



the bishop's stortford high school

Masterplan Document

December 2019



contents

1.0 introduction

- 1.1 Overview
- 1.2 The Vision
- 1.3 Site Boundary and Location

2.0 site context

- 2.1 Site Context Analysis
- 2.2 Site Context of Southern Bishop's Stortford
- 2.3 Landscape and Environment
- 2.4 Characteristics of the Site
- 2.5 Design Constraints and Opportunities

3.0 community engagement

- 3.1 Statement of Community Involvement
- 3.2 Illustrative Masterplan Evolution

4.0 design concept & principles

- 4.1 Development Principles
- 4.2 Development Character
- 4.3 Illustrative Landscape Design
- 4.4 Surrounding Density
- 4.5 Illustrative Design
- 4.6 Height and Scale
- 4.7 Illustrative Elevational Design Principles
- 4.8 Site Information and Stewardship
- 4.9 Transport, Access and Principles

5.0 conclusion

- 5.1 Summary



1.0 introduction

1.1 Overview

The Bishop's Stortford High School is seeking Outline Planning Permission, from East Herts District Council, for the demolition of all existing buildings and the redevelopment of the site to provide up to 223 dwellings, with associated access, parking, and landscaping, and vehicular access to the Thorley Hill Primary School. This Outline Application is for Access only, with all other matters being reserved.

This Masterplan Document has been prepared in line with the requirements of Policy BISH6 Part III of the Adopted East Herts District Plan which states that a Masterplan will be collaboratively prepared involving site promoters, landowners, Council and other key stakeholders.

We acknowledge and welcome the increasing necessity for high quality design in new developments, set down within the National Planning Policy Framework and associated design guidance. The high standard of design which this masterplan embodies is essential to the positive contribution that the development will provide, both to the local character and to the community.

The design and development standards set down within East Herts District Council policies and guidance have been responded to and developed within our planning and architectural proposals. We have also been directed by our detailed appraisal of the local context and the established development pattern and character, with insight from a comprehensive Professional Team across a range of disciplines. In particular, the following consultants have contributed:

- Architectural Consultant: [DHA Architecture](#)
- Planning Consultant: [Lambert Smith Hampton](#)
- Transport Consultant: [Pell Frischmann](#)
- Environmental Consultant: [Daedalus](#)
- Arboricultural Consultant: [Pell Frischmann](#)
- Community Consultant: [MPC](#)

The masterplan has been informed through a public exhibition and feedback from local residents and stakeholders, and the scheme has been presented to the Member's at the District Council's Steering Group for the Bishop's Stortford School Site throughout the evolution of the project from inception.

In the following chapters we set down our design strategy, detailing the urban design, landscape design, architectural approach and access principles for the scheme, and describe the way in which the form of the site and the open space areas provide a legible and positive experience of the development, enhanced by a consistent architectural style and materials palette.

The design team has strived to create a sensitively considered scheme and high quality built environment that aims to meet local and national aspirations for sustainability and character.



1.2 The Vision

“Create a new environment which enhances both the landscape and the built character of the neighbourhood, delivering sustainable development for Bishop's Stortford...”

We aspire to create a thriving, flourishing place, where residents engage with the locality, are keen to connect with each other and with the area, and are inspired to look after and maintain the high quality of their surroundings.

To achieve a successful development, the design team has sought to understand the site and how it relates to London Road, as well as the wider Bishop's Stortford area. Technical studies have been undertaken to support this analysis, including assessment of the landscape, visual setting, the character of the area in built form and spaces, movement and access, and sustainability.

Engagement has also taken place with a number of key stakeholders in order to understand the needs and aspirations of the town in relation to its potential for growth.

This knowledge guided the evolution of the development layout, landscape strategy, access principles, architectural design, and eventually the new place. The new development will create buildings and spaces which will enrich the character of Bishop's Stortford and the wider area, including the green link, new housing, the streets and public realm.

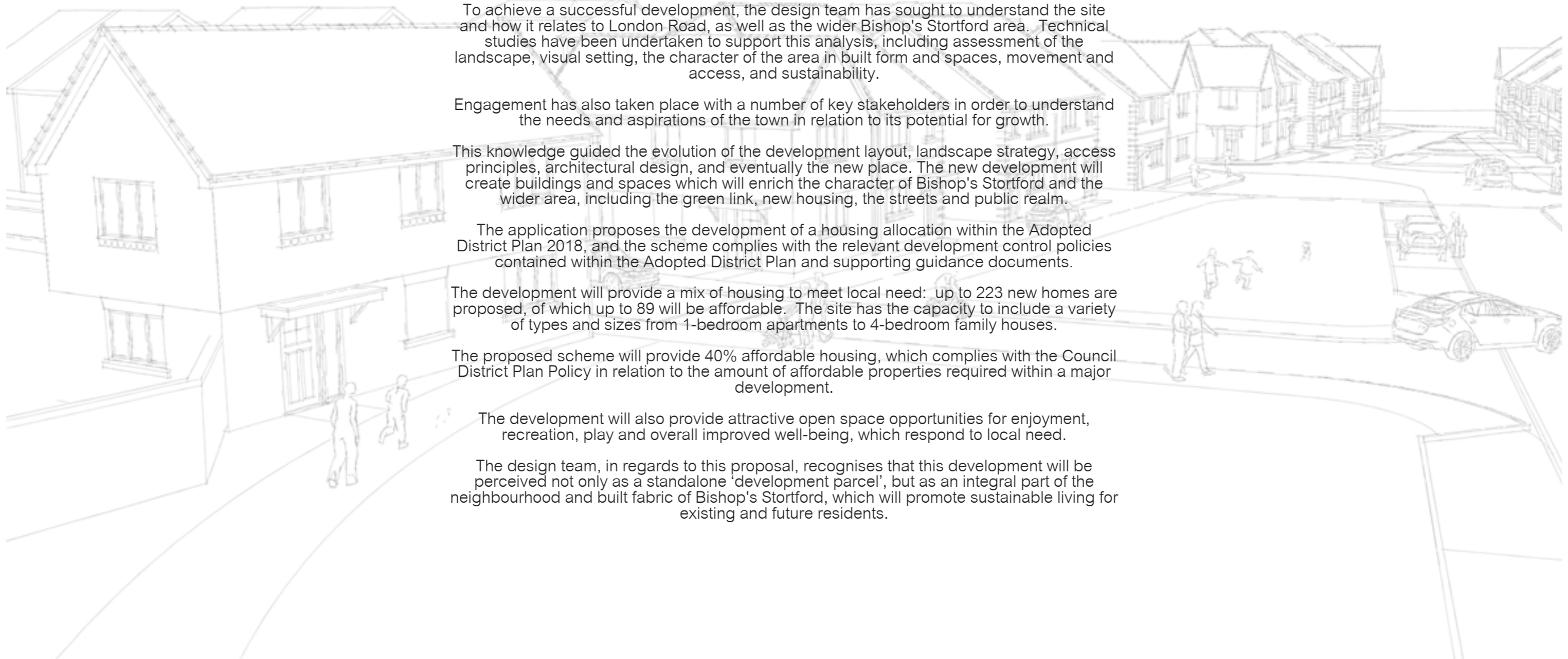
The application proposes the development of a housing allocation within the Adopted District Plan 2018, and the scheme complies with the relevant development control policies contained within the Adopted District Plan and supporting guidance documents.

The development will provide a mix of housing to meet local need: up to 223 new homes are proposed, of which up to 89 will be affordable. The site has the capacity to include a variety of types and sizes from 1-bedroom apartments to 4-bedroom family houses.

The proposed scheme will provide 40% affordable housing, which complies with the Council District Plan Policy in relation to the amount of affordable properties required within a major development.

The development will also provide attractive open space opportunities for enjoyment, recreation, play and overall improved well-being, which respond to local need.

The design team, in regards to this proposal, recognises that this development will be perceived not only as a standalone 'development parcel', but as an integral part of the neighbourhood and built fabric of Bishop's Stortford, which will promote sustainable living for existing and future residents.



1.3 Site Location and Boundary



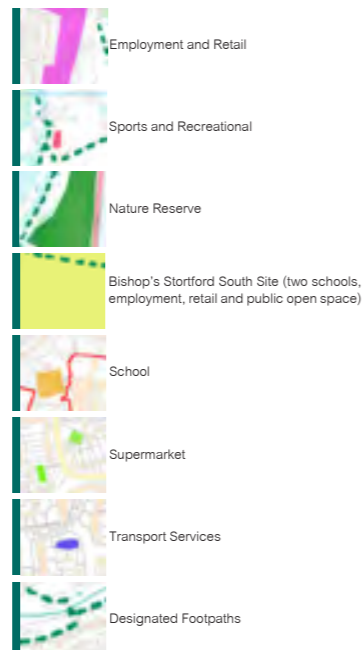
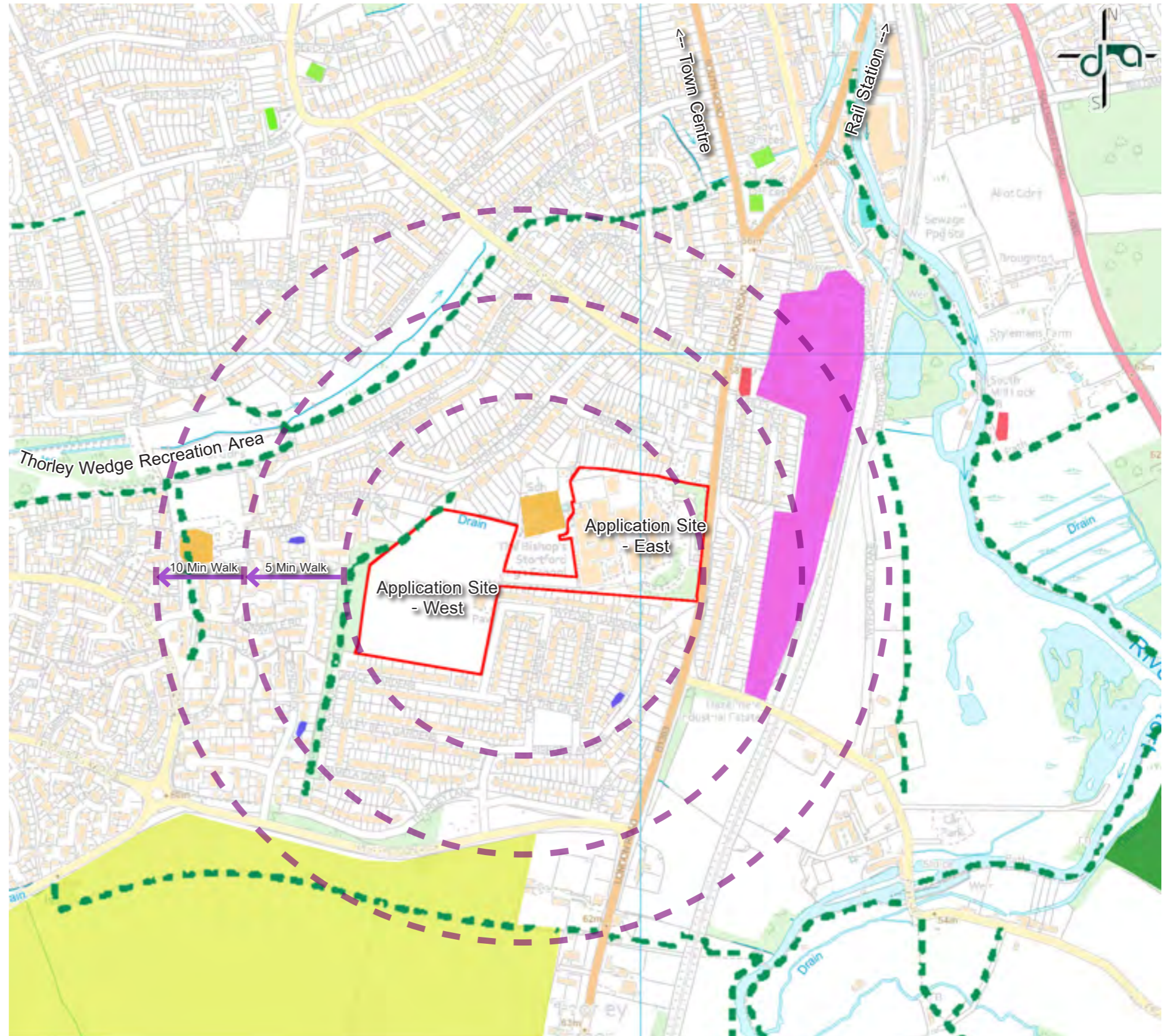
2.0 site context

2.1 Site Context Analysis

A thorough analysis of the physical context of this part of Bishop's Stortford and the residential areas surrounding the development site has been undertaken by the consultant team. The context of the site is shown opposite. The application site is accessed off London Road, a historic north-south route connecting Harlow and Saffron Walden. This neighbourhood to the south of the settlement is an established residential area which lies approx. 1.2km south of Bishop's Stortford railway station and approx. 1.3km south of Bishop's Stortford town centre. A supermarket, local centre and health centre complex lies approx. 1km to the west.

This area is particularly well served by public footpath routes and green spaces, highlighted by the green dash, both around the southern and eastern edges of the settlement (incorporating the Southern Country Park and the River Stort navigation) as well as through the core of the residential area ('Thorley Wedge'). The neighbourhood also includes some industrial/warehousing premises along its eastern boundary, as well as primary schools, public houses and places of worship which serve the local community.

This part of Bishop's Stortford shows evidence of the southward expansion of the town during the inter-war and post-war periods: the application site lies between 1930s-era development to the north and 1950s-era development to the south, as well as a 1960s estate to the west and late 20th century infill apartments to the immediate north. These areas are illustrated overleaf.



2.2 Site Context of Southern Bishop's Stortford

Analysing where the application site is situated within the local context is an important factor to consider in order to produce a considerate and well integrated masterplan, that not only responds to the immediate context, but also provides opportunities for the existing neighbourhood to utilise. Different streets and environments around the application site, as highlighted in the map and subsequent pages, gives an interpretation into the character of this particular area, and highlights the individual elements the masterplan should respond to.

The map opposite displays some key streets and residential environments that provide an insight into the close relationship related to the application boundary and inform the character of the immediate area. The masterplan aims to respond to these areas and more detail is found on the following page.



Ref.1 - London Road/Mitre Gardens Area



Urban Form: Typical inter-war semi-detached villas set regularly along a slip road parallel to the principal movement corridor; further south the dwellings back onto the main road. Recent 3-storey apartment blocks address the main road at an oblique angle behind tree frontages.

Design & Materials: Hipped-roof 'villas' in brick and pebble-dash/render, with simple storm porches and relatively small casement windows. The apartments show general historic-vernacular features including contrasting brick banding, rendered 3-storey bays and eave-line gables.

Landscape & Open Space: This part of London Road is partially lined by mature trees, as the character of the town transitions from the countryside edge to the built-up area. This transition is reinforced by the neatly trimmed hedgerow which separates the slip road from the main road further from the settlement edge.

Car Parking: The streetside parking and converted front gardens to the semi-detached villas make the parked cars prominent in the street scene, and reduce the green frontage space. The apartments have a rear car park.



Ref.3 - Magnaville Road Area



Urban Form: Dating from a slightly later period, this estate is made distinctive by its geometric arrangement of dwellings set around more sinuous road alignments, generally culs-de-sac. The perimeter blocks are less clearly defined with several maisonette buildings surrounded by semi-public/communal grassed space.

Design & Materials: Three basic building forms have been used throughout this estate: a deep gable-fronted type, a type with a front projection with a long catslide roof, and a maisonette type. White boarding is a common infill material.

Landscape & Open Space: The communal spaces are generally grassed without planting or beds; however the streets (particularly the culs-de-sac) incorporate street trees, in islands and verges.

Car Parking: Cars have generally been designed into the layout in this area: including a mixture of garages, car ports and driveways. However the grouped parking creates some large areas of hardstanding.



Ref.2 - Twyford Gardens/Grace Gardens/Audrey Gardens Area



Urban Form: Perimeter block estate of post-war housing, generally semi-detached shallow-depth dwellings with minimal gaps between. Corner buildings are angled creating additional frontage space for landscaping but smaller rear gardens.

Design & Materials: Simple building forms with minimal detailing in brick and render, originally with inset porches but generally now extended forward. Casement windows have wider proportions than the earlier dwellings. Several dwellings incorporate an interesting pattern of small square windows.

Landscape & Open Space: These streets tend to include a number of street trees as part of their character. Front gardens, where not converted to parking, are commonly hedged. A small grassed green in this area creates an attractive community resource (shown on page 12).

Car Parking: Streetside parking and converted front gardens (with some later garages) make the parked cars prominent in the street scene, and reduce the green frontage space.



Ref.4 - Thorley Park Road/Park Lane Area



Urban Form: To the north of the application site, these streets are from a similar era to the London Road/Mitre Gardens area (ref.3); there is some regularity to the street scenes, and a strong building line along longer straighter corridors. Park Lane is unusual for this area in that it is a cul-de-sac, although a footpath connects the street to London Road.

Design & Materials: There are two common housetypes evident to this area: a detached building form with a barn-hipped front gable and splay bay, and a semi-detached building form with paired bay, distinctive arched inset porches and hipped roofs. Render and pebble-dash are commonly used, and the large-format windows differentiate these buildings from those along London Road/Mitre Gardens.

Landscape & Open Space: The higher proportion of street trees give an 'avenue' character to these streets, and the front gardens that remain generally include hedged frontages.

Car Parking: Spaces between and in front of the original dwellings have been converted for garages and driveways.



2.3 Landscape and Environment

- The site lies towards the south-eastern edge of the settlement. The character of London Road in particular, transitions from a rural setting into a more built urban form.
- The neighbourhood benefits from a variety of mature open space opportunities nearby: including the River Stott and surrounding countryside, and the Thorley Wedge which comprises a swathe of green space running through the residential areas.
- Smaller green spaces also contribute to the character of specific areas, including The Green and the wooded footpath corridor which runs along the western boundary of the application site.
- The site itself, whilst accommodating a secondary school is also characterised by mature landscaping along the eastern boundary adjacent to London Road. This creates a distinctive environment when entering the site from London Road.

Ref.5 - London Road Green Corridor



Ref.8 - Public Footpath through Wooded Corridor



Ref.6 - River Stott & Southeastern Open Space



Ref.9 - Thorley Wedge



Ref.7 - The Green



2.4 Characteristics of the Site

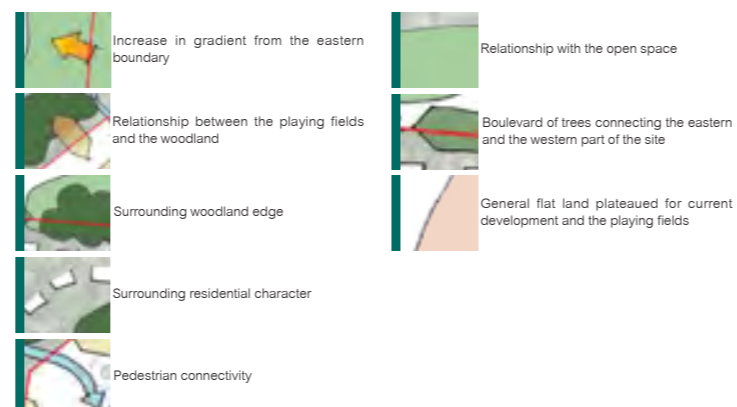
The site is 6.94Ha in area and is presently occupied by the Bishop's Stortford High School, including approximately 0.16ha of land subject to a land swap with Thorley Hill Primary School.

The site consists of two distinct land parcels linked via an access road. The eastern parcel which includes the entrance to the site, is characterised by a significant coverage of circa 1960's buildings of varying scale and height; areas of hard standing in the form of car parking; playground and a verdant green landscaped frontage which accommodates varying level differences. The western parcel includes a 2-storey building and playing fields.

- The site has significant level differences at the eastern boundary where the access connects to London Road. Current access routes are located between trees and within landscaped areas allowing a comfortable access gradient.
- Playing fields are bound by woodland back drop, creating an impermeable visual screen.
- Woodland Edge is native and unmanaged, providing an attractive natural habitat.
- Undefined boundaries allow pedestrian connectivity through the site. Access into the woodland areas is via informal trodden pathways and access from Twyford Gardens is via a school gate.
- The playing fields of Thorley Hill Primary School bisect the site which creates the eastern and western parcels with the playing fields creating a sense of openness between the two large parcels.
- A strong line of boulevard trees connects the two land parcels which are distinctive in their alignments and positioning to the site.
- The eastern land parcel has a good proportion of levelled land which was likely to have been done to accommodate the school and its hard surfaced play areas. The western parcel has some level differences but is flat enough to have been used for playing fields.



Key:



2.5 Design Constraints and Opportunities

- Following the Context and Site Appraisal shown in the previous page, the Concept Plan was formed based on the site constraints and relevant opportunities, shown opposite. The urban form and character of the surrounding areas identified a mixture of housing styles and layouts, but with rigid and linear streets to the east and south east and more natural curving streets to the north and west, where natural landscaped areas appear to have influenced street patterns, as shown in the townscape character of the surrounding area map below.
- Taking influence from this, the eastern part of the concept plan is more of a regimented shape and provides more linear streets with key focal points along the way, whilst also providing the opportunity for dwellings to surveillance areas of public open space and also provide secure back to back development in perimeter blocks and against existing residential boundaries.
- The access location will remain unchanged but its design in terms of gradient and alignment requires careful consideration to minimise tree loss. A sinuous road alignment to reduce the change in topography is required and this approach reinforces the character to roads seen west of the site. The design approach for the western side of the site recognises the opportunity for pedestrian connections throughout. An area of public open space is located adjacent to Grove Gardens with the new dwellings and those of Grace Gardens surrounding it, creating a new central space for an integrated community.
- A green landscaped corridor incorporating pedestrian connections and new streets radiates out from this space, which in turn has intersecting arcing streets which are a response to the shape of the site and the general townscape west of the site.



Townscape Character of the Surrounding Area



Key:



3.0 community engagement

3.1 Statement of Community Involvement

The redevelopment of the Bishop's Stortford High School site has been publicised and consulted with local residents and stakeholders over the last 15 years. This has been through planning applications, appeals and District Plan promotion.

Since the allocation of the School site in the District Plan in July 2018, the applicant has engaged with the District Council through pre-application discussions. This has included two steering group meetings with District Council Ward members on 13th February and 1st July 2019.

On the 10th July 2019 a public exhibition was held at the school, with a preview session for East Hertfordshire District Councillors and Bishop's Stortford Town Councillors to view the exhibition material before the exhibition was open to the general public from 4pm to 8pm.

A report of the public exhibition was prepared by Meeting Places Communications (MPC).

- A public exhibition was held at The Bishop's Stortford High School (TBSHS) on London Road, Bishop's Stortford on Wednesday 10 July between 4pm and 8pm for local residents and businesses to view and provide their feedback on the proposals to develop a residential housing scheme on the current school site. A preview session was organised for East Hertfordshire District Councillors and Bishop's Stortford Town Councillors to view the exhibition materials immediately beforehand between 3pm – 4pm.
- Prior to the event, invitations were delivered to approximately 1,300 addresses in a radius surrounding the site that was agreed with planning officers at East Herts District Council. Local Councillors also received a personalised invitation to the exhibition. A map outlining the delivery area is outlined below. As well as the area shown in the highlighted area, all addresses along Pig Lane also received an invitation to the exhibition.
- In the newsletter, residents were encouraged to provide feedback on any issues they believe should be considered in regard to redevelopment of the TBSHS site. Of the 1,300 newsletters delivered, 38 were returned. This equates to a written response rate of 2.92%.
- Of those that provided feedback, a high number of residents stated they live in close proximity to TBSHS. In their comments, residents said consideration should be given to the impact new housing would have on traffic in the local area. Several respondents stated a new traffic network would be needed to ensure congestion does become a significant issue in and around London Road. Further questions were asked about the impact the development would have on green space, and how much investment would be required in infrastructure projects, such as a doctor's surgery, to meet the needs of the subsequent population increase.
- 147 residents attended the consultation, a turnout of 11.3%. At the event, 62 completed feedback forms were completed. A further five forms were completed and delivered using the Freepost. In total, 67 feedback forms were completed, equating a written response rate of 45.57%.
- Respondents identified a number of key aspects of the scheme were important to them. These included issues as the provisions for open green space, and assurances traffic in the local area will not be increased by the construction of new homes. Whilst a number of residents expressed concern that the subsequent population increase could have on congestion, particularly around London Road, there was an appreciation these plans have to be progressed to deliver the new TBSHS campus. With regard to the new school site, respondents spoke positively over TBSHS' ambitions to expand and enhance their activities and offer enriched sporting facilities for community use.
- While some residents registered their opposition to the provision of new homes of the current school site and subsequent impact on existing infrastructure and transportation services, a majority of respondents stated they were supportive of the principle for the development. This is demonstrated by the fact that 62.1% of respondents stated they supported the emerging proposals for the current school site.

The comments raised through the public exhibition have been taken into account in progressing and developing the concept of the Masterplan.

Community Involvement Zone



Community Engagement Photos



3.2 Illustrative Masterplan Evolution

The following set of plans show how the illustrative masterplan has changed and evolved, taking into account comments made through the steering groups and public exhibition.



4.0 design concept & principles

4.1 Development Principles

Through the analysis of the site, the masterplan begins to implement key elements that respond to the existing context and form the principles of the proposed scheme. The illustrative layout shown opposite explains the thought process and considerations made and goes further to explain how the key principles have responded to particular considerations.

- 1 Alignment of access road considered to reduce impact on adjacent group of trees.
- 2 Development designed to respond to the natural site levels.
- 3 Provide active dwelling frontage onto public open space and to address site frontage.
- 4 Secure perimeter block development
- 5 Core of development provides a nodal square where routes and pedestrian linkages intersect.
- 6 Apartment Buildings located near the school entrance to create a gateway into the residential area, to create separation from school activity.
- 7 School secondary access point.
- 8 Turn houses to back on to northern boundary to create secure back to back relationship.
- 9 Respect the privacy of adjacent houses. Secure rear garden to rear garden relationship.
- 10 Road and adjacent pedestrian footway link to separated housing areas.
- 11 Allow existing neighbours to overlook new public open space and benefit from the outlook.
- 12 Locate public open space to south eastern corner of site so that it can benefit existing neighbours and allow for connection through site, linking up with existing pedestrian desire lines.
- 13 Dwellings designed to actively police and overlook public open space.
- 14 Respect rear privacy of existing neighbours by providing a landscaped buffer to the southern boundary and by flanking new buildings onto this buffer.
- 15 Turn dwellings to face onto adjacent open space and woodlands to improve usability of the space and safety, whilst also creating an attractive outlook for the properties.
- 16 Create a wide landscaped corridor through the site, linking existing properties and existing desire lines. Directional views created to link public space and play areas.



4.2 Development Character

The factors identified within this evaluation of the neighbourhood and of the application site itself have been carefully considered and the important factors incorporated into the evolving scheme. The locality and the policy context call for an imaginative layout and a high standard of design, materials and landscaping which respond positively to the local context. The preliminary layout approach shown opposite received comments on the proposals which have been incorporated into the illustrative application layout:

- 1 A pedestrian link to London Road has now been shown, which will probably take the form of stepped access given the levels here.
- 2 The footpath connections to the primary school have been more clearly shown on the layout.
- 3 A turning space for vehicles has now been illustrated.
- 4 A physical buffer incorporating landscaping between dwellings and the primary school premises could be provided.
- 5 A footpath connection to the Public Right of Way is included in this location.
- 6 Dwellings have been reconsidered to provide a corner turning vista building facing the site and gardens.
- 7 The pedestrian link from Grace Gardens/Twyford Gardens to the amenity space has been improved.
- 8 The car parking alongside the amenity space has been relocated, to reduce its impact on the character of the space.



4.3 Illustrative Landscape Design

The landscape design, as a key consideration made from the analysis of the site, provides an attractive residential setting, which is in keeping with its surroundings and ensures that any potentially adverse landscape and visual impacts are appropriately mitigated. The site contains good quality trees in which should be retained to enhance the area along with the introduction of new trees to enforce a strong landscape connection between residents and nature. Further considerations made are as follows:

- The landscape strategy will form an extension to the green infrastructure currently in Bishop's Stortford, integrating it with the landscaping within the development.
- Pockets of landscaping have been created throughout the development providing a softer edge to the new built form.
- The tree lined boulevard which connects the eastern and western parcels ensures that the green buffer between the back gardens along Twyford Gardens and the new development is maintained.
- Pedestrian focused access into the site is met with an open area of green space and tree planting, providing a sense of arrival and visual amenity.
- Plot frontages will be detailed with a mixture of hard and soft landscape materials.
- Layout designed sensitively around existing trees within and adjacent to the site with particular regard to TPO'd trees. Several trees within a group TPO will be removed in order to create a safe access into the site and this has been discussed at pre-application stage with replacement and supplementary tree planting proposed.
- Current habitats and ecology will be given the opportunity to integrate with the proposed landscape with strong and consistent connections throughout the site. Easy access for residents to open space is a key feature of the site and promotes a quality space for people to enjoy.
- Numerous health and well-being attributes are linked with good levels of landscaping and open space, in which this masterplan actively promotes and focuses on a strong green connection throughout.
- Open space locations are located strategically around the site to fully integrate with the surrounding context and provide well surveillanced and good quality, usable spaces for all.



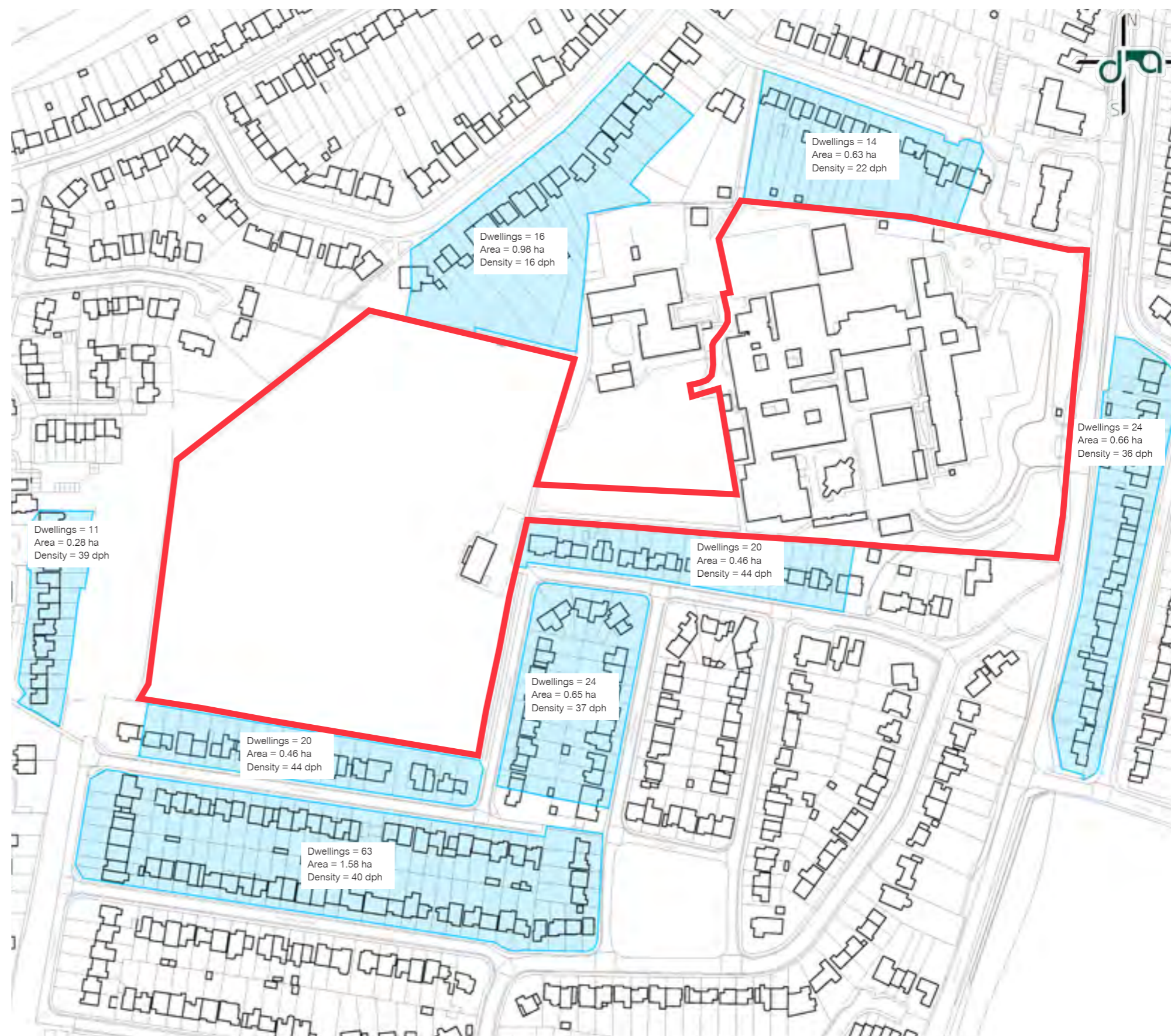
4.4 Surrounding Density

- The number of proposed dwellings and density of the proposed scheme has been very much based on the density of development from the surrounding area, taking account the suburban character of this part of Bishop's Stortford. The density also takes into account the constraints and opportunities of the site itself, and an opportunity provide an efficient use of the site.
- The adopted Neighbourhood Plan (2017) for the area, suggests that both the application site and adjoining Thorley Hill Primary school could accommodate up to 250 dwellings. This is a larger site within the Neighbourhood Plan as it includes the primary school, but would achieve a similar density to the current proposals.
- There was also an appeal decision in 2010 on the site, where the appeal inspector raised no objections to the High School site being developed for 220 dwellings. This appeal had a smaller site area to the existing application.

In comparison:

- The density of the 223 dwellings proposed is 33.57 dwellings per hectare, based on a site area of 6.94 hectares.
- The typical density of the surrounding area ranges from 36 to 44 dwellings per hectare with some pockets of lower density dwellings located around the northern and western edges of application site (see ref 20 opposite)
- The density of the 250 dwellings proposed in the Adopted Neighbourhood Plan is 30.83 dwellings per hectare, based on a site area of 8.11 hectares.
- The density of the 220 dwellings proposed in the 2010 appeal scheme at the High School is 33.08 dwellings per hectare, based on a site area of 6.65 hectares.
- The density of 150 dwellings proposed within the Adopted District Plan for the site is 23.14 dwellings per hectare, based on a site area of 6.48 hectares. This figure of 150 dwellings was based upon the primary school being expanded so in effect, applies to a smaller residential area than is currently proposed. The primary school expansion is no longer required.

It is considered that the proposed density of 33.57 dwellings per hectare is low density, characteristic of the suburban character of the area and comparable to density levels that have been previously considered appropriate on the site.



4.5 Illustrative Design



4.6 Height and Scale

The importance of considering how the proposed scheme integrates with the surrounding context is of key significance and so the heights of different areas of the masterplan have been highlighted to showcase how the issues of height and prominence have been addressed. The taller elements have been strategically placed around the masterplan to address key views and create attractive vistas, more so the information detailed below:



- The height and scale of the buildings have been considered through the site analysis and have evolved during the design stages of the Pre-Application process.
- The 3-storey apartment buildings are illustrated to create entrance features on vistas in key locations on the site, whilst providing active surveillance on wider areas of public open space.
- All of the houses are illustrated at 2-storey in height, with a traditional pitched gable end roof. Their footprints vary in dimensions with some short terraces, semis and detached houses, but are representative of that of the surrounding scale.



Illustrative 3 storey apartments (A-A)

Illustrative 2 storey dwellings (B-B)

Key:

	2 Storey Dwellings
	3 Storey Apartments



4.7 Illustrative Elevational Design & Principles

In this context, a very appropriate design approach for these new homes is to maintain a traditional character which draws from the locality, as shown opposite, and to adopt an elevational palette which makes the experience of the new development cohesive and established in the neighbourhood.

Although the design of the buildings is subject to the detail of a Reserved Matters Application, it is suggested that late Edwardian/early Victorian influences should be used on this site, which has its inspirational origins from the town. The following page details example materials to be considered for the proposed dwellings.



Illustrative Street Scene



Illustrative Street Scene



4.7 Illustrative Elevational Design & Principles continued



Front gables in facing brickwork with a contrasting diamond feature



Front gables hanging



Feature gauged arch brick headers



Softer textured main facing brick



Casement windows with stone cills



Projecting bay windows



Porch canopy with feature gallow brackets



Smooth feature contrasting brick



Grey roof tiles



Feature brick detailing

CGI showing 2 storey housing along with landscaping





4.8 Site Information and Stewardship

Illustrative Dwelling Mix

The proposed scheme aims to provide a range of homes of varying sizes, to accommodate people at all life stages with the intention to create a strong sense of community. The added benefit of providing a high percentage of affordable homes (mentioned below) allows the opportunity to provide entry level/starter homes for young families, as well as accommodate larger homes for growing families to attain a balance of residents of varying ages. The added benefits to the site because of this create a consistent output of homes that are similar in size and do no favour a particular resident and therefore promotes the site in regards to its neutrality. Key information is as follows:

- The illustrative dwelling mix is summarised in the table below. A total of up to 223 dwellings is anticipated, of which up to 89 will be affordable (40%). The illustrative housing mix provides a good balanced approach to the scheme with a focus towards two and three bed houses, with some apartments and four bed properties.
- The proposed mix will therefore provide a range of properties that will integrate well with the surrounding existing community.

Illustrative Dwelling Mix Table

PRIVATE HOMES	No.	AFFORDABLE HOMES: RENTAL	No.	AFFORDABLE HOMES: SHARED OWNERSHIP	No.
1-bed apartment	2	1-bed apartment	21	1-bed apartment	8
2-bed apartment	-	2-bed apartment	18	2-bed apartment	6
2-bed house	30	2-bed house	14	2-bed house	4
3-bed house	81	3-bed house	14	3-bed house	4
4-bed house	21	4-bed house	-	4-bed house	-
Total	134	Total	67	Total	22
TOTAL DWELLINGS					223

Accessibility

All homes will meet accessibility standards including access to the dwellings and circulation space, as well as:

- Routes will be planned to give sufficient aural and tactile information, supplemented by appropriate lighting design and visual clues to help people with sight impairment.
- Obstacles and hazards to movement will be avoided.
- The hard and soft landscaping will reinforce the route to the principal accesses, creating an attractive and accessible approach and distinguishing the entrance from the facade as a whole and utilising the same unsegregated access for all groups of people. Materials will be chosen for their slip resistance and unbound surfaces will be avoided.
- The layout has been prepared so that at Reserved Matters stage, all units can be designed to meet the standards of Part M(4) Category 2: accessible and adaptable dwellings with approximately 10% will be designed to meet the standards of Part M(4) Category 3: wheelchair accessible dwellings. This will be approved by the National House-Building Council, which includes the requirement for level thresholds to front doors and accessible internal arrangements.

Site Stewardship and Landscape Management

The long term management and maintenance tasks and responsibilities of the public open space will be set out in a Landscape Management Plan which will be submitted to clear conditions alongside the detailed landscape proposals.

The overall aims of the Landscape Management Plan will be:

- To maintain the long term landscape contribution of the existing hedgerows and public realm corridors;
- To explain the purpose of each planting treatment;
- To ensure the successful establishment and long term health of all plant stock;
- To ensure play features and SuDS elements remain in a safe, working condition with minimal impact on root systems of existing trees;
- To maintain planting areas in an attractive and safe condition.
- To ensure use of good horticultural practices and best health & safety practices at all times.

Years 1-5

It is intended that the implementation of the management regime will help to fulfil the design objectives over the first 5 years. Management objectives should be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that they are being achieved and maintenance operations should be refined over the period to respond to improvements in equipment and horticultural aids and to suit changes in the growing needs of plant stock and in local site conditions.

Years 5+

The Landscape Maintenance Contractor responsible for the site in the long term (years 5+) following the plan period should keep to the spirit of the original design objectives whilst responding in a sensitive and practical way to any issues which may arise in future years. The management plan should be reviewed and adjusted accordingly to ensure the design objectives are maintained in the longer term.

Safety & Security

The high quality of design applied to this development will be an important factor in encouraging residents to have a sense of ownership and responsibility towards their locality, and contributing to the local sense of community:

- Carefully considered surface treatments and strong landscaping principles will establish 'ownership' of the spaces, and make clear the expected modes of behaviour within each space; as well as increasing the possibility that an intruder's presence will attract attention.
- Active frontages will address, overlook and passively police the public realm, and front doors to the dwellings address will address these spaces, so that they feel safe for residents and visitors.
- Gardens will be made secure and defensible and ensure that they cannot be accessed directly from the public realm.
- The movement structure and access spaces will be carefully planned in order to maximise their quality and vitality, whilst minimising concealment and opportunities for crime. Pedestrian routes will utilise the same spaces as the vehicular routes, being well overlooked and as short and straight as possible.
- Car parking is a particular concern in respect of security and crime, and proximity to and visibility from the owner's individual dwelling will be maintained, as described in Parking and Servicing chapter of this document.
- The existing vehicle access to the school from Park Lane will be designated for pedestrian and cycle access only, which will present an improvement on the existing situation in terms of pedestrian and cycle amenity and access to the school. This improvement adds to the safety and security of the children at the primary school and enables the proposed scheme to provide a well considered scheme catering to these factors.
- In addition, more physical methods of reducing crime and improving security will be incorporated into the proposals at detailed design stage, by means of secure walls, fences, gates, doors, windows and other measures.

Energy and Emissions

The proposals for the school respond directly to the requirements, aspirations and targets described within the East Herts District Plan, adopted in 2018, which themselves align broadly with the approach found within the National Planning Policy Framework. This section of the Masterplan summarises a more comprehensive description of the approach to sustainable design and construction which can be found in the Energy and Sustainability Statement completed by Daedalus Environmental Limited.

The Energy Hierarchy underpins the entire approach to building performance for this development, where the proposals include using a combination of the following:

- Carefully considered layout to create a balance of increased solar gain whilst minimising overheating risk
- A highly efficient thermal 'envelope' to minimise the level of imported energy onto the site, reducing energy demands
- The provision of high efficiency heating systems to maximise the efficiency within which any imported energy is used
- The application of renewable energy systems only where required to meet the energy and emissions requirements of the District Plan

This approach is designed to create energy efficient homes in the most appropriate, cost efficient way.

Climate Resilience

A number of key climate trends for the area have been identified and subsequently addressed by the design team. In particular, this part of England will experience the following changes in climate:

- Increased summer air temperatures
- Increased variability in rainfall throughout the year and an increased risk of drought conditions
- Greater intensity of rainfall events
- Warmer winters

As a result, greater focus will be paid to the design of the development and individual houses to address the key risk of overheating, through improved materials specification, glazing performance, building integrated design features, and so forth. Street trees will also play a key role in adapting the site to a changed climate, creating comfortable micro-climates whilst providing a range of other benefits such as CO2 sequestration, building cooling, food growing opportunities, biodiversity enhancements and reduction in ambient noise levels. This will be coupled with a comprehensive, integrated SUDS strategy which anticipates the increase in frequency and intensity of storm events, providing onsite storage for a 1 in 100 year storm plus a 40% allowance for climate change.

Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage

SuDS can improve the quality of life in developments by making them more vibrant, visually attractive, sustainable and more resilient to change, by improving urban air quality, regulating building temperatures, reducing noise and delivering recreation and education opportunities. SuDS design should maximise the use of the available space by delivering efficient drainage together with other functions to help meet the objectives of the site. The SuDS design should, as much as possible, be based around the following:

- Using surface water runoff as a resource;
- Managing rainwater close to where it falls;
- Managing runoff on the surface;
- Allowing rainfall to soak into the ground;
- Promoting evapotranspiration;
- Slowing and storing runoff to mimic natural runoff characteristics;
- Reducing contamination of runoff through pollution prevention and controlling the runoff at source; and
- Treating runoff to reduce the risk of urban contaminants causing environmental pollution.

The main conclusions from a flood risk perspective, with regards to the Bishop's Stortford High School Site are:

- The site is situated within Flood Zone 1, an area with low probability of flooding from fluvial and/or tidal sources;
- The mapping indicates that most of the site and the proposed building area generally has a 'very low' risk of surface water flooding;
- There is generally considered to be a low risk of flooding from all other sources;
- It is recommended that infiltration techniques are considered in the disposal of surface water runoff. Infiltration tests in accordance BRE 365 will need to be carried out in order to determine suitability;
- If the infiltration rate is deemed to be insufficient for dealing with the surface water runoff from the proposed buildings, it is recommended that the surface water drainage connect to the existing drainage system;
- The proposed buildings provide the opportunity to utilise SuDS at the site. Different SuDS options should be considered such as rainwater harvesting or water butts; and
- Any increases in external hardstanding areas should be constructed using a permeable surface. This could either allow for infiltration (if infiltration rates allow) or connect into the existing site drainage via a porous sub-base.

This FRA has provided an overview of flood risk on the site. The proposed development has the potential to provide betterment in terms of post development surface water runoff through the use of SuDS techniques.

Water Consumption

Water efficiency becomes increasingly important in a changing climate with diminishing water resources. This is particularly the case in a county like Hertfordshire which is located in one of the driest regions of the country while the residents are amongst the highest water users nationally.

The East Hertfordshire District Plan 2018 has the specific targets for water efficiency standards of 110l/person/day, and specific water efficiency targets are also driven by the higher standards described within Part G of the Building Regulations, which pertain to sanitation, hot water safety and water efficiency, where the 'enhanced' target matches the council's 110l figure.

The approach will be based on the Water Hierarchy, above. Fixtures, appliances and fittings will be specified which considerably reduce potable water use down to this target level, from a national average of around 150l/person/day.

Sustainable Waste Management

All buildings will be provided with sufficient and designated space for waste and recyclables storage, both internally within kitchens/utilities but also externally. Access to the external areas will be designed to be sufficiently easy to enable the segregation of waste streams into the different receptacles provided and collected by the council whilst being sensitively located and designed to have minimal or zero impact on the streetscape.

The combination of these two elements will help foster the higher levels of recycling which are sought by the planning authority.

Sustainable Transport and Connectivity

The site is well positioned to provide connection into existing pedestrian routes and footpaths and to enable connection between the development and the centre of Bishop's Stortford on foot and by bicycle. However, in enabling the transition to ultra low and zero emissions vehicles, the development itself – in line with the requirements of the District Plan – will provide a range of electric charging facilities, in a configuration to be determined in due course, for the occupants of the site.

The highest broadband speeds will be facilitated through fibre to the property in every home. This is essential in ensuring that people remain informed and connected, and are able to access a range of services effectively. Moreover, it also facilitates greater home working, which can help minimise transport issues.

4.9 Transport, Access and Principles

To ensure that the transport aspects of the development are consistent with the current sustainability agenda, policy has been reviewed at all levels – national, regional and local. At a national level the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), provides high level guidance for local councils. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and it notes that 'the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development'.

Key policy guidance at all levels has been identified within the transport assessment report, ensuring that the development proposals meet this guidance with regards to transport. The site lies in an accessible location that lends itself to sustainable travel, and the development proposals will seek to encourage travel by sustainable modes. Parking at the proposed development will be provided in accordance with the vehicle parking standards outlined.

Vehicular Access

- London Road, which forms a section of the B1383, is a two-way single carriageway which runs in a north-south direction to the immediate east of the site and operates with a 30mph speed limit. London Road connects with the centre of Bishops Stortford to the north of the site and the A1184 to the south. The A1184 forms a section of the Bishops Stortford ring road, which links with the A120 and which in turn connects with Junction 8 of the M11.
- The site is therefore considered to be very well connected to the local, regional and strategic highway network.
- Vehicular access (shown below) to the site is proposed from London Road. It is proposed to retain and improve the existing priority junction to provide access to the development. More information can be found in the Transport Assessment report conducted by Pell Frischmann.
- It has been demonstrated that appropriate visibility splays for a 30mph road can be provided (i.e.... a 2.4m 'x' distance and a 43m 'y' distance). The access has been designed to accommodate the movements of an appropriately sized refuse vehicle and to account for buses stopping at the bus stop to the north of the access.

Site Access



Walking and Cycling Accessibility

Pedestrian and cycle access to the site is currently made primarily from London Road via the existing site access. A secondary pedestrian-only access into the site is also provided from Twyford Gardens / Grace Gardens, to the south of the existing main school site. There are continuous footways on both sides of London Road, which provide continuous walking connections between the site and the centre of Bishops Stortford. All footways within the immediate vicinity of the site are considered to be of a relatively high quality, with tactile paving and dropped kerbs provided as appropriate.

There are no dedicated cycle routes in the immediate vicinity of the site, although a series of recreational cycle routes, such as the Riverside Trail, are provided to and from the centre of Bishops Stortford. In the immediate vicinity of the site, cyclists would be required to travel on the main carriageway alongside general traffic, although the width of the carriageway of London Road and the topography of the area surrounding the site are considered to provide appropriate cycling conditions. The proposed scheme aims to address the following key points:

- The existing pedestrian / cycle access to the site from London Road will be retained, with pedestrian and cycle connections from London Road improved as appropriate. Provision for pedestrians has been incorporated into the design of the site access junction to connect the external footways with the internal footway network within the site.
- The existing pedestrian access from Twyford Gardens / Grace Gardens will also be retained and upgraded to provide improved pedestrian access to / from the south of the site.

Thorley Hill Primary School

- The Thorley Hill Primary School, which is located to the immediate north of the site, will be retained. Access to the Thorley Hill Primary School is currently made via Park Lane in the form of a vehicular access with a segregated footway. As part of the proposed development, vehicular access to the school will be provided through the proposed residential development.
- Servicing and deliveries associated with the school would also be undertaken through the new site access from London Road. Swept path analysis has been undertaken to demonstrate that the site and the school can accommodate a large refuse vehicle, with an extension to the existing turning head proposed in order to facilitate this arrangement.
- The existing vehicle access to the school from Park Lane will be designated for pedestrian and cycle access only, which will present an improvement on the existing situation in terms of pedestrian and cycle amenity and access to the school.

Public Transport Provision

- It was agreed during pre-application discussions with HCC that the existing bus stops located to the immediate east of the site provided sufficient public transport provision for the proposed development, and that a bus service serving the internal layout of the site would not be required. The existing bus stops on London Road are within 400m of the majority of the site, and provide regular services to Bishops Stortford town centre and the railway station.

Car and Cycle Parking

- Car and cycle parking for the proposed development will be provided in accordance with the EHDC adopted parking standards.

Use Class	Description	Maximum Parking Standards	Cycle Parking Standards
C3 – Residential	1 bedroom dwellings	1.5	1 1/2 space per unit if no garage or shed provided
	2 bedroom dwellings	2	
	3 bedroom dwellings	2.5	
	4 bedroom dwellings	3	

Source: East Hertfordshire District Council (2018)

- Overall, the illustrative Masterplan suggests a total of 520 parking spaces to be provided for the overall 223 dwellings which is approximately made up of the following:
 - 412 allocated parking spaces to the houses
 - 77 communal spaces for apartment residents
 - 31 visitors' spaces

Access Consultation

- The transport analysis for the proposed development, including the site access arrangements, the study area and methodology of the technical assessments, have been informed and agreed through a series of pre-application scoping discussions with HCC Highways Officers.
- The proposed residential site access arrangements were presented as part of the scoping submission to HCC Highways and were subsequently agreed as suitable during the pre-application meetings held. It was also agreed during pre-application discussions with HCC that the existing bus stops located to the immediate east of the site access provided sufficient public transport provision for the proposed development, and that a bus service serving the internal layout of the site would not be required.

Turning head design



5.0 conclusion

5.1 Summary

The design team responsible for this illustrative masterplan aspires to create attractive places that will stand the test of time. The objective is to create new developments which make a positive contribution to the existing setting - places in which future occupants are able to integrate into the existing wider community.

The illustrative masterplan providing up to 223 new homes has been planned positively in order to embody high quality and inclusive design, following a considered appraisal of the identity of Bishop's Stortford and the site's setting, and will provide a neighbourhood which is landscape led in this sensitive location.

The illustrative masterplan set out to achieve the following:

- Following the principles of best practice in urban design, landscape, movement and sustainability.
- Contributing to overcoming the region's significant shortfall in housing land supply in a situation where there is very considerable housing need.
- Offering a mix of housing which responds to local need and context.
- Creating a scheme that promotes attractive and sustainable place-making objectives and which complies with relevant development control policies within the Adopted District Plan (2018).
- Ensuring a good residential environment, with the creation of significant areas of public open space, within a managed landscaped environment.
- Integrating with the neighbouring pattern of residential development.

These proposals represent high quality, contextual design, of which Hertfordshire County Council, the Local Planning Authority and the residents of Bishop's Stortford can be rightfully proud.





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