Telford & Wrekin Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest to create a better borough

Telford and Wrekin Council

Design Brief Manual

October 2026

Background

This Design Brief Manual has been prepared on behalf of **Telford and Wrekin Council (T&WC)** to provide clear, consistent and policy-led guidance for the preparation of Development and Design Briefs for the Sustainable Community sites across the borough.

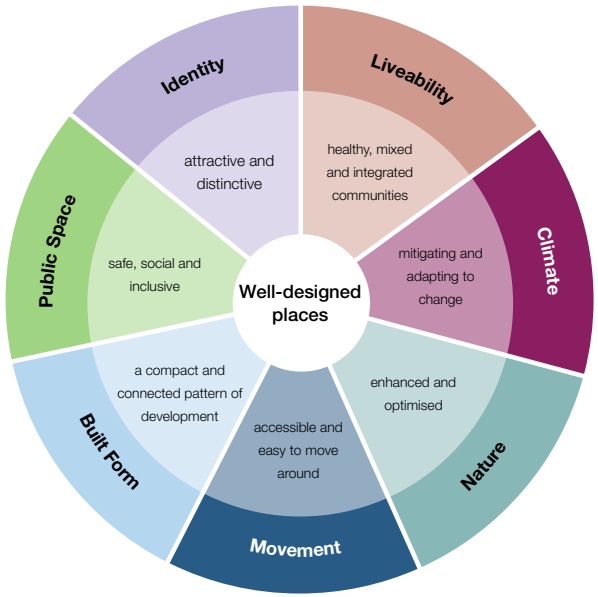
Purpose of the Design Brief Manual

This manual supports transparency and consistency in the preparation, review and determination of Design Briefs, promoting design excellence in accordance with the ***New National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2026)***, ***National Design Guide (NDG)***, as well as the emerging ***Draft Design and Placemaking Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (2026)***. In particular, the new NPPF Policies DP1 and 2 (design and placemaking) provide a strong national policy foundation for this document, complemented by the **'Design in Plan-Making'** chapter of the Draft Design and Placemaking PPG (2026).

The manual also embeds NDG's ten characteristics of well-designed places, as well as the seven features of well-designed places set out in the draft PPG, both supporting the delivery of high-quality, locally distinctive and enduring places. It also aligns with the emerging Telford and Wrekin Local Plan and associated policy framework. It aims to deliver outcomes aligned with the Council's ***Co-operative Values***, responding to **local character, community needs and long-term placemaking objectives.**

Drawing on the NDG and Draft Design and Placemaking PPG's principles for well-designed places, it establishes a structured yet flexible approach to guide applicants, site promoters, design teams and council officers in bringing forward high-quality, deliverable and contextually responsive development.

Central to this is the Council's ambition to be recognised as a **Forest Community**, reflecting Telford's distinctive environmental setting and legacy of extensive tree planting. This approach will be maintained across new areas of development with a strong emphasis on the retention and provision of green infrastructure as set out the emerging Local Plan policies to help create vibrant communities that are well adapted to climate change.





The seven features of well-designed places of Draft Design and Placemaking PPG, 2026 (above), and the ten characteristics of well-designed places of National Design Guide (below) should together inform the preparation of Design Briefs throughout the process

Approach and application

This document is structured to support practical use, establishing the foundation of a robust and effective Design Brief. Each chapter sets out the key principles, considerations and requirements to be addressed when preparing or reviewing a Design Brief, ensuring a consistent baseline of quality while allowing for site-specific responses. In doing so, **it clearly differentiates a Design Brief from a Design and Access Statement or a Masterplan Framework document, positioning it as a focused and concise tool for setting quality benchmarks, guiding site delivery, and coordinating stakeholder expectations.**

While the manual defines core expectations, it is intended to be applied flexibly and proportionately, reflecting the scale, complexity and nature of each site. This approach helps streamline the planning and application process, provide clarity and certainty for all parties, and support early and meaningful collaboration.

Ultimately, this manual seeks to establish a strong foundation for Design Briefs that guide coordinated delivery, align stakeholders around a shared vision, and help shape high-quality, sustainable development across Telford and Wrekin.

How to use this Design Brief Manual

This manual sets out the core requirements for the preparation of Design Briefs for the Sustainable Community sites coming forward within Telford and Wrekin.

The following contents page illustrates the recommended structure of a Design Brief, organised into a series of clearly defined chapters. Each chapter includes subheadings that identify the key information required to support the development of a site, accompanied by concise guidance on the Council's expectations.

Case study imagery drawn from best practice developments, alongside examples from Design and Access Statements and Masterplan Frameworks, is included throughout to demonstrate how these principles can be applied in practice. These examples are intended as guidance only and should not be replicated directly.

Applicants and their design teams are encouraged to present information in a format, structure and style that responds to the specific characteristics, constraints and opportunities of their site, while meeting the overarching requirements set out in this manual.



*This document includes interactive elements such as **hyperlinks**, which reference back to the source of the content.*

Example

Examples of content and graphic material are highlighted in a red box, showcasing useful references for production of the Design Brief.



Boxes in red highlight key information and/ or requirements.

Highlighted text in red references specific guidance and/ or policies from the emerging Local Plan.

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01
Introduction

Provides an overview of the Design Brief's status, content, and the proposed development.



1.1. Overview

Purpose and status of the document

This section should clearly define the purpose and role of the Design Brief within the planning and development process. It should explain why the document has been prepared, what it seeks to achieve, and the key outcomes it is intended to deliver, including establishing a clear vision, strategic design principles, and a spatial framework for the Sustainable Community site to guide its long-term planning and development.

The authorship of the Design Brief should be clearly stated, identifying those responsible for its preparation (including any consultants) and the organisation or client on whose behalf it has been produced.

The status of the Design Brief must also be established, explaining how it will be considered within the planning process and how it should be interpreted by Council officers and decision-makers. This should include clarification of its role in guiding pre-application discussions and informing the preparation of subsequent masterplans, Design Guides, and outline or full planning applications, where relevant.

Relationship to the Local Plan

This section should clearly explain the site's relationship to the **emerging Telford and Wrekin Local Plan**, including identification of relevant Sustainable Community (SC) allocation and associated policy requirements. It should set out how the Design Brief responds to and accords with these policies, demonstrating how the proposed development will deliver the intended vision for the site.

The section should also outline how the site contributes to the borough's wider growth, regeneration and placemaking priorities, highlighting its role within Telford and Wrekin's strategic objectives for sustainable development.

Description of Development

This section should provide a clear and concise overview of the Sustainable Community site, including its size, ownership, land type and key characteristics, as well as its location and immediate context. It should also clearly identify the site's allocation within the Local Plan, including the relevant policy reference number (SC).

A concise summary of the proposed development should also be included, setting out the key parameters and components of the scheme. This should cover the anticipated scale and nature of development, including the number and range of homes, proposed density and land uses (including key data in hectares where applicable).



02
Planning and Strategic Context

Sets the planning policy context and strategic ambition for the site, based on its allocation in the Local Plan and within the context of wider growth.

2.1. Policies relevant to the site

This section should review relevant planning policy to establish a clear, site-specific vision for the proposed development. **Rather than repeating policy wording, this section should demonstrate how national, regional and local policy requirements are translated into a coherent and deliverable design approach.**

National policy and guidance

The Design Brief must set out how national policy and guidance apply to the site, including the ***National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)***, ***National Design Guide (NDG)***, ***National Model Design Code (NMDC)***, ***Building for a Healthy Life (BfHL)***, ***Manual for Streets***, and ***National Green Infrastructure Framework (NGIF)***. This should clearly demonstrate how key principles, such as high-quality design, sustainable development, well-connected places and healthy communities, are embedded within the site vision and design approach.

Local planning policy

Proposals must respond to the **emerging Telford and Wrekin Local Plan** and its supporting strategies. This section should assess how relevant policies are applied to the site and translated into tangible design outcomes, with particular regard to Policy S4, HO suite (sustainable communities and housing), ST suite (movement and sustainable transport), DD1 (development design criteria), and the NE suite (natural environment), demonstrating how the development will contribute to the creation of sustainable, green, well-connected and inclusive neighbourhoods supported by appropriate infrastructure, services and facilities.

This section should also reflect on local evidence and strategies such as the ***Telford and Wrekin Transport Plan*** and ***Infrastructure Delivery Plan***, ensuring alignment with infrastructure provision and accessibility requirements.

In line with the Council's environmental objectives, this section must also take account of the ***Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy***, identifying the site's ecological context and demonstrating how proposals contribute to biodiversity recovery and green infrastructure networks.

Allocation specific requirements

Where the Sustainable Community site is allocated within the Local Plan, this section must clearly set out its role within the wider spatial strategy. This should include:

- The relevant allocation policy reference
- Expected land uses and indicative capacity
- Site-specific requirements, constraints and opportunities

Supplementary Planning Documents and other guidance

This section should also assess relevant ***Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)*** and other strategic guidance prepared by the Council. Where applicable, it should explain how these shape the proposals. Relevant documents may include:



- Homes for All SPD
- Climate Change Guidance for Development SPD
- Design for Community Safety SPD
- Shopfronts, Signage and Design Guidance in Conservation Areas SPD
- Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site SPD
- Green Infrastructure Framework and Evidence
- Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- Sustainable Drainage Sustems (SuDs) Handbook
- Playing Pitch and Outdoor Recreation Strategy (PPORS)
- Telford Growth Strategy
- Telford and Wrekin Transport Plan
- Highways Design Guide
- Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)
- Bus Infrastructure Improvement Plan (BSIP)
- Waste Design SPD
- Parking Standards
- Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy

03
The Site

Sets out the key components of the Sustainable Community site and considerations to inform the design proposal.



3.1. Site location (wider context)

This section should clearly describe the location of the site and its relationship to the wider context. It should provide both a concise written overview and supporting location map(s) to establish a clear spatial understanding of the site's setting, in accordance with the principles of the National Design Guide and relevant emerging Local Plan policies on context, movement and placemaking.

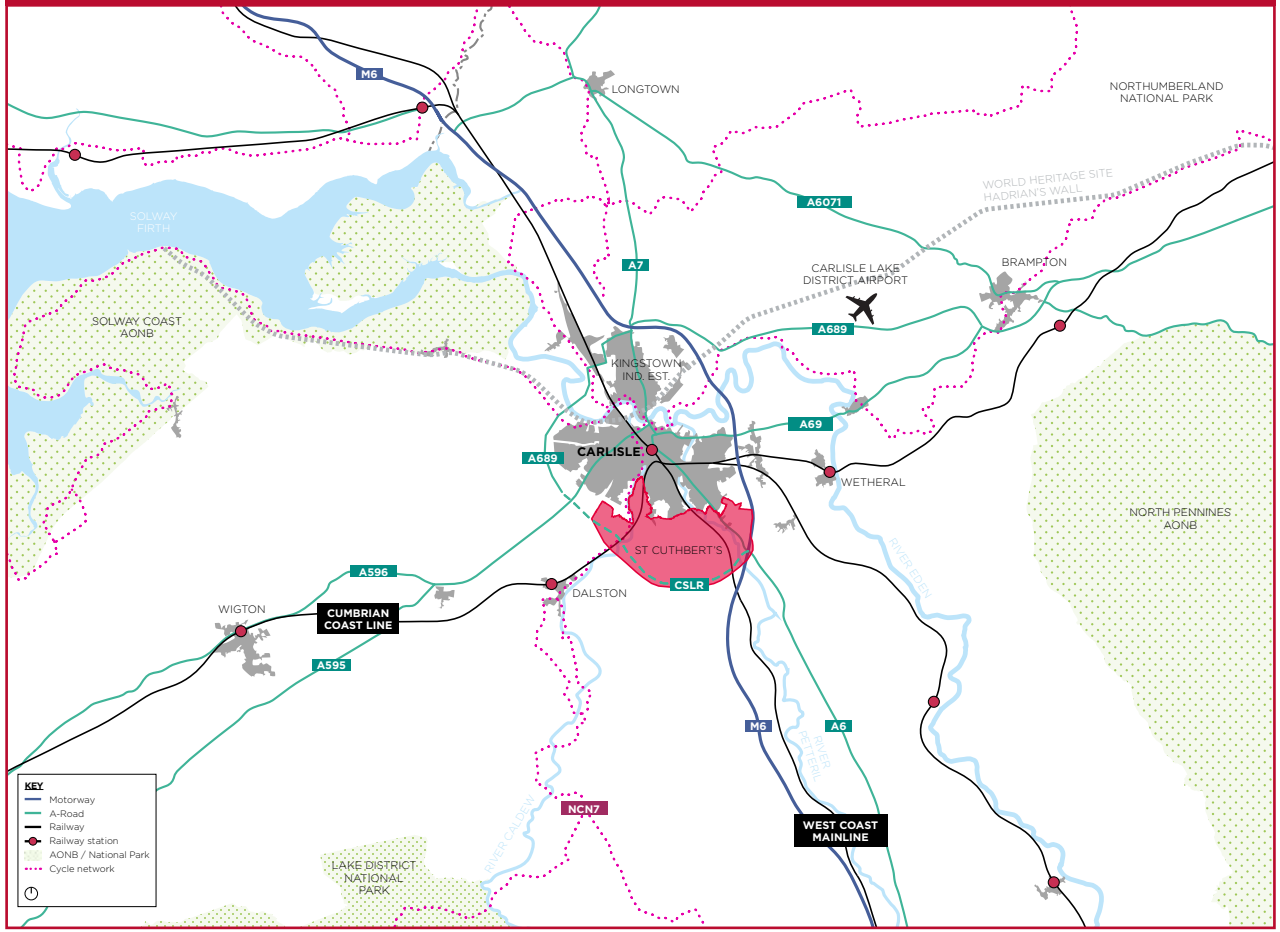
Key connections, destinations and movement networks should be identified and illustrated to demonstrate how the site integrates with its surroundings and supports a well-connected, sustainable pattern of development.

The mapping should include:

- Location within the wider area: the site boundary and position within Telford.
- Key destinations, key open spaces and major landscape features with designations, heritage features, district centres, town centres or employment areas.
- Proximity to nearby neighbourhoods and communities.
- Accessibility and connectivity, including key movement corridors, public transport links and active travel routes.

Map with boundary, north arrow, scale bar, caption and key

Example



↑ *Example location plan showing the macro context of the site. Source: St. Cuthbert's Garden Village Concept Masterplan*

3.2. Site area (micro context)

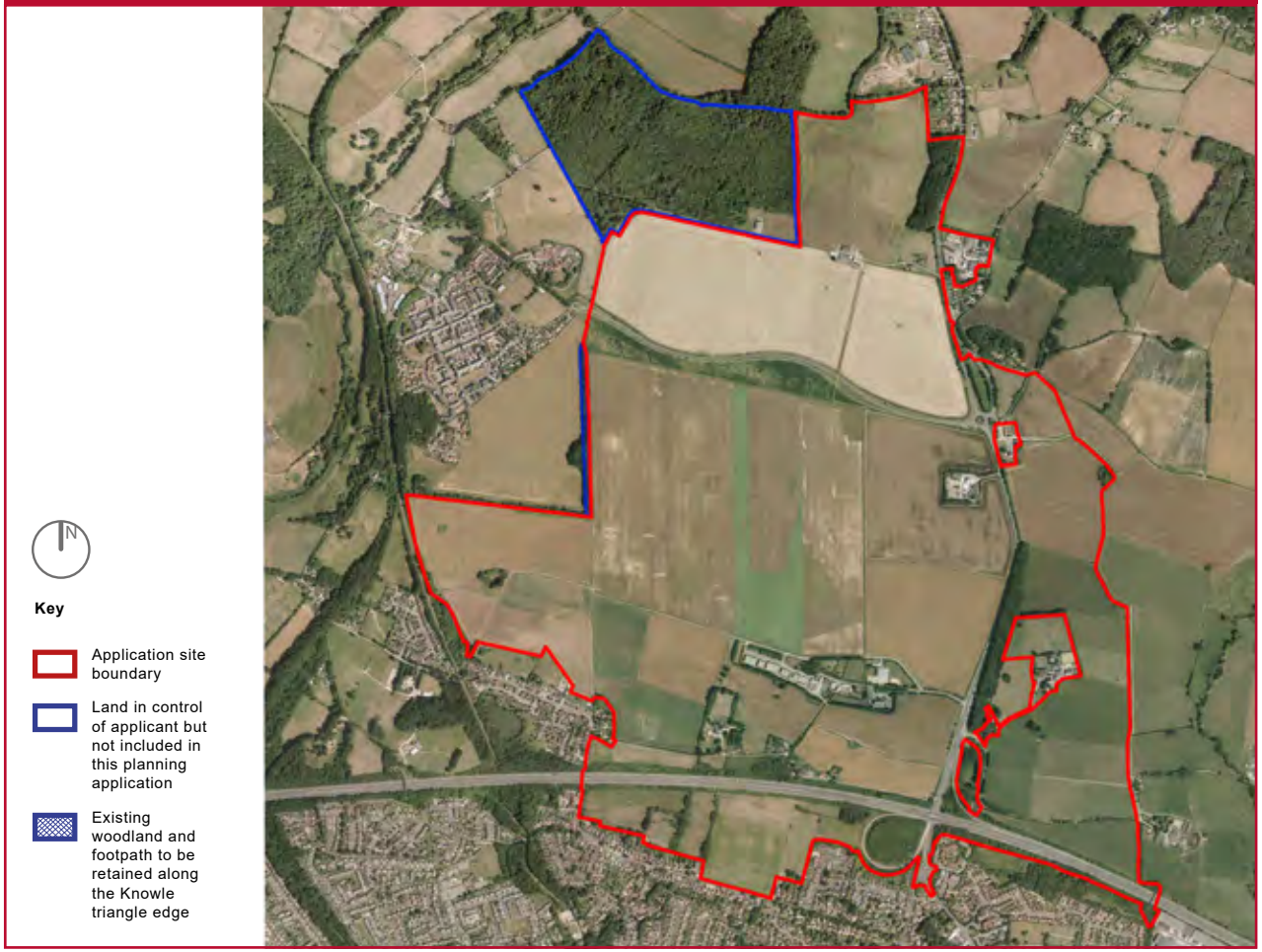
This section should provide a detailed understanding of the land within and around the red line boundary. It should clearly describe the site's physical characteristics, its existing function and use, and any relevant ownership constraints or considerations.

Key aspects such as vehicular and pedestrian access points should be identified, alongside a description of the site's edges, boundaries and any notable changes in levels or topography.

This section must be supported by a clear site plan illustrating the red line boundary, access arrangements and key features, to demonstrate the site's role, accessibility and its relationship to surrounding uses and neighbouring areas.

Map with boundary, north arrow, scale bar, caption and key

Example



↑ *Example site location plan showing the immediate surrounding context of the site. Source: Welborne Garden Village, Hampshire.*

3.3. Site history

A short, concise overview of the history of the site will help understand the context of its current condition and character. This can include the evolution of the site and its surroundings overtime, including previous land uses, layout, movement and any significant events or changes that have shaped the site. Where relevant, it should identify heritage assets and any features of cultural, landscape and architectural value that might inform the design approach.

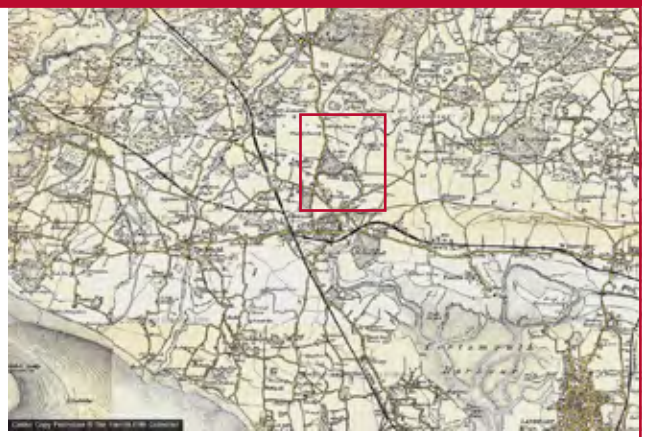
Historic maps and plans should be used to support this section, as well as historic photographs, historic records and aerial photography.

The aim of this section is to draw lessons from the past and ensure the proposals respond positively to the site's history and identity.

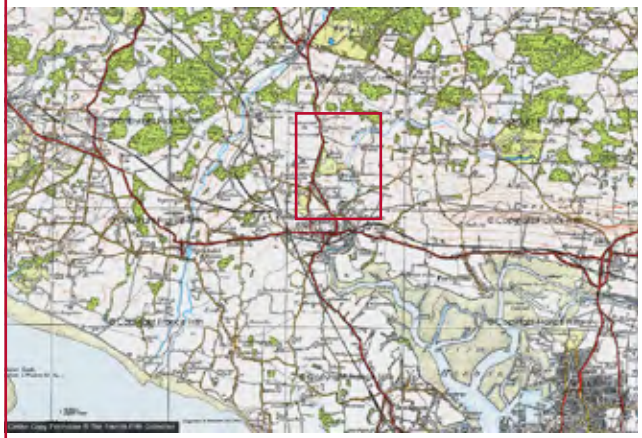
Example



1895 North Fareham Farm map



1897-99 North Fareham Farm map



1919 North Fareham Farm map



1945 North Fareham Farm map

↑ *Source: Historic maps of Fareham and South Hampshire for Welborne Garden Village*

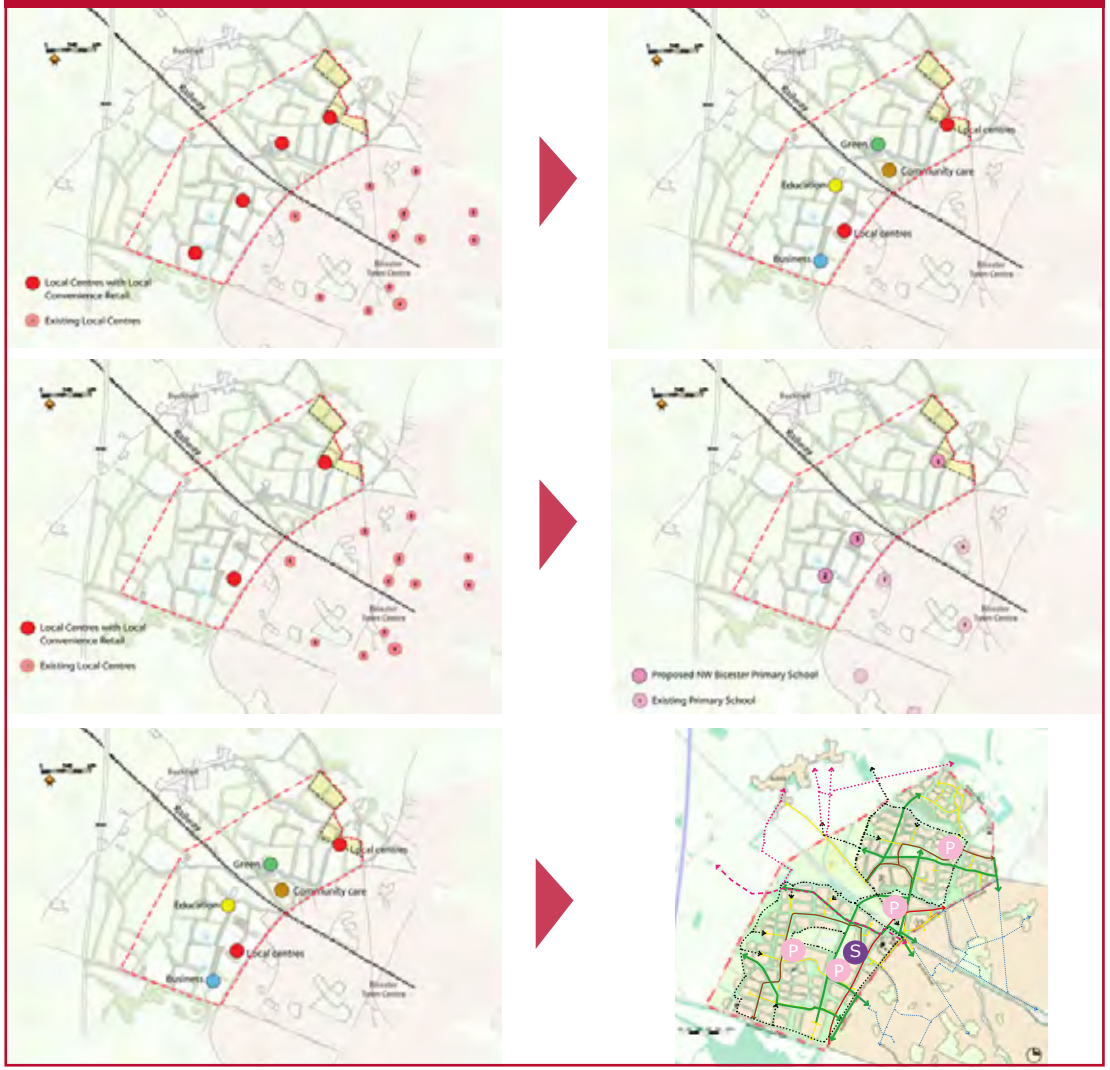
3.4. Development and scheme evolution

Where relevant, this section should summarise the planning history of the site (or specific parts of the site), including any previous applications, permissions, refusals and extant commitments. It should provide a clear overview of how the site has evolved through the planning process and identify any constraints or opportunities arising from earlier proposals.

Supporting material, such as approved drawings, illustrative masterplans, visualisations or other relevant imagery, should be included where helpful to illustrate the site's planning context.

The section must also confirm whether the site is allocated within the emerging Local Plan, clearly identifying the relevant allocation and policy reference number.

Example



→

Example diagrams showing the evolution of development proposal. Left: 2010 masterplan local hubs distribution. Right: Final proposed local centres strategy; Source: NW Bicester Masterplan

3.5. Site character and identity

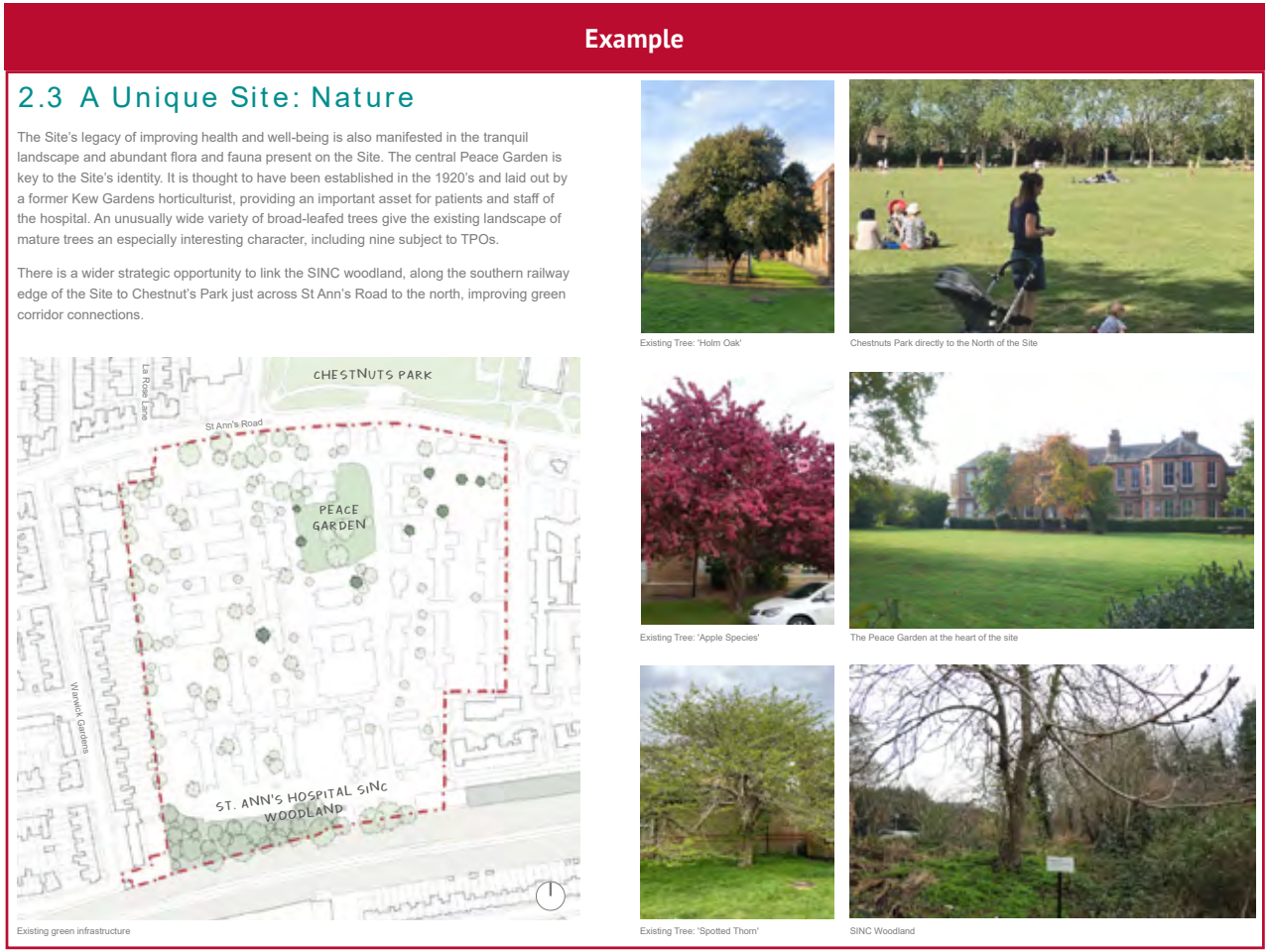
This section should describe the prevailing character and quality of both the site and its surrounding area, establishing the context to which new development should respond.

It should consider both **built form (townscape)** and **natural features (landscape)**, identifying the key patterns, structures and qualities that contribute to the site's local identity. The analysis should demonstrate an understanding of **National Design Guide** principles, particularly Context (C1–C3) and Identity (I1–I3), ensuring that development proposals are informed by and respond positively to their setting. This should also align with **emerging Local Plan Policies**, such as DD1 (development design criteria), HE suite (heritage), and NE suite (natural environment), which require development to respond to local context, respect landscape character and reinforce local distinctiveness.

The section should clearly set out which elements of the site and its context will inform the design approach, highlighting opportunities to respect, reinforce and enhance these characteristics. The analysis should look wider at the historic morphology of the place and it's character not just the immediate surroundings to ensure that the sense of place is from a wider understanding, in the context of Telford New Town.

Photographs of the site and its surroundings should be used to support the commentary. These should be clearly annotated and cross-referenced within the text, accompanied by a location plan and appropriate captions.

Example



↑ *Example page of existing natural/ landscape features within and around the site. Source: St. Ann's Masterplan*

Example

2.4 A Unique Site: Heritage

The Site's legacy is encapsulated in the characterful buildings of the hospital campus. Seven of these buildings are to be retained in the proposed masterplan, highlighted below. These buildings include the East and West Gate Lodge Buildings, Mayfield House, Mulberry House, The Peace Building, Admin Building and Water Tower, as well as the retained wall along St Ann's road.

The northern edge of the Site falls within the St Ann's Conservation Area and Mayfield House is locally listed. Materials from the remaining historic former hospital buildings which are to be demolished will be salvaged and reused where possible across the masterplan, connecting old and new. For further information please refer to the Circular Economy Statement prepared by XCO2.



Highlighted buildings to be retained, overlaid with the St Ann's conservation area boundary



Gate Lodge Entrance



The Peace Building



The Admin Building



The Water Tower



Mayfield House



Mulberry House

Example

2.5 Conservation Area Context

The northern part of the Site sits within the St Ann's Conservation Area 'Sub Area 3 - St Ann's Hospital' as set out in the 'St Ann's Conservation Area Character Appraisal' which provides a summary of the character and appearance (and accordingly the heritage significance) of this designated area. Buildings to be demolished on the Site are those which on balance are not considered to make a positive contribution to the Site or surrounding St Ann's Conservation Area.

The Site is also within close proximity to a number of statutory listed buildings including the Grade II* listed Parish Church of St Ann, the Grade II listed St Ann's Church School, and the Grade II listed 1-5 Avenue Road. In addition, the Site contains a non-designated heritage asset, the locally listed Mayfield House.

From Mayfield House within the Site, the spire of the Grade II* St Ann's Church can be seen which has been considered as a beneficial view to be preserved within the masterplan. The view from within the Site is not directly referenced within the 'Conservation Area Appraisal' however it states that: *As with many parts of the conservation area, glimpsed views of the tall spire to St Ann's Church are available from North Grove and Hermitage Road. These have a positive influence on the character of this part of the conservation area.*

For further information on the historical development of the conservation area and the local character, please refer to the 'Heritage Statement' which has been prepared by Turley in support of this application to provide the relevant and proportionate information to the local planning authority (London Borough of Haringey) with regard to the built heritage impacts associated with the proposed development.



Conservation Area Boundary, Sub Areas and Built Heritage Appraisal in London Borough of Haringey Conservation Area No. 17, St Ann's Character Appraisal.



St Ann's Police Station - Local Listed Building





Mayfield House - Local Listed Building



View to the Grade II* St Ann's Church from Mayfield House



Grade II* Listed St Ann's Church

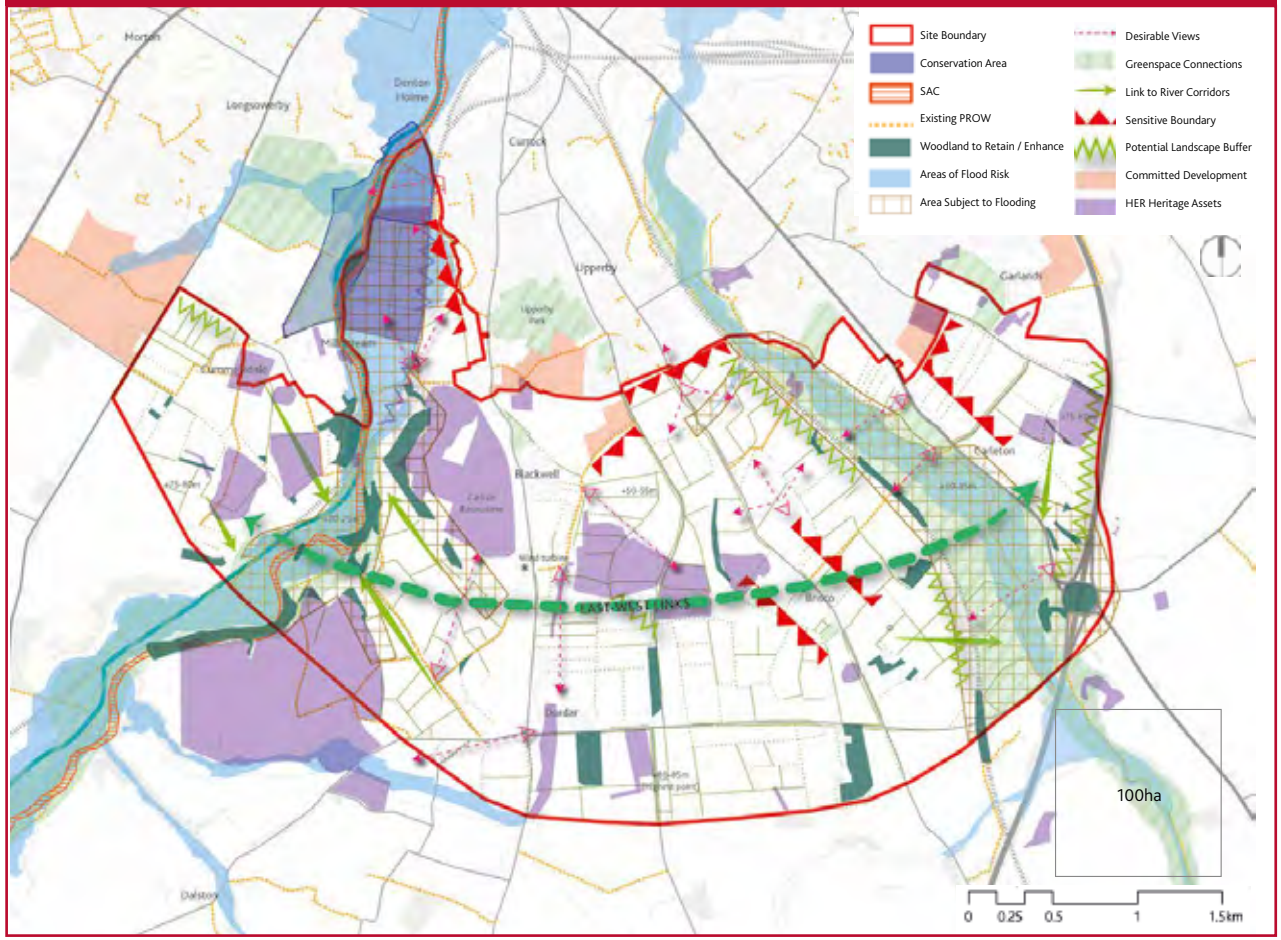
↑→

Example pages showing existing built form/ townscape character analysis.
Source: St. Ann's Masterplan

This section should also identify whether the site has been assessed within the Council's ***Landscape & Visual Sensitivity Study, Landscape Character Assessment*** and ***Capacity Assessment,*** Where relevant, it should summarise the key findings and set out any implications for the site, including recommended mitigation measures that should inform the design approach.

Map with boundary, north arrow, scale bar, caption and key

Example



↑ *Example landscape character analysis plan. Source: St. Cuthbert's Garden Village Concept Masterplan*



04 Constraints and Opportunities

Sets out the influencing factors in the area surrounding the site, as well as the potential advantages and opportunities to guide design decisions.

4.1. Constraints plans

Understanding the overarching constraints of the site is fundamental to informing a robust and deliverable development proposal. The constraints plan(s) should provide a clear and comprehensive mapped overview of all physical, environmental and technical factors that may influence the developability of the site.

The plan should be supported by concise written commentary that explains the implications of these constraints for development. This should clearly set out how identified factors may limit, shape or inform the design approach. Together, the plan and accompanying narrative should provide a robust evidence base to inform the development of a deliverable and well-considered design response.

To ensure clarity and ease of interpretation, individual constraints should first be presented on a series of separate thematic plans, allowing each issue to be clearly understood in isolation. These should then be brought together within a combined constraints plan, illustrating the cumulative effect of all constraints and opportunities across the site and informing the development framework.

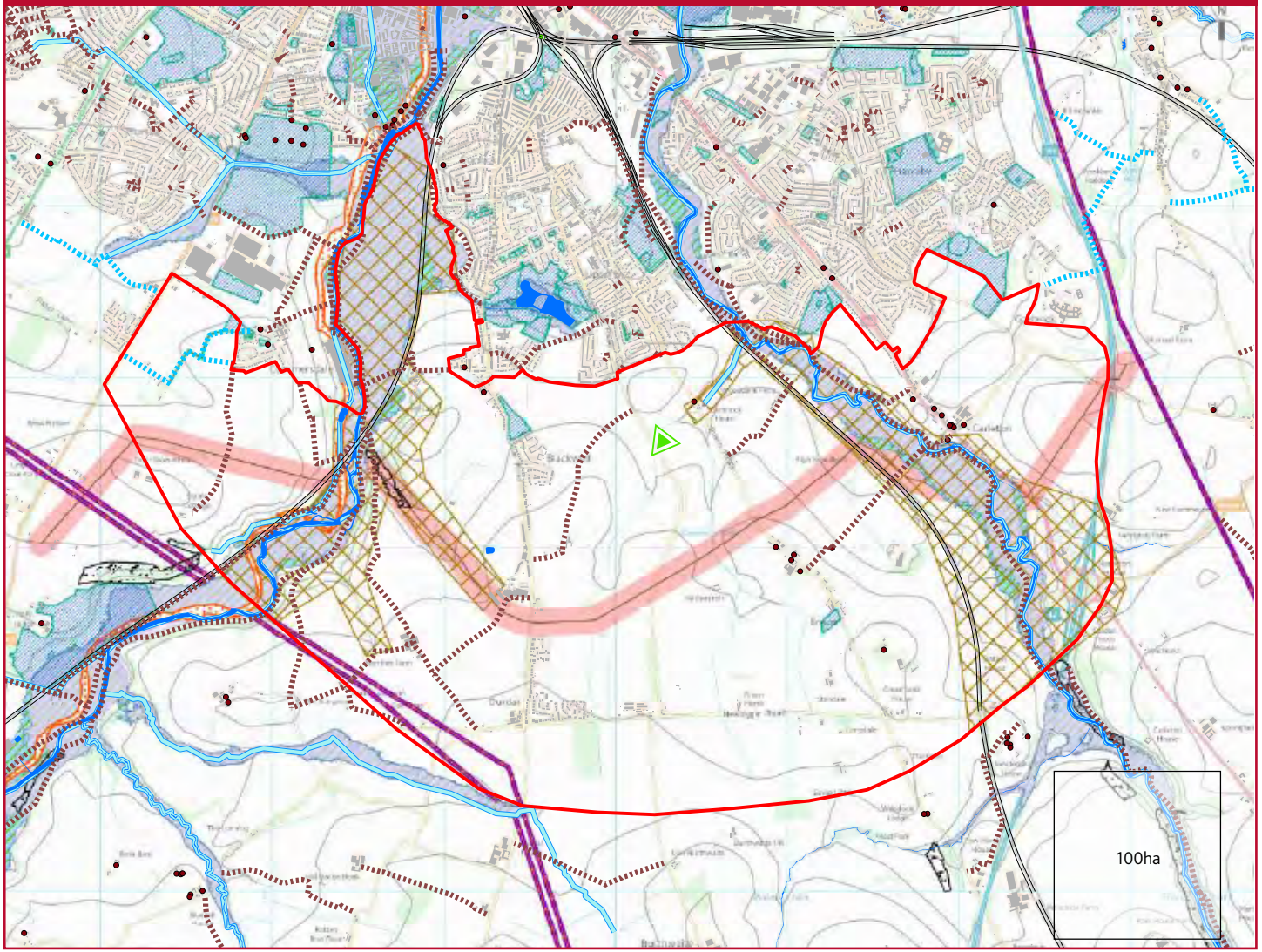


Key constraints to be identified and illustrated may include:

- Access and movement
- Surrounding land uses and nearby facilities
- Open space, ecology, designated sites and landscape features (including trees, hedgerows and habitats)
- Flood risk, drainage and water environment (including surface water and ordinary watercourses)
- Ground conditions, contamination and stability (including mining legacy where relevant)
- Utilities infrastructure and easements
- Topography, levels and key views (including visual sensitivities)
- Noise, air quality and other environmental conditions
- Archaeology, heritage assets and their settings
- Existing rights of way and public access routes
- Planning designations (e.g. Green Network, Local Nature Reserves and Wildlife Sites, Buildings of Local Interest)
- On-site constraints/ legal restrictions (e.g. easements, rights of passage, etc)
- Micro-climate considerations (e.g. wind, solar orientation)
- Adjacent site constraints or safeguarding zones (e.g. infrastructure corridors, buffers)

Map with boundary, north arrow, scale bar, caption and key

Example



→

Example comprehensive constraints plan.
Source: St. Cuthbert's Garden Village Concept Masterplan

4.2. Potential mitigations and wider opportunities

Map with boundary, north arrow, scale bar, caption and key

The mitigations and opportunities plan should clearly set out the key drivers for development, demonstrating how identified constraints can be positively addressed and translated into design opportunities.

It should be presented using clear diagrams and concise annotations to highlight where value can be created, how the development responds to its context, and how high-quality placemaking can be delivered. The plan should also illustrate how mitigation strategies, such as buffering sensitive edges, integrating sustainable drainage, enhancing green infrastructure, protecting heritage assets, improving accessibility, and leveraging existing public transport infrastructure and active travel routes as opportunities to promote sustainable movement and connectivity, inform and shape the overall development framework.

A concise supporting commentary should explain how constraints inform the design approach, demonstrating how mitigation is embedded within the proposals and how it underpins key opportunities for the site. This should establish clear design principles, showing how an integrated approach can maximise the site's potential.

Additionally, the opportunities plan should present how future growth might be accommodated to ensure that proper connectivity is considered.

Example



↑ *Example mitigations and opportunities plan. Source: St. Cuthbert's Garden Village Concept Masterplan*

05 Precedent Studies

Draws on local and national best practice and local character, and identifies the lessons learnt to inform the masterplan proposals.



5.1. Local and national case studies

Best-practice case studies provide an opportunity to draw on positive characteristics from both national and local best practice examples, in line with the design principles set out in the National Design Guide and relevant emerging Local Plan policies on design quality and placemaking.

Using case studies that demonstrate the successful integration of built form and landscape, particularly those delivered within comparable local and policy contexts, will help establish a robust baseline for the proposals. These examples should reflect the **National Design Guide**'s emphasis on context, identity and well-functioning places, alongside local policy expectations for high-quality, sustainable communities.

Selected case studies should include a balanced mix of innovative, high-quality developments at both national and local levels. As with the previous section, these should be analysed thematically such as form, layout, density, movement, green infrastructure and character, ensuring that key lessons are directly applicable and support the delivery of a successful new development.

There should be no reference to adjacent suburban development unless it demonstrates a great understanding of local character and provides genuinely relevant design cues for the site.

Example



↑ *Relevant national and local best practice examples that inform the proposed development and its intended use. Top left: Derwenthorpe, York. Top right: Abode, Great Kneighhton; Bottom left: Lightmoor Village, Telford. Bottom right: Marmalade Lane, Cambridge*

06 Vision and Objectives

Sets out the overarching vision for the site and the key placemaking principles that guide and underpin the proposal.



6.1. Place based vision

This section should set out a clear and concise visioning statement for the Sustainable Community, it should establish an ambitious yet deliverable direction for the site, grounded in a strong understanding of its context, local character, constraints and opportunities.

It should demonstrate how the development responds to and aligns with the **emerging Local Plan**, particularly policies relating to sustainable development, design quality and placemaking - including the Strategic Policy suite, HO suite (sustainable communities and housing), ST suite (movement and sustainable transport), DD1 (development design criteria), and the NE suite (green and natural environment). The vision should embed sustainability, reflect community needs and contribute to long-term social value and future growth.

The statement must provide a coherent framework to guide all stages of the development process, ensuring that proposals respond positively to the site's identity, support local priorities, and contribute to the creation of high quality, well integrated places within the wider area.

Example



↑ *Example placed based visioning statement and supporting strategic themes. Source: St. Cuthbert's Garden Village Concept Masterplan*

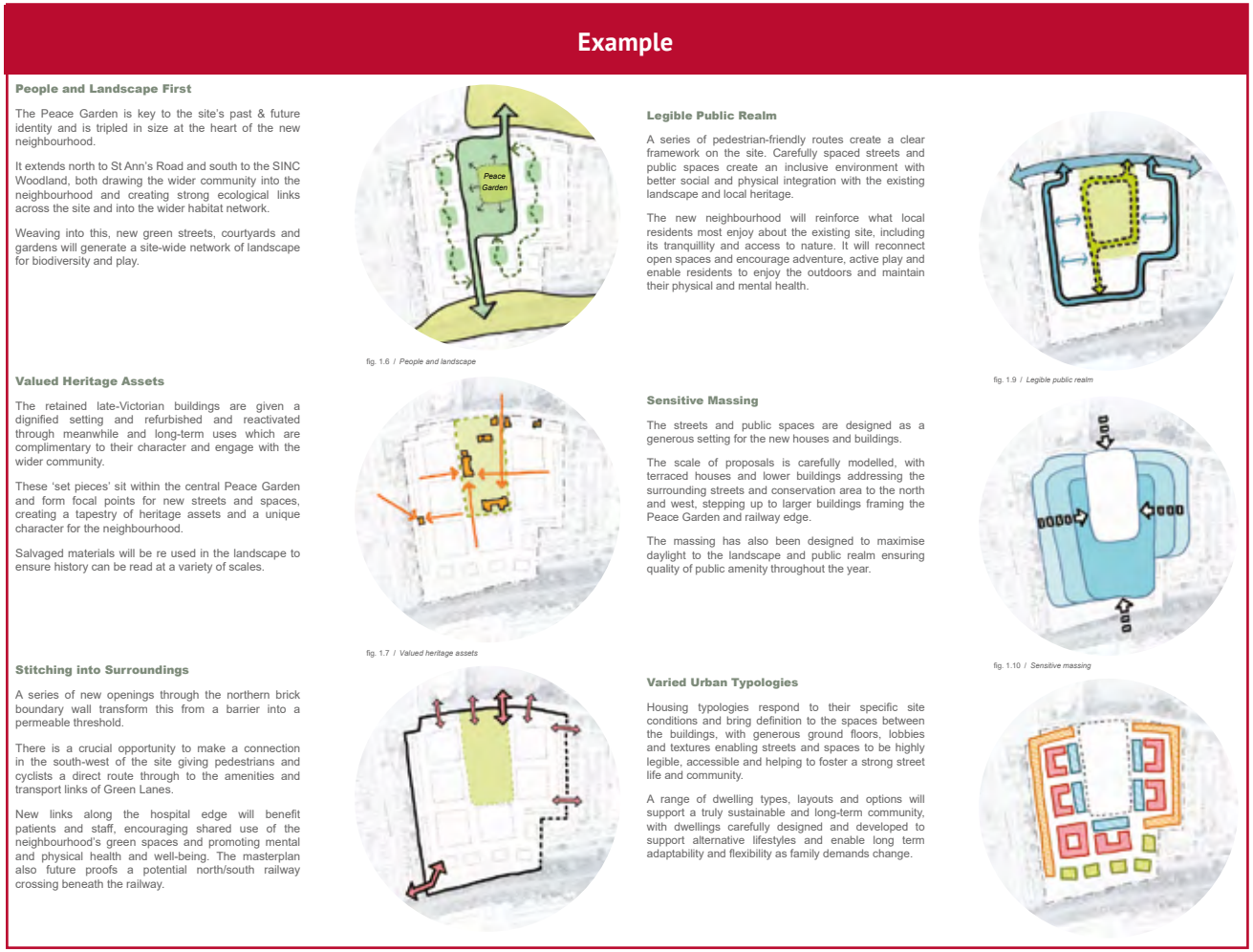
6.2. Strategic objectives and design principles

Drawing on site analysis findings and identified opportunities, this section should establish a series of strategic objectives that underpin the place-based vision and provide a clear and coherent framework for guiding development.

These strategic objectives should align with the principles of the **National Design Guide**, particularly Context (C1–C3), Identity (I1–I3), Built Form (B1–B3), Movement (M1–M3) and Nature (N1–N3), alongside relevant guidance within the **NPPF** and **Building for a Healthy Life**. They should also respond to the **emerging Local Plan**, including policies relating to sustainable development, design criteria, healthy communities, housing delivery, sustainable movement, green infrastructure and biodiversity enhancement. This will ensure proposals are well-designed, sustainable and responsive to their surroundings, while supporting the long-term vision for the borough.

Objectives should be succinct, clearly articulated and deliverable, bridging the gap between high-level ambition and practical implementation. They should provide a robust basis for subsequent masterplanning, design coding and planning submissions.

They should be illustrated through precedent imagery, thematic groupings or simple diagrams to reinforce key design principles.



↑ *Example page of strategic placemaking principles supporting the vision. Source: St. Ann's New Neighbourhood*

Example



PRINCIPLE 1: START WITH THE PARK

Deliver a landscape-led masterplan that harnesses the rivers, world class views and woodlands to create a network of unique, high quality, active landscapes and new destinations.



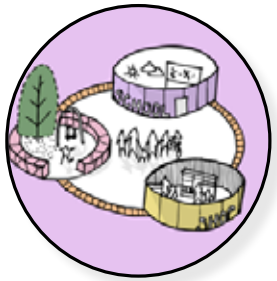
PRINCIPLE 2: LOCALLY DISTINCTIVE

Support locally distinctive, design of buildings, streets and spaces to create memorable and unique places to live.



PRINCIPLE 3: QUALITY HOMES & LIFETIME NEIGHBOURHOODS

Promote a mix of high quality homes in distinct and integrated lifetime neighbourhoods.



PRINCIPLE 4: COMMUNITY FOCUSED

Focus inclusive communities around a hierarchy of excellent facilities clustered around village centres.



PRINCIPLE 5: INNOVATIVE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Support a variety of entrepreneurial and creative employment and skills opportunities.



PRINCIPLE 6: HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

Promote health and well-being through accessible facilities and healthy lifestyles for all ages.



PRINCIPLE 7: SMART & SUSTAINABLE LIVING

Support low carbon living through sustainable planning, transport and energy.



PRINCIPLE 8: INTEGRATED SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

Provide excellent sustainable connections and environments that make walking, cycling and public transport the most attractive method of getting from A to B, making the most of the opportunities presented by the Carlisle Southern Link Road.



PRINCIPLE 9: EXEMPLARY DELIVERY & STEWARDSHIP

Continue to positively engage a range of people and communities in design, delivery and stewardship.

↑ *Example placed based guiding principles supporting the vision. Source: St. Cuthbert's Garden Village Concept Masterplan*



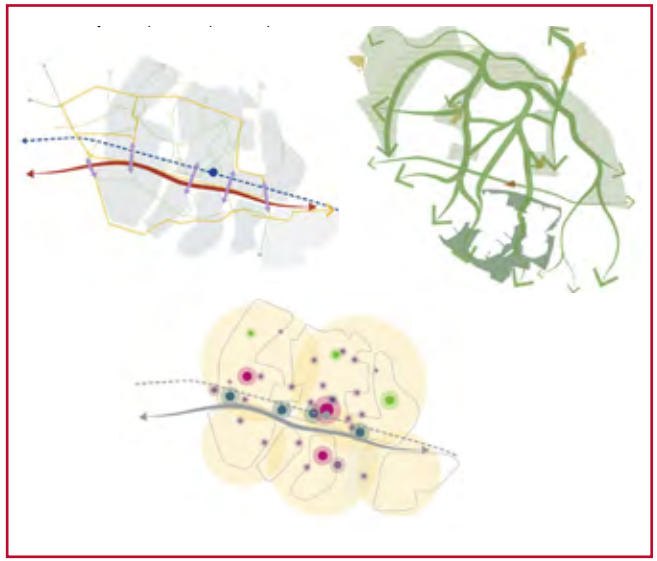
07
The Proposal

Sets out the design proposal, illustrating the evolution of the scheme alongside the strategic frameworks and parameter plans that underpin it, while retaining appropriate flexibility.

7.1. Strategic spatial frameworks

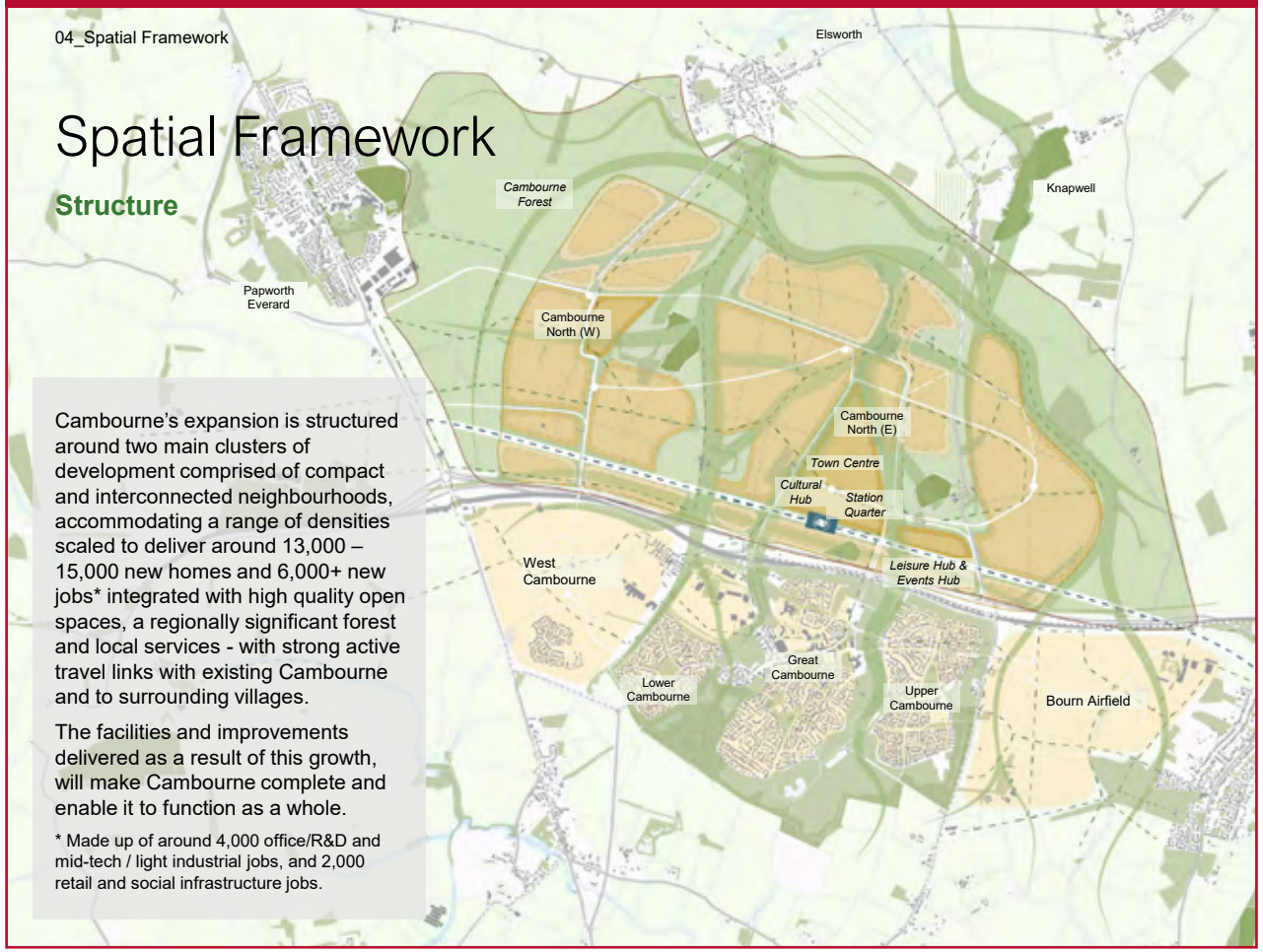
The strategic spatial framework plans should define the fixed elements of the proposed concept masterplan and establish the spatial parameters within which future detailed design will be developed. They should be clear, coherent and aligned with the vision, strategic objectives and relevant policy requirements of the site.

Each plan should be presented at an appropriate scale, include a north point, and be supported by annotations or concise commentary to ensure clarity and ease of interpretation.



Map with boundary, north arrow, scale bar, caption and key

Example



↖ ↑ *Example spatial framework plan and key concept driver diagrams. Source: Cambourne Masterplan*

Landscape, open space and green blue Infrastructure

This framework plan should define the open space network, landscape strategy, and green and blue infrastructure systems that support amenity, biodiversity and climate resilience across the site, in accordance with the principles of the **National Design Guide** - particularly Nature (N1–N4), Context (C1–C3) and Public Space (P1–P2), and relevant **emerging Local Plan** policies, including DD1 (development design criteria), S1-2 (nature conservation), CC5 (flood risk and sustainable drainage systems), and the NE suite (green and natural environment).

The approach should also accord with wider national guidance, including best practice such as the **CIRIA SuDS Manual (C753)** and **Building with Nature**, alongside relevant Telford and Wrekin SPDs and guidance, including the **Green Infrastructure Framework and Evidence**, which informs the provision of open space, health, biodiversity and environmental quality.

Based on the above references and site analysis findings, the framework should illustrate:

- **Open space typologies and quantum:** Identification of the type, function and indicative provision of open spaces, ensuring accessible, well-distributed and multifunctional green space.
- **Green and blue infrastructure:** Integration of sustainable drainage systems, habitat corridors, water features and ecological networks to support environmental quality and resilience.
- **Play and recreation provision:** Accessible and inclusive play and recreation spaces that support healthy communities.
- **Trees and landscape structure:** Retention of existing vegetation and incorporation of strategic planting to reinforce local character and enhance environmental quality – with clarity on how the scheme meets Forest Community requirements.
- **Biodiversity net gain:** Clear principles for delivering measurable biodiversity enhancements.
- **Local nature recovery strategy:** Integration of relevant priorities and opportunity areas within the masterplan to strengthen ecological connectivity and support wider nature recovery.

Right and next page →

Example landscape strategic layers and landscape framework plan. Source: Cambourne Masterplan

Example



Protect rural landscape



Connect green linkages



Create granular GBI network

Map with boundary, north arrow, scale bar, caption and key

Example

Landscape

Framework principles and guidance

A mosaic of green linkages and greenspaces, including a regionally significant regional scale ‘woodland arc’ (Cambourne Forest), will characterise the settlement. These GBI assets will provide amenity for locals, ecological benefits for local flora and fauna and contributions to community health and wellbeing.

Cambourne’s landscape will prioritise:

- Protection of existing habitats, including ancient woodland, and provide ecological enhancements to enable species to thrive.
- Mitigating the impact of new settlements and infrastructure through landscape improvements and woodland planting.
- Creating sustainable, beautiful and accessible green spaces that support active lifestyles, mental wellbeing, and social connection year-round.
- Integration of a network of 'dark corridors' for bat mitigation. Where these corridors cross the transport network and lighting is a priority for health and safety, sensitive design will be utilised. The design of lighting at these intersections will employ a hierarchical approach (see GBI Framework for details).



Urban design framework

This plan should establish the spatial structure and design logic that underpin the development, shaping its character, identity and legibility. It should be informed by the **National Design Guide**, particularly Context (C1–C3), Identity (I1–I3) and Built Form (B1–B3), and aligned with the **emerging Local Plan**, particularly Policy DD1, together with other relevant policies relating to sustainable places, green infrastructure, active travel, public realm and healthy communities.

The framework should also accord with national policy and guidance, including the **NPPF**, **Building for a Healthy Life**, and **Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)**, and relevant SPDs, including the ***Climate Change Guidance for Development SPD*** (promoting low-carbon, resource-efficient design) and ***Design for Community Safety SPD*** (supporting safe, inclusive and well-overlooked places).

Informed by the above references, site analysis findings, and the defined vision and objectives, the framework should illustrate:

- **Form and structure:** key frontages, landmark buildings, gateways, focal points and important views, supporting legibility and sense of place.
- **Spatial framework:** perimeter block structure, development parcels and the arrangement of primary public spaces, ensuring a clear and connected layout.
- **Relationship to context:** how streets, edges and spaces integrate with the surrounding area, reinforcing continuity and connectivity.

Map with boundary, north arrow, scale bar, caption and key

Example



↑ *Example urban design framework plan. Source: Cambourne West Design Code*

Land use and quantum

This framework plan should clearly define the distribution and scale of land uses across the site, aligned with the **National Design Guide** principles for creating diverse and active places (I1, M1), and with relevant **emerging Local Plan** Policies on sustainable development, housing mix, placemaking quality, and economy and centres (HO2-6, DD1 and EC suite).

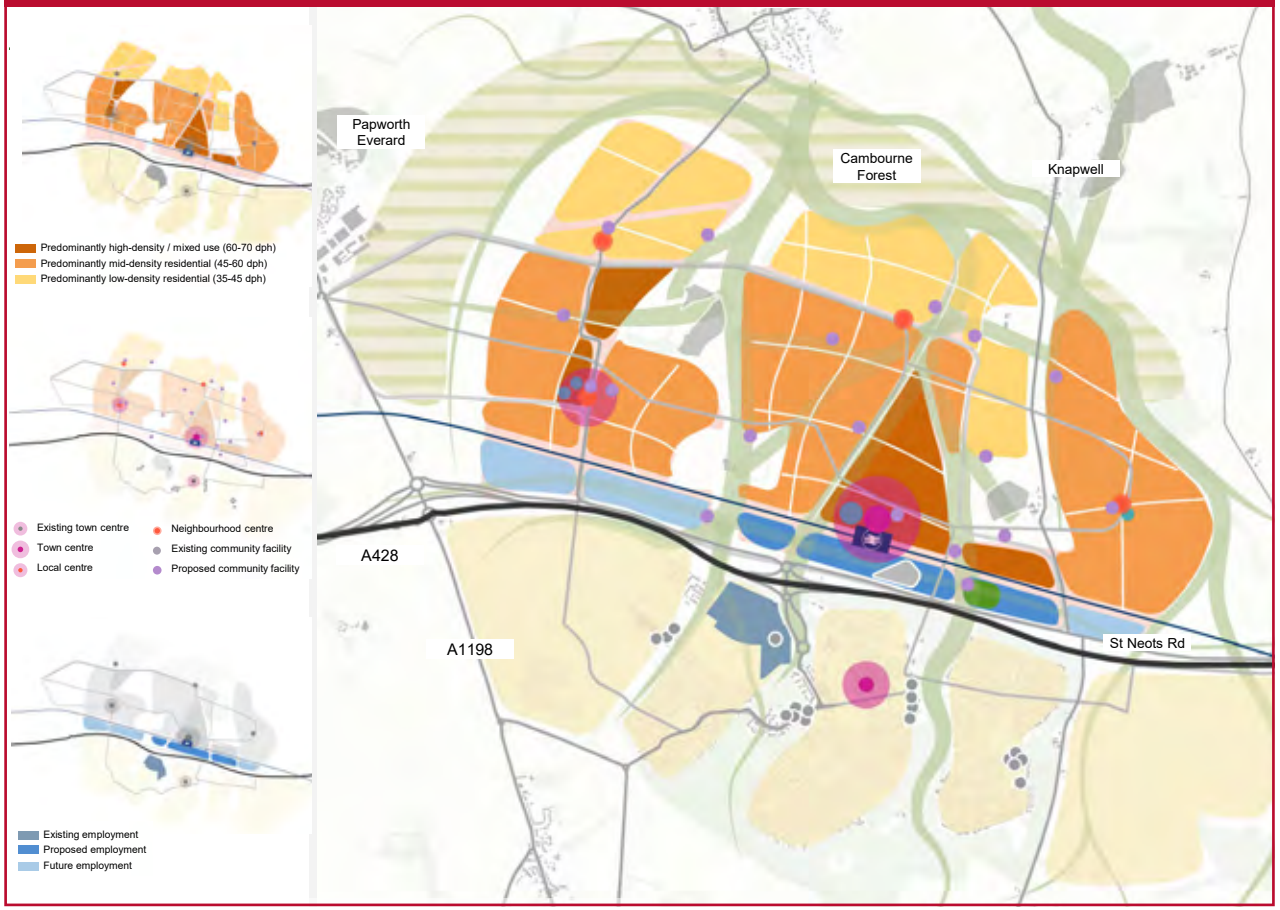
It should demonstrate how a well-balanced and integrated mix of uses contributes to a vibrant, functional and sustainable place.

The plan should illustrate:

- **Proposed land uses:** clearly identifying residential, local centres (often including mixed-use and commercial), community, employment and other uses.
- **Indicative area/ floorspace:** providing high-level area or floorspace ranges by use class, where applicable.
- **Transitions to neighbouring uses:** demonstrating how development responds sensitively to adjacent land uses and local context, in accordance with emerging Local Plan Policy DD1 and NDG Context principles (C1–C3).

Map with boundary, north arrow, scale bar, caption and key

Example



↑ *Example land use framework plan and individual layer. Source: Cambourne Masterplan*

Movement and access

This framework plan should define how people and vehicles access, move through, and connect beyond the site, establishing a coherent and legible movement network for all users. It should be informed by the **National Design Guide** (Movement M1–M3) and aligned with **emerging Local Plan,** particularly Policy DD1, and the ST Policy suite, which promote sustainable travel, active movement, transport connectivity, accessibility and the integration of development with wider movement networks.

The framework should also have regard to relevant national and industry guidance, including **Manual for Streets**, **LTN 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design**, and ***Homes England's Design Quality: Mobility Hubs Strategic Place Guidance.***

Other relevant Telford and Wrekin SPDs and guidances include:

- ***Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)***
- ***Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)***
- ***Telford and Wrekin Transport Plan***
- ***Telford Growth Strategy***
- ***Telford and Wrekin Parking standards***
- ***Telford and Wrekin SuDS Handbook***
- ***Climate Change Guidance for Development SPD***
- ***Design for Community Safety SPD***
- ***Highways Design Guide***

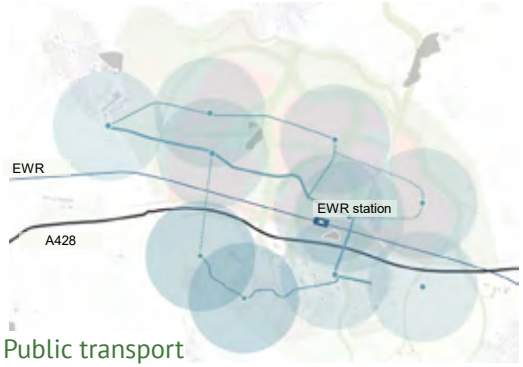
Based on the above references and site analysis findings, the framework should illustrate:

- **Access strategy:** primary and secondary access points for pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders, passenger service vehicles, private vehicles, disabled and mobility-impaired users, including servicing and delivery arrangements, should be clearly identified and designed to provide safe, convenient and inclusive access for all users.
- **Active travel and sustainable transport:** walking, cycling and public transport connections should create an integrated movement network that supports sustainable travel and placemaking, centred around a mobility hub that improves accessibility and reduces reliance on private vehicles.
- **Street hierarchy and design principles:** the route hierarchy, including primary, secondary and tertiary streets, together with a network of strategic and local walking and cycling routes.
- **Parking strategy:** overall parking approach, including type, distribution and indicative locations
- **Strategic connectivity:** it should provide safe and accessible links to the wider movement network, integrating with existing routes. Where constraints or safety issues are identified, mitigation and enhancement should be considered early. Key interfaces with the surrounding road network may form a character area to ensure development is well integrated with the road corridor.

Example



Active travel



Public transport



Vehicular

Map with boundary, north arrow, scale bar, caption and key

Example

Connectivity

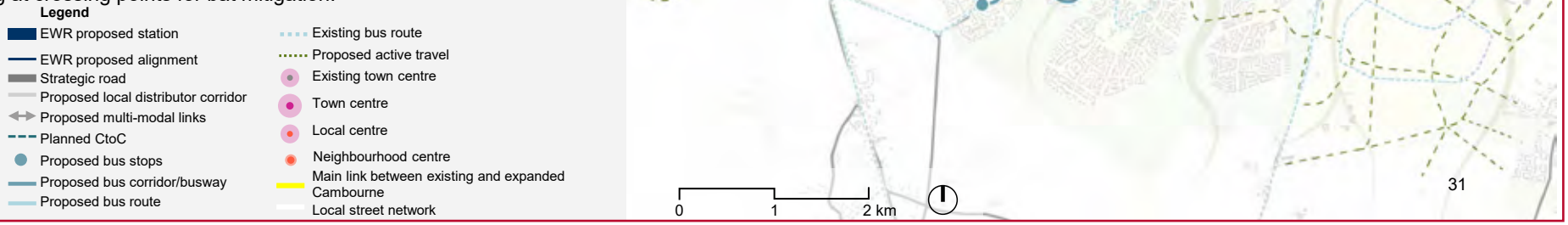
Framework principles and guidance

Cambourne's expansion will deliver enhanced connectivity within and between neighbourhoods, as well as between all neighbourhoods and the town centre. Links to the railway station and activity centres will interconnect all new areas and will reduce the severance of infrastructure corridors, bringing existing and planned settlements together, ensuring that the benefits of regional connectivity brought by a new EWR station and an extended busway are available to all.

Cambourne connectivity will prioritise:

- Access to services and amenities, including green/open spaces for both existing and new residents, as well as surrounding villages. Connections will also be respectful of landscape linkages and where appropriate, lighting impacts will be mitigated to respect dark corridor designations.*
- Active travel provision and networks to link neighbourhoods and villages to the station, new town centre services and jobs.
- Integrated rail and station assets with well-planned public spaces, jobs, and leisure opportunities centred around a multimodal interchange.

Note: See GBI Framework for details of the hierarchical approach to lighting at crossing points for bat mitigation.



← ↑ *Above and previous page: Example movement strategic layers and movement framework plan. Source: Cambourne Masterplan*

Scale and density

This framework plan should define the scale and intensity of development, establishing clear parameters for building height, massing and density across the site. It should be informed by the **National Design Guide**, particularly Built Form (B1–B3) and Context (C1–C3), and aligned with **emerging Local Plan** Policy DD1, HO2-3, and other relevant policies relating to housing delivery, sustainable development, placemaking and design quality.

Informed by these considerations, the framework should illustrate:

- **Indicative height ranges:** Maximum and minimum building heights across different parts of the site, responding to local context, key frontages, landmarks and transition zones.
- **Indicative dwelling numbers:** Anticipated unit numbers by parcel or character area, demonstrating a balanced and deliverable distribution of development.
- **Density strategy:** The overall approach to density, including how it responds to context, accessibility, movement networks and placemaking objectives, ensuring an efficient yet appropriate use of land.

Map with boundary, north arrow, scale bar, caption and key

Example



↑ *Example development density framework plan. Source: Oakley Vale Design Code*

Map with boundary, north arrow, scale bar, caption and key

Example



↑ *Example building heights framework plan. Source: Oakley Vale Design Code*

Residential quality and mix

Where applicable, this framework should establish key parameters to ensure that homes are well-designed, appropriately sized and supported by high-quality amenity, privacy and outlook. It should be informed by the **National Design Guide**, particularly Homes and Buildings (H1–H2) and Built Form (B1–B3), alongside the **NPPF** requirements for high-quality design and good standards of amenity, and **Planning Practice Guidance** relating to housing quality.

The approach should align with **emerging Local Plan** policies DD1 (development design criteria), HO1-5 (Housing mix, quality and type), and respond to local requirements for the delivery of affordable housing, ensuring a well-integrated and tenure-blind approach across the site. It should also be consistent with the principles set out in the ***Homes for All SPD,*** supporting accessible, adaptable and inclusive housing provision.

Informed by these considerations, the framework should illustrate:

- **Housing mix:** The proposed distribution of dwelling sizes, tenures and types, including the provision of affordable homes, ensuring a balanced, inclusive and tenure-blind community that responds to a range of needs.
- **Space standards:** Confirmation that homes will be designed to provide adequate internal space, functionality and flexibility to support comfortable day-to-day living.
- **Amenity space:** Principles for the provision of private and shared amenity spaces, supporting health, wellbeing and opportunities for outdoor use.
- **Outlook and privacy:** Indicative separation distances and design principles to ensure good levels of outlook, natural light and privacy between homes.

Example







Best practice housing examples featured in the NDG →

Top: Diverse mix of tenures and house types that faces onto a tree-lined avenue in a Conservation Area. Source: The Avenue, Saffron Walden.
Middle: Internal habitable rooms have high levels of natural daylight and connect well to gardens. Source: Accordia, Cambridge.
Bottom: A social housing development that sits well in the local context and meets high environmental standards. Source: Goldsmith Street, Norwich.

Character area

Given the scale and complexity of the Sustainable Community sites, a character areas strategy should be prepared to establish a clear placemaking framework. Character areas should be informed by site analysis and respond to the site's unique opportunities, constraints and context. **Character is not solely an architectural or material change in facades. It is a place specific response with form, layout, massing, landscape and architectural response.** The strategy should guide future masterplan evolution and inform the preparation of a detailed Design Code as part of the planning application process.

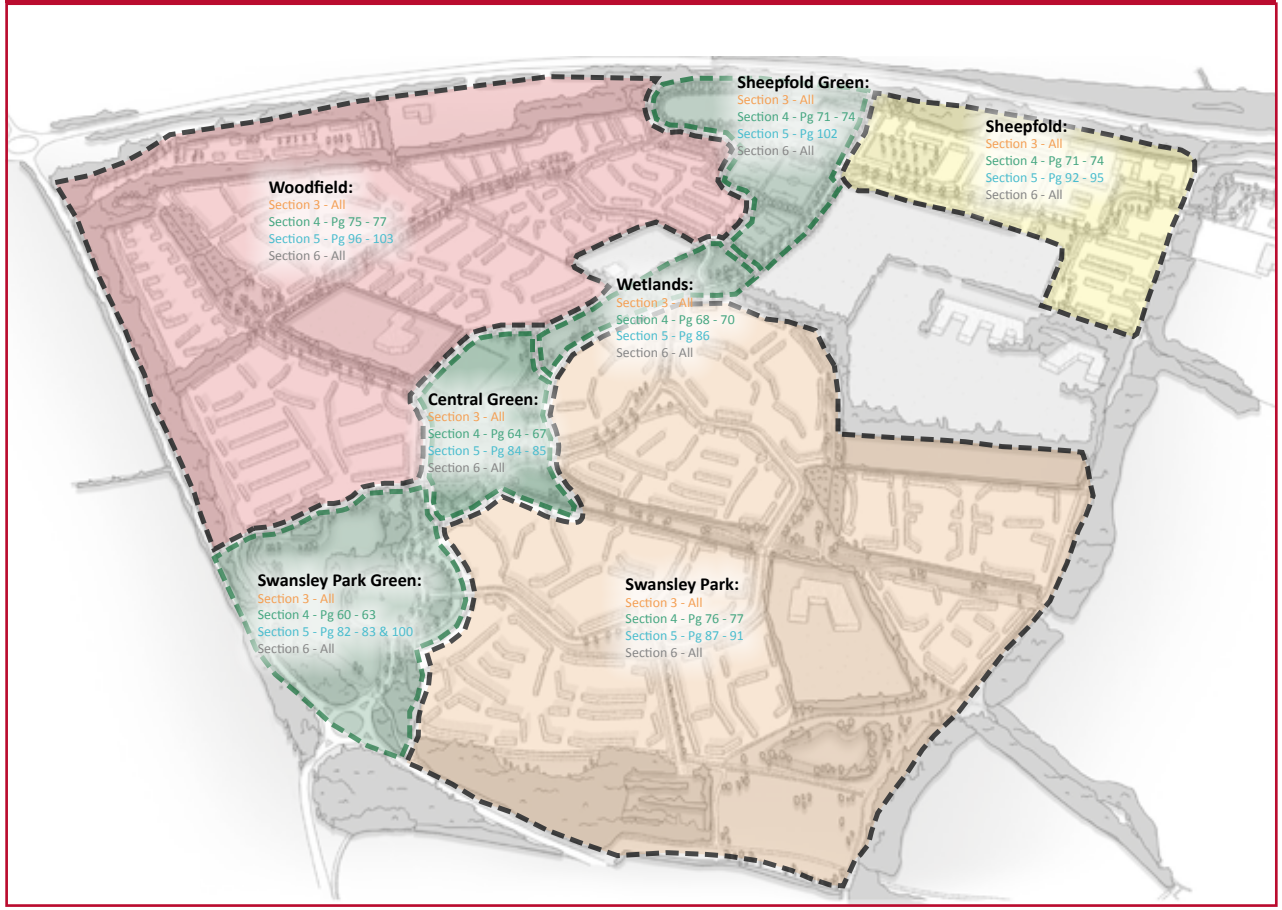
The plan should define and name the distinct character areas within the proposed development, demonstrating how each responds to local identity, historic context, landscape character and built form, in accordance with the principles of the **National Design Guide**, particularly Context (C1–C3), Identity (I1–I3) and Built Form (B1–B3), and relevant **emerging Local Plan** policies, including DD1 (development design criteria), HE suite (heritage) and NE suite (natural environment).

Clear boundaries should be identified for each character area, supported by appropriate precedent imagery to illustrate how they may vary in character, form, density and landscape approach while contributing to a cohesive and legible place. The boundary interfaces should have their own defined features ensuring character changes have a reason and purpose with clear design direction.

The plan should be presented at an appropriate scale, include a north point, and be clearly annotated to ensure clarity and ease of interpretation.

Map with boundary, north arrow, scale bar, caption and key

Example



↑ *Example character areas plan. Source: Cambourne West Design Code*

Map with boundary, north arrow, scale bar, caption and key

Example

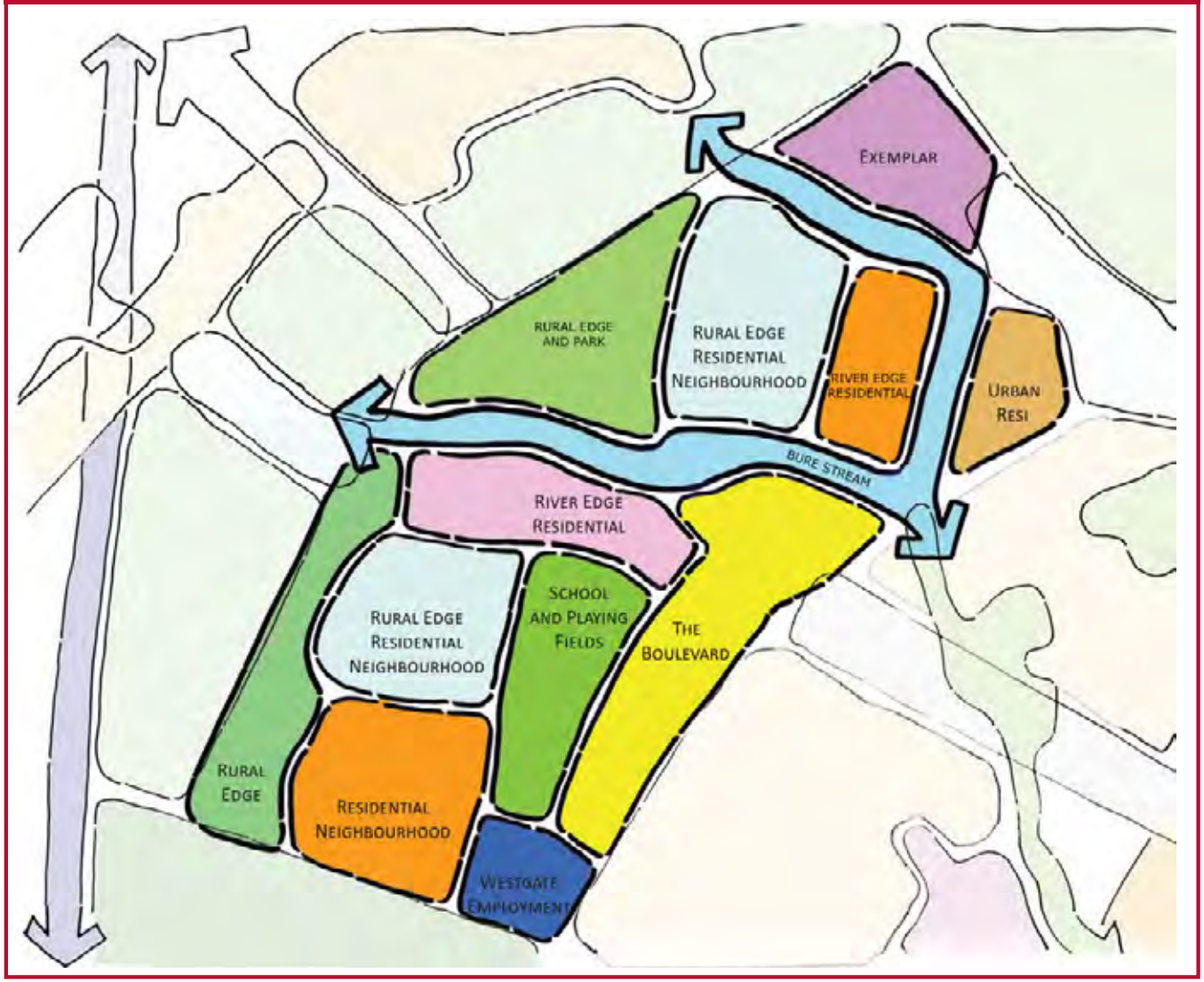


→

Example character areas plan. Character area framework responding to neighbouring character. Source: NW Bicester Masterplan

Map with boundary, north arrow, scale bar, caption and key

Example



→

Example character areas plan. Character areas around the site. Source: NW Bicester Masterplan

08
Sustainability

Sets out the key sustainability and climate resilience themes, priorities and overarching ambitions of the proposal.



8.1. Environmental sustainability and climate response

This section should clearly articulate the key sustainability priorities and ambitions underpinning the proposals, demonstrating how they have been embedded from the outset in accordance with national and local policy, including the **National Design Guide**, **NPPF**, the **emerging Local Plan** (Policy S5, CC1-6, DD5, ST1, and EC4), and the **Climate Change Guidance for Development SPD**.

It should set out how the development responds holistically to environmental, social and economic sustainability objectives, reflecting the NDG principles of Climate (C1), Resources (R1–R3) and Nature (N1–N4), alongside local policy aspirations for low carbon growth, environmental protection and healthy, well-connected communities. Key themes to be addressed include:

Energy efficiency and carbon reduction

Proposals should demonstrate a fabric-first approach and the integration of low and zero carbon technologies, supporting the transition to net zero in line with NDG C1 (Reducing carbon emissions), and emerging Local Plan Policy suite CC.

Sustainable construction and resource efficiency

The use of sustainable materials, modern methods of construction and whole-life carbon considerations should be embedded within the design approach, reducing environmental impact over the lifecycle of the development. This reflects NDG principles R1–R3 (resource efficiency, durable buildings, and sustainable materials) and local aspirations for high-quality, sustainable construction (supported by emerging guidance and design expectations).

Active travel and sustainable transport

The development should prioritise walking, cycling and public transport, creating a safe and inclusive movement network for a broad spectrum of users, including children, older people, disabled people, families, commuters and less confident cyclists. This approach will reduce reliance on the private car, promote healthier lifestyles and support greater accessibility and social inclusion. This reflects NDG M1–M5 (movement) and emerging Local Plan Policies ST1 and 5, supported by the Highways Design Guide SPD, LCWIP and BSIP.

Example







→

Elmsbrook in NW Bicester demonstrates a holistic approach to sustainable placemaking, combining net-zero carbon homes, renewable energy, water efficiency and active travel to create a healthy, low-carbon and resilient neighbourhood.

Ecology and biodiversity

The proposals should reinforce Telford and Wrekin's identity as a 'settlement in the landscape', conserving and enhancing green infrastructure and delivering measurable biodiversity gains within each SC site. Development should also promote healthy, nature-rich environments through the integration of green infrastructure, tree planting, active travel networks and accessible green spaces. This aligns with NDG N1–N4 (green infrastructure, biodiversity and landscape integration), emerging Local Plan Policies NE1-5, and the Green Infrastructure Framework and Evidence SPD.

Water management and sustainable drainage

A comprehensive approach to water efficiency and SuDS should be demonstrated, ensuring flood risk is managed and water is integrated as a positive design feature. This responds to NDG guidance on climate resilience and emerging Local Plan Policy CC5 (Flood risk management and sustainable drainage systems).

Climate resilience and air quality

The scheme should demonstrate resilience to climate change, including overheating mitigation, shading, urban greening and long-term adaptability. Development should also respond positively to air quality considerations through the integration of green infrastructure, tree planting, active travel networks and the careful location of sensitive uses. This supports NDG C2 (adapting to climate change) and local policy aspirations for resilient, future-proofed development.

A clear, structured written explanation should be provided, supported where appropriate by diagrams, metrics and precedent imagery, to demonstrate how these sustainability principles are embedded across the site. **The strategy should be tailored specifically to the site, rather than adopting a generic approach**, with an emphasis on deliverable, measurable and site-specific interventions. This will ensure that the proposals create a resilient, low-carbon and future-proof development in accordance with best practice and policy requirements.

Example







→

Cator Park in Greenwich London demonstrates how rewilding, biodiversity enhancement, sustainable drainage and nature-rich public spaces can transform urban development into a healthier, more resilient and environmentally sustainable community.



Existing vegetation across the Muxton Sustainable Community site.

09 Infrastructure and Phasing

Sets out the infrastructure requirements and phasing strategy to support coordinated and timely delivery of the development.

9.1. Infrastructure and community provision

This section should clearly set out the infrastructure and facilities required to support the development, demonstrating how the proposals are deliverable, well-integrated and responsive to local needs. It should align with the principles of the NDG, alongside the emerging Local Plan and relevant SPDs.

The strategy must identify the type, scale, quantum and phasing of infrastructure required to support the development, ensuring that provision is appropriately timed to meet both early and long-term needs. The design response should address, where relevant:

Physical infrastructure

Including movement networks, public transport, mobility hubs, utilities, digital connectivity, drainage and green infrastructure. Proposals should demonstrate a coordinated and integrated approach to infrastructure planning, supporting sustainable movement and environmental performance, in line with NDG M1–M5 and I1, and emerging Local Plan ST Policy suite (connectivity and transport), S7 (infrastructure delivery), CC4-5 (water and drainage), and NE1-5 (natural environment), as well as associated highways, SuDS and green infrastructure SPDs - such as the Green Infrastructure Framework and Evidence and Highways Design Guide SPDs.

Social and community infrastructure

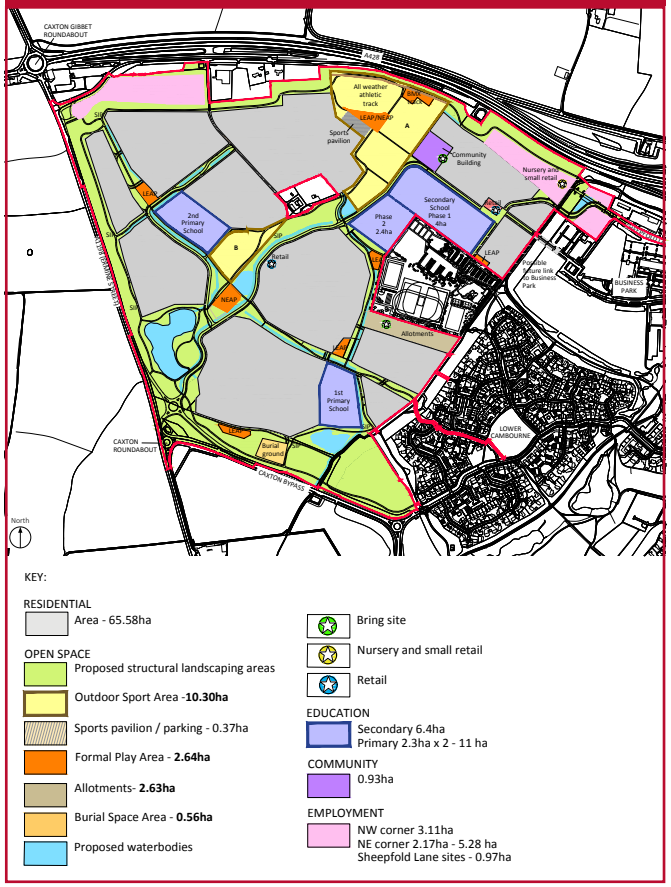
Including provision for sports, recreation, education, healthcare, community facilities and local centres. The proposals should ensure that facilities are accessible, well-located and capable of adapting to future needs, reflecting NDG principles S1–S5 (healthy, inclusive communities) and I2–I3 (social infrastructure), alongside emerging Local Plan Policy S7 (developer contributions) and CI1 (community facilities) and relevant infrastructure delivery guidance.

Phasing and delivery

The section should clearly demonstrate how infrastructure will be delivered alongside the phased development of the site. The delivery strategy should ensure that key infrastructure, services and community facilities are provided at the appropriate stages to support place-making, establish a coherent and functioning community from the outset, and meet the needs of residents as the development grows.

The construction phasing strategy should also explain how development will be sequenced to minimise disruption to existing and future occupiers. This should demonstrate how completed phases will remain fully usable during ongoing construction, ensuring that access to homes, community facilities, open spaces, schools, local centres and sustainable transport connections is not impeded or unnecessarily delayed.

Example



↑ *Example Section 106 phasing plan. Source: Cambourne West Design Code*

9.2. Phasing and delivery strategy

This section should establish a clear and robust strategy for how the development will be brought forward over time, demonstrating a coordinated and deliverable approach. It should set out the indicative sequencing of development, identifying how the masterplan will evolve in phases to create a coherent, functioning place from the outset. This should align with **NDG** principles relating to Identity (I1–I3), Movement (M1–M5) and Infrastructure (I1–I3), ensuring that each phase contributes positively to the overall place-making vision. The section should include:

Indicative delivery and phasing strategy

A clear, diagrammatic and written explanation of how the masterplan will be implemented over time, demonstrating logical and coordinated phases of development. It should identify the timely delivery of key infrastructure, community facilities, green infrastructure, biodiversity net gain, and movement networks, ensuring that each phase functions as a sustainable and well-connected neighbourhood. This should respond to the **emerging Local Plan**, particularly Policy S7 (infrastructure delivery), HO2 and 5 (sustainable communities and housing delivery), ST suite (movement and transport), CI1 (community facilities) and the ***T&WC Infrastructure Delivery Plan*** to ensure each phase is viable and well-integrated.

Early delivery priorities, flexibility and future-proofing

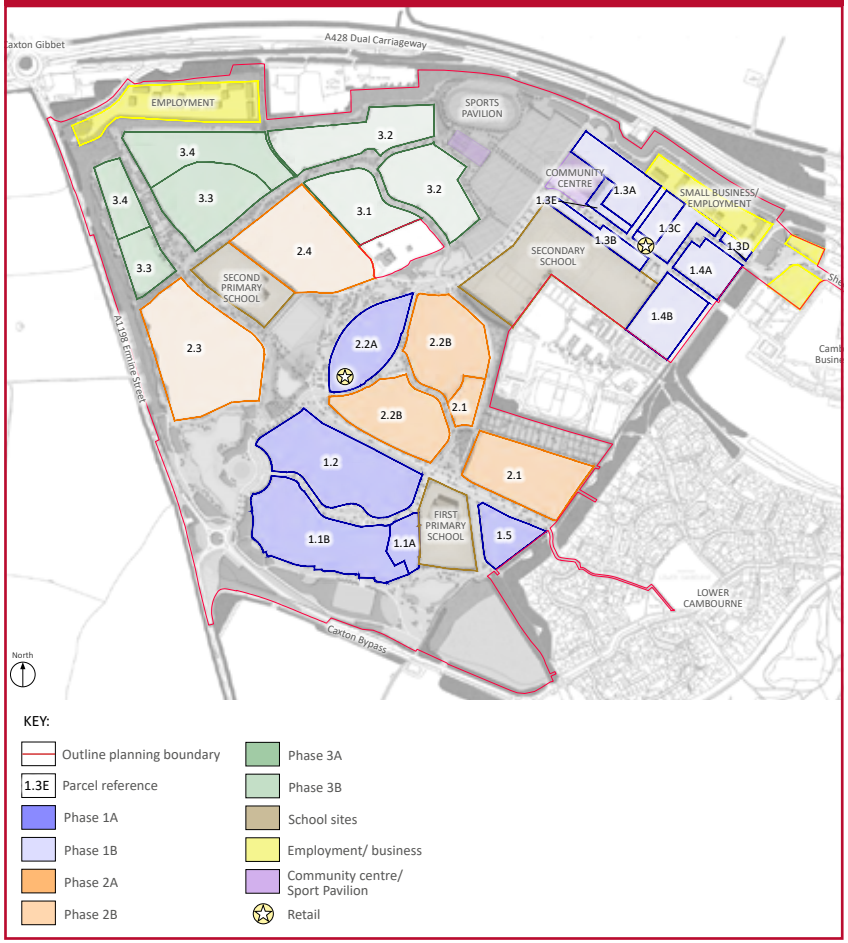
Identification of key early phase interventions that establish character, accessibility and functionality, including primary routes for vehicles and active travel, public open spaces, community infrastructure and access to public transport (existing or new services) to encourage sustainable travel behaviours from the outset. The strategy should also demonstrate flexibility to respond to changing circumstances over time, in line with NDG principles on lifetime neighbourhoods and adaptability.

Phasing of infrastructure delivery

A coordinated approach to the timing and provision of physical, green and social infrastructure, ensuring it aligns with development triggers and population growth. This should be consistent with emerging Local Plan infrastructure policies and demonstrate how infrastructure delivery will support sustainable, well-served communities at each stage.

Map with boundary, north arrow, scale bar, caption and key

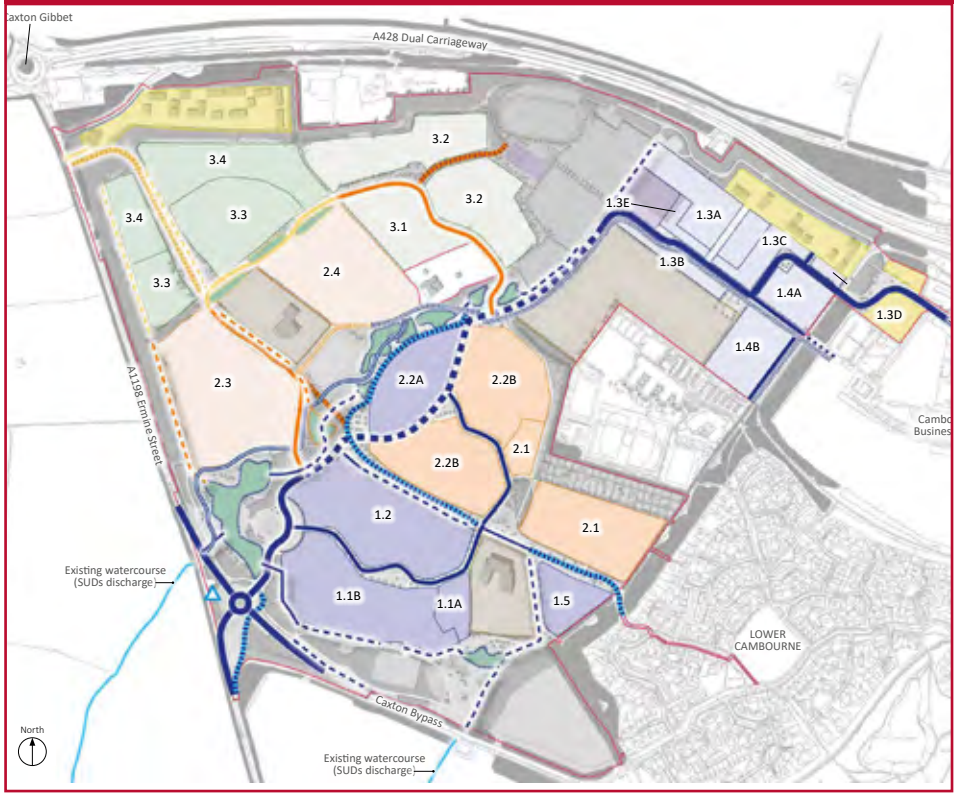
Example



↑ *Example development phasing plan. Source: Cambourne West Design Code* ***(Note that schools, employment areas, local centres, and other non-residential uses should also be included in the overall phasing strategy)***

Map with boundary, north arrow, scale bar, caption and key

Example



Example



↑ *Left: Example infrastructure phasing plan. Right: Example public realm and landscape phasing plan*

Source: Cambourne West Design Code

(Note that schools, employment areas, local centres, and other non-residential uses should also be included in the overall phasing strategy)



10
Design Quality and Engagement

Sets out the design quality expectations and community engagement strategy to secure a high standard of development.

10.1. Design quality and engagement

The successful integration of new development within its context is fundamentally dependent on the quality of its design, layout and delivery. Proposals must align with the **NDG**, particularly Context (C1–C3), Identity (I1–I3), Built Form (B1–B3), Movement (M1–M5) and Public Spaces (P1–P2), as well as the **emerging Local Plan** and relevant SPDs, to ensure development that is distinctive, sustainable and responsive to local character.

Design quality and placemaking

Design quality must be central, ensuring development responds to and enhances local character while reinforcing Telford and Wrekin's identity as a "Forest Community," in line with the emerging Local Plan Policies S1, DD1 and NE1-5.

The proposal should prioritise a high-quality public realm, attractive, inclusive, safe and well overlooked, underpinned by a landscape-led approach and integrated green infrastructure to maximise amenity and environmental performance.

Clear, legible and distinctive streets and spaces should be created, supporting liveable neighbourhoods and well-integrated mixed uses. Application of Building for a Healthy Life is encouraged to demonstrate delivery of well-designed places.

Movement, safety and inclusivity

Streets should prioritise active travel and sustainable transport, reducing reliance on private vehicles and supporting healthier lifestyles, in accordance with NDG M1–M5 and emerging Local Plan (particularly the ST Policy suite).

A Secured by Design approach should be embedded within the layout to create safe, resilient environments and minimise opportunities for crime, supported by guidance within relevant design and community safety SPDs.

Design review

In line with the NPPF Policy DP4 (design process) and best practice, major or complex proposals should engage with an independent Design Review process. Early engagement with design review panel is encouraged so that feedback can be meaningfully incorporated into the evolving design.

Delivery, flexibility and future-proofing

The masterplan should demonstrate how design quality will be maintained over time through a clear and robust delivery strategy. Early phases should prioritise elements that establish place identity, connectivity and infrastructure, such as primary routes, public spaces and community facilities.

The proposals should incorporate flexibility and adaptability, allowing for changes in land use, density and configuration as circumstances evolve. This aligns with NDG principles for lifespan and adaptability, and emerging Local Plan Policies HO2 and DD1, ensuring development remains resilient and future-proof.

Post-occupancy evaluation

In line with the principles of the Draft Design and Placemaking PPG (2026), a proportionate post-occupancy evaluation (POE) process should be undertaken by the developer or other agreed delivery partner to assess how the development performs in practice and whether key design objectives have been achieved. Findings should inform future phases, helping to refine delivery, respond to user experience and support the long-term success and adaptability of the masterplan framework.

Community stewardship and long-term management

A clear approach to community stewardship should be established from the outset to ensure the long-term quality, maintenance and management of public spaces, green infrastructure and community assets. This may include the establishment of a stewardship body, management company, a 'Community Interest Company', or partnership model that supports local involvement and a strong sense of ownership.

Development proposals should consider opportunities for productive landscapes, community use of open spaces and ongoing engagement, ensuring that the place continues to evolve in a way that reflects local needs and sustains design quality over time.

Stakeholder and community engagement

The Design Brief should embed a robust and proportionate stakeholder and community engagement strategy, recognising this as a core component of the design development process. **A detailed stakeholder and community engagement plan should be agreed with T&WC from the outset, ensuring meaningful and proportionate engagement throughout the preparation of the Design Brief and subsequent stages of the development process.**

Engagement must be initiated at the earliest stages of the project and maintained throughout, ensuring that the views of key stakeholders, local communities, and interested parties meaningfully inform the evolution of the scheme and the delivery of long-term social value.

The approach should clearly distinguish between statutory and non-statutory stakeholders (including the local authority, service providers, infrastructure bodies and statutory consultees) and the wider community (including residents, businesses, community groups and under-represented voices).

Engagement activities should be structured accordingly, ensuring that both technical inputs and community insights are effectively captured and integrated.

The engagement strategy should align with the ***RIBA Plan of Work,*** integrating consultation at key project stages, and reflect best practice set out in ***Homes England guidance.*** Proposals must also accord with the principles of the NPPF and the NDG, particularly in relation to inclusive design, community participation and social interaction.

The Developer shall demonstrate compliance with relevant Local Plan policies to ensure engagement is meaningful, transparent and proportionate to the scale and complexity of the proposal. Clear evidence must be provided to show how feedback from both stakeholders and the community has directly influenced design decisions, including site layout, land use, movement, public realm and infrastructure provision.

Engagement strategies should be tailored to the specific site context and community profile, using a range of accessible and inclusive methods to reach a broad cross-section of participants.

The Developer is expected to set out how engagement outcomes will be recorded, analysed and embedded within the design process, demonstrating an iterative and responsive approach.

Example



Community consultation pop up event held in Chestnuts Park

Example



Community consultation design workshop event

Exemplar engagement process. Source: St. Ann's New Neighbourhood

11 Adoption and Implementation Process



Guides Design Brief development, informs planning decisions, and ensures consistent delivery of high-quality, policy-compliant proposals.

11.1. Adoption and implementation process

1

1. Scope and Commissioning

The purpose, status and intended use of the Design Brief should be clearly defined at the outset, including whether it is to function as planning guidance or a Development Management tool. The spatial extent of the Brief, its relationship to the relevant Local Plan allocation policy, and the key issues to be addressed (including access, character, landscape, and infrastructure) should be explicitly set out. Governance arrangements, decision-making processes and internal sign-off procedures should be agreed at an early stage to ensure clarity and efficiency throughout preparation.

Policy context:

- Section 38(6), Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 – planning decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- NPPF 2026 -
  - PM2 - Clear vision, spatial strategy and relationship to the development plan.
  - PM7 - Governance, project management and sign-off arrangements.
  - DP1 - Design and placemaking objectives informed by local context.

2

2. Evidence Gathering and Baseline Analysis

A proportionate and robust evidence base should be prepared to inform the Design Brief. This should include a review of the planning policy context (including the Local Plan, NPPF, National Design Guide and National Model Design Code), alongside a comprehensive assessment of site constraints and opportunities. Key considerations should include accessibility, movement and connectivity, landscape and townscape character, heritage assets, and infrastructure capacity.

The findings of this analysis should be clearly summarised through a constraints and opportunities plan, identifying key issues and any required mitigation measures to inform the development of design principles.

Relevant national policy and guidance:

- NPPF 2026 -
  - PM8: Evidence for Plan-Making
  - DP1: A Strategy for Design
  - DP2: Local Design Guides, Design Codes and Masterplans
  - TR1: Vision-Led Approach to Planning for Transport
- National Design Guide (2021) – ten characteristics of well designed places.
- National Model Design Code (2021) – structure, content and purpose of design guidance.
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) - Design Masterplans and site specific briefs
- Building for a Healthy Life (latest edition) – recommended assessment framework.

Local policy context

- Emerging Telford and Wrekin Local Plan:
  - Policy HO2 (Sustainable communities)
  - Design, placemaking and sustainability policies
- Relevant Council strategies (e.g. sustainability, transport, green infrastructure).

3

3. Early Engagement (Pre-Draft)

Early engagement with the Council is encouraged to help inform the development of the Design Brief and identify key issues at the outset. Where appropriate, this may include input from relevant Council officers across disciplines such as planning, development management, highways, housing, education, drainage, ecology, and landscape. To support programme certainty and avoid delays, the scope of engagement and expected timescales for officer feedback should be agreed at the outset.

A stakeholder and community engagement plan should be agreed with the Council at the start of the process. The plan should set out the key stakeholders to be engaged, the objectives of engagement, the proposed consultation methods, and the timing of engagement activities throughout the design process.

Applicants are encouraged to undertake early design testing through workshops, design reviews, or other collaborative engagement activities where these would add value to the process. Participation in a Design Review Panel is optional but may be beneficial for significant or complex proposals, helping to refine emerging design principles and ensure alignment with policy objectives and local aspirations.

Policy context

- NPPF 2026 - PM6(d), PM7(1d), DM1(1a), DP1(1a), DP2(1b), DP4(1)

4

4. Draft Design Brief Preparation

A clear, structured and well-illustrated draft Design Brief should be prepared, setting out the vision and overarching objectives for the site, alongside a comprehensive framework of site-specific design principles.

The document should address key components including:

- Vision and objectives
- Site-specific design principles
- Movement and access strategy
- Landscape and open space framework
- Built form parameters (height, density, frontage, character)
- Sustainability and climate considerations
- Infrastructure triggers and phasing strategy

The content should be proportionate, policy-compliant and demonstrably deliverable, providing sufficient clarity to guide future planning applications.

Policy context:

- NPPF 2026 - DP1(1a-b), DP2(1a,c), DP3(2), TR1(1), HO13(3a), PM12.
- National Design Guide/ NMDC
- Emerging Local Plan design and site specific policies

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5. Formal Consultation

A programme of public consultation should be undertaken on the draft Design Brief, this will typically involve a consultation period of 4-6 weeks and should be coordinated with the Council.

Engagement methods should include publication of consultation materials by the applicant team, with links provided through appropriate Council communication channels where agreed, alongside targeted consultation with statutory consultees, ward members, and parish councils.

Consultation responses should be recorded and summarised in a Consultation Statement, identifying the key issues raised and how they have been addressed where appropriate.

Policy context:

- NPPF 2026 -
  - PM6(d): Community and stakeholder engagement.
  - DM1(1a-b): Early engagement and reporting consultation outcomes.
  - DP2(1b): Effective community engagement and local aspirations.
- Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) – Telford and Wrekin consultation expectations

6

6. Review and Refinement

Consultation responses should be carefully reviewed to identify material planning issues. The Design Brief should be amended where appropriate to address relevant feedback, with a clear audit trail explaining how comments have been considered.

A transparent "You said, we did" approach should be adopted to demonstrate how engagement has influenced the document. The final version should be refined to ensure clarity, consistency and robustness.

Policy context:

- NPPF 2026 -
  - DM1 - Engagement outcomes and responses to feedback.
  - DM3 - Consideration of representations and planning issues.
  - DP2 - Monitoring, review and refinement.
  - DP4 - Ongoing design evolution and quality assurance.
- Section 38(6) – alignment with the development plan

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7. Approval and Adoption

For Sustainable Community Design Briefs, formal approval should be obtained from the Local Planning Authority to ensure the document carries appropriate weight and provides a consistent basis for decision-making.

The status, date of approval, and decision-making route should be clearly recorded within the document.

Policy context:

- NPPF 2026 -
  - DM3 - Determining Development Proposals (clear, effective and proportionate decision-making).
  - DP4 - The Design Process (ensuring design quality is maintained through assessment, approval and delivery).
- Planning guidance - material consideration under section 38(6)

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8. Publication and Implementation

Following adoption, the Design Brief should be published on the Council's website and embedded within Development Management processes. Officers should be provided with clear internal guidance on its application.

The Design Brief should be referenced in pre-application discussions, committee reports, and decision notices where relevant, ensuring it is effectively applied in determining planning applications.

Policy context:

- NPPF 2026 -
  - DM3 - Decision-making and consideration of material planning issues.
  - DP4 - Design quality through assessment, implementation and delivery.
  - DM4 - Weight of planning frameworks and guidance in decision-making.

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9. Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of the Design Brief should be monitored through its application in live planning proposals. The document should be reviewed and updated where necessary, particularly where there are changes to the policy context or material changes in site circumstances.

Consideration should be given to whether the Design Brief is time-limited or subject to periodic review, ensuring it remains relevant, effective and aligned with Local Plan review cycles.

Policy context

- NPPF 2026 -
  - DP2 - Monitoring and review processes.
  - PM11 - Monitoring development plan implementation and effectiveness.
  - PM2 - Alignment with Local Plan vision and review processes.
- Consistency with Local Plan review cycles

References

Best practice examples and image credits

Page no.	Project name and location	Local authority	Image credit	Recognition/ Award
11, 17, 20, 21, 25, 27	St. Cuthbert's Garden Village Concept Masterplan, Carlisle	Cumberland Council	Gillespies LLP	RTPI Planning Award
14, 40, 41	North West Bicester Masterplan Framework, Bicester	Cherwell District Council	Farrells	National exemplar
15, 16, 26, 53	St. Ann's New Neighbourhood, London	London Borough of Haringey	Karakusevic Carson	Housing Design Award
23	Top left image: Derwenthorpe, York	City of York Council	Studio Partington	Housing Design Award, RIBA Yorkshire Award, Yorkshire Design Award, etc
	Top right image: Abode, Great Kneighton, Cambridge	Cambridge City Council	Proctor and Matthews	Housing Design Award, RIBA Awards, RTPI Award, etc
	Bottom left image: Lightmoor, Telford	Telford and Wrekin Council	Bournville Village Trust	RTPI Award (Commended), Housing Design Award (Shortlisted)
	Bottom right image: Marmalade Lane, Cambridge	Cambridge City Council	David Butler	RIBA Awards, RTPI Award, National Urban Design Award, etc
29, 30, 31, 33-35	Cambourne Spatial Framework Strategy, South Cambridgeshire	South Cambridgeshire District Council	Arup, Jas Bhalla Works, WW+P, Third Nature	Landscape Institute Awards, etc
32, 39, 47, 48, 49	Cambourne West Design Code, South Cambridgeshire	South Cambridgeshire District Council	Randall Thorp	National and landscape led exemplar
36, 37	Oakley Vale Design Code, Corby	North Northamptonshire Council	ADAM Urbanism	National exemplar
38	Top image: The Avenue, Saffron Walden	Uttlesford District Council	Tim Crocker	Housing Design Awards, RIBA Awards, etc
	Middle image: Accordia, Cambridge	Cambridge City Council	Tim Crocker	RIBA Stirling Prize, etc
	Bottom image: Goldsmith Street, Norwich	Norwich City Council	Elli Thomas, Design Council	RIBA Stirling Prize, RIBA Awards, Housing Design Awards, etc
43	Elmsbrook, NW Bicester	Cherwell District Council	UKGBC	Constructing Excellence Awards – Sustainability, etc, National exemplar
44	Cator Park, Kidbrooke Village, Greenwich	Royal Borough of Greenwich	HTA Design	Landscape Institute Awards, etc

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