

02.01 Historical Legacy

The development of the settlement has taken place gradually over time.

Harpenden first began to evolve during the medieval period, before experiencing significant expansion in the 20th century. This progression can be clearly traced through historical maps.

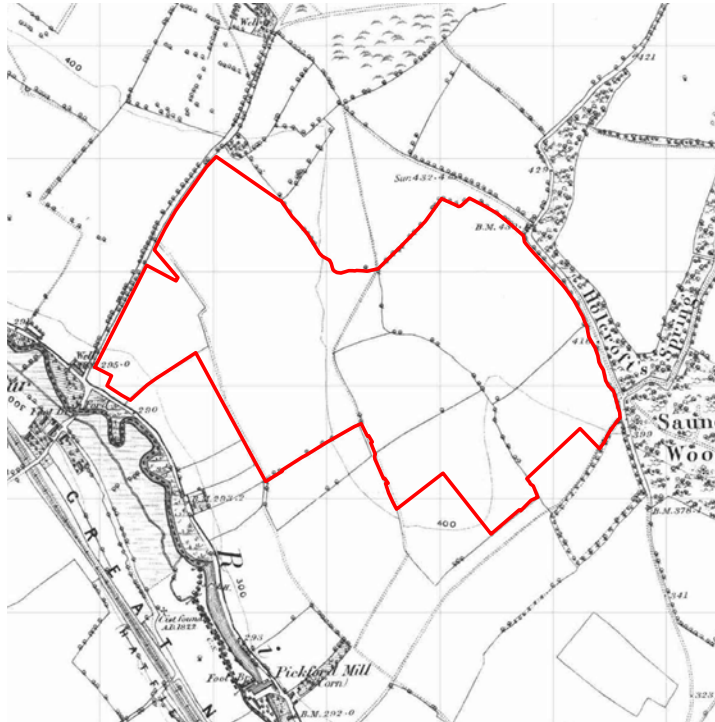
The earliest map, from 1766, shows the area as predominantly agricultural, with the wider surroundings marked by scattered farmsteads and cottages.

By the 1970s, a small riding school had been established in the southwest corner of the site, which was gradually expanded in the years that followed.

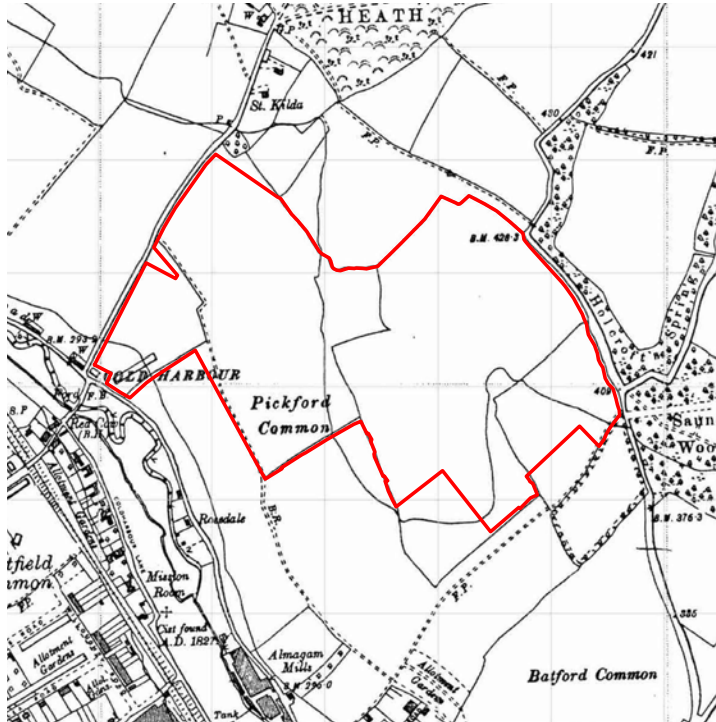
From the 1950s onwards, the land surrounding the site underwent considerable change, with new residential and commercial developments emerging. Today, the site is largely bordered by modern housing and small enclosed fields, while the northeastern section remains in agricultural use.



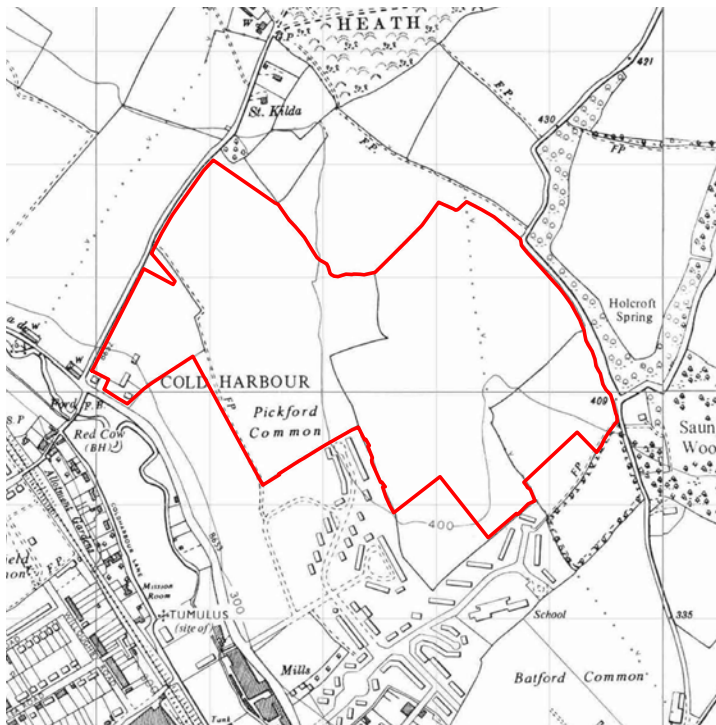
1766



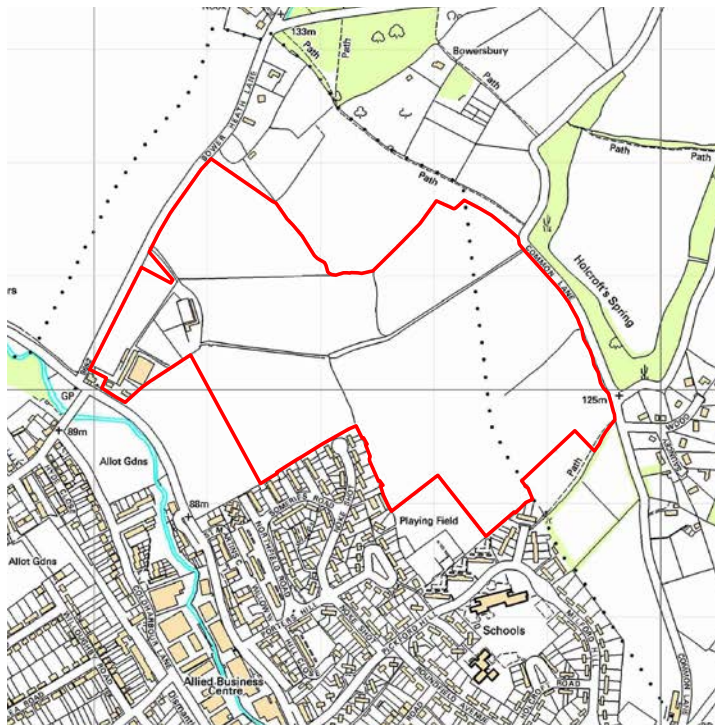
1878-81



1938



1959-60



2002



2022

02.03 Historical Buildings

- 1. The Red Cow Public House is a Grade II listed building dating from the late 16th to early 17th century, possessing significant historic and architectural value. The structure features a timber-framed core with an 18th-century red brick frontage, complemented by later alterations including a re-roofing, replacement glazing bars, and new doors.
- 2. The Thatched Cottage is a Grade II listed building dating from the 17th century, featuring a timber frame with red brick infill and a deeply thatched roof with half-hipped ends.
- 3. The Marquis of Granby is a Grade II listed public house dating from the 17th century, constructed with a timber frame and roughcast exterior, and featuring a steeply pitched plain tile roof over two storeys. It currently operates as a local pub.
- 4. Old Raisins Farm is a Grade II listed farmhouse dating from the mid-17th century, constructed with a timber frame, featuring a red brick ground floor and a plastered upper floor with partially exposed timber framing.
- 5. Mackerye End is a Grade I listed red brick manor house in Wheathampstead, dating from 1665. It features a symmetrical façade with projecting wings, notable holborn gables, and Tudor-style chimneys. The estate also includes several ancillary buildings, such as stables, barns, and a farmhouse, which are designated as Grade II listed.



1. The Red Cow Public House



2. The Thatched Cottage (on corner of Lower Luton Road)



3. Marquis of Granby



Key

Red Line Boundary

Mackerye End Conservation Area



4. Old Raisins Farm



5. Mackerye End

02.04 Local Vernacular Details and Materials

The surrounding area of the site exhibits a strong sense of local vernacular character, with architectural elements that reference traditional Tudor-style influences. Flint stonework is a prominent feature, reflecting the use of regionally sourced materials, while exposed timber beams highlight the craftsmanship and structural traditions typical of the area. The buildings display a rich variation in brickwork, combining red bricks with multi-colored bricks to create visual texture and depth across the facades. Decorative stone elements are thoughtfully incorporated, adding ornamentation and further reinforcing the historic character. Timber window frames are a recurring detail, complementing the exposed timber features and maintaining a cohesive material palette throughout the surroundings.



02.05 Wider Context & Character

The character of Harpenden is defined by a mix of housing types, ranging from grand Victorian houses to more modern developments. The town has a strong sense of community, with tree-lined streets, well-maintained gardens, and a variety of local amenities, including shops, cafes, restaurants, and recreational facilities. Harpenden also offers excellent schools, making it particularly attractive to families.

The town’s historic charm is reflected in its architecture, with many period buildings and traditional cottages scattered throughout. However, it also embraces modern developments, particularly in areas like the town center, which has seen some regeneration to accommodate contemporary needs while maintaining its character.

The surrounding countryside and greenbelt areas provide ample opportunities for outdoor activities, such as walking, cycling, and nature exploration, further enhancing the town’s appeal.

The material palette across harpenden is wide spread, the predominate materials are;

- Brick
- Render (variety of colours)
- Timber boarding
- Smoothed stone
- Local flint
- Red, grey and brown roof tiles

1. Batford Springs Nature Reserve: Comprises a number of habitats including a rare chalk lined stream. This reserve is of high importance to bio-diversity. Other uses within the area includes a play park, accessible walking route, picnic benches and information boards. It is owned by the council however volunteers preserve and take care of the reserve.

2. Harpendens Farmer Market: The market is managed by the town council and occurs every fourth Sunday of each month, it accommodates approximately 70 stalls.

3. The Church of St Nicholas: The oldest known church in Harpenden. It was originally built in about 1217, until it was enlarged in 1470. The old church was demolished and rebuilt larger in 1861.

4. Aldwickbury, Park Golf Club: Designed by former Ryder Cup player Ken Brown and Essex based course architect Martin Gillett. It is a combination of mature woodland, parkland and lakes. The park includes two courses, the park course (main course) and the manor course (short course).

5. Plough and Harrow: traditionally a beer house before becoming a family owned local pub, serving traditional pub food, real ale and entertainment.

6. Eric Morecambe Centre: A recent addition to the town, opening in 2021 it is a state of the art culture and entertainment venue. A variety of spaces for theatre, music, exhibitions, meetings and is home to the Harpenden museum.



1. Batford Springs Nature Reserve



2. Harpenden's Farmer Market



3. The Church of St Nicholas



5. Plough and Harrow



4. Aldwickbury Park Golf Club



6. Eric Morecambe Centre

02.06 Harpenden Urban Grain and Built form

The proposed site is located to the north east of Harpenden and represents a logical continuation of the town's growth.

The figure-ground plan of Harpenden illustrates a clear spatial organisation, with identifiable pockets of open space emerging from the overall block structure. The residential developments are primarily arranged in a grid pattern, conveying a sense of symmetry and spatial order.

Key

Site Boundary

Built Form



02.07 Contextual Analysis

Site Description

In order to understand the context, five areas in close proximity to the application site have been identified.

Area A: Lea Business Park

Area B: Lower Luton Road

Area C: Batford

Area D: Sauncey Wood

Area E: Bower Heath Lane

Key

Site Boundary

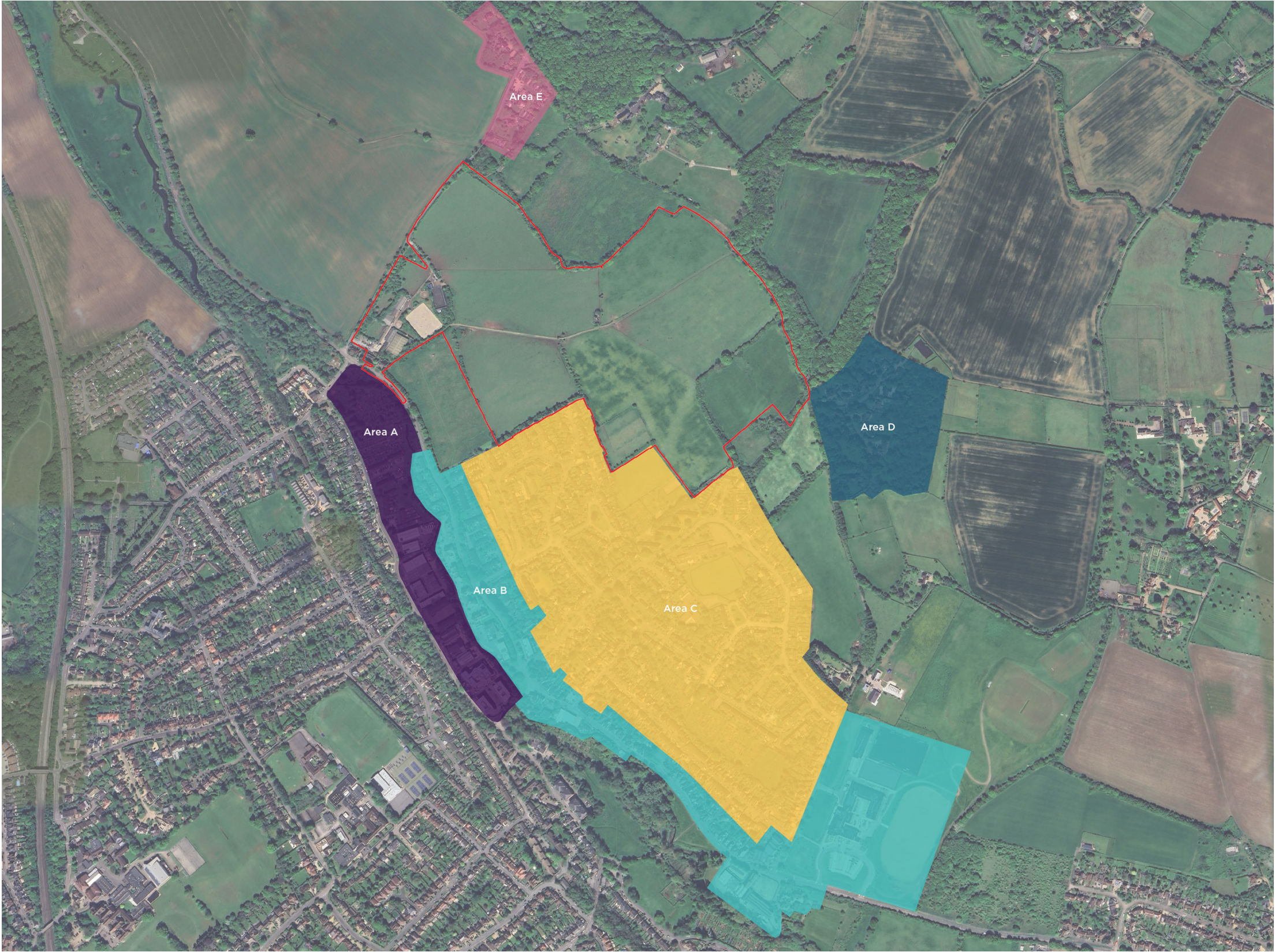
Lea Business Park

Lower Luton Road

Batford

Sauncey Wood

Bower Heath Lane



Local Contextual Analysis Map

02.08 Area A

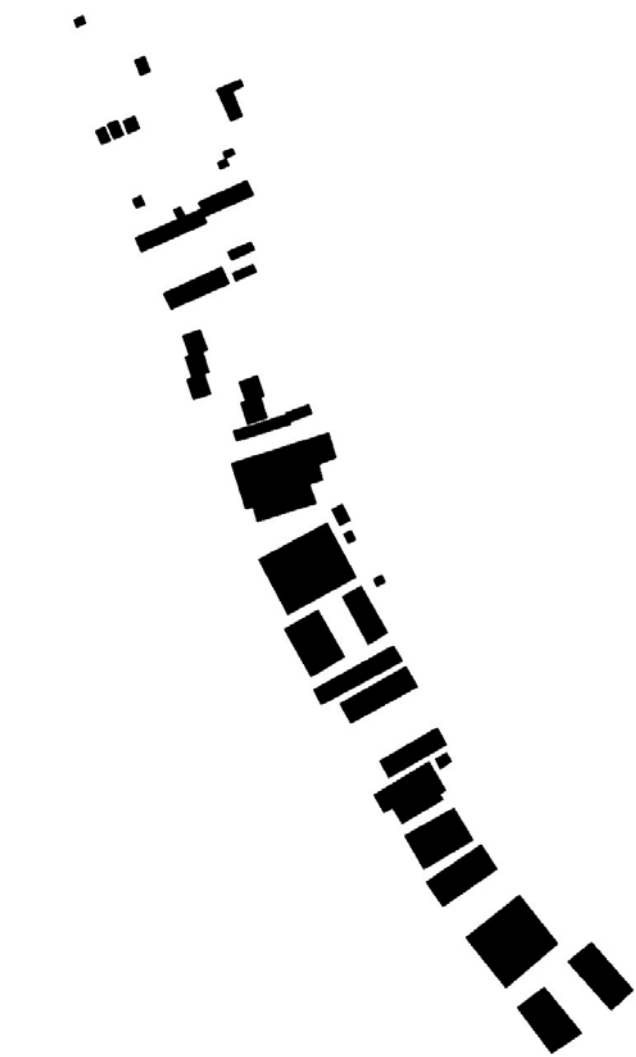
Lea Business Park

Lea business park is located just off Lower Luton Road, it is an established industrial and distribution hub. A variety of businesses specialising in the automobile industry to kitchen warehousing.

The industrial buildings extend along Coldharbour Lane, situated to the southwest of the River Lea, further expanding the areas diversity of uses. This includes residential developments, allotments and the recently developed Lea Grange Care Home.

The building exteriors in this area vary, with facades made of brick and cladding. The form and finishes of the building depend on their specific use and function.

To the northeast of River Lea, apartment blocks and dwellings which are accessible from Lower Luton Road. These buildings typically feature a consistency in physical characteristics of brick and render. With a mix of red and buff brick used for window cill detailing.



- 1 Offices
- 2 Factories/Workshops
- 3 Lea Grange Care Home



1.



2.



3.

02.09 Area B

Lower Luton Road

Lower Luton Road is the main access point to the site, located to the southwest. As a key connection to surrounding towns, it supports a variety of uses. Local amenities along the road include a Tesco Express, a petrol station, a Co-op supermarket, a hairdressers and several takeaways.

The area features a mix of dwellings, including Victorian terraces, semi detached, detached homes and as well as modern apartment blocks. A number of properties display charming character with period features such as brick detailing and decorative patterns on the facades.

A variety of materials are used in the facades, including painted pebble dash, render, red and buff brick brown and grey roof tiles. There is little consistency in architectural styles and finishes across these properties. The typography has been managed with retaining walls in certain areas and stairs leading to the entry levels of homes.

Large, mature trees and landscaping create a natural boundary along most of Lower Luton Road, providing shelter to the residential buildings. These features serve as both a noise and visual barrier, enhancing privacy and reducing the impact of traffic on the surrounding homes.



1 Millstone Way - Apartments

2 Co-op and Kingfish fish and chips takeaway are set back from the main road and lined with trees as a buffer to maintain a strong streetscape.

3 Residential Homes



1.



2.



3.