



## **THAXTED ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN**

### **Landscape Statement**



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## 1.0 Introduction

This Landscape Statement has been prepared by David Coles architects limited in support of the planning application for Approval of the Reserved Matters pursuant to the Outline Planning Permission having the reference S62A/2022/0014 for the proposed residential development on land off Thaxted Road in Saffron Walden.

## 2.0 Site Analysis

### 2.1 Location

The application site is located within the settlement of Saffron Walden, the extent of which is shown on the location plan extract under figure 2.1 below.



Figure 2.1 – Site location

### 2.2 Illustrative Masterplan

The Outline Planning Application included an illustrative masterplan for the proposed development that indicated the areas where development was likely to be accommodated on site and how this

related to the existing retained landscape and also the indicative landscape proposals to integrate with the proposed development.



Figure 2.2 – Extract of the Illustrative Layout accompanying the Outline Planning Application

The distribution of the land uses was also illustrated on the Land Use Plan also submitted as part of the Outline Planning Application. This clearly indicated the areas envisaged to be allocated to built form and the areas that were to be substantially landscaped.



Figure 2.3 – Extract of the illustrative land use plan accompanying the Outline Planning Application

## 2.3 Arboriculture

Accompanying the Outline Planning Application was an Arboricultural Impact Assessment that reported on the existing trees, those trees that were to be retained and those trees that were to be removed. It also indicated possible areas for replacement and additional planting across the site.



Figure 2.4 – Extract of the Arboricultural Impact Assessment accompanying the Outline Planning Application

## 2.4 Design Strategy

The Design And Access Statement accompanying the Outline Planning Application set out the 'guidance' informing the landscape strategy for the site as follows:

*“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.”*

The Statement also set out the key aspects of the proposed landscape strategy as follows:

- 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.*

The principles established during the Outline Planning Application process have been referred to, influenced and informed the landscape proposals for the proposed scheme.





### 3.0 Soft Landscape Proposals



Figure 3.1 – Proposed Soft Landscape scheme

The principles established by the Outline Planning Application, and adopted within these proposals include:

- Retention and buffering of the perimeter hedgerows and trees
- Integration of the surface water management features, including the existing ditches and ground features
- Landscaping design reinforcing the movement strategy and supporting the pedestrian and cycle and leisure routes through the site
- Landscape design complementing the architectural building form to the principal streets and routes
- Planting relating to the key areas of open space with themes and species selected to suit the setting and open space functions

### **3.1 Planting Palette**

The planting palette has been informed by the existing species as identified in the Arboricultural survey and the 'Essex Tree Palette' (*Place Services, Essex County Council, Jan 2018*).

Further guidance underpinning the landscape strategy is set out in the approved Landscape Visual Appraisal by FCPR.

## 3.2 Thaxted Meadows



Grassland tolerant of seasonal flooding with wildflower drifts within the infiltration basin



Public open spaces within Thaxted Meadows comprise;

1. Grassland tolerant of seasonal flooding with wildflower drifts within the infiltration basin
  2. An open space to gather framed by Cherry blossom and white stemmed Birch
  3. Grassland with mown pathways through incorporating wildflowers and bulbs planted as drifts to elevate their focus.
- leading to and connecting the network of pathways and the countryside edge.
  - to remain open as within the flood conveyance corridor.

Larger scale / maturity trees create a sense of arrival and establish the rural, landscape led approach that permeates throughout the development.



*Salix alba*



*Acer campestre* 'Streetwise'



*Carpinus betulus* Fastigiata



*Betula utilis* 'jaquemontii'

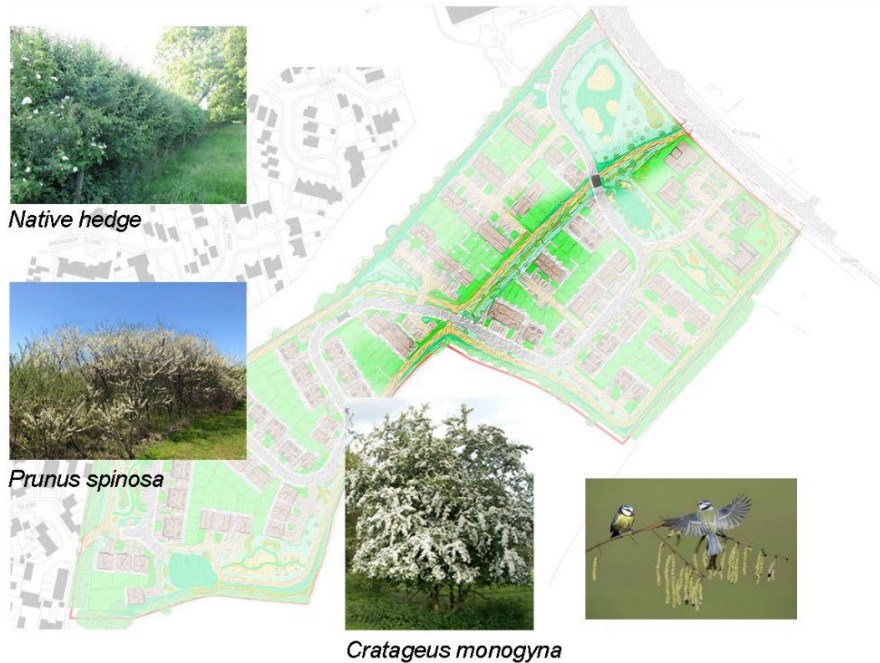


Cherry Blossom



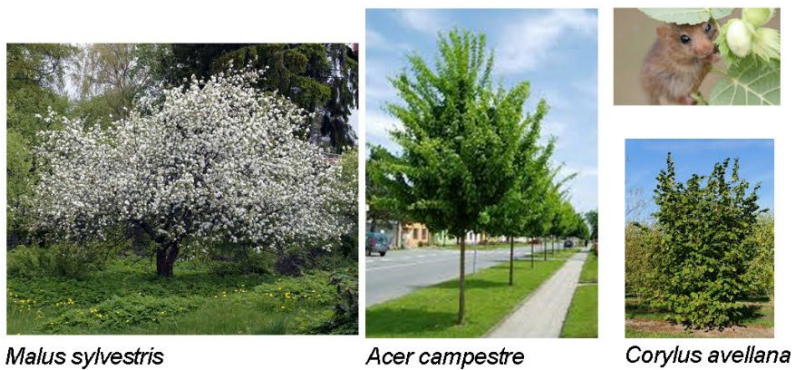
*Prunus serrulata* 'Shirotae'

### 3.3 Green Corridor and Rural Edge



The Green Corridor provides pedestrian and cycle connectivity into the site and echoes the former field boundary and drainage ditch which will be improved with new native hedge and tree planting.

Bringing a traditional green lane feel into the heart of the site, the native hedge will add to this network encouraging and enabling wildlife to travel through and across the site into the surrounding countryside.



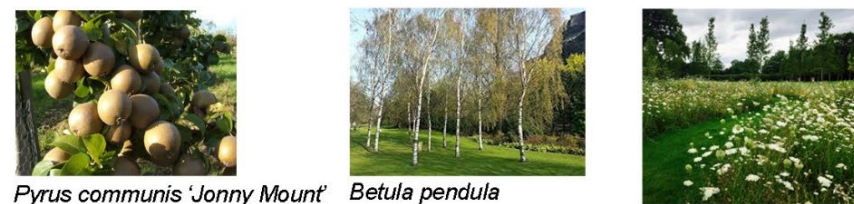
Grassland and occasional tree planting enhance the existing vegetation along the southern edges of the development and create an attractive setting for the orbital pathway.

At the furthest southern end a small Birch and native tree grove and orchard are underplanted with wildflowers with mown pathways meandering through.

Additional native scrub planting and additional trees bolster this boundary.



*Fruit varieties have been selected as traditional local origin as advised on the East of England Apples & Orchards Project website*



### 3.4 Amenity Edge and Glebe Green

*Cornus alba Sibirica*

*Cornus stolonifera Flaviramea*

*Prunus laurocerasus*

*Establishing mixed native hedge*

*Viburnum farreri*

*Chimonanthus praecox*

*Feathered form Betula utilis Jacquemontii*

*Tilia cordata*

Planting along the amenity edge seeks to retain the existing hedgerow and trees and enhance with proposed extra heavy standard and advanced nursery stock trees with large pot size specimen shrubs.

Where it is not possible to retain the existing hedgerow along the NE boundary with Thaxted Road, to allow implementation of the new pavement, this will be replanted with a new native hedge that will be established and maintained to form a robust buffer.

Open spaces along this edge and Glebe Green will incorporate species diverse grassland with meandering mown pathways, wildflower and bulb areas with native tree planting.

Blocks of semi ornamental shrub planting that have also been selected for blossom and berry value to wildlife will shape and define the spaces and filter views.

Gentle mounding and natural play elements will also encourage exploration of these spaces.

### 3.5 Internal Streets

Within the site to property frontages is proposed a matrix of,

- some low hedging defining spaces & creating form
- species rich flowering lawns
- groundcover and low shrub mixes selected for textural interest and berry and nectar qualities
- street trees and specimen shrubs as accents



*Amelanchier lamarckii*



*Viburnum tinus*



*Sarcococca hookeriana*



*Carpinus betulus Fastigiata*



*Acer campestre Streetwise*



*Pyrus calleryana Chanticleer*

#### Groundcover & edging mixes



*Festuca glauca*



*Hebe 'Emerald Gem'*



*Geranium 'Johnson's Blue'*



*Euonymus fortunei*

#### Low and formal hedges



*Carpinus betulus*



*Sarcococca confusa*



*Ilex crenata convexa*



*Ligustrum vulgare*

#### Low shrub mixes



*Ceanothus thyrsiflorus repens*



*Berberis x media 'Parkjuwel'*



*Weigela florida 'Foliis purpureis'*



*Potentilla fruticosa*

## 4.0 Hard Landscape Proposals



Figure 4.1 – Proposed Hard Landscape scheme



## Materials

The materials proposed for the hard landscape have been selected to create an attractive and welcoming environment for all users with an eye for sustainability, referring to those materials that are expected to be hard wearing and durable over their lifetime.

Examples of the materials proposed are illustrated below.



*Brett Alpha Charcoal, parking areas*



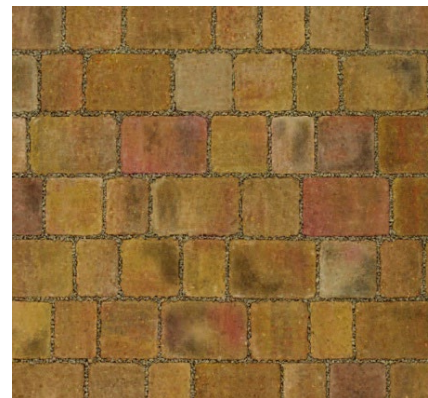
*Malvern village brick, retaining walls*



*Brett Brindle, tables*



*Self binding gravel, orbital path*



*Brett Alpha Autumn Gold*

## 5.0 Design Code Compliance

The scheme has been designed with careful reference to the Design Codes that set out the principles of the public realm relating to each of the six character areas. These have been referred to and guided the design proposals that have been complied with.

Each of the six character area Public Realm Principles are set out below.

### Character Area

Public Realm Principle	Compliance
Where feasible existing hedgerows and trees situated along the site perimeter and field boundaries will be retained and enhanced with additional native hedgerow trees and shrubs. This will increase the vegetation cover, which should filter and soften views of the proposed built development from Thaxted Road and the existing open space.	✓
A green corridor of informal open space should link the north eastern corner of the site (adjacent to the existing skatepark) with the southern site boundary. This creates a	✓

connection between the existing open space at the settlement edge and the wider countryside.	
The green corridor incorporates an overland drainage flow route and flood zone.	✓
Street trees should create a distinctive avenue along the main entrance into the site. Proposed planting of larger scale specimen trees should be undertaken through Thaxted Meadows open space.	✓
Opportunities for other areas of ecological habitat creation should include species rich grassland, native trees and shrubs and wetland within SuDS basins, which should contribute towards biodiversity net gain	✓
A cohesive network of recreational routes within Thaxted Meadows provides connections to proposed residential streets, existing open space, highways and public rights of way. Thaxted Meadows should be designed to allow natural surveillance from nearby dwellings with safe and accessible recreational routes.	✓

### 1 – Thaxted Meadows

## Character Area 2 – Green Corridor

Public Realm Principle	Compliance
Where feasible existing landscape features along an internal field boundary will be retained and enhanced with native hedgerow and tree planting. This will assist in defining the boulevard and focusing views along the Green Corridor.	✓
Proposed planting of larger scale specimen trees should be undertaken within the Green Corridor.	✓
The proposed footpath / cycleway route along the Green Corridor should enable convenient safe connections to proposed residential streets. The Green Corridor should be designed to allow natural surveillance over the footpath / cycleway route from nearby dwellings.	✓

## Character Area 3 – Amenity Edge

Public Realm Principle	Compliance
Proposed build development should be set back from the site boundary a minimum distance of 5m to ensure that the existing hedgerow and trees situated along the northern boundary can be retained and enhanced with additional native hedgerow trees. This will increase the vegetation cover, which should filter and soften views of the proposed built development from the existing open space.	✓
The greenway corridor along the amenity edge should widen to accommodate a footpath, which forms part of a cohesive network of recreational routes. Provision of pedestrian links to the northern site boundary should enhance connectivity with the existing open space.	✓
A pocket park within the central part of the site will create a green link connecting the existing open space at the settlement edge and the	✓

wider countryside. Proposed planting of larger scale specimen trees should be undertaken within the pocket park. Other areas of ecological habitat creation should include species rich/wildflower meadow grassland, native trees and shrubs and wetland within SuDS basins, which should contribute towards biodiversity net gain	
The Amenity Edge should be designed to allow natural surveillance over the greenway route and pocket park from nearby dwellings and residential streets	✓

#### Character Area 4 – Rural Edge

Public Realm Principle	Compliance
Proposed build development should be set back from the site boundary a minimum distance of 10m to ensure that the existing hedgerow situated along the southern boundary can be retained and enhanced with additional native hedgerow trees. This will increase the vegetation cover, which should	✓

filter and soften views of the proposed built development from the Cam valley.	
The open space along the Rural Edge should accommodate a bridleway, which forms part of a cohesive network of recreational routes. Provision of pedestrian links to the residential development should enhance connectivity with the proposed open space.	✓
The Rural Edge should be designed to allow natural surveillance over the open space from nearby dwellings and residential streets. This will assist in creating an active edge to the open space.	✓
On the higher ground within the western part of the site, seek opportunities to widen the 10m corridor. Proposed planting of larger scale specimen trees should be undertaken where feasible in order to soften potential views of the proposed built development. There should also be opportunities to celebrate long distance views across the Cam valley Areas of ecological habitat creation should include species rich grassland, native trees and shrubs	✓

and wetland within SuDS basins, which should contribute towards biodiversity net gain,	
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### Character Area 5 – Internal Streets

Public Realm Principle	Compliance
No landscape coding	✓

### Character Area 6 – Glebe Green

Public Realm Principle	Compliance
The existing hedgerow situated along the site boundary can be retained and enhanced with additional native hedgerow shrubs. This will bolster the existing vegetation cover, which filters views of the proposed built development from the existing residential properties.	✓
The open space should accommodate a recreational route, which forms part of a cohesive network of recreational routes.	✓

The Glebe Green should be designed to allow natural surveillance over the recreational route and pocket park from proposed dwellings and residential streets.	✓
In addition to areas of amenity grassland, areas of ecological habitat creation should include species rich/wildflower meadow grassland, specimen trees and shrubs and wetland planting within the SuDS basin, which should contribute towards biodiversity net gain.	✓

## 6.0 Conclusion

The scheme has been designed with careful reference and respect for the context, but with a clear acknowledgement of contemporary requirements. Key factors influencing the form and scale of the development have included:

- An appropriate mix of landscape features and elements that support a high quality landscaped environment for the residents of the development and the wider area.
- Sustainability in all its forms.
- The context of the site, its topography, the hedgerows, and the trees that are proposed to be retained and integrated into the open space and landscape to complement the overall proposals and the wider context.

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