

Supplementary Committee Agenda



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Cabinet Monday 18th March 2024

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping

Time: 7.00 pm

Democratic Services: V Messenger (Democratic Services)
Tel: (01992) 564243

14. NORTH WEALD BASSETT STRATEGIC MASTERPLAN FRAMEWORK (Pages 2 - 71)

(Place – Cllr N Bedford) To agree to formally endorse the North Weald Bassett Strategic Masterplan Framework (C-051-2023/24).

Please see Appendix A (Final Draft Strategic Masterplan Framework, part 1) attached.



EFDC
/
**STRATEGIC
MASTERPLAN
FRAMEWORK**
/
North Weald
Bassett

March 2024



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A Context



Executive Summary

This document sets out the vision and framework to guide development within the North Weald Bassett Masterplan Area. Its purpose is to shape the proposals that will come forward through subsequent planning applications for each of the allocated sites, which are expected to respond positively to the placemaking and spatial principles set out within this document.

The development of the Strategic Masterplan Framework at North Weald Bassett responds to Policy P6 of the Epping Forest District Local Plan 2011-2033, which allocates land for development, including the allocation of five development sites within the Strategic Masterplan Framework which are required to provide a minimum of 1,050 homes along with strategic infrastructure.

The site is located to the north of the village of North Weald Bassett and in close proximity to the North Weald Airfield Masterplan area, where the Local Plan provides for 10ha of additional employment land. Policy P6 requires the North Weald Bassett Masterplan Area to provide Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), the location of which is to be confirmed through this Strategic Masterplan Framework process. The site has good access to the strategic highway network with improvements to the A414 which will allow bus services to enter and leave the site area.

The principles set out within this Strategic Masterplan Framework have been informed by a variety of technical assessments and comments made through consultation and engagement undertaken at key stages over a number of years. The site constraints and opportunities have been fully examined and discussed with Epping Forest District Council, Essex County Council and other key stakeholders and local groups such as North Weald Bassett Neighbourhood Plan Steering

Group, North Weald Parish Council, design review panels and public consultation events.

The spatial principles and framework set out in this document have evolved from this work and are rationalised through the mandatory spatial principles/framework plans. Future planning applications will need to be in general accordance with this Strategic Masterplan Framework, which affords flexibility to allow for the effective design and layout of the site at the detailed design stage of the planning process. The Strategic Masterplan will be an important material consideration in the determination of future planning applications. It will be a landscape-led village masterplan which utilises the existing landscape framework. New and enhanced social focal points for residents in North Weald will be provided, centred on a new Social Heart to the village at the Memorial Playing Fields.

A critical part of the SMF is its enhanced connectivity through the proposal as a conduit to key destinations and the surrounding countryside. This will help integrate the new development within the existing village, foster a sense of community and draw on the unique heritage of North Weald Bassett.

This document has been produced to inform the development of future planning applications for the North Weald Bassett Strategic Masterplan Framework. This will ensure that any proposed development acknowledges the Council's vision, Local Plan policies and guidance and supports the delivery of the District's housing needs whilst protecting the site's heritage and village setting.



Vision

“A landscape-led masterplan, which respects the discrete character of the village; utilises existing landscape features; places an emphasis on social focal points, connectivity and integration with the fabric of the village; fosters a sense of community; and acknowledges the history of North Weald Bassett”



Minimum 1050 new homes, each within 150m of a major green space corridors



A new, centrally located Social Heart for the village based around the Memorial Playing Fields



Over 17ha of attractive landscape and open space



Exciting new accessible play spaces for a range of ages, including teenagers



New facilities for the village including new sports, shops, health, community and mobility uses



New/improved primary school and early years facilities to meet the needs of the village



Electric vehicle charging points at every home



Over 6km of new and enhanced pedestrian routes through the site to the surrounding countryside



An integrated network of cycle paths connecting the key destinations including the Airfield Masterplan



A range of new homes with a mix of tenures, typologies and densities



Allowing bus links into the site connecting to the existing village and links to/from Epping



A new vehicular access from the A414, on the strategic highway

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This Strategic Masterplan Framework (SMF) has been prepared by Vistry Group and its consultant team, as promoters of one of the five development sites of the North Weald Bassett SMF. The owners of the remaining four development sites have been engaged with, along with key stakeholders and utility providers, including the Parish Council, Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG), officers at Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) and Essex County Council (ECC), National Highways, Thames Water and Natural England.

1.2 Purpose and scope of the SMF

The Strategic Masterplan Framework document sets out the key development, design and delivery principles to guide proposals for North Weald Bassett as is advocated in Policy P6 of the Epping Forest District Local Plan (adopted March 2023). It will also inform and guide proposals put forward by developers which will be subject to forthcoming planning applications.

Once finalised, the endorsed SMF will be taken into account as an important material consideration in the determination of any planning applications. It will sit alongside the Local Plan to ensure that development is planned in a comprehensive manner and establishes the principles to guide the preparation, submission and determination of future planning applications.

Within the SMF some Mandatory Spatial Principles are set out to which are fundamental to its successful delivery and should be adhered to.

EFDC has set out how the SMF fits into a wider suite of documents to guide development at North Weald Bassett, through which the design will be further refined:

1. Strategic Masterplan Framework (this document)
2. Outline/detailed planning application - to build upon the SMF vision with more detailed technical work and feasibility
3. Design code - to set the rules to achieve design quality and consistency
4. Reserved Matters - detailed design proposals relating to layout, scale, appearance, access and movement.

1.3 Key issues

The key strategic issues that are vital to the delivery of the North Weald Bassett masterplan are listed below along with a short description of how they have been addressed by the proposal.

Integration with North Weald Bassett - ensuring that the SMF responds positively to its context, referencing its unique heritage and ensuring a seamless transition.

The Strategic Framework - explaining how the SMF can provide much needed local facilities for the whole village, set within a high quality, legible urban form.

Links to the wider countryside - using the SMF as a conduit to the surrounding countryside, enhancing existing links and creating new destination and recreation routes.

1.4 Process programme

EFDC's Endorsed Strategic Masterplanning Framework Briefing Note outlines the structure for the SMF process. Following public and further stakeholder consultation, the final version of the SMF will be submitted to EFDC for approval who will then use it in determining future planning applications.

1.5 Glossary of key terms

This SMF features the following key terms which are summarised below for ease of understanding:

Accessibility - The ease with which locations can be reached. People of all ages, skill, backgrounds or financial means should have easy access to a wide range of activities and destinations.

Character - Character areas are an important tool in helping to deliver contextually responsive urban design, allowing the urban designer to understand and respond to the unique qualities of any particular neighbourhood.

Density/dph - Dwellings Per Hectare, a way of determining how many dwellings/homes per hectare of land (applies to both existing and new homes).

ECC - Essex County Council.

EFDC - Epping Forest District Council.

Green and blue infrastructure (GBI) - a strategically planned network comprising all of our most valuable green (land based) and water (blue) spaces and features, both natural and semi-natural features and habitat types, both within urban and rural that when connected, deliver quality of life and environmental benefits for communities and nature.

Green belt - A planning policy to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land open with an essential characteristics being their openness.

Legibility - The act of designing a place in an understandable and coherent way to its users.

Permeability - Permitting ease of movement and avoiding severed neighbourhoods and routes.

Placemaking - The creation of public spaces that inspire, are memorable and promote social interaction and cultural exchange.

Public realm - The parts of a place that are available for everyone to use or see, for example streets.

Public Right of Way (PRoW) - A public right to travel unhindered over a piece of land, even if that land is privately owned.

GRP - Quality Review Panel, with specialist knowledge to advise a local authority on the design merits of masterplans.

SANG - Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace, an area that is aimed at safeguarding a Special Protection Area (SPA) or Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

SMF - Strategic Masterplan Framework document, which sets out the design principles for future planning applications.

Sustainable design - The practice of designing products, services and processes (including a masterplan) to be sustainable. This primarily means that designs minimise environmental impact and improve quality of life.

Urban design - The practice of placemaking.

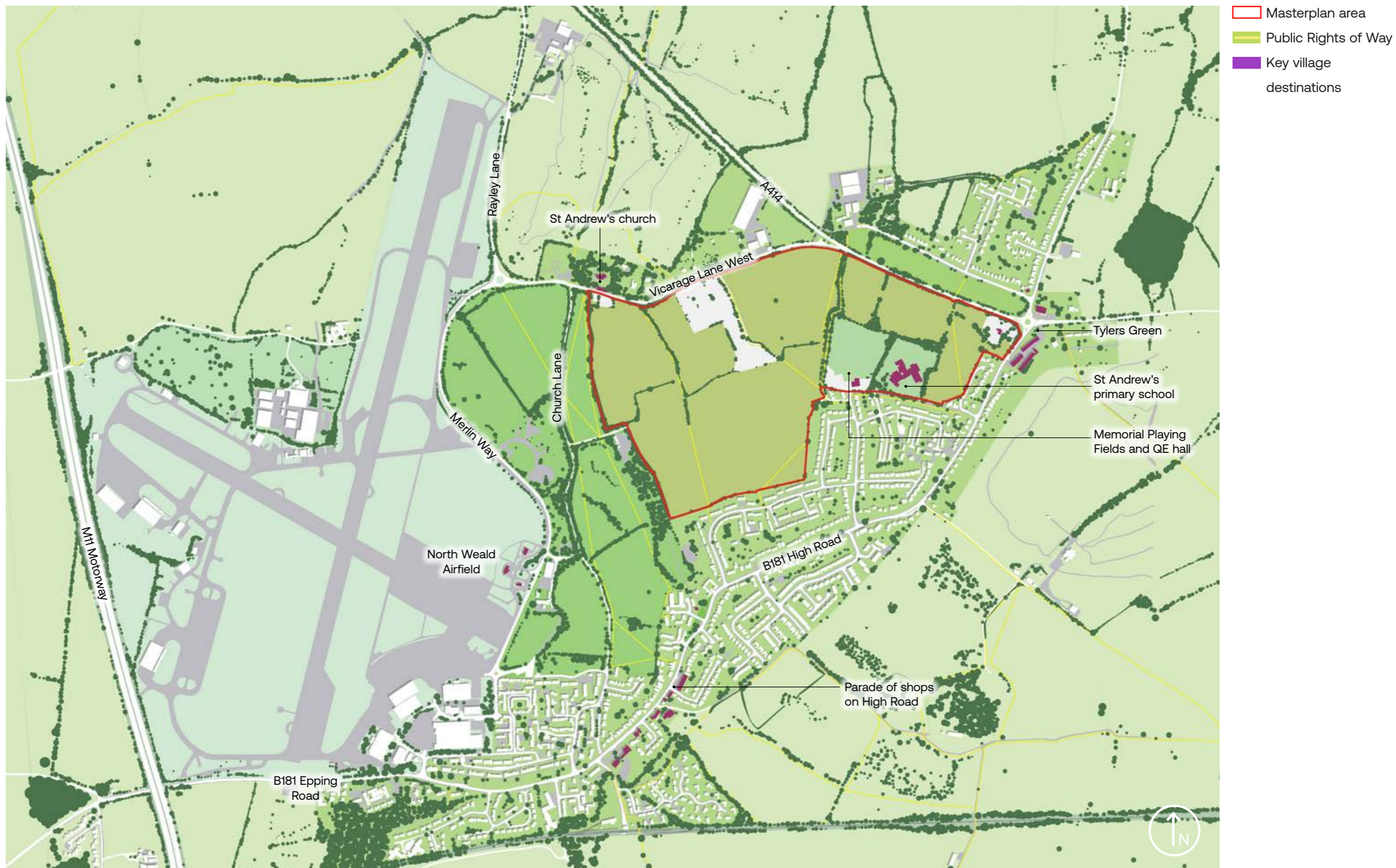


Figure 1.1 - North Weald Bassett Village

2. Planning policy and guidance

2.1 Local plan context

The Epping Forest District Local Plan allocates land throughout the District to meet the future needs of the District to 2033, including providing land for housing, employment, retail, community, recreation and leisure needs.

Policy P6 of the Local Plan allocates land for development at North Weald Bassett as the SMF (see figure 2.1). This includes the allocation of five development sites within the SMF area to the north and west of the village, which are required to provide a minimum of 1,050 homes, at the following sites:

- **NWB.R1** – Land west of Tylers Green (which is also required to provide up to 5 traveller pitches under allocation NWB.T1)
- **NWB.R2** – Land at Tylers Farm
- **NWB.R3** – Land south of Vicarage Lane
- **NWB.R4** – Land at Chase Farm
- **NWB.R5** – Land at the Acorns, Chase Farm.

Where neighbouring developer/land owner boundaries exist, a collaborative approach should be undertaken to ensure that the principles outlined within the SMF are retained.

Alongside the development of the above sites, the Local Plan requires new development to provide the following strategic infrastructure:

- Appropriate education provision including early years, primary school and secondary school places

- The provision of walking and cycling facilities, providing linkages both within the site and to key destinations
- Enhancements to public transport provision or other initiatives which reduce the need to travel by car
- Highways and junction upgrades
- Upgrade and improvement of utility infrastructure including water, waste water, solid waste, gas, electricity and telecommunication where necessary
- Improvements and provision of green and blue infrastructure and open space throughout the settlement (including SANG)
- Local centre including retail and community use, and appropriate provision of health facilities
- A strategy to address surface water flooding.

In taking forward the above sites, EFDC has a policy requirement for the preparation of an SMF to guide development. The area to be subject to the SMF also includes St Andrew’s Church of England Primary School, the Memorial Playing Fields and two existing residential properties.

A separate SMF for the Airfield has been completed and endorsed by EFDC to guide its continued use as an operational aerodrome alongside future employment, leisure and community development, in accordance with allocation E1.

There are a high number of other planning policies within the Adopted Local Plan, which are important planning considerations. The key policies of relevance to this SMF include

policy SP2, DM9, DM10, T1. In addition, the EFDC Sustainability Guidance and Green Infrastructure Strategy are also material planning considerations.

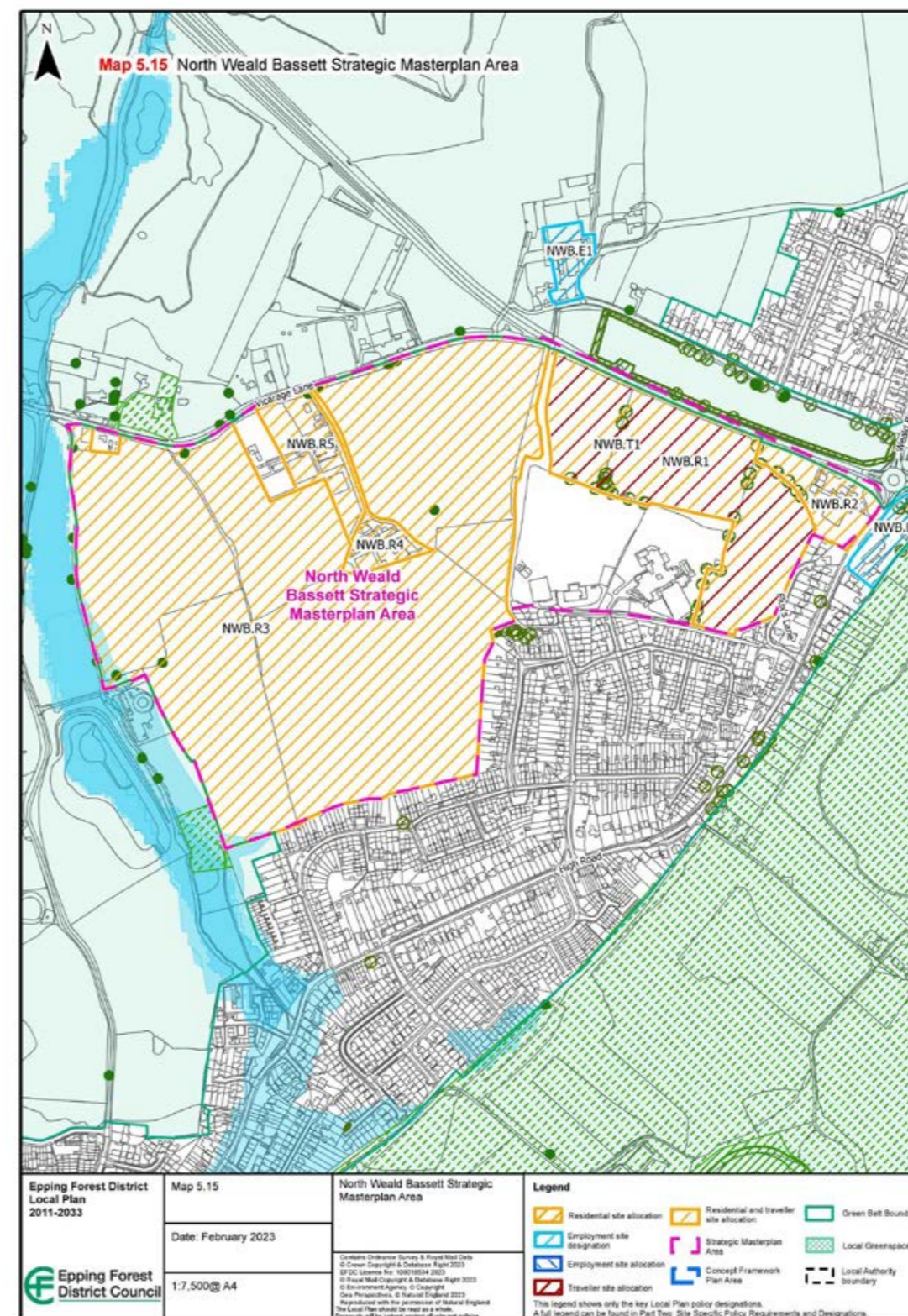


Figure 2.1 - North Weald Bassett Strategic Masterplan Framework area ©EFDC

2.2 National guidance

The revised National Design Guide (NDG) was published in October 2019 by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (subsequently Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities). It illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.

The National Design Guide provides Local Planning Authorities, designers and developers support in defining ‘good design’. It consists of good practice examples and reinforces the aim of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to create high quality places and buildings.

The framework of the NDG bases itself around the 10 characteristics of well-designed places. These characteristics cover Character, Community and Climate, including the built form and functionality of buildings, the design of public realm and the identity of place. These 10 characteristics are illustrated opposite, and are applied to the SMF.



Figure 2.2 - National Design Guide 12 principles for a well-designed place

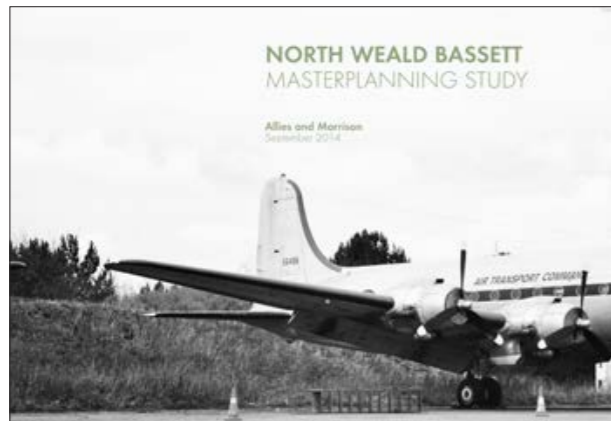
<p>Context</p> <p>Well-designed places enhance their surroundings by relating well to their context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design responds well to local heritage, culture and history by integrating these themes in to its planning These tools help a new proposal to become more acceptable and appealing to existing communities. <p>Refer to Chapter 3 of this SMF</p>	<p>Identity</p> <p>When people can identify with a place or building, it is due to the positive and familiar patterns of design it adopts from its locality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well-designed places have a character that is suitable to its present context/climate, respects its history and has a grasp of how we will live These places are also attractive to local residents and visitors, and create a sense of delight and belonging. <p>Refer to Chapters 5-7 of this SMF</p>	<p>Built form</p> <p>The built form of a design proposal generates its success from compactness. A compact design is walkable, contributing to better health/sense of place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design works well where streets are recognisable and spaces are well defined to promote ease of movement, legibility and wayfinding Built form also moulds itself to create better access to public transport and local facilities. <p>Refer to Chapter 7 of this SMF</p>	<p>Movement</p> <p>A well-designed mobility network creates streets that are safe and accessible for all</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing a range of sustainable transport modes for people to choose from, promoting better health and an enhanced environment Incorporates green infrastructure to offset emissions and promote better air quality. <p>Refer to Chapters 5-6 of this SMF</p>	<p>Nature</p> <p>Nature should be enhanced, incorporated and optimised well in to design. It works to address climate change mitigation, air quality and biodiversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature can also be used as a tool in water management and flood risk Providing open spaces with attractive and delightful settings that support well-being and promote outdoor activity. <p>Refer to Chapter 6 of this SMF and to The National Green Infrastructure Framework and Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy and Essex Green Infrastructure Standards</p>
<p>Public spaces</p> <p>Well designed places work to promote social cohesion and provide the public with a range of activities, facilities and areas to enjoy their public realm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distinctive hierarchy that ranges from small to larger, open green spaces Incorporating nature into design for better shading, greenery and air quality Places that are well designed feel safe, inclusive and secure. <p>Refer to Chapter 6-7 of this SMF</p>	<p>Uses</p> <p>A mix of uses that support people’s day to day needs helps to create better places</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A mix of housing tenures, building types and facilities to suit different stages of life and lifestyles Built to be inclusive, tenure neutral and appropriate for all. <p>Refer to Chapter 6-7 of this SMF</p>	<p>Homes and buildings</p> <p>Homes and buildings meet the needs of a diverse pool of users. They consider ranging age groups, abilities and cultural differences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homes and buildings that relate and respond to the spaces around them, including public and private space Successful buildings also provide spaces for a range of uses, whether retreat, activity, interaction or passing by. <p>Refer to Chapter 6-7 of this SMF</p>	<p>Resources</p> <p>Resources in design are best used to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, mitigate the impacts of climate change and minimise embodied energy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A layout that reduces the need for surplus resource equipment. Reduces the need for energy, land and water consumption These places use equipment and technology to minimise their environmental impact. <p>Refer to Chapter 6 of this SMF</p>	<p>Lifespan</p> <p>Well designed places are adaptable over time and reduce the need for redevelopment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings and places that are well maintained and managed by their users, owners and public agencies They are easy to use, adaptable and create a sense of ownership and belonging for residents and communities. <p>Refer to Chapter 8 of this SMF</p>

Figure 2.3 - National Design Guide principles applied to the SMF

2.3 Other guidance

Allies and Morrison Masterplanning Study

To inform the Local Plan, EFDC commissioned Allies and Morrison to “undertake a Masterplanning study for North Weald Bassett, to identify a vision for the settlement and to provide a clear framework for future development and investment”. (Source: Allies and Morrison Masterplanning Study, Page 5).



Following extensive public and stakeholder consultation, the Masterplanning Study was published in 2014 and proposed a set of development principles, agreed by community stakeholders, which aim to:

- Preserve the discrete village-like character of North Weald Bassett
- Preserve and enhance settlement’s relationship to the Green Belt/ countryside
- Consolidate the structure of the settlement to make it more ‘walkable’ and accessible

- Increase the range and quantity of local shops, leisure and community facilities, both in an augmented centre, and in other convenient locations elsewhere
- Increase the range of types and quality of employment space within the settlement
- Enhance the context of North Weald Airfield to help stimulate additional uses and activities which benefit residents
- Improve the quality of local public transport links and mitigate present highways issues.

(Source: Allies and Morrison Study, Page 6)

The Study set out three separate growth options for North Weald Bassett, ranging from the provision of 500 to 1,600 new homes. Two separate spatial scenarios were developed for the distribution of new homes as follows:

- Scenario A – covering the south east of the existing settlement on land towards the Ongar Redoubt and including part of the Blakes Golf Course, or;
- Scenario B – to extend closer to North Weald Airfield, up to Merlin Way.

Following public and stakeholder consultation it was concluded that “Scenario B (with no growth to the south of the settlement) is the preferred approach for any new development of the area”. (Source: Allies and Morrison Study, Page 143).

The Study included contextual plans of North Weald to illustrate how the village has grown over the past 150 years, the village’s

history, its heritage assets, key features and physical character. The Allies and Morrison study and the context plans have provided the starting point in developing this SMF.

Masterplanning Study - themes for SMF to review/consider

- Improved integration of the settlement with surrounding areas
- Preserve links out to the green space surrounding the settlement
- Strengthening existing commercial, social and employment offer of the commercial centre
- Creation of a nature reserve/formal park and/or country park using existing landscape to enhance the character of the settlement
- Build upon the existing heritage, both in existing character as well as the airfield and rail heritage
- Enhance the bus services to Harlow and Epping
- Enhancements of the capacity of major road junctions.

AECOM Design Guidelines for North Weald Bassett

The 2019 design guidelines for North Weald Bassett (Aecom) sets out to ensure that any new development within the Neighbourhood

Plan area is designed and planned with due regard to the existing context.

The document covers both village-wide guidelines as well as more detailed plot guidance on, for example, extensions to existing homes.



Design Guidelines - themes for SMF

- Importance of the location of shopping facilities for the benefit of existing and new residents
- Provision of buffers, in particular along the southern edge of the site, creating a breathing space between the homes of existing and new residents
- Avoid extra traffic on Church Lane
- Review of long distance views.

Neighbourhood Plan

The SMF area is located within the North Weald Bassett Neighbourhood Area. North Weald Bassett Parish Council first submitted an application for a Neighbourhood Area in September 2014 and on the 23rd January 2017, the Planning Policy Portfolio Holder determined that the whole of the Parish of North Weald Bassett should be designated for Neighbourhood Planning purposes.

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) have been involved in early discussions on the approach to and visioning for the SMF.

In 2018 the NPSG produced a questionnaire, enabling local residents to voice their opinions on their village across a variety of topics. In total 1,260 households (2,909 residents) completed the survey. The full document is available to download from www.northwealdbassettplan.org.

Please refer to the Engagement section in chapter 4 (p60-61) for further information.

IN 2018 THE NPSG CARRIED OUT A PARISH WIDE QUESTIONNAIRE OF RESIDENTS WHICH ATTRACTED A RESPONSE RATE OF 48%

<p>RESIDENTS SAID WHAT THEY MOST LIKED ABOUT THEIR VILLAGE WERE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It's friendly Rurality and countryside Village feel Peace and quiet Shops and pubs
<p>THE MAIN ISSUES FOR VILLAGERS WERE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic Crime and anti-social behaviour Public transport Shops & pubs
<p>WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN DESIGNING NEW HOUSES, THE FOLLOWING WERE CITED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 84% sufficient off road parking outside each home 83% respecting the character of the area 78% impact on crime and anti-social behaviour 60% landscaping to soften the borders between old and new development 58% homes should be set back from roads
<p>OTHER COMMENTS INCLUDED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to open and green spaces Room sizes Having space between homes Garden sizes

NPSG FEEDBACK ON CONSIDERATIONS FOR STRATEGIC MASTERPLAN FOLLOWING SERIES OF WORKSHOPS

Sport and recreation	Junior football pitches are needed, small pocket parks to be created within new neighbourhood
Gas main corridor	Linear park is supported
Drainage	There are existing flooding issues in the village. Using Natural topography of the site for drainage is supported
Hedgerows	Need to retain the strong existing structure of hedgerows across site
Boundary treatment	Green buffer to be created adjacent to existing residential properties
Views	Views to and from the village and surrounding countryside are important. Specifically to St Andrew's Church and the Airfield
Recreational routes	Strong existing walking routes to the surrounding countryside. More formalised N-S and E-W routes. Link routes to create circular walks. Current walking routes do not lead to destinations. Create route to facilities – school, recreation ground, church, Airfield, High Road and library
Integration	Need good integration and connectivity across and beyond masterplan area
A414 crossing	Safe crossing point(s) required across A414
Bus services	Improve service to Epping, and ensure good level of bus service to include masterplan area
Routes to Epping	Safe cycle routes to Epping should be considered
Electric car charging	Provision of electric car charging points within the development are considered essential
Character	Keep village character. Create village "feel" in new neighbourhood and encourage social interaction and integration
Church Lane	Church Lane is used as a rat run, and although stopping up is not ideal, this issue needs to be considered as part of the Masterplan process to avoid further vehicles using this road as a short cut. A link road from Merlin Way associated with the airfield would provide a solution to this problem
Site access	Access from the north essential. Roundabout from A414 would provide good access option. It would also calm traffic and provide opportunity for bus loop.
Access to open space	Vehicular access to open spaces needs to be restricted to avoid fly tipping and anti-social parking
Rat running	Ensure that village roads do not become a rat run for A414
Community Hub	Current facilities are poor. Would like community space, possibly including parish office, small library, coffee shop – acting as a social hub to draw residents into the new neighbourhood. Also need doctors' surgery and dentist. A small convenience shop to meet localised needs rather than compete with existing retail in the village.
School	The existing school is a precious asset and careful consideration needs to be given to further provision

Figure 2.4 - Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire summary



NORTH WEALD BASSETT
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
YOUR VOICE. YOUR PLAN. OUR FUTURE.

NPSG Questionnaire - themes for SMF

The NPSG Questionnaire feedback was a useful tool in helping to shape the emerging SMF, with clear guidance on what local people felt was best about the village as well as what could be improved, as highlighted above in figure 2.4. The key elements of the existing village appreciated by the local community were its setting, semi-rural in nature, and

the connections to the wider countryside, which the SMF has sought to retain and enhanced.

The critical elements for the proposed SMF (highlighted yellow above) were to improve community and sporting facilities, and to create a new social hub to the wider village and to help integrate the proposal with the existing residents.

3. The site and context

3.1 Site location

Wider context

North Weald Bassett is a village and civil parish in the Epping Forest district of Essex. The village of North Weald Bassett is approximately 30km from the centre of London, located to the south-east of Harlow (4km away) and north-east of Epping (3km away). Ongar is 5km to the east.

North Weald Airfield is an operational aerodrome located on the western edge of the SMF area. It is proposed as a future employment area alongside aviation uses as part of site allocation NWB.E4A, as part of the Local Plan Policy P6. This will provide 10ha of additional employment floorspace within Use Classes E(g), B2 and B8 together with the protection and intensification of existing employment floorspace within the eastern part of the airfield.

The village is very well-connected to the surrounding towns and cities via the highway network, as shown in figure 3.1. This includes the A414 to the north and the B181 that runs through the centre of the village. Wider connections include the M11 motorway to the north west and M25 motorway to the south. Epping Station affords underground connections to London via the Central Line. Harlow Town railway station affords links to London as well as London Stansted Airport and Cambridge via the West Anglia Main Line.

Epping Forest (which includes The Lower Forest) comprises 2,400 hectares area of protected ancient woodland approximately 6km to the south west of the SMF area.

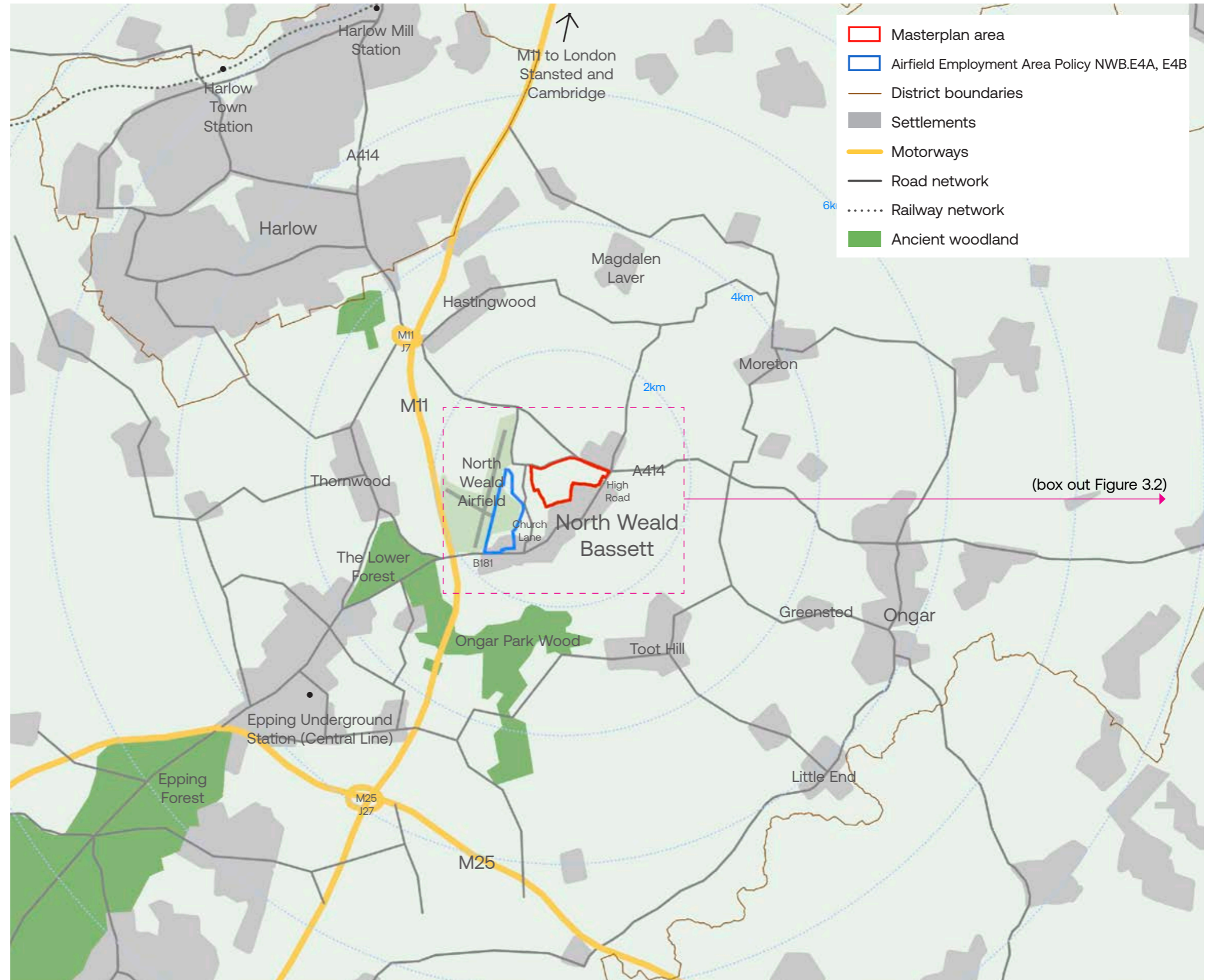


Figure 3.1 - Wider context

3.2 Site and context description

SMF area summary

The North Weald Bassett SMF area extends over an area of approximately 51 hectares (126 acres), of which 46 hectares (113 acres) are allocated for development in the Epping Forest District Local Plan under policy P6.

Figure 3.2 opposite illustrates the SMF area and immediate context.

To the north, the SMF area is bound by the A414 and Vicarage Lane West. To the east it is bound by High Road and Blackhorse Lane. To the south, the development sites are bound by St Andrew's Church of England Primary School, the Memorial Playing Fields and by the back gardens of homes on Oak Piece and Queens Road. To the west, the SMF area is bound by a main river and North Weald Bassett waste water treatment works (WWTW), beyond which is the Church Lane Flood Meadow local nature reserve.

The SMF area has a gently sloping topography with the land falling from approximately 95m above ordnance datum (AOD) in the north east to circa 75m AOD at the south western corner.

The land predominantly comprises small agricultural fields demarcated by hedgerows and a number of mature trees, with small areas of buildings to the north which include business units and residential properties.

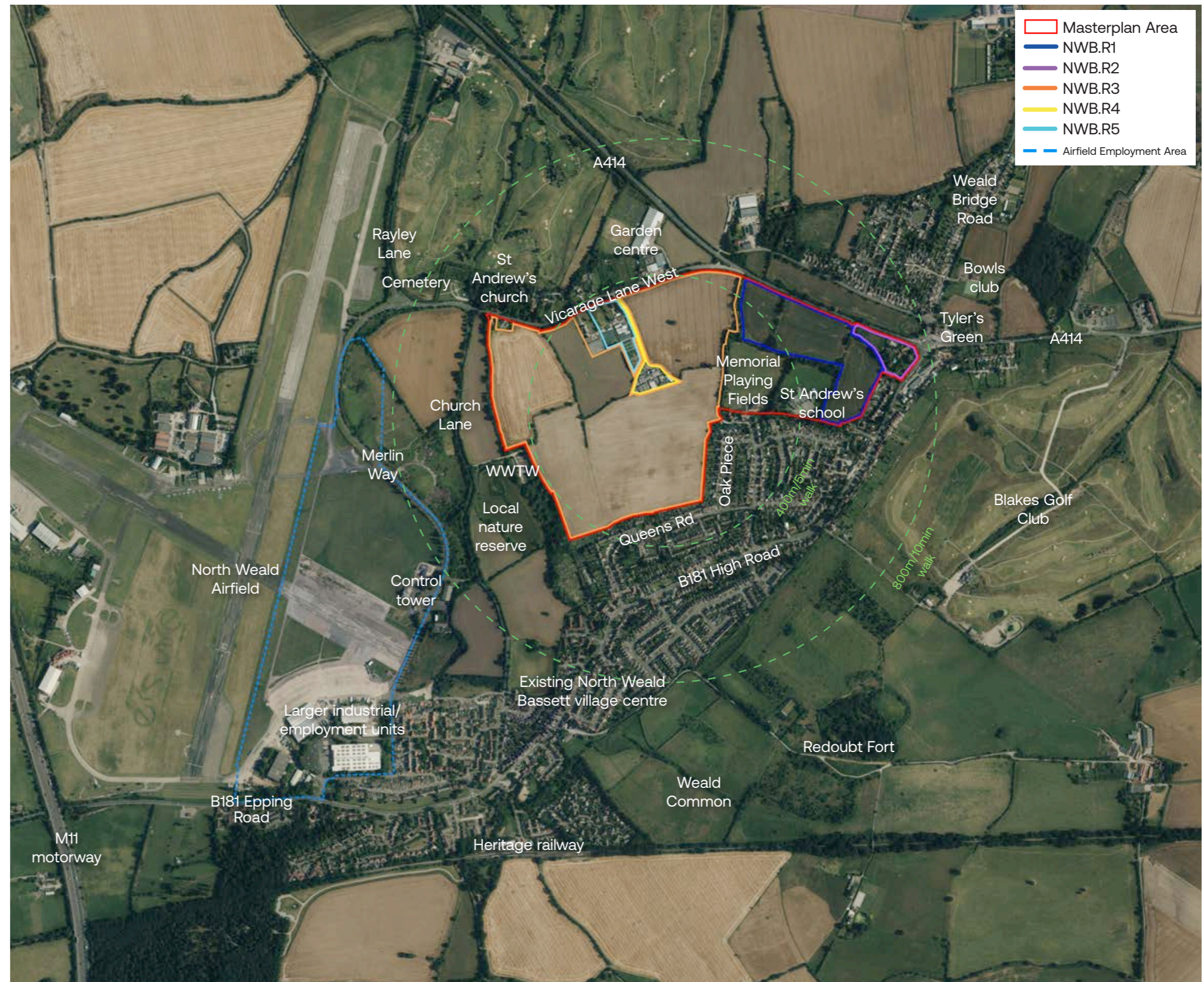


Figure 3.2 - SMF area and immediate context

3.3 Baseline review

Introduction

The baseline studies undertaken for the SMF area are summarised on the following pages. This includes a review of the site and surrounding character, the site constraints and implications on the SMF. This is followed by a review of the site (and wider village) opportunities as part of this SMF.

Ownership

The SMF ownerships are listed below and illustrated in figure 3.3.

- NWB.R1 – Land west of Tylers Green, 7.3ha, private ownership
- NWB.R2 – Land at Tylers Farm, 1.3ha, private ownership
- NWB.R3 – Land south of Vicarage Lane, 34ha, Vistry Group
- NWB.R4 – Land at Chase Farm, 0.8ha, private ownership
- NWB.R5 – Land at the Acorns, Chase Farm, 1.4ha, private ownership.

North Weald Bassett village is predominantly a residential, positioned along the length of B181 Epping Road/High Road. The SMF area is primarily formed of farmland with education, employment and leisure uses sat between the village and airfield. The study area is bordered on its southern, northern and eastern edges by residential development, and by meadow and farmland on its western edge.

Significant other uses in the local area include the airfield on the western edge (of which a large area on its eastern edge is allocated for employment), the primary school to the east and smaller employment uses to the north.

The redoubt dates from the late 19th century and is a scheduled monument. It is a significant feature as it has prompted the direction of proposed new development in North Weald Bassett.

A parade of shops is located along High Road, including a small convenience store, restaurant and takeaway shops. The village has two public houses. The Limes medical centre is located in the village close to Epping Road.

In terms of community and leisure, North Weald Bassett village has a library, North Weald village hall, The Queen's Hall community centre, allotments, recreation grounds and golf courses (refer to Social Infrastructure p19).



Figure 3.3 - Ownerships

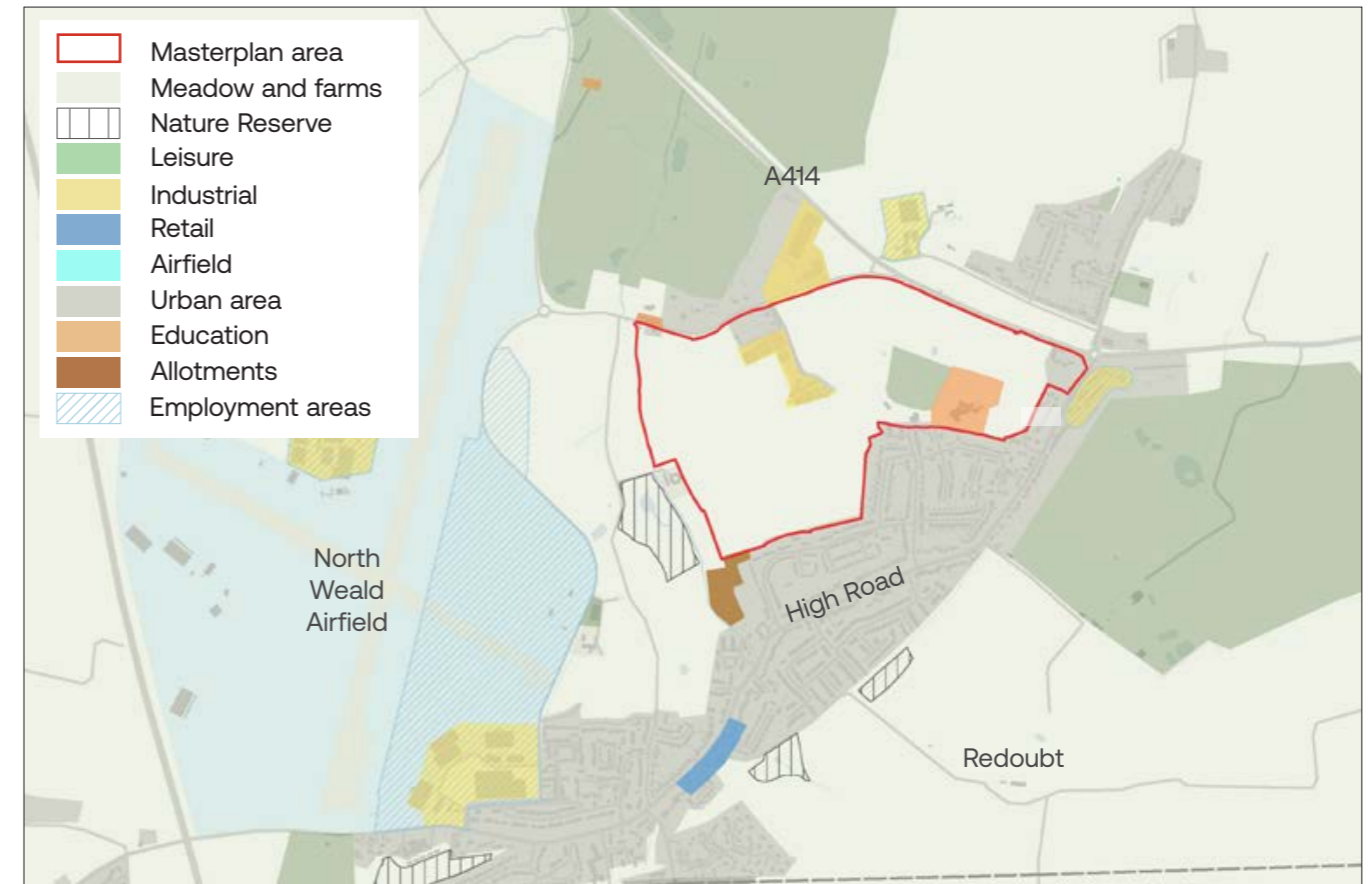


Figure 3.4 - Land uses

Landscape character

The site falls within the Epping Forest District Landscape Character Assessment – ‘Ridges and Valleys, North Weald’ (F5). The landscape character of the area is summarised in EFDC's Landscape Character Assessment (2010) as follows:

- Mature trees and hedgerows at field boundaries (of low to medium height)
- North Weald airfield is a dominant human element, with its associated metal railings, roadways and control tower
- Overall sense of tranquillity is disturbed in the west by proximity to the noise of traffic on the M11 road corridor

- A small-scale settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads and occasional nurseries, other than the large linear settlement of North Weald Bassett towards the centre of the area
- Predominantly arable farmland
- Rural road corridors lined with verges and mature deciduous trees
- Mature field trees and hedgerow trees are key landscape features
- Copses of mature deciduous woodland contribute to a sense of enclosure.

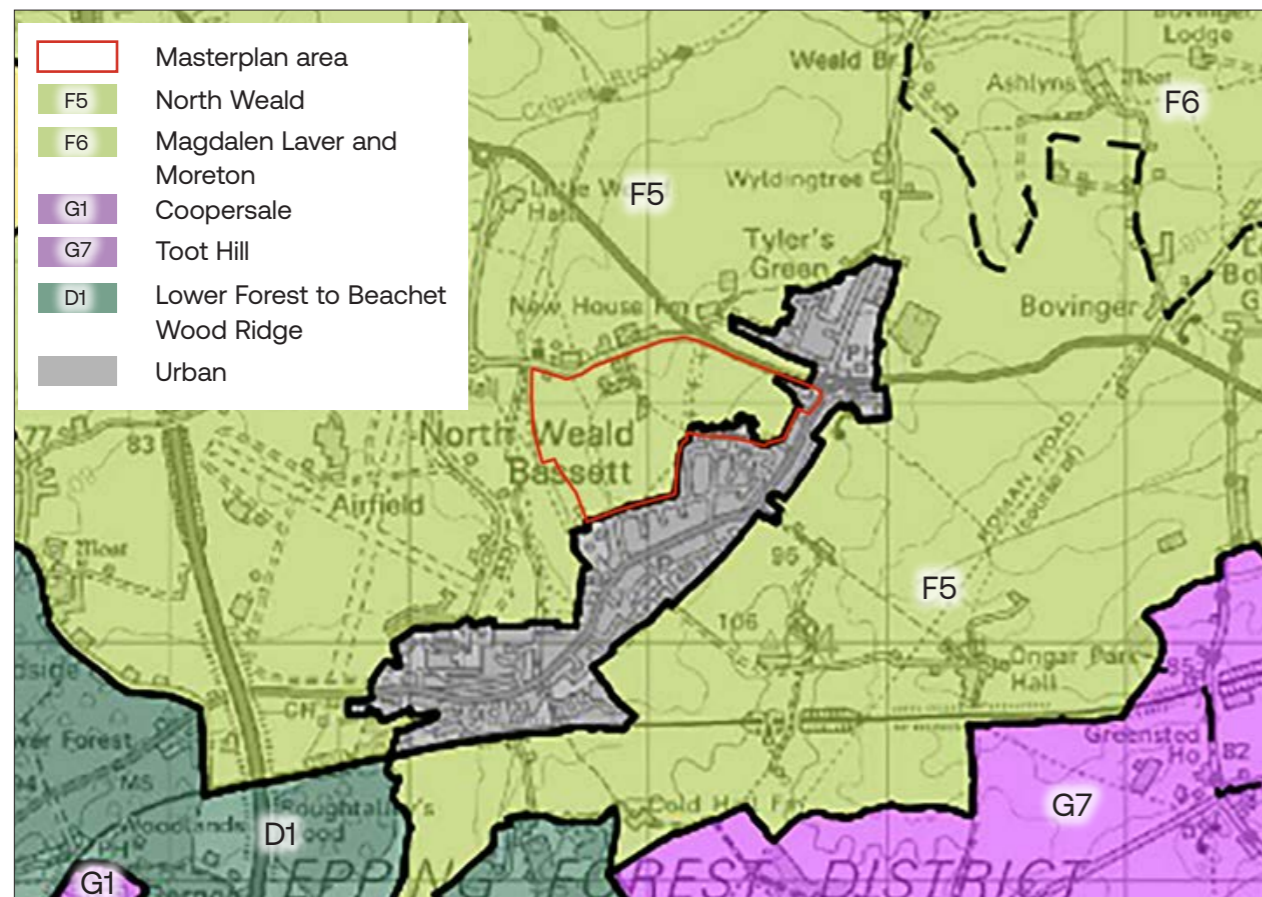


Figure 3.5 - Landscape character ©EFDC

Landscape structure

Multiple hedgerows and mature trees define the field boundaries within the SMF area.

The western edge is defined by Gullet Brook and associated streamside vegetation and trees, and the treatment works. This area feels more open and rural, with some wider views of the surrounding landscape. The north-western part retains a village-like character, with the detached properties, nursery and St Andrew's church along Vicarage Lane West. Towards the eastern part of the SMF area the landscape becomes more enclosed by strong tree belts and hedgerows, with a more residential character around Tylers Farmhouse, influenced by the junction of High Road and the A414.

Following arboricultural surveys, trees and hedgerows of importance and ecological value would be retained unless there are strong design reasons to remove them.

To the north, beyond the A414 there are no views of significance, however the Parish Church of St Andrew is visible from a large proportion of the western side of the SMF area. These views allow the attractiveness of the church tower to be appreciated within its countryside backdrop and demonstrate how it forms a community focal point.

To the east, views are limited by thick hedgerows/vegetation. To the south the landform gently rises away, with the houses north of the B181 High Road visible. To the west there are glimpsed views of North Bassett Airfield (including hangars) and its control tower.



Figure 3.6 - Landscape structure

Topography

Figure 3.7 illustrates the site and contextual topography. North Weald Bassett village is located on the edge of a valley. To the south, the land rises to form a ridge, where the redoubt is located.

For the most part the SMF area is relatively flat. The SMF area features a valley that runs along Church Lane to the west, gently rising to the east and south. The gentle topography naturally flows into the surrounding watercourses.

An existing stream/ditch flows south to north along the western boundary of the SMF study area, which could be utilised as a potential greenway, enhancing and preserving the existing Public Rights of Way network.

Generally the SMF area feels open and unenclosed, especially on the western side, with views of the airfield, existing housing to the south and St Andrew's church.

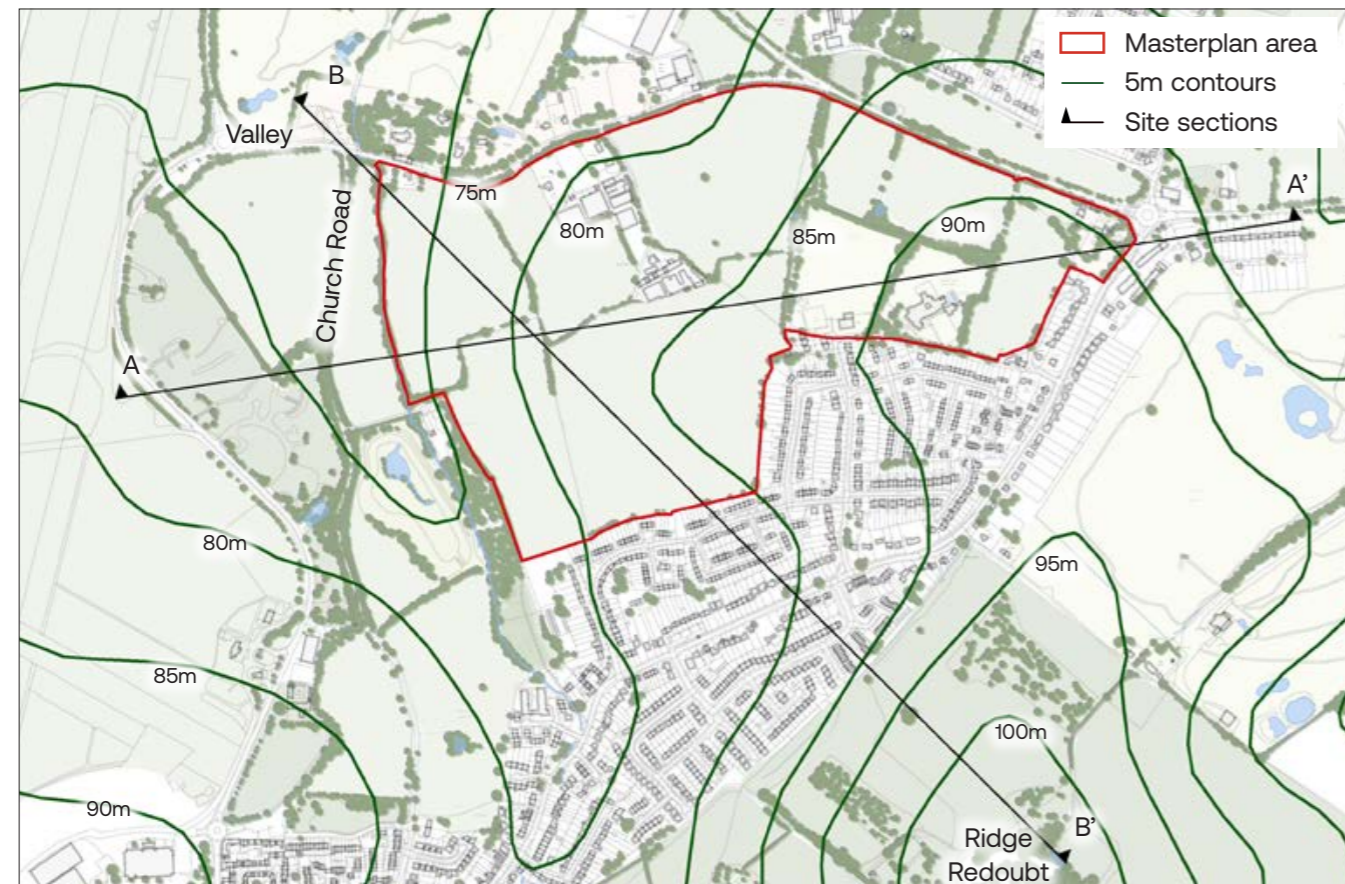
The existing SMF area topography helps to inform village character and townscape elements, such as views of St Andrew's Church. The existing topography, with gently sloping fields, should be considered in terms of drainage strategy, as should existing watercourses running around the site.

Site sections

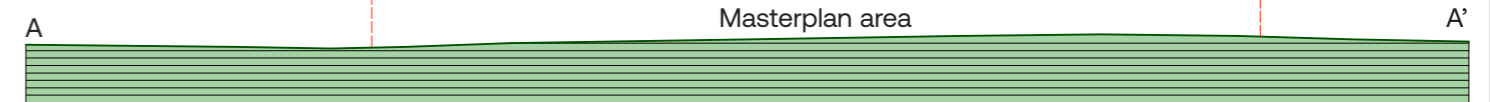
Sections A-A' and B-B' cross the SMF area and are illustrated below. The sections show how the site features a combination of relatively flat areas and gentle sloping topography but is part of a wider valley/ridge landform.



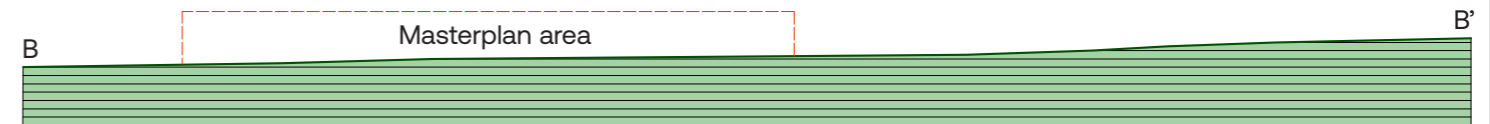
View from Church Lane looking east, past WWTW towards masterplan area, showing the landform gently rising into the distance



Site sections A-A' and B-B' (5m contours)



Section A-A' (looking north)



Section B-B' (looking north east)

Figure 3.7 - Topography and site sections

Social infrastructure

Social infrastructure is illustrated in figure 3.8. There are five local hubs which serve as key destinations for the village. The location of these hubs should influence the pedestrian routes in the proposals. The five hubs are:

- St Andrew's primary school, with 420 spaces for children aged 4-11
- The existing local centre on the High Road, consisting of a range of small shops, village hall, vets, playground and The Kings Head pub
- The crossroads/roundabout at Tyler's Green, including a pub/restaurant and employment uses along High Road
- St Andrew's Church and surrounding buildings
- North Weald Airfield. Currently this hub serves employment. As part of the Airfield Masterplan area it will also create additional employment. Finally, it has great historical value from its role in WW1, and dictated the growth of the village throughout the 20th Century.

There is a lack of pedestrian links between the existing local hubs, particularly with east/west movement (as most of the PRow run north/south).

St Andrew's primary school is an important hub, as it serves children from all over North Weald Bassett.

North Weald Airfield features a mix of uses, including (employment) but there is no clear, direct pedestrian route from the SMF area to the airfield.

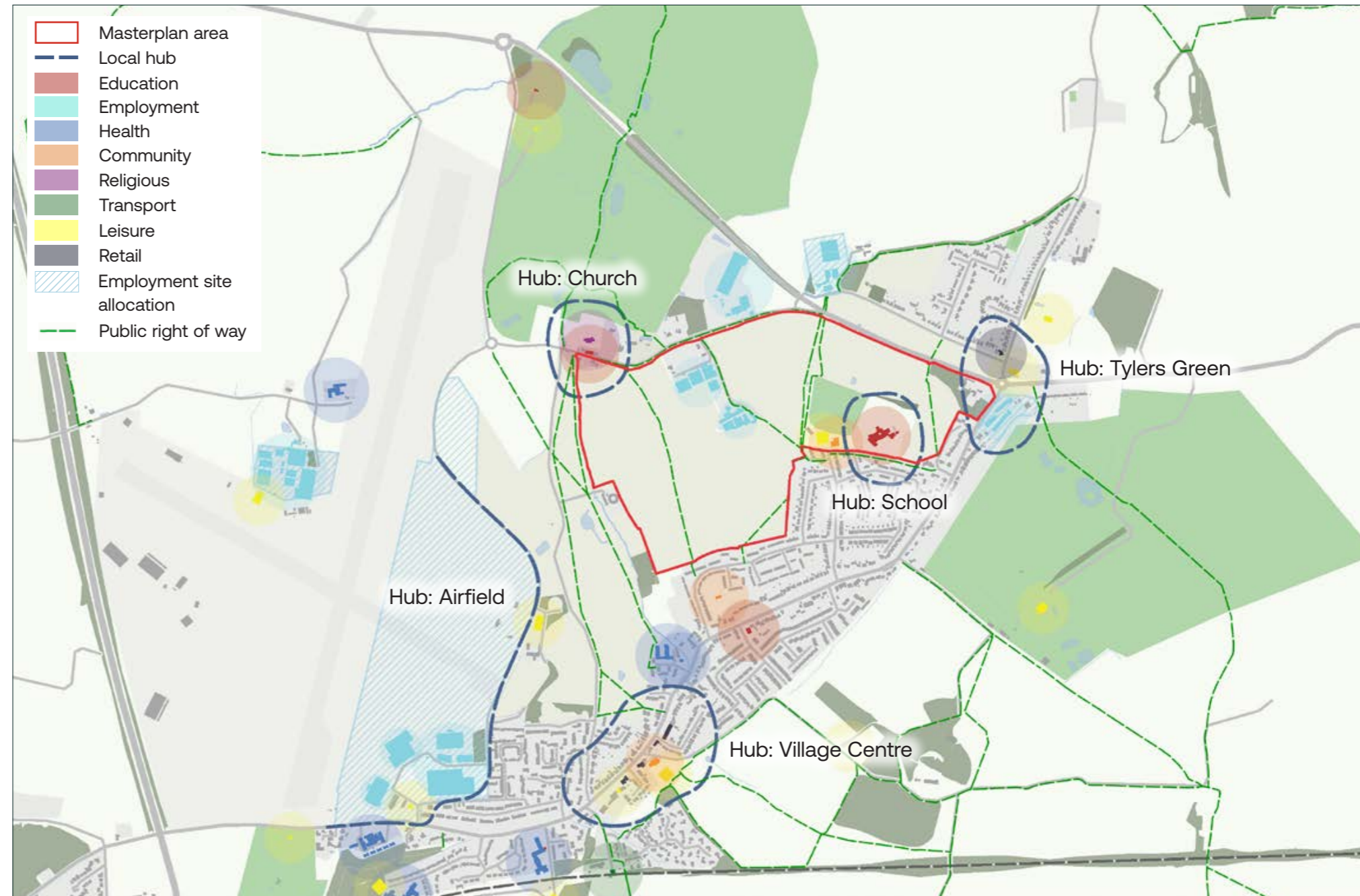


Figure 3.8 - Social infrastructure

Open spaces and play areas

North Weald Bassett benefits from a range of local open spaces, as illustrated in figure 3.9. These are well connected by the public rights of way network, which features well-used links to the wider rural countryside, one of the defining features of the village. The SMF area can act as a conduit to the countryside, therefore the public rights of way should be enhanced.

The principle areas of open space within the SMF area are the recreation ground and school playing fields, both are well screened by existing trees and hedgerows, but this may reduce their use due to lack of visibility along walking routes.

The recreation ground includes Queen's Hall Community Centre, a play area and the Memorial Playing Field which has Fields in Trust protection (as a Queen Elizabeth II Field).

To the west of the village is Church Lane Flood Meadow Local Nature Reserve and allotments. To the north of the A414 there is a bowls club and further allotments. To the south of the High Road there are a number of footpaths offering a variety of routes to the wider countryside as well as a local nature reserve and play space.

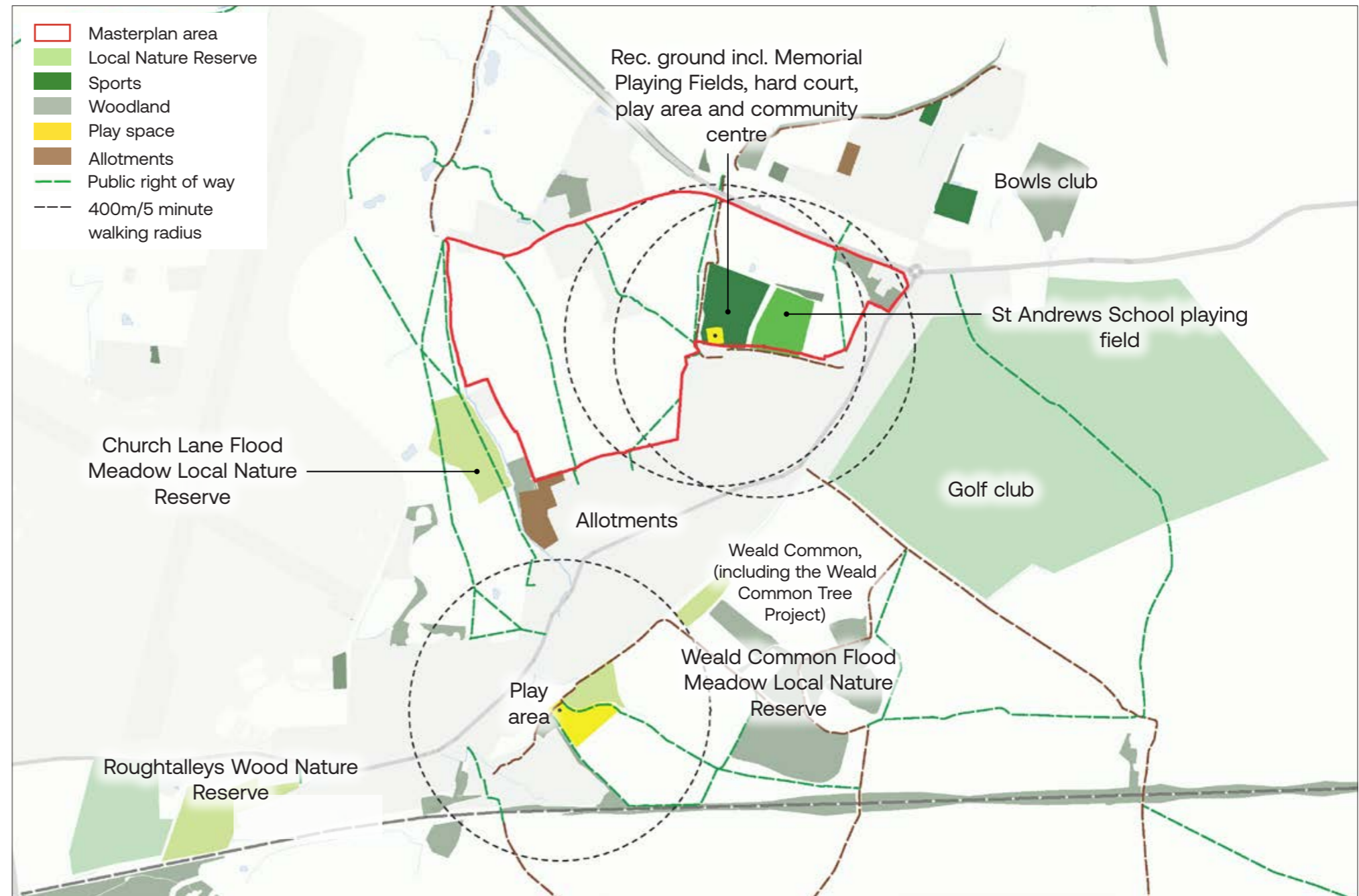


Figure 3.9 - Open spaces and play areas

Heritage

Heritage assets are illustrated in figure 3.10. A draft Built Heritage Statement was prepared by CGMS Heritage in 2018, and RPS prepared a desk based archaeological assessment, also in 2018, updated in 2023.

In terms of listed buildings there are three main areas that affect the SMF area.

On the north-western edge of the SMF area are two grade II listed buildings: St Clements and Church Cottage. This area includes the grade II* listed St Andrew's Church, dating from the 12th century. The church is a key wayfinding feature from the NWB.R3 area, and is visible from the centre of the NWB.R3 area towards the north west corner of this development site.

To the east of the SMF area there is the grade II listed Tylers Farmhouse within the NWB.R2 area, which is well screened by surrounding hedgerows and trees.

Past the western boundary, the grade II listed control tower for North Weald Airfield is visible from parts of the NWB.R3.

Beyond the immediate surrounds of the SMF area, the redoubt dates from the late 19th century and is a scheduled monument although it is not visible from the site.



Figure 3.10 - Heritage

Pedestrian connections

Pedestrian connectivity is illustrated in figure 3.11. The SMF area is well located and connected in respect to North Weald Bassett, with Public Rights of Way (PRoW) connecting through, as illustrated below. The majority of the PRoW run north/south with limited east/west connections (other than the local street network or informal routes). Many pedestrians follow the field boundaries on the southern and western edges of the SMF area, rather than using the often poorly surfaced/signposted PRoW.

As part of the Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire, local residents indicated that walking routes to the wider countryside are very important, and should be maintained.

A Bassett Millennium Walk runs through the site, part of a two hour walking loop from St Andrew's church to Church Lane flood meadow.

Within the SMF area several PRoW could be reviewed with minor alterations to improve signage, surfacing and efficient land use.

There is a lack of direct pedestrian/cycle links to the major employment area of North Weald Airfield, and the SMF should include the potential for future connections. There is an informal link on the western boundary connecting from the SMF area through to Church Lane, through the maintenance access for the Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW).

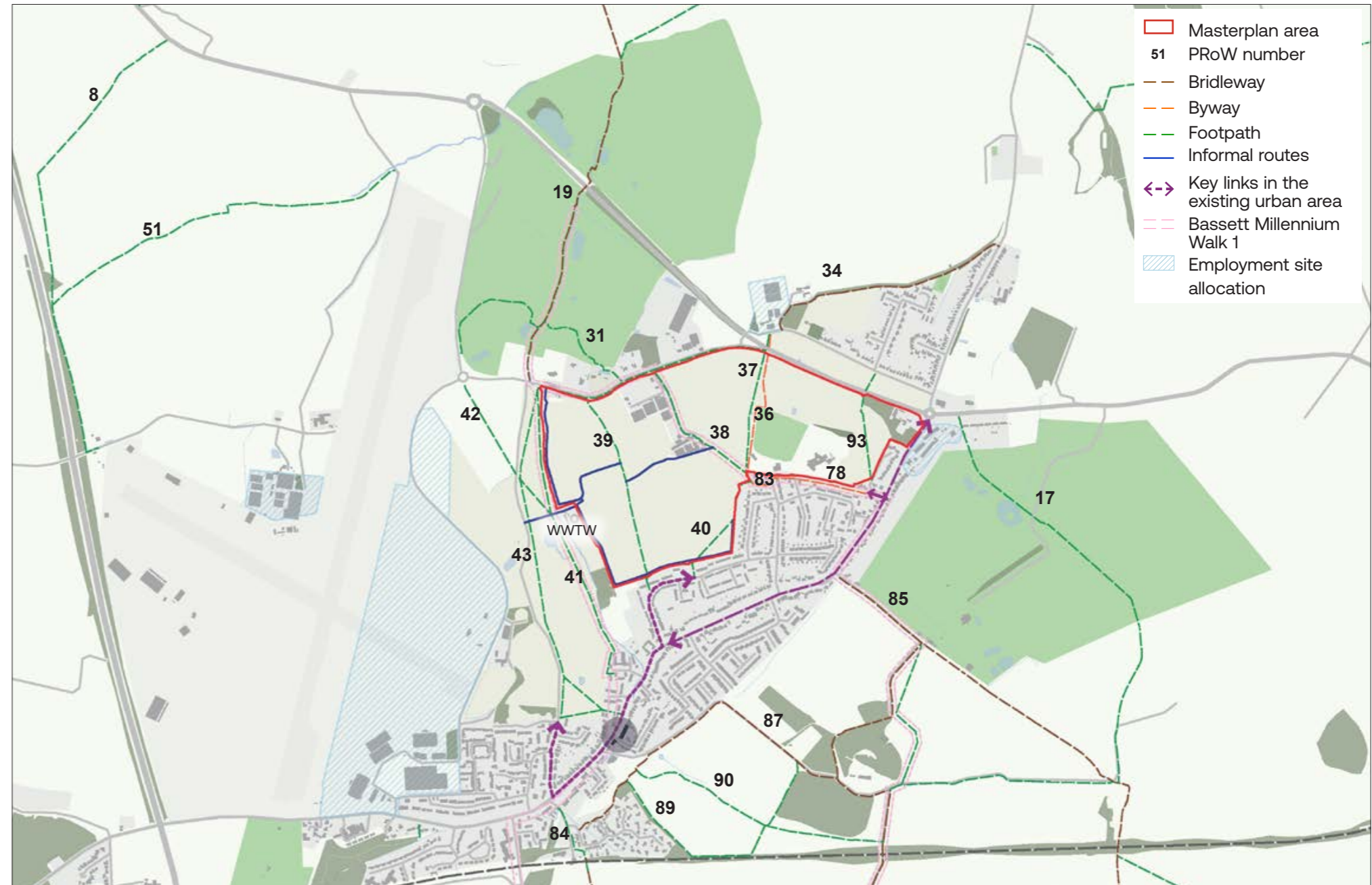


Figure 3.11 - Pedestrian connections

Pedestrian access

The following existing pedestrian accesses have been highlighted to be enhanced (see figure 3.12):

1. Informal route from masterplan area to Church Lane - Access track off Church Lane for WWTW links to western edge of masterplan area, potential to utilise as part of wider east-west link
2. PRoW 40 connecting to Queens Road - A key pedestrian gateway, affording connections to/from the existing village. Refreshing this poorly used space would create a welcoming pedestrian gateway
3. PRoW 39 connecting to Queens Road - Unsurveilled and forming a 'dog leg' shape, across a field ditch
4. PRoW 83 connecting through to School Green Lane - Lacks surfacing but well overlooked
5. PRoW 37 A414 crossing - 60mph road makes crossing difficult. SMF to address as part of access proposals
6. PRoW 93 to Blackhorse Lane - Alternate desire line runs north-south along edge rather than route of PRoW
7. Vicarage Lane West footpath - Narrow footpath, finishing abruptly at both ends but connects into PRoW links
8. PRoW 39 connecting to Vicarage Lane West
9. PRoW 38 along Chase Farm units
10. PRoW 93 connecting to A414, but difficult to cross.



Figure 3.12 - Pedestrian access to site

Primary vehicular routes

The SMF area is located within a triangular arrangement of routes (figure 3.13):

- The A414 along the northern edge of the SMF area is an important arterial route connecting to the M11 motorway and Harlow to the west, and Ongar and Chelmsford to the east
- The B181 High Road to the east of the SMF area is effectively the high street running through the village. The B181 connects to Epping to the south west
- Church Lane and Rayley Lane to the west of the SMF area. These rural roads connect to the A414 and the B181 and are used as a rat run.

Vicarage Lane West connects the A414 to Church Lane and Rayley Lane. Although vehicles may exit from the A414 onto Vicarage Lane West (along the northern edge of the SMF area), there is no vehicular means of access to join the A414 from Vicarage Lane West, as this is prohibited. The lack of eastern travel along Vicarage Lane West onto the A414 creates a diversion for drivers wishing to re-connect to the A414, forcing them to travel west along Vicarage Lane West and then north along Rayley Lane (a diversion of 3km). Likewise, drivers wishing to reach the B181 High Road from Vicarage Lane West are forced to travel west along Vicarage Lane West and then south along Church Lane (a diversion of 2km). The junction of the A414 and Vicarage Lane West on the northern edge of the SMF area is therefore an important issue as both Rayley Lane and Church Lane are minor roads, and were not designed for large volumes of traffic.



Figure 3.13 - Primary vehicular routes

Vehicular access to the masterplan area

The following residential and farm vehicular accesses have been identified within the SMF area (figure 3.14):

1. Informal parking off Vicarage Lane West for church, nursery and agricultural field access
2. Residential access for 1897 Vicarage Lane West (Weald House)
3. Residential access for Carlton House, Vicarage Lane West
4. Residential access to Chase Farm and employment units
5. Farm access off Vicarage Lane West
6. Farm access off A414/Vicarage Lane W.
7. Farm access off A414
8. Residential Access to Tylers Farm
9. Access to St Andrew's primary school off Beamish Close, includes staff and visitor parking area
10. Access to recreation ground/Memorial Playing Fields and community centre off School Green Lane, includes gated parking area for Queens Hall community centre
11. Residential access for The Pavilions including potential link to byway
12. Farm access off WWTW service road.

None of these accesses are suitable to serve the proposed number of new homes, therefore new points of access will be required as part of the SMF, which should seek to address wider issues, including access from Vicarage Lane W. onto the A414.



Figure 3.14 - Vehicular access to masterplan area

Public Transport

Public transport links are illustrated in figure 3.15. There are a number of regular bus services operating along High Road/ Epping Road, with varied levels of frequency. These comprise the 339 (Shenfield to Epping Service), the 418 (Loughton to North Weald Service) and the 420/420A (North Weald to Harlow Service). There are also several school buses that service the area, which comprise of the 491 (North Weald to Epping Service), 620 (Abridge to Ingatestone Service) and HTD1 (North Weald to Sawbridgeworth Service).

Across all these services, access can be made within North Weald and the surrounding areas.

Buses do not travel along the northern edge of the study area (Vicarage Lane West) or A414. The lack of eastern travel along Vicarage Lane West is therefore an issue.

North Weald Bassett is therefore connected by regular services to nearby towns and villages, but these services are not located within a desirable walking distance to all of the SMF area.

Epping Underground Station (Zone 6, Central Line) is 5km (by vehicle) from North Weald Bassett, and offers connections to London Liverpool Street (35 mins) and Oxford Street (45 mins). North Weald Railway station is part of a heritage railway line (Epping Ongar Railway) and runs from April to October.

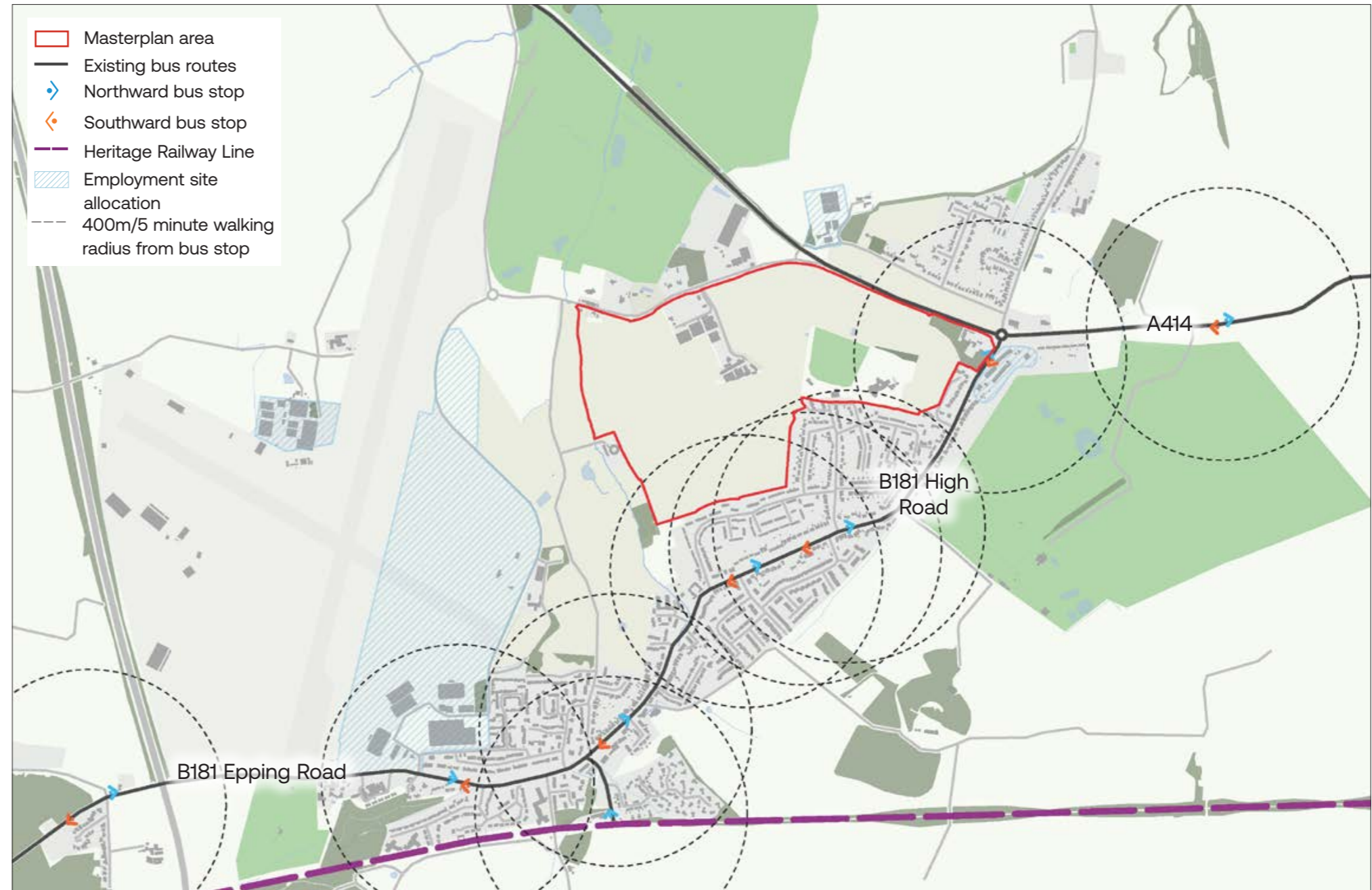


Figure 3.15 - Public transport

Street hierarchy

Street hierarchy is illustrated in figure 3.16. The village of North Weald Bassett is linear in form, mainly located along the B181 Epping Road/High Road, which also features the majority of the retail facilities for the area. The nearest motorway is the M11, connecting to the M25 to the south and Cambridge to the north.

Around the SMF area, the A414 runs along the north edge of the R1 and R2 sites. Vicarage Lane West runs along the northern edge of the R3, R4 and R5 sites and High Road runs along the eastern edge of the R2 site.

Many of the local streets are smaller in scale and named after, or in relation to North Weald Airfield (and its World War II heritage), including names after aircraft including the Hurricane, Wellington, Lancaster, Blenheim and Merlin.

There is no vehicular access from Vicarage Lane West onto the A414 (although you can access Vicarage Lane West from the A414). This reduces eastern traffic along Vicarage Lane and creates diversions to the north along Rayley Way, and to the south along Church Lane.



Figure 3.16 - Street hierarchy

Infrastructure

Infrastructure is illustrated in figure 3.17. The two principle elements of infrastructure that will affect the SMF area are the intermediate pressure gas pipeline running across the centre of the SMF area, and the area affected by odour around the waste water treatment works, on the western boundary.

The gas pipeline has been surveyed by Lightsource Survey Ltd, and is afforded a 3m and 7.5m offset (creating a 15m corridor). For more information on the easement zones please refer to the constraints plan (page 39).

The WWTW has been surveyed by Odournet. This has resulted in a mapped area (odour plume). This odour plume does not cause significant odour pollution. Applicants are advised to engage with Thames Water on the capacity of the existing WWTW.

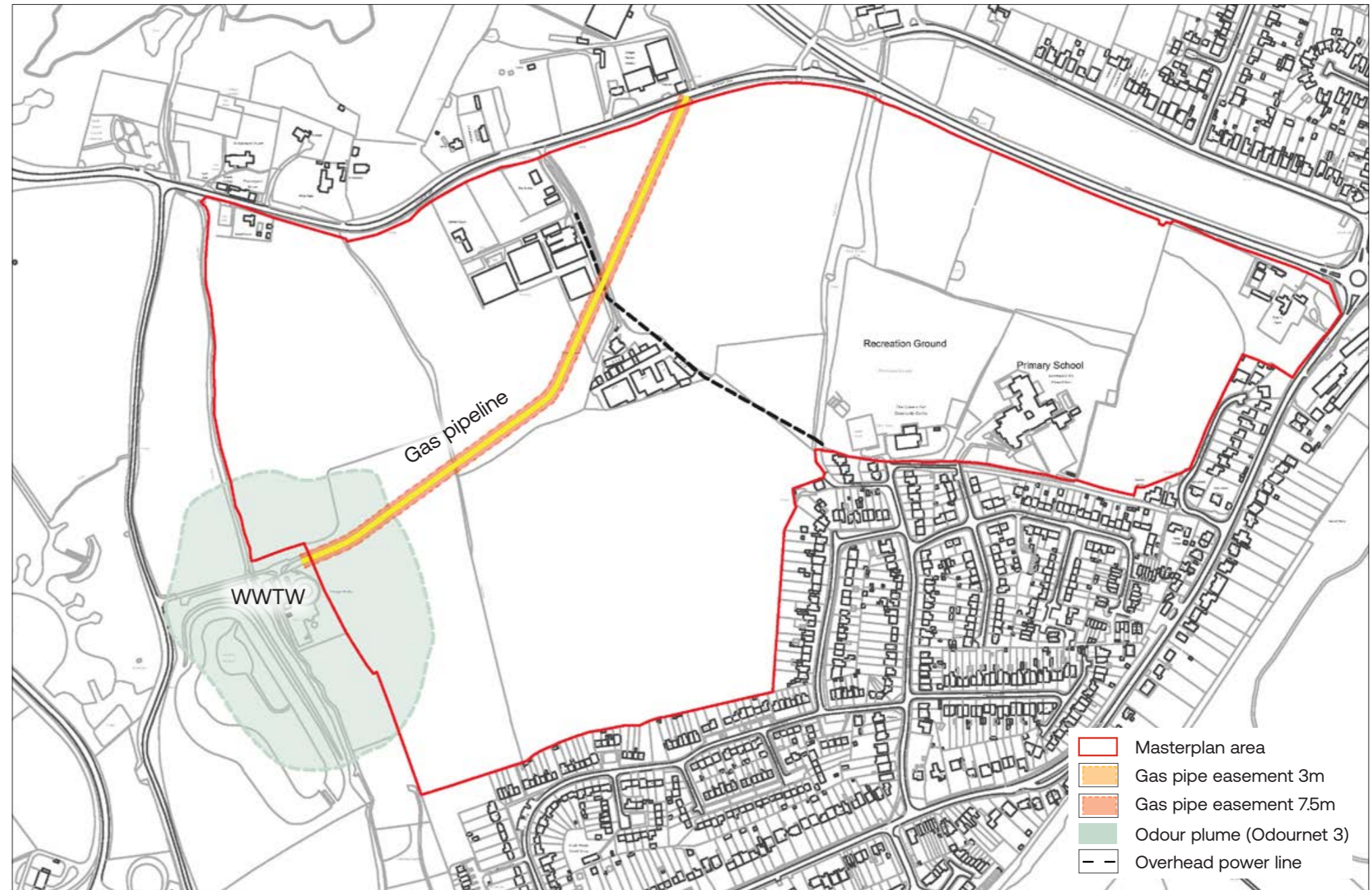


Figure 3.17 - Infrastructure



Gas pipeline marker

Ecology

The SMF area is within 10 km of Epping Forest, although separated from it by the M11. The Lower Forest Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSi) is within 2km distance of the SMF area. There are no other statutorily protected sites within 2km. Church Lane Flood Meadow, Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and Local Wildlife Site (LoWS) are adjacent to the west. There are no Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority habitats within the SMF area but broad-leaved deciduous woodland is recorded to the north and southeast.

The SMF area is predominantly in use as arable agriculture, which is of limited / negligible ecological interest but does include intact and relict native species hedgerows, large mature native trees and a pond, which are all of higher ecological value. The networks of trees, hedgerows and ponds form a network (existing green corridors) from south to north and east to west. Ecological baseline data surveyed over a number of years (2014 - 2023) has been used to inform the SMF including:

- Comprehensive desktop studies
- Phase 1 habitat surveys
- Bat surveys
- Bird surveys
- Otter surveys
- Dormouse surveys
- Badger surveys
- Water vole surveys
- Reptile surveys
- Great Crested Newt surveys.

Up to nine bat species have been recorded during surveys, including the rare Western Barbastelle. Roosts have been detected within St Andrew's Church to the north of

the SMF area but none identified within the area. The brook to the west of the SMF area is occasionally used by otters. Great crested newt are known to be present within 500m of the SMF area but not inside it. None of the other species were recorded in any of the surveys.

Key ecological features for consideration include: potential effects on Epping Forest, resulting from an increase in the population

of the district, the protection of Church Lane Flood Meadow LNR and the adjacent watercourse, St Andrews Church and the existing ecological network of trees hedgerows and ponds. One of the most important considerations will be the sensitive design of lighting.

At the detailed design stage, proposals should seek to maintain and enhance opportunities for bat foraging and commuting routes from St Andrew's church on the western edge of the masterplan area and on other green corridors. For example, this could take the form of woodland planting, standing waterbodies and species-rich hedgerows linking existing and new biodiversity habitat. This should be informed by on-site bat surveys.

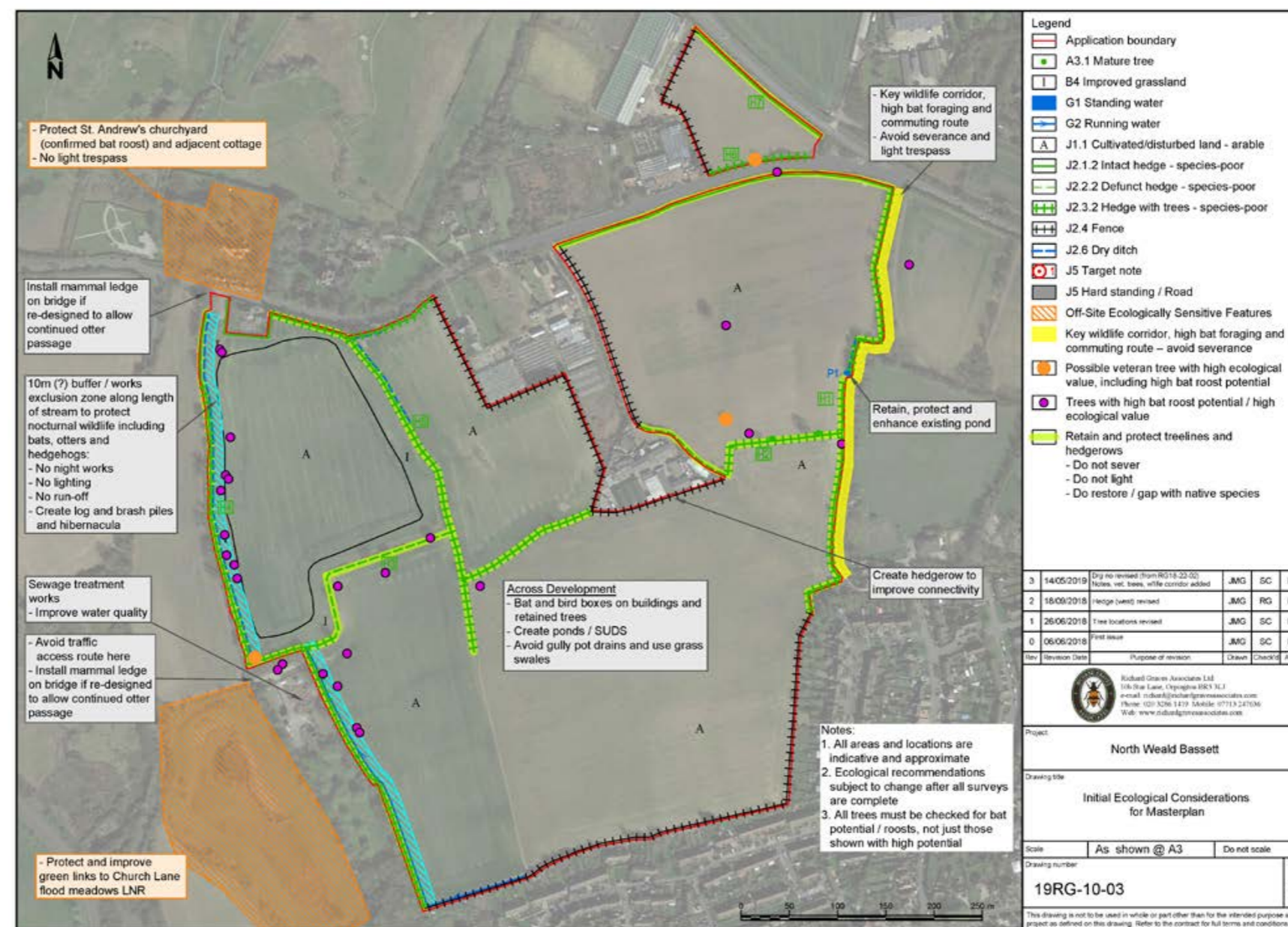


Figure 3.18 - Ecology (NWB.R3 area) ©Richard Graves Associates

Noise

Figure 3.19 shows indicative noise sources - however these are subject to survey for their full impact. The noise sources differ in their type, and will be affected by local wind and weather conditions.

The dominant noise source is the A414. Noise from the A414 is traffic related and varies due to traffic volumes. The WWTW is of secondary importance but is continuous in nature and location. The airfield and employment uses within the SMF area feature intermittent activity. The employment use noise within the study area is during operational hours, and sporadic.

All of these noise constraints can be appropriately mitigated through an intelligent design-led response to the master planning of the site.



Figure 3.19 - Noise



Airfield viewed from the masterplan area



A414

Fluvial flood risk (flood zones)

The main watercourse is adjacent to the SMF area's western boundary, flowing south to north. This accords with the Environment Agency mapping for flood zones 2 and 3 shown in figure 3.20.

The SMF area is almost completely free of fluvial flood risk.

Pluvial flood risk (surface water flooding)

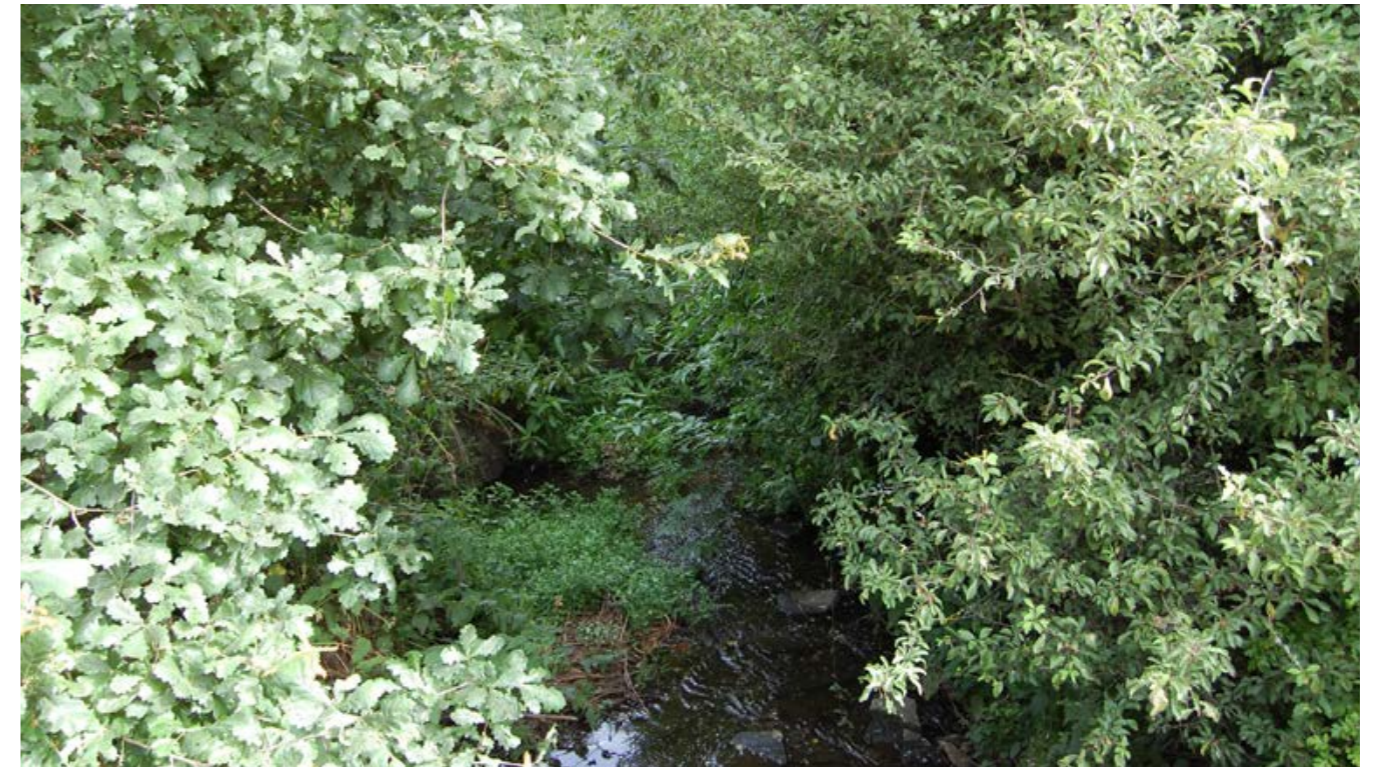
Figure 3.21 illustrates the pluvial flood risk. The existing agricultural fields flow into the watercourse on the western boundary of the SMF area via a network of field drains and ditches.

Where there are potential areas of surface water flooding, these parts of the site will be mitigated and incorporated into the SMF.

Surface water run-off will be restricted to the pre-development greenfield rate for the 1 in 1 year rainfall event with the drainage system and attenuation features sized to accommodate all storms up to and including the 1 in 100 year event plus an allowance of 40% for climate change. This means that in larger storms, the future rate of run-off will be reduced, resulting in betterment to the receiving downstream infrastructure. Attenuation storage features will also include an allowance of 10% for urban creep in accordance with Essex County Council's Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide. Consideration will also be given to exceedance events which may occur in events larger than the design storm or should a blockage be experienced.

Buffers to main rivers

The constraints plan on p46 illustrates a 10m built development buffer to the main rivers on the site edges.



Watercourse on western edge of site

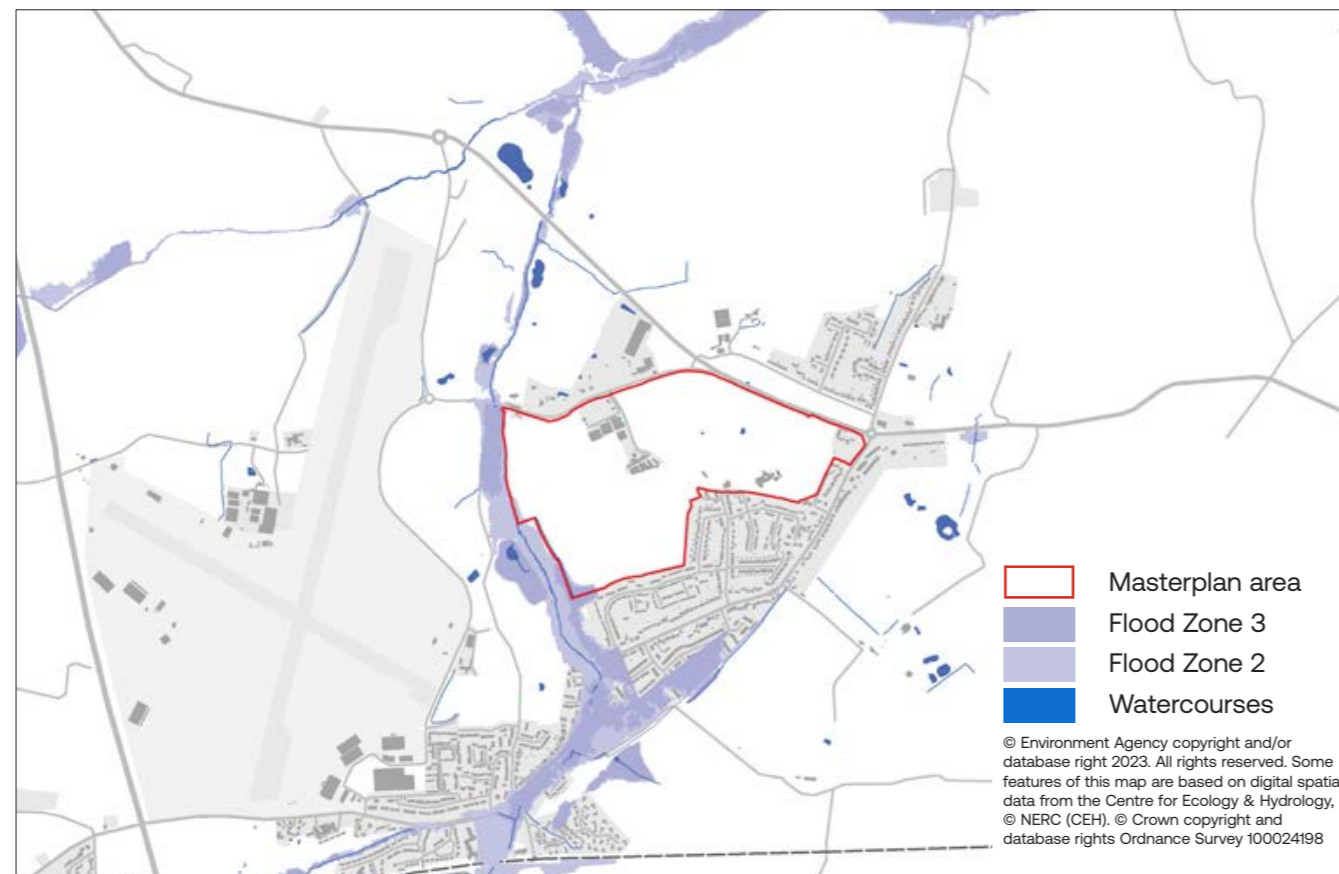


Figure 3.20 - Fluvial flood risk

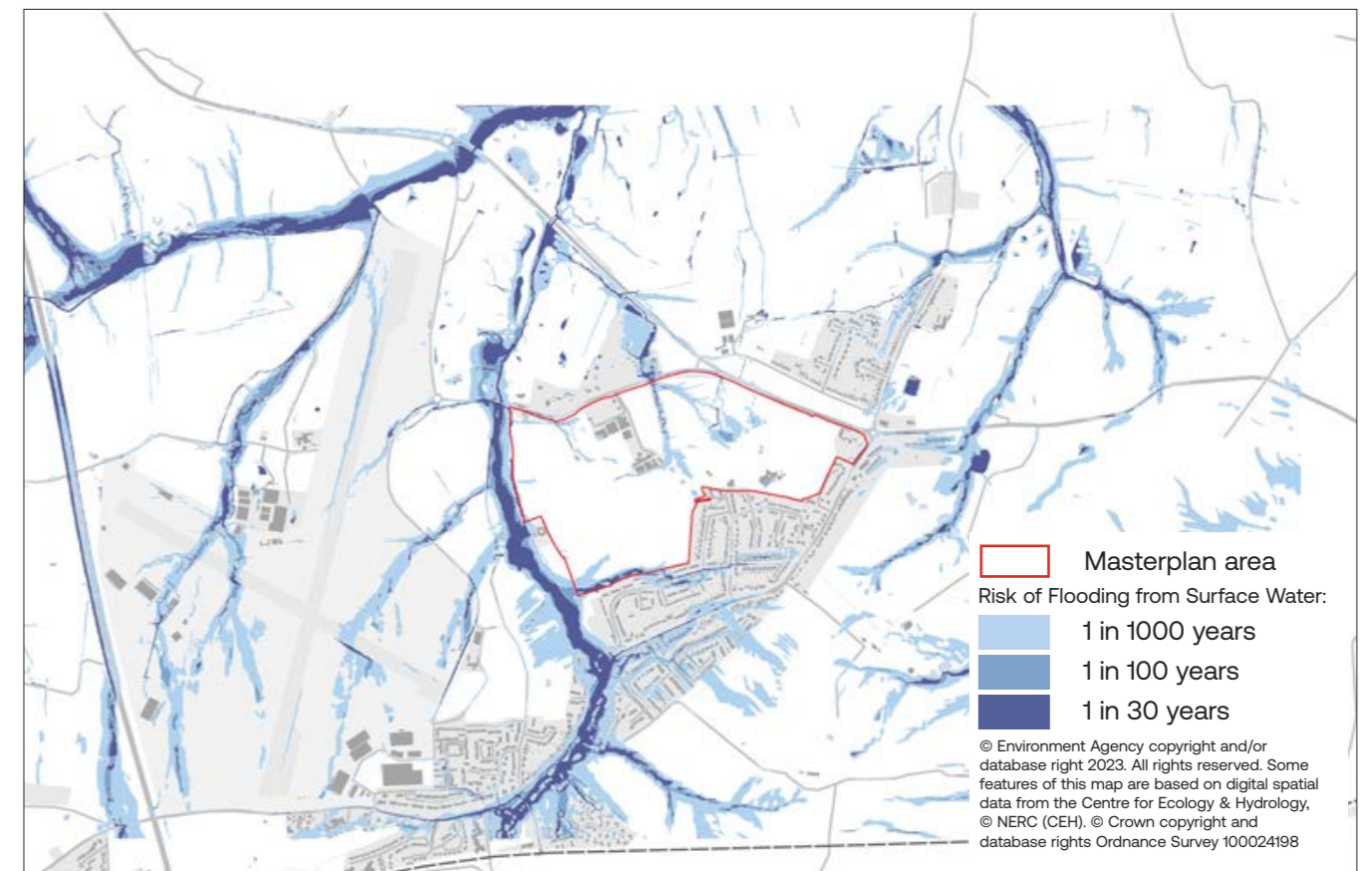


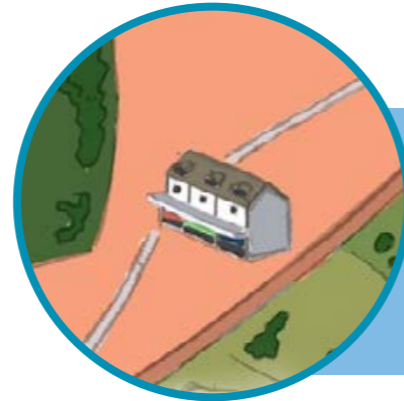
Figure 3.21 - Pluvial flood risk

3.4 Understanding the character of North Weald Bassett village

Character summary

North Weald Bassett village has a unique character. Understanding this is critical to how the proposed SMF integrates with the existing village and functions spatially.

The four primary characteristics of the village are listed opposite.



Discrete village-like feel

Overall, the village retains a semi-rural, quiet and friendly village character. The High Road gently meanders through the village, taking you to larger settlements (Harlow and Epping). The village feels more personal than many of these surrounding towns and villages, and in some ways also feels old fashioned with its predominantly traditional architectural form and village shops.

North Weald Airfield

Established in WWI the airfield is famous as serving as one of the main airbases during the Battle of Britain in WWII. Following the war, the village grew in size (with the majority between WWII and 1970) and the RAF maintained control of the airfield until the 1960s. Following this, it became a civil airfield, still in-use today. Many of the surrounding streets in the village feature aviation related names. Non aviation uses at the airfield include a large open air weekend market and a variety of employment uses.

A proportion of the airfield is proposed for future employment uses under the North Weald Bassett Airfield Masterplan Area, approximately 400m west of the North Weald Bassett SMF.



Character themes for SMF

North Weald Airfield historically, today and in the future, is fundamental to the success of the wider village. The connection between the SMF and the airfield is therefore fundamental.

The integration of the new community - the proposal should transition from village to country. Pedestrian connections should be enhanced to the village, in particular with regards to missing links, to enable a greater choice of routes and to encourage active travel.



Pedestrian connections to the countryside

North Weald Bassett benefits from around 25km of Public Rights of Way in and around the village. As part of the Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire, local residents indicated that walking routes to the wider countryside are very important, and should be maintained. A Bassett Millennium Walk runs through the site, part of a two hour walking loop from St Andrew's church to Church Lane flood meadow.

Part of the unique charm of the village is the ability to walk for a few minutes from the centre and find yourself in the countryside.

A rich local history

Along with the airfield, the village features a variety of heritage buildings and structures, which serve as stand-out markers around the village and create vistas.

These include St Andrew's church (originally built in the 12th century), Tyler's Farmhouse, the Kings Head pub (originally built in the 15th century) and the heritage railway.





Local Nature Reserve



Local shop, Tylers Green



Queens Hall community centre



North Weald Airfield museum/memorial



St Andrews primary school



Harvester pub, Tylers Green



Village sign and memorial



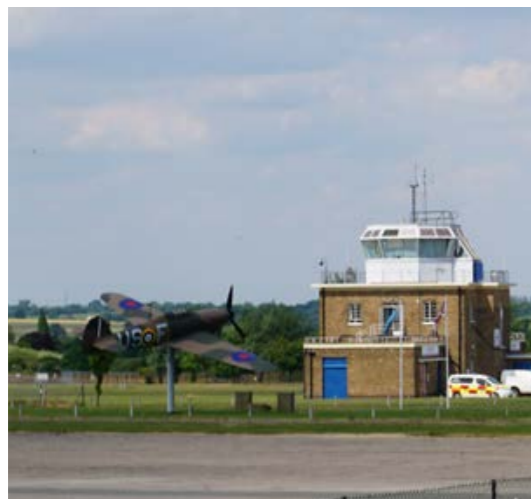
Access to primary school, Beamish Close



Existing public transport



Local centre, village shops



North Weald Airfield, listed control tower



Village hall



The High Road



St Andrews church



Kings Head pub

Figure 3.22 - North Weald Bassett village

3.5 Urban form of the village

Form of the village

The village is a lower density ribbon development (along the High Road) of mainly 20th century housing. Historically, the centre of the village was split from the local church, St Andrews, and a historic triangular form is completed with the listed Tyler's Farm (adjacent to the A414).

The triangular form relates to modern day nodes around the village, with the existing village centre shops, the church, cemetery and the shops, pub and employment land at Tyler's Green.

These nodes/destinations have developed over time, creating 5 principal nodes of activity in the village.

Development over time

Historic mapping illustrates that the village has developed incrementally over time, as illustrated in figure 3.23, but that the village has retained its strong linear form, with development along the High Road.

The largest period of growth between WWII and 1970, including commercial buildings associated with the airfield. The M11 motorway to the west was opened in 1980.

The A414 severs the northern part of the village, limiting walking routes. The SMF area fits like a jigsaw piece between these parts of the village, and therefore creates the opportunity to address these connections.

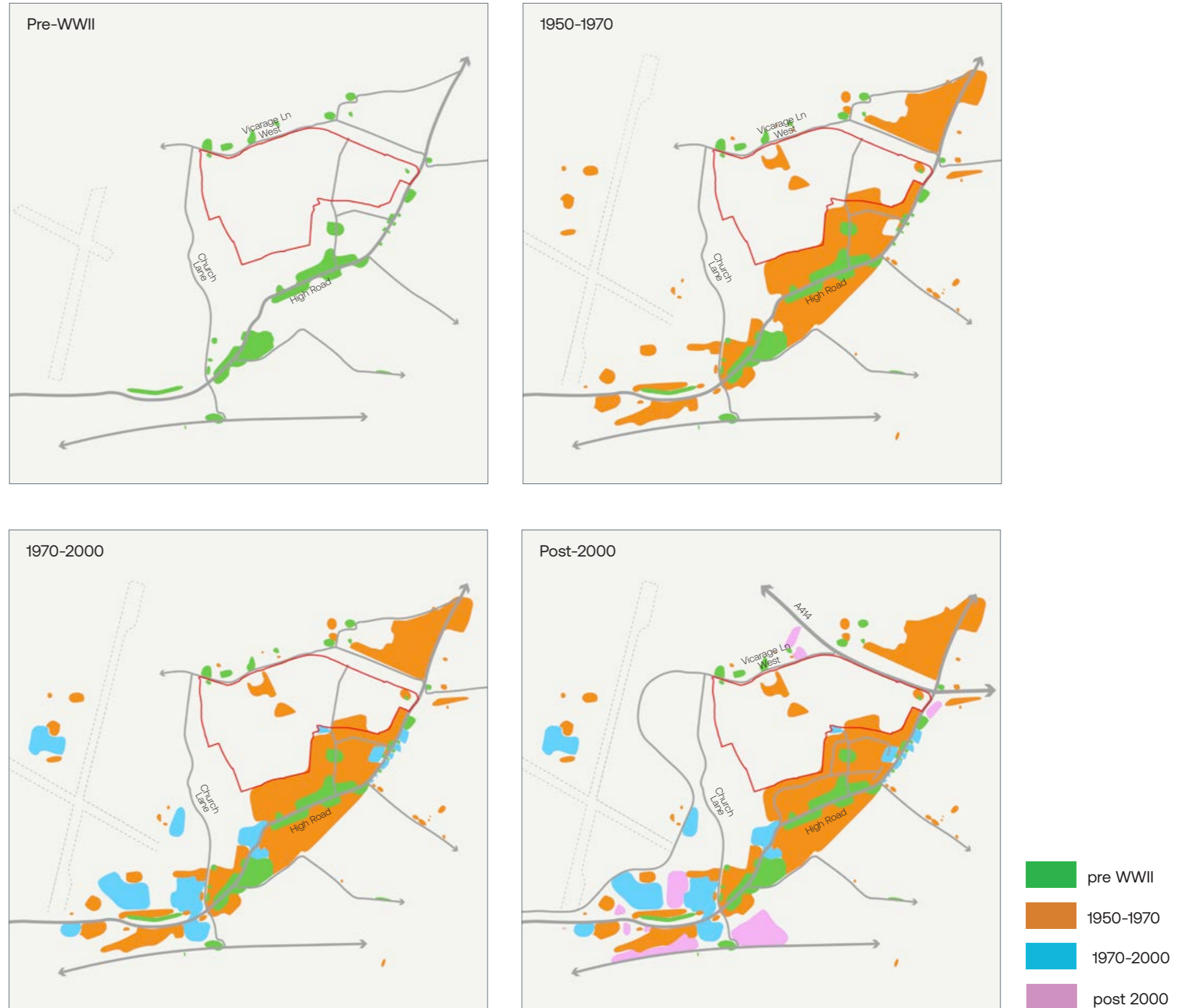


Figure 3.23 - North Weald Bassett development over time

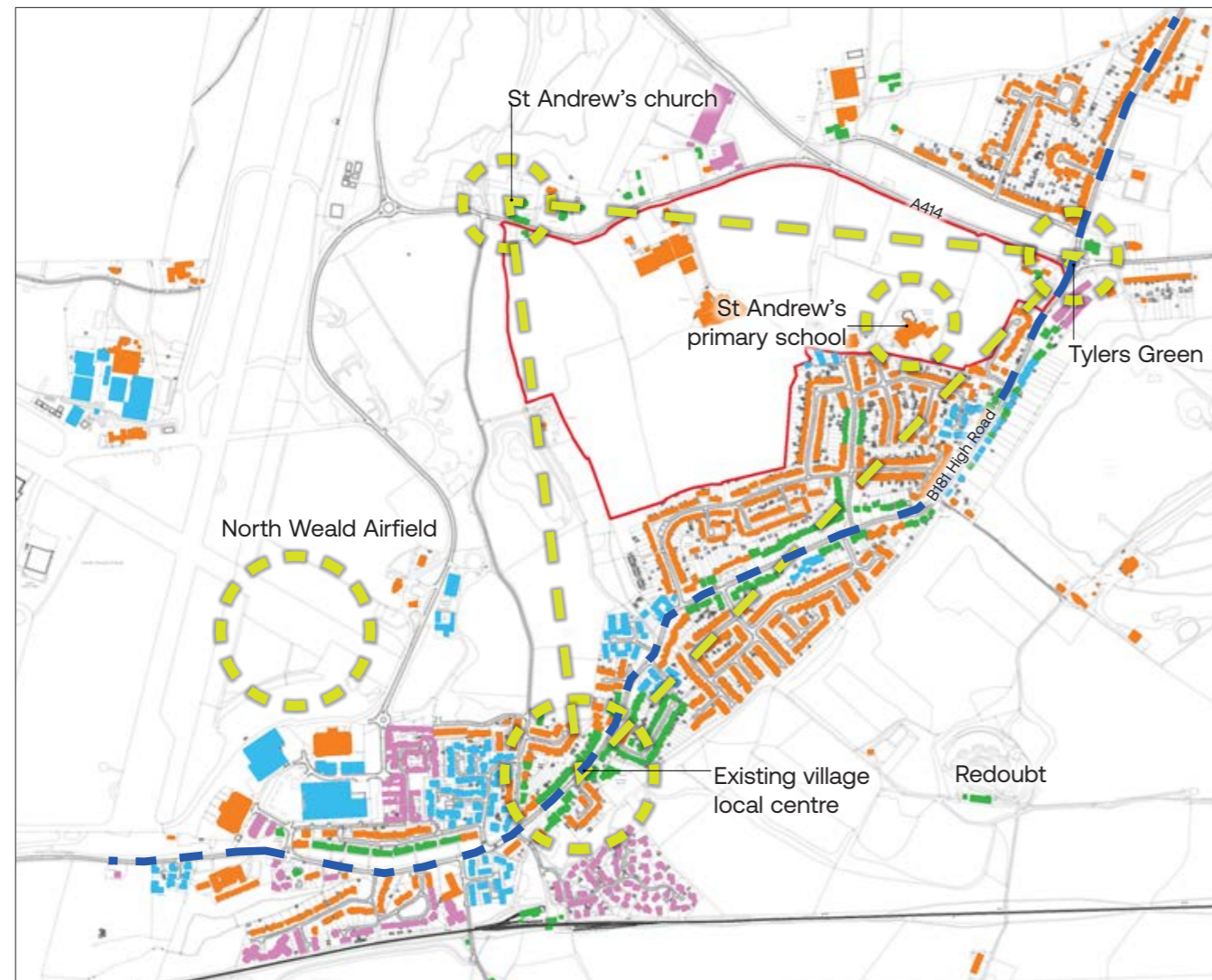


Figure 3.24 - North Weald Bassett development over time summary

Linear form

The general form of the village is linear, framed around the High Road, expanding over time to feature a mainly cul-de-sac arrangement of parcels of development.

In terms of permeability and legibility this places greater emphasis on the High Road and public rights of way to allow a choice of movement through the village. In general there is a north to south orientation of existing homes, with some exceptions due to the linear nature of the High Road. In general PRow run north to south through the village, with a lack of east-west connections, which the SMF should seek to address.

There are a limited number of visual markers and nodal points and/or marker or landmark buildings, which reduces the legibility of the area. The gently curving nature of the High Road does not feature many framed vistas, but visual markers in the village do include the village green (a small area of green space with the North Weald Bassett sign and flagpole), the shops and pubs. Away from the centre of the village, St Andrew's church is prominent in the landscape, particularly when approached from the public right of way.

With careful design and the inclusion of additional features and consideration of specific site assets, the gently meandering linear form of the village could offer a design cue for new development proposals and would integrate with the immediate urban form.

The High Road

The linear form of the High Road is emphasised by a generally consistent road and street width and form along its length, with a simple arrangement of carriageway and pavement. In general there is a lack of green spaces as part of the street, and a lack of planting and street trees (with the exception of private front gardens).

Allowing provision for street planting and the creation of green spaces in the SMF will assist the new neighbourhood with legibility and character. This is achievable with careful consideration to the building layout and highway design.

The gently curving building line along the length of the High Road provides a distinctive feature, with a range of set backs and boundary treatments. The primary street through the proposed new neighbourhood could reference this to some degree.

Communal green spaces

Along the length of the High Road are a variety of small areas of green space. These include a linear area south of York Road, which runs along the High Road and various small greens including the village green next to Wheelers Farm Gardens (which includes the North Weald Bassett sign and flagpole).

Weald Common is immediately south of the village, and is a large open expanse of green space including play and sports uses. However, there is a lack of a vibrant internal green space central to the village. The Memorial Playing Fields, adjacent to the site area, does provide a larger green space, is well located and is well-used by parents dropping off/picking up their children from St Andrew's primary school. It suffers from a lack of natural surveillance and from its enclosed nature.

This SMF document is clear in its ambition to enhance the Memorial Playing Fields as a Social Heart to the village, which through the SMF can become a focal point for the local community, and help integrate the new neighbourhood with the existing village. The co-location of sports, recreation, play, education and new community facilities would create a vibrant focal social centre for North Weald Bassett.

Likewise, the provision of a large new area of public open space on the western edge of the SMF area as part of a larger Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) can create a natural area of open space, located adjacent to the local nature reserve. The SMF should also seek to include smaller areas of greenspace throughout the new neighbourhood, with a variety of scale and uses for all users.

Vistas and wayfinding

Due to the linear form of the village there are few framed views and vistas. Where these do occur, it is in the form of scale or marker buildings, such as the 2 village pubs. St Andrew's Church does create a number of vistas through the site area, aiding legibility and wayfinding.

The setting up of vistas to key and marker buildings is a simple design cue that can be repeated as part of the design proposals for the new neighbourhood.

Glimpsed wider views

A key component of the character of North Weald Bassett is its connection with the surrounding countryside. In addition to the number of physical connections between the village and countryside, there are occasional glimpsed views through to the surrounding countryside (usually to the north), which offer temporary respite from modern life, and aid legibility.

The site area can also celebrate views through to the surrounding countryside, through careful consideration of building and street layouts.

Block form

Block form varies across North Weald Bassett. In broad terms, development post-1970 is characterised by cul-de-sac layouts, a less regular building line and a greater sense of enclosure due to street width. Before this period, development is characterised by linear form and use of deformed grid/perimeter blocks. Building line and regularity is stronger and sense of

enclosure is more open due to wider streets and distances between the fronts of homes.

Density levels

Density levels vary across the village but are generally between 25-30dph. More recent developments include Tempest Mead at 20dph, Lysander Court at 45dph and Blenheim Square at 55dph.

Building typologies

North Weald Bassett has a slightly greater proportion of semi-detached and terraced houses, with a smaller proportion of detached homes, apartments and maisonettes. Architecturally, there are a variety of styles across the village, but generally they are traditional in form.

Built form analysis

Figure 3.25 illustrates four areas within the village, across four timescales of development, identifying key characteristics.

It is clear that there are a mixture of urban forms across the village, tied together through the High Road.



Figure 3.25 - North Weald Bassett built form analysis

Post-WWII to circa 1970



Includes:
Higham View,
Emberson Way



- Medium density
- Vegetated front gardens and boundaries
- Buildings set back from pavement, regular building line



Character

- Deformed grid layout with perimeter blocks
- Occasional verges
- Very strong building line with regular spacing and location of buildings
- Sense of enclosure
- Limited number of street trees
- Limited parking on street

1970 to circa 2000



Includes:
Wellington Road,
Hampden Close,
edge of Blenheim
Square (post-2000)



- Medium to high density
- Cul-de-sac layout
- Some apartment blocks visible around edge of Blenheim Square (post-2000)



Character

- Limited pedestrian connections
- Broken building line
- Some strongly enclosed elements, with well enclosed courtyards and private drives
- Some street trees
- Some verges and left over informal green spaces
- Limited parking on street, vehicles parking over footway

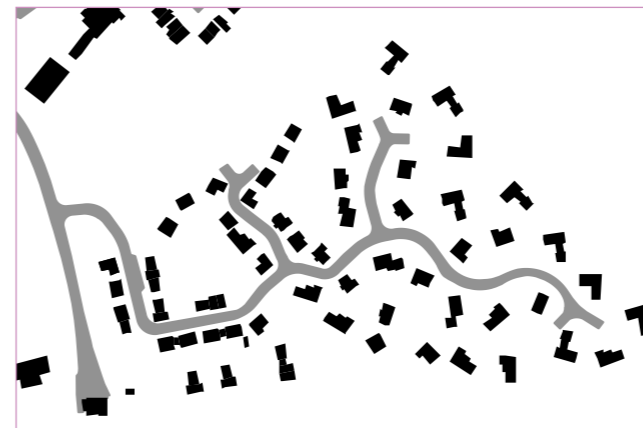
Post-2000



Includes:
Tempest Mead



- Medium to high density, smaller plot sizes
- Cul-de-sac layout
- Enclosure, narrow carriageway, green, small scale residential character



Character

- Traditional Essex form, conforms to guidelines set out in Essex Design Guide
- Buildings often rotated along street line to create facade vistas
- Very strong sense of enclosure due to narrow street form
- Landscape and well maintained private front gardens green the street
- Limited parking on street due to narrow street width

Urban form themes for SMF

The urban form of North Weald Bassett is conflicted - featuring a wealth of connections to the surrounding countryside (both physical and visual), but with an internal lack of focal greenspaces of a scale to serve the village. Likewise, other than the High Road and PRow, internal connections through the village are limited due to the number of cul-de-sacs.

The SMF should therefore aim to create much needed focal green spaces of scale, with a variety of facilities to encourage a variety of users throughout the day.

The SMF should feature a block form that is permeable, legible and encourages cycling and walking, and responds to passive environmental design considerations

The existing village is traditional in architectural form, therefore the SMF should seek to continue this precedent but with the opportunity to modernise where appropriate, for example using a traditional building silhouette with more contemporary openings. The new development should be sympathetic and complementary to the existing character of built form, whilst seeing to create a distinctive identity of its own and utilising innovative and high-quality design.

Taking the existing residential densities into account, a density level of between 30-50dph is broadly appropriate, with potential to slightly increase or decrease within the SMF in strategic locations.

A range of housing typologies and tenures should be used to ensure a mixed and balanced community. Housing should be designed to be adaptable, accessible and innovative in order to allow people to stay in their homes as lifestyles and needs change.

3.6 SMF area aerial tour

Introduction

The following pages feature the SMF area, highlighting features of the site, which allocation area they are located within, and what the key characteristics of each area are.



1. St Andrew's primary school

Allocation area:

N/A but within SMF area

Key characteristics:

- 2fe primary school
- Blackhorse Lane byway runs along southern edge, potential to improve pedestrian entrances/access to school
- Vehicular access via School Green Lane and Beamish Close, potential for new bus/coach drop off within the SMF along with new pedestrian/cycle accesses



Figure 3.26 - Site tour photographs (continues to page 34)

2. Memorial Playing Fields

Allocation area:

N/A but within SMF area

Key characteristics:

- Sports pitches, Queen's Hall community centre and play area
- Not well-overlooked, surrounded by thick vegetation, underutilised
- Potential to open up as part of a new social hub for the village



3. A414/Vicarage Lane West junction

Allocation area:

NWB.R3/edge of NWB.R1

Key characteristics:

- Only allows vehicular access for traffic travelling west on A414 onto Vicarage Lane West
- No vehicular access from Vicarage Lane West back onto A414 creating diversion
- Pedestrian crossing is difficult due to speed of traffic



4. North West field

Allocation area:

NWB.R3

Key characteristics:

- Views of St Andrew's Grade II* listed church and glimpsed views towards airfield
- PRow runs along eastern edge
- Existing property (Weald House) bounds northern edge, with Church Cottage opposite
- Potential for new vehicular access from Vicarage Lane West



5. Central northern area

Allocation area:

NWB.R4, NWB.5

Key characteristics:

- Chase Farm - mix of existing homes and employment areas including glasshouses, storage and garage buildings
- Existing vehicular access from Vicarage Lane West
- Gas main runs across NWB.R3 and between NWB.R4 and NWB.R5



6. Central fields

Allocation area:

NWB.R3

Key characteristics:

- More open in character, with wider views of the village, airfield and surrounding countryside
- Includes PRoWs and gas main
- Sensitive edges on Queens Road and Oak Piece, with the gardens of existing homes bounding the site
- Topography slopes to the west



7. North eastern fields

Allocation area:

NWB.R1, NWB.R2. Includes traveller site allocation within NWB.R1

Key characteristics:

- Dense vegetation on field boundaries creates more enclosed spaces
- Sensitive edge on Blackhorse Lane, where the site abuts to the east
- Limited views of listed Tylers Farmhouse outside of NWB.R2 area
- Northern edge runs along A414



3.7 Site edges

The SMF area features a range of site edge interfaces, which include boundaries with existing residential homes, highways (A414 to the north of NWB.R1, NWB.R2 and NWB.R3), transitions to more open countryside and natural areas (such as the local nature reserve to the west).

Residential edges

In terms of the residential edges, the largest of these are the southern and eastern edges of the NWB.R3 allocation area (Queens Road and Oak Piece), the eastern edge of the NWB.R1 allocation area (Blackhorse Lane), and the eastern, western and southern edges of Carlton House (edging NWB.R3, NWB.R4 and NWB.R5).

The SMF should not result in a loss of privacy or light for existing residents. In some cases existing residents have informal access into the SMF area, which will also need to be considered.

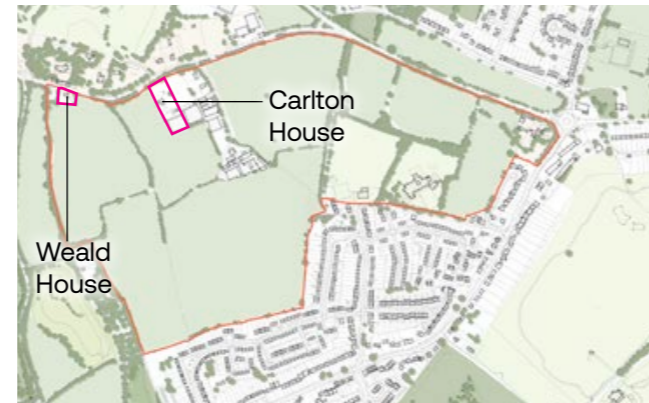
Where a PRoW runs near these boundary edges the PRoW should be considered and incorporated into the SMF proposals, ensuring natural surveillance over them.

The Design Guidelines for North Weald Bassett document includes a section on a potential green buffer between existing homes and new development adjacent to Queens Road and Oak Piece. It includes recommendations for the buffer to accommodate recreational facilities, cycle and pedestrian paths, and that the edge of new development should overlook this space to provide an active frontage and natural surveillance.

Potential future development areas

Although both Weald House and Carlton House are within the SMF area, they are not within the 5 development sites R1-R5. However, development areas do border Weald House and Carlton House. The SMF identifies the edges with these existing houses as sensitive, and as such the SMF suggests an appropriate treatment on the edges of these houses.

At some point in the future these plots may be put forward as development areas in their own right. Both plots are self contained, with their own existing vehicular access from Vicarage Lane West.



Weald House and Carlton House location

Existing residents on Queens Road and Oak Piece edges

The southern and eastern edges of the NWB.R3 site feature existing homes that back onto the site edge (along Queens Road and Oak Piece).

Therefore these edges need to be treated sensitively to provide a successful border. The southern and eastern edge also feature a PRoW running along the boundary edge, and factoring that element into the arrangement is critical, so as to provide a safe and well-used route with natural surveillance.

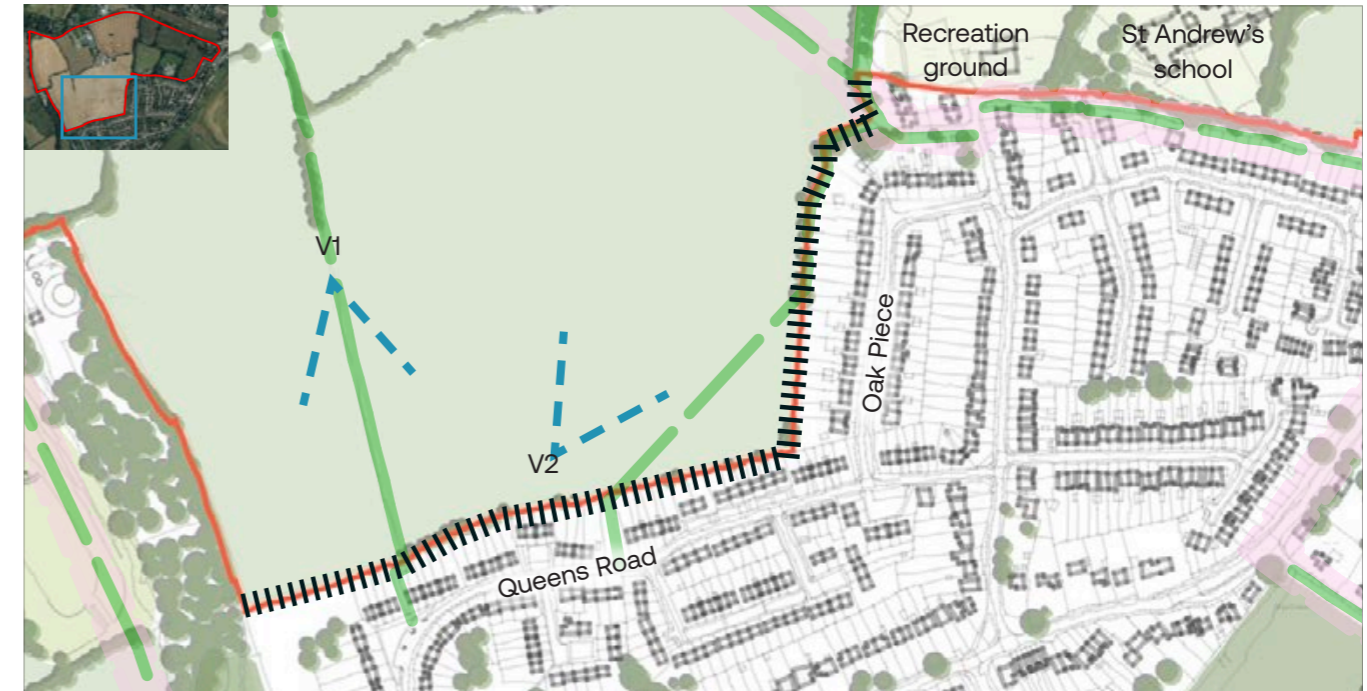


Figure 3.27 - Site interface with Queens Road and Oak Piece



Existing residents on Queens Road (view 1, left) and Oak Piece (view 2, right) 'backing onto' SMF

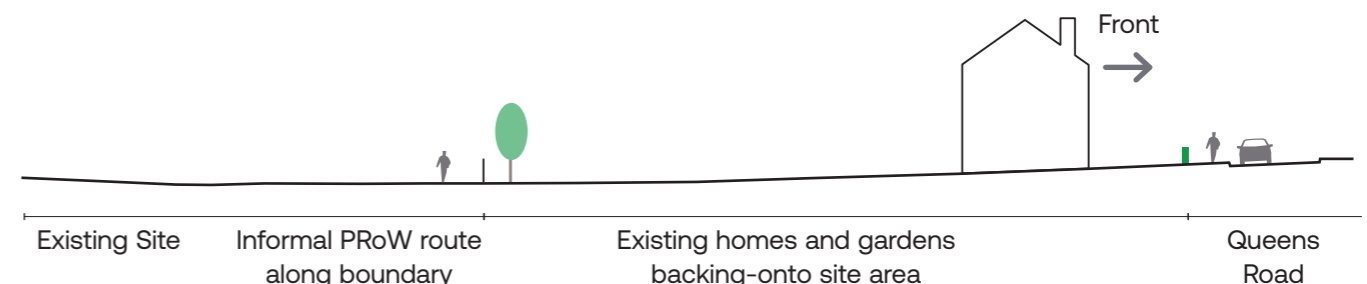


Figure 3.28 - Section across boundary edge with Queens Road

Existing residents on Blackhorse Lane edge

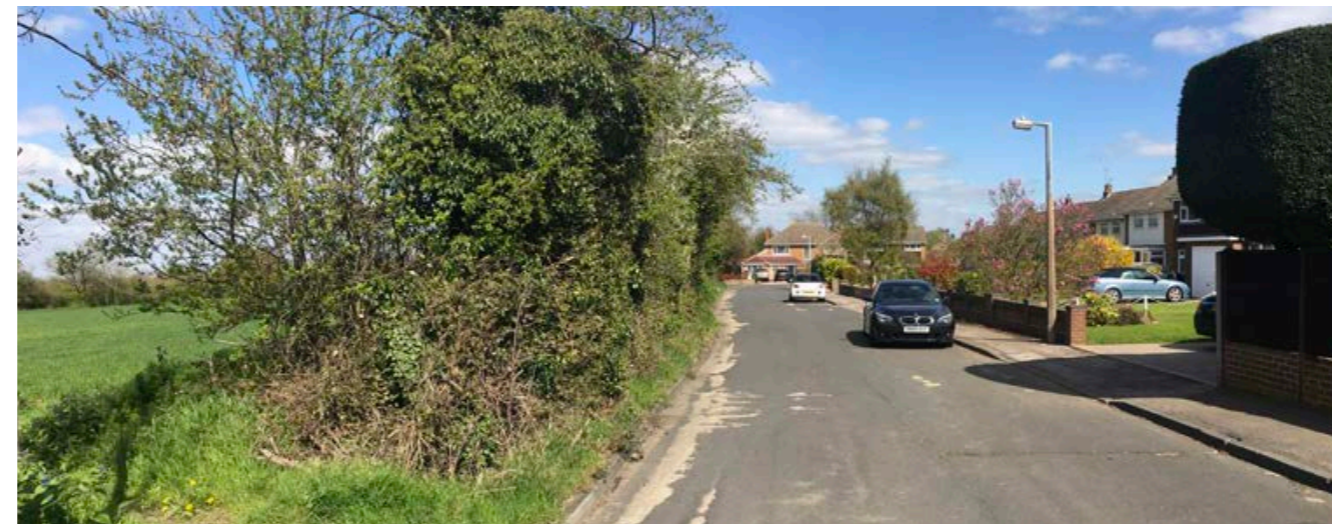
To the east of the NWB.R1 site edge, existing homes front onto Blackhorse Lane.

Along this boundary there is a hedgerow/ tree belt that provides some privacy which should be retained.

This edge also needs to be treated sensitively to provide a successful border. A PRoW runs north/south diagonally through the NWB.R1 site (although the local residents follow the boundary edge instead) and factoring that element into the arrangement is critical, so as to provide a safe and well-used route with natural surveillance.



Figure 3.29 - Site interface with Blackhorse Lane



Residents on Blackhorse Lane fronting onto masterplan area (view 3)



Figure 3.30 - Section across boundary edge with Blackhorse Lane

Vicarage Lane West edge

Located in the north west corner of the NWB.R3 development site, this edge features Weald House within the SMF area, with St Andrew's church and its associated buildings to the north of Vicarage Lane West. Weald House (within the SMF area) is enclosed by planting/hedgerows.

Vicarage Lane West is more rural in character. This edge needs to respect this character and the setting of the church. This could be achieved through the creation of a green gateway buffer, that could be part of a green gateway into the north western part of the SMF area (see page 44 for section).



Figure 3.31 - Site interface with Vicarage Lane West



Looking east along Vicarage Lane West, with church and associated buildings on the left (view 4)

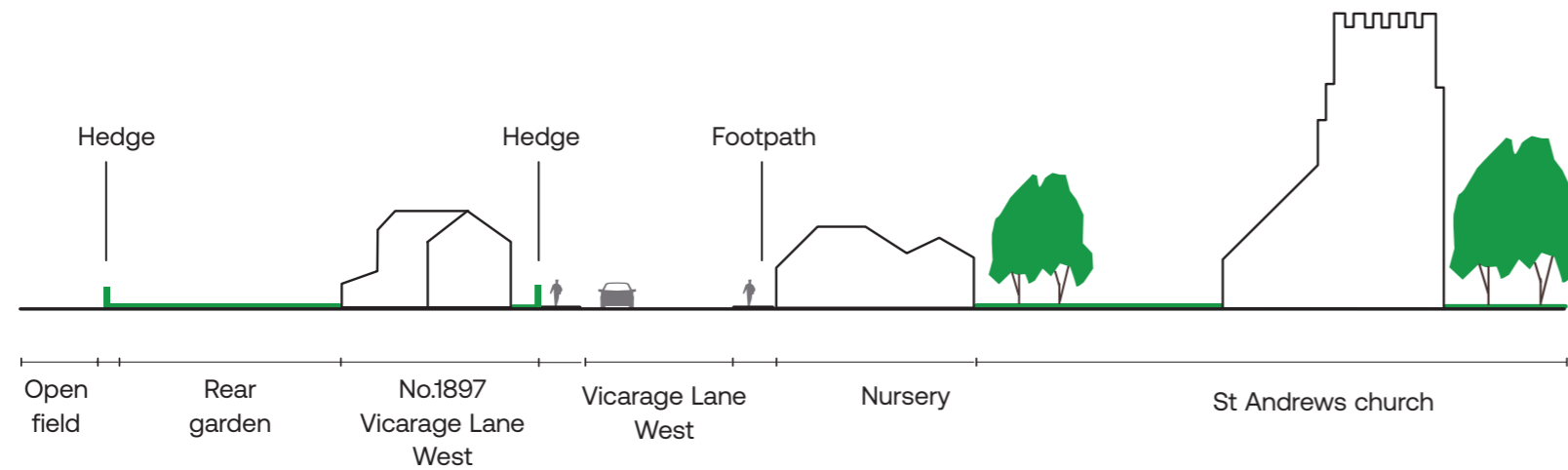


Figure 3.32 - Section across boundary edge with Vicarage Lane West

A414 edge

This edge is located to the north of the NWB.R1 and R2 development site. The A414 is a 60mph road which bisects the village, limiting pedestrian movement across the village. There are no pedestrian footways on either side of the A414.

There are 3 existing pedestrian crossing points, a zebra crossing at Tylers Green, and two informal PRow crossings, which are difficult to use due to the speed of traffic and visibility. Of the two PRow, the western

access links into a wider connection of routes to the surrounding countryside.

The A414 limits pedestrian movement, therefore this edge should improve pedestrian crossing, as well as respond to the speed of the A414, with potential to lower the highway speed from 60mph.

Reduction in vehicular speed will also help reduce noise from the road, which may require mitigation on the northern edge of NWB.R1.



Figure 3.33 - Site interface with A414

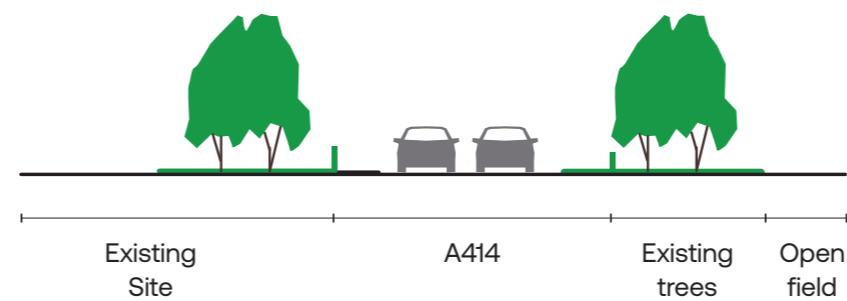


Figure 3.34 - Section across boundary edge with A414



Looking east along A414 from junction with Vicarage Lane West (view 5)

Site edges themes for SMF

Edge treatments should not result in loss of privacy/light for existing residents

Active frontages should be incorporated into the proposed treatments, to maximise activity and natural surveillance

The integration of new homes with the village is covered in the Design Guidelines for North Weald Bassett document: a green buffer with pedestrian and cycle paths is preferred, along with new homes overlooking this buffer to provide natural surveillance

The A414 is currently difficult to cross in places, therefore the SMF should seek to improve pedestrian crossing points

3.8 Site constraints summary

A number of technical studies have been undertaken to inform the preparation of this SMF. These include the following:

- Topographical surveys
- Arboricultural surveys
- Gas main survey
- Odour assessment
- Flood risk assessments
- Built heritage assessments
- Geophysics surveys and archaeological investigations
- Ecological surveys
- Noise surveys
- Traffic surveys and highway modelling
- Landscape connectivity study.

Using these technical studies, a constraints plan has been evolved as the first detailed stage in developing the SMF, as seen in figure 3.35 on p46. The principal constraints to be taken into account are:

1. The intermediate pressure gas main and associated easement
2. The Environment Agency Flood Zone associated with the Main River adjacent site NWB.R3
3. Odour concentrations associated with North Weald Bassett WWTW
4. Overhead electricity power lines
5. Attractive mature trees and hedgerows
6. Public Rights of Way and Byway
7. The setting of heritage assets.

Site constraints themes for SMF

Whilst many of the above features could be seen as constraints, they also provide opportunities to create attractive green spaces, opportunities for connectivity and the enhancement of the quality of development within the SMF area.

In particular, the existing landscape structure affords the opportunity to help frame the proposal, and to help inform character. The gas main and easement creates the opportunity for creative solutions for its use as an area of open space.



Mature trees and hedgerows



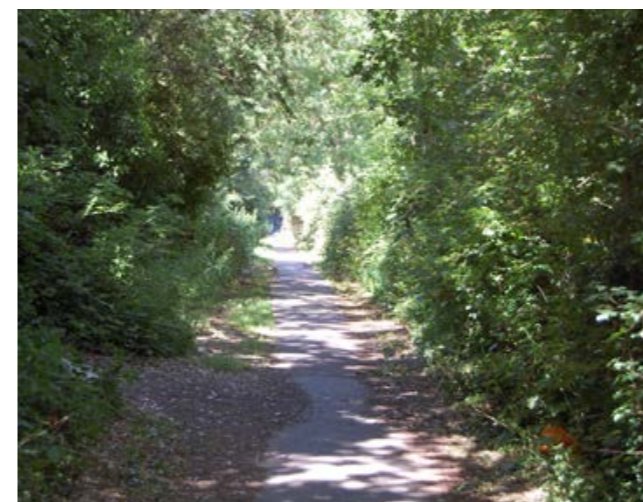
WWTW (odour zone)



Listed buildings (Tylers Farmhouse)






















Gas main



Public Rights of Way



Overhead power lines

-  Masterplan area
-  Gas pipe easement - 3m*
-  Gas pipe easement - 7.5m*
* Gas main surveyed by Lightsource surveys. 3m zone prohibits excavations/buildings etc. 7.5m zone also has restrictions - refer to detailed information
-  Indicative gas main beyond site
-  1m contours (Lidar data)
-  Overhead power lines
-  BT above ground
-  Main rivers/water course and 10m buffer
-  TPO and veteran trees
-  Hedges (retain and protect)
-  Listed building
-  Public Right of Way 2.5m buffer
-  Public Right of Way
-  Rights access points
-  Odour pollution (Odournet 3*)
*Odournet are UKAS and MCERTS accredited air quality consultants. Odournet 3 is an area surveyed unlikely to constitute significant pollution.
-  Sensitive edge with existing residents
-  EA flood zone 3
-  EA flood zone 2
© Environment Agency copyright and/or database right 2023. All rights reserved. Some features of this map are based on digital spatial data from the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, © NERC (CEH), © Crown copyright and database rights Ordnance Survey 100024198
-  *¹ Sources of potential noise disturbance:
1. Airfield
2. A414
3. WWTW
4. Employment uses

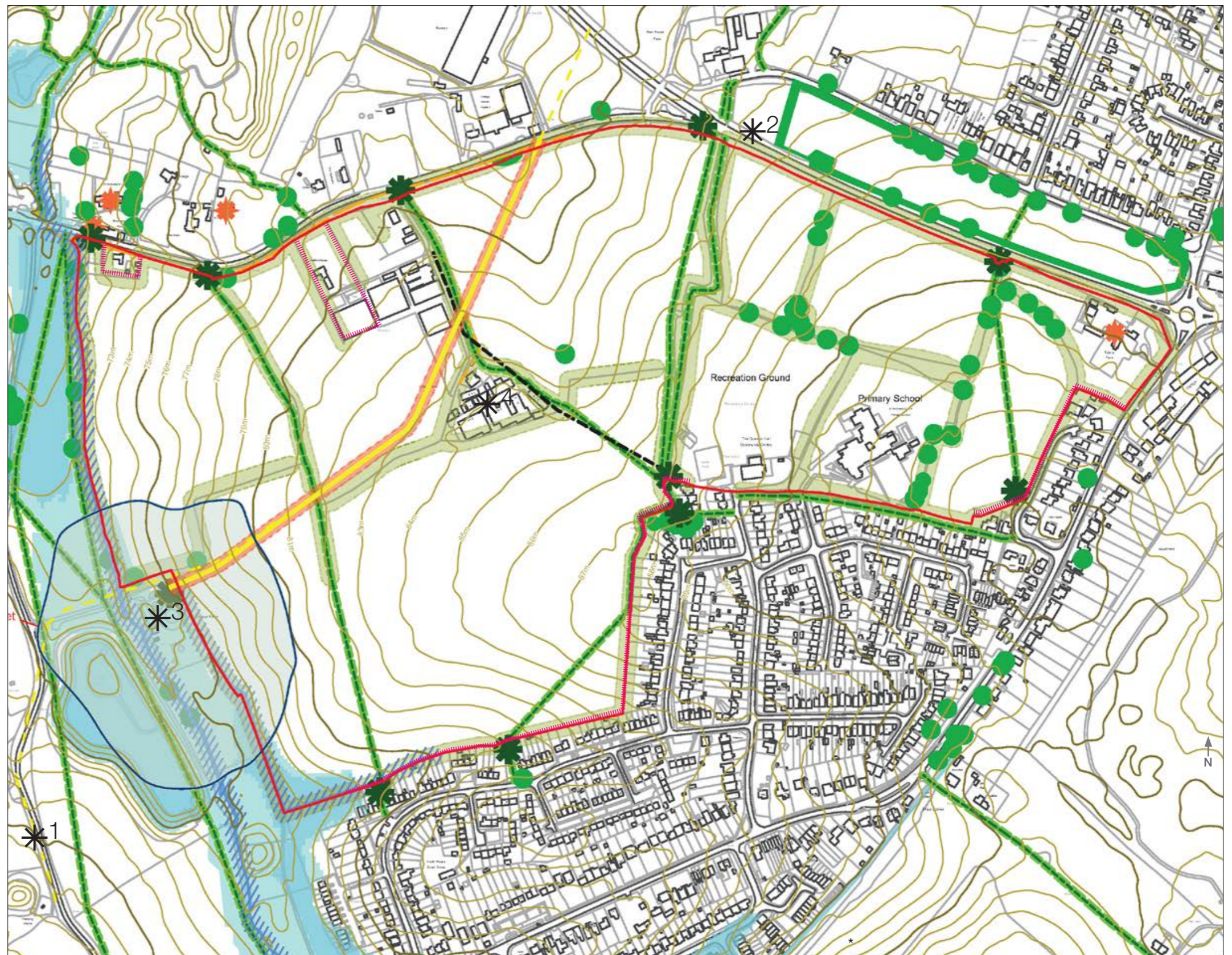


Figure 3.35 - Site constraints

NB: Additional surveys to be completed. Final detail to be resolved through determination of planning application.
All individual land owners/developers are responsible for their own survey data

3.9 Site opportunities

Identity and character

The National Design Guide states that:

“Well-designed places, buildings and spaces:

- *have a positive and coherent identity that everyone can identify with, including residents and local communities, so contributing towards health and well-being, inclusion and cohesion;*
- *have a character that suits the context, its history, how we live today and how we are likely to live in the future; and*
- *are visually attractive, to delight their occupants and other users”*

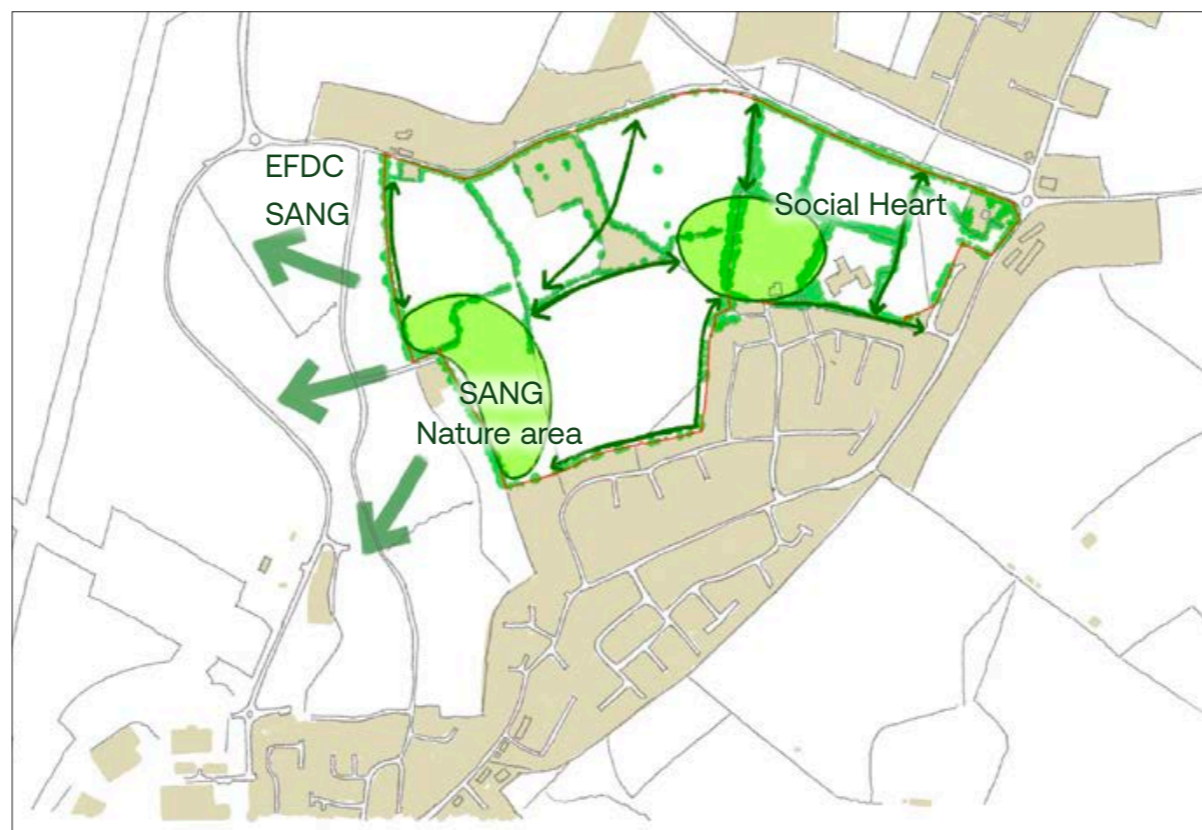
The baseline analysis, suggests that there is no single overriding character in North Weald Bassett, but that instead there are 4 embedded characteristics that the SMF must respond to, from which opportunities arise:

1. A discrete, village-like feel
2. North Weald Airfield
3. Pedestrian connections to the countryside
4. A rich local history

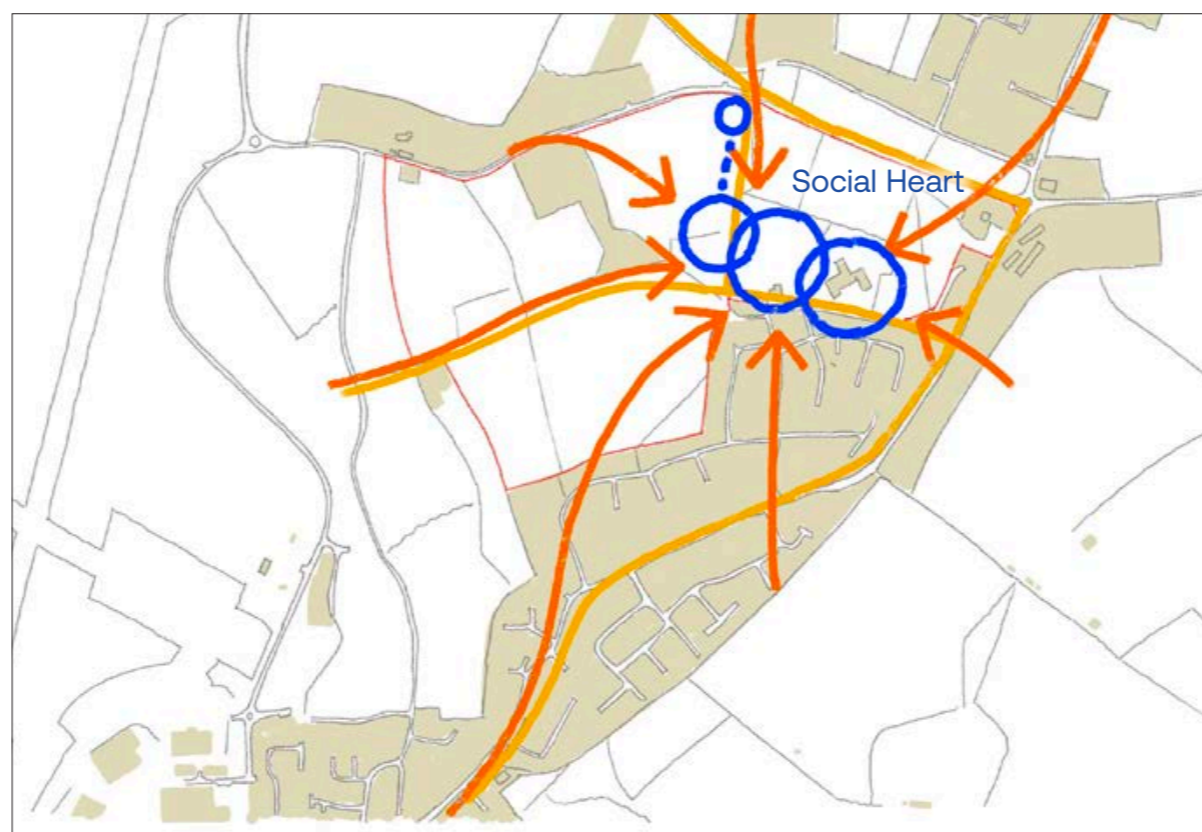
In addition, the SMF should positively respond to the identified constraints, including sensitive edges, utilities, access, contextual architectural influences, and the requirements of the Local Plan, including the allocated development sites and strategic infrastructure.

Bringing it together

A series of 6 opportunity diagrams (figure 3.36) layer together to form the combined opportunities plan (figure 3.37, p50).

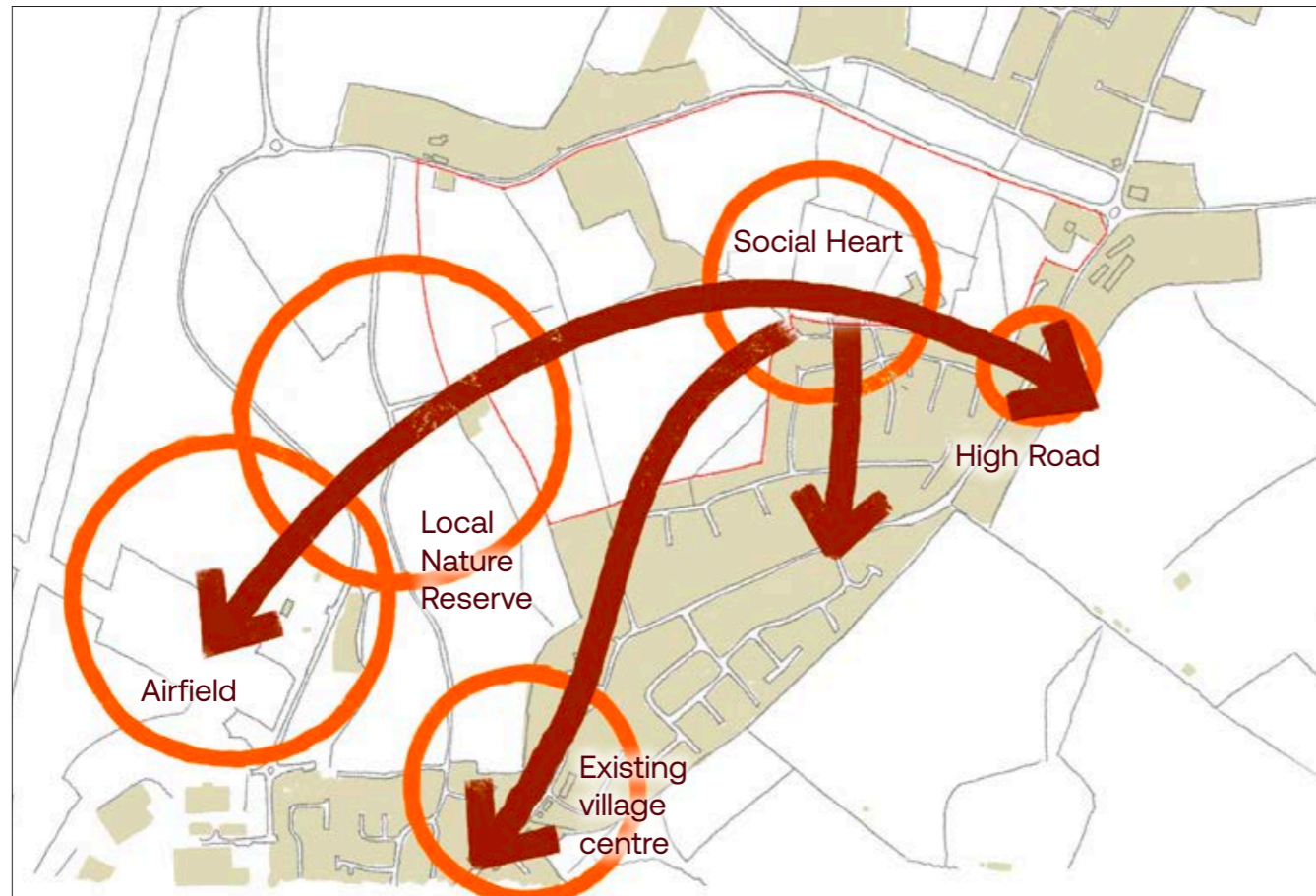


1. Landscape-led development which incorporates existing landscape features and bolsters these with ‘bookended’ large areas of open space (including new sports facilities within the Social Heart, and a nature area to link to local nature reserve) and pedestrian focussed greenways to connect them

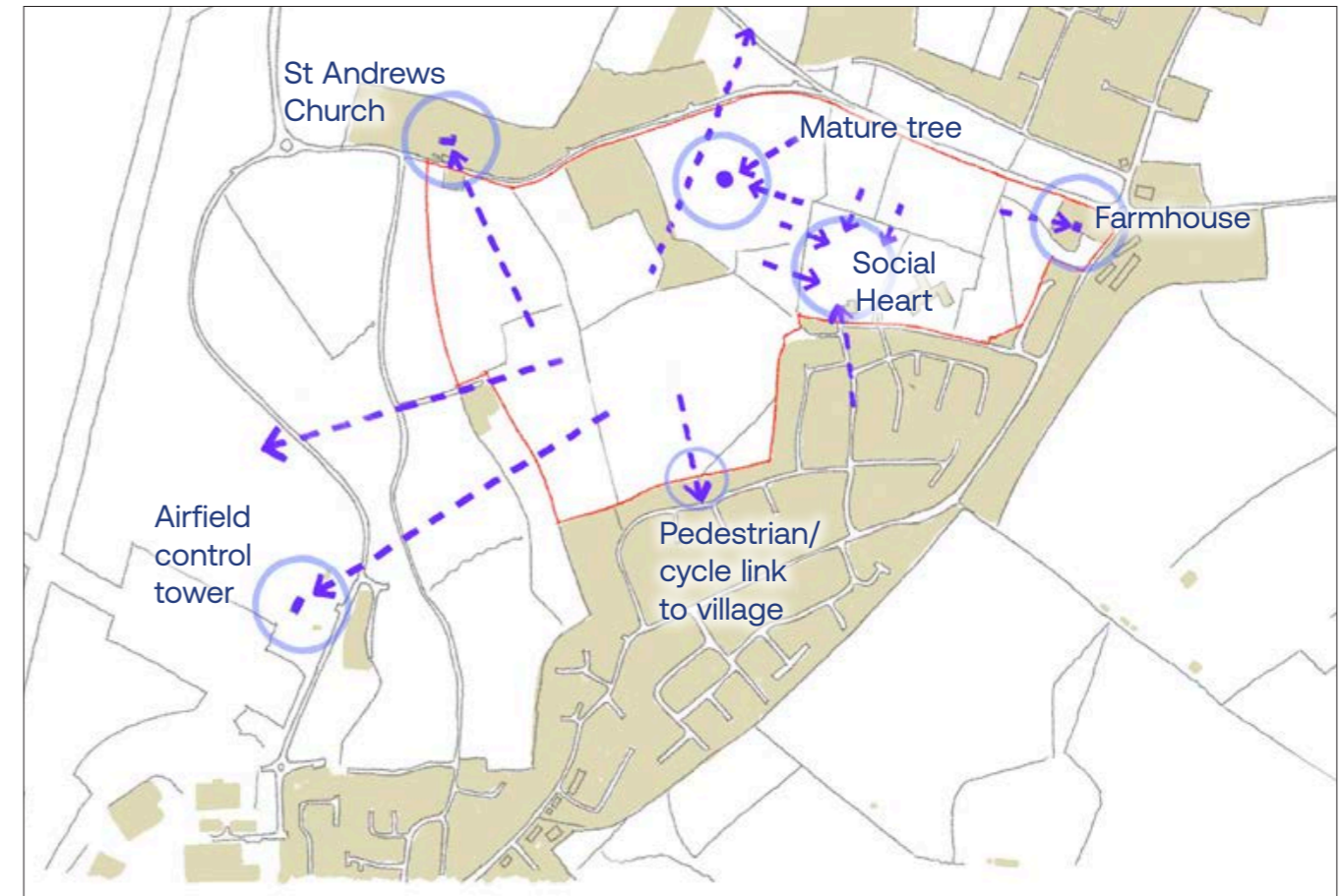


2. A complementary new social, mobility, sports and education focus for the village creating a Social Heart to the village, centrally located within North Weald Bassett and at the intersection of key movement corridors.

Figure 3.36 - Site opportunities

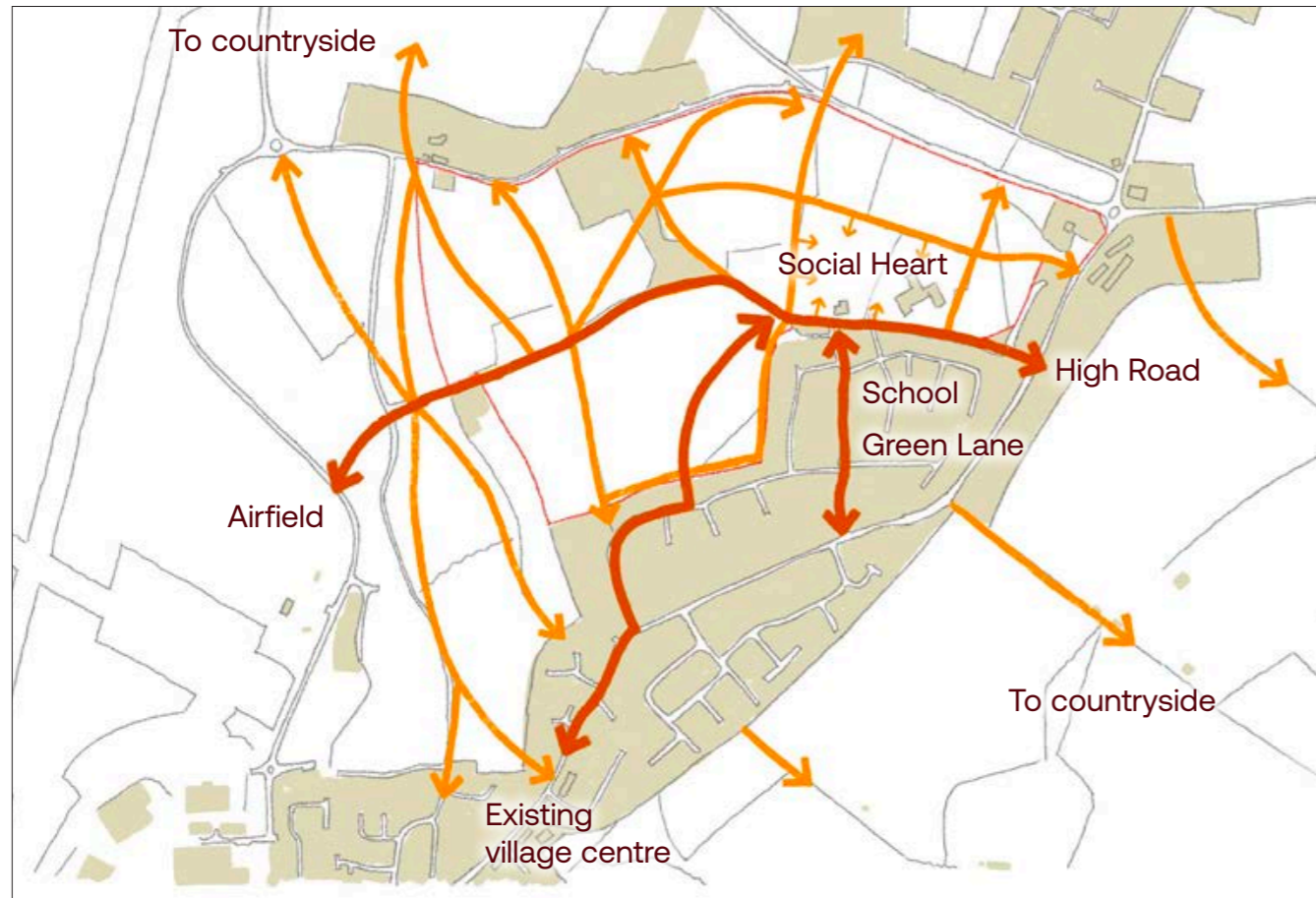


3. Enhancing east-west pedestrian and cycle connections across the village, connecting the airfield and its future uses and the local nature reserve to the SMF and ensuring integrated pedestrian links to the existing village centre via Queens Road and The High Road via School Green Lane

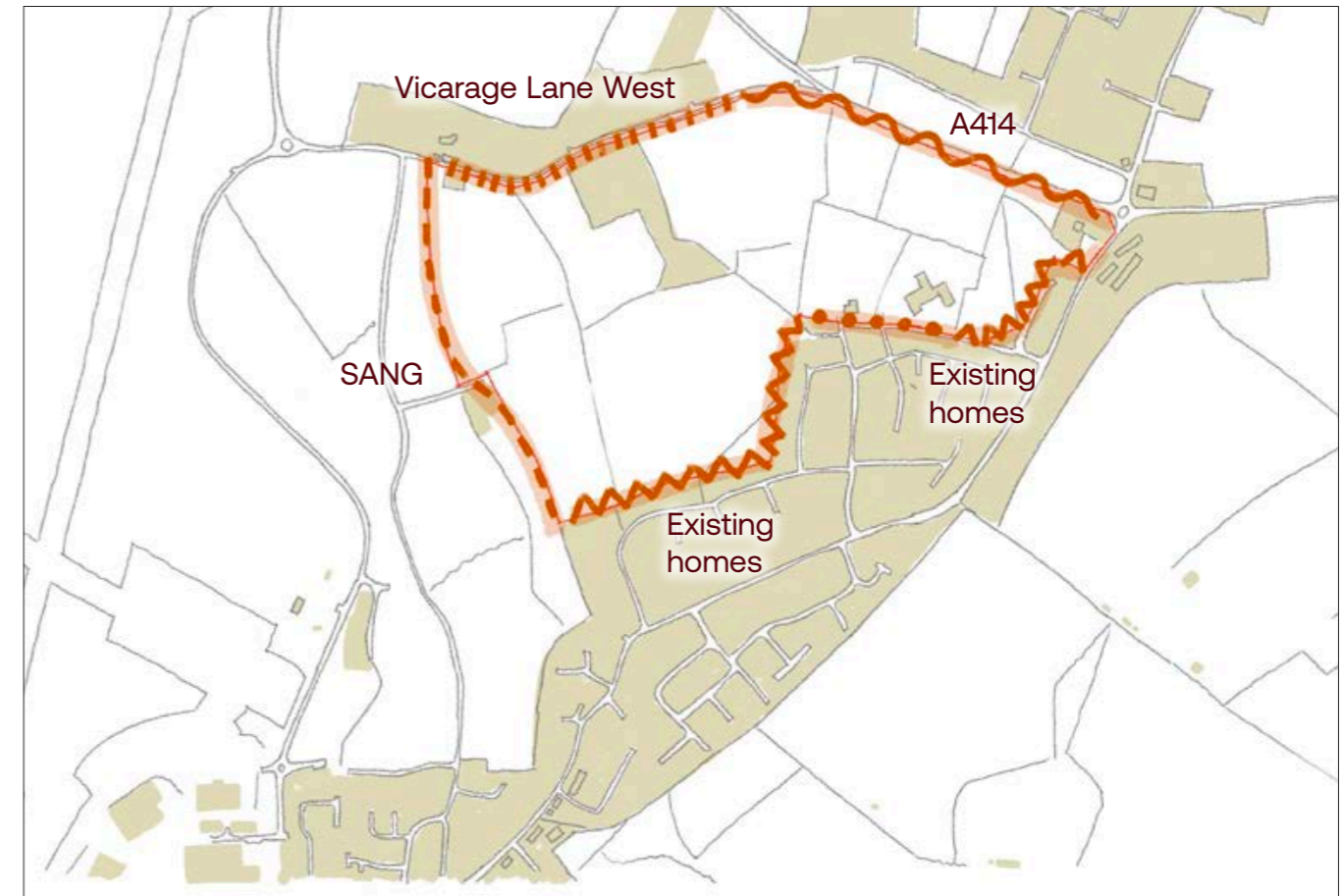


4. Aligning vistas internally and externally, including views of village destinations, heritage assets, mature trees and opening up the Memorial Playing Fields. A visual link to the surrounding countryside is as important as retaining a physical link

Figure 3.36 - Site opportunities (cont.)



5. Utilising the SMF to provide new and enhance existing pedestrian and cycle connections through the village to the wider countryside, based on a hierarchy of safe, overlooked routes led by the east-west link and route to the existing village centre



6. Responsive edge treatments, including sensitive edges which border existing homes, heritage assets and the transition from the village to countryside. Equally applies to building scale and density in response to their setting

Figure 3.36 - Site opportunities (cont.)

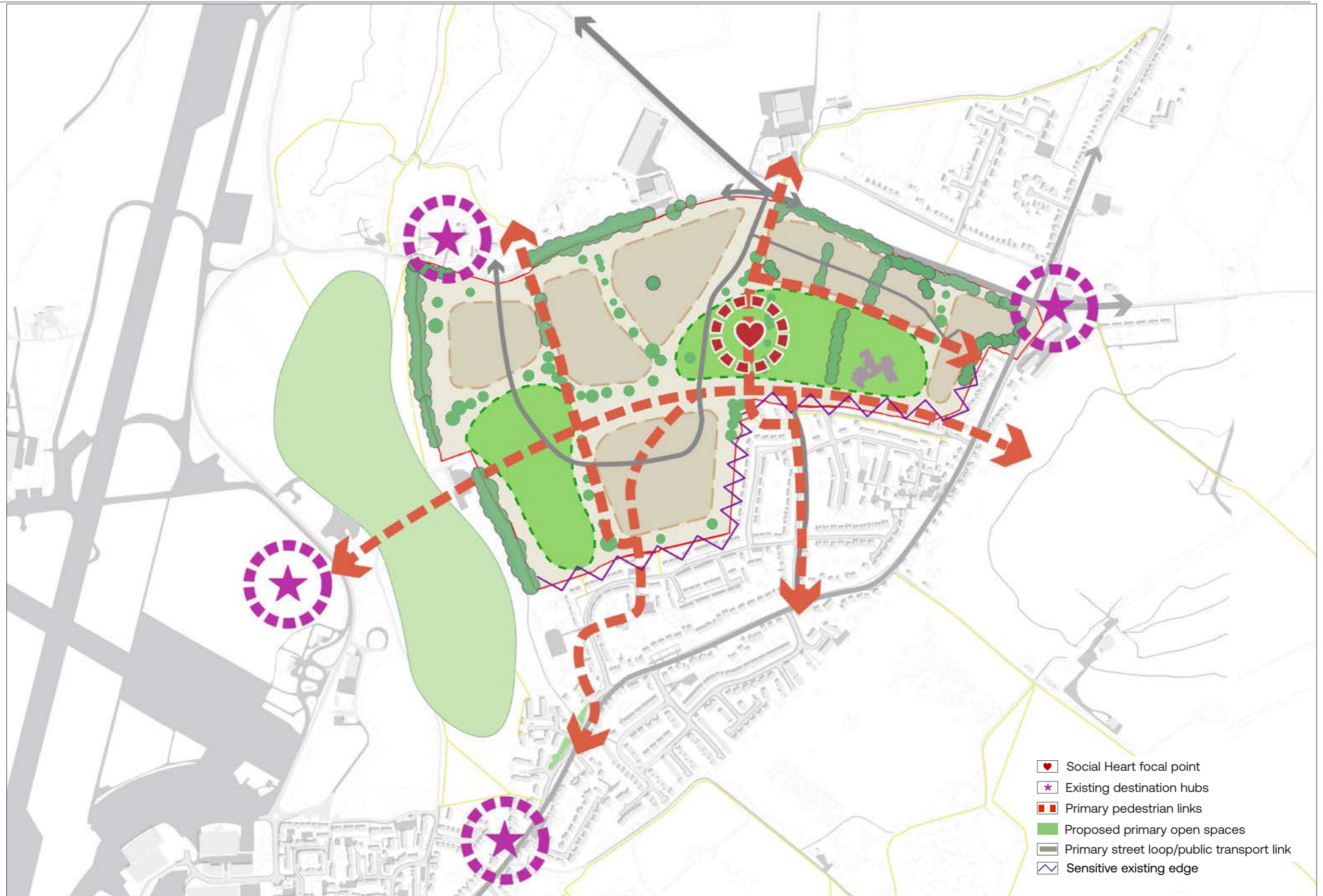


Figure 3.37 - Combined opportunities



Figure 3.38 - The opportunity for North Weald Bassett village

B Framework





4. The vision

4.1 Vision statement

The vision for the North Weald Bassett SMF is based upon the foundations of the EFDC vision for the site and a thorough analysis of the site and its context, as illustrated in Part A of this SMF. The proposed vision is:

“A landscape-led masterplan, which respects the discrete character of the village; utilises existing landscape features; places an emphasis on social focal points, connectivity and integration with the fabric of the village; fosters a sense of community; and acknowledges the history of North Weald Bassett”





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Figure 4.1 - Illustrative concept sketch

4.2 Epping Forest District Council Vision

The Local Plan sets the following vision for how North Weald Bassett will evolve up to 2033 and beyond:

“North Weald Bassett will become more self-sufficient, enabling the settlement to realise a long-term future as a larger provider of employment, housing and services within Epping Forest District. The distinct local character of the settlement, surrounded by greatly valued green open space, will be retained by maintaining key landscape areas to the south and promoting its rich military heritage.

“Future development will be located to the northern side of the village, in line with the vision set out in the 2014 masterplan.

“Aviation related uses, complemented by a mix of employment and leisure uses will be sought to boost the commercial offer and sustainability of the Airfield. The needs of North Weald Bassett residents will be met through improved health, education, leisure and community facilities, alongside a strengthened range of shops and services that are complemented by enhanced sustainable and public transport provision.”

4.3 Vision themes and masterplan drivers

The proposed vision is structured by six visioning themes. For each theme, three masterplan drivers inform the SMF, which are illustrated in figure 4.3 on pages 57-59:

Landscape & Topography

1. Utilise and enhance the existing landscape structure
2. Capitalise on the site’s topography to employ SuDS and open spaces
3. Incorporate a natural green space in the south west corner of the site

Open Spaces & Focal Point

4. Create a focal hub for the village at the Memorial Playing Fields
5. Ensure each new home is within 150m of a greenway or area of open space
6. Avoid overlooking and retain privacy of existing neighbours

Creating a Highly Sustainable Place

7. Create a 15 minute social neighbourhood with excellent walking and cycling links
8. Prioritise health and well-being through access to natural and built environment
9. Improve the flood and climate resilience, thermal and water efficiency

Integration & Legible Urban Form

10. Integrate the proposal within the wider village by filling gaps in the social infrastructure
11. Create attractive and well designed new homes in a clear and legible urban form
12. Incorporate wayfinding and marker buildings/spaces to aid legibility

Public Transport & Vehicular Access

13. Encourage sustainable travel by bringing public transport into the site
14. Reduce vehicle speeds on highway network, prioritise people over cars
15. Avoid creation of rat runs through the SMF

Enhancing Public Rights of Way

16. Utilise and enhance the existing PRow structure
17. Improve east-west links across the site to unlock key destinations
18. Encourage walking and cycling with new destination and recreation links with overlooking, compact walkable blocks.



Figure 4.2 - Visioning themes and masterplan drivers colour wheel



Landscape & Topography

Retaining the existing landscape frame to inform character; a large natural area of open space bordered by Local Nature Reserve, and existing PRow; using site topography for series of linked attenuation basins and swales, as part of SuDS strategy



Open Spaces & Focal Point

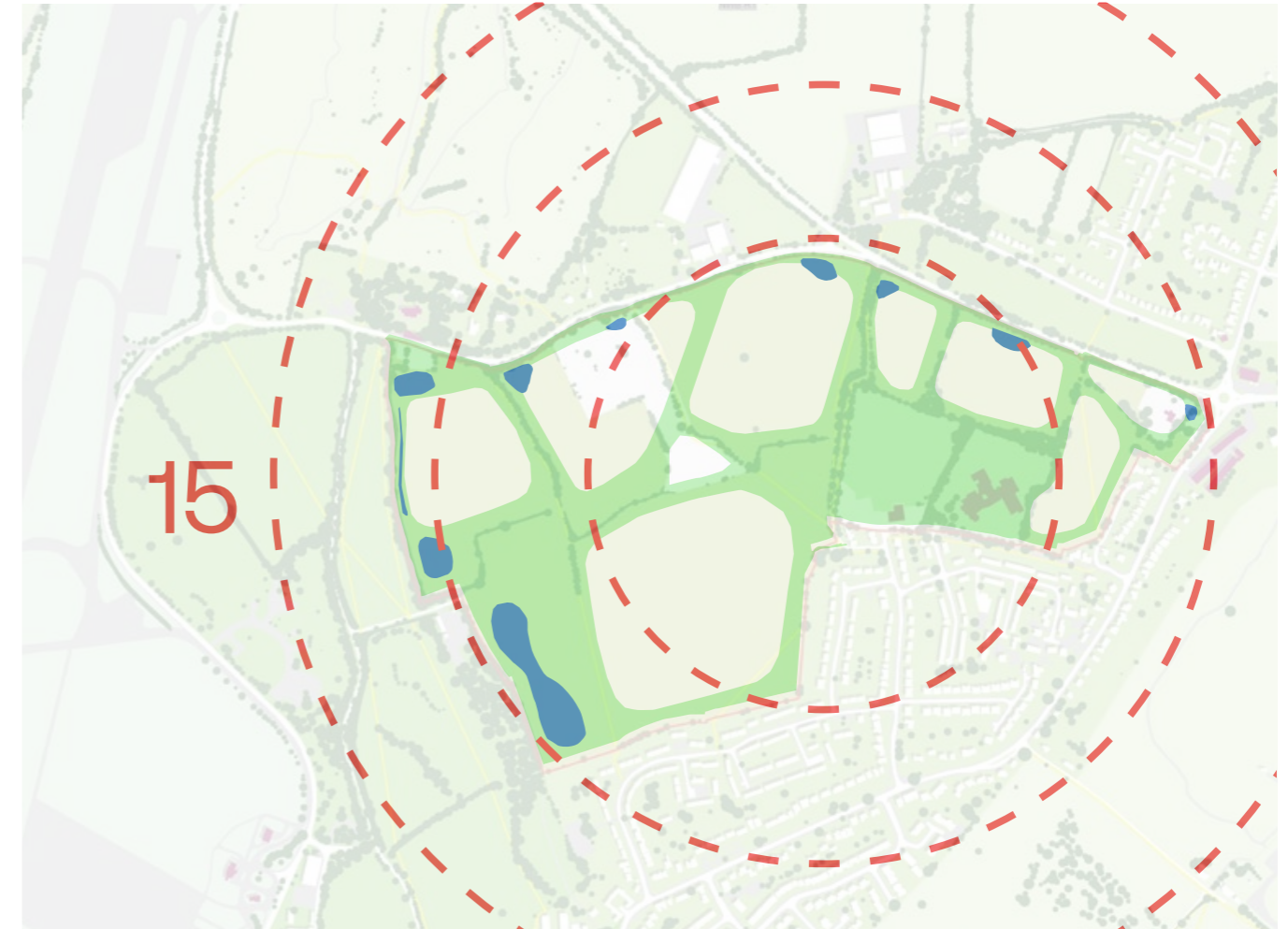
A new focal point within the village - a Social Heart incorporating the Memorial Playing Fields, local centre and school; creating a network of open spaces and greenways within 150m of each home; respecting neighbours with appropriate edge treatments

Figure 4.3 - Visioning principles and masterplan drivers



Integration & Legible Urban Form

Integrate by meeting the needs of the village (as set out in the NPSG questionnaire feedback), not competing with existing facilities; creating a well-designed place that incorporates marker and existing heritage buildings in a high quality, legible urban form



Creating Sustainable Placemaking

Creating a 15 minute walking neighbourhood with a mixture of uses to meet day-to-day needs within easy reach of the village, and access to nature nearby and further away. Responding to climate change and maximising energy and water efficiency

Figure 4.3 - Visioning principles and masterplan drivers (cont.)



Public Transport & Vehicular Access

Encourage sustainable travel and wider links by bringing public transport into the SMF area, avoiding large diversions and the creation of rat runs through the SMF, placing the majority of traffic on the strategic network, reducing vehicle speed and improving A414 pedestrian crossings



Enhanced Public Rights of Way and Active Travel Corridors

Encourage walking and cycling between overlooking, compact blocks, with new and enhanced PRow links between existing and proposed village hubs and recreational routes, including a new east to west link from the airfield to the High Road; and surrounding PRow crossings

Figure 4.3 - Visioning principles and masterplan drivers (cont.)

4.4 Future trends

There are a number of potential future trends that could impact the vision and masterplan for the site. In particular, the way we move about, with a greater emphasis on sustainable travel, highlighting the need for good public transport, cycle and walking connections.

If the way we own, hire or rent personal vehicles changes, this too could have an impact on parking requirements and street design.

Climate change will require an even greater emphasis on sustainability, water management, clean energy, and the need for shade.

The 2020 pandemic has fundamentally changed the way many people work, with more choice to work either from home, an office, or a third place, often cafés or flexible working hubs. The pandemic also showed that having a good range of local services for day-to-day needs is essential, which is described in more detail on page 52.

Wider employment trends will link well with the proposed employment land at the airfield, offering a range of employment spaces well linked to the SMF.

4.5 Engagement and how consultation has influenced the SMF

Wide ranging and in depth local engagement has been undertaken since 2018 to inform and shape the SMF to reflect local priorities. In addition to engagement with EFDC officers and the Quality Review Panel (QRP) process, local engagement has included the Parish Council, local EFDC councillors, North

Weald Bassett Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG), St Andrew's Primary School, Queen's Hall Charity, site neighbours and the wider community across the Parish.

1. NPSG 2018

An introductory meeting was held with EFDC officers and the NPSG in September 2018. A further meeting which included a site walk and workshop which culminating in post-it note annotated plans to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the village. Strengths identified included the existing walking routes to countryside to the north through the site, the strong village feel and sense of community. Weaknesses included traffic congestion and use of rat runs and the lack of social destinations for walking routes in the village. Opportunities included potential new community and retail facilities, and a 'country park' and ways that traffic could be directed away from the village centre. Site threats identified included additional traffic in the village and new shops competing with existing shops.

2. NPSG and Parish Council early 2019

A workshop meeting was held with the NPSG in February 2019. The purpose of the meeting was to spatially illustrate the emerging framework masterplan, culminating in a draft annotated sketch plan being produced. This highlighted potential masterplan drivers related to pedestrian and vehicular movement, key views and the sensitive treatment of specific edges within the SMF area. A meeting was subsequently held in March with the Parish Council footpaths officer to identify key routes and a broad footpath connectivity strategy including potential diversions.

3. QRP 1 June 2019

The first Quality Review Panel (design review)

commended the approach and collaboration across land ownerships, along with the stakeholder engagement undertaken. 12 development principles were presented which were broadly welcomed with comments on potential additional elements to include. The panel also requested to see the underlying granular analysis of the site and context, which was available but the format of the QRP did not allow to be shared.

4. Local engagement late 2019

A further meeting was held with the NPSG in November which covered the landscape strategy and further discussion of key principles. An initial meeting was also held with Governors and the head teacher of St Andrew's Primary School regarding any enhancements to the existing school. A meeting was held with Parish Councillors in December to update on progress with the SMF to date.

5. Local engagement 2020

A meeting was held with the NPSG in January 2020 to discuss transportation matters. Issues covered included traffic flows, a new roundabout on the A414, pedestrian safety, the future of Church Lane and public transport options, including examining the potential for a commuter service to Epping Station.

There were further meetings with the Governors and Headteacher of St Andrew's School in February, September and November. These covered issues such as pupil yield and explored feasibility options for the potential expansion of the school with a preferred option emerging with retained and enclosed the swimming pool and provided a new access and bus/coach drop off to the north of the school which would help address existing issues.

An online update presentation was provided to the Parish Council and local ward councillors in October 2020. Key issues raised included support for the retention of hedgerows, sensitive treatment of the SMF boundary, maximising the potential for sports and recreation, adequate healthcare provision and parking in the village.

6. Engagement with Queens Hall charity 2021

Meetings were held with the Trustees of the Queen's Hall Charity including an online introductory meeting and a subsequent site visit and in-person meeting. One of the key issues was to ensure that any new community facilities did not compete with and undermine existing sporting and social activities at Queen's Hall. Feasibility options were then progressed to explore the potential upgrade of Queen's Hall and improving sporting and play provision.

7. QRP 2 August 2021

In the second design review, the limitations of the format of the engagement meant the design team were unable to share a wealth of information, including the draft SMF with the panel. The panel suggested further review of a number of topics including sustainability, drainage, cycle routes, and retail provision.

8 EFDC PPA workshops 2022-23

From mid 2022, a series of workshops were held with EFDC as part of a PPA agreement, covering urban design, access, education, landscape, sustainability and social infrastructure. Various updates to the SMF came out of this process, including a more detailed review of the local centre and sketch designs of key areas of public realm.

9 Public consultation June 2023

Widespread community consultation was undertaken in June 2023 which comprised the mailing of an 8 page consultation brochure and feedback form to over 3,000 addresses in North Weald Parish; a consultation website with interactive masterplan and feedback form; an exhibition for key stakeholders and site adjacent residents; and a further three exhibitions and site tours for residents of the Parish. Feedback from completed forms and discussions at the exhibitions raised a wide range of detailed issues for consideration in the evolution of the SMF. Some of the key themes that have been addressed include boundary issues for site adjacent residents; provision of community, social and community infrastructure; designing out anti-social behaviour; public transport provision and access.



10. QRP 3 September 2023

A third Quality Review Panel took place in September 2023. The panel commented that the SMF has developed significantly since the previous review, with a new comprehensive document and positive focus of being landscape-led. The strategic masterplan framework had developed well. Its principles and aims were commendable, and the panel felt that the vision themes developed were successful.

The panel suggested further review of a number of topics including integration with the village, connectivity beyond the SMF area and sustainability.



Photo from public consultation exhibition



Photo from public consultation site tour



Photo from public consultation exhibition

4.6 Urban design influences

Local living

The urban planner Carlos Moreno conceived the concept of the 15 minute city, a place that brings work and home closer together. The aim is to reach place of work, health, shops and community facilities within a 15 minute walk from home (figure 4.4).

The essence of traditional village life is the opportunity for local living, with most social and economic activity of daily life within easy and convenient reach of home.

The way we see and use our local surroundings has been changing in recent years, for example the 2020 pandemic illustrated a greater reliance on the assets of our local environment, with good accessibility to local facilities and open, green spaces becoming essential.

Modern technology has enabled more online meetings, working from home and deliveries to our door - there is therefore a greater potential to live much more of our lives closer to home (figure 4.5). Simply making sure that many day-to-day needs are met within the village will help reduce the number of car journeys and improve health and quality of life. This leads to making longer trips by choice rather than because you have to. Less travelling means more time and choice, and to focus on something new - to do our normal activities while making better use of our time.

With improved community facilities and new homes, North Weald Bassett has the opportunity to embrace this concept, and in doing so, foster a sense of community and integration of the SMF area as an intrinsic part of the village.

The accessibility of green spaces and green corridors is a defining feature of the SMF. The green corridors and open spaces identified in this SMF should be incorporated into individual planning applications and their future detailed design should have regard to Natural England's Accessible Greenspace Standards and Green Infrastructure Standards where appropriate

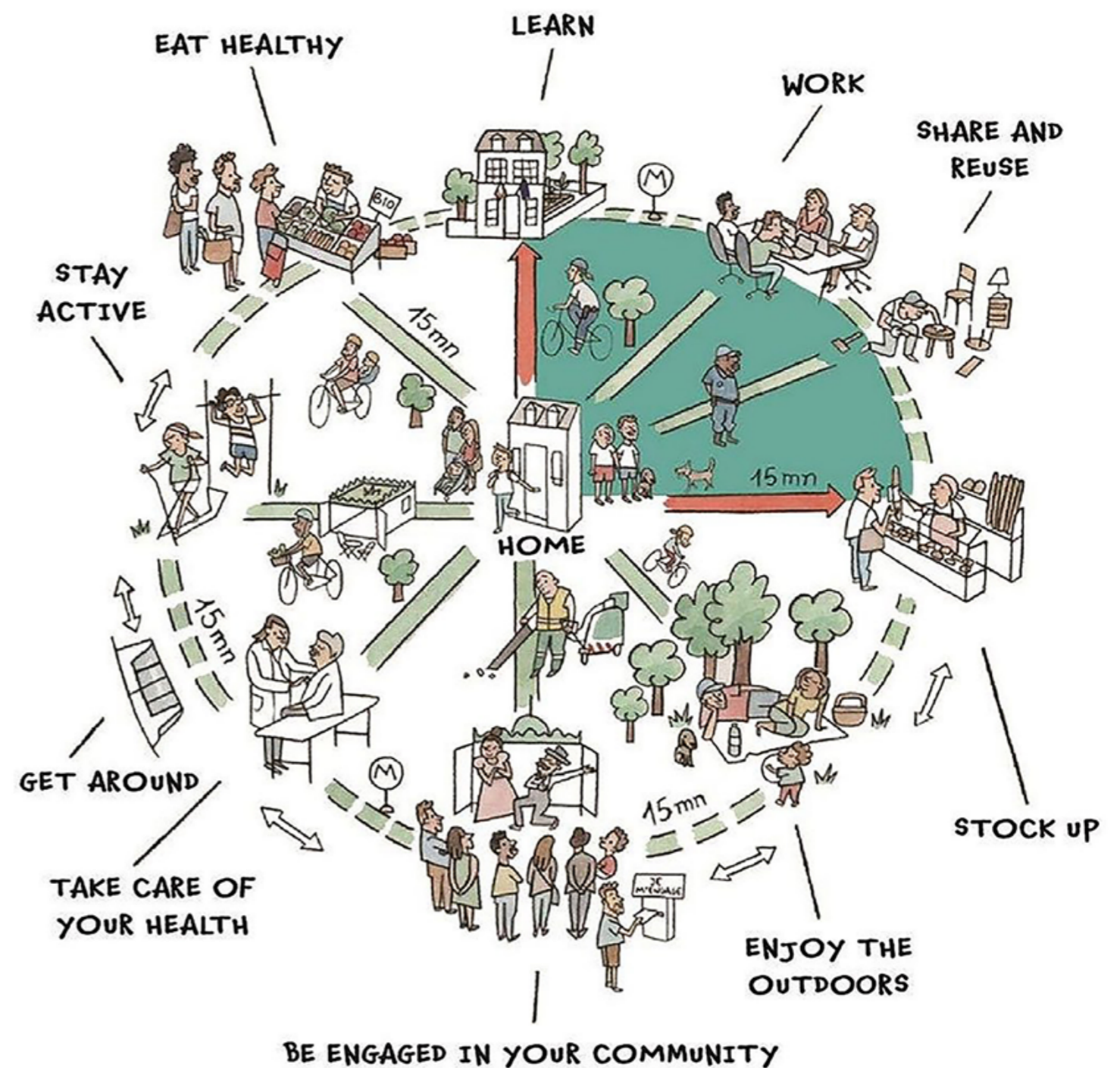


Figure 4.4 - Local living

Image © Micael

The home in 2020, with uses and services further away from home



The home in 2050, illustrating how uses and services may be located closer to home in the future

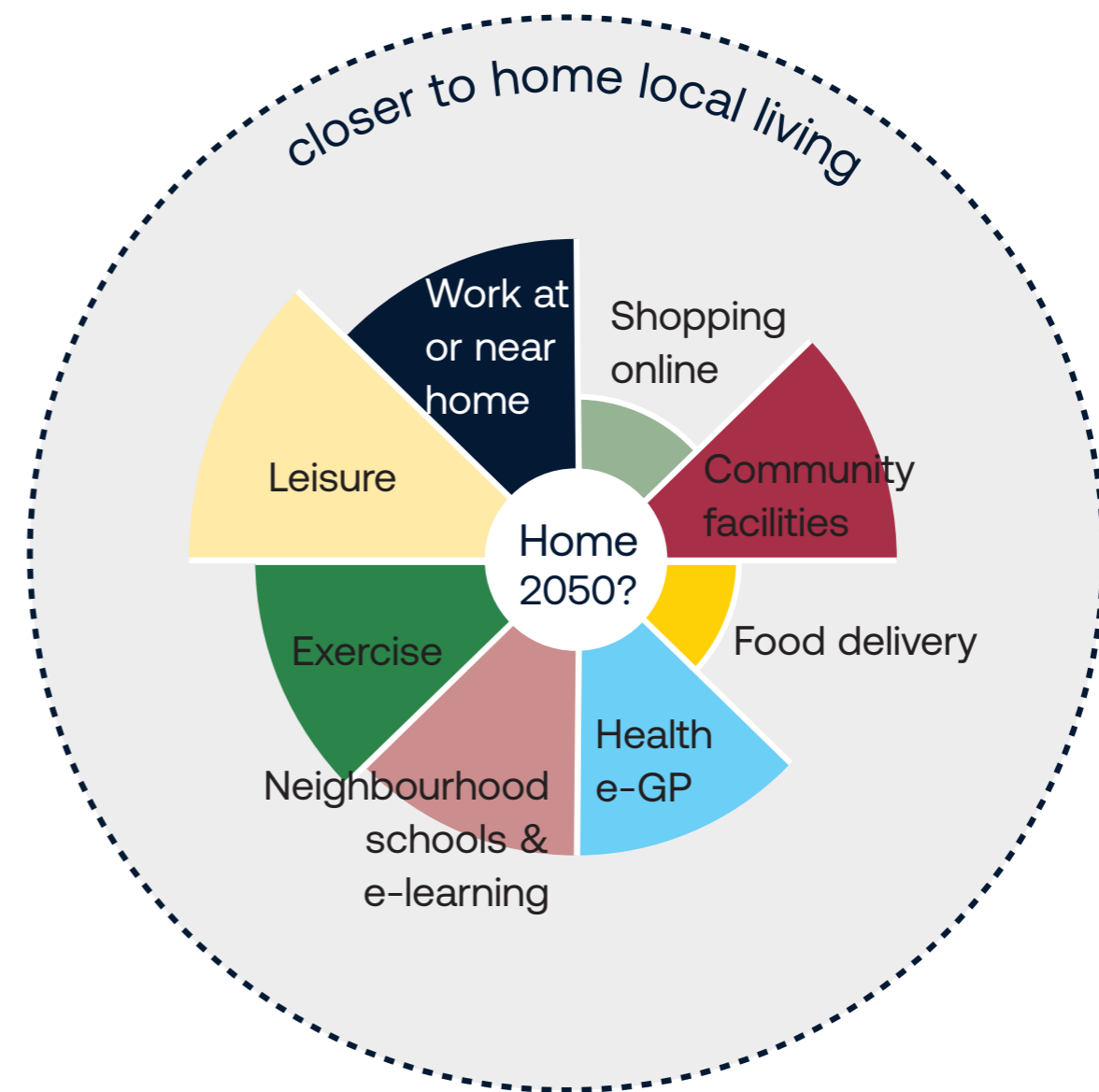


Figure 4.5 - Local living, closer to home (illustrating how uses and services may be located closer to home in the future)

Airfield Masterplan Area

North Weald Airfield is subject to a separate Strategic Masterplan Framework, which can be viewed here <https://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/north-weald-airfield-strategic-masterplan/>

The Airfield Masterplan includes the provision of 10ha of additional employment floorspace within Use Classes E(g) (Offices, Research and Development, Light Industrial), B2 (General Industrial) and B8 (Storage and Distribution) together with the protection and intensification of existing employment floorspace within the eastern part of the airfield, along with infrastructure improvements.

It seeks to “create a new, highly sustainable and modern employment area which respects the Airfield’s proud history, whilst realising its long-term future as a key employment location”.

As a major new employment hub for the village, in addition to its existing employment, leisure and recreation uses, it is hugely important that the North Weald Bassett SMF should link to it, and vice-versa.

Due to site constraints, ownerships, avoidance of extra vehicular traffic on rural roads (Church Lane) and a need to make the link as direct and short as possible to encourage its use, it is proposed that this link is pedestrian/cycle access only.

The delivery of the new link between the airfield masterplan area and this SMF should be comprehensively planned wherever possible so as to share the same environmental principles and continuity of design.

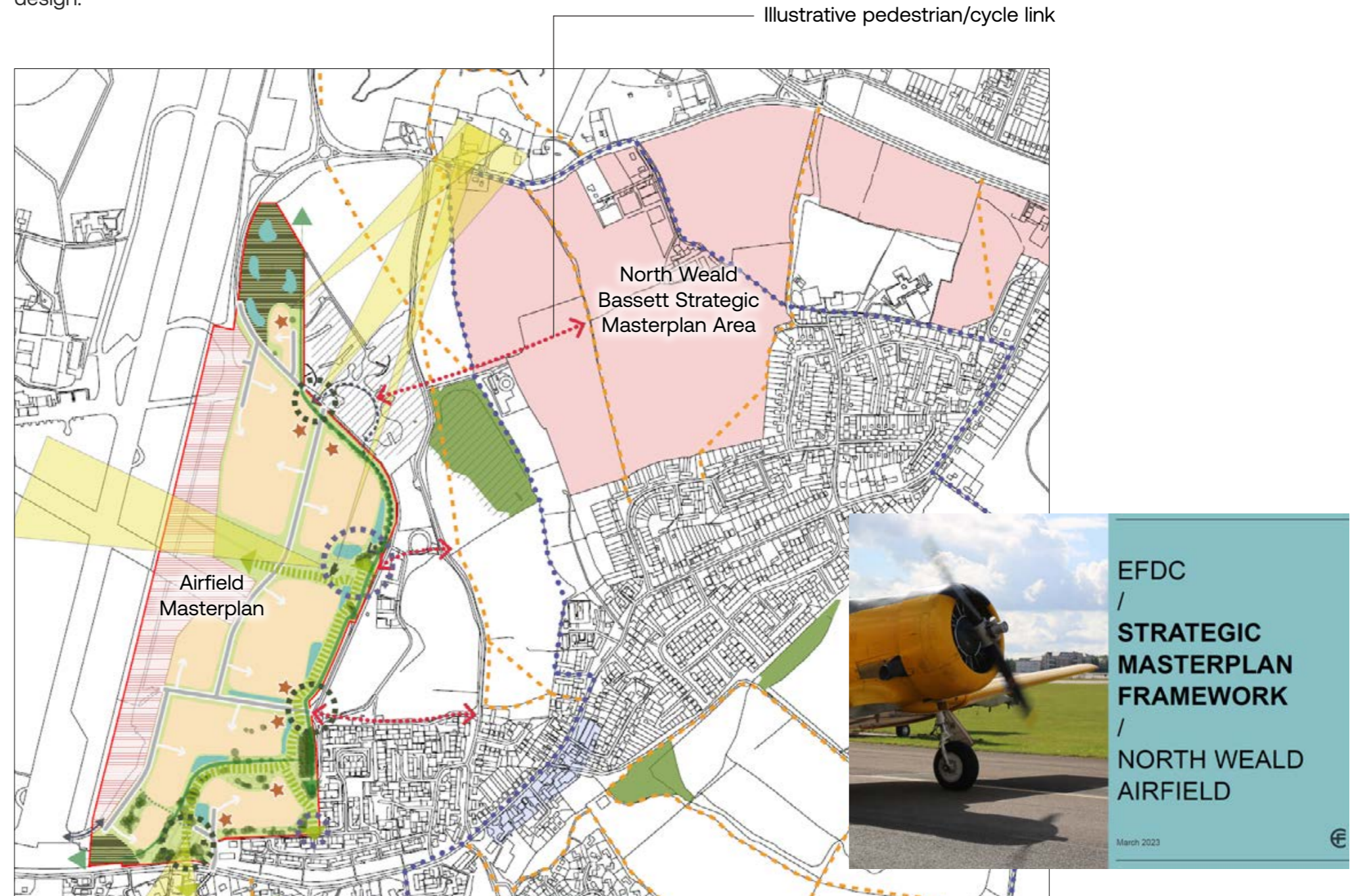


Figure 4.6 - Airfield Masterplan ©rps



Figure 4.7 - Illustrative aerial sketch of the Airfield Masterplan Area

General themes for masterplan area

The SMF should meet the needs of the village (as highlighted in the NPSG consultation) and enable the ease of movement between existing and new community facilities and destinations, including the Airfield Masterplan - a major employment hub.

In addition to the airfield, the local availability of a range of facilities, being able to work from home, active lifestyles and a desire to connect with natural surroundings are becoming essential elements of modern living.

Following the NPSG questionnaire, the missing socio-infrastructure in the village was highlighted to be a Social Heart - a new place that would combine educational, sporting, health and social activities in one place. Through the SMF process, this has been identified as being best located at the Memorial Playing Fields. It is centrally located in the village and at the intersection of Public Rights of Way. It needs improvements which can be undertaken as part of the SMF.

The masterplan should allow people to walk and cycle to key destinations quickly, safely and easily, rather than making short car journeys.

Homes within the masterplan need to be adaptable to meet changing lifestyles and different stages of life. Inclusive local living must include homes of a wide mix, tenure and type, including affordable housing and accommodation for specialist needs.

5. Mandatory spatial principles

5.1 Introduction

To ensure that future development proposals accord with a wider coordinated vision in accordance with this Strategic Masterplan Framework (SMF), this chapter sets out key spatial elements which are shown in the form as Mandatory Spatial Principles to direct future development.

The Mandatory Spatial Principles on the following pages set out these key elements. These principles will need to be incorporated into any future development proposals as they establish the spatial concept and disposition of uses across the masterplan area.

The principles cover:

- Land use and spatial organisation
- Landscape character, green space and green and blue infrastructure
- Access and movement
- Residential density and storey heights.

Future planning applications will be accompanied by detailed assessments and technical work to set the parameters of the proposed development in accordance with these principles. Any departure from these principles will need to be properly justified and supported by evidence.

5.2 Land use and spatial organisation

1. Primary access – The primary vehicular access to the SMF will be focused on a reconfigured junction between the A414 and Vicarage Lane West. This will facilitate access to the majority of homes and community uses that will be constructed across the masterplan area and offers wider benefits in terms of connectivity, minimising traffic through North Weald Bassett village, facilitating public transport access to the masterplan area, creating safer pedestrian crossings over the A414 whilst maintaining its status as a strategic road corridor.

2. Location and arrangement of the local centre – The social heart of the development comprising community facilities (i), and retail and service space (ii), will be focused around a triangle formed of three points consisting of St Andrew’s CoE Primary School (iii), the expansion of the Memorial Playing Fields westwards into site R3 (iv), and the new A414 access roundabout. New retail space will be situated adjacent the primary access as the only commercially viable location for retailers. Other community buildings are to be focused west of the existing Memorial Playing Fields and Queens Hall to create active use and animate this part of the village, increase natural surveillance and emphasise existing community assets as an expanded social core within the village. This area also forms one of the key open spaces within the masterplan area.

3. Primary school and early years site – 2.1 hectares of land with the SMF shall be reserved for a new primary school and / or early years education for pre-school children. The siting of this land has been carefully

considered to minimise the overlapping of school catchments with St Andrew’s CoE Primary School and to maximise accessibility to the existing village and new homes by foot and cycle. The education site is also located adjacent a large area of informal open space which maximises opportunities for outside learning.

4. Gypsy and traveller site – Is positioned to allow for good access to the road network and minimise impacts on surrounding community spaces. The site will allow for 5 pitches in line with Local Plan Policy with the final configuration to be determined through future planning application. Two potential locations are shown on the plan opposite (i) and (ii) but only one site will be provided.

5. SANG / Informal open space – A large area of informal open space / SANG will be provided in the south-west corner of the masterplan area. This location integrates with the existing Local Nature Reserve and EFDC’s wider ambitions to create a SANG on the green finger between this masterplan area and North Weald airfield and access to the wider countryside beyond North Weald. This area will also incorporate water features.

6. Linear Park and Bee Line – A green corridor is to be created parallel the existing gas easement to create a new linear park for the recreational benefit of residents and attract pollinators. This shall include the planting of species that are attractive to pollinators to link into the existing Bee Line north of the masterplan area. This linear park will blend into the area of SANG and include areas of informal and natural play on the way and provide part of a walkway to the local

centre.

7. Residential parcels – the location of the residential parcels is responsive to the site, its constraints and its context, and will provide a minimum 1050 new homes.

All development proposals must accord with the land use and spatial organisation mandatory spatial principles plan, as illustrated in figure 5.1.

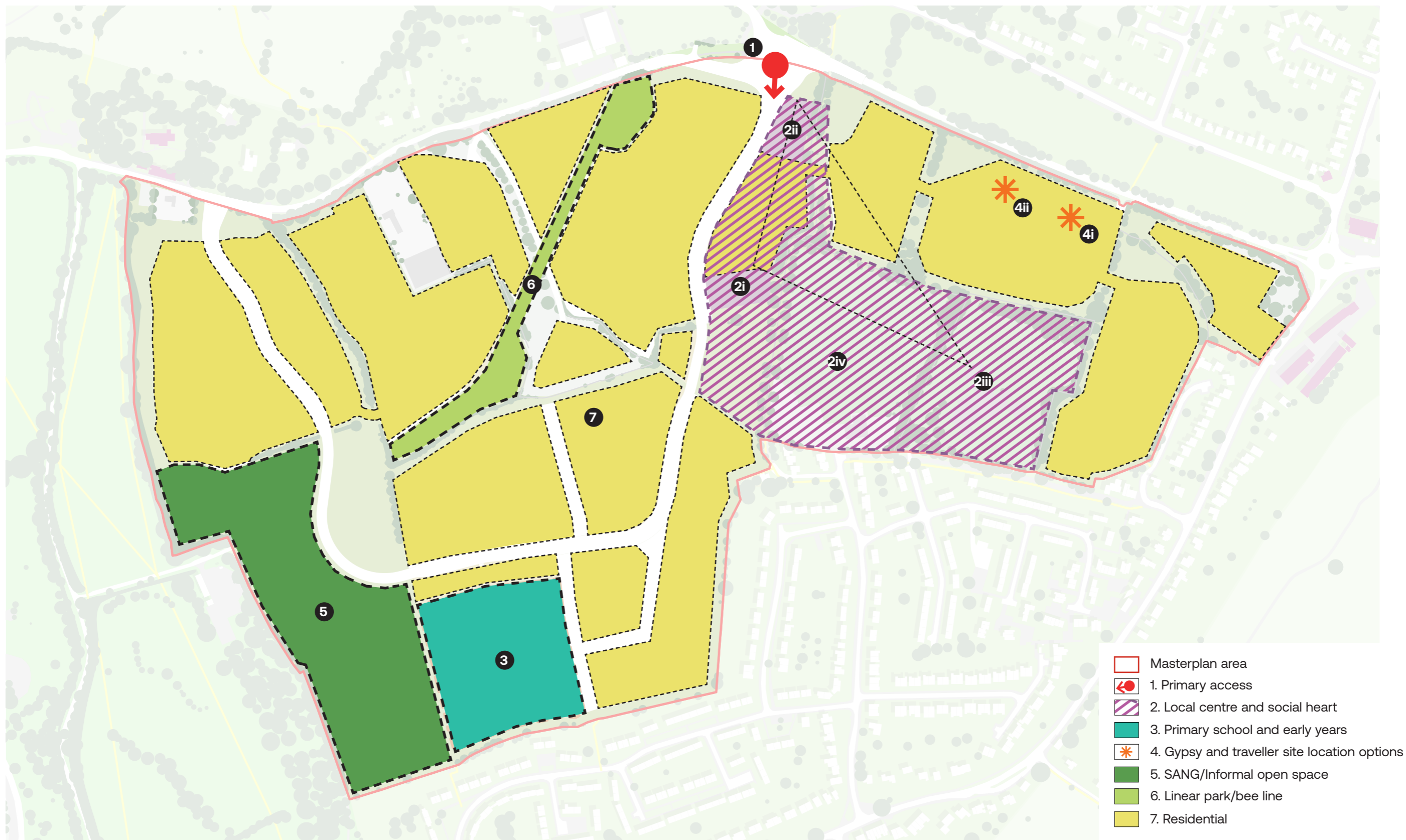


Figure 5.1 - Land use and spatial organisation mandatory principles plan (illustrative block layout)

5.3 Landscape character, green spaces and green and blue infrastructure

1. Strategic open spaces – Within this SMF there are two large areas of open space incorporating i) the Memorial Playing Fields and ii) Church Fields SANG.

i. Memorial Playing Fields – The land forming part of the Playing Fields has been gifted to the community and is to be the primary location for formal and informal sports use within the SMF. As part of this SMF, an expansion of these Playing Fields is planned to facilitate junior sports clubs use. New development is expected to front onto the Playing Fields.

ii. Village green - As part of this SMF, an expansion of the Memorial Playing Fields is planned as a new village green, with potential to facilitate junior sports clubs use. New development is expected to front onto this expansion.

iii. Church Fields SANG – Is to provide a large area of informal open space for the enjoyment of the community. This should include water features, formal and informal recreational walking routes and space for dogs to roam off leads.

2. Green Corridors – A series of green corridors are planned across the masterplan area and are to be car free routes (with the exception of parts of GC9). These primarily utilise existing landscape features and connect the two main open space areas and are to provide car free walking routes around the masterplan area. The more direct routes to local services are classified as destination routes for pedestrian and cyclists with the less direct routes forming part of recreational

walking for the pleasure of the community. Collectively these green corridors mean that every resident within the masterplan area lives within 150m of a major open space or green corridor. More generally these green corridors connect into a wider public right of way network of 20km around North Weald village and parish and provide access to the countryside. More detail relating to each Green Corridor is provided in chapter 7, p119.

3. Green buffer for privacy - along the site boundary with homes that are located on Oak Piece and Queens Road, the greenway width is extended to 10m to create a privacy buffer.

4. Trees and hedgerows – There are a number of mature trees and hedgerows across the masterplan area. These are to be positively incorporated into future development proposals. Hedgerows have traditionally defined field boundaries and a number of these are prominent landscape features. However, several of these hedgerows have declined such that they are classed as defunct and species poor. As part of this SMF these hedgerows should be maintained and improved and in places reinstated as part of the green corridor proposals for the biodiversity and habitat creation benefits they offer.

5. Water infrastructure – The masterplan area is bordered to the west by a river and the majority of the masterplan area is surrounded by traditional agricultural ditches. The provision of and management of surface water features should employ SuDs principles. These features should be

sensitively and creatively integrated into the landscape and utilise existing hydrology, topography and ecology networks. These should also be designed as positive features to support character and place-making.

6. Equipped play spaces – Play will be at the forefront of the public realm and green infrastructure strategy, incorporating informal and formal sports and recreation. These should be complemented by 'play-on-the-way' routes with playable landscape features and natural play features. One NEAP+LEAP (i), two LEAPs (ii) will be provided as well as a dedicated youth space for teenagers (iii).

7. Indicative informal play - in addition to the formal play provision, a series of smaller informal play uses will be provided along key pedestrian and cycle routes and nodal points. These could include LAPs, 'play-on-the-way' and natural play features.

8. Strategic views – There are three principle strategic views within the masterplan area. The first view is towards St Andrew's church (i) from the primary street which should be aligned to frame the church tower. The second strategic view is towards Tylers Farmhouse (ii), where future street and building form must create a framed view of this listed building. Additionally, there are glimpses of the listed airfield control tower (iii) which should be incorporated where possible. More generally there are locations to the north and west of the masterplan area where there are long views to the surrounding countryside and these should be retained to create a sense of openness and the big sky feeling these parts of the

site benefit from.

9. Sensitive lighting design – Development fringes, interfaces with natural habitats (new and existing spaces) and ecological corridors will need careful consideration to sensitive lighting design to preserve dark corridors, ecological habitat character and visual impact whilst balancing community safety.

All development proposals must accord with the landscape character, green spaces and green and blue infrastructure mandatory spatial principles plan, as illustrated in figure 5.2.

Other incidental open spaces will be detailed through future design codes and/or future planning applications. Future design code work should also define the linkages in character between open spaces.



Figure 5.2 - Landscape character, green spaces and green and blue infrastructure mandatory principles plan (illustrative block layout)

5.4 Access and movement

1. Vehicular access – The number of vehicular accesses to the masterplan area are to be kept to a minimum. The primary vehicular access will be focused on a reconfigured junction between the A414 and Vicarage Lane West (i). This will facilitate access to approximately 950-1,000 new homes and all community infrastructure within sites R1 and R3. A secondary access is to be provided from site R3 onto Vicarage Lane West (ii) to facilitate the provision of bus services. A vehicular link will connect site R1 and R3 (iii). Minor accesses are identified for the smaller development sites R2 (iv), R4 and R5 (v) utilising existing access locations where possible.

2. Spine road and bus access – A central spine road is to be provided within site R3 to provide bus access around the masterplan area. Bus stops in both directions (with shelters) are to be provided at no more than 400 metre intervals along the spine road to ensure that residents live within a 400 metre walking distance of bus stops to encourage public transport usage. This spine road is to have a carriageway width of 6.75m to accommodate bus services. The spine road corridor should consider the use of verges, swales and other vegetated corridors.

3. East-West corridor – A new east-west artery is to be facilitated within the masterplan area to provide pedestrian and cycle connectivity between The High Road and new employment floor space to be provided at the North Weald Airfield. This route should accommodate pedestrian and cycle usage.

4. Destination routes – A network of pedestrian and cycle routes is illustrated in

the access and movement spatial principles plan. These are intended to provide a network of walking and cycling routes providing direct access to community infrastructure to encourage sustainable modes of travel for local trips.

5. Recreational routes - a network of pedestrian routes providing and linking a range of recreational activities.

6. New school link - a direct link between the entrance to the new primary school and the social heart (includes part of the spine road).

7. Village interface linkages - consisting of pedestrian gateways connecting to the wider village, consisting of the airfield link (i), southern pedestrian gateway (ii), School Green Lane link (iii), St Andrews church (iv), Tylers Cross (v) A414 (vi), Blackhorse Lane (vii), Vicarage Lane West (viii) and Queens Road (ix).

8. St Andrew's CoE Primary School access – Existing pedestrian routes to St Andrew's CoE Primary School should be improved where possible (i). Additionally new pedestrian routes must be provided to the north of St Andrew's Primary School (ii) to encourage walking and cycling to the school and the community spaces it provides for new residents.

9. Access to new school – A car free pedestrian and cycle access to the east of the education site must be provided to encourage walking and cycling to school immediately to the front of this site.

All development proposals must accord with the access and movement mandatory spatial principles plan, as illustrated in figure 5.3.