HEGNPG

Supporting our Community

Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan

2020-2033

(May 2021)

Plan Making Winner
Editor's Award Winner

PLANNING AWARDS 2021 WINNER

HUNSDON EASTWICK AND GILSTON
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN GROUP

Contents

2. Delivering Quality Places 59

3. Implementation and Delivery 84

4. Monitoring and Review 90

Appendix 1 – Neighbourhood Plan Objectives 92

Appendix 2 – Local Green Spaces and Locally Cherished Views 97

Appendix 3 – Defining Village Character 102

Appendix 4 – Priority Projects 124

Appendix 5 – Key Evidence 125

Appendix 6 - Glossary 127

Table of Figures

A. Introduction to the Neighbourhood Plan

Why have a Neighbourhood Plan?

1. The Green Belt around Gilston and Eastwick was released in the East Hertfordshire District Plan (October 2018) to accommodate the strategic allocation identified in Policy GA1 for 10,000 homes, jobs and services as part of the wider Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT).

2. People living in the area are concerned about the impacts of this scale of change and are determined to ensure development respects the integrity of the local area, minimises impacts on landscape, local heritage and existing communities and upholds the essential quality of life. The community wants to ensure the release of Green Belt genuinely leads to a development of 'exceptional quality' and creates distinctive villages set within an attractive rural landscape, protecting and enhancing existing settlements at the same time and delivering benefits for existing and new communities.

3. The Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan or the GANP)[1] has been prepared by the local community, through the Hunsdon Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan Group which represents the Parish Councils and is made up of people living within the Parishes[2]. Once adopted, it will form part of the Development Plan for the area: this means that developers will be required to take account of its policies when putting forward development proposals to the local planning authority for approval.

4. Between summer 2017 and spring 2018, the local community worked closely with the developers/landowners and East Hertfordshire Council (EHC) in the preparation of the Gilston Area Concept Framework[3] which was endorsed by the Council in July 2018 as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The Parish Councils believe the Concept Framework sets appropriate foundations for respectful development but recognise that it does not have the status of formally adopted planning policy. For this reason, the Parish Councils agreed to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan which is based on the Concept Framework to elevate its vision and principles to formal policy in order to provide a stronger, locally informed planning policy framework for the Gilston Area.

---

[1] The Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan refers to the Eastwick, Gilston and part of Hunsdon Neighbourhood Plan designated area – See Fig. 1 - Neighbourhood Plan Area Boundary. This is referred to as the Gilston Area in the Plan.

[2] The Hunsdon Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Group was constituted in 2016 and has been working hard in trying to influence the future of the area. It meets regularly and is open to all local residents wishing to join and take an active role - www.hegnp.org.uk

[3] See - https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/article/36592/Other-Material-Considerations

5. The aim is to give weight to the views and priorities expressed by the local community whilst respecting the Policy GA1 allocation and the aspirations of the Council and developers. Accordingly, the Plan sets out:

    - **A shared vision** for the Neighbourhood Area (already endorsed by all parties through the Concept Framework).
    - **Key development principles for comprehensive and integrated development**, respectful of local village character and providing benefits for existing and new communities.
    - **Planning policies** to be taken into account in the determination of planning applications, with a particular focus on the importance of a comprehensive landscape led approach which draws inspiration from the local area.
    - **Priority projects** as identified by the local community in consultation (where appropriate) with statutory bodies.
    - **A framework for partnership working** between EHC, developers and the local community.

6. The Neighbourhood Plan consists of a Written Statement (this document) and a Policy Map. It will be subject to review to ensure that it responds to changes over time and if necessary, policies and development guidelines will be revised.

The Neighbourhood Area

7. The application for designation of the Neighbourhood Area was approved by EHC on 28 November 2017. It covers the entirety of Gilston Parish, Eastwick Parish and that part of Hunsdon Parish which lies within the Policy GA1 allocation (see Fig. 1).

8. The remainder of the Parish of Hunsdon (including the village, the SSSI and part of the Stort Valley) forms a separately designated Neighbourhood Area for which a Plan is currently in preparation [4].

---

[4] Hunsdon Area Neighbourhood Plan - http://hunsdonneighbourhoodplan.org.uk/

Fig. 1 - Neighbourhood Plan Area Boundary

Neighbourhood Plan Boundary

Parish Boundaries
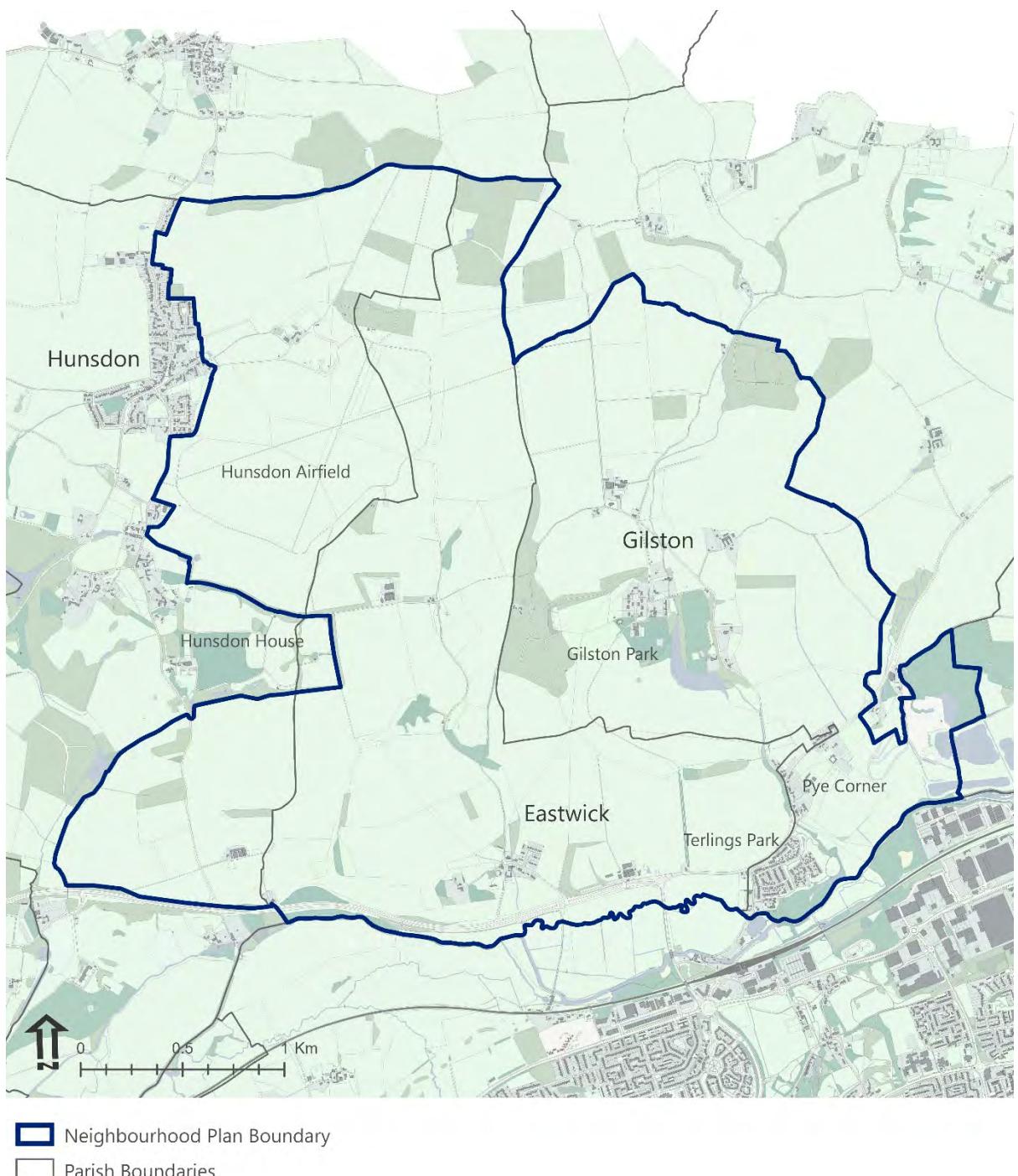
Plan Preparation Process

9.   The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended)[5] . It has had regard to the Policies of the NPPF (February 2019) and PPG on Neighbourhood Plans, and is in general conformity with the East Herts District Plan (adopted October 2018).

10.   A more detailed explanation of how the Plan conforms with national and local planning policies is provided in the accompanying Basic Conditions Statement.

11.   The Neighbourhood Plan has been founded on extensive public consultation within local communities and with the Parish Councils. It has been prepared in close collaboration with EHC, the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) and the developers.

12.   Regulation 14 Consultation was undertaken between September and October 2019 when the community confirmed general support for the vision and objectives set out in the Plan and the scope and purpose of the policies. The responses to consultation and the changes made to the Draft Plan are summarised in the accompanying Consultation Statement.

13.   Preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan has also taken account of the outcomes of the Gilston Steering Group Meetings, formally hosted by EHC, and attended by the developers, Hertfordshire County Council, the Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Plan Group and of an extra round of consultations held with EHC and the developers between February and March 2020. The Draft Neighbourhood Plan was reviewed by the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Quality Review Panel (QRP) in February 2020.

Evidence Base

14.   Preparation of the Draft Neighbourhood Plan has drawn on the extensive evidence base that supports the District Plan, the Gilston Area Concept Framework and the HGGT documents.

15.   The evidence base has been supplemented by direct inputs from the community, either in the form of comments or through their knowledge of local history, character, landscape and environmental sensitivities.

16.   A list of the key evidence base is included in Appendix 5. Further evidence base and supporting documents are available on the Neighbourhood Plan Group website: www.hegnp.org.uk

---

[5] Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended)
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2

B. Planning Policy Framework

17. This section summarises the national, strategic and local planning policy context. Further details are provided in the Basic Conditions Statement.

18. The Neighbourhood Plan provides an additional level of detail and a distinct local approach without undermining the strategic policies of the District Plan. It forms part of a suite of planning policies (mandatory) and guidance (advisory) relevant to the area. The relationship of the Neighbourhood Plan to other planning documents is illustrated in Fig. 2.

Fig. 2 - Framework of key Planning Policy and Guidance relevant to the Gilston Area
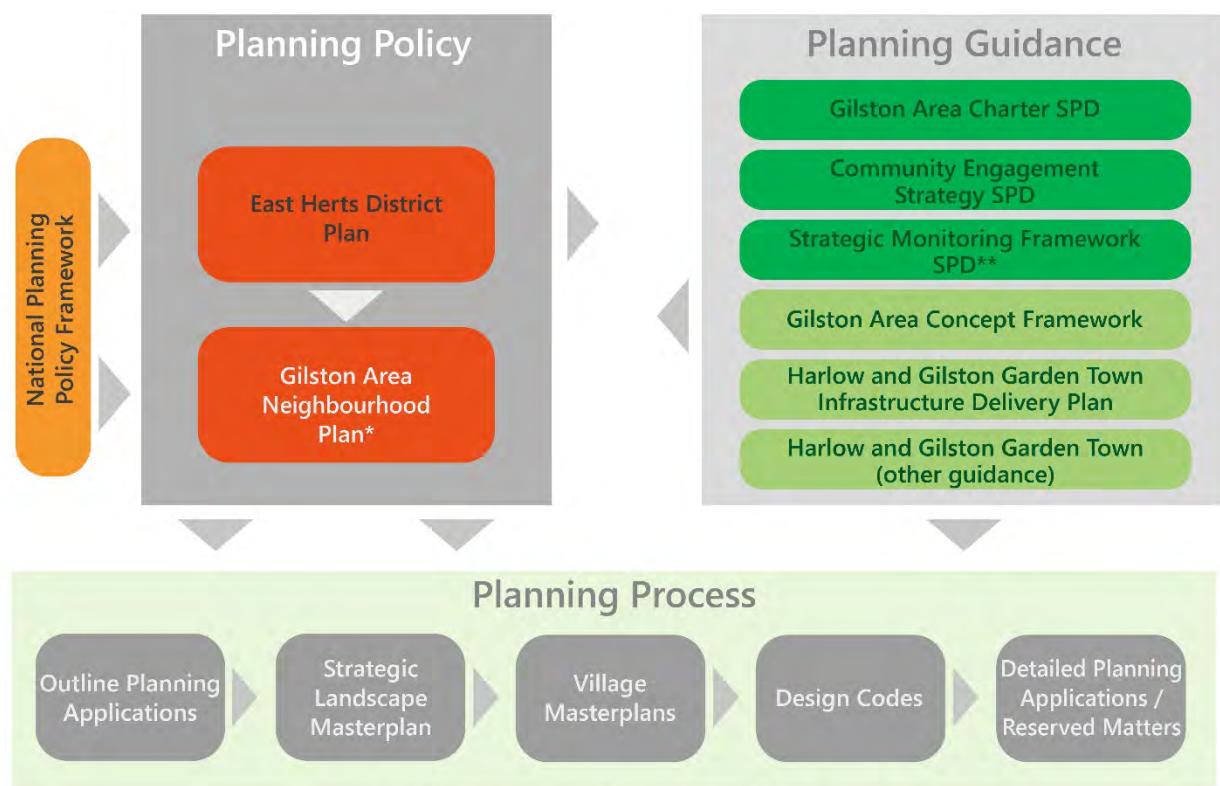
Planning Policy

East Hertfordshire District Plan

19. The East Hertfordshire District Plan[6] (Policy GA1) allocates land in the Gilston Area (see Fig. 3) for 10,000 new homes in distinct villages, with at least 3,000 to be delivered by 2033 along with employment development and supporting infrastructure including roads and sustainable transport, schools, health centres and public open space. This accounts for a large proportion of the District's housing and employment needs.

---

[6] The East Herts District Plan 2018 | East Herts District Council

20. Fig. 3 below shows the key allocations in the Gilston Area overlapping with the Neighbourhood Plan Area. The map shows a part of the allocation (in the Parishes of High Wych and Widford) outside the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Policy GA1 – The Gilston Area

21. The main development strategy established in Policy GA1 includes:
    - **Single allocation:** to be delivered within this Plan period and beyond as part of a comprehensive green infrastructure network according to Garden City Principles.
    - **Housing:** a mixture of house sizes and tenures.
    - **Education:** land for twenty forms of entry for both primary and secondary education to cater for the needs arising from the development.
    - **Transport:** a wide range of interventions and sustainable transport measures (with buses, cycling and walking) to prevent unacceptable congestion.
    - **Community Facilities:** new provisions based around a network of village centres.
    - **Employment:** provision of local employment area/s of around 5 ha in the form of either a business park or distributed across the village centres.
    - **Open Space:** development of only the south and south eastern sections of the site with new greenspaces, sports pitches, parks and recreation areas. Within the north and north western sections of the site, provision of a substantial amount of public open space as part of wider managed parklands.
    - **Character:** high-quality design, with careful consideration given to layout, architecture, building heights and materials and sensitive integration with the wider surrounding landscape.
    - **Heritage:** the many heritage assets and their settings to be conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced within the context of the overall development.
    - **Ecology and Environment:** protection of important hedgerows, Local Wildlife Sites and ancient woodlands with the creation of new habitats to achieve an overall net gain in biodiversity and integration of a Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDS) network.

22. Policy GA1 (II) indicates that the Concept Framework will identify the design principles, potential land uses, infrastructure requirements and phasing and will be used as a benchmark in reviewing development proposals.

23. Policy GA1 (IV) requires the preparation of a Community Engagement Strategy to include managing the effects of development on local residents, and opportunities to participate in the emerging new community.

24. Policy GA1(V)(u)) requires new landscaping and planting, both within the site and on the periphery, which responds to the existing landscape and complements development.

Policy GA2 – Stort Crossings

25. The Council aims to facilitate the delivery of improvements to River Stort crossings:
    - A widening of the existing A414 crossing (Central Crossing / Fifth Avenue);
    - A new vehicular, cycle and pedestrian crossing either to the east of the existing crossing (connecting the A414 to the River Way), or to the west of the existing crossing (connecting the A414 to Elizabeth Way).

Fig. 3 - District Plan Policy GA1 and the Neighbourhood Plan Area

Legend:
- Neighbourhood Plan Boundary
- Site Allocation (Policy GA1)
- Community Trust Open Space Land (Policy GA1)
- Green Belt (East Herts only)
- Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt
- Village Development Boundary (Group 1)
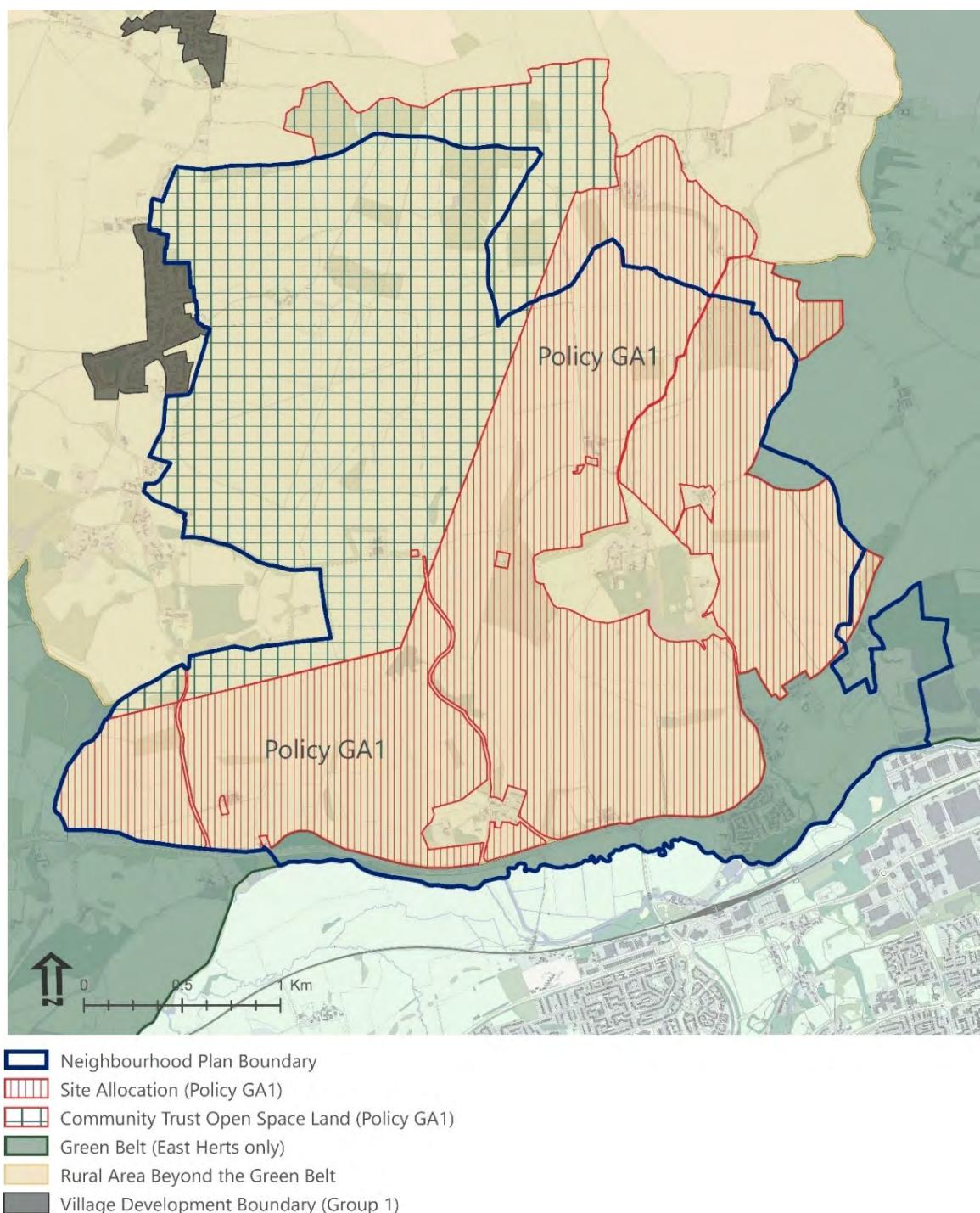
Other Planning Documents (Material Consideration)

National Planning Policy Framework

26. The Neighbourhood Plan promotes sustainable development in line with the National Planning Policy Framework[7] (NPPF) together with improvements to the environment, economy and wellbeing of people (existing and new communities) in the Neighbourhood Area. The NPPF is supplemented by the National Planning Policy Guidance (the "guidance" referred to in paragraph 8(2)(a) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990).

27. Critically, the NPPF makes it clear that in guiding development to sustainable solutions, the planning system must take into account local circumstances to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area. Paragraph 29 states that Neighbourhood Planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area.

The Gilston Area Concept Framework

28. The Concept Framework [8] was produced in parallel with the District Plan for the purpose of the Policy GA1 site allocation by Places for People and City and Provincial Properties (now operating as Briggens Estate 1) in collaboration with EHC and following collective input by the local communities. It was endorsed by EHC as a material consideration for Development Management purposes in July 2018. It represents an agreed approach between all main parties and identifies high quality design and placemaking principles, potential land uses, landscaping and public realm, transport and infrastructure requirements and phasing.

29. The Concept Framework was heavily informed by the community through the Neighbourhood Plan Group and engagement with hundreds of local residents. As a result, revisions strengthened the concept of development in the Gilston Area as a series of distinct villages inspired by local character.

30. The framework was used to demonstrate deliverability of Policy GA1 as seven distinct villages separated by meaningful landscape with shared infrastructure and a clear collective identity. It also established key principles to shape the content of any future masterplanning work, including 'strong vision, leadership and community engagement in accordance with Garden City Principles' and informed by the landscape, topographical and built features of the area.

East Herts Gilston Area Charter and Community Engagement Strategy SPDs

31. The Gilston Area Charter SPD has been produced by EHC through engagement with developers, key stakeholders and representatives from the Neighbourhood Plan Group to help guide the planning and delivery of high quality and coordinated development and infrastructure within the Gilston Area. The final document was approved by the Council's Executive in June 2020 [9].

---

[7] NPPF, Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government (February 2019) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2
[8] Gilston Area Concept Framework (2018)
[9] Gilston Area Charter SPD- Executive Report (East Herts Council 2 June 2020)

32. The Charter establishes a consistent approach to the production of Masterplans to ensure development in the Gilston Area comes forward in a comprehensive and cohesive manner that contributes to the creation of successful and sustainable places. This is seen as particularly important because of the strategic scale of development and the multiple parties with an interest in its delivery. It requires the preparation of a Strategic Landscape Masterplan to be approved in advance of Village Masterplans.

33. The Charter SPD also embeds the important role of collaborative engagement with the local community in the preparation of the Masterplans. This is further developed in the Gilston Area Community Engagement Strategy (GACES, Dec 2020), which sets out the objectives, stakeholders and methods to be used for proactive engagement [10].

Harlow and Gilston Garden Town

34. The Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) is an initiative born out of the shared aspirations of five partner Councils -EHC, Epping Forest and Harlow District Councils with Essex and Hertfordshire County Councils - to deliver housing, economic growth and the regeneration of Harlow and surrounding settlements. It was awarded formal Garden Town status by the Government in January 2017

35. The Garden Town comprises the whole of the existing Harlow District and four strategic development sites including the Policy GA1 allocation. As such, the proposals for the Gilston Area will be required to complement, and have regard to, ongoing work relating to the Garden Town.

36. The Garden Town Board expects that the strategic sites will not be developed in isolation but will be interrelated to create a coherent and sustainable Garden Town. To this end, the Garden Town is preparing a series of guidance documents, which once formally endorsed by the Garden Town Board and the three Districts will constitute material planning considerations in relation to all HGGT planning applications. Key documents [11] prepared to date include:

- The **Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision** (November 2018) sets out the main aspirations for the area. It incorporates the concept of the 7 distinctive villages in the Gilston Area and a range of development principles.
- The **Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Design Guide** (November 2018)- provides further guidance and some detailed examples how development could fulfil the Vision. It identifies a clear distinction in development form between the urban green setting of Harlow and that of Gilston, where individual villages in the rural landscape are to be provided.

---

[10] Gilston Area Community Engagement Strategy final Appendix A.pdf (eastherts.gov.uk)
[11] For all HGGT documents refer to: Our resources - Harlow and Gilston Garden Town

- The **Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Transport Strategy** (Draft for Consultation January 2020)[12] prepared in line with Hertfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 2018-2031 (LTP4)[17] setting out three headline objectives to:
  - Achieve a target of 60% of all journeys by sustainable modes of travel within new development (and 50% in existing areas of Harlow).
  - Deliver mobility options on a hierarchy that prioritises a reduction in the need to travel, walking, cycling and public transport.
  - Support a culture of active and sustainable travel within the HGGT.
- The **Infrastructure Delivery Plan** (IDP)[13], **Strategic Viability Assessment** (SVA) and **How to Guide for Planning Obligations and Viability**- jointly produced by all five Garden Town partner Councils in consultation with the main developer stakeholders (April 2019). The purpose of the IDP is to set out the infrastructure that will be required to deliver the planned level of housing and employment growth at the Garden Town and it will be used as a basis for subsequent masterplanning and planning application discussions for the strategic sites in the HGGT.

Other guidance

37. The Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission[14] published its final report, –Living with Beauty, on 30 January 2020[15]. This sets out the Commission's recommendations to government and is expected to guide changes to the planning system in the future.

- **Ask for Beauty** - The report sees beauty as the benchmark that all new developments should meet and an essential condition for granting planning permission.
- **Refuse Ugliness** - The report sees ugliness in buildings that are unadaptable, unhealthy and unsightly, and which violate the context in which they are placed.
- **Promote Stewardship** - The report maintains that the built and natural environment belong together and new developments should be regenerative, enhancing their environment and adding to the health, sustainability and biodiversity of their context.

38. The Commission advocates an integrated approach, in which all matters relevant to placemaking are considered from the outset and subject to a democratic or co-design process. The proposals aim for long-term investment in which values that matter to people – beauty, community, history, landscape – are safeguarded. Environmental goals – durability, adaptability, biodiversity – are seen as contiguous with the pursuit of beauty.

39. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to provide an exemplary showcase for the principles set out by the Commission, through its commitment to high quality design, placemaking and long-term stewardship in the Gilston Area.

---

[12] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Transport Strategy (Draft for Consultation) (January 2020)
[13] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Infrastructure Delivery Plan Final Report (April 2019) p.4
[14] https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/building-better-building-beautiful-commission
[15] Living with Beauty: report of the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission (January, 2020) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/living-with-beauty-report-of-the-building-better-building-beautiful-commission

C. Local Context

Understanding local context is essential in promoting sustainable development in the Gilston Area. It is important that local character and the aspirations of the local community help shape and influence development in accordance with national guidance and strategic policy objectives.

A Brief History of the Parishes and Villages

40. The Gilston Area contained small settlements before pre-Roman times and has been continuously inhabited ever since. Many heritage assets are still prominent features of the area today (see Fig. 4).

41. Since the 14th-15th centuries the area was the site of three churches and manor houses, all located outside the main working settlements:
    - St Botolph's in Eastwick (Grade II* Listed Building) founded around the 13th century and Eastwick Manor.
    - St Mary's in Gilston (Grade I Listed Building) surrounded by the manors of Overall and Netherhall, which later became New Place and then the present Gilston Park House (Grade II* Listed Building).
    - St Dunstan's, built as part of the complex of Hunsdon House (both Grade I Listed Buildings), located just to the west of the Neighbourhood Area.

42. All three settlements share a common history and rural economies. Hunsdon House (Grade I Listed) is one of the most important medieval houses in the country, with a long history of Royal association. The extensive countryside setting of Hunsdon House remains substantially undeveloped and allows an understanding of the role of agriculture and woodland in the operation of this nationally important historic house [16].

43. Gilston Park House is a Grade II* Listed country house in Gilston designed by Philip Hardwick for John Hodgson around 1852. Hodgson also built distinctive model farmhouses and community buildings, in rich red brick, with black detailing, tall 'Tudor' chimneys, decorative wooden gables, ornate porches, diamond-paned windows, and solid oak doors. Many of these still exist today and are listed (see Fig. 4).

44. Connections with Harlow remained limited until recently and the villages stayed outside the main routes connecting London to Cambridge which helped Old Harlow grow into a small market town even before the railways. Throughout the periods of fast urban expansion (late Victorian with the railways and in the post-war period), Eastwick, Gilston and Hunsdon retained their small size and character, despite major changes in Harlow, which developed into a sizeable town in the 1870s and then a major New Town in the post war period.

45. Until recently, physical growth in settlements in the Gilston Area was limited:
    - In the second half of the 19th century development of farmhouses and benevolent facilities took place in the Gilston Park Estate.

---

[16] https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1347687

- Between 1941 and 1945 the RAF built the airfield at Hunsdon, by altering fields and removing woodlands. The site at peak had around 2,000 personnel, mostly living in the village.
- Terlings Park, formerly a manor house to the south of Netherhall, became a medical research facility before being redeveloped for around 200 houses in 2017.

Fig. 4 - Protected Landscape Designations and Heritage Assets
(Source: District Plan, Natural England, Historic England)

Legend:

- Neighbourhood Plan Boundary
- Parish Boundaries

Paths and Bridleways
- Bridleway
- Byway open to all traffic
- Footpath
- Restricted Byway

Woodland and Wildlife
- Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland
- Ancient Replanted Woodland
- SSSI
- Wildlife Sites
- Local Nature Reserve

Priority Habitats (Natural England)
- Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh
- Deciduous woodland
- Good quality semi-improved grassland
- Lowland fens
- Lowland meadows
- Additional habitat
- Traditional orchard

Listed Buildings by Grade
- Listed Grade I
- Listed Grade II*
- Listed Grade II
- Scheduled Monuments
- Historic Parks and Gardens

The Gilston Area today

Population and Socio-Economic Overview

46. The census data of 2011 does not fully represent the current population of the area, particularly in Gilston, where the development of Terlings Park has brought 200 new households and increased the variety of age, ethnicity, and economic profile.

47. The 2011 Census paints a picture of the Gilston Area as an affluent established family area, with high employment level and a good proportion of people in managerial and professional occupation. Overall, Eastwick appears to have smaller houses and middle range of employment, while Hunsdon has an older population and a slightly lower proportion of people in high-level occupation. The three Parishes are still clearly different in socio-economic terms from the ward of Old Harlow, which profiles as a decidedly more urban area: higher proportion of flats, many singles, higher proportion of elderly and lower skills.

Landscape Setting and Relationship of Villages and Countryside

48. The Gilston Area is located on the southern facing lower slopes of the Hertfordshire uplands reaching the Stort Valley to the south. It is in large part rural and the landscape includes arable fields, clusters of veteran trees and woodland, and the parkland of Gilston Park. Notable is also the vast Hunsdon Plateau, which during WWII was cleared of trees and hedges for the airfield, the footprint of which is clearly identifiable today even though it comprises open arable fields. The Area includes many protected habitats and wildlife sites (see Fig. 4).

49. The southern edge of the Area, in part reaching the county boundary at the River Stort, extends into the valley (the remaining designated Green Belt) that separates Gilston from Harlow and provides links to significant areas of protected biodiversity within the Stort Valley and the Lee Valley Regional Park, a major Natural Green Space within an accessible distance. Further afield, but still relevant for their size and importance, are Epping and Hatfield Forests.

50. Arable fields and grassland surround the compact village of Eastwick to the south, and the scattered village community of Gilston, which comprises several building groups around St Mary's Church, at Gilston Park, along Gilston Lane and at Pye Corner and Terlings Park. Isolated farms, often Listed Buildings, are situated among the fields.

51. A Landscape Character Appraisal SPD was prepared in 2007, identifying three main zones [17].
    - The southern Eastwick Slopes characterised by parklands and cultural landscapes.
    - The River Stort, a quiet valley containing a mix of floodplains, discontinuous pasture, biodiversity-rich water meadows (SSSI and other wildlife areas), wetlands and 19th century water related industrial buildings (maltings and mills).
    - The Hunsdon Plateau characterised by the large scale open arable farmland and the WWII Airfield on the flat upland plateau south of the village of Hunsdon. The plateau is accessed by footpaths but has poor vehicular access.

---

[17] https://cdn-eastherts.onwebcurl.com/s3fs-public/documents/Landscape_Character_Assessment_SPD.pdf

52.	Pockets of woodland and many veteran trees are distributed throughout the area, in between large arable fields. These have been identified by the District Plan as Wildlife Sites which could potentially connect the water landscapes of the Stort Valley and Lee Valley to the south and west (floodplain marshes, water bodies and important SSSI/ RAMSAR sites) to the upper plateau woodland to the north.

53.	Gilston Park is the designed parkland of the eponymous manor house. Whilst the park is not formally designated, it is of importance for its landscape design and groupings of mature trees. The park of Hunsdon House is adjacent to the Neighbourhood Area, while the listed Ancient Garden of Briggens House is located just to the south.

54.	Areas of parkland were retained as part of the redevelopment of Terlings Park in 2017 together with many mature trees including significant specimens such as Giant Redwood and a Cedar of Lebanon. This parkland contributes to the character and landscape setting of Gilston.

55.	Numerous footpaths and Rights of Way cross the area and intersect farmhouses and other dwellings.

56.	The overlay of urban development over time – comparing the 1886 map of the area to that of today – has not dramatically transformed the area: the patterns of most lanes, woodland and fields remain the same, with the notable exceptions of the construction of the A414, the 5th Avenue bridge over the Stort and railways and the Hunsdon Airfield. Settlements and farms have grown with time, but they never altered the previous patterns. Because of this, local settlements still have a close relationship with the countryside: open views over the field, trees, hedgerows and planting of a rural nature and simple access lanes rather than streets.

Settlement Character

57.	The existing communities comprise the villages of Eastwick, Gilston and Hunsdon and scattered or non-contiguous dwelling houses. Only Hunsdon has a defined Village Boundary in the District Plan. The existing settlements are characterised by a dispersed built-up form and scattered clusters of buildings. Gilston is formed by a loose grouping of buildings rather than a compact settlement.

58.	Whilst the settlements are all unique, the villages within and nearby the Gilston Area (including Hunsdon, Much Hadham, Puckeridge, Widford, and High Wych) display some common features and settlement characteristics. More detail about settlement characteristics is provided in Appendix 3.

Transport and Mobility Patterns

59.   At present, the existing settlements are served by the A414 and Eastwick Road, with a network of narrow roads and lanes linking the villages and outlying settlements. As there are limited public transport services to Harlow, Bishop's Stortford or Hertford, most journeys must be undertaken by car. This includes most school trips and commuting patterns to work in Harlow or London.

60.   Harlow Station is on the London-Stansted-Cambridge rail link and services are heavily used particularly during peak hours. Residents in the Gilston Area have reported problems of lack of capacity and overcrowding on existing services.

61.   Cycling trips to Harlow Station are undertaken by some residents, but this is made difficult by the lack of safe crossing at the A414 and Eastwick Roundabout. The cycle parking facilities at Harlow Station are also poor and have inadequate capacity. Harlow Mill and Roydon Stations have fewer and slower train services and are less used.

62.   Most residents are aware of the impacts of through movements using, for example, Church Lane and the main street in Hunsdon to go to Bishops Stortford; or Eastwick Road serving Sawbridgeworth. These movements are particularly intense when there is congestion on the M11, spilling over onto the A10. Often in these occurrences, the Eastwick Roundabout causes severe delays, and Church Lane and Eastwick Road are observed by residents to become dangerously busy.

Fig. 5 - Character of Eastwick and Gilston

A. Attractive village front garden (Eastwick Hall Lane); B. Views over the open countryside from within the village (Eastwick); C. Deep front garden with large trees (Gilston Lane); D. Churches typically set in landscape at the village edge (St. Botolph's, Eastwick)

D. Vision and Objectives

The Vision and Objectives for the Area are the result of collaborative work between the community, the local authority and the promoters of development in the Gilston Area, which started during preparation of the Concept Framework and continued on the Neighbourhood Plan.

Local Perspective

63. Through on-going dialogue with EHC, the HGGT Board and developers, through engagement on the Concept Framework, the community has identified issues which have informed preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan:

    • The community wishes to ensure that the release of Green Belt in this area genuinely leads to development of exceptional quality, that will create a strong community and eventually mature into attractive villages for the future.

    • Gilston, Eastwick and Hunsdon have a different identity and history from Harlow, and development in the area should emphasise this distinctiveness and sense of place.

    • The creation and preservation of green infrastructure and ease of access to community facilities, employment sources, shops and other services is recognised as a benefit for all residents of the Gilston Area.

    • Development should take the form of individual villages set in a rural landscape which take their inspiration from local Hertfordshire villages, rather than that of urban neighbourhoods. Great importance is placed by the community on using the existing landscape and local characteristics to create an attractive place and landscape setting for people to enjoy.

    • The development will lead to complete transformation of the Gilston Area, and this should be accompanied by improvements such as better connectivity and better services for the whole area, including existing communities, in line with Garden City Principles – rather than simply mitigation of development impacts.

    • It will be important to uphold the provisions in the District Plan to preserve and protect the open spaces in the northern section of the Gilston Area and to transfer them to the community to ensure their long-term stewardship and governance.

64. The Neighbourhood Plan adopts the shared vision and objectives set out in the Concept Framework [18], which have been agreed by developers and endorsed by EHC and supported by the community during their drafting and then in consultation for the Neighbourhood Plan.

---

[18] Gilston Area Concept Framework (July 2018), Gilston Area Vision (p.10)

65. The overall vision for development in the Gilston Area is to create seven new villages, each with its own distinct character and identity, within one overall landscape setting and based on the following Garden City Principles:

- Strong vision, leadership and community engagement.
- Land value capture to deliver the essential 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.
- Integrated and accessible transport systems, with walking, cycling and public transport designed to be the most attractive forms of local transport.

Vision for the Gilston Area

I. To deliver new housing within seven distinct villages each of individual character, that are informed by the landscape, topographical and built features of the area and establish a positive relationship with the existing settlements.

II. Each village will be clearly separated by meaningful and high-quality landscape with a compact centre and softer edges facing onto greenspace. The centres will be designed to be individually distinctive and to become natural meeting places, providing a good range of day-to-day services and facilities alongside housing.

III. Every village will be designed using a palette of appropriate materials and features which respond to existing local context and architecture. The villages will be planned to support healthy community lifestyles, including a range of housing types and tenures, reducing car dependency, encouraging participation in community life, active mobility, sport and enjoyment of the countryside.

IV. The housing mix will include typologies and tenures suitable for all ages, will support home working and learning and offer a range of accessible tenures including genuinely affordable housing and homes for those with care and support needs. Care will be taken to ensure that homes front the streets and lanes and car parking does not dominate the street scene.

V. The achievement of a modal shift to reduce the dependence on car borne traffic will be strongly promoted through sustainable transport choices, new technologies and the creation of walkable neighbourhoods.

VI. A cohesive and enhanced rural landscape will bind all the new and existing settlements together and measures will be taken to enhance habitats and biodiversity, the natural environment and resilience to climate change. Community ownership and management will ensure an attractive and permanent green setting, offering substantially increased access to open spaces and amenity for all. Existing villages and communities / clusters of houses will be physically respected but functionally integrated into a unified wider community.

VII. The Gilston Area development will draw on the strategic thinking of the original 'Garden City' values of equality, good health, quality of life, a sense of community and access to employment, facilities and the countryside.

VIII. The developers and East Hertfordshire District Council have committed to the principle of land value capture and the funding and delivery of services and infrastructure needed to support the Gilston Area, with long-term community stewardship of community assets and land. New infrastructure will be phased to mitigate the impacts of the development on existing and new communities.

IX. Development of the Gilston Area will be delivered in conjunction with initiatives to further develop and regenerate Harlow through the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town initiative and the Harlow Town Centre Action Plan. This will encompass the delivery of strategic infrastructure to remedy current deficiencies, coordination of the infrastructure delivery to service the growth areas surrounding the town and potential funding/investment to support its delivery.

Objectives

66.   The vision is underpinned by interrelated objectives and development principles which the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to achieve through a range of policies, actions and projects. These are consistent with the objectives and placemaking design principles set out in the Concept Framework and Policy GA1 and are set out in Appendix 1.

Fig. 6 - Historic Gilston Park

E. Neighbourhood Plan Policies

The Neighbourhood Plan policies address the Vision and Objectives for the Gilston Area and aim to shape and influence the development, contributing individually and collectively to the over-arching objective of delivering sustainable development in accordance with the strategic priorities of the District Plan.

67. The Neighbourhood Plan policies are criteria based and not prescriptive as long as the aim of each policy is satisfied. They are organised in three core themes as illustrated in Fig. 7 below.

Fig. 7 - Policy structure of the Neighbourhood Plan
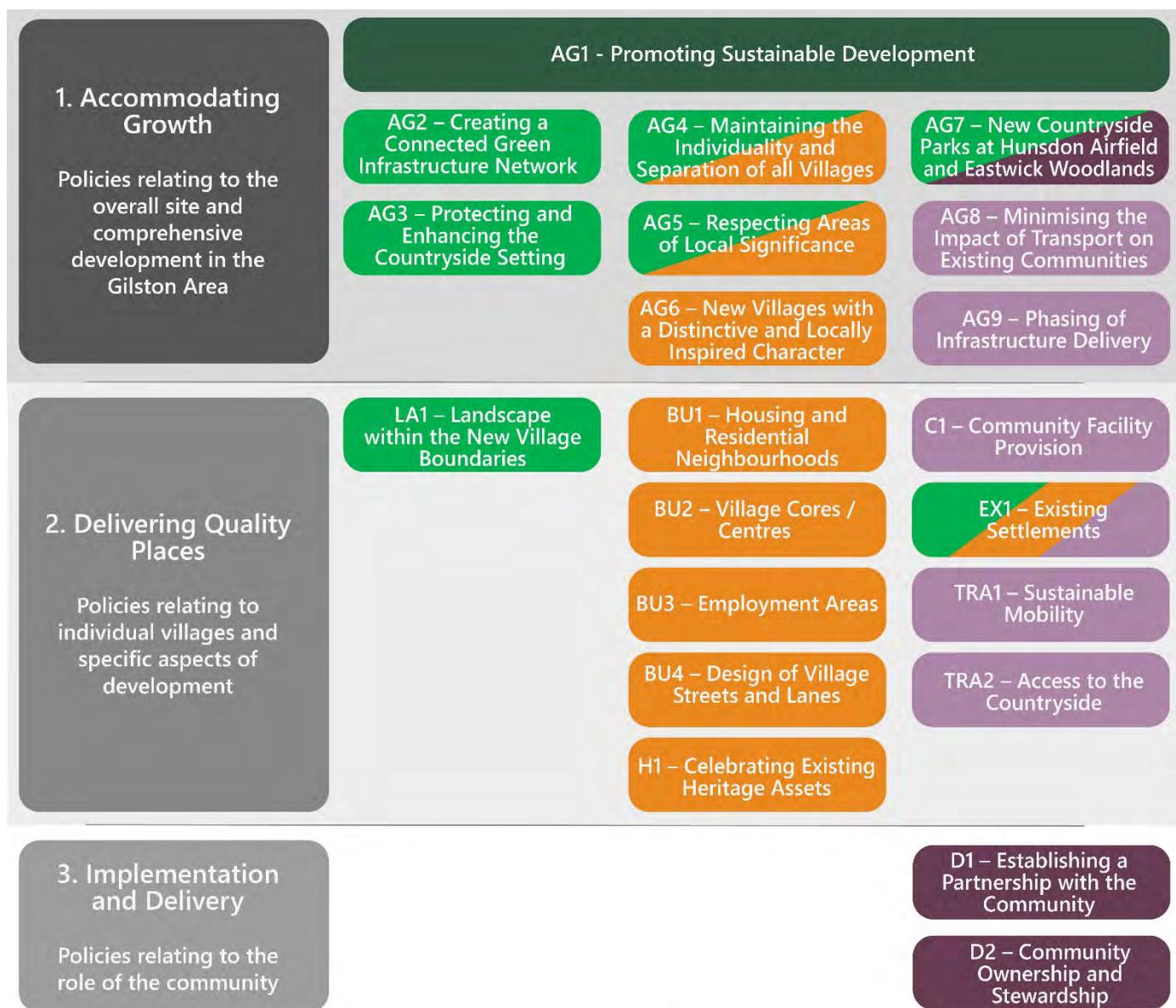
1. Accommodating Growth

This group of policies addresses strategic issues: the meaning of sustainable development in the context of the Gilston Area, the relationship with landscape and countryside, the character of villages and the integration of new and existing settlements and the wider area.

1.1 - Promoting Sustainable Development

Rationale and Justification

68.   Policy AG1 is a general policy which supplements Policy GA1 to ensure future development is comprehensively planned as a single allocation informed by local character and distinctiveness. It also sets out the main criteria for delivering sustainable development for the area and the measures needed to respond to a changing climate.

69.   In accordance with Policy GA1, development in the Gilston Area is required to take the form of a series of villages set around the historic landscape of Gilston Park. Each village should have its own distinct character and identity which responds sensitively to local landscape, character and heritage.

70.   The HGGT Vision makes a clear distinction between the Gilston Villages and the wider Garden Town, defining a village as 'a residential community with local community facilities, shops and work spaces, which is set in rural countryside and is physically and visually distinct from the rest of the Garden Town and respects the existing landscape character.'[19]. This is reinforced in the Development Principles which underpin the Concept Framework ('Well Connected but Distinctive from Harlow').

71.   The Neighbourhood Plan supports the emphasis placed on the rural landscape setting and on the development of distinctive villages of appropriate scale and character to provide a singular and coherent identity for the whole Gilston Area. A landscape led approach will ensure the integration of the existing settlements whilst retaining their individual form and identity.

72.   In accordance with the Gilston Area Charter SPD, a Strategic Landscape Masterplan for the entire Gilston Area site allocation will be produced and approved before approval of the first Village Masterplan. The Charter SPD establishes that the production of the Strategic Landscape Masterplan, Village Masterplans and Design Codes will be developer led with key stakeholder and community engagement as an integrated and ongoing part of the process[20].

73.   The Strategic Landscape Masterplan will establish the spatial strategy for comprehensive development of the entire Gilston Area and how it will successfully integrate with existing settlements and the wider landscape[21]. It will establish the key components of the Green Infrastructure Network and address strategic matters including support for sustainable

---

[19] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision (November 2018) https://cdn-eastherts.onwebcurl.com/s3fs-public/documents/Harlow_and_Gilston_Garden_Town_Vision.pdf
[20] Gilston Area Charter SPD (June 2020) Figure 6
[21] Gilston Area Charter SPD (June 2020) para 4.6

travel, integration with existing settlements and the wider landscape, village buffers and separation and management of surface water and flood mitigation[22].

74. The NPPF[23] requires a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. Development in the Gilston Area should therefore:

- Protect areas of ecological, wildlife and landscape value and create an integrated green infrastructure network to support biodiversity.
- Ensure that development supports the comprehensive needs of the area without placing additional pressures on existing infrastructure and services.
- Promote the conservation of resources including water supplies and protect existing and future communities from the impacts of flood risk and climate change.
- Manage storm water and avoid downstream flooding in the Stort Valley, through sustainable drainage systems and maintenance arrangements which will ensure an acceptable standard of operation for the lifetime of the development and, where possible, provide multifunctional benefits.
- Promote high standards of sustainable design and construction.

Community Perspective

75. The community places great value on living in the Hertfordshire countryside and on the identity of the villages in the Gilston Area. Local residents recognise the functional interrelation with Harlow, but would like to ensure that the aspects of village character, community spirit and lifestyle of the area they value are extended to the new communities.

76. Whilst it is acknowledged that development on the scale proposed will impact on the rural setting of the area and existing settlements, the community is keen to ensure it is appropriate to the character of the area and does not result in an urban or suburban character, which could erode its distinctiveness from Harlow - a matter on which they place great importance.

77. A comprehensive plan for the whole Gilston Area is seen as key to preventing piecemeal development and controlling the form and character of new development.


[22] Gilston Area Charter SPD (June 2020) para. 4.11
[23] National Planning Policy Framework (July 2018)
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2

POLICY AG1 - Promoting Sustainable Development in the Gilston Area

1. Development in the Gilston Area will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria have been satisfied:

    i.   Development proposals have considered the context of the overall development of the Gilston Area and can demonstrate that they have not been considered in isolation.

    ii. Development proposals have positively considered the existing settlements of Gilston, Eastwick and Hunsdon with respect to their character, heritage, environment and landscape setting and where possible have sought to enhance their access to services and facilities.

    iii. Proposals are landscape-led and a sensitive approach has been adopted in the transition between built development and the countryside setting of new and existing villages.

    iv. The new villages are visually and physically separated from Harlow by the natural greenspace of the Stort Valley.

2. The preparation, in collaboration with the local community, of a Strategic Landscape Masterplan for the entire Gilston Area will be necessary to provide the context and inform the preparation of Village Masterplans in accordance with Policy GA1 (IV).

3. Seven separate and distinctive new villages will be created, the locations of which are broadly defined in Fig. 8 together with the approximate number of dwellings for each. Every village will have an individual identity which complements the existing settlements and will be informed by Garden City Principles.

4. An integrated approach should be adopted to promote sustainable development, which considers:

    i.   The phased delivery of necessary social and physical infrastructure to meet the comprehensive infrastructure needs of the area.

    ii. Retention of the countryside character of the landscape setting of the Gilston Area and an integrated network of green spaces.

    iii. Protection and enhancement of areas of ecological, wildlife and landscape value.

    iv. Protection and, where possible, enhancement of heritage assets.

    v.   The proactive engagement of local communities.

5. New development across the Gilston Area should:

    i.   Incorporate measures to conserve water resources and protect existing and new communities from the impacts of flood risk and climate change.

    ii. Maximise energy and water efficiency. Non-residential buildings should seek to achieve the same standards of efficient use of water resources as residential buildings or a BREEAM 'excellent' rating for water efficiency.

    iii. Deliver high-quality low carbon homes, using where appropriate wood or recycled materials in construction and measures for energy and water efficiency.

Fig. 8 - Strategic Plan of Designations and Development Areas

Neighbourhood Plan Boundary
Broad Location of New Villages
Part of Village outside Neighbourhood Plan
Community Boundaries
Designated Local Green Space
Countryside Park
Sensitive Landscape Setting (Gilston Fields)
Sensitive Landscape Integration of Community & Leisure Use
Sensitive Heritage Setting
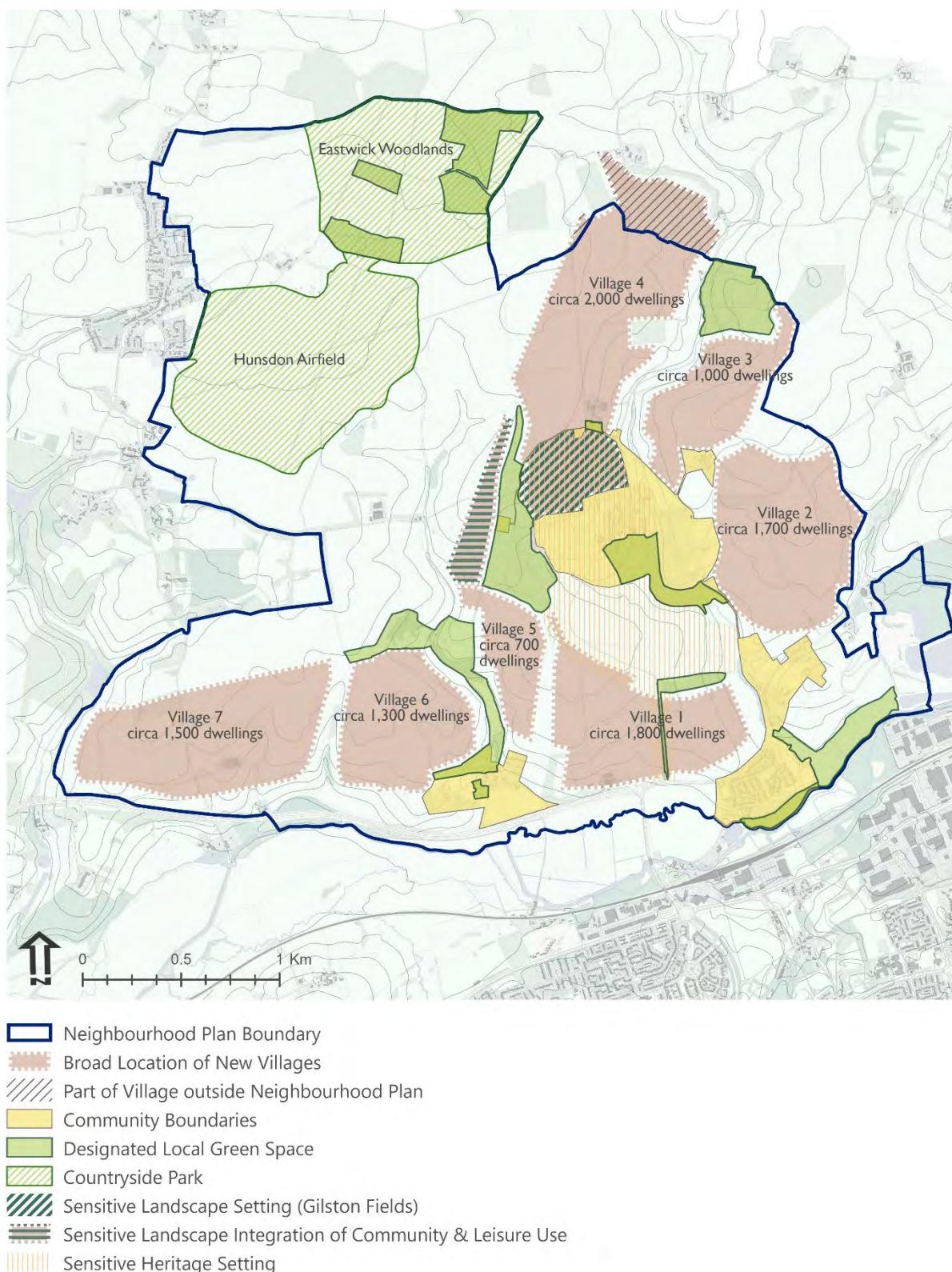
1.2 - Creating a Connected Green Infrastructure Network

Rationale and Justification

78.   Policy AG2 seeks to promote the creation of a continuous network of natural greenspaces and to protect the water environment in the Gilston Area.

79.   The objective is to:

- Create an extended network of accessible 'natural greenspaces' as defined by Natural England (ENRR526 Accessible Natural Greenspace)24, using existing trees, hedgerows and landscape features.
- Establish and maintain a natural landscape setting of rural character between new and existing settlements/ communities.
- Ensure the protection of existing landscape features and wildlife sites and the establishment of wildlife corridors and interconnected habitats across the area.

80.   District Plan Policy GA1(III) and GA1(V(g)) states that development will deliver comprehensive green infrastructure throughout the site, maximising opportunities to link into existing assets and enhancing biodiversity. Proposals will include a significant amount of open space within the north and north western sections of the area. In addition, the environment of the Stort Valley will be enhanced, and other landscape features preserved.

81.   Policy AG2 seeks to ensure that the green infrastructure network is continuous and connected beyond the Gilston Area to incorporate key landscape features (see Fig. 9) and reflect the priorities established in other relevant guidance:

- The HGGT Vision highlights the importance of a landscape-led approach to masterplanning which responds to the natural character of the landscape, connecting all parts of the Garden Town and the wider countryside.
- The Concept Framework established the principle of connectivity between the existing network of parks, views and paths to form a rich and permeable green network [25].
- The HGGT Design Guide highlights the need to ensure that areas of new development should minimise the visual presence of built form and retain a green setting separating Gilston and Harlow [26].

82.   The Gilston Area Charter SPD requires the preparation of a Strategic Landscape Masterplan to establish the key components and Character Areas that will form the comprehensive green infrastructure network across the site and inform the relationship between new villages and their green setting and ensure that the area as a whole integrates seamlessly into the wider landscape, beyond the development boundaries [27].

---

[24] Accessible Natural Green Space Standards in Towns and Cities: A Review and Toolkit for their Implementation - ENRR526 (naturalengland.org.uk)
[25] Gilston Area Concept Framework (July 2018) p.80
[26] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Design Guide (November 2018) p.22
[27] Gilston Area Charter SPD (June 2020) paras 4.10-4.11

83. Natural England has developed the Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt) [28] to assist in planning for accessible natural greenspace. The standards recommend the distances required to ensure that everyone has good access to natural greenspace.

84. The creation of a network of greenspaces is consistent with Hertfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) which recognises the need for integration of footpaths and cycleways with the greenspace and landscape corridors to support sustainable mobility and achieve the aims of the HGGT Sustainable Transport Strategy.

85. The setting of villages within a predominant landscape and associated water environment is a key feature of the area whose countryside character has remained broadly unchanged since Tudor times (see Section C) and substantially unaltered in the post-war period, when Harlow and many villages and towns around Hertfordshire grew and changed in both size and character.

86. The slopes and plateaus of Eastwick, Gilston and Hunsdon comprise agricultural fields, semi-natural parkland (Gilston Park and nearby Hunsdon House), veteran trees, established hedgerows, ditches and pockets of ancient or replanted woodland. Important wildlife areas exist nearby at the Lee Valley Park, Stort Valley marshlands and its SSSI, and the Forests of Epping and Hatfield.

87. The creation of buffer zones adjacent to rivers performs a vital role in preserving and enhancing the health of rivers in terms of water quality, floodplain storage and habitats. River corridors are used by migrating and foraging species such as bats and thus allow the movement of species between areas. Networks of these buffer zones will help wildlife adapt to climate change and provide the opportunity to restore the watercourses. The Stort Catchment Partnership, hosted by Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, has prepared The River Stort Catchment Management Plan[29] setting out the objectives and main projects to improve these watercourses and associated habitats. Their aim is to reach good ecological status for all waterbodies by 2027.

88. It will be important to protect existing wildlife sites and biodiversity and retain wildlife connectivity across the wider area, as the sites are developed. The government is to introduce a mandatory requirement for development in England to deliver 'biodiversity net gain' of 10% at least. Biodiversity net gain could be achieved in a number of ways, for example through the creation of biodiversity corridors between villages, species-rich planted areas and woodland, restoration and enhancement of rivers and their corridors (e.g. Fiddlers Brook and projects within the Stort Valley).

89. The creation of a green infrastructure network also provides the potential for betterment of land drainage through appropriately designed sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS). Appropriate stewardship arrangements are essential to ensure that any blue/green infrastructure is appropriately managed and maintained in the future.

---

[28] 'Nature Nearby' Accessible Natural Greenspace Guidance, Natural England, March 2010 http://www.ukmaburbanforum.co.uk/docunents/other/nature_nearby.pdf
[29] River Stort Catchment Management Plan www.riverleacatchment.org.uk/index.php/river-stort-home

Community Perspective

90. The community places great value on the countryside setting of their villages, the proximity of wildlife habitats and access to natural greenspace. Consultation on the Concept Framework (Sept 2017) highlighted local concerns about the impact of development on the relationship between countryside and new and existing villages and the need to protect and expand existing wildlife habitats and achieve a net biodiversity gain for the area.

91. Additionally, concern has been expressed about retaining the open aspect of important heritage assets, including St Mary's Church, Gilston Park House, St Botolph's, St Dustan's and Hunsdon House. Concern has also been expressed about the location of more intensive recreational activities in the open spaces and woodlands where these would disturb existing wildlife habitats.

POLICY AG2 – Creating a Connected Green Infrastructure Network

1. Development should:
   i. Minimise direct and indirect impacts on natural landscape assets in the Gilston Area including Local Wildlife Sites, areas of ecological importance, woodlands and water bodies and create, retain and manage appropriate separation distances and buffer zones.
   ii. Retain and, where possible, enhance areas of ecological importance including local wildlife sites and existing waterbodies.
   iii. Retain, enhance and, where possible, extend existing woodlands at an early stage of the development process.

2. Development proposals should take into account the Strategic Landscape Masterplan for the Gilston Area (see Policy AG1 (2)) to ensure the integrity of the landscape and countryside setting whilst creating an integrated Green Infrastructure Network that will surround and sit alongside the new villages, existing settlements and the wider landscape comprising:
   i. Existing parks, woodlands, designated green spaces and wildlife sites, streams and other water bodies including the River Stort and Navigation and connections into it.
   ii. Interconnected green corridors of adequate width to safeguard biodiversity and natural assets with suitable wildlife corridor connections with the wider green infrastructure network including the Stort Valley, the Green Belt and Green Wedges in Harlow which abut the River Stort, the Lee Valley Park, Epping Forest and Hatfield Forest.
   iii. Green corridors separating the villages (see Policy AG4).
   iv. New green spaces and habitats to promote a net gain in biodiversity.
   v. Walking and cycling access to the countryside in accordance with best practice such as Natural England Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGst).
   vi. Areas of open space contributing to locally cherished views in the Gilston Area and the natural corridor of the Stort Valley (see Policy AG5).
   vii. Land required for an effective sustainable drainage system in accordance with District Plan Policy WAT5, taking account of historic flood problems, protecting the Stort water systems and taking inspiration from traditional ditch and pond features.

3. The Green Infrastructure Network will be retained in perpetuity and subject to management and maintenance plans which will be secured through appropriate legal agreements.

Fig. 9 - Indicative Green Infrastructure Network

Legend:
- ▭ Neighbourhood Plan Boundary
- ▭ Parish Boundaries
- |||||| Sensitive Historic Setting
- ///// Green Belt and Open Space Land
- ▭ Important Green Spaces
- ▬ Waterbodies
- ◄▮▮▮► Indicative Green Corridors
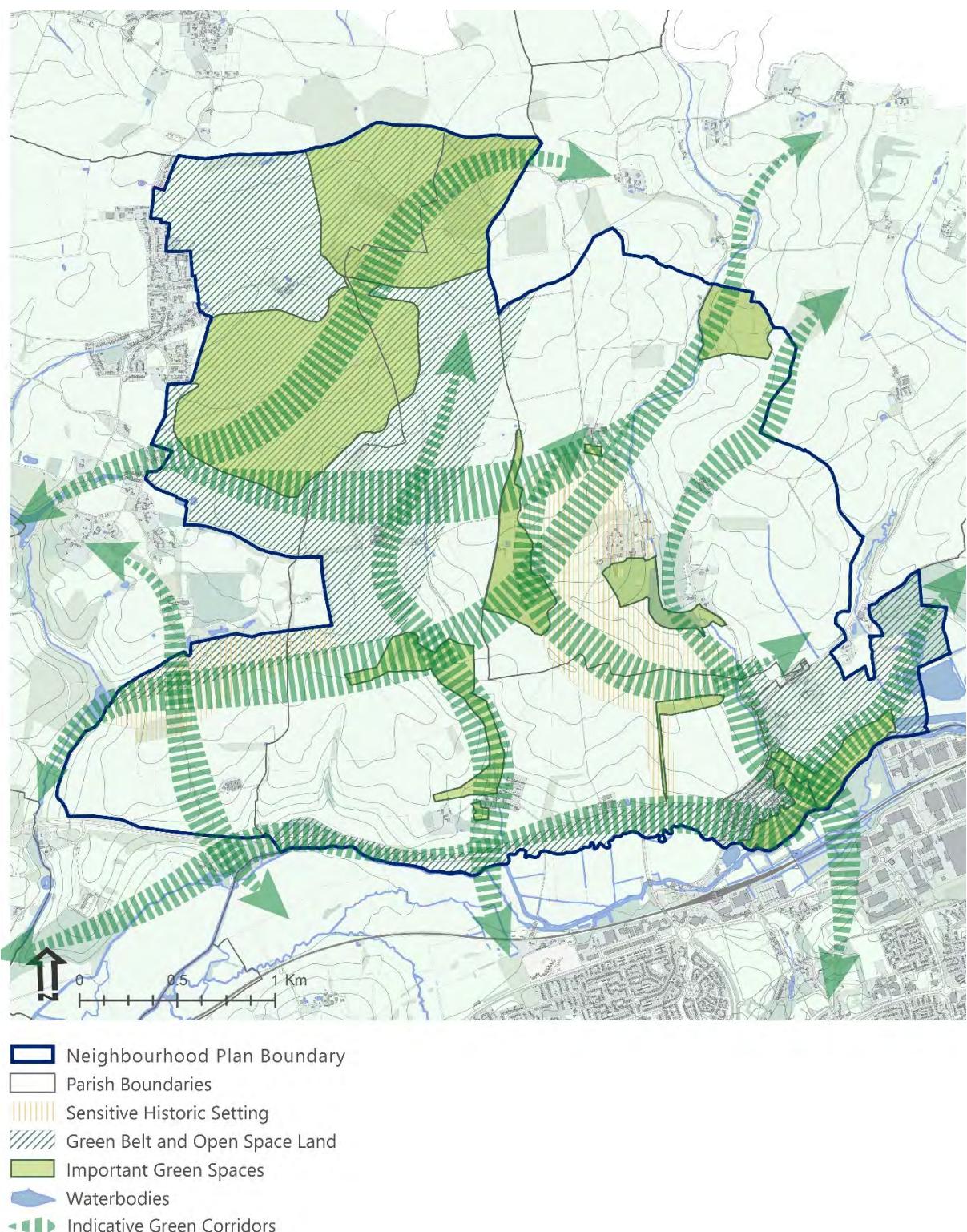
1.3 - Protecting and Enhancing the Countryside Setting of New and Existing Villages

Rationale and Justification

92. Policy AG3 identifies the measures required to mitigate the urbanising effect of development and protect the countryside setting of villages (existing and new) in order to retain the character of the area.

93. Countryside is the common term that indicates the open space outside cities and urban areas, made up of agricultural and natural greenspace (as defined by Natural England ENRR526[30]), including woodland, scrub, heathland, meadows and marshes, which support wild plants and animals.

94. The HGGT Vision supports the same objective of this Policy as it defines a village as being set in rural countryside and states that the open space between the Gilston villages 'will be rural in character using farmland and woodland to reinforce the separation of development and maintain existing village ways of life' [31].

95. The importance of preserving and protecting the landscape attributes of the Gilston Area whilst accommodating the scale of development proposed in the District Plan has also been established in the Concept Framework. The Concept Framework sets out the following guidelines to develop a unique landscape setting for the Gilston Area [32]:

    - The location of the villages should emerge from analysis and understanding of the wider strategic landscape character.
    - Development in the Gilston Area should respect and have a positive relationship with its landscape and heritage assets.
    - Where appropriate, landscape buffers are to be proposed to create a positive transition between existing places or features and new development.

96. The Gilston Area Charter SPD requires Masterplans to consider how development will sensitively respond to context, including 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.

97. The Neighbourhood Plan requires that the greenspace between the villages retains a seamless landscape with the surrounding countryside, with the character and appearance of common land rather than that of a formal / urban parkland. Inspiration should be taken from local villages, set between trees and appearing in the wider landscape as blocks of trees with interspersed rooftops (See Appendix 3, Section 3.6).

98. Effective management will be important to ensure that the countryside setting of development is maintained over time. Uses which would have a negative impact on the natural and tranquil character of the countryside or require substantial new buildings or infrastructure, such as some forms of commercial leisure activities, will not be supported.

---

[30] Accessible Natural Green Space Standards in Towns and Cities: A Review and Toolkit for their Implementation - ENRR526 (naturalengland.org.uk)
[31] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision (November 2018) p. 12, Point 7
[32] Gilston Area Concept Framework (July 2018) p.80

Community Perspective

99.   The community places great importance on the countryside setting of the villages and the character of the area, where the countryside is a place of peaceful enjoyment. They would like that future residents chose this area because they also appreciate these distinctive characteristics and living near the countryside.

100.   The proposed development will impact on existing landscape character, and these impacts must be managed and mitigated to retain the natural green setting of new and existing settlements and to enhance biodiversity and wildlife in the area.

Fig. 10 - The countryside setting of local villages

A. Rural setting of Hunsdon (Widford Rise) from the plateau of Eastwick Wood; B. Setting of agricultural fields of Eastwick from the east; C. View of Pye Corner from the footpath to the north

POLICY AG3 – Protecting and Enhancing the Countryside Setting of New and Existing Villages

1. Development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria have been satisfied:

    i. Measures have been taken to contain and mitigate the visual impacts of development on the open character of the landscape setting of new and existing villages.

    ii. Natural features such as fields and woodland blocks have been utilised to enhance the setting of new and existing villages (see Policy AG4).

    iii. Open land outside the Village Boundaries has generally been maintained as Natural Greenspace (as defined by Natural England) with inspiration taken from the local countryside comprising areas of woodland, common land, hedgerows, fields and grassland, large trees and wetland by the brooks and ditches.

    iv. Proposed plant species are typical of the local countryside and adaptable to changing climate conditions and maximise opportunities for enhanced biodiversity, spontaneous colonisation and habitat creation.

    v. Paths and bridleways are well integrated with the landscape and, where provided, walls and gates take inspiration from local features.

2. Sport pitches and formal recreational facilities within the Green Infrastructure Network and outside of Village Boundaries should respect the countryside setting by:

    i. Not requiring significant alteration of contours or the removal of substantial areas of existing vegetation.

    ii. Ensuring that the setting of heritage assets or wildlife habitats are not adversely affected.

    iii. Proposing a form of surfacing and enclosure in keeping with the rural setting.

    iv. Providing only small-scale ancillary facilities, appropriately sited and of sensitive design, which carefully consider the impact on cherished views (see Fig. 14).

    v. Avoiding floodlighting or night use where this would have an unacceptable impact on the environment, wildlife, the maintenance of dark skies or amenity as a result of noise and light pollution.

    vi. Incorporating mitigation measures to reduce any adverse impacts on the amenity of existing residents and new communities.

3. The rural landscape, wetland environment and open views of the Stort Valley should be protected from encroachment and appropriate measures should be implemented to mitigate the impacts of development proposals on the Stort Valley and the open countryside including noise and light pollution.

1.4 - Maintaining the Individuality and Separation of all Villages

Rationale and Justification

101. The principle of avoiding coalescence between settlements is well established in planning policy and is recognised in the Concept Framework, the HGGT Vision and Design Guide and in good practice. Policy AG4 aims to ensure that the open space separating new and existing villages is meaningful and designed to emphasise the individuality of each settlement within a cohesive whole.

102. The Gilston Area should have a singular and coherent identity as a group of villages within the landscape, while accommodating diversity of character within. This approach makes possible the potential of incorporating the two existing settlements Gilston and Eastwick while retaining their individual form and identity.

103. All planning policy and guidance documents consistently refer to Gilston as a place which is distinct and separate from Harlow. District Plan Policy GA1(III) refers to 'distinct villages' and the HGGT Vision points to a 'series of distinctive neighbourhoods and villages' and to connecting 'out to the wider countryside and Stort Valley'. The HGGT Vision places emphasis on the difference in the balance between green and built areas between the Gilston Area and the wider Garden Town [33]: in Gilston there will be individual and distinctive villages set within the landscape, while Harlow (although still landscape-led) has an urban layout of interrelating neighbourhoods separated by green wedges.

104. The new villages should also have individual identities. This approach is supported by the Garden Town Design Guide, which promotes an individual identity for each village and requires that development should respond positively to the landscape and topography to avoid being too visually prominent. The placemaking principles which underpin the Concept Framework state that the location and extent of village development will be influenced by the existing landscape and that the new villages will be separated by green corridors of sufficient width to ensure the villages are separate and distinctive, whilst also performing a greenspace role and function [34].

105. The Gilston Area Charter SPD provides detailed guidance on the preparation of Village Masterplans and the need to have regard to how villages will interface and respond to the surrounding landscape in the context of the approved Strategic Landscape Masterplan [35].

106. Within Hertfordshire, villages are typically surrounded by a rural landscape of fields and woodlands. In some cases, villages along a road corridor are separated by smaller fields of 100-200m width and clear discontinuity in the built form that maintains identity and prevents coalescence. This is the case of Hunsdon and Widford, or High Wych and Sawbridgeworth.

107. Identity and distinctiveness should be informed by an in-depth understanding of the structure of local settlements, landscape, topographical and built features of the area

---

[33] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision (November 2018) pp.4-5
[34] Gilston Area Concept Framework (July 2018) p.74
[35] Gilston Area Charter SPD (June 2020) para 5.3 step 4

within a comprehensive plan. Each of the new villages should feature discrete built areas, clear detachment, separation of frontages over rural fields or woodland with a clear perception of distance, sufficient to ensure that the villages are not seen as neighbourhoods of a single settlement but as genuinely distinct and individual villages.

108. Boundaries for the new villages and the communities of Eastwick and Gilston should be defined through a landscape-led approach to identify the landscape boundaries (in the Strategic Landscape Masterplan) and the edge of the built form and village boundaries (finalised through the Village Masterplans).

Community Perspective

109. The community has expressed concerns about the appropriateness of urban built forms in new development. Whilst it is recognised that the Gilston Area is separated from Harlow by the retained Green Belt and the River Stort, the community is concerned that there is a risk of visually merging the new built form into the urban area of Harlow.

110. Local residents support the sentiment of the strategic diagram in the HGGT Design Guide [36] and have a strong desire to ensure that new development respects the character of existing settlements, minimises and mitigates impacts on the existing community and creates separate villages which are sympathetic to the character of the Gilston Area and have a distinctive individual character.

Fig. 11 - Example of the gap between Hunsdon and Widford, typical of the area

A. Gap between Widford and Hunsdon looking west towards Gilston (power lines in the distance)
B. Visual gap between Widford and Hunsdon looking east

---

[36] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Design Guide (November 2019), Page 9

POLICY AG4 – Maintaining the Individuality and Separation of all Villages

1. The location and extent of new village development should be informed by existing landscape character, topography and heritage assets and respond sympathetically to the built form and setting of existing settlements and communities:

   i. A landscape-led approach should be adopted to define the extent of meaningful separation and green corridors between villages. The boundaries of these corridors will be identified in the Strategic Landscape Masterplan.

   ii. The green corridors separating villages should form part of the Green Infrastructure Network (Policy AG3).

2. Measures should be incorporated to protect the setting and distinctiveness of Eastwick, Gilston and Hunsdon and other clusters of existing buildings, including the establishment of landscape buffers and the retention of existing landscape features. The landscape buffers should comprise natural greenspace and a mixture of new planting and management of existing vegetation.

3. The new villages should each have a defined Village Boundary within which built development should be contained in order to create a distinct identity.

4. The green corridors separating villages should:

   i. Be of sufficient width and biodiversity value to support wildlife habitats and protect areas of ecological value from environmental impacts such as noise and light pollution.

   ii. Accommodate paths and cycle connections provided these can be accommodated without compromising the physical and visual separation between villages, the amenity of existing and new communities and the ecological value of the corridors.

   iii. Include provision for early planting and landscape improvements.

5. The detailed design and treatment of the natural green corridors and landscape buffers including rights of way and cycle connections will be identified in the Strategic Landscape Masterplan and Village Masterplans in consultation with the local community.

1.5 – Respecting Areas of Local Significance

Rationale and Justification

111. Policy AG5 seeks to respect the integrity of the setting of existing settlements, heritage assets and landscape features of the area by identifying Local Green Spaces, community identity and locally cherished views. This is essential to respect local context and the character and distinctiveness of the Gilston Area, so that existing and future residents can still appreciate its qualities.

112. The Policy identifies:
     - Local Green Spaces, corresponding to landscape and biodiversity assets meaningful to the community.
     - Community Boundaries, identifying the extent of existing village communities, whose integrity should be protected, which is not always clear, particularly in the case of the dispersed settlement of Gilston.
     - Locally cherished views over the open countryside and sensitive areas contributing to the appreciation of the landscape, and the setting of the most significant landmarks. These have been identified by the community as contributing to the character and enjoyment of the area. They are not assessed views and are independent of any views which may be agreed with EHC and assessed for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessments (and LVIAs) supporting the outline applications as part of the formal planning process.

113. This is consistent with Policy GA1 (V(g) and V(o)) of the District Plan, which emphasises the need to include opportunities to enhance on-site assets, biodiversity and protect Local Wildlife Sites and heritage assets and their settings, on-site and in the wider area.

114. The Gilston Area Concept Framework promotes the notion of development that will have a positive relationship with its landscape and heritage assets and the countryside and existing landscape attributes as far as possible. It also states that the designs of each village will identify long and short-range views to create visual connections with notable existing built and landscape features [37].

115. Similar aims are also established in the HGGT Vision and Design Guide. The Vision (Maximising Visibility and Appreciation of our Heritage) states that views of the natural and built landscape will be retained, with views towards heritage assets framed and enhanced[38]. The HGGT Design Guide identifies key landmarks and views across the Garden Town that will be important to retain and enhance. These include the strategic views from Hunsdon Airfield, St Mary's Church and St Dunstan's Church which are specifically identified as distinctive local assets[39].

116. Policy AG5 identifies specific Local Green Spaces (in accordance with the NPPF[40]) to signal their special qualities and because their protection and enhancement is considered to be critical to meeting the objectives set out in the Neighbourhood Plan. These are areas of local significance which are highly valued by the community (see Fig. 12). They are sensitive and

---

[37] Gilston Area Concept Framework (July 2018) p. 77
[38] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision (November 2018) p11
[39] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Design Guide (November 2018) p.22
[40] Paragraph 99, National Planning Policy Framework, Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (June 2019)

highly constrained areas of woodland and natural space with high biodiversity value, compatible with quiet outdoor recreation and contemplation. There is therefore strong local justification for taking a different approach to development management to that advised in paragraph 101 of the NPPF. Accordingly, development should be restricted to what is needed for their maintenance and preservation, with limited additions aimed at increasing appreciation and respect for these spaces. This could include repair and adaptation of existing structures, improvements to paths and drainage, and limited interventions such as erection of memorials, information boards or similar. The assessment of the designations demonstrates that they meet the criteria set out in the NPPF and is summarised in Appendix 2.

117. Of the existing communities of the villages of Eastwick, Gilston and Hunsdon and scattered or non-contiguous buildings, Hunsdon is a Group 1 Village and the others are Group 3 as defined in the District Plan. Only Hunsdon has a Village Boundary defined in the District Plan maps.

118. In order to protect the character of existing communities, and to assist in the protection of their integrity and setting, Community Boundary designations are proposed to identify the extent of the existing settlement and community (defined in Fig. 12). The Community Boundaries indicate a community unit, which should be protected to retain its cohesion. They are not equivalent to a Village Boundary, as they do not define areas where intensification and infill will be permitted. The existing settlements are characterised by a loose built-up form and scattered buildings and any future development in the Gilston Area should ensure that the character remains that of a settlement made of groupings of buildings dispersed in open space. Any planning applications within the Community Boundaries would need to respond to adopted policies relevant to Group 3 Villages as well as the Neighbourhood Plan.

119. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies three types of views (see Fig. 14):

- Long Distance Views, relating to the entire Harlow and Gilston Garden Town, and already identified in the HGGT Design Guide [41].
- Mid Distance Views to and from local assets, forming the setting of the churches, the historic manor houses and other locally significant features, like the war memorials and the Airfield memorial (see photos in Fig. 19).
- Mid Distance Open Views from publicly accessible tracks and footpaths across the countryside and open fields important for the identity and appreciation of the landscape of the area.

Community Perspective

120. The Local Green Spaces have been identified as being special by the local community and hold a particular local significance, because of their beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity or richness of their biodiversity and wildlife (see Fig. 13).

121. Views across the fields towards heritage landmarks and mid-distance views across the landscape and towards the existing villages are cherished by local residents. These have been recorded by the local community. The preparation of Village Masterplans should involve consultation with the local community on these views to ensure a positive interface between development and the countryside (see Fig. 14 and Fig. 15).

---

[41] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Design Guide (November 2018), p.21

POLICY AG5 - Respecting Areas of Local Significance

1. The following sites are locally significant and are designated as Local Green Spaces in accordance with the NPPF and District Plan Policy CFLR2. These sites should form part of the Green Infrastructure Network; the Local Green Spaces are (Fig. 12):

    a. Eastwick Wood
    b. Black Hut Wood
    c. Lawns Wood and Moat
    d. Queens Wood
    e. Eastwick Valley and Eastwick Hall Corridor
    f. St. Botolph's Churchyard
    g. Home Wood
    h. St. Mary's Churchyard
    j. Golden Grove
    k. Gilston House Parkland and Lake
    l. Avenue and Chase
    m. Woodland to the south of Terlings Park
    n. Fiddlers Brook / Lowland Fens

2. Any development within local green spaces should be tightly constrained, and restricted to works necessary for their maintenance and preservation, and minor ancillary works necessary for enhancement of their appreciation. In exceptional circumstances, development needed for strategic infrastructure required for the Gilston area (Policy GA2) may be permitted.

3. Community Boundary designations (as defined in Fig. 12) identify the extent of the existing settlements of Eastwick, Gilston and Hunsdon, including clusters of scattered buildings which form part of these communities. Development proposals will be required to protect the integrity of the community within these areas and proposals should demonstrate how impacts on existing communities will be managed.

4. The preparation of Village Masterplans should involve consultation with the local community on locally cherished views (identified in Fig. 14):

    A. Long distance view from the Hunsdon Plateau / Hunsdon Lodge Farm looking south
    B. Long distance view from Harlow, marking the transition from urban to village setting
    C. Long distance view from Parndon Mill across the Stort Valley
    D. Views to and from the Churches of St. Mary's, St. Botolph's and St. Dunstan and churchyards
    E. Views of the Listed Gilston Park House and Hunsdon House and their gardens
    F. Open view over Hunsdon Airfield from Acorn Street and Drury Lane and from the airfield towards St Mary's
    G. Open views across the airfield from the Airfield Memorial and hangars
    H. Open views out from Eastwick Road towards the Memorial
    J. Open views towards Eastwick from the Stort Valley and from the lower part of Gilston Park
    K. Rural views from Hunsdon Pound towards Brickhouse Farm House
    L. Open views towards Hunsdon Brook Fishponds
    M. Open views towards and from Home Wood and Hunsdon / Cock Robin Lane
    N. Open view from the exit of Terlings Park and Fiddlers Brook
    P. Open view from the path by Channock Farm towards Golden Grove and High Wych.

Fig. 12 - Designation of Local Green Spaces and Community Boundaries

Neighbourhood Plan Boundary

Parish Boundaries

Local Green Space

Local Green Space Designated by the District Plan

Wildlife Sites

Ancient Woodland

Scheduled Monuments

Community Boundaries

Local Green Space Designations

a. Eastwick Wood

b. Black Hut Wood

c. Lawns Wood and Moat

d. Queens Wood

e. Eastwick Valley and Eastwick Hall Corridor

f. St. Botolph's Churchyard

g. Home Wood

h. St. Mary's Churchyard

j. Golden Grove

k. Gilston House Parkland and Lake

l. Avenue and Chase

m. Terlings Park (Southern Edge)

n. Fiddlers Brook / Lowland Fens

Fig. 13 - Impressions from the Local Green Spaces

A. Eastwick Wood; B. Parkland at Gilston Park House; C. Giant cedar of Lebanon in Terlings parkland; D. Edge of Home Wood with a deer; E. Early purple orchids in Hunsdon; F. Home Wood.

Fig. 14 - Cherished Views over the Open Countryside and Sensitive Heritage Settings

Legend:

Neighbourhood Plan Boundary
Parish Boundaries
Church
Manor House
Other Asset
Sensitive Heritage Setting

Cherished Local Views
Long Distance View
View Towards and from Distinctive Landmarks
View of Open Countryside

Cherished Views (Identified by the Local Community)
A. Long distance view from the Hunsdon Plateau
B. Long distance view from Harlow
C. Long distance view from Parndon Mill
D. Views to and from the churches and churchyards
E. Views of Gilston Park House and Hunsdon House
F. Open view over Hunsdon Airfield
G. Open views from the Airfield Memorial and hangars
H. Open views out from Eastwick Road and Memorial
J. Open views towards Eastwick from south
K. Rural views from Hunsdon Pound
L. Views towards Hunsdon Brook Fishponds
M. Open views towards and from Home Wood and Hunsdon
N. Open view from Terlings Park and Fiddlers Brook
P. Open view from the path by Channock Farm

Fig. 15 - Examples of key cherished views over the open countryside or part of the setting of local assets

A. The green setting of fields and trees looking south from St. Mary's Church; B. View of Hunsdon House and St Dunstan's from the south; C. Looking south across the airfield; D. Tranquil semi-natural part of the river looking towards Eastwick and A414; E. View towards Home Wood, past St Mary's Church; F. From Eastwick Hall Lane looking south-west towards Eastwick; G. Looking north from the edge of the airfield towards Black Hut Wood and the hangars

1.6 - Creating New Garden Villages with a Distinctive and Locally Inspired Character

Rationale and Justification

122. **Policy AG6 seeks to promote new villages with a distinctive character, appropriate to context and inspired by the typical characteristics of Hertfordshire settlements. The design of each village should draw from the appreciation of the existing landscape, topography, local village form and heritage assets and should aim to achieve the best possible balance between landscape, height and density. Where trade-offs may be required, the local community should be engaged in the choices to be made, through a collaborative Masterplanning process.**

123. The Neighbourhood Plan recognises that the new villages will be required to accommodate the allocation requirements of the District Plan and to meet current design and sustainability standards and does not intend to be prescriptive about specific architectural or built form, as long as the aim of the policy is satisfied.

124. The importance of designing in context is well established in design practice and it is supported by policy and guidance for the area:

    - The report of the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission (Living with Beauty, January 2020) sees ugliness as buildings that violate the context in which they are placed. Such buildings would destroy the sense of place and undermine the spirit of community.
    - The District Plan (2018) makes numerous references to design in context and respecting the character of the area in its policies on design, villages and housing.
    - The Concept Framework, HGGT Vision and HGGT Design Guide all make reference to, and support, the importance of development proposals drawing from the character of local settlements and the wider East Hertfordshire context and, where possible reflect the historic pattern of lanes in the structure of the new villages.
    - The HGGT Vision also states that housing densities across the Garden Town will be broadly between 25 and 55 homes a hectare and that densities will typically increase towards local centres and transport hubs and villages should fragment at their edges.
    - In their responses to local consultations, Historic England highlighted the important role that the historic environment plays in place-making and reiterated their advice that development should draw on local vernacular/building materials and village forms, allowing a development to have a clear and distinctive character[42].

125. The Concept Framework proposes that the height of buildings will be defined in the Village Masterplan and that the overall development will have an average net density of 33 dwellings per hectare[43]. This approach is consistent with the aim of Policy AG6 as it will allow the identification of balance between massing and the delivery of new villages of distinct and locally inspired character when the new villages are designed.

126. As part of the Village Masterplan process, consideration should be given to the typical characteristics of local villages. Appendix 3, Defining Village Character, offers a source of design cues covering the key characteristics to be considered in future designs. By choice,

---

42 Gilston Area Charter Executive Report (East Herts Council 2 June 2020) p.95
43 Gilston Area Concept Framework (2018), pages 104-109

the Appendix makes no prescriptive recommendation and does not endorse any specific architectural style and is not to be interpreted as prescriptive guidance. Key elements include:

- The typical structure of local villages linear and organised around a central spine, without comprehensive grids, common in planned settlements and market towns.
- Streets and lanes informal layout with low engineering definition, slow speed and rich mixed landscape.
- How views out towards the countryside are present within villages with views over rural landscape opening up from crossroads from within the core of the village.
- The character of the landscape within the village boundaries, including blocks of natural / semi-natural landscape with big countryside trees or fields.
- How local villages are seen and with views from the countryside dominated by big trees and landscape and not by buildings.
- The importance of 'soft' and informal edges, without continuous frontages or repetitive rooflines and with buildings partly hidden by planting.
- The sense of arrival and transition from countryside to village without a built 'gateway'; typically, arrival is through a green transition area.
- The character of local landmark buildings (manor houses and churches) isolated from the village, creating attractive views from the countryside and no focal point within the built-up area.
- Height and massing typically two-storeys, with the occasional three-storey building in a discreet location.
- Variety of alignment and built form from compact and continuous frontages in the core of the village (such as Hunsdon, Much Hadham, High Wych) to deeply set back isolated buildings (such as Gilston Lane, Eastwick fringes, and the outer parts of Hunsdon).

127. The new villages should also reflect contemporary design criteria, which incorporate the highest standards of sustainability. Innovative design that is flexible, adaptable and incorporates cutting-edge technology in the fields of low carbon, low energy consumption, low water demand and water conservation is encouraged in line with the HGGT Vision[44].

Community Perspective

128. The community is of the view that new development should respond sensitively to existing buildings and settlements so that future residents will also enjoy the qualities of the area. The need to reflect local village character in the design of the new villages was a recurring theme. For example, during revisions to the Concept Framework, images and built form which were pointing towards urban and suburban character were removed at the request of the local community. It is, however, recognised that:

- The new villages will be larger than the majority of local ones and will need more articulation in their structure, taking inspiration from settlements like Puckeridge (see Appendix 3) or possibly Buntingford.

---

[44] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision (November 2018) p.9

- There may be a need for trade-off between landscape separation and density. These trade-offs will need to be explored as options in collaboration with the local community through the preparation of Village Masterplans.
- Contemporary and innovative design will be encouraged subject to development being of an appropriate form and scale with views and connections to the surrounding countryside. Importance is placed on the variety of building design, informality of village layout and use of appropriate detailing and materials. Pastiche design is not advocated.

129. The community expects to be actively engaged in the preparation of Village Masterplans to ensure that development reflects village character drawing inspiration from Gilston, Eastwick and Hunsdon and the wider context of East Hertfordshire.

Fig. 16 - Examples of local soft edges to development boundaries in Hunsdon and Gilston

A. Typical village soft edge (Gilston Park new development); B. Soft edge of Widford looking towards Hunsdon; C. New housing edge at Hunsdon seen from the Airfield.

POLICY AG6 – Creating New Garden Villages with a Distinctive and Locally Inspired Character

1. Proposals for the new villages should clearly demonstrate that the best possible balance has been achieved between landscape, village separation, mass, density and the overall delivery of the aims of Policy GA1 of the District Plan. This should be demonstrated in the Village Masterplans prepared in collaboration with the local community, each of which should:

   i. Respect local topography, landscape features and settlement morphology.

   ii. Create a garden village of distinct and individual character.

   iii. Provide a range of densities appropriately scaled in relation to location, heritage assets, landscape features and topography.

2. Each Village Masterplan should demonstrate how it has been informed by relationship with the landscape and heritage assets and has drawn inspiration from the character and morphology of existing villages in the Gilston Area and elsewhere in Hertfordshire. Consideration should be given to the following typical village and other local characteristics (see Appendix 3, presented by way of further guidance) in the preparation of Village Masterplans:

   i. Clear visual integration with the countryside, with direct views over the rural landscape and the retention of pockets of natural greenspace and existing landscape features within the village boundary.

   ii. Softer outer village edges (with a fragmented building line and varied frontages dispersed among trees), with no visually prominent buildings or built frontages at the edges.

   iii. Building heights and massing which are appropriately scaled in relation to village location and heritage and landscape elements.

   iv. Informal layout of streets and lanes which should include street planting and connect with the Green Infrastructure Network.

   v. Diversity of building typologies and design.

3. Contemporary and innovative design will be encouraged taking into account the context in terms of landscape, topography, built form, scale and materials.

4. The character, built form and morphology of each of the new villages should be clearly distinguishable from the character and built form of Harlow.

1.7 - Creating New Countryside Parks at Hunsdon Airfield and Eastwick Woodlands

Rationale and Justification

130. Policy AG7 establishes the Airfield and Eastwick Woodlands as a combined area of significant natural greenspace which can provide substantial benefits to new and existing communities, making a positive contribution to the natural environment and the countryside setting of the villages.

131. The creation of new countryside parks at Hunsdon Airfield and Eastwick Wood, forming part of the wider Green Infrastructure Network (Policy AG2) and providing a countryside setting for the development (Policy AG3) is in keeping with the overall vision and objectives set out in policy and guidance for the area.

132. The land north of the powerlines identified in Fig 11.2 of the District Plan including Hunsdon Airfield and Eastwick Woodlands is allocated in GA1 as 'Community Trust Open Space Land': an area to be enhanced by planting and management schemes and remain permanently undeveloped, with the exception of small buildings associated with its recreational use. The District Plan also indicates that the transfer of the site to a community land trust, or other governance mechanism, should take place early in the overall development programme to deliver local ownership and management of these assets[45].

133. The creation of countryside parks also reflects the aspirations for the HGGT Vision which states that open land on the edge of the Garden Town will be improved with investment in public access, landscape and biodiversity enhancements, and the creation of country parks where appropriate.

134. The combined size of the Airfield and Eastwick Woodlands offer significant potential for permanent natural greenspace. Its provision is particularly important to relieve pressure on the comparatively greater ecological sensitivity of the land of the Stort Valley south of the Gilston Area.

135. Besides its present recreational value, the Airfield has great local historic significance, which should be protected and enhanced: the site was requisitioned in 1939 as a night fighter station hosting to over 20 squadrons.

136. There is also an opportunity to consider wider betterment in a planned and managed way through the proposed countryside parks in relation to:
    - Legacy drainage issues associated with the old airfield, which the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) considers essential to resolve.
    - Risk of contamination in Groundwater Source Protection Zones 2 and 3 in the vicinity of the airfield which, according to the Environment Agency, could be affected by future works or drainage proposals that may disturb the ground.
    - Creation of appropriate connections to new and existing settlements through a network of footpaths, cycleways and bridleways as alternative to motorised access.

---

[45] East Herts District Plan (October 2018) para 11.3.7 p.150

Community Perspective

137. The local communities of Hunsdon, Eastwick and Gilston would wish to see the Airfield used as a natural greenspace in accordance with Policy AG3 for the enjoyment of walking, cycling, horse riding and the countryside and for enhanced biodiversity. They want to ensure that it will never be developed.

138. Hunsdon Airfield and the area of Eastwick Woodlands are important areas of open countryside for the enjoyment of Hunsdon residents in particular, and essential to the setting of the village. The Airfield's strong local historical legacy is valued by the local community who are concerned that this cultural link should not be lost. For these reasons, this area cannot be considered a resource to be planned only for the benefit of the new communities – it is already very important to the communities of today.

139. The Concept Framework states that the area is to be placed in a locked trust prior to the commencement of development, and the community strongly supports this approach. There is an expectation that the Community Trust Open Space Land will be transferred to local ownership and management and delivered at an early stage of the development programme and that the community will be fully engaged in its design and implementation.

140. Concerns have been expressed about existing non-conforming uses which detract from the rural character of the area and generate noise and heavy traffic within Hunsdon. There is a desire that non-conforming uses and activities with negative local impacts will be removed at the earliest opportunity, as part of the mitigation measures. Concern has also been expressed that some of the present agricultural practices are incompatible with the longer-term objective of enhancing biodiversity and should be replaced over time with grassland and pasture which will benefit wildlife.

Fig. 17 - The open views across Hunsdon Airfield from Church Lane

Fig. 18 - The proposed countryside parks

Fig. 18 - The proposed countryside parks

Eastwick Wood

Hunsdon Airfield

Neighbourhood Plan Boundary
Parish Boundaries
Countryside Park
Existing Public Rights of Way

Fig. 19 - Views of the area of Hunsdon Airfield and Eastwick Wood

A. Airfield memorial and base hangars; B. View of Listed Hunsdon Farm Lodge; C. Open view across the airfield looking towards Hunsdon (at the horizon); D. Looking north from the site of Eastwick Hall Farm; E. From the northern edge of Hunsdon towards Marshland and Eastwick Woods; F. Marshland Wood natural environment.

1.8- Minimising the Impact of Traffic and New Transport Infrastructure on Existing Communities

Rationale and Justification

141.   Policy AG8 seeks to ensure that new transport infrastructure is planned and delivered in a way which minimises adverse impacts on existing communities in terms of safety, noise, pollution and local character. The interrelationship with the A414 and with east-west strategic movement will also need to carefully address any severance issue and be considered in the context of the Garden Town's sustainable mobility strategy.

142.   The Gilston Area is to be planned and delivered in accordance with Garden City Principles and designed so that walking, cycling and public transport are the most attractive forms of local transport. This is consistent with Policy GA1, the draft HGGT Transport Strategy and the HCC Local Transport Plan (LTP4).

143.   The HGGT Transport Strategy[46] argues that it is futile to build more road capacity to accommodate future growth and that a change in travel behaviour is the only option to facilitate sustainable growth, based on reducing the need to travel and focusing travel on active travel modes. Consistent with that Strategy, new roads should be built only to serve the sustainable needs of the existing and new communities without attracting additional traffic from outside the area creating unacceptable impacts on the residents of the area or its environment.

144.   A wide range of large and small interventions, including sustainable transport measures, will be required to ensure that the Garden Town development is able to proceed without causing unacceptable congestion in Harlow and the surrounding towns and villages. The proposed wider strategic interventions include a new Junction 7a and upgrades to Junctions 7 & 8 on the M11, a second River Stort crossing, widening of the existing crossing, and upgrades to the Amwell Roundabout.

145.   To accommodate housing and employment growth, the District Plan promotes transport improvements in the form of two improved crossings of the River Stort. Policy GA2 states that the Council aims to facilitate:
   - A widening of the existing A414 crossing (Central Crossing / Fifth Avenue) to facilitate the provision of a sustainable transport corridor which will connect the Gilston Area to the urban area of Harlow[47].
   - A new vehicular, cycle and pedestrian crossing either to the east or to the west of the existing crossing.

146.   Whilst the new Stort Crossing will be required to provide additional highway capacity, it should still respond to the overall sustainable mobility targets for the area rather than be designed as a heavily engineered route which encourages car use. Its design must consider the potential impacts on community cohesion and the impact of noise, air quality, severance and disturbance on existing residents within the Gilston Community Boundary (including Terlings Park and Pye Corner). Consideration must also be given to the

---

[46] Garden-Town-Transport-Strategy_2020.pdf (harlowandgilstongardentown.co.uk)
[47] East Herts District Plan (October 2018) para 11.4.2-11.4.4

surrounding landscape and ecology, heritage impacts and the experience of pedestrians and cyclists.

147. In addition, measures will be required to establish an improved streetscape environment on the stretch of the A414 along the southern edge of the Gilston Area, given the importance of north-south permeability to link the villages to the wider Garden Town and Stort Valley by walking and cycling.

148. Consistently with the HGGT Transport Strategy, all streets and connecting roads in the Gilston Area, including the primary vehicular routes, should be designed to limit through traffic, contain vehicular speeds, and should be pedestrian friendly and in character with the village concept. Given the requirement to deliver significant modal shift that would encourage walking, cycling and public transport, it will be necessary to consider how these modes can be given advantage over private motor vehicles in the design of new road infrastructure to encourage behavioural change.

149. The likely increase in the volume of heavy vehicle movements and deliveries, particularly during the construction period, and to serve the future population, should be managed to minimise impacts on existing and emerging communities.

150. There should be no risk of deterioration to the water quality of the River Stort or any of the other watercourses as a result of surface water run-off from transport infrastructure and appropriate measures should be sufficiently resilient for the lifetime of the infrastructure and for a changing climate. The HGGT Water Cycle Study[48] also points to the limited capacity of the surface water sewer systems, highlighting the need to use sustainable drainage measures to avoid overspill and pollution.

Community Perspective

151. The local community is extremely concerned about the impact of major new road infrastructure (which may have a strategic function) on the character of the Gilston Area and the ease of movement and amenity of existing residents.

152. Great concern has been expressed about the potential impacts on the existing community of Gilston which may arise as a result of the final route of the second River Stort Crossing. This relates to the possibility of through traffic being routed via Pye Corner/ Terlings Park leading to severance and noise within the Gilston Community Boundary (Policy AG5) (in particular the severance of Terlings Park from the rest of Gilston) and additional traffic volumes on the narrow Church Lane towards Hunsdon. Residents of Gilston Lane are anxious to retain the low volume of traffic in their lane but would not want to be 'cut off' from accessing facilities and services.

---

[48] Harlow-Gilston Garden Town Water Cycle Study Update (2018) and Garden Town Water Cycle Study Addendum (2018) – see www.harlow.gov.uk/evidence

POLICY AG8 – Minimising the Impact of Traffic and New Transport Infrastructure on Existing Communities

1. Infrastructure design proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria are satisfied:

   i. The design of new road infrastructure minimises impacts on existing communities and incorporates mitigation measures to minimise severance within existing settlements.

   ii. Impacts from traffic and road infrastructure on existing communities in terms of safety, traffic speed, pollution, environmental and visual impacts are adequately controlled and mitigated.

   iii. Measures have been taken to mitigate visual and noise impacts on the landscape character of the Stort Valley and the setting of local heritage assets.

   iv. Measures have been put in place to minimise the risk of potential pollutants entering the River Stort or any of the other watercourses (main river or ordinary) as a result of surface water run-off from new transport infrastructure or increase in traffic volumes resulting from the development.

   v. The design of the new bridge crossings over the River Stort should minimise impacts on the character and environment of the river and provide good connections for walking and cycling, including provision for wayfinding.

   vi. New vehicular access arrangements are designed to minimise any increase in traffic on existing roads and lanes and to retain convenient access for existing communities.

   vii. No significant additional heavy vehicle movements through the existing communities as a result of the development or of new highway and access arrangements associated with the development.

2. A Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be prepared to limit the impact of construction traffic in agreement with the community.

3. A monitoring and management regime will be implemented to ensure appropriate measures will be introduced to address any issues which may arise during the construction or operation of the development.

1.9 – Phasing of Infrastructure Delivery

Rationale and Justification

153. The provision of necessary infrastructure is critical to the delivery of growth in the Gilston Area. Policy AG9 places great importance on making sure that infrastructure provision is phased to provide adequate capacity to meet the comprehensive needs of new and existing communities.

154. The principle of comprehensive assessment and delivery of infrastructure requirements is already established in the District Plan and in a variety of supporting documents:

   - Policy GA1 (V(v)) states that development in the Gilston Area is expected to assist in the delivery of all necessary on-site and appropriate off-site infrastructure. It also requires development to be in accordance with Garden City Principles including land value capture to deliver infrastructure for the benefit of the whole community.
   - The Gilston Area Concept Framework adopts as a key principle the phased delivery of necessary infrastructure to meet the needs arising from development in the Gilston Area and the cumulative needs of new and existing communities[49].
   - The stated mission of the HGGT is enhancing existing communities and creating exciting new ones in and around Harlow, through delivery of sustainable growth and infrastructure of considerable scale and significance.
   - The HGGT Infrastructure Delivery Plan [50] sets out the infrastructure that will be required, based on assessment of the quality and capacity of existing infrastructure and its ability to meet forecast demands. It goes on to propose ways to address identified deficiencies, establishing the principle of comprehensive infrastructure upgrades.
   - The HGGT 'How To' Guide for Planning Obligations sets out how the Councils intend to ensure that a consistent approach is adopted to sustainability and long-term stewardship of the Garden Town as a whole[51]. The guidance also requires achievement of land value capture for the benefit of the community.

155. The definition of infrastructure within the District Plan and the IDP covers:

   - Transportation (roads, walking and cycling and public transport services).
   - Utilities (water, sewerage, energy, etc).
   - Social infrastructure (education, healthcare, social care, community facilities and sport and leisure facilities).

156. Water and sewerage form a critical element of infrastructure provision[52]. It is important that there is sufficient capacity in the foul water network to accommodate existing and future needs without risk of further leakages into the watercourses and deterioration of water quality. There is the opportunity to explore with the Environment Agency and Water Companies how the current surface water and wastewater infrastructure can be improved in existing areas alongside new development.

---

[49] Gilston Area Concept Framework (July 2018) p. 78
[50] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Infrastructure Delivery Plan (April 2019)
[51] Harlow & Gilston Garden Town 'How To' Guide for Planning Obligations, Land Value Capture and Development Viability (Guidance Note: 01/20190417).
[52] Harlow-Gilston Garden Town Water Cycle Study Update (2018) and Garden Town Water Cycle Study Addendum (2018) – see www.harlow.gov.uk/evidence

157. Each new village will need to be supported by appropriate social infrastructure, reflecting the scale of each village, including education, health, faith, open space, leisure and retail alongside excellent links to the undeveloped Green Infrastructure Network and accessible greenspaces. Development should also ensure that existing communities will be connected to the new villages, and have easy access to infrastructure facilities, preferably through sustainable transport routes[53].

158. Infrastructure requirements need to be considered in light of the Garden Town IDP and trigger points should be directly related to actual arising needs, rather than standard requirements, which are not appropriate to a development of this scale and impact. Phasing will need to ensure timely delivery within the legal agreements associated with the planning permissions to ensure there is sufficient capacity (taking into account existing demand) to accommodate the needs of new development.

Community Perspective

159. The community has voiced its concerns about the capacity of existing infrastructure and its ability to accommodate demand arising from new development in the Gilston Area, including the capacity of road infrastructure, the current absence of bus and cycle facilities, the poor capacity of Harlow rail stations, the weakness or absence of the sewage network and the poor broadband and telecom services.

160. The community sees in the development of the Gilston Area an opportunity for a step change in infrastructure provision and would like to ensure that development should not take place in advance of necessary provision, as this would place unacceptable additional strain on existing capacity. There is expectation that the existing community will share in land value capture and benefit from new and improved infrastructure as a result of development in the Gilston Area as well as in mitigation of the impacts of development activities.

POLICY AG9 – Phasing of Infrastructure Delivery

1. The early delivery of infrastructure will be encouraged, and development proposals will be supported, where the following criteria are satisfied:

   i. A comprehensive assessment of needs arising from the development has been undertaken having regard to the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision and Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

   ii. It has been demonstrated how delivery will be phased to ensure that social and physical infrastructure is provided at the time of need for the benefit of the entire community according to Garden City Principles and there is adequate capacity to meet the cumulative needs of new and existing communities.

2. Infrastructure requirements and the timescale for provision will be subject to public consultation and determined through the planning application process.

---

[53] Gilston Area Concept Framework (July 2018) p.12

2. Delivering Quality Places

This set of policies addresses the development choices related to the appropriate design for individual villages and their local areas, leading to the creation of beautiful places, within the framework of the general and strategic policies addressing the areas as a whole in Section 1.

161. Appropriate design and development are considered under the following policy themes:
   - Landscape design within new villages
   - Built environment
   - Heritage setting
   - Community facilities
   - Improvement of existing settlements
   - Sustainable transport and access to the countryside

Fig. 20 - The natural landscape character of the existing settlements and manor house parks
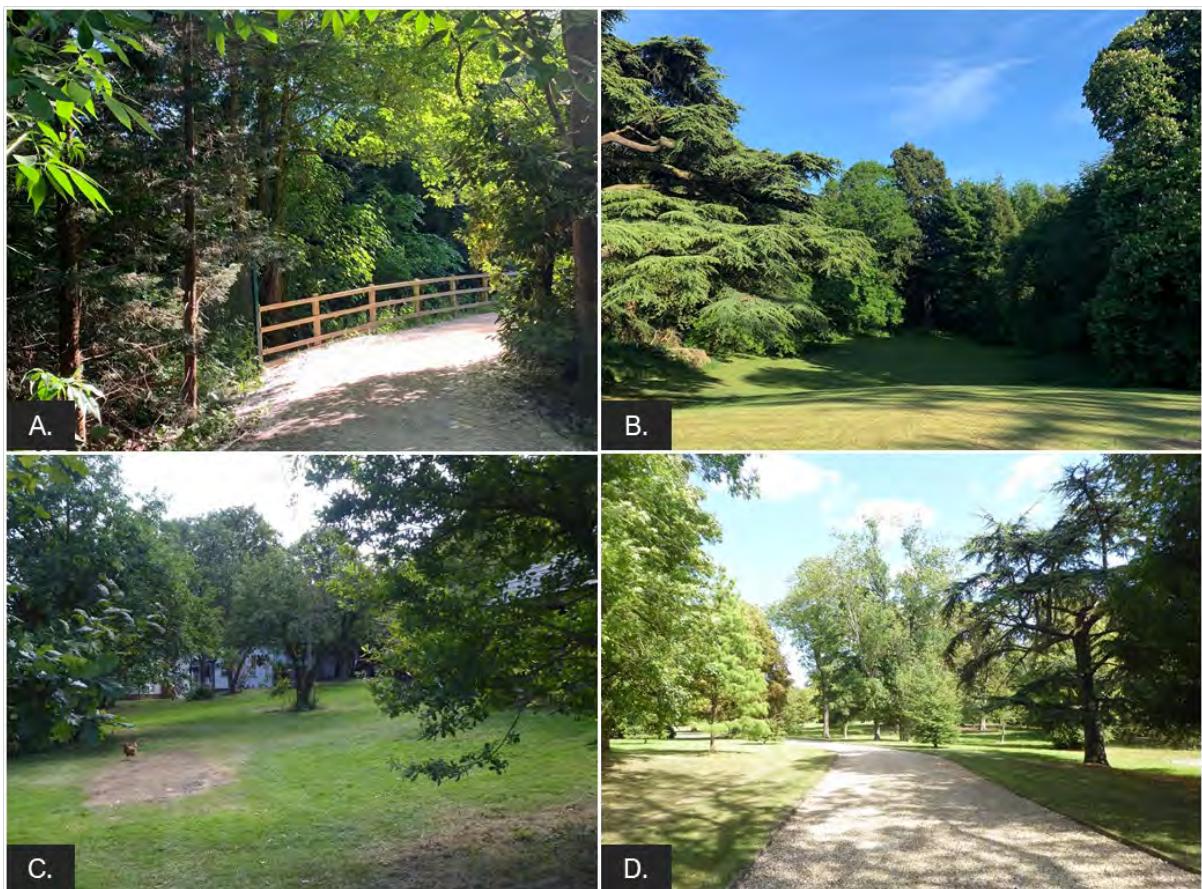
A. and B. Semi-natural parkland (Terlings Park); C. Rural gardens of Gilston Park houses by the Golden Brook
D. Parkland of Hunsdon House

2.1 - Landscape within the New Villages

Rationale and Justification

162. Policy LA1 aims to ensure that the overall landscape-led approach in a countryside setting will be reflected within the villages themselves, which should draw inspiration from the landscape within existing settlements in the Gilston Area and elsewhere in Hertfordshire (see Appendix 3 for guidance).

163. Each village should have a strong landscape framework, incorporating new and existing landscape features and maximising visual and physical connections with natural greenspace:

     - The landscape within the new villages should create a strong sense of place and local character, appropriate to a village in Hertfordshire.
     - It should be designed to maximise the continuity of the Green Infrastructure Network (Policy AG2) through the village and provide walking and cycling access to open spaces and the wider countryside.

164. High quality public spaces should positively respond to local landscape character and history and reflect local identity, using plant species and trees that are typical of the area, restoring and integrating the hedgerows, or planting new ones and adopting local patterns for lane verges and front gardens.

165. Landscape will also play a key role in defining village character which will make each village distinctive and individual.

166. The Neighbourhood Plan supports key landscape design placemaking principles advocated by the Concept Framework and HGGT Vision and Design Guide, with:

     - Green spaces within villages being connected where possible to the wider Green Infrastructure Network for the Gilston Area and the wider Garden Town.
     - Maximising access to open spaces and the wider countryside with a network of walking and cycling routes integrated with the existing network of rights of way to form a rich and permeable network[54] supporting active lifestyles and good health.
     - Creation of a range of multi-functional open spaces, local play areas, playing fields, adventure spaces, natural greenspace and SuDS carefully designed to be safe and pleasant, forming an essential part of the experience of living in the Gilston Area[55].
     - Retention of existing landscape features such as the existing holloways and historic tree planting.
     - Encouragement for new development to face onto public greenspaces where appropriate[56] to improve safety and facilitate social use[57].

---

[54] Gilston Area Concept Framework (July 2018) p.77
[55] Gilston Area Concept Framework (July 2018) pp. 126-128
[56] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision (November 2019) p.12
[57] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Design Guide (November 2019) p.40

Community Perspective

167. During consultation, the community highlighted the need to ensure that development in the Gilston Area would reflect the character of local villages of Hertfordshire, rather than the urban character of Harlow. Landscape design appropriate to the local context is critical to establishing village character and the local community would wish to ensure that each village has an individual character informed by local rural features and rich biodiversity.

POLICY LA1 – Landscape within the New Village Boundaries

1. Village Masterplans should incorporate a comprehensive landscape framework within each village, which should:

   i. Seek to optimise the visual relationship of the village with the surrounding countryside. The landscape within the boundary of each village should incorporate existing and new landscape features, new green spaces and be integrated into the Green Infrastructure Network.

   ii. Retain existing trees and significant hedgerows wherever possible and seek to enhance existing landscape features, such as woodland blocks, hedgerows, mature trees and tree lines.

   iii. Provide appropriate new planting characteristic of the local countryside and ensure a net gain in biodiversity on the village site.

   iv. Preserve and where possible enhance important views and connections to and from existing heritage assets and their setting. A sensitive approach will be required to the treatment of the area known as Gilston Fields to the south of St Mary's Church in Village 4 and the Community & Leisure Use area (see Fig. 8) which respects its landscape and significance.

   v. Integrate existing heritage assets, SuDS and other features in a comprehensive landscape design.

   vi. Make suitable provision for outdoor recreation and leisure facilities, including sports pitches with artificial surfaces and floodlighting provided that it can be demonstrated there would be no significant adverse impacts on the environment and residential amenity of existing and new communities.

2. Where possible, the implementation of landscape proposals should take place at an early stage in each village development programme.

3. Provision should be secured for the long-term management and maintenance of landscape and green spaces within the village boundary as part of an overall governance strategy (see Policy D2).

2.2 – Housing and Residential Neighbourhoods

Rationale and Justification

168. Policy BU1 aims to provide direction for the preparation of Village Masterplans and the design of each village to encourage community life and minimise travel for shopping, leisure, education and other activities.

169. New villages should use height and density of development to create a distinctive village character drawing from the local area (see Appendix 3 for design cues). It is expected that density will vary across each village with higher density near more accessible locations which are well connected by public transport, walking and cycling (generally the village centres) and reducing to the village edge, where 'soft edges' should define the boundary of the village.

170. Village Masterplans will be required (as envisaged by the Gilston Area Charter SPD) for each of the Gilston Area villages. 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[58]. The Village Masterplans will provide the framework for:

    - Meeting the development requirements of the allocation of District Plan Policy GA1.
    - Land use distribution, housing mix (including specialist housing typologies) and tenures, activities and other facilities required to meet local needs and create sustainable and inclusive communities.
    - Height, density and massing suitable to village character, appropriately scaled and sensitive to existing built, heritage and landscape assets and in relation to existing villages.
    - Creation of character areas and a coherent, yet diverse, built form.
    - Network of public spaces and visual links to wider reference assets and neighbouring villages.

171. These principles are consistent with the Concept Framework[59], which promotes a sustainable and efficient model of development structure and provides guidance on density (averaging net 33 dwellings per hectare) across the Gilston Area.

172. These placemaking principles are also consistent with the HGGT Vision and Design Guide, which invite development that is responsive and distinctive, responding to its context[60].

---

[58] Gilston Area Charter SPD (June 2020)
[59] Gilston Area Concept Framework (July 2018) p.102
[60] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision (November 2018) p.8

173. The community expressed concern about inappropriate forms of development resulting in suburban or urban character and the need to have a well developed understanding of the character of local villages before proposing design solutions.

174. There is support for high quality development which is respectful of village and landscape character but a strong view that the density and height of development needs to be controlled to avoid urbanisation of the area and to respect the scale of existing villages.

POLICY BU1 – Housing and Residential Neighbourhoods

1. Development proposals will be supported where they are in accordance with a Village Masterplan developed in collaboration with the local community and where it can be demonstrated that the criteria below are satisfied.

2. The proposals should clearly define the character and individuality of each village and adopt a layout appropriate to context and the existing landscape, heritage, topography and built form.

3. The design of each village should be in accordance with Policy AG6 and in addition make provision for:
   i. The creation of character areas within each village, each adopting a range of built-form, scale and height appropriate to a village setting.
   ii. Location of more compact development and higher densities, subject to high-quality design, in village centres and locations with enhanced access to sustainable transport.
   iii. Lower heights and densities adjacent to or within sensitive landscape and heritage assets and their settings, on village boundaries and within proximity to existing settlements (see Fig. 8).

4. The design of new residential development should:
   i. Contribute positively to the overall landscape structure of the village, the streets and green spaces.
   ii. Provide direct frontages to community open spaces and amenities and establish soft edges towards the open countryside.
   iii. Follow natural contours and including visual links to wider heritage and natural assets.
   iv. Optimise orientation for sustainability benefits.

2.3 - Village Cores / Centres

Rationale and Justification

175.   Policy BU2 focuses on the creation of mixed-use village centres offering a range of services and community facilities, critical to the promotion of sustainable development and village identity.

176.   Whilst the typology, mix and forms of these centres will vary, the village centres will form the heart of each of the villages, serving as the meeting space necessary to the creation of a strong community. They should accommodate a range of different facilities and the community infrastructure required to support a growing settlement including schools, an appropriately scaled transport hub, shops, cafes and restaurants, leisure facilities, health centres, community spaces, faith buildings and civic buildings. These local facilities will complement the more strategic retail provision within Harlow Town Centre.

177.   While each village centre primarily serves its local community, it is anticipated that each will provide a slightly different and complementary set of land uses to promote their distinctive character and to provide variety and a viable catchment area.

178.   Village centres will also be the preferred location for employment uses (see Policy BU3).

179.   The location of primary schools should be in preference within the heart of the villages to maximise their accessibility on foot and by other sustainable means and provide a community meeting place. The potential for community use of the school sites when not required for education will assist in building strong communities. EHC and the County Education Authority have articulated the desire that all of the new villages have a primary school to support the vibrancy of the village centres and reduce the need for car use.

180.   The design of village centres should take inspiration from local village centres typically compact, varied and of human scale, providing a focal point for pedestrian movement and social interaction.

181.   The importance of the village centre is reinforced in the guidance of the HGGT Vision[61] and Design Guide[62] and in the Gilston Area Concept Framework[63].

182.   The Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Transport Strategy encourages the development of vibrant centres offering a wide range of services to reduce the need to travel and the creation of transport hubs to facilitate modal interchange[64]. The Garden Town Vision establishes the principle of a series of 'micro-hubs' at key points on the Sustainable Transport Corridors (to be identified in Masterplans), to provide interchange between public transport and cycle facilities[65].

---

[61] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision (November 2018) p.10
[62] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Design Guide (November 2018) p.41
[63] Gilston Area Concept Framework (July 2018) p.74
[64] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Transport Strategy (Draft for Consultation - Jan 2020) p.17
[65] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision (November 2018) p.18

Community Perspective

183. The local community places great importance on access to new local services and community infrastructure and the role that village centres can play in creating a cohesive community.

184. There is an expectation that new facilities should benefit new and existing residents and that the new centres be designed to reflect the character of the local areas, where an active village centre with a mix of uses and meeting places is the heart of each community.

> ### POLICY BU2 – Village Cores / Centres
>
> 1. Development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria are satisfied:
>   i. The village centre provides a clear identity to the village and is located along an active pedestrian friendly street or appropriate village green and well connected to housing areas through a network of walking and cycling routes.
>   ii. The village centre provides a mix of uses to serve the new community with active frontages and ground floor uses comprising retail, workspaces, community and leisure uses in addition to residential to support the functions of the village centre.
>   iii. Consideration has been given to the location of nursery and primary schools in the village centre.
>   iv. The village centre is well connected by public transport services.
> 2. Village Masterplans will identify the location of public transport hubs at key points and demonstrate flexibility in anticipation of future mobility scenarios, including adaptable parking, drop off and pick-up arrangements and electric vehicle charging points.

2.4 - Employment Areas

185.   The provision of employment space within the Gilston Area is supported by Policy BU3 as an essential component of providing sustainable and mixed communities, as long as employment uses are designed and integrated in a way that makes a contribution to the character and life of the villages.

186.   Historically, employment within villages was located in the high street (shops, small offices and other customer facing businesses), or dispersed within the residential area and in farms. In the Gilston Area, the historic model of small-scale multiple employment opportunities could have its focus in village centres as the locations most accessible by walking, cycling and public transport. The location of employment space in village centres will be beneficial to the vibrancy and overall viability and sustainability of the villages.

187.   Development in the Gilston Area could, therefore, integrate smaller scale office accommodation distributed across the villages, catering for smaller companies (SMEs) across a combination of small private offices and flexible workspace. This is more likely to attract employment for local residents and therefore reduce the need to travel.

188.   District Plan Policy GA1 (V(q)) identifies a requirement for employment area/s of around 5ha within visible and accessible location/s, which provides appropriate opportunities to promote self-containment and sustainability. District Plan Policy ED1 states that new employment should be located where access can be achieved by a choice of sustainable transport.

189.   Residents will also be able to access more substantial employment opportunities within Harlow, including the Enterprise Zone. In addition, the proximity of the site to Harlow Town station will enable sustainable access to employment opportunities further afield, including Stansted Airport, Cambridge, Bishop's Stortford and London.

190.   The Neighbourhood Plan policies on sustainability, countryside setting and local character (Policies AG1 to AG8) indicate that delivery of employment as a large self-contained business park is not appropriate for the Gilston Area as this type and scale of development would have better synergies as part of the Harlow Enterprise Zones which are a focus for regeneration and investment by the Garden Town and Harlow District Council[66]. A conventional business park at the fringes of the villages and served by the A414 will inevitably be a car-based development, undermining efforts to reduce the need to travel. It will also present a suburban frontage to the villages and make limited contributions to community life. If employment development is proposed outside village centres, this would need to be well integrated within the village and satisfy the criteria set out in other policies in the Neighbourhood Plan.

191.   This approach is consistent with the Concept Framework, which anticipates provision for employment uses in village centres and with the HGGT Vision, which states that local centres could include small enterprise spaces to create a mix of businesses, shops and community facilities.

---

[66] Gilston Area Village 7 Employment Land Review (Savills, October 2019)

192. The focus for the Garden Town in terms of economy and regeneration is primarily on growth and investment in the Harlow Enterprise Zones (at London Road and Templefields) [67]. In the Gilston Area, the village centres are identified as the locations for investment and innovation with the potential for new employment typology mixes[68].

193. The HGGT Council partners have jointly commissioned work which will provide an assessment of the opportunities for sustainable job generation across the Garden Town in relation to the known housing trajectory growth. There will be an expectation that provision of employment land and premises within the Gilston Area will respond to the outcomes of the study, which will ultimately become a material consideration for the determination of planning applications. A draft report for the HGGT Employment Commission has recently been produced which supports a level of provision of 34,000 sqm of employment floorspace across the Gilston Area and sets out further information in respect of the considerations for its location, primarily focussed around village centres and in locations with better access to sustainable transport and strategic transport infrastructure. The Commission also identifies the importance of early delivery of employment space with at least 20,000 sqm by 2033[69].

194. It is acknowledged that a sensitive and innovative approach to integrating employment within the villages will be possible, supported by a step change in travel modes as part of the transport approach to the Garden Town and models of employment development designed to accord with other policies in this Plan.

Community Perspective

195. The community is concerned about the impact of free-standing business parks on achieving the shared vision and objectives for the Gilston Area and the creation of sustainable communities with a vibrant social life and active village centres. The community is of the view that this type of development is likely to give rise to increases in traffic generation with limited contribution to the image and life of the villages, potentially presenting visual and functional coalescence with Harlow.

196. The community has suggested that any business parks would be more appropriately located in the Enterprise Zones and other employment areas as defined in the HGGT Vision.

197. However, the community supports the concept that new development should not result in 'dormitory villages' and that a range of smaller scale employment development could enrich the life of village centres, assisting in meeting local needs and complementing residential development. This could include a mix of market and affordable employment spaces such as small workshops, offices and other facilities to serve the local community and provide opportunities for businesses to locate in the area.

---

[67] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision (November 2018) p.22
[68] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Design Guide (November 2018) pp.26-27
[69] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Employment Commission Draft Report, February 2020

POLICY BU3 – Employment Areas

1. Employment uses will be encouraged in village centres as part of mixed-use areas where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria are satisfied:

   i. Employment uses are well integrated and respectful of the overall character of the village centre.

   ii. A range of workspace of different types and sizes are provided including workspace suitable for SMEs and start-up businesses.

   iii. Measures have been taken to encourage access to employment uses by walking, cycling and public transport with a reduction in the need for car parking. Parking and other operational areas associated with new employment spaces should be suitably designed to minimise their visual impact and located away from the main public spaces.

2. Proposals for employment development outside village centres will be required to demonstrate compliance with the following criteria:

   i. Location within a defined Village Boundary and detailed as part of the Village Masterplans.

   ii. Respectful of context and landscape setting.

   iii. Well-integrated within the built fabric of the village.

   vi. Consistent with and complementary to the overall employment strategy for the Garden Town.

   v. Pedestrian oriented and accessible by walking, cycling and public transport.

2.5 - Village Streets and Lanes

Rationale and Justification

198. Village streets and lanes are identified in Policy BU4 as essential elements of villages character and the public realm. Their treatment should include features typical of villages: big trees, hedgerows, mixed shrubs and verges with a clearly defined relationship with adjoining buildings and open views onto the landscape where possible (see also Appendix 3).

199. The network of roads should reflect topography and function, adopting standards as close as possible to characteristic village street patterns. Boulevards and formal avenues are urban street types which should be avoided. Informal layouts, with short cross-roads and no formal grid patterns are typical of the area and should be reflected in the Village Masterplans.

200. New streets and lanes will create safe and accessible living environments with clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes The development should encourage active lifestyles and social integration by limiting car dominance and maximising opportunities for rich planting, biodiversity and safe informal use. The quality and character of the primary street network linking the villages should be defined in the Strategic Landscape Masterplan, while village streets and lanes should be defined in the Village Masterplans.

201. This is consistent with other guidance for the area:
    * The Concept Framework proposes that the street network typology should be in line with and enhance the overall character of the place [70].
    * The HGGT Vision stresses the importance of changing the character of roads into streets. It states that villages should be largely based on tree lined, local street layouts creating sociable places with a human scale. New development should have front doors and windows to the streets, to create safe, friendly streets and open spaces with informal overlooking [71].
    * The Garden Town Design Guide indicates that the organic pattern of lanes could be used as a cue for the structure of new villages [72].

Community Perspective

202. The community has expressed concerns about the urbanising effect of wide engineered roads and the introduction of alien design such as formal boulevards. They emphasise the need to ensure that the design of streets reflects the informality of village lanes and becomes an element of identity and distinctiveness and that existing routes such as Gilston Lane or Church Lane should retain their existing character with big trees and ancient hedgerows.

---

[70] Gilston Area Concept Framework (July 2018) p.147
[71] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision (November 2018) p.19
[72] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Design Guide (November 2018) p.40

POLICY BU4 – Design of Village Streets and Lanes

1. The quality and character of the primary street network linking the villages should be defined comprehensively for the whole area in the Strategic Landscape Masterplan. Streets and lanes within the Village Boundaries should be defined in the relevant Village Masterplan.

2. Development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria are satisfied:

    i. The design of all streets and lanes makes a positive contribution to the character and setting of the village.

    ii. Each village layout incorporates a legible street network designed to encourage walking and cycling connecting new housing to the village centre and other facilities.

    iii. The provision and design of streetlighting is appropriate to its location and purpose. Streetlighting should provide a safe environment for pedestrians but the level of lighting should be sensitive to the landscape setting and minimise light pollution and impacts on biodiversity.

    iv. Street planting should be generous and include trees and hedgerows characteristic of the local area and appropriate to village character.

    v. Car parking (on and off road) should be well integrated into the street design and in line with the sustainable mobility strategy for the area.

Fig. 21 - Typical informality and landscape of the streets and lanes of the villages of the area to be used as cues for future streetscape

A. Street landscape in Widford Rise (Hunsdon Road); B. Green verges and tree screening of houses on Church Lane in Hunsdon: C. Informal access lane to houses on Eastwick Hall Lane: D. Planted road verges on Eastwick Road by the Dusty Miller

2.6 - Celebrating Existing Heritage Assets

Rationale and Justification

203. Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource intrinsic to the character of the Gilston Area. Policy H1 requires that they should be protected and, where possible, enhanced to retain significance in the life of the future communities and guide the design of the new villages.

204. The proposed development boundaries, massing and landscape buffers will incorporate appropriate mitigation measures to minimise impacts on local heritage assets and their settings, retaining key views but also safeguarding their role and significance and celebrating them for the qualities they will bring to new and existing communities.

205. There are around 50 heritage assets designated by Historic England within the Neighbourhood Plan Area and more undesignated ones. Examples include St Mary's Church in Gilston, Gilston Park and its associated Listed Buildings, such as the schools and Hodgson farmhouses and the locally listed parkland; Hunsdon Airfield; St Botolph's Church and the Scheduled Monuments at the Mount and Eastwick Hall. There are also many heritage assets just outside the Neighbourhood Plan area, including Hunsdon House, St Dunstan's church, and others at Hunsdon, Hunsdonbury, Hunsdon Pound and Little Parndon in Harlow. Other non-designated assets include the War Memorials at the Airfield, Pye Corner and Eastwick.

206. Mostly, these assets have a rural setting and a strong relationship with the open countryside. Their location and use make a positive contribution to the area and give it clear significance as independent meaningful rural communities.

207. The Neighbourhood Plan supports the principles identified in the Concept Framework[73], including:
      - Promotion of opportunities to increase public appreciation of heritage assets.
      - Consideration of options for strategic positioning of open spaces and open layouts to preserve the setting of heritage assets, including Gilston Park House and Hunsdon House.
      - Preservation and enhancement of historic boundaries, such as the former deer park pale and ditch.
      - Establishment of appropriate set back distances and buffers to preserve and enhance the rural setting of key heritage assets.
      - Layouts that respond sensitively to the form, proportion, scale and character of heritage assets.
      - Protection of views to and from heritage assets including all churches, Gilston Park House and Hunsdon House to preserve or enhance their setting.
      - Development of long-term conservation and plans management for all heritage assets.

208. Historic England expects protection of the rural setting of heritage assets in the Gilston Area and would like to see meaningful integration going well beyond the simple safeguarding and protection of the buildings.

---

[73] Gilston Area Concept Framework (July 2018) p.90

Community Perspective

209. The community places great importance on the protection of local heritage assets and landmarks (particularly the manor houses and churches) which are critical to the character of the area. They wish to ensure that development in the Gilston Area will respect and have a positive relationship with local heritage, so that their history and significance to the area can still be appreciated by existing and new communities after the changes brought about by new development.

POLICY H1 – Celebrating Existing Heritage Assets

1. A comprehensive assessment of the area should be undertaken to identify all designated and non-designated heritage assets within and in proximity to the development including the historic Gilston Park House and Hunsdon House, Hunsdon Airfield, St Mary's, St Dunstan's and St Botolph's Churches, the local War Memorials, all Scheduled Monuments and other Listed Buildings and set out a clear approach for their protection and where possible, enhancement.

2. Development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria are satisfied:
   i. The layout and design of the development respond sensitively to the form, proportion, scale and character of heritage assets, including, where appropriate, set back distances and buffers to preserve and enhance their countryside setting.
   ii. The open, edge of settlement setting of the Churches of St. Mary's, St. Botolph's and St. Dunstan's and of Gilston Park House and Hunsdon House is retained.
   iii. Open spaces have been strategically positioned to preserve the setting and key views of heritage assets.
   iv. The significance and historic role of heritage assets in the area have been considered as part of the new development to avoid or minimise any conflict between their conservation and the proposal.

3. Proposals should also include measures to celebrate and give prominence to heritage assets by:
   i. Promoting opportunities to increase public appreciation and understanding of heritage assets by integrating them in an appropriate layout and incorporating appropriate references in the design of new development.
   ii. Ensuring that heritage informs the preparation of the Village Masterplans, through the enhancement of assets and the retention of key views.
   iii. Respecting, preserving and where possible enhancing historic boundaries, such as the former deer park pale and ditch.
   iv. Seeking to protect from visual encroachment or pollution (noise or light) and to enhance the parkland setting of Gilston Park House and Hunsdon House.
   v. Ensuring that the 19th century legacy of John Hodgson's Gilston Park Estate improvements (cottages, farm and community buildings, etc.) is recognised and highlighted in design proposals.

4. Where the proposed development affects heritage assets, a long-term heritage conservation and, where appropriate, management plan should be developed in consultation with the local community.

2.7 - Community Facility Provision

Rationale and Justification

210.   Policy C1 requires development of strong and sustainable communities through the provision, in close proximity to home, of necessary community facilities which will meet the needs of new and existing residents over the lifetime of the development.

211.   Community facilities are an essential and indispensable feature of any successful place. Services such as education, health, social services, libraries, the Police, Fire and Ambulance services all help to support quality of life in a community. The development of 10,000 homes will need to be supported by an appropriate level and quality of community facilities and services. An overall strategy is required to guide the location of new facilities, so that they are easily accessible to new and existing communities in line with Garden City Principles. Key facilities such as primary schools and local shops should be located within walking distance of most properties.

212.   One of the challenges will be demonstrating that the secondary schools are appropriately located, considering the potential role of the schools' playing fields and halls to the wider community. The location of the secondary schools must take into account other policies in this Plan, especially relating to reducing noise, visual impact and light pollution on the open countryside setting (Policy AG2 and AG3) and respecting the framework provided by the overall Strategic Landscape Masterplan and Green Infrastructure Network. Appropriate triggers for provision of secondary education on site are also important to achieve the sustainable transport mode share target given the scale of peak time journeys linked to education.

213.   EHC and the County Education Authority have articulated the desire that all of the new villages have a primary school and that, generally, the schools should be of a 'village' scale which was considered as ideally 2 form-entry in size and no larger than 3. Provision within each village helps to achieve the movement hierarchy and mode share target as well as support the vibrancy of the village centres and sense of community.

214.   Garden City Principles consider the phasing of infrastructure provision key to ensure there is adequate capacity to meet the cumulative needs of new and existing communities. This is also supported by the Concept Framework and the HGGT Infrastructure Development Plan[74].

215.   Facility provision must be phased so that it becomes operational in time to ensure there is adequate capacity to meet the comprehensive requirements of the Gilston Area of new and existing communities (see also Policy AG9).

---

[74] Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Delivery Plan (April 2019)

Community Perspective

216. The local community is concerned about the lack of capacity of existing social infrastructure and the impacts of large-scale new development in the area unless community facilities are provided on time to meet the current needs and future demands arising from new residents in the area. Trigger points for the delivery of facilities should reflect actual capacity and need for a development of this scale.

217. There is a clear expectation that the existing communities will benefit from new and improved facility provision. However, the community is concerned that convenient and easy access to local facilities will not be extended to existing residents and nearby villages.

POLICY C1 – Community Facility Provision

1. Development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria are satisfied:

   i. The distribution, availability and access to community facilities across all proposed villages is clearly set out, especially during the initial phases of development and where facilities are provided in one village to serve more than one community.

   ii. Community facilities are provided in locations which are easily accessible by walking, cycling or public transport. The location of community facilities in village centres is encouraged.

   iii. Where appropriate, measures are in place for the transfer of key community facilities into the ownership and stewardship of the local community, as part of the governance agreement (see Policy D1).

2.8 – Existing Settlements

Rationale and Justification

218. The scale of the proposed development will have a significant impact on existing settlements. Policy EX1 aims to ensure these impacts are mitigated and existing settlements may benefit in terms of access to improved infrastructure and facilities.

219. A comprehensive approach to development in the Gilston Area is required to ensure that the existing settlements in Eastwick and Gilston and Hunsdon Parishes are positively considered as part of the overall scheme: respected in their integrity, supported to flourish in a time of great change and placed at the foundation of the future community. The existing settlements will be significantly affected by the proposed development and it is important from the outset to consider how impacts can be mitigated and compensated during the extended construction programme.

220. It will be important to ensure that measures are taken early-on to enhance and strengthen the setting of the existing settlements and provide the off-site enhancements required to mitigate against the impacts of development during construction and at completion. The Strategic Landscape Masterplan should also clearly identify the safeguarding and enhancement measures of landscape features including any tree and hedgerow retention and maintenance along streets, lanes or around the churches and war memorials.

221. Existing communities should be connected to the new leisure and community facilities in the villages through an extended network of pedestrian, cycle and public transport routes. Access to key destinations within Harlow from the existing settlements should be protected and improved.

222. These measures will be essential to ensure a comprehensive and integrated development as advocated by the District Plan and the Garden Town, through its Vision, which state that new development should support and encourage the regeneration and enhancement of existing areas.

223. Policy EX1 also addresses the mitigation of impacts of new development on existing settlements through appropriate funding mechanisms.

Community Perspective

224. The local community has expressed great concern about the impact of development on existing settlements and their quality of life. There is an expectation that effective measures will be taken to minimise impacts and to ensure that existing residents share in the benefits of development in line with Garden City Principles.

225. The community wishes to ensure that measures are implemented to mitigate impacts, including provision for landscape maintenance, integration of green buffers around existing settlements and enhancement of existing greenspaces.

226. There is a clear expectation that the existing community will also benefit from the new and improved infrastructure provision of the Gilston Area. The community is concerned that the comprehensive vision for infrastructure upgrades outlined in the HGGT 'How To' Guide for Planning Obligations [75] will not materialise within their smaller scale settlements and would wish to ensure that major change will also result in infrastructure improvement within Eastwick, Gilston and Hunsdon to help mitigate the impacts of development and ensure the benefits are shared by existing communities. This should include better access to utilities (including high speed broadband), improved sewerage, access to public transport and cycle network, and convenient and easy access to local facilities.

227. As part of the development process and in adherence to the Garden City Principles adopted in the District Plan, consideration should be given to appropriate mitigation measures, subject to passing the tests set out in NPPF policy. These should be agreed in consultation with the local community. A preliminary list of priority projects identified at this stage by the community is provided in Appendix 4, which also includes other priority projects identified by the local community which could be supported through collaboration with the developers of the new villages.

---

[75] Harlow & Gilston Garden Town 'How To' Guide for Planning Obligations, Land Value Capture and Development Viability (Guidance Note: 01/20190417).

Fig. 22 - Local lanes: characterful, but in need of maintenance and enhancement (Gilston Lane)

POLICY EX1 – Existing Settlements

1. Development proposals in the Gilston Area will be required to:
   i. Demonstrate how the impact of development on existing settlements and outlying properties which form part of these communities will be mitigated as part of the overall development scheme.
   ii. Protect the landscape character of lanes, streets and open spaces affected by the development and within existing settlements such as Church Lane, Gilston Lane and Eastwick Hall Lane.
   iii. Make provision for early landscape works and planting of indigenous species with high biodiversity value and species characteristic of the local countryside to strengthen the green buffers around existing settlements and along the existing lanes.
   iv. Provide suitable and convenient access to new and existing community facilities and destinations.

2. Long-term maintenance of green and public spaces within the existing communities will be considered through the planning process and as part of the wider maintenance agreements for the Gilston Area (Policy D2).

3. Funding will be made available through legal agreements or through the possible future introduction of an infrastructure charging levy or similar charging regime to undertake improvements to the existing settlements in order to mitigate the impacts of new development. Mitigation measures will be agreed in consultation with the local community.

4. Development proposals within the settlements (outside the GA1 allocation) will be required to mitigate the impacts of development in accordance with the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan and the District Plan.

2.9 - Sustainable Mobility

Rationale and Justification

228. Policy TRA1 requires development in the Gilston Area to make an essential contribution to sustainable transport choices advocated for the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town through provision of a comprehensive sustainable mobility strategy and design choices for the new villages and the existing communities.

229. Development in the Gilston Area must promote sustainable transport choices, seek to anticipate foreseeable changes in transport technology and reduce the dominance of cars and traffic within existing and new communities and on the transport network across the wider area.

230. Promotion of sustainable transport choices requires an extensive network of safe and convenient active transport routes linking new and existing settlements and providing access to their facilities, open space and the countryside. Attractive village character and prioritisation of walking and cycling over car mobility will be essential.

231. Policy TRA1 sets out an approach which is consistent in relation to sustainable mobility with the East Herts District Plan, the ongoing HGGT work and with Hertfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4)[76]. A sustainable approach to travel is also a key objective underpinning the Concept Framework[77].

232. Development in the Gilston Area will be designed:
    - To provide an extensive network of safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle routes linking new and existing villages / communities and integrated with existing Public Rights of Way and routes beyond the Gilston Area.
    - For an order of priority to reduce the need to travel, walking, cycling, public transport, "mobility as a service" vehicles, freight and delivery vehicles and private cars - in this order.
    - With open and permeable village layouts, to shorten distances for sustainable modes and offer multiple safe routes, discouraging car use.
    - To provide safe cycling and pedestrian access to Harlow Town, Harlow Mill and Roydon stations.
    - With new efficient and frequent public transport connectivity to link new and existing settlements in the Gilston Area with surrounding areas, in particular Harlow Town Station and the town centre.
    - To avoid road layouts that give priority to cars or encourage speed.
    - To reduce provision for the car (including parking) and minimise visual presence.

---

[76] Local Transport Plan 2018-2031 (LTP4) Hertfordshire County Council (May 2018)
[77] Gilston Area Concept Framework (July 2018) p.12

233. The HGGT has set itself an ambitious target of 60% of all movement in new areas to be by sustainable transport modes (walking, cycling, shared mobility services or public transport), and 50% in existing areas of Harlow[78]. This is a very significant shift, and one which will not happen unless a comprehensive strategy for mobility is developed and adopted for the site and for the wider area, taking account of progressive changes in travel habits and technology. This will not happen if the new villages are not designed on active design principles, with a range of uses and services that reduce the need to travel and a structure and layout which makes walking, cycling and public transport attractive.

Community Perspective

234. The local community is very concerned about the existing capacity of the local highway network, the poor public transport services and the capacity and accessibility of Harlow Town Station. They are aware that, without a robust and comprehensive approach, there will be significant impacts on local communities caused by growth and major new development. The local community would wish to see an increased focus on sustainable and achievable transport modal split and the provision of improved public transport facilities and services.

235. The community would like to see substantial change in the transport and mobility patterns of the area, leading to:

- Reliable and frequent bus services for journeys to Harlow, Bishops Stortford, Hertford and Ware and the creation of sustainable transport corridors.
- Safe and convenient cycling provision across the Gilston Area, extending into existing settlements beyond and to main local destinations.
- Measures to control, reduce and slow down through traffic movement.
- Restrictions to freight movement through Hunsdon, Gilston and High Wych.
- Improved facilities and services at Harlow Town Station as a priority, including improved access and cycle facilities and potentially also at Harlow Mill and Roydon stations and increased train capacity in peak hours.
- Improved pedestrian routes extending the existing network of Rights of Way.

---

[78] HGGT Transport Strategy, p.5. Garden-Town-Transport-Strategy_2020.pdf (harlowandgilstongardentown.co.uk)

POLICY TRA1 – Sustainable Mobility

1. Development should be designed to seek to achieve the sustainable mobility targets set by the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Transport Strategy (presently 60%) and any subsequent update to it.

2. Development should demonstrate that clear sustainable mobility targets are secured as part of planning permission and that they can be realistically monitored and achieved through a range of practical and achievable solutions.

3. Development proposals should:

   i. Promote sustainable transport choices with a clear order of priority: reduce the need to travel, walking, cycling, public transport, shared transport, deliveries and private transport.

   ii. Be integrated with sustainable travel initiatives in the wider Garden Town area including the creation of sustainable transport corridors and public transport hubs.

   iii. Provide a well-connected network of attractive, safe, convenient and where possible separated pedestrian and cycle routes within each village and between villages, including the existing communities as part of appropriate street design.

   iv. Make provision for sustainable transport links which serve journeys outside the Neighbourhood Plan Area to nearby urban centres including Harlow's key shopping and employment destinations.

   v. Provide multiple safe, direct and where possible separated pedestrian and cycle routes to Harlow Town Station, Roydon Station and Harlow Mill Station with smart cycle schemes and cycle parking facilities and give consideration to a northern entrance to Harlow Town Station dedicated to active mobility.

   vi. Make early provision for frequent and extended public transport services to serve new and existing settlements with bus stops within walking distance of most new and existing houses to encourage use of public transport from the outset of the development.

   vii. Anticipate changes in transport technology and support smart mobility services.

   viii. Make provision for cycle parking and electric charging facilities to encourage the use of low carbon emission vehicles. An appropriate level of cycle storage and cycle parking should be provided in homes and at local destinations.

   ix. Seek to minimise car parking provision in relation to adopted standards and make allowance for possible reductions in parking standards over time.

2.10 - Access to the Countryside

Rationale and Justification

236.   Living in close proximity to the countryside is a key part of the vision for the Gilston Area. Policy TRA2 seeks to ensure that new development delivers an extended network of footpaths, rights of way, cycleways and bridleways which will link existing and new villages to each other and the wider countryside.

237.   Consistently with the Concept Framework, the Neighbourhood Plan requires that the new villages are designed to maximise access to open spaces and the wider countryside through a network of greenspaces (the Green Infrastructure, Policy AG2) providing walking and cycling routes, integrating the existing views and network of paths with new connections to form a rich and permeable network[79].

238.   The design of new pedestrian and cycle facilities within or across the River Stort (including the crossings proposed in District Plan Policy GA2) should minimise impacts on the character of the River Stort and provide good pedestrian connections to the Stort towpath, including wayfinding.

239.   The enhancement to the Rights of Way network via improved new, safe and, where possible, separated footpath and cycle connections should be considered in the Strategic Landscape Masterplan and Village Masterplans in consultation with the community.

Community Perspective

240.   The community places value on access to the countryside and the opportunities for integration and expansion of the existing network of footpaths presented by development in the Gilston Area.

241.   The local community currently enjoys a village setting in which meeting people along streets and lanes is a common occurrence. They believe that this is essential for community cohesion, enjoyment of the countryside and encouragement of walking and cycling for need or leisure. They would like to see that the new development creates comparable or better opportunities for a healthy community lifestyle. They would also wish to see improved safe and, where possible, separated pedestrian and cycle connections throughout the Gilston Area.

242.   There is a concern, however, that existing rights of way, which in some cases pass through sensitive areas and close to houses, will need to be protected from the potential impacts of significantly more use, as the population of the area increases, and appropriate mitigation will be required. Furthermore, the community is concerned that new cycle routes and leisure facilities could affect ancient woodland, disturbing important wildlife habitats and leading to the loss of important woodlands.

---

[79] Gilston Area Concept Framework (July 2018) p.77

Fig. 23 – The delicate environment of countryside connections within the Stort Valley

3. Implementation and Delivery

This section of the Neighbourhood Plan sets out how the community intends to work with the local planning authority, developers and other stakeholders in bringing forward development in the Gilston Area.

243. The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to sit alongside national and local planning policies and other planning guidance to provide a policy framework for the determination of planning applications in the Gilston Area. It seeks to provide a positive and proactive planning tool to assist in the delivery of Policy GA1 and the vision and objectives set out in this Plan. The planning process involved in delivering development on the scale proposed in the Gilston Area is complex and the policies in this Plan should be applied at each stage to ensure positive outcomes.

Planning Process

244. The Gilston Area Charter SPD sets out in detail the requirements and steps for the various stages in the planning process[80], including:
    - Outline Planning Applications, establishing the structure and range of development.
    - Strategic Landscape Masterplan, defining the Green Infrastructure Network and the overall landscape framework for the site and integration with existing settlements and the wider countryside.
    - Village Masterplans, identifying the boundaries of the proposed built-up area (having regard to the Strategic Landscape Masterplan), and the layout and development parameters for each village
    - Reserved Matters Applications/Detailed Planning Applications for individual buildings or smaller parts of each village.

Community Engagement and Governance Strategy in the District Plan

245. According to District Plan Policy GA1 (IV) developers will be required to agree a Community Engagement Strategy, setting out the expectations for engagement with the local community and stakeholders across Harlow and East Herts at each stage of the planning and development process to allow meaningful participation in the creation and management of the emerging new communities.

246. A Governance Strategy will be required to satisfy District Plan Policy GA1 (V(h)). It will establish the arrangements for the planning, development and long-term stewardship of the Gilston Area that will put local people at the heart of the decision making. It is also set out in the Concept Framework as a strategy for committed, long-term community-led governance[81].

247. The Neighbourhood Plan expects, therefore, the Governance Strategy to be comprehensive, and related to all villages and existing communities to ensure that the overall area will be managed effectively, coherently and in the interest of all current and future residents.

---

[80] Gilston Area Charter SPD (June 2020) Fig.4
[81] Concept Framework, p.159 and p.140

3.1 – Establishing a Partnership with the Community

Rationale and Justification

248. The community has a key role to play in taking forward growth in the Gilston Area and ensuring that development is appropriate to the location and distinctive. Policy D1 aims to put community engagement at the heart of delivering growth in the Gilston Area in accordance with Garden City Principles. Accordingly, the community must be fully engaged at each stage of the planning and development and in future governance arrangements.

249. The Council is committed to community engagement: this is a key principle underpinning Policies GA1 and DES1 of the East Herts District Plan and it is the driver of the Community Engagement Strategy SPD (Dec 2020). The Garden City Principles highlight the importance of strong vision, leadership and community engagement and long-term community ownership of land and community assets.

250. The commitment to community engagement in the development of the Strategic Landscape Masterplan, Village Masterplans and Design Codes is amplified in the Gilston Area Charter SPD (June 2020)[82]. The Charter SPD also requires that the production of each Masterplan for the Gilston Area will be led by an applicant team of professionals with suitable experience of collaborative landscape led masterplanning who will work together with the community and other stakeholders[83].

251. The Neighbourhood Plan advocates that a partnership approach with the community, starting with the existing one and progressively including future residents, should be at the heart of the development and of design choices, to ensure that these are informed by appreciation of local quality.

Community Perspective

252. The existing community has engaged proactively in the development of the Concept Framework and has worked hard at creating a climate of collaboration with the local planning authority, the HGGT Board and developers in the interest of achieving development that is of exceptional quality and appropriate to the Gilston Area. The Neighbourhood Plan Group has also worked with the District Council and the developers in the preparation of the Gilston Area Charter and Community Engagement Strategy. The community (existing and new) will expect to be fully engaged in the development of proposals for the new villages and future governance agreements and stewardship of open space and community assets in accordance with Garden City Principles and as envisaged by planning policy.

---

[82] Gilston Area Charter SPD (June 2020) para 8.1
[83] Gilston Area Charter SPD (June 2020)

POLICY D1 – Establishing a Partnership with the Community

1. Development proposals will be supported which have been developed in partnership with the community and meet the following criteria:

    i. Local communities (existing and new) have been fully, meaningfully and collaboratively engaged with at each stage of the development process; this will include evidence of how community views have been taken account in the development proposals.

    ii. Involvement of the community in briefing the design teams responsible for the preparation of Masterplans about the local area and the perspective of the community.

    iii. Collaborative Design Charrettes / Co-Design workshops will be held to facilitate the active engagement of the community at each stage in the preparation of the Strategic Landscape Masterplan and individual Village Masterplans and to ensure they respond to local aspirations and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of the area's defining characteristics.

2. Funding may be made available through legal agreements to support the local community to enable full engagement and participation, including professional support where required.

3.2 - Community Ownership and Stewardship

Rationale and Justification

253.   Policy D2 establishes criteria for future governance and stewardship of greenspaces and community assets so that arrangements are in place in a timely manner and in the interest of the whole community, including the existing one. It also requires a clear understanding of how future assets will be managed in perpetuity and identification of appropriate sustainable funding.

254.   The framework for governance arrangements of the Gilston Area will bring together the new and existing communities by seeking active involvement of residents in the management and governance choices for the area. District Plan Policy GA1 (VII) states that the development should include mechanisms to secure the long-term stewardship, protection and maintenance of the parkland, open spaces, play areas and community assets and create the conditions for local resident participation in the design and stewardship of their new communities. The District Plan indicates that this should take place early in the overall development programme[84].

255.   Long-term stewardship is one of the key Garden City Principles identified in the District Plan, Concept Framework and the HGGT Vision. The Concept Framework states that the Principal Landowners will establish mechanisms that will put local people at the heart of the decision-making process. It also promises land ownership and management arrangements which will guarantee independent control of the undeveloped parkland at Gilston Park Estate[85].

256.   New facilities will not be sustainable without well organised management structures supported by consistent revenue streams. As such, the capture of land value from the uplift in granting planning permission is central to the original Garden City Principles, and to the TCPA's contemporary vision for Garden Towns[86]. The HGGT 'How To' Guide for Planning Obligations sets out how the Councils intend to ensure the sustainability and long-term stewardship of the Garden Town as a whole through the use of planning obligations[87].

257.   As part of the planning process, landowners/developers will be required to make arrangements for the long-term management, funding, maintenance and residents' participation in the stewardship of greenspaces, parklands, leisure and community facilities, potentially including schools, health centres etc. Existing residents and residents moving into the development should have a right to be involved in the governance structures.

---

[84] East Herts District Plan (October 2018) para 11.3.7 p.150.

[85] Gilston Area Concept Framework (July 2018) p.140

[86] Guide 9: Long-Term Stewardship. Garden City Standards for the 21st Century. Practical Guide for Creating Successful New Communities (TCPA, December 2017) https://www.tcpa.org.uk/tcpa-pgs-guide-9-stewardship

[87] Harlow & Gilston Garden Town 'How To' Guide for Planning Obligations, Land Value Capture and Development Viability (Guidance Note: 01/20190417).

258. Long-term management and maintenance will be secured as part of the planning process and legal agreements via a Governance Strategy, which should be in place before the start of the development and be prepared with the active involvement of the local community and other local stakeholders. The Governance Strategy should be designed to meet a common level of investment and standard of maintenance for each village and for site-wide infrastructure serving the Gilston Area as a whole (including the existing settlements).

259. Land ownership, funding and management measures should also guarantee independent control of the Community Trust Open Space Land and other greenspaces (identified in Policies AG2 and AG7) in the interest of the community. A legal agreement for the Community Trust Open Space Land (District Plan Policy GA1) should include funding and design support to the community prior to the transfer of this land to enable community involvement in the design of the countryside parks and preparation of a management and maintenance plan (see Policy AG7).

Community Perspective

260. The local community has made clear its desire to be fully engaged from the outset in future governance arrangements and are supportive of the delivery and transfer of the Community Trust Open Space Land north of the powerlines into community ownership and control early in the development programme to help mitigate the impacts of development and provide a community asset for existing and new residents in the Gilston Area.

261. There is also an expectation that measures will be agreed and put in place at an early stage in the development programme to secure the long-term stewardship, protection and maintenance of other areas of parkland, open spaces, play areas and community assets and that local residents (existing and new) will be fully engaged in the design and stewardship of their new communities.

POLICY D2 – Community Ownership and Stewardship

1. Arrangements for future governance and long-term stewardship of the Gilston Area will be agreed between the principal landowners/developers and the local planning authority in consultation and with the endorsement of the local community and will be secured as part of the planning process.

2. An agreed governance structure should be in place at the outset of development to ensure the delivery and management of community assets is undertaken in a timely manner and in the interest of the community in accordance with Garden City Principles.

3. The arrangements for future governance and long-term stewardship will apply to all development within the Policy GA1 allocation and should include provision for the following:

    i. An integrated approach to development and necessary infrastructure provision, and the delivery and long-term stewardship of green spaces and other community assets.

    ii. The early delivery of community ownership and the long-term stewardship, protection and maintenance of the Community Trust Open Space Land (see Policy AG7).

    iii. The establishment of governance and stewardship mechanisms early in the overall development programme for the funding, timely delivery and transfer into community ownership of other green spaces, parklands, sports and recreation areas and community assets.

    iv. The active involvement of residents from the outset and the continued representation of existing and new communities in future governance arrangements and stewardship of the Gilston Area.

    v. Funding and re-investment opportunities to ensure the long-term operation and maintenance of the Community Trust Open Space Land and other community and heritage assets.

4. Monitoring and Review

262. The Neighbourhood Plan provides a policy framework for the preparation and determination of planning applications in the Gilston Area. The community is not responsible for delivery of development in the Gilston Area and will work with the Council, developers, infrastructure providers and other stakeholders to ensure development takes place in accordance with the vision, objectives and policies set out in the Neighbourhood Plan.

263. Regular monitoring of actual development outcomes against the plan is an essential part of ensuring that the plan is effective. Monitoring can indicate areas where interventions may be needed to achieve the objectives of the plan; it may also demonstrate the need for a review or partial review of the plan.

264. Given the size and complexity of the Gilston Area development and the fact that the District Plan expects it to make a significant contribution towards housing needs within the Plan period, the Council recognises the importance of closely monitoring its implementation. In accordance with District Plan Policy DEL4 (Monitoring of the Gilston Area), the Council will draw up an action plan setting out key milestones for the delivery of the site, including masterplanning, phasing of infrastructure and submission of planning applications and monitor its progress on an annual basis. The annual rate of housing completions in the Gilston Area will be reviewed by the Council as part of its District wide monitoring in accordance with Policy DEL3 (Monitoring Framework).

265. The Neighbourhood Plan will be kept under review by the Neighbourhood Plan Group and this will be undertaken in collaboration with EHC who will be responsible for monitoring development in the Gilston Area in accordance with Policy GA1 and other policies in the District Plan. Working closely with the Council, it will be possible to determine the progress being made in relation to the objectives and policies set out in the Neighbourhood Plan and the delivery of necessary infrastructure.

266. The Gilston Area Charter SPD reinforces this collaborative approach to monitoring. It states that the Garden Town Authorities will seek to provide information on an ongoing basis to keep the public informed about the planning process for the Gilston Area and subsequent development as it comes forward. The Council will use a Monitoring Framework and a series of measurable indicators to review progress[88].

267. The Monitoring Framework to be provided by EHC is expected to include a live web-based platform, regularly updated to keep the public informed about the progress of development in the Gilston Area. It will also include a record of what has been delivered and a framework for quality control of the development post construction[89]. This Monitoring Framework will assist in keeping the Neighbourhood Plan under review.

268. If necessary, a formal review of the Neighbourhood Plan or parts of the Plan will be undertaken to reflect changes in national, strategic or local policies affecting the Neighbourhood Plan area.

---

[88] Gilston Area Charter SPD (June 2020) para 9.3
[89] Gilston Area Charter SPD Executive Report (East Herts Council 2 June 2020) para 3.6 p.22

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Neighbourhood Plan Objectives

OBJECTIVE 1: CREATING DISTINCTIVE AND BALANCED COMMUNITIES

- Creation of seven separate and distinctive new villages, each informed by Garden City Principles, with a wide range of homes, employment, local retail, education and community facilities well connected by pedestrian, cycle and public transport routes and three existing villages and other groups of houses each with a distinctive character and identity.
- The location and extent of village development to be influenced by the existing landscape character, topography, heritage assets and respond sympathetically to existing settlements and communities.
- New villages are to be separated by natural green corridors and the boundaries to each village will generally have softer edges and lower density development to reinforce separation, with most developments fronting directly and overlooking the greenspaces.
- There will be a defined centre to each village of an appropriate size and scale which will provide the heart of community life.
- The village centres will generally be higher in density with a mix of uses including retail, community and education facilities and will be distinct from other parts of the village (middle and edge).
- The new villages will be designed around a network of streets, walking and cycling routes and greenspaces. The streets will be easily navigable and permeable with streets treated as vibrant and active spaces to promote inclusive communities.

OBJECTIVE 2: MAINTAINING DISTINCTIVENESS AND MANAGING THE IMPACTS OF DEVELOPMENT ON EXISTING VILLAGES

- Protect the distinctive character of existing villages in the Gilston Area and carefully manage the impacts of the development and construction on existing communities through protective green landscape and the timely provision of improved infrastructure (roads, public transport, etc.). Existing communities will be connected to new villages, and have easy access to greenspaces and community facilities through an extended network of pedestrian, cycle and public transport routes.
- The setting of Eastwick, Gilston and Hunsdon and other clusters of existing buildings will be protected through the creation of natural green corridors of sufficient width which will separate them from new villages. They will contain walking and cycling routes to connect the existing settlements with new villages in the Gilston Area and to the wider area including Harlow.
- The provision of necessary infrastructure will be phased and delivered in a timely fashion to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to accommodate the needs of new development and that existing communities are equally and adequately served.
- The extended network of pedestrian, cycle and public transport routes will connect existing communities to the new villages, and the facilities contained within them.
- It will be important to deliver early landscape improvements to strengthen the green buffers around the existing settlements.
- Construction and traffic impacts on existing communities will be minimised and mitigated.

OBJECTIVE 3: DELIVERING A WIDE CHOICE OF QUALITY HOMES

- A wide range of housing typologies and tenures (including market and affordable housing) will be provided in each village to create mixed and balanced communities.
- New homes will be designed and constructed to a high-quality standard. They will be flexible and adaptable to changing lifestyles, providing for a variety of needs.
- New homes will meet high standards of sustainability and internal space.

OBJECTIVE 4: CONNECTED TO, BUT DISTINCTIVE FROM, HARLOW

- The villages will be well connected to the infrastructure, facilities and employment of Harlow, but will be separate and distinctive in their spatial form and design and be clearly distinct from the predominantly urban development of the wider Harlow area. The development will respect the Garden Town strategy and vision and contribute to the wider aspiration for the sustained economic regeneration and growth of Harlow.
- Development in the Gilston Area will be physically separated from Harlow (save for the river crossings) by the open landscape of the Stort Valley, an amenity to be preserved for its natural and water-related character and shared by all communities subject to protection of its sensitive natural and wildlife environment.
- Land uses, streets and public spaces will be in line with the character of a village and not be inspired by urban places. Green landscape should be natural and characteristic of the countryside.

OBJECTIVE 5: PROMOTING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

- Each new village will be supported by an appropriate range of social infrastructure, including education, health, faith, open space, leisure, retail and community facilities alongside excellent links to the undeveloped open countryside especially that in community ownership and management.
- The development will encourage active lifestyles and social integration
- Each village will provide community facilities and local services relevant to the scale and size of that village.
- Opportunities for sport and recreation will be available for all age groups. Sport pitches will be provided in a variety of accessible locations, but should be designed to reflect the setting of their location. Ancillary works should accord with relevant policies, eg: AG3 and LA1.
- Accessible homes and neighbourhoods, and housing with care and support, will be integrated into the villages to enable people to live independently within their community.

OBJECTIVE 6: PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

- New development will promote sustainable transport choices, anticipate foreseeable changes in transport technology and mitigate the traffic impact of the development on existing communities and the wider transport network across the locality.
- The development will prioritise active travel and support smart mobility services, reducing the need to own a car.
- All streets and connecting roads within the villages will be designed to limit speeds and car use, will be pedestrian friendly and in character with the village concept. Streetlighting should be minimal and sensitive to the darkness of the countryside.

- New development will provide an extensive network of safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle routes well integrated with existing Public Rights of Way and routes within and beyond the site.
- Each village will be developed around a legible street hierarchy which connects new housing to the village centres and other facilities.
- New efficient and frequent public transport connectivity will link new and existing villages in the Gilston Area with surrounding areas, in particular Harlow Town Station and the town centre, with safe and direct cycle and pedestrian routes and smart cycle schemes and cycle parking.
- Electric charging facilities will be provided in all developments to encourage the use of low carbon emission vehicles.

OBJECTIVE 7: CREATING WALKABLE NEIGHBOURHOODS

- New development will be designed on active design principles. New homes will be located within short walking distance of open space, community facilities, shops, and schools to promote a healthy and active community.
- A balance of land uses will be provided in each village (relative to the scale, size and role of the village) to encourage people to minimise journeys for shopping, leisure, education and other activities.
- Safe and secure layouts will be created which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians and avoid street clutter.

OBJECTIVE 8: PROMOTING HIGH QUALITY DESIGN

- The development should create a strong sense of place and local character, drawing inspiration from the morphology and character of existing settlements in the Gilston Area and elsewhere in Hertfordshire.
- Durable and high-quality buildings and public spaces will positively respond to local landscape character and history. Clear and detailed design guidance will be developed for each village.
- Frontages should be interesting, attractive and designed to be part of a street or landscape space.
- The design of buildings and materials used will provide a balance and rich variety of material treatment in building design which draws on local materials and character, from traditional to contemporary, reflecting individual village character.
- New development will be appropriately scaled in relation to a village location and heritage and landscape elements.
- Buildings will be designed to front onto spaces to provide activation, security and surveillance. Back fences onto green areas for public use should be avoided.
- The potential to create open layouts with variable building lines integrated with landscaping should be explored. Development should follow natural contours and minimise cut and fill wherever possible.
- Smart Technologies for the home should be anticipated.

OBJECTIVE 9: A PROTECTED AND ENHANCED LANDSCAPE AND NETWORK OF GREEN SPACES

- The landscape setting of new and existing villages / settlements will be protected and enhanced through the creation of an extended network of accessible greenspaces, with the retention of existing trees, hedgerows and landscape features and enhancement of the water environment where possible. The network of green greenspaces will be linked by a series of environmentally viable green corridors promoting rich biodiversity appropriate to the area.
- The revised Green Belt will be protected and opportunities will be taken to improve access to the countryside.
- The designs for each village will identify long and short-range views to create visual connections with notable heritage and landscape features.
- The new villages will be designed to maximise access to open spaces and the wider countryside.
- Connectivity between all the different landscapes will be promoted both in terms of greater open access as well as the creation of connected green corridors for flora and fauna.
- Each village will have a range of multi-functional open spaces, local play areas, landscaping and SuDS carefully designed to be safe and pleasant, forming an essential part of the experience of living in the Gilston Area.
- Long term maintenance will be considered as part of the governance strategy, including measures to enable long term management by the community.

OBJECTIVE 10: PROTECTING AND ENHANCING NATURAL ASSETS

- Existing natural assets, especially woodlands and the water environment, will be retained and enhanced and incorporated as part of the integrated network of green and blue spaces. The topography of the site and existing landscape features will inform the configuration of the village layouts and assist in the sustainable management of surface water drainage.
- Key habitat features will be preserved and enhanced as a priority and new habitats created to improve biodiversity.
- Development will be designed to minimise impacts on areas of ecological importance through the creation of adequate separation distances and buffer zones. This should contribute to restoring the health of local rivers and their associated habitats.
- Early restoration and management of woodlands will be required. Existing woodlands will be enhanced and management plans developed at an early stage of the development process.

OBJECTIVE 11: PROTECTING AND ENHANCING HERITAGE ASSETS

- Existing heritage assets will be respected, protected and, in some instances, enhanced. This includes the historic Gilston Park House and associated Listed Buildings, the setting of Hunsdon House, Hunsdon Airfield, St Mary's, St Dunstan's and St Botolph's Churches, the local War Memorials, all Scheduled Monuments and the settings of other Listed Buildings. The proposed development layout and setbacks will incorporate appropriate mitigation measures to minimise impacts on the settings of local heritage assets alongside celebrating such assets for the qualities they will bring to the new communities as places of quality.

- Development in the Gilston Area will respect and have a positive relationship with its heritage assets. Historic boundaries, such as the former deer park pale and ditch will be respected, preserved and enhanced.
- The layout and design of new development will respond sensitively to the form, proportion, scale and character of heritage assets. Open spaces will be strategically positioned to preserve the setting of heritage assets.
- Development will be positioned and landscape designed to respect, protect, and in some instances, enhance, the setting and views to/ from heritage assets.
- Long term conservation and management plans will be developed for all heritage assets, in consultation with the local community as part of the planning process.
- Opportunities will be promoted to increase public appreciation and understanding of heritage through village design and the incorporation of appropriate references.

OBJECTIVE 12: ENGAGING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

- Establish early on the framework for governance arrangements for the long-term stewardship of the Gilston Area that will bring together the new and existing communities whilst ensuring the long-term protection of the greenspaces and their high quality management by the community.
- Local communities (existing and new) will be fully, meaningfully and collaboratively engaged with each stage of the development process.
- The undeveloped land to the northwest of the Gilston Area will be transferred at an early stage into community ownership via a community land trust or similar governance mechanism, supported by a comprehensive long-term management strategy.
- Through the Governance Strategy, measures will be put in place to ensure that the community will have the necessary means to secure the long-term operation and maintenance of community assets.

OBJECTIVE 13: ENSURING THE PHASED DELIVERY OF NECESSARY INFRASTRUCTURE TO MEET THE NEEDS ARISING FROM THE DEVELOPMENT

- New infrastructure will be designed to meet the comprehensive needs of the Gilston Area and will be phased to minimise and manage the impacts of the development on the local area. The provision of necessary infrastructure will be phased in relation to development to ensure there is adequate capacity to meet the cumulative needs of new and existing communities.
- Infrastructure requirements and the timescale for provision will be determined as part of the approval of future planning applications.
- Construction traffic will be managed to minimise impact on existing and new communities, with stringent operational management plans agreed prior to the commencement of development in a village.

Appendix 2 – Local Green Spaces and Locally Cherished Views

Table 1 - Proposed Local Green Space Designations [90]

Proposed Local Green Space	Description	Character	Proximity to Community	Special Qualities
a. Eastwick Wood (2.2ha) b. Black Hut Wood (5ha) c. Lawns Wood and Moat (9ha) d. Queens Wood (4.1 ha)	Four blocks of Ancient Woodland (Natural England) and designated Wildlife Site (District Plan) and World War II Airfield Defences (Scheduled Ancient Monument).	Local coppiced woodlands, in need of enhancement and conservation.	Extensive network of footpaths and bridleway connecting to Hunsdon, Widford, Eastwick and High Wych used by local communities for informal recreation.	Tranquil area of woodland in between arable farmland with buzzard, red kite, owl, deer, hare, orchids; important for wildlife in the open setting of the Hunsdon Plateau.
e. Eastwick Valley and Eastwick Hall Corridor (15.3ha)	Pastures and fields of Eastwick Hall, Wildlife Sites and 2 Moated sites - Scheduled Ancient Monuments.	Local semi-natural valley in between undulating fields.	Close to Eastwick, linking the village green to the countryside to the north and Hunsdon Airfield.	Historically significant: ancient lane linking to former location of Eastwick Hall and two moated sites.
f. St. Botolph's Churchyard (0.5ha)	Listed church building (Grade II*) and Listed tombs. Mature trees. Identified as a distinctive local asset in the Garden Town Design Guide.	Local semi-natural tranquil greenspace.	Close to Eastwick, and an important place of identity for the local community.	Historically significant, attractive image for the village. Tranquil and contemplative place.
g. Home Wood (15.1ha)	Block of Ancient Woodland (Natural England) and designated Wildlife Site (District Plan).	Local natural greenspace.	Interface between the Hunsdon and Gilston communities, in close proximity to both.	Tranquil, wooded, bats, buzzards, red kite, owl, hare and other wildlife habitat with wild animals, bluebells and orchids. Essential setting of St Mary's Church and Church Cottages.

---

[90] NB. No Site i. is identified for reasons of cartographic clarity

Proposed Local Green Space	Description	Character	Proximity to Community	Special Qualities
h. St Mary's Churchyard (0.4ha)	Wildlife Site Grade 1 Listed church and monuments. Identified as a distinctive local asset in the Garden Town Design Guide.	Local semi-natural greenspace and part of the heritage of the area.	At the core of Gilston community, history and identity. It contains old tombstones and ancient yew trees.	Historically significant, and part of the image of the Gilston community. Heritage interior of St Mary's Church valued locally. Tranquil space. Wildlife.
j. Golden Grove (11.2ha)	Ancient Woodland and designated Wildlife Site.	Local natural greenspace.	Close to existing community of Gilston and separating it from High Wych.	Wildlife habitat. Tranquil. Easily reached from Gilston and High Wyche via quiet lanes.
k. Gilston House Parkland and Lake (8.5ha)	Historically significant landscaped area (not listed) Site of Netherhall one of the original three farmsteads established by Geoffrey de Mandeville in 1135.	Local in character and part of heritage of area.	Privately owned. Part of the heritage setting and identity of Gilston.	Historically significant, landscaped and wooded area providing an essential setting to Grade 2* Gilston Park House, wildlife habitat.
l. The Avenue and Chase (2.8ha)	The Mount is a Scheduled Ancient Monument surrounded by a dry moat and the original site of Giffards Manor one of the three farmsteads established by Geoffrey de Mandeville in 1135.	Local in character and part of heritage of area.	Planted and wildlife habitat at the core of the Gilston area and in need of enhancement and valorisation.	Historically significant, strong local feature in need of enhancement. Wooded area and wildlife habitat.
m. Terlings Park (Southern Edge) (5.6ha)	Strip of woodland south of the parkland designated under District Plan Policy CFRL1 . Green space serving local community.	Local woodland providing the interface between Terlings Park and the river Stort towpath.	Enjoyed by residents of Terlings Park and wider Gilston community.	Mature trees, wildlife and tranquil space for community and passers-by.
n. Fiddlers Brook and Lowland Fens (8.5ha)	A designated Wildlife Site and partly designated Fen Habitat (Natural England), including a woodland strip.	Local natural greenspace.	Close to existing settlement of Gilston Lane, Pye Corner and Terlings Park with footpaths linking to the Stort Valley.	Provides habitat for wildlife and biodiversity. Tree planted buffer between roads and open greenspaces.

Table 2 - Identified cherished views

Proposed View	Type	Justification	Design considerations
A. Long distance view from the Hunsdon Plateau / Hunsdon Lodge Farm looking south	Long Distance – Wider HGGT view	Expansive appreciation of the Hunsdon Plateau – Identified by HGGT Vision	Seek to avoid foreground encroachment and location of prominent buildings in the view. Rooftops visible in between trees acceptable.
B. Long distance view from Harlow, marking the transition from urban to village setting	Long Distance – Wider HGGT view	Presentation of village character arriving from Harlow – Identified by HGGT Vision	Present an attractive village frontage, making clear character distinction from Harlow.
C. Long distance view from Parndon Mill across the Stort Valley	Long Distance – Heritage setting + Wider HGGT view	Setting of listed building and green separation from Harlow	Retain and enhance heritage setting and Stort Valley as natural greenspace separation from Harlow. Avoid foreground encroachment and mitigate full view of any buildings through appropriate planting. Rooftops visible in between trees acceptable.
D. Views to and from the Churches of St. Mary's, St. Botolph's and St. Dunstan and churchyards	Protection of heritage setting	Retain countryside setting and appreciation of Grade I and II Listed Churches	Avoid visual encroachment and location of buildings in full view. Rooftops visible in the distance in between trees acceptable. No floodlighting visible from these viewpoints.
E. Views to and from Gilston Park House and to Hunsdon House and their gardens	Protection of heritage setting	Retain countryside setting and appreciation of Grade I and II* Listed countryside manor houses	Avoid visual encroachment and location of buildings in full view. Rooftops visible in the distance in between trees acceptable. No floodlighting visible from these viewpoints.
F. Open view over Hunsdon Airfield from Acorn Street and Drury Lane and from the airfield towards St Mary's	Mid distance view over countryside	Important countryside frontage to the village. Retain view of countryside from the village through unbuilt gap in the access road to Hunsdon	Seek to avoid foreground encroachment and mitigate full view of any buildings through appropriate planting. Rooftops visible in between trees acceptable. Careful use of localised lighting to retain dark skies at night. Minimise visual impact of roads.
G. Open views across the airfield from the Airfield Memorial and hangars	Mid distance view over countryside	Retain view of countryside from a location of local significance. Retain setting of Grade II	Seek to avoid foreground encroachment and mitigate full view of any buildings through appropriate planting. Rooftops visible in between trees

Proposed View	Type	Justification	Design considerations
		and II* Hunsdon Lodge Farm	acceptable. Careful use of localised lighting to retain dark skies at night.
H. Open views out from Eastwick Road towards the Memorial	Mid distance view over countryside	Important countryside frontage to the village. Retain view of countryside from the village through unbuilt gap within the heart of Eastwick	Seek to avoid foreground encroachment and mitigate full view of any buildings through appropriate planting. Rooftops visible in the distance in between trees acceptable. Careful use of localised lighting to retain dark skies at night.
J. Open views towards Eastwick from the Stort Valley and from the lower part of Gilston Park	Mid distance view over countryside	Retain appreciation of the setting of Eastwick as a village surrounded by countryside from public RoW	Seek to retain appreciation of the setting of Eastwick through buffers, soft edges and lower buildings. Rooftops visible in the distance in between trees acceptable. Careful use of localised lighting to retain dark skies at night.
K. Rural views from Hunsdon Pound towards Brickhouse Farm House	Mid distance view over countryside - Protection of heritage setting	Retain countryside setting of Hunsdon Pound and Grade II Listed Buildings	Seek to avoid foreground encroachment and mitigate full view of any buildings through appropriate planting. Rooftops visible in the distance in between trees acceptable. Careful use of localised lighting to retain dark skies at night.
L. Open views towards Hunsdon Brook Fishponds	Mid distance view over countryside - Protection of heritage setting	Retain visual connection across towards the Fishponds from the edge of the development and protect the integrity of the heritage setting of the Hunsdon House complex	Seek to create a visual connection between new village and Hunsdon House complex. Avoid foreground encroachment into the rural setting of the Hunsdon House complex and location of buildings in full view. Rooftops visible in the distance in between trees acceptable. Careful use of localised lighting to retain dark skies at night.
M. Open views towards and from Home Wood and Hunsdon / Cock Robin Lane	Mid distance view over countryside	Retain appreciation of the setting the Airfield, bounded by woodland from public RoW	Seek to avoid foreground encroachment and mitigate full view of any buildings through appropriate planting. Rooftops visible in between trees acceptable. Careful use of localised lighting to retain dark skies at night.

Proposed View	Type	Justification	Design considerations
N. Open view from the exit of Terlings Park and Fiddlers Brook	Mid distance view over countryside	Important countryside frontage to the village. Retain view of countryside from the village through unbuilt gap within the heart of Eastwick	Seek to avoid foreground encroachment and mitigate full view of any buildings through appropriate planting. Rooftops visible in the distance in between trees acceptable. Careful use of localised lighting to retain dark skies at night.
P. Open view from the path by Channock Farm towards Golden Grove and High Wych	Mid distance view over countryside	Important countryside frontage to the village. Retain view of countryside from the village through gap by Channock Farm	Seek to retain long distance views over open land and appreciation of the setting of the villages (Gilston and future) through buffers, soft edges and lower buildings. Rooftops visible in between trees acceptable. Careful use of localised lighting to retain dark skies at night.

Appendix 3 - Defining Village Character

A3.1 - Locally Inspired Village Character

The purpose of this Appendix is to support Policy AG6 and provide details and photographic illustration of the key characteristics of the local area that can be used as inspiration. The Appendix is to be used as a source of design cues, which will need to be creatively reinterpreted in the masterplanning proposals, rather than copied or literally replicated. By choice, the Appendix makes no prescriptive recommendation and does not endorse any specific architectural style.

This Appendix provides an organised collection of 'design cues', articulated in the following sections:

- The typical structure of local villages
- The character of streets and lanes
- How views out towards the countryside are present within villages
- The character of the landscape within the village boundaries
- How local villages are seen and impact views from the countryside
- The importance of soft edges
- The sense of arrival and transition from countryside to village
- The character of local landmark buildings
- Typical height and massing
- Variety of alignment and built form.

The images and text are intended to describe the local villages and help designers and decision-makers understand what the community values and considers the essence of the morphology and character that makes their villages special. Use of local materials and building detailing is encouraged (see Policy BU1), but in itself this is not considered the principal element of local character, and no specific 'palette' is proposed.

The Appendix is to be used as a source of design cues, which will need to be creatively reinterpreted in the masterplanning proposals, rather than copied or literally replicated. Nevertheless, Policy AG6 requires that proposals demonstrate the extent to which the various components of character identified in this Appendix have been considered in the design.

Each section includes a text box intended to exemplify how local characteristics can be used as design inspiration, which is relevant and appropriate to new contemporary villages in accordance with the aims of Policy GA1, other guidance for the site and the Neighbourhood Plan. They are not to be interpreted as prescriptive guidance.

1.Much Hadham High Street

2.Hodgson cottages, Gilston

3.View of Eastwick

Respecting Morphology and Character

The District Plan and Concept Framework require new development at Gilston to be in the form of distinct villages, respecting local character and village morphology. Policy AG6 of the Neighbourhood Plan expects proposals to demonstrate that the best possible balance has been achieved between landscape, village separation, mass, density and the overall delivery of the aims of Policy GA1 of the District Plan.

This Appendix explores some of the aspects that the local community considers typical of local villages and which could be used as inspiration in future designs.

In the interest of retaining flexibility of development, the Neighbourhood Plan does not specify fixed development parameters, but expects this flexibility to nevertheless respond to local character. In the spirit of Policy AG6, where trade-offs are to be made (for example between green separation and height of buildings), these should be explored and agreed with the local community, as part of the Village Masterplan process.

Guidance on Density

The Neighbourhood Plan does not specify density parameters, which are expected to conform to guidance offered elsewhere:

- Policy HOU2 of the District Plan requires housing development to make efficient use of land. Proposals are required to demonstrate how the density of new development has been informed by the character of the local area.
- The Gilston Area Concept Framework identifies an illustrative average net density of 33 dwellings per hectare based on indicative masterplanning work undertaken (pg.108).
- The Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision (pg. 8) indicates densities between 20 and 55 dwellings per hectare. Density could vary, typically with intensity in the centre and greater fragmentation at the edge, to respond to the landscape setting. Further guidance is in the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Design Guide.

Examples from the Local Area

The villages used as reference in this Appendix have already been referenced in the Concept Framework and are drawn exclusively from the local area for the purpose of guiding 'local character', rather than generic good design principles, or generic 'villages'. The selection is drawn from:

- Group 1 Villages (the largest category of the District Plan) nearby: Hunsdon, Much Hadham and Puckeridge.
- Group 2 Villages in the immediate vicinity: High Wych and Widford.
- The local settlements of Eastwick and Gilston within the area itself.

A3.2 - Village Structure

Most local villages developed organically along a central countryside lane. Typically, development has been by progressive addition over time, without any significant visual focal point such as a market square, church or manor house. This has created an intricate structure of different neighbourhoods within each village: a characteristic that could be mimicked in new development.

Description of Local Character

Most local villages have a linear development structure, along a country lane turned into High Street linking a chain of settlements. The secondary street system is typically organic and originating from country lanes, while local streets are shorter and developed over time through infill and small additions, with a characteristic open structure, often terminating with views over the countryside. Larger villages, like Puckeridge, evolved to form a composite structure articulated along 2-3 organic linear spines. Large central places (like a market square or even a large central green) and rectilinear grid plans are absent in all local villages.
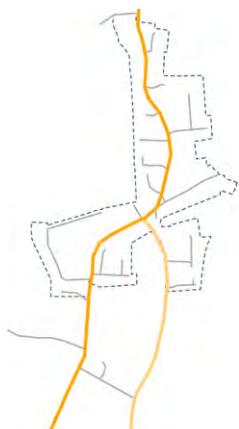
Hunsdon

- A central spine hosting most communal activities.
- An organically shaped green at a 4-way cross-roads along the main local route.
- Short local streets opening towards the countryside.
- Groups of houses connected by an organic / irregular grid.
- Landmark buildings set in landscape outside the village.

Much Hadham

- A central compact high street, with continuous frontages of varied architectural styles.
- Landmark buildings not creating local focal points, set back from the main spine.
- Very short secondary streets perpendicular to High Street.
- Semi-rural lanes parallel to the main spine at the outer edges.

Puckeridge

- Composite structure with multiple forks linked to successive expansions.
- No green or other public space.
- Local organic grid by addition of clusters of houses.
- Outer local streets opening towards the countryside.
- 1960s schools and leisure facilities at the edge of the village.

Drawing Inspiration from Local Character: Village Structure

Most local villages are smaller, after 500 years of development, than the new ones will be after 20-30 years. It is therefore reasonable to expect that the structure of the new villages will be more articulated. Nevertheless, cues could be appropriately taken from the local area, for example by:

1. Adopting a main spine as the principal alignment connecting across multiple villages through rural landscape: this could be an important organising element of the structure of each village and function as a 'high street' and central reference place, where the majority of community activities are located.

2. Retaining, as far as possible, the alignment of the existing country lanes to form a secondary street network linked to the countryside or creating additional secondary links, following topography and natural or rural features as cues for the alignment.

3. Expanding the local street network of the new villages as if it were 'by addition', forming connected pockets (future distinctive neighbourhoods), rather than large formal grids, which are more typical of urban development.

4. Avoiding long straight avenues and formal piazzas with focal views on landmark buildings, as this is more typical of market towns.

Much Hadham High Street

A3.3 - Street Character

Description of Local Character

Local streets and lanes are rich in landscape at the edges of the villages and attractively curving in the centres. They were built before the advent of highway codes and engineering standards: as a result, driving is constrained and needs to adapt to the location. Limited segregation of cycling and walking results in 'shared space' arrangements for most of the local streets.
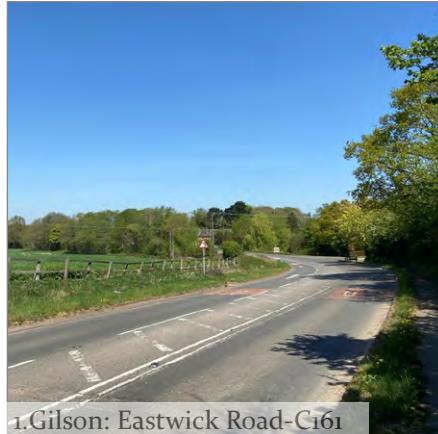

1.Gilson: Eastwick Road-C161

2.Puckeridge: Standon Hill-A120

Main roads outside villages

- Single carriageway with one wide lane per direction.
- Occasional walking path / cycle route in the verge and layby for buses.
- Minimal guardrails, street lighting and signage.
- Green semi-natural verges.
- Open views over countryside fields or enclosed in woodland.
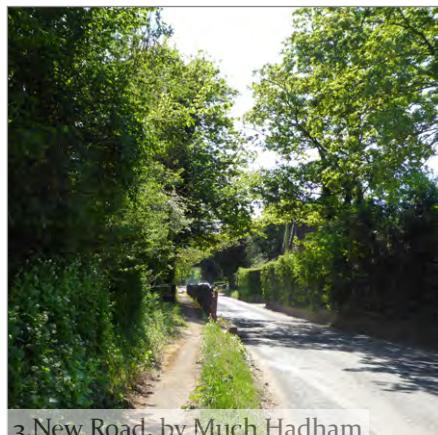
3.New Road, by Much Hadham
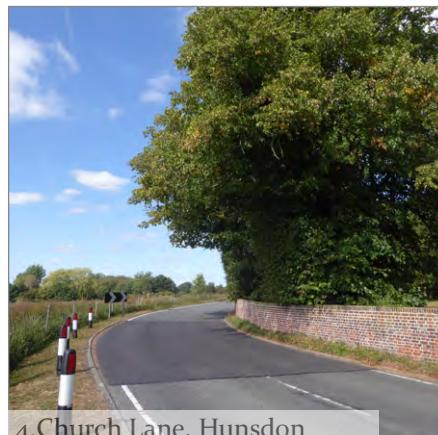
4.Church Lane, Hunsdon

Main lanes at the village edges

- Single carriageway with one narrow lane per direction.
- Occasional walking path in the verge and passing point.
- No street lighting. Minimal road marking.
- Green verges.
- Direct access to properties, mainly behind tall hedges or boundary walls.

5.Hunsdon High Street
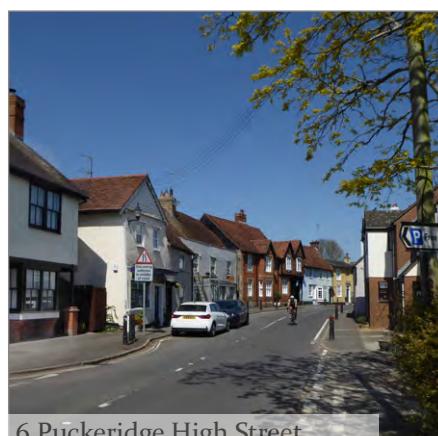
6.Puckeridge High Street

High streets

- Single carriageway with one lane per direction and side parking (encroaching in the road lane)
- Narrow footpath.
- No lighting posts.
- No verges or trees.
- Continuous frontages with narrow or no front garden space.
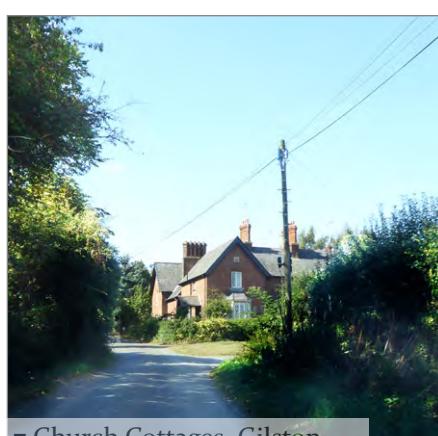
7.Church Cottages, Gilston

8.Cunningham Grove, Hunsdon

Other secondary streets / lanes

- Single carriageway / shared surface.
- No street lighting.
- Side footpath occasional and part of a green verge.
- Informal edge of carriageway with a green verge of trees or hedgerow planting.
- Informal landscaped front gardens.

Drawing Inspiration from Local Character: Streets and Lanes

With current highways standards, it will not be possible to replicate the appearance of the most attractive country lanes of the Gilston Area. Yet, inspiration can be usefully taken from local character, by:

1. Adopting informal layouts, with low speeds and reduced 'engineering' driven design in favour of locally adapted design that respects topography and landscape and encourage drivers to adapt their driving style to respond to the location.

2. Ensuring that there is abundant space for green verges, hedgerows and woodland-style planting at the edges or outside the villages, designing streets and frontages so that they are greener towards the edges (for example with deeper front gardens with trees and hedges) and more compact towards the centre.

3. Integrating cycle lanes and footways within the verges outside the villages and at the edges, while maximising opportunities for shared space arrangements in most local streets and neighbourhoods.

4. Minimising the visual impact of road signage, lighting and other street clutter.

Standon Hill Road - A120

A3.4 - Views out towards the countryside

Description of Local Character

Views out over fields and woodland are common from the village edges and occasionally from within the built-up area, creating a strong visual connection between the two.

1. Eastwick Road, Eastwick
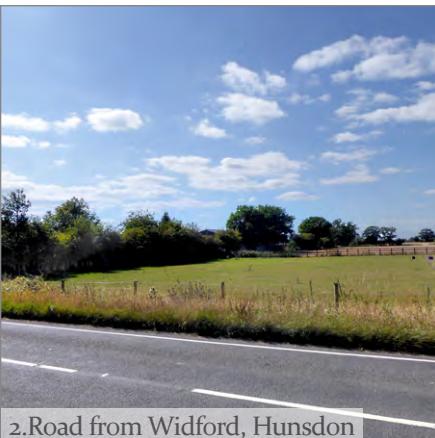
2. Road from Widford, Hunsdon

Foreground of fields on arrival

Outer access roads and lanes typically open up onto the outer fields as soon as the edge of the built area is reached, creating long distance views and visual connection with the countryside, with:

- Open views over fields.
- Grassed edge.
- No or see-through boundary fencing.

3. Eastwick Green and Memorial

View of the countryside from the heart of the village

In many cases, there are visual openings onto the countryside from within the village itself, either onto fields, like in Eastwick or onto woodland or mature hedgerow planting like in High Wych, through:

- Gaps in the building alignment.
- Inviting the countryside into the village.
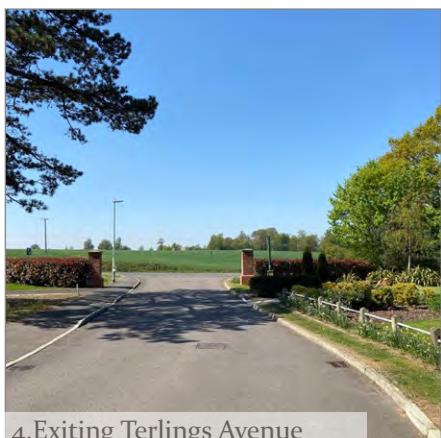
4. Exiting Terlings Avenue

5. Roseley Cottages, Eastwick

No transition between houses and countryside

The countryside typically stops at the road edge and housing boundary, with no semi-urban transition zones. Often, only a green interface of grass, trees or hedge planting delimits the property boundary.

Agricultural fields typically come close to the houses, without any recreational parkland as transition.

6. Holland's Croft, Hunsdon

7. Terlings Park, Gilston

Green at the end of the street

Secondary streets often adopt an open structure, opening views of the countryside or woodland at the end of many of the streets, sometimes even visible from the high street (Hunsdon, High Wych, Much Hadham)., with:

- Open street end, without perimeter buildings.
- Semi-natural planting transition and / or see-through fencing.

Drawing Inspiration from Local Character: Views out Towards the Countryside

Future villages will be larger than most local ones, and seeking opportunities for visual interaction between countryside and the built areas will be very important to retain the visual interaction between village and countryside. A range of opportunities could be explored:

1. Maximising open views across the countryside, whenever there is a foreground of fields (for example towards the powerlines) or a wider gap between villages.

2. Identifying and highlighting key viewpoints from inside the village out towards fields and creating visual gaps, penetrating as deep as possible into the village.

3. Bringing the feel of the countryside as close as possible to the built area, by retaining agricultural activity where practical or recreating the countryside through species-rich grassland and hedgerows.

4. Adopting in preference open street layouts at the edges, with views out over the fields at the end of the street.

New houses in Hunsdon

A3.5 - Landscape within the village

Description of Local Character

All local villages have rich biodiversity and are characterised by semi-natural landscape, many tall trees, mixed species hedges and flowering front gardens.

1.Within Widford

2.Gilston Park access lane
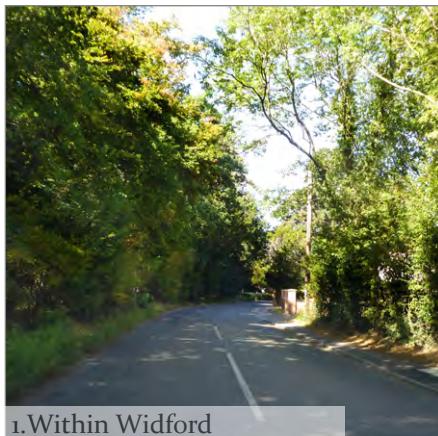
Enclosed woodland

Blocks of woodland or semi-natural wooded parkland are often enclosed within the perimeter of each village, enriching biodiversity and creating opportunities for wildlife.

- Retained older woodland within the built-up area.
- Establishment of new woodland or parkland; sometimes associated with larger properties (Gilston Park).


3.Church Lane, Hunsdon

4.High Street, Much Hadham

Countryside trees

Inside the villages, trees crowns and foliage dominate the built form, screening or framing the buildings through:

- Presence of many mature tall trees in green spaces, gardens, verges and hedges.
- Species are typical of the countryside, with few ornamental trees.

5.Gilston Park, Gilston

6.High Wych Road

Richness and variety

Within and around private properties, many species of trees are planted often close together to create a dense and rich mix of foliage and biodiversity, through:

- Use of mixed species, shape and colour.
- Dense semi-natural planting.
- Low intensity maintenance to promote naturalisation.

7.Pye Corner, Gilston

8.Eastwick Hall Ln., Eastwick
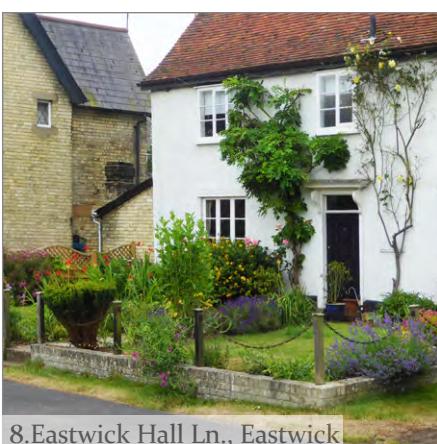
Green frontages

Front garden flowers, shrubs and climbers are typical of villages, and the local area is no exception:

- Soft landscape frontages with mixed species and flowers.
- Low boundary edge within the village and hedge planting towards the edges.
- Concealed car parking.

Drawing Inspiration from Local Character: Landscape within the Village

Landscape within local villages is very distinctive and derived by a combination of legacy countryside planting (woodland and hedgerows) and semi-natural, biodiversity rich planting within the village itself. Inspiration should be drawn by local landscape, by:

1. Maximising opportunity to increase biodiversity (and contributing towards net gain) within the villages by adopting species rich planting elements along boundaries, verges, ditches and SuDS.

2. Retaining and enriching the planting of blocks of woodland or landscape corridors running through the village, optimising semi-natural planting mixes and low maintenance plant assemblages.

3. Planting as early as possible, as tall as possible, structural groups of trees typical of the countryside within key areas of the new villages.

4. Establishing early in the development process some richly planted front gardens, with flowers, shrubs and climbers, along key axis or at key locations.

5. Encouraging new owners to contribute to the character of the village through their front gardens, for examble by establishing on site plant nurseries and providing practical advice.

Landscape in Terlings Park

A3.6 - Views from the countryside towards the villages

Description of Local Character

Most villages are set among trees and richer in plants and biodiversity than most of the agricultural fields. From a distance they are barely distinguishable from the blocks of woodland.
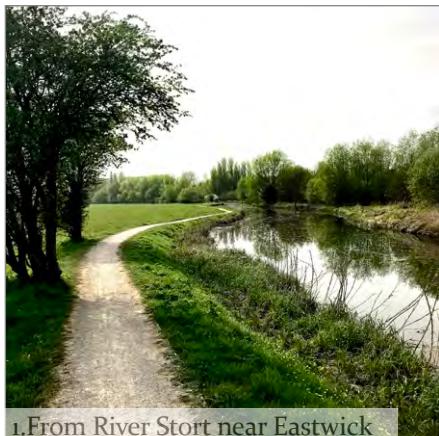
1.From River Stort near Eastwick
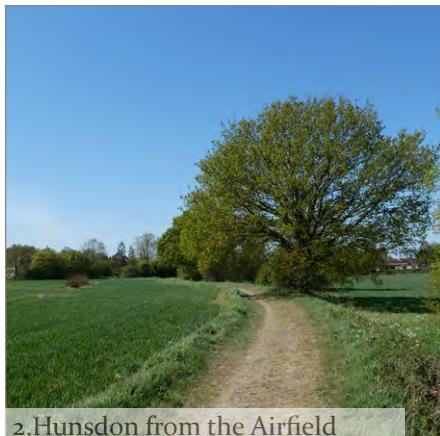
2.Hunsdon from the Airfield

Wider area

The slopes and tree belts typically hide the villages from each other and from other key locations.

From the towpath along the River Stort, less than 200m away, the buildings of Eastwick are invisible.

From the Airfield Memorial, the roofs of Hunsdon are barely discernible, as they are mostly lower than the crown of the trees.

3.From fields by Gilston House looking south

Gilston

The settlement of Gilston completely merges within the landscape. Even views from the fields of Gilston House do not reveal the roofs of Terlings Park: only the towers and facilities of Harlow beyond give indication of buildings being not so far away.

4.Long-distance view from the east

5.Short-distance from the north

Eastwick

Eastwick appears as a settlement among trees, with roofs and frontages barely appearing in between the trees and tall hedgerows, and more tree crowns rising above the rooflines behind the houses.

6.Long-distance looking north

7.Short-distance from the Airfield

Hunsdon

Hunsdon has a fragmented perimeter: entirely green in places and more built-up in others. In all cases, the built form is horizontal and interspersed with trees, either in front or beyond the houses or farm buildings.

Drawing Inspiration from Local Character: Views from the Countryside towards the Villages

Future villages will be larger and closer together than existing ones, and it will be more of a challenge to achieve the effect of 'village set amongs trees'. Nevertheless, opportunities could be explored to:

1. Strategically locate (and plant as early as possible) blocks of woodland or seminatural trees within the green corridors and buffer area to mimic the appearance of existing villages.

2. Carefully design the landscape from key points and Important Views to optimise the impact of the landscape over the built form.

3. Avoid prominent buildings or highly visible uses at the fringes of villages, especially towards open land and countryside footpath.

4. Distribute height and massing in a way that assists a soft transition between built-up areas and countryside, adopting fragmented perimeters with tall trees interspersed between the houses.

View of Eastwick

A3.7 - Soft edges

Description of Local Character

Village edges are typically green and informal, with abundant planting and a diverse roofline creating a soft transition between village and countryside.

1. Southern edge of Widford
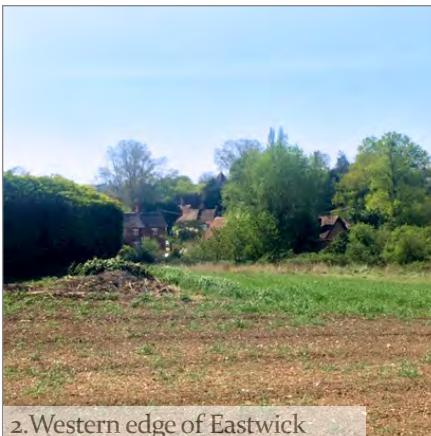
2. Western edge of Eastwick

3. New houses at the edge of Hunsdon

4. New houses, Gilston Park

5. Terlings from the air, Gilston

6. Edge of a South Cambridgeshire village

The importance of soft edges

Soft edges are a characteristic of villages, creating a narrow transition buffer from the built-up area of the village and the countryside.

Towards the edge, villages tend to become informal and open, with irregular rooflines and a belt of trees and tall shrubs interspersed between the buildings and along the boundaries.

This characteristic is not just a historic feature of the older parts of villages. The better and more appropriate designs for infill and new development adopted principles such as:

- Avoiding development all around the perimeter, leaving gaps and open views towards the countryside beyond.
- Informal building alignment and varied rooflines, so that a compact frontage is not formed towards the outside.
- Planting of tall trees in between buildings at the edge.
- Planting of shrubs and trees to create a leafy transition between the property boundary and the countryside land beyond.

Inappropriate urban edges

Hard frontages, aligned buildings and formal sequences of buildings or terraces are uncommon and unsuitable to village location, as they create an urbanised frontage that dominates the landscape and countryside.
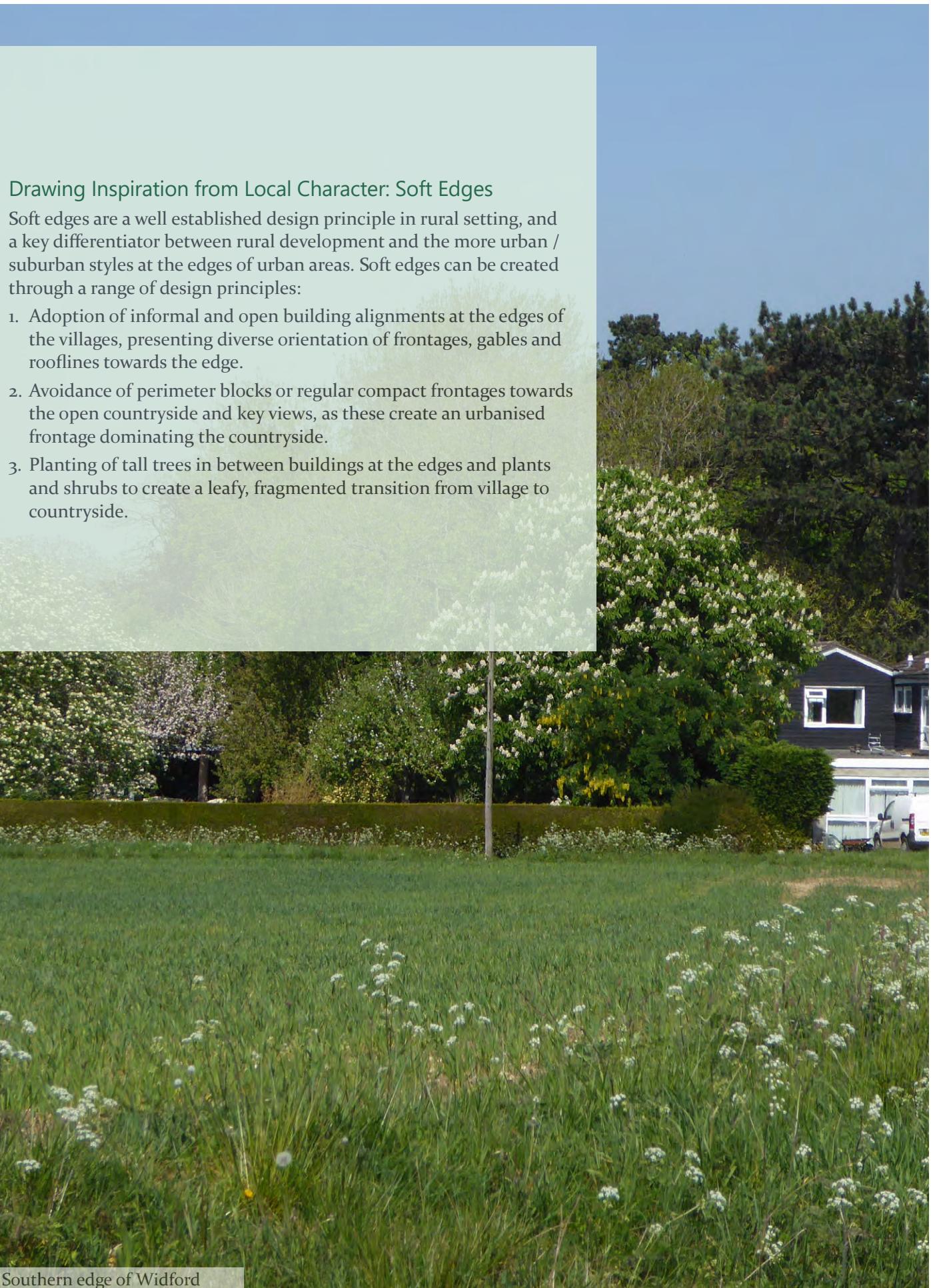
Drawing Inspiration from Local Character: Soft Edges

Soft edges are a well established design principle in rural setting, and a key differentiator between rural development and the more urban / suburban styles at the edges of urban areas. Soft edges can be created through a range of design principles:

1. Adoption of informal and open building alignments at the edges of the villages, presenting diverse orientation of frontages, gables and rooflines towards the edge.

2. Avoidance of perimeter blocks or regular compact frontages towards the open countryside and key views, as these create an urbanised frontage dominating the countryside.

3. Planting of tall trees in between buildings at the edges and plants and shrubs to create a leafy, fragmented transition from village to countryside.

Southern edge of Widford
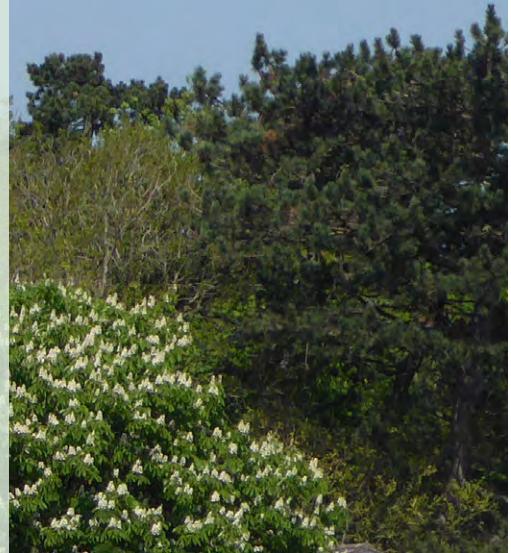
A3.8 - Sense of arrival / Gateways

Description of Local Character

Arrival into local villages is generally understated: the side of the first houses appear in between trees and edges almost unexpectedly, without any gateway buildings.

1.Puckeridge from A10

2.Much Hadham from north

Main characteristics

Arrival into a village, even from a main road, such as the arrival from the A10 into Puckeridge, is never marked by the built form:

- Trees and hedges increase in variety and colour.
- The road narrows and loses its formal definition. Road markings and signage are less prominent.
- Buildings appear sideways, without creating a focal point.

3.Eastwick - Eastwick Road

Eastwick

Arrival into Eastwick from the A414 is through an informal lane and fields, the village appearing in between trees in the distance.

No single building dominates the view. The Victorian Old School building on the left appears sideways with its decorated eaves and interlocked roofs.

4.Gilston - Eastwick Road

5.Gilston - from Home Wood
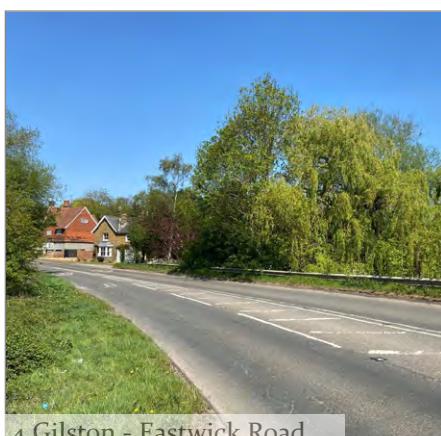
Gilston

Gilston does not have a compact village form, and no clear arrival point either. Arriving from Harlow via Eastwick Road, the village is announced by buildings isolated by landscape gaps: the Dusty Miller pub, the trees and entrance to Terlings Park and the first houses of Pye Corner.

From Home Wood, St Mary's Church spire blends between the trees.

6.Hunsdon - B180 from Stanstead Abbotts

Hunsdon

Arrival along Hunsdon Road, from either north or south, is marked by trees and buildings replacing the open views of the fields, without any significant gateway point or building.

Arrival from Church Lane is gradual, with Hunsdon House barely noticeable, and St Dunstan just appearing in between trees. Fields and scattered housing follow, before reaching the core of the village.

Drawing Inspiration from Local Character: Sense of Arrival / Gateways

Gateways and landmark buildings at the entrance of a site are typical of of 'estate' development, and alien in villages that developed organically over time. The design of a transition through landscape into the new villages could consider:

1. Gradual increase in the variety and colour of trees and planting, creating a diverse and visually rich landscaped 'gateway', rather than a built one.

2. Sideways orientation of the first buildings along the main spine, preferably set back behind planting and hedges, so that buildings and houses start to appear in between the foliage, rather than assert themselves.

3. Delicate and fine detailing in the first buildings at the edges, as a way to replicate the subtle uniqueness of key buildings like the Old School House in Eastwick or the pubs of the villages.

4. Changes to the access road upon arrival, as it turns into an attractive local street, where slow and attentive driving and streetscape quality are even more important.

Arrival in High Wych

A3.9 - Landmark buildings

Description of Local Character

The historic development of the area is marked by the large country houses set in woodland and hunting grounds: this relationship has not been lost and should be safeguarded for the future.

1.St Mary's from Home Wood
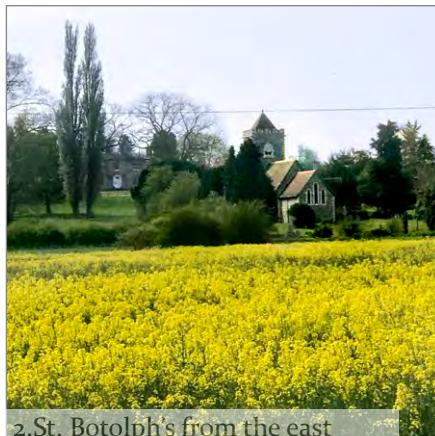
2.St. Botolph's from the east

3.Gilston Park House from west

4.View from the park

5.View of St. Dustan's and Hundson House from Lords Wood
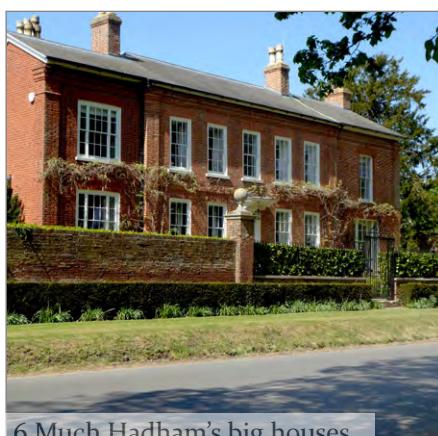
6.Much Hadham's big houses
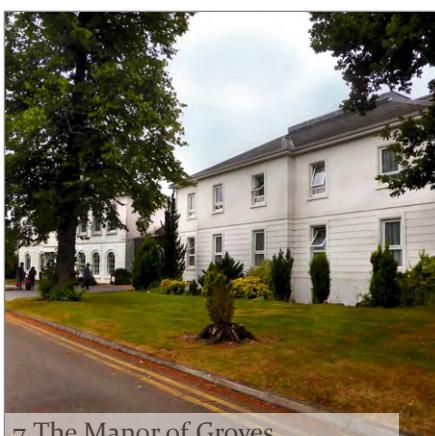
7.The Manor of Groves

The character of local landmarks

Unlike the settlements grown around a central market or a manor house, local villages have no landmark buildings in a prominent focal position within the built area.

The houses of the gentry gave origin to the villages, but these developed at some distance and out of sight, so that the main house could retain its connection with the landscape and with the hunting grounds. Large churches were built near the main house, and therefore outside the village.

- The imposing scale and proportions of Gilston Park House and Hunsdon House are the most conspicuous of the area.
- They are set in landscape and hidden from public view, only visible in the distance from the countryside.
- The churches are mostly part of the landscape scenery, just emerging in between the trees, visible through fields and countryside, but discreetly positioned when travelling by road.
- Other large houses, built by wealthy owners as seasonal country residences, mostly sought a private and secluded position.
- Where located within the village, landmark buildings are simply part of the street scene, without pronounced gateways or features.

Drawing Inspiration from Local Character: Landmark Buildings

The design of future villages should respect and retain the significance of the existing landmark buildings, and take inspiration from the distinctive way local landmarks relate to the landscape. Design suggestions could include:

1. Ensuring that prominent major landmarks are significant in the village for their function as well, and are designed to excellent standards of architectural quality, innovation and exemplary sustainability.

2. Establishing very strong integration between major built landmarks and landscape, safeguarding the predominance of landscape over built form from a distance, and without compromising the role, setting and presence of the historic manor houses (Gilston Park House and Hunsdon House).

3. Avoiding introducing major 'urban' landmarks, forming formal gateways, urban vistas or frontal focal points in a piazza.

4. Introduce local landmarks as element of 'surprise' within the organic layouts of the villages to include schools, village halls and other community or special buildings.

Gilston Park House

A3.10 - Height and massing

Description of Local Character

The villages are typically formed by two storey houses with a steeply pitched roof, lower than the trees. Larger buildings are mostly articulated in multiple volumes.
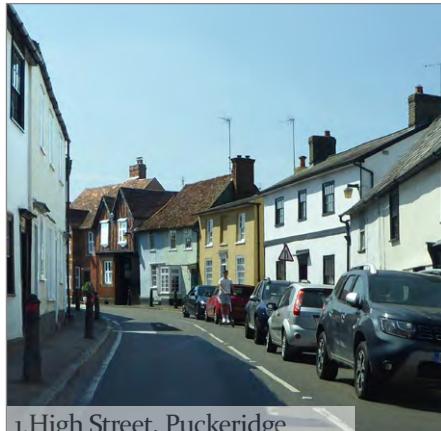
1.High Street, Puckeridge
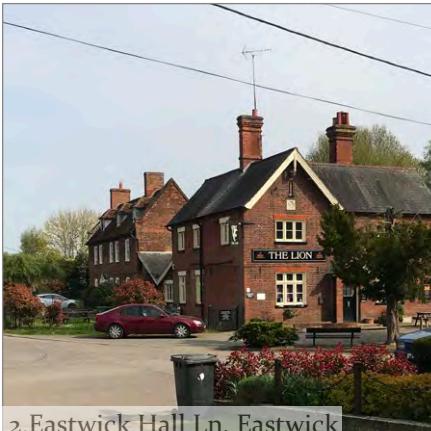
2.Eastwick Hall Ln, Eastwick

Along the main spine

The high street is often the most compact street of the village, with buildings, forming a continuous but varied 2-storey frontage with no front gardens.

Larger buildings are mostly set back by a landscaped front space and have vertically proportioned gables, often on the main frontage.

3.Pye Corner, Gilston

4.Gilston Lane, Gilston

Individual houses

Single or semi-detached houses are:

- Typically 2-storey high, with a steep pitched roof set low on the upper floor.
- Volumes are articulated, reducing the visual mass of the frontage.
- Tall decorative chimneys and gables with windows and decorative features are common.

5.Bell Lane, Widford

6.Hunsdon Lodge Farm

Larger blocks

Larger blocks are not common, unless they are farm buildings. Where present, they are generally:

- Informally arranged.
- Formed by a horizontal bar interrupted by front triangular gables.
- Set back from the roads and interspersed with trees.

7.Terlings, Gilston

8.Gilston Lane, Gilston

Three floor buildings

Three-storey buildings are uncommon and generally:

- Are located on secondary streets and / or well set back from the roads.
- The third floor is often part of the roof space, or other devices have been used to reduce the visual impact of height and bulk.

Drawing Inspiration from Local Character: Heights and Massing

Exploration of the distribution of heights and massing in future villages will need to be very carefully undertaken, to retain 'human scale' and visual presence of trees above and in between the roofs. Overall buildings may be between 2 and 4 storeys in height – taller buildings may be acceptable in appropriate circumstances, including taller buildings which will be considered on a case by case basis.

Local character prompts a range of design choices:

1. Compact village centres and high streets with a variety of buildings of modest height, with diverse frontages and rooflines.

2. Larger buildings positioned to minimise visual impact, set back from the street or located on secondary streets, so that their presence is blended in between buildings of prevalent modest height.

3. Common features include visual devices to de-emphasise the bulk and massing of larger buildings: front triangular gables, interlocked volumes and roofs, informal clustering around a private or semi-private yard (as in farm buildings).

4. Avoiding linear arrangements of bulkier buildings, taller gateway buildings and any other layout that gives prominence to mass and height.

Hodgson Cottages, Gilston

A2.11 - Variety of alignment and built form

Description of Local Character

As the villages were built over time and by successive addition, they display a great variety of buildings, and only small groups of similar houses.

1.Hunsdon High Street

2.Hunsdon, Drury Lane corner

Similar buildings - variety of details

In places, like the centre of Hunsdon, the buildings have similar colours and materials. In this case, diversity is shown in the irregular alignment, the different roof shapes and the details: doors, windows, eaves.

3.Station Road, Puckeridge

4.High Road, High Wych

Varied alignment and form

In most part of local villages, buildings of different times and form are mixed together. Within the variety there has been a consistent use of materials and forms.
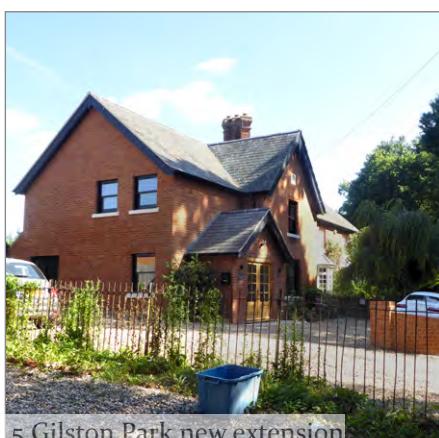
5.Gilston Park new extension

6.Hunsdon recent houses

New buildings with local references and variety

Successful new additions to the villages typically present:

- Richly planted frontages, including trees.
- Simplicity of forms.
- Height and massing comparable to those of the local area.
- Range of locally inspired building materials.

7.Beaulieu Park, Chelmsford
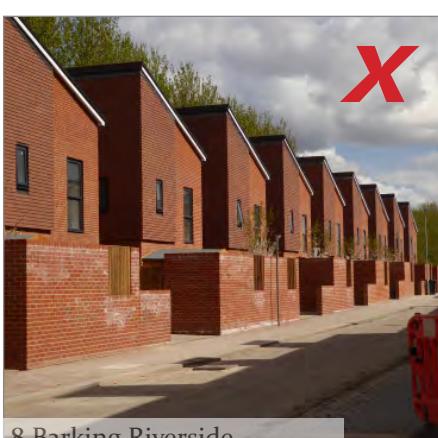
8.Barking Riverside

Inappropriate formal or repetitive units

Certain building formats, even at appropriate densities, can create an urban or suburban character, inappropriate in the Gilston Area. Inappropriate features include:

- Rows of repeated units.
- Formal alignments.
- Hard front gardens.
- Flat roofs.

Drawing Inspiration from Local Character: Variety of Alignment and Built Form

Future villages will not have the benefit of successive additions over centuries of development, and history as a source of variety and architectural interest. Nevertheless, uniformity of layout and repetition of building 'templates' is typical of suburban extensions and out of character in a village environment. Future designs should attempt to build-in variety through:

1. Informal layouts (see also A4.2: Village Structure) with only small-scale clusters of buildings of a similar design, even if overall character is consistent across each village. Rows of repeated units and formal alignments should be avoided.

2. Creating opportunities for 'customisation' from the outset, encouraging residents and owners to adopt variations in the palette of details, in frontages and front gardens.

3. Adopting simplicity of forms that can be enriched through planting and local detailing, with a range of locally inspired building materials.

4. Avoiding hard front gardens, flat roofs and cladding panels that are commonly associated with urban character and architecture.

High Wych

Appendix 4 – Priority Projects

Priority projects identified by the local community as necessary to mitigate the impacts of development:

- Early planting of buffers and landscape maintenance within and around existing settlements to strengthen their landscape setting.
- New planting and maintenance of the existing lanes including Gilston Lane, Church Lane and Eastwick Hall Lane to improve safety and strengthen local character.
- Enhanced facilities, churchyard and setting for St Mary's Church, Gilston; St Botolph's Church, Eastwick and St Dunstan's Church, Hunsdon and provision of good access to them for faith and community activities and improved kitchens and toilets to serve an expanded community.
- Early restoration and maintenance of watercourses, paths and holloways including hedgerows in Cock Robin Lane (a historic link from Eastwick towards the Airfield).
- Early planting and maintenance of the existing woodlands within the Gilston Area.
- New design and landscape setting for the Gilston War Memorial, whose setting and significance will dramatically change as a result of the development.
- Comprehensive facilitation of the upgrade of infrastructure provision in the existing settlements as new provision is made for the new villages: this would be particularly important in respect of utilities and telecoms.
- Enhanced access to pedestrian and cycle routes and to bus services, extended to the existing communities, consistently with LTP4.
- Comprehensive study of changed drainage patterns as a result of the development and SuDS networks designed to address existing problems with surface water runoff.
- Safety improvements to Church Lane and Acorn Street from the A414 to the centre of Hunsdon impacted by new traffic generated by the development.
- Comprehensive improvement of any downgraded Pye Corner and Eastwick Road to create a safer and welcoming pedestrian space.
- Improvements to Burnt Mill Lane including provision of appropriate lighting, footpath improvements and prioritisation measures for pedestrians and cyclists to provide a safe route to Harlow Station.
- Improvement to the existing village halls to serve the whole community, alongside new provision.

Other priority projects identified by the local community which could be supported through collaboration with the developers of the new villages include:

- Shared surface / public space design in Eastwick Road between the Red Lion Pub and the War Memorial.
- Creation of green / play spaces in the existing communities and an all-weather multi-use play area in Hunsdon.
- Enhancement of the facility called the Dell in Hunsdon.

Appendix 5 – Key Evidence

The Neighbourhood Plan draws from extensive evidence base prepared for the East Herts District Plan and preparation of the Concept Framework. It also draws from national and regional guidance. The list below summarises the key evidence documents that have informed the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan

1. National Planning Policy Framework, Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government (June 2019)
2. East Herts District Plan (October 2018)
3. East Herts District Landscape Character Assessment SPD 2007
4. Affordable Housing SPD, East Herts Council (Draft for Consultation, January 2020)
5. Open Space, Sport and Recreation SPD (Draft for Consultation), East Herts Council (October 2019)
6. Gilston Area Charter SPD, East Herts Council, East Herts Council (June 2020)
7. Hertfordshire County Council Local Transport Plan 2018-2031 (LTP4, July 2018)
8. Hertfordshire Infrastructure & Funding Prospectus 2018-2031, Hertfordshire County Council 2018
9. Statement of Common Ground between East Herts Council and Places for People and City & Provincial regarding GA1 (the Gilston Area) Ref: ED160 (November 2017)
10. Gilston Area Concept Framework (July 2018)
11. Gilston Area Concept Framework- Executive Report (East Herts Council, 12 June 2018)
12. Gilston Area Concept Framework- Council Report (East Herts Council, 25 July 2018)
13. Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision (November 2018)
14. Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Design Guide (November 2018)
15. Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Sustainable Transport Strategy (Draft for Consultation, January 2020)
16. Harlow and Gilston Infrastructure Delivery Plan (April 2019)
17. Harlow and Gilston Strategic Viability Assessment Report and Appendices (April 2019)
18. Harlow and Gilston Garden Town 'How To' Guide for Planning Obligations, Land Value Capture and Development Viability (Guidance Note: 01/20190417, Nov 2018)
19. Harlow-Gilston Garden Town Water Cycle Study Update (2018) and Garden Town Water Cycle Study Addendum (2018)
20. Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Board Stewardship Principles (July 2019)
21. Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Employment Commission Draft Report, (February 2020)
22. Sustainability Appraisal of Pre-Submission District Plan, AECOM (September 2016)
23. Sustainability Appraisal Report Addendum, Main Modifications to District Plan, AECOM (January 2018)
24. Sustainability Appraisal of Strategic Spatial Options for West Essex and East Herts, AECOM (September 2016)
25. East Herts Green Belt Review, Peter Brett Associates (September 2015)
26. Updating the Overall Housing Need- Based on 2014 based projections for West Essex and East Herts, ORS, (August 2016)

27. The Gilston Area Settlement Appraisal, East Herts Council 2016
28. East Herts Strategic Sites Delivery Strategy, PBA (September 2015)
29. Village Hierarchy Study, East Herts Council (August 2016)
30. Gilston Area: Heritage Impact Assessment (Montagu Evans, October 2017)
31. Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) ORS (September 2015)
32. Housing Needs Survey, DCA 2014
33. Delivery Study for Harlow and Surrounding Area: Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2018)
34. East Herts Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2017)
35. Gilston Area Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy, Places for People (May 2014)
36. East Hertfordshire Level 1 and Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2016) and Addendum, JBA Consulting (March 2017)
37. Draft Final Water Resources Management Plan 2020-2080, Affinity Water (June 2019)
38. Wildlife Sites Inventory for East Herts, Hertfordshire Biological Records Centre, 2013
39. Habitat Regulations Assessment, AECOM (September 2016)
40. River Stort Catchment Management Plan www.riverleacatchment.org.uk/index.php/river-stort-home
41. Natural England - ENRR526 Accessible Natural Greenspace
42. Nature Nearby' Accessible Natural Greenspace Guidance, Natural England (March 2010)
43. Biodiversity Strategy for Development, Places for People & Provincial Properties (December 2016)
44. Open Spaces and Sports Facilities Assessment Technical Study- Background and Context, Nortoft 2017
45. East Herts Assessment of Sports Facilities, East Herts Council 2011
46. Air Quality Planning Guidance Document, East Herts Council 2016
47. Green Infrastructure Plan, Land Use Consultants (March 2011)
48. Living with Beauty: report of the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission (January, 2020)
49. South Cambridgeshire District Council Village Design Guides (2020)
50. Pevsner Architectural Guides: Buildings of England (Hertfordshire) 2012
51. Historic England National Heritage List for England https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list
52. Gilston Area Heritage Desk Based Assessment, Places for People and City & Provincial Properties (December 2016)
53. Gilston Area Village 7 Employment Land Review (Savills, October 2019)
54. Guide 9: Long-Term Stewardship. Garden City Standards for the 21st Century. Practical Guide for Creating Successful New Communities, TCPA (December 2017)
55. Hunsdon Neighbourhood Plan - http://hunsdonneighbourhoodplan.org.uk/
56. Historic Census Data - Vision of Britain www.visionofbritain.org.uk/census
57. ONS Housing Statistics / NOMIS, Local Area Profiles Census 2011
58. Groundwater www.gov.uk/guidance/groundwater-source-protection-zones-spzs
59. Geographical spatial data:
    District Plan designations – East Herts District Council
    Landscape and environmental designations – Natural England (magic.defra.gov.uk)
    Heritage – Historic England, National Heritage List
    Public Rights of Way – Government Datastore (data.gov.uk)

Appendix 6 - Glossary

The terminology used in the Neighbourhood Plan reflects the terminology used in the East Herts District Plan, the Gilston Area Concept Framework and the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision.

Term	Definition
Accessible Natural Greenspace	Natural England's 'Nature Nearby: Accessible Natural Greenspace, March 2010' includes the following definitions: Accessible Natural Greenspace (ANG) **Accessible greenspace** –available for the general public to use free of charge and without time restrictions (although some sites may be closed to the public overnight and there may be fees for parking a vehicle) and compliant with the requirements under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA 1995). **Natural greenspace** – Places where human control and activities are not intensive so that a feeling of naturalness is allowed to predominate.
Accessible Natural Green Space Standards (ANGst)	ANGSt recommends that everyone, wherever they live, should have an accessible natural greenspace: • of at least 2 hectares in size, no more than 300 metres (5 minutes walk) from home; • at least one accessible 20 hectare site within two kilometres of home; • one accessible 100 hectare site within five kilometres of home; and one accessible 500 hectare site within ten kilometres of home; plus • a minimum of one hectare of statutory Local Nature Reserves per thousand population.
Affordable Housing	Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market, including provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. Social rented: housing is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. Affordable rented: housing is let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible and subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent. Intermediate housing: homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans). Starter Homes: new homes only available for purchase by qualifying first-time buyers.

Allocated Site	To deliver the development strategy and meet its housing requirement the Council allocates land for particular types of land use, such as housing, as part of its planned approach to managing development and shaping the future of the district's towns and villages. Infrastructure providers can then take the planned growth of a settlement into account when delivering their services.
Ancient Woodland	An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD
Biodiversity	The whole variety of life encompassing all genetics, species and ecosystem variations, including plants and animals.
Biodiversity Net Gain	Biodiversity Net Gain is an approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before, by which developers are encouraged to bring forward schemes that provide an overall increase in natural habitat and ecological features. Biodiversity Net Gain is part of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, Para 170(d) and Para 175(d)). The draft Environment Bill (2020) includes a requirement to deliver a mandatory 10 % biodiversity net gain to be maintained for at least 30 years.
Bus Rapid Transit	A fast and efficient priority bus service, located along the Sustainable Transport Corridors, making use of the latest transport technology.
Central Stort Crossing	This connects the A414 Eastwick Road with the A414 Edinburgh Way via Fifth Avenue. The crossing will be located to the immediate west of the existing crossing.
Character	A term relating to the appearance of any rural or urban location giving places their own distinct identity.
Climate Change	Long-term changes in temperature, precipitation, wind and all other aspects of the Earth's climate. Often regarded as a result of human activity and fossil fuel consumption.
Climate Change Adaptation	Adjustments to natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic factors or their effects.
Climate Change Mitigation	Action to reduce the impact of human activity on the climate system, primarily through reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
Community Boundary	Definition of boundary to identify extent of existing community to include separate groups of buildings outside settlement boundary. Applies to existing village communities, whose integrity should be protected, particularly the dispersed settlement of Gilston. It does not imply that development within its boundary is typically acceptable (unlike a Village Boundary).
Community Trust Open Space Land	The area allocated in the key Diagram for the Gilston Area in the District Plan as open space as part of wider managed parklands including continuing farming. This area will remain undeveloped, with the exception of a small number of buildings associated with its recreational use. Policy GA1 states that a community land trust, or other governance mechanism as appropriate, will be established in order to deliver local ownership and management early in the overall development programme.

Community Sport	A mix of formal and informal sports areas, including; playing fields, cricket club, bowls club, tennis club, trim trail, climbing walls, sports courts, etc. Some community sports facilities are to be shared with schools
Concept Framework	Descriptive planning document produced by the developers and formally endorsed by the Council to provide a benchmark for future development in accordance with Policy GA1.
Countryside	Common term that indicates the open space outside cities and urban areas, made up of agricultural and natural land as defined by Natural England (ENRR526 Accessible Natural Greenspace). Natural land includes tracts of countryside (woodland, scrub, heathland, meadows and marshes) which through appropriate management support essentially wild plants and animal assemblages, and the less intensively managed parts of parks, sport pitches, churchyards and cemeteries.
Density	Density is a calculation of the number of houses that may be built on a particular piece of land. It is usually expressed as the number of dwellings per hectare (dph). Net density includes directly associated uses, such as local access roads, private garden space, car parking areas, incidental open space, landscaping and children's play areas, where they are provided. Gross density includes large-scale open space, main roads, schools, hospitals, and other major supporting infrastructure.
Eastern Stort Crossing	This connects the Eastern Access to the Site, and Eastwick Road (at Pye Corner), to the A414 Edinburgh Way (eastern end) via River Way.
Enterprise Zone	A designated geographical area in which state incentives such as tax concessions and simplified local authority planning procedures are offered in order to encourage business investment.
Flood Plain / Floodplain	Generally low-lying areas adjacent to a watercourse, tidal lengths of a river or the sea, where water flows in times of flood or would flow but for the presence of flood defences.
Garden City	Concept of urban design and planning developed by Ebenezer Howard and his contemporaries that sought to create settlements that combined the positive aspects of both the town and countryside
Gilston Area	Gilston Parish, Eastwick Parish and that part of Hunsdon Parish including the proposed Gilston Area allocation (Policy GA1) as defined in the East Hertfordshire District Plan and corresponding to the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.
Green Belt	A designated tract of land around urban areas, designed to: • Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas • Prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another • Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment • Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns • Assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land

Green Corridors	The landscape separating villages which will reinforce the distinctiveness of individual villages and their relationship to the countryside and create rich areas for wildlife habitats and informal recreation.
Green Infrastructure Network	Green Infrastructure is a strategic network of multi-functional greenspace, both new and existing, rural and urban, which supports natural and ecological processes and is integral to the health and quality of life in sustainable communities. It provides habitats for and aids migration of wildlife, flood water storage, urban cooling and local access to shady outdoor space as well as creating attractive spaces for recreation.
Green Wedges	Green wedges comprise the open areas around and between parts of settlements, which maintain the distinction between the countryside Green Wedges and built up areas, prevent the coalescence (merging) of adjacent places and can also provide recreational opportunities.
Group 1,2 and 3 Village	The District Plan identifies three types of village: Group 1 Villages: villages where development for housing, employment, leisure, recreation and community facilities will be permitted, in order to help sustain vital and viable rural communities. Group 2 Villages: villages where limited infill development, together with small-scale employment, leisure, recreation and community facilities will be permitted. Group 3 Villages: villages where limited infill development identified in an adopted Neighbourhood Plan will be permitted
Heritage Asset	A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
Historic Parks and Gardens	A park or garden of special historic interest. Graded I (highest quality), II* or II. Designated by Historic England
Infrastructure	Provision of utility services, transport, schools, open space, community, health and leisure services. See also Green Infrastructure.
Infrastructure Delivery Plan	The Infrastructure Delivery Plan establishes a framework for private and public investment. It identifies as far as possible the infrastructure needs of new development, and the associated costs, phasing, funding sources and responsibilities for delivery.
Listed Building	A building of special architectural or historic interest. Listed Buildings are graded I, II* or II with grade I being the highest. Listing highlights what is significant about a building or site, and helps to ensure that any future changes to it do not result in the loss of its significance. Designated by Historic England.

International, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity	All international sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, and Ramsar sites), national sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and locally designated sites including Local Wildlife Sites
Land Value Capture	Mechanisms that enable the recovery and reinvestment of a percentage of the uplift in the value of land associated with granting planning permission. Current methods focus on linking the delivery of infrastructure to the contribution of funds from landowners/developers.
Landscape Buffer	Areas surrounding existing settlements and other clusters of buildings comprising natural greenspace and a mixture of new planting and management of existing vegetation which protect the setting of existing settlements and retain sensitive views and existing landscape features.
Local Green Space Designation	The Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities. Established by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
Local Nature Reserve	Non-statutory habitats of local significance designated by local authorities where protection and public understanding of nature conservation is encouraged. (See also Site of Nature Conservation Importance or Site of Biological Interest).
Local Transport Plan (LTP)	A statutory document which sets out the strategy for the management, maintenance and development of the area's transport system. This five-year integrated transport strategy is prepared by local authorities in partnership with the community, seeking funding to help provide local transport projects. The Plan also sets out the resources predicted for delivery of the targets identified in the strategy.
Locally Important Biodiversity Sites	Normally smaller, isolated sites, including trees, hedgerows or ponds that may not be designated but make a contribution to local or wider ecological networks.
Long-term Stewardship	East Herts Council and the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Board accept that new facilities will not be sustainable without well organised management structures supported by consistent revenue streams. Community assets must be actively managed and properly looked after in perpetuity through the creation of Community Trusts or other governance mechanisms.
Masterplan	A plan that shows an overall development concept that includes urban design, landscaping, infrastructure, service provision, circulation, present and future land use and built form.
Micro-hub	An interchange point within new neighbourhoods between the Bus Rapid Transit and the cycling and walking routes of the Super Greenways. Often found at local centres, small local centres and other intersections, it will provide facilities such as cycle hire, repair and parking and live updates for the Bus Rapid Transit service

Mitigation	The term can be used to refer to measures to reduce the incidence or creation of negative impacts.
Mixed Use Development	A development which contains a variety of uses such as businesses, housing, leisure and recreation. Such developments contribute towards building sustainable communities by increasing accessibility to a range of activities and promoting non-car modes of travel.
Modal Shift	A change of transport mode (for example, car, bus, train, bicycle, walking). In planning terms this usually implies a shift away from the private car to more sustainable transport modes, whether passenger transport or walking and cycling.
Open Space	All space of public value, including public landscaped areas, playing fields, parks and play areas, and also including not just land, but also areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs, which can offer opportunities for sport and recreation or can also act as a visual amenity and a haven for wildlife.
Permeability	The extent to which an environment allows for a choice of routes both through and within it, and allows opportunities for movement.
Planning Condition	A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission (in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) or a condition included in a Local Development Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.
Planning Obligation	A legally enforceable obligation entered into under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal.
Plateau	A landscape of fairly level high ground, which in rural areas tends to be a prominent landscape feature, often supporting a unique biodiversity.
Primary Road	A publicly maintained road, together with footways and verges that connects all villages.
Public Open Space	Open space, including not just land, but also inland bodies of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs which offer important opportunities for sport and outdoor recreation and can also act as a visual amenity. In some instances, Public Open Space can be designated by a council, where public access may or may not be formally established, but which fulfils or has the potential to fulfil a recreational or non-recreational role (for example, amenity, ecological, educational, social or cultural usages).
Public Realm	Those parts of a village or town (whether publicly or privately owned) available, for everyone to use. This includes streets, squares, parks, etc.
Rights of Way	A strip of land occupied or intended to be occupied by particular public use facilities, like roads, railroads, and utility lines.
Rural	The term used to describe the landscape setting of villages where farmland and woodland is used to reinforce the separation of development and maintain village character and to highlight the distinction from urban areas. Used interchangeably with countryside to describe landscape character.

Rural Area beyond the Green Belt	This East Herts specific policy operates a similar level of restraint to Green Belt. The Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt covers two-thirds of the District not covered by Green Belt, outside designated settlement boundaries.
Secondary Streets	Secondary streets are considered support streets for the primary ones, meant to provide access between residential development.
Section 106 Agreement	A legal agreement under section 106 of the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act. Section 106 agreements are legal agreements between a planning authority and a developer, or undertakings offered unilaterally by a developer, that ensure that certain extra works related to a development are undertaken.
Setting of a Heritage Asset	The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are non-subsidiary, independent firms which employ fewer than 250 employees.
Strategic Green Corridors	Semi-natural open space generally associated with existing landscape/ecological features
Strategic Landscape Masterplan	The requirement for a Strategic Landscape Masterplan to be produced and approved before the first Village Masterplan is established in the Gilston Area Charter SPD (June 2020). This will establish a spatial strategy for comprehensive development of the entire Gilston Area in one overarching plan.
Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)	Documents which add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.
Sustainable Development	A widely used definition drawn up by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987: "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."
Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)	An alternative solution to the direct channelling of water. SuDs are designed to control the run-off from a development; to improve the quality of the run-off; and to enhance the nature conservation, landscape and amenity value of the site and its surroundings.
Sustainable Transport Modes	Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, low and ultra-low emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport.
Sustainable Transport Corridors	A series of strategic corridors in the Garden Town providing high quality public and active travel options, connecting neighbourhoods quickly with key destinations such as the town centre and rail station.

Transport Assessment	A comprehensive and systematic process that sets out transport issues relating to a proposed development. It identifies what measures will be required to improve accessibility and safety for all modes of travel, particularly for alternatives to the car such as walking, cycling and public transport and what measures will need to be taken to deal with the anticipated transport impacts of the development.
Utilities	Utilities include services provision such as electricity, gas, water, cable and telephone.
Village	A residential community with local community facilities, shops and workspaces, which is set in rural countryside and is physically and visually distinct but in this context, will maintain strong links with surrounding villages and the Garden Town.
Village Boundary	A boundary drawn as part of the District Plan process, usually quite tightly, around the main built up area of a village, within which development may be allowed in principle.
Village Buffers	Natural & semi-natural greenspace creating recreational opportunities in a more naturalistic setting, as well as valuable habitat provision and screening/buffer to neighbouring villages and the wider countryside
Village Centre	A predominantly social space (paved or green) that provides a meeting/focal point for the village close to key amenities such as the school, shops, etc.
Wildlife Sites	Designated land of local and regional importance defined as discrete areas of land considered to be of significance for their wildlife features. They are the most important places for wildlife outside legally protected land such as SSSIs

HEGNPG

hegnp.org.uk