

inox | Homes (Ilfracombe) Ltd.

BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE ASSESSMENT

Phase A, South Ilfracombe New Community

October 2020



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“ In essence proposals for South Ilfracombe aim to deliver a robust mixed use, sustainable urban extension which provides a new ‘gateway’ to the town, informed by the rich built and cultural heritage and high quality landscape setting and supported by the overarching regeneration objectives for Ilfracombe, for strategic economic and housing-led regeneration. ”

THE SITE

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide an assessment against the criteria set out in the Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) (July 2020) design guide for a mixed use development on the southern edge of Ilfracombe, North Devon.

For clarity, this document addresses Phase A only, encompassing land to the east of Old Barnstaple Road.

Planning Background

The South Ilfracombe New Community is an allocated strategic urban extension and an outline planning application was submitted in 2013 (application for the wider site). The proposal included up to 750 dwellings together with a mixed use centre (the hub), extra care housing/facility and primary school, set within a network of Green Infrastructure.

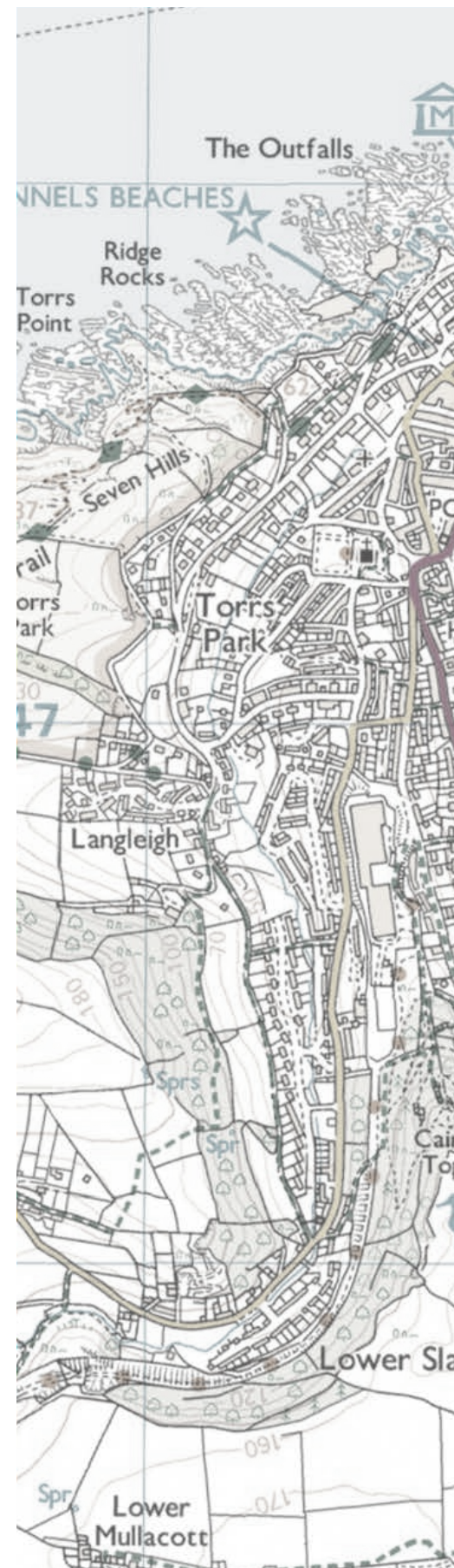
The development parameters were subsequently amended and outline planning permission was granted by North Devon Council in 2017.

A separate but adjacent application for sports pitches to the south is also included in this document. Both application boundaries are shown.

Structure of the Document

This document has been prepared in conjunction with a Reserved Matters planning application. Of particular note, this document should be read alongside the submitted Design Principles Document.

This document sets out the approved principle of development, the submitted Framework Plan, and how the scheme addresses the BHL's 12 considerations organised over 3 headings. The traffic light system used within BHL has been suggested next to each criteria to aid discussions.

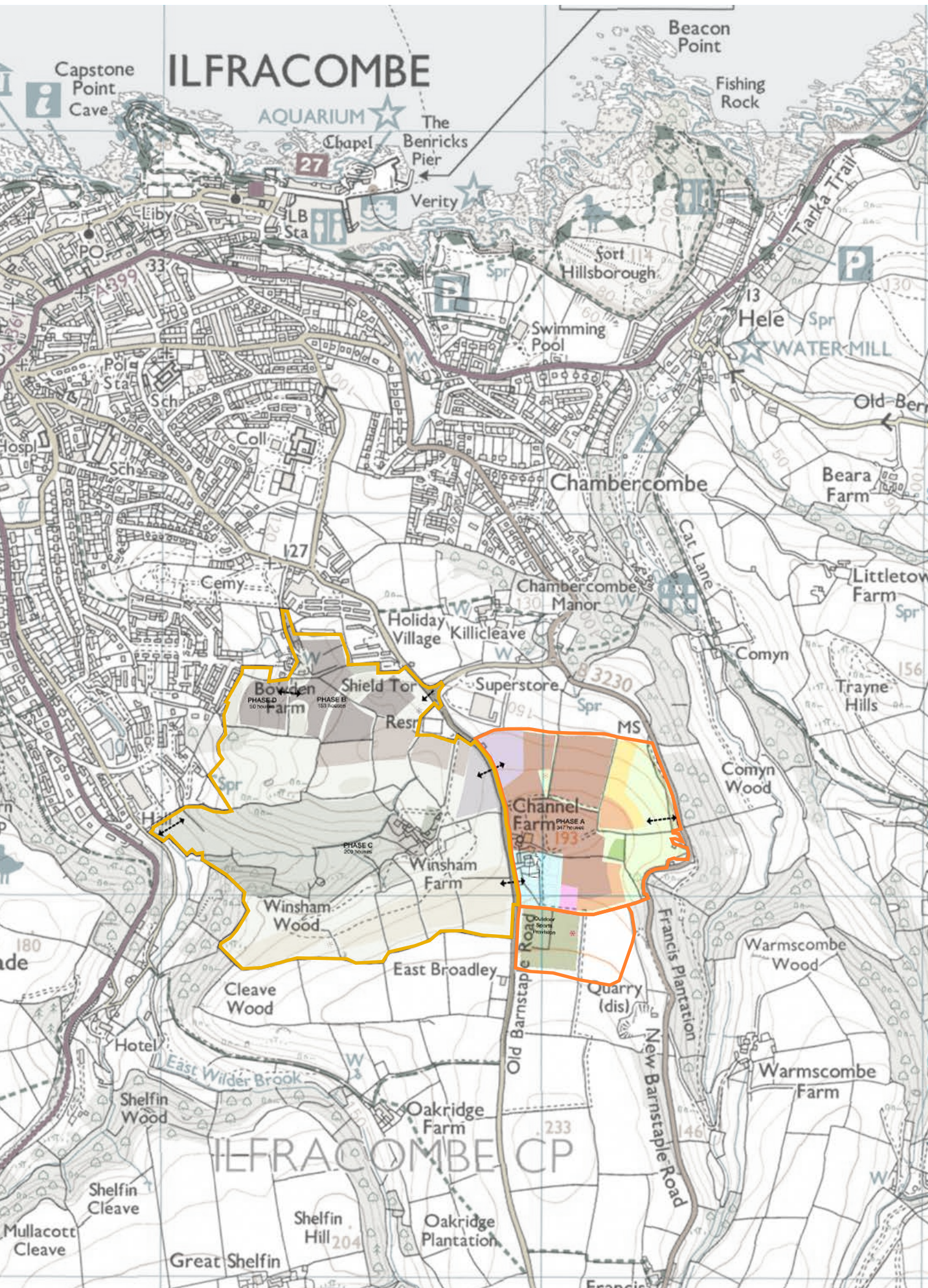


Phase A

Remaining Area of South Ilfracombe New Community

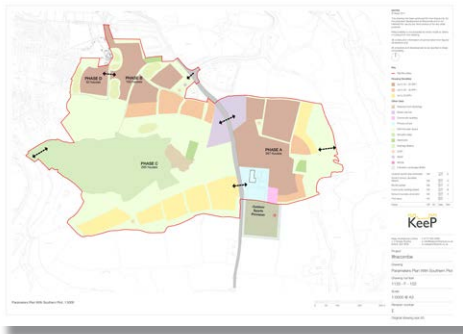
Scale Bar

0m 250m 500m



APPROVED PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

Drawing number 1133-F-103 revision E shows the approved principle of development for the site as a whole.



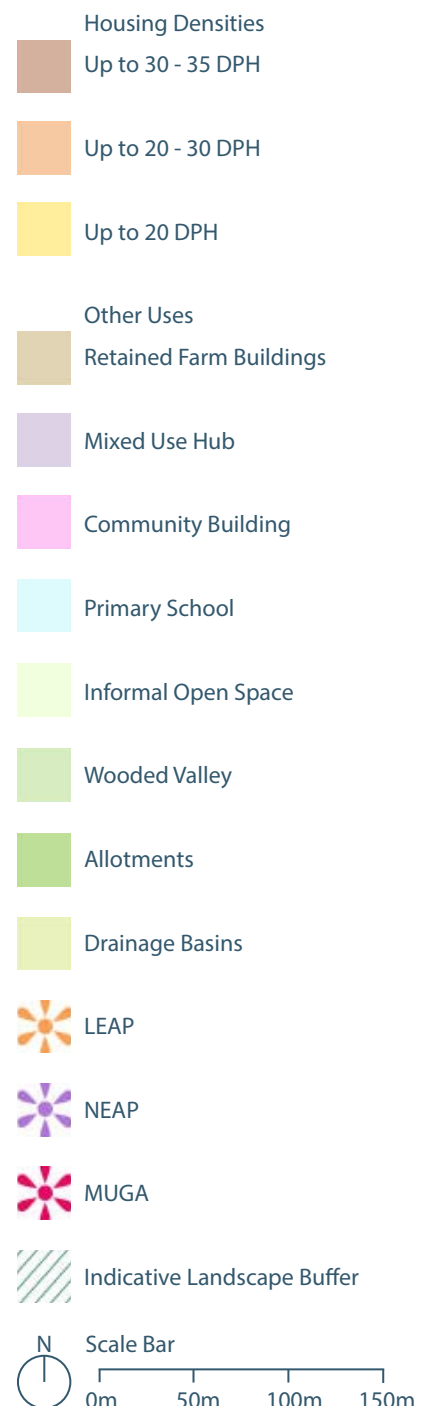
The Whole Site Development Objectives

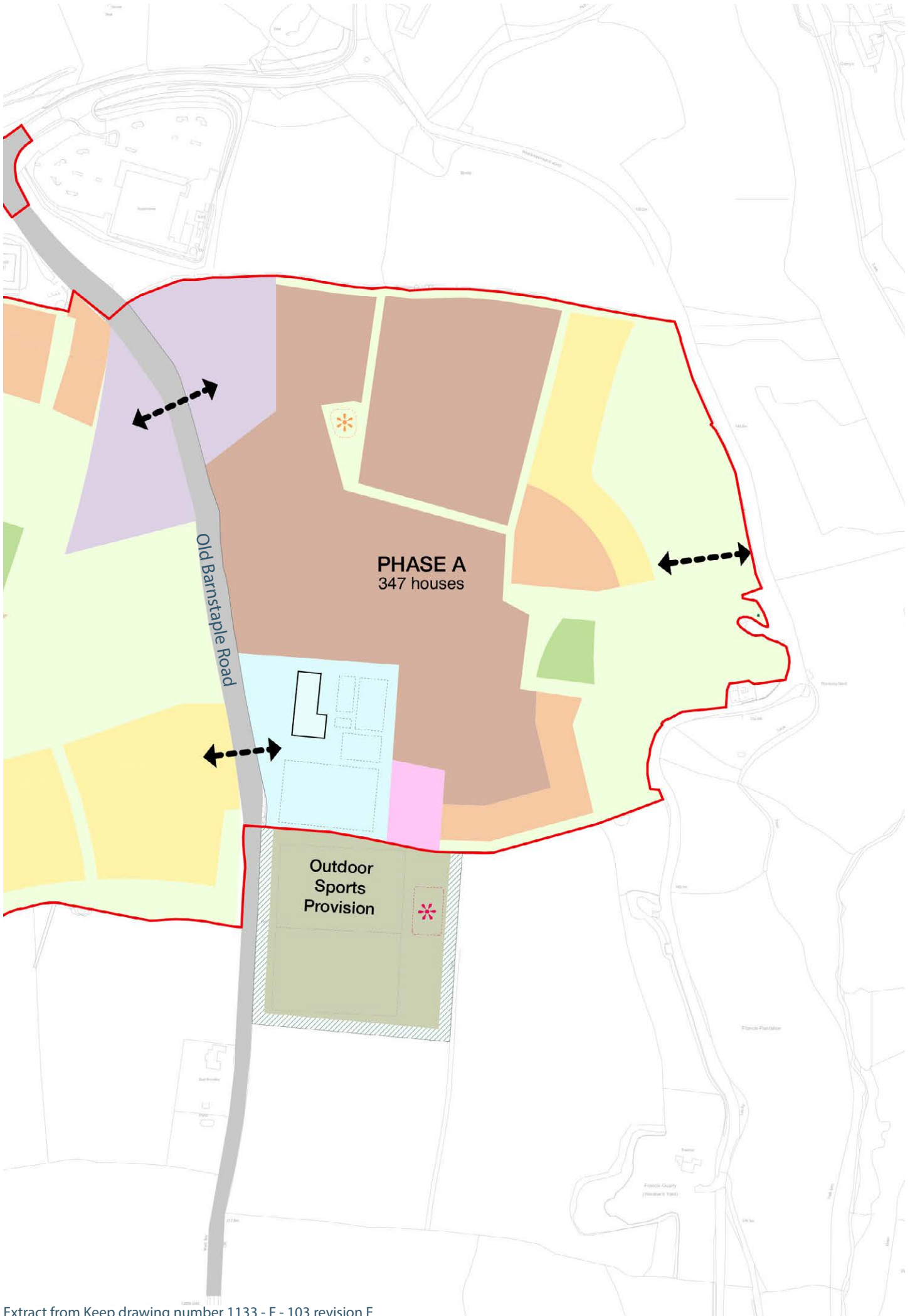
The following development objectives are extracted from the Design and Access Statement that accompanied the outline application:

- Establish a new edge to Ilfracombe incorporating a strong landscape framework.
- Deliver a mixed use, residential led urban extension comprising up to 750 new homes, including provision for affordable housing, employment floor space (B1 class), and supporting community facilities.
- Provide a new 'neighbourhood hub' to provide a focal point within the development and meet the needs of the community to include primary school, extra care housing scheme and medical/health centre and ancillary retail facilities. The principal employment floor space will also be provided at the neighbourhood hub.
- Improve the approach to Ilfracombe along Old and New Barnstaple Roads establishing a gateway into the town.
- Provide a comprehensive network of green infrastructure and landscape enhancements including allotments, formal and informal open space and playing fields for use by the whole community.
- Minimise the use of resources through the design and layout of the development, provision of sustainable urban drainage systems including ponds and water courses, and ensure development is designed to appropriate energy and resource efficiency standards.
- Establish a connected network of streets and spaces making provision for new and existing cycle and footpath connections to the town.

Phase A

This document is focused on Phase A only, on land to the east of Old Barnstaple Road. An extract of the approved parameters plan is shown opposite.

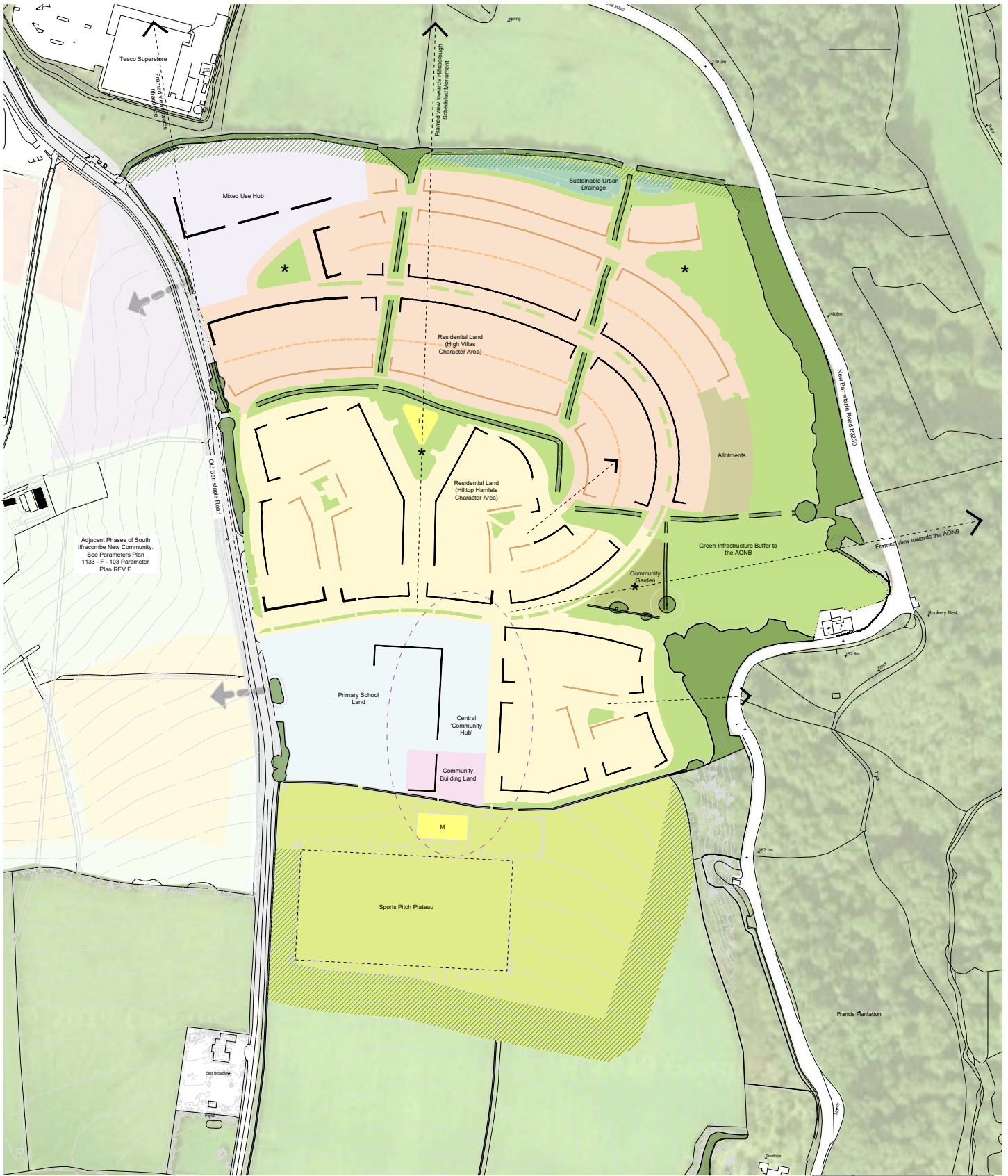




THE FRAMEWORK PLAN

The following plan (9344-L-04) is a culmination of the Design and Access Statement for the Outline Application, a preceding Design Review Panel, and the submitted Design Principles Document.

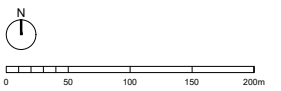
The following pages outline how the scheme addresses the BHL's 12 considerations organised over 3 headings. The traffic light system used within BHL has been suggested next to each criteria to aid discussions.



- NOTES**
- This drawing is the property of FPCR Environment and Design Ltd and is issued on the condition it is not reproduced, altered or disclosed to any unauthorised persons, either wholly or in part without written consent of FPCR Environment and Design Ltd. Ordnance Survey have been mapping - implied by client.
- All drawing dimensions to be checked and verified prior to construction.
 - Drawings are design intent and for planning purposes only.
 - Drawings to be checked and verified by the project engineer, MSE Engineer, Lighting consultant.
 - Specifications/depth/location of root barriers are subject to the project engineer's final design.
 - All services and drainage easements are to be checked and verified by the project engineers.
 - The landscape contractor shall make themselves aware of all service locations, health and safety and risk assessments prior to commencing planting operations.
 - It is the responsibility of the project engineer to design foundations to accommodate all proposed and existing tree and shrub planting, with reference made to N-HEC Standards, Part 4.2.2015 (Building near Trees).
 - All planting work to be carried out in accordance with BS4428:1989 'Code of Practice for General Landscape Operations'.
 - All levels to be checked and verified by the project engineers prior to construction.
 - All works in and around existing retained trees are subject to an Arboricultural Method Statement.
 - For setting out see the project engineer's drawings.

KEY	Description	Area
	Central 'Community Hub'	
	Community Building Land	0.2ha
	Primary School Land	1.72ha
	Mixed Use Hub	1.24ha
	Residential Land up to 33 dph High Villas Character Area	5.5ha
	Residential Land up to 35 dph Hilltop Hamlets Character Area	4.9ha
	Sports Pitch Land 1170sqm Sports Pitch Plateau for Pitches	5.0ha
	Green Infrastructure See Drawing 9344-L-17 Landscape Framework Plan for full Details.	5.2ha
	LEAP	400m ²
	MUGA	685m ²
	Allotments	0.26ha
	Sustainable Urban Drainage	
	Dark Habitat Corridors	
	Community Garden	0.1ha

- Existing Contours Above Ordnance Datum (AOD)
Shown at 2m Height Intervals
- Key Changes in Level
- Key Views Out
- Key Entrance Frontages to the Block Structure
- Key Primary Frontages to the Block Structure
- Key Secondary Frontages to the Block Structure
- Key Feature Spaces



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INTEGRATED NEIGHBOURHOODS

Natural Connections

Create places that are well integrated into the site and their wider natural and built surroundings. Avoid creating isolated and disconnected places that are not easy places to move through and around.

- The site as a whole is naturally constrained on three sides to pedestrian, cycle and vehicle movement. To the north, access is prevented through agricultural land use in third party land, and a significant retaining wall at the back of the Tesco superstore. To the east, a high, wooded escarpment prevents any meaningful access onto B3230 New Barnstaple Road. The southern edge of the site opens out onto a rural landscape with no public rights of way. Therefore, natural connections are maximised along the sites western edge, along Old Barnstaple Road. Links are provided northward towards Ilfracombe town centre, and westward to connect into the remaining approved area outlined on drawing number 1133-F-103 revision E.
- Within the site, and in accordance with best practice guidelines a 'distorted grid' block pattern has been utilised to ensure connectivity and permeability throughout. Streets have been designed to work with the steep gradients in the northern half of the site, rather than against it, to ensure accessibility for all is achieved.
- Where retained, hedgerows and trees are kept within the public realm, safeguarding their future retention and management.
- The landscape framework of existing landscape features of note (including existing retained hedgerows and trees), are reinforced with additional habitats to create movement corridors for nature and people alike.
- Adoption to site boundaries is achieved.



Walking, Cycling & Public Transport

Short trips of up to three miles can be easily made on foot or bicycle if the right infrastructure is in place, helping to improve public health and air quality whilst also reducing local congestion and carbon emissions.

- Old Barnstaple Road is first upgraded with pedestrians and cyclists in mind. A new shared footway / cycleway is proposed between the Primary School Land to the south and into the existing provision adjacent to the Tesco superstore to the north. This provision is located within the existing hedgebanks that flank Old Barnstaple Road.
- Within the site, a loop route is designed from the two access points, with a continuous new footway / cycleway that connects residents throughout the scheme with the Primary School Land / Community Building, Mixed Use Hub, Community Gardens and wider Green Infrastructure network. To help make this central route feel welcoming and an instinctive choice for everyone taking short journeys (such as the school run or older generations accessing local facilities and services), the street is tree lined to provide shade in the summer and help deflect wind in the winter months.
- In addition to the main footway / cycleway provision, a network of interconnecting and off-road footways are proposed through the sites Green Infrastructure. These connect to the allotments and Sports Pitch Land to minimise short car journeys. They also connect into the street layout to allow easy access for recreation and dog walking. Crucially they also provide links to the adjacent development phases to the west with a dedicated footway crossing over Old Barnstaple Road, to be continued on by other developers.
- Adjacent to the southern residential area / Primary School Land, two new on-carriageway bus stops and shelters are proposed on Old Barnstaple Road, along the 301 - Combe Martin - Ilfracombe - Barnstaple bus route. This service stops at the Tesco superstore and continues into Ilfracombe town centre and beyond. This provision is strategically located to not only serve this phase of development but also the future phases to the west.



Facilities & Services

Places that offer social, leisure and recreational opportunities a short walk or cycle from their homes.

- A full range of facilities are to be provided as part of this approved mixed use development. Within this phase of development, the site provides a Community Hub (Primary School and Community Building), Mixed Use Hub, formal sports pitches, a locally equipped play area (LEAP), a multi-use games area (MUGA), community garden, allotments, orchards and recreational walking routes through new areas of woodland and public open spaces.
- The proposals are designed to help improve public health by encouraging physical activity. In addition, incidental public open spaces such as the additional community gardens, have been introduced to encourage social interaction and community cohesion, as well as to help tackle loneliness.
- These facilities provided on this phase of development are all linked with a looped, tree lined footway / cycleway for ease of access.
- All routes have active frontages.
- Equipped play areas have been strategically located within close proximity to the Primary School to allow families walking or cycling to / from school to 'play on the way', making car-free trips more fun.



Homes for Everyone

A range of homes that meet local community needs.

- A full range of homes are provided, from 1 bed apartments through to 4 bed detached homes, to make a broad-based community.
- Access to outdoor space is provided for apartments, as well as houses.
- A mix of housing tenures are provided. The agreed s106 provides an agreed mix of affordable homes that meet the needs of the community. This agreed percentage of affordable homes is provided within the scheme.
- In accordance with best practice, the affordable homes are provided in small groups and spread throughout the site. The design of homes and streets make it difficult to determine the tenure of properties through architectural, landscape or other differences.
- In addition, the needs of two disabled units have been identified by the LPA, one 2 bed and one 3 bed, and both are provided within the scheme, within close proximity to the bus stop and 'community hub'.



DISTINCTIVE PLACES

Making the Most of What's There

Understand and respond.

- The assets of the site have been explored within the design team, and have taken on board comments from the Design Review Panel from an early stage in the process.
- One of key assets identified by all are the expansive views out to the surrounding landscape and coastline. This has been explored through the design of the scheme, and is reflected in the orientation of the buildings that allow framed views out to north and east, as well as creating smaller, glimpsed views between breaks in building lines.
- It was identified that the northern half of the site relates to the existing settlement properties of Ilfracombe, along the steep slopes, and that the southern half could introduce a new character to the town.
- More hedgerows and trees have been retained within the current scheme than were proposed within the approved outline permission. These are kept, not only as a landscape framework of habitat connectivity and biodiversity enhancement, but also to help break up any perceived mass of development from views toward the site.
- Additional areas of native woodland planting have been proposed along the eastern side of the site, to connect and buffer the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to the east.
- Two dark corridors for bats were identified through discussions with the LPA Landscape Officer; a 10m corridor along the northern boundary, and a 30m wide corridor along the southern boundary of new sports pitch land.
- The site forms a new settlement edge to the town along the southern edge of the sports pitch land. This has been defined with a native woodland tree belt.
- A sustainable drainage system (SUDS) has been developed to incorporate a mix of soakaways at source, and attenuation features along the northern edge, at the lowest part of the site. This has been developed alongside the bat corridor requirements.

A Memorable Character

Create places that are memorable.

- Character is integral to the development of the scheme and has been developed through an understanding of the existing site features, as indicated previously.
- Key to the development, is the 'Community Hub', that lies at the heart of the scheme. The Community Building is to be accessed from along the same tree lined street as the Primary School and Sport Pitches. This will allow for future flexibility to share facilities and car parking. Together with the sports pitches and multi use games area (MUGA) as a focal point at the end of the street, a 'Community Hub' will be created. Mixing residential units along the other side of the street will also enable activity and subsequently natural surveillance throughout the day and night for a safe environment for all. Homes that front onto this street are to have courtyard parking to avoid conflict between reversing vehicles and children / school buses.
- The residential land essentially forms two distinct character areas; the High Villas and Hilltop Hamlets. These are shown in detail over the following pages of this report.
- The Green Infrastructure is based upon a 'ground-up' approach, where existing features of note are retained as a basis for a landscape framework into which built development is sensitively integrated. This provides a link to the sites former uses, as well as an instant maturity to the development. This landscape framework will be linked through the site to the landscape beyond to maximise habitat, biodiversity, and amenity connectivity, as well as assimilating the development proposals into the landscape. The proposals provide planting species and landscape features that are locally distinctive, such as native hedgebanks and orchards.
- The earthworks design has sought to maintain the existing topographic character and resources of the site with a considered strategy. While the site is steep, the design looks to minimise cut and fill requirements as much as possible, minimising retain walls, and looking to have a no soils removed from the applicants ownership.



Well Defined Streets & Spaces

Create a network of streets and spaces that are well enclosed by buildings and/or structural landscaping, taking care to ensure that front doors and the principal facades of buildings face streets and public spaces.

- The urban design principles adopted for development block and plot design follow best practice guidance.
- This has included using a back-to-back block arrangement as the preferred approach, as this will allow for secure private rear gardens and active frontages.
- Streets and block designs have aimed to 'work' with the site topography by following the contours. Well designed retaining walls and earth banks have been considered to accommodate the sites changes level, and have been located at the rear of plots to allow for accessible, active frontages onto all streets and public open space, and allow delivery of attractive plot frontage designs.
- The arrangement of blocks will help provide a appropriate transition to the public realm (including streets, retained landscape features, dedicated footway / cycleways and green space), and ensure that streets and blocks allow for a range of housing densities.
- The design has sought to, wherever practical, maximise solar gain and light penetration through building orientation.
- As noted on previous topics, the street layout has been specifically designed to maximise views through the site and to the landscape beyond, in well resolved vistas that are integral to the scheme.



Easy to Find Your Way Around

Use legible features to help people find their way around a place.

- The layout incorporates a series of 'street types' based upon a hierarchy of higher and lower streets. These will have different functions and design characteristics, delivering changes in character across the layout.
- The streets are direct and well connected so as to deliver a legible environment for all users.
- Frontages are further defined through the soft landscape scheme, with streets types having distinct mixes of species, hedgerows and street trees to help define the streets and further provide legibility through the site.
- Of particular importance, the primary street has a design rigour along its length as a loop through the scheme, defined by taller buildings, a broader public realm, formal street trees, and formal hedgerows to frontages. This ensures that all users (pedestrians, cyclists, car users) can move safely, calmly and easily, with particular emphasis on non-car-users and less mobile people.
- Development edges are designed to have less dense development, to help transition to the landscape beyond with more detached units and landscaping and hedgerows to reflect the landscape beyond. Where private drives are located, pedestrian links are provided to the next street to ensure connectivity and legibility is maintained.
- Feature spaces are designed to be integral to the layout and help provide a focus for the community.
- Key buildings terminate vistas and form key corner buildings within the scheme, which incorporate locally distinctive features such as tile hanging. Together with large stature existing and proposed trees in key locations, these help with wayfinding through the site, and legibility of the urban grain.



High Villas Character Area

- Development to take its design cues of layout and building detailing from the existing settlement of Ilfracombe, in a modern vernacular.
- Lower density due to the steeply sloping nature of this part of the site.
- Streets to diagonally traverse the steep contours to allow users to move through the site along accessible gradients.
- To encourage social interaction in the community, small scale incidental areas of public open space should be designed into the scheme. There is an opportunity for these to form feature spaces in the public realm, with corner buildings fronting the triangular spaces where two diagonal roads meet.
- Semi detached houses with side parking will allow residents continuous opportunities of views out toward the coastline between buildings.
- Opportunities to integrate allotments and community food growing within the built form.





Hilltop Hamlets Character Area

- The development should have a character of its own, in response to the different characteristics of the site. Design reference instead could be made to the farm buildings that originally stand on the site, and of its locality in the landscape, in a modern vernacular.
- The southern part of the site occupies land, that is less steeply sloping.
- Long range views out are gained, primarily to the north and east. The built form should be designed to frame key views out as an important part of the character.
- The elevated position will conversely expose this part of the site to the winter weather. The built form should therefore be designed as 'clusters' to help lessen the wind speed, and together with planting, help create micro-climates.
- To encourage social interaction in the community, smaller scale incidental areas of public open space should be designed into the scheme. There is opportunity for these green spaces to be located on the northern and eastern edges of the character area where views are framed by the built form.
- Being less steep will help accommodate higher density housing. Short runs of terraced houses with gardens and off-street parking, as well as semi-detached and some detached houses will provide a variety of accommodation.





STREETS FOR ALL

Healthy Streets

Streets are different to roads. Streets are places where the need to accommodate the movement of motor vehicles is balanced alongside the need for people to move along and cross streets with ease. Activity in the street is an essential part of a successful public realm.

- Vehicle speeds are designed to be kept low through the development, at 20mph.
- The existing Old Barnstaple Road is to be upgraded to include a footway / cycleway. This provision then extends through the site along the primary loop road to link the development uses and Green Infrastructure.
- Streets and pedestrian routes are provided along key desire lines.
- Raised tabled areas are provided in key locations to assist in slowing vehicle speeds further and enabling pedestrian movement through desire lines, and where there are higher numbers of people. For example, such locations are prevalent at the primary street / community hub junction, and crossing the two access points into the site along Old Barnstaple Road.
- Street trees raise the quality of environment to assist in healthy movement through the site, providing shade in the summer months and an element of sheltering from wind in the winter months. Where street trees are located, suitable rooting volumes have been provided to ensure establishment and long term prosperity.
- Public greenspaces are incorporated into the scheme to provide places to sit and space to chat or play along routes.



Cycle & Car Parking

Well-designed developments will make it more attractive for people to choose to walk or cycle for short trips helping to improve levels of physical activity, air quality, local congestion and the quality of the street scene. Well-designed streets will also provide sufficient and well-integrated car parking.

- Cycle storage is to be provided for every home, and grouped cycle storage for each apartment block.
- Cycle storage is provided at the community building. This includes open and covered / lockable cycle hoops.
- Shared and unallocated / visitor car parking is provided through the scheme, along the primary street and development edges. These also incorporate electric charging points. Visitor parking is also incorporated into the apartment car parking areas.
- Realistic provision of parking is provided, with one car parking space provided for one bed flats, and two car parking spaces for 2, 3 and 4 bed units.
- A number of car parking strategy's have been used through the scheme, with parking to the side of units being the priority to limit car dominance in the streetscape. Where terraces are located, frontage parking is used in conjunction with side parking, so to allow space for adequate street tree, hedgerow and shrub planting to soften the view along the street.
- Where building frontages are an important element of a feature space or square, parking is provided to the side or rear. This is prevalent for the apartments at the northern entrance to the site, and the internal courtyards of the Hilltop Hamlets character area. These locations have been kept to a minimum.



Green & Blue Infrastructure

Create a network of streets and spaces that are well enclosed by buildings and/or structural landscaping, taking care to ensure that front doors and the principal facades of buildings face streets and public spaces.

- A strong landscape strategy has been designed at the start of the project, and is evident in the retention of more landscape features than was approved at outline stage. A 'ground-up' approach has been adopted, where existing features of note are retained as a basis for a landscape framework into which built development has been sensitively integrated.
- This landscape framework has been linked through the site to the landscape beyond to maximise habitat, biodiversity, and amenity connectivity, as well as assimilating the development proposals into the landscape. Active frontages have been designed to give public open space natural surveillance.
- The Green Infrastructure includes:
 1. Buffer the existing woodland and AONB with further tree planting along the eastern boundary and provide a wooded backdrop for development for key views from north and east.
 2. Existing hedgerows in the northern portions of the site help break up the mass of built development from key views from north and east.
 3. New community food production areas with locally distinctive orchard trees and community allotments.
 4. Equipped play areas along easily accessible routes, ensure they benefit from natural surveillance, and are integrated within the GI network.
 5. A new SUDS corridor along the northern boundary. This is also a dark flyway for bats.
 6. A new Community Garden to encourage social interaction and community cohesion.
 7. Extensive public footpath network through the Green Infrastructure.
 8. A tree lined Main Street through the centre of the development.

Back of Pavement, Front of Home

Garden cities, towns and suburbs used hedges to define public and private spaces, helping to create characterful and biodiverse places. The space between the back of the pavement and the face of buildings has a significant impact on the quality of a place. Clear demarcations between public and private spaces can encourage people to personalise the front of their homes whilst also offering opportunities to integrate level changes, utility boxes and waste storage.

- As set out in the character areas and street hierarchy section, defensible boundary treatments to private spaces are predominantly defined through hedgerows.
- Front gardens within the steepest half of the site are kept large enough for the installation of services and be a boundary to the plot, but kept small enough to ensure the development plateau as a whole is kept to a minimum and therefore reduce cut and fill over the site.
- Each area, whether private or public, has a clear function.
- Boundaries to the development edge are predominantly defined through native hedgebanks. These have been adapted as a 'soft' method of taking up changes in levels.
- Level changes have been predominantly incorporated in back gardens so to not compromise the qualities and accessibility of the street frontage. Level changes in back gardens have been softened where possible to reduce their dominance.





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