

Early Engagement Strategy Template



Southwark Council's Development Consultation Charter requires the submission of an Early Engagement Strategy (EES) for pre-application discussions with the council. The purpose of this document is to ensure that developers engage with residents and local stakeholders from the beginning of the development process. Early engagement is essential to ensure that residents and local stakeholders have a say in the development that is going on in their area. Early engagement can also help to identify elements in the design of the scheme that may have a detrimental impact on certain individuals or groups before a planning application is submitted.

As part of developing the Early Engagement Strategy, applicants should make drafts of the strategy publicly available for residents and stakeholders, including Ward councillors.

Before submission of a planning application, applicants should make the final version of the EES publicly available and undertake the engagement activities outlined in the strategy. The outcome of this engagement should then be reflected in an Engagement Summary (ES).

Part 1 - Fact-based Audit

In the Fact-based Audit, please provide the details of the local stakeholders and community infrastructure on and around the site.

'On or around the site'- refers to the area beyond the red line of the planning application, taking into account immediate neighbours of the site. Around the site is approximately a 10-minute walking radius from the red line.

For neighbourhood-level data we recommend using:

- [The Southwark Council Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\)](#)
- [The Office for National Statistics Mid-Year Population Estimates](#)
- [The Office for National Statistics Census](#)
- [Fingertips - Public health profiles](#)

For site-level data, we recommend:

- Conducting stakeholder surveys
- Recording observations through site visits
- Desk-based analysis of local infrastructure

Stakeholder Analysis

1. Who are the owners, occupiers and users of the existing buildings on and around the site?

Owner

The site is currently owned by the Salvation Army. Subject to planning permission being granted, Arada will acquire the site and take forward the approved scheme as the future landowner.

On site occupiers

The existing site currently accommodates a mid-to-late 20th century, 10 storey office block with a basement that formerly served as the Headquarters of the Salvation Army. The structure functioned primarily as an administrative workspace for leadership and support staff but has been vacated since 2023 and is currently awaiting redevelopment.

Surrounding Occupiers

The site is surrounded by several designated conservation areas, reflecting the historic and architectural significance of the wider context. However, the site itself is not located in a conservation area and has been identified as an opportunity area, where carefully considered development can respond to its surroundings. The land uses in direct proximity of the site are extremely varied, which represents the diverse and dynamic character of the area. The nearby buildings are a range of residential tenures, including mixed-use residential development. The area also offers hotels, office buildings and a wide range of retail users. Also, there are community, education, and religious facilities neighbouring the site. This mix of functions contributes to a vibrant town centre environment and reinforces the site's suitability for development within a well-established and active urban context.

Neighbouring the site:

- Residential complex Metro Central Heights
- 91 Newington Causeway
- London School of Science and Technology Building
- Fora - 251 Southwark Bridge Road
- 5-9 Rockingham Street
- 2-4 Tiverton Street

Demographics of the wider area:

Chaucer ward is located within the commercial and cultural heart of Elephant and Castle in the London Borough of Southwark. In the 2021 Census, Southwark recorded a population of 307,600 people, with a broadly even gender split.

Chaucer has a relatively young population, with approximately 47% of its population aged 20 to 39, reflecting a similar but slightly higher, trend to the wider borough. The proportion of residents aged 65 and over is lower than the borough average.

The ward is ethnically diverse with 56% of the population identifying as non-White and includes a larger population identifying as Asian or Asian British than the rest of Southwark (around 19%). Religious affiliation reflects Southwark's wider diversity and secularisation, with a large proportion of residents reporting no religion, Christianity remaining the largest faith group, and significant Muslim communities alongside smaller faith groups.

Chaucer experiences higher levels of deprivation compared to other parts of Southwark, consistently ranking among the most deprived areas in the borough. Significant economic

challenges, including some of the lowest net household incomes in the area and high rates of child poverty, contribute to this ranking.

Health outcomes in the area are similar to the Southwark average, with higher levels of life expectancy for both men and women. However, Chaucer sees significantly worse outcomes for emergency admittances. Fertility rates are also declining at a faster rate than in the rest of the Borough, with the change from 2011 to 2021 being -34%.

As a busy town centre corridor with high footfall and late-night activity, Chaucer ward records higher crime levels than many residential wards. Despite these challenges, the area benefits from excellent public transport accessibility, proximity to employment opportunities and a strong local economy driven by retail, markets and small businesses.

2. How did you identify the stakeholders on and around the site?

The Applicant and project team undertook a stakeholder mapping exercise at the outset of the consultation process to identify businesses, organisations, and commercial premises located in the vicinity of the Site. This exercise was complemented by site visits, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the surrounding commercial context.

3. Is there a Community Plan or Neighbourhood Plan covering the area?

The site is located within a highly strategic part of the borough and is guided by the statutory Development Plan, comprising the London Plan 2021 and the Southwark Plan 2022. It also falls within area-specific frameworks, including the Elephant and Castle Opportunity Area and the Elephant and Castle SPD, which together identify the area as a focus for growth, intensification, and high-quality place-making.

The site benefits from a number of key designations, including its location within the Central Activities Zone (CAZ), the Elephant and Castle Opportunity Area, and the Elephant and Castle Major Town Centre. It is also identified within the Enterprise Quarter (as defined in the SPD), has excellent public transport accessibility (PTAL 6B), lies within a designated Tall Buildings Strategy area, and is allocated for development within the Southwark Plan (Site NSP47).

Local Economy and Community Infrastructure

Schools and educational facilities

4. How have you considered the impact on any identified schools or educational institutions which are within or impacted by the scheme?

The closest schools to the site (within a 0.5-mile radius) are as follows:

- Ark Global Academy
- St Jude's CR Primary School
- Charlotte Sharman Primary School
- London School of Musical Theatre
- London Christian School

Local Economy and Community Infrastructure

- Imperial Oak School
- London South Bank University (Chemical and Energy Engineering Building)
- University Arts London (London College of Communication Building)
- London School of Science and Technology Building

The project team will incorporate these schools within their consultation outreach.

Health facilities

5. Are there any health facilities on and around the site?

The closest health facilities to the site (within 0.5-mile radius) are as follows:

- Princess Street Practice (Nexus Health Group)
- Dr K Misra- Borough Medical Centre
- Falmouth Road Surgery
- CBR Clinics
- LDN Physio
- Sensify Counselling and Therapy
- Bodyset
- Maria Garcia Therapy
- The Good Mental Health Company
- London International Polyclinic

These facilities indicate that residents have access to a range of health and wellbeing services within walking distance of the site

6. How have you considered the impact on any identified health facilities which are within or impacted by the scheme?

The scheme has been designed to avoid any adverse impact on existing health facilities in the area. While no health services are located on the site, consideration has been given to the accessibility of nearby community and wellbeing facilities. The proposals aim to ensure safe pedestrian access and connectivity, supporting local residents' access to health and wellbeing services.

Local businesses

7. Are there any local or independent businesses on and around the site? How did you determine this?

The site neighbours:

- The Enterprise Hub
- The Elephant and Castle Pub
- Costa Azul
- El Tomate Latino
- The Elegance Tailoring
- Oishii Lashes (Eyelash Tech)

Local Economy and Community Infrastructure

The identification of these businesses was carried out through a stakeholder mapping exercise at the outset of the consultation process and a site visit.

8. How have you considered the impact on any local or independent businesses within the scheme?

All businesses in the nearby vicinity have been, and will continue to be, invited to future consultation events to ensure ongoing engagement and feedback opportunities.

Sites of Community Importance

9. Are there any sites of significance to the local community on or around the site? How did you determine this?

Several sites of significance to the local community are located within a 0.5-mile radius of the building site.

Locally listed sites:

- Metro Central Heights
- Inner London Sessions Court
- K2 Telephone Kiosk Opposite Junction with Falmouth Road
- The Roebuck Public House
- Trinity Arms Public House
- Statue of King Alfred, Trinity Church Square
- Surrey Dispensary
- 26 and 28 Cole Street
- Railings to Merrick Square Garden
- The Star and Cross Church
- 62, Borough Road
- Hanover House
- Duke of York Public House
- Michael Faraday Memorial
- Metropolitan Tabernacle
- 63-83 St Georges Road
- Charlotte Sharman School
- Former Church of St Jude
- Colnbrook Street Schools
- Albert Terrace and Railings
- 2-14, London Road
- 123-131 London Road
- 109-112 Borough Road
- The Duke of Clarence Public House
- Obelisk at the Centre of St George's Circus
- St George the Martyr Library

Community Centres

- Rockingham Community Centre
- Queensborough Community Centre

Local Economy and Community Infrastructure

These sites were identified through desk-based research, reviewing planning records, site visits and stakeholder engagement. This ensured that both formally recognised and locally valued community sites were considered in the assessment.

10. How have you considered the impact on any sites of significance to the local community within the scheme?

The scheme has been designed to respect and minimise any impact on sites of significance to the local community. All the groups identified above will continue to be, invited to future consultation events to ensure ongoing engagement and feedback opportunities. The proposals also maintain appropriate distances from nearby community and cultural organisations, with careful consideration given to access, visibility, and the character of the surrounding area, ensuring the development complements existing facilities without adversely affecting their role in the neighbourhood.

The following questions may be covered in supporting documents (e.g. Design and Access Statement, Transport Statement, Energy Statement). Please refer to these strategies where relevant and summarise the key points below.

Heritage, Site Layout, and Climate Mitigation

Heritage

11. Is the site situated in a conservation area? If so, how have you considered this in your proposed scheme?

The site is surrounded by a number of designated conservation areas, reflecting the historic and architectural significance of the wider context, although the site itself is not located within a conservation area. It has been identified as an opportunity area, where carefully considered development can respond to its surroundings, enhance the townscape, and contribute positively to the ongoing regeneration of the Elephant and Castle area.

The surrounding conservation areas are:

- King's Bench Conservation Area
- Liberty of the Mint Conservation Area
- Burrough High Street Conservation Area
- Trinity Church Square Conservation Area
- Yates Estate and Victory Conservation Area
- Elliot's Row Conservation Area
- West Square Conservation Area
- St. George's Circus Conservation Area

Heritage, Site Layout, and Climate Mitigation

12. Are there any listed or locally listed building on the site? If so, how have you considered this in your proposed scheme?

There are no statutorily listed buildings or locally listed buildings on the Site.

Accessibility and Movement

13. How is the site accessed by its current users? How did you determine this?

The site is primarily accessed from Newington Causeway Road. The site is located within the London Borough of Southwark and benefits from excellent transport connectivity. It is within a 5-minute walk of Elephant and Castle Station, and the site achieves a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 6b, the highest level of public transport accessibility in London.

Elephant & Castle Station, located in TfL Zone 1&2, provides the Bakerloo and Northern Lines. There is an out-of-station interchange with the nearby Elephant & Castle National Rail station. The station provides frequent National Rail services to London Blackfriars railway station, London Bridge railway station, and London Victoria railway station, with journey times of approximately 5 to 10 minutes, as well as Thameslink services northbound towards central and north London.

14. What are the important routes through the site and why are they important? Who currently uses these routes? What data or information did you use to come to this conclusion?

The main route to the site is pedestrian access from Newington Causeway which provides entry and egress. Most foot traffic occurs on the surrounding footways of the site. This assessment is based on site visits and desk-based analysis, which informed an understanding of how the site is currently used and the key routes through it.

Climate Change and Sustainability

15. What climate change mitigation and adaption measures are relevant for the site?

The site is in Newington, an area identified by the GLA's London Climate Risk Map as vulnerable in London to climate-related risks. This reflects overlapping demographic factors, including age, language proficiency, ethnicity, tenure, and income, which contribute to local vulnerability. In response, the London Borough of Southwark's Climate Change and Resilience Strategy emphasises both mitigation and adaptation, alongside reducing inequalities.

16. What carbon reduction measures have you included within the scheme?

We are committed to delivering a highly sustainable, energy-efficient building that not only meets but aspires to exceed the sustainability requirements. By integrating a fabric-first approach, optimising passive design principles, and leveraging cutting-edge renewable technologies, the development will minimise operational carbon while enhancing occupant comfort and wellbeing. A high-performance building envelope, alongside advanced mechanical and electrical systems, will significantly reduce energy demand, while on-site renewables—including photovoltaic panels and air source heat pumps—will ensure a robust supply of clean energy. We are also prioritising circular economy principles in material selection, ensuring longevity, adaptability, and minimising embodied carbon at every stage of the building's lifecycle. Beyond compliance,

Heritage, Site Layout, and Climate Mitigation

we are embracing biodiversity net gain and urban greening to foster local ecology, improve air quality, and create inviting public spaces. Smart building technologies will continuously monitor and optimise performance, ensuring the development remains at the forefront of sustainable innovation. By embedding resilience, adaptability, and a net-zero trajectory at the heart of the design, we aim to deliver a future-proofed, environmentally responsible landmark that positively contributes to London's sustainable built environment

Part 2 - Approach to Engagement

Based on the Fact-based Audit in Part 1 of this document, outline how you will engage with the stakeholders identified. Engagement activities should be tailored to the needs of local stakeholders.

Examples of engagement activities can include (but are not limited to):

- Stakeholder meetings
- Workshops
- Attending community group meetings
- Leaflets
- Letters
- Website

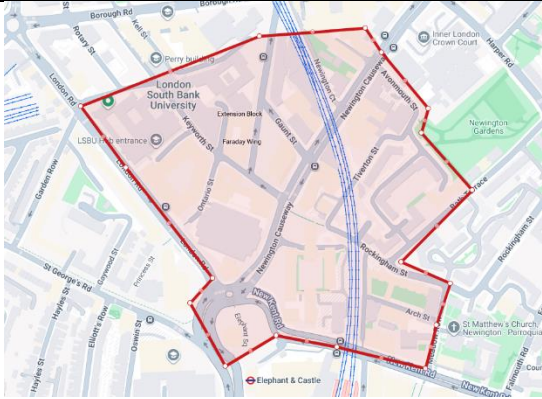
Activity and Date	Attendees	Format	Justification
Name and type of engagement activity e.g. In-person 'drop-in'. When did the event take place? What time of day did the event take place?	Who will attend the event? Which stakeholder groups are you aiming reach? e.g. Parents and carers	How will participants feedback in the session? e.g. directly to	Why did you choose this format? Why did you choose to target this group in particular?

Our consultation approach aims to reach as many people as possible, with a strong focus on accessibility and inclusivity.

Engagement activities have been designed to ensure participation from a wide cross-section of the community, including vulnerable or harder-to-reach groups. This includes older residents, disabled individuals, and those who may not engage through digital platforms.

We will use methods that cater to different abilities and age groups, and we will engage with a wide range of local groups and organisations that form a cross-section of society, including those from minority backgrounds or with protected characteristics.

Activity and Date	Attendees	Format	Justification
Meeting with local neighbour 30.01.2026	Ministry of Sound	In-person meeting	A close neighbour of the site who has in the past shown a particularly strong interest in local development. In line with the DCC, we are focusing our engagement on prominent local neighbours and organisations.
Contact Ward Councillors for a briefing 19.02.2026	Chaucer Ward Councillors	Email invite. One-to-one meeting	To offer a briefing to the local Councillors on the proposals. Meeting local politicians is a key element of best practice for any scheme, and this is no different in this case. Local representatives reflect the needs and views of the wider community and are therefore vital stakeholders to engage with. Meeting with them allows us to provide briefings, gain valuable insights and understanding of the area, and connect with other interested groups, residents, or business owners.
24.02.2026 Mailed Newsletter	Local Residents. A total of 1,465 residential and	Newsletter distribution area:	The newsletter was delivered with ample time ahead of the in-

Activity and Date	Attendees	Format	Justification
	business addresses were contacted. Including local residents, businesses and other stakeholders.		person consultation events for the local residents to be notified. It encompasses 1465 addresses signposting the public consultation events and online community hub. Community consultation FREEPOST and email address shared via the newsletter detailed above. Newsletters will be issued to surrounding local properties. This aligns with the DCC as these will be written in clear, plain English and will outline the key points of the proposal. They will also publicise multiple ways to get in touch, including by phone, email, webform, and post, catering to different age groups and accessibility needs.
Contact local groups for briefings 03.03.2026	• Rockingham TRA • St Matthews Church	Email invite. One-to-one meeting.	These groups and neighbours have in the past shown a particularly strong interest in

Activity and Date	Attendees	Format	Justification
	• 35% Campaign • Latin Elephant • Community Sothwark • The Walworth Society		local development and based on community audit these groups were considered most pertinent to brief. In addition, a number were close neighbours. In line with the DCC, we are focusing our engagement on prominent local organisations and groups in Elephant and Castle that have established networks, including local charities and groups. This approach enables us to reach a wide segment of the local community and supports our commitment to inclusivity.
Door Knocking 05.03.2026	Undertaken on addresses surrounding the site including Tiverton Street, Newington Causeway and Southwark Bridge Road.	Members of the project team door-knocked on surrounding streets' doors. This approach is particularly important for engaging residents who may not engage through digital channels or formal consultation events.	Door knocking will be undertaken to raise awareness of the upcoming consultation events and other methods to view the plans such as the website and feedback email address. Following DCC guidance, the team will be carrying out multiple door-to-door visits during

Activity and Date	Attendees	Format	Justification
			the programme to engage directly with nearby residents, inform them about the broader consultation, and gather their feedback.
In-person consultation event 10.03.2026	• Members of the Project Team • Local Residents	AgeUK: Lewisham and Southwark Stones End Day Centre, 11 Scovell Rd, London SE1 1QQ 16:00 to 20:00 Residents & businesses can drop in and out of the event and can ask questions and provide verbal and written feedback via paper comment forms on the developed plans for the site and meet with the team. Venues have been selected to ensure step-free access and accessibility for all users	A meet and greet event hosted for local residents to view the early plans for the site and speak with members of the project team, and provide their feedback via comment forms, verbally, or later online. In line with the DCC, we are holding a series of public consultation events to allow for direct conversation with the team. These events have been held in locations with accessibility so that any resident can attend. Furthermore, the consultation will take place in the afternoon/evening of the weekday to allow working-age individuals the opportunity to attend outside of typical 9-5 work hours.

Activity and Date	Attendees	Format	Justification
Follow Up email to local groups 11.03.2026	• Rockingham TRA • St Matthews Church • 35% Campaign • Latin Elephant • Community Southwark	Email invite. One-to-one meeting.	Prominent neighbours and groups were contacted further to ensure they had the opportunity to feed into the proposals either by attending the Meet & Greet event or by meeting individually.
In-person consultation event 12.03.2026	• Members of the Project Team • Local Residents • Community Southwark • AgeUK Lewisham and Southwark	AgeUK: Lewisham and Southwark Stones End Day Centre, 11 Scovell Rd, London SE1 1QQ 16:00 to 20:00 Residents & businesses can drop in and out of the event and can ask questions and provide verbal and written feedback via paper comment forms on the developed plans for the site and meet with the team.	A meet and greet event hosted for local residents to view the early plans for the site and speak with members of the project team, and provide their feedback via comment forms, verbally, or later online. In line with the DCC, we are holding a series of public consultation events to allow for direct conversation with the team. These events have been held in locations with accessibility so that any resident can attend. Furthermore, the consultation will take place in the afternoon/evening of the weekday to allow working-

Activity and Date	Attendees	Format	Justification
			age individuals the opportunity to attend outside of typical 9-5 work hours.
Consultation Website March 2026 onwards	Local residents and wider public	Online and Online form	The provision of a dedicated project website for the local community to view project information, developments and provide feedback online to feed into the scheme. In line with the DCC, an online website will be provided to allow for those that are not able to attend in person. This will provide all the consultation content, alongside feedback mechanisms and contact details for further enquiries. This aligns with the approach recommended in the DCC and accommodates those without internet access. The Engagement Summary will set out the engagement barriers and proposed mitigations further, alongside additional details that will be provided in the Equalities Impact

Activity and Date	Attendees	Format	Justification
			and Needs Analysis (EINA).
Active Phone Number March onwards	Local residents and wider public	Phone line	A phone number was established specifically for this project as an alternative form of communications for those who did not attend in person or use the website. This was done to increase accessibility and make sure all residents had a point of communication if so desired.
Meeting with Ward Councillor 01.04.2026	Councillor Helen Dennis Chaucer Ward Councillor Members of the project team	Online meeting	To offer a briefing on the early plans for the site and introduce Arada as the new owners. To understand early local concerns.
Meeting with Ward Councillor 06.04.2026	Councillor Joseph Vambe Chaucer Ward Councillor Members of the project team	In-person meeting	To offer a briefing on the early plans for the site and introduce Arada as the new owners. To understand early local concerns.
Further stakeholder meetings & workshops April 2026 onwards	Key local stakeholders identified following earlier meetings with local community	Online or In-person	Through local engagement and conversations, further groups have been identified and can provide insight on local issues,

Activity and Date	Attendees	Format	Justification
			needs, concerns and priorities.
Targeted outreach and door-knocking to local mosques and faith groups 28.05.2026	Key local stakeholders, local faith groups and minority ethnic community groups, including the Muslim Charities Forum and Baitul Aziz Islamic Cultural Centre	In-person	To raise awareness of the proposals and ensure local faith groups and minority ethnic communities had the opportunity to engage with the consultation.
Newsletters hand delivered to local residents May 2026	Local community and residents	Provision of key details including exhibition event dates and locations, contact email, phone number, mail address and sharing project website link.	Newsletters are to be distributed to residential and business addresses in the area surrounding the site, informing recipients of key consultation updates such as public events, providing contact details for further enquiries, and including information about the consultation website. This aligns with the approach recommended in the DCC and accommodates those without internet access. In addition, we will send direct emails to the local groups we have already identified to ensure they are notified of any events, as well as to any additional

Activity and Date	Attendees	Format	Justification
			groups that are identified later.
Newspaper Advert May 2026	Local residents and wider community	Provision of key details including exhibition event dates and locations, contact email, phone number, mail address and sharing project website link.	We will place an advertisement in the local paper to reach anyone who may have missed the letter or does not live within the immediate catchment area.
Door-Knocking Sessions May/June 2026	The site's surrounding neighbours	Verbal responses to be recorded in the form of notes	Ahead of any events & to gain a better understanding of the local community, door-knocking will be undertaken to alert residents of consultation events and provide general project updates. In line with the DCC, this provides an opportunity to ensure local residents and stakeholders nearest to the site are given the opportunity to engage with the team, in particular those who are time-poor and may be harder to reach via traditional consultation tools.

Activity and Date	Attendees	Format	Justification
18. 06. 2026	Baitul Aziz Islamic Cultural Centre	Email invite to the public consultation, or invitation to arrange a separate meeting. Provision of key details including exhibition event dates and locations, contact email, phone number, mail address and sharing project website link.	Key neighbours and community groups were contacted directly to ensure they had the opportunity to feed into the proposals, either by attending the consultation event or by meeting with the project team separately. They were also encouraged to share information about the consultation with their wider communities.
In-person Public Exhibition Events May/June 2026	•Members of the project team •Local residents	4pm – 7pm (weekday evening) 10am –1pm (weekend morning) Residents & businesses can drop in and out of the event and can ask questions and provide verbal and written feedback via comment forms on the developed plans for the site and meet with the team.	In-person exhibition events hosted for local residents to view the developing plans for the site and speak with members of the project team, and provide their feedback via comment forms, verbally, or later online. In line with the DCC, we are holding a series of public consultation events to allow for direct conversation with the team. These events are being held in accessible locations so that

Activity and Date	Attendees	Format	Justification
			any resident is able to attend. In addition, these are being held on a weekday evening and weekend morning to allow multiple opportunities for people to attend.
Poster On Site	Local community and residents	A1 Poster	A poster will be displayed on site with a QR code linking to the project website, which will be set up to act as a one-stop shop for information and engagement both during and after the events.
Collection of feedback Until and beyond submission	Local community and residents	Verbal, Comment Forms, Email, Phone, Mail, Online Form	Following meetings and events, local residents and community representatives will have the opportunity to share their questions, concerns, and priorities for the area. This feedback will be reviewed by the project team and considered in the development of the scheme where relevant. In line with DCC guidance, a range of feedback methods has been used, including in-person

Activity and Date	Attendees	Format	Justification
			discussions, written comment forms, and other channels such as email, phone, online forms, and freepost mail.

This section should detail how you intend to incorporate feedback received through the engagement activities that take place. We want to see evidence that stakeholders have had a meaningful impact on the design of a scheme. Please detail how you will achieve this.

How will you incorporate feedback received from engagement activities into the proposed scheme?

A feedback tracker will be maintained in Excel, with separate logs for consultation events and feedback received via telephone, email and Freepost.

All feedback will be reviewed by the project team and recorded alongside responses. Comments will be grouped by theme and analysed to identify key issues, priorities and opportunities.

Findings from the consultation will be used to inform design development at key stages, including potential changes to layout, ground floor uses, public realm and amenity provision where appropriate.

A clear audit trail will be maintained to demonstrate how feedback has influenced the evolution of the scheme. This will be summarised within the Statement of Community Involvement and Engagement Summary submitted with the planning application.