

2.6.2 Vehicle Movement

Contrary to modern urban design best practice, vehicle access is provided by an access road at the rear of the site. Consequently, there is no definition between front and back, as both sides of building face a road. A large area of external space is also taken up by vehicle access creating a poor pedestrian environment.

Proposals for the site should aim to defined front and backs to buildings and an improved the pedestrian environment at ground floor level.



Vehicle access route along rear boundary of site



Surface car park bordering Hitherbroom Park



Existing vehicles route

2.6.3 Connection to Hitherbroom Park

Hitherbroom Park is an important outdoor space for the neighbourhood, however it feels very disconnected from the existing estate and surrounding area. There is no clear route to the park and a paladin fence prevents access from the south.

The tower blocks are set away from the park and thick planting is located along the boundary. The park therefore has little overlooking and feels isolated.

Proposals for the site should aim to improve connections to the park to promote its use and improve the perception of safety.



Hitherbroom Park



Fence and planting preventing access from the estate to Hitherbroom Park



Location of Hitherbroom Park and existing play space

2.6.4 Ground Floor Activity

The existing estate offers almost no active ground floor frontage. The existing tower blocks have side entrances and the parking structures are accessed at the rear of the site via a series of narrow passageways.

The frontage at ground floor level consists of either a mesh enclosure to the parking structures or blank brickwork walls to the ground floor of tower blocks.

The lack of frontage creates a poor pedestrian environment which feels grim and unsafe. There is a clear opportunity to improve in development proposals.



Mesh enclosure to parking structures onto Avondale Drive



Passageway between parking structures and tower blocks



Analysis of ground floor frontages

2.6.5 Views

The site benefits from fantastic views into surrounding open space. In particular facing north towards Hitherbroom Park. Proposals for the site should be designed to provide all homes with views into green space.



View from existing flat looking north



View from existing flat looking south



Diagram illustrating views into open space enjoyed by existing homes

2.6.6 Proximity to Green Open Space

The site benefits from close proximity to a number of green open spaces, including Hitherbroom Park to the north and the Minet Country Park to the east, accessible via a pedestrian and cycle tunnel.

The site also overlooks an open green space on the opposite side of Abbotswood Way which is connected to a green pedestrian and cycle route linking to Pump Lane.

Proposals for the site should strengthen connections to surrounding green open spaces.



Minet Country Park



Pedestrian tunnel providing access to the Minet Country Park



Pedestrian connections to surrounding green space