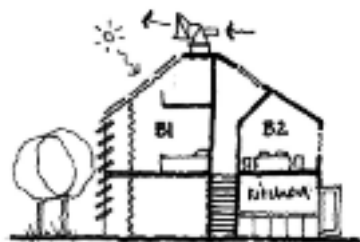
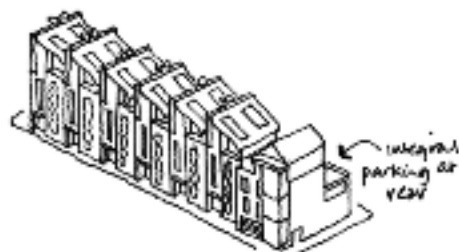




Low-energy design demands a greater understanding of unit typologies in the early stage of a project than has previously been required



Green credentials: residents are encouraged to make the most of cycle routes and car clubs provided to preserve the 'green' environment. Many of the new homes have photovoltaic roof panels and high levels of insulation. Heating is provided by a central heating and power plant, all appliances are energy efficient and the homes are expected to use around a third less water than usual, keeping energy bills to a minimum. The scheme will meet net zero carbon for the whole development, Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4, Code 6 for Energy, and EcoHomes Excellent on all refurbished buildings

when complete, including 300 affordable homes, along with community amenities – artists' studios, allotments, a farm shop, gallery space and creative business office space, all managed by a Community Development Trust. It is estimated the scheme will create around 200 local jobs.

Some 622 mature trees have been retained and 1428 new trees, including fruit trees, are being planted. Residents are encouraged to make the most of cycle routes and car clubs provided to preserve this 'green' environment.

Other green approaches in residential design include high levels of insulation and the use of energy efficient appliances. Homes use 33 per cent less water than traditional dwellings, and where possible materials are either recycled, or being sourced within 50 miles of Graylingwell Park to save energy on goods in transit.

The existing water tower at the heart of the scheme is a highly visible and a treasured local landmark, and as such, was the natural location for the new energy centre. A combined heat and power plant provides heating and hot water to all homes through gas-powered, low-carbon technology. Excess power generated is fed back into the national grid resulting in lower energy bills for homeowners. An off-site wind farm will offset the remaining CO2 emissions generated. As a whole, the scheme will meet net zero carbon for the whole development, Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4, Code 6 for Energy, and EcoHomes Excellent on all refurbished buildings.

4. SEEDING COMMUNITY

Good urban form alone cannot guarantee a thriving place, and a range of strategies are being employed at Graylingwell Park to maximize social interaction and engender the sense of belonging required to seed a new community. Some 40 per cent of the homes proposed for the site are tenure-blind affordable units, pepper-potted across the site in small groupings, creating a range of private sale, shared equity and social rented properties. These are all provided in a range of typologies of varying sizes, to encourage the development of a healthy mixed community, made up of people from all backgrounds, and at different life-stages.

A cultural strategy has also been developed, in consultation with existing local inhabitants, to bring a sense of energy to the new development in the early phases. Artists' studios are

therefore included in the mixed-uses located in three 'hubs' around the site. The hubs include community facilities, with a listed chapel and mixed-use hall, and commercial uses: a new farm shop, café/gallery, a public house, offices and small local retail outlet.

Building on the success of previous experience at Caterham Barracks, it was decided that all the mixed-uses should be owned and operated by a Community Development Trust, run by the new residents and businesses to engender a sense of ownership of Graylingwell Park as a place. A calendar of activities is being developed to act as a catalyst for social interaction. The first Graylingwell Summer fete was held in August with annual events planned for the future. These are intended to draw existing local people into the development, and further nurture good neighbourliness.

OUTCOMES: A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT

Graylingwell Park represents the latest stage in John Thompson & Partners' pursuit of sustainable urbanism: a holistic approach to development in which dynamic new places are created by combining sensitive, but technologically advanced architectures, with existing historic buildings and mature landscapes. It is highly ambitious in terms of low-energy architecture and urban design. The consensus-led approach to design fostered considerable local support, and allowed an outline consent for the masterplan, and detailed consent for Phase 1, granted in March 2009. Construction commenced on site later in the same year, with completion due in 2016.

The project has been designed to achieve Building for Life Gold Standard, the national benchmark for neighbourhood design, and has already been identified as an exemplary project by English Heritage in their publication *Constructive Conservation in Practice*.

Graylingwell Park has been awarded Best Low or Carbon Zero Initiative in the Housebuilder Awards 2010 and Sustainable Larger Social Project of the Year 2010 in the Sustainable Housing Awards, organised by Inside Housing and Sustainable Housing in association with the Chartered Institute of Housing.

■ Marcus Adams is Managing Partner, John Thompson & Partners www.jtp.co.uk/