

Building for Life Assessments

Bath & North East Somerset Monitoring Report
April 2013 - March 2014



BUILDING FOR LIFE 12

DESIGN ASSESSMENTS

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FRONT COVER PHOTO: SW KEYNSHAM – ‘THE MEADOWS’ (TAYLOR WIMPEY)

INTRODUCTION

Securing high quality design is a core planning principle contained within the NPPF, which recognises that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. The NPPF requires Local Plans to develop robust and comprehensive policies setting out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Policy CP6 of the B&NES Core Strategy requires all major development schemes with a residential component to use the Building for Life assessment tool.

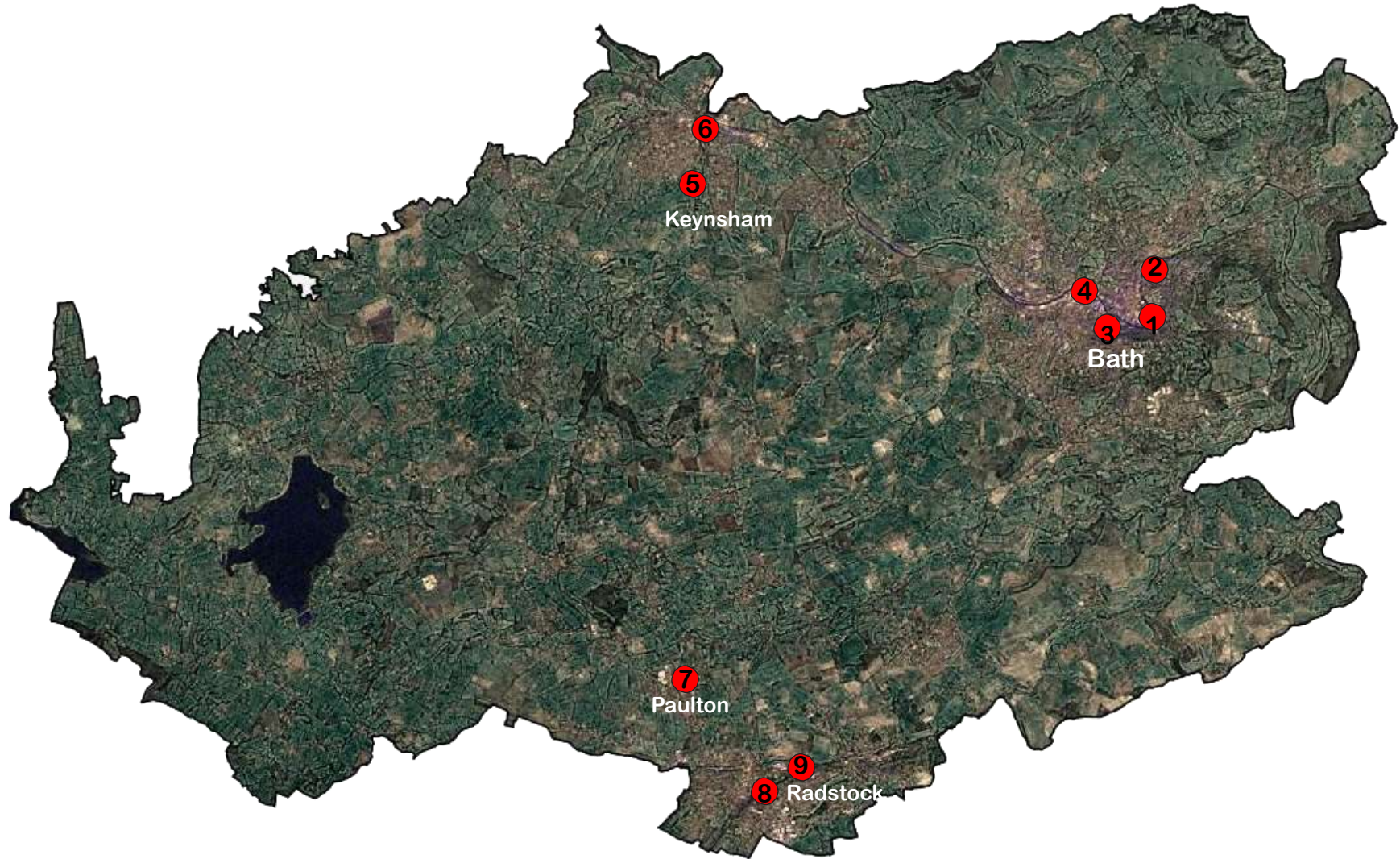
Building for Life (BfL) 12¹ is designed to help structure discussions between local communities, the local planning authority, the developer, and other stakeholders. BfL12 is also designed to help local planning authorities assess the quality of proposed and completed developments.

BfL12 comprises 12 questions and is based on a traffic light system. New developments should aim to secure as many 'greens' as possible, minimise the number of 'ambers' and avoid 'reds'. The more 'greens' the better a development will be. A red light gives warning that an aspect of a development needs to be reconsidered. The following schemes are a selection of those completed within B&NES during 2013-2014 representing a variety of different schemes, both brown and green field, and with varying sizes. Dwelling numbers relate to those completed during 2013/14; for some schemes the overall dwelling number will be much larger – the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment² (SHLAA) gives information on overall dwelling numbers.

¹ <http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/Documents/Documents/OurWork/CABE/Building%20for%20Life/uilding%20for%20Life%2012.pdf>

² <http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/evidence-base/strategic-housing-land>

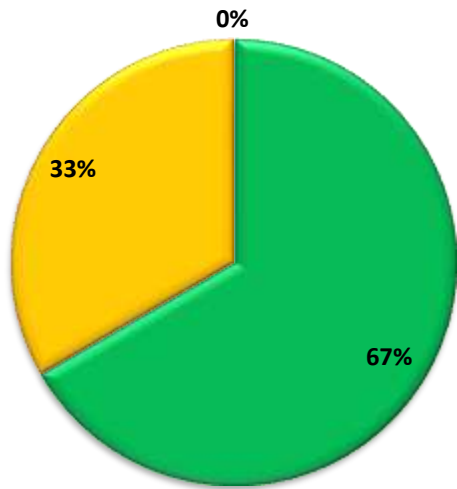
Scheme location within Bath & North East Somerset



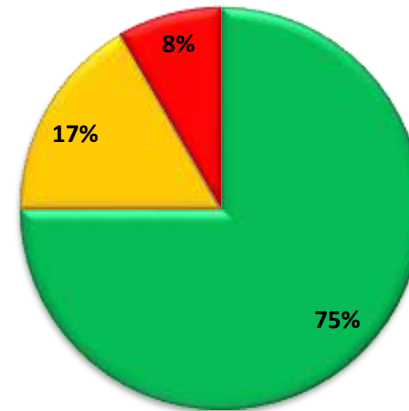
Building for Life 12: Scheme Summary Scores

Location Number	Location	Site name / address	Total dwellings (net)	BfL 12 Score		
				Green	Amber	Red
1	Bath	Lime Grove Gardens, BA2 4HE	13	8	4	0
2	Bath	Byways, Bathwick Street	11	10	2	0
3	Bath	130-132 Wells Road, BA2 3AH	14	9	2	1
4	Bath	Western Riverside	299	11	1	0
5	Keynsham	South West Keynsham 'K2'	36	5	2	5
6	Keynsham	Former Temple Primary School, Bath Hill	11	12	0	0
7	Paulton	Polestar Bovis 1b	38	1	8	3
8	Westfield	Site of Alcan Factory, Nightingale Way	93	10	2	0
9	Westfield	Towerhurst, Wells Road, BA3 3US	11	11	1	0

Lime Grove Gardens

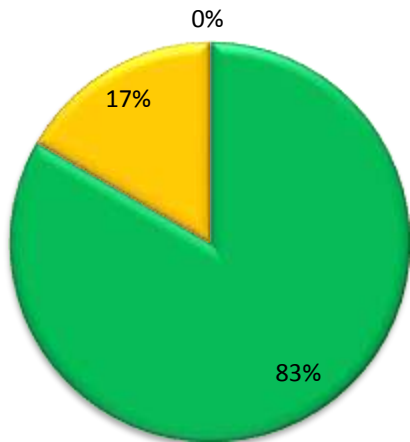


130-132 Wells Road

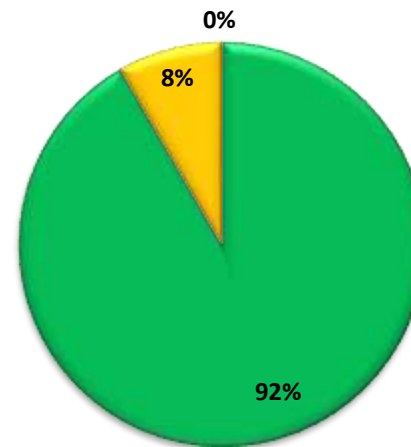


■ Green
■ Amber
■ Red

Byways

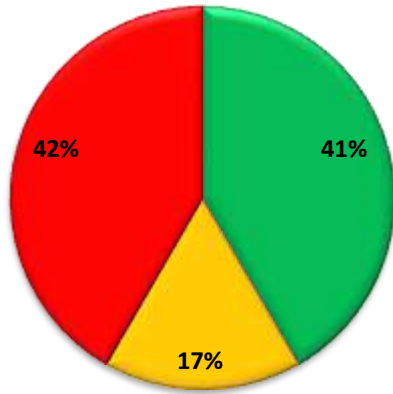


Western Riverside

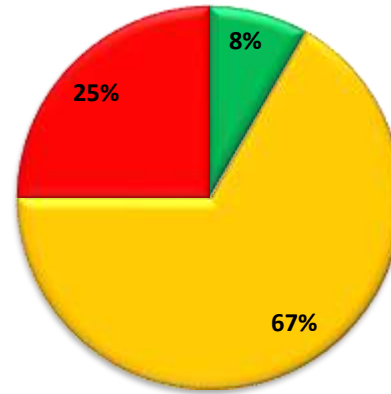


■ Green
■ Amber
■ Red

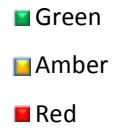
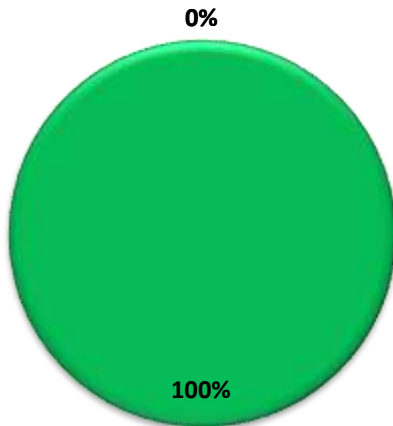
South West Keynsham 'K2'



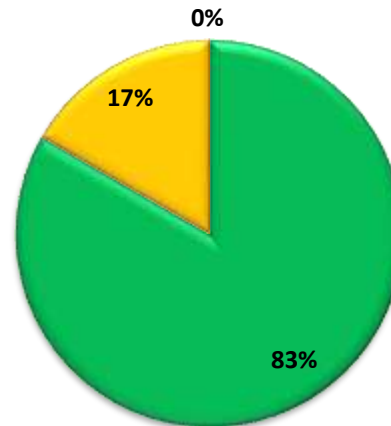
Polestar Bovis 1b



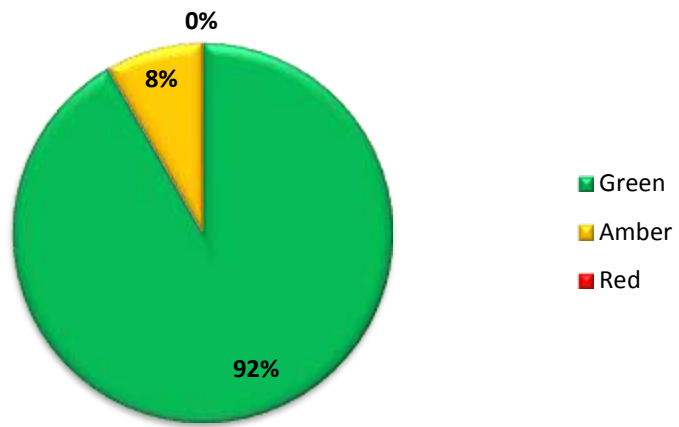
Former Temple Primary School



Site of Alcan Factory



Towerhurst, Wells Road



BFL Assessment: 12/00980/FUL

Lime Grove Gardens, BA2 4HE

Assessment Date: 03/07/2014

1. Lime Grove Gardens

Description:

Erection of 13no. dwellings with associated parking and landscaping following demolition of existing school buildings

Integration into the neighbourhood

Question		Response	Score
1. Connections	Does the scheme integrate into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones; Whilst also respecting existing buildings and land uses along the boundaries of the development site?	<p>The scheme is located on the previous site of Lime Grove School. It is bordered by the Great Western Main Line track to the west and a row of Council allotment gardens to the east. The site is flanked by a popular footpath leading to the Kennet and Avon canal walk on its southern edge.</p> <p>The principle access to the site is an extension to the route of Lime Grove Gardens making vehicular access into the site very easy to distinguish between pedestrian and vehicle routes. Raised curbs and subtle level changes are also employed in different zones. The site is awaiting road painting works to prevent unpermitted parking. The scheme could have enhanced the local infrastructure by additions such as ramps to allow cyclists easy access to the canal walk.</p>	G
2. Facilities and services	Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs or cafes?	<p>There is no addition to local amenities. However, the scheme is located minutes away from the city centre providing residents with ample access to local services and facilities. The footpath to the south of the scheme provides a convenient route back into the city centre. The Tesco Express on Bathwick Hill can also be accessed via the canal walk close to the site.</p>	G
3. Public Transport	Does the scheme have good access to public transport to help reduce car dependency?	<p>The scheme is located close to the city centre as well as popular public footpaths. The nearest bus stops are located on North Parade Road and Pulteney Road which are both within a 5 min walk from the site.</p>	G
4. Meeting local housing requirements	Does the development have a mix of housing types and tenures that suit local requirements?	<p>The scheme consists of a mix of town housing and provides a total of 13 dwellings and as such is not under obligation to provide affordable housing.</p>	G

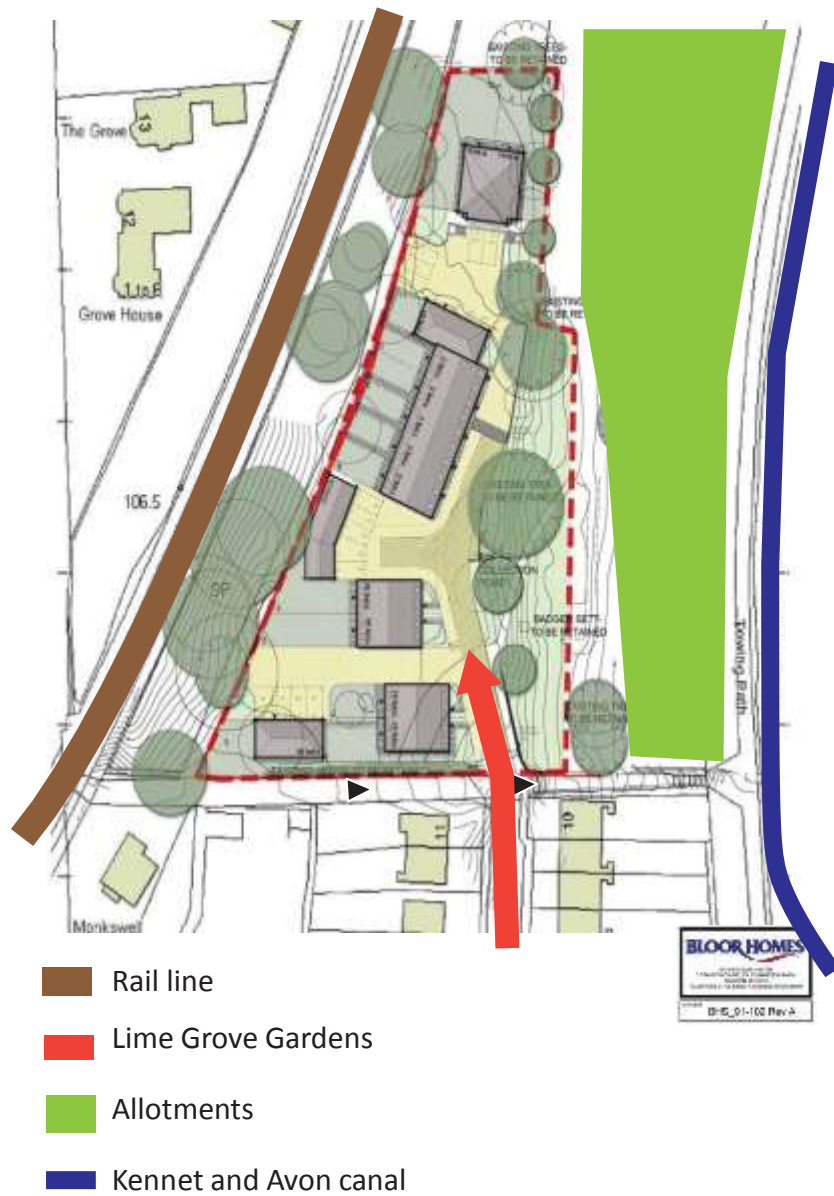


Figure 1.
Public foot path leading to canal walk.



Figure 2. Approved building plan with indicated accesses.

Figure 3. Scheme is nicely concealed by an existing line of hedges and pays good attention to the pre-existing road patterns.

Creating a Place			
Question		Response	Score
5. Character	Does the scheme create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character?	The scheme has attempted to respond to its context by adopting the local Bath stone as the primary building material, but however misses the mark in terms of scale and proportion of volumes. The predominantly two storey dwellings seem out of place with the traditional three storey town houses in the immediate context. This issue is further enhanced by the low ratio of height to width between houses and the new roads.	A
6. Working with the site and its context	Does the scheme take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimates?	The site is located largely at the bottom of a steep embankment leading to the canal walk. The scheme works well with the existing topology taking advantage of the change in level to gain an additional storey on the property to the north of the site. Fences have been erected on the eastern border to prevent disruption to the local wildlife habitat such as badger habitats at the bottom of the allotments.	G
7. Creating well defined streets and spaces	Are buildings designed and positioned with landscaping to define and enhance streets and spaces and are buildings designed to turn street corners well?	There have been some attempts to add planting at the front of the housing to enhance the streetscape. Changes in materials and variation in paving help to define streets. However the extent and scales of these interventions appears very conservative. This may be the result of a larger focus on vehicular access to the area. There is a good level of natural surveillance at turning points.	G
8. Easy to find your way around	Is the scheme designed to make it easy to find your way around?	Although the scheme is relatively easy to navigate some entrances have been very poorly located in relation to the main access. This makes it confusing for visitors to immediately recognize their function. There is also an ambiguous path leading to the badger habitat/allotments. Simple signage would avoid these common mistakes.	A



Figure 4. Missed opportunity to contribute positively to local infrastructure by failing to add side ramps for cyclists and improving the footpath.



Figure 6. The scheme suffers from awkward placement of front doors in some of units, creating unfavourable thresholds.



Figure 5. Good use of natural level change to provide garage spaces.



Figure 7. Front door is directly next to garages with no distinction in zones. Lack of soft landscaping or distinction in materiality creates an abrupt transition between public and private areas.

Street & Home			
Question		Response	Score
9. Streets for all	Are streets designed in a way that encourage low vehicle speeds and allow them to function as social spaces?	There are significant changes in surface material and the scale of development encourages low vehicle speed. Generous sidewalks and paved parking areas encourage more social use of spaces. Asphalt is used on strictly vehicular routes whilst stone paving has been used in the more private or pedestrian areas.	G
10. Car parking	Is resident and visitor parking sufficient and well integrated so that it does not dominate the street?	A good level of parking is available to residents. Secure parking is provided by a series of integrated garages within the buildings in the development. There is also some designated private parking available in front of these garages. The area available for parking is however a bit excessive as it has not been properly distinguished between the poorly placed entrance on the development	A
11. Public and private spaces	Will public and private spaces be clearly defined and designed to be attractive, well managed and safe?	Although there have been attempts to create pleasant transitions between public and private domains, inconsistencies in this approach have created an awkward ambiance overall. The path leading to the allotments forms an ambiguous relationship with its surroundings as it leads to the no man's land between the development and allotments creating confusion for passersby who wish to either access the canal walk or allotments.	A
12. External storage and amenity space	Is there adequate external storage space for bins and recycling as well as vehicles and cycles?	Recessed entrances have been used to create non obtrusive external storage areas.	G
Totals			8 4 0



Figure 8. Gap between allotment plots and site: preserved for badger habitat.



Figure 9. External storage spaces and small planted areas have been integrated into the more accomplished entrances. Fences have also been used to divide these spaces.

2. Byways, Bathwick Street

Description:

Erection of 12 no 2 bed and 2 no 3 bed flats at Byways, Cleve and Linden following demolition of existing properties

Integration into the neighbourhood

Question		Response	Score
1. Connections	Does the scheme integrate into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones; Whilst also respecting existing buildings and land uses along the boundaries of the development site?	<p>The scheme is located at the junction between Henrietta Road and Bathwick Street. It has been integrated well into the existing streetscape of terraced housing.</p> <p>The Main entrance for cars has been located on the west side of the scheme off Henrietta Road, showing a clear consideration for the current traffic flow within the area as Bathwick Street often suffers from congestion during peak hours.</p> <p>The scheme does not interfere with any existing routes and builds on current infrastructure in an efficient manner.</p>	G
2. Facilities and services	Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs or cafes?	The scheme is sufficiently served by local parks and play areas such as Henrietta Park and Sydney Gardens. Its close proximity to the city centre allows tenants to benefit from local shops and facilities within a short walk.	G
3. Public Transport	Does the scheme have good access to public transport to help reduce car dependency?	The scheme is located close to the city centre providing tenants with sufficient access to local amenities. The nearest bus stop is 3 minutes away on Forester Road.	G
4. Meeting local housing requirements	Does the development have a mix of housing types and tenures that suit local requirements?	As the quantity of dwellings provided by the scheme does not exceed fifteen there is no requirement to provide affordable housing within the scope of the project.	G



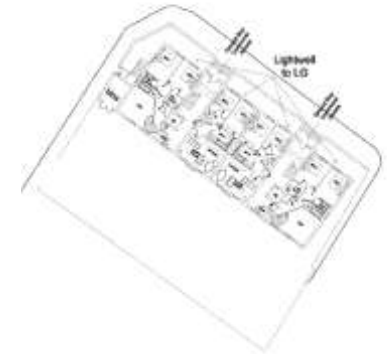
Figure 1. Vehicle access is off the substantially less busy approach to the site.



Figure 2. View from Henrietta road.



Figure 3. South west approach from Henrietta road. The site is one minute's walk from Henrietta Gardens and 5 minutes from Sydney Gardens.



Ground Floor



Site Plan & Lower Ground Floor

Figure 4. Approved Building plans.



Figure 5. All facades are carefully considered, taking clear inspiration from adjoining buildings.



Figure 6. Large fenestrations provide an abundance of natural surveillance to surrounding areas and private parking areas.



Figures 7 - 8. The scheme blends well with existing street scene and is harmony with the general atmosphere of the area

Figure 9. Traditional balcony detail on an older terrace opposite the site.

Creating a Place			
Question		Response	Score
5. Character	Does the scheme create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character?	The facades and treatment of materials show a clear consideration for the local context. The treatment of fenestrations on the north elevation are in line with adjoining façades. The south elevation takes clear inspiration from that of Rochfort Place on the opposite side of the street. The scheme exhibits a high level of contextual consideration and helps unify the street scene of its location.	G
6. Working with the site and its context	Does the scheme take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimates?	The building rhymes well with the existing landscape and utilises the change in levels across the front and rear of the site to provide parking space for tenants.	G
7. Creating well defined streets and spaces	Are buildings designed and positioned with landscaping to define and enhance streets and spaces and are buildings designed to turn street corners well?	The building is well orientated in its context. There is good natural surveillance provided by 3 out of 4 of the building's elevations. The use of fences and a raised ground floor is well in keeping to the Georgian street scene common to the area. Overall distinction between spaces has been eloquently managed; however there is no evidence for any addition of soft landscaping and trees on the rear of the building as indicated on plan.	A
8. Easy to find your way around	Is the scheme designed to make it easy to find your way around?	There is a relatively simple and organised layout of the key building elements. The development strongly obeys the existing order.	G



Figure 10. Fences are used to distinguish between private and public zones.



Figures 11-13. View from junction between Bathwick road and Henrietta road.



Street & Home			
Question		Response	Score
9. Streets for all	Are streets designed in a way that encourage low vehicle speeds and allow them to function as social spaces?	The scheme does not include any streets or public walkways due to the nature of the site. However it does sit well within its context and has been designed to take advantage of the existing infrastructure and adopts the local Georgian template for city terrace housing. A minor complaint would have been that the design is somewhat lacking in terms of greenery at the rear of the building.	G
10. Car parking	Is resident and visitor parking sufficient and well integrated so that it does not dominate the street?	Residents have been provided with a sufficient level of parking space, one space per unit. This has been accomplished through the use of ground level at the back of the buildings to provide parking bays. The level of paved area does to some extent dominate the south portion of the scheme.	A
11. Public and private spaces	Will public and private spaces be clearly defined and designed to be attractive, well managed and safe?	Private and public spaces have been clearly defined with the use of gates and fences. This is done stylistically to match the current street scene. A mix of asphalt and red paving brick have been used to define the different qualities of spaces.	G
12. External storage and amenity space	Is there adequate external storage space for bins and recycling as well as vehicles and cycles?	The scheme provides ample storage space for bins and cycles as indicated by the approved Lower Ground Floor Plan.	G
Totals			10 2 0



Figures 14-15. Lack of substantial shading at the rear of the building as proposed by original building plans.



Figure 16. External bins and rubbish storage.

BFL Assessment: 12/01150/FUL
 130 -- 132 Wells Road, Lyncombe, Bath
 09/07/2014

3. Wells Road

Description:

Conversion of office building to provide 14no flats

Integration into the neighbourhood

Question		Response	Score
1. Connections	Does the scheme integrate into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones; whilst also respecting existing buildings and land uses along the boundaries of the development site?	There has been substantial restrictions on the permitted level of external modification to the existing building in this development due to its location on the busy Wells road. Almost all existing connections to the main road have been preserved	G
2. Facilities and services	Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs or cafes?	The development has been a strict conversion of offices into apartments. The scheme is located on Wells Road and benefits from facilities in the Bear Flat area. Alexander Park is within 10 mins of the site and local Co-op is within a minute from the site. The reputable Bear pub is located conveniently behind the development.	G
3. Public Transport	Does the scheme have good access to public transport to help reduce car dependency?	The site has excellent access to public transport with the closest bus stop being within 5 min from the development. This stop hosts services both back into town as well as further afield. Wells Road is also a popular pedestrian route to and from the city centre.	G
4. Meeting local housing requirements	Does the development have a mix of housing types and tenures that suit local requirements?	As only 14 dwellings it is under no obligation by legislation to provide affordable housing.	G



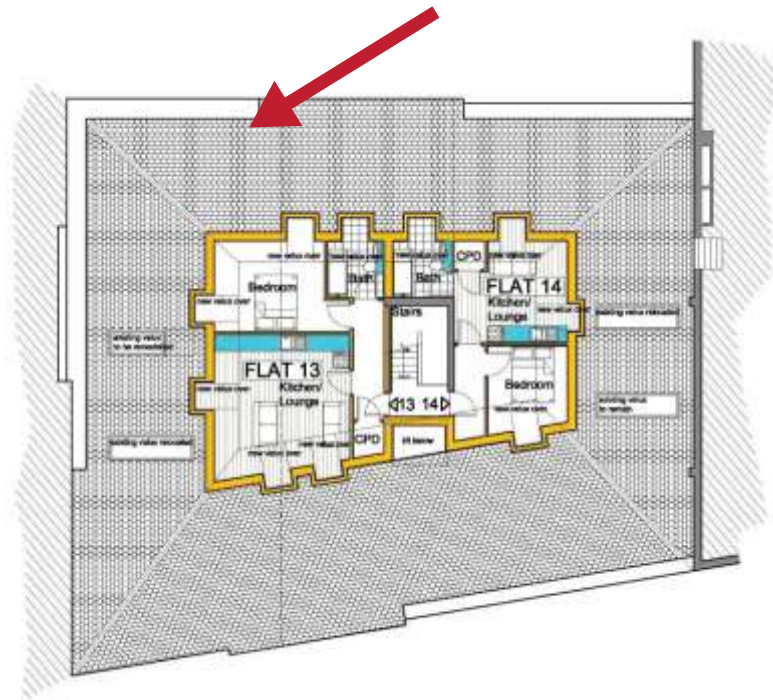
Figure 1. Approach from Bearflat.



Figure 2. Main entrance and access to private parking at the rear of the building.



Figure 3. Rear view facade. Image taken from the Bear Pub car par.



Third Floor Plan 1:100

Figure 4. Building floor plan
Noticeable signs of poor maintenance as weeds and plants have started to flourish within the roof gutters

Creating a Place			
Question		Response	Score
5. Character	Does the scheme create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character?	Although only minor changes to the exterior have been permitted, there has been no attempt to match the new windows at the rear with the older fenestrations.	A
6. Working with the site and its context	Does the scheme take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimates?	As the building has not been significantly altered at lot of the issues have been inherited from the original development.	G
7. Creating well defined streets and spaces	Are buildings designed and positioned with landscaping to define and enhance streets and spaces and are buildings designed to turn street corners well?	As this development has been primarily a refurbishment of an older office block, it is hard to place blame for the lack of development of the street level on the developer. There is a good level of natural surveillance provided rear end windows.	G
8. Easy to find your way around	Is the scheme designed to make it easy to find your way around?	The scheme consists of only one structure making navigation around the area extremely straight forward. The small scale eliminates any possibility for disorientation.	G



Figure 5. Wells Road is a popular vehicle and pedestrian route towards the centre of town.



Figure 6. Poorly designed threshold with front door and bedroom window set directly side by side, creating issues of privacy and security.

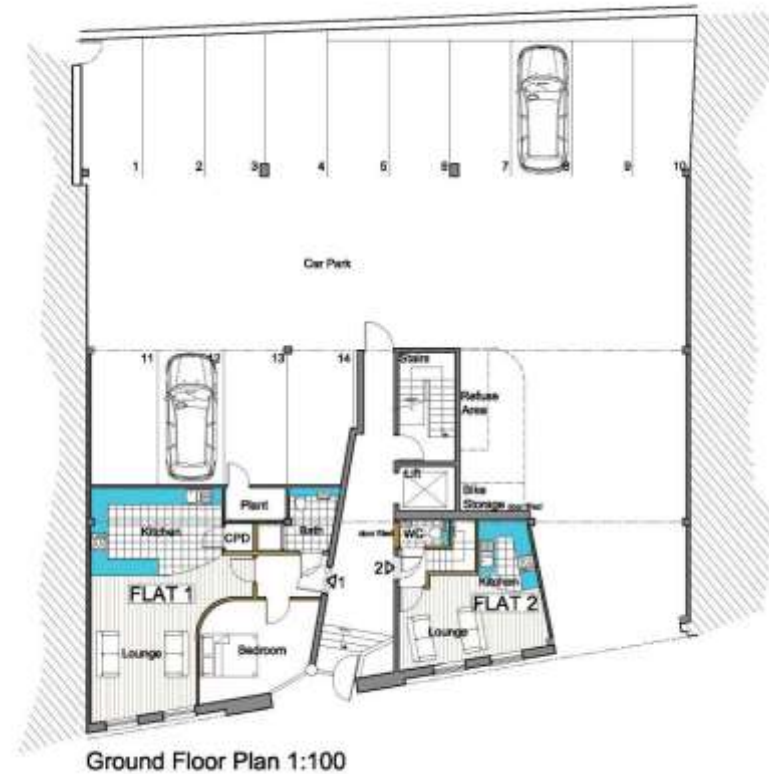


Figure 7. Building floor plan.

Collier Reading Architects

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Mr M. Riddings (NDM)
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 Bath
 BA2

Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations
 1:1250, 1:500, 1:200, 1:100 @A1
 February 2012
 CDH1

S4887 / 102B

Street & Home			
Question		Response	Score
9. Streets for all	Are streets designed in a way that encourage low vehicle speeds and allow them to function as social spaces?	Site is located on a busy road which has already been adequately defined by raised curbs and variations in materiality.	G
10. Car parking	Is resident and visitor parking sufficient and well integrated so that it does not dominate the street?	Original parking has not been altered as proposed in approved plans. Previous office car parking has been retained.	G
11. Public and private spaces	Will public and private spaces be clearly defined and designed to be attractive, well managed and safe?	Scheme does not include any social spaces but the site is in a good walking distance to Alexander Park. There has been little in the way to improve the main entrance to the site.	A
12. External storage and amenity space	Is there adequate external storage space for bins and recycling as well as vehicles and cycles?	There is inadequate provision of designated spaces for bins and rubbish storage which has not been altered as shown on plans. A wooden shed has been erected in the buffer zone between the gated parking and the road to provide some storage facilities. This shed has not been installed with adequate security measures. It is currently not being used to store rubbish but rather an eclectic collection of DIY tools. This contributes to a shabby threshold and is detrimental to the scheme.	R
Totals			9 2 1



Figures 8-9. There is no evidence of alterations to parking layout as proposed in submitted plan.



Figure 10. External storage does not exist as shown on plan. Instead there appears to have been a make-shift shed erected at the entrance to the parking providing little and inadequately secure storage for tenants.



4. Western Riverside

Description:

Phase 1A of Bath Western Riverside Western Quarter on land at former Stothert and Pitt works, comprising of 299 residential homes and apartments (Class C A1) construction of roads, footways and cycle---ways, associated infrastructure and facilities, accommodation works and landscaping.

Integration into the neighbourhood

Question		Response
1. Connections	Does the scheme integrate into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones; whilst also respecting existing buildings and land uses along the boundaries of the development site?	The current extent of the project forms a large cul-de-sac as other major links to surrounding roads have yet to be constructed. There is good indication from the master plan than when fully developed the project will be well connected in its entirety to the rest of the city. Vehicular access to the site remains via Lower Bristol road which is a major link between the city centre and the rest of the city. Pedestrians are already able to access the site via a variety of routes which include the riverside walk way, the local Homebase car park and smaller footpaths along Lower Bristol Road. The Victoria bridge is currently undergoing major and essential repairs that once completed, will provide an attractive pedestrian and cyclist connection across the River Avon. The heights of dwellings have also been adjusted to match with the existing conditions as taller building blocks have be located towards the river side while smaller building such the town houses and affordable housing units have been located on the border between the old and new development.
2. Facilities and services	Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs or cafes?	The scheme in its current state exists purely as a residential development. However, there is indication on the larger master plan for additional retail and recreational facilities to be added in subsequent phases. Even without these further additions the project is already provisioned as it is located in close proximity to the large Sainsbury's at Green Park station.
3. Public Transport	Does the scheme have good access to public transport to help reduce car dependency?	There are several nearby bus stops with services into town as well as the wider Bath-Bristol region. It is also possible to walk into the centre of town which is only a 15 minute stroll away. The streets have been designed to encourage pedestrian and social use given by the extensive use of paving as chosen surface finish. The close proximity to the city centre and varying access points such as the canal walk should encourage a more active lifestyle for local residents.
4. Meeting local housing requirements	Does the development have a mix of housing types and tenures that suit local requirements?	There is a good mix of housing types available within the development. This includes a variation of both affordable and market type apartment blocks and the smaller scale terraced town housing. There are properties with a reasonable range in sizes. Apartments range from the simple studios to the more expensive penthouse while housing blocks rang from one to three bedroom dwellings of affordable or market price housing.



Figures 1-2. Master Plan showing the currently constructed extents of the development





Figure 3. Pedestrian route branching to Lower Bristol Road.



Figure 4. Side passages to affordable housing with good natural surveillance.



Figure 5. Access from Homebase car park.



Figure 6. View from riverside walkway to development.



Figure 7. Terraced lawn on eastern portion of site.



Figure 8. Riverside walkway looking towards Victoria Bridge.

Creating a Place			
	Question	Response	Score
5. Character	Does the scheme create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character?	The scheme has been constructed predominantly using the local Bath stone, with the exception of the rendered finishes in the affordable housing units. These however, have also been done to compliment visually the quality stone work. Although the material is in keeping with the local template, the development as a whole has adopted a very distinct modern approach in its styling of the traditional town housing. Typical elements such as mansard roofs have been restyled in the eastern quarter by Allison Brooks Architects and the raised porches of the typical town houses have been redesigned with a far more simplistic and functional approach to detailing.	.G
6. Working with the site and its context	Does the scheme take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimates?	The project uses the natural levels available across the site to create a variety of unique conditions. Tall apartment blocks have been provided with underground parking spaces and the natural slope has been used to provide level access to the majority of the residential units. Where this has not been possible, rear end access with mobility ramps have been created to ensure ease of access for all. The larger apartment blocks have also been arranged to create secure communal courtyards for local residents. Towards the eastern portion of the development the flood protection has been developed into an attractive terraced lawn that links down to the riverside walk, which has also been further landscaped in an attractive manner. All major communal gardens are provided with a good level of natural surveillance with a substantial number of on facing windows.	G
7. Creating well defined streets and spaces	Are buildings designed and positioned with landscaping to define and enhance streets and spaces and are buildings designed to turn street corners well?	There is a new network of streets and paths being created throughout the scheme. These routes have been clearly defined using the massing and organization of the building blocks. All current routes and parking areas have been provided with a good level of natural surveillance as there is always a multitude on facing fenestration. There has been a high level of external landscaping at the front of all apartment block and, where possible, enclosed courtyards have been landscaped in harmony of the distinct and crisp style of the surrounding buildings.	G
8. Easy to find your way around	Is the scheme designed to make it easy to find your way around?	Street names have been integrated into the stone of buildings at road junctions. The variety of different housing types also enables easy navigation with each street being slightly different from the next in terms of composition. Way finding is currently relatively easy as the scheme is still relatively small and there is a good mix of style and scale of housing. There are existing landmarks such as the Victoria Bridge that provide greater legibility.	G



Figure 9. Town houses on Stothert Avenue.



Figure 10. Exterior facade on Victoria Bridge Road.



Figure 11. Enclosed courtyards in apartment blocks.



Figures 12-13. Raised and limited planting due to underground parking.



Figure 14. Modern interpretation of traditional terrace city housing in apartment blocks.



Figure 15. Pedestrian friendly roads.



Figures 16 17. Separation between public and private areas using fences and massing.



Figure 18. Well landscaped and inviting pedestrian access into site.



Figure 19. Well defined public and private zones.

Street & Home			
	Question	Response	Score
9. Streets for all	Are streets designed in a way that encourage low vehicle speeds and allow them to function as social spaces?	Due to the current cul-de-sac nature of the development, in its current state there is a low average speed for incoming and outgoing traffic. This might not be the case as the scheme expands and streets begin to extend into the surrounding area. There is a potential hazard posed by this, as the streets in their materiality do provide a highly pedestrianized and active social space for residents with good accessibility for all. Further regulation may need to be imposed to avoid accidents by reckless drivers along the longer straight routes.	A
10. Car parking	Is resident and visitor parking sufficient and well integrated so that it does not dominate the street?	Underground car parking for apartment blocks dramatically reduces the need for surface parking. This is an excellent use of space. However some areas of public surface parking show inefficient allocation of parking bays. Private parking for town houses is provided by electrically gated surface parking or well-overlooked dedicated parking as in the case of the affordable housing.	G
11. Public and private spaces	Will public and private spaces be clearly defined and designed to be attractive, well managed and safe?	Public and private spaces have been well defined using a variety of methods such as fencing or changes in level. Large areas of paving could be mediated with softer landscaping. Some external planting is showing signs of considerable stress. Maintenance program may be in need of review as these are essential to the overall regulation of the street ambience.	G
12. External storage and amenity space	Is there adequate external storage space for bins and recycling as well as vehicles and cycles?	Storage spaces for bins and recycling have been well considered. Recessed porches provide good and reasonably secure external storages in many of the terraced housing. Interesting porch detail within affordable housing units provides an attractive and multifunctional external storage element.	G
Totals			11 1 0



Figure 20-21. Interesting front entrance detail providing additional storage and well overlooked car parking in affordable housing



Figure 22. External porch storage



Figure 23. Ramped access at the back of dwelling on Stothert Avenue.



Figures 24-25. Well overlooked streets and parking area proving good natural surveillance.





Figure 26. Potential hazard for speeding on longer routes within site.

5. SW Keynsham K2**Description:**

Hybrid planning application for a housing led mixed use development comprising 285 dwellings, retail accommodation, flexible business/employment floor space, affordable housing, formation of new vehicular, pedestrian and cycle accesses, pedestrian and cycle improvements to Parkhouse Lane, formal and informal public open space including junior playing pitch and associated changing rooms and parking facilities, together with landscaping and tree planting and ancillary works including drainage (Full Application) and extension to Castle Primary School (Outline Application, All Matters Reserved) 36 COMPLETE IN 2012/13

Integration into the neighbourhood

Question		Response	Score
1. Connections	Does the scheme integrate into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones; whilst also respecting existing buildings and land uses along the boundaries of the development site?	There is only one main access point to the scheme, essentially forming an extensive cul-de-sac arrangement. The site is only a 10 to 15 minute bike ride from the town centre but there has been no provision to encourage bike usage, such as storage and tracks around the site. It can be envisaged that most residents will be encouraged to use motorised methods of transportation. There is also a risk of congestion at peak hours around the main entrance. There are currently some areas of inconsistent or unclear pedestrian routes.	R
2. Facilities and services	Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs or cafes?	Scheme is relatively close to the town centre. Although not yet built, a new extension to the existing school, additional sports facilities, and a local shop will be constructed at the heart of the project. The project is predominantly residential .	A
3. Public Transport	Does the scheme have good access to public transport to help reduce car dependency?	Nearest bus stop is off Dunster Road, approximately 300 meters from the main entrance of the scheme. The 665 bus runs through the town centre and Salford. Improvements to service and additional bus stops would be needed if the scheme were to reach full tenancy.	R
4. Meeting local housing requirements	Does the development have a mix of housing types and tenures that suit local requirements?	Wide range of town housing with affordable housing included. Aimed at young family housing. Comprehensive addition to housing stock to the Bristol and Bath area.	G



Figure 1. Main and only entrance to site.



Figure 2. With only one point of entry the development is effectively a large cul-du-sac.



Figures 3-4. The scheme is predominately a residential development, however there are plans to expand the existing school which should introduce a communal focal point within the project before its completion.





Figure 5. Gained space. Space has been conserved by placing dwellings over garages. This poses potential issues of noise for tenants.



Figure 7. Extremely tight transition between public and private threshold on occasion.



Figure 8-9. Unattractive and relatively flat elevation with missed opportunity for larger front lawn and planting.



Figure 10. Example of better resolved threshold and landscaping elsewhere in the development.

Creating a Place			
Question		Response	Score
5. Character	Does the scheme create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character?	Scheme pays very little attention to the local character and material usage within the area. Although there is some variation in material within the scheme, the overall character and appearance of the development is bland and common/ manufactured.	R
6. Working with the site and its context	Does the scheme take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimates?	The scheme in its state engages poorly with the surrounding environment such as the nearby Abbots Woods. Hedges and bushes have been retained on several portions of the site providing corridors for local wild life but has not been successfully exploited to enhance the quality of the environment for residents.	R
7. Creating well defined streets and spaces	Are buildings designed and positioned with landscaping to define and enhance streets and spaces and are buildings designed to turn street corners well?	Numerous attempts to provide most units with external plants; some landscaping is more successful than others. Secondary routes are well defined by building orientation and the majority of corners are well defined by building orientation with on facing fenestration providing a good level of natural surveillance.	G
8. Easy to find your way around	Is the scheme designed to make it easy to find your way around?	<p>It is relatively easy to navigate through the site. External planting is yet to be completed throughout the scheme but holds potential for enhancing the streetscape. Possible variation could be used to create further distinction between roads. Views have been well managed with planned recreational facilities or green spaces at major vistas</p> <p>Changes in building material and style also aid navigation. As most parts of the scheme are yet to be completed it is hard to discern if these factors will be adequate when the project reaches completion.</p>	G



Figure 11. Missed opportunity of potential cyclist path leading to nearby woods.



Figure 12. Council owned Allotment gardens on the east border of the development.

Figure 13. An example of successful use of open green areas to form social play areas for local residents. This plot has been provided with ample natural surveillance by on facing houses.





Figure 14. Raised front entrance creates an interesting dialogue between the different levels of privacy without the use of fences or railings.



Figure 15. Raised kerbs and change in surface treatment helps distinguish between the different routes and define streets.



Figure 16. Currently no indication for intent to link site with Castle Primary School



Figure 17. Example of typical building within the area. Photo taken at entrance to development.



Figure 18. General building material has little or no link with local style or building material.



Figure 19. Good level of natural surveillance is provided by windows unto share parking area.

Street & Home			
Question		Response	Score
9. Streets for all	Are streets designed in a way that encourage low vehicle speeds and allow them to function as social spaces?	So far most of the new roads that have been built are consistently turning corners or branching out, which encourages more cautious driving. There is some concern that this trend will not be continued at the further extremities of the site as there are plans for avenues along the extension to the school grounds and southern spine of the developments, which are all yet to be constructed. Speed bumps or careful chose of materials can be used to avoid this potential hazard.	G
10. Car parking	Is resident and visitor parking sufficient and well integrated so that it does not dominate the street?	There is a substantial impression of wasted space in many of the shared parking areas. Most are well over-looked; however the general composition of materials in these spaces feels excessive or otherwise awkward. Inconsistent treatment of threshold boundary within a single terrace block.	R
11. Public and private spaces	Will public and private spaces be clearly defined and designed to be attractive, well managed and safe?	<p>The general public and private areas are clearly defined by building orientation and position. However there are several instances where car parking is set within an unfavourable proximity to entrances, or there is little or no distinction between the two zones.</p> <p>In general there is adequate natural surveillance within the developed extent of the scheme. Major improvements to the quality and treatments of street thresholds are required as there are several areas of informal grassed areas that offer little or no function publicly or for the ecology. Quality of landscaping must be improved overall.</p>	A
12. External storage and amenity space	Is there adequate external storage space for bins and recycling as well as vehicles and cycles?	Good provision of external storage for bins has been integrated into external landscaping in terrace housing especially on northern border of the development. Small fences have been used to create designated bin areas in an aesthetically pleasing manner. Elsewhere in the scheme the intermediary space between detached units provides an access route between the back gardens and front entrances, so rubbish can be safely stored pending the official rubbish day.	G
Totals			5 2 5



Figure 20. Good use of material to define and enhance street scene however poorly managed planting has been detrimental to the overall success of this portion of the development (note dead tree).



Figure 21. Friendly and potentially social Street scene if additional planting and better managed land spacing can be introduced into the area.



Figure 22. Leftover pavement has been planted but currently does not serve any function.

Figure 23-24. Strange edge condition between pavement front entrances and road. An unusual fence has been erected to enable safe pedestrian access but illustrates poor planning.





Figure 25. Regularly meandering streets are well surveyed and designed to discourage aggressive driving.



Figure 26. Views from the site have been carefully considered and open up to pleasant views of the town or newly constructed green spaces.





Figure 27. Inconsistent threshold where one set of parking has been placed at a good distance from the front entrance while their neighbour suffers from a significantly smaller threshold between parking and the front door.



Figure 29. Un-gated back yard parking zone holds potential risk for site of antisocial behaviour as it is currently poorly over looked



Figure 28. Excessive use of surface treatment in area than could be enhanced by further soft planting.



Figure 30. Gaps between semi-detached houses have been used to provide direct access route between back gardens and the front pavements. This will enable ease of movement of rubbish on collection days.



Figure 31. Small wooden fences provide concealed external storage spaces for bins.

BFL Assessment: 09/04351/FUL
Keynsham North, Keynsham
11/07/2014

6. Former Temple Primary School, Bath Hill

Description:

Conversion of existing buildings and erection of new building to form 11 no. dwellings, and associated works.

Integration into the neighbourhood

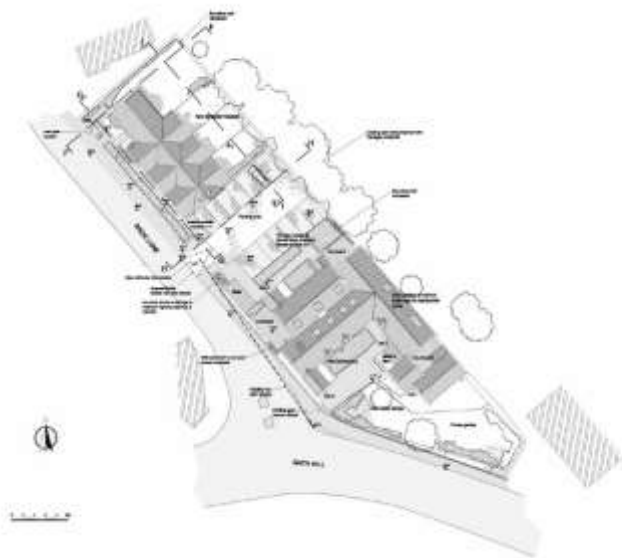
Quest		Response	Score
1. Connections	Does the scheme integrate into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones; whilst also respecting existing buildings and land uses along the boundaries of the development site?	The scheme is located conveniently within the town centre on the intersection between Bath Hill Road and Back Lane. It is immediately bordered by Keynsham Memorial Park to the east. Car entry and parking is in a shared area accessed through the significantly quieter Back Lane. As there is only one access point to Back Lane the scheme is effectively at the mouth of a cul-de-sac.	G
2. Facilities and services	Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs or cafes?	Scheme is located within 1 minute from the high street and approximately 5 minutes to the Keynsham Tesco superstore. Other amenities located within 5 minutes of the development include the new council offices, Keynsham Post office, various restaurants, cafes and high street shops.	G
3. Public Transport	Does the scheme have good access to public transport to help reduce car dependency?	The Keynsham Memorial Park and Post Office bus stops are within 5 minutes' walk from the site and offers services to Bath and Bristol on the 665 bus.	G
4. Meeting local housing requirements	Does the development have a mix of housing types and tenures that suit local requirements?	The development is a conversion of the existing primary school and erection of new buildings to form 11 dwellings. It is an interesting reuse of the former building type. The new builds take clear inspiration from adjacent buildings in styling and material finishes.	G



Figure 1. View towards high street highlighting its proximity to local and regional public transport links.



Figure 2. View to the new civic centre buildings



PLANNING	
Nash Partnership	
7234(L)010	
Approved Site Plan	

Figure 3. Approved plan.



Figure 4. Entrance to Keynsham memorial park located one minutes' walk down Bath hill road.



Figure 5. View towards the band stand within the park. The River Chew runs north to south cutting through the park, and is a well-used recreational facility for the town.



Figure 6. Old school wall has been retained and soft screens have been erected in areas to address issues of privacy. Tasteful landscaping and Fences have been used to distinguish between public and private areas.



Figure 7. View towards the site taken from the Memorial Park.

Creating a Place			
	Question	Response	Score
5. Character	Does the scheme create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character?	An Interesting reuse of former building type. New builds take clear inspiration from adjacent buildings in styling and material finishes.	G
6. Working with the site and its context	Does the scheme take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimates?	Scheme shows clear consideration for local context. Site has been modified to address issues of privacy on both the street front and park border.	G
7. Creating well defined streets and spaces	Are buildings designed and positioned with landscaping to define and enhance streets and spaces and are buildings designed to turn street corners well?	The scheme has a very private feeling from street level, as much of the existing school wall has been retained	G
8. Easy to find your way around	Is the scheme designed to make it easy to find your way around?	Scale of development reduces chances of getting lost. Front doors and exits are clearly and logically defined.	G



Figure 8-9. Newly constructed units are clearly styled to link in style with the slightly older dwelling directly adjacent to the site.



Figure 10. Pleasant scale of the old school building has been successfully converted into multiple domestic units.

Street & Home				
	Question	Response	Score	
	9. Streets for all	Are streets designed in a way that encourage low vehicle speeds and allow them to function as social spaces?	Access to the scheme is off the quiet street of Back Lane. The cul-de-sac nature of this road promotes a lower car speed, in contrast with the adjoining Bath Hill Road.	G
	10. Car parking	Is resident and visitor parking sufficient and well integrated so that it does not dominate the street?	The car park for residents and guests is located centrally between the old and new buildings within the scheme. It has been well proportioned and adequately designed. Allocated parking spaces have been clearly marked out with clear signage to prevent unpermitted parking. A minor note would be to have chosen a different paving material over asphalt, to remain in keeping with the very domestic atmosphere of the project.	G
	11. Public and private spaces	Will public and private spaces be clearly defined and designed to be attractive, well managed and safe?	Well managed and landscaped gardens within all units. There is a semi-private garden area for all dwellings as indicated on plans. This area appears to now form the extent of garden area serving unit 2, however the close proximity to the memorial park provides residents with ample social and recreational facilities.	G
	12. External storage and amenity space	Is there adequate external storage space for bins and recycling as well as vehicles and cycles?	External storage has been successfully integrated into the planning and design of the scheme. There has been creative reuse of the existing low level wall adjacent to unit 2 for a concealed bike and bin storage area.	G



Figure 11. Appropriately styled bin stores to match with the general theme of the development.



Figure 12. Well integrated and adequately surveyed bike storage



Figure 13. Good variation in material to distinguish between different areas.

7. Polestar Bovis 1b

Description:

Approval of reserved matters with regard to outline application 07/02424/EOUT (Mixed use redevelopment of former printworks comprising offices, industrial, residential, continuing care retirement community, pub/restaurant, community building, open space, associated infrastructure, landscaping and access roads)

Integration into the neighbourhood

	Question	Response	Score
1. Connections	Does the scheme integrate into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones; whilst also respecting existing buildings and land uses along the boundaries of the development site?	<p>The road access point to the site is from Hallatrow Road (the B3355), providing easy access by vehicle. Hallatrow Road is connected to Paulton High Street by a mini roundabout, helping to ease traffic through the area. The development contains some clear connections, with routes through the development and a number of access points around the site perimeter.</p> <p>The connections outside the developments boundary are often enclosed by high walls, leaving such paths feeling enclosed and creating potential safety fears for pedestrians. Not all pathways are complete, as they are intended to connect with future elements of the development, creating a disjointed feel to the development for the time being. A pathway from the site leads into the car park of a pub; a private space, resulting in a poor connection. A lack of cycle paths may discourage this mode of transport from being used, with no designated paths or lanes seen anywhere on site.</p>	A
2. Facilities and services	Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs or cafes?	<p>The existing phases of the development provide no new facilities or services of their own. It is a five-minute walk from Paulton's local shops, which include a small Co-operative. The site is also a five-minute drive to a Tesco Superstore and petrol station. Pelican crossings are provided at several points on the site perimeter to cross Hallatrow Road, helping to enhance the safety of pedestrian access to and from the site.</p> <p>These crossings could be improved, or better placed, with the main entrance to Phase 1B having no designated crossing across Hallatrow Road and towards the centre of Paulton. Purnell Sports and Social Club is only a 7-minute walk from the development, along with a range of other services within walking distance of the site, including public houses such as the Red Lion that borders the new development. Paulton Junior School and Noahs Ark Pre School are only a 10-minute walk from the site, though the nearest secondary school, Somervale, is in Midsomer Norton.</p>	A
3. Public Transport	Does the scheme have good access to public transport to help reduce car dependency?	A number of bus stops surround the development, providing services to Bath (179 and 178/379) and Bristol (178/379), which leave roughly every half hour. These bus stops are easily accessible from the site, with various exits from the development leading to different bus stops. There is potential for a bus stop within the site, which would significantly benefit the development. Only one bike storage facility was seen throughout the development, suggesting that the site may be fairly car dependent. The site's nearest train station is Bath Spa – a 24-minute drive.	A

4. Meeting local housing requirements

Does the development have a mix of housing types and tenures that suit local requirements?

A mix of housing is present, ranging from terraced houses to apartments within larger blocks. The tenure of homes was easily recognizable, with social housing clearly within the blocks of flats. Phases 1A and 1B combined provide 20% affordable housing (34% affordable housing in Phase 1B). A good range of property sizes are present and are dispersed among the site rather than one housing type dominating large areas.

A



Figure 1 - Easily navigable connection through development, overlooked by houses and lined with landscaped gardens.



Figure 2 - Enclosed path at east side of development with minimal natural surveillance.



Figure 3 - Pelican crossing across Hallatrow Road from a site entrance.



Figure 4 - Bus stop a short walk from the development on Hallatrow road.



Figure 5 - Terraced housing in development.



Figure 6 - Block of apartments

Creating a Place			
Question		Response	Score
5. Character	Does the scheme create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character?	<p>A range of building materials have been used in an attempt to fit in with buildings in the surrounding area. A yellow render has been used, which appears less in-keeping with the local area. The properties on the site entrance use a higher quality stone that is far more in keeping with the local area, though disappointingly this does not continue past the first row of houses.</p> <p>The use of reconstituted blue lias stone throughout the site, combined with grey slate roof tiling, causing the development to feel very gloomy and grey. These roofing materials are not sympathetic to local character, with clay roof tiles dominating the local area. The building materials, combined with a lack of greenery, form a very hard landscape. The majority of road surfaces are tarmac, with some areas of brickwork. The use of tarmac does little to differentiate the site from surrounding roads. The area lacks any real distinctive character and could have benefited from more variation in road materials and built form of the development.</p>	R
6. Working with the site and its context	Does the scheme take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimates?	<p>The development boasts views of the Mendips for properties at the north of the site, though views for properties elsewhere may well be impaired by other homes. The construction of taller apartment blocks allows views of the rolling countryside to be exploited from locations around the site. A landscape feature incorporated into the site is a stone barrier in the northeast exit, though the sign mounted onto the stone has been partially obstructed by a poorly placed perimeter fence. No buildings have been converted as part of the redevelopment, though this may be due to the previous industrial use of the site. There is a lack of major green areas within the site and those that do exist consist largely of closely mown grassland; limiting the biodiversity within the site.</p> <p>There are also very few trees throughout the site. The development is extremely visible in the wider view from other villages, such as High Littleton, due to its exposed location.</p>	A
7. Creating well defined streets and spaces	Are buildings designed and positioned with landscaping to define and enhance streets and spaces and are buildings designed to turn street corners well?	<p>Windows of properties face the road, creating natural surveillance within the developments streets. Many rear doors appeared to be the primary entrance used to the property, with a number of front gardens neglected and shrubbery blocking doorways. This is due to the designated parking being placed at the rear of many properties, leaving front doors in less easily accessible locations. The landscaping scheme within the development could be improved, as some areas lack green space and trees; degrading their appearance. Car park courts were well defined within the site, though in instances were very large. It may be beneficial to have smaller and more dispersed parking facilities throughout the site. Flats were placed above garages and overlooked the parking court, with the front door placed between garages; creating an entrance to the property that is unattractive and potentially dangerous for children.</p>	R

8. Easy to find your way around	Is the scheme designed to make it easy to find your way around?	The site is fairly easily navigable, with clear paths through the development and marker features assisting at points (such as building size and landscaped areas). The development would benefit from more distinctive corner buildings and landmarks, helping to improve legibility. The site generally avoids the use of steps, instead using sloped paths, helping to improve accessibility to all, including those who have mobility impairments. Textured paving in front of steps within the development helps to assist the visually impaired. Views of the Mendip valley in the north can be seen at various points throughout the development, helping to orientate pedestrians. Highways engineering dominates the streets layout, creating a suburban feel that promotes few alternatives to the car.	A
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Figure 7 - Examples of building materials used - brick work and render



Figure 8 - View of the Mendips through the properties.



Figure 9 -- Plaque on existing stone work with text covered by poorly placed fencing.



Figure 10 - Overgrown front garden suggesting back door is used as primary entrance to property.



Figure 11 - Blank walls of properties on both side of the road facing the street.



Figure 12 - Paths through the development make it far more permeable and easier to navigate.

Street & Home			
Question		Response	Score
9. Streets for all	Are streets designed in a way that encourage low vehicle speeds and allow them to function as social spaces?	The roads have traffic calming measures helping limit vehicle speeds to 20 mph, including sharp bends that lend themselves to low speeds. The use of a different highways surface other than tarmac could also be used to help further reduce vehicle speeds throughout the site, as it would help to separate the streets within the development from those on the surrounding roads. The number of windows facing the streets offers good natural surveillance, helping to reduce fears of road safety and crime. However, this was not the case in all locations, with some streets having blank elevations and brick walls. Many properties have small areas of grass or shrubs between the house and the road, helping to increase the appeal of homes and improve the overall appearance. A number of the terraced properties have low walls between the property and the path, creating an area for discreet refuse storage, although this also obstructs the view of any shrubbery behind the wall. Textured paving on road crossings help to create a safe area for the visually impaired.	G
10. Car parking	Is resident and visitor parking sufficient and well integrated so that it does not dominate the street?	Car parking dominates some areas of the development, with relatively large car parks found around the site. White lining has been used to mark out individual car spaces in many of the parking facilities, creating an eyesore. The development could have benefitted from dispersing these car parking spaces more around the site. Other areas contain smaller and better-designed parking facilities, with a number of properties having integrated garages and parking spaces at their front. Little has been done in the way of landscaping to combat the visual impact of parked cars, with the larger car parking facilities containing few trees or green areas. Rear parking courts exist in a number of properties, causing the rear door to become the primary entrance to many homes (as aforementioned). This may create concerns over the safety of vehicles, although natural surveillance from windows surrounding the parking facilities may help to reduce fears of others. Where parking is at the front of properties there is little in the way of landscaping to counteract the domination of the car, with large areas tarmaced over, reducing the kerb appeal.	R
11. Public and private spaces	Will public and private spaces be clearly defined and designed to be attractive, well managed and safe?	Public and private spaces are generally well defined, through the use of walls and fencing around properties. Small private grass areas are used to separate public and private areas when properties are further set back from the road. The positioning of buildings and their windows lends itself to good natural surveillance within the development, reducing safety fears. The largest area of grass in the development has been landscaped in a way that discourages ball games. This area of land may have been used more effectively to help stimulate biodiversity or simply create a more functional community space, with its openness allowing it to benefit from sunshine throughout the day. A small area of flowers on the site is signposted as being cared for by the local residents, displaying how there is a demand for such spaces, though little is provided. Many spaces had no clear ownership, caused by a lack of appropriate boundary treatments to define private garden space. In contrast, high boundary walls were used unnecessarily in places, creating enclosed walkways with limited surveillance.	A
12. External storage and amenity space	Is there adequate external storage space for bins and recycling as well as vehicles and cycles?	The development lacks cycle storage across the site, with only one designated area visible. The cycle storage facility that did exist was filled with waste, leaving very little space for the few bikes that were stored there. Many properties may be more reliant on garage space for cycle storage, though this is not an option for the social housing apartments and may discourage them from using this mode of transport; reducing the sustainability of the development. Bin and recycling storage was not clearly designated within the site, though many properties have small walls or fences at their front that could be used to conceal waste containers. Many of the houses appeared to have sufficiently large rear gardens with easy access to the rear of the property through a back gate, acting as both recreational space and additional storage for cycles and other items, e.g. garden equipment, if necessary.	A
Totals			1 8 3



Figure 13 - Traffic calming measures put in place to sharpen the bend and slow traffic.



Figure 14 - Houses facing street helping to increase natural surveillance. Small bushes and fences used to separate public and private space.



Figure 15 - Parking marked using white paint creating an eyesore.



Figure 16 - Rear parking court lacking any green features or landscaping to combat the dominance of vehicles.



Figure 17 --- Grass area landscaped so as to deter ball games.



Figure 18 --- Bike storage for social housing filled with waste.

8. Site Of Alcan Factory

Description:

Residential---led mixed use redevelopment comprising of the erection of 169no. dwellings, community facilities, offices, town centre link, formal green space and associated works. 93 COMPLETE IN 2012/13

Integration into the neighbourhood

Question		Response	Score
1. Connections	Does the scheme integrate into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones; Whilst also respecting existing buildings and land uses along the boundaries of the development site?	<p>The site is well located, with connections easily made from the Fosseway Road (A367). The site is also only a short distance from Midsomer Norton High Street, with connections made via the B3355. The development is linked via an established pedestrian walkway from Midsomer Norton town centre, taking only six minutes to walk from the site to the centre, helping to reduce the car dependency of the new dwellings.</p> <p>The construction of a new pedestrian and cycle path in the northeast of the development significantly increases its permeability and connects the site with Longfellow Road, on which Fosseway School and Westfield County Primary School are located. Connections through the site are clear and easily navigable for both pedestrians and vehicles, with pedestrian only routes in well-lit areas in front of homes, creating a feeling of safety.</p>	G
2. Facilities and services	Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs or cafes?	Midsomer Norton High Street is only a six-minute walk from the site via a pedestrian walkway, which provides a range of retail outlets including Sainsbury's, Argos and many independent stores. There are also a number of cafes, restaurants and public houses in the centre of Midsomer Norton. The walkway has steps at the Nightingale Way entrance, preventing the mobility impaired from accessing this route. Somerton House Surgery is only an eleven-minute walk from the new development. The development is surrounded by a number of schools, serving all age ranges, including: Somervale, Norton Hill, St Johns C of E Primary School, Fosseway School, Midsomer Norton Primary School and Westfield County Primary School. The development is planned to encompass a range of its own services, including a community centre in the northwest of the site, though this is still currently under construction. There are many opportunities for recreation in the area surrounding the site, with Welton Rovers Football club a twelve-minute walk away and Midsomer Norton Rugby Football Club a fifteen-minute walk or only two-minute drive away. South Wansdyke Sports Centre is only a six-minute walk from the new development, which provides gym, swimming and various other sports and exercise facilities.	G
3. Public Transport	Does the scheme have good access to public transport to help reduce car dependency?	A number of bus stops can be found only a short walk from the new development, with stops accessible on Charlton Road and Longfellow Road. Charlton Road provides services to Bath (173) and to Bristol (178/379), which is only a 5 to 8 minute walk from the development. The 82 service to Southmead Hospital via Cribbs Causeway can be boarded on Longfellow Road, only a short walk from the development. The close proximity to Midsomer Norton High Street provides the site with a number of other bus connections. The layout of the site allows all residents to be within walking distance of a bus stop, with clearly navigable routes through the site able to assist them. The walk may be over 400m from some properties, therefore the development would have benefited from a bus connection through the site. The nearest train station to the site is in Bath, a 25-minute drive, though can also easily be accessed via the bus network.	A

4. Meeting local housing requirements

Does the development have a mix of housing types and tenures that suit local requirements?

The development provides a range of different housing types, from detached houses with garages, to semi-detached homes and also a fairly large apartment block. The site delivers 35% affordable housing, which is mixed well with the other housing types on the site. The size of house is varied effectively, creating a pleasant streetscape. The development also contains live/work studio units, with garages below, helping to increase the mix of uses on the site.

G



Figure 1 - Clear and easily navigable connections through the development, making the site highly permeable.



Figure 2 - Large detached property



Figure 3 - Smaller terraced houses, helping to create a mix of housing



Figure 4 - Flats provided for social housing.

Creating a Place			
Question		Response	Score
5. Character	Does the scheme create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character?	The development has produced an effective character, through the use of both building materials and design. Many of the property facades are constructed using a combination of white lias stone and render, creating a distinctive character for the development and helping the buildings to blend with their surroundings. A contemporary design is successful in the development, with tree lined boulevards adding to the character of streets. The variations in building size and shape help to produce characters within the site, with glass and steel balconies used in many properties at the south of the development to add a more modern feel to the houses. The road surface was yet to be complete upon visit, though where finished it was comprised of bricks in various shades and tarmac to define particular areas of the road, helping to separate parking bays and private areas from the road. Red brick was also used in the construction of the apartments, terraced houses and live/work units, with a lower quality finish and distinctive character, but blended well with the rest of the development.	G
6. Working with the site and its context	Does the scheme take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimates?	A large number of properties are south facing, allowing them to take advantage of the afternoon and evening sun. The apartment block takes full advantage of the sun through large solar panels placed on the south slope of its roof, helping to improve the sustainability of the development. Many areas in front of properties have been landscaped carefully with small shrubs and trees, which may help to create a pleasant avenue in future. Much of the on-site landscaping that can be seen in the development plans is yet to be complete, though will be well-located in front of the terraced houses that do not have private gardens, allowing them to have a communal green area.	G
7. Creating well defined streets and spaces	Are buildings designed and positioned with landscaping to define and enhance streets and spaces and are buildings designed to turn street corners well?	Streets are clearly defined through the use of landscaping on the major connections through the development. Trees and shrubbery are effectively used to separate the road from the pavement. Low walls and trees break up pavements, whilst also concealing refuse storage. The placing of windows on all sides of properties turns corners well, increasing natural surveillance in all areas of the development and preventing safety fears. The front doors of houses face onto the street, creating a community feel helped by the well-proportioned road width. Parking bays provided for each house discourages antisocial parking and creates a more pleasant streetscape. A hierarchy of road surfacing is used to define parking bays and separate public and private parking areas, removing the need for unnecessary vertical barriers that may create an eyesore.	G
8. Easy to find your way around	Is the scheme designed to make it easy to find your way around?	The development is easily navigable, helped by the range of building types and styles. The site has clear sections and views through the development make it easy to orientate. Taller corner buildings also contribute towards easy navigation, along with areas of landscaping and variations in road and paving material. The creation of tree-lined avenues on the major streets through the site improves the legibility, whilst adding to its attractiveness. Dropped kerbs throughout pedestrian zones allow those with mobility impairments to move with ease throughout the development, though textured paving at road crossings may have proved effective in assisting the visually impaired.	G



Figure 5 -- Combination of materials used to create a strong character within the development. Features such as balconies also add character to the properties.



Figure 6 – Solar panels are south facing on the pitched roof of one of the taller buildings in the site, to take advantage of its positioning for the creation of renewable energy.



Figure 7 -- Landscaping is used to help create well defined streets and spaces.



Street & Home			
	Question	Response	Score
9. Streets for all	Are streets designed in a way that encourage low vehicle speeds and allow them to function as social spaces?	The major roads through the development are straight and could prove to not effectively discourage fast driving, though they have been off-set from one another to prevent the creation of one long strip of road. This helps to limit speeds to below 20 mph, assisted by sharp bends at junctions, forcing drivers to slow down when approaching these. The tree-lined avenues also encourage slower driving, as they provide areas behind which children may be concealed when about to cross the road. All streets are overlooked by windows and, in many cases, balconies, creating areas that have a wealth of natural surveillance and feel safe for families. Many houses present small landscaped gardens onto the street, enhancing kerb appeal and the feeling of safety within the area.	G
10. Car parking	Is resident and visitor parking sufficient and well integrated so that it does not dominate the street?	Car parking is well distributed throughout the development, with each unit of accommodation allotted a car parking space. Many homes are also equipped with garages, providing the option of more secure car parking. Parking spaces are spread across the development well and are generally connected to dwellings, making it clear whom the space belongs to and helping to reduce antisocial parking. This low-density form of parking prevents areas from turning into car parks and blocking connections through the development. It also helps to minimise security concerns as parking is clearly visible from properties, assisted by the provision of balconies on many properties. A larger, and less successful, car park is positioned outside an apartment block, though parking spaces are clearly marked by the use of a lighter shade of brick, compared to the surrounding red brick road. This is also effective in preventing antisocial parking and avoids creating an eyesore with white lines painted to define parking from road space.	G
11. Public and private spaces	Will public and private spaces be clearly defined and designed to be attractive, well managed and safe?	Public and private spaces are clearly defined throughout the development using a range of techniques. Many of the detached homes towards the south of the site have small stone walls which separate them from the pavement, behind which rubbish bins and recycling boxes can be kept out of sight. The terraced houses have small landscaped front gardens to separate them from the street, providing a less imposing but equally effective way of defining the public and private spaces. As aforementioned a fairly large area, which is planned to become a landscaped for public use, is yet to be complete, though this is well located at the perimeter of the site and positioned in front of semi-detached properties, providing natural surveillance over the area.	G
12. External storage and amenity space	Is there adequate external storage space for bins and recycling as well as vehicles and cycles?	The majority of properties have private garages that can be used for bicycle and bin/recycling storage. It was unclear as to whether the apartment block had adequate storage facilities, though some may have been located internally. The semi-detached properties at the north of the development had easily accessible designated waste storage facilities in between the houses, preventing bins from creating eyesores at the front of properties. No cycle storage could be seen for these properties, though may have been present at the rear of the property. As aforementioned, the small walls constructed in front of each of the detached properties provide an effective barrier to hide waste storage behind. Gardens in the development were of a good size and more often than not appeared to only be accessible through the property.	A
Totals			10 2 0



Figure 9 - Tree-lined avenue encourages drivers to reduce their speed.



Figure 10 -- Car parking spaces are clearly defined by different coloured brick work.



Figure 11 - Area awaiting landscaping located in front of properties to maximize surveillance.



Figure 12 - Waste storage facilities for semi-detached houses.

BFL Assessment: 12/01454/FUL
 Towerhurst, Wells Road, Westfield, Radstock, BA3 3US
 14/07/2014

9. Towerhurst, Westfield

Description:

Erection of 11 dwellings with garages/parking, landscaping, screening and associated works and erection of 2 detached garages for the existing dwellings.

Integration into the neighbourhood

Question		Response	Score
1. Connections	Does the scheme integrate into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones; whilst also respecting existing buildings and land uses along the boundaries of the development site?	A cul-de-sac has been created. The development forms an enclosed space that does not form any connections with the surrounding area other than the sites main entrance; this may not prove a major issue, as the development doesn't appear to have blocked any existing connections through the area. The main entrance to the site is from the busy Wells Road, and the road through the site is naturally well lit and all homes face the pavement, providing natural surveillance and creating a feeling of safety within the development. Wells Road provides the site with a direct route to Bath, an excellent asset for the development. Connections are easily made with the centre of Radstock via Wells Road.	G
2. Facilities and services	Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs or cafes?	The development is in a prime location on the Wells Road; providing easy access to a wide range of services, as well as being opposite a number of local shops, including a pharmacy. Radstock town centre is a two-minute drive or fifteen-minute walk away, providing a range of facilities such as a Co-operative superstore, various other retail outlets, Norton Radstock College and public houses/cafes. South Hill Park is also only a twelve-minute walk from the Somer Mews development, providing the site with a recreational area. Westfield Doctors Surgery is a seven---minute walk from the development. The site provides no new facilities itself, though this is unnecessary given the small size of the development.	G
3. Public Transport	Does the scheme have good access to public transport to help reduce car dependency?	The site is a two-minute walk from a bus stop that serves a wide range of services, including the 173 from Wells to Bath and the 178/379 from Bath to Bristol. Car dependency may be reduced due to the close proximity to the bus network.	G
4. Meeting local housing requirements	Does the development have a mix of housing types and tenures that suit local requirements?	The development only provides 3 and 4 bedroom houses; no social housing is required due to the small size of the development. The property sizes have some variation, ranging from a bungalow to a large detached home with a garage. The homes are built with disabled access in mind, many with no stepped access, which may also prove beneficial for the elderly and families with pushchairs.	G



Figure 1 - Cul de sac formed by development.



Figure 2 - Semi-detached properties within Somer Mews.



Figure 3 - Detached properties with designated parking spaces adjacent to the property.



Figure 4 - Bungalow in development, helping to provide a mix of housing type.

Creating a Place			
Question		Response	Score
5. Character	Does the scheme create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character?	The development incorporates a range of building materials, including brick and render, which help to form a strong character within the site. The properties have features such as sloped and pitched roofs above their front doors, also adding to the character of the development. The character of the surrounding area is mixed and of variable quality, further enhancing the developments character. The road and pavements within the development are made of red brick, helping to set the site apart from the entrance on Wells Road, also minimising the need for road marking to define parking bays.	G
6. Working with the site and its context	Does the scheme take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimates?	The site is naturally concealed by the large trees either side of the entrance, helping to reduce the visual impact of the development. Existing buildings at the site entrance have not been demolished, helping to maintain the area's heritage and assisting in blending the new development with the older homes. This is further assisted by the new houses following the line of these existing buildings, creating a more natural looking development.	G
7. Creating well defined streets and spaces	Are buildings designed and positioned with landscaping to define and enhance streets and spaces and are buildings designed to turn street corners well?	Front doors of houses within the development face onto the road, offering natural surveillance and creating a feeling of safety. Each property has a small front garden, helping to clearly define the public and private areas and separating homes from the road. Spaces are well defined as belonging to each property, with no wasted space without a clear use. Parking bays within the site are clearly defined, helping to prevent antisocial parking and enhancing the feel of safety for families.	G
8. Easy to find your way around	Is the scheme designed to make it easy to find your way around?	The development is very easily navigable due to its small size. The low pavement kerbs allow for both wheelchair and push chair access.	G



Figure 5 --- Pitched roofs above front doors of properties helping to add character.



Figure 6 --- Part of master plan, produced by Elan Homes, displaying the incorporation of the existing buildings in the site (buildings in grey), as well as trees the site entrance.



Figure 7 --- Bay windows also help to add to the character of the development.



Figure 8 -Streets and spaces clearly defined using different shades of brick and various types of landscaping.

Street & Home			
Question		Response	Score
9. Streets for all	Are streets designed in a way that encourage low vehicle speeds and allow them to function as social spaces?	The small size of the development naturally lends itself to low vehicle speeds, allowing pedestrians and cyclists to easily and safely access the properties. The red brick road clearly separates the site from the Wells Road, again encouraging a reduction in vehicle speed. The natural surveillance created by homes facing the road is further enhanced by front gardens on all properties, creating a pleasant and family friendly streetscape. Minimal level changes from the road to properties allows the site to be easily used by all, with the exception of the two homes with steps to their front door.	G
10. Car parking	Is resident and visitor parking sufficient and well integrated so that it does not dominate the street?	Each property has private parking, preventing the street from becoming cluttered with vehicles and creating an eyesore. The parking bays provided are clearly visible from all homes, helping increase natural surveillance. A range of parking bays are provided, both in front of properties and to their sides, helping to reduce uniformity and car dominance within the development. Garages are also provided on a number of properties, offering a more secure parking option and reducing the visibility of parked cars, benefiting all residents.	G
11. Public and private spaces	Will public and private spaces be clearly defined and designed to be attractive, well managed and safe?	Public and private spaces are clearly defined by the use of different materials, with front gardens of either grass or shrubbery separating homes from the road, without creating areas that are completely enclosed and shut-off from their surroundings. All properties overlook the road and provide natural surveillance through views up the small street, further assisted by the openness of the street.	G
12. External storage and amenity space	Is there adequate external storage space for bins and recycling as well as vehicles and cycles?	The majority of properties have garages, providing easy storage for bins and recycling, as well as bicycles. Each garage has a parking bay in front of it, providing residents with additional parking. Each property has a garden gate at the side of the house, allowing bins to be kept inside this area (as indicated in the sites 'Planning Layout'), removing an eyesore for residents and still allowing the bins to be easily moved onto the road on collection day. An alternative storage area could have been considered to prevent waste from being stored in gardens. This gate can also provide easily accessible bike storage within the back garden for properties without a garage.	A
Totals			12 1 0



Figure 9 - Low kerbs and lack of steps to property allow easy access for all. Gate to garden on right of image provides route to external storage. Private and public spaces separated with the use of landscaping.



Figure 10 - Parking bays provided for each house, as well as garages for many properties, providing additional storage.