

01	INTRODUCTION
02	PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT
03	CONTEXT ASSESSMENT
04	SITE ASSESSMENT
05	DESIGN PRINCIPLES
06	CONSULTATION
07	DESIGN AND ACCESS
08	SUMMARY



The Masterplan Layout has been designed to make best use of the available land - incorporating the latest principles of urban design - whilst ensuring that the proposals do not have an adverse impact on the sites immediate neighbours or the wider area.

The following pages analyse the design solution using the following headings:

- USE AND AMOUNT
- LAYOUT & SCALE
- LANDSCAPE & ECOLOGY
- APPEARANCE
- ACCESS AND MOVEMENT
- SUSTAINABILITY
- SECURITY AND CRIME PREVENTION

The Components for Good Design as identified in the National Design Guide 2021 - as noted overleaf have been adopted throughout the design process.

07 DESIGN & ACCESS CONT..../

COMPONENTS FOR GOOD DESIGN
(As noted in the National Design Guide 2021)

LAYOUT

Layout shows the routes through a scheme and the blocks of development - illustrating how they are arranged to relate to each other to create streets, open spaces and areas of built form.

The Layout defines the following:

- the structure and settlement pattern;
- the grain - pattern of development blocks and plots;
- the broad distribution of different uses, and their densities and heights.

FORM

Form is the three-dimensional shape and modelling of buildings and the spaces they define.

Buildings and spaces can take many forms, depending upon their:

- size and shape in plan;
- height;
- bulk - their volume;
- massing - how bulk is shaped into a form;
- building lines - the alignment of building frontages along a street;
- relationship to the plot boundary - and whether they share party walls or not;

In the case of spaces, their form is influenced by the buildings around them.

The form of a building or a space has a relationship with the uses and activities it accommodates, and also with the form of the wider place where it is sited.

SCALE

Scale is the height, width and length of each building proposed within a development in relation to its surroundings.

This relates both to the overall size and massing of individual buildings and spaces in relation to their surroundings, and to the scale of their parts. It affects how a space can be used and how it is experienced.

Enclosure is the relationship between the height of the buildings across a space, and the dimensions of the space itself.....different degrees of enclosure influence how people use different spaces, by creating differences in character that suit different activities.

APPEARANCE

Appearance is the aspects of a building or space within the development which determine the visual impression the building or space makes, including the external built form of the development, decoration, lighting, colour and texture. In the case of a space, it's landscape also influences its appearance.

LANDSCAPE

Landscape is the treatment of land (other than buildings) for the purpose of enhancing or protecting the amenities of the site, the area in which it is situated and the natural environment. Landscape includes landform and drainage, hard landscape - such as surfacing, boundary treatments, street furniture and play equipment. It also includes soft landscape - trees, shrubs and other planting.

MATERIALS

The materials used for a building or landscape affect how well it functions and lasts over time. They also influence how it relates to what is around it and how it is experienced. The scale, form and appearance of a building influence what materials may be appropriate for its construction. Materials should be practical, durable, affordable and attractive. Choosing the right materials can greatly help new development to fit harmoniously with its surroundings.

DETAILING

Detailing affects the appearance of a building or space and how it is experienced. It also affects how well it weathers and lasts over time.

07 DESIGN & ACCESS CONT..../

USE AND AMOUNT

USE

In terms of Use, as noted elsewhere in this Statement a significant portion of the site has been identified by Reading Borough Council as being suitable for up to 130 new homes under Policy CA1b.

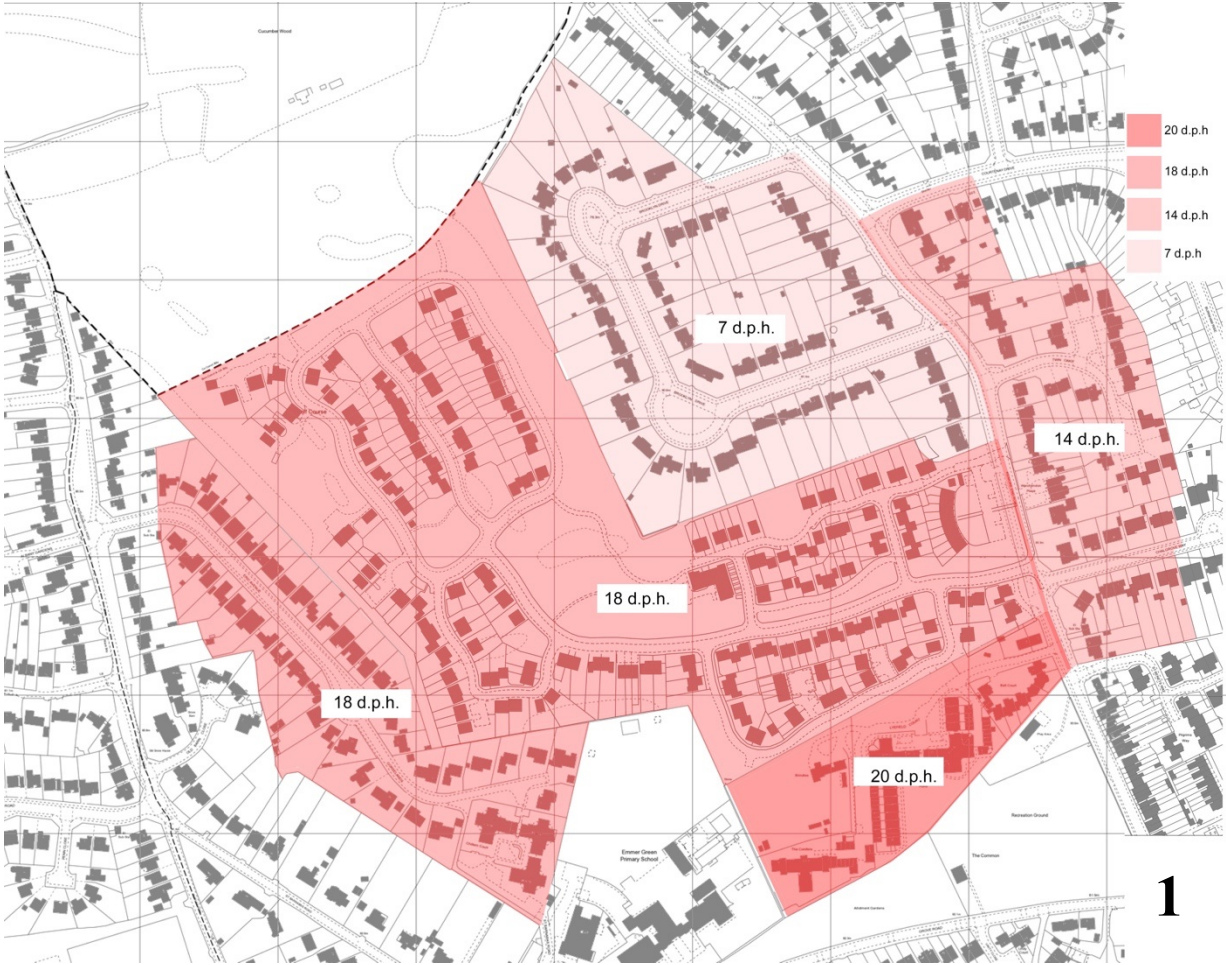
As the land beyond this Policy area is bounded on all but it’s most northern boundary with existing areas of residential units it seems wholly reasonable to propose much needed new housing on the balance of the former golf club land that lies within Reading Borough's administrative boundaries.

AMOUNT

Turning to the Amount of development proposed - with the site area being 12.15 hectares, and the application seeking approval for 223 new homes - the density would be circa 18 dwellings per hectare (dph).

This level of density is relatively modest by modern standards, but as can be seen from the adjoining Comparable Density Plans, the proposed Amount of development is comparable with neighbouring areas. As a result of the parity of density the development will sit comfortably in this location.

Whilst land is an important resource and good use should be made of the available space on a site, the possible impact of too overly dense a proposal on an existing neighbourhood should be carefully balanced.



<< Comparative Density Plan 1

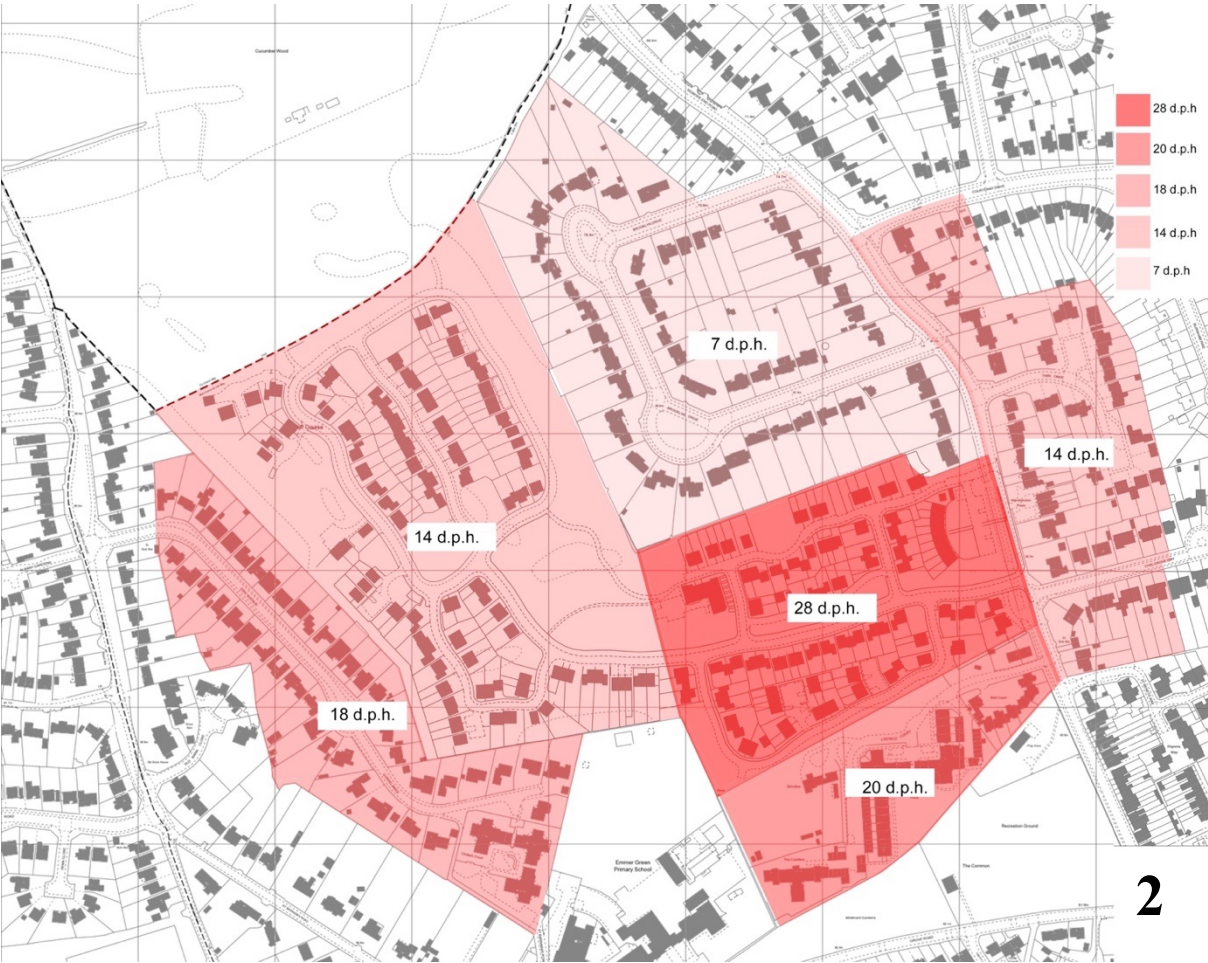
The adjacent plan illustrates an average site-wide development density of circa. 18 dwellings per hectare (d.p.h.)

Comparative Density Plan 2 >>

When the layout is broken down into its two main site areas, the densities vary.

The section currently forming Policy CA1b has a density of circa. 28 d.p.h. which is at the lower end of the agreed Policy Density figure.

The balance of the site has a density of circa 14 d.p.h. ensuring it sits comfortably with its immediate neighbours and is part of a reduction in density that runs from Eric Avenue across the proposed development to the lower density area of Brooklyn Drive.



07 DESIGN & ACCESS CONT..../

LAYOUT & SCALE

The Layout for the former Reading Golf Club site shows how 223 new homes (including 67 affordable properties) can be accommodated on the land available without having an impact on the key landscape features or the principally residential area that surrounds the site.

The layout follows the identified constraints and opportunities that have been established by the design team and are a thread that runs through the development of the proposals.

The layout creates the green link that runs from Kidmore End Road through to the sites northern boundary with South Oxfordshire.

The landscape core is not a wholly new corridor of planting, but is a linear feature that links many of the treed spaces to create a green infrastructure that is a constant throughout the length of the site.

The landscaping is paired with a variety of pedestrian routes - some formal, others less so - that run alongside or through the green spaces, all contributing to permeability by providing connections to the surrounding areas.

With the open spaces and landscape strategy fixed, the primary streets have generally been located so that they abut much of the green infrastructure. The resultant road positioning allows the opportunity in many areas for perimeter block patterning to be adopted so that there is a clearly defined separation between public and private realms.



Proposed Site Layout

LAYOUT & SCALE

This pattern of layout contributes to the legibility of the scheme, that will make navigating the internal road network easier than when a cul-de-sac type approach is used.

The perimeter block provides a framework that means that the open spaces are, in the main, separated from the houses - but still overlooked and visually policed.

There are several areas where the proposed units are not contained within the perimeter block format - particularly in the southern part of the layout. The Design Review Panel suggested that in these areas the proposed houses should have a back garden to back garden relationship to the existing properties on the perimeter of the site to reinforce the mirroring of the local grain and to provide greater security.

As can be seen from the adjoining extract from the Context Plan, the linear shape of the proposed road pattern, and therefore the houses, is very similar to the grain of development along Eric Avenue and the development area further to the west. By referencing the existing pattern of built form in the new proposals we will ensure that the relationship of the new to the existing is comfortable.

There are several areas that have been treated slightly differently from the majority of the layout - these are in key locations and provide interest and variety.



Site Context Plan

07 DESIGN & ACCESS CONT..../

LAYOUT & SCALE

Firstly, there is a formal crescent on units proposed on the Kidmore End Road frontage sitting behind a good depth of existing and proposed tree screen. The units sit in a fairly formal area of hard and soft landscaping and by virtue of its geometric shape and relationship to the frontage it will make a positive contribution to the street scene.

We have treated the layout near the play space and open area on the 'corner' of the site slightly differently. Rather than show a perimeter block arrangement we are proposing to let the built form 'bleed' into the open space thereby allowing for the various footpaths, cycle paths and access to the open space to be visually policed. Whilst the aim is to create separation between the public and private realms, areas such this corner need to be treated slightly differently to provide passive security for those using, or moving through the space.

Finally, there are several small courtyards shown that either bring variety to a street scene and building line, or enable units to be incorporated into the landscape - each bring some variety of form and scale to the layout.



Aerial View of Proposed Site Layout

07 DESIGN & ACCESS CONT..../

LAYOUT - CHARACTER STUDY

The following pages show four extracts from the Site Layout that illustrate how different areas within the site, if laid out in a differing form, using different housetypes and densities, can create a variety of experiences.

Given the size of the site, it's linear nature and the disparity in neighbouring property types, a residential layout on a site such as this should not have a 'one size fits all' solution to the proposed density and form adopted.

The character of the various areas will, as mentioned, provide differing experiences ranging from intimate courtyards through to larger detached houses on the periphery of the site that have views over the adjoining land. The character of an area is an accumulation of factors - including not just the built form and the juxtaposition of units - but also is determined by the hard surfacing and the relationship to the existing or proposed soft planting.



Character Area 2. >>

This area of houses fronts the key linear landscape feature that runs through the site. The units sit to the north of the primary street that runs east to west through the CA1b section of the site behind the deep landscape area.

The units are orientated to face the primary street and therefore the pattern is linear with all the units facing the same way - generating a clear building line that has movement along its length. They are served off an informal, private drive type of roadway, that connects to the secondary street at either end.

In terms of material finish to the roadways - it is envisaged that the surfacing should have a shingle type finish - albeit bonded to a base material, with informal edgings - therefore creating a more rural feel, particularly with the landscape in the foreground.

<<Character Area 1.

This frontage area, abutting Kidmore End Road, is an important part of the site as it is the most visible from the existing street. It is bounded on both sides by the two access roads and almost becomes an island of built form - it therefore needs to make a positive contribution to, not only the proposed layout, but also the wider area.

The formal crescent shape of the units is carried through to the two frontage areas of landscaping - one of which sees the retention of a large oak tree. The car parking for these units is laid out reasonably symmetrically around the central footpath that links to Kidmore End Road.

It is envisaged that the parking areas will be porous block paving or similar - so that the existing trees are able to benefit from surface water run-off.





Character Area 4. >>

This section of the site is at the northern boundary, on the land that overlooks South Oxfordshire's administrative area. The softening of the density in this area reflects its edge of site location, the trees and landscaping on the western side and the units with larger gardens on Highdown Road.

The houses and driveway on the northern section are sat back from the boundary to allow for low level planting to be installed.

The accesses are in the form of simple crossovers that lead to informal shared surface drives, again with a visually softer surfacing material used.

Immediately to the north-west is one of the pedestrian and cycle routes that runs through and around the scheme connecting Kidmore End Road to the land further to the north.

<<Character Area 3.

This section of the layout is discernibly denser in terms of units and built form. Being in the centre of the more northern section of the layout, houses with roof accommodation can be included, as the extra height will have no impact on existing properties that abut the site boundaries. As you move through this area the 'feel' will differ from elsewhere as the character changes with taller units proposed and houses shown on both sides of the roadway.

The roadway will be bounded on one side with a footpath and a service margin on the eastern side - hence reducing the overall amount of hard-surfacing shown.



LANDSCAPE & ECOLOGY

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL CONSTRAINTS

The landscape and visual baseline assessment, alongside the review of planning policy and landscape character guidance have been instrumental in understanding the landscape constraints and opportunities of the Site, which are defined as follows:

A proposed ‘Green Link’ passing through the Site relative to Adopted Local Plan 2019 Policy EN12;

The area to the north eastern edge of the Site is identified for Biodiversity Interest. Combined with the point above, there is potential to create a green corridor to enhance the biodiversity value of the Site to address Local Plan Policy EN12;

Careful selection of tree species in reference to Reading Borough Council Tree Strategy 2020, to respond to the climate change issue and also to provide a biodiversity link through the Site to the wider context as outlined in the Local Plan policies;

Open space is to be provided according to Local Plan policies (which rely on the Fields in Trust Guidance) relative to developments over 50 dwellings;

There are 320 trees or groups of trees on or near the Site. Please refer to the Arboricultural and Planning Integration Report, which assesses the existing trees based on their condition, quality and value in order to inform the removal or retention of trees, hence identifying the design opportunities and constraints for the development;

The demolition of the existing clubhouse;

The natural topographic profile across the Site is gently sloping and is therefore not a constraint to develop;

To create a positive interface with the landscape to the north and create opportunities for a connected and comprehensive green infrastructure.

Refer to Figure 2.1 - Landscape Opportunities and Constraints Plan of Fabriks Landscape DAS

LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

The overarching landscape concept responds to the Site conditions, constraints and opportunities. It also aims to address the climate change and adaptation issues by proposing a suitable mixture of tree species and planting throughout the scheme.

The landscape concept provides a consolidated central green core to the Site, located on a green spine, which responds to Policy EN12 and which provides the opportunity for a new spine of trees through the core of the Site.

The proposal is driven primarily by the retention of the most significant existing trees (refer to Arboricultural and Planning Integration Report) within and along the boundaries of the Site and the provision of a Green Link as identified in the Local Plan Policy. The proposed high quality development parcels are sensitively located to minimise the impacts to the trees while allowing space for new tree planting to enhance the biodiversity as required in the Local Plan and Policy CC: Adaptation to climate change and in line with the Tree Strategy 2020 sets out by Reading Borough Council.

It is acknowledged that a 3:1 ration is recommended in the Reading Tree Strategy 2020, however, unlike developments in typical brown field or green field sites, there are 320 trees or tree groups on or near the Site, and effectively 223 of them are proposed to be retained (97 no. of trees or groups of trees are proposed to be removed). The masterplan layout has been influenced by the tree retention, the zone of influence of the future anticipated rooting zone associated with that particular tree species and their shading, therefore, the density of the trees (consider both the retained and the proposed) are relatively high in comparison to the surrounding areas, and has utilised the full spacial potential within the public realm areas.

LANDSCAPE CONTEXT CONT..../

The Green Link combines the existing and proposed green infrastructure and sweeps across the centre of the Site from the east to the north, then follows the north eastern edge of the Site linking to the Area of Biodiversity Interest. The design intent is that the open space network, including a Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP), natural and amenity green space, centred around the existing trees, which forms part of the landscape features of the Site.

With the landscape located in both the centre and the edges of the Site, it provides the opportunities for the easy access to the green amenity space and a diverse relationship between the proposed built form and the existing settlement edge.

Refer to Figure 3.1 - Landscape Concept Plan of Fabriks Landscape DAS.

ECOLOGY

Golf courses often have limited ecological and biodiversity margins due to the manicured nature of the management of the fairways, greens and bunkers.

The former Reading Golf Club site is no exception, as the wildlife is mainly restricted to the existing boundaries - with the exception of the bird population - some of whom nest in the fairway and boundary trees.

This being the case, the opportunity exists to significantly improve the current situation via the reinforcement of existing planted margins to form wildlife corridors, which can then be linked to the larger areas of open space. In addition, the provision of surface water attenuation features in landscape depressions, as part of the SUDs strategy will bring forward alternative habitats, leading to enhanced biodiversity.

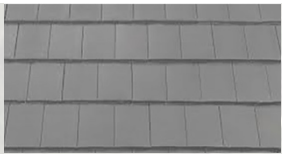
07 DESIGN & ACCESS CONT..../

APPEARANCE

Whilst matters related to appearance, fenestration and material choices will be part of the subsequent Reserved Matters application, it is anticipated that the new housing will be principally 2-storeys to eaves level, with well-proportioned roofs above - some with accommodation in the roof-space that brings variety and interest to the roofscapes.

From various public consultation responses, it would seem that the local preference is for traditional styled units, - with a leaning towards Arts and Crafts style of design and detailing, which would sit comfortably with the local vernacular.

Shown adjacent is an indication of the materials palette that could be used - with red multi-stock bricks being the principal facing material, although a number of units could have render, and some of the ancillary structures such as garages could have a boarded finish.



Variety of roof tile colours

to include :

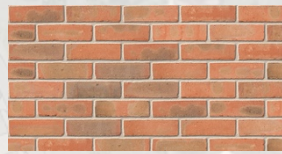
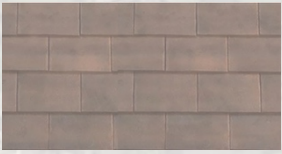
Slate Grey

Farmhouse Red

Rustic Red

Breckland Brown

ALL to be small format tiles



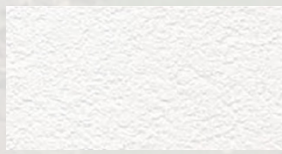
Variety of shades of red multi-stock

facing brick

to include quoining

where

appropriate



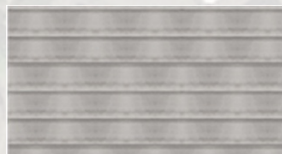
Additional facing materials to

be used in limited

locations:

Render

Horizontal boarding



ACCESS & MOVEMENT

For details regarding the access arrangements, in particular the geometry, please refer to the Transport Assessment prepared by Stantec - and that forms part of the application submission.

As discussed earlier in this document, the main access is off Kidmore End Road, with a secondary entrance located nearer to the northern boundary.

The proposed streets shown are just part of the connectivity and permeability strategy for the site that will be key to its success.

There are separate footpaths and combined pedestrian and cycle routes that principally link Kidmore End Road to the northern boundary of the site that abuts South Oxfordshire. The primary street that runs to the most northern part of the site has geometry that will ensure that a bus route could be accommodated which future-proofs the development for less reliance on the use of the motor car - particularly for short journeys.

The Movement Plan provided earlier explains the above approach graphically - and this is replicated in the technical Transport Assessment, demonstrating that it has been at the core of the layout.

SUSTAINABILITY

The proposals will take into consideration the social, economic and environmental consequences of the development, and in particular the need to meet key sustainability objectives.

Current Government Guidance and Reading Borough Councils Local Plan Policy, requires measures to minimise the consumption of energy to be part of any application such as this.

The accompanying Energy Statement reviews various means by which this can be achieved - ranging from passive measures such as the orientation of the units on the site so that principle rooms benefit from solar gain - yet with shading to reduce over-heating.

There are renewable, energy generating measures to be installed as part of the fabric of the building with the aim to reduce carbon usage - using the established hierarchy of:

- Be Lean. Use less energy.
- Be Clean. Supply energy efficiently.
- Be Green. Use renewable energy.

SECURITY AND CRIME PREVENTION

The Layout of the scheme has been carefully considered so that those living in the development, or visiting it, will both feel and be safe. The Layout is an important part of the security strategy as with careful design of the road pattern and the arrangement of the new homes passive visual policing of the site can be achieved. Properties that overlook frontages and public areas are important - as are those that turn a corner - with features addressing both roadways.

Wherever practical, alleyways or paths to the rear of houses should be avoided - where they are needed, for example to access rear cycle storage facilities behind terraced units, they should only be accessed via lockable gates.

It is important that careful consideration is given to the lighting of public and semi-public realms to create an environment that allows those using, or passing through the spaces to feel safe.