
Gilston Area

V I L L A G E
S E V E N

Village 7 Masterplan Document

March 2026



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A shared ethos based on Garden City principles

Harlow and Gilston was designated as a Garden Town in 2017, it is envisaged to become a joyful place to live with sociable streets and vibrant local centres that are accessible by sustainable and active travel modes. It will be an adaptable, healthy, sustainable and innovative place that is set within an attractive countryside landscape.

The landscape-led approach to the design of Harlow in the 1950s had its precedents in the Garden Cities movement and was fundamental to the designation of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town. The Gilston Park Estate and Village 7 are integral parts of the Garden Town, being the largest of the growth areas.

The Gilston Park Estate, of which Village 7 is a part, is being jointly delivered by Taylor Wimpey and Places for People. The vision for the Gilston Park Estate is derived from the special character of the place, aiming to create new settlements that celebrate local heritage and combine long-term landscape restoration and enhancement to form an integrated network of green spaces connecting to Harlow.

The shared vision for the Gilston Area is reinforced through the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision document (HGGT 2018), the Conceptual Framework, and the Gilston Area Supplementary Planning Documents (GA SPDs). The Gilston Park Estate consists of seven villages, each with a distinct and individual character informed by existing landscape assets, topography, and the unique character of their immediate surroundings.



Indicative CGI of natural parkland open space at Taylor Wimpey's development.

“Each village will have a unique identity based on its natural assets. Yet all villages, new and existing, will work as a whole...”

(extracted from Strategic Design Guide)



Indicative CGI of new homes and play provision at Taylor Wimpey's development

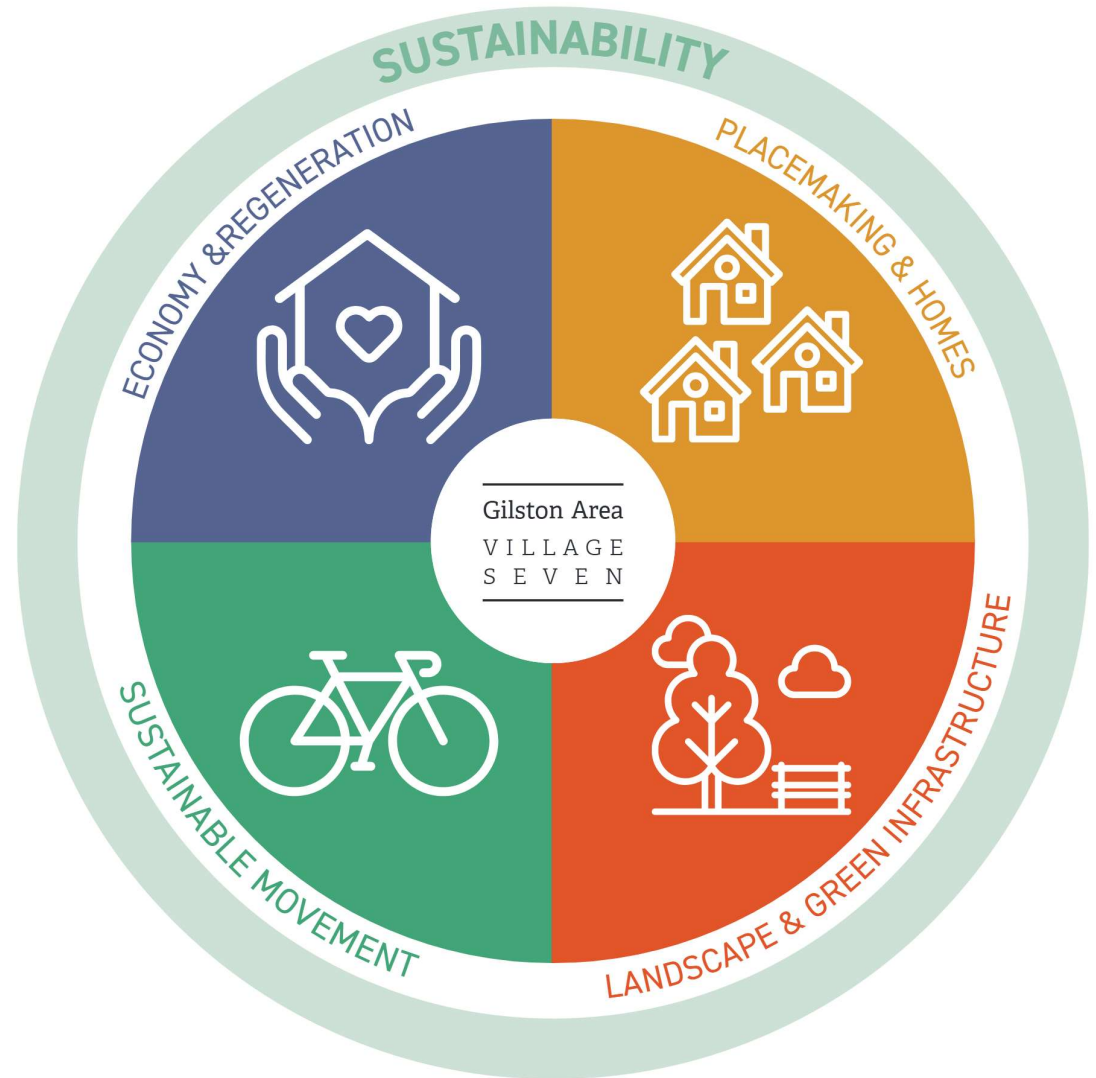
1.1 Village 7 Vision and Core Themes

The landscape and heritage-led design approach for Village 7 in particular, is based on Garden City principles and is reinforced through various local and national design guidances and policies, including the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) Vision Document and Design Guide, in which sustainability is an overriding principle that encompasses the four core themes as shown on the diagram opposite. The masterplan proposal is being designed to ensure the delivery of a truly sustainable, high quality and distinctive neighbourhood that is grounded to its locality and builds on the existing landscape and heritage assets.

Gilston Village 7 will be a new sustainable and distinctive neighbourhood set within a high quality natural parkland with an extensive offering of community-focused amenities and facilities. The development will deliver up to 1,500 new and sustainable homes with convenient access to a broad range of commercial and educational facilities, both within Village 7 and neighbouring villages. It will be a green and sustainable place that celebrates and embraces the heritage of the Site, fostering people and nature connection and encouraging an active and healthy lifestyle amongst its future residents.

The design of Village 7 draws on the four original themes identified in the HGGT Vision Document, which have been adapted to include the 10 overarching principles that apply to all developments within Gilston Park Estate and Village 7 and the 7 design principles that apply specifically to Village 7, the Western Gateway to the Gilston Area.

The four key themes are illustrated opposite. Each of the elements within the four themes will be further described throughout this document.



“Our vision is to create an environmentally responsible, sustainable, innovative and distinctive new community where people want to live”



PLACEMAKING & HOMES

A village with distinct character delivering high quality, varied, sustainable new homes to meet the needs of a diverse community.



High quality homes and public realm



LANDSCAPE & GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

To be set within an attractive new landscape which respects and responds to existing environmental and heritage assets, provides a community-orientated stewardship model, and encourages active and healthy lifestyles.



Sensitive integrated edges



SUSTAINABLE MOVEMENT

Integrate and add value to existing communities, social and physical infrastructure. Encourage a habitual shift towards sustainable modes of travel within a permeable and legible movement network.



Promoting active travel



REGENERATION & ECONOMY

Offer direct and indirect new jobs and employment opportunities, and support for the economic prosperity of the Gilston Area and existing local communities.



Community facilities

1.2 Village 7 Proposals

The emerging proposal for Village 7 of the Gilston Area is seeking to deliver significant benefits for the community:

- **High quality affordable and accessible homes** of different sizes and tenures to accommodate the growing population and meet the local area housing needs;
- **Flexible and adaptable commercial floorspace** to meet future demand and create employment locally;
- **A community park, Football Hub and village playing fields** with changing facilities to promote healthy and active lifestyles;
- **Allotments and community orchards** to encourage and support residents to grow their own food and build a sense of community, reflecting the Site's heritage;
- **A Sustainable Transport Corridor and hub** that prioritises sustainable modes of transport and strategically connects Village 7 to other villages within the Gilston Area and beyond;
- **A local village centre at the heart of the Village** with the potential to accommodate a wide range of community and flexible uses such as co-working space; and
- **Extensive areas of open space** to create an ecologically diverse landscape setting and destination.



Figure 1 Illustrative bird's eye view of how the Village 7 masterplan proposal may come forward



1.3 Background & Purpose of the Document

This Village 7 Masterplan Document (V7MP) has been prepared by Stantec on behalf of Taylor Wimpey (UK) Limited through a continuous and involved consultation and engagement process with East Herts District Council (EHDC), HGGT Partners, The Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan Group (NPG) and other key statutory consultees and stakeholders. Input has also been received from the local community and the wider public through active engagement to inform and shape the design of Village 7.

This document builds upon a considerable amount of technical baseline assessment work already undertaken, that has shaped various adopted strategies and policies, including the Gilston Area Conceptual Framework, Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision and the Gilston Area Strategic Design Guide; which have led to and informed the approved parameters of the OPA to outline consent.

The previous site-wide and village-specific technical assessments provide a comprehensive strategic analysis of the Gilston Area and surrounding villages as well as specific site-wide analysis, which have been instrumental in informing both the Masterplan Framework and the Design Code for Village 7.

This document provides further details on the planning policy context and background to the Site, together with the engagement strategy and consultation that has been undertaken in relation to Village 7 and how the outcome of this consultation has informed the design evolution of the Masterplan and lead to the Regulatory Plan approved by the outline

consent. The Design Code within the latter part of this document provides a further layer of detail to form a framework that will guide Reserved Matters Applications for future development.

The Village Masterplan and Design Code has been prepared for Village 7 as required under draft Condition D4 and D6 of the Outline Planning Application ("OPA") (reference: 3/19/2124/OUT), which comprises development proposals for up to 1,500 residential units and associated uses at the Site as part of the wider Gilston Area Garden Town Development for 10,000 new homes.

The plan opposite shows the Village 7 in relation to the wider Gilston Area and Villages 1-6 and the Strategic Landscape Masterplan (SLMP) area.

The Village 7 Masterplan Document should be used by the applicant, local planning authority and stakeholders for the purposes of preparing and assessing details of the proposed development as submitted as Reserved Matters and also pursuant to

Planning Conditions, where applicable. The Village 7 Masterplan Document should be read in the context of the planning permission for the development of Village 7 to include the information approved by it, notably including the Parameter Plans and also the corresponding Development Specification Statement. Figure 3 (overleaf) identifies the status of information comprised in the Village 7 Masterplan Document, all chapters save for that concerning the Design Code (which is for approval) should be read as supporting information. Notably the Design Code chapter includes provision for both the coding of forthcoming details and also the Regulatory Plan to identify both the spatial application of the coding requirements and also the refinement of spatial parameters as already approved by the outline planning permission (the Parameter Plans).

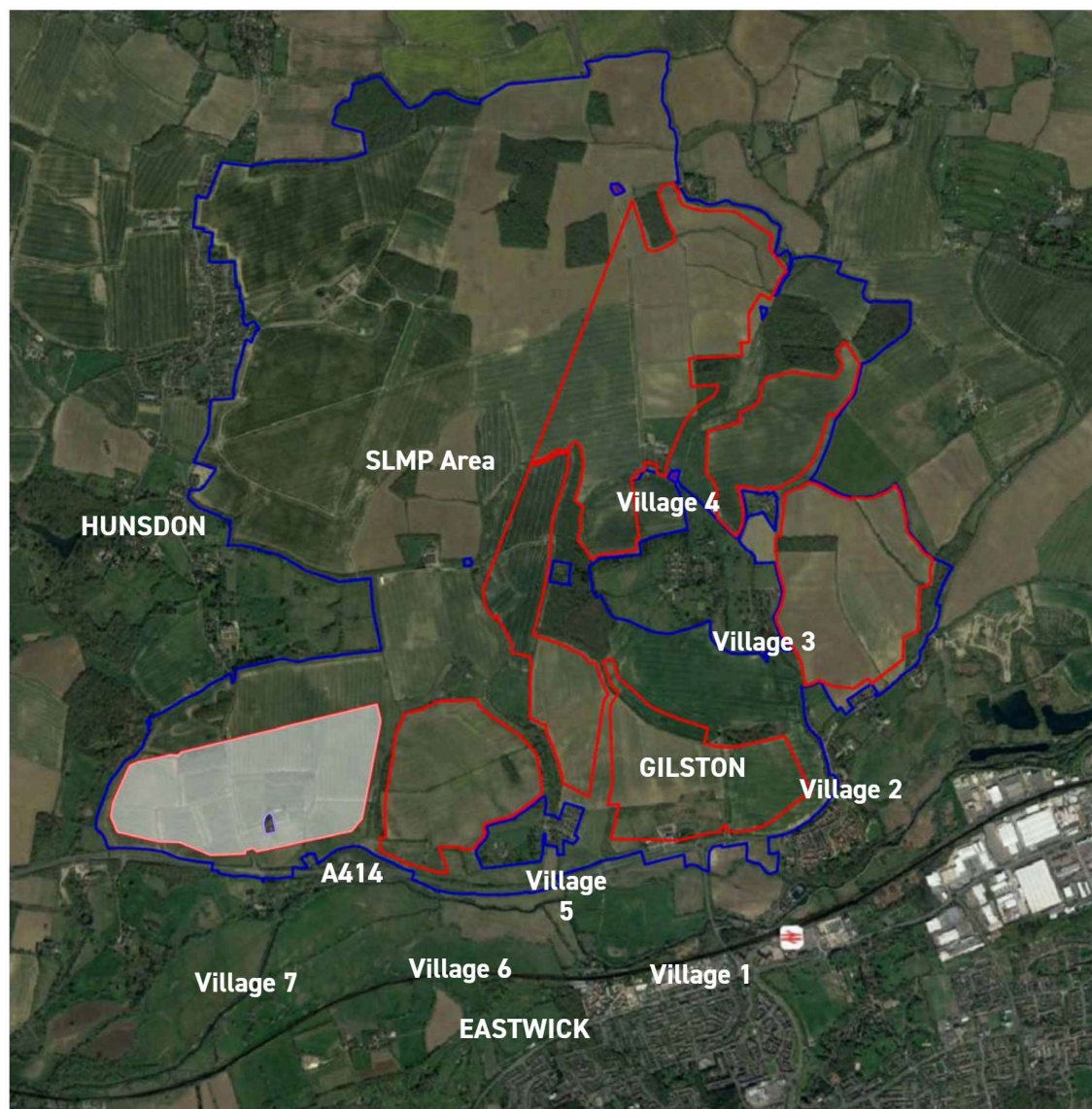


Figure 2 Location of Village 7 in relation to the wider Gilston Area and Village 1-6

1.4 Structure of the Document

STRUCTURE OF THE DOCUMENT

The creation of the Village Masterplan has followed the seven-stage process as set out by the Gilston Area Charter Supplementary Planning Document (hereafter referred to as "GAC SPD"). Refer to Chapter 2 for further details on planning context.

This document is split into two main sections: the Village Masterplan and the Design Code, with a separate end note appendix that includes the supporting technical assessments.

Once approved the Village Masterplan and its associated Design Code will form a framework to guide Reserved Matters Applications for infrastructure, development plots and buildings in a planned and comprehensive way, whilst still allowing for design flexibility and innovation.

Village Masterplan

Chapters 2-8 of this document form part of the Village Masterplan. The Village Masterplan presents a guiding framework, that will establish a spatial strategy for the key components and the broad spatial, urban design, movement and land use principles that cover the entire developable area of Village 7. It also sets out the design vision for Village 7 and the overarching strategic and village specific principles informed by the HGGT Vision and Gilston Area Strategic Design Guide. The masterplan seeks to refine and build upon the approved parameters of the OPA through continued design evolution and option testing. This design process has been informed by public and stakeholder engagement and consultation, as well as additional supplementary technical work, as more detailed investigation and technical assessments are required and updated to inform the delivery of Village 7.

The resultant Illustrative Masterplan presents how Village 7 will come forward and be delivered in line with the overarching vision and design principles. This will ensure design quality, delivery and long-term stewardship are addressed in a seamless, consistent and comprehensive manner across both Village 7 and the entire Gilston Area.

Design Code

The Design Code provides illustrated design guidance and sets expectations on certain more detailed elements of the Masterplan, such as street widths, block types, building types, planting types and materials, etc., which have been informed and led by the strategic and village design principles.

The Design Code will be used as a tool to guide designers and developers bringing forward more detailed proposals for new development within Village 7; through future reserved matters submissions; that will shape and achieve the design aspirations and design principles set out within the Masterplan.

VILLAGE MASTERPLAN

- Chapter 1 - Introduction
- Chapter 2 - Planning Background
- Chapter 3 - Understanding the Site & its Context
- Chapter 4 - Statement of Engagement
- Chapter 5 - Design Evolution & Options Testing
- Chapter 6 - The Masterplan Framework
- Chapter 7 - Sustainability and Climate Change
- Chapter 8 - Framework for Delivery



DESIGN CODE

- Chapter 9 - The Design Code



APPENDIX

Technical Appendices

Figure 3 Table to identify status of information comprised in the Village 7 Masterplan Document

Documentation	Formal Planning Approval Status or Otherwise
Strategic Landscape Masterplan & Design Code	
Chapter 1 – Introduction	Supporting information
Chapter 2 – Planning Background	Supporting information
Chapter 3 – Understanding the Site & its Local Context	Supporting information
Chapter 4 – Statement of Engagement	Supporting information
Chapter 5 – Design Evolution & Options Testing	Supporting information
Chapter 6 – The Masterplan Framework	Supporting information
Chapter 7 – Sustainability and Climate Change	Supporting information
Chapter 8 – Framework for Delivery	Supporting information
Chapter 9 – The Design Code	For Approval

1.5 The Site and its Context

IMMEDIATE SITE SURROUNDINGS

Village 7 (hereafter also refers to as 'the Site') is located to the north of the existing settlement of Harlow. Between the Site and Harlow is the River Stort and its associated valley.

1. To the far north of the Site is the Grade I listed Hunsdon House and further to the north is the hamlet of Hunsdonbury, with the village of Hunsdon lying further to the north of that. To the west of Hunsdon House is the Parish Church of St Dunstan, which is a Grade I listed building;
2. To the east of the Site lies open farmland which is the location for the planned Village 6, with Eastwick Manor and the village of Eastwick located to the south east;
3. To the immediate south is the A414, and;
4. To the immediate west lie Hunsdon Brook Fishponds, a designated Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM), the associated sensitive development area (SDA) and a public footpath, with Lord's Wood lying west of that. The land to the west forms part of the Green Belt.

The Site has access to existing local and community amenities in Harlow as well as two national rail railway stations close by, Harlow Town Station (to the south east) and Roydon Station (to the south), which provide frequent services into London.

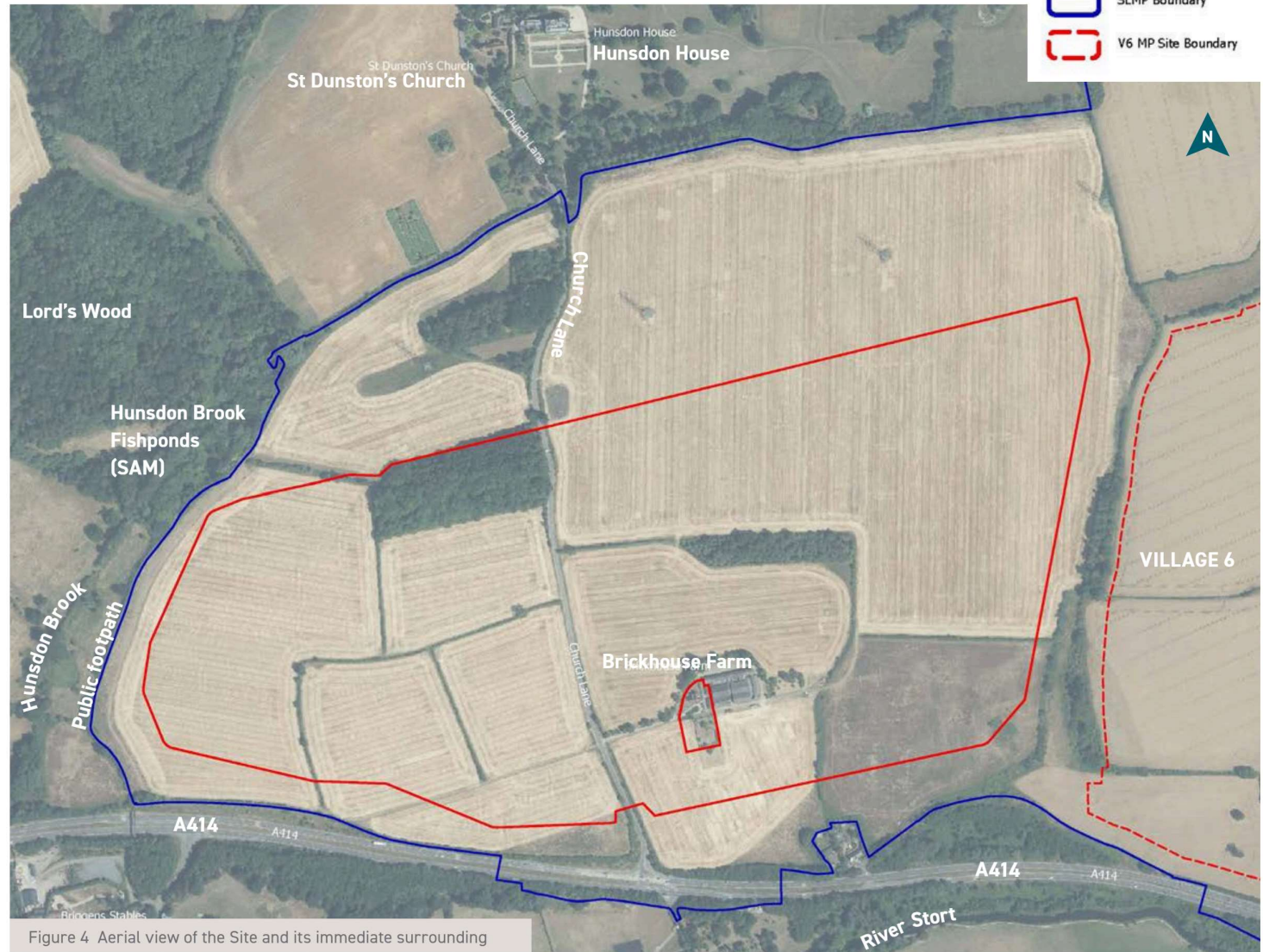


Figure 4 Aerial view of the Site and its immediate surrounding



Figure 5 View looking north towards the listed Brickhouse Farm and barns



Figure 6 View looking north towards the existing woodland



Figure 7 View looking north towards the pylons

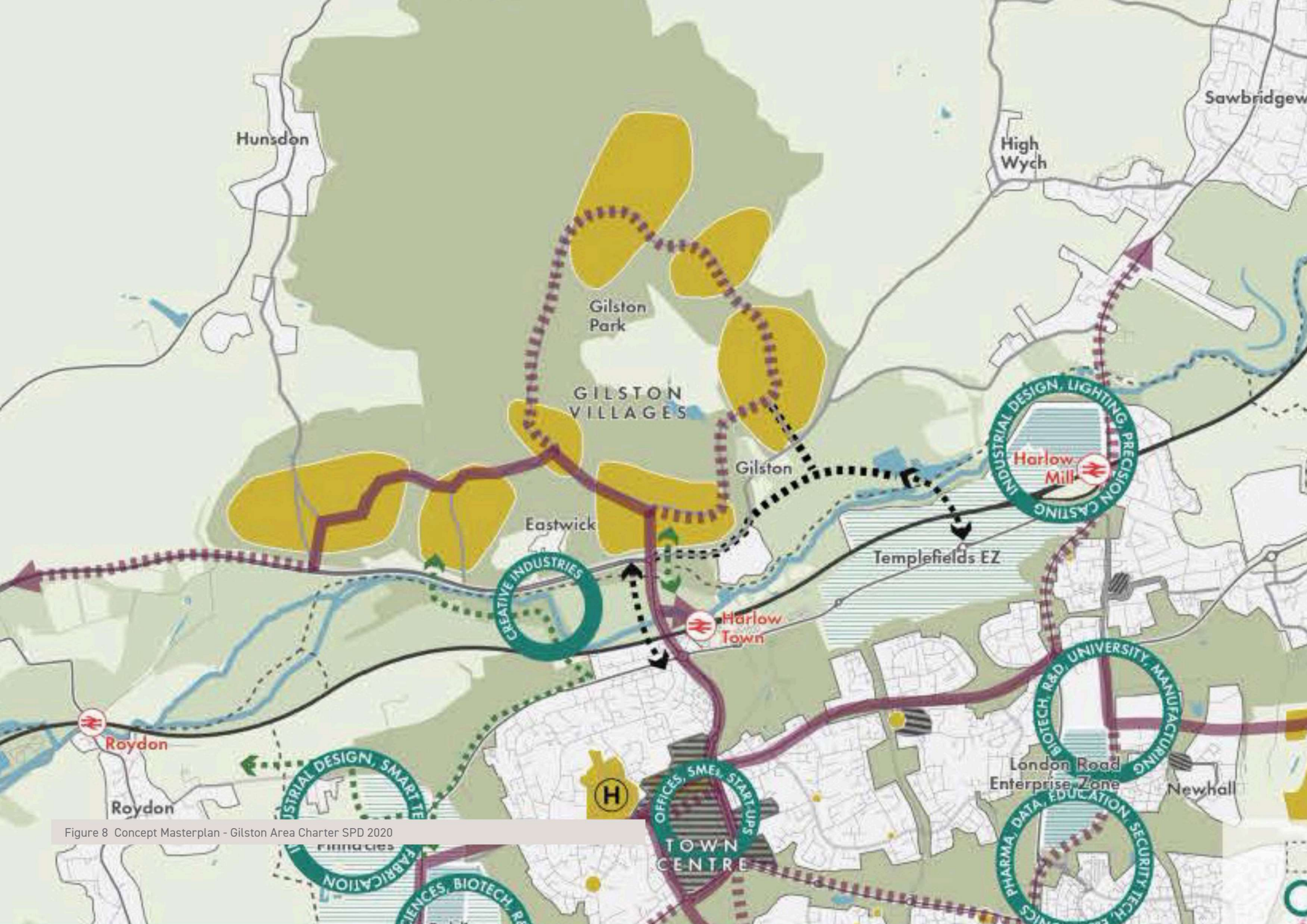


Figure 8 Concept Masterplan - Gilston Area Charter SPD 2020

Chapter 2.

Planning Background

2.1 Introduction

This section outlines the planning background and the associated policies and guidance documents, which have been fundamental in the creation of the Village 7 Masterplan and Design Code.

Village 7 is to be delivered in accordance with the approved Outline Planning Application ("OPA") for development at Village 7 (application reference 3/19/2124/OUT). The outline application was assessed and approved in line with local development plan policies of the East Herts District Plan and the Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan. Alongside a series of regulatory documents that were created and adopted to shape the guiding principles and design of the Gilston Area through engagement with landowners, the Council, stakeholders, and local communities.

The flowchart opposite indicates the hierarchy of documents, including policy and guidance, that the proposal for the Site will need to follow.

PLANNING POLICY



National Planning Policy Framework 2021



East Herts District Plan (October 2018), Hunsdon Area Neighbourhood Plan (November 2022), Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan (May 2021)

GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS



Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (November 2018)



Gilston Area Concept Framework (September 2016), The Gilston Area - Community Engagement Strategy (March 2021), East Herts Gilston Area Charter SPD (July 2020)



The Gilston Area Strategic Design Guide (July 2020)

2.2 National Planning Policy

“The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) recognises that the supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns. In achieving such development, the NPPF requires that appropriate tools such as masterplans and design guides or codes are used to secure a variety of well-designed homes to meet the needs of different groups in the community. The NPPF also recognises that design guides and codes and masterplans can be used to help ensure that land is used efficiently while also creating beautiful and sustainable places. Accordingly, Taylor Wimpey’s production of this masterplan also responds to very latest Government planning policy in delivering housing according to high quality design and contributing to the Government’s core growth agenda.”

HARLOW AND GILSTON GARDEN TOWN (HGGT)

In January 2017 the Ministry for Homes, Communities and Local Government confirmed its support for the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (of which the Gilston Area forms part of). The Garden Town initiative intends to deliver approximately 16,500 homes by 2033, and coordinated long term growth beyond the plan period. The Gilston Area represents a key part of this Government initiative. The Gilston area of the Garden Town is located to the north of Harlow and lies in East Hertfordshire District.

East Hertfordshire District Council’s adopted plan (2018) sets out the vision and development strategy to 2033. The Gilston Area is allocated in the district plan to accommodate 10,000 homes, along with supporting infrastructure including roads and sustainable transport provision, schools, health centres and open space, planned to be built across seven new villages. 3,000 of those will be delivered by 2033 and the remaining 7,000 are planned to be built from 2033 onwards.

Village 7 is to be brought forward by Taylor Wimpey UK LTD to deliver 1500 of the 10,000 homes alongside supporting infrastructure and innovative technologies to meet the aspirations of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Principles.

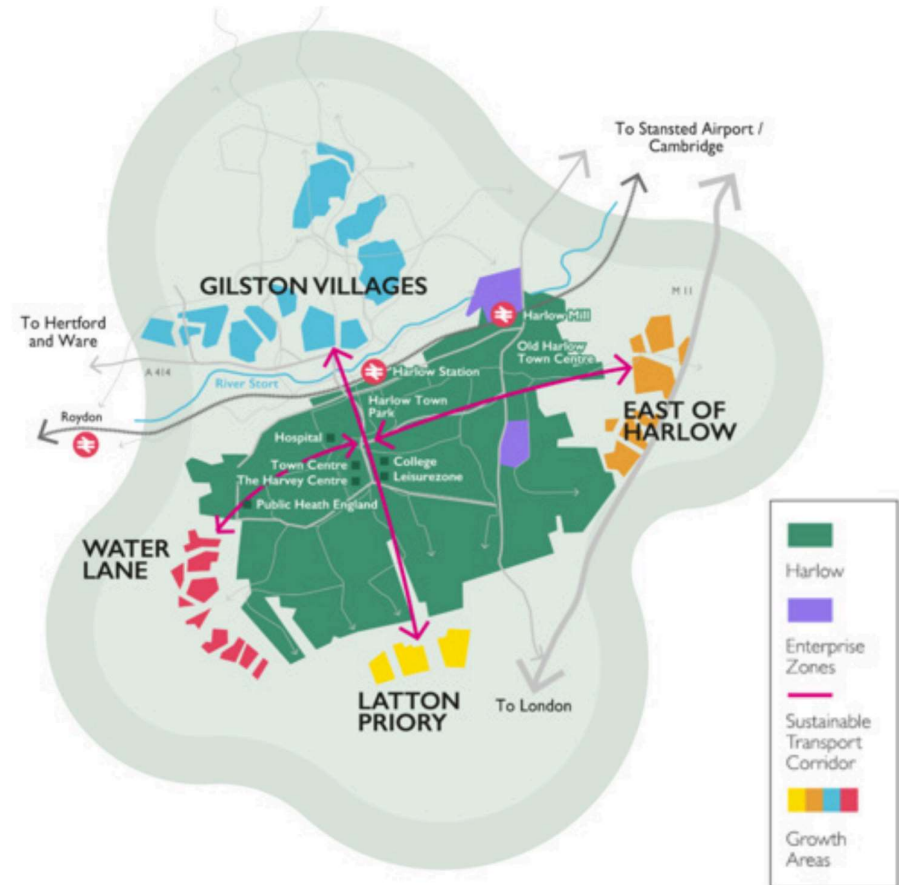


Figure 9 Location of the Gilston Area and its wider context (extract from the HGGT vision document)

2.3 Local Planning Policy

“Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance the relevant Development Plan documents are the East Herts District Plan and the Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan (“GANP”).”

GA1 OF THE EAST HERTS DISTRICT PLAN (ADOPTED OCTOBER, 2018)

Policy GA1 of the East Herts Local Plan is the site-specific Local Plan policy for the Gilston Area. The policy sets out various requirements ranging from those in relation to the development of the GA1 allocation, to include amounts and types of uses, to aims and objectives for the development to information requirements and mechanisms for the delivery of the development, such as those for the stewardship of the development. There are aspects of the policy that have already been addressed by the grant of planning permission for the development (such as headline amounts and uses and securing mechanisms and procedures through S106 obligation and planning conditions such as controls for phasing). However, other aspects remain key to this masterplanning stage, such as the principles for the development at Part III; the provisions and issues at Part V; and, the requirement for proposals to have regard to ongoing work in relation to the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town at Part VIII of the policy. Notably, Policy GA1 also cites the Concept Framework being prepared by the landowners, which has since been endorsed by the District Council.

Policy DES1 of the District Plan states that all significant development proposals are required to prepare a Masterplan setting out key land uses, design principles, infrastructure and other relevant matters. The policy requires that the masterplan be collaboratively prepared, involving site promoters, land owners, East Herts Council, town and parish councils and other relevant key stakeholders.

In part, the requirements of Policy DES1 have already been satisfied for the Gilston Area through the preparation of the site-specific Concept Framework. The remaining requirement is to be addressed through the Strategic Landscape Masterplan (SLMP) for the Gilston Area and a series of village masterplans as (VMP) as set out in the Concept Framework (2018), of which this document relates.

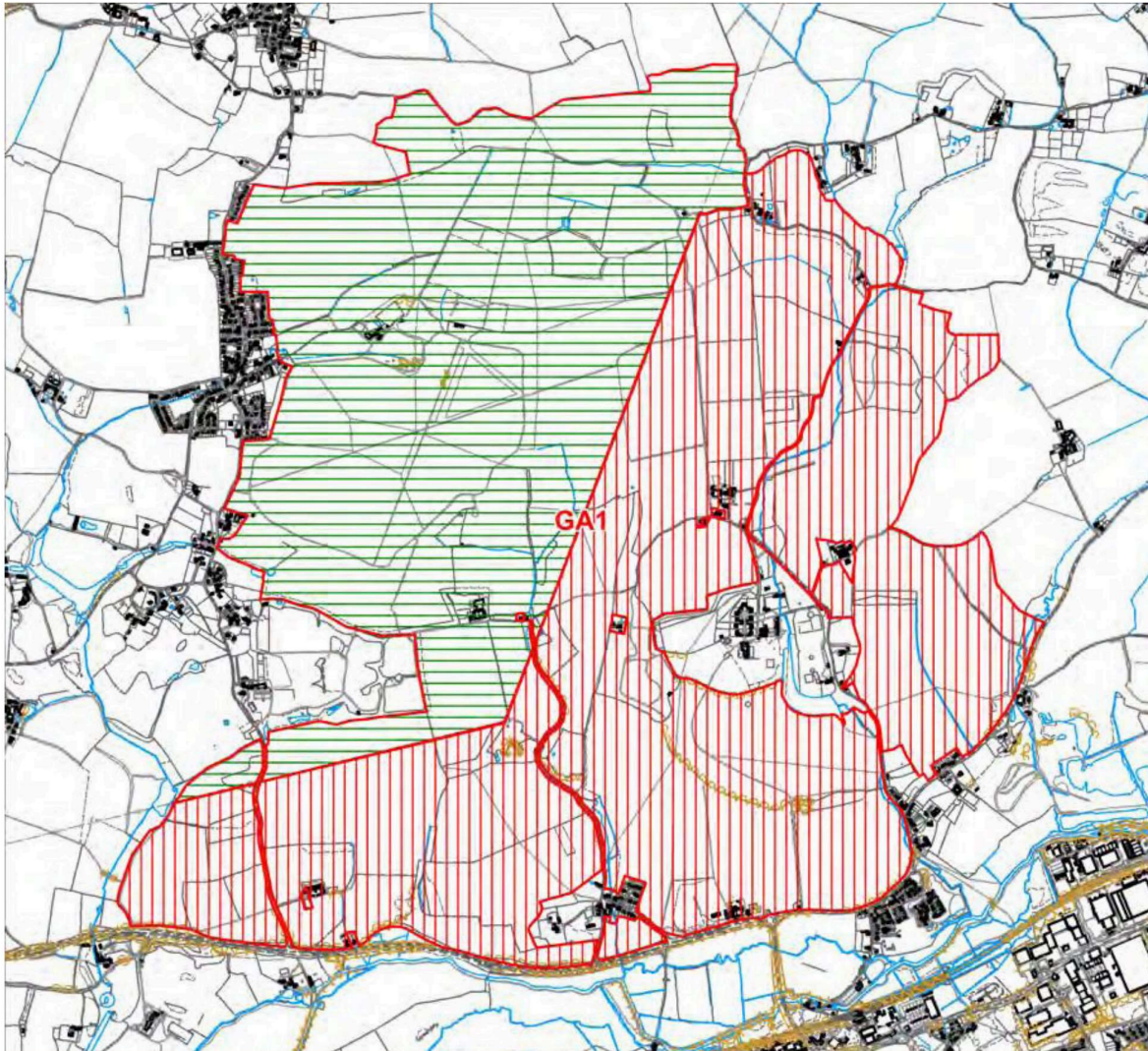


Figure 10 Gilston Site Allocation GA1 (extracted from the East Herts District Plan Document 2018)

This box is used throughout the document to highlight relevant guidance and policy provided in the Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan (referred to as GANP or Gilston Area NP).

The key policies that have informed the creation of the village masterplan are listed as follows:

GILSTON AREA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (GANP)

The GANP was subject to a successful referendum on 27 May 2021 and was adopted in July 2021. The GANP was prepared by the local community and sets out a series of policies and expectations for how the development of the Gilston Area will come forward. The GANP is based on the principles of the Gilston Conceptual Framework to elevate its vision and principles into formal policy.

The GANP seeks to achieve:

- A shared Vision;
- Key Development Principles for comprehensive and integrated development between villages;
- Planning policies that emphasise a landscape led approach to development;
- Identify local community projects; and
- A framework for partnership working.

Policy AG1 requires the preparation, in collaboration with the local community, of a Strategic Landscape Masterplan for the entire Gilston Area to provide the context for the preparation of Village Masterplans.

Policy AG2 states that development proposals should take into account the Strategic Landscape Masterplan for the Gilston Area to ensure the integrity of the landscape and countryside setting, whilst creating an integrated Green Infrastructure Network that will surround and sit alongside the new villages, existing settlements and the wider landscape.

Policy AG4 requires a landscape led approach to define the extent of green

corridors which provide meaningful separation between villages. It requires new villages to have a defined 'Village Boundary' within which built development should be contained in order to create a distinct identity. The policy requires that the detailed design and

treatment of the natural green corridors and landscape buffers including rights of way and cycle connections be identified in the Strategic Landscape Masterplan and Village Masterplans in consultation with the local community.

Policy AG6 states that proposals for the new villages should clearly demonstrate that the best possible balance has been achieved between landscape, village separation, mass, density and the overall delivery of the aims of Policy GA1. This is to be demonstrated in the Village Masterplans prepared in collaboration with the local community, each of which should:

- Respect local topography, landscape features and settlement morphology;
- Create a village of distinct and individual character; and,
- Provide a range of densities appropriately scaled in relation to location, heritage assets, landscape

The policy requires each Village Masterplan to demonstrate how it has been informed by its relationship with the landscape and heritage assets and has drawn inspiration from the character

and morphology of existing villages in the Gilston Area and elsewhere in Hertfordshire. Consideration is to be given to typical village and other local characteristics as listed in the policy.

Policy LA1 sets requirements for Village Masterplans to incorporate a comprehensive landscape framework within each village.

Policy BU1 provides guidance on the design of development within villages.

Policy BU2 requires Village Masterplans to identify the location of public transport hubs at key points and demonstrate flexibility in anticipation of future mobility scenarios.

Policy BU4 states that the quality and character of the primary street network linking the villages should be defined comprehensively for the whole area in the Strategic Landscape Masterplan, with streets and lanes within the village boundaries being defined in the relevant Village Masterplan.

Policy H1 requires that heritage informs the preparation of the Village Masterplans through the enhancement of assets.



Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan, May 2021

2.4 Gilston Area Guidance Documents and SPDs

GILSTON AREA CONCEPT FRAMEWORK

The Gilston Area Concept Framework (GACF) was produced in parallel and for the purposes of the East Herts District Plan and Policy GA1. It represents an agreed approach between EHDC, landowners and the local community.

The GACF conducted baseline technical assessments of the entire Gilston Area. In light of the constraints and opportunities identified within those assessments, the Concept Framework established the key principles that underpin the redevelopment of the Gilston Area and guide the preparation of future detailed proposals, to include the outline planning applications for Village 1-6 and Village 7 and their parameters, the Gilston Area SDG, the Strategic Landscape Masterplan 'SLMP' for the Gilston Area and the Village Masterplans.

The Concept Framework also set out the planning delivery process for the project which involves:

- The outline planning application stage – defining the spatial strategy for the villages and key parameters;
- The preparation of a Landscape Masterplan and Village Masterplans (including village specific design guides);
- Reserved Matters Applications for individual plots and infrastructure.

The Concept Framework was approved as a material consideration by the District Council.



Figure 11 Summary of 7 villages and Land Use Framework diagram extracted from the Concept Framework document

GILSTON COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY (CES)

The Community Engagement Strategy (CES) December 2020 was prepared to ensure a consistent approach to engagement through the establishment of a framework which aims to establish how the various parties involved in the growth of the Gilston Area will undertake engagement, collaboration and co-operation with the community at various stages of the planning process.

The CES continues to be built upon, prior to work commencing on the production of a SLMP/VMP, an Engagement Plan is to be prepared by each developer/landowner in accordance with the CES to agree with the Council team how they will ensure members of the local community are engaged in the masterplanning process and how their input has influenced decisions.

The key stakeholders are:

- Hunsdon, Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan Group;
- Parish Councils -- Hunsdon, Gilston, Eastwick, High Wych and Widford;
- Wider community stakeholders - including local businesses, landowners and residents living in and around Gilston, Hunsdon, Eastwick, High Wych, Widford and Harlow. Engagement with other public bodies and interest groups local to the Gilston Area and the Stort Valley, such as the Stort Catchment Partnership and Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust.



The Gilston Area - Community Engagement Strategy (March 2021)



Figure 12 Gilston Community Engagement Events (Image group 1)



Figure 13 Gilston Community Engagement Events (Image group 2)

GILSTON AREA CHARTER SPD

The Gilston Area Charter was adopted in 2020 and was produced by East Herts District Council. Its role is to “establish a consistent approach to the production of Masterplans in the Gilston Area to ensure development comes forward in a comprehensive and cohesive manner that contributes to the creation of successful and sustainable places that embody the Garden City Principles”. The Gilston charter provides a framework for what is required within the masterplans, as set out in the table opposite.



East Herts Gilston Area Charter SPD, July 2020

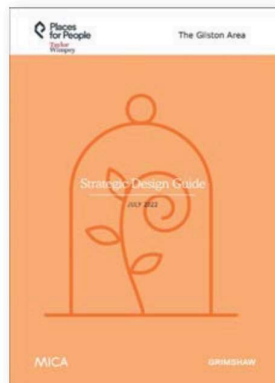
Step 1	Confirm the relevant parameters and commitments secured under the outline planning permission and through adopted policy and guidance for the Masterplan. This should include the initial definition of the Village Masterplan boundary that complements the Strategic Landscape Masterplan.
Step 2	Establish an agreed brief for the Masterplan and its objectives.
Step 3	Drawing on conversant technical and supporting information, assess considerations and opportunities for development taking account of the setting of heritage assets, key views, geographical/topographical features, ecological habitats (including trees/hedgerows), utilities infrastructure (retained and future provision), relationship to existing/emerging settlements/development; and any influences arising from the phasing and timing of infrastructure delivery.
Step 4	Establish the extent of the Village Masterplan having regard to how it will interface and respond to its immediate surrounding landscape in the context of the approved Strategic Landscape Masterplan.
Step 5	Establish and determine the location and extent of key features, building in flexibility where required. As a minimum this should include; • The Village Centre; • Points of access; • Sustainable Transport Hub/Community Hub; • Sustainable transport/movement routes including any Public Rights of Way, bridleways, cycle paths and footpaths; • Vehicle routes; • Development plots, including their orientation, maximum size and building heights and broad land uses; • Community buildings such as schools and health care facilities; • Provision of commercial and retail floorspace; • Outdoor recreation areas such as playing fields and playgrounds; • Green wedges and habitat corridors; • SuDS infrastructure such as attenuation basins and other surface water attenuation features; • Formal and informal public spaces such as allotments, village buffers etc; • Significant land level changes; • Areas that will be publicly lit including streets, recreation areas and other public spaces; • Other physical development such as utilities infrastructure.
Step 6	Identify Character Areas
Step 7	Establish a Design Code including Design Code Testing. This should take account of any site-wide Design Codes established as part of the Strategic Landscape Masterplan

Table 1 Steps in the production of Village Masterplan

GILSTON AREA STRATEGIC DESIGN GUIDE

The Strategic Design Guide [SDG] (July 2022, Version 8) was prepared in support of outline planning applications submitted by GA landowners in defining the vision and design quality for the Gilston Park Estate and Village 7. It outlines a series of 10 strategic principles which will inform the character of the villages, and support the HGGT Vision and specific design principles characteristic to Village 7 (included on p.104-105).

The SDG was approved by the District Council and is a material consideration that must be adhered to. The design principles of the SDG are fundamental to how Village 7 will be delivered and form the spatial backbone of the Village 7 Masterplan and Design Code.



The Gilston Area Strategic Design Guide (July 2022)

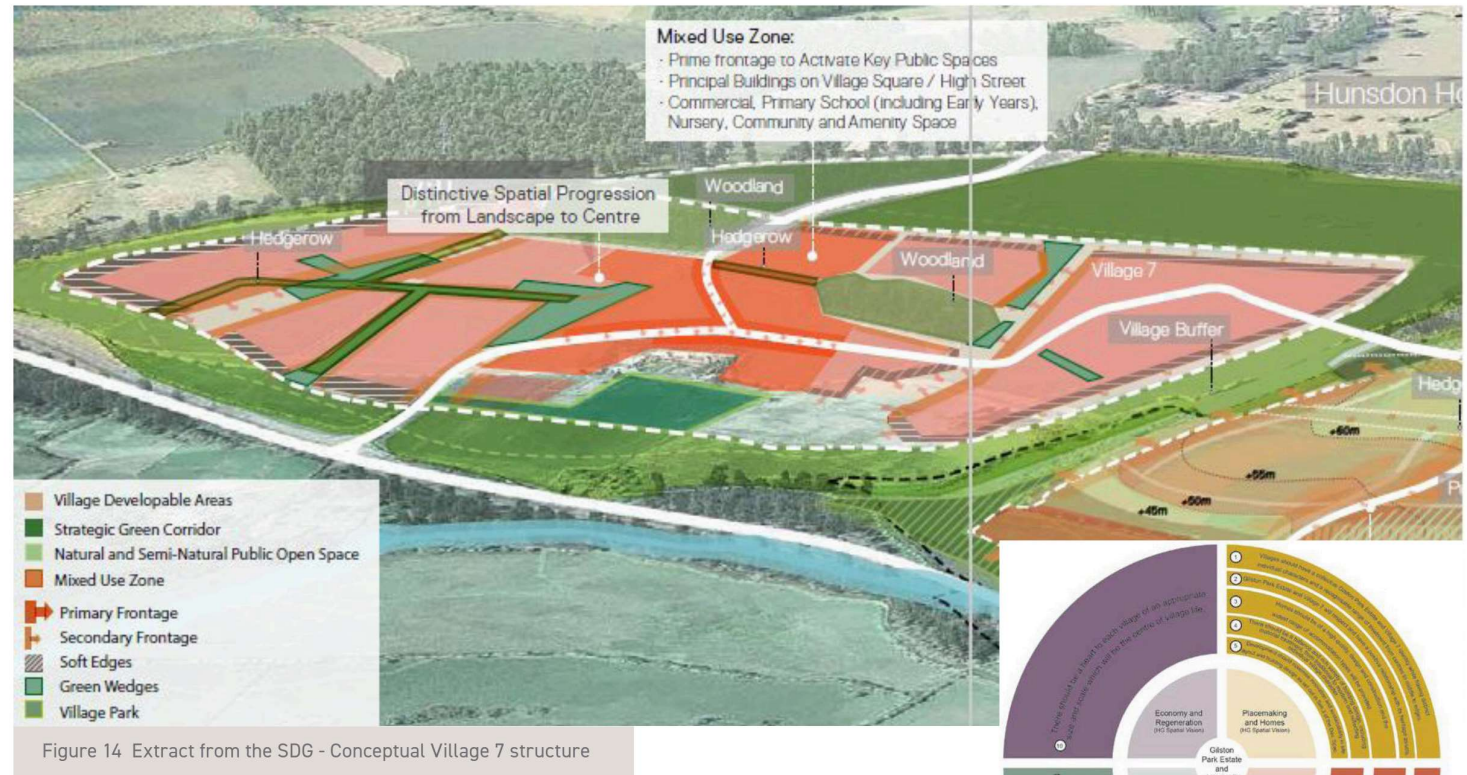


Figure 14 Extract from the SDG - Conceptual Village 7 structure

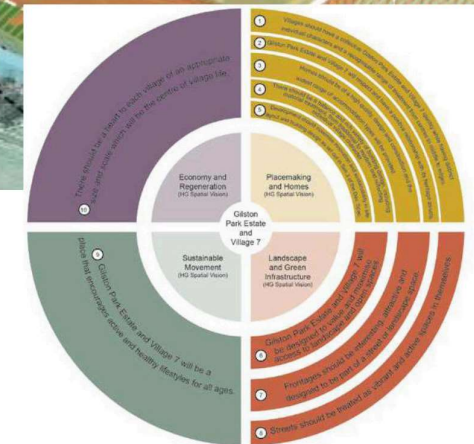


Figure 15 Extract from the SDG - Key HGGT principles (July 2022)

2.5 Planning Delivery Process

The delivery of the Gilston Area is secured by the respective planning permissions for the development of Villages 1-6 and Village 7 respectively. These permissions include an extensive range of planning conditions, with the S106 legal agreement secured pursuant to these containing a significant and comprehensive package of planning obligations to define timescales and responsibilities for the delivery of the development.

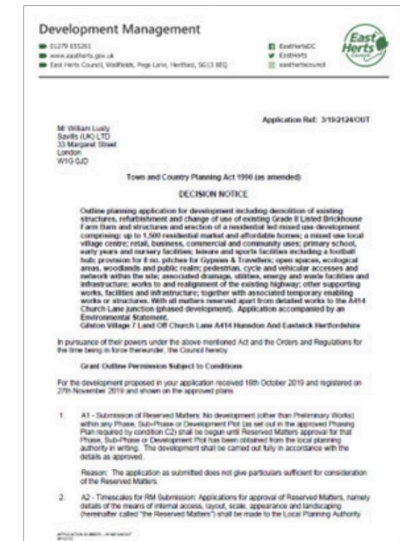
Together with the Parameter Plans, Strategic Landscape and Village Masterplans, and the Phasing Plan (Condition 8: X/25/0256/CND), these conditions set the overall delivery framework. This is set out and identified within Chapter 8 Framework for delivery.

It should be noted that related planning permissions have been separately granted for the development of the Central Stort (3/19/1046/FUL) and Eastern Stort (3/19/1051/FUL) Crossings as infrastructure key to the delivery of the Gilston Area.

The Outline Planning Application for Village 7 requires the submission of a Village Masterplan and a Design Code (Conditions D4 and D6) in line with the local and national policy requirements and the Gilston-specific guidance documents and SPDs, which have been referred to in this chapter. The detailed approval of Reserved Matters Applications will follow the approval of the Village Masterplan and Design Code.



Section 106 Legal Agreement



Outline Planning Permission (January, 2025)

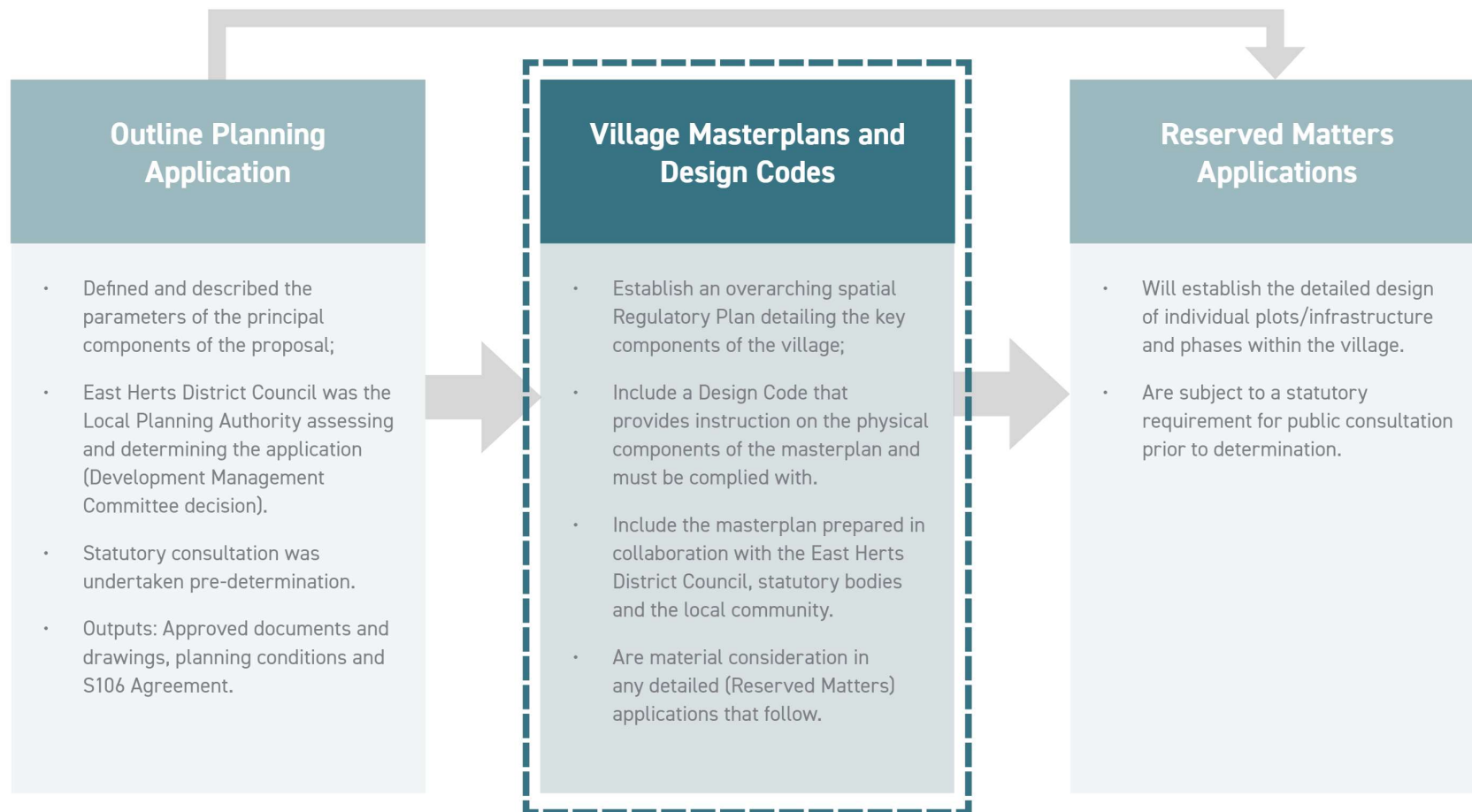


Figure 16 Planning Process Diagram

2.6 Outline Application Parameters and Approved Plans

VILLAGE 7 OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION (OPA)

Following the OPA site appraisal, further technical assessments, engagement events, stakeholder feedback and engagement, a series of parameter plans were established and approved as part of the outline consent.

The Village 7 OPA parameter plans are shown to the right and opposite. They are fixed and **must** be complied with, thus forming an approved spatial framework for Village 7, which will be further refined and developed in Chapter 6 - The Masterplan Framework.

They relate to the Village 7 outline application boundary which included the Strategic Landscape Masterplan (SLMP) area around Village 7 within the applicant's control.



Figure 17 OPA Parameter Plan 2 - Buffers and Development Zones

Parameter Plan 2 identifies the Sensitive Development Area ("SDA") along the north western boundary, adjoining Hunsdon Brook Fishponds Scheduled Ancient Monument and a SDA south of Brickhouse Farm and Barn. It also illustrates the principle of retaining hedgerow, tree line and scrub as far as possible.

The plan presents the inclusion of southeast woodland buffer zone and identifies the Veteran/Notable Trees and the Brickhouse Farmhouse Orchard.



Figure 18 OPA Parameter Plan 3 - Green Infrastructure & Open Space

Parameter Plan 3 illustrates that a good proportion of the OPA Green Infrastructure and Open Space provision falls within the Strategic Landscape Masterplan (SLMP) area. The main OPA commitments are:

- Protection of the existing natural assets namely ancient woodlands, existing woodlands, hedges and veteran trees; and
- Provision of open space.

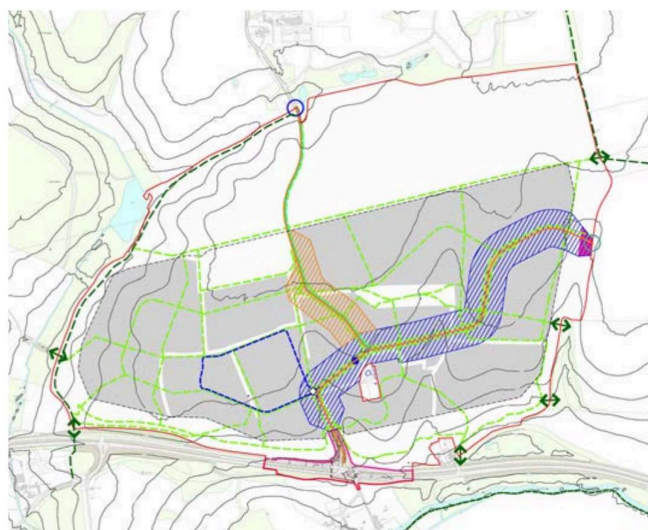


Figure 19 OPA Parameter Plan 4 - Vehicular Access & Movement

Parameter Plan 4 identifies:

- The primary access from the A414, existing access to the north from Church Lane and the connection to the east with Village 6;
- The Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC) and associated Sustainable Transport Corridor Hub (STC Hub) and supplemental route serving the western part of the Site;
- The primary route towards Hunsdon re-routing the existing alignment of Church Lane; and
- The existing pedestrian and cycle access points and Public Rights of Way.

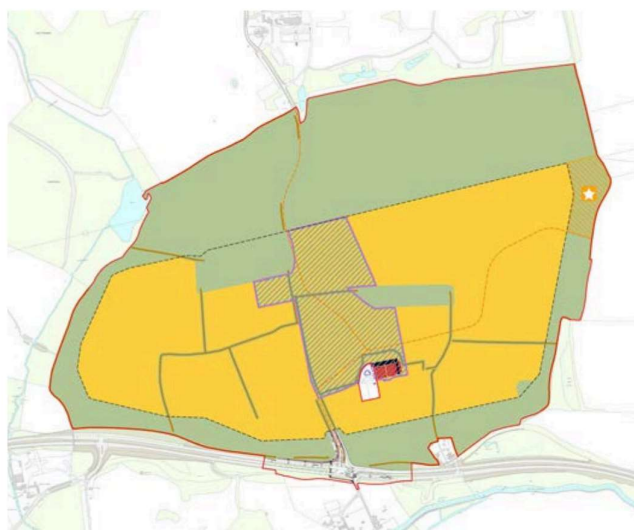


Figure 20 OPA Parameter Plan 5 - Land Use

Parameter Plan 5 identifies the key uses within the Site, including the extent of the mixed uses (including employment and education) within the Village Centre, as well as the gypsy and traveller site (within the Strategic Landscape Masterplan (SLMP) area), the Brickhouse Farm Barns listed building to be retained and the associated outbuildings which will be demolished.

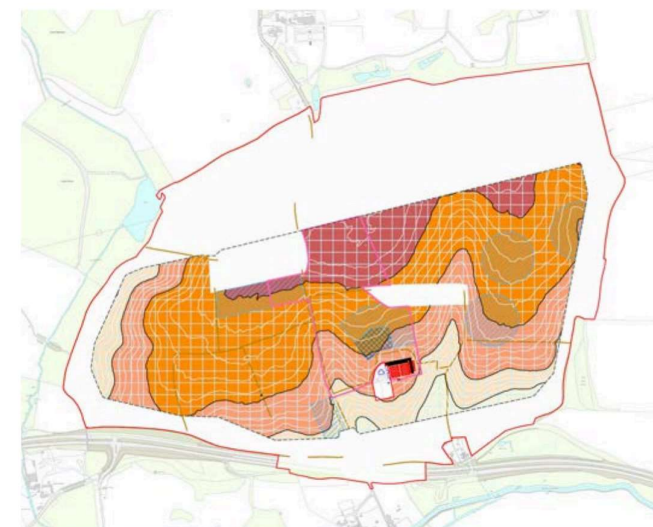


Figure 21 OPA Parameter Plan 6 - Building Heights

Parameter Plan 6 identifies building heights for the development in three key zones:

- Up to 3 storeys (13m max.)
- Up to 4 storeys (16m max.)
- Up to 5 storeys (19m max.)

It also provides a tolerance of +/- 2m for the heights expressed in metres in the key.



Hunsdon Village High Street Frontage

Chapter 3.

Understanding the Site & its Local Context

3.1 Local and Regional Context

The Site is located within the Gilston Area (GA), which is located north of Harlow and south of Hunsdon and Widford. The GA lies north across the River Stort Valley from Harlow, across the A414 dual carriageway and east of Stanstead Abbots and north west of Eastwick. The GA consists of the existing Gilston village.

With the M11 to the east and direct rail connections to London, Cambridge and Peterborough, the GA is positioned regionally to support economic growth facilitated from the national rail and road network. In addition, the area is within 10 miles of London Stansted and 20 miles of London Luton Airports. The GA sits firmly within the commuter belt around London and lies in the centre of the London-Cambridge-Stansted corridor, one of the most important economic sub-regions in the UK as shown in Figure 23.

Village 7 sits within the western portion of the Gilston Area (GA) as shown on plan opposite. It will be connected to the Central and Eastern Stort Crossings which will come forward as part of the GA. The Central Stort Crossing will improve connectivity between Village 7 and Harlow for all modes.

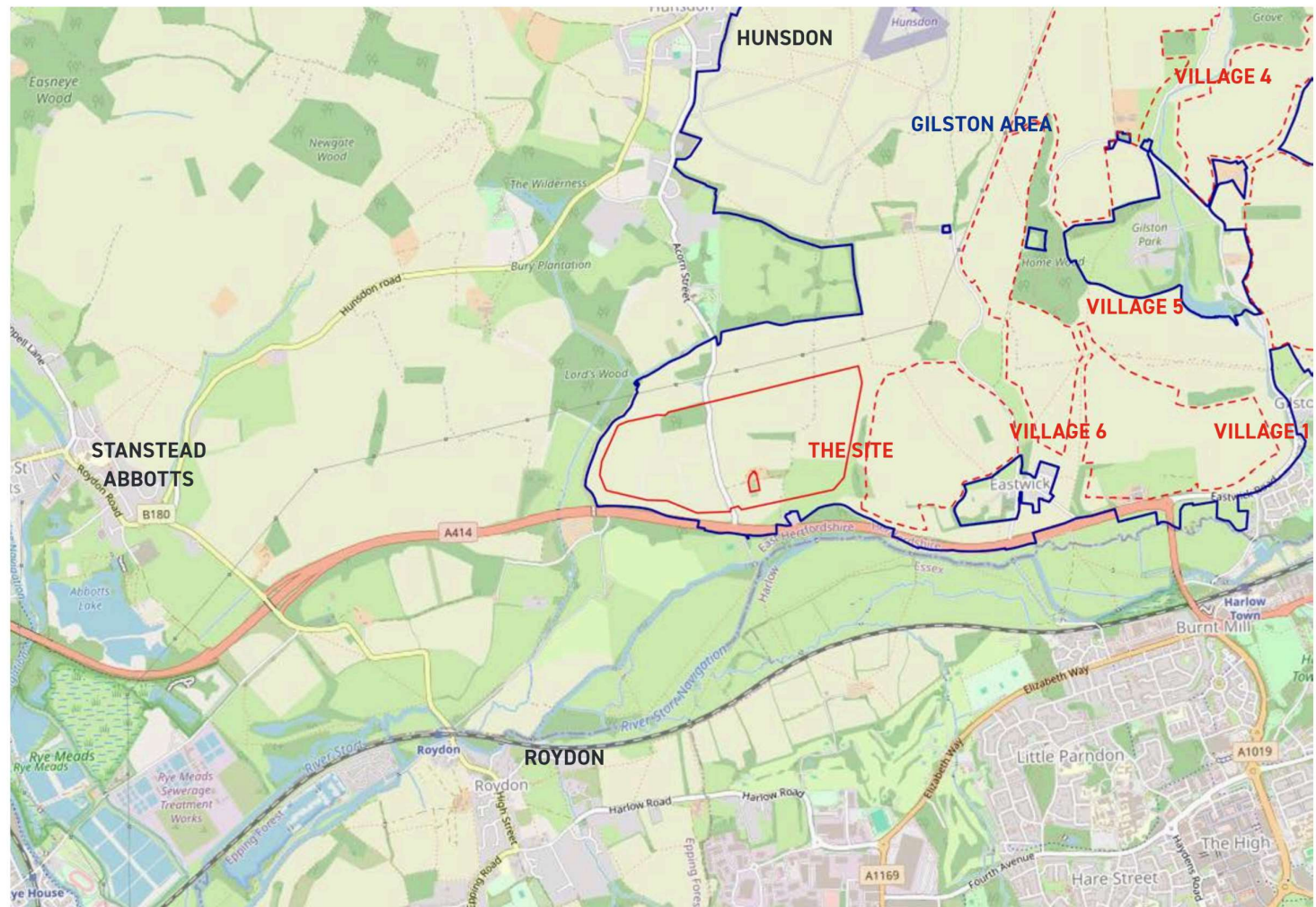


Figure 22 Gilston Village 7 and the wider context

Strategic Opportunity Sites within the London Stansted Cambridge Corridor

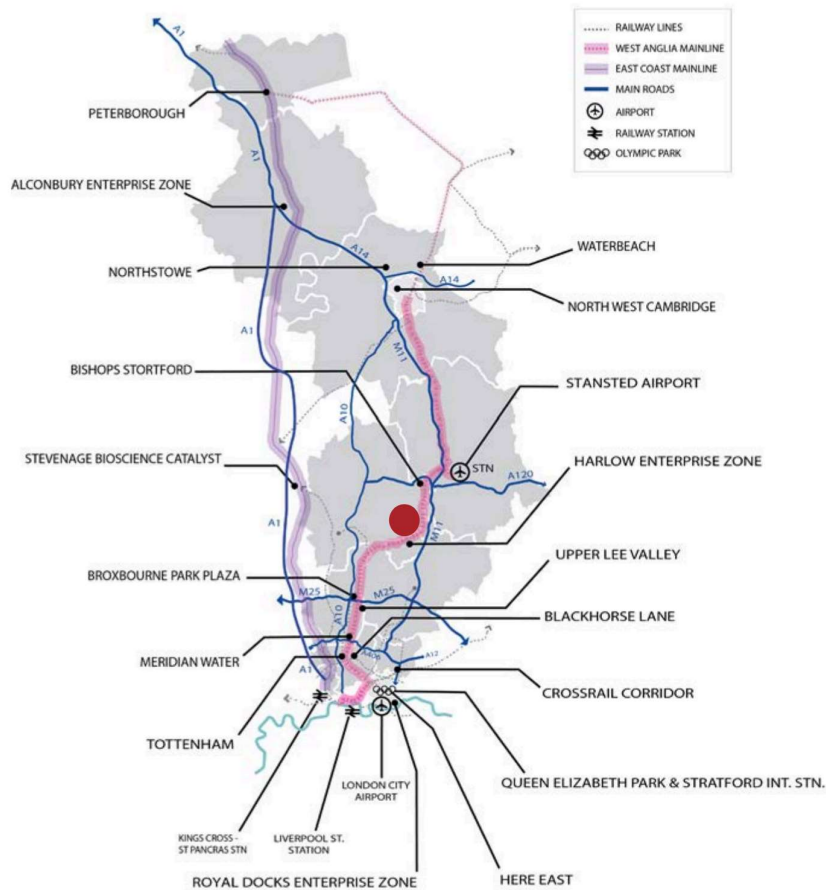


Figure 23 Plan showing the location of Gilston and Harlow within the London Stansted Cambridge Corridor

HERTFORDSHIRE ESSEX RAPID TRANSIT NETWORK

To alleviate congestion on the A414 and improve the public transport offer in an east-west direction, Hertfordshire and Essex County Councils are advocating the introduction of a new Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) system between Hemel Hempstead/Watford and Harlow. Currently named HERT this system is intended to be operational by 2030. The HERT would also connect into the Gilston Area, providing additional connections to Harlow, Hertford, St Albans and onward connectivity to Stansted Airport. The HERT would likely pass through Villages 7, 6, 5 and 1 within the Gilston Area. The HERT is included in LTP 4 and the A414 Corridor Strategy but details on routing and delivery are yet to come forth.

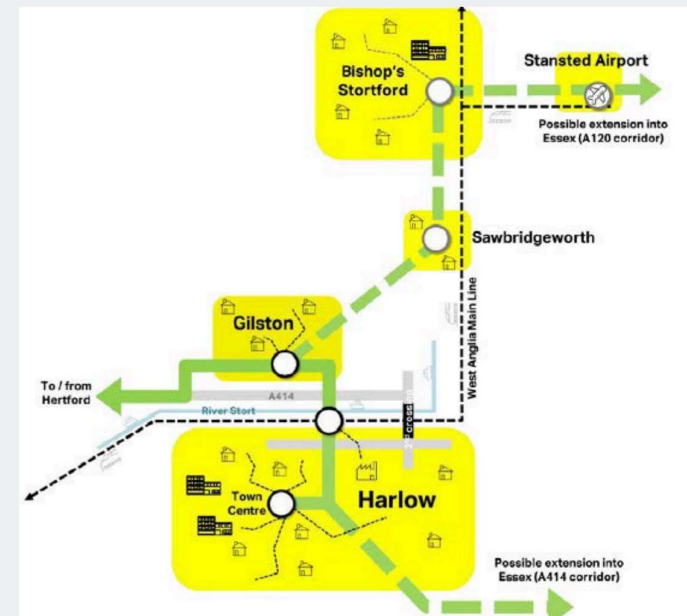


Figure 24 HERT routing through Gilston (A414 Corridor Study, 2019)



Figure 25 HERT routing overview (Public Engagement Summary, 2023)

3.2 Local Context & Identity

Adopting the observations presented in the Gilston Area Concept Framework document on the local character area, the following pages include an assessment of the overall scale and morphology of the existing settlements and demonstrate how they influence our design response proposed for the scheme.

Appendix 3 of the Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan (GANP) sets out key policies and expectations to inform development within the Gilston Area. The Village 7 Masterplan seeks to draw inspiration from the character and morphology of existing villages, explored in the local character assessment.

LOCAL CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

The Site is surrounded by five existing settlements, including Harlow, Hunsdon, Eastwick, and Gilston. The following pages provide a summary of the distinctive characteristics of each of these settlements in terms of their scale, built form, building typologies, landscape features and materiality.

The main observations in terms of urban form, building typologies, architectural details and materials are summarised in the table in Figure 32.

GANP

“Development proposals have positively considered the existing settlements of Gilston, Eastwick and Hunsdon with respect to their character, heritage, environment and landscape setting” (Policy AG1 - paragraph 1, part ii)



Figure 26 Location of Harlow, Hunsdon, Eastwick and Gilston in relation to Village 7

SETTLEMENT STRUCTURE

Roydon - the High Street and Epping Road (both B181) form the central spine of the village. Key community facilities are located where the B181 meets Harlow Road. Housing mostly fronts the B181 but in some cases cul-de-sacs provide access to clusters located to the rear of this primary frontage.

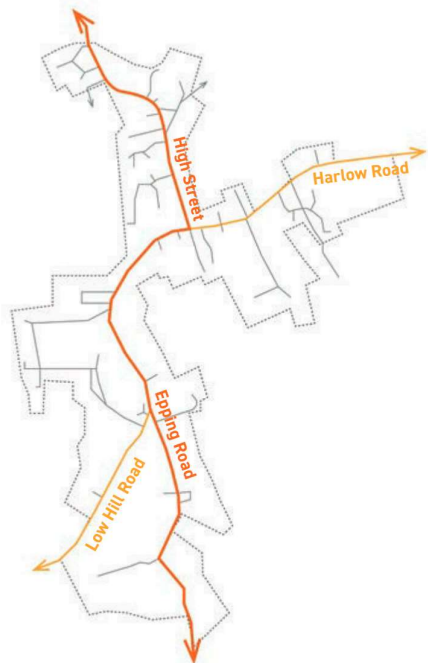


Figure 27 Settlement extent of Roydon

Hunsdon - development is organised along the High Street / Widford Road. Local streets are short and terminate with vistas of the surrounding countryside. Groups of houses are connected by an organic, irregular grid of cul-de-sac streets.

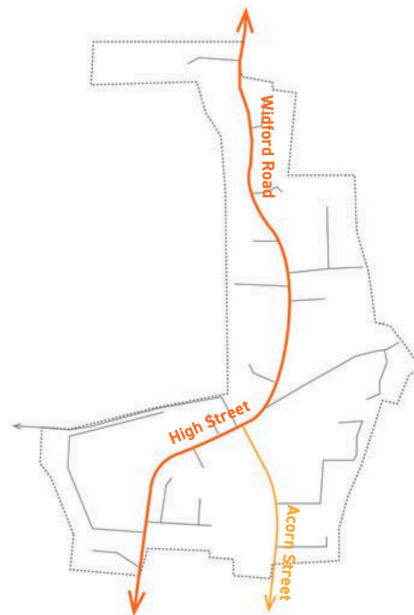


Figure 28 Settlement extent of Hunsdon



ROYDON: B181 - High Street (source: Google Earth Pro)



HUNSDON: B180 - High Street (source: GANP, p.106)



ROYDON: Harlow Road (source: Google Earth Pro)



HUNSDON: Cunningham Grove (source: GANP, p.106)

LANDSCAPE WITHIN THE VILLAGE

The surrounding local villages are rich in landscape, whether in the form of woodland pockets, green verges and trees, and/or community open space.

Many of the villages have a key green space, either a community green, park, playground or woodland. Harlow, as a town, features several connected open spaces forming an east-west green corridor.

It is common for streets to feature verges and trees, and in more rural locations such as to the edge of a village, this reduces down to one verge and includes views out to the surrounding countryside. In some of the more rural villages trees and foliage dominate the built form

There is variety and richness in the landscape offered within the local villages. Many residential streets feature soft planting comprised of a variety of species which creates visual interest. Green frontages help to soften the streetscape.



EASTWICK: Eastwick Green and Memorial (source: GANP)



HUNSDON: village open space and playground (source: Google Earth Pro)



HUNSDON: verge and street trees along Wicklands Road (source: Google Earth Pro)



NEWHALL: green street with swale (source: Google Earth Pro)



ROYDON: green wedge between two residential developments (source: Google Earth Pro)



HIGH WYCHE: soft landscaping defining boundary of house (source: Google Earth Pro)

VIEWS FROM THE COUNTRYSIDE & SOFT EDGES

The surrounding villages are typically set among landscaping, particularly blocks of woodland, trees and tall hedgerows.

Views from the surrounding countryside give the impression of greater fragmentation of development to the edge, with roofs and frontages appearing interspersed amongst trees. The local topography also helps to hide the villages, with settlements merging with the local landscape.

Village edges are mostly green and informal with, as highlighted in the GANP, “abundant planting and a diverse roofline creating a soft transition between village and countryside.”

These edges create a physical and visual separation between the built-up area of the village and the surrounding countryside allowing a glimpse at what is ahead.

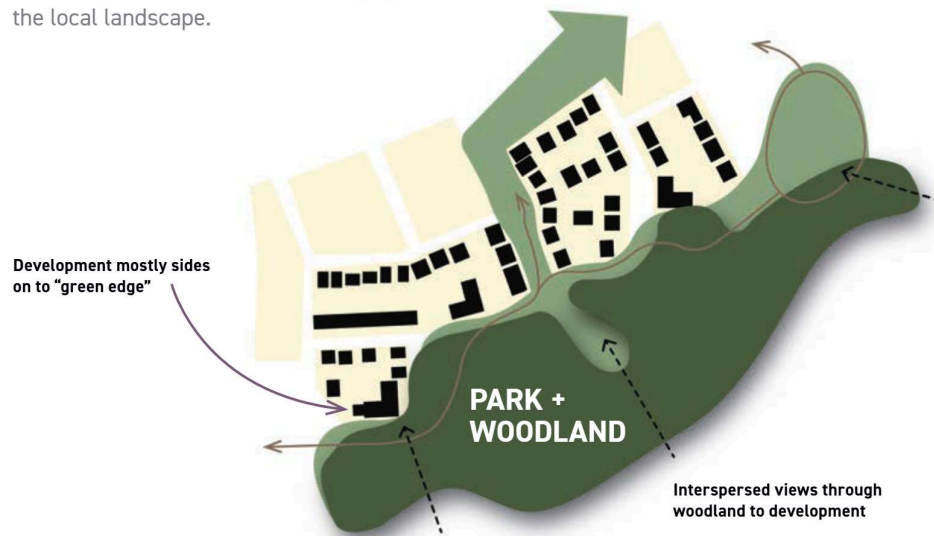


Figure 29 Analysis of local soft edge at Terlings Park, Eastwick



HUNSDON: view towards the village from the south, showing trees and tall shrubs interspersed between development (source: Google Earth Pro)



ROYDON: view towards the village from the south marked by one property screened by a few large and tall trees (source: Google Earth Pro)



HIGH WYCH: view towards the village from the north, showing irregular rooflines enclosed by shrubs and trees, with planting on both sides framing the vista to the village (source: Google Earth Pro)

SENSE OF ARRIVAL / GATEWAYS & LANDMARK BUILDINGS

In the surrounding villages there are no significant gateway buildings marking the entrance, instead access is marked by landscaping. Often trees and hedges are present with variety in size and colour.

In terms of built form, buildings appear sideways, fronting the road and no single building dominates the view. Views of built form are blended with the landscape so that they are intermittent. For more rural villages,

the sense of arrival is quite different as it's more gradual with fields and scattered housing.

For landmark buildings, these tend to be churches, village halls and pubs, but other uses such as housing can also be considered. For example, there may be a change in material, height and/or architectural details that make the building distinct from those surrounding it.

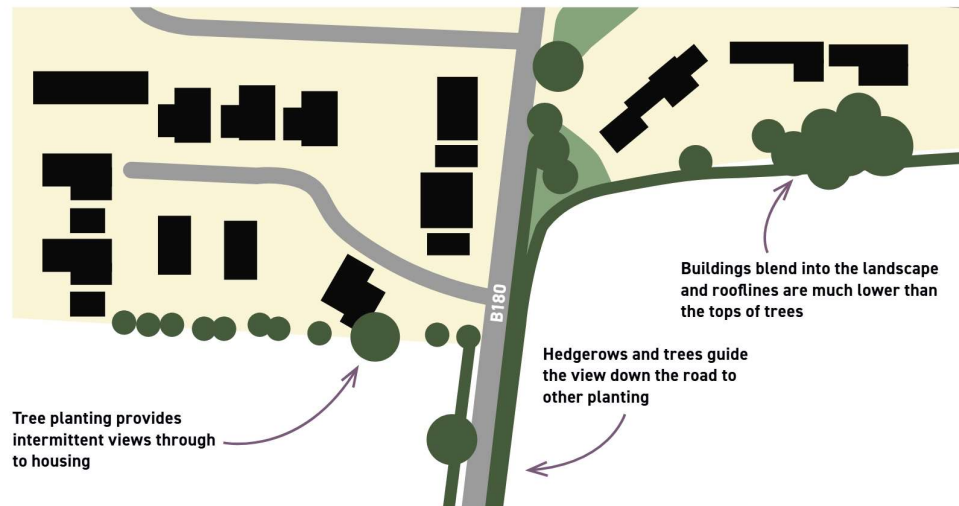


Figure 30 Analysis of the sense of arrival to Hunsdon, from the south (B180)



EASTWICK: sense of arrival through an informal lane and fields (source: GANP)



EASTWICK: landmark building with detailed forward facing gables and distinct tall chimneys



GILSTON: St Mary's Church spire blends between the trees and creates a sense of arrival to the village (source: GANP)

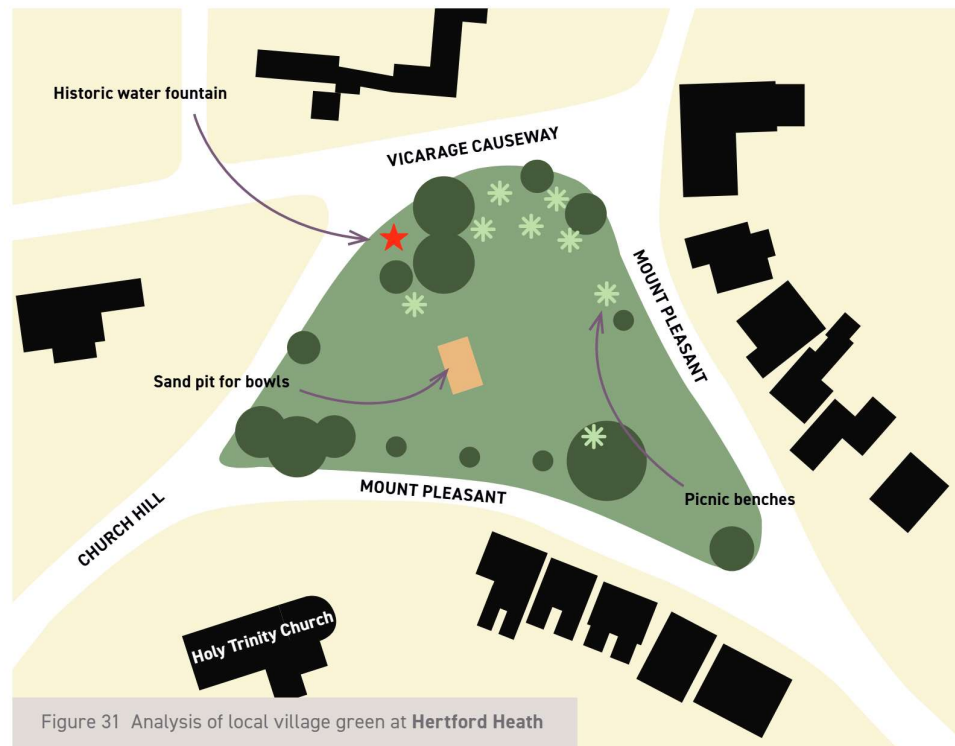


HUNSDON: trees and buildings on either side mark the arrival to the village (source: from GANP)

VILLAGE GREEN / SQUARES

There are several village greens found in the local area. The green at Hertford Heath, explored below in Figure 31, features a historic water fountain, plentiful seating and leisure uses. It is located at the centre of the village, where several key routes through

meet. The buildings surrounding this space mostly overlook and front onto it, providing natural surveillance. Other examples range in size and facilities, mostly depending on the scale of the village.



ROYDON: village green surrounded by housing and community facilities (source: Google Earth Pro)



STANDON / PUCKERIDGE: playing fields, community centre, playground, skate park and tennis club (source: Google Earth Pro)

VARIETY OF ALIGNMENT AND BUILT FORM

Given the age of many of the surrounding villages, and their pieced growth over a number of decades, there is a lot of variety in built form. There are also some common, distinct features that are characteristic to this part of Hertfordshire/Essex. As highlighted in the GANP (p.122), "within the variety there has been a consistent use of materials and forms".

Local villages typically feature two storey houses with steeply pitched roofs. High Streets are often more compact in layout with continuous frontages and small groups of similar houses. Here, there is variety in the roofscape and streetscape - shown in the image of Puckeridge High Street opposite.

Recent additions to the local villages have included local references and have continued to incorporate variety, through planted frontages, height and massing, and locally inspired building materials.



HUNSDON: recent development with height and massing similar to the local area (source: GANP)



HARLOW: 3 to 4 storey buildings clustered around a central green space (source: Google Earth Pro)



PUCKERIDGE: variety of roof heights, pitches and orientation, as well as facade colour (source: GANP)



WIDFORD: variety of 2 storey built form with the characteristic white render (source: Google Earth Pro)



PYE CORNER: distinct tall decorative chimneys and gables with windows (source: GANP)



HUNSDON: 3 storey building located on a secondary street and set back from the road (source: from GANP)

	HARLOW	ROYDON	HUNSDON	EASTWICK	GILSTON
URBAN FORM					
Street Typology and Layout	Carriageway with footpaths on both sides, no verge.	Carriageway with footpaths on both sides, no verge	Carriage way with footpath on each side, some both-side verge.	Carriageway with no footpath	Carriageway, no footpath
Parking Arrangement	Parking courts, on-street and front parking, car porches, garages	Private driveways, garages, front parking and occasional on street parking	On street and front parking	On street and front parking, garages	On street parking
Set Back	Regular setback for houses	Regular set backs, consistent building line and front garden	Regular set back, enclosed front garden or a large paved footpath	Large and varied set backs and well-enclosed boundaries	Various setbacks with front garden.
Frontage and Corners	Strong and continuous frontages along the primary street	Strong and continuous frontage along the primary street	Continuous and semi-continuous frontage. Stepped set backs.	Semi-continuous frontage	Fragmented frontage and at various angles to the road.
BUILDING TYPOLOGIES					
Building Types	Apartment building, terrace, semi-detached and detached houses	Detached, semi-detached and terraces	Semi-detached and terrace	Detached, semi-detached	Detached
Building Height	2 to 2.5 storey for houses and apartment buildings	2 to 2.5 storey	2 to 2.5 storey	2 to 2.5 storey	2 to 2.5 storey
DETAIL AND MATERIALS					
Roofscape	Butterfly roof, mainly side facing roof with inclusion of front facing gable roof. Some occurrence of flat roof apartment buildings.	Pitched and front facing gabled roof	Hipped roof, front gable roof and side gable roof	Side facing and front facing gable roof, hipped roof,	Side and front facing gable roof, pyramidal roof
Architectural Features	Chimney, recessed porches, dormers, bay window, balconies	A mix of dormers, chimneys, front porches and bay windows	Dormers, chimney and timber porches, apparent wood wall structure	Dormer, chimneys and apparent wood wall structure, porches, bay windows	Porches, chimneys
Building Materials	Colour rendered walls, red-multi bricks, terracotta and slate looking tiles, white, coloured and untreated weatherboard	White and coloured render, white weatherboard, red, brown and buff brick	Predominantly white rendered wall along the High Street. Occasional use of red bricks and dark timber board	Buff, multi red bricks, eggshell rendered wall	Red multi, buff, bricks, white render,
Roof Material	Red clay tiles.	Red clay tiles and slate roof	Brown clay tiles	Terracotta and slate looking tiles	Terracotta and slate looking tiles
Boundary Treatment	Low plantings, hedgerows and no treatments	Metal railing and low brick walls	Low planting, timber with or without timber fence	Hedgerow, timber fencing or no treatment.	Timber fence and hedgerow

Figure 32 Summary of the Local Character Area Assessment and the applicable principles

3.3 Site Features & Inherent Assets

Various detailed technical assessments have been carried out to ensure that the emerging proposals are sympathetic to the local and wider context, and have been informed by the landscape visual assessment supporting the scheme. This ensures that the landscape and heritage assets within the wider context are considered and protected.

DESCRIPTION

The Site comprises in total an area of land of 117.4 hectares. Existing features within and around the Site can be summarised as follow:

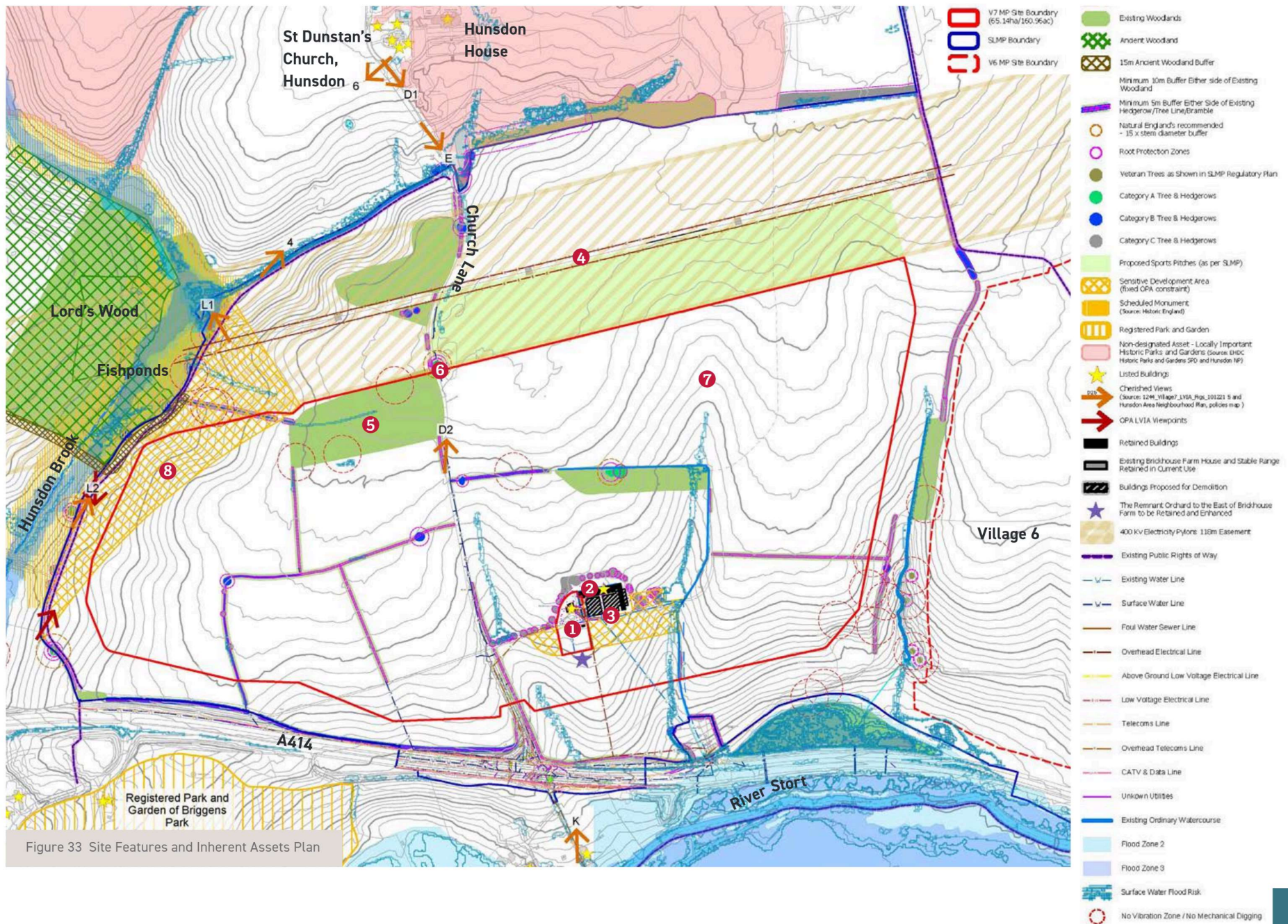
- 1 The Site is mainly used for arable agricultural purposes and surrounds previously developed land ("PDL") in the form of the Grade II listed Brickhouse Farm House, stables and walled gardens to the south. These buildings are not in the ownership of the Applicant and, although they do not form part of the Site, the development has been carefully planned around them giving due regard to the retained residential land use and listed building status.
- 2 A short distance to the east of the Farm House lies the Grade II listed Brickhouse Farm Barn (comprising the northern section of the Barn and Cattle Shed to the east). These form part of the Site and have benefited from an approved listed building consent for works to allow for their refurbishment to enable future office use (reference 3/16/2028/LBC, granted on 11 January 2017), now expired. The listed building and their associated buildings will be retained and the detailed design for their conversion (for the purposes of community, retail and office use) will form part of future reserved matters applications.
- 3 Two concrete agricultural buildings are sited immediately to the south of the main Grade II listed Brickhouse Farm Barn and directly between the cattle shed and stable range. It is proposed as part of the Application that these two buildings along with later adjoining canopies attached to the cattle shed are to be demolished with the area identified as Sensitive Development Area.
- 4 The overhead power lines and their 118m easement extend in the east-west direction, defining the northern edge of the Site.
- 5 Historic hedgerows and woodlands are evident within and around the Site. There are two main blocks of existing woodlands, one is located along the northern boundary and one lies at the centre of the Site. Each woodland includes a minimum 10m buffer along their perimeter for protection of trees and habitat.
- 6 Church Lane runs through the centre of the Site, providing a north-south connection to Hunsdonbury and Hunsdon whilst also connecting with the A414 along the southern boundary of the Site.
- 7 The majority of the Site is located within Flood Zone 1 and, therefore, has a low probability of flooding. A small proportion of the Site is located in Flood Zones 2 and 3.
- 8 The Site is not located within a conservation area. EHDC's Policies Map shows that there are three areas of archaeological significance within the Site: within the north-east corner, surrounding Brickhouse Farm House and Barns; centrally within the Site and along the western boundary. In addition, the northern-most strip of the Site is designated as a 'Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt'.



View looking towards the barn



View looking north across the field to the powerline



HERITAGE

Current Archaeological and Historical evidence suggests that the Site is part of a complex landscape that has seen human activity since the Mesolithic Period. Historically, the Site has been used for agricultural purposes, both arable and pasture with little industry or development across the Site. The majority of the Site is still under arable cultivation today.

- During the Medieval period the focus of settlement is in the area of St Dunstan's Church, 100m north of the Site.
- During the 12th-13th centuries a moated settlement was founded at Hunsdon House (the moat being filled in the 18th century). The house and lands fell into royal ownership in 1478 and became the residence of Prince Edward Tudor (later Edward VI).
- Extensive works were undertaken by Henry VII to improve the house and parkland. It is believed that the Site became "New Park" and an area to the west of the Site boundary was managed into fishponds (now a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM)). The lands remained connected with officers of the state until the Civil War.

Church Lane that leads from the A414 to the south of the Site and north to the village of Hunsdon bisects Hunsdon House from the Church, suggesting that Church Lane, which also bisects the Site, is an old route through the landscape.

The Site has continued as parkland and Brickhouse Farm has early origins as a hunting lodge. However, the predominant use of the Site, throughout the Post Medieval and Modern periods has been for farming. Recent geophysical survey has picked up traces of plough markings and also former field boundaries. The Site has been largely cleared of its inner boundaries in order to create larger fields more ideal for industrial farming. Extensive map regression exercises have identified several former field patterns, with some still remaining in the south of the Site, to the immediate west of Church Lane.

Within the Site there is one listed building, which is the Grade II listed Brickhouse Farm Barn (comprising the northern section of the Barn and Cattle Shed to the east). Lying to the west of the Grade II listed Barn is the Grade II Listed Brickhouse Farmhouse, stables and walled gardens to the south, which lies outside of the Site boundary.

There are eight Listed Buildings in the locality of, but outside the Site boundary and the impact of the development upon the setting and significance of these heritage assets has been carefully considered through the design of V7.

These Listed Buildings include Hunsdon House and the Parish Church of St Dunstan, both Grade I listed. Other designated heritage assets include:

- Four Grade II listed churchyard monuments (which will be grouped with the church)
- The Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) of the Hunsdon Brook Fishponds
- The Registered Park and Garden of Briggens Park.

The area of Hunsdon Park has been identified as a non-designated heritage asset.

Overall, on the account of the topography, the existing built and natural environment, as well as limited views between the Site and the designated heritage assets, development on the Site and the overall urbanisation of the GA would result in less than substantial harm upon these remaining heritage assets via a change in their setting.



Ware topographical map of Hertfordshire 1800, from the British Library

The following pages describe the relevant heritage assets, listed buildings and scheduled monuments that influence the development at Village 7.

Hunsdon Brook Fishponds

The group of four Tudor fishponds, created for Henry VIII between 1525 and 1534 are defined by four large earthwork dams, with quarries, a building platform and hollow way. They are located approximately 490m southwest of Hunsdon House.

The Hunsdon Brook Fishponds were scheduled for their evidential and historical significance as they are a well preserved example of Tudor fishponds created and used during the ownership of Henry VIII as an expression of wealth and status. There is also a high level of archaeological potential in the waterlogged deposits, ideal for the preservation of organic remains, in the structural material and buried land surfaces beneath all four dams and in the building platform south of the southern dam. The ponds have significant historical group value with Hunsdon House and the Parish Church of St Dunstan. However, at their current state, they are overgrown, hard to see and impossible to reach. The fishponds lie outside of the village 7 boundaries therefore principles relating to management activities along this edge are set by the SLMP.

Registered Park and Garden of Briggens Park and Associated Buildings

The Grade II listed Registered Park and Garden of Briggens Park is an 18th century designed landscape with a later house, now converted to a hotel. The immediate setting of the park is the A414 dual carriageway to the north, the river Stort to the south and east. There is arable farmland to the west while to the east lies the Hunsdon Mill House and associated buildings. The wider setting of the park is Hunsdon Brook and the arable farm land to the east, Roydon village to the south and the Registered Park and Garden of Stanstead Bury and development within including the Grade I listed Old Church of St James.



Location of key heritage assets within or close to the Site

★ Listed building

Parish Church of St Dunstan and Associated Monuments

The Parish church is from the early 14th century and built of flint rubble with stone dressing and old red roof tiles. The church features a four-bay 15th century nave roof, single-framed of scissor-braced rafters with collars and ash-lar pieces. The interior features a hexagonal pulpit and alabaster monument to Sir John Carey (King Henry VII's courier). The late medieval church also features the oldest timber north porch in the county, as well as early brickwork and timber roofing: all of outstanding interest.

The four Grade II-listed monuments surrounding the church form part of a group value and date from the late 18th century into the 19th century. The materials of the tomb monuments vary from white freestone, to white limestone and are in various styles including Gothic and Neo-Classical.



Brickhouse Farm, Barn and Attached Stable and Cattleshed

Brickhouse Farm was listed for its agricultural significance as it was built in brick during the 17th century which contrasts with Stroudes Close and Worcester Park's regular use of timber and plaster that characterises this part of the county. The farmhouse was rebuilt with a cross wing in the south during the early 18th century, which created the current T-plan exterior shape.

It has been suggested that Brickhouse Farm initially functioned as a lodge for Lord Carey's hunting park at Hunsdon, but there is no documentary evidence to support this assertion.

The barn and attached stable and cattleshed at the Brickhouse Farm were built during the Agricultural Revolution during the mid-19th century, this period of "high farming" is known as one of the most important agricultural developments in England. The listed buildings illustrate the historic development of Brickhouse Farm and the wealth and status of the Calvert family. However, as noted by Historic England, the demolition of the two former ranges to the south of the main barn, which were replaced by a modern concrete barn, has adversely impacted the historic and evidential interest of the building leaving its original function less easy to appreciate.



Hunsdon House and Hunsdon Park

The house is a mid-15th century moated brick tower house of Sir William Oldhall which was altered and extended from 1527-34 for Henry VIII. The house has changed ownership several times and has been extensively remodelled. At its current state it retains a wealth of historic fabric representing different periods, including retained original Tudor brickwork and crenulation, as well as 19th century interiors.

The wider setting of Hunsdon House has been diminished by a number of 20th century interventions including the development of Harlow to the south, the creation of the A414 dual carriageway, and the introduction of substantial pylons and powerlines through the Site.



TOPOGRAPHY

A key feature of the Site is its natural topography defined by the Stort Valley floodplain to the south and the tributary valleys of Hunsdon Brook and Stone Basin Spring that form the eastern and western low-lying boundaries to the Site.

There is an approximate 30m level change from the floodplain to the northern plateau area on the Site. At the northeast of the Site, the ground is relatively flat and offers a sense of being on top of the hill with open views south towards the Stort Valley and Harlow town beyond.

In the valleys, the slopes are steeper, resulting in a more intimate and self-contained character.

The proposed development is contained within the centre of the Site, ensuring the valleys are retained, and these semi-natural open space will be enhanced with new native species tree, shrub and grassland planting.

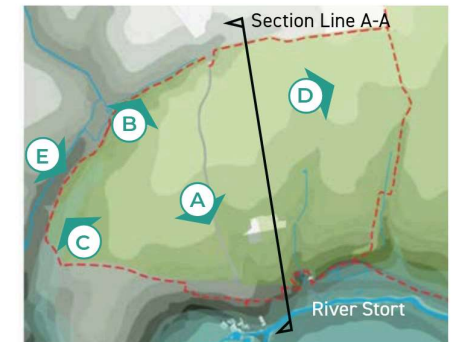
Landscape visual impact and extent of development

18 viewpoints were identified with East Hertfordshire District Council for the LVIA process. This informed the Green Infrastructure and Building Heights and Density parameter plans at Outline design stage and has identified areas for early planting along east-west ridges to mitigate the wider visual impact of built development.

The proposal for the Site includes a landscaped buffer zone of semi-natural open space which wraps around the periphery of the Village and will ensure development will be visually discrete from settlements to the north.

Undulating landscape with wooded ridges

The existing landscape comprises gentle, open undulations with ridges lined with hedgerows and wooded copses. This character has informed the landscape strategy for the Site; existing and proposed new ridge lines of hedge and tree planting will mitigate the visual impact of built development.



The highest land is at the north of the Site, dropping down to the Stort Valley in the south



View D: the flat upland plateau with wooded horizons to the north of the Site



Section Line A-A



View A: across the south facing landscape towards the Stort Valley with Harlow's tall buildings beyond



View B: looking towards St Dunstan's Church from the western boundary of the Site

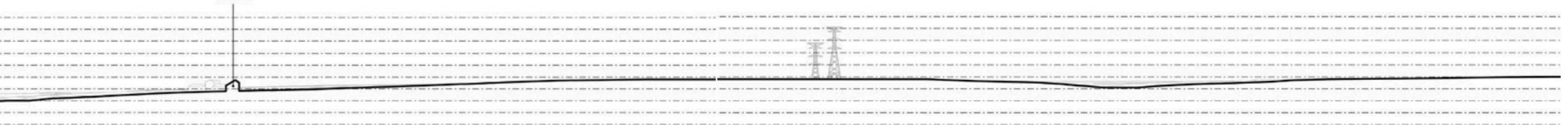


View C: the area features gentle undulating valleys where small tributaries feed into the River Stort



View E: south east from the Site looking toward Harlow across the undulating landscape with ridges lined with hedgerows and groups of trees

Brickhouse
Farm



“The preparation of Village Masterplans should involve consultation with the local community on locally cherished views”. (Policy AG5 - paragraph 4)

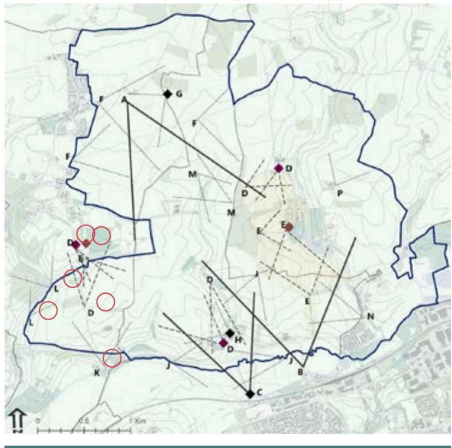
CHERISHED VIEWS

GANP Cherished Views

The Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan (GANP) identifies a series of locally cherished views.

Policy AG5 – Respecting Areas of Local Significance states that, ‘*The preparation of Village Masterplans should involve consultation with the local community on locally cherished views*’. Cherished views are illustrated on Figure 14 of the GANP and described in further detail in Table 2 of Appendix 2.

An extract of Table 2 from Appendix 2 of the GANP detailing the cherished views applying to the Site shown on Figure 35 opposite.



Extract from GANP highlighting the cherished views for Village 7

PROPOSED VIEW	TYPE	JUSTIFICATION	DESIGN CONSIDERATION
D. Views to and from the Churches of St. Mary's, St. Botolph's and St. Dunstan and churchyards	Protection of heritage setting	Retain countryside setting and appreciation of Grade I and II Listed Churches	Avoid visual encroachment and location of buildings in full view. Rooftops visible in the distance in between trees acceptable. No floodlighting visible from these viewpoints.
E. Views to and from Gilston Park House and to Hunsdon House and their gardens	Protection of heritage setting	Retain countryside setting and appreciation of Grade I and II* Listed countryside manor houses	Avoid visual encroachment and location of buildings in full view. Rooftops visible in the distance in between trees acceptable. No floodlighting visible from these viewpoints.
K. Rural views from Hunsdon Pound towards Brickhouse Farm House	Mid distance view over countryside - Protection of heritage setting	Retain countryside setting of Hunsdon Pound and Grade II Listed Buildings	Seek to avoid foreground encroachment and mitigate full view of any buildings through appropriate planting. Rooftops visible in the distance in between trees acceptable. Careful use of localised lighting to retain dark skies at night.
L. Open views towards Hunsdon Brook Fishponds	Mid distance view over countryside - Protection of heritage setting	Retain visual connection across towards the Fishponds from the edge of the development and protect the integrity of the heritage setting of the Hunsdon House complex	Seek to create a visual connection between new village and Hunsdon House complex. Avoid foreground encroachment into the rural setting of the Hunsdon House complex and location of buildings in full view. Rooftops visible in the distance in between trees acceptable. Careful use of localised lighting to retain dark skies at night

Figure 35 An extract of Table 2 from Appendix 2 of the GANP detailing the cherished views applying to the Site



Cherished View D1 - Entrance gate to St Dunstan Church on east side of Church Lane



Cherished View L2 - View from Hunsdon Mead SSSI north towards Briggens House



Cherished View L1 - Hunsdon Footpath 1 at the north-east edge of Hunsdon Brook Fishponds

HNP Cherished Views

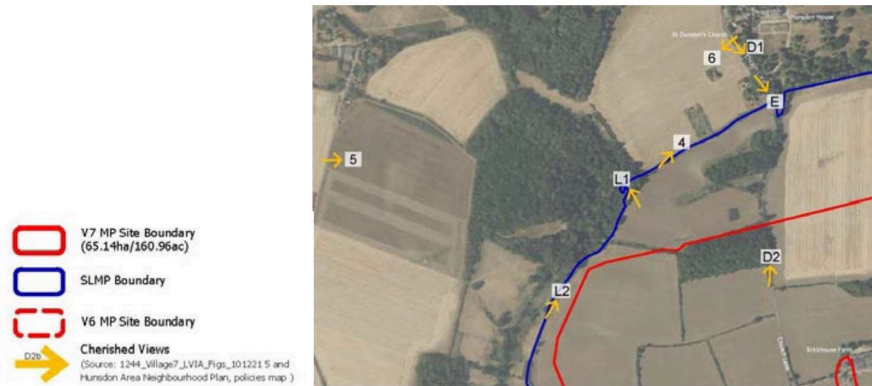
The Hunsdon Neighbourhood Plan (HNP) identifies a series of locally cherished views. POLICY HE3 Landscape Character and Cherished Views states that. 'Development proposals will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that measures have been taken to contain and mitigate the visual impacts of development on the open character of the landscape setting of Hunsdon'. Policy HE3 identifies 8 cherished views on the HNP policies map.

Paragraph 7.27 of the HNP states, 'Mitigation of cherished views could take the form of natural screening such as mitigation planting/ boundary treatment... Site specific design of buildings and structures could include a careful colour choice, lowering heights, or using appropriate materials.'

Cherished views are illustrated on Figure 14 of the HNP and described in further detail in Appendix D. An extract of Appendix D of the HNP detailing the cherished views applying to the Site shown on Figure 36 opposite.

Cherished View	TYPE	JUSTIFICATION	DESIGN CONSIDERATION
4. From Footpath H1 towards Hunsdon House and the Church	Protection of heritage setting	Retaining the countryside setting adding to the appreciation of Grade 1 and II listed buildings.	Avoid visual encroachment and location of buildings in full view. Rooftops visible in the distance in between trees acceptable. No floodlights visible from these viewpoints
5. From Footpath H2 just south of Olives Farm east towards Lords Wood and Bury Plantation.	Mid distance view over countryside	Retaining the view of countryside across open fields	Avoid visual encroachment and location of buildings in full view. No floodlighting visible from these viewpoints.
6. From Hunsdon church car park looking southwest towards Lords Wood	Long distance view over undulating countryside	Retain view of countryside from a location of local significance. Retain setting of Grade 1 Church and House.	Avoid visual encroachment and location of buildings in full view. No floodlighting visible from these viewpoints.

Figure 36 An extract of Appendix D of the HNP detailing the Cherished Views applying to the Site





Cherished View 4 - View from footpath H1 towards Hunsdon House & Church



Cherished View 5 - View from footpath H2 just south of Olives Farm and looking east towards Lords Wood and the Bury Plantation



Cherished View 6 - View from the church car park looking southwest towards Lords Wood

The Village 7 Development will reduce and mitigate impacts on GANP and HNP Cherished Views as follows:

- Development in the north-west of Village 7 will be in the distance of views from GANP Cherished View D1 and HNP Cherished View 6.
- Existing vegetation in the proposed Hunsdon Community Park and along the north-west edge of the development will combine with new tree planting in the community park to ensure only rooftops are visible between trees in the distance of views for GANP Cherished View D1 and HNP Cherished Views 4 and 6 (see Appendix).
- The development closest to GANP Cherished Views D1, L1 and L2, and HNP Cherished Views 4, 5 and 6 is located in the Woodland View character area which will have a medium to low housing density, a leafy and rural character (see Section 6.4.5).
- Proposed vegetation in Hunsdon Brook Corridor will reduce views towards development for GANP Cherished View L2 and HNP Cherished view (see Appendix).

ECOLOGY

Ecological constraints were identified through a series of desk-based studies and site surveys.

The predominant land condition within the Site is intensive arable agriculture, with the majority of the fields being ploughed very close to the boundary hedges. Where grassland exists, this is species-poor semi-improved grassland. Generally, the lack of appreciable field margins and the intensive nature of the arable agriculture limits the ecological interest of the farmland.

Lord's Wood LWS (an area of Ancient and Ancient Replanted Woodland, listed on Natural England's Provisional Ancient Woodland Inventory) lies adjacent to the north-west of the Site. Four blocks of woodland are situated within the SLMP boundary as well as several boundary trees. Hedgerows are present throughout the Site, and are mostly intact, being a mixture of species-rich and species-poor hedgerows. One seasonally wet pond is situated on the north-east corner of the eastern block of woodland, and several barns are included within the survey area at Brickhouse Farm.

The Site supports protected and priority fauna. Barns associated with Brick House Farm are known to support roosts of common bat species. In total six species of bats have been recorded utilising the Site with the most important habitats being the field boundaries and woodlands. Two species of reptile have been recorded on the Site, Slow Worm and Grass Snake both having a restricted distribution across the Site due to the availability of suitable habitat.

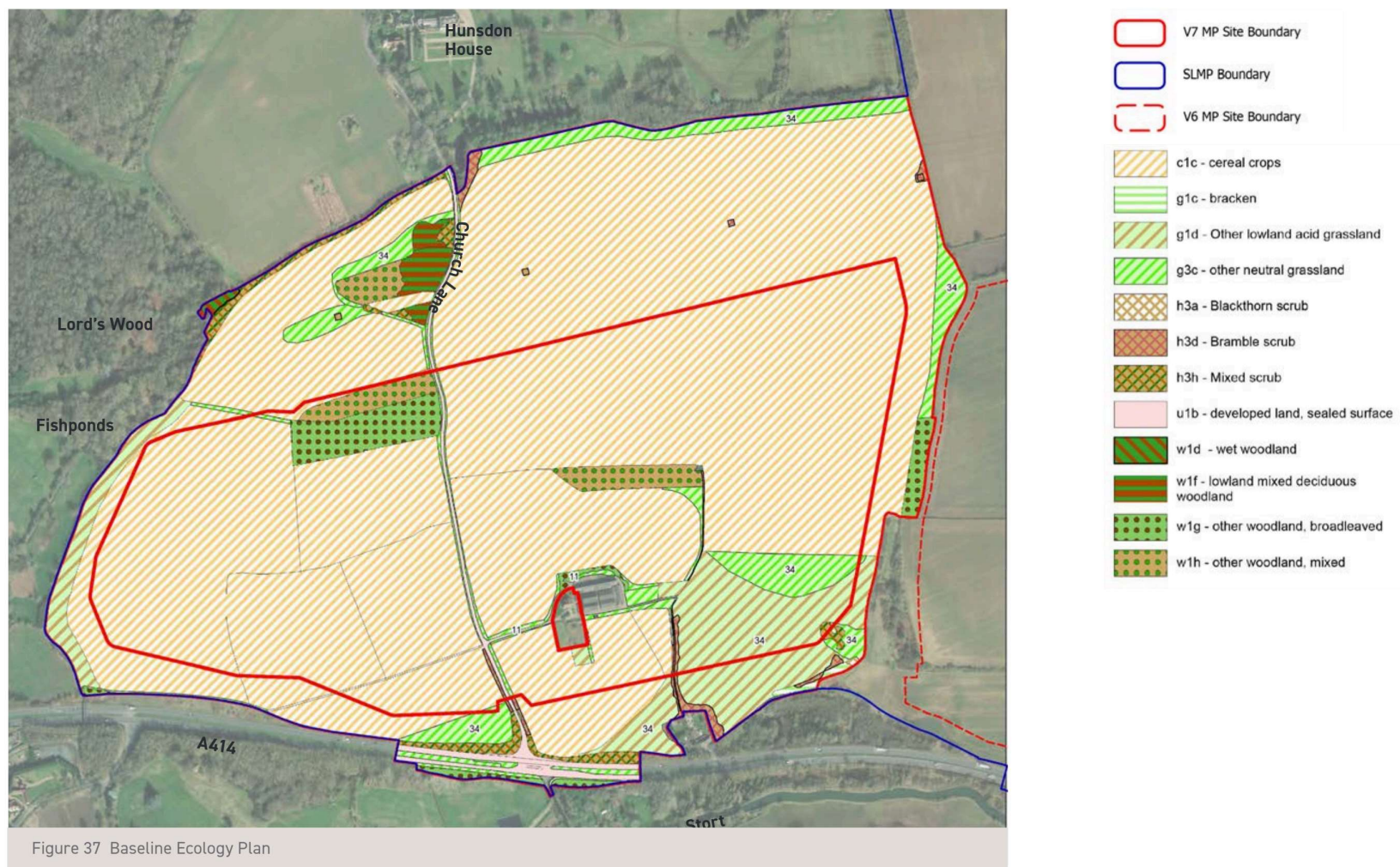
The main component of the breeding bird assemblage comprised farmland birds. None of the bird species recorded were considered rare in a National or County context. Aside from Skylark that were present within the fields, the majority of birds were recorded along the field boundaries in woodland or hedgerow. Many of the Species were resident throughout the year.

There are Badger setts associated with the perimeter of the Site.

The proposed development has been designed to retain and protect the important ecological features on-site, where possible, and to enhance them through appropriate management. These include the woodland

and hedgerows. They are to be protected through the creation of buffers and the inclusion of the areas of newly created green open space areas, which will be naturalistic and sensitively managed for biodiversity and recreation.

The development provides an opportunity to enhance existing biodiversity and ensure that it is integrated within the scheme design to provide a positive and valuable environment, for both biodiversity and people. The development aim to conserve and enhance existing high value wildlife habitats; enhance biodiversity through both creation of new habitats and through creation of habitats which link existing high biodiversity value areas; and ensure proper management of all these areas. Biodiversity should be evident throughout the urban environment, and the development will increase public access to, and appreciation of, the natural environment.



ARBORICULTURAL

A detailed tree survey in accordance with *BS5837:2012: Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations* has been undertaken to inform the masterplan.

Important trees and other elements of green infrastructure are retained and incorporated within the masterplan. These include the protection and celebration of existing woodlands and hedgerows. They are to be protected through the creation of buffers and the inclusion of the areas of newly created green open space areas, which will be naturalistic and sensitively managed for biodiversity and recreation.

Detailed arboricultural impact assessments will be submitted alongside each application for Reserved Matters approval involving built development. A scheme of temporary protection measures will be designed, implemented and maintained to protect the retained trees, and other retained elements of green infrastructure, during construction works.



View looking north towards the large woodland block adjacent to the Site boundary

The retained trees will be supplemented by extensive additional tree planting throughout the layout of development to ensure a net gain of trees for their contribution to landscape, biodiversity and the wellbeing of the community.



View looking north towards the central woodland block

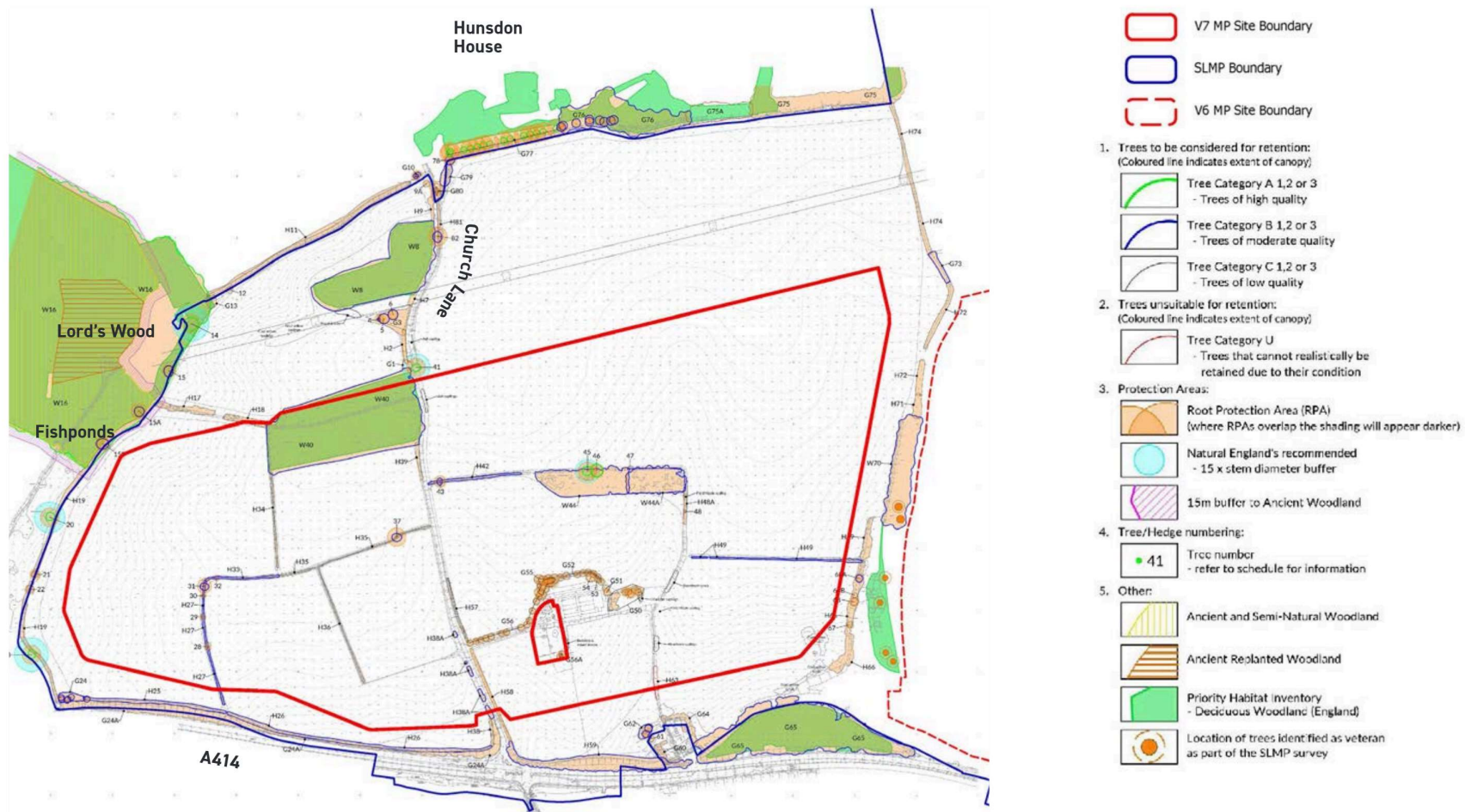


Figure 38 Arboricultural Plan

UTILITIES

Water Supply

Affinity Water (AW) is the statutory water supplier for the GA. AW's asset plans indicate that there are no assets within the Site boundary.

Gas Supply

The statutory gas supplier for the area is Cadent Gas (CG). CG asset plans indicate that there are no assets within the Site boundary.

Telecoms Supply

There are existing telecoms cables owned by Openreach, Vodafone, Virgin Media, Tata, and Interoute within the A414 dual carriageway in the southern part of the Site.

Foul Sewage

The statutory Foul Water Service provider is Thames Water (TW). TW asset plans indicate that there are no assets within the Site boundary.

Electricity Supply

National Grid indicated that there is a 400kV extra high voltage electricity overhead line crossing the northern part of the Site in the east-west direction.

UKPN asset plans indicate that there is a low voltage overhead line in the southern part of the Site. It is understood that this currently serves Brickhouse Farm and Brickhouse Farm Cottages. There are also street lights along Church Lane and the A414 highway.



View looking north towards the National Grid High Voltage Pylons

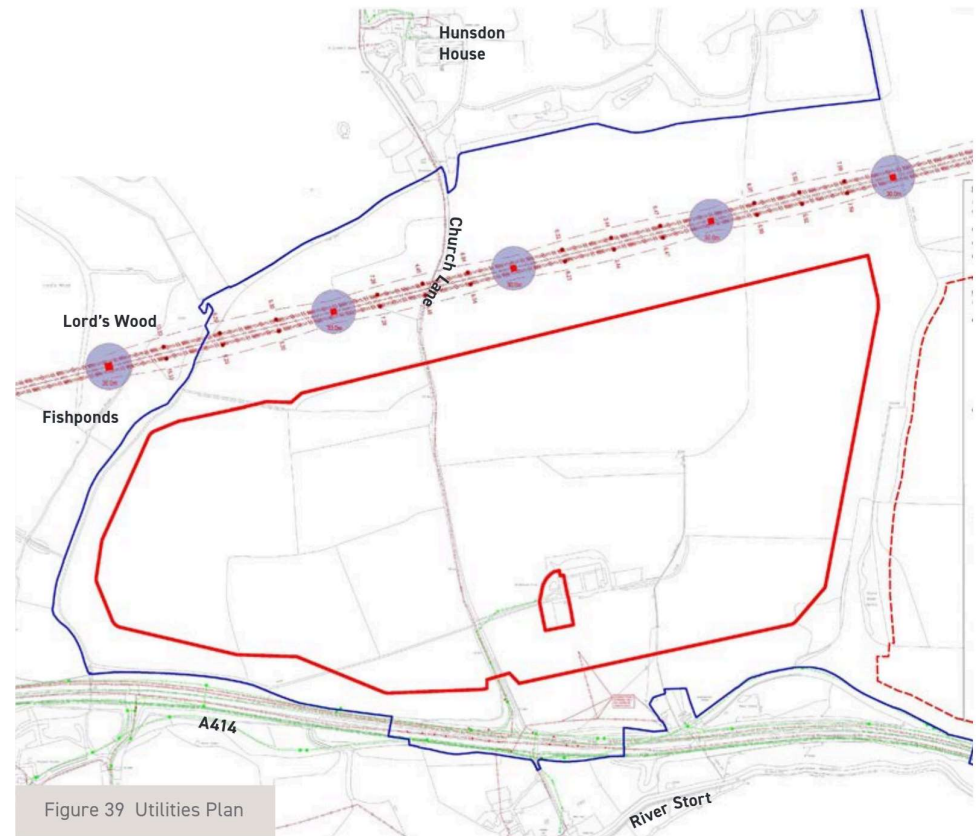
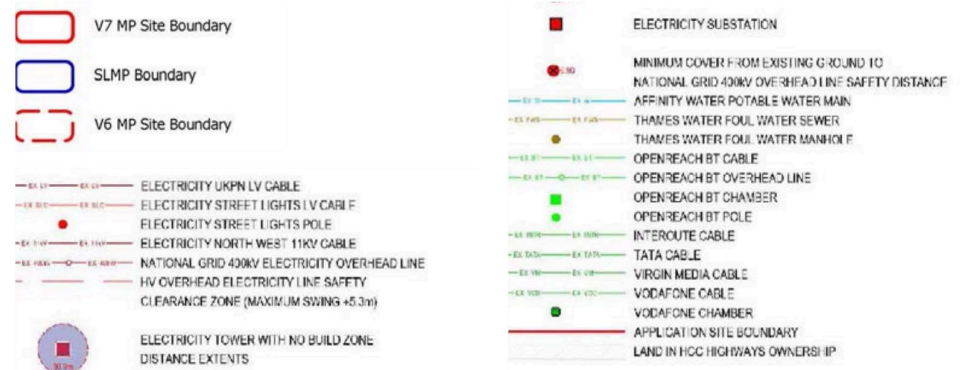


Figure 39 Utilities Plan



FLOOD RISK

A large majority of the Site is located in Flood Zone 1 – low probability of flooding. There are no historic records of fluvial flooding at the Site. There is a small section of the Site (north west corner) assessed to be located in Flood Zones 2 and 3: Medium and High probability of flooding.

The majority of the Site is at very low risk of surface water flooding. There are however areas of surface water flood risk associated with the on-site watercourses.

Based on findings contained within the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), the susceptibility to groundwater flooding varies across the Site with the higher susceptibility identified in the south-east corner of the Site,

where site levels are lowest. This coincides with the Stone Basin Spring which is located in a valley just east of the Site boundary.

The Site is considered to be at very low risk of flooding from artificial sources. The online reservoir flood map shows the Site is at low risk of reservoir flooding. There are several small scale water features close to the northern boundary of the Site, however topography suggests that should the capacity of the ponds be exceeded, overland flow route will be towards the south-west and not towards the Site.

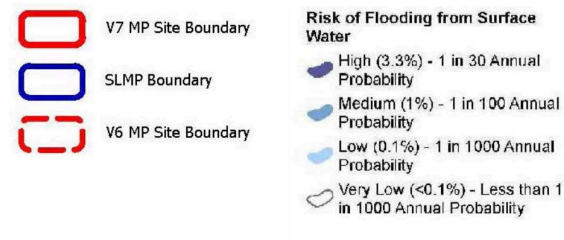
No sewers traverse the Site or are in close proximity to the Site hence there is no risk of sewer flooding.



Site photos



Figure 40 Surface Water Flood Risk Extent



3.4 Design Opportunities

By layering existing and proposed natural assets while considering the site features and historic context of the Site, a set of design opportunities have been identified to create a responsive sustainable development that reflects both national and local policies and design guidance. This landscape-led strategy creates the rationale for the Village 7 masterplan framework and guides the detailed design as development comes forward.

GANP

"Proposals for the new villages should clearly demonstrate that the best possible balance has been achieved between landscape, village separation, mass and density" (Policy AG6 - paragraph 1)



Heritage Assets

The proposed development will be designed to respect and enhance the setting of the heritage and landscape assets within and around the Site, including Hunsdon House, St Dunstan's Church, the Grade II Listed Brickhouse Farm Barns, Lord's Wood ancient woodland and woodlands within the Site, cherished views.



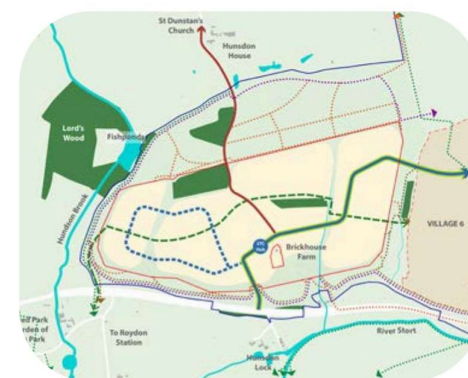
Landscape and Green Infrastructure

- Green and blue infrastructure features to be located along the western, eastern and southern development edges due to gently undulating topography.
- Potential for a well-connected green infrastructure network by retaining and enhancing existing landscape features, connecting key open spaces, amenities, local centres, hubs and residential areas.
- Define a series of development parcels, with Church Lane and north-south green corridors as key structuring elements.



Building Heights and Density

- Higher density to be focused around a Village Square to support commercial and community facilities.
- Building heights to be sensitive to the wider landscape character and heritage assets within and outside of the Site, and comply with approved OPA parameters.
- Lower density to the edge of the village to soften the transition to the surrounding landscape.



Sustainable Movement

- A network of active travel routes to encourage a healthy and sustainable lifestyle amongst residents.
- A Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC) can provide the key movement spine for Village 7 and the wider Gilston Area.
- The STC through the village centre will accommodate public transport and cycle routes to encourage a sustainable lifestyle early on.
- Opportunity for Church Lane to be diverted and transformed into a key active travel spine central to the development.

These opportunities align with the OPA parameter plans and Development Specification Statement DSS, S106 requirements, as well as planning policy and guidance documents listed on page 18.



Placemaking and Homes

- Opportunities for sports provision and other community/amenity uses, including allotments and community orchards.
- The Brickhouse Barns Grade II listed building to become a key destination within the development and will be co-located with other commercial and community facilities.



Figure 41 Design Opportunities Diagram



Image taken at Gilston V7 Community Consultation

Chapter 4.

Statement of Engagement

4.1 Engagement Overview

Taylor Wimpey worked with East Herts District Council to create the Village 7 Engagement Strategy. This strategy set out two full rounds of consultation activity around the Masterplan and Design Code, which are being prepared pursuant to conditions 13 and 15 on the decision notice for the Outline Planning Permission. The outcomes of the engagement would be reported back at subsequent events and on the project website to demonstrate feedback has been heard and how it has been addressed. At the end of consultation activity, there would be a final stage to 'Report Back' on the feedback received.

This section will give an overview of the aims of each stage, the engagement events and briefly summarise the feedback received. A full overview of each event and all feedback is available as part of the Statement of Community Involvement.

The aims of each round of consultation were:

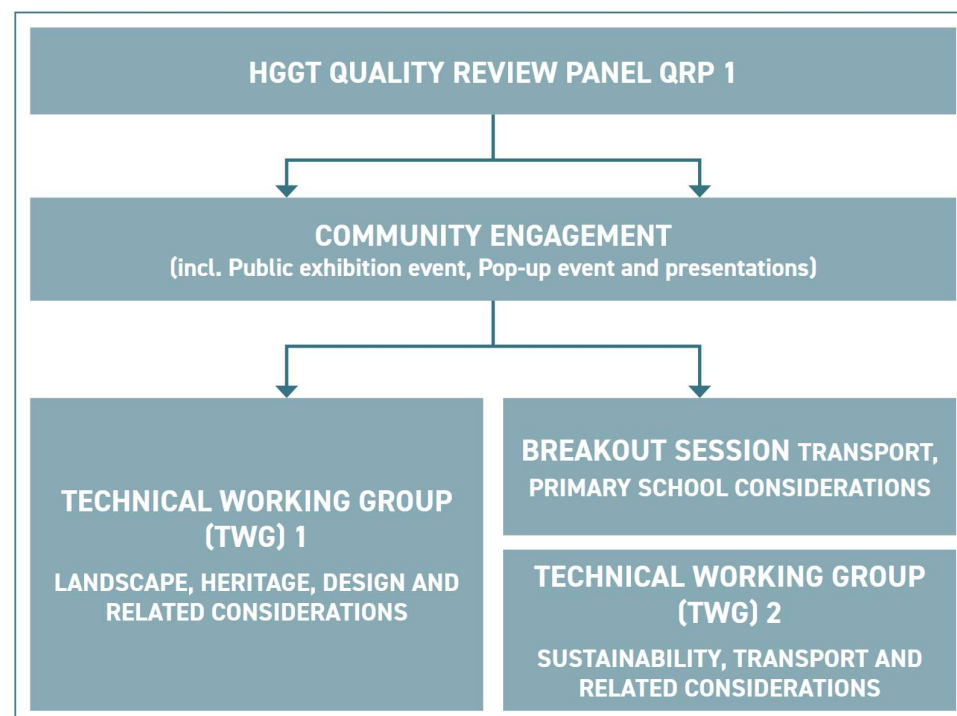
Stage One: setting out the vision and key principles for the Village 7 Masterplan and Design Code, keeping the community abreast of changes since the Resolution to Grant outline planning permission, gathering initial feedback and priorities, answering queries about established elements of the plans, such as the Community Heat Hub or Green Corridors. (Autumn 2023)

Stage Two: responding to the feedback received during Stage One and outlining more detail of the plans prior to submission of the Masterplan and Design Code to East Herts District Council. This stage of consultation would outline how feedback had been addressed, or in some cases explain why the plans had remained the same. (Spring 2024)



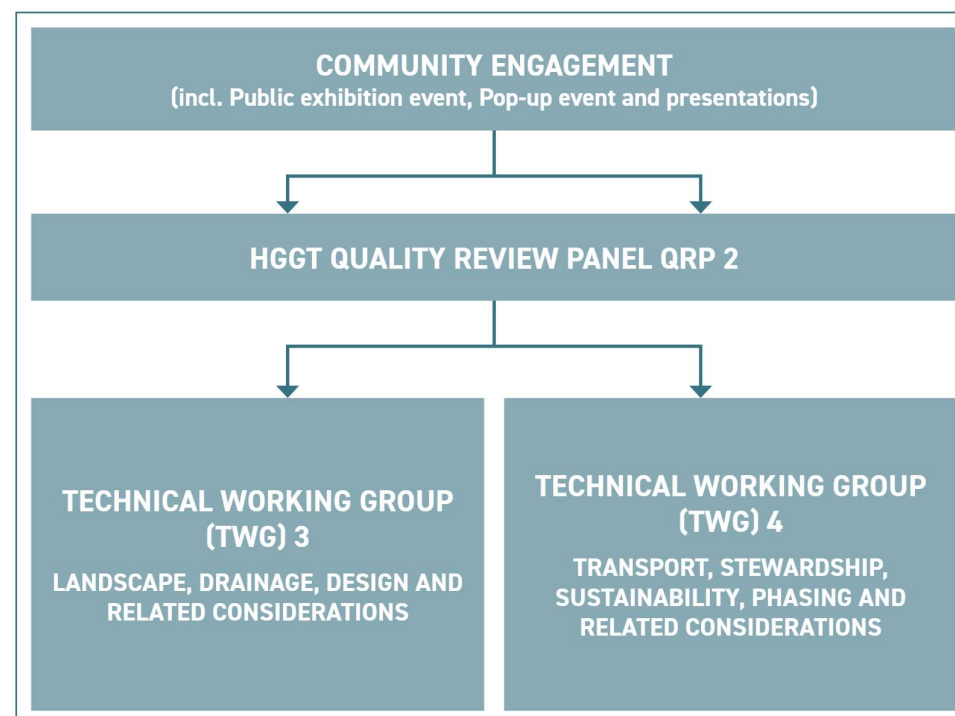
Pop-up event for local residents

STAGE 1: CONSTRAINTS AND OPTIONS TESTING



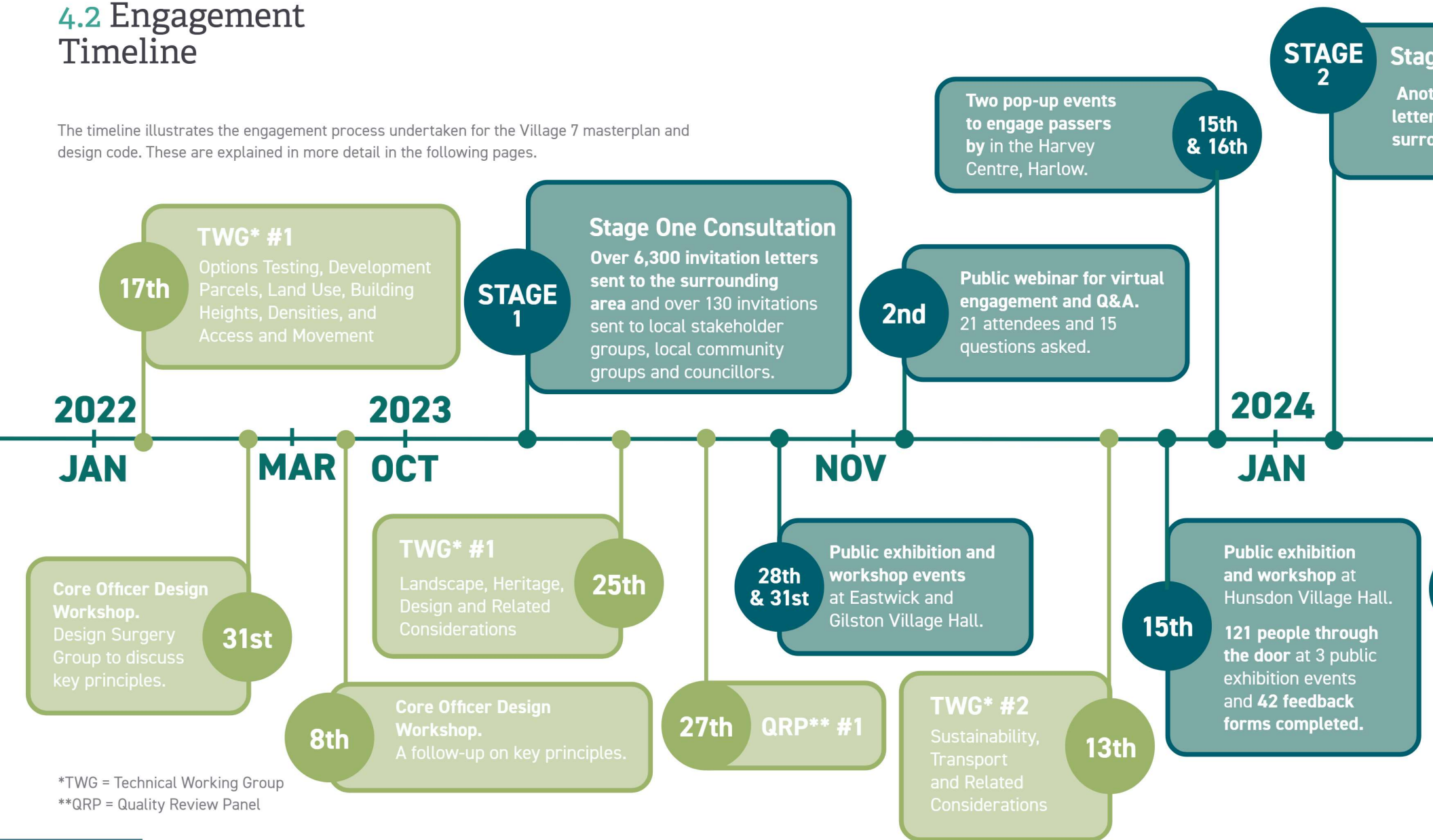
*Two stage process in accordance with Savills' draft V7 MP Scope Document, as agreed with officers (to be formally submitted pursuant to Condition D5 post grant of outline planning permission)

STAGE 2: SOLUTIONS AND PREFERRED APPROACH



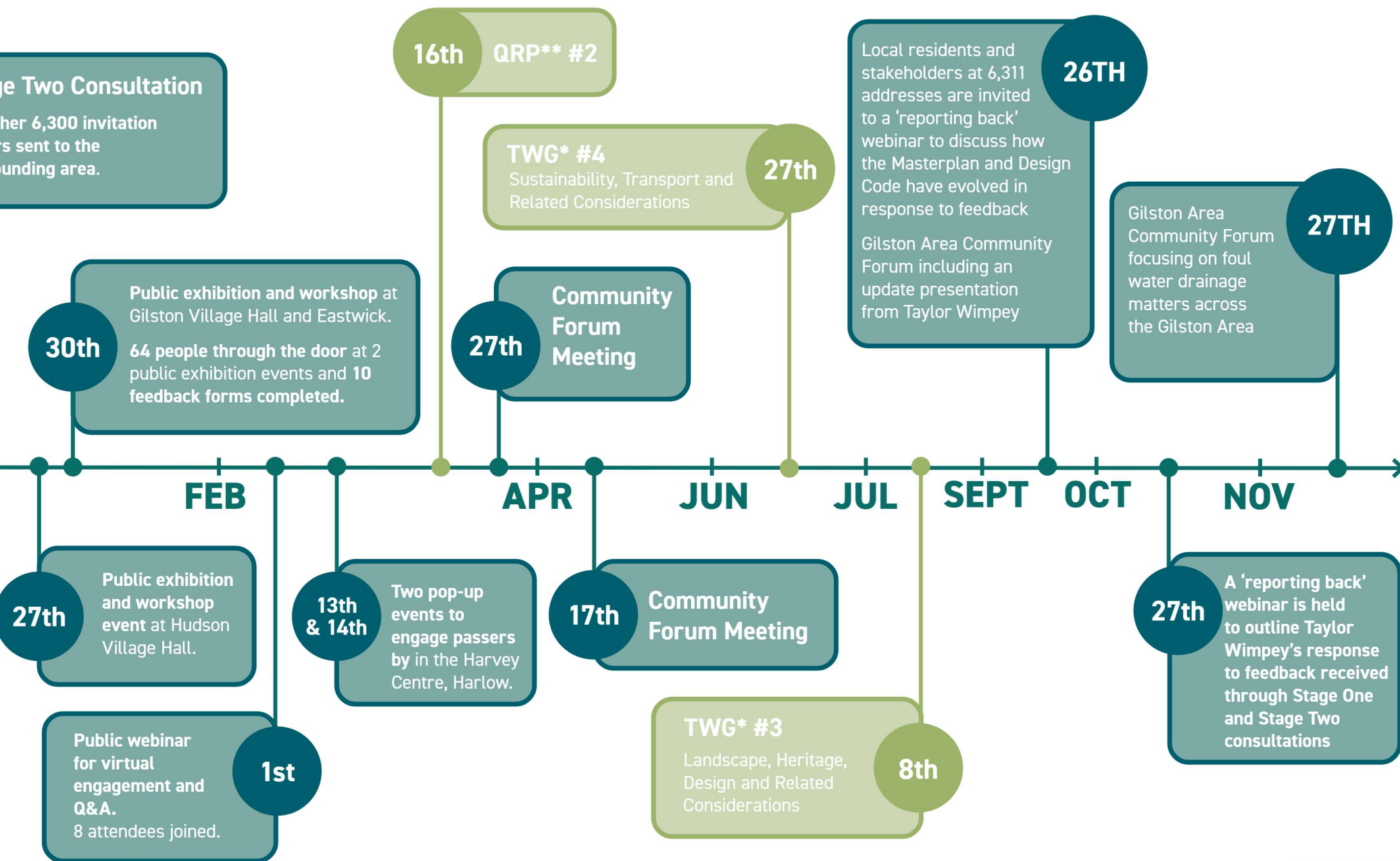
4.2 Engagement Timeline

The timeline illustrates the engagement process undertaken for the Village 7 masterplan and design code. These are explained in more detail in the following pages.



*TWG = Technical Working Group

**QRP = Quality Review Panel



4.3 Engagement with East Herts District Council

QUALITY REVIEW PANELS

Two stages of Quality Review Panels (QRPs) have taken place where the project team met with EHDC core officers and a QRP panel, consisting of technical professionals from all core disciplines, including masterplanning, landscape, transport, sustainability, drainage and stewardship, to present and discuss the development scheme and specific items for consideration.

QRP1 took place in October 2023, as part of Stage 1 of the engagement plan. This session covered constraints and options testing. QRP2 took place in February 2024, as part of Stage 2 of the engagement plan. This session explored solutions and preferred approach.

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUPS

A total of four Technical Working Groups (TWG) have taken place between October 2023 and July 2024 to review and evolve the masterplan proposal. Additional meetings have been held to discuss the primary school location and transport matters in more detail.

GILSTON AREA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN GROUP (NPG)

The NPG have been consulted throughout the process through both focused engagement meetings and as part of the public consultation events.

A summary of feedback received from the local authority:

SUSTAINABILITY

It was noted that people are often disconnected from energy sources and that having a **visual connection with the CHH would be beneficial**. It was also suggested that information / education boards could be incorporated into the Site to develop this connection.

There are **synergies between active transport and public health**, so this could be drawn into the vision and masterplan to give it a stronger case for the health and wellbeing strategy.

Important to note the **planting and maintenance of the landscaping and the implications of this for the bund**. Need to ensure the maintenance is not too onerous.

Further consideration is needed on how prospective occupiers will be sustainable outside of their homes e.g. bike storage; impermeable tarmac etc.

TRANSPORT

NPG would like the **enhancement of PRowWs, particularly bridleway and pedestrian routes**.

Hunsdon - V7 Link via airfield is requested.

Exploration of remote parking solutions for the Village Centre sought.

EHDC observed that ideally a **new pedestrian route would be provided to St Dunstan's Church**.

Football Hub important for entire Gilston Area, so **appropriate access will also need to be achieved**.

HCC requested the **consideration of modal filters along the east to west connection south of the primary school site to ensure priority is given to active travel**.

LANDSCAPE

The proposed **greenway needs to be properly considered in the SLMP and how this connects to V1-6**. SLMP needs to acknowledge how the Greenway will evolve over time and address how the **SLMP can be the 'sowing thread' of the wider Gilston Area**.

Cross sections for the treatment to the Northern Edge would be beneficial, these should also include the location of the pylons.

PLACEMAKING

The orientation of the **Primary School building** needs to **account for impacts arising from proximity to Church Lane** (noise, air pollution etc.)

Inconsistent or incorrect terminologies being used for Registered Park and Garden and Locally Important Historic Parks and Gardens (Non-designated Assets)

Community Engagement is required on Cherished Views.

The **Building Densities** should be **more closely linked to more closely defined Character Areas**. Currently there is little relationship between the proposed character areas and the Building Densities.

It was proposed that the **V7 MP needs to remain flexible** and should **not prescribe too much** now that does not allow for change when it comes to reserved matters.

The **entrance from Village 6** needs **careful consideration**, as the current plans show **4-storey gateway type built-form**, but this is not a village typology.

The Character Areas need to be more detailed and refined for when you come to coding stage and also look more widely at what the character is, and avoid uniformity imposed through the coding stage.

4.4 Engagement with the Community

Taylor Wimpey worked with East Herts District Council to create the Village 7 Engagement Strategy. This strategy set out two full rounds of consultation activity around the Masterplan and Design Code. The outcomes of the engagement would be reported back at subsequent events and online to demonstrate feedback has been heard and how it has been addressed.

Stage One

The first stage of consultation was intended to bring the community up to date with plans and technical work which had taken place following the Resolution to Grant of the Outline Application in April 2023. Consultees were invited to review and comment on the information, including taking part in detailed workshops and webinars. Stage One consultation ran from 13 October 2023 when invitations arrived with local councillors.

The workshops at the exhibitions were particularly welcomed by the local community, giving members of the public the opportunity to spend time work through the detail of the masterplan with masterplanners, transport consultants, landscape architects and Taylor Wimpey.

Stage Two Consultation

The second stage of engagement was the opportunity to relay back our findings from the first round of engagement, and to outline how comments had been addressed. Where comments could not be addressed, this was also explained. The Stage Two consultation ran from 9 January 2024 when invitations arrived with local residents.

Gilston Area Community Forum

Taylor Wimpey has attended The Community Forum, facilitated by East Herts District Council to address matters concerning Village 7 and the wider Strategic Landscape Masterplan. The Community Forum is an opportunity for local residents to ask questions about the progress and delivery of the Gilston Area.

Community Forum meetings were held on:

- Tuesday 27 February 2024
- Wednesday 17 April 2024



Several of the exhibition boards that were displayed at Stage 1 and Stage 2 public consultation events.



Workshop with local residents



Engagement event with local residents



A summary of feedback from the public consultation events

Reporting Back

Responding to the feedback received during Stage Two and giving an overview of how the plans have evolved throughout the Masterplan and Design Code consultation process. (Summer 2024)

Stage One of the consultation began on 13 October 2023, with local councillors invited to meet with Taylor Wimpey to discuss the upcoming public consultation on the Masterplan for Village 7 of the Gilston Area. Public engagement began on 17 October 2023, with 6,311 leaflets distributed to homes and businesses surrounding the Site.

This public engagement included two public events at Eastwick and Gilston Village Hall with a combined footfall of 80. Following conversations with Hunsdon Parish Councillors, a third public event was advertised by letter to all homes and businesses in Hunsdon and held at Hunsdon Village Hall. Each of these in-person events included workshop sessions led by Stantec, allowing members of the public to speak with the team about detailed elements of the plans.

Invitations guided the public to a webinar featuring a presentation and Q&A with the project team for those unable to attend in person or preferring virtual engagement.

To engage with those who might not attend a public event or webinar, two pop-up events were held at the Harvey Centre in Harlow. These events encouraged participation from those who might be short on time to engage with conventional events. Instead, a pop-up event aims to catch a wider demographic where they would naturally go.

Event feedback centred on transport, character, and ecology/landscape, detailed further in the Statement of Community Involvement. Feedback similar between the events, with the exception of the pop-ups, where members of the public spoke about a strong perception of decline in Harlow, a scepticism that change was achievable and a feeling that delivery is needed sooner.

Three specific items of feedback were particularly notable in their frequency. First, residents of Hunsdon in particular felt that the realignment of Church Lane was not necessary, with a potential risk to accessibility for HGVs related to local sugar beet production. The second item of feedback which was notable was the proposed massing of buildings in the village centre, with some taking the view that four storeys would be inappropriate for a village. The final notable item was one on heritage, where attendees felt that more should be made of the history of

the Site either as royal hunting grounds or the nearby airfield.

Taylor Wimpey's response to feedback was shared on the Village 7 website after the conclusion of Stage One.

Two months after the conclusion of Stage One, Stage Two was publicised with a new round of leaflets advertising a further two in-person events and a webinar.

Stage Two consisted of two public events, one at Hunsdon Village Hall and another at Eastwick and Gilston Village Hall. As in Stage One, these events included a workshop led by Stantec which provided an opportunity to discuss more detailed aspects of the Masterplan.

Stage Two presented more detailed information about the plans while giving an opportunity to report back on the first round of feedback. This was well-received, with particular interest in the more detailed plans at the workshop table.

Following the successful webinar and pop-up events in Stage One, they also followed the public events of Stage Two.

Stage Two feedback mainly came from workshop discussions, which were clearly preferred over feedback forms. Many attendees had participated in Stage One, leading to broader feedback covering five key topics: character, transport, landscape, environment, and land use.

Two particularly frequent items of feedback were noted during the Stage Two events. One is a repeat from Stage One, where attendees were concerned about HGVs being directed through the village centre due to the realignment of Church Lane. The second concerned sports pitches, with some repeating a concern that the pitches may represent an over-provision for football, with issues around coach parking for visiting teams.

Materials from in-person events and webinars were posted on the Village 7 website, allowing those unable to attend to still access information and provide feedback online.

Reporting Back Stage

Feedback on the emerging masterplan was gathered during both Stage One and Stage Two of consultation. To complete the process, Taylor Wimpey's Engagement Strategy called for a Reporting Back stage which would outline both how community feedback has been considered.

Leaflets inviting local residents and businesses to a public webinar were posted on 24 September 2024, giving directions to join the webinar. For those who could not attend, the leaflet directed to our dedicated email and phone line as well as a recording of the webinar which was posted online after the event took place.

The webinar was attended by 21 members of the public and seven panellists from the project team. The Q&A session lasted around 20 minutes, with four detailed questions asked and three receiving an answer live. The final question was asked during closing, and it was subsequently answered in writing.

The four questions could be summarised as:

When will the Design Code be made available?

Does the Section 106 Agreement provide funding to widen Acorn Street?

Will the proposed cycle route to Roydon be maintained as a leisure rather than commuter route?

What has changed in terms of density of the proposals?

The consultation took place over the following timetable:

STAGE ONE	October 2023	Updated Engagement plan submitted to East Herts District Council. Local Resident and stakeholders at 6,311 addresses are invited to two public exhibition events taking place at Eastwick and Gilston Villages Hall and online. Local Councillors are invited to meet the Applicant and project team. Public exhibition events are held on 28 and 31 October.
STAGE ONE	November 2023	• A public webinar is held where attendees can ask questions of the team. • Following conversations with Hunsdon Parish Councillors. Taylor Wimpey provide a third public exhibition events for resident in Hunsdon. • Hunsdon resident at 496 addresses are contacted by post to inform them of the complementary event. • A public exhibition event is held on 15 November at Hunsdon Village Hall. • Pop-up events are held in the Harvey Centre, Harlow to engage a larger audience.
STAGE TWO	January 2024	• Local resident and stakeholders at 6,311 addresses are invited to two public exhibition events taking place at Hunsdon Village Hall, Eastwick and Gilston Village Hall and online. • Taylor Wimpey's response to feedback is published on the Village 7 website • A summary of the feedback received during Stage One is published on the Village 7 website. • A public exhibition event is held at Hunsdon Village Hall on 27 January. • A public exhibition event is held at Eastwick and Gilston Village Hall on 30 January.
STAGE TWO	February 2024	• The Stage Two webinar is hosted on Zoom on 1 February. • Community Forum held on 27 February. • Pop-up events are held in the Harvey Centre, Harlow to engage a larger audience.
STAGE TWO	April 2024	• Community Forum held on 17 April.
REPORTING BACK	September 2024	• Local resident and stakeholders at 6,311 addresses are invited to a 'reporting back' webinar to discuss how the Masterplan and Design Code have evolved in response to feedback.
REPORTING BACK	October 2024	• A 'reporting back' webinar is held to online Taylor Wimpey's response to feedback received through Stage One and Stage Two consultations.



View from Church Lane looking south east towards
Harlow with listed buildings in the foreground

Chapter 5.

Design Evolution & Options Testing

This options testing chapter aligns with the OPA parameter plans and Development Specification Statement DSS, S106 requirements, as well as planning policy and guidance documents listed on page 18.

5.1 Design Evolution

This chapter explains and illustrates the design process and how the proposal for Village 7 has evolved as a result of the design iterative process and engagements with Technical Working Group (TWG) in January 2022, followed by the Design Surgery Group (DSG) in late January 2022 to discuss key design principles and related considerations.

The relevant approved parameters are applied to the tested options where appropriate to ensure the design response aligns with and builds upon the approved OPA work and associated Environmental Statement (ES).

The diagrams opposite and on the next page demonstrate the design evolution of the layout from 2021 to 2025 which illustrate the key design principles and how they can come together to create a holistic and robust masterplan that is compliant with the approved OPA parameters.

The key design principles include:

- Primary Vehicular Route and associated roundabout location;
- Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC) and hub;
- Key Active Travel Route (also referred to as 'Super Greenway' by the DSG); and
- Location of the proposed school and expansion area.

The following pages of the Options Testing chapter will provide a robust assessment of these key design principles and demonstrate the rationale for the current concept masterplan (Figure 44) which will form the basis for the Masterplan Framework and Design Code chapters.

The design developments identified were based upon information available at the masterplanning stage, further detailed design will need to be formally tested, particularly in relation to highway safety and policy compliance to ensure viability and through the relevant reserved matters applications.

1.2.1. OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION DESIGN CONCEPT (JANUARY 2021)

The concept masterplan to the right illustrates the key design principles included in the OPA Illustrative Masterplan alongside the OPA parameter deviation zones for the STC and Church Lane realignment.

-  Village 7 Masterplan Boundary
-  SLMP Boundary
-  Listed Buildings
-  Village Centre (incl. Education)
-  Deviation Zone for Sustainable Transport Corridor / Indicative Primary Vehicular Route
-  Deviation Zone for Indicative Primary Vehicular Route towards Hunsdon
-  Primary Vehicular Route
-  Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC)
-  STC Hub
-  Roundabout
-  School
-  Existing Hedgerow and Trees

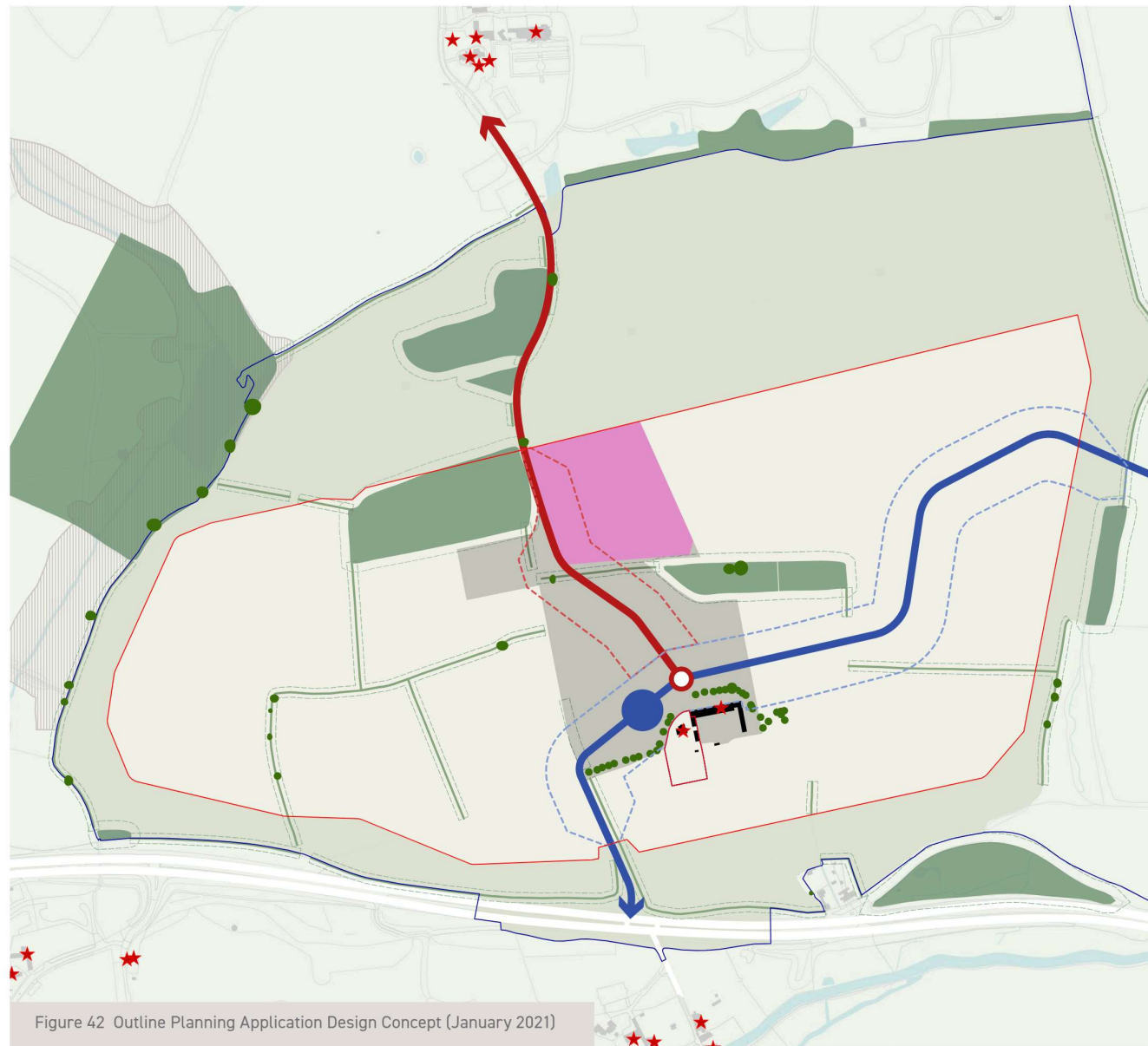


Figure 42 Outline Planning Application Design Concept (January 2021)

1.2.2. REFINED VILLAGE 7 VILLAGE MASTERPLAN - TWG (JANUARY 2022)

The concept masterplan to the right illustrates the key design principles in the refined layout that was presented to officers during a TWG workshop in January 2022, based on the established OPA parameters. The Design Surgery Group was set up following this initial TWG workshop to support and sought to option test the existing parameters and design proposal. Further details can be found in Section 5.3. Design Surgery Group Considerations.

The location of the primary school was established during this TWG workshop primarily due to topography, as this flattest part of the Village Centre can accommodate the school playing fields.

-  Village 7 Masterplan Boundary
-  SLMP Boundary
-  Listed Buildings
-  Village Centre (incl. Education)
-  Deviation Zone for Sustainable Transport Corridor / Indicative Primary Vehicular Route
-  Deviation Zone for Indicative Primary Vehicular Route towards Hunsdon
-  Key Active Travel Route
-  Primary Vehicular Route
-  Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC)
-  STC Hub
-  School and Potential Expansion Zone
-  Existing Hedgerows and Trees
-  Roundabout



Figure 43 TWG Concept Masterplan (January 2022)

-  V7 MP Site Boundary
-  SLMP Boundary
-  Cherished Views
-  School
-  Proposed School Entrance
-  Employment (B2 to B8 uses)/
Potential location for Community Heat Hub
-  Green Buffer Zone
-  Key Active Travel Route
-  Neighbourhood Transport Nodes
-  Indicative Soft Frontage along Northern Edge
-  Sensitive Development Area
-  Woodland with a 12m buffer
-  Existing Hedgerow and Trees with a 7m buffer
-  Listed Buildings
-  Village Centre (incl. Education)
-  Deviation Zone for Sustainable Transport Corridor /
Indicative Primary Vehicular Route
-  Deviation Zone for Indicative Primary Vehicular
Route towards Hunsdon
-  Development to be no taller than 16m in height (4
storeys) from ground level to the top of the roof.
-  Development to be no taller than 19m in height (5
storeys) from ground level to the top of the roof.
-  Area of Enhanced Woodland
-  Primary Vehicular Route
-  Roundabout
-  Secondary Vehicular Route
-  Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC)
-  Supplementary STC Route
-  STC Hub
-  Long Views
-  Primary / Local Nodes
-  Allotments

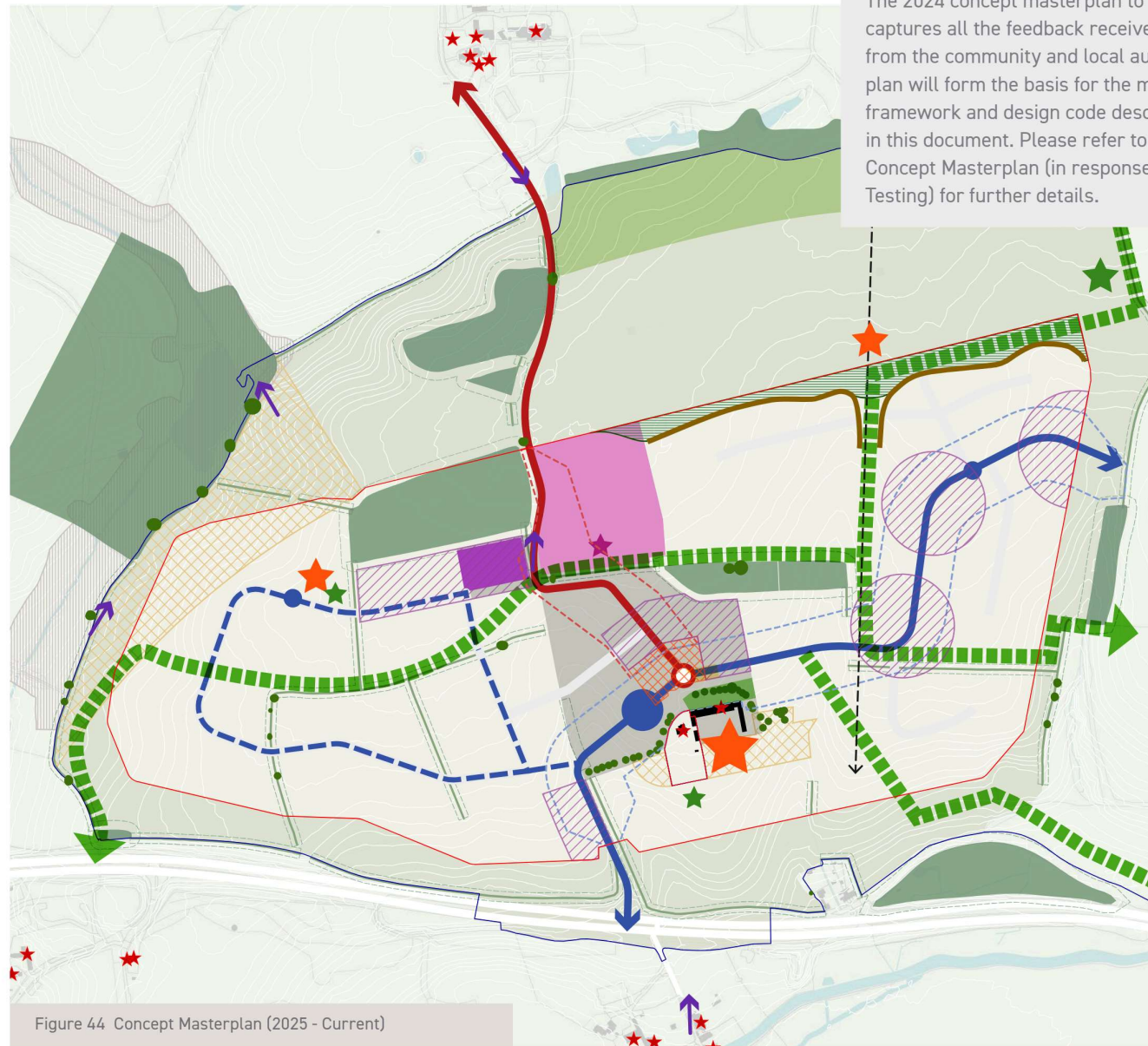


Figure 44 Concept Masterplan (2025 - Current)

1.2.3. CONCEPT MASTERPLAN (2025 - CURRENT)

The 2024 concept masterplan to the right captures all the feedback received up to date from the community and local authorities. This plan will form the basis for the masterplan framework and design code described later on in this document. Please refer to Section 5.4 Concept Masterplan (in response to the Option Testing) for further details.

5.3 Design Surgery Group Considerations

The Design Surgery Group (DSG) was set up following the initial TWG workshop in January 2022 to support the masterplan work and sought to options test the existing parameter plans to ensure that good quality placemaking would be achieved at masterplanning and detailed design phases, in accordance with the relevant Local Plan policies and the HGGT Vision.

Feedback was received from the DSG in September 2022 which requested for a number of amendments to the Parameter Plans to include:

- Extension of the “Indicative Village Centre” and “Mixed Use Zone” to include the indicative area safeguarded for employment development within the north western part of the centre.
- Insertion of topographical lines onto Parameter Plans 3 and 4.
- Incorporation of information and additional wording to the keys of the parameter plans to re-confirm commitments and principles established through the DSS.

It was agreed that a number of the other design comments were more detailed in nature and relevant to the masterplanning stage. This includes the assessment of Cherished Views as identified in the Hunsdon, Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan, delivery of a high-quality East-West Pedestrian and Cycle Route and testing of locations for the Neighbourhood Transport Nodes (NTNs). These have therefore informed this Option Testing exercise and the “Key Considerations” we set out below.

Four main themes were considered by the DSG and are illustrated on the diagrams opposite. Themes considered include:

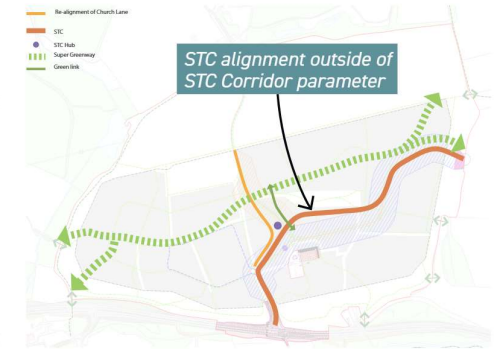
- Green Infrastructure
- Land Uses
- Employment Site
- Access and Movement

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Whilst the OPA parameters were considered in the DSG Design Review, the location of the amended STC corridor proposed by the DSG does not comply with the parameter for this route which has now been approved. The options or key considerations tested within this chapter consider the recommendations suggested by the DSG within the approved parameters.



G V7 Sketch Plan 2_PPlan 3 GI Open Space



G V7 Sketch Plan 3_PPlan 4 Vehicular Access Movement



G V7 Sketch Plan 4_PPlan 5 Land Use

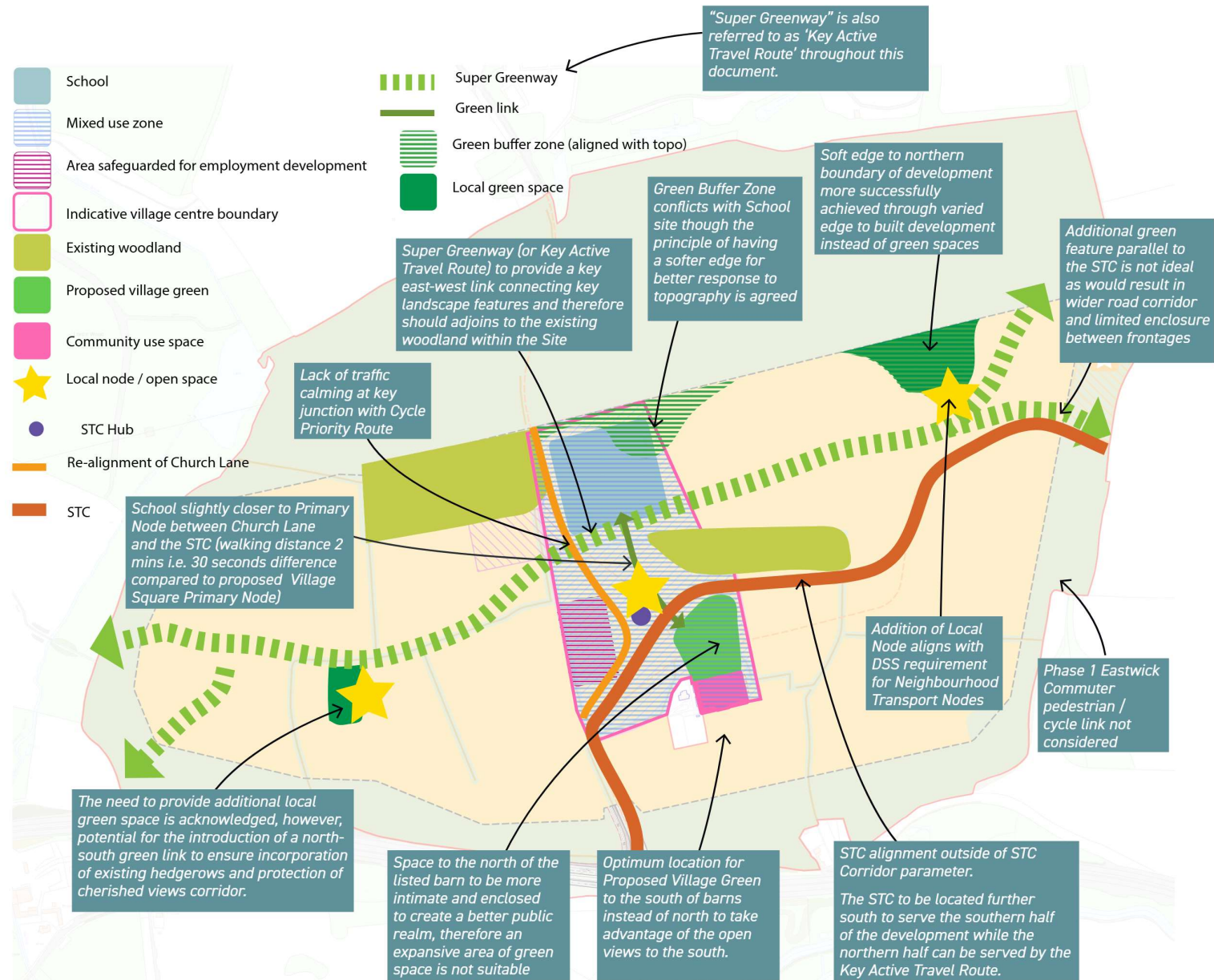
Figure 45 DSG's Masterplan Design Surgery - G V7 Sketch Plans

Figure 46 illustrates the combined recommendation by the DSG. After careful considerations, the applicant and the design team have provided some initial observations which are annotated on the opposite diagram.

The following key recommendations have been tested (see page 84 to page 97) to provide a robust design response which will ensure the delivery of a high quality development:

1. Church Lane alignment (within deviation zone);
2. STC alignment within deviation;
3. School building location within defined Mixed Use Zone - Section 106 discussion agreed to remove the expansion area and the delivery of the 3 forms of entry;
4. Employment locations for extra 2,100sqm only beyond the north-south primary road;
5. Green east-west pedestrian / cycle connectivity and location of transport infrastructure to include Neighbourhood Transport Nodes (Cycle Priority Routes CPR & Local Nodes);
6. Primary Node between Church Lane and the STC;
7. Northern Edge Landscape Treatment; and
8. Location of Community Heat Hub.

This testing was started as part of the TWGs and engagement process with the local authority and community, which enabled the identification of the applicant's preferred design response.



RECOMMENDATION A: CHURCH LANE ALIGNMENT (WITHIN DEVIATION ZONE)

The Church Lane alignment has been considered in relation to its function to enable existing north-south vehicular through-traffic and its relationship with the Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC).

OPTION 1 - DSG'S RECOMMENDATION

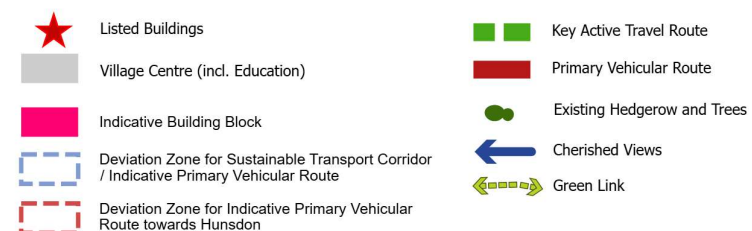
Option 1 suggested by the DSG seeks to separate the Church Lane vehicular through-traffic to the pedestrian and cycle route along the Green Link to provide additional connection to the north of the Site.

- + Direct and convenient connection for pedestrians and cyclists between school and facilities located within the listed building.
- + Realignment of Church Lane eastwards within the Site would slightly increase the likelihood of views towards St. Dunstan Church for road users (relative to the views currently seen in the direction of St. Dunstan Church from the existing alignment of Church Lane from southern Cherished View D).
- + The Primary Vehicular Route is planned along the western edge of the Village Centre mixed use zone, to the south west of the tree, celebrating the presence of the retained veteran/notable tree as a landscape landmark. This alignment creates an opportunity to feature the tree as a focal point, framing a key vista that defines the southern approach and enhances the sense of arrival into the Village Centre. The reorientation of the road also thoughtfully supports the inclusion of a well-sized Primary School site within the Village Centre's mixed-use zone, contributing to a cohesive and vibrant community-focused layout
- + Good likelihood of views seen towards St. Dunstan Church from the pedestrian and cycle Green Link (due to its more easterly location within the Site)
- Narrow distance between Church Lane and the retained woodland to the east would result in insufficient block depth should the Green Link be introduced.
- High density residential / light industrial employment uses require regular (ideally rectangular) blocks to enable efficient, high quality active frontages and overlooking to this primary route.
- Potential high street retail would not benefit from through-traffic footfall along the Primary Vehicular Route.
- Lack of traffic calming at key junction with Key Active Travel Route in proximity to school.

- + Indicates aspect that is viewed as **positive** by the applicant and the technical team which could contribute to overall good urban design.
- Indicates aspect that is viewed as **negative** by the applicant and the technical team which may cause less desirable impact on other design elements when considered holistically.



Figure 47 Recommendation A: OPTION 1 - Church Lane alignment



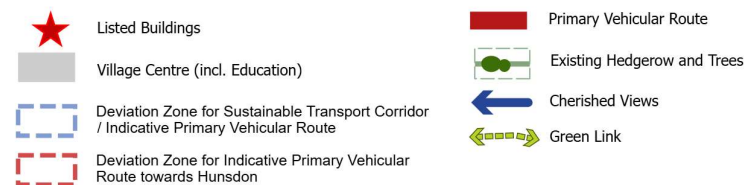
OPTION 2 - APPLICANT'S PREFERRED DESIGN RESPONSE

Option 2 proposes a more circuitous primary route for vehicles and integrates pedestrian, cycle and vehicular movement in the north-south Primary Vehicular Route between the school and the listed barns. This approach maximises opportunities for mixed uses in the Village Centre, traffic calms through-traffic and encourages active travel.

- + Direct and convenient connection for pedestrians and cyclists between school and facilities located within listed building.
- + Co-location of the Green Link and Primary Vehicular Route will benefit retailers from both vehicular and pedestrian through-traffic footfall.
- + Visual connection between the school and the listed Brickhouse Barn to aid navigation and wayfinding.
- + More regular block structure better placed to deliver perimeter blocks with active frontages.
- + Road alignment naturally calms traffic.
- + Section of Primary Vehicular Route runs parallel with Key Active Travel Route allows traffic calming opportunity.
- + Longer and more circuitous vehicular routing will discourage car travel and encourage more active modes of transports, such as walking, cycling from the listed barn to school and employment site.
- + Realignment of Church Lane in a more easterly location within the Site (adjacent to the pedestrian and cycle Green Link) maximises the likelihood of views towards St Dunstan Church for pedestrians, cyclists and road users and (relative to views currently seen in the direction of St Dunstan Church from the existing alignment of Church Lane from southern Cherished View D).
- Co-location of the realigned Church Lane (Primary Vehicular Route) and Green Link will result in wider road corridor, potential for a less enclosed streetscape.
- Potential to draw traffic volume towards the Village Centre, however, this can be mitigated by the sharper turn of Primary Vehicular Route at intersection with the Green Link, in the long term, would discourage traffic to go through the Site and use other alternative routes instead.



Figure 48 Recommendation A: OPTION 2 - Church Lane alignment



RECOMMENDATION B: SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT CORRIDOR (STC) ALIGNMENT

The STC alignment has been considered in relation to its bus and strategic cycle requirements, the provision of the STC mobility hub and its relationship with Church Lane.

OPTION 1 - DSG'S RECOMMENDATION

Option 1 suggested by the DSG to shift Sustainable Transport Corridor and buffer northwards, to allow for alignment along existing landscape features and ability to create compact local centre.

- + Combined STC alignment with Church Lane will reduce overall infrastructure provision.
- + Additional room created south of the STC Hub allows for further buffer to existing landscape features
- If the road is positioned further from the listed barn, it would fail to realise the opportunity to fully engage with the heritage assets and activate / allow a greater appreciation of their northern frontage. It would potentially create a larger area of unengaging void space between the road and heritage assets. Further detail of the Primary Node is outlined on page 92.
- Difficult to provide vehicular access / service block to the south of STC Hub should this be brought forward as commercial/ retail space or residential. Conflict with existing trees.
- Irregular and insufficient block depth that sits between the existing woodland and the STC.
- STC too far north to be convenient for low-lying units in southern part of the Site.
- Requires terminating buses to U-turn within hub or primary road junction (roundabout).

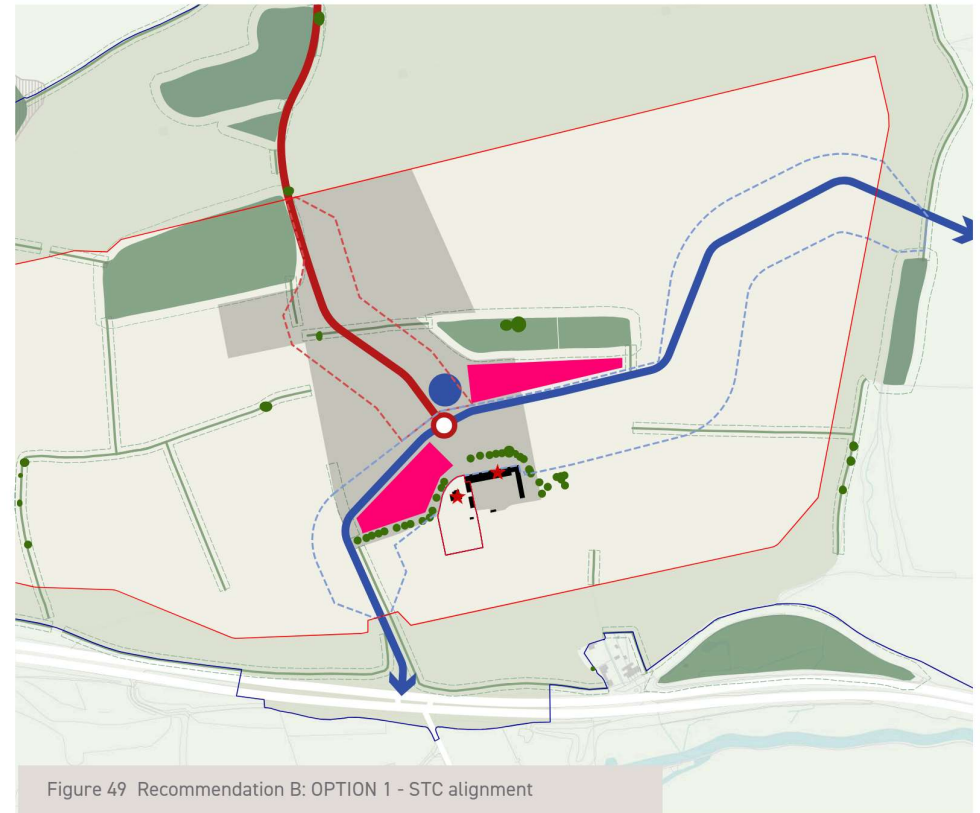
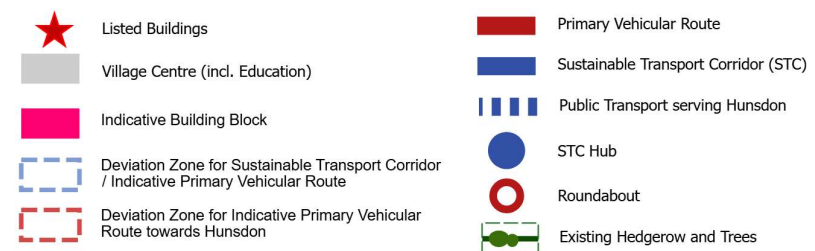


Figure 49 Recommendation B: OPTION 1 - STC alignment



OPTION 2 - APPLICANT'S PREFERRED DESIGN RESPONSE

The proposed preferred Option 2 creates a pedestrian friendly STC Hub that is separated from Church Lane vehicular through-traffic and a high quality public realm in front of the listed barns.

- + Locating the STC alignment southwards (middle of the deviation zone) allows for a more enclosed, better quality public realm and junction for the Primary Node in front of the listed barns (refer to Recommendation F page 92 to 95 for further details).
- + As the road is positioned closer to the heritage assets it better engages / integrates the overall development with these key heritage nodes, ensuring they are readily appreciated. This is coupled with a proposal for a smaller area of high-quality public realm between the two which secures a soft transitional relationship, successfully activating the area and improving way the heritage assets are experienced.
- + Additional room between the STC and retained woodland to the north allow more regular and well-placed block pattern to deliver a perimeter block with active frontages adjacent to the primary route
- + STC Hub located west of the Village Centre will encourage visitors coming from the southern entrance to switch mode of transport and park their vehicles (charge, etc.) before entering the pedestrian friendly Village Centre.
- + Introduction of a separate Secondary Vehicular Route will help alleviate some or most traffic from the main STC route.
- Requires terminating buses to U-turn within hub or primary road junction (roundabout).
- + STC positioned to have more homes in its catchment, especially to the south.

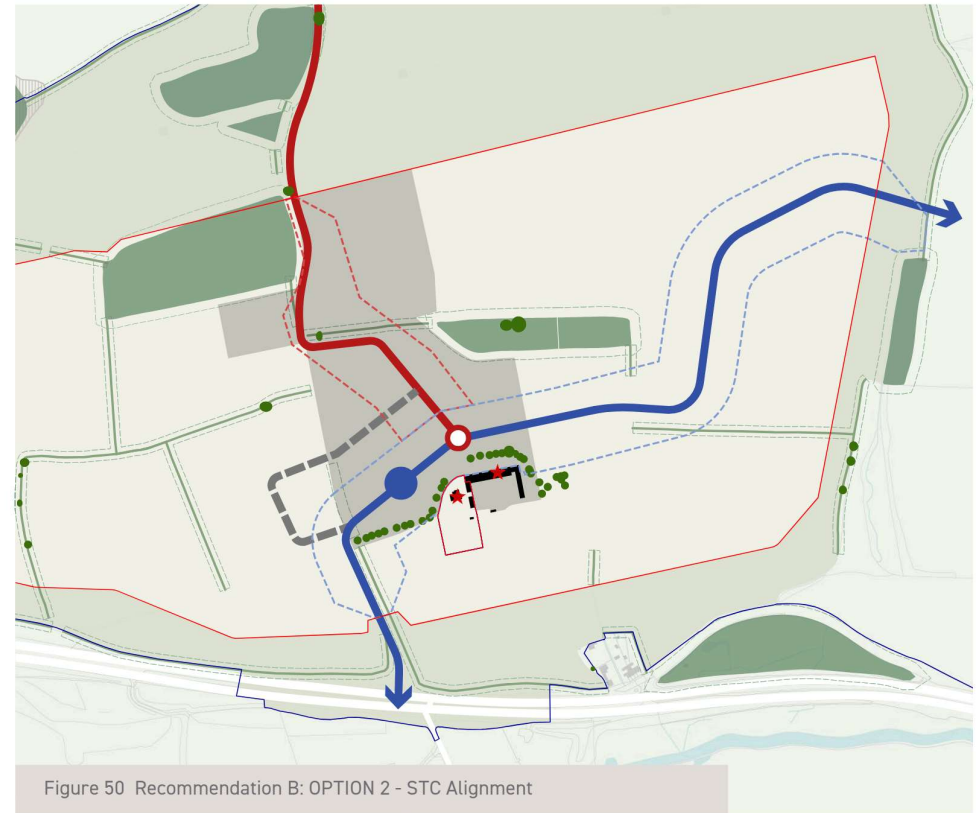
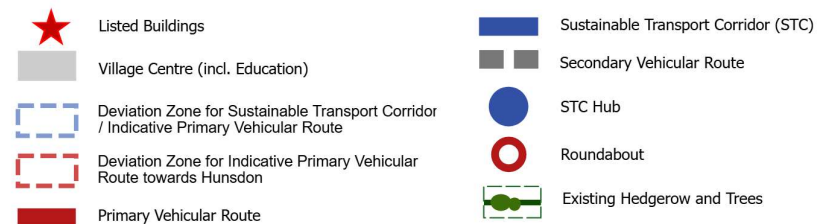


Figure 50 Recommendation B: OPTION 2 - STC Alignment



RECOMMENDATION D: EMPLOYMENT LOCATIONS

Locations for Light Industrial B2 / B8 employment uses have been considered in relation to building heights parameters, proximity to the Key Active Travel Route, STC, Primary Vehicular Route and existing landscape features.

OPTION 1 - DSG'S RECOMMENDATION

- +** Provision for employment could be amalgamated and disseminated within the mixed-use zone (Village Centre) in smaller pockets or micro employment hubs offering flexibility of location, use and tenure
- Light Industrial B2/B8 employment uses generally require rectangular plots to maximise their operational needs. This location would result in irregular 'left-over' parcels for residential development should alignment of Church Lane is retained and employment provision is within the Village Centre parameter.
- Employment use tend to provide poor building frontages with parking courts to the front of buildings and, depending on their specific use, may require fencing around the plot for security, all sides of this plot location are highly visible.
- +** Employment uses are easy to reach by sustainable modes by virtue of proximity to the STC Hub.
- This location does not allow much flexibility in building heights for the proposed uses (up to 3 storeys only).
- Lack of existing woodland vegetation immediately upslope to provide vegetated backdrop.



OPTION 2 - APPLICANT'S PREFERRED DESIGN RESPONSE

This option explores the location of employment area away from the Local Centre as it is viewed as incompatible with uses provided in the Village Centre.

- + Screening from existing woodland and hedgerow is helpful in this location. This location maximises flexibility in building heights for the proposed uses (up to 4 storeys).
- + The rectangular plot is ideal to deliver employment in phases (extensive investigation into investor/occupier market requirements was fed into the submitted employment strategy to support the OPA). Design Codes can require high quality active frontage to Church Lane (one side only) without excessive prescriptions which may undermine delivery.
- + Location envisaged to incorporate small to medium sized light industrial and distribution uses which will benefit from direct access to Church Lane and Hunsdon.
- + Maximises potential for high density residential at close proximity to the STC and V7 amenities.
- + Less prominent in views from River Stort Valley due to more westerly location within the Site.
- + Visual impact reduced by block of existing woodland immediately upslope providing a vegetated backdrop to the north.



RECOMMENDATION E: KEY ACTIVE TRAVEL ROUTE & LOCAL NODES

The Key Active Travel Route have been considered in relation to and Local Nodes and the STC strategic cycle link to encourage active travel and maximise accessibility to facilities.

OPTION 1 - DSG'S RECOMMENDATION

The option suggested by the DSG provides Local Nodes en-route along the Key Active Travel Route. However, this option does not fully consider opportunities related to the sports hub provision serving all seven villages, topography and sustainable drainage provision, allotments / play facilities and southerly views from the Site.

- Eastern Local Node would be better associated with the changing rooms / sports hub serving all seven villages. Therefore, this needs to move further north to align with the Sports Hub location.
- Western Local Node would not maximise opportunities for SuDS, allotments and long southerly views from the Site.
- Irregular building block created between the woodland and Key Active Travel Route do not have sufficient block depth for residential development.

- + Key Active Travel Route works well with the STC alignment and maximises accessibility to cycle infrastructure.
- Key Active Travel Route does not link to Phase 1 pedestrian / cycle connection to Village 6.
- + Excellent connection between school and existing woodland. Opportunities for forest schooling or forest play on the way as part of commute to/from school.



Figure 53 Recommendation E: OPTION 1 - Cycle Priority Routes CPR & Local Nodes



OPTION 2 - APPLICANT'S PREFERRED DESIGN RESPONSE

Proposed Key Active Travel Route create a permeable network that is well-connected to all facilities and thus encouraging active travel.

This option maximises opportunities related to the sports hub provision serving all seven villages, topography and sustainable drainage provision, allotments / play facilities and southerly views from the Site.

- + Eastern Local Node associated with the changing rooms /sports hub serving all seven villages and linear green corridor within walking distance from bus stop.
- + Western Local Node associated with allotments, play facilities and western bus stop.
- + A more regular block pattern well placed to deliver perimeter blocks with active frontages.
- + Attractive Village Park as the Primary Node and destination at the heart of the Site.
- + Key Active Travel Route links to Phase 1 pedestrian / cycle connection to Village 6.
- + Three options to connect to Village 6 will encourage cycling and active travel.
- + Dedicated cycle route along secondary road.
- + Linear green north-south corridors provide attractive and accessible open spaces ideal for the provision of SuDS, active travel and biodiversity connectivity, and with potential for long views.
- + Potential for distant views from Eastern Local Node along linear Green Corridor across River Stort valley towards Harlow
- + Potential for views from western Local Node along linear Green Corridor towards Briggens dovecote water tower and the River Stort valley beyond.
- + Positioning the primary village park to the south of the heritage assets not only successfully helps users to engage with and readily experience the full extent (most prominent and active frontages) of the heritage assets when using this green space, but it also aligns with the need to treat this as sensitive development area - as previously agreed.

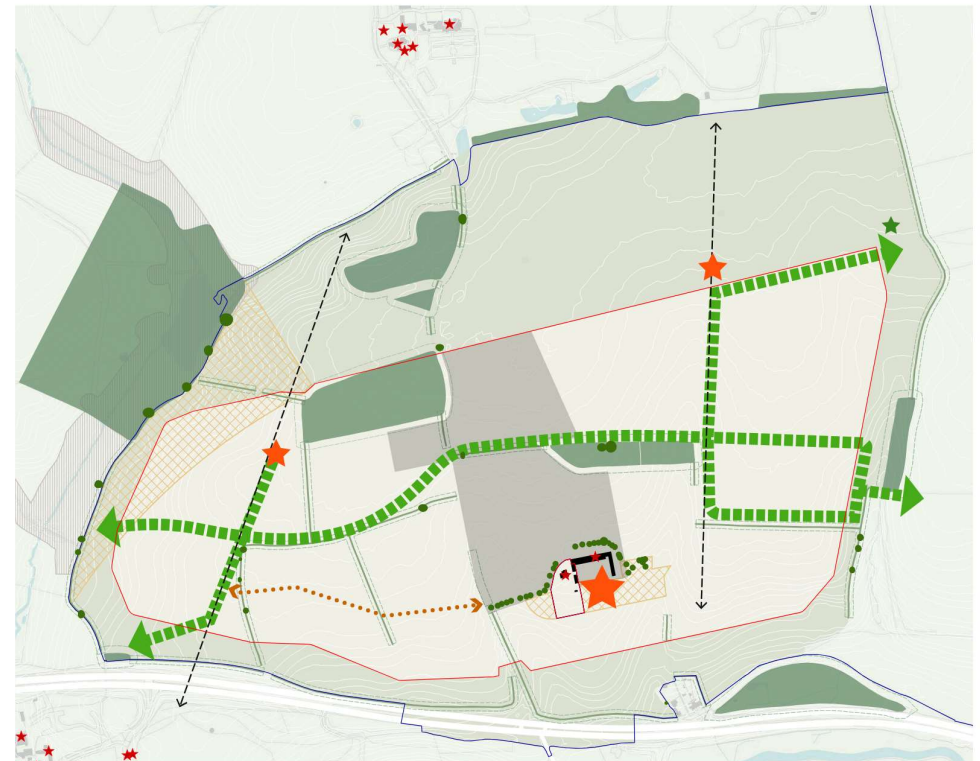


Figure 54 Recommendation E: OPTION 2 - Cycle Priority Routes CPR & Local Nodes



RECOMMENDATION F: PRIMARY NODE AND THE CENTRAL VILLAGE GREEN

The location of the neighbourhood park has been considered to utilise the existing wider landscape and create a strong relationship with the village centre.

OPTION 1 - DSG'S RECOMMENDATION

The DSG was concerned that, as it stands, the land use parameter plan potentially enables the mixed use zone to come forward without any meaningful green space – the provision of such space must be safeguarded. Based on Option 2 of Recommendation E (page 91), the listed Brickhouse Barn and the central Village Green to form the Primary Node.

- The largest programmed green space within the masterplan is proposed to the south of the community centre to make the most of the south facing views out over the River Stort. This additional proposed green open space is nearly a hectare and pushes the village centre activity 100m away from the listed barns and their community uses which would be alienated from the mixed use zone.

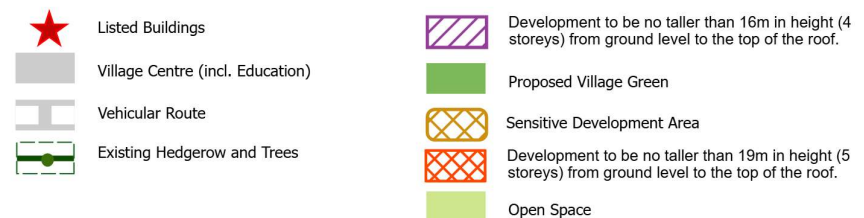
- Opportunities for up to five storeys landmark buildings undermined by Village Green.
- Large area of Village Green incompatible with compact village centre character.
- Difficult to programme such a large open space in village centre. Risk of alienating the community centre from the rest of the built development.



Location Plan



Figure 55 Recommendation F: OPTION 1 - Primary Node (Central Village Green)



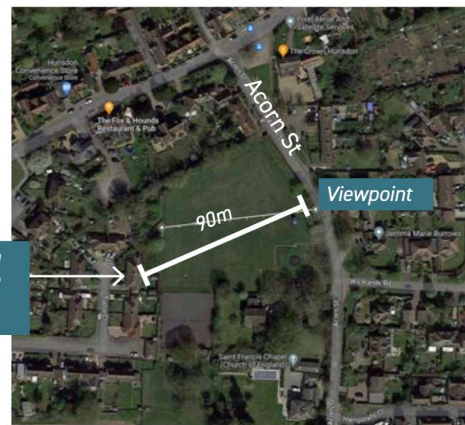
Scale Comparison

The figure opposite illustrates the cross-section of the DSG's recommended Village Green and its distance to Brickhouse barn building and a size comparison to local precedent in Hunsdon.

Hunsdon St Francis Chapel Green located on Acorn St in Hunsdon has a similar east-west distance to the suggested Village Green of 90m in width. The view from Acorn St overlooking towards the 2 storeys house (similar height to Brickhouse Barn) in the backdrop suggests an extensive area of open space and does not provide sufficient enclosure to create an intimate and welcoming Village Centre as desired.



Figure 56 Option 1 - Primary Node and Village Green cross-section AA



Local precedent key plan



Local precedent: View towards existing Hunsdon St Francis Chapel Green

OPTION 2 - APPLICANT'S PREFERRED DESIGN RESPONSE

The masterplan provides a public square in this location of circa 2700m2 - this scale is appropriate to ensure good connection to the rest of the Village Centre. There could be scope to allow for some areas of soft landscape within this civic space.

- + Opportunities for up to five storeys landmark buildings maximised by Village Green.
- + T-junction and village square compatible with compact Village Centre character.
- + Appropriate scale of civic space adjacent to the community centre. Strong relationship to nearby Village Centre landmark buildings.



Location Plan



Figure 57 Recommendation F: OPTION 2 - Primary Node (Central Village Green)

- | | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|--|--|
| | Listed Buildings | | Development to be no taller than 16m in height (4 storeys) from ground level to the top of the roof. |
| | Village Centre (incl. Education) | | Proposed Village Green |
| | Vehicular Route | | Sensitive Development Area |
| | Existing Hedgerow and Trees | | Proposed Village Square |
| | | | Open Space |

Scale Comparison

The figure opposite illustrates the cross-section of the applicant's preferred option for Village Green and its distance to Brickhouse barn building and a size comparison to local precedent in Roydon.

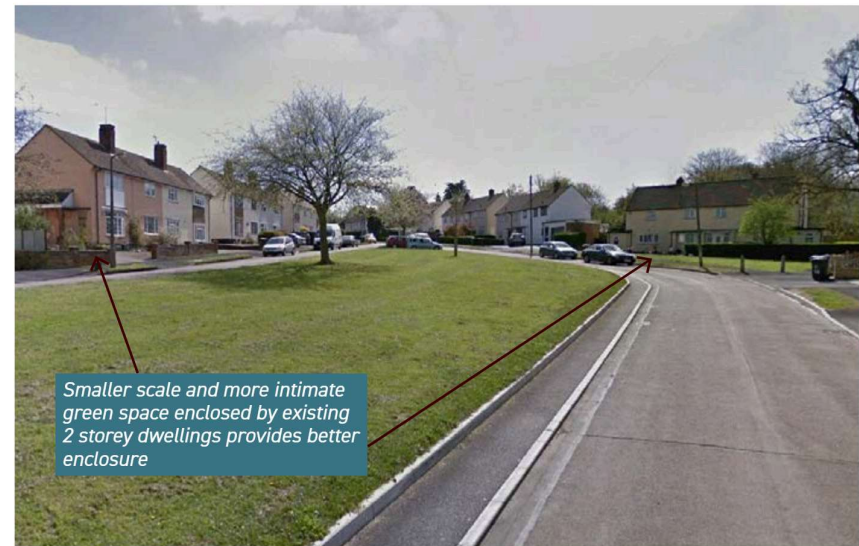
A local precedent green space in Park Fields, Roydon shown opposite illustrates a 37m wide building frontage to building frontage distance, creating a more intimate open space and the public realm is well enclosed by the 2 storey houses as backdrops.



Figure 58 Option 2 - Primary Node and Village Green cross-section BB



Local precedent key plan



Local precedent: Park Fields, Roydon

RECOMMENDATION G: NORTHERN EDGE TREATMENT

This edge has been considered in relation to topography, the provision of an eastern Local Node, the STC bus stop, and Key Active Travel Route to encourage active travel and maximise accessibility to facilities.

OPTION 1 - DSG'S RECOMMENDATION

The DSG noted that the proposed site development extent and layout fails to respond to the existing topography of the plateaus and sloping valley landforms. Whilst the pylon easement zone is agreed to be a hard linear boundary to the north, the development edge needs to be softened to create a more 'softer' edge treatment.

- + The suggested approach provides a better respond to existing landforms and topography, creating a more responsive and sensitive development edge to the north.
- The intention to soften the hard line of the built form along this northern edge is helpful but the scale is excessive. The area shown on Figure 59 is 1.12 ha - larger than a professional football pitch.

- This proposal introduces a significant open green space to break up the hard edge along the north of the development area. This could alienate the football hub from the built development.
- Location of the eastern Local Node does not align with the football pitches, this could lead to creation of dispersed uses scattered around the Local Green Space.

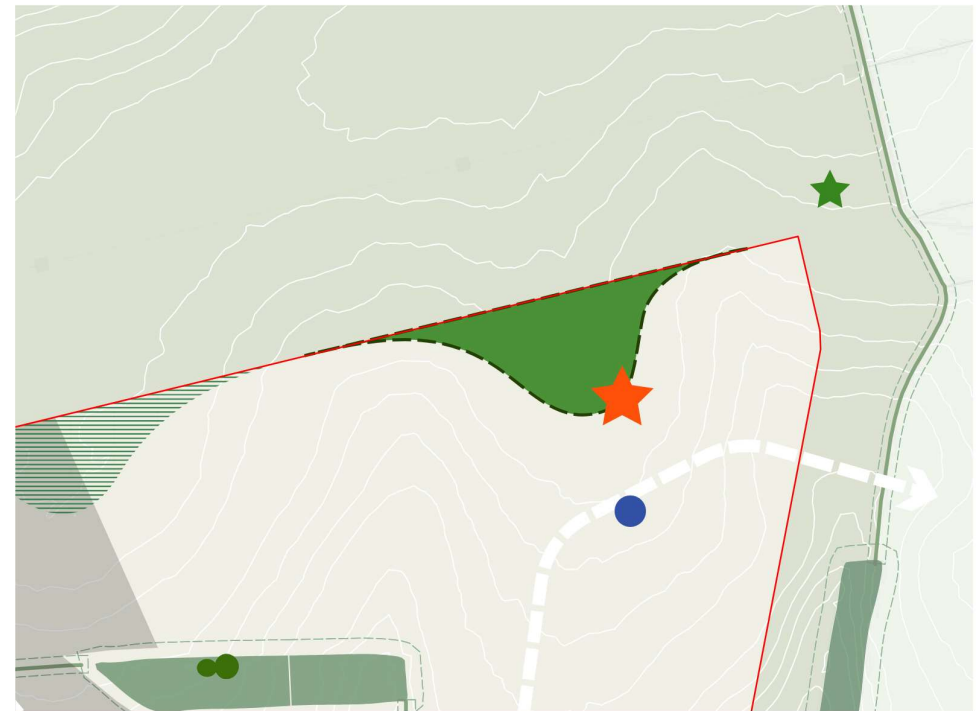
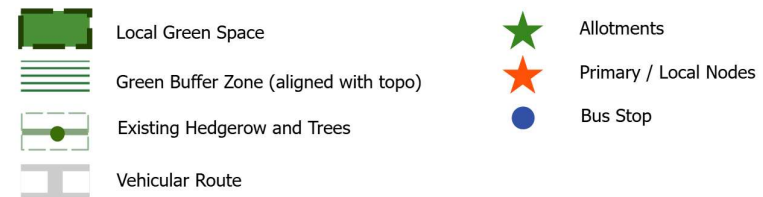


Figure 59 Recommendation G: OPTION 1 - Northern Edge Treatment



OPTION 2 - APPLICANT'S PREFERRED DESIGN RESPONSE

In this option an undulating edge is established through soft landscape of between 5-20m. This prevents a hard edge to the development whilst retaining a strong link between the football hub and the built development.

There will be a buffer of tree planting along this northern boundary as part of the LVIA recommendations. The edge can be improved with some undulation to the built form which would allow for areas of deeper tree planting.

We would suggest an undulating green buffer edge between 5m and 20m max. in plan (the area shown is up to 110m) to

ensure there is good visual connection to the sports pitches and avoid large expanses of unprogrammed open space which could feel unsafe and would segregate the sports provision from the village.

There is already provision for substantial tree planting along the northern development boundary in this area to screen the floodlights for the all weather sports pitches. The masterplan does include a chamfered edge to the built development which provides up to 30m between the building frontage and the boundary with tree planting for screening.

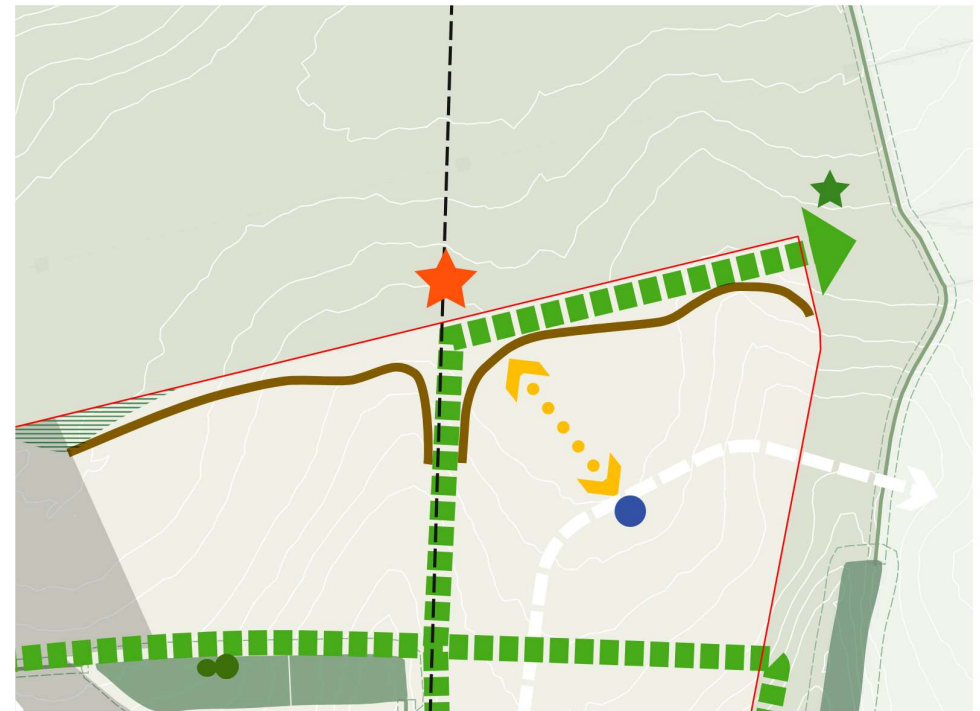


Figure 60 Recommendation G: OPTION 2 - Northern Edge Treatment



5.4 Community Heat Hub Options Testing

INTRODUCTION

The provision of a Community Heat Hub for Gilston Village 7 will deliver a low carbon heat solution for the new community and contribute significantly to the sustainability aspirations for the development.

Low carbon heat to homes and buildings will be delivered using zero carbon ready, large-scale, air-source heat pumps, powered by low (and in the future zero) carbon electricity. This will create a high efficiency network where heat is pumped to each home, in the form of hot water, using an underground flow and return pipe network.

HIGH LEVEL OPTIONS TESTING

An options testing assessment was carried out as part of the TWGs and engagement process, which enabled the identification of the applicant's preferred option which is Option 1 highlighted on the table opposite (Figure 61). A high-level appraisal of the 6 options are identified in the plan to the right. These options were selected in light of CHH requirements such as accessibility from earlier phases of development via either the primary or secondary highway network, and the proximity to homes in respect of noise. As this facility was not originally proposed within the Outline Planning Application, this

high-level appraisal has been carried out at masterplan stage through the lens of the following disciplines:

- Planning
- Placemaking
- Transport
- Noise
- Drainage
- Landscape Visual
- Landscape Design
- Ecology
- Heritage

The extensive Village 7 Masterplan engagement process which provided a useful opportunity to identify collaboratively the optimum location of the CHH within Village 7.

For further information on the detailed assessment of the Community Heat Hub options please refer to the Appendix.



	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5	Option 6
Planning	✓	✗	✗	✗	—	—
Placemaking	—	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓
Transport	—	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓
Noise	—	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Drainage	✓	—	✗	✗	✓	✓
Landscape Visual	✓	—	✗	—	✗	—
Landscape Design	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	—
Ecology	✓	✗	—	✗	✗	✓
Heritage	✓	✗	—	✓	✓	—
Other Considerations						
Loss of high value residential	✗	✓	✗	—	✗	—
Deliverable from first occupation	✓	✓	✓	—	✗	—
CHH Network efficiency	✓	—	✓	✗	✗	✗

Figure 61 Community Heat Hub Option Testing



Figure 62 Illustration of potential Community Heat Hub layout (source: GTC)

5.5 Primary School Building Location

The wider option testing identified the school to be located in the northern part of the village centre due to being the flattest location and, therefore, suitable to accommodate its associated sports pitches.

Further Option Testing has been carried out in relation to the school site aimed at identifying key placemaking principles that could underpin the detail design and deliver the aspirations for this key community facility. During the stage 1 engagement process and meeting with HCC, the site was envisaged as accommodating 2 Forms of Entry with the potential for a future 3rd form if needed. This additional form of entry area was considered as accommodating potential Village Centre compatible uses should the 3rd form of entry not be required. The school site has since been agreed to deliver 3 Forms of Entry which would be phase over time.

Whilst the school land will likely be handed over to Hertfordshire County Council to design and determine locations. Testing options at masterplan stage has helped to inform principles within the design code

section of the document, such as where cycle parking and active routes should be located, shared facilities with the football hub, and offsets from Church Lane and the heat hub that may be required.

The option testing was useful in identifying the indicative location of the main access to the school on the southern edge of the site to benefit from the east-west Key Active Travel Route serving the village. This entrance point would also deliver the shortest distance to the Mobility Hub by the central village square along the Sustainable Transport STC Corridor. The indicative location of the school vehicular access off Church Lane to the west rather than residential parcels to the east was identified through this options testing process as well.

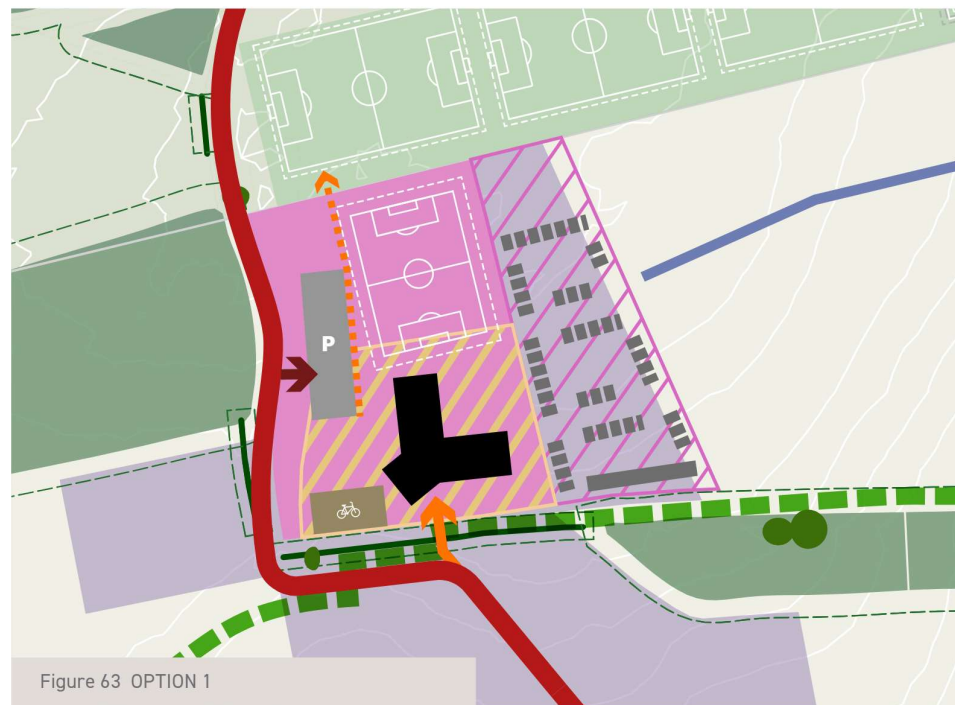


Figure 63 OPTION 1

OPTION 1

- ⊕ Additional residential, located within the expansion land would integrate with the eastern neighbourhood.
- ⊕ School playing fields could be a shared facility between the school and Sports Hub (which could be facilitated under a dual use agreement).
- ⊕ The School Building Zone (hatched) is 20m away from Church Lane (to mitigate noise and air quality impacts).
- ⊕ Cycle parking is offered adjacent to the active travel access route.
- ⊕ Car parking is provided off of Church Lane to the west of the school building.



OPTION 2

- + School playing fields could be a shared facility between the school and Sports Hub (which could be facilitated under a dual use agreement).
- + Additional residential would front Church Lane, slow traffic down, and provide a northern gateway to the village.
- + The School Building Zone is away from Church Lane traffic.
- + Cycle parking is offered adjacent to the active travel access route.
- Car parking is provided off of secondary road to the east - Car parking solution not considered suitable by HCC.

OPTION 3

- School playing fields to be a shared facility between the school and Sports Hub (which could be facilitated under a dual use agreement). Sharing of facilities not as easy in this option
- + The School Building Zone is 20m away from Church Lane traffic.
- + Cycle parking is offered adjacent to the active travel access point.
- + Car parking is provided off of secondary road to the east.
- + Additional residential would front Church Lane, slow traffic down, and provide a northern gateway to the village.

5.6 Sustainable Transport Hub Options Testing

5.7.1. SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT HUB LOCATION AND BUS PRIORITISATION

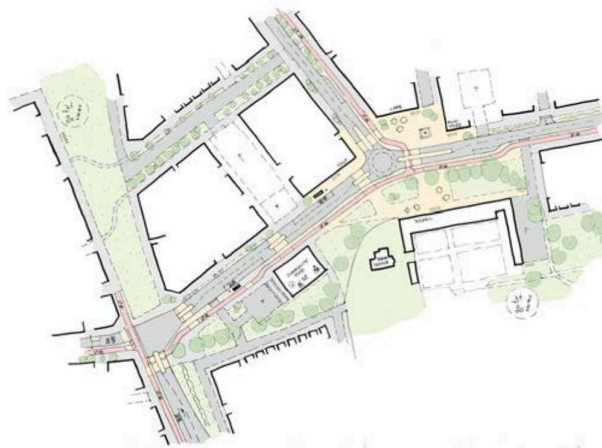
In order to achieve bus prioritisation at the village centre numerous designs and routing options were tested. The STC and STC Hub were considered. Considerations included parallel bus lanes, bus stop location, bus stop layout, the quality of public spaces, phasing, junction forms, legibility and directness of active travel network, and the relation and proximity to other amenities. The preferred approach is highly place-focussed, routes general vehicle traffic through the STC Hub and has a bus gate to the west of the hub that greatly simplifies the village gateway junction.



This option tested separating general traffic from buses in the village centre. While this brought benefits for bus prioritisation it meant an overall increase in road space and three large junctions within the village centre. Furthermore, this option was understood to place the primary vehicular routes outside their permissible corridors as per PP4.

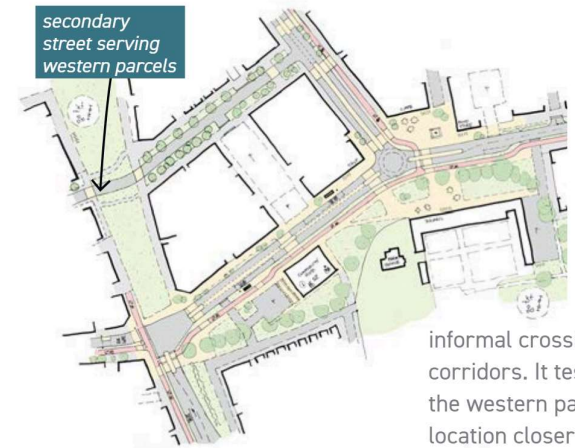


This option aimed to achieve PP4 compliance by creating redundancy of available routes offering two routes through the village centre for traffic to/from Hunsdon. In summary this option mainly benefits vehicular through traffic with little gains for buses and also still requiring significant infrastructure.



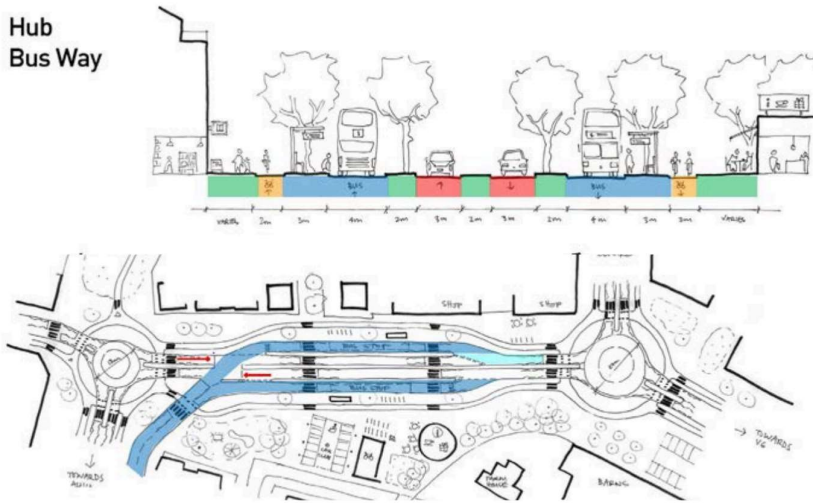
Detailed Hub Layout Testing Options

This option tested combining general vehicle traffic and buses on the STC corridor thus reducing the overall amount of roadspace and freeing Church Lane Green from traffic. It introduces a bus gate to the west which gives buses prioritised access to the western parcels over cars.

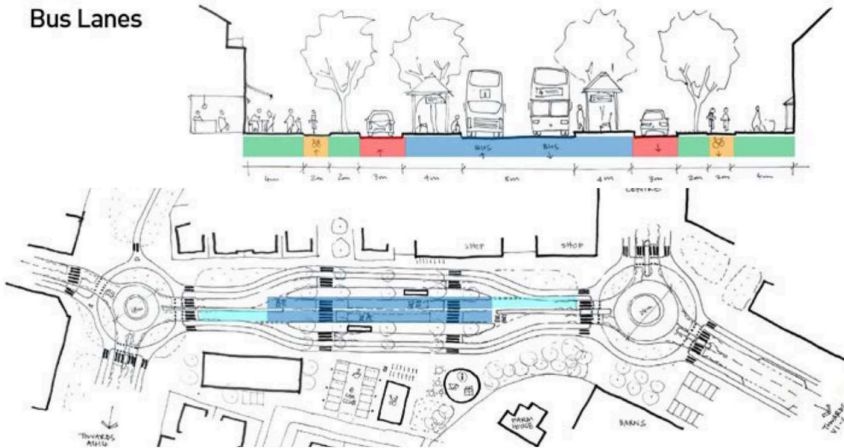


This option refines the one to the left by adding central reservations to the primary streets which reduce traffic speeds and facilitate informal crossing of these corridors. It tested accessing the western parcels from a location closer to the Village Centre which reduces the traffic volumes past the school.

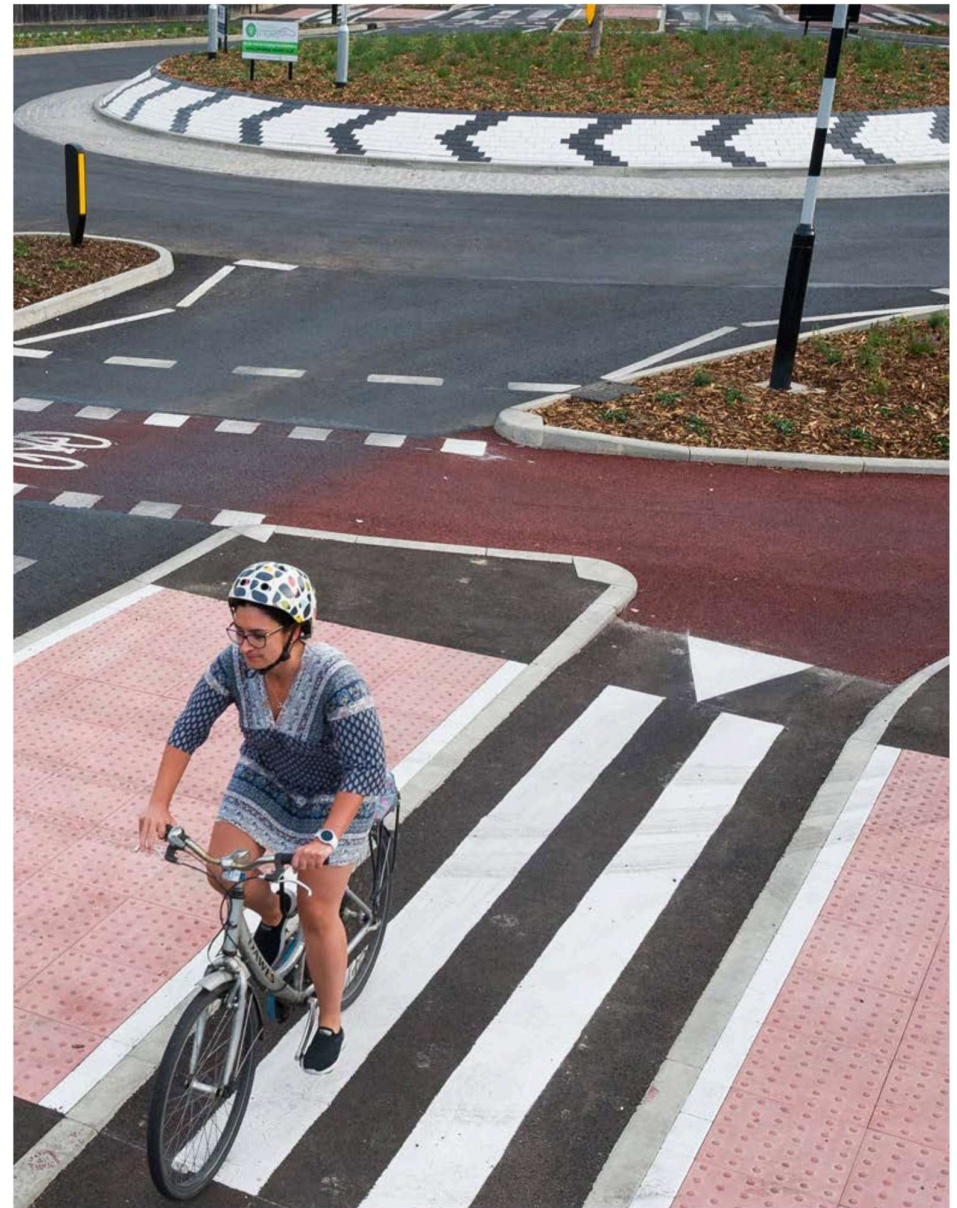
Hub Bus Way



Hub Bus Lanes



These early diagrams tested various forms of bus prioritisation at the STC Hub. They both show large Dutch- (or Cambridge-) style roundabouts with cycle tracks to all arms. The busway option places buses in the outer lanes allowing passengers to board without crossing the general traffic lanes. This would also allow moving buses onto a separate busway that could bypass the western roundabout. The landtake of this option would be considerable. The bottom option show a similar setup but here buses are on the inner lanes. This allows them to travel a shorter distance with cars needing to bypass, however, this means passengers can't reach the bus stops without crossing the general traffic lanes. In conclusion, separate bus corridors in the village centre would lead to excessively wide and over-engineered transport corridors dissecting the Village Centre. This led to the exploration of options with fewer roundabouts and with less physical separation of cars and buses.



Cambridge-style roundabouts were tested but discarded in favour of more compact roundabouts without a central island and hence less landtake. These were combined with bi-directional cycle tracks which reduce the number of conflict points with vehicles compared to the Cambridge-style solution.

5.7 Concept Masterplan (in response to the Option Testing)

The composite preferred design concept, shown opposite, illustrates how each key consideration has been carefully assessed holistically to achieve a robust and balanced layout which can deliver the aspirations for Village 7.

The key design elements are set out opposite. The result of these options testing has led to a concept masterplan. This underpins the development of the masterplan framework and regulatory plan for the design code, which are set out within the next chapters.

Masterplanning

- Listed Brickhouse Barn at the centre of activity providing a strong identity for the village.
- Eastern Local Node associated with the changing rooms /sports hub serving all seven villages and linear green corridor within walking distance from bus stop.
- Western Local Node associated with allotments, play facilities and western bus stop.
- Block pattern optimised to deliver high quality perimeter blocks with active frontages on all sides.

Transport

- Pedestrian friendly STC hub serving Village Square & mixed uses. Primary Road traffic separate from STC Hub.
- Terminating buses circulate around block.
- School served by continuous east-west (and north-south) Cycle Priority Routes as well as by network of active travel routes.
- Church Lane traffic realigned to minimise impact on school.
- School building zone located 30m from Church Lane / Primary Road traffic.
- Three options to connect to Village 6 will encourage cycling and active travel.

Public Realm

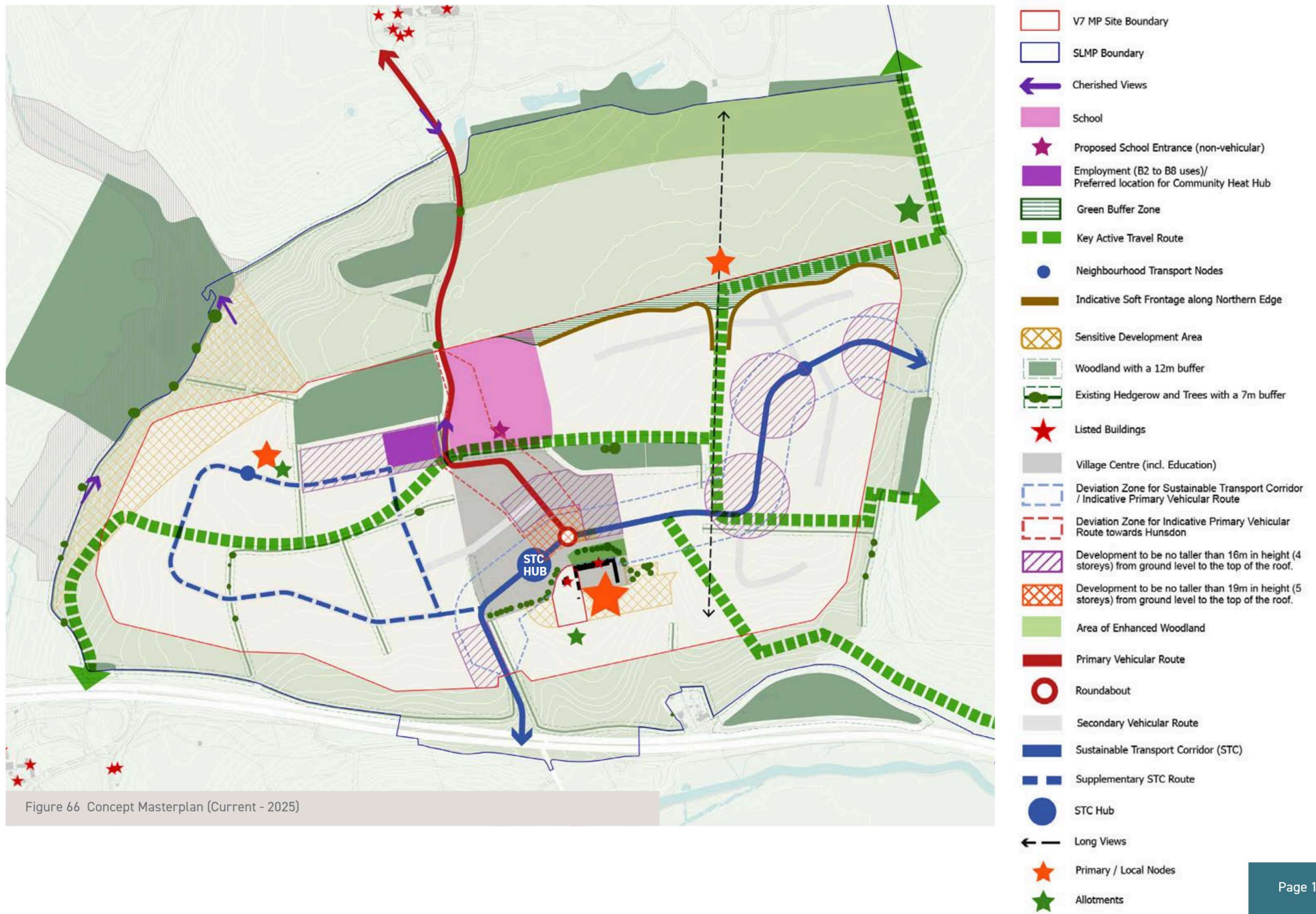
- Linear green corridors provide attractive and accessible open spaces ideal for the provision of SuDS, active travel and biodiversity connectivity, and with potential for long views.

Landscape Visual

- Maximises the likelihood of retaining views towards key local landmarks.
- Maximises the use of existing woodland to provide to provide a vegetated backdrop to key elements of the scheme.

Heritage

- Ensures the greatest engagement with and appreciation of the heritage assets is achieved, ensuring they remain key activated focal points within the proposals.





Indicative CGI of natural parkland open space at
Taylor Wimpey's development.

Chapter 6.

The Masterplan Framework

6.1 Introduction

The content of this Masterplan Framework (MF) chapter is shown in the flowchart to the right. It sets out the framework for the design code, it introduces the set of key strategies in accordance with the approved OPA parameter plans, and it explains how the Regulatory Plan relate to the Strategic Design Guide (SDG) principles.

This chapter is also supported by technical assessments demonstrating compliance to the relevant local and national policies, listed to the right.

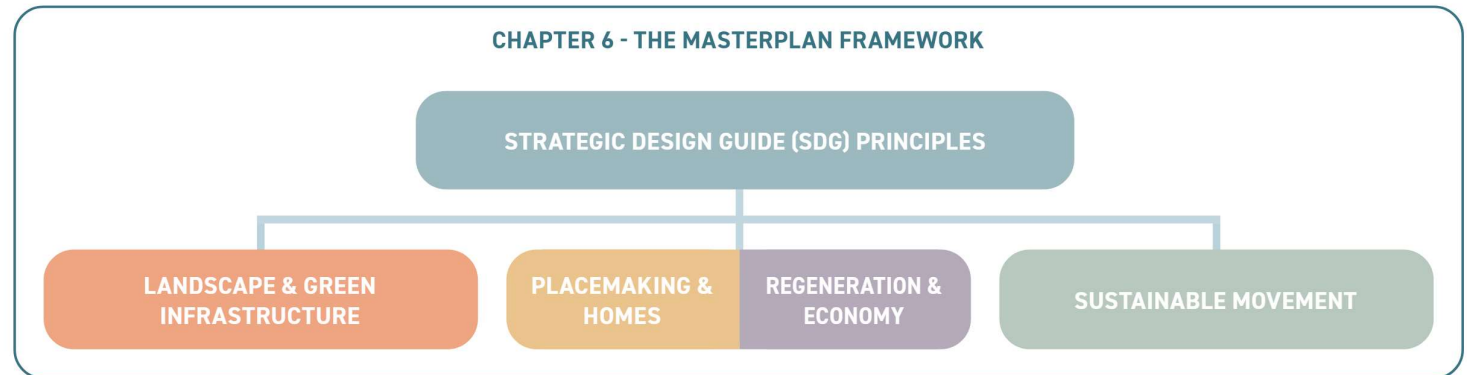


Figure 67 Structure of the chapter

This Masterplan Framework has been produced in accordance with:

- Condition 13 of the outline planning permission
- Parameter Plan 1 - Site Location Plan
- Parameter Plan 2 - Buffers and Development Zones
- Parameter Plan 3 - Green Infrastructure & Open Space
- Parameter Plan 4 - Vehicular Access & Movement

- Parameter Plan 5 - Land Use
- Parameter Plan 6 - Building Heights
- Development Specification Statement (December 2022)
- The approved details A414/Church Lane Signalised Junction
- Gilston Area - Strategic Design Guide
- Policies of the Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan
- Gilston Area Charter (GAC) SPD
- Gilston Area - Concept Framework Report

- Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Design Guide
- Relevant Local Plan Policies
- National Model Design Code



Figure 68 Artist Impression of Masterplan Framework

6.2 Strategic Design Guide principles

Below are the 10 overarching and the 7 specific design principles that apply to the development at Village 7 that were set out in the **Strategic Design Guide**. The four core themes will be adapted to become the structure of this Village Masterplan chapter and the following Design Code chapter.

10 overarching principles for the Gilston Park Estate and Villages 1-7 (as set out in the Strategic Design Guide)



1. Villages should have a collective identity while having distinct individual characters and a recognisable range of treatment from centres to middle and to edges.



2. The proposed developments will respect and have positive relationships with their heritage assets



3. Homes should be of a high quality design and construction and a wide range of accommodation types will be provided.



4. There should be a balance and rich variety of building design, including material treatment, from traditional to modern and reflecting individual village character.



5. Development should maximise innovation and sustainability in site layout, landscape and building design as set out in Section 3 of the Development Specification



6. The proposed development will be designed to value and maximise access to landscape and open spaces.



7. Frontages should be interesting, attractive and designed to be part of a street or landscape space.



8. The Gilston Area will be a place that encourages active and healthy lifestyles for all ages.



9. Streets should be treated as vibrant and active spaces in themselves, prioritising walking, cycling and public transport



10. There should be a heart to each village of an appropriate size and scale which will be the centre of village life

STRATEGIC DESIGN
GUIDE CORE THEMES:

7 principles specifically for Village 7 (as set out in the Strategic Design Guide)



1. Development at V7 should mainly be outward looking onto the landscaped periphery of the development, with maximum interface between buildings and landscape and physical and visual access to open spaces. The topography of the Site will also be a consideration of the edges of the Site.



2. Green links in V7 should connect smaller informal open spaces and play areas in the village to the landscaped periphery and create planting areas for habitat creation and ecological enhancement.



3. There should be a distinctive spatial progression from landscape to centre, particularly defined at the high street, to provide legibility in the urban form.



4. Access routes should have a clear hierarchy to create a permeable and legible movement network, discouraging through routes and to support vibrant and active spaces in V7.



5. The detailed designs for V7 should make appropriate provision for work and community facilities, including dedicated floorspace for employment as well as home-working, and supporting infrastructure.



6. There should be a balance and rich variety in the scale and composition of building, including material treatment from traditional to modern and reflecting individual village character.



7. The layout, landscaping and detailed design of V7 should demonstrate how building sustainability and innovation and site context, including the settings of heritage assets and natural assets, have been accounted for.

** Each of the 17 SDG principles has been represented by an icon in the four core theme colours. Where proposals respond to any of these 17 design principles, the relevant icon is highlighted throughout this chapter.*