



Land West of Woodcroft Lane

Design & Access Statement

October 2015

HCC ref: Y0422 Former Meadowlands DAS.indd

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

- 1.1.1 This Design & Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared by Hampshire County Council to support an outline planning application for residential development on land south of Woodcroft Primary School in Waterlooville. The land forms part of the site of the former Meadowlands Infant and Junior Schools.
- 1.1.2 The purpose of the outline planning application is to establish the principle of development for 43 dwellings, with access off Woodcroft Lane. The precise details of the appearance, landscaping, layout, and scale of the development will follow as a reserved matters or full planning application. This will provide a further opportunity for members of the public, Havant Borough Council, and other local stakeholders to be consulted on the detail of the design.
- 1.1.3 The sale of the land with outline consent for residential use will help fund the investment made by the County Council to create the Woodcroft Primary School. In line with Sport England's guidance and Policy CS18 of Havant Borough Council's Core Strategy, there will be no loss of school playing field as a result of the proposal.

1.2 Site and location

- 1.2.1 The application site extends to some 1.4 hectares and is outlined in red in Figure 1. It is located to the north of the Borough of Havant within the Hart Plain Ward.
- 1.2.2 To the north of the site is the Woodcroft Primary School and the 'Woodcroft Farm' strategic housing site. The eastern boundary abuts Woodcroft Lane and private car parks and gardens for flats in Renown Gardens. The southern boundary of site is defined by Eagle Avenue, with the Wecock Estate beyond. To the west is strip of land reserved for a future access road to 'Woodcroft Farm', and beyond that lies the Wecock Recreation Ground.
- 1.2.3 As shown in Figure 1, the application boundary

extends across that strip of land in order that, should the development of this site precede the construction of the access road into Woodcroft Farm, the existing pedestrian access to the school from the west through Wecock Recreation Ground can be maintained.

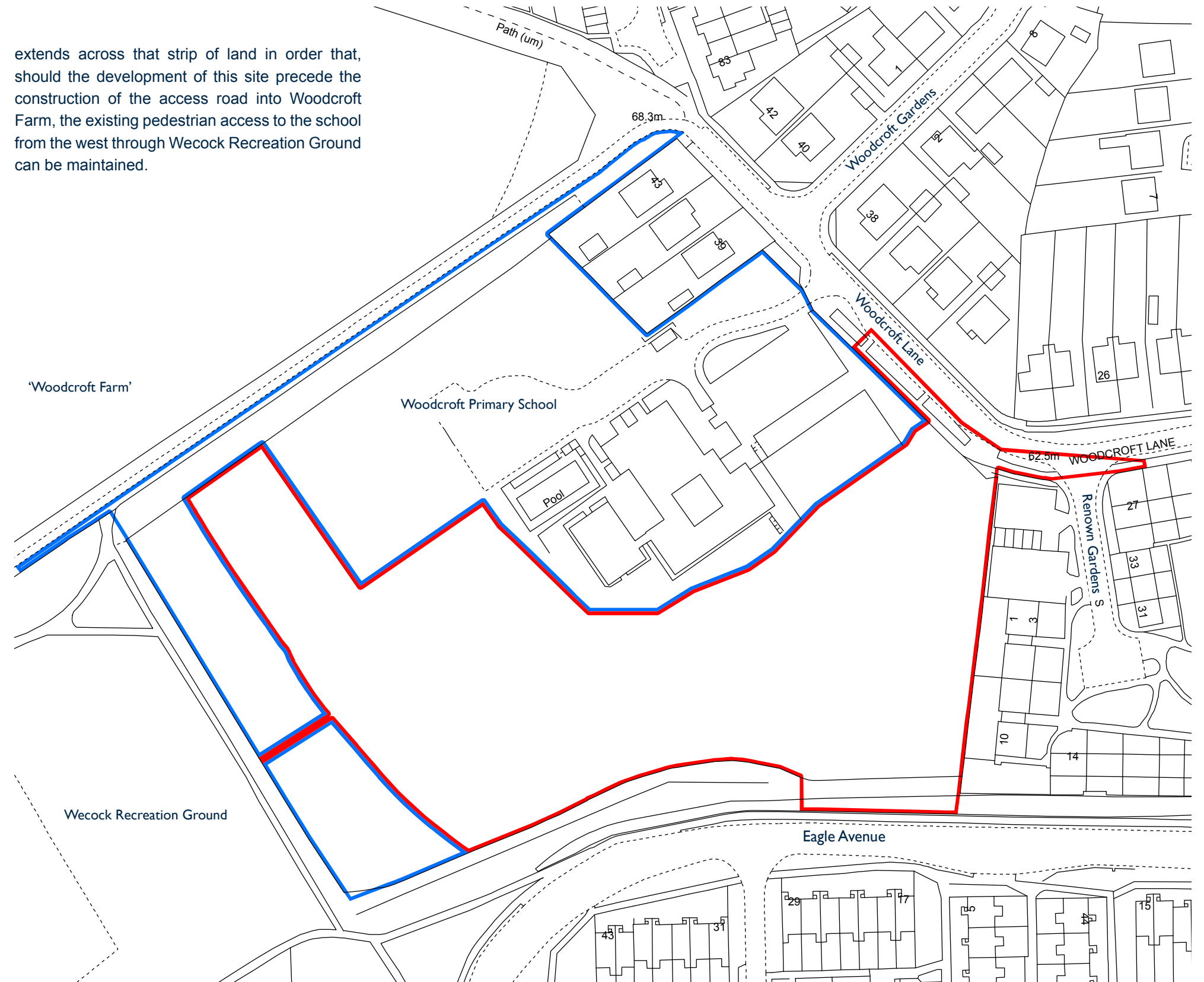


Figure 1: Red line location plan (not to scale)

2. Overview

2.1 Figure 2 provides an outline illustration of the proposed development which will bring the following key benefits:

- provide new homes, 30% of which will be affordable dwellings, for the local community
- contribute to the regeneration of Wecock Farm and the wider Borough
- deliver on-site amenity green space to act as a landscaped focal point to the development
- retain and enhance boundary trees and planting, wherever practical, as a landscaped setting to the development and important wildlife habitat
- improve public walking and cycling routes through the site from Woodcroft Lane and Eagle Avenue, making it easier for local people to get to and from the Primary School, Wecock Recreation Ground, and shops on Milton Road.
- secure a capital receipt to help pay for the investment in the refurbishment and improvements to Woodcroft Primary School;

2.2 In addition, the development at the adjacent 'Woodcroft Farm', under adopted Local Plan Policy CS18.5, has secured a replacement school playing pitch on land to the north of the site, which is a significant improvement in size, shape and topography to the existing school playing field arrangements. The replacement school playing field was granted planning consent on 11.09.15 under reference APP/15/00538.



Figure 2: Illustrative development plan 5

3. Assessment



Figure 3: Original site of the former Meadowlands Infant and Primary Schools

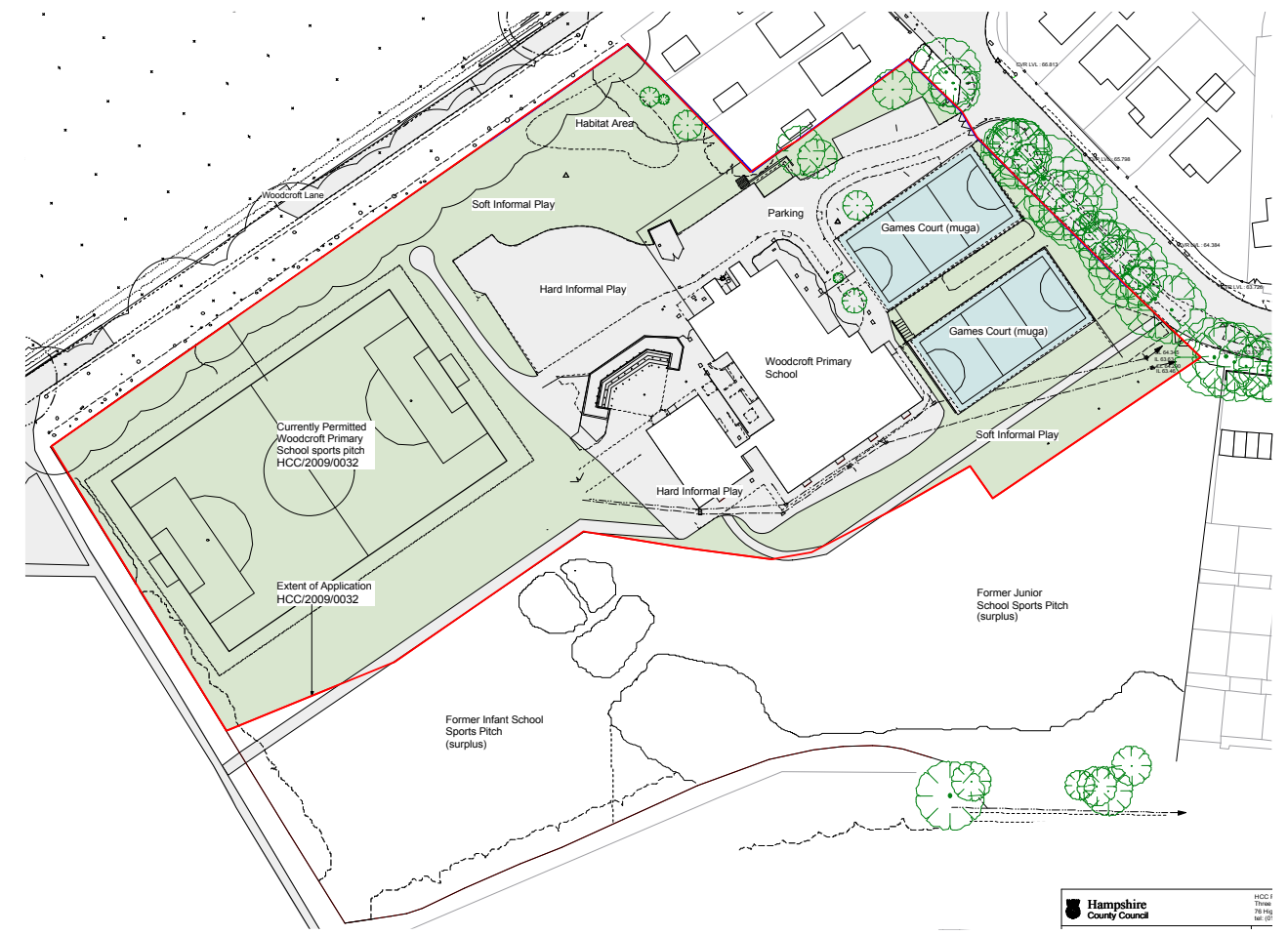


Figure 4: The approved layout for Woodcroft Primary School and its new playing pitch, with the surplus land to the south

3.1 Social and economic background

3.1.1 Having provided an overview of the benefits of the proposal, the following section sets out the background to the outline application.

3.1.2 In response to a sustained fall in pupil numbers, and following public consultations in the summer of 2007 with parents, staff and governors, the former Meadowlands Infant and Junior Schools (Figure 3) were amalgamated to form the new Woodcroft Primary School.

3.1.3 The combined sites of the former Infants and

Junior Schools were larger than that needed for the new Primary School and, as a result of the amalgamation, an area of land to the south of the school buildings was declared surplus to the County Council's educational needs in September 2008.

3.1.4 At the same time, the County Council also approved the sale of the surplus land for residential development, subject to planning consent, in order to fund the £2+ million investment in the educational and community improvements at the new Woodcroft Primary School.

3.1.5 It should be noted that pupil capacity at Woodcroft Primary School was planned to cater for the number of pupils forecast to be generated by the development of both the surplus land and local strategic housing sites that were emerging through the Havant Borough Local Plan.

3.1.5 Havant Borough Council's Development Consultation Forum was consulted on the County Council's initial proposals to develop and sell the surplus land in July 2008.

3.1.6 In February 2009, a planning application (09/59532/002) was submitted to the County

Council under Regulation 3 of the Town & Country Planning Act General Regulations 1992, for the conversion of the existing Junior School building into the Woodcroft Primary School and the demolition of the Infant School and playground to provide for the construction of a new grass playing pitch (Figure 4). The public were further consulted on the County Council's need to sell the surplus land to fund the education improvements as part of that planning application, which was approved in July 2009.

3. Assessment



Figure 5: 'Woodcroft Farm' strategic allocation



Figure 6: extract of the 'Woodcroft Farm' proposals

- 3.1.7 Concurrent with the above, Havant Borough Council completed work on its Local Plan Core Strategy, which was formally adopted in March 2011. Within the Core Strategy, Policy CS18.5 allocates a strategic housing site, known as 'Woodcroft Farm', to the north-west of the Primary School (Figure 5).
- 3.1.8 In order to provide vehicular access to 'Woodcroft Farm', Policy CS18.5 requires that a new road off Eagle Avenue passes through the westernmost section of both the Primary School (approved under Planning Application 09/59532/002) and the surplus land. To compensate for the loss of the 'approved' school playing field, Policy CS18.5 further required that land for a replacement sports pitch be provided within 'Woodcroft Farm' contiguous with the northern boundary of the Primary School.
- 3.1.9 In the light of the emergence and adoption of Policy CS18.5, the 'approved' playing field for Woodcroft Primary School was not implemented by the County Council so as to avoid the abortive cost of providing a pitch that would then need to be replaced.
- 3.1.10 Consequently, Woodcroft Primary School currently uses the surplus land as a playing field on a temporary basis until the replacement pitch

is provided at 'Woodcroft Farm'. However, the surplus land has poor drainage and is on a slight slope, which means it is not ideal for use as a school sports field. The replacement pitch within 'Woodcroft Farm' will thus be an improvement in shape, topography and drainage, and will enable more frequent and effective use by the Primary School compared with the current temporary arrangements.

- 3.1.11 A full planning application (APP/13/00804) for the development of 288 dwellings on 'Woodcroft Farm' was granted planning consent on 23 January 2014 by the Borough Council. This development allows for the land for a replacement playing field for the Primary School (Figure 6).
- 3.1.12 The details of the replacement school playing field were then submitted as a separate Regulation 3 planning application to the County Council and approved in September 2015. This latter application also provides for a temporary road around the pitch to maintain the existing farm track access, prior to the 'Woodcroft Farm' strategic allocation being developed (Figure 7).
- 3.1.13 As a result of the above, the boundary of Woodcroft Primary School will be amended to accommodate the replacement pitch within the school grounds to ensure effective security and management. As



Figure 7: Replacement school playing field and temporary farm track within 'Woodcroft Farm', and new road access to 'Woodcroft Farm' through western section of school site and surplus land..

- is shown in Figure 7, part of the 'approved' (but unbuilt) playing field for the Primary School will also be retained as an additional sports facility for the school.
- 3.1.14 Notwithstanding the above, given that the surplus land is currently being used temporarily as school playing fields, Sport England requires that replacement sports provision be made before any development on the surplus land commences. As Local Education Authority, the County Council also demands that there is no reduction in sports and playing facilities at Woodcroft Primary School.
- 3.1.15 This requirement therefore forms part of a legal agreement between the County Council and Grainger plc covering the release of County Council land for the access road to 'Woodcroft Farm' in exchange for the provision of land and funding for the replacement pitch within the strategic housing allocation site.
- 3.1.16 Should permission be granted for this outline application, the County Council intends that no development on its surplus land would commence until the replacement school pitch within 'Woodcroft Farm' has been completed. This would meet the requirements of Sport England and ensure that there is no loss of school playing field.
- 3.1.17 In order to deliver this approach, and to reflect the scale of regeneration and house building in the immediate area, the County Council seeks an outline planning consent of 5 years, until the submission of reserved matters. The County Council is also content should Havant Borough Council wish to condition its approval to this application so that no development will commence until such time as the replacement school playing field is completed.

3. Assessment

3.2 Site description

- 3.2.1 In line with the Havant Borough Council Borough Design Guide SPD (paragraph 4.46), this section provides an analysis of the site and its surrounding context. An evaluation of this analysis is set out in section 5 of this statement, which has further informed the design proposals in Section 6.
- 3.2.2 The site is underlain by clay, with no evidence of potential soil contamination (see accompanying Ground Investigation report) and is located in Flood Zone 1, with the lowest risk of flooding.
- 3.2.3 There is a slight fall from north to south across the site, with a pronounced embankment along the southern boundary with Eagle Avenue.
- 3.2.4 The majority of the site is currently mown grass and is considered to be of low / negligible ecological value (see accompanying Habitat Survey).
- 3.2.5 The site is bounded to the north and south by tree belts, which are considered to be high amenity-value woodland (see accompanying Tree Survey). As identified in the accompanying Habitat Survey, these are key ecological features likely to provide habitat for reptiles, small mammals, and bats. To the south-west of the school buildings is a small group of trees, which provides a focus to this otherwise open area. A line of oak trees are located along Woodcroft Lane, to the north-east of the site, where there is an existing gated access from the highway. These oak trees are of moderate amenity value and collectively provide a deciduous buffer to Woodcroft Lane (see accompanying Tree Survey). The remaining trees within the site and to the south-east corner comprise small groves of low amenity value ornamental trees. There are no Tree Preservation Orders within the site.
- 3.2.6 The site is not within a Conservation Area nor contain any Listed Buildings of architectural or historic interest, and Hampshire County Council's Archaeologist has confirmed that the site has low archaeological potential.



View 1: Pedestrian access to school on western boundary



View 2: Woodcroft Primary School from southern boundary



View 3: Trees along northern boundary of school



View 4: Close up of Woodcroft Primary school from south



View 5: Gated access and dropped kerb on Woodcroft Lane



View 6: Looking east towards flats in Renown Gardens



View 7: Eagle Avenue and southern boundary of site



View 8: Small copse of trees within the centre of the site

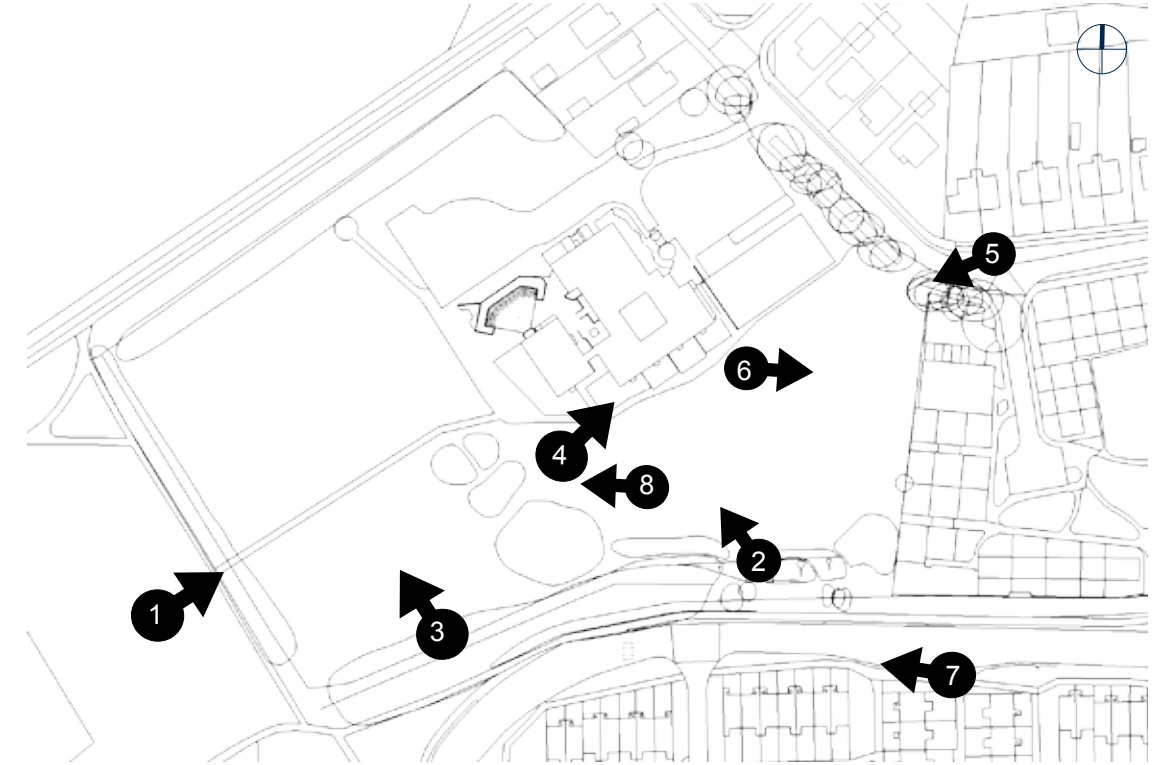


Figure 8: Photo location (not to scale)

3. Assessment

3.3 Surrounding patterns of development

Woodcroft Lane / Woodcroft Gardens / Renown Gardens

Dwelling density (dph)	21 (low)
Set back from street (m)	8 - 9
Storeys	1-3
Height x width x depth (m)	4.7-9.6 x 4.2-12 x 6.5-11
Plot width (m)	7-9
Garden	Rear gardens with length 5 - 15m.
Boundaries	Railings / low brick walls with hedging of 0.5 - 1.2m. height
Materials	Red brick, clay tile, white fenestration, cream or white render.
Roofing	Hipped or gable ends with chimneys.
Car parking	Some off-street in drive way, garages, on-street parking courtyards.



Figure 9: Woodcroft Lane & Renown Gardens urban grain



Figure 10: Chalet bungalows in Woodcroft Lane

Eagle Avenue

Dwelling density (dph)	50 (medium)
Set back from street (m)	2 - 3
Storeys	2 - 3
Height x width x depth (m)	7.75 x 5 x 7.5
Plot width (m)	5
Garden	Front gardens 4.5 - 6m. long and rear gardens of length 10-15m.
Boundaries	Low brick walls with height 0.5m. with some hedging.
Materials	Red brick with a mix of weatherboarding, concrete interlocking tiles and tile / slate hangings to upper floors.
Roofing	Low pitches with clay tiles and gable ends.
Car parking	Rear garage courtyards or on-street in dedicated parallel bays.



Figure 11: Eagle Avenue urban grain



Figure 12: Terraced housing in Eagle Avenue

Kite Close / Hobby Close / Merlin Close

Dwelling density (dph)	65 (high)
Set back from street (m)	Staggered from 7m from the street.
Storeys	2
Height x width x depth (m)	8.25 x 4 - 5 x 8
Plot width (m)	4 - 5
Garden	Little or no front gardens, back gardens 7 - 10m. long.
Boundaries	Little demarcation or landscaping.
Materials	Red / orange-red brick with white fenestration.
Roofing	Grey or red tile with gable ends. Small porches.
Car parking	Off street in driveway or front courtyard.



Figure 13: Kite Close urban grain



Figure 14: Terraced houses in Hobby Close

3. Assessment

3.4 Movement and access

3.4.1 The site benefits from the extensive pedestrian network in the surrounding area that links to existing services and facilities. Local shops on Milton Road are some 200m to the east of the site, with the Cowplain District Centre, on London Road, approximately 1.2 km to the south-east.

3.4.2 The nearest bus stops are on Eagle Avenue, Lovedean Lane, and Milton Road. The No.40 service connects to Waterloooville, Queen Alexandra Hospital, Cosham Station, Portsmouth, and Southsea. The No.39 service links to Havant and South Downs College. The site is thus well served by local facilities and provides realistic opportunities for walking / cycling and using public transport as alternatives to the private car.

3.4.3 There is an existing vehicle and pedestrian access into the site from Woodcroft Lane. This will need to be improved to ensure safe access for all but will remain the sole vehicular access into the site.

3.4.4 However, accessing the site from this single point would result in a cul-de-sac of more than 200m, and the submitted Transport Assessment indicates that an separate emergency access route into the site will be required.

3.4.5 Existing cycle routes are limited but could be enhanced in line with the Borough Council's 'Active Travel Study (2011-16)' and Hampshire County Council's 'Countryside Access Plan for the Solent (2008-13)', and through proposals at 'Woodcroft Farm'.

3.4.6 Existing Rights of Way to the north of the site provide access to the surrounding countryside. It is proposed to divert a section of Bridleway 1, which runs along the northern boundary of the site and the Primary School, within the 'Woodcroft Farm' development in order to accommodate the proposed replacement school playing field. This diversion will also connect a 'missing link' between Byway 46 and Woodcroft Lane..

3.4.7 The Woodcroft Primary School Travel Plan

(2010-2012) identifies that 80 - 90% of pupils walk to the school and that there is a need for enhanced lighting and pavements to the School and improved crossing points on Lovedean Lane, Eagle Avenue, and Woodcroft Lane.

3.4.8 The proposal presents opportunities to improve walking and cycling to and from the Primary School, bus stops, and local shops through on-site measures or developer contributions for off-site works.

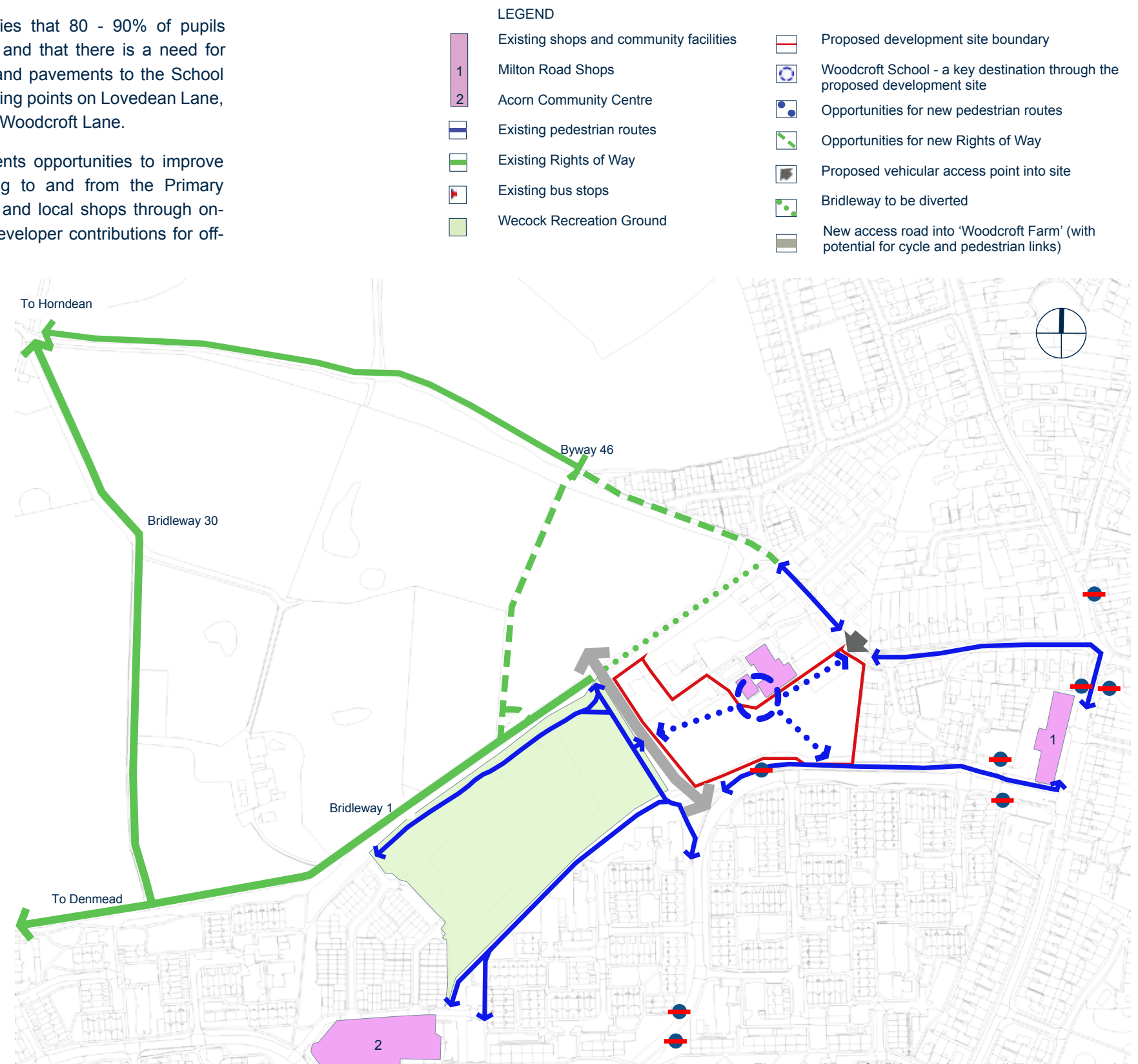


Figure 15 Local facilities and accessibility (not to scale)

3. Assessment

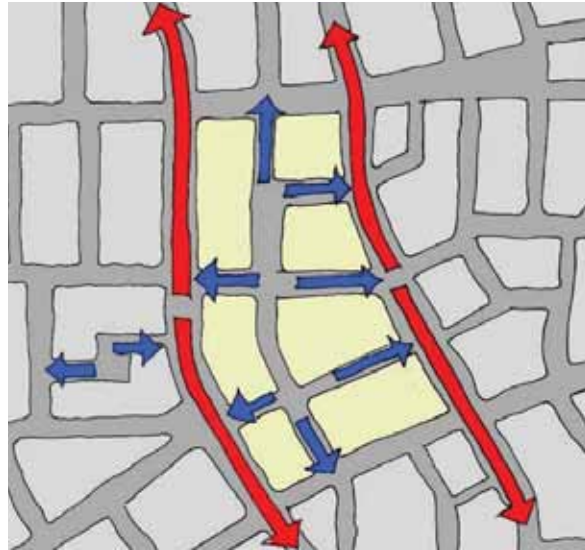


Figure 16: Extract from Havant Borough Design Guide

3.5 Design and Layout Policy

3.5.1 This section summarises the adopted Local Plan policies relating to urban design which have been used to guide the illustrative proposals that follow. The accompanying Planning Statement and Affordable Housing Statement explains how the proposals comply with other relevant national, regional, and local planning policies.

3.5.2 Policy CS16 [High Quality Design] states that planning permission will be granted for development that is designed to a high standard and:

- identifies and responds positively to existing features of natural, historic or local character within or close to the development site;
- integrates with existing local landscape features, promotes wildlife and biodiversity and/or applies characteristics of the local area into the design of a scheme wherever possible to create variety and interest;
- uses the characteristics of the locality to help inform the design of new development including heights, massing, existing buildings lines, plot widths and depths, materials and proportions of windows and doors;

- links to existing pedestrian and cycle routes and encourages people to use public transport where possible;
- does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of neighbours through smell, loss of privacy, outlook, noise and overlooking;
- reduces opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour;
- is legible and not dominated by vehicular traffic;
- uses high quality hard and soft landscape material and street furniture;
- ensures safe and convenient access for all;
- maximises opportunities for mixed use developments and encourages higher densities (50+ dwellings per hectare) where appropriate;
- mitigates negative environmental impacts through sustainable design;
- adapts to the changing needs of the users and the changing climate over the life-span of the building.

3.5.3 Policy CS8 [Community Safety] states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that: engrain community safety into the development process; provide well-lit footpaths, cycle ways and roads; maximise opportunities for natural surveillance and the amount of 'defensible space'.

3.5.4 Policy DM13 [Residential Parking] permits development that provides car and cycle parking in accordance with the relevant standards set out in the Havant Residential Parking and Cycle Provision SPD (see Table 1).

Unit Size (Beds)	Car Parking		Cycle Parking	
	Allocated	Unallocated (shared)	Long stay	Short stay
1 bed	1	0.9	1	1
2 bed	2	1.3	2	
3 bed		1.9		
4+ bed	3	2.4		

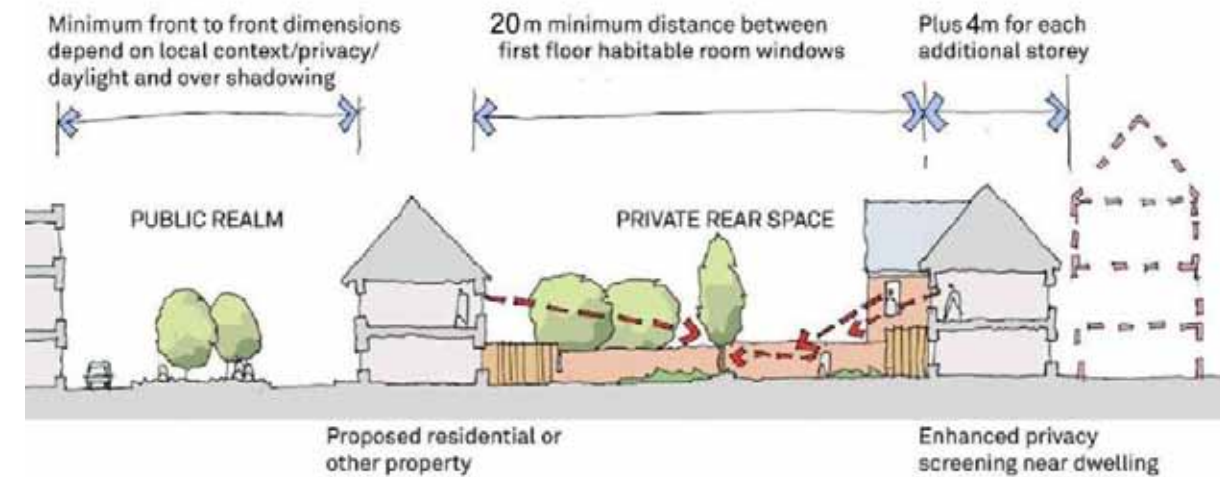


Figure 17: Extract from Havant Borough Design Guide

3.5.5 Section 5.1 of the Havant Borough Design Guide SPD December 2011 also encourages new development to:

- use perimeter blocks (paragraph 5.04)
- incorporate balconies where possible in apartments (Paragraph 5.15).
- provide a combination of parking including breaks in rows of on-street parking bays between every 5 spaces.
- provide cars with surveillance from ground and upper floor windows.
- ensure garages and car ports do not project forward of the building lines.
- vary street width and length according to the prominence of the route and housing density
- provide adequate facilities for the storage of domestic waste and convenient access for collection.



Figure 18: Extract from Havant Borough Design Guide

4. Involvement

- 4.1 In line with paragraph 4.5.2 of the adopted Havant Borough Council Statement of Community Involvement DPD, the following section sets out the nature and scale of community engagement that has been undertaken to date to inform the current proposals.
- 4.2 The requirements for community involvement on the current application will be undertaken by Havant Borough Council during the formal planning application process in line with Table 2 of the Borough Council's Statement of Community Involvement.
- 4.3 In addition to meeting the Borough Council's minimum requirements for community involvement, the County Council has also consulted a wide range of community groups / forums, stakeholders, and professionals to ensure a sustainable proposal is achieved.
- 4.4 Parents, School Governors, and stakeholders were consulted in Summer 2007 on the proposals for the creation of the new Woodcroft Primary School and how this would be financed from the sale of surplus land resulting from the merger of the Infant and Junior Schools.
- 4.5 The County Archaeologist was consulted in June 2007 and raised no concerns arising from the proposal.
- 4.6 Initial outline proposals for the site were presented to the Havant Development Consultation Forum in 31 July 2008. This enabled explanation of the proposals at an early stage to Councillors, the public, and key stakeholders and also answered a number of questions from local Councillors in a public forum. Feedback from the forum has been incorporated into the illustrative layout, including a reduction in the number of dwellings proposed on the site from 52 to 43 dwellings to make the proposal more sympathetic to the character of the locality.
- 4.7 Hampshire County Council Biodiversity Group were consulted in February 2011. This confirmed that the Phase 1 Habitat Survey is adequate for planning purposes and proposals should incorporate the avoidance measures identified within that Survey.
- 4.8 There have been three pre-application consultations in June 2008 (GEN/59532/001), October 2009 (GEN/59532/002), and December 2011 (GEN/11/01344), and various meetings with Havant Borough Council's planning officers dating from February 2008. Details of how these consultations have informed the current illustrative proposals are summarised in the sections that follow.
- 4.9 Hampshire County Council Area Highways Office was consulted in August 2011 and raised the need for vehicle tracking and public rights of access to be secured for the emergency access to the site from Eagle Avenue.
- 4.10 There has been ongoing engagement with Woodcroft Primary School on the proposals for the site.
- 4.11 Hampshire Constabulary's 'Design Out Crime' Advisor was consulted in February 2012 and raised no objections to the illustrative layout. Comments from the Crime Design Advisor have been incorporated into the current proposal.
- 4.12 The Safer Routes to School Programme Manager was consulted in March 2012 and set out a number of points that have been addressed in the illustrative layout.
- 4.13 Sport England was consulted on the proposal for a new playing field to replace the existing school pitch in April 2012. There will be no loss of school playing fields and no development on this site will commence until a replacement playing field has been provided in line with Sport England's comments. Further details on how the comments from Sport England have been incorporated within the proposal are set out in the accompanying Sport England Supporting Statement.
- 4.14 Ongoing discussions with the owners and agents promoting 'Woodcroft Farm' have ensured that sufficient land is reserved, immediately to the west of this application site, to deliver a future access road from Eagle Avenue to that strategic housing development area.



Figure 20: Refurbishment of Meadowlands Junior School to create Woodcroft Primary School 2009



Figure 19: Demolition of Meadowlands Infant School 2009



Figure 21: Entrance to the new Woodcroft Primary School

5. Evaluation

5.1 The Concept Plan in Figure 22 summarises the principal constraints and opportunities that need to be addressed by the development in order to create a well-designed place. These have emerged from the evaluation of the social, economic, physical, and planning policy contexts, and the outcome of involvement with local stakeholders.

5.2 Feedback from the early pre-application consultations in 2008 and 2009 with the Local Planning Authority and the Havant Development Consultation Forum highlighted the need to:

- safeguard sufficient land for access to Woodcroft Farm and front houses onto this route to provide natural surveillance.
- retain the existing pedestrian link to the school from the western boundary
- avoid the over-dominance of the access road within the site
- integrate development with the existing pedestrian and cycle networks and avoid inactive routes
- retain mature trees where possible and mitigate any loss of planting to maintain / enhance biodiversity
- provide landscaped open space (but not playing space), directly over-looked by houses, as a focus for the development
- create a sense of place, with defined gateways and landmarks, such as by retaining the existing central copse of trees.
- minimise over-looking between new and neighbouring residential properties.
- relate car parking to individual units, close to front doors with good surveillance.

5.3 Early discussions with the Highway Authority established the need for a route from Eagle Avenue for emergency vehicles only, but which would also provide a pedestrian / cycle link to and from local facilities.

5.4 The images in Figure 23 indicate the evolution of draft illustrative layouts for the site in response to the early pre-application discussions and evaluation.



Figure 22: Concept plan (not to scale)



Figure 23: Evolution of site layout from early pre-application discussions (not to scale)