



Land north of School Road Arborfield Cross

Statement of Community Involvement September 2024



Table of Contents

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
2. INTRODUCTION	4
3. PUBLIC CONSULTATION	4
3.1. - ENGAGEMENT WITH ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES AND STAKEHOLDERS.	4
3.2. - CONSULTATION WEBSITE	7
3.3. - SOCIAL MEDIA	9
3.4. - DROP-IN CONSULTATION & EXHIBITION	9
4. PUBLIC RESPONSE	11
4.1. - DATA SOURCES	11
4.2. - CONSULTATION WEBSITE	11
4.3. - RESPONSE ANALYSIS	12
4.3.1. - Biodiversity Net Gain and Retention.....	12
4.3.2. - Affordable Housing.....	12
4.3.3. - Community Levy Infrastructure (CIL)	12
4.3.4. - Smaller Homes	13
4.3.5. - Personal Interest in Homes	13
4.3.6. - Community Facilities.....	13
4.3.7. - Preferred Types of Homes	14
4.4. - IN PERSON COMMENTS	14
4.5. - ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK	15
4.6. - SUMMARY	15
5. APPENDICES	17
5.1. - WEBSITE	17
5.2. - SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTS	26
5.3. - PUBLIC EXHIBITION FLIER.....	28
5.4. - PUBLIC EXHIBITION BOARDS.....	30
5.5. - PUBLIC EXHIBITION FEEDBACK FORM	33
5.6. - WOKINGHAM TODAY COVERAGE.....	35



1. Executive Summary

1.1. - This report provides details of the programme of community engagement undertaken by the Community Communications Partnership (the “CCP”) on behalf of Croudace Homes, Vortal Homes Limited and Falcon Developments (SE) Limited (the “Applicant”) in relation to the proposed development of the Land North of School Road, Arborfield Cross (the “Site”) within the administrative boundary of Wokingham Borough Council (the “Council”).

1.2. – The proposed development is for approximately 95 homes of mixed sizes and tenure with a 15% biodiversity net gain (BNG), electric vehicle charging points, pedestrian pathways, CIL contributions, and community facilities such as play areas. The site is set across almost 20 acres. This consultation served to inform local residents, community stakeholders and elected representatives about the plans and gain feedback.

1.3. - Paragraphs 39-42 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) encourage engagement between developers, local planning authorities and the local community. This is intended “to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties” and “better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community”.

1.4. - Sections 7.13-7.16 of the Council’s Statement of Community Involvement (March 2024) also encourages “positive engagement” from a developer “to help prepare and refine their proposal” before a planning application is submitted.

1.5. - The objectives of the consultation were to ensure that local residents, community groups, and elected representatives were made fully aware of emerging development proposals and give them the opportunity to provide feedback and express ideas.

1.6. - The consultation comprised of the following elements:

1.6.1. - Engagement with politicians: There is ongoing engagement with Ward councillors and relevant members of the Council’s cabinet who are being informed about the plans, inviting feedback from them.

1.6.2. - Consultation Website: The Applicant hosted a consultation website (<https://schoolrd-arborfieldcross.co.uk/>) to provide details of the proposals and methods for stakeholders to submit feedback including a contact telephone number of the project team. This was made live on 14th June 2024.

1.6.3. - Social Media Campaign: A Facebook and Instagram advert directing viewers to the website was active from 27th June to 18th July 2024.

1.6.4. - Drop-in Consultation event and Exhibition: An event was held at the Royal British Legion Club in Arborfield Cross on 9th July 2024 from 16:00-20:00, in which members of the public were invited to read and ask about the development plans and give feedback. An earlier private session was conducted between 15:30 and 16:00 to afford parish and district councillors to attend the exhibition at a quieter time for their contemplation.



2. Introduction

2.1 - This Statement of Community Involvement has been prepared by the Community Communications Partnership (the “CCP”) on behalf of Croudace Homes, Vortal Homes Limited and Falcon Developments (SE) Limited (the “Applicant”). It encompasses the planning application being prepared for the proposed development of the Land North of School Road, Arborfield Cross (the “Site”) within the administrative boundaries of Wokingham Borough Council (the “Council”).

2.2 - This Statement provides details of the community consultation undertaken in relation to the Proposed Development of the Site and the comments and feedback received through this consultation.

3. Public Consultation

3.1. - Engagement with elected representatives and stakeholders.

The CCP communicated with the following stakeholders:

Name	Position	Medium	Purpose	Date	Outcome
Gordon Joyner	Deputy Director, Oxford Diocesan Board of Education. Diocese of Oxford equates roughly to the Counties of Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Berkshire.	3 Phone calls and 2 emails	To understand the attitude of the Diocese (that governs the school) to the potential benefits of development.	15.3.24; 25.3.24 9.4.24 & 16.4.24; 22.7.24	Repeated calls and emails finally saw a pragmatic response from Mr Joyner who has experience of dealing with schools and understood what might be possible with such a development. He agreed that he would contact the CEO of Keys Academy Trust- despite multiple chases, this contact was never confirmed.
Sarah Stevens	Reception, Coombes CE Primary School	5 x phone calls and 6 emails	To understand staff, governor and broader school community attitude to the potential benefits of development. To request a meeting with the Head Teacher, Luke Henderson and Chair of Governors, Louise Connelly.	15.3.24- 1.5.24	The CCP provided detailed information about the proposal and potential benefits of the development to the school, including for a meeting of the Governors on 13 th May. This offer repeatedly included the offer of land for sports pitches. Despite this, the school provided an inconclusive



					response to submitted queries.
Scouts UK	The Scout Information Centre; Growth & Communities Team	5 emails	To contact the 1 st Arborfield Scout Group and determine any need and interest in new facilities	5.6.24; 17.6.24; 17.6.24; 24.6.24; 2.7.24	After several emails to the local branch of the Scouts, the Client was directed to the Scouts UK Growth & Communities Team on 17.6. Later emails sought an explanation for lack of response from that team. The client subsequently learned that the Scouts were quite happy with the arrangement with the school. They further stated that although there were benefits with a dedicated Scout hut, the significant costs meant they would not be interested.
Jo Hardy	Head of Operations, Coombes CE Primary School	5 x phone calls and 5 emails	To understand staff, governor and broader school community attitude to the potential benefits of development. To request a meeting with the Head Teacher, Luke Henderson and Chair of Governors, Louise Connelly.	15.3.24-1.5.24	The CCP provided detailed information about the proposal and potential benefits of the development to the school, including for a meeting of the Governors on 13 th May. This offer repeatedly included the generous offer of land for sports pitches. Despite this, the school provided an inconclusive response to submitted queries.
Mark McDonnell	Trustee, Parochial Church Council Of The Ecclesiastical Parish Of St Bartholomew's, Arborfield Cross	Phone call and 3 emails	To understand the sentiment of the local Church to the potential benefits of development.	23.5.24 26.5.24 28.5.24	Mr McDonnell raised the detail of the CCP inquiries with the Rector of St Bartholomew's, Arborfield Cross who in turn was going to raise with the Head of



					Coombes CE Primary School.
Gavin Collins	Rt Revd Bishop of Dorchester. Following the untimely death of the Bishop of Buckingham in February 2024, contact was established with the Rt Revd Bishop of Dorchester (in same diocese as Arborfield Cross viz Diocese of Oxford). The Bishop of Buckingham was the Chair of the Diocese Education Board.	Teams call	To understand the attitude of the Diocese to the benefits of development.	15.7.24	We were advised in communication with the Bishop that we were best to contact the Director and Deputy Director of Oxford Diocesan Board of Education.
Tony Wilson	Director of Education, Oxford Diocesan Board of Education	Email	To understand the attitude of the Diocese (that co-governs the school) to the potential benefits of development	22.7.24	Despite several attempts to contact the Director, we achieved no further information or leads.
Hilary Carless	Parish Clerk, Arborfield and Newland Parish Council	Email and phone calls	To understand local attitude to the potential benefits of development. Parish Councillors were individually invited to the drop-in consultation and exhibition.	7.6.24	The Parish Council invited the Client then sadly rescinded their invite to a scheduled meeting on 16 th July. Ahead of the drop-in consultation and exhibition, the parish clerk advised the CCP that attending parish councillors could only offer comments in a personal capacity.
Cllr Prue Bray	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Children's Services, Wokingham Borough Council	11 emails	To establish the lead councillor for Children's Services take on the salient issues in the school; to understand the Liberal Democrat council leadership attitude to development; to		Contact with the councillor was frustrated by three key events: a serious accident where the councillor broke her hip; the council elections on 3 rd May; and the general election on 4 th July which meant



			understand broader school community attitude to the potential benefits of development		she has been extremely busy.
--	--	--	--	--	---------------------------------

NB From the table above, it is worth emphasising that contact with the school has been frustrated by the Easter break, end of summer term, 'Inset' Days, and by the complex governance of both an Academy Trust and the Diocese. Prior to the meeting of Coombes Primary School Governors, on 13th May, the CCP provided up to date materials of proposals.

The CCP is continuing to contact local councillors to secure the best end-result for the community.

3.2. - Consultation Website

A website (<https://schoolrd-arborfieldcross.co.uk/>) was commissioned to provide residents with details about the Proposed Development and a medium for them to offer comments to shape the proposal. This website includes pages about the following topics:

- Background information about Croudace Homes.
- Landscaping and planting plans for the improvement of biodiversity and amenity, including a prompt to suggest species to plant on the development.
- Sustainability of the proposal's design, including features for saving energy and water, reducing carbon emissions and ideas for improving pedestrian and bus access in the village.
- Plans to improve infrastructure, featuring the concept masterplan.
- Prospects of homes that would meet different residents' needs i.e. first-time buyers, key workers, families and those who need smaller homes. This included feedback prompts about this and whether viewers or people they know would be interested in moving into the homes.
- A Feedback form.

These pages are shown in [Appendix 5.1](#).

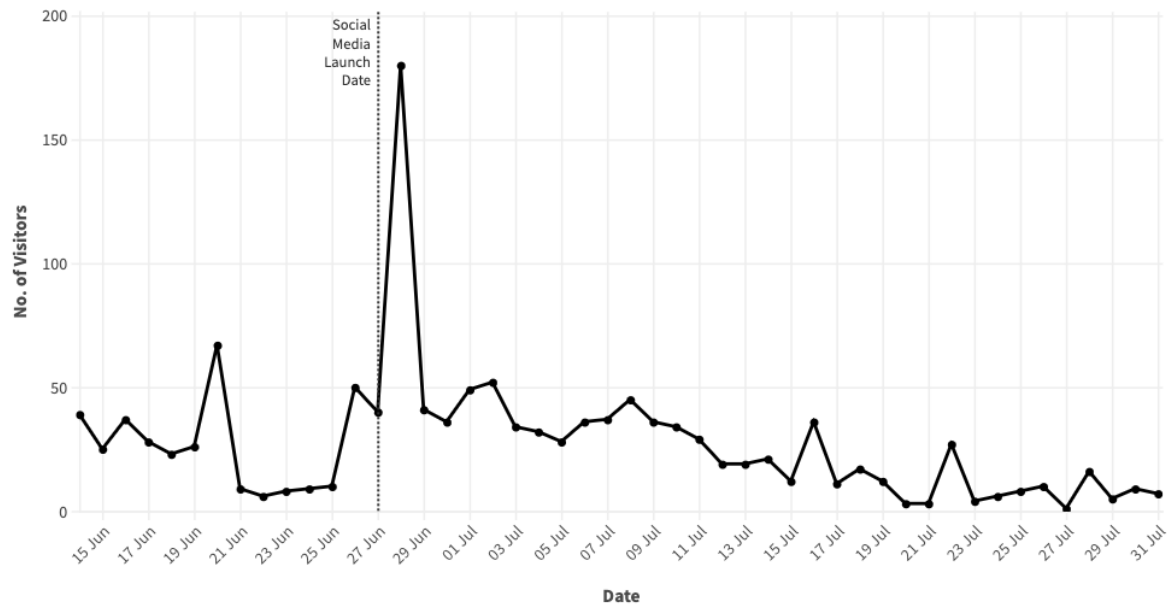
This website was live from 14th June 2024. Up to 31st July, it has received a total of 1,292 unique visitors. It received its peak number of visitors of 180 on Friday 28th June. 7 visitors have submitted feedback using the aforementioned feedback form and prompts. Page views over the same period (the amount of times the pages of the website were opened, as referred from unique visitors) totalled 2,559.

The high incidence in visitors on 28th June correlates with the social media launch on Thursday 27th June with the Friday affording more people to visit the website as the weekend started.

Figure 1 below illustrates the number of visitors to the website:



Figure 1: Graph to show the visitors per day on the Arborfield Cross website from 14th June (date of publication) to 31st July.





3.3. - Social Media

From 27th June to 18th July 2024 the CCP ran a social media campaign on Facebook and Instagram.

This social media campaign targeted local residents reaching 5,091 users on both platforms. This resulted in 316 unique clicks to the consultation website. This is a healthy Click Through Rate of 6% which is above industry standards for advertisements in social media, with Instagram being usually 0.94% and Facebook 0.72%.

This advert is shown in [Appendix 5.2](#).

3.4. - Drop-in Consultation & Exhibition

A public exhibition was held on Tuesday 9th July 2024 at the Royal British Legion Club at Eversley Road, Arborfield Cross, RG2 9PR between 3:30pm and 8pm. To inform local residents of this event, on 22nd June 500 fliers (see [Appendix 5.3](#)) were distributed to homes in Arborfield Cross and homes to the east of the site where Langley Common Road, Barham Road and School Road meet. This number was chosen by estimating the number of households in Arborfield Cross and Langley Common, rounded up to the number of copies offered by the printing company used. Any fliers that remained after delivery to the prioritised areas was completed were delivered to the nearest homes outside these areas, around the north of Arborfield Garrison. This was later compared to an estimate made using the 2021 national census. The four Output Areas that cover Arborfield Cross and Langley Common (E00083869, E00083858, E00083860, E00167043) had a total of 532 households.

Attendees were invited to sign in upon arrival, before they could enter the exhibition and read the six interpretation boards. These detailed a welcome board, vision, sustainability benefits, community and social benefits, environmental benefits and next steps (see [Appendix 5.4](#)). One large board in the centre of the exhibition described the development, detailing the location and planning considerations. This board included a concept masterplan. The boards were laid out to be interpreted in a clockwise fashion encouraging visitors to come on the planning journey with Croudace Homes, Vortal Homes Limited and Falcon Developments (SE) Limited.

Representatives from Croudace Homes, Marrons (Planning Consultant), Transport Planning Associates (Transport Consultant) as well as the CCP attended the consultation. They welcomed residents to the consultation, answered their questions, listened to their comments and requested that they record their opinions on paper feedback forms (see [Appendix 5.5](#)) or on the website, using provided iPads. The paper feedback forms included the same questions as the online form. A QR code was provided on the final interpretation board for visitors to view and share the proposals in their own time and leisure.

Out of the 500 delivered invites, the event was attended by 48 guests. A total of 6 feedback forms were completed. This gives an average of 9.6% of those being invited and subsequently attending the exhibition and 1.2% also completing the feedback forms. This does not include attendees who gave feedback by word of mouth. Following the event, the interpretation boards were also added to the CCP website to help residents see the boards in their own time and leisure.

During the event, the CCP was invited by Andrew Batt, a contributor at *Wokingham Today* for a comment to the press. The CCP provided a news comment with quotations from Croudace Homes and the CCP.



Positive and informative news coverage was achieved with a photo and news report in the online edition¹ of the newspaper on 28th July. The positive coverage is recorded in Appendix 5.6.

¹ <https://wokingham.today/residents-learn-about-arborfield-homes-plan/>



4. Public Response

4.1. - Data Sources

Data was compiled from the consultation event, both in terms of the paper feedback and conversations that the representatives had. This included the submission of comments using iPads provided at the drop-in consultation. In addition, there was consultation conducted online through the School Road website. The aim is to provide a sharper picture of the issues that matter to local stakeholders and residents.

We detail below the responses received on the public exhibition feedback forms, in-person conversations as well as online feedback.

An example of the public exhibition feedback form is attached as Appendix 5.5. Feedback from the public exhibition feedback forms and online feedback is listed below in 4.3. In person conversations are captured in 4.4. There was some additional feedback which is listed under 4.5 with the summary at 4.6.

4.2. - Consultation Website

Themed tabs on the consultation website offered a range of closed questions. Feedback for each category offered a series of closed questions listed below and attached as Appendix 5.1.

Of the people who then interacted and responded to questions on the website, only some answered all the questions, others answering a few chosen questions.

There was also a section offering additional comments. These comments although few in number offer a valuable insight into local thinking.

The *Nature Friendly Neighbourhood* tab featured the question *'We would like to hear from you what trees and plants you think would be best planted to improve biodiversity, please let us know below.'* The site listed several possible types of trees and plants. For trees this included feature trees, street trees, natural trees, hedgerow trees and hedgerows. For plants: typical shrub species, typical herbaceous species, typical grasses species, typical fern species, typical bulb species, typical climbing species, typical marginal species, typical native buffer species, amenity grassland mix and wildflower meadow mix.

About The *New Homes* tab featured questions on the types of home, with the question *'What kind of homes do you think are appropriate for the local area?'* With options: starter homes for first time buyers, homes for key workers, smaller homes, and family sized homes. This tab also featured a further question: *'Are you or someone you know interested in one of the new homes?'*

Under the *Have Your Say* tab, respondents were invited to fill out general details and respond to questions that included:

How important is it to you that new developments in Arborfield Cross contribute to increasing biodiversity and green spaces, such as the proposed 15% biodiversity net gain and retention of hedgerows and trees along the southern boundary?

Do you believe the provision of affordable housing for key workers within the development would positively impact the diversity and inclusivity of Arborfield Cross?

How beneficial do you think the Community Infrastructure Levy contributions would be for enhancing local facilities and amenities, including potential funding for new roads, parks, and community spaces?



There will be smaller homes for those in the local community who are looking to downsize. Do you agree that this is needed for Arborfield Cross?

Would you or someone you know be interested in one of the new homes in Arborfield Cross?

How beneficial do you think it would be to incorporate community facilities, such as a rural co-working space or areas for local events, into the development?

4.3. - Response Analysis

4.3.1. - Biodiversity Net Gain and Retention

“How important is it to you that new developments in Arborfield Cross contribute to increasing biodiversity and green spaces, such as the proposed 15% biodiversity net gain and retention of hedgerows and trees along the southern boundary?”

Public exhibition feedback form: Respondents deemed this “very important”(4) and “essential”(1), one questioned how this could be achieved “by building over ‘Green fields(sic)’”

Online feedback: the question offered important, neutral and not important. Important: 3 votes.

Total for public exhibition and online feedback: Essential: 1 vote, Very important: 4 votes, Important: 3 votes.

4.3.2. - Affordable Housing

“Do you believe the provision of affordable housing for key workers within the development would positively impact the diversity and inclusivity of Arborfield Cross?”

Public exhibition feedback form: Respondents answered “yes” (5), “somewhat” (1), “unsure” (1) and “no” (1).

Online feedback: the question offered yes, unsure and no. Yes: 1 vote, Unsure: 2 votes, No: 1 vote.

Total for public exhibition and online feedback: Yes: 6 votes, No: 2 votes, Unsure: 3 votes, Somewhat: 1 vote.

4.3.3. - Community Levy Infrastructure (CIL)

“How beneficial do you think the Community Infrastructure Levy contributions would be for enhancing local facilities and amenities, including potential funding for new roads, parks, and community spaces?”

Public exhibition feedback form: 5 respondents answered that it would be “very beneficial”. Of those 5:

- 1 specified the need for an additional health facility in the village hall.
- 1 specified the need for an allotment or community orchard.
- 1 assumed that the CIL would be directed locally.

The remaining 3 respondents answered “Neutral”, “No opinion” or did not answer.



Online feedback: the question offered Important, Neutral and Not Important. Important: 2 votes, Neutral: 2 votes. Total: 4 votes.

Total for public exhibition and online feedback: Very beneficial/ Important: 7 votes, Neutral: 3 votes, No opinion: 1 votes, No answer: 1 vote.

4.3.4. - Smaller Homes

“There will be smaller homes for those in the local community who are looking to downsize. Do you agree that this is needed for Arborfield Cross?”

Public exhibition feedback form: 5 respondents agreed. Of those 5:

- 2 specified bungalows.
- 1 who did not specify in this field also expressed interest in a bungalow in response to the next question.
- 1 offered “no opinion.”
- 2 answered “unsure.”

Online feedback: the question offered yes, unsure and no. Unsure: 2 votes, Yes: 2 votes. Total: 4 votes.

Total for public exhibition and online feedback: Yes: 7 votes, Unsure: 3 votes, No opinion: 1 vote, No: 1 vote.

4.3.5. - Personal Interest in Homes

“Would you or someone you know be interested in one of the new homes in Arborfield Cross?”

Public exhibition feedback form:

- 5 respondents expressed this interest, depending on affordability.
- 1 was interested in a two-bed bungalow (see above) and was considering market rate affordable. or shared ownership and asked about the housing association.

Online feedback: the question offered yes, unsure and no. Yes: 6 votes, No: 3 votes. Total: 9 votes.

Total for public exhibition and online feedback: Yes: 11 votes, No 3 votes.

4.3.6. - Community Facilities

“How beneficial do you think it would be to incorporate community facilities, such as a rural co-working space or areas for local events, into the development?”

Public exhibition feedback form: All respondents supported this principle. Even the respondent who answered “neutral” offered a suggestion. Some specified:

- Bus service.
- Community centre/Scouts hub or overspill of village hall.
- Doctors/Dentists.
- An amenity for older children or young adults, such as a skate park.



Online feedback: the question offered important, neutral and not important. Neutral: 2 votes, Important: 2 votes. Total: 4 votes.

Total for public exhibition and online feedback: Important: 5 votes, Neutral: 3 votes.

4.3.7. – Preferred Types of Homes

“What kind of homes do you think are appropriate for the local area?”

Public exhibition feedback form:

- 4 chose “Starter homes for first time buyers.”
- 3 chose “Family sized homes.”
- 2 chose “Smaller homes.”
- 1 chose “Homes for Key Workers.”

Online feedback: the question offered Starter homes for first time buyers, Family sized homes, Smaller homes and Homes for Key Workers. Starter homes for first time buyers: 9 votes, family sized homes: 4 votes, smaller homes 4 votes, Key workers: 2 votes. Total: 19 votes.

Total for public exhibition and online feedback: Starter homes for first time buyers: 13 votes, Family sized homes: 7 votes, Smaller homes: 6 votes, Homes for Key Workers: 3 votes.

4.4. - In Person Comments

This section refers to the comments that were raised during conversations with all staff at the in-person consultation event. We summarise these by theme below.

Housing

Among exhibition participants there was an expressed desire for the building of bungalows. This includes the fact that such homes are better for later living and for owners with disabilities. There was support for the green / low density approach to housing shown on the masterplan; it was felt that there was the need for more affordable properties for younger people to move to the village; housing provision needs to target affordable homes for local needs; there was regret expressed by some who reported that some families would like to move back to the village and simply can’t afford it.

Community & Infrastructure

There is a strong sense of community with a very diverse range of clubs with many families reporting that they have lived in the village for generations. There was some concern raised about the lack of facilities for teenagers in the Arborfield Cross area. Similar to the situation throughout the south east of England, there was concern about the new development’s impact on existing health infrastructure. This is exemplified in GP drop-in surgeries which are already stretched, although the local GP surgery is accepting new patients. There was also some concern expressed by attendees from their experience of other developments that there were significant delays to the construction of key infrastructure.

Transport



The Applicant sought feedback on relocating one of the pairs of bus stops further north to ensure it would serve more of the Arborfield Cross population; presently, the existing bus stops are located near sheltered accommodation and patronised by their residents- so further consideration should be given to their moving. There is abuse of Observer Way by 'boy racers' travelling at excessive speeds. There is some thinking that the introduction of traffic calming measures coming in to the village from the north will shape some of this discussion. There is no existing bus service to Wokingham from Arborfield Cross even though such a connection would be deemed more useful than a bus service to Reading, which is the current bus offer.

School

Comments relating to Coombes CE Primary School fall mainly into two categories: concerns raised about the quality of standards at the school; traffic congestion and parking problems caused at drop off and pick up times.

Environment

As well as general support for green and low-density homes, attendees raised the energy efficiency of homes. Unsurprisingly given the cost-of-living crisis, there were quite a few comments relating to energy provision including solar panels and air source heat pumps. Given the presence of hedgehogs locally, the provision of gaps in fences, known informally as 'Hedgehog Highways' was raised. There were also comments alluding to allotments in the local area being under subscribed.

4.5. - Additional Feedback

Public exhibition feedback form: One visitor was concerned about traffic passing through the village en route to Wokingham; they suggested that reopening School Road would allow traffic to bypass the village.

Another consultee requested better bus services. Currently the poorer nature of the bus service after 8PM on a Saturday forces users to travel via Reading to get to the village.

Online feedback:

Comments expressed an interest in facilities for older children and young adults- for example a skate park.

There was an expression of interest in the purchase of a home in the new development, soliciting information from the developer.

4.6. - Summary

The in-person exhibition, public exhibition feedback forms, in-person conversations at the exhibition and the online feedback fed a rich picture of overwhelmingly positive comments.

At all stages of the consultation, it was made clear that respondents could contact the CCP directly with questions and comments.

We lay out in 4.1 to 4.5 above the many means in which engaged members of the public were questioned to ascertain their feeling about features of the development and to provide clarity regarding the local issues.

We illustrate in the Appendices 5.1 to 5.5 below the format of much of this engagement.



Members of the public expressed support for prospective contributions to the local environment and public services. They showed particular interest in access to healthcare and bus transport. There was also some interest in amenities (community centre, orchard allotments). There is desire in the community for first time buyer homes, small, affordable homes, especially bungalows, although family sized homes are also popular.



5. Appendices

5.1. - Website

School Road – Arborfield Cross

[Home](#) [Nature Friendly Neighbourhood](#) [Sustainability](#) [Infrastructure](#) [About The New Homes](#) [Have Your Say](#)



Welcome to our website where we would like to tell you more about our plans for a new neighbourhood north of School Road.



Who are Croudace?

Croudace Homes is a well-established regional residential developer founded in 1946, and to this day remains a family-owned business.

We are committed to building high-quality homes backed up with a first-class customer service. Our strength lies in the care and attention given to the internal and external design. We aim to produce new homes to suit all budgets and set ourselves high standards for the design and build quality of our developments, whilst also ensuring they fit well in their local environment.

The social and environmental effects of the developments we design and build are always considered and we take our responsibility towards the immediate and wider community seriously. Incorporating play areas and sports facilities, protecting local wildlife and hosting community events and raising money for charity are all part of a commitment to make Croudace developments desirable and socially pleasant places to live.

Below are some examples where we have successfully integrated our homes into local communities, reflecting the character and design of the area.



Willowbrook Park, Didcot



Please watch our short presentation film below to learn more about our plans for the new neighbourhood at Arborfield Cross.





School Road – Arborfield Cross

[Home](#)
[Nature Friendly Neighbourhood](#)
[Sustainability](#)
[Infrastructure](#)
[About The New Homes](#)
[Have Your Say](#)


Nature Friendly Neighbourhood

First and foremost, when new neighbourhoods are established, they need to be in harmony with nature. The land is currently being farmed and modern farming practices aren't able to leave much habitat for plant and animal diversity. Our plans will also include improvements to the biodiversity of the area and we will deliver biodiversity net gain across the site. This will be achieved by planting lots of new native hedges, trees, wild areas and creating new diverse habitats such as wetland spaces, whilst retaining and enhancing where possible the existing vegetation on-site.

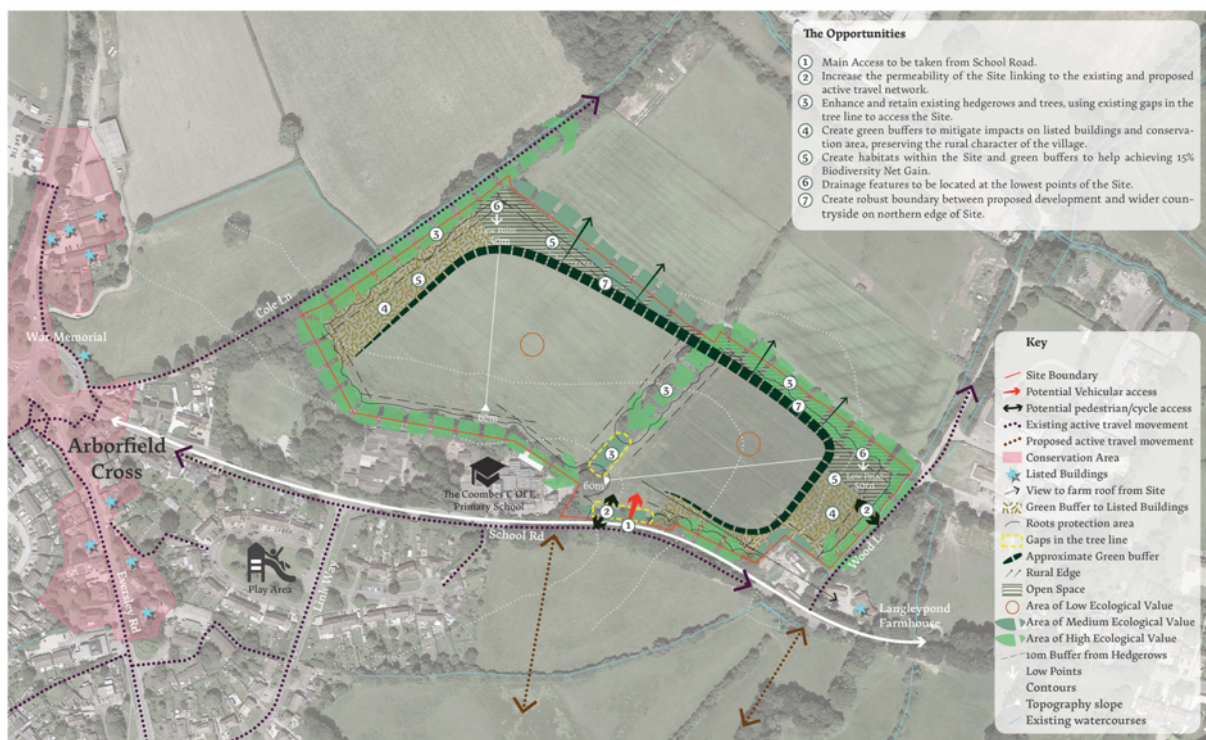
We are also going to create new public open spaces for the existing and future residents where you will be able to walk and relax in nature.

Our designs will facilitate access to green space and landscaping that promotes health and wellbeing, with new formal open green spaces to the western and northern boundaries of the site. The mature trees to the north of the site will also be retained.

All of the new houses and flats will have either private gardens or access to communal areas in the case of any flats and we will be planting a large number of trees, shrubs, hedges etc. and create new and diverse habitats for plants and animals.

We welcome your thoughts on the species of indigenous wildlife and plants that we should have on the site, please visit our dedicated "green infrastructure" page to learn more and share your views with us.

Plan for nature friendly initiatives





Trees
Plants

INDICATIVE TREE PLANTING PALETTE (Click on tree name to view image)

FEATURE TREES • CARPINUS BETULUS (HORNBEAM) • FAGUS SYLVATICA (BEECH) • PRUNUS AVIUM (WILD CHERRY) • SORBUS AUCUPARIA (ROWAN) STREET TREES • CARPINUS BETULUS 'FRANS FONTAINE' (FASTIGIATE HORNBEAM) • ACER CAMPESTRE 'STREETWISE' • MALUS TRILOBATA (FASTIGIATE APPLE) • PRUNUS 'SUNSET BOULEVARD' (FASTIGIATE CHERRY) NATURAL TREES • ALNUS GLUTINOSA (ALDER) • SALIX ALBA (WHITE WILLOW) • BETULA PENDULA (SILVER BIRCH) • CORYLUS AVELLANA (HAZEL)	HEDGEROW TREES • PRUNUS AVIUM (WILD CHERRY) • PRUNUS PADUS (BIRD CHERRY) • MALUS SYLVESTRIS (CRAB APPLE) • CRATAEGUS MONOGYNA (HAWTHORN) HEDGEROWS (MIXED NATIVE SPECIES FOR TREEBELT UNDERSTORE / EDGE PLANTING) • CORNUS SANGUINEA (DOGWOOD) • ILEX AQUIFOLIUM (HOLLY) • EUONYMUS EUROPAEUS (SPINDLE) • VIBURNUM OPULUS (GUELDER ROSE) • PRUNUS SPINOSA (BLACKTHORN) • LIGUSTRUM VULGARE (WILD PRIVET) HEDGEROWS (FOR GARDEN BOUNDARIES) • CARPINUS BETULUS (HORNBEAM) • FAGUS SYLVATICA (BEECH)
---	---

. indicates required fields

We would like to hear from you what trees and plants you think would be best planted to improve biodiversity, please let us know below. *

Submit



School Road – Arborfield Cross

[Home](#) |
 [Nature Friendly Neighbourhood](#) |
 [Sustainability](#) |
 [Infrastructure](#) |
 [About The New Homes](#) |
 [Have Your Say](#)

Sustainability

What is sustainable development?

"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Delivering sustainable development at School Road in Arborfield Cross is very important to us at Croudace. Sustainability in development is about ensure that what we build is adaptable and long-lasting into the future, ready for changes that could come and being aware of the environmental, social and economic objectives of delivering housing.

Living within our environmental limits is one of the central principles of sustainable development. One implication of not doing so is climate change. The homes that Croudace build are to the Future Homes Standards requirements, and we were ahead of the curve in building energy efficient homes. The homes we are proposing here in Arborfield Cross will be highly energy efficient with cost effective measures to keep energy bills low.

If sustainable development focuses on the future, does that mean we lose out now?

Not necessarily. Sustainable development is about finding better ways of doing things, both for the future and the present. We might need to change the way we work and live now, but this doesn't mean our quality of life will be reduced.

A sustainable development approach can bring many benefits in the short to medium term, for example:

- Health & Transport – Instead of driving, switching to walking or cycling for short journeys will save you money, improve your health and is often just as quick and convenient.
- Making the most of our resources by harvesting rainwater and grey water
- Ensuring that all new homes are built to the latest energy saving standards with excellent isolation to conserve energy
- Increasing biodiversity by a minimum of 10%
- Building homes that is adaptable for the whole of your life and providing homes of different sizes that are appropriate for the people who live in them.

At this new neighbourhood at Arborfield Cross it is very important to us that it is as sustainable as possible with electric vehicle charging points as standard at every home, rainwater harvesting, grey water harvesting, triple glazing and insulation to make the homes as energy efficient as possible. All the homes will have dedicated parking spaces and cycle storage.

Sustainable transport and active travel

To improve bus accessibility, Croudace will explore the possibility of relocating the existing northbound 'The Swan' bus stop further north towards the Arborfield Cross roundabout.

Currently, the footpath south of School Road ends rather abruptly. It is an aspiration of Wokingham Borough Council to change this. As a result, we believe there may be an opportunity for us to extend this footpath through the site, thereby connecting it with the existing public rights of way (PROWs). This will ensure continuous and safe pedestrian access, integrating our development seamlessly with the surrounding area.

School Road – Arborfield Cross

[Home](#)
[Nature Friendly Neighbourhood](#)
[Sustainability](#)
[Infrastructure](#)
[About The New Homes](#)
[Have Your Say](#)

Infrastructure

A new neighbourhood will bring in more residents who will spend money locally helping local shops and pubs to flourish. But they will also use community facilities. We want to hear from you about provisions in the local area which may need improvements, such as GP and dental services. Please visit the 'Have Your Say' section on our website to share your suggestions for infrastructure improvements.

Here is an indication of our plans.



Active Travel and Transport

Croudace is committed to delivering a sustainable development that promotes healthy living through active travel. To achieve this, we will provide new pedestrian connections that link into existing cycle and pedestrian routes into Arborfield Cross.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The developers will pay the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which will be spent on community facilities, new roads, parks, and play areas. Town and Parish Councils will receive a meaningful proportion of the money raised – up to 25% in this instance.

- Multi-use games area
- Community orchard
- Allotments
- Community hall

Which of these options is your favourite? We would love to hear your thoughts!

Support for Local Services and Amenities

The provision of additional dwellings within the village will increase the customer base and viability of existing services and amenities in the area.



School Road – Arborfield Cross

[Home](#)
[Nature Friendly Neighbourhood](#)
[Sustainability](#)
[Infrastructure](#)
[About The New Homes](#)
[Have Your Say](#)

About the new homes

What kind of homes will we deliver?

We are looking to deliver new homes here in Arborfield Cross with 40% of them affordable. As our proposals are still at an early stage of development, we want to hear from you on what kind of homes should be the priority.



Across the development we want to deliver a wide variety of homes that will suit the needs of the diverse community in Arborfield Cross and the local community. These will include:

- **Starter homes for first time buyers** – helping those get on the foot on the property ladder
- **Homes for Key Workers** – homes set aside for first refusal for people working in key sectors, like nurses, teachers, and paramedics.
- **Smaller homes** – homes available and suitable for those looking to downsize while continuing to live in the same area
- **Family sized homes** – homes that are built with families in mind, with the space for families to grow and flourish.

* indicates required fields

What kind of homes do you think are appropriate for the local area? *

- ☐ Starter homes for first time buyers
☐ Homes for Key Workers
☐ Smaller homes
☐ Family sized homes

Submit

Who will live in the new homes?

We have a simple vision to create a vibrant new integrated neighbourhood community, offering a sensitive response to its location in Arborfield Cross and the surrounding area.

Arborfield Cross is a lovely village and anything we add needs to fit in with the wider area and make it an even better place to live. It is very important to Croudace that this new neighbourhood adds to the already beautiful village and contributes to the range of facilities available for existing and future local residents. We want to provide an attractive new neighbourhood, offering a sensitive response to its location in Arborfield Cross and the surrounding area.

To achieve this vision, the new neighbourhood will offer a blend of attractive architecture, well managed landscape with biodiversity enhancements, educational provision, and new foot and cycle connections to Arborfield Cross. Architecturally, the homes will be influenced by the existing historic architecture.

Croudace takes great pride in building homes of the highest quality design, materials and finish.

* indicates required fields

Are you or someone you know interested in one of the new homes? *

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Submit



School Road – Arborfield Cross

[Home](#)
[Nature Friendly Neighbourhood](#)
[Sustainability](#)
[Infrastructure](#)
[About The New Homes](#)
[Have Your Say](#)

Have Your Say

What will it look like?

Arborfield Cross is a lovely village and anything we add needs to fit in with Arborfield Cross and make it an even better place to live. It is very important to Croudace that this new neighbourhood adds to the already beautiful village and contributes to the range of facilities available for existing and future local residents. We want to provide an attractive addition to the village, offering a sensitive response to its location in Arborfield Cross and the surrounding area.

* indicates required fields

Name *

First

Last

Email *

Phone

Address *

Post Code *

How important is it to you that new developments in Arborfield Cross contribute to increasing biodiversity and green spaces, such as the proposed 15% biodiversity net gain and retention of hedgerows and trees along the southern boundary? *

- ☐ Important
☐ Neutral
☐ Not important

Do you believe the provision of affordable housing for key workers within the development would positively impact the diversity and inclusivity of Arborfield Cross? *

- ☐ Yes
☐ Unsure
☐ No

How beneficial do you think the Community Infrastructure Levy contributions would be for enhancing local facilities and amenities, including potential funding for new roads, parks, and community spaces? *

- ☐ Important
☐ Neutral
☐ Not important

There will be smaller homes for those in the local community who are looking to downsize. Do you agree that this is needed for Arborfield Cross? *

- ☐ Yes
☐ Unsure
☐ No

Would you or someone you know be interested in one of the new homes in Arborfield Cross? *

- ☐ Yes
☐ Unsure
☐ No

How beneficial do you think it would be to incorporate community facilities, such as a rural co-working space or areas for local events, into the development? *

- ☐ Important
☐ Neutral
☐ Not important



Additional Comments

Submit

Thank you for taking the time to visit our website and watching our Virtual Exhibition.

If you want to share your views with us on specific issues, please visit each of the pages of the website and give your specific feedback on the different aspects of the new neighbourhood.

Croudace is committed to listening and working with the people of Arborfield Cross to create a new neighbourhood that will add to your local community and provide infrastructure that you want and need alongside homes for the local community.

If you have any further questions or comments please contact Phélim Mac Cafferty on 020 4538 7200 or e-mail phelim@schoolrd-arborfieldcross.co.uk.



5.2. - Social Media Adverts

AFFORDABLE HOMES IN ARBORFIELD CROSS

- 🌿 **Enhanced Wildlife Areas**
- 🚶 **Improved Transportation
& Accessibility**
- 🏠 **Find Your Perfect Home
Today!**



schoolrd-arborfieldcross.co.uk





Exciting News for **Arborfield Cross!**

*Are you looking for a home in the lovely
town of Arborfield Cross? Visit our
website for more information:
schoolrd-arborfieldcross.co.uk*



 *Enhanced Wildlife Areas*

 *Improved Transportation &
Accessibility*

 *Find Your Perfect Home Today!*





5.3. - Public Exhibition Flier

Croudace Homes

LAND NORTH OF SCHOOL ROAD DROP-IN

Croudace Homes would like to invite you to attend a public exhibition to learn more about their plans for the land north of School Road in Arborfield Cross.

A **public exhibition** will be held on **Tuesday, 9th July 2024 at the Royal British Legion Club between 3:30pm and 8pm.**

Let us know if you plan to attend, either by email or by phone.

Meet the Developers and Discuss the Plans

Engage directly with our developers to discuss the upcoming development.

Address Your Concerns

Raise any concerns you have about the project - we're here to listen.



FIND OUT MORE HERE:



3:30 PM - 8 PM

TUESDAY

9

JULY

**THE ROYAL
BRITISH
LEGION CLUB**

EVERSLEY RD,
ARBORFIELD, READING
RG2 9PR



Croudace Homes

A NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD



Croudace Homes are pleased to present their draft proposals for the land north of School Road in Arborfield Cross.

These plans aim to deliver environmental benefits, enhanced green spaces, improved transportation, and affordable housing.

Contact Us:

020 4538 7200
 phelim@schoolrd-arborfieldcross.co.uk
 schoolrd-arborfieldcross.co.uk

3:30 PM - 8 PM
 TUESDAY

9
 JULY

**THE ROYAL
 BRITISH
 LEGION CLUB**

EVERSLEY RD,
 ARBORFIELD, READING
 RG2 9PR



5.4. - Public Exhibition Boards

Welcome from Croudace Homes

The Croudace team welcomes you to this public exhibition, where we seek your views on our draft proposals for the delivery of new quality homes on land in Arborfield Cross.

Croudace Homes takes immense pride in creating homes of the highest quality for all our customers. We take great care in the design of each property, as well as the layout of our developments. From entry-level starter homes to opulent family estates, we cater to all with a diverse range of offerings.

Croudace is a well-established regional residential developer, proudly operating as a family-owned business since our inception in 1946.

We are known for the attention given to internal and external design, as well as the high specification of fixtures and fittings. We are very proud of our previous projects and look forward to collaborating with the Arborfield Cross community on this upcoming project.



Our Vision for Arborfield Cross

Approximately 95 homes are proposed on the Site, including a significant number of affordable dwellings. This includes a mix of 2, 3, and 4 bedroom with appropriately sized gardens.

A policy compliant scheme will be provided, seeking to include public benefits and overall environmental enhancements. Additionally, the Neighbourhood Plan has been considered to understand local aspirations for future development.





Environmental Benefits

Croudace is committed to improving biodiversity and will provide a Biodiversity Net Gain of 15% above the current baseline position. Landscaping designs include indigenous planting and habitat creation to support local wildlife and enhance the natural environment. Trees and hedges along the boundaries will be retained where possible, as well as planting new trees and hedges and creating new habitats for nature.



Common box



Geranium Rozanne



The Brooks, Burghfield Common, by Croudace.



Honore Jobert



Allium sphaerocephalon



Alder tree

Next Steps

We value your input as we refine our plans for the School Road development. Your feedback on housing types, green spaces, and community facilities will help shape the final proposal.

The next step is to submit a planning application once we have considered your feedback. This will be later in the Summer.



SCAN
ME
FOR MORE
INFORMATION

You can also see this information and give us feedback at: schoolrd-arborfieldcross.co.uk

Please leave your feedback by completing one of the forms or on one of our iPads.

Thank you for attending, and we hope you have found this event helpful and informative. We welcome all feedback.



The Site



The Site is approximately 20 acres in size and located north of School Road, Arborfield Cross and currently comprises two open fields. Importantly, the project will not detract from the significance of local listed buildings, preserving their historical integrity.

Additionally the design of the Site will enhance connectivity. This will be achieved by integrating walking and cycling routes, promoting sustainable and active transportation options for residents and visitors.

croudacehomes

Marrons

THE COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS PARTNERSHIP



5.5. - Public Exhibition Feedback Form

SCHOOL ROAD – ARBORFIELD CROSS

It is very important to Croudace that this new neighbourhood contributes to the range of facilities available for existing and future residents. We want to provide an attractive entry to the town, offering a sensitive response to its location in Arborfield Cross and the surrounding area.

Personal information

Name

Address

Email

Phone

Question 1. How important is it to you that new developments in Arborfield Cross contribute to green spaces, such as the proposed 15% biodiversity net gain and retention of hedgerows and trees along the southern boundary?

Question 2. Do you believe the provision of affordable housing for key workers within the development would positively impact the diversity and inclusivity of Arborfield Cross?



Question 3. How beneficial do you think the Community Infrastructure Levy contributions would be for enhancing local facilities and amenities, including potential funding for new roads, parks, and community spaces?

Question 4. There will be smaller homes for those in the local community who are looking to downsize. Do you agree that this is needed for Arborfield Cross?

Question 5. Would you or someone you know be interested in one of the new homes in Arborfield Cross?

Question 6. How beneficial do you think it would be to incorporate community facilities, such as a rural co-working space or areas for local events, into the development?

5.6. – Wokingham Today coverage

Home > Area > Arborfield

Residents learn about Arborfield homes plan

by **Andrew Batt** — July 28, 2024 in Arborfield, Featured, News, Property



The developer held a drop-in sessions for residents. Pic: Andrew Batt.



More than 50 residents attended a recent drop-in to view proposals for a housing development in Arborfield.

The event earlier this month at Arborfield Royal British Legion saw developer Croudace reveal its initial proposals for land north of School Road, adjacent to the Coombes CofE primary school.

The developer has said it will look to obtain outline planning permission for approximately 95 two-, three- and four-bedroom homes on the site later this year.



It said the mix will include a “significant number” of affordable housing.

The developer also revealed that more than 2,500 people have looked at its proposals online.

A spokesperson for the developer told *Wokingham Today*: “Croudace hails the importance of their discussion with the community.

Related posts

re3 releases summer waste advice to minimise environmental impact

Full support for school uniform motion

“The public conversation continues, where residents can continue to submit their feedback.

“Croudace is keen to hear on topics as varied as the types of new homes people believe are most appropriate; the importance of increasing



Alison Walker from Croudace added: "Thank you to every resident who has submitted their comments.

"We are really pleased with our discussion with the public about the proposals in Arborfield Cross.

"Croudace strongly believes in quality homes that will boost the area and provide much needed new homes for first time buyers, families and those looking to downsize.

"An integral part of a future planning application will be the discussion with the local

community.

"And we look forward to an ongoing and positive discussion with the community to enhance and shape the development."

Henry Lamprecht from consultation organisation CCP, added: "An essential part of the work that the Community Communications Partnership is listening carefully to the voices that will shape development and in Arborfield Cross,



Henry Lamprecht from consultation organisation CCP, added: “An essential part of the work that the Community Communications Partnership is listening carefully to the voices that will shape development and in Arborfield Cross,

“We have hosted an online forum, held the in-person discussions, and we have leafleted 600 homes.

“We have also begun discussions with local community organisations to stress the benefits they can achieve from this new development.”

Prior to the drop-in event, local councillor Rebecca Margetts issued a warning to residents to be wary about providing comments to the developer, suggesting the time to make any comments known is when formal plans have been submitted to Wokingham Borough Council.

Attendees that spoke to *Wokingham Today* were understanding of the need for new homes, but were critical that this plot is the best solution for them.

The ability of the current infrastructure in the village to cope with a large number of new homes was the main concern.

The developer is still seeking comments on its proposals at <https://schoolrd-arborfieldcross.co.uk>.