Batchworth

Neighbourhood Design Code

Final Report

November 2023

Delivering a better world

Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by
Eimear McDonnell, Senior Landscape Architect Holly Turner, Graduate Urban Designer	Vanessa Adams, Associate Director	Ben Castell, Director

Revision History

Issue no.	Issue date	Details	Issued by	Position
01	17/09/2021	Draft for Steering Group review	Vanessa Adams	Associate Director
02	29/11/2022	Feedback	Miles Hosking	Steering Group
03	23/12/2022	Draft 2 for Steering Group review	Jack Wilton-Cooley	Graduate Urban Planner
04	16/03/2023	For Locality review	Ben Castell	Director
05	09/05/2023	Final Report Submission	Ben Castell	Director
06	28/11/2023	Regulation 19 revisions	Ben Castell	Director

Contents

Part 1: Overview

Part 2: Design Guidance & Codes

Part 1: Overview

1. Introduction

Through the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government's Neighbourhood Planning Programme led by Locality, AECOM was commissioned to provide design support to Batchworth Community Council.

This package of support covers design guidance and codes covering the Neighbourhood Plan area and a strategic concept masterplan for Rickmansworth Town Centre.

1.1 Purpose of this document

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF; 2021, paragraph 127) states that neighbourhood plans "can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development."

Batchworth Community Council require design guidance and codes based on the character and local qualities of the Neighbourhood Plan area.

The Batchworth Neighbourhood area is under development pressure to meet community demands; however it is important that the historic environment and green infrastructure are preserved and enhanced and that a variety of shops and services are supported for all sectors of the community.

This report is intended to inform the Community Council's preparation of its Neighbourhood Plan, and to add depth and illustration to the Plan's policies on design and growth, offering guidance on the community's expectations.

1.2 Process

The following steps were undertaken to produce this report:

- Initial meeting and site visits with the Steering Group;
- Desktop research including review of documents prepared by the group;
- Urban design analysis of the whole area, Character Areas;
- Local forums undertaken by Batchworth Community Council to gain feedback from residents;
- Preparation of overarching design guidance and codes;
- Preparation of draft report for review.

1.3 Structure of this document

This report is intended to be read in conjunction with the Rickmansworth Town Centre Options Report.

This document is divided into two parts as follows:

- **Part 1: Overview** - including Introduction and Policy Review;
- **Part 2: Area-wide Design Guidance and Codes** for the whole Batchworth area, including next steps.

1.4 Area of study

Batchworth Neighbourhood Area

The Neighbourhood Plan area of Batchworth is located just outside of London in the south west of Hertfordshire. Batchworth Community Council consists of two wards: Rickmansworth Town, and Moor Park & Eastbury.

Batchworth lies just inside the M25 motorway which orbits London (see Figure 01). The area also has good rail connections via train and tube to the centre of London as well as out to the Midlands and the west of the country. After the introduction of the Metropolitan Railway in 1887, the area grew dramatically and in the 1920s and 1930s became know as part of Metro-Land and a popular commuter town.

Rickmansworth is the main centre within Batchworth with a retail core offering shops, restaurants, offices and a mix of other uses.

Rickmansworth is the primary settlement in the Three Rivers District and holds the administrative seat of the District Council. The nearest large town is Watford which is approximately 3.5 miles east of Rickmansworth (as the crow flies).

Rickmansworth town contains a historic core that has been designated a conservation area. The High Street is located within this core.

F.1 | **Figure 01:** Map showing Batchworth in the wider context.

Policy & Guidance Review

02

2. Policy Review

This section summarises the relevant design policy and guidance produced at national and district level which have informed this design guidance and codes.

2.1 National Planning Policy Framework (2021) (Draft Consultation - 2022)

Development needs to consider national level planning policy guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG). In particular, NPPF Chapter 12: Achieving well-designed places stresses the creation of high-quality buildings and places as being fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It sets out a number of principles that planning policies and decisions should consider ensuring that new developments are well-designed and focus on quality.

2.2 Three Rivers Core Strategy 2011-2016 (Adopted October 2011)

The adopted Three Rivers Core Strategy set out the District-wide spatial vision and overarching strategies up to 2026. The key policies relevant to the design codes included in this document are:

Policy PSP1 Development in the Principal Town (Rickmansworth) sets out the place-shaping strategy for Rickmansworth. Future development is expected to be infill on previously developed land. Developments should conserve and enhance the local distinctiveness of the historic core and maintain the current levels of retail floorspace.

Policy PSP3 Development in Secondary Centres (Kings Langley, Carpenders Park, Eastbury, Maple Cross, Moor Park, Oxhey Hall) sets out the place-shaping strategy for secondary centres in the settlement hierarchy, including Moor Park. Future development sites are expected to be predominantly in the urban area and on previously developed land. There may be scope for some sustainable development within the Green Belt.

Policy CP1 Overarching Policy on Sustainable Development requires all development in Three Rivers to contribute to the sustainability of the District, including the need to tackle climate change.

Policy CP3 Housing Mix and Density promotes high quality residential development that respects the character of the District and caters for a range of housing needs. In particular, new development should provide a range of house types and sizes to reflect the existing and future needs of the Three Rivers population and the characteristics of housing in the area. In relation to density, development should respect density levels within existing residential areas, particularly within areas of special landscape and/or historic value in the district. In locations that are highly accessible to public

transport, services and facilities, higher densities will be promoted. (Note: While the policy text refers to the production of an overall Design Code Supplementary Planning Document at the time of adoption, the relevant SPD does not form part of the current Development Framework for Three Rivers. The most up-to-date Local Development Framework as of May 2021 also did not indicate progress of the production of a District-wide Design Code.)

Policy CP4 Affordable Housing seeks to secure an overall provision of around 45% of all new housing as affordable housing.

Policy CP9 Green Infrastructure seeks a net gain in the quality and quantity of Green Infrastructure through protection, enhancement and provision.

Policy CP10 Transport and Travel requires all development to be designed and located to minimise the impact of travel by motor vehicle on the District.

Policy CP12 Design of Development states a list of high quality design criteria which all development proposals will be expected to achieve. All development proposals are expected to:

- Have regard to the local context and conserve or enhance the character, amenities and quality of an area.
- Conserve and enhance natural and heritage assets.
- Protect residential amenities by taking into account the need for adequate levels and disposition of privacy, prospect, amenity and garden space.
- Make efficient use of land whilst respecting the distinctiveness of the surrounding area in terms of density, character, layout and spacing, amenity, scale, height, massing and use of materials.
- Build resilience into a site's design taking into account climate change (for example flood resistant design).
- Use innovative design to reduce energy and waste and optimise the potential of the site.
- Ensure buildings and spaces are, wherever possible, orientated to gain benefit from sunlight and passive solar energy.
- Design out opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour through the incorporation of appropriate measures to minimise the risk of crime and create safe and attractive places. Incorporate visually attractive frontages to adjoining streets and public spaces.
- Ensure all appropriate frontages contain windows and doors that assist informal surveillance of the public realm.
- Use high standards of building materials, finishes and landscaping; also provide/ contribute towards street furniture and public art where appropriate.
- Ensure the development is adequately landscaped and is designed to retain, enhance or improve important existing

natural features; landscaping should reflect the surrounding landscape of the area and where appropriate integrate with adjoining networks of green open spaces.

- Make a clear distinction between public and private spaces and enhance the public realm.
- Ensure that places, spaces and buildings are accessible to all potential users, including those with mobility difficulties.
- Provide convenient, safe and visually attractive areas for the parking of vehicles and cycles without dominating the development or its surroundings.
- Be durable and, where practical, buildings should be capable of adapting to other uses and functions in order to ensure their long-life.

2.3 Three Rivers Development Management Policies (Adopted July 2013)

Adopted in July 2013, the Development Management Policies for Three Rivers set out the detailed criteria which planning applications within the District will be considered against, alongside other policies within the Development Framework. The key policies of relevance include:

Policy DM1 Residential Design and Layout requires all residential development to satisfy the design criteria set out in Appendix 2 of the document, in order to ensure that development does not lead to a gradual deterioration in the quality of the built environment, and that landscaping, the need for privacy and amenity space and the creation of identity in housing layouts are taken into account.

Appendix 2 Design Criteria sets out qualitative and quantitative guidelines in relation to privacy, prospect, amenity space, property extensions, dormers, roofs and the layout, as well as boundaries, for new development.

Policy DM3 The Historic Built Environment sets out a presumption in favour of the retention and enhancement of heritage assets. Further detail is provided in the Conservation Area appraisals for each conservation area.

Policy DM6 Biodiversity, Trees, Woodlands, Watercourses and Landscaping requires development to result in no net loss of biodiversity value across the District as a whole. In particular, development proposals are required to seek to retain existing trees, hedgerows and other important landscape and nature conservation features as many as possible, particularly, those of local amenity, nature conservation value and biodiversity value. New developments are also required to include new trees and other planting to enhance the landscape of the site and its surroundings as appropriate.

Policy DM7 Landscape Character requires proposals to make a positive contribution to the surrounding landscape.

Policy DM11 Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities and Children's Play Space states that proposals for new and existing open space should be designed to a high standard and should not consist of large areas of open grass. In particular, it should have regard to its surroundings, its likely use, the need for a variety of different forms of open space, the need to enhance existing nature conservation interests and the benefits of creating new habitats.

Policy DM13 Parking requires development to make provision for parking in accordance with the zone-based standards set out in Appendix 5 of the Development Management Policies document. It also refers to Hertfordshire County Council's Roads in Hertfordshire: A Design Guide, which sets out the street design guidelines and parking standards (including vehicles, motorcycle and cycle) in Hertfordshire, particularly in relation to dimensions and design principles.

2.4 Emerging Three Rivers Local Plan

Three Rivers District Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan which will set out the vision and policy framework for growth within the District until 2038.

The consultation on the Local Plan Regulation 18 Additional Sites for Potential Allocation documents ran from 27 January to 30 March 2023.

Following on from the Regulation 18 Consultation on preferred policy options and sites for potential allocation which took place in July/August 2021, Three Rivers District Council are now carrying out a supplementary consultation on additional sites for potential allocation.

Part 1 of the documents set out the preferred strategic vision and policies while Part 2 of the documents identifies potential sites for allocation (including housing, gypsies and travellers & travelling showpeople sites, employment, town centres & retail, open space, education, green belt and other infrastructure).

The key preferred policies in Part 1 relevant to the design codes included in this document are:

Preferred Policy Option 1 Strategic Policy: Overarching Policy on Sustainable Development states that the Council will take a positive approach to the consideration of development proposals that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. In particular, all development proposals are required to take into account of the sustainable need to:

- Tackle climate change by reducing carbon emissions, increasing energy and water efficiency of buildings, promoting the use of renewable energy systems, and using other natural resources wisely, including through the use of sustainable building materials.
- Manage water and flood risk through the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems.
- Optimise the use of land including through an uplift in the density of development where appropriate.

- Reduce waste going into landfill by reducing materials used, reusing and recycling building materials, and providing opportunities for recycling wherever possible.
- Protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environments from inappropriate development and improve the diversity of wildlife and habitats.
- Build mixed and sustainable by providing housing across a range of tenures and types, including affordable housing and specialist and supported accommodation to meet needs.
- Maintain high levels of employment by attracting jobs and training opportunities for local people and supporting businesses.
- Improve access to jobs, skills, services and facilities particularly within areas of deprivation in the District.
- Sustain the viability and vitality of the key town and district centres and villages identified in the settlement hierarchy.
- Protect and enhance existing social and community facilities, and provide new facilities.
- Promote a range of sustainable travel modes with priority given to cycling and walking.
- Providing necessary infrastructure to enable and/or support development, including transport, education, health, Green Infrastructure, utilities, waste facilities, waste water, leisure, cultural and community facilities.
- Promote buildings and public spaces of a high enduring design quality that respect local distinctiveness, are accessible to all and reduce opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Manage and reduce risk of and from pollution in relation to quality of land, air and water and dealing with land contamination.

Preferred Policy Option 2 Housing Mix and Type requires all new homes to contribute to the creation of balanced and sustainable communities by meeting identified local and District housing needs in terms of mix, size, tenure and type to cater for the full range of different households.

Preferred Policy Option 6 Residential Design and Layout and Accessible and Adaptable Buildings requires all new housing development to be designed and built to high quality for duration of its lifetime and meets the preferred Design Criteria as set out in the consultation document Appendix 1 to ensure that development does not lead to a gradual deterioration in the quality of the built environment, and that landscaping, the need for privacy and amenity space and the creation of identity in housing layouts are taken into account. In addition, the preferred policy supports housing designed and built to encourage sustainable and flexible living and those that are built to be accessible and adaptable to meet changing occupier circumstances

over the lifetime of the development. On developments of 50 or more dwellings, 10% of new homes are required to meet the Building Regulations M4(2) standard and 10% of the affordable housing are required to meet the Building Regulations M4(3) standard.

Preferred Policy Option 13 Adapting to Climate Change and Sustainable Construction supports new development that builds in greater resilience to climate change and extreme weather events through the design of sites and buildings, including where appropriate:

Managing flood risk and promoting sustainable drainage systems

Promoting and enhancing the Green Infrastructure network across the District and integrating this as part of the design process

Protecting the natural environment, and conserving and enhancing biodiversity

Considering the layout of new development, building orientation, shading, construction materials and ventilation systems to address sunlight and daylight, passive solar gain and reduce risks of overheating and reliance on air conditioning systems.

In relation to sustainable design and construction, the preferred policy also requires new development to be designed and constructed to:

- Make efficient use of mineral resources and incorporate a proportion of recycled materials and/or secondary aggregates
- Minimise waste and reuse materials resulting from excavation and demolition activity
- Conserve water and reduce flood risk
- Be flexible and adaptable to the needs of future occupiers.
- Incorporate measures to enhance biodiversity value.

Preferred Policy Option 15 Flood Risk and Water Resources requires major development and supports minor development to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems into their designs. Developments are required to maintain a minimum distance of 8m from a main river and a minimum distance of 5m from any ordinary watercourse.

Preferred Policy Option 19 Green and Blue Infrastructure requires new development to contribute to the delivery of new safe and accessible Green and Blue Infrastructure and to the management of a linked network of new and enhanced open spaces and corridors. It also seeks to protect and enhance public rights of way and other sustainable transport links between spaces in the Green Infrastructure network by requiring development masterplans to incorporate buffers of at least 20m around Rights of Way (where appropriate).

Preferred Policy Option 23 Local Distinctiveness and Place Shaping requires all new development to achieve high quality design that responds to the distinctive local character (including landscape character of the area) of the area and contributes to a strong sense of place.

It also defines that essential elements of place-making include creating economically and socially successfully new places with a clear identity that promote wellbeing.

In addition to the Design Criteria set out in Appendix 1, the preferred policy also sets out criteria in relation to the following design elements distinct local character, connections, safeguarding amenity, landscaping and public realm, safeguarding assets and the environment, safety and security and access and inclusion.

Preferred Policy Option 25 Heritage and Historic Environment seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment. It supports development of the highest design quality that will sustain and where appropriate enhance the special interest, character and significance of the District's heritage assets and their setting, as well as those that will make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Within Conservation Areas, development will only be permitted if the proposal:

- Is of a design and scale that preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area
- Uses building materials, finishes, including those for features such as walls, railings, gates and hard surfacing, that are appropriate to the local context
- Retains historically significant boundaries, important open spaces and other elements of the area's established pattern of development, character and historic value, including gardens, roadside banks and verges
- Retains and restores, where relevant, traditional features such as shop fronts, walls, railings, paved surfaces and street furniture, and improves the condition of structures worthy of retention
- Does not harm important views into, out of or within the Conservation Area
- Protects trees, hedgerows and other significant landscape features and incorporates landscaping appropriate to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area

Preferred Policy Option 26 Sustainable Transport and Travel requires new development to contribute to the delivery of an integrated, accessible and safe transport system that maximises the use of sustainable transport modes of walking, cycling and the use of public transport.

Preferred Policy Option 27 Parking requires development to make provision for parking in accordance with the parking standards set out in Appendix 3 of the emerging Local Plan. In particular, 20% of car parking spaces for major developments should be allocated and off-street vehicle parking for new developments should be provided. Areas providing parking should preserve should preserve a building's setting and the character of the surrounding area, and should provide adequate soft landscaping and surface material to avoid adverse visual impacts and to manage surface water runoff.

2.4.1 Site Allocation Plans

The following sites have been identified as potential residential allocations in the emerging Local Plan as shown in Figures 03 and 04:

01. CFS41 Rickmansworth Station - proposal to upgrade the station and drop-off area and residential uses. This is an opportunity to form an attractive gateway to the town centre.
02. CFS77 Rickmansworth Library - Located in the town's historic core this proposed residential development has the potential to become a mixed use landmark to the town.
03. CFS40a Land at Park Road - proposed for mixed use development of residential, amenity and ancillary works, but would need to address surface water and groundwater flood risk issues.
04. EOS7.0 Land to the south of Shepherds Lane and west of the M25 - this site has capacity for 760 dwellings with a primary school, open space and play space, but would need to address impacts on heritage assets, protected trees and groundwater source protection.
05. OSPF22 Batchworth Park Golf Course - capacity of this site is estimated at 618 dwellings and would also need to provide a primary school, open space and play space, and address surface water flood risk, impact on heritage assets and groundwater source protection.

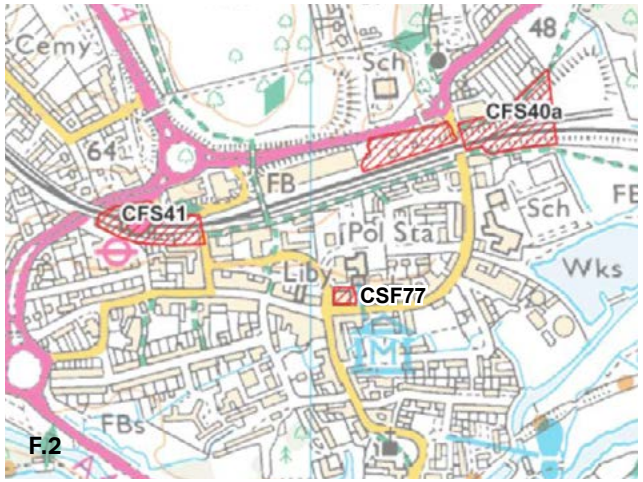


Figure 02: Potential sites for development in Rickmansworth from emerging Three Rivers District planvu.co.uk

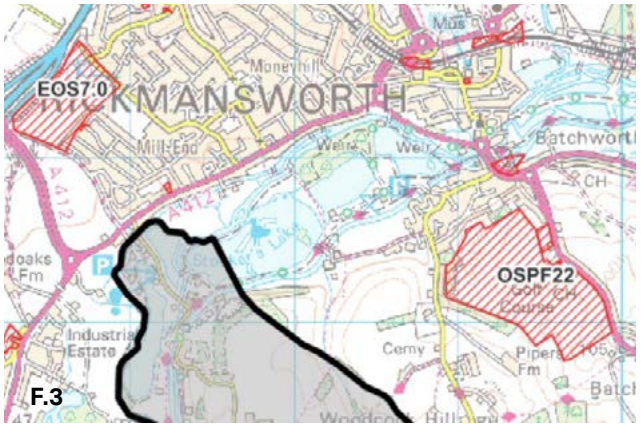


Figure 03: Potential sites for development in Moneyhill and Batchworth Heath from emerging Three Rivers District planvu.co.uk

2.5 Design Guidance

2.5.1 Design Guidance

The following key reference publications have been used to inform this guidance and should also be used to inform development proposals coming forward within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

2021 - National Design Guide
DLUHC

The National Design Guide (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2021) illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.

The ten characteristics identified includes: context, identity, built form, movement, nature, public spaces, uses, homes and buildings, resources and lifespan. The Guide also reinforces the National Planning Policy Framework's objective in creating high quality buildings and places. The document forms part of the government planning practice guidance.

2021 National Model Design Code
DLUHC

The National Model Design Code provides guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote well-designed places. It sets out the key design parameters that need to be considered when producing design guides and recommends a methodology for capturing and reflecting views of the local community. It forms part of the government's planning practice guidance.

2020 - Building for a Healthy Life
Homes England

Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) is the new (2020) name for Building for Life, the government-endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. The new name reflects the crucial role that the built environment has in promoting wellbeing. The BHL toolkit sets out principles to help guide discussions on planning applications and to help local planning authorities to assess the quality of proposed (and completed) developments, but can also provide useful prompts and questions for planning applicants to consider during the different stages of the design process.

2007 - Manual for Streets
Department for Transport

Development is expected to respond positively to the Manual for Streets, the Government's guidance on how to design, construct, adopt and maintain new and existing residential streets. It promotes streets and wider development that avoid car dominated layouts but that do place the needs of pedestrians and cyclists first.

2.5.2 Design assessments

How can we create complete and connected places? What guides are available to help professionals and users alike create successful places and neighbourhoods? The following publications should be used as assessment guides on placemaking and streestcapes to help inform proposals coming forward within the Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan area.

The Healthy Streets Approach,

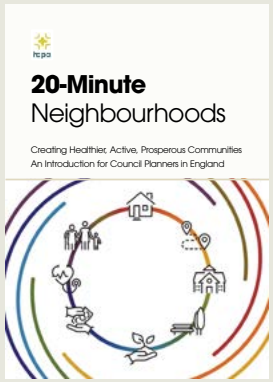
Lucy Saunders

Lucy Saunders, a specialist in public health and transport has created an assessment tool which highlights '10 Indicators of a Healthy Street': Everyone feels welcome; Easy to cross; Shade and shelter; Place to stop and rest; Not too noisy; People choose to walk and cycle; People feel safe; Things to see and do; People feel relaxed; and Clean air.

2021 - 20 Minute Neighbourhoods Guide

Town and Country Planning Association

The TCPA has created a 20-Minute Neighbourhoods Guide for creating healthier, active, prosperous communities in England. Describing a neighbourhood, where people can meet their needs within a short walk or cycle. The 20-minute neighbourhood boosts local economies, improve people's health and wellbeing, increase social connections in communities, and tackling climate change.



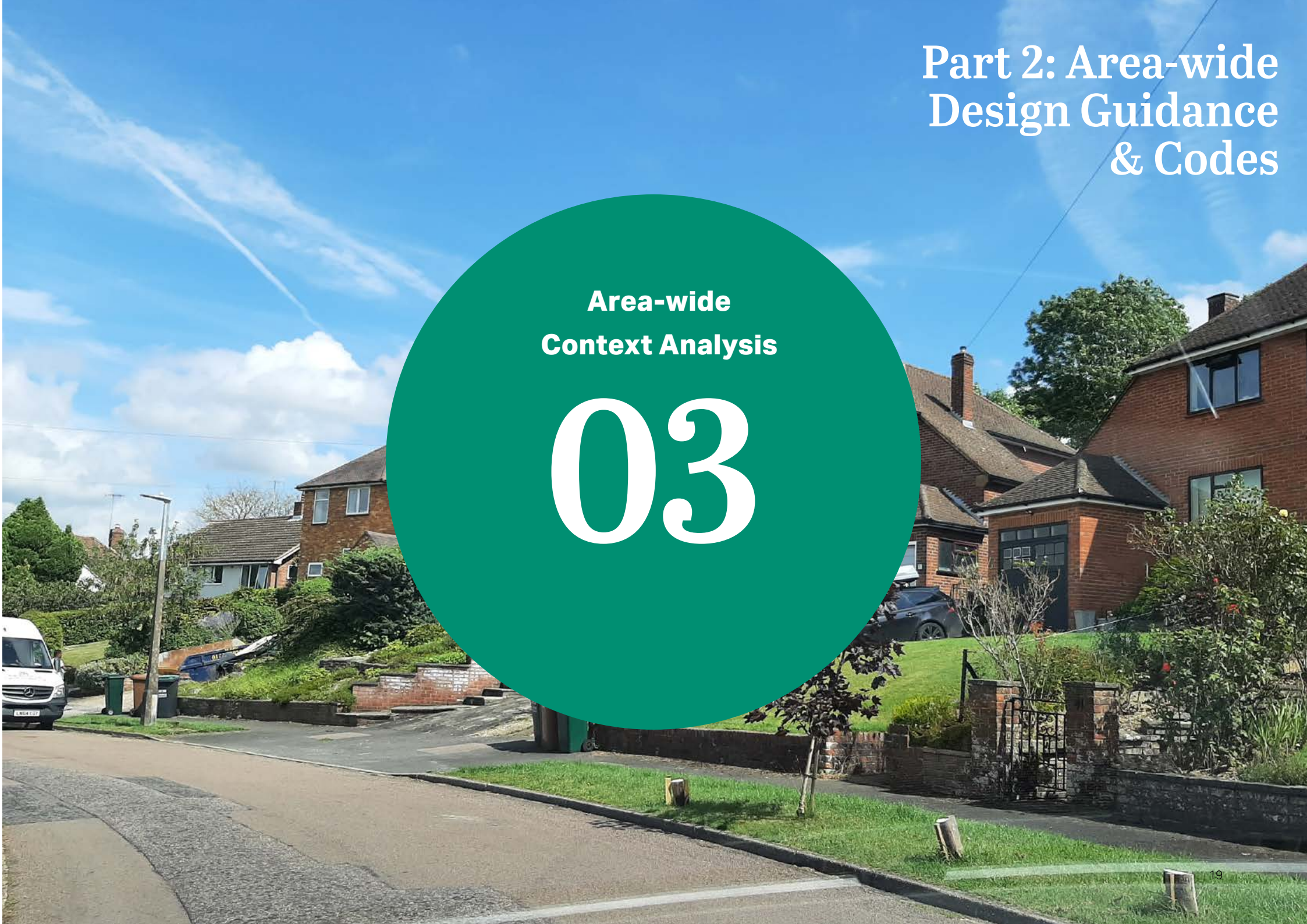
2015 - Putting Health into Place

NHS

In September 2015, NHS England and Public Health England launched an ambitious new initiative to put health at the heart of new neighbourhoods and towns across the country.

The resultant Healthy New Towns programme NHS "Putting Health into Place" has worked on 10 demonstrator sites. From developing these sites it formed 10 Healthy New Town Principles: Putting Health into Place. These principles will support partners in housebuilding, local government, healthcare and local communities to demonstrate how to create new places that offer people improved choices and chances for a healthier life.

Part 2: Area-wide Design Guidance & Codes



Area-wide Context Analysis

03

3. Area-wide Context Analysis

This section outlines the key features of the Batchworth area by access and movement; history and heritage; landscape and flooding and land use. An overview of the six Character Areas includes a summary of the specific challenges and opportunities for each area, and finally, this section concludes with more indepth analysis on Rickmansworth town centre.

3.1 Access and movement

The expansion and development of Batchworth as a commuter town for London has been strongly related to its accessibility and movement networks.

Areas of Batchworth such as Moor Park grew dramatically with the extension of the Metropolitan railway which connects Rickmansworth and Moor Park to central London. Rickmansworth station also acts as an interchange station served by the Chiltern Railways which run to Marylebone in London as well as out of London toward the West Midlands.

Batchworth is located in close proximity to the M25 which lies to the north west of the area. A series of A roads connect Rickmansworth town centre to the surrounding towns such as Watford to the north east. The road network around Batchworth is well connected with most of the suburbs relying on cars as the main mode of transport which can cause congestion in busy areas. Furthermore, the associated infrastructure forms a barrier to movement, separating the town centre from its residential hinterlands.

The area is well served by buses in parts; however, most do not penetrate the town centre as the focus is on the ring road and railway station. And there is no service which connects both wards. Within the town centre many of the walking routes are unattractive and not well signposted. Some of the residential areas are car dominated and do not have sufficient footpaths for pedestrians. There are some footpaths through green areas and a towpath along the Grand Union Canal.

F.4 **Figure 04:** Map showing access and movement in Batchworth.

3.2 Green infrastructure & flood risk

Although Batchworth is a built-up area there are plenty of green and blue assets in and around the area. There are a number of golf courses in the area, most of which are to the south of the town centre located mainly in the Moor Park area. There is some public access across the golf course via Public Right of Ways however they are limited. Some of the main recreational open spaces include Bishops Wood Country Park located on the southern NP area boundary, Croxley Common which is to the east of the town centre and the Eastbury Recreation Ground which is located centrally within the Eastbury area.

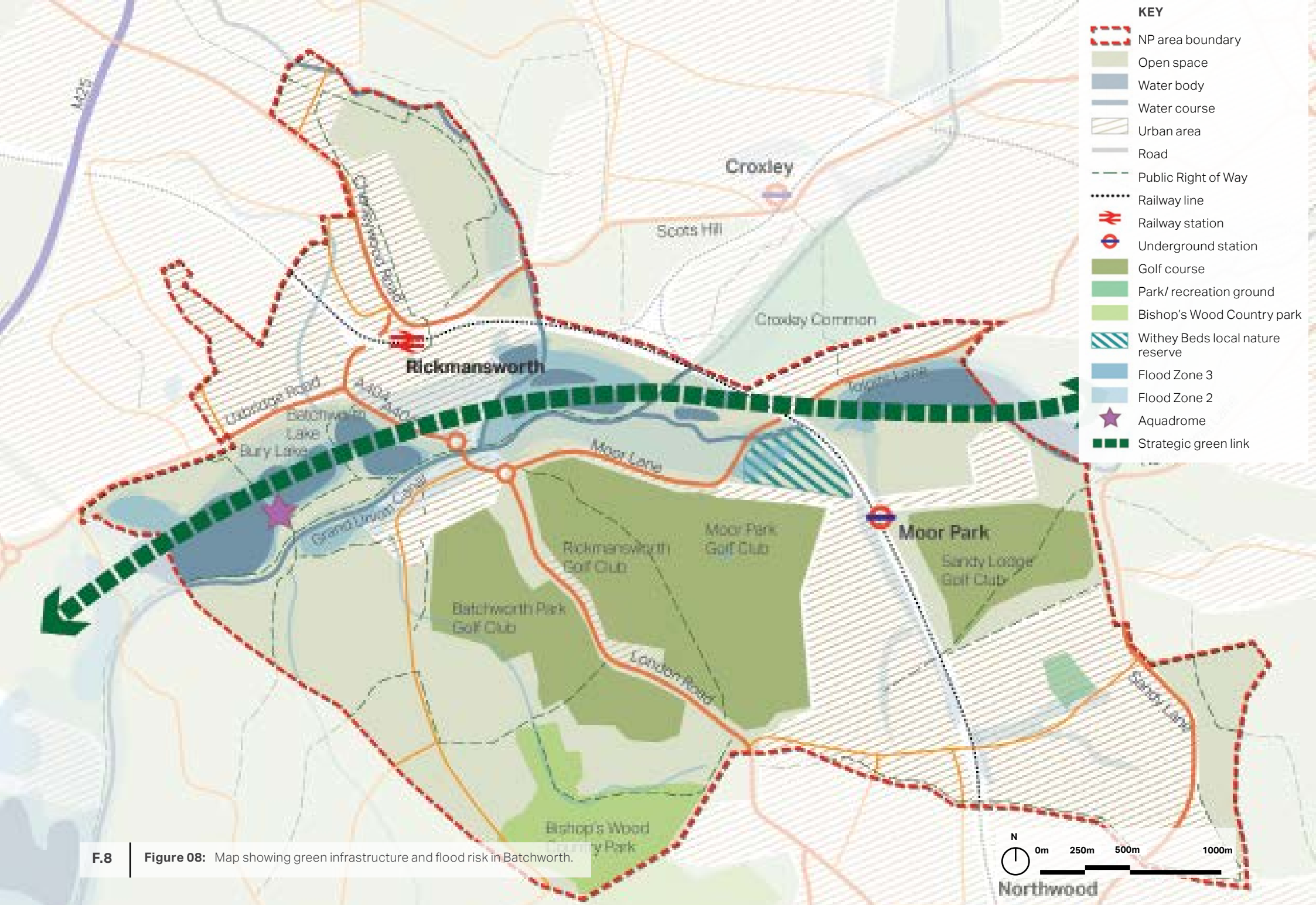
The Grand Union Canal, the rivers and lakes cut through the centre of the Batchworth area, therefore much of the immediate surroundings is within a flood zone which can affect areas of Batchworth. Within this area there is the Withey Beds local nature reserve located to the south of the railway line. This area is considered a strategic green link for the Three Rivers district and more widely throughout Hertfordshire. Batchworth Lake and Bury Lake are both used as part of the Aquadrome which is fairly well connected with surrounding footpaths. Furthermore, there is a towpath allowing people to walk along the canal.

The presence of the green and blue infrastructure is an important landscape feature of Batchworth which contributes to the character and identity of the area.

Figure 05: Bury Gardens, Rickmansworth Town Centre.

Figure 06: View of the Grand Union Canal.

Figure 07: Eastbury Recreation Ground.



F.8 **Figure 08:** Map showing green infrastructure and flood risk in Batchworth.

3.3 History and heritage

Within the Batchworth there are a number of heritage assets that contribute to the character of the area and should be protected and enhanced. There are six conservation areas, each with distinctive features.

Rickmansworth conservation area consists of the High Street and Church Street and was extended to include the surrounding Victorian buildings. Some of the key features are the presence of water including the town ditch and the rivers, timber framed buildings hidden under brick skins and the use of yellow stock brick, slate and render on terraced housing.

The Nightingale Road, Upper Nightingale Road and Cedars Avenue conservation areas include fine examples of Victorian and "Arts and Crafts" style buildings, built at a time when Rickmansworth was flourishing.

The Moor Park conservation area has a contrasting character to Rickmansworth as it is surrounding on three sides by countryside (Green Belt). It is almost completely residential with large, detached houses built in the 1920s/30s set well back from the street which tend to be tree lined.

Batchworth Heath conservation area centres around the heath which has both ecological interest and historical. The buildings in the area are predominately made of brick and tile and there are attractive views in and out of the area.

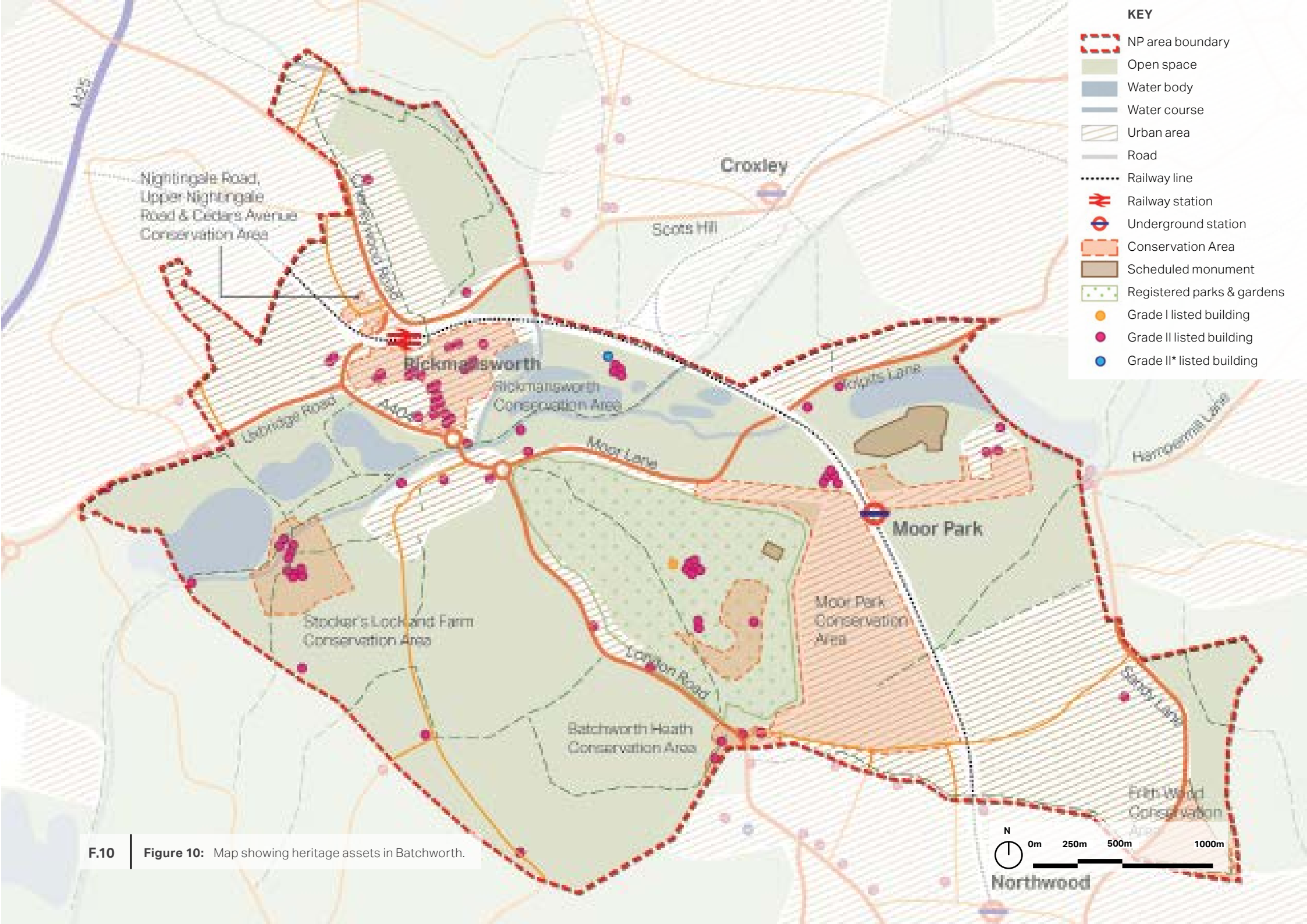
The Frith Wood conservation area features older houses set apart on individual, large plots with wide frontages and mature trees, as well as Grade II Listed and locally listed buildings.

Stocker's Lock and Farm conservation area has the most rural feel with the Grand Union Canal as an important historic feature that was key to the development of the cluster of buildings in the area.

There are a number of listed buildings throughout the area with most being Grade II listed, however there is one grade I listed building, the Moor Park and orangery/ Stable block which is located within the Moor Park registered park and garden.

Lastly, there are two scheduled monuments within Batchworth which are the Manor of the More and a Roman Villa located on Moor Park golf course.

Figure 09:
Moor Park and orangery, grade I listed building.



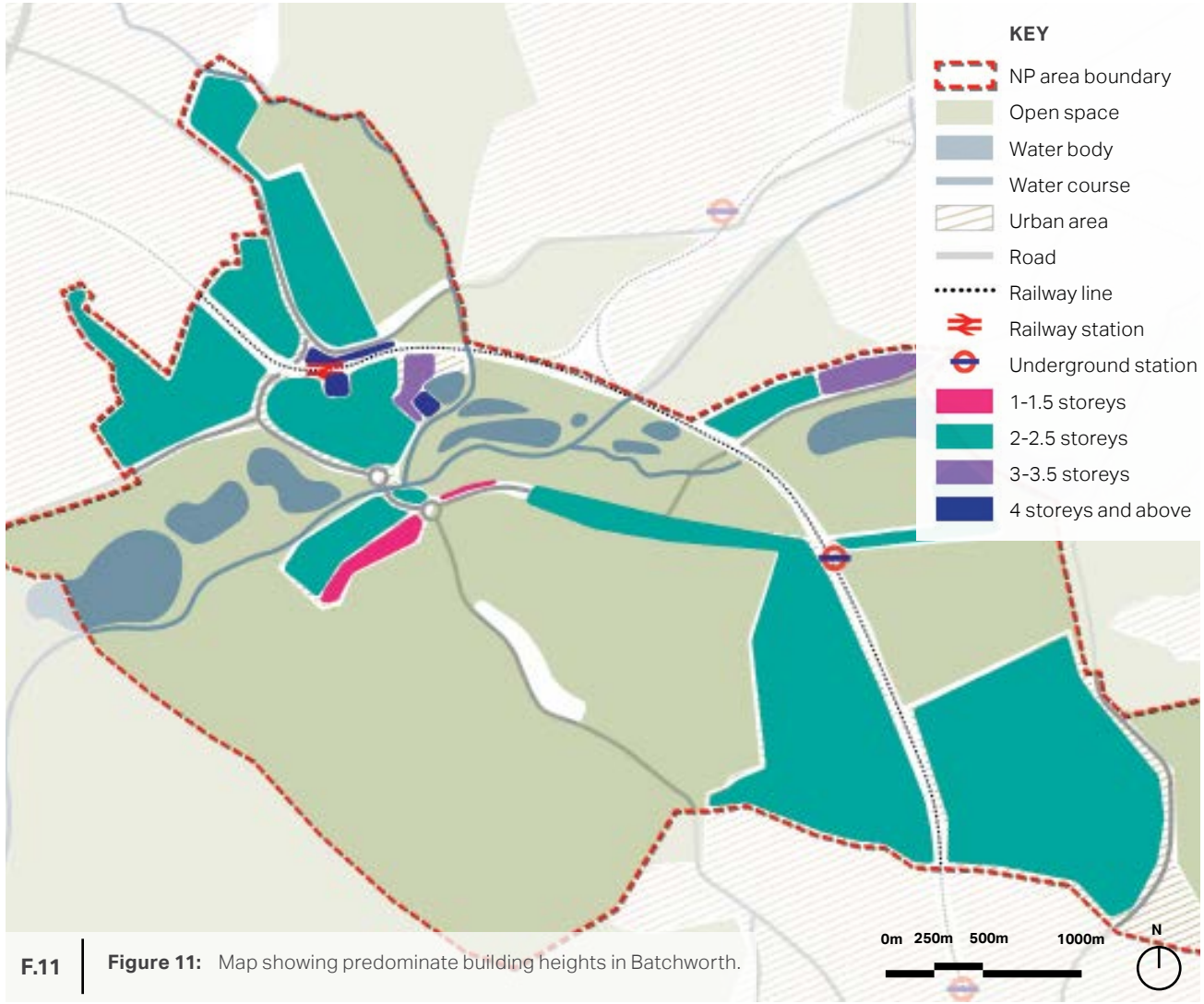
F.10 | **Figure 10:** Map showing heritage assets in Batchworth.

3.4 Building heights

Across Batchworth the building heights vary however the most predominant height is 2-2.5 storeys (*hereafter referring to above ground storeys) due to the area being mostly residential houses. Residential blocks of flats, particularly on Eastbury Avenue are 3-4 storeys.

Within Rickmansworth town centre there are buildings of up to 5 storeys which are mostly located near the railway station and to the north of the High Street. There are also some bungalows on the edge of the Harefield Road Character Area which are located on higher ground.

Along Tolpits Lane there are a mixture of 2 and 3 storey buildings due to changing uses in the area from employment to residential.



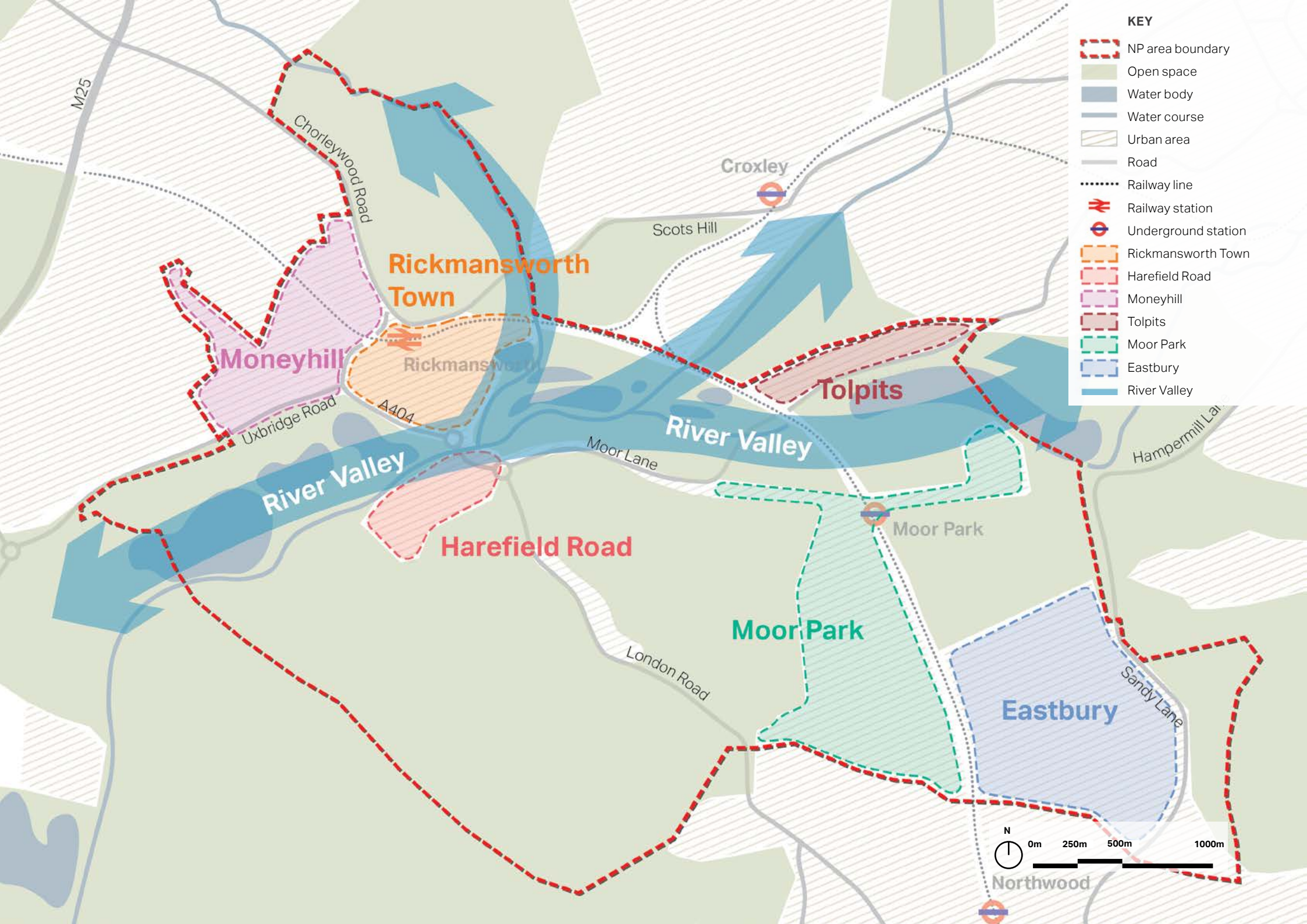
F.11 **Figure 11:** Map showing predominate building heights in Batchworth.

3.5 Character Areas overview

The Character Areas identified in this section have been defined by members of the Steering Group following a tour of the area in 2019. The different Character Areas were distinguished by their design, scale, and qualities within the urban fabric as well as the unique issues and opportunities each area is presented with.

This section assesses each Character Area individually to understand the key characteristics that will then be used to form the basis for the design guidance and codes for each area set out in Chapter 7. Spatial elements such as pedestrian links, highway barriers and building layout have been considered, as well as design elements such as building types, boundary treatments and public realm.

Further, more in-depth analysis on Rickmansworth town centre which has informed the strategic masterplan has been covered already in Chapter 3.


KEY
NP area boundary
Open space
Water body
Water course
Urban area
Road
Railway line
Railway station
Underground station
Rickmansworth Town
Harefield Road
Moneyhill
Tolpits
Moor Park
Eastbury
River Valley
M25
Chorleywood Road
Croxley
Scots Hill
Rickmansworth Town
Moneyhill
Rickmansworth
A404
Uxbridge Road
River Valley
River Valley
Moor Lane
Tolpits
Hampermill La
Moor Park
Harefield Road
Moor Park
London Road
Sandy Lane
Eastbury
N
0m
250m
500m
1000m
Northwood

01 Character Area 1: Rickmansworth Town

Land Use	Rickmansworth Town is the principal settlement within the District and has a varied land use mix with retail core as well as social and community infrastructure and offices. In the east of the centre there is a civic area which includes council offices, the library, police station and theatre. The library is listed as an asset of community value. Lastly, there are a number of residential properties as well as a railway station with trains and the tube to London.
Pattern of Development	The Character Area is defined by the surrounding highways, the A412 and Riverside Drive, creating a ring road around three sides of the town centre which forms a barrier to movement. The west of Rickmansworth town is constrained by the riparian environment of the River Chess, River Gade, River Colne and the Grand Union Canal. The High Street, which forms the historic retail core, runs the length of the Character Area from east to west with secondary and tertiary roads connecting to it. These roads off the High Street are a combination of terraced housing, apartment buildings and small offices. This area is the most built up and has the highest density of development. There are pockets of residential development across the town which reflect the expansion of industry and the extension of the metropolitan line. The eastern portion of the High Street was at one point mainly commercial use but has since been converted to residential.
Building Line/Plot Arrangement	The western portion of the High Street has a strong and consistent building line which has been retained with the historic form and alignment of the buildings creating a strong sense of enclosure and character. Within the historic retail core, the building plots are generally narrow in width and long with buildings that are flush to the street. The residential houses behind the High Street generally have a small setback from the street to allow for a small front garden.
Boundary Treatment	The terraced and semi-detached housing located to the south of the High Street generally have low brick walls as boundary treatments, however some hedges and wooden fences can also be seen. These boundary treatments provide cohesion and unity to the street. The apartment buildings boundary treatments vary dependent on their location, but most have either a hedgerow or ironmongery at the boundary edge. Other areas such as The Cloisters off the High Street have grass verges and trees, however many front gardens have been converted to parking areas detracting from the street scene and causing environmental issues.
Heights & Roofline	The buildings range from 2-6 storeys in height with most of the apartment buildings being 4 or 5 storeys. The historic buildings along the High Street are generally 2-3 storeys and the residential houses are mostly 2 storeys. The rooflines vary across the Character Area, however pitched and hipped roofs are the most predominate. Along the residential streets the roofline is generally consistent with few protrusions, whereas the apartment buildings have more complex roofscapes and do not form a continuous line along the street.
Public Realm	Due to the nature of the highway network, pedestrian links between the main town centre and arrival points, such as the station and car parks, are generally poor quality and do not provide a sense of arrival or offer clear wayfinding aids. Along the High Street there is a lot of visual clutter that detracts from its historic fabric. The High Street is normally busy with traffic and narrow pavements, however in response to the Covid-19 pandemic a section of the High Street was pedestrianised for part of the week. The recycling centre contributes to traffic and restricts access to the waterfront. Bury Gardens provides green space within the town centre and has a rich history dating back to the 1700s, however it is currently underused and fallen into a state of disrepair.

F.13 **Figure 13:** Opportunities and constraints within the Rickmansworth Town Character Area.

Issues to be addressed in the Design Codes:

i. Connections to/from the town centre and surrounding open space amenities are constrained by the existing road and rail infrastructure and are not welcoming for pedestrians and cyclists.

ii. Dated public realm along the High Street and poor quality shopfronts.

iii. More recent development does not celebrate Rickmansworth's rich heritage.

iv. Lack of clear gateways into the retail core and the town centre for pedestrians.

Opportunities to be used as an inspiration in Design Codes:

i. The highway barriers that surround the town centre can be broken by reconfiguring the junctions and improving the conditions for walking and cycling.

ii. Providing better access to the waterfront to the south of the town centre would bring the unique setting of the nature reserve, golf course and riparian environment into the town.

iii. There is an opportunity to celebrate the many heritage assets within the town centre ensuring their character is respected and can help define the town centre's place brand.

iv. The public realm along the High Street can be improved by decluttering signage and tidying the shopfronts.

F.14


F.15

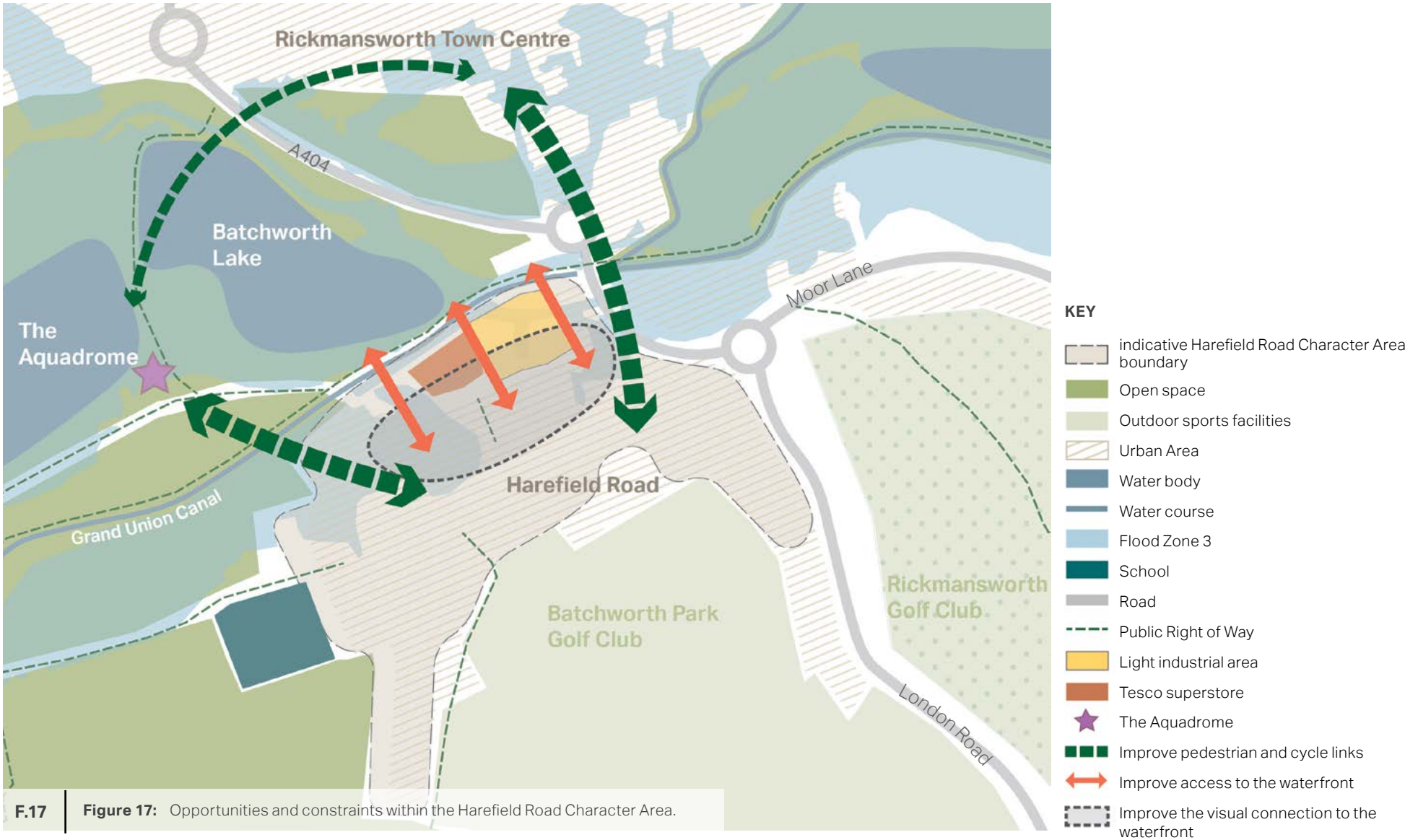
Figure 14:
Signage in the town centre.

Figure 15:
Residential street with semi-detached houses within the town centre.

02 Character Area 2: Harefield Road

Land Use	The Harefield Road Character Area is a small residential area with some local facilities such as a supermarket, primary school, and a pub. The Rickmansworth Aquadrome is adjacent to the Character Area to the north. There are some light industrial units along the riverside and a supermarket.
Pattern Of Development	This Character Area is adjacent to the Aquadrome to the north and is detached from the town centre by the rivers and the highway network. To the south is a golf course and to the west a farm. The A404 creates a barrier at the eastern edge with high speed traffic. Harefield Road provides the main route through the area and leads off to a number of cul-de-sacs.
Building Line/Plot Arrangement	Throughout the area the building lines are in general alignment with some protrusions creating interest along the street. The buildings have a generous setback from the street with a front garden and space for off-street parking. The majority of the dwellings are semi-detached and detached, there are also some bungalows along Sherfield Avenue. A range of architectural styles can be seen.
Boundary Treatment	The boundary treatments at the property edges are consistent throughout the Character Area, with most properties using a low brick wall or a hedge.
Heights & Roofline	As a residential area most of the buildings are 2 storeys in height, however there are some 1 storey bungalows which are located on higher ground. The roofline is generally aligned, however a selection of roof types such as hipped and gable pitched roofs provide variation along the street.
Public Realm	Most streets have generous footpaths for pedestrians as well as large green verges with trees on at least one, if not both sides of the street bringing greenery to the area. Connection to the waterfront is restricted due to the light industrial units and the Tesco superstore and there is only one vehicular access point to the Aquadrome which can become very congested at peak times and sunny days. Furthermore, traffic generated from the supermarket restricts accessibility to the Aquadrome. There are limited pedestrian and cycle links to Rickmansworth Town Centre as the main route is car dominated.

Figure 16:
Detached houses with on-plot parking and front gardens.



F.17 **Figure 17:** Opportunities and constraints within the Harefield Road Character Area.

Issues to be addressed in the Design Codes:

i. The main route into the Batchworth area via the A404 is car dominated and forms a barrier separating Batchworth with Rickmansworth town centre.

ii. The light industrial units and the Tesco superstore create a barrier to the waterfront from the Harefield Road Character Area.

iii. The Tesco superstore causes congestion along Harefield road, the main route through the area.

iv. The area south of the Grand Union Canal lies within flood zone 3, meaning that is it likely to suffer from flooding.

Opportunities to be used as an inspiration in Design Codes:

i. Create new pedestrian and cycle connections to Rickmansworth Town Centre to break the highways barrier that currently exists. New routes can also be linked into existing footpaths and walks, such as the Grand Union Canal towpath that runs east to west along the canal.

ii. The relationship between the residential area, the waterfront and the Aquadrome could be strengthened to enhance the benefits of green and blue infrastructure for people and biodiversity.

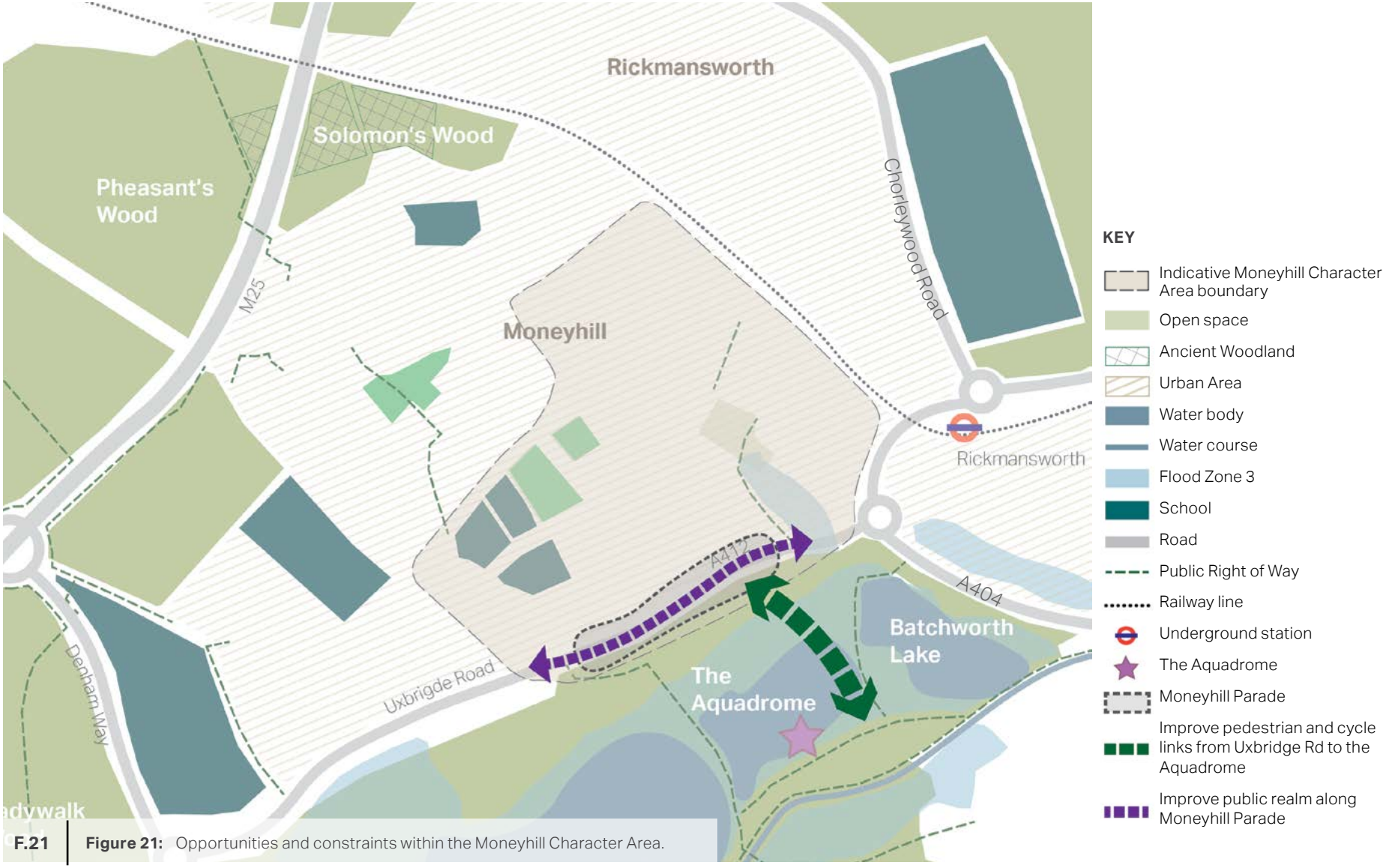
Figure 18:
Road entrance to the Aquadrome.

Figure 19:
Typical semi-detached house in Batchworth.

03 Character Area 3: Moneyhill

Land Use	Moneyhill is predominantly a residential area to the west of Rickmansworth Town Centre. Uxbridge Road which runs along the southern edge of the area has a number of restaurants, cafes and takeaways which form Moneyhill Parade. There are also a number of schools, two churches and a community centre. Moneyhill is in close proximity to the river valley and Aquadrome with access to the south of Uxbridge Road.
Pattern Of Development	Uxbridge Road connects Moneyhill to the town centre to the east. Along Moneyhill Parade there are terraced buildings on both side of the road with commercial at the ground floor and residential above. This road leads to a series of residential streets to the north. The eastern residential area (the Nightingale Road, Upper Nightingale Road and Cedars Avenue conservation area) generally consists of detached houses, whereas the west has more semi-detached and terraced housing. There are a range of architectural styles throughout the area.
Building Line/Plot Arrangement	Moneyhill Parade has a consistent building line along the street with buildings flush with the street to allow easy access to the commercial units. The residential areas within Moneyhill generally have long plots with large back gardens as well as generous front gardens and buildings setback from the street.
Boundary Treatment	The majority of properties within the residential area have a hedge, planting or a low brick wall as the boundary edge, however there are some dwellings that do not have a boundary treatment which interrupts the rhythm and unity of the street.
Heights & Roofline	Nearly all the buildings in Moneyhill are two-storeys in height, which is in keeping with the suburban character of the area. Some streets have a continuous roofline creating a strong sense of enclosure, whereas other streets have a more varied roofline due to different roof profiles.
Public Realm	Moneyhill Parade along Uxbridge Road has a separated carriageway for on-street parking, which is adjacent to a footpath and the main carriageway. The dominance of cars in this area along with the location of the central footpath make the street a less pleasant environment for walking and cycling. The residential areas of Moneyhill generally have footpaths on both sides of the road and some streets have green verges and street trees.

Figure 20:
Moneyhill Parade with a central footpath.



F.21 **Figure 21:** Opportunities and constraints within the Moneyhill Character Area.

Issues to be addressed in the Design Codes:

i. Uxbridge Road can become congested particularly at certain times of day as the main route to the M25 and the presence of restaurants and takeaways. This can cause concerns about public safety for pedestrians.

ii. Moneyhill Parade as the heart of this Character Area is car-dominated and could be improved.

Opportunities to be used as an inspiration in Design Codes:

i. There is an opportunity to improve the public realm of Moneyhill Parade to create a more attractive and vibrant local hub could encourage new uses in the units along the parade.

ii. Along with the improvements to the public realm, there is an opportunity to create better links to the Aquadrome and river valley to the south of Uxbridge Road.

F.22


F.23

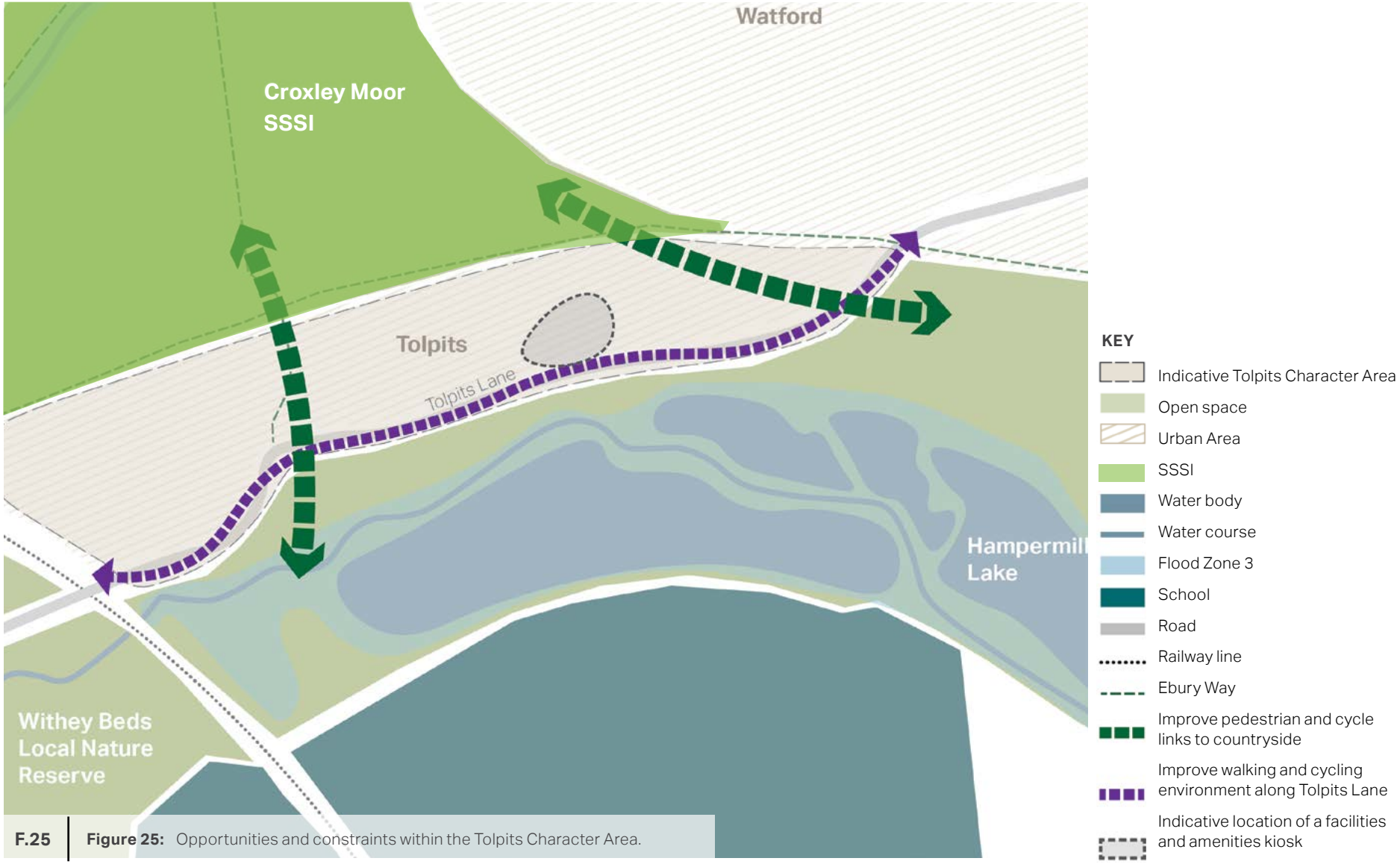
Figure 22:
Vlew of Moneyhill parade with commerical uses at the ground floor and residential above.

Figure 23:
Typical detached houses in the conservation area.

04 Character Area 4: Tolpits

Land Use	Tolpits has historically been an employment area with light industrial units. It has been designated as a key employment area however its role and function has been undermined by recent diversification with offices converted to residential units (along some existing houses just south of the entrance to Croxley Moor). There is a lack of facilities and amenities in the area to serve workers and residents.
Pattern Of Development	The Tolpits area is bound by Croxley Moor to the north, Tolpits Lane to the south and the railway line to the west and is quite isolated from the surrounding area. Tolpits Lane provides the primary route through the area running from east to west. As an employment area the buildings generally have a large footprint and are arranged with car parking surrounding the buildings for easy access.
Building Line/Plot Arrangement	The plots are generally large to accommodate large building footprints and ample car parking. The building line along some of the internal streets is fairly consistent. The small row of semi-detached houses by Croxley Moor have front gardens.
Boundary Treatment	The buildings located along Tolpits Lane generally have a boundary treatment of hedgerows and trees or ironmongery with a low brick wall. Most of the other buildings in the area do not have a boundary treatment due to the arrangement of the buildings and the car parking located around the buildings.
Heights & Roofline	The buildings within this area are generally 1-2 storeys in height with the occasional building reaching 3 storeys. Most of the buildings have flat roofs or shallow pitched roofs. Due to the stand-alone nature of the buildings and their varying orientation they do not form a consistent roofline along the street.
Public Realm	Tolpits is a car-dominated area with poor pedestrian and cycle links. Tolpits Lane does not have a footpath on either side of the road, however there is a footpath to the north of the Tolpits area. The internal streets are dominated by parked cars and is not designed for pedestrians.

Figure 24:
Light industrial area within Tolpits.



F.25 **Figure 25:** Opportunities and constraints within the Tolpits Character Area.

Issues to be addressed in the Design Codes:

i. The Tolpits area is relatively isolated which restricts access to those who have a car.

ii. Tolpits Lane has fast moving traffic with many HGVs making it a dangerous environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

iii. Due to changes in planning policy making it easier to convert offices to residential, the area could lose more employment land to development in the future.

Opportunities to be used as an inspiration in Design Codes:

i. To improve safe access for walking and cycling to the countryside and local employment opportunities. This includes connecting the recreational route along the River Valley with an access point through Tolpits.

ii. Pedestrian and cycle routes could be improved along Tolpits Lane to create a safer walking and cycling environment.

iii. The car parking could be rearranged to provide a less car dominated environment that prioritises pedestrians.

iv. A kiosk to accommodate local service facilities and amenities could be created to primarily serve workers to reduce car usage.

F.26


F.27

Issues remaining

1. ***Cross-ownership collaboration***
2. ***Rare moth habitat along Ebury Way***

Figure 26:
New residential development located within the Tolpits area, seen from Dwight Road.

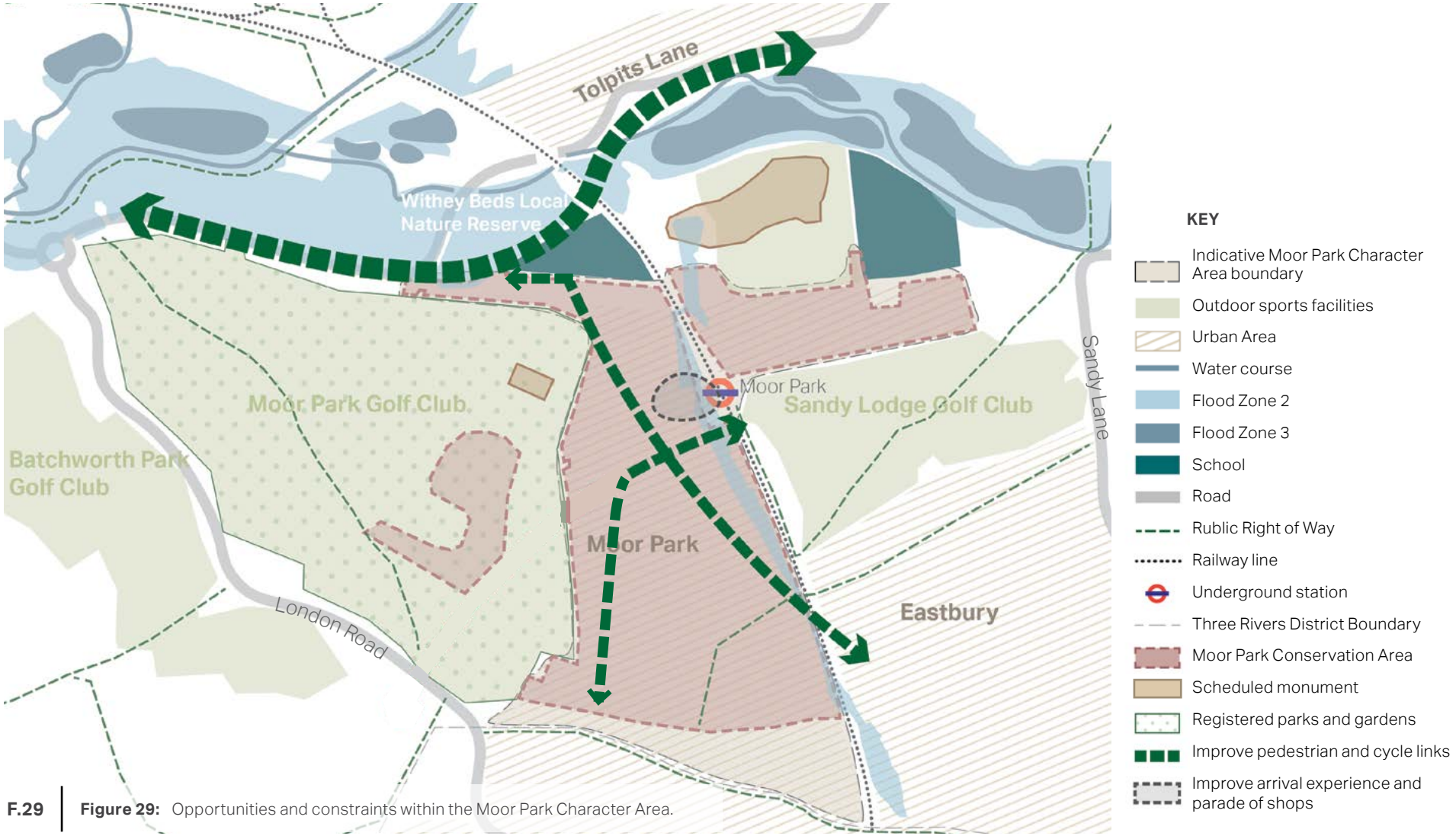
Figure 27:
Footpath along the northern edge of Tolpits.

05 Character Area 5: Moor Park

Land Use	Moor Park[1] is a large residential estate with a small shopping parade and a small number of flats. The Moor Park (1958) Ltd management company is operated by residents to maintain the estate including private roads, verges, and open spaces[2]. The built-up area forms the Moor Park Conservation Area, which is surrounding by golf courses to the east and west. The Metropolitan railway line also runs through the area with a station called Moor Park.
Pattern Of Development	The development of this area took place in the early 20th century after the Moor Park Mansion and estate was bought in 1919 and converted. Throughout the 20th century building spread to the south and west. The area mainly consists of large detached houses on generous individual plots with attractive roads at differing scales.
Building Line/Plot Arrangement	This area is mostly made up of large plots with detached houses that are set back from the street with front gardens and off-street parking. The small parade of shops has a consistent building line with entrances flush with the street and bay car parking in front.
Boundary Treatment	The boundary treatments at the property edge are consistent throughout the Character Area, with most properties using a low brick wall or a hedge at the boundary edge.
Heights & Roofline	The houses are generally 2-2.5 storeys in height apart from the parade of shops and flats facing the parade which are up to 3 storeys high.
Public Realm	As a car dominated area, pedestrian and cycle links could be improved as not all the street have a footpath for pedestrians and there is a lack of access to some of the surrounding green infrastructure such as the Withey Beds Local Nature Reserve. The public realm adjacent to the parade of shops which forms a boulevard could be better utilised, as could the space outside Moor Park station.

1 The Moor Park Conservation Area Appraisal can be found: here.
2 Planning and development in Moor Park also has legal restrictions which are outlined: here.

Figure 28:
View along Station Approach parallel to the railway line. Typical street within Moor Park with lots of greenery and sense of enclosure provided from the mature trees and hedges.



F.29 | **Figure 29:** Opportunities and constraints within the Moor Park Character Area.

Issues to be addressed in the Design Codes:

i. This conservation area has mature trees and vegetation with tree-lined avenues and houses set on spacious plots; any design guidance and codes must preserve this distinctive character.

ii. The land to the east of Moor Park along the railway line is within Flood Zone 3 and is at risk of flooding. This is exacerbated by surface water flooding associated with hard surfaces; therefore design guidance should promote greenery and permeable surfaces.

Opportunities to be used as an inspiration in Design Codes:

i. The public realm outside the railway station offers a lot of greenery so there is an opportunity to create more of an arrival space that is distinct to Moor Park. Furthermore, this area could provide a better visual link to the boulevard and parade of shops to improve way finding.

ii. The parade of shops could shift from being car-based to focus on pedestrians and has the potential to be a local destination with seating areas or additional planting along the central reservation as it is fairly wide.

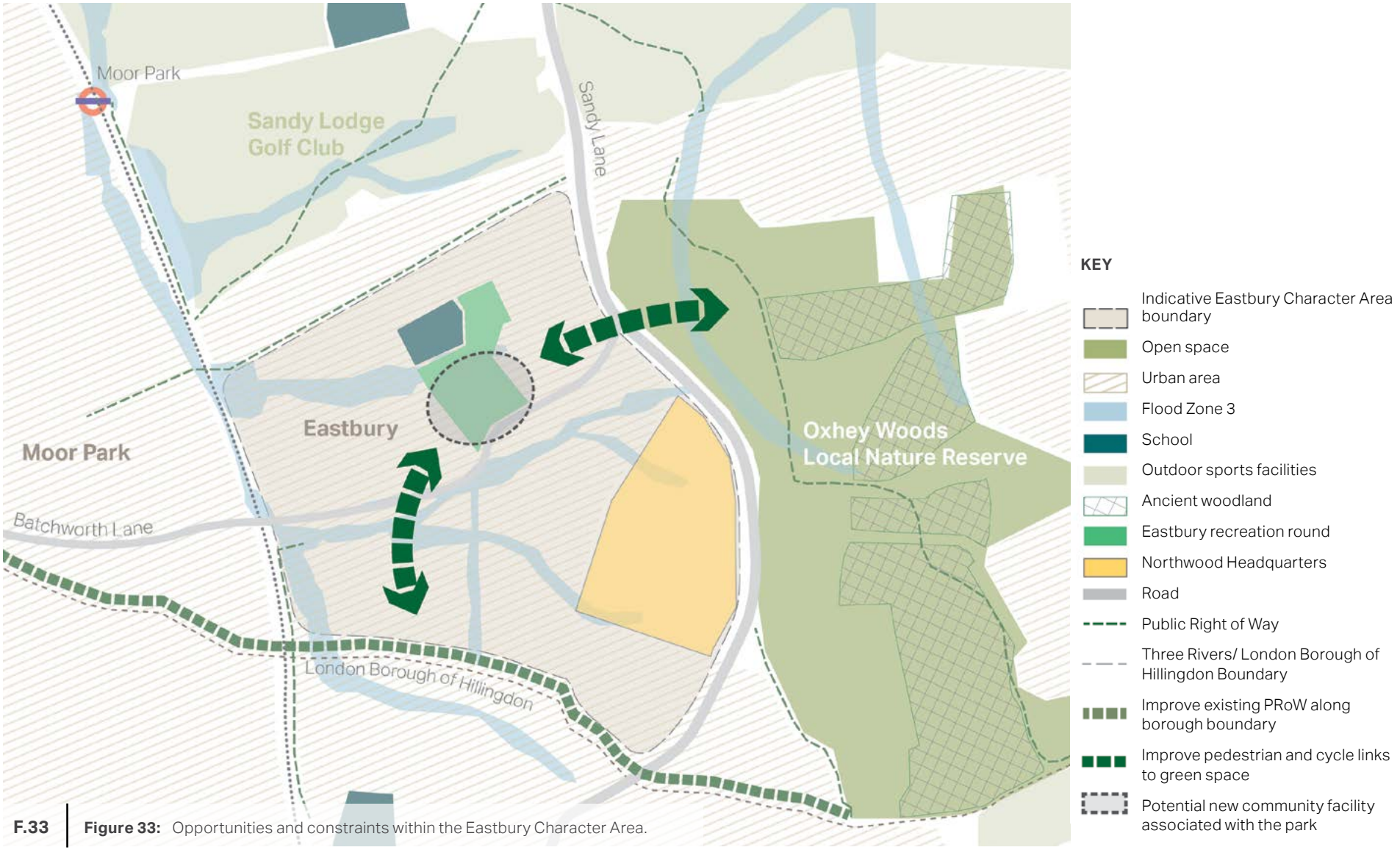
iii. There is potential to improve the pedestrian links throughout this area, particularly linking to the Withey Beds Nature Reserve.

Figure 30:
View to the parade of shops with flats above and car parking bays as well as a central reservation with planting.
Figure 31:
Example of a detached house with a large driveway and a brick wall boundary treatment, typical of this Character Area.

04 Character Area 6: Eastbury

Land Use	Eastbury is primarily a residential area with suburban development forming part of Metroland. There is also a primary school and Eastbury Recreation Ground which is a well-used green space with public tennis courts. To the east of Eastbury there is the Northwood Headquarters with associated housing to the west.
Pattern Of Development	The introduction of the Metropolitan Line railway station at Northwood in 1887 sparked development in Eastbury. Eastbury relies on Northwood for local facilities and amenities.
Building Line/Plot Arrangement	Eastbury is dominated by detached homes, many of which form part of the Metroland style from the 1930s. The plots are fairly large, and the buildings have a generous setback from the street and have front gardens and driveways, with the exception of Grove Farm Park which has smaller plot sizes. Over the years new developments have emerged and houses have been redeveloped leading to variations in the building line along the streets.
Boundary Treatment	The majority of Eastbury consistently uses low brick walls with hedgerows above. This creates rhythm along the street as well as contributing to the green character of the area. Some of the more recent flats use ironmongery at the boundary edge. The associated houses west of the Northwood Headquarters are unique in character as they do not have a boundary treatment, only large grass front gardens and are distinct in character to the other housing in the area.
Heights & Roofline	Most of the detached and semi-detached houses range from 2 to 2.5 storeys in height across Eastbury. The streets with flats tend to be slightly taller at 3 storeys and some of these buildings have flat roofs which is not in keeping with the predominately pitched and hipped roofs seen throughout the Character Area.
Public Realm	The pavements are generally wide, and some streets have green verges on one or both sides helping to create a green, suburban character. The main public space within the area is the Eastbury Recreation Ground which is well kept and well used. In contrast, the pedestrian and cycle routes at the boundary with Hillingdon are in poor states of repair and require attention. Several of these pedestrian routes are partially blocked by large trees (all tree-blocked paths are marked "No cycling"). The loss of green space is to be resisted in this area.

Figure 32:
View from Batchworth Lane looking to Eastbury Recreation Ground, the only designated open green space in Eastbury.



F.33 | **Figure 33:** Opportunities and constraints within the Eastbury Character Area.

Issues to be addressed in the Design Codes:

i. Parts of the western area have experienced flooding in the past from surface water run-off due to limited drainage capacity and the increase in hard surfaces. Therefore, the design codes should seek to reduce the number of hard surfaces, specifically in front gardens.

Opportunities to be used as an inspiration in Design Codes:

i. The Eastbury Recreation Ground is an important open space within the area and there could be an opportunity to highlight it's significance to the community by improving pedestrian and cycle routes to the green space.

ii. There could be an opportunity to enhance existing footpaths that are overgrown and create new ones to encourage walking and cycling, particularly along school routes.

iii. Future development should respect 1930's Metroland character as well as the special character of the Northwood Headquarters housing. Front gardens should be retained to protect off-street parking, and buildings should not be enlarged from front boundary to street edge.

Figure 34:
Northwood Headquarters housing with large front gardens, no boundary treatment and no footpaths along the road.
Figure 35:
Example of flats developed along Eastbury Avenue.

Area-wide Design Guidance

04

4. Area-wide design guidance

This section provides overarching design guidance for the whole of the Batchworth area based on the five objectives set out in the emerging vision for the neighbourhood plan, as drafted and consulted upon by the Batchworth Community Council in the summer of 2021.

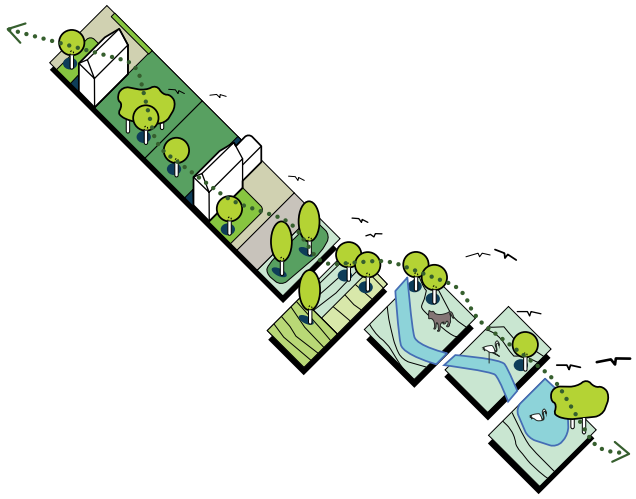
4.1 Introduction

This section provides design guidance for new development in Batchworth, setting out the expectations that applicants for planning permission in the town will be expected to follow.

The guidance can be applied to the whole Neighbourhood Plan area. This chapter is divided into five sections, each with a different number of subsections. A short introductory text with general design guidance is provided at the beginning of each section followed by a series of more prescriptive parameters highlighted in a grey box.

1 EN. Environment

Enhance the richness and experience of green and blue infrastructure assets within Batchworth.



F.36

Figure 36:
Illustrative diagram of a blue and green network.

EN.01.01 Green & Blue Infrastructure Network

The Batchworth Community Council's designated Neighbourhood Plan area has a rich and varied green and blue infrastructure with the river valley cutting through the Neighbourhood Plan area creating a strategic green link as well as being surrounded on three sides by Green Belt. The Ebury Way, which runs east-west across the south of the town centre has the potential to be incorporated within the green link with enhancements. Within the built up areas there are green spaces, front and back gardens, street trees and landscaping which all contribute to the extensive green and blue network.

i. Green networks, corridors and linkages are a key mechanism for reducing the adverse effects of fragmentation of biodiversity. They also deliver a range of social and environmental benefits including enhancing the local landscape character and providing opportunities for public access and recreational use, and improving health and wellbeing.

ii. Green and blue networks can be created and enhanced by providing a series of both public and private green spaces including generous and vegetated front and back gardens, public green spaces, fields, and natural open spaces. The blue infrastructure in Batchworth consists of the three rivers, lakes and the canal.

iii. Enhance access to Batchworth's green and blue infrastructure, and views. Existing pedestrian and cycle links can be improved and new links created to connect homes to nature.

iv. Protect and mitigate against flooding through careful planning and design of development in areas at risk of flooding.

EN.01.02 Environmental Protection

There are many environmental designations such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and local nature reserves within the Batchworth Neigh area which will need to be considered when any new development or change to the built environment is proposed.

i. The Hertfordshire Green Infrastructure plan should be considered particularly in relation to the strategic green link through the river valley.

ii. Identify priority habitats where there is richness of wildlife, such as Ramsar sites, Special Protection Areas, SSSIs and National Nature Reserves, and preserve them.

iii. Retain and conserve important trees and hedgerows and respect tree preservation orders. These can provide habitat for wildlife and enhance the open landscape.

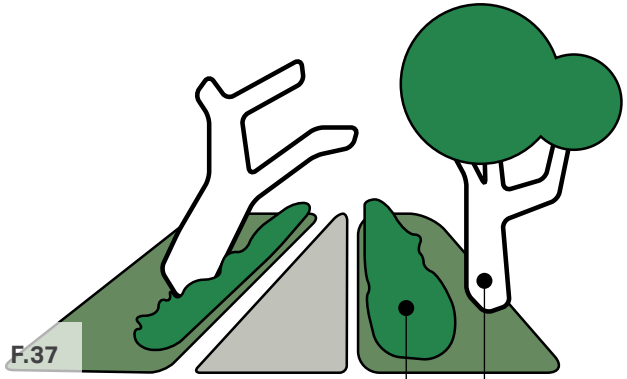


Figure 37:
Diagram showing mature trees and hedgerows should be retained.

Figure 38:
Croxley Common Moor, SSSI.

Figure 39:
Withey Beds Local Nature Reserve.

EN.01.03 Biodiversity & Wildlife

The varied landscape character around Batchworth allows for rich biodiversity and a range of wildlife. It is important that this biodiversity is retained and enhanced.

i. Woodland, hedges, trees and green road verges should be protected and enhanced where possible. Natural tree buffers should also be protected when planning for new development.

ii. Areas considered high in wildlife, such as the rivers and lakes to the south of Batchworth should be protected and where possible enhanced.

iii. Align back gardens to ensure a continuous wildlife corridor. Bird boxes or bricks in walls can be installed to enhance biodiversity and wildlife.


F.40

F.41

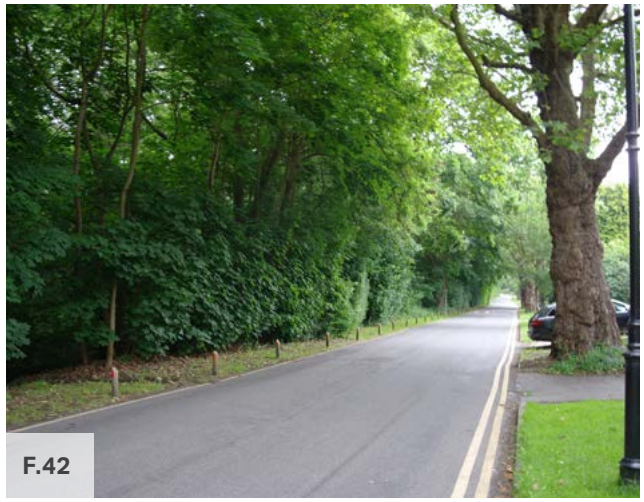

F.42

Figure 40:
Swans and ducks on Bury Lake.

Figure 41:
Bird box within the Withey Beds Local Nature Reserve.

Figure 42:
Tree lined street with plently of greenery.

2 SU. Sustainable Design

Sensitively respond to the challenges of and future proofing Batchworth against the impacts of climate change. Fostering sustainability across economy, culture and community.

SU.02.01 Sustainable Design

This section introduces examples of energy efficient technologies and strategies that could be incorporated into new and existing buildings. Although these do not constitute a policy requirement, new development would be highly encouraged to embed these guidelines into their proposals.

New developments should be designed for climate change mitigation and adaptation. Development proposals should consider layout, aspect, massing and use of materials in order to reduce energy consumption and thereby minimise contributions to climate change.

Historic buildings within Batchworth can provide good examples of sustainable layouts and construction methods along with the efficient use of energy and local resources. The survival of these historic buildings reflect their success and adaptability.

There are opportunities in most historic buildings to improve energy conservation without causing harm, through measures such as secondary glazing, improved loft insulation using natural materials, low energy lighting and the use of fuel-efficient boilers. In some situations, renewable energy technologies can also be installed without causing harm to the heritage significance.

i. In new developments, the orientation of buildings within the plot, along with the site topography, should be considered to maximise solar gain while keeping a consistent frontage to the street.

ii. Internal rooms should be oriented according to their expected use, e.g. sun in the morning for kitchens, but maximise sunlight in habitable spaces such as living areas and studies for the rest of the day.

iii. The design of new developments must maximise the use of energy efficiency and energy conservation fixtures, fittings and technology. Passive methods of heating and cooling and the use of renewable energy technologies such as ground source and air source heat pumps, photovoltaics and solar panels must be considered for new developments. The use of these technologies would also be expected in refurbishments.

iv. Solar access along the south façade should be maximised and openings on the north side minimised. Appropriate shading elements and cross ventilation should be employed in new and existing buildings.

SU.02.02 Energy Efficient Housing & Energy Production

Energy efficient or eco design combines all-round energy efficient construction, appliances, and lighting with commercially available renewable energy systems, such as solar water heating and solar electricity.

Starting from the design stage, there are strategies that can be incorporated towards passive solar heating, cooling and energy efficient landscaping which are determined by local climate and site conditions. The retrofit of existing buildings with ecodesign solutions should also be encouraged. Daylight and sunlight assessments can be used to analyse potential negative impacts of new development on surrounding properties and preemptively resolve overshadowing and right to light disputes.

The aim of these interventions is to reduce overall home energy use as cost effectively as the circumstances permit. The final step towards a high-performance building would consist of other on site measures towards renewable energy systems. Certifications such as BREEAM[1] and NABERS drive improvements to building services and systems performances.

It must be noted that eco-design principles do not prescribe a particular architectural style and can be adapted to fit a wide variety of built characters. A wide range of solutions is also available to retrofit existing buildings, included listed properties, to improve their energy efficiency [2] to the heritage significance.

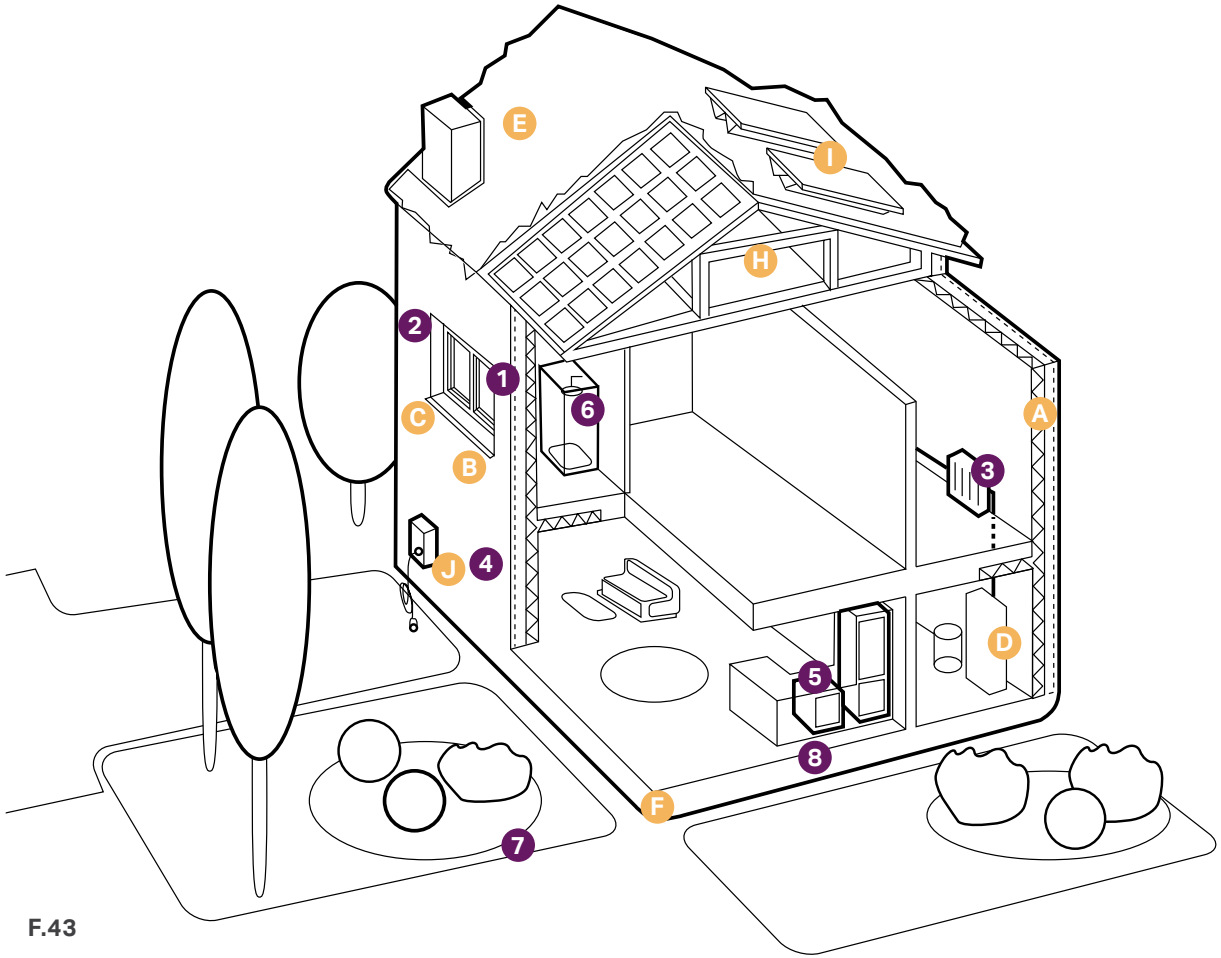
1 BREEAM Technical Manual www.breeam.com
2. Historic England. https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/energy-efficiency-and-historic-buildings/

i. Buildings must be built with high levels of energy efficiency. Construction materials should be effectively reused, recycled and locally sourced. Material should be transported on site in the most sustainable manner and have low embodied energy. Innovative materials must be considered to reduce embodied carbon.

ii. Buildings must achieve at least a minimum level of carbon reductions through a combination of energy efficiency, on-site energy supply and/or (where relevant) directly connected low carbon or renewable heat and choose from a range of (mainly off-site) solutions for tackling the remaining emissions.

iii. New proposals should consider the use of ground and air source heat pumps, as well as electric boilers.

Figure 43:
Diagram of a low-carbon home adapted from Commission on Climate Change.



F.43

Existing homes

1. **Insulation** in lofts and walls (cavity and solid)
2. **Double or triple glazing with shading** (e.g. tinted window film, blinds, curtains and trees outside)
3. **Low- carbon heating** with heat pumps or connections to district heat network
4. **Drought proofing** of floors, walls, windows and doors
5. **Highly energy- efficient appliances** (e.g. A++ and A+++ rating)
6. **Highly waste- efficient devices** with low-flow showers and taps, insulated tanks and hot water thermostats
7. **Green space (e.g. gardens and trees)** to help reduce the risks and impacts of flooding and overheating
8. **Flood resilience and resistance** with removable air back covers, relocated appliances (e.g. installing washing machines upstairs), treated wooden floors

New build homes

- A **High levels of airtightness**
- B **More fresh air** with the mechanical ventilation and heat recovery, and passive cooling
- C **Triple glazed windows and external shading** especially on south and west faces
- D **Low-carbon heating** and no new homes on the gas grid by 2030 at the latest
- E **Water management and cooling** more ambitious water efficiency standards, green roofs and reflective walls
- F **Flood resilience and resistance** e.g. raised electrical, concrete floors and greening your garden
- H **Construction and site planning** timber frames, sustainable transport options (such as cycling)
- I **Solar panel**
- J **Electric car charging point**

Solar panels

Solar panels should be designed to have a minimal visual impact on the roof of a building. New builds should incorporate solar panels from the beginning and form part of the design concept. Some attractive options are solar shingles, photovoltaic slates or tiles. Solar panels can also be used as a roofing material in their own right.

When retrofitting existing buildings the proportions of the roof and building should be considered to identify the best location and sizing of the panels. Tiles or slates of different colours can be added to the roof to better integrate the solar panels.

Figure 44: Example of solar tiles integrated into the roof from the outset.

Ground heating systems

Heat pumps play an important role in the transition to low carbon energy. Heat pumps involve using a system to capture heat from outside the home and move it inside. Electricity is used to do this though the quantity of heat generated is greater than the quantity of electricity used to power the system. As a heat pump captures heat that is already present in the environment, the system itself emits no carbon dioxide emissions.

Ground source heating may also be designed with the system underground vertically in instances where land is not sufficient for a horizontal layout..

Figure 45: Example of a ground source heating system.

SU.02.03 Sustainable Drainage System (SuDs)

Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) cover a range of approaches to managing surface water in a more sustainable way to reduce flood risk and improve water quality, whilst also improving amenity benefits.

Any development should seek to reduce flood risk overall through the creation of multi-functional green infrastructure and sustainable drainage systems. It is essential to demonstrate that the development will be safe and flood risk is not increased elsewhere.

New developments should consider the amenity and aesthetic value of surface water in the urban environment alongside long term environmental, biological and social factors in the context of climate change and urbanisation.

SuDS should be considered as a key design tool to achieve those wider goals and not a mere functional requirement.

i. New and existing developments must capitalise on SuDS possibilities as a key design element to provide amenity and aesthetic value to the development.

ii. Where possible, SuDS networks should be integrated with the surrounding water bodies to create a closed loop water cycle.

iii. New and existing developments should ensure that at least 30% of house frontages incorporate soft landscaping and flower beds, hard standing is constructed with a permeable surface along with suitable drainage, and trees within a site are retained or replaced so overall numbers remain the same.

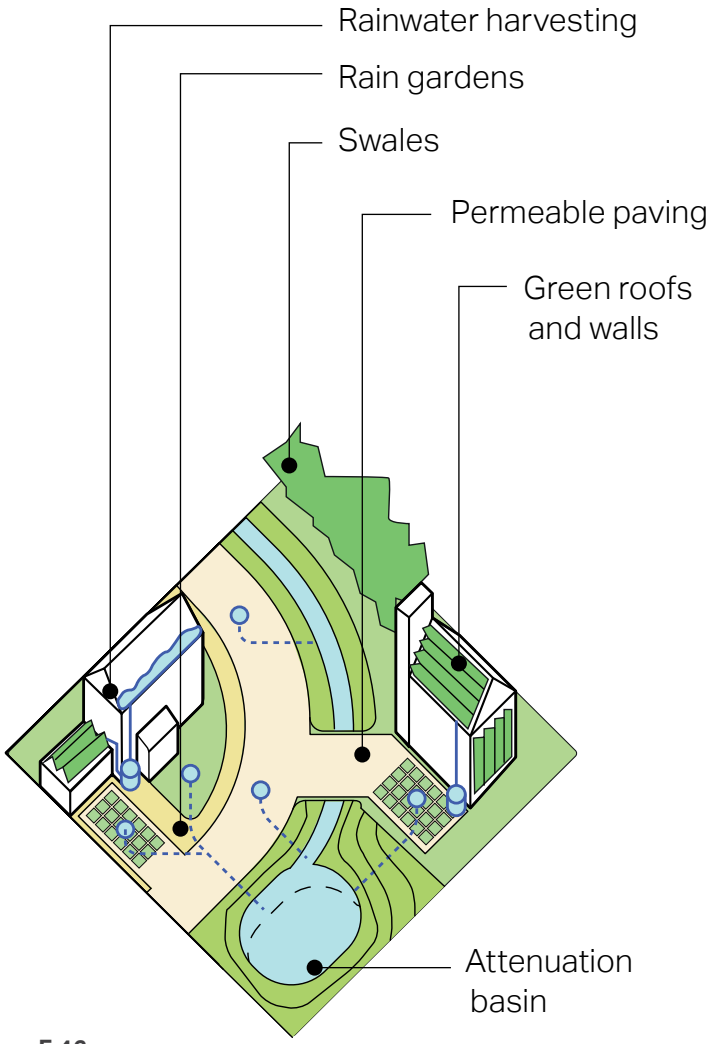


Figure 46:
Diagram showing a comprehensive system of green and blue infrastructure.

F.46

Storage and Slow Release

Rainwater harvesting refers to the systems allowing the capture and storage of rainwater as well as those enabling the reuse in-site of grey water. Simple storage solutions, such as water butts, can help provide significant attenuation. If water is not reused, a slow release valve allows water from the storage to trickle out, recreating capacity for future rainfall events.

These systems involve pipes and storage devices that could be unsightly if added without an integral vision for design Therefore, some design recommendations would be to:

- Conceal tanks by cladding them in complementary materials.
- Use attractive materials or finishing for pipes.
- Combine landscape/planters with water capture systems.
- Underground tanks.
- Utilise water bodies for storage.

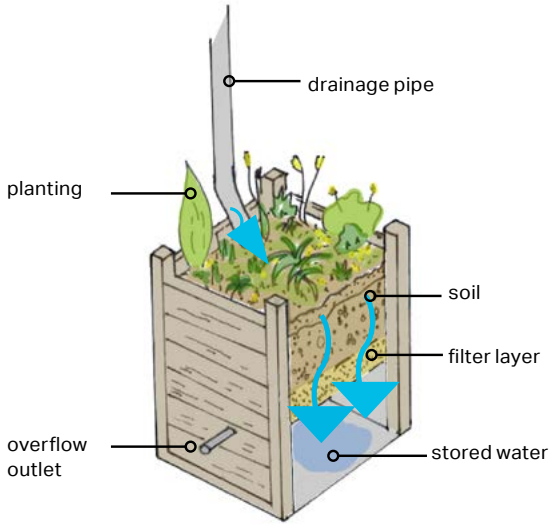
Bioretension Systems

Bioretention systems, including soak away and rain gardens, can be used within each development, along verges, and in semi-natural green spaces. They must be designed to sit cohesively with the surrounding landscape.

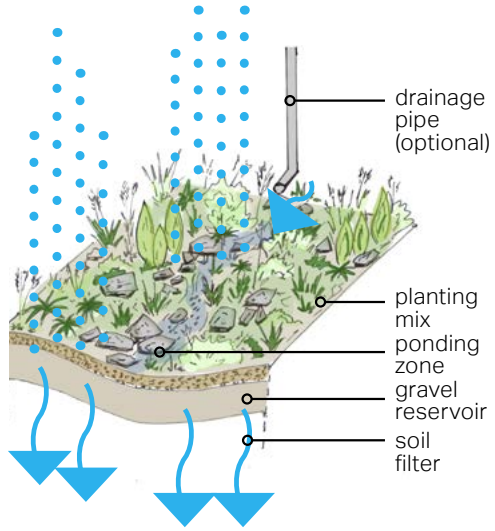
They can be used at varying scales, from small-scale rain gardens serving individual properties, to long green-blue corridors incorporating bioretention swales, tree pits and mini-wetlands, serving roads or extensive built-up areas.

These planted spaces are designed to enable water to infiltrate into the ground. Cutting of downpipes and enabling roof water to flow into rain gardens can significantly reduce the runoff into the sewer system. The UK Rain Garden Design Guidelines provides more detailed guidance on their feasibility and suggests planting to help improve water quality as well as attract biodiversity.[1]

1 UK Rain Gardens Guide. Available at: https://raingardens.info/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/UKRainGarden-Guide.pdf



F.47



F.48

Figure 47:
Diagram showing a stormwater planter.

Figure 48:
Diagram showing how a rain garden works.

SU.02.04 Electric Vehicle Charging

Off-street car charging

New developments should integrate mounted charging points and associated services into the design from the start to avoid cluttered elevations on the primary facades and front elevations of the building.

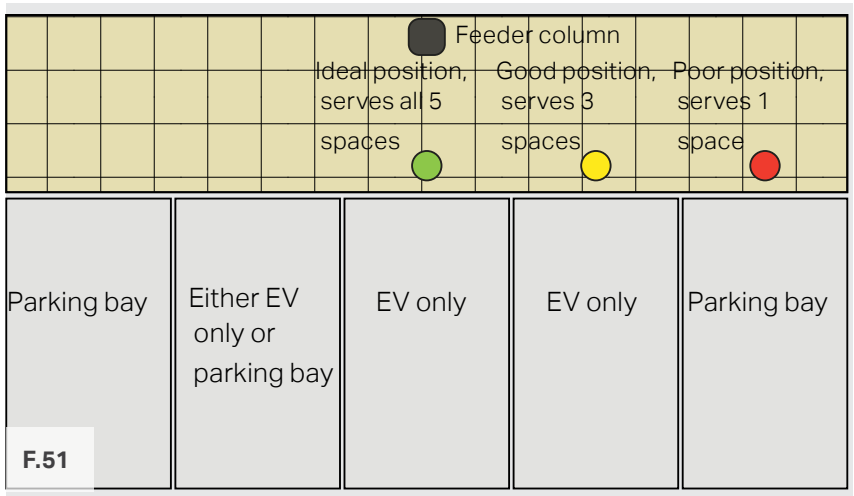
On-street car charging

Car charing points should be provided when new on-street parking is suggested as well as retrofitting existing car parking, where possible.

- When charging points are located on the footpath there should be a clear footway width of 1.5m for wheelchair users and pedestrians to pass by.
- Charging points should be placed so they can serve as many vehicles as possible.

F.49

F.50



F.51

Figure 49:
Off-street mounted car charging point.

Figure 50:
On-street free-standing car charging point.

Figure 51:
Diagram showing the placing of on-street car charging points.

3 CO. Community

Create an attractive place for all to live, work and play in order to strengthen community cohesion and inclusivity.

CO.03.01 Social and Community Infrastructure

Any new development should contribute to and enrich the local infrastructure provision to build better places for residents. They should encourage inclusive places that cater for the needs of the community promoting health and well-being through convivial and safe public open space.

Batchworth has a number of social and community facilities throughout the area, however most are located in Rickmansworth town centre, contributing to its character and offering a high level of engagement for local people.

Inclusive and aware design necessitates that developers have a diverse design team who reflect the varied diversity of Batchworth's residents.

i. Existing and proposed social and community infrastructure should respond to the main place making principles identified in each Character Area as well as be sympathetic to the existing architectural style.

ii. Public buildings such as the library in Rickmansworth town centre represent a social focal point for communities and community activities. Therefore they should be re-provided in high quality premises or improved.

iii. Signage and wayfinding should be used to highlight the options for sustainable transport modes, promoting walking and cycling to and from community facilities to reduce the reliance on private cars.

F.52


F.53

Figure 52:
Local library in Rickmansworth town centre.

Figure 53:
Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin.

CO.03.02 Open Spaces

There are a variety of green spaces within Batchworth which have a different character, use and scale. This created the opportunity to develop a system where each green space serves a particular purpose and come togther to create a connected green network.

i. Existing open spaces should offer a variety of spaces that can host a diverse range of activities and accommodate different users.

ii. They should respond to local character and encourage civic pride. Existing and new community groups can organise events and activities in the open space to boost people's engagement.

iii. Open spaces should be well maintained and monitored to preserve their high quality, improving the visual impact in order to attract more people. New development should seek to connect into existing open spaces where possible

iv. Any new open spaces should be well integrated into the existing park system by offering new facilities and uses.

v. New open spaces should be of an appropriate size, location and form for the intended use.

vi. Open space should offer choices for the needs of all users For example, outdoor gym equipment, productive gardens, allotments etc. Offering choices can encourage a healthier lifestyle.

vii. New landscapes and open spaces should be located within walking distance from their intended users. If appropriate, these should be connected to the green and blue network.

viii. Where a direct link is not possible, it may be appropriate to link these together through green routes, shared surfaces and streets. Tree lines avenues should be used to achieve a visual and physical connection to open space.

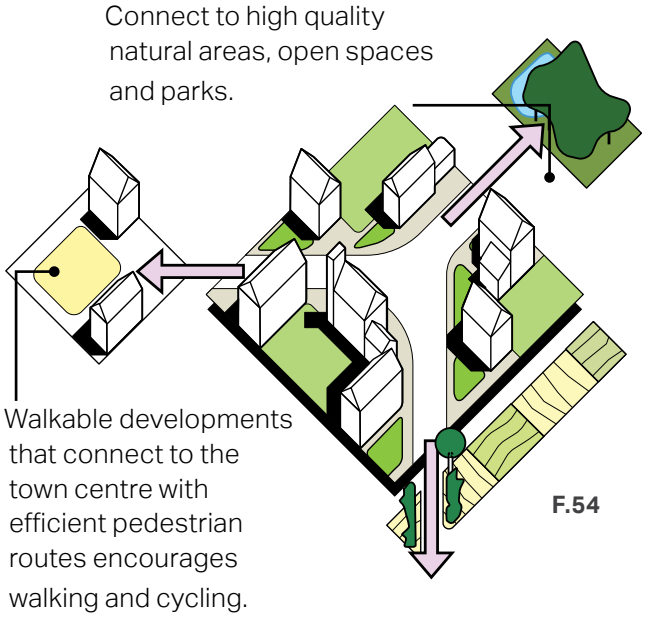


Figure 54:
Diagram highlighting the connections to open space.

4 CH. Character

Promote high quality design in new development that response to the character and identity of individual areas in Batchworth and helps build a sense of place.

CH.04.01 Consider the Context

A place's character can be made up of many different elements which come together to create a unique sense of place. Any proposal will need to respect the existing context as well as create attractive and resilient places that contribute positively to the townscape, public realm,street scene, and landscape setting of Batchworth.

These design principles describe the elements that contribute to Batchworth's character and new development should pay particular attention to the layout, form, scale, materials and detailing.

i. New development must demonstrate an understanding of the landscape sensitivities and designations of the area, shown in Chapter 3, respecting the existing character and surrounding landscape.

ii. New development must respect the existing street patterns and evaluate any traffic issues in the area in order to avoid congestion. New design should enhance the existing street patterns, improve connectivity and avoid causing traffic pressure o the existing street network.

iii. New development must prioritise creating a well-connected green system. New design should propose new links to the surrounding open space and integrate the existing ones as well as improving connectivity and promoting alternative modes of transport.

iv. New development should respect the character of each area within Batchworth in terms of scale, building orientation, enclosure, roof line, facade rhythm and architectural detailing.

v. Edges should be designed to link rather than segregate existing and new neighbourhoods.

vi. Existing street hierarchies should inform the scale and density of new development i.e., primary roads may be preferable to host large scale developments.

vii. A waterway's towpath and its environs should form an integral part of the public realm. The siting, configuration, and orientation of buildings optimise views of the water and generate natural surveillance which encourages use. Access to the waterside should be improved where possible.

CH.04.02 Townscape Quality

The various Character Areas within Batchworth have unique characteristics that need to be protected or enhanced in order to retain the identity and sense of place.

For each Character Area, new development or any change in the built environment must:

i. Largely respect the existing density and setback; however, taller buildings will be appropriate in some cases where there is no negative impact on the surrounding streetscape.

ii. Respect any designations and constraints related to the surrounding landscape as well as any important views.

iii. Refer to most recent conservation area appraisals were appropriate and guidance set out in Chapter 8 of this document.

Figure 55:
Buildings are all the same scale and height along the High Street.

Figure 56:
Additional storey is set back from the frontage to lessen the impact on the street (Rickmansworth)

Figure 57:
Large buildings that are out of scale with the street should be avoided (Rickmansworth)

CH.04.03 Heritage

Within Batchworth there are six designated Conservation Areas: Rickmansworth Town; Nightingale Road, Upper Nightingale Road and Cedars Avenue; Moor Park; Batchworth Heath; Frith Wood; and Stocker's Lock and Farm. The town centre also has a number of listed buildings including the Grade II Listed Basing House which is located near the library and has been converted to council offices and commercial serviced office space.

Outside of the Conservation Areas there are areas of architectural importance, such as the Eastbury area that was developed in the distinctive Metro-land style. These areas may have the capacity to absorb appropriately designed taller buildings.

Any future development or change to the built environment must:

i. Respect the character of the Conservation Areas, as well as the architectural styles outside of it, proposing design that are a good fit for the local context.

ii. Appraise and document the attributes of the existing Conservation Areas.

iii. Integrate green features, where possible, to screen and provide breaks between groups of new buildings.

F.58


F.59

Figure 58:
Basing House, Grade II listed building.

Figure 59:
House within the Northwood Headquarters area which has a unique character.

CH.04.04 Local Vernacular

Batchworth is rich in vernacular architecture which contributes to the area's character and identity.

The historic centre of Rickmansworth has a number of Victorian terraced houses which remain; however it is interspersed with more modern development. The High Street has some 17th-19th century buildings that help create an intimate scale.

Outside of the town centre the majority of the development is inter or post war residential housing in a variety of architectural styles illustrating how Batchworth has developed, largely from the Victorian era and the arrival of the Metropolitan line making the area more accessible to London. Outside the town centre detached and some semi-detached houses are dominate, often in a style distinctly identifiable as Metro-land housing.

There are an increasing number of apartment blocks, mostly in the town centre but some can also be found in other parts of Batchworth. In the town centre they have previously reached up to five storeys which is noticeably taller than the eastern portion of the high street. Some are buildings that have been converted from office to residential use.

i. Development should use materials and architectural detailing that contributes to the historic and vernacular character of the area.

ii. Development should demonstrate that the palette of materials has been selected based on knowledge of the local vernacular style and traditions.

iii. Development should reflect an understanding of the building details of the historic core without resulting in low-quality imitations of past styles.

iv. Use of locally sourced bricks or brick that match the buildings in the surrounding area. Particular attention should be given to the bonding pattern, size, colour and texture of bricks. Generally, for inspiration and appropriate examples, the developers should look at the historic cores and surrounding area. Each development should be designed with the specific location in mind and its immediate surroundings.

CH.04.05 Architectural Details

New development or any change to the built environment must be able to demonstrate a sympathetic response to the existing character and architectural details found in the local context.

This section showcases some of the local building details which should be considered as positive examples to inform the design guidelines and codes.

i. New development in Batchworth must not negatively impact the existing character not only within the conservation areas but also outside of them. There are many elements that contribute to the local character of the area and should be respected.

Figure 60:
Example of a hipped roof.
Figure 61:
Houses with varying roofscapes.
Figure 62:
Brick chimney using the same building material as the main building.
Figure 63:
New apartment development at Elmswater. Source: https://elmswater.uk.
Figure 64:
New window in a traditional style.
Figure 65:
Dormer window.
Figure 66:
Door detail.

CH.04.06 Materials and Colour Palette

Local building materials make a key contribution to the character of the area and provide an important link between built development and the surrounding landscape. The predominant building materials in Batchworth include yellow stock brick, red brick and white render.

The most common roofing materials are slate or concrete tiles.

Boundary treatments often include hedgerows or other vegetation, brick walls or ironmongery.

The use of sustainable materials is highly welcomed but they must respect the existing materials palette within Batchworth to conserve the distinctive local character of the area.

In new developments and renovations, locally sourced bricks or bricks that match the buildings in the surrounding area would be the most appropiate. Particular attention should be given to the bonding pattern, size, colour, and texture of bricks. Sustainable cladding systems including timber finishes will also be deemed suitable.

Generally, for inspiration and appropriate examples, the developers should look at the buildings within the specific Character Areas of Batchworth and particularly to those within the conservation area. However, contemporary interpretations, if done well, can be an interesting way of enhancing the local character without imitating it.

i. Development should employ materials and features to conserve and enhance the distinctive local character and heritage of Batchworth.

ii. Development should use a common palette of locally distinctive vernacular building materials comprising of yellow stock brick, red brick, slate or concrete roof tiles.

iii. Development should also use a common colour palette of locally distinctive tones.

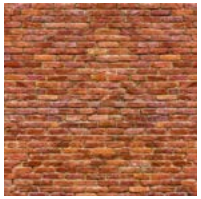
iv. The use of artificial materials that imitate traditional materials should be avoided and alterations in existing buildings must use local materials to maintain the character of the area.

v. Development should maximise the reuse or recycle of materials already on site or locally to minimise the adverse effects generated by construction.

vi. Each development should be designed with the specific location in mind and its immediate surroundings.

Materials

Yellow stock brick



Red brick

Brown brick

Render

Hung tiles

Concrete roof tiles

Clay roof tiles

Slate roof tiles

Weatherboarding

Colour Palette

Yellow

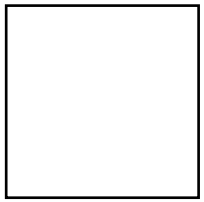
Red

Brown

Orange

Grey

Light grey



White

5 AP. Accessibility and Permeability

Improve access and movement for all in and around Batchworth.

AP.05.01 Street Layout and Connectivity

For large development sites which may come forward, the street layout should be carefully considered. Streets should be connected with each other and different travel options and routes should be considered. Good practice favours a generally connected street layout that makes it easier to travel by foot, cycle and public transport.

A more connected pattern creates a 'walkable neighbourhood', a place where routes link meaningful places together[1].

The existing street network in Batchworth is generally well connected, however in some places there are highway barriers that disrupt the connectivity between neighbourhoods.

1 Healthy Street typologies can be found at www.healthystreets.com

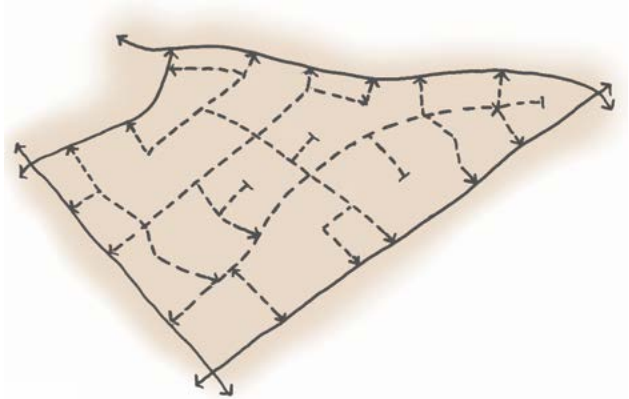
The TFL Streets Toolkit[2] also offers a simple framework for reference in creating high quality, well connected streets and public spaces.

2 Found at www.tfl.gov.uk

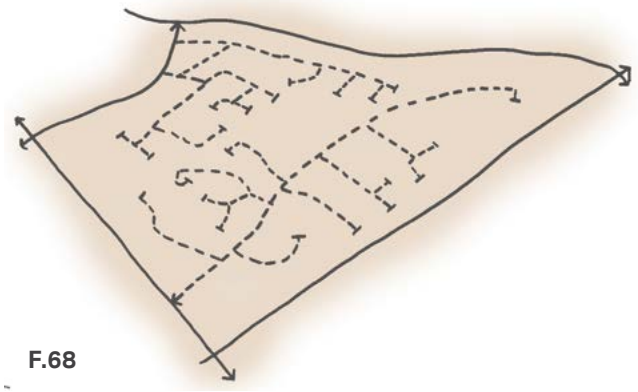
i. Proposed routes should be laid out in a permeable pattern, allowing for multiple connections and choice of routes, particularly on foot. Cul-de-sacs should generally be avoided, however when this is not possible they should be relatively short and provide onward pedestrian links.

ii. Streets should be designed for the needs of pedestrians and cyclists as well as motor vehicles.

iii. Proposed routes should be short and walkable distances which are usually defined to be within a ten minute walk or a five mile trip by bike.



F.67



F.68

Figure 67:
Well connected street layout with some cul-de-sacs where appropriate.

Figure 68:
Impermeable layout dominated by cul-de-sacs increasing reliance on cars.

AP.05.02 Walking and Cycling

Any new development should provide opportunities for walking and cycling to local services and facilities as well as to local green spaces. How successful a place is could be easily measured by how pleasant it is for walkers and cyclists. Batchworth has a generally well-connected built form and some public footpaths through the countryside, including the towpath on the Grand Union Canal walk. Improving and extending this permeability is key to ensuring that development enhances the area.

i. Prioritise pedestrians and cyclists where possible to provide safe and convenient connections to/ from destinations so that walking and cycling becomes the easiest option for people to take.

ii. Always connect development to existing pavements and paths within the area in which the development sits.

iii. Propose new paths, pavements and cycle lanes where site constraints allow to ensure that the development seeks to maximise opportunities for walking and cycling.

iv. Seek to provide secure bicycle parking and hire facilities[1].

v. Seek to cater for a range of bicycles including tricycles, side cars, training bikes, and electric bikes by providing e-charging ports.

vi. Ensure that pavements are well lit and avoid the use of alleyways or circuitous routes with poor visibility for pedestrians. All pedestrian routes must have a m minimum width of 2 metres[2].

1 Parking requirements (LTN1/20) available at: www.gov.uk

2 The Design of Pedestrian Crossings. Available at: www.gov.uk

Figure 69:
Narrow footpaths should be avoided.

AP.05.03 Signage and Wayfinding

Signage and wayfinding techniques are an integral part of encouraging sustainable modes of transport as they make walking and cycling easier by ensuring that routes are direct and memorable.

i. Places should be created with a clear identity, clear views and sightlines, and be easy to navigate.

ii. Local landmark buildings of distinctive building features such as towers or chimneys can aid legibility.

iii. Landscape features, distinctive trees and open spaces can also be used as wayfinding aids as well as providing an attractive streetscape.

iv. Potential for technologically integrated streets should be explored, with capacity for WiFi and Bluetooth connections.

v. Consider technological solutions for wayfinding such as digital street signage with real-time information.

F.70

Figure 70:
Building with a taller corner feature aids legibility.

F.71

Figure 71:
Too much signage can clutter the streetscene and should be avoided.

4.2 General design considerations

Because the design guidelines and codes of this chapter cannot cover all design eventualities, this section provides a number of questions based on established good practice against which the design proposal must be evaluated. The aim is to assess all proposals by objectively answering the questions below. Not all the questions will apply to every development. The relevant ones, however, must provide an assessment as to whether the design proposal has taken into account the context and provided an adequate design solution.

As a first step there are a number of ideas or principles that should be present in the proposals.

1

General design guidelines for new development:

- Respect the existing settlement pattern in order to preserve the character.
- Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks;
- Reinforce or enhance the established character of streets, greens and other spaces;
- Ensure balconies and roof terraces being incorporated in new and existing developments do not negatively impact on the privacy of neighbouring buildings.
- Harmonise and enhance the existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use;
- Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development;
- Consider the surrounding context in terms of scale, roofline, height, form, and density where necessary to protect vulnerable assets;
- Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;
- Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;
- Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;
- Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other; and
- Aim for innovative design and eco-friendly buildings while respecting the architectural heritage and tradition of the specific Character Area whilst also integrating them with future development.

2

Street grid and layout:

- Does it favour accessibility and connectivity over cul-de-sac models? If not, why?
- Do the new points of access and street layout have regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists and those with disabilities?
- What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern; are these reflected in the proposal?
- How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?
- Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?
- Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

3

Local green spaces, views and character:

- What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design; i.e. what are the landscape qualities of the area?
- How does the proposal affect the trees on or adjacent to the site?
- Has the proposal been considered within its wider physical context?
- Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?
- Can any new views be created?
- Is there adequate amenity space for the development?
- Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?
- Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?
- Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how this will be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?

4

Gateway and access features:

- What is the arrival point, how is it designed and is it welcoming and clearly signposted?
- Have the arrival points considered the approach on foot, by cycle, public transport and car and in that order?
- Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building or listed landscape?
- Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

5

Buildings layout and grouping

- What are the typical groupings of buildings?
- How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?
- Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the townscape?
- What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?
- Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters stemming from the main road?
- Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?

6

Building line and boundary treatment

- What are the characteristics of the building line?
- How has the building line been respected in the proposals?
- Has the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?

Building heights and roofline

- What are the characteristics of the roofline?
- Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing and scale?
- If a higher than average building(s) is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?
- Will the roof structure be capable of supporting a photovoltaic or solar thermal array either now, or in the future?

7

Household extensions

- Does the proposed design positively contribute to the character of the area and, and does it have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties in relation to privacy, overbearing or overshadowing impact?
- Is the roof form of the extension appropriate to the original dwelling (considering angle of pitch)?
- Do the proposed materials match those of the existing dwelling?
- In case of side extensions, does it retain important gaps within the street scene and avoid a 'terracing effect'?
- Are there any proposed dormer roof extensions set within the roof slope?
- Does the proposed extension respond to the existing pattern of window and door openings?
- Is the side extension set back from the front of the house?

8

Building materials and surface treatment

- What is the distinctive material in the area, if any?
- Does the proposed material harmonise with the local materials?
- Does the proposal use high-quality materials?
- Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves and roof details been addressed in the context of the overall design?
- Does the new proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?

9

Car parking solutions

- What parking solutions have been considered?
- Are the car spaces located and arranged in a way that is not dominant or detrimental to the sense of place?
- Has planting been considered to soften the presence of cars?
- Does the proposed car parking compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?
- Have the needs of wheelchair users been considered?
- Can electric vehicle charging points be provided?
- Can secure cycle storage be provided for both occupiers and visitors at an individual building level or through a central/ communal facility where appropriate?

10

Architectural details and design

- If the proposal is within a conservation area, how are the characteristics reflected in the design?
- Does the proposal harmonise with the adjacent properties?
- This means that it considers the height, massing, aspect, and general proportions of adjacent buildings and how it takes cues from materials and other physical characteristics.
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing landscape features?
- Has the surrounding architectural character and precedent been considered in the proposals?
- If the proposal is a contemporary design, are the details and materials of a sufficiently high enough quality and does it relate specifically to the architectural characteristics and scale of the site?

Character Area Design Guidance and Codes

05

5. Character Area Design Guidance and Codes

1 Character Area 1: Rickmansworth Town

The priority for Rickmansworth Town is to balance its historic character with the current needs and uses of the town centre.

The codes for this Character Area should be read in conjunction with Chapters 4 and 5 on Rickmansworth Town Centre, which provides further detail on the public realm strategy for the town centre. Therefore, this section will focus on the residential streets surrounding the High Street.

CA.01.01 Layout & Building Appearance

- The layout of Rickmansworth Town is derived from the town's past and the urban form should be retained in order to preserve the historic character.
- Consideration should be given to landscaping the High Street to create a destination point thereby increasing footfall and ensuring a vibrant and attractive Town Centre. Part time pedestrianisation of the High Street should also be considered if it can be shown by quantitative evidence to benefit local businesses and residents.
- Consistent boundary treatments should be maintained at the edge of the property boundary throughout the Character Area to bring uniformity. The boundary treatment can vary in height and material but should take into account that of the neighbouring properties in order to complement the existing streetscape.
- Any new development should look to the existing building typologies which are predominately terraced and semi-detached housing. In addition, new buildings should match the height of the surrounding properties and should not generally exceed 2.5 storeys.
- The area has a low amount of high density 2-3 homes such as terrace typologies.
- The low amount of bungalows in the area should be retained to facilitate downsizing for older residents.

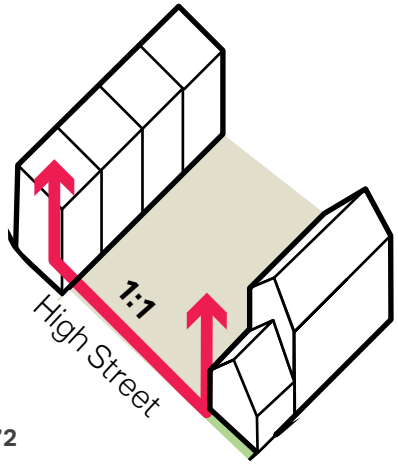
Enclosure

Both the High Street and the residential streets should retain their strong sense of enclosure provided by the building height to street width ratio as well as consistent building lines and boundary treatments, which create an intimate street scale.

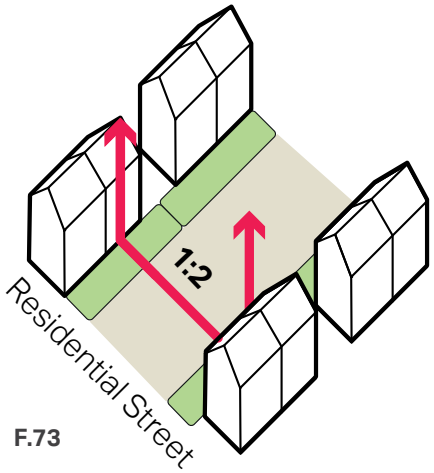
Building Lines and Setbacks

Along the High Street and in the residential streets there should be a strong continuous building line with small protrusions to allow for visual interest.

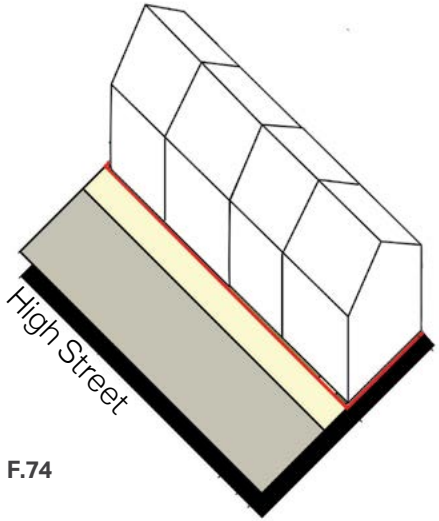
The buildings on the High Street should not have a setback from the street to allow for easy access to the commercial units. The residential streets should have a small setback from the street between 1-3m with a small front garden and a consistent boundary treatment at the property edge.



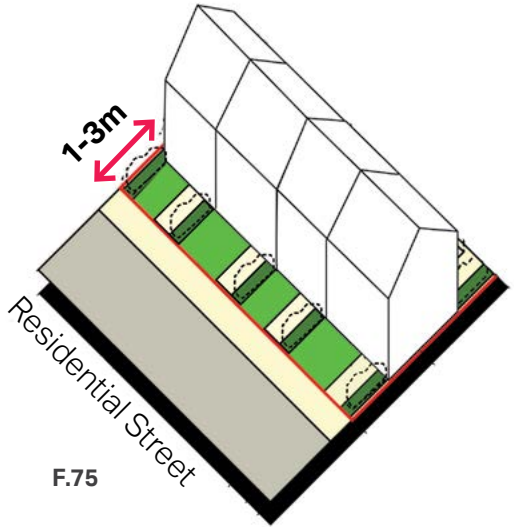
F.72



F.73



F.74



F.75

Figure 72:
Indicative diagram of enclosure along the high street with a 1:1 ratio (not to scale).

Figure 73:
Indicative diagram of enclosure along residential streets with a 1:2 ratio(not to scale).

Figure 74:
Indicative diagram of no building setback from the street and a consistent building line (not to scale).

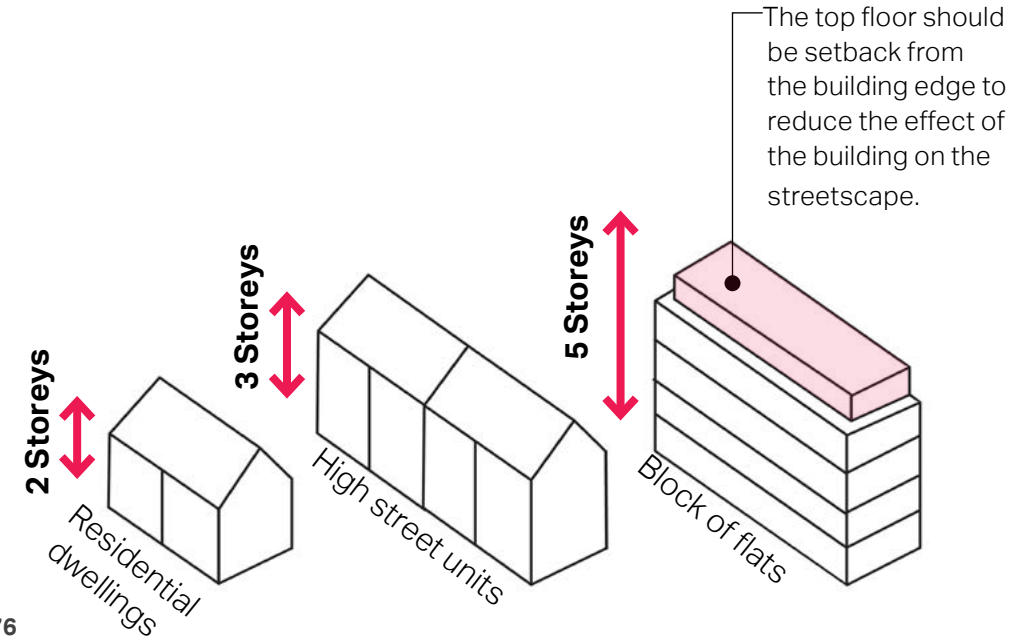
Figure 75:
Indicative diagram of small building setback from the street with a front garden (not to scale).

Building Heights

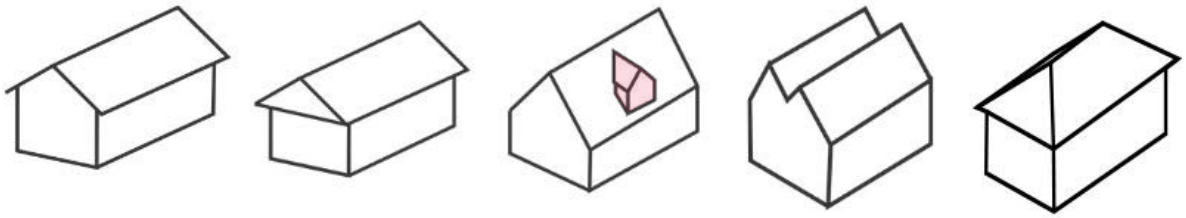
The building heights vary throughout the town centre, as shown in Figure 76. Development should look to the immediate surroundings to ensure the they are in keeping with the existing building heights in order to preserve the character of the area.

Roof Typologies

There are a variety of roof typologies throughout Rickmansworth Town as shown in Figure 77, however the most common in this area are pitched roofs. Therefore, any development should aim to enhance the character of the area by utilising roof typologies that are already present and taking note of the buildings in the immediate surroundings.



F.76



F.77

Figure 76:
Diagram showing the building heights in Rickmansworth Town (not to scale).

Figure 77:
Diagram showing the common roof typologies in Rickmansworth Town (not to scale).

Existing character to be retained:

i. The sense of enclosure along the streets.

ii. Strong and consistent building lines but with small or subtle variations to add interest.

iii. Consistent boundary treatments using materials such as brick and hedges.

iv. The mix of housing typologies, mostly terraced and some semi-detached housing that should not exceed 2.5 storeys in height.

v. Blocks of flats should be no taller than 5-5.5 storeys.

Figure 78:
Residential street with consistent building line and boundary treatments.

Figure 79:
Traditional semi-detached house.

Figure 80:
Modern block of flats.

CA.01.02 Heritage Assets

The Rickmansworth conservation area within the town centre and the listed buildings in the area contribute to the character of the area and must be respected by any future development or changes to the built environment.

- Development which affects any designated and non-designated heritage or community asset must respect the significance of the asset and must demonstrate how local distinctiveness is reinforced. Particular consideration shall be given to maintaining key views and architectural style and detailing.
- Development should respect the intamate scale of development and strong sense of enclosure throughout the town centre.
- Particular consideratin shall be given to the retention of open spaces and gaps between buildings to sustain the historic form and pattern of development.

CA.01.03 Taller Buildings

In more recent years there have been a number of taller buildings, up to six storeys that have been developed around the town centre. The majority of these buildings are located near the station, however increasingly there are more in other locations around the town centre. Some design considerations for tall buildings are:

- Taller buildings should be located in appropriate locations that do not negatively effect the sensitive setting of the conservation area.
- An appropriate location for a new taller building would be the 'civic square'.
- The buildings should look to the immediate context to understand the appropriate height to ensure the building does not look out of scale.
- The top floor can be set back to reduce the visual impact on the street scene.
- High-quality materials that are in keeping with the surroundings should be used.

Figure 81:
Strong sense of enclosure along a residential street within the Rickmansworth Town area.

Figure 82:
Block of flats using sympathetic materials to the surrounding area.

2 Character Area 2: Harefield Road

The priority for the Harefield Road Character Area is to improve access and connections to the waterfront, Aquadrome and town centre.

CA.02.01 Layout & Building Appearance

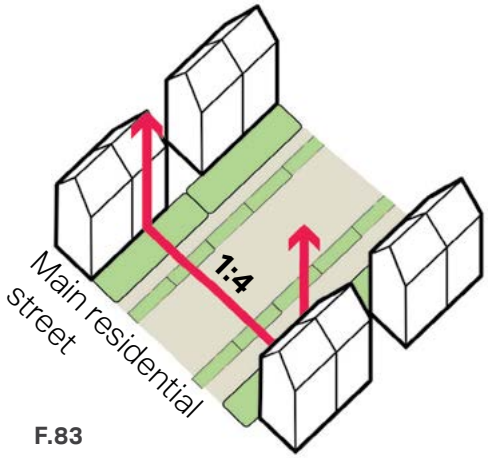
- This area is dominated by a number of cul-de-sacs that lead off the main through road, Harefield Road. As the layout of this Character Area is unlikely to change pedestrian connections should be prioritised to create more permeability through the area.
- Any future improvements to the streetscape should prioritise pedestrians and cyclists, particularly routes to/from the Aquadrome and town centre.
- Consistent boundary treatments should be maintained at the edge of the property boundary throughout the Character Area to bring uniformity. The boundary treatment can vary in height and material but should take into account that of the neighbouring properties in order to complement the existing streetscape.
- Any new development should look to the existing building typologies which are predominately semi-detached and detached houses. In addition, new buildings should match the height of the surrounding properties and should not generally exceed 2.5 storeys (above ground).
- Monotonous, unvarying building elevations should be avoided by providing subtle changes in the roofline.
- Retention of soft landscaping, i.e., planting, to the front of houses.

Enclosure

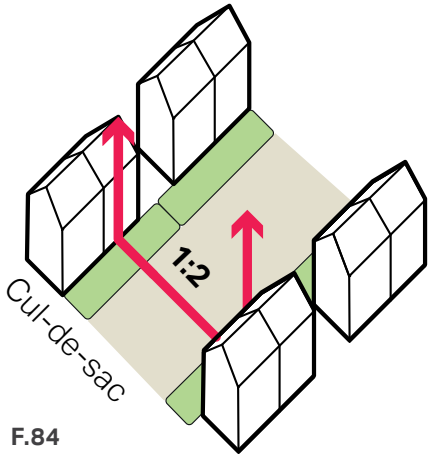
The main residential streets within this area generally have an open feel with wide streets compared to the building heights. This open feel should be maintained along with the grass verges and footpaths. A more intimate feel should be retained along the cul-de-sacs with a smaller building height to road width ratio.

Building Lines and Setbacks

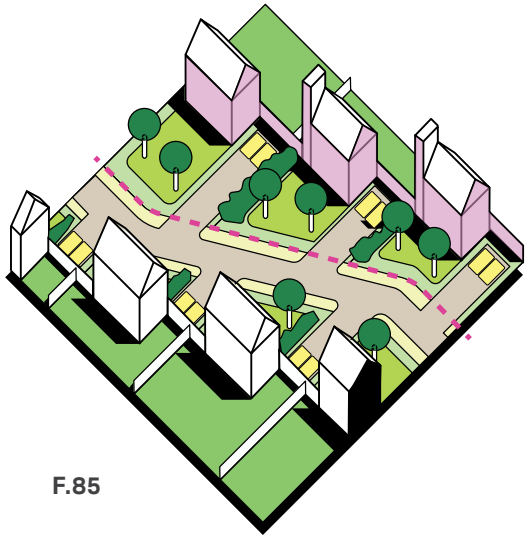
The building line should be consistent along the street, however small variations and protrusions can provide visual interest along the street. The generous building setbacks, between 3-6m should be retained in order to maintain the suburban feel of the area. This allows for vegetated front gardens and off-street parking.

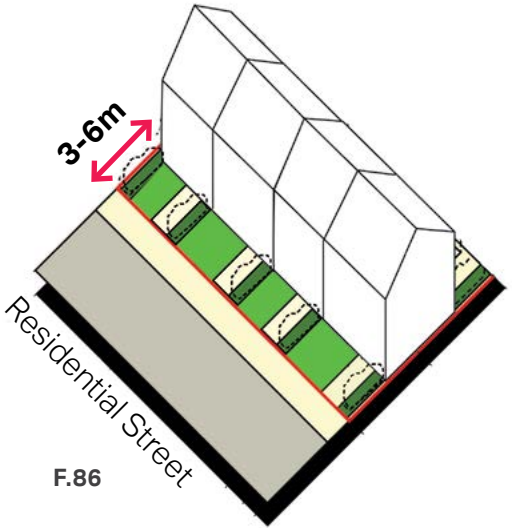


F.83



F.84


F.85



F.86

Figure 83:
Indicative diagram of enclosure along main residential streets with a 1:4 ratio (not to scale).

Figure 84:
Indicative diagram of enclosure along cul-de-sacs with a 1:2 ratio (not to scale).

Figure 85:
Indicative diagram showing small variations in the building line (not to scale).

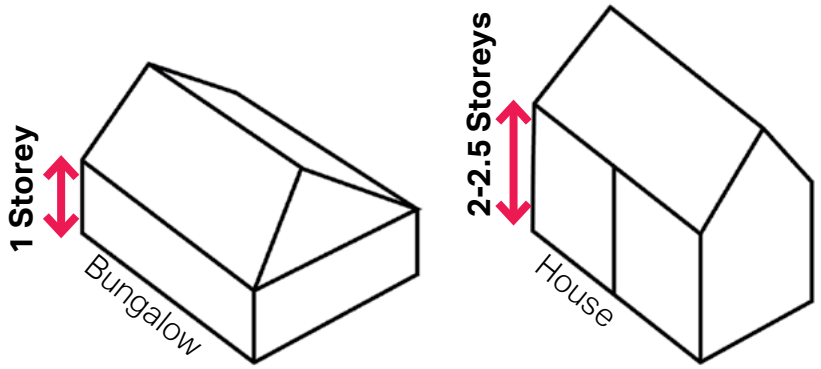
Figure 86:
Indicative diagram showing generous building setback from the street (not to scale).

Building Heights

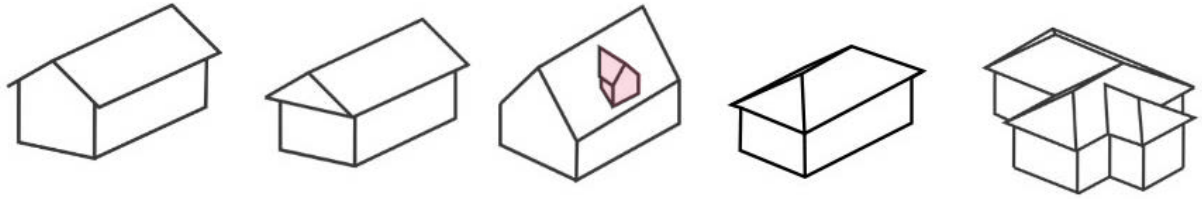
As the buildings in this area are up to 2.5 storeys in height, new development should respect the suburban feel when looking at the building height. Along Paitford Close there are also some bungalows.

Roof Typologies

New development should look to the existing roof typologies in the area. The most common are pitched roofs and hip and valley roofs. Furthermore, subtle variations in the rooflines along the street can provide visual interest.



F.87



F.88

Figure 87:
Diagram showing the building heights in Batchworth.
Figure 88:
Diagram showing the common roof typologies in Batchworth.

Existing character to be retained:

i. Large green verges and a variety of street trees, including some distinctive landmark trees on street corners.

ii. Retain the mix of housing typologies, including semi-detached and detached houses.

iii. Consistent boundary treatment at the property edge using low brick walls or hedgerows.

iv. Large vegetated front gardens that should not be wholly paved over.

Figure 89:
Large green verge with a footpath along the main road.

Figure 90:
Typical semi-detached house within the Batchworth area.

Figure 91:
Consistent boundary treatment along the street.

CA.02.02 Signage and Wayfinding to the Town Centre

There is a need to improve the signage to the town centre to the north and to the Aquadrome. Some principles should be taken into account in this regard:

- New developments should be designed around a series of nodal points focusing on the relationship with the existing Character Area as well as the surrounding landscape.
- Wayfinding must be clearly established throughout this Character Area, particularly along pedestrian and cycle routes and should be designed to complement and not clutter the public realm.
- New signage design must be easy to read. Elements likes languages, fonts, text sizes, colours and symbols should be clear and concise, and avoid confusion.

Figure 92:
Aerial image showing where signage needs to be improved to the Aquadrome and town centre to the north

CA.02.03 Traffic Calming

Harefield Road and Frogmoor Lane junction serves as an example for a congestion point where multiple directions of traffic and modes of transport interface. It provides the main access point to the Aquadrome which can become congested, particularly at weekends and on sunny days, creating a car dominated environment. Some traffic calming measures could be introduced to shift the priority to pedestrians and cyclists.

- Create a continuous footpath across the junction as they visually emphasise pedestrian priority. This is done by continuing the pavement material across a junction or street entrance, encouraging drivers to slow down and look for pedestrians. Raising the carriageway or providing a dropped kerb also enables buggies and wheelchair users to cross the street more easily.
- Raised junctions and entry treatments are flat sections of carriageway that are raised to be closer to the height of the neighbouring footways. They are usually placed at pedestrians crossings, a street entrance or at a junction. This measure often requires a 20mph speed limit, which becomes self-enforcing as vehicles have to approach at a lower speed. Continuous footpaths can be explored in conjunction with raised junctions.

F.93

F.94

Figure 93:
Example of a continuous footpath using one the same paving material and height across the junction.

Figure 94:
Example of a raised junction.

3 Character Area 3: Moneyhill

The priority for this Character Area is to create a more inviting public realm for pedestrians and visitors to Moneyhill Parade.

CA.03.01 Layout & Building Appearance

- The streets to the north of Uxbridge road form a grid structure which provides good permeability, therefore this structure should be retained.
- The streets within the residential area have a footpath on both sides of the road which should be retained.
- Some of the streets have green verges and street trees and the streets without should look to introduce greenery where possible.
- Consistent boundary treatments should be maintained at the edge of the property boundary throughout the Character Area to bring uniformity. The boundary treatment can vary in height and material but should take into account that of the neighbouring properties in order to complement the existing streetscape.
- Dwellings should have a generous setback from the street with small front gardens. Paving over front gardens should be avoided as it can cause drainage issues.
- Any new development should look to the existing building typologies which are predominately semi-detached and some detached houses. In addition, new buildings should match the height of the surrounding properties and should not generally exceed 2.5 storeys.
- Development in the conservation area must respect the historic setting with its Victorian and Arts and Crafts style housing.
- Along Moneyhill Parade the building typology changes to terraced housing with commercial uses at the ground floor which should be retained.
- Monotonous building elevations should be avoided by providing subtle changes in the roofline to add interest.
- Any future improvements to the streetscape should prioritise pedestrians and cyclists.

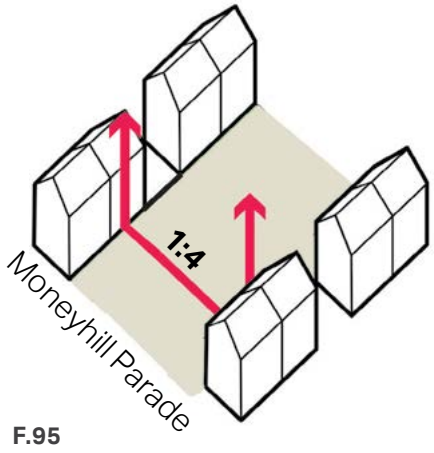
Enclosure

Moneyhill Parade does not have a strong sense of enclosure as the street is wide. The residential streets have more of a sense of enclosure, which should be maintained.

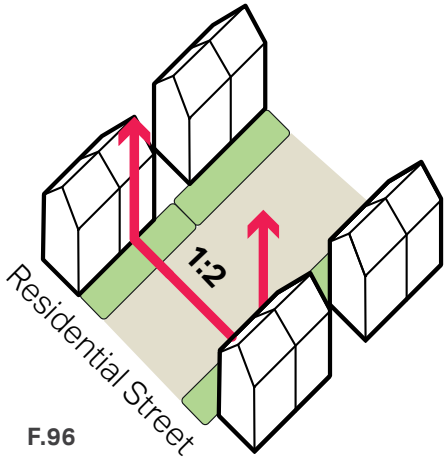
Building Lines and Setbacks

Moneyhill Parade has a consistent building line as the buildings do not have a setback from the street allowing easy access to the commercial units.

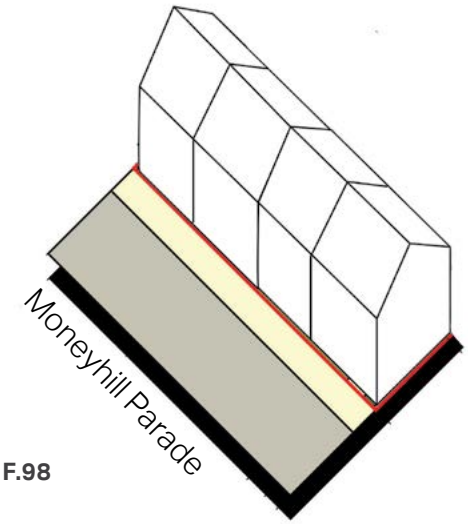
The residential streets have slight variations in the buildings line and generally have a 3-6m setback from the street allowing for a front garden and off-street parking.



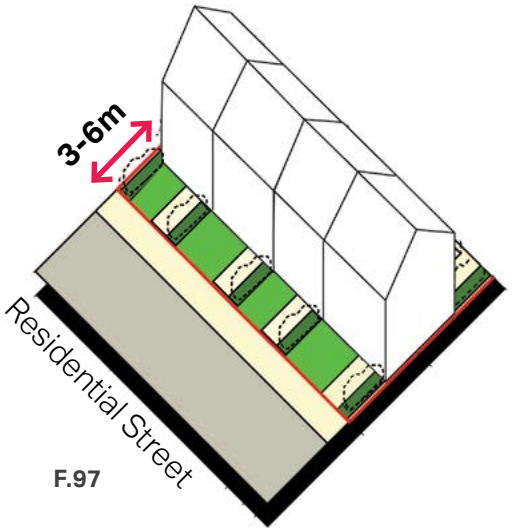
F.95



F.96



F.98



F.97

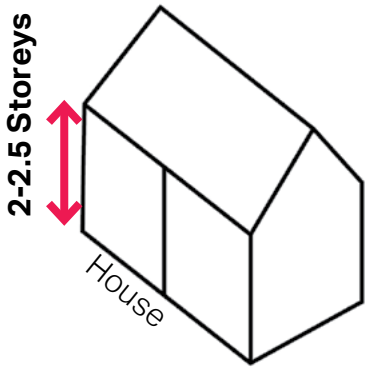
Figure 95:
Illustrative diagram of enclosure along Moneyhill Parade with a 1:4 ratio (not to scale).
Figure 96:
Illustrative diagram of enclosure along residential streets with a 1:2 ratio (not to scale).
Figure 97:
Illustrative diagram showing a consistent building line and no setback from the street (not to scale).
Figure 98:
Illustrative diagram showing generous building setback from the street (not to scale).

Building Heights

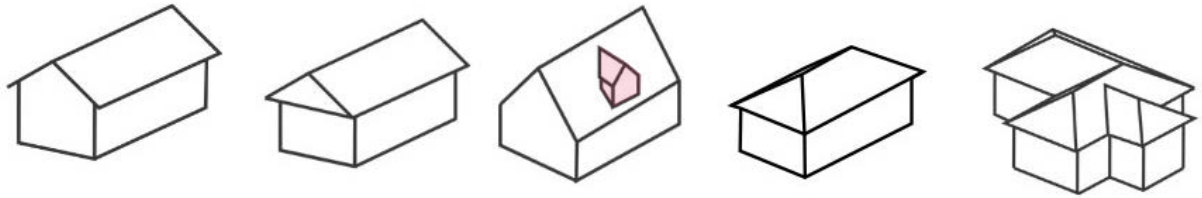
The buildings in Moneyhill do not generally exceed 2.5 storeys in height, therefore any development will need to respect the existing building heights in the area.

Roof Typologies

New development should look to the existing roof typologies in the area. The most common are pitched roofs and hip and valley roofs. Furthermore, subtle variations in the rooflines along the street can provide visual interest.



F.100



F.99

Figure 99:
Diagram showing the building heights in Moneyhill.
Figure 100:
Diagram showing the common roof typologies in Moneyhill.

Existing character to be retained:

i. Green verges and street trees within the residential streets, particularly in the conservation area.

ii. Wide footpaths on both sides of the street.

iii. Housing mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced houses, which should not exceed 2.5 storeys in height.

iv. Vegetated front gardens should not be paved over and greenery should be introduced where possible.

F.101


F.102


F.103

Figure 101:
View along Moneyhill Parade.

Figure 102:
View along a residential street with green verges and street trees.

Figure 103:
Typical detached house with a brick boundary treatment and small front garden.

CA.03.02 Moneyhill Parade Public Realm

The public realm and car parking along Moneyhill Parade could be rearranged to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists and make the street feel less dominated by vehicles. The following page shows the current layout of Moneyhill Parade and indicated improvements that could be made to the layout more pedestrian and cycle friendly.

To complement any changes to the layout of Moneyhill Parade there are some further design considerations below:

- The materiality and colours used in the public realm should enhance the surrounding built environment and contribute to the character of the place.
- Materials should be of a high-quality and durable to withstand a long period of time.
- Where appropriate, a variety of materials can be used to differentiate between the footpaths, roads and car parking spaces.
- Street furniture should be introduced along Moneyhill Parade to provide residents with places to stop, creating a more attractive environment for pedestrians.
- Distinctive street furniture can also improve legibility and wayfinding as well as enhance the character of the place.
- Shops and cafes can also provide 'spill out' space in to the public realm, which will help animate the street.

Figure 104:
Example of a new footpath and two-way cycle land with car parking next to the road, Station Road, Harrow.

Current Moneyhill Parade

1. Narrow footpath.
2. One-way lane with car parking on both side making the street feel cluttered.
3. Central footpath with street furniture.
4. Two-way carriageway.
5. Pedestrian crossing.
6. Wide under used pavement with railing.
7. Bus stop on central pavement.

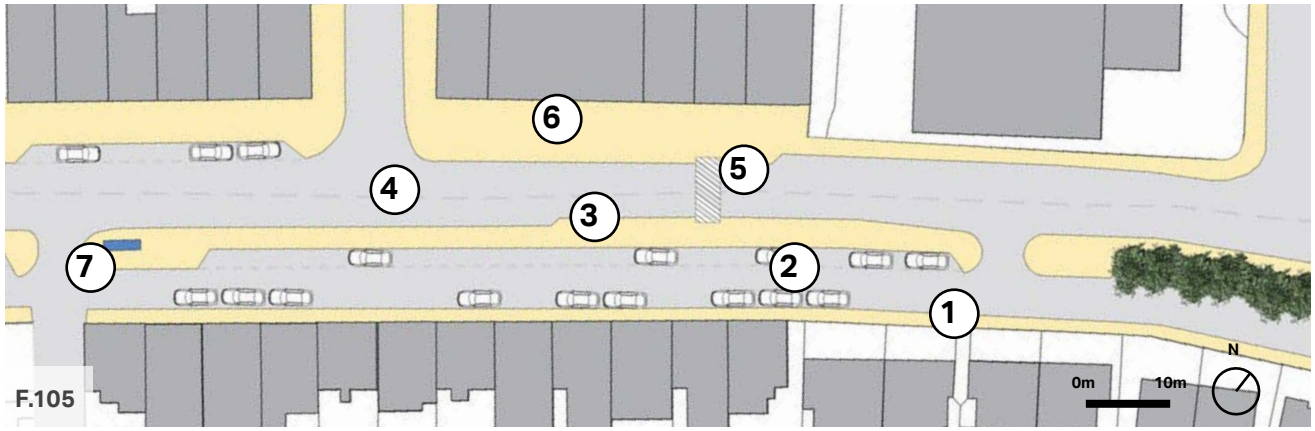


Figure 105:
Plan showing the current layout of Moneyhill Parade's public realm.

Redesign option

1. New public realm wide enough for street furniture and spill out space.
2. One-way lane retained. New kerb build outs with treet pits on southern side.
3. Parking bays along central reservation.
4. Retain the pedestrian crossing.
5. Additional car parking created by narrowing the wide pavement.
6. Add cycle parking by bus stop.

Figure 106:
Plan showing the proposed layout of Moneyhill Parade's public realm.

4 Character Area 4: Tolpits

The priority for Tolpits is to improve access to the surrounding open spaces and provide additional amenities in the area.

CA.04.01 Layout & Building Appearance

- Internally Tolpits is fairly permeable with the roads laid out in a grid pattern. If any is any change to the use of the buildings in the future the road layout should still be permeable.
- The area is dominated by car parking and there are no footpaths through the area. New development in this area should seek to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists by providing direct routes with footpaths and cycle lanes/paths.
- Given the area's primary use as an employment area, most of the buildings have a large footprint but are generally not taller than 2.5 storeys in height. There are some buildings that are up to 4 storeys. Any new development should take into account the surrounding building typologies and heights.
- New development should carefully consider the impact on neighbouring uses, particularly if residential uses are located next to commercial properties. Suitable landscape buffers, screening and separation should be sensitively designed in from the outset, rather than as an afterthought. Access requirements for residents and businesses, and their service and delivery vehicles, need to be carefully considered.
- If new dwellings are provided in this area, they should have front doors/entrances areas and windows clearly defined and facing the road.

Figure 107:
Illustrative diagrams of enclosure along a general street within Tolpits with a 1:4 ratio (not to scale).
Figure 108:
Illustrative diagram of buildings with car parking bays in front (not to scale).
Figure 109:
Illustrative diagram of building heights up to 4 storeys (not to scale).
Figure 110:
Illustrative diagram showing roof typologies in Tolpits (not to scale).

Enclosure

The streets are generally wide due to its use as an employment area, therefore this should be retained.

Building Lines and Setbacks

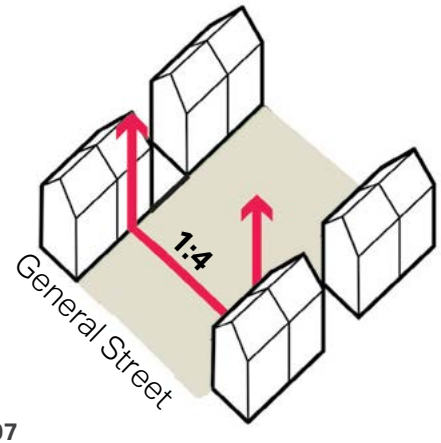
Long buildings give the impression of a consistent building line along the street. The buildings are not setback but do have car parking bays infront of the buildings. The bays could be interspersed with street trees and greenery to enhance the area.

Building Heights

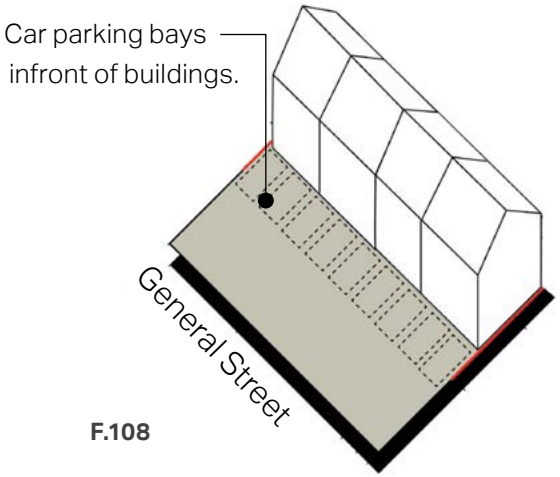
Most buildings are generally 2-2.5 storeys, however some reach up to 4 storeys. Therefore the existing context should be considered for new development.

Roof Typologies

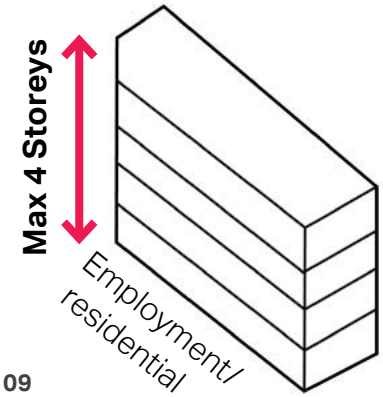
Shallow pitched roofs are the most common in the area.



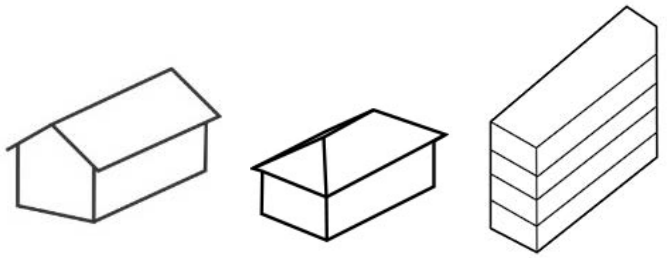
F.107



F.108



F.109



Shallow pitched roof | Hipped roof | Flat roof

F.110

Existing character to be retained:

i. Retain green verges and street trees on Tolpits Lane.

ii. Retain the trees screening the area to the north and from the south.

iii. The area should be retained predominantly as an employment area given its self-contained nature and the quantum of employment space provided.

Figure 111:
Tolpits Lane with green verges but without a footpath.

Figure 112:
Street within the Tolpits area dominated by car parking.

Figure 113:
Residential building within the Tolpits area.

CA.04.02 Access to Open and Green Spaces

The Tolpits area could benefit from better access to the surrounding open spaces including Croxley Moor to the north and Withey Beds local nature reserve to the east. Providing pedestrian and cycle links to these green spaces could be a benefit for the people that work in the area.

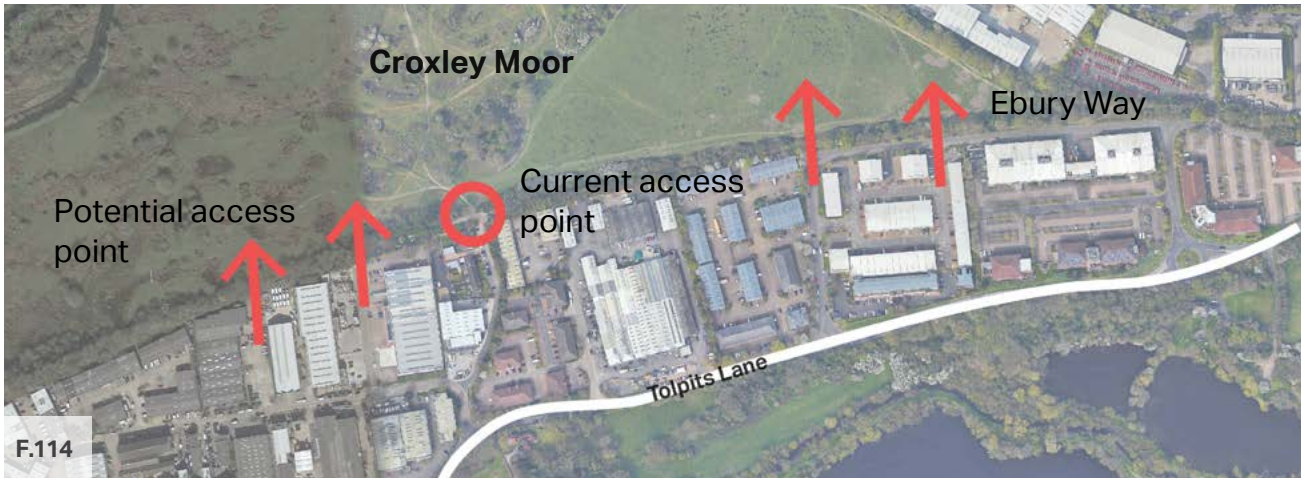
Some design considerations for improving pedestrian and cycle access are listed below:

- Create more access points to Croxley Moor and to the Ebury Way at the north ends of the streets for pedestrians and cyclists, whilst balancing the needs to protect the SSSI.
- Ensure the access points are visible and well signposted.
- Access to Withey Beds nature reserve is constrained by the railway line, however the access could be improved by providing a footpath and cycle lane along Tolpits Lane.


F.115

Figure 114:
Current access point from Tolpits to Croxley Moor and the Colne Valley Trail.

Figure 115:
Aerial image showing indicative access points to Croxley Moor from streets within Tolpits.



F.114

CA.04.03 Facilities and Amenities Kiosk

As an employment area Tolpits could benefit from some additional facilities and amenities such as a cafe or local shop. This would reduce the need for workers or residents to travel to other areas by car throughout the day for food and other essentials, meaning it is more sustainable as services would be within walking distance.

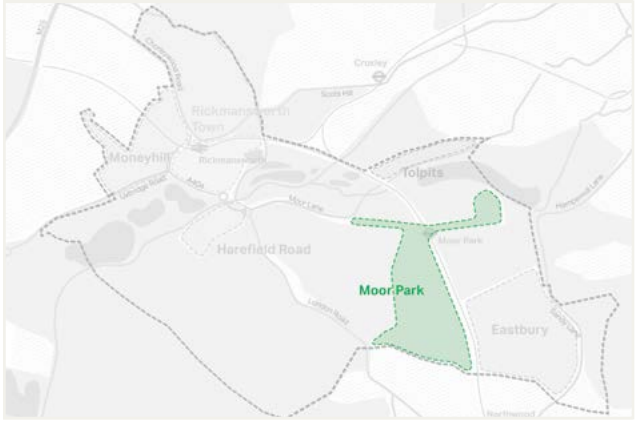
Some design considerations for a facilities and amenities kiosk are:

- The kiosk should be located centrally within the Tolpits area to ensure it is within walking distance of all possible users.
- Ensure the public realm surrounding the kiosk is of a high-quality and has street furniture to enable people to sit and rest.
- Provide street trees or greenery in the surrounding area.
- The building could act as a local landmark with a distinctive feature.

Figure 116:
Example of a modular cafe built to meet the needs of a growing industrial estate, Globeside Cafe, Marlow.

F.116

5 Character Area 5: Moor Park



The priority for Moor Park[1] is to preserve the special character of the Conservation Area and encourage pedestrian and cycle movement.

1 Refer for Moor Park Conservation Area Appraisal (here) for further detail on the special character of the area.

CA.05.01 Layout & Building Appearance

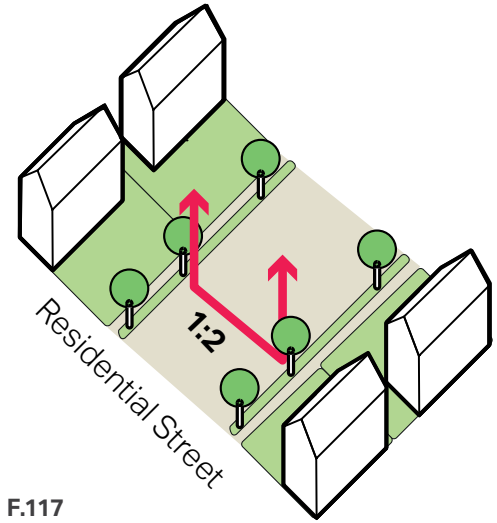
- Streets in the Moor Park area are generally tree-lined, linear and long forming a loose grid structure. Due to the length of the roads the streets are not ideal for pedestrians. Therefore, more pedestrian links could be introduced that cut through the grid.
- Currently the streets do not have footpaths for pedestrians on either side of the road. In order to promote sustainable modes of travel footpaths and cycle lanes could be introduced.
- The streets have lots of greenery provided by green verges and street trees, which should be retained.
- There are consistent boundary treatments at the property edge, often made out of brick walls or hedgerows which should be retained and any new development should be in keeping with the surrounding boundary treatments, particularly those adjacent.
- Dwellings should have a generous setback from the street and should have a vegetated front garden, in keeping with the green feel of the area. Paving over front gardens with non-permeable surfaces must be avoided as it can cause drainage issues.
- Any new development should look to the existing building typologies which are predominantly large, detached houses in a variety of architectural styles (mainly from the 1920s, 1930s and 1950s) on spacious individual plots, and are up to 2.5 storeys in height.
- An exception to this is along the parade of shops near Moor Park station which has the shops in a terrace and a block of flats opposite. Both rows of buildings are three storeys in height and provide enclosure for the wide street.
- Pitched roofs are characteristic of the Moor Park area, therefore buildings should generally have pitched roofs but can have subtle variations.

Enclosure

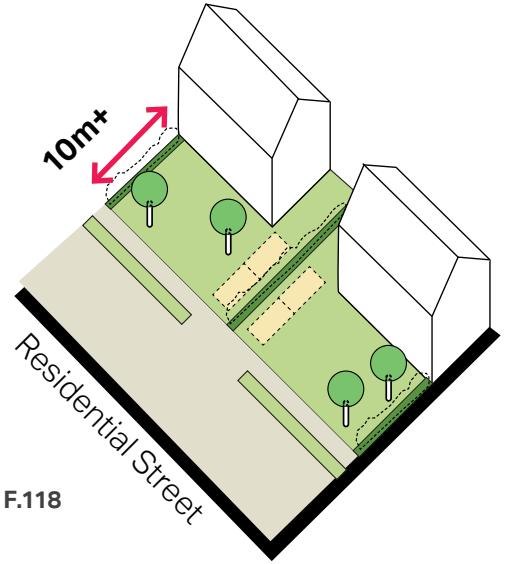
This Character Area benefits from large front gardens in front of detached houses and irregular lines of trees creating enclosure. The roads are mostly wider that 6m and the enclosure ratio is about 1:2.

Building Lines and Setbacks

The buildings are generally well set back from the road with more than 10m width for front gardens. The character of the area is largely defined by its landscaping and mature vegetation and front gardens which are well planted rather than entirely paved over, would be considered more in keeping with the area.



F.117



F.118

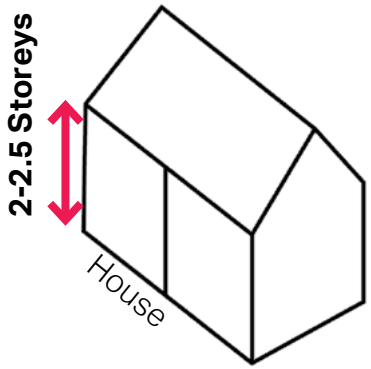
Figure 117:
Illustrative diagram of enclosure along residential streets with a 1:2 ratio (not to scale).
Figure 118:
Illustrative diagram showing a consistent building line and no setback from the street (not to scale).

Building Heights

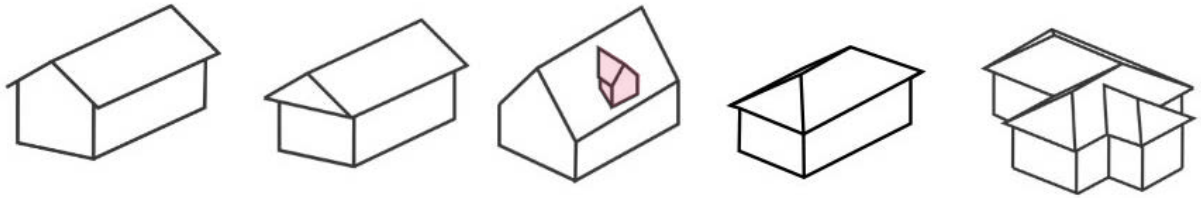
The buildings in Moor Park do not generally exceed 2.5 storeys in height, therefore any development will need to respect the existing building heights in the area.

Roof Typologies

New development should look to the existing roof typologies in the area. The most common are pitched roofs and hip and valley roofs. Furthermore, subtle variations in the rooflines along the street can provide visual interest.



F.120



F.119

Figure 119:
Diagram showing the building heights in Moor Park (not to scale).

Figure 120:
Diagram showing the common roof typologies in Moor Park (not to scale).

Existing character to be retained:

i. Large amounts of greenery in the area including the green verges, front gardens, street trees and the surrounding Green Belt.

ii. Retain the central green strip with planting parallel to the parade of shops.

iii. Retain the parade of shops.

iv. Retain the special character of the area as described in the Moor Park conservation area appraisal.

F.121


F.122


F.123

Figure 121:
Parade of shops with a central green strip with planting.

Figure 122:
Typical detached house in Moor Park, with a paved driveway which should be avoided.

Figure 123:
View along a street in Moor Park with no footpath but a wide green verge.

CA.05.02 Heritage Assets

Whilst there are no listed buildings within the Moor Park area (although there are Scheduled Ancient Monuments at grounds of Merchant Taylors School and Moor Park Golf Club), it is designated as a conservation area due to its significance as part of the low density Metroland development of the 1930s which is essential to its character and must be respected.

- Development which affects any designated and non-designated heritage asset must respect the significance of the asset and must demonstrate how local distinctiveness is reinforced. Particular consideration shall be given to maintaining landscaping, key views and architectural style and detailing.
- Consideration shall also be given to the retention of gaps between buildings in order to maintain the low density of the conservation area.

CA.05.03 Pedestrian and Cycle Links

Pedestrian and cycle access and links to Withey Beds local nature reserve from the Moor Park area could be improved.

- Provide more direct routes for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Increase the number of access points to the Withey Beds local nature reserve.

Figure 124:
Typical detached house with a pitch roof within the conservation area.

Figure 125:
Existing pedestrian footpath adjacent to the railway line.

6 Character Area 6: Eastbury

The priority for the Eastbury is to future proof the area against flooding, the protection of green space and appropriate boundary treatment, and to respect the special character of the Northwood Headquarters housing.

CA.06.01 Layout & Building Appearance

- The streets in Eastbury are generally well-connected and permeable with few cul-de-sacs, therefore this layout should be retained.
- The majority of the streets have footpaths on both sides of the road, which should be retained and improved if needed.
- The Northwood Headquarters housing area (around Altair Way) does not have footpaths along the streets, however the roads are wide and there is little traffic.
- The streets generally have green verges and streets trees that contribute to the suburban character of the area so should be retained and introduced along streets without them.
- There are consistent boundary treatments at the property edge, often made out of brick walls or hedgerows which should be retained and any new development should be in keeping with the surrounding boundary treatments, particularly those adjacent.
- The dwellings in the Northwood Headquarters housing area do not have a property boundary, they have large grass covered front gardens that meet the street. This characteristic should be retained as it is distinctive to this area.
- Dwellings should have a generous setback from the street and should have a vegetated front garden, in keeping with the green feel of the area. Paving over front gardens with non-permeable surfaces must be avoided as it can cause drainage issues.
- Any new development should look to the existing building typologies which are predominately detached houses in a variety of architectural styles and are up to 3 storeys in height but predominantly 2. Blocks of flats - generally from 2-3 storeys in height (some reach 3.5) - are located along the main roads such as Eastbury Avenue.
- 2 storey development will be preferable for individual dwellings and 3 storeys will be accepted for apartment developments.

Enclosure

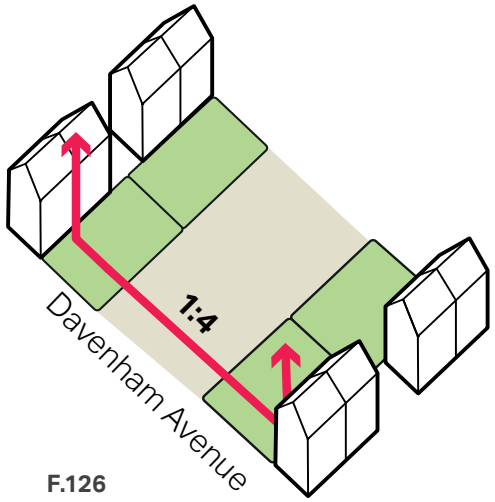
The presence of trees on green verges provide 1:2 enclosure ratio.

The properties in Northwood Headquarters area have deep front gardens which provide a less enclosed area.

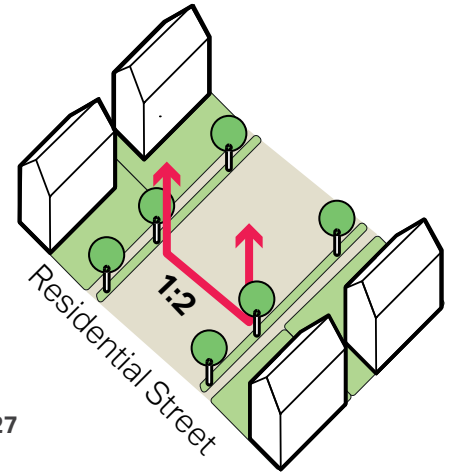
Building Lines and Setbacks

The majority of the housing layout adjacent to the Northwood Headquarters are well set back from the road without any boundary treatment. There are some trees which add interest to the area.

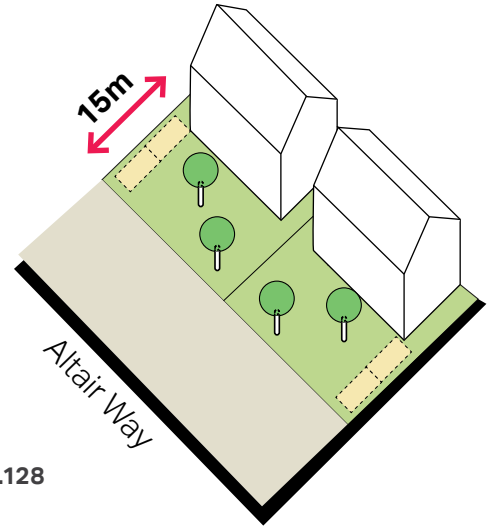
Residential areas such as Batchworth Lane provide large front gardens which exceed 10m at some points with a mixture of low wall and hedges as boundary treatment.



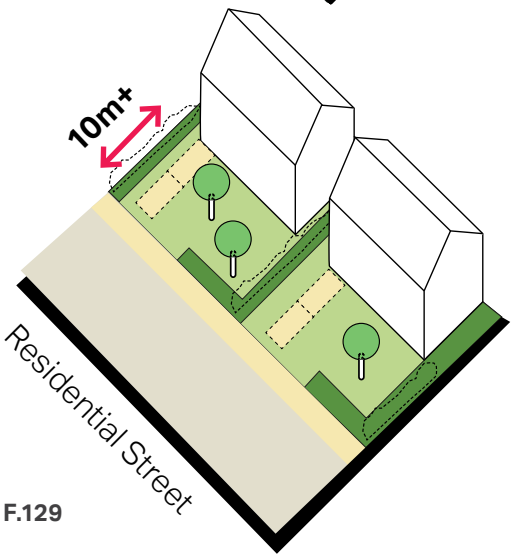
F.126



F.127



F.128



F.129

Figure 126:
Illustrative diagram of enclosure along Davenham Avenue with a 1:4 ratio (not to scale).

Figure 127:
Illustrative diagram of enclosure along a typical Eastbury residential street with a 1:2 ratio (not to scale).

Figure 128:
Illustrative diagram showing generous building setback from the street without the boundary treatment on Altair Way (not to scale).

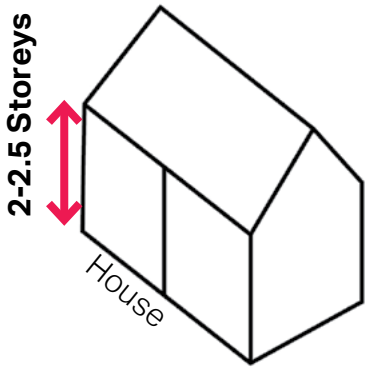
Figure 129:
Illustrative diagram showing a consistent building line and generous set back from road. The properties have boundary treatment (not to scale).
Prepared for: Batchworth Community Council

Building Heights

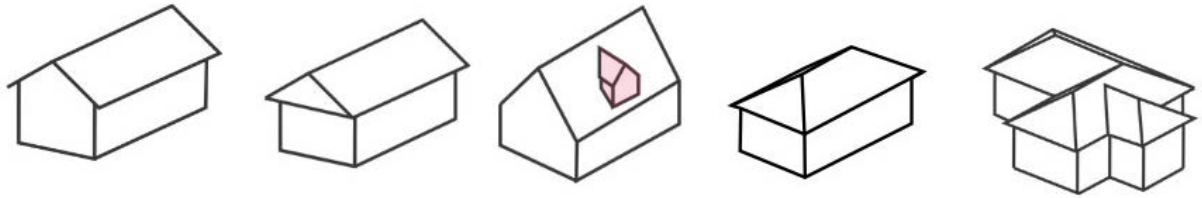
The buildings in Eastbury do not generally exceed 2.5 storeys in height; any new development will need to respect the existing building heights in the area.

Roof Typologies

New development should look to the existing roof typologies in the area. The most common are pitched roofs and hip and valley roofs. Furthermore, subtle variations in the rooflines along the street can provide visual interest.



F.131



F.130

Figure 130:
Diagram showing the building heights in Eastbury.
Figure 131:
Diagram showing the common roof typologies in Eastbury.

Existing character to be retained:

i. The streets should maintain their greenery in the form of green verges, mature street trees and front gardens with planting.

ii. Green boundary treatment as boundaries should be retained in the appropriate locations within Eastbury, with the exception of the Northwood Headquarters housing area around Altair Way.


F.132


F.133


F.134

Figure 132:
Street in Eastbury with green verges and street trees.

Figure 133:
Street in the Northwood Headquarters housing area with a wide road and no footpaths.

Figure 134:
Typical detached house in the Eastbury area.

CA.06.02 Eastbury Recreation Ground Community Hub

Eastbury Recreation Ground is located centrally within the Eastbury area and is a well-used green space. A community pavilion could enhance meeting facilities at the recreation ground. Key design considerations are:

- Pavilion location on the left-hand side of the path where hard standing e.g. tennis courts, already exists and not to encroach on the open green space.
- Create good pedestrian and cycle links to the area.
- The public realm of the grounds remain in keeping with the suburban surroundings, be well-landscaped and use high-quality materials.

CA.06.03 Permeable Paving

Permeable paving should be used at the front of properties along with front gardens to help with drainage and allow water to filter through. Some design considerations are:

- To respect the material palette of the building and the street.
- Harmonise with the landscape treatment of the property.
- Create an arrival statement and help define the property boundary.

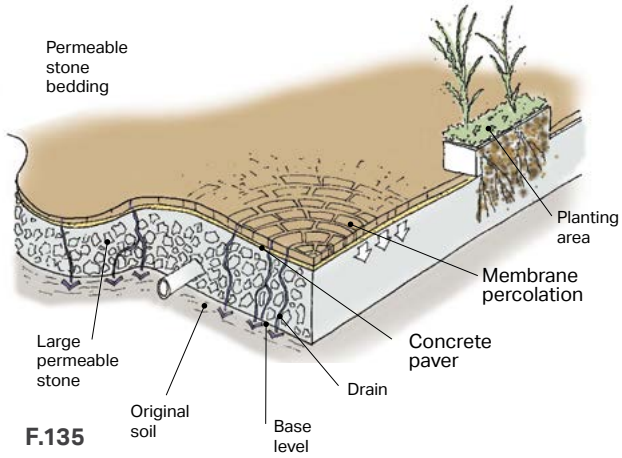


Figure 135:
Diagram showing a section through permeable paving.

Next Steps

06

6. Next Steps

6.1 Delivery

This report is intended to be a valuable tool to help secure context-driven, high quality development within Batchworth. It will be used in different ways by different actors in the planning and development process, as summarised in the table.

Actors	How they will use the design guidelines
Applicants, developers, and landowners	As a guide to community and Local Planning Authority expectations on design, allowing a degree of certainty – they will be expected to follow the Guidelines and Codes as planning consent is sought.
Local Planning Authority	As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications. The Design Guidelines and Codes should be discussed with applicants during any pre-application discussions.
District Council	As a guide when commenting on planning applications, ensuring that the Design Guidelines and Codes are complied with.
Community organisations	As a tool to promote community-backed development and to inform comments on planning applications.
Statutory consultees	As a reference point when commenting on planning applications.

6.2 Next Steps

The recommended next steps for how to use the outcomes of this report are to:

- Engage with the wider community and business community on this design guidance;
- Embed this report's content in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan;
- Continue to engage with the Council to develop policies supporting the proposals and seek funding opportunities, particularly those that can help kick-start the regeneration of Rickmansworth Town Centre; and
- Work with those local organisations that can help to implement the recommendations.

About AECOM

AECOM is the world's trusted infrastructure consulting firm, delivering professional services throughout the project lifecycle — from planning, design and engineering to program and construction management. On projects spanning transportation, buildings, water, new energy and the environment, our public- and private-sector clients trust us to solve their most complex challenges. Our teams are driven by a common purpose to deliver a better world through our unrivaled technical expertise and innovation, a culture of equity, diversity and inclusion, and a commitment to environmental, social and governance priorities. AECOM is a *Fortune 500* firm and its Professional Services business had revenue of $13.2 billion in fiscal year 2020. See how we are delivering sustainable legacies for generations to come at aecom.com and @AECOM.

aecom.com