

V1MP Design Code

JUNE 2026

Executive Summary

The Village 1 Masterplan (V1MP) is being prepared in accordance with the outline planning permission for Villages 1 to 6 of the Gilston Park Estate which was granted by East Herts District Council (EHDC) in January 2025 (Ref. No. 3/19/1045/OUT). The context to the V1MP includes the East Herts District Plan and the Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan, and relevant guidance, including the Gilston Area Concept Framework, the EHDC Gilston Area Charter Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) Vision and Design Guide.

The V1MP covers the developable area of Village 1 identified in the Parameter Plans of the outline planning permission, and will have regard to the interface within the Strategic Landscape of the Gilston Park Estate beyond which is subject to the Strategic Landscape Masterplan (SLMP), which has been prepared in accordance with the outline planning permission.

This V1MP Design Code forms a key document of the V1MP. Together with the V1MP Regulatory Plan, which sets out how the Design Code applies spatially to the masterplan area, the V1MP Design Code provides a comprehensive overview of the mandatory requirements and recommendations for design within the V1MP area. Once approved, the V1MP Design Code and Regulatory Plan will guide future detailed reserved matters applications within Village 1.

The V1MP is underpinned by a thorough review of site constraints and analysis of opportunities which are summarised within the Design Code (Part B).

The V1MP Design Code and Regulatory Plan have been developed in consultation with local authorities, key statutory & non-statutory bodies, local community representatives, and through public consultation. The contribution of these groups has been a hugely important and valued part of the process of defining the key design parameters needed to take the proposals forward from strategic outline planning into detailed design coding which will inform the quality of the detailed proposals which are to be developed at reserved matters application stage.



Harlow

River Stort

Eastwick

Eastwick Road

Park Pale

Home Wood

Harlow Town

Lime Avenue

Gilston Park

Gilston House

Terlings Park

Gilston

River Stort

The Team



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Part A

Introduction

Chapter 1

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose & Role

Purpose & Role of the V1MP Design Code

The purpose of this Design Code is to provide a set of simple, concise, illustrated design requirements to provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of the Village against which subsequent reserved matters applications will be considered. It has been prepared to ensure that a high standard of design is delivered when preparing reserved matters applications that are submitted pursuant to the outline planning permission for the Village.

The Village 1 Masterplan (V1MP) proposals have been developed in close coordination with the Strategic Landscape Masterplan (SLMP). Together, this Design Code and the SLMP Design Code carry forward the design ethos set out in the outline planning submission and will translate into the first phases of the Village 1 development.



1.2 Status & Design Code Extents

Status of the V1MP Design Code

This Design Code is required to be consistent with, and provide an enhanced level of detail to the documents and plans approved under the outline planning permission, including the Development Specification, Parameter Plans, Strategic Design Guide and Placemaking Strategy. It **should**, therefore, be read in conjunction with these documents.

All reserved matters applications in Village 1 will be required to accord with the approved V1MP Design Code and Regulatory Plan and will need to be accompanied by a completed Compliance Checklist to demonstrate compliance with this Design Code.

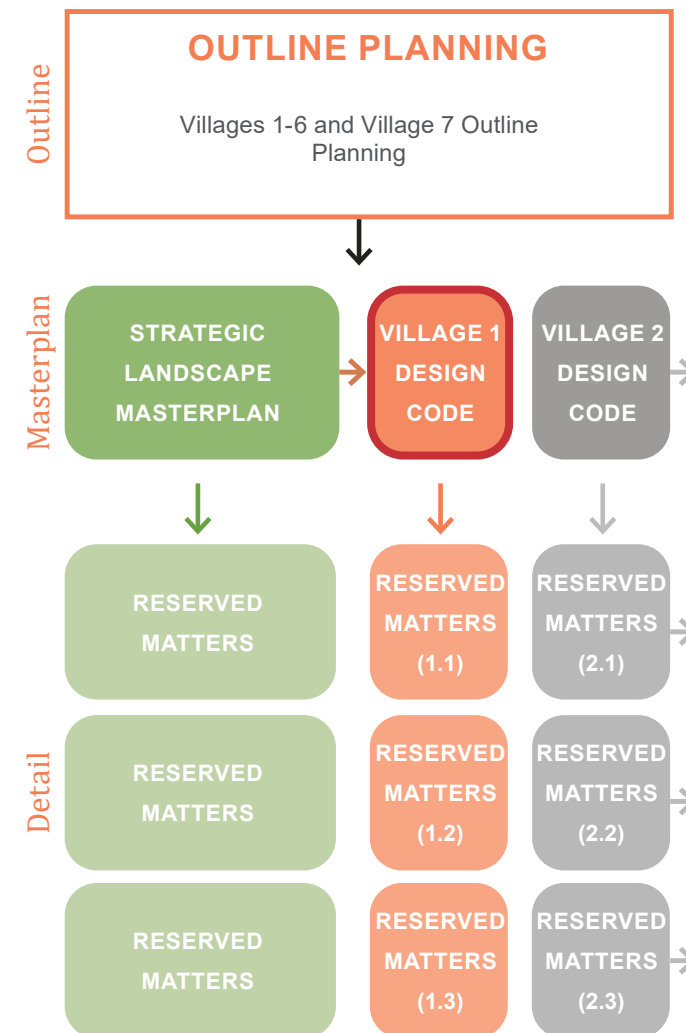
This Design Code is specific to Gilston Park Village 1. However, it draws upon national and local best practice urban design guidance including: the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG); By Design: Urban Design in the Planning System (2000); The Urban Design Compendium 1 and 2 (2000, 2013); Health Placemaking, Design Council (2018); Building for Life 12 (2015); Active Design (2015) and Active Design, Principles into Practice (2019). The Design Code also considers and responds to East Herts District Council's (EHDC) local design guidance and the Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan.

V1MP Design Code Extents

The V1MP Design Code and Regulatory Plan covers the developable area of Village 1 identified on Parameter Plans approved under the outline planning permission.

The developable area boundary, as defined on Parameter Plan 5 (Principal Land Uses), represents the transition from the V1MP to the SLMP. Parameter Plan 5 can be found in the Appendix of this code.

The SLMP does not set details for the developable area, but it may set some principles that may be applicable. It is considered important that decisions within the V1MP boundary have regard to the interface with the strategic landscape beyond. This ensures that design decisions are aligned with the wider SLMP, avoiding conflicts and enabling a more coherent and legible spatial structure across the wider area.



1. Introduction

1.3 How To Use The Design Code

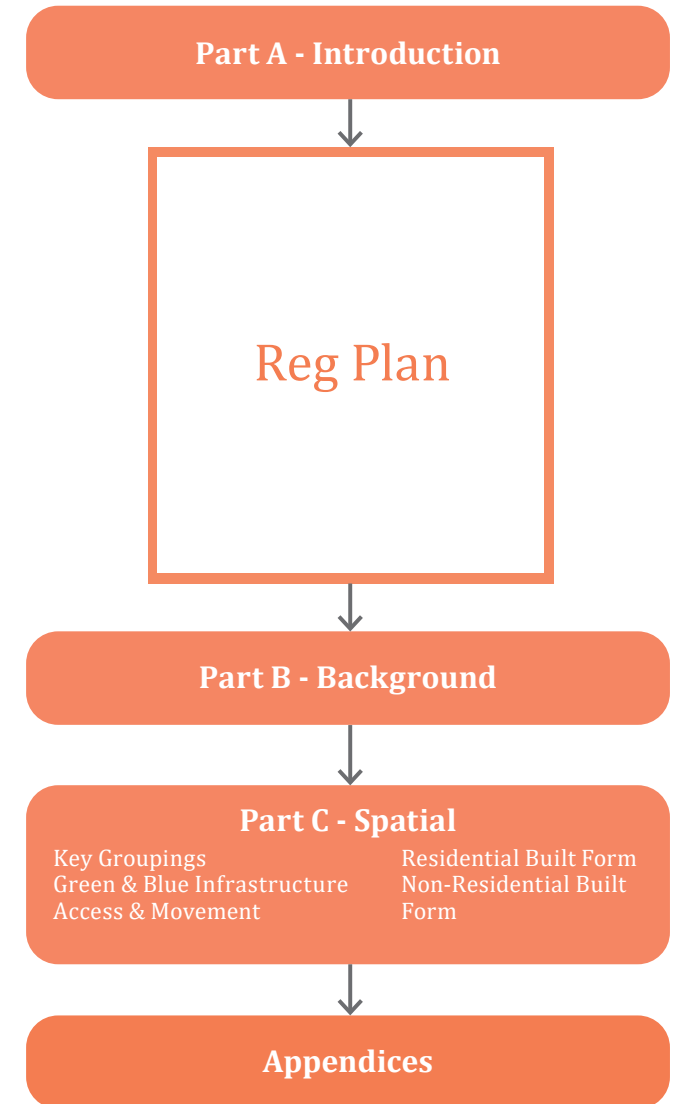
Structure of the Design Code

This Design Code document **must** be read alongside the accompanying V1MP Regulatory Plan.

The V1MP Regulatory Plan forms the overriding design control tool and informs the structure of the V1MP Design Code.

The following pages explain how the reader **must** use the V1MP Design Code and Regulatory Plan.

The adjacent diagram gives an overview of the relationship between the V1MP Regulatory Plan and Design Code document. The Regulatory Plan is the most important Design Code plan and its content is explained in more detail in subsequent chapters within the document that relate to the Regulatory Plan's key.



1.3 How To Use The Design Code

Part A & B - Introduction & Background

The Introduction sets out the purpose, status and hierarchy of the V1MP Design Code. It also introduces the V1MP Regulatory Plan and explains how to read it. The V1MP Regulatory Plan is based on the masterplan and sets out a framework of mandatory requirements and design fixes which all future detailed planning applications must comply with. The Background summarises the relevant background information, including planning context, the vision, design principles & concepts, constraints and introduces the Illustrative Masterplan.

Part C- Spatial Key Groupings

Sets out the key urban design principles for the Key Groupings. Key Groupings are distinct gateways around the site and reflect principal destinations where the built form, movement and public realm interweave and assimilate to forge a distinct urban set piece for people and activity to congregate in one place.

Part C- Spatial Green & Blue Infrastructure

Sets out design principles for the multifunctional green and blue infrastructure network, including guidance on sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), play provision, and biodiversity.

The chapter extends to design principles for the arrangement and use of key public spaces, with further detail on the principles for detailed aspects of the design including hard and soft landscape materials, street trees and street furniture.

Part C- Spatial Access & Movement

Sets out the key principles of the access and movement network, including guidance on street design, active travel, parking and servicing strategies.

Part C- Spatial Residential Built Form

Identifies controls on building height and density and sets out general urban design principles for block layout and street scenes.

Provides guidance on how to deliver a real sense of place through the creation of local distinctiveness, including the identification of Frontage Characters, and use of materials and building detailing.

Part C- Spatial Non-Residential Built Form

Identifies areas of non-residential built form including the mixed uses and education facilities. This chapter sets out the key framework parameter and design principles for the Village Centre.

1. Introduction

1.3 How To Use The Design Code

Design Fixes & Design Guidance

The Design Code includes:

1. **Mandatory design fixes** - elements within the Design Code that **must** be adhered to.
2. **Design recommendations** - which use the term **should**.
3. **Supporting design guidance** - design options and illustrative content that shows how development may be configured to comply with mandatory design fixes or design recommendations.

The adjacent extracts and annotations provide an example of the relationship between design fixes and design guidance and illustrates how they are identified.

Throughout the Code, stipulations and recommendations are described as either '**Must / Must not**' or '**Should / Should not**'.

1. '**Must**' / '**Must not**' – elements within the Design Code that are mandatory design fixes and/or requirements. These hold the same weight as items listed under 'M' (Mandatory) included on tables and illustrations.
2. '**Should**' / '**Should not**' – requirements of the Design Code included to facilitate design quality and serve as recommendations to be followed.

Design options use the terms 'could', 'can' and 'may'.

Mandatory design fixes

V1MP Design Code

6. Residential Built Form

6.4.1 Strategic Landscape Corridors

Street Component	Permitted Types	Notes
Building Line	Irregular	
Spacing between buildings	Varied	
Building alignment / orientation	Staggered	
Parcel Edge Planting	Perimeter Planting 1	

Component	Illustration	Notes
Building Typologies		- Buildings must be limited to 2/2.5 storeys to accord with the soft edge neighbourhood plan principle. - Predominantly detached and semi-detached permitted. (For full library of building typologies refer to the back of this chapter).
Parking Arrangements		(For full library of parking typologies refer to the back of this chapter).
Front Boundary Treatments		(For full library of boundary typologies refer to the back of this chapter).
Set-back	Minimum of 3m	
Materials	Walls - Primary  Walls - Accent  Roofs  Windows  Balconies  Details 	- Palette must be limited to fix primary wall and fix accent along any given frontage. Marker Buildings can use contrasting accent material on entire facade. - Where a building is part of a Key Grouping it will demonstrate a cohesive material application with the rest of the homes within the grouping.



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1.3 How To Use The Design Code

In specific cases, both good and poor examples are illustrated to help the understanding of the key principles. They are marked with a green tick or a red cross as illustrated below:

 Good example

 Bad example

Compliance with the Design Code

A Compliance Checklist is included in the Appendices to provide those delivering Village 1 with a tool to review their proposed designs and check that they are in compliance with the V1MP Design Code & Regulatory Plan.

All reserved matters applications **must** demonstrate compliance with V1MP Design Code and Regulatory Plan.

A completed copy of the checklist **must** be provided with each planning application to confirm that it is in compliance with the Design Code, or if not, provide suitable justification for any departures from the V1MP Design Code and/or Regulatory Plan.

It is recognised that there may be circumstances where it is not possible or desirable to comply with the Design Code. This may be due to technical site constraints/opportunities or changes in policy or legislation which require an alternative approach.

There may also be situations where a non-compliant solution can be demonstrated to be a better design solution and/or the result of an opportunity provided by advancements in technology or manufacturing.

In all cases, departures from the Design Code will only be acceptable when a rationale for an alternative approach can be justified through supporting documentation, such as the Compliance Checklist accompanying the reserved matters applications.

Design Code Review

The V1MP Design Code and accompanying Regulatory Plan will cover a development period of several years, during which it is recognised that differing external factors will influence aspects of how the development is delivered. It is therefore intended that reviews of the Design Code and their associated plans are undertaken at suitable stages and shall be agreed with the master developer and EHDC.

These reviews will identify any areas where the documents are considered to have become out-of-date, in the expectation that they are then suitably amended to inform future design guidance and reserved matters applications.

1. Introduction

1.4 The V1MP Regulatory Plan

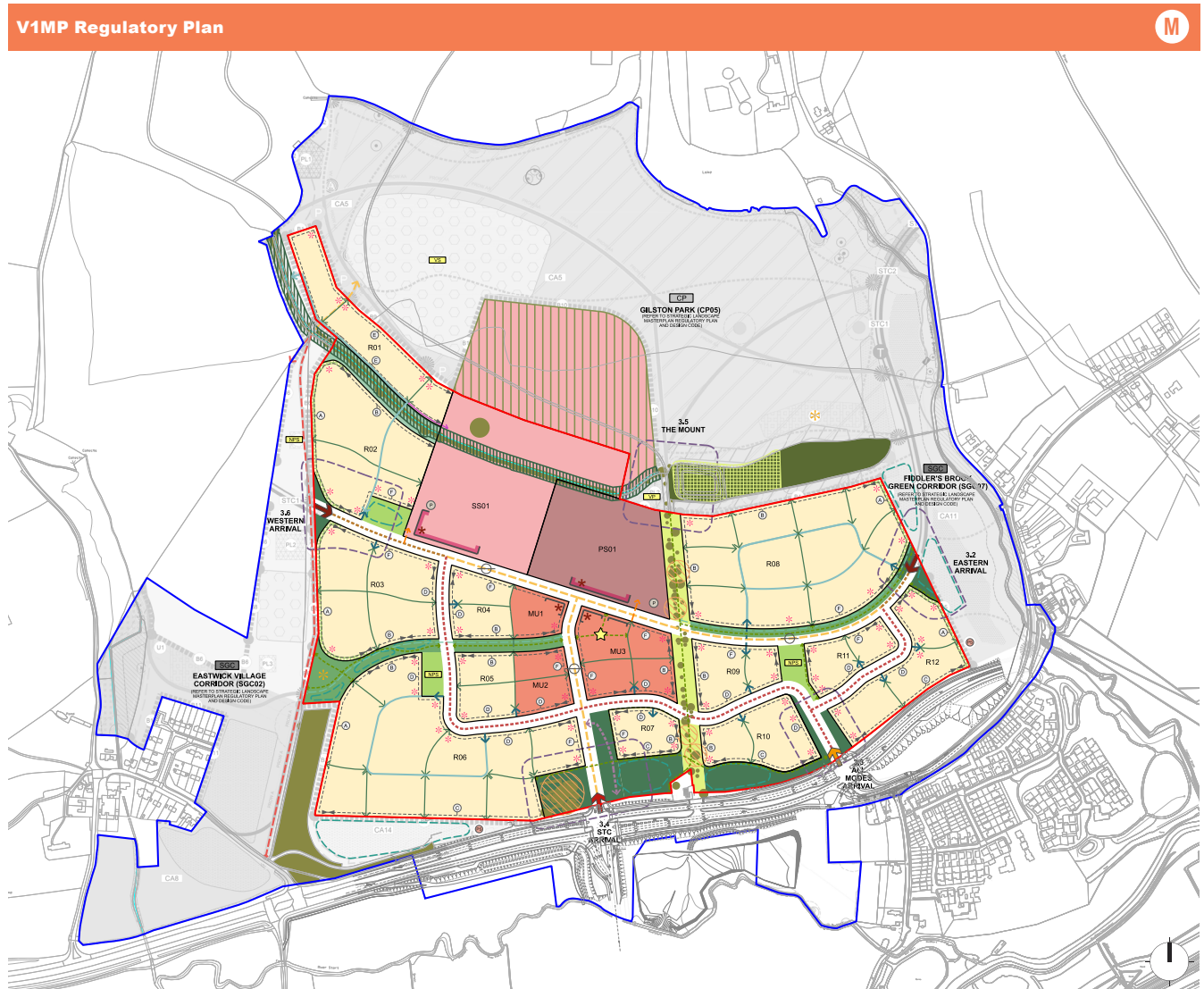
The V1MP Regulatory Plan

The V1MP Regulatory Plan forms an integral part of the Design Code for Village 1 and the layers within the plan relate to the sections in this Design Code document. The V1MP Regulatory Plan is the platform upon which all detail within the Design Code is based. It sets out graphically the location, extent, and status of key mandatory elements of the development. All detailed planning applications **must** conform to the framework set out by the V1MP Regulatory Plan.

Adherence to the V1MP Regulatory Plan will ensure that all phases of the development will follow the core vision, as well as integrate effectively with their immediate and wider surroundings.

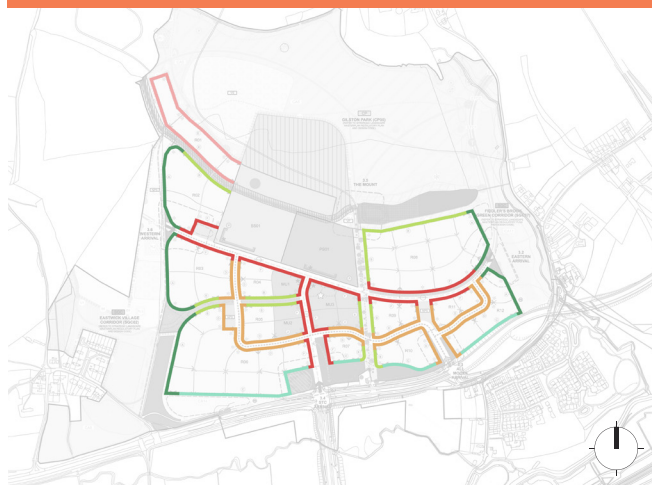
Notes:

- Refer to the full V1MP Regulatory Plan (RP_001_RevP1) for the drawing legend.
- A full scale copy can be found inside printed copies of the Design Code. For digital copies, please refer to submitted V1MP Regulatory Plan in the planning portal drawing ref: 01913_Regulatory Plan_RP001_RevP1
- The drawing makes reference to the SLMP Regulatory Plan(s). Please refer to submitted SLMP Regulatory Plan in the planning portal drawing ref: GSLM605-GRX-XX-DR-L-1112_RevP2. The reader should familiarise themselves with these plans.



1.4 The V1MP Regulatory Plan

Inset Plan Village 1 Frontage Character Plan



V1MP Regulatory Plan Fixes

The V1MP Regulatory Plan sets the design fixes for the development of Village 1 including:

- Strategic elements of landscape and public realm;
- Strategic access and movement;
- Individual development parcels (for commercial, residential, mixed use and community uses) that are positioned within the network of green infrastructure and streets.

Whilst the V1MP Regulatory Plan sets an overall framework for development it is acknowledged that a degree of flexibility will be required in the design of detailed proposals, for example:

- Although street corridors are fixed in scale, the detailed design of streets will need to be explored in greater detail in parallel to the consideration of the access requirements for adjacent parcels.
- Likewise, whilst the location of green infrastructure is fixed the exact design of these spaces, including their boundaries, is subject to detailed design that will need to be considered in line with adjacent development parcels and streets.

V1MP Regulatory Plan Key

The V1MP Regulatory Plan shows the design fixes for Village 1 that are further explained in the related chapters of this Design Code. The key/legend to the Regulatory Plan cross references chapters of the Design Code.

V1MP Regulatory Plan Inset Plan

An inset plan setting out 'Residential Frontage Characters' provides the location of the six frontage characters, explained in detail in Chapter 6.

Parcel References

The V1MP Regulatory Plan includes parcel references for development parcels. Parcel references are denoted as numbers in the centre of development parcels.

These parcel reference numbers are not cross-referenced in the V1MP Design Code, but are provided for ease of reference for future reserved matters applications. These parcel references do not represent a phasing sequence.

Part B

Background

Chapter 2

2. Background

2.1 Planning Context

Background

The East Herts District Plan (2018) and Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan (2021) provide for the development of the new Gilston Area community, across seven distinct Villages, based on Garden City principles. In January 2025, East Herts District Council (EHDC) granted outline planning permission for the creation of 8,500 homes, plus supporting development, infrastructure and open space which comprises Places for People's development of Villages 1 to 6, known as the Gilston Park Estate (Ref. No. 3/19/1045/OUT).

Planning permission was also granted for Taylor Wimpey's development of Village 7 (Ref No. 3/19/2124/OUT) in January 2025.

The East Herts District Plan requires the production of a masterplan for all significant development proposals (Policy DES1). The Gilston Area Charter Supplementary Planning Document (Charter SPD) (2000) has been produced by EHDC through engagement with landowners, key stakeholders and representatives from the local community to help guide the planning and delivery of development and infrastructure within the Gilston Area. The Charter sets out the role of the Strategic Landscape Masterplan, and Village Masterplans, the process for production of the documents and the required content of masterplan submissions.

The Charter SPD states that *“given the scale of development in the Gilston Area, individual Masterplans will be required for each of the Gilston Area Villages, together with an overarching Strategic Landscape Masterplan that will address the strategic elements of the development and the important network of green spaces that will knit the Villages together and integrate the area into its wider context”* (para 2.5).

“Each Gilston Area Masterplan will be supported by a Design Code and together they will provide an added layer of detail to the evolving plans for the Gilston Area, building on the parameters and commitments secured at the outline planning application stage and the work already undertaken in the Gilston Area Concept Framework” (para 4.7).

“Once approved the Masterplans and their associated Design Codes will form a framework to guide Reserved Matters applications (and any relevant detailed planning applications) for development plots or buildings that follow” (para 4.8).

The content of the V1MP **must** align with the parameters established through the outline permissions, the statutory Development Plan documents and take account of relevant guidance including the Gilston Area Concept Framework and the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) Vision and Design Guide. The V1MP will also be supported and informed by up to date technical work such as topographical surveys, and flood risk assessments.

Requirements for Design Code Preparation

In accordance with the Charter SPD, Places for People have agreed a V1MP Scope and V1MP Engagement Strategy with the Project Lead Group (PLG) comprising EHDC, Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), and Places for People:

- The V1MP Scope (November 2023) sets out a summary of the key planning policy and guidance documents that relate to the V1MP, provides an overview of the process for the production of the Village masterplans, and confirms the proposed spatial extent and scope of the SLMP submission.
- The V1MP Engagement Plan (December 2023) sets out the policy context for engagement, the engagement principles and objectives, and the engagement process, including reporting and performance indicators.

The Gilston Park Estate outline planning permission requires that a Village masterplan is prepared and approved by EHDC for each of the six Villages (outline permission condition 31) prior to the approval of any Reserved Matters application for residential or commercial floorspace within the boundary of that Village.

2.1 Planning Context

Outline permission condition 32 covers the scope of the Village Masterplan and states that it **should** be produced in general accordance with the provisions of the Charter SPD, the SLMP Design Code and Regulatory Plan, and the approved outline permission plans and documents (namely the Development Specification and Parameter Plans, Strategic Design Guide, Placemaking Strategy, and non-reserved plans for the strategic site accesses) as well as a number of specified matters, comprising:

- guidance on the broad location and quantum of business and commercial, retail and leisure floorspace within the Village;
- the approximate location of Village sport and play facilities;
- the interaction with the relevant Village buffer (which lies outside of the VMP area);
- the approximate location of proposed leisure and commuter routes for pedestrian, cyclists and other active travel modes including connections beyond Village boundaries to the strategic landscape areas;
- the approximate location of proposed designated Public Rights of Way and design principles for improvements and/or modifications to existing Public Rights of Way; and
- the approximate location of proposed public transport infrastructure and active travel infrastructure such as cycle hire facilities.

Outline permission condition 34 requires that each Village Masterplan be supported by a Village Design Code and associated Regulatory Plan. As a minimum, the Design Code is required to include Village design principles for a list of topics identified, namely:

- Block structure
- Public Realm
- Green and blue infrastructure including multifunctional SuDS plus consideration for groundwater and watercourse safeguarding zones (flooding and pollution)
- Maintenance strips for SuDS and all watercourses or water features (springs)
- Biodiversity and amenity benefits SUDS
- Response to heritage (Key Groupings)
- Routes and movement network, integrating with the wider movement network
- All modes parking typologies
- Street hierarchy and character types
- Sustainable Transport Hubs (and bus parking)
- Land uses
- Density
- Building heights
- Relationship with existing levels for key existing features
- Edges, nodes and gateways
- Frontage, access and servicing
- Built form
- Identity

- Areas that will be publicly lit, including streets, recreation areas and other public spaces in accordance with the lighting design principles in the Development Specification Document (section 3.17)
- Approach to public art
- Indicative Village materials palette
- Planting strategy

The Code is also required to include:

- A Regulatory Plan - Full scale copy can be found inside printed copies of the Design Code. For digital copies, please refer to submitted V1MP Regulatory Plan in the planning portal drawing ref: 01913_Regulatory Plan_RP001_RevP1
- Reporting of the Design Code Testing process including how the outcomes have informed the final Design Code.

2. Background

2.1 Planning Context

Outline Planning Permission - Parameter Plans

A series of Parameter Plans form part of the Outline Planning Permission for the Village Development and provide the basis for future Village Masterplans and the Strategic Landscape Masterplan, as well as Reserved Matters Applications.

The Parameter Plans identify the spatial framework of the Village Development and define those elements that are subject to limits of deviation or some extent of flexibility.

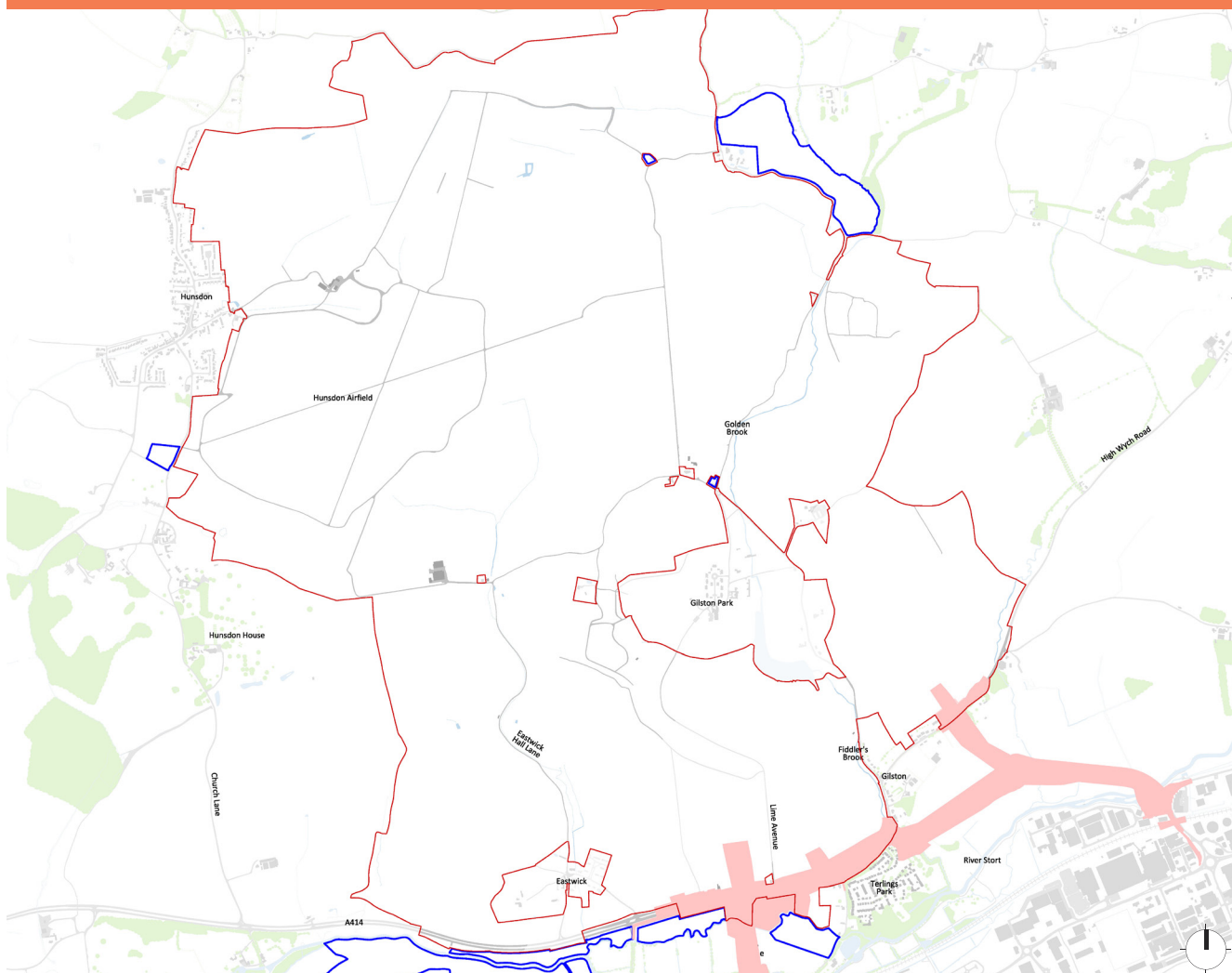
The Parameter Plans contain some contextual information to assist interpretation and orientation of the scheme – both inside and outside the boundary.

The Parameter Plans relate to the following matters:

1. Existing Vegetation and Buildings;
2. Village Corridors, Constraints and Developable Areas;
3. Green Infrastructure and Open Space;
4. Access and Movement;
5. Principal Land Uses; and
6. Maximum Building Heights.

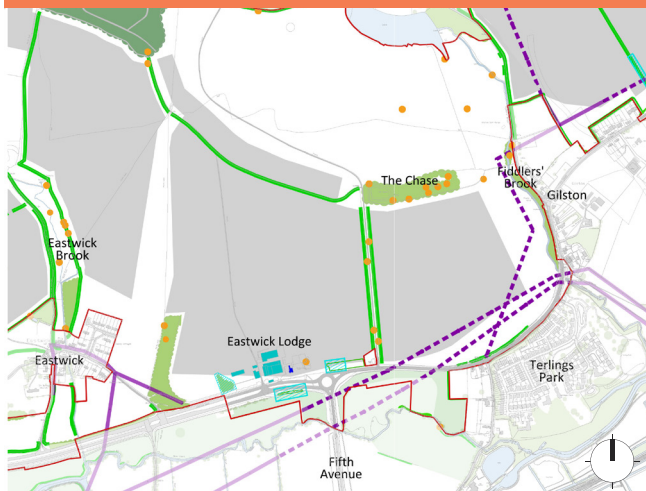
Extracts of the approved Parameter Plans pertinent to Village 1 are shown on the following page. Full versions with their corresponding key/legend can be found in the Appendix of this code.

Gilston Park Estate Application Boundary Plan

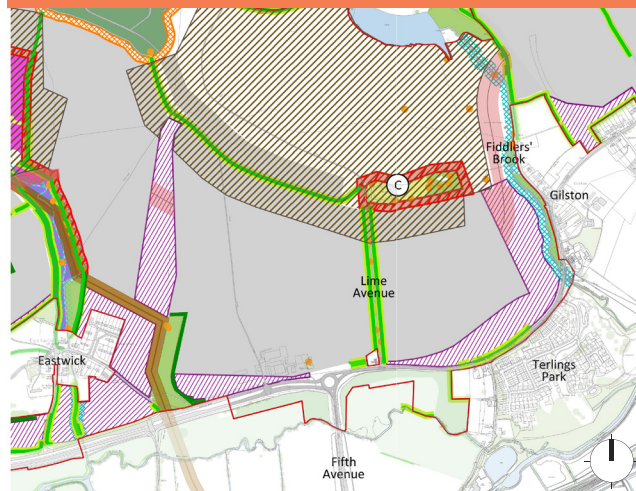


2.1 Planning Context

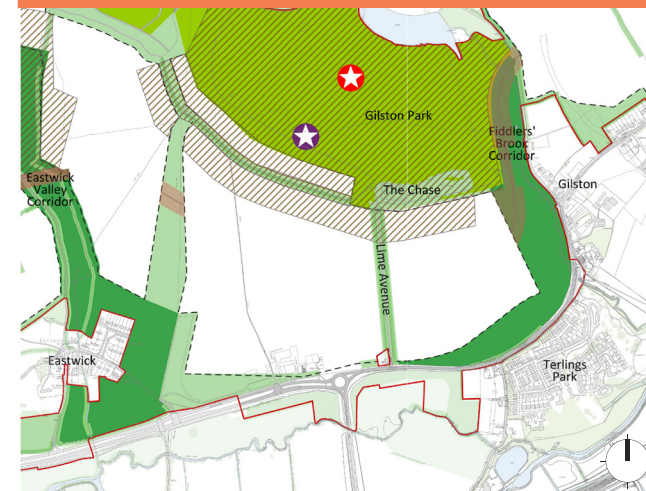
1. Existing Vegetation and Buildings PP Extract



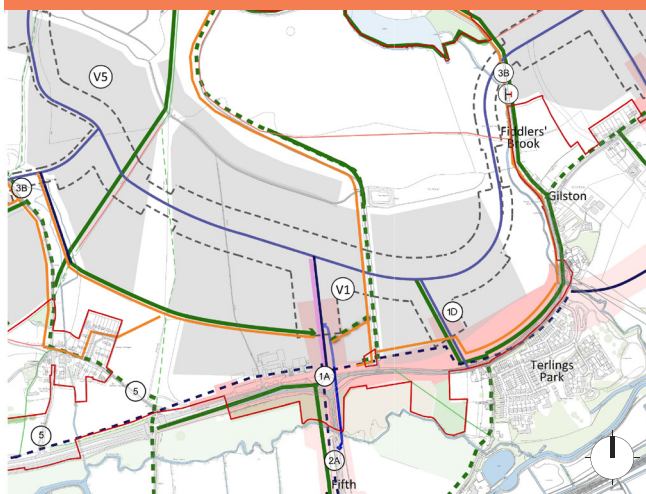
2. Village Corridors, Constraints and Developable Areas PP Extract



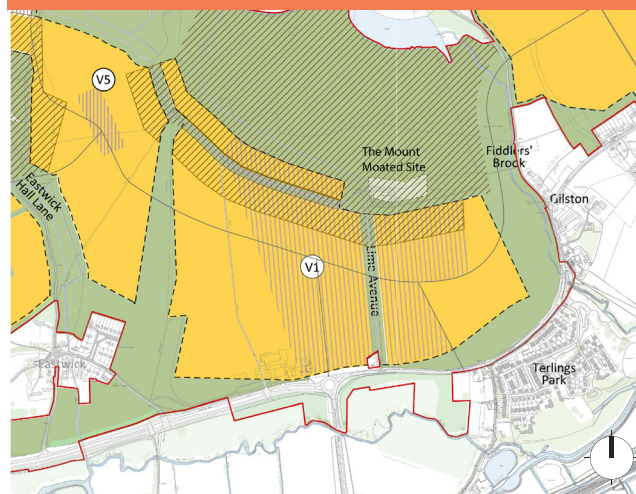
3. Green Infrastructure and Open Space PP Extract



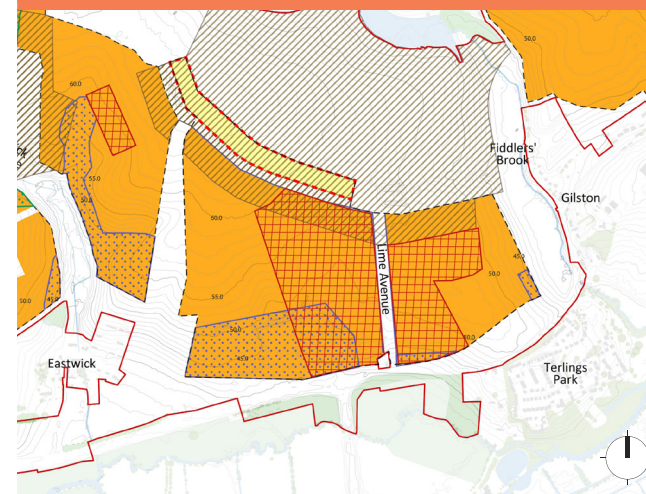
4. Access and Movement PP Extract



5. Principal Land Uses PP Extract



6. Maximum Building Heights PP Extract

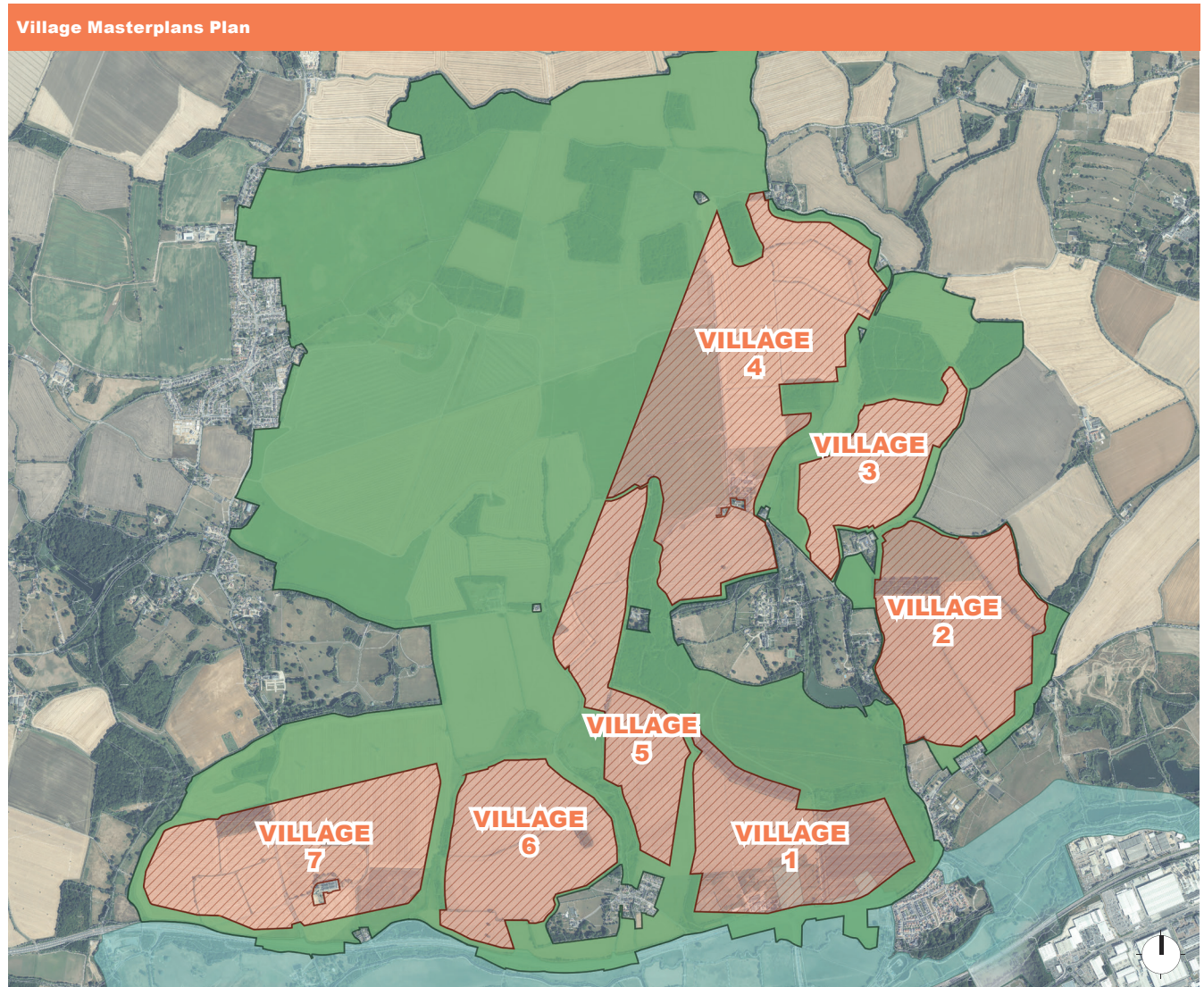


2. Background

2.1 Planning Context

Strategic Landscape Masterplan & Village Masterplans

The plan opposite illustrates the boundaries of the Gilston Area. The green areas indicate the Strategic Landscape Masterplan areas, while the orange hatched areas show the boundaries of each Village Masterplan.



2.1 Planning Context

Strategic Landscape Masterplan

The Charter SPD states there will be a single Strategic Landscape Masterplan (SLMP) which will consider the landscape around and between each Village, as well as the land to the west of Villages 4 and 5. The SLMP has been prepared jointly by Places for People and Taylor Wimpey

The SLMP will be produced and approved before the first Village Masterplan is approved.

The SLMP will focus on establishing the key components and Character Areas that will form the comprehensive green infrastructure network across the site that will surround and sit alongside the new Villages, existing settlements and the wider landscape. It will also look to address and plan for strategic matters including:

- How movement will be accommodated to prioritise active and sustainable modes of travel and the achievement of the 60% mode share target;
- How the development will successfully integrate with adjacent settlements and landscaping including the Stort Valley;
- How the new Villages will have sufficient landscape buffers but function successfully together as one new settlement, making efficient use of the land through coordinating measures such as the approach to drainage and flood risk and any potential net gains for biodiversity; and
- How the community open space land allocated in the Gilston Area will be planned and landscaped to help facilitate its long term maintenance.

References are made throughout the V1MP to where the SLMP **should** be referred to.

Village Masterplans

The Charter SPD states that there will be a masterplan for each Village within the Gilston Area.

Village Masterplans will provide a framework within which designers and developers can bring forward more detailed proposals for individual development plots in a planned and comprehensive way, whilst still allowing for design flexibility and innovation at the detailed design stage.

Each Village Masterplan will establish a spatial strategy for the key components that will comprise the Village, such as the Village Centre, access points and key routes, residential development plots, recreation and open spaces and key supporting infrastructure such as education and health facilities.

In addition, the Village Masterplan **should** complement the SLMP and plan for a Village that:

- Has a distinct character;
- Integrates sensitively with its surrounding landscape setting taking account of existing ecological and heritage assets;
- Ensures movement is accommodated to prioritise active and sustainable modes of travel and the achievement of the 60% mode share target;
- Delivers sustainable homes and places that commit to tackling climate change;
- Connects successfully into the wider sustainable drainage network and reduces flood risk;

- Will be a place to live that is safe and secure, promotes healthy lifestyles and fosters a strong sense of community;
- Shall demonstrate how the Village can adapt over time to meet the changing needs of the community.
- Establish Character Areas, informed by special/ memorable places such as heritage or ecological assets, key views, the location of proposed key buildings and features, nodal points, and green spaces.

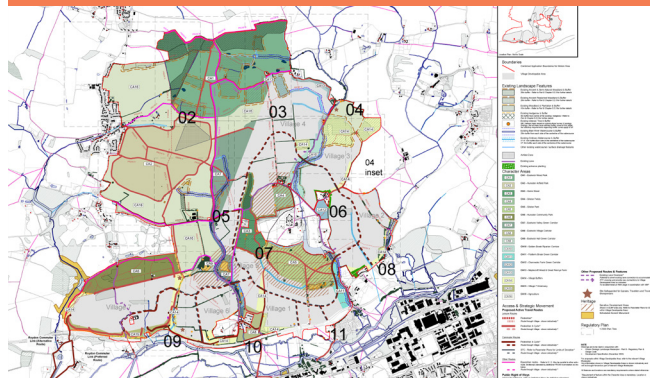
2.1 Planning Context

Strategic Landscape (SLMP) Regulatory Plan(s)

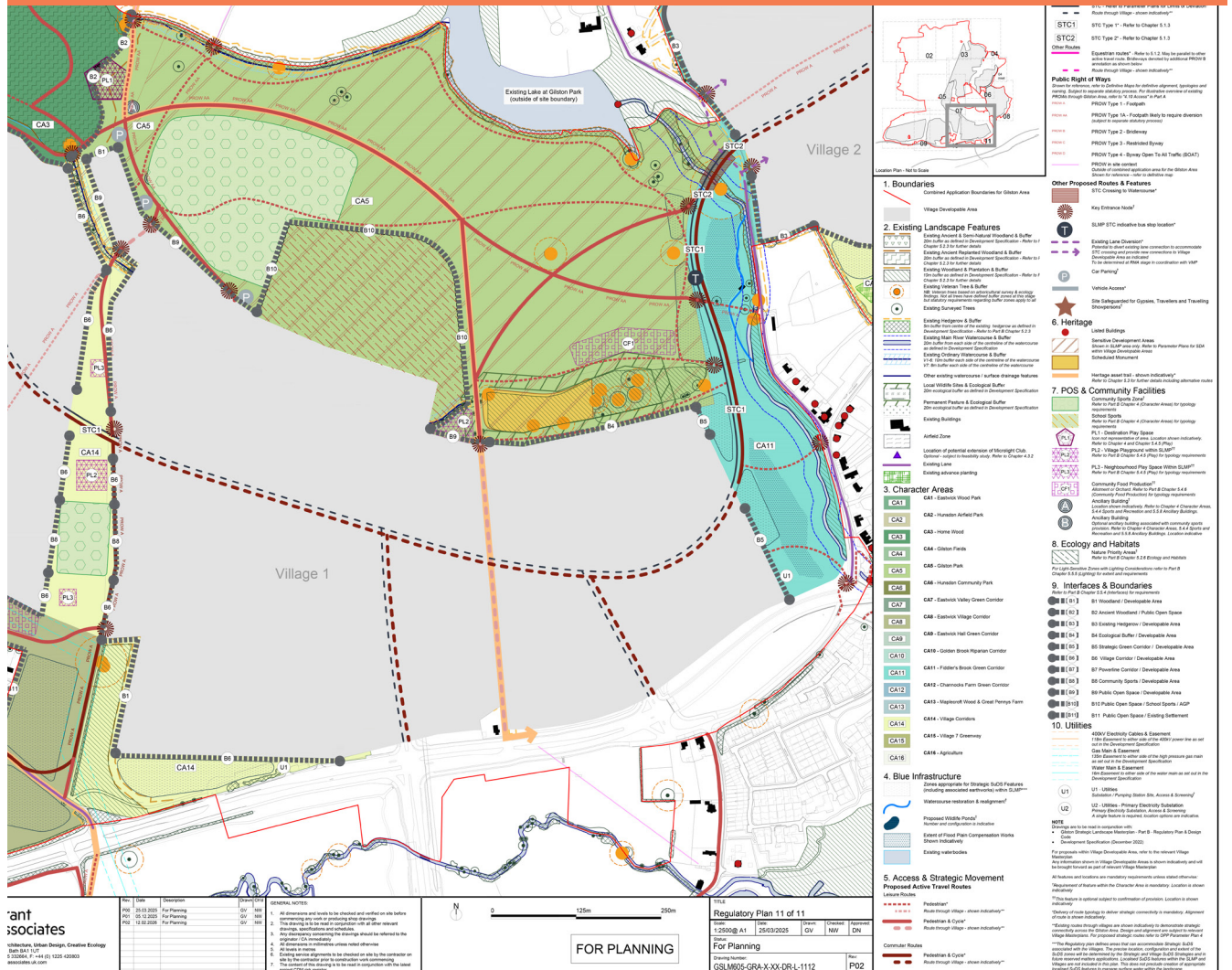
The SLMP Regulatory Plan(s) form a core component of the Strategic Landscape Masterplan and provide a spatial definition of the key requirements for future RMAs. The SLMP Regulatory Plan(s) define the key features and fixes for the landscape design of each area, together with a record of the location of controlling requirements, illustrating where these overlap and relate to the proposed landscape areas. The SLMP Regulatory Plan(s) also define the spatial extent of each Character Area of the SLMP which form the basis of the SLMP Design Code structure.

There are 11 No. Regulatory Plans for the SLMP, incorporating a 1:10,000 scale Strategic Site Wide Regulatory Plan and 10 No. 1:2500 scale Regulatory Plans. The overarching Strategic Site Wide SLMP Regulatory Plan is shown below, with the Village 1 1:2500 Regulatory Plan shown opposite.

SLMP Site Wide Regulatory Plan



SLMP Regulatory Plan - Village 1 Extract



2.1 Planning Context

Design Codes

The SLMP and Village Masterplans are to be each supported by a Design Code which will establish elements that are considered to contribute to the creation of high quality place making, starting from the most strategic elements working through to more focused detailed elements.

A Regulatory Plan is to be produced in support of each Design Code to illustrate how it relates to development plots, land parcels or different character areas on a single scalable drawing.

Design Requirements - Overlapping Features

Whilst the V1MP Regulatory Plan focuses exclusively on the Village 1 developable area, a number of strategic features, including SuDS and movement routes, necessarily overlap between the Village 1 extent and the Strategic Landscape Masterplan (SLMP) area.

As with all boundaries between the Village Masterplans and the SLMP, it is essential that future RMA proposals are informed by relevant masterplans within and immediately adjoining their project area.

In addition, for overlapping features, designers **must** seek to apply all mandatory design requirements of the V1MP design code relevant to that feature and its location, and to use these, together with SLMP requirements, to inform RMA design.

The design for overlapping features **must** consider the following principles:

- function & use of the space / feature
- access strategy (including internal roads)
- views & relationship to built form (including ancillary buildings & infrastructure)
- levels integration
- ecological requirements & aspirations
- heritage response (where applicable)
- planting and material character

Where haul roads, other construction features or temporary developments are required as part of the delivery of the Gilston Area, these features **should** be as sensitively and safely incorporated into the landscape as possible. When they are no longer required, the land **must** be developed in accordance with the relevant reserved matters approval.

Where applicable, these principles **must** be agreed between multiple developers / project teams such that there is clarity in design objectives, and unified design outcomes are achieved.

Where appropriate project teams **must** coordinate on proposals in order to ensure cohesion and a blurring of strategic boundaries, such that these are not discernible within the built scheme.

2. Background

2.2 Features & Constraints

Village 1 - Context and Assets

Village 1 occupies the south-facing arable slopes of the Stort Valley and is framed by the tributary valleys of Fiddler's Brook to the East and Eastwick/Gould's Brook Valley to the west. To the south, the busy Eastwick Road dual carriageway flanks the southern boundary. In contrast, the northern boundary is formed by the woodland blocks and hedgerows that are remnants of the former parkland landscape of Gilston Park.

The elevated aspect of the northern part of the Village benefits from open horizons and views out towards Harlow New Town opposite the Stort Valley slopes.

The character of trees and hedgerows across the Village varies from the riparian nature of the Stort Valley to the south, where wet woodland of Willow, Alder and Poplar are evident to the broad-leaved woodland species of Beech, Hornbeam, Elm and Ash and occasional Oak characteristic of the woodlands of Homewood, The Chase and the tree-lined cutting of the former deer ditch known as the Park Pale.

An avenue of lime and horse chestnut trees mark the former park driveway and form a dominant landscape feature running from north to south across the centre of the Village.

The long term conservation and replenishment of this avenue is a key consideration due to the age and condition of the existing trees.



2.2 Features & Constraints

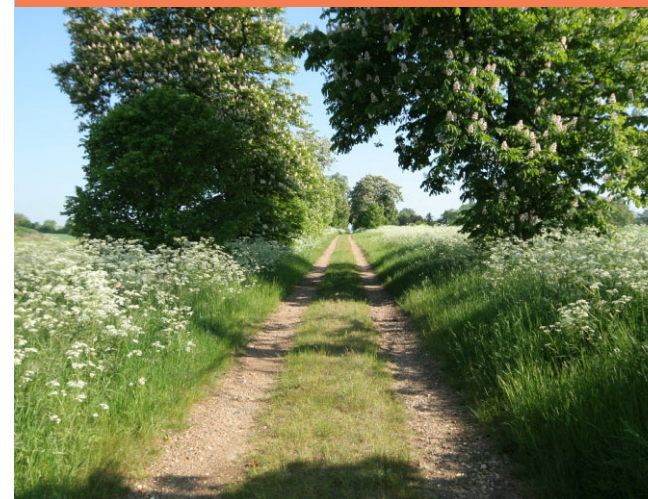
1. View along the Park Pale towards Homewood



2. View looking towards the The Mount and The Chase



3. View looking north along Lime Avenue



4. View looking towards the existing buildings within Village 1.



Note: Stort Valley Cycles building scheduled for demolition

5. View along Eastwick Road



6. View from west looking towards Lime Avenue



2. Background

2.2 Features & Constraints

Village 1 - Constraints

The physical constraints of Village 1 are summarised below and in the Constraints Plan on the following page.

Topography and Floodplain

The topography of Village 1 rises from the valley flood plain of the River Stort to the south, with its elevation and position in the landscape benefiting from wide-ranging views south towards the Stort Valley and Harlow. It is therefore important that any future development reflects this sensitive condition, with the topography informing the character of development and landscape areas. A small valley is formed by the Fiddler's Brook tributary watercourse to the west of Village 1, with its associated floodplain.

Landscape

Unless identified for removal, the development **must** sensitively integrate with existing hedgerows, trees, tree belts, and woodland. The relationship between built form, proposed site levels, and these existing landscape features **should** be carefully planned and coordinated.

Several veteran trees are located throughout the Village. These **must** be retained, subject to the findings of future detailed surveys assessing their condition and quality.

An avenue of Lime and Horse Chestnut trees that mark the former Park driveway form a dominant landscape feature running from north to south across the centre of the Village. The long term conservation and replenishment of this avenue **must** be a key consideration due to the age and condition of the existing trees.

The character of trees and hedgerows found across the Village varies from the riparian nature of the Stort Valley to the south where wet woodland of Willow, Alder and Poplar are evident to the broad leaved woodland species of Beech, Hornbeam, Elm and Ash and occasional Oak characteristic of the woodlands of Homewood, The Chase and the tree lined cutting of the former deer park pale. Mature Coppice Stools and specimen trees to The Chase and Park Pale **should** form part of the design response for the built form interface.

Heritage

The Sensitive Development Area shown on the Constraints Plan reflects the historic and landscape sensitivities of Gilston Park.

The Mount is a Scheduled Monument (NHLE1013017) and consists of a moated site, associated deer pen enclosure and a small part of the Park Pale. The wider Park Pale forms a substantial monument across the landscape within the Gilston Estate reflecting the Medieval park landscape within this area of Hertfordshire.

The ditch contains trees, the more substantial of which are located on the eastern, and the southern slope of the ditch. The majority of the Park Pale is of low to medium significance as it is extensive and well preserved. The extent of the Park Pale where it is directly associated with the moated site is of high significance. A buffer zone is provided along this section of the Park Pale, comprising a 10m buffer to the Ordinary Watercourse, a 5m buffer to the existing hedgerow, and the root protection areas associated with existing trees.

To the south west of Village 1 a number of existing buildings and structures are located as part of the 'Eastwick Lodge' complex, including the Forest Veterinary Centre building. Outline Planning Permission PP1 shows that this building may be retained or demolished, however it is currently empty but intended for temporary use in future proposals. All other buildings at Eastwick Lodge are to be demolished.

Due to the ongoing nature of archaeological work across the site, there is potential for further unrecorded archaeological features to be discovered, which may warrant preservation in situ or by record.

Access and Movement

Eastwick Road forms a significant constraint and will require a carefully considered approach to mitigate noise and visual impacts for the proposed development. There is a Public Rights of Way network, including a footpath which immediately lies adjacent to the western boundary of Village 1. These will need to be retained where possible and suitably incorporated into any future proposals unless they are diverted in accordance with a separate statutory process.

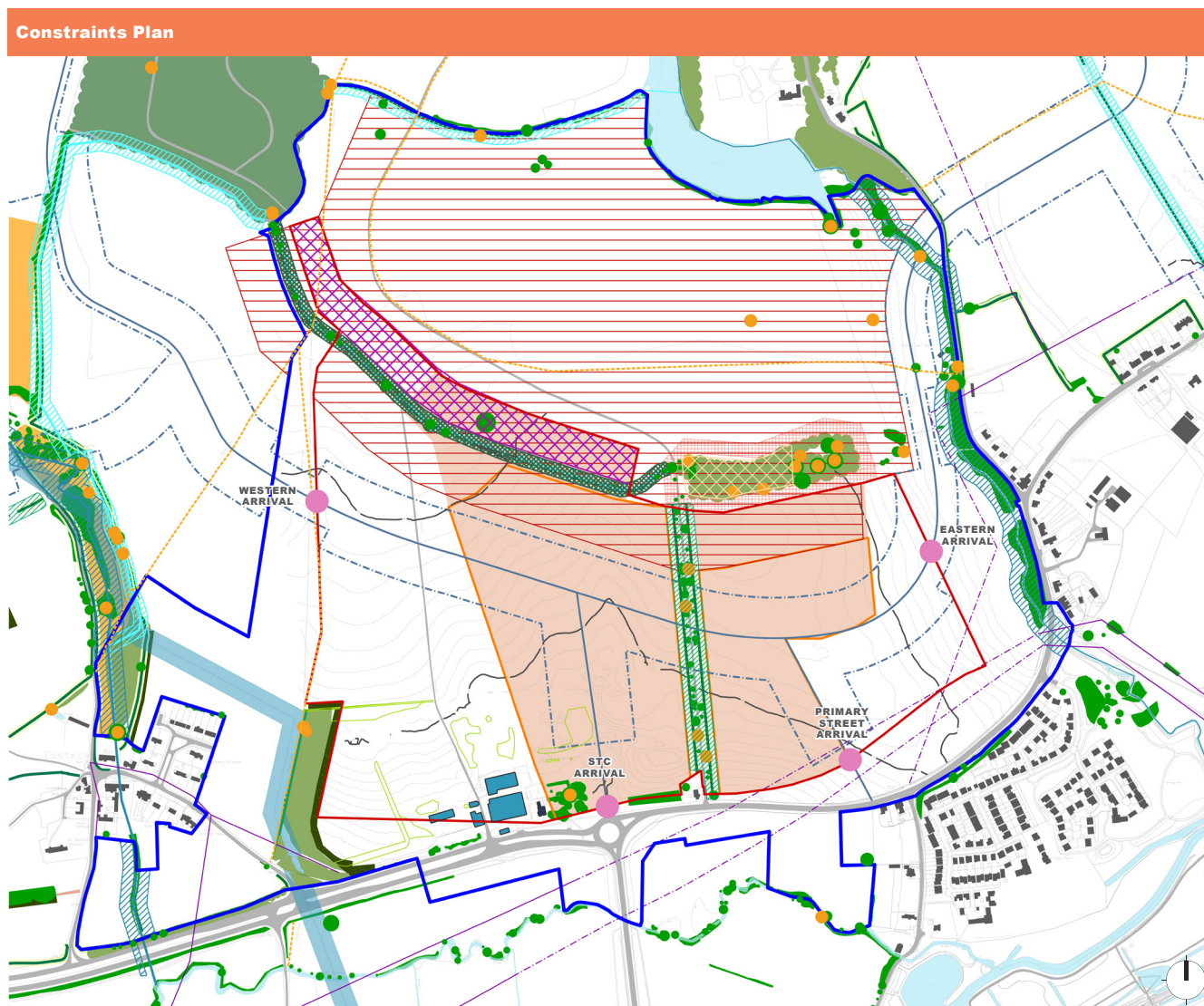
Four gateways to Village 1 will need to be carefully considered, along with a foot/cycle bridge crossing the Central Stort Crossing. Proposals **must** demonstrate how the landing point of the foot/cycle bridge is integrated into the design of the landscape and built form.

Utilities

A number of existing utilities including overhead cables run through the south east corner of Village 1. Proposals **should** consider the best response to these, including undergrounding cables where necessary.

2.2 Features & Constraints

- | | |
|---|---|
| — 10m Contours | Woodlands |
| — 1m Contours | 5m Buffer to existing hedgerows (Measured from centreline) |
| ■ Existing buildings retained | 10 Buffer to Existing Woodlands |
| ■ Existing buildings to be demolished | Ancient woodlands (including Ancient and Semi-natural Woodlands and Ancient Replanted Woodlands) |
| ■ Existing buildings to be retained or demolished | 20m wide ecological corridor |
| ■ The Mount (Scheduled Monument) | Existing waterways |
| ■ Sensitive Development Area | 10m buffer zone from Ordinary Watercourse (Measured from centreline) |
| ■ 16m easement either side for water main | 20m buffer zone from Main River (Measured from centreline) |
| ■ Education and Mixed Use Zones | Park Pale buffer zone (includes 10m OWC buffer, 5m buffer to existing hedgerow and root protection areas to existing trees) |
| ■ Zone with maximum height of 18.0+AOD (refer to Development Specification for proportion of buildings permitted to achieve maximum height of up to 5 storey) | Local wildlife site |
| ■ Area of additional height control where building height is limited to 11m | Public Right of Way (footpaths) |
| — Other existing OHLE cables | Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC) Limit of Plan Deviation generally +/- 60m with variations * (*refer to Movement and Access Parameter Plan) |
| — Other existing OHLE cables to be underground, subject to detailed design | Gateways |
| ■ Existing vegetation retained (subject to detailed design development) | |
| ● Existing trees | |
| ○ Existing trees to be removed | |
| ● Veteran trees | |
| — Hedgerows | |



2. Background

2.3 Masterplan Vision

A Visionary Gateway to a Thriving Future

Village 1 is more than a starting point - it's the dynamic gateway to 10,000 new homes and forms the foundation for seven transformative Villages in the Gilston Area. Located just north of Harlow, this landmark Village combines connectivity, community, and sustainability to redefine modern living. With its high-density design, Village 1 will serve as the heart of the broader development, setting a bold standard for quality, vibrancy, and inclusivity.

A Hub of Connectivity and Sustainable Living

As a crossroads of enhanced local routes and innovative infrastructure, Village 1 will become a model for sustainable travel. With its visionary Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC) at the core, walking, cycling, wheeling, or taking the bus will become the natural choice for residents. The STC, complemented by exemplary pedestrian and cycling paths, ensures that internal travel is not only seamless but environmentally responsible.

A carefully designed primary street network will provide convenient access to homes while reinforcing the STC as the fastest, most appealing option—making it the heartbeat of movement in the community.

Shaped by Heritage, Designed for the Future

Rooted in the rich history of Gilston and Eastwick, Village 1 will evolve as a place of distinct character and identity. Its interconnected neighbourhoods and open spaces will blend the charm of the existing landscape with a forward-thinking vision, creating an environment where heritage and innovation coexist.

The Village's landscape-led approach will deliver an inspiring network of multifunctional green spaces—perfect for play, leisure, and social interaction. These thoughtfully designed areas will foster a deep sense of belonging while preserving and enhancing the natural beauty that defines the area.

Vibrant Community Living

At its core, Village 1 will be alive with energy, anchored by a distinctive Village Centre—a hub of activity and connection. Here, at the intersection of the STC, East-West Green Link, and Lime Avenue, a vibrant mix of uses will unfold: from cafes and local shops to cultural and recreational spaces. Designed with flexibility in mind, this shared space will adapt and thrive as the community grows, becoming a focal point for social interaction and commerce.

Educational excellence will further enhance the Village's appeal, with a Primary School, and in time a Secondary School, serving as key anchors of the neighbourhood. These institutions will not only educate but also inspire, generating opportunities for social and economic vibrancy.

Living Beautifully: Homes for Every Stage of Life

Village 1 offers a diverse and thoughtful mix of homes, tailored to every stage of life and preference. From traditional forms with contemporary details to a range of tenure choices, the housing typologies reflect a commitment to quality and density without compromise.

Formal streetscapes along the STC will showcase rhythm and enclosure, with tree-lined avenues and cohesive architecture creating a sense of order and beauty.

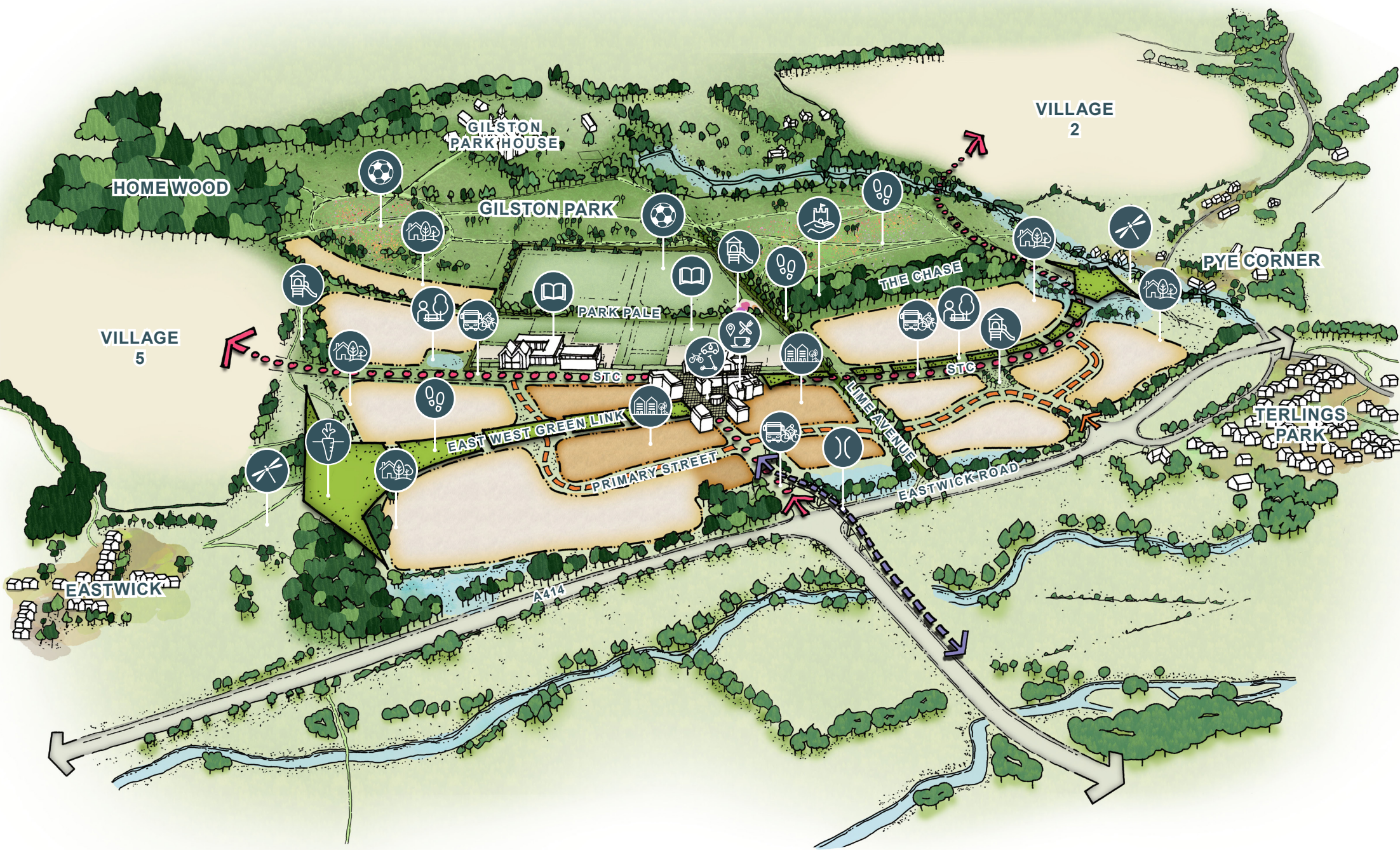
Towards the edges of the Village, the design transitions into a more organic aesthetic, with feathered edges and varied alignments that add charm and interest.

A Place to Thrive

Village 1 isn't just the beginning—it's the benchmark for what's to come at Gilston Park. This vibrant, sustainable, and thoughtfully designed community will embody the very best of modern living, balancing connectivity, heritage, and innovation to create a place where residents will truly thrive.



2.3 Masterplan Vision



2. Background

2.4 Illustrative Masterplan

The Village 1 Masterplan (V1MP) Design Code is supported by an Illustrative Masterplan which demonstrates how the development could be set out in accordance with the Parameter Plans and this Design Code.

The form of the Illustrative Masterplan has been strongly shaped by the landscape and physical features located within Village 1 and the proposed land use and quantum of provision is a response to its context and existing assets.

The Illustrative Masterplan responds to the Vision set out for Village 1 and has been developed in collaboration with the local community, local planning authority and key stakeholders, through an extensive consultation process.

The V1MP does not seek to fix the detail of the Illustrative Masterplan, but the proposals illustrate one possible form of development within the parameters that are set.

KEY

- 1 Gilston Park
- 2 Park Pale
- 3 The Mount
- 4 The Chase
- 5 Lime Avenue
- 6 Neighbourhood Green and Play
- * Village Centre
- 7 Primary School
- 8 Secondary School
- 9 Primary Access (All Modes)
- 10 Pedestrian & Cycle Footbridge
- 11 STC Access (Sustainable Modes)
- 12 Retained Tree Belt
- 13 Fiddler's Brook Landscape Corridor
- 14 Village Play Area
- 15 Neighbourhood Play Area
- 16 Community Growing
- 17 Community Sports Provision

2.4 Illustrative Masterplan

VILLAGE 2

VILLAGE 5

GILSTON

Plume of
Feathers Pub

TERLINGS
PARK

The
Dusty Miller
Pub

EASTWICK

The Lion
Pub

St Botolph's
Church



2. Background

2.5 Engagement & Process

The Village 1 Masterplan and Design Code has been developed in collaboration with the local community, local planning authority and key stakeholders advising on technical and strategic aspects of the proposals. In addition to meetings and site tours with the Hunsdon Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Planning Group (HEGNPG), the Engagement Strategy established the following core groups who took part in regular consultation throughout the process of the Masterplan and Design Code:

Project Lead Group

Regular engagement sessions bringing together Places for People and the local planning authority, to discuss principal matters for Village 1. The Project Lead Group approved the Project Programme, Engagement Strategies and Community Working Group membership in accordance with the Gilston Area Charter and Community Engagement Strategy.

Village 1 Masterplan Community Working Group (CWG)

Collaborative sessions provided a platform to gain in-depth local knowledge from the community and key stakeholders; to influence future proposals and provide an opportunity for a selected group of local stakeholders to feedback on emerging proposals before wider public engagement. Members included HCC, EHDC, Hunsdon, Eastwick & Gilston Neighbourhood Planning Group, Harlow Council, High Wych Parish Council, Council youth representatives, community representatives.

In addition to the Working Groups, proposals were discussed with:

- East Herts District Council, Hertfordshire County Council, Essex County Council and Harlow Council
- Harlow & Gilston Garden Town (including HGGT Board, Officer Groups & Developer Forum)

Statutory / Non-Statutory Bodies:

- Environment Agency, Historic England, Natural England, Sport England, Highways Authority, Lead Local Flood Authority, and Education Authority

Public Consultation & Online Engagement

A key part of Places for People's commitment to local people is to ensure the scheme reflects the needs and interests of the wider community.

Public consultation events were held at regular intervals throughout the engagement process. These events provided the opportunity for local people to learn about the emerging masterplan, ask questions of the project team and provide feedback. As some of the work was undertaken during the Covid-19 restrictions, online platforms such as Zoom and Teams were used to facilitate some of the sessions. Recordings of the sessions were made available to those who were unable to join.

Throughout the process, a dedicated project website was available to ensure residents were kept up to date with proposals. In addition to this, a dedicated email address and Freephone number were also maintained so that those without access to the internet were about to reach out to the project team for further information.

Technical Stakeholder Engagement, including Quality Review Panel

Village 1 Masterplan Technical Working Groups – a collaborative working process with EHDC & HCC officers, with sessions providing an opportunity to work through proposals and seek officer input on technical matters which form the basis of the V1MP. Members included officers from EHDC and HCC, specialists from the consultant team, and nominated external stakeholders who were invited to relevant sessions to contribute.

Nine workshops were held, each focusing on a key topic of the Village 1 design covering: Sustainable Transport; Green Infrastructure; Ecology, Biodiversity and SuDS; Urban and Sustainable Design and Design Code Methodology and Archaeology and Implementation.

HGGT Quality Review Panel – two opportunities were provided for a panel of built environment professionals, including experts in architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design, to review the emerging proposals and offer feedback. This input was aimed at positively shaping and refining the proposals. The Panel's report and PfP's response are provided in the V1MP Design Code Appendix.

2.5 Engagement Strategy & Process

Site Tour with Local Community Members



CWG 2 'Hands-on Planning'



CWG 2 - 'Hands-on Planning'



Public Exhibition 1



Public Exhibition 2



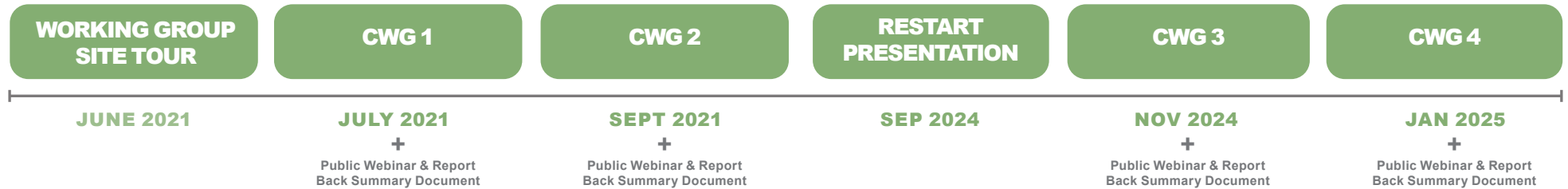
Public Exhibition 2



2. Background

2.5 Engagement & Process

COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP (CWG)



TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (TWG)



QUALITY REVIEW PANELS



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



2.5 Engagement Strategy & Process

CWG 3 - Design Code Session



CWG 3 - Design Code Session



CWG 3 - Design Code Session



CWG 4 - Design Code Review Session



CWG 4 - Design Code Review Session



CWG 4 - Design Code Review Session



Part C

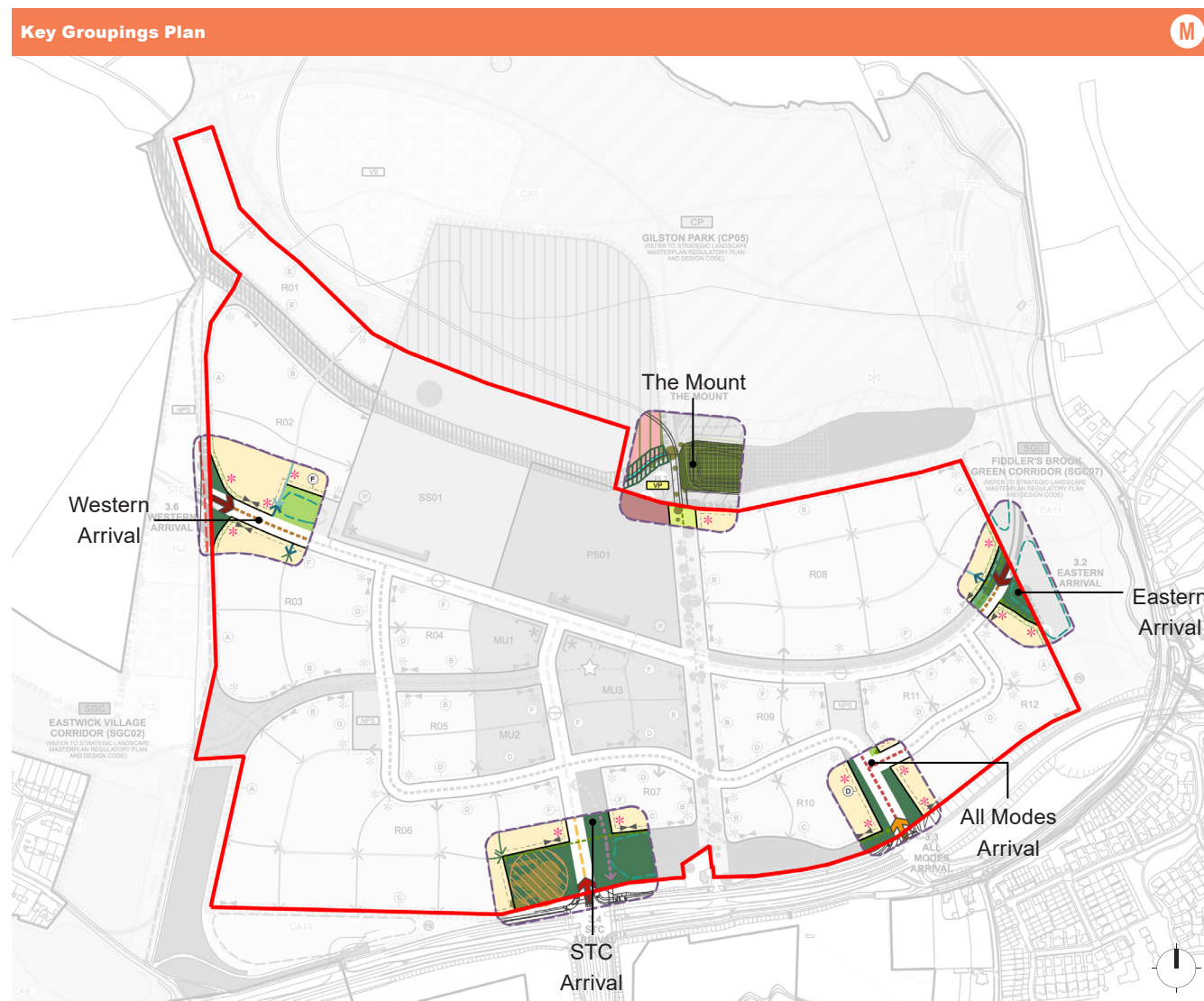
Spatial

Key Groupings

Chapter 3

3. Key Groupings

3.1 Key Groupings



Key Groupings

The Key Groupings represent some of the principal gateways into Village 1 and reflect distinct nodes where built form, movement and public realm interweave and assimilate to forge a distinct 'set piece' for people and activity to congregate in one place.

Enhanced design guidance is therefore provided for these Key Groupings to ensure future proposals deliver the level of design quality that is expected in these 'placemaking anchors' of Village 1, while still complying to the general guidance provided in *Section 6.4* for each frontage character.

Five Key Groupings are identified on the V1MP Regulatory Plan:

- Eastern Arrival
- All Modes Arrival
- STC Arrival
- The Mount
- Western Arrival

Reserved Matters Applications **must** adhere to the design principles set out in this section, using the illustrations as guidance for detailed design.

3. Key Groupings

3.1 Key Groupings

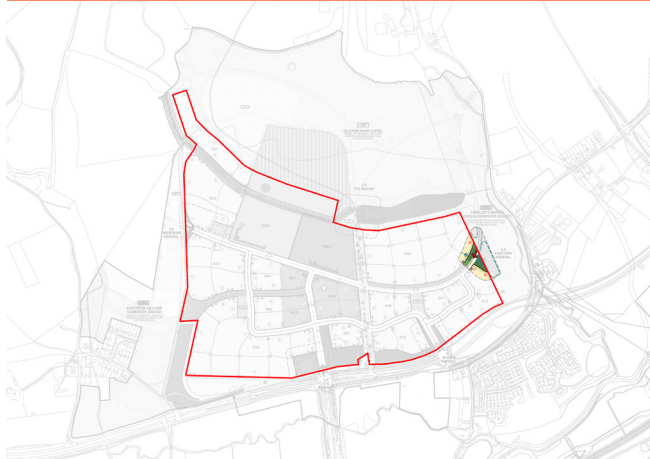


Key Groupings ensure there is a coherent design response between the landscape, movement network and built form ensuring these address key views and vistas, and the open space and public realm they interface with.
Wintringham Park, St Neots

3. Key Groupings

3.2 Eastern Arrival

Key Plan



1. Eastern Arrival

This Key Grouping defines the Eastern Arrival of Village 1, where the Sustainable Transport Corridor (all modes section) enters the development. The grouping is defined to support legibility, as it also sits in a prominent location along the eastern Fiddlers Brook Strategic Green Corridor.

Key Design Principles

Landscape

- The Eastern Arrival **should** be the least formal of the gateways, reflecting its setting at the edge of the Fiddler's Brook Corridor.
- The gateway **must** create a transition between the Village and the parkland character of the Fiddler's Brook Corridor. An informal arrangement of trees and hedgerow planting **must** be provided so as to provide a transition from the open space to the edge of Village 1.
- The gateway **should** be designed as a set-piece landscape to act as a 'placemaking' element within the wider landscape framework. It **should** be coordinated with the adjacent architectural proposals to establish key views and vistas.
- SuDS features **must** be integrated into the design as a key focal point and **must** include areas of permanent water. The STC **should** feel elevated, creating the impression of a causeway rising from the surrounding basins. The gateway **must** include pedestrian and cycle connections which are an important component of the Village 1 movement strategy.
- SuDs features **must** be designed to complement the overall landscape aesthetic and provide amenity value.
- Planting within proposed SuDs or wetland areas **must** be included.
- To enhance user experience, wayfinding elements and public art **must** be included to help orientate and guide for individuals navigating through the space.
- The landscape **should** incorporate a mosaic of habitats, to form an important contribution to local biodiversity and create connectivity to further habitats spaces both within and beyond the scheme.
- Areas of landscape **should** include enhanced/planted wildlife habitats, with areas for seating and recreation sensitively integrated between them.

3.2 Eastern Arrival

Key Design Principles (Cont.)

Movement

- Pedestrian, cycle and bus movement **must** be prioritised on entering the Village.
- Pedestrian footpaths **must** be a minimum 2m wide.
- Shared footpath/cycleways **must** be a minimum 3m wide.
- A band of close mown grass **should** be utilised along path edges, with longer grass preferred in the main body of the open spaces for pollinators and biodiversity benefits.
- A simple and consistent palette of materials **should** be used in a uniform manner to aid legibility. *Refer to the Hard Landscape Palette in Section 4.14 for further details.*
- Proposals **must** seek to reduce vehicular speeds when entering Village 1, through the use of appropriate measures, such as traffic calming.
- Provision of cycle stands and other potential micromobility uses **should** be provided as part of the landscape proposals, whilst ensuring they do not unnecessarily clutter the public realm.
- Safe crossing points for pedestrians and cyclists including vulnerable users (e.g. school children) **should** be provided and clearly demarcated.
- Formal routes **should** include play and wayfinding elements that provide interest and information.
- Vehicular access to homes fronting the Fiddler's Brook Strategic Landscape Corridor **should** be from tertiary streets and private driveways.

Built Form

- Buildings at this gateway **must** be arranged as a cohesive group of dwellings, forming a set piece that contributes to a well-composed and intentional streetscape.
- Where building form part of a Key Grouping it **must** demonstrate a cohesive material application with the rest of the homes within the grouping.
- Buildings **must** positively address the open space and **must** be predominantly detached residential homes of 2/2.5 storeys tall. These homes **should** be predominantly wide fronted eaves facing typologies. *Refer to the Frontage Character A Strategic Landscape Corridors for further detailed design principles.*
- Prominent Marker Buildings **must** address both the STC and the Fiddler's Brook Strategic Landscape Corridor.
- Marker Buildings **must** 'turn the corner' providing active frontage on to both the STC and the open space.
- Marker Buildings **should** respond to long-range views, with well-articulated elevations and architectural detailing. Proposals **should** explore elements such as distinct architectural forms, roofscape, glazing, materiality and/or the use of additional external structures or features.



Attenuation basins can provide attractive linear features alongside major transport routes



A viewing platform over water creates an attractive focal point



Good surrounding design detail can compliment natural SuDs features