

# Taylor Wimpey

## Land north of West Road, Sawbridgeworth (SAWB2)

Master Plan Document

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# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction

This Master Plan Document has been prepared and submitted on behalf of Taylor Wimpey North Thames Ltd. in support of proposals for residential development located to the north of West Road on the western edge of Sawbridgeworth. The planning application proposes the following development:

- 133 dwellings
- 80 private dwellings
- 53 affordable dwellings
- land to facilitate the expansion of Mandeville Primary School
- public open space including a linear green / defensible green belt buffer, a central green, green links
- children's play facilities
- Sustainable Drainage System
- pedestrian and cycle routes enhancing the wider connectivity of Sawbridgeworth

This document responds to the requirements of emerging District Plan policy DES1 and culminates in an Illustrative Concept Master Plan that encapsulates the work done to date.

## 1.2 Planning Summary

Land north of West Road, Sawbridgeworth, is allocated for development in East Hertfordshire District Council's emerging District Plan, under policy SAWB2. The policy sets out the requirements and aspirations for the site and its development; these specific policy criteria include:

- Delivery of at least 125 new dwellings (of which 40% are to be affordable);
- Provision of land, car parking and access routes to facilitate the expansion of the adjacent Mandeville Primary School to two forms of entry;
- Improvements to footways and public transport to support the use of sustainable modes of travel;
- High quality green infrastructure and landscaping throughout the site, including enhanced landscaping along the western boundary of the site where the site adjoins the Green Belt and surrounding countryside; and
- Addressing other relevant policies of the District Plan as appropriate.

The principle of development at the site is well-established, with the site having first been identified in the 2014 draft of

the District Plan. The District Plan has now been subject to Examination and the Inspector's Report is due imminently. Over 2017 and 2018, Taylor Wimpey has been working with stakeholders and consultees to develop detailed plans for the site and to demonstrate the sustainability and suitability of the site for residential uses.

In addition to land north of West Road, two other sites in Sawbridgeworth have been allocated for development. These are land south of West Road for at least 175 dwellings (reference SAWB3) and land north of Sawbridgeworth for at least 200 dwellings (reference SAWB4). The sites give rise to a total allocation for Sawbridgeworth of at least 500 dwellings. The developers and promoters of all three sites are liaising with one another in respect of infrastructure matters such as highways capacity within Sawbridgeworth, to ensure their timely delivery. Land north of West Road is capable of delivering the school expansion land required to serve residents of all three allocated sites.

# 2.0 Contextual appraisal

## 2.1 Site and context analysis

### Site Analysis

#### The Site:

The proposed Sawbridgeworth development site sits to the north west of Sawbridgeworth on the outskirts of the town. It comprises 6.1 hectares of land (15.07 acres) which is currently used for agricultural purposes. The site has a fall from north east to south west of approximately 12 metres and is flattest at its north eastern edge. Site access is taken from West Road. With the exception of perimeter trees and hedgerows, the site is generally clear of any defining features and there are no existing buildings. The site includes Mandeville Primary School's existing vehicular and pedestrian access from West Road, located approximately 180 metres east of the site's main access.

To the south and along West Road towards Sawbridgeworth is 2 storey semi-detached housing. A single storey school building adjoins the site to the east with a football club beyond. A secondary school and leisure centre are situated to the north east with 2 and 2 ½ storey housing to the north east corner of the site. Open countryside flanks the western boundary and to the south west there is an emerging allocation of 175 dwellings.

- Key:
- Proposed residential allocation (SAWB2)
  - Town Centre
  - Local shops
  - Leventhorpe School
  - Mandeville Primary School
  - Local Play Area
  - Principle road
  - Proposed pedestrian / Cycle link
  - Existing pedestrian / Cycle link
  - Public Rights of Way
  - Existing bus stop
  - Railway



Fig 1. Local connectivity

# 2.0 Contextual appraisal

A public right of way running outside the northern edge of the site connects to Cambridge Road and Leventhorpe School to the east and country lanes then on towards Parsonage Lane and Beanfield Road to the west. The Mandeville Primary School access and eastern edge of the site accommodates an informal footpath which extends the full length of the site, connecting with the public right of way along the northern boundary. A second public right of way extends from West Road along the south western boundary, terminating in the field to the west of the site.

The site is well connected to Sawbridgeworth and the surrounding countryside by a series of Public Rights of Ways, footpaths and twitchels. There is the opportunity within the site to connect some of these routes to create new links between the site, the existing settlement, and other allocated development sites. The town centre is approximately 1km/12min walk from the development site and Sawbridgeworth Railway Station approximately 1.6km/20 min.

Bus stops are located on both sides of the A1184 approximately 450m walking distance from the edge of the proposed residential site and the local Sawbobus service, operated by Sawbridgeworth Town Council, runs along West Road.

- Key:
- Site boundary
  - ^ Site access
  - Mandeville Primary School site
  - School expansion (area to be confirmed)
  - Existing residential development backing site
  - Existing residential development flanking site
  - Open space frontage - fields
  - Open space frontage - playing fields
  - Existing tree & hedgerow canopies
  - Category 'B' RPA
  - Category 'C' RPA
  - Shading arc
  - Attenuation basin
  - Watercourse
  - ←--→ Public right of way (bridle way)
  - ←--→ Public right of way (footpath)
  - ←--→ Unmade footpath



Fig 2. Site Opportunities and Constraints Plan

## 3.0 Design, concepts & processes

### 3.1 Concept

The proposed Concept Master Plan layout for the SAWB2 development is shown in Fig 3. The key components have been developed from the opportunities and constraints of the site and can be summarised as follows:

- Creation of defensible green belt boundary with POS, SuDS features and high quality residential frontage.
- Green edge and residential frontage to public rights of way.
- Green links from development to open countryside.
- Maximising views of the open countryside.
- Central green with children's play located close to school.
- Landscaped gateway feature with views to countryside.
- Improved pedestrian /cycle links for existing and proposed developments.
- Perimeter block providing good definition and high levels of surveillance and security to streetscape and public realm space.
- Residential backing / flanking existing housing.
- Residential backing school and expansion land.
- Retained hedgerows and trees.
- Ecological enhancements through varied landscape design.
- Access from West Road.

### 3.2 Engagement

The development proposals have been informed by extensive engagement with officers and community stakeholders, in keeping with the guidance set out in East Herts District Council's Statement of Community Involvement and adopted master planning approach.

A master planning meeting was held with members of EHDC and Sawbridgeworth Town Council on Thursday 30th November; this allowed an initial 'round-table' exploration of key concerns and themes.

At the November master planning event, members suggested a 'walkabout tour' of Sawbridgeworth should be arranged to enable them to show Taylor Wimpey particular aspects of Sawbridgeworth's character, as well as junctions which are the subject of local concern. This tour took place Wednesday 7th March. A subsequent master planning meeting was held on the 22nd March, where members of the Shaping Sawbo group discussed the proposals and their wider aspirations for the town, with officers and Taylor Wimpey. EHDC's officers have been in ongoing discussion with the Shaping Sawbo group.

Taylor Wimpey is also currently organising a drop-in public consultation event, to which residents will be invited through

a community newsletter. The event will include information about detailed aspects of the proposals, written in non-technical language.

Residents will be invited to give feedback through a feedback form at the drop-in event, and can also contact the project team at any time through a Freephone telephone number and Freepost address.

A Statement of Community Involvement will be included in the documents submitted as part of a planning application. This will clearly set out the consultation activities that took place prior to submission, and list all the verbatim feedback received throughout the community engagement. Taylor Wimpey will explain how we have responded to the feedback received through the pre-application consultation, highlighting areas where the proposals have changed in response to feedback. Where it has not been possible to amend the scheme based on community feedback, we will explain why.

# 3.0 Design, concepts & processes

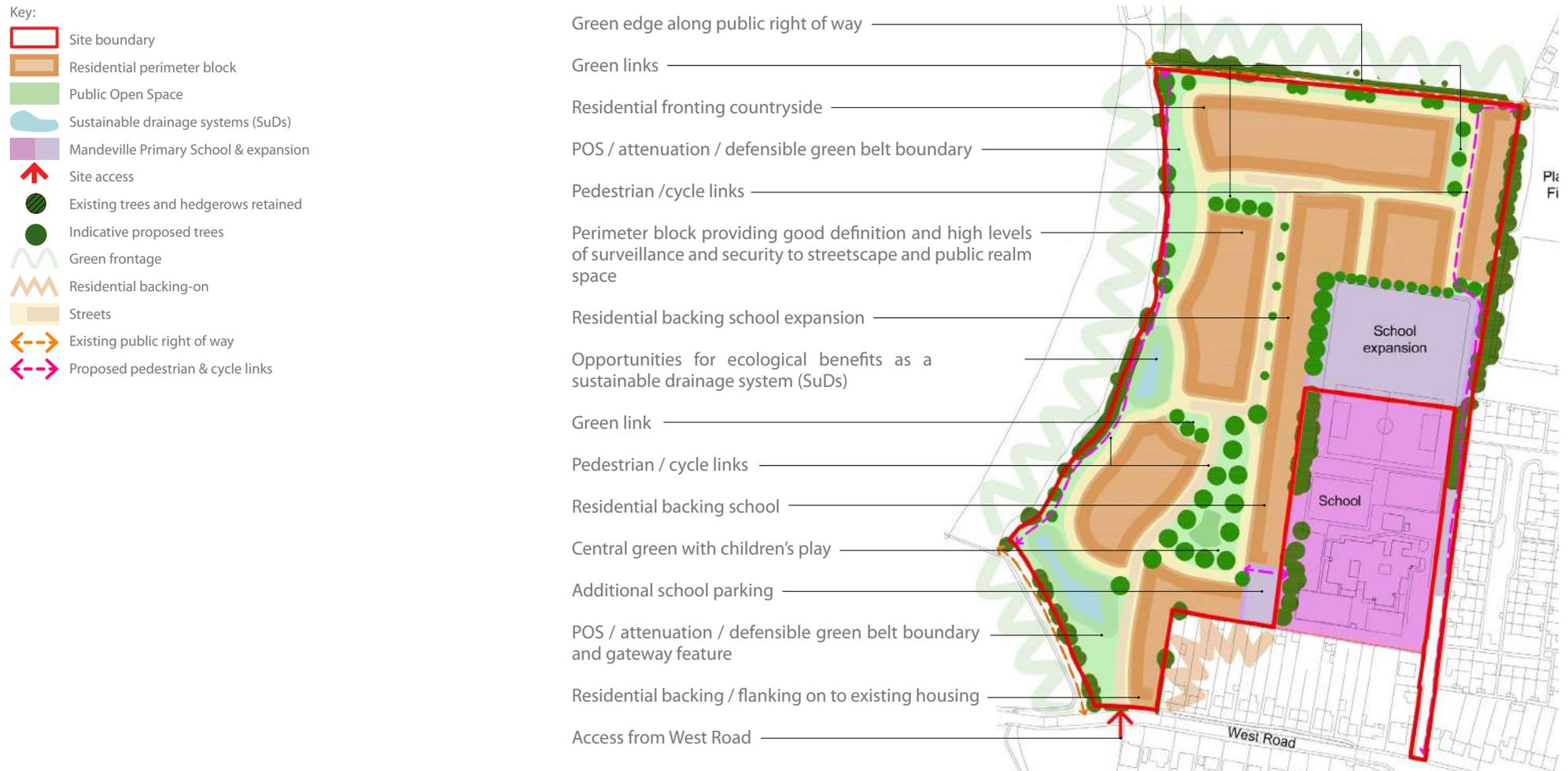


Fig 3. Proposed Site Layout - Concept

# 4.0 Proposals

## 4.1 Amount and use

The amount of development proposed has been informed through analysis of the site's constraints and opportunities. The amount of development will be further refined through the planning application and development management process

- 133 dwellings
- land to facilitate the expansion of Mandeville Primary School
- public open space including SuDS features
- children's play

The proposed 133 dwellings includes 40% affordable and will include apartments and houses ranging from 2 bedrooms to 5 bedrooms to meet local housing needs. The affordable housing will be tenure blind.

Public open space accommodating children's play is provided centrally in a high quality green at the heart of the development. A generous defensible green belt boundary running the full length of the western boundary, together with green links and squares, provides further landscaped public amenity space with recreational footways, sustainable drainage features and ecological enhancements. Focal Green spaces enhance key gateways, give the development a unique character and aid community cohesion.



Fig 4. Land uses

## 4.2 Density

The proposed residential density across the site will be between 34-40 dpha. The proposed density strategy is shown in Fig 5:

Lower density development, comprising a predominance of detached housing with some semi detached, fronts green space around the perimeter of the site. The introduction of green links and a generous defensible green belt boundary creates a looser, fragmented edge along the western boundary in response to this important edge of town location.

A medium density core, comprising a predominance of semi detached housing with some detached, runs through the centre of the site to create a more urban condition with higher density apartment buildings located to terminate key vistas and mark gateways.

The proposed density strategy, in conjunction with the street hierarchy, help to achieve variety in the development and assist legibility.

# 4.0 Proposals



Fig 5. Proposed residential densities

## 4.3 Movement and access

### Pedestrian and cycle movement:

A number of pedestrian and cycle routes are provided along the length of the site, connecting West Road with the existing Public Right of Way that runs along the northern boundary. Proposed routes include a link to the west, through the countryside defensible green belt buffer, a link to the east of Mandeville Primary School which allows for a potential link into the adjacent Crofters End development and a link through the centre of the site passing through the gateway focal green, the central green, along a tree lined avenue and green link.

Connections to the southern West Street footway are proposed via uncontrolled pedestrian crossings and a pedestrian access to Mandeville Primary School is proposed at the south east corner of the central green.

### Vehicular movement:

The site is served by a Major / Minor Access taken from a junction with West Road near to the location of the existing site access. Shared Surfaces serve less trafficked areas to encourage pedestrian and cyclist priority. The shared surface streets form a series of intimate groupings of housing, linked to aid permeability. A loop around the central green would facilitate access for the Sawbobus service.



Fig 6. Movement and access

# 4.0 Proposals

## 4.4 Car parking:

Car parking is provided on plot, concealed behind building frontage to minimise its visual impact on public realm space. Parking for houses is generally located alongside the dwelling with garages provided for private houses. Apartments are served by small parking courts located behind the apartment buildings that provide high levels of natural surveillance.

Houses have at least one space capable of being 3.3m in width. Each apartment parking court has a space with a clear access zone of 900mm.

Allocated parking is provided as follows:

- 1 bed apartments                    1 hard standing space
- 2 bed houses / apartments    2 hard standing spaces
- 3 bed houses                        2 hard standing spaces or  
    2 hard standing + 1 garage
- 4 bed houses                        3 hard standing or  
    2 hard standing + 1 garage

Unallocated on street visitor parking spaces will be included to address any shortfall created by the requirement for fractions of spaces.

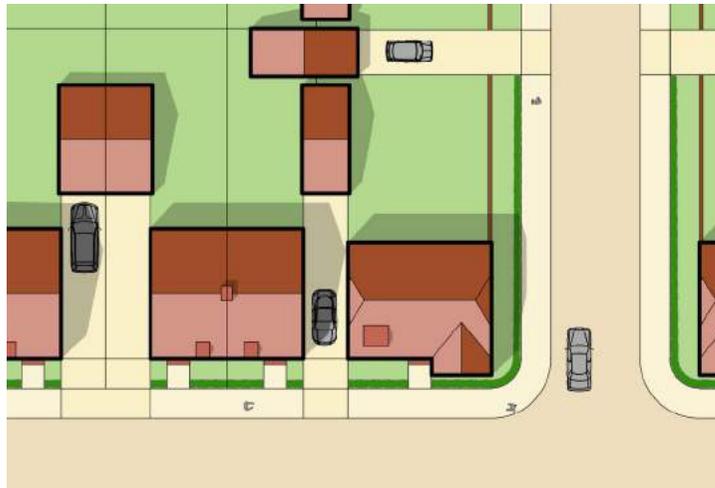


Fig 7. On plot parking for housing



Fig 8. On plot parking for apartments

## 4.5 Scale and massing

### Building Heights

Fig 9 shows the proposed range of building heights.

Proposed building heights are predominantly 2 storeys with some 2 ½ storeys, and 3 storey apartment blocks introduced at key terminating vistas to provide variety and aid legibility. 3 storey apartment blocks are located centrally to the development to avoid imposing on existing development or creating overbearing features on the green belt.

### Relationship to the surrounding area

A predominance of 2 storey semi-detached housing fronts West Road. Proposed 2 storey houses flank and backs onto the existing to create perimeter block development providing a secure and well defined public realm / private realm interface and high levels of surveillance and security to streetscape and public realm space.

Proposed housing backs or flanks the majority of the school's boundaries to provide good definition and high levels of surveillance and security to the principle access route and central focal green and minimise areas of dead frontage.

# 4.0 Proposals

Key:

- up to 2.5 storey
- indicative opportunities for 3 storey



Fig 9. Building heights

Adjacent open space and the green belt in particular is fronted by a looser broken frontage comprising a predominance of 2 storey detached houses to create an appropriate response to this edge of town, countryside frontage.

### Legibility

A series of focal landscaped spaces are proposed throughout the development. A landscaped green gateway to the development is visible from West Road and links to the countryside to the west. A central green is located in the heart of the development, approached through a narrowing in built form which terminates the vista before opening out to a landscaped green with children's play. Apartments provide marker buildings at the end of the central green before the built form closes to a tree lined principal street, again with the vista terminated by a 3 storey apartment building. A series of green links / squares connect

to the countryside and public rights of way creating a series of events, variety of public realm spaces and evolving vistas all of which help to provide unique character and encourage a cohesive community.

### Views

A landscaped gateway to the development provides high quality frontage to West Road and allows views out to the open countryside to the west. Views from the open countryside have informed a looser, broken frontage with outward facing properties and landscaping, proposed to create a high quality new edge of town to Sawbridgeworth. As well as softening the impact of the development on the green belt, landscaped breaks in built form also provide spectacular views out over the adjacent countryside for new residents and existing residents enjoying the developments facilities.

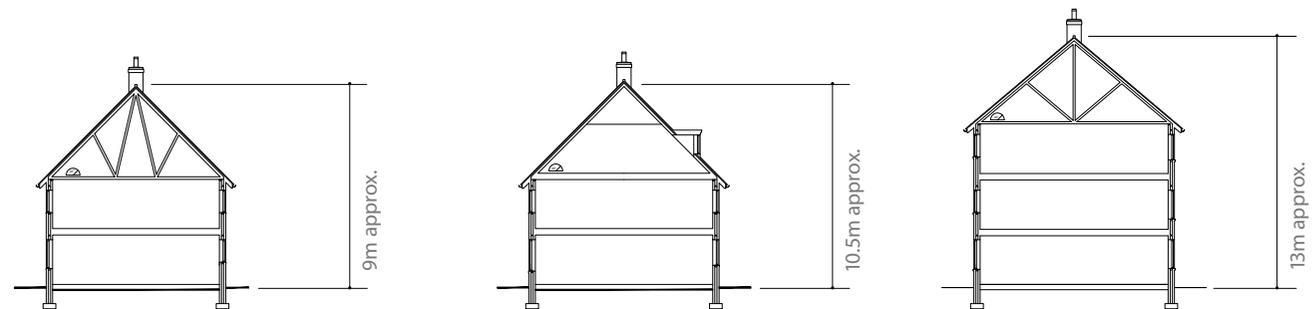


Fig 10. Indicative building heights

# 4.0 Proposals

## 4.6 Appearance and Character

The proposed development will provide higher and lower density, high quality housing in a diverse landscape setting. The appearance will be traditional detached and semi-detached forms in perimeter block development based on consensus urban design principles and objectives.

All of the buildings incorporate traditional forms with pitched roofs complementary to the surrounding development. The proposed aesthetic is a traditional vernacular style influenced by examples of mid to late 19th century houses and cottages which can be found within Sawbridgeworth.

A mixture of 2, 2½ and 3 storey buildings with varied eaves and ridge heights, dormer windows, chimneys, bays and balconies provide variety and visual interest to the streetscape.

Main entrances to dwellings front the public realm, providing attractive frontage. Dwarf walls / railings / planted front gardens will define defensible space between the public and private realms whilst contributing towards attractive streetscape.

A small considered palette of materials will create a cohesive development with variations focused on marker buildings at terminating vistas and gateways to add variety and aid legibility.



Fig 12. Indicative sketch of proposed access from West Road



Fig 11. Indicative sketch of part of the countryside edge viewed from the west

## 4.0 Proposals



Fig 13. Indicative sketch of the central green viewed form the south

# 4.0 Proposals

## 4.7 Landscape

### Existing Landscape

The vast majority of the existing landscape features on the Site will be retained as part of development proposals. Located to the site boundaries, the mature trees and tree lines will be retained and will provide a landscape framework for the development.

### Landscape Design Principles

#### Gateway Landscaping;

- Set development back from West Road to respect the character of the approach to Sawbridgeworth and provide an attractive setting for the new homes;
- Advanced stock tree planting at the development access and continued along the main spine road to create an attractive approach into the development;
- A new feature timber rail will create a defined boundary to the development.

#### Amenity Landscaping & Public Open Space (POS);

- A landscaped central green at the heart of the development incorporating focal tree planting, seating and children's play;
- Recreational footways within POS and new pedestrian links to the adjoining streets and houses;
- Ornamental tree and shrub planting to soften the built

development and provide an attractive streetscape;

- Wildflower meadows within the POS that create visual interest alongside seasonal bulb planting that will enhance biodiversity and habitat creation across the development.

#### New Green Belt Boundary & Tree Planting;

- New tree and hedgerow planting along the western boundary to create a new defensible boundary to the Green Belt and a soft development edge;
- New native hedgerow planting along the Public Right of Way to the north and the route of the bridleway to the southwest to respect the amenity of its users;
- Provide additional interest and structure to open space;
- Plant specimen trees to focal points within the POS and street scene;
- Plant street trees to create character and add legibility to the layout.

#### Recreation & Play;

- Create a play area for young children (LEAP) primarily up to the ages of 10 years old alongside a door step play area (LAP) for toddlers within the central 'village green';
- Create opportunities for natural play within play areas and POS through natural landscape features, such as boulders and earth mounds;

- Create a wide range of play opportunities across the site for able and less able children.

### Drainage Summary

A Flood Risk Assessment and a Drainage Strategy have been prepared for land north of West Road. The site itself lies within Flood Zone 1 and is at low risk of flooding from rivers or the sea. The site is at low risk of flooding from all other sources. As such, it is considered that residential development at the site is appropriate in flood risk terms.

A surface water drainage strategy drawing has been produced which shows how surface water run-off from the development could be controlled and discharged to the adjacent watercourse. The surface water drainage strategy uses a combination of traditional piped drainage, underground attenuation, open attenuation and flow control devices to capture, treat and discharge the surface water run-off from the site. The open attenuation basins are located along the western boundary of the site and will be integrated into the wider landscaping strategy for the site, with appropriate planting.

Foul water from the development will discharge to the public foul sewer in West Road. TW has confirmed through pre-application discussions that there is no requirement to upgrade the off-site foul sewers.

# 4.0 Proposals



Fig 14. Illustrative images of the landscape features and children's play facilities



Fig 15. Proposed Landscape Strategy Plan tbi

## 5.0 Illustrative Concept Master Plan

The layout responds to its context through the careful consideration of building orientation and the arrangement of different building typologies in order to deliver a diverse, high quality and well connected development that is responsive, attractive and sensitive to its setting.

The form of residential layout is perimeter block providing good definition and high levels of surveillance and security to streetscape and public realm space whilst concealing the parked car behind building frontage to minimise its visual impact. The form of layout is organic generally, reflecting the shape of the site and constraints / requirements of the western green belt buffer and SuDS drainage. Towards the centre and east of the development the layout becomes more rectilinear in form in response to boundaries with existing development. This works in unison with the density strategy, strengthening the variation between the rural countryside edge and more urban core, providing a unique sense of place.

The school expansion is located predominantly to the north of the existing school site with a smaller area of expansion to the site's south west providing for additional car parking requirements and a new pedestrian and cycle access for the school.

The development fronts West Road, complementing the existing development grain to provide good definition and high levels of

surveillance and security to streetscape and public realm space where existing and proposed developments come together. A well defined focal green at the entrance to the site maintains views through to the open countryside, enhances the gateway to the development and responds to the sensitive green belt interface.

Housing fronting the open countryside to the west creates a high quality new edge of settlement to the town of Sawbridgeworth. A generous defensible green belt boundary, green links, lower density fragmented development, and variety of landscape treatments and depths all contribute towards this high quality development edge and provide spectacular views out over the adjacent countryside.

A central green with children's play and landscaped amenity open space is located at the heart of the development to provide a focal point which as well as serving the new and existing communities is also ideally located to in relation to Mandeville Primary School.

A series of green links, squares and north / south pedestrian and cycle links connect with public rights of way and improve permeability, in particular between Cambridge Road and Leventhorp School to the east and West Road and Mandeville Primary School to the south.

Existing trees and hedgerows have been retained.

The site is served by a Major Access taken from a junction with West Road dropping in stature to a Minor Access serving the developments centre north of the central green. Shared Surfaces serve less trafficked areas to encourage pedestrian and cyclist priority. The shared surface streets form a series of intimate groupings of housing with links to aid permeability.

A predominance of semi-detached houses and apartment blocks along the Minor Access and first stretch of shared surface gives the centre of the development a more urban character where as a greater number of detached houses gives a more suburban feel to the development edges, in particular to the west which works in conjunction with the landscape proposals to create a looser, broken countryside edge.

Apartments have been located to terminate key vistas and define gateways as one moves through the development. Apartments are located in close proximity to a wide variety of open amenity space and parking courts serving the apartments are located behind building frontage.

The creation of a unique and varied development in response to the site's existing opportunities and constraints give the development a unique character and aid community cohesion.

# 5.0 Illustrative Concept Master Plan

Perimeter block provides good definition and high levels of surveillance and security to streetscape and public realm space

Well defined public and private realm

Parked car concealed behind building frontage to minimise its visual impact

A range of accommodation including;

1 and 2 bed apartments

2, 3 and 4 bed housing

40% affordable distributed across the site

A predominance of detached housing, combined with proposed green links creates a lower density, fragmented edge to this important edge of town condition

A predominance of semidetached housing creates a medium density suburban core and interface with existing development

Apartments located as marker buildings terminate key vistas and define gateways

3 storey apartments located centrally avoid imposing on existing development or the green belt frontage (2-2.5 storeys is proposed for housing)

The proposals density and landscape strategies in conjunction with the street hierarchy help to achieve variety and aid legibility

Site wide density in the range of 34-40 dpha

Front gardens provide defensible space and opportunities for soft landscaping within streetscape. Deeper front gardens along the countryside frontage contribute to the countryside edge character

Bins / bike storage provided behind building frontage with direct access to street

Perimeter block compliments existing development; backing onto residential properties along West Road and Mandeville Primary School maximises surveillance and security / minimises dead frontage



Fig 16. Illustrative Concept Master Plan, MRA drwg SK02.4

**Taylor**  
**Wimpey**