ST ALBANS SCHOOL

Hallam Land

PART OF HENRY BOOT

WOOLLAM PARK

North St Albans

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

DECEMBER 2024

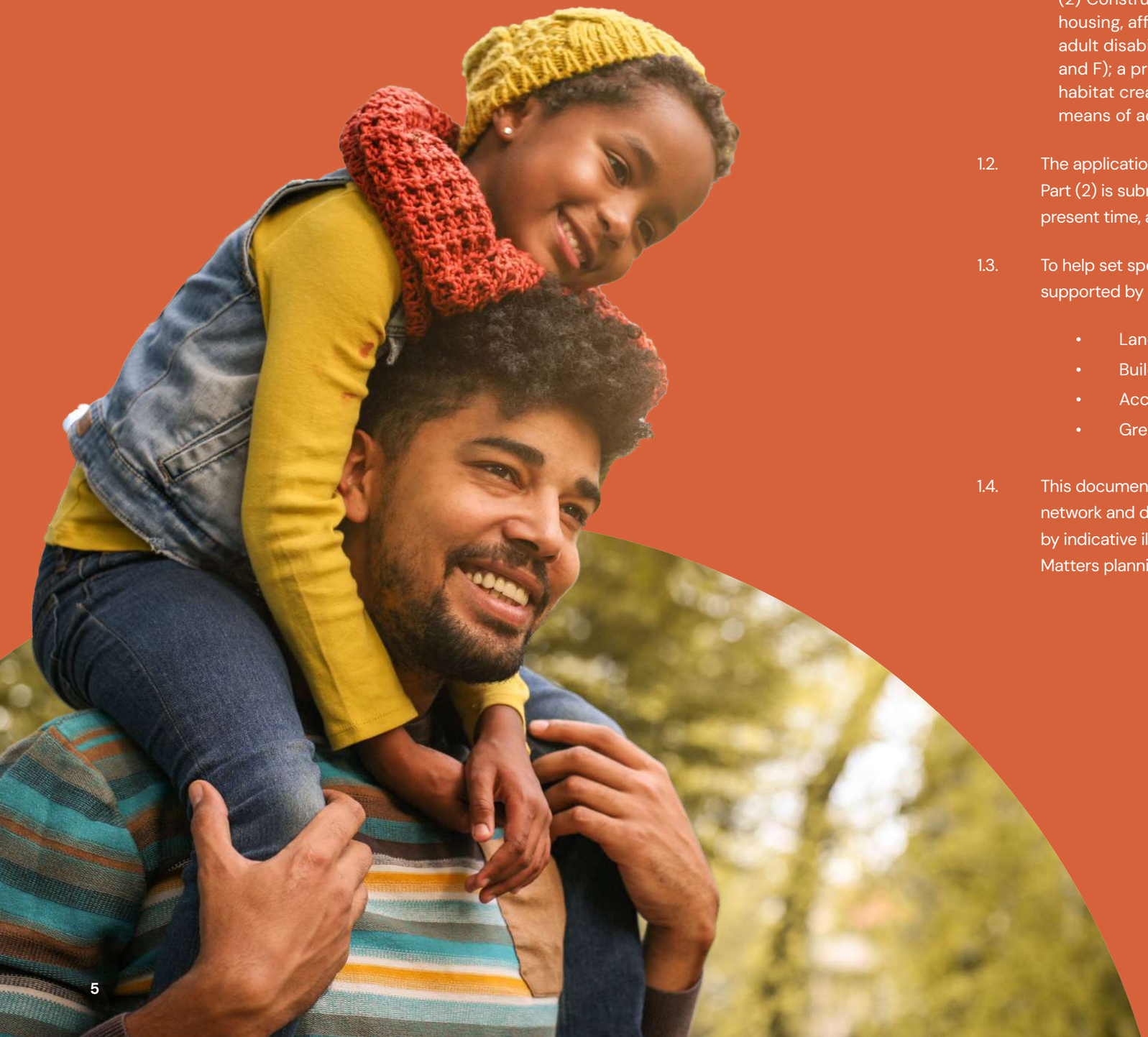
Contents

Five
PLACEMAKING STRATEGY 66

One

Introduction

This Design and Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared to support a Hybrid Planning Application by Hallam Land Management Limited (Hallam), and St Albans School and St Albans School Woollam Trust (together, 'the School') for the proposed development of land at North St Albans, referred to as 'Woollam Park'.



The Proposal

1.1. Planning permission will be sought for the following development:

(1) Relocation and replacement of existing playing fields and erection of pavilion annex; and

(2) Construction of up to 1000 new homes (Use Class C3) to include a mix of market housing, affordable housing, age restricted specialist accommodation for the elderly, adult disability service units; a care home (Use Class C2); a local centre (Use Classes E and F); a primary school (Use Class F); the laying out of green infrastructure including habitat creation; drainage infrastructure; earthworks; pedestrian and cycle routes; new means of access and alterations to existing accesses.

1.2. The application is submitted as a "hybrid" application. Part (1) is submitted as a full application. Part (2) is submitted as an outline application with approval of means of access sought at the present time, and all other reserved matters to be approved at a later date.

1.3. To help set specific design expectations for the Reserved Matters stage, the application is supported by Parameter Plans covering the following areas:

- Land use
- Building heights
- Access and movement
- Green infrastructure

1.4. This document explains in detail the land use, movement framework, green infrastructure network and development character to be achieved via a set of design principles, supported by indicative illustrative material that is intended to the layout and design of future Reserved Matters planning applications.

Role of the DAS

1.5. The purpose of this document is to communicate the design process and development principles associated with this proposed development whilst demonstrating how the Site would be developed in accordance with the planning policy requirements and through adopting best practice urban design principles. It demonstrates how the local character has been taken into account and how a high quality development can be achieved.

1.6. The document also communicates the collaborative design process undertaken to date which includes dialogue with officers and representatives of St. Albans City and District Council (SACDC) and Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) as well as other key stakeholders.

1.7. The illustrative material used in this document necessarily reflects the 'outline' status of the planning application. Further detail will be worked up as and when reserved matters are progressed, following grant of Outline Planning Permission.

1.8. The photographs used in this document of other schemes are used as precedent images that aim to give an idea of the intended 'look and feel' of the proposed development.

1.9. The document has been prepared in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 no. 595 and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). In doing so it:

(a) explains the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development;

(b) demonstrates the steps taken to appraise the context of the development and how the design of the development takes that context into account;

(c) explains the policy adopted as to access, and how policies relating to access in relevant local development documents have been taken into account;

(d) states what, if any, consultation has been undertaken on issues relating to access to the development and what account has been taken of the outcome of any such consultation; and

(e) explains how any specific issues which might affect access to the development have been addressed.

Structure of the DAS

1.10. The DAS is structured to reflect the design process which has followed a collaborative process of assessment, evaluation, involvement, design and review with key stakeholders over several years including working closely with SACDC and HCC with particular focus on and in respect of the suite of Strategic Sites Design Guidance documents that SACDC has developed to introduced to support proposals for large developments (e.g. 100+ homes).

1.11. This process has followed a clear sequence of design stages including site investigation and analysis to establish a base line of existing conditions to determine constraints and opportunities. Throughout the process up to submission of this OPA, evolving proposals have been reviewed by a Design Review Panel; Design: South East (St. Albans) as required by the St. Albans Strategic Sites Design Guidance: Masterplan Toolkit (July 2023).

1.12. Through a process of iterative design testing, masterplan evolution and review, an approach has been formulated that suggests a successful layout, character and form of open spaces, and built form as proposed by this OPA.

Summarising the process undertaken, this DAS is structured as follows:

- Introduction;
- Vision;
- Design Evolution;
- Placemaking Strategy;
- Summary & Conclusions.

The Applicant and team

1.13. The Applicant has assembled a comprehensive and experienced team of specialist consultants that have reviewed and assessed the available technical information relating to the Site and its context in order to accurately and robustly formulate a deliverable development proposal. The team is identified in the diagram to the right:

Every space we inhabit tells a story. From the design of our homes to the public realm that we enjoy and move through, these environments shape our daily experiences. How we interact with these spaces reveals much about our personalities and lifestyles.

The vision for Woollam Park is about establishing a long-term strategic approach to accommodating growth in an exemplar way that meets the specific needs of the location and its population, caters for emerging lifestyles, economic, energy and mobility

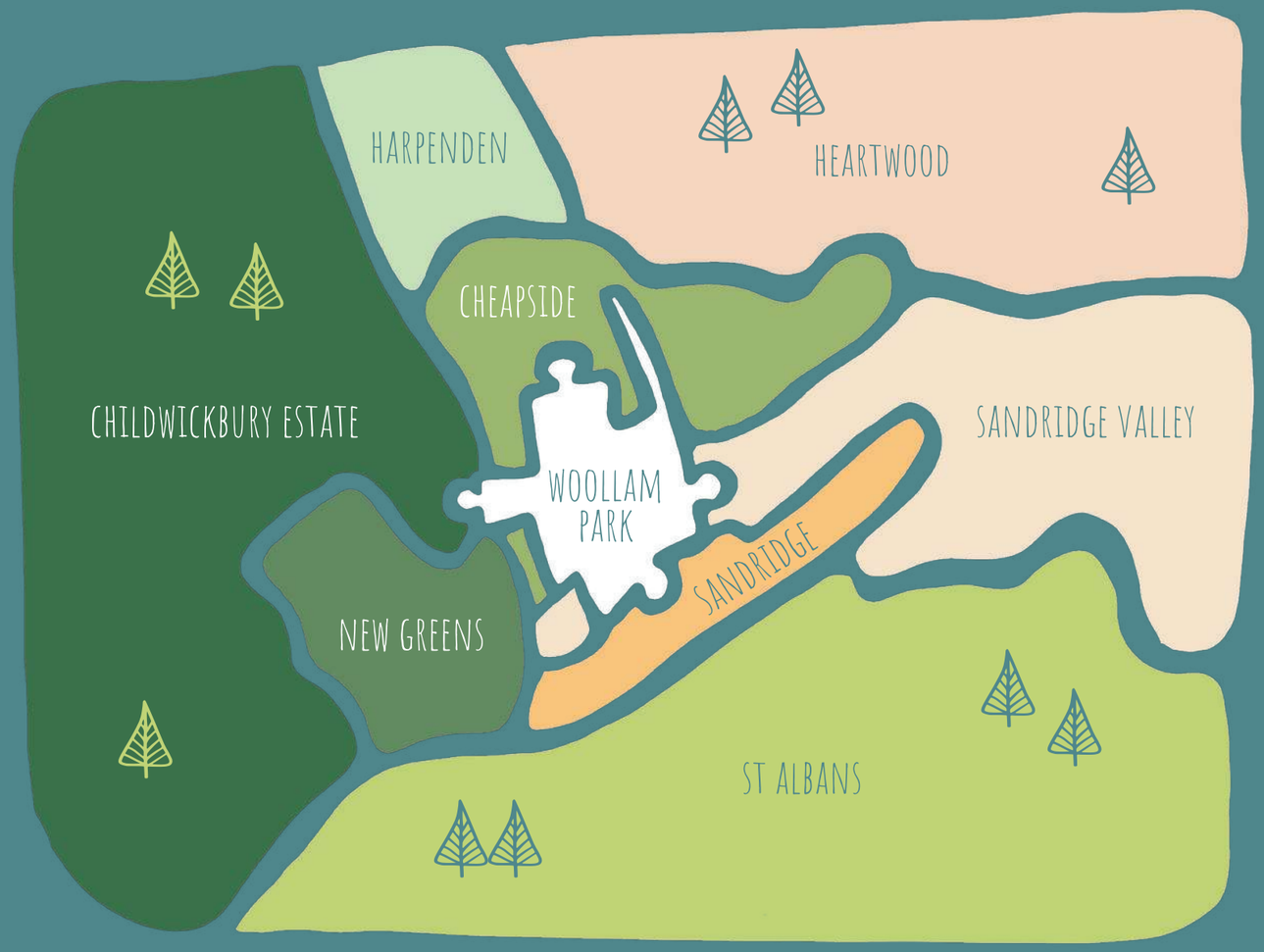
Vision

Two

Unique Place Characteristics

Inspired by Landscape

Landscape analysis that has been undertaken centres on key physical and perceptual site characteristics that have the opportunity to celebrate the landscape within a contextual-inspired development strategy.



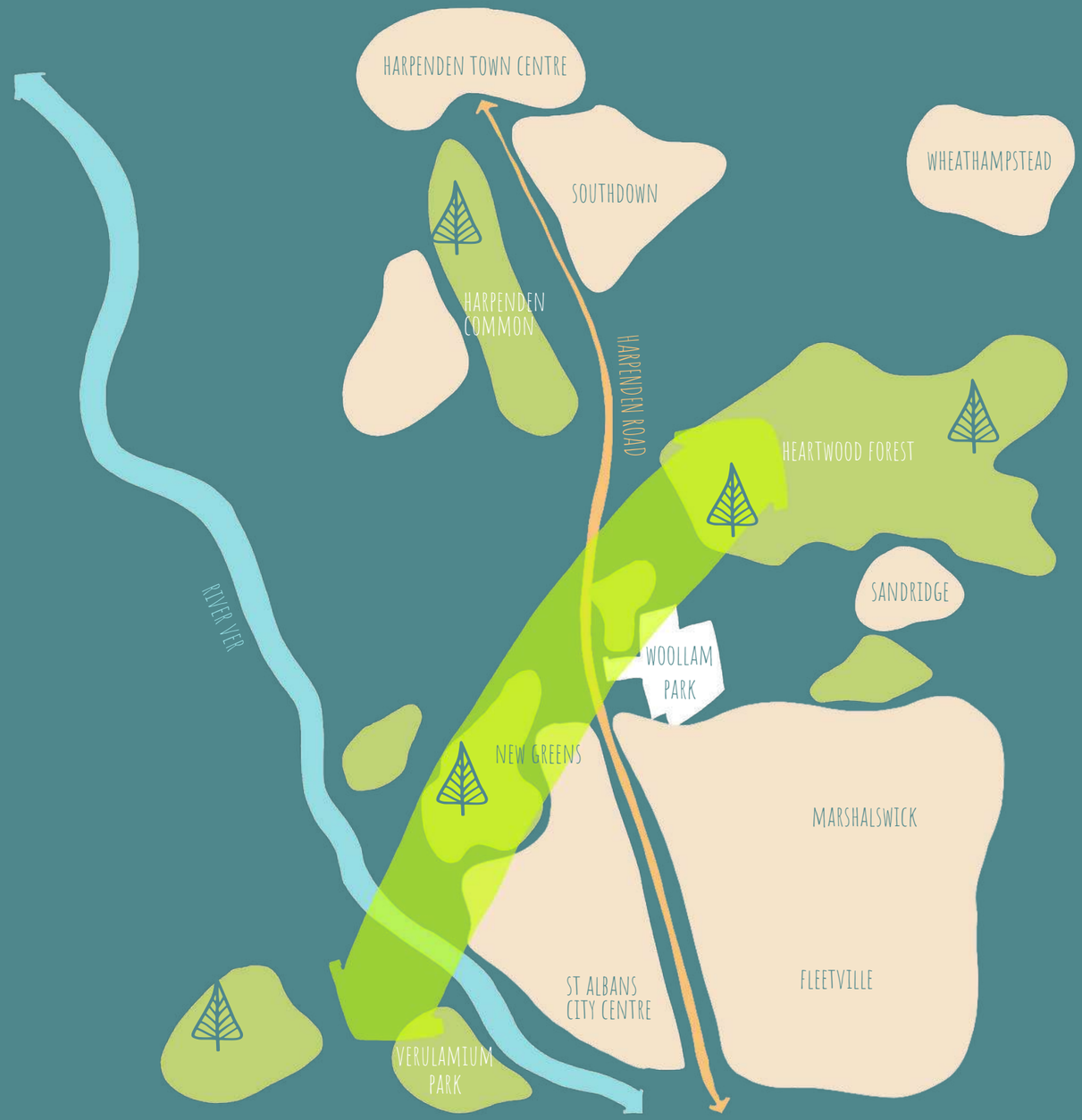
Woollam Park will act like a jigsaw piece that sits at the heart of a series of valleys, and provides a unique convergence of landscapes.

The design for the development will provide unique qualities that reflect the contextual landscapes, giving its residents and the existing community interactions with these environments by enveloping nature into its proposals.

Strategic Connectivity

Bridging Nature

The Heartwood Forest is a key strategic natural resource for the St Albans region. Woollam Park presents an opportunity to not only provide sustainable movement from existing areas (such as New Greens) to access this important asset, but also a connected network of new green infrastructure that will allow nature and wildlife to connect to it too.



A generosity of green infrastructure not only provides a large amount of open space, but its quality will be exceptional.

A connected network of expansive open spaces will provide for a number of functions including leisure and play, biodiversity net gain, habitat creation, food production and sustainable drainage.

Woodland Festival

Woollam Park, North St Albans

The aspiration is to provide placemaking infrastructure that will facilitate the emergence of an exemplar sustainable and modern development at Woollam Park.

People & Place Rules

Intentions & Motivations

The manifesto should be a story we all want to tell, professionally and personally. An important story, of local interest and wider public interest.

People

Community at its heart

Diversity Rules

Live Well by Accident

Place

Inspired by Landscape

Car is Not King

Planning for the future

The manifesto for Woollam Park, and the statements in it, are based on a view of predicted future trends of how people will live, work and purchase new things, and how they'll interact with the spaces they choose to inhabit.

Themes that are inherent to the Woollam Park manifesto revolve around flexible lifestyles and flexible working, using the land to live and to serve our every day lives.

01

COMMUNITY AT ITS HEART

People make places, not buildings, streets nor spaces - these are simply a canvas for communities to thrive.

A strong and happy community is recognised as the essential ingredient in creating an enduring Woollam Park.

Central to the strategy of Woollam Park is the concept that all planning, design and management decisions will enrich the lives of its residents and its users, buildings, streets, spaces and virtual space must be thought of not as entities of their own, but environments for people to live, work, play and learn.

The Town and Country Planning Association outline in their guidance on new communities that strong visioning and community engagement and community ownership of land and long term stewardship are components of successful new communities.

DIVERSITY RULES

02

Community strength is also supported by a diverse mix of inhabitants of ages, origins and backgrounds.

A community composed of rich and varied socio-economic status offer relative strengths to the community structure which can benefit all.

In order to support community diversity, diversity of built form and space in Woollam Park will be required. Different kinds of building typologies, plot-sizes, public and private spaces that respond to specific needs will deliver a stimulating and varied environment, promote sustainable patterns, and support a mixed society.

A mix of education, social, community, leisure, convenience, employment and residential land uses will be delivered in a mixed approach for Woollam Park.

LIVE WELL BY ACCIDENT

03

The environment that we live in can make us healthier. Woollam Park should be as much about well-being as it is about providing for growth.

Sport, play and healthy food have the ability to bring communities of all ages together. They are the beating hearts of our communities and play a vital role in strengthening social connections within the places we live, for example, the small interactions between children at a play area or the interactions between parents watching. The development will enable these activities to take place giving the Woollam Park community the best possible chance of forming strong social bonds that stand for generations to come.

Every resident at Woollam Park should have the right to access spaces that allow sport, play and growing food to take place. Rather than fix every principle, at every design stage the question should be asked... Are we doing enough to maximise the potential for play, sport and amenity for every resident? Play should extend its offer beyond the confines of designated play areas to playful streets, spaces and wider landscapes. Woollam Park will provide a wide range of opportunities for various sports and access for all abilities.

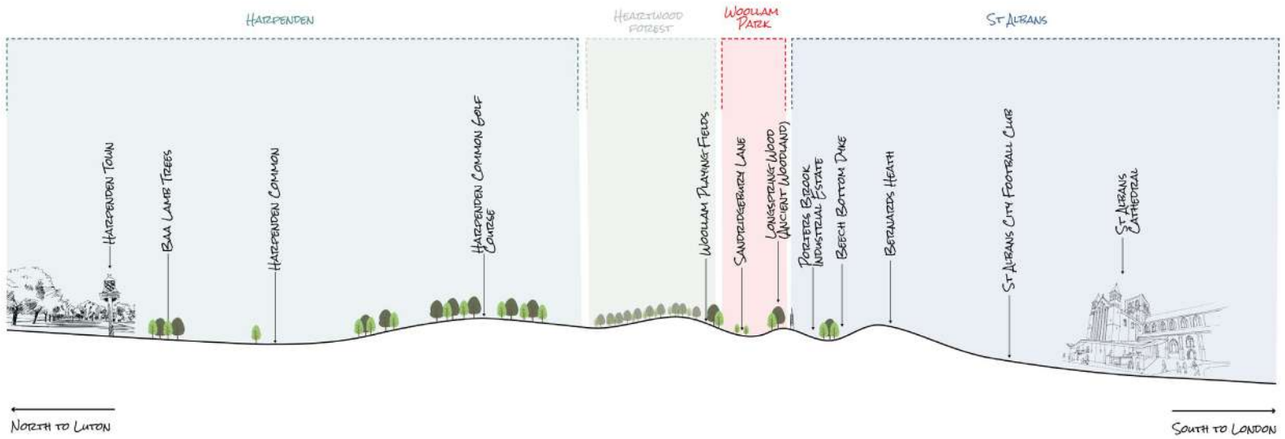
INSPIRED BY LANDSCAPE

04

A unique place in an environment where landscapes meet to create an exciting opportunity.

Landscape analysis that has been undertaken centres on key physical and perceptual site characteristics that have the opportunity to celebrate the landscape within a contextual-inspired development strategy.

Woollam Park sits within a series of valleys providing a unique convergence of landscapes on site. The design will provide unique qualities that reflect the contextual landscapes, whilst providing its residents and the community interactions with these environments by inviting nature within the development.



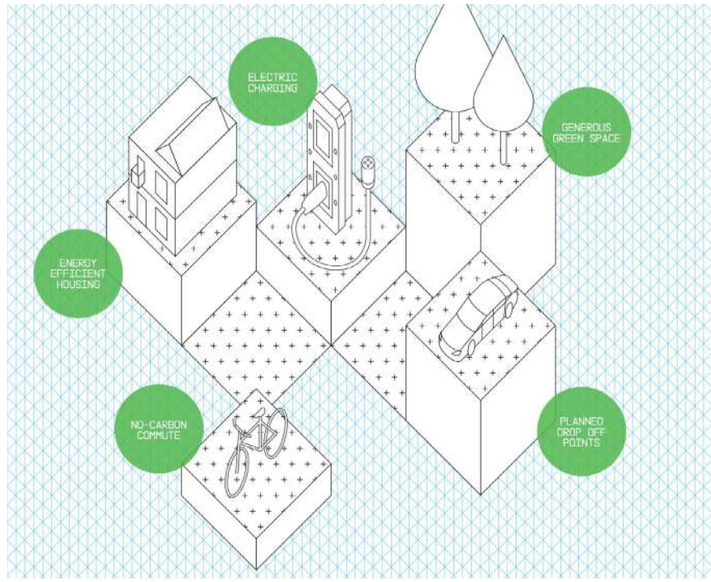
WE WANT TO SAVE THE PLANET

Our climate is changing; we must alter our approach to the built environment. Woollam Park's homes need to consume less energy and work towards a zero carbon future.

05

Clear actions will be taken to achieve carbon-free workplaces, homes, shops, schools and community facilities; these include improving building insulation, air tightness and mechanical heat recovery performance. Alternative heat sources will also be used such as electric heat pumps aligned with heat storage. Community heat networks will be used, potentially over small groups of dwellings, sharing efficiencies and costs;

SACDC declared a Climate Emergency in July 2019. In 2020, the Council adopted a 'Sustainability and Climate Change Crisis Strategy' with the aim of reducing the Council's emissions and doing everything in their power to influence the District's emissions, to achieve Net Zero by 2030. Under national energy legislation, post-2025, new developments will not be able to make connections to the natural gas network, as a result the approach to development at Woollam Park will need to explore new innovations to potentially test the effectiveness of growing technologies such as for example PV roof tiles, domestic battery walls, modular construction, small scale community heat networks and other solutions, approaches and techniques as they emerge.



CAR IS NOT KING

06

The Government document on the Future of Mobility provides a number of scenarios to 2040 which are a useful tool to understand the likely context for movement within SMB when developing and when complete. The following extract sums up the challenges and opportunities ahead:

“We live in a time of unprecedented change in the transport system. Changes in the nature of working and shopping, new technologies and behaviours – such as automation, vehicle electrification and the sharing economy – are already having an impact on how the system functions This time of social change and new technologies.”

The approach to growth at Woollam Park will be led by the highest standards of walkability, compactness with community and social facilities within easy reach (less than 5min walk).

A permeable active grid

Woollam Park will be formed around a dense network of routes and connections that prioritise active travel (i.e. walking and cycling) and offer the potential for movement by autonomous modes.

Space will be provided for the car in initial phases of development, but over time there will be a transition away from dependence on the private car to autonomous and active modes and the strength of a well-connected grid of sustainable routes will allow this transition to occur. This approach has the potential to not only support sustainable mobility for residents but also business and deliveries.

Who is going to *live and work here?*

The vision for the site has been formulated taking into account the types of people that will live and use the Site.

The services, facilities and spaces proposed have been shaped by understanding the needs of the Site's future population.

A day *in the life of...*

The vision has been formed by thinking about how various residents and users of the Site will live their everyday lives and the types of services, facilities and spaces they will interact with during each day.

Wake up and go for a quick jog around the connected open spaces.

Catch up with friends for a coffee at a Community Hub.

Use flexible work space.

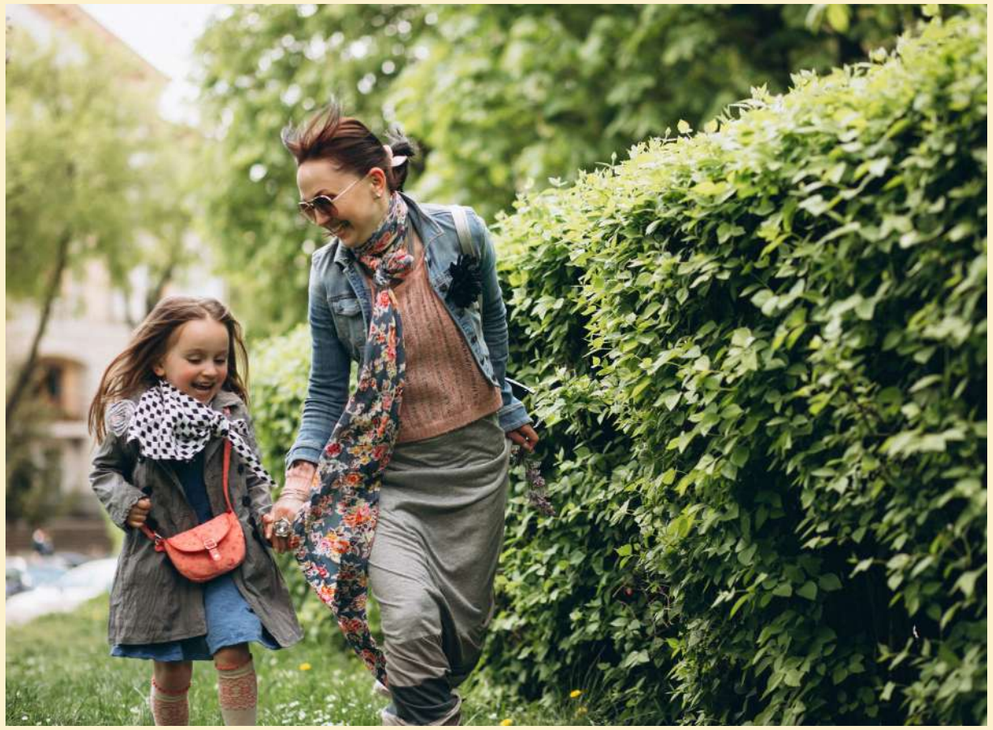
Go out for dinner in the local centre.

Walk the dog through series of public open spaces.

Three

Observing & Evaluating Place

The National Design Guide (2019) and National Model Design Code (2019) and SACDC Strategic Sites Design Toolkit (2023) provide guidance for well-designed places that are beautiful, healthy, greener, enduring and successful. The guidance places great importance on assessing and understanding a Site and its context before formulating proposals as a means to achieving a high standard of design and creating a strong sense of place.



PLANNING CONTEXT

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

3.14. The NPPF is underpinned by the presumption in favour of sustainable development. NPPF Paragraph 110c states that the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the national Design Guide and the National Model Design Code. NPPF Paragraph 119 states that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses. NPPF Paragraph 126 states that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve, and that, good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.

3.15. NPPF Paragraph 130 states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments;

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of | streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the Site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

3.16. NPPF Paragraphs 132-136 emphasise the importance of design quality through the evolution and assessment of development proposals. They state that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes.

The National Design Guide (January 2021) and National Model DesignCode (June 2021)

3.17. The National Design Guide (NDG) highlights the importance for developments to deliver thoughtful and inclusive well-being principles that meet the needs of a diverse range of users.

3.18. The document sets out ten characteristics necessary for creating well-designed places and outlines that these components work together to deliver physical character, a sense of community and address environmental issues affecting climate. The ten characteristics, which are taken from the principles of 'Building for a Healthy Life' (BHL) (see below) are identified in the key diagram below and are identified as follows:

- Context – enhances the surroundings.
- Identity – attractive and distinctive.
- Built form – a coherent pattern of development.
- Movement – accessible and easy to move around.
- Nature – enhanced and optimised.
- Public spaces – safe, social and inclusive.
- Uses – mixed and integrated.
- Homes and buildings – functional, healthy and sustainable.
- Resources – efficient and resilient.
- Lifespan – made to last.

3.19. The National Model Design Code (NMDC) forms part of the government's planning practice guidance and should be read as part of the National Design Guide, and alongside the planning practice guidance notes referenced in Part 3 of the National Design Guide, Manual for Streets, and other forthcoming guidance relating to the natural and environmental characteristics of development. The document emphasises that it is guidance and not a statement of national policy, but that it provides recommended guidance on how to prepare masterplans.

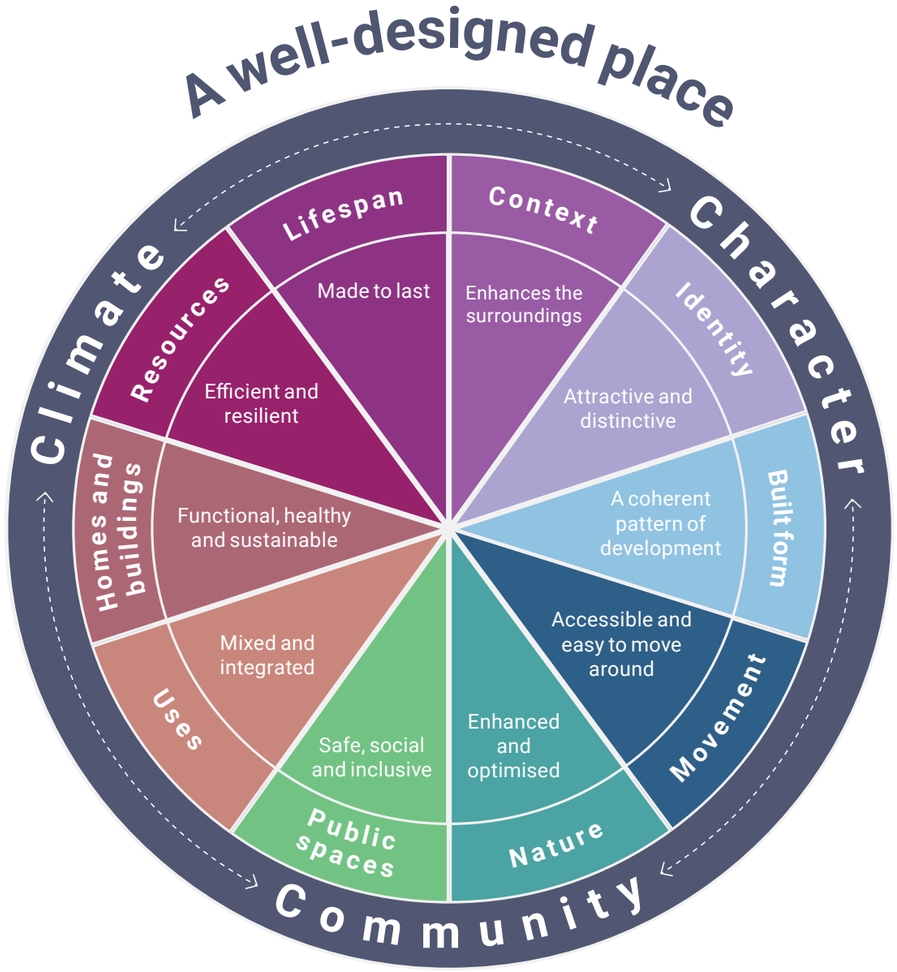
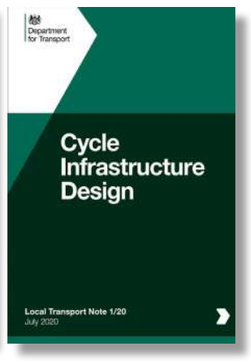


FIGURE 1 - THE 10 CHARACTERISTICS OF WELL-DESIGNED PLACES, NATIONAL DESIGN GUIDE (JANUARY 2021)

Building for a Healthy Life (June 2020)

3.23. Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) replaces Building for Life 12 as a widely-used design tool for placemaking. The underlying principles within Building for Life 12 are at the heart of BHL. BHL states that it seeks to improve the design of new and growing neighbourhoods allowing proposed new development to focus on the things that matter most when creating good places to live.

3.24. Organised across the three core themes of Integrated Neighbourhoods, Distinctive Places and Streets for All, 12no. considerations are presented to help shape the qualities of successful places and understand how best these considerations can be best applied to the individual characteristics of a Site and its wider context. The three core themes guide development from the macro level through to micro scale considerations in an illustrated way with clear written and visual prompts helping to identify good practice and avoid common pitfalls. BHL states that following the stated principles will set clear expectations of the new development and allow local communities to more easily identify the qualities of the development proposals.



Local Transport Note 1/20 (January 2020)

3.20. LTN 1/20 provides the national standards for cycling infrastructure design in the UK. The document was published in conjunction with the Gear Change policy paper of 2020 which set out the UK government's position on how to increase walking and cycling. All new key cycling infrastructure, such as cycle lanes and parking, must adhere to the LTN 1/20.

3.21. The LTN does not replace the requirement for local authorities to set their own design standards, but it does provide a recommended base for authorities to develop their own standards from.

3.22. Five basic requirements are set out for all new active travel infrastructure which should be Coherent, Direct, Safe, Comfortable and Attractive.

Under these headings are some more detailed key principles:

- Routes should be simple to navigate and of a consistently high quality
- Cycle routes should be at least equally as direct as motor vehicle routes
- Cycle infrastructure should be safe for all, and always perceived as safe
- Good quality, well-maintained surfaces
- Public spaces should be well designed for people to spend time
- These principles help inform decision making throughout the design process, and ultimately avoid unsafe and unusable cycle lanes and infrastructure.

The standards are directly drawn from the Dutch Design Manual for Bicycle Traffic.

Development Plan

3.25. The adopted Development Plan for the Site comprises the City and District of St Albans District Local Plan Review (adopted November 1994) Saved and Deleted Policies Version (July 2020)

3.26. In addition to the adopted Development Plan, SACDC is preparing a new Local Plan; the St Albans Draft Local Plan 2041. Between July-September 2023, SACDC consulted on a Regulation 18 draft of the plan and between September-November 2024 the Council consulted on the Regulation 19 draft both of which include a number of draft policies that are relevant to the Site and proposals (outlined below). The Council's Local Development Scheme (February 2024) indicates that the new Local Plan will be adopted by the end of 2026.

3.27. The Draft Local Plan sets out significant planned growth in the district identified through draft allocations. Part B to the Regulation 19 Draft Local Plan 2041 identifies land at North St Albans (allocation B1) for primarily residential development of 1,146 units (indicative) to include 150 from Planning Permission 5/2021/0423 (identified to be the Sewell Park development scheme to the immediate west of the Site). The draft allocation also provides a number of further requirements as part of the allocation; the relevant extract from Appendix 1 of the draft local plan is provided at Figure 2 (right).

3.28. A full analysis of relevant planning Local Plan policies is provided in the Planning Statement submitted with this Planning Application. A summary of the key design policies are provided below:

Adopted Local Plan Review Saved and Deleted Policies

Policy 69 - General Design and Layout

3.29. All development shall have an adequately high standard of design taking into account context, materials and other policy requirements in respect of settlement strategy, highways, parking, design and environment, conservation and historic buildings.

Policy 70- Design and Layout of New Housing

3.30. The design of new housing development should have regard to its setting and the character of its surroundings whilst also addressing; design and layout; dwelling mix; roads and footpaths; parking and garaging; landscape; privacy between dwellings; privacy between dwelling and rear boundary; orientation; amenity space around dwellings; defensible space; open space and materials.

B1 - North St Albans, AL3 6DD		
Parish / Ward	St Albans / Bernards Heath / Sandridge & Wheathampstead	Allocated site boundary
Hectares	54.85	
Proposed use	Primarily residential 1,097 units (indicative) (this includes 150 from planning permission 5/2021/0423)	
Proforma Ref	M-020	
HELAA Ref	SA-10-21/SA-22-21	
Green Belt Sub Area Ref	SA-62 / SA-63a/ SA-66 / SA-69 / partially SA-63c / Not recommended	

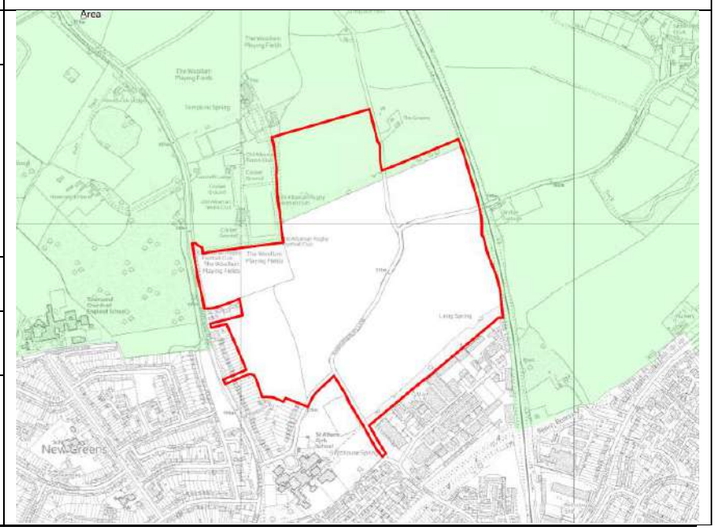


FIGURE 2 - NORTH ST ALBANS DRAFT SITE ALLOCATION (REG19 DRAFT SACDC LOCAL PLAN 2041 (SEPTEMBER 2024)

Policy 74 - Landscaping and Tree Preservation

3.31. The Council will take account of specific landscaping factors when considering planning applications. These factors relate to the provision of new landscaping and the retention of existing landscaping.

3.32. In addition, there are a number of adopted supplementary planning guidance documents adopted by SACDC which are also relevant as follows:

- Design and Layout of New Housing (November 1998)
- Revised Parking Policies and Standards (January 2002)
- Affordable Housing (March 2004)

Emerging Local Plan

3.33. The emerging Local Plan provides a number of relevant draft design policies. A summary of the key design policies are provided below:

Strategic Policy SP12 - High-Quality Design

3.34. Outlines that high quality design is an important component of sustainable development across the District and that new development should accord with a series of important design considerations.

DES1 – Design of New Development

3.35. Provides essential requirements for the design of new developments including the need to respond positively to its context and provide high quality detailing that adds to the visual interest and distinctiveness.

DES2 – Public Space

3.36. Proposals that create or affect public space should accord with a number of requirements including the need to create legible and easily navigated routes and spaces that are designed for all users and make appropriate links to existing movement routes.

3.37. Prioritise pedestrian and bicycle movements and provide an attractive environment with soft landscaping that provides appropriate planting of trees and shrubs, incorporates and protects existing planting and landscape features of value, integrates naturalised Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), and supports biodiversity conservation and enhancement.

DES3 – Efficient Use of Land

3.38. Development proposals should make efficient use of land. Development should provide an appropriate density and optimise Site capacity relative to public transport connections.

DES5 – Residential Amenity Standards

3.39. Proposals for residential and non-residential development should meet prescribed requirements in respect of privacy and separation, daylight and sunlight, internal space standards and private amenity space.

DES6 – Building Heights

3.40. The height, massing and design of proposed development must positively respond to the character and distinctiveness of the surrounding area and valued townscapes and landscapes where applicable.

DES7 – Building Servicing

3.41. Building servicing to be considered at an early stage in the design process to ensure a high level of integration with the development and must demonstrate compliance with specific building servicing requirements.

3.42. *Strategic Policy SP4 - Housing*

Proposals for residential development should provide good quality housing that meets the needs of all parts of society the Council including the need to provide a suitable mix of housing and affordable housing.

3.43. *Strategic Policy SP13 – Health and Wellbeing*

The Council aims to improve people's health and wellbeing through relevant policies including particular relevance to improved walking and cycle infrastructure, more opportunities for active play for children and provision for exercise and sports.

St Albans Strategic Sites Design Guidance (July 2023)

3.44. The Strategic Sites Design Guidance is a suite of documents that SACDC has developed to introduce a step change in the quality of developments within the district.

3.45. The Design Guidance applies to planning applications and Sites within the district that are identified as either Broad Locations (i.e. Sites allocated for development), large Sites (100+ homes) or 10,000m2 and more of commercial uses.

3.46. The Strategic Sites Design Guidance compromise the following documents:

1. Strategic Sites Design Principles - providing guidance on the design principles that developments are required to meet for Strategic Sites.
2. Strategic Sites Design Toolkit - providing guidance on the design process for Strategic Sites.
3. Strategic Sites Masterplanning Toolkit - providing guidance on the planning process for Strategic Sites.
4. Strategic Sites Employment Uses Design Toolkit - providing guidance on the design principles for developments with substantial employment uses of 10,000m2 or above.

3.47. The guidance sets out that the design principles included in the documents embrace nationally-recognised best practice in design and the established frameworks for achieving excellence. In addition to this they set out a route toward developing a local vernacular-led design proposition through the use of extensive analysis of the built and natural context of the development Site.

3.48. The St Albans Strategic Design Guidance is consistent with the NDG's (January 2021) aspirations and principles for creating beautiful, enduring and successful places, but provides further local detail for designers. The guidance states that both the NDG (January 2021) and the St Albans Strategies Sites Design Guidance should be read in conjunction and underpin St Albans' approach to delivering key design aspirations of the NPPF (December 2023).

3.49. The Strategic Sites Design Principles document provides a key diagram (shown at Figure 3, right) that gives a broad overview of the planning process for strategic Sites and highlights how the chapters within the Strategic Sites Guidance documents typically relate to each stage. Importantly, the diagram shows how the design process should interact with a Design Review process and advises on the number of Design Review Panels (DRP) noting that the number will depend on the scale and complexity of the project.

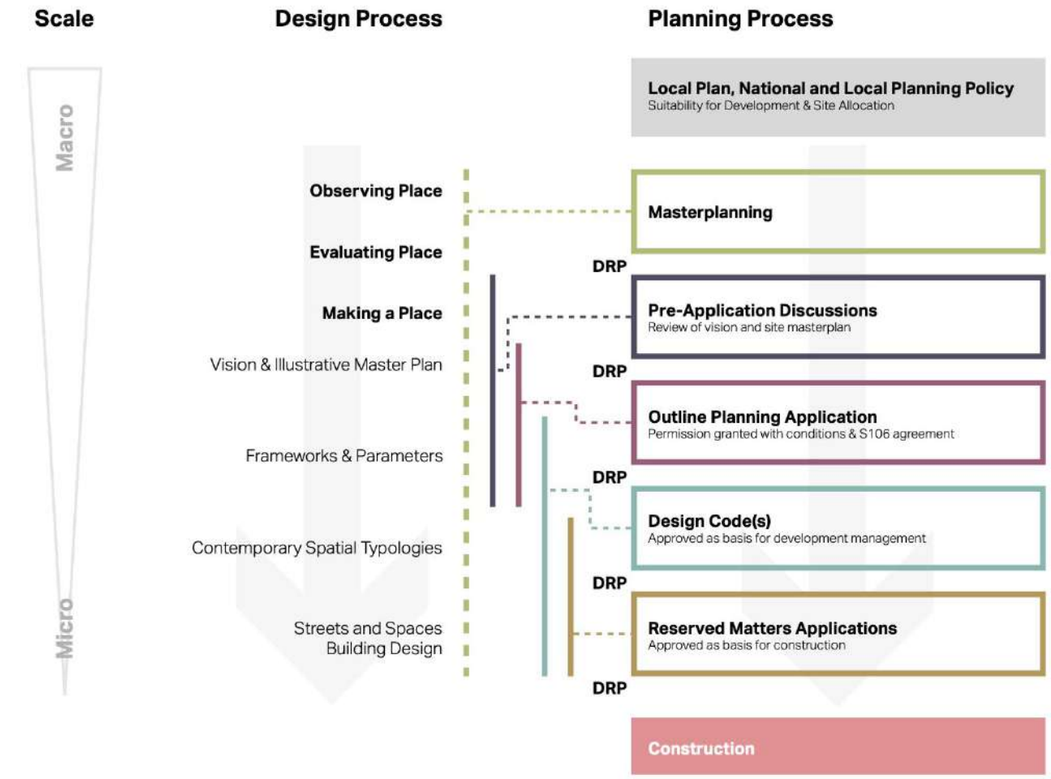


FIGURE 3 - "TABLE 1 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE DESIGN PROCESS AND THE PLANNING PROCESS AT SADC" - STRATEGIC SITES DESIGN PRINCIPLES DOCUMENT (JULY 2023)

3.50. The Strategic Sites Design Toolkit advocates a structured design process based on three key stages:

1. Observing Place – Observing and understanding the Site and its broader physical context is a critical starting point before design activity takes place.
2. Evaluating Place – Understanding the significance for design of what has been observed and identifying those features which are likely to have a dominant influence on design at every scale.
3. Making a Place – This refers to the design stage, where the features deemed important through the evaluation process directly inform the design from the Site-wide masterplan through to increasing levels of detail.

3.51. The Woollam Park design team have used the strategic Sites guidance and preferred design process to formulate proposals for the Site. As required, this has included a number of DRP meetings as well as focussed Urban Design Workshops (detailed in the Design Evolution section below) with SACDC and HCC officers. This DAS evidences the approach to the design process and the outcomes that it has delivered.

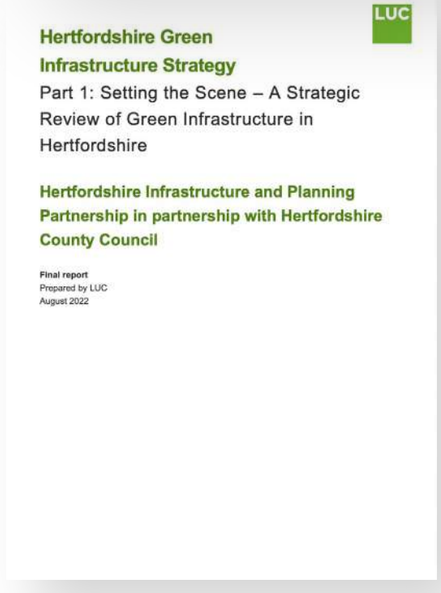
Hertfordshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (August 2022)

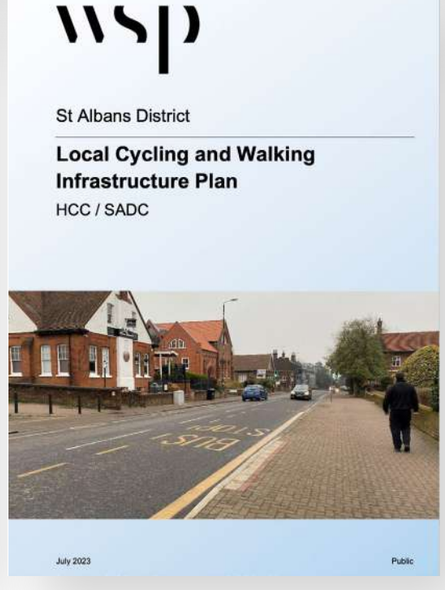
3.52. The strategy - produced by the Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Planning Partnership (HIPP) in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), and in consultation with key stakeholders - identifies opportunities across the county to protect and enhance the Green Infrastructure (GI) network. The strategy is divided into two parts: Part 1 sets the scene by providing an overview of context since the last GI strategy (2011) with Part 2 outlining the baseline analysis and an action plan of priority opportunities and delivery mechanisms.

St. Albans District - Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan (July 2023)

3.53. The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) emphasises that HCC and SACDC's share central government's ambition to make walking and cycling the natural choice for shorter journeys or parts of longer journey. The LCWIP recognises the need for a step change in the process of planning active travel networks, identifying and prioritising infrastructure improvements, and incorporating emerging best practice in design.

The LCWIP identifies a series of interventions throughout St Albans to prioritise active travel infrastructure delivery.





OBSERVING PLACE

Wider Context

3.54. The Site is situated on the northern edge of St Albans. The centre of St Albans is located approximately 2.5 kilometres to the south of the Site. St Albans is approximately 30km north of London (to the south east) and near to a number of other medium-sized settlements including Hemel Hempstead (8km west), Watford (12.5km south west), Hatfield (6km east) and Welwyn Garden City (9km north east) to the north of London located around the M25. Harpenden is approximately 4.5km to the north of the Site with the village of Sandridge situated approximately 1km to the east of the Site. The majority of the Site is located within St Albans Parish with only the area proposed for the relocation of the sports pitches in Sandridge Parish.

3.55. Approximately 1km to the north east of the Site is an area known as the Heartwood Forest; the largest planned continuous new native forest in England covering approximately 347ha. The Heartwood Forest is connected to the wider area by the Hertfordshire Way Bridleway which runs east-west to the north of the Site providing a circular route around Hertfordshire.

3.56. To the south and west of the Site are the existing suburban environs of north St Albans including the residential suburbs of New Greens (west) and Marshalswick (south).

View of Market Place, St Albans

View of High Street and Bower's Parade, Harpenden

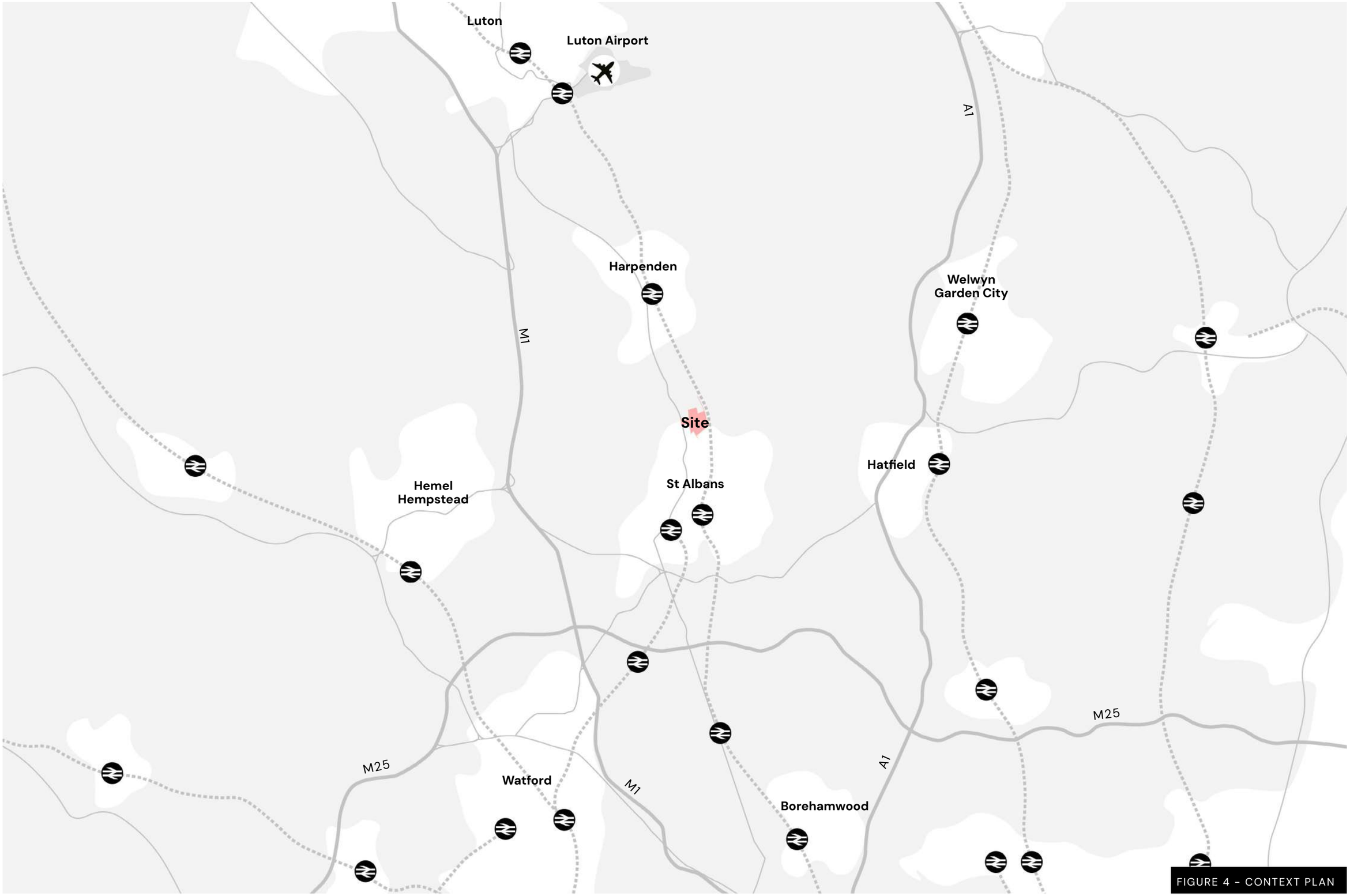


FIGURE 4 - CONTEXT PLAN

Site Context

3.57. The Application Site (identified in red in Figure 5) extends in total to 50.17ha in size and is located to the immediate north of St. Albans, within the administrative boundary of SACDC.

3.58. The Site currently comprises a series of agricultural fields, sports pitches (forming part of the wider Woollam Playing Fields and Old Albanians Rugby Club pavilions and pitches Site) and a number of existing hedgerows and tree groupings. Sandridgebury Lane, a single carriageway width minor road with hedgerows either side, runs diagonally through the Site from south east (at its junction with Harpenden Road) to the north east crossing under the Midland Mainline railway line. Longspring Wood; an ancient woodland and local wildlife Site is a linear stretch of woodland running along the southern boundary of the Site.

3.59. The Site has an undulating form with land sloping to a valley that is broadly aligned with Sandridgebury Lane running north east-south west through the Site and to its lowest point immediately adjacent to the railway line. From here, the land rises to the north up towards the Woollam Playing Fields and to the south to Longspring Wood.

3.60. The Site is bound to the north by the remainder of the Woollam Playing Fields and Old Albanians Rugby Club pavilions and pitches Site as well as further arable farmland that extends further north towards Harpenden. To the north east on the eastern side of the rail line is the Heartwood Forest as noted above.

3.61. To the east, the Midland Mainline Railway Line forms a pronounced edge to the Site; the rail line, which provides Thameslink services into London from Bedford, runs both through cutting and on embankment as it passes the Site. On the other side of the rail line fronting the southern side of Sandridgebury Lane are a series of cottages ('Bridge Cottages') and beyond this open countryside including further arable farmland as well as some land used for equestrian purposes.

View southwards from Longspring Wood

View of Sandridgebury Lane

3.62. To the south, immediately beyond Longspring Wood, is the Valley Road Industrial Estate which contains a number of commercial buildings and their associated car parks and service yards as well as a number of other uses including a pre-school day nursery and a number of residential apartments, some of which have been converted from previous commercial buildings. Beyond this is the residential extent of north St Albans including the suburb of Marshalswick which is characterised by low density suburban family housing. Valley Road, a narrow high sided single carriageway runs south from Sandbridgebury Lane within the Site. St Albans Girls School (STAGS) is immediately south of the Site on the southern side of Sandridgebury Lane; the school Site includes an expansive school building set within playing fields that includes floodlit all weather pitches. The Beech Bottom Dyke nature reserve, a linear tree green space running east-west is not far from the south of the Site. Beech Bottom Dyke is thought to have originated in the Iron Age.

3.63. To the west, immediately adjoining the Site boundary is a single agricultural field that has Outline Planning Permission (Application Reference: 5/2021/0423) for 150 residential dwellings. The scheme, known as the 'Sewell Park Development' forms part of the B1 draft Local Plan allocation and is currently the subject Reserved Matters proposals made by Cala Homes. Further west, on the opposite side of Harpenden Road, is the New Greens neighbourhood; a residential estate developed in the 1960's which in addition to housing, includes a local centre at High Oaks with a small parade of local shops and church and the Margaret Wix Primary School. At the north of New Greens is Townsend Church of England Secondary School which is adjacent to an expansive area of sports pitches at Toulmin Drive.

3.64. Vehicular access to the Site is currently provided in several places. The sports pitches that form the north western part of the Site are currently accessed from the existing access to the Woollam Playing Fields and Old Albanians Rugby Club pavilions and pitches Site off Harpenden Road (A1081).

3.65. The only Public Right of Way (PRoW) on the Site itself is Public Footpath 096 which runs through Longspring Wood and then along the eastern boundary parallel to the rail line up to Sandridgebury Lane.

There are also a number of PRoW near to the Site notably including the Hertfordshire Way (Bridleway 009); a 195-mile circular route around Hertfordshire.

FIGURE 5 - SITE LOCATION PLAN

Topography and Geology

Wider Context

3.66. The Site is within an area characterised by its undulating landscape with the centre of St Albans effectively being located within lower land encircled by undulating higher land falling down towards the centre close to the River Ver.

3.67. To the north, Harpenden Common rises up from Harpenden town centre to an area of higher land just north of the Site. The landform then ripples and descends down towards the central St Albans area.

3.68. This landscape has resulted in an interesting arrangement of field patterns and woodland blocks that reflect the local topography. Existing local hedgerows around and beyond the Site are typically dense containing mature trees.

3.69. There are several local geological materials within the local area with many converging on or near to the Site. To the north and west, on the higher land, clays are prevalent. To the south and east, there are chalks, gravels and flints.

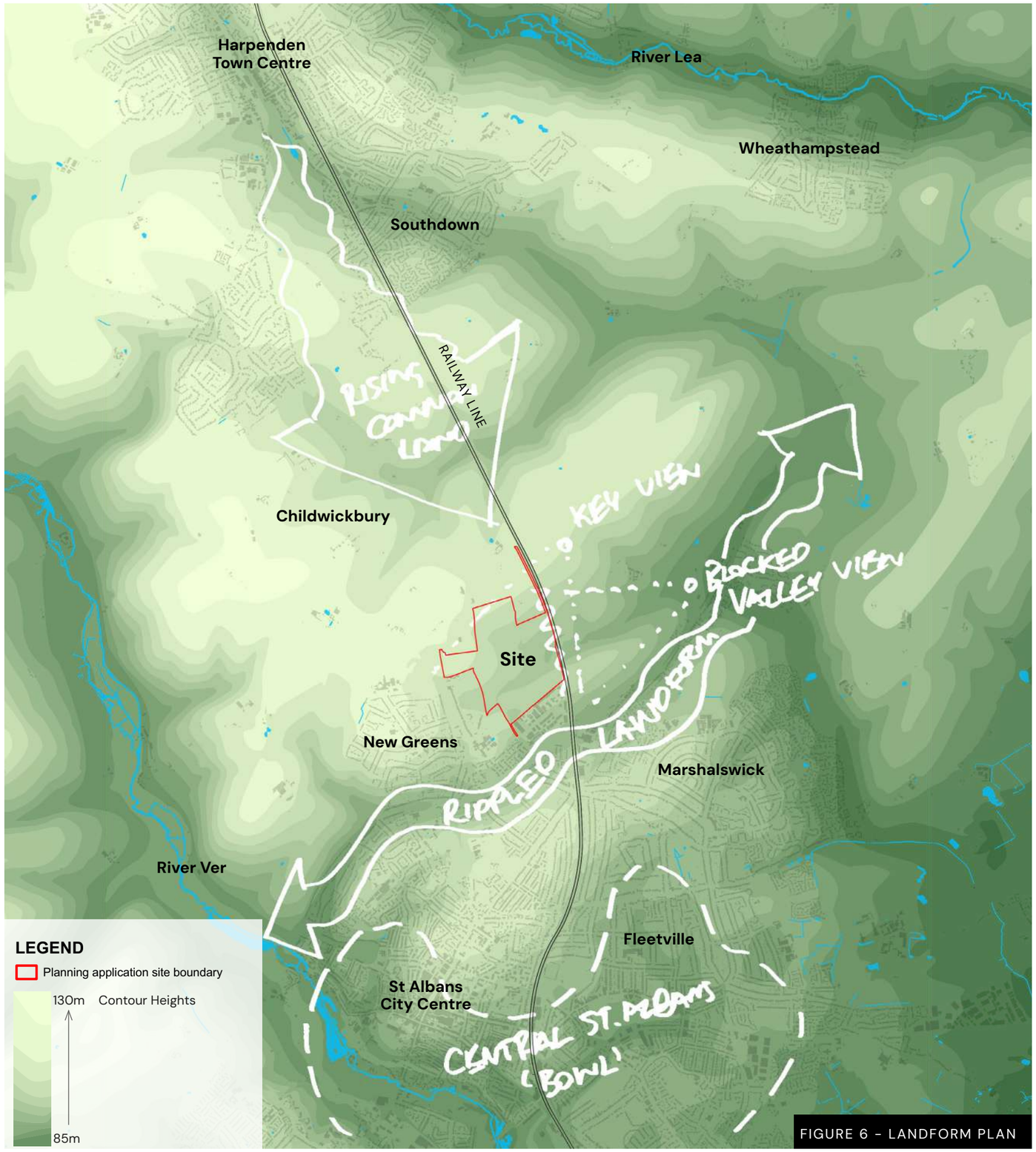


FIGURE 6 - LANDFORM PLAN

Site Context

3.70. The Site has an undulating form with land sloping to a valley that is broadly aligned with Sandridgebury Lane running north east-south west through the Site and to its lowest point immediately adjacent to the railway line. From here, the land rises to the north up towards the Woollam Playing Fields and to the south to Longspring Wood.

3.71. Geologically, the Site contains a mix of clays, chalks, gravel and flint. The majority of the Site is characterised by clay soils except for an area close to the eastern boundary which contains chalk and flint; this allows surface water to infiltrate into the ground.

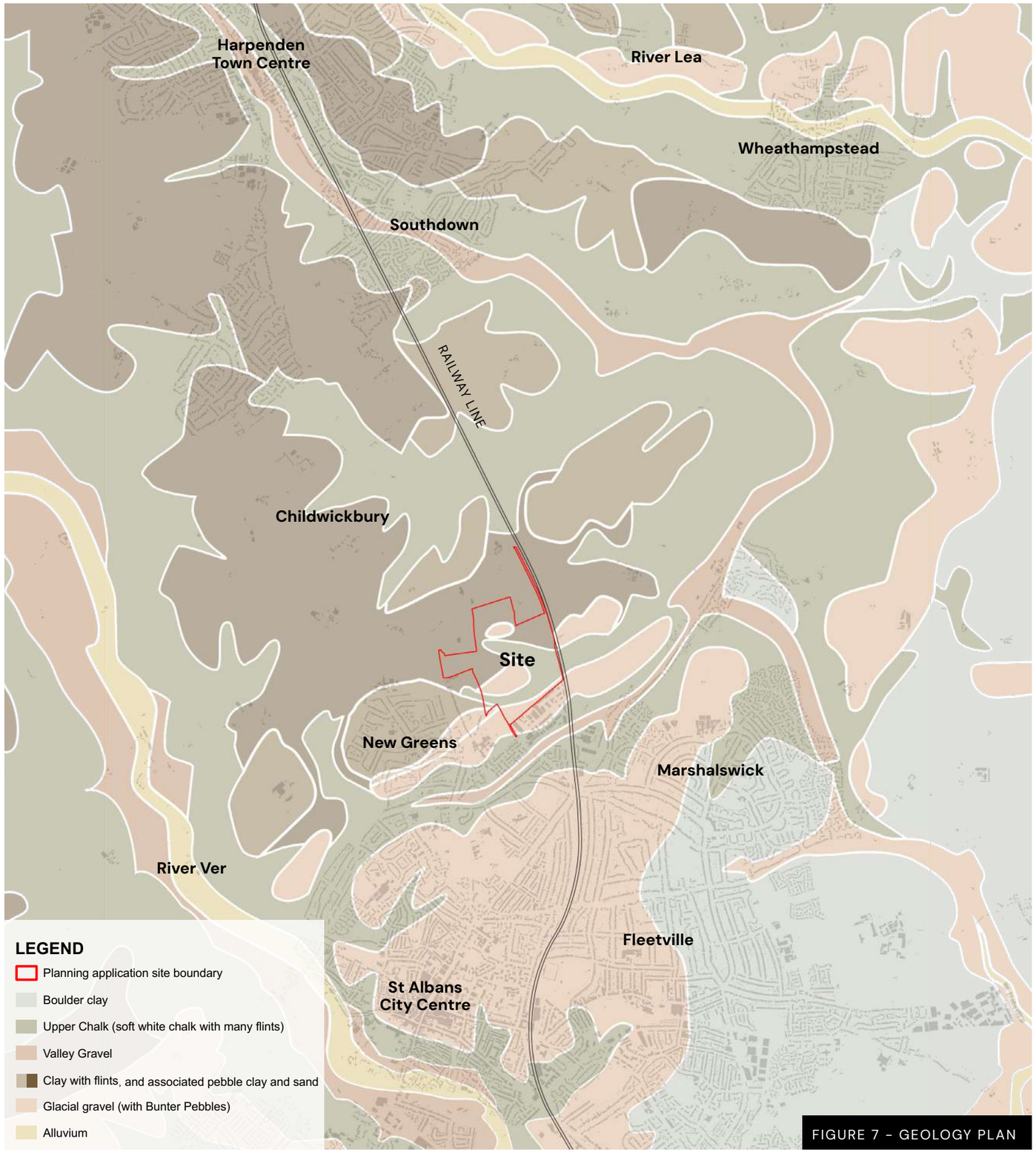


FIGURE 7 – GEOLOGY PLAN

Water

3.72. The Site is at either very low or low risk of flooding from fluvial, tidal, reservoirs, canals, and sewers. Medium and low surface water flood risk is only present on-Site in the form of east to west flow routes, reflecting the site's natural topography. Furthermore, it is possible that there is low to medium groundwater flood risk at the Site, ground water monitoring is currently being undertaken.

3.73. Surface water runoff is likely to occur after heavy rainfall, where the ground is fully saturated. Currently, no formal means of surface water drainage has been identified to positively drain the Site and as such, water will runoff with the natural topography in an easterly direction towards the boundaries of the Site, namely the railway line.

3.74. The Long-Term Flood Risk Information, Flood Risk from Surface Water Map identifies that most of the Site is at very low risk of surface water flooding. It is noted that low, medium and high surface water flow routes bisect the Site centrally, before ponding along the eastern boundary (Figure 8)

3.75. The production of this mapping has been undertaken at a national scale. To provide more detail, a Site-specific 'direct rainfall' hydraulic model has been produced by PJA to enhance understanding of the potential surface water flood risk to the Site and immediate surrounding areas.

3.76. From a review of the modelled extents, it is noted that the modelled baseline (Figure 9) extents follow a similar extent to the publicly available long-term flood risk surface water mapping. Furthermore, an increase in surface water has been seen across the Site during the 1 in 30-year event, however it should be noted that these extents follow the existing flow paths present. It is assumed these extents have increased due to the updated topographic survey and hydrology utilised within the hydraulic model build.

3.77. Given this, flood risk from surface water sources may be considered to be medium risk.

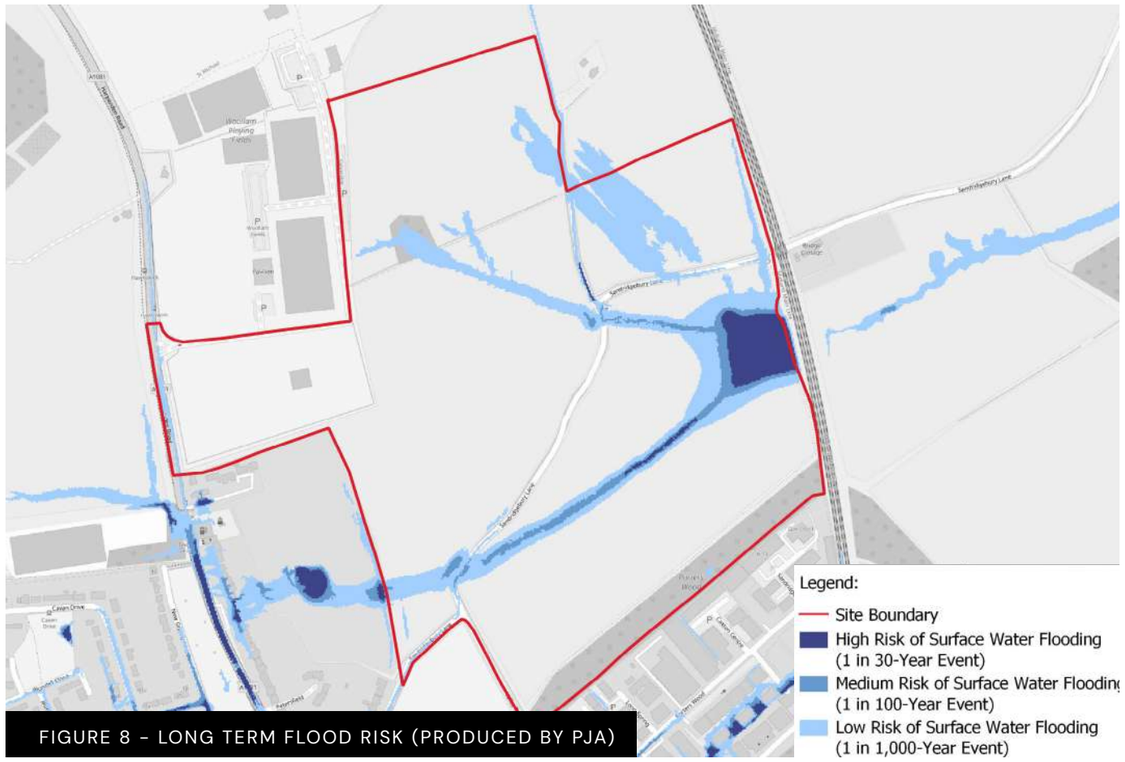


FIGURE 8 - LONG TERM FLOOD RISK (PRODUCED BY PJA)

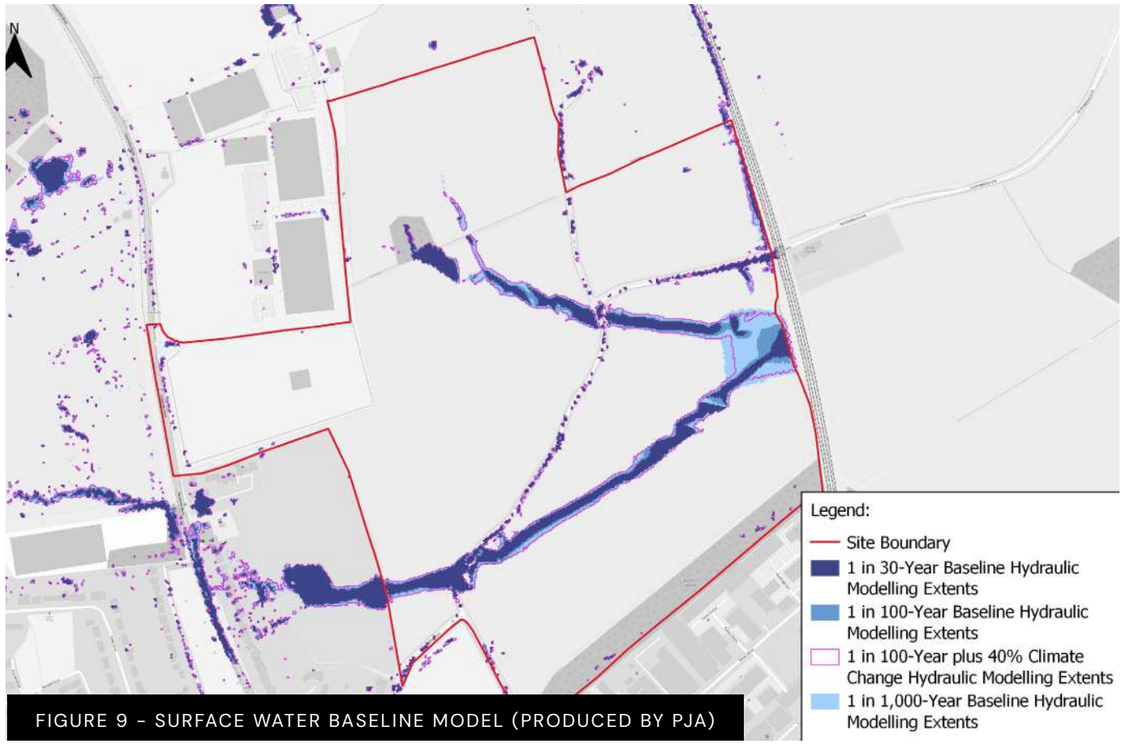


FIGURE 9 - SURFACE WATER BASELINE MODEL (PRODUCED BY PJA)

Green Infrastructure and Landscape

Wider Context

3.78. The Site occupies an area of undulating land at the head of a valley and on the edge of a plateau, which forms a wide ridge between St. Albans and Harpenden and is bounded along its eastern edge, in part by embankment and in part by cutting, associated with the Midland Main Line railway. It borders St. Albans Girls School to its west, Porter's Wood industrial estate to its south, residential development to its west, the Wollam Playing Fields to its northwest, and farmland to its north and east.

3.79. Pockets of woodland are a feature of the landscape that surrounds the site and Heartwood Forest, a publicly accessible woodland owned and managed by the Woodland Trust, is located around 400m to the north east. There are also several rights of way that provide connections through the landscape to the north, east and west of the site, some of which form part of the Hertfordshire Way long-distance footpath.

3.80. Digital mapping, created by casting 'light' from target points over a 'bare earth' digital topographic model, was used to test the theoretical visibility of potential development areas; and, in combination with fieldwork activities, was used to identify those within the Site's wider context that may be sensitive to changes from its development.

3.81. This analysis identified that, although theoretically visible across a wide geographic area, the Site is largely concealed from much of the surrounding landscape (including most sections of the Hertfordshire Way and from locations within Heartwood Forest), and is most visible in close-distance views from within its immediate context.

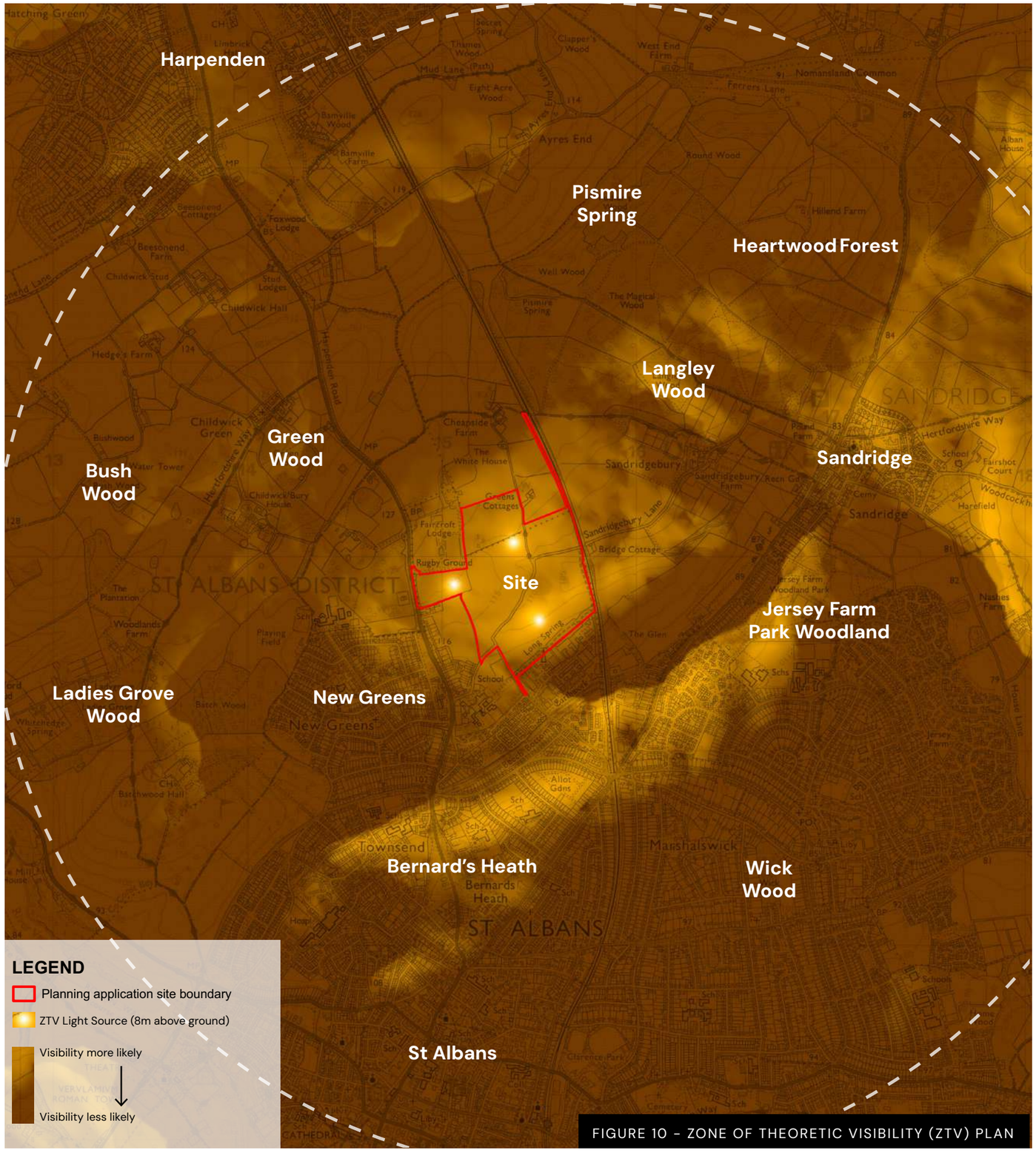


FIGURE 10 - ZONE OF THEORETIC VISIBILITY (ZTV) PLAN

Site Context

3.82. The majority of the Site comprises arable farmland, however the land in the north western part of the Site presently forms part of Woollam Playing Fields. The Site also contains several belts of trees and hedgerows, including Longspring Wood, which extends along the southern boundary of the Site and is a designated area of Ancient Woodland and Local Wildlife Site. Pockets of woodland are also present across the surrounding landscape, with a few Ancient Woodlands both to the west and north east of the Site.

3.83. The Site is crossed by several (largely intact) hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees, most of which align minor lanes. The Site is also enclosed by some mature hedgerows along its western boundary, including a defined section of 'important hedgerow' where it borders Harpenden Road, and is bounded to its east by scrub vegetation bordering the railway.

3.84. Analysis of ZTV mapping indicates visibility toward the Site from numerous locations within the surrounding landscape, including on the higher lying land east of Sandridge, and along the southern edge within the city of St Albans. Actual visibility into the Site is however contained to relatively few locations due to intervening vegetation and built form within the surrounding area, with views into the Site entirely screened by woodland from the Beech Bottom residential area and Valley Road Industrial Estate and from St Albans itself.

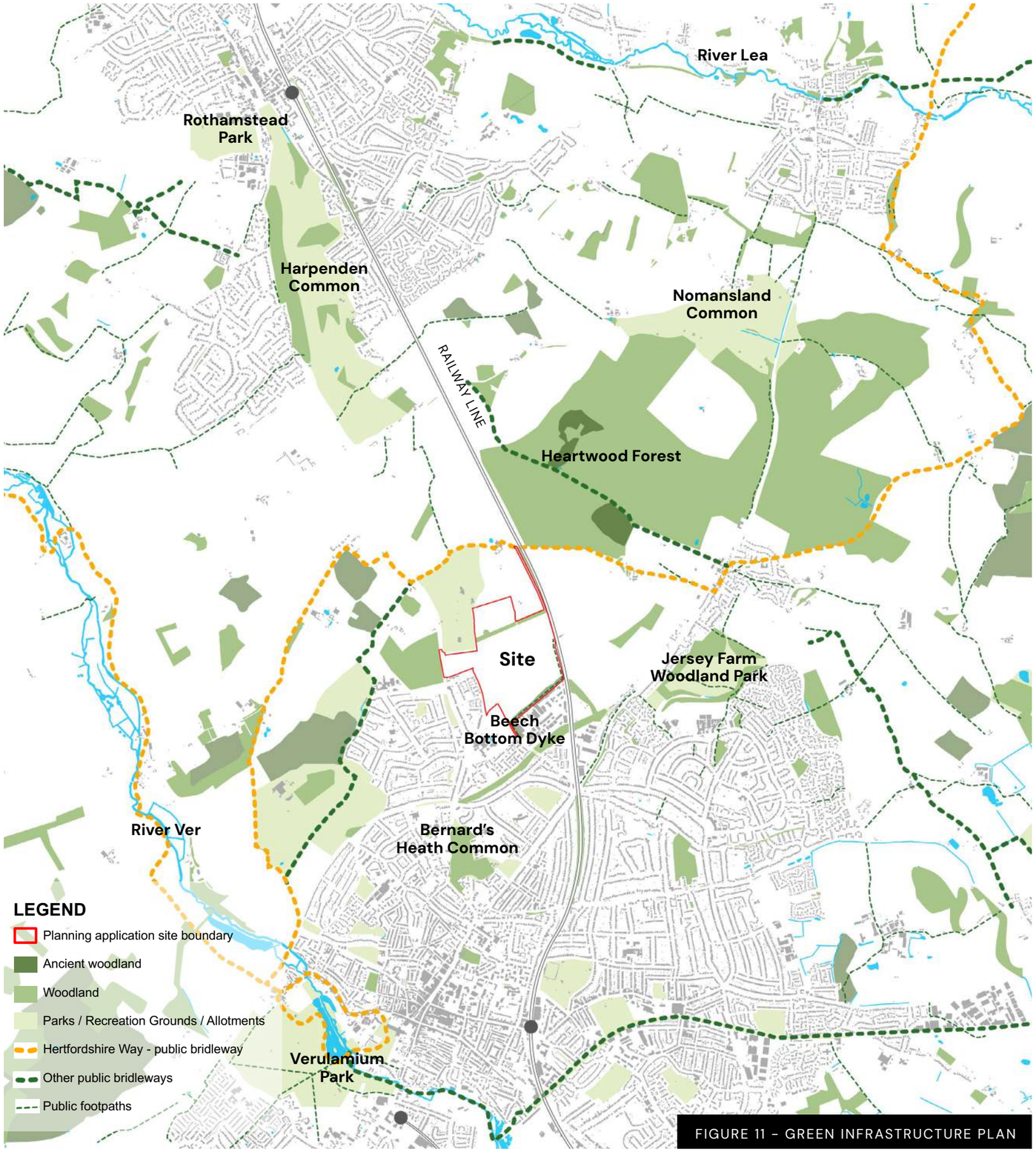


FIGURE 11 - GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

Ecology and Biodiversity

Wider Context

3.85. A single internationally designated site, the Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is located within a 15km radius of the site. The application site falls beyond the zone of influence of 12.6km identified by Natural England for the Chilterns Beechwood SAC and therefore there is no impact.

3.86. A further nine sites of local or county conservation interest were identified within 1km of the Application site, with the closest being the Longspring Wood Local Nature Reserve within the southern boundary of the site.

3.87. Offsite, approximately 400m to the north of the site, two existing arable field compartments, totalling 34ha in size, will be used to create farmland bird mitigation plots, within the current agricultural management. These plots will enhance the landscape for farmland bird species, providing improved nesting and foraging habitats for farmland bird species, notably skylark and linnet.

Site Context

3.88. The Application Site comprises four arable field compartments and a single mown grassland compartment utilised for amenity purposes. The arable fields support a mixture of cereal and non-cereal crops, with narrow field margins bound by native hedgerows supporting occasional mature trees. Along the northern boundary there is mixed woodland and immature broadleaved woodland plantation; while along the southern boundary of the Application site is Longspring Wood Local Wildlife Site (LWS) and ancient woodland compartment.

3.89. The bat assemblages within the Application Site largely comprised common and widespread species, with common pipistrelle accounting for most of the 2022 static detector survey registrations (91.88%). Soprano pipistrelle (6.1%), brown long eared (0.91%) and noctule (0.53%) were the next most frequent species. The Annex II species, barbastelle, made up 0.2% of the recordings during static detector surveys, with recordings of this species along the young woodland plantation belt (W3) and hedgerow H4 during the 2022 survey effort and along hedgerow H2, woodland W2 and the Longspring Wood LWS (W5), during the 2024 survey.

3.90. A total of 21 mature trees had features suitable to support roosting bats. The proposals will ensure these trees are retained and appropriately buffered from disturbance.

3.91. Protected species surveys for badgers, bats, breeding and wintering birds, dormice and reptiles were completed between 2018-2024.

3.92. Breeding Bird and Wintering Bird surveys recorded a total of 31 species, and 32 species, respectively. Bird assemblages comprised a range of generalist bird species, typical of the arable, hedgerow and woodland habitats recorded onsite.

3.93. Hazel dormouse surveys were completed from autumn 2018 to summer 2019 identifying no dormice evidence onsite. It is therefore considered that this species is not a constrain to the proposals.

3.94. Reptile surveys conducted in 2018 and 2022 recorded a single adult common lizard during both years, along the hedgerow H8, resulting in a low population.

LEGEND

- Planning application site boundary
- Farmland Bird Mitigation Land
- Heartwood Forest Area
- Proposed Mitigation Buffer (15m)

Habitats

- Arable field margins cultivated annually
- Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface
- Cereal crops
- Developed land; sealed surface
- Lowland mixed deciduous woodland
- Modified grassland
- Non-cereal crops
- Other woodland; broadleaved
- Other woodland; mixed
- Important hedgerow (Hedgerow Regulations 1997)
- Line of trees
- Native hedgerow
- Native hedgerow - associated with bank or ditch
- Native hedgerow with trees
- Species-rich native hedgerow
- Species-rich native hedgerow with trees
- Existing Large Rural Tree
- Existing Medium Rural Tree

Species Constraints

- Common Lizard (Low population)

Trees with Bat Roosting Potential

- High
- Low
- Moderate

FIGURE 12 - ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS PLAN

Historic Legacy

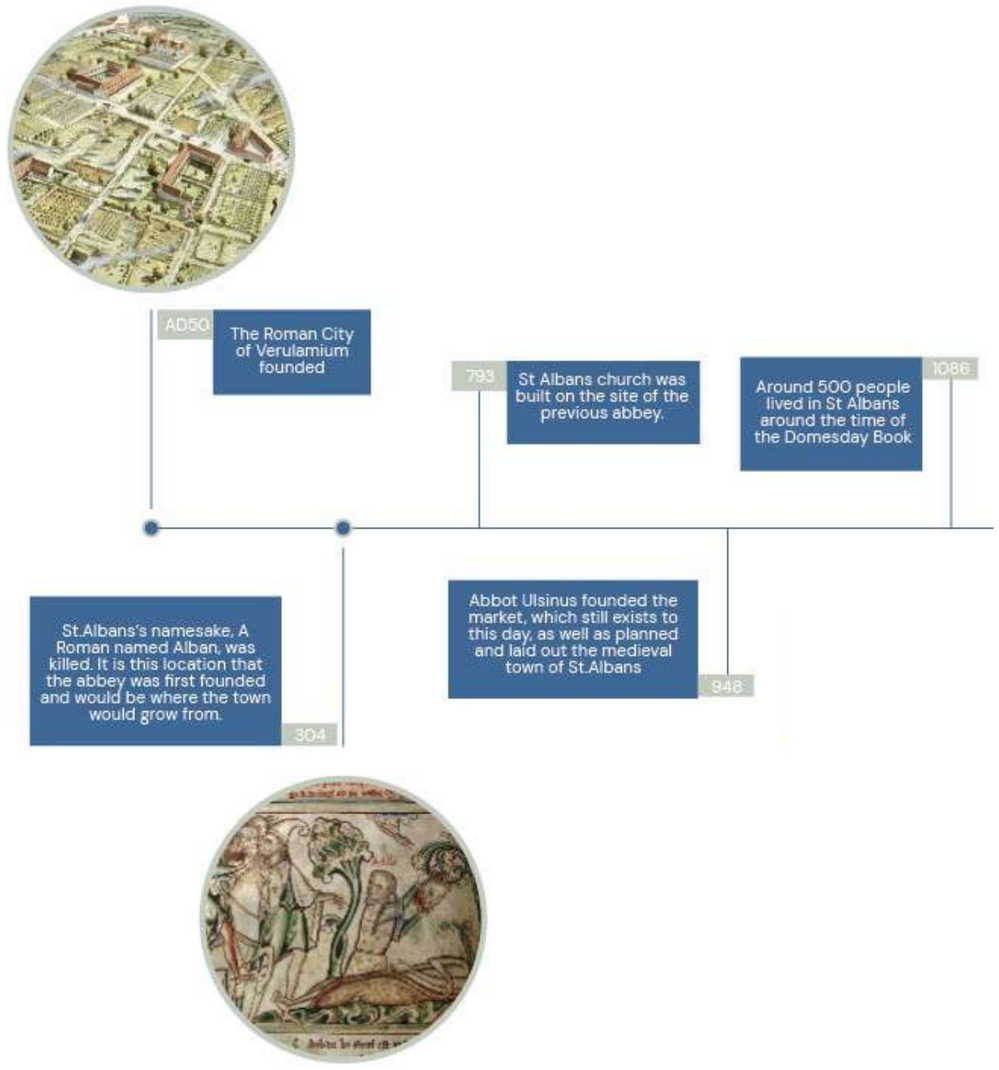
3.95. North St Albans has a rich history that relates to its Iron Age beginnings, Roman settlement, the Industrial Revolution as well as other key influences including historic parks and houses, agriculture, and development associated with the railway.

3.96. St Albans was first recorded as a Celtic British Iron Age settlement. After the Roman conquest of Britain in AD 43, it developed as Verulamium and became one of the largest towns in Roman Britain. Verulamium slowly declined and fell into decay after the departure of the Roman Army in AD 410. However, the ruined buildings provided materials to build the new Norman Abbey and the Roman bricks removed from Verulamium are still evident in the Cathedral today. Much of the Roman town was uncovered in the 1930's and are on view in Verulamium Park in the centre of St Albans.

3.97. The growth of St Albans was facilitated by its proximity to London as well as the market (which still runs today) selling produce from the fertile local agricultural land. Verulam Road was created specifically to aid the movement of stage coaches, as St Albans was conveniently placed as a first night's stop on the journey from London. The coaching industry however declined after the 1840's, when the railway arrived in 1858. There were originally three lines into the city, firstly the route to Watford, then a now defunct line to Hatfield in 1865 and finally the mainline service to London and Bedford in 1868.

3.98. During the inter-war years, St Albans, in common with much of the surrounding area, became a centre for emerging high-technology industries, most notably aerospace. The City was expanded significantly after World War II, as government policy promoted the creation of New Towns and the expansion of existing towns. Substantial amounts of local authority housing were built at Cottonmill (to the south), Mile House (to the south-east) and New Greens (to the north). The Marshalswick area to the north-east was also expanded.

3.99. St Albans School was founded within St Albans Abbey by Abbot Wulsin in 948 and was the first school in the world to accept students not intending to join a religious order. By the 12th century, the school was one of the largest in the British Isles. Since the 19th century, there have been many additions to the school Site, which now comprise buildings dating from the Roman-era to modern extensions built in the 1990s. The Woollam Playing Fields (which forms part of the Site) provides an extensive, modern, outdoor sports facility for the School and the Old Albanian Sports Club that was built on part of a 400-acre farm owned by the school.



1800

By the 19th century, St.Albans was a rural market town in the green belt of london and the first coaching stop in and out of London.

1877

The abbey church was granted cathedral status and the town a city charter

1974

St Albans City Council, St Albans Rural District Council and Harpenden Town Council are merged to form St Albans District Council as part of a much wider local government reorganisation.

2023

St. Albans District Council Draft local plan, including 54.85 hectares of land allocated for the development of 1,097 units.

1553

King Edward VI granted a charter to the town by which it became a Borough with a Mayor and Corporation

1858

The railway arrived connecting St Albans to Hatfield and then into London.

1900

St Albans would see its greatest growth between 1891-1901 and with the post-WWII redistribution of population out of London

2001

Census shows a population of 129,000 for St Albans City and District

FIGURE 13 - HISTORIC TIMELINE

Conservation and Archaelogy

3.100. There are no designated heritage assets within the Site, however there are several Grade II listed buildings within 1km of the Site, including:

- A cluster of Grade II Listed Buildings around Childwickbury House and Childwick Green, including Childwick Bury Manor and Coach House located approximately 900m north west of the Site.
- A cluster of Grade II Listed Buildings in Sandridge, including Sandridge House and the Church of St Leonard located approximately 750m east of the Site.

3.101. There are also several other designated heritage assets within the nearby landscape, including Beech Bottom Dyke, an iron age territorial boundary located approximately 260m south of the Site.

3.102. The centre of St Albans, approximately 2.3km south of the Site, is also home to several listed buildings, including the Grade I Listed Clock Tower and the Site of St Albans Abbey.

3.103. There are no registered Parks and Gardens within the Site, the nearest being the Gorhambury Estate located approximately 4km west of the Site.

3.104. A review of historic mapping (Figure 14) identifies that, St Albans has experienced suburban growth to its north and east into less constrained areas away from the River Ver flood plain and the heritage assets of central St Albans.

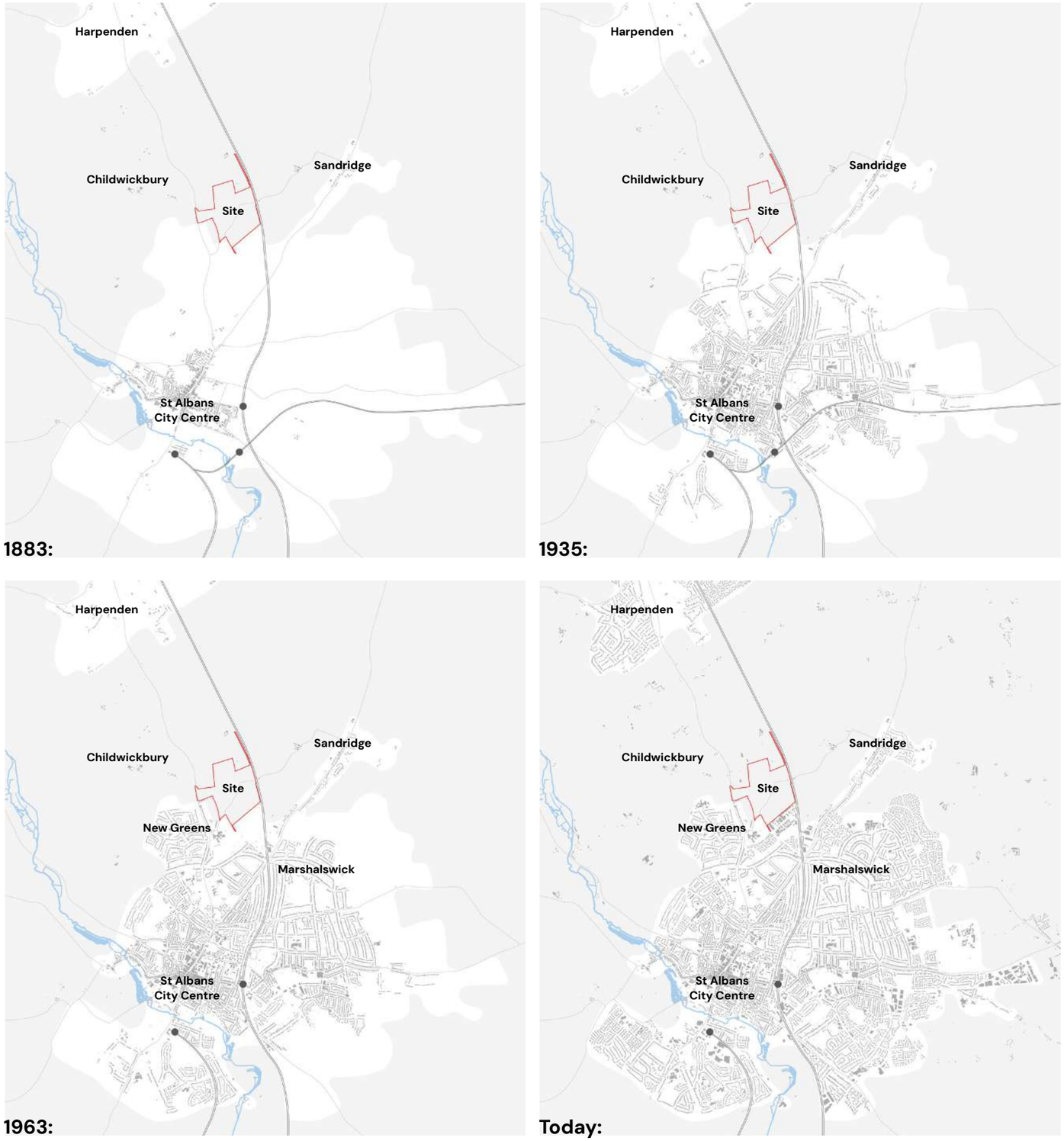


FIGURE 14 - ST ALBANS HISTORICAL EVOLUTION DIAGRAMS

Visual and Environmental Exposure,Enclosure and Shelter

Wider Context

3.105. The Site occupies an area of undulating land at the head of a valley and on the edge of a plateau, which forms a wide ridge between St. Albans and Harpenden and is bounded along its eastern edge, in part by embankment and in part by cutting, associated with the Midland Main Line railway. It borders St. Albans Girls School to its west, Porter's Wood industrial estate to its south, residential development to its west, the Wollam Playing Fields to its northwest, and farmland to its north and east.

3.106. Pockets of woodland are a feature of the landscape that surrounds the site and Heartwood Forest, a publicly accessible woodland owned and managed by the Woodland Trust, is located around 400m to the north east. There are also several rights of way that provide connections through the landscape to the north, east and west of the site, some of which form part of the Hertfordshire Way long-distance footpath.

3.107. Digital mapping, created by casting 'light' from target points over a 'bare earth' digital topographic model, was used to test the theoretical visibility of potential development areas; and, in combination with fieldwork activities, was used to identify those within the Site's wider context that may be sensitive to changes from its development.

3.108. This analysis identified that, although theoretically visible across a wide geographic area, the Site is largely concealed from much of the surrounding landscape (including most sections of the Hertfordshire Way and from locations within Heartwood Forest), and is most visible in close-distance views from within its immediate context.

Site Context

3.109. Within the Site, the characteristic east-west valley form provides north and south facing slopes that create distinct sunlight considerations and aspects that face each other.

3.110. The effect of the rising land to the west out of the Sandridge Valley to the Harpenden Road and the rail line on the eastern boundary however create a degree of shelter to the Site that reduces the impact of prevailing westerly winds rushing through the valley. Similarly, existing tree belts on the north boundary and Longspring Wood on the southerm boundary provide further shelter and enclosure.

FIGURE 15 - ILLUSTRATIVE SECTION

Connectivity

3.111. The Site benefits from good accessibility to local schools, medical facilities, a Local Centre and employment opportunities within a short walk of the Site. Footways and/or shared use paths are provided along most roads in the vicinity of the Site, and these are mostly street lit. Exceptions include Sandridgebury Lane and Valley Road which are single-track country lanes which generally do not benefit from footways or street lighting beyond the existing urban edges of St. Albans.

3.112. The A1081 Harpenden Road and Beech Road (plus Batchwood Drive and Marshalswick Lane) are key roads within the area carrying higher traffic volumes requiring controlled crossings to be introduced. The Ancient Briton and King William IV junctions have puffin crossings on each signal controlled arm with a zebra crossing on the unsignalised link between St. Albans Road and Marshalswick Lane.

3.113. A network of Public Rights of Way surrounds the Site including a public footpath which bounds the south-east of the Site, connecting Sandridgebury Lane and Valley Road via Longspring Wood. Two shorter footpaths link the footways on the western side of A1081 Harpenden Road to New Greens. A longer distance Bridleway route between Sandridge and Batchwood Drive is also accessible north of the Site connecting into the Heartwood Forest.

3.114. The Site is located within an 8km (30-minute) cycle of significant facilities and destinations including both of St. Albans Railway Stations and Harpenden Railway Station, plus the entirety of the built-up area of St. Albans, Harpenden, Sandridge, Wheathampstead and Redbourn. The St. Albans Green Ring is accessible at Batchwood Drive. This is a signed active travel loop of around 10km incorporating on and off-road sections which provides access to open spaces, heritage Sites, schools, workplaces, leisure facilities and both St. Albans Railway Stations.

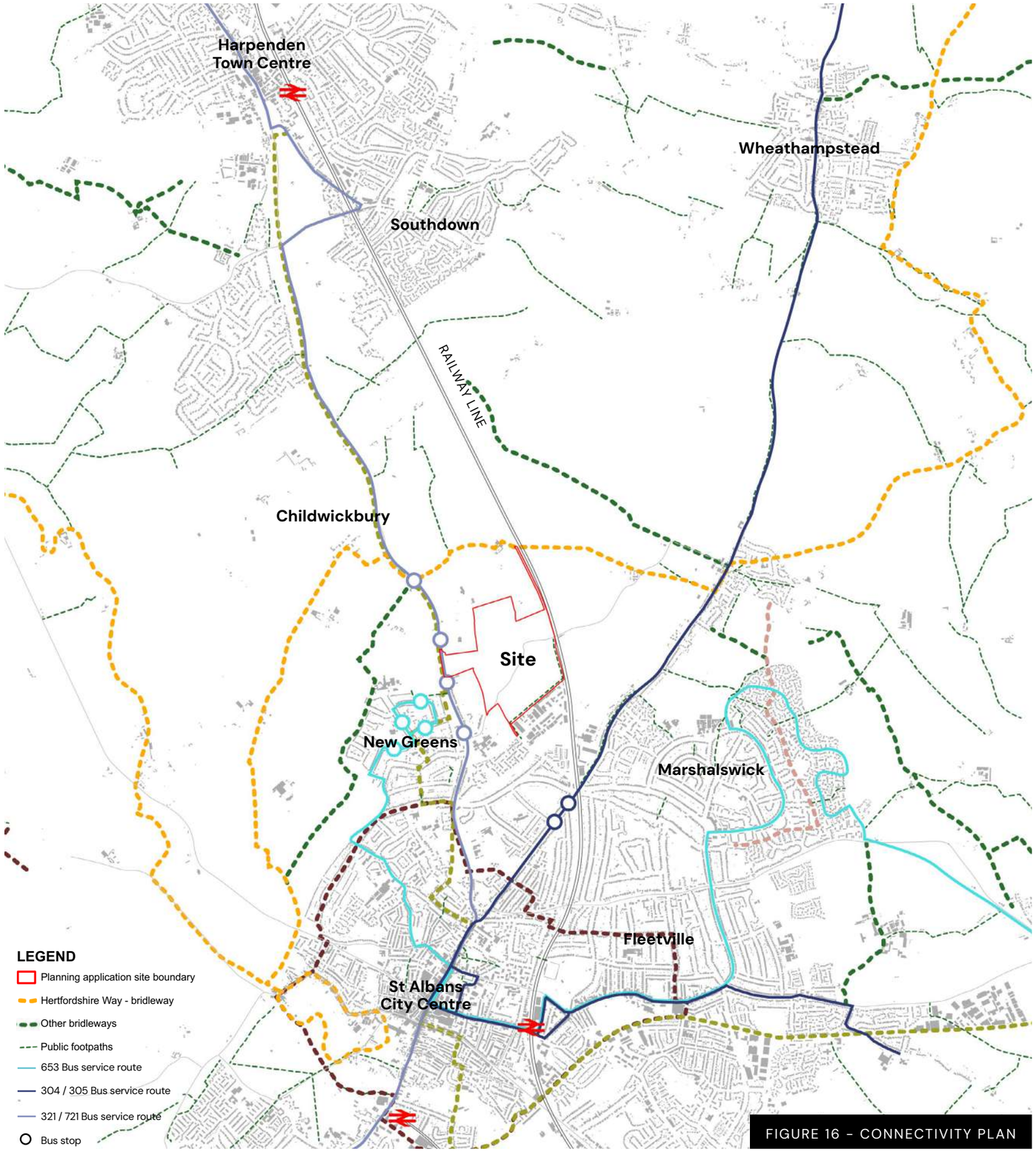


FIGURE 16 - CONNECTIVITY PLAN

3.115. The Site is located to the east of National Cycle Route 6 (NCR6) which runs along or parallel to the A1081 Harpenden Road between Harpenden and St. Albans city centre before continuing south to Luton and Watford and Greater London. However, the cycling infrastructure within the town, including along much of NCR6 is well below the standard required to enable most people to consider cycling as an option for everyday utility and commuting journeys.

3.116. Along the A1081 to the north of St. Albans NCR6 runs along a narrow, shared footway/cycleway to the west of the carriageway, which switches to the east side of the carriageway on the southern edge of Harpenden without a controlled crossing. Within St. Albans the route deviates into the New Greens area and passes along a number of residential streets leading to Batchwood Drive where a toucan crossing provides access to a shared use path running south of the road. The onward connection to the city centre incorporates unlit traffic free sections through woodland, and mixed traffic cycling including along the A1081 Harpenden Road meaning this route is not suitable for most people to cycle.

3.117. Sandridgebury Lane and Valley Road are subject to the National Speed Limit (max. 60mph) through the Site although the width and alignment of the roads mean it is unlikely that vehicles would generally travel at the limit. Informal signage on Valley Road asks drivers to travel at 20mph for the safety of local wildlife. Sandridgebury Lane runs generally east- west between A1081 Harpenden Road, passing St. Albans Girls School and beneath the railway to the High Street in Sandridge. Valley Road leads south from Sandridgebury Lane to the King William IV signalised junction changing in character significantly along its length (30mph speed limit, increasing lane width and providing footways). A 7.5T weight restriction with no exceptions is imposed on Valley Road north of Darwin Close.

3.118. A network of bus services operates along roads in the vicinity of the Site. The nearest existing stops are found on A1081 Harpenden Road, north of the Old Albanians Access or adjacent to the Texaco Service Station. Further stops are found on Valley Road, Beech Road and in the New Greens area. The primary inter-settlement bus route near the Site is the 321/721 Sapphire which runs between Luton and Watford via St. Albans and Harpenden, which runs along the A1081 corridor. The stops for this service will be within a 400m walk of much of the west side of the Woollam Park development.

3.119. Three railway stations are in the vicinity of the Site; St. Albans City and Harpenden serve the same Midland Main Line on the Thameslink network and St. Albans Abbey serves the Abbey Line on the West Midlands network.

3.120. The Sewell Park proposals incorporate local pedestrian infrastructure improvements that will also be beneficial to future residents of the Application Site. The parameter plan for the Sewell Park development shows numerous active travel connections between the two Sites, with connections to the A1081 and a new controlled crossing point over it. A segregated foot/cycleway will be installed along A1081 Harpenden Road, commencing from the new Site access south towards the Ancient Briton Junction. Upgraded bus stops will feature cycle bypasses with pedestrian crossings across cycleways to access bus stops. The Sewell Park development has committed to the delivery of continuous unidirectional segregated cycleways along A1081 Harpenden Road between their Site access and the Ancient Briton Junction, as well as toucan crossings to enable safe crossing for cyclists over the A1081 Harpenden Road.

Edges and Beyond

3.121. To the north, the Site is adjacent to the remainder of the Woollam Playing Fields and Old Albanians Rugby Club pavilions and pitches site as well as arable farmland that extends further north towards Harpenden. To the north east on the eastern side of the rail line is the Heartwood Forest.

3.122. To the east, the Midland Mainline Railway Line forms a pronounced edge to the Site; the rail line runs both through cutting and on embankment as it passes the Site. Beyond this, on the other side of the rail line is further open countryside including further arable farmland as well as some land used for equestrian purposes.

3.123. To the south, immediately beyond Longspring Wood, is the Valley Road Industrial Estate and beyond this, the residential extent of north St Albans including the suburb of Marshalswick which is characterised by low density suburban family housing. St Albans Girls School (STAGS) is immediately south of the Site on the southern side of Sandridgebury Lane; the school Site includes an expansive school building set within playing fields that includes floodlit all weather pitches. The Beech Bottom Dyke nature reserve, a linear treed green space running east-west is not far from the south of the Site.

3.124. To the west, immediately adjoining the Site boundary is the Sewell Park development which as noted above, is the subject of Outline Planning Permission (Application Reference: 5/2021/0423) for 150 residential dwellings. Further west, on the opposite side of Harpenden Road, is the New Greens neighbourhood; a residential estate developed in the 1960's which in addition to housing, includes a local centre at High Oaks with a small parade of local shops and church and the Margaret Wix Primary School. At the north of New Greens is Townsend Church of England Secondary School which is adjacent to an expansive area of sports pitches at Toulmin Drive.

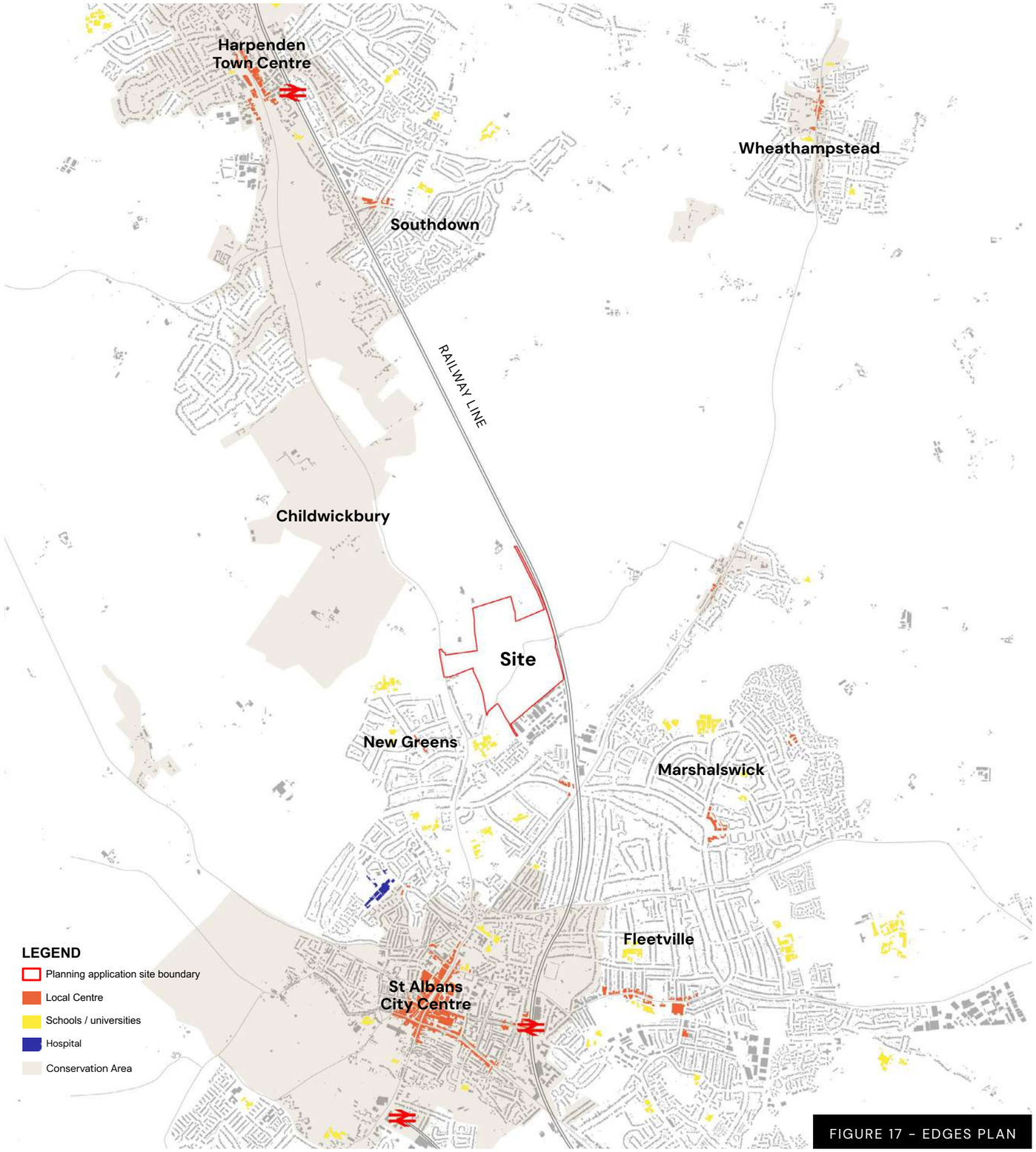


FIGURE 17 - EDGES PLAN

Urban Grain and Built Form

3.125. Residential development to the south of the Site is characterised by low and medium density suburban housing on generously-spaced streets and plots.

3.126. There is a mix of housing typologies however the dominant form is low-rise (2-3 storey)detached and semi-detached buildings.

3.127. Urban blocks are typically suburban allowing for car movement and including access to on-plot driveways.

3.128. Valley Road Industrial Estate includes typically large-footprint commercial buildings set on formed hard-surfaced plateaus providing service yards and car parking. There are a mix of high and low rise built form on the Industrial Estate.

Detached dwellings on Harpenden Road

Detached and semi-detached dwellings on Marshalswick Lane

Terraced housing High Oaks, New Greens

Commercial/Industrial buildings at Valley Road Industrial Estate

Land Use

Wider Context

3.129. The local area is characterised by low and medium density suburban residential development and includes a number of land uses to support nearby communities including schools, open spaces, local shops, public houses and civic amenities including churches and community buildings.

3.130. Valley Road Industrial Estate is located to the immediate south of the Site and includes predominantly commercial land uses, however, there are also a number of residential apartments and a pre-school nursery.

3.131. To the north of the Site is open agricultural land and the Woollam Playing Fields (part of which is within the Site) and associated pavilions.

Site Context

3.132. The majority of the Site comprises arable farmland, however the land in the north western part of the Site presently forms part of Woollam Playing Fields. The Site also includes Longspring Wood; a designated area of Ancient Woodland and Local Wildlife Site.

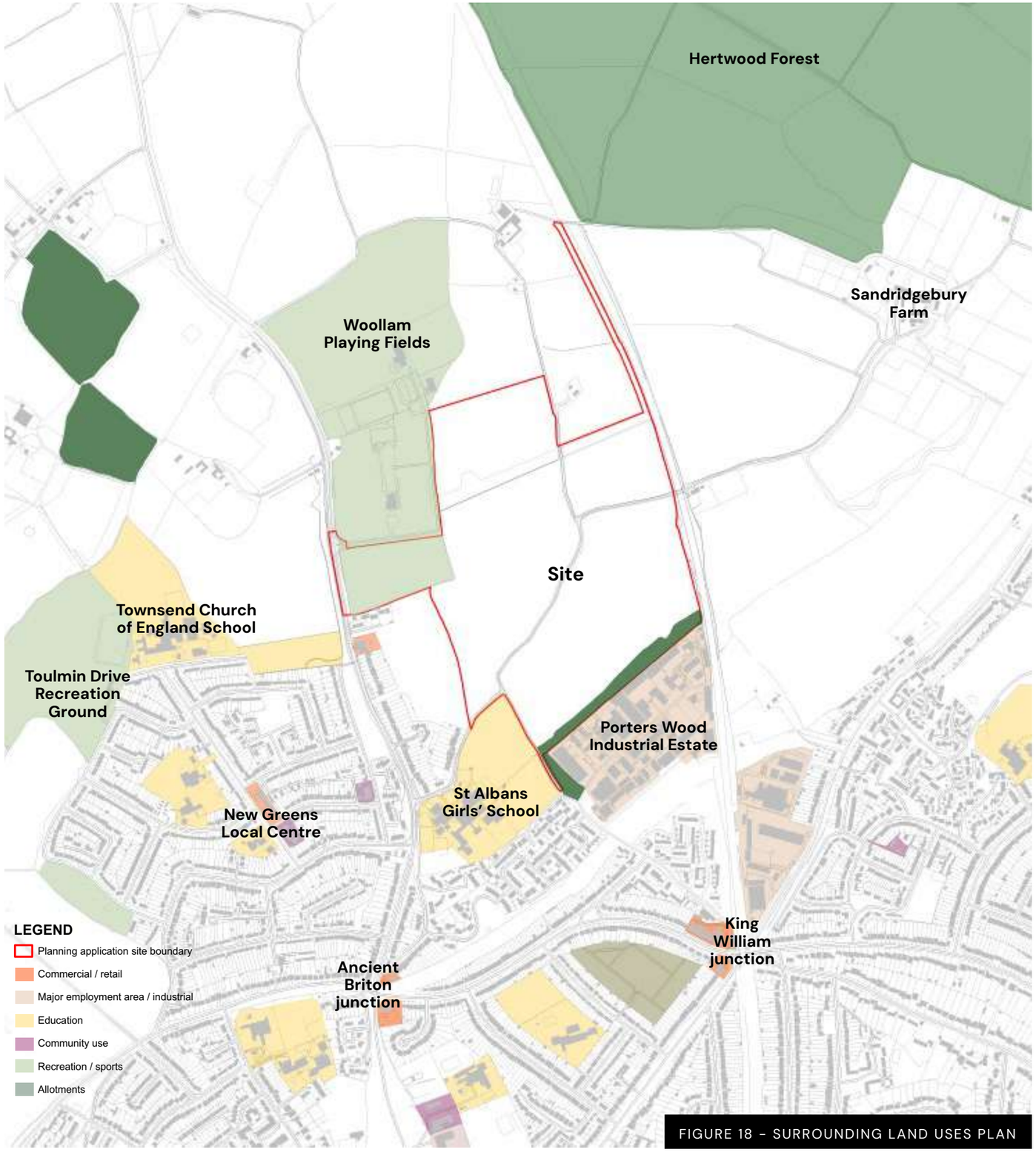


FIGURE 18 - SURROUNDING LAND USES PLAN

Unique Features and Narratives

3.133. The Site is uniquely positioned between settlements of varying scales; St Albans - a city, Harpenden - a town, Sandridge - a village and Childwickbury - a hamlet.

3.134. Each of the settlements has both distinct and common features often associated with the landscape and the rich history of the local area.

3.135. There is great variety in plot sizes, building typologies and architectural styles, however there is distinct commonality in building materials, building details and fenestration throughout the nearby settlements which are explained further below.

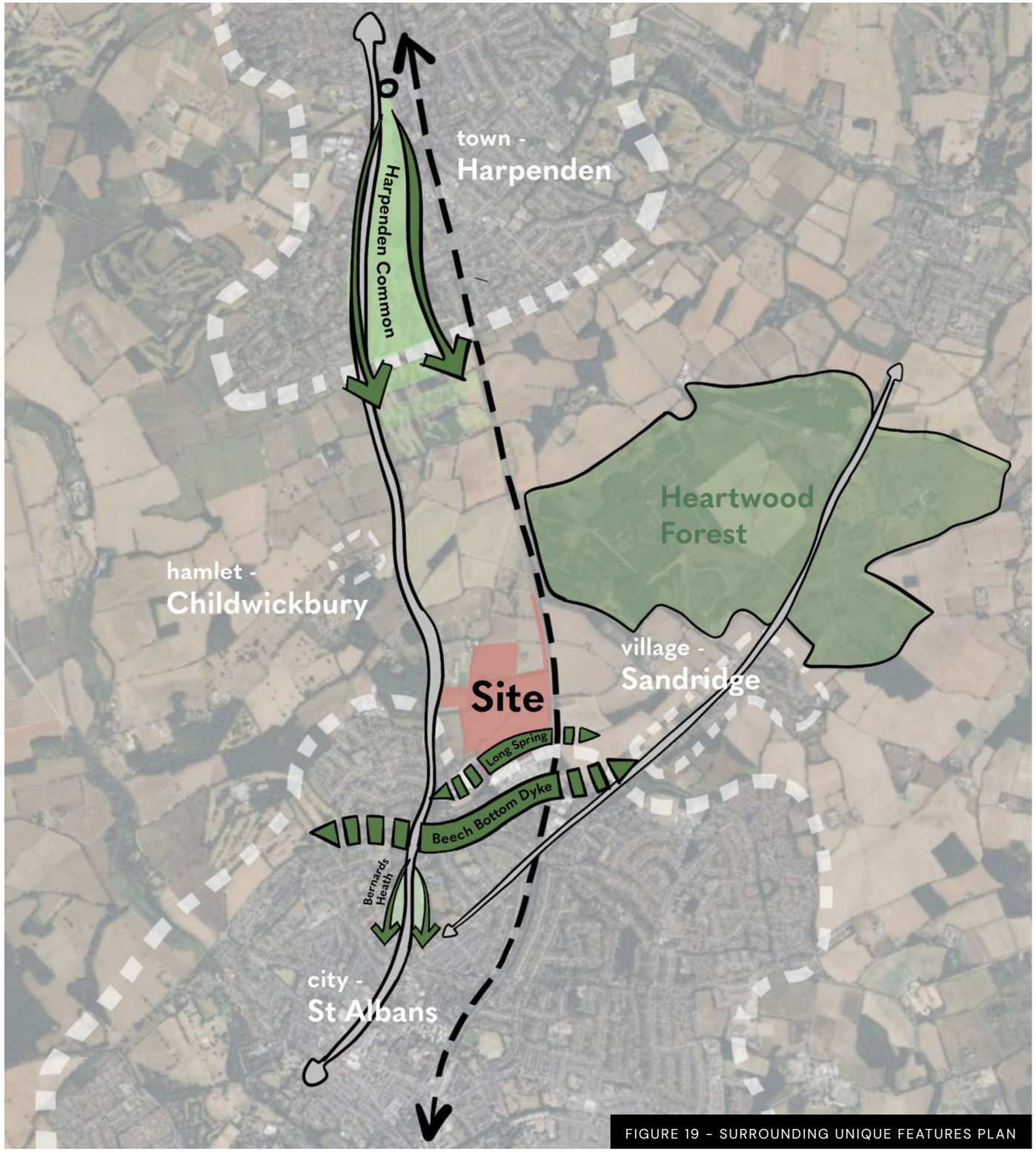


FIGURE 19 - SURROUNDING UNIQUE FEATURES PLAN

City - St Albans


1. Fishpool Street


2. St Michael's Street


3. Sopwell Lane

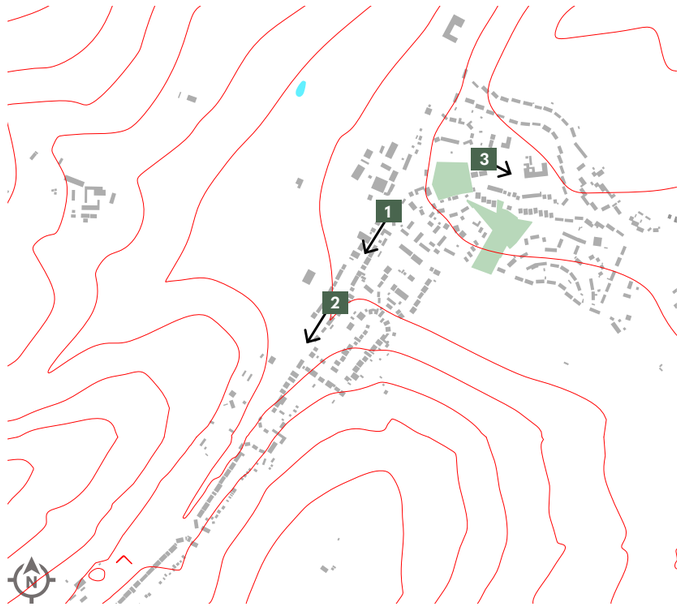
Town - Harpenden


1. Harpenden Common


2. Harpenden Common


3. High Street / Bower' Parade

Village - Sandridge

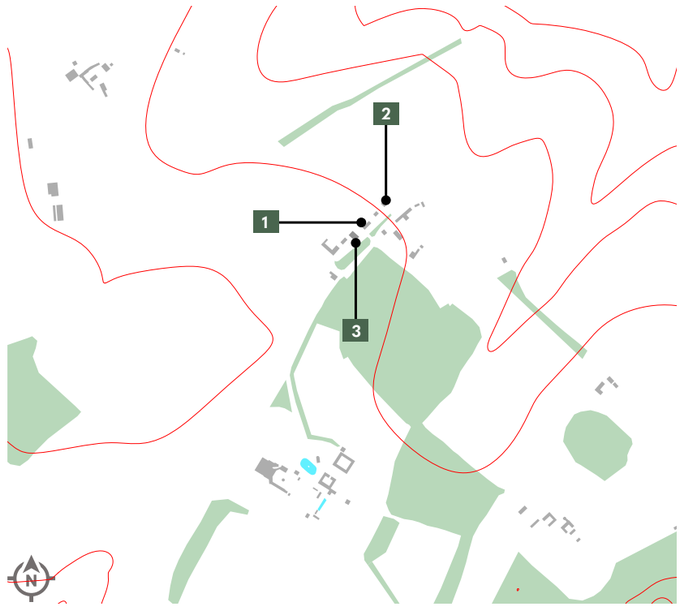



1. High Street


2. High Street


3. Church End

Hamlet - Childwickbury




1. Childwick Green


2. Childwick Green


3. St Mary's Church

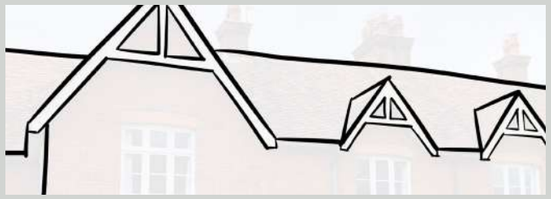
Local Vernacular Details and Materials

3.136. Many traditional local buildings have been built using the traditional 'cruck construction', a timber-frame construction where the roof is an integral part of its structure. Other typical traditional features include elements such as gables, tall chimneys and dormers that are aligned to windows below.

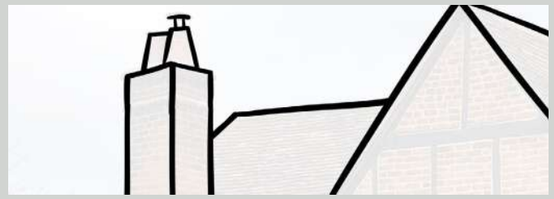
3.137. Brickwork frequently has a warm red colour from the Hertfordshire brick earth and often incorporates feature brickwork such as geometric patterns.

3.138. Well-crafted details can be found on traditional elevations of buildings within the local area adding visual interest and depth to the local architecture.

DETAILS



Gable forms with timber detailing

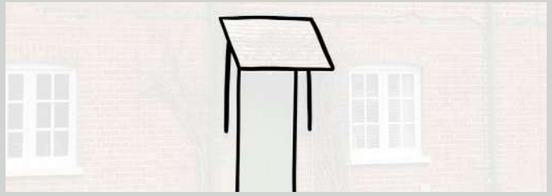


Tall chimney stacks

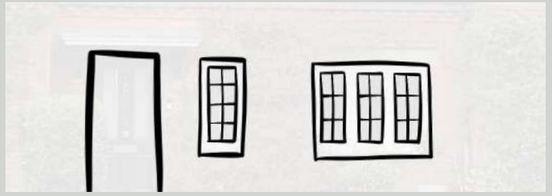
MATERIALS

Red earthy brick types

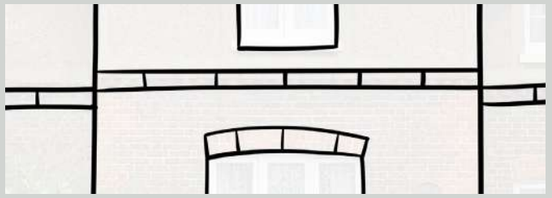
Warmer brick types



Simple lean-to porches



Consistent window sizes



Brickwork detailing on corners and use of brick banding at storey heights

Light painted timber

Red roof tiles

Brown roof tiles

EVALUATING PLACE

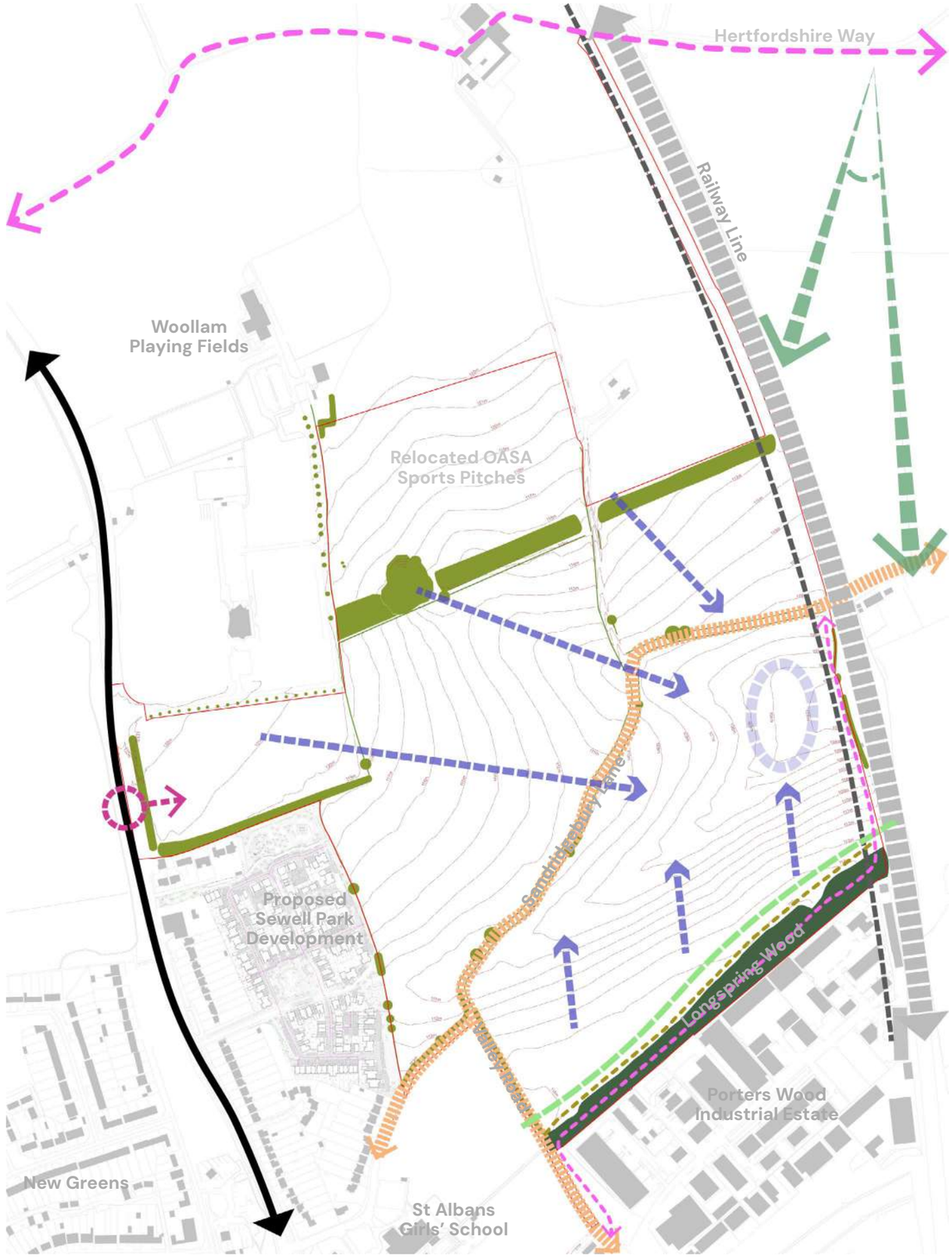
Site Synthesis

3.139. The findings of the 'observing place' analysis undertaken through technical work compiled by the design team has established that the Site is a suitable location for development, which could be brought forward without giving rise to significant environmental effects.

3.140. The site analysis has identified a number of key issues that should be addressed as part of the placemaking strategy for the Site as follows:

- Topography and geology - the Site and its surrounds are characterised by an undulating land form with a valley form extending into the Site from the east. There are a mix of underlying ground materials including a prevalence of clay and chalks.
- Water, green infrastructure and landscape - surface water infiltrates into the ground at its east. There are a number of existing trees and hedgerows on the Site that should be retained including the Longspring Wood LWS which is designated ancient woodland. There are distinct views from the north and east along and across the Sandridge Valley.
- Ecology and biodiversity - whilst the majority of the Site comprises habitats of low ecological value, there is good potential for habitat creation.
- Historical legacy - St Albans is rich with historic context; the Site is adjacent to an area of substantial post-war growth to the north of St Albans centre.
- Visual and environmental exposure, enclosure and shelter - The valley form offers daylight and aspect considerations
- Connectivity - The Site is well-connected to St Albans and has the potential to strengthen connectivity further.
- Land use - The area is characterised by suburban residential development
- Urban grain and built form - The suburban surrounds are of a medium-low density and typically low building heights.
- Edges and beyond - To the south is the residential extent of St Albans while to the north is open sports field and agricultural land.
- Unique features and narratives - Commonality in building materials and details
- Local vernacular details and materials - Use of red and earthy tones and the inclusion of well-crafted details on elevations that offer interest and architectural quality.

3.141. The 'observing place' analysis and stakeholder consultation undertaken during the preparation of the planning application have demonstrated that there are no technical or environmental constraints to development that cannot be appropriately mitigated. Specific opportunities and constraints have been identified through this process and are summarised at Figure 20.



LEGEND

- Planning application site boundary
- Existing 1m contours
- Railway line
- 30m stand-off zone from railway line
- Harpenden Road
- Sandridgebury Lane and Valley Road
- Public Rights of Way - bridleway inlcuding Hertfordshire Way
- Public rights of Way - footpath
- Permissive footpath
- Agreed site access
- Longspring Wood with associated 15m offset from ancient woodland
- Tree / group of trees / hedgerow
- Key views to the site
- Indicative direction for surface water flooding and main infiltration area

FIGURE 20 – CONSTRAINTS & OPPORTUNITIES PLAN

Four

Design Evolution

Consultation and engagement has been carried out throughout the design process with a wide range of stakeholders and consultees to test the vision and technical conclusions for Woollam Park and evolve the most appropriate design strategy for the Site.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

4.1. The proposals have evolved through a collaborative approach to design that has involved the design team and key consultees working closely together to formulate an appropriate development proposal for the Site. Consultation has been undertaken throughout an extensive period between 2018-2024 with key stakeholders including engaging with the general public on the proposals prior to the proposals being submitted. A full Statement of Community Engagement (SCI) is submitted with this Planning Application outlining in detail the consultation and engagement that has been carried out to support the development of the proposals.

4.2. SACDC and HCC officers have been integral to the design process having had a long-standing involvement in relation to the Site. Having been involved in the Site and proposals from the outset, officers have been able to identify particular components that are the most important for future development of the Site and ensure that they are maintained throughout the evolution of the proposals; for example, the location of vehicular access to the Site from Harpenden Road, the future status of Sandridgebury Lane and the size and location of the Primary School.

4.3. Engagement has been undertaken in the context of previous scheme proposals being formulated in relation to the emerging Local Plan. In 2018, the Woollam Park Site was identified as a 'Broad Location' in the draft Local Plan due to limited urban housing options, minimal Green Belt impact, and high accessibility. This led to a draft Masterplan for 1,000 homes being presented in July 2020 to the SACDC Planning Policy Committee (see below). In July 2023, SACDC's new Regulation 18 Local Plan identified St Albans as the primary focus for development and continued to designate North St Albans as a "Broad Location" for growth. In September 2024, SACDC published the Regulation 19 emerging Local Plan which again identified the Site development.

4.4. The collaborative approach to the current scheme design has largely been conducted through formal meetings and workshops with particularly SACDC and HCC as well as other key stakeholders including Sport England. Following the requirements of the SACDC Strategic Sites Guidance (2023), the proposals have also been presented to the Design: South East (D:SE) - St. Albans Design Review Panel (DRP) on a number of occasions.

4.5. D:SE - St. Albans DRP have been engaged with three times during the course of formulating proposals for the Site; twice (in November 2019 and March 2020) in relation to previous scheme proposals that supported representations to the emerging SACDC Local Plan and more recently in March 2024 in relation to the formulation of this Planning Application.

Public exhibition event held at Christ Church, 3 September 2024

Pop up consultation event held in St Albans city centre, 21 August 2024

4.6. The key conclusions of the respective DRP reports can be summarised as follows:

DRP Report 1 - 4 December 2019

1. The vision needs to be strong and imaginative - to be reflected clearly in the strategy and arrangement of the Site.
2. Sustainable transport and connectivity need to be considered as part of a much wider strategy beyond the Site's boundary.
3. Character and identity need to develop from urban design considerations such as grain, form and density.
4. Environmental constraints (such as the noise and pollution generated from the Harpenden Road and railway) need to be clearly identified and responded to.
5. The urban form and fabric of historic Hertfordshire villages should be referenced.
6. The location and configuration of the local centre need to be reconsidered in order to maximise the density of activity and access by walking, cycling and public transport.
7. The parking strategy to consider 'type' and 'allocation' of parking.
8. The new neighbourhood must be future-proofed through long-term community stewardship and management, providing sustainable low-carbon housing types.

DRP Report 2 - 1 April 2020

1. Preparation of a clear set of parameter plans and Site-wide development strategies embedded as part of the illustrative masterplan submission. The submission should allow for an appropriate level of future flexibility.
2. Higher average net densities should be considered, in order to unlock a sustainable vision for the Site.
3. Clarify who the new residents of North St Albans will be, and use this narrative to develop densities, street character and house types.
4. Further work is needed to ensure value is captured to strengthen transport links across St Albans to help new residents make the modal shift away from car use.
5. A stewardship and community management plan should be significantly developed in order to ensure the large swathes of communal land will be properly maintained, adapted and future-proofed against climate change.

DRP Report 3 - 4 April 2024

1. Provide detailed contextual analysis to underpin the development of a robust and coherent approach to the Site. This must include the wider context beyond the red line boundary.
2. Revisit and draw in detail the key connectivity and landscape place-making principles which will drive the narrative for, and distinctive character of, the Site.
3. Develop a bold, aspirational, landscape-led vision that defines what type of place this will be and gives it identity.

4. Provide clarity on what the Local Centre includes and when it will be used, supported by evidence-based analysis of who will live here.
5. Provide clarity on what the density distribution will look like and the typologies that will be adopted to achieve it.
6. Demonstrate the value of the development of this Site to people of St Albans.
7. Ensure that the outline masterplan is structured around simple, clear ideas which can be realised within the delivery of the development parcels.
8. Evidence use of the 'St Albans Strategic Sites Design Guidance: Design Toolkit (July 2023)' in the development of the emerging framework and phasing strategy.

4.7. During 2024, a series of Urban Design Workshops were held between the design team and officers from SACDC and HCC as well as SACDC's appointed Urban Design Consultant (Garry Collinson). Four Urban Design Workshops were held and typically involved the design team submitting material in advance of workshops relating to the observation and evaluation of the Site and its surrounds and details of the emerging proposals which were then discussed at the workshops with guidance from officers and SACDC's Urban Design Consultant in the context of the SACDC Strategic Sites Guidance (2023) to develop the proposals further.

4.8. The Urban Design Workshops focussed on the application of the SACDC Strategic Sites Guidance Toolkit document in shaping the proposals and forming an appropriate narrative to the scheme that is based on a thorough analysis of the Site and its context. The workshops were also used as an effective forum to discuss the spatial typologies that should be used to realise the vision for the Site. Specific discussion also took place in relation to the role and status of Sandridgebury Lane and how this would interact with the proposals and support movement within and beyond the Site.

Public and Stakeholder Engagement

4.9. The Applicant has conducted a multi-stage public consultation strategy that engaged residents, elected members and local community groups on the broad principles underlying the proposed development.

4.10. Previous consultation exercises had taken place regarding Woollam Park during earlier phases of the Local Plan process, particularly in early 2020. In 2023 and 2024 further consultation was carried out on the proposals that form this Planning Application.

4.11. Multi-faceted and in-depth public consultation was undertaken to support the proposals, starting with stakeholder meetings from Q4 2023 to Q2 2024 and then formal exhibition events and 'pop-up' engagements in high-footfall areas to ensure the message was delivered to a broad cross-section of the community.

4.12. The consultation strategy implemented by the Applicant included:

- Two rounds of leafletting to 2,000 addresses in the vicinity of the site, informing residents of the forthcoming consultation events and inviting their feedback
- A dedicated consultation website at woollampark.co.uk providing information on the proposals as well as access to the content from the community consultation.
- A direct email address for public enquiries.
- Thorough engagement with local elected representatives, including members of St Albans City & District Council and local parish councils including Sandridge Parish Council and St Michaels Parish Council.
- Additional engagement meetings throughout 2024 with groups of relevance to the proposals, for instance local organisations committed to the promotion of active and sustainable travel modes within St Albans and an in-person meeting held with representatives of CLASH (Save St Albans Green Belt) in September 2024.
- Two formal in-person public exhibition events held in September 2024 (3 September 2024, Christ Church, High Oaks, New Greens, St Albans and 4 September 2024, The Alban Arena, Civic Centre, St Albans)
- Three 'pop-up' engagement events in high-footfall areas to facilitate broader awareness of the proposed development.

4.13. The in-person events were complemented by a thorough programme of direct engagement meetings with elected members, parish councils and representative organisations.

4.14. To reach a wider range of people and create a more accessible engagement programme, the applicant team deployed digital engagement methods as part of the engagement strategy. A dedicated website (woollampark.co.uk) was set up explaining the proposals and summarising the technical matters relating to them.

4.15. The website has been set up as an alternative but complementary platform for consultation as well as a place for residents to visit to learn more about the plans. It also hosts a copy of the exhibition boards to allow residents to review at a time convenient to themselves. The website has been available since the launch of the public consultation in August 2024 and has been updated on a number of occasions since its initial launch.

4.16. In addition to the dozens of relevant conversations held at the 'pop-up' engagement events, 178 local people attended one of the two exhibition events. Over 1,200 individual people viewed the dedicated consultation website, while over 100 people submitted feedback on the proposals, through physical or digital means.

4.17. The feedback collected has been invaluable in allowing the application team to refine the proposals and to carry out further preparatory work where necessary to help address issues raised by residents.

4.18. The Statement of Community Involvement submitted with the planning application provides information about the webinar event and quantitative analysis of the feedback obtained at the event.

DESIGN REVIEW

Scheme evolution timeline

DRP Concept Framework (November 2019)
(Produced by Urban Wilderness)

4.19. An initial concept framework was produced to support the first DRP meeting. Importantly, this drawing placed the primary access, school and local centre in the broad positions which they are now proposed and were supported by the DRP.

DRP Concept Framework (March 2020)
(Produced by Urban Wilderness)

4.20. The next version of the concept framework was produced for the second DRP and showed a greater level of detail and some minor refinements to the position and extent of open spaces to address the panel's initial comments.

Call for Sites Submission (March 2023)
(Produced by Urban Wilderness)

4.21. In responding to the second DRP comments, further refinements were made to the proposals that were then submitted to the Call for Sites consultation to the emerging SACDC Local Plan. Key changes included a greater generosity of open space alongside Sandridgebury Lane to include particularly sufficient space for drainage attenuation.

B1 - North St Albans, AL3 6DD			
Parish/ Ward	St Albans / Bernards Heath / Sandridge & Wheathampstead	Allocated site boundary (red line)	Original HELAA site boundary
Hectares	46.75		
Proposed use	Primarily residential 1,146 units (indicative) (this includes 150 from planning permission 5/2021/0423)		
Proforma Ref	M-020		
HELAA Ref	SA-10-21		
Green Belt Sub Area Ref	SA-62 / SA-63a/ SA-66 / SA-69 / partially SA-63c		

Draft Local Plan Allocation (September 2023)
(Produced by SACDC)

4.22. The Draft Local Plan included draft site allocation B1 which identified a proposed site area for allocated development 1,146 units. This included the Sewell Park development which, at that stage, had already received Outline Planning Permission for "up to 150 dwellings" (Approval Date: 12/01/2022)

DRP Concept Framework (March 2024)
(Produced by Define)

4.23. A concept framework was produced for the third DRP that responded to previous DRP comments and retained key masterplan elements that had been supported previously including the positions of the primary access, school and local centre.

4.24. The concept framework also reflected more detailed technical work to establish, for example, the necessary spatial requirements for drainage attenuation and biodiversity net gain.

B1 - North St Albans, AL3 6DD		
Parish / Ward	St Albans / Bernards Heath / Sandridge & Wheathampstead	Allocated site boundary
Hectares	54.85	
Proposed use	Primarily residential 1,097 units (indicative) (this includes 150 from planning permission 5/2021/0423)	
Proforma Ref	M-020	
HELAA Ref	SA-10-21/SA-22-21	
Green Belt Sub Area Ref	SA-62 / SA-63a/ SA-66 / SA-69 / partially SA-63c / Not recommended	

Draft Local Plan Allocation (September 2024)
(Produced by SACDC)

4.25. The Regulation 19 Draft Local Plan provides a updated proposed allocation that slightly revises the number of units proposed to 1,097 (including the 150 approved dwellings at Sewell Park.

Five

PLACEMAKING STRATEGY

A preferred placemaking strategy has been reached as a result of scheme evolution documented above. The approach is underpinned by extensive consultation, design, environmental and technical work to ensure that proposal will result in the best possible outcome for the benefit of new and existing communities. This section of the DAS describes the development proposals and explains the placemaking approach and concepts that have been applied to the proposed development particularly in respect of land uses amount, access, landscaping, layout and appearance.

1. A multi-functional network of green infrastructure that celebrates and reflects the site's unique landscapes

2. An integrated and connected movement strategy

3. A vibrant and diverse range of uses and activities

4. A distinct character and placemaking

KEY DESIGN PRINCIPLES

5.1. Having developed a vision and then undertaken technical assessments of the Site and its surrounds, a series of design principles have been formulated in order to evolve the most appropriate placemaking strategy for the Site.

5.2. The design principles address the key matters arising from observing and evaluation the Site and its local context and allow sufficient flexibility for detailed design solutions to evolve (and be consulted on), in conjunction with future Reserved Matters planning applications.

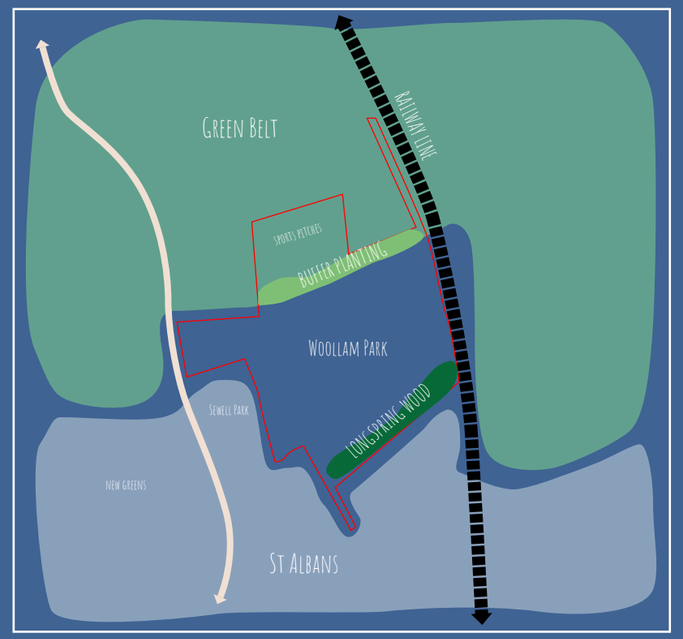
5.3. The design principles follow four key themes (shown left) which are broken down into sub-principles and are identified on the following pages, allow for sustainable delivery of this part of the North St. Albans allocation, whilst also respecting local character and landscape assets and being focussed on the health and well-being of its future residents.

1. A multi-functional network of green infrastructure that celebrates and reflects the site's unique landscapes

Integrate existing landscape features

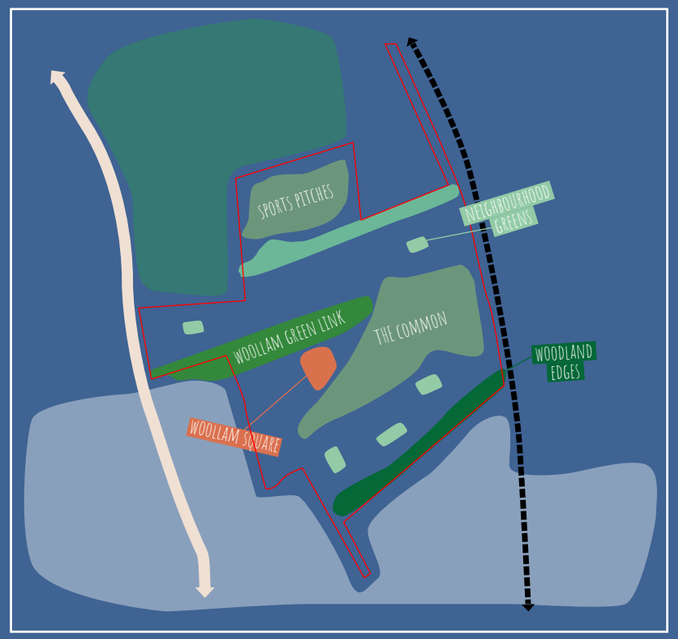
- The creation of a proposal that connects the site with the wider landscape through using existing earthforms where possible, creating interesting and expansive open spaces and providing planting within development blocks to assimilate development into the landscape.
- The Site will also be connected to the wider area and its existing landscape assets with a integrated network of active travel connections that allow existing important resources to be more accessible to new and existing residents.

Strengthening the green belt



- Minimise harm to the spatial and visual openness of the Green Belt and strengthen boundaries with remaining Green Belt land to help ensure their permanence.
- Deliver compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land.

Flexible network of formal and informal open spaces



- Within the Site, a connected network of open spaces will provide a variety of functions and enhance connectivity for humans and nature within, beyond and through the Site.

2. An integrated and connected movement strategy

Unlocked movement networks for existing and new communities

- Proposals facilitate wider strategic connectivity beyond the Site that will enhance everyday lives (e.g. enhanced active travel access to Heartwood Forest)
- A strategic mobility hub in the heart of the development will offer multimodal connectivity between the development and the wider area including key local facilities and services. This will in turn support modal shift and assist in reducing air pollution and carbon creation.

Integrate new and existing community

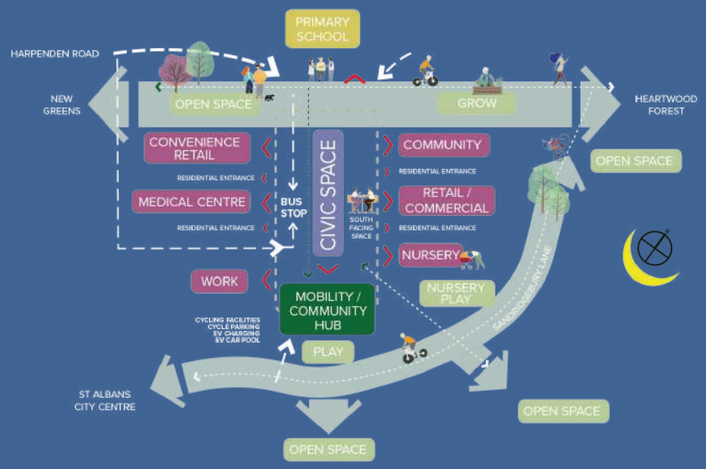
- Strong connections with the immediate surrounds of the Site and the wider locale that facilitate sharing of new and existing facilities with new and existing residents alike.
- Beyond the Site and it's immediate vicinity, improvements to connections and routes will allow for enhanced access to key assets, services and facilities .

Open and permeable network of streets

- Proposals support active and sustainable travel patterns as well as public transport routes that connect with the existing local movement network.
- Within the Site, the proposed movement network provides direct, safe and attractive access to key trip generators including the local centre, primary school and open spaces.

3. A vibrant and diverse range of uses & activities

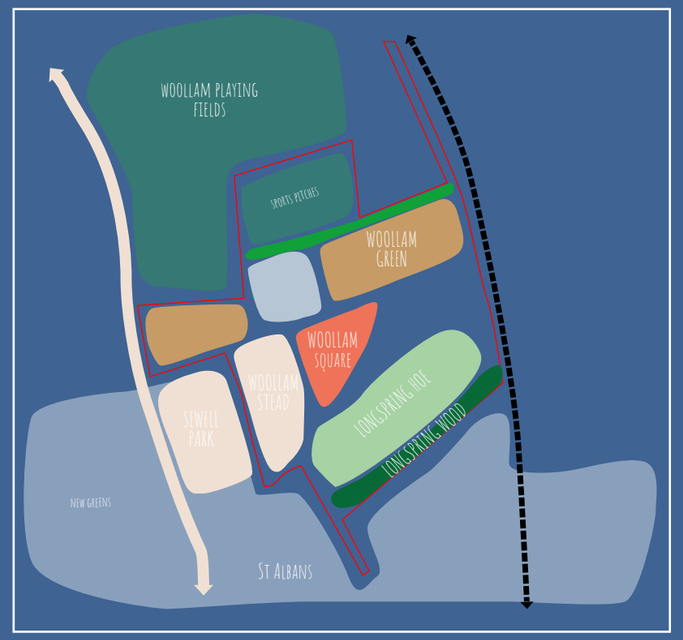
New community facilities to complement existing local offering



- A local centre will be provided that supports civic, education, local retail, mobility and play functions. The concentration of these functions within the centre of the Site will ensure maximum accessibility to new residents; it will also provide an identifiable centre within the Site that existing local residents can access too.
- The availability of flexible internal and external spaces in the local centre will facilitate cultural and community activities that strengthen and engender the formation of a strong community.
- A community building and a multifunctional civic square at the centre of the development will provide the opportunity for the new community to come together.

4. Distinct character and placemaking

New development will contribute to the distinct character of its neighbourhoods



- The new neighbourhood will respond to the local characteristics of the immediate context and celebrate the broader St Albans context by creating distinct character areas within the development that reflect local vernacular and materials and use appropriate building typologies to meet specific density requirements.

New development will deliver a range of housing densities and typologies

- A variety of housing typologies and forms will be provided to maximise efficiency. This approach will also support the creation of a diverse community that attracts a range of family units and resident ages.

MASTERPLAN FRAMEWORK

Scope

5.4. An Illustrative Framework Plan (shown right) has evolved directly from the preferred placemaking strategy and identifies the various placemaking components that could at a later date be addressed by a Design Code and subsequent Reserved Matters proposals so that the placemaking strategy can be realised.

5.5. The Illustrative Framework Plan has been reached following the evolution of the proposals as documented; it is underpinned by compliance with planning policy, consultation and engagement, design, environmental and technical work to ensure that proposal creates the best possible outcome for the benefit of new and existing residents and shows how a highly-connected new community can create a long term environment for residents to live healthy, fulfilled and enjoyable lives set within a rich green environment.

5.6. The Illustrative Framework Plan has been formulated in collaboration with SACDC officers throughout the pre-application process and uses the Strategic Sites Design Toolkit (July 2023) to show, illustratively, the disposition of development blocks (in the context of Outline proposals), green infrastructure and the movement network. Key extracts (or 'cut outs') of further detail are also shown on the Illustrative Framework Plan that relate to the specific spatial typologies that are proposed for the Site (Figure 21).

5.7. The proposals shown do not preclude alternative layouts as part of a subsequent Reserved Matters providing that the underlying principles and parameters established as part of the planning application are generally complied with and a high quality development can be achieved in accordance with planning guidance.

5.8. The images shown in this chapter are used to convey the design approach and are not intended to be wholly-representative of the final architecture of built form on the Site. They do however portray a level of design quality expected from the development.

The Illustrative Framework Plan identifies extracts of the Spatial Typologies that are explained in further detail below.

FIGURE 21 – ILLUSTRATIVE FRAMEWORK PLAN

Use and Amount

5.9. The predominant land use of the site is new housing with up to 1,000 homes and 80 care beds, including a range of housing types catering for a variety of ages, family sizes and tenures in line with the requirements of the relevant planning policies. This will include later living and extra care accommodation (Use Class C2/C3).

5.10. A 2-Form Entry Primary School and children's nursery are also proposed as well as a flexible mixed-use area with civic and community buildings (including Use Classes E, F1 and F2) and local convenience retail (Use Class E).

5.11. The proposed open spaces across the Site will provide for a number of functions and activities, including play and recreational activity, the retention of important trees and existing hedgerows (maintaining connectivity to preserve and enhance ecological habitats) as well as existing watercourses, drainage attenuation and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS).

5.12. The proposed range of land uses for the Site, their general arrangement and the amount of development is in general conformity with relevant adopted and emerging Development Plan policies.

	Land Use	Area (Ha)	%
Net Developable Area	Residential	18.18	36.24
	Primary School	2.00	3.99
	Local Centre	1.57	3.13
	Accommodation for Elderly	0.80	1.59
	Care Home	0.51	1.02
	Total NDA	**23.06**	**45.97**
Open Space	Key Civic Space	0.85	1.69
	Primary Link Street	1.16	2.31
	Green Infrastructure	18.09	36.06
	Relocated Old Albanian Sports Pitches	5.93	11.82
	Other Infrastructure	1.08	2.15
	Total Open Space	**27.11**	**54.03**
	Site boundary	**50.17**	**100**

FIGURE 22 - INDICATIVE LAND BUDGET

LEGEND

- Residential
- Primary School
- Local Centre
- Age restricted specialist accommodation for the elderly
- Care home
- Key civic space
- Location for a mobility hub / community-use pavilion
- Primary link street
- Green infrastructure
- Longspring Wood
- Buffer planting
- Area reserved for relocation of Old Albanian Sports Pitches and associated facilities

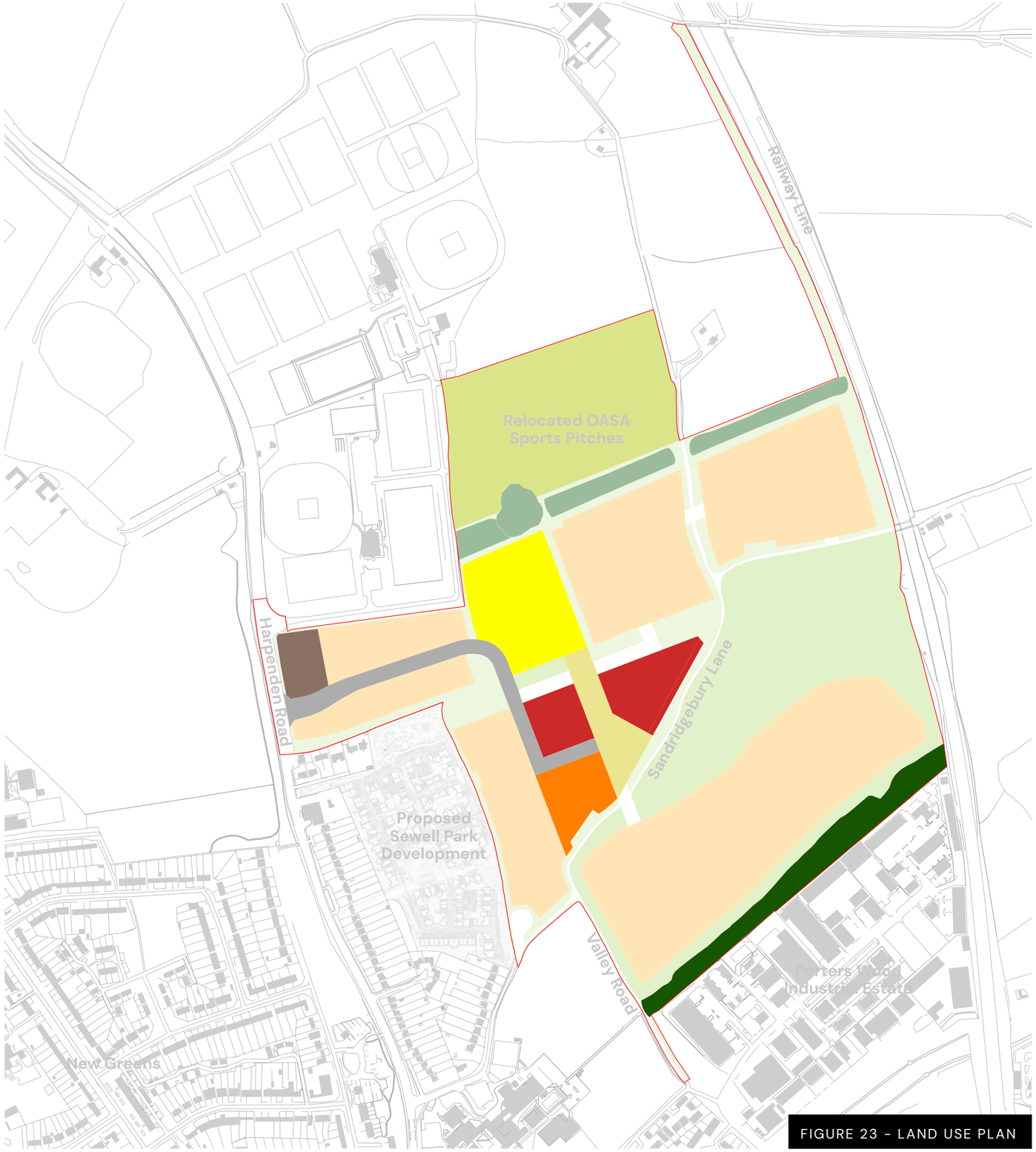


FIGURE 23 – LAND USE PLAN

Density

5.13. The Proposed Development seeks to make efficient, effective use of the land in accordance with the NPPF (December 2023) and adopted and emerging Development Plan. Proposed densities are shown indicatively in Figure 24 below and seek to recognise opportunities for positive placemaking with higher density development around the local centre and to the west of the Site adjoining the Sewell Park scheme with lower densities particularly along the northern, eastern and southern edges of the Site.

LEGEND

- Up to 100 dwellings per hectare
- Up to 85 dwellings per hectare
- Up to 50 dwellings per hectare
- Up to 42.5 dwellings per hectare
- Up to 35 dwellings per hectare
- Care home
- Primary School

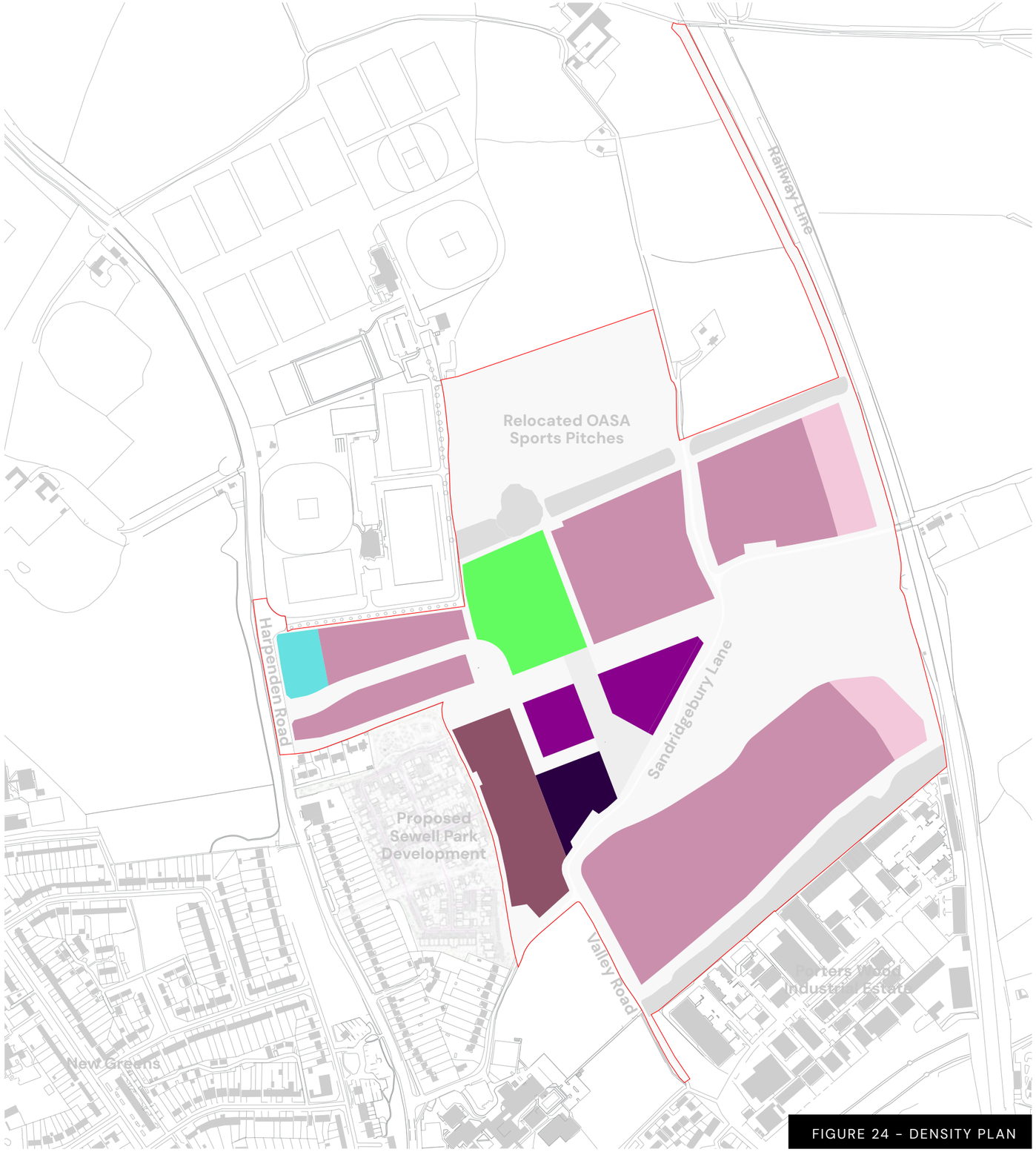


FIGURE 24 – DENSITY PLAN

Building Heights

5.14. Buildings heights are proposed to reflect and be sympathetic to the edge of settlement location noting opportunities for greater height generally to reflect the potential within the centre of the development around the local centre as well as on principal highway frontages and are shown indicatively at Figure 25.

LEGEND

- Indicative location for a mobility hub / community-use pavilion (1 storey)
- Up to 4m high (1 storey)
- Up to 9.3m* high to ridge (2 storeys)
- Up to 10.9m* high to ridge (2.5 storeys)
- Up to 12m** high to ridge (primary school)
- Up to 12.8m* high to ridge (3 storeys)
- Up to 16m* high to ridge (3 - 4 storeys)

* Houses = **3.15m** floor to floor + 3m pitch roof

Apartments / Retirement living = **3.5m** floor to floor ground floor + **3.15m** floor to floor uper floors + 3m pitch roof

Extra care facility = **3.5m** floor to floor + 3m pitch roof

Commercial = **6m** floor to floor (ground floor only)

** The specific height to be determined by school designer

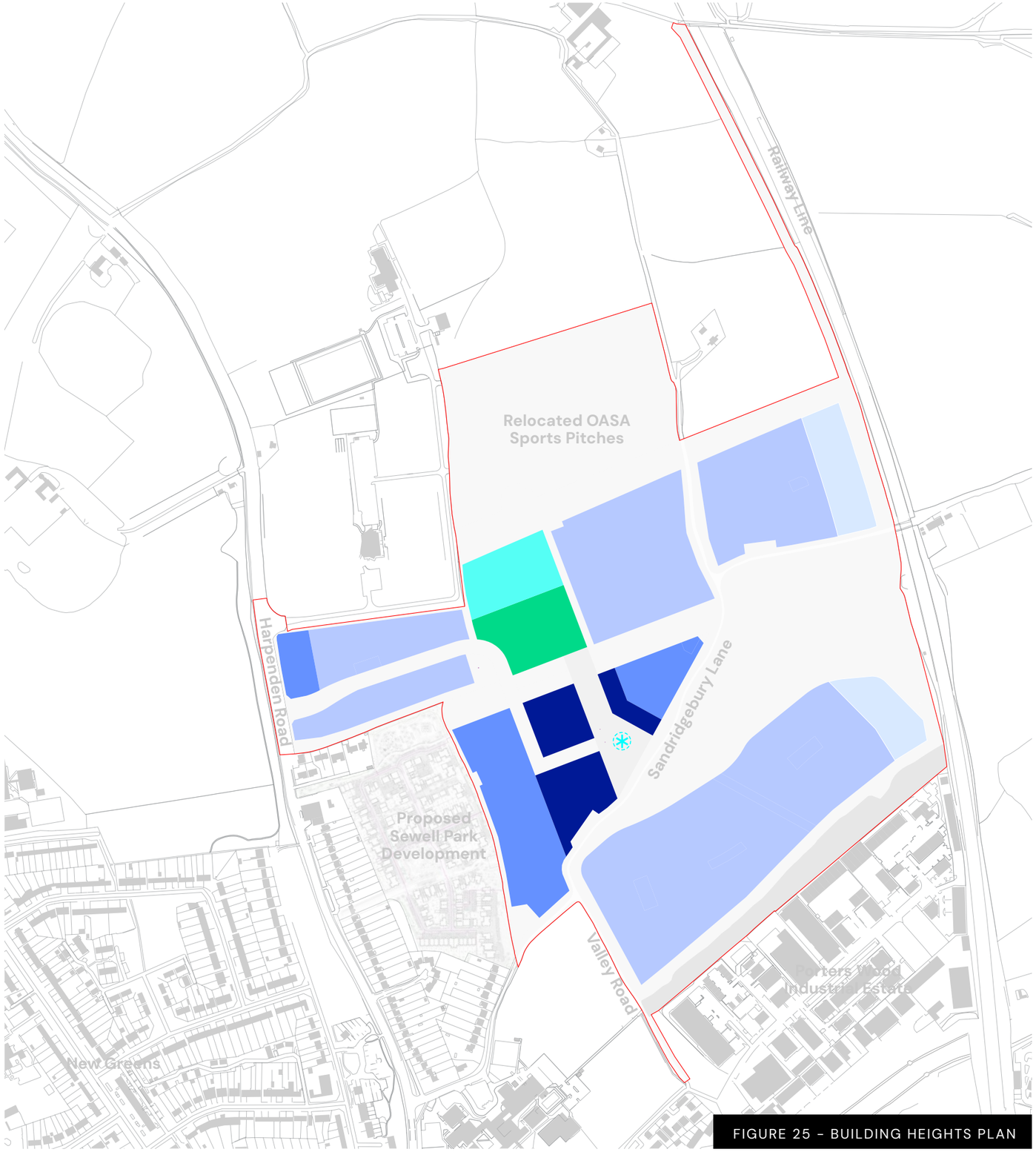


FIGURE 25 – BUILDING HEIGHTS PLAN

Layout and Appearance

5.15. Characterful development will be derived from an approach which distinguishes separate placemaking components - composed of edge, frontage and street typologies as well as key spaces and landmarks within the proposed development - that individually reflect the narrative and visionary principles for the Site. Key design principles will be applied to these placemaking components that will allow them to project a specific grouped character relative to the context within which they are set.

5.16. The Placemaking Plan (Figure 26) identifies a Placemaking Strategy for the Site based on the parameters set out in the application drawings. The plan identifies the placemaking components that should be subject to key design principles so that a characterful development can be realised.

5.17. The key placemaking components of the Placemaking Strategy are as follows:

- Spatial Typologies
- Key Spaces and Frontages
- Streets and Routes
- Landmarks

LEGEND

KEY SPACES & FRONTAGES

- The Common & Frontage
- Woollam Green Link & Frontage
- Longspring Wood & Frontage
- Neighbourhood Green & Frontage
- Woollam Square & Frontage

EDGES

- Sewell Park Edge
- Sandridgebury Lane Edge
- Railway Edge
- Northern Perimeter Edge
- Harpenden Road Edge
- Valley Road Edge

LANDMARK

- Key corner
- Gateway building
- Key vista termination
- Primary school building

MOVEMENT

- Vehicular primary access point
- Vehicular secondary access point
- Public Rights of Way (PRoW) - bridleway
- Public Rights of Way (PRoW) - footpath
- Permissive footpath
- Sandridgebury Lane and Valley Road
- Sandridgebury Lane and Valley Road closed to vehicular traffic
- Private access road
- Primary link street
- Primary access street
- One way street
- Primary active travel route with fully segregated cycle lane
- Indicative network of proposed footpaths / cycle lanes
- Vehicular turning point
- Mobility hub / community-use pavilion

FIGURE 26 – PLACEMAKING PLAN

PLACEMAKING STRATEGY

Spatial Typologies

5.18. Analysis of context and the evolution of the Site and the local context has arrived at a series of spatial typologies and place names that have informed the proposals and will articulate local distinctiveness as well as changes in form, density and detail.

5.19. The spatial typologies have been prepared with reference to the SACDC Strategic Sites Design Toolkit (July 2023) and in response to recommendations provided through the pre-application Urban Design Workshops and the D:SE DRP recommendations.

5.20. The spatial typologies allow the pre-existing context of the site to inform future design, ensuring the form and character of new places reflect a locally-derived narrative about placemaking. Providing multiple spatial typologies will allow the scheme to respond to discreet contextual references within the Site and wider area which at a micro level will allow the overall sequence of consciously-considered spaces and design details to link back to the Site's wider context.

5.21. The Spatial Typologies Plan (Figure 27) identifies the respective spatial typologies. Descriptions of spatial typologies are then provided below to set a narrative for specific placemaking components (e.g. streets and movement, character and scale, landscape and public realm, land uses and activities) that can be applied in future detailed design activities (e.g. Design Codes and Reserved Matters Applications).

FIGURE 27 - SPATIAL TYPOLOGIES PLAN

WOOLLAM GREEN

Design Principles

Public Realm and Landscape

- 01 Looser northern edge to respond to the openness of the playing fields and arable farmland beyond.
- 02 Undulating semi-natural Common land to the south (valley bottom).
- 03 Buildings arranged around a series of landscaped neighbourhood greens within blocks.

Parking

- 04 Lower densities allow both terraced and semi- detached housing to support on-plot parking.
- 05 Some on-street parking provided, carefully designed to support both residential and visitor requirements.

Streets

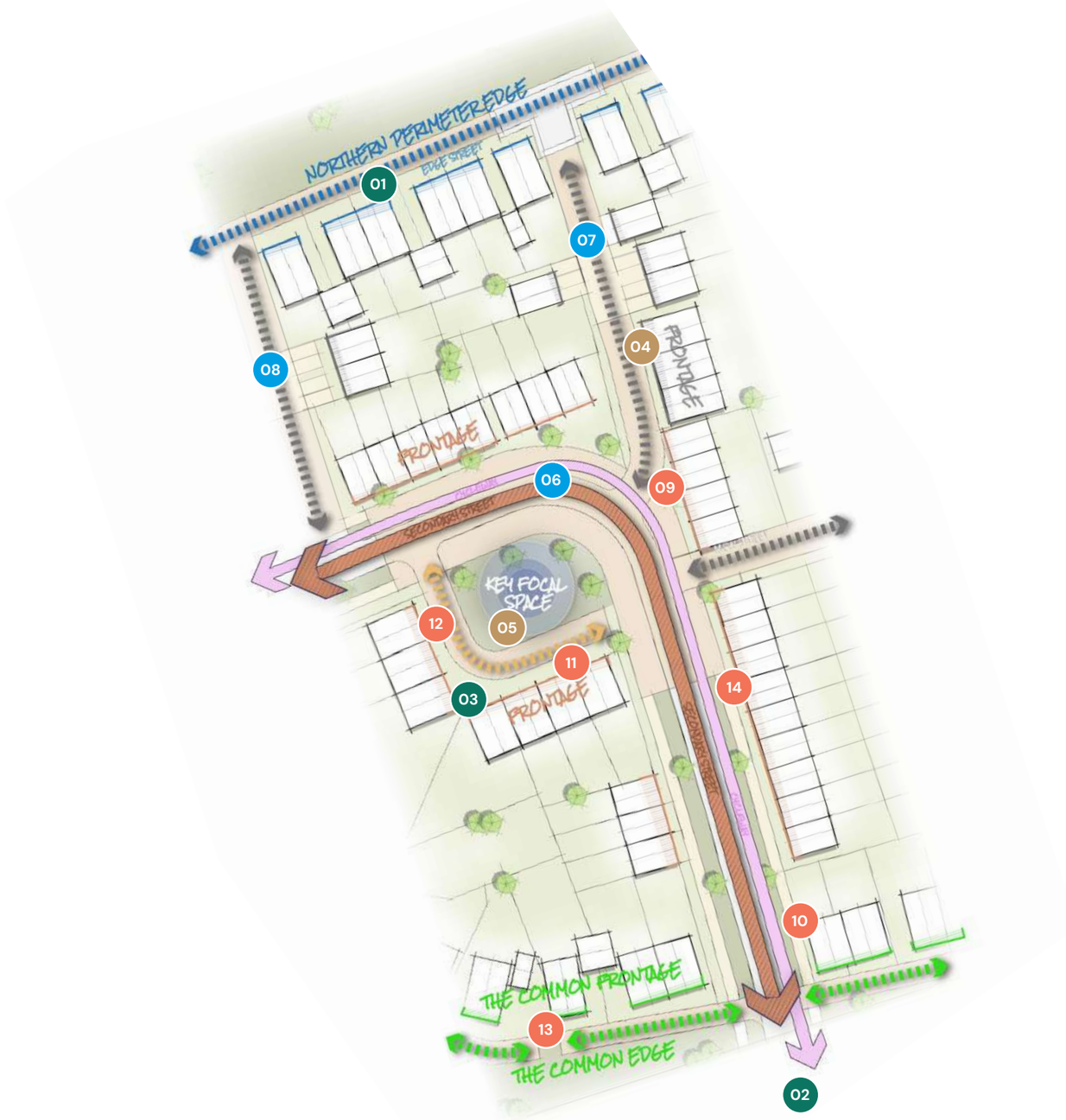
- 06 Primary / secondary routes aligns with neighbourhood greens, forming the principle frontage.
- 07 Secondary / tertiary routes run perpendicular providing pedestrian and cyclist access to primary route and forming housing blocks.
- 08 Mews streets support parking for terraced houses and access to the edge typologies.

Buildings

- 09 Predominantly 2 to 3-storey housing throughout.
- 10 Housing arranged to form gateways at important townscape junctions.
- 11 Standard housing typologies are augmented at points of townscape importance.
- 12 Neighbourhood greens to be contained by continuous frontage.
- 13 Rhythmic roof forms along primary street and Common edge.
- 14 Garden walls support the urban structure.

*all images are illustrative and not wholly representative of final architecture and materials

Green: "Set on high ground, with built form configured around a public green space".
Strategic Sites Design Guidance - Design Toolkit, SACDC (July 2023)



Manifesto Response

People Rules

01 Community at its Heart

Strategically-distanced neighbourhood greens and permeable active travel access to the main public spaces and local centre functions and facilities will support and engender communal life.

02 Diversity Rules

A mix and range of house typologies, sizes and tenures will attract a variety of socio-economic groups and family sizes. Neighbourhood greens and easy access to larger public spaces will allow all members of the community to mix.

03 Live Well by Accident

A dense, connected network of active travel routes with convenient, direct and attractive access to public parks and spaces will encourage healthier movement and lifestyles.

Place Rules

04 Inspired by Landscape

Blocks and routes will align with the rolling topography and celebrate views in and out. On the northern edge, a looser grain will respect the aspect to the open countryside whilst to the south a rhythmic form and arrangement will frame the Common.

05 Car in Not King

Whilst necessary to access the development, vehicular routes will be more convoluted/less direct than active travel routes. On plot parking will be kept away from building frontages to minimise cars in the street scene.

06 Planning for the Future

A wealth of active travel connections within and beyond the typology area will maximise the number of journeys made by sustainable travel modes. Materials will be used that are high quality, long-lasting and low in maintenance. Orthogonal blocks will maximise the success of PV performance.

WOOLLAM STEAD

Design Principles

Public Realm and Landscape

01 Series of permeable pedestrian routes arranged to support shared spaces between blocks.

02 Public realm to give priority to active travel and support permeability.

03 Lanes and mews spaces provide access to housing blocks and lead to the principal street network

Parking

04 Higher densities and greater proportion of apartments require a mix of parking solutions including; on-plot parking, enclosed courtyard parking and carefully designed on-street in defined pockets of 5-6.

05 On-street parking for visitors and residents integrated into the street and shared surfaces

Streets

06 Secondary mews and streets run perpendicular providing pedestrian and cyclist access to the public square.

07 Some secondary streets do not provide vehicular access to the high street but end in shared surface spaces with integrated parking

Buildings

08 3 to 4 storey mixed use apartment buildings are parallel to high street to give spatial coherence.

09 2 to 3 storey terraced housing along the secondary streets and mews.

10 Standard housing typologies are augmented at points of townscape importance.

11 Gardens walls support the urban structure

*all images are illustrative and not wholly representative of final architecture and materials

Stead: "a higher density towards the centre where a 'market square' for public space (i.e. Woollam Sqaure) forms the focal point".
Strategic Sites Design Guidance - Design Toolkit, SACDC (July 2023)

Manifesto Response

People Rules

01 Community at its Heart

Woollam Stead will be a dense area of housing whose residents will benefit from immediate adjacency to Woollam Square and the civic functions that it provides as well as being a meeting place for the community.

02 Diversity Rules

Woollam Stead will provide a mix and range of house typologies, sizes and tenures but with a specific focus on denser (and therefore smaller) family housing typologies arranged as terraces and townhouses.

03 Live Well by Accident

The area will be accessible from a dense, connected network of active travel routes that will also support further active travel beyond the site and importantly, directly into the immediately adjacent Sewell Park development.

Place Rules

04 Inspired by Landscape

Woollam Stead slopes gently from north to south. The terraced form will take up slight changes in level. Due to the high density form, buildings will generally be hard to pavement edges however there will be opportunities for planting in the street.

05 Car in Not King

Development will be formed around a dense, close-knit and fine-grain of shared space streets that support active travel movement, communal life and play in the street.

06 Planning for the Future

A wealth of active travel connections within and beyond the typology area will maximise the number of journeys made by sustainable travel modes. Materials will be used that are high quality, long-lasting and low in maintenance. Orthogonal blocks will maximise the success of PV performance.

WOOLLAM SQUARE

Design Principles

Public Realm and Landscape

01 Series of permeable pedestrian routes arranged to support shared spaces between blocks.

02 Public realm to give priority to active travel and support permeability.

03 Public square forms focal point of the urban structure and wider neighbourhood.

Parking

04 Higher densities and greater proportion of apartments require a mix of parking solutions including; on-plot parking, enclosed courtyard parking and carefully designed on-street in defined pockets of 5-6 to house.

Streets

05 Primary / secondary routes align with the public square, forming the principle frontage. One way section between the school and retirement running north to south.

Buildings

06 2 to 5-storey mixed-use buildings to frame public square and face onto key edges to give spatial coherence.

07 Public buildings in pivotal locations act as marker buildings, enlivening the principle public spaces.

08 Rhythmic roof forms along Common edge.

09 Built form supports distant views.

*all images are illustrative and not wholly representative of final architecture and materials

Heart: the focus for the community and civic functions of the development.

Manifesto Response

People Rules

01 Community at its Heart

Woollam Square will provide the communal heart to the scheme with the civic functions that the community needs accessible via a permeable active travel network. The public realm will be a focus for meeting and interacting as a community.

02 Diversity Rules

As with the rest of the development, Woollam Square will provide a mix and range of house typologies, sizes and tenures but with a specific focus on denser housing typologies including apartments and later living.

03 Live Well by Accident

Woollam Square will be accessible from a dense, connected network of active travel routes that will also support further active travel beyond the site to other centres and key trip generators (e.g. schools, the hospital).

Place Rules

04 Inspired by Landscape

The square will slope gently from the primary school at its north to the Common to the south. The southern end of Woollam Square will fan out to afford views down the Sandridge Valley.

05 Car in Not King

Vehicular movement will be controlled through the Square; the square provides an important convergence point for all routes and modes and movement will be designed so as not to dominate the space.

06 Planning for the Future

A wealth of active travel connections within and beyond the typology area will maximise the number of journeys made by sustainable travel modes. Materials will be used that are high quality, long-lasting and low in maintenance. Orthogonal blocks will maximise the success of PV performance.

LONGSPRING HOE

Design Principles

Public Realm and Landscape

01 Public realm to give priority to pedestrians and to support the permeable street network that steps down the contours.

02 Undulating semi-natural Common land to the north.

03 Existing Longspring Wood (ancient woodland/local wildlife site) to the south to be managed, maintained and celebrated by the proposals.

04 Trees and planting throughout the typology area to mitigate long range views from the north and east.

Parking

05 Lower densities allow both terraced and semi-detached housing to support on-plot parking.

06 Some on street parking provided, carefully designed to support both residential and visitor requirements.

Streets

07 Secondary streets configured along contours.

08 Pedestrian priority shared surface mews streets terrace down across the contours.

09 Mews streets support parking for terraced houses and access to the edge typologies.

Buildings

10 Predominantly 2 to 3-storey housing throughout.

11 Housing arranged to form gateways at important townscape junctions.

12 Standard housing typologies are augmented at points of townscape importance.

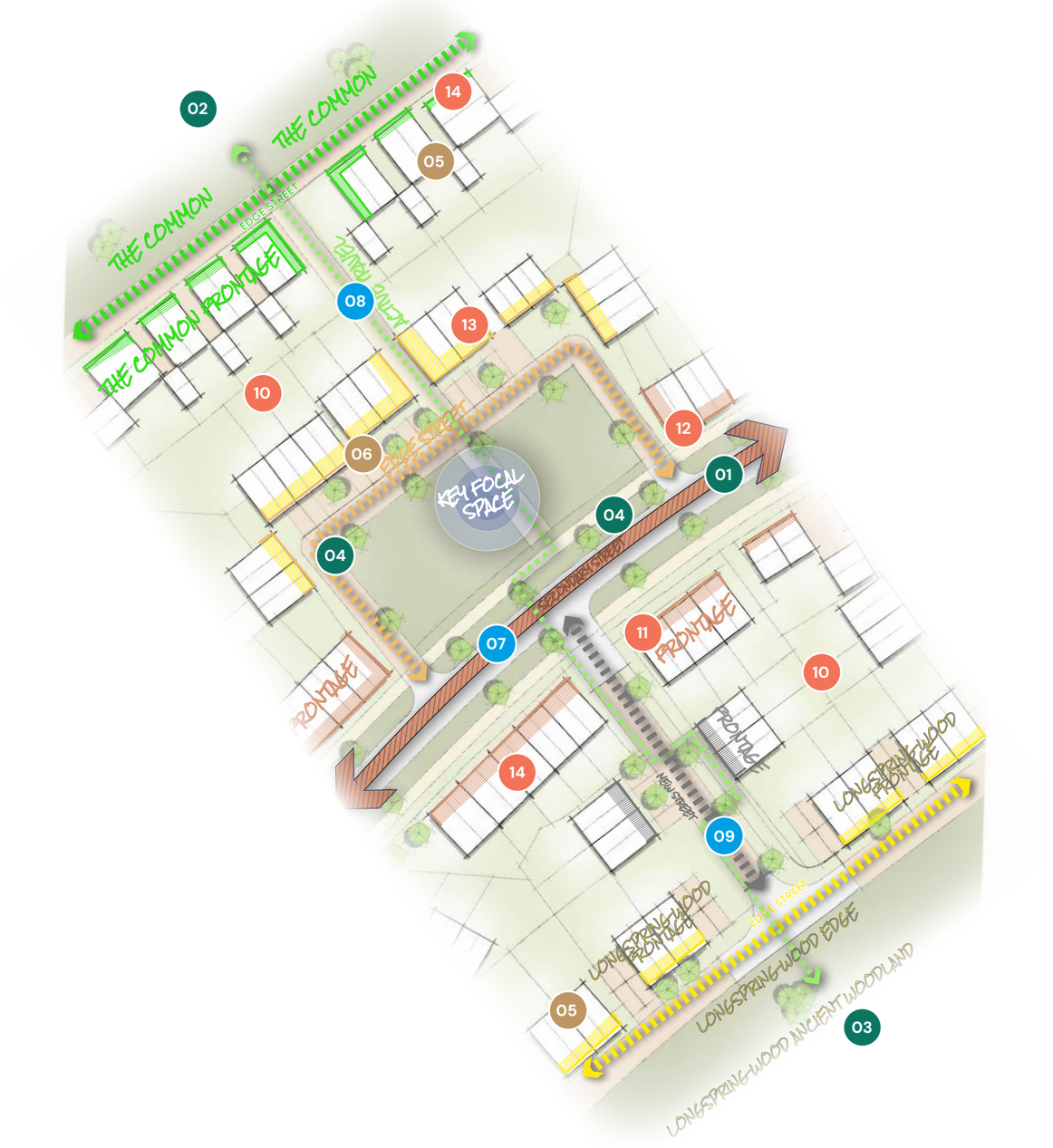
13 Neighbourhood greens to be contained by continuous frontage.

14 Rhythmic roof forms along secondary street and Common edge.

*all images are illustrative and not wholly representative of final architecture and materials

Hoe: "the structure and grain used in this typology respond to the existing landform and celebrate views across the surrounding landscape."

Strategic Sites Design Guidance - Design Toolkit, SACDC (July 2023)



Manifesto Response

People Rules

01 Community at its Heart

The residents of Longspring Hoe will benefit from immediate adjacency to Longspring Wood to the south and the Common to the north, both of which will support communal life and provide opportunities for community conservation and maintenance.

02 Diversity Rules

Longspring Hoe will provide a mix and range of house typologies, sizes and tenures but with a specific focus on medium and larger family housing typologies.

03 Live Well by Accident

A dense, connected network of active travel routes with convenient, direct and attractive access to public parks and spaces will encourage healthier movement and lifestyles.

Place Rules

04 Inspired by Landscape

Longspring Hoe provides a distinct slope down into the Sandridge Valley. The structure and grain of development will respond to the existing landform and celebrate views towards and across the landscape.

05 Car in Not King

Whilst necessary to access the development, vehicular routes will be more convoluted/less direct than active travel routes. On plot parking will be kept away from building frontages to minimise cars in the street scene.

06 Planning for the Future

A wealth of active travel connections within and beyond the typology area will maximise the number of journeys made by sustainable travel modes. Materials will be used that are high quality, long-lasting and low in maintenance. Orthogonal blocks will maximise the success of PV performance.

Key Spaces and Frontages

5.22. Within the Site there are several distinct key spaces and frontages (Figure 28) that form recognisable elements of the placemaking strategy. The design principles for each of these are defined on the following pages.

5.23. The detailed landscape treatment for Key Spaces will be described in future Design Codes in advance of Reserved Matters applications; however, we set out below the general design principles in terms of the formation of these spaces, their functions, particular landscape treatments and details that should be specified at Reserved Matters stage.

LEGEND

KEY SPACES & FRONTAGES

- The Common & Frontage
- Woollam Green Link & Frontage
- Longspring Wood & Frontage
- Neighbourhood Green & Frontage
- Woollam Square & Frontage

FIGURE 28 – KEY SPACES & FRONTAGES PLAN

FIGURE 29 - ILLUSTRATIVE LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN

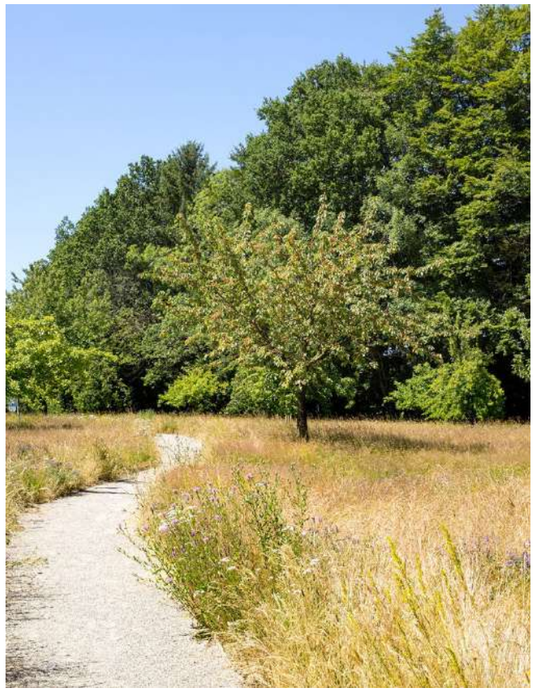
01 THE COMMON

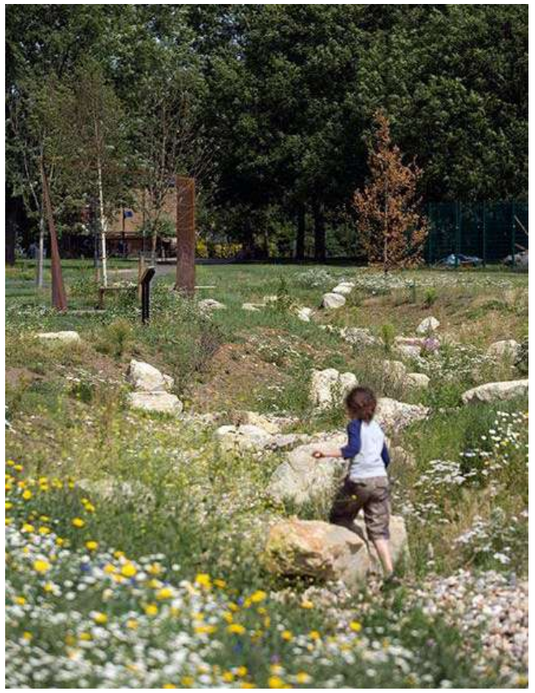
5.24. The Common will be an expansive, biodiverse and multi-functional green park that enhances east to west connections through the Site and provides an area for people and for nature. The space will contain an area in the centre that focusses on human activity whilst the edges will be used for important SuDS and wildlife habitat.

5.25. The central area will contain a flat section of mown grass for kickabouts and picnics, a large play space and a community garden. These uses will co-exist together to create a centre of gravity in the park for people to gather, have fun and socialise.

5.26. Around the edges of the Common, the land will serve two main purposes. The first is to redirect the development's surface water through a series of attenuation basins, alleviating local flooding and treating rainfall at source. The second is to play a key role in the enhancement of the Site's ecology, creating a series of wildlife habitats that will be planted with an abundance of native species.

5.27. Alongside the edges of the Common, development will face out onto the space to support its containment as well as providing an attractive outlook and offer natural surveillance.





THE COMMON

Design Principles

Public Realm and Landscape

01 Retention and enhancement of existing hedgerows and trees along Sandridgebury Lane, providing a key wildlife corridor.

02 Existing PROW.

03 Large swathes of native specimen tree and shrub planting set within attenuation basins creating a surface water cascade through the site.

04 Footpaths connect up development parcels, existing footpaths and adjacent settlements ensuring that the development ties into the local area.

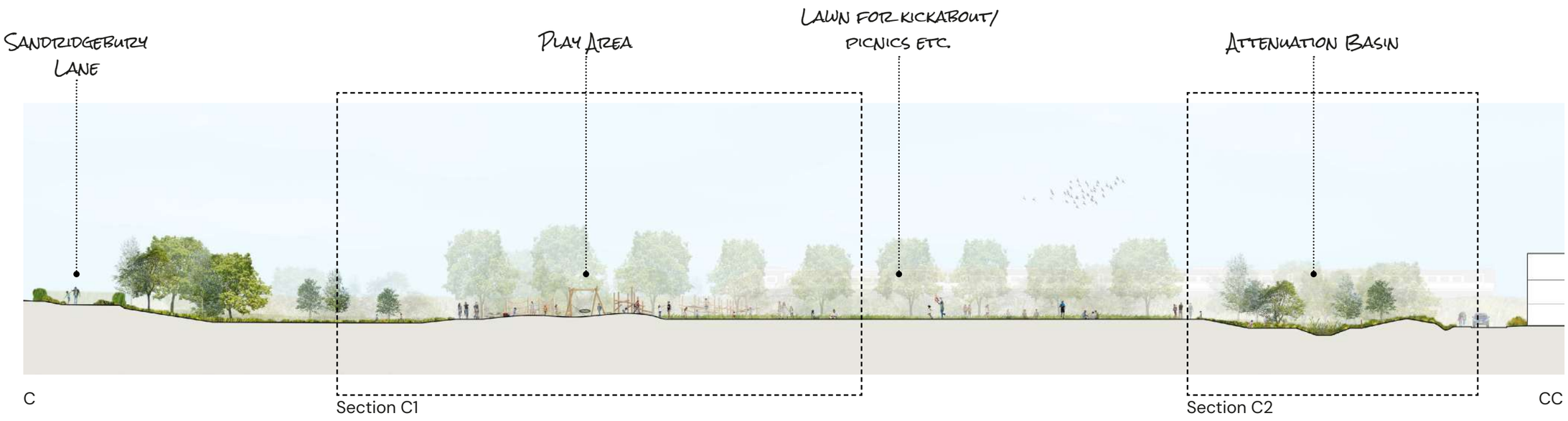
05 Centrally located NEAP play area.

06 Community garden provides a destination for the local community to gather with a shared love of horticulture.

07 Flat grass area for recreation activities, like kickabouts, picnics and community events such as park yoga.

08 Community orchard provide opportunities for fruit picking.

09 Large parkland tree avenues running through the park.



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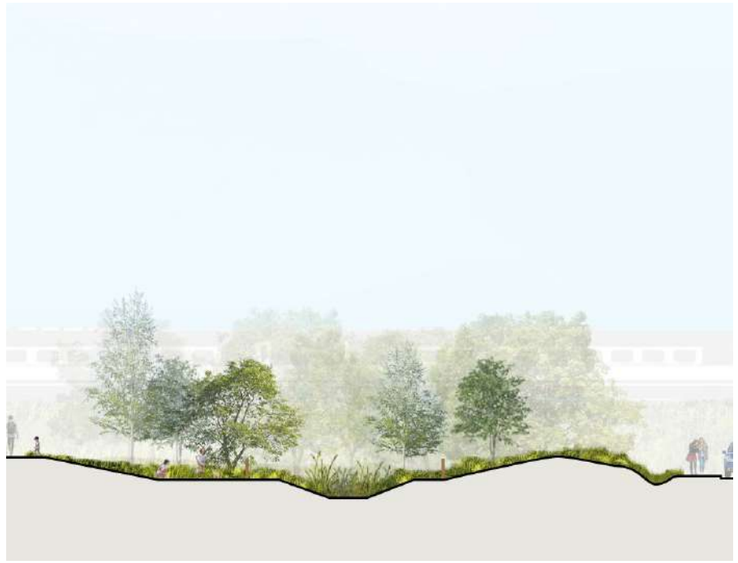
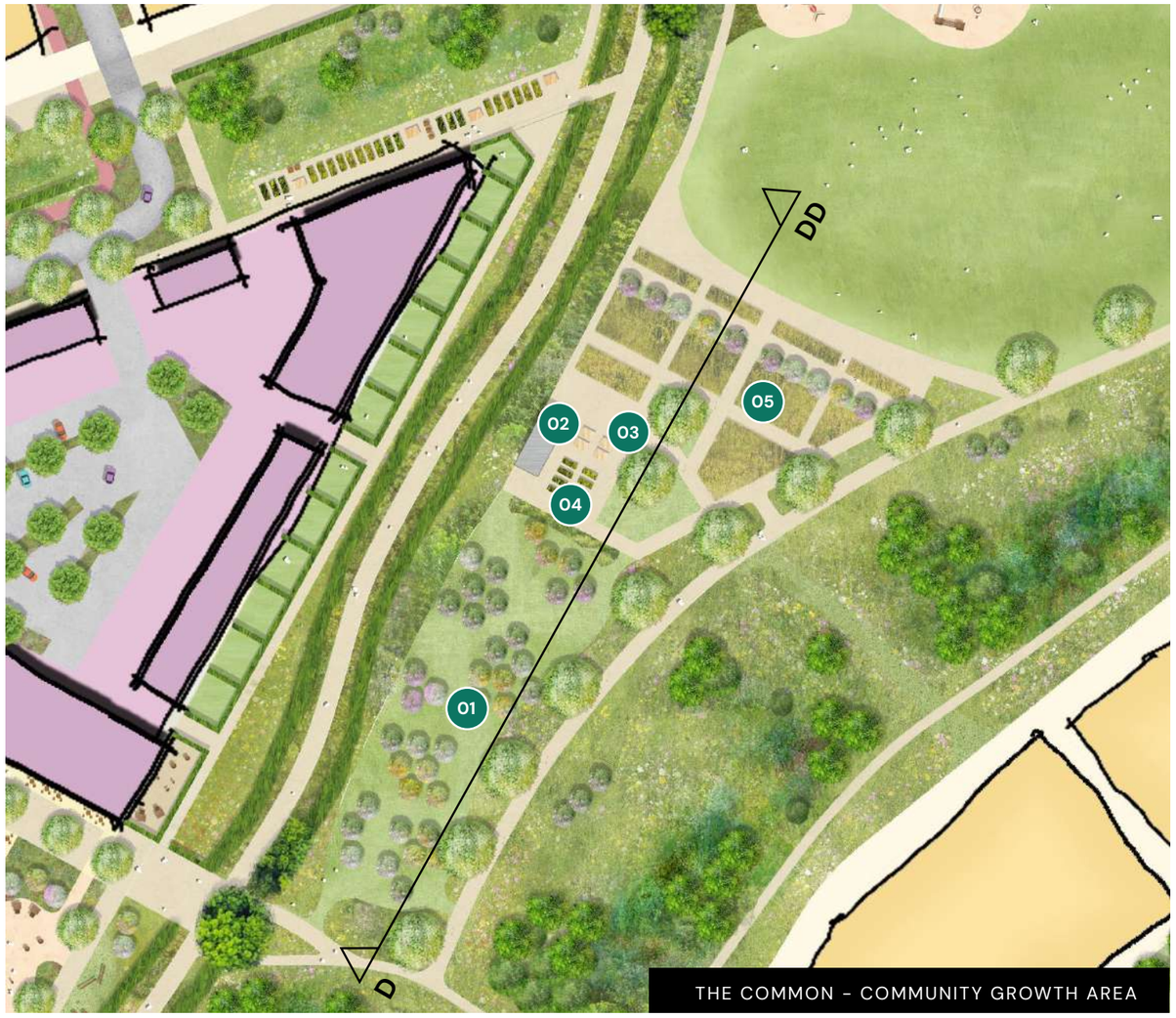


Section C2

VIEW SOUTH-WEST ACROSS THE COMMON



THE COMMON - COMMUNITY GROWTH AREA

Design Principles

Public Realm and Landscape

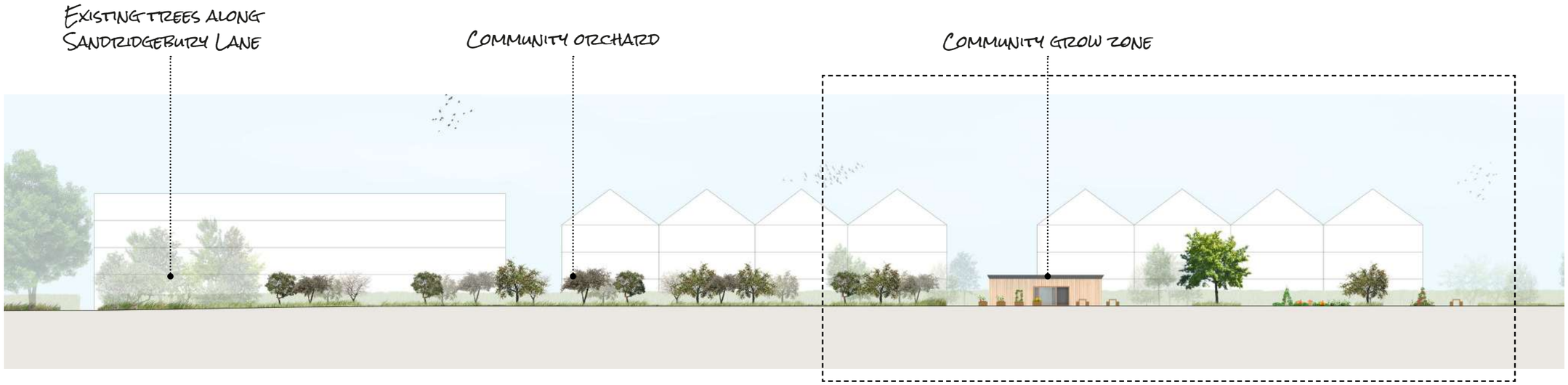
01 Community orchard

02 Community shed facility to store furniture and tools

03 Flexible seating associated with the Shed, offering a place for people to come and meet as well as grow food.

04 Timber planters to provide a place for people to grow fruits and veg or cut flowers. Planters to vary in height with walkways between wide enough for wheelchairs.

05 Planting areas for productive landscape



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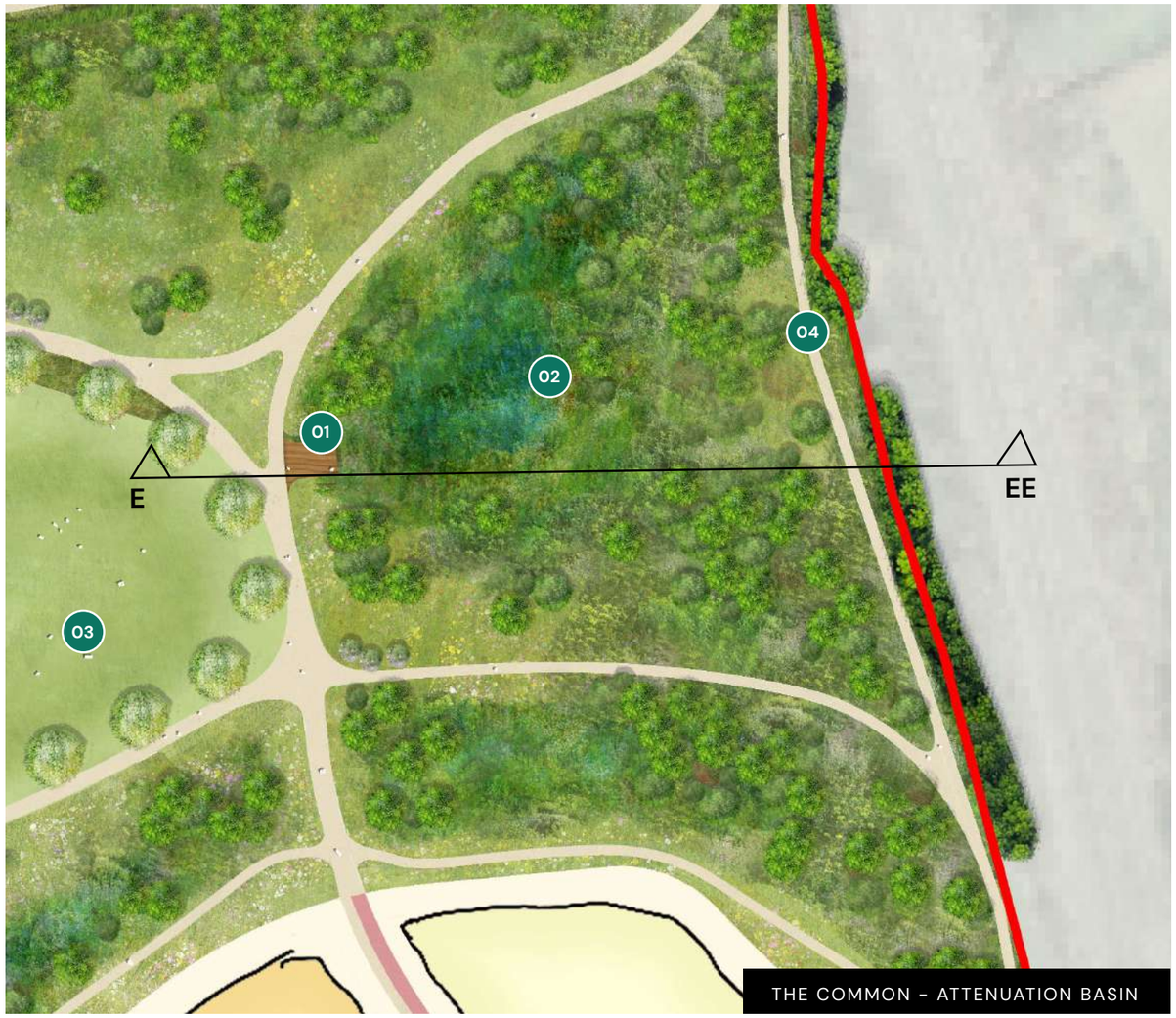


THE COMMON – ATTENUATION BASIN

Design Principles

Public Realm and Landscape

01 Jetty overlooking the attenuation basin

02 Attenuation basin

03 Flat grass area for recreation activities, like kickabouts, picnics and community events such as park yoga.

04 Existing Public Right of Way along the eastern edge of the Site.


LAWN FOR KICKABOUT / PICNICS ETC.
JETTY
ATTENUATION BASIN
EXISTING PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY

E EE

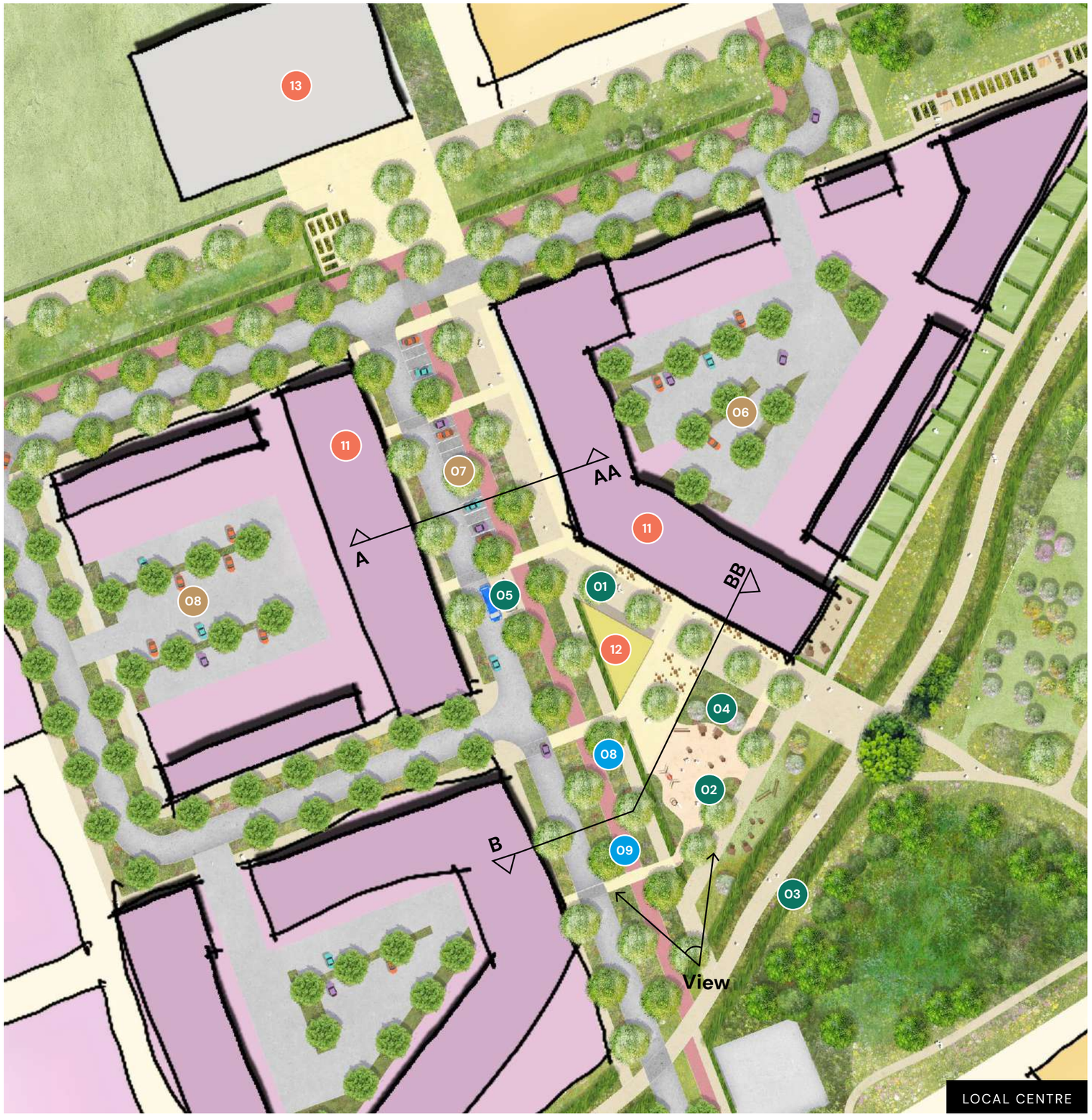
02 LOCAL CENTRE

5.28. The local centre provides the main civic functions at the heart of the development. The local centre will include taller, bulkier forms of linked development accommodating a mix of civic community uses (e.g. community building, local retail) at ground floor with residential uses (apartments and later living) above.

5.29. The buildings will frame a formal neighbourhood public plaza (Woollam Square). The plaza will be characterised by high quality hard landscaping, street furniture and formal tree planting. It will be the focus for the convergence of movement routes including public transport and active travel, whilst providing a dispersal space for children being taken and collected from the primary school.

5.30. Adjacent to the local centre will be a key play area for the Site, creating a gathering point in the public realm for families after school finish and at weekends.

FIGURE 30 - LOCAL CENTRE CONCEPT LAYOUT DIAGRAM



Design Principles

Public Realm and Landscape

01 Pedestrian boulevard with street trees and street furniture provides spill out from shops and cafe

02 A central LEAP play area with a formal boundary hedgerow

03 Existing hedgerow retained and maintained at 1.5m minimum.

04 Community grow zone with a potable water supply.

05 Bus stop

Parking

06 Internal courtyard parking

07 Limited numbers of short-stay spaces on street

08 Delivery/servicing bays where necessary/practical

Streets

09 Segregated 4m cycleway through the space allowing for safe north-south movement towards the school

10 4m wide rain garden running north-south through the space, providing a green bugger between the pedestrian routes and segregated cycleway

Buildings

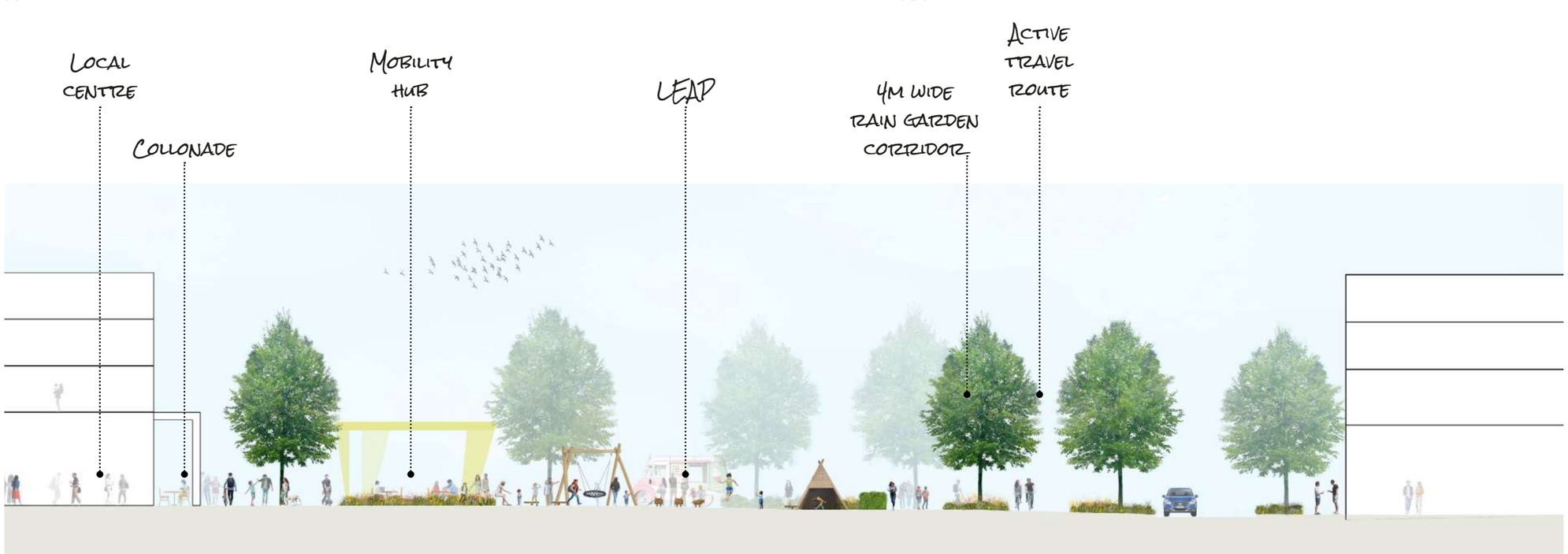
11 Continuous linked form blocks with active ground floors and apartments on upper floors

12 Pavilion mobility hub building in the centre of the civic space to be easily visible and accessible

13 School building to frame the northern extent of the space


LOCAL CENTRE
ACTIVE TRAVEL ROUTE

A AA


LOCAL CENTRE
COLONADE
MOBILITY HUB
LEAP
4M WIDE RAIN GARDEN CORRIDOR
ACTIVE TRAVEL ROUTE

B BB

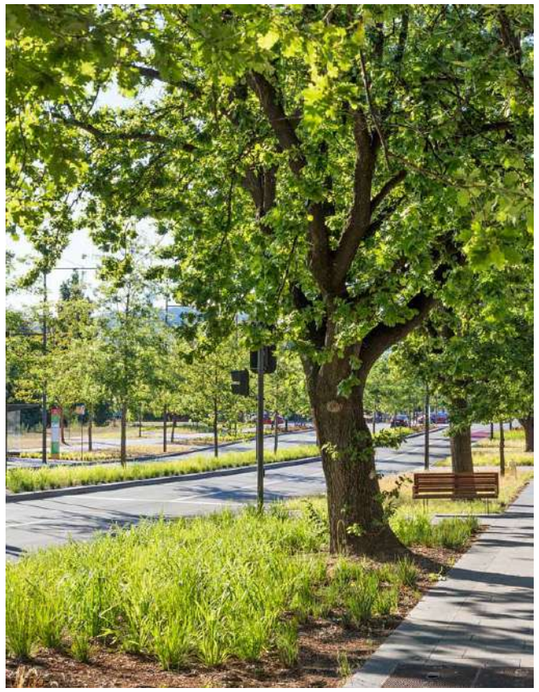
VIEW NORTH THROUGH LOCAL CENTRE

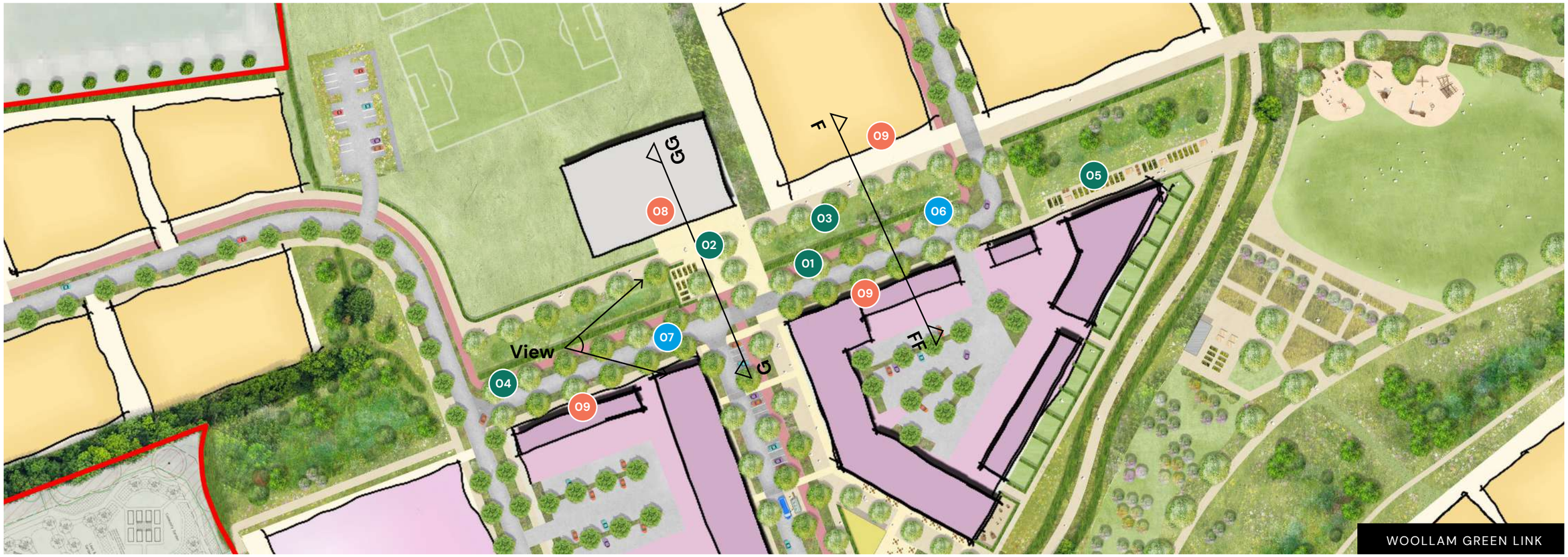
03 WOOLLAM GREEN LINK

5.31. The Woollam Green Link will be a multi-functional space providing areas for biodiversity net gain, drainage attenuation, productive landscape, entrance plaza for the primary school and an active travel route.

5.32. This green corridor will have a linear and formal nature that reflects the surrounding built form in scale and character. Lines of avenue trees will sit alongside SuDS, road and cycle and footpath.

5.33. The school plaza opens out onto the space, creating a key destination in the development, well connected to the sustainable travel network. The space will have site furniture and planting boxes that can be used by the school to create an element of ownership and customisation by the people who use it.





Design Principles

Public Realm and Landscape

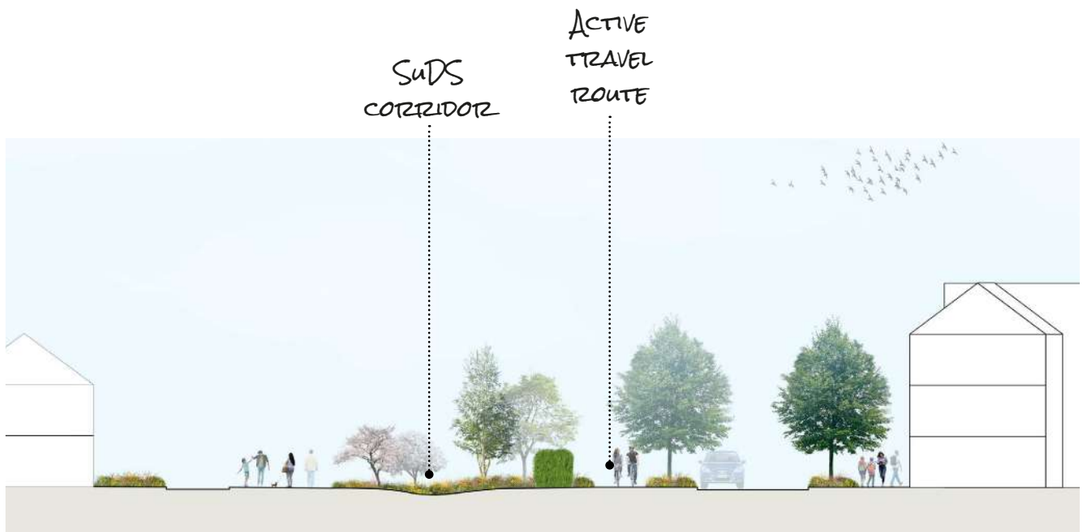
- 01 Formal avenues of trees alongside the highway.
- 02 Wide plaza adjacent to school entrance.
- 03 Swales flowing west to east along the Green Link forming part of the wider drainage strategy.
- 04 Native hedgerow planting creating a route for wildlife between existing vegetation.
- 05 Community grow zone with potable water supply

Streets

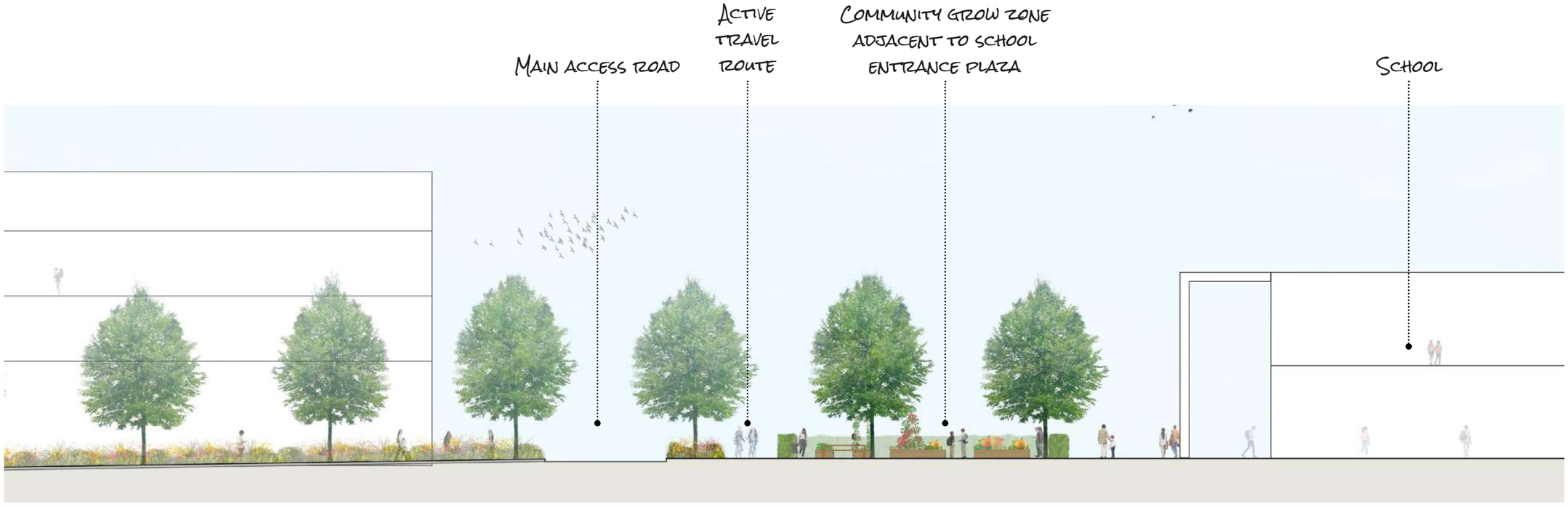
- 06 3m Segregated cycle way through the space connecting the Harpenden Road with The Common.
- 07 Primary street on the southern side of the green link to facilitate greater dispersal space immediately outside the school building

Buildings

- 08 School building to frame the northern extent of the space
- 09 Continuous linked frontage to the green link to provide containment and offer an attractive aspect from development


SuDS corridor
Active travel route

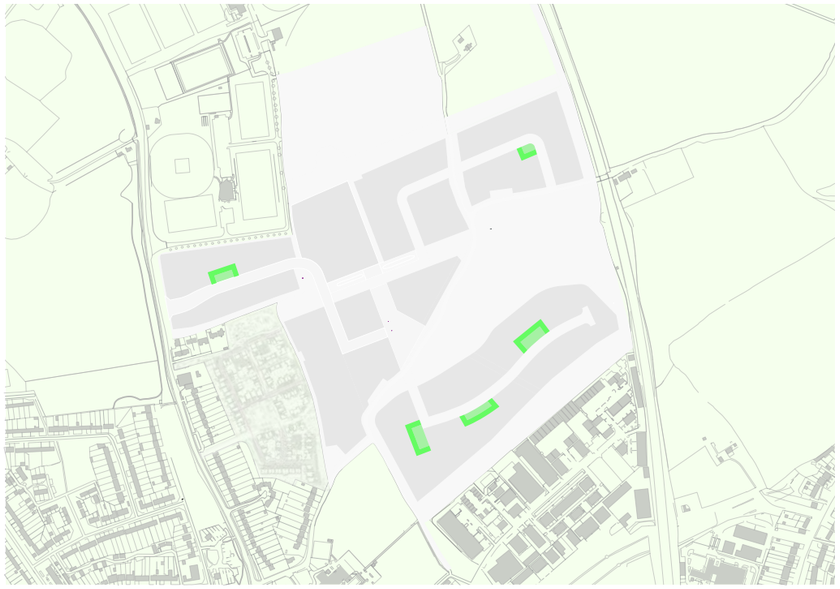
F FF


Main access road
Active travel route
Community grow zone adjacent to school entrance plaza
School

G GG

VIEW WEST ALONG WOOLLAM GREEN LINK

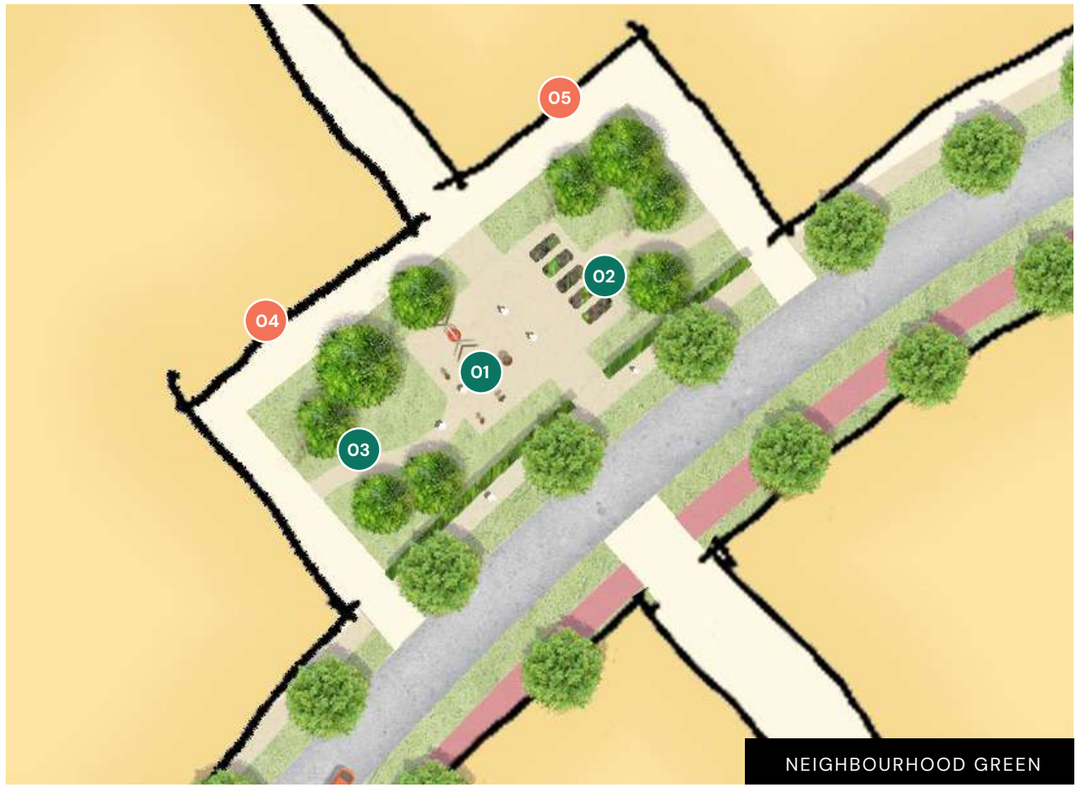
04 NEIGHBOURHOOD GREENS



5.34. Throughout the development parcels will be Neighbourhood Greens distributed in locations that create relief within the urban form and provide a focal point for the immediate neighbourhood.

5.35. Neighbourhood Greens will be smaller than other key spaces and will effectively be configured as landscaped squares fronted or enclosed by adjacent buildings.

5.36. Each Neighbourhood Green will have common landscape elements but will have its own individual identity to reinforce the spatial typology within which it is located and local distinctiveness that will form a focus for the block and assist in way finding through the Site.



NEIGHBOURHOOD GREEN

Design Principles

Public Realm and Landscape

01 LEAP play area with boundary hedge planting.

02 Community grow zone with raised planters.

03 Tree planting breaking up development parcel for views from the north east.

Buildings

04 Dwellings to front positively onto the Neighbourhood Green to offer natural surveillance and interesting aspect for development.

05 Linked form to provide containment to the space

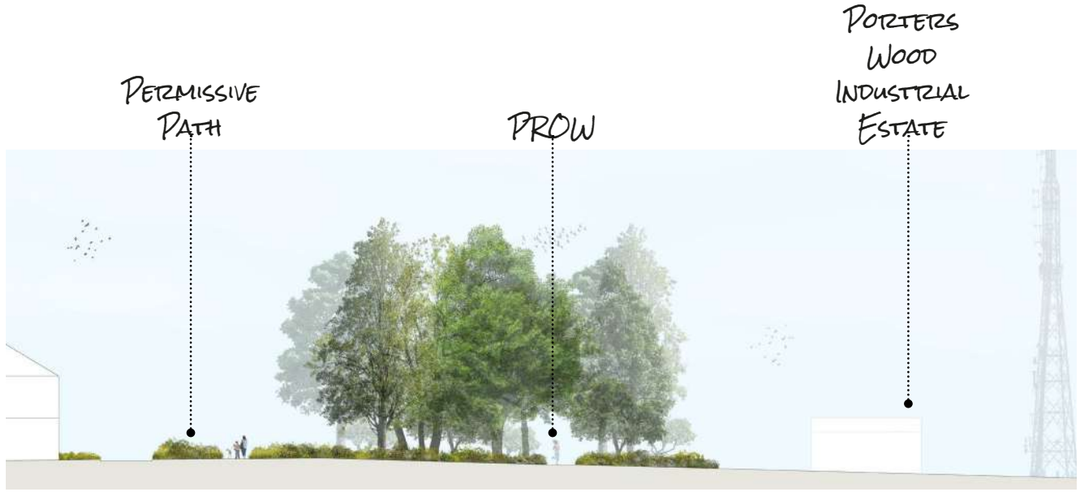
05 LONGSPRING WOOD

5.37. At the south of the Site, Longspring Wood LWS, an ancient lowland mixed deciduous woodland remnant located along the south-east boundary of the site and recorded as Habitat of Principle Importance.

5.38. Longspring Wood is sought to be retained as required and there will be buffer offset of 15m from development to its north to preserve its designated qualities.

5.39. Within the wood, the existing public footpath will be preserved on its existing alignment but edged with a low fence to support the preservation of the woodland and enhance opportunities for woodland floor flora.

5.40. The existing permissive right of way that runs to the immediate north of Longspring Wood will be preserved on its current alignment adjacent to the new development edge and will link to the wider network of footpaths and active travel connections to facilitate healthy lifestyles. Development fronting onto Longspring Wood will be sympathetically lower in density and building height to respect the LWS and ancient woodland setting.



Edges

5.41. The series of edge typologies below set out principles for where the proposed built form interfaces with larger areas of open space and public realm within the development or with areas beyond the Site such as the existing urban area, outlying countryside or adjacent new development.

LEGEND

- Sewell Park Edge
- Sandridgebury Lane Edge
- Railway Edge
- Northern Perimeter Edge
- Harpenden Road Edge
- Valley Road Edge

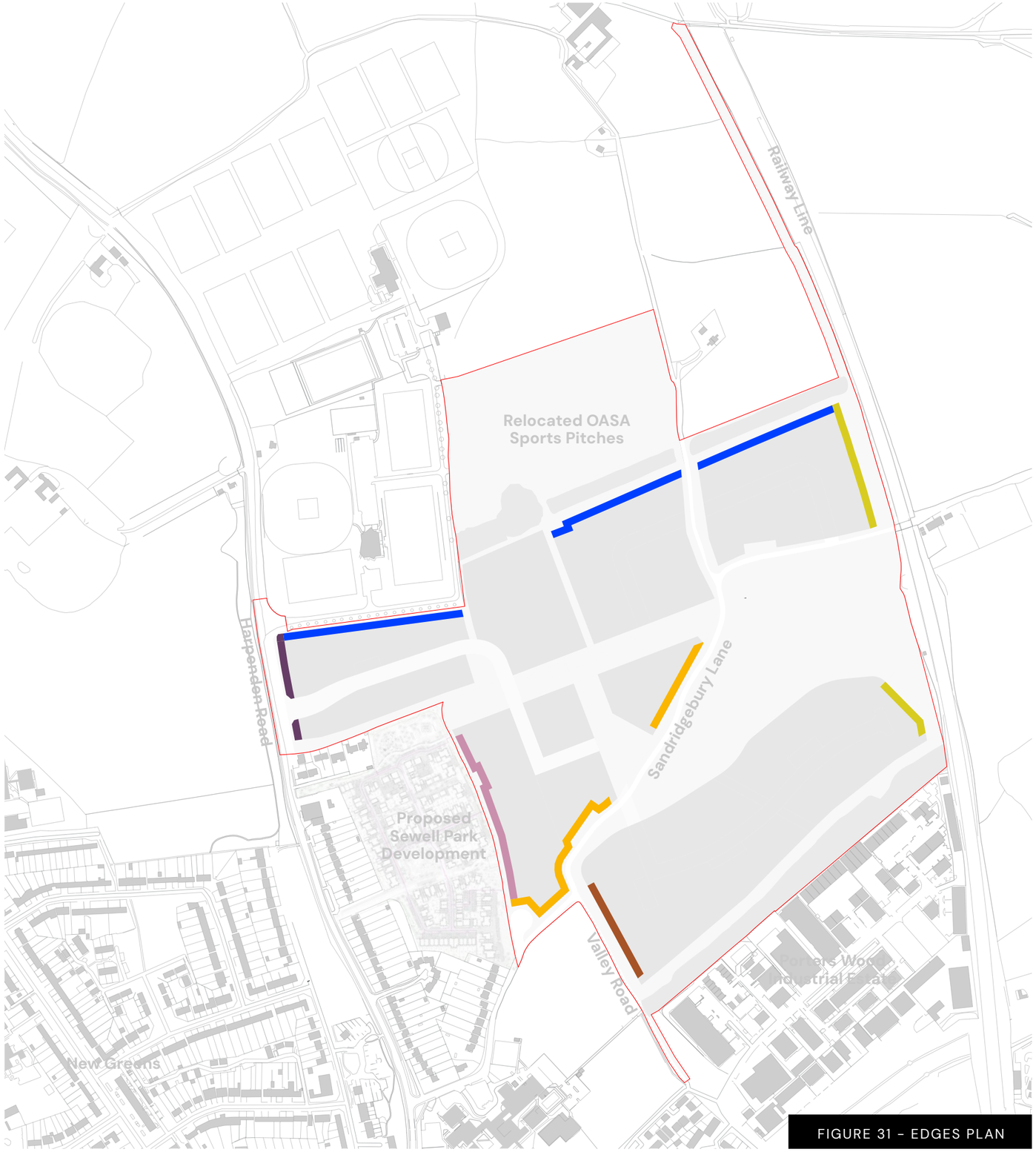
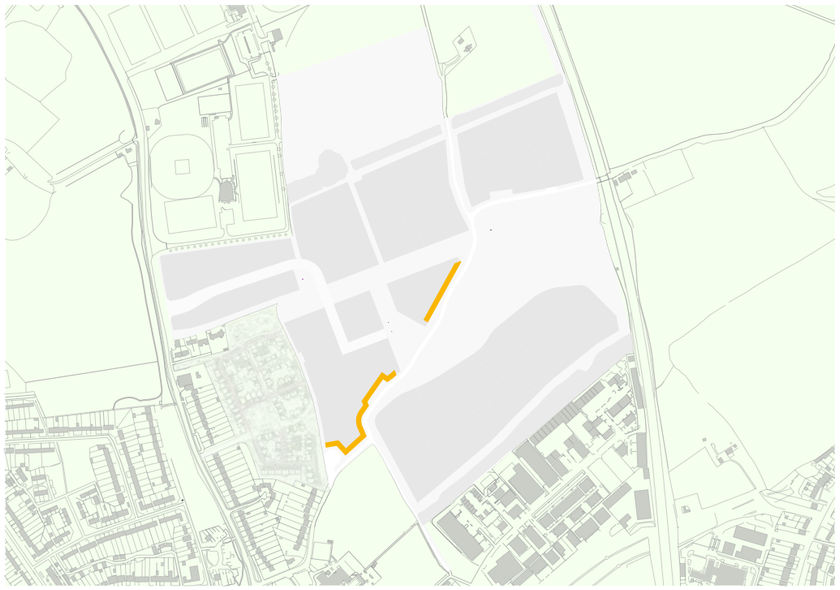
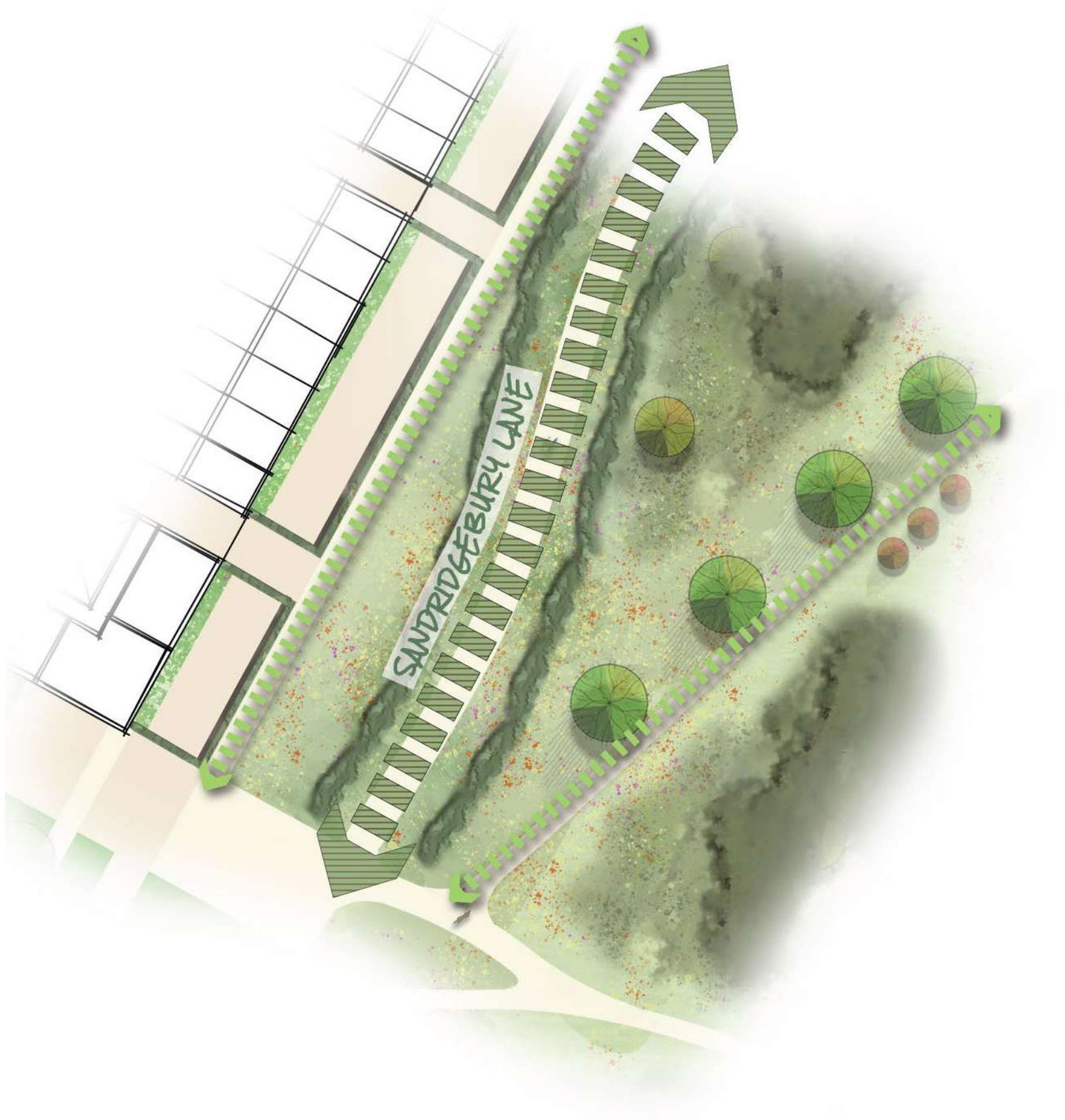


FIGURE 31 – EDGES PLAN

Sandridgebury Lane Edge





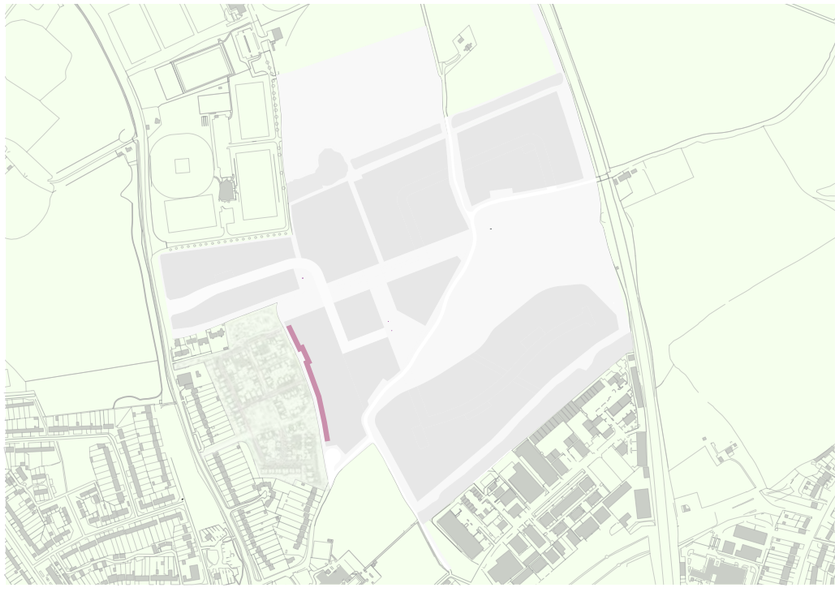
5.42. Sandbridgebury Lane provides an important connection within the Site to the wider area (including the Heartwood Forest) and is proposed to be retained as part of the proposals. The route exists as a typical country lane with hedgerows and verges lining the route throughout.

5.43. Proposals for the lane from a movement perspective are addressed in further detail below. The lane also has an important role and function as an edge to new development.

5.44. Immediately adjoining development will be primarily focussed on the lane's western side. Development should face onto the lane to support its safety and security by supporting natural surveillance. The position of the built frontage facing the lane will also allow for a semi-private area to the frontage of housing.

5.45. To the east of the lane will be The Common open space which will include a parallel active travel route meandering through the space.

Sewell Park Edge



5.46. Development on this edge has an important responsibility to respond to the new development proposed to the immediate west of the Site as part of the Sewell Park scheme.

5.47. Aside from development itself, an existing hedgerow and series of mature trees that are on the Site boundary between the two development sites are sought to be retained. The retained green infrastructure will therefore act as a green corridor between the two development schemes.

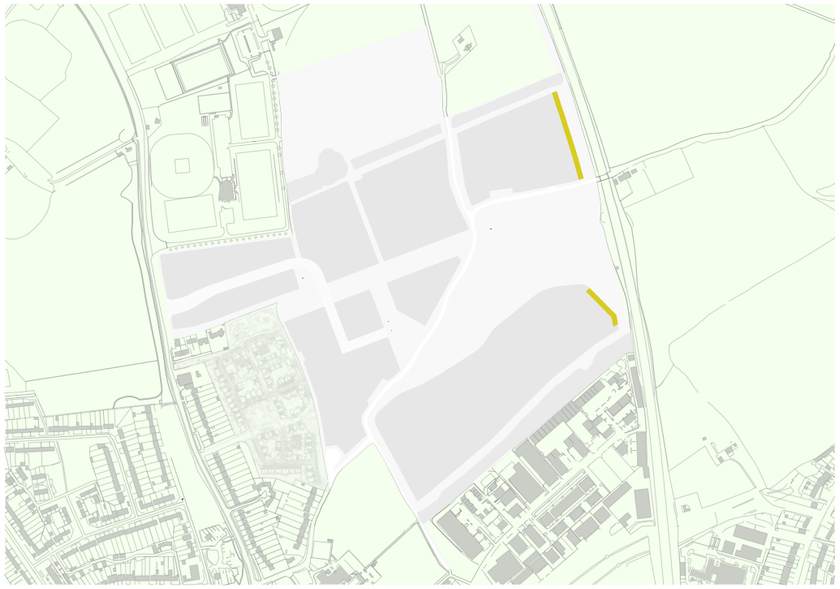
5.48. In addition, a series of important active travel connections will be forged between the two schemes to provide sustainable connectivity and permeability between new development and Harpenden Road and beyond to New Greens. These significant connections will also offer immediate access to the proposed Local Centre and Woollam Square.

Harpenden Road Edge

5.49. This part of the Site fronts directly onto Harpenden Road and will form a continuation of the existing developed frontage to the immediate south on Harpenden Road. There is therefore a need in urban design terms, for a design response that respects the existing built form and frontage treatments.

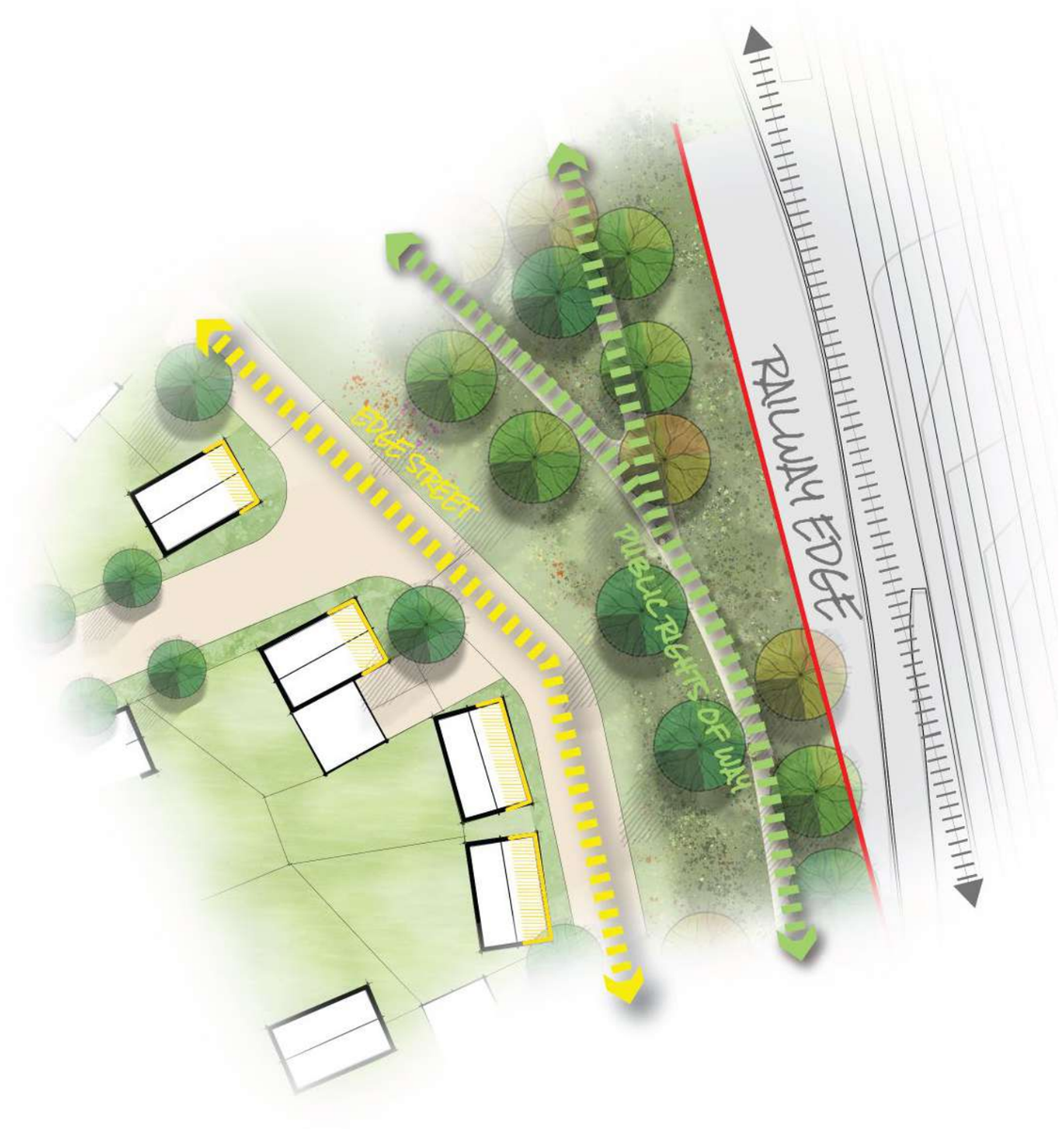
5.50. The Harpenden Road Edge will also signify a new arrival point to St Albans from the north and the edge therefore has a responsibility through its built form and treatment to announce a gateway into the town. In order to do this, the new frontage is proposed to have a sense of formality with the proposed care home allowing for a taller form of development that can signify a new gateway..

Railway Edge

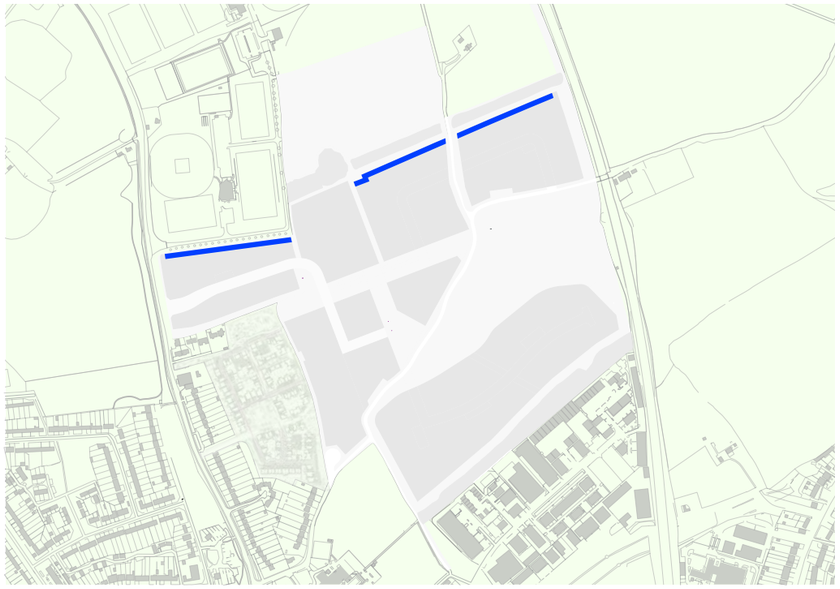


5.51. The eastern edge of the Site is characterised by the existing Midland Mainline Railway Line which forms a pronounced edge to the Site and runs both through cutting and on embankment resulting in distinct localised level changes. Beyond the rail line is open countryside and the Heartwood Forest (including its setting).

5.52. The built response to this distinct edge will need to balance requirements to ensure acceptable acoustic conditions in private amenity space in view of the adjacent rail line whilst also providing an appropriate transition to the rural setting beyond. Development will therefore be set back from the rail line to ensure acceptable acoustic conditions and looser in form, facing directly out from the edge and providing opportunities for planting between dwellings to complement the setting and soften the impact of the built form.

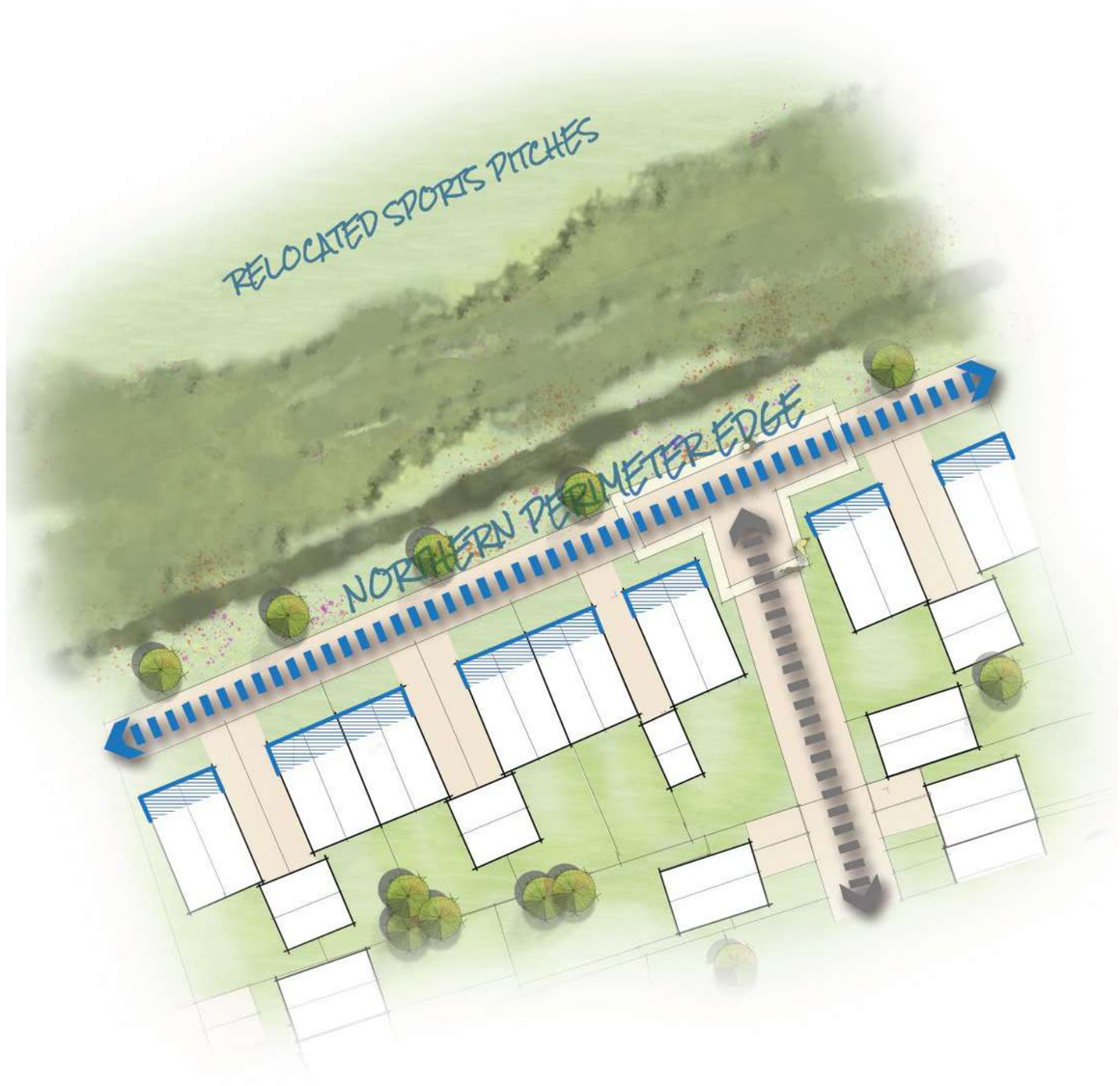


Northern Perimeter Edge

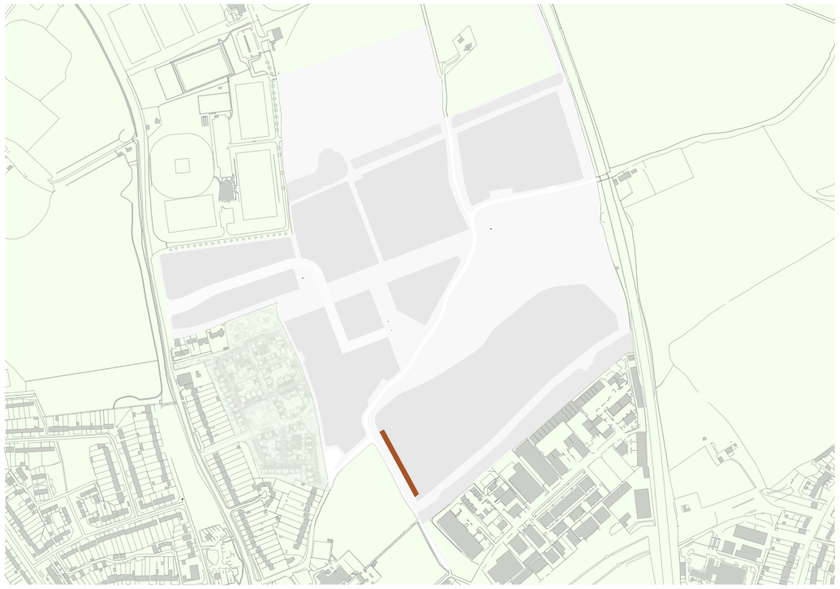


5.53. The northern edge of the Site faces out north onto both the Woollam Playing Fields site and the Hertfordshire countryside. When complete, this edge will form a new northern built extent of the wider St Albans area. The principles for development on this edge therefore have a responsibility to ensure that the development can transition sympathetically to open land beyond.

5.54. Buildings on the Northern Perimeter Edge will be loose in their arrangement and face directly out from the edge, provide opportunities for planting between development that can complement the setting and soften the impact of the built form. Typically, dwellings on this will be of a lower density (detached and semi-detached) in order to achieve aspirations for a looser form of development in this location.

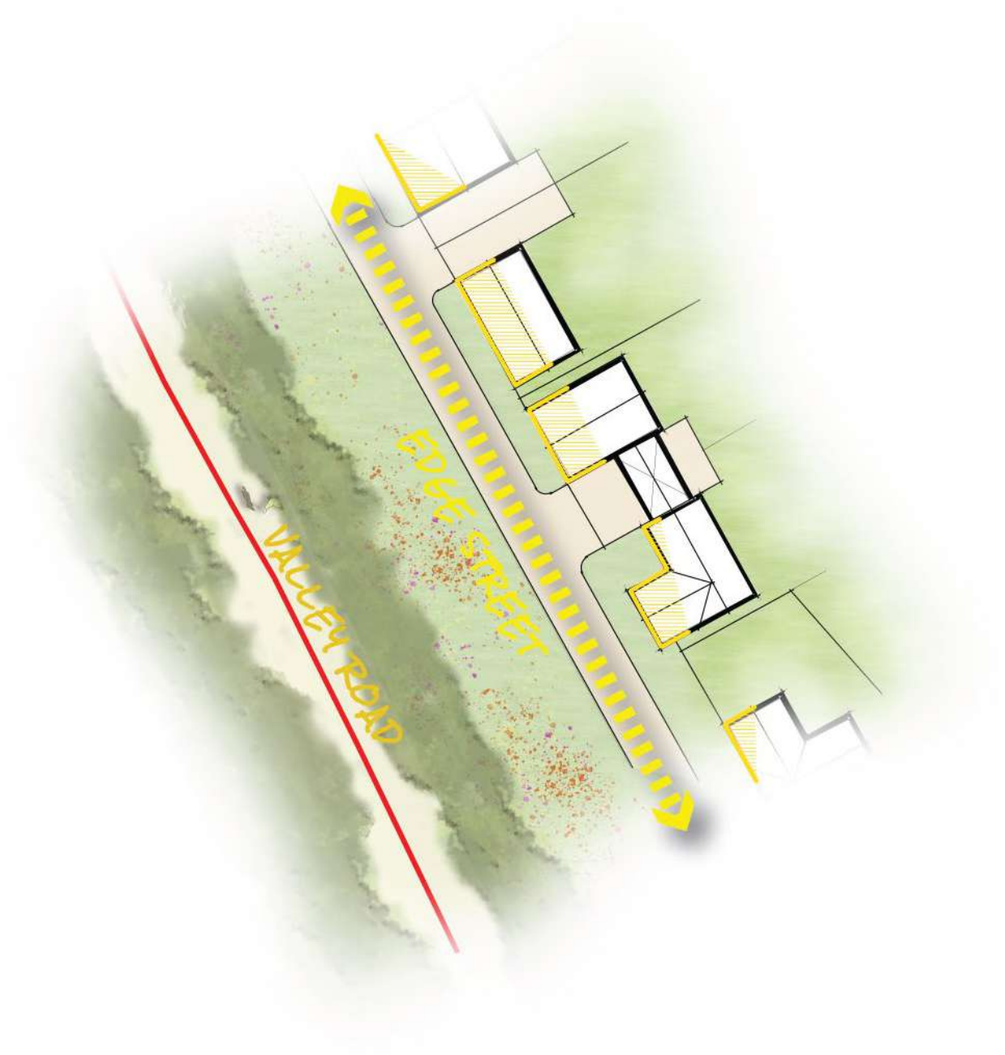


Valley Road Edge



5.55. A small area of development at the south of the Site will be immediately adjacent to the northern extent of Valley Road which connects north onto Sandridgebury Lane. This part of Valley Road is extremely narrow and is proposed to be controlled as an active travel route only that connects Woollam Park to existing streets and routes to the south.

5.56. This area of the Site is characterised by the mature wooded sides of Valley Road which are sought to be retained. Development will face out towards Valley Road behind the existing wooded boundaries . There will be no direct access to new properties from Valley Road with access being provided from a private edge drive set within the main development block behind the existing wooded boundary.



Landmarks

5.57. Landmark buildings should be notably distinct within the wider scheme and use additional detailing and accent materials to emphasise particular buildings within their setting. Such buildings are characterised by their location in relation to the site and are typically highly-visible and hold a commanding position that stand out from the context and the neighbourhood, bringing focus and identity. The most appropriate locations for Landmarks are identified on the Placemaking Plan. These locations have been selected in line with the following principles:

- They are in highly-visible locations within the pattern of streets and spaces.
- They would be appropriate landmarks for navigation.
- They hold a commanding position that is not shared by other buildings.
- They are distributed throughout the plan in such a way that important pedestrian and vehicular nodes and routes become more memorable.

5.58. In order to ensure Landmarks become exemplars, innovative, bold and imaginative design responses are required that are appropriate to their settings.

LEGEND

- Key corner
- Gateway building
- Key vista termination
- Primary school building

FIGURE 32 – LANDMARK PLAN

MOVEMENT STRATEGY

Streets and Routes

5.59. A well-connected movement network, accessible by all users, is proposed to ensure that all areas of the proposed development are easy to navigate, safe and secure with priority for public transport, pedestrians and cyclists throughout. The movement network is proposed to be integrated and connected with existing routes and connections adjacent to the Site and the Applicant proposes a series of off site enhancements to public transport and active travel connections to key trip generators around St Albans including St Albans Station.

5.60. The connected permeable network of active travel routes provide convenient and safe that support health and wellbeing and reduce reliance on the private car. The sustainable active travel network has been designed to retain, enhance and link directly with existing Public Rights of Way that connect the Site to adjoining neighbourhoods and rural areas.

5.61. At the centre of the Site - within the local centre - a mobility hub is proposed at Woollam Square where principal active travel connections and public transport routes converge. This important multi-modal interchange will offer a range of mobility options in one place as well as complementary facilities including eBike/eScooter hire options for short journeys; cycle tool stations and secure cycle parking; public space with greenery, seating, and shelter; local information, including timetables, walking/cycling maps, and notice boards; wider services to help residents to live locally, from parcel lockers to cafe/co-work space in adjoining buildings. The positioning of a mobility hub allows for a communal focal point focussed on sustainable travel habits that introduces users to sustainable transport modes and engenders sustainable travel habits.

5.62. Provision of a hierarchy of new streets and routes within the Site are integral to the mobility strategy, allowing users of all ages and abilities to move safely and conveniently between various spaces and land uses within the development as well as the wider St Albans area. In accordance with the NPPF and the Development Plan, the proposed street typologies offer excellent opportunities for tree planting and drainage features within the street corridor.

5.63. All street typologies have been designed in conjunction with HCC and using the relevant guidance. The movement hierarchy proposed takes a 'Manual for Streets'-led approach to design reflecting the capacity and role of each route whilst complementing the development that will front them. In general, streets must be designed in conjunction with the built form and landscape architecture to shape the overall appearance and sense of enclosure and definition. Together these elements will create the foundations for a successful and sustainable development with a strong sense of place.

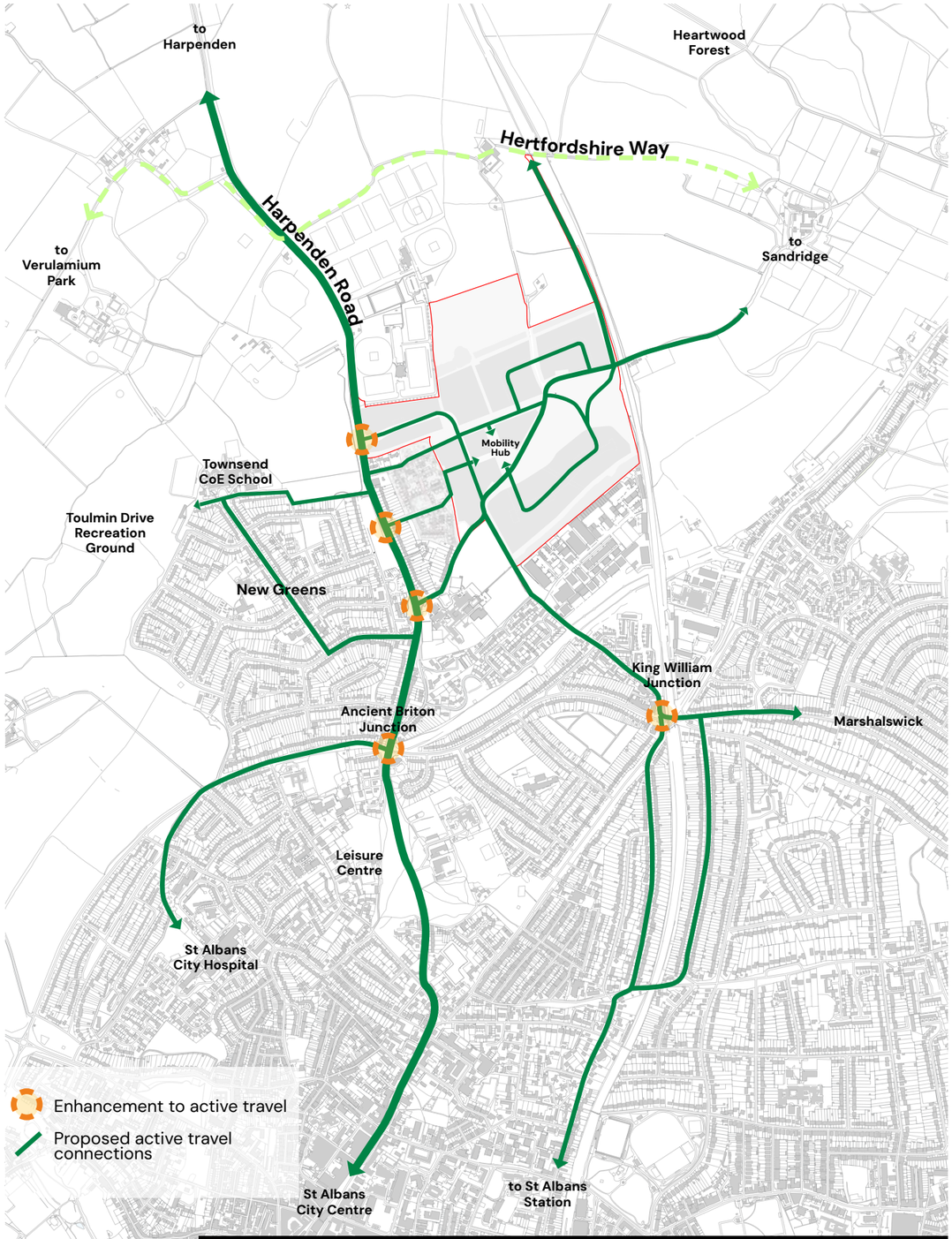


FIGURE 32 - PROPOSED ACTIVE TRAVEL CONNECTIONS TO KEY DESTINATIONS

LEGEND

- Vehicular primary access point
- Vehicular secondary access point
- Public Rights of Way (PRoW) - bridleway
- Public Rights of Way (PRoW) - footpath
- Permissive footpath
- Sandridgebury Lane and Valley Road
- Sandridgebury Lane and Valley Road closed to vehicular traffic
- Private access road
- Primary link street
- Primary access street
- One way street
- Primary active travel route with fully segregated cycle lane
- Indicative network of proposed footpaths / cycle lanes
- Vehicular turning point
- Mobility hub / community-use pavilion

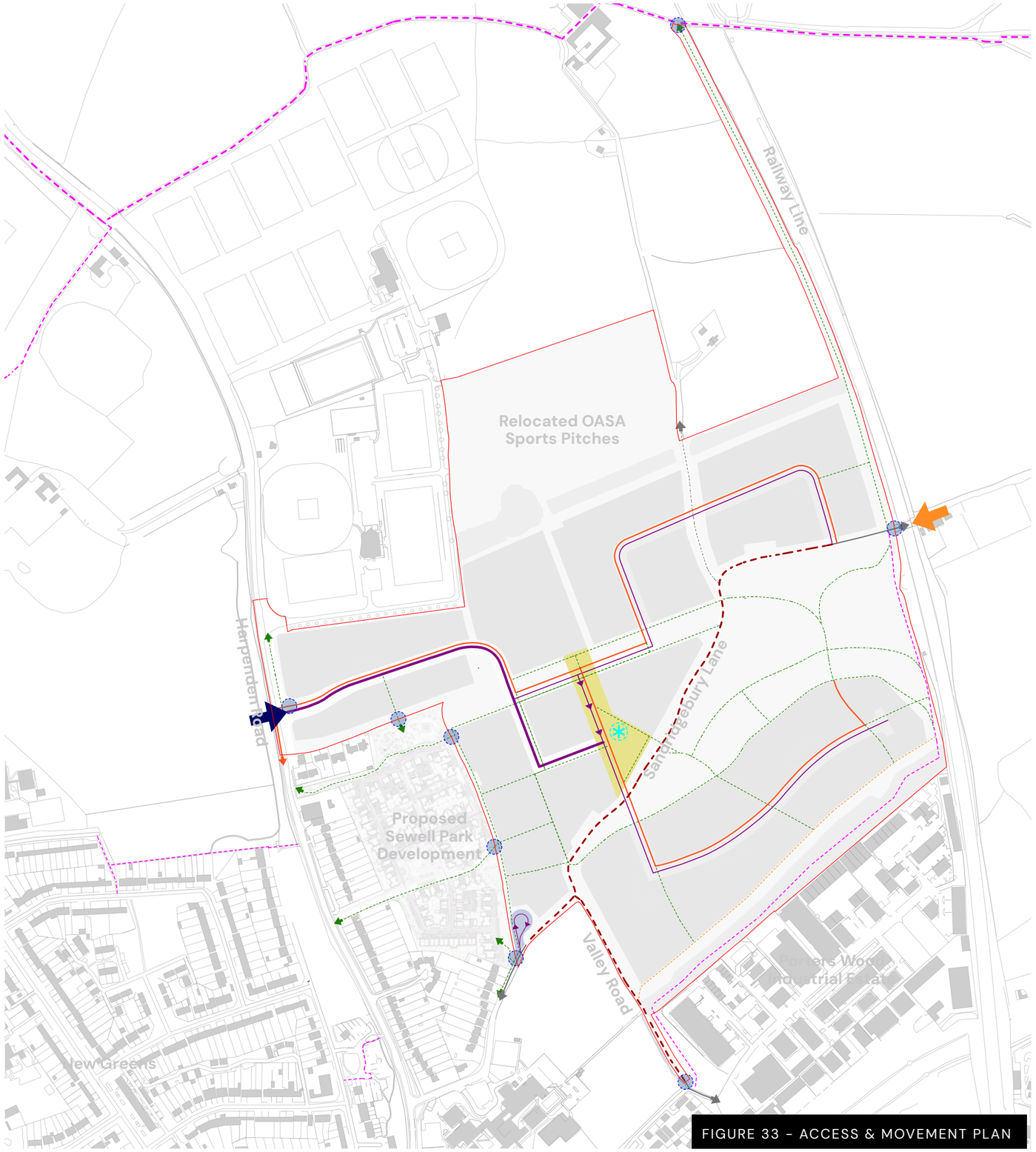
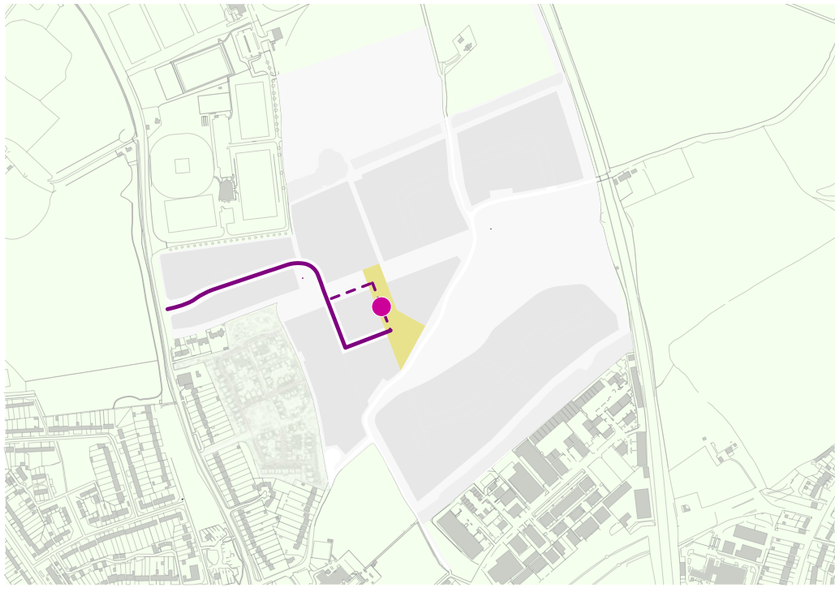


FIGURE 33 – ACCESS & MOVEMENT PLAN

Primary Link Street

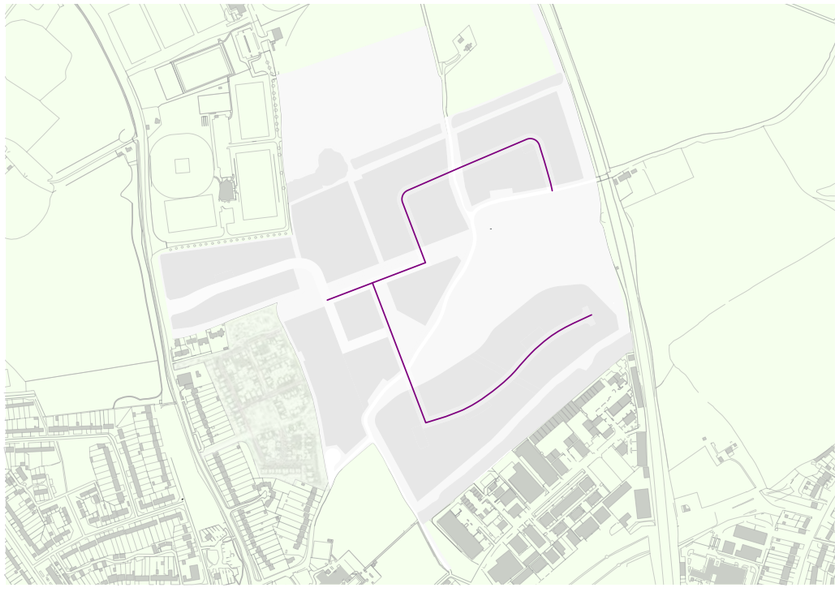


5.64. Further to pre-application discussions the Primary Link Street has been designed to encourage walking, cycling and public transport movement through the provision of generous footways and cycleways and bus priority measures along its length. The route will provide access for private vehicles for some, but not all, of its alignment so as not to create a 'rat run' through the development.

5.65. As the principal route through the Site, the Primary Link Street will have a sense of formality with tree-lined verges, swales and an integrated footway/cycleway to both sides. On-street parking for visitors and bus stops on the street would be determined by the type of frontage. Pedestrian linkages/crossings will be made up of pedestrian prioritised areas/squares and raised table junctions.

5.66. The Primary Link Street provides access from Harpenden Road to the Local Centre and from there to the various development blocks. The Primary Link Street has been designed to accommodate bus movements and allow the potential for bus services to enter the Site as required and subject to ongoing discussion with key stakeholders (e.g. HCC, bus operators).

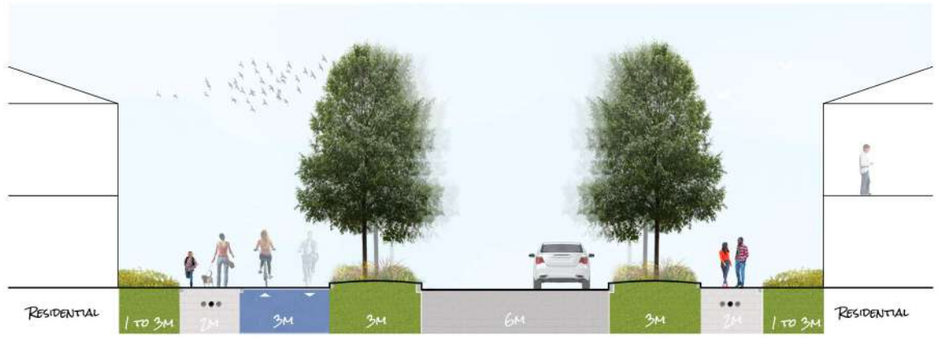
Primary Access Street



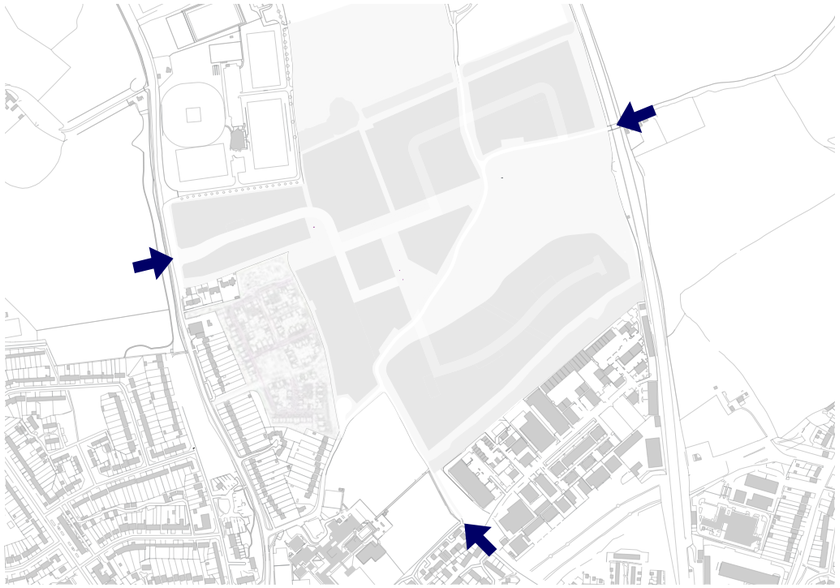
5.67. The Primary Access Street provides the main vehicular movement routes through the Site from the Local Centre. The route also allows for bus access into the Local Centre at the heart of the Site with buses proposed to be routed south from the proposed school site through a one way (north to south) section of the Primary Access Street with buses then circulating around the north western local centre block before leaving the Site.

5.68. The Primary Access Street route is proposed to have a sense of formality with tree-lined verges, swales and an integrated footway/cycleway throughout its length.

5.69. Consideration will be given to where direct access and non-direct access to the Primary Access Street will be taken with no direct access being applied due to higher numbers of vehicle movements potentially associated with the Primary School and/or Local Centre and otherwise direct access being provided on the rest of the routes where vehicle movements are fewer.



Site Access



5.70. Primary vehicular access will be provided from a new traffic signal-controlled junction taken east of the A1081 Harpenden Road (Figure 35). The vehicle access will also be a key active travel access with segregated foot/cycleways due to the higher level of vehicle flows expected on this primary route. The vehicle access and primary route connecting to the mobility hub and local centre will be designed to cater for buses and other larger service vehicles.

5.71. The proposals will also result in the partial downgrading of Sandridgebury Lane and Valley Road to through traffic within the site boundary. This will contribute to the wider aspiration to discourage through traffic and making car travel less convenient than other journey modes. These routes will instead be prioritised for active travel movements, with emergency vehicle access maintained.

5.72. The eastern extent of Sandridgebury Lane will remain open to vehicles to maintain access to the railway line and existing residences east of the railway, a turning head can be provided within the site area, ahead of the closure to all vehicles, if necessary subject to a monitor and manage approach. The western extent of Sandridgebury Lane will maintain access to existing residences and St. Albans Girls School, then within the site

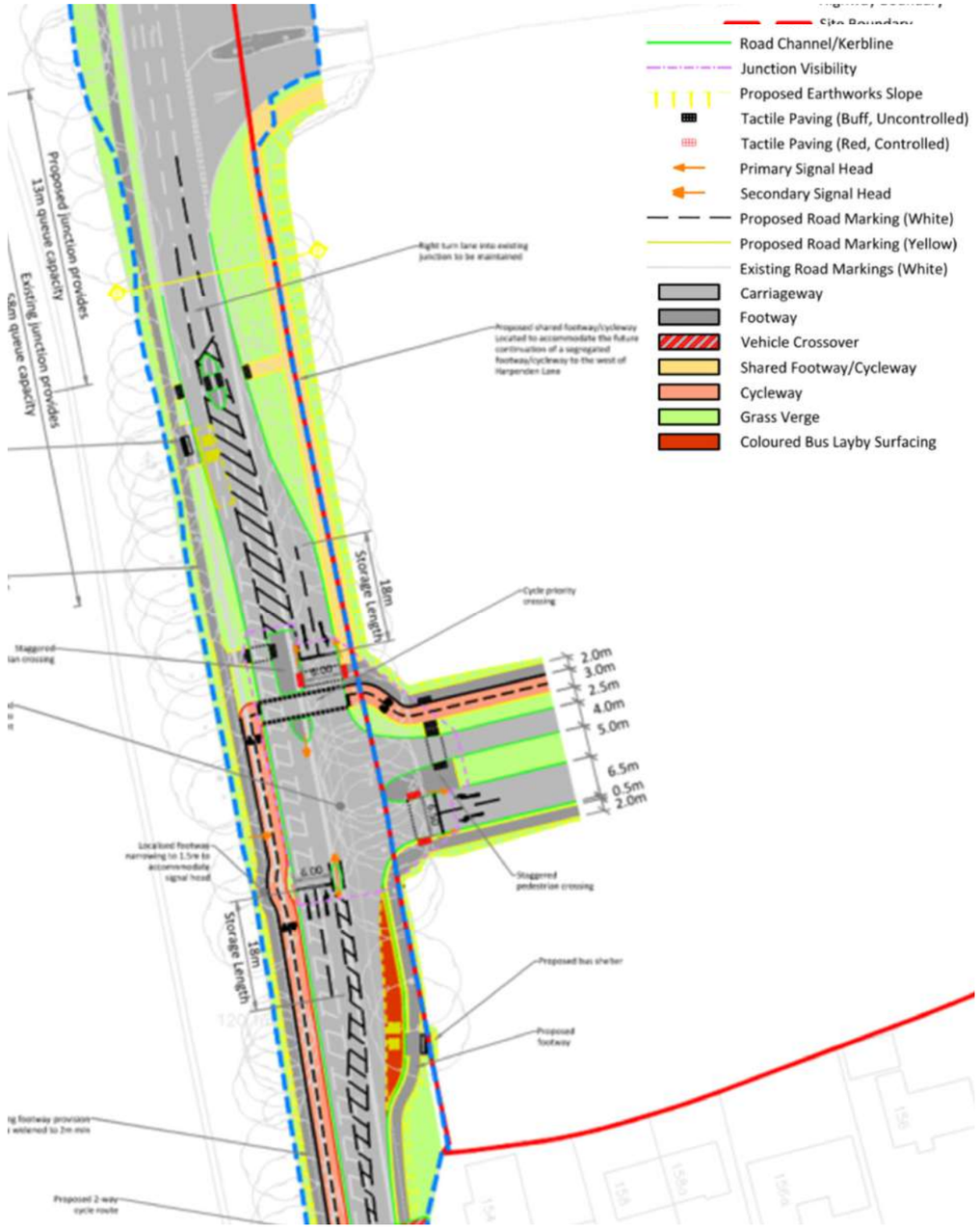


FIGURE 35 - A1081 HARPENDEN ROAD SIGNALISED ACCESS

boundary, a turning loop will be introduced as noted above for vehicles to continue back down Sandridgebury Lane and back to A1081 Harpenden Road.

5.73. A hierarchy of street types will be introduced within the site area including main entrance and primary streets, where buses are permitted and secondary streets where buses are not permitted and lower traffic flows are expected. A 20mph speed limit will be applied to all street types.

5.74. The approved Sewell Park proposals are located to the immediate west of the Site. The application proposals allow for connectivity and integration with the Sewell Park scheme. Key active travel connections will be made between the application site and the Sewell Park scheme that effectively link both sites to the proposed local centre and Harpenden Road. No vehicular connections are proposed between the two sites.

FIGURE 36 – VALLEY ROAD POTENTIAL ARRANGEMENT

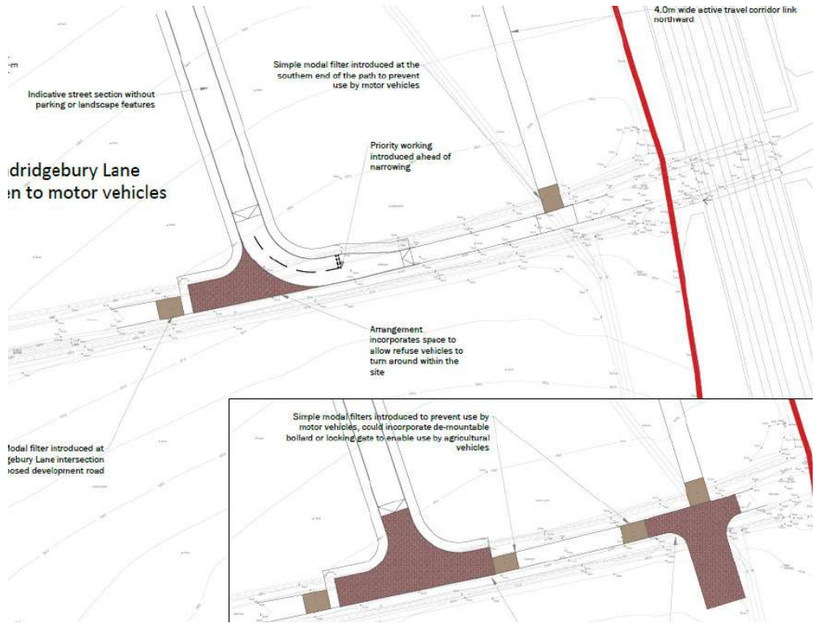
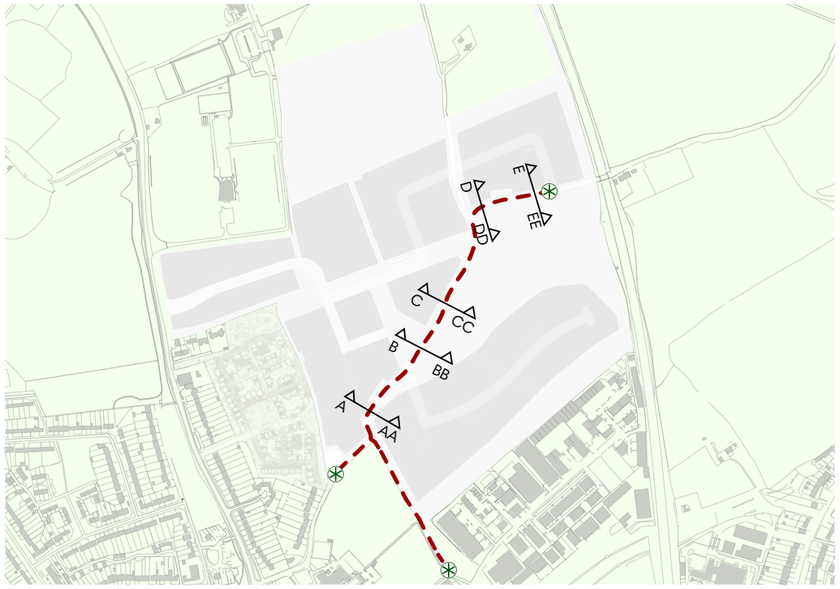


FIGURE 37 – SANDRIDGEBURY LANE EASTERN END POTENTIAL ARRANGEMENT

Downgraded Sandridgebury Lane & Valley Road



5.75. Sandbridgebury Lane provides an important connection within the Site to the wider area (including the Heartwood Forest) and is proposed to be retained as part of the proposals.

5.76. Sandridgebury Lane currently exists as a typical country lane with hedgerows and verges lining the route throughout. It runs between Harpenden Road and the village of Sandridge to the east. As the lane passes through the Site, it is proposed to close it to vehicle movement and a make it into an active travel route only from a point just north east of the STAGS and residential properties near to Harpenden Road and also further east at a point just west of the existing railway bridge.

5.77. Modal filters will be introduced to restrict vehicle movement but allow active travel movement to continue along the route. A further modal filter will be introduced on Valley Road to the south restricting vehicle movement onto Sandridgebury Lane from Valley Road.

Hyde Lane, Monkton Heathfield
Example of retained lane with modal filter and clipped hedgerows either side

5.78. The retained Sandridgebury Lane will provide an important active travel connection through and beyond the Site right to the local centre and the common where various amenity functions are proposed. The route will also open up a safe active travel connection from beyond the site (e.g. New Greens to the west) to the Heartwood Forest which provides an important strategic open space resource for the city and the area.

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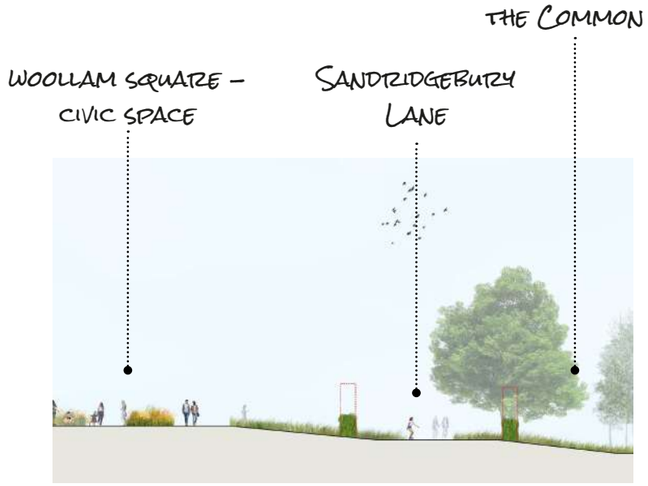

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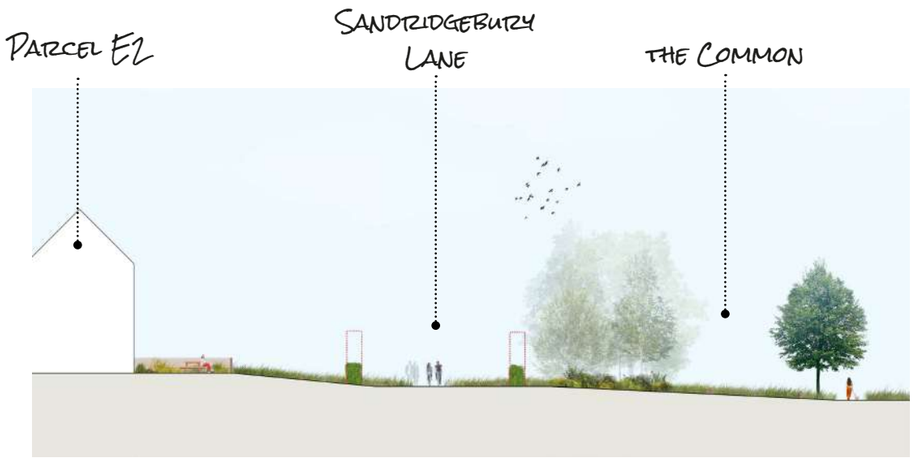

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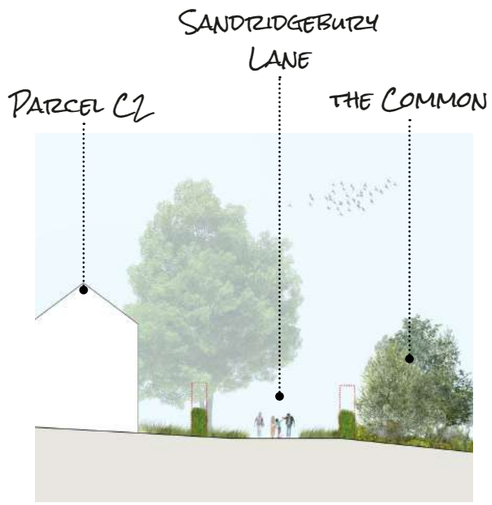

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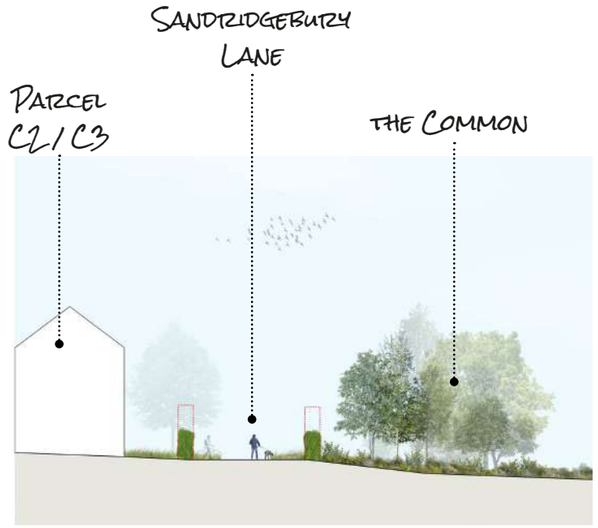

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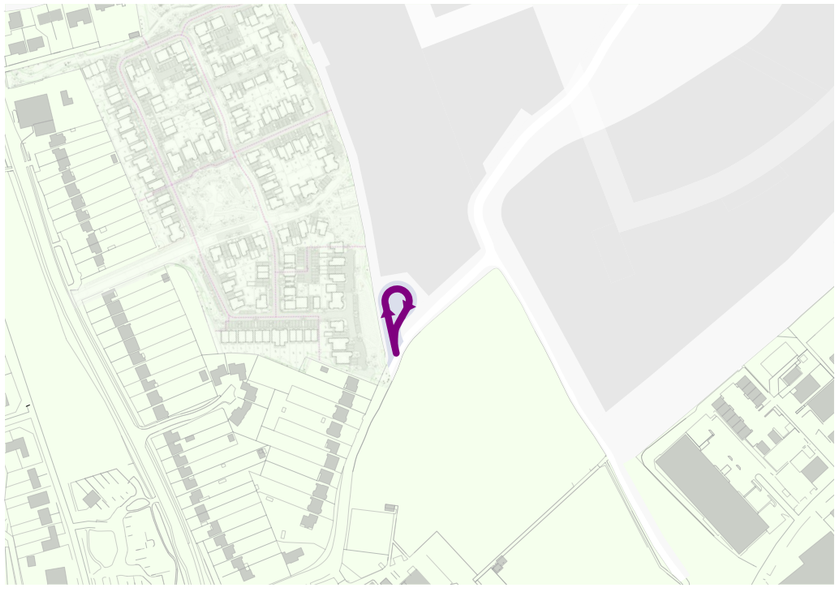
Sandridgebury Lane Turning Loop



5.79. Further to discussion with SACDC and HCC, at the south of the Site on Sandridgebury Lane, a turning loop is proposed before the proposed modal filter to allow vehicles to turn around. This will also support pick up and drop off for the St Albans Girls School where at present informal parking takes place.

5.80. Detailed proposals will need to ensure that this highways feature does not dominate the environment in this location and that it can be sympathetically provided as part of the proposals. An appropriate landscape design for this area will come forward at Reserved Matters stage that incorporates planting and other soft landscaping to mitigate the impact of the turning loop as suggested by SACDC officers in the pre-application urban design workshops.

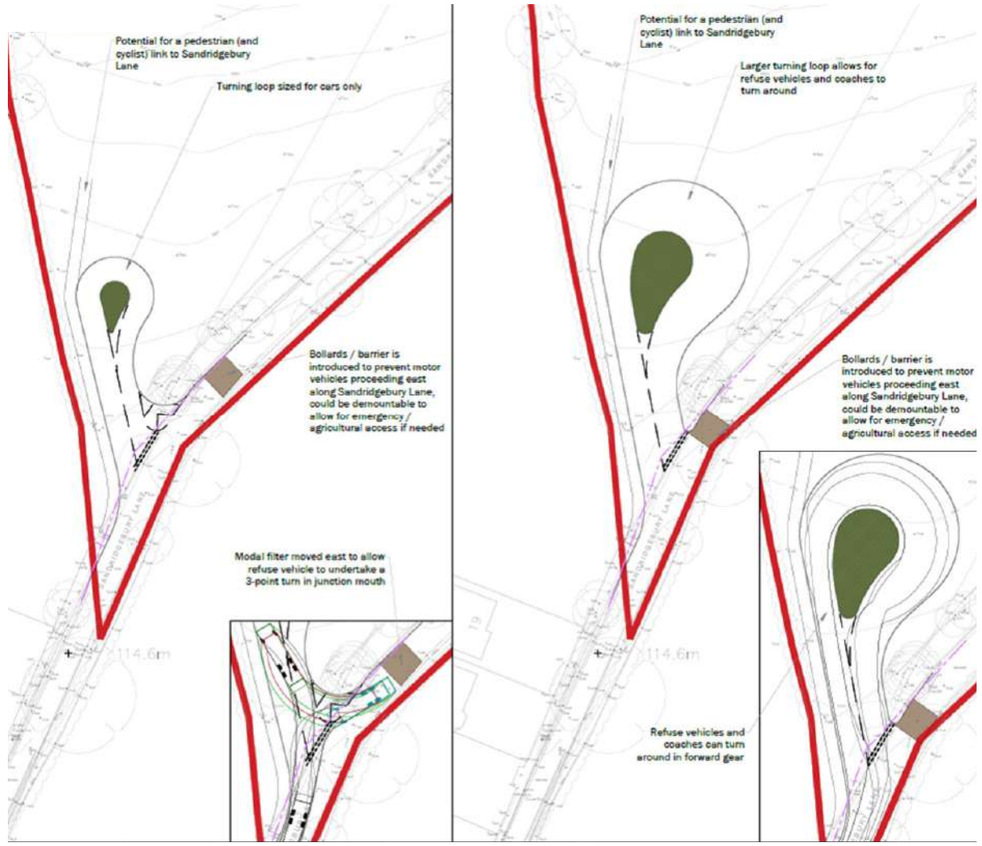
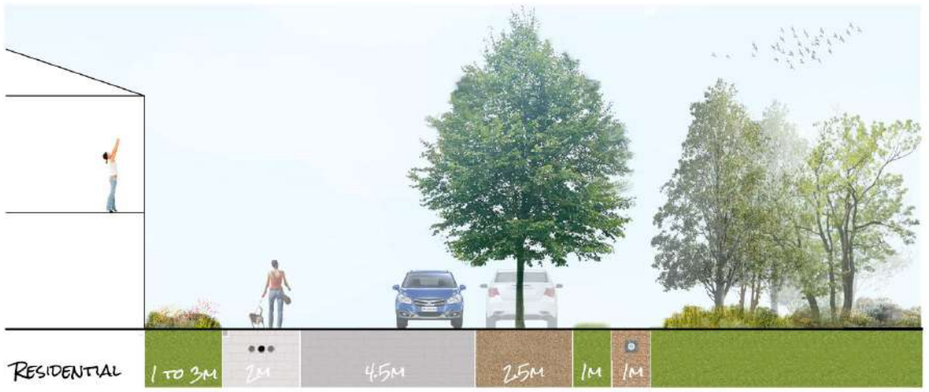


FIGURE 38 - SANDRIDGEBURY LANE TURNING LOOP POTENTIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Other Streets and Routes

5.81. Throughout the rest of the development, secondary, tertiary and edge Streets will provide a very safe residential environment where for example children can play safely. Measures should be used to ensure very slow vehicle speeds. The edges of the development in particular provide a critical point of interface between the surrounding context of the scheme and the development itself.

5.82. A selection of potential other street/route typologies are provided right showing, indicatively, the configuration of street corridors that will be refined through further Reserved Matters layouts.



Car Parking

5.83. The Emerging Local Plan sets out updated parking standards, it is deemed that these provide a more suitable guide for determining an appropriate parking strategy than those contained in the adopted Local Plan. For the 'Broad Locations' which includes 'North St Albans', Policy TRA4 of the Emerging Local Plan expects that the developments would 'prioritise sustainable and active modes of transport such as to require reduced parking provision, as part of a bespoke parking strategy' and as such, prescriptive standards are not set out for these areas. A bespoke approach to parking which complements the low carbon transport strategy for the proposed development is therefore set out defining the principles for parking at the development with the precise detail to be agreed at Reserved Matters stage.

5.84. Initial engagement with HCC has demonstrated their support for a provision of car parking which is lower than typical for other development in St Albans as well as a higher than minimum standards provision of cycle parking to support the low carbon transport strategy for the development. For the local centre, HCC has confirmed their in principle support for zero/very low provision of car parking, with the exception of parking for disabled users which would be ensured. The sites residential parking strategy adopts a mix of allocated and unallocated parking provision, with the number of spaces per dwelling based upon house type and size.

5.85. In summary it is proposed to provide an average of 1.7 parking spaces per dwelling on the site with:

- Apartments provided with 0.9 parking spaces per dwelling (leased separately)
- 1/2/3 bed houses provided with 1.6 spaces per dwelling (39% unallocated) ; and
- 4/5 bed houses provided with 2.4 spaces per dwelling (17% unallocated)

5.86. The parking strategy also allows for:

- Accessible parking meeting the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility
- Suitable on-site car club facilities will be provided within or adjacent to the mobility hub
- EVs - EV charging points in line with building regulations; and
- Motorcycle parking

Cycle Parking

5.87. It is proposed to provide cycle parking in excess of the Draft Parking Standards in the Emerging Local Plan, with an aspiration for cycle parking for at least one cycle space per bedroom for the residential uses. This will be provided for in a safe and suitable location within the curtilage of individual properties and in a prominent, secure and covered location within public/shared areas. This principle is also proposed for the local centre and education uses to be in exceedance of the minimum standards set out in the Emerging Local Plan. Shared cycle parking would again be provided in a secure, convenient, accessible and well-lit location. Cycle parking will be designed to ensure that access to cycles at the start of any journey is no less convenient than access to a vehicle.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Public Open Space

5.88. An integrated approach to the design of green spaces has been adopted whereby the co-ordination of landscape, ecology, drainage and health and well-being requirements have been addressed to provide a connected network of multi-functional green infrastructure. The provision of an appropriately planned, designed and managed green infrastructure network will deliver a wide range of functions and benefits.

5.89. A network of multi-functional green infrastructure will protect and enhance existing hedgerows and trees, provide new biodiverse habitats, incorporate sustainable drainage attenuation, provide areas for play and recreation and protect the unique landscape character of the Site where possible. This will create a legible, varied and attractive environment that supports a sense of community for new and existing residents.

5.90. The overall masterplanning approach has been landscape-led with the green infrastructure network formed around the existing features and topography of the site and its surrounds. The landscape strategy has sought to structure the proposals around existing natural and semi-natural features including hedges, mature trees and waterbodies and to incorporate them into areas of proposed public open space.

5.91. As noted above a connected network of active travel routes will permeate through the development using the dense network of green infrastructure to connect the Site with the surrounding area and existing active travel network. The alignment of existing mature hedgerows in particular provides an opportunity to align green corridors with active travel movement routes to create attractive multifunctional green connections that provide not just movement but also biodiversity net gain and landscape mitigation benefits to the proposed development.

5.92. Centre to the wider landscape strategy is the desire to maximise site biodiversity and to bring 'nature to the doorstep'. This is important, not only for creating sustainable landscapes but also for promoting personal well-being and good mental health within the new community. The masterplanning process for the site has been notably influenced by the principle that as a starting point all existing tree cover and hedges should be retained where possible.

5.93. The existing Sandridgebury Lane and adjacent landscape at the valley bottom, enables a new biodiverse park to be formed, providing a wildlife corridor and an importance location to incorporate SuDS (running to a low point at the far east of the Site) with leisure routes running throughout the space.

5.94. The landscape within the proposed Woollam Park masterplan has been based upon the guidelines set out in St Albans City and District Council's Draft Local Plan 2041 (2023) and the comparison can be seen below

Open Space Category	Definition	Site Requirement (per person) from Draft Local Plan	Site Requirement (A) based on calculation below*	Site Provision	Percentage of Provision
Amenity Green Space	Can include informal activity spaces close to homes, work or enhancement of residential or other areas, informal recreation and incidental spaces and also to include use as multi-functional space, including playing pitch provision.	15.3m²	3.67ha	6.03ha	164%
Natural and semi-natural green spaces	Supports wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education.	34.6m²	8.3ha	8.39ha	101%
Parks and gardens	Parks and formal gardens, open to the general public. Accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events.	7m²	1.68ha	2.88ha	171%
Children's play area	Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction, involving children and young people, equipped play areas.	0.6m²	0.144ha	0.18ha	125%
Teenage areas	Can include facilities such as youth shelters, skate parks, BMX tracks, MUGA, etc.	0.18m²	0.043ha	0.049ha	114%
Productive landscape / Allotments±	Opportunities to grow own produces. Added benefits include the long term promotion of sustainable living, health and social inclusion.	4.5m²	1.08ha	0.67ha	62%

*Assumes 1000 dwellings at 2.4 people per dwelling = 2400 population, so (site requirement m² x 2400) / 10,000 = Xha
±In lieu of traditional allocated allotments

FIGURE 39 - COMPARISON TABLE OF WOOLLAM PARK POS PROVISION AGAINST SACDC OPEN SPACE QUANTITY ASSESSMENT

FIGURE 40 - PUBLIC OPEN SPACE PLAN

Ecological, Biodiversity Net Gain and Arboricultural Strategy

5.95. The development design has been informed by the principles of Biodiversity Net Gain, to deliver a 10% net gain across the site. This will be achieved through retaining and enhancing the majority of the woodland and hedgerow habitats across the site. These habitats will be supported through the creation of a wide range of semi-natural habitats to support and improve wildlife connectivity across the landscape, such as the Heartwood complex to the north west. This habitat creation will be managed to maximise biodiversity value and provide additional foraging, breeding and commuting habitats for wildlife recorded onsite. Further installation of specific protected species enhancements, including bird/bat boxes and reptile hibernacula will further improve the biodiversity value of the site.

5.96. Offsite approximately 400m to the north of the site, two existing arable field compartment totalling 34ha in size, will be used create farmland bird mitigation plots within the current agricultural management. These plots will enhance the landscape for farmland bird species, providing improved nesting and foraging habitats for farmland bird species, notably skylark and linnet.

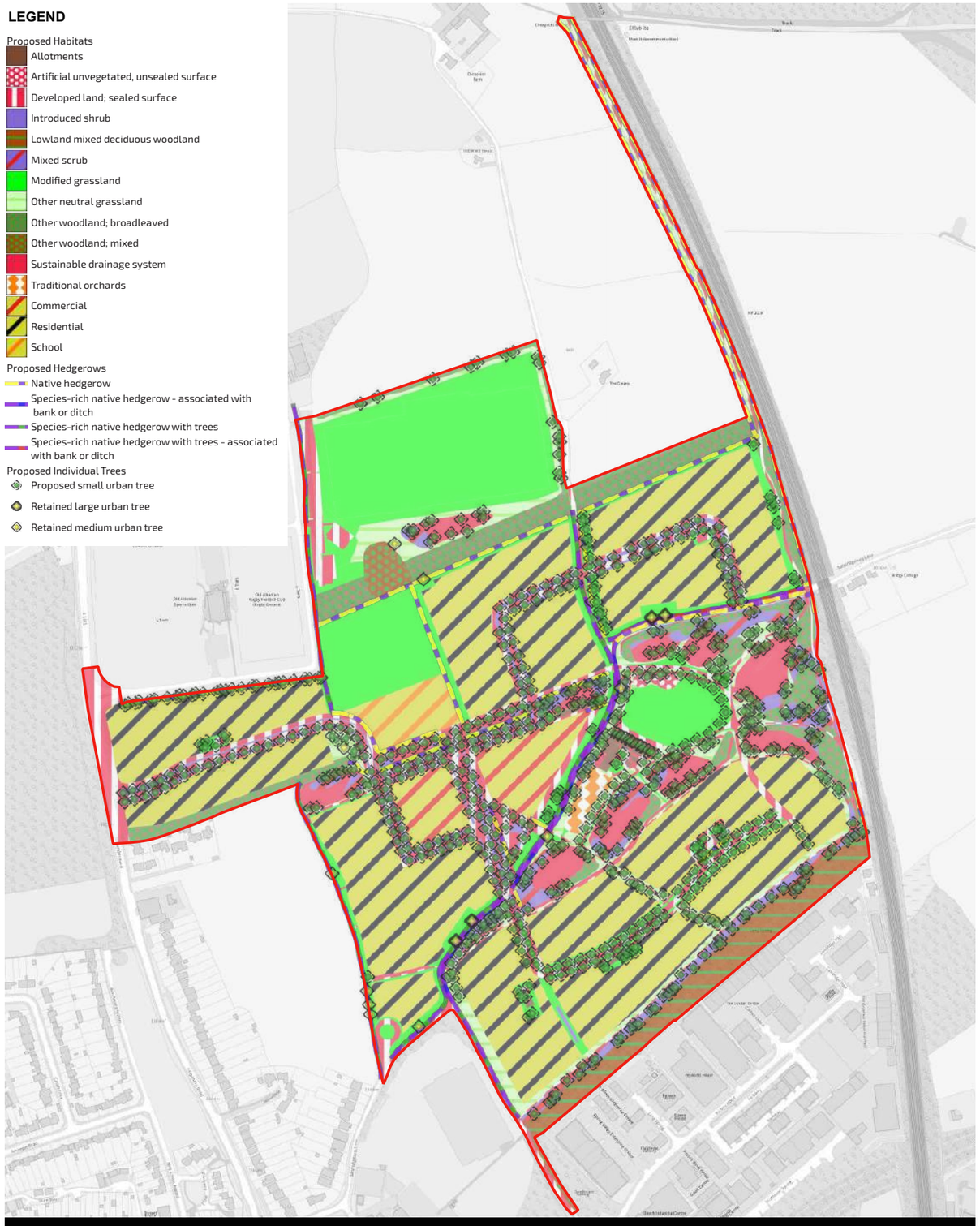


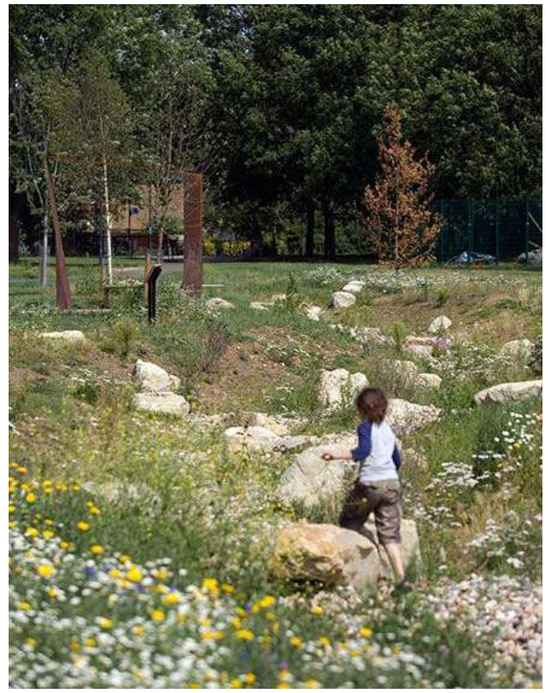
FIGURE 41 - ECOLOGICAL, BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN AND ARBORICULTURAL STRATEGY PLAN (PRODUCED BY FPCR)

Surface Water Drainage Strategy

5.97. Measures have been proposed to ensure that there is a negligible increase in surface water flood risk on- and off-Site from the development and ensure that excedance flows will be directed away from properties.

5.98. Key surface water and flood risk design principles include:

- Commitment to Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)
- Long term adaption and resilience to climate change
- Adaptive to phasing
- Tailored to proposed character areas
- Balance of conveyance with attenuation
- Water quality considerations



5.99. The proposed surface water drainage systems are designed to replicate the existing hydrological patterns of the Site by allowing runoff to infiltrate both to the north (Sports Pitches) and east (Residential). Soakaway drainage is deemed suitable for the site at two tested locations, while attenuation storage will be utilised through open Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) features such as attenuation basins, infiltration basins and swales.

5.100. Although water butts may be deployed, they are not factored into capacity calculations. The drainage strategy includes collector drains for the sports pitches, which will direct runoff into an attenuation basin before discharging via infiltration. For the residential area's runoff, multiple lined detention basins will be implemented to provide adequate storage and water quality enhancement before discharge. Additionally, a swale will redirect surface water flood risk flow away from development areas, ensuring the system's effectiveness as part of the overall post-development hydrological management.

Basin	Developable Area [ha]	Assumed Impermeable Area [ha]
Catchment A	3.35	2.65
Catchment B	2.41	1.57
Catchment C	3.46	2.59
Catchment D	3.00	2.37
Catchment E	0.62	0.63
Catchment F, I, G and J	9.63	7.07
Catchment H	1.11	1.41
Catchment K	2.42	1.83
Catchment L	0.75	0.71
Total	**26.75**	**20.83**

FIGURE 42 - SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE STRATEGY PLAN (PRODUCED BY PJA)

Foul Water Drainage Strategy

5.101. Due to the natural fall of the Site, foul sewerage will be pumped to a Thames Water (TW) maintained sewer, at a location to be agreed with them subject to TW network capacity modelling.

5.102. A foul water drainage strategy has been prepared (Figure 43) which implements measures for foul flows to drain via gravity to the proposed pumping station within the Site. Foul water will be pumped from the proposed Type 3 pumping station to the northwest of the Site into Manhole MH8702.

FIGURE 43 – FOUL WATER DRAINAGE STRATEGY PLAN (PRODUCED BY PJA)

Earthworks Strategy

5.103. The purpose of the proposed earthwork's strategy is to define and regrade areas of the existing topography that aren't immediately suitable for residential development, say at a gradient of 1 in 15 or steeper. The main development parcels are then layered into the model, to ensure that sufficient longitudinal gradients are met to accord with design guidance and standards. The aim of the overall strategy is to ensure that, as far as practicable, the site earthworks balance and that there is not an excess of material either to be removed, or a need for material to be brought onto site to facilitate development. This strategy will continue to evolve as detailed design is progressed, supported by a phase 2 ground investigation.

5.104. In the most part, the site area falls at an acceptable gradient, so little or no earthwork formal grading is required to facilitate development. In these areas, the topsoil and subsoil will be stripped to a depth of 600mm, to form a formation surface from which development can be constructed from.

5.105. Parcels which form the southern section of the development, however, are located in an area that is deemed relatively steep to develop, with an average 1 in 10m gradient falling from south to north. Therefore, these areas need to be re-graded as part of the development proposals. The natural ground levels are being lifted in the north of the parcels to facilitate a shallowing of the existing slope to a circa 1 in 20 gradient.

5.106. Numerous attenuation ponds and swales are required as part of the wider drainage strategy and these have been included within the earthworks strategy to ensure continuity between the pond and the parcel levels.

FIGURE 44 - PROPOSED EARTHWORKS STRATEGY PLAN (PRODUCED BY PJA)

Health and Wellbeing Strategy

5.107. The landscape strategy for the Site places a high amount of importance on focusing on the health and well being of future residents and users of the key spaces of the Site. Distinct themes have been identified and addressed by interventions that can be interwoven into the landscape and public realm proposals.

Social

5.108. A number of social civic opportunities have been created within the design for the key spaces that provide the means for community events or small pop-up social activities. The local centre, for example, provides a civic space at its heart as a focus for communal social activities (e.g. markets, Christmas events).

Environment

5.109. The Site's existing natural assets provide attractive landscape features that can be brought to life to inspire the landscape strategy and create an interesting backdrop for people to enjoy the new open spaces. The existing hedgerows and trees for example will be retained and along with newly-planted trees and hedgerows will form interesting vistas within the development complementing the proposed built form and representing a significant improvement from their current context within a intensely farmed agricultural environment. A variety of different natural and semi-natural landscape character areas are proposed to enhance the existing environment and offer opportunities for habitat creation and biodiversity gain. The resulting landscape will be diverse and distinctive, with interest for all users.

Recreation

5.110. The proposed green infrastructure will provide a connected movement network for pedestrians and cyclists linking the Site to St Albans, Sandridge and its surroundings and existing Public Rights of Way through the outlying countryside. The network will also link key spaces within the Site, providing convenient access to a variety of functions and activities and a circular loop around the development.

LEGEND

- Green infrastructure
- Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP)
- Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP)
- Local Area for Play (LAP)
- Teenage Area
- Allotments and grow zones
- Public Rights of Way (PRoW) - footpath
- Permissive footpath
- Sandridgebury Lane and Valley Road
- Sandridgebury Lane and Valley Road closed to vehicular traff
- Private access road
- Primary active travel route with fully segregated cycle lane
- Indicative network of proposed footpaths / cycle lanes

FIGURE 45 – HEALTH & WELLBEING PLAN

Play Strategy

5.116. Two formal play spaces (1no. LEAP, 1no. NEAP) are proposed and each one will take a slightly different character in terms of equipment provided, the degree of enclosure and the landscape it overlooks in order to add variety and interest. It is important that these play areas are integrated into the wider landscape, forming part of a wider strategy, rather than being segregated and self-contained with no design reference to surrounding spaces. In other areas of the public realm, there will also be areas for imaginative play too. For example, landscape sculpted to create mounds and valleys to roll down or hide behind. In some cases, these can be equipped with passive play equipment (e.g. balancing logs) to create further imaginative play opportunities.

FIGURE 46 – PLAY ALLOCATION PLAN

Productive Landscape Strategy

5.122. The inclusion of traditional allotments in this site is likely to have a detrimental affect on the overall open space provision in terms of amenity and public access. Therefore, an alternative approach has been provided that focuses on a community garden and large orchard area, more accessible by the local community and in keeping with the aspirations of the public spaces and development as a whole.

5.123. The proposals will provide growing and foraging opportunities for the community in line with emerging principles on the 'productive landscape' approach which is now actively promoted on larger scale communities, particularly through the Homes England Garden Community programme, predominantly due to the health and well-being / social cohesion benefits.

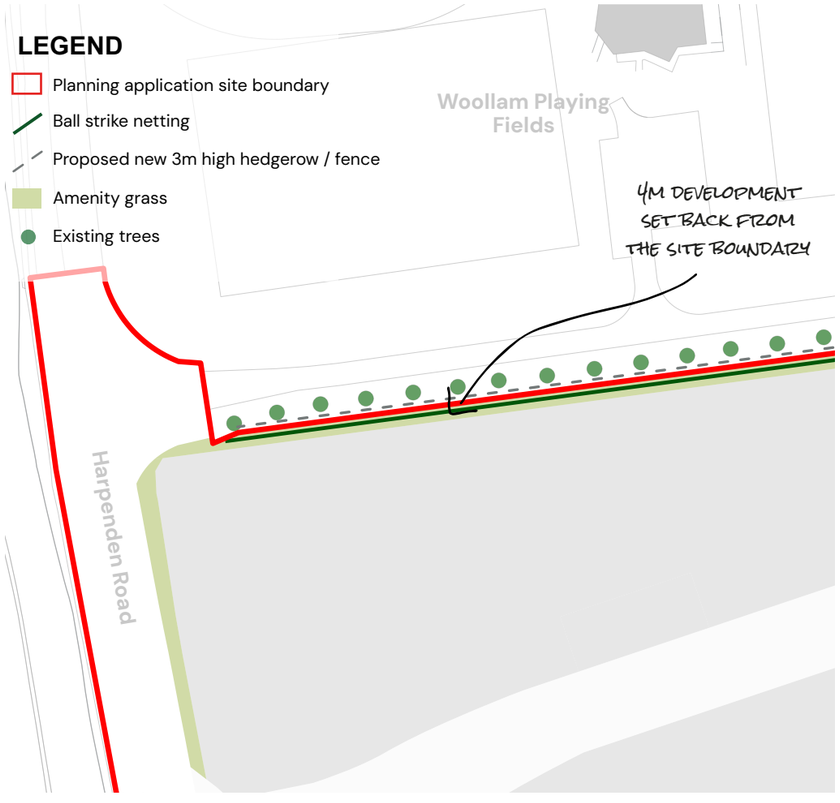
FIGURE 47 – ALLOTMENT ALLOCATION PLAN

MASTERPLAN STRATEGY

Existing OASA Sports Pitches Strategy

5.129. At the north of the Site, proposed development will be immediately south of the existing Woollam sports pitches which are used for a variety of sports including rugby and football.

5.130. The proposals seek to manage the important interface between development that is proposed adjacent to the existing sports pitches to the north of the Site. In this area, development will be set back by 4m from the Site boundary. On the boundary itself will be either 3m high hedgerow / 3m high fence. Ball strike netting will be installed (if required) along the boundary to prevent balls from the pitches from straying into the adjacent residential area, as per recommendations of the Ball Strike Report.



Lighting Strategy

5.136. The lighting for Woollam Park will provide safety for pedestrians in the key public spaces and play areas through the site.

5.137. Sensitive areas and green corridors with a focus on wildlife and habitat creation are to use low level lighting for way marking only.

5.138. It is anticipated that the lighting concept will be developed in further detail through the detailed design stages, but broadly follow the accompanying plan.

LEGEND

- Strategic movement routes designed to standard, to provide a safe route through the park that allows facial recognition
- Spaces designed to standard (play), mast lighting to provide safe levels of lighting and allows facial recognition
- Visually sensitive movement routes, low level bollard lighting
- Adjacent street lighting, designed to standards

FIGURE 48 - LIGHTING STRATEGY PLAN

Energy & Sustainability Strategy

Sustainability and Climate Change

5.144. There is one internationally-designated site located within 15km of the site; the Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation (SAC) network, which is situated to the west of the site, with its nearest component part located approximately 14.5km away. Due to the intervening distance and the presence of suitable recreational facilities in the locality, it is considered that there will be no constraint to development. There are no SSSI within 2km of the site.

Climate Change Mitigation and Reducing Carbon Emissions

5.145. St Albans City and District Council declared a Climate Emergency in July 2019. In 2020, the Council adopted a Sustainability and Climate Change Crisis Strategy with the aim of reducing the Council's emissions and doing everything in their power to influence the District's emissions, to achieve Net Zero by 2030.

5.146. The development at Woollam Park will implement a range of measures to reduce carbon emissions and support the Council's net zero transition, focusing on the three biggest sources of emissions associated with new development, transport emissions associated with petrol and diesel vehicle use, operational emissions associated with day-to-day energy use, and embodied carbon emissions associated with construction and building materials.

Transport Emissions

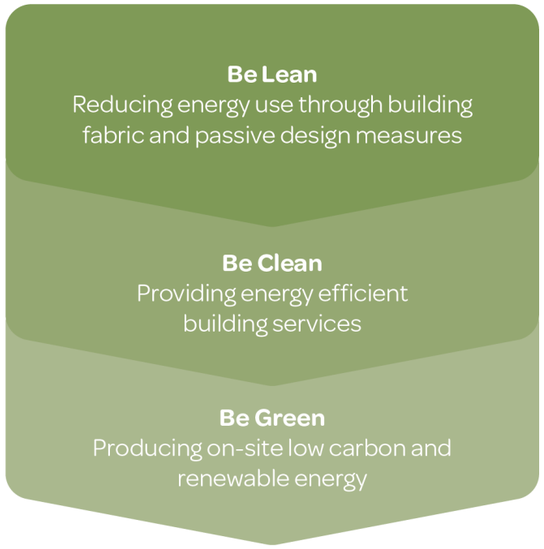
5.147. Road transport related carbon emissions account for circa 39% of total emissions within St Albans district. A sustainable transport strategy is therefore key to supporting the net zero transition. The development is in a highly sustainable location with access to a range of local services and amenities and sustainable transport modes including local train and bus services. The proposals will include a primary school and local centre with retail, a café, nursery, community building and other commercial uses, helping to meet people's day-to-day needs on site. Sustainable travel will be encouraged through the provision of a dense network of walking and cycling routes throughout the site, proposed off-site improvements to local infrastructure, a mobility hub, cycle parking, and EV charging facilities. The sustainable travel plan for the site will support the uptake of travel by sustainable modes, helping to reduce emissions associated with private car travel.

Operational Emissions

5.153. As a minimum all homes will be designed to meet the Future Homes Standard with an ambition to go beyond this where viable with an ambition to be net zero in carbon emissions associated with regulated energy use. Non-domestic buildings will achieve the government's Future Building Standard as a minimum, with community buildings targeting the voluntary UK Net Zero Building Standard. It is highly likely that the school, which will be delivered by Hertfordshire County Council, will also be net zero in line with the Council's net zero aspirations. This will be achieved through the application of the energy hierarchy and a fabric first approach which aims to reduce energy demand in the first instance, followed by the use of on site renewable energy generation such as ASHP and Solar PV. The development will be all-electric, without the use of fossil fuels for heating or hot water.

Transport Emissions

5.154. Road transport related carbon emissions account for circa 39% of total emissions within St Albans district. A sustainable transport strategy is therefore key to supporting the net zero transition. The development



is in a highly sustainable location with access to a range of local services and amenities and sustainable transport modes including local train and bus services. The proposals will include a primary school

Embodied Carbon

5.160. Embodied carbon associated with materials and construction can represent 40-70% of whole-life carbon in a new building. In order to manage and reduce the embodied carbon impact of the development at Woollam Park, all homes will aim to achieve best practice embodied carbon targets in line with the RIBA Climate Challenge. At detailed design, developers will be required to undertake a Lifecycle Assessment (LCA) on a representative sample of their dwelling types and implement measures to reduce embodied carbon. This could include measures such as lean design to minimise materials use, specification of locally sourced or lightweight materials to reduce transport emissions, specification of low carbon and sustainably sourced materials, or delivery of a proportion of homes using Modern Methods of Construction or modular build.

5.166. Climate change will cause the UK to become warmer, winters will become wetter, and summers will become drier. This is recognised by the council's emerging local plan which requires development to be resilient and adaptable to Climate Change. The proposed development at Woollam Park will include a number of features to reduce the risk of overheating, minimize flood risk, and enhance water efficiency to reduce stress on water local potable water supplies.

Overheating

5.167. The detailed design of homes will be required to demonstrate that the risk of overheating has been mitigated, taking into account projected increases in summer temperatures. Design will follow the cooling hierarchy, which prioritises the use of passive cooling measures, helping to minimise energy use and carbon emissions. The extensive provision of green and blue infrastructure throughout the site plan will also help to mitigate the risk of overheating through providing a cooling effect.

Flood Risk

5.168. The site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1, with a low probability of river or sea flooding. The surface water drainage strategy for the site will include a variety of Sustainable Drainage (SuDS) features which aim to mimic the natural processes of surface water drainage and provide water treatment, biodiversity, and amenity benefits within blue and green corridors. Proposed SuDS features include attenuation basins, swales, bioretention systems, filter strips, and permeable paving.

5.174. Homes will aim to limit water usage to a maximum of 110 litres or less per person per day through the provision of water efficient equipment such as dual flush WCs, water meters, and low flow fittings. Homes with access to a garden will be provided with a water butt to enable rainwater collection. The use of rainwater harvesting systems will be considered for community areas and/or non-domestic buildings at detailed design.

FIGURE 49 - SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY DIAGRAM

Stewardship Strategy

Introduction

5.177. The development proposals include the creation of high-quality environment and public open spaces supported by long-term placemaking, stewardship and place-keeping mechanisms for the new community at Woollam Park.

5.178. This Stewardship Strategy sets out the high-level principles and objectives which this project will seek to achieve.

5.179. It provides a workable stewardship solution which can be applied to the scheme whilst also retaining the flexibility appropriate to the outline status of the planning application.

5.180. The stewardship solution will develop throughout the planning process in two stages:

- Creation of the Long-term Stewardship Strategy – This would be submitted and agreed prior to grant of detailed planning permission. It would set out the stewardship model, organisational structure, its scope, income and expenditure model, estate management role, the potential relationship with St Albans School, and the detailed facilities that would be provided

- Establishment of the Stewardship Body – This body will be established in a form agreed with the Local Authority prior to the first occupation of the development. Its structure would include mechanisms for the ongoing management, control and funding of the Stewardship Body, its operation and management of the Community Hub and/or mobility hub, the commitments for the management of green infrastructure in accordance with a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan, and other mechanisms that will allow residents to clearly understand how the public parts of Woollam Park will be managed.

Planning Policy

5.186. A longstanding planning objective has been that communal spaces associated with new development are subject to proper management and maintenance.

5.187. This has often required legal covenants either to transfer the land or asset to a public authority with an associated commuted sum, or alternatively, the creation of estate management companies who are vested with such responsibilities and funded through an estate charge levied on occupiers.

5.188. For large scale development, there has been a trend towards the establishment of community management organisations as part of that process.

5.189. In the emerging Local Plan, Policy LG1 that concerns principles for development at the identified Broad Locations, criteria S intends that "an appropriate Community Stewardship and Legacy body is established with sufficient assets to provide long term sustainable management of community facilities and / or open spaces".

Stewardship Principles

5.190. The following principles of Successful Stewardship will be at the heart of the evolution of stewardship structure and arrangements at Woollam Park.

5.191. Planning for long-term stewardship

- The creation of a stewardship structure should have a planned sequence, starting during the planning process;

- Public engagement and delivery should inform the stewardship organisation's policy formulation and be embedded in on-going management and maintenance;

- The strategy should look beyond the site boundary; and

- Stewardship bodies can manage a wide range of community assets, not just public open space.

5.175. Paying for long-term stewardship

- Predictable revenue is essential for viable and successful stewardship;

- Proactive management of land and property endowments can be profitable;

- Stewardship bodies should be entrepreneurial;

- Money can be saved through good design; and

- Stewardship services should develop as the community grows.

5.176. Running a stewardship body

- Good stewardship requires good governance, including incorporating communities within the body which clearly defined roles and responsibilities;

- Investment in the right skills and capacity is crucial;

- Dialogue with residents must be maintained;

- Transparent monitoring requirements should be embedded from the outset to ensure the benefits of the development are realised and maintained; and

- There must be financial transparency.

Stewardship Model

Overview

5.197. The following principles define how the stewardship body will operate and make decisions. It is the intention for these to be considered in the evolvement of stewardship arrangements at Woollam Park prior to determination of the application.

5.198. Any stewardship body will:

- Uphold the objectives of stewardship and ensure decisions are made in the long-term public interest;
- Be an effective, credible custodian of the development's assets;
- Be financially sustainable, offering value for money services;
- Develop, maintain and monitor a long-term viable and prudent business plan to ensure the efficacy and success of the stewardship arrangements;
- Enable long term resilience through a flexible, adaptable and entrepreneurial approach;
- Ensure that it has access to suitable skills and expertise and has sufficient capacity to enable it to undertake its role successfully.;
- Encourage collaboration and partnership working between local authority partners, the community and wider stakeholders, to take full advantage of their contribution to stewardship, where appropriate;
- Include representation from the Woollam Park residents on the stewardship body once the occupation of the development begins; and
- Embed transparent monitoring and accountability requirements from the outsets to ensure the benefits of the development are realised and maintained and adapted if required.

Assets

5.204. Any stewardship model will depend on the asset, the place, the party/ies delivering the development, and the people who will live in the new community.

5.205. The assets to be covered could include:

- Open space, amenity green space, parks, children play space, allotments, public realm, SuDS;
- Secondary and tertiary roads where not adopted by the Highways Authority;
- Verges and street furniture;
- Active transport corridors;
- The mobility hub;
- The community building.

5.206. Green spaces will be managed to offer a diverse range of benefits, fostering recreational opportunities, supporting physical and mental well-being, social connections, and educational experiences for all members of the community.

5.207. The protection and enhancement of biodiversity will be prioritised to ensure the successful delivery of the Biodiversity Net Gain identified in the design and planning stages through to construction, site adoption and stewardship. This approach must be viable on an ongoing basis.

5.208. It is expected that other assets and services, such as education and utilities would remain the responsibility of traditional providers.

Possible Models

5.214. The operation of a stewardship body is influenced by three key interdependent elements:

- The organisational structure;
- Legal form and funding;
- Governance;

5.215. Consideration will also need to be given as to how the community membership of the body will be established.

5.216. As the planning process progresses, further consideration will be given to the preferred model to be adopted relative to its strengths and weaknesses.

5.217. The timing of the body being established, how it will be created, who will be involved, ensuring that anybody has suitable skills and expertise to enable it to undertake its role successfully and any transitional arrangements will require careful consideration. All this, along with the structure, form and reporting obligations, will be captured in a business plan.

5.218. Consideration of appropriate governance, its credibility, transparency, viability, fairness and affordability, replicability and flexibility are also key factors.

5.219. Although not vital to any model, St Albans School, as landowner, may consider sitting as a member on a stewardship body; this will be the subject of later discussion at Governor level at later stages.

5.236. Commitment to the stewardship model will form part of the S106 negotiations although it is important that there remains flexibility and adaptability in the delivery and long-term management as the body will need to evolve with the development.

5.237. As the proposals develop, and there is clarity on the types and amounts of community assets, agreement will need to be reached with the applicants on who delivers the assets, when they are delivered, and when they are transferred over to any stewardship body.

5.238. Delivering and maintaining the quality of assets will be considered carefully in establishing the stewardship body. The quality of the asset must be proportionate to the resources and revenue the stewardship body must deliver to ensure the body remains financially stable. Quality and monitoring will be managed through the development stages as well as assessed prior to handover of any asset.

5.239. The stewardship body should offer value for money services and allow the body to take an entrepreneurial approach. This relates to set up costs and operation costs. It is likely that some of this information will be secured through planning conditions or via the S106 Legal Obligation Agreement.

5.240. Operational costs could be funded through a mix of:

- service charge;
- commercial property charge;
- endowments or loans from the developer paying a commuted sum to cover management and maintenance costs for a certain number of years;

These elements will evolve over time

5.247. A long-term community engagement plan will be developed to assist in the establishment of the stewardship body to ensure community representation in establishing it and in decision making and to inform governance proposals and to identify founding board members for initial stages.

Management Model

5.248. Successful models can act on behalf of a growing community and engage new residents in shaping local decision-making and community development. Such approaches have included parish councils (although Woollam Park is in an unparished area) or other neighbourhood forum or other representative bodies/forums. It is desirable for the governance arrangements to also offer the involvement of landowners, developers, and the host local authority or authorities, as long-term partners in the project.

5.249. One option which is being considered is the Community Trust and Lease Model which has been developed by Greenbelt Group, which is considered a modern solution for large developments and has been successfully implement elsewhere.

5.250. The key features of this model include:

- A Community Trust is established with a governing board providing oversight in the form of trustees (which may include St Albans School) together with a representation from a residents' association. It ensures the best interests of homeowners and the wider community are mutually served and the developers' legacy fully protected;

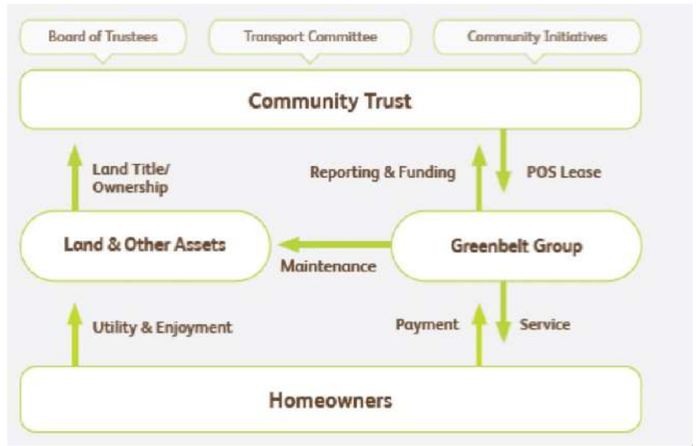


FIGURE 50 - MANAGEMENT MODEL OPTION (OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT) CONSIDERED AT WOOLLAM PARK; SOURCE: GREENBELT 'PUBLIC OPEN SPACE SOLUTION FOR LARGE DEVELOPMENTS AND GARDEN VILLAGE PROJECTS'

- A funding structure is created to provide for the management and maintenance of open spaces and other assets, community care and community initiatives and the running costs of the Trust. This guarantees the funding of these vital elements in perpetuity;
- All assets and leases are ultimately owned by a Community Trust in perpetuity, providing the community with a strong control mechanism and a safeguard that these areas will be looked after in their best interests;
- A series of identical leases are granted to Greenbelt, enabling the developer to pass all placekeeping and community care responsibility in phases as the development progresses; and
- As leaseholder, Greenbelt assume all risks and liability for maintenance of the public realm and community care and would be bound by performance criteria and price controls. This lease reduces the costs burden and skills required on the board of the Trust, while it retains ultimate control.

5.267. This model involves several stages from planning approval to project completion as the site is delivered and project completed and responsibility via leases being granted, to Greenbelt in a phased way. Initially these leases will be from the developer, whilst the Community Trust is being formed as the residents arrive. The assets and their operational leases will be transferred to the Trust once it is viable.

5.257. This process enables input into the detailed designs to ensure effective maintenance is possible and helps ensure a smooth transition and optimal outcomes for the site. This process can be repeated in phases if necessary. Outsourced providers (i.e. in this example, subcontractors to Greenbelt) may assist with the day-to-day functions on an agency or service provided basis retaining control over performance management and costs to the Board.

5.258. Stewardship activities and their effectiveness will also need to be continuously monitored and evaluated, and strategies adapted where appropriate, to ensure the long-term success of open spaces in a changing environment.

Conclusion

5.259. This Stewardship Strategy confirms the intention for Woollam Park to follow the overarching high-level principles and objectives set out in policy and guidance in relation to establishing long term stewardship arrangements for the proposed development and which will be secured through planning conditions and/or part of any Section 106 Agreement associated with an outline planning permission.

5.260. The principles set out in this Strategy will be developed throughout the planning process in two stages: the establishment of the Long-term Stewardship Strategy, which will be agreed upon prior to the grant of detailed planning permission, and the Stewardship Body, which will be agreed upon prior to the first occupation of the development.

Potential Indicative Phasing Strategy

Delivery and Phasing

5.274. It is anticipated that construction of the development will commence from the west of the site following relocation of the existing playing pitches. This would utilise the new Harpenden Road access.

5.275. It is intended that the development will be delivered in phases, with each phase being a separate and severable part of the project. However, the required physical and social infrastructure for each phase will be delivered alongside new homes to support the growth and sustainable functioning of the development.

5.276. It is anticipated that a condition to secure a future phasing plan will be attached to any planning consent issued.

Supporting Infrastructure

5.277. The local centre, primary school, mobility hub will be provided for by certain population size triggers with the goal of early delivery where feasible and reasonable to support the sustainability and cohesion of the new community.

5.278. It is expected that the majority of development in Phase Two will be completed prior to the re-routing of Sandridgebury Lane onto Harpenden Road.

Construction and Logistics

5.279. A Construction Management / Traffic Plan will be provided as part of a condition attached to any future outline planning permission to explain how the construction traffic will access the site to ensure the existing highway network is not unduly impacted.

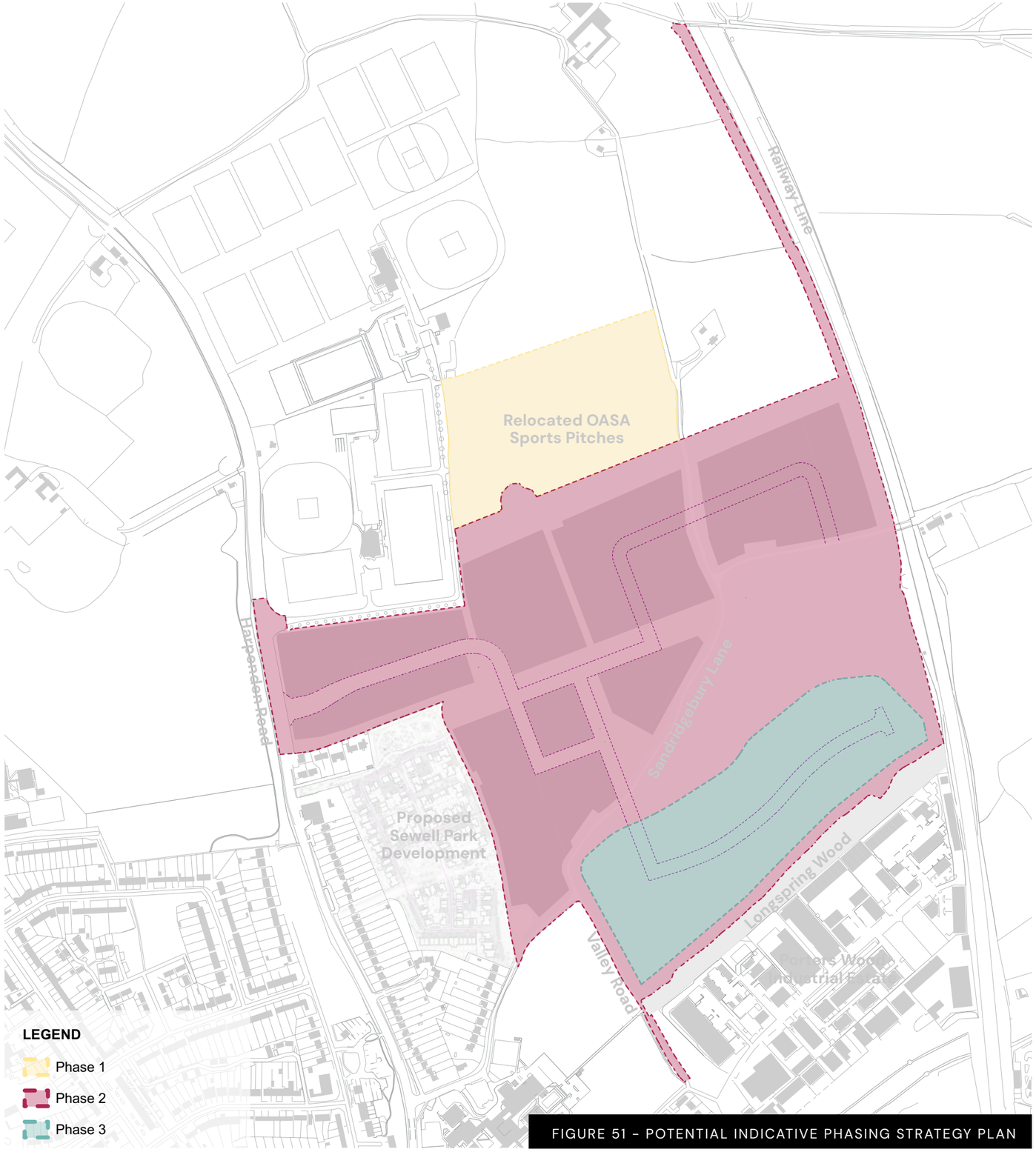


FIGURE 51 - POTENTIAL INDICATIVE PHASING STRATEGY PLAN

Six

Summary & Conclusions

Summary and Conclusions

5.285. The Proposed Development has been underpinned by extensive consultation, design, environmental and technical work, ensuring it is practical and deliverable. The vision and placemaking strategy is considered to be consistent with the requirements for the Site as set out in the emerging Development Plan allocation (B1). The proposals also accord with the objectives for new residential development set out in the NPPF, as well as leading precedents and examples of best practice.

5.286. Specific placemaking, architectural and landscape details of the proposed development will be subject to further in-depth dialogue with key stakeholders with the broad design principles set out in this document providing a framework for future discussions on Design Codes and Reserved Matters Applications in particular. The masterplanning approach set out in this DAS therefore does not seek to fix the exact location or configuration of all spatial elements, however, detailed access plans, alongside a series of Parameter Plans are included as part of this application in order to secure a comprehensive and robust approach to the delivery, the location and general configuration of a number of fixed elements is such as:

- the creation of a green and blue infrastructure network which surpasses minimum open space requirements and provides important functions such as biodiverse habitats, structural planting, communal spaces and children's play;
- the retention of landscape features such as mature trees and hedgerows to accommodate existing species and habitats and to maximise new opportunities for habitat enhancement, creation and management;
- a development that will be well-connected (to its surroundings and the wider extent of the St Albans area), readily understood and easily navigated, supporting links to local facilities;
- a permeable connected network of public transport and active travel routes that will encourage sustainable modes of travel and provide access to new streets and a range of public open spaces;
- the provision of a mix of family house types, sizes and tenures, which will offer choice and create a balanced residential community;
- a development which will positively respond to local character through the provision of a range of building types, patterns and densities.

FIGURE 52 - SUMMARY PLAN

Define.

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