# LAND TO THE SOUTH OF THORPE ROAD, WEELEY, ESSEX

# **Design & Access Statement**

Reserved Matters Planning Application including details of Layout, Scale, Appearance and Landscape following Outline Approval 19/00524/OUT, for 280 dwellings, a 2 form of entry primary school, 56 place early years nursery, up to 3000 Sq.M of office (B1) buildings on 1 hectare and associated ancillary buildings, drainage systems, boundary treatments and hard surfacing as well as public open space, vehicular access from Thorpe Road a pedestrian footbridge and the closure of existing level crossing and formal diversion of public footpath No 5 - Weeley, over the new railway bridge



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# **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

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This Design & Access Statement has been prepared to accompany a Reserved Matters Planning application seeking consent for Layout, Scale, Appearance and Landscape.

Outline planning consent, including details of Access was permitted for 280 dwellings, a 2 form of entry primary school, 56 place early years nursery, up to 3000 sqm of office (B1) buildings on 1 hectare and associated ancillary buildings, drainage systems, boundary treatments and hard surfacing as well as public open space, vehicular access from Thorpe Road a pedestrian footbridge and the closure of existing level crossing and formal diversion of public footpath No 5 - Weeley, over the new railway bridge (Ref: 19/00524/OUT).

Following the outline consent an application to discharge condition 4 has been approved. This sets the layout parameter that has informed the design proposal set forth (Ref: 21/01143/DISCON).

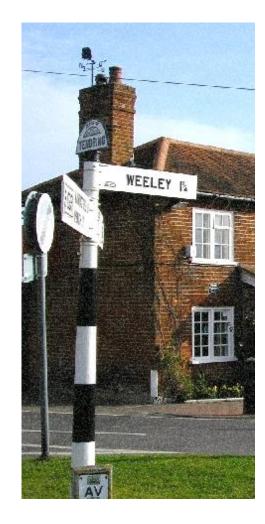
The scheme will compliment the residential built

environment that characterises Weeley, along with providing new office space and education facilities.

The vision for the site is to provide a high quality development comprising of a traditional housing scheme that caters for a variety of lifestyles as well as creating employment and educational facilities.

A proactive design led approach is necessary to secure this. The purpose of this document is to set out the design process and explain how the proposed development makes appropriate use of the opportunities presented, whilst at the same time addressing the physical and policy constraints which apply.

This document should be read in conjunction with documents as listed on the following page. This includes reports from specialist consultants which have established the baseline and informed the design process. Additionally, the accompanying Planning Statement sets out the relevant planning policy and the history of the project.



# **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

DRAWING REF	TITLE	DRAWING REF	TITLE
21/12/01	Site Location Plan	21/12/32	The Anna - Plans & Elevations
21/12/03	Proposed Block Plan	21/12/33	The Victoria - Plans & Elevations
21/12/04	Proposed Site Plan Parcel A	21/12/34	The Imogen - Plans & Elevations
21/12/05	Proposed Site Plan Parcel B	21/12/35	The Imogen (Variation) - Plans & Elevations
21/12/06	Proposed Site Plan Parcel C	21/12/36	The Willow - Plans & Elevations
21/12/07	Proposed Site Plan Parcel D	21/12/37	The Berkeley - Plans & Elevations
21/12/08	Open Market Housing Key Plan	21/12/38	The Braithwaite - Plans & Elevations
21/12/09	Affordable Housing Key Plan	21/12/39	Proposed Outbuildings
21/12/10	House Type A & B	21/12/40	Proposed Office Unit A Floor Plans
21/12/11	House Type C & D	21/12/41	Proposed Office Unit A Elevations
21/12/12	House Type E	21/12/42	Proposed Office Unit B Floor Plans
21/12/13	House Type F	21/12/43	Proposed Office Unit B Elevations
21/12/14	House Type G	21/12/44	Proposed Office Unit C Floor Plans
21/12/15	House Type H	21/12/45	Proposed Office Unit C Elevations
21/12/16	House Type J	21/12/46	Proposed Site Sections A & B
21/12/17	House Type J (Variation)	21/12/47	Proposed Site Sections C & D
21/12/18	House Type K	21/12/48	Proposed Site Section E
21/12/19	The Chloe - Plans & Elevations	21/12/49	Accommodation Schedule
21/12/20	The Bettina - Plans & Elevations	21/12/51	Proposed Parking Plan
21/12/21	The Cecilia - Plans & Elevations	21/12/52	Waste & Recycling Collection Plan
21/12/22	The Darcey - Plans & Elevations	21/12/53	Boundary Treatment Plan
21/12/23	The Olivia - Plans & Elevations	21/12/54	Proposed Materials Plan
21/12/24	The Olivia (Variation) - Plans & Elevations	21/12/55	Proposed Materials Schedule
21/12/25	The Georgia - Plans & Elevations	21/12/56	Existing Buildings (Sheet 1 of 2)
21/12/26	The Damask - Plans & Elevations	21/12/57	Existing Buildings (Sheet 2 of 2)
21/12/27	The Damask (Variation) - Plans & Elevations	21/12/58	Design & Access Statement
21/12/28	The Amelia - Plans & Elevations	21/12/60	Existing Block Plan
21/12/29	The Eleanor - Plans & Elevations	21/12/61	Demolition Plan
21/12/30	The Alexander - Plans & Elevations	21/12/62	External Works Material Plan
21/12/31	The Ruby - Plans & Elevations	21/12/63	The Braithwaite (Weeley) – Plans & Elevations

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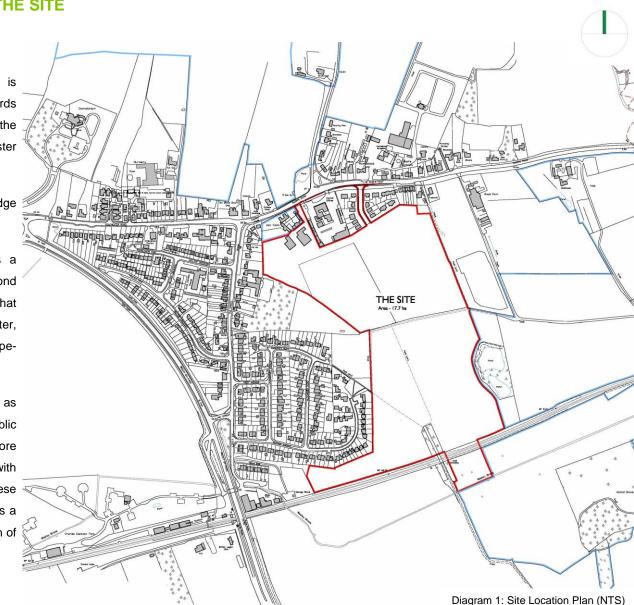
#### 2.1 Site Location

Weeley is located within Tendring District and is served by the main roads Thorpe Road (towards Frinton/Walton), Clacton Road (B1441 to Clacton), the Weeley bypass (A133 to Clacton) and Colchester Road (A133 to Colchester).

The site itself is located adjacent to the eastern edge of the village as shown in red on diagram 1 (right).

The village has a railway station that provides a service from Clacton/Walton to Colchester and beyond to London. There are also numerous bus services that link to nearby settlements (105/107 to Colchester, 2/76/100 to Clacton, 87C to Brightlingsea, 115 Thorpe-le-Soken, and 702 to Frinton).

The village has various services and facilities, such as a primary school, a holiday park, the Black Boy public house, a bakery and a convenience shop. Furthermore Weeley Heath is located nearby to the south with additional services and facilities. In recognition of these services and other factors, Weeley is designated as a Rural Service Centre in the 2017 Publication version of the Tendring Local Plan.



#### 2.2 Description Of The Site

The application site extends to approximately 17.7 hectares. The site currently comprises of open farmland and some farm buildings associated with Ash Farmhouse, a Grade II listed property. Ash Farmhouse resides outside of the application site.

There are two main access points into the site. The main vehicular access will be taken through the recently constructed Barleyfield Drive, a small development of 20 traditional residential dwellings constructed by Rose Builders. A secondary farm access is located to the north west of the site off of Thorpe Road. Additional pedestrian access points are located along the eastern, southern and western boundaries via the Public Right of Way (PRoW) network.

Vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access into the site was approved at Outline stage and forms a basis of the proposed site layout.

There is a gentle slope across the site from Thorpe Road in the north towards Weeley Brook in the south. The PRoW (no.182) crosses east to west through the centre of the site before turning south and splitting to cross the railway line and entering St Andrews Road.

In general the northern accesses bound the farm yard of Ash Farm, the rear of Tendring District Council offices and the properties of Barleyfield Drive.

The eastern boundary is lined with hedgerows and trees with glimpse views to the equestrian facilities and ponds of Freelands and Brook Farm beyond.

The southern boundary is divided from the Railway line by a small copse/woodland and a fence.

The western boundary abuts fences associated with the neighbouring properties.

Weeley has an eclectic mix of residential properties ranging is size and style. Beyond the Barleyfield development, Thorpe Road is characterised by terrace cottages and large houses.

The Street, to the east, continues the varied range with bungalows, chalet bungalows and houses built over various periods of time. The Street gives access to a 1970s development of houses and bungalows which backs on to the application site. This estate has recently been extended with the St. Andrews Close development providing 14 traditional residential dwellings.

A ditch runs from west to east approximately through the centre of the site. From here the ditch ultimately discharges to Holland Brook, close to where it joins Weeley Brook, to the east of the site. There are ditches running southwards, either side of the track that aligns with the railway crossing point.

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# 2.3 Site Photographs



Diagram 2: Aerial Image and Site Photos

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### 3.1 Weeley Character Analysis

The origins of Weeley lie in the heart of the village which has expanded over time. The 1930's, 50s and 90s evolution of the village can been seen, however the character has in many places been blurred with small developments, replacement dwellings and numerous extensions been built to suit individual taste. And as such the stepping stones in time are not as defined as other towns or villages. The images on this page are a selection of dwellings from the village that help define its character. Inspiration should be drawn from local precedent to form the design proposal.















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#### 3.2 Constraints & Opportunities

#### <u>CONSTRAINTS</u>

The development needs to have regard to the opportunities and constraints set out during the Outline application in which the overall principle and access were approved. The Illustrative Masterplan set forth a broad parameter on which to base the final site layout. In particular this set the areas within the site for Commercial, Education, Residential use classes along with Public Open Space (POS) and a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS).

Following the Outline consent an application (21/001143/DISCON) to discharge Condition 4 (Layout and Phasing Plan) was submitted and approved. The plan (diagram 5, page 17) forms the parameter for the design layout along with identifying the location of public open space and the integration of Affordable Housing.

The prospective layout plan needs to take into account the constraints and opportunities that are particular to the site and its immediate context. The boundary treatment and the relationship with the adjacent built form and private amenity space needs careful consideration particularly with the Grade II Listed Ash Farmhouse.

The vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access was approved at outline stage and forms a basis of how the site should be configured. The PRoW network within the site needs to be recognised and incorporated into the development.

A full arboriculture assessment has been undertaken at an early stage of the design process to inform the potential layout options from the outset.

Overhead power cables run across the site in various directions. These need to be diverted to accommodate the scheme layout.

#### **OPPORTUNITIES**

The proposal affords the opportunity to realise the potential of the site as a complimentary part of the surrounding area. To achieve this it is necessary to refresh the sites identity. Key to this would be to identify specific areas where soft landscaping and open space can be provided to inform the location of new built form. In addition existing hedge rows and trees to the site boundaries should be retained and where possible provide new planting to enhance the ecological value of the site.

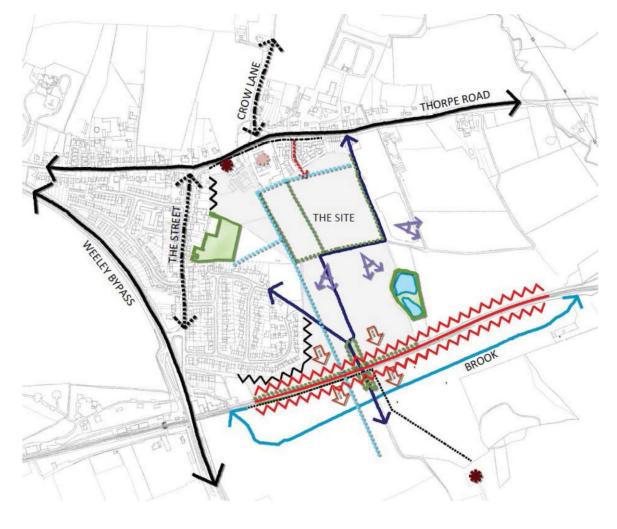
This is a clear opportunity to provide an attractive traditional housing development that reflects the urban pattern and character of Weeley.

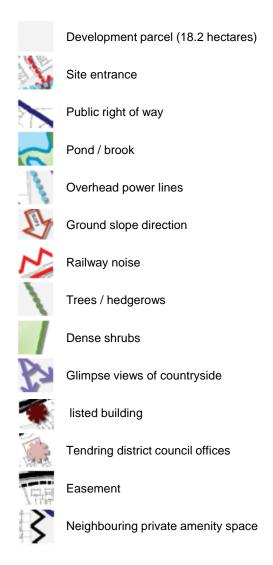
The development must include a SuDS scheme that, along with the POS, incorporates ecological mitigation and biodiversity enhancement areas.

The diagram on the following page visually identifies the locations where built form can harmonise with the surrounding built form and countryside.

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### 3.3 Constraints & Opportunities Plan





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Diagram 3: Constraints & Opportunities Plan

#### 4.1 Design Concept

The overarching principles for the scheme masterplan have evolved in response to the findings of the site and context analysis. These centre upon:

- Provision of employment buildings on serviced plots that have flexibility to accommodate small, medium or large companies
- Locate a 2.1 hectare parcel of land for a new education facility
- Adhere to the 'General Layout and Phasing Plan' (21x12x02 (Rev C) approved by discharge of Condition 4 of the Outline approval
- High quality distinctive development complimenting the character of Weeley
- New dwellings to cater for a variety of living requirements, including Affordable Housing, first time buyers, family homes and people looking to downsize
- Incorporate an attractive on site sustainable drainage system integrated into the development

- Respond to the arboricultural and landscape constraints in terms of layout, form and height while retaining and enhancing planting to boundaries
- Provide appropriate ecological mitigation / enhancement where possible to include new areas of soft landscaping and open space
- Create pedestrian and cycle connections and links within the site and to the surrounding network beyond
- Incorporate a Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP) within the heart of the development
- Adoption of a traditional design philosophy with bespoke detailing to compliment the village setting
- Respond to the appropriate planning policies and the Essex Design Guide

The concept has been developed through a number of sketch stages to refine the approach and to establish a detailed masterplan as seen in the following sections.

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#### 4.2 Site Access

Access to the site was approved at the Outline stage and remains the same for this Reserved Matters application. This included the vehicular and pedestrian access through Barleyfield Drive and the pedestrian / cycle path to the west of the Tendering District Council Offices.

The approved Access Arrangement Plan (diagram 4, right) forms the basis of the proposed overall Masterplan.

Within the site the roads are compliant with ECC Highways standards. As defined in the ECC Highways Technical Manual the main 'Link' road measure 6.75m wide with a 2m footpath and a 3.5m foot/cycle path either side. Further into the site the 'Access' roads will measure 5.5m wide with two 2m wide footpaths either side. The 'Minor Access' roads are to be 6.0m wide.

Where appropriate the site will have Size 3 and Size 5 turning heads. This results in larger vehicles, such as fire engines or refuse collection trucks being able to turn around within the site and exit in a forward gear.

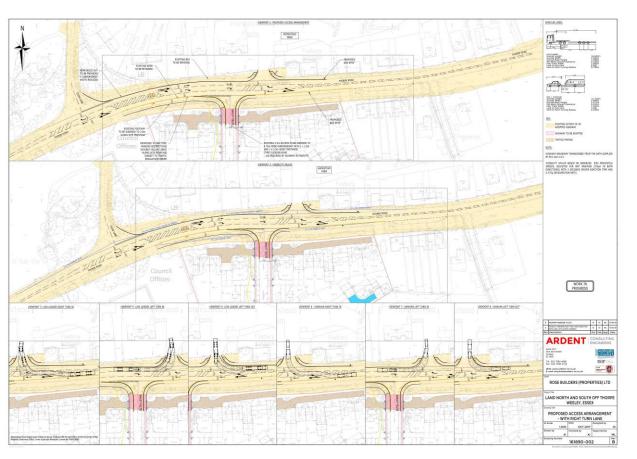


Diagram 4: Proposed Site Layout

#### 4.3 Land Use & Quantum

Planning Use Class and Quantum has been set at the Outline Stage and includes 280 residential dwellings (C3), a 2 Form of Entry primary school, 56 place early years nursery, up to 3000 Sq.M of office (B1) buildings and associated ancillary buildings.

Adhering to the constraints of the site a developable area of 10.9 hectares has been proposed for residential dwellings. This discounts the commercial use, school land and public realm. Establishing 280 dwellings on the 10.9 hectares results in circa 25 dwellings per hectare (dph). This compliments the pattern of surrounding development that characterises the built form of Weeley and typifies an Essex village setting.

In accordance with Tendring District Council's planning policy, 30% of the units will be available for Affordable Housing. This will provide 84 much needed dwellings for the village and the wider district.

Tables 1 and 2 (right) summarise the total number of proposed units, level of accommodation and how they split between tenure.

ТҮРЕ	AMOUNT AFFORDABLE HOUSING	AMOUNT OPEN MARKET
1 Bed Flat	13	
2 Bed Flat	5	
2 Bed Bungalow	2	10
2 Bed House	40	34
3 Bed House	23	105
4 Bed House	1	47
TOTAL	84	196

Table 1: Schedule of Accommodation (Open Market and Affordable Housing)

ТҮРЕ	TOTAL AMOUNT (Affordable Housing & Open Market)	OVERALL PERCENTAGE (%)
1 Bed Units	13	5
2 Bed Units	91	32
3 Bed Units	128	45
4 Bed Units	48	18
TOTAL	280	100

Table 2: Dwelling type Percentage Mix

### 4.4 Layout & Phasing

Following the Outline consent an application (21/001143/DISCON) was made to discharge *Condition 4 (Layout and Phasing Plan).* 

The General Layout and Phasing Plan, ref; 21/12/02c, (right) was submitted and approved by Tendering District Council. This plan sets the overall parameter which the final masterplan is based upon.

The plan also demonstrates the approximate location of Affordable Housing and how it can integrate evenly across the site in clusters of no more than ten units.





#### 4.5 Proposed Masterplan

The final site layout has been carefully considered following the detailed site analysis and responds to the constraints set out in Section 3.0. The site analysis gives opportunity to incorporate a series of development features that are sensitive to the context of the area, creating varied, articulated and picturesque street scenes that seeks to enhance the visual value of the surrounding built form.

The scheme incorporates a series of features that have been highlighted in the following sections, including cycle and pedestrian links, office space, areas of landscaped Public Open Space and Affordable Housing.



#### 4.6 Layout

As part of an environmentally conscious scheme specialists in the fields of ecology, transportation, landscape visual impact, arboriculture and surface water drainage have all been appointed to aid in producing the final masterplan.

The design concept follows a simple yet logical layout that maximizes the potential of the site. The scheme has been designed to have varied and well articulated tree lined street scenes. Throughout the development pockets of green Public Open Space (POS) provide a soft break in the street scape. This open space has a multi purpose opportunity to create a sense of openness, a sense of place, public amenity space and areas where biodiversity can flourish.

The scheme focuses on small mews courts and private drives branching off the main spine road. To avoid repetition each branch has a mix of house types. The main spine road through the site will be lined on one side with a grassed verge and a row of trees and the other, a SuDS system in the form of a French drain, essentially a grassed depression that secures the controlled flow of surface water. These landscape features create healthy and spacious avenues that in turn increases the biodiversity value of the site.

New dwellings front onto the main road to ensure active street frontage. Feature buildings are located at sensitive locations throughout the development. Specifically designed corner plots have been articulated to be double fronted and care has been taken to provide feature buildings as an end stop to each road.

Consistent with the Outline planning consent the southern section of the site is a large area of Public Open Space (POS) for recreation purpose, areas of biodiversity enhancement and a surface water attenuation basin. New dwellings in this region face out onto the POS to provide active street frontage and passive surveillance.

The proposed Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP) has been located centrally in the development to benefit each of the new residents and the wider community. The LEAP measures 400 Sq.M and is delineated by an estate railing to allow children to play in a safe environment.

The site layout has been carefully designed to blend the development into the urban and rural context. Part of this consideration is to minimise the impact upon the existing properties to the north and west. Bungalows have been sensitively located in key areas to minimise the impact on neighbouring residents.

The proposed scheme ensures a minimum of 25m back to back distance between properties. In addition windows have been sensitively located to restrict any overlooking of private amenity space.

The large swales safely attenuate surface water within the site. The bespoke system controls the flow and outfall of any excess surface water into the existing watercourse.

The proposed office complex to the north west of the site is designed to follow a courtyard formation consisting of 3 two storey buildings. Car parking has been spread evenly around the site to cater for each unit. Where possible new tree and hedge planting has been provided to create a soft edge to the working environment.

#### 4.7 Pedestrian & Cycle Routes

The scheme proposal affords the opportunity to;

- provide pedestrian and cycle paths through the site connecting the new and neighbouring residents;
- create new paths set within a picturesque tree lined setting to encourage sustainable travel methods. The cycle and footpaths meet the standards set within The Essex Design Guide and Highways Technical Manual;
- ensure tactile paving is provided where necessary;
- link the new paths to the PRoW network within and outside of the development;
- provide a footpath connecting the site to the PRoW system to the south over a new footbridge for safe and accessible route over the railway line

# <u>KEY</u>

Proposed Cycle / Footpath
Proposed Footpath
Public Right of Way
Existing Footpath



# 4.8 Private Amenity Space

To provide a healthy living environment for each of the new occupants the development provides;

- generous private rear garden space
- large spaces between buildings;
- 25m 'back to back' distance exceeding the EDG minimum standards;
- opportunity for new areas of planting;
- ample front gardens for attractive street frontage.



#### 4.9 Landscaped Community

The landscaped setting prides the opportunity for;

- the creation of 2.85 hectares of new public open space, (16% of the overall 18.2 Hectares);
- · areas of meadow and biodiversity enhancement
- maintaining the existing trees and hedgerows that define the site boundaries, and;
- where possible providing new trees and hedgerows;
- the enhancement of the small copse of trees along the southern boundary;
- a new community Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP) located centrally to the development to benefit new and neighbouring residents;
- attractive tree lined streets through out the development, and;
- a SuDS scheme that doubles as an attractive feature in the form of landscaped swales and French Drains



#### 4.10 Proposed Offices

FRONT ELEVATION

GROUND FLOOR PLAN

The scheme proposes circa 2600 Sq.M of (B1) Office Space. The design layout forms three barn style units in a courtyard formation. The design;

- ensures cycle and vehicle parking meets the requirements of the 2009, ECC Parking Standards;
- provides external soft landscaped amenity areas;
- creates flexible working space to attract small, medium or large companies.





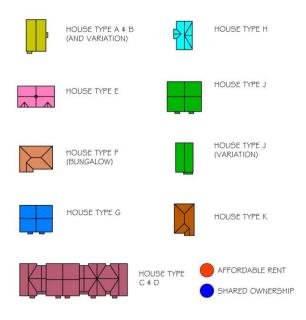
Floor Plans & Elevation of Unit A

#### 4.11 Integrated Affordable Housing

The development as a whole provides 30% of the total development as Affordable Houses, therefore 84 new homes. Key to creating a balanced community is to spread the Affordable Housing evenly throughout the development in small pockets of no more than ten units.

21 units (25% of the Affordable Housing Provision) are to be Shared Ownership and tailored to provide a mix of unit sizes that meets local needs

#### **KEY: AFFORDABLE**





#### 4.12 Open Market Housing

**KEY: OPEN MARKET** 

THE ALEXANDER

(CHALET)

THE AMELIA

THE BERKELEY

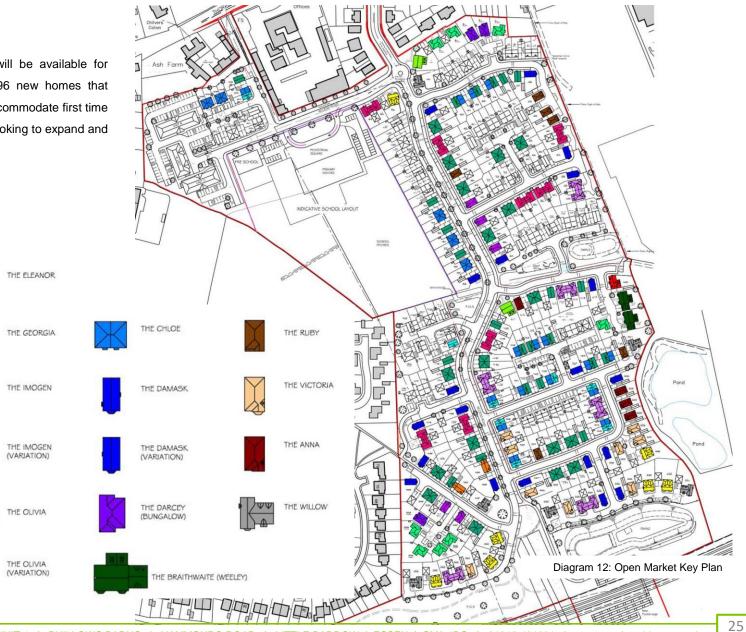
THE BRAITHWAITE

THE CECILIA (BUNGALOW)

THE BETTINA

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70% of the total development will be available for private sale. This equates to 196 new homes that offer a mix of dwelling sizes to accommodate first time buyers, young families, families looking to expand and people looking to downsize.



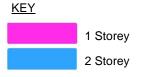
#### 4.13 Scale

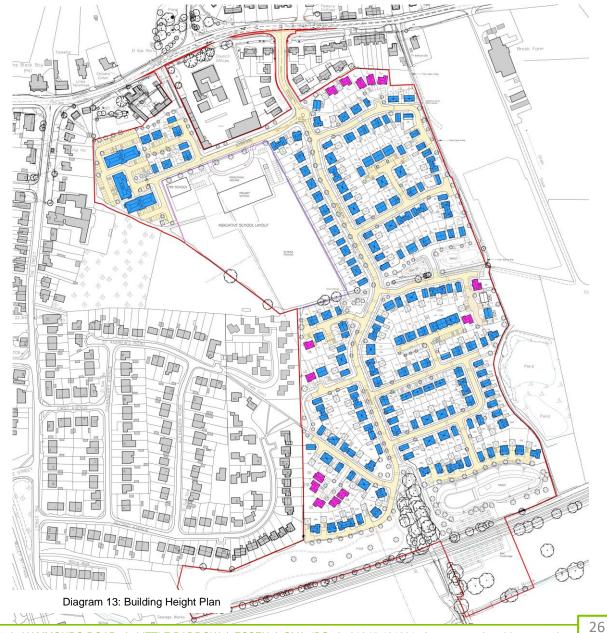
The proposed dwelling houses provide a variety of family homes, including 1, 2, 3 and 4 bed accommodation.

It is the intention for the development to complement the surrounding area with 1 and 2 storey units ranging between 6.1m and 9.3 metres in height, thus creating an interesting and varied roof scape.

Diagram 13 (right) shows how single and two storey units have been organised across the site. Where necessary bungalows have been positioned close to neighbouring properties associated amenity space.

Each unit complies with the '*Technical housing* standards – nationally described space standard' to provide a comfortable living arrangement.





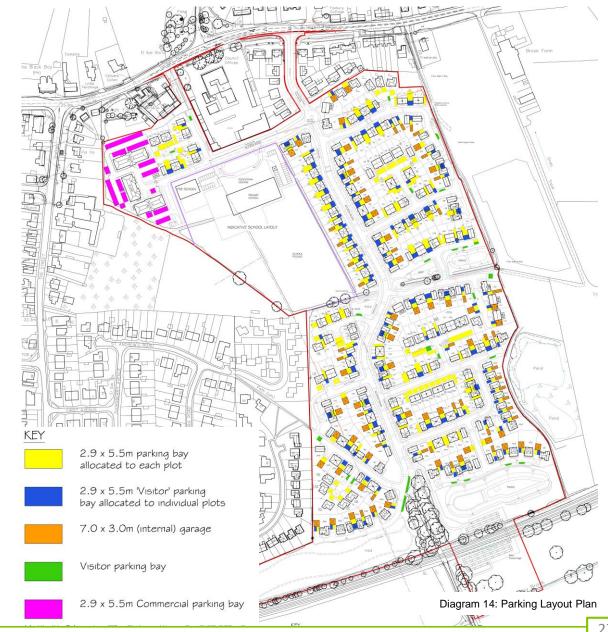
#### 4.14 Vehicle Parking

Each unit will meet the minimum requirements of the *ECC Highways, Parking Standards: Design and Good Practice (2009).* This will encourage on plot parking to help keep the streetscape clear of vehicles.

Generally residential parking bays will measure 2.9 x 5.5m in accordance with the standards. Each unit has the ability to expand at least one parking space to 3.3m wide if required at a later date.

As demonstrated on diagram 14 (right) each house will benefit from a minimum of two on plot spaces, however where possible a significant proportion of units benefit from an extra on plot parking bay to provide a private visitor space. Of the units without a visitor space a 25% provision of visitor bays are provided and spread evenly throughout the development.

Many plots have garages with a minimum internal dimension of 7m x 3m. This allows for storage of two bicycles. Plots without garages each have a separate on plot timber frame storage facility for the safe keeping of two bicycles. Flats will have a secure communal cycle storage facility within easy reach of the associated building.



#### 4.15 Appearance

The design of the proposed dwellings take inspiration from the traditional architecture seen in and around Weeley.

The principle aim would be to continue the traditional typology of Barleyfield Drive into the development site.

To compliment the character of the village a mixture of high quality building materials and design features that reflect many of the existing buildings will be incorporated in to this development.

Materials will be from a traditional palette of plain roof tiles, pan tiles, natural slate, facing brickwork, render, and horizontal weather boarding.

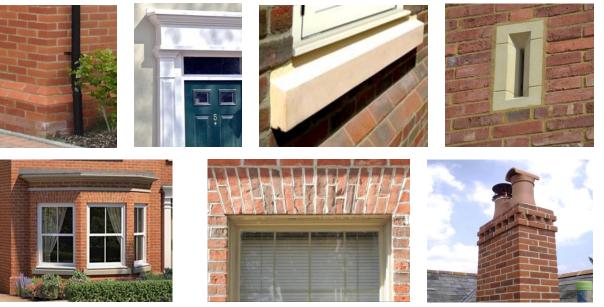
As with the majority of Weeley the proposed dwellings will include bespoke details such as brick plinths, ornate porches, casement and sliding sash windows, bay windows, flat gauge brick arches, dentil brick bands, detailed brick chimneys and detailed eaves to produce an attractive village scene.

Further detail on the specific appearance and design of each individual dwelling is contained within the accompanying house type plans.

#### MATERIAL PALETTE



# ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL



### 4.16 Proposed Street Scenes

KEY



STREET SCENE B-B

Diagram 15: Street Scenes A-A & B-B



# 4.16 Proposed Street Scenes



STREET SCENE C-C



Diagram 16: Street Scene C-C

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4.16 Proposed Street Scenes



STREET SCENE D-D



Diagram 17: Street Scene D-D

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# 4.16 Proposed Street Scenes



STREET SCENE E-E



Diagram 18: Street Scene E-E

#### 5.1 Landscape

A landscape masterplan has been produced to inform the proposed layout and demonstrate how the development sits within its edge of settlement context.

The design has been led by the Strategic Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) submitted with the Outline application which highlights the areas where built form can be located to harmonise with the surrounding countryside.

The Proposed Landscape Masterplan (diagram 19 and 20) highlights where new pockets of open space can be sensitively designed with new planting.

An important feature of the development is the boundary treatment. The existing hedgerows will be maintained and enhanced to provide additional screening of the development and increase the biodiversity value of the site.



Diagram 19: Northern half of the Proposed Landscape Masterplan

Ecological habitat; ; tussocky meado with scattered scrub throughout for

habitat rich area. Refer to Ecological

Low key mown footpaths as part of

circular walking route within the site

Existing hedgerows retained Existing woodland retained and managed. Footpath link retained and redirected to proposed bridge for

Δ

5

6

Report

crossing point

### 5.1 Landscape

Within the heart of the scheme is a Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP) set within a parcel of open space. The design of this area is led by the landscaping strategy to ensure the area is welcoming and useable for the residents.

This overall Landscape Masterplan demonstrates how a pleasant development can be achieved to encourage a healthy lifestyle for the occupants.

The landscape design focuses upon a duel function of creating a pleasant environment while providing a natural boundary and screening to individual plots.



crossing point



# **6.0 CONCLUSION**

# **6.0 CONCLUSION**

This Design & Access Statement has been prepared to accompany a Reserved Matters application by Rose Builders for a residential, commercial and education development on the site south of Barleyfield Drive.

The analysis shows how the design process has evolved from the Outline planning approval to ensure the delivery of proposals which relate directly to the site's physical, social and environmental context. This includes the constraints and opportunities that have been identified.

This has led to the preparation of a proposed site plan that demonstrates a logical layout, scale and quantum of development set within a soft landscaped setting.

In conclusion it is considered that the proposals constitute a sustainable and responsive design which warrant support through the planning process.