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New homes planned for Ashtead

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Hundreds of new homes could be built in Ashtead if newly submitted plans to Mole Valley District Council are approved. Wates Developments and its partners, Vistry Group, have submitted outline plans for up to 270 homes, of which about 40 per cent will be affordable.

The proposals, which still need to go through the planning process, also include a community centre that could become a children's nursery. Nearby schools are said to be under-subscribed, with vacancy rates expected to grow in some areas, according to planning documents submitted to the council. The documents suggest that the new homes could help boost pupil numbers in local schools.

John Tarvit, director of planning for Wates Developments, said: "We have an exciting vision for this site to create a sense of place and community, with landscape-led design that incorporates a variety of green spaces. Our proposals will help encourage social interaction, provide safe and attractive streets, encourage sustainable travel choices, and maximise biodiversity. We're proud that this will be a high-quality, net-zero development that reduces carbon emissions and enhances the resilience of the development to a changing climate. All new homes will be lean, clean, and green."

The land, south of Ermyn Way, has been allocated for residential-led development by the council. The developers state they are "committed to creating a distinctive and responsive new neighbourhood, offering a good range of house sizes and types.

"The proposed development will enhance the existing local community and deliver a range of benefits for people in Ashtead in addition to the much-needed new homes."

In addition to the housing scheme, the developers are proposing a community building with the potential for a children's nursery, 30 acres of open space, and a children's play area. At this stage, the plans are in outline format, but the developers have said that buildings will vary across the site, reaching up to a maximum of three storeys, although the majority will be two storeys.

The developers believe this approach will "create a varied roofscape, define marker buildings and add to the visual richness" of the project. They have also indicated that details such as the sizes of the homes, in terms of bedrooms, and the layout of the development are yet to be finalised.

Wates said the site currently consists of arable agricultural fields just north of the M25 and within walking and cycling distance of both Ashtead and Leatherhead. It is also already well connected to bus services. As part of the pre-planning process, Wates held meetings with nearby schools, including Trinity Primary School.

The planning statement noted: "At the meeting, the applicants were informed that the school is well below pupil capacity and referred to the same position at other local schools. It was explained to the applicants that local schools are accepting pupils who might not otherwise meet their selection criteria." It added: "It was confirmed that Greville School currently has capacity and in the coming years will likely have greater capacity as there are significant spaces available in the reception year."

Homes would be built on the western side of the site to create "a clear distinction between residential development and the eastern section within the retained green belt." The final layout will be determined through discussion with the council.

Wates Development's outline plans for up to 270 homes near the M25 in Ashstead (image Wates Development)

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