerations:

- The layout benefits from good accessibility and connectivity with wider movement networks. The proposed access road connects the site with the A6 roundabout which provides direct access into Buxton from the north.
- The site also benefits from links to the existing footpath network (Buxton FP1 and Buxton FP2).
- Existing bus stops along Fairfield Road to the south of the site are within walking distance. The A6 is served with two bus services the 199 and 030 which provide connections to Buxton in the south and Whaley Bridge and Manchester Airport to the north.
- The layout of the development encourages access to local amenities by non-car modes of transport by ensuring direct and convenient pedestrian routes through the site which connect with surrounding streets and public transport routes.
- The layout has been designed to be both legible and permeable in order to encourage walking and cycling for short journeys within the development.
- Cycle parking is provided in secure sheds within private rear gardens.
- All streets and routes pass in front of people’s homes rather than to the back of them creating a well overlooked public realm to promote pedestrian safety.

Facilities & Services

Urban Design Comments (JSA):



- There are no facilities or services proposed on the development other than a small area of open space.

Response/Additional Considerations:

- Due to the relatively modest scale of development proposed, the provision of additional non-residential uses on the site is not considered feasible or economically viable. Nevertheless, the site does benefit from good access to existing facilities in the local area. The proposed development of 116 new houses will help to support these existing services and facilities by providing additional customers and increased footfall.
- There are a range of existing community facilities within walking or cycling distance of the site including shops, pubs, a church, schools and community centres. Employment opportunities abound towards the town of Buxton located 1km south west of the site. In terms of leisure facilities, the Hogshaw Rec lies to the south of the site with footpath and cycle connections making this a very convenient resource for the future residents. Buxton and High Peak Golf Club lies within walking distance of the site to the east of the A6.
- The nearest primary school is Fairfield Endowed C of E school a kilometre south of the site with easy cycle and pedestrian access. St Annes Catholic Primary and St Thomas More Catholic Academy also lie a kilometre to the south west.
- The nearest supermarket is Waitrose located a kilometre to the south west in Buxton centre.
- The development provides new recreational facilities for use by new and existing residents in the form of a children’s play area located close to the site entrance for ease of access and is accessed by direct footpaths.
- Multi-functional public open space within the development is located so that it is easily accessible by all residents and benefits from good surveillance by surrounding homes and streets.
- Generous front gardens and active frontages throughout the development will encourage street activity and inter-action between residents.

Integrated Neighbourhoods

Homes for Everyone

Urban Design Comments (JSA):



- There appears to be a section of smaller, presumably affordable housing at the south side of the site, separated from the bulk of the site by the access road. The National Design Guide encourages a more mixed distribution.

Response/Additional Considerations:

- Policy H4 of the High Peak Local Plan (2016) requires the provision of affordable housing and states that where the provision of affordable houses proposed is below the requirements set out, the Council will require applicants to provide evidence by way of a financial appraisal to justify a reduced provision. A viability assessment has been prepared by Roger Hannah to support the application which demonstrates that affordable housing is not viable as part of the development, concluding that the affordable housing on site should be reduced on site to reflect scheme viability.
- The development comprises a broad mix of housing types including semi-detached properties, townhouses, and detached dwellings (see accommodation schedule opposite).
- The housing mix includes a selection of 2, 3 and 4 homes to suit the needs of the local community and to create a socially cohesive and balanced community.
- All homes have access private outdoor space.
- All homes are built to Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS), with 50% Category1 NDSS and 50% Category 2 NDSS.
- All homes are designed to be flexible to respond to changing needs. This includes flexible floor plans, ample storage space and minimum space standards
- A total of 10 different house types are proposed to encourage a diverse community of residents and providing considerable variation across the site.

SCHEDULE OF ACCOMMODATION

Barratt Type	House Type	Sqft	No	Total Sqft
Private Units				
Rowan - End	2 Bed Terraced House	866	10	8660
Rowan - Mid	2 Bed Terraced House	866	1	866
Oakmoor - End	3 Bed Bed Semi / Mews House Dual Aspect End Unit	1049	1	1049
Birchmoor - End	3 Bed Terraced House	1025	3	3075
Rathlin	3 Bed Detached House	990	11	10890
Matlock - End	3 Bed Semi / Mews House	970	23	22310
Hopton	3 Bed Detached / Semi Detached Dual Aspect House	1017	9	9153
Hopton - End	3 Bed Detached / Semi Detached Dual Aspect House	1017	1	1017
Knightwood - End	4 Bed Townhouse	1122	18	20196
Ashtead	4 Bed Dual Aspect Detached House	1265	4	5060
Wallasea	4 Bedroom Int. Garage Detached House	1206	11	13266
Haweswater	4 Bedroom Int. Garage Detached House	1495	7	10465
Total number of units and square footage			99	106007
Gross Site Area in Acres				10.39
Open Space & Undevelopable Area in Acres				3.18
Net Site Area in Acres				7.21
Density (Units per Acre)				14
Density (Units per Hectare)				34
Square Foot / Acre				14,703

Accommodation Schedule

Distinctive Places

Making the most of whats there

Urban Design Comments (JSA):

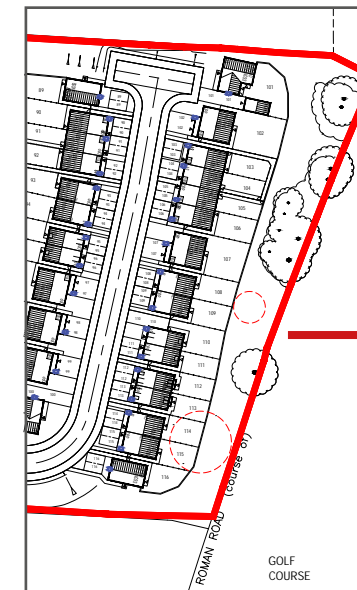
- The layout takes little account of the lie of the land in order to arrange the roads and houses in such a way as to minimise cut and fill.
- The central section of the site which is currently served by two roads could be served instead by a single road.
- The road layout runs right alongside the area of emergent woodland at the border of the site. This would introduce a highly urbanising impact on the adjacent woodland in terms of light pollution, noise and traffic.
- The opportunity to extend formal pedestrian and cycle routes alongside this pleasant natural area has been lost.
- The potential to capitalise on the exceptional views over distant hills and towards Buxton itself by creating a public space within the site at a high vantage point has not been taken.
- The opportunity to create recreational pedestrian links with the wider area - both with adjoining streets and with other points of access onto the common has not been taken.

Response/Additional Considerations:

- This is a challenging development site with significant changes in levels. A number of different options were considered for the layout of the site, all of which would require some degree of cut and fill. The proposed site layout achieves an appropriate balance between making efficient use of the land and minimising the extent of cut and fill. Rear gardens will be stepped and retaining walls between adjoining gardens will be used to accommodate level differences whilst avoiding sloping gardens.
- A landscape buffer is proposed along the site's western boundary in order to minimise the urbanising impact of the development on the existing woodland. The nearest houses to the woodland are set back over 20 metres from the site boundary (substantially more in most cases). The proposed road which will run along the western boundary will have a footway along one-side only in order to create a soften transition with the adjoining open space. This will be a relatively low-trafficked route given the number of houses it serves.
- Due to steep level differences, it would not be possible to locate a segregated footpath along the edge of the woodland. Instead, pedestrian access along this boundary is provided for along a 2m wide footway along the roadway which will afford a vantage point for views towards the woodland.
- The development responds to the unique constraints and opportunities presented by the site. At the northern end of the site, the built form has been pulled back from the eastern boundary and highest part of the site to avoid the TPO trees.
- Homes have been orientated to benefit from views of existing natural features including the area of woodland to the west.



Houses stepping down the slope



Previous Layout



Current Layout

The site layout has been revised to provide an increased stand-off and landscape buffer to the existing protected trees along the site's north-eastern boundary

Distinctive Places

A Memorable character

Urban Design Comments (JSA):

- The proposed homes are highly similar in design to those in many other parts of the country.
- The arrangement of streets and buildings does not accord with the local traditional street massing and rhythm. The developer has attempted to provide a varied street scene by intermingling two and three storey homes of slightly varying design.
- An analysis of the traditional street layout in the locality reveals that there is variation in the street scene, but that the massing is restrained in order to develop a strong resulting rhythm. Blocks of housing are grouped together at a single height and street canyons progress in a stepped, often regularly stepped, fashion to punctuate the skyline. The pleasing result is often a varied but unified street scene, rather than an apparently random collection of houses.



A strong sense of symmetry created by grouping similar house types.



Proposed streetscene showing use of 2.5 storey houses alongside 2 storey houses to create an interesting and varied roofline

Response/Additional Considerations:

- The proposed house type range has been specifically developed for the High Peak area and has been approved for use on other sites in and around Buxton and the High Peak area more widely.
- Reconstituted stone is proposed as the primary facing material for external walls to reflect and compliment the use of natural stone traditionally used on older houses in the area. In addition, grey roof tile has been chosen with a similar appearance to traditional slate.
- Local character is also reflected in the use of stone window and door surrounds, cills and lintels. Chimneys have been added to some house types to further reference local vernacular housing. Elevations display a strong sense of proportion and symmetry which is also in keeping with local character.
- No three storey houses are proposed. The maximum height of buildings will be 2.5 storey with the upper floor living space accommodated within the roof space in order to minimise the overall height and massing of buildings.
- The use of 2.5 storey houses within the streetscene helps to provide a mix of house types and sizes within the development. They have been located them in such a way as to provide a varied streetscene and avoid homogeneous or excessively repetitive rooflines.
- Whilst long runs of terraces would provide a strong sense of rhythm and enclosure to the streetscene, it would result in large amounts of frontage parking which would not be appropriate on this site.
- Symmetry has been created along some sections of street by the arrangement of similar house types (see example opposite).
- An extensive photographic study is presented at **Appendix A** which examines the local built character in and around Buxton. The survey identifies local examples, including both traditional housing stock and new build developments, which have a similar materiality and detailing as the proposed house types. Within this context, it can be seen that the proposed development will be entirely in keeping with local built character. The illustrations over the following pages illustrate the key details and materials of the proposed house types and presents these alongside local examples of similar features.

Local Precedent



Stone Window Surrounds

Local Precedent



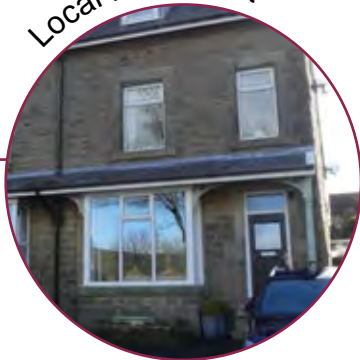
Chimneys

Local Precedent



Grey Roof Tile

Local Precedent



Extended First Floor Canopies



Local Precedent



Stone walling

Local Precedent



Stone Cills

Local Precedent



Pitched Roofs



Edenhall Darlstone Buff Black Split



Russell Grampian Roof Tile (Slate Grey)



Black Rainwater Goods



Projecting stone door surrounds



Flat Roof Canopies



Artstone Window Cills and Heads



Stone Chimneys



Feature Window Surrounds

Local Precedent



Facade Symmetry



Local Precedent



Repeating Pattern of Fenestration



Local Precedent



Stone Door Surrounds



Local Precedent



Gable Fronts



Local Precedent



Well Proportioned Facades with good sized window openings to the street

Distinctive Places

Well defined streets and spaces



Urban Design Comments (JSA):

- The street design does not provide any breaks in the building line which might create a better sense of containment, but instead allows the view to ebb away along very long roads.
- The natural lie of the land will provide some sense of enclosure, by limiting long views, but the overall impression would still be of enervating lengths of monotonous street frontage punctuated only by the varying shapes and sizes of front parked vehicles.
- Repetitive use of a corner house design not employed as a device to terminate long views, has limited impact on the street scene.
- No locations exist where a strong built form terminates the linear view. Long views from the north looking south along the two main roads would be terminated by perimeter fencing, perhaps mitigated by some semi-public planted strips.
- The link between the three roads in the north of the site would appear to be fringed by side garden fencing.
- Street trees could greatly enhance all of the streets but there are very few proposed here.

Response/Additional Considerations:

- Additional side drives have been introduced across the site to reduce frontage parking, provide greater separation between houses and provide increased breaks in the built form whilst still maintaining a strong sense of enclosure to streets.
- Proposed boundary treatments to the front of houses will provide additional enclosure to streets.
- The layout has been revised to provide better termination of key vistas by header buildings (see plan opposite). The main view south along the primary access road (eastern side) is terminated by an area of landscaping which will help to screen and soften the appearance of the side boundary walls.
- Four corner turning house types are proposed (The Montrose, Oakmoor, Hopton and the Ashtead). Each house type has been designed to provide attractive frontage and window openings onto both streets.
- Streets are well overlooked by the principal elevations of the properties which enclose them, with front doors accessing the streetscape via front gardens. Blank walls onto the street are avoided where possible. Buildings are positioned close to the street with small setbacks to allow for frontage parking.
- An urban block structure is proposed, providing good security to private rear gardens.
- Trees are provided in front gardens and areas of open space along the primary access roads which will contribute to creating attractive streetscenes.
- Clear delineation is achieved between public and private space with careful space planning helping to avoid areas of 'leftover' space.



Plan showing use of header buildings to terminate vistas along primary streets



Typical Corner Turning House Type

Distinctive Places

Easy to find your way around

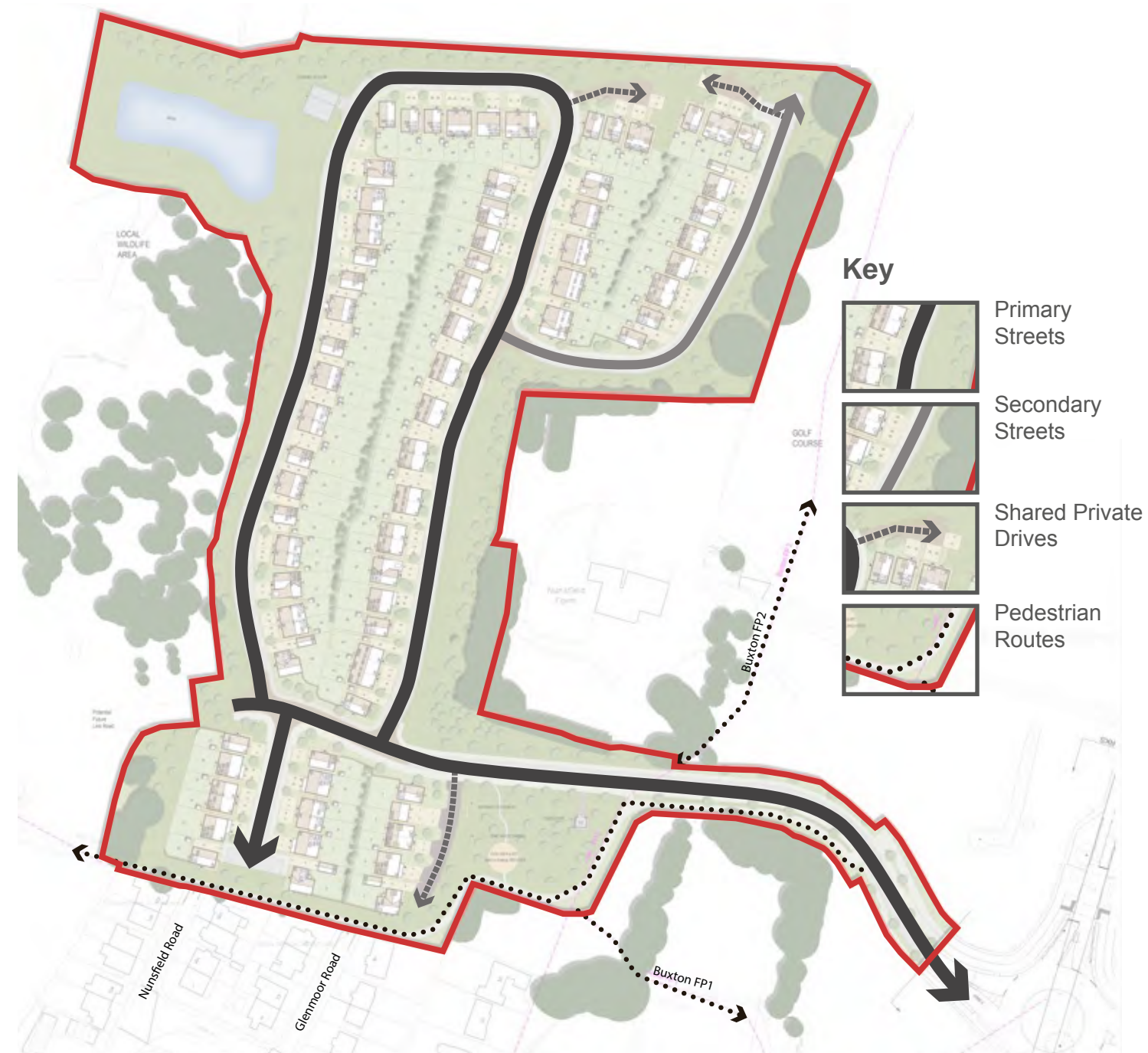
Urban Design Comments (JSA):

- The guidance suggests that streets ought to be designed differently from each other in order to foster an understanding of the hierarchy of the route network.
- The two main roads are identical in design in terms of width, pavements and turning heads.



Response/Additional Considerations:

- The proposed street hierarchy is illustrated opposite and incorporates differentiation between the different routes. For example, primary access roads will be designed with a 5.5m wide carriageway and 2m wide pavements along one or both sides. In contrast, secondary streets will have a narrower carriageway of 5m with pavements along both sides. An additional layer in the hierarchy is introduced in the form of shared private drives serving small numbers of houses.
- Orientation around the site is aided by the strong landscape and public realm features including a number of retained mature trees, green buffers and areas of open space.
- Views out of the site are retained to the adjoining woodland, surrounding houses to the south and open countryside to the north, aiding orientation within the site.
- Header buildings create landmarks and terminate vistas through the development to aid wayfinding.
- Clear sight-lines are maintained to existing pedestrian routes to ensure these feel safe and convenient to use.
- Straight sections of street will permit longer views through the development to further aid legibility.



Proposed Street Hierarchy

Streets for All

Healthy Streets

Urban Design Comments (JSA):

- There is no need to design both main streets to an identical car and refuse vehicle dominated design.
- National guidance specifically counters against this approach. The westernmost road adjoins the attractive wooded open space and the opportunity exists but has not been taken, to make this an attractive new pedestrian and cycle friendly route, albeit with vehicular access.

Response/Additional Considerations:

- Due to steep level differences, it would not be possible to locate a segregated footpath along the edge of the woodland. Instead, pedestrian access along this boundary is provided for along a 2m wide footway along the roadway which will still afford a vantage point for views towards the woodland.
- The primary streets are designed to form an internal loop/spine road through the development and therefore it makes sense that they are designed to a similar specification. Both routes have been designed with a footway along one side only to help provide a softer transition with the adjoining areas of open space and woodland edge.
- Variety has been introduced into the street hierarchy in the form of a series of secondary routes which are distinguished by a narrower carriageway. Secondary routes also serve smaller numbers of houses.
- Streets will have active edges with direct plot access, good surveillance by adjoining houses, front doors and habitable room windows facing the street.
- Attractively landscaped front gardens and boundary treatments will add sensory richness to streets.
- The secondary street at the northern end of the site serves a small number of houses than the primary routes and will be lightly trafficked.



Proposed Street Hierarchy

Streets for All

Cycle and Car Parking

Urban Design Comments (JSA):

- The streets are far too dominated by repetitive frontage parking and national guidance is clear on the need for more variety in the distribution of parking.



Response/Additional Considerations:

- A balanced approach is adopted to parking which includes a range of solutions including side parking (on private driveways and garages), frontage parking, integral garages and on-street parking.
- Long rows of frontage parking along the street have been avoided where possible. Typically, rows of frontage parking bays are kept to a maximum of four spaces before an area of landscaping is introduced between adjacent bays to help soften the visual impact of parked vehicles.
- Cycle storage is provided for in secure garden sheds located within private rear gardens.
- Streets and pedestrian routes will be designed for safety and security with good lighting and benefiting from active surveillance by adjacent houses.
- Private garages are set behind building lines to reduce their visual dominance along the street.
- Visitor parking is provided on-street and on private drives.
- Integral garages are designed as singles to avoid dominating the front elevation



Soft landscaping and tree planting has been introduced between parking bays to reduce the visual impact of parked cars along the street



Use of side drives to reduce the amount of frontage parking

Streets for All

Green and Blue infrastructure

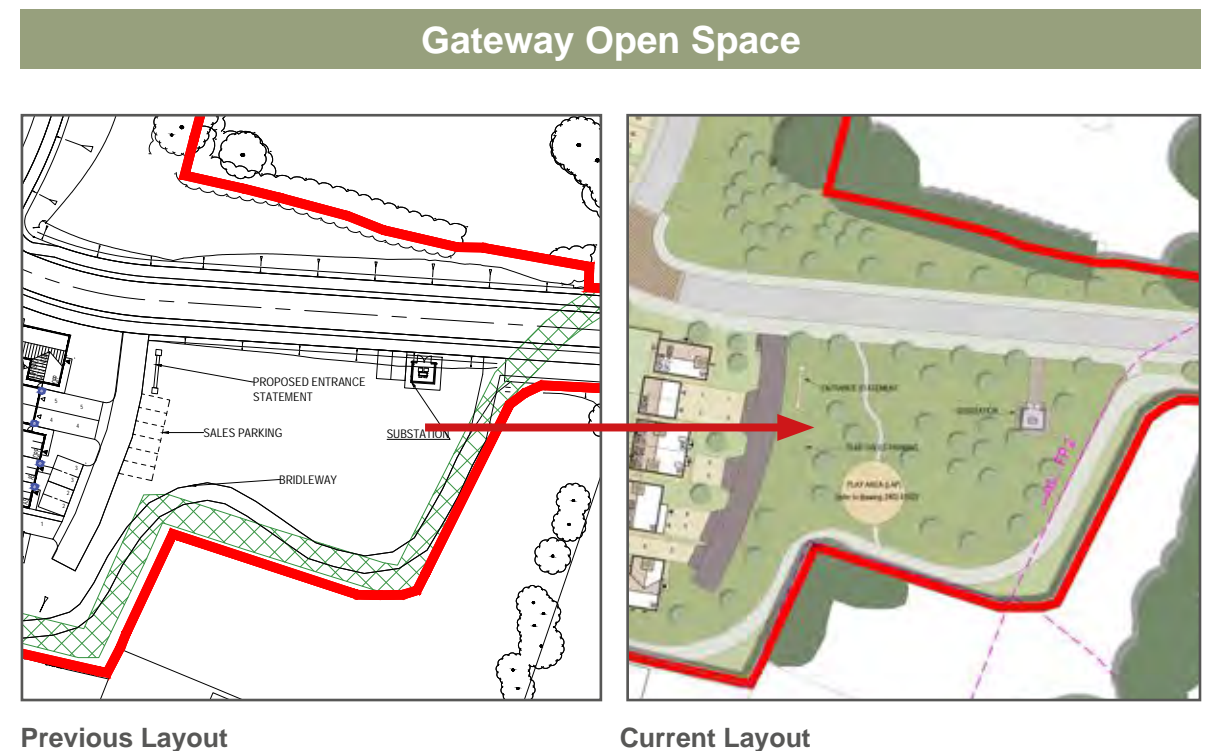


Urban Design Comments (JSA):

- No provision of open space for recreational purposes.
- The provision of an area at the site entrance is poorly enclosed and poorly overlooked by surrounding homes and does not feel part of the new community.
- The other area of space would be a narrow strip of land above a steep drop down the excavated hillside along the eastern edge of the site. There appears to be no intention to create a footpath along this edge.

Response/Additional Considerations:

- The layout includes a large area of public open space located at the entrance into the site which will create an attractive green gateway. The space is located on higher ground and will provide a vantage point for longer distance views across the site and wider landscape. Its location at the site entrance and close to the existing Public Right of Way also maximises its accessibility to existing and future residents.
- The layout has been amended and now shows a children's play area located within the gateway open space.
- The proposed sub station has been relocated and positioned further back from the access road to reduce its visibility and enhance opportunities for screening with soft landscaping.
- The gateway space is overlooked and enclosed by a row of 5 houses along its western edge. Footpaths are provided through the open space which connect with the existing footpath along the site's southern boundary.
- Additional areas of open space are provided throughout the site in the form of landscape buffers around the site edges. Whilst some of these areas will be affected by steep changes in levels, other parts will be publicly accessible and usable open space. This includes a large area of space to the north of the access road.
- Sustainable Urban drainage systems are embedded within the design of the scheme and include a naturalistic attenuation basin located in the north-west corner of the site, set within the development's open space.
- The layout ensures areas of public open space benefit from good surveillance by nearby houses.



Streets for All

Back of pavement, front of home

Urban Design Comments (JSA):

- The layout works well. The house frontages all face the street and there are no roads or spaces that are completely un-overlooked.



Response/Additional Considerations:

- The definition of public and private spaces is delivered through the use of urban blocks, the use of corner turning house types, as well as the use of boundary treatments such as hedgerows. Areas of public open space will be well defined by the adjoining streets vertical markers such as railings, walls or planting.
- Clear delineation is achieved between public and private space with careful space planning helping to avoid areas of 'leftover' space.
- Utility boxes will be discretely located and will be painted to match the house elevations or located on secondary elevations where possible.
- Waste storage will be provided for in private rear gardens with a direct path to the street. Collection points will be provided in appropriate locations along the managed drives and lanes.
- A minimum setback of 2m is provided between pavement and front of house (with most plots having increased setbacks) creating an areas of defensible space that delineates between public and private land and provides opportunities for personalising front gardens.



All streets within the development benefit from active surveillance by surrounding houses.

Appendix A: Local Vernacular Photo Study

New Build Developments

Local Precedent: Heathfield Nook (Barratt Homes)



Local Precedent: Highpeak Meadow (Barratt Homes)



Local Precedent: Otterhole Close (Taylor Wimpey)



New Build Developments

Local Precedent: College Hill Park (Persimmon)



Local Precedent: Hogshaw Drive



Local Precedent: Carr Road



Traditional Housing

Local Precedent: Barn Edge Road



Local Precedent: Market Street & South Avenue



Local Precedent: Rockfield Road



Traditional Housing

Local Precedent: Bennett Street



Local Precedent: London Road



Local Precedent: Torr Street

