



# Former Swallowfield Nursery, Mannings Heath

## Consultation Statement

June 2020



## Contacts



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# Introduction

## Overview

This consultation document seeks to explore the development opportunities for the site at Former Swallowfield Nursery, Church Road, Mannings Heath. The site was included in the adopted Neighbourhood Plan and an outline planning permission was granted in July 2017 showing four large detached houses. Nuthurst Parish Council objected to the application, requesting that at least some of the houses be split to provide smaller dwellings.

## Site Location

The application site is included within the built up boundary of Mannings Heath. The boundary of the built up area lines the western and southern site boundaries.

The site is located in a sustainable location, within the village of Mannings Heath and approximately 2.3 miles to the south-east of Horsham Town Centre.



Site Location Plan



# The Site

## Site Description & Context

The application site currently comprises a field, located within the built up area of Mannings Heath. There are some mature trees within the site, a number of which are protected under Tree Preservation Orders along the western site boundary. Access to the site is via a private road off Church Road to the north-west. The private road extends past the site to the north and west while also providing access to Swallowfield to the south. An existing pond is located in the north-western corner of the site and will be retained as part of these development proposals.

The site is surrounded by residential built form to the north, north-east and south. The character and appearance of dwellings in the surrounding area is varied. The area to the north of the site is densely built up of detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellings. Buildings are predominantly set back from the road with off street parking to the front. Some buildings along Church Road front onto the road with on street parking visible. Buildings in the local area are constructed out of a range of materials including brick, hanging tile and timber panelling with stone and brick detailing.



Terrace on Church Road



Site location plan showing surrounding context



Dwellings on Lime Kiln



Dwelling on Swallowfield Close



Dwellings on Winterpit Close



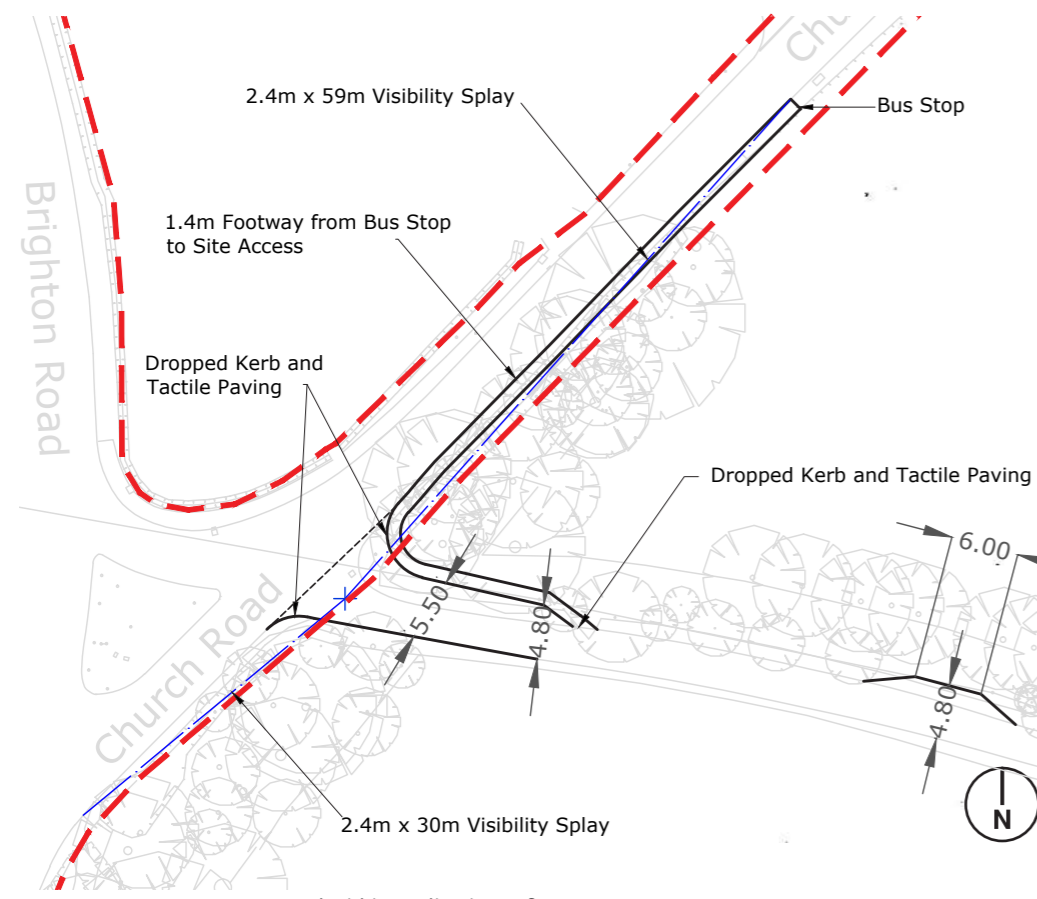
# Approved Application

## Overview

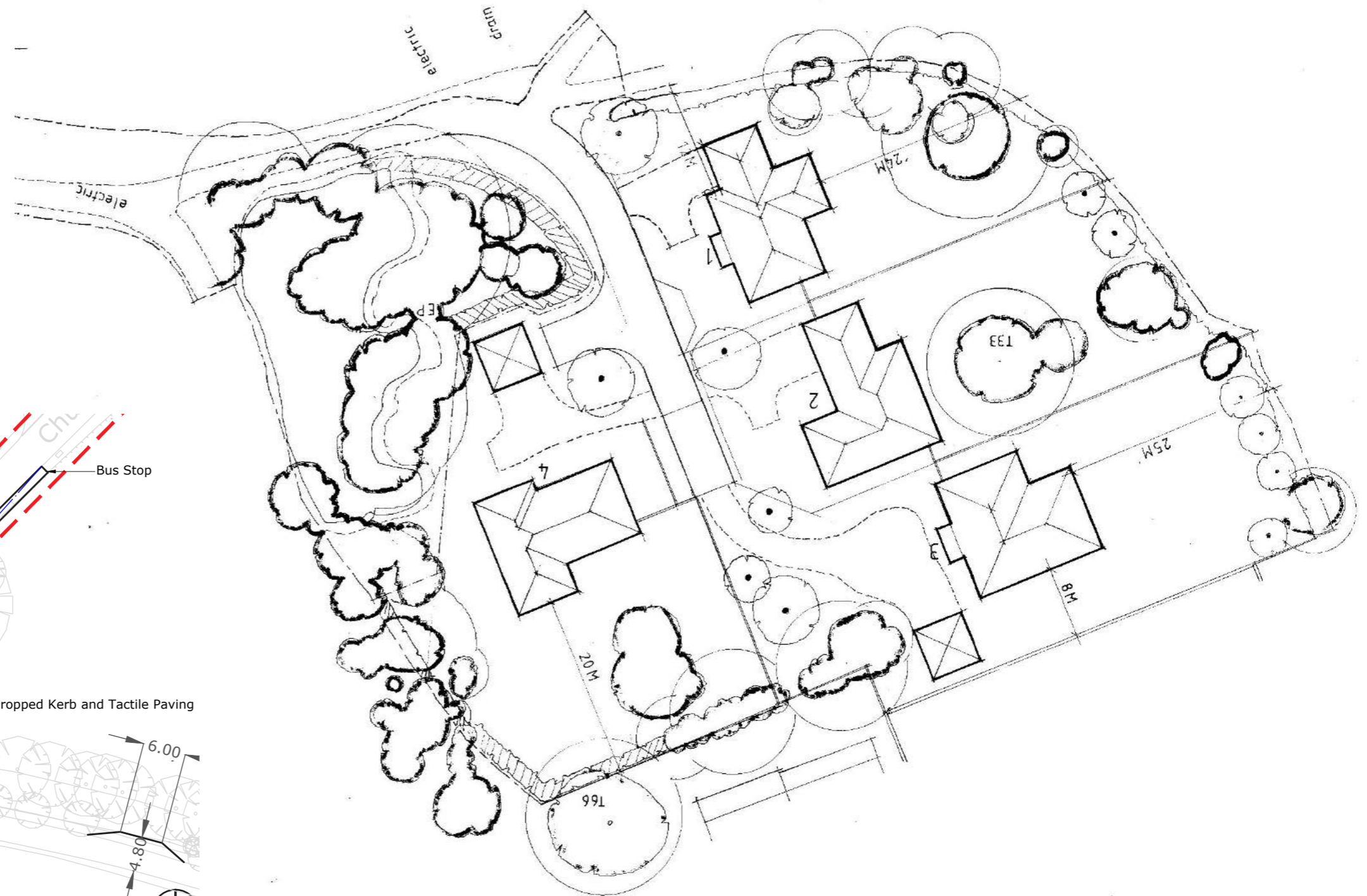
An outline application for the construction of 4 dwellings within the site was approved by the Council in July 2017 (Ref: DC/17/1158). The application received a number of objections from local residents and also received negative comments from the Parish Council and Housing Officer.

The application included details of vehicular access arrangements from Church Road which would be included in any further detailed application within the site.

Given the approval of these large executive homes, which we calculate to equate to 1,270m<sup>2</sup> of floorspace, we wanted to explore ways that this area could be better divided to provide a development which had a stronger design narrative and also improved the scheme in terms of local housing need and the aspirations of the neighbourhood plan. There is opportunity to provide a scheme that sits better in the context and offers a wider range of housing choice.



Access arrangements approved within application Ref: DC/17/1158.



Site Layout submitted with application Ref: DC/17/1158.



# Design Proposals

## Overview

This consultation document has been prepared to illustrate our alternative approach to the site's development possibilities in comparison with the existing outline consent and to assist a dialogue with the Parish Council. The proposed plans show the construction of a broad mix of 9 dwellings, which have been designed to respect the Gross Internal Areas of the approved built form. The proposal offers an increased mix and number of units in a "farmyard" arrangement, appropriate for the semi-rural location and responds to the comments received in response to the approved application on site.

## Comparison with Permitted Outline Scheme

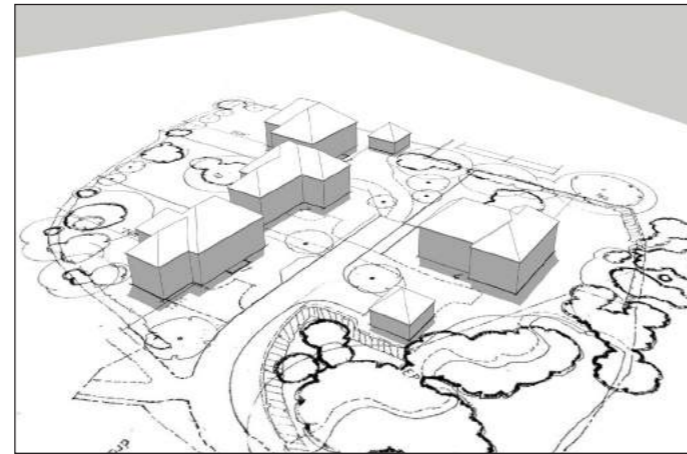
This page provides a visual massing comparison of the permitted and proposed schemes viewed in 3D from three angles. The following points are clearly demonstrated;

- The permitted scheme has four large detached family houses within a suburban cul-de-sac.
- The proposed scheme also comprises of four principle buildings but is considerably more compact and focused on a shared courtyard, and therefore encroaches less on the site boundary and surrounding buildings.
- The proposed scheme comprises 9 no. houses of mixed size and type.
- The proposed scheme has a range of building forms, derived from the Courtyard Farmstead Type, including detached (farm) houses, terraced cottages, a long timber barn and open car barns.
- The proposed scheme is more fitting to its semi-rural location.

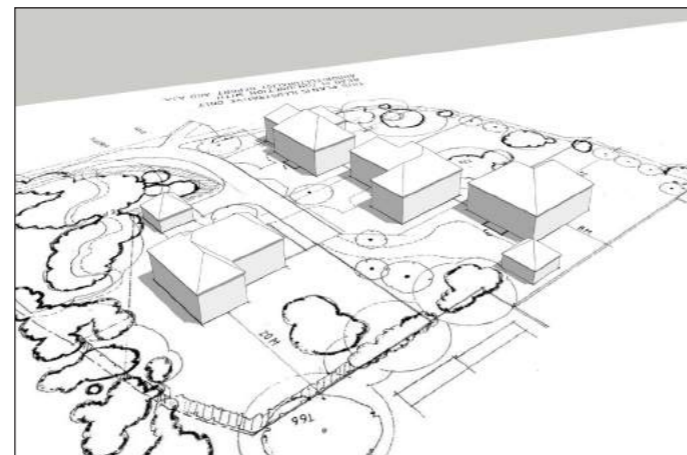
Permitted scheme ref. DC/17/1158 granted outline approval in September 2018. The approval comprised 4 no. large detached family houses with a total internal floor area of 1270 m<sup>2</sup> or 13,672 ft<sup>2</sup>.

By comparison, the proposed scheme comprises 9 no. units of mixed sizes and types with a total internal area of 1210 m<sup>2</sup> or 13,020 ft<sup>2</sup>. Clearly, the proposed scheme is both smaller and has a more varied mix of house types, in line with local housing need as set out in the SHMA.

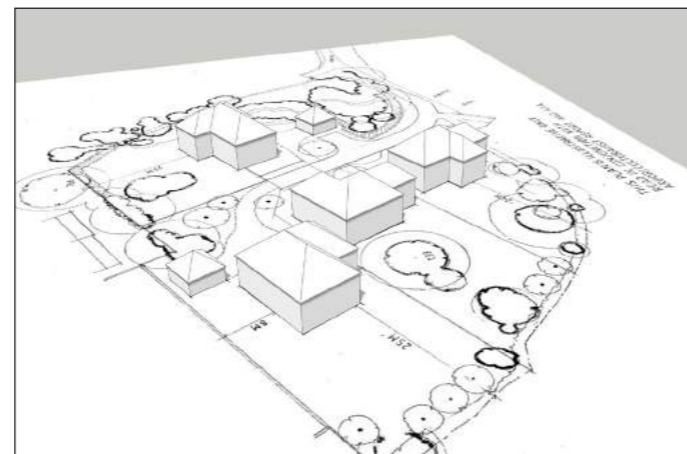
## Approved Scheme



View from the north west



View from the south west



View from the south east

## Proposed Scheme



## Overlay



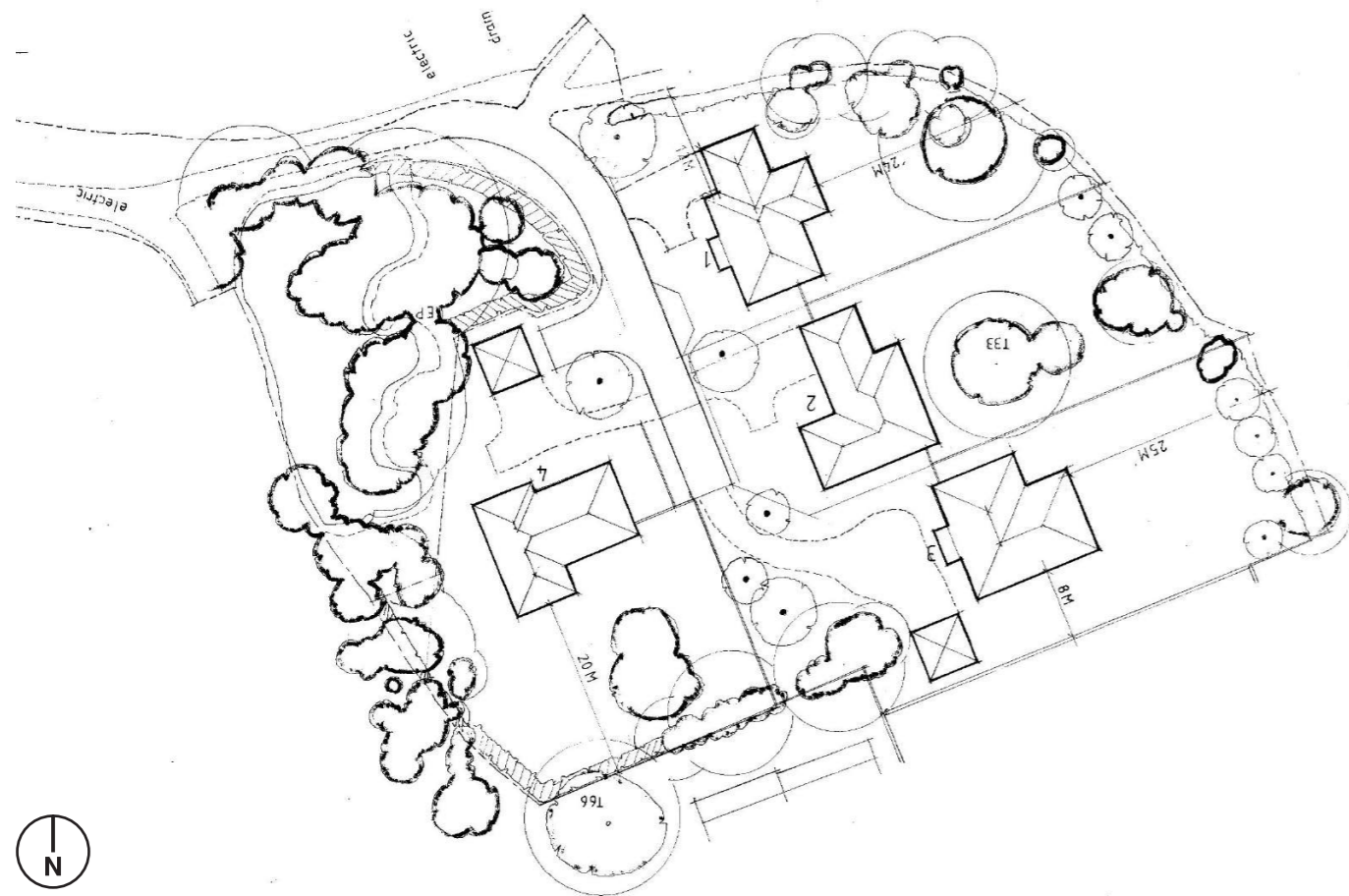


# Design Proposals

## Massing

Like the outline consent, the proposed scheme involves four principle buildings. Two of these are smaller and two larger than the outline permission but the overall massing of the buildings is slightly less than was previously shown. The two larger buildings are split into smaller dwellings and the other two provide smaller detached houses. Unlike the previous scheme, the buildings are arranged to form a central courtyard which is considerably more compact, and as such encroaches less on the site boundary and surrounding buildings. The buildings include a range of forms, derived from the Courtyard Farmstead Type, including detached (farm) houses, terraced cottages, a long timber barn and open car barns.

The proposed scheme is more fitting to its semi-rural location.



Site Layout submitted with application Ref: DC/17/1158.



Proposed Site Layout



# Design Proposals

## Layout

The submitted plans comprise a farm grouping of 9 dwellings arranged around a central courtyard. The proposal has been designed in the Sussex Vernacular based on the concept of the courtyard farm.

Highway access is unchanged from the approved consent via the existing lane which travels north to a junction with Church Road. This then leads to Brighton Road (A281) and wider connections into the road network. The proposal includes a widened junction with the end of the lane, as approved application drawing 140235-01.

Parking for houses 1-7 is within and in front of allocated car barns. Plot 9 has a single garage and two driveway spaces. Plot 8 is served by a double garage and two driveway spaces. Two visitor parking spaces are provided at the entrance to the courtyard.

Surface water drainage is drained to the pond which will be adapted as a SUDS retention pond subject to further technical design work.



Proposed Site Layout



# Design Proposals

## Appearance

- The proposed buildings have been designed to reflect the local rural character and the traditional pattern of the Courtyard Farmstead.
- The building types and materials are as follows;
- Plots 1 to 4 – A timber ‘threshing barn’ with a hipped, plain tiled roof and projecting front bay (former loading doors). A slate roofed car barn is provided on the gable end.
- Plots 5 to 7 – Mixed terrace of ‘farm’ type cottages, including linking car barn/s and low pitch single storey rear extensions. The dwellings are designed with gables and dormers and set behind low fencing. The materials include mottled brickwork with contrasting red details, tile hanging and plain roof tiles with slates to house 5 and the low pitch extensions. Brick chimneys are provided at each end of the terrace.
- Plots 8 and 9 – Two detached houses aligned and grouped to form the west end of the courtyard. Both plots have a mixture of single and 1.5 storey extensions, in the manner of farm buildings. Plot 9 is proposed with mottle brickwork and plain tile, like cottages 5 to 7, and the largest dwelling, Plot 8 is to be constructed with brickwork with flat arches, sash windows and slate roof. This dwelling has been designed as the focal point of the grouping.
- Detached car barn – This has been designed in the manner of a converted cart shed with plain tile roofing.

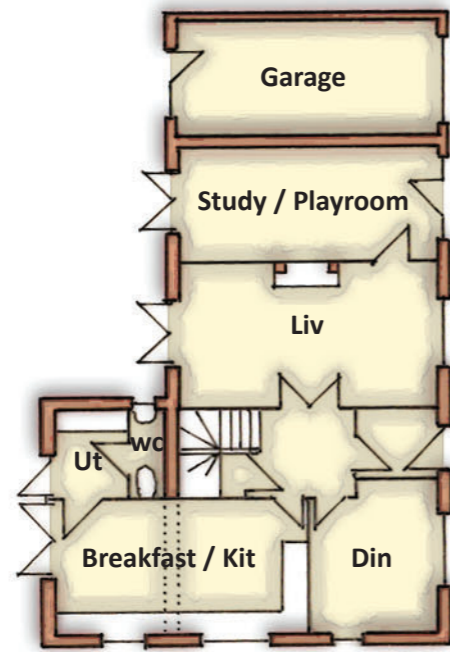


Proposed Coloured Perspective

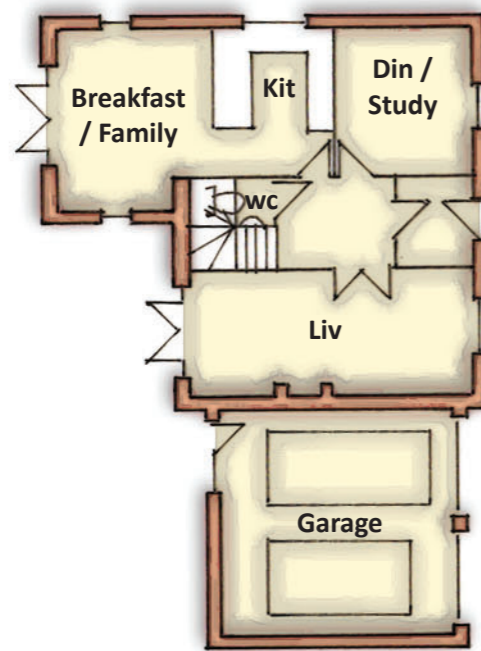


# Design Proposals

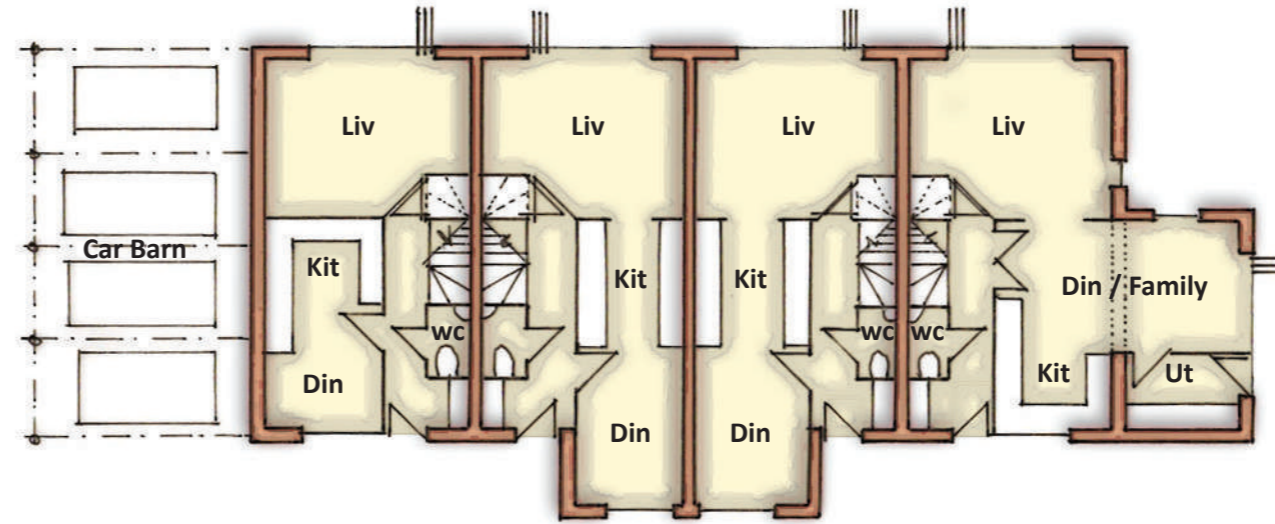
## Proposed Ground Floor Plans



9



8

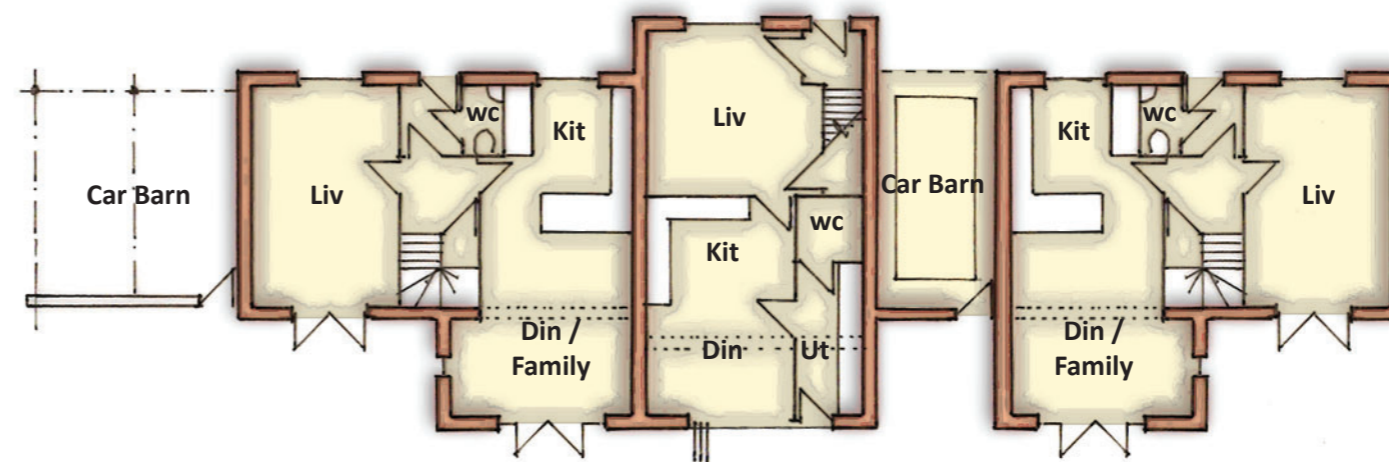


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# Policy Framework

## Overview

Applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The statutory development plan for this area is the Horsham District Framework, the Nuthurst Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2015 - 2031 and relevant Local and National Planning Guidance 2015.

## National Planning Policy Framework 2019

The NPPF was published in 2012 and updated in July 2018 and February 2019. The document sets out national guidance relating to design. Paragraph 124 states the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Paragraph 127 explains that planning decisions should aim to ensure that developments:

- a) *function well and add to the overall quality of the area over their lifetime;*
- b) *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- c) *are sympathetic to local character and history;*
- d) *establish or maintain a strong sense of place;*
- e) *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development; and*
- f) *create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being.*

## Horsham District Planning Framework 2015

The following policies from the Horsham District Planning Framework are considered relevant within this proposal;

- *Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development;*
- *Policy 2 - Strategic Policy: Strategic Development;*
- *Policy 3 - Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy;*
- *Policy 16 - Strategic Policy: Meeting Local Housing Needs;*
- *Policy SD4 - Housing Needs;*
- *Policy SD6 - Landscape Buffer, Landscape Character, Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure;*
- *Policy SD7 - Design;*
- *Policy 24 - Strategic Policy - Environmental Protection;*
- *Policy 25 - Strategic Policy - The Natural Environment and Landscape Character;*
- *Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity;*
- *Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development;*
- *Policy 33 - Development Principles;*
- *Policy 35 - Climate Change;*
- *Policy 36 - Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use;*
- *Policy 37 - Sustainable Construction;*
- *Policy 38 - Flooding;*
- *Policy 39 - Strategic Policy: Infrastructure Provision;*
- *Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport; and*
- *Policy 41 - Parking.*

## Nuthurst Neighbourhood Plan 2015

Key policies from the Nuthurst Neighbourhood Plan which are relevant for these proposals are:

- *Policy 1 - A Spatial Plan;*
- *Policy 2 - Land at Swallowfield Nursery, Mannings Heath;*
- *Policy 10 - Housing Design;*
- *Policy 14 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity.*



# Planning Balance

## Policy Appraisal

The site is located within the built up area, where the NPPF 2019 sets a general presumption in favour of sustainable development. The principle of the residential development of the site has been set by the approved outline application (Ref: DC/17/1158), for the construction of 4 dwellings. The site is allocated for residential development within the Neighbourhood Plan (Policy 2). The policy bears no restriction on the number of dwellings which would be considered appropriate within the site, although the document does refer to the site being suitable for between four and seven dwellings.

The development discussed within this consultation document includes 9 dwellings of the following sizes:

- 1 X 2 beds;
- 6 X 3 beds;
- 1 X 4 beds; and
- 1 X 5 bed.

The application provides family homes which are noted of being of the highest demand within the area in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update for Horsham, 2012. Given that the number of units within the site is restricted to 9, no on site affordable housing provision has been provided.

Policy 33 of the Development Framework requires proposals to make efficient use of land, ensuring a high standard of design and layout.

Policy SD7 of the District Planning Framework requires development proposals to be of a high quality, responding to the character and local distinctiveness of the area. Proposals should provide an appropriate transition to the wider countryside. The proposed development has been carefully designed to reflect the site's position just within the built up area boundary. The proposed dwellings include a barn style terrace as well as brick buildings.

The farm style cluster of buildings reflects the historic agricultural character of the site. The materials and detailing included within the proposed dwellings has been incorporated into the design following a review of the character and appearance of existing

built form within the local area, enhancing its distinctiveness. The proposed development results in a total reduction in floor space within the site, in comparison to the recently approved scheme.

Policy SD6 requires a strong landscape buffer to the open countryside, ensuring a robust, long term and defensible boundary. The proposed development seeks to retain all trees lining the site boundary and has been designed to incorporate the existing pond located in the western corner of the site. The proposal to retain the existing pond in the north-western corner of the site with the inclusion of a wildflower grassed area both retains the rural character on the entrance to the site and retains and enhances levels of biodiversity within the site.

The site layout and proposed built form has been carefully designed to ensure that the proposal is not visible from public viewpoints within the surrounding countryside.

The West Sussex County Council Guidance on Parking at New Developments 2019 requires a total of 20.3 parking spaces within the site. The proposal includes the provision of 25 parking spaces, including two visitor spaces, located near the entrance of the site.

Vehicular access to the site is proposed via the existing shared drive from Church Road. The proposed access arrangements include the widening of the access junction with Church Road and the addition of a passing area as approved within outline consent Ref: DC/17/1158.

The closest dwelling to the existing built form at Swallowfields (plot 7) is located in excess of 25m from the northernmost elevation of Swallowfields. The proposed development is well protected by existing trees and shrubbery and has no effect on the amenity of this dwelling.





# Conclusion

The proposed development has been designed following an analysis of the local area and is considered to be of an appropriate scale and character, in keeping with the site's surroundings.

The proposal takes the surrounding countryside into account and provides a courtyard style development, which retains mature trees within the site and enhances the existing pond.

The design and use of materials ensures that the proposal would be of a high quality and locally distinctive.

We appreciate that the input of the Parish Council at an early stage is important in ensuring that the proposal maximises opportunities to add value to the local community and character of the area. We therefore look forward to meeting with you discuss these ideas.









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