



COUNTRYSIDE
Places People Love

Bishop's Stortford South



THE VISION FOR BISHOP'S STORTFORD SOUTH

Our vision is to create a place that offers inhabitants a sense of 'belonging', a place they can be proud of and feel part of a community. We will deliver a sustainable community; a community that provides a well-rounded balance of facilities, serving the needs of all ages in an integrated and well considered way.

The characteristics of the existing local community, the unique history of Bishop's Stortford and its rural hinterland provide the context upon which the character of Bishop's Stortford South will take influence, providing continuity with the key design traits and historic rural patterns of development found locally.

The Vision is founded on six key objectives:

- 1 Deliver a landscape-led development with memorable sequences of attractive spaces
- 2 Protect and enhance existing wildlife and natural features of the site
- 3 Provide new housing at the right scale and of the right type to meet the whole of the community's needs
- 4 Create a vibrant village 'hub' connecting key facilities including schools, shops, and employment facilities creating local job opportunities
- 5 Provide attractive pedestrian and cycle routes utilising green corridor and public spaces to connect to valued nearby amenities
- 6 Promote healthy lifestyles through sustainable transport measures, access to green space, designed with the community in mind.

These six objectives have shaped the Masterplan Framework and design decisions.



Countryside believes that where people live matters.

Each of our schemes are different and respond to the specific local context and features of the site. We look to use our creative place-making skills to create an environment residents are proud to call home.

We carefully masterplan our developments to integrate new facilities so they can benefit residents, delivering necessary supporting infrastructure and placing an emphasis on landscape-led design.

Some examples of previous and emerging developments you may be familiar with include:



At St Michael's Mead the sensitive design approach echoing the Hertfordshire village vernacular was recognised as a winning scheme by RIBA at the Housing Design Awards in 1998 and 2000.

Countryside has earned a reputation for high quality, community-led design and won 'Large Housebuilder of the Year 2017' at the Housebuilder Awards for our innovative Abode scheme at Great Kneighton, Cambridge.



East Herts District Plan Draft Policy BISH 5 provides the framework for the development of Bishop's Stortford South.

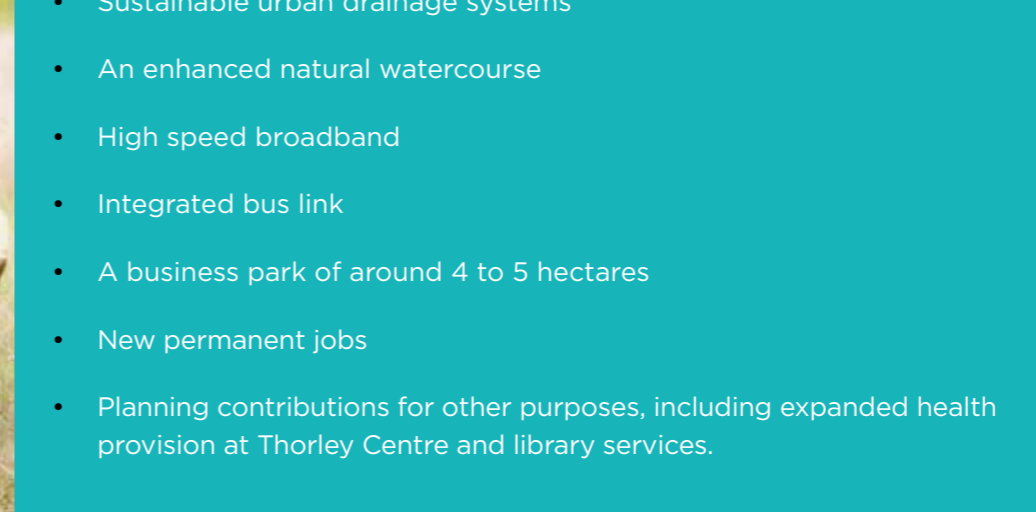


The proposal will come forward initially as an outline application for the site as a whole, with detailed information for the key internal north-south bus route as well as the first phase of development north of the Hertfordshire Way. The site will be developed out in phases with detailed applications coming forward at a later date.



Countryside's proposals will deliver a number of economic, social and community benefits:

- Affordable homes
- Care home
- Local centre, community facilities and retail opportunities
- Landscaping, public open space and children's play areas
- Nursery, primary and secondary school provision
- Sports facilities for community use
- Sustainable urban drainage systems
- An enhanced natural watercourse
- High speed broadband
- Integrated bus link
- A business park of around 4 to 5 hectares
- New permanent jobs
- Planning contributions for other purposes, including expanded health provision at Thorley Centre and library services.



The Site

The site is located on the southern fringe of the town and is bounded by St. James Way to the south, Obrey Way to the west, Whittington Way to the north and the rear gardens of properties along Thorley Street (B1383) to the east. The majority of the site comprises agricultural land, set out as five irregularly shaped arable fields, separated by small hedgerows and ditches.

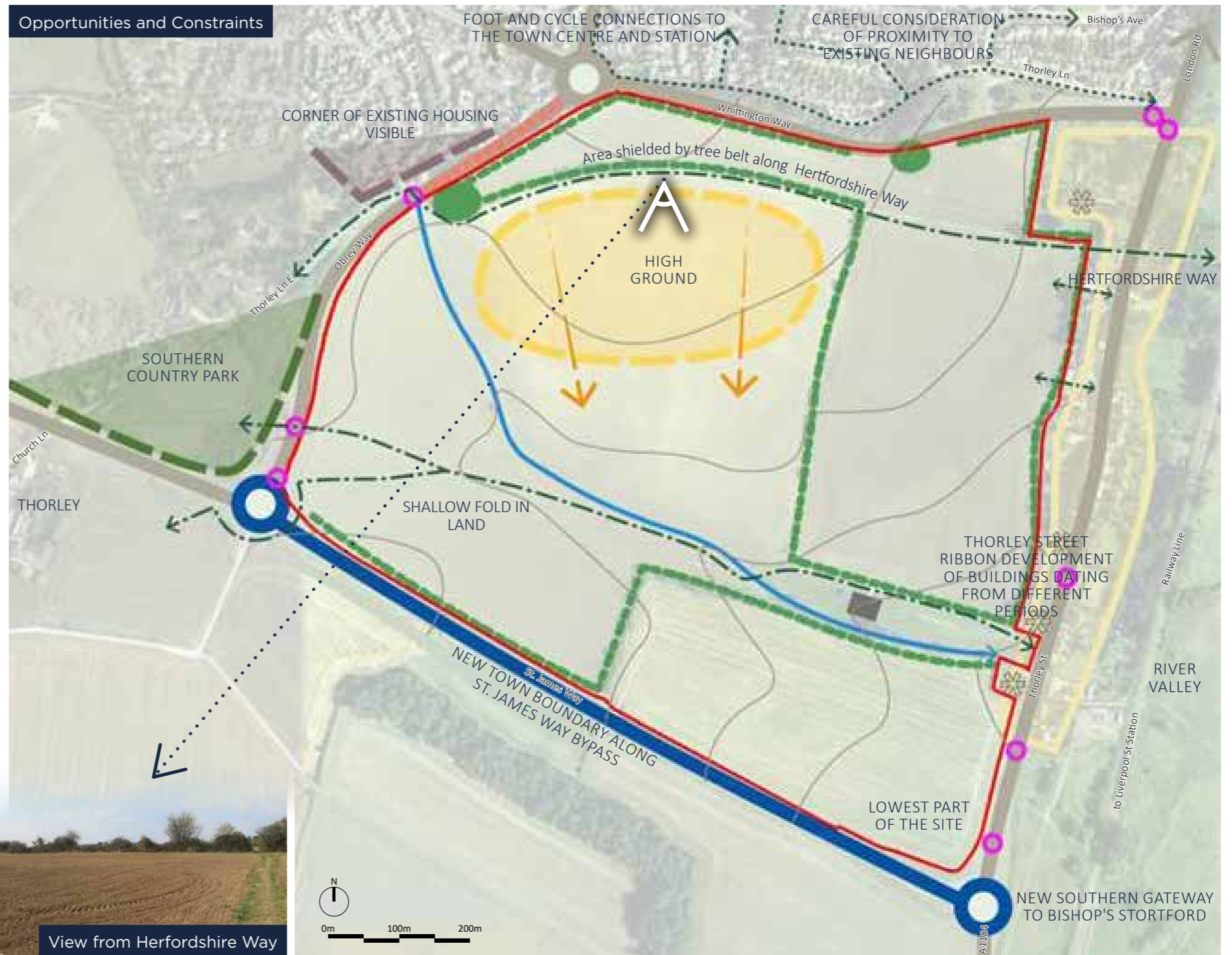
The northernmost field is bound along its southern edge by a long distance public footpath - the Hertfordshire Way. A second public right of way crosses the southern part of the site in a similar east-west direction. The site generally slopes from its northern and western edges down to the southeast corner, at the A1184/B1383 junction.



- The majority of existing copses, hedgerow trees and hedges on site would be retained except in those areas where a new access or a new footpath needs to be formed
- Part of Obrey Way is relatively narrow and unsuitable for heavy goods vehicles
- There are no built heritage assets within the site, however, a number of listed buildings border the site to the east
- There are currently very limited areas of existing semi-natural habitat and there is significant opportunity to improve the overall biodiversity of the site
- The existing agricultural ditch that runs through the site provides a feature by which to structure the layout of the development to maximise drainage, recreation and biodiversity benefits within an enhanced corridor
- The route of the existing Public Rights of Way will provide a network of multifunctional open spaces, with connections to valued nearby facilities including the Southern Country Park.

The Hertfordshire Way

Emerging proposals would seek to maintain open views from the high ground and from the Hertfordshire Way, along the Stort valley to the southeast.



View from Hertfordshire Way

- | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Site Boundary | Key foot and cycle connections | Existing Tree/Hedgerow | Long Views from Hertfordshire Way | Existing Crossings |
| Listed Buildings | Watercourse | Narrow Road Section | Existing Electricity Substation | 5m Contours |
| Right of Way (public footpaths) | Southern Country Park | Thorley Street Buildings | | |

Local Character

A character study has been carried out to gain an in-depth understanding of the local context and ensure that proposals reflect the rich heritage of Bishop's Stortford and its hinterland. The local area contains some very fine architecture of varying types and scales from the past few centuries. Of particular relevance to the master planning is the character of each of the streets and spaces within a hierarchy from the busiest thoroughfares down to the smallest courtyard spaces. Buildings must positively address the environment adjacent to them in a manner which reflects the hierarchy of those routes and spaces.





Key:

- Existing Roads
- Proposed Main New Access
- Proposed Secondary New Access Points
- Phase 1 Access Points
- Proposed Village High Street
- Proposed East-West Link
- Existing Public Rights Of Way
- Existing Pedestrian / Cycle Routes
- Key Proposed Pedestrian / Cycle Routes
- Indicative Location of Proposed Pedestrian / Cycle Crossing
- Landscaped Feature Celebration Point to ensure the continuity of the Hertfordshire Way (location of bus only section subject to Highways approval)
- Watercourse
- Existing Vegetation

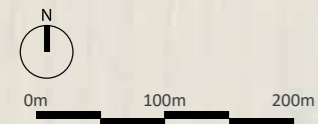
Indicative Extent of:

- Residential Area
- Local Centre
- Employment Area
- Primary Education
- Secondary Education
- Green Infrastructure
- Multi-functional Open Space (including play and kick-about areas, meadows and orchards)

Masterplan Framework

The purpose of the Masterplan Framework is to provide a design framework within which Countryside will bring together a planning application for Bishop's Stortford South.

It sets out key access and layout features of the scheme, and includes key principles to guide the Council and Design Team on any subsequent planning application. The principle of development will be established by the District Plan. The Masterplan Framework is a stepping stone between the District Plan allocation and a planning application.



new Toucan and Zebra crossings to prioritise safe pedestrian and cyclist crossing points along Whittington Way

bus only link subject to Highway's approval to minimise traffic onto Whittington Way

retention of existing trees, copses

land for secondary school providing dual use of facilities for community purposes (enabling the likely relocation of Bishop's Stortford High School)

SOUTHERN COUNTRY PARK

Thorley Ln

Church Ln

THORLEY

school buildings positioned on the lower part of site

quality pedestrian and cycle links to surrounding countryside and existing neighbourhoods

noise mitigation measures with use of careful planting and landscaping to create a varied frontage

neighbourhoods inspired by the local Hertfordshire village vernacular

Secondary school site

Primary school site

BUS ROUTE

HABITAT CORRIDOR

LOCAL CENTRE

EMPLOYMENT

separation of employment traffic

legible streetscape to aid navigation

provision of a key bus route to encourage modal shift and reduce car use

sensitive edge to existing homes on Thorley Street will be limited to 2.5 storeys

tree lined streets to form part of the landscape and visual mitigation

key wayfinding nodes across the development creating local distinctiveness

Whittington Way

Hertfordshire Way

Obrey Way

St. James Way

Thorley Ln

Bishop's Ave

London Rd

Rail to Liverpool St and Cambridge

RIVER VALLEY

A1184

Engagement in the Masterplanning Process

This Masterplan Framework is informed by active engagement, over a period of years, with the Neighbourhood Plan for All Saints, Central, South and Parts of Thorley Ward; key local stakeholder groups; meetings with District and County officers as well as statutory consultees; a seven week period of public consultation; an All Member Workshop; and two Member Steering Group meetings. The feedback from all of these activities has fed into this framework.

Images:

1. Member tour of Beaulieu, January 2018
2. Exhibition at BSHS, January 2018
3. Neighborhood Plan tours of Great Kneighton, Cambridge, March 2016
4. Member's working group, Charis Centre, December 2017
5. Public exhibitions, December 2017



A driving principle is a landscape-led approach seeking to retain and enhance existing hedges and trees, the watercourse, and public footpaths to create an attractive network of multifunctional open spaces.

Design will prioritise health and wellbeing with children's play and kick-about areas, meadow and orchards.

Green Corridor

The green corridor is an important spine that runs through the centre of the proposal, providing a multifunctional role. A sitewide sustainable drainage scheme linked to the watercourse will improve water levels and water quality in the watercourse as well as provide new riparian habitat such as reed beds and increased plant diversity.

The corridor will be overlooked from at least one side along its length providing pleasant views, and will include extensive areas of informal open space and opportunity for gentle recreation and quiet enjoyment of wildlife.

Village Green

The village greens are smaller, more intimate public spaces scattered around the development, often containing play spaces and overlooked by houses. These areas create a linked frontage to ensure a good sense of enclosure. The spaces will be naturalistic in appearance with native trees and meadow grass.

Edible Landscape

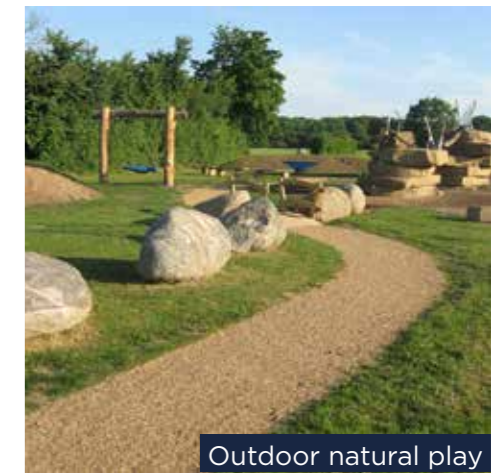
The landscape strategy will incorporate food plants as both an aesthetic design feature and also as a source of fresh and natural fruits for informal community consumption and enjoyment. This may include fruit and nut trees, edible flowers and berry bushes. Planting areas will have year round interest that includes sensory and edible fruit bearing plants and trees that will provide a play value, incidental learning and attract wildlife. To encourage foraging across the site, edible fruit bearing species will be present in the choice of parkland trees, woodland thickets, hedge mixes, shrubs and planting areas. For example, orchard areas will provide an attractive summer blossom and an relaxed landscape area.



Green Corridor



Edible landscape



Outdoor natural play



Village Green



Secondary and Primary Schools

Schools will be located centrally with school buildings on lower ground and playing fields to the north to retain the character of and open views from Hertfordshire Way along the Stort Valley to the south.

Land for a secondary school will allow for the relocation and expansion of the Bishop's Stortford High School (The Boys' School) currently located on London Road. Indoor and outdoor sports facilities (provided as part of the secondary school) will be shared for community use.



Hertfordshire Way

The Hertfordshire Way is a long distance public footpath that passes through the site over the crest of the hill. It is not open to use by cyclists.

The paths through the site will be open to all users, dog walkers and joggers, and provide informal connections to the Southern Country Park and a town-wide route.

The new school fence on the southern side of the Hertfordshire Way will be sunken into a ditch to preserve the footpath's scenic charm.



The development will comprise a mix of house types; 1 and 2 bed apartments for smaller households and family housing (2, 3, 4 and 5 bedroom, a mixture of detached, semi-detached and terraced homes with private gardens).

We are seeking to provide a rich variety of traditional streets and spaces throughout the new neighbourhood. These streets will provide an attractive connected network, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.

The development is likely to include six distinct character areas. The residential-led character areas are expected to comprise:

Northern Neighbourhood

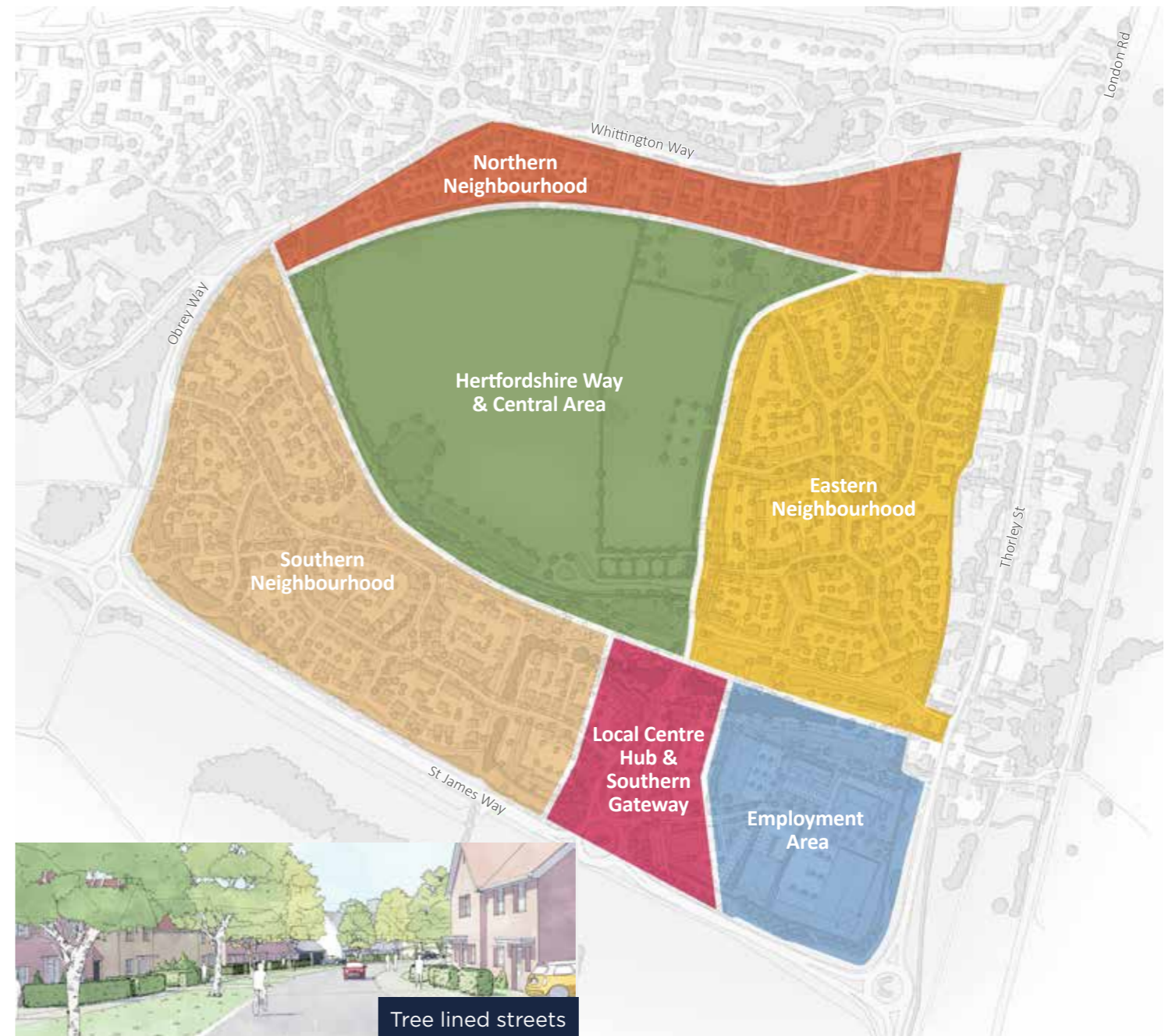
The Northern Neighbourhood will play a key role in welcoming people into the site from the north, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists as well as people using public transport services through the site reaching the educational, employment and local centre facilities to the south. The linear east-west nature of the neighbourhood will be defined by building frontages along Whittington Way and the Hertfordshire Way, which will be screened by both existing and proposed trees, creating a green edge to this neighbourhood. A mix of 2, 2.5 and 3 storeys homes will be provided with landmark features and high scale and massing defining key corners, nodes and spaces.

Eastern Neighbourhood

The village high street runs to the West of this neighbourhood which provides an important building frontage to this key link through the site. Continuous building frontage will provide a sense of enclosure to the street and reflect the Hertfordshire village high street character. Tree lined green streets will run diagonally through the neighbourhood which gently slopes to the watercourse to the south, with larger trees over time providing a green screening to development when seen from a distance. Properties along the western edge of this neighbourhood will have been carefully considered and will be up to 2.5 storeys to ensure a sensitive approach to existing properties along Thorley street, particularly where listed buildings are located. A central incidental open space will provide a focus of activity for residents with direct connections to a meadow and orchard to the north east.

Southern Neighbourhood

The largest of the three residential character areas, the Southern neighbourhood will provide a new key edge for Bishop's Stortford along St. James Way, as well as providing a new frontage to the Southern Country Park and Obrey Way to the west, and overlooking the green corridor to the north. Development will be limited to two storeys along the southern and western boundaries creating a gentle urban-rural edge character. Two Public Rights of Way run through this neighbourhood converging, together with a secondary east-west route, at a Village Green which will form the heart of this neighbourhood, and provide attractive links to the Country Park.



Masterplanning Principles: Village Hub

A mix of facilities is proposed fronting onto the village high street (north-south route) from the local centre and care home, past the schools up to a village green in the north.

Located on the lowest part of the site at a key node visible from St James' Way and London Road, the Southern Gateway will act as a community hub with opportunity for a local café, retail and convenience shopping.

The Southern Gateway will be formed around an open space overlooked and enclosed on two sides with buildings. The space will be semi-formal in nature to reflect its position in the higher density part of the site. Planting will be limited to large trees and grass, with areas of bulb planting.

The local centre will seek to take design cues from the high street character of Bishop's Stortford, in particular North Street, located within the historic centre, in its roof form and height.

Proposed commercial uses within the site could make reference to 19th century buildings through their layout, materials and detailing.

The Southern Gateway provides primary access from a roundabout on St James' Way, enabling the separation of employment related traffic - a key aspiration of the neighbourhood plan.



Gateway entrance



Tree planting will feature in public spaces



Local centre



Local precedents to inform local centre and employment building character



The core objective is to encourage as many journeys as practical by means other than the private car.

Walking and Cycling

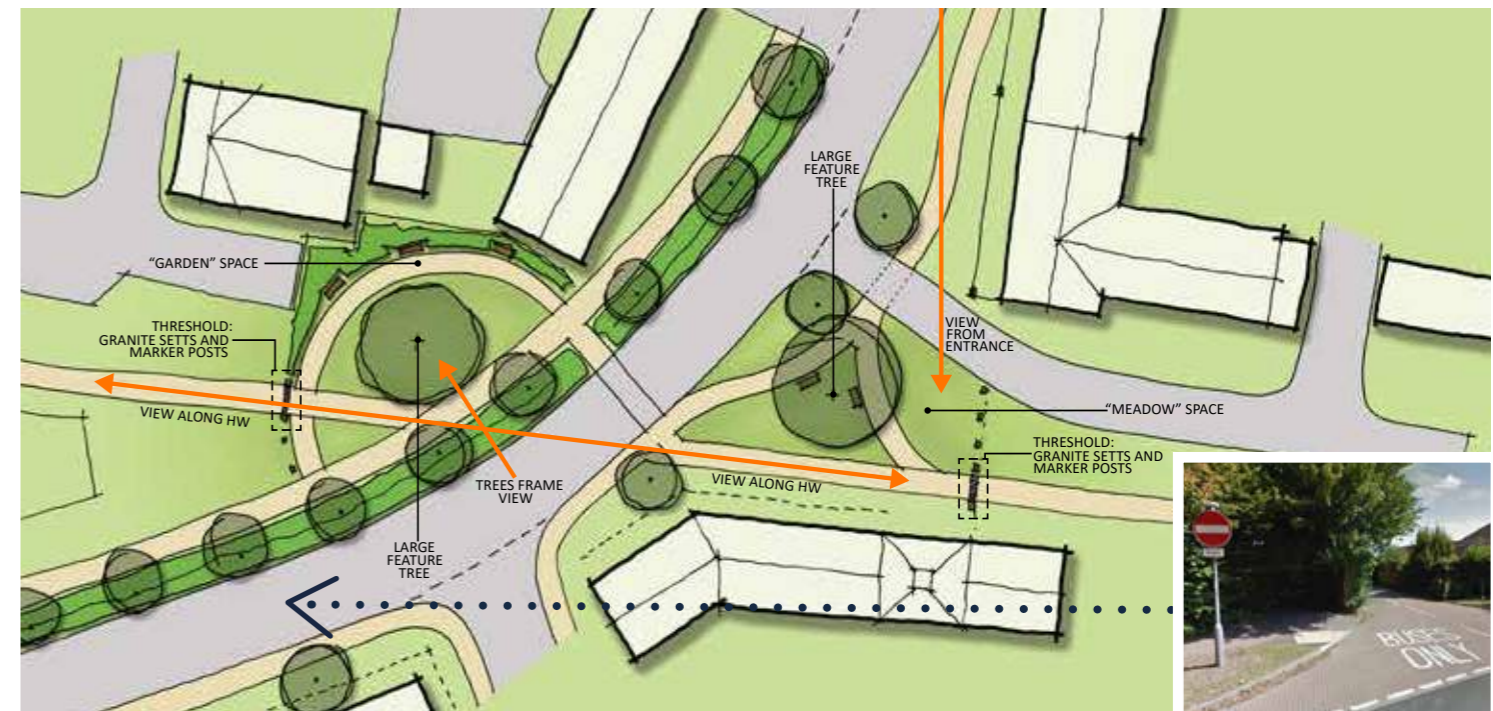
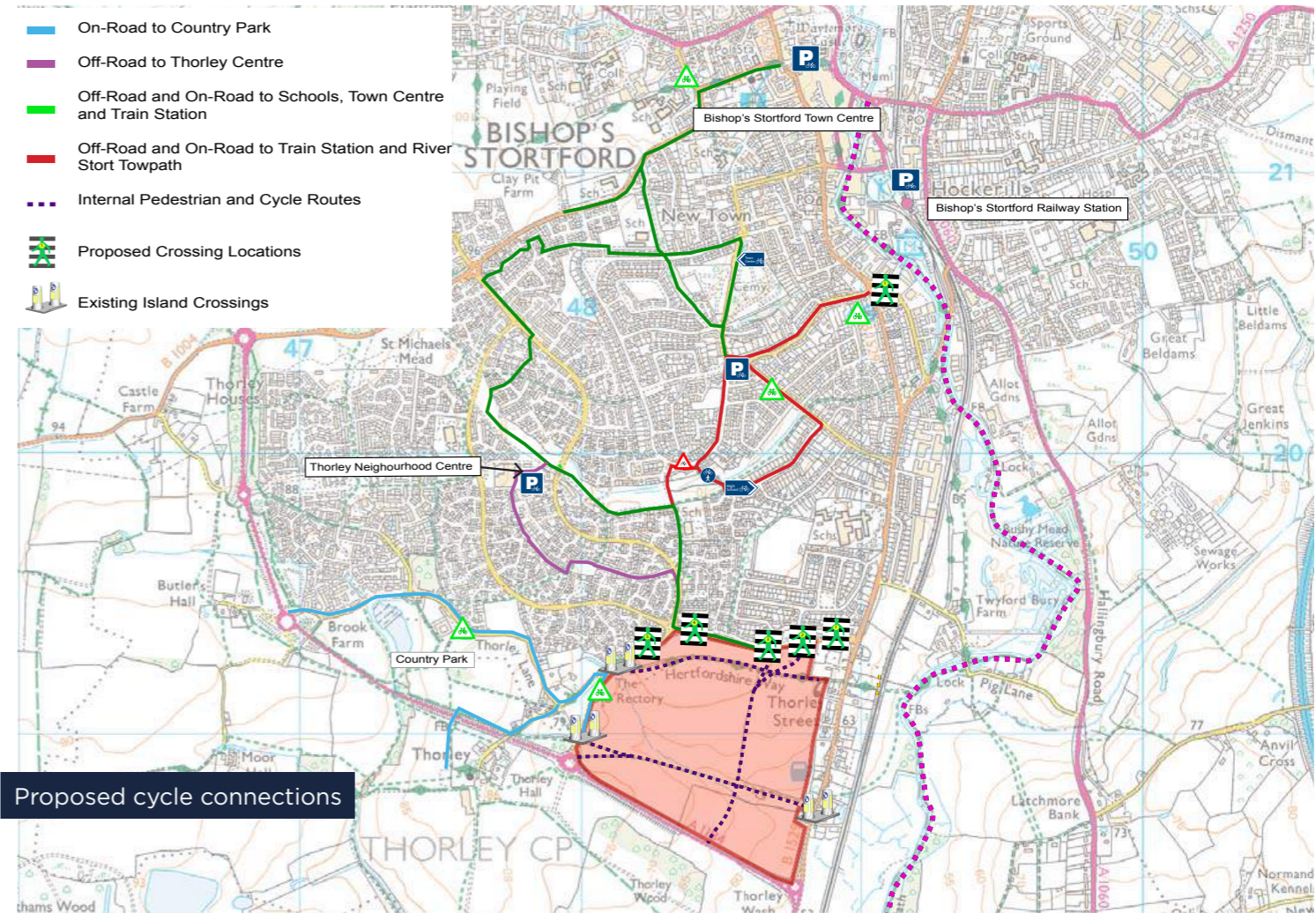
The proposals will encourage journeys on foot and by cycle, both from the development and to the school and the facilities on site, and will include:

- Safe and interconnected footways and cycleways within the development, including a 4m footway/cycleway link from the schools along an internal key route
- A series of new and enhanced formal crossings on Whittington Way and Obrey Way including a Zebra and a Toucan
- Informal recreational walking and cycling routes to provide attractive leisure opportunities.

New streets will be designed to encourage low vehicle speeds. This is likely to include the introduction of a 20mph speed limit across the whole of the site, subject to Highway's approval.

Awareness will be a major part of encouraging people to walk, cycle and use the public transport. The awareness strategy will ensure that all future residents understand the options available to make journeys by non-car means, information on future bus times, where buses stop, and walking and cycle routes as well as cycle training for residents will be extended to the immediate neighbourhood around the development.

To celebrate and encourage the use of the Hertfordshire Way as a long-distance footpath crossing the site, the scheme will incorporate a landscape feature point at the crossing point over the new village high street and north of the bus only section. This feature point will be simple and yet attractive, framed by trees and bringing the footpath's routes together. Initial design ideas propose this feature could be shaped around the concept of providing two resting spaces for weary travellers – one to the east as a continuation of a meadow, and another to the west more gardenesque in style.



Bus Link

The main street through the site will provide a mix of uses along it and the opportunity to provide bus services to the schools and local centre, thereby minimising congestion. A bus only section will provide a competitive advantage over the private car. The primary access to the site will be from St James' Way. Additional secondary points of access will be carefully positioned on Whittington Way and Obrey Way.

Countryside will introduce new bus services for the development, to seek to encourage people to make journeys by bus through the provision of high quality information and initial free travel. Countryside have found that once people get used to making journeys by bus during the incentive period, then a considerable proportion continue to make journeys once the incentive period finishes.

Countryside are working with the local bus operator Arriva on the scope to introduce new services, including real time travel information at bus stops for the emerging proposal and the surrounding area. The site is readily accessible from the station by bus, but one of the key issues is ensuring the bus times are linked with train times. At Beaulieu in Chelmsford, Countryside have introduced a new bus service which is scheduled to arrive at least 5 minutes before a train departs and leave 5 minutes after a train arrives. This is in addition to ensuring that bus services start early in the morning and finish late in the evening, so it is a valid option for those who have to start early or stay late for any reason.

This attention to detail can make a considerable difference to how many people travel, and for their Beaulieu scheme in Chelmsford, nearly 25% of journeys in the peak period are made by bus, which is over double that which occurs in the local area.

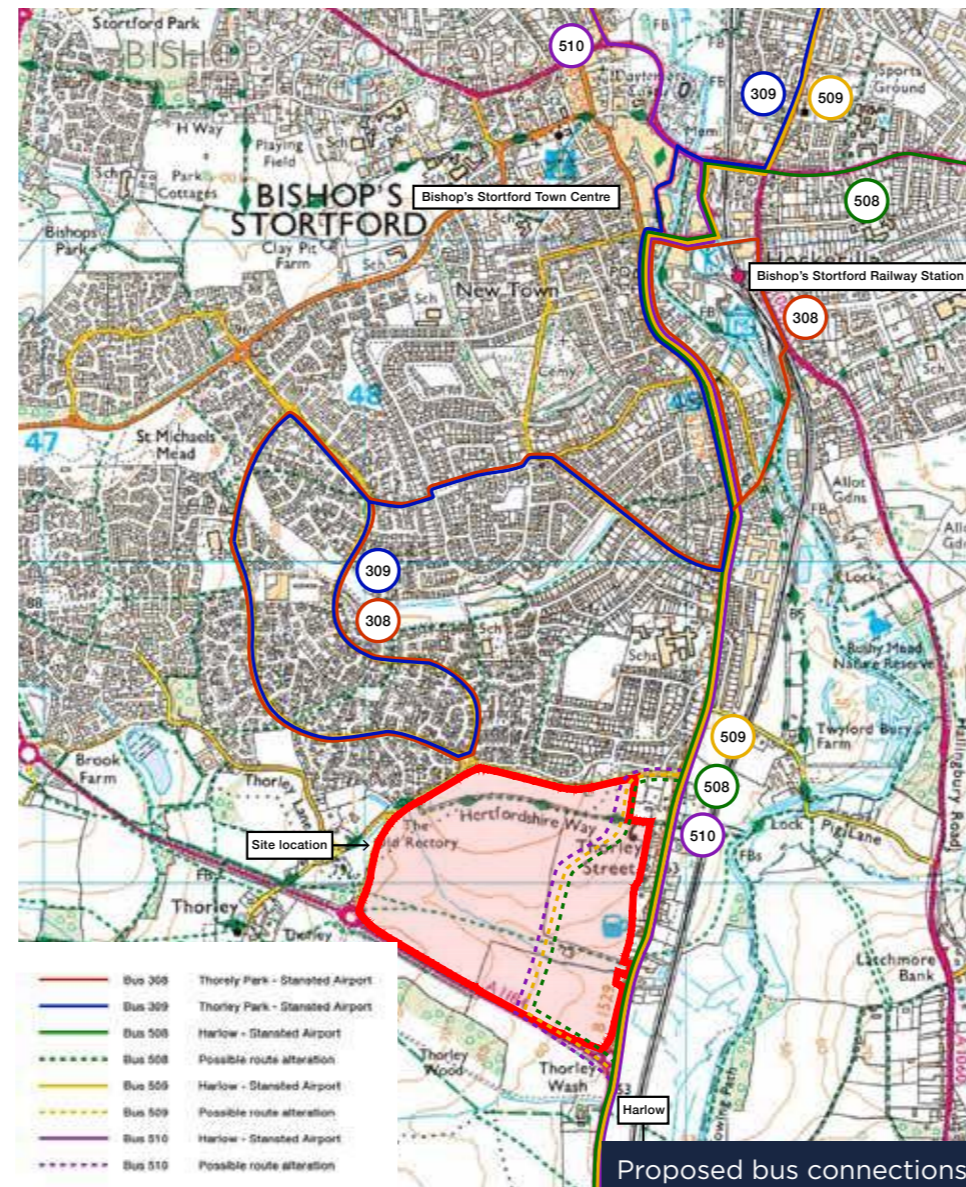
Countryside's Beaulieu scheme has won the Award for Infrastructure Planning at the Planning Awards June 2018. Judges praised our 'integrated approach' and described the project as 'an excellent example of total infrastructure consideration: transport, social and education.'

A bus-only link located south of the first phase of development will limit additional car traffic turning onto Whittington Way, whilst promoting a regular and efficient bus service

School Travel Plan

A green travel plan will be devised for the secondary school as part of it's detailed proposals dealt with as part of a later reserved matters application. The School Travel Plan will make pupils and staff aware of:

- The Scheduled Bus Services, which will stop next to the School Entrance
- The Dedicated School Bus Services
- The signage and route upgrades to the pedestrian and cycle routes to and from the site to the principal destinations within the Town Centre
- The pedestrian routes within the site and the crossings to be provided on Whittington Way and Obrey Way



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- 3. Select...**
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- 5. Activate...**
...your ticket JUST BEFORE you get on the bus.
- 6. Show...**
...the driver the ticket on your phone.

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Countryside's schemes fully embrace the 'Building for Life 12' as a design tool. We are highly experienced in place-making. Our scheme at St Michael's Mead, Thorley Lane, is cited in the 2018 BfL12 standards as a best practice example.



Criteria:

1

Connections

The scheme will integrate with its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new connections, including to the network of foot and cycle routes, which link to the town centre, railway station, and Thorley neighbourhood centre to the north, the Southern Country Park to the west and the River Stort valley to the east.

2

Facilities and services

The development will provide an extensive variety of new community facilities, including local shops, schools, employment, public open space including children's play areas, the shared use of the secondary school's sports facilities, and a care home.

3

Public transport

A village high street providing a north-south bus corridor link will be accommodated on-site, which will serve inter-urban and school bus services and will provide connections to the town centre, railway station and local towns and villages. Along with free bus vouchers for new residents, this will help to minimise dependency on the private car.

4

Meeting local housing requirements

The development will provide a mix of housing types and tenures to address local housing needs. This will include a variety of new affordable, open-market and self-build homes. Properties will be provided with fibre broadband and be 'EV' ready.

5

Character

Plans for the site will incorporate a number of distinct character areas. These will take inspiration from the local vernacular, including the picturesque villages found in this part of Hertfordshire. Sensitive design treatments to the east of the site will respect the existing buildings (including listed buildings) along Thorley Street.

6

Working with the site and its context

The scheme will be respectful of, and benefit from, the existing topography, landscape features and watercourses found on-site. This will include: the creation of a new green corridor along the route of the existing ditch; locating school playing fields on the high ground to the south of the Hertfordshire Way to preserve views to the south; and where possible preserving and enhancing existing hedgerows on-site.

7 Creating well defined streets and spaces

The scheme will be led by a bespoke landscape strategy, with new soft and hard landscaping used to define and enhance key streets and public spaces. Spaces and streets will be framed by buildings that front them, creating positive relationships between built form and public realm and offering passive surveillance through overlooking.

8 Easy to find your way around

The scheme will be designed to incorporate legible neighbourhoods and to promote walking and cycling across the site and beyond. Buildings of landmark design will feature at key nodes to ensure that it is instinctively easy to find your way around.

9 Streets for all

Any new streets will be designed to encourage low vehicle speeds and to allow them to function as social spaces. This is likely to include the introduction of a 20 mph speed limit across the whole of the site, subject to Highway's approval.

10 Car parking

Resident, commercial, school and visitor parking will be well integrated into the development and wherever possible will be off-street to create a more attractive environment and to encourage other forms of travel.

11 Public and private spaces

The scheme will include clearly defined and attractive public and private spaces. A specialist body, such as the Land Trust (a national charity), will be appointed to manage and maintain public spaces.

12 External storage and amenity

All new homes will comply with relevant design standards and guidance in respect of amenity/garden space, bin and recycling storage, vehicle and cycle parking and other sustainability requirements, as well as being supplied with fibre broadband and made ready for electric vehicle charging.