



Countryside is bringing forward a new outline planning application for the remaining development parcels at Wolsey Park. The new application seeks to:

1. **Positively respond to local housing need**
2. **Make more efficient use of an existing development site**
3. **Help provide and maintain a five-year supply of deliverable housing land**
4. **Provide additional space for local services**
5. **Retain significant areas of green open space on-site**

This document provides an overview of the new application and explains the above benefits, as well as displaying images of previous Countryside developments.

More detail on our proposals, including information videos, can be viewed at:

www.wolsey-park-application.co.uk

OUR PROGRESS IN DELIVERING WOLSEY PARK

Construction of Wolsey Park commenced in May 2019. The first new homes are expected to be completed and occupied in autumn 2020. Originally this was envisaged in late spring, before site works ceased due to Covid-19.

Robust infection control measures have since been introduced on-site, in accordance with Government advice, which has enabled work to re-commence safely.

So far, 312 homes (made up of 192 homes in the north and 120 homes in the centre of the site) have been granted detailed permission. These are being built in tandem with the strategic infrastructure for the whole of Wolsey Park, including the central spine road, landscaping areas (inclusive of drainage infrastructure) and utility connections.



WOLSEY PARK
RAYLEIGH • ESSEX



THE EXISTING PLANNING PERMISSION

Outline planning permission for Wolsey Park was granted in June 2016 (reference 15/00362/OUT) for 500 homes occupying only one-third of the site area. More than 50% of the site is given over to open space.

The permission also included:

- Reserving land for a new primary school
- Space for a health or medical centre
- Non-residential space suitable for a day nursery, small-scale retail, pub, restaurant or care home
- Landscaping, footpath and cycle links, drainage and infrastructure works



NEW OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION

Our new outline planning application principally relates to the delivery of the southern and remaining central residential parcels at Wolsey Park (shown inside the redline on the plan opposite).

We are seeking to update the approved plans to make efficient use of land in accordance with national planning policy changes since the original permission and provide a mix of housing to meet local need, whilst retaining significant areas of open space. The principles approved in the original permission and contained within policy SER1 of the Local Development Framework Allocations Document have again guided the application.

Three main changes are proposed to the original 2016 planning permission which are explained below and overleaf:

I. ADDITIONAL NON-RESIDENTIAL SPACE

Following a wide range of interest from service providers for the non-residential land adjacent to Rawreth Lane, additional land has been identified within the site which could be used to provide local community services for new residents living at Wolsey Park and in the wider area.




It is proposed that a further 0.3 hectares of land adjacent to Rawreth Industrial Estate is reserved for non-residential uses, such as retail, food and drink, creche, day nursery or general office, amongst other possible uses (Uses Class E and/or use as a public house or drinking establishment).

This will be marketed to operators in the same way as the original non-residential uses land. If no operator is found, this land would revert to open space.



PROPOSED SITE PLAN FOR NEW PLANNING APPLICATION

KEY

-  Proposed residential parcels
-  Homes under construction
-  Additional non-residential space



2. DENSITY REVISIONS

To date 312 homes have been approved reserved matters at Wolsey Park, using 8.4 hectares of residential land. This represents an average density of 37.1 homes per hectare within those residential parcels.

To comply with the original outline planning permission restriction of 500 homes (condition 6), the remaining 188 homes would be built across 7.3 hectares of residential land. This would result in a much lower average density of 25.8 homes per hectare for these homes and would be an inefficient use of the remaining residential land.

When compared with the average density of the first phases, this represents the potential loss of 83 homes, including 29 affordable homes (as shown below).

Current residential land position at Wolsey Park	RM permissions	Balance of 2016 Outline Planning Permission
Number of homes	312	188
Residential land – inclusive of green spaces in parcels (ha)	8.4	7.3
Residential density (dph)	37.1 (net)	25.8 (net)
Potential number of homes lost through inefficient land use (reduced density of 11.3 homes per hectare multiplied by remaining 7.3 residential hectares)		83

To avoid inefficient use of the site, our new outline application includes a revised density plan (as shown on the density plan below) which aligns with the approved densities on the northern areas of the site, to provide a slightly increased overall density of 37.6 homes per hectare across the site. This change in density would give rise to an additional 83 homes. It also enables the provision of smaller 1, 2 and 3 bed homes to meet local housing needs as part of a balanced housing mix alongside family homes.

The proposed density plan retains the same design principles as originally approved, with lower densities on steeper parts of the site and towards adjacent farmland (on the western edge of the development).

3. AMENDED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PARCELS

In the 2016 outline planning permission, only 34% (15.7 hectares) of Wolsey Park is designated for the provision of new homes. With the restriction of 500 homes, the gross average density of the existing permission is low at 10.7 homes per hectare. By contrast over 50% of Wolsey Park is open space.

As part of the new outline planning application, it is proposed that a small proportion of additional land is used for residential development (approximately 3.5 hectares) through the broadening of the original residential development parcels as shown on the new Site Plan on page three and the table below.

As part of the application, we are also looking to ensure that our contribution to local sporting provision better reflects local need, as the Council has identified there is spare capacity in Rochford for junior sports pitches.

Land-uses (ha) comparison	2016 Outline permission		2020 Outline application	
	(ha)	(%)	(ha)	(%)
Open space uses	25.8	55	22.2	48
Residential (inclusive of green spaces in parcels)	15.7	34	19.2	41
Other uses (education site, non-residential uses, health and spine road)	5.3	11	5.3	11
Total	46.7		46.7	

Instead of providing two junior pitches on-site as per the original outline permission, we propose to make a significant contribution towards the delivery of a 3G pitch in the Rayleigh area, for which there is greatest need locally. We will also provide an informal kickabout area as part of a social hub, which will also include a community orchard, playspace, allotments and a youth facility.

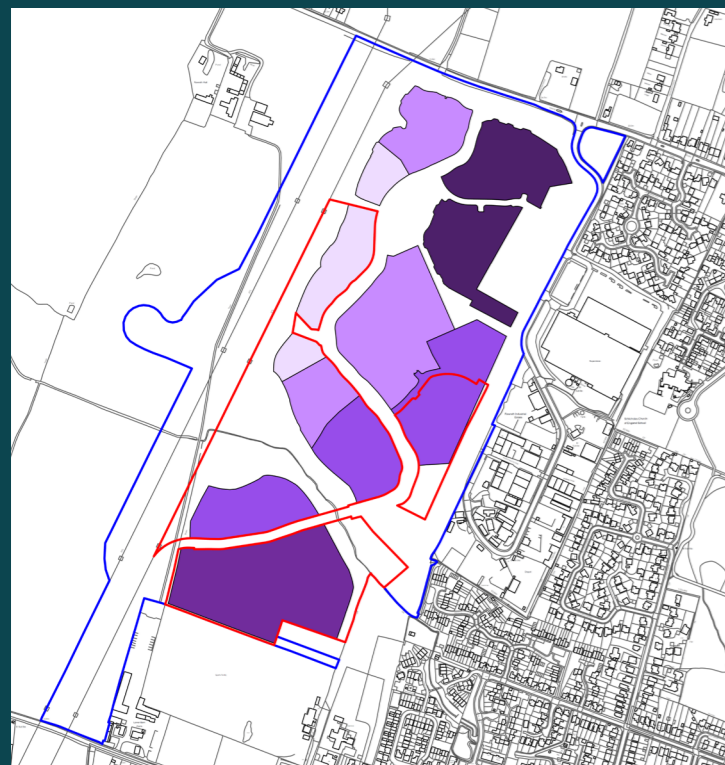
In total, these changes would result in 19.2 hectares of the site (41%) being used to provide homes. This would mean that 22.2 hectares (48%) of Wolsey Park would remain as open space (over 3-times the amount required by the Council's open space standards).

The combination of revised density and an additional 3.5 hectares of residential development land could result in an uplift of up to 222 homes across the Wolsey Park site. Of these, 35% would be affordable, which would mean an additional 78 affordable homes would be delivered (raising the total to 253 across Wolsey Park) as shown in the table below.

This optimisation of development is in accordance with the NPPF which states that planning authorities should:

“avoid homes being built at low densities, and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site”.

DENSITY PLAN



	38 to 47.5 dph
	38 to 42 dph
	34 to 38 dph
	30 to 34 dph
	25 to 30 dph

Comparison between 2016 and 2020 outline planning applications	Approved in 2016 Outline permission	Proposed with 2020 Outline application	Difference
Maximum number of homes	500	722	222
Number of affordable homes	175	253	78
Site area (ha)	46.7	46.7	0
Gross residential density (dph)	10.7	15.5	4.8



LOCAL HOUSING NEED

The Council’s wider housing needs were most recently reviewed in the 2017 addendum update to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). To address affordability issues and housing needs in the District, the SHMA addendum recommends an increased annual housing delivery of between 331 and 361 new homes per annum. The Government’s standard methodology requires 385 homes per year.

The SHMA reports that these affordability issues have a disproportionate impact on younger households in the District, as noted at 2.79 of the SHMA addendum which states:

“If unaddressed, an extrapolation of the suppressed trends seen over more recent years would effectively accept that the worsening affordability and [the] historic undersupply of housing will restrict the formation of younger households in the future. This conflicts with the clear emphasis of the NPPF towards significantly boosting the supply of housing to meet needs and address acknowledged issues relating to affordability.”

The 2019 Housing Delivery Test Action Plan reported a shortfall of 674 homes in Rochford District, equating to approximately 33% in housing completions.

As of February 2020, there was a waiting list of 653 people for affordable housing in Rochford District (which had remained broadly constant throughout 2019). This increased to 707 people by the end of June 2020 and the housing register is now as follows:

- 1 bed – 250 applicants (35.4%)
- 2 bed – 267 applicants (37.8%)
- 3 bed – 154 applicants (21.8%)
- 4 bed – 36 applicants (5.1%)

An additional 78 applicants are seeking supported or sheltered accommodation.



73.2% of those on the waiting list are waiting for a 1-bed or 2-bed affordable home.

The new outline planning application would respond directly to this need, by providing an additional 78 affordable homes and a total of 253 across the site



NEW HOME ENQUIRIES RECEIVED BY COUNTRYSIDE

Countryside has received an overwhelming number of enquiries, particularly from local residents, for a new home at Wolsey Park.

We have received 1,827 enquiries for the first 192 homes at Wolsey Park.

Of the 1,535 people who have provided their post code, 73.9% live within the SS post code area and 63% of those live within Rayleigh (SS6), Hockley (SS5), Rochford (SS4) and Wickford (SS11 and SS12) post code districts.



CONTACT US

If you have any questions about Wolsey Park or the current planning application, please get in touch with our community representatives, DevComms, using the contact details below:

Email - countryside@devcomms.co.uk

Phone - 0800 080 3163



BENEFITS OF THE NEW PLANNING APPLICATION

ADDITIONAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING

An extra 78 affordable homes, resulting in up to 253 across Wolsey Park, meaning that the Council's current waiting list could be reduced by a third.

THE RIGHT TYPE OF AFFORDABLE HOMES

The revised density plan enables us to provide 1 and 2-bed affordable homes to reflect the current waiting list which is not achievable with the approved density plan.

RESPONDING TO LOCAL HOUSING NEEDS

Our new plans would deliver the right mix of homes to address local demand, which would not be possible with the current density restrictions, including an increased number of smaller homes suitable for first-time buyers.

MORE EFFICIENT USE OF WOLSEY PARK

The plans would make more efficient use of land in accordance with national planning policy, helping to address local housing need on a site that is already being developed.

ADDITIONAL NON-RESIDENTIAL USE SITE

Extra land to provide local services for residents of Wolsey Park and the surrounding local community.

ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Including towards education, health and sports provision locally.

