

BroadwayMalyan<sup>BM</sup>

# NORTH CHRISTCHURCH

MASTERPLAN  
REPORT

DECEMBER 2011



# NORTH CHRISTCHURCH

MASTERPLAN  
REPORT

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BroadwayMalyan<sup>BM</sup>



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# 01



# NORTH CHRISTCHURCH

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## Introduction and overview

# 01 | Introduction and overview

## Introduction

Christchurch Borough Council is planning a sustainable urban extension on land to the north of the town which will provide new homes within the Borough, including additional and much needed affordable housing provision.

The need for an urban extension in this location was originally set out in the draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the South West of England. This document set a requirement for 3,450 homes in the Borough between 2006-2026, with 600 of these to be provided in an area of search to the north of Christchurch – covering land both to the north and south of the railway line. Despite the Coalition Government planning to abolish the RSS now the Localism Bill has achieved Royal Assent, Christchurch Borough Council (CBC) is still in support of the principle of an urban extension in this location in order to address local housing need.

In 2010, CBC appointed a consultancy team, led by planning and design practice Broadway Malyan, to undertake a two-stage process to evaluate the urban extension. Stage 1 of the work comprised a masterplan context report which examined the baseline position within the area of search including: existing context; policy; constraints and opportunities. This work concluded that any development should go on land to the south of the railway line only, with areas to the north only suitable for open space and recreational uses relating to the site.

## Options assessment

The Stage 1 report also examined a number of options relating to the inclusion or removal of a number of key constraints on land to the south of the railway line, including: overhead powerlines; statutory allotments and different levels of Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGs) which will be required due to the site's proximity to the nearby protected heathlands.

Of the five options assessed in the report, four were used by CBC to form the basis of the Christchurch urban extension chapter of the "Options for Consideration" consultation stage of the Joint East Dorset and Christchurch Core Strategy. This document was consulted on for a 15 week period between 4th October 2010 and 15th January 2011. The options that were consulted on were:

- **Option 1:** Relocate allotments and SANGs north of the railway line and move powerlines
- **Option 2:** Relocate allotments and SANGs north of the railway line, but retain powerlines
- **Option 3:** Retain allotments and powerlines in current location, but move SANGs north of the railway line
- **Option 4:** Retain allotments and powerlines and locate SANGs to the south of the railway line

## Core Strategy consultation feedback on options

The feedback from the public consultation on the "Options for Consideration" Core Strategy report were positive. Option 4 was the most popular option, but Natural England objected to this as it would not meet the requirements of a SANG. Option 3 was the second most popular, but would result in a housing development site that was in close proximity to the powerlines, creating potential marketability problems and issues of urban design where the allotments create a "pinchpoint" on the site. Option 1 was the next most popular, whilst Option 2 was the least favoured.

### Option selection and justification

Taking into account the consultation feedback and the planning and design issues, Option 1 was seen as the best option to take forward. This option enabled a larger number of homes to be delivered on the site, helping to meet local need. It also created a better site as it undergrounded / re-aligned the powerlines making the site more attractive for both developers and future occupiers. It also relocated the allotments, thus preventing 'pinch-points' on the site and helping in its overall urban design layout. However, this option did involve a high level of cost to underground/realign the power lines and move the allotments and these major costs needed to be assessed against the potential values. To do this, CBC commissioned Broadway Malyan to undertake a high level viability exercise (working alongside consultancy team members WSP and Whiteleaf). This exercise proved that all options could potentially work from a viability point of view (albeit, dependant on the number of houses and the level of affordable housing) and that Option 1 could be taken forward.

Taking into account the consultation feedback, planning and design issues and the viability exercise findings, CBC commissioned Broadway Malyan to masterplan Option 1 as part of the Stage 2 work. As part of this exercise Broadway Malyan were requested to examine the implications of retaining the allotments - as a sub-option. This is explored in section 04.

### Report structure

This document comprises the Stage 2 Masterplan Report and contains the following:

- **Section 2:** Understanding Christchurch
- **Section 3:** Understanding the site and surrounding context
- **Section 4:** Masterplan evolution
- **Section 5:** The design detail

A further free-standing report will cover viability.

### Overview of the site

The site comprises land to the north of the A35 and south of the mainline railway (linking Christchurch to Weymouth in the west and London Waterloo in the east). It reaches as far as Hawthorn Road in the west and the crossing point of the railway and A35 in the east.

The site covers an area of 46ha and comprises open, undeveloped and relatively flat agricultural land. The only exceptions to this are the Roeshot Hill allotments and a major overhead electricity power line that runs in an east west direction across the site. The River Mude runs in a north-south direction at the centre of the site.

A Sainsbury's supermarket and Stewart's Garden Centre lie immediately to the south of the central parts of the site. The area to the south of this is largely low density residential development on the outskirts of the town.

Although not considered to be "developable", land to the north of the railway line is part of the wider site and could be utilised for recreational open space including SANGs and a potential site for the relocation of the Roeshot Hill allotments. This area of land is also agricultural and relatively flat. However, unlike the land to the south, it has no defined edge and opens out into the wider countryside, offering longer distance views towards the New Forest in the north east.



The site



# 02





# NORTH CHRISTCHURCH

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# Understanding Christchurch

# 02 | Understanding Christchurch

This section seeks to understand the town of Christchurch by looking at its historic growth and by analysing its urban design characteristics and other key features such as green infrastructure and transport. Understanding these aspects will help provide the wider context for the masterplanning and design of the site.



# Historic settlement evolution

The town of Christchurch was originally a Saxon settlement that grew up between the rivers Avon and Stour. In 1094 the construction of the town's most significant landmark - the Christchurch Priory - began and it was this that ultimately gave the town its name.

At its beginning, the town grew slowly in a linear form (along the High Street). By the latter half of the 19th century, this linear pattern had continued with development extending out east along the roads now known as Purewell and Stanpit and towards the coastal fishing village of Mudeford (see plan from 1870). The other notable village at that time was Burton. The town's railway station opened in 1862, to the north of the town. The North Christchurch site was largely agricultural land then, but its south eastern edge was defined by what is now known as Lyndhurst Road.

This pattern of growth continued over the next 60 years with the linear corridor down to Mudeford becoming more densely developed. Land to the north west of Christchurch also became urbanised, possibly as a result of the influence of the railway station, which by this time had been moved further west as a result of the introduction of a new junction with an additional railway line serving Hinton Admiral and Brockenhurst in the east. This new line is shown on the plan from 1910 and forms the northern edge of the North Christchurch site.

The plan from 1930, shows further expansion in Christchurch, both to the north west of the town, the west and additional linear development along Somerford Road to the east. Further development started to take place along the coast, north east of Mudeford.

However, the creation of low rise council housing in Somerford in the 1940s and 1950s led to development sprawling out from the linear pattern previously seen. Mudeford too expanded further, with both Mudeford and Somerford framing the Christchurch Aerodrome, which was built in 1926 and used by the RAF in World War II. The new residential development coincided with the construction of the Somerford Bypass (A35) which created a route around the northern edge of the settlement and formed the south western edge of the North Christchurch site. The village of Burton was also the subject of further housing growth in this period.

Since 1960, further low rise, low density residential development has continued, with the most notable area of change comprising the development of the Christchurch Aerodrome following its closure in the late 1960s. This area also includes a large amount of the town's industrial and employment land. By 2011, the town had virtually reached its limits in terms of administrative and environmental boundaries/ constraints. The last area left within the town that is relatively unconstrained is the North Christchurch site.

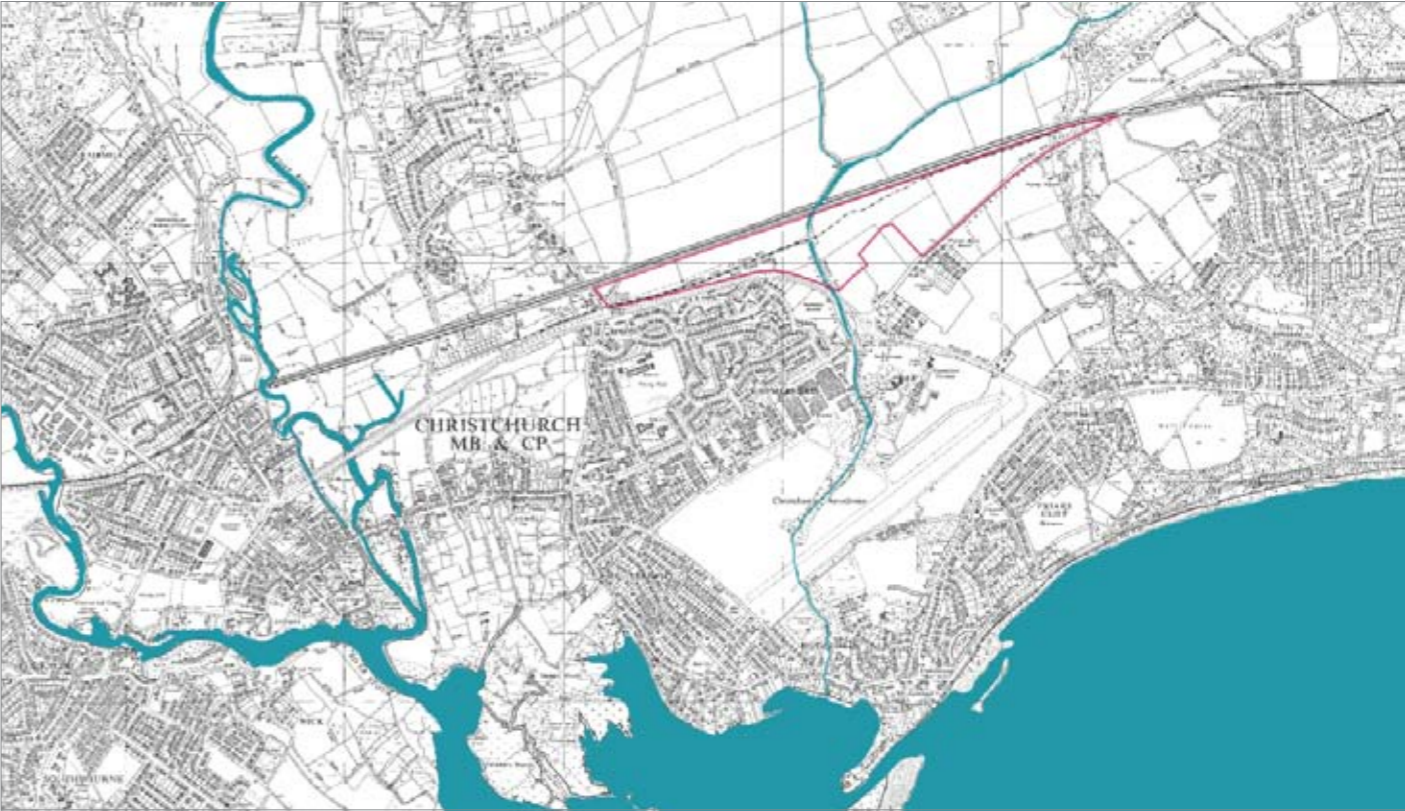
## 1870



# 1910



# 1960



# 1930



# 2011



# Urban structure











## Legibility

In addition to understanding the town's evolution, it is also important to examine its urban structure. The urban structure generally comprises those urban elements that:

- encompass the main urban elements of the area that underpin it and bond it together;
- gives identity to individual localities within the area
- includes artefacts that render the area legible, imageable and memorable; and
- generally stays constant over a period of time.

The urban structure could best be described using the analogy of a tree and liken the branches and trunk to the structure and the leaves to the urban fabric. One can imagine the form of a tree without its leaves, but not without its trunk and branches. The elements of Christchurch's urban structure can be mapped using a "Lynch analysis technique" based on mapping structural elements such as paths (travel corridors), edges (real or perceived boundaries in the community), landmarks (highly identifiable features in the community), nodes (major destination or activity areas) and districts (sub areas in the community that have an inherent uniqueness or quality).

The first four key urban structure elements are shown on the plan (right).

<b>Path</b>	
	Site
	Primary route
	Secondary route
	Railway line
	Greenway
<b>Node</b>	
	Nodal junction
	Rail station
<b>Landmarks</b>	
	Landmark building / services
<b>Edge</b>	
	Railway line
	Main approach to town



## Urban structure

### Districts

The districts are shown on the plan (right). These include the more historic areas of the town centre, Purewell, Stanpit and Mudeford where many of the older buildings are located. The Grange is a district of post war ex-council housing, whilst Somerford Road and West Highcliffe largely comprise post 1960s low density residential development, with industrial uses contained in the former. Burton is divided into both the historic core and the more recent development.

The urban fabric (which largely comprises the built form within the urban structure whose detailed configurations do not dramatically influence the overall pattern of a place e.g. built form, design, morphology) within some of these key districts is examined later in this report and in relation to the site itself. Urban fabric features of the surrounding area, such as character, design, density etc. could all influence the future development of the North Christchurch site.



## Green infrastructure and leisure provision

The town has an abundance of green infrastructure and open space. A key area of natural open space resource is the coast line and the marshland around the harbour area. There is a notable green link that runs southwards along the Mude Valley to the coast as well as further areas of green space along the A35 corridor. The main leisure facility in the town is the Two Riversmeet Leisure Centre, whilst other formal recreation facilities available include Highcliffe Golf Club. A north south ecological corridor known as Avon Valley runs from the west of Burton and into the town centre. The town also contains several recreation gardens and public parks as well as school playing fields.

The existing green infrastructure and leisure provision is mapped (right). This information has been taken from the Council's own Open Space, Sport and Recreation Assessment (May 2007).



- Site boundary
- Recreation grounds and public gardens
- Other open space
- Amenity / informal green space
- Natural and semi-natural green space
- Children and young people's space
- Active sports space
- Natural and semi-natural green space international ecological designation
- Education outdoor space
- Allotments





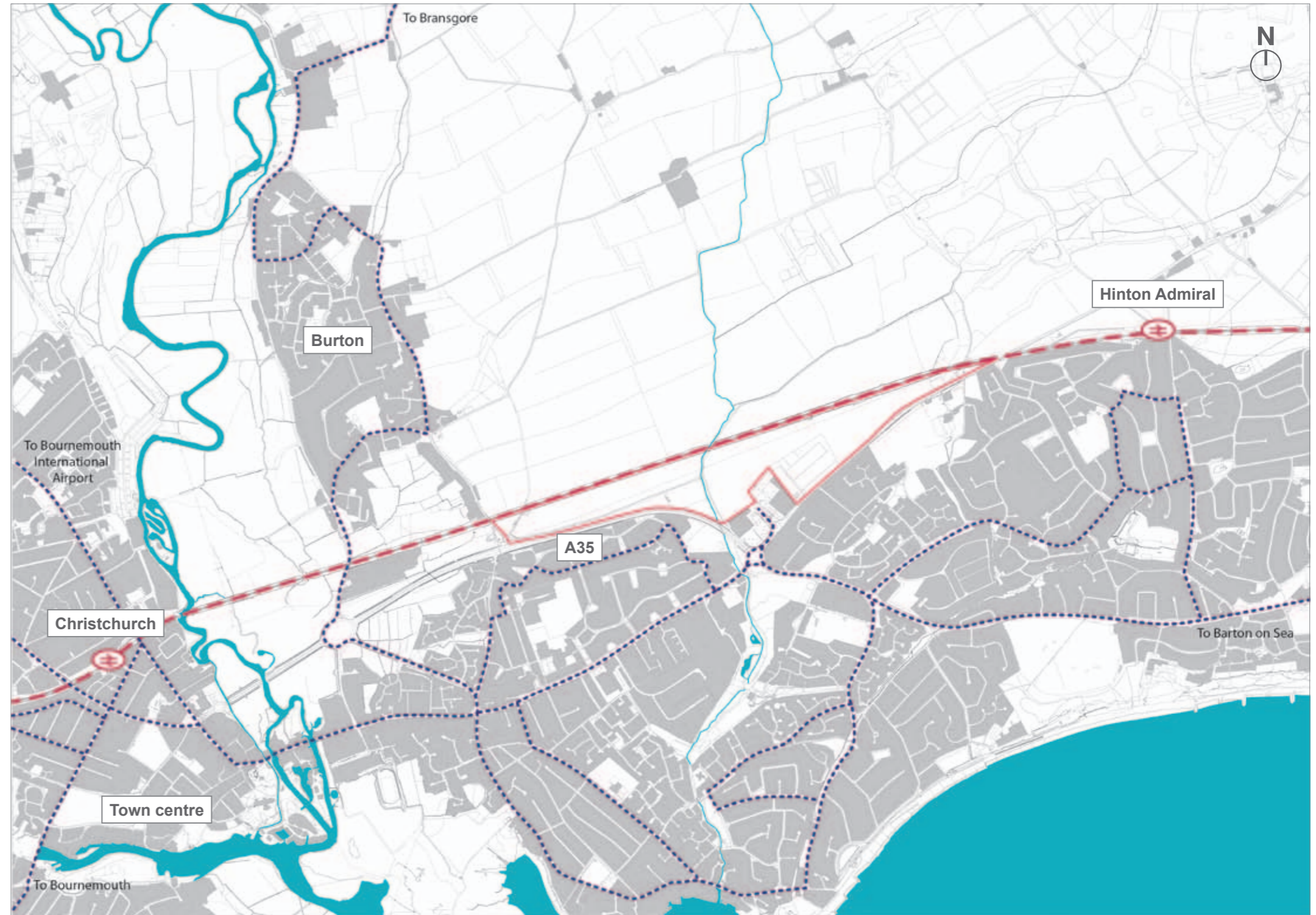
# Transport and accessibility




## Rail and bus

The town has two mainline railway stations: Christchurch and Hinton Admiral in (Hampshire). These connect the town to locations in the west (including Bournemouth, Poole and Weymouth) and the east (Southampton, Basingstoke and London Waterloo).

In addition, the town has a network of bus routes connecting the centre with its surrounding residential areas and wider hinterland as well as other areas within the coastal conurbations of Bournemouth, Poole and Southampton.

Both the rail and bus services are described in more detail in the Stage 1 Report.



-  Railway line
-  Rail station
-  Bus route



# Transport and accessibility

## Cycling and walking

The town has a comprehensive network of footpaths and cycle routes within the urban area. What is very noticeable from the adjacent plan is the network that exists outside and to the north of the town with the Avon Valley Path extending northwards and linking into a series of public rights of way/bridleways.

A number of these links run through the heart of the site.



- - - - - Cycle route
- - - - - National Trail - Avon Valley Path
- . . . . . Public Right of Way
- . . . . . Bridleway
- . . . . . By-way open to all traffic
- . . . . . Other route with public access









# NORTH CHRISTCHURCH

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## Understanding the site and surrounding context

# 03 | Understanding the site and surrounding context

Having understood the evolution, urban structure and key features of the town, this section focuses in on the site and its surrounding context by examining its key land uses, features, opportunities and constraints. Whilst this section summarises the key issues, further, more technical details relating to many of these matters are contained in the Stage 1 Report.



## Surrounding key land uses

Despite being on the northern fringes of Christchurch, the site is surrounded by a number of both urban and rural land use influences. To the immediate south of the site is a local shopping centre comprising a Sainsbury's supermarket and Stewart's Garden Centre and their associated surface car parks. A cluster of other commercial land uses are located on the south side of the A35 here, namely a fast food restaurant, a car showroom and a public house.

Further south comprises an area that is largely residential in nature, with The Grange area made up of ex-council housing stock and the West Highcliffe area consisting of low rise, low density residential development. Two large employment areas are located between The Grange and West Highcliffe and comprise industrial and storage/distribution units as well as larger retail warehouses. Community facilities such as schools and health centres are also located here.

To the west of the site is an area of open land which also contains a small sewage treatment works. North of the site is the mainline railway which runs on an embankment. North of this is the historic village of Burton. The remainder of land here is open, flat agricultural land. As stated in the Stage 1 report, part of this area has been identified as a potential mineral extraction site for sand and gravel. The planned gravel extraction area covers land in both Dorset and Hampshire. The Dorset area runs between Hawthorn Road and River Mude, whilst the planned extraction in Hampshire covers an area between the River Mude and Burton Common.

To the west of the site is further housing and Hinton Admiral Railway Station.

The plan (right) shows the key local land uses and their walking distance from the site. It highlights that many day to day services and facilities are located within a short walk (between 5-15 minutes).





## Local facilities

At a more detailed level, the site is located close to a number of key community facilities, including schools (nursery, primary and secondary), healthcare and sports provision. The adjacent plan (right) maps these and shows how many of them are within 800m of the centre of the site (which broadly equates to a 10 minute walk time).

The plan also shows the site in proximity to the town centre and the large number of services and facilities here.

### Education

1. St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School
2. Mudeford Wood Playgroup
3. Mudeford Junior School
4. The Grange School
5. Somerford Early Excellence Centre and Junior School
6. Burton Pre-School Playgroup
7. Burton Day Nursery
8. Burton Church of England Primary School
9. Highcliffe School
10. Mudeford Community Infant's School
11. Christchurch Infants and Junior School
12. Poppets Pre-School
13. Priors Church of England Primary School
14. Twynham School
15. Christchurch Learning Centre

### Sports Provision

1. Watermans Park, Grass Pitches
2. East Christchurch Sports and Social Club, Grass Pitches
3. The Grange School, Swimming Pool, Grass Pitches, Sports Hall
4. Somerford Junior School, Grass Pitches
5. Mudeford Wood Community Centre, Grass Pitches and Sports Hall
6. Highcliffe School, Health and Fitness Suite, Grass Pitches, Sports Hall
7. Burton Recreation Ground, Grass Pitches
8. Two Riversmeet Leisure Centre, Golf Club, Swimming Pool, Sports Hall Health and Fitness Suite, Indoor Bowles
9. Burton Church of England Primary, Grass Pitches
10. Winkton Fields, Grass Pitches
11. Highcliffe, Golf Club
12. St Marks Church Hall, Sports Hall
13. Barrack Road Recreation Ground
14. Twynham School, Grass Pitches, Sports Hall, Swimming Pool

### Healthcare

1. Barn Practice
2. Stour Surgery
3. Burton Surgery
4. Christchurch Hospital
5. Stephen House Dental Practice
6. Priors Dental Practice
7. Cheriton Dental Practice
8. Wessex Pharmacy
9. Rowlands Pharmacy
10. Boots Pharmacy



## Key site features

As stated in section 1, the site, which comprises some 46 hectares (ha) is relatively flat and comprises agricultural land. It is a long linear site measuring around 2km from east to west.

The northern and southern edges are defined by strong physical boundaries comprising the railway line and the A35 trunk road respectively. The A35 is a dual carriageway to the west of the Somerford Roundabout, but single carriageway to the east. The railway line runs on an embankment to the north with the only crossing points being through two short viaduct bridges at Hawthorn Road and Watery Lane.

The River Mude runs in a north-south direction through the heart of the site and under the railway line alongside Watery Lane. In terms of internal roads, the only other route apart from Watery Lane within the site is Ambury Lane which connects Watery Lane to Hawthorn Road in the west. Both are relatively narrow tracks.

The Roeshot Hill allotments comprise a large parcel of land within the site covering an area of 4.5ha. The total area of the allotment including the adjoining nursery is 5.7ha. The Roeshot Hill allotments are statutory allotments and accessed from the A35/Lyndhurst Road to the south.

One of the key features on the site is the overhead electricity powerlines that run in an east-west direction across the site, dissecting it in two. These powerlines are 132kv and run along a stretch of 8 pylons.

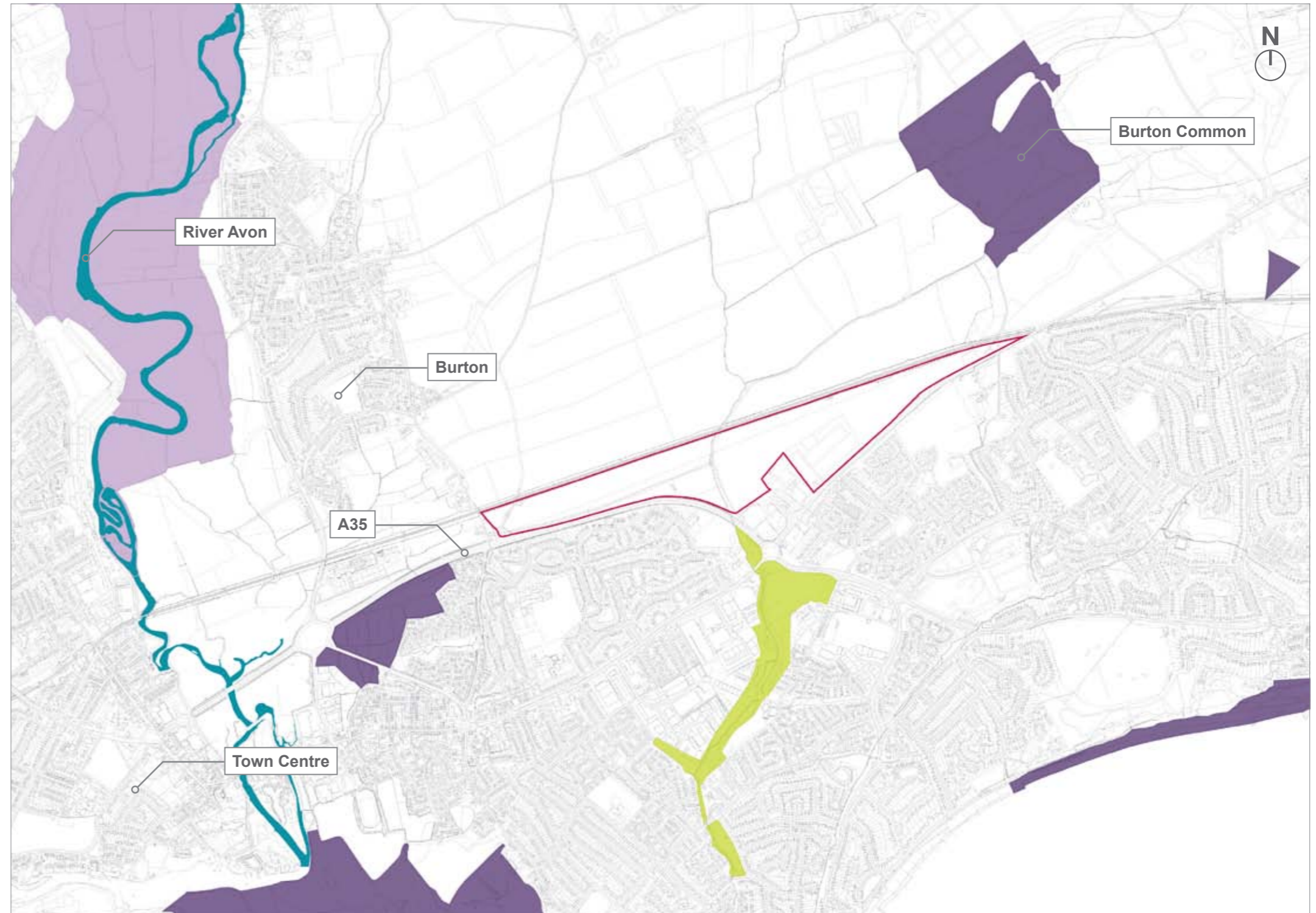


# Ecology

The site does not have any major ecological constraints. However, the surrounding areas do contain locations of significant ecological value. The most important area is that to the west – known as the Avon Valley. This is designated a Special Protection Area (SPA) and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and is, therefore, of European importance. Although the site does not directly impact on this area, impacts associated with urban encroachment such as dog walking, cat predation and fires do have an impact, particularly on the ground nesting birds in this area. More detail on this is contained in the Stage 1 Report, but Natural England’s mitigation measures require any further residential development within 5km of such sites to provide Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGs) as part of new development proposals to encourage dog walkers etc. to use these instead of the protected areas. Therefore, the North Christchurch site will have to provide SANGs to mitigate the impact of its future resident population. This can be between 8-16ha per 1,000 people but the quantum location and design would be a matter for discussion with Natural England.

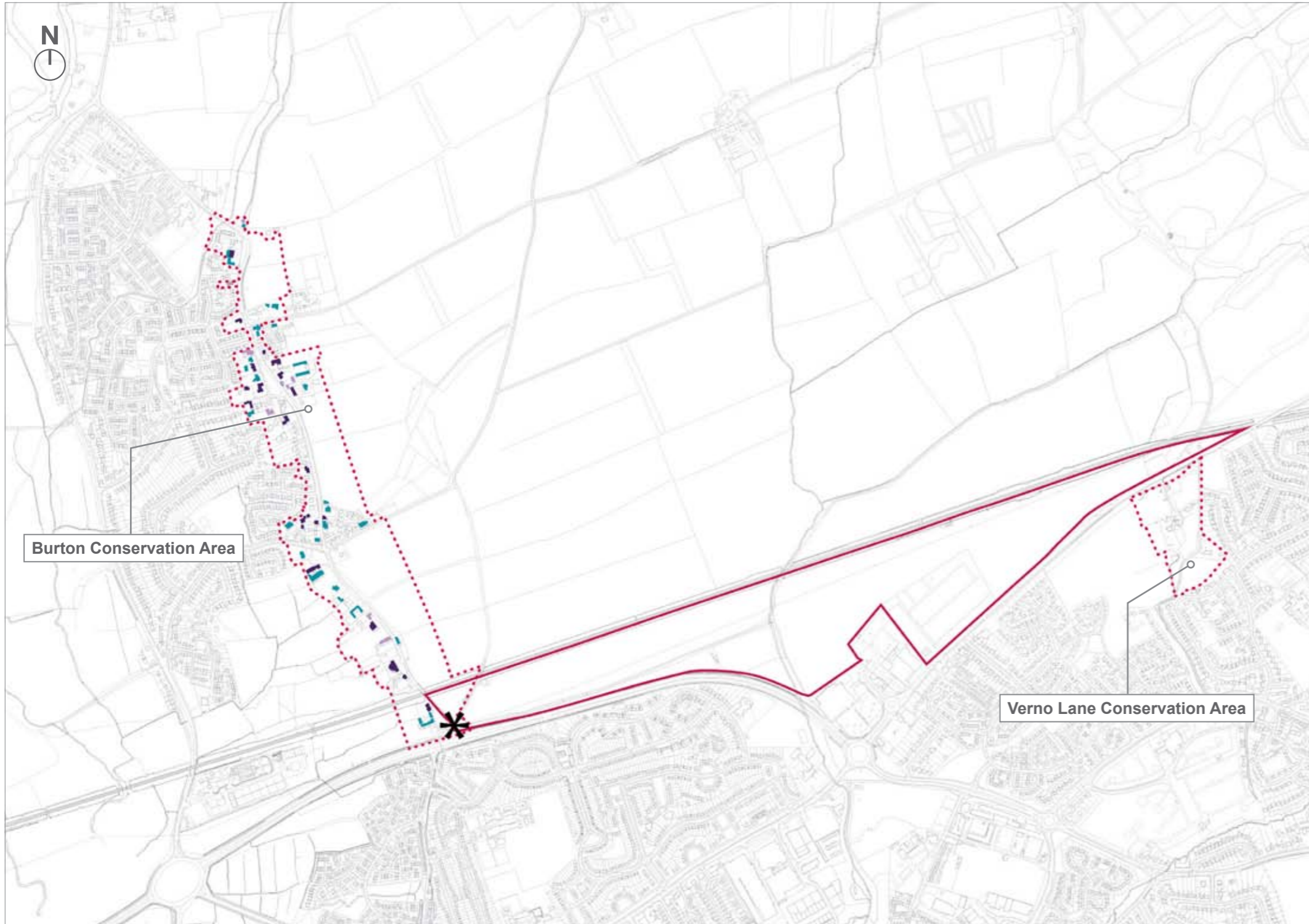
Other designations include the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at Burton Common to the east and a Site of Nature Conservation Importance to the south. These need to be protected, but do not require the level of mitigation associated with the SPA/SAC areas.

Southern Damselfly have been located by the Council’s countryside team. Discussions with Natural England have revealed that no survey is required at this stage. Appropriate mitigation measures along the River Mude (15m buffer) as set out in the Stage 1 report will be sufficient. In due course, the developer will need to undertake a survey.



-  SSI / SPA / Ramsar / SAC
-  SSSI / SAC / SPA
-  SSSI
-  SNCI





## Archaeology and cultural heritage

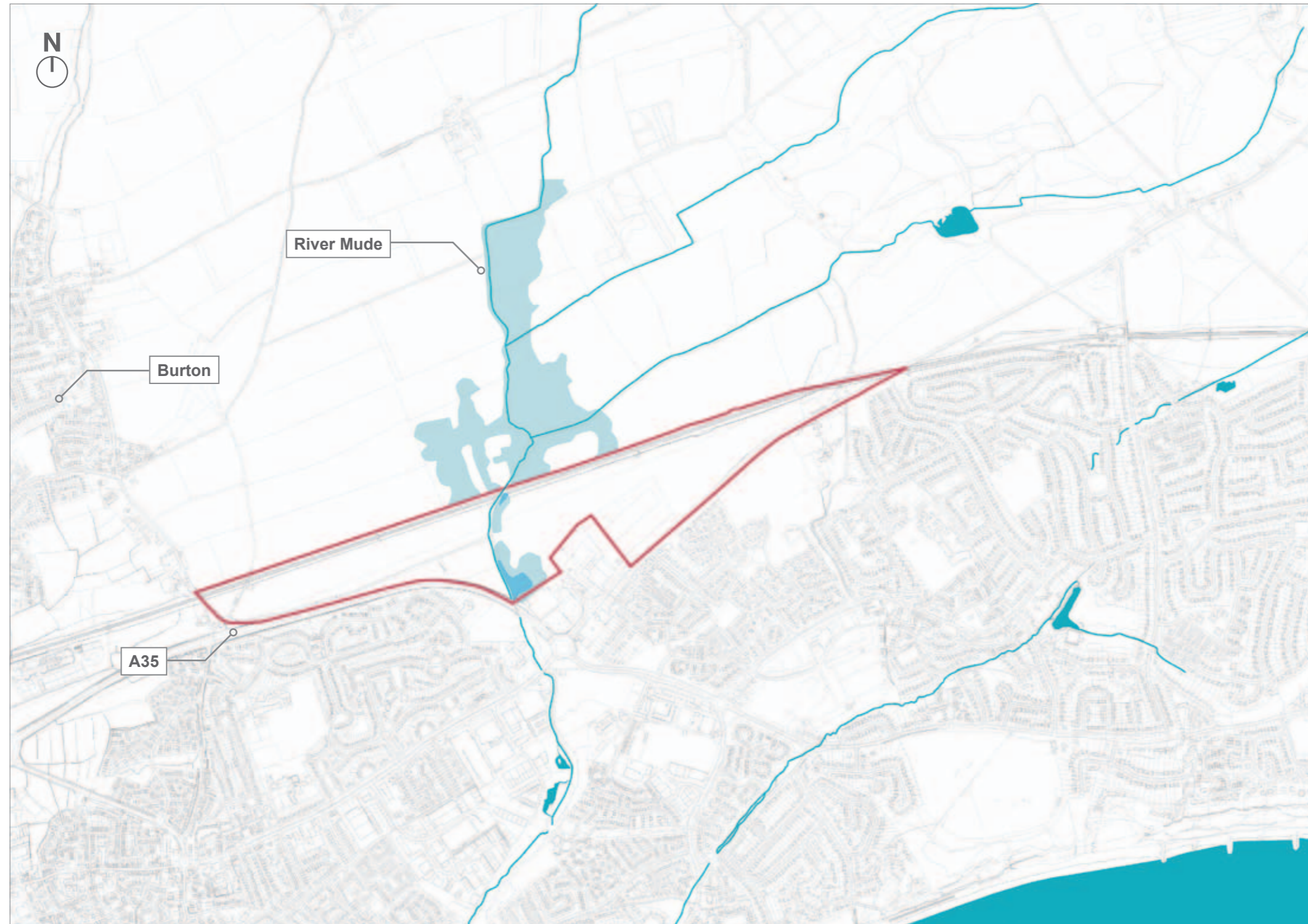
There are a number of historical features and buildings in close proximity to the site. Staple Cross is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) that lies at the eastern end of the site. Although of historical importance, its setting has largely been destroyed over the years through the road infrastructure that has developed around it. Nevertheless, it is a landmark and an important archaeological feature which must be retained and its setting improved.

Either side of the site are two conservation areas. The Burton Conservation Area comprises the eastern part of the village and contains a series of listed and locally listed buildings dating back to the 18th century. The other conservation area is Verno Lane which is made up of a collection of notable buildings, but largely hidden from view from the A35 and accessed up a small track.

- ⋯ Conservation area boundary
- Listed buildings in conservation area
- Locally listed buildings in conservation area
- Buildings making a positive contribution to the conservation area
- ✱ Scheduled Ancient Monument



## Flooding and drainage



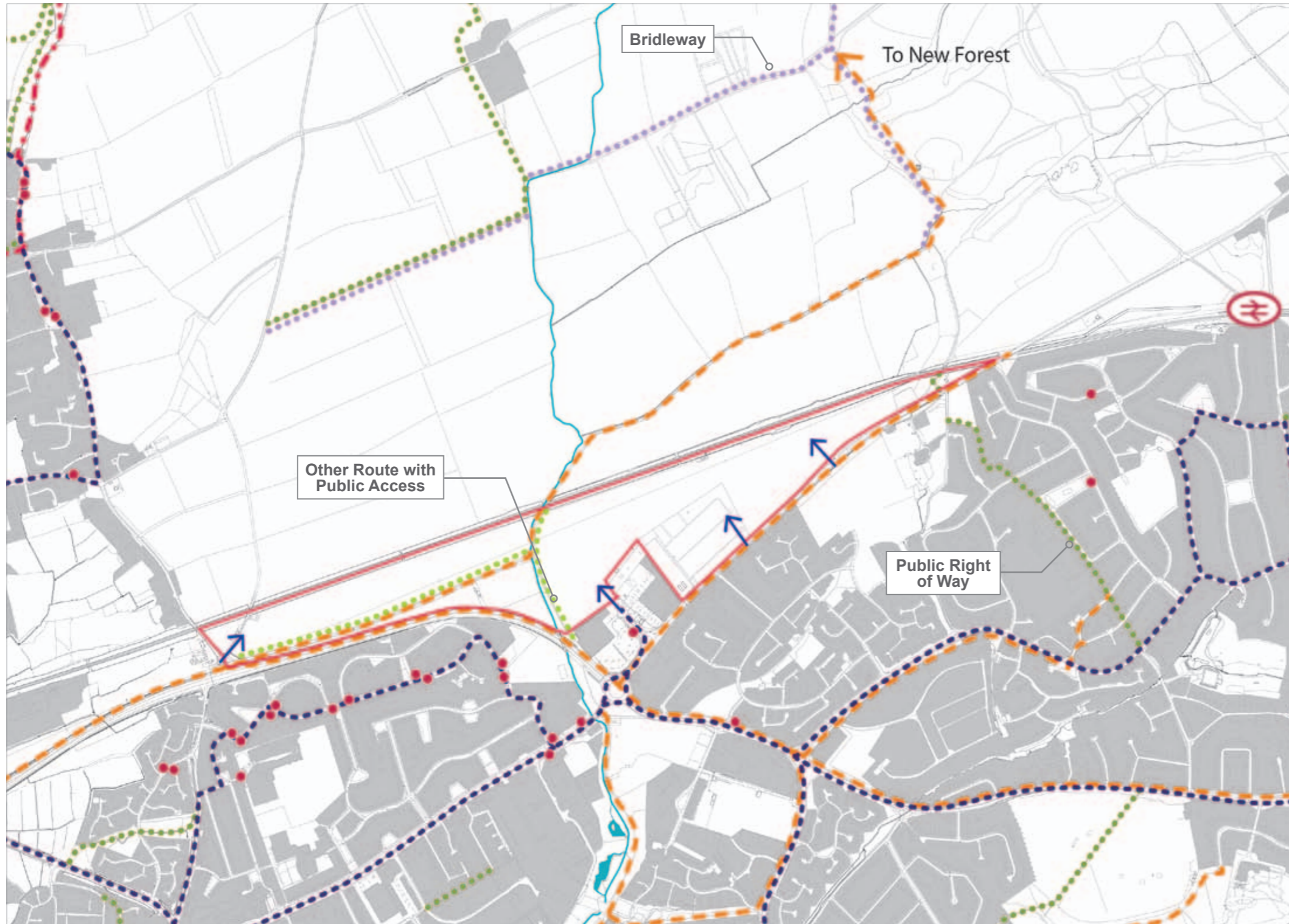
Latest mapping from the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment shows that only a small part of the site falls within an area of flood risk. This comprises land along the River Mude. Most of this area falls within Flood Zone 2 (land assessed as having between 1:100-1:1000 annual probability of river flooding and a 1:200-1:1000 annual probability of sea flooding) where certain land uses are permitted. A small pocket of land lies within Flood Zone 3a (land assessed as having a 1:100 or greater probability of river flooding or a 1:200 or greater probability of sea flooding) which should remain free from development.

The River Mude will require a 15m buffer each side to allow for an enhanced ecological environment and vegetation strips as well as to avoid adverse impact on Southern Damselfly habitat.

■ Flood Zone 2  
■ Flood Zone 3



## Local connectivity plan



The plan (left) shows the site's local connectivity. The main identified vehicular access points into the site could be taken from:

- Hawthorn Road (in the west of the site)
- From the access road into the Sainsbury's development (likely to be bus link only)
- Two potential connection points north of the A35 (Lyndhurst Road) in the east of the site.

It is considered that these routes could then be connected through an internal road network within the site that serves the development.

The site is also surrounded by a number of bus stops. The closest is within the Sainsbury's development, which acts as a small bus interchange. However, the main bus routes run further south in an east-west direction along Hunt Road, Everest Road and Somerford Road. It is considered that there is a potential need for/possibility of routing certain services through the site to increase connectivity and encourage further bus patronage.

In terms of cycle links and footpaths the site is well connected. The National Cycle Network 2 runs through the site, along Ambury Lane and up Watery Lane. This route ultimately connects up to the New Forest in the north and the town centre in the south west. A footpath connection also runs through the site, running from the A35 (close to the pedestrian footbridge), through the site and up Watery Lane.



- Bus stop
- Bus route
- Rail station
- Potential site access
- National Trail - Avon Valley Path
- Public Right of Way
- Bridleway
- Other route with public access



## Wider greenway linkages

The site lies on a key north-south greenway, which runs from the open countryside to the north of the railway lines, through the site and down to the coast. Further analysis of this greenway has shown it to be an attractive and multi-functional piece of green infrastructure that encompasses a variety of activities and experiences, including:

- Open countryside to the north of the town
- The natural corridor of the River Mude
- Playground/ skatepark at Watermans Park
- Christchurch Sports and Social Club
- Mudeford Wood Community Centre/nursery and all weather sports pitches
- Hotels/pubs
- Ferry links

The site, therefore offers the opportunity to continue this link and enhance it further.

## Surrounding urban character

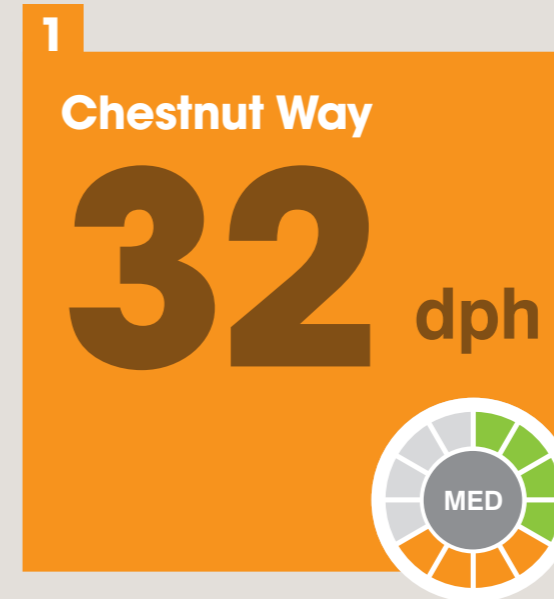
As stated earlier in this report, in addition to understanding the urban structure of the area, an analysis of the urban fabric was also undertaken. This sought to understand local housing densities and typologies in Christchurch today and, in particular, those close to the site. This analysis not only helps comprehend different levels of density in the town today and what they look like, but could also help to inform the types of density that could be appropriate for the site.

The Stage 1 report contained a detailed section covering urban character. This looked at seven locations in and around Christchurch and relatively close to the site and provided sample tiles of housing in each, looking particularly at housing density.

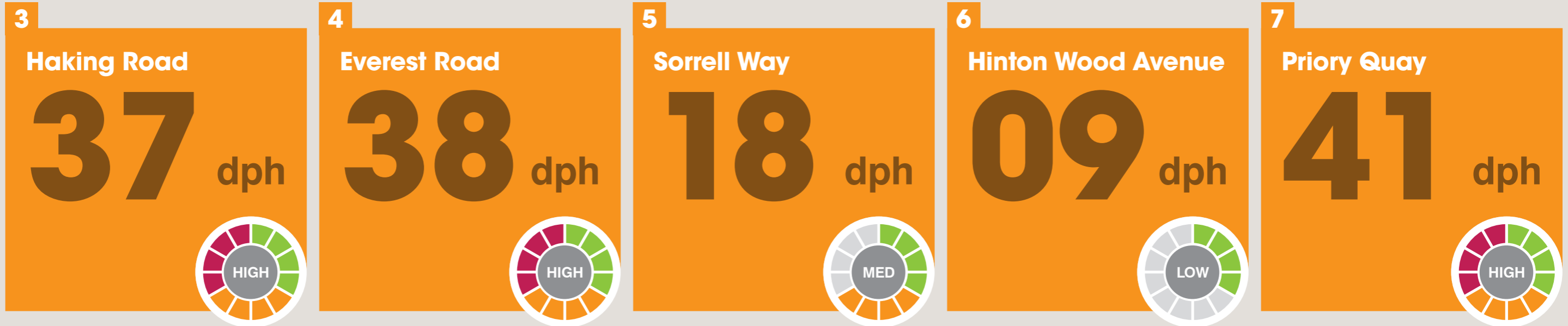
Key features to note are:

- A range of densities from 9 dwellings per hectare (dph) in Hinton Wood Avenue (the oldest residential area studied) to 41 dph at Priory Quay
- Properties all of a similar era (1960s-1980s)
- Many have large front gardens with private driveways and are, therefore, set back from the street, creating a lack of enclosure and a car/road dominated feel
- Most face onto relatively featureless tarmac, but quiet streets
- Many have little architectural interest/features

Despite the issues of design and layout, these areas are popular and comprise desirable places to live within Christchurch.







## Surrounding urban character

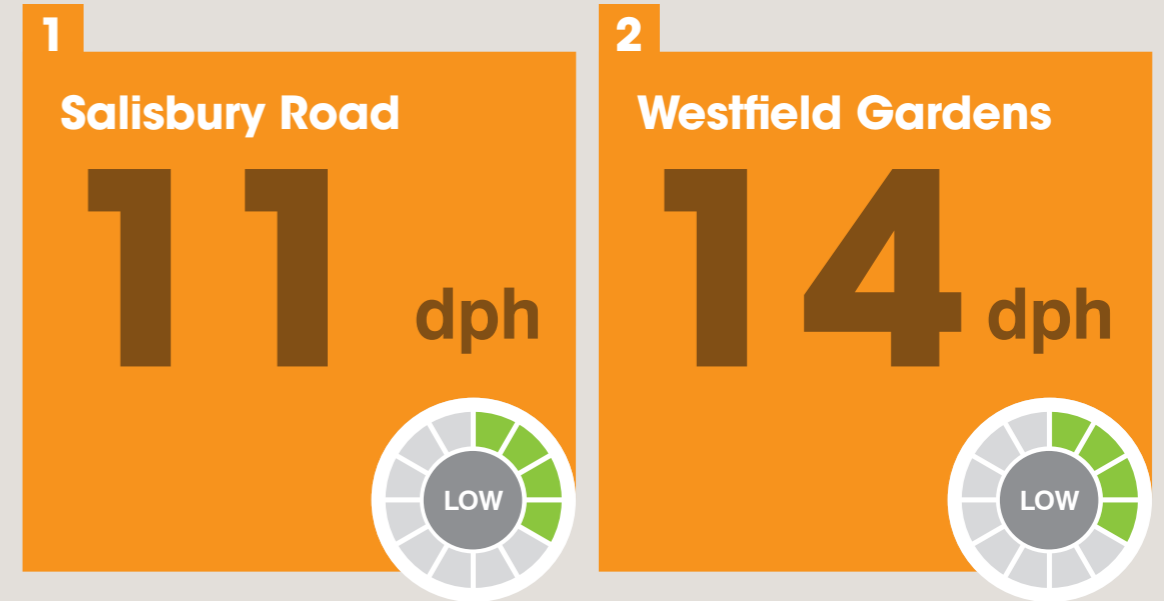
Whilst the examples on the previous page gave a good idea of densities in the town/close to the site, many of them lacked the design quality and character that the North Christchurch site should be striving for. Christchurch has many other areas of high design quality and character in the more historic parts of the settlement. As part of this Stage 2 report, further research was undertaken to identify other styles of housing and building typology in Christchurch and their respective densities.

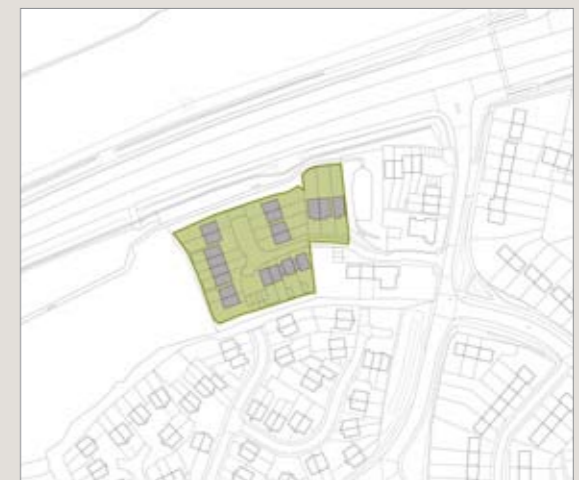
Key features to note are:

- Mixture of architectural eras and styles, including 1800s thatched, early 1900s terrace, 1930s detached, 1990s detached and turn of the 20th century terrace
- Range of plot sizes and layouts, ranging from large houses set in grounds with mature trees and landscaping to small terrace housing with small/ no front gardens

- Varying parking layouts, ranging from on-curtilage with garages and private driveways to on-street parallel parking. The newer developments have internal parking courts within the blocks.
- Range of street typologies, ranging from standard through routes with tarmac surface treatment and clear definition between the street and the pedestrian footpath to shared surfaces with block brickwork.

These additional housing typologies provide a greater breadth of styles and typologies which could be appropriate to the site.









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## Masterplan evolution









## 04 | Masterplan evolution

Having established the key characteristics of the site and surrounding area, this section sets out the evolution of the masterplan, starting by summarising the constraints and opportunities on the site, before moving onto a vision for North Christchurch. This vision is then translated into a series of design objectives and principles which then inform a concept plan for the site that will help shape and structure the masterplan for North Christchurch.



## Summary of site constraints

The plan (right) summarises the site's constraints as they are today. The major features include the overhead powerlines, which not only constrain the site physically, but give the site a poor perception. Other constraints include the noise buffer along the railway line and the areas of flooding along the River Mude. The allotments take up a large part of the site, which results in an awkward pinch point from a design point of view.

-  River buffer (15m either side)
-  Floodplain
-  Scheduled Ancient Monument
-  Pylon buffer (10-17m either side)
-  Allotments and nursery
-  Railway buffer (30m either side)
-  Supermarket noise buffer (50m)
-  Site
















## Summary of opportunities

The plan (right) shows the site's numerous opportunities. One of the key opportunities is the green link from the south, through the site and out into the open countryside to the north.

There is also the opportunity to underground/re-align the overhead powerlines and relocate the allotments, to create a larger site - in line with option 1 of the Council's consultation options. The removal of the powerlines frees up space and improves the perception and visual quality of the site. The relocation of the allotments, potentially to a site to the north of the railway line, opens up developable land close to the local centre. It also allows the opportunity for a new allotment 'hub site'.

The existing hard edge of the railway line becomes a hard, defensible boundary to the town.

The Sainsbury's supermarket creates a hub around which to build a new/expanded local centre containing a number of small scale local shopping and community uses e.g. hairdressers, public house, community centre etc.

-  Undergrounding powerlines
-  New urban edge
-  Potential new allotment location
-  Improved greenway
-  Greenway link - footpath and cycleway
-  Footpath linkages
-  New expanded local centre
-  Synergy with existing uses
-  Existing local facilities
-  Gateway to countryside/Chistchurch
-  Site boundary



## Understanding the local vision and objectives

The site is essentially the last major piece of the town's jigsaw and the largest development site left in Christchurch. It is, therefore, of key importance to the town and its development must tie in with the Council's overall vision for the Borough.

The "Options for Consideration" Core Strategy document that went out for consultation in late 2010/early 2011 contained Christchurch Borough Council's (and East Dorset District Council's) vision for the area. This contained a useful insight into local aspirations. Key elements of the vision are set out (right) with the key points relating to the masterplan highlighted in bold.

## Joint core strategy vision

The **natural environment** of Christchurch and East Dorset and its **historic and thriving towns and villages** are, and will, continue to be the **most important assets for the area**. However this environment will be used to sustain the growth of the local economy, and the welfare of its local communities, rather than being used as a reason to turn our back on growth which can be achieved sustainably.

The Dorset Heathlands, the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Christchurch Harbour and its beaches will be protected and enhanced to ensure that recreation and commercial activity sustains these areas. The area will adapt to the emerging demands of climate change through clear strategies to reduce risk of flooding, and through encouraging **high standards of building design and construction**.

The housing needs of the area will be addressed, with housing delivered of a **type and tenure which meets the aspirations of those wishing to buy or rent**. An element of this housing will be in the form of **new, well planned, sustainable residential areas** in both Christchurch and East Dorset. These will be attractive new areas, including high quality, **sustainable homes, areas of open space, new community facilities, and improved transport links** to the surrounding area.

Housing will also continue to be met from redevelopment within the existing towns, but developments will now **better reflect the character and type of housing found in each local area**, and will make appropriate contributions to infrastructure. Almost all new housing development will contribute to the **provision of affordable housing**, creating a step change in delivery of affordable dwellings and a significant reduction in waiting lists.

The character of the area will also be protected through retention of the Green Belt in all areas except those needed to secure **well planned and sustainable housing** and employment growth as part of the Core Strategy.

Historic towns such as Christchurch and Wimborne will be vibrant centres of commercial and cultural activity, with niche shopping, and varied attractions and facilities for residents and visitors alike. Other key local centres in Ferndown, Verwood, West Moors and Highcliffe will support shops and services for their local communities, with villages and **smaller neighbourhood centres providing basic services**. New ways of delivering services and facilities in rural areas will be developed.

The area will be easier to get around, not just for those who have a car, but for those who wish to use **public transport, to walk or to cycle**. In Christchurch, development will be focused on the **existing public transport corridors** on the A35 and A337 and better links will be made to Christchurch and **Hinton Admiral stations, with the urban extension also linked to the transport network**. Christchurch Borough Council will continue to press for the development of a Christchurch Bypass as a long term solution to the town's traffic problems.

### Strategic Objectives:

Underpinning this vision is a series of objectives that have been developed by the two Councils. These being:

#### Objective 1

To manage and safeguard the natural environment of Christchurch and East Dorset.

#### Objective 2

To maintain the character of the towns and villages, and to create vibrant local centres.

#### Objective 3

To adapt to the challenges of climate change.

#### Objective 4

To enable the mixed economy of Christchurch and East Dorset to grow, and to develop new employment sectors.

#### Objective 5

To provide a suitable, affordable and sustainable range of housing to meet local needs.

#### Objective 6

To help our communities to travel less, and to travel more easily by a range of choices.

The Joint Core Strategy vision and its objectives, coupled with the analysis of the site and its opportunities have led to the creation of a vision for the site which is set out on the opposite page.

## North Christchurch vision

North Christchurch is the last major piece of the town's urban jigsaw and offers a wonderful opportunity to become a modern 21st century urban quarter with a distinctive character of its own.

It will act as an attractive gateway to the north of the town, connecting the historic settlement of Christchurch to the south of the railway line with the wider rural countryside landscape to the north.

At the heart of the site will be the existing local centre, which will be enhanced and form the focal point for the new and existing residents, thus helping to integrate them both physically and socially from the outset. The presence of the local centre, along with improved bus connections, footpaths and cycle ways will help to ensure that the development comprises a fully sustainable community, lessening the need for the private car.

The site's main natural feature: the River Mude will become a key green spine through the heart of the site, improving the north-south connections and creating an area of high bio-diversity and recreational value. This will be complemented by other areas of formal and informal green space that create an attractive and usable environment as well as adding character to the development. Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace will also be provided to encourage people away from the nearby protected heathlands.

The buildings within the site will pick up on the town's high quality examples of local vernacular, whilst also appreciating local densities and typologies and the need to provide sustainable, marketable and flexible units.

To help apply this vision spatially to the site a series of **design principles** have been produced - overleaf.

# Design objectives and principles

**Walkable neighbourhoods** Two new neighbourhoods within a ten minute walk of the new local centre **1**



**River Park** Central green space around river corridor to enhance its bio-diversity and create an active focal point for the community **2**



**Network of green open spaces** To create varied and accessible recreation opportunities **3**

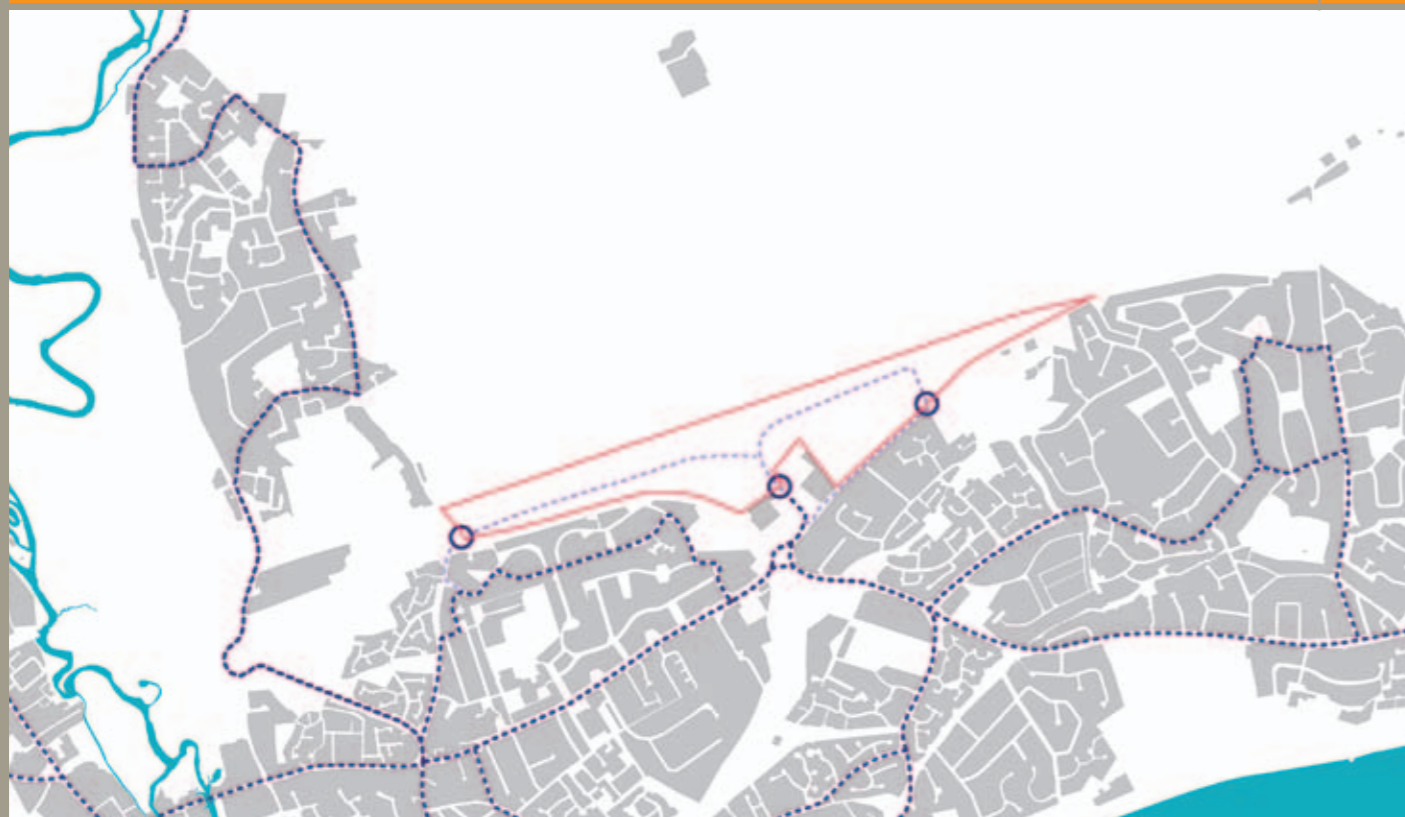


**North-south greenway** Enhanced wider green links to the town and surrounding countryside/SANG **4**



**Sustainable Connections** To encourage sustainable travel patterns

5



**Improved east-west links** Utilising constrained area to create new linkages

6



**Remove constraints** To free up land, create a better environment for development and create an allotment 'hub' site

7



**Respecting key features** Protecting historic and environmental features

8



## Concept and framework masterplan

The plan (near right) illustrates the key concepts for the site. The key features are:

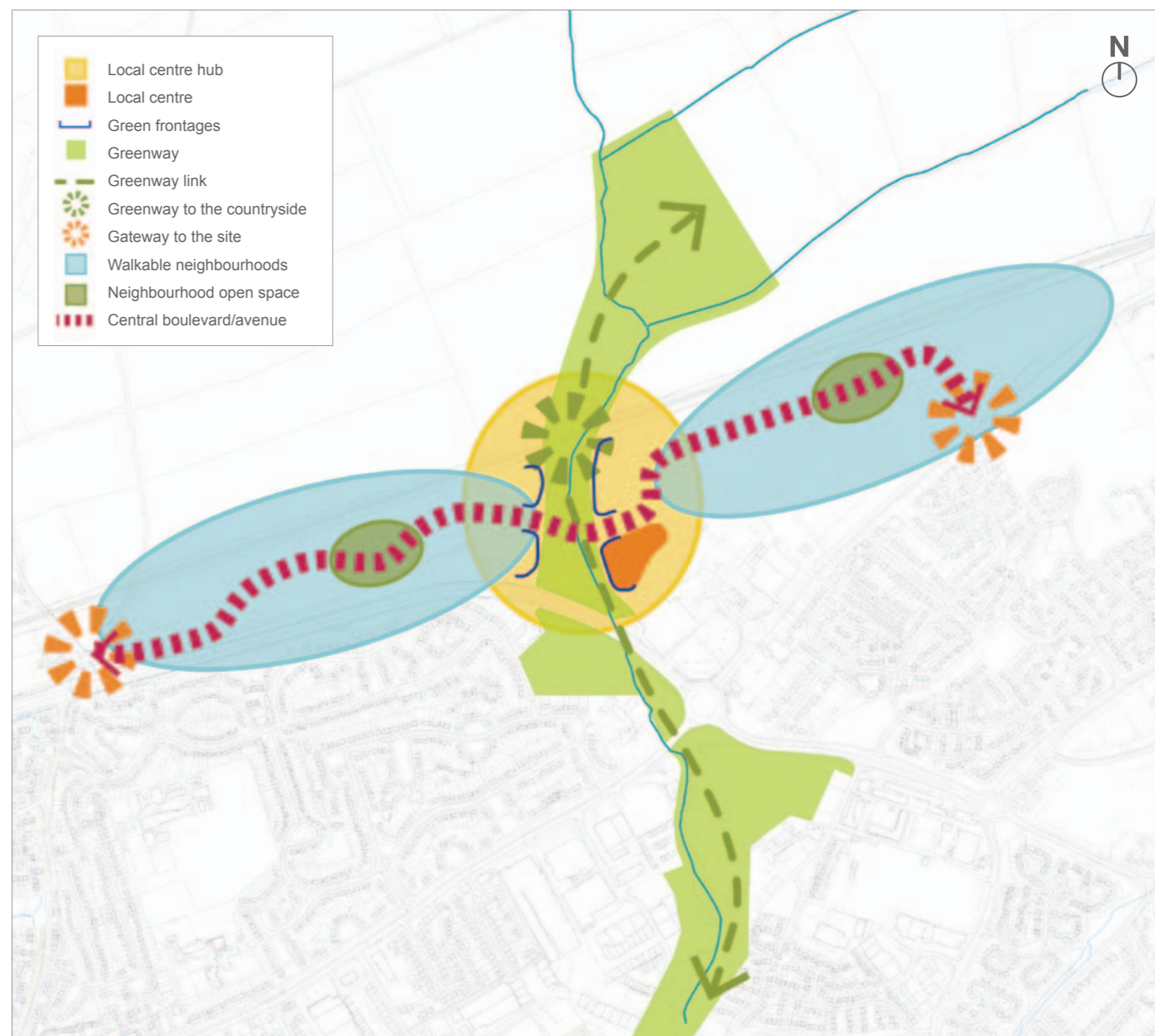
- Central local centre hub
- Two walkable neighbourhoods either side
- A north-south green spine/central park
- Local green spaces central to each neighbourhood

The framework masterplan (far right) shows a potential layout for the site. The key features are as follows:

- Predominantly residential land uses set in perimeter blocks.
- An east west tree-lined avenue/boulevard extending from Hawthorn Road in the west to the current location of the layby on the A35 (Lyndhurst Road) in the east.
- A mixed use local centre at the heart of the site, facing into a public space/shared surface, with a direct link down to the Sainsbury's development for linked trips. Potential uses within this local centre could include those which complement Sainsbury's rather than try to compete with it, such as: pub/restaurant; hairdresser; takeaway; dry cleaners; healthcare centre; small retail units (comparison and convenience provision at a level that does not have an adverse impact on Christchurch town centre) and a dual aspect community building/sports pavilion between the local centre and the central park
- A large central park area adjacent to the local centre providing new playing pitches, formal open space provision, areas of informal recreation and natural green space

- A series of useable and varying open spaces throughout the development
- A linear green route adjacent to the railway line in the non-developable area (powerline easement and railway noise buffer)
- A further green corridor along the south west of the site, accommodating footpath and cycle linkages as well as swales/sustainable urban drainage systems
- The power lines are undergrounded in the west of the site, via a termination tower to the immediate east of Hawthorn Road

Sainsbury's have an option covering 6 acres (2.4 hectares) of land immediately to the north of their existing supermarket (this largely covers the area of proposed playing pitches). The existing store is overtrading and Sainsbury's may seek to expand this store in the future. Sainsbury's have no immediate plans, but the Council have discussed the possibility of them working up an alternative local centre layout to take account of their aspirations. As and when this is received, it could sit as a separate piece of evidence alongside this masterplan. Should any planning application come forward, this could be accommodated within the local centre, subject to other policy considerations. The core strategy policy will not use the masterplan as a perspective blueprint for any future applications and sufficient flexibility will be written into any future policy.





Framework masterplan

## Alternative design – with Roeshot Hill allotments retained.



The plan on the previous page illustrated how the masterplan would look if the Roeshot Hill allotments were relocated. The plan (opposite) shows a framework masterplan with a potential layout for the site should the allotments be retained. This layout maintains the same key principles as the full masterplan including the alignment of the spine road.

From a design point of view, the retention of the allotments emphasises the narrow linear nature of the site at the eastern end and helps to create an awkward pinch point that impacts on the overall permeability of this part of the site. It also creates a more isolated development at the eastern end.

The retention of the allotments also results in the loss of over 5 hectares of land which equates to a reduction in housing of between 147 and 176 homes.

Whilst the retention of the allotments still enables the site to deliver a scheme with design integrity, the opportunity to move the allotments allows a comprehensive design with a preferable block layout.

The rest of this document focuses on the framework plan that relocates the allotment i.e. the preferred option.





## Access and movement plans

### Road typologies

The road structure is built around a main east-west spine which runs from Hawthorn Road in the west to the lay-by off of the A35 (Lyndhurst Road) in the east. The road will take the form of a boulevard or avenue and its key features comprise:

- 6m wide carriageway (capable of accommodating buses) with a 3m landscape strip each side. 2m wide pedestrian footpaths run either side of the landscape strips. The landscape strip would accommodate lines of trees to give the road character and a sense of grandeur as well as creating better legibility within the site
- A series of deflections along its route to slow traffic (preventing the possibility of it being an alternative route to the A35)
- A series of raised and shared surface areas at each junction, to help slow traffic down further and mark junctions and nodes. The route through the local centre will also comprise shared surface
- Two spurs – one into the Sainsbury's site and one onto the A35 (Lyndhurst Road). The Sainsbury's spur would be a bus only link
- A pinch-point at the bridge over the River Mude with the purpose to again slow traffic speeds and prevent it becoming an alternative to the A35

A series of primary roads serve the residential blocks. Access to the fronts of the residential blocks for cars is either taken from mews style roads or private driveways.

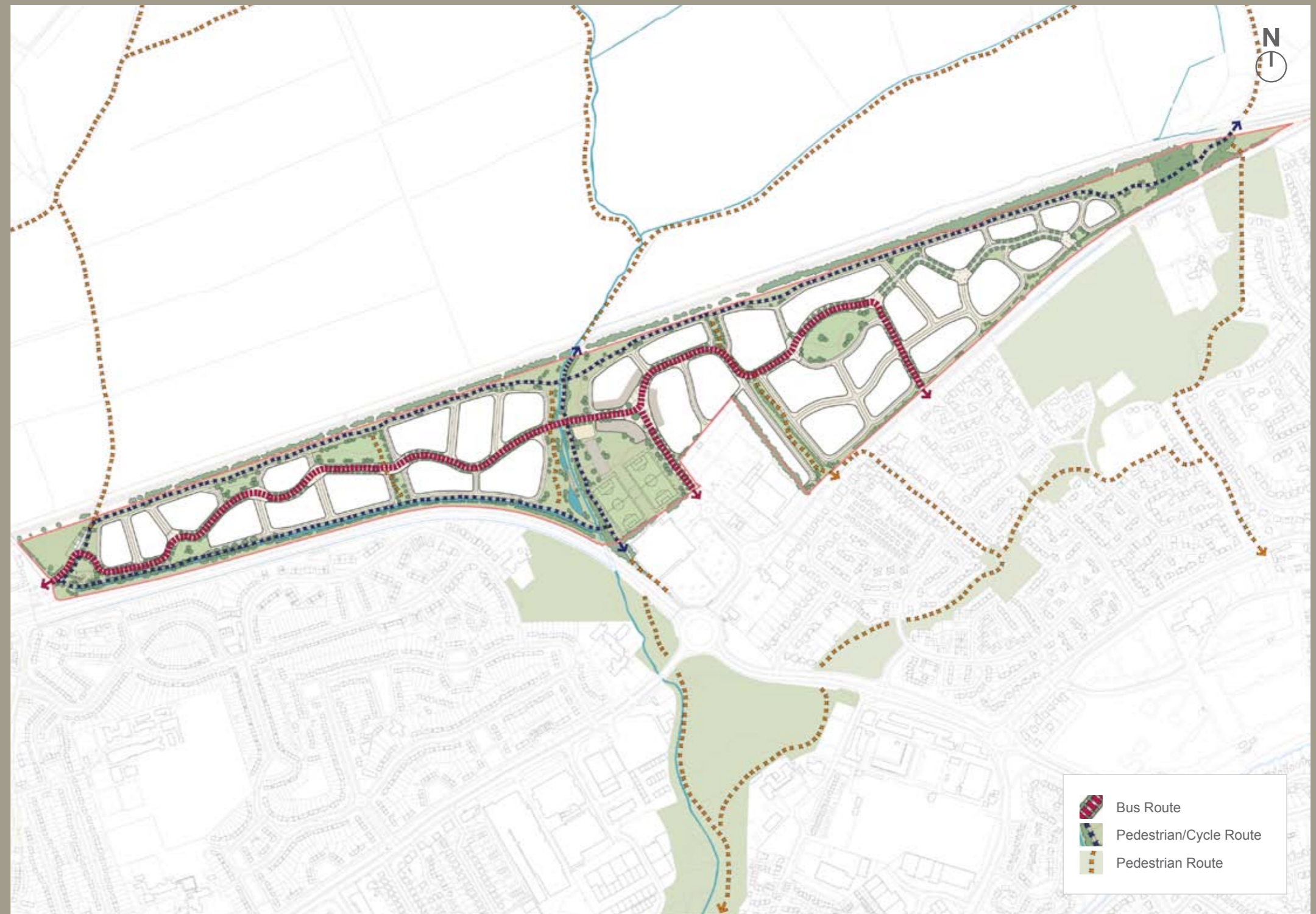


### Sustainable movement strategy

The central avenue/boulevard has the potential to accommodate buses and a possible bus link is shown on the plan (right). Such a route would ensure that all residents on the site would be within 400m (5 minute walk) of the bus. The route shown offers the potential to run a link through almost the entirety of the site, whilst also having the option to run through Sainsbury's (and the bus interchange) or operate on a shorter loop (between Lyndhurst Road and Sainsbury's).

New pedestrian and cycle routes are provided through the site. The existing National Cycle Network 2 runs along a similar route to that which exists today. However, this route is now complemented by a linear link along the northern edge of the site. Both routes connect into north-south routes and the wider connections.

There are a number of pedestrian routes across the site. The east-west cycle links also cater for pedestrians and these are complemented by several north-south connections which in turn link into the wider strategic footpath network, both within the residential area to the south and the open countryside to the north.



## Landscape and green infrastructure

A key feature of the site is its hierarchy and network of open spaces. At the heart of the whole scheme is the Central Park. This has the following features:

- River Mude running through its heart, creating an attractive natural feature and area of ecological value
- Close proximity to the local centre, providing it with an active edge
- A central location within the site, making it accessible to the residents of the development
- A number of formal uses including:
  - » Two playing pitches (with a central area for a cricket strip)
  - » A Multi-Use Games Area (for older children) including a five-a-side pitch/ basketball court
  - » A Local Equipped Area of Play – for older and younger children
  - » A dual aspect pavilion building fronting onto both the park and the local centre, containing community rooms, a café and changing rooms

The Central Park is also located in an area of the site that is non-developable (flood risk). Despite this being an infrequent event, open space and recreational uses, rather than development were considered most appropriate here. Flood attenuation measures can be incorporated into the design of this space. Such measures include the lowering of one/or both of the playing pitches to enable it/them to store water in the event that the river breaches its banks.



In addition to the Central Park, the scheme has other areas of open space (based on village green typologies) in the east and west, which are more informal, but with the potential to contain local play areas for smaller children. Both are walkable to their surrounding communities at either end of the site. Furthermore, both areas are similar in scale to the green at the heart of the village of Burton. The Central Park and the two greens are overlooked by either active uses or residential properties to create spaces and places that feel safe and secure at all times of the day.

The potential allotment relocation site is shown on the plan opposite. Potential exists for this to be located in the area of land to the north of the railway line and between Hawthorn and Sailsbury Roads, subject to further work and agreements between the Council and landowner. The Council will seek to establish a larger 'hub site' here. The precise size of the site is yet to be confirmed, but will be more than a direct replacement.

There is the need to provide Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGs). The best location for this is to the north of the railway line. However, this area is subject to planned/potential minerals workings over the next 15-20 years. Several alternative strategies have been explored between the Council, Natural England and the landowner, but at the time of this report, no final strategy/ location had been fixed. The masterplan, therefore, remains flexible as to its future location, but ensures that the links to the north of the railway line are maintained and enhanced.

SANG's must be provided in accordance with Natural England's standards which are set out in the 2011 Footprint Ecology Report entitled: Analysis and presentation of IPF monitoring and projects to inform the heathland DPD.



The masterplan meets the Council's Recreation, Sport and Open Space requirements. The land use, density and capacity plan, (shown later in this section), shows a mid-point housing figure of 849 dwellings. This number of units would generate the following population:

Homes	849
Average household size	2.3 people/household
Population	1,952

The Council's Recreation, Sport and Open Space standards require:

Provision	Standard per 1,000 people
Recreation and public gardens	0.5
Natural and semi-natural green space	1
Amenity greenspace	0.5
Children and young people's space	0.25
Allotments	0.25
Outdoor active sports space	1.25
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.75</b>

The site's overall requirements on this site are, therefore:

Provision	Requirement
Recreation and public gardens	0.98
Natural and semi-natural green space	1.95
Amenity greenspace	0.98
Children and young people's space	0.49
Allotments	0.49
Outdoor active sports space	2.44
<b>Total</b>	<b>7.33</b>



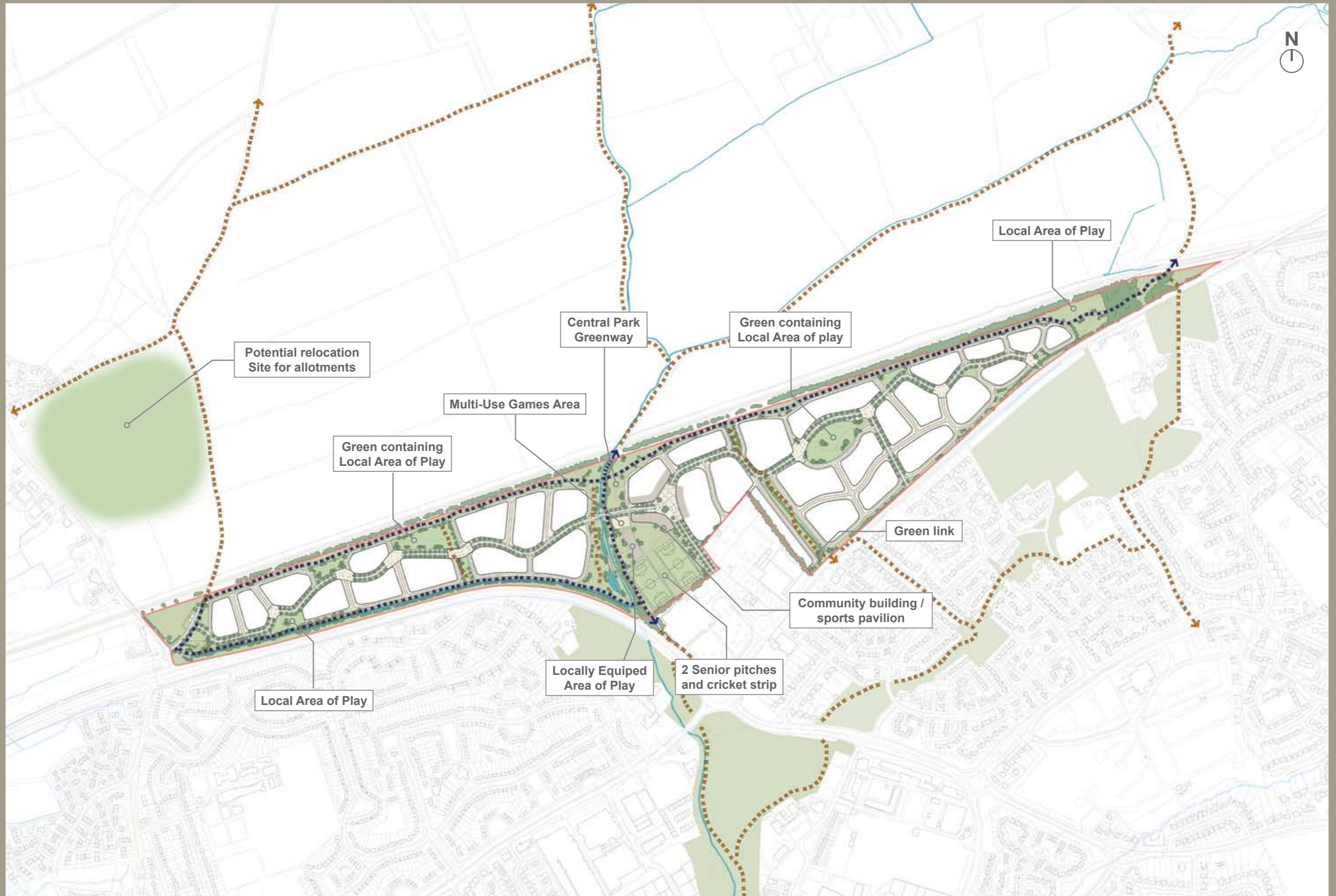
Of this total, both amenity green space and children's play space could be included as part of the general net residential areas (as set out in Planning Policy Guidance 3). Furthermore, allotments will comprise part of the new 'hub' to the north of the railway line.

Recreation and public gardens (0.98ha) and outdoor active sports space (2.44ha) will need to be provided within the site boundary, as will natural/ semi-natural greenspace (1.95ha).

The masterplan shows two parks at the centre of both the eastern and western neighbourhoods. These total 1.37ha, thus providing more than required in terms of recreation and public garden provision. It also shows playing pitches (1.42ha) and other active sports space at the centre of the development (1.08ha) resulting in 2.5ha overall – again providing the requisite amount.

Finally, it provides for a total of 2.51ha of natural/semi-natural green space in the greenways/green corridors to the north and south of the development and this, again, provides more than enough provision.

Further areas of amenity greenspace are provided at the eastern and western ends of the site.



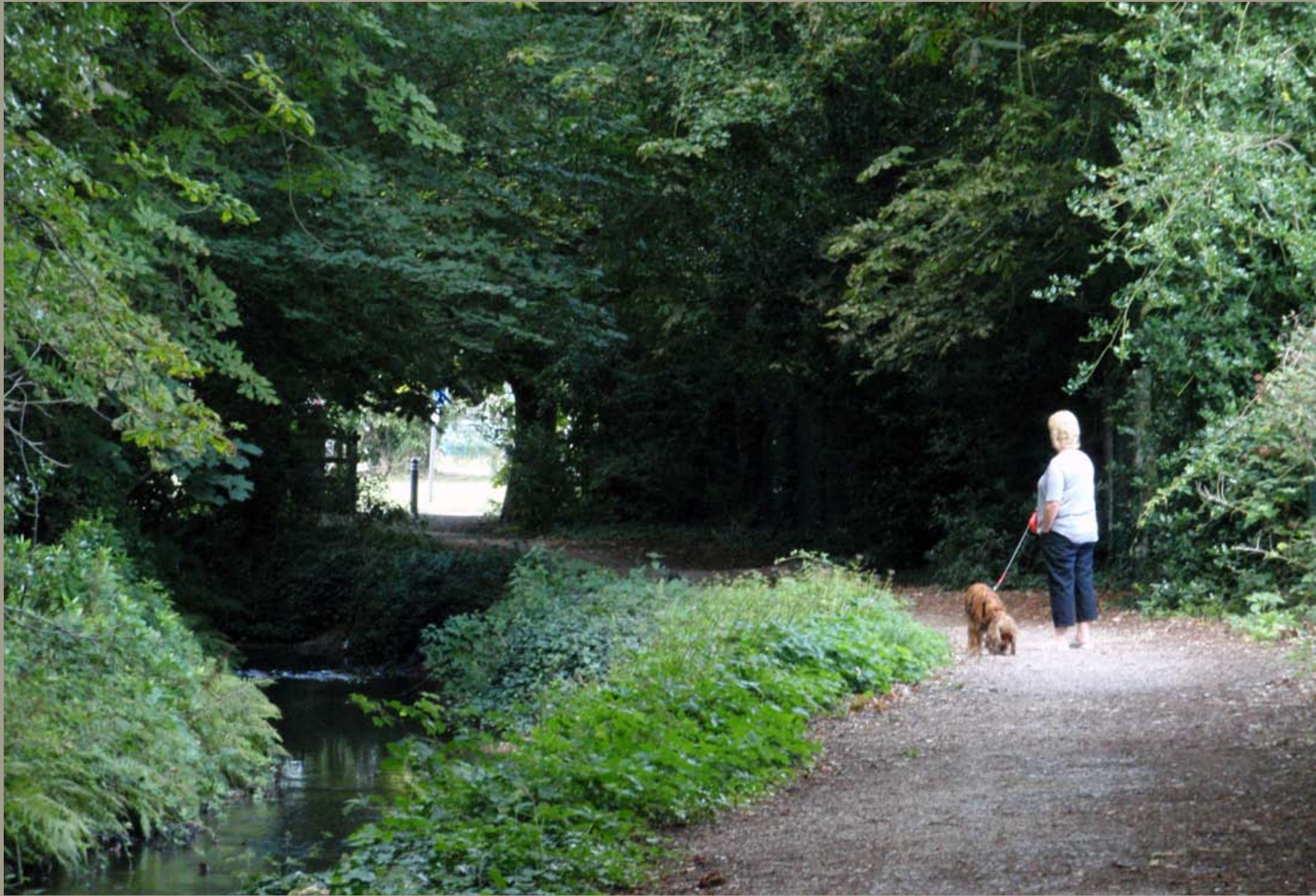
## Wider context

Having established the landscape and green infrastructure layout on the site, the plan (right) shows how the new network of open spaces fits in with the wider context. Key to this is the continuation of the multi-functional north-south riverside green link that runs from countryside to coast.

As with other parts of this green spine, the new Central Park offers a blend of recreational uses, informal green space and areas of ecological value that will benefit the new residents of the site, the existing population and visitors to the town.

The new Central Park also plays a key role in acting as a gateway to Christchurch for those walking to the town from the surrounding footpath network to the north. It also creates an attractive transition between the town and countryside.





## Land use, density and capacity

The plan (opposite) shows the land uses on the site, with the housing element broken down by density - measured in dwellings per hectare (dph).

### Land uses

Land uses are predominantly housing, with the only variation being around the local centre with the pavilion building and small scale shops/commercial uses at ground floor level in blocks H3 and H4.

### Density

In terms of housing density, the following breakdown has been applied:

**High (H) = 40-45 dph** (likely to comprise mostly flats and terraced houses on small plots)

**High-medium (HM) = 35-40dph** (likely to comprise townhouses and terraced houses on medium sized plots)

**Medium (M) = 25-35dph** (likely to comprise townhouses, semi-detached houses and detached houses on medium plots)

**Low (L) = 20-25dph** (likely to comprise semi-detached houses and detached houses on larger plots)

The rationale behind the locations of the various housing densities is as follows:

- High density, located around the local centre. This area will largely comprise flats and apartments over shops. This helps ensure that more people live closer to the shops and services here creating a sustainable development, a more vibrant part of the site and street surveillance at all times.
- High-medium density located around the local centre and along the edges. This level of density ensures that densities gradually reduce as you move away from the local centre. They also ensure that smaller terrace and town houses are located along the northern and southern edges, creating a stronger, less broken built form here.
- Medium density located towards the eastern and western edges of the site. This level of density allows for more family accommodation, whilst also providing a strong frontage both along the edges and along the central avenue/boulevard helping to emphasise its importance. This level of density will still help support bus patronage.
- Low density on the outer edges and within the heart of the eastern side of the site. This ensures that the arrival point in the west of the site is less urban/dense, reflecting the character of the nearby village of Burton. The pocket of low density development on the eastern end also ensures that larger housing provides a softer edge that graduates into the green areas to the east. A further block of low density housing lies within the heart of the eastern side of the site, shielding this from the noise of the A35 and providing a distinct character area of its own.

The urban character studies contained earlier in this report provide an indication of comparative places within Christchurch.

### Capacity

The site capacities are generated by the densities. The table (right) shows each plot size within the site and a range of dwelling numbers based on the lower-middle and upper end of that density range. E.g. plot M3 is medium density, which ranges from 25-35 dph. The numbers in the table reflect the low end of this (25dph), the mid-point (30dph) and the high end (35dph).

Applying this to the whole site results in a housing capacity of between 765 dwellings and 933 dwellings. The mid-point of 849 dwellings is considered to be the most useful figure for the purposes of this exercise. The masterplan's open space has been calculated based on this mid-point.

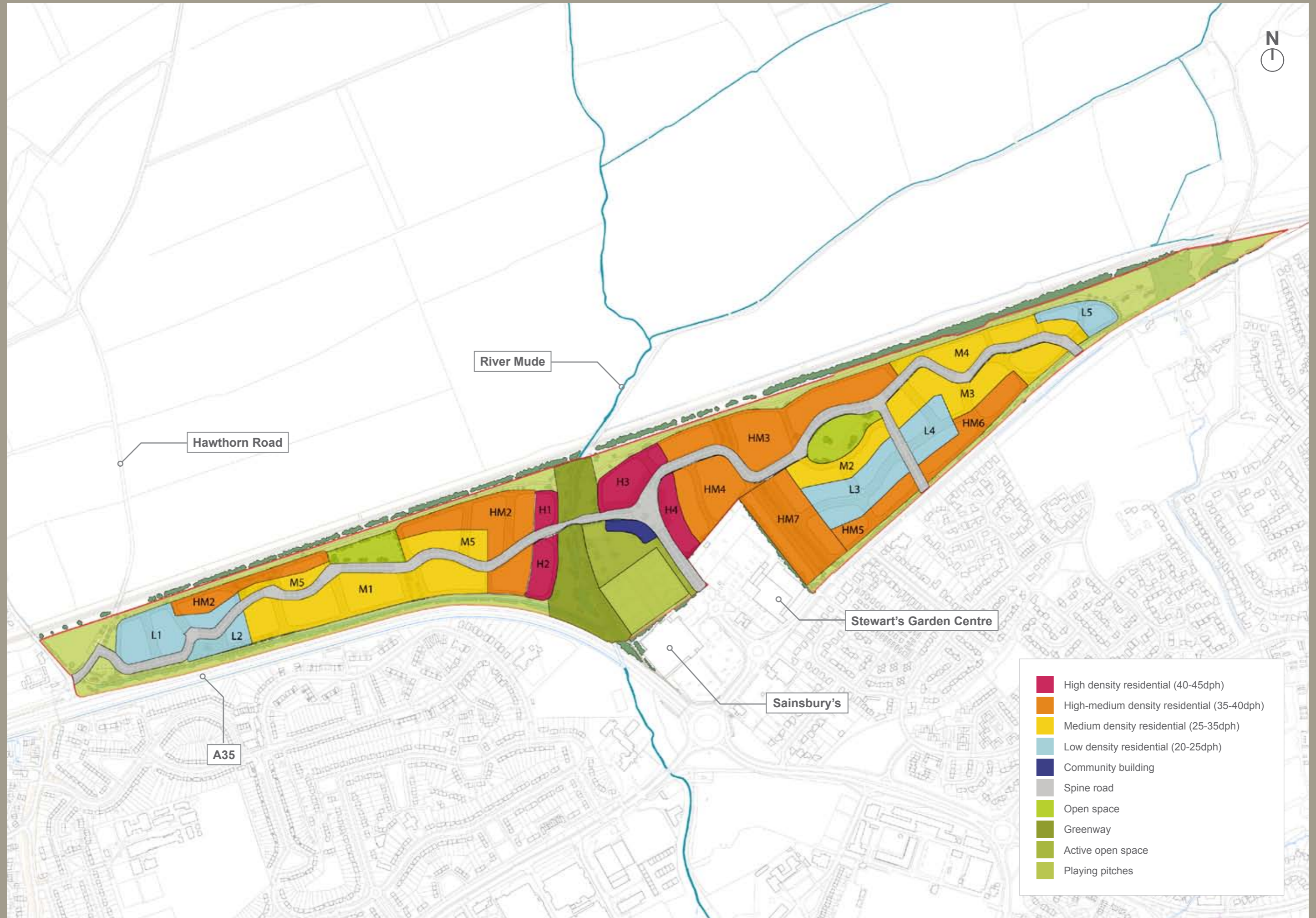
### Impact of density on renewable energy

The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) - now part of the Design Council - produced a report entitled: Establishing Local Energy Supply / CHP Networks. This report states that for Combined Heat and Power (CHP) to be viable developments need to be over 200 homes in size and at a density of 60-80dph. If the density is below this figure, then CHP and district heating is less viable.

To operate effectively CHPs require a good annual thermal base load. Whilst CHP is unlikely to be viable at the scale of development anticipated there may be the potential to introduce such a scheme given that there is a Sainsbury's nearby that is likely to be extended in the future. Depending on how the Sainsbury's building services are configured will depend on the annual heat requirement. If the thermal demand is sufficient then CHP may become more viable at this point. This view is subject to a detailed energy strategy being prepared and it is recommended that the Council carry out such a study or require the developers to do so and that it should examine the potential offered by all uses.

Residential Plots				
Plots	Plot Size	Lowest	Mid	Highest
H1	0.30	12	13	14
H2	0.55	22	23	25
H3	0.93	37	40	42
H4	0.57	23	24	26
HM1	0.51	18	19	20
HM2	2.33	82	87	93
HM3	2.87	100	108	115
HM4	1.44	50	54	58
HM5	0.69	24	26	28
HM6	1.05	37	39	42
HM7	2.04	71	77	82
M1	2.75	69	83	96
M2	0.87	22	26	30
M3	1.88	47	56	66
M4	1.29	32	39	45
M5	1.00	25	30	35
L1	1.39	28	31	35
L2	0.45	9	10	11
L3	1.47	29	33	37
L4	0.80	16	18	20
L5	0.58	12	13	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>25.76</b>	<b>765</b>	<b>849</b>	<b>933</b>





## Key frontage plan

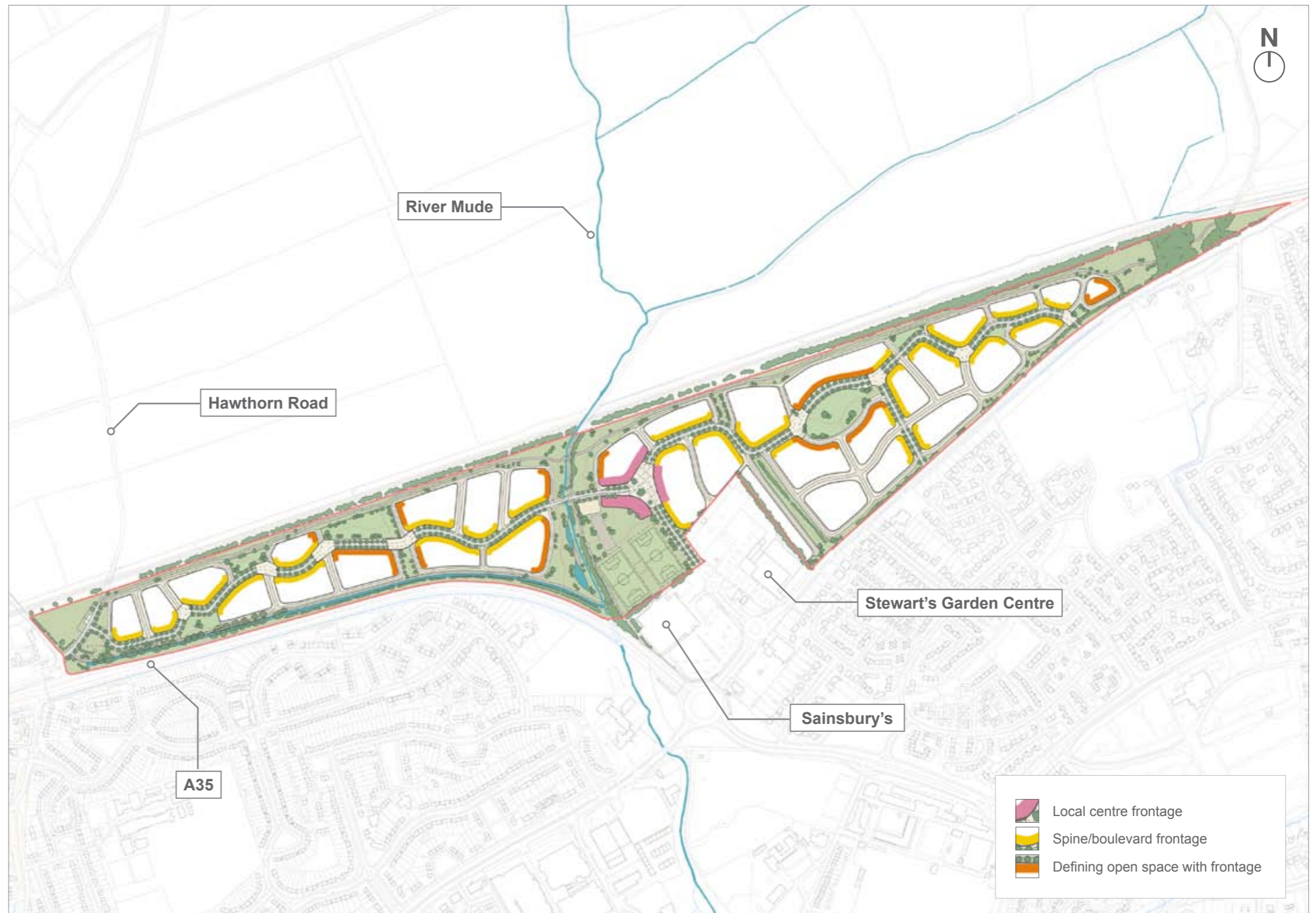
The plan (right) shows the key frontages within the development.

The local centre will become the focus of the development and will comprise active and varied frontages to reflect the ground floor uses taking place here. These frontages will all face into the central public square and their design will be important.

Frontages along the central boulevard/avenue will also be important as they will help define the street and the spaces along it. Particular attention should be given along the spine to ensure that buildings have frontages/facades that:

- have frequent doors and windows, with few blank walls;
- articulate the facades with projections such as bays and porches;
- use high quality building materials; and
- provide a sense of enclosure to the street.

Other key building frontages are those that front onto the open space within the site. Buildings that front onto public spaces create an identity and sense of ownership and care as well as passive surveillance. Facing the park also creates higher values which help off-set the costs of creating single-sided streets. The key open spaces including the Central Park and the two village greens should have high quality residential frontage around their edges, meeting the principles set out above.



The plan (right) provides an indication of how development could be phased. Phase 1 could comprise land to the east, which could come forward early and after the power lines have been undergrounded and re-routed through the site. Phase 1 would have two access points onto the A35 (Lyndhurst Road) preventing it from becoming a cul-de-sac development at the outset. Phase 1 would also be the largest of the phases, ensuring that any developer receives a return on the number of units early on. It would also ensure that a number of larger family dwellings are delivered from the outset.

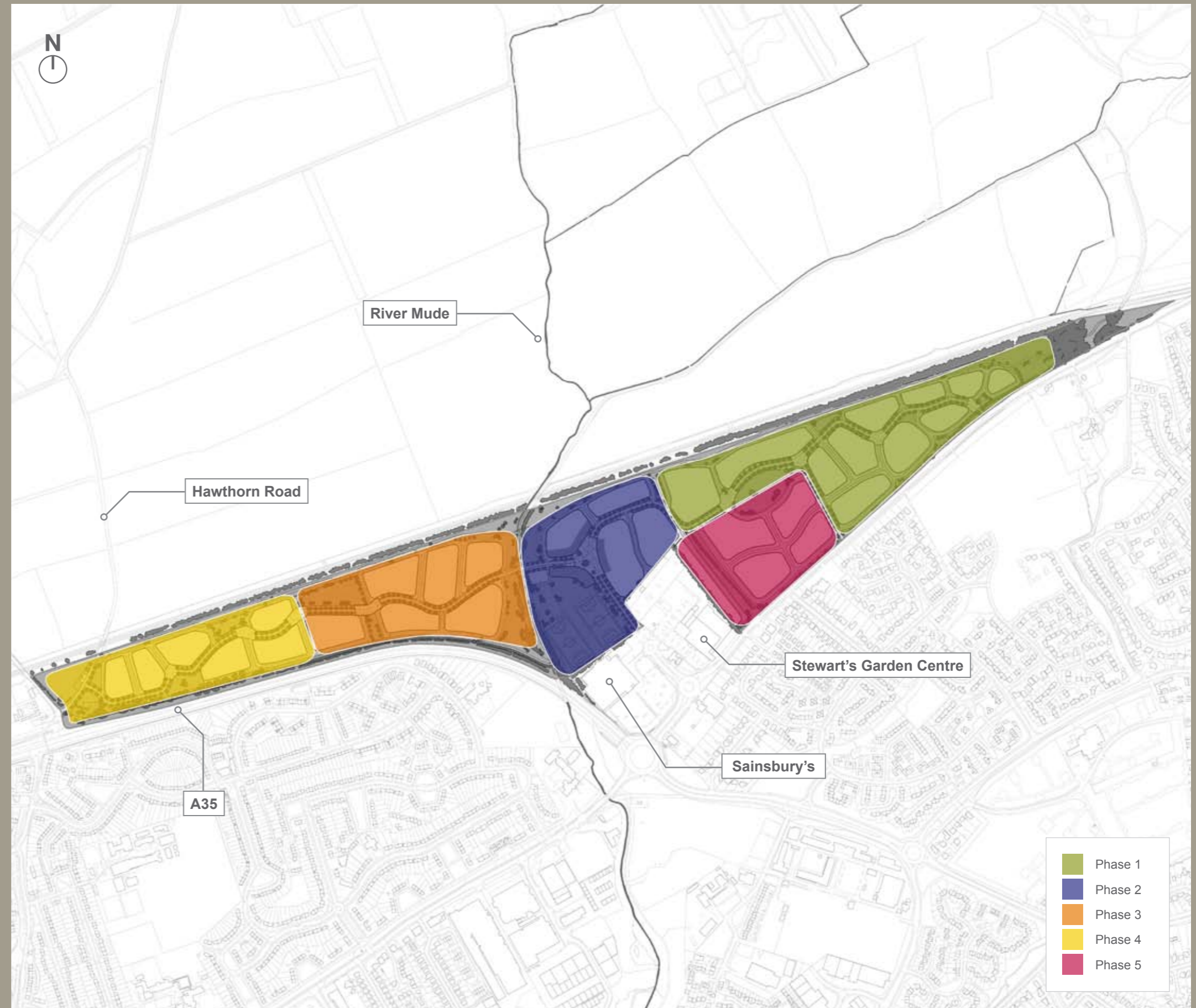
Phase 2 would comprise the local centre and the higher density flatted development. The delivery of this area early on in the site's construction will ensure that the local facilities are built before much of the housing thus helping to provide a heart to the new community at the outset. It will also provide the link through to the Sainsbury's site allowing a bus loop to be achieved. The Central Park area would also be delivered, ensuring that open space is provided, again meeting the needs of the new community and linking in with the wider town wide green infrastructure.

Phases 3 and 4 would comprise the expansion of the development to the west. The central boulevard/avenue would be completed at the end of phase 4, thus allowing the opportunity for a bus link.

Phase 5 would involve the development of the Roeshot Hill allotment site. This is likely to come later in the process due to landownership agreements and the need for an alternative allotment facility to be secured and in place.

The site is likely to deliver around 850 dwellings. Based on the usual rule of thumb of completions (e.g. one developer building on average 50 units per year), it is anticipated that the site would take around 9 years to complete if the following rate of development was achieved:

- Year 1: 50 units (1 house builder)
- Year 2: 50 units (1 house builder)
- Year 3: 100 units (2 house builders)
- Year 4: 100 units (2 house builders)
- Year 5: 150 units (3 house builders)
- Year 6: 150 units (3 house builders)
- Year 7: 100 units (2 house builders)
- Year 8: 100 units (2 house builders)
- Year 9: 50 units (1 house builder)







# NORTH CHRISTCHURCH

MASTERPLAN  
REPORT

## The design detail

## 05 | The design detail

Having developed a framework masterplan this section provides further detail to illustrate how certain aspects of the development could be arranged. It provides guidance on the principles of the residential housing layout before focussing on a particular residential block within the site to show how the principles can be provided at a detailed level. A local centre layout is also provided and highlights the synergy between functions and the creation of an attractive public space. Principles for good urban design are described and illustrated to ensure the evolution of a robust design.



## Designing the residential blocks

### Perimeter blocks - general principles

Residential developments should be designed with the quality and character of the public realm as a top priority. Such a public realm framework of streets, squares and larger areas of open space is best defined using a layout structure of perimeter blocks. The key aspect of a perimeter block residential layout is that it makes a clear distinction between the public fronts and private backs to dwellings. Designing a residential development in this way leads to a number of important benefits:

1. The public realm is clearly spatially defined by built form which relates to it in a positive way.
2. Access, wayfinding and navigation, especially for visitors, is straightforward.
3. Streets typology can be easily enhanced and articulated.
4. Natural surveillance of public space is maximised.
5. Car parking can be accommodated in a variety of ways.
6. Traditional patterns of urban form are repeated and echoed.

These points are expanded upon over the following pages.

### 1. Spatial definition of the public realm

Streets, squares and larger areas of open space must be fronted by clearly defined built edges which enhance their character and sense of place. Buildings should generally follow a continuous line of active frontage, with doorways, windows, bays and balconies relating directly to the public realm. Staggered in the building line should be carefully considered and designed consciously to add emphasis where appropriate. Building scale should be appropriate to the scale of space fronted onto.



Spatial definition of the public realm



## 2. Access, wayfinding and navigation

A residential development should have a clear identity and its layout should be easy to understand for residents and visitors. A perimeter block approach easily generates a layout with a permeable and clear network of streets. Navigation and legibility can then be improved by creating landmarks and focal points, views, clear routes, and gateways to particular areas. Buildings which terminate vistas or streets should be designed as focal points. Corner buildings should be considered especially carefully and should have a double frontage rather than a blank flank.

## 3. Reinforcement of streets typology

Manual for Streets (DfT, 2007) promotes the development of street character types on a location-specific basis with reference to both the place and movement functions for each street. The most important factor in defining the character of a street is the relationship between the buildings which enclose it. The distance between frontages, building scale and level of continuity of each frontage should be designed first and foremost to enhance the character of the street fronted onto. A very rich streets typology can be achieved simply through considered variations in these three elements. The depth and design of private space between building line and public realm should also be appropriate to the character of the street.

### Landmark building aids legibility and wayfinding

#### Example Poundbury, Dorset



### Street typology - tree lined boulevard

#### Example, Christchurch, Dorset



### Street typology - shared surface residential street

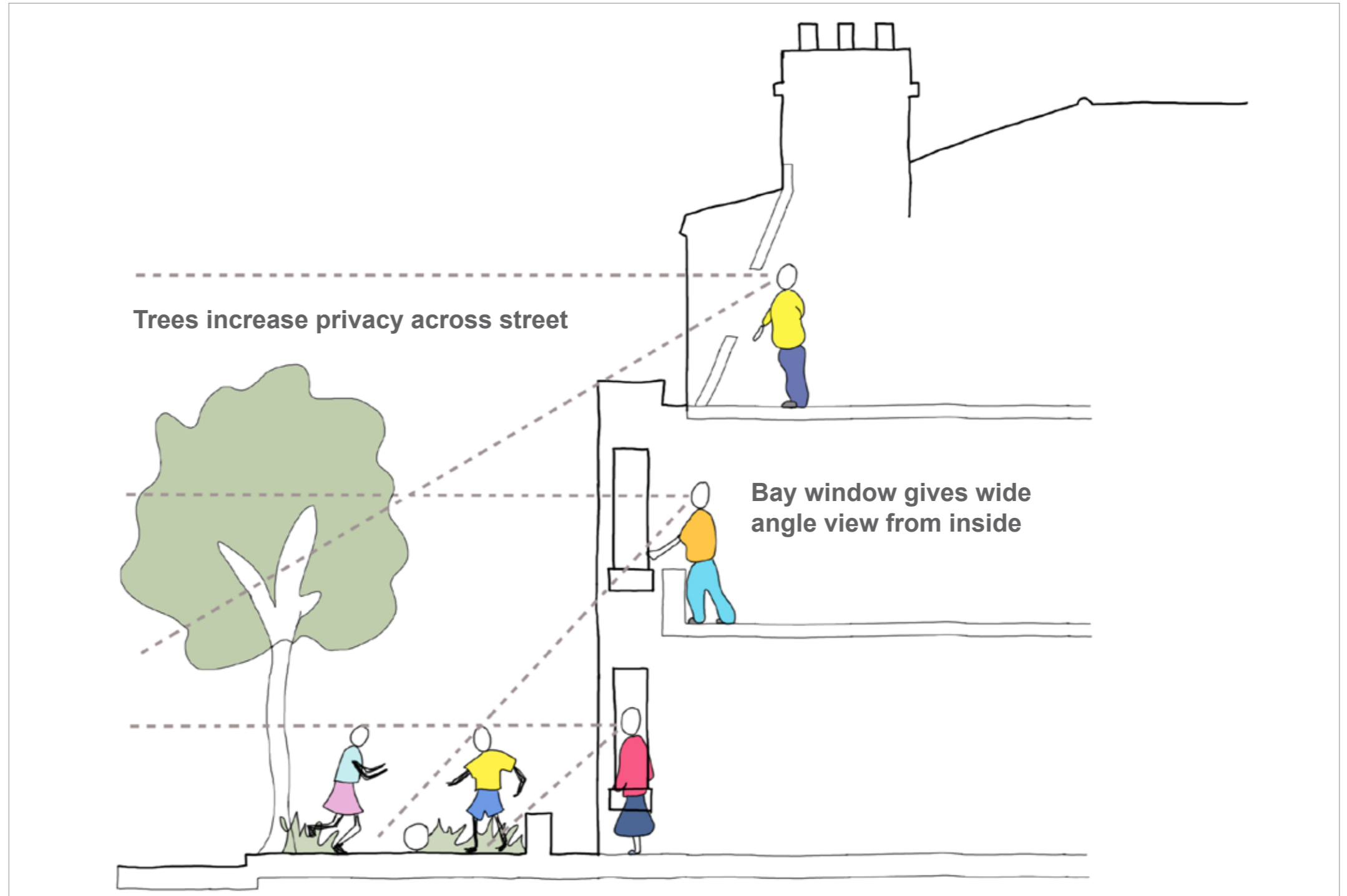
#### Example Poundbury, Dorset



# Designing the residential blocks

## 4. Natural surveillance and designing out crime

Secured by Design (ACPO, 2009) promotes a perimeter block approach as a key component of an effective strategy towards designing out crime. Perimeter blocks minimise the proximity of private backs to public spaces, reducing physical opportunities for unauthorised access to private property. They also maximise natural surveillance of the public realm, enabling windows and doors to open onto all public spaces. A continuous building frontage, avoiding unnecessary staggers, will also minimise the occurrence of blind spots or potentially dark corners.



Overlooking and natural surveillance

Continuous block frontage whilst maintaining architectural variety and traditional street patterns

Example Poundbury, Dorset



## 5. Traditional patterns of urban form

One of the key attractions of perimeter blocks is that they replicate what is generally the traditional pattern of urban form. Continuity with historic patterns of building is therefore inherently reinforced by the layout of residential developments designed as perimeter blocks.

## 6. Car Parking

Car parking should be achieved through a combination of methods, used as appropriate depending on the density and character of the particular location. Parking on curtilage, whether garage, car port or open, will be appropriate for most residents' parking provision. To preserve the character of the street, on curtilage parking spaces must not project in front of the building line. Courtyard parking can be appropriate within higher density areas, either as small secure areas within the heart of a perimeter block, or as a carefully designed frontage element within a mews-type street setting. Parallel on-street parking will be appropriate for unallocated visitors or residents parking.

Shared surface mews with on street parking

Example Upton, Northampton



Courtyard parking

Example Upton, Northampton



## In addition to the six points referred to previously, perimeter blocks have a number of additional advantages. These are described below.

### Perimeter blocks and character areas

Within larger residential development sites, the identification of character areas is a key aspect of creating local identity and sense of place. Wherever possible, character areas should help to define and reinforce elements of public realm such as streets and squares. Character area boundaries should therefore usually run along the rear of plots, through the centre of perimeter blocks, rather than through the centre of streets.

### Perimeter blocks and residential density

The perimeter block approach works effectively across a wide range of residential densities. The residential densities used within the proposed masterplan range from 'high density' through 'high-medium density' and 'medium density' to 'low density'.

### Perimeter blocks and privacy

The relationships between dwellings within perimeter blocks are of critical importance to ensure that the amenity of residents is not compromised. The most important factor here is the maintenance of privacy. The distance between opposing rear windows to habitable rooms where intervisibility is possible should not be less than 20m. This distance should be increased where buildings are higher than two storeys or where site topography substantially raises one building above its neighbour. In addition, rear gardens should not be directly overlooked by windows to habitable rooms of adjoining properties.

### Perimeter blocks and housing types

Each residential block should make provision for a mix of house types and tenures in order to promote inclusivity and choice. A full range of house types should be provided for including flats, terraces, townhouses, semi-detached and detached homes meeting the needs of young people, families, the elderly and those with special needs and disabilities. All housing should be 'tenure blind' so as not to distinguish between social rented and shared ownership properties in the appearance and the setting of the dwelling. House types should be used to establish coherent residential blocks which fit within wider character areas.

### Regular and irregular perimeter blocks

The site is narrow and linear in nature creating pinch points which constrain the depth of residential blocks. A perimeter block can be applied just as effectively on narrow blocks providing the depth is at least 40 metres giving space for double fronted development (ie. back to back housing). The key aspect here is that a perimeter block need not be rectilinear with straight edges; the principles work just as well with curved and irregular shaped blocks, so long as the basic principle of separating public fronts from private backs is maintained. A variety of block types generate rich layout and character, the size and shape of the residential block influences the detail design such as density, house types and housing layout.



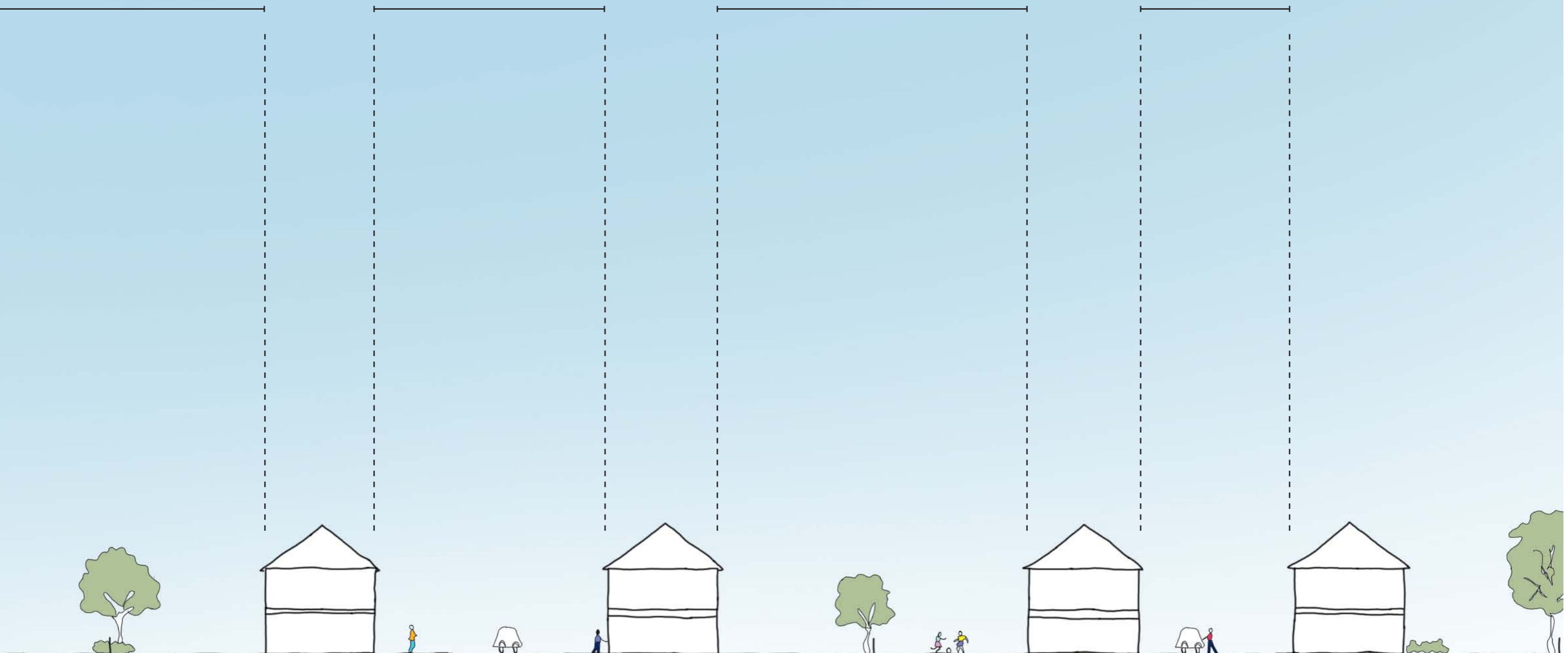
Definition of space: public and private

Rear gardens  
back to back  
**20m**

Primary Road residential street  
front and back  
**15m**

Rear gardens  
back to back  
**20m**

Mews Street shared  
surface front to front  
**10m**



## Key features of the residential block

The benefits of perimeter blocks can best be illustrated when compared with a more fragmented layout (typical of development in the 1970's and 1980's). The following illustrations show this using two existing blocks within Christchurch.



### Fragmented block layout



This example of a perimeter block in Christchurch highlights the key design principles which create a sense of place, aid wayfinding and structure space.



## Perimeter block layout



## Perimeter block character tile

### Boulevard street typology with strong defined built frontage

Example Poundbury, Dorset



Having established the principles of a perimeter block layout across the site, this section examines a particular area within the site in more detail. The area lies in the central part of the western side of the site and is shown (opposite).

#### Definition and frontage

- The housing layout has been designed to provide continuous frontage along the central boulevard, creating a sense of place whilst travelling through the development.
- Corner buildings with interesting features act as landmarks at key junctions or deflections along the road.
- It is important to define open space with built form to create a sense of enclosure and feeling of safety through overlooking. Properties have been laid out to define a strong edge fronting onto the open spaces.
- Attention has been given to the relationship of built form to the southern edge of the site. Housing is set back from the A35 creating a strong physical frontage to act as a noise barrier whilst also providing views from the A35 of defined housing frontage rather than the backs of homes.

#### Car parking

- The residential layout provides a mix of car parking designs depending on the layout of the block.
- Where possible, car parking has been provided on curtilage behind the building frontage line, otherwise courtyard parking has been designed to accommodate parking within higher density areas.

#### House types

- Variety and interest along the streetscape is ensured by creating a mix of house types with varied architectural styles.
- This layout illustrates 18 four bed properties, 32 three bed properties and 4 two bed properties. This highlights the flexible mix of housing which can be delivered across the site.

#### Density

- This housing layout covers an area of medium density and high-medium density.
- House types have been arranged on varied plot sizes in order to achieve appropriate densities. Therefore, house sizes and garden sizes vary producing a mix of properties and character to suit residents needs.

### Mix of house types and densities along the street

Example Oxley Park, Milton Keynes



### On street parking on a shared surface street

Example Upton, Northampton







Potential residential layout

## Local supermarket with residential on the second and third floors

Example Oxley Park, Milton Keynes



## Mixed use centre, parade of retail units

Example Oxley Park, Milton Keynes



## Local centre design

### Introduction

Local centres act as neighbourhood hubs for local communities by providing a range of community services and facilities within easy access of all residents. The local centre should be centrally located within the neighbourhood to allow ease of access, whilst the facilities provided should reduce local deficiencies in services and provide for day to day needs. A local centre has the ability to become a hub where local people congregate to socialise and build a sense of community. The design and layout of a local centre is, therefore, crucial to its success.

### Key design features of a local centre:

- Be easily accessible by sustainable travel modes
- Be designed to have an attractive outdoor environment
- Public and community uses should be centrally located providing connections between various uses
- Centres should be designed and laid out to provide a sense of containment and enclosure around a central public space, street or plaza. The size of this space should be proportionate to the scale of the centre, ensuring the local centre is designed to be human scaled to fit within its surroundings
- Materials, lighting, street furniture, signage and landscaping should sit within the comprehensive design strategy for the local centre
- The position and design of buildings should provide a cohesive identity and ensure a legible relationship with the surrounding urban fabric
- Green space and recreation grounds should be well defined and overlooked by built frontage
- Residential uses should be accommodated within the local centre to increase activity, vibrancy and safety

## Local centre situated around a park

Example Poundbury, Dorset

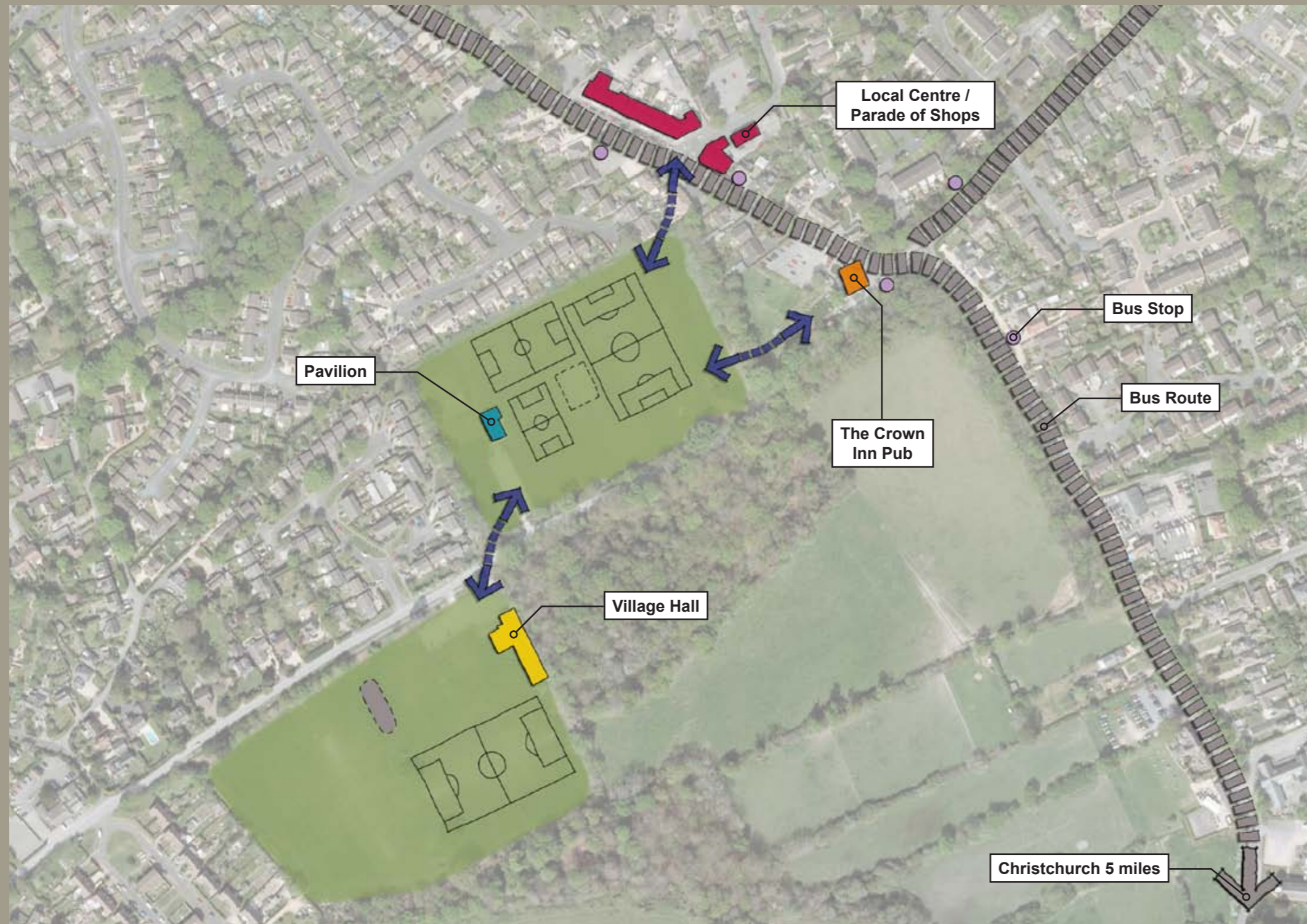


# Precedent: Bransgore local centre layout

As a precedent, we have looked at a similar local centre in Bransgore, and illustrated its key features below.

### Key design features:

- Local centre serviced by a bus route with bus stops at key facilities.
- Synergy between retail services, pub, leisure and recreation.
- Recreation ground layout provides active pitches, children's playground and community buildings.



Local Centre / Parade of Shops



The Crown Inn pub



Village Hall

## Local centre design tile

We have applied the design principles of local centres to the North Christchurch site. The key aspects are set out below and illustrated (right). The design of the local centre is of course dependant on how Sainsbury's wish to proceed with any future expansion plans and the Councils policy on this. This was covered earlier in the report

### Accessibility

- The local centre square is situated on the central boulevard so facilities are accessible. A shared surface treatment with no road markings will encourage slow traffic movement allowing public activity on the square.
- The bus route travels through the local centre ensuring ease of access and encouraging sustainable modes of transport.

### Layout

- The building layout is designed to enable flexibility and future proofing, potential uses include a community building, pub and flats over retail. If the needs of the community change over time the building uses can be adapted to suit requirements.
- Buildings front onto the square providing enclosure and containment, whilst the community building is double fronted opening out onto the recreation ground.
- The square should accommodate a mix of street furniture without being cluttered, allowing flexibility of uses in the community space.

### Parking

- Parking is provided on the edge of the square screened by a belt of trees, reducing dominance of the car within the public realm.

### Open space

- Recreation provision is located in close proximity to the local centre hub allowing interaction between uses.
- The recreation elements include a Multi-Use Games Area, a Locally Equipped Area of Play, two senior football pitches and a cricket pitch.
- The recreation ground is easily accessible to the wider community via the north-south greenway.

### Wider setting

- The design provides a comprehensive neighbourhood centre with a range of facilities which relate and compliment the surrounding retail provision at Sainsburys.





Sketch perspective of the local centre at North Christchurch - looking north

