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THE NEWINGTON VERNACULAR

As discussed above Newington has undergone piecemeal growth over the years and accordingly has a rich mix of architectural styles throughout.

Much of the pre-Industrial vernacular is in keeping with wider medieval character, being mostly half-timbered detached dwellings; Newington Manor is an excellent representation of this (1). This era of the village’s architecture is generally in the most pure vernacular tradition, being unified by the use of locally sourced materials put together by the community themselves, incorporating familiar techniques and proven details.

Few examples remain, unfortunately, due to the advanced age of these buildings, the inconsistent build quality (and inherent maintenance and longevity issues), and simply due to unsympathetic later developments which have seen them demolished or significantly altered. Given the sensitivity of the few remaining buildings of this era it is important that they are retained and their specialness celebrated, by ensuring that they remain ‘unique’ within the village rather than inappropriately replicated in new development.

Later development in Newington is unfortunately defined by unsympathetic mid-century suburban intervention, with much of the postwar development being of a regionally generic character: limited material palettes, plain detailing, boxy massing, and poor streetscape relationships overall (2).

Nevertheless, as with other growing settlements along the historic Watling Street (eg. Sittingbourne, Faversham) there is good evidence of characterful building in Newington during the 18th century in the Georgian style (3). This includes the ‘Georgianisation’ of older dwellings, which would have primarily been seen with larger, more affluent detached properties on the outskirts, but later as prevalent as semi-detached and terraced houses on the High Street and along Church Lane (4).

DESIGN GUIDANCE
Proposals should demonstrate an understanding of the local architectural vernacular, and reflect this context appropriately.



1. Newington Manor



2. Recent development off High Street



3. 46 Church Lane



4. High Street

MATERIALS & DETAILING

As noted the overall character of Newington is an eclectic one; it includes half-timbered buildings of some hundreds of years in age, quite formal Georgian-era brick and rendered dwellings, high volume postwar suburban homes. There is little that unifies these disparate characters and, as such, there is an opportunity to reflect on which would be most appropriate to reflect in a new development.

Georgian styling, as established previous, is the one of the most pervasive and probably the most consistent historical style seen in and around Newington. Indeed it is also very well represented throughout the adjoining settlements along the historic Watling Street, with a great range of early- and late-Georgian examples to study.

Although much of the post-medieval / pre-Victorian architecture through Newington and along Watling Street is unified under the 'Georgian' style there is still some variety of materials and detailing within. This tends to take the form of pleasing variation within the overall characteristics of the style:

- *Formal arrangement of plans and elevations, designed around symmetry and regularity of features;*
- *Flush façades with minimal projections, other than bay windows and porches;*
- *Shallow pitched roofs (both slate and clay) with hipped ends over deep boxed eaves or cornice;*
- *Double-hung vertical sliding sash windows, painted white, proportioned to a vertical emphasis, generally 6 over 6 panes;*
- *Red, yellow, buff facing brickwork, typically in Flemish bond, some instances of stretcher bond, broad splayed arches of rubbers (matching or contrast colour), projecting banded courses;*
- *Some render, white or cream, either full height or set as a rusticated plinth, otherwise plain detailing;*
- *Mixture of doors, typically four- or six-panel, with surrounds ranging from simple rendered arch detailing to more ornate configurations including canopies.*



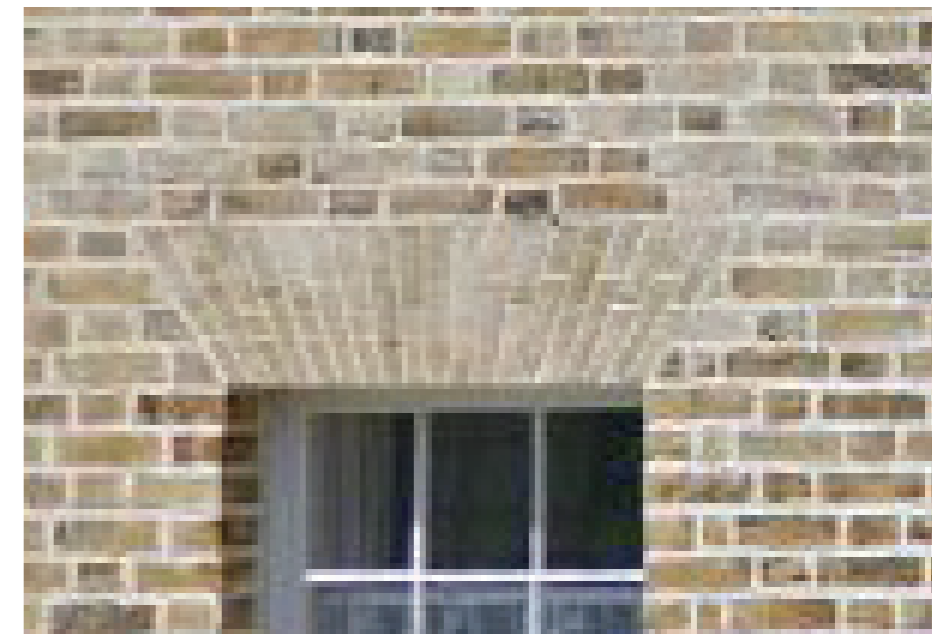
1. Sash window detailing in red brick



2. Yellow brick with rusticated plinth



3. Angled bay windows with pitched roof



4. Brick arch to window opening

DESIGN GUIDANCE

Proposals should incorporate locally distinctive materials and detailing as part of a considered placemaking strategy where possible.

STREETSCAPE & BOUNDARIES

As can be seen from its eclectic architectural character Newington has had a rather intermittent evolution over the years. It has seen long periods of ‘static character’, quickly followed by more accelerated growth periods alongside new transport infrastructure, ie. the railway, A2 bypass road, M2 motorway. Therefore the changing nature of the transport routes in and around the village has also influenced how the dwellings relate to those spaces, particularly via their boundary treatments.

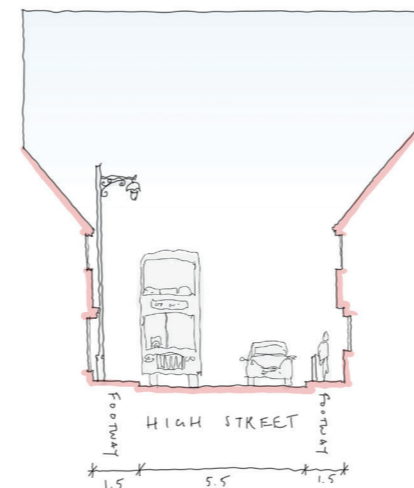
With transport increasing in volume, type and intensity along the Watling Street (later High Street, later A2) the streetscape character of this corridor has become increasingly urbanised. Dwellings are set broadly symmetrical across the corridor, and remain on their historic alignments close to the street edge with occasional modest stepping back. They generally have no defensible front space at all, with a threshold later supplemented by cast iron bollards and railings set on the footway/carriageway boundary rather than property edge. Where private front boundaries do exist they are generally vertical iron railings, and occasionally brick walls with railings over where the property is set even further back.

Church Lane is, in contrast, asymmetric with early dwellings on the eastern side set on the footpath, and later properties along the western edge set back behind terraced front gardens. Church Lane runs perpendicular to ground level contours, with many of the dwellings needing steps and railings to their front doors. Similar to the High Street the larger properties have deeper front gardens with generous planting, behind brick walls with railings over.

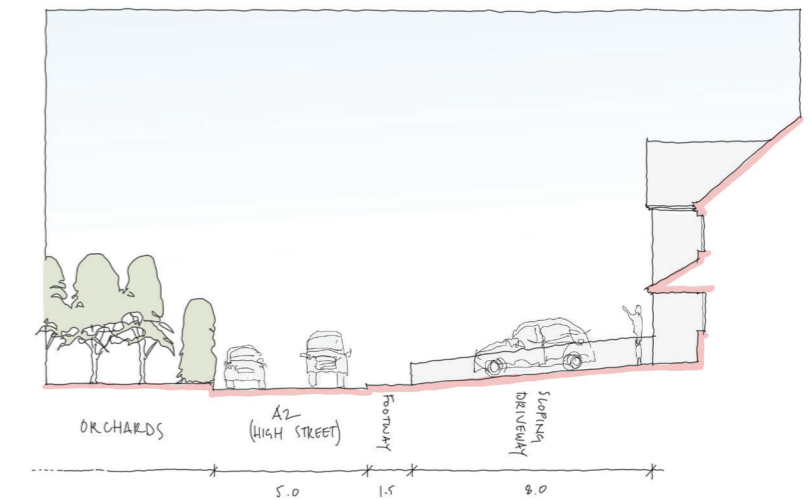
Bull Lane is significantly less urban than the High Street or Church Lane. Dwellings here - both historic and contemporary - have much deeper setbacks from the carriageway, set behind a much greater mix of front boundaries: brick walls of varying heights, flint walls with brick quoins, timber fences of varying character. Newington Manor has a very distinctive and very unique front brick boundary wall, set in ‘wild bond’, on to Bull Lane. It otherwise retains a more formal and ordered entrance on to Callaways Lane, comprising a red brick crescent with flint panels set in.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

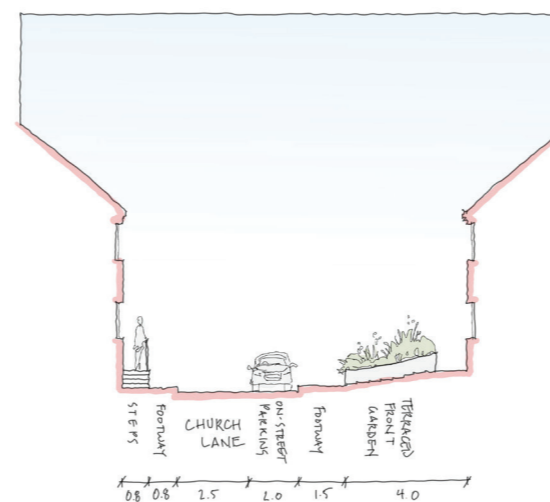
Proposals should reflect the streetscape character of the wider context, and complement it accordingly.



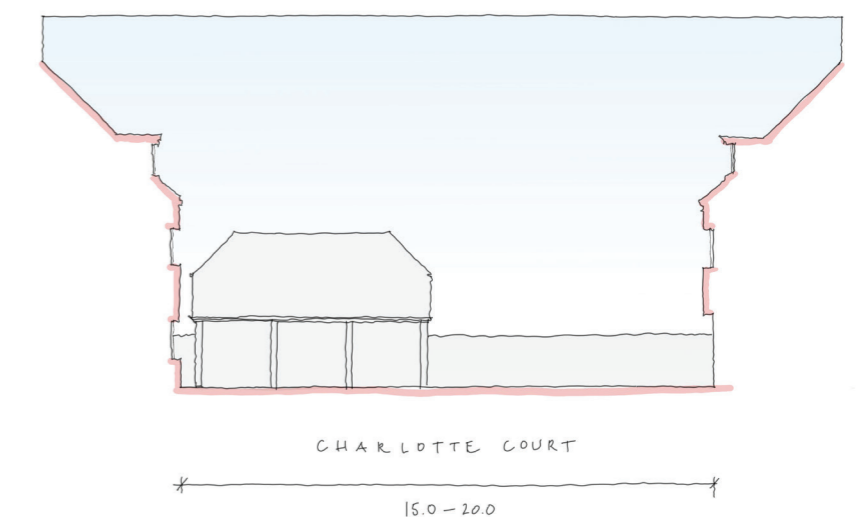
1. Typical street ratio of the High Street



2. Street ratio of A2 overlooking orchards



3. Typical ratio of Church Lane



4. Street ratio of Charlotte Court (mews)

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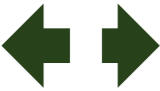


GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

This development will deliver a series of interconnected, accessible and ecologically beneficial green spaces which will provide residents and the wider community with open spaces that enhance their well being and provide opportunities to connect with nature.

The proposed substantial native landscape buffer will enclose the Site and enhance existing surrounding wildlife networks as well as provide screening to limit views from the wider landscape.

The green infrastructure diagram opposite demonstrates how the Site will deliver informal and informal open space, green pedestrian links and a substantial landscape buffer.

Legend:

- 
Substantial native landscape buffer to provide screening and enhance local wildlife networks.
- 
Green pedestrian link - shared surfaces with native trees, wildflower verges and amenity planting.
- 
Formal open space - to incorporate a village green, play and amenity greenspace.
- 
Informal open space - to incorporate orchard planting, play, wildflower meadows and a landscape buffer.



OPEN SPACE PROVISION

This development will comply with the open space standards set out in Policy DM17 from pages 242-243 of Bearing Fruits 2031, The Swale Borough Local Plan, Adopted July 2017.

The table below sets out the minimum size of each open space typology required in order for the Site to meet the local standard.

| Open Space Typology | Local Standard | Site Requirements (Assumed population of 111 based on 46 dwellings with an average occupancy of 2.4 people.) |
|---|---|--|
| Parks and gardens | 1.11ha per 1,000 population | 0.12ha |
| Natural and semi-natural green space | 4.36ha per 1,000 population | 0.48ha |
| Formal outdoor sport | 1.09ha per 1,000 population | 0.12ha |
| Amenity green space | 0.45ha per 1,000 population | 0.05ha |
| Provision for children and young people | 0.24ha per 1,000 population | 0.03ha |
| Formal play facilities | Contribution either on or off site to enhance existing. | N/A |
| Allotments | 0.20ha per 1,000 population | 0.02ha |
| | | Total: 0.82ha |

Note. Due to the close proximity of local allotments and the relatively low quantity required it may not be appropriate to deliver allotments on-site.

Legend:

- Parks and gardens = approx. 0.15ha
- Natural and semi-natural greenspace = approx. 1.03ha
- Amenity greenspace = approx. 0.07ha
- LAP LAP / Doorstep play = approx 0.03ha total



Indicative open space provision diagram to demonstrate how POS could be provided on site

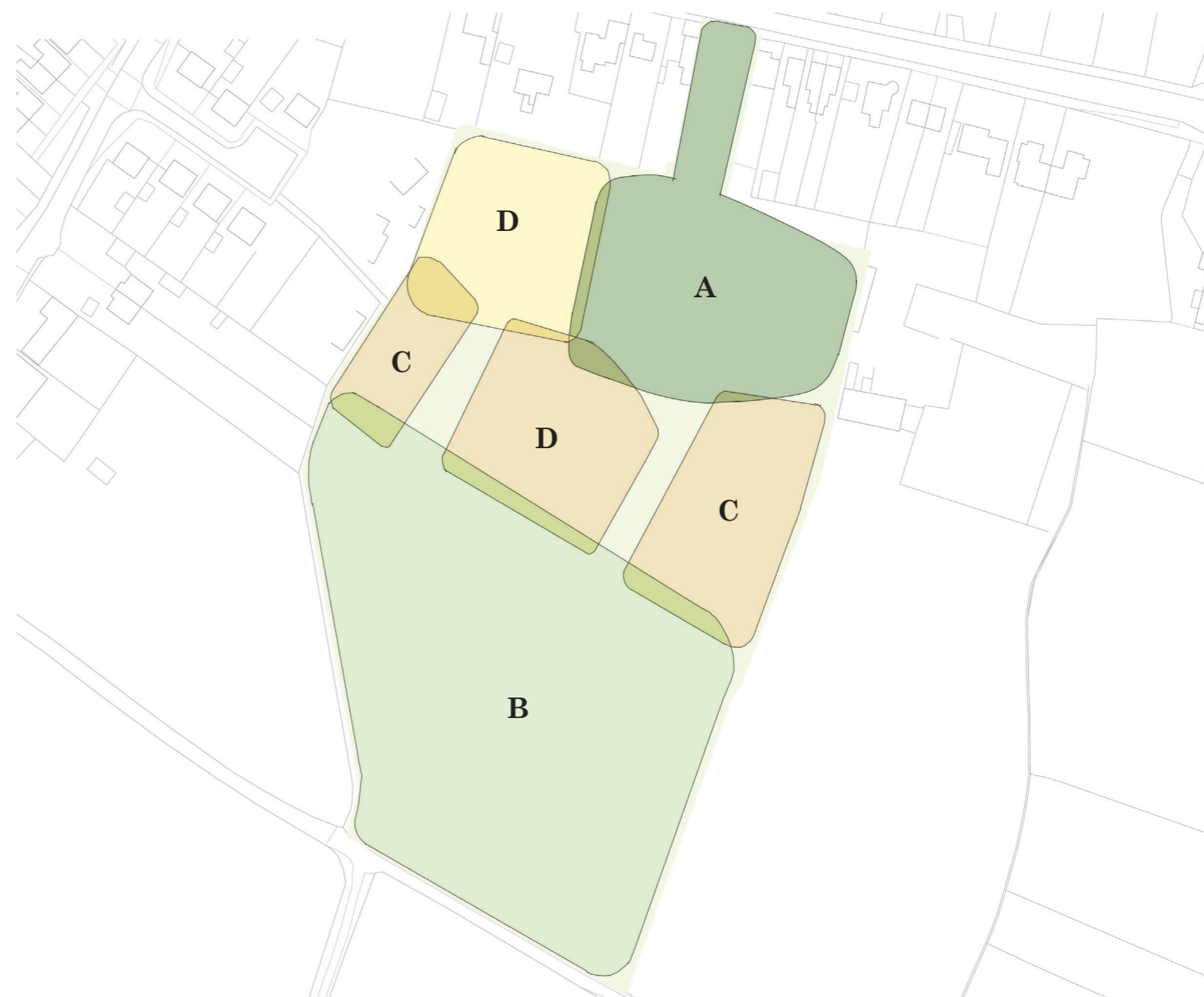
CHARACTER & CONTEXT

Building on the principles of a Georgian character, as established in the Outline Planning Approval and accompanying Illustrative Masterplan, there is a necessary ‘formality’ to the overall pattern of development. Building frontages are deliberately rectilinear (contrasted by a formal semi-crescent) with parallel roadways and footpaths that create linear boundary treatments in keeping with the overall character.

It is intended that the proposed character areas are considered as cohesive placemaking designs and accordingly must integrate - with equal weight and care - the architecture, landscape (existing and proposed, inc ecology), roads, and drainage.

It is proposed that, based on the principles of the illustrative layout, to create a series of character areas focused around existing and proposed landscape spaces:

- *The major new green public open spaces are **the Park Crescent (A)** and **The Orchards (B)**, which will be linked through the scheme via **The Lanes (C)** along the existing landscaped site boundaries.*
- *Placemaking best practice suggests a variety of places within a scheme, ideally with some in sympathetic contrast to enhance the specific unique characteristics of each. It is therefore proposed to create a modestly contrasting ‘urban landscape’ character area deeper in the plan areas, being the **Mews Courts (D)**.*



Character Area Strategy

HIERARCHIES & WAYFINDING

The site, by virtue of its overall form and location, must follow the postwar ‘infill’ pattern of development rather than the historically prevalent ribbon character. The worst examples of the ‘infill’ pattern, both locally and nationally, have taken the form of suburban cul-de-sacs that bear little sense of place or cohesive design. This is often exacerbated by a stagnant sense of movement through a scheme, with the form of road dominating the streetscape corridor, and a lack of clear hierarchy and wayfinding throughout.

It is essential that the proposed scheme here sets the best framework possible for legible spaces and attractive places that encourage movement through the site. Following on from the character areas described previous this is based on the principles set out within the Outline Planning Approval and Illustrative Masterplan.

Within the overall Georgian character there will be a natural preference for formality and regularity in wayfinding features throughout the site:

- **The Crescent (A)** will receive long views along the entrance drive from the High Street, set behind a formal set-piece ‘common park’;
- Once within this space views will be directed west and east towards secondary features, being smaller **Flank Frontages (B)** which feel subservient to the Crescent;
- As one moves towards those features, further views will be opened up to the remaining landscaped spaces of the site. Movement towards the existing boundary planting along **the Lanes (C)** will better contextualise the scheme, as will movement towards **the Orchards (D)** in the south.



Wayfinding Strategy

ACCESS & MOVEMENT

The principles for movement across the site have been set initially by connectivity established in the Outline Planning Approval, being the existing public right of way along the western boundary, and the proposed site access from the High Street to the north.

Within the site proper it will appropriate to create a series of movement corridors that align with the aspirations of the wayfinding strategy discussed previous. This will ensure that residents and visitors alike will be able to move legibly through the development, with spaces and places naturally signposted following a characterful movement hierarchy.

This hierarchy is, in the spirit of cohesive placemaking, comprised of a carefully designed balance between architecture, highways and landscape elements. Depending on the character aspirations of each street these elements will play varying roles with varying priority, although always in service of encouraging legible movement between key spaces.

Crescent Drive - Primary Street (5.5m road, 2.0m footway, >1.0m verges)

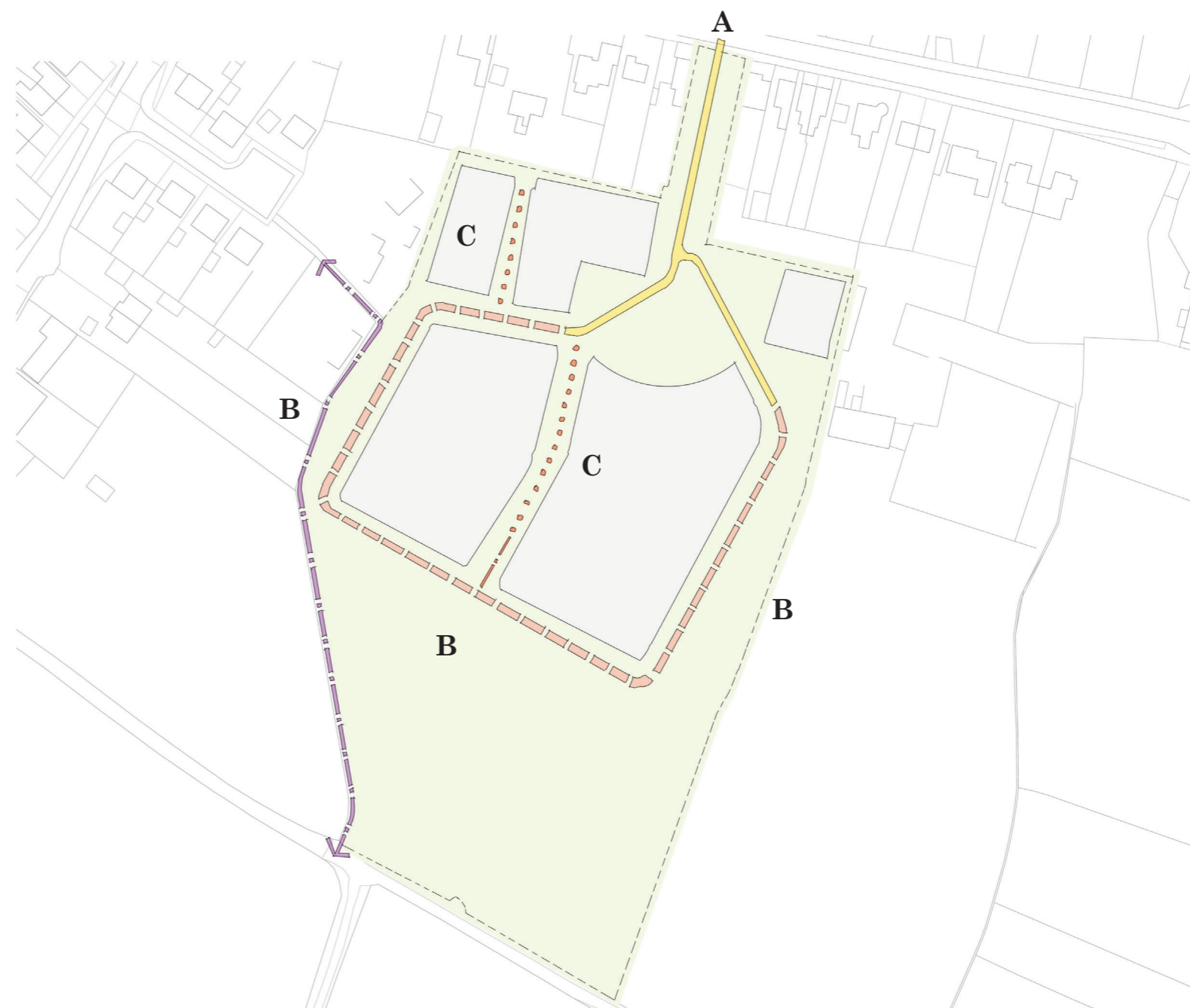
Defined by its approach to the Crescent dwellings and formal Park. This route will accommodate the highest proportion of traffic numbers through the site, as it also accommodates the 'scaling down' junctions to secondary and tertiary routes through the site. Dwellings are generally set back from the roadway, which develops a sense of characterful enclosure and 'place' via a formal street tree planting strategy.

The Lanes - Secondary Streets (6.0m shared surface, >1.0m verges)

Defined by their asymmetric relationship between dwellings and landscape. These routes provide generous dwelling frontage margins to be planted as a mixture of formal and informal landscape thresholds. Existing and proposed open spaces are linked to the dwellings across the roadways via formal street planting and low-level natural and man-made boundary treatments.

The Mews - Tertiary Streets (6.0m shared surface, <1.0m verges)

Defined by dwelling enclosure. These spaces are created as more hard-landscaped urban spaces with a reliance on formal man-made features to create thresholds and boundaries. Soft landscaping is limited to tree pits and 'managed' front hedges where appropriate.



Access & Movement Strategy

DENSITY & MASSING

The Outline Planning Approval establishes a limit of building heights to be 2-storeys on the site. There is evidence locally along the High Street of dwellings that may exceed 2-storeys where necessary to fulfil a particular streetscape function (eg. 3-storey gateway buildings at Station Road, 2.5- to 3-storeys in the very centre of the village, etc).

Nevertheless, although limited to 2-storeys, it would be in keeping with local distinctiveness to vary storey heights and eaves levels to articulate streetscape within the overall pattern. This should complement and reflect the strategies described previous, particularly in terms of wayfinding. The generally accepted urban design principles of increased height to emphasise wayfinding elements, gateways and corner features remain valid regardless of whether this is achieved through additional storeys, increased storey heights, lifted eaves, or increased roof pitches and ridgelines.

Density is described this massing strategy as a necessary element of creating 'contrast' in the streetscape; a wayfinding strategy that relies on taller building elements for hierarchy and legibility is only successful if 'shorter' buildings exist with which to contrast. Despite the smaller size of the site overall there is still great potential to vary dwelling densities to enhance this strategy:

Increased density

Adjacent the existing dwellings along the High Street, and around the formal Crescent Park entrance composition

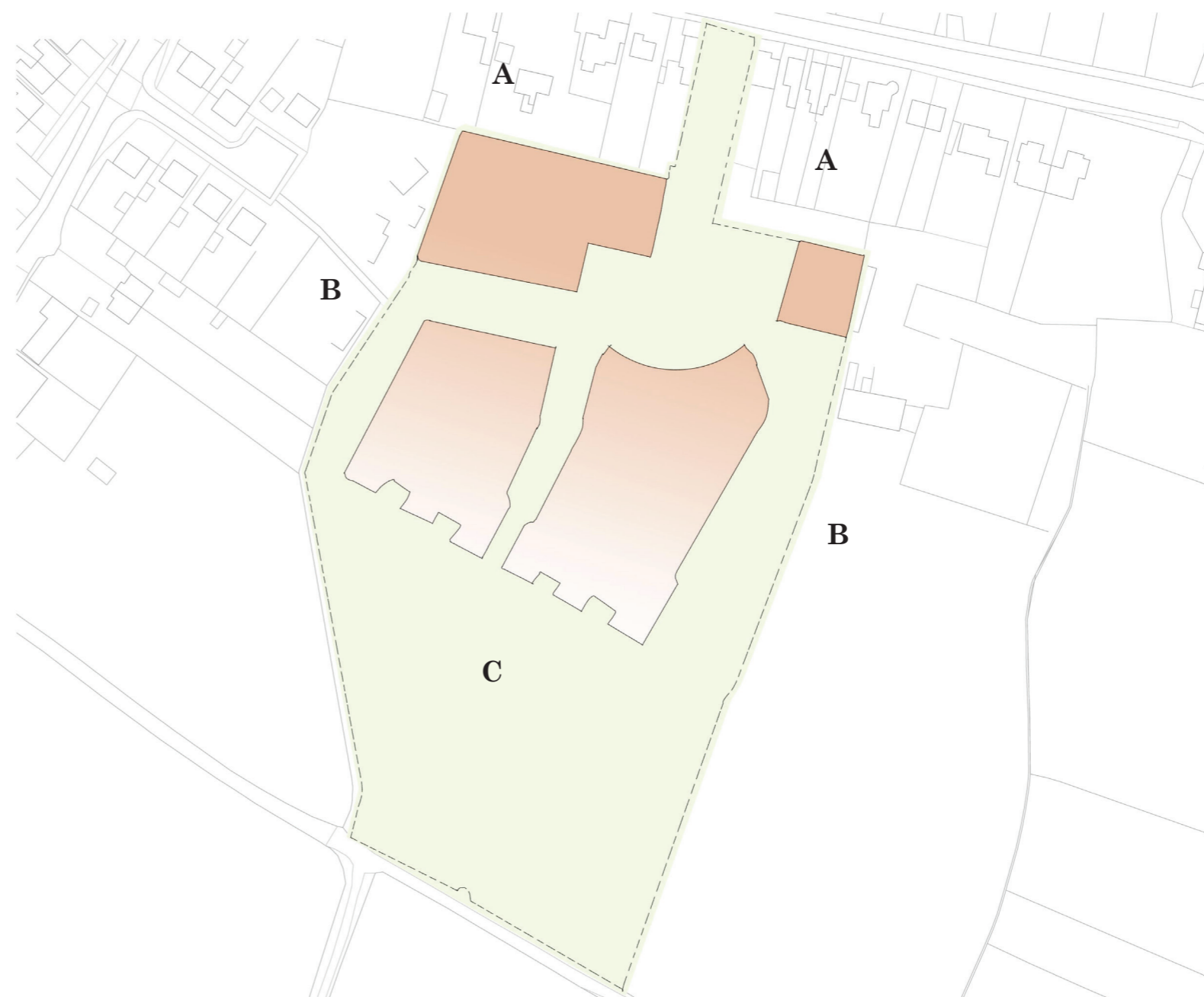
Regular density

Linking through the secondary streets and courtyards

Decreased density

Adjacent the proposed Orchards and open space along the southern boundary

Note. Specific 'dwellings per hectare' figures are not shown, as the overall quantum of development has been established by the Outline Planning Approval. Accordingly the Design Code seeks to describe density as a qualitative function of character rather than a quantitative measure of capacity.



Density & Massing Strategy