

Design & Access Statement

for the proposed development of 6no. affordable homes at

Knighton Road, Broad Chalke

on behalf of The Broad Chalke Community Land Trust

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Etchingham Morris Architecture were appointed by the Broad Chalke CLT in 2017 at which point, a site in Knighton Road had been short-listed and subsequently selected for the provision of 6no. affordable homes for local people.

The Neighbourhood Plan was in preparation at that time and was formally made on 7 July 2021. It provides a valuable resource identifying the special characteristics of the settlement of Broad Chalke together with the constraints, opportunities and aspirations for new development in the village.

The site is allocated and defined 'Site 4' in the Broad Chalke Neighbourhood Plan (NP) and is controlled in terms of the maximum land area and dwelling numbers by a 'landowner offset agreement' referred to in the NP Clause 4.28, giving a ratio of 2:1 affordable / private with the landowner's 'open-market' housing site on Manor Farm Road 'Site 5'.



The Site

Site 4 is defined by a red line in the NP (Fig 12) and consists of a section of arable field to the west of the main Knighton Road settlement and on the south side of the road. Arable land will be retained on its southern and western sides.

The land area is outside of the defined Village Conservation Area, but within and surrounded by the AONB. It slopes up from north to south gradually and that incline increases southwards to Knighton Hill.

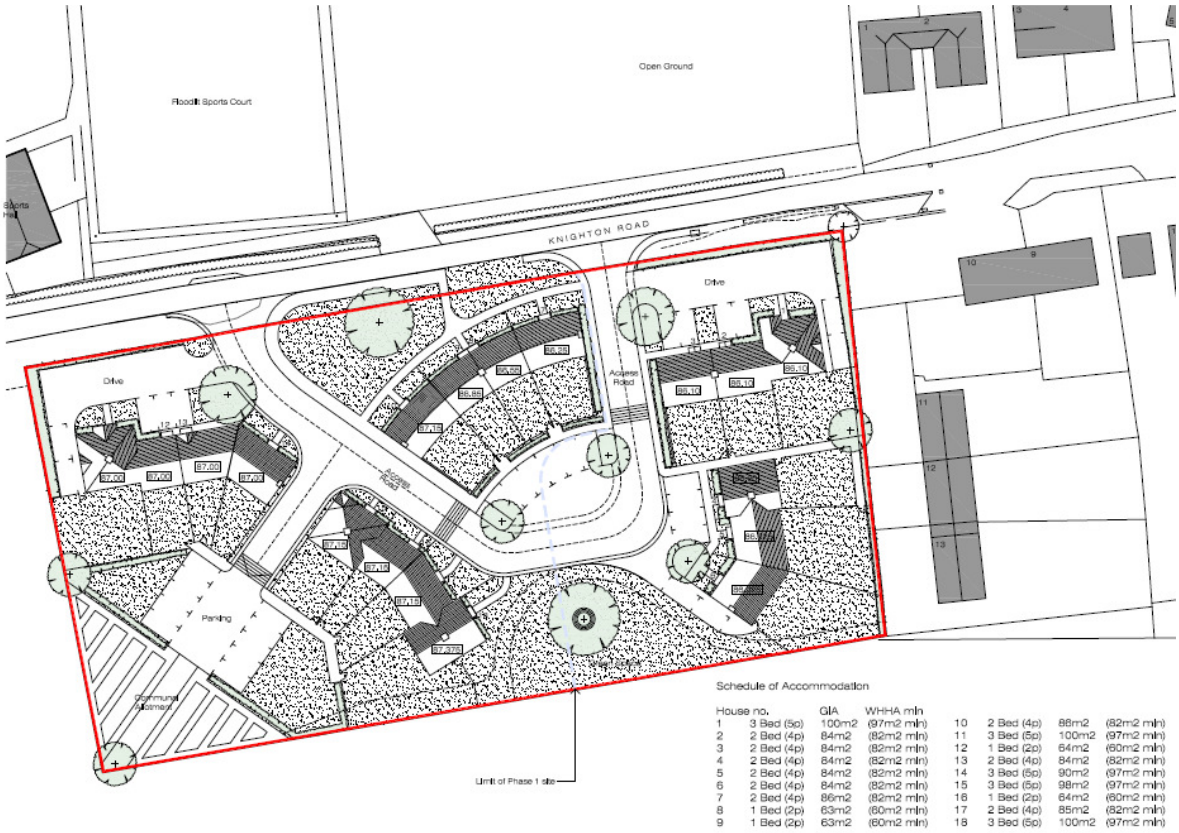
Knighton Road itself in this location is a relatively narrow lane with wide grass verges and near-continuous hedgerows.

© The Broad Chalke Neighbourhood Plan 2019 - 2026

The village recreation ground and associated sports centre are to the north-west and Broad Chalke C of E Primary School is to the north as seen on the image above.

Design Development

The layout of this application site for 6 new dwellings has been informed following the preparation of a longer-term strategy for the development of an enlarged parcel of land which may become available in the future should the need for further affordable housing in the village arise. See sketch layout plan below. This current section of the development is concentrated at the eastern end of the site so as to be a cohesive, natural progression of and addition to the built form on the south side of Knighton Road.



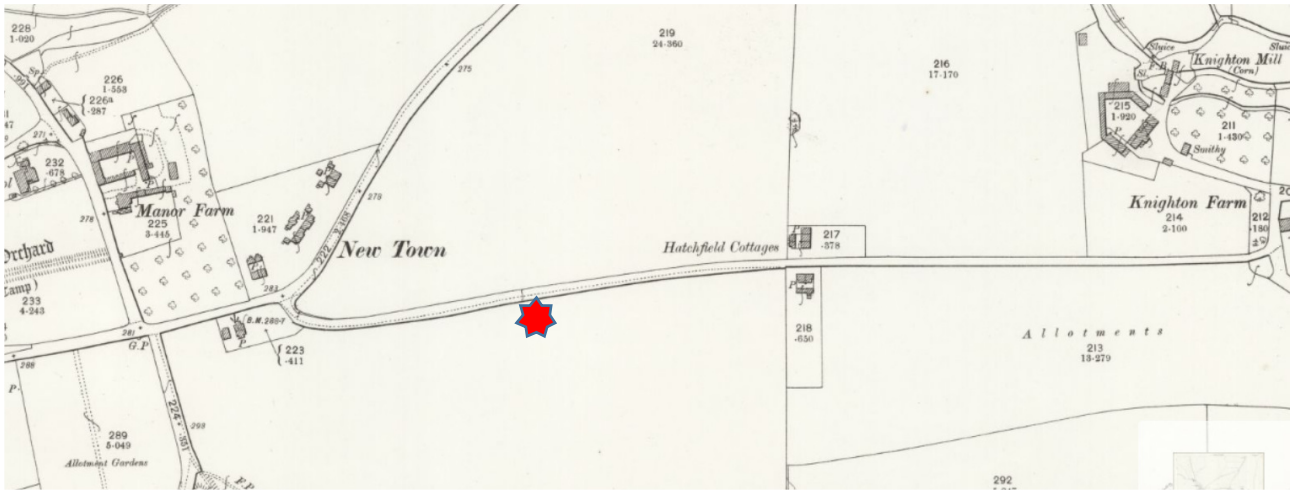
Should the need arise for further affordable housing in the village, this provides a 'masterplan' which can of course be reviewed but which represents a vision by the current Broad Chalke Community Land Trust members. The 'masterplan' was designed to follow an informal layout with buildings generally fronting the road, providing green open-spaces and concealing vehicles from view. Its highway alignment is to ensure views of Knighton Hill are preserved from Knighton Road and not obliterated by development. Consideration of the potential bigger picture has very much informed the layout of the current proposals.

At an early stage, with only the information above in place, informal consultation with Mr Mark Henderson of Wiltshire Council Planning Department took place in 2019. Thereafter, consultants focused on the development of detailed proposals for the current site of 6no. affordable homes. Broad Chalke CLT partnered with White Horse Housing Association Limited and the detailed design stage led to public consultations and a formal pre-application enquiry to Wiltshire Council in February 2022. Since receipt of Wiltshire Council's pre-app comments in April 2022, further work has been undertaken by the consultants which now allows for the submission of this Full Planning Application.

It should be noted that the linked open-market development site (NP Site 5) owned by the same landowner as this site is the subject of a separate Full Planning Application for 3no. new dwellings and that application has been submitted in tandem with this one.

2.0 THE EXISTING BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The NP identifies several 'character areas' within the settlement of Broad Chalke. This site is located with Character Area 6: New Town. As the name suggests, the majority of the buildings in this part of the settlement are post-war, modern residential development of one and two storey dwellings. The Knighton Road area is characterised by buildings set back a distance from the road, generally arranged fronting the road although in some instances, terraces are gable-end on to the road.



In the OS map extract above (dated 1901), it shows that only Hatchfield Cottages and a pair of cottages opposite (known as Hill View) existed in this part of Knighton Road. The approximate location of this application site is shown by the red icon. Some limited expansion of development westwards took place in the first half of C20 but the majority of the character area is of late C20 origin.



A comparable modern-day land area aerial view is shown above with the site location similarly identified. The images that follow give an indication of the general character and scale of the built environment along Knighton Road:



View looking east into Knighton Road settlement (development site to the right, Knighton Hill top right)



View looking west along Knighton Road (development site to the left beyond bungalows)

Immediately adjacent to the development site, on the eastern side are two terraces of council built bungalows, arranged parallel to Knighton Road at the front and with the rear terrace end-on to the road and cut-in to the slope. A similar approach to the configuration of buildings has been taken with the new development.



View looking south from Knighton Road at existing bungalows (development site to the right)

3.0 SITE CONSTRAINTS & OPPORTUNITIES

The allocation of land designated for affordable housing in the made NP is of a narrow frontage, deep proportion which minimises the amount of built-form impact on Knighton Road. The site will form the new southern section of the western entrance to the Knighton Road settlement and as such, has a degree of prominence.

The site itself rises gradually from north to south and is relatively level in an east / west direction. Access visibility is good in both directions and a compacted footpath route exists on the north side of Knighton Road which connects this part of the settlement back to the school, playing fields, sports centre and beyond that, the core of the village.

Knighton Hill is a prominent backdrop to the site. Its focus and the need to minimise visual impact have been considered when developing the overall long-term masterplan and as such, this stage of the development too. It is visible from most parts of this area of the village and from vantage points further afield as identified in the Landscape Visual Impact Assessment.

The siting of the adjoining bungalows are a fixed constraint in terms of environmental impact (ie traffic / noise generation etc) and their scale / aspect has also been considered in determining an appropriate site layout, building massing, roof forms and over-looking / over-shadowing for the new dwellings.

The NP identifies certain design constraints associated with this site and relevant parts of Policy 4A confirm that development proposals must:

- Be accessed from Knighton Road to an adoptable specification standard
- Retain and secure sustained protection and management of existing boundary hedgerows and trees as far as practicable
- Include additional boundary and landscaping to ensure the setting of the AONB and village is protected
- Be between one and two storeys in height
- Be of a high standard of design and materials that address the principles of the National Design Guide and conserves and enhances the character of Broad Chalke, as outlined in objective 3 (p.31-62) of the Broad Chalke NP
- Include appropriate measures to reduce the rate of rainwater run-off and improve rainwater infiltration to soil and ground (sustainable urban drainage)
- Maximise opportunities to achieve sustainable construction that exceeds minimum requirements

Through a combination of design work and desktop / site based studies, the architectural, engineering, archaeological, ecological and landscape consultants associated with this project have fed-in their observations and recommendations together with the financial viability aspects by the housing provider which has resulted in a coordinated response to the site constraints. This site offers an opportunity to embrace its ‘edge of settlement’ location and make a positive and sensitive contribution to the built environment of Broad Chalke. Our key objectives have been to:

- Acknowledge the pattern of development to Knighton Road
- Ensure the spacial and massing relationship to the adjoining development is considered.
- Set the new buildings back from the highway so as to retain a wide, open aspect to Knighton Road and avoid a ‘closing-in’ of built form.
- Orientate buildings so as not to present rear elevations to the public domain and not to allow the car to dictate a formulaic sub-urban layout
- Recognise the fact that the site abuts open countryside and make building material and means of enclosures (fencing and hedging) choices to acknowledge the sensitive context
- Achieve vehicular and pedestrian safety improvements without an ‘engineered’ solution and preserve the green lanes which are a very important characteristic of the village location.

4.0 SITE LAYOUT

The development is arranged with a terrace of three units fronting onto Knighton Road and a cranked terrace of three units to the rear orientated with an east / west aspect. The new access road is sited to the west, so removed away from the adjoining existing residential properties and in a location to enable its possible future expansion westwards.



The green edge to Knighton Road is retained with new indigenous hedgerow and tree planting to provide some punctuation and visual screening from long views to the north and also to allow screening of some of the vehicle hardstanding space in front of units 1-3.



The cranked form of the rear terrace is best appreciated on the plan adjacent and the primary 'driver' for that configuration is to allow the bungalows to the east to continue to have a view south-westwards across the arable land and valley escarpment beyond.

It also allows the end of the terrace to better address the new access road serving the development and to acknowledge Knighton Road.

The same terrace is to be 'dug-in' to the slope of the land, much as the current bungalows are and the area to the south-west of the development site will remain as an elevated plateau at the natural contour so reducing the visual impact of the buildings when viewed from the west / north-west.

During the resident consultation process, a meeting was convened with the occupiers of the adjacent bungalows in order to discuss the siting and associated scale of the new dwellings nos. 4-6. As a result of that meeting, their concerns were addressed by moving the terrace another 1.5m distance westwards to improve the separation and the eaves / ridge heights were lowered as well. This is documented on the application drawings ST687-14a and 15a produced to assess daylighting impact, where the original building proflie is shown in red.

5.0 APPEARANCE & SCALE

The two terraces are intended to read as simple but well executed traditional vernacular buildings. Whilst the open-field might present an opportunity for a more contemporary 'exceptional' architectural approach, we consider that the new buildings and the potential future enlarged site should read as a cohesively stitched addition to the New Town settlement.

The palette of walling materials consists of red brick, coursed red brick / flint and areas of feather-edged weatherboarding to some upper storey areas. The brick string courses and quoins to corners / openings with bands of knapped field flint are arranged in a traditional 2 brick string courses to 6 course flint proportion. The upper storey weatherboarding to units 2 & 3 is to be left natural and unfinished so as to acknowledge being on the fringe of agricultural land.

Windows and doors are to be paint finished and set below segmental brick arches. All roof areas are to be of slate with grey angular ridge tiles.

With the exception of unit 1 which has a pyramidal roof form and a central chimney, intended to provide some visual punctuation to the roof line, the storey heights of all other dwellings are intentionally modest and between 1.5 to low 2 storey heights, limited to 3.7m and 4.3m from floor to eaves so as to manage the scale and reinforce a traditional character whilst the 42.5 degree slate covered roofs provide a visually traditional roofscape. This is further reinforced by chimney stacks which are a vernacular characteristic of village cottages.



Units 1-3



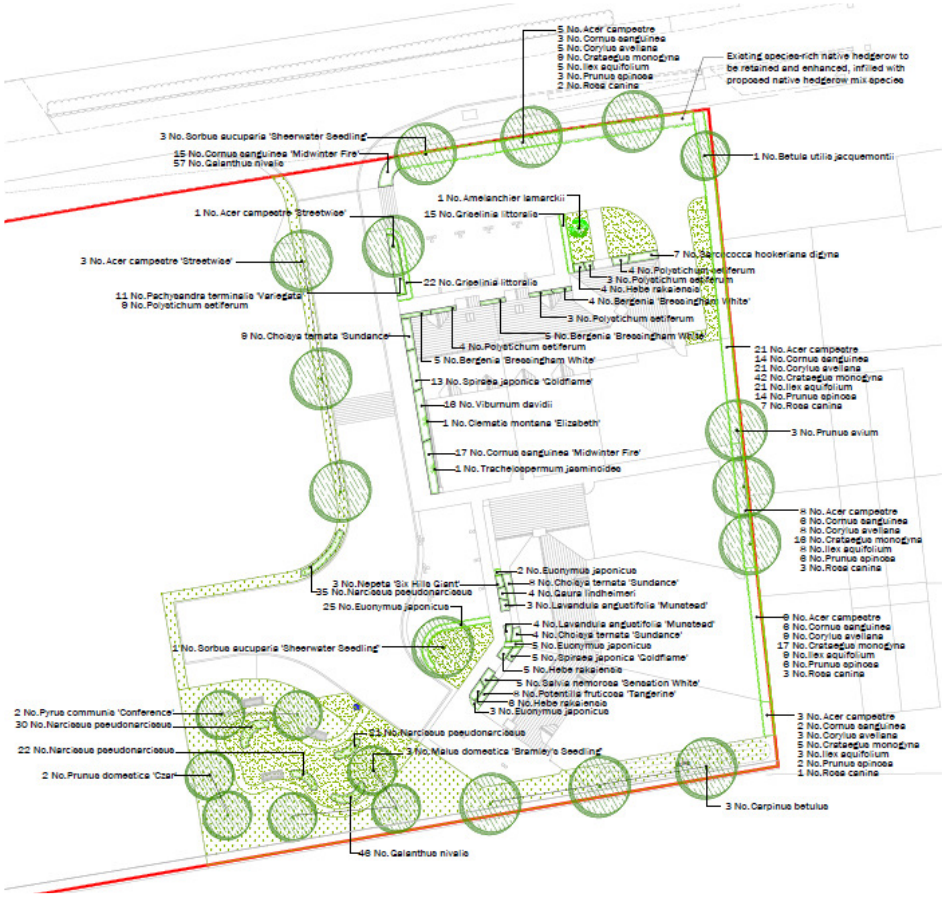
Units 4-6

6.0 LANDSCAPING

The proposed scheme of hard and soft landscaping has been developed in response to the findings of the Landscape Visual Impact Assessment.

The rural context of the application site is acknowledged in the choice of hard landscape materials and soft landscape species. The need to provide a 10% of Biodiversity Nett Gain as a result of the development has also fed-in to the soft landscaping proposals.

The NP cites the importance of retaining the rural character of green lanes within the village and Policy 4A stipulates that one should *'retain and secure sustained protection and management of existing boundary hedgerows and trees as far as practicable'* as well as *'include additional boundary and landscaping to ensure the setting of the AONB and village is protected'.*



The proposals illustrated here reinforce the existing boundary soft landscaping and introduce numerous new tree and hedgerow planting areas to ensure that the development provides a 'soft' transition to the AONB as well as delivering an ecological benefit. Boundary fencing to the retained arable land is to be stock fencing so as to acknowledge its rural setting.

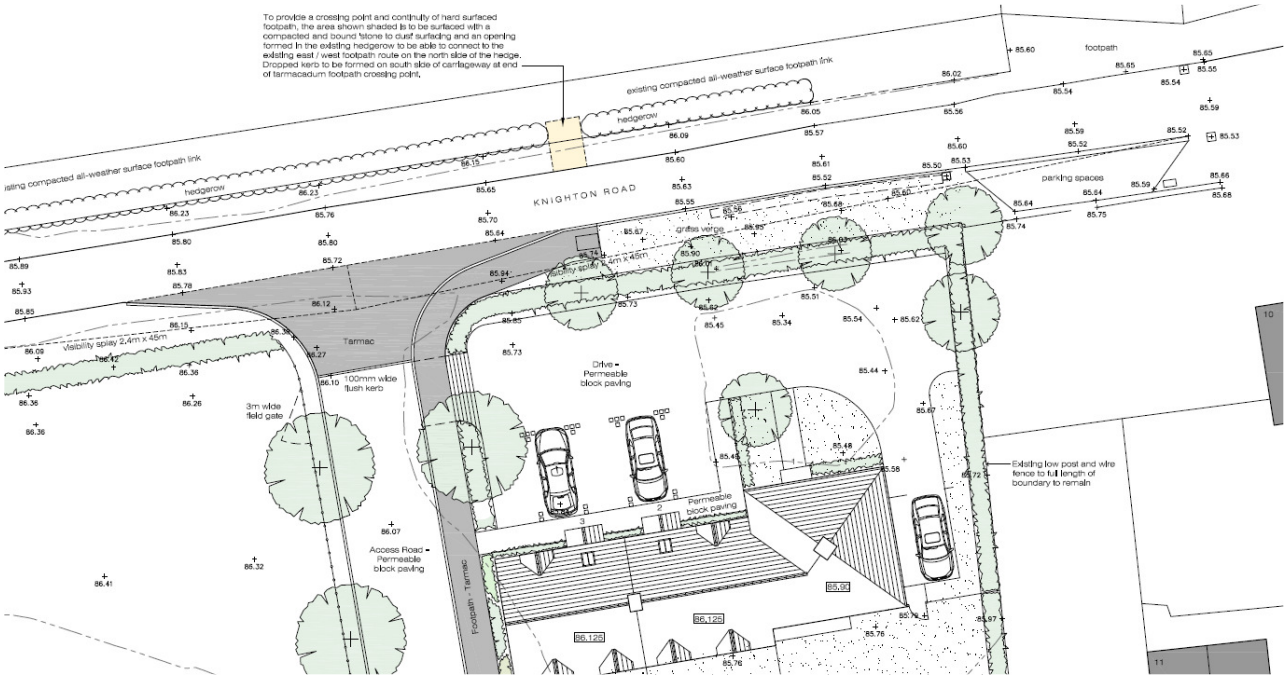
Hard landscaping surfacing material where not required to be tarmacadum, will be permeable block paving in a combination of 'charcoal' and 'cedar' colours so as to be visually unobtrusive.

7.0 ACCESS

The formation of a new vehicular access to Knighton Road does require the use of tarmacadum surfacing to satisfy the requirement of the highways authority and a tarmacadum footpath extends over the green highway verge to create a safe crossing point to the compacted east / west footpath which exists on the northern side of Knighton Road. Highway engineers have designed the access junction, carriageway width and turning area to accommodate the manoeuvring requirements of a refuse vehicle. The new access road is not to be offered for adoption and will be privately maintained.

At pre-app stage, the highways authority made an observation that the new footpath needs to connect to a formalised tarmacadum surfaced footpath on the northern side of the road. This would

have a seriously detrimental impact on the retention of the 'green lane' character of Knighton Road, be at odds with neighbourhood plan policy and have an adverse impact on the AONB and village character. As such, the application includes for a crossing point to the well-used informal compacted footpath on the north side as shown below.



8.0 PRE-APP RESPONSE POINTS FROM WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

Refer to Wiltshire Council's letter dated 5 April 2022 (ref: ENQ/2022/00274)

1. **Overlooking**
   Reference is made to '*a degree of overlooking from the rear elevation of plots 1-3 into the rear garden of plot 4' due to the orientation of this property*'. It refers to Core Strategy policy CP57 and the relevant part of that policy is understood to be that the development is to deliver a positive contribution by '*having regard to the compatibility of adjoining buildings and uses, the impact on the amenities of existing occupants, and ensuring that appropriate levels of amenity are achievable within the development itself, including the consideration of privacy, overshadowing, vibration, and pollution (e.g. light intrusion, noise, smoke, fumes, effluent, waste or litter)'*

   Response:
   As referred to earlier in this document, the reasoning and justification for the siting of the two terraces is to ensure an appropriate relationship to the existing adjoining bungalows (ie by siting the new access road as far away as possible to limit noise pollution and nuisance) and to ensure that the development has scope to expand westwards in the future if the need arises. This part of the Broad Chalke settlement has several examples of building forms arranged perpendicular to one another and an acceptable degree of overlooking into neighbouring amenity space is an inevitable product of that configuration.

   In the case of terrace 1-3 and the garden of unit 4 as referred to, units 2 and 3 are offset from unit 4's rear garden and as such, any view if it were possible, is at an acute angle. Unit 1 does have a direct relationship to unit 4's rear garden, but as the site cross section below shows, with a 1.60m high eye line placed at the rear facing first floor windows of unit

1, the view line (shown in red) dictated by the top of the boundary fencing mean that no part of the ground of unit 4's garden is actually visible from this location.



2. **Facing Materials**
   Confirmation is sought on the type of facing materials provided for this development

   Response:
   See the 'appearance and scale' and 'landscaping' sections of this document for detailed clarification of material choices.

3. **Affordable Housing**
   Confirmation of the precise tenure split should be provided to the Housing Enabling Team prior to the submission of a Full Application.

   Response:
   The housing provider has confirmed that the mix is 2 x 2 bed shared ownership, 1 x 3 bed rented and 3 x 2 bed rented. This is has been advised to the Enabling Officer, Clare Moore.

4. **Highways (Knighton Road Footpath)**
   Reference is made to the new length of footpath from the development site not corresponding with the end of the tarmacadum footpath location on the north side of Knighton Road.

   Response:
   As described elsewhere in this report, the NP requires an emphasis to be placed on ensuring that this (and any other) new development respects the character which defines Broad Chalke. As a rural settlement, tarmacadum pavements and the removal of green verges, rather like the introduction of street lighting is an anathema and is considered to be alien in such a rural context. It contradicts the requirement of the NP and of AONB sensitivity. The majority of Knighton Road consists of green verges and well-trodden compacted surfaces used to connect pedestrians with different parts of the settlement. The unfortunate introduction of tarmacadum footpath exists to a relatively short length of Knighton Road where late C20 development has eroded the rural character. The issue of pedestrian safety is of course not in question and a suitable, adequate provision needs to be made for pedestrians to cross Knighton Road from the development site to a place of safety. That place of safety exists in the form of a compacted footpath. See section entitled 'access' for further detail.

5. **Highways (New Access Road)**
   Observations regarding footpath, carriageway and service margin widths have been made presumably on the assumption that the development infrastructure may be offered for adoption.

   Response:
   The new highway infrastructure is not being offered for adoption and as such, all road geometry, width, margins etc are suitable as a private development.

6. **Highways (Car Parking)**
   Reference is made to 2no. parking spaces overlapping the 0.5m buffer strip around the access road. This relates to the parking spaces outside unit 4. Furthermore, the visitor parking spaces are not easily accessible and need reconsideration.

   Response:

   The highways consultant has confirmed that the **v**isitor spaces at the size (6m back kerb length) and location shown are perfectly accessible. Furthermore, the parking space / buffer strip issue referred to is irrelevant if not being offered for adoption.

7. **Ecology (River Avon Catchment)**
   The ecological report needs to address this matter and produce an appropriate assessment.

   Response:
   With regards to the nutrient neutrality assessment, given that the site is allocated via the neighbourhood plan and included in the strategic AA and mitigation strategy, we do not consider that any further information is required to support this application.

8. **Ecology (Biodiversity Nett Gain)**
   Calculation metric to be submitted for review by council.

   Response:
   This information has now been produced and is included in the application submission

9. **Ecology (New Trees and Hedgerows)**
   Reference made to lack of space for maintenance of trees in narrow strip and hedgerows as well as hedging not counting as mitigation for BNG where within residential curtilage. Responses needed from Ecologist and Landscape Architect.

   Response:
   The Landscape Architect and Ecologist have collaborated on a revised soft landscaping proposal which addresses the observations raised. Planting species, standards and quantities have been revised in order to adequately meet the BNG requirement and revised documents are included in this application.

10. **Archaeology**
    A field survey evaluation is 'likely' to be needed prior to the determination of a Planning Application.

    Response:
    In consultation with the County Archaeologist, a more defined brief was obtained and a series of on-site strip trench excavations were carried out under the direction of A C Archaeology. The results are included as a report in this submission.

11. Drainage – Soakaways

The letter advises that surface water soakaways must be positioned 10m away from buildings due to the chalk sub-strata.

Response:

The drainage consultant liaised directly with Stella Davies, the Principal Drainage Engineer at Wiltshire Council. Parts of the site investigation report were shared by email (25 May 2022) to convey the subsoil structure, together with input from Building Control to demonstrate that the minimum distance of 5m would be acceptable. This was accepted by SD.

12. Drainage – Foul Water

With regard to the proposed connection to an existing council maintained sewage treatment plant in Knighton Road, reference has been made by the council's drainage section to advise that 'we are not in a position to be able to grant permission for the connection due to legal complications regarding the existing pipework'.

Response:

This came as a surprise to the CLT and its advisors given that their drainage consultant, Cole Easton, had been liaising with Simon Kelly throughout the scheme development stages when the principle of connection for the 6no. new dwellings was agreed, subject to the undertaking of upgrade work to the plant itself by the council and an obligation on the part of the developer to undertake upgrade works to a section of the incoming pipework infrastructure.

The housing provider, White Horse Housing Association Ltd have been in regular contact with Simon Kelly since this observation was made and we understand that the delay relates to protracted negotiation timings with the landowner.

Given that the principle of a connection has been previously agreed, this application is being submitted on the basis of that original drainage strategy and the expectation is that negotiations will have been concluded by the time that a decision is required on this application.

9.0 CONCLUSION

The Broad Chalke Community Land Trust were established as a not-for-profit community benefit society and their 61 members are passionate about delivering affordable housing for local people in the village of Broad Chalke. The onset of the Covid pandemic and various legal and technical issues have delayed the delivery of this Planning Application submission which is now being made in tandem with the landowner's open-market development at Manor Farm Road. The CLT and their professional advisors have carried out community consultations, direct meetings with neighbours, prospective occupiers and wider consultees in order to 'best inform' the proposals.

We consider that the scheme delivers a valuable, much needed and positive addition to the village through careful consideration of form, scale, detailing and material choice and is intended to read as a cohesive and indigenous addition to the village. It fulfils the aspirations of the Neighbourhood Plan and therefore local residents' wishes whilst complying with the Wiltshire Core Strategy and guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework.