



SUMMERFIELD PLANNING LIMITED

Land west of Church Hill, Exeter

Planning Statement

Prepared on behalf of Verto Homes Limited

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement accompanies a full planning application submitted by Verto Homes Ltd for residential development of land west of Church Hill, Pinhoe, Exeter.
- 1.2 This Statement explains the nature of the proposal, the framework provided by relevant tiers of planning policy and the scheme's compatibility with the Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). In doing so, it provides the justification for granting planning permission.
- 1.3 A full set of technical documents and architectural drawings are provided in support of the application. The following plans and reports have been submitted:
- Air Quality Assessment;
 - Application Form;
 - Arboricultural reports;
 - Architectural plans and elevations;
 - Community Infrastructure Levy Form 1;
 - Design and Access Statement;
 - Ecology report;
 - Engineering plans;
 - Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy;
 - Green Infrastructure Statement;
 - Ground Investigations Report;
 - Heritage Statement;
 - Landscape Visual Impact Assessment;
 - Landscape proposals;
 - Planning Statement (incorporating a Statement of Community Involvement); and
 - Transport statement.
- 1.4 Further details of the above, including plan and report references, is provided in the covering letter that accompanies the application.

2. Site description and planning history

Location

- 2.1 The site is located to the north edge of Pinhoe on land to the west of Church Hill. It is wholly within the administrative boundary of Exeter City Council.
- 2.2 Whilst originally a settlement in its own right, Pinhoe is now a suburb on the northeastern edge of Exeter. Pinhoe provides a number of community facilities, all of which are in close proximity of the site. This includes a primary school, community hall, playing fields, public house, post office, butchers and convenience store. The area is also well served by regular bus services. The Transport Statement confirms the range of facilities that are within walking distance of the application site.
- 2.3 The site occupies an elevated position on the northern edge of the city. The area is a mix of woodland areas and pastoral/agricultural land that combine with vegetation along field boundaries to give a well-wooded appearance. There is currently residential development occupying the area at varying densities amongst the trees.
- 2.4 To the west of the application site is Pinhoe Quarry with outline planning permission (Reference 10/2088/OUT) granted consent for 380 homes, community facilities, shop and open space in this location. Following the approval of reserved matters (Reference 19/1100/RES), the site is currently under construction with a significant number of properties occupied.
- 2.5 To the east of the site is Home Farm with outline planning permission (Reference 16/1576/OUT) granted consent for 120 homes and associated infrastructure and open space. A subsequent reserved matters application (Reference 18/1177/RES) for 30 dwellings on the southwestern parcel was granted and construction is complete. A reserved matters application (Reference 19/0255/RES) for 90 dwellings on the northwestern parcel was submitted in February 2019. The site is close to completion, with the majority of homes occupied.
- 2.6 To the south of the site is an area with full planning permission (Reference 19/0962/FUL) 40 zero carbon smart homes that is under construction by the applicant.

Site description

- 2.7 The site has an area of approximately 1.47 hectares and was previously used as a commercial nursery. The upper (northern) two thirds are not currently in active use. The lower (southern) third is used for the grazing of horses.
- 2.8 Vehicular and pedestrian access is currently provided from the south-eastern corner, via a private lane that runs adjacent to the southern boundary from Church Hill. The road Church Hill runs adjacent to the eastern boundary providing access between Pinhoe and the surrounding area.
- 2.9 A Public Right of Way (PRoW) Footpath 53 runs adjacent to the western boundary between Pinhoe and The Church of St Michael and All Angels which is further to the north west at the top of the hill. Access to the PRoW is possible from the site through an existing gateway.
- 2.10 There are existing buildings located to the western boundary of the site. These consist of two single storey block-built buildings finished in render under mono-pitched corrugated metal roofs. Together with some low walls defining a yard, they create a small agricultural type complex around the access to the PRoW.
- 2.11 Immediately to the north is a small land parcel that appears at one time to have been part of the larger field that contains the site, but is now in separate ownership and used for grazing of horses.
- 2.12 The site itself has been divided into three smaller parcels as part of the previous use with the boundaries running across the site in a general east-west direction. There is currently little in the way of vegetation defining those boundaries. The landform of the upper (northern) two parcels have been altered to create terraced plateaus that step up south to north and no longer follow the original contours or slope of the site. In the main, vegetation is restricted to the boundaries and the mature trees and tree groups.
- 2.13 The northern boundary is defined by a hedgebank, with large gaps. Due to the alterations to the landform within this parcel of the site, the ground level is higher than the northern hedgebank towards the western boundary. The eastern boundary is defined by an overgrown hedgebank. This is predominantly a hedge with some individual oak trees and a group of trees towards the northern corner. The western boundary comprises a tree belt with gaps on top of a bank sloping down towards the adjacent PRoW. The southern most corner is contained by tall

mature trees consisting of native species, along with some smaller Hazel, as well as a large Eucalyptus tree. The rest of the southern boundary is defined by a tall hedge. There are some individual trees dotted around within the site.

Planning history

2.14 A summary of the Local Planning Authority (LPA) online planning records for the site is provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Site planning history

Application No.	Proposal	Decision
16/0724/LED	Certificate of lawfulness sought for 2no agricultural storage buildings.	Lawful use confirmed
01/1205/FUL	Retention of two agricultural buildings.	Approved
00/1142/FUL	Retention of two agricultural buildings (removal of condition 1 of permission 99/0421/03).	Approved
99/0421/FUL	Retention of two agricultural buildings.	Approved
98/0232/AGF	Retention of 2 agricultural buildings, erection of greenhouse and polythene tunnel, construction of access to highway and associated works.	Refused
92/0952/FUL	Construction of access to highway, terracing and mounding of land, construction of internal access roads, yard, shed and 5 polytunnels and 2 water lagoons and ancillary drainage to serve horticultural unit producing hardy nursery stock.	Approved
91/0414/FUL	Construction of new access and driveway and alterations to existing access.	Refused
91/0313/FUL	Retention of mobile home for temporary period for horticultural worker.	Refused
91/0787/FUL	Construction of access to highway, terracing and mounding of land, construction of internal access roads, yard, shed and water storage lagoon and ancillary drainage to serve new horticultural unit producing hardy nursery stock.	Refused

2.15 The planning history confirms that the site has previously been in horticultural use and that there is a history of commercial activity. In addition to the existing buildings, there has been approval in the past for polytunnels and other development associated with the lawful use of the site.

Request for pre-application advice

2.16 The development of the application site for 40 dwellings was the subject of a request for pre-application advice in April 2021. The LPA's response (dated 23 July 2021) raised concerns about the impact of the proposal on the rural character of the area and highlighted potential for the development to be visible from important viewpoints.

2.17 The response advised that the proposed development of the site would be considered contrary to Policy CP16 of the Exeter Core Strategy and Saved Policy L1 of the Exeter Local Plan. The response also confirmed that at that time the Council were unable to demonstrate a five year housing land supply. It was suggested that the shortfall in housing land supply was modest and that the trajectory indicated that this would reduce.

2.18 Finally, the LPA raised concerns regarding the potential ecological impact of the proposed development and advised that the location meant that it would be unlikely that occupants would have access to a good level of services or sustainable modes of transport.

2.19 The pre-application response has informed the refinement of the proposal prior to the submission of the application as follows:

- Number of dwellings has been reduced from 40 to 18 units;
- Reduced density has provided significant open space within the site, along with additional space for landscaping and tree planting;
- All dwellings are now single storey to limit their visual impact;
- External materials have been selected to assist with assimilating the development into the landscape in the more prominent locations; and
- An area of landscaped open space has been provided along the length of much of the eastern boundary to ensure that the character of the approach to Pinhoe along Church Hill is not harmed.

2.20 The changes made have resulted in a development that is considered to be appropriate for the site and avoids harmful impacts to the character of the area and the setting of the city.

3. Statement of community involvement

- 3.1 The applicant has undertaken pre-application engagement with local residents. This provided an opportunity for people living within the vicinity of the site to provide comments on the proposals in advance of the planning application being finalised and submitted.
- 3.2 The engagement involved the distribution of a summary leaflet to around 250 properties in the local area.
- 3.3 The document identified the application site and confirmed its previous use and provided a copy of the proposed site layout. Details of the housing mix was provided, along with information about the applicant and the construction of zero carbon smart homes. A copy of the consultation document is provided in Appendix 1.
- 3.4 Both a postal and an email address were provided for interested parties to submit their comments. The leaflet was distributed on 21 May 2023. Recipients have therefore had approximately two months to consider the proposals and comment prior to the submission of the planning application.
- 3.5 At the time of submission, the applicant has received one response to the consultation. This was received from a near neighbour to the site who raised some specific queries in relation to the proposed arrangements for access. The applicant has met with the resident and provided further information in response to their request.
- 3.6 At the point of the submission of the application no other comments have been received. Should any further comments be received by Verto Homes following the submission of the application, these will be forwarded to the LPA.

4. Proposed development

4.1 The description of development is as follows:

Construction of 18 zero carbon bungalows, together with access and associated landscaping, open space and infrastructure and demolition of existing buildings.

4.2 The proposed site layout (Drawing No.1366-942-0101 REV D) provides an explanation of the proposed development. The layout is provided in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Site Layout Plan



4.3 The scheme's various components and their position within the application site reflect the site's characteristics as described in the Design and Access Statement. The main components are as follows:

- 18 single storey zero carbon smart homes, including 6 affordable homes;
- New vehicle access;
- Pedestrian access via the development that is under construction to the south;
- Open space;
- Landscaping and tree planting; and
- Biodiversity enhancements.

4.4 A summary of the key elements of the proposed development is provided below.

Sustainable construction

4.5 Verto Homes specialise in designing and building intelligent and sustainable zero carbon smart homes, which produce and use their own renewable energy. The homes use highly sustainable materials and feature intuitive home-automation technology.

4.6 Creating a zero carbon home requires a specification that is different to conventional new build homes. This will enhance their sustainability and not only create a home that is less harmful to the environment, but also provide a building that has very low or zero energy bills and thus creating a sustainable home for both the environment and the inhabitants. The smart home element of the houses is integral to this and means they 'learn' how occupiers live to make them as efficient as possible.

4.7 Key components of the houses are as follows:

- Solar PV panels;
- Highly insulated air tight construction;
- Mechanical ventilation with heat recovery;
- Air and Ground Source Heat Pumps;
- Smart Home integration;
- Triple glazed windows.

4.8 Further information on each of the above is provided below.

Solar PV Panels

4.9 The proposed site layout has been designed to ensure that each dwelling has a roof pitch that allows for south facing solar panels. The south facing roof slopes have been enlarged to increase the amount of panels that can be installed. Each dwelling will also have a battery to store excess energy generated.

Highly insulated airtight construction

4.10 Each dwelling will be constructed using very high levels of insulation and the design of the building fabric will ensure a high level of air tightness that will prevent heat loss. This will allow residual heat to be retained, meaning less heat needs to be generated from the heating system.

Mechanical ventilation with heat recovery

- 4.11 In addition to the highly insulated and air tight building fabric, a mechanical ventilation with a heat recovery system will be installed to supply fresh, filtered pre-heated air into the dwellings. These systems enable fresh air to be distributed to all the living spaces and bedrooms while extracting it from kitchens, bathrooms and utilities. The fresh input air is filtered and pre-heated with the exhaust air that is being removed from the buildings, reducing condensation, dust and smells from the bungalow.

Air and Ground Source Heat Pumps

- 4.12 Air and Ground Source Heat Pumps will service the underfloor heating systems and supply hot water to all dwellings. As well as having zero CO² emissions, the zonal heating enables the homes to be more efficient and reduces the need for higher water temperatures by 30% compared to normal radiators.

Smart Home Integration

- 4.13 The smart home system pulls everything together and creates a fully integrated ecosystem that not only provides the user with total control of all features, but also ‘learns’ how the occupants live so that only relevant parts of the house are heated, reducing energy consumption. This can be fully automated but also controlled via a mobile app so it is accessible anywhere in the world.

Triple glazed windows

- 4.14 Triple glazed windows and doors will be installed to each dwelling. The majority of windows will be openable to allow natural ventilation and prevent over heating in the summer months.

Housing mix

- 4.15 As the main land use, residential development extends across the application site. The proposed development will provide 18 new homes, including a mix of semi-detached and detached properties. The proposal includes 6 affordable homes. The accommodation schedule is provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Schedule of accommodation

	Accommodation	Number
Open Market	2 bed bungalow	5
	4 bed bungalow	7
	Total open market housing	12
Affordable	1 bed bungalow	4
	2 bed bungalow	2
	Total affordable housing	6

Layout

4.16 The dwellings have been located on the site taking into consideration and avoiding development in the most visually sensitive areas of the site. The buildings have been positioned around public open space areas, behind tree screening and ensure the development is integrated within its setting and the wider landscape.

Scale and appearance

4.17 All of the proposed dwellings will be single storey in height. They have a contemporary appearance considered appropriate to the local vernacular that will allow the bungalows to incorporate up-to-date construction methods and high quality modern materials that will ensure they are robust and sustainable.

4.18 The external materials are a simple palette of bricks, timber and render, with natural slate roofs. Feature plots on the site, facing roads and on corner plots, incorporate additional windows to increase street surveillance. Different combinations of the materials have been used on each

bungalow type to create visual interest across the site and to help break up the mass and appearance of the development from external views.

Access

- 4.19 A new vehicle access will be provided from Church Hill to the east of the site. This will be the only vehicular and cycle route. The pedestrian route through the site will connect via the existing access track along the southern boundary and through the development that is currently under construction to the south. There will also be a connection provided to the PRoW to the west.

Vehicle parking and cycle storage

- 4.20 Car parking is provided for each dwelling. Provision has been intentionally limited and there are a total of 21 parking spaces. Nine of the dwellings also have garages. These are of a sufficient size to accommodate a car and cycle storage. Those dwellings without a garage will be provided with a separate secure cycle store.

Open space and landscaping

- 4.21 The proposed development includes an area of dedicated public open space. This is located to the eastern side of the site and is approximately 1,457 sqm in area. The open space will provide an amenity area and it is anticipated that it may include provision of suitable play equipment.
- 4.22 The proposed development is accompanied by a landscape strategy. This provides an overview of the proposals for the retention and enhancement of existing tree and hedgerows, along with the proposed new planting. In addition to new tree and hedgerow planting, the scheme incorporates rain gardens, new hedgebanks, areas of meadow planting and amenity grass.

Biodiversity mitigation and enhancement

- 4.23 The proposed development incorporates buffer zones around existing hedgerows and trees. It is also recognised that the lighting scheme will need to be designed so that light spill onto hedgerows and retained trees is kept to a minimum, especially to the east and west boundaries. This can be achieved using low energy directional down lighting, and/or smart lighting, with timers or sensors to limit hours of operation.

- 4.24 Habitat will be retained within the scheme to the site boundaries including hedgerows, trees, and scrub. Opportunities will be taken to provide additional habitat through planting hedgerows to the site entrance and within the development, native tree across the site and an area of wildflower meadow. All new hedgerows will consist of native shrubs and trees. The hedgerow buffer zones will consist of habitat which will benefit a range of mammal, bird, reptile and invertebrate species.
- 4.25 Integrated bat roosts will be incorporated into the bungalows to the site boundaries, and especially those facing the northwest area which will be enhanced for wildlife. Furthermore, one integrated bird nesting feature will be incorporated into each property. Bee bricks will also be provided. Finally, hibernaculum will be created within any new wildflower grassland habitat to encourage reptiles and amphibians.

Drainage

- 4.26 Ground investigations have demonstrated that the site is not suitable for surface water discharge via infiltration. Following the hierarchy of discharge, discharge to surface waters has been investigated. The nearest watercourse is just west of the site, shown on the South West Water mapping. At this stage the ownership of this is unknown, however it is understood to be a man made ditch possibly to do with the previous quarry workings or possibly as part of the further development in the quarry. The watercourse is at a considerably lower level than the site and connection to it would be difficult to achieve.
- 4.27 The existing site utility survey shows an existing surface water sewer in the south-westerly corner which appears to outfall in the direction of the identified watercourse; this should be chased to the outfall to confirm whether this is a suitable outfall for the proposed site. An alternative option for the surface water outfall is to run a new surface water sewer adjacent to the existing foul drain, south of the site, through Pinhoe Phase 1 and into the watercourse. This will be subject to the relevant third party approvals and consents.
- 4.28 Both of the above options will be an attenuated scheme with flow control device limited to greenfield runoff rates. The surface water will be treated and stored onsite via a hybrid swale and tank system; the swale will have a permeable base of clean stone draining to the tank below. Foul drainage will be discharged to the existing public sewer.

5. Local and national planning policy

5.1 This section of the statement provides information on the local and national planning policies, along with the other material considerations, which are relevant to the determination of the submitted planning application.

Local planning policy

5.2 In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, applications for planning permission should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.3 Relevant to the proposal, the Development Plan for the site comprises of the following:

- Saved policies of Exeter City Local Plan First Review (2005); and
- Exeter City Core Strategy (2012).

5.4 The LPA are currently in the process of reviewing the Local Plan. However, given the stage that the emerging plan has reached it has not been considered for the purposes of the planning application.

5.5 The following Development Plan policies are relevant to the Council's consideration of the planning application.

Exeter Local Plan First Review 1995 – 2011 (saved policies)

5.6 The Exeter Local Plan First Review, adopted March 2005, covered the plan period of 1995-2011. The Secretary of State has 'saved' a large number of policies from this Plan, until the point they are replaced with more up-to-date expressions of local planning policies. A summary of the saved policies contained within the Local Plan relevant to the consideration of this application is provided below.

Key policy tests

5.7 The Local Plan First Review states at paragraph 2.12 that Policy AP1 will be one of the key tests against which new proposals will be judged. Policy AP1 states that new development should be designed and located to raise the quality of the urban and natural environment and reduce the

need to travel and that proposals should be located where safe and convenient access by public transport, walking and cycling is available or can be provided.

Housing

- 5.8 Policy H1 states that proposals for housing development will be assessed against a search sequence. This search sequence outlines three categories as follows: previously developed land, conversions and infill within the urban areas; previously developed land on the urban fringe within public transport corridors; and greenfield land through sustainable urban extension within public transport corridors.
- 5.9 In relation to the above, Policy H2 states that priority will be given to meeting housing needs on previously developed land by applying the search sequence and by permitting residential development at the highest density that can be achieved without detriment to local amenity, the character and quality of the local environment and the safety of local roads. The policy requires that development must have regard to the need to provide a variety of housing provision which is accessible to a range of employment, shopping, education, health and social care, leisure and community facilities.
- 5.10 Policy H6 confirms that housing proposals on sites capable of yielding 15 or more dwellings or on site of 0.5 ha or more should include provision for subsidised rented, shared ownership or low-cost market housing to contribute to the city wide target for affordable housing
- 5.11 Policy H7 advises that proposals on sites of 15 or more dwellings or on sites of 0.5 ha or more, and developments of 20 or more housing units which are conveniently located for shops and services, should provide an element of housing that can easily be adapted for occupation by people permanently confined to wheelchairs.

Open space

- 5.12 Policy L4 advises that development of 10 or more dwellings should contribute to the provision of youth and adult play space (directly related to, and necessary for, the development) having regard to the type of residential development proposed and considered against a standard level of provision of playing pitches of 1.2 hectares for every 450 dwellings.

Transport

- 5.13 Policy T1 advises that development should facilitate the most sustainable and environmentally acceptable modes of transport, having regard a hierarchy that prioritises pedestrians, people with mobility problems, cyclists and public transport users.
- 5.14 Policy T2 confirms that in accordance with the accessibility criteria set out above, residential development should be located within walking distance of a food shop and a primary school and should be accessible by bus or rail to employment, convenience and comparison shopping, secondary and tertiary education, primary and secondary health care, social care and other essential facilities.
- 5.15 Policy T3 establishes the requirements for development to be laid out and linked to existing or proposed development and facilities in ways that will maximize the use of sustainable modes of transport.

Landscape setting

- 5.16 Policy LS1 seeks to prevent development which would harm the landscape setting of the City and confirms that proposals should maintain local distinctiveness and character. The policy only permits development that is reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture, forestry, the rural economy, outdoor recreation or the provision of infrastructure, or is concerned with change of use, conversion or extension of existing buildings.
- 5.17 It is recognised that Policy LS1 is not consistent with NPPF and accordingly can only be afforded very limited weight.

Environment

- 5.18 Policy EN4 states that development will not be permitted if: it would increase the likelihood of flooding; it would be at risk itself from flooding; it would require additional public finance for flood defence works; adequate provision is not made for access to watercourses for maintenance; and it would threaten features of landscape or wildlife importance by reducing the recharge of local water tables.

Design

- 5.19 With regards to design, the policies below are considered to be of relevance to the development proposed:
- Policy DG1 sets out the design and layout principles;

- Policy DG2 relates to design conservation;
- Policy DG4 establishes the design for residential development;
- Policy DG5 outlines the provision of open space and children’s play area;
- Policy DG6 is related to vehicle circulation and car parking; and
- Policy DG7 outlines the design related crime prevention and safety measures.

Exeter Core Strategy 2006 - 2026

5.20 The Core Strategy sets out the vision for development across the city. It provides a vision, objectives and strategy for the spatial development of the city up to 2026. A summary of the relevant Core Strategy policies is provided below.

Vision and objectives

5.21 The Core Strategy outlines how Exeter will embrace its role in the region as an area of growth as follows:

- By providing houses, jobs and supporting infrastructure through maximizing the use of previously developed land within the city, and through sustainable urban extensions to the east, at Newcourt and Monkerton/ Hill Barton, and to the south west at Alphington; and
- By maintaining a vital and viable mix of uses in the City Centre and delivering development to enhance Exeter’s position as a premier retail and cultural destination.

5.22 To support the vision of the Core Strategy the Council have set the following objectives:

- Making the fullest contribution possible to the mitigation of, and adaption to, climate change and the transition to a low carbon economy;
- To provide everyone in the community with the opportunity of living in a decent warm home or a suitable type, size and tenure for their needs;
- Minimising the need to travel and reducing the dependence on the car;
- To protect and enhance the City’s unique historic character and townscape, its archaeological heritage, its natural setting that is provided by the valley parks and the hills to the north and west and its biodiversity and geological assets; and
- Create and reinforce local distinctiveness and raise the quality of urban living through excellence in design.

Spatial strategy

- 5.23 The Core Strategy aims to enable the City to grow without damaging the environmental assets. The spatial strategy seeks to focus growth on previously developed land within the City Centre before other potential sites.
- 5.24 Policy CP1 seeks to ensure that development is guided to the most sustainable locations, recognising the contribution to be made to growth by the existing urban area. The policy requires that the necessary infrastructure, including low and zero carbon energy, transport and green infrastructure, is in place to allow for sustainable urban extension to the east and south west of the city.
- 5.25 This policy identifies that over the period to 2026, provision should be made for 12,000 dwellings, around 1,800 of which should be provided in the ‘rest of the city’ outside of the planned urban extensions.

Housing

- 5.26 Policy CP3 outlines the distribution of development across the plan area. This policy takes account of completions and commitment, which amounts to around 6,500 dwellings, or around 51% on previously developed land. This reflects the constraints on the city and the need to provide housing through greenfield urban extensions.
- 5.27 Policy CP4 requires that residential development achieves the highest appropriate density compatible with the protection of heritage assets, local amenities, the character and quality of the local environment and the safety and convenience of the local and trunk road network.
- 5.28 Policy CP5 states that the supply of housing should meet the needs of all members of the community such that all major developments (10 or more dwellings) should include a mix of housing informed by context, local housing need and the most up to date Housing Market Assessment. The proposed mix of housing has been informed by pre-application discussions.
- 5.29 The need for affordable housing contributions on site for development is stated within Policy CP7, this outlines that on sites capable of providing 3 or more additional dwellings, 35% of the total housing provision should be made available as affordable housing for households whose housing needs are not met by the market. The Policy confirms that the provision of affordable housing and the tenure split will be subject to considerations of viability and feasibility.

Environment

- 5.30 Policy CP12 advises that the spatial strategy reflects the precautionary approach to flooding and flood risk. All development proposals are required to mitigate against flood risk utilizing SUDS where feasible.
- 5.31 Policy CP14 states that development of ten or more dwellings, will be required to use decentralized and renewable or low carbon energy sources, to cut predicted CO² emissions by the equivalent of at least 10% over and above those required to meet the building regulations current at the time of building regulations approval, unless it can be demonstrated that it would not be viable or feasible to do so.

Design

- 5.32 The Core Strategy aims for development to be sustainable in design and construction. Policy CP15 states that proposed developments are expected to demonstrate how sustainable design and construction methods will be incorporated. All development must be resilient to climate change and optimise energy and water efficiency through appropriate design, insulation, layout, orientation, landscaping and materials, and by using technologies that reduce carbon emissions.
- 5.33 Policy CP16 relates to the strategic green infrastructure network across Exeter. This aims to protect and enhance current environmental assets and local identity and to provide a framework for sustainable new development. This policy states that the character and local distinctiveness of identified areas, including hills to the north and north-west of the city, will be protected.
- 5.34 Policy CP17 seeks to ensure that development proposals exhibit a high standard of sustainable design that is resilient to climate change and complements or enhances Exeter's character, local identity and cultural diversity.

Supplementary Planning Documents

- 5.35 There are a number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) that have been adopted by the LPA. Whilst not planning policy, the SPDs provide guidance on the implementation of policy and are material considerations for determining planning applications.

Sustainable Transport

- 5.36 The Sustainable Transport SPD was adopted in March 2013. The document provides guidance on the design features and contributions that may be required to satisfy planning policies and ensure that development results in sustainable travel outcomes.

Planning Obligations

- 5.37 The Planning Obligations SPD was adopted in April 2014. It provides guidance on the planning obligations that may be required to satisfy planning policies and ensure that development results in sustainable outcomes.

Public Open Space

- 5.38 The Public Open Space SPD was adopted in September 2005 and provides clarification on the provision of open space and facilities as part of new residential development.

Residential Design Guide

- 5.39 The Residential Design Guide SPD was adopted in September 2010 and provides detailed guidance in support of the Development Plan. The SPD sets out the aim to secure good quality sustainable residential design.

Trees and Development

- 5.40 The Trees in Relation to Development SPD was adopted in September 2009. It identifies the minimum information required by Exeter City Council when considering a planning application on a site that contains or is adjacent to trees.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.41 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was revised in July 2021. It is a material consideration for planning decisions. The following policies are relevant to the consideration of the proposed development.

Achieving sustainable development

- 5.42 The NPPF confirms that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development (Paragraphs 7 and 8). There are three overarching objectives (economic, social and environmental), which are intrinsically linked and should be pursued in complimentary ways. Paragraph 9 confirms that these objectives are not criteria that should be used to judge every proposal against

5.43 Paragraph 11 states that all decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development by approving developments which accord with up-to-date development plans without delay.

5.44 This means that applications that accord with an up-to-date development plan should be approved without delay. If there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies that are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, planning permission should be granted unless the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides clear reason for refusing the development, or the adverse impacts of approving the development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF as a whole.

Decision making

5.45 The NPPF confirms that in line with planning law, planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise (Paragraphs 2 and 47).

5.46 It is also made clear that LPAs should approach decisions on planning applications in a positive and creative way and that they should seek to approve applications for sustainable development (Paragraph 38).

Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

5.47 Section 5 and specifically Paragraph 60 confirms that the Government has an objective to significantly boost the supply of homes.

5.48 Paragraph 69 recognises that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built-out relatively quickly. Furthermore, it is advised that LPA's should specifically support the development of windfall sites, giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for new homes.

Promoting sustainable transport

5.49 Paragraph 111 confirms that development should only be refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

Making effective use of land

5.50 Section 11 outlines the ways in which to make effective use of land. Paragraph 119 notes that decisions should promote the effective use of the land to meet housing need.

5.51 Paragraph 124 advises that planning proposals should be designed to ensure an efficient use of land, taking account of: the identified needs for different types of housing; local market conditions and viability; the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services; the character of an area; and the importance of creating well-designed places.

Achieving well-designed places

5.52 The creation of high-quality, beautiful and sustainable spaces is fundamental to what the planning process should seek to achieve, with good design being a key aspect of sustainable development (Paragraph 126).

5.53 Paragraph 130 states that planning decisions should ensure that schemes: function well and add to the overall quality of the area over the lifetime of the development; are visually attractive and provide a good architectural style, layout and landscape treatment; establish a strong sense of place; optimise the potential of the site to accommodate an appropriate mix of development; and create safe, inclusive and accessible places.

5.54 Paragraph 134 states that planning permission should be refused for development that is not well designed which fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, including taking into account any local design guidance. Conversely, significant weight should be given to proposals where the design of a development reflects local and government guidance on design.

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

5.55 Planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the local environment by, among other things, providing net gains for biodiversity and preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution (Paragraph 174).

6. Other material considerations

6.1 There are material considerations that are considered to be relevant to the consideration of the planning application.

Housing land supply

6.2 The LPA acknowledge in the latest Five Year Housing Land Supply Statement (May 2023) that they are currently unable to demonstrate a five year supply of housing¹. The published statement confirms that the LPA consider that they are able to demonstrate a supply of four years and four months.

6.3 As the Council does not have a five year supply of housing land, Paragraph 74 and Paragraph 11 of the NPPF apply and the presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged. This requires that a 'tilted balance' is applied to the determination of planning applications.

6.4 The NPPF (paragraph 11) requires that a presumption in favour of sustainable development should be applied, which for decision-taking means:

Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, granting permission unless:

- *the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
- *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.*

6.5 Footnote 7 of NPPF Paragraph 11 clarifies that this includes situations where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites when considered against the requirements of the Housing Delivery Test.

6.6 To clarify, the NPPF policies identified in Footnote 7 do not indicate that permission should be refused in this instance.

¹ <https://exeter.gov.uk/media/zfwfmpwd/230502-final-5yrs-statement-accessible-version.pdf>

6.7 The current deficit in housing provision and the contribution that the proposal would make in addressing this shortfall is a material consideration that should be weighed in favour of the granting of planning permission.

Zero carbon development

6.8 On 15 March 2019 Exeter City Council, declared a commitment to make Exeter a carbon neutral city by 2030. Exeter City Futures, a partnership between the Council and a number of other local organisations, have published a report “Towards a Carbon Neutral Exeter”, which sets out a number of recommendations towards achieving the target.

6.9 Three of the key goals are:

- renewable energy generation;
- energy reduction; and
- energy efficient buildings

6.10 The proposed development of 18 zero carbon dwellings will significantly exceed the requirements of the Development Plan as it relates to renewable energy generation and sustainable construction.

6.11 The provision of a development that exceeds these policy requirements should, particularly within the context of the Government objective to be net zero by 2050 and the Council’s own ambitions, be a material consideration that is weighed positively in the planning balance in favour of granting planning permission.

7. Planning assessment and justification

7.1 This section of the statement assesses the proposal against the relevant planning policies and other material considerations and provides the justification for granting planning permission.

Presumption in favour of sustainable development

7.2 As confirmed in Section 6, the LPA cannot currently demonstrate a five year supply of housing land. As a result, Paragraph 73 and Paragraph 11 of the NPPF apply. The presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged, requiring a tilted balance to be applied to the determination of planning applications.

7.3 The LPA consider that there is a housing land supply of four years and four months. There is a significant need for new housing in the city. In light of this, the delivery of new housing (both open market and affordable) in what is a sustainable location, should be afforded weight in favour of the proposed development.

7.4 Significantly, in his report regarding the appeal for Land to the West of Clyst Road, Topsham (Appeal Reference 3202635) the Planning Inspector advised that:

Importantly, the Council has conceded in the present appeal that to meet the CS housing requirement and to achieve a five year housing land supply, permissions would need to be granted on land that is subject to policies LS1 and CP16.²

7.5 The application site lies within an area that is subject to both policies LS1 and CP16. However, the information submitted with the application, and in particular the LVIA, demonstrates that there are no adverse impacts arising from the proposed development that substantially and demonstrably outweigh the benefits which in this case include a range of new zero carbon homes (including affordable homes) open space and biodiversity enhancements.

Principle of development

7.6 The site is adjacent to the existing urban area of Exeter, with development built and under construction to the east, south and west. Whilst the site is currently unused, its most recent and current lawful use is a commercial nursery. The site sits within the area designated under Saved Policy LS1 of the Exeter Local Plan.

² <https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/ViewCase.aspx?caseid=3202635>

- 7.7 Policy LS1 concerns development within Exeter’s Landscape Setting and lists a limited number of development types that are considered to be acceptable in the designated area. These do not include housing development on greenfield land that lies within the hills to the north and northwest. There is therefore a conflict between the proposed development and Policy LS1. However, it has been recognised in a number of relevant decisions including planning appeals, that Policy LS1 is inconsistent with the NPPF and should therefore carry very little weight for the purposes of the determination of planning applications.
- 7.8 Saved Policy H1 of the Exeter Local Plan sets out a search sequence by which the LPA identifies locational priorities, with development on greenfield land through urban extensions within public transport corridors the last in that sequence. Notably however, saved Policy H1 does not preclude development of greenfield land. Whilst housing development on green fields is the least preferable in the search sequence, the policy confirms that it is acceptable in circumstances where it entails extending an existing urban area that is in a sustainable location that is well served by public transport.
- 7.9 The application site is adjacent to the urban area of Pinhoe. The area is predominantly residential. The Transport Statement accompanying the application confirms that the site is well served by public transport. The site is also located within a 1.1km (11 min walk) of the centre of Pinhoe, where there are a wide range of amenities. Furthermore, St Michael and all Angels Church is located on Church Lane 350m to the west of the site and accessible via Public Footpath 53. The Pinhoe Community Centre America Hall is located on De La Rue Way which is 760m from the application site.
- 7.10 In terms of distance to education facilities, Pinhoe Primary School is located within 760m from the site on Harrington Lane, a typical 8 minute walk. The nearest Secondary Schools are St James and St Luke's Science and Sports College both of which are 1.7km from the application site, or a 17 minute walk / 8 minute cycle.
- 7.11 The distance to the local facilities complies with Manual for Streets national guidance, which at paragraph 4.4.1 states: “Walkable neighbourhoods are typically characterised by having a range of facilities within 10 minutes’ (up to about 800 m) walking distance of residential areas which residents may access comfortably on foot. However, this is not an upper limit and PPS13 states that walking offers the greatest potential to replace short car trips, particularly those under 2km.”

- 7.12 Manual for Streets 2 (MfS2) identifies the contribution that cycling can make to transport sustainability and accessibility, identifying this mode of travel as a good substitute for short car trips, particularly those under 5km. Exeter city centre is located 4km west from the application site and can be accessed easily by bicycle and a wide range of public transport services.
- 7.13 In summary, the development site is in a highly sustainable location and in close proximity to a wide range of facilities and services required on a daily basis within a short walking or cycle trip. Furthermore, the site is surrounded by an excellent pedestrian and cycle network which links the site with the neighbouring employment and residential areas. The city centre can be easily reached by cycle trips via a network of cycleways and advisory cycle routes.
- 7.14 A number of bus stops and rail stations are located within the distances recommended by MfS. Frequent bus and rail services are provided to the city centre and the main towns located to the east and the north of Exeter. A number of these services are provided to serve commuters and the frequency of services offered during peak times ensure that employees in the area can use these services conveniently.
- 7.15 The site is therefore located in an area that offers a genuine choice of sustainable ways to access services and facilities. The proposed development would ensure safe and suitable access to these services and facilities by a range of transport modes. Therefore, the proposal should be considered to be a sustainable urban extension of Pinhoe in an area well-served by public transport, thereby offering choice of travel modes other than just the private car.
- 7.16 For the reasons outlined above, it is considered that the proposed development does not conflict with Saved Policy H1 or Saved Policy LS1. Accordingly, the location of the proposal should be considered to be acceptable for residential development in principle.

Provision of housing

- 7.17 The proposed development includes the provision of a mix of open market and affordable homes. The proposed level of affordable housing accords with policy and the proposal also includes an appropriate level of accessible homes.
- 7.18 The proposal therefore accords with the provisions and objectives of Saved Local Plan Policies H6 and H7 and Core Strategy Policies CP3 and CP5.

Layout and design

- 7.19 The Design and Access Statement and architectural plans demonstrate how the proposed development accords with design related policies and the relevant element of the Design Guidance SPD. Specific provisions include the integration of landscape design within the proposal, development at a height and density that is appropriate within the context of the local area and garden sizes that accord with the requirements of the Design Guidance. Furthermore, in excess of 10% of the site area is provided for public open space.
- 7.20 For the reasons outlined above, and further explained in the Design and Access Statement, the proposed development accords with Saved Local Plan Policies DG1, DG4 and DG7.

Landscape impact

- 7.21 The baseline study prepared for the LVIA submitted with the application concludes that the landscape character of the application site has an overall Medium-High sensitivity due to it occupying mid-slopes within the landscape setting of Exeter.
- 7.22 The proposals would introduce residential development where there currently is none, although it is noted that alterations have been made to the landform as part of the previous use as a plant nursery. Mitigation measures have been incorporated to help integrate the development into the landscape setting. This includes restricting the properties to single-storey bungalows, arranging buildings within the site and at levels that go some way to reflect the original contours of the site, providing buffer zones from sensitive boundaries and the provision of considerable tree planting and other landscaping.
- 7.23 As a result of the above, the proposed development would be well contained amongst the surrounding existing and proposed tree cover. As a consequence, the proposed development would be most apparent from within the landscape setting due to the close proximity in which it would be experienced from Church Hill and Footpath 53. The LVIA concludes that this would result in a Slight-Moderate Adverse impact to the landscape setting, but that this would only be experienced in the immediate vicinity of the site.
- 7.24 The LVIA concludes that when experienced from within Exeter and its outskirts, the proposed development would be viewed as an extension of the settlement edge and in the context residential development that already occupies the slopes of the setting, including that which is

currently under construction. In this context the proposed development would be a minor element and so result in a Minimal Adverse impact to the landscape setting.

7.25 Overall, the LVIA concludes that the site is capable of accommodating the proposed development without significant effects to the general character of the landscape setting of Exeter, or the visual amenity of the wider area. Where adverse effects do arise, these are Slight-Moderate and only experienced within the immediate vicinity of the site, where the proposals would not be a dominant or prominent feature. A landscape strategy accompanies the proposals and mitigation measures have been incorporated into the scheme to lessen effects, while helping to integrate the development into the surrounding character of the area and the landscape setting of Exeter.

7.26 The evidence demonstrates that the proposed development will not therefore result in harm to the landscape setting of the city. As such the proposal does not conflict with the provisions of Policy LS1 and Core Strategy Policy CP16.

7.27 In the event that the LPA consider that there is a demonstrable conflict with Policy LS1, it is important to recognise that the policy should be afforded very limited weight.

Sustainable construction

7.28 Verto Homes have carefully considered and modelled the energy use within the proposed dwellings. These have been designed with extremely high levels of fabric efficiency to reduce heat loss. Roofs have also been orientated to optimise generation for solar PV. This has involved maximising the space on the south and east/west roofs, reducing shading in the design and orientating the properties to gain the best advantage for daylight hours. The roofs have also been extended to maximise solar energy where possible, and protrusions on the roof structure have been adjusted to allow more flexibility in energy generation. All of the homes will include a large solar array with a battery.

7.29 The use of sustainable materials, along with a low energy requirement and renewable energy generation, means that the new homes will meet A rated SAP standards. Each property will be sold (or in case of the affordable homes transferred to a Registered Provider) with a Zero Energy Bills guarantee for a period of 5 years provided by Verto in partnership with Octopus Energy.

7.30 This will ensure that, not only will the new dwellings contribute to the national objective to meet net zero emissions by 2050, but that the occupants will also directly benefit immediately

from the utilisation of sustainable construction methods and the provision of renewable energy generation technology, through a guarantee that they will not receive any energy related utility bills during the first 5 years after taking possession of their property.

- 7.31 Through the provision of highly efficient homes and renewable energy generating equipment, it is anticipated that the dwellings will not need to use energy generated elsewhere. The proposed development will therefore accord with and exceed the requirements of Core Strategy Policy CP14. The proposed development will also exceed the requirements set out in Core Strategy Policy CP15 which is related to methods of sustainable design and construction.
- 7.32 For the above reasons outlined above, the proposed development is considered to accord with Saved Local Plan Policy DG2 and Core Strategy Policies CP14 and CP15.

Access and parking

- 7.33 The site will be accessed via a new vehicle access to the eastern boundary. Pedestrian access will be provided via the site under construction to the south. These arrangements will provide suitable and safe access for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. The proposed arrangements for vehicle parking and cycle storage accord with the relevant policies and guidance.
- 7.34 An assessment of the vehicle traffic impact confirms that the proposed development will generate a minimal volume of vehicle flows with an estimated total of 11 vehicle trips in and out of the site during the busiest peak AM peak hour, along with 11 trips during the PM peak.
- 7.35 A development traffic impact assessment carried on the B3181 Main Road double mini roundabout junction for the base year 2023 resulted in calculated impacts of 0.33% during the AM 0800-0900 period and 0.40% for the PM 1700-1800 period. These predicted percentage increases are minor and are therefore not considered likely to provide a severe impact to the operation of the B3181 Main Road double mini roundabouts.
- 7.36 For the reasons outlined above, the proposed development is considered to accord with Saved Local Plan Policies T1 and DG6.

Open space and green infrastructure

- 7.37 The proposed development incorporates significant areas of open space and green infrastructure. The open space area to the east of the site alone has an area of 1457 sqm, which is just under 10% of the site. Further publicly accessible areas of green space are provided across the site. The Landscape Strategy confirms that, in addition to the above, the proposed development will include the retention and enhancement of existing tree and hedgerows, along with the proposed new planting. In addition to new tree and hedgerow planting, the scheme incorporates rain gardens, new hedgebanks, areas of meadow planting and amenity grass.
- 7.38 In view of the above, the proposed development accords with Saved Local Plan Policies L4 and DG5 and Core Strategy Policy CP16.

Biodiversity

- 7.39 The proposed development incorporates a range of measures that will provide for biodiversity mitigation and enhancements. These include the provision of buffers, management of lighting, habitat retention and enhancement and the provision of new habitats areas. Appropriate tree, hedgerow, shrub and meadow planting is also proposed, along with provisions for bats, bird, bees, reptiles and amphibians.
- 7.40 For the reasons outlined above, the proposed development accords with Saved Local Plan Policy LS4.

Drainage and flood risk

- 7.41 The Flood Risk Assessment submitted in support of the application confirms that the site is within Flood Zone 1. Whilst soakaways are not suitable, there are options available to deal with surface water outfall. Sustainable urban drainage systems have been utilised where possible with the site discharge rate limited to greenfield runoff rate. Rainwater gardens and tree pits will be further reviewed at detailed design stage. Separate systems for surface water and foul water discharge are proposed and development proposals are not considered to create or increase the flood risk to adjacent sites.
- 7.42 For the reasons outlined above, the proposed development accords with Saved Local Plan Policy EN4 and Core Strategy Policy CP12.

Heritage

- 7.43 The Archaeological Assessment submitted with the application confirms that the proposed development is unlikely to significantly impact any below ground archaeology, as it is considered very unlikely that anything will have survived 20th and 21st century works on the Site. The assessment recognises that the Grade II* Listed Church of St Michael and All Angels is very sensitive to further changes to its setting. The assessment concludes that the Church will retain its rural setting and character, and the proposed use of bungalows on the upper parts of the Site will minimise the impact of the development on heritage assets and the wider landscape.
- 7.44 In view of the above, the proposed development is considered to accord with Saved Local Plan Policy C2 and the relevant elements of Core Strategy Policy CP4.

Summary

- 7.45 In all respects, other than a conflict with spatial elements of Policy LS1, the proposed development accords with the strategic objectives of the Development Plan and other relevant development management policies.
- 7.46 The scheme has also been prepared in the context of the NPPF, and because of the current shortfall in housing land supply its presumption in favour of development is engaged and supports the grant of planning permission. The proposed development will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.
- 7.47 For these reasons, the granting of planning permission is justified at the present time.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 This Planning Statement is submitted in support of a full planning application for residential development on land to the west of Church Hill, Pinhoe, Exeter.
- 8.2 The proposed development will provide:
- 18 single storey zero carbon smart dwellings, including 6 affordable homes;
 - New vehicle access;
 - Pedestrian access;
 - Open space;
 - Landscaping and tree planting; and
 - Biodiversity enhancements.
- 8.3 The proposed development will include zero carbon energy efficient homes that will generate their own energy via solar PV panels and self-regulate energy usage via smart home integration to maximise efficiency. The development will contribute towards meeting Exeter City Council's carbon neutral target. The fact that the proposal significantly exceeds the requirements of planning policies and building regulations is a material consideration that should be weighed in favour of the scheme.
- 8.4 The proposed development has been prepared taking into account the site constraints and opportunities. The original proposal has been refined following pre-application advice provided by the LPA.
- 8.5 The proposal accords with the provisions of the Development Plan, other than the conflict with the spatial elements of policy LS1. Notwithstanding this, the Council has previously acknowledged that the policy is not criteria based and relies on outdated evidence and superseded government advice, and that it can therefore only be accorded minimal weight. Furthermore, the submitted LVIA demonstrates that the proposed development can be delivered without harm to the general character of the landscape setting of Exeter, or the visual amenity of the area.
- 8.6 It is also relevant that the Council have previously acknowledged that to meet the Core Strategy housing requirement and to achieve a five year housing land supply, permissions need to be granted on land that is subject to policies LS1 and CP16.

- 8.7 As the Council are not able to demonstrate a five year land supply, the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged requiring a tilted balance to be applied to the determination of planning applications. The current deficit in housing provision and the contribution that the proposal would make in addressing it is a strong material consideration in favour of the proposed development.
- 8.8 There can be no question that the application site is in a sustainable location and the evidence submitted with the planning application demonstrates that there are no adverse impacts associated with the proposed development and that it should be considered acceptable in planning terms.
- 8.9 In accordance with the NPPF, which for the reasons outlined above is a material consideration for the determination of the application, planning permission should be granted. The proposal is therefore commended to the LPA, who are respectfully requested to approve the planning application.

Appendix 1 – Pre-submission consultation leaflet



VERTO'S BACKGROUND

Verto is at the forefront of sustainable living and, founded in 2010, is the UK's first housebuilder to specialise in the design, construction and sale of Zero Carbon Smart Homes™.

A Verto home does not burn fossil fuels, and implements state-of-the-art technologies to regulate energy usage efficiently as well as generating its own clean energy from renewable sources. Our homes therefore produce zero emissions during their day to day running. Using smart automation, heat and light in every room can be adjusted saving energy and creating an environment suited to the homeowner's personal preferences.

As one of the leading sustainable companies operating in the South West, we are committed not only to tackling the Climate Emergency, as declared by Exeter City Council in July 2019, but also the cost of living and energy crisis that many households are suffering from. To that end, this year we launched the first of our Zero Carbon Smart Homes™ to feature a Zero Bills Guarantee, meaning that our residents won't pay a penny towards the energy costs of running their home.



NEXT STEPS

We are in the process of preparing the plans and technical reports that will be required to support this planning application. The supporting information will cover a range of topics, including access, archaeology, drainage, ecology, landscape and trees, and is required to ensure that the scheme is appropriately designed and sensitive to the local environment.

Whilst the planning application process will offer an opportunity for you to provide Exeter City Council with your views on the proposed development, we would like to invite any comments that you may have, which will be considered by Exeter City Council as part of the planning application submission.

Should you wish to provide any comments, you can do so by writing to us at the address below:

- info@vertohomes.com
- Verto Homes, Green Court, Ground Floor, Building A, Truro Business Park, Threemilestone, Truro, Cornwall, TR4 9LF.

If you would simply like to find out more about our fight for zero on the home front, please visit www.vertohomes.com.



PROPOSAL FOR 18 ZERO CARBON BUNGALOWS

LAND WEST OF CHURCH HILL,
PINHOE, EXETER

LIVE ZERO



SITE BACKGROUND

Verto will be submitting a detailed planning application this month for 18 Zero Carbon Smart Homes™ on land west of Church Hill, Pinhoe identified on the plan below. The land was previously used for horticulture and is terraced to accommodate now obsolete polytunnels. This will expand Verto's presence and commitment to building high quality sustainable homes in the local area, with 40 Zero Carbon Smart Homes™ currently under construction at our Nexa Fields development to the south, on Pulling Road. This leaflet provides an overview of the proposed development and an opportunity for you to provide comments in advance of the submission of the detailed planning application.

LOCATION MAP



PROPOSED CONCEPT

The scheme has been designed to create a mixture of 18 Zero Carbon bungalows, of which 6 will be affordable, helping to alleviate the current undersupply of high quality affordable homes in the local area. The development will comprise 4 x one bedroom bungalows, 7 x two bedroom bungalows and 7 x four bedroom bungalows, each incorporating the latest sustainable technologies including EV charging points for each home. We have designed the scheme to create a distinctive and attractive place to live, which retains all existing mature trees and includes enhanced and new landscaped areas throughout the site. When operational, the UK Government's Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) register states the average emission rate for a dwelling in the UK is 6 tonnes of carbon per annum, but our Zero Carbon Smart Homes™ achieve a rate of **negative 2 tonnes**, by supplying the grid with clean excess energy generated from our homes that is utilised elsewhere. That's a reduction of 133%. For this scheme, of 18 new homes, the expected carbon saving is estimated to be circa 3,600 tonnes over 25 years compared to existing housing stock. ¹ <https://find-energy-certificate.service.gov.uk/energy-certificate/8439-6731-0000-0639-2222>.

A new safe access to the site will be connected to Church Hill. Landscape buffers surrounding the site and numerous green breaks between plots will create an attractive environment to live, whilst maintaining and enhancing the current wildlife and ecological connections throughout the local area. A large area of public open space, comprising existing trees and hedge banks will create an attractive arrival and entrance to the proposed development. The scheme is a truly landscape led design, making use of bungalows, natural materials, preserving all of the existing trees and incorporating large green open spaces throughout.

PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT

