

A Report for
North Hertfordshire District Council

In respect of
**Pedestrian Access, Proposed Residential Development
Claybush Road, Ashwell,
HERTFORDSHIRE**

Road Safety Audit

November 2017



DOCUMENT SIGNATURE AND REVIEW SHEET**Project Details**

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Transport Planning Associates (TPA) have been commissioned by North Hertfordshire District Council to carry out a Road Safety Audit of an existing un-adopted Public Right of Way (PRoW) along the south western fork of Ashwell Street, Ashwell and a proposed Pedestrian Link from the residential development site currently agricultural land situated to the south of Ashwell Street and to the west of Claybush Road.
- 1.2 This section of Ashwell Street PRoW, Figure 1, currently provides access for seven residential properties and agricultural land proposed as the residential development site. Ashwell Street PRoW is essentially used to facilitate residents along this section. It is a narrow lane measuring 2.6 metres in width without footway provision and has been used as shared space between pedestrians and vehicles along its length for many years.



Figure 1 – Location Plan – Ashwell Street

- 1.3 The residential development site location as shown in Figure 2, is currently accessed from Ashwell Street and Claybush Road. The preferred pedestrian access route from the residential development site is via Ashwell Street. Claybush Road does not currently have footway provision along its length for safe pedestrian access nor is there such a proposal. It is essentially a Country Lane measuring approximately 5metres in width and has speed limits of 30mph northbound and 60mph National Speed Limit southbound, as shown in Figure's 3 & 4.

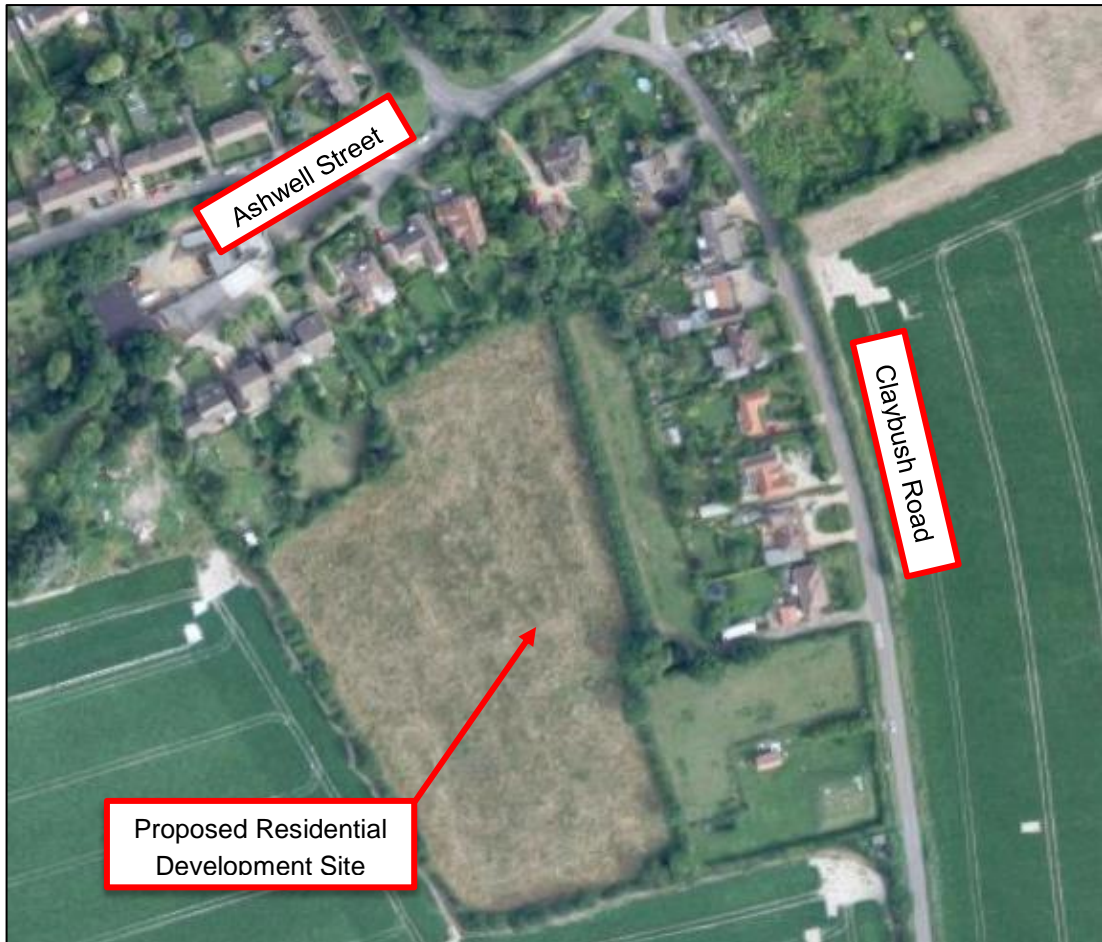


Figure 2 – Residential Development Site Location



Figure 3 – Claybush Road 30mph Northbound



Figure 4 – Claybush Road 60mph National Speed Limit Southbound

2 ROAD SAFETY AUDIT

- 2.1 The Road Safety Audit took place on Friday 3rd November 2017 at TPA's London office. The site visit took place on Thursday 2nd November 2017 during daylight hours between 10am and 12pm. The weather during the site visit was cloudy and dry and the road surface was dry. There were few pedestrian and/or vehicle movements during the course of the site visit.
- 2.2 The audit was carried out by the following Road Safety Audit team:
- Trevor Preston – RSA Team Leader
MCIHT, HE RSA Cert Comp
Associate
Transport Planning Associates
 - Senthil Sivanathan – RSA Team Member
Transport Planner,
Transport Planning Associates
- 2.3 The terms of Reference are as described in the Highway England Design Manual for Roads and Bridges document TD 19/15, 'Road Safety Audit'. The Road Safety Audit Team has examined and reported only on the road safety implications of the existing situation along Ashwell Street which is to remain in its current state without any further proposed improvements and the proposed Pedestrian Link between the residential development site and Ashwell Street.

2.4 The Road Safety Audit comprised an examination of documents provided and these are listed in **Appendix A**. The information provided and discussions with the Client North Hertfordshire District Council was considered sufficient as the Audit Brief for the purposes of undertaking the Road Safety Audit request. The Audit Brief comprised the following documents:-

- Proposed Site Layout drawing - 1130.P1.400 Q
- Pedestrian Access drawing – 072/067

3 DISCUSSION

3.1 Ashwell Street is an un-adopted section of carriageway and has been used as a Public Right of Way (PRoW) for many years. It is used as pedestrian and vehicular access by residents and owners of adjoining properties and land. The width of this PRoW is 2.6m wide and has a concrete and bituminous surface in sections along its length. The PRoW is not an adopted Highway and does not conform to any Highway Standards and/or safety regulations. The ownership of this PRoW is unknown and it is accepted therefore that it operates outside of any Highway Traffic Act's, Regulations and/or Standards. There is currently no priority hierarchy given to pedestrians or vehicles except it is known that pedestrians tend to use private driveways to avoid vehicles on Ashwell Street PRoW, which is an accepted practice by all residence.

3.2 Croudace Homes are proposing to build 33 residential properties on their development site with a Pedestrian Link joining the site and Ashwell Street PRoW. The proposed Pedestrian Link comprises a 2m wide footpath adjoining the proposed estate road and demand is expected to increase via Ashwell Street PRoW to the village centre and local schools as a safer alternative to Claybush Road a busy road which does not have footways.

3.3 There is insufficient room for pedestrians and vehicles to pass safely along the length of Ashwell Street PRoW. Where currently it is accepted that pedestrians use local resident's driveways to take refuge to avoid vehicles, this practice is not expected to be allowed to continue with the increased number of pedestrians expected to use the link from the development site.



Figure 5 – Ashwell Street Width

3.4 Visibility along Ashwell Street (PRoW) between the entrance and the proposed Pedestrian Link is unobstructed as can be seen in Figure 5. Pedestrians and drivers using Ashwell Street have clear visibility in each direction.



Figure 6 – Visibility along Ashwell Street PRoW

- 3.5 Ashwell Street PRoW s essentially an area of shared space for vehicles and pedestrians. The level of visibility allows drivers to give way to pedestrians and other vehicles from both directions during the hours of daylight. However there is no street lighting along this section of Ashwell Street PRoW and during the hours of darkness visibility of pedestrians would be reduced and potentially only picked up by vehicle headlights.
- 3.6 Collision Data is generally available for adopted highways where accidents are recorded and used to mitigate areas of highway safety improvements. Because this section of Ashwell Street PRoW is un-adopted there are no records to indicate whether any collisions over this section have ever taken place.
- 3.7 The existing carriageway surface is ragged with pot holes and unevenness along its length. This may cause drivers and pedestrians to change direction to avoid surface discrepancies and in so doing potentially increase the risk of collision with other users of Ashwell Street PRoW.
- 3.8 There is no traffic data available to determine the peak movements of pedestrians and/or vehicles along Ashwell Street PRoW. Nor is there any data available to determine forecast pedestrian movement from the development site, whether the increased pedestrian demand is during the same peak periods as other movements along Ashwell Street or whether the increased demand is at different time's altogether, such as school times compared with working day times. If indeed the times of increased demand are different to the normal peak periods along Ashwell Street then there would be no additional impact on current movements.
- 3.9 The proposed Pedestrian Link between the residential development site and Ashwell Street PRoW comprises a 2m footpath which ends adjacent to No.51 Ashwell Street and which has a Chicane Barrier at either end to prevent vehicular access. Beyond the Chicane Barrier at the Ashwell Street end where the footpath ends the remaining section becomes shares space and vehicular access for No.51, as shown in Figure 7.



Figure 7 – Vehicular Access No. 51 Ashwell Street PRow

4 ITEMS RAISED IN THIS ROAD SAFETY AUDIT

PROBLEM 1

Location: Ashwell Street PRow

SUMMARY: The existing carriageway surface is ragged with pot holes and unevenness along its length. This may cause drivers and pedestrians to change direction to avoid surface discrepancies and in so doing potentially increase the risk of collision with other users of Ashwell Street PRow.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the existing carriageway surface along the length of Ashwell Street is resurfaced and maintained as a smooth even surface to reduce the potential risk of pedestrian trips and collisions with vehicles weaving to avoid uneven surfacing and pot holes.

PROBLEM 2

Location: Ashwell Street PRoW

SUMMARY: There is no street lighting along Ashwell Street PRoW and during the hours of darkness visibility of pedestrians would be reduced and potentially only picked up by vehicle headlights increasing the risk of collisions.

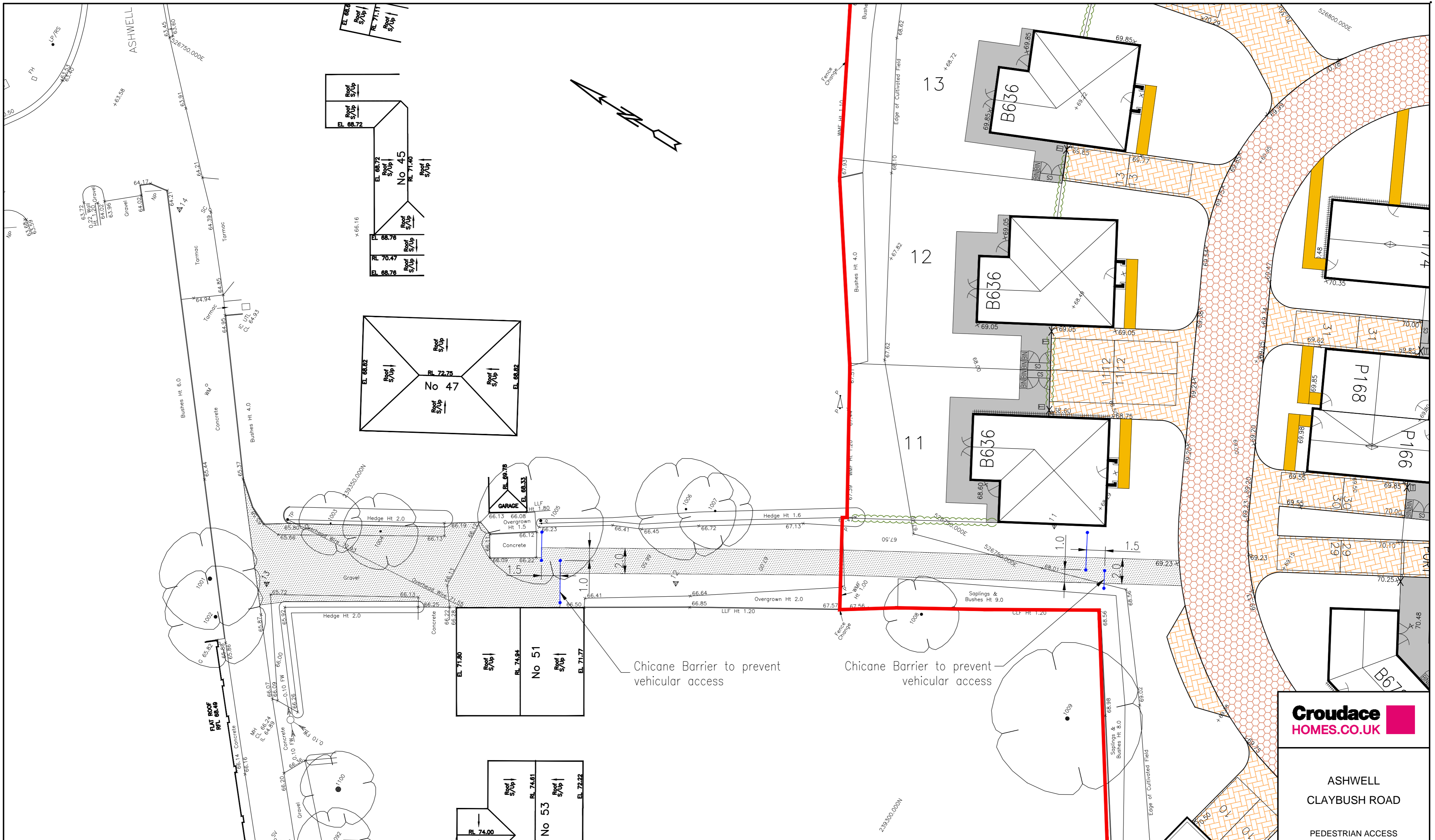
Recommendation: It is recommended that Ashwell Street PRoW is lit through the hours of darkness.

5 SUMMARY

- 5.1 This road safety audit is not based on a set of proposals as would normally be expected under Highway England document TD19/15. Instead an evaluation over the safety of an existing un-adopted public right of way section of Ashwell Street and a proposed Pedestrian Link has been carried out to determine the possible safety implications of the proposed increased pedestrian demand from the Croudace Homes residential development site.
- 5.2 The Ashwell Street PRoW is not an adopted Highway and does not conform to any Highway Standards and/or safety regulations. The ownership of this PRoW is unknown and it is accepted therefore that it operates outside of any Highway Traffic Act's, Regulations and/or Standards.
- 5.3 There is currently no priority hierarchy given to pedestrians or vehicles except that currently pedestrians tend to use private driveways when they can, to avoid vehicles on Ashwell Street PRoW. We understand that this encroachment onto private drives is an accepted practice by all residents
- 5.4 There is no pedestrian and/or vehicle traffic flow data available for Ashwell Street PRoW or what the increased pedestrian demand is likely to be from the residential development site. Nor are there any peak period times available of resident's day working times and what the proposed pedestrian demand peak times from the residential development site are likely to be. Whether they are the same times as the residence working day times or different times to accord with school opening and closing times. Also, there is no collision data to determine whether there are any past or present safety issues along Ashwell Street PRoW.

- 5.5 In conclusion, it can be seen that the current interaction of pedestrians and vehicles along this stretch of Ashwell Street PRow has occurred for several years. It cannot be determined at this stage as to whether any increased pedestrian demand along this section of Ashwell Street PRow is likely to increase risk of collisions as it has not been determined whether the increased demand is in addition to existing pedestrian traffic flows at the same times or whether the increased pedestrian demand is at a deferent time with less or more vehicular traffic and it may well be less or the same as the current situation albeit at a different time of day.
- 5.6 In terms of pedestrian and vehicle movements along Ashwell Street PRow. Pedestrians currently use private drives to avoid vehicles and vehicles 'give-way' to pedestrians to allow them to traverse the short section of Ashwell Street PRow before proceeding. The current practice of allowing pedestrians to use private drives to avoid vehicles along Ashwell Street PRow may well cease with the increase demand from the residential development site, but it is likely that there may be more of a tendency for drivers to give-way more to pedestrians under this new regime and although the width along Ashwell Street PRow is very narrow at 2.6m, it is possible for a pedestrian and vehicle to pass.

APPENDIX A



- KEY**
- Brett Omega Flow Paving—Colour Brindle (Permeable Construction)
 - Brett Omega Paving—Colour Autumn Gold (Impermeable Construction)
 - Concrete Slabs – Colour Buff
 - Concrete Slabs – Colour Natural
 - Tarmac

NOTES

- All units shown are in meters.

Croudace HOMES.CO.UK

**ASHWELL
CLAYBUSH ROAD**

PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

SCALE: 1/500 (A2)

DATE: JULY 2017

DRAWN: ACG

CHECKED:

DRG.No.: 072/067

CLAYBUSH ROAD, ASHWELL
PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT



-  EXISTING TREES / PLANTS TO BE RETAINED
-  PROPOSED NEW TREES / PLANTS
-  EXISTING TREES / PLANTS TO BE REMOVED

Q	17-08-2017	Hedge re-instated.	YT
P	08-08-2017	Plots 14, 15 & 16 omitted. Plot numbers amended.	KP
M	07-06-2017	Road access to No.14 amended.	SF
L	10-05-2017	Access geometry rearranged to suit engineering layout.	SF
K	18-04-2017	Hatched Public Open Space	YT
J	03-03-2017	Plots 2-8 building position adjusted to increase the rear garden. Plot 24 car park position amended to give a close access to the front door. Drawing legend added showing the status of trees and plants.	YC
H	24-01-2017	Plots 27, house type B635 entrance porch amended	YC
G	11-01-2017	Plots 11-27 house type rearranged.	YC
F	14-07-2016	Plots 30-31 changed to P166's.	SF
E	12-07-2016	Garages for plots 28&29 changed	SF
D	20-06-2016	Site roads changed to 'shared surface' type. Footpaths removed.	SF
C	13-06-2016	Layout updated following pre-app comments received.	SF
B	18-02-2016	Plots moved to accommodate pedestrian footpath link.	SF
A	05-02-2016	Minor layout amendments to accord with client comments received 5-2-2016	SF

Project:
**CLAYBUSH RD
ASHWELL**
Client:
CROUDACE HOMES
Drawing:
PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT

Drawing no: 1130.P1.400 Rev: Q
Scale@A1: 1/500 Date: JAN 2016 Drawn: SGF Checked: SGF



Disclaimer: All dimensions and measurements to be checked on site.
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Do not scale from this drawing.

PLANNING