



**BOROUGH OF
BROXBOURNE**

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Newgatestreet Road

Development Brief

Draft for public consultation

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Introduction

The site at Newgatestreet Road has been released from the Green Belt through the new Broxbourne Local Plan in order to provide an enhanced identity for the village of Goffs Oak through provision of a communal green in a prominent location near the centre of the village. This design brief serves an important purpose in adding detail to the Local Plan policy framework in terms of the design of development. In order for planning applications to be approved, the Council expects the final design to have appropriate regard to the vision and objectives set out in this document. An illustrative design solution to achieve the vision and objectives is set out in Appendix A.

Site Description

The site allocation comprises an open field of 2.28 hectares (5.07 acres) immediately to the south west of Goffs Oak Village Centre. Its boundaries are defined by Newgatestreet Road to the west and St James Road to the north west. Two detached dwellings and Goff's Oak public house on Wesley Court form the southern boundary. The eastern boundary comprises open fields, a commercial yard and sports fields. Directly opposite the site on the west side of Newgatestreet Road is Mason's Parade and Goff's Oak Methodist Church.

The site boundaries are well defined by existing trees, hedgerow and vegetation; the boundary with Newgatestreet Road has a good level of self-seeded trees and a hedgerow along its length. The site is also screened from St James Road to the north by a mature hedgerow.

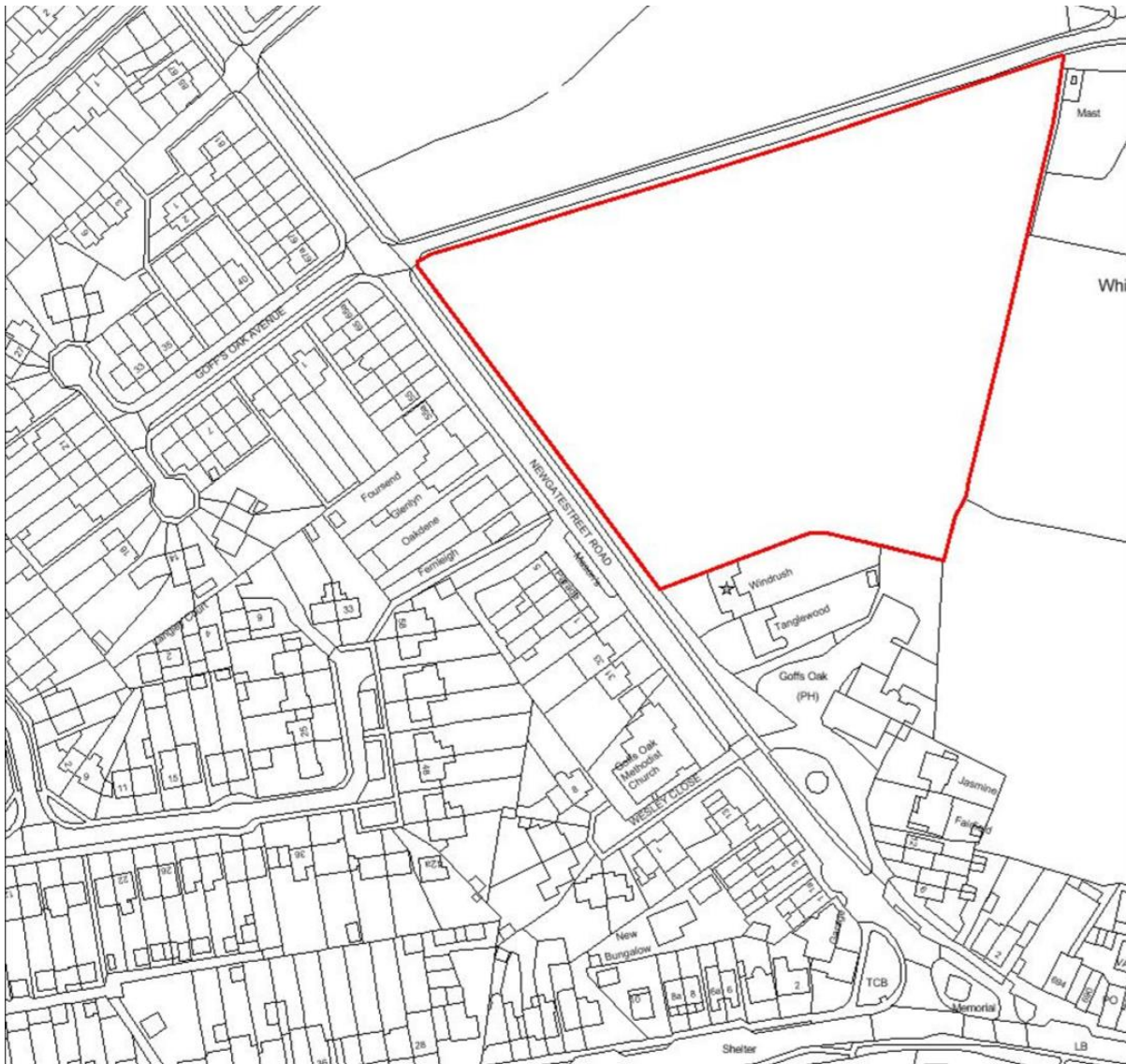


Figure 1: aerial photo showing Green Belt boundary

The site slopes from the south west on Newgatestreet Road to the north east on St. James Road. It has been in use for arable farming land until recently.

In terms of public transport services to the site, the 242 bus route travels along Goffs Lane from Welwyn Garden City through to Waltham Cross via Goffs Oak. The nearest rail station is Cuffley Station which is approximately 1.4km from Goffs Oak.

Figure 2: Site Plan



Broxbourne Local Plan

The Broxbourne Local Plan 2018-2033 (adopted June 2020) allocates four greenfield extensions to the village of Goffs Oak, as shown within the indicative Concept Plan below. As shown above, the site was released from the Green Belt. The ‘exceptional circumstances’ for release of the site from the Green Belt related to the provision of the new open space indicated for play on the indicative Concept Plan below¹.

Figure 3: Indicative Concept Plan for Goffs Oak (source: Broxbourne Local Plan)



The accompanying policy GO4: Newgatestreet Road was examined by the Local Plan inspector, whose final report² states at paragraph 180 that “Policy GO4 proposes 25 homes and a new area of public open space on land at Newgatestreet Road, along with improved pedestrian links. Whilst the new homes would encroach into the countryside, they would be close to the village centre and the proposal would present the opportunity to create a village green in an appropriate location.”

¹ Green Belt Topic Paper, 2017

² Broxbourne Local Plan 2018-2033, Inspector’s Final Report (14 April 2020) www.broxbourne.gov.uk/localplan

Policy wording

Relevant extracts from the Local Plan Policy GO4 and supporting text are provided in italics below.

Newgatestreet Road

8.6 *The field at the junction of Newgatestreet Road and St James Road has been promoted for housing development. A limited amount of housing is considered appropriate in order to open up the field for community uses, linked to the existing playing pitches behind the village centre. Land to the east of the identified area will be retained as Green Belt in order to protect the important gap between Goffs Oak village and St James'.*

Policy GO4: Newgatestreet Road

The site identified on the Policies map is allocated for development as follows:

- 1. Approximately 25 homes;*
- 2. 40% affordable housing*
- 3. New public open space – minimum 0.8 hectares;*
- 4. Pedestrian crossing on Newgatestreet Road;*
- 5. Pedestrian links to the existing playing pitches.*

A development brief will be prepared for this site.

Additionally, policy PM1 is considered of relevance to the design and layout of the site, taking account of the available opportunities.

Sustainable Place-Making

4.3 *This Local Plan proposes a number of new places. They will be connected to existing towns and villages and need to respect those relationships. However, they will also be places in their own right. This Plan establishes the framework where new development can achieve sustainable new places but also puts in place policies that seek to improve existing towns, villages and the countryside areas around them.*

Policy PM1: Sustainable Place Making

New developments proposed within the Borough are required to complement existing town and villages and the countryside around them. Major developments must also establish their own identities through the implementation of sustainable place making principles.

Finally, Policy DSC1: *Design and Sustainable Construction* states that ‘where-ever possible, development proposals must...enhance local character and distinctiveness...’

The Design Concept: Evolution and Continuity

Goffs Oak contains an official registered 'village green' at Jones Road (see Concept Plan above), but this is located around 600m from the village centre, and over 1km from the northern areas of the village. The existing playing fields are located more centrally but are concealed from Newgatestreet Road and Cuffley Hill/Goffs Lane. The main objective of the site allocation is to create a new green that is both centrally located and highly visible as a focal point, contributing to a strengthening of the 'village' identity.

The indicative Concept Plan in the adopted Local Plan (Figure 3 above) indicates vehicular access from both Newgatestreet Road and St James' Road, with the open space located to the north of this. However, in response to a recent planning application, Hertfordshire County Council advised that a) vehicular access to St James' Road is not necessary for this scale of development and b) access from Newgatestreet Road should be moved further north to avoid safety issues with Mason's Parade.

The Council has therefore proposed an alternative site layout as set out in **Appendix A: Illustration of a potential acceptable design solution**. This proposal has a number of advantages:

- Strengthening visual connections and the pedestrian desire line between Mason's Parade and the communal green whilst avoiding safety conflicts;
- Reducing the distance between the communal green and the village centre;
- Maintaining the rural character of St James' Road;
- Providing better connections between the communal green and the existing playing fields;
- Retaining the openness of the environs of the existing dwelling known as 'Windrush'.

National Design Guide

The National Design Guide³ sets out the 10 characteristics of well-designed places, which are referenced within this development brief and which will be used to assess proposals for the Newgatestreet Road site allocation, together with the Local Plan.

Context – enhances the surroundings
C1. Understand and relate well to the site, its local and wider context
C2. Value heritage, local history and culture
Identity – attractive and distinctive
I1: Respond to existing local character and identity
I2. Well designed, high quality and distinctive
I3. Create character and identity
Built Form – a coherent pattern of development
B1. Compact form of development
B2. Appropriate building types and forms
B3. Destinations
Movement – accessible and easy to move around
M1. An integrated network of routes for all modes of transport
M2. A clear structure and hierarchy of connected streets
M3. Well considered parking, servicing and utilities infrastructure for all users
Nature – enhanced and optimised
N1. Provide high quality, green open spaces with a variety of landscapes and activities, including play
N2. Improve and enhance water management
N3. Support rich and varied biodiversity
Public spaces – safe, social and inclusive
P1. Create well-located, high quality and attractive public spaces
P2. Provide well-designed spaces that are safe
P3. Make sure public spaces support social interaction
Uses – mixed and integrated
U1. A mix of uses
U2. A mix of home tenures, types and sizes
U3. Socially inclusive
Homes & Buildings – functional, healthy and sustainable
H1. Healthy, comfortable and safe internal and external environment
H2. Well-related to external amenity and public spaces
H3. Attention to detail: storage, waste, services and utilities
Resources – efficient and resilient
R1. Follow the energy hierarchy
R2. Selection of materials and construction techniques
R3. Maximise resilience
Lifespan – made to last
L1. Well-managed and maintained
L2. Adaptable to changing needs and evolving technologies
L3. A sense of ownership

³ MHCLG, October 2019: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide>

Vision and Objectives

Four design objectives have been developed for the Newgatestreet Road site. These are informed by an overarching vision for the site to which the eventual design will be expected to aspire:

Development of the Newgatestreet Road site allocation will create a new communal green, providing a community function as a meeting point near the centre of the village, and including space for community events as well as play and recreation. The green will have a prominent role in the life of the village, will be highly visible from Newgatestreet Road, and will be overlooked by attractive residential properties of exemplary design quality. This will be a place to strengthen the identity of the village, enhancing its rural character, and of which both new and existing residents can be proud.

Figure 4 below shows how the key requirements of this Brief may be illustrated spatially. Development areas are shown in grey. Individual buildings are represented by dotted grey lines for illustrative purposes only.

Figure 4: Diagram illustrating the vision and objectives set out in this Brief.



Explanation of the four objectives for the site is provided below.

Objective 1: Create a new communal green as a focal point for the village to achieve social interaction and enhanced character and identity for Goffs Oak.

This objective reflects the following National Design Guide characteristics of well-designed spaces:

- P1. Create well-located, high quality and attractive public spaces
- P2. Create well-designed spaces that are safe
- P3. Make sure public spaces support social interaction
- N1. Provide high quality, green open spaces with a variety of landscapes and activities, including play
- I1. Respond to existing local character and identity
- I2. Well-designed, high quality and distinctive
- I3. Create character and identity
- L1: Well managed and maintained
- L3. A sense of ownership

As set out on page 7 above, the original design concept set out in the Local Plan has evolved in response to Hertfordshire County Council's comments regarding vehicular access to the site, but the core vision remains that set out in the Local Plan of "a limited amount of housing...in order to open up the field for community uses".

How much open space?

The Local Plan indicates the need for a minimum of 0.8 hectares open space for such purposes. This size of open space is considered the minimum necessary to enable the creation of a communal green for the local community to come together, for example hosting community events and activities in a prominent location well related to the village centre (N1). Any land required for the provision of other open space, for example sustainable drainage features, would require additional land and should not be deducted from the total needed to create a communal green.

Form and layout of the communal green

In order to maximise its contribution to creating local character and identify (I3) as well as ensuring that it supports social interaction (P3), the communal green should maximise frontage to and visibility from Newgatestreet Road and Mason's Parade.

The Council will not adopt open space within the development and therefore proposals for development within site GO4 should include provision for appropriate management arrangements in perpetuity (L1).

Reflecting its importance to the local community, the form and layout of the communal green should be planned in consultation with local residents (L3). Subject to the outcomes of public engagement, it is anticipated that the communal green will at minimum include facilities for informal play (such as informal cricket and football) in a safe location visible from Newgatestreet Road and overlooked by residential development. A limited amount of on-street parking should be provided for users of the green.

Objective 2: provide attractive, convenient, and safe access for all users

This objective reflects the following National Design Guide characteristics of well-designed spaces:

- M1. An integrated network of routes for all modes of transport
- M2. A clear structure and hierarchy of connected streets
- B3. Destinations

Vehicular access

The choice of access location should reflect the requirement to provide a communal green consistent with the Local Plan and vision and objectives within this Brief. As explained on page 7 above in relation to the evolution and continuity of the design concept, for safety reasons vehicular access should also avoid Mason's Parade.

As set out in this Brief, residential development will play an important role in overlooking the communal green. This presents an opportunity for the access road to the properties to provide definition and attractive street scene (M2). The opportunity existing for a secondary internal street leading off this main street to provide additional housing to the rear.

Proposals should also include an appropriate turning head for refuse collection trucks or other large vehicles as necessary (H3). The Council's Waste Supplementary Planning Guidance and Roads in Hertfordshire should be consulted for further information and requirements. As shown in the illustrative design solution at Appendix A, this proposal could also provide a visual connection through to the existing playing fields.

Access for pedestrians and cyclists

The communal green will be a destination for community events. It is therefore essential that access to the green should be suitable for all age ranges.

The Local Plan requires provision of a pedestrian crossing on Newgatestreet Road. The purpose of this is to enable residents of the new development to access Mason's Parade, the bus stop and the existing settlement beyond, and also to enable residents of the existing residential areas to access the communal green. The preferred alignment of such a crossing is indicated in Figure 3 above and on the illustrative design solution in Appendix A. View 1 below shows the desire line across the road from Mason's Parade (right) to the site of the new green (left, behind the hedgerow).

View 1: South-east along Newgatestreet Road with the Site on the left and Mason's Parade on the right (source: Google streetview).



The Local Plan states at paragraph 8.6 that “a *limited amount of housing is considered appropriate in order to open up the field for community uses, linked to the existing playing pitches behind the village centre.*” Visual as well as physical linkages between the existing pitches and the new communal green should be provided. The illustrative design solution at Appendix A demonstrates how the proximity and inter-visibility between the two spaces could be maximised through effective layout of residential dwellings and open space.

Objective 3: Enhance the natural environment and rural character

This objective reflects the following National Design Guide characteristics of well-designed spaces:

- C1. understand and relate well to the site, its local and wider context
- I1. respond to existing local character and identity
- I2. well-designed, high quality and attractive
- N1. provide high quality, green open spaces with a variety of landscapes and activities, including play
- N2. Improve and enhance water management
- N3. Support rich and varied biodiversity

The village of Goffs Oak is characterised by a setting within the rolling hills and fields of the Hertfordshire countryside. The immediate environs of the site include the rural lane of St James' Road, flanked on both sides by trees and hedgerows. Development proposals should retain the trees and hedgerows along St James' Road in order to retain the character of the lane and the rural character of this gateway to Goffs Oak, and which may also serve to screen the backs of housing development.

View 2: east along St James Road and south-east along Newgatestreet Road (source: Google streetview).



Along Newgatestreet Road, some thinning of the hedgerow will be necessary in order to achieve vehicular access as well as secure the visibility of the communal green referred to under objective 1. However, proposals should retain as much of this greenery as possible, consistent with the objectives in this Brief.

The site itself is characterised by a large field sloping gently down from west to east away from the village. This provides glimpsed long views from Newgatestreet Road, as for example shown in View 3 below. The layout of development and open space

should explore the potential for a new street beyond the communal green to preserve long views as much as possible consistent with policy GO4 and the practicalities of delivering the site.

Trees should form an important part of the character of the development. Wherever possible, existing trees should be used to frame views into and out of the site. This might include views of trees through to the existing open space. Generous planting of new trees along the new street fronting the communal green will provide shade and enhance the natural feel of the site.

Sustainable urban drainage (SuDs) provision⁴ should take advantage of the sloping nature of the site. It is likely that a pond and/or a natural soakaway (swale) will be located at the lowest point of the site. The landscaping and planting of this area will be a major contributor to achieving net ecological gain for the site as a whole through appropriate management (N2, Local Plan policy NEB1). Depending on the results of community engagement, it may also be appropriate for an area of the communal green to be given over to enhanced habitat provision.

View 3: looking north from Newgatestreet Road across Windrush to the Site and the landscape beyond (source: Google streetview).



⁴ Local Plan policy W4

Objective 4: high quality residential development to enhance the setting of the communal green

This objective reflects the following National Design Guide characteristics of well-designed spaces:

- H1. Healthy, comfortable and safe internal and external environment
- H2. Well-related to external amenity and public spaces
- H3. Attention to detail: storage, waste, services and utilities
- R2. Selection of materials and construction techniques
- B1. Compact form of development
- I2. well-designed, high quality and attractive
- I3. create character and identity
- B2. Appropriate building types and forms
- B3. Destinations
- U2. A mix of home tenures, types and sizes
- U3. Socially inclusive

What form of housing?

Residential development should complement and enhance the qualities of the communal green in a number of ways. Firstly, these dwellings will play an important role in terms of overlooking the green and contributing to a safe environment (H2, P2). Secondly, new dwellings should be visually attractive and distinctive, using appropriate building types and forms (B2), creating a coherent form of development that users of the communal green and Newgatestreet Road, as well as residents of the new development, can enjoy.

The Council believes that the shape and configuration of the site lends itself to the creation of a crescent of houses overlooking the communal green. The National Design Guide provides a relevant example of some design cues for dwellings in this location (see right), although the Council envisages sufficient tree planting around the edge of the green to provide a shady and comfortable environment.



This neighbourhood in a semi-rural setting draws on local historical precedents to create a distinctive character. It is defined by the height and massing of buildings, variation in roof forms and material selection. Gables are paired to create a focal point and mark the entrance to a street. Trowse Newton, Norfolk.

Pairing of houses is shown in the illustrative design solution in Appendix A, which shows larger dwellings in slightly bigger plots at the entrance to the street. A similar effect could also be achieved through a variation in materials between the paired houses at the street entrance and the other houses fronting the green (see the diagram in Figure 3 above).

It is expected that distinctiveness will be achieved in part through the use of high quality materials, and that new dwellings will contain sufficient detailing and articulation to create distinctiveness (I2, I3), adding to the interest of the streetscene in the vicinity of the communal green.

Affordable housing requirements should be met on-site and therefore the development should be socially inclusive in nature (U3), including provision of an appropriate mix of housing as set out in Local Plan Policy H4: Housing Mix, including provision for accessible and adaptable dwellings.

Housing fronting the communal green is likely to comprise detached or semi detached market housing in order to achieve the necessary high standard of design required in this highly visible location at the focal point of the village. It would therefore be acceptable for affordable housing to be located behind this in a flatted or terraced form. Appendix A illustrates how this could be achieved whilst maintaining a high standard of amenity for all residents regardless of tenure.

How much housing?

As set out in the Local Plan, the primary objective of releasing this site from the Green Belt is to achieve the realisation of a communal green. However the Local Plan recognises that *“a limited amount of housing is considered necessary in order to open up the field for community uses.”* (underlining added). From this it is clear that the primary purpose of the Local Plan allocation is to achieve wider community benefits in terms of the open space, rather than the provision of housing.

Policy GO4 states that the site should provide approximately 25 homes. Paragraph 3.19 of the Local Plan states the following: *“The indicative dwelling figures are neither a minimum nor maximum, but rather an estimate of capacity to inform the plan making process and to provide a starting point for consideration of site-specific issues through the planning application process. In considering the merits of planning applications at the Local Plan sites, the Council will apply the dwelling numbers in the context of sustainable place-making, to achieve efficient use of land through a design-led approach. Proposals at Local Plan sites which differ from the indicative dwelling numbers provided within this Plan should be fully justified with regard to site-specific factors.”*

The illustrative design solution at Appendix A indicates the potential to achieve 33 dwellings, i.e. 8 more than set out within policy GO4, and how this is consistent with the Local Plan requirements for this site, including the provision of high-quality communal green. Any alternative proposals will need to set out how the aims set out in the Local Plan and this Brief can be achieved.

Residential car parking

In accordance with Local Plan *Policy TM5: Parking Guidelines*, it is expected that given the location of this site the car and cycle parking guidelines set out in Appendix B of the Local Plan are likely to be realistic. This indicates 2 car parking spaces for 2-bed dwellings, 2.5 spaces for 3-bed dwellings, and 3 spaces for 4+ bed dwellings.

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Appendix A: Illustration of potential acceptable design solutions

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Three dimensional modelling of the above illustrative scheme



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