



# Land East of High Road **High Cross**

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT | DECEMBER 2023



# The team

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# Introduction

## Purpose of the document

This Design and Access Statement (DAS) supports an Outline Planning Application for the residential development of up to 95 units with All Matters Reserved except for Access, on Land East of High Road, High Cross.

- The Outline Application is for the construction of up to 95 houses including 40% affordable housing and 5% self-build / custom-build plots.
- Public Open Space, play spaces, landscaping and land for cemetery, education and allotment uses.

This document explains the steps taken to analyse the site and its context and sets design parameters that, while allowing for necessary design flexibility, will ensure a coherent and context-responsive design approach for the development.

## Parameter Plans

In addition, this DAS explains the proposed access and movement strategy and sets the framework for a sustainable high-quality development with regard to landscape, density and massing.

Plans accompanying this application include:

- Parameter Plans providing key physical parameters as follows:
  - » 1. Land Use and Landscape
  - » 2. Access and Movement
  - » 3. Density and Storey Heights
- Illustrative Concept Master Plan
- Site Location Plan

Future Reserved Matters applications for the site will need to demonstrate general compliance with the Parameter Plans and design approach as set out in this document.

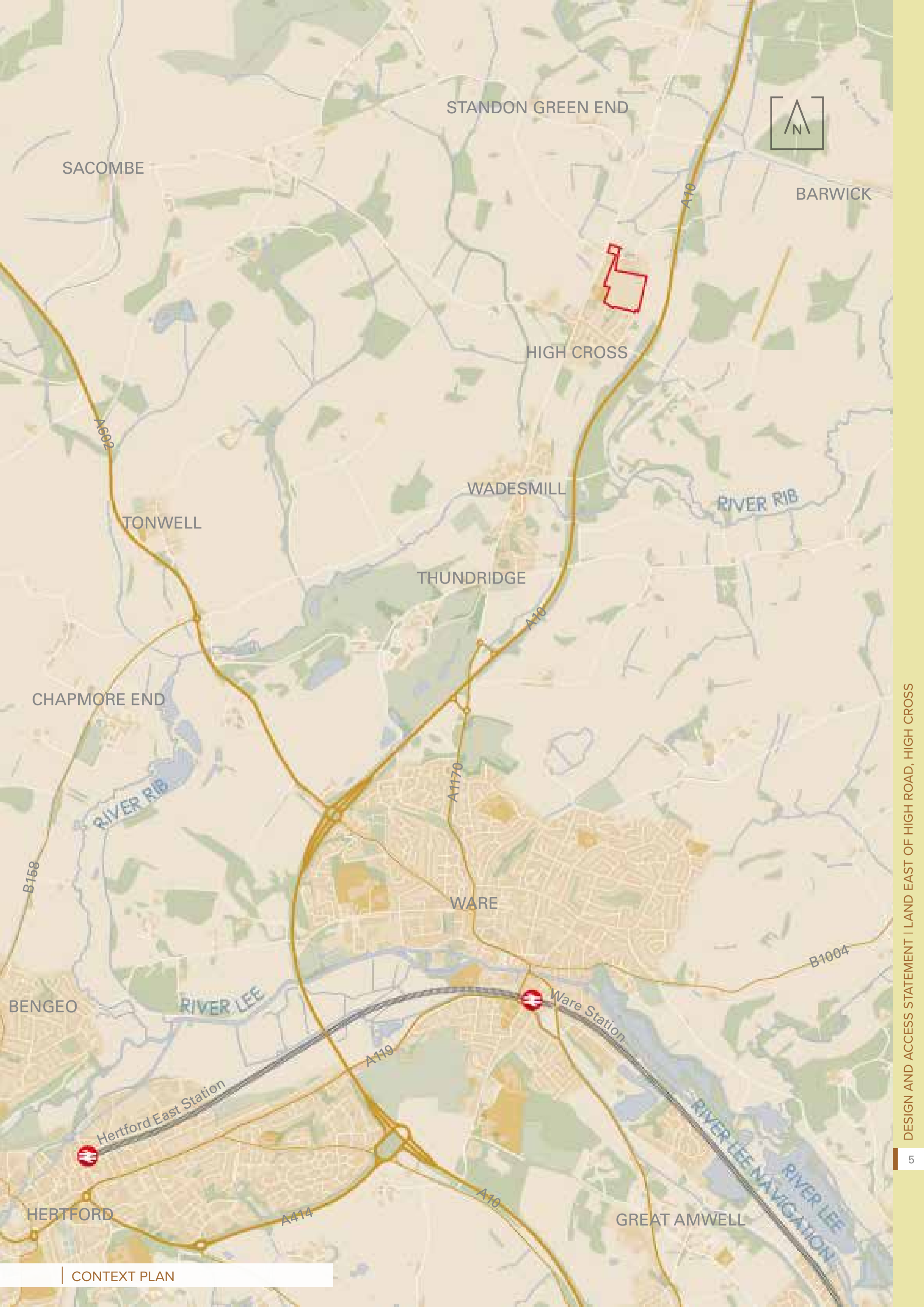
The vision for Land East of High Road, High Cross is to deliver a distinctive development that:

Feels like an integral part of the existing village.

Celebrates the heritage assets of Sutes Farm and the Church of Saint John.

Responds positively to the existing townscape of High Cross.

Delivers benefits to the wider community.



SACOMBE

STANDON GREEN END

BARWICK

HIGH CROSS

WADESMILL

RIVER RIB

TONWELL

THUNDRIDGE

CHAPMORE END

RIVER RIB

WARE

B1004

BENGEIO

RIVER LEE

Ware Station

Hertford East Station

RIVER LEE NAVIGATION

HERTFORD

GREAT AMWELL

# The Site

## Site description

The site is located to the north-east of High Cross and is accessed from High Road. It is enclosed by development to the west and south.

To the north, the site adjoins the Grade II\* listed Sutes Farmhouse and Barn setting, which is accessed through the site by a driveway/informal track. Towards the east there is open farmland beyond which, runs the A10.

The site is currently agricultural land and covers an area of approximately 7.75 ha. The site's topography gradually slopes down from the northeast to the southwest.

Landscape features are concentrated along the southern boundary with some scattered mature trees towards the west and north-eastern corner.

The Public Right of Way (PRoW), Footpath 045 runs east to west along the southern edge of the site boundary.

The site sits adjacent to the Church of Saint John the Evangelist, the tower's spire is a local landmark and a noticeable feature in the landscape from some long distance views.



1 | Access into site



2 | View towards Sutes Farm



3 | View towards open field



4 | Site enclosed by development to the west



5 | View towards St. Johns Church



Pest House Lane

Ermine Street

High Road

North Drive

A10

1

2

3

4

5

# Local Context

High Road is the main street in the village and passes through the village north-south, in the north it is referred to as Ermine Street and in the south, Cambridge Road. This road provides key links to the surrounding context, with the town of Ware in the south and Puckeridge in the north.

The A10 is located to the east of the village running parallel to High Road. Connecting to Cambridge Road, south of the village linking the A10 and Cambridge Road to Ware and Hertford. These towns provide connections to London and the wider surrounding area by road and rail links.

North of High Cross village, Ermine Road connects to the A10 and joins with the A120 providing wider links to Cambridge further north and Bishop's Stortford (Stansted Airport) in the east.

## Local Amenities

High Cross has several facilities that are within walking distance of the site and include:

- » Puller Memorial Church of England (COFE) Primary School
- » Parish Church of Saint John The Evangelist
- » Hunt & Forage - food producer
- » Child minding services
- » High Cross Village Hall
- » Petrol station/convenience store
- » Various local businesses and enterprises

Wider towns and villages surrounding High Cross provide additional amenities within an accessible distance.

## Public Transport

High Cross has two bus stops, the nearest bus stop is approximately 100 meters from the site entrance, the other is located in the centre of the village. These are serviced by bus route 331, running an hourly service between Hertford and Buntingford.

This route also serves Ware and Hertford in the south, allowing residents access to rail and transport connections to London and the South-East of England.



Bus stops on High Road, near the site entrance.



Puller Memorial COFE Primary School



Church of Saint John The Evangelist, High Cross














Petrol station/convenience store

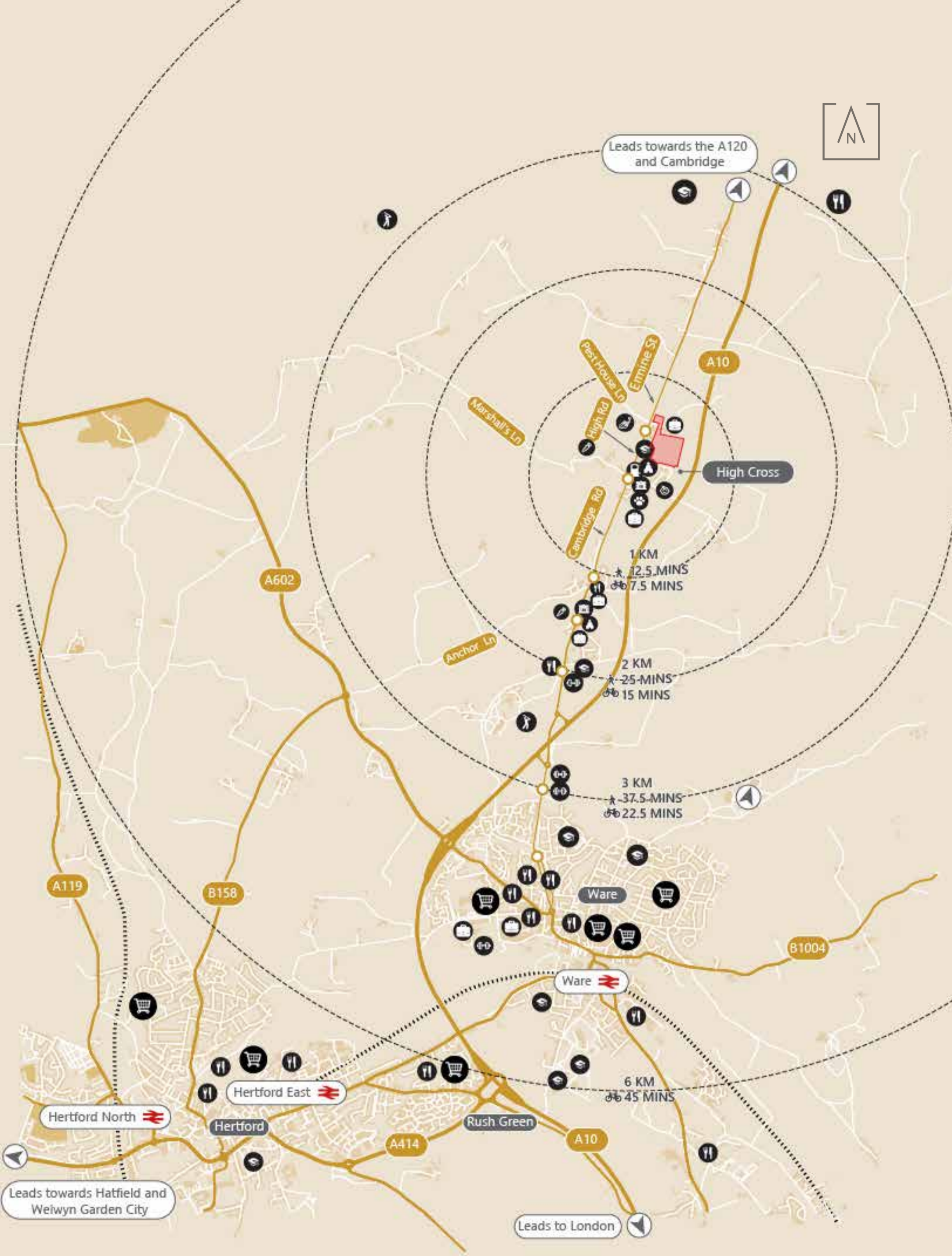


Hunt & Forage, food producer in High Cross

### KEY:

- |   |                          |   |                           |
|---|--------------------------|---|---------------------------|
|  | Site Boundary            |  | Village Hall              |
|  | Supermarket              |  | Dog Care                  |
|  | Restaurants, Pubs & Bars |  | Child Care                |
|  | Education                |  | Food Produce              |
|  | Golf                     |  | Businesses and Employment |
|  | Beauty                   |  | Petrol Station            |
|  | Sports & Leisure         |  | Bus Stop                  |
|  | Places of Worship        |  | Railway                   |





# Constraints & Opportunities


























## Constraints

- The site slopes from the north-east to the south-west, therefore consideration is to be given to ensure optimal use of the natural topography.
- There is a small area of the site in the south-west, that is at risk of surface water flooding.
- Part of the western and southern areas of the site adjoin to the back of properties, parking courts and garages.
- The intersection of the existing track to Sutes Farm and the proposed access road to the scheme, to be “downgraded” to preserve the character of the lane/ setting of the Listed Building.
- There are some potential long distance/sensitive views of the characterful church tower of Saint John the Evangelist’s Church that will be retained.
- There are some mature trees of value present around parts of the site that will be retained.

## Opportunity

- Potential to create a high-quality development that responds to the village context of High Cross and celebrates its assets.
- Opportunity to provide much needed amenities such as; school extension, allotments and cemetery.
- Opportunity to create view corridors and viewing mound to celebrate views of the church and parts of High Cross.
- Opportunity to provide a green corridor through the northern area of the site, to create a multi-functional open space that protects the setting of Sutes Farm.
- Opportunity to facilitate biodiversity enhancements; with new planting to improve habitats, public open spaces including grassland areas and integrated SuDS. This will help achieving biodiversity net gain on site.
- Opportunity to provide play spaces around the public open space area.
- Opportunity to provide walking routes around the site to enjoy the open space. These pathways can connect the northern section of the site to High Road and extend southward, integrating with the Public Right of Way (PRoW).

### KEY

	Site boundary
	Potential site access
	Existing track to Sutes Farm
	Potential pedestrian links
	Existing surveyed tree positions
	Proposed trees (indicative)
	Surveyed site levels and contours
	Public Right of Way - Footpath
	Public Right of Way - Bridleway
	Low potential surface water flood risk*
	High potential surface water flood risk*
	Opportunity for SuDS basins
	Primary School expansion zone
	Potential cemetery extension
	Potential allotments
	Sensitive edge to rear of existing properties
	Potential landscape buffer
	Intersection of proposed road and existing track to be sensitively addressed
	Grade II Listed Buildings
	Grade II* Listed Buildings
	Opportunity for POS
	Long views to St John's Church High Cross
	Potential development road
	Existing roads
	Grade II* Youngsbury Registered Park & Garden

\*Source: Environment Agency



Ermine Street

Pest House Lane

Potential native woodland planting

Reduce visual prominence to new access road

SuDS

Sutes Farmhouse

Barn at Sutes Farmhouse

High Road

SuDS

Potential Planting

Potential landscape buffer to existing properties

Potential Allotments

Views towards church

High Cross Puller Memorial COFE Primary School

Church of St John the Evangelist

The Rectory

SuDS

A10

Public Right of Way

North Drive

Multiple Listed Buildings within this area

Public Right of Way

Public Right of Way

# Access and Movement

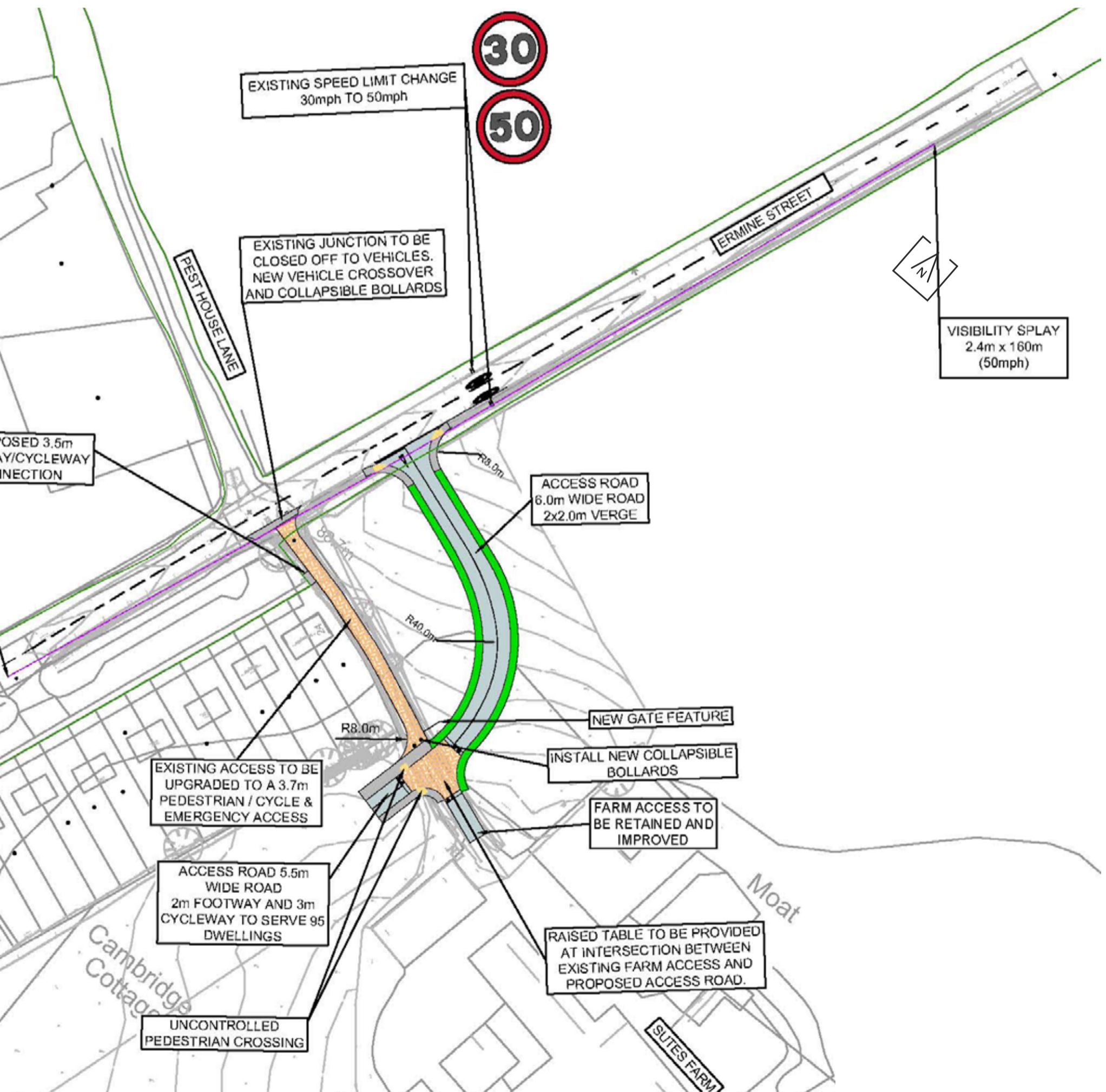
Vehicle access will be from High Road via a new T-junction. The proposed access junction has been designed to accommodate all vehicle movements to and from the site and is presented in detail within the Transport Assessment accompanying this application.

Vehicular movement into and within the site has been designed to adoptable standards and will provide:

- New 6.0m wide access road from High Road to the existing farm track.
- Existing farm access from High Road to be closed off to vehicles, with new vehicle crossover and collapsible bollards.
- Existing farm access to be upgraded to a 3.7m pedestrian / cycle & emergency access.
- Estate road to continue via a 5.5m carriageway with a 2m footway and a 3m cycleway to serve up to 95 dwellings.
- A visibility splay of 2.4m x 160m to the north (50 mph) and 2.4m x 120m (40 mph) to the south.



PROPOSED ACCESS PLAN



# Heritage

## The Heritage Assets

There are a number of heritage assets in the surrounding area which have the potential to be affected by the residential development of the site. Whilst we note that there are a number of listed buildings within the centre of High Cross (identified in the adjacent plan as circled in blue), we consider that these will unlikely be affected by the development of the site and it is those immediate assets which would form the primary heritage considerations in the development of the site.

The table to the right identifies the listed buildings and the adjacent plan shows the location of the listed buildings in relation to the site.

To the south of the site is the grade II\* Youngsbury Registered Park & Garden which is associated with Youngsbury, the principal house (Grade II listed). There is limited inter-visibility and there is unlikely to be any significant impact on the heritage assets within this area.

The mile post, identified as key 3 is a piece of transport infrastructure and would not be affected by the proposed development of the site. We have therefore not considered this further.

In summary, the assessment focuses on effects on buildings 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 only.

## Significance and setting

There would only be indirect effects arising from the development of the site, that is, the setting of the listed buildings. We have consulted the list descriptions for the listed buildings (albeit that the list entries are provided for identification purposes only and do not hold statutory weight.).

The Heritage Statement sets out a summary of the setting of each of the listed buildings and describes the contribution that the site of the proposed development contributes to their significance.

### Listed Buildings surrounding the site

1	Sutes Farmhouse	II*
2	Barn at Sutes Farmhouse	II
3	Milestone	II
4	High Cross Puller Memorial CofE Primary School (100 metres to north of Church)	II
5	Church of St John the Evangelist (Church of England)	II
6	The Rectory (60 metres to west of church)	II



HERITAGE ASSET PLAN

## The effect of the development of the site

The proposed residential development of the site would change its character from an open worked landscape to a built one. That change will, without question, cause a degree of harm to the listed buildings identified above. For the purposes of the NPPF, that harm would be 'less than substantial' and in accordance with paragraph 202, would be balanced against the wider planning benefits.

An initial heritage appraisal informed the design approach and identified the following potential mitigation measures:

- **Access:**

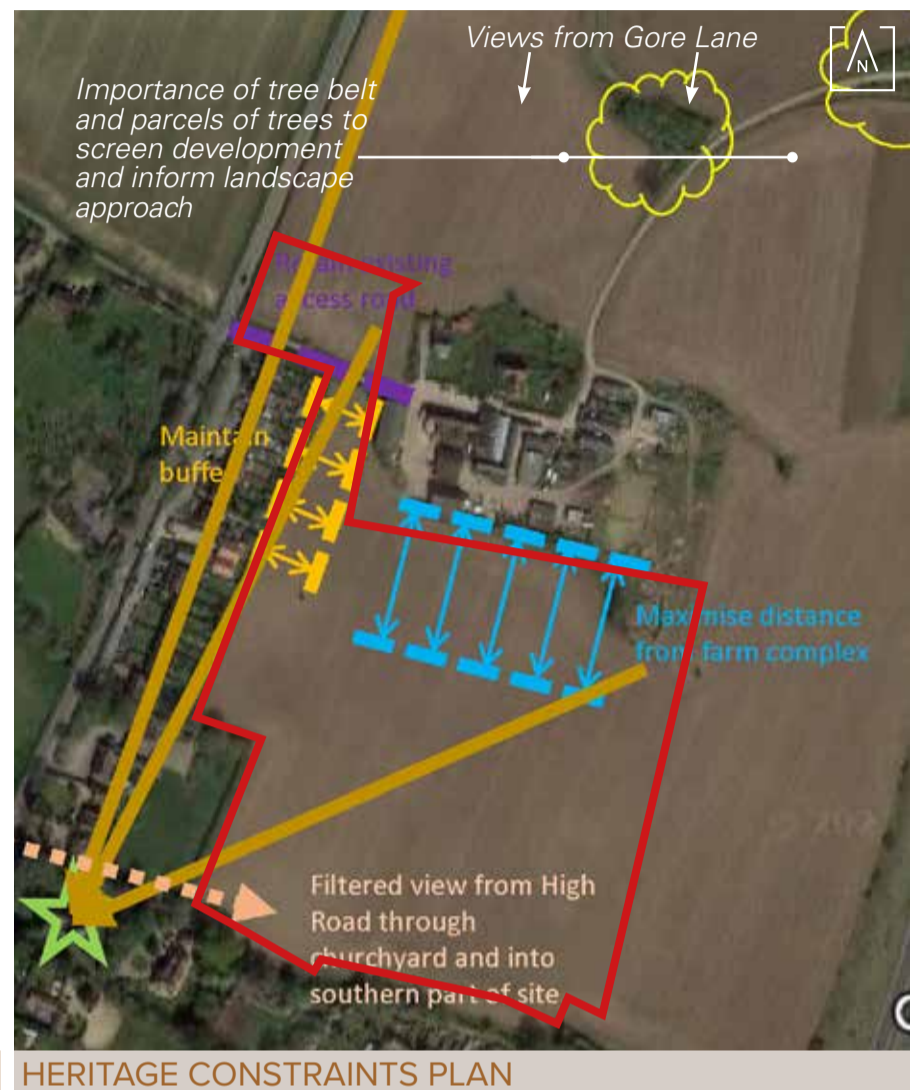
- » Retain the current access to the farm complex as a pedestrian/cycle path to maintain an element of the original experiential element of the setting of the listed farm buildings.
- » Consider how the visual prominence of the new access road can be reduced. Passing places should be avoided as they allow for vehicles to 'pause' and increase the urbanisation of the site in key views.
- » Landscaping buffers can provide some screening, but need to be carefully selected so as to avoid the appearance of further urbanising the area. There is an underlying character of tree pockets which could be utilised as an example.

- **Extent of residential development:**

- » Moving the northern boundary of residential development as far as possible away from the farm complex. This will create a buffer which will reduce the perception of the change in character of the land surrounding the farm complex.
- » Landscape and visual consultant to photograph views from the lay-bys along Gore Lane to understand how the existing tree belts can be used to screen views of the residential development.
- » Omitting development along the approach road to maintain the gap open between the rear of properties on High Road the farm complex.

- **Views:**

- » In addition to views from Gore Lane – a kinetic sequence which is marked by a lay-by and an entrance to a footpath leading to the north.
- » Filtered views from High Road between buildings and to the site, including through the churchyard where there is a view of the southern part of the site.
- » Views of the spire of the Church of St John the Evangelist, with the potential to open up views through the site and better reveal significance.



# Character Analysis

High Cross has a rural character which is well preserved. Several listed buildings such as Saint John the Evangelist Church, The Rectory and Puller Memorial Primary School share close proximity to the site. Therefore it is essential that the proposal helps preserve and enhance the context.

## Neighbourhood Plan

Some of the key objectives of the Thundridge Neighbourhood Plan, which also falls within the strategic objectives and policies of the East Herts District Plan, include:

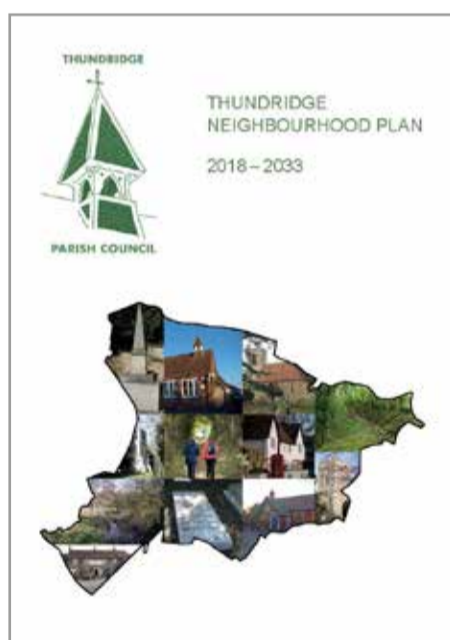
- Preserve and enhance the character of the built environment in the villages and recognise the significance of heritage assets including landscapes, conservation areas, listed buildings and other historic features and areas.
- Ensure that new development is built to a high standard of design which reinforces local distinctiveness and character.

## Key Character

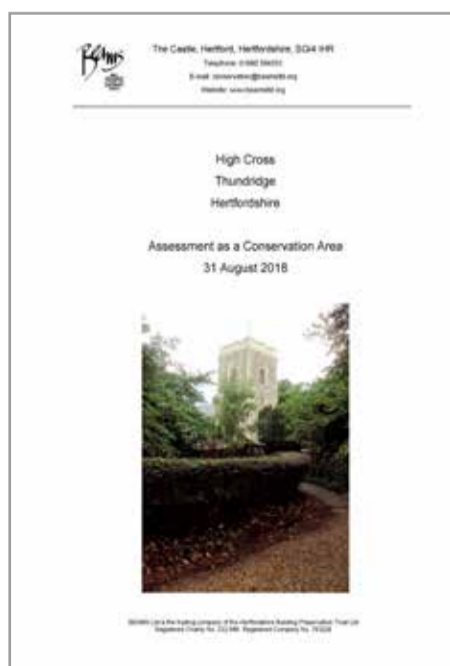
As part of the local character analysis, an assessment of the village has been informed by a site visit, a review of High Cross Assessment as a Conservation Area, 31 August 2018, by Thundridge Parish Council, and a heritage appraisal conducted by the team. This study helped to inform the key character areas in the following section.

A distinct element identified is the 17th and 18th century vernacular style evident along the historic route and the new 20th century development found mainly along the east-west route. Additionally, the farm complex poses as an important element due to its historic relevance and prominence to the site. Hence, the three key character areas are:

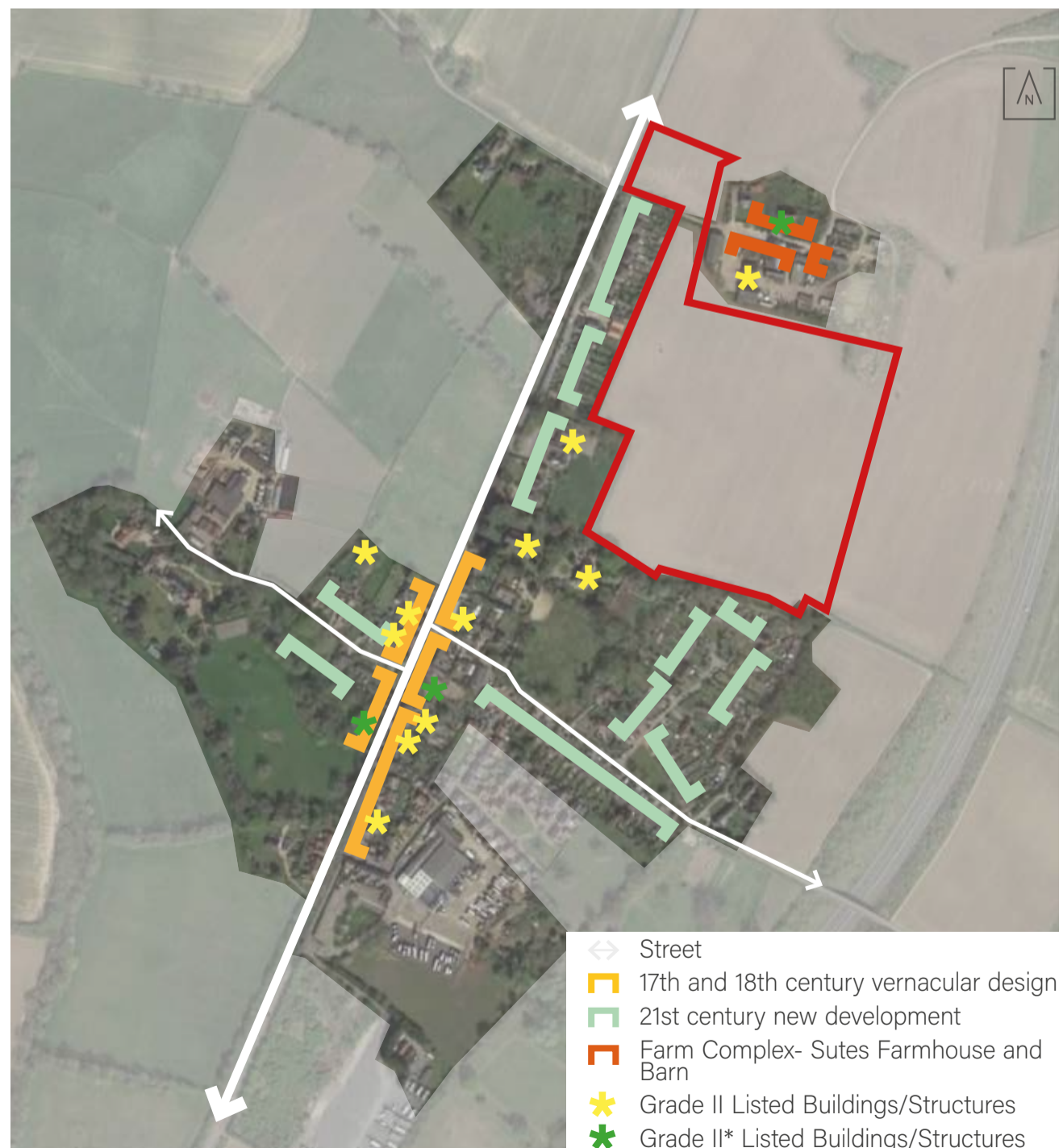
- 17th and 18th century vernacular design.
- 20th century new development.
- Farm complex- Sutes Farmhouse and Barn.



Thundridge Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2033



High Cross Assessment as a Conservation Area, 31 August 2018.



- ↔ Street
- ▭ 17th and 18th century vernacular design
- ▭ 21st century new development
- ▭ Farm Complex- Sutes Farmhouse and Barn
- ★ Grade II Listed Buildings/Structures
- ★ Grade II\* Listed Buildings/Structures

## HIGH-CROSS- KEY CHARACTER AREAS



## 17th and 18th century vernacular design

### Development Pattern

High Cross was once a major historic thoroughfare and most development was along the north-south axis and consisted of several inns. The development follows a linear layout of continuous frontage with some gaps along the north-south axis of the High Road.

Modern in-fill development is minimal along this route with most historic and listed buildings well preserved.

### Building Form and scale

Simple form with minimal opening detail. Houses are generally 2 storey terraced houses aligned along the street, with commercial use on the ground floor. The plots are small to medium sized with medium rear gardens.

Mix of gable and pitched roofs with mostly eaves parallel to the street. Coach drive through is well integrated.



Linear arrangement of the 17th and 18th century core



2.5 storey terraced houses with prominent dormer windows and chimneys. Double door with simple porch projection and opening.



High Cross farm house and barn showing varying scale and form.



The White Horse Inn - Varying form achieved with single storey extensions from the main structure. Double doors, bay window and prominent chimney are distinct features.

### Building Set-back

Set-back is minimal with only the pedestrian pathway separating the built form from the street. Buildings are set close to the main high street, forms a continuous line and maintains uniform setback. Access is gained directly from the pavement.



The Old Waggon (grade II\*) - Continuous frontage, minimal set-back from the street and no boundary treatment.

## Boundary Treatment

Along the main north-south axis there are no boundary treatments with buildings immediately fronting the street. Boundary is defined by the edge of the pavement. However, in some cases, a very low fence is used. Tall hedges or landscape are absent.



Balmhams Hall and The Cottage - roughcast render and narrow set-back.

## Parking

Parking courts are provided either adjacent or to the rear of the building. Narrow carriage reduces presence of on-street parking.



The Old Waggon (grade II\*) - Continuous frontage, minimal set-back from the street and no boundary treatment.

## Design Detail

Most listed buildings are 17th and 18th century timber framed vernacular architecture styles later refaced in red brick or render. Distinct cantilever projection is also evidenced with prominent chimneys.



Double doors.



Cantilever projection.



The Coach House - carriage entrance retained.

## Material

Common wall materials include brick and plain white rendered walls or roughcast render.

Some buildings have horizontal boarding painted black or white. Roof material is usually clay plain tile.



## 20th Century new development

### Development Pattern

Modern development along the east-west links also maintains a linear arrangement along with the street. This involves long continuous frontage of terraced houses. The arrangement is formal and well defined.

Green space enclosed by building with continuous frontage.



Informal arrangement facing open green space.

### Building Form and scale

Many buildings are semi-detached and 2 storey in height but there are also a few 1 and 1.5 storey buildings. The form is linear and continuous with a few gaps in between. It includes a mix of gable, pitched or half hipped roofs with eaves mostly parallel to the street.

The scale of the units are uniform with 1 storey garages forming a gap in the roofline.

### Building set-back

The units have a continuous uniform setback from the street. Most units have medium scale front gardens and face the internal street. Some larger units face the main street and have a wider set-back from the street with public open space in between.

### Boundary Treatment

East-west link shows low lying well defined hedges or fences as boundaries. Boundary has mostly linear treatment and front on to internal private drives.



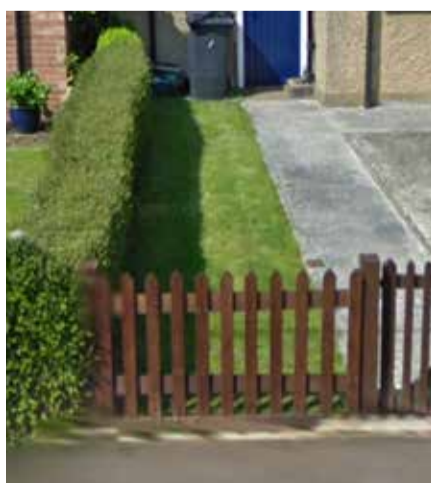
Varying scale and medium set-back from the street.



Larger units with view towards open green space and wider set-back.



Low lying wall.



Picket fence.



Defined low lying hedges.

## Parking

Different types of parking such as integrated parking with accommodation on top, parking provided adjacent to the dwelling and even parking courts are seen.

## Design Detail

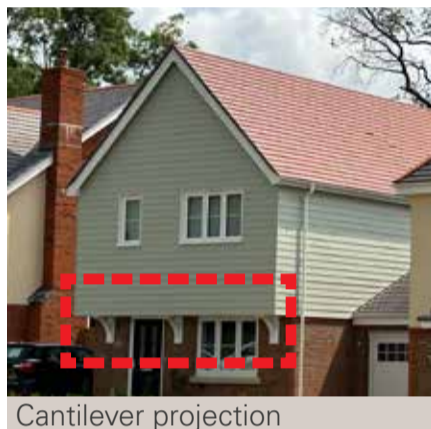
Design is simple with minimal detailing. Roof is mostly eave facing with a short projected roof over the main entry.



Street ending at a parking court



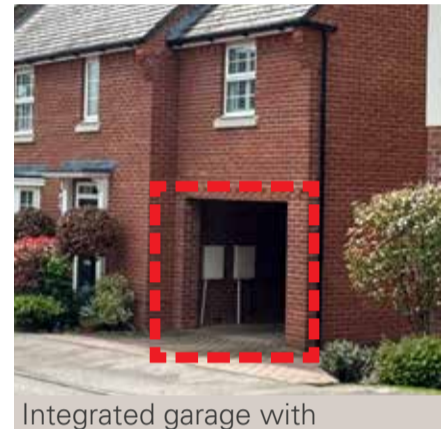
Eave facing units



Cantilever projection



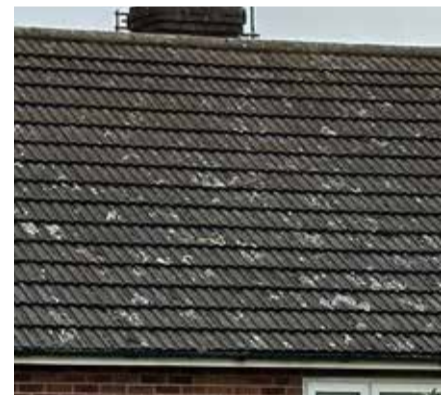
Simple door detail



Integrated garage with accommodation on top.

## Material

Varying material used between ground and first floor. Main materials include red brick, light render, horizontal boarding and clay / concrete roof tiles.



## Farm complex- Sutes Farmhouse and Barn

### Development Pattern

14th Century farmhouse and 17th century barn is a collection of buildings in a group setting. Developed as a cluster the wider setting is kept open. A continuous informal arrangement centred around the end of the road.



Group development of the farm complex at the end of the driveway



Buildings' arrangement form a loose courtyard space.

## Building Form and scale

The units are detached independent structures of varying scale and form. The farmhouse is a 2 storey T shaped structure with a half hipped south wing roof facing the street. The plot is not defined due to its grouped nature and vast open space. The Barn is a single storey linear structure with a steep pitched roof.



The farmhouse- 2 storey form with north and north-west sides rising from the moat.

## Building Set-back

The buildings front on to an internal street with no defined set-back. They have varying setback and arranged to form a cluster of units.



The Barn- distinct form and use.

## Boundary Treatment

There is no defined boundary element. The buildings are aligned informally on either side of the street with no pavement to define the edge.

## Design Detail

The farmhouse is a white weatherboarded timber framed structure on a brick sill with red tile roof. Prominent chimneys and its half hipped roof act as unique features.

The barn is characterised by timber framed weatherboarded structure on a brick plinth with steep roof. Double doors are a common feature.

## Material

Materials include mostly brick or weatherboard walls painted white or black. Sheet roof over the barn. The farmhouse has a clay tiled roof.



Weatherboarded walls and brick plinth.



Double doors.



The Farmhouse with half hipped roof and porch projection.



White weatherboard.



Clay tiled roof.

# Landscape Strategy

The landscape strategy for the site includes the following:

1. Creation of a strong entry and focal point through entrance and avenue planting, improving the landscape setting of the listed Farmhouse.
2. A new parkland setting to the north and east of the new housing formed by generous open grassland areas with blocks of trees and vegetation that respond positively to the surrounding landscape.
3. Play and interaction with the landscape will be encouraged by positioning the play space beyond the housing.
4. The views of the church spire will be celebrated with new a viewing mound.
5. The southern boundary is to remain a green space with the existing PRow travelling past the SuDS basin, the cemetery extension and school extension.
6. The informal grassland areas will provide benefits for pollinators and to show visual interest.
7. Seed mixes will be chosen for their bursts of colour and ecological benefits.





# Drainage

A Sustainable Drainage Report prepared by Cannon Consulting Engineers accompanies this application. A summary of key elements of the drainage strategy is provided in this section.

## Surface Water Strategy

It is proposed to outfall surface to the Barwick Tributary to the north of site. Local measures such as water butts or planters, collecting reusable surface water from roofs, are recommended at this stage to comply with policy.

## Maintenance

It is proposed that the strategic drainage features on site are to be maintained by either the statutory undertaker for the area; Anglian Water or a suitable management company.

## Impermeable Areas

It is proposed at this stage that permeable paving is used as a form of source control for private areas where possible (shared drives, parking spaces etc.), and thus any standard urban creep factor will be balanced out by the slight reduction in impermeable surfacing.

## On-site Attenuation

The principal SuDS systems in place for this scheme will be large and open attenuation basins. These will include areas of permanent water and planting to promote the four pillars of good SuDS design. It is feasible to provide permanently wet areas within the basins proposed and thus create wetland areas.

# Noise

Quantum Acoustics has undertaken an environmental noise survey to establish the existing noise levels. It is concluded that the proposed development complied fully with noise related national and local planning policies.



Swale.



Example of permanent water and planting SuDS basin.



# Ecology

Desk based and site walkover assessment of the ecological features has been undertaken by Geosphere Environmental. The site itself is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory nature conservation designations. Whilst records of amphibians, badgers, bats, birds, and reptiles were recorded within proximity of the site, no notable protected species were recorded within the site boundary. With the majority of the site consisting of arable farmland, there are very few other plant species present and there are no grassland margins, both with low ecological value.

None of the habitats that occur in proximity of the site were considered to have high ecological importance on an international, national, regional or county scale. The habitats on-site are likely to have up to district significance only.

A substantial tree belt is present on the southern boundary although there are no Tree Preservation Orders or conservation areas within the site boundary. A light hedgerow spans the length of the western boundary, these have moderate ecological value and will need to be protected through design of proposals.



# Design Principles



## A landscape Led Setting

- Visual corridors across the existing contours to maximise views towards the Church's tower.
- A parkland that acts as a green corridor to protect the setting of Sutes Farm. This area consists of multi-functional open space containing; SuDS basins, play spaces and buffer planting.
- Existing natural features like trees and hedges will be retained and integrated within the network of public open spaces.

## Permeable Network of Routes

- The development will provide a network of well connected routes that will link into adjacent existing footpaths and public right of ways to connect the proposed development to key areas within the village.



## Context Responsive

- The development will positively respond to the natural and townscape context of the site and the local area.
- Lower density development will be located in the most sensitive areas, with open spaces and buffer planting created to screen development and positively respond to views from the north.

# Design Evolution

## Initial Concept Masterplan

Following the initial technical work to identify the site's opportunities and constraints, a Concept Masterplan was prepared. This sought to establish the broad areas for the proposed land uses. A potential extension to the existing primary school was also proposed.

This was refined following a technical review by the highways, landscape, heritage and drainage consultants. The updated Concept Masterplan was then used for the public consultation and presentation to the Parish Council.



Public Consultation Concept Masterplan

## Final Concept Masterplan

A number of changes were made to the Concept Masterplan as a result of the public consultation:

- Removal of the proposed built form behind Cambridge Cottages.
- Increased landscaping throughout the proposed development, including a wider buffer along the site's western boundary.
- Inclusion of allotments to comply with the SPD requirement and address the current waiting list in the Parish.
- Inclusion of land as a cemetery extension to address the local requirement.
- Further consideration of the access arrangements to the non-residential elements.



Concept Masterplan

## Parameter Plans

Following a final technical review of the Concept Masterplan, a series of Parameter Plans have been produced to reflect the key elements. The Parameter Plans cover the following areas:

- Land Use and Landscape.
- Access and Movement.
- Building Heights and Density.

It is expected that the Parameter Plans can form the basis of the detailed design at reserved matters stage, and will assist with the determination of this outline planning application and the preparation of appropriate planning conditions.



Land Use & Landscape Parameter Plan

## Illustrative Layout Plan

This planning application is in outline form only, with the detailed design and layout to be produced at reserved matters stage. An Illustrative Layout Plan has been prepared to demonstrate how 95 dwellings could be accommodated based on the Parameter Plans. The Illustrative Layout Plan complies with Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan guidance in respect of housing mix, public open space provision, parking provision, and connectivity for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.



Illustrative Layout Plan

# The Proposal

The Illustrative Concept Masterplan provides a design and landscape led development that positively responds to the local character through its layout, landscape and built form.

Key features of the plan include:

- The access street that responds in character to the existing track at the intersection to Sutes Farm, to suit and preserve the nature of the lane/setting of the Listed Building and celebrate the heritage asset of the village.
- The residential development is designed to allow a series of view corridors towards St. Johns the Evangelist's Church tower.
- A viewing mound in the public open space towards the north-east to enhance views towards of the church and parts of High Cross.
- A new green corridor along the north and eastern boundaries to create a buffer with the setting of Sutes Farm.
- A hierarchy of streets to provide a legible place with informal private lanes to the development edges, shared surface mews areas, tree lined streets and swales.
- A range of parking spaces and types to accommodate most vehicular parking on plot, with only visitors parking along streets. This aims to reduce street clutter, create attractive streetscapes and expand the use of streets to all users beyond just vehicular parking.
- A network of multifunctional open spaces throughout the development including, green corridors, wild flower planting and open spaces incorporate SuDS and play space features as well.
- Pedestrian links running along the eastern boundary and through the site from the main access to the north.
- A new pedestrian and cycle link to be provided off the track and follows the main access route into the development.
- Allotments along the western edge of the site to encourage shared activity and foster a sense of community.
- A cemetery extension to the south which supports community facilities.

## KEY

	Site boundary
	Vehicular access
	PRoW Access
	Retained track to Sutes Farm
	Existing roads
	Potential access to Primary School expansion zone
	Development parcel
	Frontage
	Key frontage
	Potential pedestrian links
	Existing trees
	Proposed trees
	Proposed boundary planting
	Proposed pedestrian paths along street
	Vehicular street
	PRoW routes - Footpaths
	PRoW routes - Bridleway
	Cycle lane
	Existing lane crossing
	Shared surface
	Proposed swales
	Proposed SuDS basins
	Primary School expansion zone
	Viewing mound
	Verges and open space
	Green space within view corridor
	POS
	Wild flower planting
	Play areas
	Long views to St John's Church
	Allotments
	Cemetery Extension



Pest House Lane

Ermine Street

High Road

Sutes Farmhouse

Barn at Sutes Farmhouse

Landscape buffer to existing properties

Allotment parking

High Cross Puller Memorial COFE Primary School

Allotments

Wild Flower Planting

Viewing Mound

Play

Low level planting

Views towards church

Primary School Expansion Zone

Play

SuDS

Church of St John The Evangelist

The Rectory

Cemetery extension

Public Right of Way

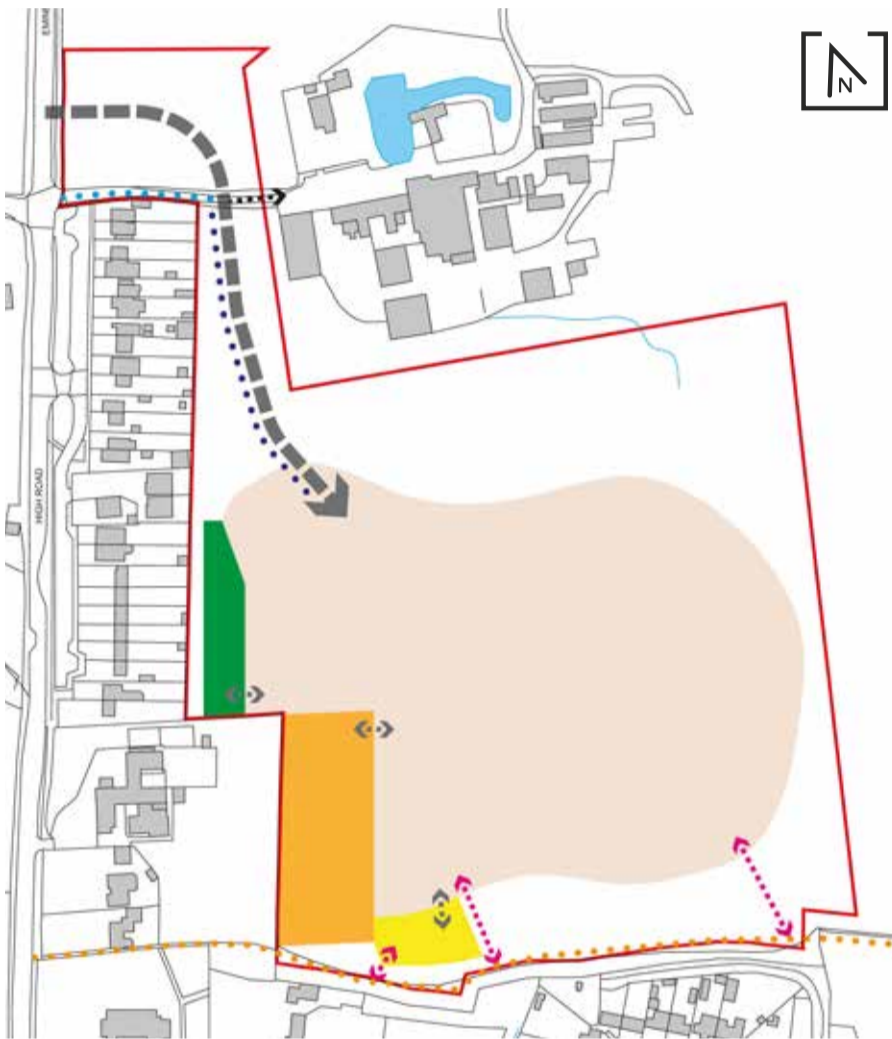
North Drive

ILLUSTRATIVE CONCEPT MASTERPLAN

# Design Parameters

The Parameter Plans presented below articulate fundamental guidelines for the development, focusing on the following key elements:

## Access and Movement Parameter Plan



### Movement

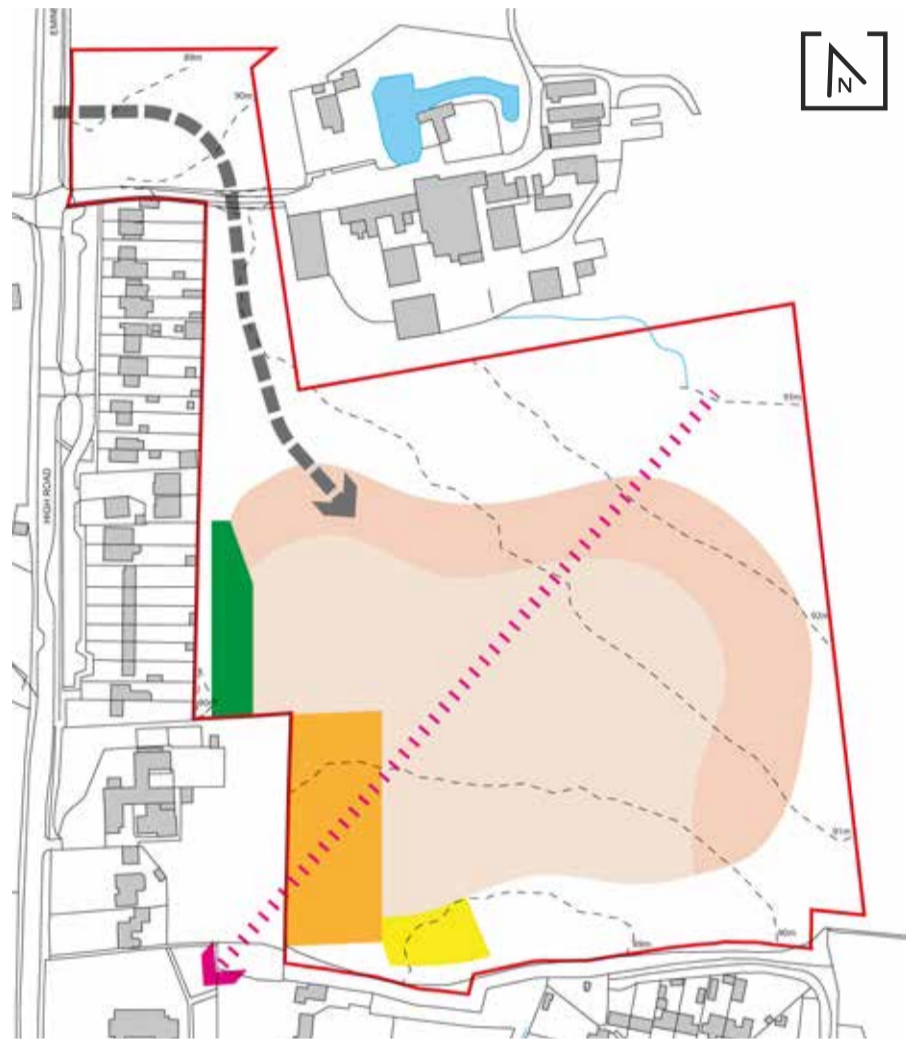
Vehicular access to the site is to be gained off High Road in the north, with an access road to be provided through the site into the south. The existing track and its character serving Sutes Farm is retained.

The northern part of the site's open landscape character is retained, and sensitivity is shown towards the intersection of existing track and new road. A separate 3m cycle and pedestrian route is proposed to follow the same alignment as the access road, providing a segregated tree lined route into the development. A connection with the existing PRoW to the south of the site is allowed.

#### KEY

- Site boundary
- - -> Vehicular access road
- Residential development area
- ↔ Indicative location of vehicular connection for maintenance purpose
- ⋯ Public Right of Way
- - -> Indicative location of pedestrian connection
- - -> Vehicular connection to Sutes Farm
- ⋯ Existing track to be converted to shared cycle/footway
- ⋯ Shared cycle/footway
- Allotment area (allotments and parking)
- School extension area
- Cemetery extension area

## Density and Storey Heights Parameter Plan



### Density

Densities vary slightly across the site with a medium density of 30-35 DPH (Dwellings Per Hectare) contained to the west. An area of low density 20-30 DPH along the edges of development in the east looking onto the open space.

### Storey Heights

Development on-site to be a maximum of 2-2.5 storeys.

#### KEY

- Site boundary
  - - -> Vehicular access road
  - Low density residential development area (20-30 dph) up to 2 storey- max ridge height of 9m (excluding chimneys and flues)
  - Medium density residential development area (30-35 dph) up to 2 1/2 storey max ridge height of 11.5m (excluding chimneys and flues)
  - Cemetery extension area
  - - -> View of church spire to enable line of site from public open space within development
  - ⋯ Contours
  - Allotment area (allotments and parking)
  - School extension area
  - Cemetery extension area
- Note- exact built form to be confirmed at Reserved Matters Stage



## Land Use and Landscape Parameter Plan



### Land Use and Landscape

The development responds to local topography and the landscape it is set in. The proposal is considerate of its setting and seeks to work with and become part of the High Cross landscape.

- Residential development concentrated within the core of the site accommodating up to 95 new homes with 40% affordable homes.
- Multi-functional open space parkland is located along the east and northern parts of the site. This space will include:
  - » Recreational open space, including play spaces and walking routes.
  - » Native flower planting and buffer/hedge planting to enhance and create habitats.
  - » The multi-functional open space that also acts as a natural green corridor to protect the setting of Sutes Farm.
- View corridors are positioned along key view lines, to protect sensitive views of the Church and resulting open spaces will have positive use/impact on the development and its streetscape.
- A landscape buffer is to be provided along the backs of existing properties along the western boundary.
- Allotments with associated parking to also be accommodated along the western boundary.
- An area of land safeguarded for the potential future extension to the Primary School.

#### KEY

- Site boundary
- Vehicular access road
- Residential development area
- Residential development edge exact built form boundary to be confirmed at Reserved Matters Stage
- Allotment area (allotments and parking)
- School extension area
- Cemetery extension area
- Public open space including strategic and boundary landscaping, amenity areas and retained features
- Landscape area to include SuDS provision and open space
- Landscape buffer to existing property boundaries along High Road
- ★ Indicative location of play area (location to be confirmed at Reserved Matters Stage)

# Local Character Response

## Appearance

Buildings will be traditional in form and appearance to reflect the local character of the village. The proposed development will be designed not only to blend within the existing townscape but also to celebrate the existing heritage assets.

This approach defines two key character areas:

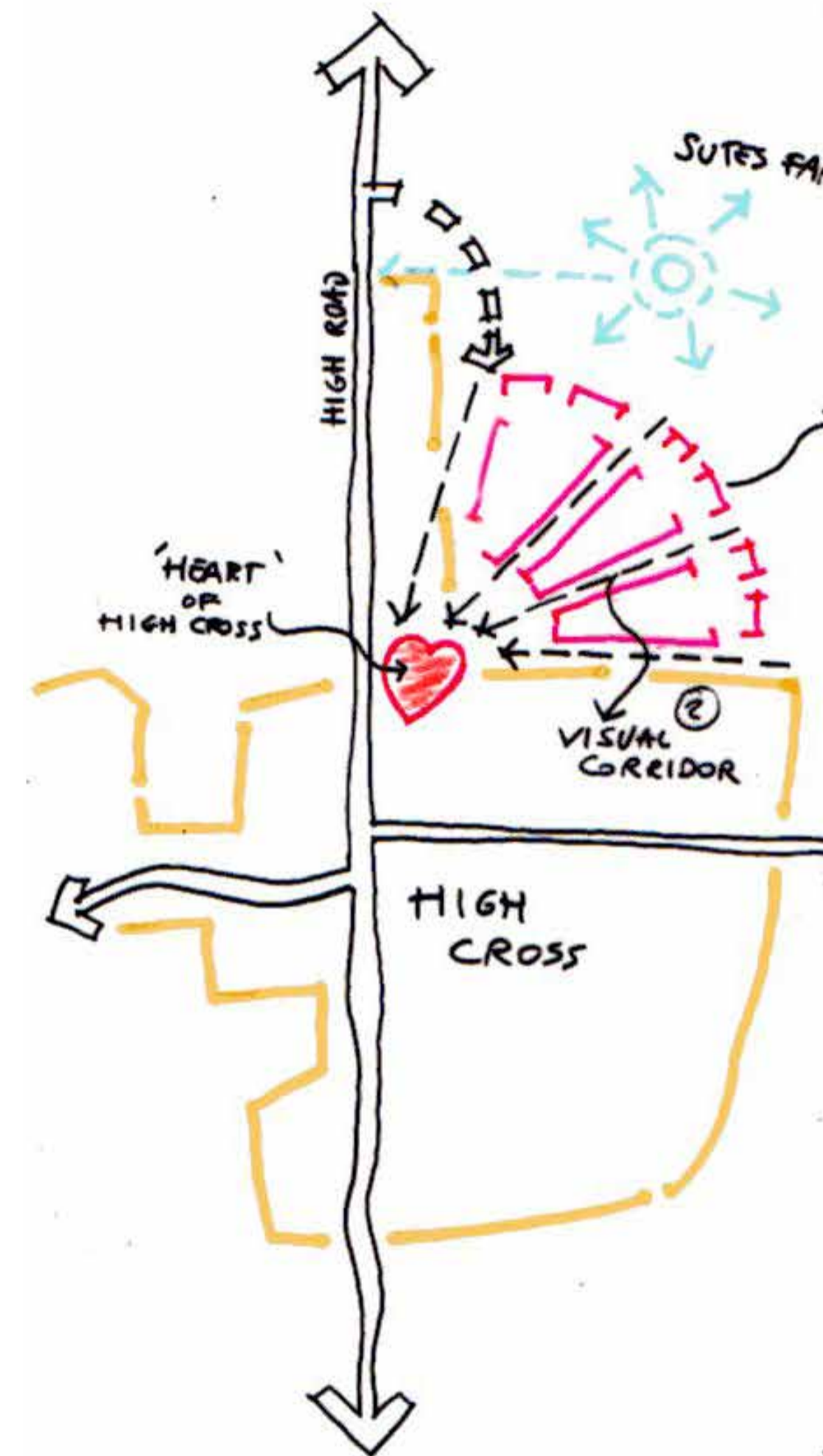
1. **Sutes Farm Edge:** the north-eastern edge which provides an entrance to the development, a suitable interface with Sutes Farm and a landscape buffer to formalise the new edge of development.
2. **Visual Corridors:** define linear streets with good level of enclosure and continuous frontages to set visual links towards the Church's spire at the heart of High Cross.



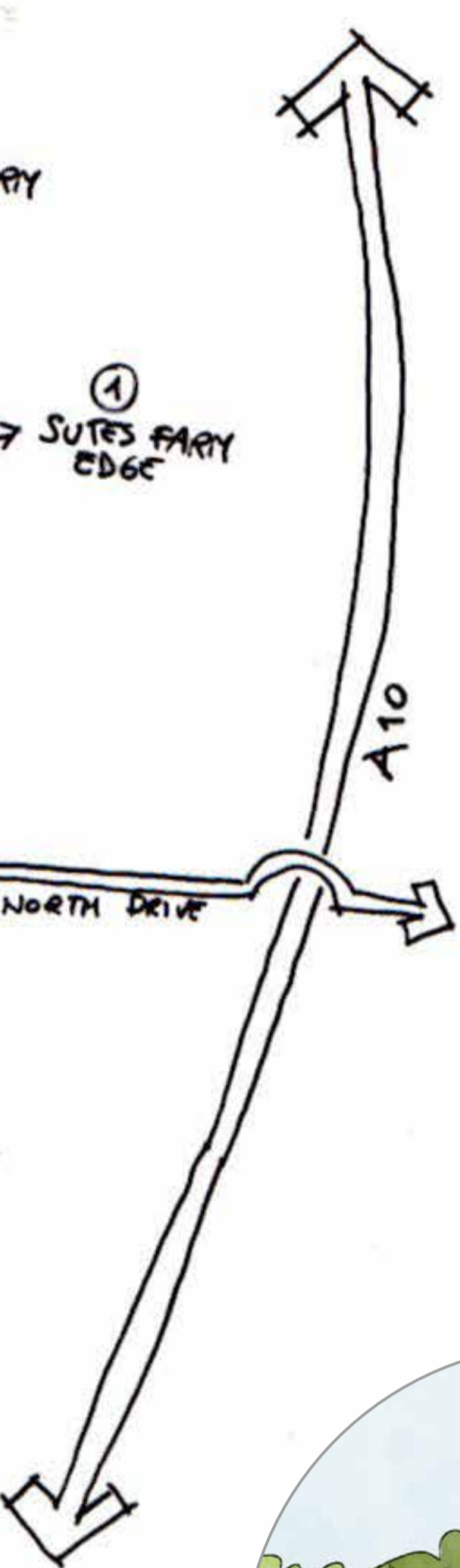
Sutes Farm: informal arrangement of buildings.



Church of St John's tower and the nearby primary school combined with the village crossing between High Road and North Drive form the 'heart' of High Cross.



Terraced houses and linked forms within High Cross.



**Concept**

The proposed scheme delivers multiple view points from which the Church Spire can be appreciated.

Visual link from access.



Visual link from southern SuDS.



Linear and enclosed frontages.



Loose buildings with gaps.



**Concept**

Distinctive frontages: a more loose frontage towards the north-eastern edge and a linear continuous frontage along the view corridors.

## Sutes Farm Edge

The north-eastern development edge defines the interface with Sutes farm to the north and, at the same time, the main entrance / gateway into the site.

The overall appearance will respond to the character of the farm house and group of detached rural buildings around it.

Summary of key features for the northern edge:

- Loose arrangement of buildings with detached houses with gaps.
- Varied set-backs.
- Houses to be 2 storey in height or less.
- Buildings of varied forms including simple rectangular footprints and more articulated L or T shaped houses.
- Traditional porches to reflect local styles and features such as protruding enclosed porches or pitched/hipped porches.
- Use of local materials to reflect those used within rural buildings including light and dark timber boarding and bricks.
- Clay tile roofs.



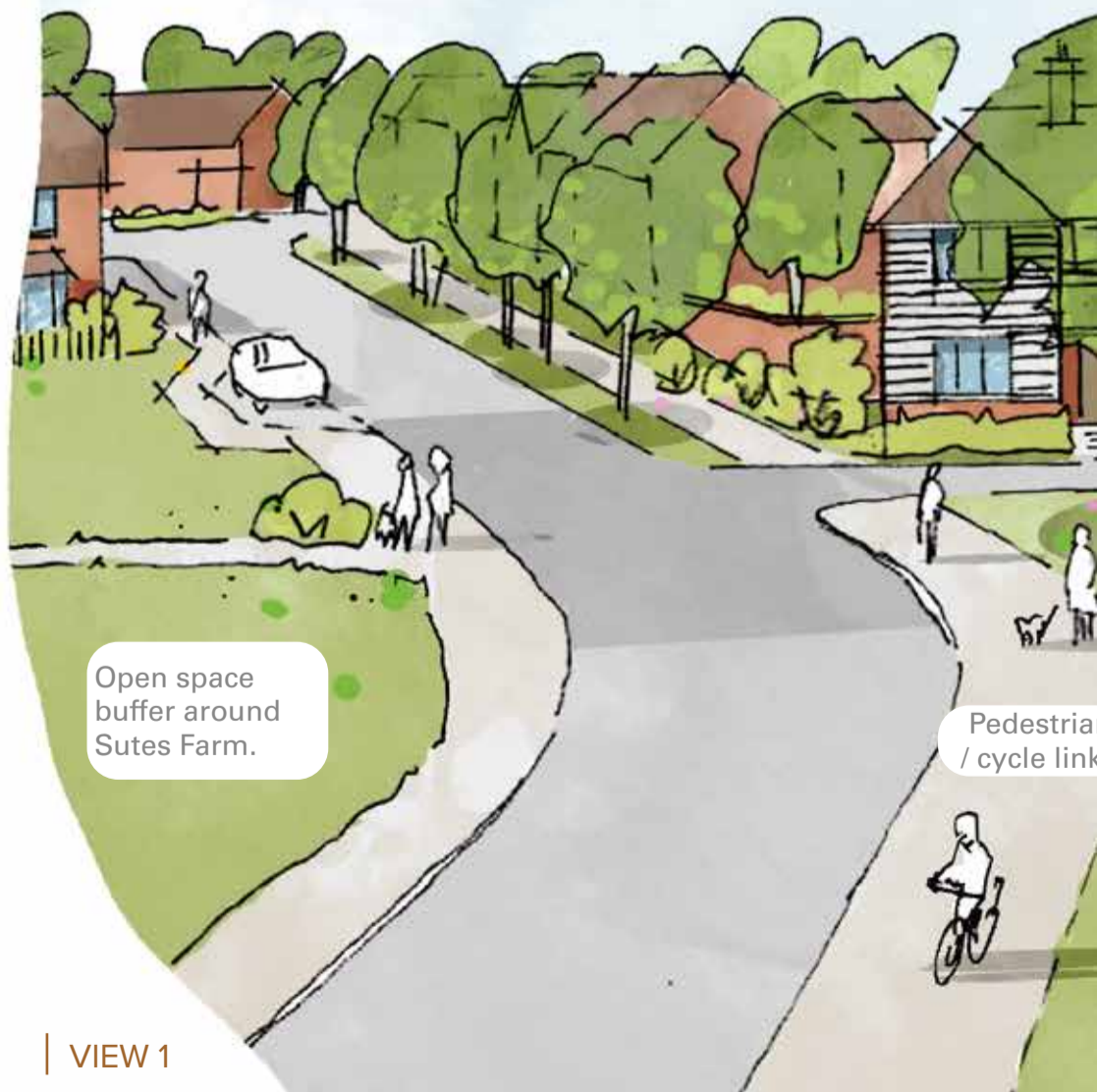
T shaped Sutes farmhouse in timber frame on brick sill and white weatherboarded.



Listed linear barn buildings with rear wings in dark boarding



| VIEW LOCATION



| VIEW 1



Wings with half hipped gable ends.



Brick sill, roughcast render and timber walls and clay tiles.



Enclosed traditional porch.



Detached houses with gaps.

SuDS Basin.

Allotments.

Church Tower.

Limited palette of materials



Dark / light boarding



Red brick



Plain tiles roof

## Visual Corridors

The rest of the proposed development is based on setting visual corridors towards the Church's spire. These links will be defined by continuous frontages to provide a good level of enclosure to the streets which is a feature of the existing streets within the village.

Summary of key feature:

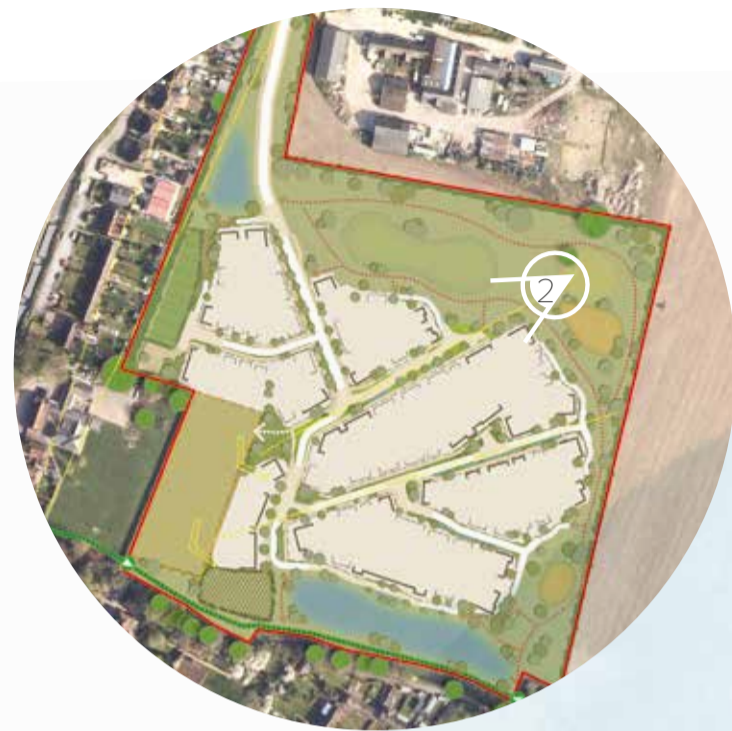
- 2 to 2.5 storey dwellings.
- Compact and linear arrangement of buildings.
- Building types with regular footprints and linear arrangement
- Use of rooms above drives to create linked forms which evoke the historic Inns within the village.
- Mainly terraced and semi-detached typologies often linked together.
- Red bricks will be the main material as a unifying material throughout the site. A mix of dark/light boarding, and render will be used to break up the street scene and on particular features of the buildings.
- Most roofs in plain tiles with some in slate colour tiles.



Coach House - example of former Coaching Inn with wide carriageway through to rear yard closed by a large double door.



Former coaching house timber frame rendered with weatherboarded wing / side and boarded apron.



VIEW LOCATION



First floor jetty.



Combined doors.



Swale

VIEW 2



Weatherboard apron.



Soft low landscaping to provide an open character to the front gardens.

Rooms above driveways to evoke historic Inns and create a continuous frontage.

Church Tower.



Picket fences.

Materials to reflect local streets character.



Red brick



Dark / light boarding



Render / roughcast render



Plain tiles roof



Slate colour tiles

## Visual Corridors

The visual corridor along the southern edge of the development will be fronting a wide open space including the SuDS basin.

Houses will be grouped in rows of terraces with a regular alignment and consistent eaves, in a similar way to the 20th century residential area to the south.

Detached or semi-detached houses could be used to break the continuity of frontage and to define corner plots.

Front gardens will have an open character with low planting and picket fences.



| VIEW LOCATION



| VIEW 3





20th Century residential terraces fronting wide mowed open areas.



Swale.

Boundary treatments such as hedges, picket fences, knee rail and post and rail fences.

# Development Benefits

The development will deliver significant benefits to the whole community including:



## Community Facilities

The site presents a fantastic opportunity to provide a wide range of benefits for the local community of High Cross.

- The cemetery extension to form a natural bridged extension of the church, allowing residents a quiet contemplation space to reflect and pay respects.
- Allotments proposed along the western part of the site. Allowing existing and new residents more opportunities to come together as a community, grow locally and encourage healthier habits.
- An expansion to the primary school is proposed to tackle increasing demands of the local area.
- Additional play spaces provide more opportunities for young people to play, be active and interact with the environment.



## Safe and Attractive Routes

The site is designed to create safer and more attractive spaces for pedestrians and cyclists with less emphasis on private vehicle use.

- New walking and cycling routes through the site that connect the development to the proposed parkland and the existing wider network of routes of High Cross.
- The existing PRoW along the southern boundary has been incorporated into the design. To take advantage of the site's existing assets, with pedestrian and cycle routes connecting to this route and the wider movement network of High Cross.
- Crossings and intersections are formed with shared space surfaces and raised tables to create traffic-calming areas for safe use by all users.



## A distinctive and Sustainable Place

The proposal seeks to create a distinctive place that is located in a sustainable location and will employ design solutions encompassing a wider sustainability agenda.

- Designed as a natural extension to the village by infilling an area contained between the existing settlement and the A10.
- A characterful development that responds to the local vernacular, that is distinctive yet in keeping with the area's character.
- A development that seeks to mitigate climate change issues and promote active, sustainable ways to travel and healthy lifestyles.
- A proposal that will take advantage of the public transport network to access larger settlements' additional amenities, transport and commuter nodes, lessening the demand for private vehicles.



## Landscape and Biodiversity Enhancements

Consideration has been taken to mitigate the potential impact the scheme could have from a landscape and ecological perspective.

- Green corridors and additional planting to support the creation of new habitats. Native planting to be used to ensure the proposal is in keeping with the area from an ecological perspective.
- Designed to avoid diminishing long and local views.
- A landscape buffer is proposed along the western edge of the development where the site abuts the rear of existing properties along High Road.
- The allotments also provide an additional buffer from proposed homes to the backs of properties along High Road.
- Buffer planting is proposed along the other edges of the site, in the form of hedgerows to define the edge of the site's parkland area.



### Heritage

The scheme is designed to respect existing heritage assets such as Sutes Farm and important views.

- A green corridor is proposed along the north-eastern open space of the site, to protect the setting of Sutes Farm.
- Maintaining views towards the church and character of its setting. By establishing view corridors to set buildings back along these spaces.
- A viewing mound is proposed to take advantage of local views and allow existing and new residents to enjoy views of the village from a new perspective.



### New Homes

- A wide range of new homes including affordable homes with a higher proportion of smaller homes for young families in line with local needs and the aspirations of the EHDC.
- A range of typologies are proposed to address local character and varying housing needs ranging from; bungalows, 1-bed flats, short terraces, detached and semi-detached units.
- New homes are designed to be compliant with parking requirements with different types of parking provision provided. This will take varying forms on-site with; frontage, on-plot parking, carports, garages and visitor parking located along streets.



### Quality Open Spaces

- New accessible open space on what was private land, with public walking routes around the scheme, allowing residents more access to public open space.
- Cycle and pedestrian routes through a mix of natural and semi natural open spaces, to provide recreation in a high quality public realm.
- Safe and attractive recreational and play spaces accessible to all.
- Viewing mound in the north-eastern edge of the site to celebrate and enjoy views of High Cross.
- A robust landscape proposal that incorporates SuDS, creating a better designed network blue and green spaces that complement each other.
- Open space within the development have been designed to form distinctive character with frontages and shared spaces responding to these areas.
- Tree-planted avenues and “village greens,” have been designed with segregated paths and cycle lanes creating less “cluttered” more attractive streetscapes.

# Sustainability

There are a number of key sustainable design measures incorporated into the development:

## Social & Economic Benefits

The development aims to provide a range of social and economic benefits to both new and existing residents through:

- Construction of up to 95 new dwellings providing opportunities for local people.
- The provision of additional land for the potential future expansion of Puller Memorial COE Primary School.
- A development in a sustainable location which will continue the natural extension of the village.
- Homes designed to create healthy living environments which are flexible for the future.

## Environmental Protection & Enhancement

Through a range of design measures the development aims to protect and enhance the local environment, including:

- Buildings which will be designed to make use of sustainable materials to reduce environmental impacts of construction.
- Development designed to prioritise sustainable and active modes of travel including walking and cycling.
- Provision of measures to protect on-site ecology and enhancement measures to increase biodiversity which also helps reduce the impact of climate change on site habitats. Provisions include meaningful areas of open space with integrated SuDS and tree lined streets with rain gardens or swales.
- Provision of measures through construction and operation of the Site to reduce pollution, minimise waste and encourage recycling.

## Mitigating & Adapting to Climate Change

The development will incorporate a range of measures to reduce carbon emissions, mitigating the effects of climate change, and adaptation measures to ensure the long-term resilience of the development to the effects of climate change. Measures will include:

- Buildings designed to achieve the interim FHS (Future Homes Standard) through the use of a fabric first approach and all electric energy strategy, incorporating low carbon renewable energy technologies such as ASHP (air source heat pumps), with roof spaces across the Site orientated to accommodate Solar PV panels
- Specification of water efficient fittings to reduce water consumption to 110 litres per day per person
- Development of new homes in Flood Zone 1 and provision of a surface water drainage system designed to manage a 1 in 100 annual probability plus 40% climate change rainfall event

- Homes designed to take account increasing annual temperatures set out in the UKCP18 climate projections to minimise the risk of overheating

## Secure by Design

The reduction in opportunities for crime through the design of the proposed development is a key element in creating a secure sense of place. The layout is designed to create natural surveillance and sense of ownership of private areas.

The aim will be to ensure that every part of the scheme is easily identified as either being private or public realm. The development has been designed to address the key principles, highlighted within the guidance literature for 'Secured by Design' as follows:

- Houses are to be arranged to address the street or individual spaces and to give positive enclosure to these areas so they are overlooked and create a sense of ownership
- Vehicular and pedestrian entrances are 'policed' by overlooking these spaces
- Care has been taken to ensure activity to the frontages.
- The scheme provides a clear definition between public and private areas that are secure and well defined
- Parking for dwellings is provide on plot or to the frontage where there is good surveillance. Where courtyard parking for flats is provided this is well overlooked by surrounding buildings
- A management company will ensure the open spaces are well maintained environments that are likely to be a source of pride for residents. This encourages a sense of ownership and responsibility, thus discouraging crime.



# National Design Guide

The National Design Guide builds on the aspirations and objectives of the NPPF and is a tool for assessing and improving design quality. The NDG is a part of the Government's collection of planning practice design guidance. Below is a summary of how the design proposal complies with the National Design Guide.

## Context - Enhances the surroundings

The proposals for the site have been informed by an assessment of the local character including a review of Thundridge Neighbourhood Plan, the East Herts District Plan and other SPDs. A site visit and desktop analysis to identify key constraints and opportunities, and assess the character of the immediate and local context.

## Identity – Attractive and distinctive

The proposed scheme will be designed to protect and nurture the identified key aspects of the local character through a landscape and design led approach, in particular the views of St Johns the Evangelist church tower. This will create a cohesive and coherent scheme which is designed to focus on key aspects of the local identity and the surrounding landscape.

## Built form – A coherent pattern of development

Buildings will be designed and located to address public internal spaces or at the end of key vistas to define a clear and legible environment. A clear hierarchy of spaces through an appropriate relationship between built form, landscape and the space in between.

## Movement– Accessible and easy to move around

A clear hierarchy of streets and pedestrian links is needed to create a legible movement framework across the site. Vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access to High Road and pedestrian access to North Drive will offer connections to the local network of routes and public transport.

## Nature – Enhance and optimised

The landscape strategy will aim to maintain and enhance the existing mature vegetation along the edges of the site whilst creating an integrated network of multifunctional open spaces. The landscape strategy will provide a range of environmental benefits including new habitats and planting.

## Public spaces – Safe, social and inclusive

Streets and public open spaces will be extensively landscaped and designed to encourage a wide range of leisure activities suitable for people of all ages and abilities. All public spaces will be designed so that they are accessible and provide opportunities for people to meet and interact.

## Uses– Mixed and integrated

The development will deliver a range of new homes of which 40% will be affordable and designed as tenure blind, an with an appropriate mix of unit sizes to respond to local needs.

## Homes and buildings – Functional, healthy & sustainable

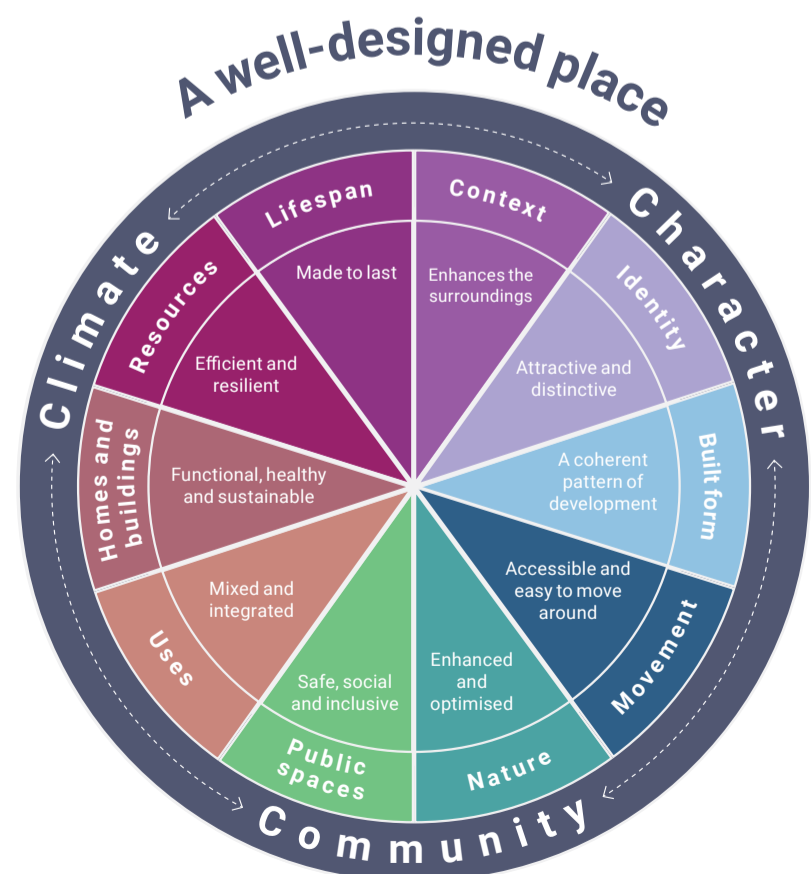
Homes will have private gardens and access to amenity spaces and the wider green infrastructure via a network of pedestrian/cycle routes which will provide residents with opportunities to socialise and promote a healthy lifestyle. Homes will be designed to National Described Space Standards and to be adaptable to residents' future needs. Homes will be designed to high standards respecting back-to-back distances and will avoid improper use of space and deliver a well-integrated and maintained public realm.

## Resources – Efficient and resilient

Homes will be designed to meet or exceed Building Regulations, taking into account future changes including The Future Homes Standard. The development will also be designed to maximise energy efficiency where possible with appropriate technologies and techniques.

## Lifespan – Made to last

All buildings will be built to high standards to ensure the building's envelope is protected. Architectural character will respond to local traditional character with a durable material such as brick being used across the site and overhanging eaves to protect the façades.



# Conclusion

Proposals for Land East of High Road set out a comprehensive framework for a cohesive development including:

- Up to 95 quality homes in a varied range of types and tenures including 40% affordable units and 5% self-build plots.
- A development that integrates with the existing village and celebrates its assets.
- A wide range of benefits to the local community.
- Land to extend the existing primary school and cemetery.
- Community allotments.
- Areas for play and socialise.
- Large areas of accessible multifunctional open space with views towards the church tower from a viewing mound and across carefully designed view corridors.
- A drainage strategy which is integrated within green spaces to both respond to the site's water management and create opportunities for biodiversity enhancements.
- An access and movement strategy to serve the new development whilst encouraging walking and cycling.
- A context responsive approach which draws upon the existing townscape and will deliver a natural and distinctive addition to the village.





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