



**Bellway Homes Ltd (Northern Home Counties)  
Development Brief**

**Residential Development**  
Land R/O Central Garage, Cranfield, Beds

DLA Ref: 11/131  
March 2013

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The evidence which I have prepared and provided in this Report is true and has been prepared and is given in accordance with the guidance of the Royal Town Planning Institute and I confirm that the opinions expressed are my true and professional opinions.

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Development Brief has been prepared for Bellway Homes Ltd (Northern Home Counties) to guide the potential residential development of a parcel of land in the centre of the village of Cranfield. Cranfield is a village to the West of Bedford (See Fig 1 opposite). Consideration is being given to the development of the site for residential use and to provide a parcel of serviced land (1.4ha) for the potential provision of a new lower school. Access to the adjacent land to the south-east corner owned by the Primary Care Trust will also be provided.

### 1.1 Scope

This Brief considers the proposed residential development of the site in the context of national planning guidance and, adopted and emerging development plan policy.

1.2 The Brief comprises an analysis of the site and its immediate context (Section 2), a consideration of current Government Guidance (Section 3), and the emerging LDF (Section 4). Constraints (section 5), Opportunities (Section 6) Proposals and Vision for the site (Section 7) and the next stages being presented in (Section 8) conclude this report.

1.3 As a result of a Planning Performance Agreement, discussions and meetings have taken place with the following stakeholders:-

Mark Saccoccio	Planning Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC)
Annabel Gammell	Planning CBC
Ann Rowland	Sustainable Transport Team CBC
Stuart Robinson	Policy CBC
Keith Armstead	Education CBC
Carrie Leach	Education CBC
Chris Mollart-Griffin	Transportation CBC

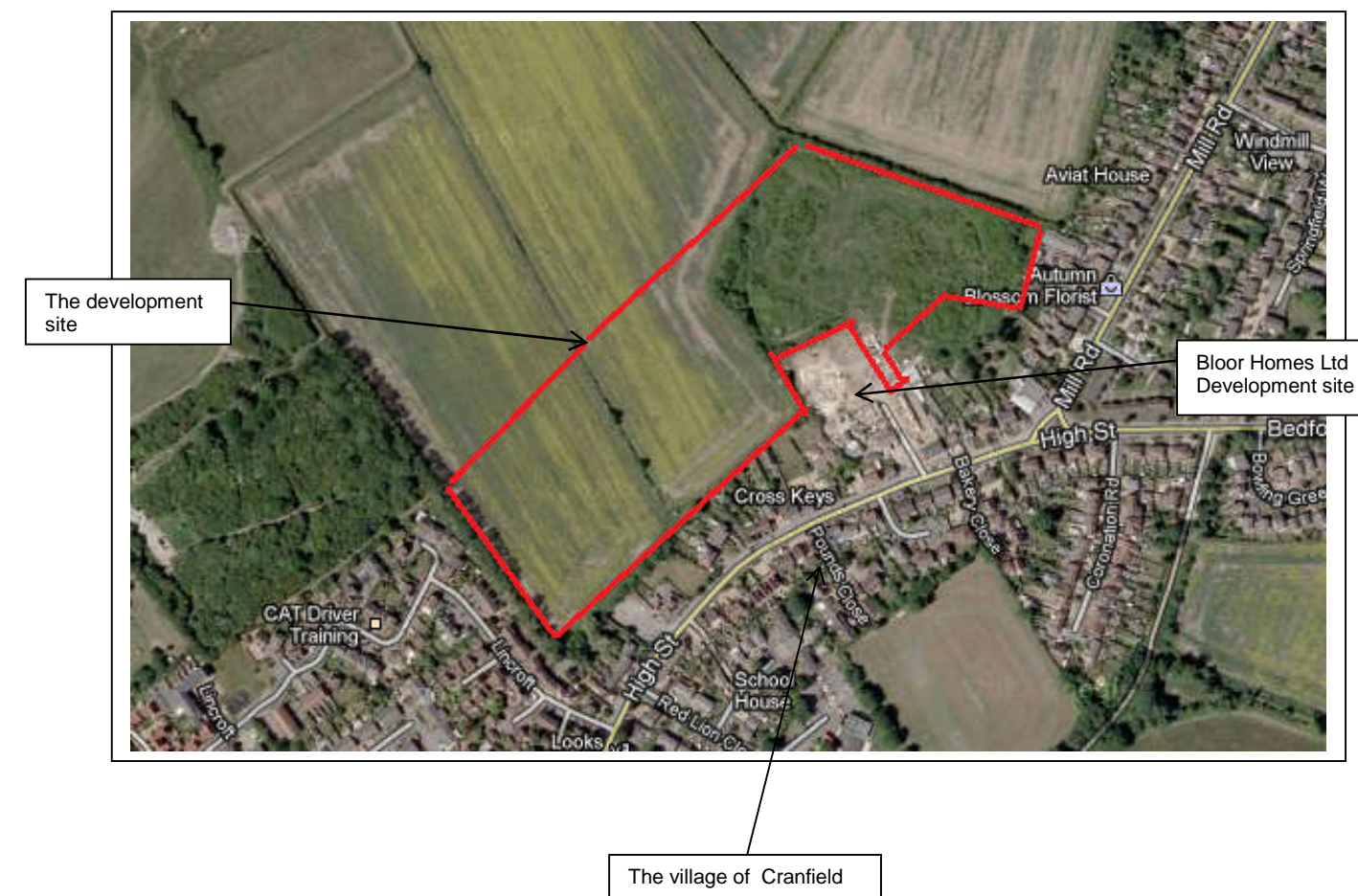
1.4 This document also provides the initial framework for the development of the site.

1.5 **Background**-Policy HA7 of the Site Allocations DPD allocates the land for the development of 135 dwellings.

1.6 **Policy Requirement** –Policy HA7 states that development on the site will be subject to a number of requirements (see paragraphs below in Section 4) including the production of a Development Brief to guide development.

1.7 **What is a development brief?**- This Development Brief document is a Technical Document which will be subject to public consultation, prior to ratification by Central Bedfordshire Council's Executive Committee. The Development Brief will then sit alongside a detailed Full Planning Application and assist Central Bedfordshire Council in determining an application and guiding the design of the proposed development.

**Fig 1:** Location of the Report Site



## 2.0 SITE & CONTEXT APPRAISAL

### 2.1 Location

The site is located to the north of the High Street in the centre of the village of Cranfield, Bedfordshire. To the north and east of the site are open fields and countryside. On the southern and western boundary sides of the site are the residential properties on the High Street and Lincroft, (see Fig 2 opposite).

### 2.2 The Development Site

This comprises a broadly rectangular band of land running from South West to North East. An area of land to the centre of the site located around the access has now been redeveloped by Bloor Homes Ltd. The Bloor Homes Scheme at Flitt Leys Close is a mixture of detached and semi-detached dwellings of varying sizes. The development is accessed via Flitt Leys Close. The land to the east of the entrance is owned by the Primary Care Trust (PCT). The PCT are responsible for the development of this parcel of land which is outside the scope of this development brief. The site is 6.86ha (excluding the PCT site) in size and consists mainly of fields and uncultivated land.

### 2.3 Surrounding Area

To the south west, the site adjoins further more modern residential development. To the South there is a mixture of retail premises, in the form of village stores, public houses and older residential properties. To the north east of the site there is again a mixture of commercial and residential properties.

Fig 2: The Site



## 3.0 GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

### 3.1 Government Planning Guidance

The advice contained in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is relevant to the development of this site. Relevant sections of the following paragraphs are reproduced below.

3.2 Para 7. There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

- These roles include - supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being;

3.3 Para 9. Pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life, including (but not limited to):

- replacing poor design with better design.

3.4 Para 17. Within the overarching roles that the planning system ought to play, a set of core land-use planning principles should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. These principles are that planning should:

- always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;
- encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value;

- conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations;

3.5 Para 56. The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.

3.6 Para 57. It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces.

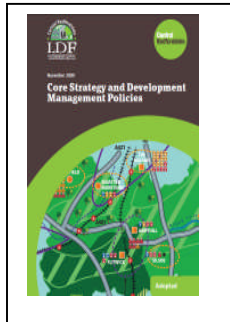
3.7 Para 60. Planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. It is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.

3.8 Para 131. In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

## 4.0 EMERGING LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

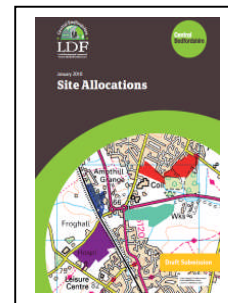
### 4.1 Core Strategy & Development Management Policies November 2009



In November 2009 Central Bedfordshire Council adopted the Core Strategy and Development Policies DPD for the Central Bedfordshire North area. This document sets out the vision, objectives, spatial strategy and overarching policies to guide development in the area, up to 2026. The Development Management policies provide the policy framework against which all planning applications will be assessed. This document identifies the strategy for future development in the area, providing the basis for the Site Allocations DPD to allocate specific sites.

### 4.2 Site Allocations Document April 2011

4.3 The Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) has identified sites and policies to help deliver the spatial vision, objectives and policies of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD.



4.4 As part of the Site Allocation Document, The Local Delivery Strategy was produced which specifically accompanied the Core Strategy by providing a clear indication of infrastructure needs in an area and, in turn indicating what should be provided in that area. By providing this information we can gain a greater insight into the deliverability of a scheme and how any development should be phased.

### 4.5 Policy HA7 – identifies Land Rear of Central Garage, Cranfield for residential development Site Reference: H040/H133/H322 Site Area: 7.23 ha (6.86 excluding the PCT Site)

Land rear of Central Garage, Cranfield, as identified on the Proposals Map, See figure 3 below, is allocated for residential development providing not more than 135 dwellings and the provision of a new Lower School should that be required. In addition to general policy requirements in the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD and appropriate contributions to infrastructure provision in the Planning Obligations SPD, development on this site will be subject to the following:

- ☐ Production of a Development Brief to guide development;
- ☐ Preparation of a Transport Assessment to help identify the impact of the development on the highway network and mitigate against impacts on junctions within Cranfield;
- ☐ Provision of adequate access to the site;
- ☐ Provision of satisfactory buffer landscaping to minimise the impact of development on the open countryside;
- ☐ Provision of green space in order to protect the biodiversity of the site; and
- ☐ Provision of a cycleway providing a link to Bridleway 22 north of the development site.

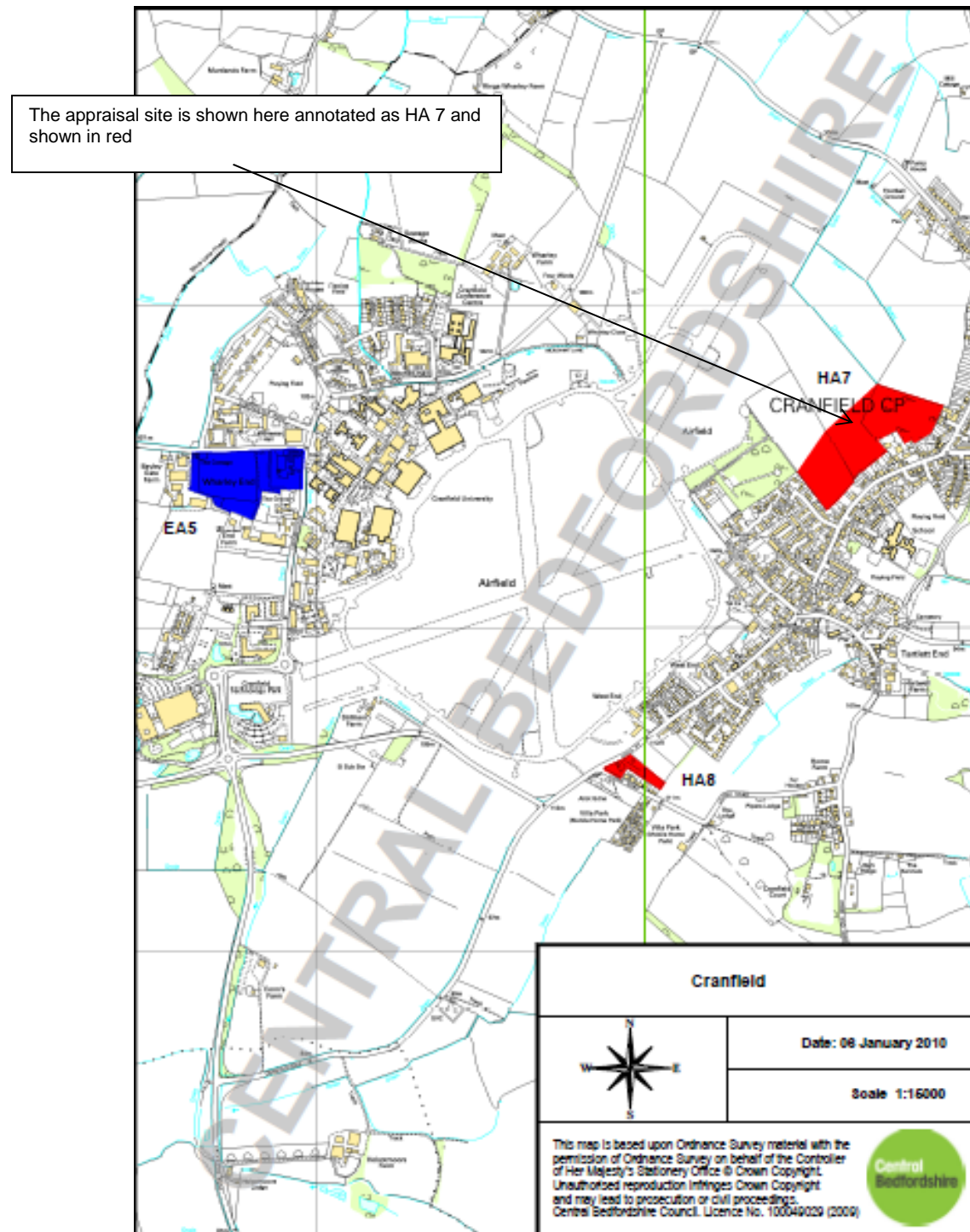
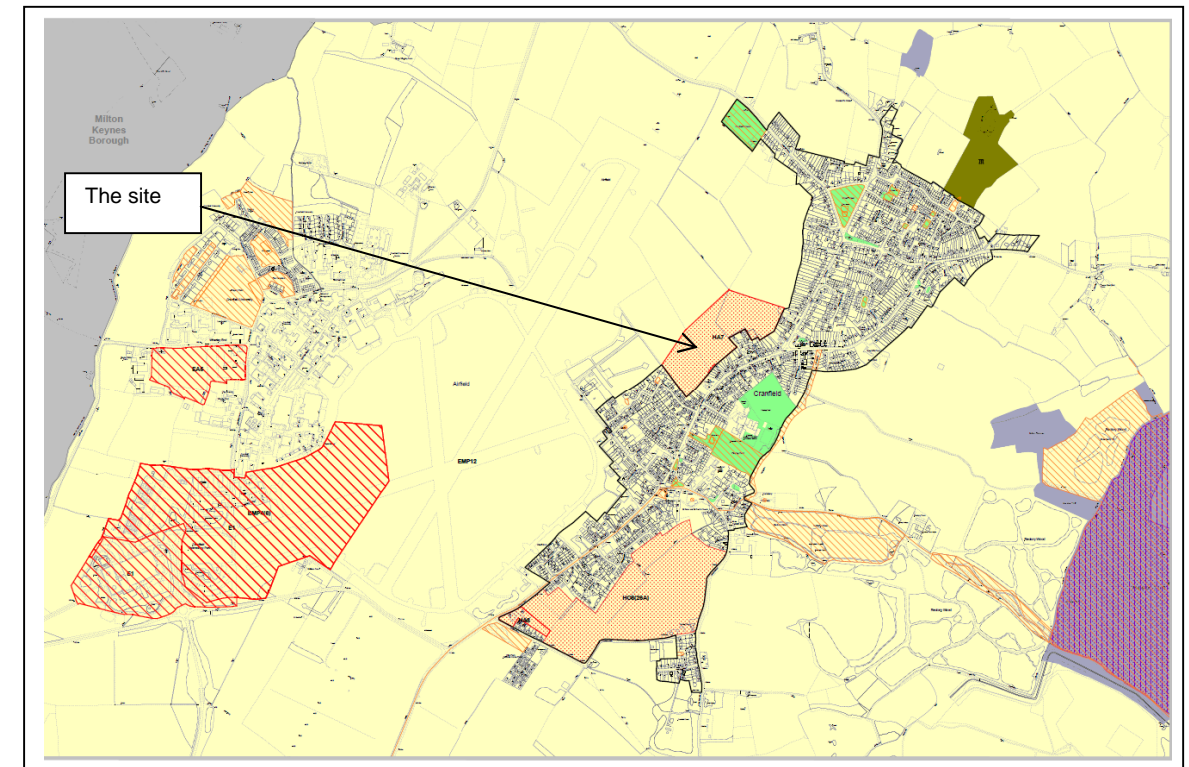


Figure 3

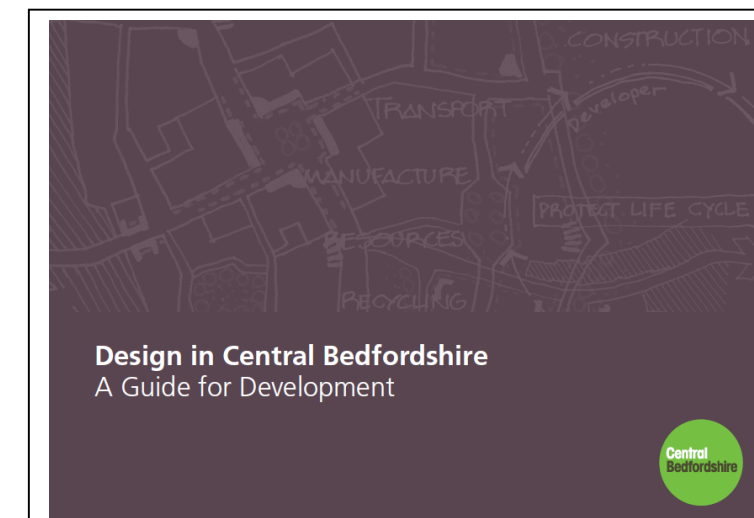
Figure 4



4.6 Other documentation that is applicable to this site includes:-

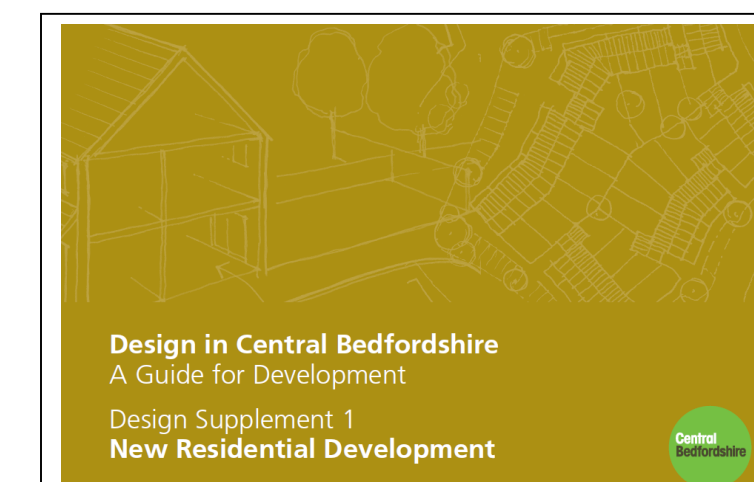
4.7 **Design In Central Bedfordshire: A guide for development**

This guide provides an agenda of policies and objectives which are intended as a springboard for creating good design solutions, which respond to this agenda and to the context. It is not intended as a straightjacket to produce narrow conformity. It is therefore unlikely that standard 'anywhere' designs from applicants will be accepted as a valid approach by the Council. The guide sets out parameters by which any development will be assessed including design, context, setting, scale, materials, landscaping etc.



4.8 **New Residential Development**

This supplement addresses all forms of new residential development in terms of size, density and tenure likely to be required within the District. It is specifically aimed at reconciling the wide agenda for the home environment with the need to create development which is locally distinctive and which enhances its setting.

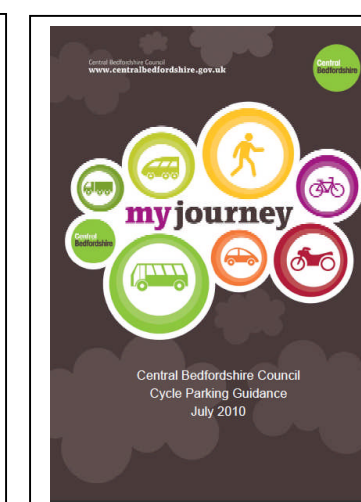
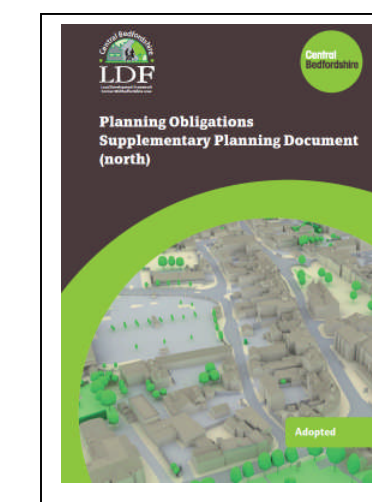


4.9 **Planning Obligations**

This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) sets out proposals for an improved approach to negotiating and securing planning obligations associated with new development in Central Bedfordshire, for the former Mid Bedfordshire area.

**Local Transport Plan**

Account needs to be taken of this guidance which sets out a long term framework for investment in transport across Central Bedfordshire. The LTP includes the Council's Cycling and Parking Strategies.



- 4.10 On 2nd October 2012, Central Bedfordshire Executive committee endorsed the Council's new Parking Strategy as interim technical guidance. The Strategy will be a material consideration for Development Management purposes and will be reflected in the Council's emerging Design Guide, which is currently being prepared. To reflect this emerging design guide, account has had to be taken of the new parking standards which has provided an additional consideration in developing the site to make best use of the land available.
- 4.11 Following the production of a draft Brief the document was the subject of a four week consultation exercise between 13th November and 13th December 2012 in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement. This included a one day public exhibition alongside a consultation relating to a future planning application for the site.

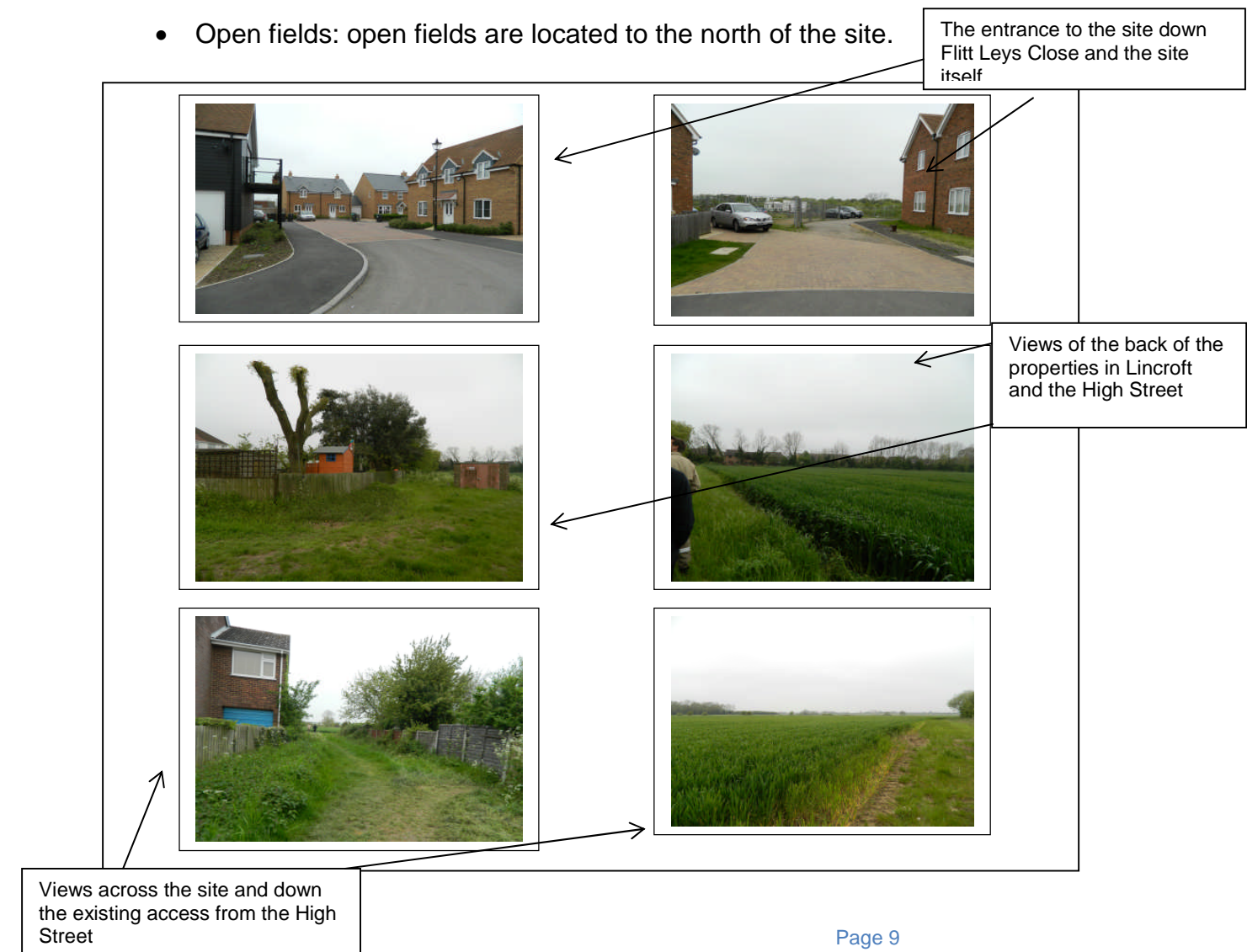
Following the consultation exercise the Brief was updated, to take into account the relevant suggestions or comments that were received. On 18th March 2013 the revised Brief was considered and adopted by the Central Bedfordshire Executive Committee of the Council.

The results of the public consultation will be summarised in a statement of community involvement submitted alongside a future planning application.

## 5.0 CONSTRAINTS

- 5.1 Topography- The land is level for the most part, however there are some level changes towards the north of the site but these are not so dramatic as to cause any significant impediment to the development of the site.
- 5.2 Existing Landscape Features- The main line of trees are located on the western boundary of the site to the rear of the properties in Lincroft. There are other trees that are sporadically spaced around the site, some of which are located to the rear of those properties on the High Street. A hedge runs from North to South through the centre of the site.
- 5.3 Access - Vehicular access to the site can be secured through the recently completed development by Bloor Homes, from Flitt Leys Close. Safe and satisfactory access can be secured from this point and no other unrestricted access is available at this point in time. However, the precise design and details of the access into the site will need to be agreed prior or as part of the submission of a planning application in due course. In designing a safe access, account will also need to be taken of the need to serve the school site and health centre site. A full Transport Assessment will need to be submitted with future planning applications. Alternative access arrangements will be considered on their merits should they come forward. Any alternative access will similarly need to ensure that safe access to the school and health centre is secured.
- 5.4 Public Footpath- A public footpath (FP22) (not a bridleway) runs north to south across the site along the hedgerow and continues onwards to the north and eventually links up with Cranfield University as shown on figure 5 below. The proposal will maintain the link through the site to the existing footpath.
- 5.5 Gas Main/Sewer- A gas main runs around the southern corner of the site as does the sewer whilst existing drainage runs north and then turns diagonally north east across the eastern part of the site. An easement of 6m is required to the Gas Main.

- 5.6 As part of Policy HA7 an area of land needs to be set aside for the provision of a new lower school. As shown on the adjacent plan (figure 5) this is proposed to be in the north eastern part of the site adjacent to the retained land for the PCT.
- 5.7 Existing Neighbouring uses- proposals should include appropriate design response to the adjoining uses:
- Residential: The site is bounded in the south eastern side by the residential properties fronting the High Street and those to the west fronting Lincroft.
  - The Proposed School Site: This is proposed to be located in the north eastern corner of the site and as such, account needs to be taken for the access and relationship with the proposed houses.
  - Open fields: open fields are located to the north of the site.





## 6.0 OPPORTUNITIES

6.1 New homes for Cranfield- This site provides the opportunity to deliver 135 new homes to help meet the local housing need for Cranfield. The proposals will provide a range of housing, tenures and sizes, in order to meet the needs of all sections of the local community and to promote sustainable development.

6.2 Quality of Design- this is an opportunity to create an extension to Cranfield that will favourably respond to the surrounding development and open countryside with an appreciation of the local context by providing a variety of scale and enclosure of space. Proposals will seek to ensure that there are appropriate variations in height (maximum 2 storey to reflect the character of Cranfield), density, building types and roofscapes to create an area with a sense of place.

6.3 CBC has recently published comprehensive design guides as detailed above. These design guides provide specific guidance on residential development and they should be accounted for in any residential developments.

The design guides recognise the following points:-

- Densities should be favouring 30dph or more but must reflect the surrounding area. Details of the character of each area are detailed in the "Guide for Development".
- Sustainable building materials should be used. (Again details of likely acceptable materials are contained with the "Guide for Development".)
- Appropriate amenity areas should be provided.
- The design should take account of Code for sustainable homes, safer places, by design, Manual for Streets 2 (including the use of shared surfaces), Building for Life Standards and the Policies in the Core Strategy.

6.4 Account should also be taken of the local distinctiveness in terms of scale, design and materials if applicable. Privacy, impact, sunlight and daylight are other important points to consider.

6.5 Distances between dwellings should be 21m distance between facing windows at 2 storey level, above this height distances should be increased.

6.6 Careful design will also help to design out crime. Blank gable walls should be avoided, footpaths should be closely associated with carriageways, front doors should be visible from the public realm, single storey flat roofs avoided, rear access to properties should be as few as possible and if necessary then they should only have one point of entry. Clear distinction between private and public areas should be provided and rear parking areas avoided.

6.7 Garage sizes should be no less than 7.0m x 3.2m as a minimum. Garage design and layout should go hand in hand, in accordance with the adopted Design Guide

6.8 Parking where possible should be provided on-plot but all parking must be located to allow natural surveillance and should relate to dwellings that they would serve.

6.9 On street parking should be designed to reduce speed and the visual impact of parked cars. This can be achieved by suitable pinch points, appropriate landscaping and changes in material.

6.10 As a condition of any future planning permission for the proposed Lower School, a School Travel Plan and suitable traffic management solution will need to be put in place which seeks to minimise and safely manage traffic movements associated with the school

- 6.11 Setbacks depending upon street scene should be not less than 0.5m and no more than 6m. Parking of cars should not be less than 2m from habitable room windows. Rear gardens should be on average 100sqm and not less than 50sqm.
- 6.12 The Provision of a School site- the proposal provides the opportunity for the provision of a new lower school for the expansion of Cranfield. The proposal will provide a serviced plot with safe and appropriate access.
- 6.13 Open Space- A public open space strategy will provide the opportunity for amenity, informal recreation and informal play as an integral part of the design. The variety of safe, overlooked landscaped spaces will be provided around the site to provide easy access for all. Areas and type of amenity space should be discussed with the Central Bedfordshire Leisure Services Facilities officers during the design process. The Development Brief will focus play space on one large site, in close proximity to the Lower School site.
- 6.14 Positive Integration with Existing Community- The development will include footpaths and opportunities for cycling into, out from and around the site which will connect to existing roads and footpaths including a link to the High Street.
- 6.15 Improved access to the countryside- The proposals should also make provision for pedestrian connections from the site to Footpath 22 that serves the surrounding countryside.
- 6.16 Examples of houses around the site are provided opposite and outline a flavour of the character of the area.





Figure 6

## 7.0 PROPOSALS AND VISION FOR THE SITE

- 7.1 Delivery of Housing- Policy HA7 of the Site Allocations DPD sets a target of delivering 135 new dwellings across the site and the provision of a site for a new lower school. This will include the provision of a range of housing types and sizes based upon an assessment for the need in this area in accordance with Policy DM10 of the Core Strategy.
- 7.2 Affordable housing will be provided where appropriate in accordance with Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy. A mix of affordable rent and shared equity will be provided on site. The location of the affordable housing and exact mix of tenure will be determined through negotiations with the Council and the registered provider.
- 7.3 The location of the affordable housing and exact mix of tenure will be determined through negotiations with the Council and the registered provider.
- 7.4 Planning Obligations- A S106 agreement will be agreed in order to make contributions towards necessary facilities in accordance with Policy CS2 where appropriate. These contributions will be provided through entering into a S106 agreement or any future Infrastructure Levy charging schedule.
- 7.5 The level of contributions would include:-
- List the contributions (\*to be agreed\*)
- 7.6 Connectivity across the site- The scheme will need to allow for the access across and through the site. The design will need to encompass the ability to retain access for farm vehicles to the fields at the rear of the site from the High Street. The design will also have to encompass the servicing and access of any proposed new lower school and the site retained by the Primary Care Trust (PCT). Routes for pedestrians and cyclists also need to be provided to ensure freedom of movement into, out from, and

within the site are accommodated. The routes into and out of the site are shown on the plan in figure 7 below.

- 7.7 Integration with the existing neighbourhood- The development will form an extension to the existing village and the recent development by Bloor Homes at Flitt Leys Close. Flitt Leys Close provides the vehicular access to the site through the existing development. The site adjoins existing housing along much of its south western boundary. The proposed development will need to carefully consider the relationship with the existing development along the High Street and Lincroft. With this in mind the storey heights would be kept to a maximum of two storeys.
- 7.8 The site would also need to consider the wider views from outside the village looking into the site.



## 8.0 NEXT STAGES

- 8.1 This Development Brief has been prepared on behalf of Bellway Homes Ltd (Northern Home Counties) to guide the residential development of land to the rear of Central Garage, off the High Street in Cranfield.
- 8.2 The site has been allocated within the emerging Local Development Framework under Policy HA 7 as being capable of accommodating up to 135 units and the provision of a new lower school.
- 8.3 In accordance with the above designation of the site, residential development would be considered acceptable in principle.
- 8.4 On adoption of the Brief the next stage would be the formal submission of a full application. The application would make reference to the brief and would take account of the public consultation exercise.