



**Land East of North Road, Stevenage
(in the Parish of Graveley)**
Statement of Community Involvement

On behalf of **Croudace Homes**

Project Ref: 35476/A5/PD | Rev: 01 | Date: December 2023

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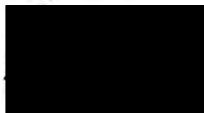

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Report Title: Statement of Community Involvement

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For and on behalf of Stantec UK Limited				

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Contents

1 Introduction..... 1
2 Proposed Development 2
3 Policy Context..... 3
4 Consultation and Engagement 4
5 Public Exhibition 9
6 Feedback and Response 12
7 Conclusion 17

Appendices

- Appendix 1 Design Review Panel Response from Design South East
- Appendix 2 Local Plan Project Board Report
- Appendix 3 Public Consultation Event Invite
- Appendix 4 Exhibition Boards
- Appendix 5 Feedback Forms

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) outlines the pre-application engagement undertaken on behalf of Croudace Homes Limited (the 'Applicant') in support of their proposals for a residential development on Land East of North Road, Stevenage (within North Hertfordshire District and the Parish of Graveley), herein referred to as the 'site'
- 1.2 The planning submission which this SCI accompanies seeks outline planning permission under the following description of development

“Outline planning application to include determination of access, for the erection of approximately 900 dwellings (including affordable housing and self/custom build units), provision of a primary school, provision of a neighbourhood centre including community building, and provision of open space areas across the site, together with associated drainage, land works and utilities works. This application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement”

- 1.3 Stakeholder engagement is a crucial part of the planning process and allows local communities to input into the development process. This provides local communities with the opportunity to shape proposals. This is not only in relation to design and layout, but also content within the site such as land uses, open space areas etc.
- 1.4 The planning process through the pre-submission phase in relation to the site includes the production of a Strategic Masterplan Framework document. This is underpinned by a baseline report and brings forward design principles which the planning application should adhere to. This SCI details the process in which this Strategic Masterplan Framework document has come forward and its current status.

2 Proposed Development

- 2.1 The site is an approximately 42.7 hectare greenfield site located beyond the current northern edge of Stevenage. It consists of one large field in arable use, bordered by hedgerows and a small woodland to the east, and bisected by Public Right of Way (Graveley 007) which travels from Stevenage to Graveley; a bridleway runs along the eastern boundary (Graveley 008) from Stevenage to Chesfield. Footpath Graveley 006 runs along the north-western edge of the site linking Graveley High Street to Crow End.
- 2.2 The site is located within the Parish of Graveley within North Hertfordshire District. The boundary to Stevenage Borough runs along the southern boundary of the site. The proposed connection points to the south link to a separate proposed residential development
- 2.3 A full detailed description of the proposal is set out within the accompanying Planning Statement.
- 2.4 A summary of the outline application is set out below:
- Approximately 900 dwellings, of which 40% will be affordable housing and 9 will be reserved for serviced plots for self-build development (use class C3). The development area is approximately 24.7 hectares.
 - Land for a new 2 form of entry primary school (use class F1) up to 2 hectares in area.
 - Provision of a Neighbourhood Centre of 0.4 hectares to include a local square with a community hall or meeting place (use class F2) and supporting non-retail facilities (use class E).
 - A network of cycle and pedestrian routes across the site.
 - A network of multi-functional public open spaces across the site, ranging from a Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play to green corridors and allotments.
 - Provision of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and associated drainage basins and features as necessary.
 - Ancillary features and infrastructure required to bring forward development, such as substations. The number and location will be agreed through the reserved matters process.

3 Policy Context

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023 encourages plans to be a platform for local people to shape their surroundings. Paragraph 39 confirms that early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Paragraph 40 adds that local planning authorities should encourage applicants to engage with the local community and where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees before submitting any future planning application.
- 3.2 Paragraph 126 highlights the effectiveness of engagement between applicants, communities, and local planning authorities throughout the planning process.
- 3.3 In paragraph 132, the NPPF states that applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.
- 3.4 The proposed development site is allocated for residential development within the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031, which was adopted in November 2022. The Local Plan itself was prepared in line with the requirements of the Council's own SCI document (since updated). This allowed feedback direct to the Council in relation to the potential development of land East of North Road. The full consultation process is set out within chapter 1 of the Local Plan.
- 3.5 To confirm, the land is allocated for residential development within policy SP18 of the adopted Local Plan. The site-specific criteria is set out within policy SP16, where the site is referred to as Site NS1 – North of Stevenage. Policy SP9 of the Local Plan requires Strategic Housing Sites to be supported by Strategic Masterplans, and the policy sets out the rationale for such documents. It adds that these documents should be subject to pre-application discussions.
- 3.6 The Council's latest SCI document was adopted in September 2023. Chapter 5 of this document relates to community involvement in pre-application masterplanning, and notes that 'strategic' sites are those over 500 dwellings, whilst 'significant' sites are those delivering over 100 dwellings. It reiterates the need to involve the Council, the community and stakeholders in the masterplan process to allow meaningful input in shaping the planning and design outcomes.
- 3.7 The Council's SCI acknowledges the content of Local Plan policy SP9. It sets out the potential consultation strategy for sites, which includes a wider public consultation event at draft masterplan stage, and the requirement to provide a feedback event.

4 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1 Policy SP9 of the approved North Hertfordshire Local Plan requires the strategic allocations to come forward with an agreed masterplan. In order to meet the requirements of the policy and to inform future planning application, the Applicant has worked with the Council to agree an appropriate masterplan. The process to achieve this was set out in the Council-produced Strategic Masterplan Brief for site NS1.
- 4.2 The Brief includes a number of steps to be taken to ensure a robust masterplan would result. The steps as to how this would be achieved are shown below:



- 4.3 A key stage during the earlier part of the process was stage 3, the production of a baseline report for the site. This set out the baseline condition to a variety of different disciplines, ranging from a Townscape and Character Study to a Utilities Assessment. This then informed the opportunities and constraints plan produced for the site, and also allowed both parties to understand the key areas of the masterplan moving forward.
- 4.4 The Brief document also set out the expected level of engagement to ensure that the process involved appropriate technical input at the necessary stages of the process. The table below sets out some of the meetings. However, it should be noted that this does not include all communication with officers at North Hertfordshire, where regular correspondence took place throughout this process.

Date	Purpose	Attendees
11 April 2023	Access Meeting	With HCC, SBC and NHDC
14 March 2023	Highways Meeting	With NHDC and HCC
14 December 2022	Full Design Team Meeting	With Council design team
3 October 2022	Design	With SBC, NHDC, HCC and Miller/Bellway
3 February 2022	Education Workshop	With HCC and NHDC
13 January 2022	Full Design Team Meeting	With Council design team
30 September 2021	Full Design Team Meeting	With Council design team
11 September 2019	Education Meeting	With HCC and NHDC
4 July 2019	Education Meeting	With HCC and NHDC
24 January 2019	Meeting with adjacent landowner	With developers and agent
22 January 2019	First Pre-app Meeting	With NHDC

- 4.5 Three further meetings are set out specifically below.

Parish Council Discussion

- 4.6 On 5th January 2023, a Teams Call was undertaken with Graveley Parish Council to discuss the scheme. The conversation focused on the community facilities to be used. The Parish Council raised that they would appreciate having some facilities within a community building given the lack of existing provision. It was agreed that this would be considered and where possible, space for Graveley Parish Council would be incorporated into the building.

Design Review Panel

- 4.7 The Applicant applied for the masterplan to be reviewed by the Design Review Panel, undertaken by Design South East on behalf of North Hertfordshire District Council. A summary document was submitted ahead of the event, which comprised of a site visit in the morning, and a discussion between parties in the afternoon session.
- 4.8 The event was attended by 5 members of the Design South East panel, as well as the Panel manager. Also in attendance were representatives from both North Hertfordshire District Council and the Applicant. The event included a productive discussion regarding the masterplan as it was at that time, and sought to discuss areas where potential improvements were identified. A copy of the submission document and the formal response from Design South East following the event can be viewed in **Appendix 1**.

4.9 The Design Review Panel identified 6 key recommendations in their final reports. These are set out in the table below alongside the design response:

Key Recommendation	Design Response
<p>Continue to attempt developer-to-developer talks with Miller and Bellway Homes to ascertain if any possibility remains for a joint design approach along the edge between the two sites. If further collaboration is not possible, consider the Stevenage site a fixed constraint that will require a sensitive response to edges, frontages, and connections.</p>	<p>As noted, the scheme to the south within Stevenage Borough is more advanced than the Croudace site. This is a result of the timings of the adoption of the respective Local Plans and the subsequent release of land from the Green Belt. The Stevenage Borough application was also submitted in 2017 and subsequently approved before the submission of the NS1 application</p>
<p>Undertake meaningful public consultation to understand what the scheme can provide for the wider communities of Graveley and Stevenage and improve integration with existing neighbourhoods</p>	<p>The planning process continues to run against a programme agreed with North Hertfordshire District Council. At this time, the public consultation event had yet to take place, and this event allowed local residents the opportunity to input into the process</p>
<p>Deliver the sustainable vision described by committing to higher sustainability targets such as BREEAM Communities and LETI, alongside sustainable design principles such as optimising building orientation and the prioritisation of active travel modes</p>	<p>The application will at a minimum be policy compliant in terms of sustainability credentials. The Panel had pushed for commitments to additional measures. However, the Applicant cannot commit to these at this stage. That is of course not to say that additional sustainable measures cannot be introduced, especially as new technologies come on line. The detailed applications will ensure that the opportunities provided through the masterplan in terms of active travel are realised.</p>
<p>Reconsider the movement framework to ensure primary streets are simplified to read as such, and the village core is better connected to the rest of the proposal. Begin to develop detailed proposals in section, defining how the character of each street type will impact green spaces and built form and carefully considering areas of transition (for example from built form to green space; streets to green space)</p>	<p>Following the meeting, the location of roads around the central core and the link to the development to the south took place, and in line with the discussion, these have been realigned. This has improved the connections to the central area, particularly from the eastern parcels. The main community street in the southwest of the site has also been realigned to add further bends and distance, seeking to encourage active modes of travel.</p>

<p>Continue to develop the green infrastructure framework of functional routes and connections. Establish a clear hierarchy and function for green spaces, together with a set of design principles that will clarify the character of these spaces and allow for an informed built response within each character area</p>	<p>A key part of the discussion was the western green route running north to south through the site. Discussion sought to understand its function and more importantly, where it is linking to. This was subsequently reviewed and realigned so it better serves the northwest corner of the site, providing good access through to the community hub as well as the development to the south</p>
<p>Carefully analyse the character and morphology of Graveley and the surrounding countryside to ensure the development edge responds sensitively to its surroundings, particularly in its relationship to (and separation from) the village, to better inform the character areas across the development</p>	<p>The relationship with Graveley was discussed in detail. The parcel alignment has changed since that discussion, with the allotments moved to the northwest corner, providing greater separation of built form. The character area work has evolved through the Strategic Masterplan Framework document to take into account comments made and subsequent discussions with North Hertfordshire District Council</p>

4.10 The discussions points with the Design Review Panel has been reviewed, and as noted in the table above, has led to some refinement of the masterplan. Of particular notice is the western green corridor, which now serves as more than just a leisure route, and now provides better links across the site.

Local Plan Project Board

4.11 On 23 May 2023, the progress of the masterplan making process was reported to North Hertfordshire District Council’s Local Plan Project Board. This included a report to the Board which provided an update on the process. That report stated:

‘In overall terms, officers consider that the draft Masterplan demonstrates general conformity with a number of criteria of Policy SP9, Policy SP16 and other relevant local and national policies. Officers are content with the broad direction of travel and design development of key land uses, the movement and urban design frameworks and the overall green infrastructure network.’

4.12 A presentation of the masterplan and its background was undertaken, followed by a question and answer session. A copy of the report to Members can be viewed in **Appendix 2** of this Statement. The conclusion of the Project Board meeting, in line with the recommendation to Members, was as follows:

‘Following the presentations and questions, RB (the Chair Cllr Ruth Brown) thanked the developer team for attending and Project Board **agreed** the report recommendation to *endorse the work undertaken to date as an appropriate basis for public consultation on the draft masterplan.*’

4.13 The Project Board then led to the public consultation event. Details of this event are set out in chapter 5 below. This was in the form of a public event held at the Stevenage Rugby Club on North Road, where members of the public and other stakeholders were invited to discuss the masterplan itself.

Next Steps

- 4.14 The Strategic Masterplan Framework has not yet progressed to stage 10 of the Brief as set out above. It is hoped that the document will be considered by Members and given Council approval in early 2024.

5 Public Exhibition

5.1 The main aspect of the public consultation process in the run up to this planning application was a public exhibition, held at the Stevenage Town Rugby Club on North Road, from 15.30 – 19.30 on Wednesday 5 July 2023.

5.2 Invites to the event were sent as below:

- Local Residents (see below)
- The Clerk and all Parish Council Members at Graveley Parish Council
- North Hertfordshire District Councillors for the Chesfield Ward; Cllrs Dominic Griffiths and Terry Tyler
- North Hertfordshire District Councillor for Weston and Sandon; Cllr Steve Jarvis
- Hertfordshire County Councillor for Royston West and Rural; Cllr Steve Jarvis
- Hertfordshire County Councillor for St Nicholas; Cllr Phil Bibby
- Stevenage Borough Councillors for Woodfield; Cllrs Phil Bibby, Graham Lawrence and Margaret Notley
- The Friends of Forster Country
- Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust
- Historic England
- Sports England

5.3 With regard to invites to the general public, these captured address points at Graveley, including properties along Back Lane, the existing business addresses and care home to the west of North Road, and residential properties along and set off Granby Road and Chancellors Road at north Stevenage. The captured address points are shown on the images below:



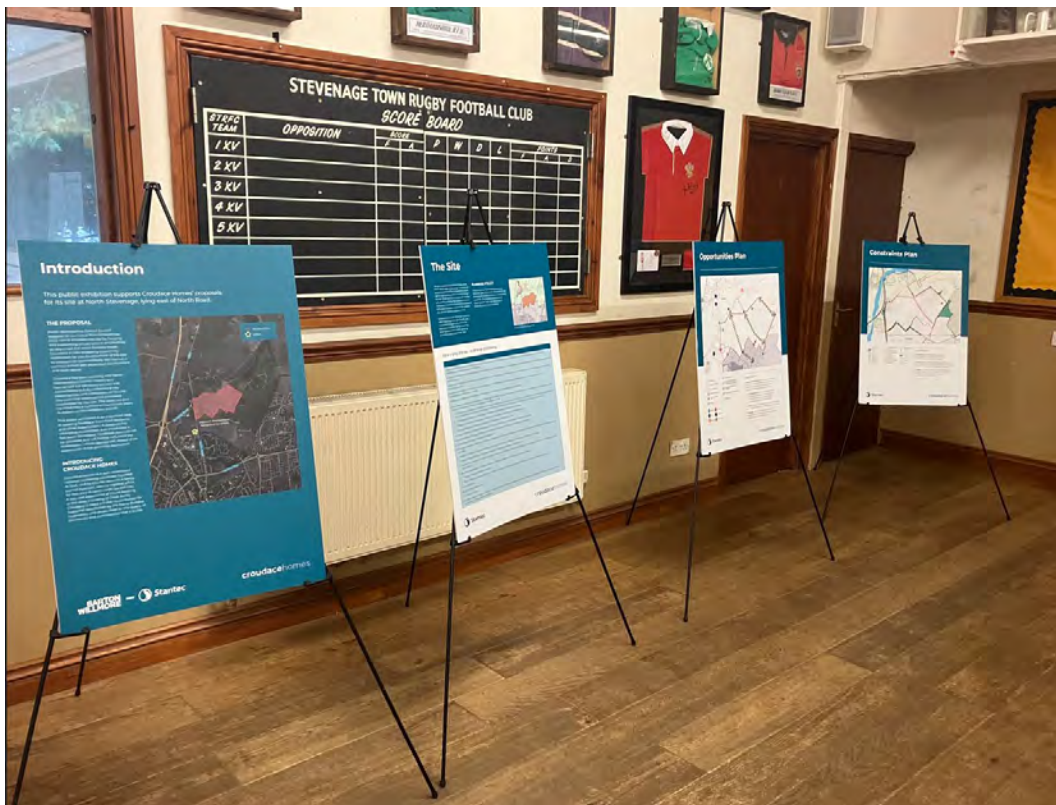


- 5.4 The flyer for the event, distributed to the address points shown on the plans above, can be viewed within **Appendix 3**.
- 5.5 To facilitate the online consultation, an accompanying website was also circulated (<http://northstevenage.croudacehomes.co.uk>) to further publicise the event and collect feedback. The website included the exhibition boards that were displayed at the event itself. The information and feedback form were available to view and complete for a further 16 days after the event itself.
- 5.6 The exhibition boards gave information on the context, an indicative layout and design information including the access arrangements and sustainability details. The exhibition boards can be viewed within **Appendix 4** and were laid out as follows:
 - Introduction: To the proposal and to Croudace Homes,
 - The Site: A description of the Site and the planning policy designation,
 - The opportunities plan,
 - The constraints plan,
 - Land Use Framework: Setting out design principles,
 - Movement and Access Framework: Setting out design principles,
 - Green Infrastructure Framework: Setting out design principles,
 - Biodiversity Framework: Setting out design principles,
 - Urban Design Framework and Building Heights,
 - Examples of the Appearance of Buildings and Sustainability,
 - The Masterplan: Including the key elements highlighted,
 - Next Steps: Including timeline and how to provide feedback
 - Example Street Scenes: Four examples across the site
- 5.7 The feedback form, provided both online and in hard copy during the event, asked a number of open-ended questions, and provided a comment box for the respondent to provide

additional comments. A copy of the questionnaire can be viewed within **Appendix 5** of this Statement. The questions within the questionnaire were as follows:

- Taken as a whole, what is your overall impression of the proposals?
- What do you consider to be the main benefits of the proposal?
- Do you have any key concerns regarding the proposal?
- Do you have any other comments about the proposal?

5.8 The event was attended by a number of staff from Croudace Homes, as well as representatives from Stantec (planning) and TPA (transport). The photograph below shows some of the exhibition boards set out in the Rugby Club building:



5.9 Approximately 80 people attended the public exhibition and the feedback drafted by those attendees, as well as submissions through the website, are set out within chapter 6 below.

6 Feedback and Response

6.1 A total of 15 written responses were received during the public consultation event. Of these, 8 comments were submitted using the feedback form, whilst emails were raised following the event forming the additional 6 comments from a combination of the general public and invited stakeholders.

6.2 The result from the 8 feedback forms received are set out below:

Question 1: Taken as a whole, what is your overall impression of the proposals?

6.3 Of the responses received, 7 were negative whilst one was left blank. Of note was reference to the aim of the developer to maximise profits. One response sought to understand how Stevenage Borough Council would be obliged to provide extra services, paid for by Stevenage residents, for future residents within North Hertfordshire District.

Question 2: What do you consider to be the main benefits of the proposal?

6.4 On the submitted forms, no benefits were provided.

Question 3: Do you have any key concerns regarding the proposal?

6.5 The table below sets out word for word the comments received on the 7 forms that completed Question 3, and provides a design response in reply:

Comment to Question 3	Design Response
'Traffic will grind to a halt. It will (be) an absolute nightmare for anyone living in the area'	This application is supported by a Transport Assessment to ascertain impacts upon the strategic and local highway networks. The application seeks to promote sustainable travel modes through its layout and direct links.
'Traffic chaos. Urban fringe overspill on local community'	Traffic is described above. The proposal seeks to ensure that Graveley can retain its own identity. Appropriate separation is retained between settlements, which remains within the Green Belt. The proposal will provide on-site community facilities for use by all, including its own school, and financial contributions will be made to other necessary infrastructure requirements.
'If you are going to build please put a solid tree band along the northern boundary'	The northern boundary treatment has been discussed with stakeholders as part of the pre-application process. It is not considered appropriate to create a solid tree belt here. As such, a more informal area of hedgerow in dispersed with trees is proposed in this area.
'No more Skylarks – nowhere for people to work locally – this is just a dormitory development for London commuters'	The application will be accompanied by ecological surveys including an assessment of breeding birds to establish impacts and mitigation requirements. Regarding the use by commuters, this is significant demand by the local population for dwellings in this location. There are significant levels of employment opportunities in short distances from the site which will attract residents.

<p>‘Traffic, pollution, practically making Graveley part of Stevenage’</p>	<p>Traffic is described above. Regarding potential coalescence with Graveley, the application seeks to retain an appropriate gap with Graveley, whilst retaining links via the Public Right of Way network. The application will seek an appropriate treatment to the northern boundary.</p>
<p>‘Many environmental flooding, traffic, pollution, are the homes actually going to be affordable? Etc’</p>	<p>The application is supported by an Environmental Statement and numerous technical documents. These documents confirm that no harm has been identified that would preclude development coming forward. In terms of affordable housing, the proposal will include 40% affordable housing. This will represent approximately 360 dwellings which will remain as such in perpetuity.</p>
<p>‘Yes. It’s inappropriate as it will probably increase Stevenage’s role as a dormitory are where residents work elsewhere. Junction 8 of A1(M) is already overcrowded to the point of being dangerous. The A1(M) itself cannot take the present traffic load and peak traffic goes through Stevenage to junction 7’</p>	<p>The matter regarding the creation of a dormitory settlement is covered above. Regarding traffic, the junctions referenced have been assessed within the Transport Assessment supporting this application and the findings are not considered to preclude development coming forward on the site. It should also be noted that the site has been allocated for development, a process for which the Council would have also undertaken modelling of junctions to ensure they have appropriate capacity to support the proposed development.</p>

Question 4: Do you have any other comments about the proposal?

6.6 The table below sets out the word for word comments received on the 7 forms that completed Question 3, and provides a design response in reply:

<p>Comment to Question 3</p>	<p>Design Response</p>
<p>‘Put a solid tree boundary along (north) side’</p>	<p>As noted above, a full treed boundary to the north is not considered appropriate, as discussed through the Strategic Masterplan Framework engagement with the Council. A more informal boundary of in dispersed hedgerows and tree planting is proposed.</p>
<p>‘Not your responsibility, but I think it’s a disgrace that this development and the adjacent SBC development were not considered and put out to public consultation as a single unit. Adjacent Councils should cooperate and be open with their respective residents about the total size and impact of large schemes like this’</p>	<p>The key issue has been the difference in timings between documents. The Stevenage Borough Local Plan was adopted in May 2019, whilst the North Hertfordshire Local Plan was adopted in November 2022. The outline planning application 17/00862/OPM within Stevenage Borough was submitted in 2017. As such, that project has always been in advance of the Applicant’s proposal. Whilst it is noted that a joint consultation would be informative, it has not been practically possible given the timelines involved. Liaison has taken place with the developer to the south to ensure that connections points between sites are available. The masterplan reflects the agreement between parties.</p>

'It's a travesty'	Comment noted
'Please reconsider urgently before we live in a concrete jungle'	The development of the masterplan has had landscaping front and centre of the layout evolution. It seeks to ensure appropriate green spacing and green infrastructure throughout the site, and appropriate green boundaries, especially to the countryside boundaries and country park to the north and east. This seeks to reduce any impact of the built development and create a pleasant layout for the proposal.
'Homes appear to overlook each other – does the design minimise road need'	The masterplan is currently illustrative. When the detailed design comes forward within the future reserved matters applications, care will be taken to ensure there is an appropriate relationship between all dwellings in order to ensure no loss of amenity to any future residents.

6.7 The feedback form did request details of postcodes to ascertain where the correspondent resides. The 8 feedback forms provided 7 responses as set out below:

- ❖ SG4 7LD South Graveley – One respondent
- ❖ SG4 7LY North Graveley – One respondent
- ❖ SG1 4BX Rectory Lane area (Stevenage) – Two respondents
- ❖ SG1 4SA Foster Close (Stevenage) – One respondent
- ❖ SG1 4SB Boswell Gardens (Stevenage) – One respondent
- ❖ SG1 4AR Granby Road (Stevenage) - One respondent

6.8 As noted, a further 6 comments were sent via email following the public consultation event. The table below summarises the comments received via email, and provides the design response accordingly:

Consultee	Comments Received	Design Response
Local Resident (Chancellor Road) – SG1 4AP	Notes difficulties in getting onto North Road at peak times, and an increase in levels of congestion. Notes no provision of health facilities, placing additional strain on existing facilities	The proposal seeks a signalised junction onto North Road, which should allow safe movement of vehicles between the site and North Road. The connection through the land to the south also allows access to a further signalised junction. The illustrative layout has been designed to encourage sustainable modes of transport and seeks to reduce vehicle traffic as a result. Health provision has been subject to significant discussion with the Council, and the scheme will make financial contributions in lieu of on-site provision.

<p>Local Resident (Graveley – no postcode provided)</p>	<p>Concerns regarding traffic impact the lack of cyclists using routes, light and noise pollution to the residents of Graveley, inappropriate landscaping between the site and Graveley village, the provision of three-storey development and their prominence and impact upon heritage assets.</p>	<p>The proposal seeks to promote cycle use by ensuring direct routes are available and creating an extended car loop to deter users, especially for internal trips. The development will encourage use of North Road by cyclists.</p> <p>The proposal includes up to 4 storey high buildings in appropriate locations. The scale parameters plan has been assessed by the heritage consultant, who considers that appropriately designed development in this area will be acceptable. Whilst the parameters suggest up to 4 storey properties, not all buildings in that area will be at that height.</p>
<p>Local Resident (Graveley) – SG4 7LN</p>	<p>Concerns regarding coalescence with Graveley, the lack of a treed boundary between the site and Graveley, the number and affordability of housing, disruption by increased traffic, and the needs for small affordable housing and bungalows.</p>	<p>Matters regarding traffic, and coalescence and the boundary with Graveley are covered above.</p> <p>The housing numbers have been dictated through the North Hertfordshire Local Plan process, which has identified the site as the preferred location to bring forward 900 dwellings to meet the identified need of the District.</p> <p>The proposal will bring forward approximately 360 affordable dwellings, which will include a mix of house sizes. Future reserved matters application will bring forward finalised design, but there is the potential for some bungalows to be included.</p>
<p>Graveley Parish Council</p>	<p>Very concerned regarding construction phase so no site traffic comes through the village or has access via Church Lane and/or Back Lane. It seeks residents to not use these routes as rat runs.</p> <p>It seeks appropriate relationships between the built development and existing properties, including appropriate screening.</p> <p>The Parish Council would like a Parish office without the community building, with a toilet, kitchen and closed-off storage area</p>	<p>Construction detail will be agreed with the Council through the planning application process. This will likely include a routing arrangement likely to be in line with the Parish Councils request.</p> <p>The Applicant cannot control rat running by future residents to and from the site. The only vehicle access into the site will be from North Road given the land available.</p> <p>The development will ensure it has appropriate relationships to adjoining landowners, including appropriate boundary planting and screening.</p> <p>The design and layout of the community building will come forward through a future reserved matters stage. However, they are no concerns with the provision of Parish facilities within the building, with the details to be agreed at the later date.</p>

<p>Sport England</p>	<p>Seeks to ensure that an 80m ball strike zone is provided around the Graveley cricket pitch.</p> <p>The proposals for off-site sports pitch provision is supported subject to financial contributions.</p> <p>The community building could be used for indoor sports provision such as dance, fitness, martial arts etc</p> <p>The masterplan is generally supported in line with Active Design principles with some general comments made</p>	<p>The illustrative masterplan seeks allotments to be located adjacent to the cricket club. Future reserved matter applications can ensure an appropriate relationship between land uses and the cricket club.</p> <p>Sport England has previous confirmed the lack of on-site provision and the suitability of an appropriate financial contribution.</p> <p>The proposal will include a community building. The size and layout of that building will form part of a future reserved matters application. However, the potential for it to be used for sports and classes is noted and will assist in informing its future design.</p> <p>Of note are comments that the school and community building should be on the same side of the road. They are currently separated on the illustrative masterplan by a bus only road which will serve both locations. This is considered appropriate given the access requirements for each, and the more public access to the community building without impacted on the running of the school.</p>
<p>The British Horse Society</p>	<p>Seeks to ensure safety during construction to allow for continued safe use of the Bridleway, with appropriate measures and signage in place</p>	<p>The proposal will ensure that appropriate measures are used to ensure safety for all throughout the construction period, and this will include users of the Public Bridleway that runs north to south through the site.</p>

6.9 The majority of comments received and summarised above relate to the principle of development, or more precise detail that would come forward either through conditions to the outline planning permission, or within future reserved matters application.

6.10 One comments repeated relates to the boundary with Graveley. This has been the subject of consultation with the Council to understand what is best in this location. Given the heritage assets in the vicinity and the village character, the use of a full treed boundary is not considered appropriate in this location. Instead a more informal mix of hedgerow and trees is considered to best respect that identified character. It is appreciated that this agreed position does not reflect the views of the general public. However, it is considered the more appropriate place-making option for the site. Precise details will come forward through future landscape reserved matters applications.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 Croudace Homes Limited has carried out significant stakeholder engagement and public consultation ahead of the submission of this planning application on land east of North Road, Stevenage (within North Hertfordshire District). The importance of effective and inclusive consultation is acknowledged and the opportunity to include stakeholders and the local community has ensured the public perspective of the proposed development has been understood in moving forward with design proposals.
- 7.2 In line with policy SP9 of the adopted North Hertfordshire Local Plan, the Applicant has produced a Strategic Masterplan Framework document in line with a Brief provided by the Council. This provided a guide as the necessary steps to ensure a robust masterplan is produced and that this is informed by all disciplines.
- 7.3 This Statement of Community Involvement sets out some of the steps undertaken through that process. This includes a summary of the Design Review Panel undertaken in association with Design South East, the presentation to the Local Plan Project Board, and the public consultation event that took place in July 2023.
- 7.4 This Statement sets out some of the key consultation responses received during this process and sets out the design responses where necessary. The Design Review Panel identified 6 key recommendations, which have been thoroughly reviewed and resulted in some amendments to the masterplan. This has included a review of the green corridors and relationships to the north.
- 7.5 The public consultation event was well attended and a number of feedback forms and comments were received. The majority of these were objecting to the principle of development at the site, rather than any of the design specifics. The proposed boundary with Graveley was referenced in a number of responses. The boundary is currently undefined as it runs through the existing wider field. However, the stakeholder discussions suggest that a full treed boundary is inappropriate in this location, and a more informal mix of hedgerows and trees should be used. The full design will come forward through the reserved matters application.
- 7.6 The Strategic Masterplan Framework is yet to be formally approved by the Council. However, it is at an advanced stage, and is expected to be considered by Members in early 2024. As such, when the planning application is expected to be determined, the document will be formally agreed by North Hertfordshire District Council.
- 7.7 The pre-application process has therefore including significant liaison with stakeholders, culminating in the proposed parameter plans to be considered. The design and layout has been shaped by these discussions and the relevant inputs described within this Statement. Local residents will now have the chance to review the details of the outline planning application and make any further comments to the District Council accordingly.

Appendix 1 Design Review Panel Response from Design South East

Document published separately

Appendix 2 Local Plan Project Board Report

Strategic Planning Project Board Paper

NS1 – NORTH OF STEVENAGE: DRAFT MASTERPLAN

23 May 2023

Purpose of Report

1. This report summarises progress to date on, and the content of, the pre-application Masterplan for Strategic Site NS1: North of Stevenage. Policy SP16 of the Local Plan allocates this site for the development of approximately 900 homes and supporting infrastructure. The Masterplan will be subject to public consultation in June / July.

Core Functions

2. This report particularly relates to the following Core Functions of the Project Board:
 - Inform place specific visions for the Strategic Housing sites that support sustainable communities;
 - Provide corporate oversight and strategic direction to the implementation of strategic site project delivery and wider strategic planning matters
 - Agree approval process and timing for Strategic Masterplans
 - To provide, where applicable, a recommendation to the Service Director: Regulatory on the draft masterplan documentation to be subject to formal public consultation

Recommendation

3. That Project Board:
 - Provide any comments or feedback on the draft masterplan following presentation by the landowner team; and
 - Endorse the work undertaken to date as an appropriate basis for public consultation on the draft masterplan

Background

4. Site NS1 consists of approximately 43 hectares of agricultural land sited to the south-west of Graveley and lying between the village and the administrative boundary with Stevenage Borough to the south.
5. The adjoining land within Stevenage benefits from planning permission for residential-led development of approximately 800 homes with associated community facilities and green infrastructure. Works to open up the site from North Road have recently commenced.
6. As for all the Strategic Sites in the Local Plan, Policy SP9 Design & Sustainability and the site-specific policy (in this instance Policy SP16) require new

development to be well designed and located and respond positively to local context and for a comprehensive and deliverable Strategic Masterplan for the entire allocation to be prepared and agreed between the landowner/developer and the Council.

7. The landowner team have been positively working with officers from the District and County Council (and their representatives) under a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) since January 2022 to develop a pre-application masterplan for this site. This has been a proactive exercise between all parties involving iterative the evolution of baseline evidence and masterplan proposals in response to an agreed Masterplan Brief.
8. Emerging material from the masterplan framework was subject to formal Design Review by Design South-East in February 2023 using their North Hertfordshire-specific panel of experts (DRP). A written report was provided following a site visit and roundtable discussion of the proposals.
9. The masterplan has also been informed by liaison with Stevenage Borough Council and the applicants for the adjoining land in Stevenage Borough. Detailed work on proposals for the northern phases of that scheme – which will adjoin NS1 – is ongoing. However, opportunities to maximise integration of the sites have unfortunately been limited, a factor recognised by the DRP.
10. The process summarised above has now led to issuing of a draft Strategic Masterplan Framework by the landowner team ('the Masterplan'). A confidential, pre-consultation copy is provided with this report. This will be presented to the Project Board by the landowner team at the meeting.
11. In terms of content, key features of the Masterplan include:
 - Analysis of the site and surrounding area to define the opportunities and constraints which inform the scheme;
 - A series of framework plans and accompanying text, broadly following the Council's guidance, for the key masterplan layers covering:
 - Land use & development
 - Movement and access
 - Landscape, Green Infrastructure & Biodiversity
 - Height, Density & Urban Design
 - Character; and
 - An illustrative masterplan drawing together the layers
12. In spatial terms, key features of the Masterplan include:
 - A primary route (the 'Gateway Street' and 'Central Street') linking from the adjoining Stevenage site to North Road including a proposed modal filter through the core of site restricted to bus and active travel only;
 - A network of secondary and lower order streets distributing from this central corridor to serve the development parcels;

- Land in the centre of the site to accommodate a two form-entry (2FE) Primary School;
- A community hub including school, community building, urban plaza and key play facilities;
- A central greenway running northwest - southeast along the Hertfordshire Way corridor which will form the centrepiece of the site's Green Infrastructure network;
- Linking this to the proposed adjoining Country Park in Stevenage Borough and the Public Rights of Way network;
- A secondary Green Infrastructure corridor through the east of the site connecting the adjoining Stevenage development to residential parcels, on-site play and allotment provision and onwards to Graveley village;
- Planting around the site edges to reinforce:
 - the visual separation of the development from the village of Graveley (but not to screen it);
 - the ecological function of the existing planting belt along the administrative boundary with Stevenage; and
 - the historic, landscape and ecological function of the Ten Acre Plantation and proposed Chesfield Conservation Area
- Using the topography to:
 - provide sustainable drainage features in low-lying areas, and more open and expansive GI on elevated ground; and
 - inform the layout of residential development, community uses and the associated movement network; and
- The use of character areas within the site with (relatively) higher intensity development to the south and west and lower intensity and more informal development to the north and east.

13. In overall terms, officers consider that the draft Masterplan demonstrates general conformity with a number of criteria of Policy SP9, Policy SP16 and other relevant local and national policies. Officers are content with the broad direction of travel and design development of key land uses, the movement and urban design frameworks and the overall green infrastructure network.

14. The amendments that have been made following Design Review and subsequent officer comments are supported. These include changes to the alignment of the eastern Green Infrastructure corridor to better connect towards Graveley and the orientation of and relationship between the community hub, urban plaza and Central Street.

15. A brief commentary on some of the key framework plans is set out below.

Land Use Framework

16. This identifies a two-hectare site for a 2FE Primary School site located close to the centre of the development and to the north of the Central Street. A

Community Hub is located to the south side of the street and opposite the school site. This creates a well-located 'heart' at the centre of the scheme alongside the Hertfordshire Way Green Infrastructure corridor and along the key infrastructure corridor.

17. Residential uses are shown broadly split into two neighbourhoods to the east and west of the Hertfordshire Way.

Movement and Access Framework

18. The Gateway / Central street and its alignment across the southern-central area of the site provides clear gateways into the development and facilitates a legible hierarchy and structure of movement, green infrastructure and development to its north and south.
19. The secondary streets (Community Streets) allow for access throughout the two neighbourhoods. Following DRP and feedback from HCC as the Highway Authority, the routing of these streets has evolved to deliberately introduce a more circuitous journey for private vehicular travel – particularly to the south of the Gateway Street – to support Local Transport Plan and active travel principles.
20. Neighbourhood Streets and Lanes provide local-level access to and around the development parcels. The masterplan includes indicative cross-sections for the key street typologies.
21. A wide range of cycling and walking connections are shown with three proposed multi-use utility / active travel routes, two of which pass through the key green infrastructure corridors and a third which effectively provides an active-travel extension of the primary street into the eastern neighbourhood.
22. Existing Rights of Way through and adjoining the site are 'plugged in' to this network.
23. A mobility hub is proposed as part of the central community heart allowing for the prospective provision of car clubs and bike hire schemes as well as interchange with bus services. A 'mini-hub' is proposed in the eastern village.

Green Infrastructure Framework

24. The Green Infrastructure (GI) network has been designed to retain and enhance existing site features, most notably the corridor surrounding the Hertfordshire Way which passes through the centre of the site from north-west to south-east. This is currently a Public Right of Way through the agricultural field. In the masterplan this is the centrepiece of the GI network with a generous corridor that also helps demarcate between the western and eastern 'villages' or 'neighbourhoods' which are a key feature of the design.

25. Key nodal points along this corridor include proposed elements of more formal provision around the community heart and, at the south-east, a gateway to the proposed Country Park within Stevenage Borough.
26. A second GI corridor runs through the western part of the site linking an active travel connection from HO3 and the plantation woodland along the administrative boundary broadly north and then west to connect into the Public Right of Way that runs along the northern boundary, exiting in the north-west corner towards North Road. This corridor has been realigned in response to the DRP and now provides a more legible connection to better integrate the site with Graveley.
27. The GI framework has been provisionally coded against the typologies and quantities of open space used in the Council's standards which are, in turn, derived from national *Fields in Trust (FIT)* benchmarks. This shows that, in quantitative terms, requirements for Parks & Gardens, Natural and Semi-Natural and Amenity Space could be comfortably exceeded. Allotment standards are met while Sport England advice is that requirements for formal pitch provision should be met off-site.
28. Play provision is made across the site with play areas in the western and eastern 'villages', one larger play facility in the central area and one, potential further small play area at the south-west. A Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) is shown adjoining the community facilities reinforcing this area as a key destination within the site. The arrangement provides good play coverage across the site. In purely quantitative terms, there is a shortfall against the relevant standards. However, the play areas and MUGA meet recommended sizes and there is some friction within the *FIT* advice between the detailed recommendations and dimensions for different types of play and the overall standards.
29. There may also be further opportunities for additional informal / naturalistic 'play' provision to be incorporated into (e.g.) perimeter trails, the central corridor etc. as the scheme develops but which are not presently shown at this level of detail.

Biodiversity Framework

30. The draft framework and accompanying calculation state that a Biodiversity Net Gain of at least 10% can be achieved.

Height & Density and Urban Design Frameworks

31. These plans set out a series of place-making principles to support the high-quality design of public space and public realm. These include:
 - Building heights to reflect landscape, topography and intended townscape character including 2 storey around the more sensitive northern and eastern edges, 2-2.5 storeys through the majority of the eastern

neighbourhood and the eastern half of the western neighbourhood and 2-4 storeys along the Gateway Street with 3-4 storeys around key routes and spaces;

- The creation of two distinct areas or neighbourhoods in the west and east of the site bisected by the Hertfordshire Way corridor consisting of a rural and informal eastern area and a more formal and urban western core;
- The use of a more curved block structure in the eastern neighbourhood in response to topography;
- Primary frontages along the central spine / Gateway Street and identification of key buildings on block corners to provide definition and aid legibility and landmark buildings at the school and community hub;
- A series of focal spaces aligned to key elements of the green infrastructure network including the play areas, pocket parks and MUGA; and
- The school buildings being located to the east of the school site with a south-facing frontage towards the proposed Urban Square and community buildings

Character Areas

32. The masterplan proposes five Character Areas working broadly from south-west to north-east across the site:
 - North Road Gateway
 - Western Core
 - Countryside Edge
 - Park Edge; and
 - Eastern Core
33. These reflect the varying features of the site and its surrounds with specific design responses identified.
34. Officers' view is that the Masterplan contains an appropriate level of information and detail to generate meaningful consultation feedback on the draft proposals. Project Board are asked to endorse the work undertaken to date and the draft Masterplan on this basis and upon the understanding that further resolution will follow in a number of areas prior to finalisation.
35. Notwithstanding this recommendation, there are a number of issues and areas for resolution and further work which are summarised below. However, officers' view is that these are not of a magnitude that they should preclude progressing the draft Masterplan to public consultation. As above, officers are content with the broad disposition of the masterplan and the 'direction of travel' of the project as a whole. These issues can be addressed, alongside the feedback received from stakeholders during the public consultation period, in time to inform and be presented in a final Masterplan later in the year and include:

- Ensuring the Masterplan is underpinned by a clear, locally specific vision and accompanying objectives;
- Ensuring the Framework Plans are clearly informed by an appropriate and proportionate evidence base particularly with regards to landscape & townscape (Local & Site Character) as well as the identification of off-site routes and improvements to support Active Travel;
- Ensuring the above are clearly reflected (to non-expert readers) in a clear landscape-and townscape-led 'thread' through the masterplan from evidence & influences, through scheme evolution to more detailed requirements around local character;
- Clearly aligning street and movement proposals to Hertfordshire County Council's (emerging) Place & Movement Framework, the Rights of Way network and complementary guidance such as Healthy Streets;
- More closely tying the character areas and illustrative masterplan to the local context, particularly in delivering a greater informality in the eastern village and along the northern edge reflecting the semi-rural location;
- Clear coding and refinement of proposals in relation to Green Infrastructure (GI) and Biodiversity Net Gain to provide an appropriate range of spaces and treatments and to also allow cross-referencing of plans to ensure their complementarity.

36. These issues, and other more detailed comments, are recorded in a detailed, working draft officer assessment of the Masterplan against the requirements of Policy SP9 and Policy SP16. This will be refined in response to any feedback from this session and / or any further iteration of the Masterplan that is produced to public consultation. This assessment will then be issued to the landowner team as a record of progress and outstanding issues at this draft Masterplan stage and to inform further work towards a final masterplan.
37. It will be important that the issues raised are addressed prior to completion of the final Masterplan document and associated evidence base so that officers can positively recommend approval (via the Project Board) to elected Councillors as a material consideration for any subsequent planning applications and so that case officers and decision-makers for those applications can attribute an appropriate level of material weight to the Masterplan's contents in reaching their recommendations and determinations.
38. It is anticipated that public consultation on the draft masterplan will be undertaken by the landowner team in June / July 2023 following consideration by the Project Board. Further detail on the proposed consultation will be included in the presentation to Board.

Appendix 3 Public Consultation Event Invite

Notification of Exhibition Event

Wednesday 5 July 2023

You are invited to attend a public exhibition event regarding the developing plans to build up to 900 dwellings, a primary school and community facilities on land North of Stevenage (east of North Road).

The site is allocated for development within the North Hertfordshire District Council Local Plan. Proposals have been informed by a number of technical studies and have evolved to the information which will be presented at the event.

There is no need to register so please feel free to drop in at your convenience.

The event will be held on
Wednesday 5 July 2023
and will be run between
15.30 to 19.30 and will be
at the following venue:

Stevenage Town Rugby Club
The Clubhouse
North Road
Stevenage
Hertfordshire
SG1 4BB

Should you be unable to attend, the information will be available to view at the following **website from 5 July 2023 until 21 July 2023**. Details as to how feedback can be submitted is available on the website:



<http://northstevenage.croudacehomes.co.uk>

We look forward to welcoming and hearing from you.

Site Location Plan



— Site Boundary

★ Venue

Adjacent development
being built by others

Appendix 4 Exhibition Boards

Introduction

This public exhibition supports Croudace Homes' proposals for its site at North Stevenage, lying east of North Road.

THE PROPOSAL

North Hertfordshire District Council adopted its new Local Plan in November 2022, which allocates this site for housing and supporting infrastructure and facilities to help meet the area's housing needs. Croudace is now preparing a planning application for the development of the site, to incorporate approximately 900 homes, a primary school and associated development and open space.

Croudace has been working with North Hertfordshire District Council and has carried out technical surveys and assessments to fully understand the opportunities and constraints of the site. This work has informed the proposed masterplan for the site. This work has also inputted into a number of framework plans as shown on the exhibition boards.

This public exhibition is an important step in seeking feedback from local residents and other stakeholders. It presents the emerging masterplan, and shows how it has been developed. Feedback received will be assessed and will further influence the masterplan, where appropriate, ahead of the submission of the planning application.

INTRODUCING CROUDACE HOMES

Croudace Homes is a well-established regional residential developer founded in 1946, and to this day remains a family-owned business, with its regional office for this area in Letchworth Garden City. It has vast experience of house building in the area, including at Great Ashby. Croudace is rated a 5-star house builder for customer satisfaction by the Home Builders Federation, and prides itself on the quality of the homes and communities that it builds.



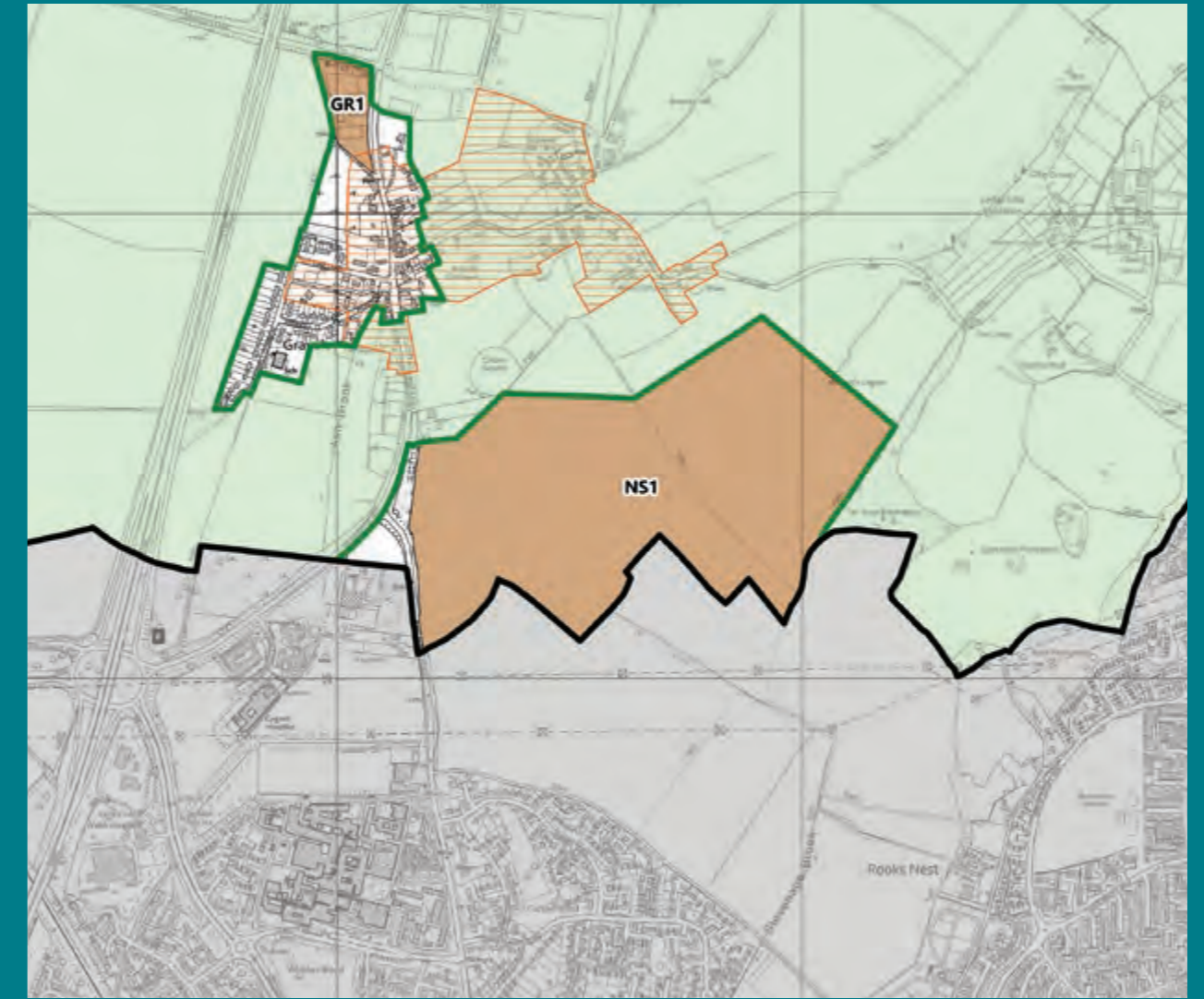
The Site

The site is located east of North Road, north of the urban edge of Stevenage. It consists of a single agricultural field, crossed by a public right of way running north to south through the site. To the north is the village of Graveley, with existing walking links between the two. To the east is Chesfield Park and the woodland of Ten Acre Plantation, whilst to the western side of North Road is a garden centre.

The land to the south of the site is located within Stevenage Borough Council, and is allocated through Policy H03 of the Stevenage Local Plan for 800 dwellings, which benefits from outline planning permission dated September 2022.

PLANNING POLICY

The site has now been formally removed from the Green Belt, and is allocated for new development within the North Hertfordshire Local Plan. The proposed development must meet the aims and objectives of the policy, which is set out below.



Extract from the Policy Map

POLICY SP16: SITE NS1 – NORTH OF STEVENAGE

Land to the north of Stevenage within Graveley parish, as shown on the Policies Map, is allocated as a Strategic Housing Site for a new neighbourhood of approximately 900 homes.

A comprehensive and deliverable Strategic Masterplan for the entire allocation is to be prepared and agreed between the landowner/developer and the Council.

Where applications have already been submitted to the Council a Strategic Masterplan should be agreed prior to the or as part of the grant of planning permission.

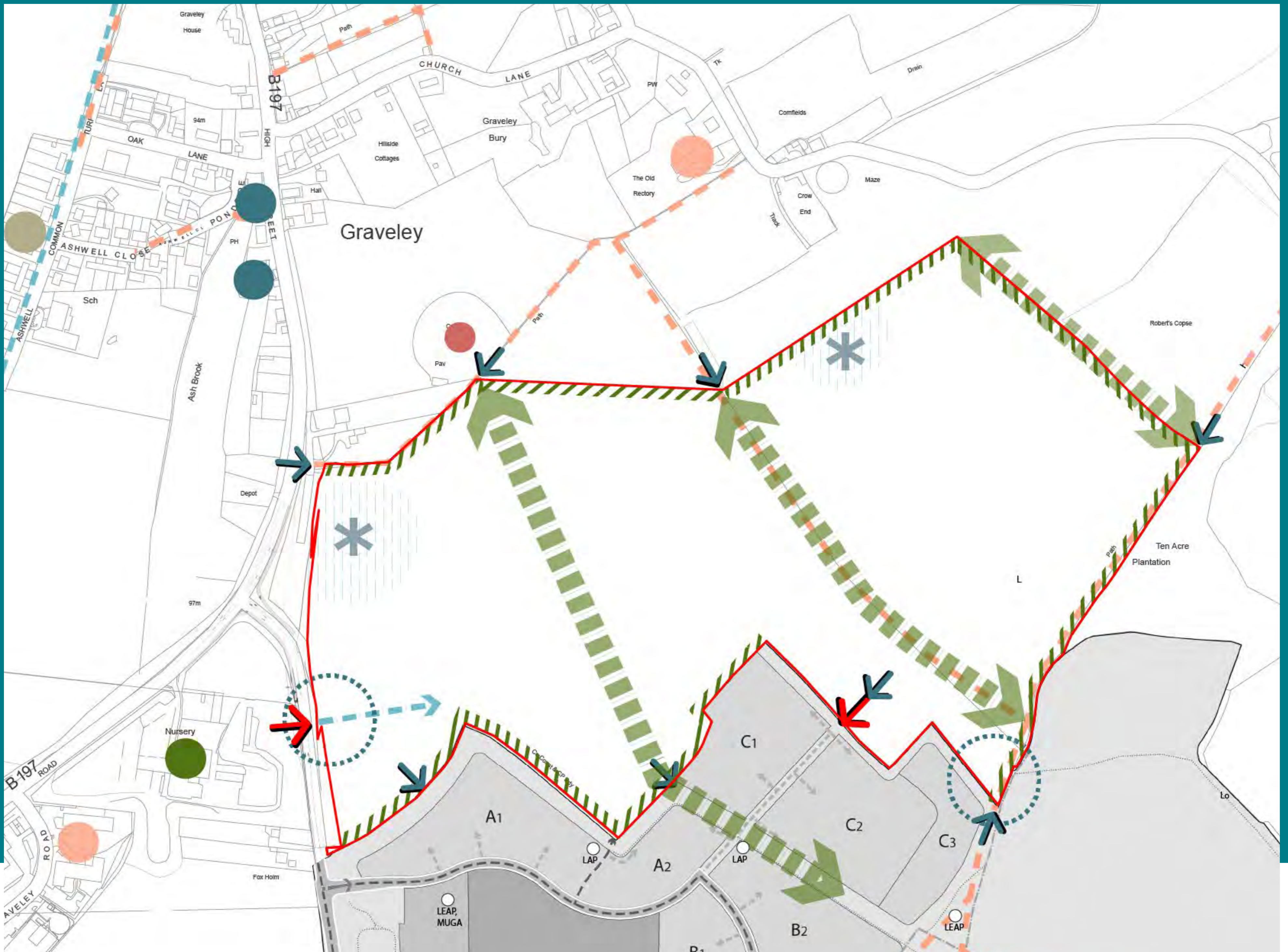
Any application on part of the site will be assessed against its contribution to the Strategic Masterplan and must not prejudice the implementation of the site as a whole.

Development proposals should provide the following planning and masterplanning requirements:

- a. Integration with adjoining development in Stevenage Borough including site-wide solutions for access, sustainable travel, education, retail, and other necessary medical and social infrastructure to include:
 - i. 2FE of primary-age education provision either wholly within the site or in conjunction with the adjoining land allocated for development in Stevenage Borough ensuring adequate primary school capacity across both sites over the lifetime of the developments;
 - ii. travel provision designed having regard to the Stevenage Mobility Strategy and including:
 - Effective links into the existing pedestrian and cycle, public transport and road networks; and
 - an upgraded junction at the intersection of Graveley Road / North Road; and
 - iii. neighbourhood-level retail facilities subject to an up-to-date assessment of local demand and supply;
- b. A detailed drainage strategy identifying water infrastructure required and mechanism(s) for delivery;
- c. At least 9 serviced plots for self-build development;
- d. Structural planting to create a sense of place, integration into surrounding landscape and a long-term, defensible Green Belt boundary to the north;
- e. Integration of existing public rights of way to provide routes through the site to the wider countryside including:
 - i. Footpath Graveley 006 and Bridleway Gravely 008 along the perimeter of the site; and
 - ii. Footpath Graveley 007 as a south-east to north-west route through the site and link path from the urban area to the Stevenage Outer Orbital Path;
- f. Sensitive consideration of existing settlements, landscape features and heritage assets including:
 - i. Graveley village and Conservation Area;
 - ii. the St Nicholas & Rectory Lane Conservation Area including the Grade I listed St Nicholas Church and Rook's Nest; and
 - iii. Chesfield Park.
 - iv. Church of St Etheldreda
 - v. Manor Farm; and
- g. Detailed design and layout of the site to be informed by site-specific assessments to mitigate any landscape, heritage and Green Belt impacts to the fullest reasonable extent.

Opportunities Plan

The technical team has assessed the potential for development at the site. The key opportunities are summarised on the opportunities plan below:



- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Site boundary | Primary access route into site |
| Public Right of Way (PRoW) | Opportunity for additional planting and landscape buffer. Landscape buffer to accommodate tree root protection zones |
| National Cycle Route 12 | Opportunity for open landscape at highest point |
| Vehicular and Bus access point | Potential attenuation area at lowest point |
| Pedestrian/cyclist access point | Main gateway |
| Green link | |
| Hospital | Recreation |
| Pub | Garden Centre |
| Care facility | Primary school |

KEY POINTS

Access and Movement – The main vehicular access point is shown from North Road, and connections will be made to the adjoining development site to the south to allow integration between the two.

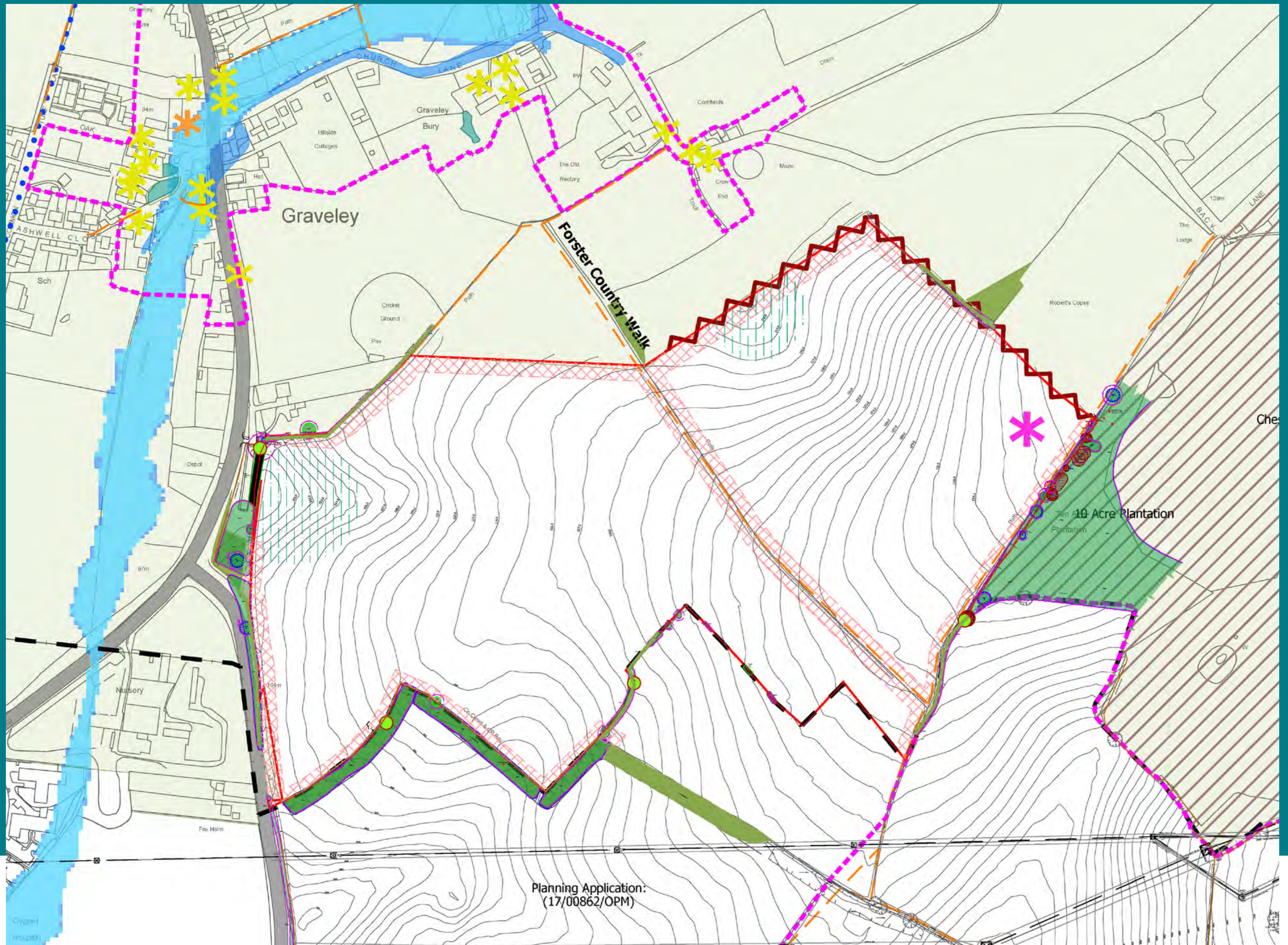
Green Infrastructure – The proposal allows for the existing Right of Way through the site to become a green infrastructure route, with the creation of a similar route to the western part of the site

Drainage – The drainage basins are proposed on the lowest parts of the site and inform appropriate adjacent land uses

Landscape – The character of the site has been assessed and will inform the location of development, planting, connectivity and views/vistas

Constraints Plan

The technical work has also identified the constraints of the site, which are set out on the plan below:



Planning Application:
(17/00862/OPM)

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| Site Boundary | Existing Public Rights of Way | Enhance Connectivity and Create Dark Corridors (Min 12m offset) |
| Flood Zone 2 | National Cycle Route 12 | Site high point |
| Flood Zone 3 | Existing Pylons and Overhead Lin | Site low point |
| Green Belt | District Boundary | Existing Woodland |
| Listed Building - I | Conservation Area | Existing Hedge |
| Listed Building - II* | Non-designated Heritage Asset | Existing Pond |
| Listed Building - II | Sensitive Edge viewed from the north | 1m Contours |

KEY POINTS

Topography – The site rises to the east, with the highest point at the eastern corner being about 30 metres higher than North Road.

Ecology – There is existing planting on the boundary of the site, which have the potential for habitats for protected species, and they should be respected accordingly.

Heritage – There are a number of identified heritage assets adjacent to the site which must be respected by the development, including conservation areas and numerous listed buildings.

Land Use Framework

The Land Use Framework for the development has been designed to respond to the adjacent context and local need.



DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- Landscape-led development to incorporate and enhance adjacent green spaces;
- Neighbourhood level facilities located centrally in the most accessible location;
- Community uses that could include co-working spaces, meeting rooms, cafe and community hall;
- New primary school to make use of accessibility opportunities and to enforce the area as a landmark;
- A network of multi-functional open spaces, play areas, allotments and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) taking account of and reinforcing localised constraints and opportunities, which will enable site-wide accessibility and recreation opportunities and encourage walking;
- An urban square, mobility hub and shared central street adjacent to the school and community uses to enable community level outdoor uses and activities.

Movement & Access Framework

The movement strategy has been designed around maximising sustainable travel options. A multi-user active travel network within the site will provide attractive walking and cycling routes to destinations in Stevenage, Graveley and the surrounding countryside. The development will have a clear street hierarchy that prioritises walking, cycling and buses.



Site Boundary	Multi-Use Utility Active Travel Route
Structural Green Space	Emergency Access and Multi-Use Utility Active Travel Route
Development Blocks	Recreational Active Travel Route
Gateway Street	Informal Active Travel Route (Mown Path)
Community Street	Public Footpath
Neighbourhood Street	Bridleway
Central Street	Pedestrian/Cycle Access Point
Lane	Vehicular Access Point

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- All homes being as close as possible to a 400m walking distance of a centrally located bus route.
- Restricted traffic movement within primary routes to discourage vehicular traffic convenience and to encourage walking and cycling locally.
- At least three new pedestrian/cycle access points into the development scheme to the south.
- Provision of two vehicular access points, one to the development site to the south and the other on North Road alongside proposed highways improvements to North Road, which will enable integrated public transport opportunities.
- Emergency access to be provided between the eastern and western parcels.
- Strong pedestrian and cycle permeability through and around the development connecting to the existing Public Right of Way and bridleway network to strengthen connections between Graveley and Stevenage.

Green Infrastructure Framework

The proposed Green Infrastructure Framework will establish a network of multifunctional open spaces that are informed by site-specific design principles.



Landscape Framework Plan Legend

Site boundary

Existing features:

- Existing tree and root protection area (RPA)
Refer to Hayden's Arboricultural Consultants 'Tree Survey and Constraints Plan' (8840-D-CP).
- Retained public right of way footpath (Graveley 006/ 007)
Route to be upgraded and re-designated to permit cyclists and horse riders.
- Retained public bridleway (Graveley 008)
Route to be upgraded.

Proposed open space typology:

- Equipped / designated children's play space
• Proposed = 0.248 ha.
• Minimum required for 900 dwellings = 0.540 ha*

- Local Area for Play (LAP) / 'Doorstep' play:
• Min. 100m² per location.
• 100m (~1 minute) walkable distance.
• 5m separation from nearest dwelling.

- Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP)
• Min. 400m² per location.
• 400m (~5 minutes) walkable distance.
• 20m activity zone buffer to habitable rooms.

- Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP)
• Min. 1,000m², including min. 465m² hard surfaced area.
• 1,000m walkable distance.
• 30m separation activity zone buffer to dwelling boundaries.

- Multi-use Games Area (MUGA)
• Proposed = 0.101 ha.
• Minimum required for 900 dwellings = 0.648 ha*

* Any shortfall in area-based calculations is to be agreed with the LPA with due consideration to the site locality, distribution, accessibility, and quality of proposed on site play provision, and nearby existing provisions for children

- Parks & Gardens**
• Proposed = 2.898 ha.
• Minimum required for 900 dwellings = 1.728 ha

- Amenity Green Space**
• Proposed = 3.747 ha.
• Minimum required for 900 dwellings = 1.296 ha.

** Diagonal hatches indicate associated buffer landscapes unlikely to be accessible and excluded from the open space calculations.

- Natural and semi-natural space
• Proposed = 6.958 ha.
• Minimum required for 900 dwellings = 3.888 ha.

- Community allotment/ orchard
• Proposed = 0.648 ha.
• Minimum required for 900 dwellings = 0.648 ha.

Proposed landscape assets:

- Proposed SuDS attenuation basin location.
Where possible to include areas of permanent open water and marginal aquatic vegetation.
- New gateway highway junction/ Pedestrian access enhancements
- Proposed surfaced multi-user path with mown verges
- Surfaced footpath with mown verges
- Illustrative mown grass informal recreational routes
- Non-vehicular connections to paths outside of the site

The proposed Green Infrastructure Framework will establish a network of multifunctional open spaces that are informed by the following site-specific design principles:

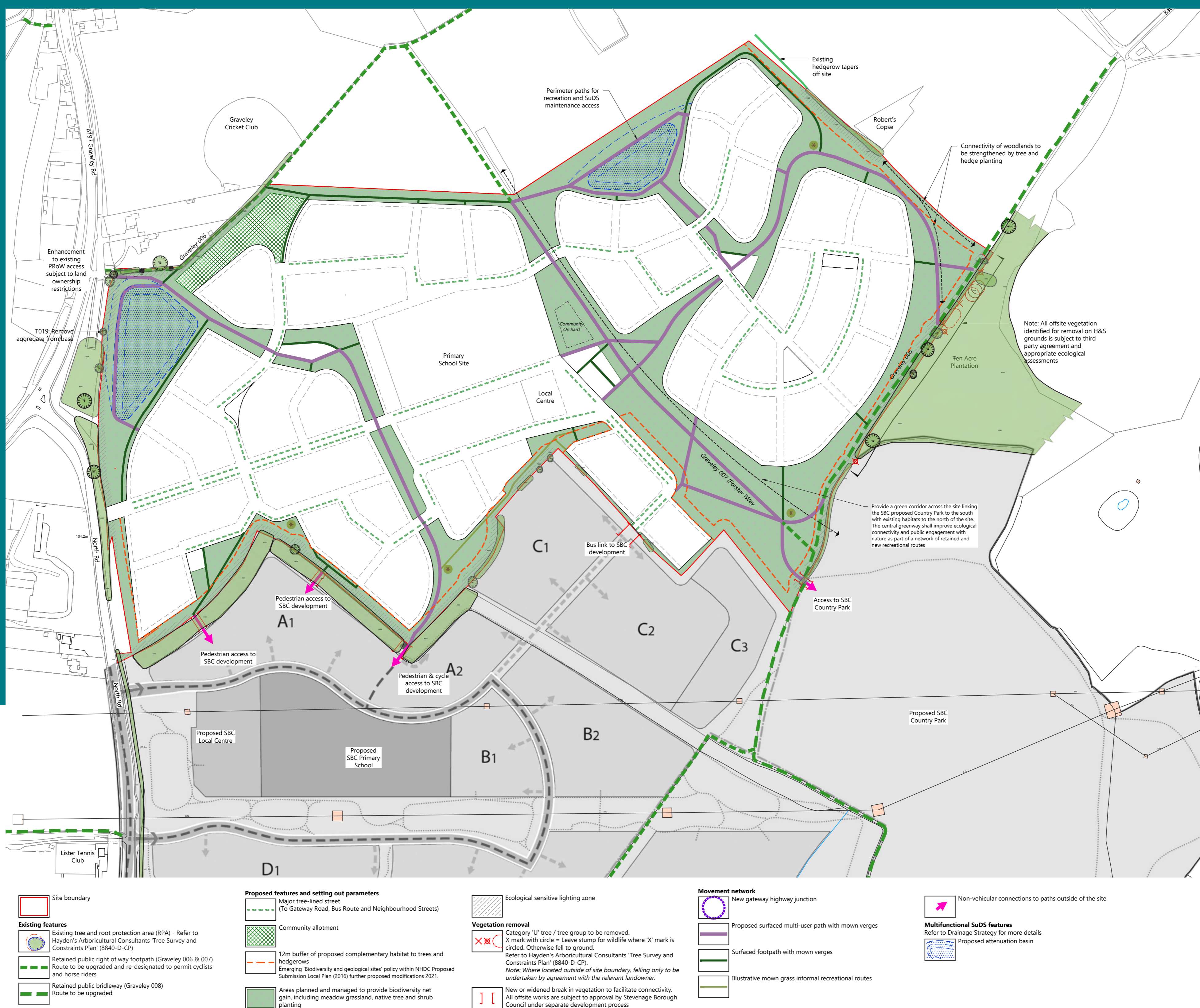
- Enhance and expand the existing rights of way through the provision of a network of routes that encourage access and enjoyment of the site's open spaces and good sustainable connections beyond the Site.
- Provide a central green corridor through the Site - linking the village of Graveley to the north with the proposed new Country Park due to be laid out as part of the adjoining development to the south.

- Provide accessible and universally designed formal play opportunities for children and youths of all ages and abilities.
- Provide allotments and community orchards for sustainable food production and the promotion of healthy lifestyles.
- Provide tree-lined streets to assist with integration of the new built form and to assist with micro-climatic resilience.
- Retain, strengthen, and connect existing habitats, including boundary hedgerows and woodland.
- Create new grassland habitats.
- Provide at least a 10% biodiversity net gain.

- Enhance the diversity of flora on the site for the benefit of wildlife and public amenity, and to increase resilience and adaptability to future climate-related impacts.
- Utilise the site's varied topography to provide sustainable drainage features in low-lying areas, and open and expansive landscapes on elevated ground.

Biodiversity Framework

The Biodiversity Framework shall deliver a network of open spaces that integrate the built development into its landscape setting; enhance the character, appearance and appeal of the open spaces; and expand and enhance the mosaic of habitats and species diversity for the benefit of wildlife.



DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- Existing boundary hedgerows and trees will be retained where possible with development set well back. Where viable, existing linear features will be supplemented with additional planting to strengthen green movement and wildlife corridors
- Tree and/or hedgerow planning will be provided along the eastern boundary of the site to strengthen linkages between the existing woodlands of Ten Acre Plantation and Robert's Copse.

- New attenuation basins, forming a component of the Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS), will be designed to provide a range of new aquatic habitats
- Sensitive lighting zones have been identified alongside existing and proposed woodland and hedge to provide dark corridors to allow movement of wildlife around the site boundaries.
- Native species will form a core aspect to new planting and tree schemes, reflecting local context and character. Where beneficial additional non-native

species will be used to bolster species-diversity, amenity value, resilience and food/foraging opportunities for wildlife.

- A network of local green corridors will be formed, linking new residents and wildlife to key multi-functional spaces and nearby assets such as the proposed Country Park.
- Areas of wildflower grassland, native shrub and tree planting will be integrated into the open space to provide biodiversity net gain.

Urban Design Framework

The development will be arranged around a perimeter block structure to define and provide enclosure to open spaces and routes with sufficient natural surveillance. The development will establish a network of soft and hardscaped spaces to aid the legibility and distinctiveness of the development.

The accompanying plans shows how the blocks dictate the location of landmark buildings, and how the main frontages are anticipated across such blocks. It also highlights how the edges of the development blocks will interact with surrounding land uses.



BUILDING HEIGHTS

The building heights will address the surrounding context and the local character of each area, in particular relating to the surrounding visual sensitivity.

- Western Parcels – Allows for greater flexibility due to limited impact upon the surrounding visual context, allowing for more 3 storey development.
- Central Parcels – This area is visually sensitive from the east so will generally consist of 2 and 2.5 storey properties
- Eastern Parcels – More visually constrained so will generally consist of 2 and 2.5 storey properties



Appearance of Buildings

The proposed buildings will be of a traditional construction that will include a mixture of brickwork, render, tile hanging and horizontal boarding.

The site will accommodate a range of sizes and types of homes. Different character areas will be laid out within the site, working together to produce a site-wide character and identity which draws on the best of the existing local architecture.

Here are some photos taken from previous Croudace developments.



Community Centre, Hermitage Park, Maidstone, Kent



Ashwell, Hertfordshire



Blakemore Manor, Hertford



King's Weald, Burgess Hill, Sussex

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is best defined as meeting the needs of today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. By providing new housing, our business clearly meets a fundamental requirement of today's communities, but in carrying out our operations we seek to mitigate their effect on the environment and endeavour to meet our wider responsibilities to the society and economy in which we work.

The new homes will be highly insulated and low-energy operating, using air source heat pumps or similar for heating, rather than gas boilers.

Croudace Homes developments provide for more than just new homes. The potential consequences for the existing physical and community infrastructure are mitigated typically through the provision of new or enhanced facilities on site and financial contributions to support improvements on a range of neighbourhood amenities including transport and schools.



The Masterplan

The masterplan is informed by the framework documents and supporting technical reports summarised within this exhibition. These show the most effective areas to build, as well as the need for features such as open space and drainage basins. The masterplan is the culmination of the background work, and will be used to inform future applications for built development on the site.



Development Boundary	Allotments	Recreational Routes	Shared Space	Attenuation
Buildings	Trees	Cycle Routes	Community Orchard	Existing Woodland
Private Garden	Play Area	Main Street		

KEY ELEMENTS

- Up to 900 new homes.
- A Two Form Entry Primary School at the heart of the new development.
- A Community Centre adjacent to the school which could include meeting rooms, a hall, co-working spaces and a cafe.
- Extensive public open spaces that includes children's play spaces, recreational greenspaces, allotments and areas of enhanced biodiversity.
- Central square including a mobility hub that links to a bus only/active travel link through the heart of the site.
- Permeable street network aimed at pedestrians and cyclists.

Next Steps

This exhibition marks an early step in the process for the submission of a planning application for the proposed development at the site.

The indicative timeline below provides a guide to future timings. Please note that these are subject to change.

- Exhibition – July 2023
- Submission of Planning Application – Late 2023
- Planning Application Decision – Spring 2024
- Submission of Reserved Matters Application – Summer 2024
- Commencement on Site – Late 2024/Early 2025

HAVE YOUR SAY

We hope the exhibition has been informative and has provided a good understanding of the proposed development on land at North Stevenage.

We would welcome your feedback to consider before we finalise and submit the outline planning application. Please tell us your thoughts by completing one of the feedback forms.

Please note you can also view the information you have seen here today and submit any comments you may have via the website below. The website will be available until 21 July 2023.

 land.north@croudace.co.uk

 <http://northstevenage.croudacehomes.co.uk>

Example Street Scenes

Set out below are some sketched examples of how parts of the development could look.



NORTH ROAD GATEWAY

Higher density development to reflect the urban setting, with increased heights in appropriate locations, and introduction of gateway features. Accommodates enhanced active travel links.



EASTERN CORE

Eastern part of development, influenced by the surrounding countryside, steeper topography and a clear separation from the higher density areas.



COMMUNITY HUB

Creation of a community heart of the development adjacent to the central greenway, consisting of the primary school and community facilities, all served by the bus route and pedestrian/cycle routes.



COUNTRYSIDE EDGE

lower density development facing out into the countryside. Heights limited to address the adjacent rural and open context.

Appendix 5 Feedback Forms

Land North of Stevenage Feedback Form

Thank you for attending the exhibition event. We would be grateful if you would fill in this form to provide us with written comments on the proposals. You can choose whether to give feedback anonymously or to share your name and/or postcode. Providing a postcode assists our understanding of where responders live in relation to the proposed development.

Feedback can also be provided direct to the following email address: land.north@croudace.co.uk

Name:

Postcode:

1. Taken as a whole, what is your overall impression of the proposals?

2. What do you consider to be the main benefits of the proposal?

3. Do you have any key concerns regarding the proposal?

4. Do you have any other comments about the proposals?

We look forward to reading your comments.