

# LAND EAST OF A6/BEDFORD ROAD | RUSHDEN

## DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT



MAY 2022

**Bellway**

  
**STRATEGIC  
LAND**

# CONTENTS

<b>01. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Introduction
1.2	The Planning Application
1.3	About Bellway Homes
1.4	Purpose of the Statement
1.5	The Vision
<b>02. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1	Planning Policy Guidance
2.2	Local Planning Policy
<b>03. SITE ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>9</b>
3.1	Site Location & Context
3.2	Access, Movement & Facilities
3.3	Surrounding Designations
3.4	Historical Development of Local Area
3.5	Architectural & Character Context
3.6	Landscape & Visual Character
3.7	Ecology
3.8	Topography
3.9	Flooding & Drainage
3.10	Utilities
3.11	Built Heritage
3.12	Arboriculture

## Prepared by:



## Office Address:

CSA Environmental

Dixie's Barns, High Street, Ashwell, Hertfordshire, SG7 5NT

## Office Telephone Number:

01462 743 647

## On behalf of:



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## **04. EVALUATION** **25**

- 4.1 Opportunities & Influences Plan

## **05. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS** **29**

- 5.1 The Parameters Plan
- 5.2 The Development Framework Plan
- 5.3 Design Principles & Layout
- 5.4 The Illustrative Masterplan
- 5.5 Use & Amount
- 5.6 Access
- 5.7 Street Hierarchy & Car Parking
- 5.8 Crime Impact Consideration
- 5.9 Character Areas
- 5.10 Scale
- 5.11 Green Infrastructure & Design
- 5.12 Sustainability

## **06. CONCLUSION** **55**

# 01

## Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction

The Design and Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared by CSA Environmental on behalf of Bellway Homes for a proposed residential development at Land East of the A6/Bedford Road, Rushden (the Site). The Settlement of Rushden lies within the administrative district of North Northamptonshire Council (East Northampton Area).

The application Site measures approximately 23.70 hectares (ha) and comprises part of two larger arable fields, and is located adjacent to the south eastern edge of Rushden, east of the A6. To the north and east of the Site are further arable fields, with a golf range and course located to the south east, to the north of Bedford Road (A6). The land adjacent to the east of the Site is currently subject to a planning application for the use of a community facility which includes 4 rugby pitches.

The Site is located a short distance south of the allocated Rushden East Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE), which lies to the east of the A6 and north of Newton Road.

The Site and its context are identified within Figure 1.1 opposite.

### 1.2 The Planning Application

The submitted planning application seeks permission (all matters are reserved except access) for a high quality, sustainable development comprising the following:

- **A development for up to 450 new homes, including 30% (135no.) affordable;**
- **Provide a new community, retail and or health facility.**
- **New public open space, including two children's play areas, recreational footways and cycleways, and a potential pedestrian link connecting the Site to Newton Road and Rushden East SUE to the north.**
- **Vehicular access in the form of an improved arm on the eastern side of the roundabout which currently serves the A6/ Bedford Road and the A5028/Bedford Road.**



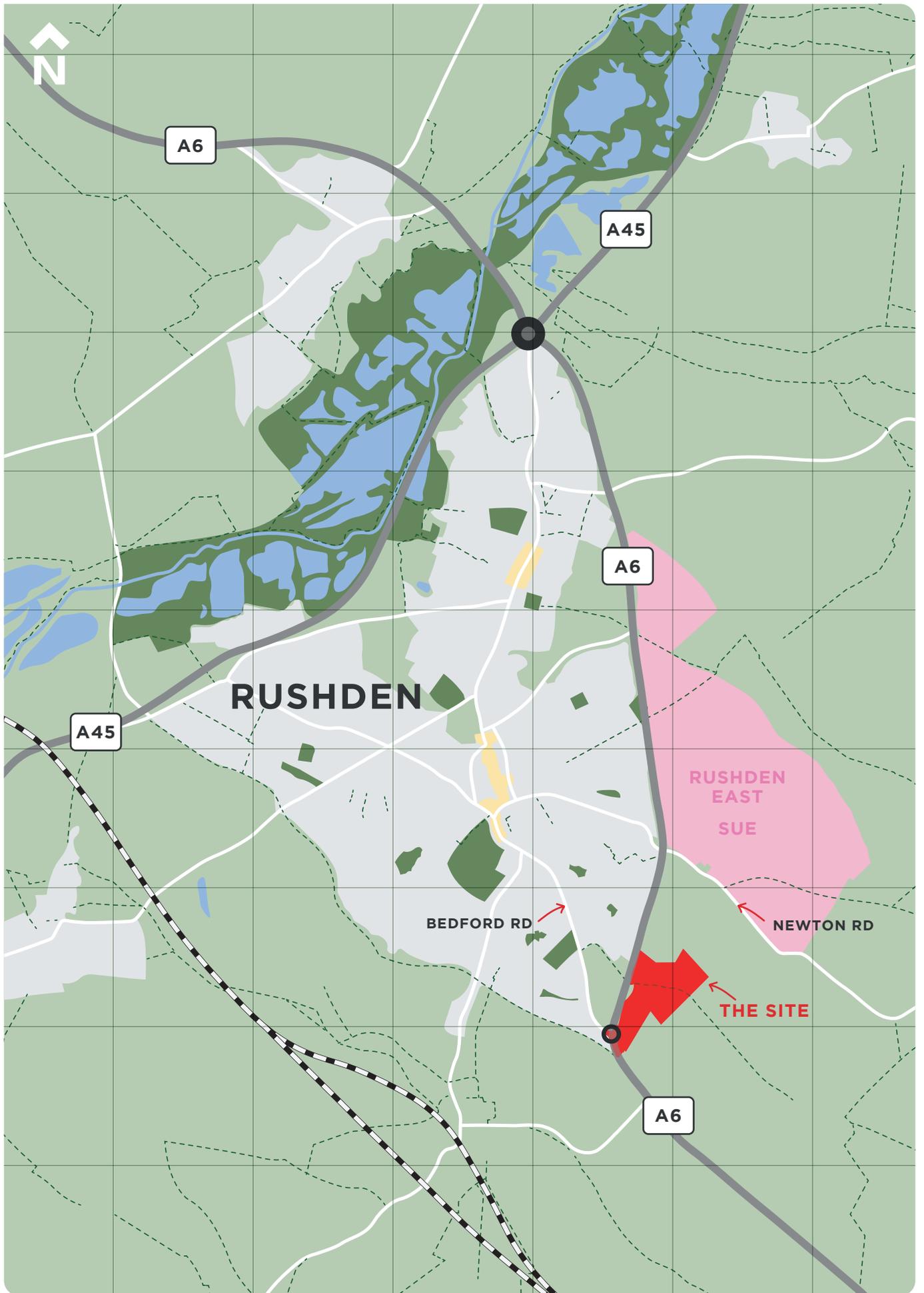


Figure 1.1: Site Context Plan

### 1.3 About Bellway Homes

At Bellway, our aim is not just to build new houses, it is to create attractive and sustainable communities that leave a positive legacy for residents and the wider society. Our commitment to this is demonstrated by being awarded the coveted five star housebuilder award by the House Builders Federation, as a result of emphasis on build quality, customer care and health and safety.

Bellway recognise that successful developments must meet the needs of not just potential residents, but also of existing neighbouring communities. We therefore consult on new developments through tailored engagement with local communities and stakeholders, incorporating feedback into our plans to ensure local people have the opportunity to help shape developments within their community.

As one of the largest housebuilders in the UK, Bellway are well placed to deliver much needed market and affordable homes to address the country's ongoing housing shortage. Since our beginning as a family business over 70 years ago, Bellway now operate from 22 trading divisions which are located in the main population centres in England, Scotland and Wales.

Bellway are promoting this highly sustainable Site in Rushden for the delivery of much needed market and affordable homes, and we want to deliver a thriving and liveable place in this sustainable location. We are fully committed to working with the Council and the community to make this happen.



### 1.4 Purpose of the Statement

The DAS explains the design rationale for the scheme and how the applicant has fully considered the proposals and understands what is appropriate and feasible within the context of the Site and its surroundings.

Good quality design is an integral part of sustainable development. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) recognises that design quality matters and that planning should drive up standards across all forms of development. Achieving good design is about creating places, buildings, or spaces that work well for everyone, look good, last well, and will adapt to the needs of future generations.

This Design and Access Statement is comprised of the following sections:

- 01. Introduction:** This section introduces the development proposals and sets out the vision and purpose of the Design and Access Statement.
- 02. Planning Context and Design Guidance:** This section sets out the relevant planning policy and design guidance that applies to the development of the Site.
- 03. Site Assessment:** This section demonstrates the steps taken to appraise the Site and its surroundings.
- 04. Evaluation:** This section identifies the influences and opportunities of the Site and its surroundings.
- 05. Development Proposals:** This section describes and illustrates the design proposals and demonstrates how they respond to the influences and opportunities identified in Section 4.0 and local design guidance.
- 06. Conclusion:** This section evaluates the proposals against the principles of good design contained within Building for a Healthy Life.

## 1.5 The Vision

The vision for the Site is to create a sensitively designed and high-quality place which complements the character of Rushden and responds to the Site's assessed constraints, as follows:

- Deliver a high-quality residential development in a sustainable and well-connected location to help deliver the housing requirements to support the sustainable growth of Rushden, without negatively impacting on the surrounding character.



- Provide up to 450 new homes, offering a range of dwelling types, sizes and tenures to meet the housing needs of the area, including 30% affordable housing.

- Provide a new community facility, which could comprise uses such as a shop, a community hall, or a health facility. This would minimise the need to travel beyond the development to reach some services or facilities, and could form an important social heart to the neighbourhood.

- Create a logical, carefully considered extension to Rushden, which will ensure an appropriate transition between the existing settlement and the countryside beyond.

- Respect and enhance the Site and the surrounding landscape, heritage and environmental assets by setting the new homes within an attractive green infrastructure network. New tree and thicket planting will mitigate against the loss of existing vegetation to facilitate the internal street layout, and will include new thicket planting along the eastern boundary to set the entire development within a strong green landscaped framework.

- The proposed green infrastructure framework will allow for ecological enhancements, have a beneficial effect on local wildlife, and will help address the requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain.

- SuDS features coinciding with the low points of the Site, designed to retain surface water and provide new habitat for wildlife.

- Promote a development that integrates into its surroundings, with a focus on maximising connectivity of pedestrian and cycle routes, to both the existing settlement edge, the proposed RE SUE, and the countryside beyond.



- Create a 'place' that is accessible to everyone, which makes everyone feel comfortable, safe and secure, and a place where people want to live.

# 02

## Planning Policy Context

### 2.1 Planning Policy & Guidance

A detailed assessment of the planning policy framework is set out in the Planning Statement which accompanies this planning application. This section focuses on the local planning policies most relevant to the design and access proposals for the development.

#### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

At the national level, the relevant policy guidance is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021). The NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development and is a material consideration in the making of planning decisions, setting out the parameters by which planning applications are to be assessed in relation to:

- **The presumption in favour of sustainable development.**
- **Decision-making.**
- **Delivering a sufficient supply of homes.**
- **Promoting healthy and safe communities.**
- **Promoting sustainable transport.**
- **Making effective use of land.**
- **Achieving well-designed places.**
- **Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.**

Paragraph 126 of the NPPF states that “Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities”.

Paragraph 130 provides a set of design criteria which new development should seek to achieve:

- **Function well and add to the overall quality of the area over the lifetime of the development.**
- **Be visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping.**

- **Be sympathetic to local character and history, while not preventing or discouraging innovation.**
- **Establish or maintain a strong sense of place to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit.**
- **Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space).**
- **Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being.**

#### National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

The Planning Practice Guidance explains how the NPPF policy should be implemented and should be read alongside the National Design Guide. Paragraph 001 (ID 26-001-20191001) of the PPG provides further information on design in the planning process. It states:

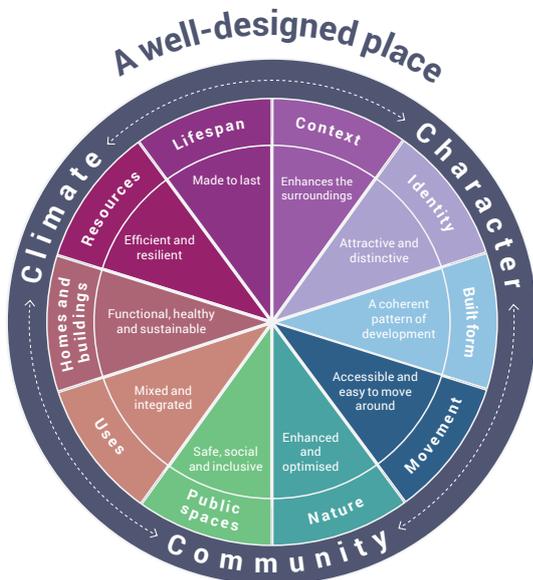
*“...development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to: a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.”*

### National Design Guidance

In October 2019, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) published the National Design Guide (NDG). The NDG has been put in place to advise local authorities and their officers when assessing planning applications, councillors when making planning decisions, applicants and their design teams when preparing a planning application and local communities and their representatives.

Whilst it seeks to inform development proposals and guide the assessment of them, it also supports paragraph 130 of the NPPF which states *“planning permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.”*

Part 2 of the NDG sets out the ten characteristics which help to nurture and sustain a sense of community. They work to positively address environmental issues affecting climate. They all contribute towards the cross-cutting themes for good design set out in the NPPF.



### Building For a Healthy Life (BHL)

#### ‘A Design Toolkit for neighbourhoods, streets, homes and public spaces’

BHL is one of the most widely used design tools in England for creating places that are better for people and nature. It was written in partnership with Homes England, NHS England and NHS Improvement and is structured to set clear expectations for new developments. By following BHL’s structure, the following Statement offers a clear set of design qualities and ‘testable’ principles for the application at Rushden.

By following BHL, a critical aspect of the proposals for the Site is to design for active travel and access to green space. The ability to be able to walk and cycle within the new neighbourhood and further afield to essential services and work is key in order to minimise traffic and mitigating climate change. Equally, and as BHL sets out, the COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced the importance of designing for active travel. This is in recognition that design choices that help people feel disposed to walk or ride a bicycle in their neighbourhood are critical to supporting a sense of well-being from outdoor exercise.

The development of the Site will also respond positively to climate change. The principles embedded in BHL as a whole creates the basis for a sustainable development, including in relation to designing for active travel, maximising access to green space, working with the existing landscape and securing biodiversity enhancements.



## 2.2 Local Planning Policy

In April 2021 the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government approved the parliamentary legislation for the creation of two new unitaries for Northamptonshire.

North Northamptonshire Council is the single unitary council responsible for providing a range of public services to residents and businesses in the areas of Corby, East Northamptonshire, Kettering and Wellingborough. It has replaced Corby Borough Council, East Northamptonshire Council, Kettering Borough Council and the Borough Council of Wellingborough, and now delivers all the services which were previously provided by these councils. The Site at Rushden falls within the East Northamptonshire Area of the North Northamptonshire Council.

The current Statutory Development Plan for the District includes the Local Plan Part 1, also known as The North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) 2011-2031, adopted in July 2016. This Plan sets out the overarching strategic policy framework for the district. Part 2 of the Local Plan includes site specific development plan documents and the policies map. This is known as the East Northamptonshire District Local Plan (DLP), adopted November 1996 and The Rushden Neighbourhood Plan, “Made” in June 2018.

Work is currently being undertaken to produce a new district wide Local Plan Part 2. The Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan Part 2 consultation took place in March 2021 and is currently awaiting to be independently examined by the Planning Inspectorate, to test the “soundness” of the Plan before being formally adopted by the Secretary of State. The Local Plan Part 2 will provide additional site-specific detail supporting and to be read alongside the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (Local Plan Part 1). This will replace policies from the previous Local Plan Part 2, except in cases where a “made” (adopted) Neighbourhood Plan have already superseded these.

### Local Plan Part 1: North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) 2011-2031 (adopted July 2016)

The Policies most relevant to this DAS and the Site are summarised below:

#### Protecting and Enhancing Assets

- **Policy 3 - Landscape Character:** Development should be located and designed in a way that is sensitive to its landscape setting, retaining and, where possible, enhancing the distinctive qualities of the landscape character area which it would affect.
- **Policy 7 - Community Services and Facilities:** Development should support and enhance community services and facilities, where appropriate by providing on site where necessary or contributing towards accessible, new or enhanced community services and facilities; providing accessible greenspace in accordance with relevant national standards; Safeguarding existing facilities; and not resulting in a net loss of open space, allotments, sports and recreation buildings and land.

#### The Green Infrastructure Framework

- **Policy 19 - The Delivery of Green Infrastructure:** Managing development and investment to secure a net gain in green infrastructure through establishing multi-functional greenspaces within the GI network and providing, where opportunities exist, new wildlife habitats, facilities and routes to enhance assets and the linkages between them.

#### Delivery Homes

- **Policy 30 - Housing Mix and Tenure:** Housing development should provide a mix of dwelling sizes and tenures to cater for current and forecast accommodation needs and to assist in the creation of sustainable mixed and inclusive communities.

Ensuring high quality developments is a particular important aspect of the design process. **Policy 8** of the JCS '*North Northamptonshire Place Shaping Principles*' will be considered in the proposals and are explored further within Section 5 of this DAS. Those objectives are as follows:

- **Developments should create connected places;**
- **Make safe and pleasant streets and spaces;**
- **Ensure adaptable, diverse and flexible places;**
- **Create a distinctive local character; and**
- **Ensure quality of life and safer and healthier communities.**

### **Local Plan Part 2: The East Northamptonshire Local Plan, (adopted 1996)**

The East Northamptonshire Local Plan, has now mostly been replaced. However, a small number of its policies still remain in force. Those policies most relevant to this DAS are summarised below:

- **Policy RL3 - Recreational Open Space Provision by Developers**
- **Policy RL4 - Children's Play Areas**

### **Rushden Neighbourhood Plan**

The Rushden Neighbourhood Plan (RNP) was adopted by East Northamptonshire Council on 4th June 2018, and covers the same period as the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2011 to 2031).

The Site lies within the RNP boundary and the level of development proposed is key to the overall strategy of the Plan, with recognition of the potential that this Site could contribute towards the growth of Rushden, combined with the that of the development at Rushden East.

The Policies most relevant to this DAS and the Site are summarised below:

#### **Housing**

- **Policy H4 - Market housing type and mix:** New market housing proposals will be required to provide a balance of property sizes and types to meet market demands in accordance with Policy 30 of the NNJCS.

#### **Environment**

- **Policy EN1 - Design in Developments:** All new developments should be of a high quality of design, adhering to the key principles set out within the Policy.
- **Policy EN2 - Landscaping in Developments:** Development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that these would deliver well integrated hard and soft landscaping
- **Policy EN4 - Public Realm:** Where appropriate, new development should improve the quality of the public realm with the creation of safe and attractive public spaces.

#### **Community, Leisure & Open Space**

- **Policy CL2 - Provision of new open space and amenity space:** Development proposals of this size will be required to provide suitable amenity space, through the provision of either semi-natural open space, natural open space or children's playspace, or a combination of each, in accordance with the districts Open Space Supplementary Planning Document.
- **Policy CL7 - New community facilities:** Developments which improve existing community facilities or provide new community facilities will be supported.

#### **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD & Guidance**

Consideration has also been given to the following local planning and design guidance:

- **NCC Parking Standards (September 2016);**
- **NCC Place and Movement Guide (2008);**
- **North Northamptonshire Sustainable Design SPD (2009);**
- **ENC Developer Contributions SPD (June 2006);**
- **ENC Domestic Waste Storage and Collection SPD (July 2012);**
- **ENC Open Space SPD (November 2011); and,**
- **ENC Tree and Landscape SPD (2013)**

# 03

## Site Assessment

### 3.1 Site Location & Context

Rushden has grown to become one of the largest towns in Northamptonshire, and is centrally located to larger settlements such as Northampton, Corby, Peterborough, Milton Keynes and Cambridge. Geographically the town covers approximately 14 square miles and is well served by a number of strategic roads, including the A45 located to the west and north of the town and the A6 that runs east of the town.

The Site measures 23.70ha and lies approximately 2km (1.2 miles) from the centre of Rushden, adjacent to the south eastern edge of the settlement, east of the A6/ Bedford Road. To the north and east of the Site are further arable fields, with a golf range and course located to the south east, to the north of Bedford Road (A6).

The land adjacent to the east of the Site is currently subject to a planning application for the use of a community facility, which includes 4 rugby pitches. With the exception of higher ground in the north, the Site is largely enclosed in character yet influenced by the existing residential edge of Rushden to the west, ribbon residential development to the south (Bedford Road), east (The Avenue) and north (Newton Road) as well as the heavily trafficked A6 transport corridor immediately west and south. The Site is located a short distance south of the allocated Rushden East Sustainable Urban Extension, which lies to the east of the A6 and north of Newton Road.

The site is characterised by arable crops and comprises part of two larger field compartments which are separated by a ditch and well-established hedgerow with occasional hedgerow trees along the valley bottom, broadly through the Site's centre. It is defined by mature vegetation to the west and its north eastern and south eastern edges while the remaining northern and eastern boundaries are undefined.

The urban edge of Rushden is strongly apparent beyond the A6 immediately adjacent to the western site perimeter and residential properties along Bedford Road (A6) immediately to the south are also prominent. Rushden Primary Academy occupies a large, modern and visually dominant building to the west of the site and Rushden and Higham Rugby Club, with its high perimeter fence line, also forms a dominant element within local views to the south-west.

Public footpath UK9 crosses the Site, linking Rushden in the west to Higham Park in the east.

The Site's boundaries to the west, north east, and south east, are defined by mature vegetation, while the remaining northern and eastern boundaries are undefined, however the new sports pitches and clubhouse proposed by the Rushden Town Council will, in time, mark this boundary.

The Site location, its immediate context and Rushden's wider context are illustrated on the Site Location Plan in Figure 3.1 below and the Wider Context Plan in Figure 3.2 opposite.

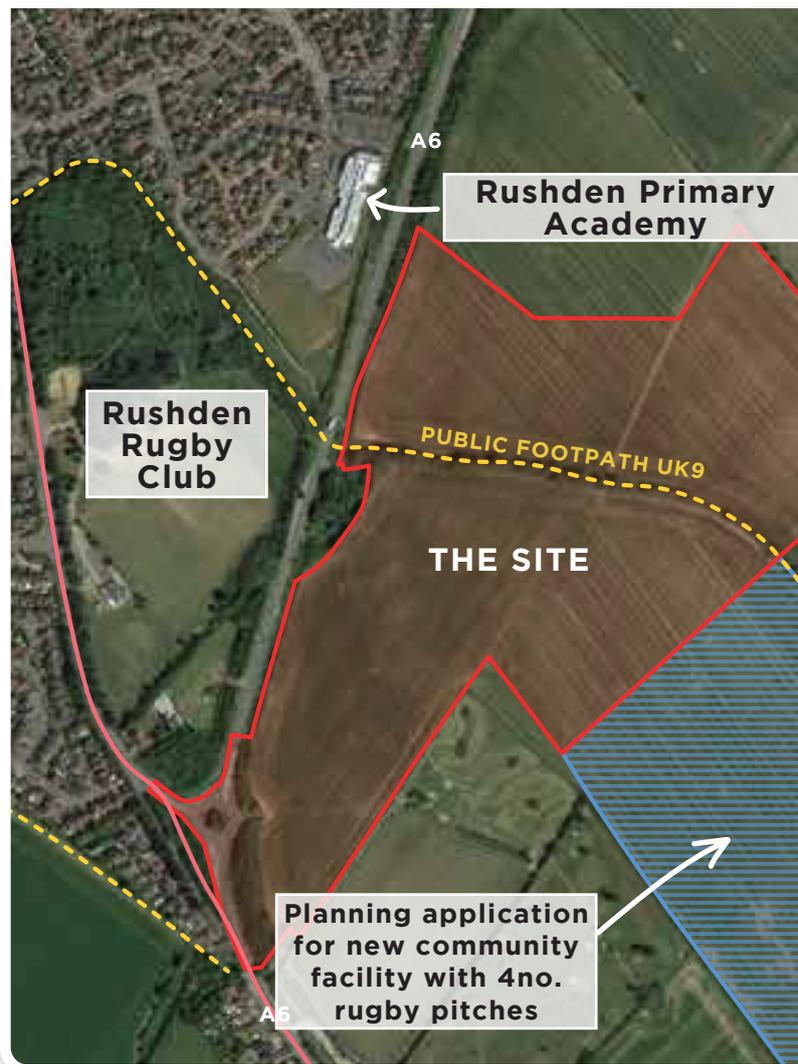


Figure 3.1: Site Location Plan



Figure 3.2: Wider Context Plan

### 3.2 Access, Movement & Facilities

The Site lies approximately 2km (1.25 miles) south east of Rushden town centre. Rushden provides a good range of local services and facilities, and the Site is within walking or cycling distance of many of these, including Rushden Primary Academy and Rushden Academy (secondary school), a convenience store, and the doctor's surgery at Harborough Field Surgery.

There is a good network of footpaths and cycle routes throughout Rushden. While there are currently no footways at the A6/Bedford Road roundabout, the proposed development would facilitate new pedestrian connections across the A6, which would link to the existing footways within the town.

Rushden has a range of convenience stores including Waitrose, Lidl, Sainsbury's Local, and Asda. Rushden Lakes Shopping Centre has over 50 stores, including clothing retail, restaurants, cafés, food stores and a cinema. There are several schools within 3km of the Site, as well as leisure facilities, a post office and a library. There are many employment opportunities within Rushden, including Sanders Lodge Industrial Estate (around 3.8km from the Site).



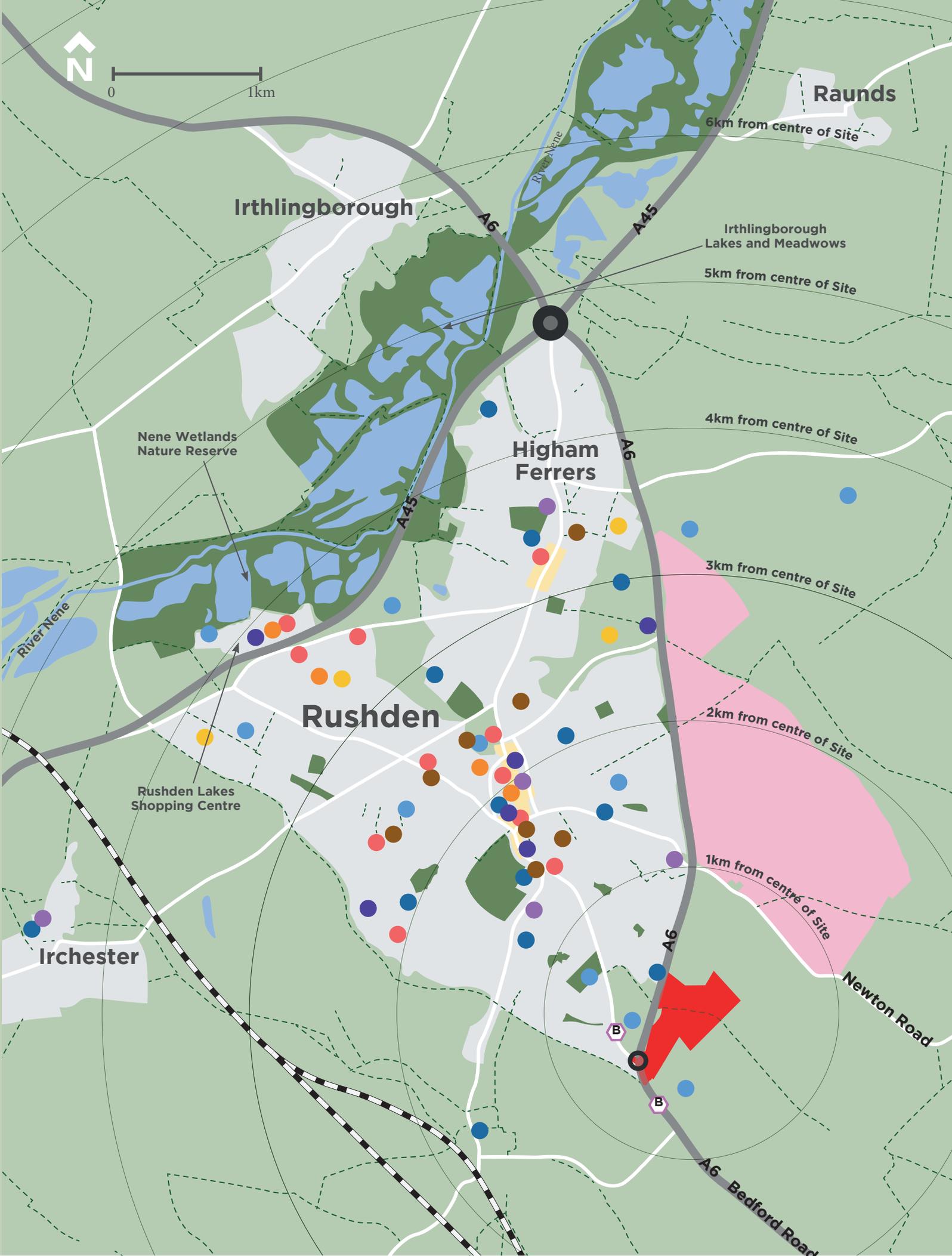
There is a bus service which links Bedford Bus Station with Kettering, along Bedford Road to the south and west of the Site, and through Rushden town centre, including to the Rushden Lakes. The nearest bus stops are located adjacent to the golf course, to the south of the Site, and adjacent to the current rugby club, to the south west. Further bus connections from Rushden town centre offer links to Wellingborough (including the Railway Station, 7km north west of the Site), with rail links from here to several towns and cities, including Nottingham and London St Pancras International.

The Site has good access to the wider highway network and public transport links, and offers a sustainable and accessible location for housing growth.

The location of the aforementioned facilities, services and connections are illustrated on the Facilities Plan in Figure 3.3 opposite.

-  Site location
-  Rushden East Sustainable Urban Extension
-  Public Open Space
-  Existing water features
-  Town centre
-  Existing main vehicular routes
-  Existing bus stops
-  Railway Line
-  Public Right of Way (PRoW)
-  Education facilities
-  Medical facilities
-  Convenience store/supermarket
-  Sporting/leisure facilities
-  Religious facilities
-  Industrial Site
-  Retail facilities
-  Public House/Restaurant/ Takeaway





**Figure 3.3:** Facilities Plan

### 3.3 Surrounding Designations

#### Landscape

The Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) Map (GIS) and the adopted Local Plan Proposals Map identify that the Site is not covered by any statutory or non-statutory designations for landscape character.

A search undertaken with the Local Planning Authority has revealed there are no Tree Preservation Orders ('TPO') covering any trees within the Site.

A single public right of way (PRoW) (Ref. UK9) crosses the Site connecting Higham Park in the east to Rushden town in the west, a bridleway (Ref. 2B) joins Bedford Road close to the southern tip of the site. An extensive network of designated routes criss-cross the landscape to the north, east and south including the Three Shires Way some 2.7km (1.7 miles) from the site.

The Site lies on the slopes of a localised valley, land rises to north-east, east and south east affording a perception of the site being reasonably well-contained overall. Landform slopes gently across the Site, rising to localised ridgelines in the north-east, at 90-95m AOD, and the east and south-east at 85-90m AOD.



Views along route of Public Footpath UK9



Grade I Listed Church of St Mary | Rushden Town

#### Heritage

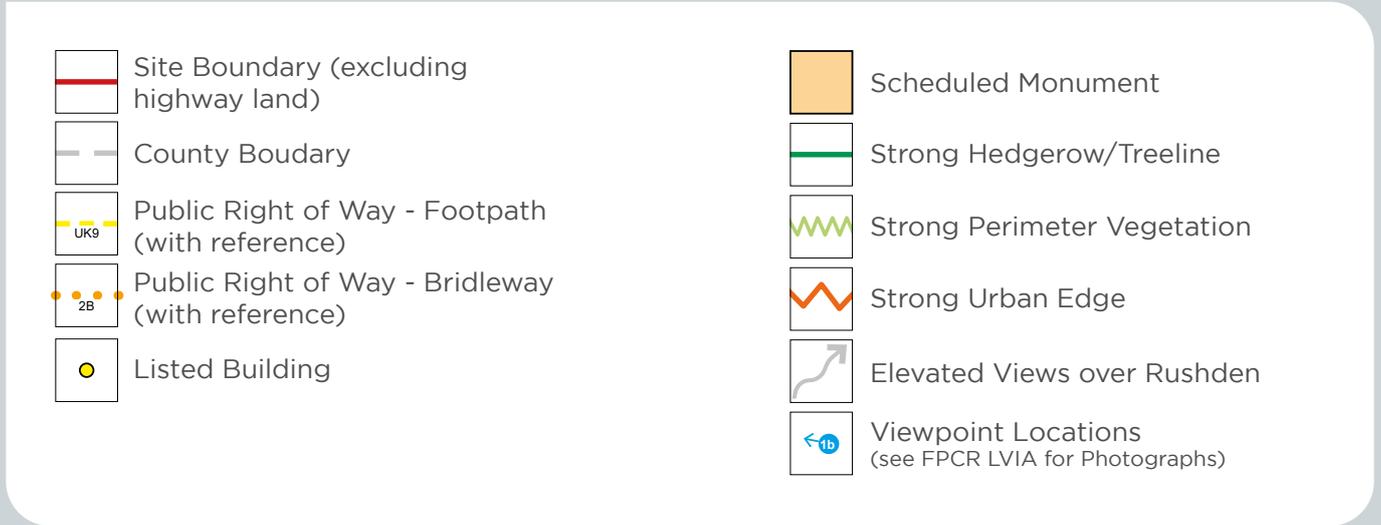
The Site is not covered by any national statutory or non-statutory heritage designations. Rushden Conservation Area and a small number of listed buildings are located to the north west of the Site, while a Scheduled Monument and Listed Building are located to the south east, and a further Listed Building lies at Wymington, situated to the south west of the site. There is limited intervisibility between the designations and the Site due to intervening built development combined with the nature of the topography as well as distance.

#### Ecology

The Site is not covered by any national statutory or non-statutory designations for ecology.

The Multi-Geographical Information for the Countryside system (MAGIC) has been reviewed for relevant information regarding the international designations. The site is situated 3.3km to the south east of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pit SPA / RAMSAR / SSSI.

Figure 3.4 opposite identifies the Surrounding Designations which have been identified above.



**Figure 3.4:** Surrounding Designations Plan (Prepared by FPCR)

### 3.4 Historical Development of Local Area

Historically Rushden and the medieval and important Saxon estate centre of Higham Ferrers were small rural villages and today have coalesced to now form the contiguous settlement of Rushden. Early indications suggest that there is evidence of Bronze and Iron Age settlements in the area as well as Roman sites being found in the Hayway Area and Higham Park. Rushden is referenced in the Domesday book, with many of the settlement's key attributes stemming from early historical periods; for example, the core medieval pattern and field systems of Rushden were established during the 8<sup>th</sup> Century.



View of historic buildings along Bedford Road on the approach to the town centre

Farming in the region was the dominate occupation of the town in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. It wasn't until the industrial revolution in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century that this changed rapidly, where boot and shoe manufacturing became Rushden's new employment base. The demand for factory space to aid the boot and shoe making industry saw the rural village of Rushden grow rapidly into an industrial town. At the height of this growth between 1870 and 1920, Rushden was home to over 100 factories. As a consequence of this industrial shift, the character of the area changed and saw the introduction of new rows of terraces and community buildings, built between new roads and over former green space within the settlement, which supported and served the families of the factory workers. The speed of growth meant factories became an embedded feature of the town and in more recent years a large number of these have been converted to flats.



Rushden is famous for its shoe and boot making heritage

During the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Rushden continued to grow and development in the settlement diversified to include new banks, shops and other civil and community buildings constructed around the High Street and Newton Road. Other significant developments in this period include the creation of the one-way traffic system that still remains today.

Rushden today has grown to be one of the largest towns in Northamptonshire, however, due to the decline in boot and shoe making industry, much of the vibrancy of the historic core of Rushden has been lost to larger out of town competitors and other nearby settlements.



View looking along Newton Rd towards the Library & St Mary's Church

### 3.5 Architectural & Character Context

An analysis of the surrounding area can help to achieve an understanding of the physical context of the proposed community including; the immediate neighbourhood, local town and region, as well as street and more intimate spaces. Therefore, an analysis of the local built form and character can aid in the understanding and integration of the proposals into their context.

Within Rushden, the original heart of the settlement grew around High Street, High Street South, Duck Street, College Street, Church Street, Newton Road and Park Road, with new development expanding around the High Street, the former A6/ Bedford Road, that now runs like a spine through the settlement in a north - south direction. Radiating out to the west, south and east of the town centre are predominantly streets of brick and terraced housing that are associated with the former shoe manufacturing industries as well as other Victorian buildings.

The core of Rushden is designated as a Conservation Area with the urban grain largely linear in form, with the medieval route through the town forming the backbone of the Conservation Area. The centre of the Conservation Area is dense in form as buildings front onto the High Street with visual relief only being provided by pockets of public seating scattered throughout the centre. The continuous building line along the High Street is only broken by the Wesleyan Chapel, which sits at a different angle to nearby neighbouring buildings. The most prominent building in the Conservation Area is St Mary's Church.

As a reflection of the age of the settlement, the town contains a significant number of designated heritage assets including the Grade I Listed St Mary's Church that was built in the 1300's and is identified by its grand spire. In addition, there are other Grade II\* listed buildings, including Rushden Hall which dates back to the 14<sup>th</sup> Century, former shoe factories, former farmhouses and rectories.

The typical building styles, materials and key characteristics of Rushden should be considered within the proposals of the Site, these include:

- **Linear direct streets provide long range views and enhance connections to key local facilities.**
- **Back-to-back development, ensuring rear amenity spaces are enclosed and private.**
- **Development fronts the primary movement route, ensuring streets are well overlooked**
- **Range of densities used, with the highest density development located close to local centres.**
- **Use of regular plot widths and a consistent building line reinforces primary routes.**
- **Higher storey heights and narrow fronted plots are commonplace along primary routes, enhancing a more formal character.**
- **Wider and shallower plots are more common in rural areas, reflecting the lower density of development.**
- **Terraced units are commonplace**
- **Drive through historic coaching archways provide access to rear parking without impacting on building line and built form massing.**
- **Parking should be carefully considered, it can tend to dominate the street scene in long terraced streets, impeding vehicular flows, but aiding traffic calming.**
- **Red brick dwellings are common with the occasional use of painted brick or render, either full height or to the ground floor only to define the street scene.**
- **Painted stone detailing common**
- **Increased detailing, including traditional dentil courses, stone banding and corbelling used to define higher order properties.**
- **Gables front the street, with brick or timber detailing adding interest to the street scene.**



A selection of photographs illustrating the architectural quality & character of Rushden

### 3.6 Landscape & Visual Character

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been carried out for the proposed development by FPCR Environment and Design Ltd (FPCR). The purpose of this LVIA study is to provide an assessment of the likely landscape and visual effects of the proposed development.

Existing landscape features of mature trees, scrub and hedgerows will be retained, as far as practicable, reinforced, and enhanced to strengthen the character of the site. A strong framework of GI will be implemented to include new perimeter landscape planting, providing a robust green edge to the development and additional containment from the wider countryside to the north and east. Structure planting will also be introduced along green corridors within the scheme, creating logical development parcels, these will interconnect with each other as well as areas of open space including the large recreational areas at the heart of the development and in the north which encompass equipped children's play and SuDS features. The retained mature hedgerow, drainage ditch and PRow running through the centre of the proposed development will form a strong green spine and greenway. New tree planting will be introduced along the primary road, as well as more minor roads where practicable throughout the proposed development, and within the public open space.

The proposed development will be well related to the existing settlement edge of Rushden through its considered layout. A residential character will be created that is sympathetic to the setting of existing properties. While the scheme will undoubtedly change the character of the site, it is considered that it will not be out of context with the nature of the local landscape, being within an area influenced by its urban surroundings, most notably the edge of Rushden and the A6.

In both landscape and visual terms, the proposed development will be well contained by localised landform combined with layers of field boundary and roadside vegetation together with existing built development. This results in an in-extensive visual envelope overall.

While there will be some adverse residual visual effects that are assessed as being significant, the receptors affected are limited to users of PRow 'UK9' and are extremely limited and localised only with the majority of available views contained to when passing through the site or close to its east/ west boundaries. Furthermore, the proposed development is not out of character with the existing immediate surroundings and will therefore be viewed in the context of this.

This LVIA concludes that, while the proposed development will inevitably result in some effects upon the local landscape and visual resource, very few extremely localised effects will be significant in the longer term with the majority ultimately being mitigated to bring forward a high-quality residential development for Rushden with a range of amenities, including a local centre, recreation, and biodiversity opportunities.





**Photo Viewpoint 1** | Sequential view north west from PRow UK9



**Photo Viewpoint 2** | Sequential view north east from PRow UK9 (within site)



**Photo Viewpoint 3** | Sequential view east from PRow UK9 (within site)

### 3.7 Ecology

FPCR prepared an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). The purpose of the EclA is to review the existing baseline ecology of the Site and the impact and effects resulting from the proposed development. The EclA considers and evaluates the potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts during the construction and occupation phases of the scheme. Biodiversity enhancements are described, and residual effects following mitigation and compensation are noted.

The Site predominantly comprises part of two intensively farmed arable field compartments. A hedge with ditch and trees runs east – west through the Site, dividing the two field compartments. Two other hedges are present at the north east and south east boundary of the Site. The A6 road side buffer planting is present along the western boundary of the site.

A desktop survey was undertaken in 2020/2021, which identified that the Site is located 3.3km south east of the Nene Valley Gravel Pit Special Protection Area (SPA)/RAMSAR/Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Given the distance of the Site to the designated site, residents of the proposed development are likely to have to travel by car to be able to use the recreational resources within the designated site.

To minimise recreational use of the designated site, the proposed development at the Site should provide at least 9ha of new green infrastructure, within walking distance of the new homes. These new areas of open space will be designed to be attractive to dog walkers, and to provide a variety of recreational uses, thereby offering a closer and more convenient alternative for recreation than the Nene Valley Gravel Pit.

The initial phase 1 habitat survey element for the proposed development was undertaken and included: Spring, Summer and Autumn Bat Transect and Automated Static Surveys; Badger Survey; Assessment and aquatic survey of waterbodies as potential great crested newt habitat; and breeding and wintering bird surveys.

Hedgerows, trees and the ditch occur at the boundaries of the existing field compartments and represent features of greater ecological value within the site. These features are to be largely retained, with the majority of the footprint of the proposed development designed to sit within

the existing arable land, which is of significantly lower ecological value as a habitat. The proposals include a generous GI network to expand on the retained features creating additional grassland, wetland and areas of structural woody planting. Additional corridors of green space will be created which will improve upon the existing network of potential habitat for local fauna including birds, bats and amphibians including GCN, resulting in an overall Minor Beneficial impact upon habitats and faunal assemblages in the long-term.

Based on successful implementation of the proposed mitigation, compensation and enhancements set out within the EclA, the development is not anticipated to result in any residual significant negative measures on important ecological features. The extent of GI proposed has the capacity to deliver >10% net biodiversity gain.

Section 5 of the DAS will explore the necessary ecological mitigation measures, which are proposed to reduce these pressures and help protect, preserve and enhance the local biodiversity of Rushden.

### 3.8 Topography

Landform slopes gently across the Site, rising to localised ridgelines in the north east, at 90-95m AOD, and the east and south east at 85-90m AOD.

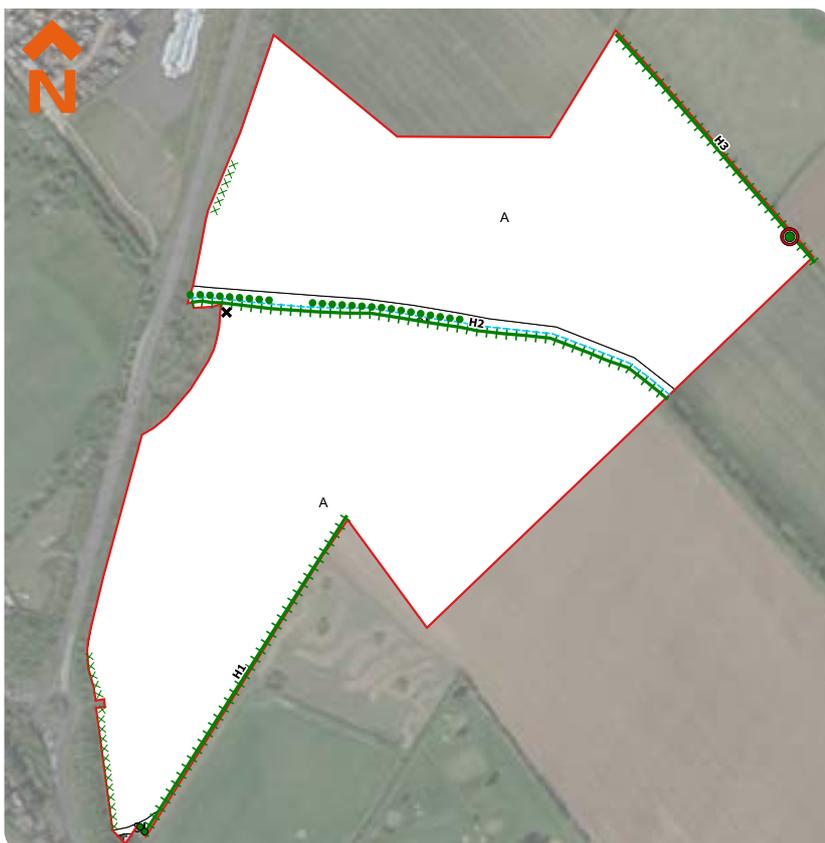
Both Rushden, Higham Ferrers and the Site lie predominantly within a wide, shallow valley with the land falling to the north west of the Site where the Nene Valley dominates the landscape and its topography. Beyond the Site, the landform to the east and south opens out into a gently rolling landscape marked by localised stream and river valleys.



Photographs of the gently sloping landform



Figure 3.5: Topography Plan



**Key**

- Survey area
- A Arable
- SI Poor semi-improved grassland
- Scrub - dense/continuous
- Tree and scrub line
- Hedgerow
- Ditch
- Scrub - scattered line
- ✕ Scrub - scattered
- Tree with bat potential
- Broadleaved tree

Figure 3.6: Habitats Plan (Prepared by FPCR)

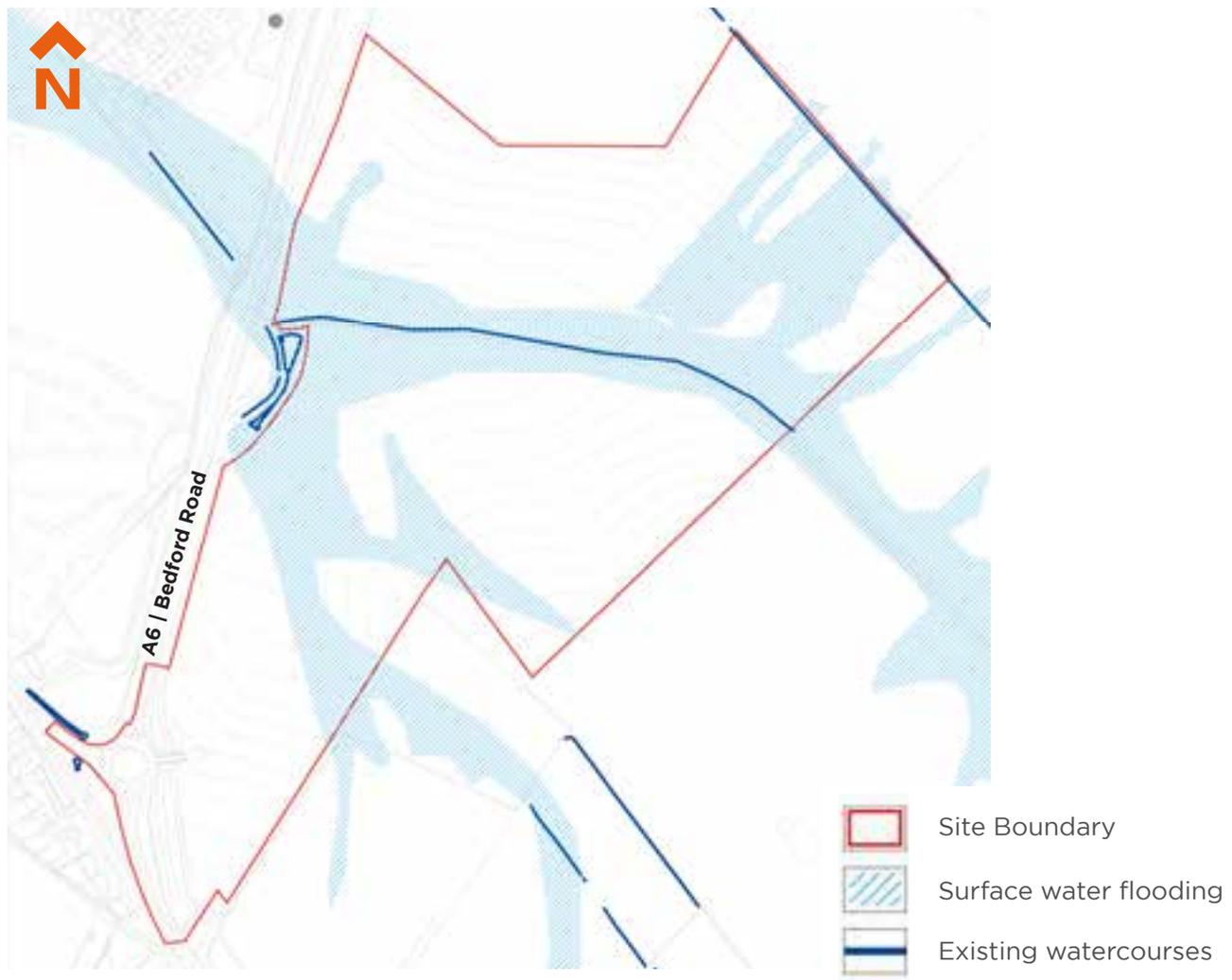
### 3.9 Flooding & Drainage

The Outline Planning Application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Drainage Statement. This has been prepared to demonstrate that following the construction of the development, the risk of flooding on the Site and potential risk of flooding elsewhere will not increase and that surface water drainage from the development will accord with Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) principles in compliance with current national and local standards. The findings of the FRA and Drainage Statement report are summarised below:

- **The Site is wholly located in Flood Zone 1, which means that it is at low risk of fluvial flooding, and suitable for residential development. Localised parts of the Site are liable to some surface water flooding due to localised depressions and shallow valleys within the topography, however, the proposed development will allow for the surface water to be managed.**

- **Surface water from the Site will discharge via gravity to the watercourse at the western boundary of the Site, adjacent to the A6. Surface water will be treated on site via the use of various Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) measures, which could include permeable paving, filter drains, swales or attenuation basins. Attenuation basins or other SuDS features will retain excess surface water on site, in order to control its rate of release to that of the equivalent greenfield rates, plus a 40% allowance for climate change storm event.**

The FRA concludes that the proposed development is safe and in accordance with the requirements of national and local planning policy.



### 3.10 Utilities

A Utility Appraisal Report has been prepared to support the Outline Planning Application and has been undertaken to identify the constraints imposed by the existing utility apparatus. The appraisal also identifies the need for new utility infrastructure, potential utility upgrade/reinforcement works, or the need for further investigation/modelling where required. The findings of this report are summarised below:

- **Gas and water mains, and electricity, telephone and internet cables are located in Bedford Road (A6) along the southern boundary of the Site, and the development can be serviced with these utilities.**
- **A watermain runs through the Site from east to west. The main and associated 24m easement will be retained undeveloped as part of the proposed development.**

The Utility Appraisal Report concludes the proposed development can be accommodated, whilst adhering to any specific building restrictions.

In terms of the energy strategy for the site, discussions with energy providers are ongoing. The energy strategy will be developed alongside the detailed design and form part of future reserved matters submissions.



Figure 3.8: Utilities Plan

### 3.11 Built Heritage

A historic environment desk-based assessment has been undertaken in relation to the Site, and it considers the available archaeological, historical, topographic and land-use information in order to clarify the significance and archaeological potential of the Site. The findings of the assessment are summarised below:

- **Rushden Conservation Area lies approximately 1.4km to the north west in the town centre, however there is limited intervisibility between the Conservation Area and the Site, due to intervening built development combined with the nature of the topography, as well as distance.**
- **A small number of Listed Buildings also lie to the north west of the Site, but again, separated from it by intervening development. A Scheduled Monument and Listed Building are located to the south east, and a further Listed Building lies at Wymington, to the south west of the Site.**
- **There are no designated heritage assets on the Site, and the proposed development will have no impact upon any designated heritage assets in the surrounding area.**
- **The available archaeological records, combined with the results of the analysis of historical mapping, cropmark plots and previous archaeological investigations, suggest that there is potential for the survival of prehistoric and Roman period remains in the Site. However, there is no evidence to suggest that any remains would be of greater than local significance. It is possible that buried remains relating to medieval or post-medieval agriculture could survive within the Site, representing former ploughing or field boundaries, as well as possible small scale quarrying, but any such remains would be considered to be of negligible significance**

### 3.12 Arboriculture

FPCR produced a Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA). There are no trees covered by TPOs within the Site. The survey records the tree cover present and assesses its arboricultural value. The report identifies arboricultural constraints and opportunities to inform development design. The findings of the survey are summarised below:

- **No Veteran trees were recorded in the Site. The trees present were mostly young to semi-mature ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and silver birch (*Betula pendula*). They provide some limited structural diversity, but the trees did not offer microhabitats typical of mature or over mature trees. From this ecological assessment the trees have been identified as being of no more than Local importance.**
- **Dense scrub dominated by bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) was present along the south western boundary and within the very southern corner of the Site. Willow (*Salix* sp.) and sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) were also recorded within the areas of dense scrub.**
- **Only three hedgerows are present within the study area, all of which are species poor comprising three or four species per average 30m section. None of the hedgerows met the criteria to be classified as 'Important' under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997**
- **The part removal of G5 and G3 is needed to construct the internal access road.**
- **A large proportion of tree cover can be retained and incorporated into the landscaping scheme, with the trees retained subject to sound Arboricultural management as informed by British Standards**
- **New tree planting should include native and ornamental tree species. Native species should be specified to contribute towards net biodiversity gain.**

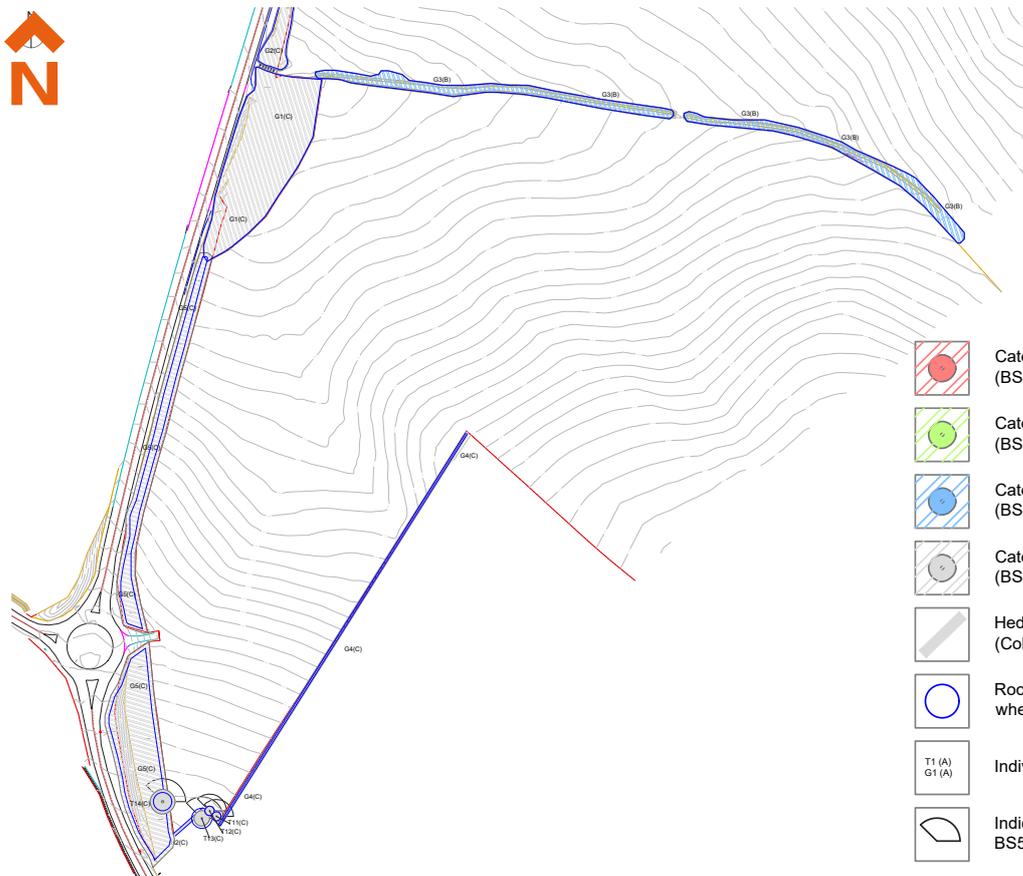
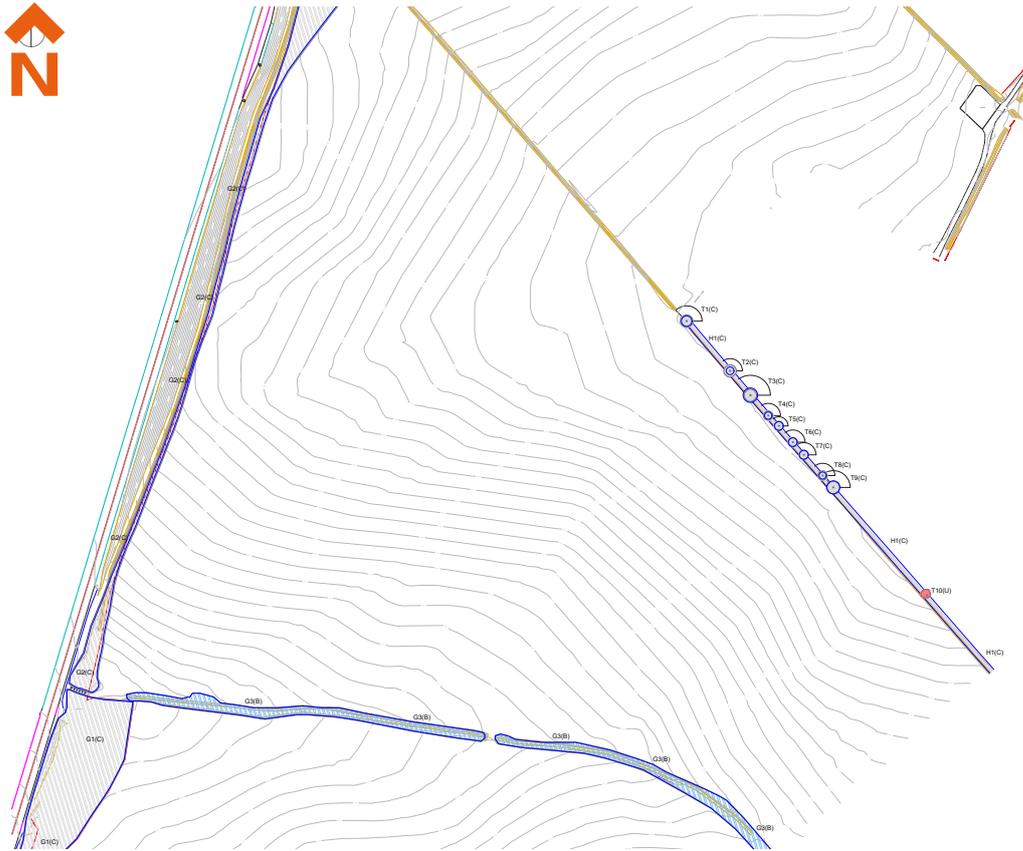
The AIA concludes that subject to the implementation of the advice contained within the AIA the proposed development is acceptable from an arboricultural perspective. The loss of trees and hedgerow can be readily mitigated and the retained trees can be adequately protected during construction activities to sustain their health and longevity. New tree and hedgerow planting would deliver a significant net gain in tree and shrub species diversity and canopy cover at the site. An Arboricultural Method Statement and finalised Tree Protection Plan will need to be produced. Where the feasibility of a scheme has been agreed upon by the Local Planning Authority, this detail can be agreed and submitted later as part of a reserved matters application or pre-commencement planning condition (by agreement with the applicant).



Mature native hedge and tree planting along the route of the Public Footpath UK9



Well-managed hedgerow



-  Category U - Trees / Groups Unsuitable for Retention (BS 5837:2012)
-  Category A - Trees / Groups of High Quality (BS 5837:2012)
-  Category B - Trees / Groups of Moderate Quality (BS 5837:2012)
-  Category C - Trees / Groups of Low Quality (BS 5837:2012)
-  Hedgerow (Colour indicates BS5837:2012 Category)
-  Root Protection Area (The RPA has been altered where appropriate to reflect underground constraints)
-  Individual / Group Number and BS5837:2012 Category
-  Indicative Shade Pattern (in accordance with BS5837:2012 where appropriate)

Figure 3.9: Tree Survey (Prepared by FPCR)

# 04

## Evaluation

### 4.1 Opportunities & Influences

The Opportunities and Influences associated with the proposed development have been identified following the assessment of the Site and its surroundings, as detailed in Sections 2 and 3. These are listed below and shown on the Opportunities and Influences Plan at Figure 4.1. This assessment of the Site and its surroundings have informed the design proposals.

#### Opportunities

- Provision of a new vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access point from the roundabout at the junction of Bedford Road and the A6, including a Toucan crossing immediately north of the roundabout, into town centre.
- Opportunity for pedestrian links to the existing public footpath which runs through the Site, allowing connections to the wider countryside. A further pedestrian link could potentially be provided to link to Newton Road in the north.
- Opportunity for a new area of public open space within the highest part of the Site in the north east, as well as further green infrastructure corridors through and around the new homes. Two new children's play areas can also be provided.



- Safe cycle and pedestrian links, which are overlooked by the new homes, can be provided within the development to link to the new rugby club (without the development, the routes to the club would be less attractive for walkers and cyclists).
- Opportunity to provide new hedgerow, thicket and tree planting to significantly increase tree cover within the Site and its boundaries and set the entire development within a strong green framework.
- Opportunity to reinstate hedgerows and green corridors along former historical field boundaries, to further enhance the east-west and north-south green links through the Site.
- Opportunity to provide a range of ecological enhancement measures in order to maximise the Site's biodiversity value. Enhanced green corridors within and around the boundaries of the Site will improve wildlife connectivity.
- To provide sustainable drainage basins (SuDS) in the lower parts of the Site, which will form an integral part of the development's green infrastructure, providing ecological benefits and habitat creation.

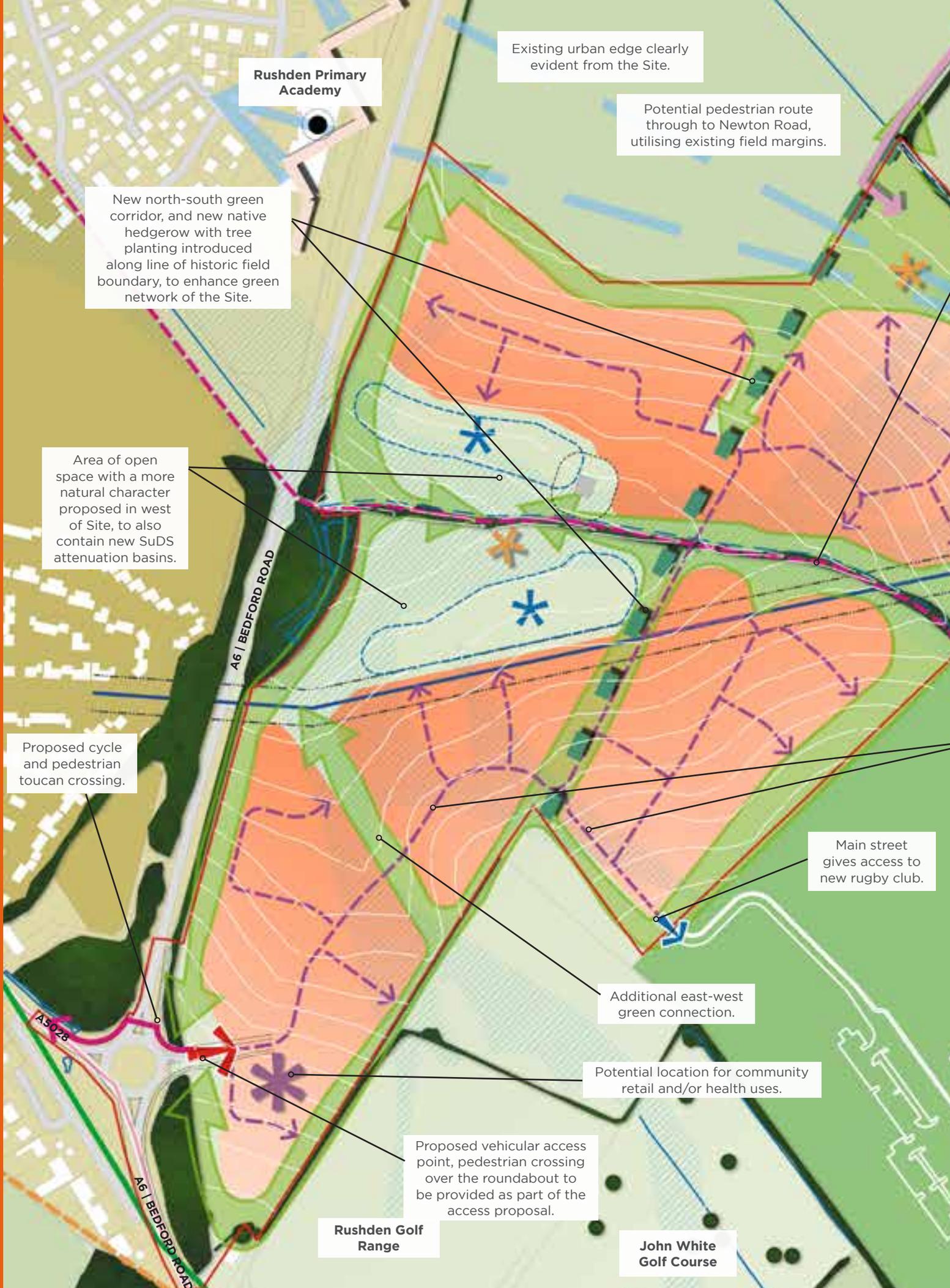




## **Influences**

- A watermain crosses the Site, and the main and its easement needs to be accommodated within the development.
- The principal influence of the development is the fluvial and surface water flooding, which will inform the proposed layout. The naturally occurring low points along the brook which runs parallel to the PRow, towards the western Site boundary, should define the location of the potential attenuation basins.
- The interface between the development and the adjoining new rugby club needs to be carefully designed, to ensure that both developments are integrated.
- The public footpath which crosses the Site will be retained along its current alignment, within a green corridor.
- Noise from the A6 needs to be considered, with appropriate design and mitigation measures included in the development.





27 **Figure 4.1:** Opportunities and Influences Plan



Site Boundary: **Aprx. 23.70ha**

### Context

-  Proposed community facility with rugby pitches
-  Potential community, retail and/or health use
-  Housing allocation
-  Nearby facilities
-  Existing water main and easements
-  Existing contours
-  Visible urban edge
-  View towards town centre

### Circulation

-  Existing bus route and bus stops
-  Proposed vehicular access point
-  Proposed vehicular access point serving the proposed rugby club
-  Cycle/pedestrian link and toucan crossing
-  Potential streets through the new development
-  Existing cycle lane/way
-  Existing bridleway
-  Existing public footpath
-  Potential pedestrian link to Newton Road

### Flood Risk and Drainage

-  Surface water flooding (Source: EA Mapping)
-  Existing watercourse and bodies
-  Potential location for SuDS Basins
-  Potential locaton for pump station (15m cordon sanitaire)

### Green Infrastructure & Play Provision

-  Existing trees and hedgerows
-  Proposed green corridors
-  Line of historic field boundary
-  Potential children's play areas

# 05

## DESIGN PROPOSALS

### 5.1 The Parameters Plan

The design proposals for the Site have evolved through an iterative design process informed by environmental and technical work, an understanding of the development's relationship with Rushden and the surrounding context, and an assessment of planning and design policy, including the place shaping principles highlighted within Policy 8 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy. This has resulted in the Parameters Plan (Figure 5.1) which seeks to minimise environmental impacts whilst maximising social, economic, biodiversity and sustainability benefits.

The Parameters Plan shows the Site boundary, the means of access into the Site, the areas of retained and new landscaping and the location and extent of the proposed land uses, including the amount of built development. It also conveys information on the maximum storey heights.

 Site Boundary: **Aprx. 23.702ha**

#### Proposed Uses

 **Proposed vehicular access point**  
Taken from the existing A6/Bedford Road roundabout, via an improved arm on the eastern side of the roundabout. The access road will comprise a 6.75m wide road with two lane approach to the roundabout.

 **Proposed developable area**  
= Predominantly 2 & 2½ storey dwellings, with a limited number of 3 storey dwellings (**maximum height of 12.2m**)

**To include:** residential, residential streets, landscaping and incidental greenspaces

 **Potential community, retail and/or health use: Up to 0.3ha**

 **Proposed developable area**  
= Predominantly 2 storey dwellings, with 2 1/2 storey dwellings at key locations (**maximum height of 11.5m**)

**To include:** residential, residential streets, landscaping and incidental greenspaces

 Potential internal road layout

 Proposed access to Rugby Club

 Remaining Infrastructure: **1.17ha**

#### Green Infrastructure

 **Proposed public open space**  
**To include:** Including natural & semi-natural greenspace, amenity greenspace, and children's play areas

 Existing vegetation within the Site to be retained

 **Potential structural thicket, hedgerow & street tree planting**  
**To include:** Mitigate against the loss of the existing vegetation to facilitate the internal road layout. Help break up the built development from more visually sensitive areas.

 Potential locations for play provision  
**To include:** 2 No. Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP)

#### Hydrology & Drainage

 Existing watercourse/bodies

 Potential location for SuDS basins

 Pump Station (15m cordon sanitaire)

#### Green Infrastructure

 Nearby planning application

 Existing Public Footpath (UK9)

 Existing Bridleway

 Existing Cycleway

 Local facility/points of interest

 Mains water pipe & easement (12m easement either side)

9.83ha

12.70ha



Rushden Primary Academy

LEAP

SuDS

PS

LEAP

SuDS

Proposed Community Facility with 4no. rugby pitches

Rushden Golf Range

John White Golf Course

Figure 5.1: The Parameters Plan

## 5.2 The Development Framework Plan

The Development Framework Plan (Figure 5.2) builds upon the level of detail shown on the Parameters Plan, to show the potential structure of streets and the grain of development in respect of the size and proportions of the principal perimeter blocks. It shows how the development is proposed to be structured around the creation of a main tree lined street taken via a new arm off the existing roundabout from the A6/ Bedford Road. From this main street, the Development Framework Plan shows how a number of secondary streets radiate out to the rest of the development providing direct and convenient connections to the development's new dwellings.

The proposed pedestrian and cycle routes can clearly be seen on the Development Framework Plan, demonstrating one of the principles of achieving a healthy green environment. Furthermore, the Development Framework Plan depicts the locations and sizes of the proposed attenuation basins, locations of the equipped play areas and ecological enhancements.

-  Site boundary: **Aprx. 23.70ha**
-  Proposed residential area: **Aprx. 12.70ha**  
(Up to **450 dwellings @ 35.5dph**)
-  Potential community, retail (Class F2) and/or health use (Class E)

### Circulation

-  Proposed vehicular access point
-  Proposed vehicular access point serving the proposed rugby club
-  Proposed spine street through the development
-  Proposed secondary streets
-  Proposed lanes and private drives
-  Shared surface/public realm
-  Recreational routes
-  Existing cycle lane/way
-  Existing bridleway
-  Existing public footpath
-  Potential pedestrian link to Newton Road

### Green Infrastructure & Play Provision

-  Existing trees and hedgerows
-  Avenue/Street tree planting
-  Proposed public open space to serve the new development
-  Proposed structural tree planting
-  Proposed play provision  
2No. LEAP
-  Existing water features
-  Proposed locations for (SuDS) drainage basins
-  Potential locaton for pump station (15m cordon sanitaire)

### Context

-  Existing bus route
-  Nearby planning applications
-  Nearby facilities



Proposed locations for Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) features in the form of drainage basins at the low points of the Site, to help manage the flow of surface water during periods of heavy and persistent rainfall.

Pedestrian route through the Newton Road, utilising existing field margins.



**Rushden Primary Academy**

Existing public footpath to be retained.

Housing Allocation NP H3 (D)

SuDS

PS

LEAP

LEAP

SuDS

LEAP

Proposed cycle and pedestrian toucan crossing.

A6 BEDFORD ROAD

Boundaries will be strengthened with new wildflower and tree planting to help filter views of the development, as well as enhancing habitat and biodiversity across the development.

New recreational routes will meander through the development's open spaces.

A5028

Proposed Community Facility with 4no. rugby pitches

Location for community retail and/or health uses.

**Rushden Golf Range**

Proposed vehicular access point, pedestrian crossing over the roundabout to be provided as part of the access proposal.

Existing footway provision to be improved to 3m footway/cycleway to link through to rugby club access.

**John White Golf Course**

**Figure 5.2:** The Development Framework Plan

### 5.3 Design Principles & Layout

Policy 8 of North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, sets out five key 'Place Shaping Principles' which have been considered and are particularly important aspects of the design process for new developments. It is important to note that the layout and design of the development is a Reserved Matter. However, these five key principles have been communicated within the DAS to ensure the subsequent detailed design reflects the initial aspirations and development structure, as well as ensuring that a high-quality sustainable development is achieved.

The disposition of the proposed uses and the structural layout elements established by the Parameters Plan, Development Framework Plan and the Illustrative Masterplan have been designed to adhere to the design strategy established in the preceding section.

- A:** Developments should create connected places
- B:** Developments should make safe and pleasant streets and spaces
- C:** Developments should ensure adaptable, diverse and flexible places
- D:** Developments should create a distinctive local character
- E:** Developments should ensure quality of life and safer and healthier communities.

Figure 5.3 - Illustrative Masterplan on Page 40, illustrates how these key Place Shaping Principles have been achieved.

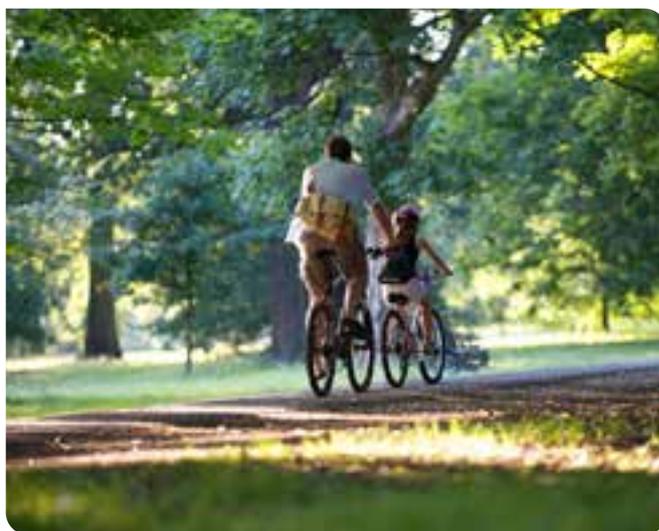


### **A** Developments should create connected places

Vehicular access will be provided from the A6/Bedford Road and will be lined with street trees to create a strong, verdant and formal character through the heart of the development. A three-metre-wide footway/cycleway will be provided on the northern side of the carriageway, and will link with the existing footway along Bedford Road west of the roundabout. Public Footpath UK9 is to be retained in its current alignment and will become an anchor with new recreational routes radiating out from this route.

New recreational footways will be provided within the Site which meander through the vast areas of public open space. They will be sensitively lit where necessary to respect wildlife corridors and will connect into the existing routes which cross the Site. Informed by existing landscape features along the Site boundaries, green corridors will be incorporated to create a permeable layout which focuses on creating an integrated network of open spaces within the Site, as well as creating these connections beyond the development's boundaries.

These connections will ensure a comprehensive masterplan is achieved, strengthening the sense of place created by the new development.



## **B** Developments should make safe and pleasant streets and spaces

Calming and slowing traffic is an important part of delivering streets for people, and encouraging walking and cycling. In order to slow vehicles and to encourage users to drive with caution, it is expected that some, or all of the following methods will be used within the detail design stage:

- **Locating buildings so that they are close to the street edge or carriageway.**
- **The introduction of features that act as visual ‘incidents’ along the street.**
- **Changes in the carriageway surface.**
- **The use of well-designed ‘shared surfaces’ to create streets for all.**
- **Carefully restricting forward visibility through the arrangement of buildings, the building line and landscape treatment.**



The Parameters Plan, Development Framework Plan and the Illustrative Masterplan propose a framework for development where the public realm will be overlooked, be open in aspect and well-used in order to reduce opportunities for and the fear of crime. The Illustrative Masterplan has been designed to adhere to the following principles of good design:

- **Permeability:** a choice of well-defined routes within the layout will encourage walking and cycling, therefore reducing car dependency and maximising the presence of ‘eyes on the street’. Including a designated cycleway which will be sensitively lit to allow for safe and convenient access in and around the Site at all times of day and year.
- **Natural surveillance:** dwellings will front onto streets and public spaces with entrances and windows fronting onto the public realm to maximise overlooking.
- **Animated street scenes:** building frontages will be as ‘active’ as possible, particularly at ground floor level. Windows to active rooms, such as living room and kitchen windows, will face the public realm.
- **Car parking:** the majority of cars will be accommodated within the curtilage of the dwellings to provide optimum surveillance. Where used, the parking courts are limited in size, well overlooked and will be enclosed by walls and new landscaping.
- **Non-vehicular routes:** new housing will front onto open spaces containing pedestrian routes to maximise natural surveillance.
- **Management:** the ownership and responsibility for external space will be clearly identified and the proposals will facilitate ease of maintenance and management.



## **C** Developments should ensure adaptable, diverse and flexible places

The development proposals provide for up to 450 dwellings of which 30% would be affordable homes, which will be fully integrated within the market housing and be of a type and size that meets local need. The development proposals also include a new community facility, which could comprise for example, a shop, a health facility, or a community hall. This can form a heart to the new neighbourhood, and could provide local services and facilities to the new residents.

Therefore, it is clear that a varied and distinctive neighbourhood can be achieved providing for local needs through a mix of uses, unit sizes and tenures in accordance with Policy 30 of the JCS and Policy H4 of the RNP. The mix of land uses and densities will ensure that people can move easily between and through them by non-car modes.



## **D** Developments should create a distinctive local character

The appearance of the development is a Reserved Matter, although the principles need to be communicated within the DAS to provide a design framework for the new homes at the detailed design stage.

The external appearance of the new homes will respect the local vernacular of Rushden and the surrounding settlements. An overview of Rushden's character and context has been provided in Section 3, which highlights a number of design influences for the detailed design of the development.

- **Simple Built Form:** Buildings will be designed with a simple built form and an appropriate level of detailing that complements the local vernacular.
- **Unity:** New homes will convey an impression of unity relieved by minor points of detail, materials and grouping, producing variety with harmonious identity.
- **Key Buildings:** Key buildings using special details, raised building heights and/or increased massing will be used in key locations.
- **Building Groups:** Buildings will be the principal visual elements that characterise the development. With the exception of key buildings, individual dwellings will be subservient to the building group.
- **Corners:** Houses on corners should have dual frontages and use features such as bay windows to emphasise their pivotal position.



### **Palette of Materials**

A restrained palette of materials should be used, although there will be subtle changes in composition of materials to strengthen the identity of individual areas. The choice of materials will reflect the more traditional characteristics of Rushden and the local area.

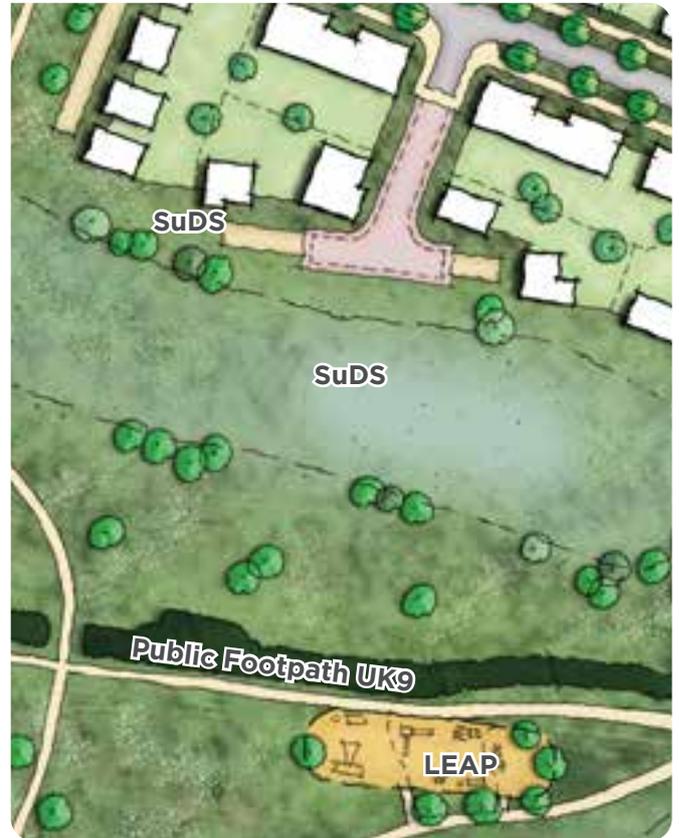
- **Roof finish:** Mix of plain tiles and pantiles characteristic of the area, in red/brown tones. Limited use of high-quality artificial slate tiles with thin profile to provide further variety to the roofscape.
- **Facing brickwork:** Mainly red brick with decorative finishes including half-timber.
- **Render:** Render to highlight key buildings or important structural elements of buildings. Predominantly painted in white or pastel shades to reflect the local character.
- **Timber cladding:** White weatherboard timber cladding may be appropriate for lesser structures e.g. Garages.
- **Boundary treatments:** Considered mix of timber picket fencing, brick walls and planted vegetation, as well as black iron estate railings to key buildings along street frontages to reflect the Victorian era houses found within Rushden Town Centre.



## **E** Developments should ensure quality of life and safer and healthier communities.

The Parameters Plan, Development Framework Plan and Illustrative Masterplan shows how a green infrastructure framework could be delivered to conserve and improve the existing landscape features, and establish a variety of new landscaped areas with recreational routes and wildlife habitats.

- The development will be encompassed by new areas of public open space, which will include a large central area of open space; informed by the flood modelling work, recreational routes, cycleway, children's play areas and further ecological enhancements.
- New woodland belts along the western, northern and eastern boundary, thicket, tree and species rich wildflower meadow planting will be planted across all areas of the development. Street tree planting, Bat and Bird Boxes, log piles, and space for community orchards, are also to be proposed, to the further enhance habitat creation, allowing wildlife to continue to flourish. The principal aim of these enhancements is to ensure the proposals are achieving the required Net Gain.
- Two new Locally Equipped Areas for Play (LEAP) and are located adjacent in logical areas connected via the proposed recreational routes, maximising accessibility for all.



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## 5.4 The Illustrative Masterplan

The Illustrative Masterplan (Figure 5.3), which is based upon the Parameters and evolution of the Development Framework Plan, and has been prepared to demonstrate in more detail the general design principles that will be adopted through the development of the Site.

It is important to note that the layout of the development is a Reserved Matter. However, the Illustrative Masterplan, together with this Design and Access Statement, communicate the key design principles that a subsequent Reserved Matters application should reflect in order to respect the in-depth analysis of the Site and its surrounding context.

The Illustrative Masterplan indicates the principles of the development's urban structure; the proposed patterns of streets and spaces, and the urban grain; the location, arrangement and design of the principal development blocks and the green infrastructure that the new development will sit within.

The Illustrative Masterplan provides for up to 450 dwellings (including up to 30% affordable housing). The development is set within a strong green infrastructure framework. The attractively landscaped areas will create opportunities for amenity, formal and informal play for new and existing residents of Rushden. Extensive creation of new pedestrian and cycle links connecting the Site into the existing Public Right of Way network, existing footway network and to the countryside beyond. Furthermore, the Site's ecological value will be enhanced with the proposed woodland, thicket and tree planting, and the creation of wildflower meadows and strengthening of ecological corridors along the Site's boundaries, retaining the majority of the existing trees and hedgerows.

### The Vision

- Deliver up to 450 high quality, mixed tenure homes in a sustainable and well-connected location to help deliver the housing requirements to support the sustainable growth of Rushden, without negatively impacting on the surrounding character.
- 43% of the Site will be provided as green infrastructure and will include a two new children's play areas, informal recreational areas within new landscaped open spaces, new recreational footways, and space for new landscaping and ecological enhancements.
- Importantly, new safe pedestrian and cycle links will be created to allow easy access into the town centre for the new residents, without the need to use a car, including a potential new link to Newton Road and onto Rushden East SUE.
- The new homes will be located within close walking distance of the proposed areas of public open space, which will allow for easy access to outdoor recreation and green space, aiding in creating a healthy community. In addition, development will be within easy reach of the proposed rugby club, and will create an attractive setting and entrance to the new rugby club, with safe, overlooked walking and cycle routes provided for pedestrian and cyclists from the wider town to the west.
- The new homes will be designed to look out towards the new areas of open space, as well as the streets and footways, thereby ensuring passive surveillance, which will ensure a neighbourhood where residents and visitors feel safe.
- The development will provide a new community facility, which could comprise uses such as, for example, a shop, a community hall, or a health facility. This would minimise the need to travel beyond the development to reach some services or facilities, and could form an important social heart to the neighbourhood.
- The new homes will be designed to be attractive and varied in their character, while reflecting the historical vernacular of Rushden. This will create a specific sense of place within the neighbourhood, which will reflect its wider surroundings.



Proposed locations for Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) features in the form of drainage basins at the low points of the Site, to help manage the flow of surface water during periods of heavy and persistent rainfall.

Pedestrian route through the Newton Road, utilising existing field margins.

Existing public footpath to be retained.

Proposed cycle and pedestrian toucan crossing.

Boundaries will be strengthened with new wildflower and tree planting to help filter views of the development, as well as enhancing habitat and biodiversity across the development.

New recreational routes will meander through the development's open spaces.

Location for community retail and/or health uses.

Proposed Community Facility with 4no. rugby pitches

Proposed vehicular access point, pedestrian crossing over the roundabout to be provided as part of the access proposal.

Site boundary: **Aprx. 23.70ha**

**Access & Connectivity**

- Vehicular, pedestrian & cycle access
- Existing pedestrian access points
- Existing Public Rights of Way
- Potential recreational routes
- Potential pedestrian link to Newton Road

**Developable Area**

- Proposed new homes: **Up to 450 Units**
- Proposed community building
- Proposed pump station (15m cordon sanitaire)
- Proposed spine street & street tree planting

**Green Infrastructure**

- Existing vegetation
- Proposed structural planting
- Proposed new thicket, tree and wildflower planting
- Proposed Sustainable Drainage Systems (**SuDS**)
- Proposed Children's Play Locally Equipped Area for Play (**LEAP**)

**Figure 5.3:** The Illustrative Masterplan

## 5.5 Use & Amount

The outline planning application covers a total area of 23.70 hectares. The proposals encompass the following:

### Residential Development Area – up to 450 dwellings (12.70 hectares)

The development accommodates a development area measuring 12.70 hectares, providing for up to 450 dwellings. The average net density for the residential development area is 35.5 dwellings per hectare (dph).

The housing mix will be determined at the Reserved Matters stage, but it is expected to include a broad range of types, sizes and tenures. Up to 30% (135no.) of the homes will be affordable and will be fully integrated within the market housing and be of a type and size that meets local need.

### Green Infrastructure – 9.83 hectares

As shown on the Land Use Plan (Figure 5.4), the proposals for the Site include 9.83 hectares (43%) of green infrastructure. The green infrastructure will have a range of functions and provide a range of benefits:

- **Public Open Space:** Retention and enhancement of the existing landscape framework, and the provision of public open space, will integrate the proposal into the landscape fabric of Rushden. Green corridors will be enhanced along the development boundaries and through the development, informed by landscape features such as existing vegetation, to assist in the breaking up of the built environment and creating green connection for both people and wildlife alike. The large area of central open space informed by the flood modelling work will create a focal point to the development.
- **Recreation and Play:** The existing public footpath will be retained in its current alignment, connected via new recreational routes, creating an integrated development. The provision of two new children's play areas, suitably located to be easily accessible for all. Connected via the new recreational routes, allowing for safe and convenient access for residents. Opportunities for informal play along these routes, will encourage 'Play on the Way' and further promote healthy and active lifestyles.

### JCS: Policy 30 - Housing Mix and Tenure:

*'Housing development should provide a mix of dwelling sizes and tenures to cater for current and forecast accommodation needs and to assist in the creation of sustainable mixed and inclusive communities.'*

- *'On private sector developments of 15 or more dwellings (net)'... 'the local planning authority will seek the provision of affordable housing in line with the following targets:' ... 'Growth Towns and Market Towns excluding Oundle 30% of total dwellings'*

### RNP: Policy H4 – Market housing type & mix:

*'New market housing proposals will be required to provide a balance of property sizes and types to meet market demands in accordance with Policy 30 of the NNJCS'... 'Where new residential development is proposed, the Neighbourhood Plan anticipates that affordable dwellings will be delivered in accordance with Policy 30 of the NNJCS.'*

It is therefore considered that the masterplan accords with the above Policies.

- **Natural & Semi-Natural Greenspace:** New tree and thicket planting, grass margins and wildflower meadows will be incorporated into the public open space. Woodland, thicket and tree planting along the development's northern and eastern boundaries will set the entire development in a strong green framework, defining a currently undefined boundary, creating a soft vegetative transition from the new homes and the countryside beyond.
- **Sustainable Drainage Systems Features:** SuDS basins will be located within the lower parts of the Site to manage excess surface water run-off during periods of heavy or persistent rainfall. The basins will also be designed to create new habitats for wildlife, contributing to the setting of the new homes, and will become a focal part of the development.
- **Ecology:** The vast majority of existing vegetation will be retained and enhanced, which will maintain wildlife connectivity across the Site. New landscaping will increase the habitat value of the Site to ensure a net gain in biodiversity can be achieved. Furthermore, a proportion of the central area of public open space will be utilised for ecological enhancements, which could include orchard planting. These features will bring both social and environmental benefits to the area.

**RNP: Policy CL2 – Provision of new open space and amenity space:**

Development proposals that result in a net gain of 15 or more dwellings... ‘will be required to provide suitable amenity space, through the provision of either: semi-natural open space, natural open space or children’s playspace, or a combination of each, in accordance with East Northamptonshire Council’s Open Space SPD...’

It is therefore considered that the masterplan accords with the above Objectives.

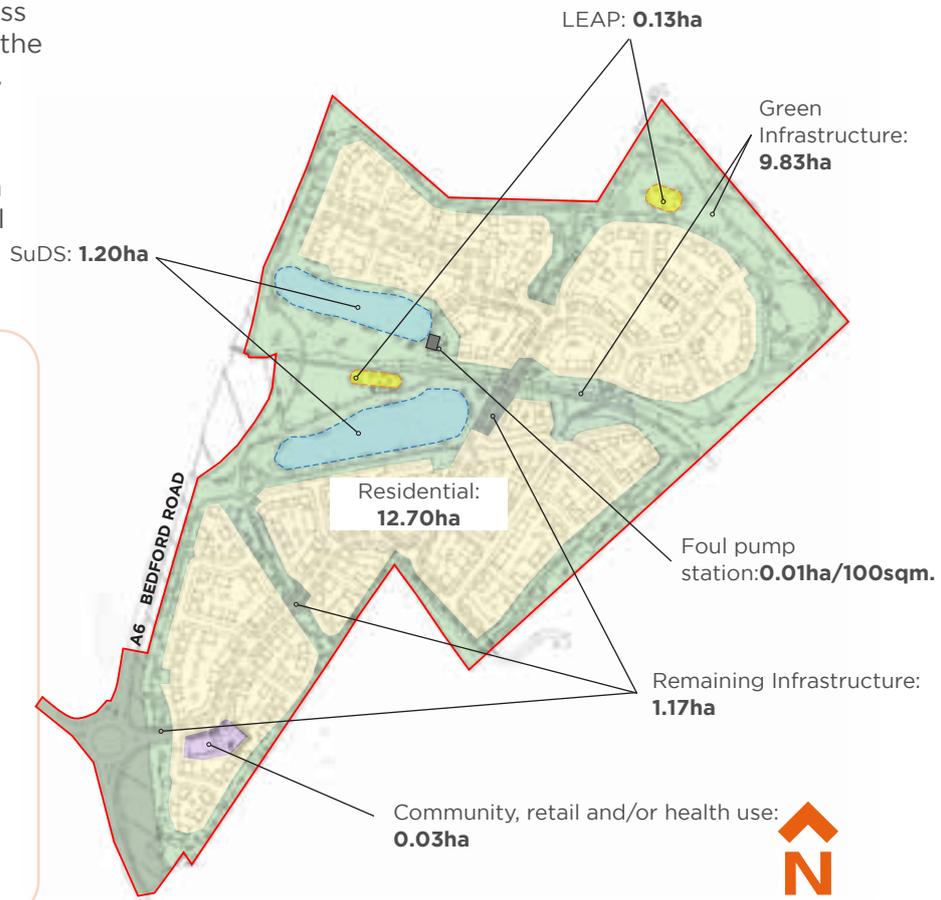
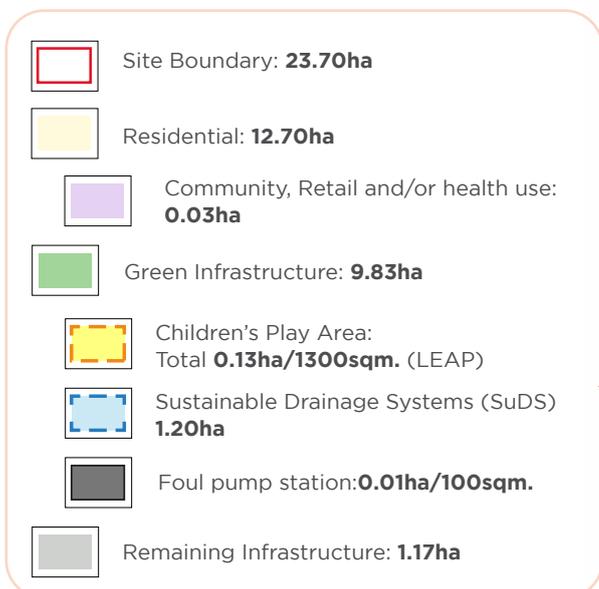
The open space standards and recommendation for how these should be applied across the district are set out in the Council’s Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) ‘Open Space, 2011’ and are outlined in Table 1. These standards are as follows:

Therefore, the proposal of **9.83ha** of new green infrastructure and open space or **43% of the overall development**, is in excess of the requirements set out in the above Standards. This over provision is as a result of a number of factors, including the need for the large SuDS basins, to address the need to deliver BNG, and to respect the water pipeline and associated easement.

The shortfall in allotments, Parks and Gardens and Outdoor Sports provision is offset by the significant over provision of amenity and Natural and Semi Natural Green Space.

**Table 1:** RNP ‘Open Space Standards’ 2011

Type of Green Space	Recommended Local Standard Quantity Standard (sqm/1000 person)	Quantity required for around 450 new homes: (1,080 persons)	Quantity proposed within the new development:
Amenity Green Space	0.8	0.86ha	9.69ha
Natural & Semi Natural Green Space	1.30 (urban)	1.40ha	
Parks and Gardens	0.6	0.65ha	Off-site contribution
Outdoor Sports Facilities	1.69	1.83ha	Off-site contribution
Provision for Children & Young People	0.1 (urban)	0.11ha/ 1100sqm	1 x LEAP = 0.06/ 600sqm 1 x LEAP = 0.07/ 700sqm Total = 0.13ha/ 1300sqm
Allotments & Community Gardens	0.34	0.37ha	Off-site contribution
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4.83ha</b>	<b>5.22ha</b>	<b>9.83ha</b>



**Figure 5.4:** Indicative Land Use Plan

## 5.6 Access

### Vehicular Access

Figure 5.6 opposite (page 43) and the associated Key below demonstrates the proposed access points and movement hierarchy on and around the development.

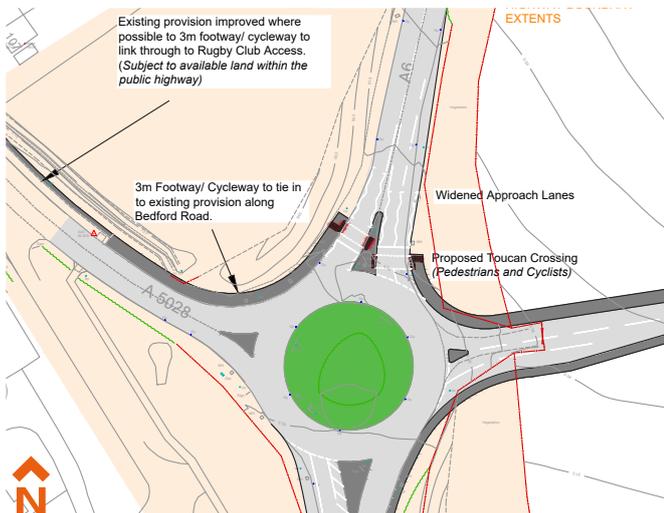
It is proposed to access the Site from the existing A6/Bedford Road roundabout, via an improved arm on the eastern side of the roundabout (Point 1 in the key). The access road will comprise a 6.75m wide road with two lane approach to the roundabout. A new tree-lined main street would lead through the development, and link to the new community facility to the east (Point 2 in the Key). The main street could form a loop within the development, which would aid in creating a legible and permeable layout within the Site. Secondary roads will lead off the main street, and will serve private drives, courtyards, and lanes, to ensure a varied character within the development, and a clear hierarchy of movement routes.

A three-metre-wide footway/cycleway will be provided on the northern side of the carriageway, and will link with the existing footway along Bedford Road west of the roundabout.

The traffic generation from the proposed development has been estimated and distributed onto the local network, showing that the development would generate modest vehicular movements during the morning and evening peak. Nearby junctions have been modelled and are forecast to operate within capacity during the morning and evening peaks.

### Emergency Vehicles

The detailed design of the layout will be in accordance with Part B of the Building Regulations, 'Access and Facilities for the Fire Service' to ensure sufficient carriageway widths and appropriate access for fire appliances can be achieved.



### Pedestrian & Cycle Access

Pedestrian and cycle access to the Site will be available via the new vehicular access point (Point 1 in the Key), the existing Public Footpath, and the proposed recreational routes which cross the Site. A new three-metre-wide footway will be provided on the northern side of the spine street, which will accommodate pedestrian and cyclist movement and will run through the heart of the development providing a sustainable way of travel connecting the proposed new homes with the public open space, community facility and settlement beyond.

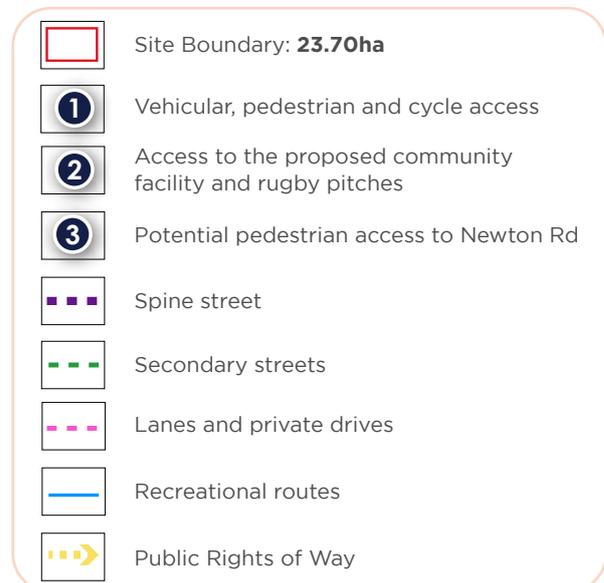
Public footpath UK9 crosses the Site, linking Rushden in the west to Higham Park in the east and will be retained within a green corridor and public open space. New recreational footways will connect to this route, promoting connectivity and accessibility for new and existing residents of Rushden.

There is also the opportunity to provide a potential pedestrian link north towards Newton Road (Point 3 in the Key).

### Public Transport

The Site benefits from good access to public transport, and is well served by bus routes in the town. The closest bus stop to the Site is located approximately 350m to the north west of the proposed vehicular access point, providing connections to the Rushden town centre and Bedford Bus Station to the south and Kettering in the north.

Opportunities for enhancing bus connections to the development will be explored as part of any planning application submission, in consultation with relevant parties. The main street within the development will be designed to be able to accommodate a future bus route.



## 5.7 Street Hierarchy & Parking

The Parameters Plan, Development Framework Plan and the Illustrative Masterplan have been designed to show how a clear hierarchy of streets and space should be created, so that it will be clear for residents and visitors alike to know where the principal routes are and how to navigate their way around the development. The design proposals provide for a layout where each street and route within the hierarchy will be an identifiable type. Character Areas with different layout and subtly different detailing will aid in ensuring a legible layout.

**Table 2:** 'Parking Standards' 2016

House Type	Vehicle	Cycle	Motorcycle	Disabled
1 Bed	1 space per dwelling, plus visitor spaces of 1 per dwelling across the development	1 secure covered space per bedroom	N/A	N/A if parking is in curtilage of dwelling
2/3 Bed	2 spaces per dwelling, plus visitor spaces at 1 per dwelling across the development			
4+ Bed	3 spaces per dwelling, plus visitor spaces at 1 per dwelling across the development			

### Car Parking (Class C3 Dwelling Houses)

The car parking and cycle standards for new developments are set out in the Northamptonshire County Council's SPD: Northamptonshire Parking Standards (September 2016). Chapter 9 of the SPD sets out the guidance on the level parking required within each Use Class.

The vehicle and cycle parking standards above will be applied and determined at the Reserved Matters stage. At the Reserved Matters stage, the car parking will be designed so that vehicles do not dominate the street scene or cause inconvenience to pedestrians and cyclists. The level of car parking provision includes any garages and car ports, provided as an integral part of the dwelling or within its curtilage, and/or driveways provided within the curtilage.

Cycle parking provision should normally be provided within the curtilage of the residential dwelling. Where a garage is provided, it should be of a suitable size to accommodate the required cycle parking provision. Parking provision should be provided as a secure communal facility where a suitable alternative is not available.

It is also important to note that with rapidly advancing electric car technology a number of the new homes will be fitted with Electric Vehicle Charging (EVC) points. Determination of these would be a Reserved Matter and would be decided on a plot-by-plot basis.



## 5.8 Crime Impact Consideration

The design principles outlined above have been developed having regard to the need to create a place that is safe and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, does not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience. In this regard, the scheme design has taken into account the requirements of paragraphs 92(b) and 130(f) of the NPPF.

The design principles and layout communicated throughout this DAS demonstrate that:

1. The planned access routes will provide attractive routes through the development, that will benefit from natural surveillance.
2. The detailed design will consider the layout and sighting of individual uses. The mix of uses can promote an active neighbourhood with the community facility providing a focal point depending on its end use.
3. The pedestrian and cycle routes through the site, and linked areas of public open space, will relate well to the proposed dwellings, ensuring the natural surveillance of these public spaces.
4. A hierarchy of streets will promote a coherent development and promote different character areas. Public and private spaces will be well defined as part of the detailed design.
5. The detailed design will be developed having regard to specific security measures, which can be included as part of reserved matters submissions.
6. The access routes and indicative location of open space, play areas and the community facility will ensure an appropriate level of activity throughout the site.
7. The management and maintenance of public areas will include crime prevention measures as appropriate.



Street lighting along footpaths will create safer routes around the development.



New recreational routes and public open space will be overlooked by new dwellings.



Car parking spaces will be located close to the dwellings they serve.



Figure 5.7: 'Designing out Crime' Principles

## 5.9 Character Areas

To ensure a comprehensive and successful development is achieved, the character of the surrounding settlement should be considered. The Character Areas, together with the design strategy will ensure that a holistic, coherent and well-designed place is established.

Throughout this section, words such as 'informal' and 'formal' will be used to describe certain character areas. A formal character area will be defined by a more uniform style, such as wider streets with grass verges and street planting with regular and stronger building frontages, and consistent set back distances defining the edges. Informal areas will appear more intimate and relaxed, with narrower streets and varying set back distances complemented by a wider range of different styles of buildings.



### The Spine Street

The Spine Street provides the required connection between the A6/Bedford Road and the new homes. It will provide a sensible and logical route through the core of the development. The Spine Street will be the principal tree lined street running through the development, and will be suitable for all types of predicted traffic movement. The key characteristics of the Spine Street are as follows:

- **Defined by a more formal arrangement of buildings with occasional varied building line (up to 3 storeys).**
- **Along sections of the Spine Street, strong and consistent building frontages should front the street to mark its importance as the principal route serving the development and to aid legibility.**
- **A considered mix of parallel and gable frontages will help to break up the roofscape and add character.**
- **Will accommodate safe movement for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. Differing surface materials will, therefore, help to passively control traffic speeds at key locations along the street.**
- **Incidental green spaces and street tree planting along the Spine Street will frame views out towards the public open space and countryside beyond.**



## Secondary Streets

The Secondary Streets will provide important connections from the Spine Street to the peripheral areas. The key characteristics of the Secondary Streets will be as follows:

- **Defined by more informal arrangement of buildings with a more varied building line and differing set back distances.**
- **In limited and central areas, dwellings up to 2½ may be proposed to aid legibility and define key buildings and spaces.**
- **Will accommodate safe movement for pedestrian, cyclists and vehicles. Differing surface materials will help to passively control vehicle speeds.**



Masterplan Extract: Secondary Streets

## Recreational Routes

The Recreational Routes will run through the areas of public open space within the development, providing important connections between the new homes, the development's proposed green infrastructure, the existing Public Footpath and recreational routes and the A6/ Bedford Road. The key characteristics are as follows:

- **The routes will pass through attractively landscaped areas, which will be overlooked by the new homes to ensure they are safe and secure to use.**
- **The routes will be clearly visible and sensitively signposted, providing clutter-free paths.**
- **Sensitive lighting where necessary, will avoid light pollution and potential conflicts with ecological objectives.**
- **The routes will be more than just paths for non-vehicular movement. For example, benches will be placed alongside them to coincide with key points of interest, such as the play area, and potential views across the development.**

## Lane & Private Drives

The Lanes and Private Drives will play an important role in the character of the development, marking the peripheral parts of the development parcels overlooking the new open spaces. The key characteristics of the Lanes and Private Drives are as follows:

- **Predominantly detached, 2 storey dwellings to create lower densities, with varied set back distances and building orientations.**
- **Good sized front gardens will assist in creating softer building lines that appropriately mark the transition between the built environment and the development's open spaces.**
- **Generally, will take the form of shared surface spaces.**



Masterplan Extract: Lane & Private Drives



Masterplan Extract: Recreational Routes

## 5.10 Scale

### Density

The development proposals achieve an overall average density of 35.5dph, which achieves an efficient use of the Site, whilst providing a balanced approach to the provision of green infrastructure that allows for the provision of 9.83 hectares of public open space.

In general terms, the density of development will graduate from higher densities in the more central parts of the residential development area to lower densities towards the development's peripheral areas, responding to areas which are more sensitive in terms of landscape and setting. However, within this overall density framework, a range of densities will be established throughout the Site. When combined with landscape and building form, this will assist in providing different areas of recognisable character.

The following density principles have been established by the proposals for the Site:

- **Higher densities along the Spine Street will create stronger building frontages to assist in enclosing and framing the key movement route through the development.**
- **Lower density development fronting the areas of open space that enclose the residential development area to create an appropriate transition from the residential environment to the attractive areas of green infrastructure and countryside beyond.**

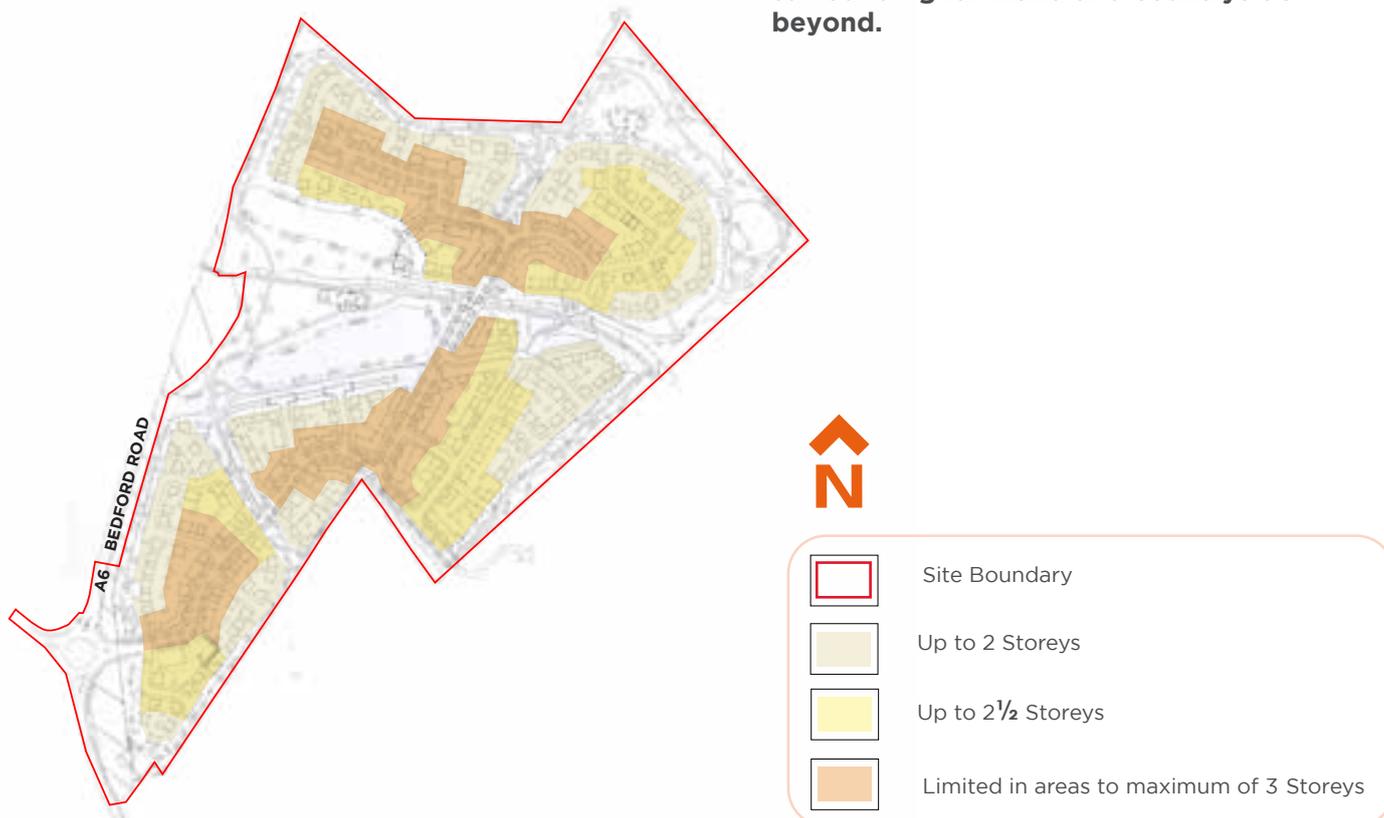
### Building Heights

The new homes will generally be 2 and 2½ storeys in order to reflect the height of the existing residential development in the nearby residential areas, as well as respecting the edge of settlement location. However, the considered use of 3 storey dwellings within limited areas of the central parts of the development, will assist in creating the basis for a varied and interesting roofscape. 2½ and 3 storey dwellings will, therefore, be used to achieve a number of different townscape functions, including:

- **To create key groupings overlooking important areas of open space including incidental greenspaces located within the central parts of the development.**
- **These groupings will aid legibility in the streetscene along the main residential streets.**
- **To create variety and interest.**

The height of the new dwellings overlooking the Site's boundaries, and those of higher, more visually sensitive areas, in particular the northern and eastern areas of the development, will be limited to 2 storeys for the following reasons:

- **To respect the scale of the existing dwellings in the surrounding area.**
- **To assist in creating an appropriate transition from the residential environment to the surrounding farmland and countryside beyond.**



## 5.11 Green Infrastructure & Design

### Landscape Design

The landscape proposals have evolved through an analysis of the Site and its setting, as well as best practice design guidance. As set out earlier in the DAS, the development comprises approximately 9.83 hectares of green infrastructure. Therefore, approximately 43% of the Site will comprise new areas of green infrastructure. These areas will retain the important wildlife connections through the Site, and include additional areas for ecological mitigation and enhancement, such as strengthening existing vegetation along the Site boundaries, space for community orchards and a network of SuDS features. Together, these green infrastructure features will deliver an exciting new asset for Rushden, for the benefit of both new and existing residents.



To address the need for a new boundary to the development along the northern and eastern boundary, new tree belt woodland belts will be planted set behind an area of open space. Similarly, but also taking existing Site features into considerations, the central part of the Site has been left free from development and utilised as public open space, including new thicket and tree planting and recreational routes. The proposals provide vast new areas of woodland, thicket, tree and species rich wildflower meadow planting, as well as a space for a new community orchard and street tree planting, forming a strong landscape framework and network of open spaces.

A new north-south native hedgerow is proposed to be incorporated within the development, along the route of a historic field boundary, in order to create a green corridor within the development which will provide new habitat and movement routes for wildlife. A further east-west green corridor is proposed in the south of the development, along an area prone to surface water flooding, to create a further habitat link and movement route for wildlife.



The future maintenance and management will be secured for the long-term via a planning obligation using an appropriate public body or private management company.

### Recreation

The areas of open space and new landscaping shown on the Illustrative Masterplan will provide a new community asset for informal recreational activities, including walking, picnicking and informal play. Two new Locally Equipped Areas of Play (LEAP) will be included within the areas of public open space. These spaces will have a 'rural' style and will incorporate timber elements of natural play, befitting the settlement edge location of the Site. It will also be aimed at younger children (up to 8 years) and will provide a range of play experiences and opportunities. Quality landscaping and furniture will create an attractive destination for the wider community, as well as the new residents.

A network of formal recreational routes and informal mown footways will enhance connectivity across the Site, promoting a healthy and active neighbourhood. A green corridor centred on the existing Public Footpath UK9 which crosses the Site will lead through a large swathe of habitat-rich meadow grass alongside the western boundary.



### Sustainable Drainage Systems

The detailed drainage strategy for the development will be determined in accordance with the standards set out by the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA).

To replicate pre-development conditions, the use of two attenuation basins are proposed. These basins have been designed to accommodate runoff from all storm events up to and including a 1 in 100 year + 40% climate change.

The proposed basins have been designed to discharge to the ground with an assumed infiltration rate and or to discharge to the watercourse at a maximum rate of 2.0l/s in line with current policy as QBAR greenfield runoff for the Site is lower than this value.

The SuDS basin will condition the quality of the water and provide landscape, amenity and ecological benefits. They will be landscaped with native emergent and marginal vegetation, with opportunity for some permanently wet areas to further enhance habitat creation.



## Ecological Enhancements

A number of ecological mitigation and enhancement measures are proposed across the Site as part of the landscape proposals. These will enhance opportunities at the Site for wildlife such as bats, birds and hedgehogs, as well as for the benefit of the wider habitats and helping to achieve a Biodiversity Net Gain. These include:

- **Creation of open grassland and species rich wildflower meadows, which will be managed specifically for the benefit pollinating insects. These habitats will comprise of plant species of local provenance, aiming to increase the overall extent of these habitats locally.**
- **Improved connectivity of green infrastructure will be provided with infill planting of existing boundary vegetation. This will provide habitat for nesting birds.**
- **Overseeding of wildflower mixes within the drainage features. This will serve to enhance opportunities for foraging bats and wildlife in general. The SuDS basins will condition the quality of the water and provide landscape, amenity and ecological benefits. They will be landscaped with native emergent and marginal vegetation.**
- **Space for an orchard could create a new habitat type on-site.**
- **Holes will be included at the base of garden fence panels to enable hedgehogs to roam.**
- **Timber and brash from any trees cut down will be reused to create log piles for the benefit of wildlife, such as hedgehogs.**
- **Further measures include; reduction of artificial light spill on boundary habitats, installation of bird and bat boxes and ecologist supervised clearance of nesting bird habitat.**
- **Additionally, the habitats created across the Site will provide opportunities for protected and no-table species, including foraging bats, badgers, amphibians and nesting birds.**



**RNP: Policy EN4 – Public Realm:** Where appropriate, new development should improve the quality of the public realm with the creation of safe and attractive public spaces.

It is therefore considered that the masterplan accords with the above Objectives.

## 5.12 Sustainability

The NPPF sets out the three dimensions to sustainable development: Economic, Social and Environmental. It establishes that decisions on planning applications should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.

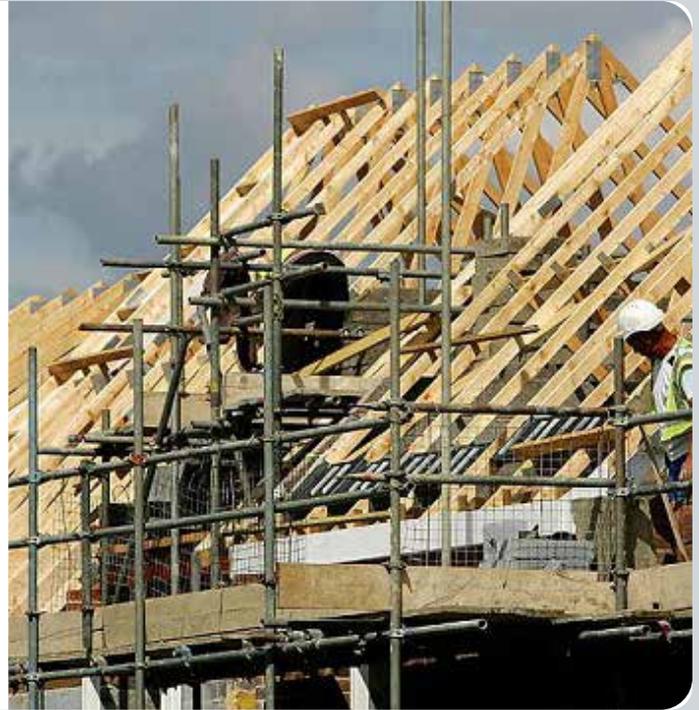
### The Environmental Role

- The proposals maximise the retention of the existing trees and hedgerows on the Site's boundaries. The Parameters Plan, Development Framework Plan and Illustrative Masterplan show how existing vegetation can be strengthened with new landscaping.
- A range of connected open spaces comprising existing site features and new landscaping, attenuation basins, and opportunities for ecological enhancements, will ensure all new homes are within safe and easy reach of a range of high-quality open spaces.
- Opportunities for semi-natural habitat creation will be maximised through the naturalistic landscaping of the open spaces and retention of existing features, in particular along the western, northern and eastern Site boundary where new woodland planting will be created.
- Attenuation basins and infiltration network will be used to avoid any adverse impacts in terms of flood risk.
- The green infrastructure will enhance the character and quality of the development and Rushden as a settlement.
- At the detailed design stage, the new homes will be designed to meet national and local targets in respect of reducing energy demand, carbon emissions and energy efficiency.



## The Economic Role

- The development would contribute to the economic role of the area by generating employment and tax receipts during construction.
- To provide homes that are energy efficient and minimise environmental impact.
- In the longer term the local economy would benefit from the provision of housing for workers, investment in local infrastructure and services through additional s106 payments and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to support local infrastructure, additional expenditure on goods and services, from the New Homes Bonus and from additional Council Tax receipts.



## The Social Role

- The development would contribute to providing new housing and addressing the current shortfall in supply within the North Northampton area.
- Up to 30% or 135 of the new homes will be affordable, providing new housing opportunities for existing residents in the area.
- The areas of public open space will include new children's play areas, space for a community orchard, retention of the existing Public Footpath, and recreational routes will help to support community health and well-being and promote active modes of transport.
- The vehicular access point off the A6/ Bedford Road will incorporate a three-metre-wide footway to the northern carriageway. A Toucan crossing, with a cycle and footway connection is proposed immediately to the north of the Bedford Road/A6 roundabout, to enable safe links into the town centre, and will link into the existing footway network.



# 06

## Conclusions

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of Bellway in support of the Outline Planning Application for up to 450 dwellings, including a new community facility, vehicular access taken via a new arm off the existing roundabout serving the A6, public open space and new recreational routes and cycleways, children's play areas, landscaping, drainage and associated works.

### Key Benefits:



The provision of up to 450 much-needed high-quality new homes for Rushden



Protecting existing habitats and creating new ones, including the retention and extensive enhancement of the existing trees and hedgerows on the Site boundaries



The delivery of around 30% affordable housing



Creating local jobs during the construction phase



A new community facility, which could comprise uses such as a shop, a community hall, or a health facility.



Investing in the local economy, aiding the recovery from the pandemic



Helping North Northamptonshire Council to meet its housing targets



Financial contributions towards improvement infrastructure



Creating new public open green spaces for all to enjoy

The A6/Bedford Road Masterplan sets out the importance of the Building for a Healthy Life publication for achieving best practice design. Therefore, to conclude the DAS, the following pages provide an assessment of this planning application against the principles of good design contained within Building for a Healthy Life.

<b>INTEGRATED NEIGHBOURHOODS</b>		<b>SCORE</b>
<b>Natural Connections</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The planning application allows for ‘edge to edge connectivity’ facilitated by street tree planting where possible, running through the length of the Site and a number of traffic-free routes which pass through the Site’s connected network of green spaces.</li> <li>✓ A connected street network is achieved.</li> <li>✓ The principles of ‘filtered permeability’ are achieved whereby the private drives and lanes, create pleasant low traffic environments with pedestrian connections still allow pedestrian movement to the Public Footpath along the Site’s southern boundary.</li> <li>✓ A connected network of green spaces connects existing and new habitats, existing wildlife corridors, and create new movement corridors for nature.</li> <li>✓ Majority of the existing vegetation is retained within the public realm, safeguarding their future retention, management and improvement.</li> </ul>	
<b>Walking, cycling and public transport</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The spine street is designed to accommodate a pedestrian and cycle footway along the carriageway.</li> <li>✓ Many of the lanes and secondary streets are to form shared surface street spaces.</li> <li>✓ A network of traffic-free routes will provide direct connections to the existing cycle lane along the A6/ Bedford Road and the Public Footpath which crosses the Site. The proposal also provides the opportunity for a [pedestrian/cycle link connecting to Newton Road and the Rushden East SUE to the north of the development.</li> <li>✓ All of the homes are located within easy reach of the existing bus stop along Bedford Road; however, the Spine Street has been designed to be able to accommodate a bus route and potential new bus stop if necessary.</li> </ul>	
<b>Facilities and services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The community facility has been located in an area which is easily accessible by new and existing residents of Rushden and will create a focal point to the development connected via the new recreational foot and cycleways.</li> <li>✓ The new children’s play areas will inherently create a further focal point of community activity, enhanced with community allotments and orchard.</li> </ul>	
<b>Homes for everyone</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ At the detailed design stage, the homes and streets will be designed so it is difficult to determine the tenure of properties through architectural, landscape or other differences.</li> <li>✓ A range of house types, sizes and tenures are to be provided to meet local needs and create a broad-based community.</li> <li>✓ Affordable homes are to be distributed across the Site.</li> </ul>	

## DISTINCTIVE PLACES

<p><b>Making the most of what's there</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A thorough understanding of the Site has been gained by Site visits and desktop research in order to understand the local area and to understand how the Site's existing features can be incorporated into the design proposals.</li> <li>✓ Existing features, such as the utilities, Public Right of Way and existing vegetation are used as "anchor features" to inform and shape the design proposals.</li> <li>✓ The SuDs features are to form a key and integral part of the Site's green infrastructure, delivering both landscape and ecological enhancements.</li> <li>✓ Existing habitats are to be protected and enhanced. New habitats are to be created.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>A memorable character</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ At the detailed design stage, inspiration will be drawn from local character.</li> <li>✓ New green spaces and the existing and new landscaping within them will create places with a memorable character.</li> <li>✓ The masterplan proposals create a design framework within which memorable spaces and building groupings will be created at the detailed design stage.</li> <li>✓ At the street naming stage, the opportunity exists to have names that have a connection to the locality.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Well defined streets and spaces</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ All streets will benefit from having active frontages.</li> <li>✓ The streets and spaces are to be well-defined using buildings and landscaping to enclose and define spaces.</li> <li>✓ At the detailed design stage, front doors will face streets and public spaces. Dual-aspect homes on street corners will have windows serving habitable rooms.</li> <li>✓ The design proposals are based upon well-defined perimeter blocks.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Easy to find your way around</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Legibility has been a key consideration from the outset of the design process. The streets have been designed to connect with one another and to be as direct as possible.</li> <li>✓ The Illustrative Masterplan demonstrates how streets are to be used as the main way to help people find their way around a place. For instance, the Spine Street will be distinguishable from the more minor streets through the use of different spatial characteristics, building typologies, building to street relationships, landscape strategies and boundary treatments.</li> </ul>	

## STREETS FOR ALL

<p><b>Healthy streets</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The design speed for the Spine Streets and Secondary Streets will be 20mph and 15mph for the Mews, Lanes and Courtyards.</li> <li>✓ The Spine Street will be tree lined where possible.</li> <li>✓ The shared surface nature and low design speeds of the Lanes and Private Drives will create streets that encourage more social interaction and street life, bringing wider social benefits.</li> <li>✓ The masterplan proposals show how the street layout can be designed to anticipate and respond to pedestrian and cycle 'desire lines' (the most direct routes between the places people will want to travel between).</li> <li>✓ At the detailed design stage, new and existing landscape will provide layers that add sensory richness to a place – visual, scent and sound.</li> <li>✓ The new dwellings will front the streets with active edges that will provide natural surveillance to create the basis for a safe new neighbourhood.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Cycle and car parking</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The DAS sets out both the car and cycle parking provision, which is to be provided in accordance with the LPA's Design Guidance. The emphasis is on incorporating adequate, safe and secure parking for vehicles and bicycles in a discreet and sensitive manner.</li> <li>✓ Cycle parking is to be secure and overlooked.</li> <li>✓ Where used, parking courtyards will have properties within courtyard spaces with habitable rooms providing natural surveillance.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Green and blue infrastructure</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The connected network of green spaces will maintain movement and feeding corridors for wildlife.</li> <li>✓ The network of connected recreational routes running through the green spaces will encourage physical activity and social interaction.</li> <li>✓ The SuDS features will capture and manage water close to where it falls. These features will form an integral part of the development's green spaces to deliver a range of landscape, recreational and ecological benefits.</li> <li>✓ The masterplan proposals create a habitat network providing residents with opportunities to interact with nature on a day-to-day basis.</li> <li>✓ Natural surveillance opportunities are maximised from the adjacent dwellings and buildings and from the connected network of traffic-free routes.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Back of pavement, front of home</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ At the detailed design stage, defensible space and strong boundary treatments will be used, with an emphasis on boundary treatments that add ecological value and/or reinforce distinctive local characteristics.</li> <li>✓ At the detailed design stage, waste storage and utility boxes will be well-integrated.</li> <li>✓ In places, such as the lanes, mews and courtyards, deeper front garden spaces will create opportunities for social interaction.</li> <li>✓ Where used and wherever possible, ground floor apartments with their own front doors and semi-private amenity spaces will be used to help to enliven the street whilst also reducing the amount of people using communal areas.</li> </ul>	



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