

Draft Gilston Area Charter Supplementary Planning Document

1. Introduction

- 1.1 East Herts District Council (“East Herts”) is committed through its District Plan to supporting the delivery of 10,000 homes and associated infrastructure in the Gilston Area. The development will be delivered as several separate and distinct villages set within substantive landscaping and parkland.
- 1.2 The Gilston Area forms part of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (“the Garden Town”), which was designated a Garden Town by the Ministry for Homes, Communities and Local Government in January 2017, comprising 23,000 new homes across Harlow Town together with 23,000 new homes across new neighbourhoods to the east, west, and south of Harlow, and new villages in the Gilston Area to the north. The Garden Town is located within the local authority areas of East Herts, Epping Forest and Harlow, and also includes Hertfordshire and Essex County Councils (collectively the “Garden Town Authorities”) (see Figure 1).
- 1.3 This Gilston Area Charter (the “Charter”) has been produced by East Herts through engagement with landowners, key stakeholders and representatives from the local community to help guide the planning and delivery of high quality and coordinated development and infrastructure within the Gilston Area, informed by the Garden City Principles and the vision for the Garden Town (see Figures 1 and 2).

Figure 1. Vision for the Garden Town and location of the Gilston Area

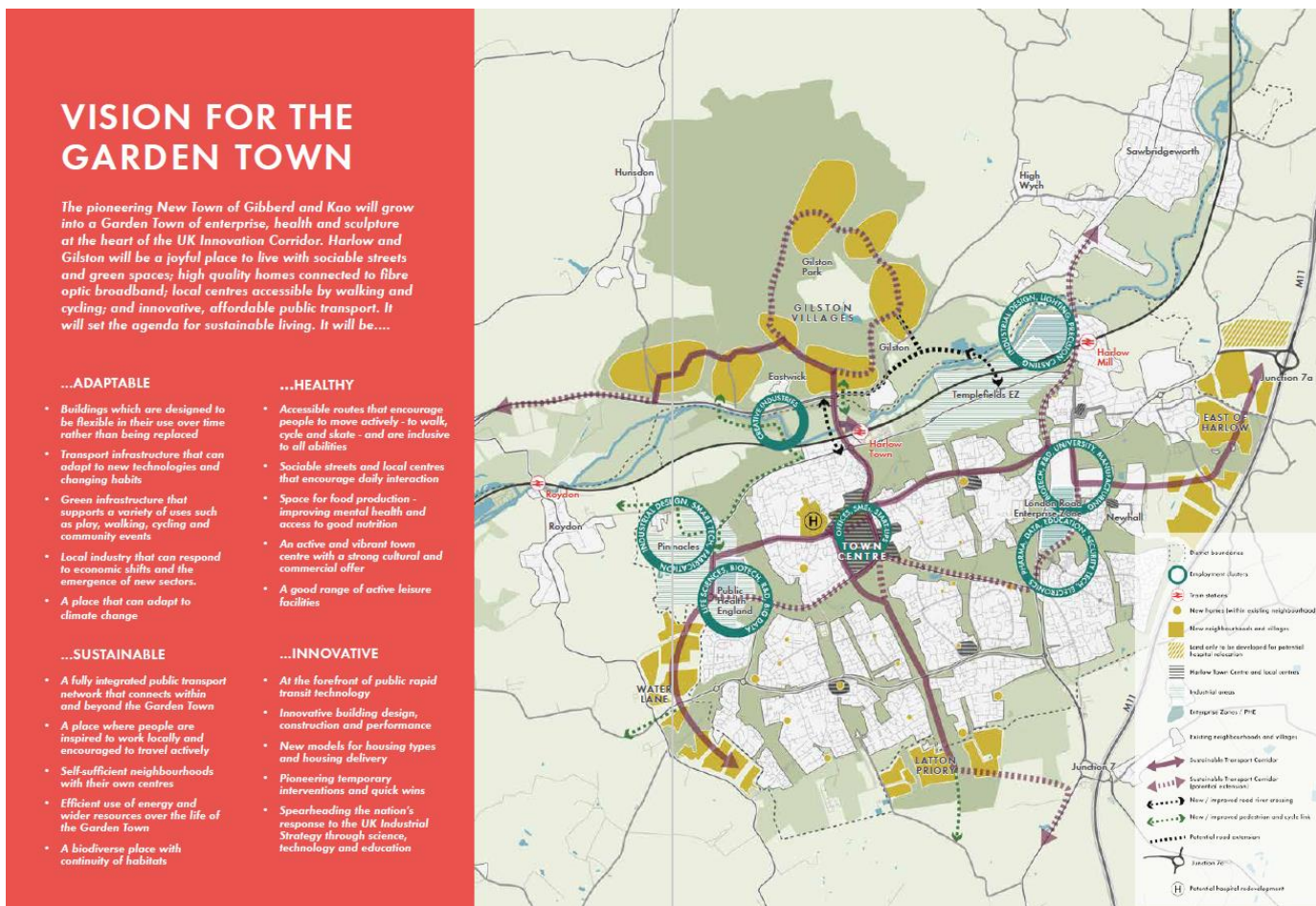


Figure 2. Artists illustration of the Garden Town and the Garden City Principles



2. Planning policy and guidance relevant to this document

- 2.1 In October 2018, East Herts adopted its District Plan which sets out the Council's planning framework for the district, identifying how it will grow and develop over the plan period up to 2033. Part 1 of the Plan establishes the Council's vision and strategic objectives for the district, including a development strategy with settlement/site specific policies.
- 2.2 District Plan policy GA1 (see Figure 3) identifies the Gilston Area for significant growth, including the delivery of 10,000 homes and associated infrastructure, comprising but not limited to community facilities, employment, retail, education, sports, open space and strategic transport improvements including additional/enhanced crossings over the River Stort. The new homes will be delivered within distinct villages set within substantive landscaping and parkland, each based on Garden City Principles and forming a key part of the Garden Town.
- 2.3 A Concept Framework was produced in parallel to the District Plan by landowners Places for People and City and Provincial Properties in collaboration with East Herts District Council. The framework used surveys, assessments, conceptual masterplans and consultation input from key stakeholders and the community to support and demonstrate the deliverability of Policy GA1. It also established key principles to underpin and shape the content of any future masterplanning work undertaken, including the articulation of the Gilston Area as a set of distinct villages but with shared infrastructure and a clear collective identity.
- 2.4 A Garden Town Vision and Garden Town Design Guide have been produced by the joint Garden Town Authorities which set out expectations and aspirations for the delivery of high quality and sustainable development across the Garden Town. The Design Guide states that;
- “East Herts Council will work with landowners, stakeholders and the community to prepare a Charter for the Gilston Area to demonstrate how it will be delivered in accordance with the village concept and the Garden Town Vision.”*
- 2.5 District Plan policy DES1 (see Figure 3) requires all 'significant' development proposals to include the preparation of a Masterplan. Given the scale of development in the Gilston Area, individual Masterplans will be required for each of the Gilston Area villages, together with an overarching Strategic Landscape Masterplan that will address the strategic elements of the development and the important network of green spaces that will knit the villages together and integrate the area into the wider context. Chapter 17 of the District Plan identifies the use of Design Codes in helping to deliver high quality outcomes on particular sites/areas and supports the use of Design Reviews to provide assessment and support to ensure high standards of design.
- 2.6 A Neighbourhood Plan is currently being produced by the Hunsdon, Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan Group “to shape the future of the area” and “set out more detailed planning policies to guide how development takes place and how the

existing settlements and new villages will be shaped in the future” (Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan for Consultation Draft 1.1, September 2019). On adoption, Neighbourhood Plans form part of the Development Plan against which relevant planning applications will be determined.

Figure 3: Policy GA1 ‘The Gilston Area’ and DES1 ‘Masterplanning’ of the East Herts District Plan

Policy GA1 The Gilston Area

I. In accordance with Policy DPS3 (Housing Supply 2011-2033), land at the Gilston Area is allocated for development to accommodate 10,000 homes, to be delivered within this Plan period and beyond. It is anticipated that at least 3,000 homes will be delivered by 2033.

II. A Concept Framework is being jointly prepared by the landowners, the Council and the local community. The Concept Framework identifies design principles, potential land uses, infrastructure requirements and phasing, and will be used as a benchmark in reviewing proposals for development. Prior to the submission of any planning application(s) further design work through the pre-application engagement process will be required in order to agree, among other things, the quantum and distribution of land uses, access and layout principles.

III. The Gilston Area will provide for 10,000 homes across distinct villages, each based on Garden City principles respecting the following:

- strong vision, leadership and community engagement;
- land value capture to deliver the social and physical infrastructure for the benefit of the community;
- long-term community ownership of land and stewardship of assets;
- mixed-tenure homes and housing types including those that are genuinely affordable;
- a wide range of local jobs within easy commuting distance of homes;
- beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with access to open space, combining the best of town and country to create healthy communities, and including opportunities to grow food;
- development that enhances the natural environment, providing a comprehensive green infrastructure network and net biodiversity gains, and that uses energy-positive technology to ensure climate resilience;
- strong cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable, vibrant, sociable communities; and
- integrated and accessible sustainable transport systems, with walking, cycling and public transport designed to be the most attractive forms of local transport for new residents to travel within the Gilston Area and to key local destinations.

IV. A community engagement strategy will be prepared, working with the two local parishes, which will include consideration of managing the effects on local residents, and opportunities for them to participate in the emerging new community. Engagement with the local communities and other relevant stakeholders shall take place through the planning application process and through the development of village Masterplans.

V. The development is expected to address the following provisions and issues:

- (a) a range of dwelling type and mix, in accordance with the provisions of Policy HOU1 (Type and Mix of Housing);
- (b) Affordable Housing in accordance with Policy HOU3 (Affordable Housing);
- (c) a care home/ flexi-care or sheltered properties in accordance with the provisions of Policy HOU6 (Homes for Older and Vulnerable People);
- (d) Self-Build and Custom Build Housing in accordance with Policy HOU8 (Self-Build and Custom Build Housing);
- (e) the provision of a serviced site for Gypsy and Travellers, in accordance with Policy HOU9 (Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople) which should deliver 15 pitches for longer term needs beyond the Plan period;
- (f) the provision of a serviced site for Travelling Showpeople in accordance with Policy HOU9 (Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople) which should deliver 8 plots for longer term needs beyond the Plan period; (each of sufficient size to allow for the provision of accommodation and equipment plus storage/maintenance);

- (g) quality local green infrastructure throughout the site including opportunities for preserving and enhancing on-site assets, maximising opportunities to link into existing assets and enhancing biodiversity. This will include the protection of Local Wildlife Sites and other assets of environmental value;
- (h) the provision of significant managed open space and parklands, and a limited number of buildings associated with that use, on the northern section of the site as identified in Figure 11.2, the ownership of which will be transferred to a community trust or other mechanism that ensures long term stewardship and governance for the benefit of the community;
- (i) a variety of public green spaces across the site, including the provision of play areas and opportunities for outdoor health and fitness activities, as well as space for wildlife;
- (j) access arrangements and local highways measures and commensurate financial contributions to addressing impacts on the wider strategic highways network, including the provision of additional crossings to the River Stort;
- (k) land for twenty forms of entry for both primary and secondary education, including Early Years facilities, subject to more detailed modelling. All schools should provide for the dual use of facilities for community purposes;
- (l) sustainable transport measures which encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport including:
- the provision of cycleways and footways that provide links throughout the site and into Harlow;
 - enhancement of existing bridleways and footpaths; enhanced passenger transport services including the creation of a sustainable transport route through the site which will link into a sustainable transport corridor which links the Gilston Area to the urban area of Harlow; and
 - the setting of objectives and targets for the use of sustainable transport modes.
- (m) consideration of the potential of the site to facilitate the delivery of a re-located Princess Alexandra Hospital;
- (n) the use of appropriate landscape buffers in order to protect the individual character and integrity of Eastwick and Gilston villages within the context of the development;
- (o) the protection and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings, both on-site and in the wider area through appropriate mitigation measures, having regard to the Heritage Impact Assessment. Gilston Church and the Johnston Monument (both grade I listed), the moated site Scheduled Monuments at Eastwick, the Mount Scheduled Monument, and Gilston Park house (grade II*) are of particular significance and sensitivity and any planning application should seek to ensure that these assets and their settings are conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced, through careful design; landscaping; open space; buffer zones; protection of key views; and, better management and interpretation of assets, where appropriate;
- (p) neighbourhood centres in accessible locations, providing local retail and community uses, including healthcare facilities to meet the day-to-day retail and health needs of new residents;
- (q) employment area/s (of around 5ha), within visible and accessible location/s, which provides appropriate opportunities to promote self-containment and sustainability;
- (r) consideration of opportunities for local supply chains as well as opportunities for local employment and training including apprenticeships and improving skills base for local people;
- (s) indoor and outdoor sports facilities (which may be shared use) taking into account the Council's evidence on sports and open space needs;
- (t) consideration of need for cemetery provision;
- (u) landscaping and planting, both within the site and peripheral, which responds to the existing landscape and complements development, as appropriate, and a defined recognisable boundary to the Green Belt;
- (v) assisting the delivery of all other necessary on-site and appropriate off-site infrastructure;
- (w) necessary new utilities, including integrated communications infrastructure to facilitate home working;
- (x) satisfactory water supply, including acceptable water pressure for occupants;
- (y) sustainable drainage and provision for flood mitigation;
- (z) other policy provisions of the District Plan and relevant matters, as appropriate.

VI. Any application for development will include an indicative phasing plan for the delivery of infrastructure and utilities across the villages.

VII. The delivery of the Gilston Area will include a mechanism for:

- securing the long term stewardship, protection and maintenance of the parkland, open spaces, play areas and community assets;
- managing the construction process to address potential impacts on existing and future communities;
- encouraging a successful and active community, including an innovative approach to create the conditions for local resident participation in the design and stewardship of their new communities.

VIII. Proposals for the Gilston Area should complement, and have regard to, ongoing work in relation to the Harlow and Gilston

Policy DES1 Masterplanning

I. All 'significant' development proposals will be required to prepare a Masterplan setting out the quantum and distribution of land uses; access; sustainable high quality design and layout principles; necessary infrastructure; the relationship between the site and other adjacent and nearby land uses; landscape and heritage assets; and other relevant matters.

II. The Masterplan will be collaboratively prepared, involving site promoters, land owners, East Herts Council, town and parish councils and other relevant key stakeholders. The Masterplan will be further informed by public participation.

III. In order to ensure that sites are planned and delivered comprehensively, any application for development on part of the site will be assessed against its contribution to the Masterplan as a whole.

3. The role of this Charter

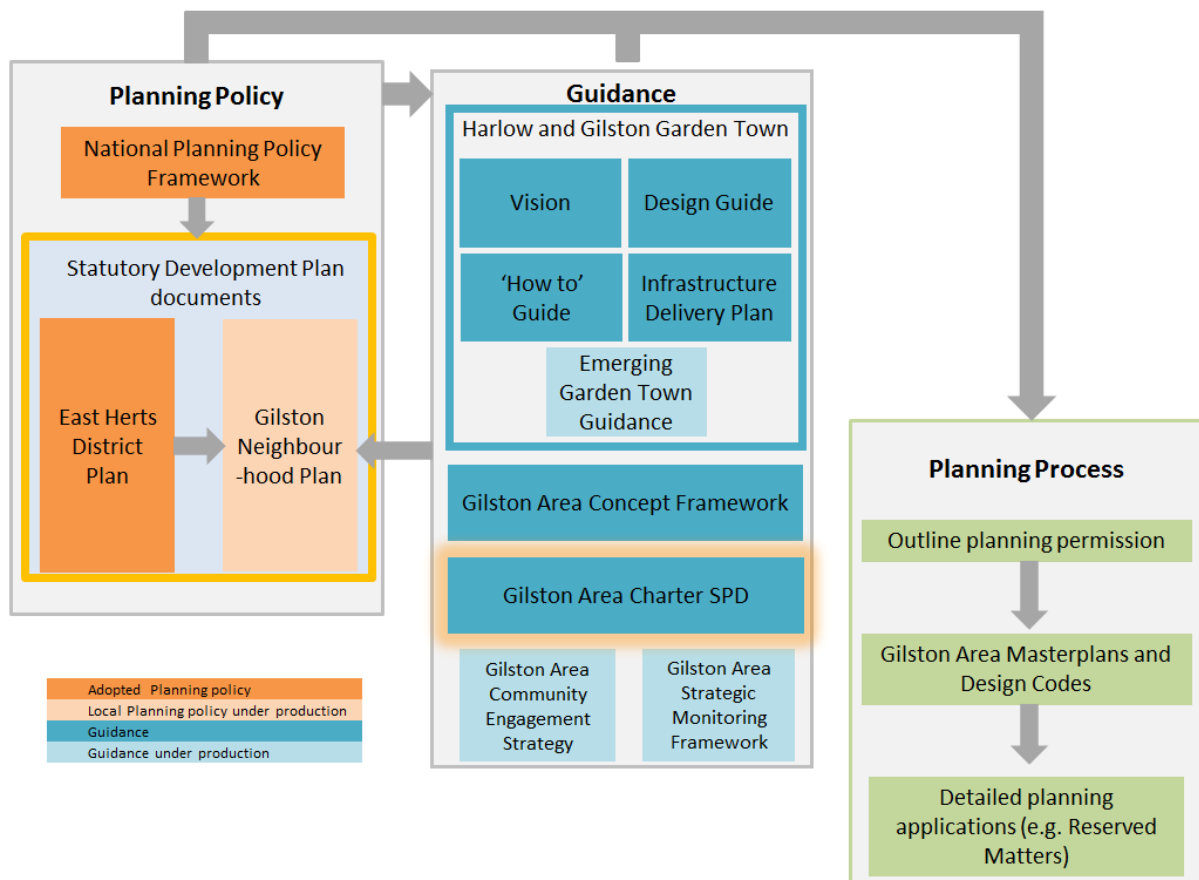
- 3.1 This Charter is a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which seeks to support the implementation of District Plan Policy DES1 in producing robust Masterplans that deliver the overarching ambitions and aspirations for the Gilston Area as set out in District Plan policy GA1 and other relevant policy/guidance. As an SPD, the Charter is a Local Development Document that builds upon and provides more detailed advice or guidance on the policies in the District Plan and has weight as a material consideration in planning decision making.¹
- 3.2 The guidance contained within this document establishes a consistent approach to the production of Masterplans in the Gilston Area to ensure that development comes forward in a comprehensive and cohesive manner that contributes to the creation of successful and sustainable places that embody the Garden City Principles. This is particularly important to the Gilston Area because of the strategic scale of development and the multiple parties with an interest in its delivery.
- 3.3 In addition it requires the masterplanning process to appropriately consider how development in the Gilston Area will sensitively respond to its setting including for example protecting and enhancing ecological and heritage assets of the site, the wider landscape and Stort Valley and the relationship with existing settlements, Harlow and the wider Garden Town.
- 3.4 Finally the Charter also seeks to embed the important role of collaborative engagement between the applicant and the Council, key stakeholders and statutory bodies in the preparation of the Masterplans, as well as the local

¹ A material consideration is a matter that should be taken into account in deciding a planning application or an appeal against a planning decision.

community in accordance with the emerging Gilston Area Community Engagement Strategy.

- 3.5 The guidance contained within this document has been informed by existing and emerging policy and guidance and a case study review of a broad range of existing design documents, including Design Strategies, Design Codes and Masterplans; these are summarised in the Appendix to this document.

Figure 4: The Gilston Area Charter in the context of relevant policy/guidance and the planning process for the Gilston Area



4. The role of Masterplans and Design Codes in shaping the development of the Gilston Area

- 4.1 East Herts expects a high standard of design quality for all new development proposed in the district and identifies Masterplans and Design Codes as means of helping to achieve this. They are particularly useful for large multi-phased developments such as that coming forward in the Gilston Area, acting as a mechanism to assist in the delivery of coordinated development and high quality design outcomes.
- 4.2 Masterplanning is about place making. A good masterplan should tell a 'story' about the place as it is now and how it will be in the future as it is developed. Incorporating masterplanning into the planning process enables issues to be addressed collaboratively and in a coordinated and comprehensive way before the detailed elements of a development are established. This helps to enable the overarching development objectives for the site to be realised and reduces the potential for design quality compromises and delays at the detailed planning application stage.
- 4.3 Design Codes are a set of illustrated rules or requirements that guide how the physical elements of a development should be designed, such as streets, buildings and landscaping. They often include mandatory design requirements but also make recommendations where flexible design solutions are most appropriate.
- 4.4 The graphic and written components of Design Codes build upon the matters established at the outline application and masterplanning stages and aim to provide clarity as to what constitutes acceptable design quality at the detailed application stages, thereby providing a level of certainty for developers, the Council and the local community alike.
- 4.5 Planning policy guidance² advises that Design Codes are best prepared in partnership to secure agreed design outcomes and should be tested and reviewed as development proceeds.

The Gilston Area Masterplans

- 4.6 As set out earlier in this document, Masterplans will be required for each of the Gilston Area villages, together with an overarching Masterplan that will address the strategic elements of the development and the important network of green spaces that will play a key role in knitting the development together and integrating it into the wider context.
- 4.7 Each Masterplan will be supported by a Design Code and together they will provide an added layer of detail to the evolving plans for the Gilston Area, building on the parameters and commitments secured at the outline application stage and the work already undertaken in the Gilston Area Concept Framework. The requirement for

² <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/design#para008>

their production will be secured by this Charter and a strategic planning condition secured at the outline application stage in accordance with District Plan policy DES1.

- 4.8 Once approved the Masterplans and their associated Design Codes will form a framework to guide detailed planning applications for development plots or buildings that follow. A summary of how the Masterplans fit into the planning process for the Gilston Area is provided in Figure 5.
- 4.9 The content of each Masterplan must align with any parameters established through the outline applications, the Local Development Plan and take account of relevant guidance including the Gilston Area Concept Framework and the Garden Town Vision and Design Guide. The current relevant policy and guidance documents are summarised in Appendix 1.

The Gilston Area Strategic Landscape Masterplan

- 4.10 A Strategic Landscape Masterplan will be produced and approved before or in parallel with the first village masterplan. This will establish a spatial strategy for the entire Gilston Area site allocation in one overarching plan that draws together and expands upon the principles established in the parameter plans approved at the outline application stage, and the work already undertaken in the Gilston Area Concept Framework.
- 4.11 It will focus on establishing the key components and Character Areas that will form the comprehensive green infrastructure network across the site that will surround and sit alongside the new villages and existing settlements and connect to and complement the wider landscape including the Stort Valley, this will include detailed proposals for key areas of the landscape including the community trust open space land allocated in the Gilston Area. The Masterplan will also plan for strategic matters including: how movement is accommodated to support the 60% mode share for active and sustainable travel, identifying key routes between the new villages, existing settlements and wider destinations; establish principles that inform the relationship between new villages and their adjacent landscape setting; as well as provide an opportunity to establish additional guidance where helpful to support comprehensive development such as supporting a co-ordinated approach to dealing with drainage and flood risk. The role of the Strategic Landscape Masterplan is to ensure that the villages and green spaces function successfully together as one new settlement, and that the area as a whole integrates seamlessly into the wider landscaping and access routes beyond the site boundary.

The Gilston Area Village Masterplans

- 4.12 A Masterplan will also be produced for each Gilston Area village. These will provide a framework within which designers and developers can bring forward more detailed proposals for individual development plots in a planned and comprehensive way, whilst still allowing for design flexibility and innovation at the detailed design stage.

- 4.13 Each Village Masterplan will establish the location of the village centre, recreation spaces and key routes through the village, key supporting infrastructure such as education and health facilities, as well establish how the village edges will be integrated into the wider landscaping and movement network. They will also consider how the village can be designed to: support the 60% target for active and sustainable travel; provide sustainable homes and places that commit to tackling climate change; connect into a wider sustainable drainage network and reduce flood risk; establish a distinct character; foster a strong sense of community; as well as consider how the village can adapt over time to meet the changing needs of the community.
- 4.14 Each Village Masterplan will establish its own Character Areas, informed by special/memorable places such as heritage or ecological assets, key views, the location of proposed key buildings and features, nodal points, and green spaces.

Gilston Area Design Codes

- 4.15 Each Masterplan including the Strategic Landscape Masterplan will be supported by a Design Code. The Design Code will establish elements that are considered to contribute to the creation high quality place making, starting from the most strategic elements working through to more focused detailed elements.
- 4.16 A Regulatory Plan will be produced in support of each Design Code to illustrate how it relates to development plots, land parcels or different character areas on a single scalable drawing. This will enable users to navigate where the provisions of the code will apply.
- 4.17 Each Design Code will need to be tested to determine whether it is fit-for-purpose before it is finalised and submitted for approval. Testing should consider how user friendly the code is, its market viability, likely capacity to deliver quality and its efficiency as an administrative tool that can help streamline the planning process. The testing process should be evidenced as part of the Design Code.
- 4.18 To ensure that Design Codes are effectively implemented, a 'Compliance Checklist' shall also be produced as part of the Design Code submission, this will set out the mandatory elements of the code in a Compliance Checklist table. Applicants submitting detailed/Reserved Matters applications will be expected to complete the table as part of their submission to confirm their proposals accord with the Design Code.
- 4.19 It is likely given the duration of the Gilston Area development that the circumstances within which the code will operate will change over time. The Compliance Checklist should also make provision for applicants to acknowledge where a code may no longer be fit for purpose and provide design justification for any proposed deviations for consideration by the Local Planning Authority. An example of the format a Compliance Checklist might take is provided in Figure 6 below.

- 4.20 The remainder of this Charter will set out the steps that should be undertaken in the production of the Gilston Area Masterplans and the associated submission and determination process. It also sets out the important process of community and stakeholder engagement in the masterplanning process.

Figure 5. Planning process for the Gilston Area



Figure 6. Example of the format a Compliance Checklist might take

REF.	Design Principle	YES	PARTIALY with design justification provided	NO with design justification provided	Not applicable
2.1	Does the design take account of the principles set out for the Eastern Access Key Grouping?				
5.4	Has the Village Centre been designed to ensure a clear definition between public and private spaces?				

5. The process steps that should be taken in the production of Gilston Area Masterplans and Design Codes

5.1 The production of each Masterplan for the Gilston Area shall follow the process steps identified below. It shall be led by the applicant but in collaboration with the Council, key stakeholders and the community. It will also be necessary to seek a review of the Masterplan proposals as they evolve by the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Quality Review Panel (QRP). Further detail on the role of the QRP and how collaboration should be undertaken is set out later in this document.

5.2 *Strategic Landscape Masterplan*

STEP 1 Confirm the relevant parameters and commitments secured at the outline application stage and through adopted policy and guidance for the masterplan. This should include the initial definition of the Masterplan boundary in the context of its surroundings and the wider Gilston Area.

STEP 2 Establish an agreed brief for the Masterplan and its objectives.

STEP 3 Assess considerations and opportunities for development taking account of the setting of heritage assets, key views, geographical/topographical features, ecological habitats (including trees/hedgerows), utilities infrastructure (existing retained and future provision), relationship to existing settlements and properties etc.

STEP 4 Refine and agree the Masterplan boundary which may extend beyond the Outline application boundary to ensure this integrates seamlessly into the wider landscape and recognises opportunities for broader enhancements with partners.

STEP 5 Establish and determine the location and extent of key features, building in flexibility where required. As a minimum this should include;

- Areas of woodland, community parks and fields, green corridors, key habitat areas and ongoing agricultural uses including areas of public access for leisure and recreation and areas of restricted access to support habitats and protect heritage assets and the inter-connections as connected green infrastructure;
- Settings of heritage assets and their enhancement and interpretation;
- Sustainable transport routes and broad location of hubs, public rights of way, bridleways and footpaths that permeate the green infrastructure;
- Key vehicular routes that permeate the green infrastructure;
- Watercourse crossings, SUDS infrastructure such as a connected network of surface water attenuation features and outfalls and enhancements to existing watercourses;
- Areas of public lighting beyond village boundaries or dark zones to reduce impacts on ecology and night sky;
- Significant land level changes.

The broad location and extent of strategic nodal points within the site that will influence movement, such as village centres, sustainable transport hubs, public spaces and community buildings such as schools, should also be referenced and shown to be considered as part of the Strategic Landscape Masterplan (with further detail on these elements to be provided in the Village Masterplans).

STEP 6 Identify Character Areas.

STEP 7 Establish a Design Code including Design Code Testing. This should include any site wide Design Codes that should also be reflected in the Village Design Codes in order to establish a consistent sense of place.

STEP 8 Opportunities to address other strategic matters that are the subject of planning conditions on any grant of outline permission, for example determining a logical order for phasing development and bringing forward supporting infrastructure. This will need to align with any existing planning conditions approvals and s106 commitments secured at the outline planning stage.

5.3 *Village Masterplans*

STEP 1 Confirm the relevant parameters and commitments secured under the outline planning permission and through adopted policy and guidance for the masterplan. This should include the initial definition of the Village Masterplan boundary in the context of its surroundings, and the wider Gilston Area taking account of the Strategic Landscape Masterplan.

STEP 2 Establish an agreed brief for the Masterplan and its objectives.

STEP 3 Assess considerations and opportunities for development taking account of the setting of heritage assets, key views, geographical/topographical features,

ecological habitats (including trees/hedgerows), utilities infrastructure (existing retained and future provision), relationship to existing settlements and properties etc.

STEP 4 Refine and agree the Village Masterplan boundary which may extend into adjacent open spaces.

STEP 5 Establish and determine the location and extent of key features, building in flexibility where required. As a minimum this should include;

- The Village Centre;
- Sustainable Transport HUB;
- Walking, cycling and public transport routes;
- Vehicle routes;
- Development plots, including their orientation, maximum size and building heights and broad land uses;
- Community buildings such as schools and health care facilities;
- Outdoor recreation areas such as playing fields and playgrounds;
- SUDS infrastructure such as ponds and other surface water attenuation features;
- Formal and informal public spaces such as allotments, village buffers etc;
- Significant land level changes;
- Areas that will be publically lit including streets, recreation areas and other public spaces;
- Other physical development such as utilities infrastructure.

STEP 6 Identify Character Areas.

STEP 7 Establish a Design Code including Design Code Testing. This should take account of any site wide Design Codes established as part of the Strategic Landscape Masterplan.

STEP 8 Opportunities to address other strategic matters that are the subject of planning conditions on any grant of outline permission, for example determine a logical order for phasing development and bringing forward supporting infrastructure. This will need to align with any existing planning condition approvals and s106 commitments secured as part of the outline planning permission including any details approved with the Strategic Landscape Masterplan.

6. The content of a Masterplan submission

- 6.1 Each Masterplan shall comprise written and visual material and applicants are encouraged to use physical models as well as interactive visualisations to support engagement and understanding of the Masterplan including where these can be adapted as development is delivered. Plans, drawings and photographs should also

be included supported by various technical documents. The content of each masterplan should include the sections as set out below:

1. Description of the site:
For Village Masterplans this should include a plan showing the physical extent of the village in the context of the wider Gilston Area. For the Strategic Landscape Masterplan this should include a plan showing the entire site in the context of the wider area, denoting the areas that will be developed through the Village Masterplans, their supporting green infrastructure and the areas that will be safeguarded from development.
2. Relevant background information including:
 - Planning policy/guidance considered when establishing the Masterplan and associated Design Code.
 - Confirmation of the parameters and commitments approved at the outline application stage that have informed the Masterplan.
 - Summary of the main findings and issues identified in any supporting technical assessments.
3. Statement of Engagement: this should include how and who was engaged in the preparation of the Masterplan and associated Design Codes in accordance with the Gilston Area Community Engagement Strategy.
4. Options testing: this should tell the story of how the final version of the Masterplan and Design Codes were arrived at using plans and narrative. It should include the options considered and ruled out and also how feedback from the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Quality Review Panel and other key stakeholders informed the process.
5. The Masterplan: this should be illustrated on a plan with supporting narrative and illustrative material.
6. The Design Code: this should include a Regulatory Plan, illustrations and supporting narrative as set out in Section 4.
7. Sustainability Statement: this should demonstrate how the Masterplan and associated Design Code have sought to achieve quality outcomes responding to the relevant check markers as set out in Section 9 of the Charter.
8. Framework for delivery including any agreed phasing plan for development and infrastructure.
9. Appendix, this should comprise supporting docs/technical studies. Note; it may be acceptable to draw on existing material such as technical information already approved at the outline application stage.
 - Topographical survey, including ground conditions

- Environmental considerations such as ground contamination, air quality and noise
- Landscape and visual assessment incorporating a character appraisal and any key views
- Phase 1 habitat survey
- Tree and hedges survey
- Flood risk assessment
- Transport assessment
- Travel Plan
- Heritage assessment including archaeological survey
- Utility services plan, detailing the location of existing utilities to be retained as well as proposed (electricity, gas, sewerage, drainage, water supply).

7. Submission and approval process

- 7.1 The following section sets out the process for formally submitting a Masterplan to East Herts for consideration and determination.

(1) Project Governance Arrangements

A Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) will be prepared and agreed between the applicant and East Herts together with other relevant bodies such as Harlow Council, Hertfordshire County Council and Essex County Council before work of any significant extent on the Masterplan is undertaken.

A PPA is a project management tool which local planning authorities and applicants can use to agree timescales, actions and resources for handling particular applications. They can be particularly useful in setting out an efficient and transparent process for developing large and/or complex planning submissions such as Masterplans. They encourage joint working between the applicant, Local Planning Authority and other statutory bodies involved in the planning process. They also enable any issues to be addressed early and collaboratively which speeds up decision making and avoids development compromises later in the planning process.

A PPA programme will be established that is based on achieving the steps set out in Section 5 above and will establish the resources required for other signatories to the PPA to support the Masterplan production process.

A Core Project Group will be established as part of the PPA to support the preparation of the Masterplan. The group will comprise representatives from the applicant team and officers from East Herts and the other signatories.

(2) Masterplan Engagement

Prior to work commencing on the production of a Masterplan, an Engagement Plan will be prepared by the Core Project Group in accordance with the Gilston Area Community Engagement Strategy. The plan will seek to;

- a) Identify any statutory parties, HGGT partners and other bodies that should inform the masterplanning process including how/when they should be engaged;
- b) Establish a working group of community representatives to help inform the production of the masterplan.

(3) Quality Review

Each Masterplan and respective Design Code shall be reviewed by the Harlow and Gilston Town Quality Review Panel (QRP) at various stages of their production, including at the options testing phase and during the drafting phase (pre-submission) as agreed by the Core Project Group. The QRP is an independent design panel made up of planning and design professionals which can review any emerging work relating to the Garden Town, including development proposals from landowners / developers. The Panel provides an independent critique in relation to matters presented to it and its recommendations and observations may then be considered by applicants or the local planning authority to inform the content of the Masterplans.

(4) Formal submission and decision making

Each Masterplan will be submitted by the applicant to East Herts as Local Planning Authority (LPA) as an Approval of Details application seeking to discharge the associated strategic condition secured at the outline application stage. The application will be accompanied by the supporting documents as set out in Section 6 above (unless otherwise agreed by the LPA) and the process for its production will have followed the steps set out in Section 5.

The LPA will assess the application in accordance with the programme specified in the PPA.

The application to discharge the planning condition (approve the Masterplan) will be taken to East Herts Full Council with an officer report for determination. Once endorsed, the Masterplan will be approved formally through discharge of the associated planning condition and form the framework for subsequent reserved matters applications and form a material planning consideration in the determination of any detailed planning applications that may come forward in the respective Masterplan area.

8. Engagement

- 8.1 All Masterplans and their associated Design Codes shall be prepared in liaison with statutory bodies, key stakeholders such as the HGGT partners and the local

community from the pre-submission stage. As mentioned in Section 7 above, an Engagement Plan shall be produced prior to any work on the Masterplan commencing. This will establish who will be involved in production process, how and when.

- 8.2 The Engagement Plan shall also demonstrate how the measures within it have given due regard to the Gilston Area Community Engagement Strategy which sets out the required approach to stakeholder engagement and consultation for all planning matters associated with the Gilston Area, including the production of Masterplans.
- 8.3 Statutory bodies that shall be engaged will include the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England, as well as other bodies as required.

9. Quality outcomes

- 9.1 District Plan (Policy GA1) seeks to ensure that the development of the Gilston Area comes forward having regard to the Garden City Principles (see figure 2). The Garden Town Design Guide has translated the principles into a number of design quality questions which should be considered and responded to at the masterplanning stage (see Figure 7). This will help to embed high quality design solutions into the evolving plans for the Gilston Area and ensure that once completed it works as a successful, sustainable place where people will want to live, work and visit.
- 9.2 The Masterplans should also consider and respond to any future Guidance or Checklists established by East Herts or jointly by the Garden Town Authorities where these looks to embed high quality design and sustainability solutions through the planning process by building in consideration of measurable sustainability outcomes.
- 9.3 The Garden Town Authorities will seek to provide on an ongoing basis information to keep the public informed about the progress of masterplans and development as they come forward in the Gilston Area. In accordance with the East Herts District Plan policy DEL4 East Herts will also provide monitoring for the Gilston Area through a monitoring framework to review progress and outcomes throughout the planning, construction and post construction stages by identifying a series of targets that can be measured. Opportunities to link these to indicators established through the masterplans and design codes will be explored as well as in relation to other approvals and any other new policy/guidance that comes forward that is relevant to the Gilston Area.
- 9.4 As set out in Section 6, a Sustainability Statement shall be included as part of each masterplan submission to demonstrate how it has responded to the above considerations.

Figure 7 – Design Quality Questions (Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Design Guide)

- 1 How will the proposals respond positively to the existing context, including heritage assets, and make a positive contribution to the character and quality of place?
- 2 What steps have you taken to ensure high quality architecture and construction that achieves distinctive neighbourhoods and villages that contribute to a harmonious whole?
- 3 How have the proposals incorporated different architectural typologies to support balanced, sustainable and diverse communities, in terms of the range of uses, spaces, housing types and tenures?
- 4 Demonstrate how the proposals will facilitate social interaction and help improve the physical and mental health of residents and visitors.
- 5 Explain how the proposed buildings and places could adapt to changes in lifestyles, climate change and future requirements?
- 6 How will the proposals demonstrate a landscape-led approach that preserves hedgerows, mature trees, water ways and other existing natural landscape features?
- 7 How will the proposals extend and enhance the network of Green Wedges Green Fingers and open spaces? How do these vary in character and in what ways are they usable?
- 8 Demonstrate how proposals have been informed by stakeholders to contribute to a clear net biodiversity gain and climate resilience?
- 9 How have the proposals incorporated approaches to sustainable energy, water, waste, design and construction and other practices that will improve household sustainability?
- 10 How will the proposals establish and contribute to an attractive walking and cycling network that people will want to use, including access to the Super Greenways?
- 11 How will the proposals encourage a behavioural change to facilitate the overall modal shift towards sustainable travel required across the Garden Town?
- 12 How will the proposals integrate with and support the Bus Rapid Transit network across the Garden Town and beyond? This should appropriately balance both movement and placemaking?
- 13 Explain the measures taken to ensure the proposals support changing working patterns and future working needs?
- 14 Explain in what ways your approach supports the success of Harlow Town Centre, and the network of existing or new local centres.
- 15 How have proposals considered and taken account of feedback from local consultation? What changes have been made to demonstrate this? Have any community 'quick-wins' been identified and how will they be delivered?
- 16 What is the approach to phasing and how will proposals support early delivery of key infrastructure in conjunction with homes e.g. landscape, transport, digital, community?
- 17 Demonstrate how collaboration with the community has positively informed arrangements for the long-term stewardship of community assets within the proposals?

APPENDIX

Appendix 1 – Main policy and guidance documents that support the production of a Charter and the Gilston Area Masterplans/Design Codes

Document	Author	Status	Summary
East Herts District Plan https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/planning-building/planning-policy	East Herts Council	Adopted October 2018	<p>Adopted development plan for the District which sets out the Council's planning framework for the district, identifying how it will grow and develop over the plan period up to 2033.</p> <p>Of particular relevance to the Charter are Chapter 11 - The Gilston Area (Policy GA1) and Chapter 17 - Design and Landscape.</p>
Gilston Area Concept Framework and Council Report	Places for People, in partnership with City and Provincial Properties and East Herts Council	Produced and approved as a material consideration in July 2018.	<p>Produced to demonstrate the deliverability of the proposed site allocation, establish key principles that should underpin the development of the Gilston Area and guide the preparation of future detailed proposals. The Framework presents a broad articulation of the delivery of the Gilston Area as a set of distinct villages, in advance of the formal pre-application or statutory planning application process.</p> <p>Of particular relevance are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - P10, vision for the Gilston Area - P12, development objectives for the Gilston area. - P74-79, placemaking design principles. - P81-87, key landscape and physical characteristics that will shape

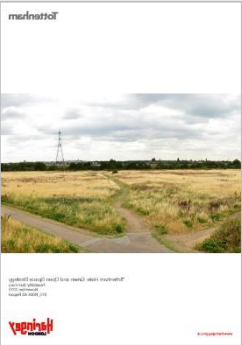

Document	Author	Status	Summary
			<p>the design of each of the 7 villages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - P90, the principles for protecting heritage assets. - P96, principles to minimise the impacts of the development of the Gilston Area on existing communities. - P96-101, recommendations of how to protect the character and appearance of existing settlements in the Gilston Area. - P102, principles for scale and massing of new development in the area. - P103, responding to surrounding landscape assets. - P104, principles for densities in the area. - P107, consideration of appropriate densities throughout the development area. - P114, key green infrastructure objectives for the area. - P119-121, recommendations for green infrastructure in the area. - P123, recommendations for SUDs systems. - P124, outline how the development of the Gilston area should support the Stort Valley. - P126, open space guidelines. - P128, recommendations for open space features and character. - P130, approach to considering ecological constraints. - P132, features of village centres and place making recommendations. - P134, recommendations for the layout of retail centres and commercial provision. - P135, recommendations for an 'Education and Leisure Zone' next to Home Wood in the centre of the Gilston area. - P137, proposed design criteria for housing. - P140, proposed governance arrangements. - P146, strategic access arrangements for the area. - P147, recommendations for street typologies. - P148-P152, principles and recommendations for sustainable modes of transport.

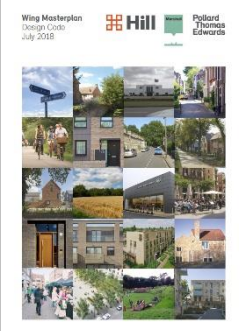

Document	Author	Status	Summary
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - P154 and 155, proposals for strategic highways improvements. - P158 and p163 set out overarching principles for the development of the area.
Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision	Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners working with the Garden Town Authorities	Produced November 2018. Approved as a material consideration in December 2018	<p>Document sets out the vision for the Garden Town and the principles which will inform its growth and management.</p> <p>Of particular relevance to the Charter are P4, the Vision for the Garden Town and P8, the principles and indicators which should shape and inform the development of the area.</p>
Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Design Guide	Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners working with the Garden Town Authorities	Produced November 2018. Approved as a material consideration in December 2018	<p>Document sets out the expectations and aspirations for the delivery of high quality and sustainable developments.</p> <p>Of particular relevance are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - P17, Density and typology considerations. - P20 onwards, consideration of important views and landmarks. - P24 onwards, recommendations for sustainable movement network extensions. - P39-41, design recommendations for the Gilston Area. - P50-51, design quality questions to be considered by new development proposals.
HGGT Infrastructure Delivery Plan	Arup working with the Garden Town Partner Authorities	Published April 2019 as a material planning consideration	<p>The IDP draws on previous work undertaken by the Councils – in particular, the District-level IDPs already produced to support the respective Local Plans – and compiles, aligns and updates it. The combined Infrastructure Schedule for the Garden Town covers a wide range of types of infrastructure.</p> <p>The IDP also identifies how expected developer contributions from various sites will be apportioned and what collection mechanisms can be utilised to assist in funding the infrastructure items which serve more than one site. Through the process of producing the IDP, a package of measures and broad estimates of the likely financial contribution for each of the Garden Town sites has been produced.</p>




Document	Author	Status	Summary
			The IDP has been produced concurrently with the Strategic Viability Assessment, to allow these costs to be included in the appraisal. The purpose of the Strategic Viability Assessment is to consider the wider deliverability of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town, taking into account infrastructure requirements alongside other considerations.
HGGT 'How to' Guide for Planning Obligations, Land Value Capture and Development Viability	Garden Town Authorities	Published April 2018 as a material planning consideration	This Guide sets out how the Councils intend to ensure that a consistent approach is adopted to support growth and deliver the necessary infrastructure to ensure the sustainability and long term stewardship of the Garden Town as a whole in line with the Garden City Principles and Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision. This will include the capture of development land value through the use of planning obligations.
HGGT Transport Strategy (draft)	Aecom working with the Garden Town Partner Authorities	Draft – Proposed to be approved as a material planning consideration.	The Transport Strategy will set out how HGGT will achieve the challenge of future travel demand linked to planned growth.
Hunsdon, Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan	Hunsdon Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan Group	Consultation draft, published September 2019 On adoption, Neighbourhood Plans form part of the Development Plan against which relevant planning applications will be determined.	Plan is currently being produced by the Hunsdon, Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan Group to shape the future of the area” and “set out more detailed planning policies to guide how development takes place and how the existing settlements and new villages will be shaped in the future” (Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan for Consultation Draft 1.1, September 2019).
East Herts Masterplanning	East Herts	Guidance	Document sets out the minimum steps the Council expects to be

Document	Author	Status	Summary
Approach	District Council		undertaken in the production of Master Plans.

Appendix 2 - Case study examples of design documents reviewed to inform the guidance in the Charter.

Case Study	Summary	Learning points and relevance to the Gilston Area
<p>Tottenham Hale Green and Open Space Strategy, London 2015</p> 	<p>Associated with a growth area in London for 5,000 new houses and 4,000 new jobs. The Strategy seeks to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve accessibility and links between urban areas and open spaces. • Increase planting and greenery within the urban area. • Merge the green spaces and urban areas. <p>The strategy guides improvements to the routes between the green and open spaces, extending and connecting open spaces from the Lee Valley Park into the Tottenham Hale area.</p>	<p>This is an Open Space Strategy, and therefore does not present design codes. The Strategy does however provide a good example of developing open space projects which link open space to surrounding urban areas.</p> <p>The Gilston Area could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on accessibility to open spaces from developed areas. • Seek to merge green spaces and developed areas. • Consider creating set projects to bring together developed areas and open space areas.
<p>Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park Design Guide, London, 2018</p> 	<p>This relates to a 100ha area of open space on the site of the London 2012 Olympic Games Park, now managed by the London Legacy Development Corporation. The Guide sets out expected standards for ensuring good design and biodiversity across the park, and integrating place making principles. The Guide sets out overarching and detailed design principles to guide new development and projects in the Queen Elizabeth Park area.</p>	<p>The Guide is well presented and easy to understand. The use of examples is helpful in conveying the design features being sought. The Guide presents a large amount of detail on design preferences to guide decision making.</p> <p>The Guide is less detailed than Design Codes. This is less restrictive for development proposals but will require more assessment and review by the Council at the planning application stage.</p> <p>The Gilston Area could use a strategic design guide approach to outline strategic design principles and manage the layout of open space, green space and public areas throughout the Gilston Area and the surrounding area.</p>

Case Study	Summary	Learning points and relevance to the Gilston Area
<p>Wing Masterplan, Cambridge, 2018</p> 	<p>Development of 1,300 new homes, a primary school, community hall, mixed use units, open space, allotments, clubhouse and sports pavilion. The Design Code aims to ensure quality and co-ordination across all phases of development.</p>	<p>The masterplan presents detailed and comprehensive Design Codes which are well presented and easy to understand.</p> <p>The masterplan clearly presents mandatory features and recommended features. The use of character areas throughout the development site assists in understanding the requirements across the area. The presentation of good and bad examples of design features is a helpful addition to the document, making the aims and objectives of the document easy to understand.</p> <p>The Gilston Area could use the approach of presenting Design Codes within the village masterplans and could consider creating character areas within and across the village masterplan areas. A similar approach to using landmark features throughout the village masterplan areas could be used to create a more interesting overall design. Masterplans and Design Codes associated with the Gilston Area could incorporate good and bad design examples to help peoples understanding of the aims and objectives of the documents.</p>
<p>Deptford Neighbourhood Plan Design Codes, 2019</p> 	<p>Relates to the Convoys Wharf development site in London, and connections to surrounding estates included within the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. The development site has outline planning permission for up to 3,500 homes, shops, restaurants, cafes and a hotel. The Design Codes provide strategic and detailed design guidance in relation to accessibility, heritage and well-being.</p>	<p>The Gilston Area could draw upon this approach to develop guidance for key connections into and out of villages, linked to protecting / enhancing heritage, providing access to green infrastructure, and promoting cultural integration. The approach to stakeholder engagement to inform Design Codes could also be beneficial for the Gilston Area.</p> <p>Design Codes associated with the Gilston Area should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the status and role of the codes are clearly articulated. • Consider what level of detail is required to meet the aims and objectives of the area. • Consider what themes are required for codes in the area.

Case Study	Summary	Learning points and relevance to the Gilston Area
<p>Alconbury Weald Design Code</p> 	<p>Development of 5,000 new homes, B1/B2 employment floorspace, open space, and community facilities. The Design Code relates to 108ha of the development site. The Code provides clear and comprehensive design fixes and guidance to inform the production of the reserved matters planning applications.</p>	<p>This Design Code demonstrates the importance of good presentation and clarity in creating a successful document which achieves its aims and objectives. This example can be used to consider the level of detail that is appropriate for the Gilston Area Design Codes. Establishing clear linkages with Reserved Matters applications is helpful in defining the scope, remit, role and status of design codes. The use of a Regulatory Plan is helpful in reviewing and understanding this Design Code.</p> <p>The Gilston Area could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate and adapt the structural and presentational elements of this Design Code. • Provide a similar level of clarity on design fixes and guidance. • Consider incorporating an overarching Regulatory Plan.
<p>Land South of Chesterton, Cirencester</p> 	<p>Relates to a site allocated in the Cotswold District Council Local Plan as a new strategic mixed-use neighbourhood that will deliver up to 2,350 homes, employment uses, education and community facilities, areas of public open space and allotments.</p>	<p>The Design Code focuses on design characteristics that are important to achieve, informed by stakeholder engagement. The Codes present clear mandatory and illustrative requirements. The document is well presented and clearly structured / articulated. The Codes include a Regulatory Plan, present detailed design elements, and include a compliance checklist which covers mandatory requirements to inform the reserved matters applications.</p> <p>The Gilston Area could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw upon the approach to presenting and structuring a Design Code. • Incorporate a Regulatory Plan. • Include a compliance checklist.
<p>Chilmington Green, 2016</p> 	<p>Relates to a new garden suburb in Ashford, Kent, for 5,750 new homes arranged in three distinct neighbourhoods. Through a collaborative approach including stakeholder meetings, the design code aims to deliver a high quality environment with a memorable sequence of</p>	<p>There are similarities in the scale and type of development to the Gilston Area. The Design Code covers the entirety of the development rather than distinct village areas. The structure of the document is clear and follows best practice by including a Regulatory Plan, a structured approach, and clearly demonstrating mandatory and illustrative components. Stakeholder engagement has informed the production of this document, and the Codes include a quality charter which helps to</p>

Case Study	Summary	Learning points and relevance to the Gilston Area
	public spaces and a variety of character areas.	<p>provide an overarching series of commitments to guide individual developments.</p> <p>The Gilston Area could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include a Regulatory Plan and should clearly demonstrate mandatory and illustrative features. • Draw upon the approach to stakeholder engagement. • Include a quality charter to outline a set of commitments to guide development.
Design Codes for Strategic Development Sites within the Cambridge Fringe Areas, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council 2012	Produced to provide guidance to applicants on the preparation of Design Codes. The document builds on best practice and lessons learned and sets out a desirable process for the production of Design Codes.	<p>The Charter may draw on the guidance to incorporate requirements for the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form and scope of design codes. • Identification of detailed elements to be agreed in negotiation with Council. • Design elements to be ‘fixed’ which are non-negotiable. • Process for producing, consulting, testing, reviewing, amending monitoring and enforcing design codes. • Approach to charging for design related support from Councils and seeking to recover costs. • Identification of appropriate governance arrangements.

