



Land West of Thaxted Road Saffron Walden

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Section 1

Introduction

Introduction

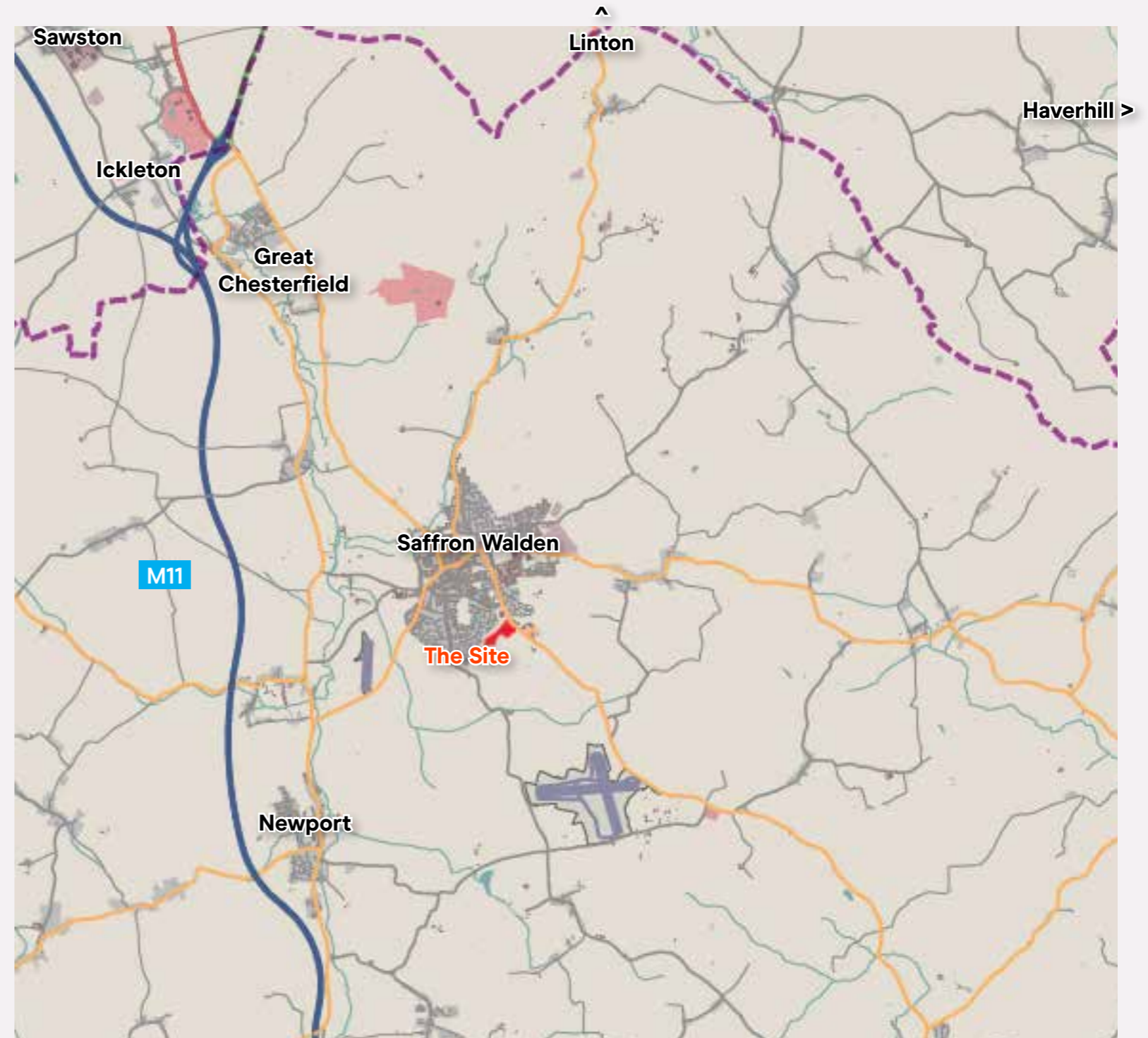
1.1 About this Document

This document has been prepared by Omega Architects on behalf of Kier Ventures in support of an Outline Planning Application for the Land West of Thaxted Road, Saffron Walden with the intention of explaining the design principles and concepts that have informed the current proposals.

The objective of the Statement is to demonstrate that:-

- The application represents a well-considered proposal, incorporating high quality design principles which has developed from our original vision for the site.
- The proposals make good use of the site whilst making full consideration of the character of the area and amenities of occupiers of neighbouring properties.
- The proposals make significant provision for inclusive design and access.

Obtaining a Planning Permission will provide for the delivery of a high quality, comprehensively planned development which will bear the hallmarks of quality, sustainability and placemaking and which will stand the test of time to be recognised as an exemplar for future developments.



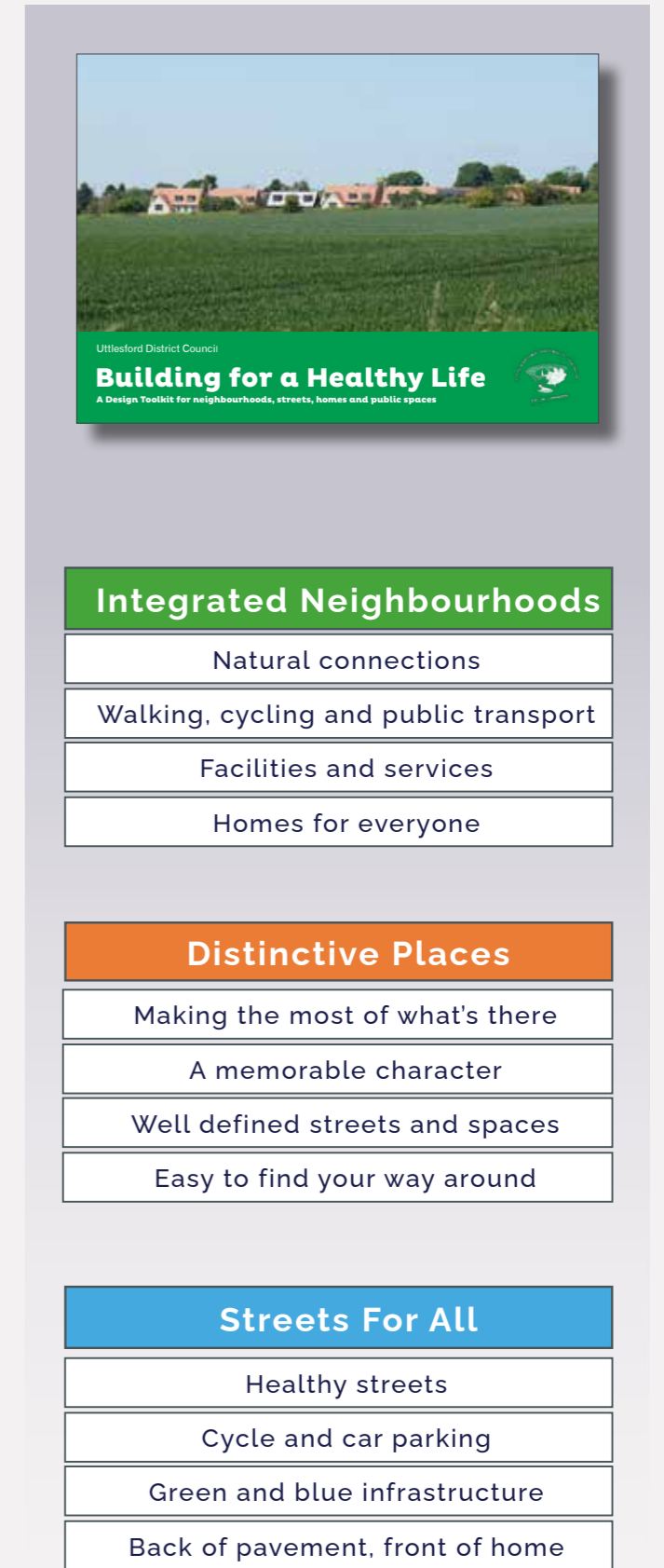
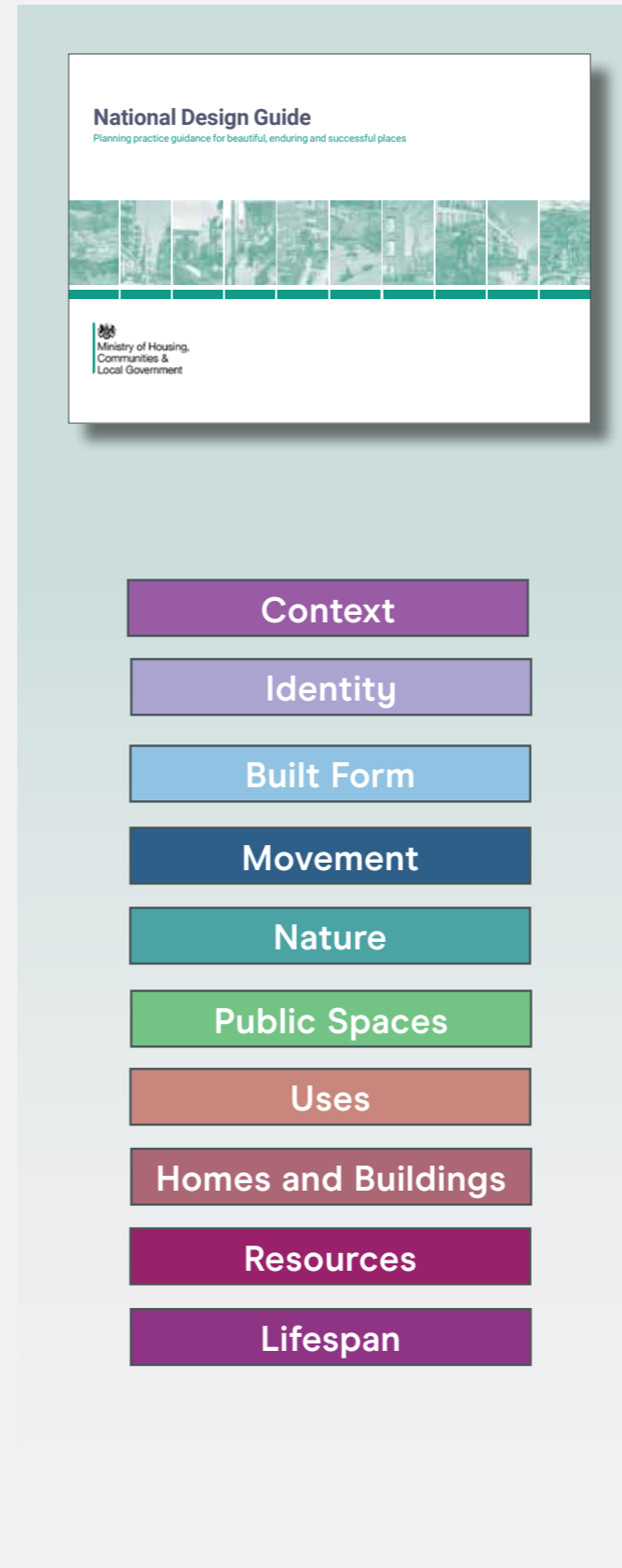
Location Plan

Introduction

1.2 How to use this document

This report will enable the local planning authority to better understand the analysis and considerations that have underpinned the designs of the development proposals.

The structure of the report aligns with recognised design guidance such as the National Design Guide and Uttlesford DC Building for a Healthy Life and local guidance such as the Essex Design Guide. As such, references to the core principles within these documents have been provided throughout the report to assist the appraisal of the proposals and cross-referencing with these guides.



Introduction

1.3 Vision

The design team are seeking to create a new neighbourhood and community to the south-east of Saffron Walden of the highest standard, therefore a series of aspirations for the new development have been outlined and will be assessed throughout the process of design:



Landscape-led Design

Incorporation of existing landscape assets and key views to the wider area within an attractive, green landscape framework of streets and spaces.



Supporting a Sustainable Location

The delivery of a large amount of new homes to help support the excellent new local infrastructure already in place on Thaxted Road, and utilise the good transport connections into central Saffron Walden.



Integrate with Existing Community

An opportunity to provide an embellished settlement edge to the south-east of Saffron Walden that seeks to actively relate to the surrounding countryside and the existing settlement edge by careful development planning and extending desire lines and well-used routes through the site.



High Quality Design and Placemaking

A high quality new development seeking to continue the high standard of design and placemaking for new development within Saffron Walden such as the nationally recognised development at 'The Avenue'.



'Artist's impression of Illustrative Masterplan

Section 2

Site Context

Site Context

2.1 The Site

The site is situated to the west of Thaxted Road, Saffron Walden.

The site is defined to the north and west by existing residential settlement including dwellings, open space, a leisure centre and a skatepark, to the east by Thaxted Road, and to the south hedgerow field boundaries along arable agricultural land.

The site is currently in agricultural use and is occupied by arable fields. Vegetation cover within the site itself is restricted to hedgerows and trees, situated along site perimeters and internal field boundaries.

There has been extensive new development in the past few years along the north-eastern side of Thaxted Road, including recently approved residential development which is currently under construction, and Knights Park, an edge of settlement retail park including supermarket, café, garden centre and other commercial units, and a hotel.



Aerial Photo

Site Context

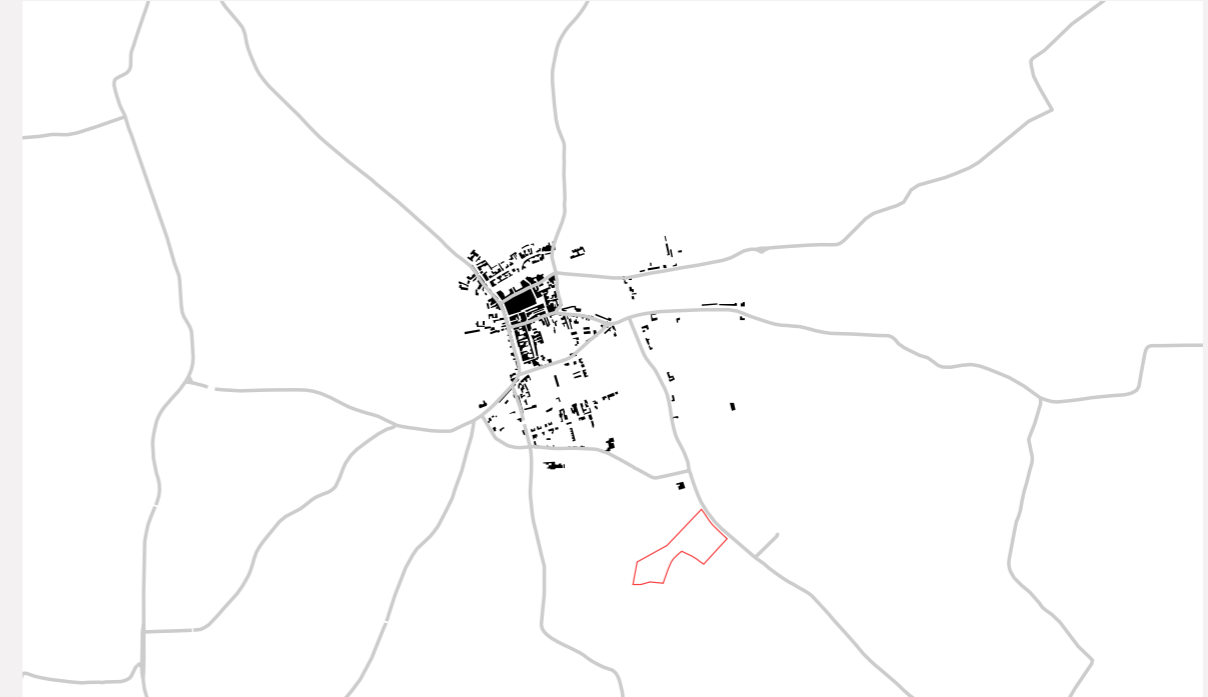
2.2 Planning history

The site has limited planning history relating to two planning applications.

UTT/12/6004/SCO in 2012 requesting for a screen opinion in respect of proposed residential development (225 dwellings) including extension to Skate Park.

UTT/13/2060/OP in 2013 was an Outline application with all matters reserved except access for residential development of up to 300 dwellings, pavilion building, extension to skate park and provision of land for open space/recreation use, including an option for a new primary school on a 2.4 ha site. The application was subsequently dismissed.

2.3 Historic context



1898 Settlement Map



Present Day Settlement Map

Site Context



2.5 Movement and Connectivity

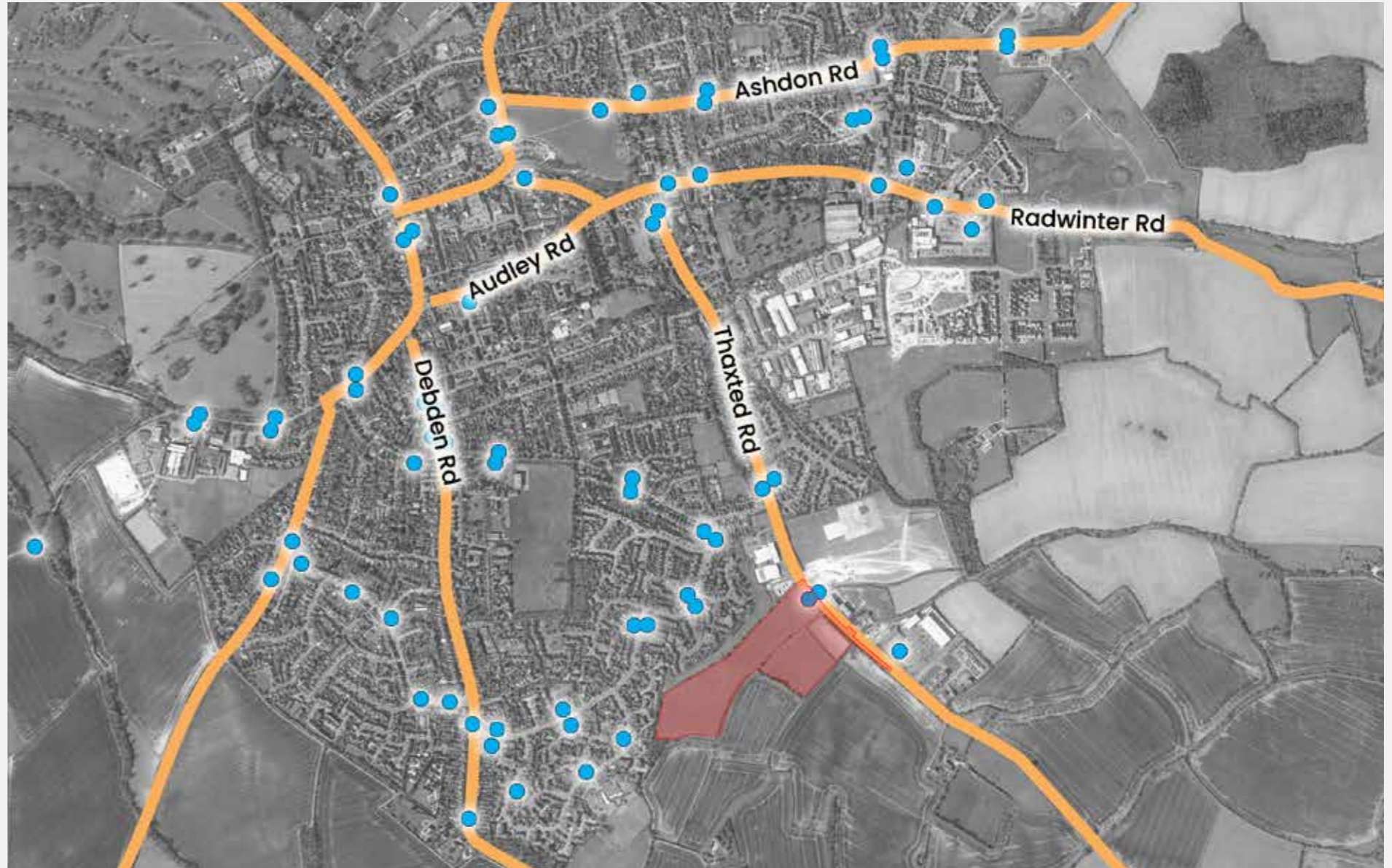
Saffron Walden is a market town located within the authority area of Uttlesford District Council. It is located approximately 12 miles south of Cambridge and Stansted Airport is located 10 miles south. There are a number of smaller villages and hamlets surrounding the town.

The town is located on the B184 which connects it with Thaxted to the south east, and the A11 to the north.

Saffron Walden is served by Audley End railway station located approximately two miles from the centre of Saffron Walden. The town is strategically located on the West Anglian Main Line. Direct services operate out of Audley End Station to Cambridge (17 minutes), Bishops Stortford (13 minutes) and London Liverpool Street (56 minutes) as well as to other locations.

KEY:

-  Main Roads
-  Bus Stops



Connections Plan

Site Context

2.6 Local Amenities

Saffron Walden is one of two major settlements in the District and as a market town has a town centre and outlying areas which provide a wide range of services to an extensive rural catchment area. The town has both primary and secondary education, an extensive retail facility base including three supermarkets (Waitrose, Tesco and Aldi), public houses, two doctors' surgeries, dentists, post office, pharmacies, places of worship, and a range of employment facilities in the town centre and in established commercial areas of the town.










On the opposite side of Thaxted Road is the newly opened 'Knight's Park' retail area, which offers the following facilities just a few minutes walk from the site:

- Supermarket
- Café and restaurant
- Garden centre
- Veterinary Surgery
- Pet shop
- Gym
- Waste and recycling centre.



Amenities Plan



	Retail / Hospitality		Public Open Space		Golf Club
	Hospital		Leisure		Town Hall
	Schools		Church		Walden Castle

Site Context

2.7 Landscape Analysis

To commence the design development of the site, FPCR have provided a set of guidelines to underpin the landscape strategy:

- Development is set back from site boundaries to minimise the visual impact. An appropriate relationship with the existing settlement edge and wider rural character is achieved by respecting both the existing public open space, established residential streets and the historic field boundaries.
- Key areas of focal open space and greenways would be actively fronted onto by adjacent streets, lanes and residential properties.
- Existing hedges and trees by the site perimeter and along field boundaries will be retained where feasible to enhance the rural edges and to sub-divide the proposed residential parcels;
- The existing field hedgerows within the site will be supplemented with additional tree planting, bolstering vegetation cover which will soften and filter views. Proposed development would be set back behind landscape buffer planting. New planting will utilise a select planting palette including locally characteristic indigenous native tree varieties.
- New footpaths would be accommodated along a greenways and lanes to enhance opportunities for recreational uses. Convenient routes through the proposed development will ensure connectivity both to the existing settlement and to the wider countryside.
- All of the landscape areas and public open space features will be managed and maintained. This would be achieved through the implementation of a comprehensive Landscape Management Plan, to ensure the successful establishment and continued thriving of the landscape proposals.



Site Context

2.8 Settlement Extent

The current settlement edge to the south-west of Saffron Walden is demarcated by the housing estate south of Cromwell Road and Winstanley Road, however in recent years new development has extended the settlement along Thaxted Road further south-east. The Knights Way retail park therefore now forms the furthest extent of the settlement to the south-east of the town.



Settlement Typologies Key:



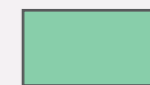
Settlement area

Roads



Countryside

Woodland



Public Open Space

Site Context

2.9 Conservation & Heritage

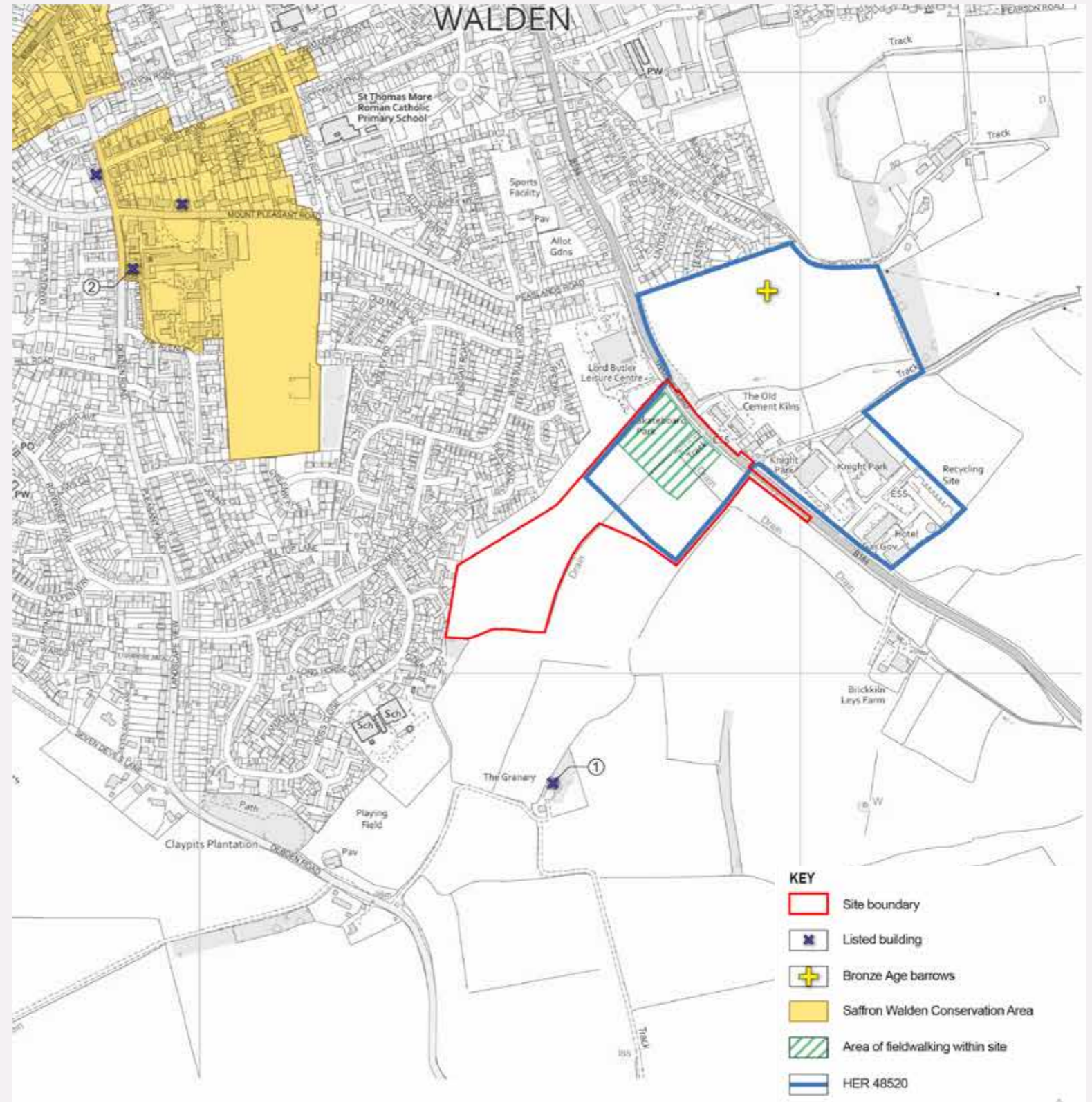
The report states that the site area does not contain any extant features of note other than hedged field boundaries which reflect long standing boundaries. Given change to the 19th century arrangement of fields, including encroachment from 20th

century development to the west, the site has no special historic landscape value. The site is likely to have been agricultural for many centuries and few sites or features had previously been recorded in the study area. Geophysical survey and fieldwalking in the north of the current site associated with that development did not identify anything of note.

The Council's archaeology advisor at Essex County Council requested completion of geophysical survey across the site. Completed by Headland Archaeology in September 2022, this appears to have worked well, but did not identify anything of likely archaeological significance. Given assessment of low archaeological potential following this fieldwork, the Council's archaeological advisor has agreed that further work can be completed as a condition of planning permission. Trial trenching would be completed to confirm the nature of the small number of features identified by the geophysics and to confirm that the method reflects the actual potential of the wider site.

The site does not contain any designated heritage assets and none lie close by. The closest asset is a Grade II listed post-medieval barn at Herberts, 300 metres south of the site. Although the site land was historically farmed from this farmstead, the barn does not have an associated listed farmhouse surviving. The site visit confirmed that barn is focussed on buildings to its south and is screened from the site by hedgerows and a small wood.

The site visit confirmed that no other designated heritage assets could be affected by residential development of the site. All lie at a considerable distance and are screened by topography or development within Saffron Walden.



Site and Key Heritage and Archaeology Plan

Site Context

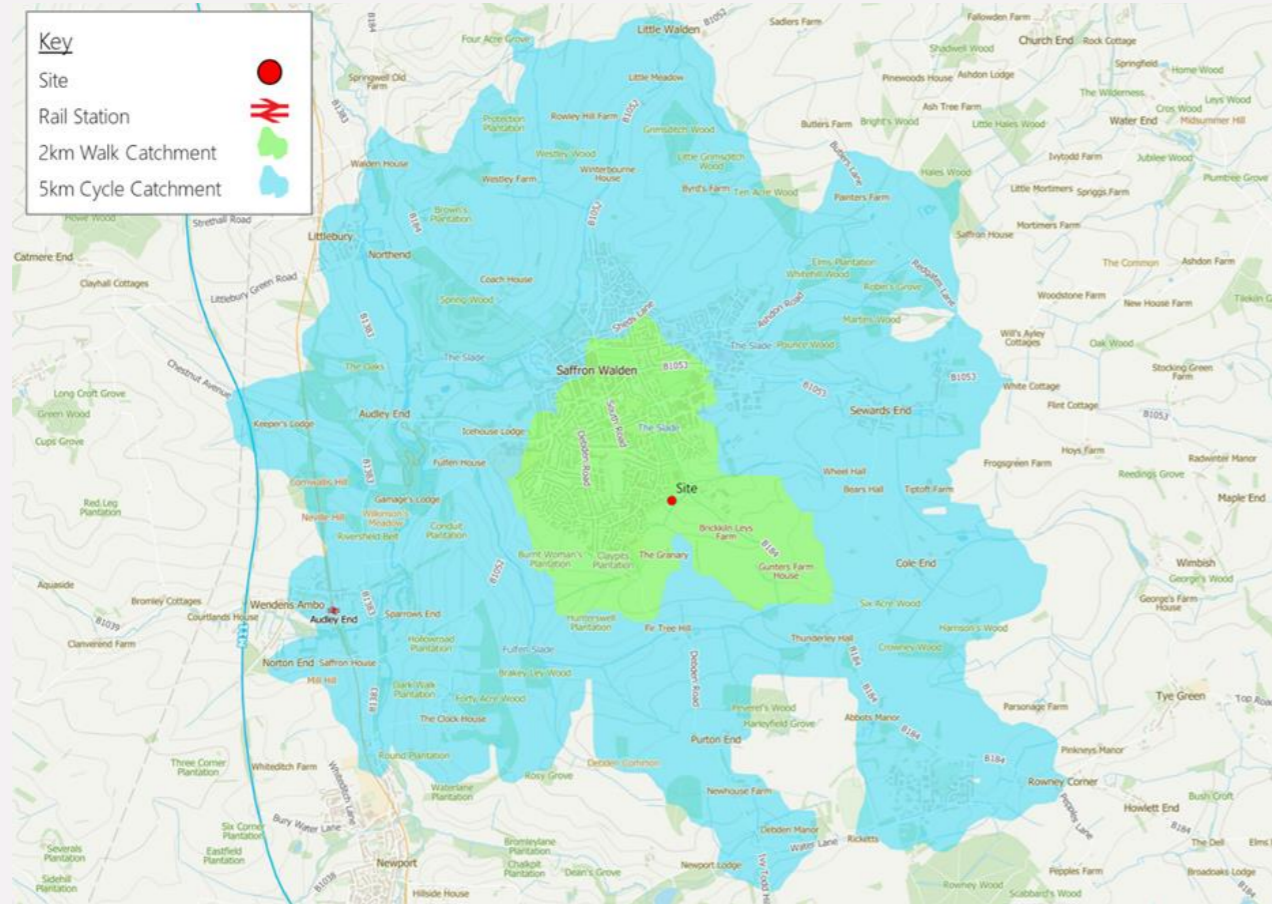
2.10 Highways

Milestone Transport Planning have produced a Framework Travel Plan to accompany the planning application. This summarises the current town wide transport position as follows:

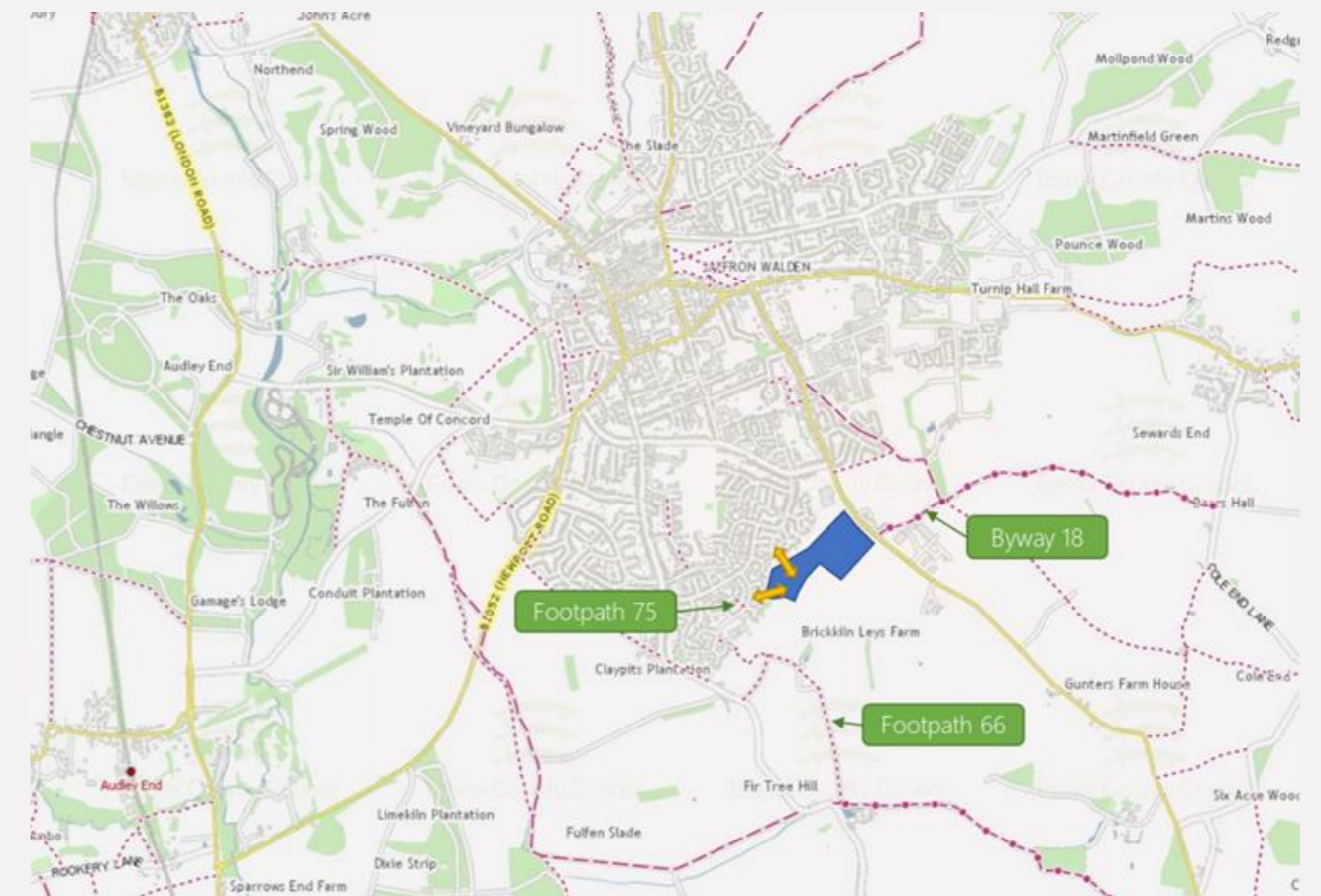
The majority of Saffron Walden, including the town centre is accessible by active travel modes (walking and cycling) and Audley End railway station is within a reasonable cycling distance of the Site.

The Site benefits from its proximity to a number of off-carriageway paths that directly connect to the neighbouring area including publicly maintainable paths to the north and west that connect the Site boundary to Peel Road and The Glebe. In addition, there are a number of public rights of way (PROW) in the immediate vicinity of the Site.

To the north of the site is an area of public open space that is owned and maintained by UBC and is regularly used by residents of the adjoining residential estate to the north for recreational purposes. Presently there are three key connections between the public open space and the existing adopted highway maintainable at the public expense, at Tukes Way, The Glebe and Peel Road.



Walk & Cycle Catchment



PROW Network & path Connections

Section 3

Site Assessment

Site Assessment

3.1 The Site

The north-east boundary of the site is demarcated by a hedgerow with a field gate providing access to the site. There is a ground level difference to the eastern corner where the site sits above the footpath and Thaxted Road which is in a cutting at this edge.

The north-west boundary is also demarcated by a hedgerow with some trees within it, adjoin the public open space which runs along the entire northern edge of the site. Some gaps have been created in the hedgerow onto the site which people evidentially use for walking routes.

The western boundary is a denser line of hedgerow/trees, with rear gardens and parking courtyards of properties on The Glebe and Church Field backing onto it. The southern edge of the site again has hedgerow and sporadic trees, with fields extending further south away from the site.



Aerial Photo

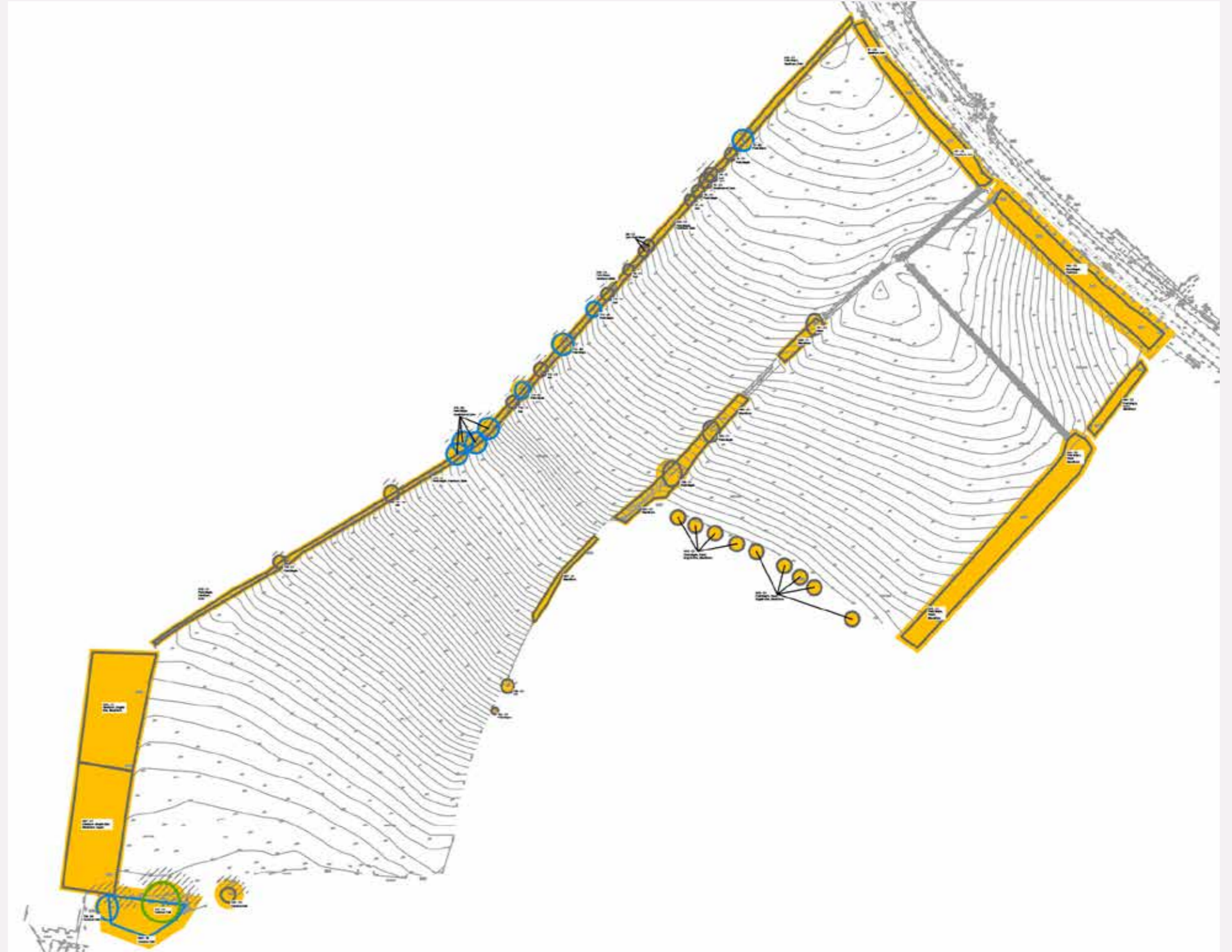




Site Assessment

3.2 Arboriculture

A Tree Survey has been conducted with results accompanying this planning application. This shows that the majority of tree and hedgerow planting on the site is set around its edges, with a small amount forming a field boundary extending from the centre of the site towards Thaxted Road to the north-east. It is the intention that all existing trees and hedgerows are retained except where they are in poor health and landscape management may facilitate replacement or improvement to the areas.



Tree Survey

Site Assessment

3.3 Topography

The low point of the site is located to the northern corner adjacent to the new access from Thaxted Road. The lower field rises from this point approximately 8 metres up to the south-eastern corner, where the site narrows and gradients steepen towards the upper parts of the site.

This steeper part of the site rises approximately 15m from the narrowed section of the site up to the wider area to the south-west, where gradients flatten out and become almost level at the southern most area of the site.

Road gradients should be designed to minimise the gradient as far as possible for accessibility.

In general, the maximum desirable longitudinal gradient on the footway / cycleway network, including the multi-user Orbital Greenway, within the Site will be 5.0% (1:20). Where natural steep changes in level are unavoidable, short sections may be constructed at 8.0% (1:12). Where these exist, flat platforms of at least 5.0m in length should be provided along its length.

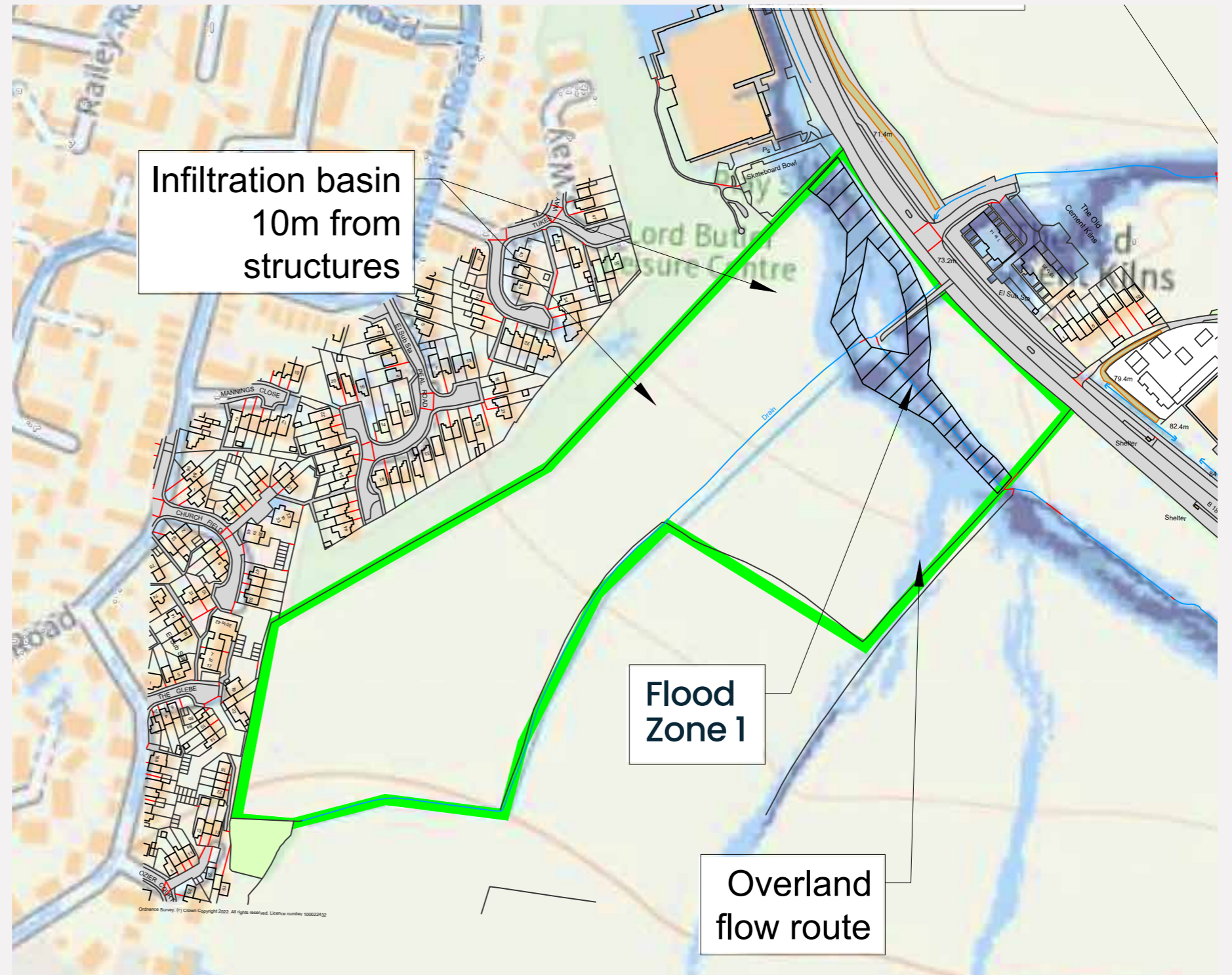


Topography Plan

Site Assessment

3.4 Drainage

Rolton have provided initial analysis and guidance with regards to flooding and drainage constraints that will require consideration through the development of the site.



Flood Risk and Drainage Constraints

Site Assessment

3.5 Access

A potential junction design for the main access from Thaxted Road into the site has been developed by Milestone Transport Planning, as illustrated in the adjacent drawing. This ensures appropriate off-set distances from the proposed access to junctions serving development on the northern side of the road.

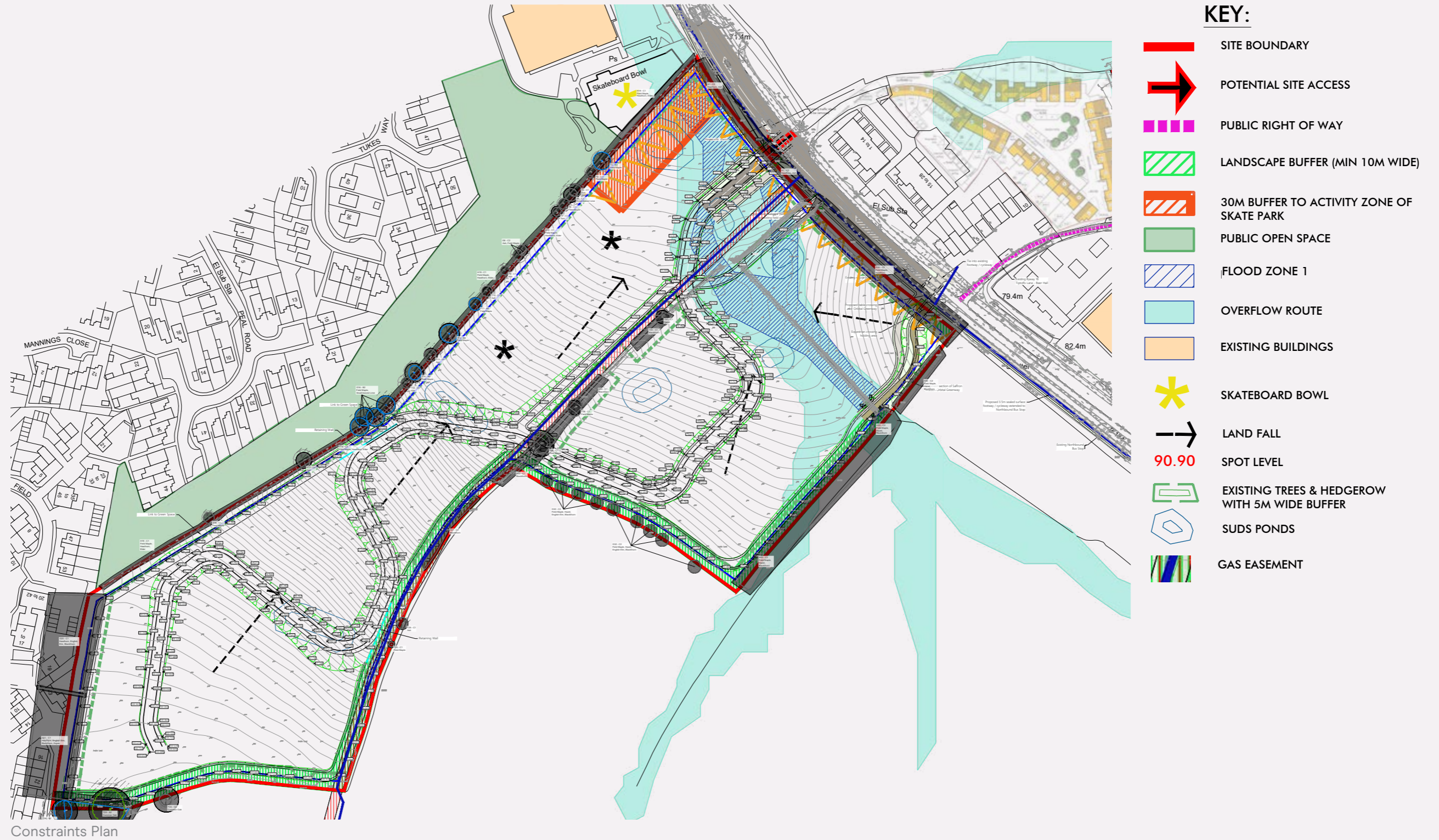


Potential Access to Site

Site Assessment

3.7 Site Constraints

The various technical considerations outlined over the preceding pages have been collated into an overarching constraints plan to provide a baseline from which the development proposals can be progressed.



Constraints Plan

Section 4

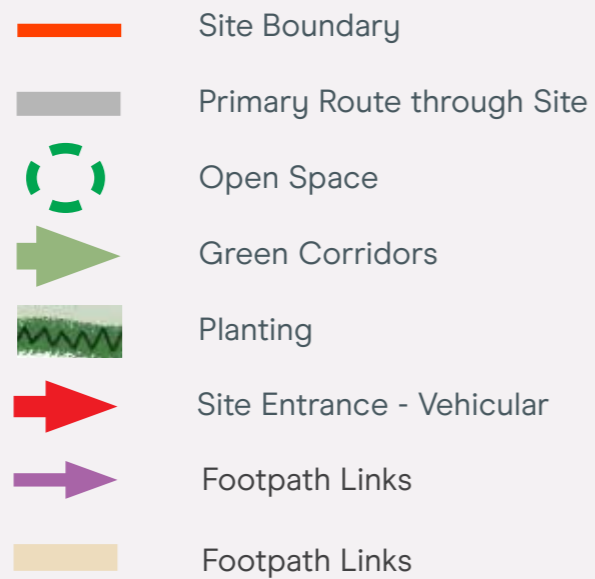
Design Evolution

Design Evolution

4.1 Site Concept and Opportunities

The aspirations of the Vision have been re-visited to set out an initial proposal for a concept plan for the site and identifying opportunities that can be included within the development:

- Landscape-led design - Create a green framework within the site that is focussed on the existing landscape features and allow for the opportunity for these to be incorporated within key streets and spaces through the development;
- Integration with existing community - identify desire lines that may be used by the local community and integrate these within the green landscape framework;
- Supporting a Sustainable Location - make these routes as direct as possible to help promote sustainable modes of transport to local facilities such as on foot or bicycle;
- High Quality Design and Placemaking - identify key spaces within the site where spaces can be created to assist wayfinding and ensure placemaking is at the heart of the new development.



Concept Plan

Design Evolution

4.2 Concept Development

Initial framework plans for the site reviewed potential developable areas around the site and then introduced the key routes and spaces as suggested in the Concept plan to form a development framework. Initially, as set out on Option 1, the key constraints were applied such as landscape buffers and flood mitigations areas with a development framework set within this.

Further options, as shown in Option 2, then applied the rationale as proposed in the concept plan to implement placemaking and design of key routes and spaces. Important consideration was given to topography and the potential orientation and gradient of roads that would need to address the levels across the site. Also given consideration, was the potential alignment of the proposed Saffron Walden Orbital Greenway, a new multi-use path that is to extend around the edge of the town.

A pre-ap meeting was held with Uttlesford District Council; feedback on the design included:

- suggested incorporation of Orbital Greenway
- pedestrian and cycle routes through the site should be promoted
- road gradients should be reviewed to confirm to Essex Design Guide
- street sections and densities to be informed by a design code.

The framework plan has been further developed and, along with the accompanying design code, these points have been integrated as set out in the framework plan shown in section 4.3.



Framework Option 1



Framework Option 2

Design Evolution

4.3 Framework Plan

The key design principles of the emerging framework plan are as follows:

1. Vehicle access from Thaxted Road;
2. Landscaped strategic open space forming arrival space into development; opportunities for play, SUDs and flood mitigation, and permeability with the existing public open space to the north and leisure facilities for pedestrians and cyclists;
3. Focal building providing prominence over the arrival into the development;
4. Green corridor planting and landscaped channel for overland flood route - based on line of existing field drainage route;
5. Wide landscaped boulevard into main scheme, within which is located existing landscape features such as swale and hedgerow - opportunity for direct and segregated route for pedestrians and cyclists within green corridor;
6. Development areas designed to overlook internal streets and spaces and outwardly face towards countryside - allowance for new boundary planting to help screen new development from wider views;
7. Central open space linking existing public parkland to the north with circular footpath routes around the edges of the site; opportunities for new tree planting, play, and SUDs within a high quality and overlooked space;
8. Roads orientated to cross contours to mitigate increased gradients to the upper parts of the site; development parcels to be split by streets capable of incorporating new street planting to help screen the buildings from wider views;
9. Looser, more informal development areas allowing for lower density to upper levels of the site
10. Opportunities to introduce new pedestrian access points providing direct movement towards surrounding neighbourhood and its amenities
11. Public open space to upper level of the site, integrating with the existing public open space to the north and providing permeability through this space to The Glebe for pedestrians and cyclists;
12. Wide landscaped public open space along the southern edge of the site allowing for new planting opportunities to screen the new development at this upper level.
13. Multi use Orbital Greenway with new crossing to Thaxted Road.



Framework Plan

	Site Boundary		Focal Point Buildings
	Pedestrian/ Cycle Movement		Residential Development
	Orbital Greenway		Existing Trees
	Primary Roads		Strategic Public Open Space
	Secondary Roads		

Design Evolution

4.4 Local Consultation

Forty Shillings have produced a Statement of Community Involvement to accompany the planning application. A summary of this is as below.

Consultation activities

Commencing in October 2022, Kier Ventures began a public consultation process ahead of the submission of a planning application in November 2022.

The aims of the consultation and engagement process was:

- To raise awareness of the proposed development and planning application.
- To gather feedback from the local community.
- To answer any questions from the local community about the proposals.

Project website and email

A project website and email were launched in October 2022 and the website includes the following pages:

- Welcome
- About us
- The site
- Our plans
- Benefits
- Have your say

Publicising the consultation

On the 28th October 2022 A5 invitation flyers were sent out to 1,779 addresses including both businesses and residential properties.

The A5 flyer contained information on the following:

- Satellite map of the development site.
- Details of the development plans.
- Invitation to submit feedback via the electronic feedback form.
- Contact email address and project website.

Review of feedback

Throughout the consultation period, all feedback was received online. In total 107 people provided feedback about the scheme, with the majority of feedback coming from residents in the immediate vicinity of the site.

From the feedback received, the following subject matters cover the main points raised, which can be read in more detail within the SCI:

- The increase in traffic congestion
- The impact of the development on local infrastructure
- Environmental concerns
- Opposition to development in Saffron Walden
- Support for the development

Section 5

Design Parameters

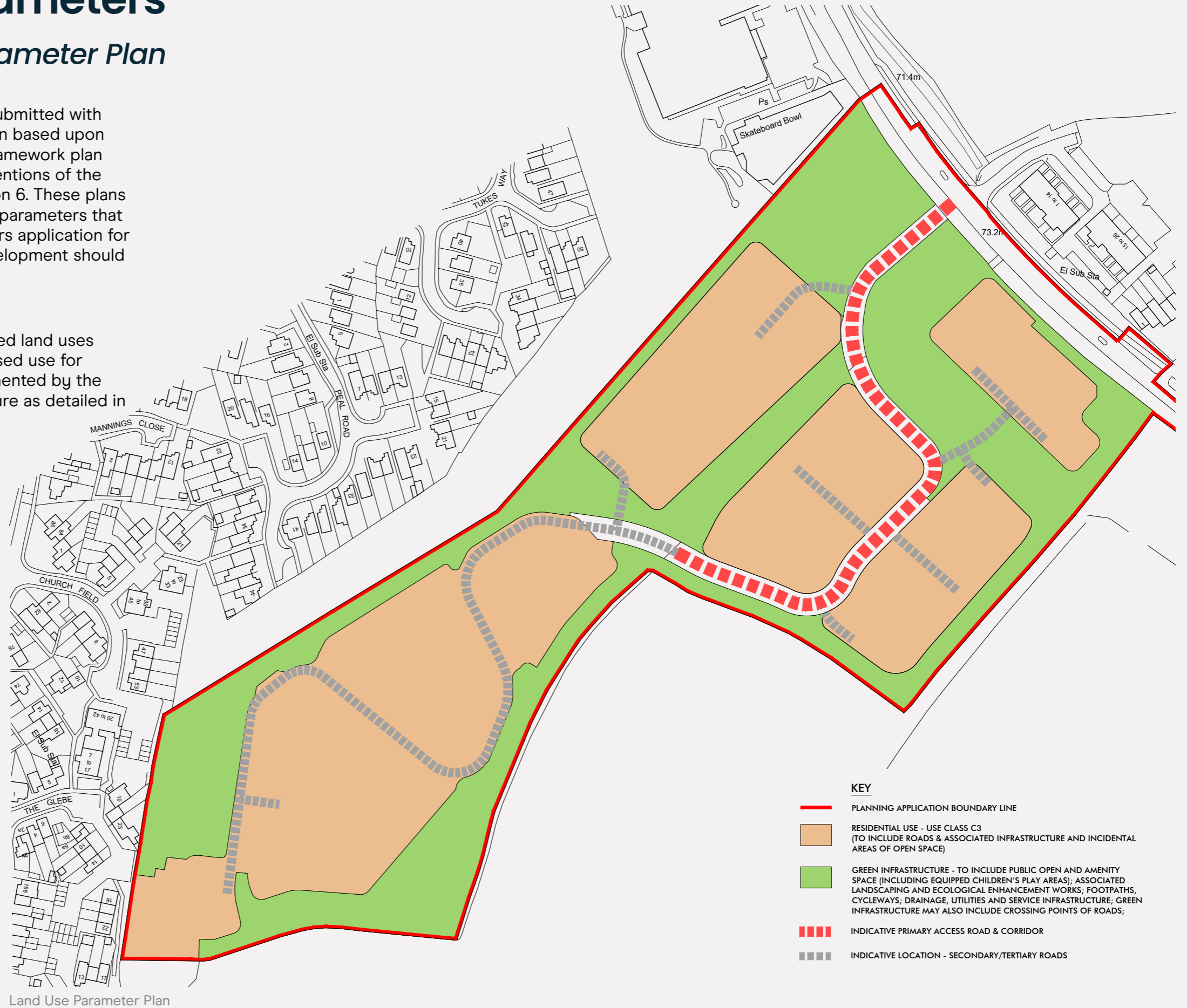
Design Parameters

5.1 Land Use Parameter Plan

A set of Parameter Plans are submitted with the Outline planning application based upon the design principles of the Framework plan shown in section 4 and the intentions of the Illustrative Masterplan in section 6. These plans seek to implement key design parameters that a forthcoming Reserved Matters application for the detailed design of the development should accord with.

Land Use:

This plan identifies the proposed land uses within the site. The sole proposed use for the site is residential, complemented by the surrounding Green infrastructure as detailed in a separate parameter plan.

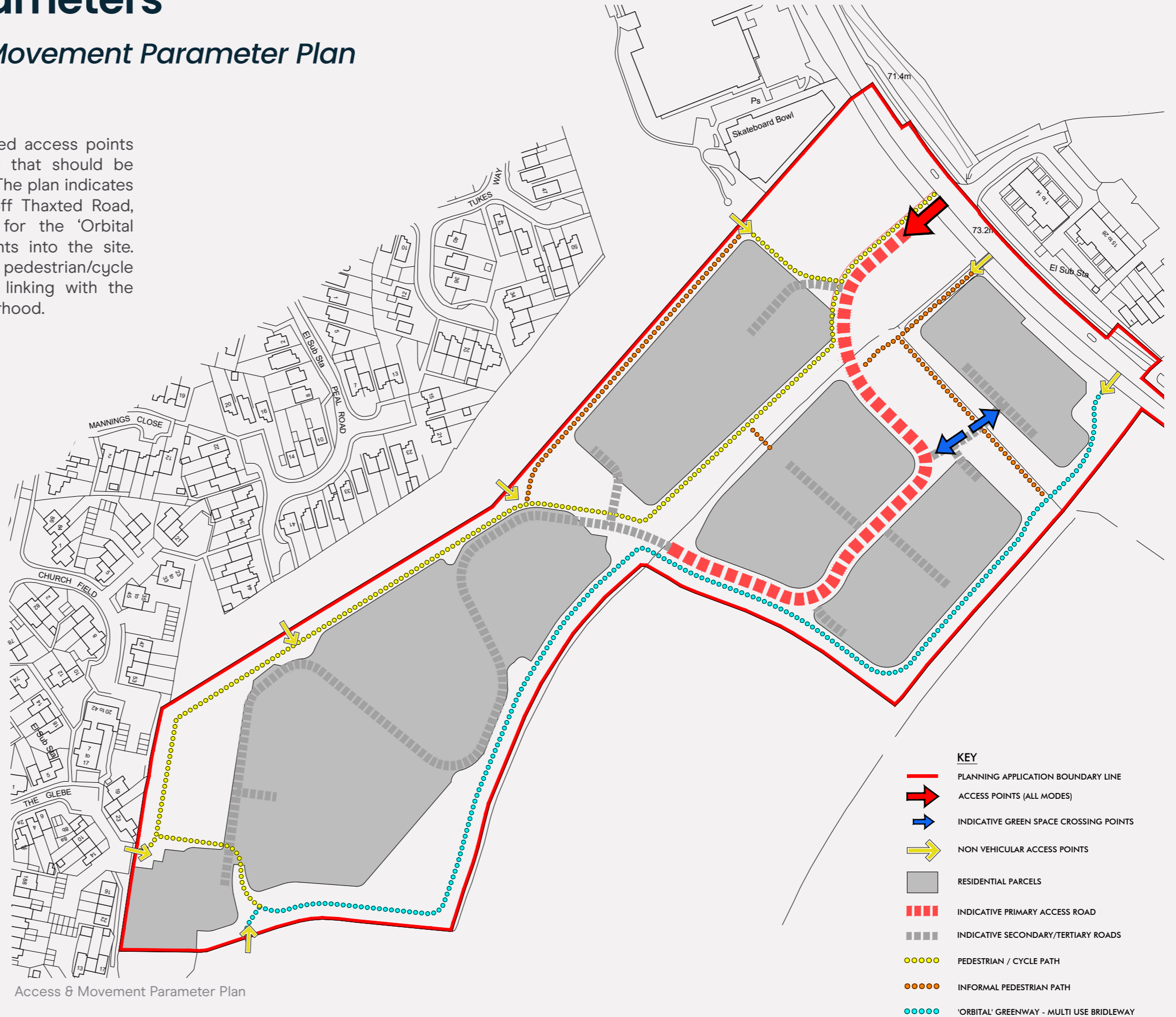


Design Parameters

5.2 Access and Movement Parameter Plan

Access and Movement:

This plan identifies all proposed access points into the site and any routes that should be safeguarded through the site. The plan indicates the vehicle access location off Thaxted Road, along with proposed route for the 'Orbital Greenway' and its entry points into the site. Alongside this are other pedestrian/cycle connections around the site linking with the existing surrounding neighbourhood.

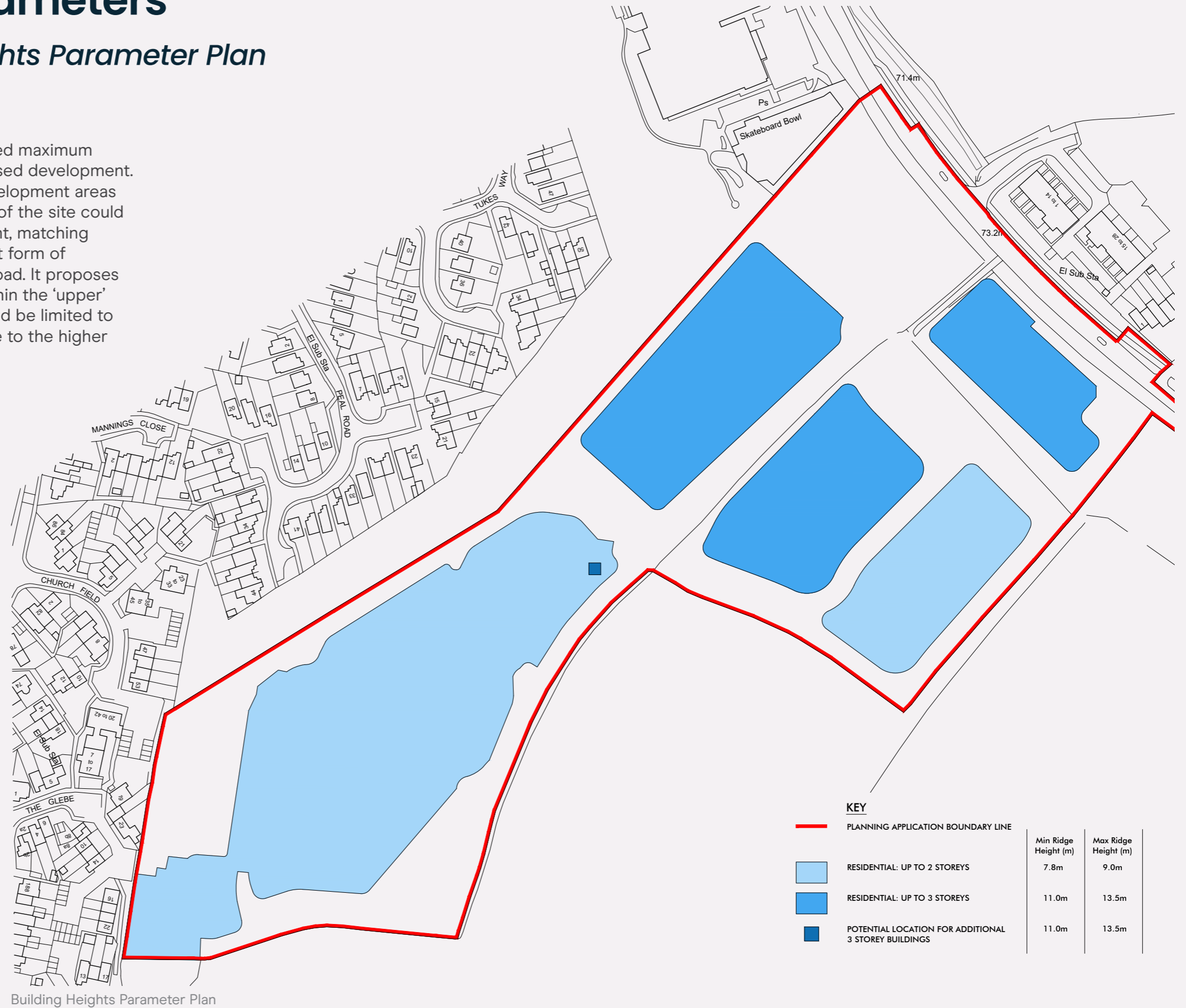


Design Parameters

5.3 Building Heights Parameter Plan

Building Heights:

This plan illustrates the intended maximum building heights for the proposed development. The plan proposes that all development areas within the 'lower' eastern part of the site could be up to three storeys in height, matching the existing and emerging built form of development along Thaxted Road. It proposes that all development areas within the 'upper' western areas of the site should be limited to a maximum of two storeys due to the higher ground levels here.



Design Parameters

5.4 Density Parameter Plan

Density:

This plan indicates how proposed density should match the building heights parameter plan in terms of the building typology within the site. 'Higher' density is proposed to the 'lower' eastern areas which would suit some terraces and small apartment buildings, whilst 'lower' density is proposed to the 'higher' western parts of the site to reflect the reduced storey heights and ensure a different typology of buildings are proposed such as detached or semi-detached properties.

Density ranges proposed are similar to current and emerging development in the locality. 'The Old Kilns' opposite the site has a density of 39dph (not including apartments); 'Poppy View' (Bellway development on northern side of Thaxted Road) proposes a density of 32dph.

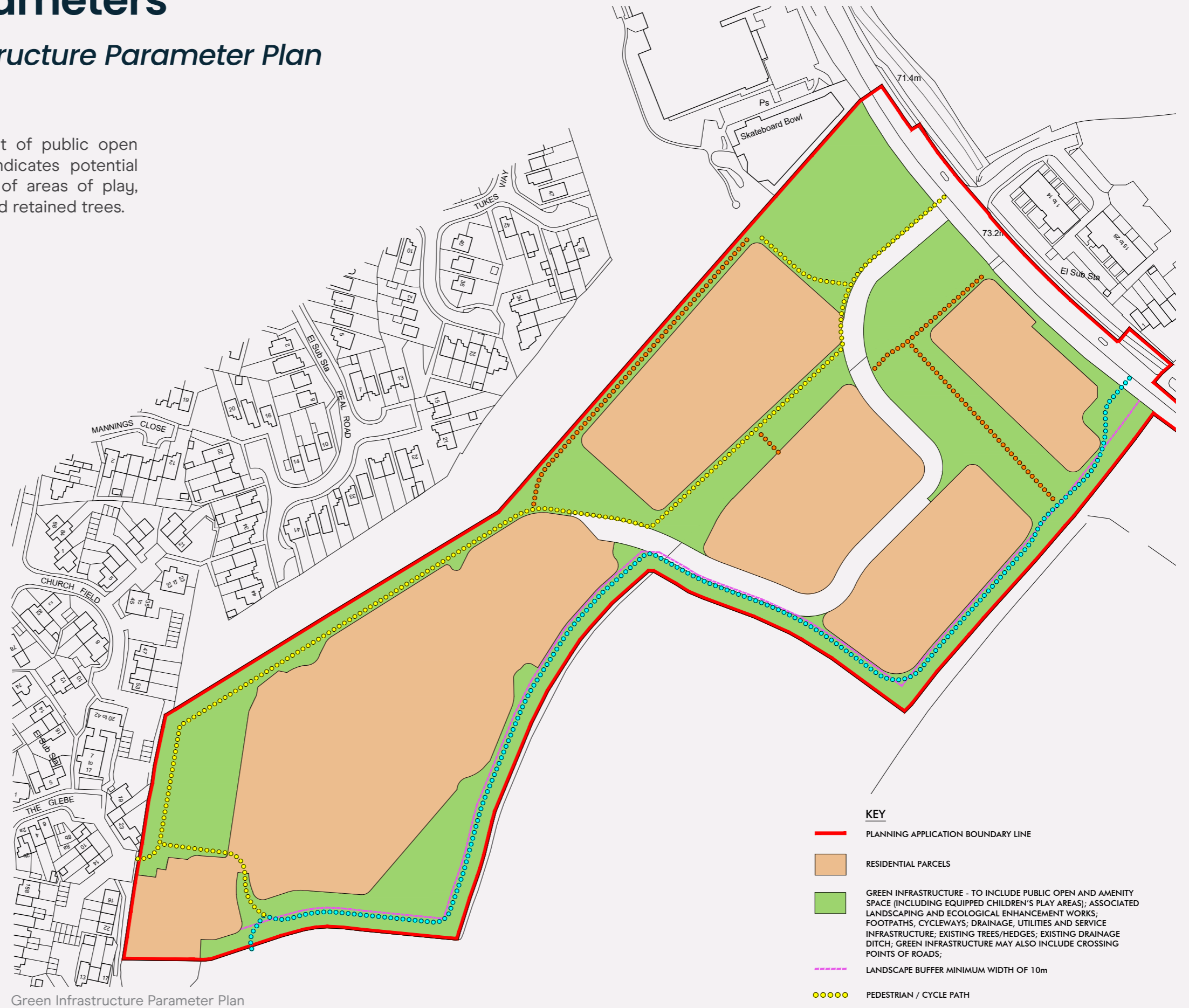


Design Parameters

5.5 Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan

Green Infrastructure:

This plan indicates the extent of public open space within the site, and indicates potential locations for different types of areas of play, locations for SUDs, existing and retained trees.



Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan

Section 6

Illustrative Proposals

Illustrative Proposals

6.1 Illustrative Masterplan

An illustrative masterplan has been produced that indicates how a scheme can be delivered that respects the constraints as outlined in section 3, meets the design parameters as set out in the previous section, and provides a development with good placemaking and urban design principles. Using the basis of framework masterplan as illustrated in section 4, and the parameter plans in section 5; the illustrative masterplan is set out as follows:

1. *Arrival space from Thaxted Road - strong building frontage proposed to provide a contained environment and well overlooked space;*
2. *Three storey apartment buildings in key locations, to be designed as focal buildings to assist wayfinding;*
3. *Housing development backing onto western boundary only where strong hedgerow is located and ground levels differ to the road;*
4. *Small maisonette block providing overlooking towards arrival point of 'Orbital Greenway' into the site;*
5. *Multi-functional landscaped corridor through scheme incorporating existing landscape features, proposed new planting, play facilities and drainage mitigation features;*
6. *Green corridor providing a direct pedestrian/cycle link between arrival space and centre of the development; car-free and safe route well overlooked by new buildings either side of corridor; alignment allows for retention of existing landscape features such as hedgerow and drainage field ditch;*
7. *New development orientated to overlook existing area of public open space to the north, which currently lacks many direct habitable windows overlooking the space;*
8. *Central open space forming green link between existing public open space to the north and existing hedgerow boundary along the southern edge of the development; linking with the proposed route for the Orbital Greenway;*
9. *Alignment of proposed multi-functional 'Orbital Greenway' route within landscape buffer along southern edge of the site;*
10. *New development outwardly facing towards southern edge of the site to form positive frontage with countryside and allow for new public routes to be overlooked;*
11. *Focal building located at head of central green corridor to assist wayfinding and as a key visual marker within street scene;*
12. *Landscape buffer along northern edge of site including pedestrian/cycle route, with connections northwards off-site to Peal Road and other existing streets to the north;*
13. *Road alignment proposed to 'meander' within western part of site to address rising ground levels to higher areas to the west; some buildings on this road proposed as split-level to help address the level differences across the site;*
14. *Development set back from southern corner of site to allow for new landscape and planting to help screen buildings from wider views;*
15. *Area of open space designed to link with western end of existing public open space to the north; New buildings proposed to form strong edge to the south and east to mitigate the lack of overlooking from the existing settlement edge;*
16. *Potential new pedestrian and cycle access point in western end of the site with 'The Glebe'; overlooked by houses to south, which are screened from wider view by the adjacent existing woodland to the south of the site.*



Illustrative Masterplan



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Illustrative Proposals

6.2 Indicative Dwelling Mix

The diagram adjacent and key below indicate the different dwelling types proposed within the illustrative masterplan. A good range of dwellings are proposed ranging from one/two bedroom apartments, to three and four bedroom family houses.

Also proposed are single storey bungalows, comprising of the affordable housing allocation as requested by Uttlesford District Council. These are located at the higher part of the site to the west, on the southern edge to mitigate any views of the development at this higher level from further afield.



Indicative Dwelling Mix

Illustrative Proposals

6.3 Indicative Tenure Distribution

40% of the new dwellings proposed within the illustrative masterplan are proposed as Affordable housing, with a mix designed to reflect aspirations for dwelling sizes as requested by Uttlesford District Council. The affordable dwellings are spread throughout the new development to ensure they are provided within clusters rather than all in one location.



-  - Private
-  - Affordable

Indicative Tenure Distribution

Illustrative Proposals

6.4 Indicative Heights and Scale

Buildings within the illustrative masterplan meet the requirements of the Building Heights Parameter Plan. In general houses are proposed at two storeys however there is opportunity for two and a half storey houses in the eastern part of the site as per the parameter plan. All houses within the western part of the site are proposed as a maximum of two storeys in height, with some bungalows proposed to the higher parts of the site to the south-west.

Apartment buildings should be designed as focal buildings and therefore are proposed as three storeys, and are placed in key locations where they can act as visual markers to streets and spaces. The key focal building in the centre of the site at the head of the green corridor includes a rear wing which is limited to two storeys to reflect the reduced heights in this area, and to reference the outlook over the southern edge of the site.

An artist's impression of the proposed scale and massing of the illustrative masterplan is provided on the following page.



Indicative Heights and Scale



Artist Impression of Illustrative Masterplan

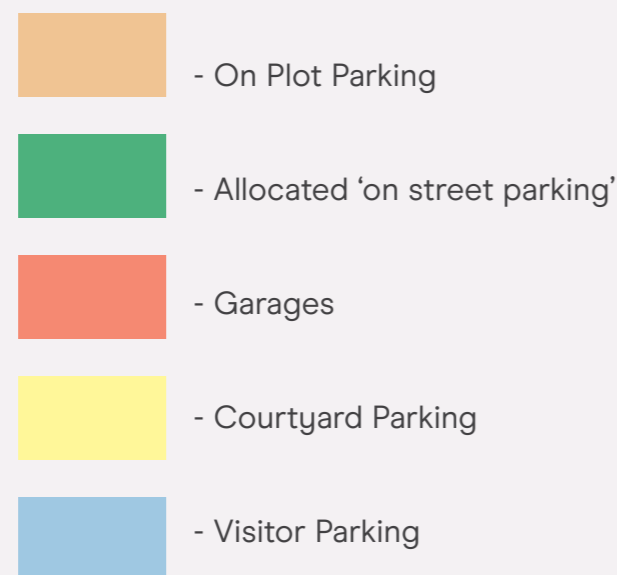
Illustrative Proposals

6.5 Indicative Car and Cycle Parking

Car parking provision within the Illustrative Masterplan is in line with ECC Parking Standards (2009) with provision proposed as follows:

- 1 bedroom unit = 1 space per dwelling;
- 2 bedroom units = 2 spaces per dwelling;
- Over 2 bedroom units = 2 spaces per dwelling;
- Visitor parking = 0.25 spaces per dwelling unallocated.

Cycle parking should be provided at 1 space per dwelling. Cycle parking for houses should be provided within rear sheds or garages or a space within rear gardens. For apartments, communal cycle stores should be provided which are in a safe and overlooked location and lockable.



Indicative Car and Cycle Parking

Illustrative Proposals

6.6 Landscape Strategy

The design for the layout and built form will adopt best practice and appropriate contemporary design solutions. These will be informed by Saffron Walden's local character including both the existing townscape and the Cam valley setting.

Proposed residential landscape and public realm should create a distinctive, high quality place, which is informed by best practice design guidance. Because the settlement edge context of the scheme the rationale for a landscape led approach is a logical one. A safe and enduring landscape should be established that will provide a rich and diverse setting for the development; encourage recreation and play; provide identity within the built form; maximise bio-diversity and encourage sustainability benefits such as Sustainable Drainage (SuDS).

Provision of public open space and private gardens should comply with the relevant standards. Based on the open space standards identified within Saffron Waldens Neighbourhood Plan, the quantum and types of open space proposed for 170 dwellings, would be as follows:

- Natural & Semi-natural Greenspace = 2.37ha
- Amenity Greenspace = 0.65ha
- Provision for children and young people = 0.04ha

The proposed development provides a range of open space for natural play and informal recreation along with the provision of equipped play. Existing recreational facilities located in close proximity to the north of the site, include public open space, One Minet Skatepark and the Lord Butler Leisure Centre. The proposed development should provide a Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP) children's play area which would complement the existing recreational facilities.

In addition to the public open space, every home will provide some individual private garden or communal private amenity space in accordance with the Essex Design Guide guidelines.

The following guidance underpins the landscape strategy:

- The Cam valley setting is respected with key views to and from the site, informing the proposed scheme.
- Development is set back from site boundaries behind landscape buffers to minimise the visual impact.
- To minimise visual impacts development within the western part of the site situated on higher ground could accommodate lower density residential development, up to 2 storeys in height. Lower lying parts of the site, adjacent to Thaxted Road would be suitable for higher density development up to 3 storeys in height.
- Existing hedges and trees along the site boundaries will be retained where feasible to enhance the rural edges.
- New planting will utilise a select planting palette including locally characteristic indigenous hedge and tree varieties.
- New footpaths and cycleways would be accommodated along greenways and lanes to enhance opportunities for recreational uses. An 'Orbital' Greenway multi-use bridleway is proposed along a corridor of open space, alongside the southern site boundary. Elsewhere within the site, other footpath routes will be accommodated along open space corridors. Attractive, convenient routes through the proposed development will ensure connectivity both to the existing settlement and to the wider countryside.
- The proposed development provides a range of opportunities to create new public open space for the benefit of both existing and new residents. A high quality landscape is proposed, which would include a range of community facilities to provide a rich and distinctive character.
- All areas of open space would be actively fronted onto by adjacent streets, lanes and residential properties.



Illustrative Proposals

6.6 Landscape Strategy

Open space provided for the development comprises 3.06Ha dispersed across the site creating linear greenways and focal open green spaces within the site as part of a cohesive multi-functional green infrastructure.

- A high quality landscape is proposed, which would assist in creating a rich, distinctive place of varied character. The development includes individual character areas, each having their own identity and role within the landscape and public realm:
- Thaxted Meadows will create a distinctive area of informal open space situated on low lying land adjacent to Thaxted Road. It will provide an attractive arrival space into the residential development, which the main vehicular entrance, along with pedestrian and cycle routes pass through.
- The Green Corridor creates a wide landscaped boulevard into the central part of the proposed residential development. It provides an attractive linear corridor of open space framed by adjacent residential development, with opportunities for direct and segregated routes for pedestrians and cyclists.
- The Amenity Edge will be well integrated with the existing open space to the north. It will be designed to allow natural surveillance over the greenway route and a pocket park from nearby dwellings and residential streets.
- The Rural Quarter creates an attractive interface with the wider rural landscape situated to the south of the site. Proposed built development would be set back from the site boundary behind an existing hedgerow and trees.
- Glebe Green creates a focal area of open space on an area high ground situated at the western end of the site. It forms an attractive pocket park overlooked by proposed residential development, will be well connected to the existing settlement with recreational routes for pedestrians and cyclists.

Further details of the public realm principles for each of these character areas are provided within the Design Code.



Illustrative Proposals

6.7 Illustrative Character Areas

The Design Code document submitted alongside the Outline Planning Application identifies a series of character areas across the proposed development area. These areas have different parameters and design coding principles with the intention of creating a cohesive development, with a strong design principle for the buildings to reflect the setting of the site and its surroundings whilst referencing local character.

The Illustrative Masterplan demonstrates how implementation of the character area guidance along with other design coding principles can be achieved.

The six defined character areas are:

-  1. Thaxted Meadows
-  2. Green Corridor
-  3. Amenity Edge
-  4. Rural Edge
-  5. Internal Streets
-  6. Glebe Green



Illustrative Proposals

6.7.1 Character Area 1:

Thaxted Meadows

This area comprises the lower parts of the site which in the main are characterised by the large areas of multi-functional public open space, around which buildings should provide a strong sense of overlooking and containment of the space, by linked building typologies and taller, three story buildings.

The northern part of this space will form a continuation of the existing public open space to the north of the site and provide good connectivity with the existing play facilities, skate park and the Lord Butler Leisure and Fitness Centre. The landscaped corridor extending to the southern edge of the site will provide pedestrian and cycle links with the Orbital Greenway extending along the southern edge of the site.



Tadpole Garden Village



Caterham Barracks, Surrey



Highwood, Horsham



Key Plan



The Avenue, Saffron Walden



Church Street, Saffron Walden



Artist Impression of Thaxsted Meadows

Illustrative Proposals

6.7.2 Character Area 2: Green Corridor

Green Corridor

This corridor provides direct pedestrian and cycle connectivity through the site, from the arrival space off Thaxted Road to the centre of the development. This route is safeguarded away from the roads and should be overlooked by linked building typologies to form a safe and well overlooked route through the development.

The corridor includes existing landscape assets to the site, such as a hedgerow and drainage ditch which can assist with the transfer of surface water and the SUDs strategy throughout the development.



Key Plan



Market Row, Saffron Walden



Castle Hill, Saffron Walden



The Avenue, Saffron Walden



Knights Park, Tunbridge Wells



Upton, Northampton

Illustrative Proposals

6.7.3 Character Area 3:

Amenity Edge

This area comprises the northern edge of the development. The existing hedgerow in this area is to be retained and respected with a 5m buffer. Adjacent to this will be pedestrian/cycle paths set away from the adjacent roads. Where possible, and where the topography allows, dwellings should be orientated to overlook this edge and form a positive relationship with the existing public open space to the north which currently lacks natural surveillance.

The central open space should, like the arrival space, form a continuation of the existing public open space to the north of the site. Pedestrian links into the adjacent streets to the north are limited adjacent to this area, therefore the increased space offered by the central open space should allow for alternative walking routes and movement from the existing green space through to Thaxted Road and the countryside edge.



Sovereign Gate, Cheshunt



Bolnore Village, Haywards Heath



Key Plan



Abode, Great Kneighton



The Avenue, Saffron Walden



Artist Impression of Central Open Space of Amenity Edge

Illustrative Proposals

6.7.4 Character Area 4:

Rural Edge

These areas form the southern edges of the development, with buildings set back from the site boundary. Buildings in these areas should be of a lower density than elsewhere within the development, comprising detached and semi-detached properties and orientated to face outwards and form a positive relationship with the countryside edge.

The open space in these areas should allow for new planting to assist with screening of the new buildings from wider views, and form an attractive space within which the new Saffron Walden Orbital Greenway can pass through.



Vignette / Sketch Aerial Extract



Key Plan



Bolnore Village, Haywards Heath



The Frythe,



Arborfield Green



Kiln Barn Road, Aylesford

Illustrative Proposals

6.7.5 Character Area 5:

Internal Streets

The streets in the western area of the site are at a gradient to address the rising ground levels to the western edge of the site, and as such buildings either side of the streets should be designed specifically to address this condition.

Houses should generally be detached and set back from the road to allow for separation and frontage gardens to mitigate any change in levels, or alternative house types proposed that seek to address the level changes within the design of the house, such as split-level houses.



Vignette / Sketch Aerial Extract



Church Street, Saffron Walden



Museum Street, Saffron Walden



Key Plan



Highwood, Horsham



Knights Park, Tunbridge Wells



Trumpington Meadows, Cambridge

Illustrative Proposals

6.7.6 Character Area 6:

Glebe Green

This area comprises the highest part of the site and another strategic area of public open space serving the development. Like the arrival space and the central space, this should form a continuation of the existing public open space to the north of the site and provide good connectivity from a potential new pedestrian/cycle access into the site from 'The Glebe', which would offer improved connectivity from the Katherine Semar Junior School and Meadows Montessori Nursery with the existing open space to the north of the site and the leisure centre.

The space should be well overlooked by new houses surrounding it, including some new houses in the far western corner of the site to ensure the proposed new access point has direct overlooking and frontage. The space should also link with the Rural Edge area offering an attractive route around the southern edge of the site for walking and cycling to promote healthy living.



Kiln Barn Road, Aylesford



Trumpington Meadows, Cambridge



Key Plan



The Avenue, Saffron Walden



The Brackens, Ascot



Artist Impression of Glebe Green

Section 7

Building for the Future

Building for the Future

7.1 Energy and Sustainability Strategy

An assessment of the site’s sustainability and energy credentials has been carried out to support an outline planning application for the Land West of Thaxted Road, Saffron Walden. The proposed scheme involves the development of the site for up to 170 dwellings, associated landscaping and open space, with access from Thaxted Road.

The energy strategy follows the energy hierarchy; avoiding unnecessary energy use, use energy more efficiently, use renewable energy, and offset emissions, as per the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Supplementary Planning Document (2007).

The proposed energy strategy capitalises on passive design measures to maximise the fabric energy efficiency and energy demand. The scheme will benefit from Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery to minimise heat losses. The scheme should then makes use of Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs) for space heating and domestic hot water. Heat-pump solutions for space heating and hot water will remove the need for on-site combustion.

The scheme could look to utilise window reveals, balconies and external shutters where feasible, to reduce the requirement for active cooling.

The proposed energy strategy has been set out within this report and the scheme is currently demonstrating a combined on-site regulated CO2 reduction of 59% (Part L 2021 Baseline). The site-wide results summary for the carbon emissions are set out on this page. Further detail may be found in the body of the Energy & Sustainability report.

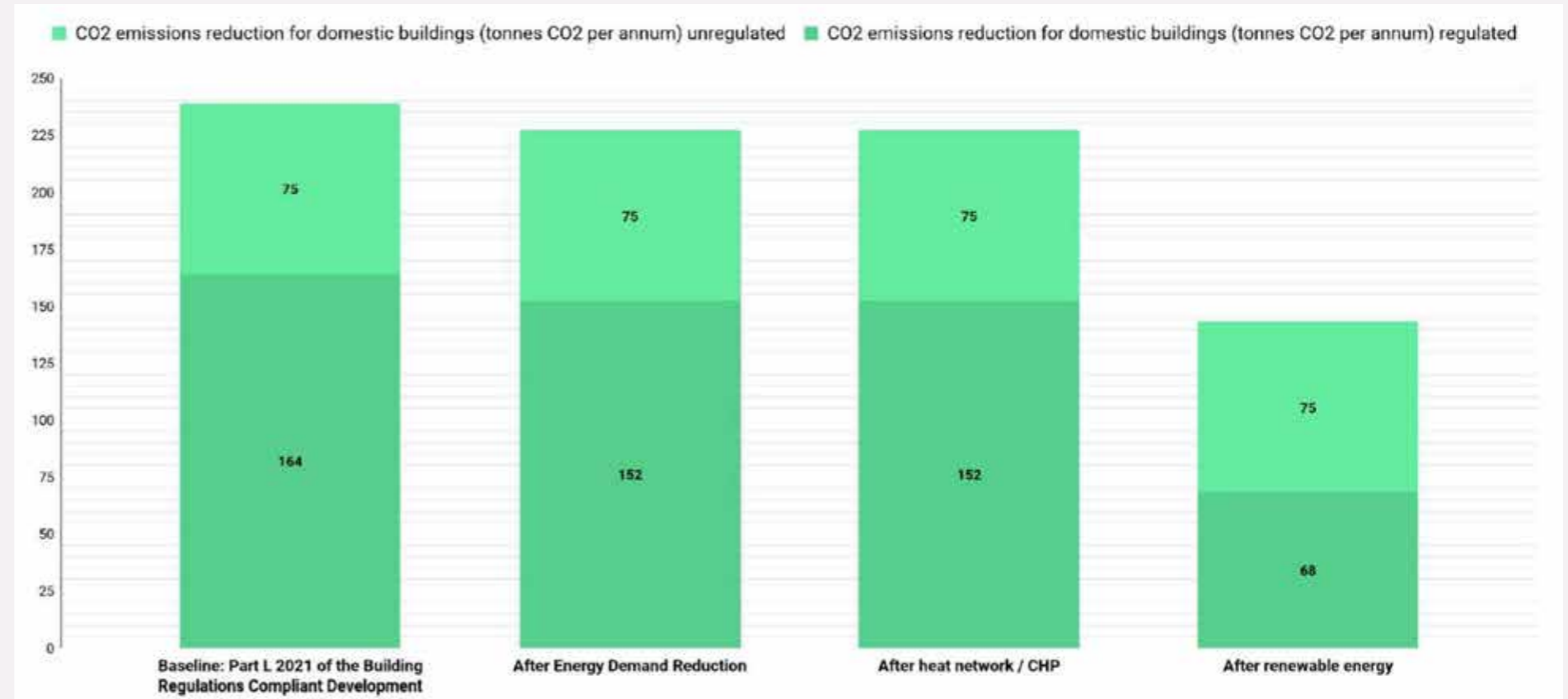


Figure 1: Total site-wide savings at each stage of the energy hierarchy

	Regulated domestic carbon dioxide savings	
	(Tonnes CO ₂ per annum)	(%)
Savings from energy demand reduction	13	8%
Savings from heat network / CHP	0	0%
Savings from renewable energy	84	51%
Cumulative savings	97	59%

Table 1: Total site-wide savings at each stage of the energy hierarchy

Emissions within this report are based on the following CO₂ emission rates:

- Natural Gas 0.210 kgCO₂/kWh
- Grid electricity 0.136 kgCO₂/kWh

These represent the SAP 10.2 carbon factor figures. For the assessment of demand reduction measures (Be Lean stage) space heating and domestic hot water is assumed to be from gas boilers with an 89.5% efficient gas boiler, to standardize a benchmark target. However, the Be Green stage of the energy hierarchy results considers ASHPs as an alternative method for space heating and hot water.

Building for the Future

7.2 Framework Travel Plan

Milestone Transport Planning have produced a Framework Travel Plan to accompany the planning application.

The purpose of the Framework TP is to set out a long-term strategy for the management of trips generated by the Site, based on hierarchical principles where emphasis is placed upon the order of priority outlined below:

- opportunities to reduce travel demand and the need to travel
- meeting the needs of vulnerable road users, i.e., pedestrians and cyclists
- facilitating access by passenger transport
- accommodating the requirements of two-wheeler users, i.e., mopeds and motorbikes
- facilitating the safe and efficient movement of emergency vehicles, essential deliveries and refuse collections
- accommodating the requirement that, for some, access by motor vehicle, will still be required and in such instances seeking to minimise, where possible, single occupancy car trips.

The performance of the TP will be judged against defined targets and will be regularly monitored and reviewed.

Effective measures will be identified through the preparation of the TP to achieve an overall goal of reducing the impact of traffic generated by the development and to improve accessibility. As a consequence, residents of the development will have:

- Better access to essential services and jobs
- Improved travel options
- Opportunities for a healthier lifestyle

Aims

The overarching aim of the FTP is to reduce the need to travel and to affect a reduction in the reliance upon car borne travel for essential and non-essential journeys to and from the Site. This will reduce the impact of such travel on the local environment as a whole by:

- Minimising travel by private car where practically possible, to achieve fewer trips from the development than would otherwise have been the case.
- Encouraging safe and viable alternatives to the private car that minimise the environmental impact on the surrounding community as well as those living at the development through the promotion of attractive, safe, viable and efficient modes.
- Achieving a reduction in overall private vehicle mileage resulting in an associated reduction in congestion on surrounding roads and effect of development-related traffic on emissions, noise, visual intrusion and road traffic accidents.
- Ensuring people are aware of their travel options as well as creating a safe and accessible location for people to live and visit.
- Having a positive long-term impact on the environment and personal health.

Objectives

The aims of the FTP are underpinned by objectives that are in accordance with local and national policies. The key objectives are:

- Achieve fewer single occupancy vehicle trips to and from the development than would otherwise have been the case.
- Provide high quality infrastructure that encourages greater use of sustainable travel modes such as walking, cycling and public transport.
- To encourage car sharing thereby reducing the number of single occupancy trips.
- To promote the health benefits of walking and cycling with a broad ranging choice of formal and recreational facilities.
- To provide a safe cycle and pedestrian friendly environment within the proposed development linked to the existing and enhanced off-site cycle and pedestrian infrastructure.
- To maximise accessibility to public transport from the development for all journey purposes.
- To implement rigorous marketing of the TP and its measures through a range of media.
- To continually manage and implement sustainable travel practices throughout the lifetime of the TP.
- To continue to raise awareness of environmental issues, especially those which impact on personal health and involve transport matters amongst residents.

Building for the Future

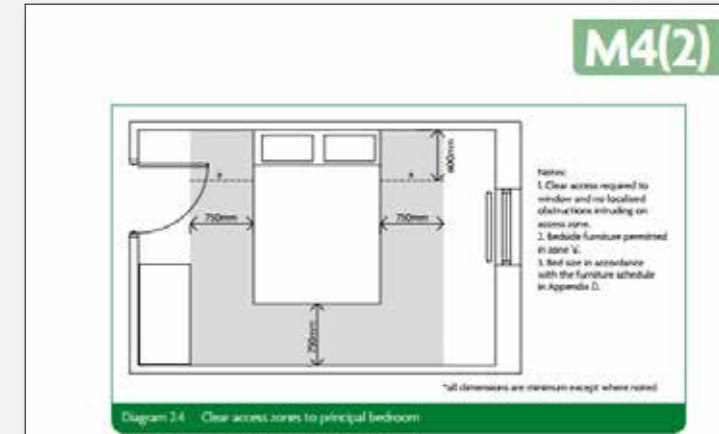
7.3 Access

With regard to accessibility within the site, road and footpath levels will be designed to meet required standards regarding maximum gradients.

Access between footpaths and parking spaces to access doors will be in full accordance with AD Part M. All external spaces serving the dwellings will be designed to accommodate ambulant disabled and wheelchair access.

The residential accommodation should be been designed to comply with Council Policy with regard to provision of dwellings meeting Part M4(2) (Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings) of the Buildings Regulations standards, along with any requirement for a proportion of dwellings designed to meet Part M4(3) (Wheelchair Use Dwellings) of the Building Regulations.

Alongside this, new dwellings will be designed to meet internal space standards as prescribed at national or local level.



M4(1)

Table 1.1 Minimum widths of corridors and passageways for a range of doorway widths

Doorway clear opening width (mm)	Corridor clear passageway width (mm)
750 or wider	900 (when approached head on)
750	1000 (when approach is not head-on)
775	1050 (when approach is not head-on)
800	1100 (when approach is not head-on)

NOTE: A standard 825mm door leaf up to 44mm thick will be deemed to satisfy a requirement for a clear opening width of 775mm.

Private stairs and changes of level within the entrance storey

116 To provide easy access between rooms on the entrance storey, a stepped change of level within the entrance storey should be avoided where possible. If internal steps or stairs on the entrance level are unavoidable, they should comply with the provisions of Part K.

Sanitary facilities

HM Government

The Building Regulations 2010

Access to and use of buildings

M

APPROVED DOCUMENT

Volume 1: Dwellings

M4(1) Category 1: Visitable dwellings
 M4(2) Category 2: Accessible and adaptable dwellings
 M4(3) Category 3: Wheelchair user dwellings

2015 edition incorporating 2016 amendments – for use in England*

Sanitary facilities

room and shower room should be...
 ations that could impose a load of up to...
 ed to comply with this guidance need

stable for many types of adaptations but...
 ations are fitted that impose high point

venient for some wheelchair users...
 elling should comply with all of the

that provides a WC and basin (which may

rooms, the WC (together with its...
 Diagram 1.3 and the basin does not

bedrooms, the room with the WC and...
 a potential level access shower, and the...
 clear access zones) meet the provisions...
 shown in Diagram 2.6.

Building for the Future

7.4 Secured by Design

The utilisation of Secured by Design principles as a fundamental part of the design process ensures that the proposals meet best practice for crime prevention.

The proposals can be submitted to the local Crime Prevention Design Adviser during the application process to understand thoughts on the layout and 'macro' issues regarding community safety around the site, such as active frontage, natural surveillance, boundary treatments.

National Guidance

The attributes of sustainable communities are identified which are of particular relevance to crime prevention within Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention. These attributes and how the development of the site responds are set out below:

Access and Movement

The development will achieve safer access and movement by ensuring that primary routes for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles are direct and lead to where people want to go, with as little segregation as possible. Where footpaths are required, they are as straight and wide as possible and overlooked by surrounding buildings.

The movement framework is based upon a pattern of streets and shared spaces, removing the need for underused alleyways, short-cuts, footpaths and a large number of minor access points that can become vulnerable to, or facilitate crime.

Structure

The development is structured to give careful consideration to the relationship between existing dwellings with the proposed new houses.

As few as possible sides of the buildings will be exposed to the public realm. Active frontages will be provided onto streets a movement framework that focuses people and vehicles on to well defined routes. Defensible space will be provided by private or communal gardens that can only be accessed from the surrounding buildings.

Continuous frontages will also reduce the opportunities for graffiti on blank façades, such as gable ends.

Surveillance

Spaces will be overlooked by buildings or uses, with windows and doors facing onto the street where possible to create an active frontage with surveillance.

Ownership

A clear distinction will be provided between public, semiprivate/communal and private spaces. This is achieved using appropriate demarcation such as fences walls or hedges. Careful selection of these demarcations is proposed in order to achieve the appropriate aesthetic and feel for an area.

High fences, walls and landscape treatment that actively impede access are most appropriate in places that are vulnerable to crime, such as the back

of dwellings, and have been provided accordingly. Railings and hedges will be used to signify the public / private divide.

Physical Protection

These security measures will be installed without compromising the quality of the local environment. Crime prevention measures that adversely affect the way a place looks and feels can undermine the aim of safe and sustainable communities.

Measures, such as grilles and barbed wire, are often unattractive and increase the fear of crime by suggesting that an area is unsafe.

The main aim for the development is to plan in security from the outset.

Activity

The public realm will be designed to ensure it is well overlooked by the surrounding properties, with habitable room windows ensuring surveillance throughout the day.



Building for the Future

7.5 National Design Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that creating high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.

The National Design Guide illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice. It forms part of the Government's collection of planning practice guidance and should be read alongside the separate planning practice guidance on design process and tools.

The National Design Guide sets out ten characteristics which are based on national planning policy, practice guidance and objectives for good design as shown in the National Planning Policy Framework.

The ten characteristics are described opposite.



THE TEN CHARACTERISTICS

OUR RESPONSES

Context

- Understand and relate well to the site, its local and wider context
- Value heritage, local history and culture

Section 2 of this DAS provides a detailed analysis of the surrounding context of Saffron Walden.

Identity

- Respond to existing local character and identity
- Well-designed, high quality and attractive
- Create character and identity

The Design Code submitted with the planning application proposes how the new development should reference the local character to provide the new development with a sense of identity.

Built Form

- Compact form of development
- Appropriate building types and forms
- Destinations

The Illustrative Masterplan in section 6 proposes buildings across the site that are suitable to the environment and the proposed new spaces that are being created. The Design Code also provides guidance on what types of buildings are suitable within each character area.

Movement

- An integrated network of routes for all modes of transport
- A clear structure and hierarchy of connected streets
- Well-considered parking, servicing and utilities infrastructure for all users

Section 2 of this DAS provides an overview of the existing routes around the site, and the proposals in sections 5 & 6 illustrate how a proposed movement framework can work through the development.

Nature

- Provide high quality, green open spaces with a variety of landscapes and activities, including play
- Improve and enhance water management
- Support rich and varied biodiversity

The Framework masterplan illustrated in sections 4 & 5 is set around a series of strategic open spaces that link with the adjacent existing public open space and routes. The Green Infrastructure parameter plan safeguards these spaces, around which the new development can be set.

Building for the Future

7.5 National Design Guidance

THE TEN CHARACTERISTICS

OUR RESPONSES

Uses

- A mix of uses
- A mix of home tenures, types and sizes
- Socially inclusive

The site is proposed for residential use only, however there is a range of local facilities on the opposite side of Thaxted Road including a supermarket, and directly adjacent to the site is the local leisure centre and play facilities. A good range of new homes is proposed however the masterplan proposed in section 6 is illustrative only.

Homes & Buildings

- Healthy, comfortable and safe internal and external environment
- Well-related to external amenity and public spaces
- Attention to detail: storage, waste, servicing and utilities

The Framework masterplan ensures new development is set around to a series of strategic open spaces and other routes through the site provide safe and well overlooked spaces around which collections of new homes can be created. Internal layouts will be assessed at Reserved Matters stage.

Resources

- Follow the energy hierarchy
- Selection of materials and construction techniques
- Maximise resilience

An Energy and Sustainability Strategy is provided with the planning application which outlines what options are available to the new development and how at Outline level the masterplan provides opportunities for sustainable ideals.

Lifespan

- Well-managed and maintained
- Adaptable to changing needs and evolving technologies
- A sense of ownership

Section 7 of this DAS and sections within the Design Code also submitted with the planning application provides some guidance on how the new buildings should be designed to allow for adaption in the future to meet local and national requirements.

Public Spaces

- Create well-located, high quality and attractive public spaces
- Provide well-designed spaces that are safe
- Make sure public spaces support social interaction

The open space strategy within the DAS and Design Code provides guidance on how the spaces could be designed as part of the illustrative masterplan, and ensure the spaces interact well with the surrounding new homes.




Building for the Future

7.6 Compliance with Uttlesford Building for Healthy Life

The masterplan has been design to advocate the aspirations set out in 'Uttlesford Building for Healthy Life' produced in 2021 by Design for Homes in partnership with Homes England, NHS England and NHS Improvement. The considerations of this document have been at the forefront of the Vision for Saffron Walden as set out at the start of this DAS, and as such the design has acknowledged the aspirations of BfHL throughout its evolution.

An assessment of the 12 BfHL criteria has been conducted as follows:


Integrated Neighbourhoods

Integrating into the Neighbourhood	Evaluation	Evidence	Score
<p>1. Natural Connections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look beyond the red line that marks the extent of your site. Ordnance Survey maps along with satellite mapping software such as Google Earth are useful tools to help you understand the wider context and how you can best stitch a new development into a place. Identify the places, facilities and services you need to connect to. Draw points of connection into and through your site - creating a strong and direct street, path and open space network. Create well-connected street and path networks, providing opportunities for these to be extended beyond the site boundary in the future. Research and respond to how water flows and nature moves across your site and the wider surroundings. 	<p>A detailed analysis of the surrounding context of Saffron Walden has been conducted and included with this DAS. This outlines local amenities, existing routes, and a character study of the local area. The proposals in the Framework Masterplan and Illustrative Masterplan seek to provide direct routes connecting with access points that link the surrounding local context.</p>	<p>Section 2 Site Context Section 4 Design Evolution Section 5 Design Parameters Section 6 Illustrative Proposals</p>	
<p>2. Walking, Cycling and Public Transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cycle and walk the neighbourhood to understand where off-site interventions will be most useful. Local residents and councillors can help you understand where investment in improvements to pedestrian and cycle infrastructure might have most impact. Invite people to cycle within the site and beyond to destinations within at least a three mile radius; with routes through green spaces, quiet streets alongside prioritised and protected routes on busy streets, junctions and roads. If there is an existing protected cycle network, connect to it. Alternatively, begin a new one by building or funding routes to key destinations. Ensure access for all and help make walking feel like an instinctive choice for everyone undertaking short journeys (such as the school run or older generations accessing local facilities and services). Streets and paths that connect people to places and public transport services in the most direct way, making car-free travel more attractive, safe and convenient. Make sure that all streets and routes pass in front of people's homes rather than to the back of them – creating a well overlooked public realm. Exploit existing (or planned) public transport hubs, such as train stations and bus interchanges, to build at higher densities and channel a higher percentage of journeys to public transport. 	<p>The proposals in the Framework Masterplan and Illustrative Masterplan seek to provide direct routes connecting with access points that link the surrounding local context. A route hierarchy has been proposed within the Framework Masterplan and supported by the Design Code that places walking and cycling routes at the highest level of priority within the design of the site. The proposals also allow for the integration of the proposed future Saffron Walden Orbital Greenway.</p>	<p>Section 2 Site Context Section 3 Site Assessment Section 4 Design Evolution Section 5 Design Parameters Section 6 Illustrative Proposals Design Code</p>	
<p>3. Facilities and Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developments that provide community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, health facilities, co-working spaces, parks, play spaces, cafés and other meeting places that respond to local community needs. Locate any new facilities in the best location for those walking, cycling and using public transport. Consider whether improving existing facilities will add more value to the local community than adding new ones. Assess or identify what sport and leisure provision there is for people of all ages, paying particular attention to the needs of children, teenagers and older people. Create places where people can meet each other such as public spaces, leisure facilities, community buildings, cafes and restaurants to provide opportunities for social interaction – helping to improve public health by encouraging physical activity and helping to tackle those affected by loneliness and isolation. 'Play on the way' can make car-free trips more fun for children making them want to walk or cycle to school. Sustainable drainage schemes that contribute towards an attractive and accessible network of streets and public spaces. 	<p>As mentioned above, walking and cycling routes have been designed as the highest level of priority within the design of the site to promote use of healthy modes of transport. These routes allow for direct movement through the site to the surrounding existing local facilities; Knights Park retail park on Thaxted Road, Lord Butler Fitness & Leisure Centre adjacent to the northern corner of the site, and Katherine Semar Junior School and Meadows Montessori Nursery to the west of the site.</p>	<p>Section 2 Site Context Section 5 Design Parameters Section 6 Illustrative Proposals Design Code</p>	


Building for the Future

7.6 Compliance with Uttlesford Building for Healthy Life

Integrated Neighbourhoods




Integrating into the Neighbourhood	Evaluation	Evidence	Score
<p>4. Homes for Everyone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A mix of housing types and tenures that suit the needs of the local community. This may include first time buyer homes, family homes, homes for those downsizing and supported living. • Maximising the opportunities offered by supported accommodation, placing these homes at the heart of new developments above active ground floor uses such as shops, community facilities and pre-schools.¹¹ • Offering people access to at least some private outdoor space. This is particularly important for people's mental health and well being especially when social distancing and travel restrictions are in place. 	<p>The new homes will be designed in detail at Reserved Matters stage however the illustrative masterplan proposes a layout and mix of units that is felt appropriate for current local need and also to reflect the setting of the site. All properties would be provided with private outdoor space, including apartment blocks which are all set around the strategic open spaces and provide positive outlook onto these spaces.</p>	<p>Section 6 Illustrative Proposals Design Code</p>	

Distinctive Places

Creating a Place	Evaluation	Evidence	Score
<p>5. Making the Most of What's There</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow time for good design, walk the site and the surroundings with the local planning authority. Discuss, understand and agree opportunities and constraints building a shared vision that makes use of the topography and other existing assets on and beyond the site. • Explore conceptual ideas before settling on an agreed way forward and producing a site layout. For instance, if there are existing site features explore how these might be best integrated into a place. • Identify any visual connections into, out, through and beyond the site. • Work with the contours of the land. • Understand how water flows across and pools on the site. Explore how water can be used to enhance biodiversity, create character and improve people's sense of well being. • Draw all these considerations together to get the street, block and open space structure right from the start (a framework or concept plan). • Consider opportunities for natural lighting, cooling and ventilation. Take care not to compromise important urban design principles such as perimeter block structure. • Identify opportunities to integrate and reuse existing features of value, these might be natural or man made, on or beyond the site. • Be careful that hedges are not simply retained and prevent a sensible and practical new development layout. It may be more effective to create and plant new hedgerows and tree belts into development proposals than work around existing hedges. A well thought out approach may even increase habitat and biodiversity. • Be sensitive to existing development but avoid creating buffer spaces between existing and new back gardens. • Using the landform and ground conditions (soil) in a considered way. For instance, low-nutrient subsoils are ideal to put to one side if you wish to establish wildflower meadows rather than importing new topsoil. 	<p>A detailed study of the site has been conducted which fed into the development of a concept plan outlining the key aspirations for the new development. This then informed a series of Framework Plans which reviewed alternative ways to design the site, allowing the design team to come to a conclusion on which option was best to deliver the aspirations for the site. It is felt this plan provides a good base for future Reserved Matters applications to design the more detailed elements of the scheme.</p>	<p>Section 2 Site Context Section 3 Site Assessment Section 4 Design Evolution Section 5 Design Parameters Section 6 Illustrative Proposals</p>	

Building for the Future

7.6 Compliance with Uttlesford Building for Healthy Life

Creating a Place	Evaluation	Evidence	Score
<p>6. Memorable Character</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character. • Review the wider area for sources of inspiration. If distinctive local characteristics exist, delve deeper than architectural style and details. Where the local context is poor or generic, do not use this as a justification for more of the same. Inspiration may be found in local history and culture. • Understand where positive local character comes from: streets, blocks and plots (urban grain), green and blue infrastructure, land uses, building form, massing and materials often underpin the essence of the distinctive character of settlements rather than architectural style and details. • Using a local materials palette (where appropriate) can be a particularly effective way to connect a development to a place. This is often more achievable and credible than mimicking traditional architectural detailing which can be dependent on lost crafts. • Brownfield sites can offer sources of inspiration for new development. Greenfield and edge of settlement locations often require more creativity and inspiration to avoid creating places that lack a sense of local or otherwise distinctive character. • Character can also be created through the social life of public spaces. Create the physical conditions for activity to happen and bring places to life. 	<p>A character study of Saffron Walden has been conducted as part of the assessment of the local and surrounding context which provides an understanding on local character and identity. The Design Code then outlines how the local materials and features can inform the design and choice of colour and materials within the proposed new development.</p>	<p>Section 2 Site Context Section 3 Site Assessment Section 6 Illustrative Proposals Design Code</p>	
<p>7. Well Defined Streets and Spaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strong framework of connected and well overlooked streets and spaces. • Look beyond the plan and illustrative street scenes; what will you actually see and experience walking along the street? • Perimeter blocks with clearly defined public fronts and private backs. • Active frontages. Front doors, balconies, terraces, front gardens and bay windows are a good way to enliven and add interest to the street and create a more human scale to larger buildings such as apartments and supported living accommodation. • Carefully considered street corners. • Three dimensional models (physical or computer generated) and simple, hand drawn street cross sections can be particularly useful tools to understand and test the spatial qualities of a place. 	<p>A route hierarchy has been established within the Framework Masterplan that seeks to ensure a well thought out series of streets and spaces that have a hierarchy in order to convey differing character. All blocks around these routes have been designed as perimeter blocks with outward facing homes, except where there is reasoning for not doing this due to the sites current features. A 3D model and sketch vignettes have been produced to help design the key spaces around the development.</p>	<p>Section 4 Design Evolution Section 5 Design Parameters Section 6 Illustrative Proposals Design Code</p>	
<p>8. Easy to Find Your Way Around</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streets that connect with one another. • Streets that are as straight and as direct as possible. • Use street types, buildings, spaces, non-residential uses, landscape, water and other features to help people create a 'mental map' of a place. • Streets with clearly different characters are more effective than 'character areas' in helping people grasp whether they are on a principal or secondary street. • For larger sites, it will be necessary to use streets and spaces with different characters to help people to find their way around. 	<p>A clear route hierarchy that provides differing character to the streets has been set in place within the Framework Masterplan. Direct routes have been incorporated where possible, except where the topography requires a different approach, in particular to the western part of the site – however here direct pedestrian/cycle routes have been provided along the edges of the development away from the main road.</p>	<p>Section 4 Design Evolution Section 5 Design Parameters Section 6 Illustrative Proposals Design Code</p>	

Building for the Future

7.6 Compliance with Uttlesford Building for Healthy Life

Streets for All

Street & Homes

9. Healthy Streets

- Low-speed streets and neighbourhoods with pedestrian and cycle priority.
- The right balance between movement and place functions.
- Rethinking the way we distribute street space. At times of more relaxed social distancing, demand for better quality cycle provision is expected to increase as public transport capacity reduces. Congestion caused by motor vehicles will make it unattractive for people to switch from public transport to cars creating a unique opportunity to change the way we move around our cities, towns and villages.
- Healthy streets improve people's physical and mental health. Encouraging walking, cycling, outdoor play and streets where it is safe for younger children to cycle (or scooter) to school can create opportunities for social interaction and street life bringing wider social benefits.
- Street trees.
- Avoid streets that are just designed as routes for motor vehicles to pass through and for cars to park within.
- Boulevards and streets with active edges rather than distributor roads and bypasses with no (or limited) frontage access.
- Streets that are easy to cross; providing priority for pedestrians and cyclists across junctions and accesses.
- Well overlooked streets with front doors facing streets and public spaces.
- Provide conditions for cycling appropriate to the speed and volume of motor traffic.
- Inclusive design: think about how people with visual, mobility or other limitations will be able to use the street confidently and safely.

10. Cycle and Car Parking

- Provide secure cycle storage close to people's front doors so that cycles are as convenient to choose as a car for short trips.
- Integration of car parking into the street environment.
- Anticipate realistic levels of car parking demand, guarding against displaced and anti-social parking; thinking about the availability and frequency of public transport.
- Avoid confusing car ownership with car usage.
- Creative solutions for attractive, convenient and safe cycle parking or higher density developments (such as apartment buildings).
- Generous landscaping to settle frontage car parking into the street.
- Shared and unallocated parking

11. Green and Blue Infrastructure

- Create a strong landscape strategy that has impact from 'day one'. Don't 'layer' landscape onto a scheme at the end of the process. Landscape changes can offer opportunities to reintroduce lost habitats and species.
- Create a network of different types of spaces.
- Weave opportunities for habitat creation throughout the development. Plan these as movement corridors to support biodiversity.
- Create food growing opportunities such as allotments and orchards on larger developments.
- Have a sustainable drainage 'treatment train' thinking about the 'four pillars'. Capture water as close as possible to where it falls. Be creative with rain gardens, ponds and swales and avoid steeply sided or fenced holes in the ground.
- Well-designed multi-functional sustainable drainage will incorporate play and recreational opportunities.
- Well-overlooked public open spaces with strong levels of natural surveillance.
- Robust management and long term stewardship.

Evaluation

One of the key design features for the site is the Green Corridor which extends from the Thaxted Meadows arrival space into the centre of the development. This will be a car free route set alongside existing landscape features, with the new buildings designed to overlook and provide direct access and frontage onto the route. Further west, there are linear pedestrian/cycle routes been provided along the edges of the development adjacent to the existing hedgerows, which provide a safe passage between the new and existing public open spaces around this part of the site.

Proposals for cycle parking will be dealt with at Reserved Matters stage, however the Design Code provides guidance on how this should be addressed. The Code also provides guidance on how car parking should be integrated within the design of the development, and the illustrative masterplan indicates how this can be achieved. In particular, the provision of visitor parking within linear spaces across the development designed sensitively within the landscape environment.

The landscape strategy for the development is clear and is the key driver for the design of the Framework Masterplan. The series of strategic open spaces at the arrival to the site, centre of the site, and upper level of the site are all linked via the aforementioned pedestrian and cycle links and also form a direct connection with the existing public open space that extends along the northern corridor of the site. The central open space also forms a green link between this existing open space and the hedgerow extending south along the boundary from the centre of the site.

Evidence

Section 4 Design Evolution
Section 5 Design Parameters
Section 6 Illustrative Proposals
Design Code

Section 5 Design Parameters
Section 6 Illustrative Proposals
Design Code


Section 5 Design Parameters
Section 6 Illustrative Proposals
Design Code

Score



Building for the Future

7.6 Compliance with Uttlesford Building for Healthy Life

Street & Homes	Evaluation	Evidence	Score
<p>12. Back of Pavement, Front of Home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly define private spaces through strong boundary treatments. Manage changes in level in a way that does not compromise the qualities of the street. Design the space between the back of the pavement and building façades carefully to integrate services, waste storage and utilities cabinets (meter boxes) so their impact is reduced. Avoid pieces of 'leftover' land that serve no useful public or private function. Homes with shallow street backs need careful thought as it is not uncommon to see these spaces poorly resolved with small pieces of grass turf or gravel. Outdoor amenity space for apartment buildings, such as a balcony for relaxing or the drying of clothes. 	<p>The detailed design of the streets and buildings will be undertaken at Reserved Matters stage, however the Design Code provides guidance on how these streets should be designed and the interaction with new homes. The differing levels across the site have been considered and the Design Code includes a section on this in chapter 4 providing guidance on how good design can ensure level changes can be designed into the scheme as positive features.</p>	<p>Section 4 Design Evolution Section 5 Design Parameters Section 6 Illustrative Proposals Design Code</p>	



Artist Impression of Proposed Development



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