The Development Philosophy

A STORY ABOUT ENCOURAGING UNDIRECTED PLAY AND DESIGNING OUT LONELINESS

We are developing an idea for a gathering of low-carbon homes around routes, nature and shared spaces that belong. Recent housing in the village provides predominantly for the car with poor urban design creating cul-de-sacs detached from the recreational networks of the countryside. This development will instead be characterised by shared open spaces and a number of routes linking it with the village and the countryside.

The homes will be attractive, highly sustainable, appropriate to the needs of the village and economical to live in, making the most of their rural setting. I hope that their productive landscape will develop into a shared community asset.

Ball Games Allowed

A retired resident should be able to see their neighbours coming and going. A child should feel free to explore the rich layers of their rural landscape. And a parent should feel the comfort of watching their children play in a safe environment.

Visitors Welcome

Walkers, riders, runners (and hedgehogs, song birds and insects) should feel that their recreational routes are left undisturbed – perhaps even enhanced with a new loop instead of the familiar out-and-return. And gardeners will have the opportunity of accessible, sun-ﬁlled allotments.

A Healthy Mix of House Types

My aim is for this project to provide a replicable example of sustainable development that supports the creation of place and community. Anecdotal evidence from residents suggests that there is a need for affordable housing that is tied to those with local connections. Of the (up to) seven houses (up to) two will be made available to the parish for this purpose.

Homes for a mix of ages and life stages will attract down-sizers and families. We will design homes to *passiv-haus* standards that can be divided in different ways at different times according to their users’ needs. Some or all of the homes could be self- or custom-build. A hierarchy of shared spaces will be apportioned to the spaces between homes and in front of them - shared space for stuff, movement and play.

Building-in Biodiversity

To many people, nature can seem unfamiliar and rough around the edges; there remains a disconnect, both in urban and rural minds, between how nature is portrayed, and what the English-landscape at its best can offer. The aim of the landscaping of this project is to provide educational and recreational access to the biodiversity of its rural location so that those living there or visiting will experience the changing beauty of the English countryside in all its seasons. The houses will be part of the rural environment on the edge of the village, embedded in the natural landscape. To this end we will make the most of options to deliver beautiful and biodiverse landscaping:

* Allotments – sun-filled allotments will be allocated to every home with additional allotments available to other village residents.
* **Wildlife Pond**– very little competes with open water for biodiversity value on a small scale, with equal benefits for well-being. A wildlife pond, set in a sympathetically managed wildflower meadow, will be established in the field to the north-east of the development. Easily visible from the bridleway, it will have supervised access for educational purposes (for example by the local primary school and Brownie pack).
* **Community Orchards**– equally, traditional orchards, with local varieties and wildflowers beneath, deliver significant biodiversity value and serve as a point of interest and community benefit.
* **More trees**– native tree-planting around the site to provide shade for the houses and car parking areas will enhance landscaping for biodiversity and well-being.
* **Grassland**– wildflower grassland remains one of the mainstays of habitat creation. The wildflower meadows to the east and north of the development will be maintained to provide areas for exploration and discovery. In the spring and early summer access will be provided for educational purposes and annual hay cuts – sometimes by horse drawn equipment – will provide a further educational experience for residents and visitors. See also the report from Applied Ecology detailing how a 20%BNG will be achieved.





