

**SECTION 4:**  
DEVELOPMENT  
OPPORTUNITIES

## 4.1 Development Opportunities

- 4.1.1 The planning policy context is outlined in Section 2. The site is allocated as a reserve site and therefore could accommodate a range of development options.

However, considering the identified housing need in Milton Keynes, this Brief will focus on providing a new residential housing scheme. It is therefore considered to be suitable to come forward as a housing development.

The site could accommodate a range of residential options including apartments and /or housing.

- 4.1.2 Residential uses would be appropriate for the site given the surrounding residential uses as well as proximity to the local centre and existing bus stops. The expected density of the site should reflect surrounding densities and the Local Plan high states 35 DPH.

- 4.1.3 It is expected that 30% of the total housing will be provided as affordable housing, as outlined in the Council's Affordable Housing SPD adopted in 2013. However Plan:MK expectation for affordable housing (HN2) is of at least 31% on development proposals for 11 or more housing units. MKDP may elect to obligate a purchaser to provide additional Affordable Housing to that which is required at the time of any planning application.

**SECTION 5:**  
PLANNING AND DESIGN  
PRINCIPLES

## 5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 This section outlines the principles relevant to the design and development of the site. These principles have been informed by best practice, the planning policy context for the site, the site analysis as well as the identified opportunities and challenges.
- 5.1.2 Development proposals should be based on a thorough appraisal of the site's context.
- 5.1.3 Where relevant, the principles are spatially represented by an accompanying Parameters Plan (see figure 6).

## 5.2 Layout

- 5.2.1 Development of the site should be designed and laid out such that development fronts onto White Horse Drive. Private areas should be located internal to the site and adjacent to the south west boundary and be inaccessible to the public.
- 5.2.2 It is not anticipated that any green public open space will be created on site as part of the development.
- 5.2.3 If housing is located on the northern edge of the site facing the existing pathway an access road parallel to the footpath could be included to provide frontage access and parking for the site.
- 5.2.4 Housing layout and design should ensure a good standard of amenity in terms of privacy, sunlight and daylight as well as private amenity space in the form of gardens for houses and balconies, or shared private communal space for apartments.

## 5.3 Building Lines and Frontages

### Building Lines

- 5.3.1 New development should adhere to the existing character of the surrounding residential development. In this sense a fairly formal building line with common setbacks should occur and be located in a manner that respect the existing trees, verges and public footway along the site's boundary.

### Frontages

- 5.3.2 The most important frontage is onto White Horse Drive. Residential development should ensure some frontage onto this street with entrances opening onto it. No individual vehicular accesses will however be permitted. Where the existing grid road planting starts on the southern edge of Whitehorse Drive and extends around the bend alongside the H8, housing can back onto this planting.
- 5.3.3 The north western frontage onto the footpath is also important and where possible development should front onto and overlook this path.
- 5.3.4 The creation of significant lengths of blank wall will not be permitted.
- 5.3.5 The southern and northern ends of the Whitehorse Drive frontage should be marked with key corner buildings that are appropriately treated given their key locations.

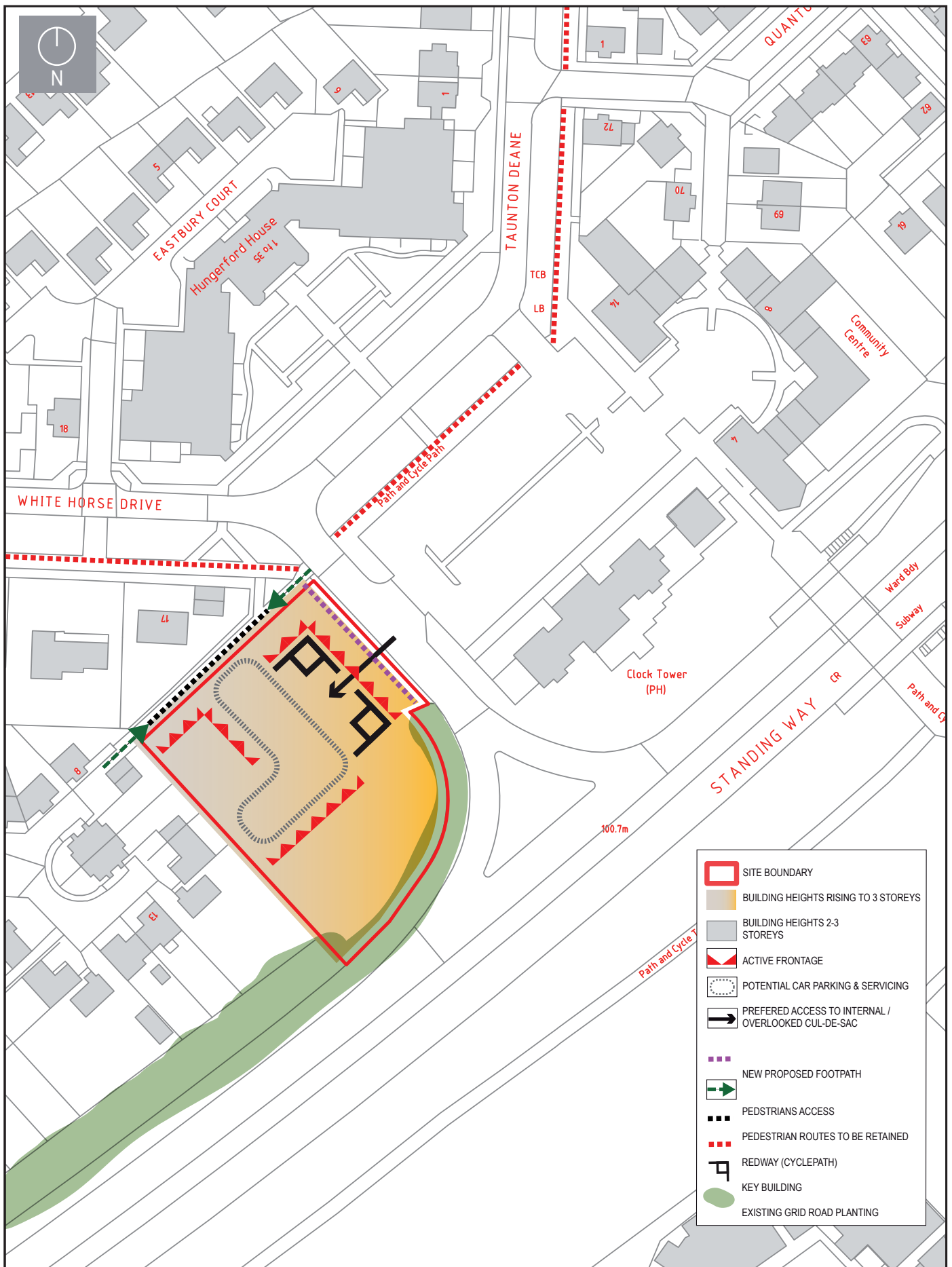


Figure 6: Parameters Plan - Residential Development

## 5.4 Detailed Design Appearance

- 5.4.1 Section 3 identified the nature of the existing housing surrounding the site along White Horse Drive. This should inform the design of proposed development on this site. However, as the site is on a key entrance to Emerson Valley the surrounding development should not dictate a repetition of this built form.
- 5.4.2 Buildings should comprise the predominant material that is included in the surrounding context which is buff brick. However, they should be of contemporary yet simple and honest design that enhances the surroundings. All building components should be of high quality and durable.
- 5.4.3 Particular attention should be paid to the White Horse Drive frontage which occupies a key location in terms of portraying the image and first impression of Emerson Valley.
- 5.4.4 If apartments are included, the main pedestrian entrance to the building should be located on the corners of the site and relate to the existing pedestrian routes.



Example of a key building with balconies creating an active frontage



Traditional materials can help create a strong character if used in a contemporary design



The design of the windows can add character whilst increasing surveillance and privacy



Gable ends addressing the street can create a strong built form presence



## 5.5 Building Heights

- 5.5.1 Building heights along White Horse Drive are predominantly 2 storey. The heights of buildings on the site should respect the existing context and therefore should also be predominantly 2 storeys. However, given the key location of the site, some well considered stepping up elements to the development may be permissible to create a strong built form presence at a key entrance to Emerson Valley.

## 5.6 Access and Movement

### Vehicular Movement

- 5.6.1 A sole shared vehicular access into the site will be required given that access (shared or individual) is not available from 3 of the 4 edges and distance from other junctions on White Horse Drive restricts the availability of an access location.
- 5.6.2 The preferred vehicular access to the development should be taken from White Horse Drive likely terminating in a widened cul-de-sac to accommodate parking and allow housing to front into (see fig 6).
- 5.6.3 The treatment of the junction off Whitehorse Drive should be carefully considered in light of the proximity of the proposed access to a redway crossing and the distance from the Junction with H8 Standing Way (A421).

## Pedestrian and Cycle Movement

- 5.6.3 Pedestrian movement will occur along the existing footways to and around the site. An extension to the existing footway to run along White Horse Drive to the fronts of dwellings is expected to be provided.
- 5.6.5 Provision shall be made for cycle parking in order to encourage greater cycle usage. Proposals should provide as a minimum the cycle parking standards in force at the time of the planning submission.

## 5.7 Parking

- 5.7.1 Car and cycle parking must be in accordance with Milton Keynes Council's Parking Standards.
- 5.7.2 The Parameters Plan indicates parking to be located within an overlooked cul-de-sac to be widened to include parking for the whole site. This will be required to serve housing facing White Horse Drive.

## 5.8 Public Realm and Landscaping

- 5.8.1 Other than the two low level shrub hedges that border the site on its northern edges, there are no other existing landscape features on the site. However, there is an existing grid road corridor planting immediately beyond the site's boundaries curving around into Whitehorse Drive, which must be protected during construction work and retained.
- 5.8.2 A defensible space (or a privacy strip) should be included on all front boundaries of housing on the site. This privacy strip should be of similar dimensions to existing properties in Bottesford Close.
- 5.8.3 Development proposals should be accompanied by a plan illustrating indicative landscape principles for the site.
- 5.8.4 The development proposal should make a positive contribution to the amenity of the area and the hard and soft landscape detailing will be an important factor in its success in this regard.



Example of level surface street access arrangement to neighbouring mews residential development



Existing access and surrounding development



Modern town houses and apartments would be a suitable design response to the site



## 5.9 General Planning Requirements

### Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems

5.9.1 When making planning applications it is essential that, to get the best results, the integration of water and SuDS options are considered early in the site evaluation and planning process, not just at the detailed design stage. Full consideration of SuDS at the pre-application and outline stage is important to ensuring surface water management is fully integrated into the development, leading to an effective drainage design, providing multiple benefits and with costs considered from the outset. Further guidance and information can be found in the “Milton Keynes Council Surface Water Drainage; Local Guidance for Planning Applications”, which is available on the Council's website.

### Safety and Security

- 5.9.2 The developer must consider crime prevention at an early stage in the design process: initially, regarding design and layout and subsequently, regarding any additional physical security or community safety requirements. The Council will seek to design out opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour following best practice guidance in ‘Secured by Design’.
- 5.9.3 Most importantly, the layout of the development should avoid the creation of areas of public realm that are ‘leftover’ and not overlooked by any development, as they can become areas of anti-social behaviour. Furthermore, there should be no ambiguous space in terms of ownership.

### **Servicing, Waste and Utilities**

- 5.9.4 The layout and design of the building(s) shall accommodate requirements and access for servicing, waste storage and collection and utilities equipment.
- 5.9.5 Methods of dealing with, and integrating servicing, waste storage and collection shall reflect the location and be part of the building envelope, with no separate enclosures. Service yards should not dominate any elevation and should not occur along the frontage.
- 5.9.6 Utilities equipment - electricity sub-stations, gas governors, telecoms cabinets should be considered as part of the overall layout.
- 5.9.7 The Council's Local Plan Policy D4 and the Sustainable Construction SPD set sustainability standards that will have to be considered as part of the overall design process.

### **Superfast Broadband**

- 5.9.8 All new developments are encouraged to provide superfast broadband.

**Urban Design & Landscape Architecture**

Growth, Economy and Culture

Milton Keynes Council

Civic Offices

1 Saxon Gate East

Milton Keynes MK9 3EJ

T +44 (0) 1908 252708

F +44 (0) 1908 252329

E [urban.design@Milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:urban.design@Milton-keynes.gov.uk)

[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/udla](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/udla)

