

An aerial photograph of a residential area, showing a road, fields, and houses. The image is darkened to serve as a background for the text.

Land East of Highbridge Road,
Colden Common,
Winchester

Vision Document



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1. Introduction

1.1 Neame Sutton Limited, Chartered Town Planners is instructed by Croudace Homes Limited (“Croudace”) to prepare a Vision Framework document for its promotion site at Land East of Highbridge Road, Colden Common, Winchester.

Croudace

1.2 Founded in 1946, Croudace Homes is a family owned, residential developer providing a wide range of homes in good locations throughout the south east. It is committed to building high quality homes backed up with a first-class customer service.

Neame Sutton

1.3 Neame Sutton Chartered Town Planners is a planning consultancy located in the South Downs National Park, close to the South Coast. Neame Sutton is instructed by clients across the UK in a wide range of Town Planning matters. The practice frequently advises clients in relation to residential development proposals including matters relating to housing land supply.

The role of the Vision Document

1.4 This Vision Framework document is intended to assist Officers at Winchester City Council (“WCC”) in their consideration of the promotion site as a suitable location for housing as part of the emerging Winchester District Local Plan 2020-2040.

1.5 The Local Plan Part 1: Joint Core Strategy (adopted March 2013) sets out the Council’s strategic framework for delivering development. It identifies the amount of development, broad locations for change, growth and protection, including allocating strategic sites.

1.6 The Local Plan Part 2: Development Management and Site Allocations (LPP2) was adopted by the Council in April 2017. LPP2 allocates land to help

deliver the development strategy for new housing, economic growth and diversification set out in Local Plan Part 1.

1.7 The Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan, which is currently at the Regulation 19 Consultation stage.



Figure 1. Wykeham Vale, Wickham - A Croudace Homes Development

2.0 Site Description

2.1 The promotion site comprises a 6.7ha rectangular parcel of land to the east of Highbridge Road, accessed via Spring Lane, which borders the north of the site. The land is currently pasture framed by hedge and tree boundaries and abuts the settlement to the east and north. Upper Moors Road borders the site to the east.



Figure 3. The Promotion Site

2.2 The northern part of the site is overgrown whereas the field to the south is currently used as horse paddock. A Public Right of Way lies to the south of the site, within the site boundary.



Figure 4. The Site, looking East from Highbridge Road/ Spring Lane junction



Figure 5. The Site from the Public Right of Way looking North



Figure 6. Photograph of the Public Right of the Way looking west



Figure 7. Photograph of Highbridge Road looking north



Figure 8. Photograph of Spring Lane looking towards Highbridge Road



Figure 9. The field boundary between the two field parcels

- 2.3 The site is not within a conservation area, nor are there any listed buildings within or directly adjacent to the site. The Grade II listed property of Brambridge House a, lies on the western side of the B3335 (Highbridge Road).
- 2.4 The site itself has no landscape designation. The South Downs National Park also lies on the western side of the B3335.
- 2.5 Colden Common Community Centre, Co-Op and Colden Common Primary School are within 100m of the site's eastern boundary on Upper Moors Road, or 180m from the centre of the site. Central Park Playground lies just beyond the Community Centre.

- 2.6 The Colden Common Community Centre has a busy timetable and hosts Kingfishers Pre-School. There is another Pre-school within the Methodist Church on Spring Lane. Colden Common Surgery is also located a short walking distance from the site on Spring Lane.



Figure 10. Colden Common Community Centre



Figure 11. The Community Centre busy timetable



Figure 12. Kingfishers Preschool at Colden Common Community Centre

3.0 Site Considerations

3.1 This section of the vision document looks to provide more contextual information on the site's constraints and opportunities, including:

- Transport
- Ecology
- Flooding and Drainage
- Landscape
- Heritage
- Mineral Resources

(i) Transport

3.2 The site is located to the west of the centre of Colden Common within a convenient walking and cycling distance to the majority of local services and facilities within the village (see Table 1 and Figure 13). The site is well situated to take up opportunities to provide direct access to these facilities via new connections tying into the existing walking/cycling networks which are generally good quality.

3.3 The site is also well located to surrounding bus stops, the closest of which are located on Spring Lane, with additional stops on Lower Moors Road and Upper Moors Road just south of the primary school. The bus stops are served by routes to the following destinations:

- Winchester City Centre (including Winchester Railway Station) – 27-minute journey via bus service 61 or 31-minute journey via bus service 69.
- Eastleigh Town Centre (including Eastleigh Railway Station) – 21-minute journey via bus service 61.
- Allbrook and North Boyatt – 26-minute journey via bus service 61.

Facility	Location	Distance from Site Entrance (m)	Distance from Site Centre (m)	Walking Time (Mins)	Cycling Time (Mins)
Employment	Highbridge Estate	650	903	8	2
	Wessex Park Employment	1,300	1,495	15	5
Education	Colden Common Primary School	35	166	<1	<1
	Kingfishers Colden Common Preschool	180	310	2	1
	Rainbow Preschool	300	495	3	1
Retail	The Co-operative	180	310	2	1
	Mayflower Takeaway	180	310	2	1
	Post Office	180	310	2	1
	Brambridge Shops	270	523	3	1
Leisure	KMA Sports Academy	200	330	2	1
	Skate Park	240	435	3	1
	Central Park Playground	300	430	3	1
	Rising Sun	350	480	4	1
	Allotments	550	550	6	2
	Colden Common Play Area	800	995	9	3
	Colden Common Recreation Ground	800	995	9	3
	Wessex Park	1,200	1,330	14	5
Healthcare	Colden Common Tennis Courts	1,200	1,395	14	5
	Colden Common Surgery	170	365	2	1
	Colden Chemist	500	695	6	2
Transport	Colden Common Dental Care	700	895	8	3
	Bus Stop (Outside Co-operative Store)	130	260	2	0

Table 1. Walking and cycling distance to local shops and services.

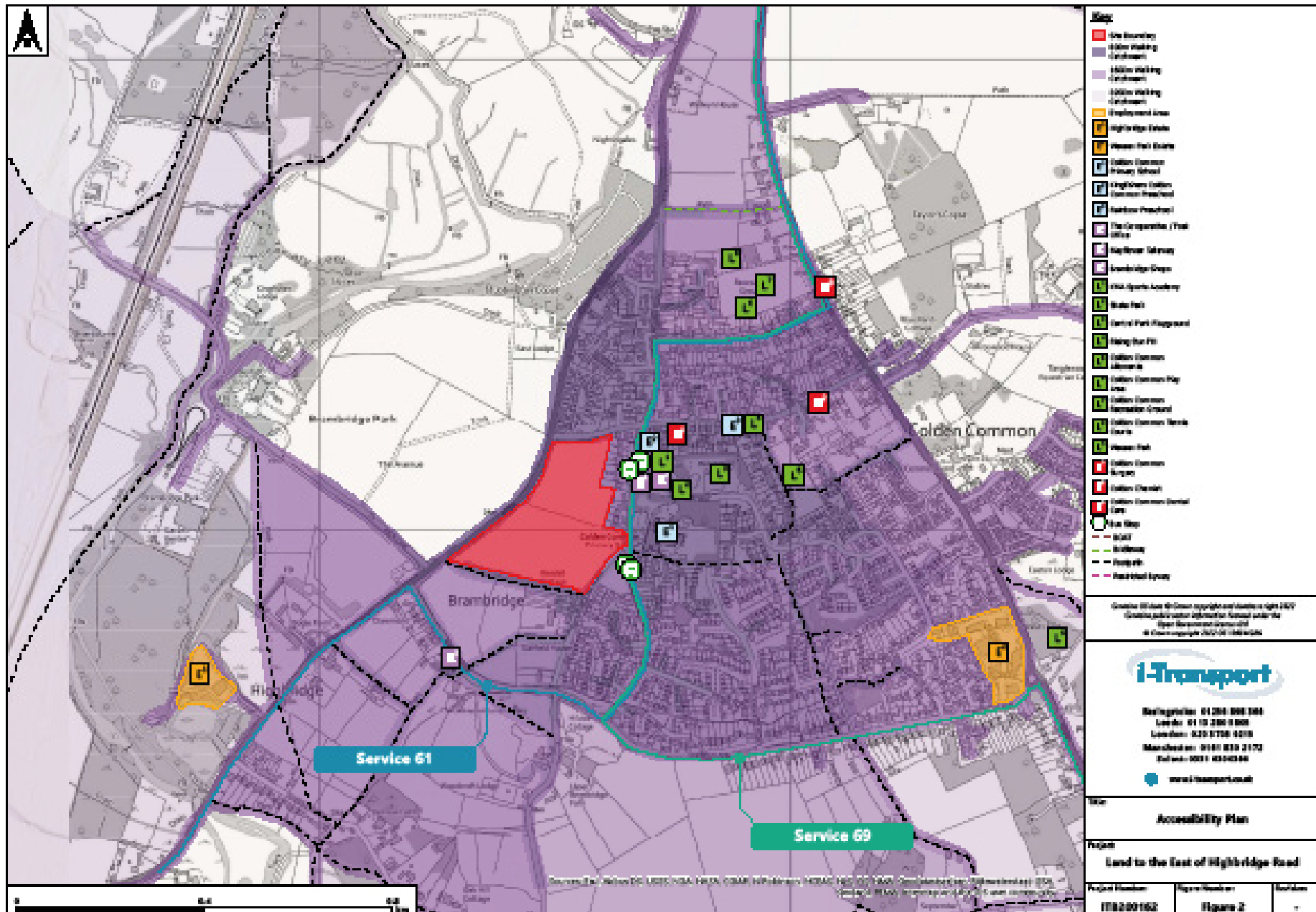


Figure 13. Accessibility Plan

Access Strategy

- 3.4 Primary vehicular access is achievable from Spring Lane in the form of a simple priority junction. This will be delivered in line with the latest HCC design guidance with adequate visibility that accords with speed survey data obtained in July 2024.
- 3.5 A second vehicle access is also achievable from Upper Moors Road to serve the proposed community building car park if required.
- 3.6 Three separate pedestrian and cycle accesses can be provided as part of the development proposal, connecting to Spring Lane, Highbridge Road and Upper Moors Road respectively. These comprise:
- A new 2m footway connection to Spring Lane alongside a new pedestrian crossing including dropped kerbs and tactile paving;
 - A 3m shared footway/cycleway connection onto Highbridge Road to tie into the existing crossing at this location;
 - A 3m shared footway/cycleway connection onto Upper Moors Road in conjunction with a new uncontrolled crossing to provide a direct route to the local primary school and oo-op shop; and
 - Mown paths across the site, safely linking walkers on the Public Right Of Way within the site, to Spring Lane without be required to walk on the carriageway of Highbridge Road.
- 3.7 These accesses will facilitate direct, safe and efficient pedestrian/cycle movements between the site and the local services and facilities outlined previously.

Traffic Impact

- 3.8 The proposed development of approximately 80 dwellings is forecast to generate circa 60 two-way vehicular trips during each peak period. This is equivalent to an average of around one additional vehicle per minute on Spring Lane which will then be distributed further on the local highway network depending on their destination. These increases are not a significant amount of additional traffic and there will be no material impact on the local highway network.



Figure 14. The proposed Site Access location from Spring Lane

(ii) Ecology

- 3.9 The site is currently grassland/ paddock land and will require appropriate surveying at the appropriate time to understand the specific habitats and species it supports.
- 3.10 The site is not within an area statutory designation for ecological reasons, but does fall within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone for the River Itchen SSSI and SAC. Any future planning application will consider the impact of the proposal on the SSSI, SAC and SPA and any suitable mitigation that may be required.
- 3.11 All developments are required to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain and there is a preference to deliver this on site. The indicative masterplan shows areas of biodiversity enhancement in the southern parcel where built development would be kept to a minimum.

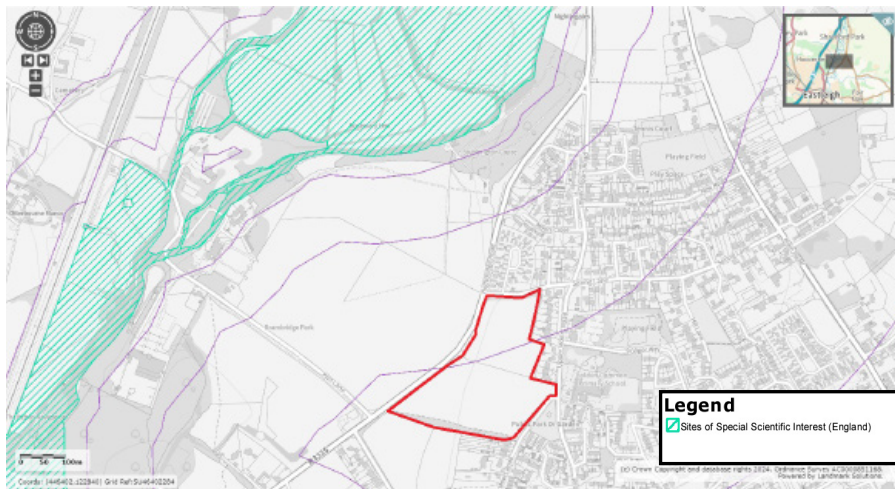


Figure 15. Extract from Magic Map, DEFRA (accessed online September 2024)

(iii) Flooding and Drainage

- 3.12 The site is in Flood Zone 1, the area at lowest risk of flooding by rivers and the most appropriate for residential uses.



Figure 16. The Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning (Flood Zones) (accessed online September 2024)

- 3.13 The site has a small area of surface water flooding near the boundary between the two fields. A managed and maintained Sustainable urban Drainage System provided as part of the development would improve the surface water environment.

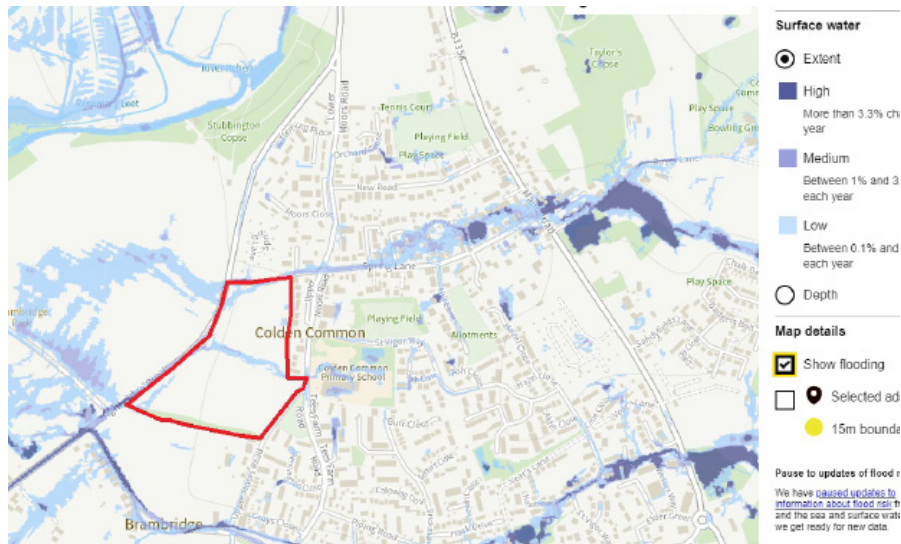


Figure 17. The Environment Agency Surface Water Flood Map for Planning (Flood Zones)(accessed online October 2024)

- 3.14 The site is partly within a Source Protection Zone (Zone 1- Inner Protection Zone) for potable water extraction, as is much of Golden Common. All current proposed allocations in the draft Winchester Local Plan (Regulation 19 version) are also in this same zone.
- 3.15 It is expected that foul water will utilise the existing foul network following any necessary upgrades, as required.

(iv) Landscape

3.16 The Site comprises two unremarkable fields bounded by mature hedgerows and trees and is well related to the existing built up edge of Colden Common to the north and east. A public footpath passes along the southern boundary, otherwise the site has no public access and is well contained by built development, roads and hedgerows.

Northern Field

3.17 The northern field is unmanaged and lies south of Spring Lane, where a post war housing estate and the Sunningdale Mobile Home Park extend up to the boundary of the B3335 Highbridge Road. The western boundary of the northern field is defined by an overgrown hedgerow with mature trees, which is gappy in places. To the east, residential development on higher ground along Upper Moors Road backs onto the Site. An overgrown hedgerow with mature trees defines the southern boundary of the field.



Figure 19. View towards northern boundary of Site from junction of Upper Moors Road and Spring Lane



Figure 20. View of western boundary of northern field of Site from B3335 Highbridge Road (note glimpses of housing on horizon)



Figure 21. View from Upper Moors Road to east of southern field

Southern Field

- 3.18 The southern field is currently grazed by horses and to the north is bounded by a mature hedgerow. The western boundary follows the B3335 Highbridge Road, with a well established hedgerow and mature trees opposite the tree avenue to Brambridge House and the boundary of the National Park. The southern boundary of the Site is delineated by an overgrown hedgerow with mature trees alongside a public footpath. Paddocks north of Brambridge Road and residential development off Upper Moors Road are located further to the south. The eastern boundary of the southern field follows a hedged boundary to Upper Moors Road and adjoins Colden Common Primary School.



Figure 22. View from Upper Moors Road to the hedged boundary separating the northern and southern fields



Figure 23. View of southern field from B3335 Highbridge Road



Figure 24. View south from public footpath at southeast corner of Site (note negligible visibility of National Park)

3.19 The Winchester Landscape Character Assessment SPD (2022) identifies the Site and immediate locality as lying within Landscape Character Area 13: Lower Itchen Valley.

3.20 The key characteristics are heavily weighted towards the River Itchen and associated features that have no visual relationship with the Site. Many of the key characterises indicate a lower susceptibility to new build development, particularly where any development could be well related to the existing settlement edge i.e.;

- An enclosed and sheltered feel, in stark contrast to the open arable landscape to the east and west of the character area;
- A well-treed character; and
- between Otterbourne and Colden Common the underlying clays have resulted in a more enclosed landscape with more trees but much shallower valley sides, rising almost imperceptibly in places;

3.21 Key issues include:

- Suburbanisation and loss of tranquility within the character area
- Visual intrusion of detractors such as pylons, paddock fencing, and industrial buildings
- Fragmentation and neglect of hedgerows and wet woodlands
- Ash dieback and the loss of mature trees within the landscape
- Reduction in biodiversity through intensive agricultural practices

Built form strategies include integrating new development with the surrounding landscape by providing locally indigenous planting, as appropriate.

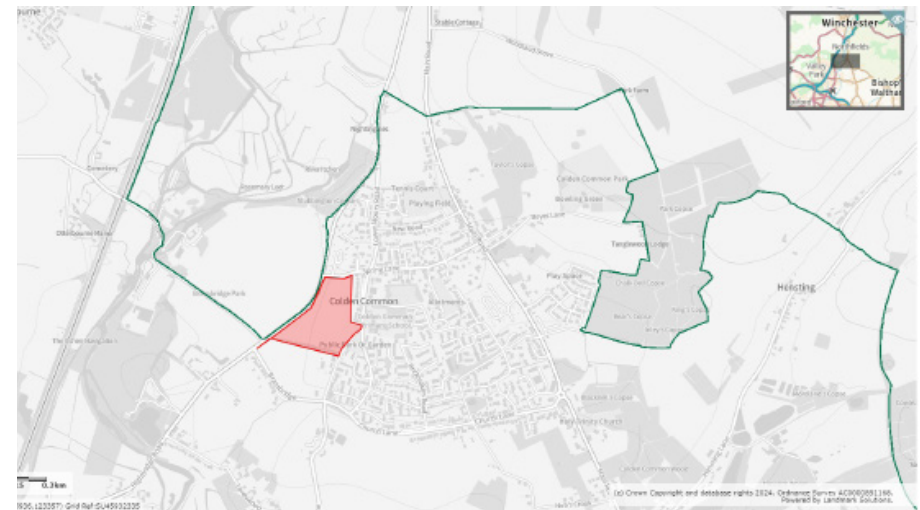


Figure 25. The Boundary of the South Downs National Park, an extract from Magic Map, DEFRA, (accessed online September 2024)

3.22 The South Downs National Park lies to the west of the B3335 Highbridge Road, however the open farmland has no public access where views to the Site would be available.

3.23 A recent site visit highlighted that the Site does not make a material contribution to the setting of the South Downs National Park for the following reasons:

- There are no publicly accessible views of the Site from the National Park;
- There are no clear views of the northern field from any publicly accessible locations;
- The B3335 Highbridge Road defines the edge of the National Park, reinforced by an overgrown hedgerow and mature trees along the western boundary of the Site;
- Residential development at Colden Common to the north and south of the Site already abuts the B3335 Highbridge Road and the boundary of the National Park.

3.24 There is a subtle landscape character difference between the northern and southern fields with the northern field less sensitive to new built development because of its closer physical relationship to the settlement edge and absence of public access and visibility.

3.25 Landscape opportunities include:

- The western boundary of the Site to the B3335 has the potential to be further strengthened with new planting, adjacent to the National Park;
- Enhancement of the recreational experience within the southern field by facilitating greater public access, adopting species rich meadow planting to

improve biodiversity and amenity, whilst also accommodating appropriate low key community facilities in close proximity to Colden Common Primary School.

- Active management could enhance the long term potential of veteran hedgerow trees, a number of which are covered by Tree Preservation Orders.



Figure 26. Example of a parkland area on a Croudace development

(v) Historic Environment

- 3.26 The promotion site is not within a Conservation Area, nor are there non-designated or listed heritage assets within the site.
- 3.27 The main heritage consideration to the development of the site is the setting of the Grade II* Listed Brambridge House, which lies 525m to the north-west of the site.

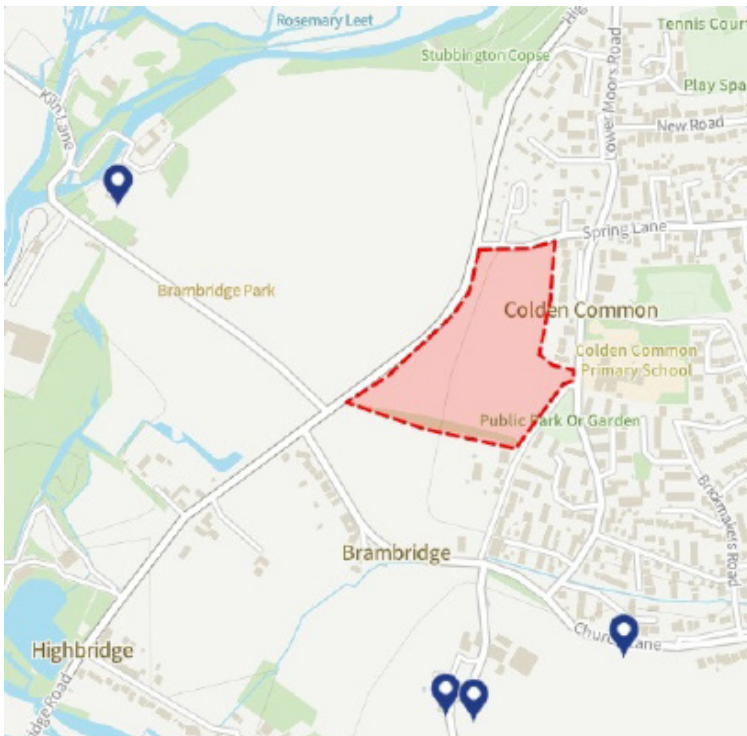


Figure 27. Extract from Historic England Listed Building map for Colden Common (accessed online September 2024)

- 3.28 This is large 18th-century country house, which is now divided into flats. It is built of stuccoed brick, and has three storeys. It was remodeled after a fire in 1872.
- 3.29 Historically, the house lay within an area of parkland with a distinctive avenue which is wide enough to give views to the house from the road to the south-east. This still survives today, and much of the former parkland to the north of the avenue retains its open character, although the scattered tree planting and clumps of trees have been lost.



Figure 28. Extract from the 1897 Ordnance Survey Map

3.30 This avenue aligns with the southern area of the site, and there are views from within and to the east of the site to the house, and reciprocal visibility of the southern part of the site is anticipated, although there is no public access to confirm this.

3.31 Whilst the northern area of the site also lies relatively close to the avenue, it is screened from the house by the trees of the avenue itself, which are staggered in a double line, rather than being a single line of spaced-out trees.

3.32 As such, it is anticipated that the northern area of the site can accommodate built form without significant inter-visibility or co-visibility with Brambridge



Figure 29. Looking North within the southern area of the site



Figure 30. Looking toward Bambridge House from the northern area of the site

(vi) Mineral Resources

- 3.33 The site lies in a Mineral Consultation Area for Brick Clay and also Superficial Sand and Gravel. Surveying would be required to assess any potential supply and whether prior extraction of any mineral would be required before development commences.
- 3.34 All current proposed allocations for Colden Common in the draft Local Plan fall within a Mineral Consultation Area. It is also noted that processing plants for Sand and Gravel and Brick clay are some distance from Colden Common and therefore even if the mineral is present in a quantity and quality appropriate for extraction, the financial viability of extraction may prevent its removal in addition to the site being, in mineral extraction terms, relatively small and in close proximity to residential properties. This is not therefore a constraint to the delivery of the site for housing.

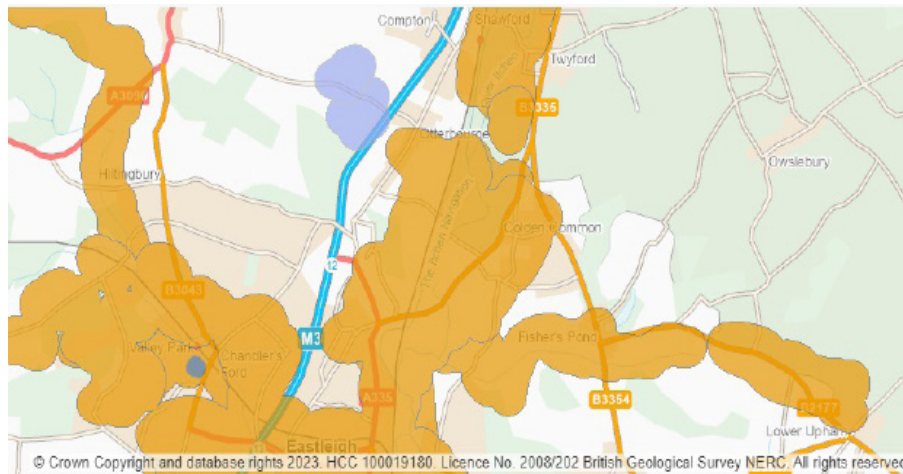


Figure 31. The Hampshire Mineral Consultation Area for Superficial Sand and Gravel

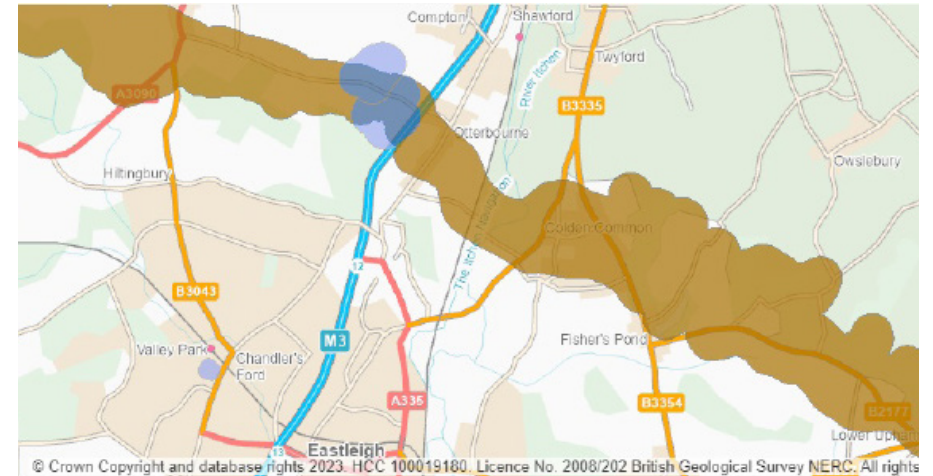


Figure 32. The Hampshire Mineral Consultation Area for Brick Clay

4.0 Key Scheme Benefits

Community Building and Car Park

- 4.1 The site offers an ideal opportunity to help meet community needs alongside the delivery of much needed new homes in Colden Common.
- 4.2 One such need identified is for a further community building. The existing Community Centre nearby is well used, with a busy timetable and little opportunity for new groups to use the building. Youth groups, such as Scouts and Girl Guiding, continue to grow in popularity in the area.
- 4.3 The site can therefore provide a further multi-use community building located in close proximity to the existing community and as well as new residents in a way that can work alongside the existing Community Centre to expand the range of opportunities for youth and other groups to meet.
- 4.4 It has also been identified that parking for school drop off and pick up can be an issue for local residents with disruption on the local roads at these times. The parking area of the community building could provide additional car parking for the school during these peak times to improve the existing situation for residents.

Allotments

- 4.5 It is understood that allotments are in high demand in the local area. The site offers the potential to deliver further allotment plots alongside the community building and car park in a central location to provide the opportunity for more residents to access plots to grow their own fruit and vegetables.

Public Open Space

- 4.6 This site is the only proposal in Colden Common (including the Council's proposed allocations) that offers the opportunity for a new and substantial area of publicly accessible open space. As well as being used for a range of informal recreation activities, it will also provide areas for ecological enhancement and biodiversity net gain.
- 4.7 The location of the site close to the village's key services means that the open space would be useable not just for new residents of the development but for the wider community.
- 4.8 The community benefit offer for this site is therefore unique in terms of the sites presented for allocation in and around Colden Common and presents a genuine community benefit.



Figure 33. Areas for wildlife enhancement on a Croudace development

5.0 The Indicative Proposal



Key Components of Scheme:

- Approximately 80 new homes of which 40% will be affordable
- A new community park
- New allotments
- A new community hall
- Parking to serve the new and existing local facilities
- Retention and enhancement of trees and hedgerows, where possible
- 15% onsite Biodiversity Net Gain
- Additional landscape screening to the National Park
- The southern field to be kept largely undeveloped to recognise its relationship with Brambridge House

Figure 34. Concept Plan

- 5.1 The illustrative layout plan proposes a landscape led development that provides a mix of dwellings alongside community uses such as allotments, a community use hall, parkland and open space, informal and formal recreation routes and supporting facilities.
- 5.2 The pattern of development comprises predominantly perimeter block development with well-defined public and private spaces.
- 5.3 There is a mix of detached and semi-detached houses interspersed with terraces and some flats arranged within a generally linear framework of streets and shared spaces.
- 5.4 A tree lined street connects Spring Lane to the edge of the proposed parkland and community facilities.
- 5.5 At the eastern edge to the existing gardens of adjacent dwellings on Upper Moors Road is proposed a wildlife corridor and landscaped buffer which would provide a natural screen. Behind the buffer the proposed houses are arranged to help safeguard the existing privacy of the existing houses.
- 5.6 To the south are apartments and a mix of detached and semi-detached houses set behind the existing field boundary. To the west and north, behind reinforced tree planting within a landscape buffer, are further houses.
- 5.7 Houses are typically two storeys and the flats are up to three storeys. Third floors are set into the roof space to reduce height. Variation in height dwelling type will create interesting street scenes.
- 5.8 All dwellings are provided with amenity space, houses are provided with private gardens and the apartments will have access to communal open spaces.



Figure 35. A Croudace development with extensive open space and a play area

- 5.9 Careful consideration has been given to the site's proposed access. A new junction is proposed into the site. Through and into the site there is proposed a well-connected movement network, accessible by all users, which helps ensure that the development is easy to navigate, safe and secure. The proposed layout has been developed on the principle of providing permeability for all modes of travel. The configuration of the internal street network creates a safe environment for all road users, particularly for on carriageway cycle use. To prioritise pedestrian and cycle access there are new connections proposed through the development and to the existing community.

6.0 Planning Considerations

The Location of Development

- 6.1 Colden Common is a sustainable location for future development. The City Council has proposed allocations in the village totalling nearly 90 dwellings, in the Regulation 19 Consultation version of the Local Plan. The Village is however constrained by the South Downs National Park , SSSI and SAC and SPA and Ancient Woodland. This site represents a logical rounding off of the Colden Common triangle. The site is vacant and ready to deliver housing and community uses.
- 6.2 For the reasons stated within this Vision and on the advice of Landscape and Heritage Consultants, Croudace is confident that this site, would be suitable for development.

Housing Need

- 6.3 The Winchester Local Plan (Regulation 19) is being advanced quickly so that it can be submitted ahead of the publication of a new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was consulted on from July to September 2024. The draft NPPF re-introduces mandatory housing targets which sees Winchester's planned housing target rise from 676 dwellings per annum to 1099 dwellings per annum. There will be a need to address this higher housing need if not prior to submission, immediately after adoption. This site is available, suitable, achievable and therefore deliverable. It should therefore be considered for a housing allocation.



Figure 36. A Croudace development with wildlife areas and seating

7.0 Conclusion and Next Steps

- 7.1 This Vision Document is just the beginning for Land East of Highbridge Road. Croudace will continue to develop its concept plans through a comprehensive landscape led masterplan approach with a full consideration of the assets on the site.
- 7.2 This site is available, suitable, achievable and deliverable. This site is also able to deliver significant planning benefits.

Planning Benefit 1: Allotments

This site is able to deliver allotments. It is understood that there is a waiting list for allotments in the area.

Planning Benefit 2: Public open space

Delivery of significant onsite publicly accessible open space to serve both existing residents and those occupying the new dwellings.

Planning Benefit 3: Community building

The Colden Common Community Centre is well used and there is little availability in the current schedules for new youth, sport or community groups. An additional community use building within the setting of a large amount of open space would be a significant public benefit.

Planning Benefit 4: Community building car parking

The new community building would include a car park which could also be used for Colden Common Primary School and the proposed allotments.

Planning Benefit 5: Safe pedestrian connections

The footpath on Spring Lane terminates just short of the access to Sunningdale Mobile Home Park. There is no footpath on Highbridge Road from Spring Lane south to Brambridge, where there is a short footpath connection which terminates across from Kiln Lane. The Public Right of Way which goes through the site on its southern boundary is uneven.

A proposal on this site could provide:

- Public Right of Way enhancement
- Mown footpaths in the southern part of the site, connecting to hard surfaced footpaths in the northern part of the site and onto Spring Lane
- Footpath connection from the existing formalised pedestrian walkway on Highbridge Road to the Public Right of Way in the site.
- Dedicated pedestrian access on Spring Lane

- 7.3 Winchester City Council will have to consider identifying additional housing sites either through this current Local Plan or through early review. The site is in a sustainable location for the delivery of housing. Croudace is committed to working with Winchester City Council and the local community to ensure the aspirations of stakeholders are seen in the site.



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