



MEETING : DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT FORUM
VENUE : COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD
DATE : TUESDAY 21 APRIL 2026
TIME : 7.00 PM

Old River Lane

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Development
Management Forum

21 April 2026



Agenda Item 2a



Cityheart

A masterplan vision

A **high-quality mixed-use scheme** of exceptional design that contributes to the **vibrancy of Bishop's Stortford**, creates a **new town centre destination**, and complements the **uniqueness of this historic market town**.

This is an evolution of the strategic principles established through a series of masterplan studies including:

- 2017 BSTC Planning Framework
- 2018 ORL Concept Masterplan
- 2022 ORL SPD
- 2025 'District Plan' Masterplan



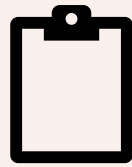
Designed in consultation with the community and Council

Our proposals have been designed through collaboration and engagement with the local community, masterplan steering group, councillors and East Hertfordshire District Council officers.



334

people attended consultation events



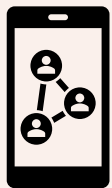
111

completed surveys / feedback forms



4

meetings of the Masterplan Steering Group



375,512

social media impressions



1,263

visitors to the consultation website



11

Old River Lane Delivery Board meetings



Masterplan Steering Group – May 2025



Consultation exhibition events – June 2025

Responding to questions raised

An increased number of homes

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The number of homes **reflects how the town centre and housing needs have evolved since 2018** when policy BISH8 was adopted

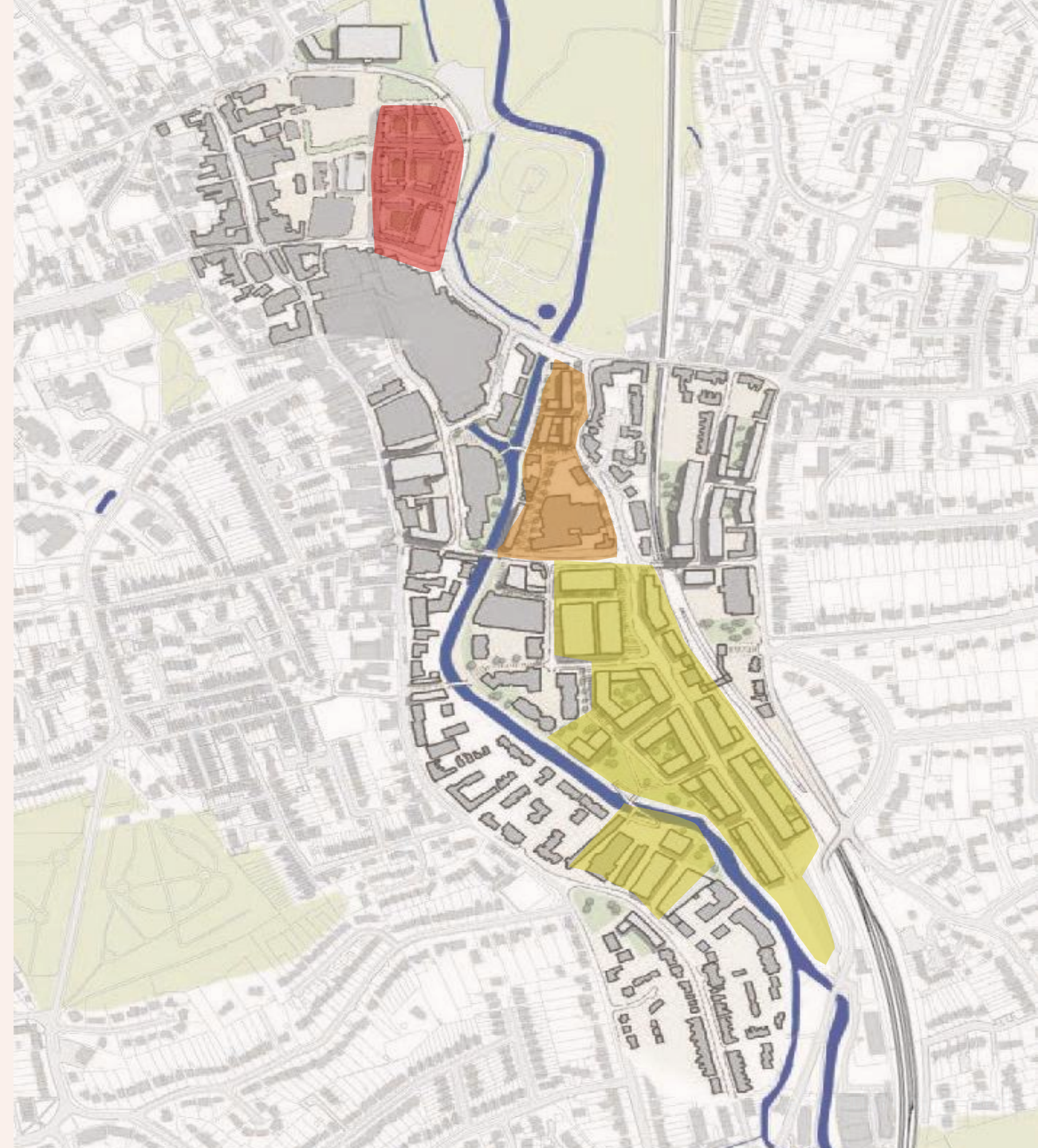
- Makes **good use of a previously developed brownfield site** in a highly accessible and sustainable location
- **Aligns with national and local priorities** to make the best use of available land
- **Helps meet local housing needs.** Bishop's Stortford has a target to deliver new homes
- **Designed at a scale that is appropriate** for a town centre setting
- There is an emphasis on **delivering high-quality homes**



Residential courtyard

Building height

- Our site is positioned towards the **periphery of the historic core**, along the River Stort regeneration corridor.
- The discussion about proposed height and scale has **evolved through conversations** with local people, an independent Design Review Panel and EHDC design officers.
- It **takes cues from existing buildings nearby**
- Where taller elements are proposed, they **are located away from the most sensitive areas** instead positioned in the centre of the site;
- Independent studies **show the scheme has acceptable impacts on light and neighbouring buildings**



Building height

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- * A range of heights between 4 and 6 storeys with set backs on the upper floors to reduce impact at street level.



- * Lower building heights to the south adjacent to Coopers with taller buildings in the centre of the site allowing for a clear expression of corner and infill buildings.

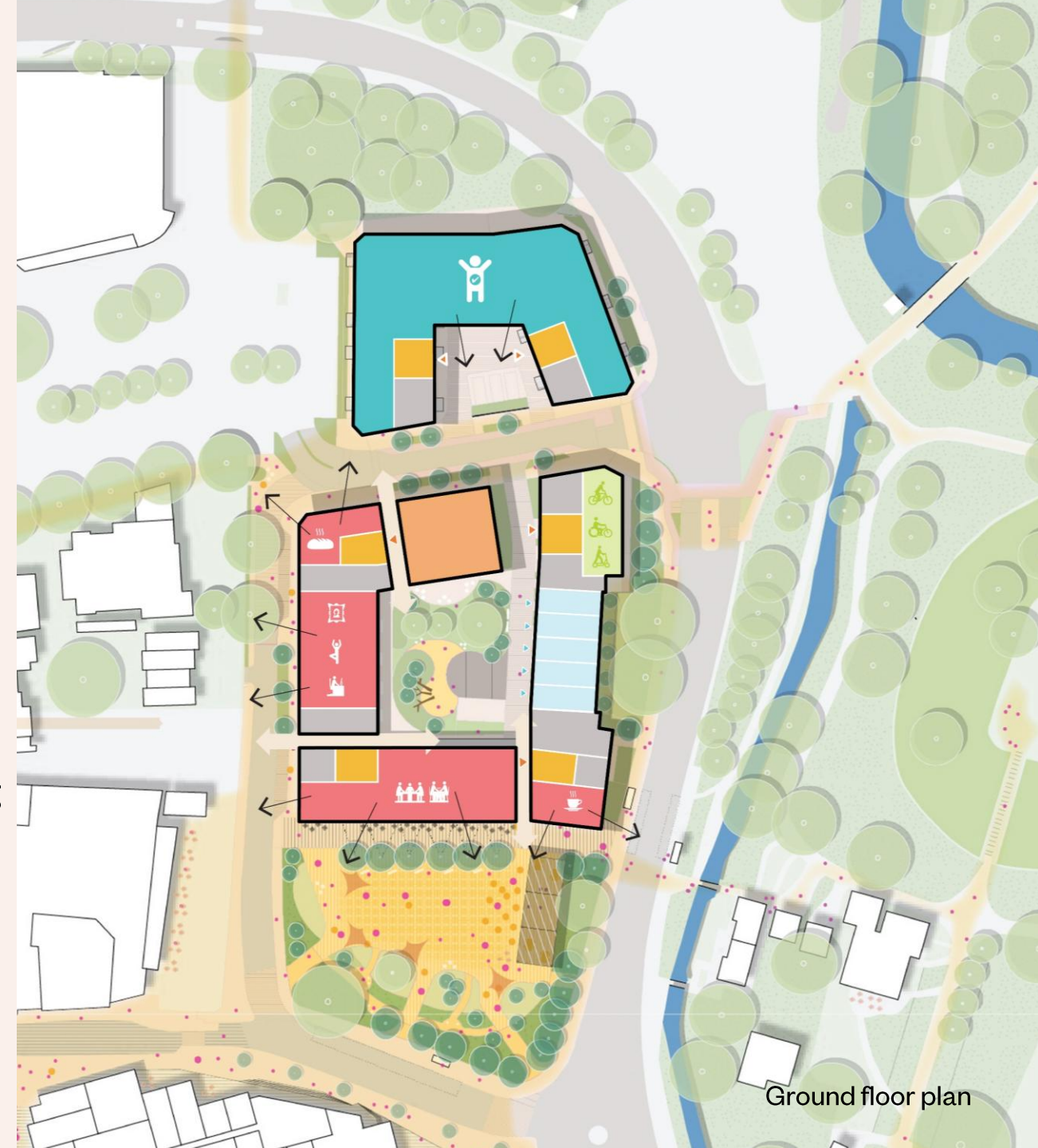


- * Uses the significant topography changes in the town centre to integrate with the prevailing roofscape;



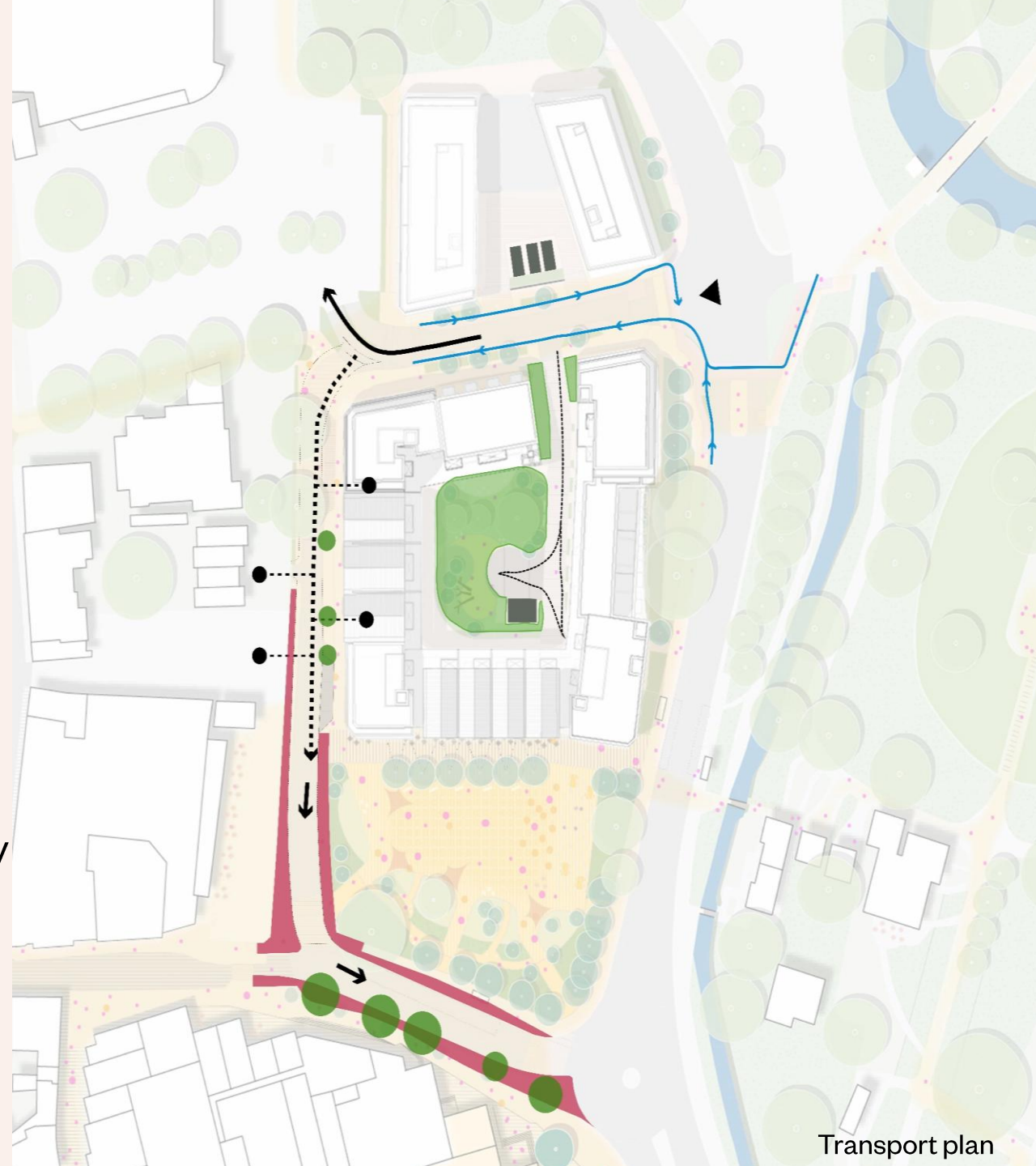
Compliance with mixed-use vision and development objectives

- **Over 50% of the ground floor is given over to active and non-residential uses (2,200sqm)**
- The southern part of the site is **well placed to support a destination food and beverage unit** facing on to the town square
- **Smaller, flexible units along Old River Lane** that could support a gallery and co-working space
- The ground floor of the northern plot is **proposed as a 1,135sqm community health hub**, with discussions ongoing with the NHS
- To align with the ORL SPD, the size of the new public open space has been **designed to safeguard land to deliver a dedicated arts or community building in the future**



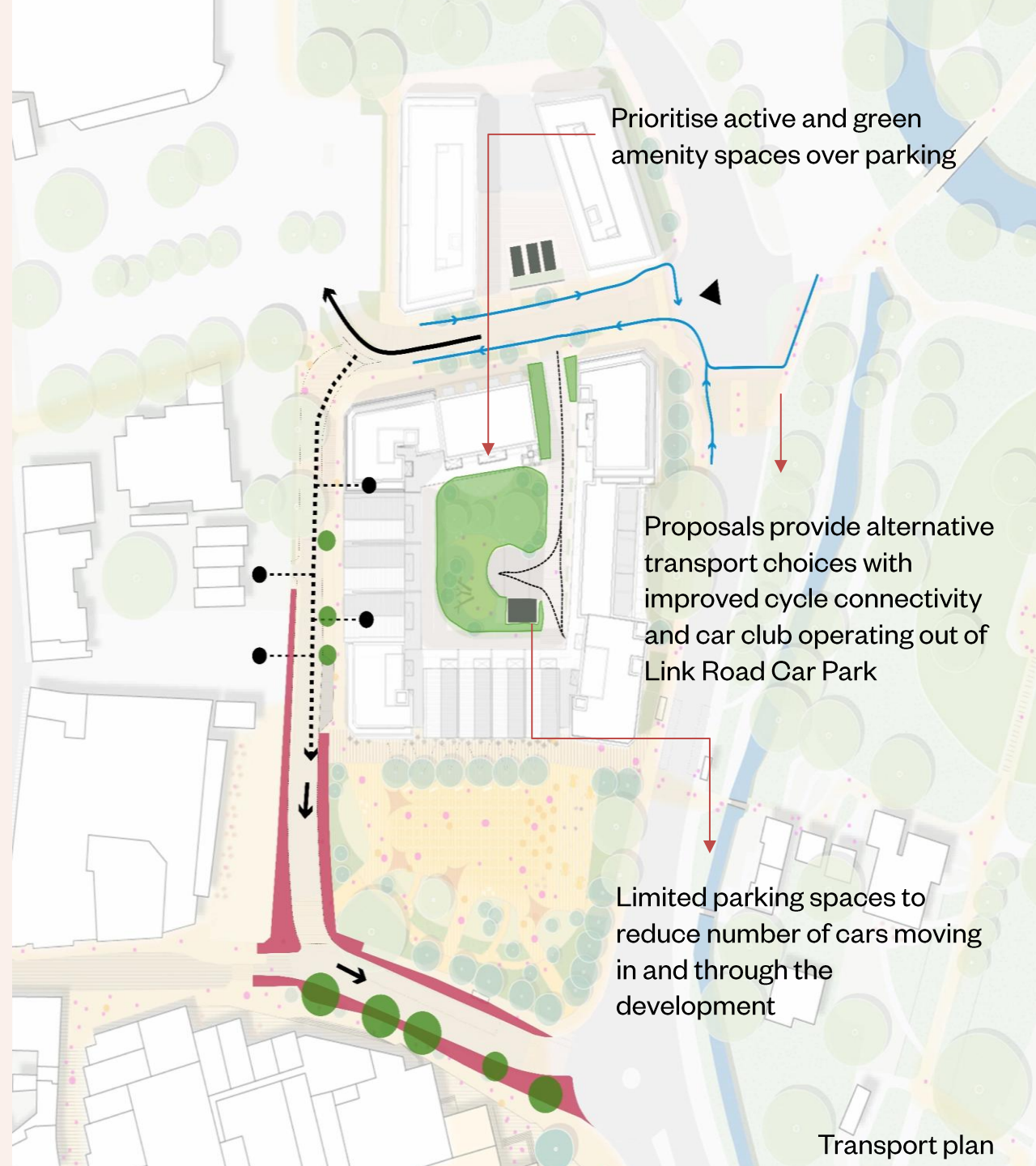
Traffic and movement

- The scheme has been **assessed with the local highways authority**, including how the area is expected to grow
- Traffic has been **modelled based on realistic future conditions**
- Overall, the development is expected to **generate less traffic than the previous use of the site**
- **Includes new and improved walking and cycling routes**, with safer crossings making everyday journeys easier and healthier
- Making **Old River Lane safer and more accessible** by removing through traffic and prioritising walkers and cyclists.



Limited parking site

- **Surface parking previously located on site is now provided within the Northgate End Multi Storey Car Park (482 bays)**, effectively unlocking the core development opportunity of Old River Lane
- We want to **align with District Plan objectives to promote sustainable transport** and improve accessibility by:
 - **Prioritising sustainable travel methods** by removing through traffic from Old River Lane
 - **Encouraging healthy communities** by improving cycle connectivity and operating a car club out of the Link Road Car Park
 - **Reducing congestion and carbon-dioxide emissions** by prioritising activity and green amenity spaces over parking



The environmental footprint

- **Explored the retention of Charringtons House**, which concluded that this will not be viable in terms of future lifespan of the building, and delivering an efficient building layout.
- **Adopt a fabric first approach** to reduce energy demand
- Future-ready homes **designed to be fully electric**
- Deliver **substantial planting and greenery** to be introduced throughout the scheme
- **Promotes healthy streets with walking and cycling** through the provision of safe, well-connected streets
- **Delivering an 83% improvement** over the Part L Building Regulations requirements for **carbon reduction**
- **Design choices to reduce cement content** including low building heights, no basement level and stacked layouts.



View from Old River Lane

171

171 new homes and affordable homes



1,200

1,200 sqm of new retail, café, and restaurants at ground floor



4,500

4,500 sqm of new planting and greenery



1,130

1,130 sqm community health hub

2,000

2,000 sqm town square equivalent to three standard tennis courts



83%

83% improvement over the Part L Building Regulations requirements for carbon reduction



Thank you

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