

Where is the site?

The site is situated in the village of Langham and located off School Road. Langham is comprised of linear development mainly located along the length of Wick Road and extending out along Perry Lane and St Margaret's Cross, forming a rough 'T-shape' of development. The proposed development would complete the left arm of this T-shape and would essentially comprise infill development, as the site is located between the industrial site to the west of the site and existing dwellings to the east. The dwellings fronting School Road are arranged in a linear pattern, reflecting the surrounding existing properties.

Is the site suitable for residential development?

The site forms part of a draft allocation within the Colchester Borough Council's emerging Local Plan (Policy SS9). Produced by the council, the Local Plan is a statutory planning document that sets out how the council will meet its objectively assessed housing needs by identifying pieces of land across the district that it believes are appropriate for residential development. By allocating the land at School Road, the council has accepted that the site is suitable in principle for residential development. The Emerging Local Plan states that the site represents a "logical extension to the village as it lies between existing housing and employment sites and is well located for the school and community centre and shop." It is also within close distance of open space, a play area, and a bus stop ensuring a more sustainable location than reasonable alternatives in the area.

What does the draft allocation comprise of?

The council has stated that between the two sites that make up the allocation located within St Margaret's Cross 70 homes have the potential to be built. Linden Homes is proposing an attractive residential development comprising 50 new homes (including 20% affordable housing) and a village green. As part of the draft allocation, Linden Homes was also required to provide a new car park for Langham Primary School to help alleviate congestion on School Road during school drop-off and pick-up times. Though initial plans included 53 homes, the scheme was reduced to 50 following feedback received at the public consultation in November 2018.

Why are Linden Homes seeking to deliver 50 new homes?

As Colchester Borough Council has allocated a greenfield site for the development to meet its housing needs, Linden Homes believes it is important to maximise the efficiency of the site to reduce the number of greenfield sites required to be developed.

Upon designing the scheme, Linden Homes believes that the site could accommodate 50 homes whilst maintaining the character of the area. The development achieves an average net density of 32 dwellings per hectare (dph), The density results in an efficient use of the use of the land in line with

the Government's requirements set out in national planning policy, whilst at the same time promoting densities which are appropriate to the local area and which will help assimilate the development into its surroundings.

How much of the site will be affordable housing?

The development will provide 50 new homes comprising of 40 market homes and 10 affordable housing units. Affordable housing totals 20% of the site and aligns with the current Core Strategy Policy H4.

Does the development respect the character of the local area?

The development will respect the local character but also move the community towards a more sustainable future, through a significant increase in housing choice. Materials and architectural details have been identified which exhibit distinctive local design (for example red brick, ivory, and white render, dark brown roof tiles, and black front doors). This is incorporated into the detailed design of the new development and creates a townscape that is varied and sympathetic to its environment integrating with the existing community. This both reflects the traditional local character and that of the Essex Design Guide.

What mix of housing is Linden Homes proposing?

Of the 50 houses, Linden Homes is proposing to build 4 one-beds, 6 two-beds, 17 three-beds, 20 four-beds, and 3 five-beds.

What will the school car park be used for?

Under Policy SS9 of the emerging Local Plan, a small car park is to be provided within the site to serve Langham Primary School. Linden Homes has engaged with the school as part of the planning process and believes the proposed car park is appropriate to meet the needs of the school. The car park will comprise 10 spaces and it is intended to be used either as a drop-off/pick-up facility during school hours and/or parking for staff and visitors during the school day.

Does the highways network have sufficient capacity to accommodate the additional traffic movements?

Linden Homes understands that there is some concern about the capacity of the highways network to accommodate the additional vehicular movements that the site would generate, notably along School Road. Richard Jackson Limited (technical transport consultants) has assessed the impact that the proposed development and submitted a Transport Statement which has been assessed by Essex County Council highways authority who have (subject to several conditions), concluded that there would be a limited impact on the local area.

The report demonstrates that the development would generate an increase of 6 car arrivals and 17 car departures during morning peak hours, and 13 car arrivals and 6 car departures during evening peak hours. The highways network has sufficient capacity to accommodate these additional movements.

The local highway injury accident records further demonstrate that there are no significant issues in the local area which would be disproportionately affected by the proposed development.

The location of the site provides the opportunity for sustainable modes of travel, being within walking distance to many local amenities and public transport. Linden Homes is keen to promote sustainable sources of travel and the following measures to provide accessibility by foot and cycle are proposed:

- Provision of pedestrian/cycle links through the site
- Internal road layout design to ensure low traffic speeds. The design will promote safe walking and high permeability through the site, and limit the potential for anti-social behaviour
- Particular attention to be paid to surface quality, and sufficient 'overlook' to provide a sense of safety and security for users
- Appropriate signage and crossing points of roads through the development, to include dropped curbs, tactile paving, and guardrails as appropriate.

As such, Richard Jackson Limited has concluded that the development is considered to have a limited impact on the local transport network and there should be no objections to the proposed development on highway and transportation grounds.

How will Linden Homes seek to alleviate drainage problems?

A surface water drainage strategy has been conducted under the council's guidance on surface water and flood risk. The surface water drainage strategy has been incorporated into the design of the proposed development to ensure the risk of surface water flooding is minimised.

Linden Homes has incorporated SUDS principles in the design to restrict the flow from the site, maintaining the current level of run-off. A swale is proposed along the northern boundary where water flows will be treated and stored in the short term in conjunction with permeable paving throughout the site.

The drainage network also has flow restriction devices installed to reduce the peak flows into the swale during intense storms. The drainage network has been computer modelled to ensure that the flow is restricted so that flooding is not caused either on the development or downstream of the Site and that all storms can be accommodated within the onsite system, up to a 1 in 100-year event including the effects of climate change.

Does infrastructure and amenities have the capacity to accommodate the additional residents?

The emerging Local Plan (which has allocated the site for development) ensures that allocations support economic prosperity and development viability. Therefore, developers are expected to contribute to providing and enhancing both on-site costs and strategic off-site infrastructure costs, to mitigate the impact of development and ensure that infrastructure is sufficient to accommodate the new development. These contributions are legally secured through Section 106 and CIL contributions.

Linden Homes' development will provide several financial contributions towards local infrastructure expected to total £800k+. Included will be contributions towards education, open space, community facilities, healthcare, and sustainable transport.