Draft Dacorum Strategic Design Guide

Part 1: Design Process

April 2020

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DRAFT

This document was developed collaboratively by

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Contents

Introduction

Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) has developed this guidance to promote the highest quality new development which supports sustainable, inclusive and attractive places and integrated communities.

Dacorum's Design Aspirations

Significant planned growth in Dacorum Borough will lead to the development of new communities and economic activity, enhancing housing choices and providing new opportunities for local residents. Some of this growth will be accommodated in the Borough's existing settlements, and some will be delivered on adjacent greenfield sites, including land formerly in the Green Belt.

Today's new development needs to factor in significant and transformative future changes to the ways in which we live, work, shop, travel and spend our free time - prompted by climate change, economic fluctuations, advances in technology and demographic shifts.

DBC has declared a Climate Emergency and is committed to fostering genuinely sustainable communities that support a zero carbon future. Sustainability needs to come in the form of technology - including leaving space for adaptation to technologies which have yet to be developed - as well as through planning of compact, well-integrated mix-use environments.

Meeting these challenges requires a strategic approach to design at all scales, embracing nationally-recognised best practice whilst responding to the characteristics and features which are unique and distinctive to Dacorum. The Strategic Design Guide provides clear guidance to landowners, developers and their design teams on how they can achieve this.

The Dacorum Strategic Design Guide

This guide outlines Dacorum's strategic design expectations and a design process which should be used to achieve these through new development of all scales. It also provides detailed guidance on the design of employment uses.

Context

The Strategic Design Guide was prepared through collaboration with St Albans City and District Council (SADC) and Herts IQ, in recognition that the features which make the local area distinctive are not contained by administrative boundaries. Collaboration to prepare this guidance also provides the basis for a joined-up approach to the design of the new development area of Hemel Garden Communities, which comprises land split roughly equally between DBC and SADC. The final documents have been published separately by the two Local Authorities to enable customisation to their respective planning policies, however the contextual baseline and strategic aspirations of the guidance remain shared.

In accordance with national-level planning policies and guidance, this guide ensures clarity on design expectations and how this will be demonstrated and tested through the development management process.

Planning Status

The Strategic Design Guide is a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The guidance supports the following Local Plan policies: [insert list of policies]

The Guide will be used by:

• Applicants and their design teams preparing development proposals;
• Planning officers, to negotiate with applicants/agents as proposals are developed, to offer pre-application advice at the outline and reserved matters stage, and to assess the quality of development proposals when determining planning applications;
• Elected Councillors when assessing development proposals in advance of and at planning committee;
• Statutory consultees providing commentary on applications;
• The Dacorum Community Review Panel when reviewing development proposals at pre-application and application stage; and
• Local communities as they are consulted on applications.

Scope

The Strategic Design Guide applies to planning applications and sites across Dacorum of all scales, for which it covers the strategic objectives and design process to which DBC expects designers to adhere.

Part 3 of the Guide provides detailed guidance for the design of employment areas and business and industrial units, which are of strategic importance to the local economy. DBC is in the process of preparing detailed guidance for other types of applications, to complement this Strategic Design Guide.

Structure of the Guide

There are three parts to the Strategic Design Guide:

- Part 1: Design Process (this document) sets out an approach to the design process that the Council will expect applicants to follow. This provides a route for planning applicants and their design teams to understand the specific character of this part of Hertfordshire and apply a character-led approach to design.

- Part 2: Design Principles establishes design principles to which all development proposals in the Borough are expected to adhere so that they contribute to sustainable growth and continue Dacorum's tradition of distinctive, attractive and successful places.

- Part 3: Employment Uses Guidance provides guidance to secure contemporary employment development which adheres to best practice environmental sustainability measures, offer a diverse and flexible range of commercial spaces and public spaces and streets which encourage healthy working lifestyles and social interaction.

How to Use This Guide

The three-stage design process - observing, evaluating, making - supports meeting the design principles for high quality, inclusive and sustainable places in a way which reflects and responds to Dacorum's local character.

Design Process

The guidance advocates a structured design process based on three key stages:

- Observing Place – Observing and understanding the site and its broader context
- Evaluating Place – From the features observed, identifying which will be most influential to design
- Making a Place – Applying the identified features to design at all scales and stages, from a site-wide masterplan through to increasing levels of detail, to create distinctive places.

These stages provide a route toward developing a local vernacular-led design proposition based on analysis of the built and natural context of a development site.

Applicants and their design teams should use the guidance methodically, but it is important to emphasise that successful design outcomes will result from an iterative, not linear design process. Reviewing and revisiting what is observed at the start of the design process and re-evaluating its significance at each design stage will allow design solutions to be tested and refined in order to achieve a robust set of proposals.

As well as detailing the design process, this document includes guidance on the type and quality of outputs that the Council will expect design teams to produce and evidence through pre-application and application processes. These will depend on the nature and scale of proposals, and should be agreed during pre-application discussions.

Relationship with Part 2 Design Principles

Part 2 of the Strategic Design Guide establishes design principles to which all development proposals in the Borough are expected to adhere. Principles are arranged into categories, each of which links strategic aims to a checklist of practical, measurable principles which designers can implement and planning officers can assess.

Following the design process outlined in this document will help to ensure that the resulting designs meet these strategic aims.

Principle of 'Comply or Justify'

The Strategic Design Guide is to be used following a principle of 'Comply or Justify'. Deviation from the principles and design processes set out will only be permitted with robust and evidence-based justification for doing so. In such cases, developers and their design teams must demonstrate that their proposals will deliver the very highest quality design that aligns with the aims of each Design Principle theme.

Proposals that do not comply with these principles and fail to provide compelling justification, including evidence and options analysis, will be refused.

Key

The guidance contains clear pointers towards issues to consider, additional resources and key outputs and 'supplementary' outputs, marked in the document as shown below.

Consider

Additional Resources

Required Outputs

Supplementary Information

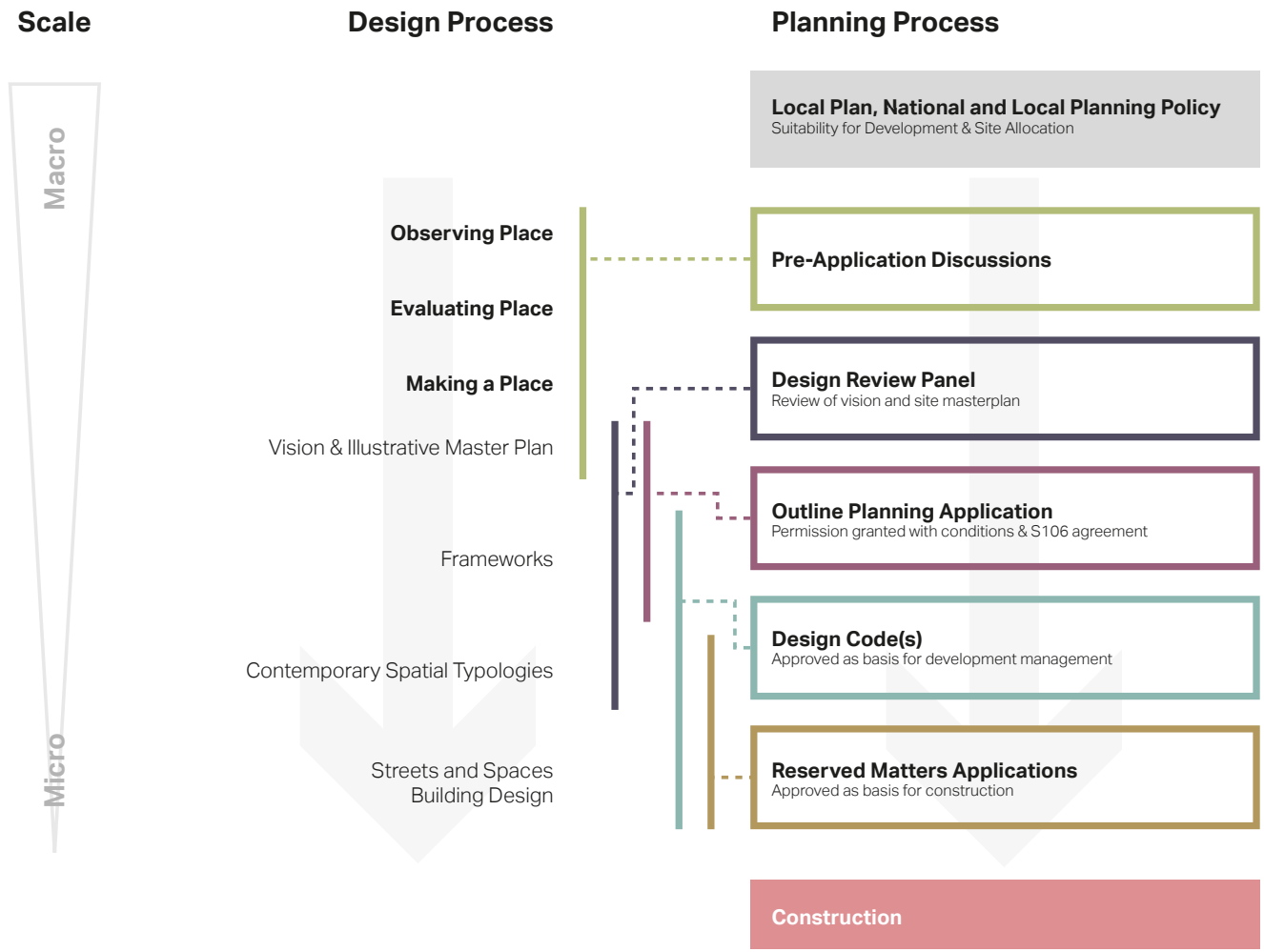
How to Use This Guide

The Design Process guidance is a tool spanning the pre-application and application stages in planning.

The Guidance within the Planning Process

The diagram to the right provides a broad overview of the planning process for strategic sites and highlights how the design process stages and outputs typically relate to each stage.

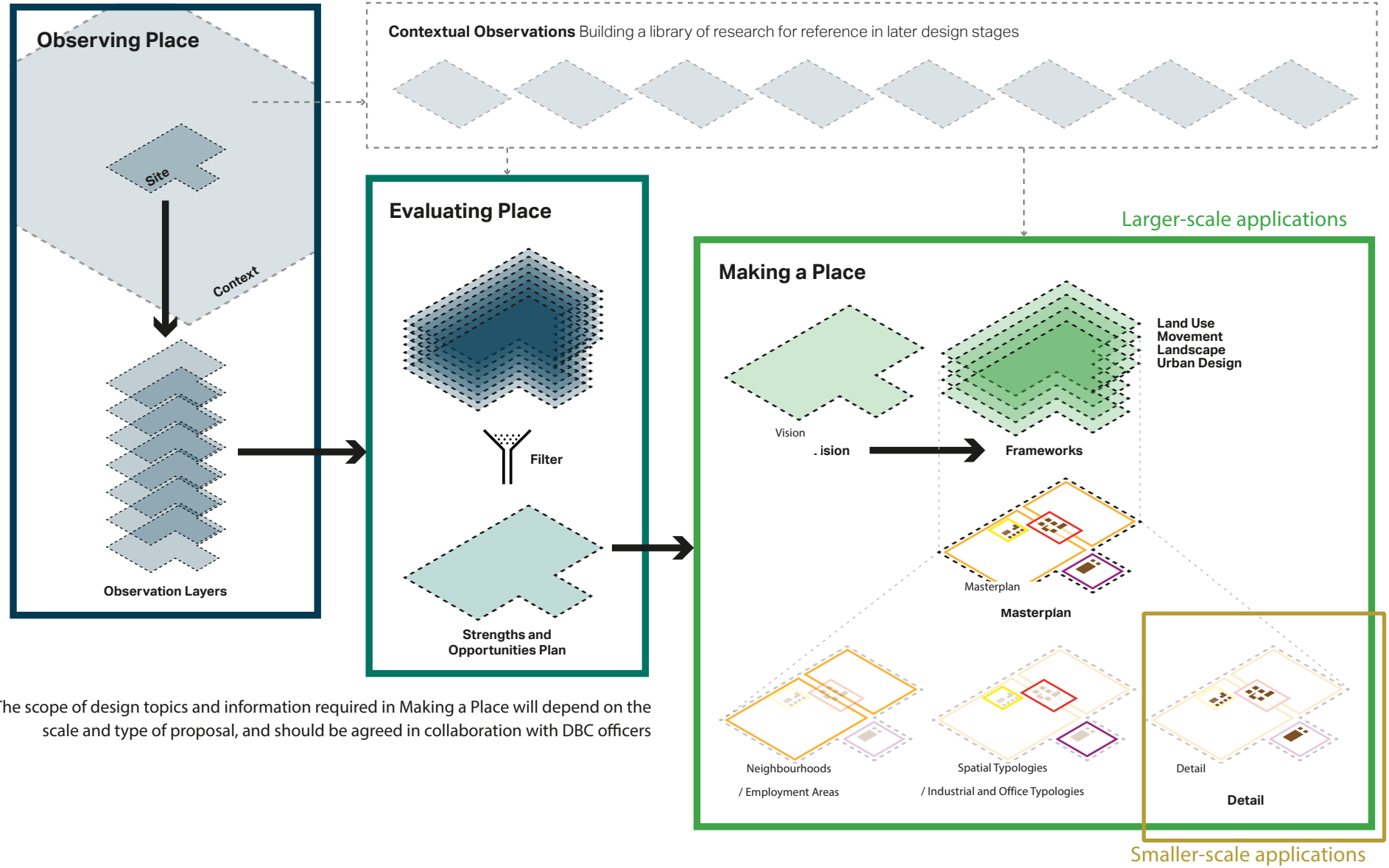
The diagram represent the process for strategic sites, which is the most complex, and Outline and Reserved Matters Applications have been separated out. This guidance also applies to Full Planning Applications which combine the two types of applications, and smaller scale applications.



Relationship between the design process and the planning process at DBC

The Design Process

The three key stages of the design process are detailed in the figure. Successful design outcomes involve using the guide's three-stage design process iteratively with close working between designers and and the Local Authority.



The scope of design topics and information required in Making a Place will depend on the scale and type of proposal, and should be agreed in collaboration with DBC officers

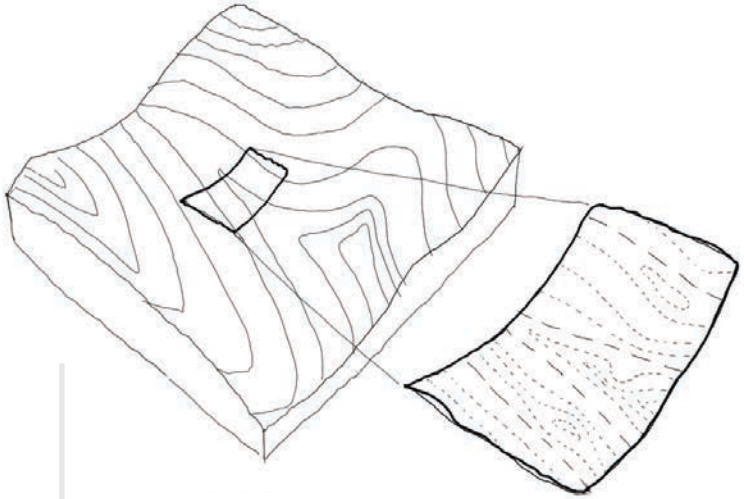
Hemel Hempstead's old town High Street is an urban environment with a characteristic townscape, but remains closely connected to the landscape with level changes and views to the river valley bottom below.

Observing Place

Introduction to Observing Place

The process for developing proposals for a successful place grounded in a strong narrative starts with a clear and detailed understanding of the characteristics of a site and its wider context.

Observing Place sets out a series of key topics for consideration and ways to observe site-specific features. These are a starting point and the topics listed are not exhaustive.



- Topography
- Green Infrastructure
- Water
- Historic Legacy
- Connectivity
- And more...

Wider Context 1

Analysis begins with an understanding of the wider context in which the site sits.

Site Context 2

Observing then continues with a detailed understanding of the features and assets of the site, and how they are treated in the wider context. Layers of information are built up on plans.

Required Outputs 3

A consistent set of analysis drawings which illustrate findings from observations should be prepared.

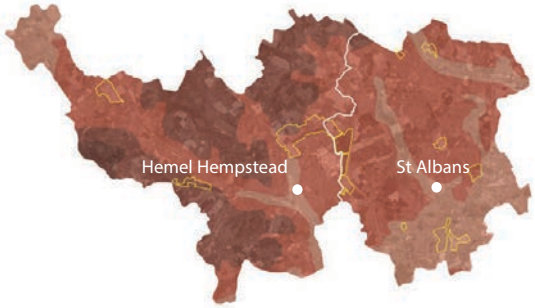
Some observations may also be supplemented by additional outputs, as detailed in the headings within this chapter.

Context: Topography and Geology

Topography, geology and soils have played a key role in shaping the natural and built environments across the districts over time, with historic land uses and settlement patterns often strongly reflective of the lay and make-up of the land sitting beneath. Understanding these elements is important to enable place-specific design proposals to be developed.

Topography

The districts show considerable variation in topography character. Steep valleys with plateaus are common in the west. This transitions to flatter ground in the south east. The Chiltern Hills form a natural boundary to the north and west. Rolling countryside cut through by river valleys connects the two areas.

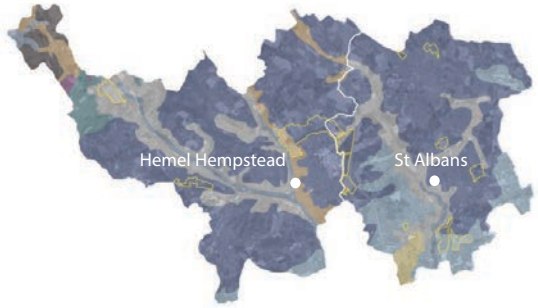


Geology

The geological make-up of the districts reflects the topography very closely. In the west chalk bedrock with boulder clay surface deposits creates steep valleys. A clear divide in geology running along a NE-SW line near St Albans reflects a similar sharp change in topography. Below this line gravels and alluvial deposits dominate.

Soils

The soils which cover Hertfordshire today are of two kinds: alkaline or neutral. Chalky soils predominate in the north and east of the county (more or less acid) and chalky and clay soils cover the centre and west of the county. Domesday settlement numbers were higher in the north and east with more land ploughed in these areas than to the west.



Additional Resources

Landscape Character Assessments

Guidance at different scales on key landscape characteristics are available.
National / East of England / Hertfordshire

Observing: Topography and Geology

1 Wider Context

Understand

- Topographical features and composition
- Underlying geology
- Soil types
- Inter-relationships between soil types, geology and topographical features

Examples of What to Observe

- Broad topographic elements such as valley corridors, plains, ridgelines and hilltops
- The composition of geology and soil types in relation to topography

2 Site Context

Understand

- Topographical features and areas of the site
- Origins of topographical features
- Inter-relationships between soil types, geology and topographical features

Examples of What to Observe

- Valley sides and bottoms
- Plateaus
- Ridgelines
- Undulating ground
- Sudden features
- Changes of bedrock and surface material
- Soil changes

3 Outputs

Key Outputs

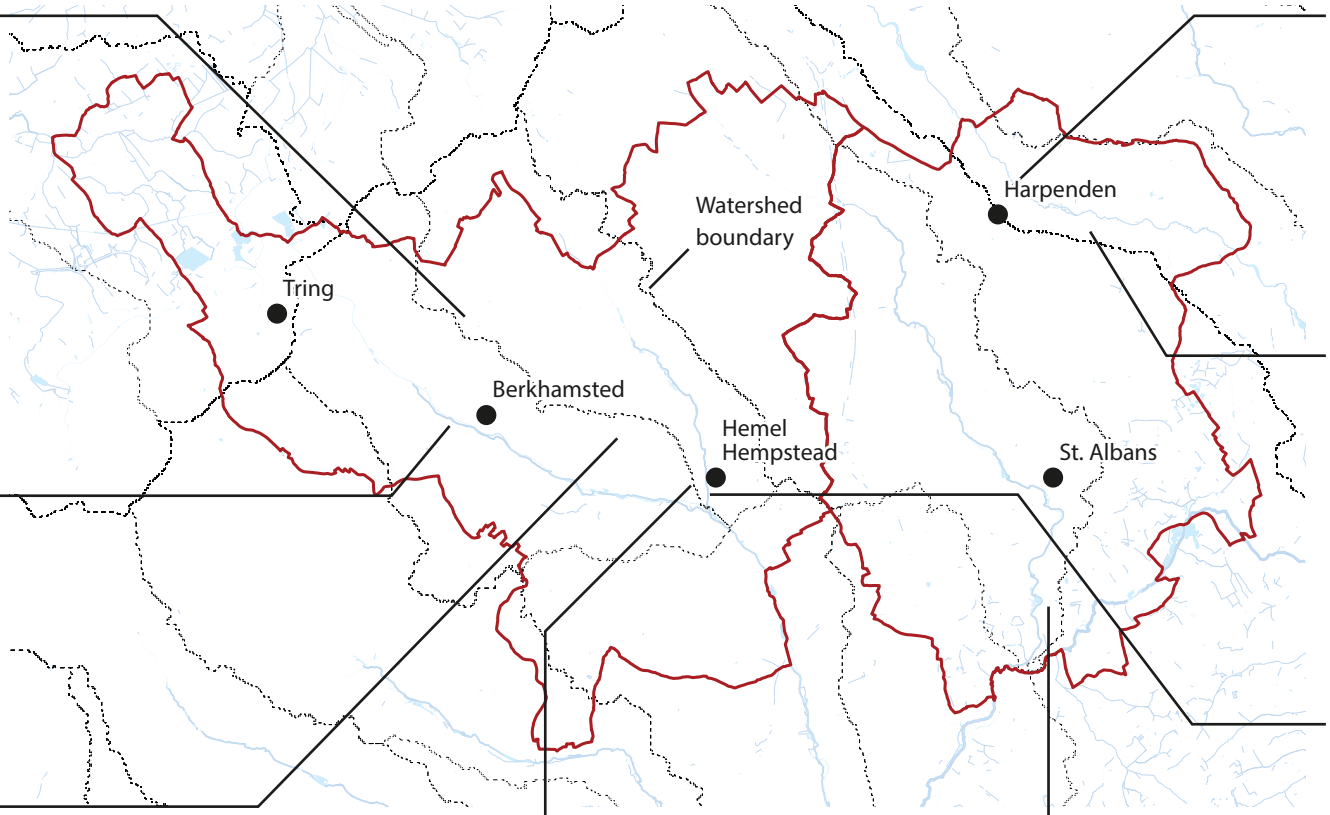
Context plan
Site plans of topography, geology and soils
Site photographs
Sections
Surveys

Supplementary Information

3D models
Contextual studies of the site topography and geology

Context: Water

Water, in its natural form or altered by human development, is a key influence on landscape and urban form. Natural water movement and its use in the wider context should be observed at an early stage of design.



Chalkland water
Much of Dacorum and the north-west of St Albans District is on chalk bedrock, which results in little water visible on the surface except in large watercourses. Seasonal streams and springs are present across the landscape, and surface run-off on clay soils may be an issue.

Grand Union Canal
Running NW-SE through Dacorum, the canal is a historic highway that is now a leisure attraction. Industrial buildings. Nash Mills canal system is a key historic feature.

Place names and water
Across the districts, water is present in place names, reflecting its importance in history. Places frequently mention sources and destinations of water, such as 'Water End', which includes a Conservation Area.

Water Gardens
Hemel Hempstead's master-planner, Geoffrey Jellicoe, created the linear Water Gardens to connect together the river valley and town centre running running alongside it.

Change in character
To the south-east of St Albans the presence of water on the surface is more frequent and visible. This corresponds with the major change in topography and geology.

Small watercourses
Even the largest rivers in the districts are small and retain an intimate, soft character. The largest rivers often form meanders across small flood plains at the bottom of steep-sided valleys.

Natural and man-made habitats
Water runs through valley-bottom wetlands, fed by rivers and springs. Among the largest water features are reservoirs around Tring and filled in gravel pits south of St Albans and Kings Langley.

Water and urban development
Water channels can be found running along the edge of city streets. Industrial buildings relate to water features. Other towns and villages turn their back on rivers.

Observing: Water

1 Wider Context

Understand

- Water bodies and watercourses present
- Patterns of flooding
- Water catchments
- Seasonal nature of water

Examples of What to Observe

- Source and destination of watercourses
- Presence or absence of water from the landscape
- Water in nearby habitats

2 Site Context

Understand

- Water bodies and watercourses present
- Natural, engineered or man-made elements
- Purpose of engineered or man-made elements
- Recreational amenity value of water present
- Ecological value
- Drainage patterns

Examples of What to Observe

- Rivers, streams, brooks
- Canal, channels
- Seasonal nature / characteristics
- Flood history
- Character of water edges (soft, engineered, accessible, wooded?)

3 Outputs

Key Outputs

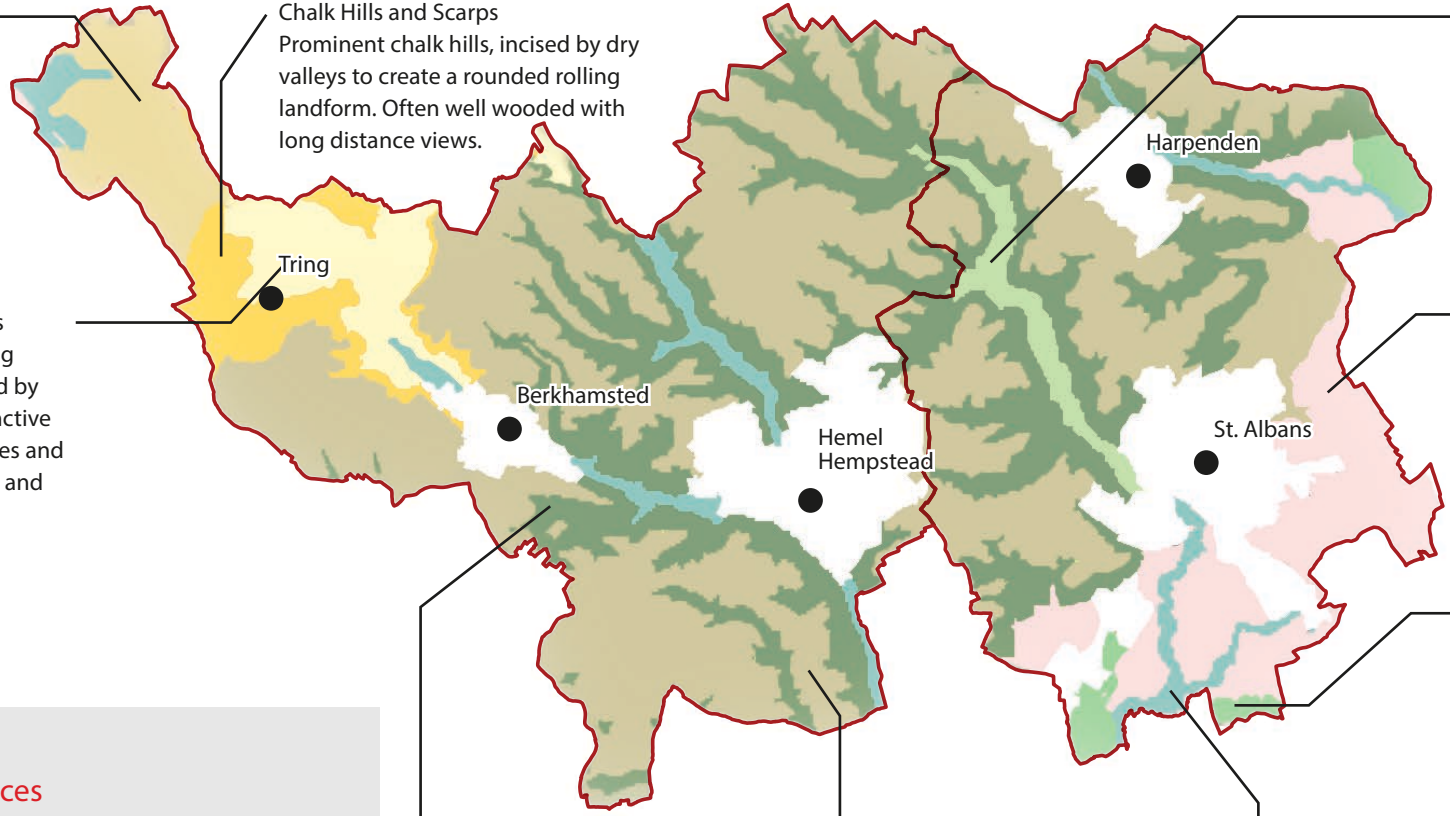
Context plan
Site plans of watershed boundaries, watercourses, water bodies and flood zones
Site photographs

Supplementary Information

Contextual studies of the water bodies within and adjacent to a site or in the wider context.

Context: Green Infrastructure and Landscape

The districts are characterised by a number of landscape types, with a broad change from north-west to south-east. River valleys cut through this landscape to create distinct character changes. Each landscape form has defining green infrastructure such as hedgerows, woodland and grasslands.



Lowland Village Farmlands
A well settled, low lying landscape. Intensive agriculture means this a busy, rural landscape.

Lowland Village Chalklands
Low lying, but gently rolling arable landscape, dissected by small streams, with a distinctive pattern of nucleated villages and a patchwork of woodlands and shelterbelts.

Chalk Hills and Scarps
Prominent chalk hills, incised by dry valleys to create a rounded rolling landform. Often well wooded with long distance views.

Settled Chalk Valleys
Distinguished by soft, rounded and sometimes steep topography. There is a balance of woodland and farmland, with distinctive villages and associated parklands.

Lowland Settled Farmlands
A settled agricultural landscape, often with a recurring estate character, associated with fertile rolling lowlands.

Wooded Hills and Ridges
A varied and textured landscape characterised by undulating hills and steep ridges, cloaked in woodland with clearings.

Wooded Chalk Valleys
Steep sided, wooded valleys penetrating surrounding upland plateau, becoming shallower with seasonal watercourses in their upper parts. Larger valleys have permanent watercourses, often associated with river meadows.

Wooded Plateau Farmlands
A settled, early enclosed landscape with frequent ancient woods, associated with a rolling or undulating glacial plateau, dissected by numerous shallow valleys.

Valley Meadowlands
Flat, low lying valley floors supporting a pastoral land use, associated with notable watercourses/rivers. Generally unsettled, with occasional areas of carr woodland and gravel extraction lakes, or ancient meres.

Additional Resources

Landscape Character Assessments

Guidance at different scales on key landscape characteristics are available.
National / East of England / Hertfordshire

Observing: Green Infrastructure and Landscape

1 Wider Context

Understand

- Broad green infrastructure network
- Landscape character designations
- Locally, regionally or nationally distinctive characteristics
- Scale, age and quality of green infrastructure and landscape elements
- Tree coverage

Examples of What to Observe

- Hills and lowlands, scarps and valleys, meadowlands and farmlands
- Trees referenced in local place names

2 Site Context

Understand

- Type of green infrastructure and landscape present
- Distinctive characteristics
- Ecological value
- Scale, age and quality of green infrastructure and landscape elements, relationship with topography
- Designations, sensitivities and protection
- Amenity and recreation value

Examples of What to Observe

- Trees and hedgerows
- Ancient woodlands
- Grasslands
- Seasonal variations and sensitivities
- Landscape use for human activities
- Local landscape policies and designations

3 Outputs

Key Outputs

Context plan
Site plan showing existing landscape features
Site photographs
Surveys

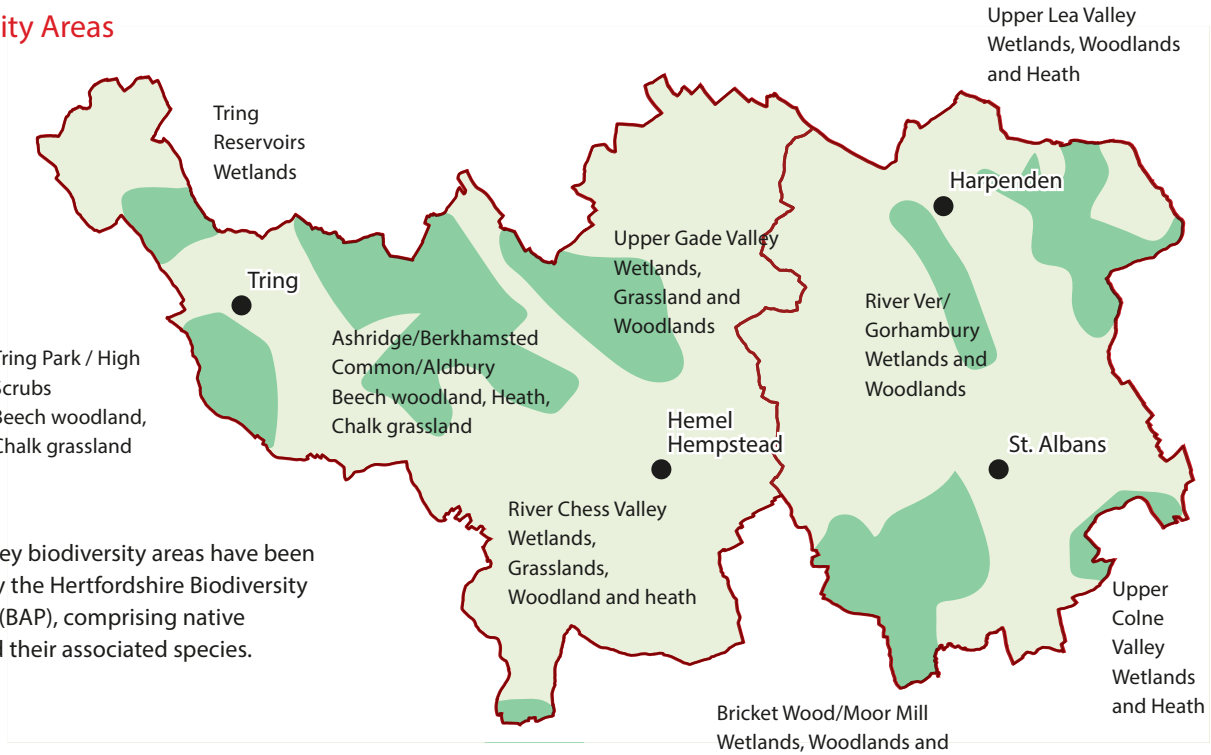
Supplementary Information

Contextual studies

Context: Ecology and Biodiversity

New places must conserve and protect, and where possible enhance, the natural environment. Observing the existing ecology and biodiversity of a place is essential to understand opportunities for enhancement of the nearby and wider natural ecosystem.

Biodiversity Areas



A range of key biodiversity areas have been identified by the Hertfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP), comprising native habitats and their associated species.

Habitat Action Plans

There are 8 Habitat Action Plans in place in Hertfordshire:

- Woodland, including lowland mixed deciduous woodland, lowland wood pasture and parkland
- Wetlands, including wet woodland
- Heathland and acid grassland
- Neutral grassland
- Chalk grassland
- Farmland
- Orchards
- Urban

Species Action Plans

The Hertfordshire BAP sets out 5 Species Action Plans that guide work on protecting, restoring and re-creating a sustainable level of biodiversity in the county based around native species:

- Mammals: Water vole, common dormouse, Natterer's bat and otter
- Birds: Tree Sparrow, Bittern, Stone-Curlew, Song Thrush, Black-Necked Grebe
- Amphibians: Great Crested Newt
- Invertebrates: The chalkhill blue, grizzled skipper and purple emperor butterflies, stag beetle and white-clawed crayfish
- Flora: Great pignut, cornflower, river water-dropwort and the county flower, the pasque flower

Additional Resources

Biodiversity Action Plans

The Hertfordshire Environmental Forum has prepared a 50-year Biodiversity Action Plan for the county. The Hertfordshire BAP identifies 5 Species Action Plans and 8 Habitat Action Plans.

Observing: Ecology and Biodiversity

1 Wider Context

Understand

- Native species of flora and fauna
- Wildlife in the wider context
- The wider needs for biodiversity enhancement
- Potential impact on nearby protected species
- Local Biodiversity Action Plans

Examples of What to Observe

- Existence of wildlife corridors
- Existence and composition of habitats
- Local nature reserves

2 Site Context

Understand

- Conditions that underpin the distinctiveness of local flora and fauna

Examples of What to Observe

- Statutory ecology and biodiversity surveys
- Wildlife corridors
- Composition of habitats
- Endangered or protected species
- Key Biodiversity Areas

3 Outputs

Key Outputs

Context plan
Site plan showing existing ecology and biodiversity
Ecological surveys

Supplementary Information

Contextual studies

Context: Historical Legacy

The historic legacy present in the landscape and built environment is most significantly expressed settlement patterns and historic buildings. The districts have rich histories of agriculture, historic parks and houses, and a pioneering New Town.

Field Patterns

The districts are home to distinctive and ancient co-axial field patterns.

Historic Parks

Local historic park landscapes can inform future developments. Their design principles are successful examples of integrating landscape and built form.

New Towns and Garden Cities

Hertfordshire contains the two original Garden Cities, and three 'mark 1' New Towns. Set piece architectural design, integration of green spaces and distinct architecture create their unique characters.

Place Names

Common place names in the districts are closely related to landscape, water and historic patterns of usage.

Other Legacies

Other historical legacies that may be found on or near the site include:

- Hedgerows, trees and woodland
- Ridgeways and watersheds
- Historic and listed buildings
- Conservation areas
- Historic agriculture such as ridge and furrow
- Archaeological features
- Ancient tracks and historic way-markers

Additional Resources

Historical Maps

Historical mapping is available from commercial providers and for reference at Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies.

Observing: Historical Legacy

1 Wider Context

Understand

- Existence of human-influenced landscape and topographical features
- Historical land uses and their impact on the local context today
- Historical reasons for development of centres in the wider context

Examples of What to Observe

- The chronology of historic uses
- The pattern of movement and development
- The meaning of place names

2 Site Context

Understand

- Activities and uses that have taken place on the site during different historical periods
- Manifestation in present-day features
- Topographical features and field patterns
- Agricultural legacy and field patterns
- Engineering of water bodies and courses

Examples of What to Observe

- Locally distinctive building styles and materials
- Scale, age and quality of features
- Sensitive historical elements or those in need of protection or enhancement

3 Outputs

Key Outputs

Context plan
Site plan including listed buildings, archaeological features, statutory designations, ancient tracks etc
Site photographs
Contextual studies

Supplementary Information

Figure ground drawings based on historical maps
Field pattern drawings based on historical maps

Context: Visual Exposure, Enclosure and Shelter

The districts have a variety of landscapes that feature changes in visual exposure, enclosure and shelter, contributing to their distinct characters. Exposure or enclosure can be found in both rural and urban areas.

Rural ← - - - - - → Urban

Exposure ↑ - - - - ↓ Enclosure

Exposed chalkland plateau
High chalk grasslands with expansive views over valleys are a distinct feature of the landscape of the NW of the districts.

Valley side settlements
Settlements like Harpenden and Berkhamsted have extended from the valley floor up the slopes, but have retained visual connectivity to the valley and centre of the original town.

Views from High Streets
St Albans' and Hemel Hempstead's high streets incorporate frequent views out towards the surrounding landscape.

Enclosed valleys and vegetation
Several landscape character areas have intimate, enclosed characters to their rural areas with pockets of woodland and hedgerows.

Nucleated or valley bottom settlements
Settlements in valley bottoms, or nucleated settlements are often enclosed in character.

Enclosed urban streets
The tight urban streets of places like Berkhamsted generate their distinctive character.

Observing: Visual Exposure, Enclosure and Shelter

1 Wider Context

Understand

- The character of visual exposure, enclosure and shelter within the context
- Contributors to exposure, enclosure and shelter
- Views between the site and the original town centre

Examples of What to Observe

- Key view corridors reinforced by topography
- Visual connections within settlements reinforced by topography

2 Site Context

Understand

- Views into and out of the site, sensitivity of views, key receptors and the proximity of receptors
- Locations and character of areas of enclosure and shelter
- Sources of enclosure and shelter

Examples of What to Observe

- Effects of topography and vegetation
- Public Rights of Way
- Visual connection into nearest settlement
- Visual connections towards other places
- Frequency of hedgerows creating pockets of enclosure

3 Outputs

Required Outputs

Context plan
Site plan illustrating aspect, slope and direction of view
Site photographs
Sections

Supplementary Information

Contextual studies

Context: Environmental Exposure, Enclosure and Shelter

The aspect and exposure of a site can have significant influence on character, quality of public realm and energy efficiency. Location of noise and air pollution sources will also affect the nature of development.

Aspect

Streets oriented for solar gain

Orientation of streets for solar gain
Orientation and change in aspect ratio of streets to maximise solar gain can be observed in Berkhamsted, on the north and south sides of the valley.

The south-facing side of the valley is oriented to maximise south-facing aspect into houses, while the north-facing, shaded side of the valley orients streets to maximise dwelling exposure to the east-west axis.

Public activity spaces oriented towards sunlight
Public realm such as the marketplace in St Albans is oriented in a way that maximises solar gain into activity spaces.

The aspect ratio and enclosure of the spaces protects against cold winds from the east and north-west.

Street trees providing shade
Deciduous street trees such as these in Berkhamsted will provide shade in the summer along pedestrian routes.

Observing: Environmental Exposure, Enclosure and Shelter

1 Wider Context

Understand

- The character of environmental exposure, enclosure and shelter within the context
- Sources of exposure, enclosure and shelter
- Solar orientation of streets and corresponding street widths
- Location of pollution and noise sources

Examples of What to Observe

- Change in character of neighbourhoods related to orientation and access to sunlight
- Location and orientation of public spaces and activities on those public spaces
- Local Air Quality Management Areas

2 Site Context

Understand

- Sources of shelter, enclosure or exposure
- Aspect and daylight
- Prevailing wind
- Exposure to easterly and northerly winds
- Flooding
- Microclimate conditions

Examples of What to Observe

- Sun path
- Resilience challenges from changing weather patterns
- Opportunities for shade and shelter
- Site wide noise and air pollution levels

3 Outputs

Key Outputs

Context plan
Site plan showing orientation of slope, sun path, wind direction and other environmental features
Site photographs
Sections

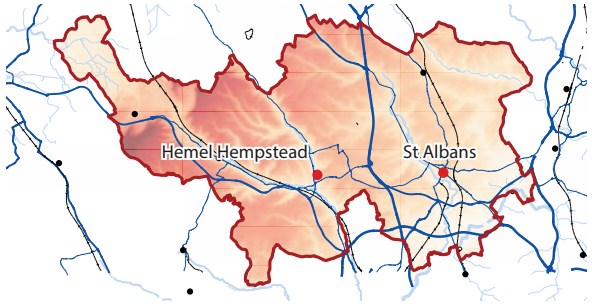
Supplementary Information

Contextual studies

Context: Connectivity

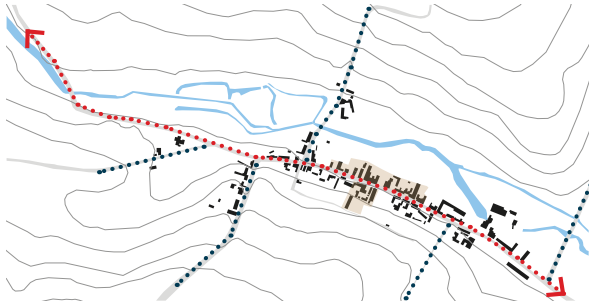
Connectivity and movement corridors have played a significant role in the location, form and scale of development within the study area. These include waterways, historic routes, paths, rail lines and roads. These have evolved over time to shape places. An in-depth analysis and appreciation of the connectivity of the site to the surrounding context and any emerging policies or strategies is required in order to ensure place is functional and to develop a site-specific narrative.

Major Routes



Key road and rail routes in the districts run in valleys to or from London. There is weaker connectivity between valleys, usually only by road. There are plans to enhance connectivity, such as the A414.

Settlement Development



Movement networks have created settlement structures, such as linear settlements along valleys or nucleated settlements on high ground.

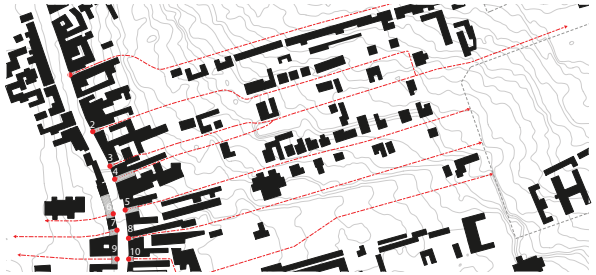
Active Travel

Local routes for journeys to school, work and shopping exist throughout the districts. Public rights of way knit together rural areas and provide access to open space.

Public Transport

Strong public transport links to London are a key feature and are part of the desirability of the districts. Connectivity to railheads is desirable.

Pathways



Many historic settlements contain fine-grain connectivity through alleys and paths to the surrounding landscape, referencing burgage plots.

Additional Resources

Historical Maps

Historical mapping is available from commercial providers and for reference at Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies.

Observing: Connectivity

1 Wider Context

Understand

- Pedestrian networks
- Vehicular networks
- Public transport networks
- Integration of travel modes
- Present-day and historical routes and movement corridors

Examples of What to Observe

- Public Rights of Way, National Cycle Networks
- Road hierarchy
- Links to topography
- Links to settlement patterns
- Relationship to surrounding settlements

2 Site Context

Understand

- Links and connections to wider pedestrian and cycle networks
- Vehicular networks
- Present-day and historical routes and movement corridors adjacent to the site

Examples of What to Observe

- Formal and informal paths and patterns of use
- Walking and cycling
- Hierarchy of roads and streets
- Relationship to surrounding settlements
- Relationship to topography

3 Outputs

Key Outputs

Context plan showing strategic highways, local access, bus routes and local cycle network
Site plan showing existing footpaths, public rights of way, cycling routes and other site access
Site photographs

Supplementary Information

Contextual studies
Walking times studies
Travel time studies

Context: Edges and Beyond

New places should form a valuable new part of a wider town or settlement. Knitting the new place into the existing community requires observation of existing edges, nearby facilities, and opportunities for development to benefit the existing place and facilities.

Nearby Facilities

New development should provide good accessibility to existing, nearby facilities. Designers should observe nearby provision of commonly-used facilities and amenities such as:

- Schools
- Doctors and healthcare centres
- Dentists
- Shops
- Post offices
- Community facilities
- Play areas
- Open space
- Allotments
- Train stations

Amenity Capacity

A comprehensive observation and assessment of amenity provision and available capacity in the local context should be undertaken by designers to inform on-site provision and connections.

Where existing facilities are overburdened, development of new or enhanced amenities offers the opportunity to improve provision for existing residents. Refer to policy on the expectations for the strategic sites and whether it is expected that the site provides for the additional demand, rather than using spare capacity elsewhere.

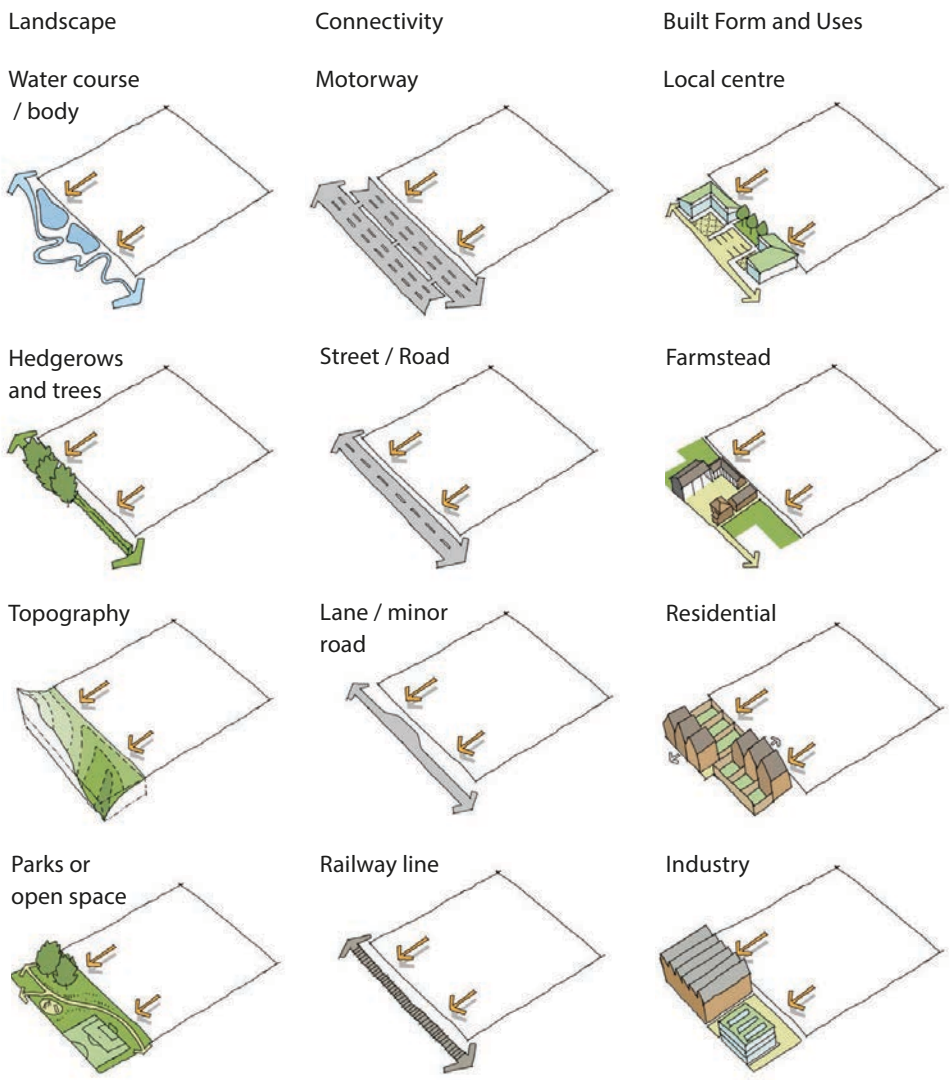
Edges

A typology of observed edges to major development sites in the districts is shown to the right.

Landscape edges offer the opportunity to enhance access to the districts' high quality open spaces and green infrastructure for new and existing residents in the area. They can also provide biodiversity corridors or visual landscape buffers.

Transport Infrastructure edges are vital for the development of sustainable places, but can also bring noise and air pollution.

Built Form edges offer opportunities to knit the new place into the existing settlement to form a cohesive whole.



Observing: Edges and Beyond

1 Wider Context

Understand

- Location of higher-order services in the area
- The range of types of facilities and places and opportunities for additional provision
- How developments have knitted into the existing context elsewhere
- Amenity provision and capacity

Examples of What to Observe

- Health and education
- Retail
- Community
- Public transport
- Sport, leisure and recreation
- Heritage and cultural elements
- Open space

2 Site Context

Understand

- The range of types of facilities and places
- The nature of their distribution
- Catchment of facilities and places
- Available capacity and provision of nearby facilities
- Effect and influence of edges on the site

Examples of What to Observe

- Edges present on the site
- Existing facilities present on or adjacent to the site
- Routes to existing facilities

3 Outputs

Key Outputs

Context plan showing existing edges and nearby facilities
Site plan
Site photographs

Supplementary Information

Contextual studies
Capacity studies
Sections or elevations
Supporting illustrations
Travel studies

Context: Land Use

Existing adjacent land uses of a site can inform the future development of a place. A variety of land uses are found near the existing settlements in the districts, to which the design should respond - in terms of character, function and integration.

Agriculture
Much land in the districts is devoted to agriculture. A rich history of field patterns, farm buildings and landscape management is often present. Edges to sites defined by hedgerows or field boundaries can provide opportunities for views into the wider landscape or connections to public rights of way.

Woodland
The districts have significant amounts of tree cover and ancient woodland, providing habitat and leisure opportunities. New woodland at Heartwood near St Albans is being planted. Understanding and retaining high quality mature woodland as part of a development could contribute to character and narrative.

Industry and Infrastructure
Light industrial estates are often present at the edges of towns in the districts, providing employment but also generating visual, traffic and noise impacts, such as at the Buncefield oil depot on the edge of Hemel Hempstead. Other infrastructure such as major traffic arteries, gas mains and power cables can create land use restrictions.

Education and Sports Facilities
School sites and sports facilities often contribute to landscape edges or wider green space. Their buildings can be significant landmarks, and provide an existing focus point for a place.

Additional Resources

National Grid Design Guidelines
Guidance on design near high voltage power lines

Observing: Land Use

1 Wider Context

Understand

- Land uses that exist and their location
- Design of existing places reflecting historic or adjacent land uses
- Historic reasons for land uses

Examples of What to Observe

- Links to topography, water and landscape
- Historic industries, farming practices and other distinctive land use elements or distinctive land uses
- Employment sites in the wider context

2 Site Context

Understand

- How to engage with adjacent land uses
- Historical legacy of land uses to inform narratives
- Retention of some existing land uses

Examples of What to Observe

- Agriculture
- Woodland
- Sports facilities
- Education
- Industry
- Former industry or land uses
- Transport and other infrastructure

3 Outputs

Key Outputs

Plan showing land uses of the site
Site photographs
Surveys

Supplementary Information

Contextual studies

Context: Urban Grain and Built Form

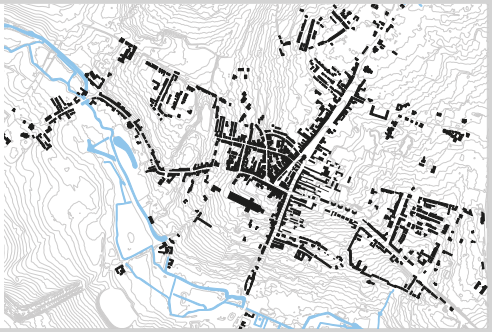
The narrative of a place can be developed from looking at the historic legacy of the built environment. The morphology and grain of the settlements varies depending on their location, the surrounding topography and landscape as well as their size and density.

Urban Grain

Ridgetop villages, hillside villages, larger towns with a centre and a 'high street', and valley settlements all have their different features and characteristics, as do the New Towns. The variety in morphology and grain characteristic of old settlements is often missing in new developments, which tend to be comparatively monotonous in appearance as a result.

Layout and Density

Most towns created before c.1250 either occupied significant positions in the landscape such as strategic places along rivers or major route junctions or established as places of ancient importance, such as old estate centres of hundred meeting places. The relationship between the natural topography and a settlements' layout and density is evident in historic figure grounds based on ordnance surveys.



Built Form and Patterns

Depending on the location and nature of the settlements, different built forms and patterns can be found. For example, all the historic towns have a fine grain formed from the historic long burgage plots running perpendicular to the main street, whereas in some of the valley settlements, long houses are arranged parallel to the primary route and river. Many of the historic farmsteads are set around courtyards.

Additional Resources

Historical Maps

Historical mapping is available from commercial providers and for reference at Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies.

Observing: Urban Grain and Built Form

1 Wider Context

Understand

- Prevalent morphology and historic urban grain of the surrounding settlements
- Built form response to the topography
- Relationship of movement routes to grain
- Influence of surrounding topography on layout and density

Examples of What to Observe

- Spatial plot and building configurations
- Street, public realm and open space patterns
- Grain, shape and articulation of historic buildings
- Relationship between movement routes and contours

2 Site Context

Understand

- Historic plots and typologies
- Clustering and arrangement of these plots
- Influence of surrounding topography on layout and built form
- Type of topography and grain that can be found on pre-existing on the site

Examples of What to Observe

- Urban morphology in relation to topography, location and orientation
- Spatial plot and building configurations
- Street, public realm and open space patterns
- Grain, shape and articulation of historic buildings
- Relationship between movement routes and contours

3 Outputs

Key Outputs

Analysis of historic maps and documents
Studies of local urban patterns
Site photographs of the local historic settlements

Supplementary Information

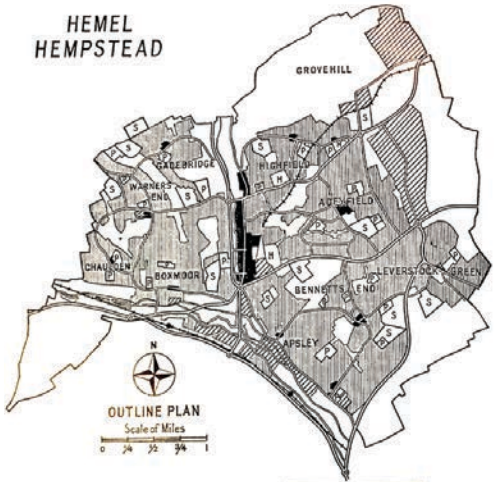
Contextual studies and sketches

Context: Unique Features and Narratives

Many places are defined or remembered by their unique features. Local examples can be used as inspiration for the design.

Unique Architecture
Napsbury Park is a development based in a former hospital. The hospital buildings themselves were built in a former manor house park. The architecture of the buildings and structure of the grounds provided a basis for the design and distinctive nature of the development.

Unique Institutions
Many places in the districts contain unique institutions and historic uses that reflect the history of the area. The Harpenden Youth Mission at Highfield Oval is a distinct and characterful place.



Unique History
Modern heritage can also provide a unique narrative of place. Former airfields with industrial or wartime heritage have modified landforms. The legacy of the Garden Cities and New Towns of Hertfordshire is another distinct feature. The TCPA have created guidance to explain the garden city principles and how to apply them to contemporary development.

Observing: Unique Features and Narratives

1 Wider Context

Understand

- Unique regional historical identity

Examples of What to Observe

- First impressions and striking features of the wider context and locality
- Potential for views of historic features
- In the case of New Towns, historic planning and design principles
- Importance and wider relevance of historical context

2 Site Context

Understand

- Local historical context

Examples of What to Observe

- First impressions and striking features of the site
- Potential of unique features to influence development layout and landscape design

3 Outputs

Required Outputs

Plan showing the unique features of the site
Site photographs

Supplementary Information

3D models
Contextual studies

Context: Local Vernacular Details and Materials

Construction and Craftsmanship

Earlier buildings are constructed using timber framing generally with wattle and daub and, later, brick infill panels. Clay peg tiles are used on steeply-pitched gabled roofs, slate appearing from the eighteenth century on shallower pitches. Other typical traditional features include chimneys, timber windows and in some cases dormers.

Materials and Colour

Locally sourced bricks tend to have a warm red orange colour, and are sometimes arranged in patterns using burnt headers. Other traditional materials include the local Puddingstone rock formed with rounded flint pebbles bound by a lighter sand coloured matrix.

Photo: DBC

Patterns and Details

Geometric patterns and well crafted details can be found on both the exterior and interior of buildings across the region.
The influence of traditional crafts such as straw plaiting can be seen in intricate geometrical configurations and patterns. Chequerboard patterns using flints are occasionally seen and some geometric patterns in brickwork appear, particularly in 19th century buildings.

Photo: DBC

Additional Resources

Historic information in local libraries. including the Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies, St. Albans., and in the Chilterns Design Guide.

Observing: Local Vernacular Details and Materials

1 Wider Context

Understand

- Local traditional architectural features
- Local traditional materials used in the area and how they are shaped and applied
- Local traditional typical details and patterns
- The colour palette of the historic built environment

Examples of What to Observe

- Typical construction methods and craftsmanship
- Architectural elements and details within the historic built environment
- Materials and their use within the historic built environment
- Traditional colours and patterns within the wider context

2 Site Context

Understand

- Traditional architectural features on or in close proximity of the site
- Typical details or patterns either as part of existing historic buildings or other pre-existing structures or elements
- The colour palette of the environment

Examples of What to Observe

- Typical construction methods and craftsmanship on or in close proximity of the site
- Architectural elements and details within the historic built environment
- Materials and their use
- Traditional colours and patterns

3 Outputs

Required Outputs

Studies of local vernacular features
Photographs of typical materials, details and patterns

Supplementary Information

Contextual studies and sketches
Material samples
Historic information on local vernacular architecture

Identifying Patterns: Built Form in DBC and SADC

The following pages draw out some spatial typologies observed in settlements in Dacorum and St Albans. These have been given historic place names based on their topographical context.

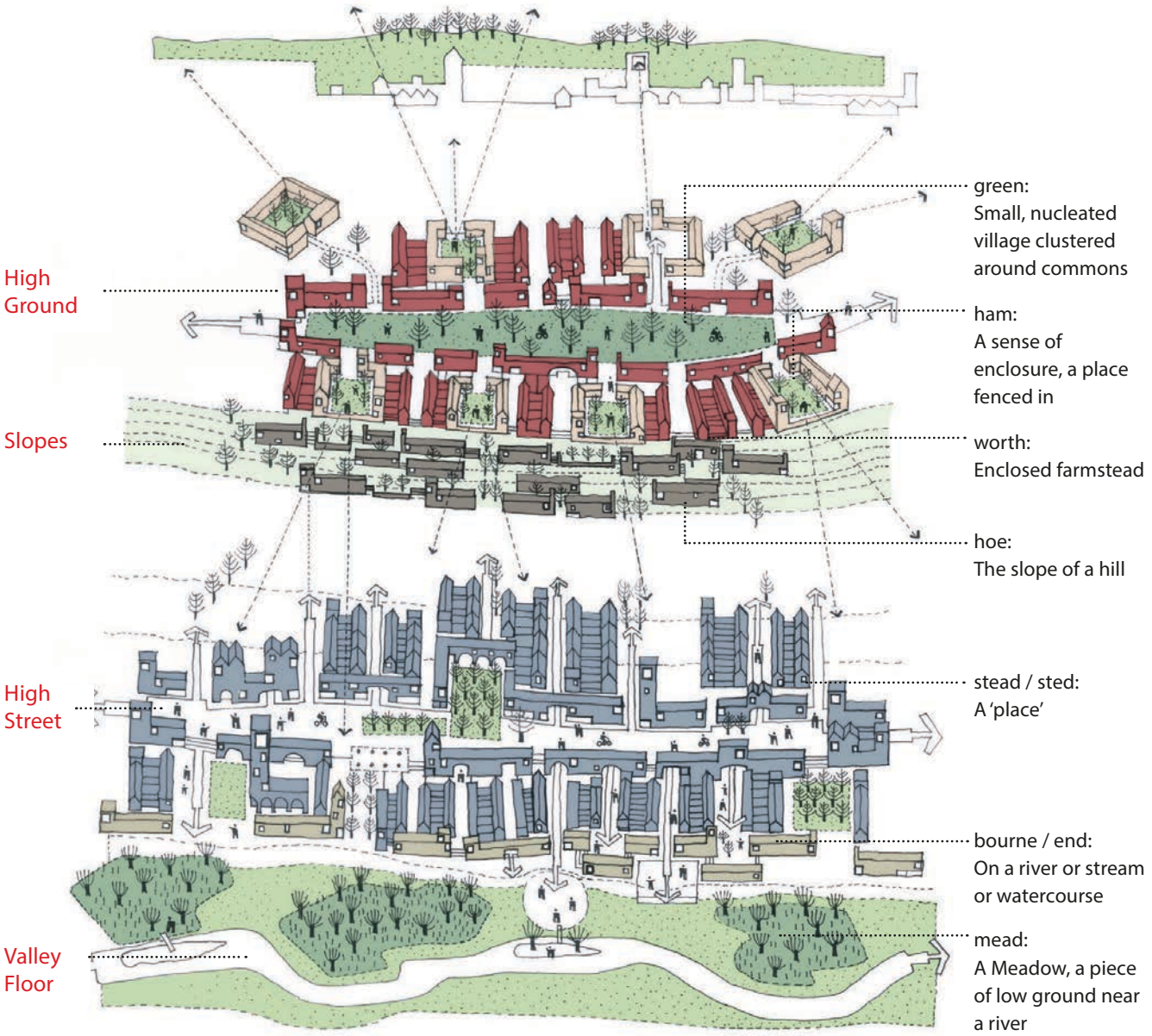
The purpose is to demonstrate how patterns of built and natural form can be identified and understood as part of the observation stage of design. Designers are encouraged to use the approach presented here to identify sets of patterns and categorise them into spatial typologies themselves.

Guidance on using typologies to inform contemporary design is found in Making a Place.

Early settlements were established at significant positions in the landscape: on hill tops, along rivers or near major route junctions. Historic figure grounds of Hertfordshire show the relationship between the landscape and topography and the grain and orientation of built form.

Historic high streets are often set along contour lines and support a mix of uses and higher density developments. Perpendicular routes, typically secondary streets and mews, lead to lanes of lower density terraces. The grain and character of the high streets is often based on the historic burgage plots that have governed development over time.

Settlements on ridge lines are set around greens or commons. Buildings found on high ground are arranged around courtyards to provide a sheltered environment, (often farmyard settlements) set in the landscape. Sloping sites typically have a built form that follows the contours with linear housing typologies.



Concept cartoon of patterns of landscape conditions and local place names in west Hertfordshire © Proctor & Matthews Architects

Spatial Typologies: Relating to Historic Place Names and Topography

Concept cartoon of spatial typologies relating to place names © Proctor & Matthews Architects

green
lower density, larger scale buildings with aspect over the shared common space

ham
orthogonal homestead courtyard (or a 'set piece' of architecture) to one side of the green to create shelter on the high ground

hoe
typically a series of long houses running parallel to the slope

stead / sted
higher density place with a market street, which runs parallel to the contours

bourne / end
typically long houses situated along the contours with extended views across marshland landscape

Spatial Typologies: Historic Examples

On looking in more detail at existing villages, the relationship between the natural topography - of the high-ground, the slopes and the valley floor - and the layout and density of settlements becomes apparent.

Historic Examples

Little Gaddesden, north of Berkhamsted
The village is characterised by its large, linear green at the centre that runs along the ridgeway at the top of the valley. The primary route aligns with the green, forming the principle frontage, and the built form sits to one side, overlooking the valley to the south. The built form consists of a number of large scale buildings and farmsteads set back from the green and surrounding shared surface courtyards.

Wheathampstead, north of St Albans
The main high street follows the topography up the hill, perpendicular to the valley below. Secondary routes run perpendicular to the main street and access the long linear buildings that sit within the burgage plots on the eastern side. Towards the high point of the village sits Town Farm which is arranged around a courtyard.

Hemel Hempstead old town
The historic high street lies part way down the valley. Routes to alleyways follow the grain of the co-axial field patterns and provide access to the burgage plots, which are perpendicular to the high street.

Church End, north-east of St Albans
Church End is a small village that sits at the valley floor just south-west of Redbourn. It features a series of long houses that run parallel to the contours. These long houses have smaller outbuildings at the back of their plots that run perpendicular to the main buildings. The long houses form the edge to the wetland meadow landscape beyond.

High Ground

Example - Little Gaddesden (Dacorum)

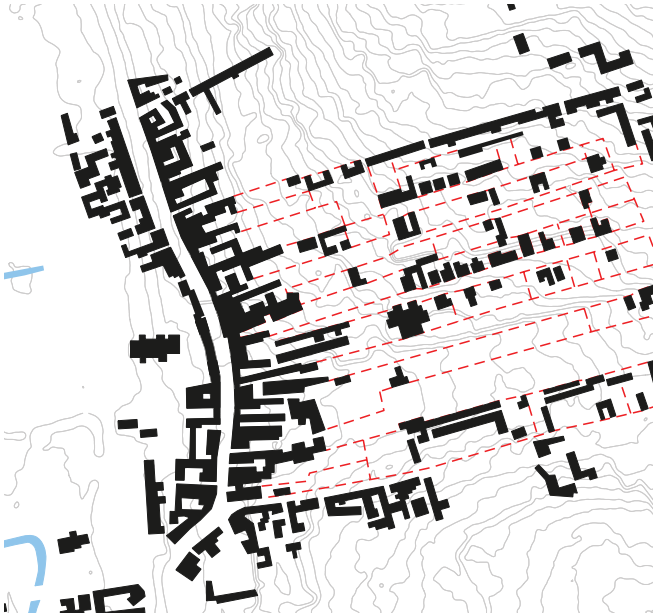
Slopes

Example - Wheathampstead (St Albans)

Spatial Typologies: Historic Examples

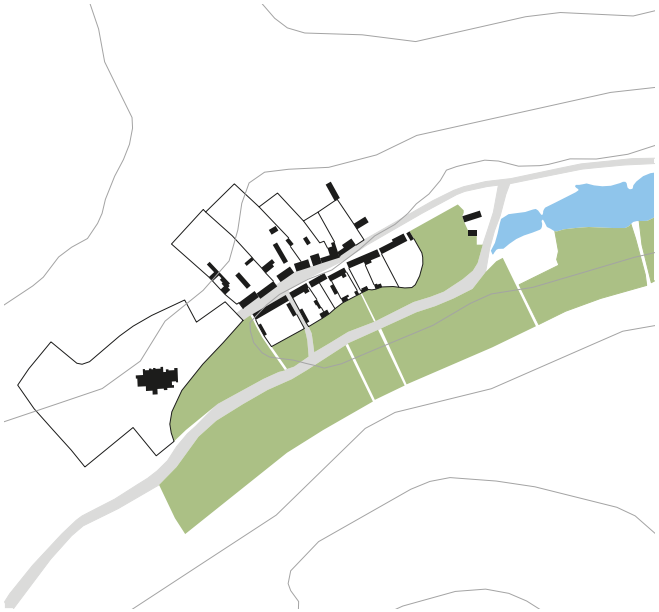
High Street

Example - Hemel Hempstead (Dacorum)



Valley Floor

Example - Church End (St Albans)



Additional Resources

Historic Maps

Historical mapping is available from commercial providers.

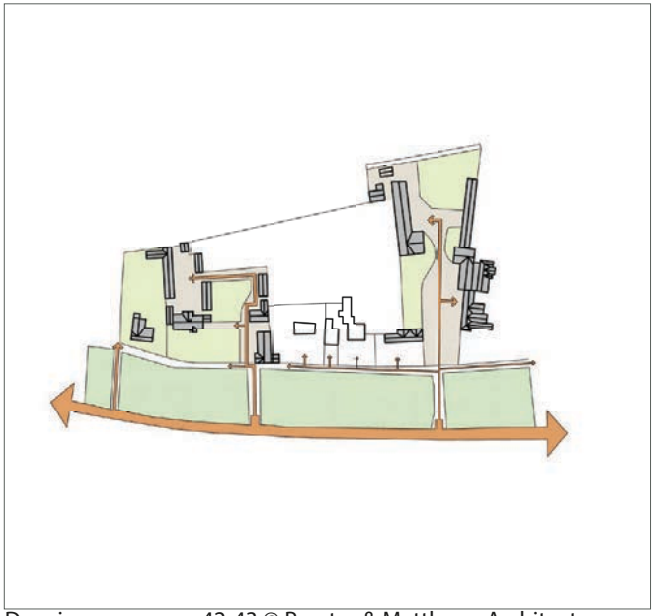
Historic information in local libraries. including the Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies, St. Albans.

Spatial Typologies: Features and Characteristics

Each typology is defined by features including topography, green space, access routes, grain, form and density.

...green typology (located on the high ground)

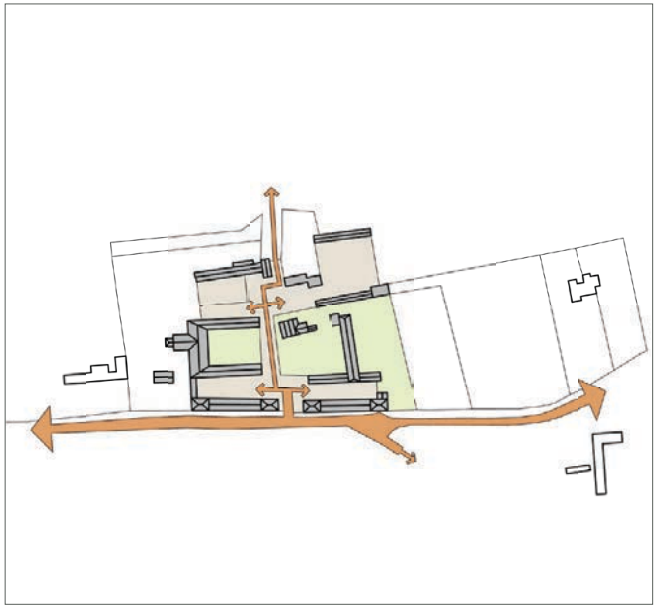
...green: small, nucleated villages clustered around village commons



- long linear green aligns with the contours
- primary route to one side of the green
- perpendicular secondary routes cut through the green, perpendicular to the contours
- main buildings with aspect over the green
- loose grain of buildings and clusters
- farmstead arrangements often found towards the edge - see 'the ham / worth'

...ham typology (located on the high ground)

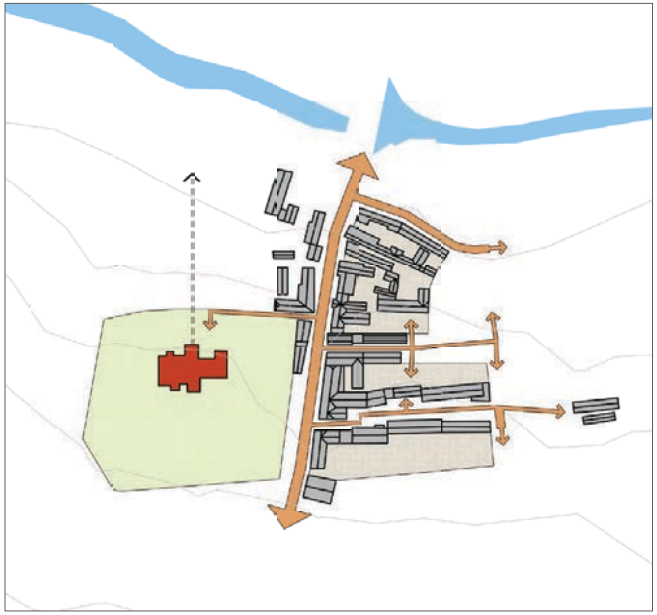
…ham: a sense of enclosure, a place fenced in
...worth: enclosed homestead or farm



- orthogonal farmstead clusters
- farmstead clusters are built around courtyards that are either fully enclosed or open on one side to the surrounding landscape
- creates a sheltered form
- buidlings arranged around shared access courts
- relatively low building heights and density

...hoe typology (located on slopes)

…how: a slope of a hill

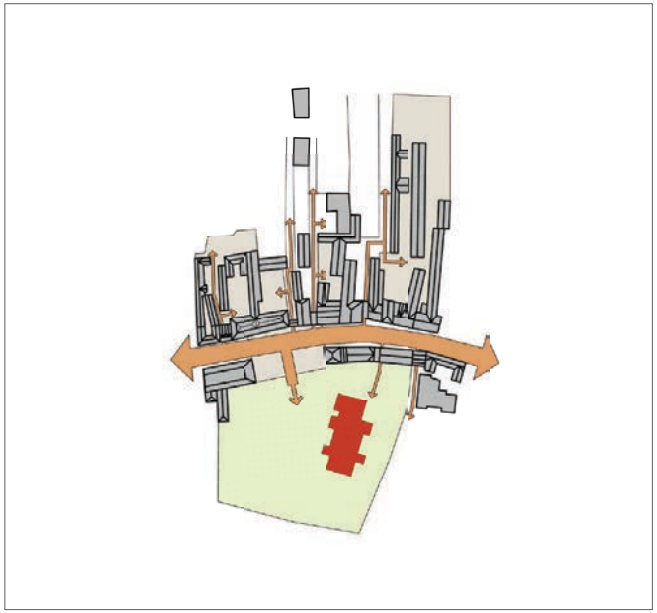


- long linear houses run parallel to the topography
- permeable routes perpendicular to the contours
- secondary access streets configured along contours support the building frontages
- relatively low density allow landscape elements and trees to feature between the buildings
- a strong sense of the surrounding landscape and topography within the settlement
- buildings and open spaces at the edge of the settlement enjoy long views across the landscape and into the valley

Spatial Typologies: Features and Characteristics

...stead typology (located on the slopes)

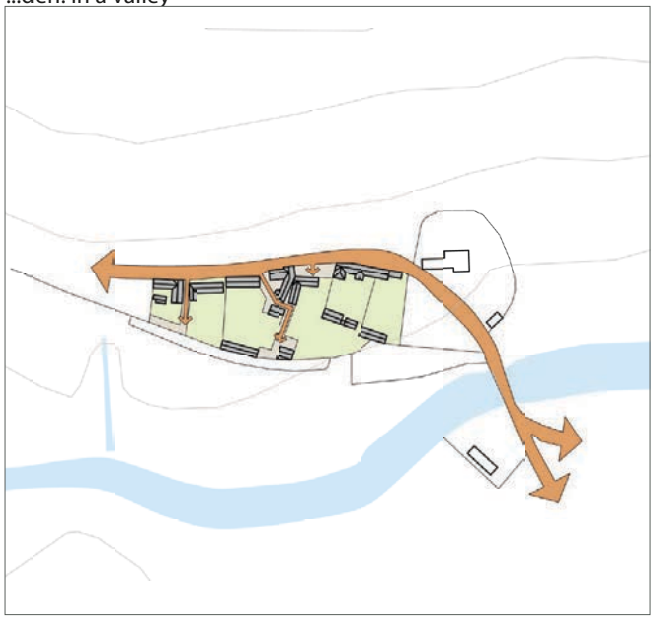
...stead: a place



- fine grain and higher density
- wide market high street perpendicular to contours
- tree lined market street and continuous frontage
- burgage plots found on both sides of the market street
- marker buildings sit within the high street at widest point
- perpendicular secondary routes join the the high street via alleyways
- parking courts behind main routes
- typologies are flexible and can accommodate residential, commercial and retail uses

..bourne/ end typology (located in a valley)

…bourne: on a river or stream or watercourse
...end: of the watercourse
...den: in a valley



- long linear houses are arranged along the contours and run parallel to the main street
- buildings arranged around green spaces
- primary route to one side of the typology
- majority of buildings along primary route have an aspect towards the landscape beyond
- a strong sense of the surrounding landscape and topography within the settlement
- height and density of the built form is relatively low but but may increase with proximity to the main street

Supplementary Information

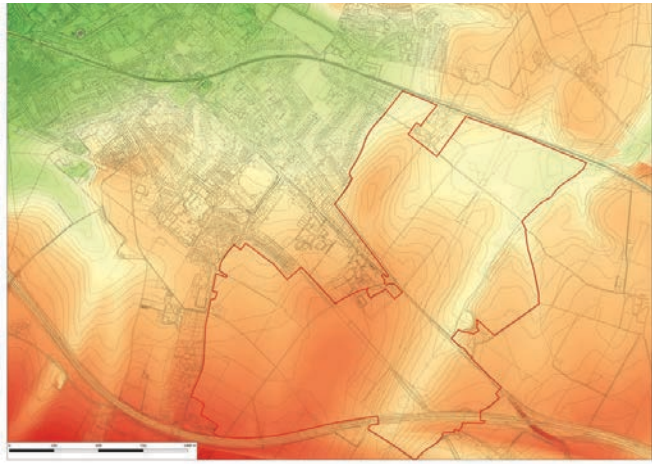
Supporting sketches and diagrams
3d illustrations

Key Outputs

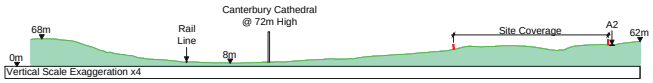
Historic and spatial evaluation of the surrounding context to identify relevant spatial typologies
Historic and spatial evaluation of site to identify which typologies suit the site

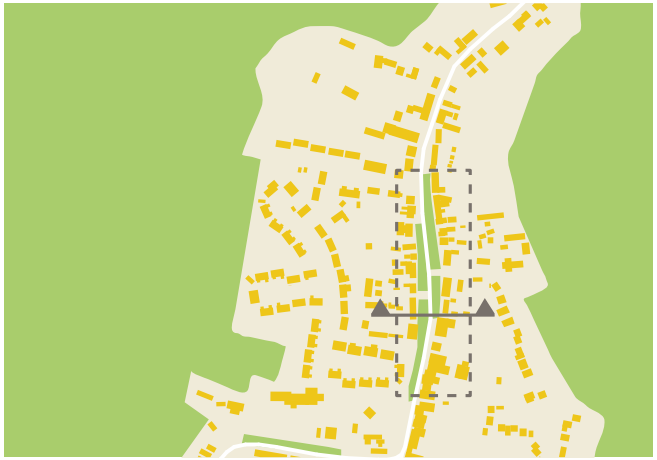
Observing Place: Example

Mountfield Park, to the south-east of Canterbury in Kent, is a 4,000 home strategic development that is on the periphery of the existing cathedral city, and has a strong narrative of place. This section illustrates some of the materials produced during the Observing Place stage of the design process.

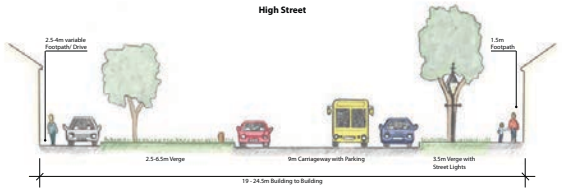


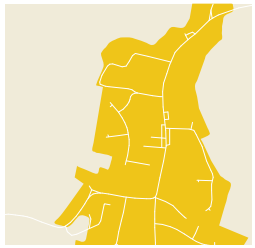
Topography
Contour maps are supplemented with sections and photos that illustrate the visual relationship of the site with the city centre and notable landmarks.

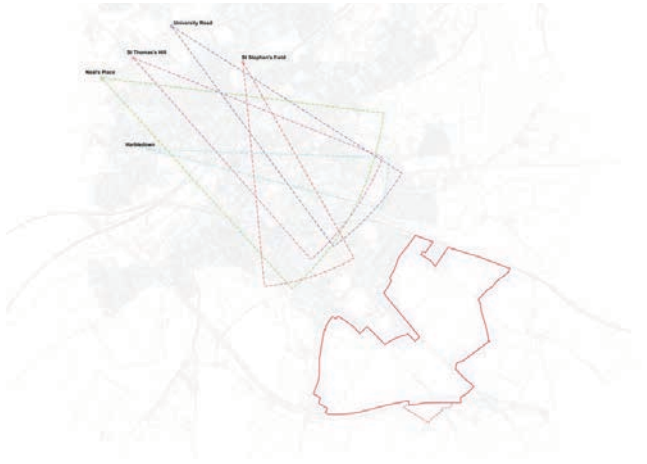




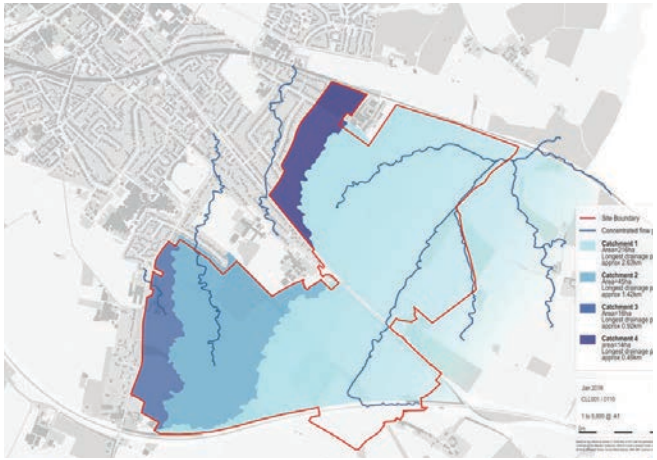
Contextual Studies
A study of the urban grain and structure of nearby settlements is illustrated using figure grounds, sections and block structure plans.



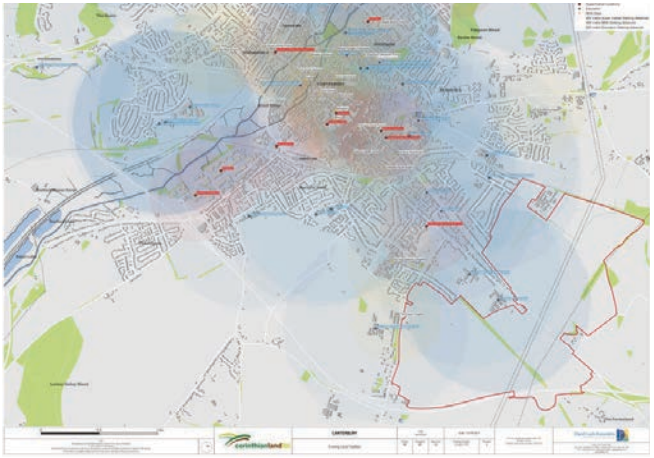




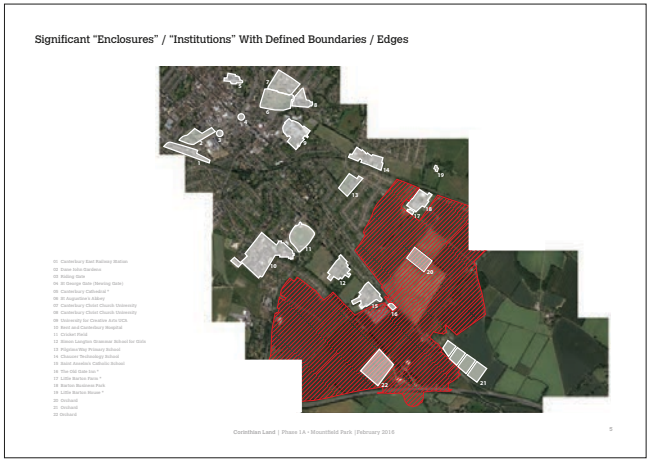
Visual Exposure
Studies provide an understanding of the site's visibility from key external viewpoints, supplemented by photos from the site which illustrate visual connectivity to the city. Site photos are taken in a variety of seasons and weather conditions conditions.



Water
Analysis of water flow and catchments build a picture of drainage and the impact of water within the site.



Connectivity and Places to Connect To
Existing facilities and their catchment areas are mapped to understand the potential for active travel links and connectivity to the existing settlement. This is supplemented by a movement study of public transport and existing active travel routes.



Historic Legacy and Unique Features
Aerial photos of gridded agricultural landscape forms are observed in the wider context. An iconic view of Canterbury Cathedral is noted as a key feature of the site, while a woodcut showing a shared meal from William Caxton's second edition of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, further informs the narrative.

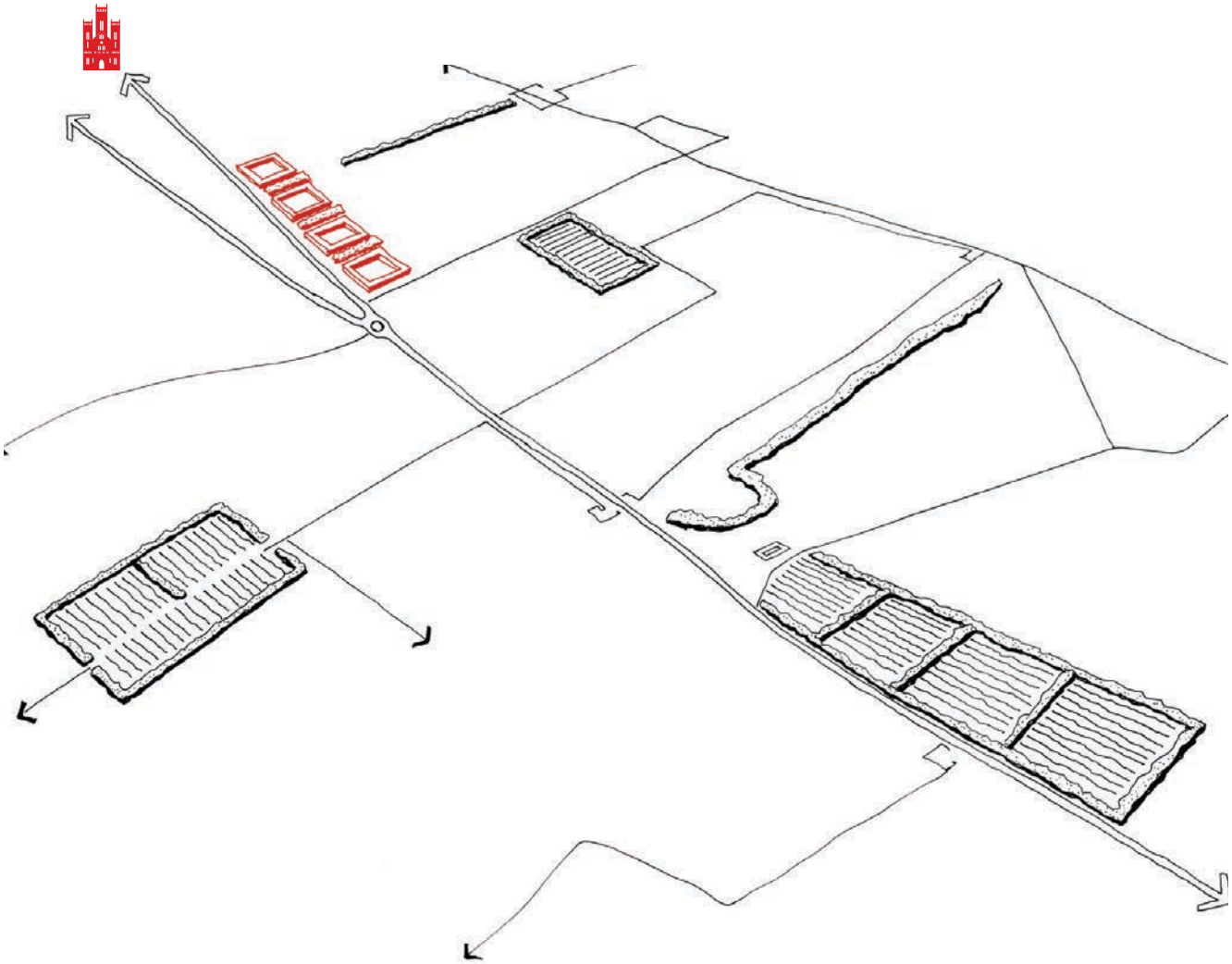
Observing Place: Example

The first phase of 140 homes will set a benchmark for a further 4,000 new homes by establishing a contemporary identity that encapsulates the essence of Canterbury. The formal composition of homes, apartment blocks and open spaces is driven by the site's iconic view of Canterbury Cathedral.

Identifying the view to the Cathedral

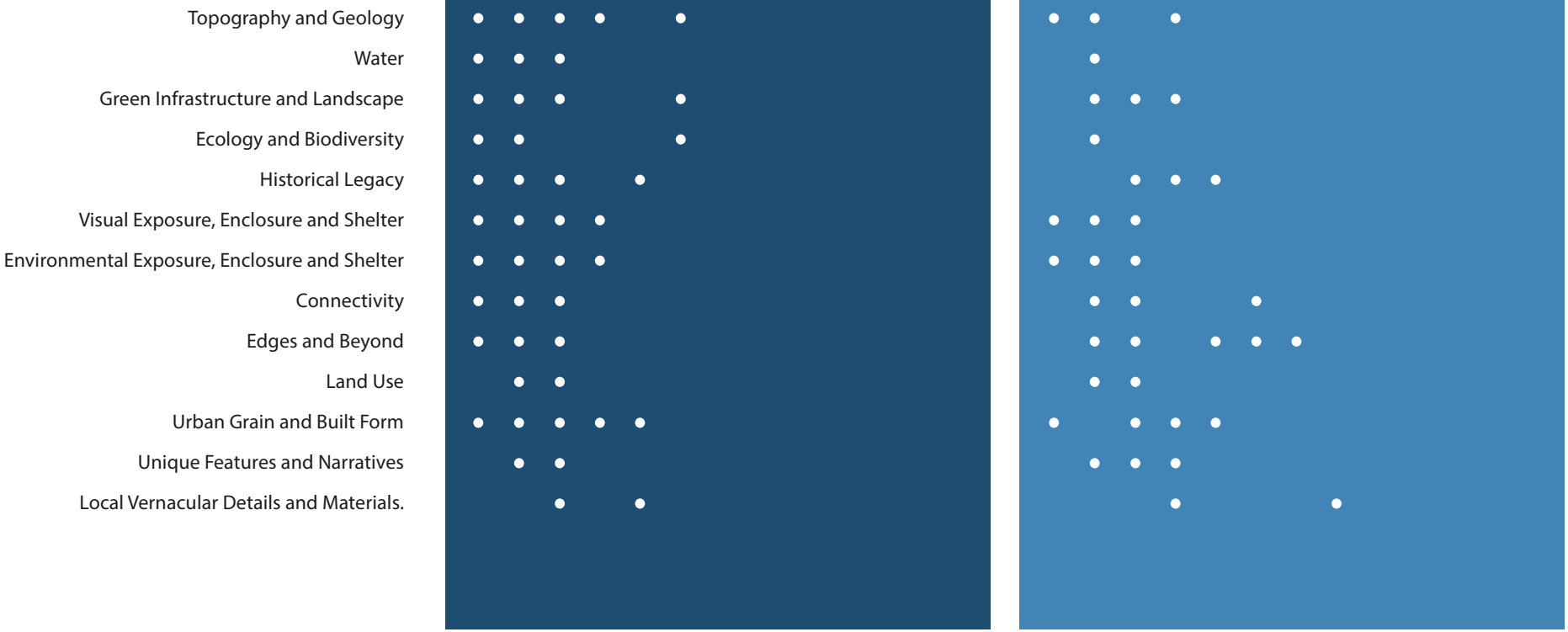
Views to Canterbury cathedral from surrounding areas

Field Patterns and hop fields in Kent



Observing Place: Checklist

Applicants are encouraged to illustrate their site observations imaginatively, making best use of media to suit the information gathered. This checklist should be considered a starting point and Key Outputs are prescriptive.



The Grand Union Canal runs through Dacorum Borough and has a distinct character and history. A feature like a canal can be a strong, defining feature of the narrative of a new place, and create a focal point for design

Evaluating Place

Introduction to Evaluating Place

In bringing together the observations, a detailed understanding of the strengths and opportunities of a place can be formed.

Too often the process of design for large development sites focuses on constraints, limitations and numerical metrics. The Evaluating Place process aims to help designers understand and build on the strengths and opportunities identified in the Observation stage, and focus their design efforts on enhancing these key assets. These assets, physical or otherwise, form the basis of the emerging narrative of the place.

This section outlines a simple process for evaluating strengths and opportunities that should underlie design decisions. This understanding should be demonstrated through a range of materials which will inform discussions with the LPA.

Strengths and Opportunities

Evaluating the observed characteristics and features in order to identify a site's primary strengths, opportunities and structuring elements.

Illustration

Bringing together the understanding of the site in an illustrative plan and supporting materials.

Design Principles

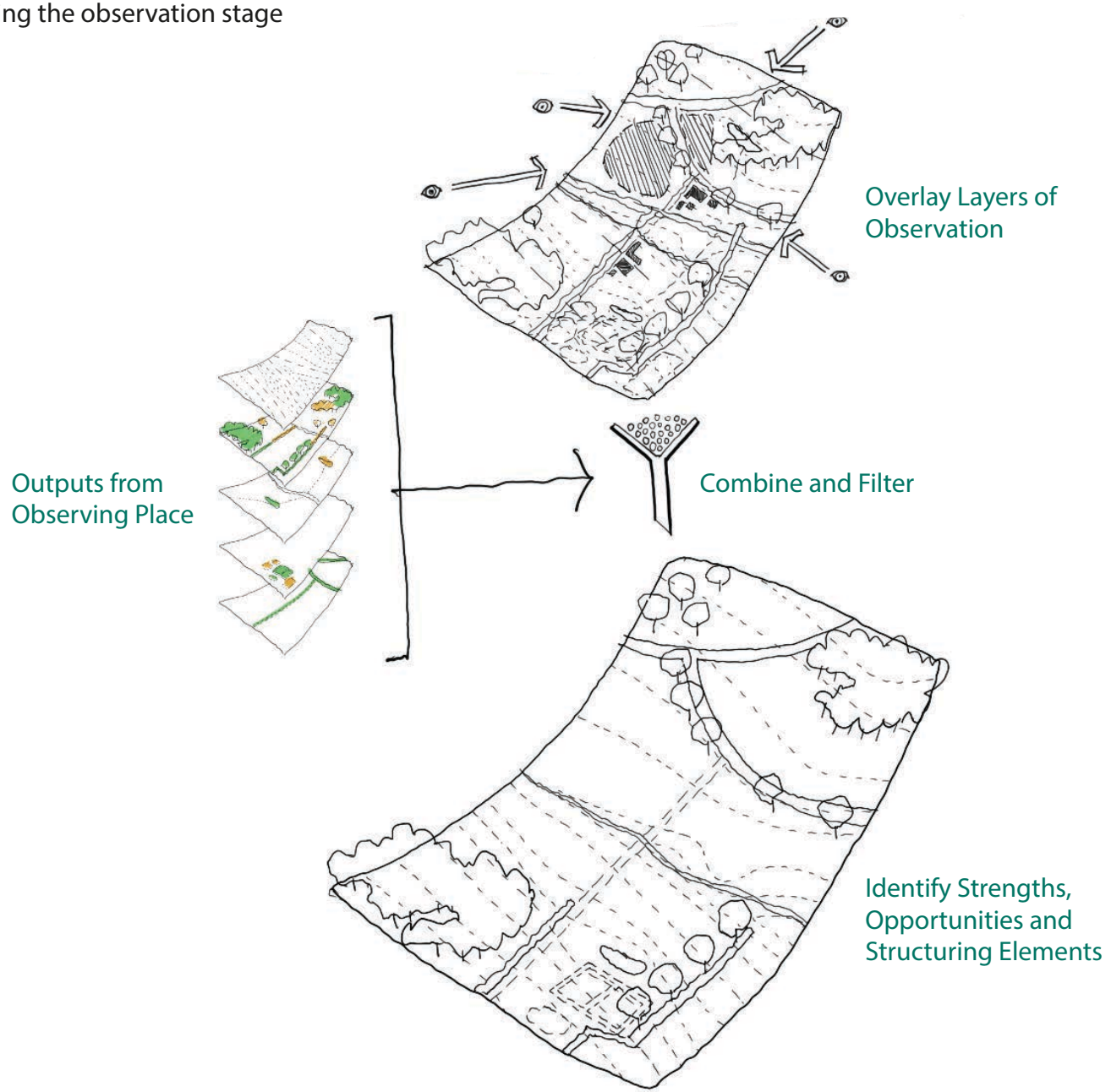
The Design Principles for creating high quality new places should underlie decisions and identification of site assets and strengths.

Identifying Strengths and Opportunities

Design teams must evaluate the features identified during the observation stage to identify a site's primary strengths and opportunities.

Applying a series of questions to the layers of information observed can help in evaluation. The box below provides some suggested questions which may form a starting point.

Answers to the questions rely on subjective assessment, and do not pre-determine design responses. Rather, they set a potential framework for onward design proposals to respond to.



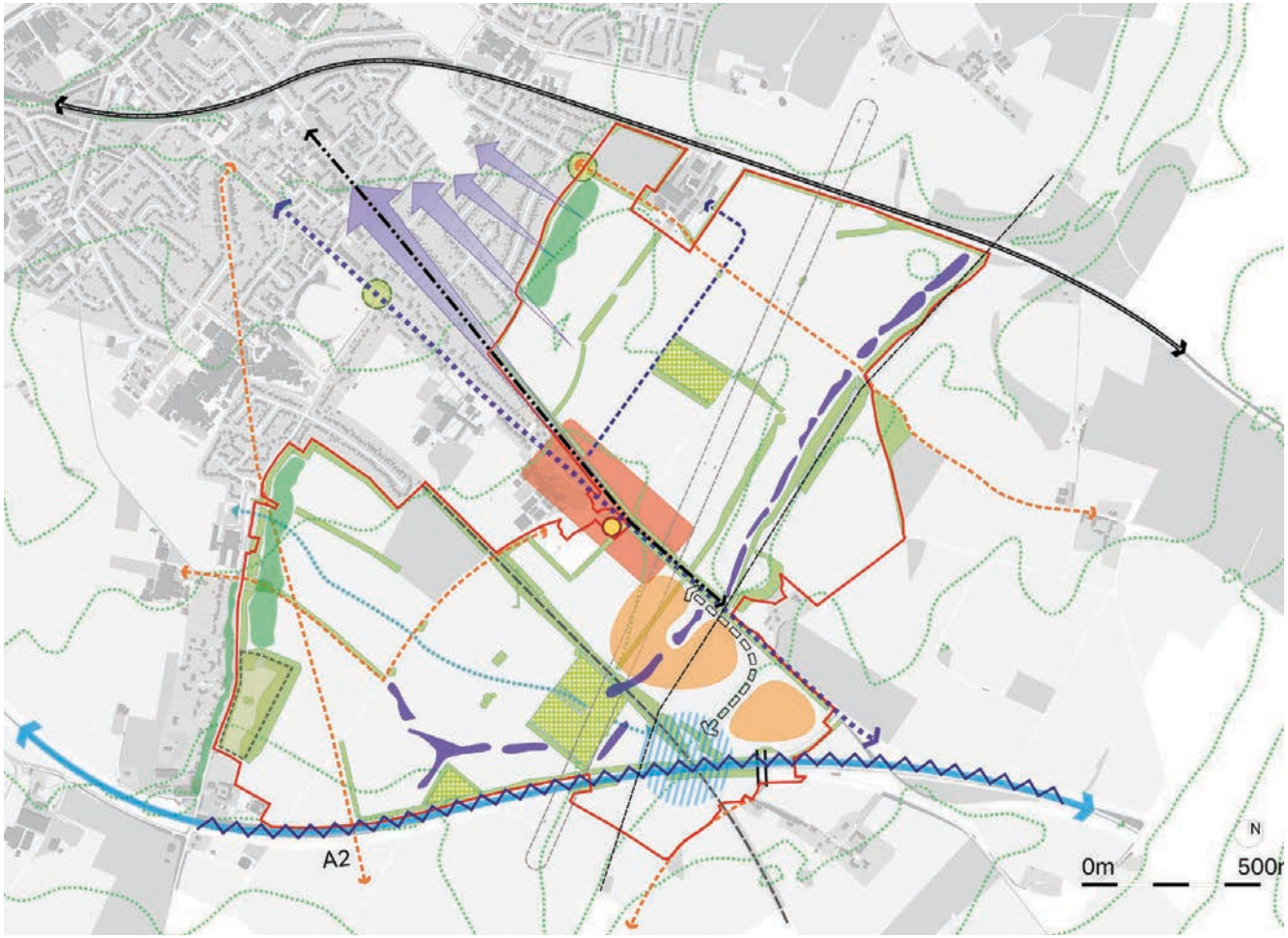
Consider

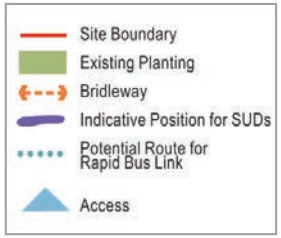
- Are features of good physical quality?
- Do elements have cultural or social significance?
- Are elements of high ecological value?
- Are elements permanent or ephemeral?
- Are elements of old age or heritage value?
- Are elements significant or distinctive, locally or wider?
- Are elements scarce, rare or endangered?
- Do elements pose a risk or hazard?

Illustrating Strengths, Opportunities and Structuring Elements

The example to the right is taken from Mountfield Park, Canterbury, a 4,000 home development that was introduced in the Observing chapter.

The plan shows the strengths, opportunities and structuring elements which were identified through Observing Place and evaluated to be of greatest potential to the site.

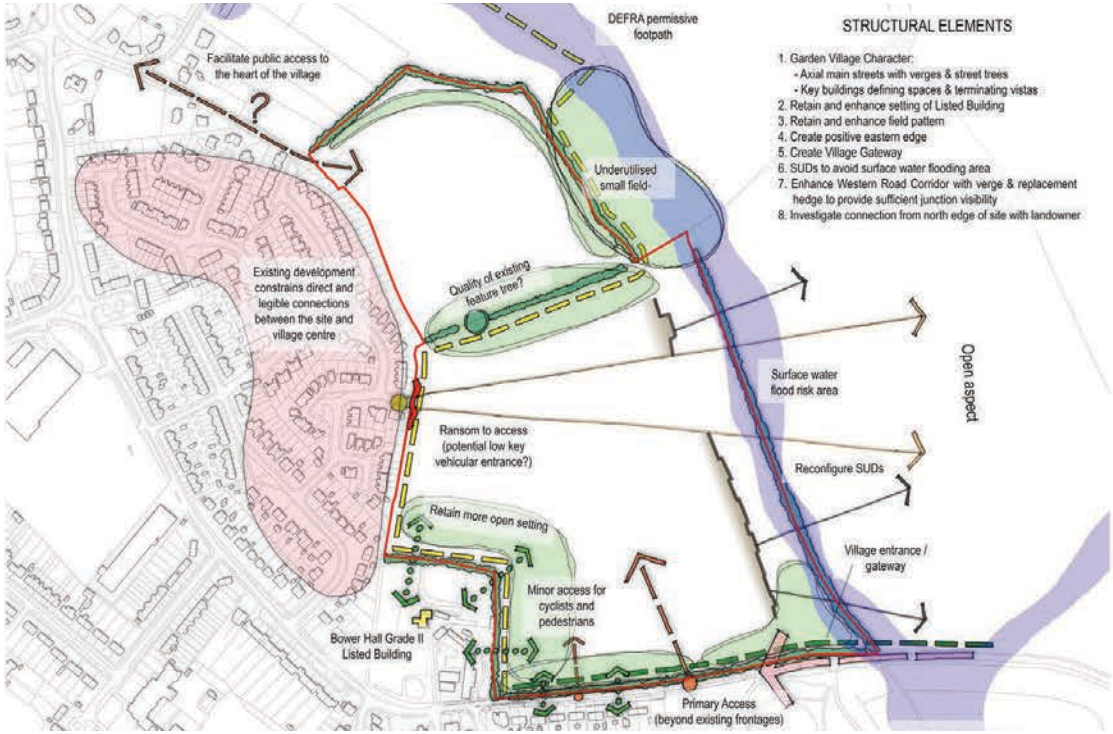




Illustrating Strengths, Opportunities and Structuring Elements

Design teams must evaluate the features identified during the observation stage to identify a site's primary strengths and opportunities.

The example below is taken from Silver End, Essex, a 350-home development introduced in the Observing chapter.



Key Outputs

Strengths, Opportunities and Structuring Elements Plan
Supporting photographs and illustrations
Written explanations and statements

Supplementary Information

Supporting illustrations
Tables of opportunities and constraints

Evaluating Place: Checklist

This check-list should be considered a starting point, and may vary according to the nature of the site and proposed development

Analysis

	Are elements of good physical quality?	Do elements have cultural or social significance?	Are elements of high ecological value?	Are elements permanent or ephemeral?	Are elements of old age or have heritage value?	Are elements locally, regionally or nationally significant and distinctive?	Are elements scarce, rare or endangered?	Do elements pose a risk or hazard?
Topography and Geology	•	•	•			•		•
Water	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Green Infrastructure and Natural Habitats	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Ecology and Biodiversity	•	•	•	•		•	•	
Historical Legacy	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Visual Exposure, Enclosure and Shelter	•	•				•		
Environmental Exposure, Enclosure and Shelter			•	•				•
Connectivity	•	•	•	•	•	•		•
Edges and Beyond	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Land Use	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Urban Grain and Built Form	•	•			•	•		
Unique Features and Narratives	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Local Vernacular	•	•			•	•	•	

Highfield Oval on the northern edge of Harpenden has a clear sense of identity, place and character.

Making a Place: Frameworks

Introduction to Making a Place: Frameworks

This chapter builds on the understanding of place, emerging narrative and structuring elements identified in the previous chapters, and introduces key community and spatial requirements from new developments. These contribute towards a vision, frameworks and neighbourhoods, which make up an illustrative masterplan.

Ingredients of Community and Spatial Requirements

What a new community and place need to be successful, and how much space will it use.

The Vision

A concept to underpin the evolution of the masterplan, rooted in a site-specific narrative.

Frameworks

Land use, landscape, movement and urban design frameworks provide structure for the vision and create a neighbourhood structure as the building blocks of the new place.

Illustrative Masterplan

Consolidation of the frameworks to realise the vision.

The Ingredients of Community

Strategic sites should not be designed as 'anywhere' housing estates, but as places which enable a community to exist, grow and evolve. The spatial requirements of a community must form a foundational element of design frameworks.

Design teams and applicants should start by considering in detail how to build a successful and integrated community.

It is important at the outset to understand what the site will need to accommodate in order to meet the needs of the new and established communities. The Local Plan policy for each site should provide a starting point.

The capacity of the site to accommodate a wide range of uses needs to be tested and retested as the masterplan progresses.

Applicants and their design teams should, as a minimum:

- Review open space standards (or in their absence refer to Fields in Trust as a starting point for discussions with the LPA).
- Liaise effectively with the Lead Local Flood Authority to begin to shape a strategy for surface water drainage.
- Enter into early dialogue with the Local Education Authority to confirm the scale of provision required for early-years, primary and secondary education, and in what form.
- Assess the scale of local retail, leisure and hospitality required and establish whether the scale of new development will trigger a retail impact.
- Understand what is needed to support specific community needs for example, community halls, indoor sports provision, library services and adult learning.
- Confirm the level of provision needed for health care.
- Agree the type and amount of employment to be provided.

The Local Planning Authorities will particularly encourage applications from teams who:

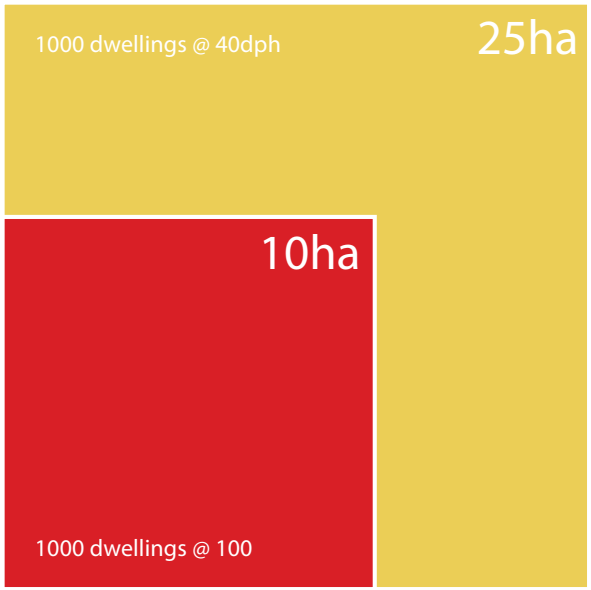
- Explore the provision of amenities, facilities and design interventions which go above and beyond requirements, to make a new place unique and a positive addition to its locality.
- Demonstrate a clear narrative of place that informs designs at all scales throughout the process.
- Integrate the new place successfully into nearby existing places, bringing benefits and improvements to the established community in areas such as amenities, service provision, and access to open space.
- Incorporate all of the placemaking and design principles (refer to the Design Principles section) into their designs, addressing the broader development challenges set out at the start of this document.

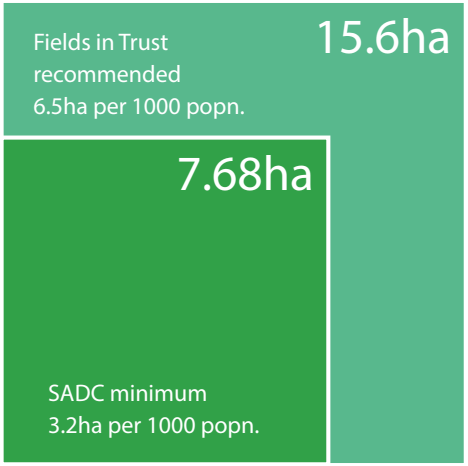
Spatial Requirements

Estimating and understanding the capacity for development is a crucial first step for strategic sites. The Local Authority will consider the balance between facilities, open space and residential development. Understanding the scale of the spatial requirements of a new place will help create a neighbourhood structure and define appropriate design responses.

Space Provision

The diagram below shows the indicative space requirements for a 1,000 home development, with an approximate population of 2,400 people at an indicative household size of 2.4 people per dwelling. The household size figure, and current space and facility provision standards, should always be sought from the relevant local authority.

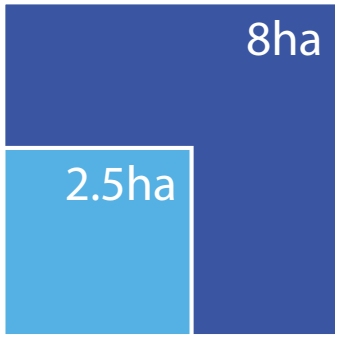




Open space should include a variety of uses:

- Amenity recreation space
- Formal parks, gardens and allotments
- SuDS and drainage
- Biodiversity and wildlife areas
- Sports pitches
- Landscape buffers

8FE Secondary School
One 8ha school per 4000 dwellings



2FE Primary School
2.5ha per 1000 dwellings

Grey infrastructure which includes roads, channels and pipes.

Consider

Other potential uses that may be required on site and which could have an impact on development capacity, are:

- Elderly care home provision
- Custom / self-build plot provision
- Healthcare hubs and health centres
- Employment areas
- Indoor leisure facilities
- Community space

Requirements should be determined through consultation with the relevant local planning authority and and through market needs assessments, where relevant.

The Vision

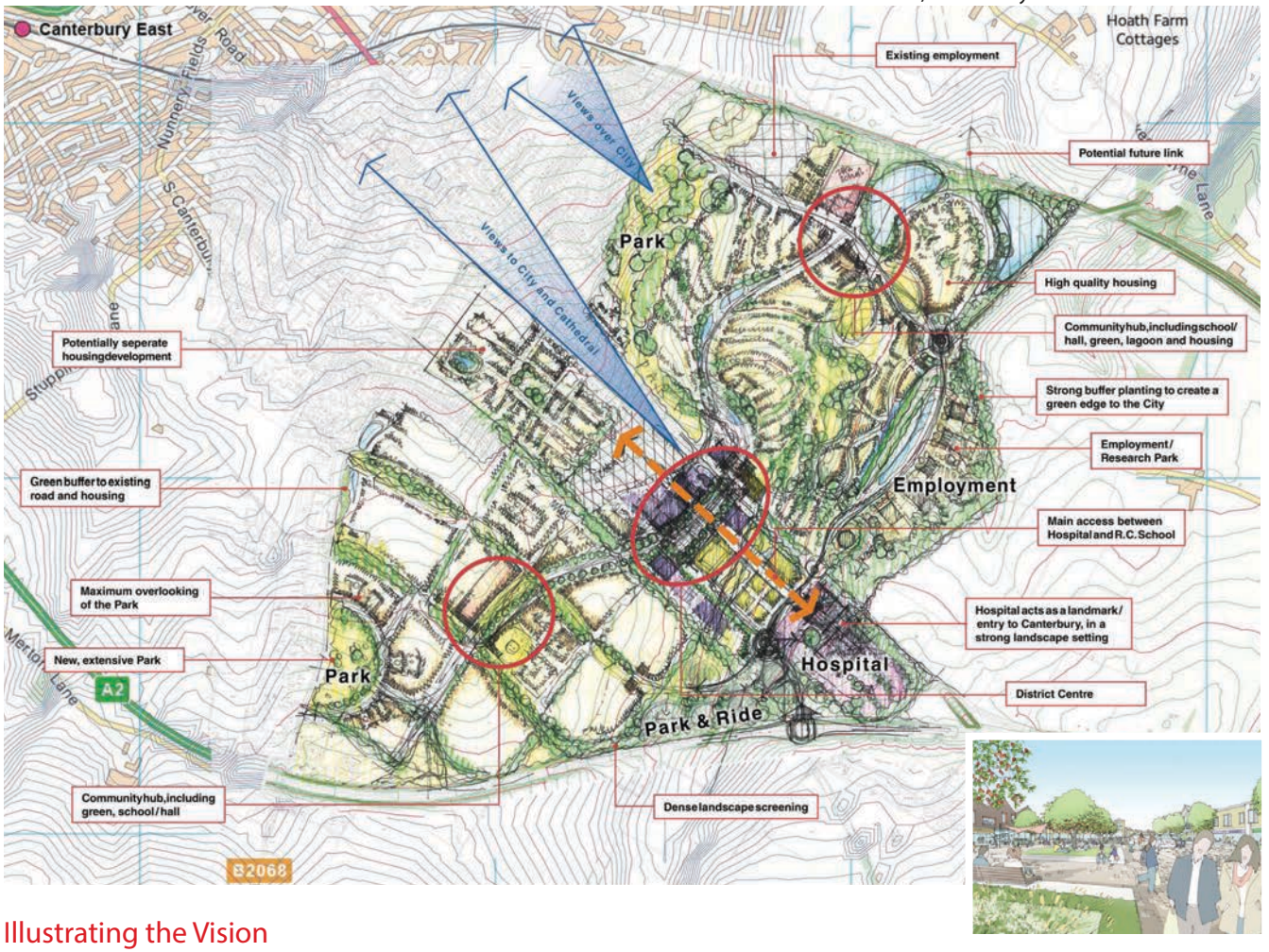
The Vision should be produced to establish important ideas and structural elements which will underpin the evolution of the masterplan framework, all grounded in a site-specific narrative.

Drawing on what has been learnt at the Observe and Evaluate stages, the Vision should provide the first ambitious narrative about the future place, referencing character, responses to the landscape, integration with the surrounding built and natural environment, neighbourhood structure, how the growth of community will be supported and what might be distinctive.

The purpose of the vision is to set an agenda and foster understanding about the direction of travel for future masterplanning. Some of the details will change and evolve but the broad narrative should be retained throughout.

The materials illustrating the Vision should show how the approach responds to the key site opportunities supporting the ambition. It should include an indication of neighbourhood structure, focal points, initial landscape arrangement, location of key land uses, access and principal routes. These go on to inform the development of the supporting frameworks.

Mountfield Park, Cantebury - David Lock Associates



Illustrating the Vision

Clear illustration of the emerging vision and narrative is an effective communication tool for defining the nature of the new place, and demonstrating how the observations have contributed to the design. Applicants should make use of a variety of media to demonstrate a strong vision which will guide and define the rest of the process.

Relating the Vision to the Frameworks

The categories to the right outline what designers should consider when putting together the initial vision, and how it is elaborated in the frameworks. Each category relates to a framework, on which more guidance is provided in subsequent sections.

Each framework is closely related and should respond to the others, creating an iterative design process.

Key Outputs

Vision plan
Sections
Written narrative

Supplementary Information

Supporting illustrations and videos
Photographs
3D Model and bird's eye views

Land Use

Arrangement of land uses
- Provision based on spatial requirements
- Relationship to land uses outside the site boundary
- Relationship to movement network

Identification of key sites
- Education
- Healthcare
- Community facilities
- Local centres and high streets
- All responsive to active travel catchments
- All positively integrated into neighbourhoods
- Consider integration of uses / co-location

Landscape

Open space structure
- Identification of key typologies
- Relationship to landscape and to open space provision

Green and blue infrastructure
- Connections to wider green and blue infrastructure corridors
- Biodiversity and ecological protection
- Integrate drainage patterns and SUDS
- Informed by technical hydrological assessments of water movement, capacity and flooding
- Integration into open space provision

Movement

Connections to existing movement network
- Informed by technical traffic assessment
- Identification of new infrastructure
- Consideration to walking and cycling routes

Circulation networks
- Primary routes of circulation
- A hierarchy of routes
- Prioritise active modes of travel and public transport

Urban Design

Neighbourhood structure
- Identification of boundaries, centres and main streets, defining features and character within the site
- Relationship to key uses
- Connections between neighbourhoods

Intensity, grain and frontages
- Variation to provide interest and respond to movement networks, land uses and open space
- Defining frontages and legible landmarks

Land Use Framework

The Land Use Framework shapes a place and locates uses to serve new neighbourhoods and the existing settlement. The final plan may be used as a parameter plan for the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and application purposes.

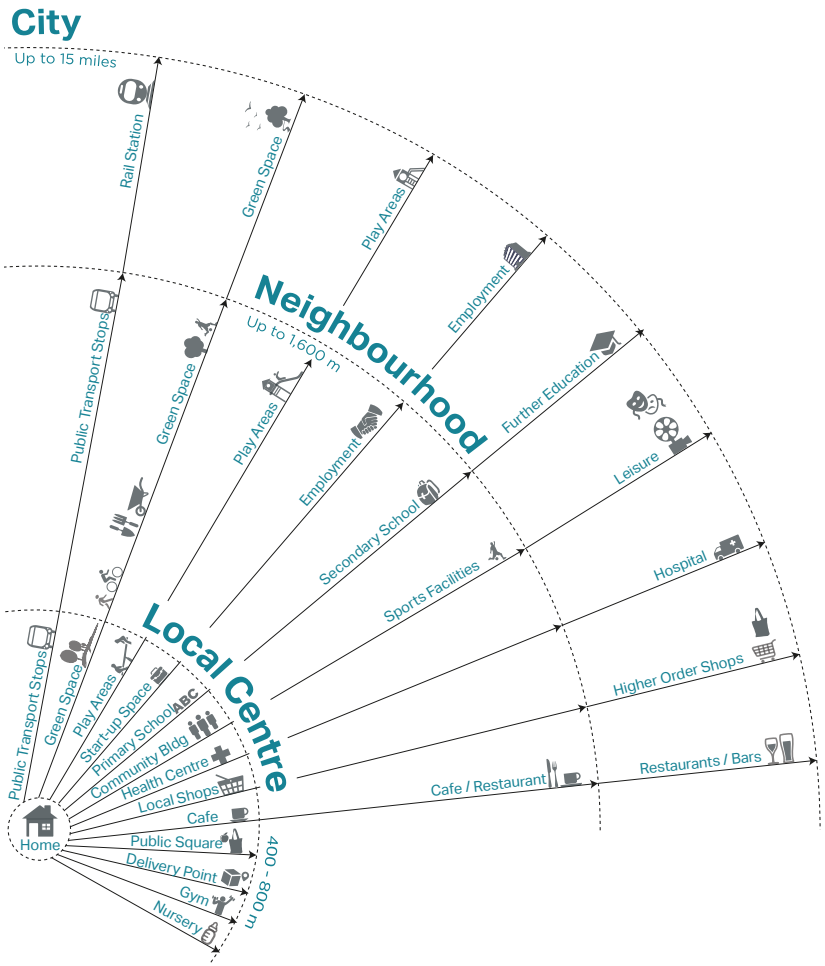
Consider

- Land uses required by local and national policy, related to proposed dwellings and site
- Land uses that could complement residential and required uses to improve placemaking
- Land uses that could help integrate the new place into any existing settlement
- Active travel catchments for local facilities
- Mixing of uses to complement and reinforce each other and public realm activity
- Relationship to movement networks
- Relationship to intensity levels and placemaking potential
- Contextually-driven orientation of land uses, either linear or nucleated
- Location of land uses in context of emerging neighbourhood structure
- Relationship to topography, for example school playing fields requiring mostly flat land

Supporting Strategies

To clearly address all of these issues, a series of Strategies should be developed to inform and underpin the overall Framework:

- Community facilities
- Sport and recreation
- Open space
- Education provision
- Healthcare provision
- Transport provision



Catchments and Provision

Services and facilities need enough people in their catchments to be viable and sustainable. Day-to-day services should be within walking distance of the people they serve.

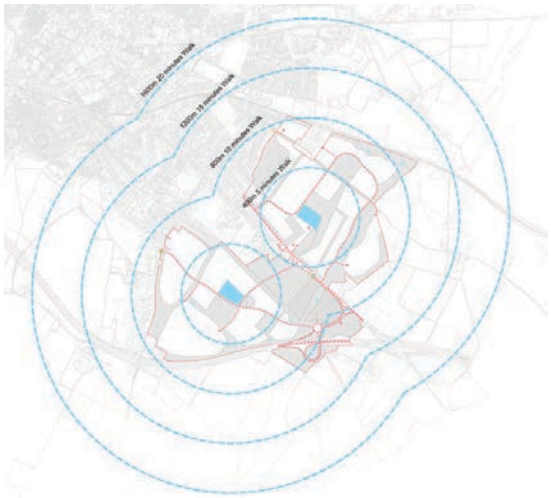
Larger developments will have a greater number of higher-order services located within them.

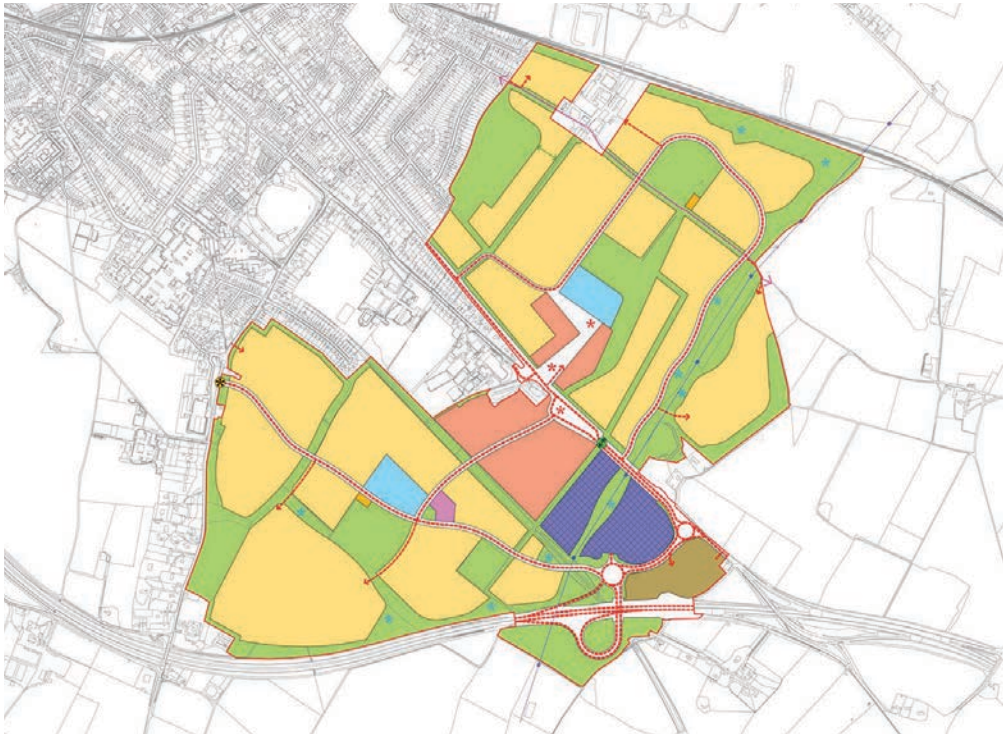
All new developments should have a defined centre with a mix of land uses, such as schools, local shops, community space or play areas.

Co-locating uses which are used at different times of day can promote public realm vitality throughout the day and evening, improving natural surveillance in a place.

Land Use Framework: Example

Plan showing catchment of proposed community hub land use





Land use framework plan illustrating key land uses.

- Residential
- Primary School
- Community Hub
- Reserve site for hospital and commercial uses
- Local Centre
- Park and Ride
- Community Pavilion
- Geographic Information (see Landscape Framework)

Mountfield Park, Canterbury - David Lock Associates

Additional Resources

Sport England have developed principles for Active Design to create healthier and more active new places

Up to date space and facility provision standards should always be sought from the relevant local planning authority.

Key Outputs

Land Use Framework plan
Land use budget
Supporting Strategies

Supplementary Information

Supporting illustrations
Sections

Landscape Framework

The Landscape Framework defines how landscape, ecology, water and open space are integrated into and contribute to the new place. It should encourage active usage, community development and healthy living, and contribute to environmental resilience and sustainability.

Consider

- Response to topography and site conditions
- Provision of a variety of space types and scales
- Open space typologies which respond to their catchment and location and are based on planning requirements and standards, distributed through and integrated into the development
- Connections with existing open space beyond the site boundary
- Promotion of active travel and healthy lifestyles
- Provision for wildlife and existing high value natural features
- Integration of surface water drainage and SUDS
- Integration of heritage and archaeology
- Provision of community orchards and allotments

Supporting Strategies

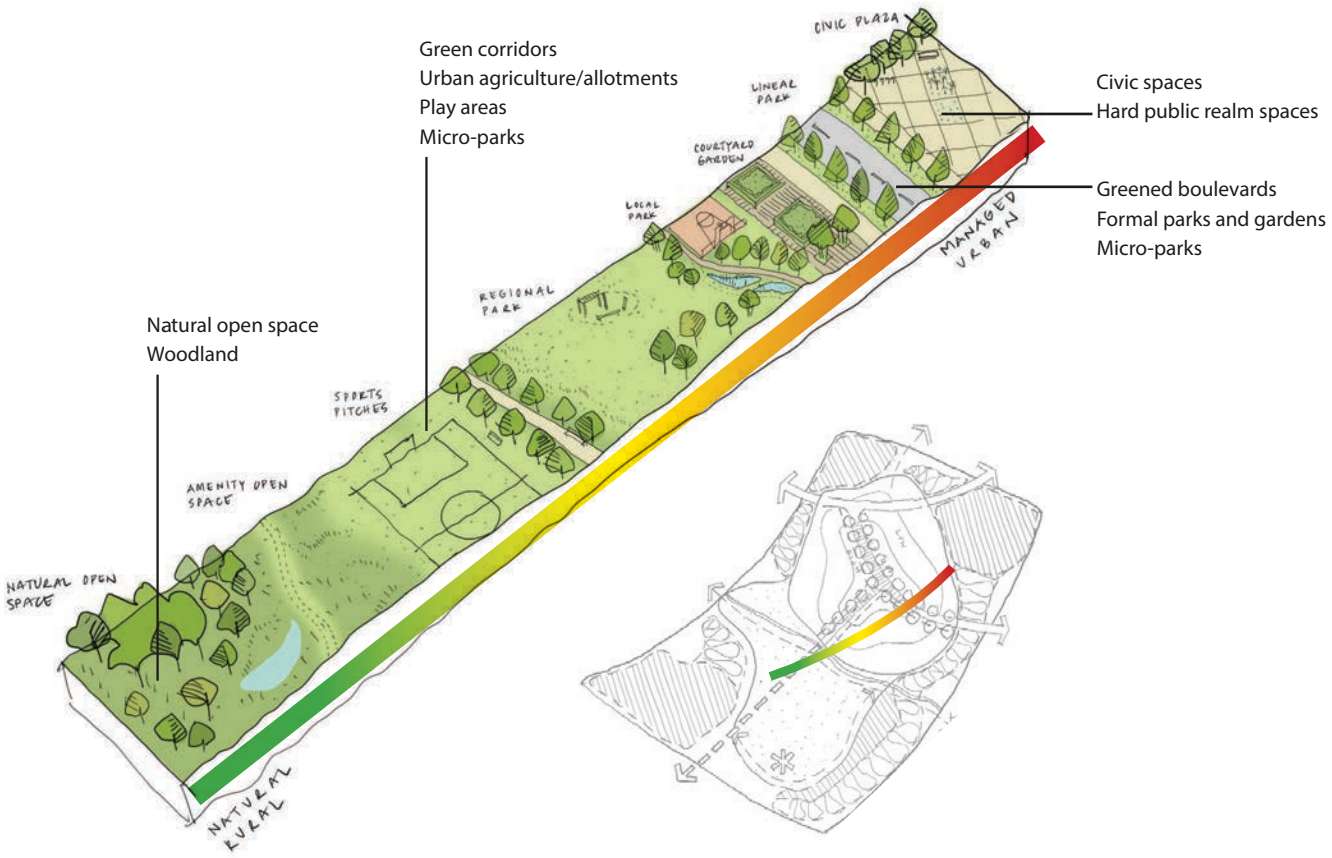
To clearly address all of these issues, a series of Strategies should be developed to inform and underpin the overall Framework:

- Environmental sustainability
- Ecology
- Drainage, SuDS and flood prevention
- Climate change resilience
- Heritage and archaeology
- Open space community facilities
- Sport and recreation provision
- Open space typologies
- Green infrastructure

Open Space Typologies

A wide variety of open spaces can contribute to the variety and character of a place. Different typologies are appropriate in different parts of the masterplan. Up to date guidance on appropriate provision levels for each type of space should always be sought from the Local Planning Authority.

Opportunities to integrate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) and water flow should be considered at all scales and throughout all open space typologies, from large landscape-scale drainage features all the way through to permeable materials and integrated retention tanks.



Landscape Framework: Example

Additional Resources

CIRIA and DEFRA have published The SUDS Manual to give guidance on effective sustainable urban drainage systems in new developments.

Landscape and open space plan for Mountfield Park, showing open space typologies, integration with green and blue corridors, wildlife habitats and main SUDS provision.

- Existing woodland
- Proposed woodland
- Open green space
- Civic spaces
- Allotments / orchards
- Playing fields
- SuDS basins
- Amenity green space

Mountfield Park, Canterbury - David Lock Associates

Key Outputs

Landscape Framework plan
Supporting Strategies

Supplementary Information

Supporting illustrations
Sections
Surveys

Movement Framework

The Movement Framework defines how the communities can access services, employment, leisure and open space in a healthy, safe and sustainable way. New places should be seamlessly connected with existing settlements, within and beyond the boundary of the new development.

Consider

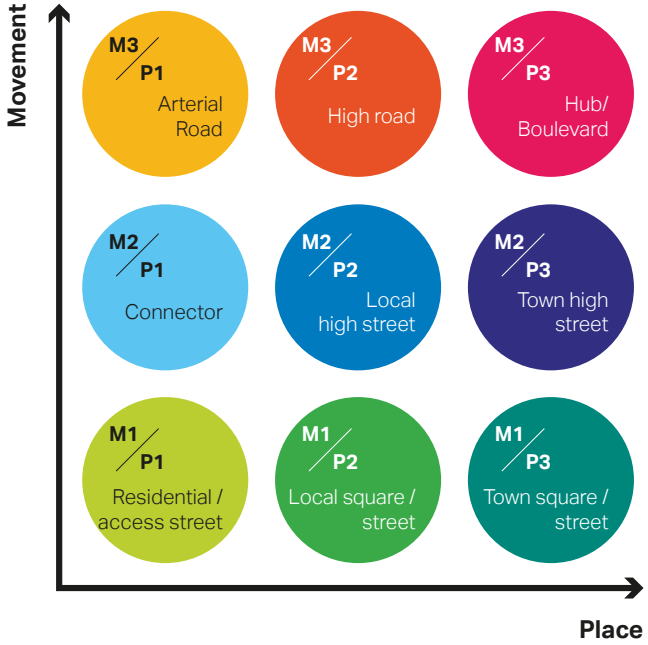
- Maximising active travel minimising the need for day-to-day car use
- Use of green infrastructure corridors
- Public transport corridors with stops based on residential catchment
- The needs of the wider settlement, for example Park and Ride locations
- Legible and permeable routes for all modes
- Catchments of land uses and relationship to movement networks
- Connections to existing movement networks such as paths, cycle network, rail and road
- Flexibility to accommodate future expansion beyond the site and changes in lifestyle and movement patterns
- A street's Movement and Place hierarchy to inform appropriate future design
- Flexibility to accommodate Electric and Automated Vehicles and future technology
- Efficient layout in terms of land-take

Movement and Place

Streets are both movement corridors and places, and the Movement Framework should reflect this understanding. This approach aims to prevent streets becoming traffic-dominated, create high quality public spaces and ensure effective mobility throughout. The relationship between movement and place is set out in the diagram to the side and below.

Movement
The position of a street along the movement axis is determined by the strategic importance of that route. Movement includes pedestrian and cycling movement.

Place
The position of a street along the place axis is determined by its catchment and contribution to placemaking. The higher along the place axis, the greater attraction and contribution of the street to the character of a place.



Supporting Strategies

A series of Strategies should be developed to inform and underpin the overall Framework:

- Environmental sustainability
- Green infrastructure
- Walking / cycling / active travel
- Public transport
- Street typologies
- Emergency access
- Waste strategy

Movement Framework: Example

Additional Resources

TfL's Street Types for London Guidance expands on their implementation of the Movement and Place typology matrix.

Cycle nation have published Making Space for Cycling, a guide to creating successful new places and streets with good provision for cycling.

The Chartered Institute of Highways and Transport have published guidelines for integrating buses in new developments

Manual for Streets outlines key movement network design principles

Hertfordshire County Council's Highway Design Guide defines acceptable street design within the county.

Mountfield Park, Canterbury - David Lock Associates

Movement framework plan illustrating active travel catchments, route hierarchy, open space movement, key land uses and public transport provision

- Existing public rights of way
- Limited access
- Parcel access
- Bus gate
- Primary street
- Important public realm
- Fast bus route
- Green bridge

Key Outputs

Movement Framework plan
Supporting Strategies
Street sections

Supplementary Information

Supplementary illustrations / graphics

Urban Design Framework

The Urban Design Framework creates varied, legible and interesting places with a clear spatial hierarchy, which are welcoming to a wide range of different groups, facilities and activities. It defines neighbourhoods, variety, centres, intensity and structuring elements such as boundaries, nodes, frontages, views and gateways.

Consider

- Structure of neighbourhoods - refer to the Spatial Typologies in 'Making a Place'
- Neighbourhood boundaries and centres
- Development intensity variations
- Paths, edges, nodes and landmarks to aid legibility of movement and distinctiveness of place - consider key corners and noteworthy buildings
- Variety and richness along streets and movement networks
- Views and visual connections in and out of the site
- Key frontages and building lines defining spaces
- Edge conditions and appropriate responses

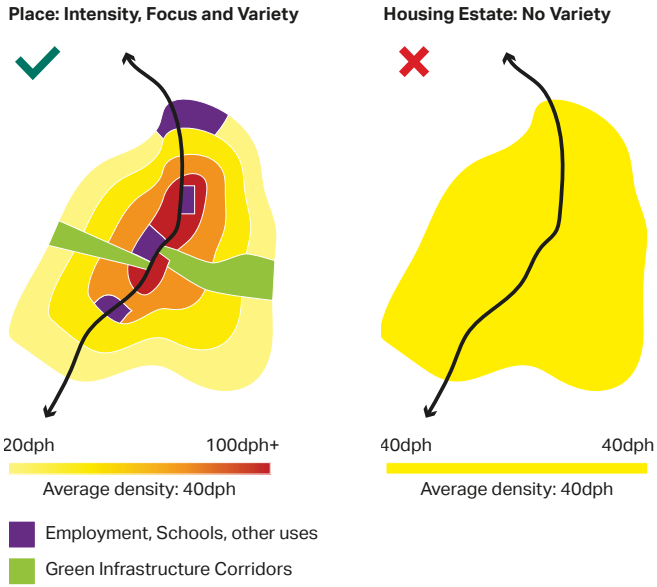
Placemaking through the Framework

Key placemaking decisions are made at this framework stage. Neighbourhoods should be clearly defined by the framework elements, with the potential for clusters of different typologies within the neighbourhoods, explored in the following section of this document.

Framework Elements

As well as site-specific defining principles, designers should use the Townscape Elements below to structure the framework. Effective use of the framework elements will help create legible and memorable neighbourhoods.

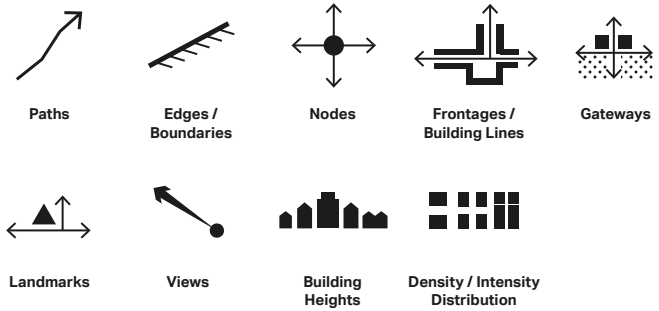
The introduction of townscape principles sets a quality level for later stages of design in the proposals.



Supporting Strategies

To clearly address all of these issues, a series of Strategies should be developed to inform and underpin the overall Framework:

- Building Heights
- Intensity / Density Distribution
- Neighbourhood Structure
- Green Infrastructure



Urban Design Framework: Example

An urban design parameter plan showing neighbourhood structure, key boundaries and landmarks, main frontages, defining principles and land use overlay

Mountfield Park, Canterbury - David Lock Associates

Additional Resources

Dacorum Borough Council's Urban Design Assessment gives examples of grain and intensity variations within the borough's urban areas.

The Urban Design Compendium contains principles of urban design, how they can be applied and lead to successful places.

Key Outputs

Urban Design Framework plan
Supporting Strategies

Supplementary Information

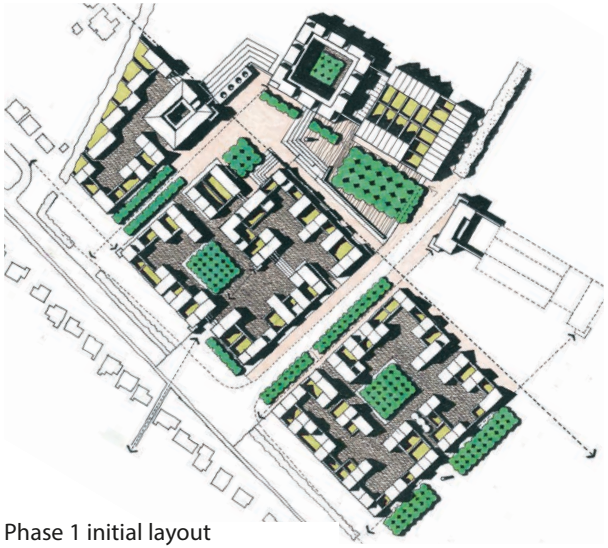
Supplementary illustrations
Sections showing edge treatment, key spaces, noteworthy buidlings and visual connections

Bringing it Together: The Illustrative Masterplan

The Illustrative Masterplan supports a contextual approach to the detailed design of the first phase based on the Observing - Evaluating - Making process.

The Illustrative Masterplan should demonstrate density, intensity and urban grain, and should be informed by a reasonable degree of testing of the capacity of development areas to accommodate housing at different scales and densities. Any studies that result from this testing can be used in the Design and Access Statement to demonstrate intent and form a bridge to the design code stage. To the side is an example of an Illustrative Masterplan which brings together the Framework layers to show:

- Development areas
- Intensity and use
- Movement
- Open space
- Green infrastructure
- Relationship to context
- Water and drainage



Phase 1 initial layout

The Illustrative Masterplan above supports the Detailed Masterplan of the first phase, shown left.

Making a Place: Frameworks - Checklist

Applicants are encouraged to illustrate the outputs imaginatively, using the best media for the nature of the information gathered. This checklist should be considered a starting point and is not prescriptive.

The arrangement of complementary buildings around human-scale public spaces generates an effect greater than the sum of its parts, and is key to the character of St Alban's distinct town centre.

Making a Place: Spatial Typologies

Introduction to 'Making a Place': Spatial Typologies

Contemporary versions of the contextual spatial typologies identified in Observing Place can be utilised within a masterplan - on their own or in combination - to create distinctive neighbourhoods.

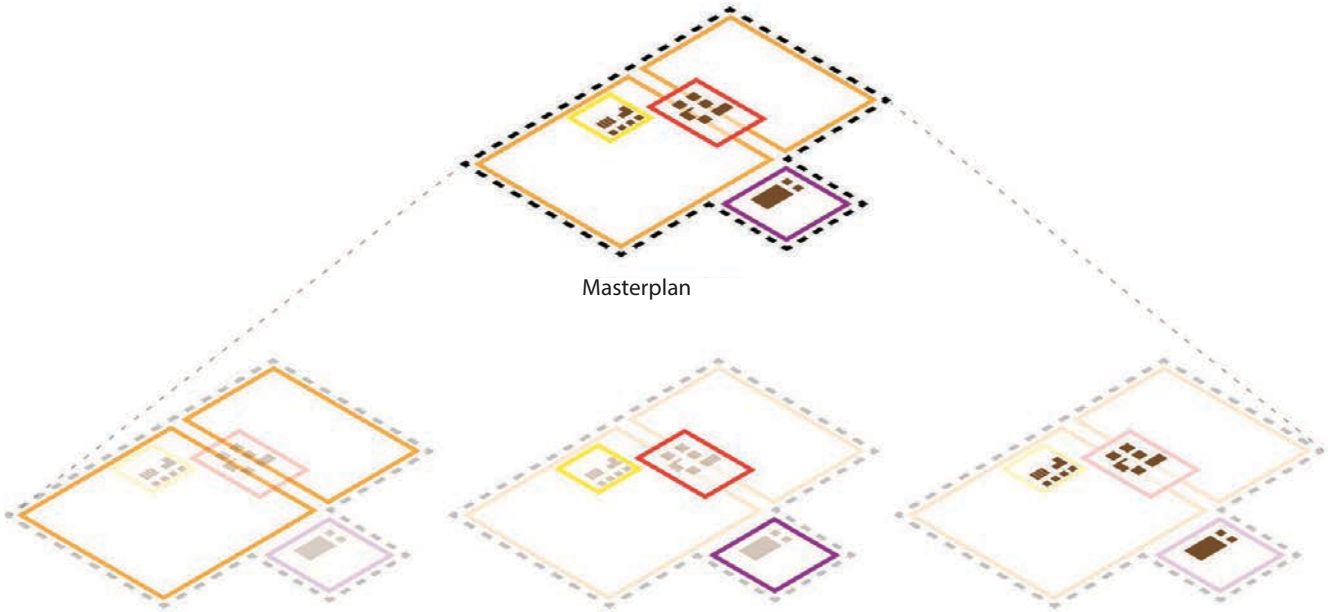
This report provides guidance on the four spatial typologies based on those identified in Observing Place. These spatial typologies are:

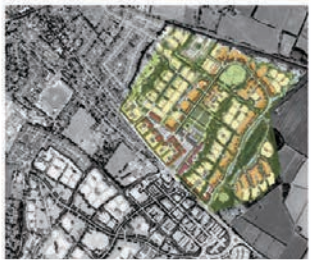
- The Green, and The Ham / Worth
- The Hoe
- The Stead / Sted
- The Bourne / End

These spatial typologies are not exhaustive, design teams can identify further spatial typologies through an assessment of historic built form and landscape.

Design Principles

The Key Design Principles will apply to these spatial typologies, supported by specific principles for each spatial typology which are set out on the following pages.





Contemporary Spatial Typologies: The Green and The Ham / Worth

The Green is set on high ground, with built form configured around a public green space. The Ham / Worth is a structured courtyard typologies, like farmsteads or almshouses, forming architectural 'set pieces' in the landscape.

Design Principles - Public Realm and Landscape

01 Linear green strategic landscape

02 Landscaped courtyards and shared surface courtyards and mews

03 Informal landscaped spaces

04 Public route to edge of settlement

Design Principles - Parking

05 On-plot parking: tandem in courtyards, flats over garages, townhouses over garages, to dwelling frontages, integrated with landscape -supports the fine grain and human scale.

06 Informal parking in landscape, parking in secure courts and set into shared surface

Design Principles - Streets

07 Primary route aligns with the 'green', forming the principle frontage

08 Secondary routes run perpendicular to primary route forming housing blocks

09 Garden walls to public realm not fences

Design Principles - Buildings density 30-50 dph

10 Mews spaces and courtyards form belvedere's to landscape

11 Housing arranged to form gatehouses at important townscape junctions

12 Terraced housing configured to form structured courtyards

13 Semi-detached housing with on-plot parking fronting informal landscape

14 Courtyard typology forms continuous frontage

15 Ham / Worth Formal courtyard of housing

Design Principles - Public Realm, Landscape and Parking

Sketch plan of the green © Proctor & Matthews Architects

Contemporary Spatial Typologies: The Green and The Ham / Worth

Continuous defined edge to the landscape

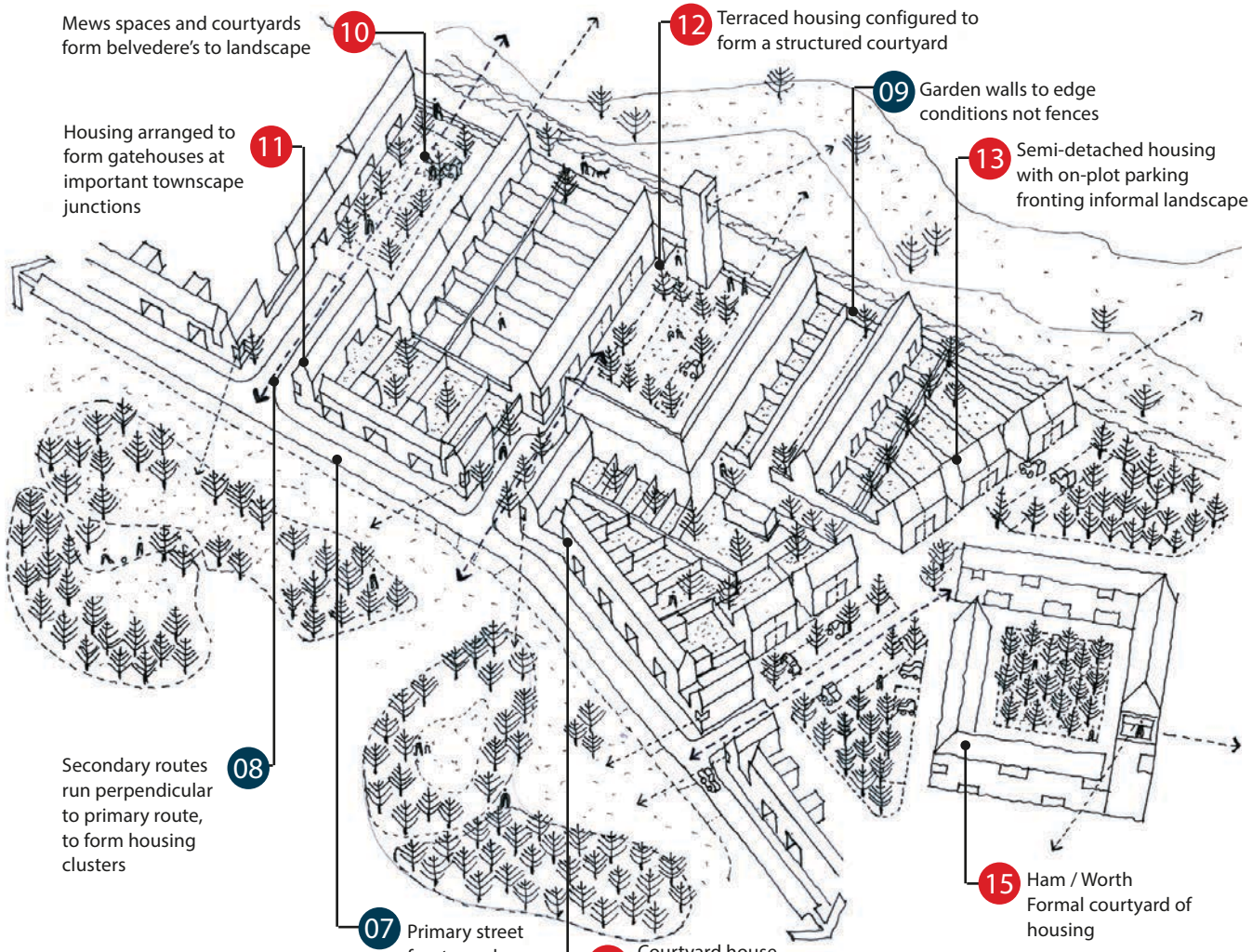
Landscaped communal courtyard

'Gatehouse' buildings at key locations and to landscape edge

Typologies with integrated parking spaces

Parking integrated with landscaping

Design Principles - Streets and Buildings



Cartoon of Green and Ham / Worth © Proctor & Matthews Architects

Contemporary Spatial Typologies: The Hoe

The contemporary Hoe typology can be applied to smaller neighbourhoods set on a slope or across a varied topography. The structure and grain used in this typology should respond to the existing land form and celebrate views towards and across the surrounding landscape.

Design Principles - Public Realm and Landscape

01 Series of permeable pedestrian routes arranged to support shared space courtyards between housing blocks

02 Public realm to give priority to pedestrians and to support the permeable street network that steps down the contours

Design Principles - Parking

03 Lower densities allow both terraced and semi-detached housing to support on-plot parking

04 Some on street parking provided, carefully designed to support both residential and visitor requirements

Design Principles - Streets

05 Primary streets configured along contours

06 Pedestrian priority shared surface mews streets terrace down across the contours

07 Vehicle routes follow the contour lines

Design Principles - Buildings density 30-40 dph

08 Built form predominantly linear terraces set along contours to support the street structure

09 Roof forms create a strong silhouette in the landscape

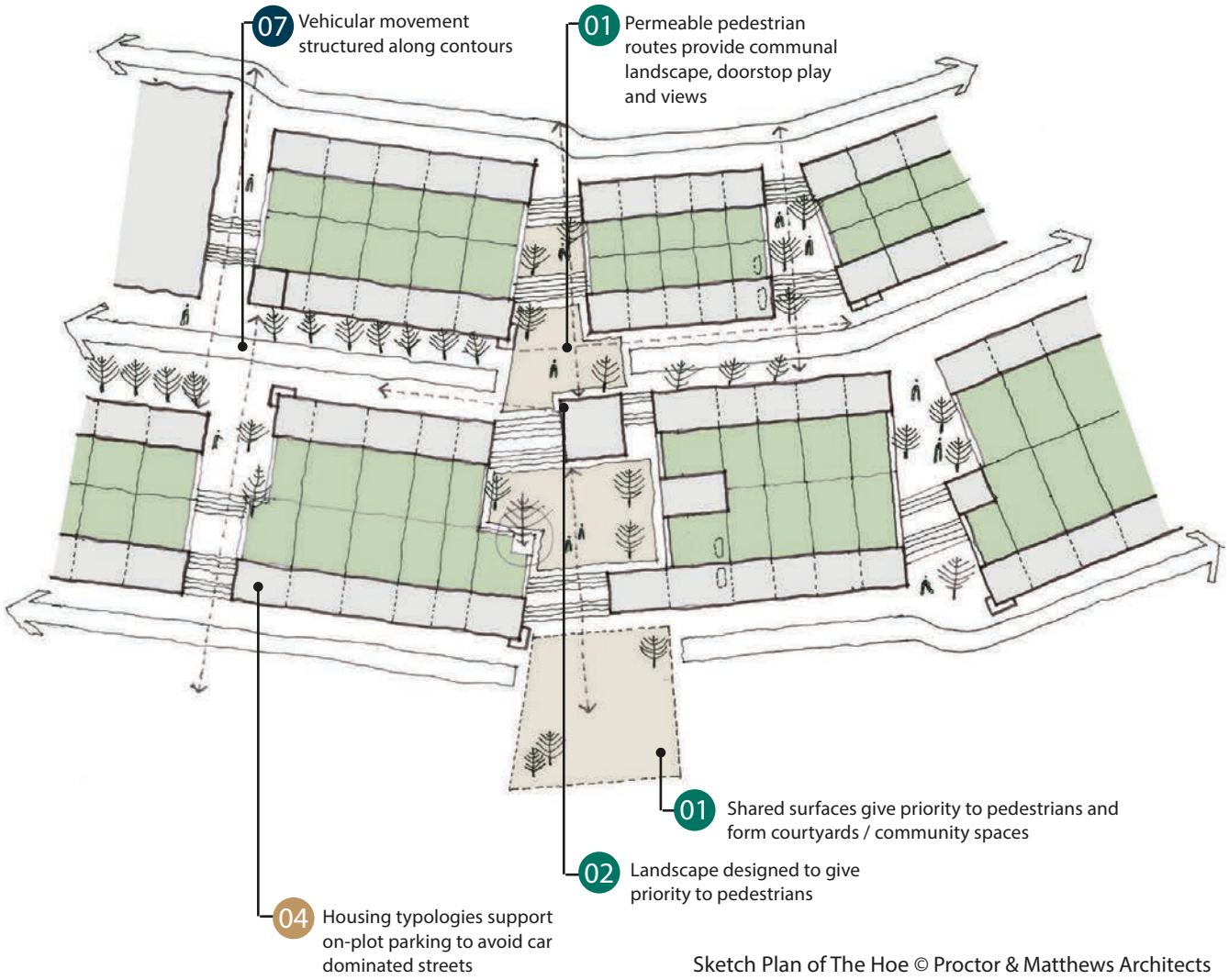
10 Pedestrian mews provide opportunities for special typologies (taller houses or apartments) to be used as townscape markers

11 Level changes within gardens allow for economic retaining structures

12 Gardens walls - rather than fences - help support the urban structure

13 Built form supports distant views

Design Principles - Public Realm, Landscape and Parking



Sketch Plan of The Hoe © Proctor & Matthews Architects

Contemporary Spatial Typologies: The Hoe

Permeable pedestrian routes with communal landscape and doorstop play

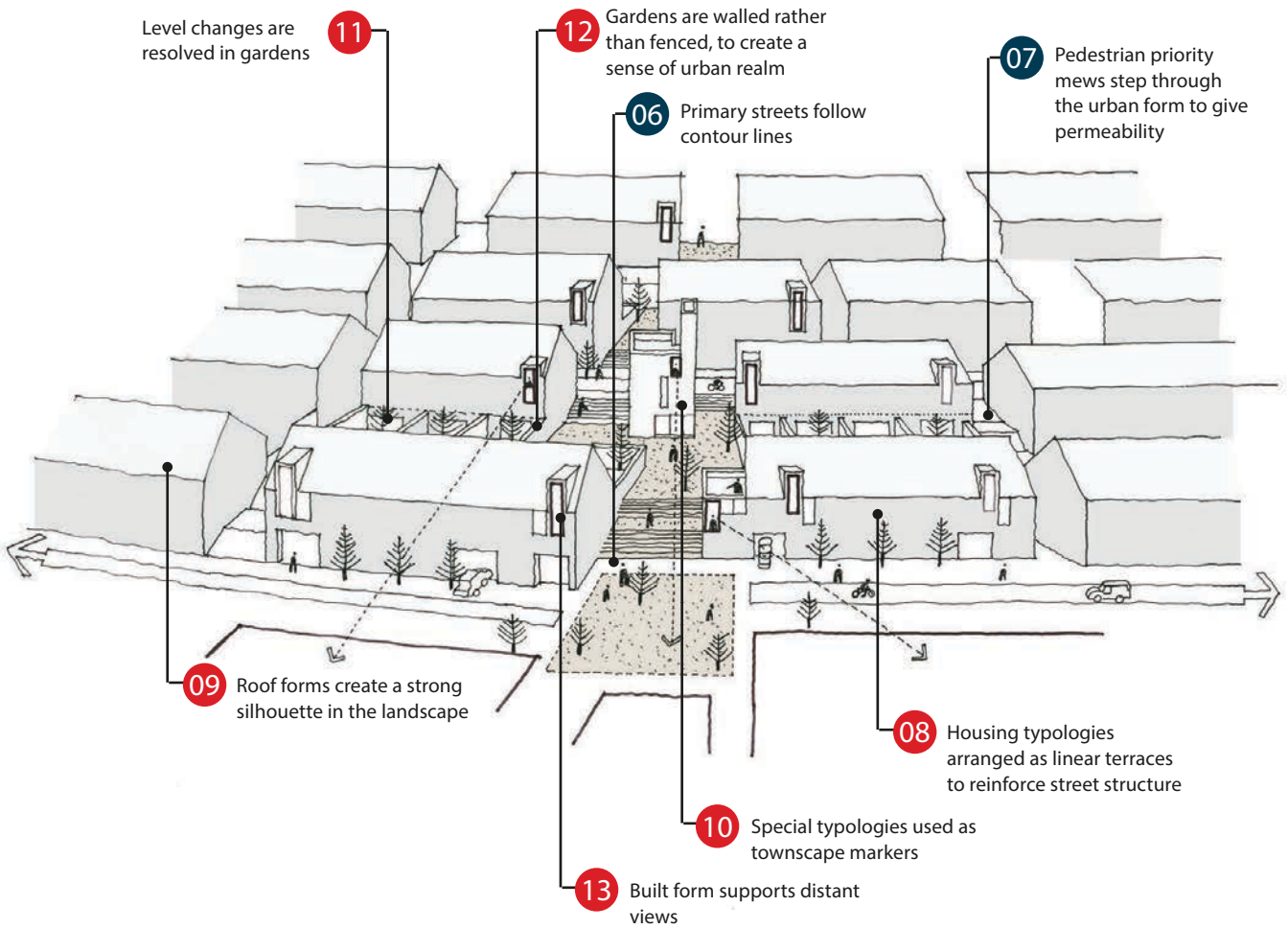
Garden walls create a sense of urban realm

Linear terraced long houses

Built form supports distant views

Townscape marker located at a key junction

Design Principles - Streets and Buildings



Sketch Cartoon of The Hoe © Proctor & Matthews Architects

Contemporary Spatial Typologies: The Stead / Sted

The Stead / Sted applies to larger neighbourhoods on the slopes, with a higher density towards the centre where a 'market square' for public space forms the focal point. There should be a diverse mix of residential and non-residential uses, with the majority of commercial uses located along the main street and around the market square.

Design Principles - Public Realm and Landscape

01 Principle high street of neighbourhood is mixed use, with a shared surface environment with structural hard and soft landscaping

02 Public market square forms focal point of the urban structure and wider neighbourhood

03 Formal courtyard buildings enclose private and semi private gardens including productive landscapes (allotments, raised beds or orchards)

Design Principles - Parking

04 Higher densities and greater proportion of apartments require a mix of parking solutions including: on-plot parking, enclosed courtyard parking, undercroft parking and carefully designed on-street in defined pockets of 5-6

Design Principles - Streets

05 Neighbourhood layout is focussed around the principle mixed-use high street and often follows contours

06 Secondary mews and streets run perpendicular providing pedestrian and cyclist access to the high street

07 Some secondary streets do not provide vehicular access to the high street but end in shared surface spaces with integrated parking

Design Principles - Buildings density 40-70 dph

08 3 to 4 storey mixed use apartment buildings are parallel to high street to give spatial coherence

09 2 to 3 storey terraced housing along the secondary streets and mews

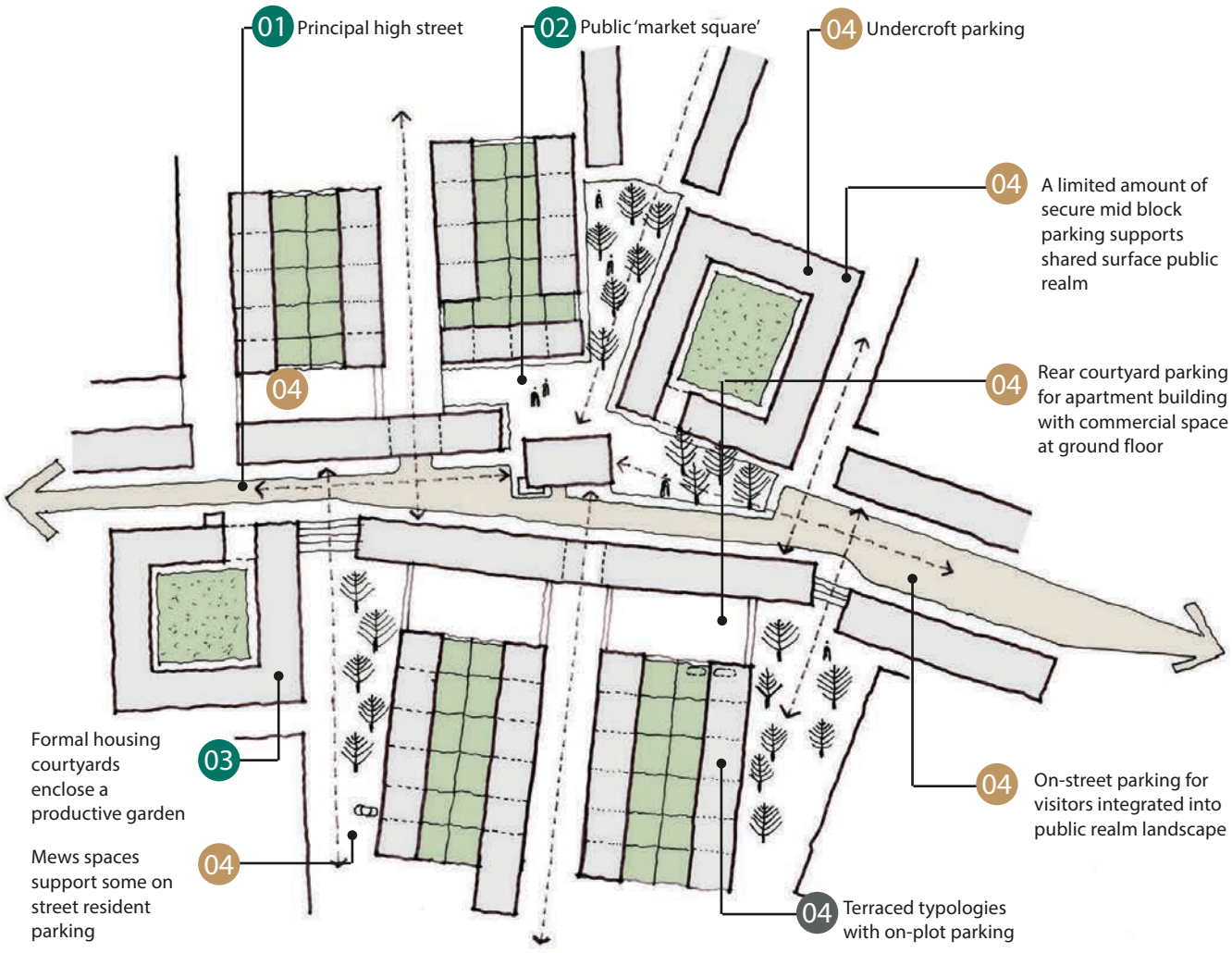
10 Public buildings in pivotal locations act as marker buildings, enlivening the principle public spaces

11 Standard housing typologies are augmented at points of townscape importance

12 Principal frontage buildings to high street form portals / arches over secondary routes to help create coherent frontage

13 Gardens walls support the urban structure

Design Principles - Public Realm, Landscape and Parking



Sketch Plan of The Stead / Sted © Proctor & Matthews Architects

Contemporary Spatial Typologies: The Stead / Sted

Secondary streets support a walkable neighbourhood

4 storey apartments form strong frontage to high street

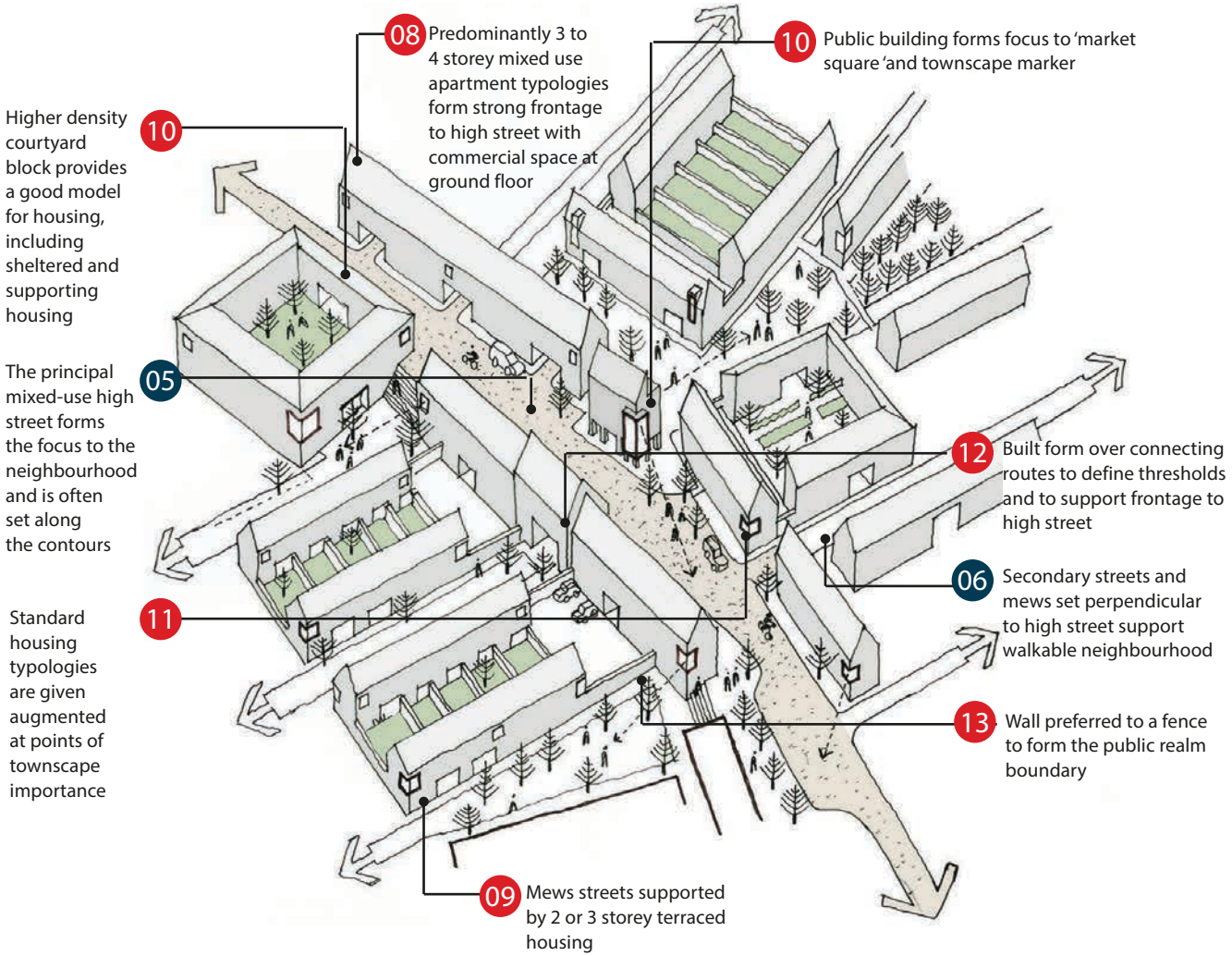
Articulation at point of townscape importance

High density courtyard block

Built form over connecting route

Townscape marker

Design Principles - Streets and Buildings



Sketch Cartoon of The Stead / Sted © Proctor & Matthews Architects

Contemporary Spatial Typologies: The Bourne / End

The valley floor bourne / end spatial typology applies to smaller neighbourhoods. The neighbourhood grain should be linear and follow the contours with very close links to the surrounding landscape setting. The neighbourhood is likely to be mostly residential, possibly with a community or mixed-use building in a central location.

Design Principles - Public Realm and Landscape

01 Lanes and mews spaces provide access to housing blocks and lead to the principle street network and the meandering valley floor landscape

02 The valley floor landscape comprises a biodiverse parkland with water features; streams /SuDs holding ponds and rills / rain gardens / wetland meadows and recreational spaces

03 Valley floor landscape connects to the wider pedestrian and cycle network

04 Shared surface mews and lanes and shared productive landscapes e.g. allotments

05 The threshold between the built form and landscape edge is clearly defined - see 13 below

Design Principles - Parking

06 Greater on-plot parking provision for larger homes and terraced houses

07 On-street parking for visitors and residents integrated into the street and shared surfaces

Design Principles - Streets

08 Streets and lanes set perpendicular to the valley floor landscape are not through-routes for vehicles

09 Mews streets support parking for terraced houses and access to the edge typologies

Design Principles - Buildings density 25-35 dph

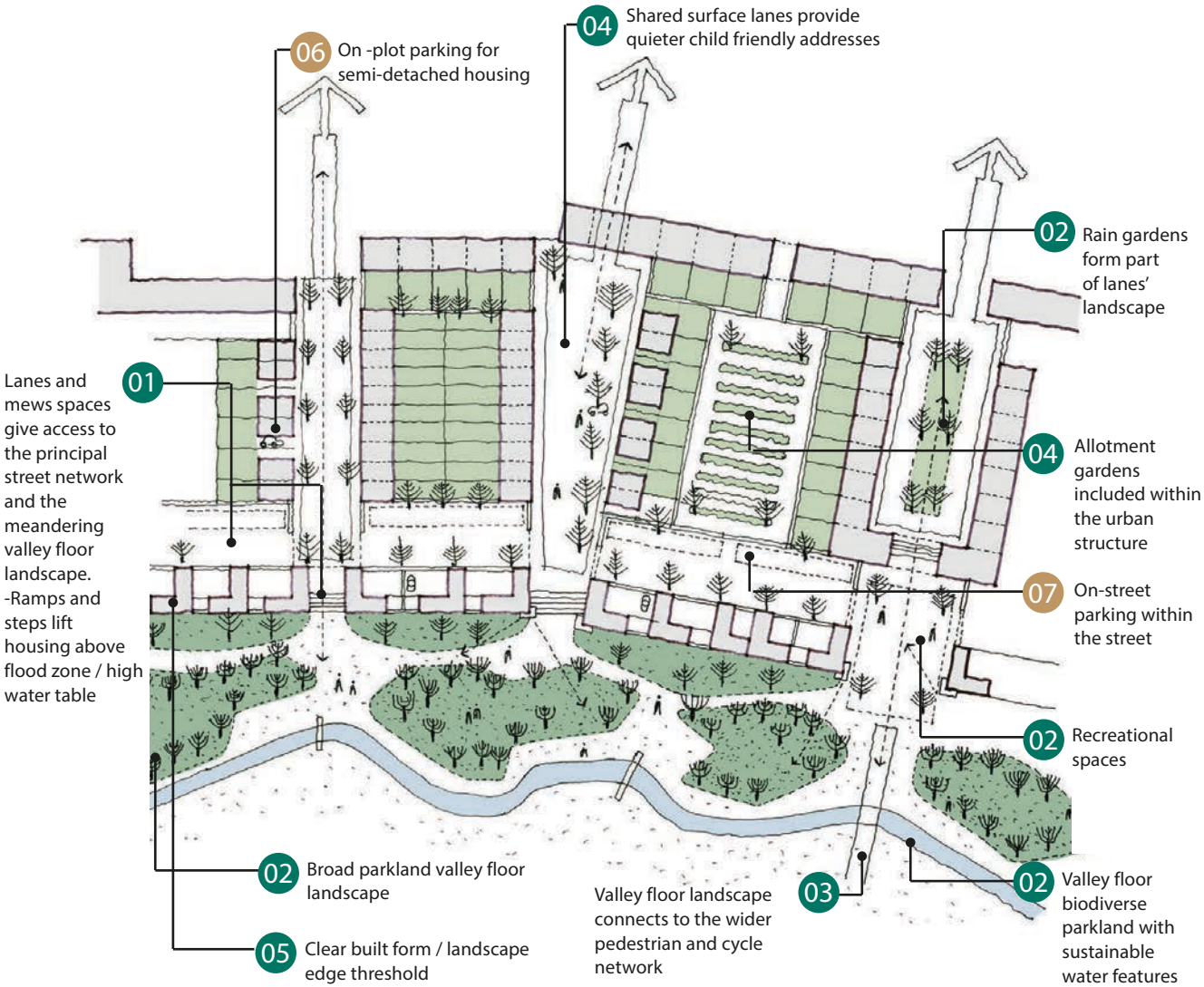
10 Mix of low density dwellings that includes terraced housing

11 Edge house typologies are designed with side gardens to form a structured urban edge

12 Some apartment buildings act as townscape markers and gateway buildings

13 Gardens walls support the urban structure

Design Principles - Public Realm, Landscape and Parking



Sketch Cartoon of The Broune / End © Proctor & Matthews Architects

Contemporary Spatial Typologies: The Bourne / End

Design Principles - Streets and Buildings

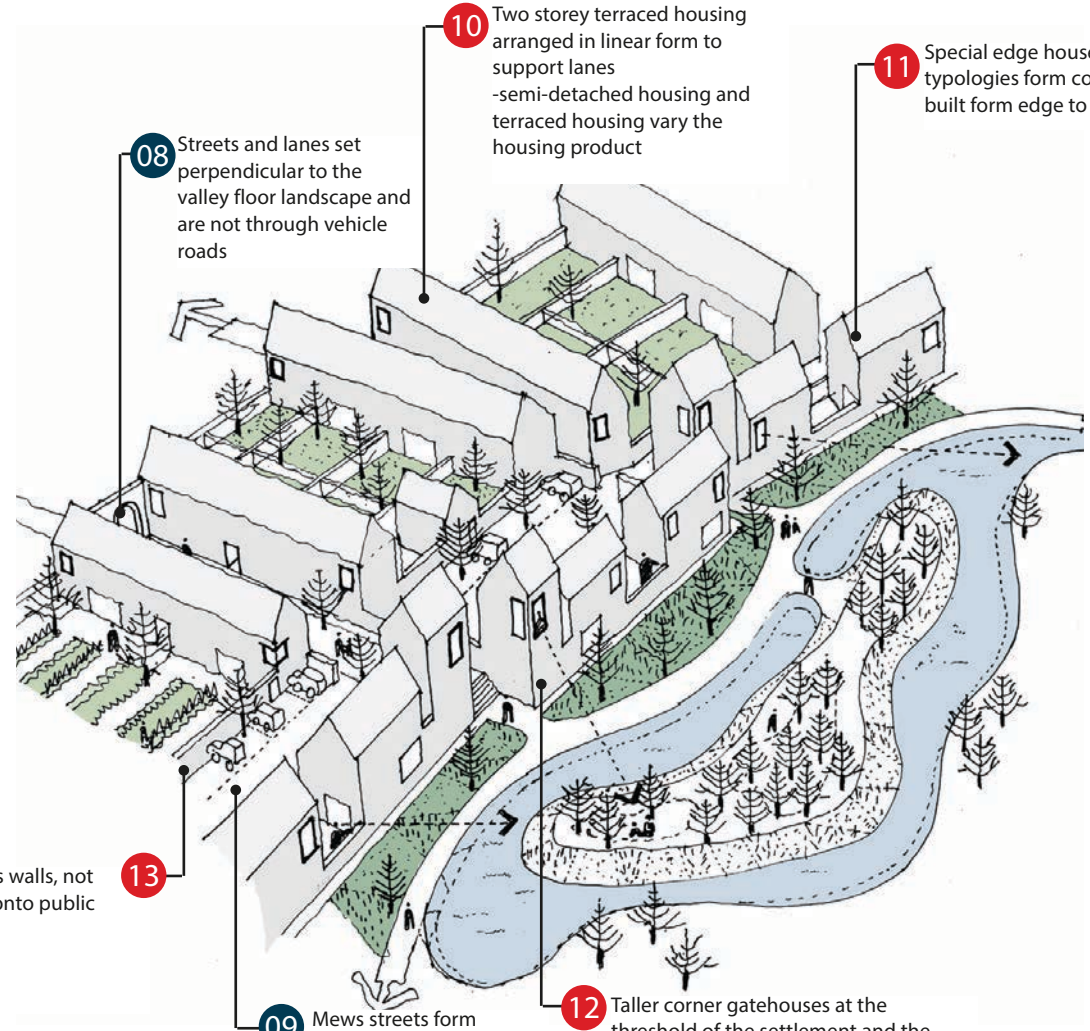
Communal landscaped courtyard space

Mix of semi-detached and terraced housing within mews

Garden walls define the urban realm

Recreational spaces and landscape streets

Built form engages with the edge to landscape



Sketch Cartoon of The Broune / End © Proctor & Matthews Architects

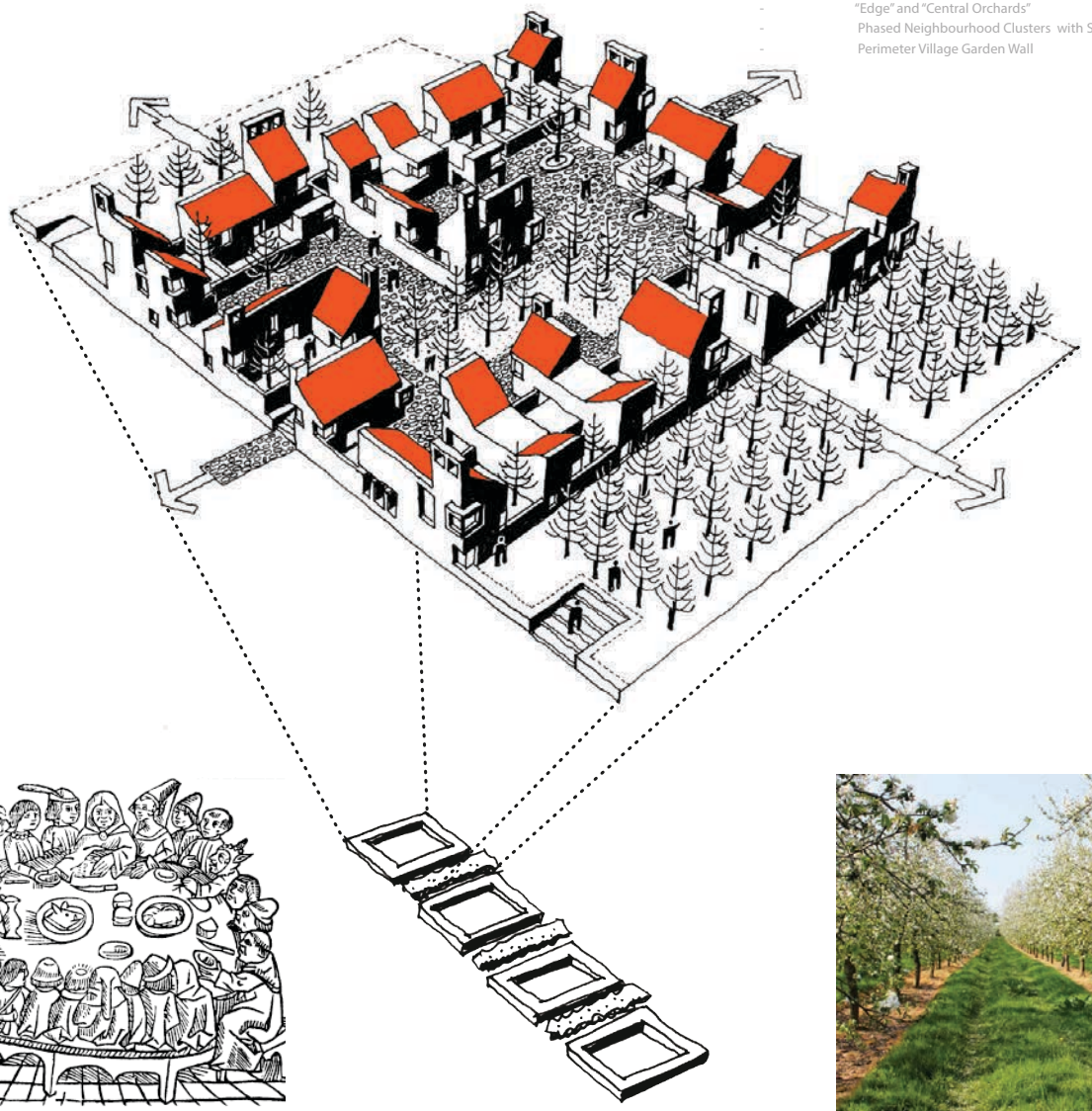
Contemporary Spatial Typologies: Example - Structured Rural Housing

The predominant spatial typology for Phase 1 of Mountfield Park, Canterbury, Kent, consisting of 140 homes is created in response to an analysis of local, historic and county-wide typological forms.

Building on the typological narrative of shelter and organisation established by the orchard and hops field references, this residential spatial typology is informed by the local contextual precedents of courtyard farms and rural institutions.

The proposed residential spatial typologies are configured as a series of Courts made up of inter-connected 'courtyard houses' with an orchard landscape focus at the heart of each grouping, and separated by shelterbelts of trees proposed for the areas between each court.

- Community Spatial Typologies
- "Courtyard Dwellings"
- "Edge" and "Central Orchards"
- Phased Neighbourhood Clusters with Strong Identity
- Perimeter Village Garden Wall



Sketch © Proctor & Matthews Architects

Contemporary Spatial Typologies: Example - Structured Rural Housing

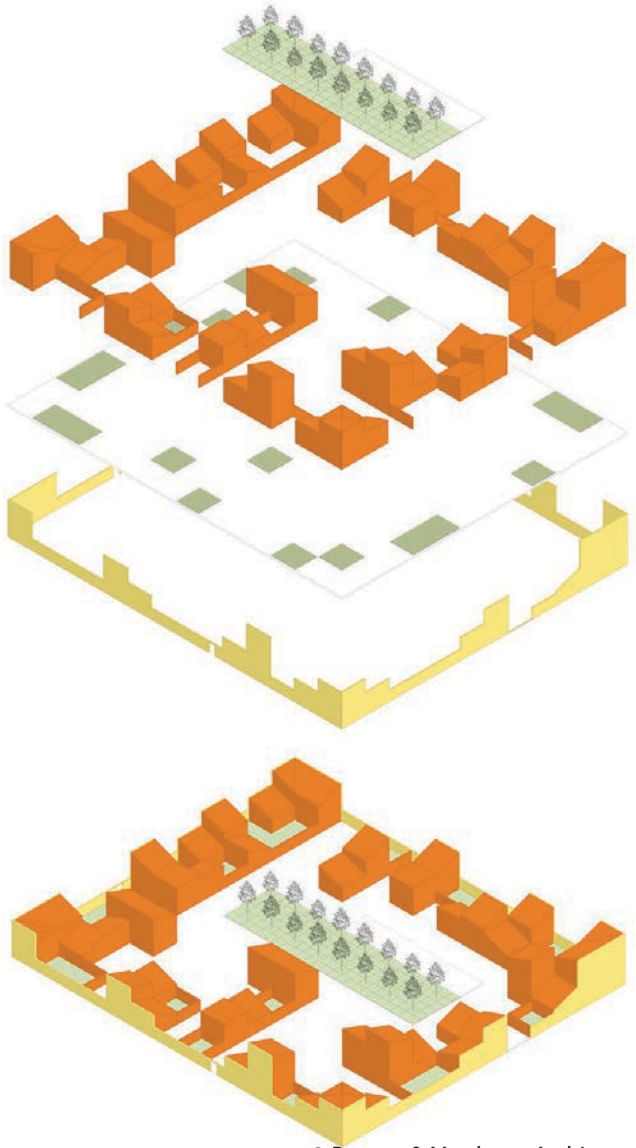
The proposed spatial typology is arranged within the Phase 1A masterplan for Mountfield Park, which in turn relates to the wider framework. Materiality and detailing refer to the local Kent context.

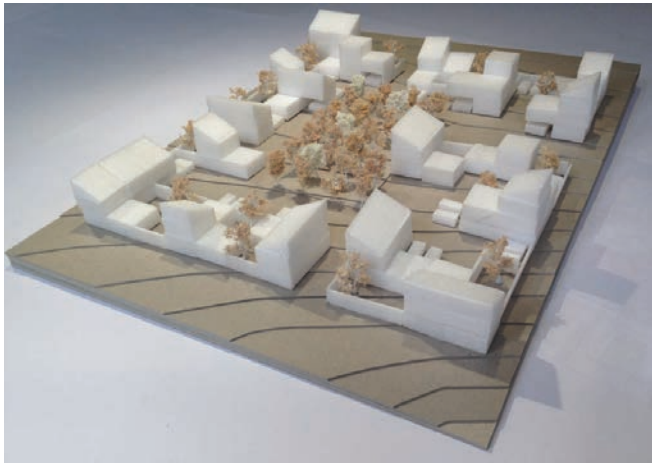
The architectural form and language proposed for all buildings is based on a contemporary exploration and interpretation of local vernacular precedents.

Each residential group is conceived as a composition of three principal components: a perimeter 'Village' Garden Wall, Courtyard dwellings and a Central Neighbourhood Cluster Orchard.

The 'Village' Garden Wall defines the external perimeter of each cluster and unites each family dwelling type to form a coherent court form.

A red brick wall forms the outer edge of all dwellings and courtyard gardens and incorporates gables, chimneys and perforated brickwork bonded panels. This echoes the enclosing walls of typical Kent village streetscapes, and provides a distinctive profile and silhouette to each residential cluster.





Making a Place: Spatial Typologies - Checklist

Applicants are encouraged to illustrate the outputs imaginatively, using the best media for the nature of the information gathered. This checklist should be considered a starting point and is not prescriptive.

Spatial Typology Design

Required Outputs

- Site layout
- Landscape drawing
- Plans, sections and key elevations
- 3d images / CGIs
- Material and colour palette
- Environmental strategy
-

Supplementary Information

- Supporting sketches and diagrams
- Illustrations of proposed built environment
- Model
- Supporting reports (if applicable)
-

Making a Place: Additional Resources

Additional Resources

Distinctively Local
HTA Design, Pollard Thomas Edwards, PRP and Proctor and Matthews Architects

The Ten Primary Characteristics of Places Where People Want to Live
RIBA

The Housing Design Handbook
Levitt Bernstein

Urban Design Compendium
Llewelyn Jones

Urban Design Compendium 2
Llewelyn Jones

The Plot
Jonathan Tarbatt

Garden City Principles
TCPA

Shaping Neighbourhoods
Hugh Barton

The Smart Growth Manual
Duany, Speck and Lydon

The Case for Space
RIBA

101 Things I Learned in Urban Design School
Matthew Frederick and Vikas Mehta

Public Places Urban Spaces
Matthew Carmona

CABE Guidance

The Design Companion for Planning and Placemaking
Urban Design London

Manual for Streets
Department for Transport

Manual for Streets 2
The Chartered Institution for Highways and Transport

Great Streets
Allan B Jacobs

Cities for People
Jan Gehl

Life Between Buildings
Jan Gehl