

Welcome

Oxford City Council (OCC), along with a professional team of consultants have been exploring proposals to provide a number of residential homes on Elizabeth Place. The objective is to provide new, high-quality, affordable housing in varying sizes and occupancies on the under-utilised site to help meet housing needs Oxford. The design team consists of Architects (Oxford Architects), Structural Engineers (Stantec), and Mechanical and Electrical Engineers (CBG Consultants), working in close collaboration with OCC in meeting their requirements.



Purpose of Exhibition

The purpose of this exhibition is to share OCC's initial proposals for the development of Elizabeth Place and to seek comments from the community about the change to their local environment. By engaging with local residents at an early stage, the design team has the opportunity to investigate what is working well, and where there are areas for improvement. Comments will be incorporated wherever possible, to achieve the best possible solution for this particular area.

Please see the final board on how you can provide feedback and the deadline for comments.

The next step in the process would be to finalise the proposals and submit a full planning application in October 2021.



Our Vision



Architect's visualisation along Westlands Drive

The following objectives are at the heart of the Westlands Drive proposal:

New Social Housing

Provide new homes within the city, of which 100% will be social rent or shared ownership. The proposed homes include a choice of flats, maisonettes or townhouses from one to four bedrooms, for different occupancy needs.

High Quality

Visually and functionally improve the quality of architecture, urban realm and green space in the heart of Northway. The homes are designed to current space standards to provide a comfortable environment for living. A variety of amenity spaces will be provided, with a layout which maximises the benefit of the open space. Materials used will be high quality, robust and aesthetically pleasing.

Low Energy Housing

Provide exemplar low energy housing with a performance target of 70% carbon reduction below 2013 Regulations, by using high levels of insulation and renewable energy sources. In day-to-day terms this means lower energy consumption and bills during very hot or very cold weather, leading to low energy demand and savings, and ultimately a more sustainable way of living.

Ecology Improvement

OCC is committed to improving the ecology and biodiversity of the area, with plans to introduce native planting and roost sites for various wildlife such as birds, bats and insects.

The Site Today



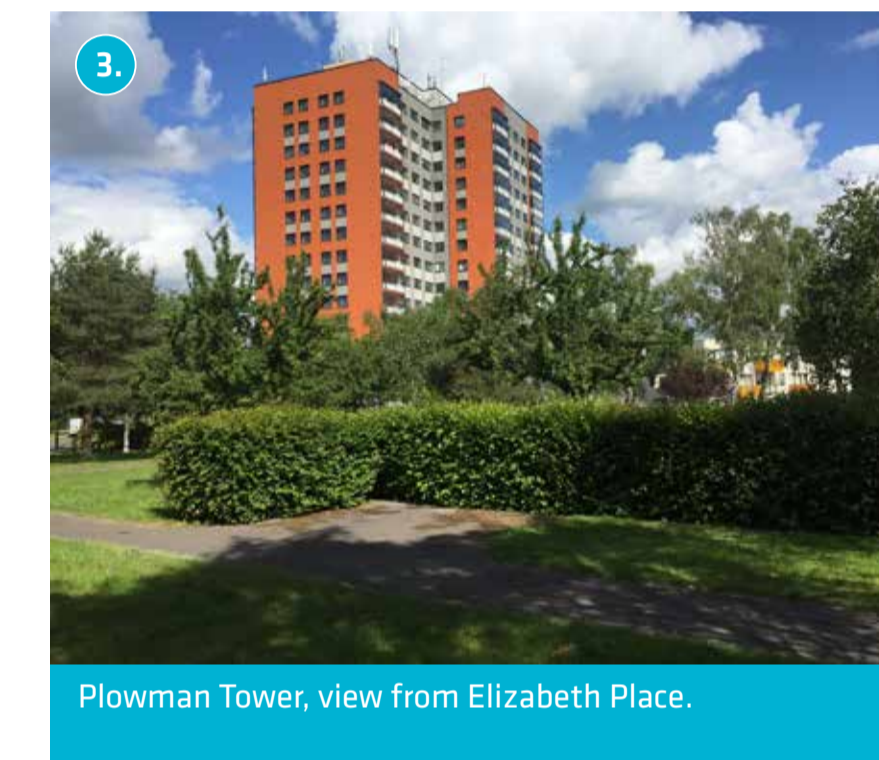
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Intersection between Westlands Drive and Elizabeth Place.



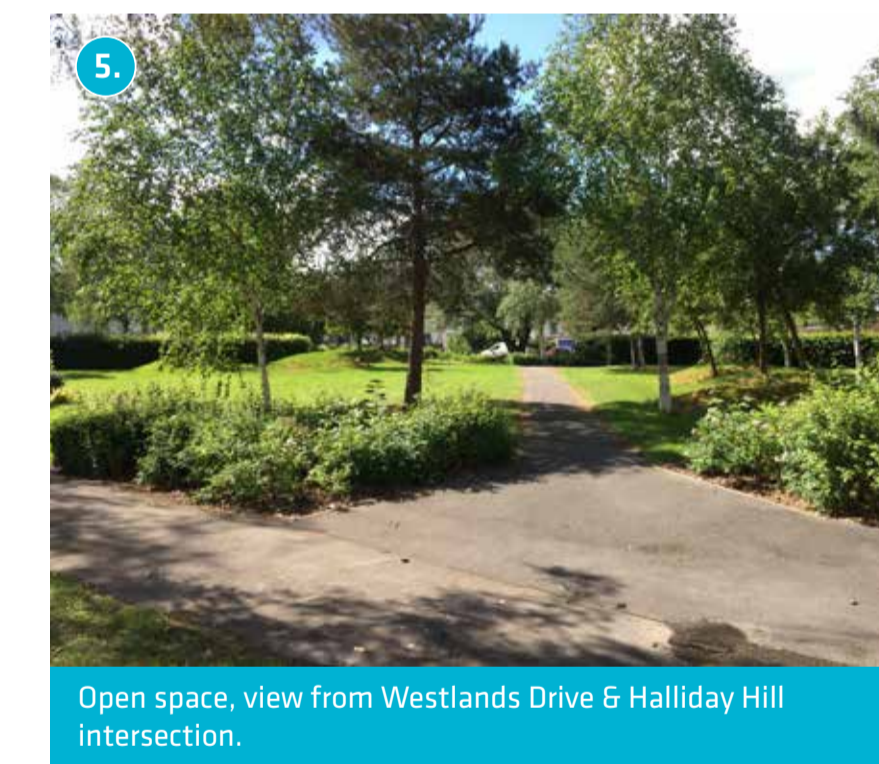
Garages on Elizabeth Place, Westlands Drive 4-storey housing block in the background, 10 Corse Leas dwelling, far left side.



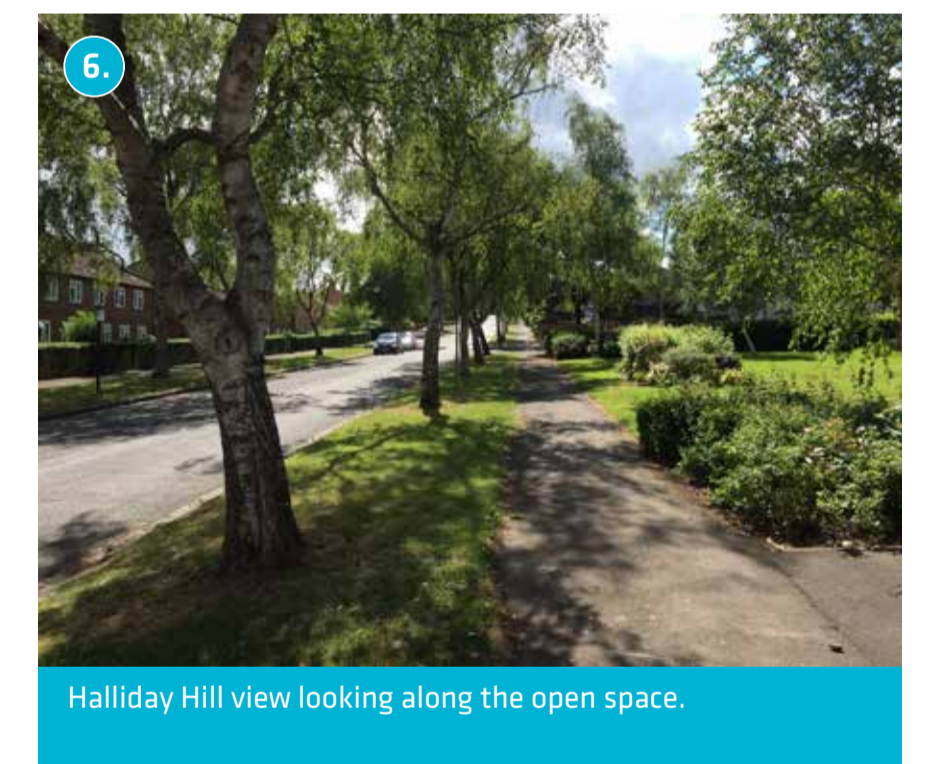
Plowman Tower, view from Elizabeth Place.



Two storey dwellings on Corse Leas.



Open space, view from Westlands Drive & Halliday Hill intersection.



Halliday Hill view looking along the open space.

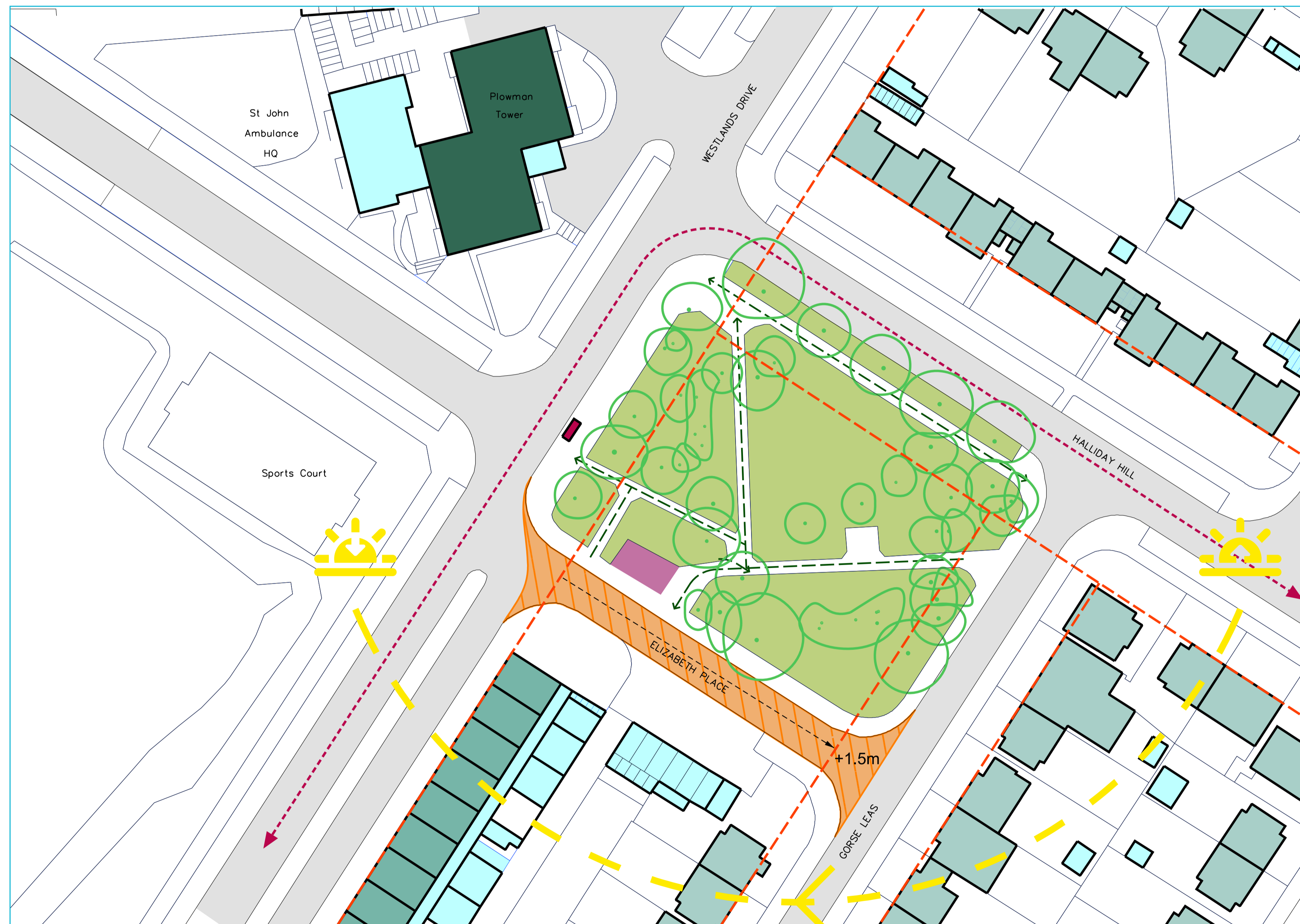


New development at the corner of Westlands Drive and Sutton Road .



Path behind 4-storey housing block on Westlands Drive.

Constraints & Opportunities



KEY	Constraints	Opportunities	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set back from the street Recycling collection point Bus stop Bus route Pedestrian paths Existing trees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 storey (sheds, garages,...) 2 storeys (houses) 3 storeys (mixed-use) 16 storeys (Plowman Tower) Lawn (Proposed site is undeveloped with no requirement for demolition) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roads (Proposed site is accessible from all sides) Elizabeth Pl. (minor road can be removed to enlarge the proposed site) Garages Sun path Slope up

Constraints

- The site is partly on a road, Elizabeth Place, and a green, open space to the north of it. Whilst not a busy road, this provides access to the existing garages on Elizabeth Place. Some pedestrian paths through the green space exit at Elizabeth Place, next to a recycling collection point. The proposal currently involves relocating this recycling collection point and rerouting the path through the green space.
- Existing building lines have been identified, including a setback from the street on Westlands Drive.
- A number of trees exist on the proposed footprint of the new building and will need to be removed.
- There is a level difference of approximately 1.5m starting at a low point the west on Westlands Drive and rising up towards the east on Gorse Leas.

Opportunities

- The surrounding area consists of a majority of 2-storey houses on the east rising up to a 3-storey block of houses with shops on the ground floor on the west, and to a 16-storey residential tower on the northwest. The change in heights provides a varied backdrop to step the heights of the proposal, creating an interesting roofline.
- On the north, the lawn provides the impression of a large front yard. A large playing field, community centre and sports court are to the west of the site.
- Elizabeth Place is a minor road, and therefore can be removed without significant impact on traffic flow.
- The open nature of the site allows for double aspect units, providing light and natural ventilation.

Draft Proposals



Design Quality

The homes are designed to current space standards for modern living, including private amenity spaces and an energy-efficient building envelope.

Massing

Stepped design reflects the scale of surrounding buildings, incorporating different unit sizes within a new volume fronting the open space

Materials
















Brick has been selected as a high quality, robust, non-combustible material out of the surrounding palette, echoing the parade and 2-storey houses north of the square.

Aesthetic

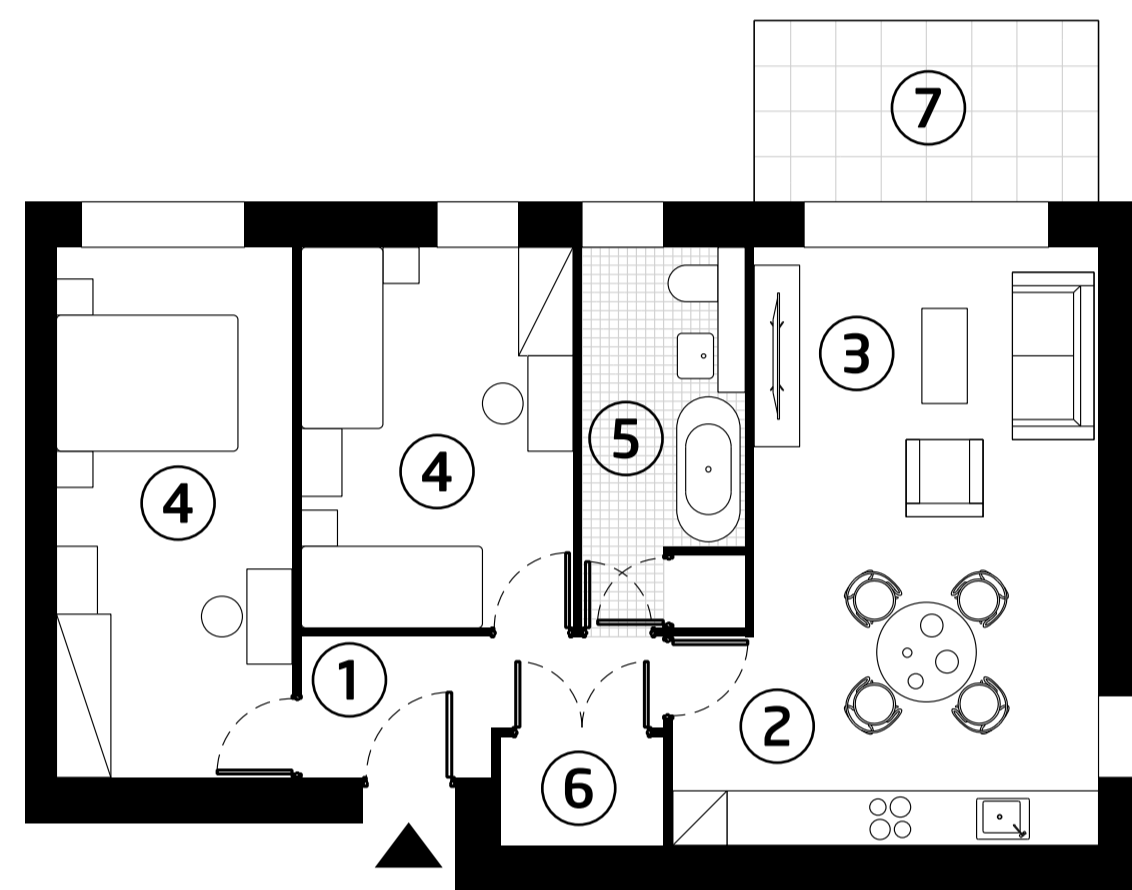
The modern aesthetic will be in line with newer developments in area, while reflecting colours of the surrounding brickwork.

External Works

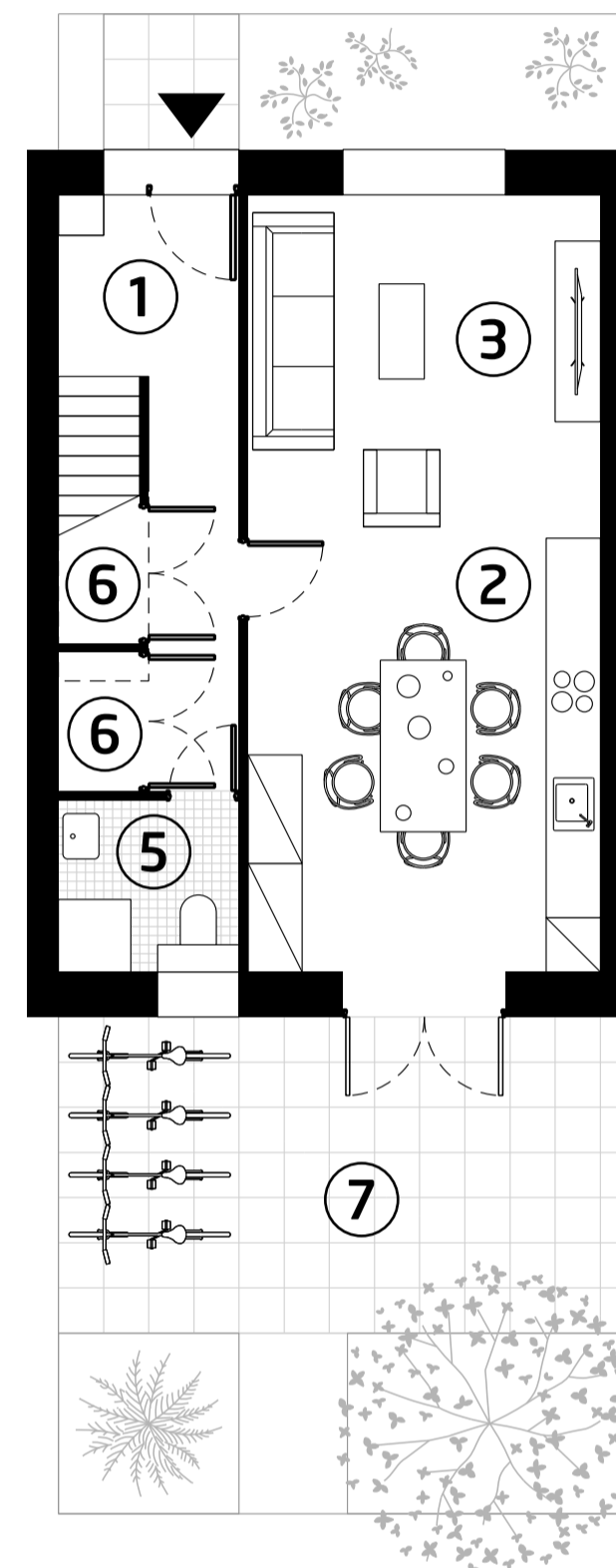
Rerouting of paths will be required in the green space at the front of houses. Robust, high-quality hard landscaping will be incorporated into the back gardens and access to the houses.

KEY	Unit colour key	
	Trees retained	 1 Bed Flat
	Trees removed	 2 Bed Flat
	Root zone	 2 Bed Flat
	Proposed trees	 2 Bed Maisonette
	Public garden	 3 Bed Flat
	Planting beds	 3 Bed House
	Elizabeth place (road to be closed)	
	Ancillary	
	10 Gorse Leas garage	

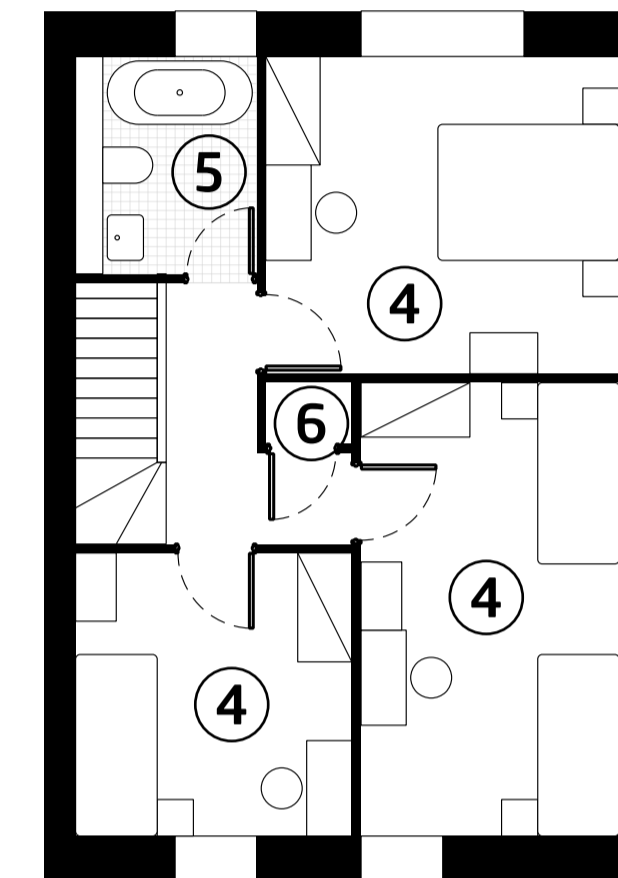
Draft Proposals



2 Bed Flat - Plan



3 Bed House - Ground Floor Plan



3 Bed House - First Floor Plan

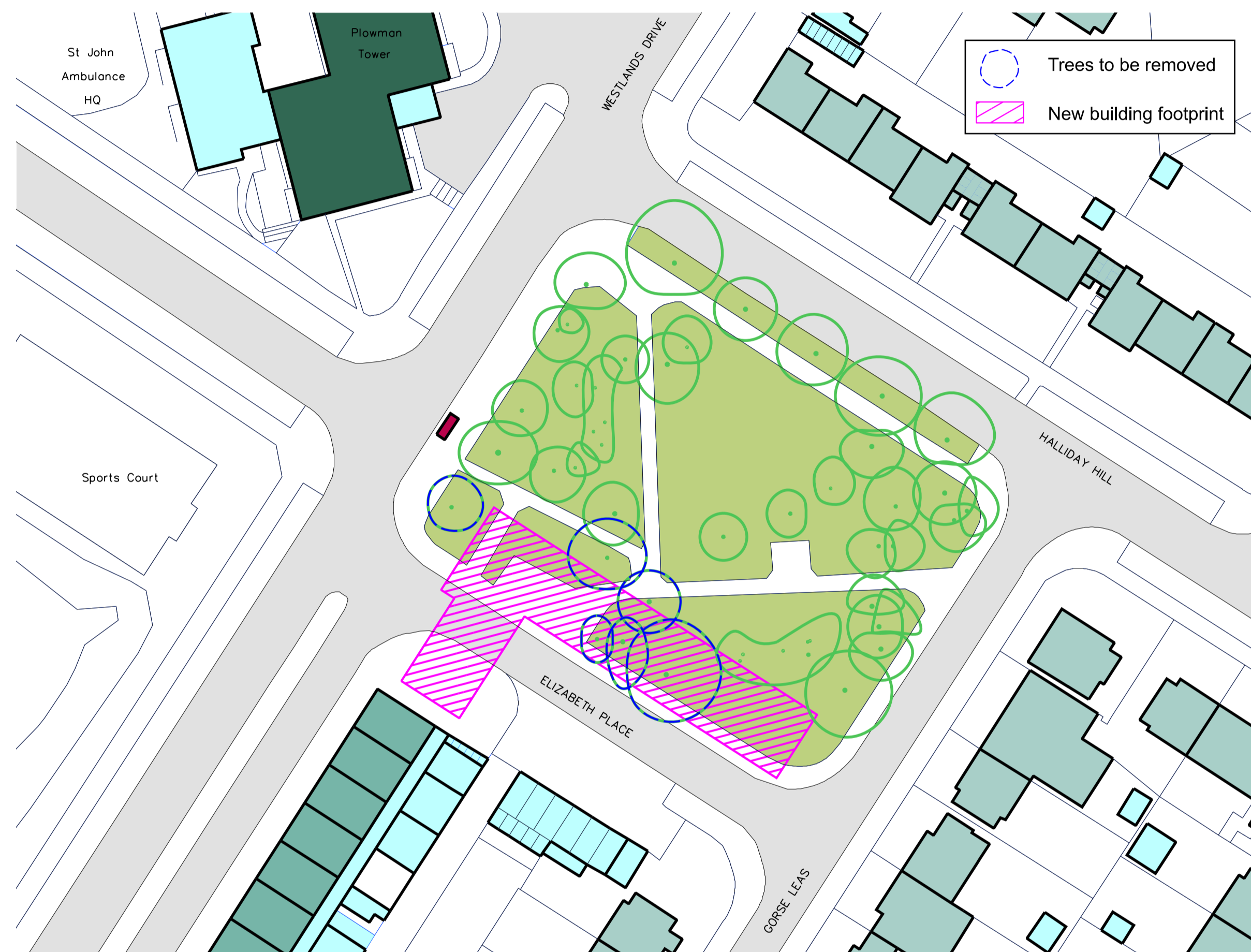
Key

- 1 Entrance hall
- 2 Kitchen / dining room
- 3 Living room
- 4 Bedroom
- 5 Bathroom / WC
- 6 Storage
- 7 Private amenity space



Proposed North Elevation

Green Space, Ecology, Biodiversity



Current condition

The green space is currently predominantly used by people crossing the diagonal paths, which will mostly be retained, with some alteration required, and the recycling bins on Elizabeth Place will be relocated.

The proposal retains 75% of the open space, enhanced with new landscaping features and facilities.

75% of green space maintained

Green areas will be largely retained, while the existing paths will be amended to maintain desire lines. We are taking suggestions on how residents and neighbours would like to use this space.

Most trees retained

An arboricultural survey done has been carried out to assess value of the trees and minimise their removal, particularly the more mature ones. Six trees have been identified as requiring removal for the development, but indigenous species planting will be carried out to replace those removed.

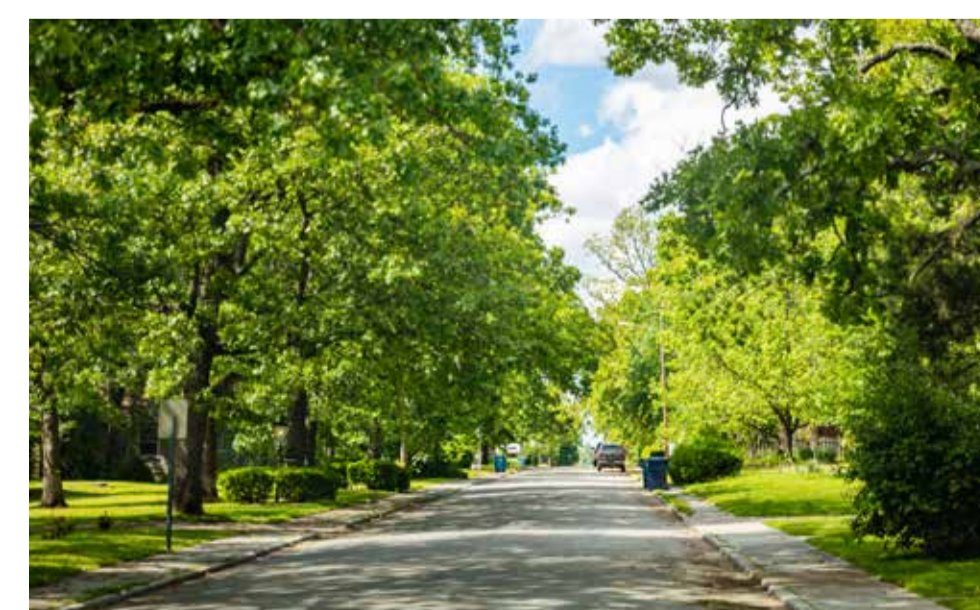
Existing green space has limited ecological value

The site includes areas of amenity grassland, largely non-native young to semi-mature trees, hedges, introduced shrubs and hard-standing. The tree and shrub planting had previously been created for amenity and ornamental value but are deemed low in ecological value.

New scheme improvements

OCC are committed to improving the ecology and increasing net biodiversity. Proposals include the planting of new native trees and the provision of nesting and roosting sites for birds, bats, and insects such as swift boxes, bat bricks, and a bug hotel.

Please let us know what you would like to see in or how you would like to use this open space by completing the feedback form.



Social, Sustainable Housing

The proposed 16-unit development will be made up entirely of homes let at social rent and for shared ownership in a variety of sizes and types suited for different occupancies. A vast majority of the homes will be 2 bedrooms and above, with a focus on providing homes for families.

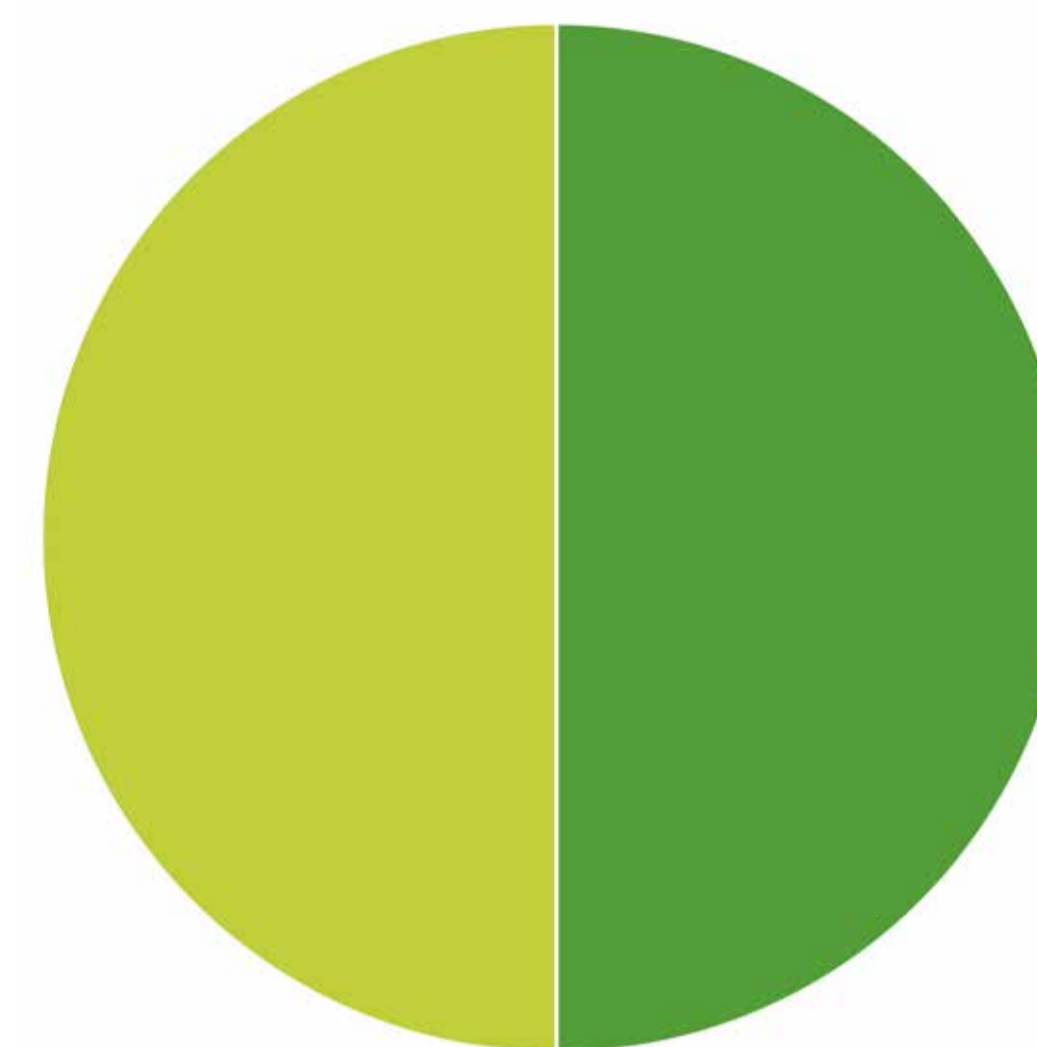
Social rent is calculated with reference to the size and value of a home and average regional incomes. In Oxford, social rent is typically around 40% of equivalent private rents.

Shared ownership gives people the opportunity to get a foot on the property ladder by buying a stake in their homes that they would not otherwise be able to afford.

This proposal goes significantly beyond the council's requirement for 40% of homes in development sites of more than 10 homes to be for social rent and 10% to be for other affordable tenures like shared ownership.

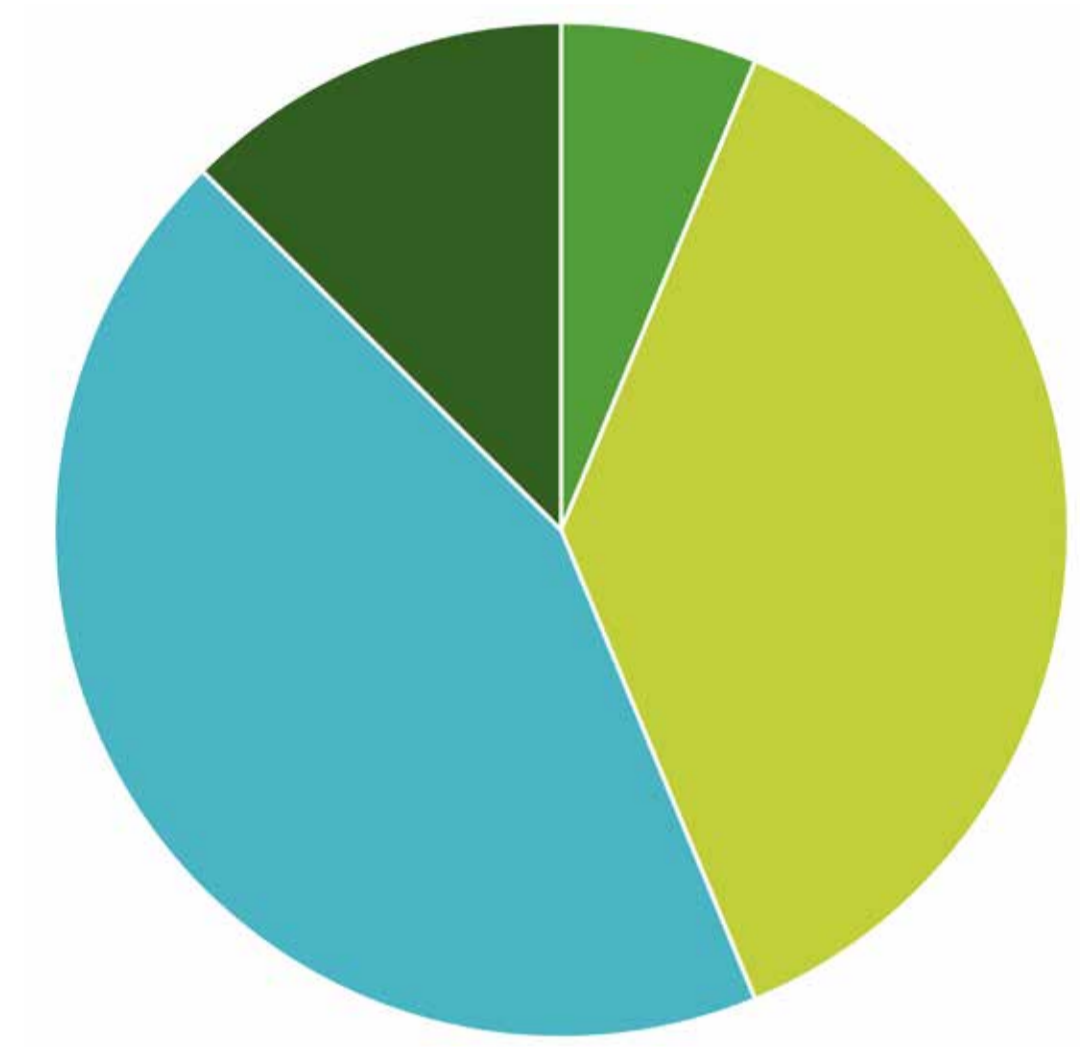
1 no. accessible unit will be provided from the outset, with another 2 which can be easily adaptable into wheelchair accessible flats in the future. A lift will provide level access to all flats, which all have private amenity spaces.

Tenure



● Social Rent ● Shared Ownership

Number of Rooms



● 1 Bedroom ● 2 Bedrooms
● 3 Bedrooms ● 4 Bedrooms

Sustainable Homes

The proposal targets a reduction of carbon emissions by 70% when compared with 2013 Building Regulations requirements. This involves reducing reliance on fossil fuels, limiting heat loss in the winter and lowering the subsequent need to heat the space, and paying attention to overheating, which will become more of a problem in the changing climate in years to come. OCC are monitoring building quality through an in-house quality checking process.

Potential ways of implementing sustainable energy solutions include:

- High levels of insulation
- Renewable energy
- Photovoltaic panels
- Air source heat pumps
- Electric (as opposed to gas) heating
- Provision for cross-ventilation of each home
- Appropriately-sized windows balancing natural light, ventilation and overheating

Transport & Highways



Stopping up road

The closure of Elizabeth Place as a through road is unlikely to have significant impact on traffic flow, based on current observations and use levels. Access to the garages on Elizabeth Place will be retained.

Low car development

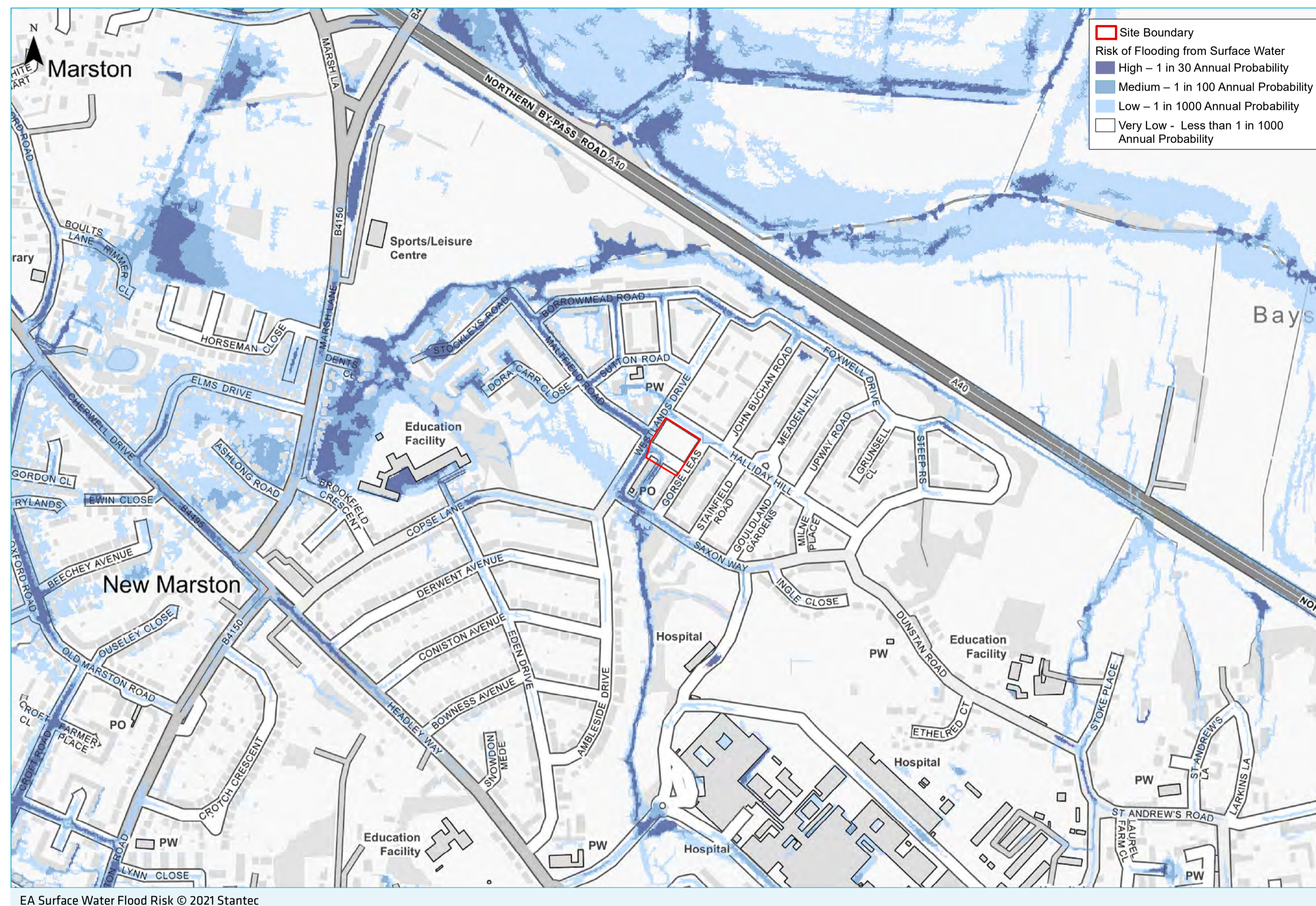
This is a low car development as it is close to public transport services and located in a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ), in accordance with planning requirements. A small number of wheelchair accessible car parking spaces will be provided, and these would be managed to avoid uncontrolled parking.

Covered and secured cycle storage appropriate for the number of residents in the flats and maisonettes will be provided. Houses will have their own cycle storage, accessed through the back gardens.

Bin lorry and fire engine access

Services access will be from Gorse Leas, behind the proposed houses.

Utilities, Drainage & Flooding



Not in flood plain

The majority of the site has a very low risk of surface water flooding, with an annual probability of equal or less than 0.1%.

A small portion of the site towards Westlands Drive is at Low to Medium risk (between 1% and 3.3%).

Northway and Marston Flood Alleviation Project

The bottom end of Saxon Way and Westlands Drive have historically flooded when the flows within Headington Hill Tributary have overloaded the entry of this stream into a culvert behind the Oxford Boxing Academy, Saxon Way. This flooding is associated with high intensity, short term, rainfall events, causing flash flooding. The Northway and Marston Flood Alleviation Project has sought to reduce the risk of this flooding to local residents and businesses by controlling the flood waters. Road levels have been altered on Westlands Drive to redirect flood waters onto the adjacent recreation ground. The ground level of the recreation ground have been reprofiled to provide a storage basin for these flood waters adjacent to Westlands Drive, which will discharge back into the Headington Hill Tributary culvert (beneath Westlands Drive) after the storm has dissipated.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems

The proposed drainage strategy will utilize permeable paving in the landscaping and back gardens in conjunction with a trench, and a flow control system which will limit the discharge rate to the public sewer.

No major utilities below site

No major utilities have been found below the site, minimising disruption of supply to neighbours during the development works.

Summary



Architect's visualisation from Gorse Leas

A new residential development in this area will:

- Increase the prominence of the parade as the centre of Northway
- Improve visual quality and aspect to and from the open space
- Create a massing which responds to the scale of existing surrounding buildings and stitches them together in a visually pleasing manner
- Provide social housing predominantly for families
- Deliver sustainable, low energy new homes
- Provide wheelchair accessible accommodation and more for future adaptation
- Retain 75% of the open space and facilitate natural surveillance of it, while improving the amenity for use by the wider community
- Improve the biodiversity and ecology of the area by planting native trees and creating habitats for various wildlife.

How to give feedback

Please let us know what you think about the proposal by going to the link below and answering the questionnaire.

www.oxford.gov.uk/westlandsdrive

The public consultation event will be running from 13th August to 10th September 2021. We would be grateful if your responses could be completed by 10th September 2021.