



04

Evolution of the Masterplan

This chapter builds on the site analysis by describing how the masterplan has evolved over time. It outlines how the design has responded to engagement feedback, The Crown Estate's vision and ambition for East Hemel, and the sustainability objectives that have been established. The chapter includes earlier iterations of the masterplan, demonstrating how it has been progressively refined through a combination of stakeholder input, technical studies, and design development.

Engagement Overview

This section provides a summary of the extensive consultation and engagement process and how the findings have fed into and informed the design process.

Stakeholder and Community Engagement

The OPA has been developed through a comprehensive stakeholder and community engagement strategy. A detailed summary can be found in the submitted Statement of Community Involvement. Three key stages of engagement have shaped the development of the OPA:

Stage 1 Engagement (Oct - Dec 2024)

The first round of engagement with the local community and key stakeholders introduced the vision for East Hemel, provided an opportunity to meet The Crown Estate

team, understand the Site and establish key themes, issues and opportunities held by the community.

Stage 2 Engagement (Jan - Mar 2025)

The second sequence of engagement focussed on gathering design inputs and ideas, education around principles of good growth and design, as well as understanding local concerns. A series of study tours and a community workshop culminated in a series of drop in events.

Stage 3 Engagement (April - July 2025)

This sequence of engagement shared the illustrative masterplan, itself a reflection on feedback from previous consultation and engagement. This has been accompanied by targeted engagement with specialist interest groups.

Stage 0 May - Sept 2024	Stage 1 Oct - Dec 2024	Stage 2 Jan - Mar 2025	Stage 3 Apr - Jul 2025	Stage 4 Nov 2025
Strategy planning Preparation Cherry Tree Lane Community Garden Advance networking	Stakeholder workshop Drop-ins	Study visit to Cambridge Site visit + community design workshop Drop-ins Briefing sessions	Drop-ins Briefing sessions Preparation of SCI	Information drop-ins



Drop-in exhibition in Leverstock Green



Drop-in exhibition in Woodhall Farm

Pre-Application Meetings

There has been extensive pre-application discussions with the Local Planning Authorities at St Albans District Council (SADC), Dacorum Borough Council (DBC), and Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) alongside Hemel Garden Communities (HGC), as well as National Highways, Natural England, Health & Safety Executive (HSE), the Environment Agency (EA) and Sport England over the 2024-2025 period, to provide feedback on the development of proposals and verify technical information, methodologies and approaches. The masterplan-led engagement, agreed under a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) is set out below:

Stage 1 PPA (December 2023 – May 2024)

- Introductory meeting - March 2024

Stage 2 PPA (June 2024 – November 2024)

- Vision and Masterplan - September 2024

Stage 3 PPA (November 2024 – June 2025)

- Green and Blue Infrastructure - November 2024
- Movement and Transport - January 2025
- Masterplan Development and Employment Area - February 2025
- Character, Housing and Density - March 2025
- Centres - April 2025
- Nickey Line - May 2025
- Parameter Plans and Development Specification - June 2025

Local Plan Engagement

In addition to the formal pre-application process, The Crown Estate have engaged with SADC and DBC's Local Plan processes, including the development of the Hemel Garden Communities Framework Plan which sits as evidence for both local plans.

Formal representations have been submitted at the following opportunities:

- SADC Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation - September 2023
- SADC Local Plan Regulation 19 Proposed Submission Consultation - November 2024

Design Review Panels

Two design reviews were held in December 2024 and March 2025 with the Design South East Hemel Garden Communities Quality Review Panel. This is an independent design review whose purpose is to review the vision, principles, and masterplan approach for East Hemel and to identify recommendations for improvement in order to ensure quality in the design and delivery of the Site.

East Hemel Vision

The vision for East Hemel was developed by The Crown Estate in conversation with key stakeholders including DBC, SADC, HGC, HCC, Herts IQ and Community Stewardship Solutions.

The vision was established to guide both the masterplan design as well as future design development, and the delivery of the project over time. The masterplan has been informed by the vision at every level, from the structuring principles described in Chapter 5 to the level of engagement committed to throughout this process, to the more detailed illustrative masterplan described in Chapter 7.

A blueprint for places for the next 100 years

The vision sets out to establish a **blueprint for UK places**, shaping a new standard of living as a national benchmark and a process of place innovation for The Crown Estate. It poses the core prompt:

If you designed a place for the next 100 years, what would you do differently?

Designing for the next 100 years brings unique opportunities: investing in nature for the benefit of people, place and planet, and building community wealth across multiple generations.

Why East Hemel?

Why Here?

East Hemel is in an incredible position: with a strategic location, nature in its DNA, an active community, and promising economic prospects. Located in the heart of Hertfordshire, the area boasts natural beauty, yet some areas are in need of attention.

Why Now?

A number of drivers and challenges set the trajectory of change as the world evolves, and act as signals of change for the next 30-50 years. Finding ways for East Hemel to face these challenges head on is the essence of this development, and sets this place's status as a pioneer and a blueprint for change: a new place designed for a fast transforming world.

Why Us?

The Crown Estate plays a unique role in this transformation. They have been stewards of this land for close to 100 years, and will continue long into the future. On a national scale, they have the influence to establish a new model of placemaking that will benefit multiple generations. Locally, they are committed to empowering the East Hemel community and bringing together stakeholders who share our commitment to long-term care.

What next?

Guiding Principles

Five guiding principles provide clear direction, ensuring that actions align with the long-term vision, building a community and place that endures for generations to come.



Nurturing our Natural World

Our hundred-year view aims to radically shift attitudes towards the value we place upon the natural world.



Promoting Community Participation

Our hundred-year view aims to build a stable, healthy community that stands the test of time.



Fostering Prosperity & New Economies

Our hundred-year view aims to position East Hemel for growth industries at a national level.



Celebrating Pride of Place

Our hundred-year view aims to shape a strong identity for East Hemel, positioning it as an inspiration and The Crown Estate as agents of change.



Connecting Places & People

Our hundred-year view aims to revolutionise the way we get around, setting a new benchmark for active and sustainable travel for the nation.

Sustainability Framework

The Sustainability Framework is underpinned by The Crown Estate's 100-year vision and seeks to achieve regenerative outcomes in the long-term, as set out below.

The Proposed Development lays the spatial foundations for this vision to take shape. The Outline Planning Application also includes core strategies that will support the delivery of these goals.

The Sustainability Framework is shaped around six guiding principles. The headline objectives for each guiding principle is set out below.

More will evolve post-planning, including supplementary programmes tackling early activation, education, training and skills, and green investment and revenue generation for the local community.



Nurturing our Natural World

Headline objectives:

- > 1/3 of site area publicly accessible green space
- 10% biodiversity net gain
- Climate resilient through landscape-led design
- Rainwater harvesting as a feature of the landscape



Promoting Community Participation

Headline objectives:

- 40% affordable housing
- Intergenerational housing mix
- Ongoing community engagement
- Community-led stewardship approach



Fostering Prosperity & New Economies

Headline objectives:

- Mix of business unit sizes to support SMEs
- New jobs for local people
- New education and upskilling opportunities for local people
- Collaboration with local institutions



Celebrating Pride of Place

Headline objectives:

- Protect and restore heritage assets and routes (i.e. Nickey Line)
- Early activation
- Spaces for community
- High external outdoor quality for clean air and environmental comfort
- Support healthy lifestyles



Connecting Places & People

Headline objectives:

- Walkable neighbourhoods
- New sustainable transport corridor, enabling active travel
- > 80% homes within 400m of local amenities
- > 60% of trips by sustainable modes by 2050
- Digital connectivity
- Car clubs and alternative mobility solutions.



Living Within Environmental Limits

Headline objectives:

- Reducing upfront embodied carbon for infrastructure and buildings
- Energy efficient
- Low-carbon operation
- Renewable energy generation on-site
- Water circularity and efficiency
- Circular design, recycling/reuse and waste reduction

Initial Masterplan Options

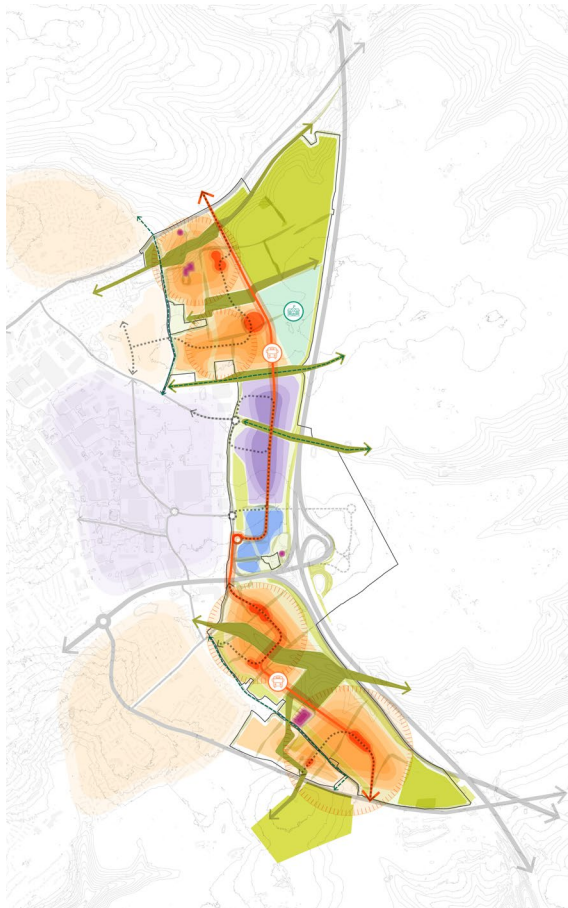
In the earliest stages of design development, a series of 'What If?' propositions were developed. These propositions explored alternative futures for East Hemel, each based on different underlying structures, leading to distinct identities and urban characters.

These options were discussed and assessed for their merits and issues. The final

masterplan has evolved from these initial options, drawing on the most successful and relevant aspects of each to create a balanced, integrated, and adaptable design framework for East Hemel.

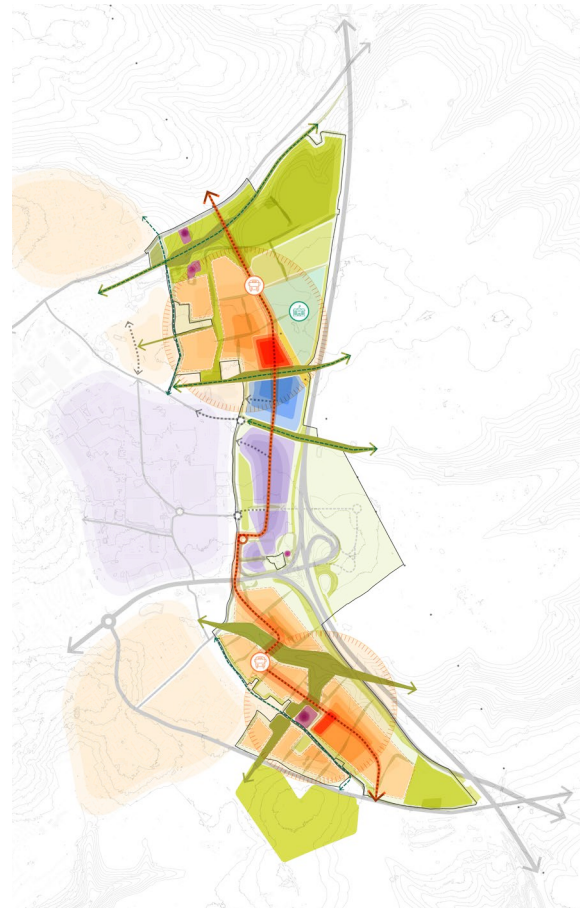
The options each revealed a number of design ideas and components which were carried forward for further exploration in the next stages of design development,

Option 1 - What if East Hemel was a collection of small communities?








This option explored the proposition of distinct community clusters of 500-800 homes, each with a core and segregated by green buffers.

Option 2 - What if East Hemel was a single place with a district centre?

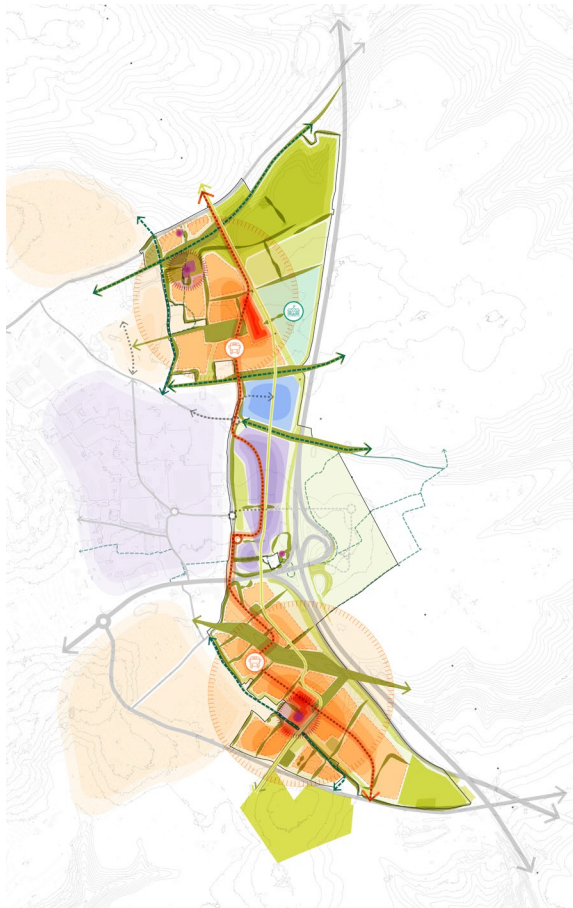


This option explored the proposition of a larger district centre in the north integrated with the employment area, with a smaller local centre provision in the south.

including the concept of smaller, distinctive communities nested within larger neighbourhoods, a commitment to preserving hedgerows as a key structuring principle of the masterplan, and the proposition of using farmsteads as community / destinations hubs within each neighbourhood.

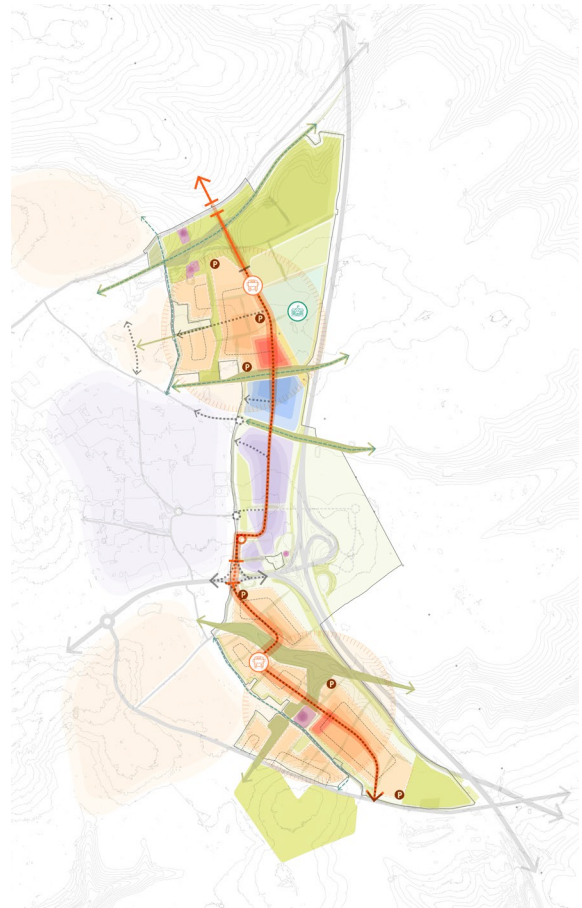
	Sustainable Transport Corridor
	Strategic green spaces
	Green connections
	Residential areas
	Centres
	Innovation hub
	Mixed employment
	Activated farmsteads
	Secondary school

Option 3 - What if East Hemel preserved and centred all existing features?



This option centred existing site features and assets in the structure of the masterplan. All hedgerows are protected, creating a fine grained green network.

Option 4 - What if East Hemel was car free / car lite?



This option explored the proposition of permitting only internal vehicular movement, with a through-route only for public transport and active travel. Shared parking at site gateways retains vehicles at edges and creates a car-light environment within.

Stage 1 Community Engagement

The purpose of Stage 1 Engagement was to introduce The Crown Estate, their team and approach, and to seek initial views from participants, to inform the process of taking the East Hemel proposals forward. Stage 1 community engagement included:

- 5 drop-in exhibitions at Leverstock Green, Woodhall Farm, Redbourn, Maylands Industrial Estate, and Hemel Town Centre
- Stakeholder workshop
- Attendance at Generation Dacorum Event
- Dedicated consultation website and feedback form
- Targeted social media campaign
- Leaflet circulated to residents, businesses and immediate neighbours

Drop-In Exhibitions

Emerging themes across all exhibitions were:

- **Planning:** Concerns over site boundaries, council roles, green belt loss, biodiversity, plan clarity, and traveller site locations
- **Infrastructure:** Questions on capacity, phasing, healthcare access, flooding, and demand for infrastructure to come first
- **Traffic, transport and roads:** Concerns about road capacity, M1 junction, construction traffic, and demand for clear public transport plans
- **Environmental factors:** Concerns about pollution impacts near the motorway and development in relation to Buncefield
- **Design and local identity:** Strong desire to maintain village character and green space, especially in Leverstock Green and Redbourn
- **Housing:** Need for more and genuinely affordable housing, with mixed views on housing types, densities, and tenure
- **Active travel:** Support for walkable, connected communities, with safer walking/cycling routes and accessible local services



Photos from the Stage 1 drop-in exhibitions



Photos from Generation Dacorum event

Stakeholder Workshop

The first stakeholder workshop was held with an invited group of stakeholders, many of whom had been involved in pre-engagement discussions. Attendees included HGC, SADC, DBC, Redbourn Parish Council, Hertfordshire Police, Hertfordshire Futures, BRE, British Pipeline Association, Friends of the Nickey Line, Woodhall Farm Community Centre, Leverstock Green Village Association, Community Action Dacorum, Ver Valley Society, Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Sunnyside Rural Trust, Cupid Green Lane Allotments, St. Luke's School, Save Leverstock Green, as well as some local residents.

The event had briefing presentations and questions on The Crown Estate's role, aspiration & place vision; the statutory planning context; the overall masterplanning approach for East Hemel; the engagement approach. These were followed by workshop group discussions on different focus themes. Through these discussions, the workshop sought to explore possible future scenarios and directions for East Hemel, and understand aspirations and ideas from stakeholders.

The groups provided feedback on issues, ideas and aspirations. The workshop closed with a reflection on key issues and opportunities from the session, including

- Access to nature and greenery
- Strong public transport links
- Concerns around integration between existing and new communities, particularly in relation to services
- Ambitious ways of thinking in terms of transport and moving around



















Photos from the Stage 1 stakeholder workshop

Concept Masterplan Evolution

Following Stage 1 engagement, the team developed a Concept Masterplan which sought to take on board the initial themes, concerns and ideas heard, combined with technical constraints and strategic context for growth driving site-specific responses.

The direction of the masterplan was driven by a landscape character assessment and analysis. Site topography directly informed the development of the open space concept –particularly in the extent of the Country Park along the Ver Valley Slopes—and in turn the extent of built form and the configuration of new communities nested with open spaces. A sustainable movement network was developed which complemented the sustainable transport corridor with pedestrian and cyclist routes, linking key destinations and into surrounding roads.

Options for the central employment area were explored and discussions held with SADC on configuration within emerging plan policy.

	Sustainable Transport Corridor
	Secondary Routes
	Nickey Line / Lanes / Quietways
	Pedestrian / Cycle Routes
	Bridge across A414
	Bus stops / MMTI
	Listed buildings as destinations
	Local Centres / Community Clusters
	Active Frontage
	Country Park
	Parks & Gardens
	Sports Pitches
	Residential Plots
	Primary Schools
	Secondary School
	Industrial / Commercial

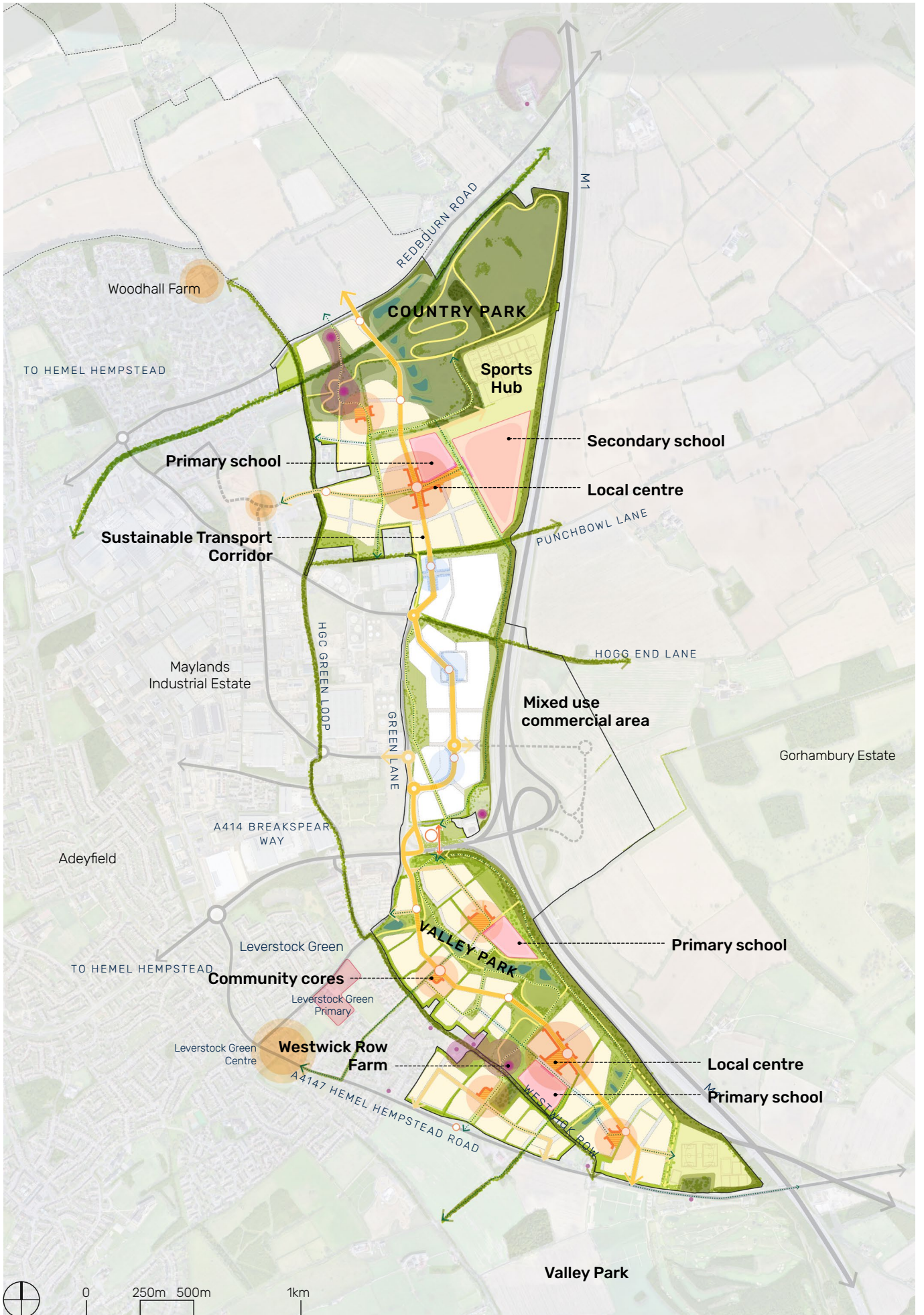


Fig 04.1 Initial concept masterplan

Stage 2 Community Engagement

The purpose of the Stage 2 engagement events was to involve the community in exploring and developing solutions to some of the challenges and ideas raised throughout Stage 1. This involved an educative and collaborative approach, where local residents and stakeholders participated in a series of events designed to increase their understanding of the Site, its constraints, and how key challenges might be overcome.

Stage 2 community engagement included:

- Study site visit to Cambridge
- Community site visit and 2 day design workshop
- 4 drop-in exhibitions at Leverstock Green, Woodhall Farm, Redbourn and Maylands Industrial Estate
- Dedicated consultation website and feedback form
- Targeted social media campaign
- Leaflet circulated to residents and businesses

Feedback

Throughout Stage 2 a number of key themes were evident, many of which related to the feedback received during Stage 1:

- **Traffic and connectivity:** Concerns about traffic around the M1 and impact on local networks, including of rat-running. Connections, both internal and external to the Site, with a view that strong public transport links and the Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC) will be key
- **Integration:** The integration of East Hemel into surrounding neighbourhoods and Hemel Hempstead, both physically and socially, whilst maintaining and protecting the distinctiveness of existing communities, particularly Leverstock Green
- **Open space:** The integration of nature across the Site, including local-level open spaces complementing bigger parks
- **Quality:** Quality of design and the use of typologies and materials to inform the character and identity of East Hemel
- **Inclusivity:** Ensuring consideration of and provision for all abilities of users, as well as flexibility and adaptability of spaces and buildings
- **Stewardship:** Stewardship of local assets, with various ways to work with local people and partners identified to ensure lasting facilities and services
- **Infrastructure:** Infrastructure, particularly relating to the importance and accessibility of schools and health services and how key uses are clustered
- **Gypsy and Traveller** community provision
- **Phasing,** particularly regarding early delivery of infrastructure



Fig 04.2 Community Design Workshop - Masterplan ideas

Design Response

The primary changes responding to ideas and concerns from Stage 2 consultation include:

- Strengthening the green edge with Leverstock Green / Greenacres properties to provide a functional open space connection
- Revision to the southern local centre strategy following community ideas of co-locating the centre with Westwick Row Farm
- Definition of different design responses to the STC along its length, so it is not a monotonous route but varies and responds to its different contexts within the Site
- Refinement of the movement strategy, in particular treatment of lanes and provision for equestrian movement
- Development of an approach to character areas across the Site to use diversity and quality of built form to create a strong identity
- Considering routes to and the accessibility of the Country Park from nearby residents at Woodhall Farm, Swallow Field, and Redbourn, as well as inclusion of parking provision for visitors
- Exploration of local sports provision and need to complement policy requirements



Photos from the Stage 2 site visits, community workshop and drop-in exhibitions

Design Review Panels

The purpose of consulting a Design Review Panel (DRP) is to gain independent, objective advice on the quality of the masterplan proposals. In the context of an outline planning application, DRP feedback has helped guide improvements and strengthen the overall design quality. Some comments, however, relate to matters of detail that will need to be addressed throughout the project's development, beyond the outline stage and into future design phases.

Design Review Panel #1

The first DRP was held in December 2024 on the basis of the Concept Masterplan. Key points of feedback received include:

Connectivity and integration

- Demonstrate a thorough understanding of what exists outside of the red line boundary of the Site, to ensure that the proposal reads as an extension of the existing town and neighbourhoods and as a connecting piece in a wider network of settlements, rather than as a standalone development.
- Develop the east-west routes through the Site and focus on the importance of these in linking the masterplan back into Hemel Hempstead and beyond.
- Undertake a movement study based on where people will be drawn to and from, to better inform the key routes throughout the Site.

Landscape

- Strengthen the character of the green spaces and SANGs to ensure they function as an accessible, multifunctional landscape aligned to The Crown Estate's long-term vision.
- Prioritise nature-based water management solutions to create a network of ecology and biodiversity which

works at multiple scales, from plot to street.

- Include long site sections at key points throughout the Site to highlight the topography/visual connectivity between different parts of the masterplan.
- Function of edge landscapes was raised: be more descriptive of their use.

Transport

- Be bold with the transport strategy to ensure that it is a car-lite development which prioritises active travel.

Centres

- Ensure that the proposed community centres are located with direct access to shared green space, to create vibrant, active edges for people to enjoy.
- Create community centres which are flexible for a variety of uses, and in doing so, begin a dialogue about community stewardship.

Engagement

- Undertake extensive community engagement to ensure new and existing local facilities complement and enhance, rather than detract from, each other.
- Organise an Inclusive Design Workshop to understand how the development can cater to a wide demographic and suit their diverse needs.

Design Review Panel #2

Key points of feedback received at the second DRP in March 2025 include:

Connectivity and Integration

- Undertake a more thorough analysis of the existing routes within Hemel, assessing where these connect with the proposed masterplan, to understand the limitations around the new development and its interface with existing adjoining neighbourhoods, and to exploit

opportunities for connecting active travel to strategic locations.

Movement and Placemaking

- Expand and define the primary multi-modal transport interchange (MMTI) as a place in and of itself, rather than as merely a transport hub.
- Create a positive balance between function and place along the Sustainable Transport Corridor by exploring variations along its length to reflect changing character areas.
- Enhance the east-west connections through the Site and create clear wayfinding opportunities to draw people in towards the local centres, from beyond the confines of the masterplan.
- Interrogate the types of daily journeys that people will take, both within and outside of the Site, to accommodate linked trips through active travel.

Topography and Inter-visibility

- Include larger scale, more detailed sections at key intersections of the plan, to demonstrate how the varied topography and level changes impact certain parts of the masterplan.
- Explore the Site through 3D modelling to understand the inter-visibility between the parks, housing and edges of the development.

Commercial Mix

- Ensure that the central area boasts a mix of industrial and commercial uses, to ensure that this space is well-used and activated throughout the day.

Design Responses

Key design responses to and iterations in light of DRP feedback have included:

- **Connectivity and integration:** Spatial analytics exercise to identify and maximise opportunities for east-west movement and integration into the wider Hemel network.
- **Centres:** Development of local centres strategies which are commercially robust, placemaking-focussed and flexible.
- **Landscape:** Greater definition of the Country and Valley Parks in light of feedback on activation and design within SANG land.
- **Topography and inter-visibility:** Inclusion of long site sections through key areas with steep slopes and interfaces between open spaces and built development.
- **Commercial mix:** Refinement of commercial area innovation district strategy to promote a mix of uses and a varied, human-scale public realm.
- **Landscape and topography:** Refinement of drainage strategy including strategy / assumptions for on-plot drainage and its impact on the wider network.
- **Inclusivity:** Topographic analysis to ensure key routes are accessible; prioritisation of inclusive design and Make Space for Girls principles.

Masterplan Refinement

Following Stage 2 engagement, Design Review Panel Feedback and ongoing feedback from SADC, DBC, HCC and HGC as part of the pre-application process, the design team continued to refine the masterplan and integrate further levels of detail.

At this stage, a change in the proposed application boundary East of M1 was introduced following discussions within the relevant authorities regarding future M1 J8 improvements. The application boundary was reduced in order to exclude the junction upgrade area as this does not form part of this planning application. The application continues to safeguard for a new bridge over the M1 into the Site.

Further aspects that were tested and refined include:

Movement and Accessibility

Spatial accessibility modelling was conducted to identify opportunities to integrate East Hemel into existing neighbourhoods, and to identify optimal locations for centres and schools within the proposed movement network to balance accessibility with catchments to both existing and new facilities.

The modelling identifies routes of high pedestrian connectivity—which therefore have the potential to attract more footfall—which are therefore optimal locations for local centres and schools. This however considers neither catchments or walking distance to these locations, nor the quality and character of these places which will both encourage use and walkability.

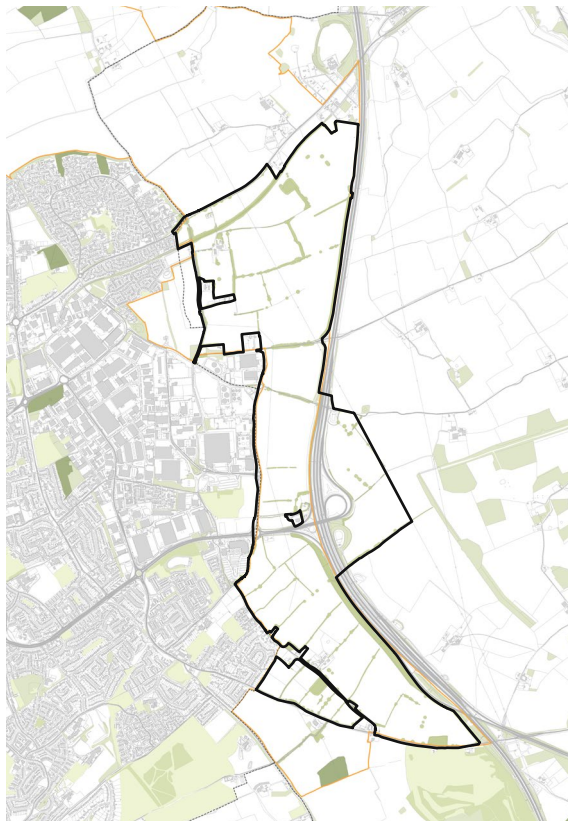


Fig 04.3 Original application boundary

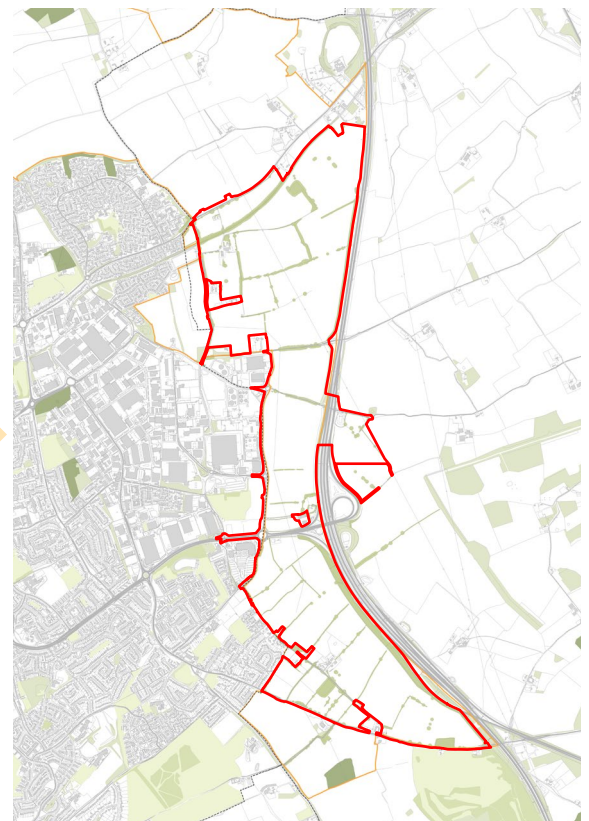


Fig 04.4 Final application boundary

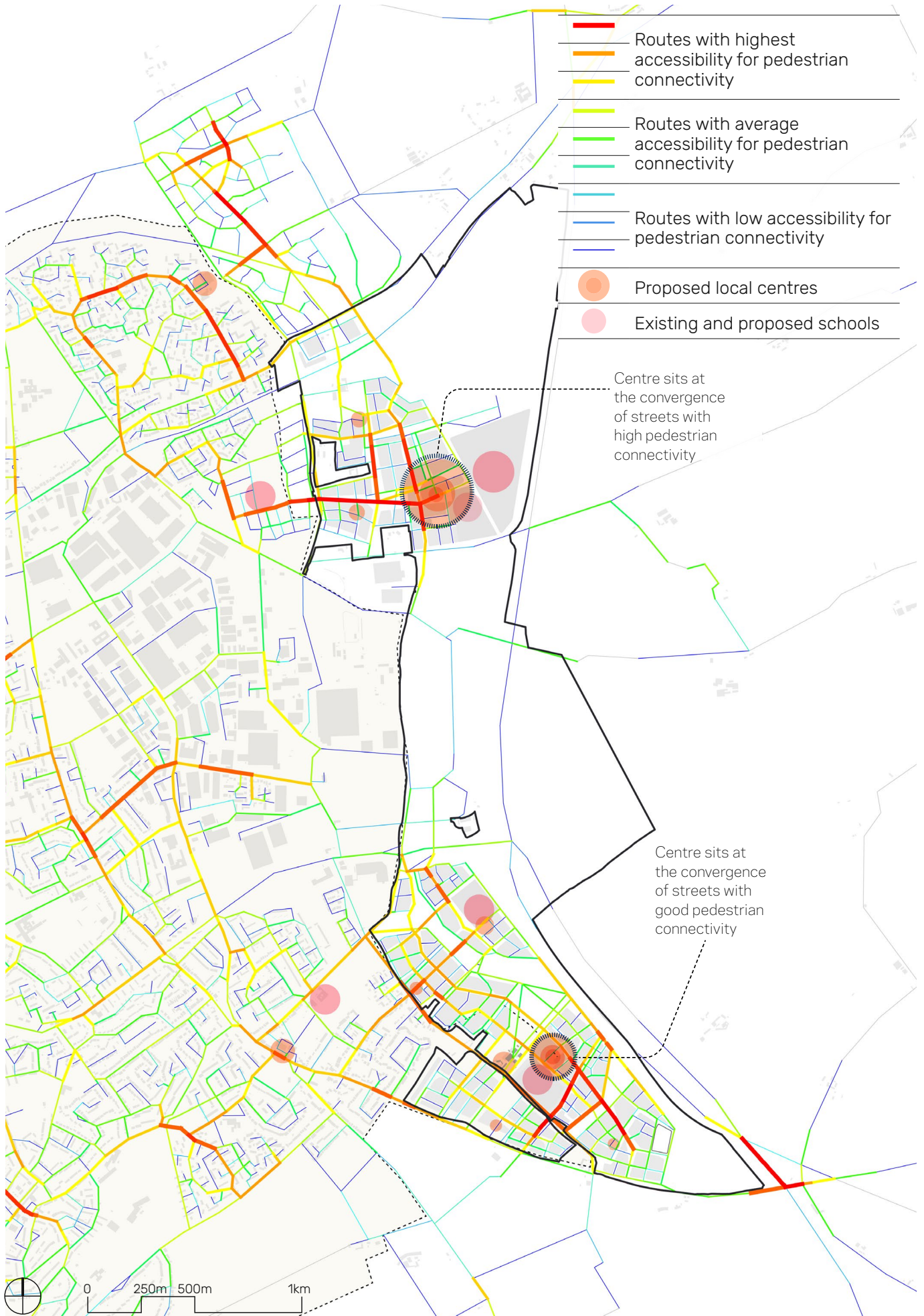


Fig 04.5 Pedestrian connectivity analysis to identify routes connecting back into Hemel and optimal locations for centres

Access to Facilities

An analysis was undertaken on the emerging masterplan to assess the location and distribution of facilities, both in order to optimise the coverage and provision for East Hemel residents, but also to minimise competition and overlapping catchments with existing facilities in neighbouring communities.

Local Centres

The analysis indicated that most existing and proposed local centres service neighbourhoods well within a 15-minute walking radius, with most of East Hemel residential neighbourhoods able to access their local centre within a 10-minute walk.

The dense street network within the masterplan increases the catchment of homes within a 5- and 10-minute walk as compared to existing centres.

From a walkability perspective, the proposed

local centres have very little overlapping catchments with existing centres and therefore serve discrete communities with local service provision.

Schools

The analysis indicated that the masterplan area is well served by primary schools within a 5-10 minute walking radius.

Due to the linear nature of the site and the central employment allocation, the analysis identified that the southernmost part of the site is within a 15-20 minute cycle to a secondary school. This reinforces the need for good cycling and public transport networks to ensure good accessibility to secondary schools for all of East Hemel.

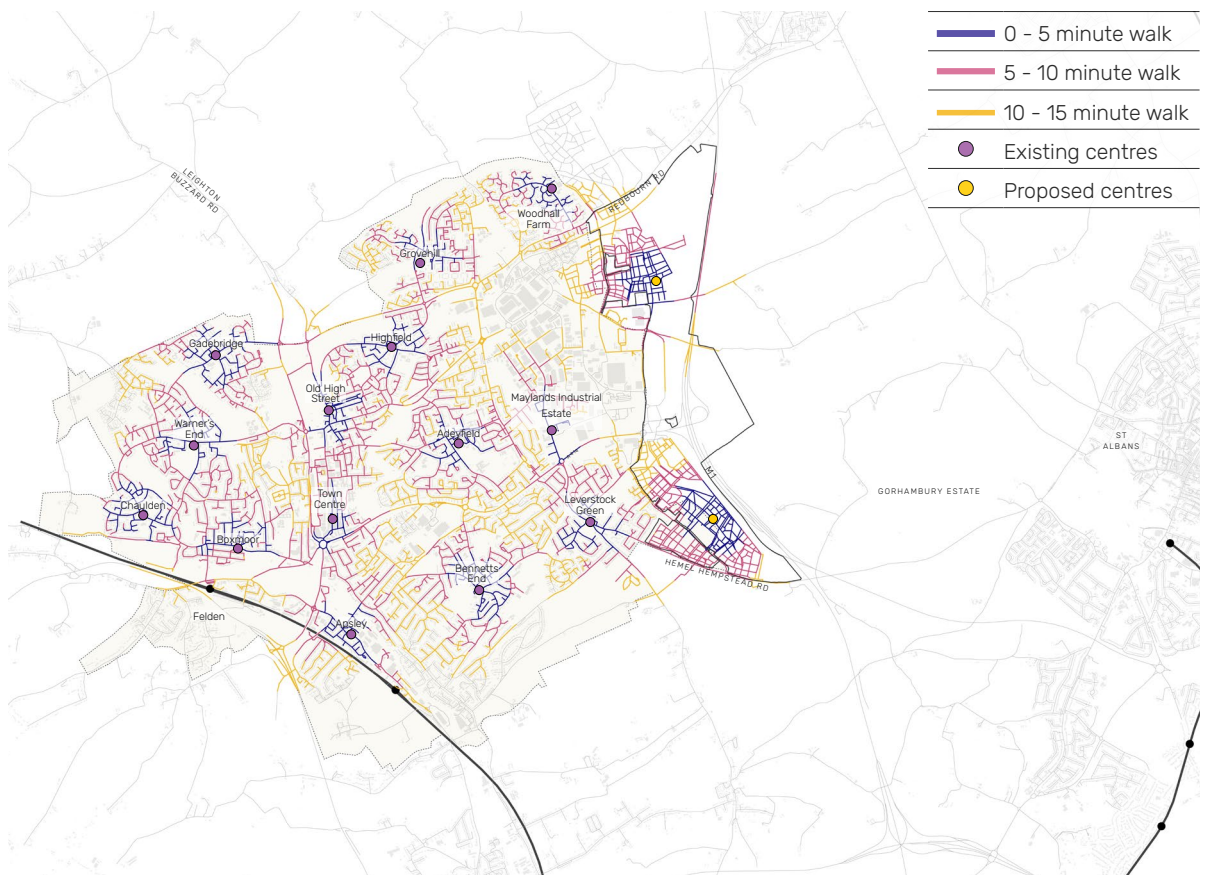


Fig 04.6 Centres catchment analysis

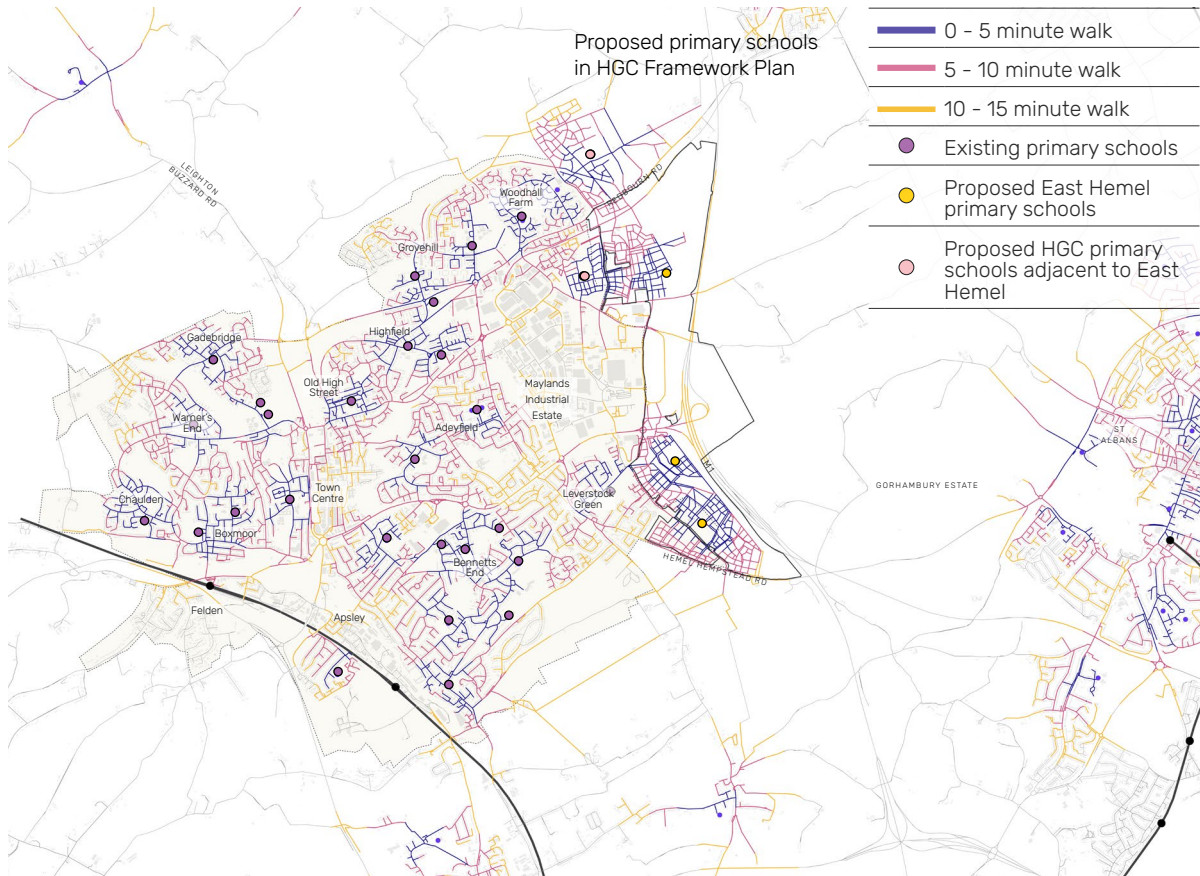


Fig 04.7 Primary school catchment analysis

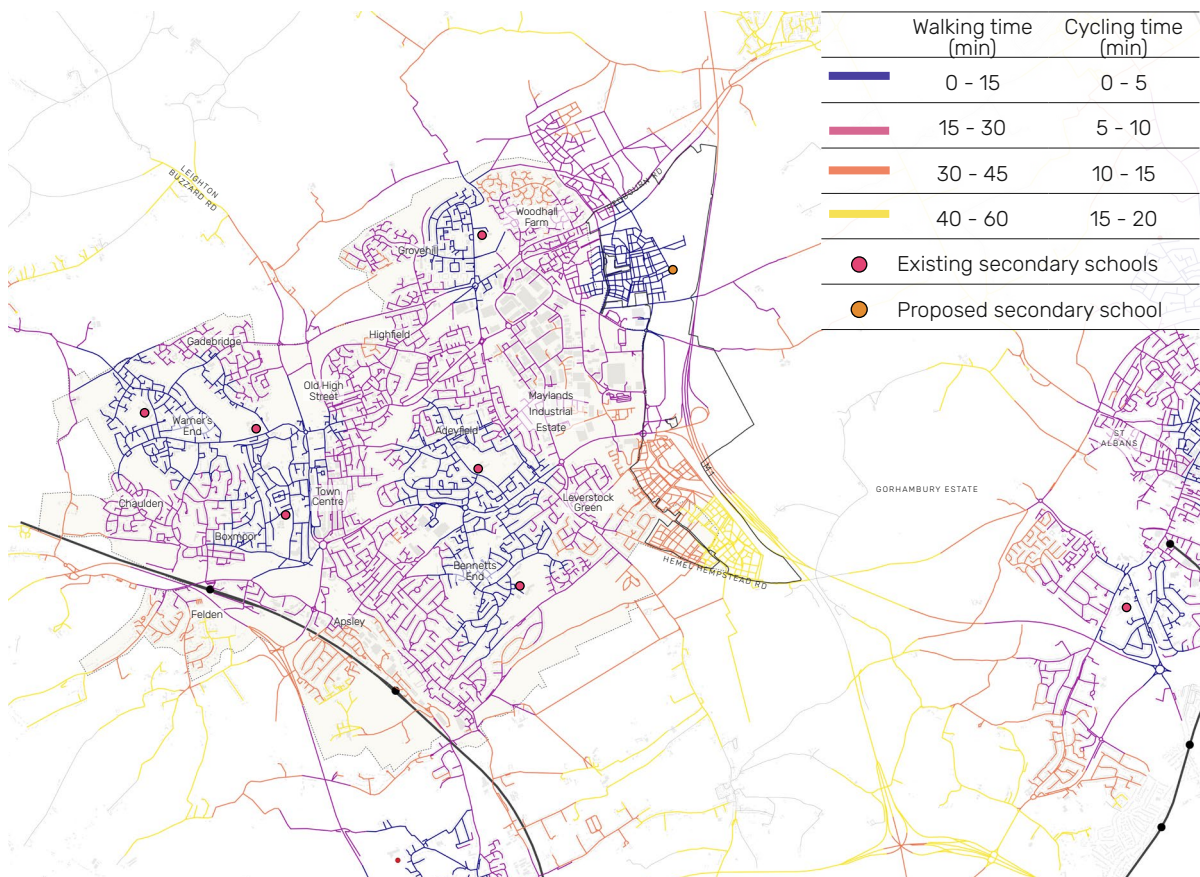


Fig 04.8 Secondary School catchment analysis

Slope and Topography

Further analysis of the areas of steep slopes across the site informed masterplan refinement including:

- Refinement of the movement network to ensure the STC and strategic roads are accessible and working with contours
- Relocation of two primary schools to provide flatter sites and optimise overlooking onto open spaces
- Designing parcels in steeper areas to work with the Site's contours while ensuring accessible plot access

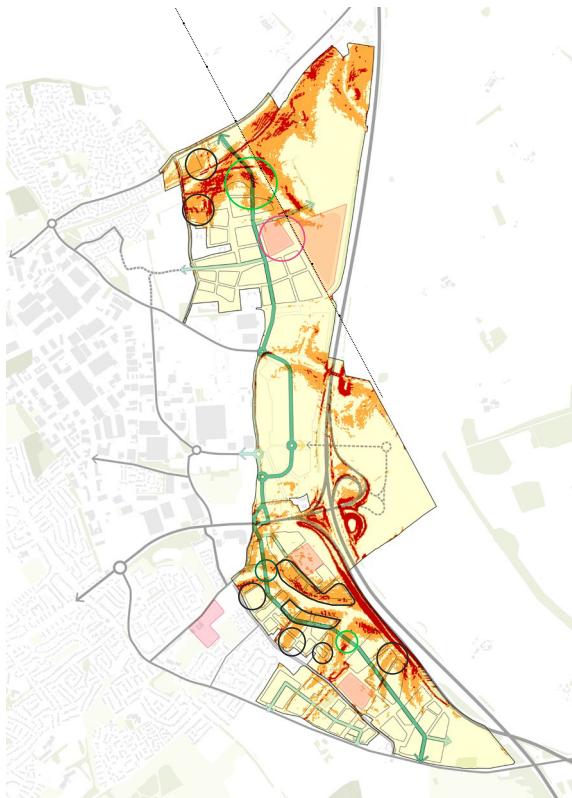


Fig 04.9 Identifying locations where steep slopes require a considered design response to ensure accessibility and minimise earthworks

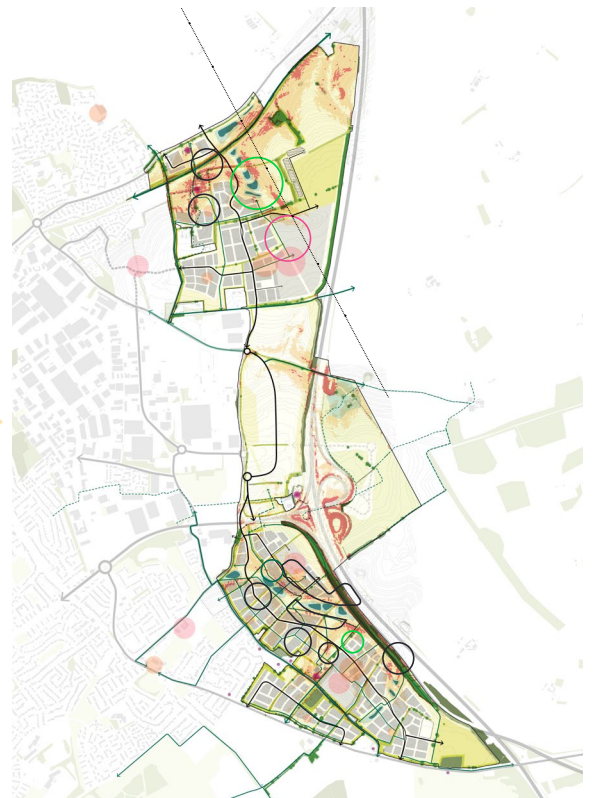


Fig 04.10 Refining the masterplan based on slope and topography

Landscape and Open Space

Refinements to the landscape structure at this stage included:

- Refinement of edges to Leverstock Green following engagement
- Revision of green infrastructure strategy in light of ecology surveys, in particular the definition and widening of certain bat corridors, badger sett relocation and proposals for planting and wildlife interventions across the STC
- Refinement of the drainage strategy, including adjustment of built form and road network
- Revised strategy east of the M1 and associated red line boundary adjustments
- Refinement of noise bund design

Mix and Built Form

Refinements to the distribution of uses and densities across the site at this stage included:

- Revised strategy and design for the commercial area, including landscape strategy
- Refinement of the local centres configuration and mix in response to engagement and market advice in collaboration with RCKa Architects
- Refinement and optimisation of plot structure, density, mix and typology in collaboration with Alison Brooks Architects and Savills
- Heights and visual impact testing



Fig 04.11 Concept masterplan approach to southern local centre and boundary with Greenacres

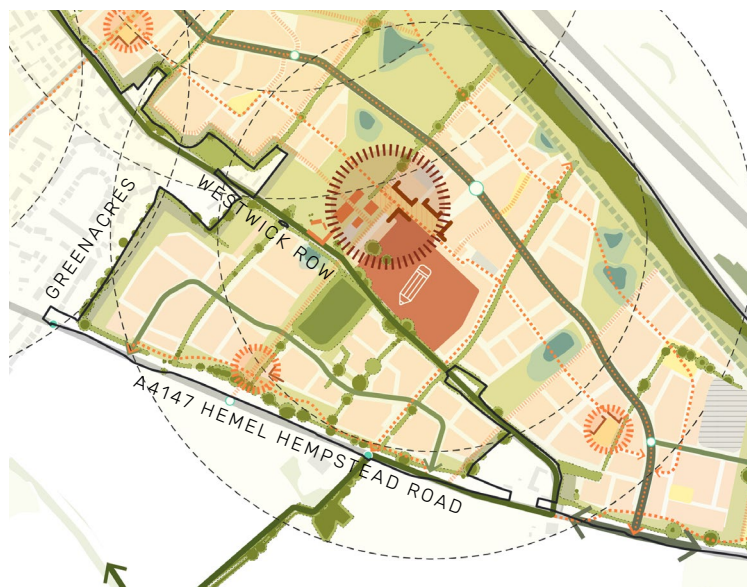


Fig 04.12 Masterplan refinement, introducing a linear open space as a green edge with Greenacres and reconfiguration of local centre to better integrate with Westwick Row Farm and the Valley Park

Nickey Line Crossing

A number of options have been developed and tested for the proposed crossing of the STC with the Nickey Line, considering the implications for the location of a new junction on the B487 Hemel Hempstead Road. The Nickey Line is a historic disused railway currently used as an offroad pedestrian and cycle route. Surrounded by dense vegetation, mature hedgerows and trees, it has high landscape and ecological value.

The aim of this study was to consider the best way to develop a concept proposal for crossing the Nickey Line to meet the vision and sustainable infrastructure design principles. Objectives included:

- Ensure access and legibility between the Nickey Line, East Hemel and wider HGC.
- Carefully manage and mitigate the impact of the crossing on the character and ecology of the Nickey Line
- Minimise the impact of the crossing on the landscape character and wider landscape setting
- Work with topography and minimise carbon impact through reduced earthworks
- Achieve the most effective and desirable

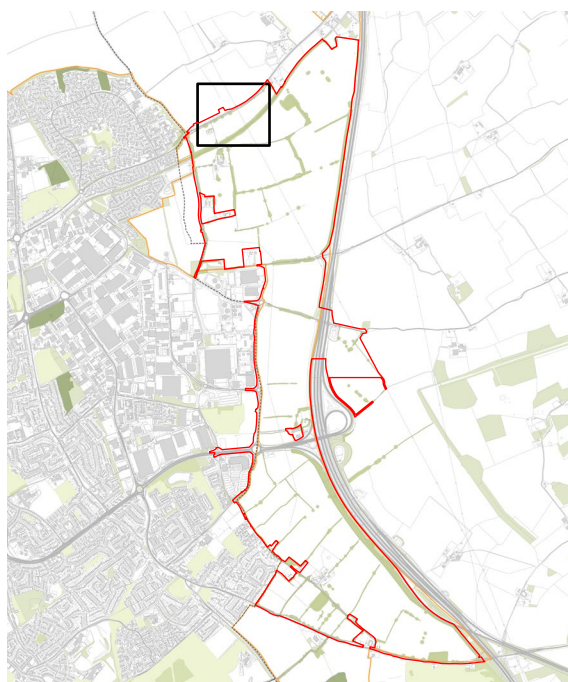


Fig 04.13 Nickey Line study location

outcome to prioritise sustainable and active modes of travel

- Deliver a comprehensive solution which works effectively with the Redbourn Road crossing

Three options were considered for the crossing, illustrated in **Fig 04.14**, and were scored against the above objectives:









- 01** STC road bridge over the Nickey Line
- 02** An at-grade controlled crossing
- 03** Nickey Line bridge over the STC

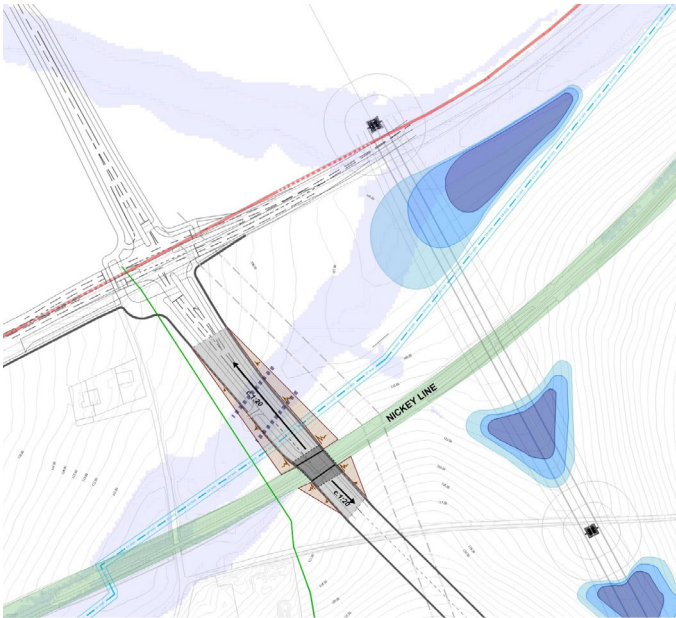
Conclusions

An at-grade controlled crossing—Option 2—is preferred due to the minimised earthworks and impact on existing landscape and character.

The option is preferred as it:

- Allows for disruption to the landscape of the Nickey Line to be minimised, retaining as much mature hedgerows and trees as possible
- Presents significant active travel and movement benefits, including improved accessibility and visibility
- Enables a new access point onto the Nickey Line, enhancing its useability as a key active travel route
- Maintains and enhances wider east-west corridors beyond the STC to promote links to Hemel and east of the M1 to the countryside

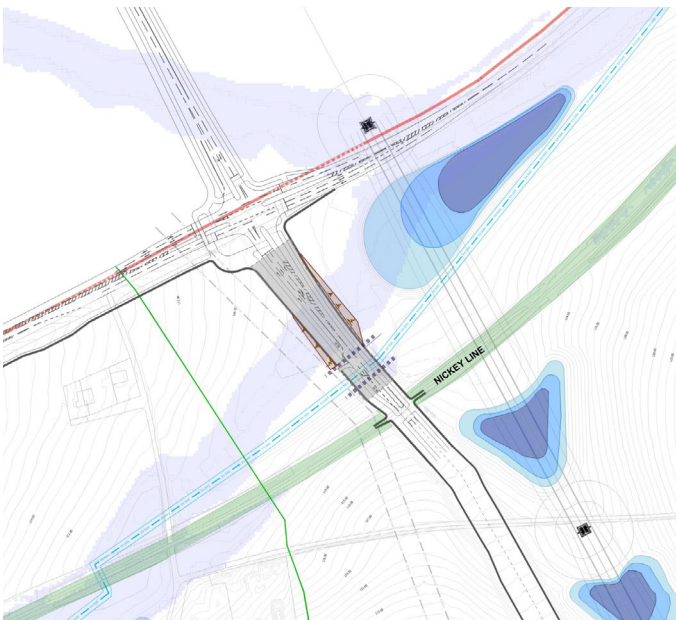
	BPA pipeline
	National Grid overhead power lines and pylons
	Thames water sewer
	Existing 1:1000 year flood extents
	Proposed 1:100 year + climate change flood extents
	Propose permanent water
	Proposed banking
	Proposed culvert



Option 1: STC road bridge over the Nickey Line

Overall width of crossing: 32-35m

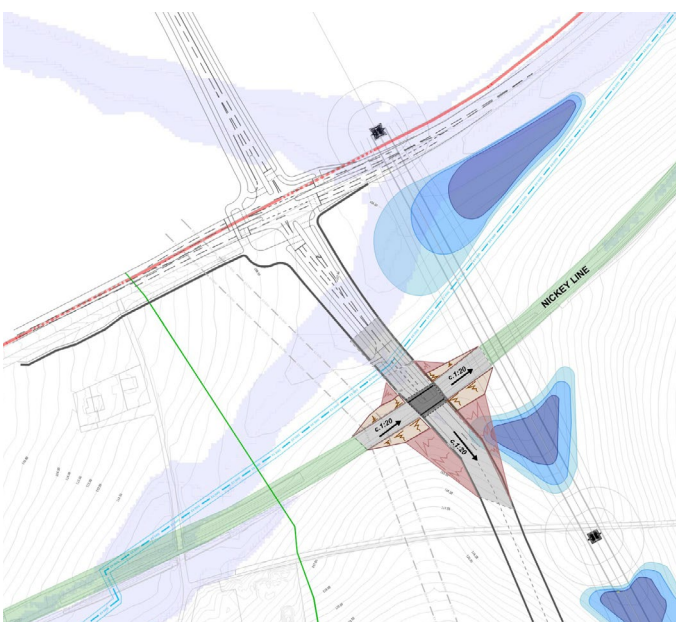
- Embankment up to roadway bridge over Nickey Line
- c.1:20 ramp approximately 100m long
- This option requires significant earthworks and will result in the removal of mature hedgerows and vegetation.



Option 2: At-grade controlled crossing

Overall width of crossing: 10-12m

- Shorter/smaller embankment required to connect to at-grade crossing with Nickey Line
- Improve connectivity and accessibility between residential areas and Nickey Line.
- Minimum impact on existing hedgerows and vegetations
- Reduction in required earthworks



Option 3: Nickey Line bridge over the STC

Overall width of crossing: 90 - 100m

- Significant Nickey Line embankment to meet highways 5.2m clearance, with engineered retaining walls forming bridge abutment
- Reduced accessibility
- Maintain wildlife connectivity.
- This option will require significant earthworks and maximum impact on existing hedgerows and vegetations.

Fig 04.14 Nickey Line optioneering for the proposed crossing

Stage 3 Community Engagement

The purpose of Stage 3 Engagement was to present the illustrative masterplan as a response to previous inputs and engagement, and to gain further insights and feedback. Engagement focussed on the emerging illustrative masterplan. The aim was to give residents an opportunity to view the plans in advance and become familiar with them. Statutory consultation will follow submission of the Outline Planning Application.

Stage 3 community engagement included:

- 4 drop-in exhibitions at Leverstock Green, Woodhall Farm, Redbourn, and Maylands Industrial Estate
- 3 online and in-person briefings on specific topic areas
- Engagement with specialist groups
- Dedicated consultation website and feedback form
- Targeted social media campaign
- Leaflet circulated to residents and businesses

Drop-In Exhibitions

Emerging themes across all drop-in exhibitions were:

- **Traffic:** Continued concerns regarding traffic on Redbourn Road and others, the knock on impact of congestion and impacts on the M1, rat running and the capacity of Junction 8. Concern with how the widening of Redbourn Road and the junction upgrade at A414 will be managed
- **Lanes:** Both support for and opposition to reducing traffic on historic lanes, but concern with phasing and implementation strategy
- **Modal shift:** Continued scepticism regarding the reality of improving bus services and reducing parking and car ownership
- **Open space:** Support for the amount of green space and water attenuation being delivered on site, with queries about detailed design, habitat creation and stewardship options
- **Housing:** Support for the range of housing provision being proposed, with an interest in more detail regarding the types, design, quality, tenures, density, affordability and levels of affordable housing being proposed
- **Health:** Concern with local health provision and the potential impact of East Hemel on local infrastructure, with a particular concern over the proposal for a single GP surgery in the north of the Site with no provision in the south
- **Schools and pollution:** Concern with the location of schools in close proximity to the M1 as well as the employment area and the potential impacts of noise and air pollution. Desire for further information and rationale on their distribution and on the design and effectiveness of the noise bund
- **Buncefield:** Concerns with safety risk of buildings close to Buncefield oil depot, including non-residential buildings as well as homes north of Punchbowl Lane
- **Gypsy and Traveller:** Queries around the number and location of sites and their integration into the neighbourhood
- **Phasing:** Queries regarding development phasing - when certain areas would come forward, with specific concerns around the phasing of infrastructure and facilities, particularly of schools



Photos from the Stage 3 drop-in exhibitions

