

for Arun District Council



## Design and Access Statement

Land to the North of 7-12 Joyce Close,  
Wick Estate, Littlehampton  
West Sussex,

May 2014

MH Architects Ltd  
Ground Floor  
Bicentennial Building  
Southern Gate  
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# Contents Page

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- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Site Assessment
  - 2.1 Physical Context
  - 2.2 Social Context
- 3.0 Involvement
  - 3.1 Statement of Community Involvement
- 4.0 Evaluation

## **Design**

- 5.0 Use
- 6.0 Amount
- 7.0 Layout
- 8.0 Scale
- 9.0 Appearance
- 10.0 Landscaping
- 11.0 Sustainability

## **Access**

- 12.0 Environment Agency: Flood Risk Map
- 13.0 Inclusive Access
- 14.0 Connectivity
- 15.0 Application Submission

## 1.0 Introduction

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MH Architects Ltd (MHA) has been appointed by Arun District Council (ADC) to prepare and submit a full detailed application for 5no. new dwellings on land to the north of 7-12 Joyce Close, Littlehampton, West Sussex. ADC have a substantial housing stock in the area and are a well established provider of good quality affordable housing in this area, with good local relationships and management in place.

The application site is approximately 0.18 hectares and is currently primarily car parking with some areas of grass adjacent the 'dog walk' footpath. On three sides the site is flanked by neighbouring properties or their gardens, while the A259 lies beyond the footpath and a bank of trees.

The proposals are for homes that will be let at social rents, with the number and type driven by local needs as established by ADC. All homes are designed to comply with the emerging ADC Design Guide.

The application is for 5 units, 3 of which would be two bed housing with 2 one bed flats. The dwellings are arranged as a terrace with front doors onto the 'dogwalk' or the remaining area of parking. The east of the site is to remain as a remodelled parking area, which will provide parking for both the new homes and the existing ones. Also, the area of existing drying space will be remodelled to include parking as well as drying space. Hard standing and associated hard and soft external works will also form part of this planning application. The hard standings and new planting have been attractively designed so that they add to the development as a whole.

The application will make use of the existing vehicular access point located between 12-13 Joyce Close. The design team at MHA has carefully considered the scheme with regard to the sensitivity of the location. This has determined the scale, style, appearance, orientation and amount of development being proposed.

Additional studies have been commissioned to accompany this application including an Ecological Report, Topographical Survey, Noise Report, Parking Surveys and Tree Survey/Schedule. Further input has been provided by Highways Consultants and Civil Engineering Consultants on issues such as road design and drainage.

The proposals are for a low density scheme that retains a good amount of green space, either as private rear gardens, or sizeable landscaping buffers to the site perimeter. The houses and associated external works will be suitably designed to relate to the setting but with modern design and contemporary style.

The progression, evolution and final design of the scheme is based on a careful analysis and thorough knowledge of the application site and surrounding context, and involves liaison with the local residents, the client, a variety of consultants and the relevant Arun District Council departments.

## 2.0 Site Assessment

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### 2.1 Physical Context



Figure: Aerial image and site photos (aerial image for indicative purposes only)

## 2.0 Site Assessment

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### 2.1 Physical Context

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The application site comprises a pocket of land measuring 0.18 hectare and shaped by the boundaries of existing gardens to the west, east and south and the 'dogwalk' footpath along the north. Currently the fencing that runs roughly parallel to the footpath but inboard of the site boundary, would be removed.

The site is situated amongst an existing residential development of a housing estate built around the 1960-70's. The inner site is largely flat with a small amount of hard standing forming the entrance area, the land towards the footpath ramps up. The site is predominantly hard standing used for car parking with a strip of low level grass along the northern edge.

The surrounding residential buildings exhibit a range of facing materials including render of various colours red/brown brick, tile hanging and some timber cladding with brown or grey tile roofs. Mainly side and top hung UPVC casements form the window openings and timber or UPVC doors with vision lights. The roofs are pitched in a fairly uniform way due to all the buildings being constructed in a one development.

A number of surveys and reports were commissioned before the initiation of design development in order to create a better understanding of any existing site constraints, sensitive areas and issues. These include:-

- Topographical Survey prepared by HB Surveys
- Tree Survey and Schedule, leading to development implications assessment, prepared by Broad Oak Trees.
- Underground Utilities Records supplied by ADC.
- Extended Phase 1 Ecological Survey by Thomson Ecology
- Highway input and tacking design by Mayer Brown
- Acoustic Report by Ian Sharland Ltd
- Parking Surveys by CEP
- Site ground monitoring by Constructive Evaluation Limited
- Site visits and photographic studies by MH Architects

A Topographical survey has identified the existing levels on site and the ridge/eaves height of surrounding buildings such as the neighbouring houses of Joyce Close. This information has provided the design team with crucial details to set certain parameters, e.g scale and massing of buildings and the orientation / layout required to achieve level thresholds and accessible pedestrian/car routes around the site.

Combined, these surveys have informed the design of the proposals and given the design team a clear understanding of the existing physical nature of the site and surrounding area.

## 2.1 Physical Context



Figure : Photographs of building styles within the Estate, vast majority being of a very similar form with changes to external materials

## 2.2

### Social Context

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The proposals are prepared to meet a defined housing need, as set out by ADC. Study of certain surrounding existing densities, as well as character of the local layout as a whole, has guided the proposals.

The site has been deemed to offer an opportunity to create quality affordable homes of a size identified as being in great need within the area. The Local Authority Housing Needs Survey has defined the brief that stipulated a key set of unit types along with a high quality living environment. Most new residents will come from within the local area and as such help to support the local economy and local facilities. All the housing provided will be owned and managed as affordable housing let at social rents to local people by the Council.

## 3.0 Involvement

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Several meetings with ADC and some WSCC staff have guided the scheme from first principles towards a solution that is complementary to the Wick Estate area. Study of existing densities, as well as character of the local area as a whole, has guided the proposals.

The site offers an opportunity to create high quality affordable homes that will knit into the existing fabric of the extended site context. Collaboration between various departments at ADC has helped to develop the housing mix and numbers to form the brief.

The design has been evolved through collaboration with a range of experts in the fields of environmental design with Thomson and Broad Oak Trees in particular. The outcome is unique to this site context and will demonstrate how good environmental standards can be met in this location.

Feedback on initial layouts was received from members of Building Control at ADC and in particular Fire and Water Officers at West Sussex County have been incorporated into the submitted scheme. A vehicle tracking drawing was carried out to ensure that both proposed and existing homes can be serviced by the refuse collectors and fire vehicles.

Our previous experience with Secure By Design means that we have incorporated their typical strategies as standard where possible within the proposal. The added complication of existing paths and routes has meant that we have not started from an ideal base.

## 3.1 Statement of Community Involvement

As this site is part of a wider project to identify underused land as a source of much needed housing in the Arun district it has undergone a number of stages of community involvement. Initially, letters were sent out to residents informing them of the proposals and setting the date for the public consultation. At the public consultation which was held on Monday the 9th of December from 3pm to 7pm at The Keystone Centre on Eldon Way. Attendance was good and we received 37 feedback comments.

In summary the key issues identified were;

- Concern about loss of parking for existing residents and whether this would lead to more on street parking.
- New homes should be allocated to local residents.
- Localised issues on specific sites for disabled parking provision close to existing units

Some examples of the positive comments received included *‘well thought out plans. Looks like the houses will be in areas that are not used’* and *‘Supportive of building extra council housing but they should be allocated to local Wick people or people who work in the area, which means they can afford to live locally.’*

A number of the suggestions and comments received have helped to influence the final layouts and this can be seen when compared with the original layout as proposed below.

These consultations were highly beneficial and held at a time when alterations to the scheme were entirely possible. The design team has taken all the issues identified on board and where possible incorporated them within the final scheme layout



## 4.0 Evaluation

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During the site assessment key points were identified which were used to guide the development of this proposal. They are as follows:-

- The proposals are to provide 5no. affordable/rent dwellings. With associated refuse, car parking and cycle storage.
- Unit types determined by established housing need at the time of making planning application. Information provided by ADC.
- Comply with ADC Housing Standards including the emerging design guide and comply with requirements for storage, room sizes, furniture provisions and space requirements as set out in Housing Quality Indicator standards (HQI) version 4, where possible.
- Incorporate Secure by Design principles to create a safe environment in which natural surveillance plays a key role in overlooking pedestrian routes and communal spaces.
- The proposals are to maximise the potential of the site in order to provide high quality living environment to all dwellings.
- The development is to meet a minimum of Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) Level 3. In so doing it will demonstrate accordance with the objectives of Arun District Council's policies.
- Units are to be bespoke, each is to make the most of its location and be elevated to work well within the street scene and wider context.
- The orientation and layout of the dwellings will be designed to make best use of the external environment with regard to sustainable benefits such as natural light/ ventilation.
- Building materials will be sourced from local suppliers wherever possible and will be selected to complement the context in terms of appearance and longevity.
- Design responds to the site and surrounding context in terms of scale, appearance, layout, use and amount and take into account the general massing and height of the surroundings.
- The layout and orientation of the proposed dwellings relates pleasantly to the neighbouring residential properties. Street scenes are based on accurate level data obtained from the topographical survey to demonstrate that the proposals are compatible.
- Protect the main existing trees and planting, while introducing new where possible.
- Provide a high quality, maintainable and robust landscape scheme that softens the development, contributes to the character of the area and resolves in a proper manner all boundary conditions. Ensure that the scheme improves biodiversity and meets the objectives set out in the ecological report and Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH).
- Take into account the site constraints analysed during the 'assessment' stage of the design process and work within these restrictions.
- Consider building for life criteria during the development of the scheme.

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## Design

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### 5.0 Use

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Several iterations of the layout and unit schedule were studied and tested during the design development process eventually leading to a scheme comprising of 3 houses, and 2 one bed flats each with nearby parking spaces, organised into a small terrace to echo the predominant form found in the surroundings. This residential use is entirely appropriate given the established community it adjoins.

The site currently houses a parking court and small area of grass verge, this scheme would bring this land into better use to provide 100% affordable homes for local residents of Littlehampton. An existing access connects the site to Joyce Close and it is proposed to maintain this route to allow for refuse and emergency vehicle access as part of this application.

Each home has a clearly defined front door on the street, with first floor flats also having their own staircase and front door. Careful consideration has been paid to orientation of the proposed buildings and key areas of planting and trees so that neighbouring dwellings are afforded good levels of privacy, and the proposed scheme provides an appropriate use for the site.

Each home will have its own private garden with storage shed, with first floor flats accessing their garden from close to their front door. All homes have provision for bin storage within their rear gardens. Bin collection areas have been allowed for ease of collection are fronting the shared surface and within required distances for bin operatives

The development provides 29 on site spaces of which 7 are unallocated spaces for the proposed homes and 22 are unallocated spaces for existing residents. In addition, 7 spaces are re-provided off site on within a triangular piece of land in front of 7-12 Joyce Close. The number of spaces re-provided has arisen from a parking use survey and carried out on these sites and the surrounding area, which is submitted with this application. The parking use survey highlights proposed new parking levels that were current at the time of writing and as such reflects a 'snapshot' of the proposals at that time. Mayer Brown's submitted transport notes assess the scheme as submitted.

## 6.0 Amount

The site area measures 0.18ha, with much being retained for parking and landscaped space. The site density would be 27.8 dwelling units per hectare, which is in line with the principles of housing policy and requirements to suit the surrounding existing patterns of development. Generally, the estate is of a relatively low density with two storey homes with space in front, behind and in parking courts. Footpaths are often set back from the road with intervening grassed areas. The amount has been defined through several design option appraisals and led by existing density studies and on going liaison with the Local Authority.

This level of accommodation is deemed appropriate for the location and will complement the well established residential community of this area of Littlehampton. As listed, the parking will be unallocated with enough capacity to serve both the houses and the flats, as well as any visitors. In addition, the parking surveys carried out illustrate the utilisation of the existing car parks and as a result an appropriate level of spaces have been provided to replace those lost. The disabled spaces will be set above the minimum of 10% giving 4 spaces. Parking numbers have been derived from guidance and minimum requirements provided by the WSCC parking calculator. The location of the spaces is well integrated with the housing layout to encourage overlooking, safety, and avoid over dominance which can occur from large groups of parking spaces. The schedule below illustrates the amount of parking provided both on and off site to meet proposed and existing need combined.

### **PARKING SCHEDULE - Land to the North of 7-12 Joyce Close**

|                                        |                    |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Peak Surveyed Use</b>               | <b>= 17 spaces</b> |
| <b>Proposed On Site Parking</b>        | <b>= 29 spaces</b> |
| <b>Proposed Off Site Parking</b>       | <b>= 7 spaces</b>  |
| <b>Total parking after development</b> | <b>= 36 spaces</b> |

Secure sheds are provided within each garden to store 1no. cycles per home. It is envisaged that visitor cycles will be stored within the rear gardens of the person they are visiting. Private outdoor spaces have been allocated to each dwelling affording all residents excellent green areas to enjoy. The garden sizes are well in excess of normal modern standards. This is in part to make good use of the low density of the site layout and also to ensure ample separation distances from the site's boundaries.

Reference to local waste management guidance has identified the requirements for bin storage throughout the site, this has been interpreted as follows; each home will be provided with 1 x 240ltr bin for domestic refuse and 1 x 240 litre bin for the recycling of corrugated card, glass bottles, glass jars, junk mail, envelopes, drinks/liquid food cartons, card/greetings cards, clean foil, plastic bottles, paper, newspapers/magazines, directories and brochures, steel/aluminium cans and aerosols. Homes will have internal recycling space to encourage use.

We propose that bins are stored in the gardens of the homes, providing discreet and convenient bin storage and then moved to a bin collection point on the day of collection. The site allows a refuse vehicle to enter the site and following collection turn around and exit in forward gear, please see the tracking study drawing submitted as part of the application.

Whilst a provision is shown on the plans we welcome continued liaison with Arun District Council in order to determine the best provision of bin sizes. The spaces provided are sufficient in size to allow some flexibility in this respect. The location of the bin storage will comply with current standards regarding distance for bin collection and occupant use, as denoted by Building Regulations, Code for Sustainable Homes and Local Authority guidance.

## 7.0 Site Layout

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The layout of the scheme has been shaped by a number of contributing factors and undergone continual development following regular consultation at key design stages. Constraints identified during the site assessment have been evaluated in order to set parameters to work to.

The site has one existing entrance that will be renewed and can accommodate a refuse vehicle or fire appliance. This road leads through to the parking court giving access to all of the new units. Access on foot to the footpath will be maintained. Detailed consultation has been had with the Fire department of West Sussex County Council who can fully support the scheme.

The site road has been designed to be a shared surface. Shared surfaces are designed to slow vehicles and increase the safety and inclusion of pedestrians when using the road way. They help to form more cohesive areas of public realm within developments and can offer residents an increased sense of ownership over external areas of the site.

Separation distances and associated garden sizes are ample in line with the existing nature of the location. With regard to overlooking, specific attention has been paid to the proposed site layout and the fenestration of new dwellings to respect existing properties. Where appropriate gables do not have first floor windows to ensure no overlooking. Planting and tree buffers have been used to define defensible space and screen the proposals from the footpath and neighbouring properties.

Due to the location of the site and the existing buildings the scheme is therefore not viewed easily from the public highway of Joyce Close, with only some small elements visible. The parking court is in a similar position to the east end of the current parking area and a number of these spaces will be unallocated for use by existing residents. In addition a new area of parking for 7 cars has been provided within the triangular space to the south of numbers 7-12 Joyce Close.

The units are arranged in a terrace running east west with 4 entrances from the footpath and one orientated towards the parking court. This layout provides good levels of natural surveillance to the footpath and parking court, yet has south facing private rear gardens that meet the existing access path of the neighbours to the south and allow good levels of privacy. Placing the proposed structures away from the boundaries aids privacy for existing neighbours.

The internal layout of the dwellings will cater for easy access at ground floor (as required by Approved Doc M) and will strive to provide easily accessible and flexible accommodation, widening the possible scope of future use to a wide variety of people.

The tree survey undertaken Broad Oak Trees identified two C grade trees located within the site. We have striven to retain the existing trees and hedge rows as natural buffers to the new development as this not only separates visually but helps to ground the new development into the existing natural surroundings. Unfortunately the quality and location of these trees meant they could not be retained. The Tree Survey Report accompanying this application more fully describes the existing site and considers the effects of the proposals.

## 8.0

### Scale

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As with the layout, the scale of the proposed submission has been appropriately designed to create a scheme which takes into account the sizes and proximity of the existing nearby houses and trees. The essence of this guiding principle translates across many of the headings covered in this document yet is particularly relevant to scale.

The development proposes new houses two full storeys in height, similar to the surrounding context. This relationship can be seen in the site section shown above, which also show that the proposals tie in well with the scale of the existing buildings.

This variety creates a pleasant appearance that is in keeping with the best buildings found in the surrounding context. This theme is enhanced by rotating roof pitch alignments so that the street scenes feature a variety of eaves and gables. The gables emphasise key corners and act as ends to long views. The primary elevation and front doors of each house are well related to the site layout to avoid any unsightly blank elevations. Key gable ends, such as the one facing the parking court, have windows to allow for natural surveillance of these areas and add visual interest.

The flats are arranged into house sized forms that allow them to be tied into terraced designs and be of a similar scale. The flats form and scale represent the existing larger terraced or semidetached houses surrounding the site. Articulation has been introduced in the form of key gables and the use of set backs and differing plan widths.

## 9.0 Appearance

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Figure : Proposed elevations

During design development we felt that key elements of the surrounding architecture was an important aspect to take into account when deciding the style and design of the scheme, while also reflecting the developments contemporary nature. The design team considers that the site offers a real opportunity to enhance the existing community while drawing from its design context where appropriate.

Traditional in form and scale yet with contemporary detailing and fenestration, the proposed houses will incorporate a combination of multi-stock red facing brick, contrast brick, artificial slate roofs, and timber detailing. Key elements of brick detailing will add variety to the aesthetic quality of the scheme. Materials will be of a good quality and selected to age gracefully.

Artificial slate has been proposed to the roof pitches with matching ridge tiles (half round). PVCu windows are proposed and it is noted that the Local Authority would seek samples of materials and windows in due course. Dark Grey PVCu gutters and downpipes have been proposed with dark grey eaves, soffits, and bargeboards. Doors and windows would be to Secure by Design standard and the front doors would have a colourful finish to add a dash of individuality to the scheme.

Extensive planting, defined in places with timber knee rails and new trees soften the site and amongst other benefits, reduce the appearance of car parking spaces and increase the ecological potential of the development.

## 10.0

### Landscaping & Lighting

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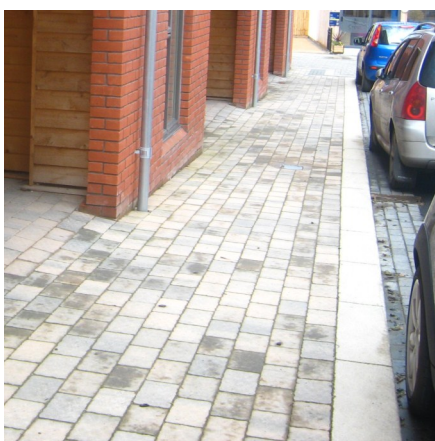
The external landscaping has been designed as easily maintainable and easily accessible for users including mobility impaired residents/visitors. All hard landscaping will be on firm ground, with no loose gravel which has the potential to make access difficult for wheelchair and cane users. Soft landscaping will include extensive greenery and planting to encourage biodiversity and wildlife, in accordance with the recommendations of the ecology report and CSH guidance provided by Thomson. Please refer to the reports by Thomson Ecology which fully describe the ecological nature of the site.

All homes will have their own private garden, accessed from close to their entrance door. New plants and trees are proposed in key locations such as the boundary between parking court and footpath. Further planting has been designed to denote frontage boundaries to the new units and soften the buildings into the site. These areas will act as 'green buffers' to provide a degree of screening from key existing properties and a soft edge to the new development.

Existing boundary treatments will remain the same as existing, while areas of new fencing will be provided as necessary. Subdividing garden fences of 1.5m will be topped with trellis panelling to bring them up to 1.8m, while external facing garden fences will be 1.8m close boarded. All rear access paths and gates will be secure and designed to meet Secure by Design criteria. In addition to the above, the noise report has identified that garden fences to the north, east and west boundaries should be of acoustic construction and at least 2m high. Please see the acoustic report submitted with this application for more information.

Lighting will primarily be of a low level nature but will be designed to provide safe levels of lighting both within the proposed site but along the areas of the footpath that bound the site. It is anticipated that a more detailed lighting scheme will be provided following detailed liaison with the Council.

Examples of the some of the types of boundary treatments and landscaping proposed



## 11.0

### Sustainability

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A sustainable home is one that is built to meet the needs of people today, but with due consideration for the needs of future generations. The dwellings will be constructed to reach a minimum Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3. It is understood from liaison with the Local Authority that by following this nationally recognised standard, the application will demonstrate compliance with its local policy.

Specific environmental / sustainability features of the development will include the following:

- Low levels of heat loss through the fabric of the building as a result of high insulation levels and air tightness performance.
- All glazing will have low heat loss and be designed to maximise natural daylight and reduce summer solar gain (high performance windows would form part of solution / energy strategy). Enhanced acoustic glazing specification.
- Low energy heating and hot water systems will be considered at a detailed design stage.
- Low energy lighting installations internally and externally throughout with appropriate controls.
- Provision of secure and weather tight cycle storage to encourage cycle ownership and use.
- All insulation materials will be low polluting, with detailing to minimise thermal bridging.
- Use of durable materials of low environmental impact and long life, sourced responsibly for main building and finishing elements (including certified timber).
- Provision of rain water butts to all houses to serve external areas. Planting to be selected where possible to limit water use and reflect warming climate trends.
- Limited hard surfacing due to low density scheme and efficient access layout. Permeable surfaces to allow percolation into soil.
- The ecological value of the site would be enhanced by the implementation of an appropriate landscaping strategy.
- The development has a good building footprint in terms of heat loss criteria and day lighting, by virtue of the semi-detached and cluster flats adopted.
- Construction site impacts to be reduced by adoption of a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) by main contractor as permitted by site constraints e.g. waste segregation, recycling and monitoring.
- The applicant will investigate the use of renewable or low carbon technologies towards achieving minimum CSH Level 3 accreditation. The passive measures of good orientation and fabric enhancement, as well as the many mandatory categories, is the preferred method of achieving CSH Level 3.

## Environment Agency: Flood Risk Map

The attachment below, taken from the Environment Agency website, displays the application site which is located outside but in the locality of a flood risk zone. It is therefore classed as Zone 1. A full (FRA) is not required as the site is less than 1ha.

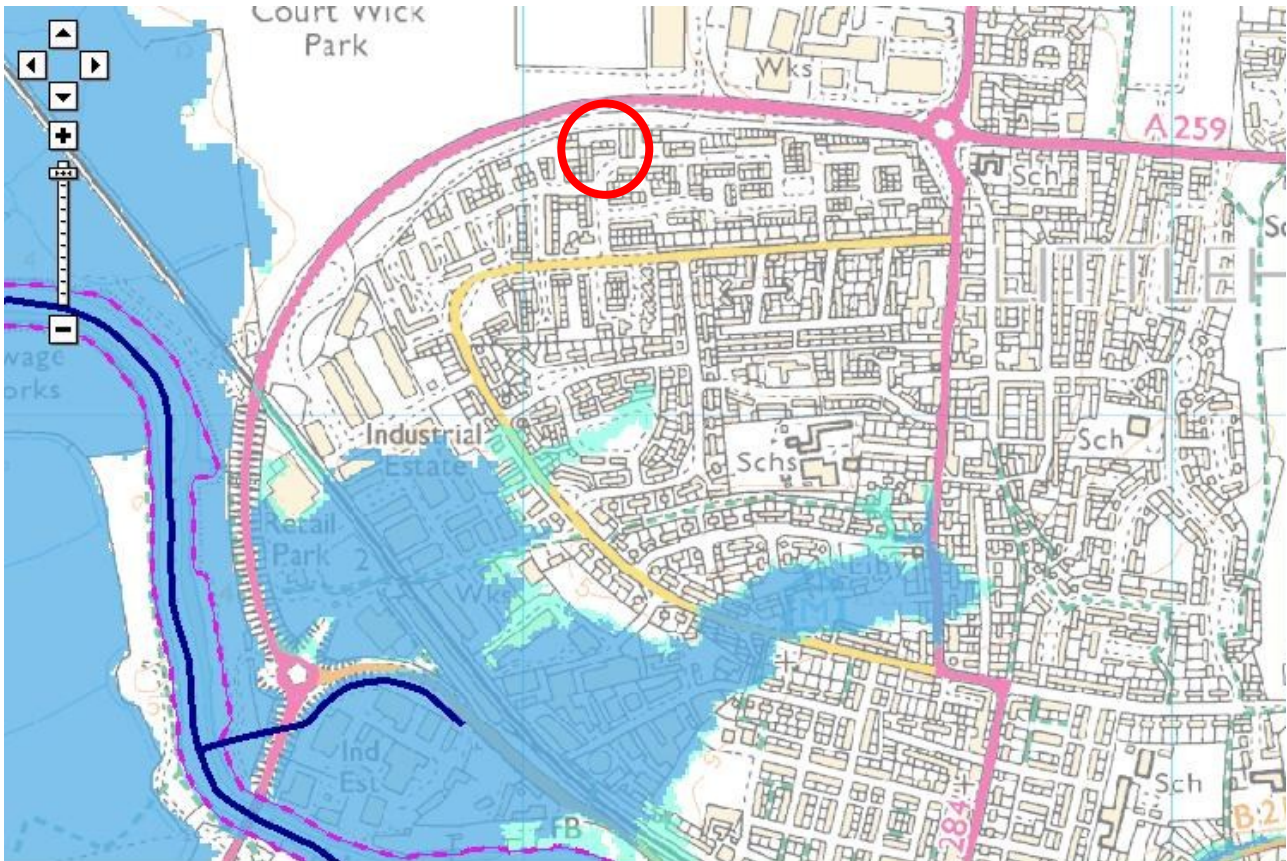


Figure : Flood risk map

## 13.0 Inclusive Access

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This proposal has been designed to be accessible to all users. The proposed site levels strategy will allow a good degree of accessibility with footpath gradients at approximately 1:21 to 1:40.

Finished floor levels have been set to enable level thresholds throughout with easily identifiable paths leading to entrances/exits at a gradient of no greater than 1:20 in accordance with good practice, Part M of the Building Regulations and Lifetime Homes principles. A 1200mm level threshold extends from the entrance before gradients begin.

Where possible units have been designed with Lifetime Homes criteria in mind, this hasn't been possible for everyone of the 16 points. The Lifetime Homes standard aims to make units suitable and adaptable to meet a broad range of disabling conditions, therefore allowing residents to remain in their homes for a longer period with the many social benefits that staying in the same community brings.

## 14.0 Connectivity

### Public Transport Bus Services

Please refer to the bus route map below. The Coastliner number 700 runs along Courtwick Road close by to the south of the site, this connects the area to Chichester and Brighton in the other direction.

Number 9 is a more local route that connects Littlehampton to Angmering and Worthing

### Pedestrians

A range of essential amenities and facilities are located within a reasonable distance of the application site.

### Cycles

Cycles will be stored privately within the gardens of each house. The sheds are large to suit Code for Sustainable Homes criteria and each allows for at least 1 cycles for houses and 1 cycle for flats and also garden storage space.

### Public Transport

#### Rail Link

Littlehampton Train Station is approximately 1.6km south of the application site and provides links to Brighton, Chichester, Southampton and London.

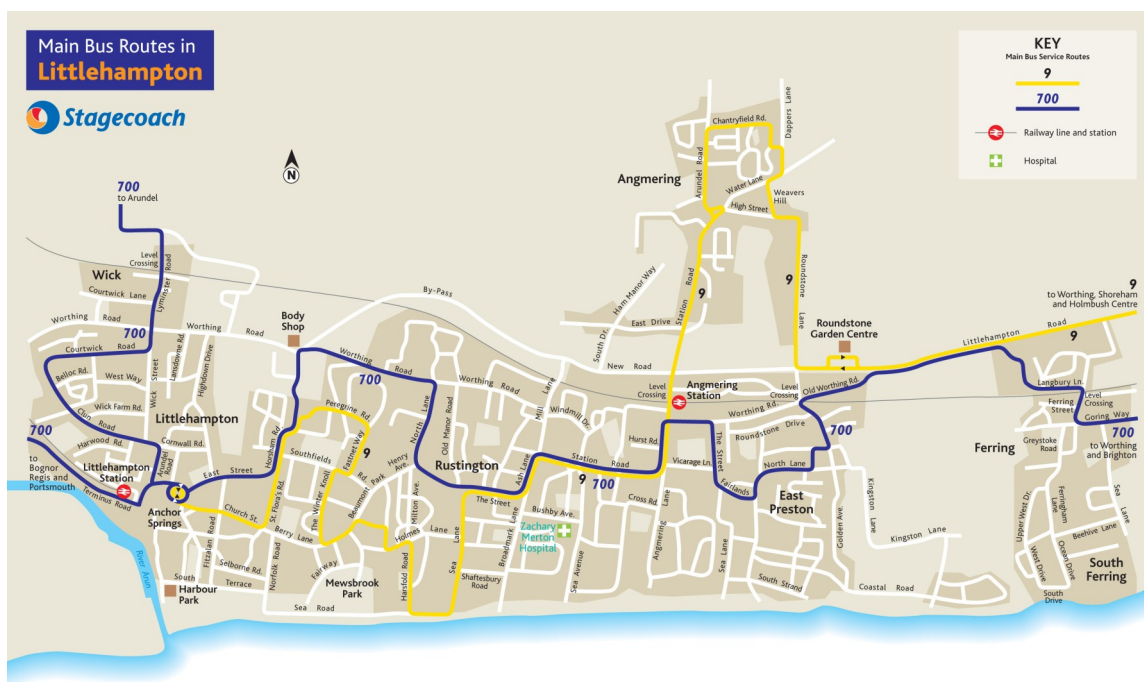


Figure Map showing surrounding Bus Routes

### Private Transport

Parking is provided on site for both proposed and existing residents, with provision set out by the WSCC parking calculator and the parking surveys carried out.

## 15.0

### Application Submission

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The proposed scheme, which has been submitted for full planning permission, has been carefully considered in relation to the surrounding context and the needs of the community.

The architectural team has worked in conjunction with the Local Authority, various consultants and advisors to create a new development which responds respectfully and appropriately to the surrounding context. The design team have consulted with local residents concerning all aspects of the proposed development including parking spaces to enable a scheme that meets the requirements of the local population as well as ADC to be submitted for planning permission.

It is respectfully requested that Officers and Members of the District Council look favourably on this proposal and grant full planning permission.