

## 2.2 LOCAL CHARACTER

### **The immediate local area is a variable mix of buildings in both age, typology and materials.**

The more historic buildings, prevalent along Highstone Road, are typically long terraces in light buff stone with black sills and lintels and slate roofs. They are charmingly characterful with largely proportioned openings, neat black edge details and chimneys.

Later development is typically detached or semi-detached red brick houses set back from the street with front gardens and driveways. The newest additions bring a fresh positivity back to the area with larger openings, prominent gable elevations and defined gardens.

The historic character of the wider area has retained long-lasting charm and durability in both built form, public realm and landscaping. Key features include stepping frontages and gables, chimneys, long low garden walls immediately adjacent to the public footway, and durable green shrubbery and hedges protruding above to soften but still define the boundaries.



Characterful historic terraced properties in stone and brick on Highstone Road



Red brick semi-detached dwellings on Mount Vernon Avenue



Local historic red brick terraced dwellings, Howard St, Worsbrough Common



New mottled red brick and cedar clad units in first phases of SYHA regeneration development



Stone walls, gables & hedges, Worsbrough Road



Terraces stepping up slope and front gardens with chimneys, White Lane

2.3  
CURRENT SITE

The site is a grassy triangular area, at the top of the slope that follows Highstone Road and Mount Vernon Avenue.

As a result, from this upper junction (A), long distance views are achieved across the site from west to east, towards the mature trees in St Luke's Church yard, and the distant hills beyond.

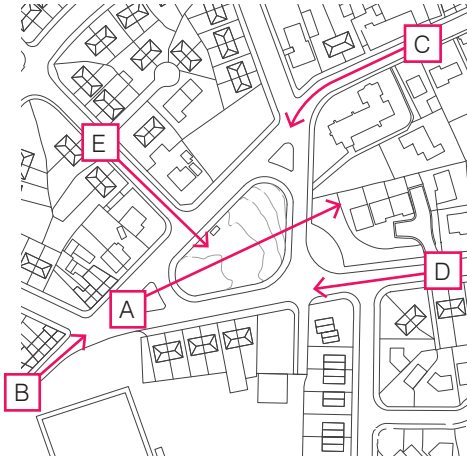
Views towards the site are achieved from multiple viewpoints, as a key node at the heart of Worsbrough Common. The site is prominently located, exposed on all sides with numerous roads approaching it, and long reaching views from it towards the far hills in the east. It is important the proposal takes into account these key views.

The main historic road Highstone Road provides views from the south east (B) and north west at the junction with Warren Quarry Lane along the bus route (C), whilst Mount Vernon Avenue approaches uphill towards the site (D), and Dickinson Road from the north west (E).

A mixture of historic terraced buff stone cottages and red brick semi-detached houses look onto the site along the primary frontages, whilst at the shorter end, the mature trees, old stone wall and gable end of St Luke's Church provide a backdrop, as the site slopes down to the east.



A. Western edge of the site and view of trees and hills beyond



Plan locating views



B. Approach from the south west along Highstone Road



C. Approach from the north east along Highstone Road



D. Approach from the east along Mount Vernon Avenue



E. Approach from the north west along Dickinson Road

## 2.4 SITE OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

**The site is surrounded on all sides by pavement abutting the three carriageways of Highstone Road, Mount Vernon Avenue and Lockwood Lane.**

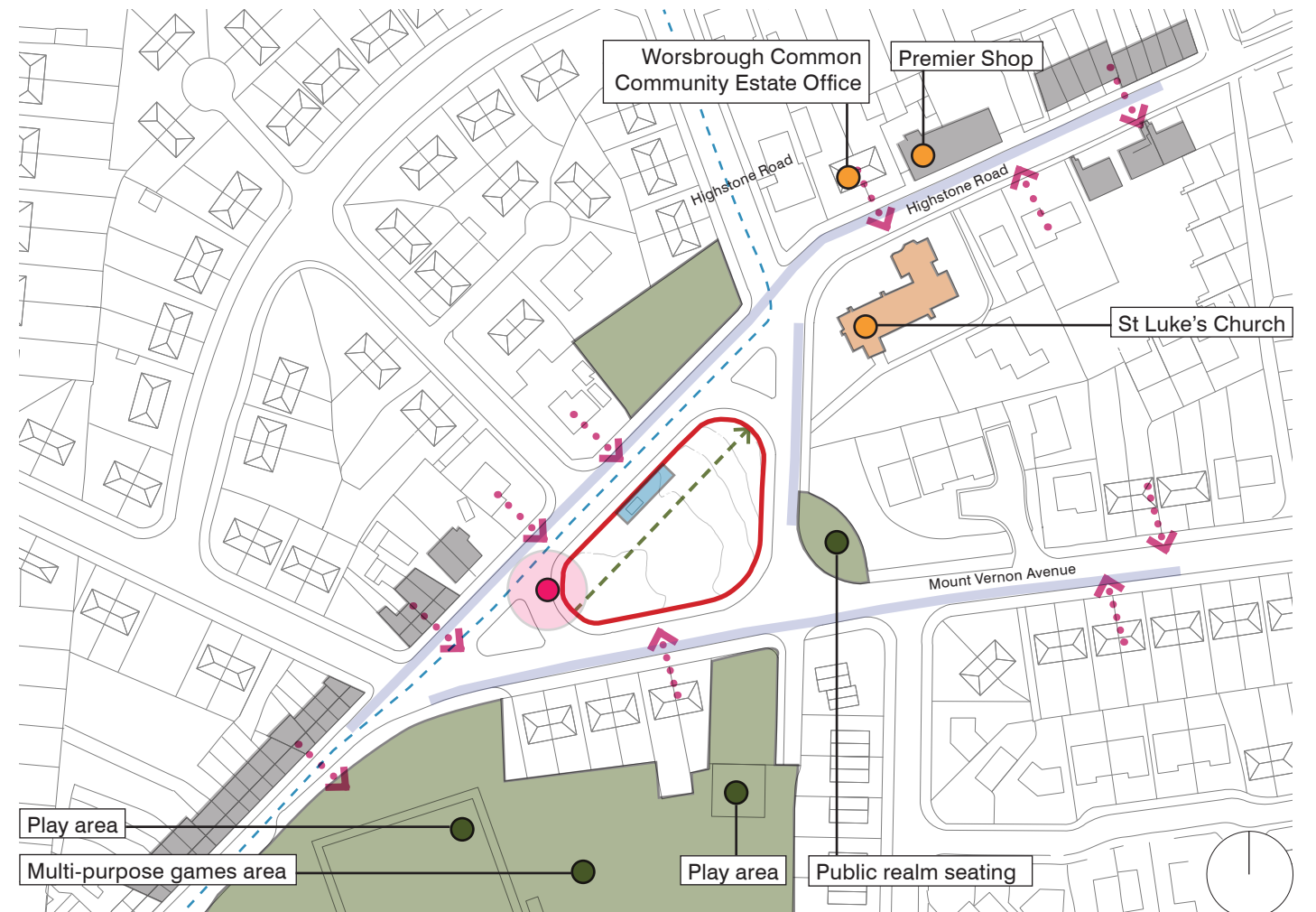
The site slopes by approximately 2m from south west to north east parallel to Highstone Road. The only existing built features on the site are a bus stop and telephone box, as well as elements such as post box, low metal railing, grit box and telegraph poles with overhead cables along Highstone Road.

Two grassy triangles define the adjacent junctions, with other opposite corners also defined by grassy edges, planting or public realm with seating.

The 43/44 bus route passes adjacent to the site, to and from the centre of Barnsley along Warren Quarry Lane and Highstone Road . Numerous other buses are available on Mount Vernon Road, a short walk east along Mount Vernon Avenue.

There is a former coalmine entrance located just off the south west corner of the site within the carriageway, which requires a 10m easement to the development of any built form, which has been well considered in the proposal. For more details on the coal mine investigations that were carried out, please see the Geo-Environmental Site Assessment produced by Met Engineers for SYHA.

- Site outline
- Bus stop & telephone box
- - - Bus route
- Previous coal mine entrance
- 10m easement from coal mine
- - - Existing property frontage line
- - - Fall of slope
- Existing green space
- Public amenity space
- Local vernacular terrace
- Local community facility
- Existing street parking



Constraints and Opportunities Diagram of Site



Exposed bus stop on site



Public realm seating opposite site



Grassy corner leading towards playground

## 3.0 INITIAL FEASIBILITY STUDIES

**Mæ Architects carried out a series of initial feasibility studies for the site for SYHA and consulted with Barnsley Council to define the most appropriate and viable option of development on the site.**

The first feasibility study in early April 2014 located 5 'courtyard' dwellings on site with private gardens, but did not respond well to the character of the area or the dual frontage nature of the site.

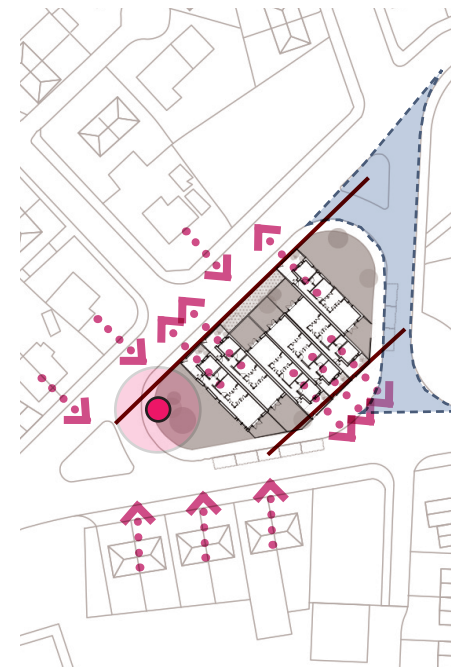
The second feasibility study in late April 2014 located 5 dwellings as a block formation, with parking at the western end over the coal mine easement, and a communal garden in the centre.

From these two studies, the key feedback from the planners was concerned with how the site addresses Mount Vernon Ave and Highstone Road as it is a strategic corner site. It should ideally front both of the main roads as a block development would, with the constraints of the bus stop and telephone box area that cannot have a frontage.

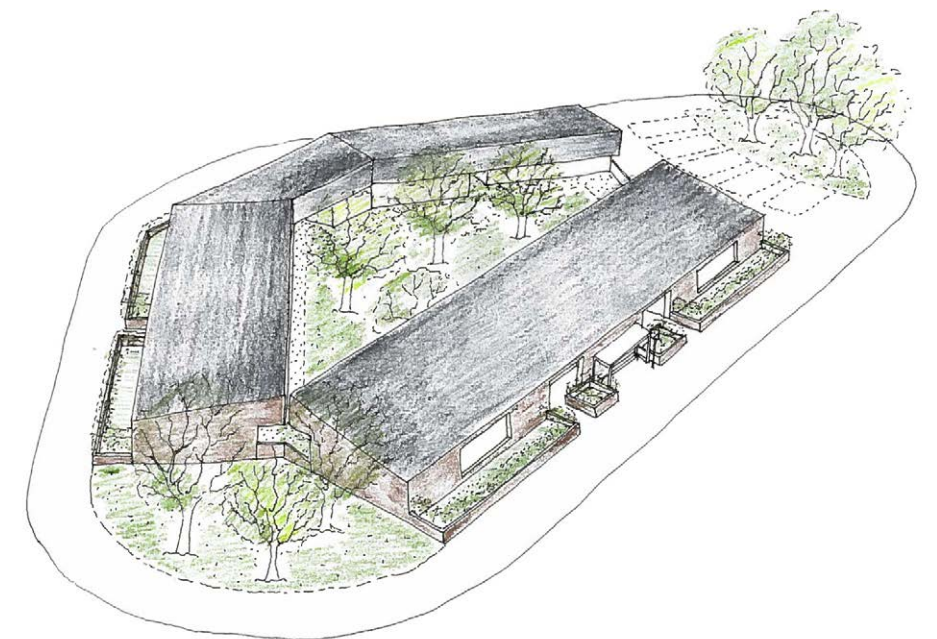
It was discussed that whilst the stone terraces are directly on the street and this could be seen as precedent, it would be preferable to have some area of front garden as were successfully done in the regeneration of Worsbrough.

On street parking might be acceptable as densities are low and the roads are not too busy.

At this point, these studies did not address the implications or opportunities of levels, bus stop removal, or maximising amenity space and views to, from and through the site.



Feasibility Study 1



Feasibility Study 2 massing view



Feasibility Study 2 indicative plan

# 4.0

## CONCEPT PROPOSAL

The third feasibility study in May 2015 set out the following priorities, in order to ensure viability of the scheme and deliver good quality architecture and urban design principles:

- 6 residential single storey units
- Frontage onto both Highstone Road and Mount Vernon Avenue
- Response to key approaches and views with prominent frontages, gables and garden walls
- Relocation of bus stop and phone box to ensure clear, visual, safe and accessible location, without intruding on residents' privacy
- Protect privacy distances with good internal layouts so that habitable rooms do not overlook each other, orientated towards private gardens, with screens and planting between.
- Create access to private rear gardens for refuse and ease of parking access
- Locate 1 parking space per dwelling on site
- Tie into local context with appropriate massing and materials, drawing on local context for precedents in brick and colour palette, with features such as gables and planted garden walls.



Concept Proposal plan, issued to planners for advice in May 2015

**The plan and supporting information was advised on with planning officers from Barnsley Council, with feedback in June 2015 concluding:**

- A lot of work has gone into the concept with logical reasoning provided.
- The benefits of producing an individually designed scheme on what is an awkward site is clear and the advantages of a dual aspect development on a prominent island site are acknowledged
- Having discussed the scheme with Highways and Design colleagues the main issue with the proposal appears to be the shared car parking area.
- The location and reasoning behind the car park is clear given the location of the mine shaft and the easement. One idea was to move the development towards the shaft i.e. keep the two units in a similar position, but, move the terraced row of 4 units into the car park area so they are more centrally positioned on the site frontage. This could allow for two smaller car parks which would be located closer to the units to which they relate.

**Further planning discussions have helped to shape the proposals, namely regarding the location and overlooking of parking.**

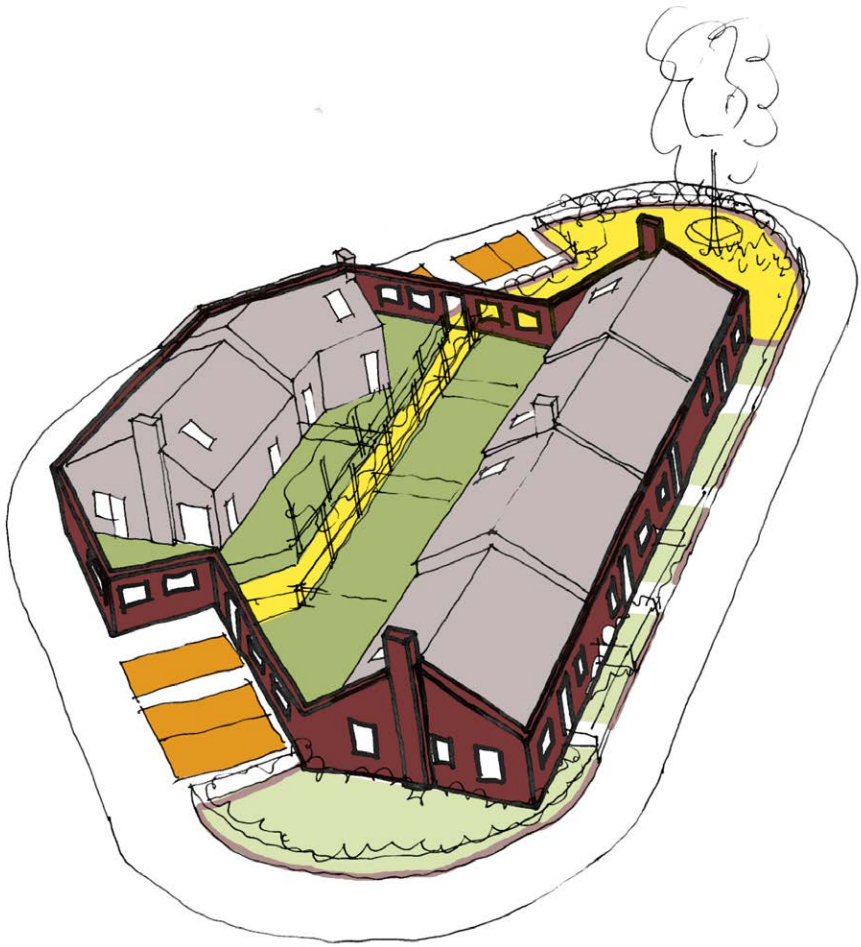
**The design and access principles that drive The Proposal are set out in the following chapters.**



Initial massing illustrating the Concept



Initial sketch illustrating the Concept Proposal viewed from Mount Vernon Avenue



Adjusted Concept arrangement, locating two areas of parking and realigning the perimeter wall

## 5.0 THE PROPOSAL

**This section sets out the design approach and access strategies behind the proposal.**

The proposal will be defined under the following headings:

- Use
- Amount
- Scale and massing
- Layout
- Landscaping
- Appearance
- Refuse Strategy
- Transport and access



Aerial massing view of The Proposal, viewed from the south west

5.1  
USE

Residential development tailored towards the end users

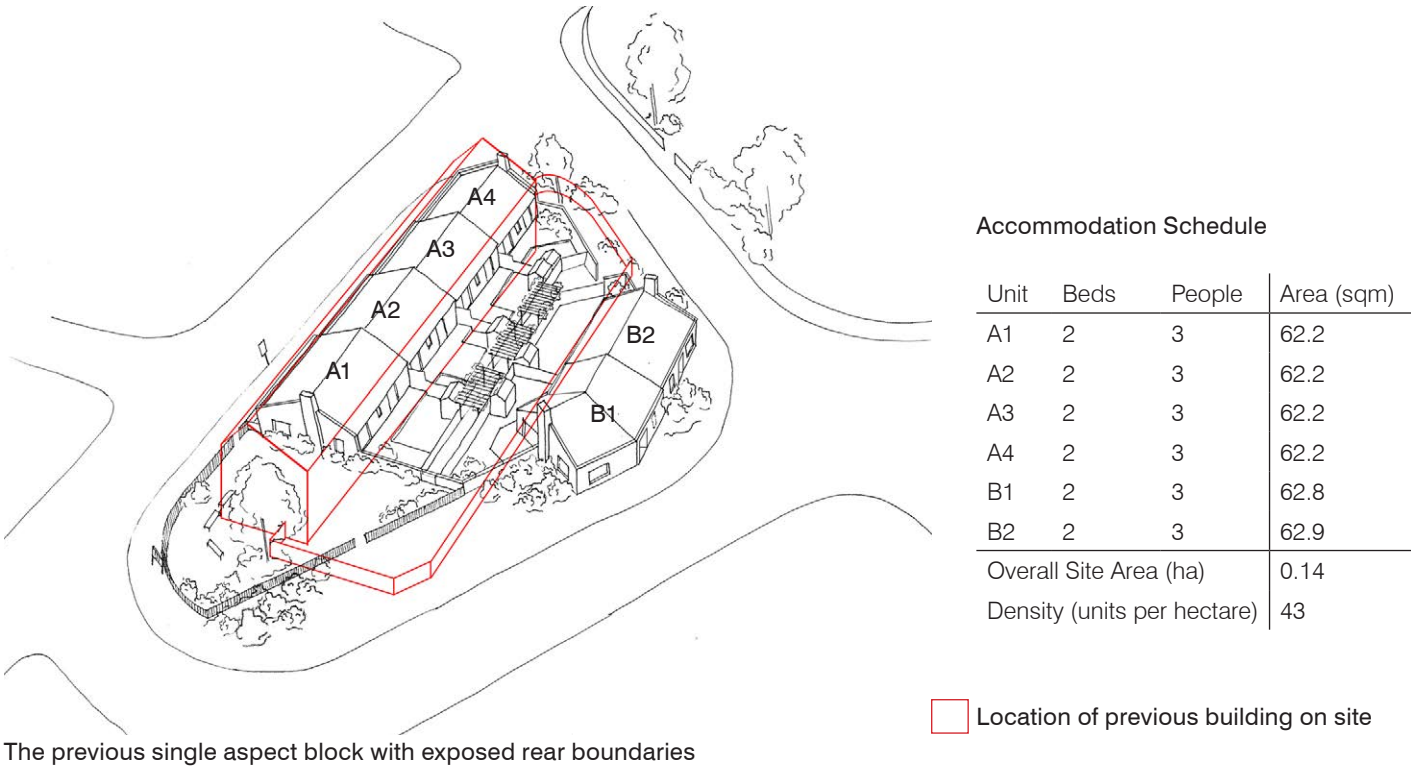
- The proposal is for 6 no. single storey residential bungalows, sized as 2 bedroom, 3 person units.
- The end users have been considered throughout the proposals, designed as inclusive, general needs housing, likely to be sought by older people.
- Front entrances provide level access and are clearly defined with wide, inset, sheltered entrances facing onto the street.
- Front gardens are bound by railings to the terrace fronting Highstone Road, and, for the pair facing Mount Vernon Avenue, is defined by a change of surface and planting area.
- The rear gates and boundaries to the dwellings are not left exposed, contained within the brick perimeter wall which links the two blocks, set back from the public realm by planting areas.
- Each unit has an area of private garden, as well as access to a shared residents' garden, securely accessed via a rear shared path connecting to the parking spaces and refuse storage area.



5.2  
AMOUNT

Quantum of development creates a robust and viable scheme

- The volume of development responds to the need to create a financially viable scheme, given the preference for bungalows on the site, to be deliverable by South Yorkshire Housing Association.
- This is the final phase of the Worsbrough Regeneration programme.
- The amount and position of development on site enables best practice urban design principles to be put forward and create lasting improvements to the local area as a whole.
- These principles include creating positive dual-frontage development to overlook the multiple street frontages, better defining the public and private realm with secure, robust boundary treatments, and responding to views to and through the site with quality materials and characterful elevations.
- This is in contrast to the previous building on site, as a singular linear block which fronted onto Highstone Road, obscured views across the site and had a poor quality, defensive, exposed rear boundary which turned its back on the residents of Mount Vernon Avenue.



## 5.3 SCALE AND MASSING

### 5. Appropriate scale and massing for the 'island' site

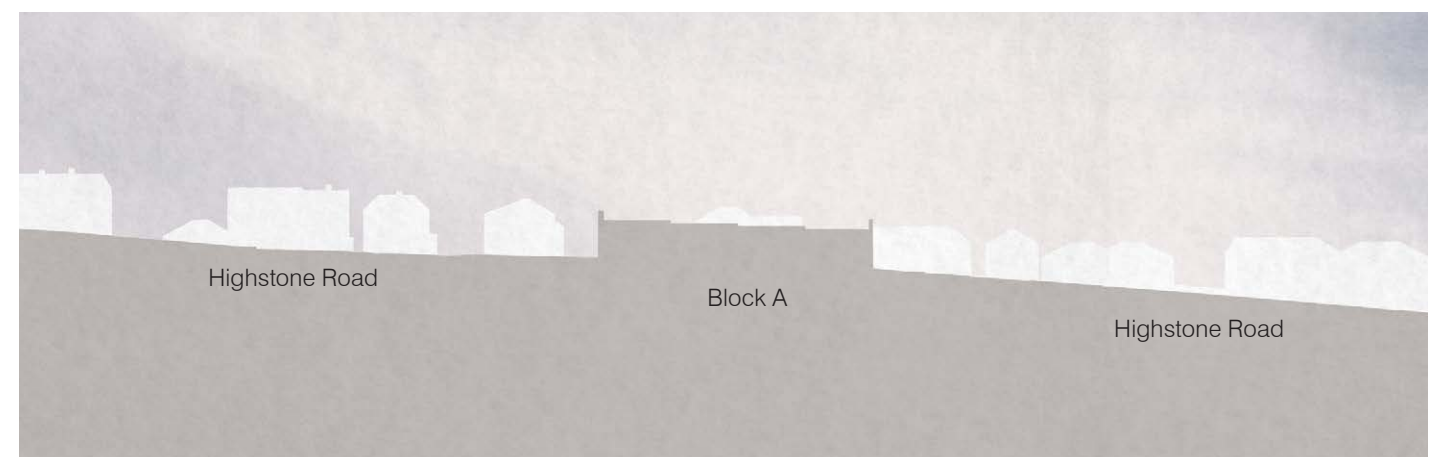
- The single storey dwellings reduce the visual impact on this prominent island site, with minimal overshadowing onto the street and garden spaces
- The two blocks follow the historic urban grain, fronting onto and animating both streets without a 'front' and a 'back' side to the site.
- The pitched roofs reference the local character, creating strong characterful gables that respond to multiple views on approach to the site
- The feeling of a green landscape on the site within the walled garden enhances long distance views through the site, particularly from Highstone Road to the mature trees of St Luke's church and hills beyond
- Views out from the site from are enjoyed on all sides, ensuring the development is both secure and inclusive for its residents, and outward looking and engaging with the adjacent public realm and local community.



Photo montage presenting view from junction of Highstone Road and Warren Quarry Lane



Photo montage presenting view from Mount Vernon Avenue



Indicative long section showing scale of Block A with other buildings stepping down Highstone Road



Photo montage presenting view from junction of Highstone Road and Mount Vernon Avenue