

# LAND AT MOORS FIELD, STATION ROAD, LITTLE DUNMOW

BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE

DANDARA EASTERN

JULY 2023

PREPARED BY PEGASUS GROUP



Building  
For a  
Healthy  
Life

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July 2023

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# BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE STATEMENT

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# INTRODUCTION

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BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE STATEMENT  
JULY 2023

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**INTRODUCTION**

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**PURPOSE OF STATEMENT**  
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Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) is a Design Code to help improve the design of new and growing neighbourhoods. It has been created for the use of a range of stakeholders, including local communities, local councillors, developers and local authorities. This allows them to focus on the factors that are most important in helping create good places to live.

Building for a Healthy Life is organised across three key themes, covering 12 considerations for high quality design and placemaking. These 12 considerations move away from the 12 questions in Building for Life 12, as questions demand a quick response where good design requires more time and thought. These considerations are effective when discussed at the start of the design process, helping to set high standards of design from the beginning.

## **INTEGRATED NEIGHBOURHOODS**

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NATURAL CONNECTIONS

WALKING, CYCLING AND PUBLIC  
TRANSPORT

FACILITIES AND SERVICES

HOMES FOR EVERYONE

## **DISTINCTIVE PLACES**

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MAKING THE MOST OF WHAT'S  
THERE

A MEMORABLE CHARACTER

WELL DEFINED STREETS AND SPACES

EASY TO FIND YOUR WAY AROUND

## **STREETS FOR ALL**

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HEALTHY STREETS

CYCLE AND CAR PARKING

GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

BACK OF PAVEMENT, FRONT OF HOME

# / INTRODUCTION

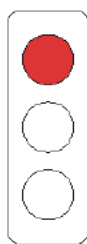
## ACHIEVING THE BEST OUTCOME

Building for a Healthy Life is a design process structure rather than a scoring system. Examples of good practice are highlighted by a green light, whilst poor practice is highlighted with a red light and needs to be reconsidered. An amber light is assigned to an element of design where it falls between a green and red light. Where an amber light is assigned, it highlights the potential to rethink and redesign the particular aspect in order to achieve a more positive outcome. However, in some cases an amber light cannot be avoided due to circumstances beyond the control of the local authority and/or the developer.

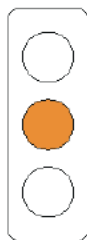
The objective is to:

- Secure as many 'greens' as possible,
- Minimise the number of 'ambers' and;
- Avoid 'reds'.

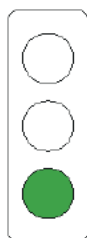
The more green lights secured, the better the proposed development will be.



**RED:** STOP AND RETHINK



**AMBER:** TRY AND TURN INTO GREEN



**GREEN:** GO AHEAD

The relationship between Building for a Healthy Life, the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Design Guide:

Integrated Neighbourhoods	National Planning Policy Framework	National Design Guide
Natural connections	91a; 102c; 102e; 104d; 127b; 127f	B3; M1; M2; N1; R3
Walking, cycling and public transport	20c; 91a; 91c; 127e	B1; B3; M1; R3
Facilities and services	102; 103	B1; B3; N1; P3; U1; U3
Homes for everyone	60-62	B1; B2; U2; U3
<b>Distinctive Places</b>		
Making the most of what's there	122d; 127c; 127d; 153b; 184	C1; C2; I1; B2; R3
A memorable character	122d; 127c; 127d	C2; I1; I2; I3; B3
Well defined streets and spaces	91a	B2; M2; N2; N3; P1; P2; H2; L3
Easy to find your way around	91b; 127b	I1; M1; M2; U1
<b>Streets for all</b>		
Healthy streets	91b; 102c; 102e; 110a-d	M1; M2; N3; P1; P2; P3; H1; H2
Cycle and car parking	101e; 127f; 105d	B2; M1; M3
Green and blue infrastructure	20d; 91b; 91c; 127f; 155; 170d; 174	C1; B3; M1; N1-3; P1; P3; H1; R3; L1



## PUTTING HEALTH INTO PLACE

There is an increasing emphasis on addressing the role that the built environment has on people’s health and wellbeing as part of what is called a ‘whole systems’ approach.

As part of the Healthy New Towns z led by NHS England, NHS Improvement, Public Health England and partners, ten demonstrator sites across England explored how healthy placemaking can be achieved. This resulted in a series of publications that present ten principles that show how healthier places can be planned and designed, creating new ways if providing integrated and health care services. These ten principles are embedded within BHL.

The publications:



Source: [england.nhs.uk/publications/putting-health-into-place](http://england.nhs.uk/publications/putting-health-into-place)

### THE 10 ‘PUTTING HEALTH INTO PLACE’ PRINCIPLES:

#### Plan, Assess and Involve:

1. Plan ahead collectively
2. Assess local health and care needs and assets
3. Connect involve and empower people and communities

#### Design, Deliver and Manage:

4. Create compact neighbourhoods
5. Maximise active travel
6. Inspire and enable healthy eating
7. Foster health in homes and buildings
8. Enable healthy play and leisure

#### Develop and Provide Health Care Services:

9. Develop health services that help people to stay well
10. Create integrated health and wellbeing centres





Poundhill

Pond

Brambles House

Sinks

The Moors

Bright's Cottage

The Cottage

Willow Cottage

MOORS LANE

Lay-by

Burgess Cottages

Pound Hill Villas

Track

Drainage position 4bc

136 107 108 109  
 127 131 131 132  
 128 128 133  
 104 111 112 113 114 115  
 103 103 104 105 106 107 108 109  
 118 119 120 121 122  
 118 119 120 121 122  
 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84  
 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84  
 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70  
 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84

Issues

The Moors

Drainage position 4bc

SUCS Plans  
before any approvals  
drawings for setting  
out and details

Proposed Site layout  
P23-0555\_DE\_003



# SECTION 01

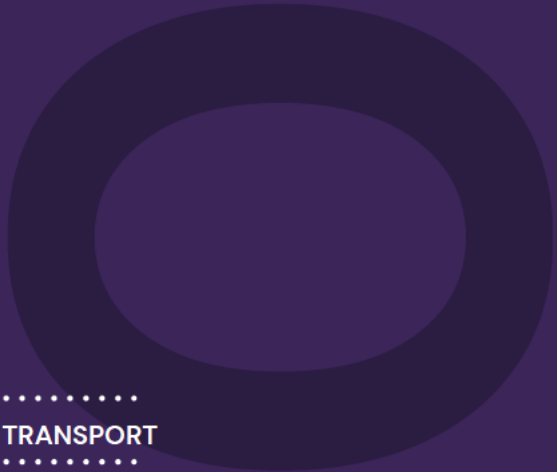
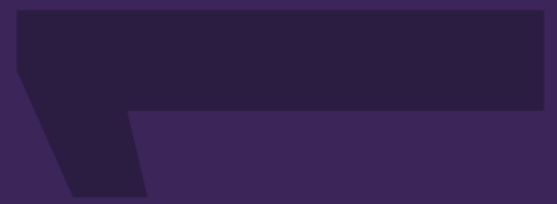
## INTEGRATED NEIGHBOURHOODS

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BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE STATEMENT  
JULY 2023



# 01



## SECTION 01



- Q1 NATURAL CONNECTIONS .....
- Q2 WALKING, CYCLING AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT .....
- Q3 FACILITIES AND SERVICES .....
- Q4 HOMES FOR EVERYONE .....

# 1 / NATURAL CONNECTIONS

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Create places that are well integrated into the site and their wider natural and built surroundings. Avoid creating isolated and disconnected places that are not easy places to move through and around.

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What's needed:

- 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 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.

The proposed development is effectively integrated into the site and the wider natural and built surroundings. A new spine road and network of subsidiary roads serve the site, leading to multiple points of pedestrian access at the site boundaries. This will be beneficial to the wider area as it will increase permeability and reduce dependence on Station Road for connectivity.

The two green corridors running North-South and East-West along with a 'blue' corridor running North-South, are central to the proposals and have been a key influence in the design evolution. They will facilitate the movement of both existing and future residents between the surrounding context. Furthermore, they will function as wildlife corridors to retain and enhance existing wildlife movement networks. As a result of the extensive footpath and route network permeating throughout the proposed development, existing desire lines for people and nature will be retained and enhanced.

The proposed route network will also benefit from filtered permeability, whereby vehicles will have limited access to the abundance of routes, whilst pedestrians have unrestricted access. The southern section of the site will remain as a biodiversity hotspot with a strong and undisturbed relationship with the existing Moors habitat.

## 1 Natural connections

The proposed development contains a strong and direct route network that is responsive to the site's surroundings. The proposed road network will ease pedestrian use on Station Road whilst providing direct connections through the site to surrounding areas. Furthermore, the large green corridors provide strong natural connections between the northern boundary and the existing and proposed habitat areas to the south. The effective integration with surrounding route networks ensures the site will reinforce existing movement patterns for wildlife as well as existing and future residents.



## 2 / WALKING, CYCLING AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

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Short trips of up to three miles can be easily made on foot or bicycle if the right infrastructure is in place, helping to improve public health and air quality whilst also reducing local congestion and carbon emissions.

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What's needed:

- 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.



Sustainable transport and active travel will be promoted under the proposals. The proposed road network and primary access point will create a strong connection with Station Road. Bus stops are easily accessible from the site along Station Road via new pedestrian links to the proposals site boundaries. This integration with the bus network will encourage sustainable travel for medium-to-long distance journeys. For shorter journeys, the extensive footpath network and the interconnected north-south and east-west footway connections will encourage active travel to surrounding areas due to their effective integration into the wider site and contextual route network.

In addition to the convenience and connectivity of these routes, they are also attractive and safe. The tree lined avenue-style link road and the delicately landscaped green corridors will provide pleasant and relaxing routes for existing and future residents to use.

Segregated footpaths, in addition to the use of Dutch-style road crossings, will ensure pedestrian and cyclist safety is prioritised throughout the site. The effective use of perimeter blocks and the extensive active frontage throughout the streetscape will offer a strong sense of natural surveillance throughout the route network. This will further increase the safety of these routes, maximising their usability. Further information can be found in the 'Wayfinding and Cycle Strategy'.

## 2 Walking, cycling and public transport

The extensive network of routes within the proposed development provides a variety of attractive options for active travel. These include an integrated and extensive network of footpaths as well as the integration of the site with the wider bus network.

Extensive natural surveillance and numerous traffic calming measures, including Dutch-style road crossings, will maximise the safety of the route network and further encourage active travel.



# 3 / FACILITIES AND SERVICES

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Places that offer social, leisure and recreational opportunities a short walk or cycle from their homes.

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What's needed:

- 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.

The site is effectively integrated with nearby facilities as the proposed green corridors and footways provide cycle and pedestrian connections to Station Road at multiple points around the site, providing easier connect to the services such as the food retail shop contained within the adjacent housing development. Around the site there is a variety of facilities and services, many of which will be comfortably within walking and cycling distance due to the proposed footway links. These include St Mary the Virgin Church, Coop convenience store and The Flitch and Bacon restaurant.

Slightly further afield, although still within 1mile and walking (20 mins) and cycling (5 mins) distance, are further facilities and services within the village of Felsted and includes numerous food and drink establishments, as well as primary and secondary schools and sports centres.

Within the site itself, a childrens playground will be provided within the northern open space. This will provide recreational opportunities for children within immediate proximity to the family homes. This is in addition to an expansive network of public spaces to be provided, including a community allotment, within and surrounding the development that provide opportunities for residents to meet and relax, as well as the potential to grow their own produce to minimise reliance on travelling to shops.

### 3 Facilities and services

The proposed development will have strong connections to the abundance of facilities and services around Dunmow and Felsted. Therefore, future residents will be able to access schools, shops, restaurants, pubs, places of worship, medical centres and more within walking and cycling distance.

A childrens playground and a hierarchy of public spaces are included wihtin the proposed development to provide places for meeting, resting, movement and relaxation within the site.



# 4 / HOMES FOR EVERYONE

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## A range of homes that meet local community needs.

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### What's needed:

- 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.
- Offering people access to at least some private outdoor space. This is particularly important for people's mental health and wellbeing especially when social distancing and travel restrictions are in place.

The proposed development will include a wide variety of housing types to attract a diverse range of residents. Overlooking the open spaces to the North and West will predominantly be large detached family homes. These are aimed at families who will be able to provide a safe and healthy space for their children to grow up, with close contact with nature in both the private gardens and public open space. Densities within the urban cores of the development parcels will generally be higher and will include both detached and semi-detached housing, however a large portion will still overlook the green corridors running through the site and the open space feature to the south. These range from 2-bed to 4-bed houses and will cater to anyone from young couples and first time buyers to families. Small 1 and 2 bed flats will also be provided for single occupancy provision, while a range of bungalows are also provided including full wheelchair/M4(3) compliant provision.

This variety in housing types will mean there are options to suit various budgets and, as a result, it will significantly contribute to meeting housing demand in the area.

In addition to the wide range of house types and sizes, the site also includes for the local authority stipulated 40% affordable provision. These dwellings will be tenure blind to avoid and disparity in housetype.

#### 4 Homes for everyone

A variety of house types and sizes will be provided, supplemented by a large affordable housing allocation, attracting a range of residents from large families to young couples. There will be options to suit differing budgets and attract a diversity of residents. As a result, this will add to the diversity of the local population. All houses will benefit from private outdoor space in addition to the vast open space included within the proposals.



# SECTION

# 02

## DISTINCTIVE PLACES

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BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE STATEMENT  
JUNE 2022

# 02

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## DISTINCTIVE PLACES

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Q5 MAKING THE MOST OF WHAT'S THERE  
.....

Q6 CHARACTER  
.....

Q7 CREATING WELL DEFINED STREETS AND SPACES  
.....

Q8 EASY TO FIND YOUR WAY AROUND?  
.....

# 5 / MAKING THE MOST OF WHAT'S THERE

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## Understand and respond to local context.

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### What's needed:

- 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 wellbeing.
- 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.



The development proposals not only capitalise on the existing content and context of the site and surrounding area, but actually retain, enhance and utilise it, whilst sensitively integrating with the landscape and adjacent settlements. Over 60% of the development site is retained and improved open space, which wraps around all but one side of the development houses, with the layout designed so that dwellings overlook this natural vista wherever possible.

Green corridors have been utilised to wayfind through the site to the existing Moors landscape feature, while wider footpath and cycleways have been provided to link through the open spaces retained.

Site levels have been utilised to ensure surface and drainage water flows south towards the new SUDS feature ponds at the south of the site, while integrated swales provide additional storage within a north-south 'blue' corridor which will provide further ecological benefit.

While not a feature that is generally desirable to be retained on a site, the development has also been designed around an existing drain that runs through the site from north-south. Its retention within the proposals should be considered a sustainable option to the alternative of diversion at huge cost and energy.

A couple of trees and a small section of hedge needs to be removed to facilitate the development, however, in addition to the abundant existing open space to be retained and improved an extensive landscaping strategy will be implemented that will incorporate native as well as non-native species to replace any removed vegetation.

The proposed development reacts appropriately to surrounding developments, with large landscape and open space provision created to enhance green corridor links between them, while building heights and densities are also respected within the proposal. The result is a seamless integration with surrounding built form.

## 5 Making the most of what's there

On site constraints are incorporated within the scheme effectively, to avoid unsustainable removal/diversion. Existing landscape features such as The Moors are also retained and enhanced with an abundance of diverse open space provision. Existing connections through and around the site are retained and further enhanced with footpath and cycle links included as part of the landscape strategy, while the layout has been designed to take advantage of the site topography to aid sustainable drainage. A narrow stretch of landscape provided between existing and proposed rear gardens in line with an approved outline masterplan creates a potentially undesirable buffer space and is the only reason for an amber designation.



# 6 / A MEMORABLE CHARACTER

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## Create places that are memorable.

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### What's needed:

- 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.

The scheme had a relatively detailed Design Code document approved as part of the outline permission which contained within it, amongst other elements, detailed descriptions for what materials/styles should be provided within pre-defined character areas, therefore the proposals reflect this to ensure the dwelling styles and overall character of the site align with what is already approved by the local authority..

The local character of both the landscape and built form within the local area has been respected and enhanced within the proposals. The low to medium densities and 2 and 2.5 storey building heights provide a seamless transition with surrounding development, maintaining the character created by the existing built form. Variations in building materials, including brick and a palette of muted render colours, with stone details have been used on the housing to respect the varying materials used in surrounding development.

The landscape character will also be respected and enhanced under the proposed development. The proposed layout has been designed around open space, with as many dwellings overlooking open space as possible. The green corridors will allow views through the site both north-south and east-west, to maintain vistas to existing and proposed landscape features in and around the site. The retention and additional planting of native vegetation species will contribute towards maintaining local character, whilst planting of non-native species will enhance and distinguish this character.

## 6 A memorable character

The proposed built form will effectively build on existing character through the smooth transition in building heights and densities. Furthermore, the choice of architectural materials will reflect elements of local character. A strong emphasis has been put on landscape character within the proposals, with the extensive landscaping scheme helping to create a distinguishable character within the proposed development.



# 7 / WELL DEFINED STREETS AND SPACES

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Create a network of streets and spaces that are well enclosed by buildings and/or structural landscaping, taking care to ensure that front doors and the principal facades of buildings face streets and public spaces.

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What's needed:

- 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.

The proposed development incorporates a network of safe and attractive streets and spaces. Throughout the proposed development, the built form creates the space between the buildings rather than a highway-led approach. This has resulted in a functional layout where all open spaces are overlooked and safe. The use of perimeter blocks generates extensive active frontage along the routes, providing them with significant natural surveillance. Dual aspect homes will be used on corners where possible to maintain this natural surveillance and the positive interaction between the public and private realm. These design considerations are effective in deterring any anti-social behaviour and securing the safety of the streets and open spaces. This extensive frontage, combined with continuity in the building line, generates a strong sense of enclosure. As a result, there is an intimate and human-scaled feel throughout the network of streets and open spaces.

Many of the routes, including the green corridors, respect the views towards existing and proposed open space features. This uniquely defines the streets, aids way-finding and contributes towards the placemaking throughout the site.

## 7 Creating well defined streets and spaces.

The effective use of perimeter blocks will contribute towards a network of enclosed and human-scaled streets and open spaces. The extensive frontage will offer a strong element of natural surveillance in order to deter anti-social behaviour and secure the safety of the spaces. Strong emphasis is placed on making streets as green as possible with tree lined verges and green corridors defining key routes.



# 8 / EASY TO FIND YOUR WAY AROUND

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Use legible features to help people find their way around a place.

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What's needed:

- 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.

Legibility is central to the design proposals, which promote the ease of navigation for both existing and future residents. The geography of the site is capitalised upon with attractive views and vistas through the green corridors, streets and along the proposed spine road. The tree-lined green corridors act as a natural map and way-finding to lead you through the centre of the site to the pre-defined character areas.

The proposed route network is designed to contribute towards the site's legibility, with the streets being as straight and direct as possible to aid the ease of movement. This will also ensure that natural landmarks at the terminus of the streets are visible, further improving the imageability of the streets and aiding the mental navigation of the route network.

The different character throughout the hierarchy of streets is another design feature that will aid legibility. The proposed spine road will be designed as a grand, tree-lined avenue with a segregated footways off the road. Therefore, it will clearly be identifiable as the primary arterial route. Beyond this, secondary routes will be narrower and will be fronted either side by housing. It will be clear to users that these are primarily used to access housing. Private drives will feature a shared surface, which will symbolise a transition between residential areas and open space.

Please refer to the Wayfinding and Cycle Strategy for more information.

## 8 Easy to find your way around

The proposed development will be a legible environment that facilitates ease of navigation. The Moors and subsidiary open space are an important natural landmark that is respected in the residential layout and green corridors will help to guide existing and future residents around the site. Landmark buildings will also be used at strategic locations, such as at the corners of junctions, to further boost imageability and legibility. The varying character of streets within the route hierarchy will also contribute towards this legibility of the urban environment by clearly guiding users through the network.



# SECTION

# 03

## STREETS FOR ALL

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BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE STATEMENT  
JULY 2023



# 03

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## STREETS FOR ALL

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Q9 HEALTHY STREETS

Q10 CYCLE AND CAR PARKING

Q11 GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

Q12 BACK OF PAVEMENT, FRONT OF HOME

# 9 / HEALTHY STREETS

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Streets are different to roads. Streets are places where the need to accommodate the movement of motor vehicles is balanced alongside the need for people to move along and cross streets with ease. Activity in the street is an essential part of a successful public realm.

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What's needed:

- 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.

The vitality and safety of the streets is key to the design proposals. The proposed tree-lined spine road will feature extensive landscaping, secondary routes will be softened by front gardens and private drives will benefit from their immediate proximity to green open space. Additional north-south and east-west green and blue corridors will supplement the layout and soften secondary roads. This relationship between hard and soft landscaping will add a sense of tranquillity to the street scene whilst encouraging lower vehicle speeds.

The incorporation of segregated footpaths throughout the site ensures active travel is given priority over vehicles. This prioritisation is further exemplified with the Dutch-style junction crossings which further contribute to cyclist and pedestrian safety. Restrictions on vehicle speeds will be enforced on the spine road and secondary routes whilst the change to a shared surface on the private drives will further encourage reduced speeds. Therefore, safety of future and existing residents will be achieved throughout the route network.

The arrangement of the built form will help to deter anti-social behaviour, further improving the safety throughout the site. The focus on the use of perimeter blocks, in addition to the continuity of the building lines, will generate a strong active frontage and strong sense of enclosure. In turn, this will generate natural surveillance throughout the street and open space network. This will deter anti-social behaviour and contribute to the safety of the proposed development.

## 9 Healthy streets

The streets within the proposed development will benefit from substantial soft landscaping in order to create a pleasant, green streetscene. Where there is frontage parking, plot depths have been designed so that landscape buffers are inset between the parking and the dwelling to soften the streetscape. Safety throughout the street network will be secured via the numerous traffic calming measures, such as enforced speed restrictions and Dutch-style road crossings. Furthermore, the extensive active frontage generated by the use of perimeter blocks will provide natural surveillance to deter anti-social behaviour.



# 10 / CYCLE AND CAR PARKING

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Well-designed developments will make it more attractive for people to choose to walk or cycle for short trips helping to improve levels of physical activity, air quality, local congestion and the quality of the street scene. Well-designed streets will also provide sufficient and well-integrated car parking.

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What's needed:

- 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.

All homes will benefit from private parking within the curtilage of the property, mostly to the side or front of the houses. As a result, parking spaces will be overlooked and benefit from natural surveillance. The use of rear parking courtyards has been avoided as these suffer from a lack of natural surveillance and can attract anti-social behaviour as a result. Large runs of frontage parking are avoided where possible and are broken up by plots with side parking and front gardens. Where this is not possible, plot depths have been provided to enable landscape buffers to be provided between frontage parking and the dwellings to soften the streetscape. This maintains the balance of hard and soft landscaping within the streetscene.

All homes will contain sufficient space for cycle storage, whether in garages or in rear gardens, all of which have space for storage sheds to be added. This will encourage cycle ownership and the use of cycling as a sustainable transport alternative.

Electric vehicle charging points will be provided in accordance with policy and regulations.

## 10 Cycle and car parking.

Sufficient car and cycle parking will be provided within the curtilage of the properties which will be both safe and convenient for the residents. Placemaking has been at the forefront of the proposed car parking strategy, with the avoidance of excessive runs of hard landscaping being of particular importance throughout the design process.



# 11 / GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

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Creative surface water management such as rills, brooks and ponds enrich the public realm and help improve a sense of wellbeing and offer an interaction with nature. As the richest habitat for a range of flora and fauna, they are also a key play in achieving the net gain in biodiversity sought by the 2020 Environment Bill.

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## What's needed:

- 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.

A multi-functional green and blue infrastructure network has been central to the design iteration process. The green corridors connect the extensive open space surrounding site, ensuring the streets retain their connection with nature. Furthermore, the formation of the build line that creates these green corridors safeguards the views through the site to the open spaces beyond. This maintains a strong connection with nature for existing new residents. Within the green corridors there is a variety of planting and landscaping, forming a biodiversity hotspot to benefit the local ecosystem whilst generating environmental interests for residents. Where possible, trees and vegetation has been retained. To mitigate any vegetation lost through construction, an extensive landscaping strategy has been devised to add additional native and non-native vegetation. In addition, there is a childrens play area located in the northern open space, providing valuable play space for children. Segregated footpaths along the spine road will guarantee ease of movement through the primary routes and ensure they are attractive spaces for movement in addition to rest and play. A blue corridor is formed along the north-south section of the spine road via the addition of swales along its route. Not only does this provide additional surface water storage provision it also creates unique habitats for biodiversity.

A SuDS pond will be located in the open space to the south of the site. This multi-functional feature will contribute to biodiversity net gain by adding diversity to the local ecosystem. Moreover, it will contribute to the effective drainage of run-off within the site.

All open space surrounding the site, as well as the green and blue corridors running through the site, will be extensively overlooked, creating safe spaces for existing and future residents to enjoy.

## 11 Green infrastructure

The layout provides an integrated and multi-functional green infrastructure network. The natural setting within the surrounding landscapes provides the opportunity to create large green and blue corridors offering idyllic views through the site. Furthermore, they will feature extensive native and non-native planting to help achieve biodiversity net gain. The diversity that the swales and SuDS pond will add to the existing ecosystem will also help to achieve this. A childrens play area and numerous seating areas will provide opportunities for play and rest, while an allotment creates opportunities for local food growing. Combined with the movement opportunities that the cycleways and footpaths provide, this means there is ample opportunity for movement, play and rest within the green infrastructure network.



# 12 / BACK OF PAVEMENT, FRONT OF HOME

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Garden cities, towns and suburbs used hedges to define public and private spaces, helping to create characterful and biodiverse places. The space between the back of the pavement and the face of buildings has a significant impact on the quality of a place. Clear demarcations between public and private spaces can encourage people to personalise the front of their homes whilst also offering opportunities to integrate level changes, utility boxes and waste storage.

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## What's needed:

- 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 of clothes.



The use of strong building lines and front garden landscaping, such as low hedgerows, will contribute towards the clear definition between the public and private realms. Rear gardens will be separated by timber fences, although high-quality brick will be used where these gardens face the road in order to provide a visually sympathetic barrier between public and private space.

Variation in the use of surface materials will further aid the definition between public and private space. Private drives will feature a shared surface which will signal the transition to a private residential street. Furthermore, on-plot driveways will also feature differing materials to the roads in order to define the public and private realm.

## 12 Back of pavement, front of home

Soft barriers, such as low hedgerows, will contribute towards creating a clear definition between public and private space. This will be strengthened by the use of brick walls to define the boundary between streets and rear gardens where appropriate. Variations in surface materials between public, private and semi-private space is another design consideration that will be used to achieve this. For example, roads, driveways and private drives will feature differing materials.



# SUMMARY

BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE STATEMENT  
JULY 2023

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This BHL assessment has been undertaken by Pegasus Group on behalf Dandara Eastern to accompany a detailed planning application for residential development on the land at Moors Field, Station Road, Little Dunmow.

The assessment has been undertaken with reference to the detailed layout 'P23-0555\_DE\_003 - Presentation Layout', that forms part of the application.

The table below shows that the proposals satisfy almost all 12 BHL considerations through the awarding of 11 green lights, with the only minor amber consideration being caused by the already approved outline masterplan dictating that a landscape buffer is provided between the rear of existing and proposed rear gardens, on the eastern boundary to the site.

The assessment demonstrates that the scheme will:

- Fit comfortably into its surroundings as a logical, urban extension.
- Promote a healthy and active community by taking advantage of its close links to amenities, sustainable transport links and natural features.
- Be well designed, attractive and safe.

	COMMENTS	
<b>INTEGRATED NEIGHBOURHOODS</b>		
Natural connections	Route network is well connected to surrounding areas. Site remains connected to existing natural features.	
Walking, cycling and public transport	Permeable network of streets encourages walkability. Integrated into bus, rail and cycle networks.	
Facilities and services	The site is within walking distance to an abundance of facilities and services.	
Homes for everyone	The proposed developments includes a range of house types and sizes, although range of tenures is limited.	
<b>DISTINCTIVE PLACES</b>		
Making the most of what's there	The proposed development is reflective of natural contours, existing views and nearby development.	
A memorable character	The development will enhance the character of the local area through well designed landscape and built form.	
Well defined streets and spaces	The streets and spaces largely benefit from active frontage, strong enclosure and natural surveillance.	
Easy to find your way around	The route hierarchy is clear, direct and legible. Detailed designed features will be used to maximise legibility.	
<b>STREETS FOR ALL</b>		
Healthy streets	Natural surveillance creates safe streets. Street trees and shared surfaces will aid traffic calming.	
Cycle and car parking	There is sufficient private space in front of homes for integrated car and cycle parking.	
Green and blue infrastructure	The proposed development includes an integrated and multi-functional green infrastructure network.	
Back of pavement, front of home	Public spaces benefit from the overlooking private spaces. Soft barriers demarcate public and private spaces.	

# APPENDIX / BfL12 AND BHL DIFFERENCES

The title change between BfL12 and BHL reflects greater emphasis on healthier and more active lifestyles. NHS England and NHS Improvement have chosen to use the tool as an effective way to reach a broader audience and share the findings of the Healthy New Towns Programme. The table below notes the key differences:

BUILDING FOR LIFE 12	BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE	REMARKS
<b>Integrating into the neighbourhood:</b>	<b>Integrated neighbourhoods:</b>	
1. Connections	1. Natural connections	Greater emphasis and advice relating to connecting places.
2. Facilities and services	2. Walking, cycling and public transport	Greater emphasis on active travel (walking and cycling) to reflect good practice (such as 'Putting Health into Place'); reinforcing efforts by government and the NHS to improve the nation's health and wellbeing through the way in which new developments are planned and designed.
3. Public transport	3. Facilities and services	Moved from being the second to the third consideration; improved written and visual guidance.
4. Meeting local housing requirements	4. Homes for everyone	No change; improved written and visual guidance.
<b>Creating a place:</b>	<b>Distinctive places:</b>	
5. Character	5. Making the most of what's there	Moved from being the sixth to the fifth consideration. A distinctive or locally inspired identity will only be created when the time is taken to understand the site and its wider context.
6. Working with the site and its context	6. A memorable character	This consideration has been switched from position 5 to position 6.
7. Creating well defined streets and spaces	7. Well defined streets and spaces	No change; improved written and visual guidance.
8. Easy to find your way around	8. Easy to find your way around	No change; improved written and visual guidance.

Continued:

Street and home:	Streets for all:	
9. Streets for all	9. Healthy streets	<p>Improved written and visual guidance. Renaming this consideration further highlights the importance of street design and the impact this has on people’s travel choices, levels of physical activity and public health. Good street design prioritises pedestrians and cyclists, encouraging active travel modes; in turn improving people’s health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Additional prompts encourage street space to be shared more fairly between pedestrians, cyclists and motor vehicles allowing carriageway space to be redistributed; allowing protected cycle ways and wider pavements to be created. Pedestrians can then be offered more space to allow for social distancing whilst protected cycle ways will allow more people to cycle safely and confidently, ensuring that reduced public transport capacity (at times of social distancing) does not lead to greater private car usage (leading to further congestion, increased energy usage and reductions in air quality).</p>
10. Car parking	10. Cycle and car parking	<p>Emphasising the importance of thinking about cycle parking design as a key factor in encouraging people to choose to cycle rather than drive for shorter trips.</p>
11. Public and private spaces	11. Green and blue infrastructure	<p>Focuses on public space only with private space consideration being moved into the last consideration. The change in title to ‘green and blue infrastructure’ reflects forthcoming changes in legislation that place a greater emphasis on improved habitat creation and better water management.</p>
12. External storage and amenity space	12. Back of pavement, front of home	<p>The emphasis of this consideration has been directed to focus more on the space between the back of the pavement and the façade of individual buildings. These spaces are very often poorly resolved and have a significant impact on the quality of the street environment.</p> <p>Developments that perform well against this consideration will also resolve storage issues relating to waste and recycling containers.</p> <p>The consideration also highlights the need to consider providing some amenity space for apartments and maisonettes. This is in direct response to the challenges experienced by those living in apartments and maisonettes during lockdown, recognising the importance of being able to sit outside in the open air to people’s mental well-being.</p>

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**Building  
For a  
Healthy  
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