

# HALE VILLAGE CLT

**Definition:** the Hale Village Community Land Trust (CLT) is a not-for-profit voluntary organisation that aspires to build and manage affordable houses to rent. HVCLT propose a village-led response to rural economic and social disadvantage.

A pertinent second definition with which to begin is affordable housing. For this project the term describes homes let at a price substantially less than prevailing local market rates. HVCLT's intention is for rents to be a manageable fraction of total household income. Homes built by a CLT are not subject to the right to buy and will remain available indefinitely for people with a connection to the local community, economy and landscape.

This pre-planning application describes Hale Village CLT's plans for two affordable homes at Folly Hill, on the west side of Hale Purlieu road, SP6 2NN. Our brief, set by HVCLT, is pasted below:

'Design two semi-detached dwellings, one with three bedrooms, and the other with two. The properties are to be similar in appearance, materials and building type and style to the affordable dwellings built by the New Forest National Park Authority at Bransgore which the CLT members chose as their preferred project precedent from a large selection of photographs. The Directors feel that so far as possible a high ridge line should be avoided and existing trees retained. Car parking space should be included for at least four cars on site and both dwellings should have a utility area for keeping of muddy boots and dogs. The heating preferences are for an air source heat pump for each dwelling. Landscaping should be simple with a shared car park and gardens to be maintained by the tenants.'

Development of the design has been influenced by several factors: the nature of Community Land Trusts, the character of the landscape, and our previous experience.

The ethos of a CLT is outlined in its name. First, 'community' suggests people coming together and working for the social good of the village.

Second, 'land' implies access to an available and affordable site to allow for subsidised buildings. Third, 'trust' defines how projects are developed not to make a profit but to create an asset that can be held for generations. The backdrop to this proposal is the inflated residential market in the New Forest. A CLT is a good way of constructing affordable homes with a high degree of control – control over a more democratic design process, more considered construction and the criteria for occupancy. This sense of the project having roots, being by and for the village, is an exciting prospect with the capacity to engender better empowerment and resourcefulness locally.

There is a serenity to the landscape of the New Forest, a feeling that everything is much as it always was. Such a remarkable atmosphere of changelessness has been maintained by the continuity of old ways of life. It is a landscape which has developed through forestry and grazing and which benefits from stable communities that are connected to the 566 km<sup>2</sup> of pastures, heaths and woods that form the National Park. Many of smaller villages in and around the forest have a 'frontier' appearance. By this we mean that there is an unusually close overlap between the natural and the man made, and often settlements look like pockets of loosely defined woodland clearings, with few hard landscape edges.

Our design studio has experience in working with CLTs and positioning new buildings in ancient landscapes. Much of this work has been around Firle Village researching, mapping and writing an Estate Plan for Lord Gage which now serves as an environmental and architectural brief for collaboration with the South Downs National Park. In 2018 we gained planning permission for Angmering Community Land Trust to build twelve homes arranged around a mews and walled garden.

**Design:**  
**Rabble Place Ltd**  
**Ecology:**  
**Ethos Ltd**  
**Trees:**  
**Barrell Consultancy**

*The drawing below gives an impression of the new HVCLT homes from the existing gate. The Red Oak tree, porch and sheds [which flank the 2-bed garden path] are seen in the centre.*



## HCVLT Introduction

Work with Angmering started by organising neighbourhood plan design workshops with CPRE Sussex as a partner. Our resultant report won a community planning award and forged a friendship with the Parish Council which led to the start of the CLT project. We therefore have a good understanding of the priorities and procedures involved in community projects, and an appreciation for the character of landscapes and the particularities of vernacular land-uses and buildings.

The democratic nature of CLTs as organisations, the specialness of the New Forest landscape character and the sum of our rural design experiences are a valuable resource. If this project is to achieve the aim of building a community-led development then creativity, transparency, flexibility and modesty will need to define our attitudes and approaches. Looking ahead, four topics are particularly relevant to explore for this pre-application: location, design, proven local need and long-term affordability.

### Location

The paddock at Folly Hill is shown mapped on page four. Directly to the east is the Hale Purlieu road and the New Forest SSSI. To the north is the garden of Folly Hill and to the south is the garden of Archers Folly. These relatively large houses and their gardens form the southern end of a string of properties built along the ridge way road, which continue up to the junction with Tethering Drove. This stretch of ribbon development is therefore the southern limb of the village, which has grown over the last century out from Hatchet Green.

The land at Folly Hill is proposed for HVCLT's development as it is available, affordable, discrete, part of an existing pattern of development and walkable from the village school. The main effort of the project is to maintain a community with a range of age groups, to support family ties and provide an alternative to high property prices. Time is therefore of the essence to make a difference to contemporary village life and the availability of the site is a primary consideration.

Eleven sites in the parish have been investigated prior to HVCLT's support for Folly Hill. These are shown on page four with a list of reasons for sites failing to be appropriate or currently deliverable.\* In January 2019 a concept plan was developed, and shared publicly, for the two front runner sites which were deemed the most viable: Folly Hill (site 1) and land at Carters Close (site 6). This exercise was an important step in transparently and democratically appraising the next steps for HVCLT. The clear conclusion drawn from a public meeting and exhibition was that Carters Close is not a popular site for more development and was dependant on too many contingencies. Efforts have since been focused on Folly Hill, and District Council funding for pre-development work was supported by Hale Parish Council.

A crucial criteria for an affordable housing development is the cost of land. The lower the price of land the higher the subsidy that can be passed onto future tenants. The paddock at Folly Hill will be sold for £1 to HVCLT by two of its Directors if planning is achieved. The site is therefore considered the best available and the most affordable site. An assessment of whether it is an appropriate site requires review in relation to the layout and level of services in the village.

Hale Village has a particular character. Until 1920, the parish was part of the Hale Estate no pub or shop. After the Estate was sold as lots the village grew in various phases.

The transfer from single landlord to numerous private owners did not lead to more facilities. Today the village hall and primary school remain the key local public services. The nature of how the village grew has given it a scattered appearance. There is no discernible shape to the whole but three areas are apparent: the old village around Hatchet Green, the newer development around the fork in Hale Lane, and the wooded stretch of houses along Hale Purlieu road.

Hale is therefore not a physically dense village with an economic core. Instead the social and environmental focuses are suggested as events in the hall and school, the seasonal relationship with the Purlieu, the presence of animals grazing under Commoners rights and the proximity, quality and quantity of trees and shrub. It follows that the Folly Hill paddock site should not be disregarded as disadvantaged in its location, for the village is characteristically spread out.

The key connection to consider is between the school and the proposed houses. This distance is approximately 1050m which is an average 13 minute walk. The very nature of the project is to give local people the chance to remain in their community. Accordingly HVCLT suggest that future tenants will wish to live in a rural location, will wish to be close to the forest and be happy to walk between the constituent parts of the village.

### Design

The idea is to build a two and a three bed house which are semi-detached and appear like a terraced cottage, situated to gain maximum sunlight in a wooded clearing. The terrace has been designed to display a simple rural charm, with windows placed where needed, porches for shelter and boots, a plan that encourages use of every corner, good spaces for storage, and gardens with low and simple boundaries. Our approach has been to consider the qualities that make a rural village house different to a suburban house. We have then worked to arrange these aspects to create two homes with an appearance of striking simplicity, practical charm and a robust, easy to maintain, layout inside and out.

The south elevation of the proposed terrace is a reconfiguration of the New Forest National Park's affordable homes built at Bransgore. The main difference is that rather than a narrow frontage and deep plan the proposed homes for HVCLT have a long frontage and shallow plan. This orientation will maximise daylight and minimise the number of windows and the building mass seen from Hale Purlieu. Looking from the south, the terrace should appear irregular with an uneven arrangement of windows to blur the definition between each house and to soften the elevation. Looking from the north, the backs of the houses have a small number of windows and no doors. This is the darkest side of the building which is positioned directly on the site boundary. The intention is for the rear to appear like a garden wall when seen from Folly Hill and to limit the number of garden boundary treatments and areas for tenants to maintain.

On the inside, both houses are designed with a traditional two bay floor plan. One bay is a kitchen and the other a sitting room. Between the two is a storage area and staircase. The staircase leads up from the sitting room. In the three bed house a downstairs toilet and bootroom provide extra space. The challenge has been to reduce unnecessary doors and corridors and to add generous yet simple details: a window in the upstairs landing and glazed doors onto the garden, for example.\*\*

\* This map illustrates HVCLT's search for sites which has been supported by New Forest National Park Authority.

\*\* Our aim is that the proposed interiors are affordable to build yet have the capacity for lots of character.

The project's landscaping has been carefully considered. The existing gate and access from the road will be reused, leading to an area of gravel for parking 4 cars and 2 guests. Gardens for both houses are out the front, facing south, and are contained by simple timber post and rail fences. Two sheds provide storage for garden furniture, a barbecue or bikes and tools. These are positioned either side of the garden gate to the two-bedroom house. The fence line between the gardens aligns with the trunk of the prominent red oak. The garden fence of the three-bedroom house is pulled back from the edge of the site to create a path to the porch outside the garden and allow HVCLT to maintain all the west and southern hedgeline boundary. This landscape plan intends to have a minimal impact on the existing ground and to create a pattern and palette for the parking, fences, sheds and gardens with a Hale and New Forest character.

The rationale for placing sheds, fence, path and porch on axis with the existing red oak tree is to demonstrate how the proposed houses are purposefully rural in design and are planned to encourage a creatively sustainable lifestyle. To be in, and to work with the woodland, rather than adopt a suburban attitude is HVCLT's intent. An arboricultural opportunities and constraints assessment has been produced by Barrell Tree Consultancy. This report summarises that there is a high proportion of good trees on the site and that there is very limited scope for removals without significantly adversely affecting local character. Our plan is to work with Barrell Tree Consultancy as the design gains detail and to retain T9 Red Oak. Further design development will ensure that the proposed houses, drainage runs, soakaways and services will not encroach into root protection areas.

Internal and external design principles will be complemented by a low carbon energy system. The twin ambition is to meet the expectations of the Government's Future Homes Standard and to ensure low utility bills for tenants. The proposed roof has traditional proportions with a SSW orientation, 75m<sup>2</sup> area and 42 degree pitch. The strategy is to use a low temperature air to water heat pump and full photovoltaic coverage of 36 modules on the roof \*. The heat pump will provide water around 45-50 DegC for use on an underfloor heating system. From Hale Purlieu common the proposed roof will be seen obliquely and through a screen of roadside oak trees. In order to make sure the proposed houses have a sense of authenticity, rather than pure architectural imitation, the roof line is simple and without chimneys. It is imagined that a roof surface of photovoltaic cells will develop a productive and satisfying external appearance of hard working cottages: a gentle evolution of the New Forest vernacular.

### **Proven Local Need**

The need for more affordable homes in Hale is the primary factor which has inspired a search for sites and required the consideration of better house plans and sensitive approaches to landscape. Today, the demographic structure of the village is determined by the discrepancy between rising house prices and average local earnings and the sale of social housing through the right to buy. House prices in National Parks are approximately 22% higher than the rest of the country and the New Forest is, at the time of writing, the most expensive of all. Such relatively recent economic changes have reduced the options for younger generations to live in the parish. There are few local alternatives but to move away in search of higher incomes and lower rents / mortgages. The logical conclusion to this pattern is that the village will become socially less diverse and economically more exclusive and less productive.

Three surveys of the village, undertaken over the last twelve years, have identified the issue of a lack of affordable housing. First the Housing Needs Survey 2008, Second the Parish Plan Survey 2017 and third the Housing Needs Survey 2018. The reports from each can be found in full on the Hale Village CLT website.

In 2008 New Forest District Council commissioned the rural housing enablers of Community Action Hampshire to carry out a housing needs survey at Hale. The original motivation for the survey is best expressed by the following extract from the covering letter sent by the Parish Council to all households with the survey questionnaire:

*'Owing to the high cost of housing in the area, the Parish Council is considering whether there might be a need for additional affordable housing in the parish so that residents who cannot afford to buy or rent locally will not be forced to move away. The reason for providing new affordable housing is to help local people of all ages who would like to contribute in the long term to maintaining the community spirit and village services that still exist.'*

Of the 227 questionnaires distributed 87 were sent back, a 38% response, considered by Action Hampshire to be a good return that permitted statistical validity. The survey found that there is a limited number of small homes to buy or rent, and a low rate of open market sales due to an ageing population under-occupying larger houses. Thirteen households identified the need of a family member with a local connection to live in the village. Sixteen family members were recorded as having recently moved away from the parish because they could not find a suitable home. All households who identified a need had a total income of less than £26,000 per year. The survey also revealed that the majority, 86%, of respondents would support the idea of building a small affordable housing scheme for local people. The survey report recommended that the parish council explore ways of building a small scheme of affordable housing. At that time no sites were identified and no further action was taken.

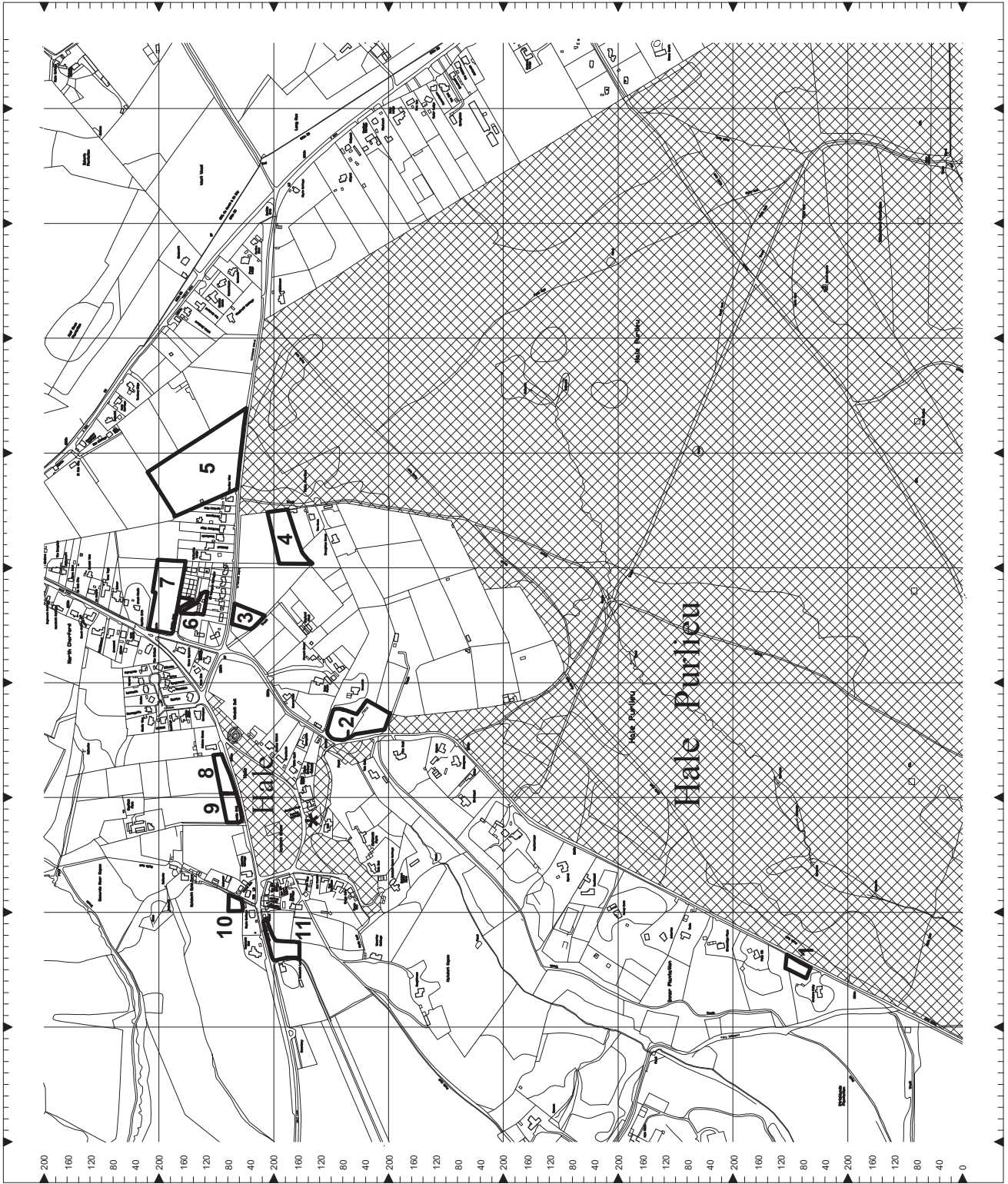
In 2017 a working party of volunteers, at the request of the Hale Parish Council, organised and distributed a questionnaire to every household in the parish as research for the developing Parish Plan. This contained two questions relevant to housing need. A/ Do you know anyone in the village, or someone living elsewhere who has family connections to the village, who would like to live in the village but cannot afford to? Response: Yes 26%. No 74%. B/ Would you support plans for the village to build some affordable homes? Response: Yes 77%. No 23%.

An interim Parish Plan summary written by the Parish Council in January 2018 explained how in light of the recorded need and support they commissioned a new and independent survey. In February 2018 this report was issued. 237 questionnaires were sent out and 121 returned, a response of 47%. This found that 79.8% of respondents indicated support for the idea of building a small number of affordable homes on different sites spread around the Parish. Thirty one respondents completed part II of the survey which was the section for those with a housing need. All of the respondents stated a connection to the parish, with sixteen currently residing within Hale and fifteen living outside, but connected by work, family or by previously living in the parish. Five of the respondents stated they were already registered with New Forest Homesearch. A variety of reasons were provided for wanting to live in the parish: 74% of respondents wanted to start their first home, 42% wanted to be nearer family and 29% to be near work.

\* Area of PV coverage: 72m<sup>2</sup>.  
Annual Output: 10,790 kWh.  
Annual demand for both houses with heat pumps: 15,600 kWh.  
Providing 70% of demand.  
Running at 76% efficiency due to shading,  
Annual saving of 5000kg CO<sub>2</sub>.

- 1 The Folly Hill site, available at no charge to HVCLT, with an existing access onto Hale Purlieu road. Considered appropriate, subject to design and landscape details and public support, by New Forest National Park Authority.
- 2 Field opposite Twin Oaks. Difficult access and not offered as available to HCVLTI.
- 3 Field to the south of Tethering Drove. Not offered as available to HCVLTI and not considered suitable by NFNPA.
- 4 Field opposite Woodlands on Tethering Drove. NFNPA have indicated that sites to the south of Tethering Drove are not preferable. The availability of the land is not yet confirmed.
- 5 Field to the east of Purlieu View. NFNPA consider this an appropriate site. Availability depends on a level of cross-subsidy [element of market housing or a cost per plot above affordable housing norm].
- 6 Land at Carters Close. Owned by NFDC who wish to retain it for future developments.
- 7 Field adjoining Brook Heath. Site is not available to HVCLT.
- 8 Field adjoining Aubann House. NFNPA consider this site too sensitive for development.
- 9 Land at Mayfield Farm. NFNPA consider this site too sensitive for development.
- 10 Land NE of Maple Cottage. Site is not available to HVCLT.
- 11 Land near Hatchet Lodge forming part of Hale Park. Owned by overseas trust so an approach has been too difficult to follow up.

\* Location of Hale Primary School.



### **Long-term affordability**

The aim of Hale Village CLT is to develop a socially responsive, politically popular and financially sustainable housing alternative to the local inflated residential market. Crucially this community-led housing solution should remain accessible for generations and generations. The company structure devised for CLTs is designed to ensure this in statute through Section 79 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 – which states that:

- (i) A CLT must be established as a not-for-profit organisation with a membership that is open to all who live and work in a community. The members must also own and control the organisation.
- (ii) A CLT must be established for the express purpose of furthering the social, economic and environmental interests of a local community.
- (iii) The land and property assets of a CLT must be used to provide a benefit to a local community and must be protected in the long-term by a legal asset-lock.

Hale Village CLT have drafted a Housing Allocation Policy. This policy sets out how tenants will be selected. The following draft criteria will need to be met: clear housing need, the ability to afford a HVCLT home, and a requirement for the accommodation type available. A local connection will also need to be demonstrated. Applicants shall be considered to have a strong local connection if they are:

- (1) a resident in the parish/surrounding parishes at the date of the allocation;
- (2) have previously been a resident and/or has family who are;
- (3) have a demonstrable need by reason of current or imminent local employment;
- (4) have a demonstrable need to support or to be supported by a local family member;
- (5) will be an asset to the community through support of voluntary organisations; or
- (6) keeps animals on the New Forest as a Commoner.

The previous four sections have been written to cover the fundamental principles of Hale Village CLT: a considered location, creative design, evidence of housing need and asset lock for long term local affordability. The following paragraphs review the proposal in the context of New Forest National Park Planning Policy.

### **Policy SP28: Rural Exception Sites**

Small-scale affordable housing developments may be permitted as “exceptions” on sites in or adjoining villages to meet the identified needs of local people in these areas. Proposals for exception sites should:

- a) meet a particular local need that cannot be accommodated in any other way;
- b) be subject to a planning obligation under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) to ensure that the dwellings provide for low-cost housing for local needs in perpetuity;
- c) be capable of management by an appropriate body, for example a Registered Provider, the Authority, or a community land trust or similar accredited local organisation;
- d) be located where there are appropriate local services (e.g. shops, schools and public transport). 100% of the housing on rural exception sites will be affordable.

The project meets the expectations and requirements of Policy SP28 as it has been initiated by a Community Land Trust to fulfil well defined local housing need with a two-bedroom and three-bedroom house for rent.

At the point of submitting full planning permission a Local Allocations Policy will be included as part of the s106 process and once built both homes will be protected by a legal asset-lock. The location for the project is 1050 metres walk from the local primary school and village hall and is within the Hale Conservation Area. Hale is a scattered and dispersed village that has developed during several phases of growth in the last century and has few facilities. It is hoped that community initiatives such as the CLT may help improve local services.

### **Policy DP2: General Development Principles**

All new development and uses of land within the New Forest National Park must uphold and promote the principles of sustainable development. New development proposals must demonstrate high quality design and construction which enhances local character and distinctiveness. This includes ensuring:

- a) development is appropriate and sympathetic in terms of scale, appearance, form, siting and layout;
- b) development respects the natural, built and historic environment, landscape character and biodiversity;
- c) development takes opportunities to protect and enhance the setting of groups and individual trees, hedges and hedgerows and to include new planting of native trees and hedges where appropriate;
- d) materials and boundary treatments are appropriate to the site and its setting;
- e) development would not result in unacceptable adverse impacts on amenity in terms of additional impacts, visual intrusion, overlooking or shading;
- f) development would not result in unacceptable adverse impacts associated with traffic or pollution (including air, soil, water, noise and light pollution). New development must also comply with required standards for car parking and open space.

The Hale Village CLT houses are inherently sustainable as they are proposed for people that wish to be in Hale, to get the chance to make a difference to the community and to go against the trend of rural youth out-migration. Combating climate change will require local decisions made at the local level. More resourcefulness and resilience will be needed to change habits and build productive local networks of social and economic exchange. Small settlements are not unsustainable if there is a genuine commitment to localism. The proposed design looks characterful and is located to get good light and have a low impact on surroundings. The proposed architecture and landscape is an example of a gently contemporary New Forest vernacular. Every effort has been made to retain trees and to slot the terrace in among the woods.

### **Policy DP18: Design Principles**

All new development will be required to achieve the highest standards for new design: including location, layout, size, scale, details and materials of new development within the National Park, with particular regard to:

- a) enhancing the built and historic environment of the New Forest;
- b) creating a safe environment where people want to live, work and visit;
- c) ensuring new development is accessible where appropriate;
- d) ensuring all new development incorporates sound sustainable design and construction principles and good environmental practices; and
- e) ensuring development is contextually appropriate and does not harm key visual features, landscape setting or other valued components of the landscape, and enhances these where appropriate.

## Design Policy continued

The proposed houses for HVCLT are arranged for rural lifestyles across the seasons with simple and easy to look after rooms that have a warm character. Our approach has been to create straightforward two bay floor plans with associated thresholds of storage. This layout encourages the use of every corner and avoid corridors and a cul-de-sac mentality. Many modern homes are essentially containers for cars and televisions with no connection to a community and the landscape. HVCLT intend to provide the opposite and have considered in detail how to make garden sheds prominent and fun, how to build up an interesting contrast between both garden paths, subtle design differences between the interiors of each home, ways to ensure very low utility bills, an aesthetic looseness and texture to the exterior, and how to achieve the careful balance between a traditional copy and an exciting interior that can shape and be shaped by contemporary family life.

### Policy SP5: Nature Conservation

All development must comply with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Development which may affect the integrity of an internationally important site for nature conservation will not be permitted unless there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the development, and there are no alternatives. If this is the case, the Authority will require compensatory measures to ensure the overall coherence of the designated site.

Development may satisfy the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations if sufficient and effective measures are put in place to avoid or fully mitigate any likely significant adverse effects of the proposal (either individually or in combination with other plans and projects) through its lifetime on the designated sites. A contribution to the Authority's Habitat Mitigation Scheme and/or the Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership's Scheme will enable developers to ensure that mitigation measures are secured for the recreational impacts of their development.

The Folly Hill Paddock is currently the end of a garden with a large number of trees around the boundary. Across the road is the Hale Purlieu common which is part of the New Forest SSSI that protects the largest area of "unsown" vegetation in lowland England, including lowland heath, valley and seepage step mire, and ancient pasture woodland. Nowhere else do these habitats occur in combination and on so large a scale.

The project team are working with Ethos Ecology to gain a better picture of the existing site and impacts of the proposal. The very small scale of the development and its sensitive siting, tucked next to a mature red oak, should not affect the integrity of surrounding habitats. The clear public benefit for supporting this proposal has been discussed yet it is not HVCLT's intention for the proposal to result in compromise to the environment. If compensatory and / or offsetting measures are required then the gardens of Folly Hill can be considered for new habitat creation.

### Policy SP11: Climate Change

The Authority will support proposals to mitigate climate change and adapt to the impacts of climate change through:

- a) avoiding development in areas at highest risk of flooding;
- b) locating development so as to reduce the need to travel by car;

- c) sustainable design and construction of buildings including improved water and energy efficiency;
- d) supporting small scale renewable and low carbon energy generation; and
- e) enabling wildlife and habitats to adapt to climate change.

The aim of HVCLT is build two remarkable houses that give local people the chance to stay where they have roots. This is a unique opportunity to empower the local community to start to consider alternative options and local solutions. The standard model of planning for, building and heating homes has largely delivered poor results. These two proposed homes are an opportunity to demonstrate how to build low carbon, modest houses that are environmental light and socially generous.

### Summary

Hale Village Community Land Trust is a not-for-profit voluntary organisation that proposes to build and manage two affordable homes for rent.

The aim of Hale Village CLT is to develop a socially responsive, politically popular and financially sustainable housing alternative to the local inflated residential market. Crucially this community-led housing solution should remain accessible for generations and generations.

The brief is to design two semi-detached dwellings, one with three bedrooms and the other with two bedrooms.

The land at Folly Hill Paddock is available, affordable, discrete, part of an existing pattern of development and walkable from the village school.

Eleven sites in the parish have been investigated prior to HVCLT's support for Folly Hill. The reasons for ten of them failing to be appropriate or currently deliverable are listed on page four.

Hale is not a physically dense village and is characteristically spread out. The distance between Folly Hill and Hale school is approximately 1050m, an average 13 minute walk.

The terrace has been designed to look simple and to have practical charm.

A low carbon energy system is proposed to meet the expectations of the Government's Future Homes Standard and to ensure low utility bills.

It is imagined that a roof surface of photovoltaic cells will develop a productive and satisfying external appearance.

The demographic structure of the village is determined by the discrepancy between rising house prices and average local earnings and the sale of social housing through the right to buy.

Three surveys of the village, undertaken over the last twelve years, have identified the issue of a lack of affordable housing in the village. The most recent 2018 housing need survey found that 79.8% of respondents indicated support for the idea of building a small number of affordable homes on different sites spread around the Parish.

The Hale Village CLT houses are proposed as inherently sustainable. Combating climate change will require local decisions made at the local level. More resourcefulness and resilience will be needed to change habits and build productive local networks of social and economic exchange. Small settlements are not unsustainable if there is a genuine commitment to localism in practice.