

LAND WEST OF DROVE LAND DEVELOPMENT SITE

INFORMATION PACK:

New Alresford Neighbourhood Plan Consultation

*Concept Design of Potential Development
For Consultation Purposes Only*

Prepared by Pro Vision on behalf of The Grange Estate

November 2024

NEW ALRESFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN CONSULTATION

INFORMATION PACK:

DROVE LANE DEVELOPMENT SITE

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DATE:

NOVEMBER 2024

PRO VISION

THE LODGE

HIGHCROFT ROAD

WINCHESTER

HAMPSHIRE

SO22 5GU

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 A 2023 Business Survey carried out by New Alresford Town Council identified that the community wants:

- cheaper homes to rent/buy
- opportunities to downsize
- opportunities for first time buyers
- small business units/start-up units
- energy efficient developments

1.2 The land at Drove Lane is being promoted by the landowner as a possible mixed-use development opportunity comprising:

- a mix of up to 9 new homes
- small workshops/business floorspace
- an area for nature conservation and education

1.3 This Information Pack seeks to show how the site promotion team has considered the site context; the constraints to, and opportunities for development; and how/why it has come up with the proposal.

Site Promotion Team

1.4 At present, the site promotion team comprises:

- **The Grange Estate – landowner**
- **Pro Vision – Planning Consultant**
- **Pro Vision – Architect/Urban Designer**
- **Pro Vision - Ecology**

1.5 The site is not currently under any option to a developer/housebuilder.

1.6 The landowner hopes to deliver the proposals as part of their wider agricultural diversification strategy.

2.0 Map of Drove Lane Development Site

- 2.1 The land at Drove Lane is located on the western edge of New Alresford, off the B3047. It extends to about 6 hectares or nearly 15 acres.



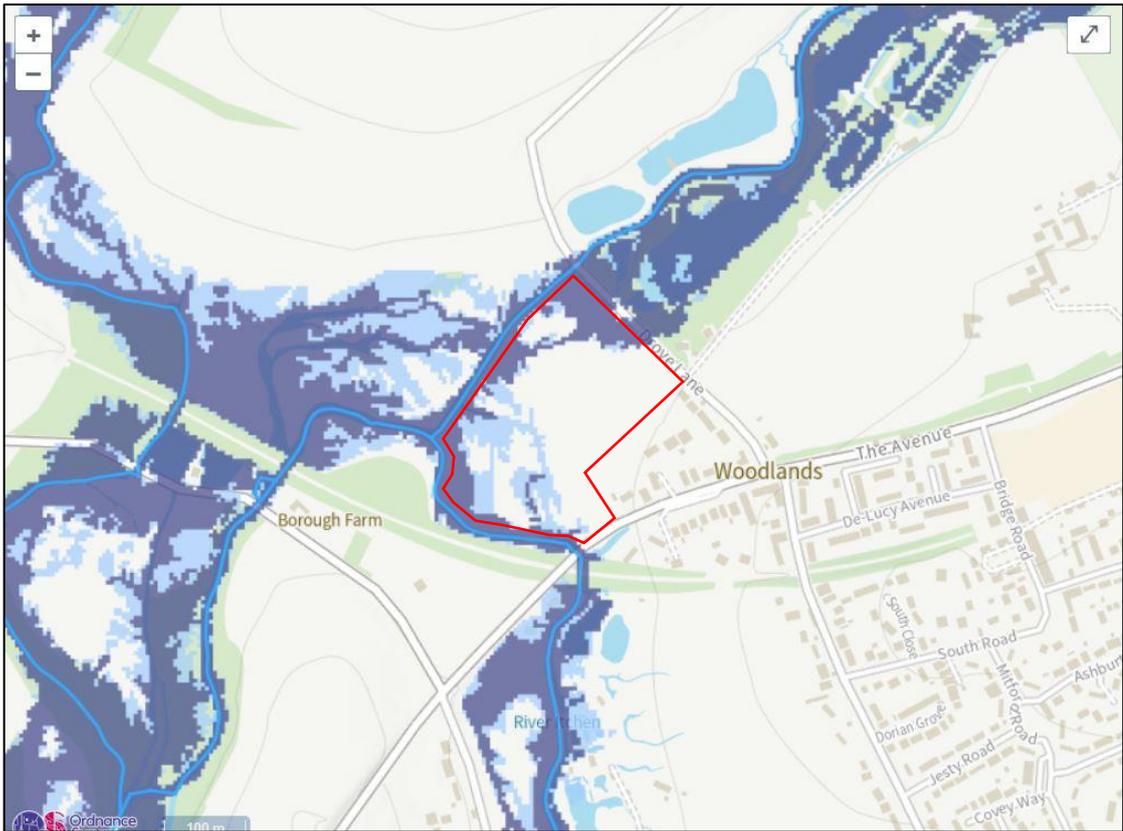
Plan 1 Location

- Development Site
- Secondary School
- Recreation Ground/Play Area
- High Street

Source: ProMap (OS licence no.100022432)

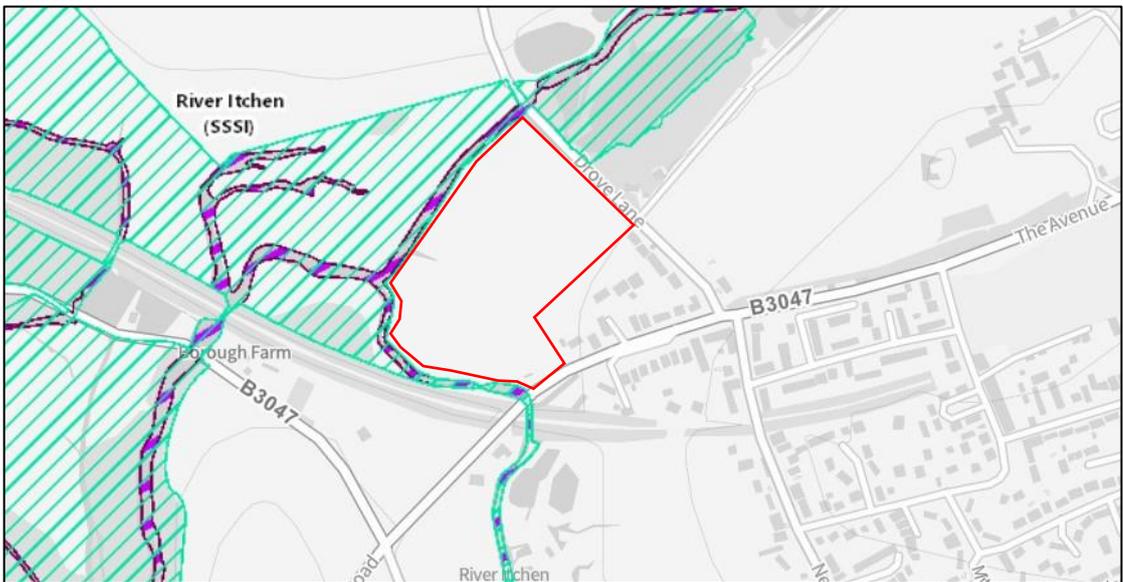
Site Considerations

- 2.2 The site is located on the edge of the built-up area although it is in 'countryside' for planning purposes. The river which indicates the extent of the site is designated as a site of special scientific interest (SSSI). In addition, some of the site is vulnerable to flooding.
- 2.3 There are houses fronting onto the B3047 adjoining the southern boundary of the proposed development site.
- 2.4 Land to the north of the proposed development site is in agricultural use. This land is crossed by a long-distance public right of way (The Wayfarers Way).
- 2.5 Arlebury Park is located immediately to the east. Perins school is about 700m to the east. There is a recreation ground and play area about 750m to the south-east. Arlebury Café and associated facilities is about 800m to the east. The high street (The Swan PH) is about 1200m to the east.
- 2.6 There is a disused railway line/embankment to the west of the proposed development site. This historic route once connected Alresford to Winchester. It is largely within the landowners control from the B3047 as far as Itchen Abbas.



Plan 2 Flood Risk

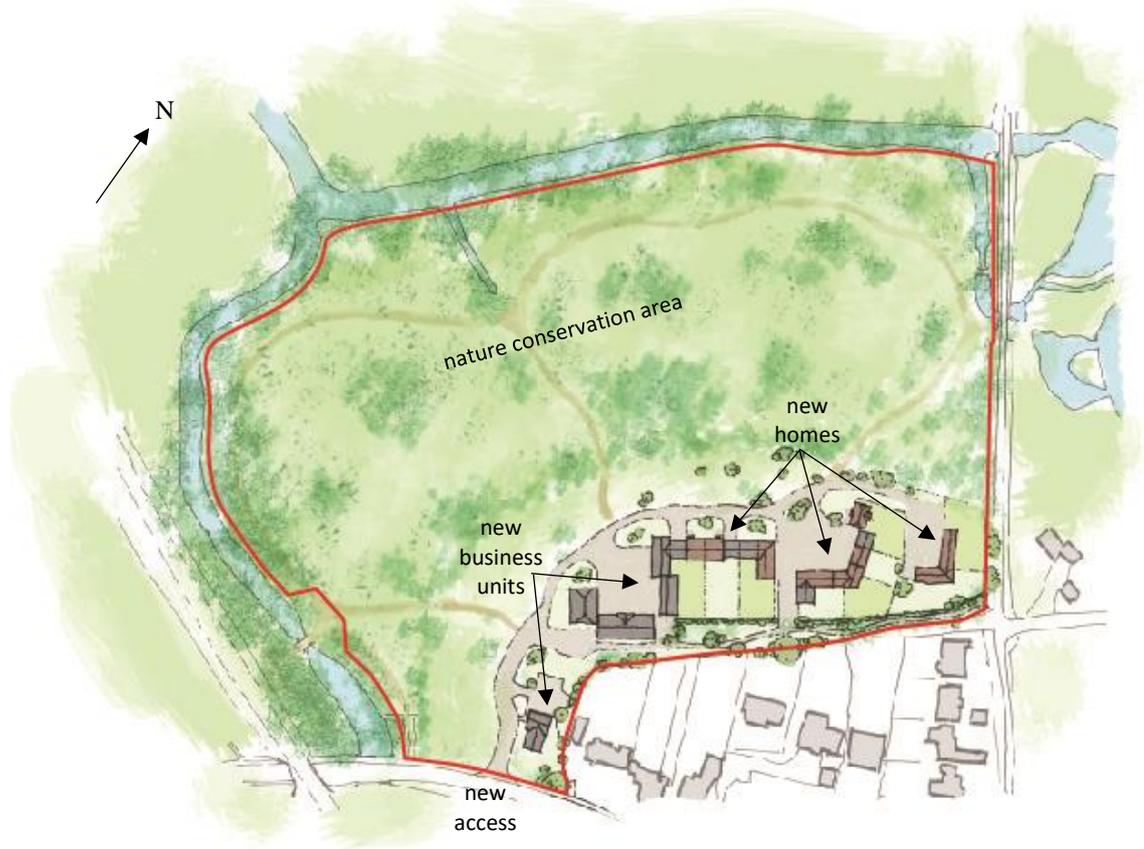
Source: www.flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk



Plan 3 SSSI & SAC

Source: magic.defra.gov.uk

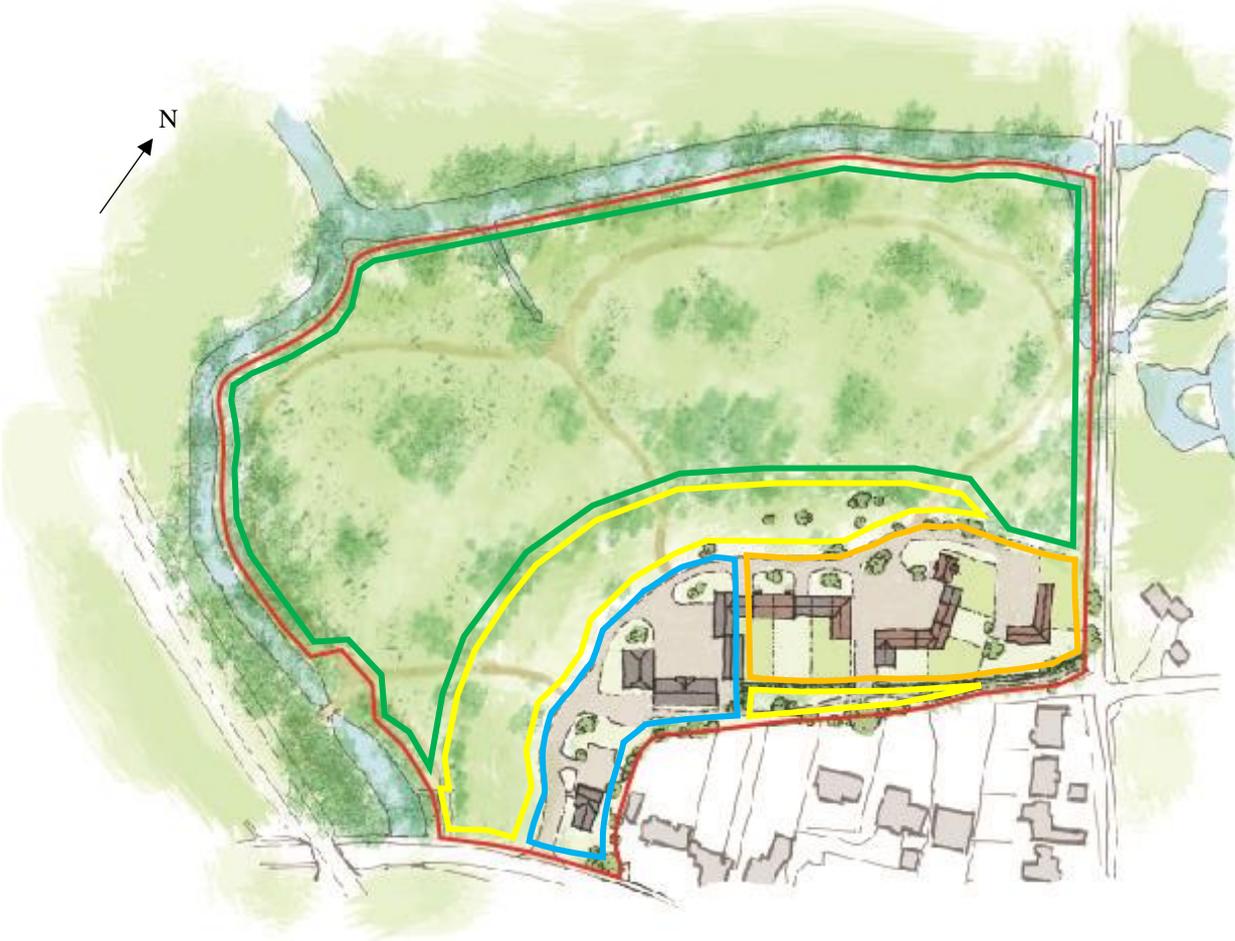
Illustrative Proposal



Plan 4 Illustrative proposal
[Red box] Proposed development site

3.0 Proposed Development Opportunities

3.1 An indicative land use budget is set out below:



Plan 5 Land Use budget

 Nature Conservation Area	4.35ha
 Informal open space	0.80ha
 Residential	0.65ha
 Business	0.50ha
Total	6.30ha

4.0 Constraints & Opportunities

- 4.1 The design of the proposed development site has been informed by the following constraints and opportunities:
- 4.2 **Landscape** – the proposed development site is located within ‘countryside’ on the edge of the urban area. It is not constrained by the National Park. Views towards the site from public rights of way are limited. *Opportunity - the proposed development site presents an opportunity to create a permanent green edge to this part of the settlement. The ‘green space’ will not be an area for public recreation, it will be enhanced to create a nature conservation area, albeit with public access which will encourage sensitive interaction with the natural environment.*
- 4.3 **Flood Risk** – parts of the site are identified as being at risk of flooding. *Opportunity - the proposed development site presents an opportunity to provide an important community asset to experience the natural world close-up, whilst maintaining provision to accommodate flood events.*
- 4.4 **Biodiversity** – the site shares a boundary with an important waterway and associated habitats. The ground cover is also of reasonably good quality in places. Existing trees and hedgerows also provide important habitat. *Opportunity - the proposed development site presents an opportunity to enhance the existing riverbank and grazing meadow habitats which are vulnerable to neglect and/or damage from agricultural use. The nature conservation area will support education and well-being.*
- 4.5 **Highways** – vehicular access is currently via a field gate off Drove Lane – a small rural lane. *Opportunity – vehicular access to the proposed development site can be delivered via a new access off the B3047. The preferred location offers good visibility in both directions. There will be no vehicular access onto Drove Lane. A new pedestrian/cycle link from Drove Lane will facilitate convenient access to the town centre and/or a network of public rights of way. The proposed development could support the creation of a strategic foot/cycle path along the route of the former railway line.*
- 4.6 **Neighbouring Amenity** – there are existing houses on higher ground to the south. *Opportunity – the proposed development site is on lower ground. In addition, the preliminary concept centres on the creating a group of agricultural buildings, many of which will be single storey and therefore will not have an adverse impact on neighbouring amenity.*

5.0 Delivery & Timescales

- 5.1 It is anticipated that the proposed development site could be delivered in a single phase, with an approximate timetable as follows:
- Summer 2026** Adoption of New Alresford Neighbourhood Plan
Autumn 2026 Submission of planning application
Spring 2027 Determination of planning application
Autumn 2028 First occupations

6.0 Meeting Identified Needs

6.1 It is considered that the proposed development site could deliver sustainable development that meets the needs of the community.

Local Services

6.2 The proposed development site is conveniently located to provide walkable access to:

- the town centre (the Swan PH) approximately 20 mins
- Arlebury Café approximately 14 mins
- Perins School approximately 13 mins
- Stratton Bates Recreation Ground approximately 13 mins

6.3 The town centre comprises a range of convenience stores, other high street shops, a dental surgery, a doctor's surgery, cafés and restaurants. There is a dedicated footway along The Avenue/B3047 linking the proposed development site to the town centre.

6.4 The town centre is also just a 5 minute cycle-ride from the site.

6.5 There are nearby bus stops providing a regular service throughout the day between Winchester and Petersfield (#67), and between Winchester and Alton (#64). Both routes link the proposed development site to New Alresford town centre.

6.6 The proposed development site will also place new business units close to the strategic road network, reducing commercial traffic in the town centre. In response to the findings of the 2023 Town Council consultation, the proposed business units will provide opportunities for small, start-up companies, or low-cost flexible co-working spaces. Employment opportunities would be close to existing residential areas, further reducing the need to travel.

6.7 A small café at the entrance could provide refreshments, and a bicycle repair service for those cycling the Itchen valley.

6.8 The proposed nature conservation area will provide safe and convenient access for the whole community to learn more about the natural world, and specifically about the flora and fauna within the chalk streams of the Itchen valley. Information boards will provide an educational experience. Equally, the proposed nature conservation area will provide easy access for those simply wanting to enjoy the tranquillity of the countryside.

Infrastructure

6.9 Investigations into the capacity of local infrastructure has not yet been carried out. As a relatively small development, the proposed scheme is unlikely to create a significant burden on existing infrastructure – schools, healthcare, drainage.

6.10 Foul drainage is understood to be available in the B3047 and improvements to local wastewater treatment works are planned. If mains drainage is not available, the development

site includes sufficient space that will remain undeveloped, to make provision for a private system on site.

- 6.11 With regard to nutrient neutrality, the landowner generates their own supply of nutrient credits to mitigate the impact of new development on the environment.

Economy

- 6.12 The proposed development site will make a contribution to the local economy during construction.
- 6.13 Thereafter, the provision of new business units will benefit the local economy and boost local employment. Approximately 5000ft² of start-up work space is proposed. This could comprise co-working or be attached to homes as live-work if required.
- 6.14 The landowner is exploring the potential to open up the former railway line for pedestrians and cyclists which would enhance the sites relationship with the town and the wider countryside. The promotion of walking and cycling could encourage tourism, make a valuable contribution to the local economy, and deliver a long-term legacy.

The Environment

- 6.15 Approximately 4ha of under-used farmland will be enhanced to create a nature conservation area/wetland. This could include improvements to riverbank habitats, existing hedgerows and grasslands.
- 6.16 Flood risk is acknowledged across parts of the site. Preliminary discussions with a flood risk engineer have indicated that development should be sited no lower than the 57m contour (allowing for climate change). The current proposals have been drafted on this basis.
- 6.17 The proposed development will be designed to score highly for energy efficiency, including the provision of solar power and air source heating where appropriate. Daily water consumption will also be limited, and potentially augmented by rainwater harvesting.

Quality of Place

- 6.18 The proposed development site has been promoted for housing since 2010, with Winchester City Council suggesting a capacity of up to 60 dwellings. However, the approach to planning has changed significantly over the last 15 years or so, with more emphasis on understanding the environmental constraints and the context, than simply squeezing on as many houses as possible.
- 6.19 Accordingly, mindful of the urban-edge setting, with identified environmental constraints, a low-density scheme set largely over a single storey, or 1½ storeys, responds to the local context, density and rural setting.
- 6.20 Given the edge of settlement location, a rural vernacular which adopts the scale, massing and appearance of a traditional farmstead is considered appropriate.

6.21 The nature conservation area will be accessible to the public via a boardwalk, with information and education boards. This experience could also provide a green link between existing rights of way along Drove Lane and the South Downs National Park, including the former railway line should those proposals materialise in the future.

Housing

6.22 Up to 9 new dwellings are proposed. This could provisionally include:

- 4 x 2 beds
- 4 x 3 beds
- 1 x 4 bed

6.23 No Affordable Housing is proposed. But equally, proposed units will not be 'executive homes' – they will be smaller (and therefore 'more affordable') to address the needs of older people looking to downsize, and younger people seeking to buy their first home or rent.

6.24 Opportunities to provide a greater number of homes have been explored, but the quantum needed to make the scheme viable alongside the provision of affordable housing would create a density and layout that would be less appropriate in this location.

6.25 The proposed development could also accommodate provision for self-build if required.

6.26 All dwellings will exceed minimum space standards and will meet accessibility standards.

7.0 Consultation

7.1 It can often be challenging to find appropriate locations for new development – to balance the need to protect and conserve the natural environment, with the socio-economic needs of those that live there.

Addressing Concerns

7.2 The proposed development site will inevitably generate local concerns relating to:

- the natural environment
- flood risk
- highways

7.3 However, the proposed development presents an opportunity to enhance the ecological baseline of the site and promote education and public interaction with biodiversity. This will provide a far greater benefit to the environment and the community than if it is simply left as an unmanaged parcel of private land.

7.4 Provisional discussions with a hydrological engineer have indicated that the extent of flood risk (with an allowance for climate change is the 57m contour). Accordingly, there will be no built form sited in the area identified as being at risk of flooding.

7.5 The proposed development site will deliver a new vehicular access onto the B3047 where there is good visibility in both directions. As a relatively small site, the development will generate a relatively low number of movements. The site is well related to the strategic road network for businesses, and walkable to the town centre for the daily needs of residents.

Collaboration

7.6 It's probably fair to say that proposals are at a very early stage, and lack detail in places. This is intentional, to avoid presenting what appears to be a *fait accompli*.

7.7 We want this to be the start of a conversation about a form of development that makes a meaningful contribution to the needs of New Alresford; that involves listening to your feedback; and responding to your input; a collaboration.

7.8 There is no 'option' on the land. There is no developer partner. The landowner wants to deliver a development that is shaped for the community; by the community. Based just outside New Alresford, and with significant landholdings in the local area, the landowner is a local employer, and contributes local produce that features in local shops. Accordingly, the landowner is already an important part of the local community, and is invested in ensuring the town continues to thrive.

7.9 By working together, alongside the community, we can make a meaningful contribution towards meeting the existing, and future, needs of New Alresford.