






HGC Framework Plan Story Document


July 2024



Hemel
Garden
Communities

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Overview

What this document is about

Dacorum Borough Council and St Albans City & District Council are each drafting a new local plan that will set out how much new development will happen in the years up to 2041, and where it will be located. The local plans will ensure that the homes and services needed by the residents of each local authority are well planned and delivered in line with a clear set of agreed policies.

The transformation of Hemel Hempstead, led by *Hemel Garden Communities* is an important objective for each local plan. The transformation will see brownfield regeneration and greenfield development (within the 'Growth Area') considered together with the existing town under a concept of 'One Place', for the benefit of all. The 2020 Spatial Vision explains how this will be achieved:

"Hemel Garden Communities: creating a greener, more connected New Town.

In the heart of the Golden Triangle between Oxford, Cambridge and London, Hemel Garden Communities will create new neighbourhoods and transform existing ones and the wider area, building on the best of its heritage and culture to become a greener, more connected New Town.

The vision is organised into four thematic pillars, all of which reinforce the aspirations to promote healthy lifestyles and respond to the climate crisis.

The four pillars



Hemel Garden Communities will be home to inclusive, integrated neighbourhoods connected by a green network, and thoughtfully designed places with engaged communities, all underpinned by digital connectivity, a self-sustaining economy and pioneering green technology driven by Herts Innovation Quarter."

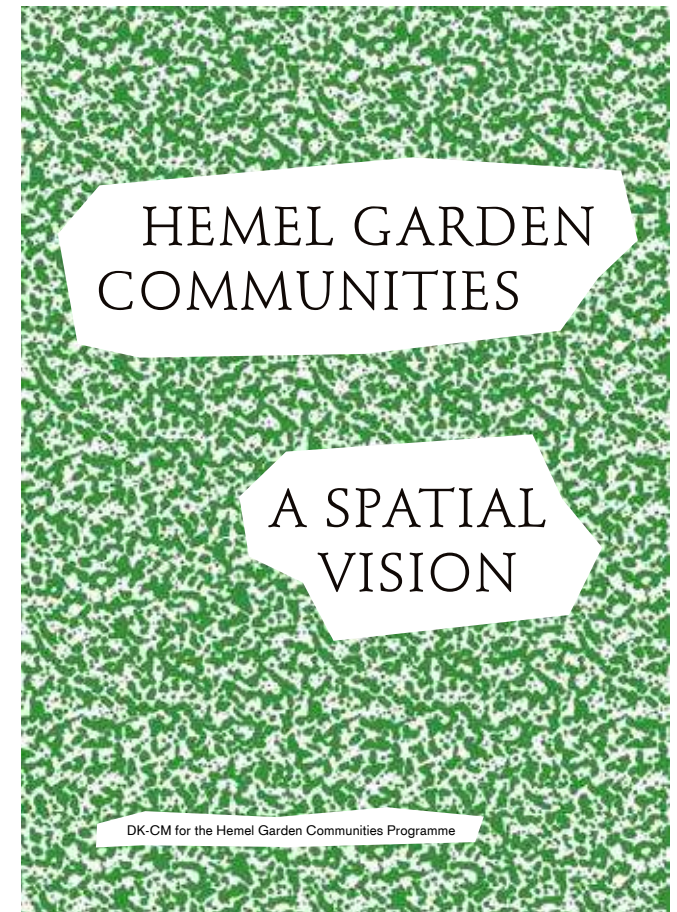
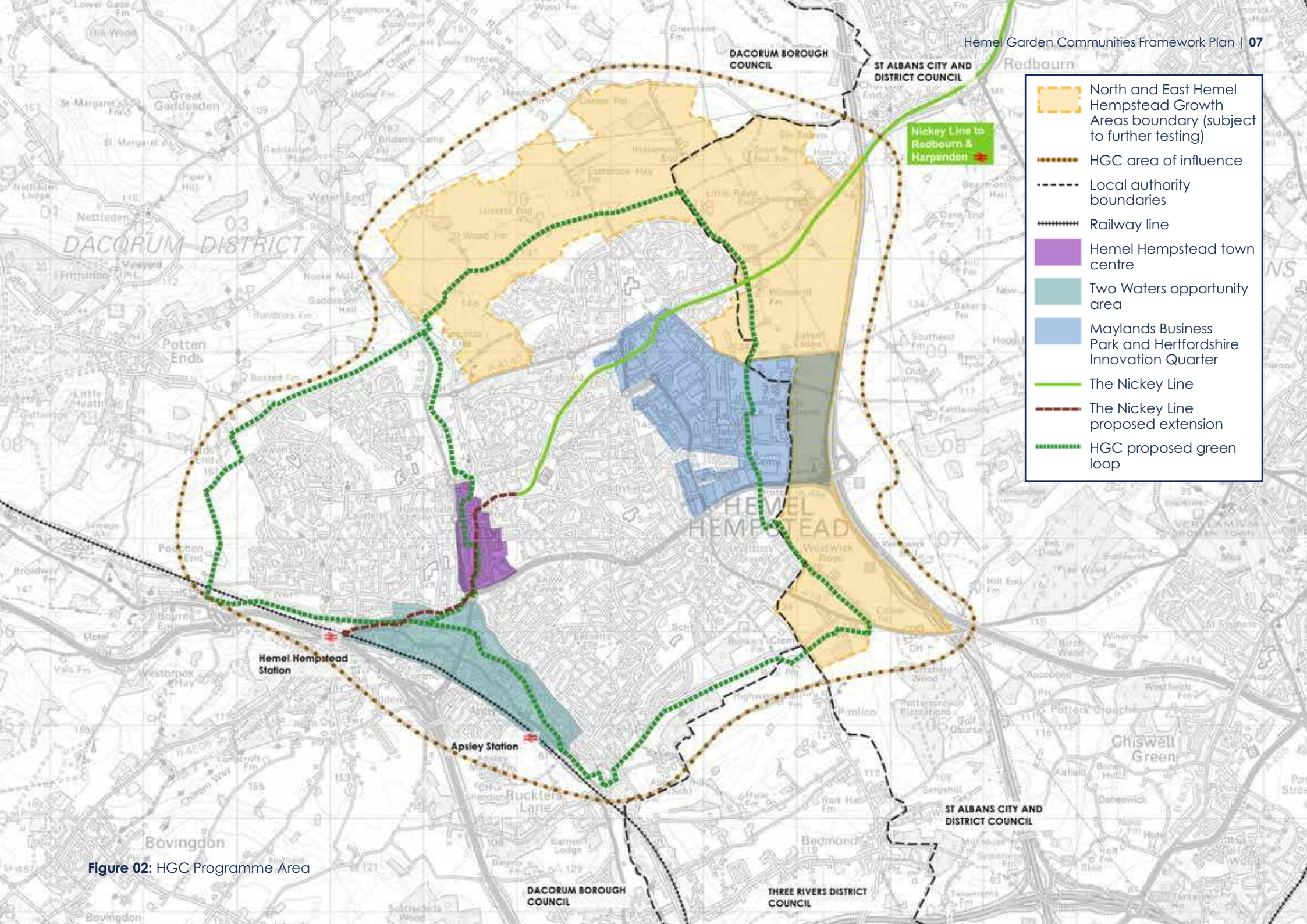


Figure 01: Hemel Garden Communities: A Spatial Vision



-  North and East Hemel Hempstead Growth Areas boundary (subject to further testing)
-  HGC area of influence
-  Local authority boundaries
-  Railway line
-  Hemel Hempstead town centre
-  Two Waters opportunity area
-  Maylands Business Park and Herfordshire Innovation Quarter
-  The Nickey Line
-  The Nickey Line proposed extension
-  HGC proposed green loop

Figure 02: HGC Programme Area

The planned growth of Hemel Hempstead has naturally prompted questions from local people about what the new development will mean for the town and nearby places.

Much of the thinking about what the development might be like, what will happen there, and how well planned infrastructure can support communities has been brought together through the *Hemel Garden Communities Framework Plan*, which is the focus of this [document].

The Framework Plan considers the whole of the Growth Area — the land which wraps around the northern and eastern flanks of the new town — which will deliver up to 11,000 new homes over many years, along with business space, parks and green spaces, schools, healthcare facilities and other local services.

The main purpose of the Framework Plan has been to test and inform the policies and allocations in the draft Local Plans for Dacorum and St. Albans, to check that what is planned fits within the site, that enough room can be made for biodiversity, and that the development has a realistic chance of being delivered (i.e. it is both affordable and technically achievable). The knowledge gained through the Framework Plan process will be used as evidence in support of the examination of the local plans by an independent inspector. The full development of the Growth Area will go beyond the Local Plan periods, and the Framework Plan has been prepared on the principle of comprehensive forward planning for the future.

Land within the Growth Area is owned by several different parties, and it also straddles the Dacorum and St Albans local authority boundaries. The Framework Plan ensures that all the issues related to the Growth Area have been thought about in a coordinated way, rather than in a piecemeal fashion. This follows the ambition and approach adopted in masterplanning the New Town following its designation in 1947.

It is hoped that the information set out in this [document] will help local residents to understand what is being planned, and how the ambitions established for Hemel Garden Communities will be delivered.

One Place

Hemel Garden Communities is based on the concept of 'One Place', with the aim of sharing the benefits of growth and transformation of the town across existing and new communities. The concept aims to make sure that new communities in the Growth Area are integrated into the town's social, cultural and economic life, and that the new facilities and opportunities opened up by the growth of the town are accessible and usable by all. The Four Pillars of the Spatial Vision set out the key principles that will make this happen.

The Framework Plan picks up the spatial challenge of bringing new and existing places together. It has done this by first understanding what makes Hemel Hempstead special, successful and a good place to live. By learning from its past and present, it looks forward to the future shape of the town, ensuring that the needs identified through planning and policy-making can be successfully co-ordinated and delivered over the coming decades.

At a practical level, bringing existing and new communities together will be about:

- convenient, accessible active and sustainable transport networks across the town in line with the HGC Transport Vision & Strategy;
- new centres and places that provide for their new communities but also complement and strengthen existing places; and
- a landscape and green infrastructure approach, guided by the HGC Green Infrastructure Strategy, that provides a great new place to live, but also makes the whole of Hemel Hempstead healthier and more sustainable through provision of new multi-functional public open space and equitable access to nature.

Existing neighbourhoods

Hemel of today



Access and movement

Route heirachy



Placemaking

Farmsteads, local centres, town gateways



New neighbourhoods

Hemel-scale neighbourhoods



Green networks

Comprehensive connectivity



FP concept

Hemel of the future



Figure 03: 'One Place' early concept sketches



Growing Hemel Hempstead Successfully

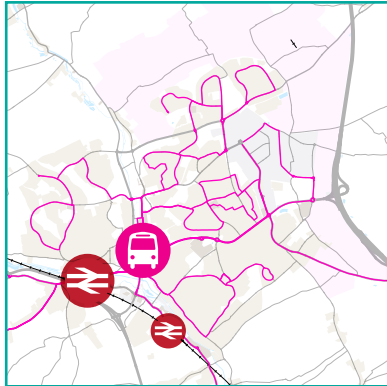
Hemel Hempstead existing qualities and features

The successful growth of Hemel Hempstead should be underpinned by an understanding of how the town currently works in planning terms. The diagrams here, grouped according to The Four Pillars, show how the original master plan for the new town has led to a distinct pattern of neighbourhoods connected by a strong grid of roads and interspersed by green valleys and open spaces with playing fields.

Neighbourhoods are planned to be self-sufficient in terms of local centres and primary schools, while important destinations, including the station, town centre, hospital, Maylands and M1 junction 8 are concentrated on or near to the A414 corridor.

A GREEN NETWORK

PUBLIC TRANSPORT



Bus routes tend to loop around neighbourhoods providing good coverage but poor directness and long journey times. The primary rail station is located at the far west of the town.

VEHICULAR MOVEMENT



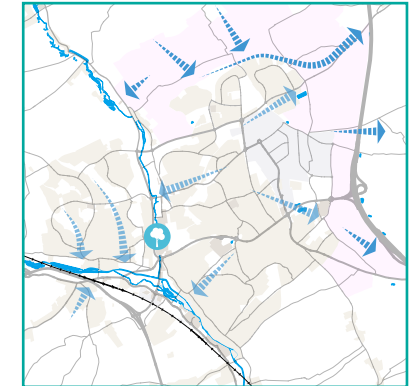
A strong 'grid' of primary vehicle routes connects the town centre, Maylands and northern neighbourhoods. Two key access points are the A41 junction to the south and M1 J8 to the east.

ACCESSIBLE GREEN SPACE



Hemel Hempstead benefits from accessible green space, based around the network of valleys, with significant strategic spaces clustered near the town centre. Smaller green space is accessible within neighbourhoods.

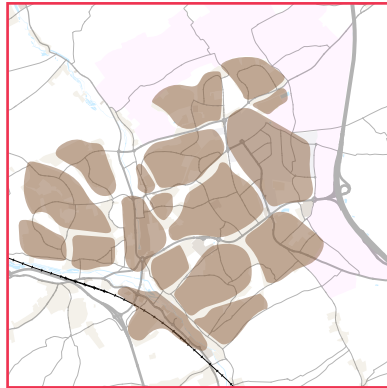
WATER



The Rivers Gade and Bulbourne join south of the heart of the town, creating extensive green and blue networks, draining most of the existing town. Much of the north and east of the town drains eastwards, towards the River Ver, through normally dry valleys.

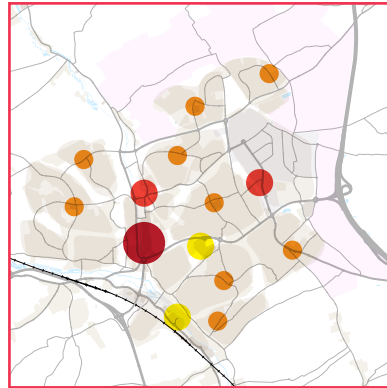
INTEGRATION & NEIGHBOURHOODS

NEIGHBOURHOODS



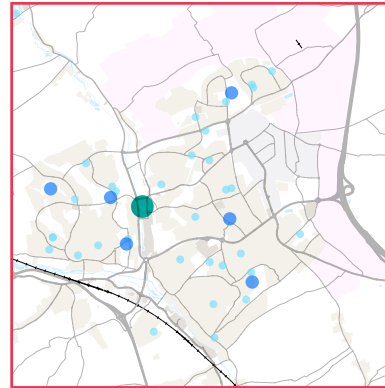
Neighbourhood units are distinctive and are arranged on valley sides, defined by main routes and green infrastructure. They are inspired by the self-contained Clarence Perry neighbourhood unit.

CENTRES



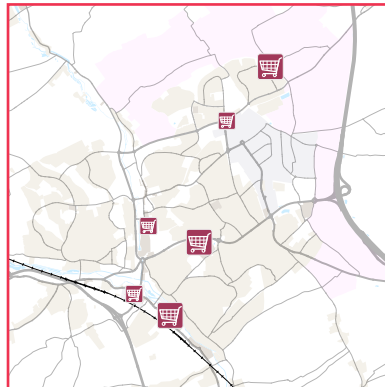
Centres are strongly related to surrounding neighbourhood units, with some higher order centres such as Maylands, Old Hemel and the town centre. Two major retail park style developments (in yellow) also function as 'centres'. Centres are accessible on main routes, although local centres are generally accessed on foot.

EDUCATION



The town has six secondary schools, concentrated in the west, and primary schools are distributed evenly within neighbourhoods. A single post-16 FE college is located in the north of the town centre.

SUPERMARKETS



The town has three major supermarkets, with a further three smaller/discount stores.

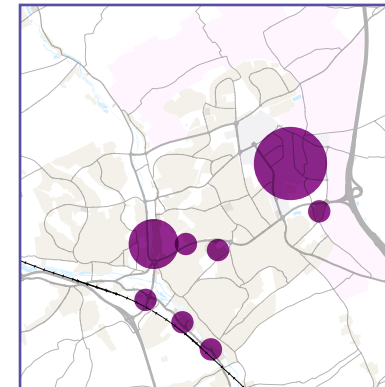
SPORT



Playing fields are well integrated into open space networks and valley floors across the town. Indoor sports facilities are concentrated in the south and centre of the town.

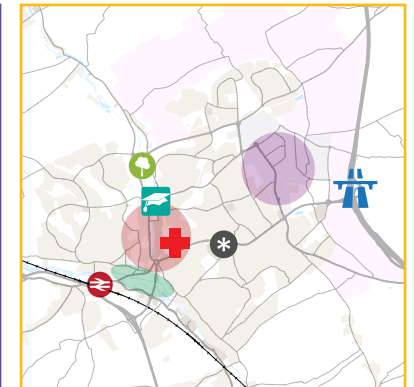


EMPLOYMENT



There are two main employment centres—the town centre (primarily service and administrative), and Maylands (primarily light industrial, distribution and research uses, and the largest employment area in Hertfordshire). Retail, industrial and office parks are located in the south.

MAJOR DESTINATIONS



The town has a strong linear centre with old and New Town components and extensive open spaces such as Gadebridge Park. Leisure destinations such as the The Snow Centre are an important part of Hemel Hempstead's regional attraction.

Understanding the growth areas

LOCATION

The Growth Area is the area outlined by the St Albans and Dacorum Local Plans for the spatial expansion of Hemel Hempstead as part of the Garden Communities Programme. It is outlined in red on the adjacent plan. It spans the land to the north and east of Hemel Hempstead, starting at the B440 Leighton Buzzard Road near Picotts End in the north-west, crossing the B487 Redbourn Road, and reaching the A4147 St Albans Road in the south-east.

The M1 motorway bounds its eastern edge, and the Chilterns National Landscape lies to the north. The Growth Area wraps around the existing town of Hemel Hempstead adjacent to Grovehill, Woodhall Farm, Maylands and Leverstock Green.

The local authority boundary is shown on the plan with a black dashed line. All the Growth Area falls within Hertfordshire County, and the County Council is engaged in planning for growth (with specific responsibilities for education, highways, waste, libraries and social care).

LAND OWNERSHIP

The Growth Area measures over 1,000 hectares. A large amount of the land belongs to The Crown Estate, who have actively engaged with Hemel Garden Communities along with three developers — Kitewood, Pigeon and Bloor. The remainder of the area is in private ownership. This patchwork of landownerships emphasises the need for a comprehensive plan at the early stages of the planning process, to ensure that due regard is given to a joined-up approach to infrastructure, green infrastructure and important facilities such as schools.

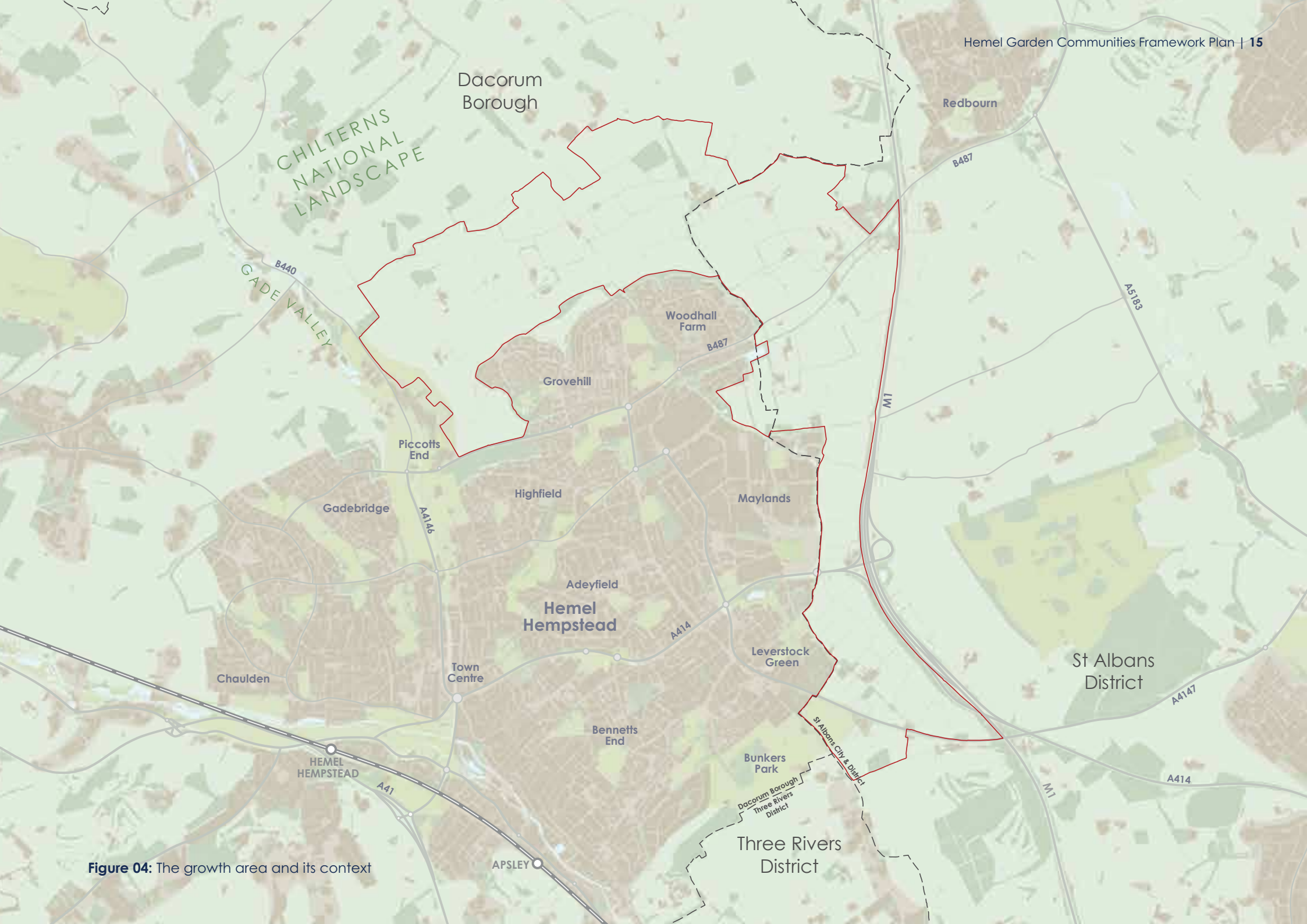


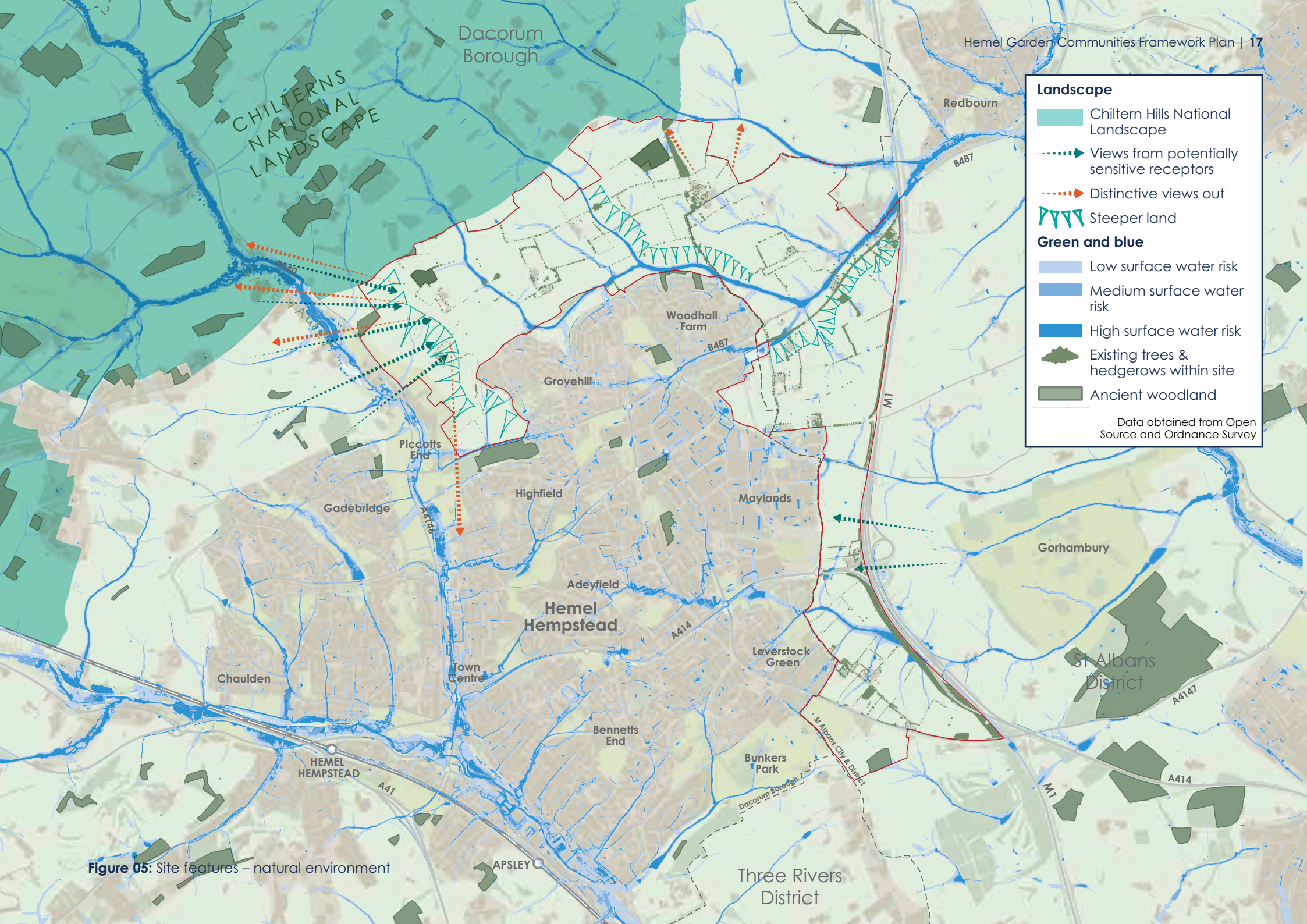
Figure 04: The growth area and its context

SITE FEATURES

The Growth Area includes a number of important features which have a bearing on the Framework Plan. These are summarised in the following plans, and described in the accompanying text:

Landscape

- The site is characterised by rolling fields, with broad shallow valleys where surface water drains to. Steeper sections rise from Leighton Buzzard Road (the Gade Valley slopes), around the northern perimeter of Woodhall Farm, and to the south of Redbourn Road, which limit the scope for development.
- Long views out to the west and north from the Gade Valley provide visual links to the surrounding National Landscape. Views of Hemel Hempstead are restricted by the topography and tree planting in the northern part of the Growth Area, but Grovehill can be seen from nearby. To the south of Redbourn Road, Maylands industrial estate is highly visible due to the size of the buildings, and the M1 traffic can be clearly heard, highlighting the need for new measures to prevent noise disturbance. To the south of the A414, long views out are again restricted in places by tree planting, field boundaries and uneven terrain.
- Views into the site from the surrounding countryside are particularly prevalent from the western slopes of the Gade Valley, and from some vantage points in the north. Visual and landscape assessments have, and will continue to be undertaken as the plans develop to ensure mitigation of any harm to surrounding countryside.
- To the east of the M1, there is potential for development to be visible from the Gorhambury Estate, and special regard will be paid to ensuring this is not harmful to the integrity of this important heritage asset.
- The site is within the setting of the Chilterns National Landscape, which imposes a responsibility to carefully consider the form and limits of new development. A review of the boundary of the National Landscape by Natural England is underway. A variation order is expected to be sought from the Secretary of State in winter 2025.
- The Chiltern Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation (SAC) lies a few kilometres to the northwest of Hemel Hempstead. To mitigate the potential impact on this habitat of additional recreation use by a growing population, Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) will need to be provided within the Growth Area, to the satisfaction of Natural England.
- There are no permanent water features within the site. A number of dry valleys run through the site, draining the site towards the east and the River Ver. These dry valleys regularly transport surface water after heavy rainfall.



Landscape

- Chiltern Hills National Landscape
- Views from potentially sensitive receptors
- Distinctive views out
- Steeper land

Green and blue

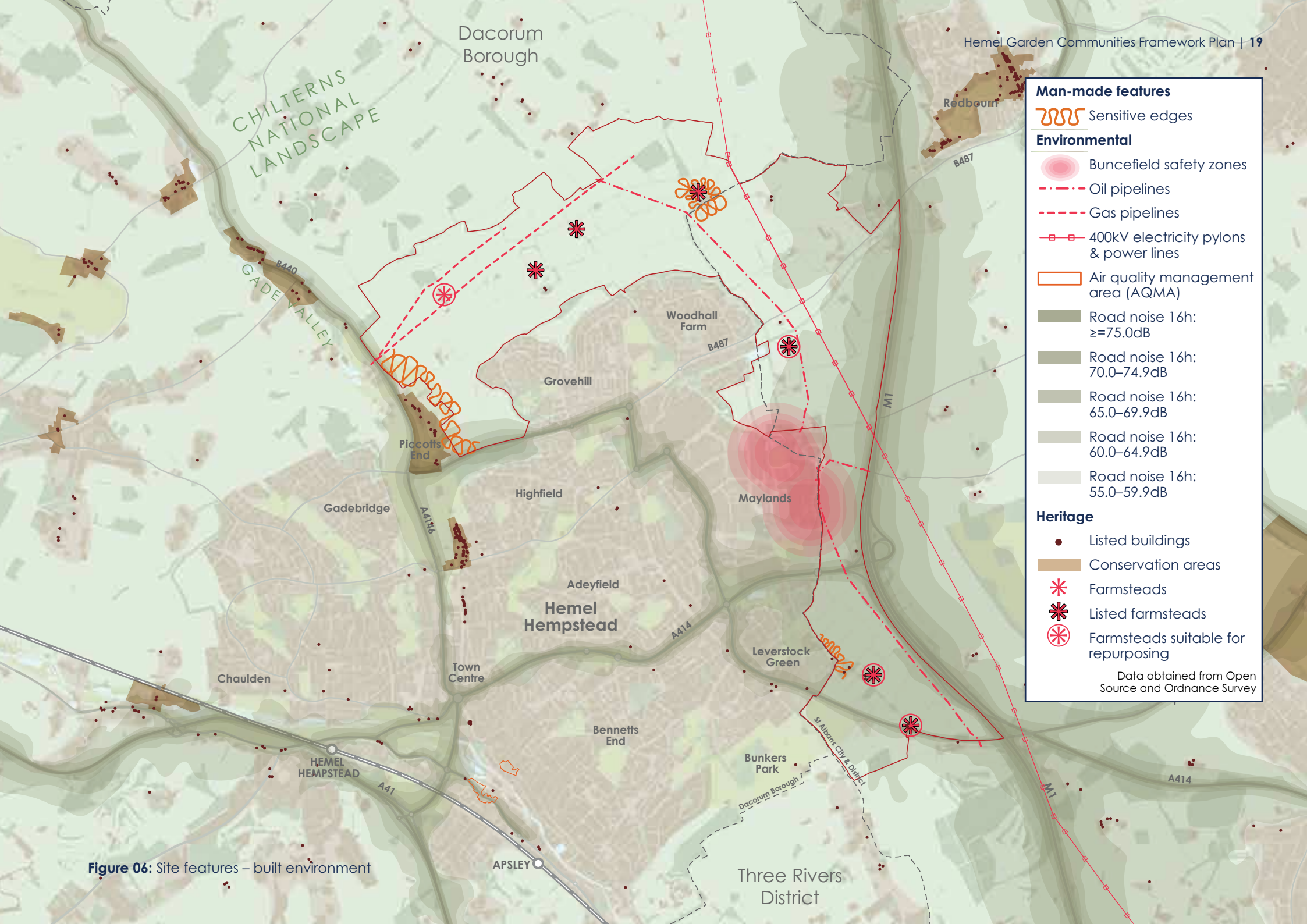
- Low surface water risk
- Medium surface water risk
- High surface water risk
- Existing trees & hedgerows within site
- Ancient woodland

Data obtained from Open Source and Ordnance Survey

Figure 05: Site features – natural environment

Man-made features

- Whilst predominantly comprised of arable farm land, a number of historic and man-made features and activities have influenced the Framework Plan.
- Sensitivities exist adjacent to Piccotts End, which is a conservation area with many listed buildings, and around several existing farm buildings. Many of the latter offer the opportunity to consider the creative re-use of heritage buildings as a cultural link to the Growth Area's history, and as focal places for community activity.
- Several utility corridors cross the Growth Area. This includes underground gas pipelines crossing the northern part of the site in an east-west direction, and an oil pipeline running south to Buncefield Oil Depot. The health and Safety Executive have imposed strict limitations on development on activities within identified 'safety zones'.
- National Grid overhead powerlines cross the eastern most part of the Growth Area; the lines will remain as they are of national significance, and it is expected that they will inform the future extent of the Greenbelt, demarking the limit of new development.



Man-made features

- Sensitive edges

Environmental

- Buncefield safety zones
- Oil pipelines
- Gas pipelines
- 400kV electricity pylons & power lines
- Air quality management area (AQMA)
- Road noise 16h: ≥ 75.0 dB
- Road noise 16h: 70.0–74.9dB
- Road noise 16h: 65.0–69.9dB
- Road noise 16h: 60.0–64.9dB
- Road noise 16h: 55.0–59.9dB

Heritage

- Listed buildings
- Conservation areas
- Farmsteads
- Listed farmsteads
- Farmsteads suitable for repurposing

Data obtained from Open Source and Ordnance Survey

Figure 06: Site features – built environment

Access and movement

- Several lanes and Public Rights of Way cross the site, forming a network of minor connections which should be used in the future for walking and cycling.
- Opportunities to connect directly into nearby Grovehill and Woodhall Farm are limited because the boundaries to those neighbourhoods are formed by private back gardens. It will be important to capture those opportunities which do exist, and ensure they are woven into the movement network within the Growth Area to connect communities.
- The Nickey Line is a former railway line that has been converted to a long-distance cycleway. It runs through the site at East Hemel Hempstead and can cater for longer journeys to Redbourn, Harpenden and Hemel Hempstead town centre. Easy access to the Nickey Line should be facilitated by adjacent development.
- The Growth Area meets the existing highway network in several locations including the A4147 St Albans Road, Westwick Row, the A414, Green Lane, Hogg End Lane, Punchbowl Lane, Cherry Tree Lane and Three Cherry Tree Lane, B487 Redbourn Road, Holtsmere End Land, Cupid Green Lane, Dodds Lane, Link Road and B440 Leighton Buzzard Road. Some of these routes have the potential to provide principal access points into the site, whereas others can serve to enhance the network of quieter connections for walking and cycling. Punchbowl Lane, Hogg End Lane and Holtsmere End Lane each offer links to the countryside beyond the Growth Area, with opportunities for recreational access.

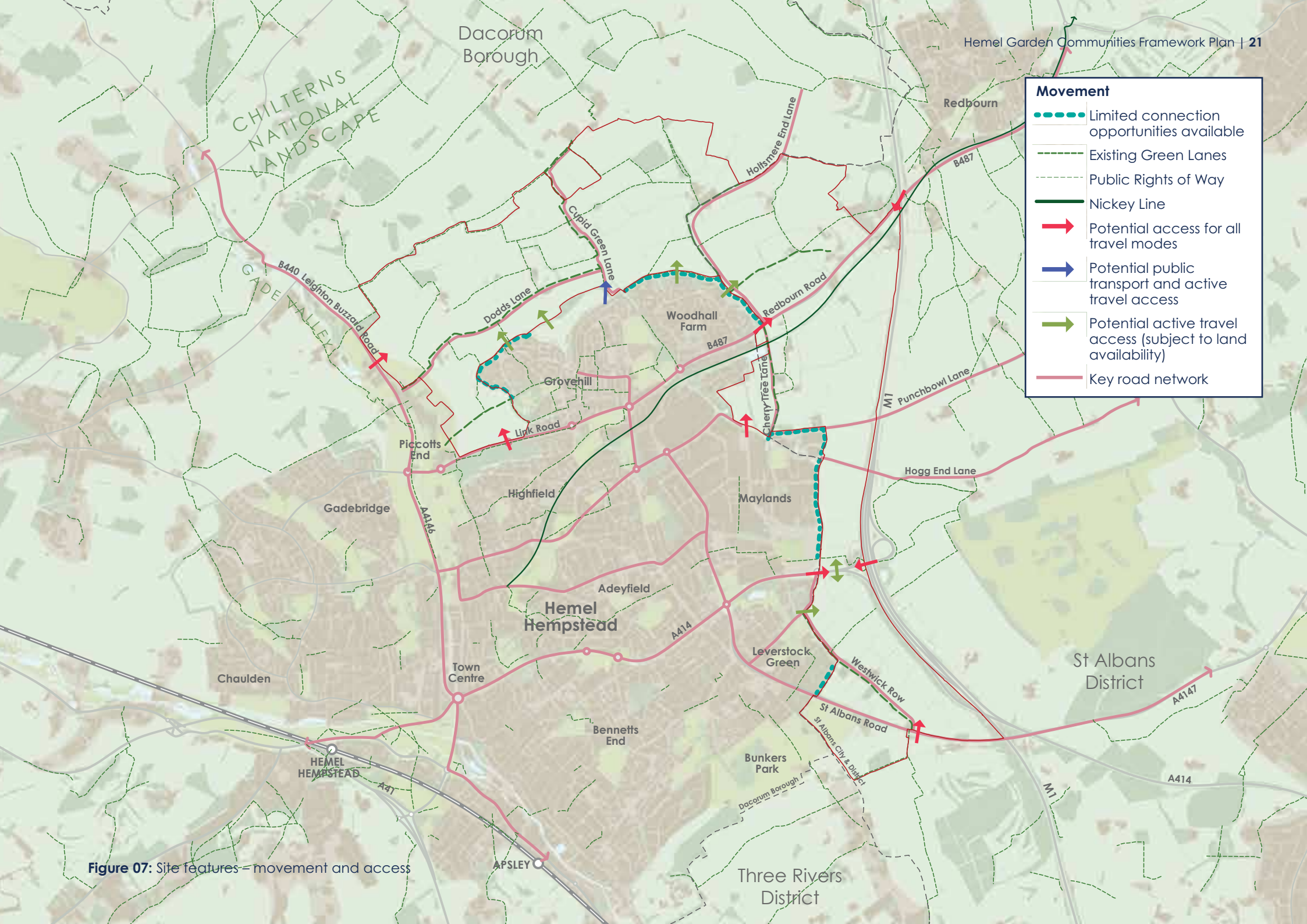


Figure 07: Site features – movement and access

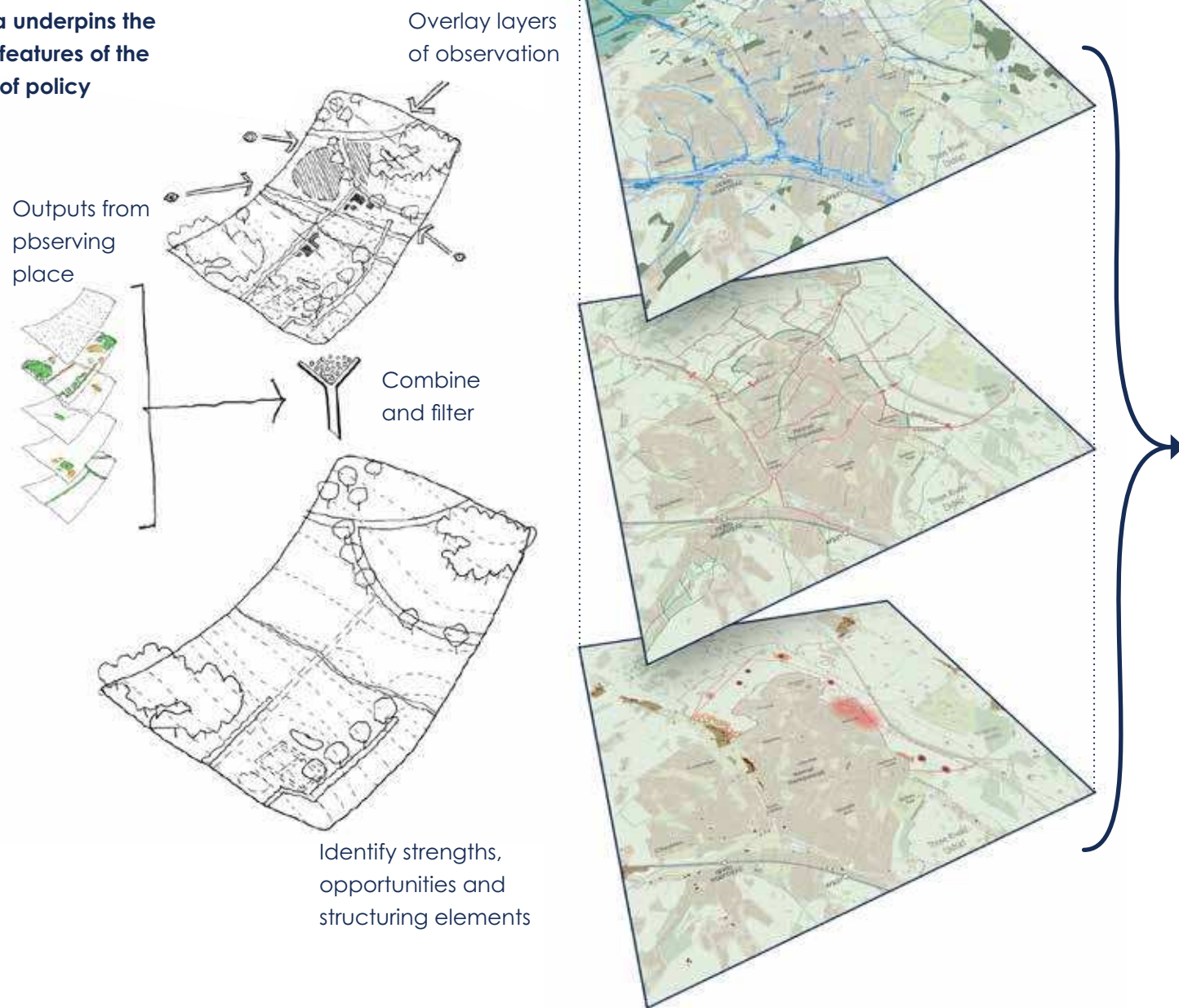
Three Rivers District

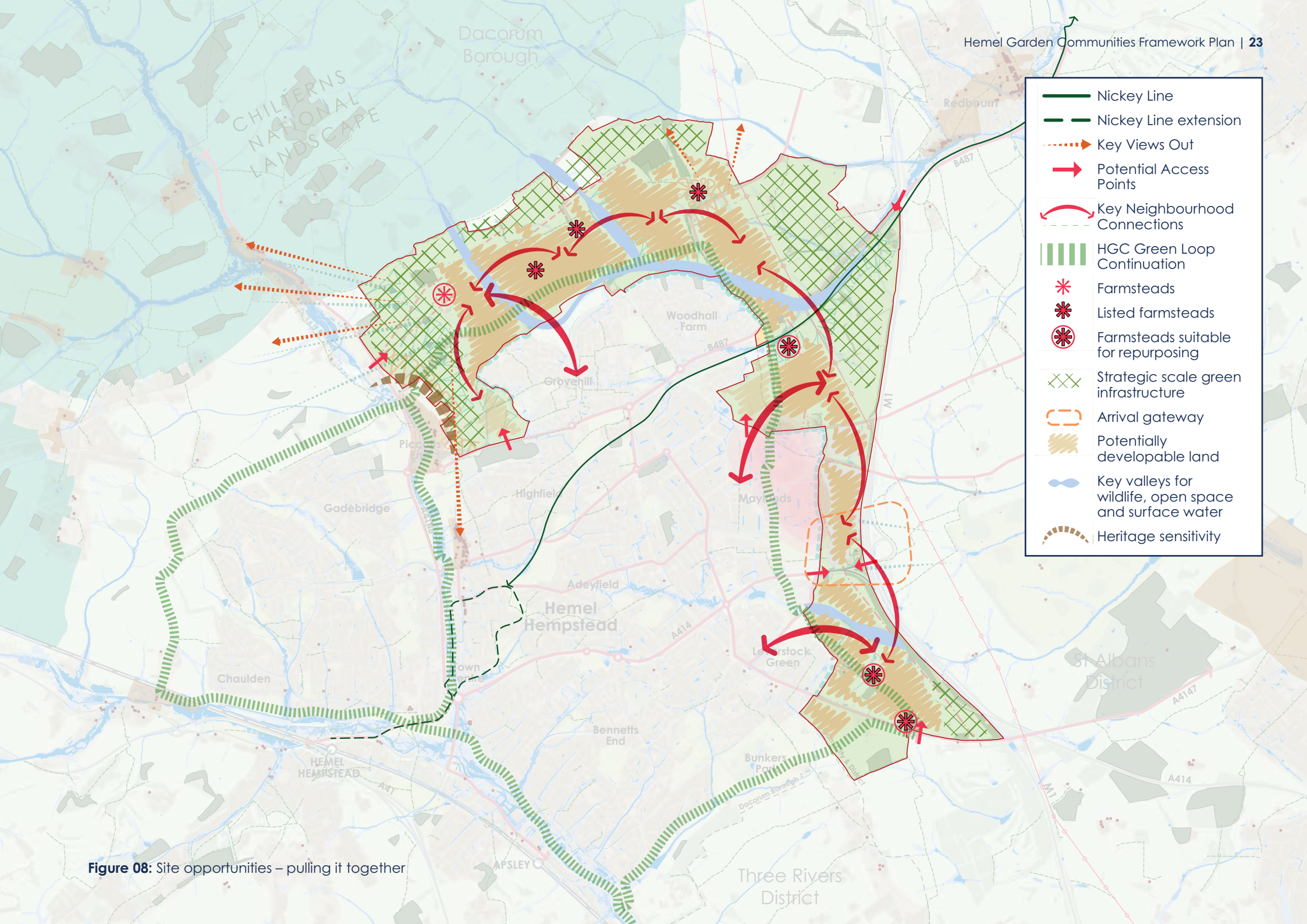
Pulling it together

A holistic approach to the design of the Growth Area underpins the Framework Plan, using design to marry the physical features of the site and context with the wider aims and objectives of policy and the Hemel Garden Communities Spatial Vision.

To do this, the Framework Plan follows the design process set out in the joint 'Strategic Sites Design Guide', published by both SADC and DBC, by first carefully observing and understanding the site's features, the surrounding context and the town as a whole.

The next stage of the design process draws this together, to understand how to create the foundation for a holistic place, and define the growing shape of a sustainable, successful Hemel Hempstead in the future. This stage evaluates the site and town as a whole, and looks at opportunities to anchor new places within their existing environment. This forms a link between the site as it is today, and the site as it could be in the future.





- Nickey Line
- Nickey Line extension
- Key Views Out
- Potential Access Points
- Key Neighbourhood Connections
- HGC Green Loop Continuation
- Farmsteads
- Listed farmsteads
- Farmsteads suitable for repurposing
- Strategic scale green infrastructure
- Arrival gateway
- Potentially developable land
- Key valleys for wildlife, open space and surface water
- Heritage sensitivity








Figure 08: Site opportunities – pulling it together

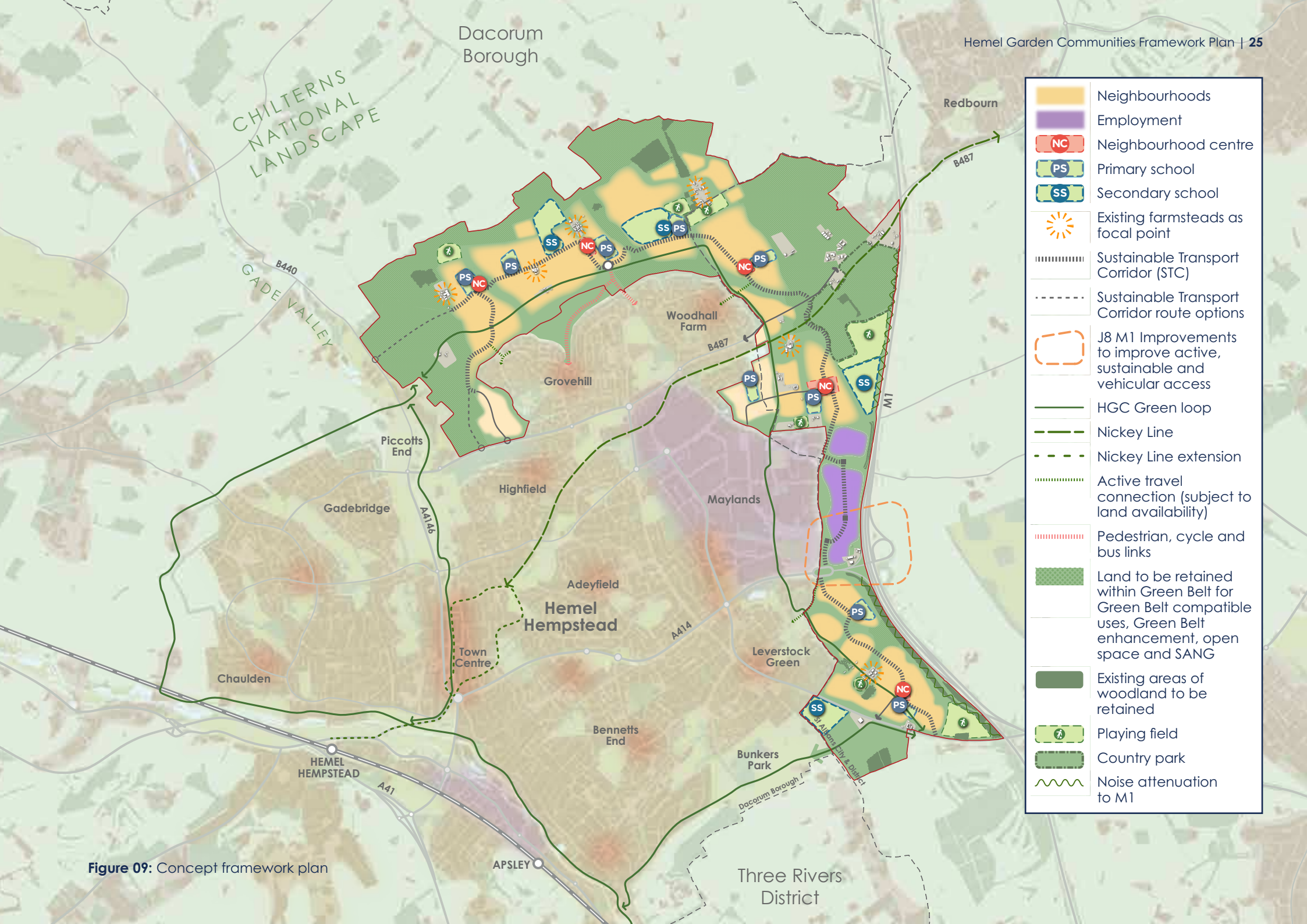
Concept plan

The Concept Framework Plan identifies the main components of the planned growth of Hemel Hempstead. It shows the main connections, neighbourhoods, land uses, facilities and open spaces that are essential for achieving the policy and transformation objectives set out by the local authorities.

The Concept Plan is not a blueprint, or a detailed masterplan. It shows how all the ingredients of a successful place can be arranged to achieve what is set out in the emerging Local Plans and the Spatial Vision, and to give co-ordinating guidance for future masterplanning of sites within the Growth Area, and wider infrastructure planning.

The following pages go through the key features of the Concept Plan in more detail. These features are grouped into three themes which flow from the four pillars of [A Spatial Vision](#):

Spatial Vision Pillar	Concept Plan Themes
 <p>Green Network</p>	 <p>Green and blue infrastructure: how the Growth Area will work with nature and the landscape as an essential part of its design and future function.</p>  <p>Transport and mobility: how the Growth Area will support the Transport Vision, with sustainable mobility being the first and easiest choice for getting around Hemel.</p>
 <p>Integration and Neighbourhoods</p>	 <p>Community wellbeing: how the Growth Area can have thriving, mixed, successful and integrated new neighbourhoods that complement and connect with existing Hemel.</p>
 <p>Self-Sustaining Economy</p>	
 <p>Engaged Communities</p>	



- Neighbourhoods
- Employment
- NC Neighbourhood centre
- PS Primary school
- SS Secondary school
- Existing farmsteads as focal point
- Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC)
- Sustainable Transport Corridor route options
- J8 M1 Improvements to improve active, sustainable and vehicular access
- HGC Green loop
- Nickey Line
- Nickey Line extension
- Active travel connection (subject to land availability)
- Pedestrian, cycle and bus links
- Land to be retained within Green Belt for Green Belt compatible uses, Green Belt enhancement, open space and SANG
- Existing areas of woodland to be retained
- Playing field
- Country park
- Noise attenuation to M1

Figure 09: Concept framework plan

Sustainable growth

Growth and transformation of Hemel Hempstead must be considered in the context of addressing environmental issues such as the climate crisis, the need to protect and enhance biodiversity and nature, and issues such as air and water quality. The four pillars of the Spatial Vision provide the basis for this across the town, and the Framework Plan tests how this can be applied in the Growth Area.

A masterplanning approach to development can ensure that a holistic view is taken of the opportunities for all components of a place to work together to ensure that it will be environmentally sustainable in the future.

- Walkable, well-provisioned neighbourhoods, so that facilities for daily life are within walking and cycling distance of home.
- Convenient and accessible sustainable transport options so that it is possible to live life in Hemel Hempstead without needing to use a car regularly.
- Networks of green open spaces and natural habitats that provide areas for nature and people to co-exist, and to re-link and strengthen natural habitats through wildlife and ecology corridors.
- Retaining as much existing natural space as possible and creating new enhanced natural spaces with high-value habitats.
- An integrated approach to water management that retains it within the site, using natural approaches to filter it from pollutants, and taking advantage of it to provide high quality space for ecology.
- Minimising the need for carbon-intensive infrastructure such as major new roads.

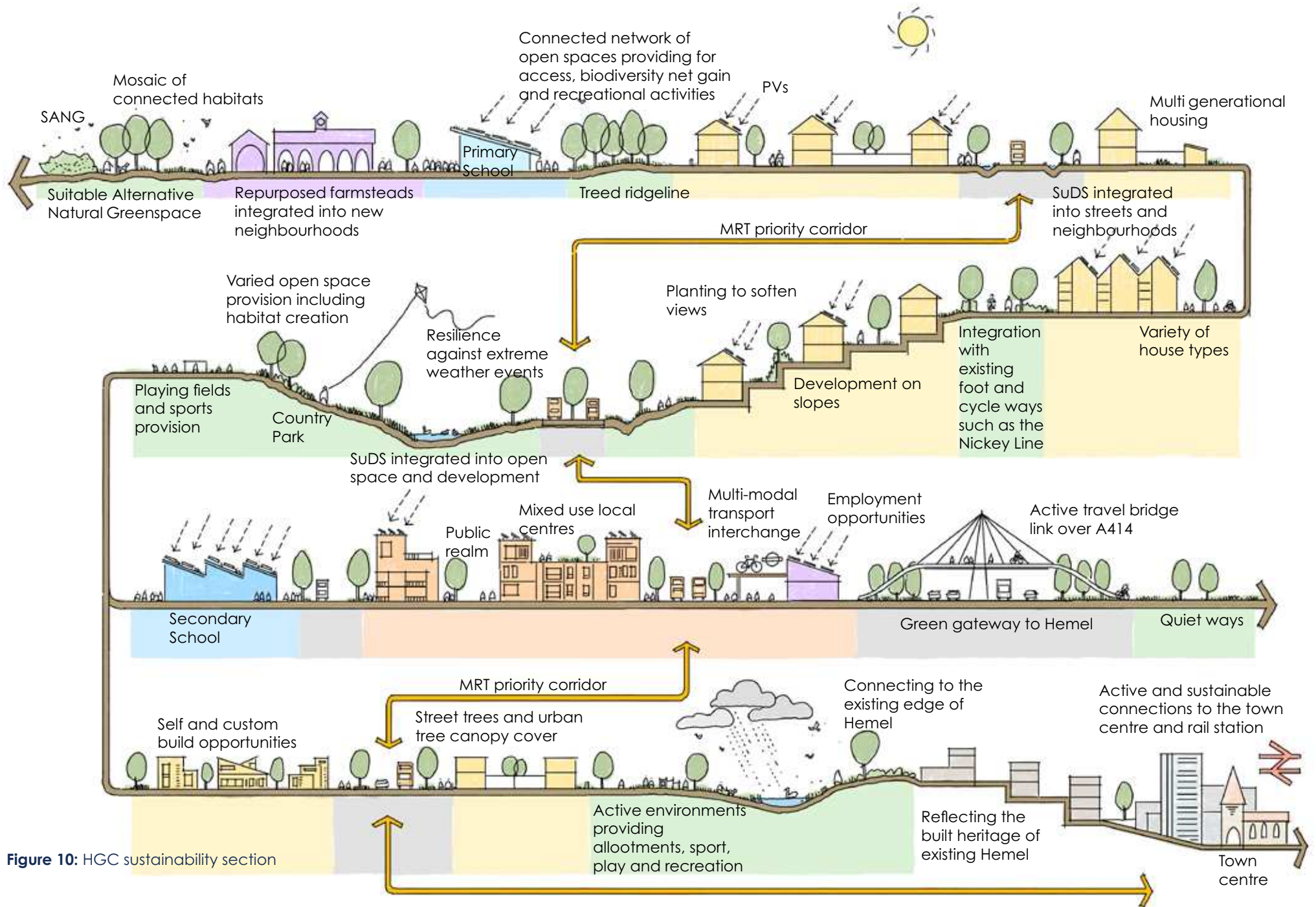


Figure 10: HGC sustainability section



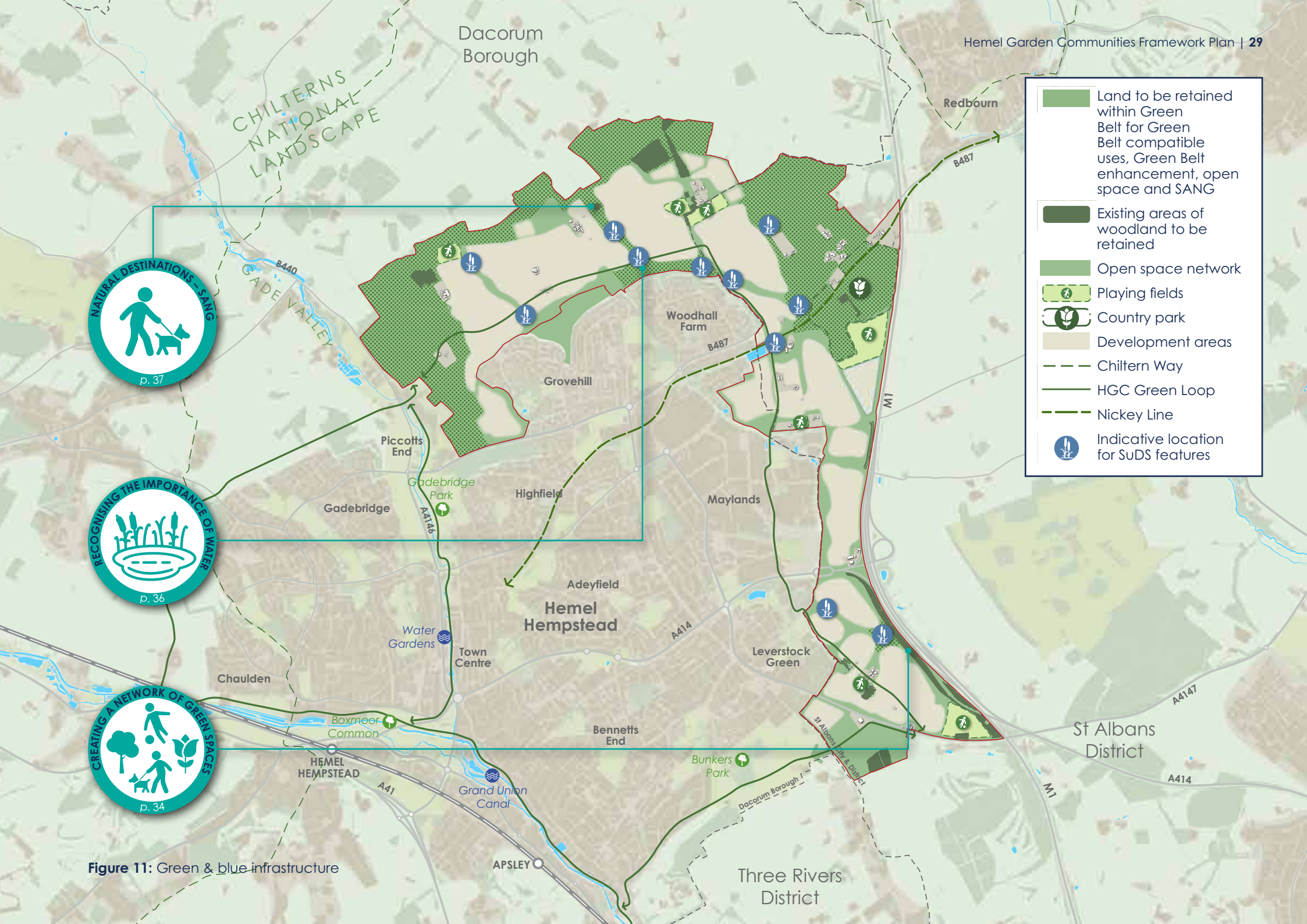
Theme 1: Green & blue infrastructure

Green and blue infrastructure is a term that describes all the individual parcels of natural space, open spaces, water, plants, trees and other features within our urban and rural spaces that deliver quality of life and environmental benefits for communities and the nature that thrives within them. At the scale of the Framework Plan, it encompasses the networks of varied green spaces, habitat links, ecological enhancements and sustainable management of surface water.

The New Town masterplan of 1947 envisaged neighbourhoods set within extensive, connected green networks, formed by the valleys of the landscape. The Growth Area will be defined by this principle, using the network of valleys as green space for recreation, nature, active travel and managing surface water flows.

Around half of the Framework Plan area is envisaged as accessible green space and/or land set aside for nature recovery. Green spaces will be varied in character, seamlessly connected, and deliver benefits for the whole town and wider area through provision of sports facilities, recreational spaces, walking routes, children's play and vital access to nature. They will help to increase biodiversity, and provide an alternative destination to under-pressure natural habitats such as the Chiltern Beechwoods Special Protection Area.





- Land to be retained within Green Belt for Green Belt compatible uses, Green Belt enhancement, open space and SANG
- Existing areas of woodland to be retained
- Open space network
- Playing fields
- Country park
- Development areas
- Chiltern Way
- HGC Green Loop
- Nickey Line
- Indicative location for SuDS features

NATURAL DESTINATIONS - SANG
p. 37

RECOGNISING THE IMPORTANCE OF WATER
p. 36

CREATING A NETWORK OF GREEN SPACES
p. 34

Figure 11: Green & blue infrastructure



Theme 1: Green & blue infrastructure

OVERALL APPROACH

Key elements underlie the Framework Plan approach.

Strategic Green Corridors: A strategic network of distinctive multi-user greenways for active travel and leisure by bike and on foot, formed by celebrating, enhancing and integrating existing routes, and planning new ones.

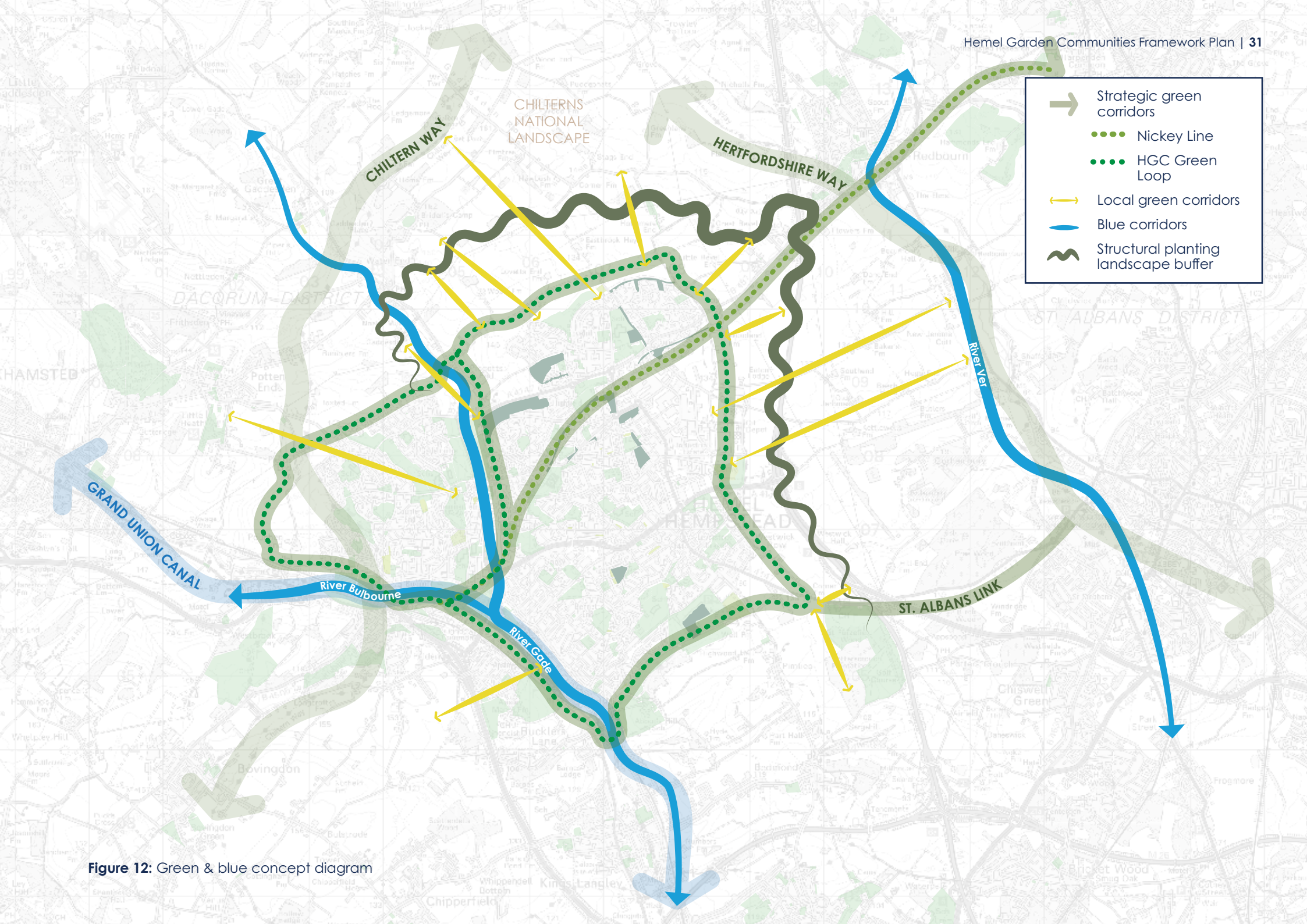
- **HGC Green Loop:** Figure-of-8 route connecting key destinations, including the town centre, Maylands Business Park, River Gade and River Bulbourne/Grand Union Canal, with new neighbourhoods and the Chilterns National Landscape via the Chiltern Way.
- **Nickey Line:** The former railway track that linked Hemel, Redbourn and Harpenden forms a traffic-free green route. Proposals include improving the existing route between Hemel and Harpenden and extending the route to Hemel Hempstead and Harpenden train stations, to create a continuous greenway connecting the existing town with the New Garden Communities, Redbourn and Harpenden.

- **St. Albans Link:** The new greenway route will link St Albans with the existing New Town and the New Garden Communities following the A4147 corridor, also connecting the HGC Green Loop to the Hertfordshire Way at St Albans.
- **Access to wider countryside including to the Hertfordshire Way and Chiltern Way.**

Local Green Corridors: A series of corridors radiating out from existing Hemel Hempstead, to connect the HGC Green Loop to the wider development and beyond to the surrounding landscape, ensuring all homes can easily access the green network.

Blue Corridors: The blue corridors offer opportunities for people to exercise and connect with nature on daily basis and are important wildlife habitats. They also form part of flood water management including the Grand Union Canal, River Ver, River Bulbourne and River Gade.

Structural planting landscape buffer: Wide and biodiverse buffers to mitigate visual and acoustic impacts, including early structural tree planting to create a multi-functional wooded landscape in the north of HGC Growth Area on sensitive views from the Chilterns National Landscape and a biodiverse landscaped acoustic bund to attenuate noise pollution from the M1 within the east HGC Growth Area.



- ➔ Strategic green corridors
- ⋯ Nickey Line
- ⋯ HGC Green Loop
- ↔ Local green corridors
- Blue corridors
- ~ Structural planting landscape buffer

Figure 12: Green & blue concept diagram



Theme 1: Green & blue infrastructure

LINKS TO THE SPATIAL VISION

The Framework Plan's Green & Blue Infrastructure theme supports many of the components of HGC Spatial Vision's four pillars, including:

Pillar 1: A Green Network

- **Spatial Principle 1.1:** Create a network of strategic and local green and blue routes
- **Spatial Principle 1.3:** Create, protect and enhance new 'green swathes'
- **Spatial Principle 1.5:** Increase biodiversity and retain, enhance and extend existing habitats
- **Spatial Principle 1.6:** Enable wildlife movement
- **Spatial Principle 1.7:** Create and maintain rich, wide and well-connected biodiverse buffers
- **Spatial Principle 1.9:** Create sustainable urban drainage systems

Pillar 4: Engaged Communities

- **Spatial Principle 4.8:** Enable long-term stewardship of spaces, places and assets

PRINCIPLES OF DEVELOPMENT

Future development and masterplanning should be guided by the following principles:

CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCE

The network will provide a range of adaptation and mitigation strategies to help future proof the town and new communities towards climate resilience, including delivery of net zero carbon and air quality targets.

MULTIFUNCTIONAL NETWORK

The network will provide a range of adaptation and mitigation strategies to help future proof the town and new communities for climate resilience, including delivery of net zero carbon and air quality targets.

STRATEGIC NETWORK MANAGEMENT

The Green and Blue Infrastructure networks will be supported by a comprehensive and sustainable management strategy, which will provide for strategic and local management facilitated by long-term stewardship.

PEOPLE AND ACCESSIBILITY

Develop an inclusive, attractive and integrated network that enables people to experience and connect with nature with a range of features to support healthy lifestyles.

GREEN NETWORK FEATURES

The green network should include:

- A new 'principal park' as a key destination with a good range of facilities and connected by strong active travel routes to new and existing areas.
- Integration of wildlife habitats and delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain from new development in the town and Growth Areas.
- Provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to mitigate the impacts of development on the Chiltern Beechwoods SAC (agreed by Natural England and other stakeholders).
- Expansion of the town's urban tree canopy cover with all new streets tree lined, to help address local air quality issues, provide more shade during heat waves and deliver biodiversity and amenity benefits.
- Nature-based urban greening solutions built into the public realm, landscaping and building design.
- A variety of play spaces that extend and enrich the existing network.
- innovative community food growing spaces, drawing upon the area's rural economy and farming sector.
- Enhancement and expansion of important landscapes such as woodland and chalk / acid grasslands.
- Conservation and enhancement of the local landscape character (including the Chilterns National Landscape setting), townscapes, green valley swathes and heritage assets.

BLUE NETWORK FEATURES

The blue network should include:

- Sustainable urban drainage systems.
- A strategic and a local approach to sustainable water management.
- A healthy and safe water environment designed to increase resistance to flooding and drought.
- Features that encourage 'access to water' for leisure use.

GREEN ECONOMY

Design a high-quality green infrastructure network which contributes to national and local priorities for supporting economic prosperity and adds social and economic value.



Theme 1: Green & blue infrastructure

CREATING A NETWORK OF GREEN SPACES

The Growth Area will be defined by its extensive, varied and accessible network of open spaces. These will provide access to walking routes, play, outdoor recreation, access to nature and the many other benefits of green space within a short walking distance of everyone's front door.

This network of spaces is at the heart of successful growth of Hemel Hempstead, setting new neighbourhoods within a rich setting of natural and green open spaces, bringing alive the original New Town vision of a town in a park.

This asset for Hemel Hempstead must be managed and stewarded in a holistic and imaginative way from the start and for the long-term. Well-cared for, these spaces will be a tremendous asset for the town as a whole, providing for people and for nature, as well as performing essential functions such as surface water management and traffic-free mobility in a natural and attractive way.

All open spaces will:

- be easily accessed by walking, cycling and sustainable public transport.
- connect to each other and to surrounding neighbourhoods
- be safe, inclusive and accessible to all
- consider their context and surroundings to make them truly distinctive

NATURAL / SEMI-NATURAL, INCLUDING COUNTRY PARK AND SANG

Informal use, with an emphasis on nature and natural features.

Natural spaces will:

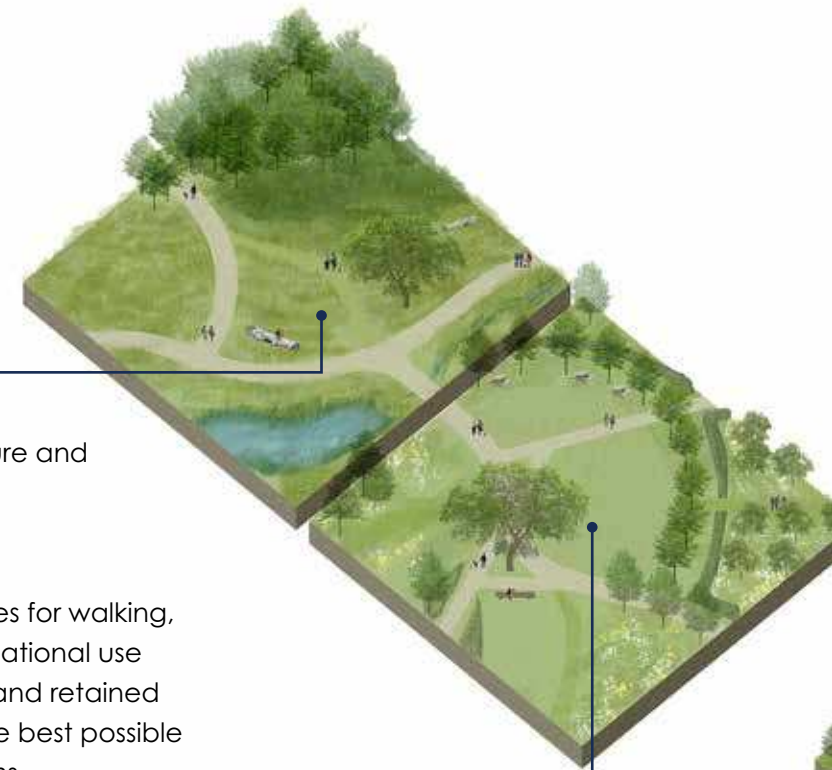
- include a variety of paths and routes for walking, cycling, equestrian and other recreational use
- have a mosaic of natural habitats and retained trees and hedgerows to provide the best possible home for thriving natural ecosystems
- minimise artificial lighting to minimise disturbance to wildlife and provide a countryside feel
- integrate surface water attenuation features in a way that provide natural habitats and an attractive environment

AMENITY GREENSPACE

Informal use, intended to improve local amenity and help connect larger green spaces.

Amenity spaces will:

- vary in size, shape and character
- include natural habitats within and around spaces for people
- include seating, small focal points and space for informal games use





PARKS AND GARDENS

Formal spaces, including some with a civic quality, with more intense levels of use and opportunities for the community to come together.

Parks and gardens will:

- provide spaces for community groups and activities to use
- include seating, shade and meeting points
- include space for nature in and around spaces for people
- become focal points for their neighbourhoods, with the possibility of small cafes and pavilions

CHILDREN'S PLAY

Thoughtfully planned spaces for children of all ages, responding equally to the needs of girls and boys, and encouraging active and healthy living.

Children's play spaces will:

- vary in their character to reflect their surroundings
- be located within a short walking distance of all homes
- offer a range of sizes and provision, including adventure playgrounds
- include planting and natural features to provide play value, contact with nature, shade and shelter and educational opportunities

PLAYING FIELDS AND SPORTS PITCHES

Formally planned and managed areas for organised sports, with sufficient areas provided for changing and club facilities.

Playing fields and sports pitches will:

- offer a range of different sports within walking and cycling distance of homes, with changing and storage spaces and lighting as appropriate
- include areas of meadow, scrub and tree planting to provide complementary spaces for nature
- provide complementary trim trails and other ways of being active outside of organised sports





Theme 1: Green & blue infrastructure

RECOGNISING THE IMPORTANCE OF WATER

Hemel Hempstead has a long history of utilising water to create beautiful and useful spaces. The Water Gardens in the town centre form an attractive formal, urban space based on the river Gade. The moors and meadows where the Gade meets the Bulbourne and Grand Union Canal provide a natural flood plain and protection for the town, and recent rewilding of the Bulbourne (a rare chalk stream) provides more habitat space for ecology and enhances natural flood protection capacity. The valleys separating neighbourhoods absorb surface water flows in storm events.

The Growth Area is currently a dry landscape, with water flows being seasonal and related to rainfall, flowing into the valleys before sinking away into the chalk bedrock. Much of the water catchment heads eastwards towards the River Ver and St Albans.

Development in the Growth Area will embrace a Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) approach to handling surface water flows, and to prevent flooding of nearby areas after rain. This approach uses design features at building, street, neighbourhood and strategic scales to absorb and slow the flow of water after it rains. Rainfall events are increasing in intensity and frequency due to climate change. Good design can make sure these water handling features contribute to the quality of a place, from making streets greener through to providing large-scale accessible wetland habitats for many species to thrive in. Effective SuDS will also contribute to the improvement of water quality, preserving sensitive local habitats such as rare chalk streams of the Gade and Ver.

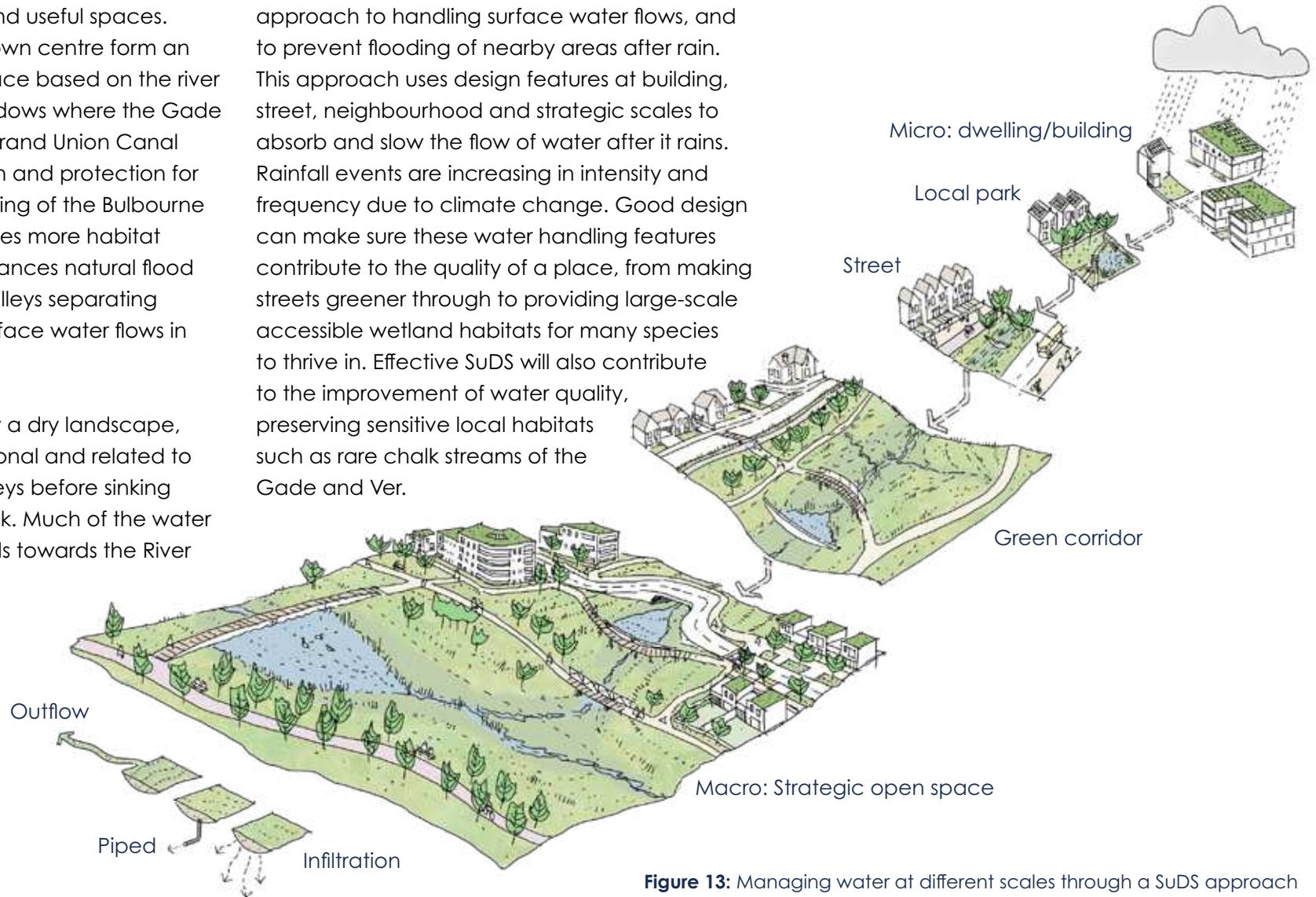


Figure 13: Managing water at different scales through a SuDS approach



Theme 1: Green & blue infrastructure

NATURAL DESTINATIONS – SANG

Hemel Hempstead benefits from its location near to some of England's most beautiful scenery, and some of its most precious habitats. The nearby Chiltern Beechwoods, an area designated as a 'Special Area of Conservation' (SAC), is afforded the highest level of environmental protection in law. It already suffers from the impact of visitors on its habitats.

To ensure the growth of Hemel Hempstead does not exacerbate this, the Growth Area includes areas known as "Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces" or SANG. These areas are designed to provide real alternative outdoor, natural spaces for people to visit and enjoy, as an accessible alternative to the Chiltern Beechwoods SPA. A total of 211ha of SANG is anticipated to be needed across the Growth Area.

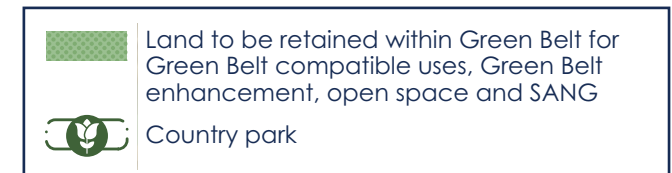
From a natural perspective, the requirements at Hemel Hempstead represent the largest SANG project in England. Close working with Natural England will be needed to evolve ideas and proposals for a variety of different SANG spaces capable of attracting visitors away from the Chiltern Beechwoods to protect them from further degradation and allow their natural recovery.

A successful set of SANG areas will vary in size, landscape and their connections to other parts of the open space network and countryside. This is to give variety and choice, so that everyone in Hemel Hempstead has a chance to access one nearby. The Framework Plan shows a pool of potential SANG land in excess of the 211ha requirement from which future SANG can be secured.

In the northeast, one area of SANG will also be a Country Park, with additional facilities so that it can become a regional destination.



Figure 14: Suitable Alternative Green Spaces





Theme 2: Transport & mobility

Future growth of Hemel Hempstead is intrinsically linked to a transformation of transport and mobility in the town and wider area. It must be easy and convenient for people to get around by walking and cycling (active travel), or sustainable travel options such as rapid, prioritised bus services. The Growth Area will be at the forefront of this shift, with an ambitious target of 60% of journeys originating there being by sustainable modes of travel by 2050.

This cannot be done in isolation, and the Framework Plan is aligned and integrated with the Transport Vision for the whole of Hemel Hempstead, which is based around a 'Key Network' of routes where active travel and sustainable travel options are prioritised, as well as accommodating other vehicles.

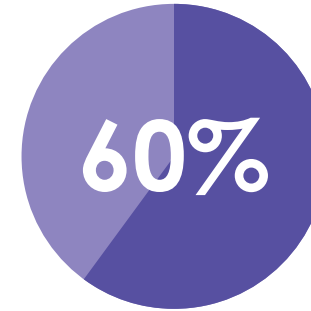
A Sustainable Transport Corridor runs through the Growth Area and will connect to the Key Network at several Neighbourhood Centres. This will be designed for use by all modes of travel, with an emphasis on active and sustainable modes. For local journeys, an extensive network of active travel priority routes will make this the natural choice for nearby destinations. A series of mobility hubs at neighbourhood centres will make it easy to change between active and sustainable travel choices, so more destinations are within easy reach.

Even with a transformation of the town's transport system, the Transport Vision and Strategy recognises that there will still be vehicle traffic for some needs. Improvements to junction 8 of the M1 will ensure the strategic network improvements required by the Local Plans can be accommodated, and will radically improve active and sustainable transport provision in this area so the A414 is no longer a barrier between communities.

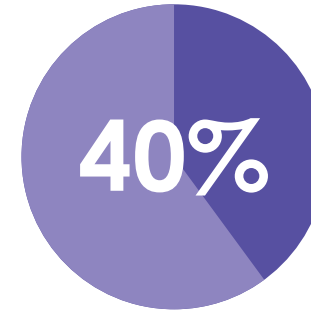
OVERALL APPROACH

The Transport Vision is based around three themes, key components of which have been included in the Framework Plan:

1. A well-connected place that puts people first: Key Network, Local Networks, the Sustainable Transport Corridor
2. A place that encourages sustainable travel: Active Travel, Public Transport
3. A network fit for the future: Mobility Hubs, HERT



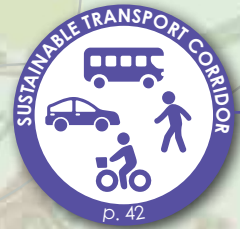
60% of journeys from, to and within the Growth Areas made by active and sustainable ways of travelling



40% of journeys within existing Hemel Hempstead made by active and sustainable ways of travelling

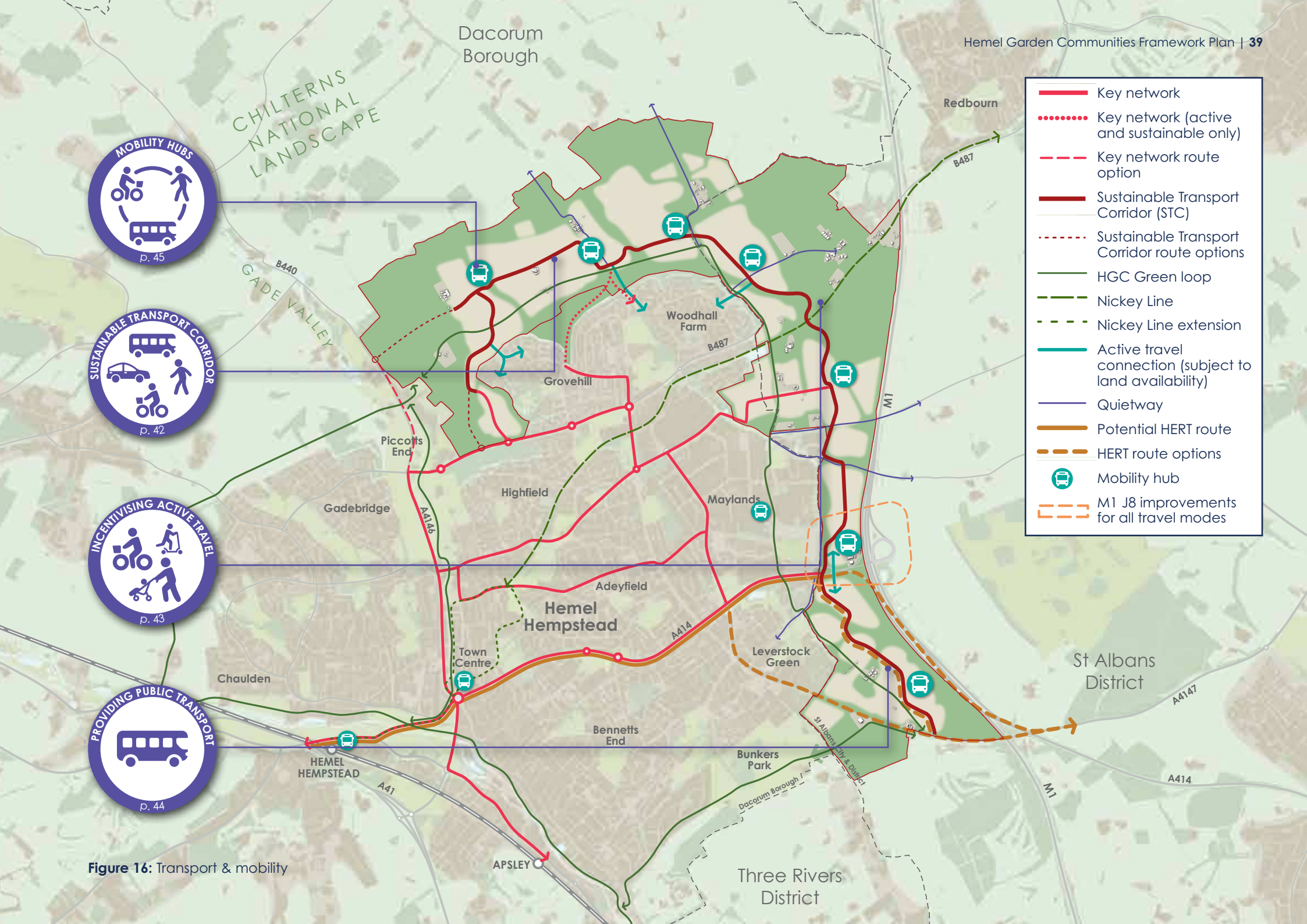


Figure 15: Hemel Garden Communities transport vision for 2050 (DKCM)



- Key network
- ⋯ Key network (active and sustainable only)
- - - Key network route option
- ▬ Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC)
- ⋯ Sustainable Transport Corridor route options
- HGC Green loop
- - - Nickey Line
- · - · - Nickey Line extension
- Active travel connection (subject to land availability)
- Quietway
- Potential HERT route
- - - HERT route options
- Mobility hub
- - - M1 J8 improvements for all travel modes

Figure 16: Transport & mobility





Theme 2: Transport & mobility

LINKS TO THE SPATIAL VISION

The Framework Plan's Transport & Mobility theme supports many of the components of HGC Spatial Vision's four pillars, including:

Pillar 1: A Green Network

- **Spatial Principle 1.1:** Create a network of strategic and local green and blue routes
- **Spatial Principle 1.2:** Build a strong green network to serve multiple users and functions
- **Spatial Principle 1.8:** Make the green network accessible to all

Pillar 2: Integrated Neighbourhoods

- **Spatial Principle 2.3:** Support vibrant, accessible local centres

Pillar 3: A Self-Sustaining Economy

- **Spatial Principle 3.4:** Create and enhance places to meet, socialise and connect within employment areas

PRINCIPLES OF DEVELOPMENT

Future development and masterplanning should be guided by the following principles:

STRATEGIC CONNECTIVITY

The Growth Areas to the North and East of Hemel Hempstead will be strategically connected to key destinations within the movement network and beyond.

CONNECTIVITY

Maximise opportunities to create local active and sustainable connections between the Growth Areas, its neighbourhoods, the existing town and nearby areas to support the delivery of integrated communities.

HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

Build a strong and inclusive active travel network across the town and Growth Areas, which maximises opportunities for improved accessibility and health and well-being incorporating healthy streets, greenways and open spaces.

20-MINUTE NEIGHBOURHOODS

New neighbourhoods will be walkable and designed so that local centres, schools and facilities are within easy reach of all homes.

TRANSPORT CORRIDORS

Sustainable transport corridors will be provided across the town and Growth Areas to support the wider movement network.

TRANSPORT HUBS

A network of Transport Hubs will be provided with appropriate facilities to support modal share shift across the Growth Areas, existing town and wider destinations. There will be a hierarchy of Transport Hubs across the town, ranging in scale and facilities dependent on the role they serve and designed to support the whole movement network.

JOURNEYS

Journeys to local centres and key destinations will be easier to take by walking, cycling and passenger transport.



Theme 2: Transport & mobility

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT CORRIDOR

New neighbourhoods and the Maylands extension will be connected by the Sustainable Transport Corridor, which will provide a route for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport along its length, with private vehicles not able to drive continuously from one end to the other, but only access sections in between. As such, it will be designed to make sustainable travel options more convenient, and not to act as a vehicle cut-through or 'bypass' for the existing town. It will connect to the existing town's streets at key points along its route in Neighbourhood Centres to form a comprehensive network of routes.

The Sustainable Transport Corridor will be tree-lined, designed for people and a high-quality environment first, and will vary in character along its length to reflect its surroundings. It will prioritise sustainable transport, and provide segregated cycling provision to the highest standards throughout.

The route of the Sustainable Transport Corridor is not yet fixed, and its exact form will depend on the Transport Vision and more detailed feasibility studies and masterplanning. In the north west of the Growth Area, where the Sustainable Transport Corridor must make a connection between the Neighbourhood Centre on the plateau and the Link Road or Leighton Buzzard Road, a number of options exist which require further design study and consideration.



Figure 17: Visualisation of STC in local centres



Theme 2: Transport & mobility

INCENTIVISING ACTIVE TRAVEL

Getting around by walking, wheeling or cycling (active travel) will be the easiest and most convenient mode of travel for journeys starting within the Growth Area, and beyond into the rest of Hemel Hempstead. Active travel has benefits beyond just reducing vehicle traffic: it is a healthy, inexpensive way of getting around that does not create noise, air pollution, congestion or cause vehicle accidents. Places designed around active travel can be human-scaled, have more space for children's play and can support more local facilities and services. Where they are needed, cars can still move about, but people are prioritised.

Making this a reality requires a joined-up approach to the design of places, which is reflected in the Framework Plan. Neighbourhoods will offer facilities and services within walking distance of home. Walking and cycling routes will be safe, direct and attractive. This will be enabled by a continuous network of safe 'utility' active travel routes that have hard surfaces, lighting and overlooking from surrounding homes and buildings. These routes will be supported by a range of leisure routes that will provide a choice for different users.

The Framework Plan connects the Growth Area into Hemel Hempstead at all possible opportunities, and extends the Key and Local Active Travel Networks in the town-wide Transport Vision, so that active journeys can continue throughout Hemel Hempstead on dedicated infrastructure.

Routes will be a mix of:

- **Segregated active travel provision within streets that also provide for public transport and private vehicles**
- **Greenways:** Surfaced off-road routes through open spaces
- **Quietways:** existing rural lanes where vehicle traffic has been removed or reduced to access only, with walking and cycling prioritised in a green, rural environment
- **The Nickey Line:** an existing cycleway on a former railway that will be improved and upgraded in line with the Nickey Line Vision

Creating the HGC Green Loop within the Growth Area will be achieved through a combination of route types as it connects between different places.



Figure 18: Visualisation of Nickey Line potential (DKCM)



Theme 2: Transport & mobility

PROVIDING PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Complementing active travel networks will be excellent sustainable public transport provision, based around the Transport Vision's Key Network. The Growth Area connects to this network and extends it into Neighbourhood Centres and along the Sustainable Transport Corridor. Sustainable public transport will connect seamlessly with active travel networks at mobility hubs to provide longer-distance trip options. Public transport will be prioritised along the length of its journey so delays caused by congestion can be avoided, by the use of infrastructure such as bus gates, automatic bus priority at signals, and extended bus lanes where needed.

A major opportunity for the Growth Area is the integration of HERT (Hertfordshire to Essex Rapid Transit), a proposal for an east-west prioritised transit system that would connect Hemel Hempstead to towns across Hertfordshire and Essex, including St Albans and Harlow. HERT would likely run along the A414 from Hemel Hempstead town centre, and could run through the employment area and southeastern neighbourhoods of the Growth Area. This would give these locations unrivalled connectivity not just into Hemel Hempstead but across the wider

region. Further work will be undertaken to finalise a route and look at how this scheme could be successfully integrated into the Growth Area.

In the north of Hemel Hempstead, there are a number of options for connecting public transport from the Growth Area to the rest of the town, which are shown on the Framework Plan. Further studies and engagement will be undertaken before routes are selected.

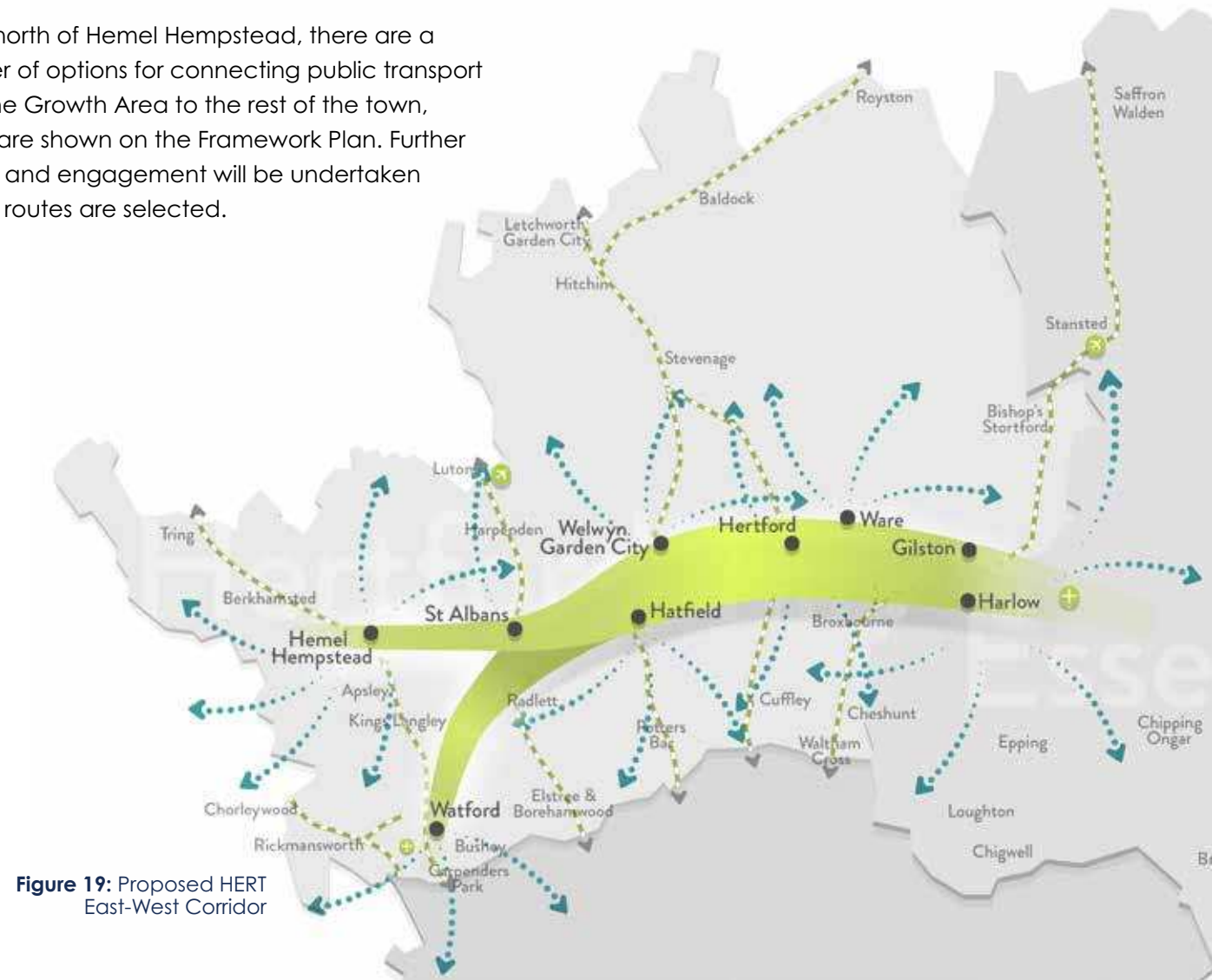


Figure 19: Proposed HERT East-West Corridor





Theme 2: Transport & mobility

MOBILITY HUBS

A mobility hub is a place that offers more than one well-connected transport option, with additional facilities and information to increase the convenience of journeys and make sustainable transport choices more attractive. As part of the Transport Vision, Hemel Hempstead will develop a comprehensive network of mobility hubs of different sizes and provision, at key destinations on the Key and Local Networks.

The Framework Plan for the Growth Area locates mobility hubs at each of the Neighbourhood Centres, the employment area and at the community hub in the north. Following the principles set out by [CoMoUK](#), they will be designed to make it easy to change between active travel and sustainable public transport, or between different forms of sustainable public transport. They will be a key part of the place, providing convenient onward travel from walkable hubs and schools and supporting a range of convenience facilities such as parcel lockers, cycle maintenance and community information, as well as footfall for shops, community facilities and other uses.



Built examples of mobility hubs integrating active and sustainable travel modes





Theme 3: Community wellbeing

A comprehensively planned, attractive and sustainable urban extension which provides homes, jobs and local services in tandem will help to cultivate community, meet the pressing need for new homes, and support the continued growth and future prosperity of Hemel Hempstead. Imaginative design and innovation will help to ensure that the development brings joy and a sense of pride, and responds appropriately to the existing New Town, whilst also preparing for a lower carbon future.

HGC proposes a garden community for the 21st Century, and the emerging Local Plans are clear in their call for the application of garden community principles in the planning, design and delivery of the development.

Central to the garden community concept is a focus on the timely provision of places, homes, services and social infrastructure to support the new community. In its 2013 publication *Creating Garden Cities and Suburbs Today: a guide for councils*, the Town & Country Planning Association (TCPA) notes that at “the heart of the Garden City ideals is the development of holistically planned new settlements which enhance the natural environment and provide high quality affordable housing and locally accessible jobs in beautiful, healthy, sociable communities.”

Achieving this vision will demand a different approach to normal property development. Advance infrastructure will need to be laid out and utilities and services supplied from scratch, green infrastructure and community facilities

established from the start. Transport services have to be established, and effort put into growing community, which, by definition, will initially be comprised of strangers. The realisation of the opportunity to grow demands a longer term perspective because it is capital intensive in the early stages.

The Framework Plan builds on the Spatial Vision to identify those opportunities to enhance community wellbeing through the development stages and beyond. The emphasis on health and wellbeing that was identified in the original garden cities remains as relevant as ever, and the transformation of Hemel Garden Communities is a rare and opportune moment to ensure the built environment, on which all citizens depend, supports healthy communities wherever possible.

Neighbourhoods which are walkable and attractive are central to this goal. The creation of identifiable areas where local services are within easy and safe reach and where people can recognise and interact with their neighbours



Centres at the heart of walkable neighbourhoods

is the building block of a successful and healthy community. The following pages highlight ways in which the Framework Plan provides the structure for achieving this. Further detail on the potential nature of the individual neighbourhoods is set out under 'Places' in the next chapter of this document.

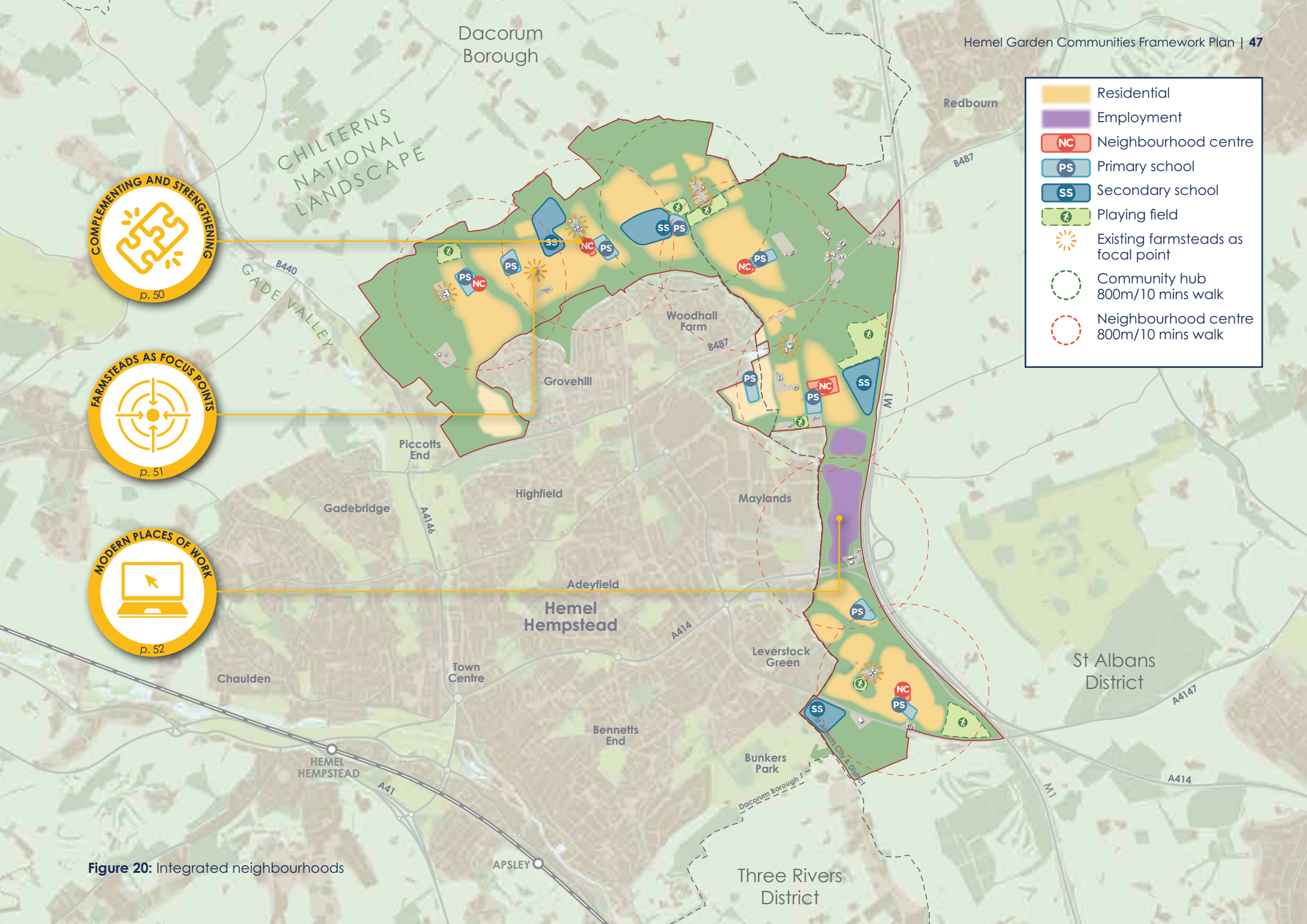
OVERALL APPROACH

The form and size of each potential neighbourhood has been developed to reflect Hemel Hempstead's successful structure, with strong neighbourhood centres, good links between them, and the use of the landscape, topography and open space network as strong edges to define self-contained neighbourhoods. This approach is captured in the diagram below, which shows how new neighbourhoods are arranged and connected, and the key principles that structure them internally.



	Residential
	Employment
	Neighbourhood centre
	Primary school
	Secondary school
	Playing field
	Existing farmsteads as focal point
	Community hub 800m/10 mins walk
	Neighbourhood centre 800m/10 mins walk

Figure 20: Integrated neighbourhoods





Theme 3: Community wellbeing

LINKS TO THE SPATIAL VISION

The Framework Plan's Community Wellbeing theme supports many of the components of HGC Spatial Vision's four pillars, including:

Pillar 1: A Green Network

- **Spatial Principle 1.10:** Extend and enrich Hemel's existing network of adventure playgrounds
- **Spatial Principle 1.11:** Extend the existing network of productive landscapes

Pillar 2: Integrated Neighbourhoods

- **Spatial Principle 2.1:** Create new neighbourhoods and grow existing ones on hilltops and higher ground
- **Spatial Principle 2.2:** Establish and reinforce walkable relationships
- **Spatial Principle 2.3:** Support vibrant, accessible local centres
- **Spatial Principle 2.4:** Create neighbourhoods that are distinct from each other
- **Spatial Principle 2.5:** Create intergenerational and inclusive neighbourhoods

Pillar 3: A Self-Sustaining Economy

- **Spatial Principle 3.1:** Support a circular and inclusive economy
- **Spatial Principle 3.3:** Diversify the offer of employment areas
- **Spatial Principle 3.4:** Create and enhance places to meet, socialise and connect within employment areas

Pillar 4: Engaged Communities

- **Spatial Principle 4.4:** Provide space in buildings and public spaces for local-level heritage and cultural activities
- **Spatial Principle 4.7:** Deliver meaningful, early activation and temporary projects

PRINCIPLES OF DEVELOPMENT

Future development and masterplanning should be guided by the following principles:

NEIGHBOURHOOD FEATURES

Create distinctive neighbourhoods with high quality schools, health and community facilities at their heart. Any existing heritage assets, such as farmsteads, should be used to help emphasise character, local history and a place identity.

INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

Neighbourhoods will be inclusive communities designed with local centres at their heart, providing a range of housing in terms of size, tenure, character and live-work opportunities designed to support people from all socio-economic and demographic groups, fostering community cohesion and social value.

HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

New communities should have access to a range of facilities and green open space for people to be active and socially engaged as part of their daily routine, improving the physical and mental health of its citizens.

NETWORK OF LOCAL CENTRES

Create a network of local centres across Hemel Hempstead. Their scale, density, function and offer relating to the catchment population and relationship to nearby local centres (complementing rather than competing).

EXISTING LOCAL CENTRES

Development, diversification and environmental improvement opportunities should be harnessed to support existing local centres across Hemel Hempstead.

NEW LOCAL CENTRES

The form of new local centres should be designed to offer:

- A compact and relatively dense mix of uses.
- Future flexibility and resilience.
- A range of services, facilities and employment opportunities.
- Shared community, work, civic and cultural uses.

EMPLOYMENT AREA

The new employment area should be attractively designed to:

- Create high quality public realm and open spaces to enable healthy and sustainable working and travel environments.
- Integrate with the wider economic eco-system and supply chains across Maylands and Hertfordshire.
- Provide buildings, facilities, services and spaces that foster innovation, enterprise and skill development opportunities.



Theme 3: Community wellbeing

COMPLEMENTING AND STRENGTHENING

Neighbourhood centres are central to daily life and the functioning of communities in Hemel Hempstead. The Framework Plan reinforces their importance for the development of One Place by placing them at the heart of new neighbourhoods in the Growth Area.

Each neighbourhood centre will be unique. Their size, layout and mix of uses will vary depending on their connections, the local landscape, the nature of other nearby centres, and the neighbourhood surrounding them. Each will incorporate retail, leisure, community, and higher density residential uses. They will include mobility hubs and have active travel priority in the public realm. Children's play, open space and green infrastructure will bring centres to life. Other reasons to visit, such as sports facilities, larger or specialist shops, early years education or employment/co-working space may be present at some centres.

The location, scale and connectivity of centres is an important part of their long-term economic and social sustainability. It is also of crucial importance to existing centres in Hemel Hempstead, which should not see their vitality affected by the creation of new centres. The town's growing population should support prosperity across all parts of the town.

Where new neighbourhood centres are comparatively distant from existing centres, such as in the northeast or north, it is anticipated that they will be larger, more diverse and with more facilities. Where they are closer to existing vibrant centres, such as in the southeast near Leverstock Green, they may be smaller in their scale and scope, whilst still providing key functions and day-to-day essentials in walking distance of homes.



Figure 21: Neighbourhood centre visualisation (DKCM)



Theme 3: Community wellbeing

FARMSTEADS AS FOCUS POINTS

Across the Growth Area, there are a number of farms and farmsteads, managing the existing agricultural land. Many of them contain listed farmhouses, barns or other buildings. They are an important part of the heritage of the landscape, and special consideration has been given to their role as the landscape and land use around them changes in the future.

Each location is unique – some on high ground, some in valleys, some isolated and some the focus of small hamlets. They each represent an opportunity to create places for new and existing communities to use and form connections around. They could provide space for employment, co-working, community use, outdoor activities, social spaces, children’s play and attractive open spaces.

Early conversion would enable them to function as a hub for the new community, helping it to grow and find its feet in the early years of development. Excellence in architecture and sensitive conversion of historic buildings, respecting their heritage and historic form, would set a design standard for the new neighbourhoods.



Figure 22: Existing farmstead repurposed for community uses



Theme 3: Community wellbeing

MODERN PLACES OF WORK

The growth of Hemel Hempstead could support up to 10,000 additional jobs, a key part of the Spatial Vision's pillar of a Self-Sustaining Economy. Much of this growth will be accommodated in an extension of the existing Maylands Industrial Estate, within the Growth Area. It is a key part of the HertsIQ Enterprise Zone.

This area will be designed as a sustainable, people-focused space that can provide a home for the wide range and mix of businesses that will be able to set up and grow in Hemel Hempstead. Following the principles set out in the Employment Uses Design Toolkit of the St Albans and Dacorum Strategic Sites Design Guide, the design will create:

- A Healthy Place to Work and Socialise
- A Multi-Functional, Natural Environment
- A Sustainable Built Environment
- A Well Connected, Integrated Place
- A Pedestrian Focused Place

The extension to Maylands will deliver a place that can host a diverse and flexible range of high quality commercial spaces for different businesses, whilst achieving the highest levels of sustainability. It must be able to adapt to demand changing over time, and be flexible to accommodate a range of different types of development from production and storage spaces to light industrial, workshop, co-working, high-tech research and high quality offices.

At its heart, the HertsIQ area will be a focus on place quality, with excellent public realm, useful facilities in a vibrant centre, and an attractive, collaborative and healthy working environment that supports economic growth.

Elsewhere in the Growth Area, as well as jobs in uses such as education, retail, health, leisure and sport, a range of co-working and small-scale employment spaces will be integrated into well-connected neighbourhood centres, creating opportunities for working near homes.



Consolidation of at-grade parking into 'car barns' to increase efficiency of land use and improve quality of environment

A people-focused environment with high quality public realm including seating, art & planting

Mix of workspaces, arranged to create vibrancy and activity on streets and public spaces

Tree-lined streets providing biodiversity value, shade and shelter, help reduce the urban heat island effect and provide aesthetic benefits

Opportunities for building-based energy generation and biodiversity



Figure 23: A healthy place to work

Green and blue infrastructure integrated throughout the development, performing multiple functions as part of an efficient use of land

Accessible, reliable public transport

High quality active travel infrastructure to promote walking and cycling and help achieve the required modal share

Buildings addressing the street and public realm



Destinations

Ten destinations

The original master plan for Hemel Hempstead included many places and destinations to serve both the community's needs and enable people to come together for recreation and community activity. Planned neighbourhood centres, parks, sports grounds and the old and new town centres are part of the rich diversity of destinations, places and spaces which make Hemel Hempstead an attractive place to live.

Providing the same level of opportunity for the Growth Area will help to deliver the 'one place' ambition to transform the enlarged town. To achieve this, the Framework Plan applies the concept of the 'Power of Ten'; it identifies ten key destinations within the Growth Area and establishes an intent to ensure there are at least ten activities within each one. The resulting places will meet the needs of new residents, but will be available to all, ensuring the benefits of growth help to transform the opportunities for the wider community.

The ten destinations are made up of neighbourhood centres, open spaces, employment area and sports opportunities. Not all these places will be the same; their character and the nature of the activities within each will be inspired by their setting, their landscape context and their function. These opportunities will be explored further through future design coding and masterplanning. New places, in particular new neighbourhood centres, should look to complement rather than compete with the existing centres and places within the town.

ABOUT THE POWER OF TEN

The Power of 10 is a concept developed by the [Project for Public Spaces](#). The Power of 10+ shows how paying attention to the human experience when building a place's destinations and districts can have immediate and widespread impacts. The idea behind this concept is that places thrive when users have a range of reasons (10+) to be there. These might include a place to sit, playgrounds to enjoy, art to touch, music to hear, food to eat, history to experience, and people to meet. Ideally, some of these activities will be unique to that particular place, reflecting the culture and history of the surrounding community.

When locations contain at least 10 of these destinations, they can become better equipped for generating resilience and innovation.



Open spaces



Centres



Employment



Sports

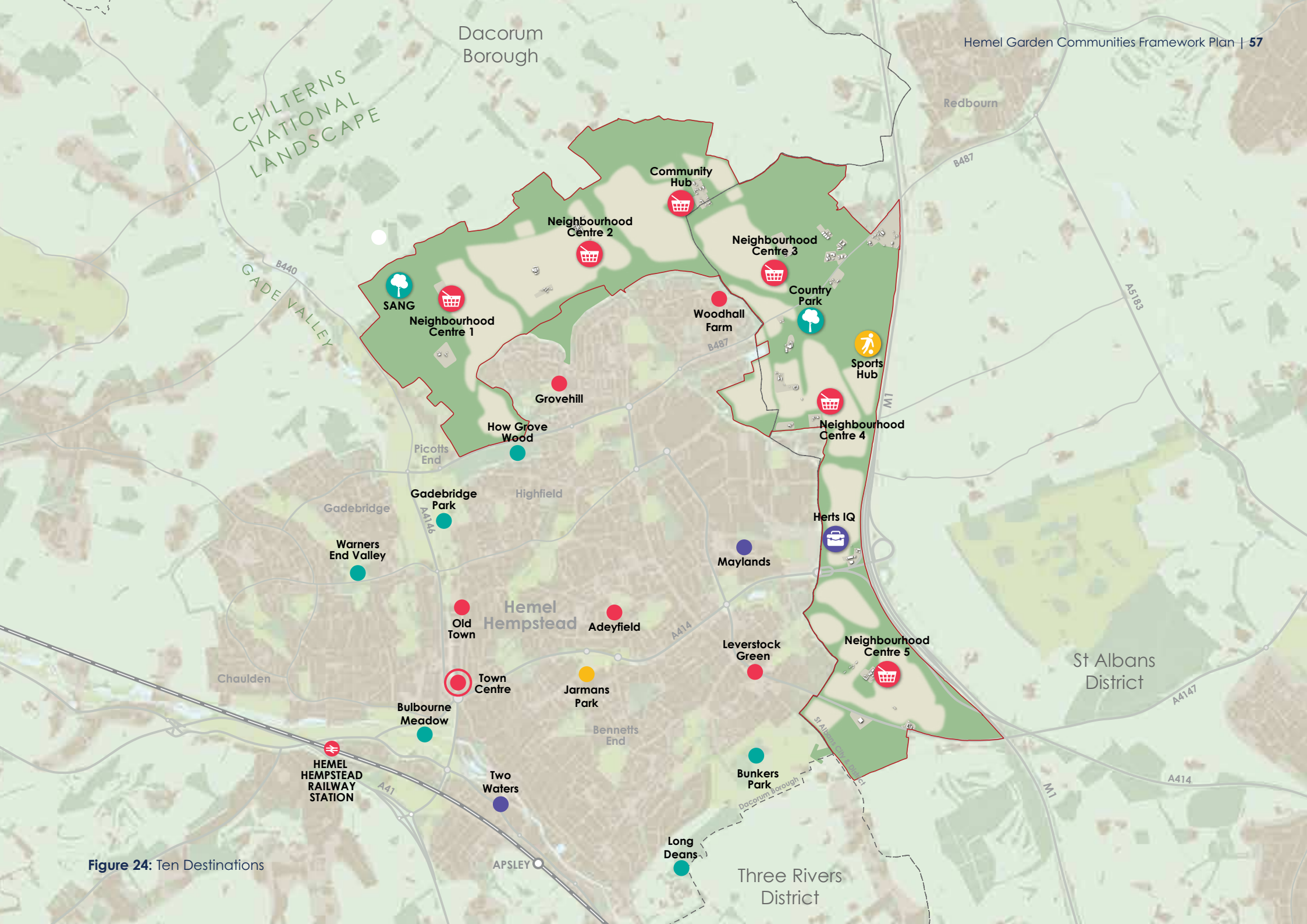


Figure 24: Ten Destinations

The power of ten in Hemel Hempstead

The 'Power of Ten' concept is intended to encourage future masterplanners and placemakers to think carefully about the interactions, activities and transactions that take place within settlements on a daily basis, and to tailor the future built environment within the Growth Area to supporting and facilitating these.

Activities could range from the very small scale, informal and often spontaneous, such as posting a letter, enjoying a view or walking a dog, to more formal and organised activities such as Park Run, going to school or joining a community club. Places should also cater for community initiatives such as local food growing, and provide buildings and spaces for important services such as healthcare and schools.

Furthermore, the ten places present a chance to consider the life of the future community, and how this could be strengthened for example through volunteering, socialising, connecting with nature, learning and being active. These types of actions will build on the Spatial Vision, in particular Pillar 4 'Engaged Communities' and the thread of 'Healthy Communities'. Catering for all anticipated and unanticipated activities through the creation of attractive, walkable neighbourhoods will set the scene for a successful place. The images to the right offers some initial ideas on the type of activities which should be supported within the new places.

At the masterplanning and detailed design stages, consideration should be given to how choice and variation can be optimised, recognising that demands and tastes will change over time. Flexible buildings will ensure the development within the Growth Area can respond to different community needs, while attractive green spaces and investment in biodiversity will encourage more people to enjoy the outdoors. Hemel Hempstead has a tradition of adventure play, and opportunities to expand the choice of adventure play areas is a key objective underpinning healthy lifestyles.

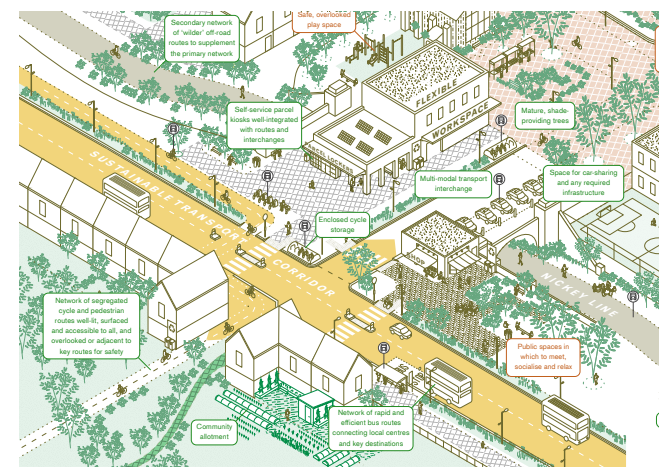
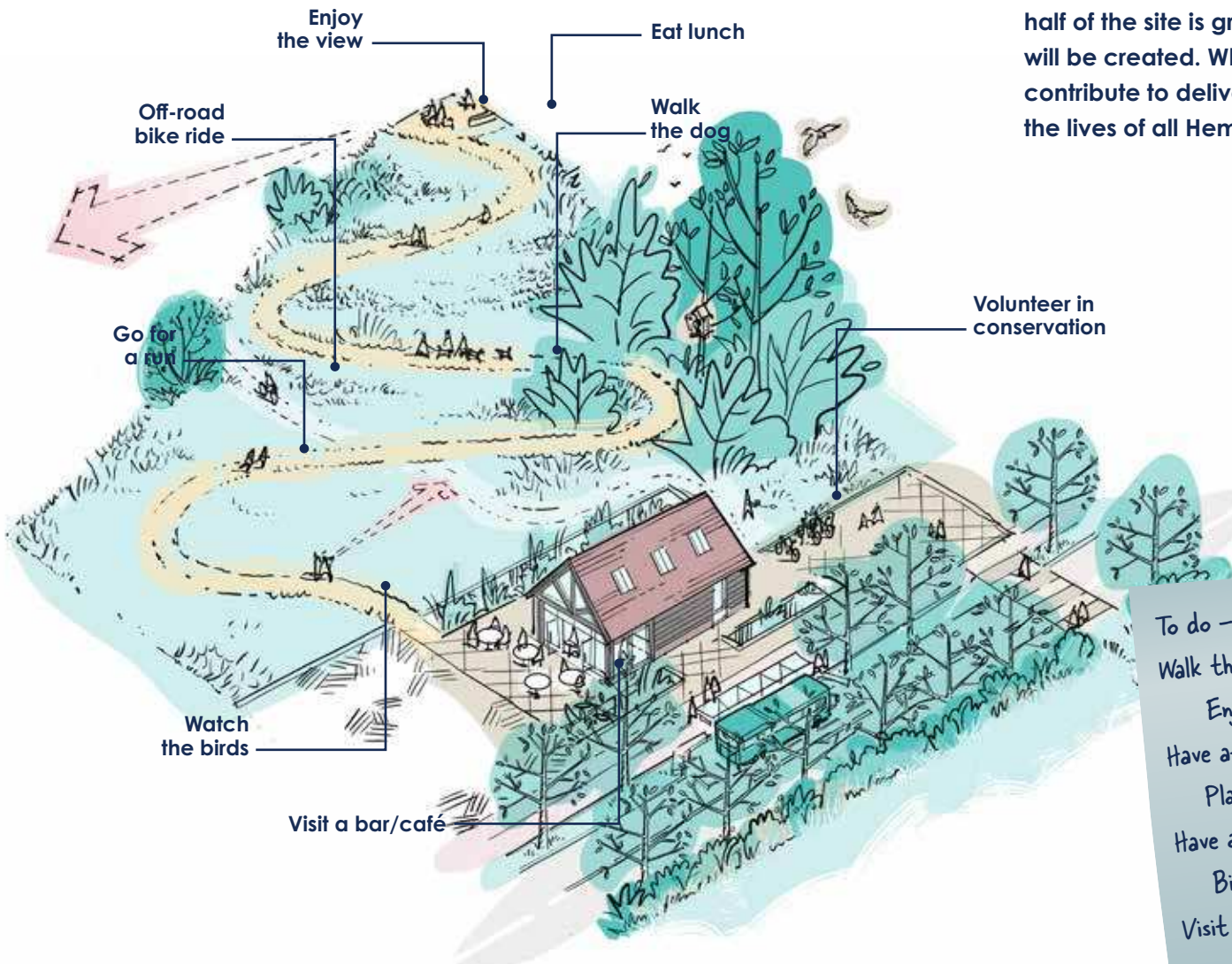


Figure 25: Extending the Spatial Vision - 4 types of place, linked by a sustainable transport corridor



Ten places Open space

The Growth Area will facilitate access to a vast network of greenspaces on an unprecedented scale. The local authority's requirement for open green spaces, coupled with the obligation to provide SANG, will mean that up to half of the site is green space. Within this wider network, specific destinations will be created. While the design of every green space, at every scale, will contribute to delivering success, the destination spaces will help to enrich the lives of all Hemel's residents.

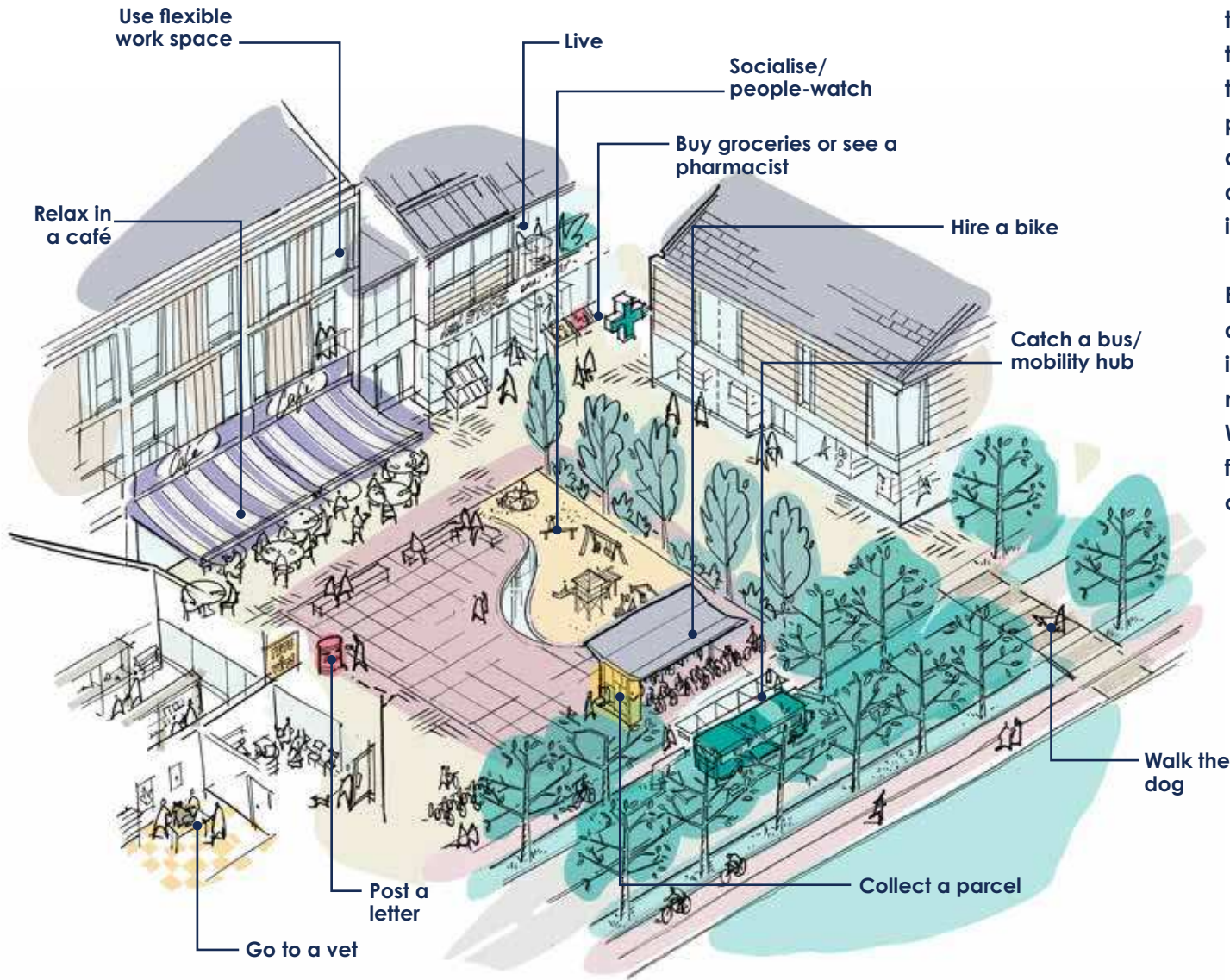


To do - East Hemel North
 Country Park Listen to music
 Visit a farmer's market
 Attend a community or
 Parish Council meeting
 Volunteer Go to the pub
 Park run Enjoy a walk
 Join a painting class
 Grow some vegetables Eat
 Become a nature conservationist
 Learn about the local area

To do - North West Hemel SANG
 Walk the dog Go for a run
 Enjoy the rural view
 Have afternoon tea
 Play Off-road bike ride
 Have a picnic
 Bird watching Learn to ride
 Visit a local maker (bike / horse)
 Long walk into the Chilterns



Ten places Neighbourhood centres



The Framework Plan identifies six neighbourhood centres within the Growth Area to ensure that the residents of each neighbourhood can satisfy their day-to-day needs without the need to travel. Basic services such as grocery shopping, pharmacies and post offices should be provided alongside other shops, cafes and services such as vets and hairdressers. Each centre will also include a new primary school.

Every centre has the potential to offer something different beyond these basic services, and investment in local job creation, maker spaces, markets, pubs and clubs will also be encouraged. Where the opportunity exists, repurposing existing farm buildings can come into play, adding to the character of the place.

To do - North Hemel
Community Hub

- Play a team sport
- Go for a run
- Join a club
- Rent a meeting room
- Rent a scooter
- Coaching a team
- Attend an evening class
- Socialise
- Spectate
- Work
- Go to school
- Play

To do - North West Hemel
Community Hub

- Go to school
- Top-up shop
- Catch a bus (from mobility hub)
- Meet friends / socialise
- See a doctor
- Play
- Remote working
- Get a haircut
- Go to the vet
- Recycle

To do - North East Hemel
Local Centre

- Buy bread and milk
- Drop-off dry cleaning
- Go to school
- Go to nursery
- Pick up a take-away
- Catch a bus
- Host a coffee morning
- Play
- walk the dog
- collect parcel

To do - East Hemel North Local Centre

- Be a teacher
- Open a business
- Visit a doctor
- Shop for groceries
- Go to school
- Meet a friend / socialise
- Take children to nursery
- Work out
- Join a club
- Access mental health services
- Catch the bus

To do - East Hemel South
Local Centre

- Start a long walk
- Catch the HERT
- Join a local club
- Play bowls
- Grab a coffee
- Start a book club
- Learn to ride a horse
- Visit the nearby SANG
- Remote working
- Buy groceries
- Go to school
- Go to the pub
- Play

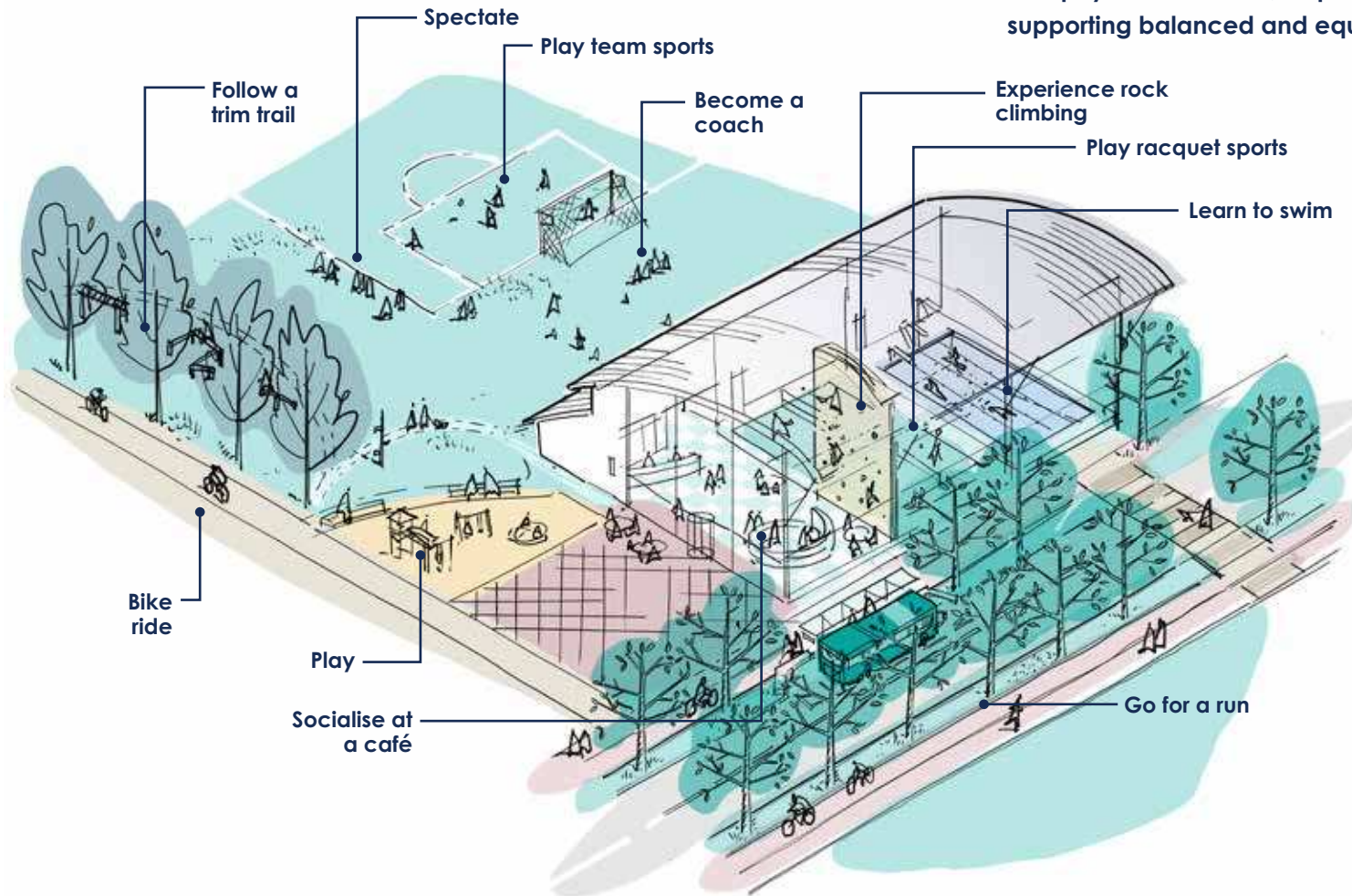
To do - North Hemel
Local Centre

- Shop at a market
- Buy an antique
- Rent a bicycle
- Catch a bus (from mobility hub)
- Eat (café, brasserie, restaurant, pub?)
- Join the cubs or brownies
- Volunteer
- People watch
- Go to school
- Join a choir



Ten places Sports

Opportunities for organised sports are a defining feature of the New Town master plan, and the growth in popularity of all types of sports means that more thought should go into planning and designing sporting locations than has traditionally been the case. Consideration should be given to ways in which people of all ages, genders and physical ability can engage in sports and physical activities, as part of a healthy lifestyle and in the interests of supporting balanced and equitable neighbourhoods.

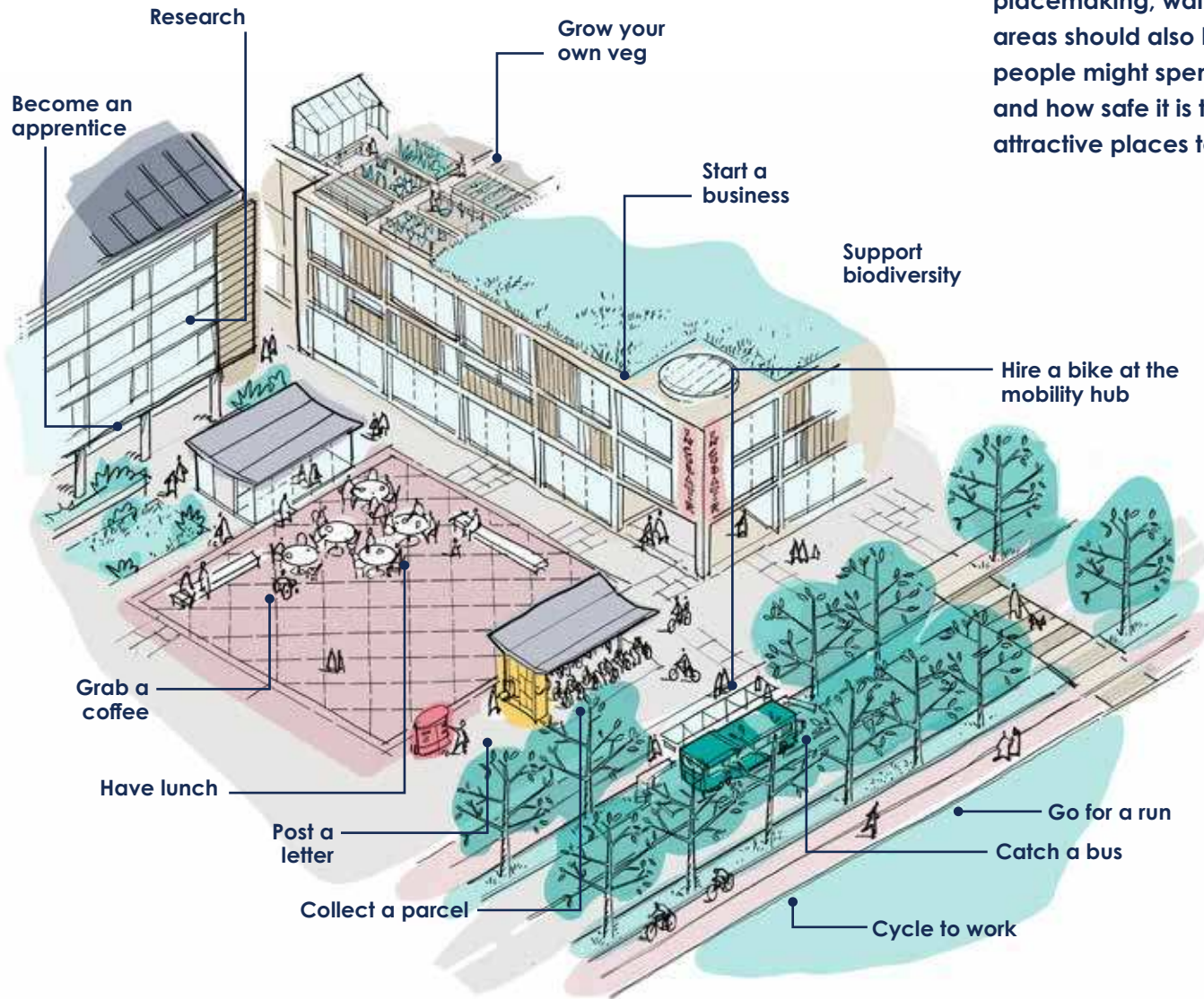


To do - East Hemel Sports Hub

- Learn to fence*
- Play ball sports*
- Build muscle*
- Socialise*
- Learn to swim*
- Meditate*
- Play racquet sports*
- Eat*
- Join a fitness class*
- Play*
- Visit a physiotherapist*
- Climbing & bouldering*



Ten places Employment



The expansion of Maylands represents an opportunity to rethink the way major employment areas are planned and designed. The emphasis on placemaking, walkability and biodiversity that is afforded to residential areas should also be placed on new employment areas. Thinking about how people might spend their lunchbreak, how convenient childcare provision is, and how safe it is to walk or cycle to work will all be fundamental to creating attractive places to work and to invest.

To do - Maylands East
 Eat lunch outdoors
 Pick up a parcel Cycle to work
 Go for a lunchtime walk / run
 Start a business
 Join an established company
 Learn / training Socialise
 Buy a newspaper
 Post a letter Catch a bus
 Buy lunch at the food market

