

# CHALKS FARM, SAWBRIDGEWORTH (SAWB3)

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Masterplan - June 2018



DAVID WILSON HOMES  
WHERE QUALITY LIVES

**STRUTT  
& PARKER**

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## Barratt David Wilson North Thames

Barratt David Wilson North Thames (BDWNT) has high aspirations for the development at Chalk’s Farm and wishes to achieve a high quality sustainable residential neighbourhood at the edge of Sawbridgeworth that will contribute towards district wide housing needs. BDWNT has a long and proven track record in the inception and implementation of major development projects in the area, with award winning Saffron Gardens development in Sawbridgeworth being one of them.

## Building for Life

Barratt Developments PLC is one of the few developers committed to assess all its schemes against Building for Life criteria to ensure delivery of quality places. Building for Life 12 is the industry standard assessment, endorsed by Government, for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. The 12 questions reflect the vision of what new housing developments should be: attractive, functional and sustainable places. Redesigned in 2012, BfL12 is based on the new National Planning Policy Framework and the Government’s commitment to build more homes, better homes and involve local communities in planning.

# 2. PLANNING CONTEXT

The Site benefits from an Allocation for residential development in the East Hertfordshire District Council Submission Local Plan, under Policy SAWB3.

The Policy, as amended by the 2018 Main Modifications, requires for the Site to accommodate at least 175 homes by 2022, and for a Masterplan to be “collaboratively prepared, involving Site promoters, landowners, East Herts Council, Hertfordshire County Council, Sawbridgeworth Town Council, and other key stakeholders”. This document has been prepared to meet the needs of this Policy.

Policy SAWB3 also sets out a number of expectations for the Site, which BDW have been working to incorporate to proposals. These include policy compliant affordable housing, green infrastructure, local highways mitigation measures and sustainable transport measures including footpath connections.



- Site allocations
- 100 Proposed number of new homes
- Existing built up areas
- Green Belt
-  Railway station
-  District/County boundary





### 3. THE SITE

#### Location of the Site

The Site is approximately 10 ha in size. The Site comprises arable field in a landscape that is generally open with little tree cover apart from hedgerow trees following the network of local roads and subdividing fields. It is located to the south of West Road and west of Coney Gree on the Western side of Sawbridgeworth, immediately adjoining the built up area of the town.

The Site currently lies outside the settlement boundary of Sawbridgeworth and is shown in the current Local Plan as lying within the open countryside and Green Belt. The town of Sawbridgeworth lies between Bishop’s Stortford, (6.0 km to the north of The Site) and Harlow (5.0 km to the south of the Site).

#### The Site in Context

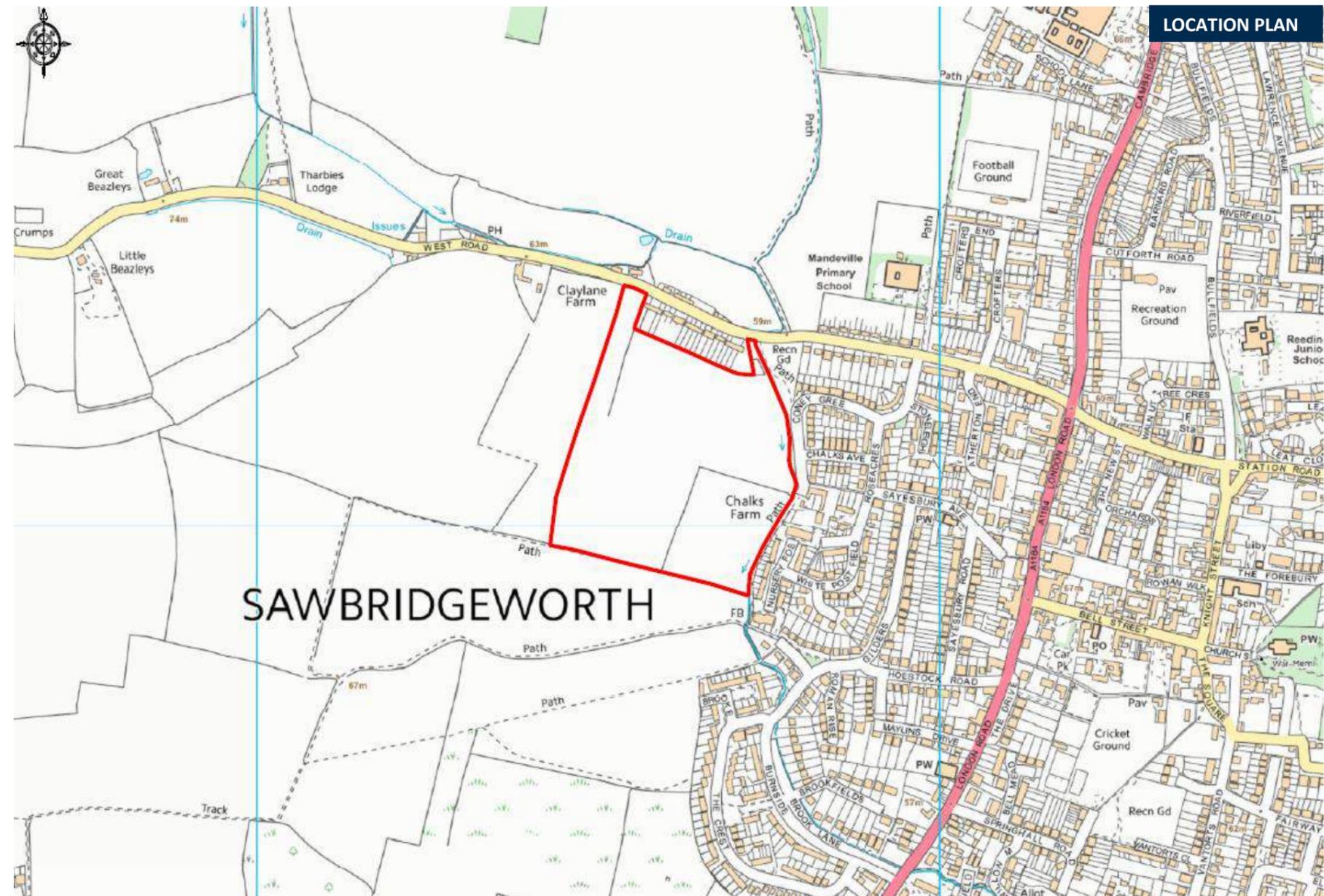
The Site’s location close to a comprehensive and wide-reaching network of road, pedestrian and public transport links gives it excellent accessibility.

The footpath to the northern boundary links the site to the Mandeville Primary School and nursery and to the A1184 London Road and the town centre.

The Leventhorpe Academy School and Leisure Centre is within 1.2 km and can be accessed using footways along West Road and Cambridge Road.

The eastern footpath provides links to the residential areas immediately to the east of the Site to also link to the town centre and provide connectivity to local services and facilities including Vantorts Park and the Bullfields Centre.

There are bus stops within a 5 minute walk from the Site boundaries. The main bus services at high frequency link to Bishops Stortford and Harlow and Stansted airport. Sawbridgeworth railway station is also within a 20 minute walk, with regular services to London Liverpool Street, Harlow and Cambridge.





## 4. CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

### Landscape

There is an excellent opportunity to improve and enhance the built up edge of Sawbridgeworth through the provision of areas of new structural planting and open space, including the retention of the existing hedgerow and trees, within the Site minimising the effects of development for housing on the locality and the wider landscape.

Views towards the Site can be obtained from a limited number of vantage points in the immediate vicinity; and in some middle distance views to the west, north and south west. Near distance views are obtained from short sections of public footpaths and roads in close proximity where partial and glimpsed views are possible through and/or over the boundary vegetation as shown on the Landscape Constraints and Opportunities Plan. With careful consideration given to height, form, density, scale, layout and landscaping, the visual impact of the development will be minimised.

### Flood Risk and Drainage

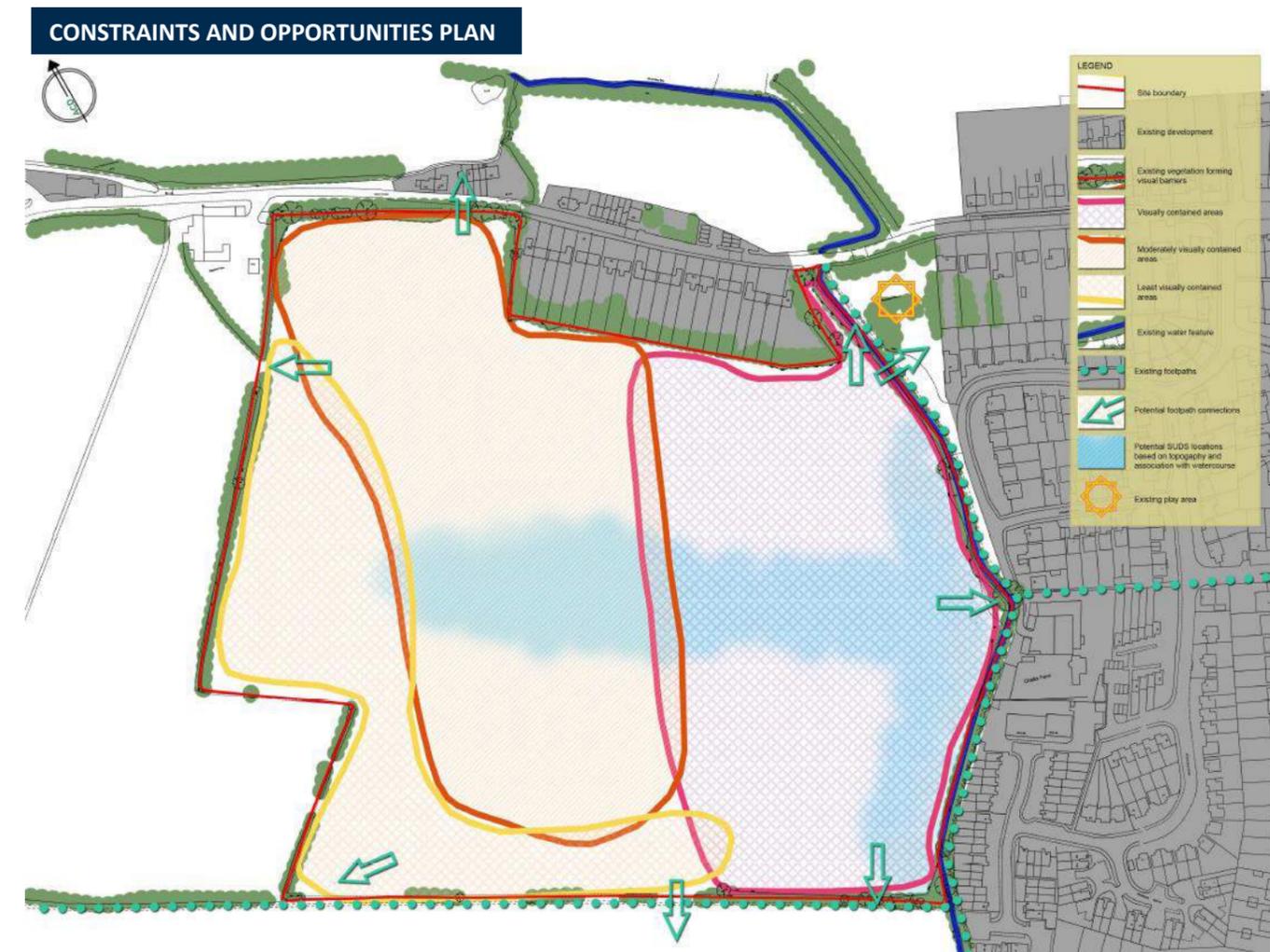
It is necessary to ensure that any development is outside of the Flood Risk Area at the south east corner of the site. Due to ground conditions on the Site, surface water attenuation in the form of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) such as ponds, swales, permeable paving and below ground systems will be required. These systems have the potential to increase the biodiversity value of the site through the provision of natural habitats. By utilising SuDS and limiting surface water discharge the proposed development will not increase flood risk to the surrounding area.

The site can be served by the existing public foul drainage network through reinforcement where necessary and utilising water efficient components within the new development homes. All other services are available locally enabling connections to the public water supply, gas, electric and telecommunication services with minimal network reinforcement required.

### Ecology

The Site is comprised of managed arable land of low ecological value. Habitats of significance are restricted to the boundaries of Site (hedgerows and Sawbridgeworth Brook). These boundary habitats are of value to several protected species/Biodiversity Action Plan species, as well as being of general biodiversity value themselves. Any impact upon these ecologically valuable features will be mitigated through design to ensure that valuable features are retained and protected.

Providing boundary planting will enhance the biodiversity value of these habitats, as well as create new ecologically valuable habitats on Site (woodland and woodland edge) benefitting protected species such as bats. It is considered that implementing these enhancements will result in a positive increase to the biodiversity value of the Site as a whole.



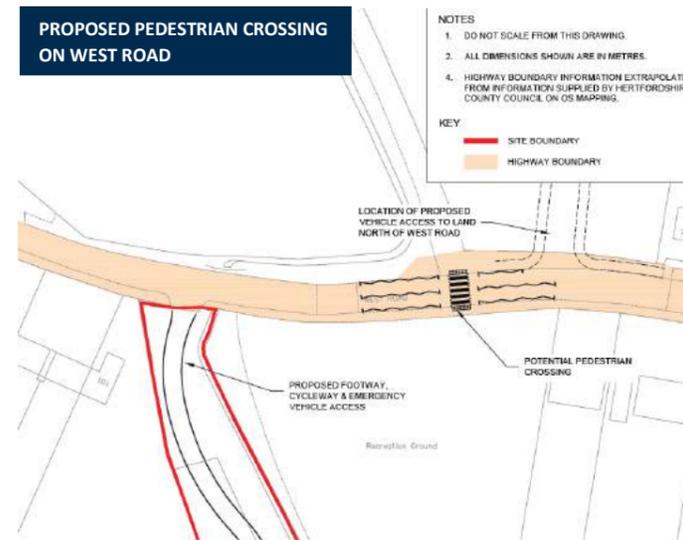
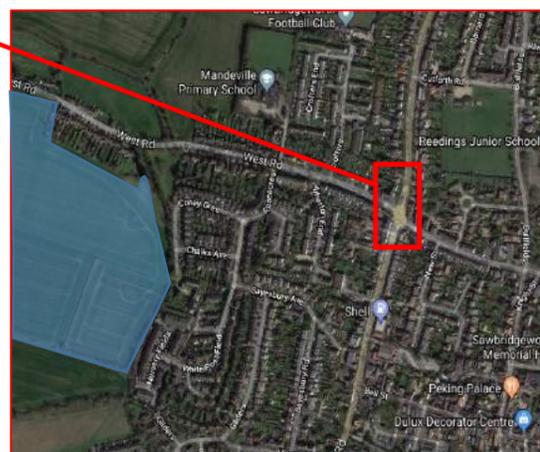
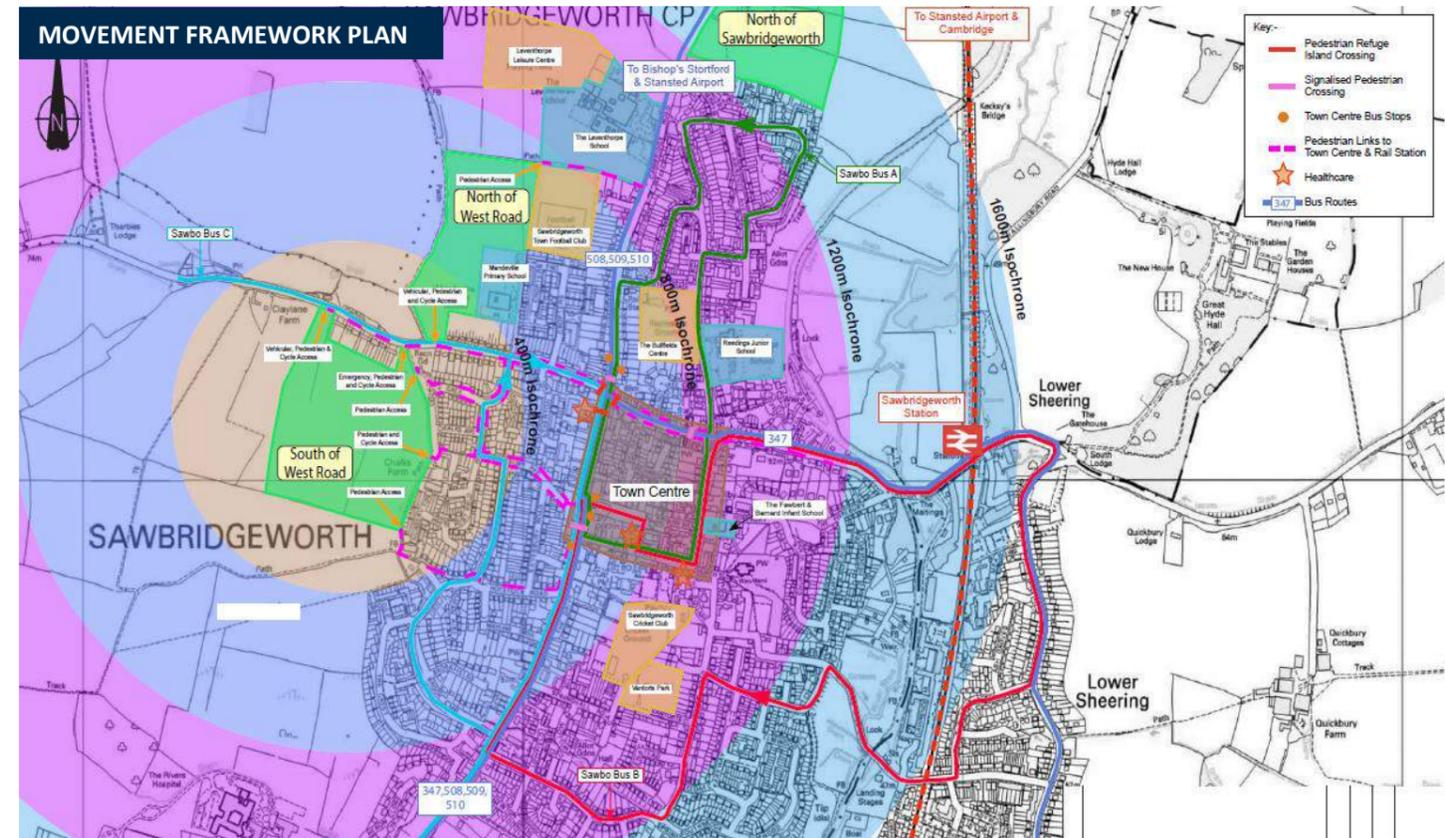


# 4. CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

## Accessibility

The Site is in a sustainable location with facilities and services in Sawbridgeworth within walking and cycling distance of the site, including schools, healthcare and the town centre as shown on the supporting Movement Framework Plan. The Site has good connectivity to the existing footway network. As well as footways alongside a vehicular site access at West Road, there are three points of pedestrian connection along the eastern boundary to West Road, Coney Gree and Gilders, all of which provide direct routes of just five minutes walk to London Road. The internal layout of the site will be designed to maximise the permeability of the site for pedestrian and cycle movement within the site and into the locality.

The Site has access to the high frequency bus corridor of London Road with direct services south to Harlow and north to Bishop's Stortford and Stansted Airport. West Road also benefits from being located on the 'Sawbobus' network. Frequent rail services are available from Sawbridgeworth station, which is a 20 minute walk or less than a 10 minute cycle ride from the site.



Proposed Access and Car Parking - The principle and location of a Site access onto West Road have been agreed with Hertfordshire County Council. The scheme will comply with the Council's car parking standards.

Offsite Improvement Works - As part of the proposals, and in accordance with the proposed Policy SAWB3, it is acknowledged that improvements are necessary to the double mini-roundabout junction in the centre of Sawbridgeworth where West Road meets the A1184 London Road. The works to improve this junction, as illustrated on Plan Ref 12-039-SK-01-C, have been agreed in principle with Hertfordshire County Council.

It is also proposed to provide a new pedestrian crossing across West Road to allow safe access to Mandeville Primary School.

## 5. OUR VISION

Based on the assessment of the Site's constraints and opportunities summarised briefly in this document, BDW are able to present a vision for the residential development at Chalks Farm as a new, vibrant, attractive neighbourhood at the edge of Sawbridgeworth. The key aims for the new neighbourhood will be:

- To provide a landscape led development with rich and varied network of green open spaces and linear parks that will be incorporated and augment important landscape features.
- To deliver much needed housing for the district and for Sawbridgeworth.
- To promote objectives of sustainable development through layout and design.
- To create an attractive, high quality development with a great sense of place and identity.
- To create a neighbourhood that builds upon and enhances the character of Sawbridgeworth.
- To provide a safe and secure environment for all.
- To provide a development that is well connected, readily understood and easily navigated.
- To create an environment that prioritises pedestrians and cyclists.
- To provide a range of dwelling sizes, types and mix of tenure that will offer a choice of lifestyle accessible and acceptable to all.
- To enhance and improve biodiversity and provide wildlife corridors.
- To create an attractive interface with the open countryside.
- To remediate development patterns and create plenty of links and connections to the surrounding neighbourhoods.
- To achieve a sustainable water drainage system with swales and ponds that will enhance the quality of the landscape.
- To create opportunities for recreation, play and allotments for the development and the wider community.





# 5. OUR VISION

## Landscape Led Development

A key part of the vision will be to improve and enhance the built up edge of Sawbridgeworth through the strategic use of effective landscaping and the creation of public open space. The strategy is illustrated on the accompanying Proposed Landscape Strategy. It includes the following:

- The retention of existing boundary hedgerows and trees to minimise the effects of developing the Site.
- The introduction of significant new belts of structural planting and landscape 'buffers' along the western and southern boundaries of the Site to provide a visual screen.
- Play areas for toddlers and young children within the scheme.
- Recreational and allotment space for the benefit of the Sawbridgeworth community.
- Pedestrian links around and through the development, to form a 'green infrastructure' network, as well as providing links to the wider public footpath network.
- The landscaping to maintain and support the wildlife habitat and diversity of the area.
- Open space and landscape planting along the eastern boundary (adjoining the Sawbridgeworth Brook) to incorporate flood attenuation features as well as additional pedestrian/cycleway routes.
- The provision of a comprehensive landscape scheme, including open space areas, landscaping within the housing areas and adjoining the access roads to create an attractive and pleasant environment for the new residents.





## 6. OUR PROPOSAL

The development proposals comprise:

Around 200 David Wilson homes to include 40% affordable housing

An interconnected network of green open spaces incorporating parkland, greens, open space and a buffer zone around the boundary

Play areas

Allotments

Recreation facilities

Pedestrian, cycle and vehicle routes

Parking

Drainage works (including sustainable ground and surface water attenuation)

Access from West Road

Secondary access to West Road

Pedestrian links to the eastern edge of Sawbridgeworth

Pedestrian link to Mandeville Primary School

## 7. CONCLUSION

This Masterplan presents proposals as to how the Site could be delivered to meet the requirements of the East Herts District Plan.

The vision for the land at Chalks Farm aims to create an aspirational and sustainable place for living and create a new neighbourhood at the edge of Sawbridgeworth whilst respecting the existing character of the Site.

Using a landscape led design and high quality architecture, along with new community assets, the Site provides an opportunity to support the existing community whilst assisting the Council to meet its Local Plan housing requirements.

