

Burston Garden Centre
Design and Access Statement
December 2020



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1. Introduction

Summary of Proposals

This document forms part of a planning submission for a new retirement community to the rear of Burston Garden Centre made by DPV Consult, as agents on behalf of Castleoak Care Developments, with PRP as Architects and Landscape Architects.

The proposed retirement community includes a clubhouse with communal amenities overlooking a village green, assisted living with care comprising 80 no. 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartment and 44 no. 2 bedroom care bungalows.

Despite significant local support, the previous planning application for a retirement community on the site was refused in March 2019, and subsequently dismissed at appeal. The applicant and their design team have taken on board the feedback from the Inspector and the Local Authority's concerns and addressed these through the new proposals.

To better protect the green belt and curtilage of the Grade II* Listed Burston Manor House, the proposals show a substantial reduction in built form, circa 3,520 sq m in footprint (GEA). This is achieved through the removal of the care home. The cottages are subsequently more dispersed around the site creating a sense of openness between the landscape and the built form.

Enhanced boundary treatment and landscaping will improve the heritage setting and increases the sense of openness. The access road to the site has been realigned to respect the physical relationship between this part of the development and Burston Manor House, improving its overall setting.

As with the previous application, the proposals also include a new junction and crossing to the A405 North Orbital Road, a new access road to the site and a new bridleway along the south east boundary to Birch Wood.

The Client

Castleoak Care Developments (Castleoak), the applicant, are the lead developer for the proposed retirement community.

Castleoak are market specialists, with an award-winning track record of successful development and construction project delivery for both assisted living and care homes, having delivered over 200 care homes and 2000 assisted living units across the UK. Working collaboratively with leading care and retirement living operators and funders they are helping to address the growing shortfall in specialist care, assisted and independent living accommodation for the UK's growing population of older people.

At the core of Castleoak's ambition is to create quality living space for the older generation, providing accommodation that promotes community living, choice and flexibility to enable residents to not only maintain their independence, but also maximise and enhance their lives.

PRP

PRP has a dedicated team of 30 architects and designers who are leading the market in providing attractive housing and care solutions reflecting the needs and aspirations of the next generation of older people.

The PRP later living team is mainly based in their Surrey offices and handles projects throughout the UK.

They are passionate about designing homes which are innovative, sustainable, where residents feel secure and proud to live. PRP's aim is always to create bespoke site-specific solutions which are cost effective and efficient to run. With such a large portfolio of schemes their broad client base has given them a clear understanding of the various models of older people's facilities being developed by different providers, in the public, private and voluntary sectors.

PRP's experience is grounded in research having been involved in producing several comprehensive design guides in the field of specialist accommodation for older people. Their involvement in documents such as the HAPPI report reflects their close links with national policy-making bodies, helping us to stay abreast of the relevant changes in legislation.

Above all, each project is designed with care and is bespoke for the particular client, resident group, community and site location. Design quality compliments their expertise in the sector resulting in award-winning, truly innovative buildings where older people can thrive in their later years.



Background & Vision for the site

The site sits on the edge of How Wood, connected by footpaths to local shops, a GP surgery and public transport links. Although the site is within the designated Green Belt, it has previously been used for propagation purposes as part of Burston Garden Centre. Whilst the Garden Centre is still a popular destination and a successful business, this part of the garden centre is now surplus to their on-going requirements.

The proposals will bring to life this redundant part of the garden centre with a series of buildings of architectural distinction surrounding a new village green. The landscape proposals have been carefully considered throughout the design process to ensure that the new development will substantially enhance the landscape character of the site itself, complementing the mature backdrop of the adjacent woodlands. Redundant structures and hardstanding areas, adjacent to the boundary of Burston Manor House, will be removed.

Burston Garden Retirement Community will provide a range of specialist accommodation for older people promoting healthy lifestyles and the well-being of residents. The new community will encourage residents to achieve the greatest possible degree of independence, choice and fulfilment into their later years. The living accommodation will be designed specifically for older people, allowing ‘aging in place’ within an enabling environment.

The Assisted Living and Care Bungalows will provide independent living for residents combined with site-based care, support and activities. The care home accommodation has been removed from the application in response to comments received both through the planning application and the subsequent appeal.

The design addresses the issues raised during the planning process to date and improves the sensitive landscape setting by significantly enhancing the landscape, biodiversity and ecology within the site (Green Belt). The woodland will provide a stunning mature backdrop to the new development and an existing visual buffer for the neighbouring properties at How Wood. The boundary to How Wood uses landscape to integrate the development into the wider landscape setting. This will be a highly desirable environment to live in, with a high quality architectural and landscape response.

Communal facilities will include the Clubhouse and a variety of external gardens, the former being the main focus of the community. It will contain foyer/reception, restaurant, bar, activity room, library exercise room, therapy/treatment room, management offices, laundry, scooter storage. The landscaped environment will provide a village green with an informal play area and a pond, edible gardens, orchards, raised allotments, safe walks and trails, all in a secure setting

The Concept of Retirement Living

The proposed development at Burston will provide residents within the assisted living apartments and care bungalows with individual self-contained accommodation, together with a variety of additional communal facilities within the clubhouse, all within one development.

The assisted living apartments and the care bungalows aim to provide residents with a home for life. Residents can live independently whilst enjoying the sense of community and companionship that a range of communal facilities can provide. It is expected that residents will live in any of the assisted living and care bungalows with a 24-hour domiciliary care service being available to them, so as to maintain the greatest possible degree of independence and ‘normality’ for their individual circumstances.

Care will be provided to residents on an ‘as needed’ basis, and every encouragement will be given to maintaining independence and an active lifestyle. An important feature of retirement living is the creation of lively balanced communities of older people, ranging from active, independent residents to those requiring a higher degree of care.

The main aim of the assisted living and care bungalows is:-

- To provide older people with their own self-contained home
- To promote peoples independence
- To provide flexible care & support from an on-site care team when required
- To provide and maintain a balanced community in an enabling environment to promote active aging
- To offer a ‘home for life’ as far as practically possible
- To provide cost effective and better value for money for resident who require care
- To free up much needed family housing that is under-occupied
- To promote downsizing enabling occupants to free up the equity for their later years and release under occupied family housing





2. Existing Site & Landscape Setting

Site Location

The application site lies on the edge of How Wood village, within the administrative boundary of St Albans and comprises land formerly used for rose propagation as part of the wider Burston Garden Centre. The application also includes works to provide an improved junction to the A405, a new road to access the proposed development, significant new landscaping around the site and a new bridleway to the south of the site.

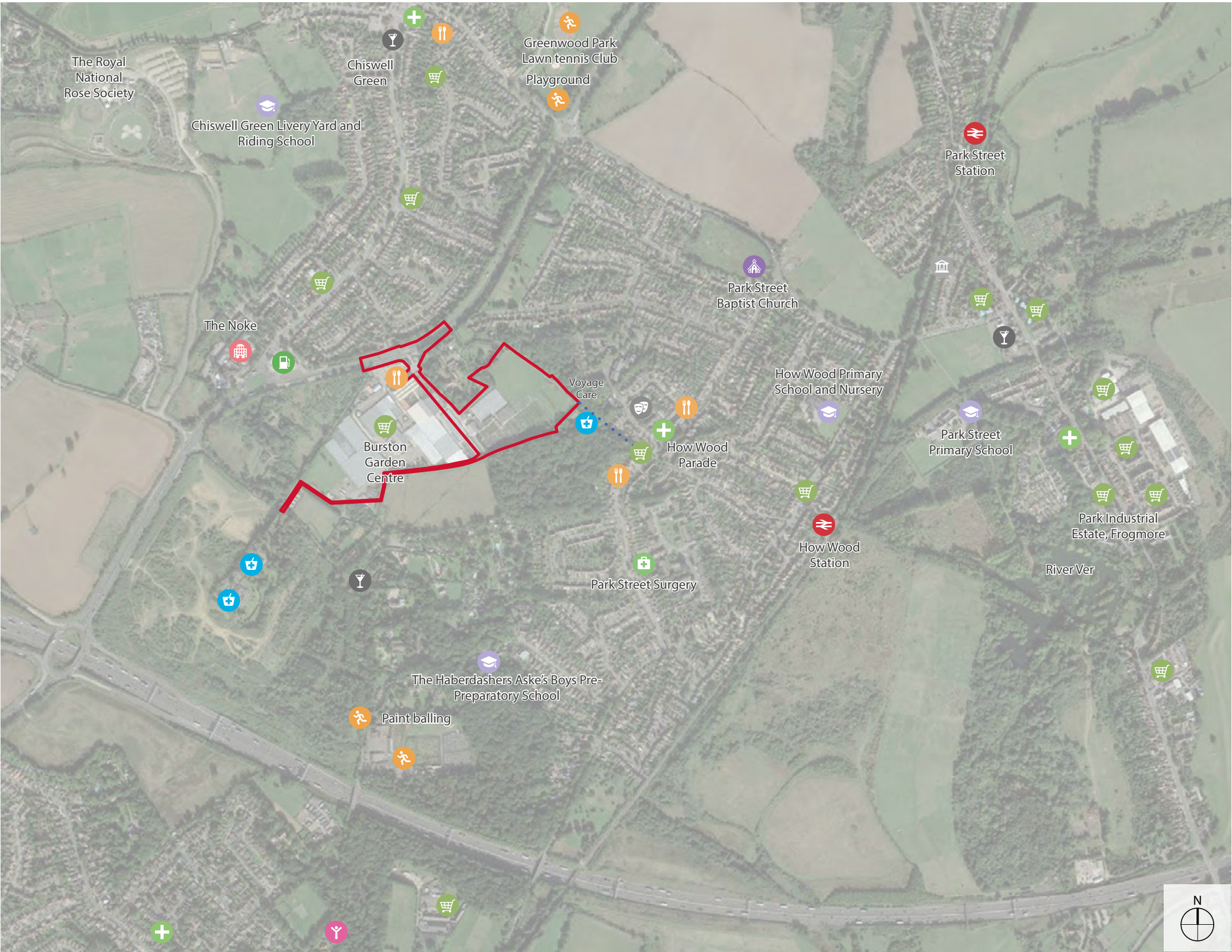
The site is located on the rural-urban fringe of How Wood (County Wildlife sites) and is located in a Green Belt zone. The location is designated in the Local Authority's landscape development area and is in an area of Archaeological Significance.

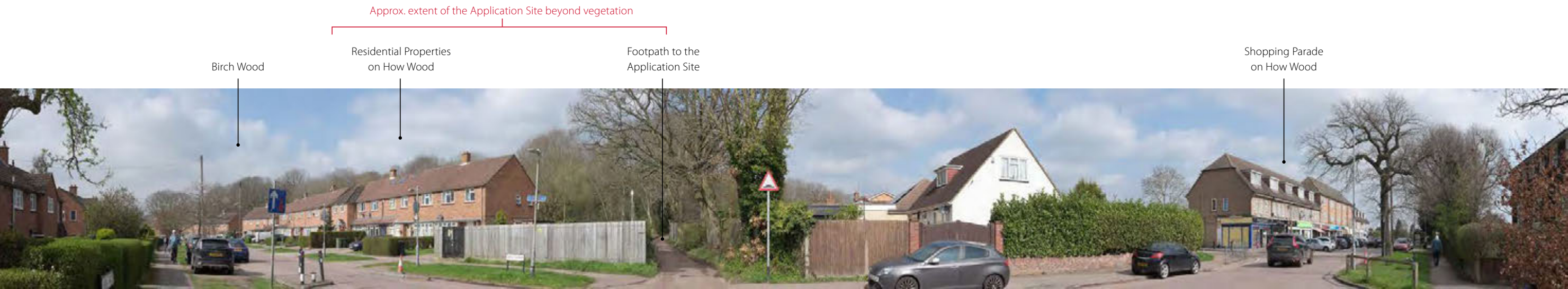
How Wood village sits between Watford and St Albans, within St Stephen civil parish, Hertfordshire and forms part of the St Stephens Neighbourhood Plan. The parish itself is made up of a number of villages including Park Street and Frogmore to the east, Bricket Wood and Colney to the south and Chiswell Green to the north. Nearby Park Street and St Albans offer restaurants and bars, many of which overlook the River Ver.

How Wood village is 1.3 miles from the site by car and 0.2 miles to walk from the east of the site, via an existing bridleway and some residential streets. How Wood offers a small selection of shops, including a hairdressers, a pharmacy, a take away, a mini-market and a GP surgery.

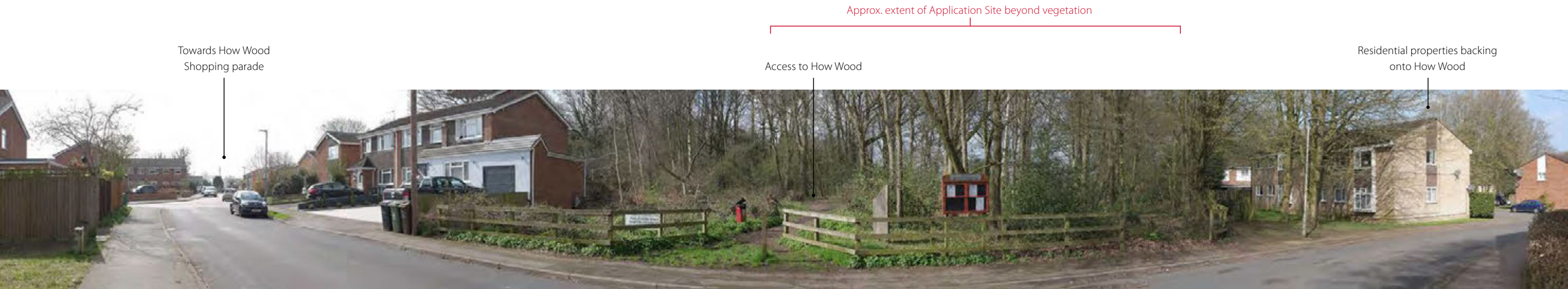
The site is well served by road, sitting 2.7 miles from St Albans and one mile from the M25, via the from the A405 North Orbital Road. The current access to and from the garden centre from the A405 is, however, unsafe with no safe pedestrian crossing point for local residents.

There is a regular train connection from How Wood railway station on the St Albans Branch Line, linking it with St Albans Abbey and Watford Junction railway stations. Journey times into London Euston, via Watford, are circa 40 minutes. There is also a regular bus service to St Albans from How Wood, via Chiswell Green.





View North from How Wood towards site



View West from Grovelands opposite footpath entrance to How Wood



Bridleway from south east corner of site with access to Birchwood Bungalow on left



View from How Wood looking east



Burston Garden Centre Access Road

Photos of site boundary and adjacent properties



Boundary with Burston Manor Farm



Boundary with Birchwood Bungalow



Bridle path behind The Limes off the North Orbital



Bridle path boundary to site



Path from How Wood road to site boundary



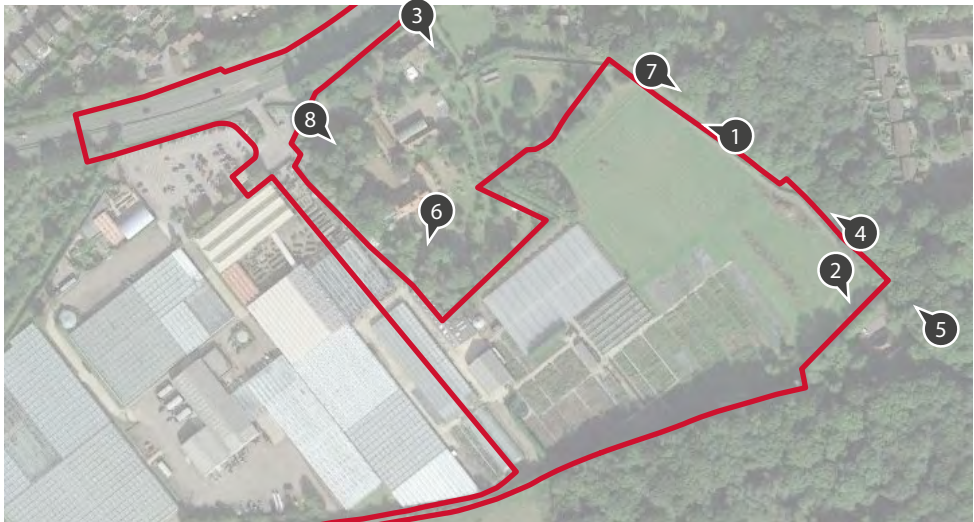
View of Garden Centre from Burston Manor



Pathway along boundary with How Wood



Pond adjacent to Burston Manor entrance



Key Plan

Photos within site boundary



View towards mast and Birch Wood



Derelict paved area



Disused garden centre site



Existing garden centre infrastructure with Burston Manor in the background



Existing disused greenhouses



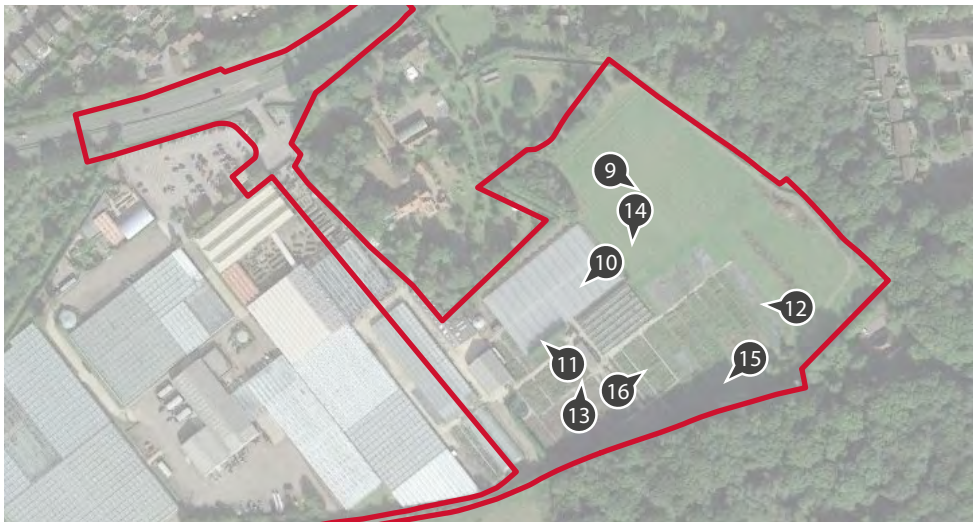
Existing disused polytunnels



Unmade track through site



Unused industrial garden infrastructure



Key Plan

Access to Site

Together with the proposed junction improvement works (as outlined by PEP with this planning application), a new roundabout at the site entrance will enable a clear direction and arrival. This area will be enhanced with landscaping to form the threshold into the proposed retirement community. The following photographs demonstrate the peripheral working nature of the existing site:

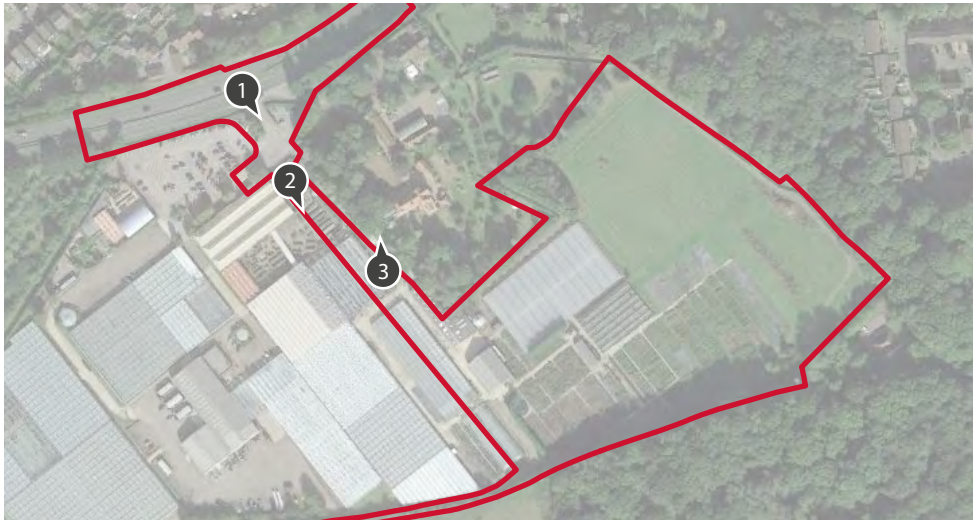


The access road into the site is currently used for deliveries to the garden centre and as a service yard. The road, which is floodlit during the dark winter afternoons/evenings, is used constantly during the working day by noisy forklift trucks and delivery vehicles. Pallets and stock are stacked high along the boundary of the Manor House.

To the south west of the Manor House there is a large unsightly concrete outbuilding which is no longer in use and a number of metal containers used for storage. The rows of glasshouses within the garden centre site are also visible beyond this.

The new access road will bring the following improvements to the boundary of the historic Manor House:-

- The existing glasshouses will be reduced in width to provide sufficient space for a new residential access road and footpath with informally planted landscaped edges to both sides.
- Floodlit lighting will be removed and replaced with directional lighting suitable for a quiet residential road
- All of the deliveries and servicing to Burston Garden Centre will move to the western side of the garden centre reducing day to day vehicular noise
- A generous landscape edge will be mask the new access road from the Manor House acting as an extension to the informal planting within the Manor House demise.
- The disused outbuildings will be demolished, improving the outlook from the Manor House.



Key Plan



Site Analysis

The site is enclosed on two sides by two woodlands, namely; How Wood to the north east and Birch Wood to the south east. How Wood is a beautiful woodland, open to the public, with meandering paths leading through it, a pond and small stream. How Wood provides dense screening to the residential properties in Spruce Way, Walnut Close & Grovelands to the east. Between How Wood and the site is a bridleway, which continues beyond to the south east, and is segregated from the site by a close boarded fence limiting views into the site. Birch Wood, the larger of the two woodlands, is not readily open to the public and has no bridleway on its perimeter. There is a telecommunications tower along the perimeter of Birch Wood. Both woodlands provide a buffer to traffic noise, particularly from the M25.

A residential property known as Birchwood Bungalow is located at the point where the two woodlands converge, adjacent to the eastern most part of the proposed site. Birchwood Bungalow provides specialist accommodation for people with learning and physical disabilities and is well screened from the site.

To the north of the site are three clusters of buildings; Burston Manor House (also referred to as Burston Manor), Burston Manor Farm and The Limes. Burston Manor is a Grade II* listed timber framed house constructed in the 12th century, with later additions in the 15th and 17th century, and is enclosed to the south and west by a moat. The adjacent manor outbuilding to the east of the manor house is also Grade II listed. Burston Manor Farm comprises of a series of outbuildings which are within the demise of The Limes, a 1970's 2 storey dwelling. The site is well screened from Burston Manor by a metal mesh fence and 18m high Oak, Beech and Cherry trees and from the Manor Farm by a wooden post and rail fence and 16m high Leyland Cypress trees.

Burston Garden Centre sits to the west of the site and shares the current access road. Visitors' parking is located to the front of the garden centre separate from the servicing and delivery traffic along the access road. The garden centre is in its own right a popular destination for visitors from both the local community and further afield, with the latter often arriving by coach. As well as a wide selection of plants, the independent garden centre boasts a restaurant, an outdoor seating area and offers a range of events for the wider community. Glasshouses are located adjacent to the access road on the west, a proportion of which will be demolished to facilitate the new access road and boundary landscaping. As the site is currently under the same ownership as the garden centre, there is no boundary treatment separating the two.

The main development site for the retirement community was previously used for plant propagation and consists of a number of disused and derelict outbuildings, greenhouses, polytunnels and water tanks, with extensive hard surfaced areas. This portion of the site measures 3.5 hectares in area. Despite the strong landscape setting, the site itself has no landscaped areas of any merit.



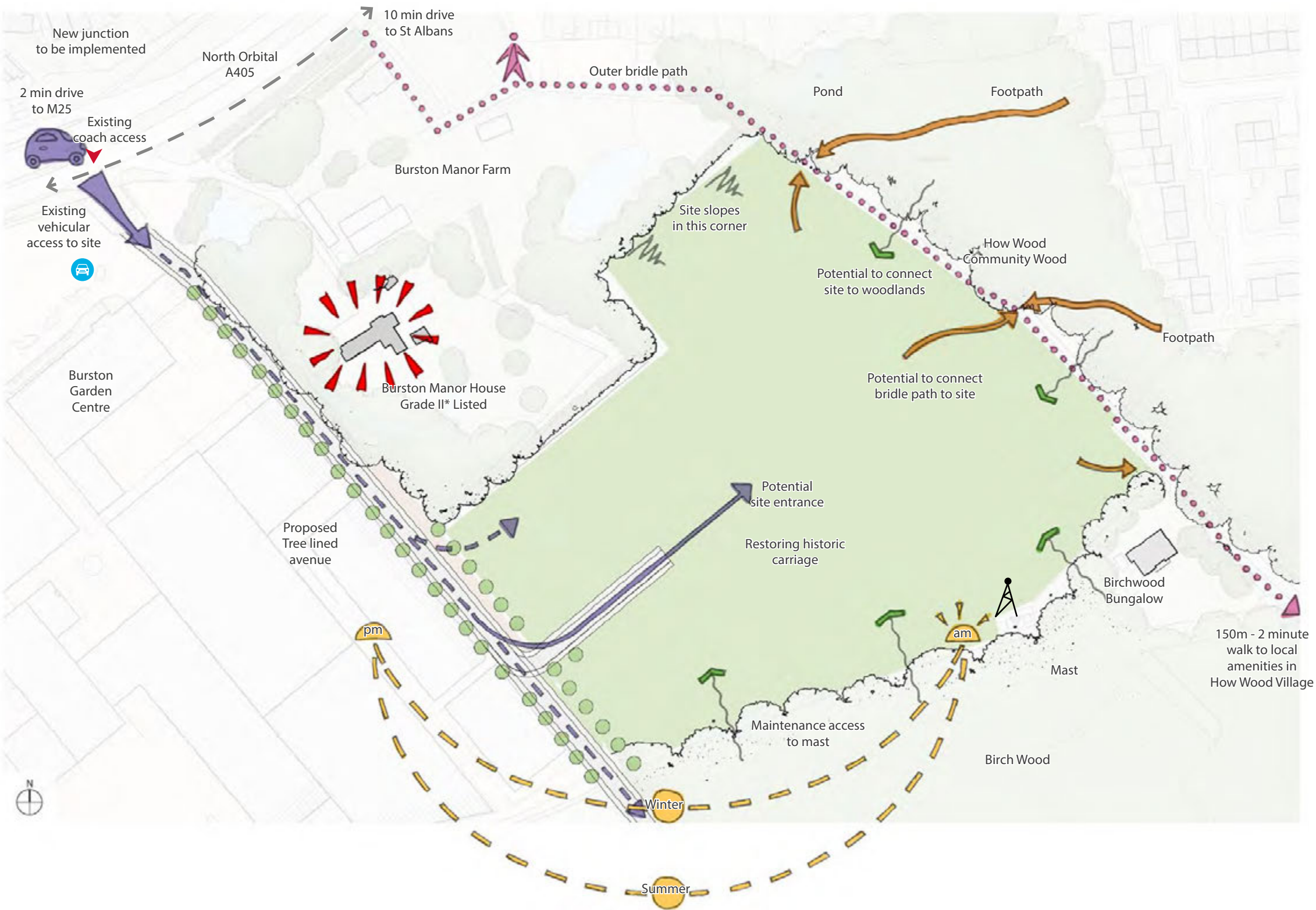
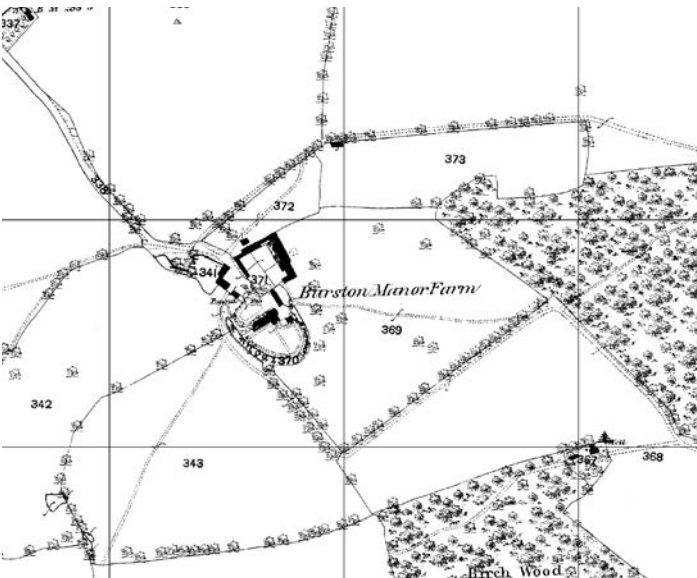
Opportunities and Constraints

The proposed development of the site presents a number of fantastic opportunities, namely;

- Provide a new junction with the A405 with safe crossing for pedestrian use.
- Improve the access road with landscape borders to either side of the new road.
- Remove disused, derelict and unsightly structures and buildings on the site.
- Improve the landscape setting within the site to complement the mature backdrop of the adjacent woodlands.
- Increase ecology and biodiversity within the site.
- Restore the historic carriage route through the site.
- Improve setting to Burston Manor by removal of deliveries to Garden Centre from western boundary.

Historical Map 1872-1880

Historical route of avenue of trees to be restored



Heritage Setting

Burston Manor is a Grade II* listed timber framed house constructed in the 12th century, with later additions in the 15th and 17th century, and is enclosed to the south and west by a moat. The adjacent manor outbuilding to the east of the manor house is Grade II listed.

Burston Manor abounds the site to the south and the garden centre's delivery access road to the west.

There are filtered views, particularly in winter, from the eastern-most corner of the site of Burston Manor roof and upper floor. These views are considered to be important to the wider heritage setting of Burston Manor and have influenced the proposed masterplan and landscape design.

Existing tree screening along the rest of the site boundaries limits other views in and out of the site.

A Built Heritage Statement prepared by RPS Heritage outlines the importance of Burston Manor, the moat and outbuildings.



Key Plan



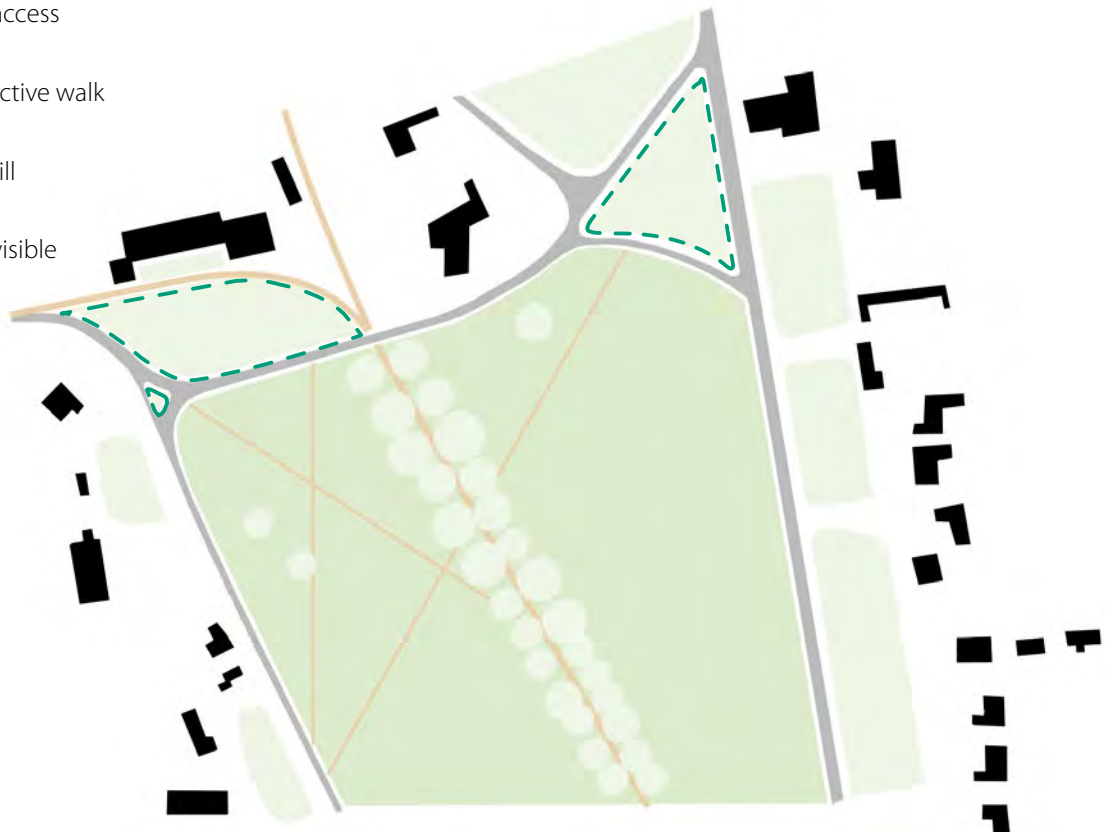


Local Identity

Village greens are a quintessential part of rural and semi-rural settlements across the UK, providing a place for people of all ages to gather and enjoy community life and a pleasant visual amenity for the dwellings overlooking them. PRP undertook a study of some village greens in the locality to analyse how they relate to their village settings and identify key characteristics which can be applied to the design of the Burston Gardens scheme and tie the design into its surrounding context .

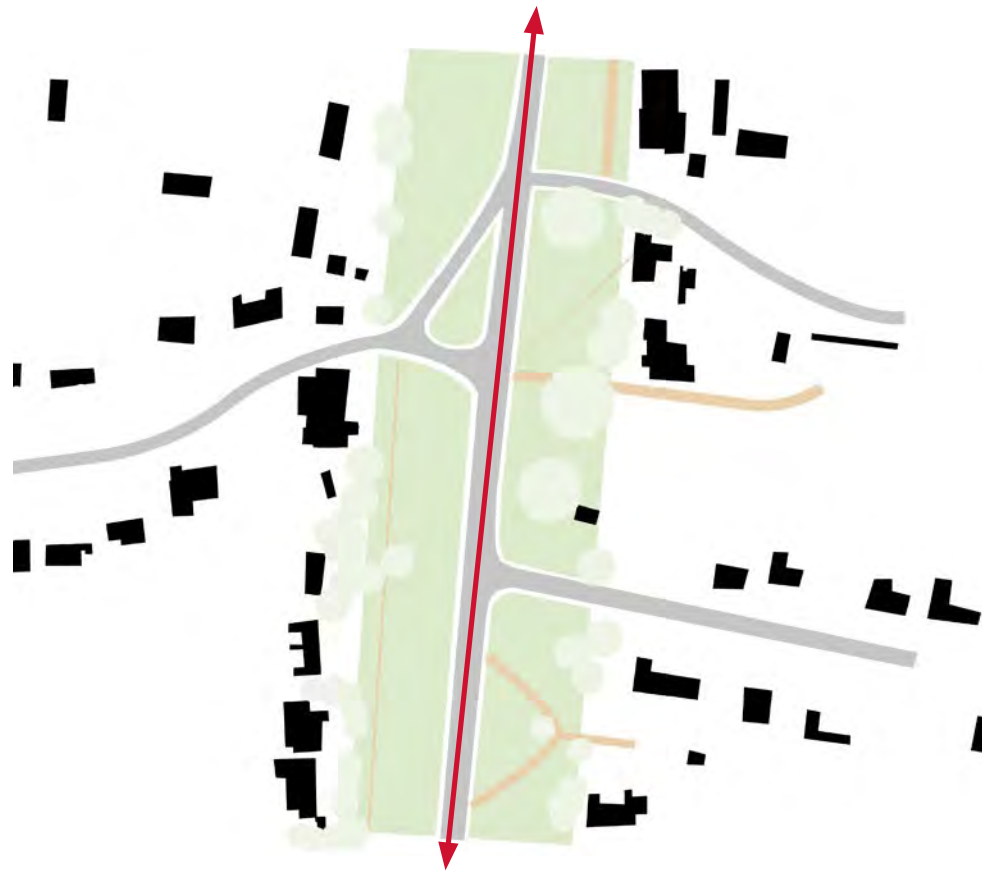
Redbourn

- Hierarchy of roads with vehicular route on the perimeter and minor access tracks to properties
- Avenue of trees forming attractive walk which dissects the green
- Built form is set back whilst still addressing the green
- Secondary green spaces are visible beyond the main green



Croxley Green

- Linear green forming a route into the main village
- Informal routes within the green connecting footways
- Hierarchy of roads through the green with informal tracks providing access to dwellings
- Public buildings front the green, located on junctions with minor roads
- Trees define the edge of the green, providing privacy to dwellings
- Private buildings are set back from boundary behind hedgerows and fences
- Minimal boundary treatment to public buildings makes them feel part of the green
- Long distance views to significant buildings, including the church and public house
- Informal/ unmade routes run where required within the green connecting footways



Public buildings open out to the green



Public buildings open out to the green



Public buildings open out to the green



Houses set behind soft boundary treatment



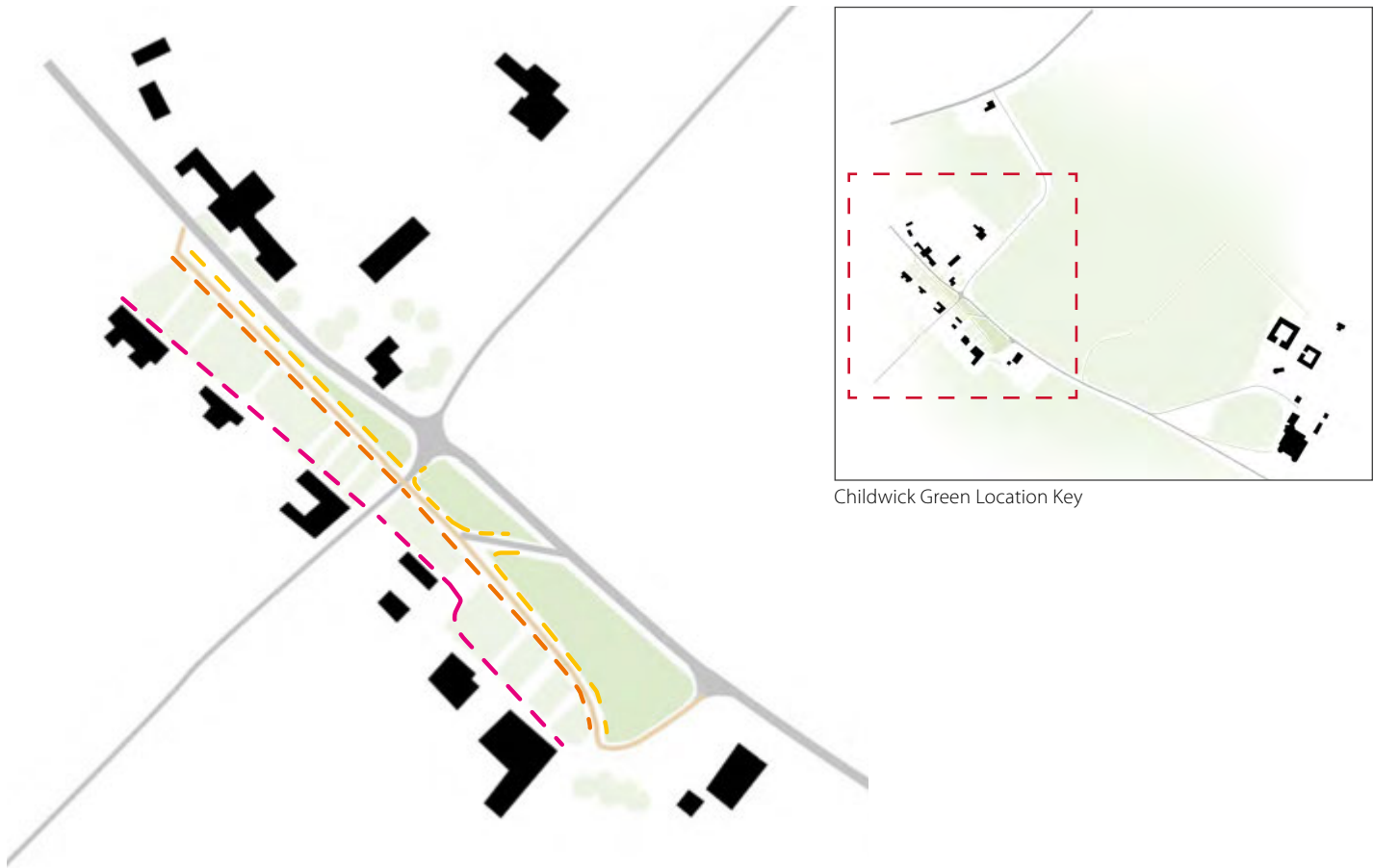
Buildings set back with informal access



Public buildings open out to the green

Childwick Green

- Linear green remote from Manor House
- Manor House entrance defined by gateposts and gatehouse
- Formal tree lined route with spring bulbs highlights primary route
- Private buildings are set back some distance from the green with a semi-public green buffer between
- Formality to the layering of the public and semi-public green spaces
- Large green areas in front of dwellings visually extend the green
- Hedgerows and fences define the boundaries of the private dwellings
- Informal tracks provide access to dwellings
- Progressive layers of low level boundary fences & hedges create a sense of openness



Childwick Green Location Key

Conclusion

From the analysis of the various village greens there were a number of principles across each which have informed the conceptual design approach for Burston Garden Retirement Community. These include:-

- The village green is always at the heart of the community, overlooked by dwellings and a public building such as a church or public house
- Dwellings which front onto the green use low level, permeable fencing and hedging to define their boundaries
- Public buildings which front onto the green are more dominant in height and prominence
- Formal paths often run along the edges separating buildings from the green whilst informal desire routes dissect the green
- Hierarchy of roads clearly distinguishes between the main vehicular routes and the informal access to dwellings
- Trees either define the main routes through the green or are used on the perimeter to create a sense of privacy for dwellings
- Secondary green spaces increase the sense of openness, visually extending the green
- Entrance to villages defined by signage or gateposts.



View of the green from the road



Various boundaries through a variety of methods



Path intersecting the green and houses



The gatehouse entrance to the village



Long landscaped path up to the village



Courtyard stable blocks

Local Architectural Character

The architectural quality of the local area provides a number of vernacular precedents. The following images, taken from the surrounding villages, show the rich palette of materials and the local building forms that have influenced the design proposals.



Brick detailing and prominent gables



Distinctive brick detailing and elegant chimneys



Gate within hedge



Pyramid roof form with dovecote to Burston Manor Outbuilding and timber cladding to Burston Manor



Red brick vertical tile hanging and black timber



Gated threshold with view of estate fencing



3. Consultation and Community Involvement

Consultation and Community Involvement

Castleoak have undertaken extensive consultation for the proposed development with the Local Authority Planning Department, St Stephen's Parish Council (Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group), the Highways Department at Hertfordshire County Council, Residents' Associations and the local community. A full Statement of Community Involvement has been included within the Planning Statement outlining this process and relevant outcomes.

The Statement of Community Involvement contained within the Planning Statement outlines the consultation approach that has been adopted and how the scheme has evolved and been amended to reflect the observations and issues raised by all interested parties since 2017.

Consultation with St Albans District Council

Five meetings with the LPA have now taken place over the course of the evolution of the proposals:

- Pre-application Meeting 1 (10 October 2017)
- Pre-application Meeting 2 (18 June 2019)
- Pre-application Meeting 3 (6 October 2020) and 2 further follow up meetings (17 and 30 November)

Consultation with Hertfordshire County Council

The applicant has also had continuing dialogue with HCC (Highways) and the Head of Accommodation Commissioning for HCC over the evolution of the proposals.

Consultation with Local Stakeholders

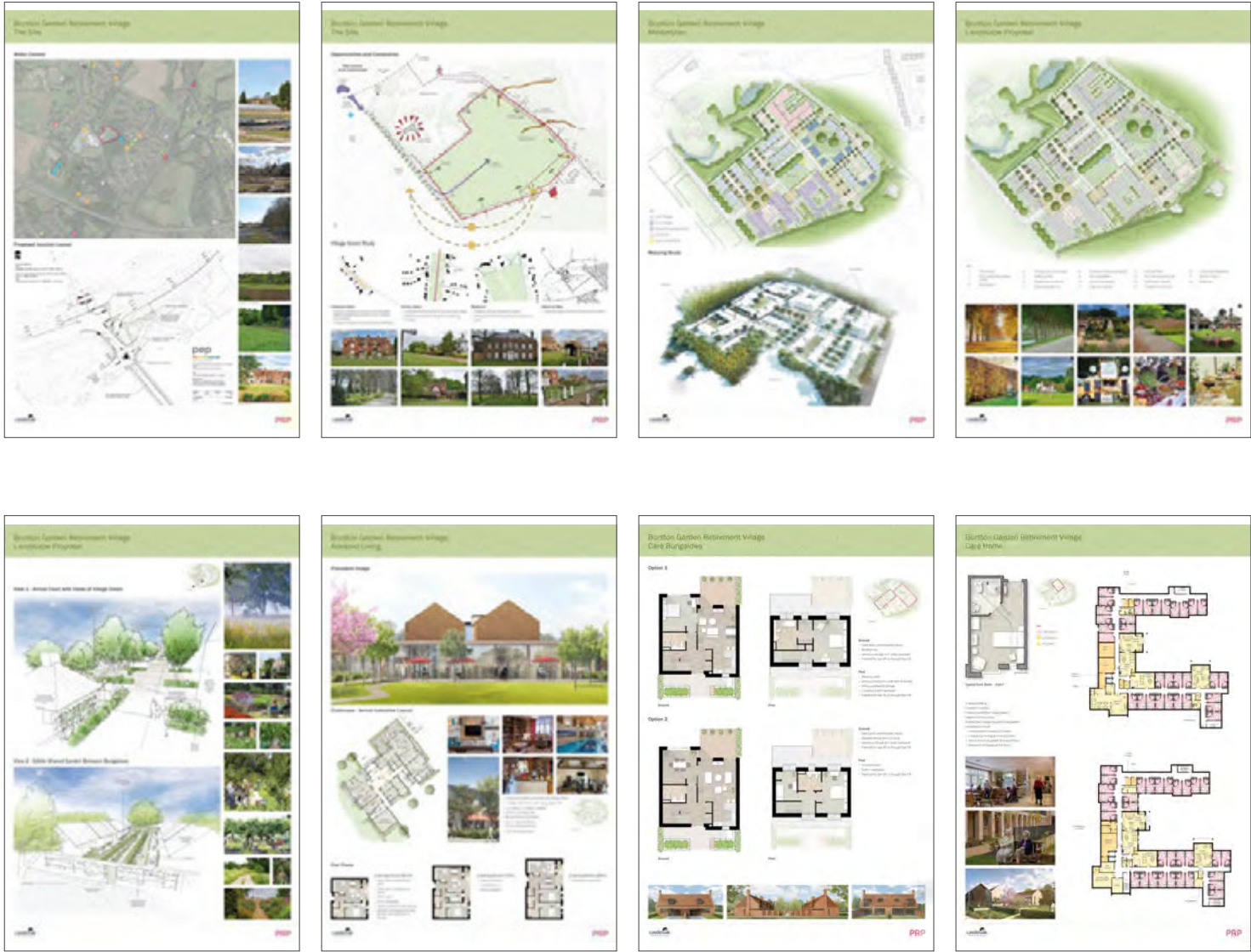
The applicant has continued to engage with key local stakeholders including the Chiswell Green Residents Association, the Park Street and Brickett Wood Residents Association, the St Stephen Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and local and ward members.

Public Consultation 2018

A public consultation event was held at the Mercure Noke Hotel on the 24th April 2018 where members of the local community were invited to attend a drop-in session to view the proposals. Local councillors were invited to a preview of the proposed design in advance of the public attending. The event was well attended and the proposals were in the main positively received. Areas of the design which were either welcomed or subsequently addressed include:-

- A treatment room has been provided within the clubhouse building for the use of visiting health professionals.
- The landscape proposals have been further developed to include appropriate species of trees and plants.
- The proposed junction with the A405 was considered to be of huge benefit to the local community
- The inclusion of a bridleway to the south of the site was welcomed
- A drainage strategy for the development has been developed to ensure that there will be no surface water run-off into How Wood
- The scale of the development adjacent to How Wood reduces to 1½ storeys to minimise impact on the residential properties to the north east. These properties also have substantial low level planting along the boundary and the bridleway, adjacent to How Wood woodland.
- The proposed parking has been carefully considered, ensuring it will meet the operational needs of the development. The provision of an on-site minibus service is being proposed along with a car share scheme, subject to resident demand.

The Statement of Community Involvement, within the Planning Statement, provides more details on the event and responses received.



Planning application 5/2018/1324/LSM dated June 2018

A full planning application comprising the demolition of the existing horticultural buildings and the redevelopment of the site to provide a new retirement living community was submitted in June 2018.

33 representations of support were received from the consultations. The comments acknowledged that the development would provide much needed care facilities in a suitable location. Furthermore, support was given for the road traffic improvements to the A405 in providing improved safer access to the site and the garden centre.

7 letters of objection were received.

The planning application was taken to committee in March 2019 with a recommendation for refusal and despite a positive discussion at the committee the council narrowly sought to refuse the application for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development would compromise inappropriate development in the Green Belt which would cause in principle and actual harm to the openness of the Green Belt.
2. The intensification in the level of development and planting at the boundary of Burston Manor and the associated dovecote would obscure the historic boundary of the Grade II* and Grade II listed buildings and its relationship with How Wood and Birchwood.

Pre-application Planning Advice 2019

Following a pre-application submission in June 2019, a meeting with the Planning and Heritage Officers was convened on site. Issues discussed during the site visit included:-

- The unsightliness of the existing access road and service yard and how this could be improved with the proposed development
- The existing condition of the site and its relationship to the Manor House and the ability to provide a further landscape edge between the Manor House and the proposed built form
- Maintenance of the existing landscape edge to the north eastern boundary and how this could be maintained in perpetuity
- How views from the Manor House into the site and from the site towards the Manor House could be restricted through an enhanced landscape edge and raised bund.

The design was amended for this previous application to extend the landscape edge with the Manor House along the northern boundary by removing 2 bedrooms from the care home and 3 care bungalows. The access road was also moved west to increase the landscaping and additional LVIA views have been provided.



Current Pre-application Planning Advice 6 October 2020

Following the appeal dismissal, a new pre-application submission was made in September 2020 (Ref: PRE/2020/0122). A virtual meeting with the Planning and Heritage Officers was convened on the 6 October 2020. The discussion centred around how the design responds to the issues raised in the appeal.

The new proposals excluded the care home, allowing a substantial reduction in density of built form across the site.

The access road into the site was moved west and Burston Lane was moved south to increase the landscaped edge and improve the setting of the Manor House.

The landscaped edge with the Manor House along the northern boundary was enhanced in the pre-application scheme. The dwellings adjacent to this boundary are 1 1/2 storey bungalows arranged to increase spacing between the built form to increase the sense of openness.

The access track to the eastern boundary has been substituted with a layered, landscaped edge to the existing bridleway and How Wood.

The design issues which were highlighted during the meeting, and in the subsequent response, as needing further consideration within a new application include:-

- The site is considered to be part of the wider context of Burston Manor and as such the proposals should seek to minimise the harm to the heritage setting.
- Long ranging winter views from and to Burston Manor House need to be considered (Appeal Dismissal paragraphs 60-63).
- Bunds along the boundary with Burston Manor were not considered to be appropriate
- Walking routes within the development for residents should be considered

The design has been amended since this pre-application meeting to capture the views which exist between the bridleway along How Wood and the Manor House. Glimpsed views, above and through trees, from the Manor House to the garden centre and How Woods have also been respected in the new design proposals.

The landscape proposals have been further developed to provide a range of different character areas with a variety of external spaces for residents to enjoy. The proposed bund along the boundary with the Manor House has been removed and a variety of planting proposed along this edge, at a reduced density and scale.



Proposed masterplan layout

1. Curved, less formal central route
2. Buildings clusters around tree lined courtyards
3. Enlarged central green
4. Landscape woodland edge of native trees and shrubs
5. Boundary planting, screening Burston Manor
6. Permeable open views through the site from bridgeway
7. Residents communal gardens (including edible gardens)
8. Potential footpath link to bridgeway



Illustrative masterplan for initial pre-application scheme

Pre-application Planning Advice
November 2020

In response to the feedback received from the October pre-application meeting, a further 2 meetings were convened in November to review the design proposals in detail before the intended resubmission of the planning application. The meeting was held virtually with the Planning and Heritage Officers.

The revised proposals sought to address previous concerns about further improving the setting of the Manor House and ensuring that the long ranging winter views from the Manor House are retained. Given the seasonal advantage now afforded by the loss of the leaves on the trees, further on site investigation has been carried out to capture the winter views between the Manor House and the Bridleway, in both directions. Analysis of these views enabled a clear strategy of the connections across the site to be established. The views informed an alignment on the site of both clear winter views and filtered winter views. The presented master plan layout responded accordingly by parting the buildings and through careful landscape design in preserving the openness with the new low level planting.

The primary issues which were highlighted during the meeting, and in the subsequent response, as needing further consideration within a new application include:-

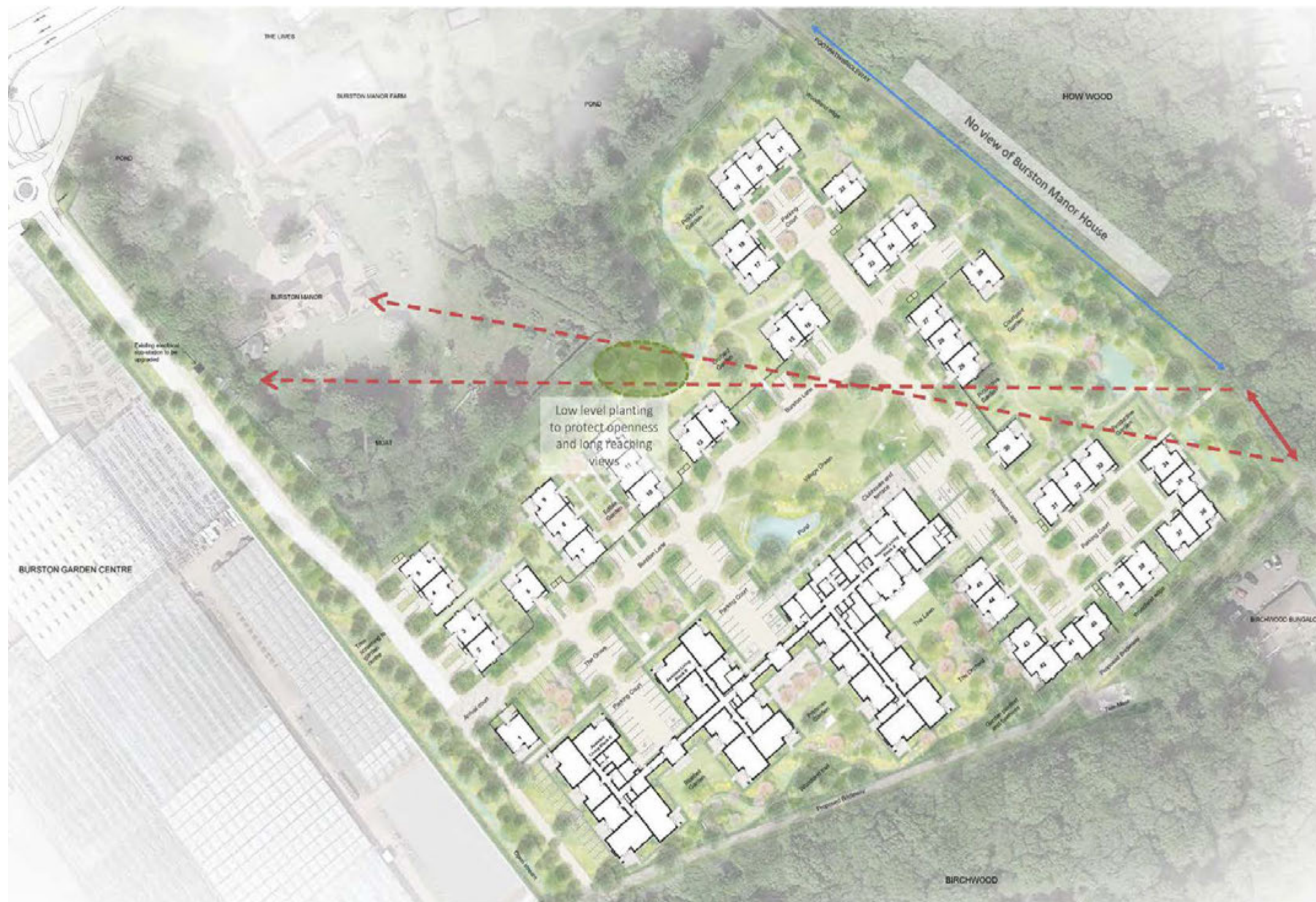
- The site is considered to be part of the wider context of Burston Manor and as such the proposals should seek to minimise the harm to the heritage setting.
- The proposals are “inappropriate development” in the Green Belt and that, as a result, the proposals need to be determined by reference to the “very special circumstances” test set out in the NPPF.

In response to the issues discussed at the meeting, the following amendments have been made to the design:-

- Views which exist between the bridleway along How Wood and Burston Manor House have been captured within the new masterplan.
- Glimpsed views, above and through trees, from the Manor House to the garden centre and How Wood have also been respected in the new design proposals.
- The landscape proposals have been further developed to provide a range of different character areas with a variety of external spaces for residents to enjoy, connected by clear walking routes around the site.
- The drainage design has also removed the potential flooding of the village green by locating a swale from this area to the perimeter of the site.
- The care bungalows, which were previously located in closest proximity to the Manor House, have been realigned to provide a substantial distance from the boundary of the Manor House.



Filtered views of heritage setting (scheme from 1st follow up meeting)



Design response to heritage setting (scheme from 1st follow up meeting)



4. Appeal Dismissal

Analysis of Appeal Dismissal

Further to the Council’s decision to refuse planning permission for the proposed retirement village on the 20 March 2019 (LPA ref. 5/2018/1324/LSM) Castleoak lodged an appeal (Ref:APP/B1930/W/19/3235642) against the decision. The appeal was subsequently dismissed on the 9th January 2020.

A detailed critique of the reasons for planning refusal and dismissal of appeal have been prepared by DPV Consult and form part of this application. The following sections look at the specific design issues and how these are addressed.

The main issues for dismissal are quoted as:-

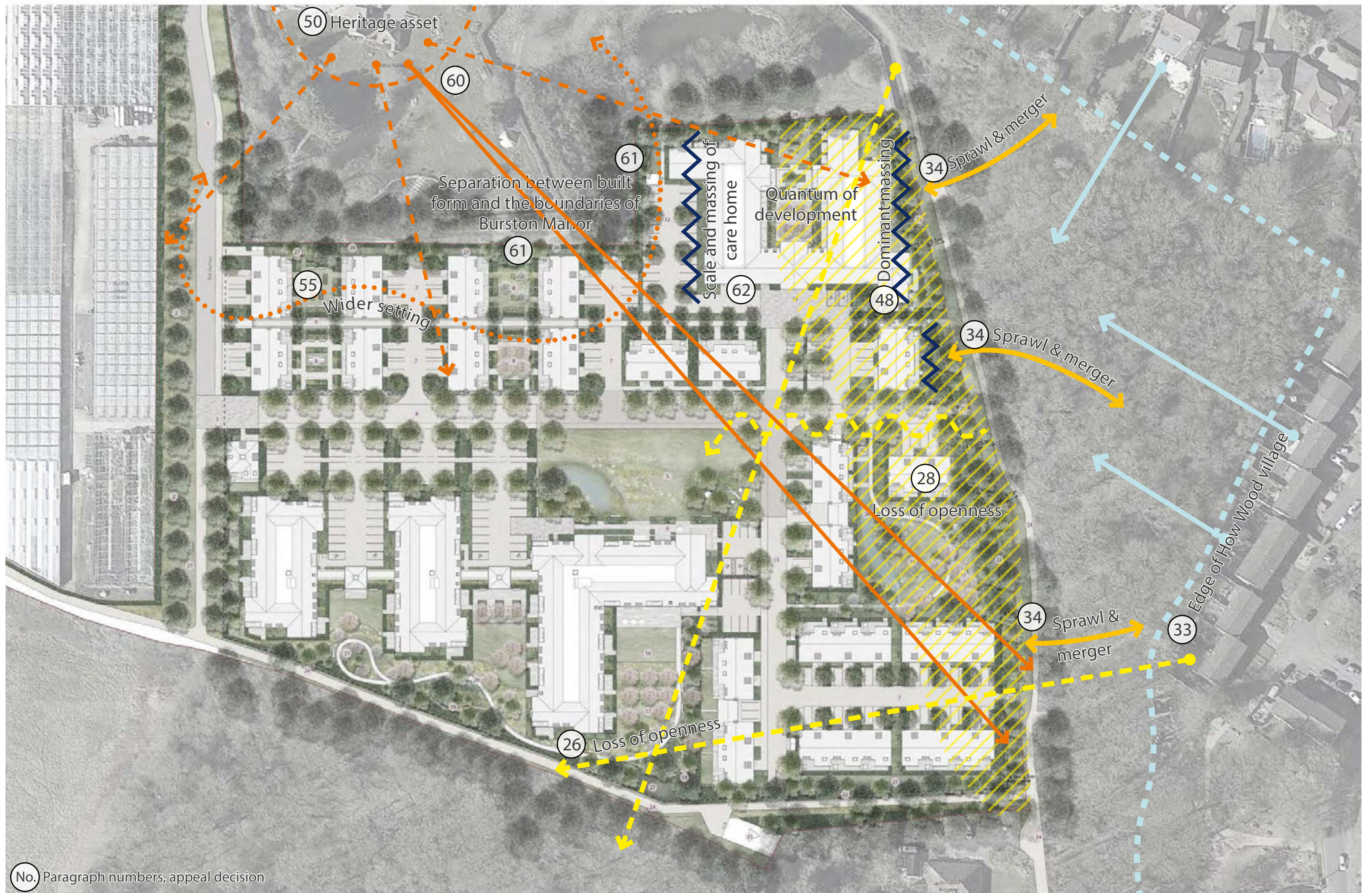
- i. The extent to which the development would harm the openness of the Green Belt and/or conflict with its purposes;
- ii. The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area;
- iii. The effect of the proposal on the significance of the grade II* listed Burston Manor and grade II listed outbuildings, as derived from their setting; and,
- iv. Whether the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations so as to amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development.

Items i.), ii.) and iii.) in particular have been analysed by the design team in order to inform the proposed redesign of the masterplan.

The diagram on the opposite page identifies in more detail issues within the appeal decision which are addressed in the revised proposals. These include:-

- Loss of openness in spacial terms (paragraph 26) and as perceived by users of the bridleway to the east of the site (paragraph 29).
- Lack of significant depth or density to How Wood to provide a definitive edge to How Wood Village (paragraph 33)
- A degree of sprawl and merger between the proposed development and How Wood Village (paragraph 34)
- The proposed care home, due to its scale, would have a large and dominating effect (paragraph 48)
- Importance of the northern boundary of the site as the northern edge of the Grade II* listed Burston Manor’ House’s wider setting in this direction (paragraph 55)
- Due to the amount of development, there would be limited separation between the built form and the boundaries of Burston Manor (paragraph 61)
- Historic relationship between Burston Manor and How Wood (paragraphs 60, 61 and 62).





(No.) Paragraph numbers, appeal decision

Design Response to Heritage Setting

In response to the appeal dismissal findings, the design approach to the site and boundaries with Burston Manor House have fundamentally altered to respond more appropriately to the wider heritage setting.

The attached diagrams are annotated extracts of the original masterplan (planning application ref no 5/18/1324). These highlight conceptually the proposed changes to the design approach of the built form and the landscape proposals which include

- Improving the wider setting of Burston Manor House
- Maintaining the wide reaching views to and from the manor house
- Reduction in built form along the south eastern boundary of the manor house
- Removal of the care home
- Realignment of the access road to improve the landscape edge



Proposed amendments to wider site



Proposed amendments to boundaries with Burston Manor House

Commercial nature of boundary to be replaced with new landscaped edge with road further away from boundary



1

Redundant structure to be demolished

Existing trees along Burston Manor House boundary to be retained



2

Existing photographs, showing commercial character of existing site

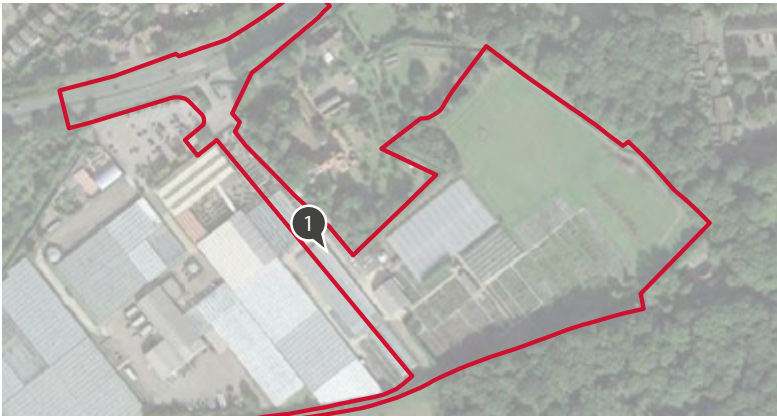
Proposed Amendments to Access Road



Existing photograph showing setting of proposed Birchwood Drive taken in similar location to adjacent CGI views



View of development on approach along Birchwood Drive
Previous planning application (Ref No. 5/18/1324)



Key Plan



View of development on approach along Birchwood Drive
Revised landscape edge between cottages and Burston Manor House boundary and realigned road - current application



5. Design Proposals

Design Approach

As a response to the issues raised by the appeal Inspector the applicant has worked collaboratively with the Local Planning Authority and other key stakeholders on the current proposals on the revised proposals.

The principal design changes are:

- **Spatial openness improvement:** The reduction in the quantum as well as the scale and mass of development, with the removal of the 64-bedroom, 3,518 sqm, 2-storey care home which was located on the north east portion of the site, to the benefit of the setting of Burston Manor and the visual openness of the scheme as viewed from the existing bridleway
- **Spatial openness improvement:** The overall reduction in built form includes a reduction from 45 to 44 bungalows and equates to a decrease of almost 20% of the overall floor area, down from 19,449 sqm to 15,807 sqm
- **Spatial openness improvement:** A reduction in the density of development, utilising the space freed up by the removal of the care home to increase the space between bungalows and their distance from the curtilage of Burston Manor, as well as increasing the landscaping provision across the site
- **Heritage and visual openness improvement:** A more dispersed, more informal and consequently less urban arrangement of accommodation throughout the site, including the re-orientation of the bungalows towards the northern boundary of the site so that they are no longer positioned “side-on” towards Burston Manor
- **Heritage improvement:** A change of landscaping approach in relation to Burston Manor, seeking now to identify, respect and enhance views of the Manor from within the site, rather than closing them off with additional screen planting
- **Heritage improvement:** The identification and maintenance of the visual connection between Burston Manor and the woodlands
- **Visual openness improvement:** The increase in the visual permeability of the scheme, with more open views throughout the site and from the northeast and southeast towards the village green
- **Visual openness & landscape character improvement:** The removal of the close boarded fence adjacent to the boundary with How Wood to open the bridleway with the introduction of new woodland planting (trees and understorey) and the introduction of a low-level estate post and rail fence (subject to discussions with rights of way)
- **Visual openness & landscape character improvement:** Softening the built form along the eastern boundary of the site to facilitate a more sensitive edge with How Wood, greater separation from existing houses and allowing space for extensive planting of native tree species to extend the woodland area
- **Health & wellbeing improvement:** The provision for enhanced pedestrian routes both through and around the perimeter of the site, including access to Burston Garden Centre and improved connectivity to the local shops and facilities in How Wood Village
- **Outdoor amenity improvement:** The re-engineering of the pond on the village green and the wider drainage scheme to ensure that all surface water, even the most extreme ‘1 in 100 year’ storm event, is contained within the swales and ponds so that the village green itself is no longer used for attenuation and is now flat and more easily accessible

The design changes as illustrated enable a more informal arrangement of the remaining units with a greater focus on landscaping, green space and protecting the setting of Burston Manor a Grade II* listed building. More generally, the redesign has focused on addressing the reasons why the previous scheme was refused by the Council and subsequently dismissed at appeal.

Fundamentally there has been a change in focus insofar as the proposals now serve to celebrate rather than hide Burston Manor by modifying the layout to facilitate views of the Manor from within the site and to increase the openness of views from the Manor itself. This includes the realignment of the pedestrian route through the eastern part of the development (to and from How Wood Village shops) and the provision of an interpretation board on the village green, which will provide information about the Manor and its historic importance.



Historic route

- Acknowledgement of former boundary and historic movement across the site
- Move the proposed site entrance away from Burston Manor
- Gatehouse announces entrance to the site



Village Green

- Sense of arrival created with tree lined route, emulating estate roads
- Formality softened with landscaped edges
- Village Green centrally located creating the 'heart' of the community
- Clubhouse is clearly visible fronting the green with low level planting
- Informal/ unmade routes will naturally occur within the green



Site layout

- Winter view between How Wood and Burston Manor retained
- High level glimpsed views from Burston Manor across site retained
- Secondary green spaces visible beyond the main village green, creating series of more intimate satellite greens and gardens
- Series of pedestrian paths create permeability through site to How Wood beyond
- Hierarchy of vehicular routes with primary tree lined route edging the green and secondary access private dwellings
- Private buildings are set behind hedgerows, softly defining boundaries
- Bridleway creates defined border between woodlands and village

Conceptual Masterplan

Masterplan Layout

- The Clubhouse is the focal building on the site, facing the green.
- Care Bungalows are arranged more informally around the village green, framing views between Burston Manor and How Wood.
- Care Bungalows have been turned to face onto Burston Lane, the historic route, to enliven the street and also provide a more varied elevation towards the northern boundary.
- Smaller clusters of accommodation are distributed around the site to enable communities to forge around specially designed semi-private gardens.
- The care home has been removed from the north eastern corner of the site and replaced with low density care bungalows to reduce massing and increase the sense of openness.
- The site has an abundance of walking routes within the new landscaped gardens and pedestrian connections to the adjacent woodlands.
- Setting of Burston Manor is improved by the removal of redundant buildings, retention of wider views and enhanced landscaped borders.
- Clear view of How Wood from Burston Manor and vice versa.

Key

1

Historic Route

♥

Hub Heart

3

Routes through the site

Extension of Landscape

Extension of Wood land

Glimpsed views of wider context (high level)

View between Burston Manor and How Wood



Architectural Concept

The distinctive architectural quality of the locality provides a series of rich vernacular precedents which have informed the design proposals. The following images, taken from the surrounding villages, show the rich palette of materials, features and building forms which have influenced architectural design response.



Feature gable with brick detailing



Windows breaking the eaves line and gable with feature brickwork



Single storey low eaves line with mirrored entrance and elegant chimneys



Pyramid roof form with dovecone (Burston Manor Outbuilding) and timber cladding (Burston Manor)



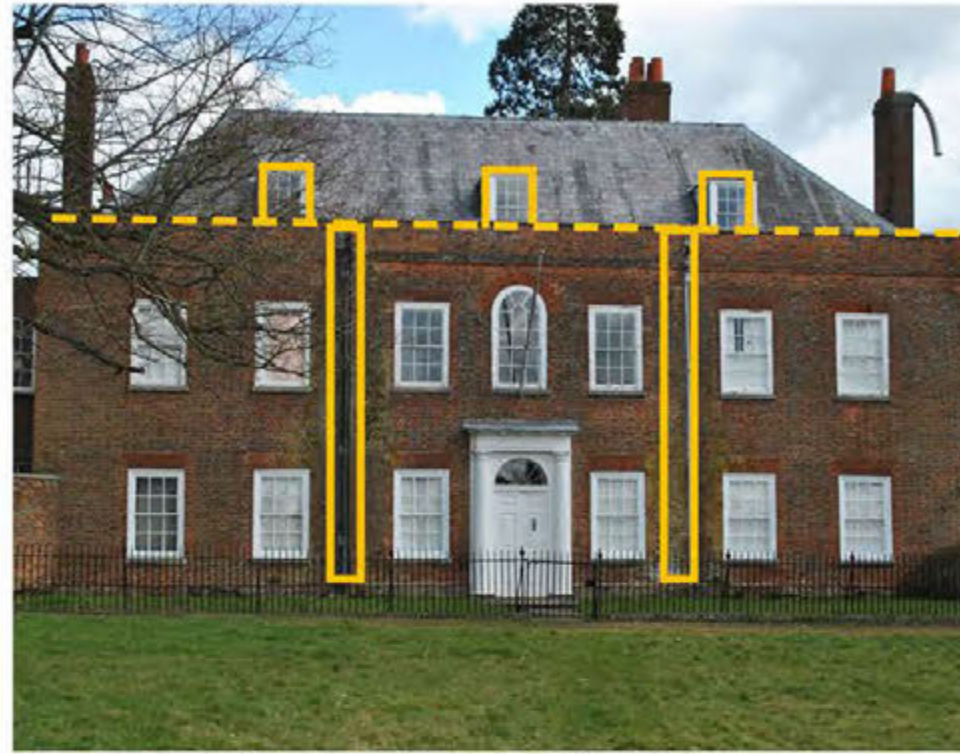
Red brick, vertical tile hanging and black timber



Black timber cladding



Window grouping with hierarchy distinguished on upper floor



Rainwater downpipes breaking up horizontality of elevation and dormer windows



Dormer windows



Asymmetric gable bookend to terrace



Horizontal brick detail to first floor



Brick chimney feature

The Masterplan

The proposed development envisages a clubhouse with communal amenities overlooking a village green, assisted living comprising 80 no. 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartments and 44 no. care bungalows. To better protect the green belt and minimise harm to the curtilage of the Grade II* Listed Burston Manor House, the proposals show a substantial reduction in built form. The key changes from the refused application include:

- A substantial reduction to the footprint of the development of circa 3,520 sq m (GEA) to better protect the green belt and curtilage of the Grade II* Listed Burston Manor House.
- The care home has been removed from the development proposals resulting in a reduction of the overall quantum of development on the site.
- The bungalows are more dispersed around the site creating a stronger sense of openness between the landscape and the built form.
- The cottages along Burston Lane have been pulled away from the boundary with the Grade II* Listed Burston Manor House low level planting introduced along the boundary, to maintain long reaching views with How Wood and the wider context
- The access track along the north eastern boundary with How Wood has been removed and the depth of landscaping increased to reduce the potential for sprawl and merger with the adjacent village.
- The access road (Birchwood Drive) has been realigned to enhance the newly landscaped edge with Burston Manor House, improving its overall setting.
- A layered landscape community of planting, which varies in height, along the northern boundary protects and enhances the setting of Burston Manor.

The reinstatement of the historic route to Burston Manor sets an order to the development with the abundant landscaping, architectural style and massing creating the feel of a traditional rural settlement.

The different building typologies create a variation in scale and massing with the most dominant being the clubhouse building overlooking the village green, signifying its importance within the village setting and making it readily accessible to the new community. A consistency in materials and forms, such as the black timber-effect cladding, elegant chimneys and gables, creates a contextual palette which has been applied differently to the typologies, to provide a distinct character to each.

The masterplan concept has been landscape and heritage led with the groups of buildings arranged around a series of distinctive green spaces. These spaces link the buildings physically and visually to each other and the wider context and retain views to and from Burston Manor.

The masterplan arranges a series of buildings along Burston Lane, off which are a series of interlinked green spaces with the clubhouse and community green set centrally at the heart of the community.

Vehicular and pedestrian movement around the site is carefully designed to be safe, clear and legible. The raised arrival court and gatehouse 'announce' the entrance into the site, reminiscent of a grand entrance to a country estate.

The arrival court leads onto a tree lined route, Burston Lane, which runs the length of the site, emulating the historic route which once dissected the site.



Proposed masterplan layout



View 1 - Approach to the Village along The Avenue



View 2 - south east corner of site with Burston Manor House in the distance



View 3 - northern most point of Bridleway looking towards clubhouse with Birch Wood beyond (with previous care home shown dotted)

Assisted Living

The assisted living apartments are set within three independent buildings to the south east of the site. The design of three separate building blocks avoids the large massing of one institutional building traditionally associated with this particular typology. The blocks each have their own entrance and parking court and are linked at ground floor, providing security to the courtyard gardens and ease of access for care staff.

Block A of the Assisted living contains the main facilities for the new community on the ground floor, known as the clubhouse, with apartments to the southern wing and above. The clubhouse creates the heart of the development and sits directly on the south western edge of the village green, benefiting from afternoon sun. Blocks B and C are residential buildings which sit parallel to the clubhouse.

The building forms enclose three distinctive courtyard gardens each with a south east facing terrace which can be accessed either via the link buildings or from the clubhouse facilities. Views into the courtyards from the links will assist with orientation and wayfinding for residents and visitors when walking through the building. Fobbed access doors separate the main clubhouse facilities from the residential accommodation, creating an additional layer of 'progressive privacy' and security for residents.

Blocks B & C have mirrored elevational treatment overlooking Burston Lane with asymmetrical gables creating bookends. The palette of materials and brickwork features complements the gables of the facing care bungalows. The resident only entrances are articulated with small 'pavilions' sitting within their own parking courtyard, which makes reference to the form of the Grade II listed outhouse at Burston Manor.

In addition to the main clubhouse facilities some additional communal and ancillary spaces are included elsewhere within the assisted living for operational or privacy reasons. These include:-

- Guest suite for visitors - within the residential wing on the first floor adjacent to the lift
- Staff rest room and change - adjacent to the lift on the second floor
- Staff office - centrally located on the ground floor within block B
- Assisted bathroom - adjacent to the lift on the second floor



Ground Floor Plan



Second Floor Plan



First Floor Plan

Accommodation Schedule

Type	1B	2B	3B	
Ground	6	13	1	
First	9	20	1	
Second	9	20	1	
Total	24	53	3	= 80 Apartments



View of Assisted Living Block C from Burston Lane

Assisted Living – Clubhouse

The clubhouse building continues the architectural language of blocks B & C with subtle differences to increase its dominance within the village setting, namely;

- Prominent 3 storey gables with symmetrical roofs
- Cloistered canopy, framing the main entrance and communal facilities, emulating the veranda of a village green pavilion
- Framed pergola wrapping around the corner of the restaurant terrace

The Clubhouse is entered off the village green with footpaths connecting it to parking on either side. The Clubhouse building contains the shared village facilities and administration for the new community.

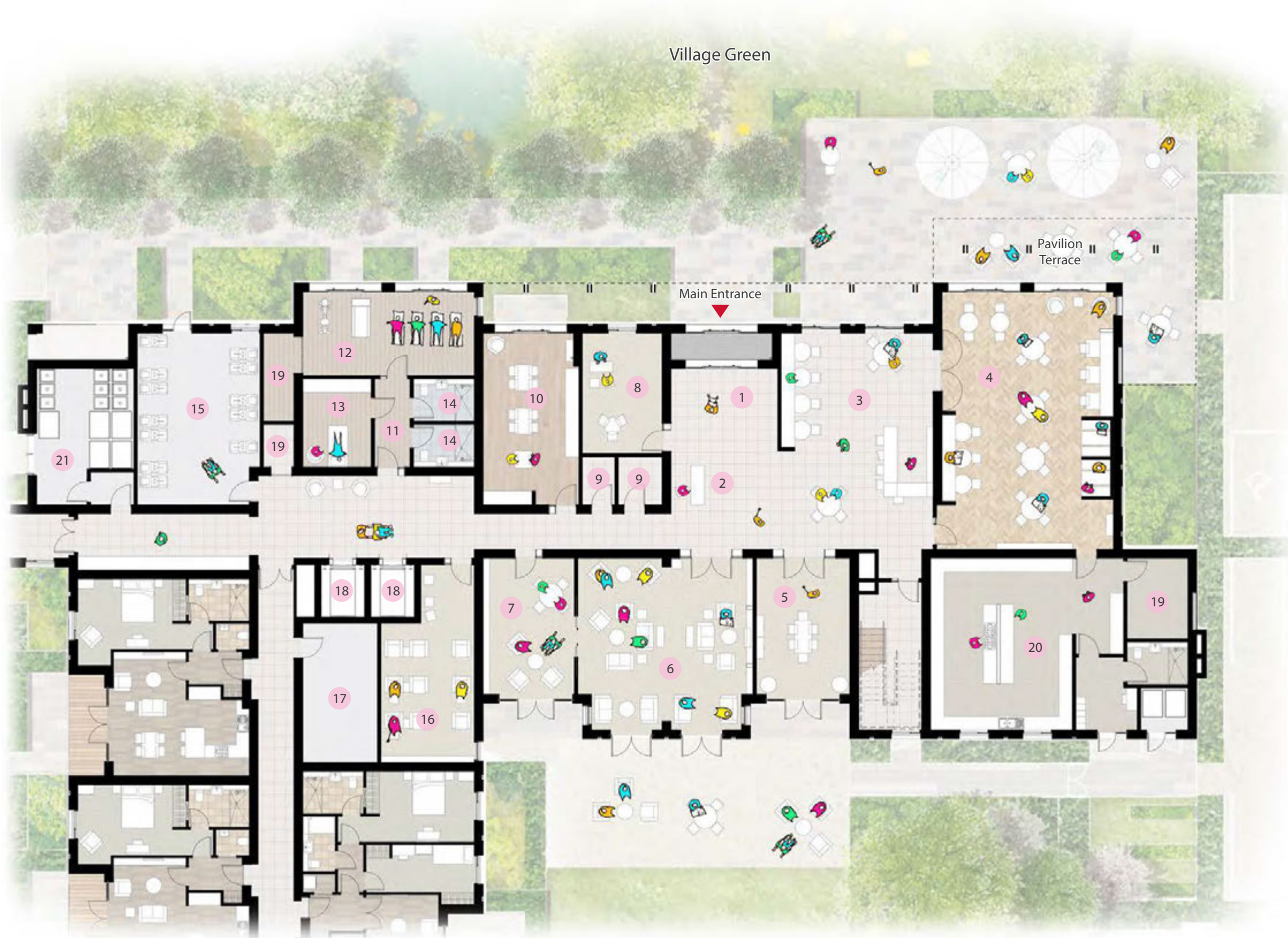
The entrance opens into a generous reception foyer with an adjacent open plan café & bar area providing a welcoming bustle on arrival. The café/ bar and adjacent restaurant both open onto the pavilion terrace and village green. A pergola wraps around the restaurant terrace to provide shading. Low level hedging around the terrace will provide a sense of enclosure for alfresco diners. Gaps in the hedging will allow access to the natural play area and the village green. The progression of the eating spaces, terraces and village green will allow the indoor and outdoor spaces to be used together on warm days and for special village events.

The lounge is directly visible on entering the building with views out to the south east facing courtyard and terrace. The lawn in this courtyard can be used for group activities such as croquet or boules. Beyond the lawn is an orchard, which continues the theme of edible gardens, and a woodland walk for residents and their visitors to enjoy.

A private dining room can be reserved for more intimate events such as family birthday parties. The library will provide a quiet room which can also be used flexibly as an extension to the lounge.

The wellbeing suite includes an exercise room for group classes, a treatment room and changing areas. It is envisages that visiting health professional and therapists will make use the treatment room.

The main catering kitchen is located discreetly behind the restaurant, with a separate 'back of house' access for deliveries and refuse collection.



Key

- | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| 1. Entrance Foyer | 4. Restaurant | 7. Library | 10. Activity Room | 13. Therapy Room | 16. Cinema | 19. Store |
| 2. Reception | 5. Private Dining | 8. Managers Office | 11. Wellbeing Suite | 14. Changing Rooms | 17. Laundry | 20. Catering Kitchen |
| 3. Cafe/Bar | 6. Communal lounge | 9. WC | 12. Exercise Room | 15. Buggy Store | 18. Lift | 21. Refuse Store |

Red facing brickwork

Vertical tile hanging

Dormer window with
black metal surround

Soldier course detail



View of Residents entrance pavilion between assisted living blocks

Facing pudding stone

Metal standing
seam roof

Pudding stone



Entrance Pavilion study



View of the Clubhouse across the Village Green

Dormer window with
black metal surround

Vertical tile hanging

Red facing brickwork with
dark header pattern detail

Soldier course banding detail



View across village green towards Clubhouse

Metal canopy
over entrance, bronze
colour

Dark grey brickwork

Recessed balcony

Red facing brickwork

Assisted Living – Typical Apartments

All of the apartments are designed with the requirements of older people in mind (exceeding category M4(2) of the Building Regulations), creating enabling environments with features which will assist those with a variety of impairments including mobility, hearing, visual and cognitive impairments.

All of the apartments are self-contained, designed to be accessible and compliant with modern standards appropriate to the changing needs of the older generation. A mix of 1, 2 & 3 bedroom apartments are proposed in the following ratio:

- 24 no. 1 Bed Apartments @ 56 m²
- 53 no. 2 Bed Apartments @ 78-85 m²
- 03 no. 3 Bed Apartments @ 100 m²
- Total = 80 no. Dwellings

The apartments will provide aspirational open-plan living for older people with generous spaces standards. Within each of the new residential apartments, careful consideration has been given to meet the needs of older adults having a design that will cater for those who may also have or may develop some physical disability or impairment.

Generously sized windows are proposed for the lounges and bedrooms to ensure light, bright interiors and good views out for the residents. It is proposed that all the ground floor apartments will have their own patio areas and upper floor flats will have a generous balcony capable of accommodating table and chairs and some planting should residents desire this. These spaces are generously proportioned ‘outdoor rooms’ and the enclosure offered by the recessed balconies will provide a degree of outdoor privacy. All the apartments have been provided with generous storage.

All rooms in the apartments will be ‘care-ready’ to allow for future adaptation to suit people’s changing needs. Doors will be of sufficient width for residents using a wheelchair or walking frame.

The kitchens have been designed to be suitable for the intended user group with a wheelchair turning space and high level oven. An open plan arrangement with a breakfast style bar provides delightful contemporary living which is barrier-free.

Walls in the shower rooms have the strength to accommodate grab rails as required in the future while the space will enable front transfer from the wheelchair to the WC, knee space under the basin for wheelchair users and access to the shower via a level access design. All will be well designed to offer a domestic, non-institutional feel while providing an accessible and enabling environment.

The apartments have been designed to include the following:

- Recessed entrance to define threshold to dwelling
- Space for 1500mm diameter wheelchair turning circle in all rooms
- Generous living area with open plan, contemporary kitchen and dining area creating barrier-free access
- Electric induction hob with controls at the front for easy access
- High level oven to avoid the need to bend down
- Shower Room adaptable to accommodate future installation of grab rails and shower seats, with sufficient room for wheelchair
- Level access shower with glazed screen
- Knee space under basin for wheelchair user
- Generous storage cupboards with space in kitchen storage for washer/dryer
- Full height knock-out panel between bedroom and shower room to facilitate future ceiling hoist installation
- Secondary habitable room to 2 and 3 bed apartments could be used as a bedroom, dining room, study or snug
- Level access to patios and balconies
- Large windows to provide ample daylight and ventilation
- Generous master bedroom with built-in wardrobe and ensuite bathroom
- Second WC or bathroom to all dwellings



1 bed apartment (56 m²)

- Direct view through living space
- Open plan, contemporary layout
- Built in wardrobe
- Generous balcony
- Assistive technology, potential for hoist from bedroom to ensuite



2 bed apartment (78-85 m²)

- Direct view through living space
- Open plan, contemporary layout
- Built in wardrobe
- Generous balcony
- Two bathrooms
- Utility cupboard
- Assistive technology, potential for hoist from bedroom to ensuite



3 bed apartment (100 m²)

Two double bedrooms and third bedroom or study connected to living room

- Open plan, contemporary layout

Built in wardrobe

- Generous balcony
- Two bathrooms
- Utility cupboard
- Assistive technology, potential for hoist from bedroom to ensuite

Care Bungalows

The care bungalows are designed to meet the aspiration of downsizers who still want the spaciousness of their own house with the assurance that it will be suitable for their changing needs in later years. Two different 2 bed typologies have been developed providing a choice for purchasers. All the 44 bungalows will have 2 bedrooms.

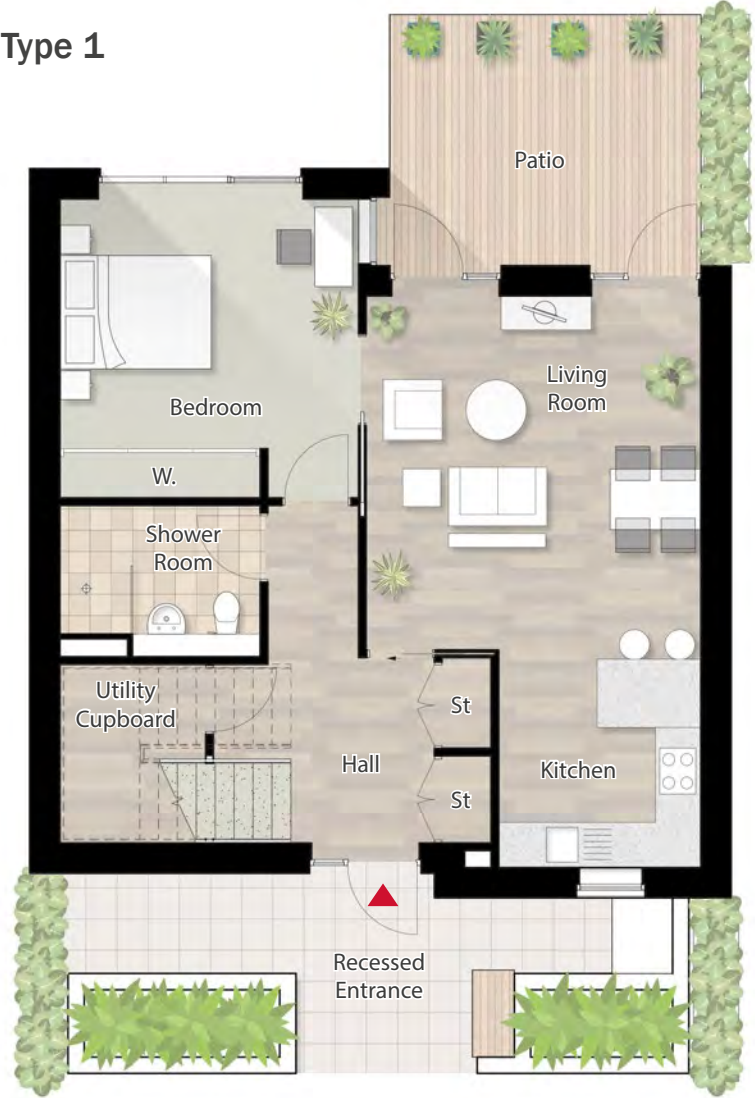
The layouts meet the same standards as the assisted living apartments and are easily adapted to meet the occupants' changing needs. Each typology is designed to enable the occupant to live independently on the ground floor if required, leaving the upper floor usable for a partner or carer. Alternatively a stair lift or through floor lift could be installed if continued use of both floors is preferred.

The key highlights features of the design, making the home desirable, enabling and 'care ready'. The bungalows have been designed to include the following:

- Recessed entrance to allow opening of front door in the dry
- External space for storage and charging of scooter
- View through house to garden on arrival
- Space for 1500mm diameter wheelchair turning circle in all ground floor rooms
- Generous living area with open plan, contemporary kitchen and dining area creating barrier-free access
- Electric induction hob with controls at the front for easy access
- High level oven to avoid the need to bend down
- Shower Room adaptable to accommodate future installation of grab rails and shower seats, with sufficient room for wheelchair
- Level access shower with glazed screen
- Generous storage cupboards with space for utility cupboard for washer/dryer
- Full height knock-out panel between bedroom and shower room to facilitate future ceiling hoist installation
- Secondary ground floor habitable room could be used as a bedroom, dining room, study or snug
- Level access to front and rear garden
- Large windows to provide ample daylight and ventilation
- Staircase suitable for future installation of stair lift
- Potential for future installation of through floor platform lift
- Generous master bedroom with dressing room or built-in wardrobe and ensuite bathroom

The bungalows are generally paired to create an attractive neighbourly symmetry on the elevations. The recessed entrances have accents of dark weatherboarding with ventilated brick detailing to the adjacent store cupboard. The mix of traditional materials and contemporary detailing proposes appealing distinctive dwellings.

Type 1



Ground Floor



First Floor



Gatehouse



Front view of paired bungalow

Type 2



Ground Floor



First Floor



Perspective view looking into walled garden



Rear view of paired bungalow

Materials & Massing

Materials

The simple palette of materials that articulate the local character identified in the neighbouring villages have been embraced in the new design. With particular reference to the properties in Childwickbury, the rich character of fine Victorian detailing has influenced the architectural quality and elegant design of the proposals.

To create a cohesive environment across the new village a number of key details have been applied to each property while also linking the details through connecting walls and landscape elements too. The finer brickwork detailing articulated through double soldier courses and gable verge detailing provides elements of interest and relief to the elevations whilst also offering a level of traditional quality.

The local vernacular of red brick with clay tiled roofs enables natural materials to be used that will improve in appearance with age and also require lower maintenance wherever possible. The palette is further complimented with accents of black stained proprietary weatherboarding, dark brickwork and dark zinc panelling.

The combination will provide the appearance of a series of buildings that are contemporary yet respectful of their context.

Massing

The proposed massing, scale and building heights for the development vary with the taller buildings centrally located stepping down to the edges of the site to recreate the hierarchy of a traditional village setting.

The low scale care bungalows are arranged along the How Wood and Burston Manor boundaries to respect these sensitive settings. The 1½ storey dwellings are arranged around intimate, shared gardens to create a sense of community and social interaction between those residents.

At 2½ storeys with paired 3 storey gables, the clubhouse is the tallest building in the development to reflect its more public function and make it readily visible and accessible to residents and visitors. This central location also minimises any visual impact on surrounding residential properties.

The two residential blocks of assisted living are 2½ storeys in height and are set perpendicular to Birchwood so that only their gables front onto the woodlands. The three courtyard gardens are edged with a woodland walk along the south east boundary, giving the appearance of the woodlands 'seeping' softly into the site.

These blocks and the clubhouse are linked at ground floor only to retain the appearance of smaller buildings, providing a security to the courtyard gardens.



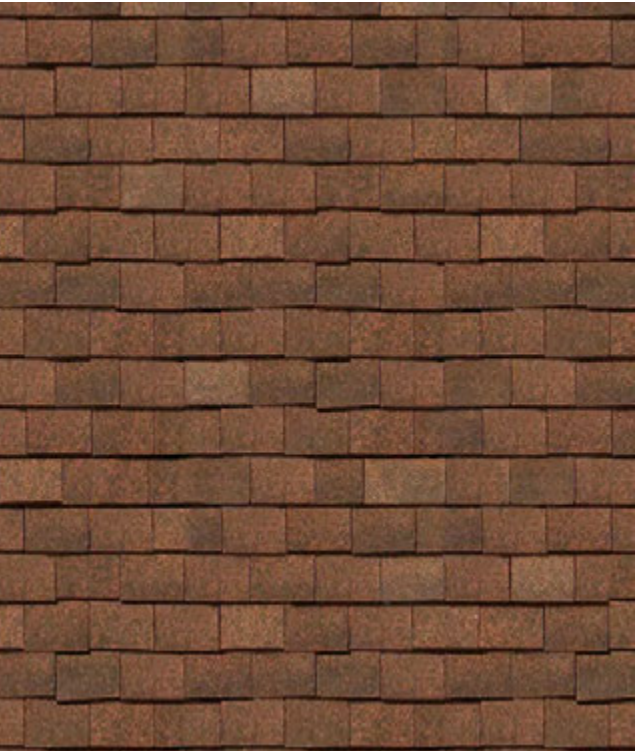
Dark Flush Headers



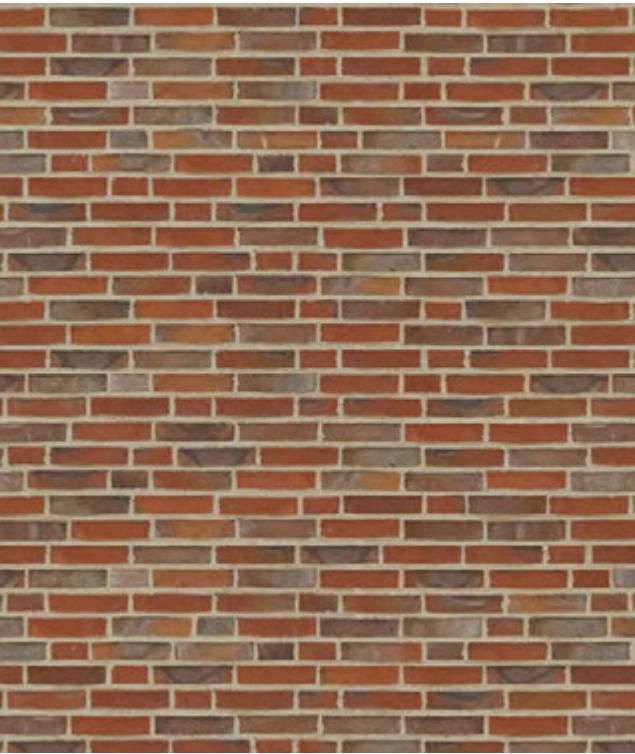
Pudding Stone Walling



Soldier course brick detailing



Clay roof tiles



Red facing brick



Dark facing brick



Black coloured propitiatory weatherboarding



6. Landscape Design

Landscape Masterplan

In response to the unique setting of the site, the landscape proposals have been sensitively developed to incorporate the following design features:-

- Integration of the development with the surrounding woodland context by providing a woodland-planted edge to the edges bounding How and Birch woods
- A combination of native tree and shrub planting will be sensitively added to the boundary with Burston Manor to strengthen the existing planted edge. The more open views from the Manor House and its garden will be maintained by the creation of a wildflower meadow with scattered orchard trees, thereby extending the typology of individual trees in open ground that is found within the manor grounds.
- A planted new access road which provides a generous landscape buffer between the Manor House and the commercial garden centre
- Creation of walkable and attractive landscape routes for residents to enjoy through the naturalistic landscape that bounds the site.
- Promotion of biodiversity through a range of planting and water features
- Tree-lined roads with generous planted verges
- A village green at the heart of the development for the whole community to enjoy
- Intimate courtyards which promote the concept of edible and growing gardens
- A series of swales and ponds integrated into the scheme as part of the on site water management

The proposed development includes a series of walks within the site. There are dedicated footways associated with the proposed roads within the site and a series of landscape walks to enjoy the varied green spaces in the scheme. These include the informal path across the green to the Clubhouse, an orchard garden walk, and paths providing circular walks in the courtyard and woodland gardens.

The application also includes a new junction and crossing to the A405 North Orbital Road, a new access road to the site and a new bridleway along the southeast boundary to Birch Wood.

The plan on the opposite page illustrates the landscape proposals and highlights the routes, spaces and features as identified above. These will be described in turn followed by a description of the proposed landscape materials and planting, but it starts with the existing trees.

Existing Trees

The proposed scheme removes only two lines of cypress and several scrub trees along the eastern part of the southern boundary. These are identified in Appendix C of the arboriculturalist report by Quaife Woodlands that forms part of this submission. The report concludes that the removal of these trees will have no detrimental impact on the landscape as all the trees to the boundary are retained. The report goes on to detail the root protection zone for the existing trees retained around the boundary of the site.



Aerial View of the Site looking towards the South

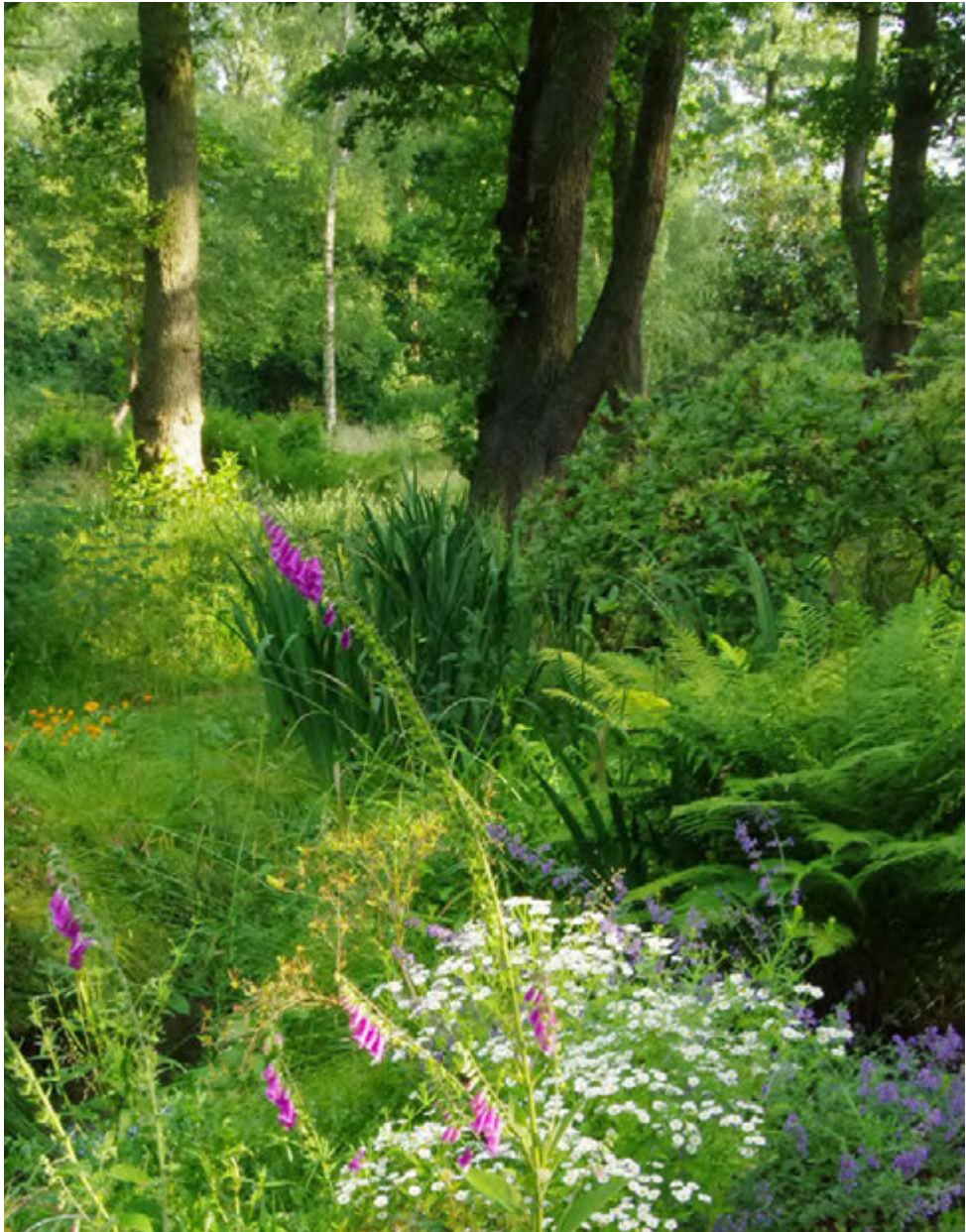


- Key**
- 1. Birchwood Drive
 - 2. Planted edge to garden centre
 - 3. Arrival court
 - 4. Burston Lane
 - 5. Village green and pond
 - 6. Clubhouse Terrace
 - 7. Parking to care bungalows
 - 8. Edible gardens
 - 9. Woodland edge
 - 10. Orchard Gardens
 - 11. Tele-mast
 - 12. Parking court
 - 13. Hornbeam Lane
 - 14. Courtyard Garden
 - 15. Productive garden
 - 16. The lawn
 - 17. Orchard
 - 18. Garden pavilion and beehives
 - 19. Woodland trail
 - 20. Primrose garden
 - 21. Bluebell garden
 - 22. Bridleway
 - 23. Seating area with meandering path to the interpretation board on the village green
 - 24. Swale
 - 25. Pond
 - 26. Seasonal Garden

Landscape Character Areas

There are a number of character areas that provide a variety of experiences and functions within the development. They include tree lined lanes and paths, the village green which is the main communal green space and a series of smaller semi-private communal gardens such as the edible, courtyard, orchard and woodland gardens. These spaces are designed to encourage social interaction and participation in the landscape and contain a balance of set functions such as growing beds, planted zones and sitting areas with open lawns that are flexible and will accommodate events through the year. A series of formal and informal paths allow residents and visitors to meander through the different gardens spaces, encouraging the active use of each.

These character areas are illustrated on the plan opposite and each is described in detail on the following pages





Character areas key

- 1 Birchwood Drive
- 2 Arrival Courts
- 3 Burston Lane
- 4 Village Green
- 5 Orchard Gardens
- 6 Edible Gardens
- 7 Parking Courts
- 8 Woodland Glade Gardens
- 9 Courtyard Garden
- 10 Seasonal Gardens
- 11 Native Woodland Edge

Diagram illustrating the landscape character areas

Birchwood Drive

The existing access route will be repaved with a black macadam surface and footways provided to the side of the road. Existing covered glasshouses within the nursery, along the western boundary of the road, will be removed to allow the road to be relocated away from Burston Manor boundary. The existing planted boundary will be extended and enhanced with new trees and shrubs planted between the new road and the manor house.

The boundary with the garden centre will be planted with a native hornbeam hedge, a swale and new tree line set in a grass verge with a succession of bulb planting including snowdrops, daffodils, tulips and bluebells.

The arrival court will be paved with setts forming a raised table and threshold to the new village development. Beyond the arrival court, the entrance drive leads to visitor parking where the bays are paved with reinforced grass set between tree planting and native hedges.



Artist impression of Birchwood Drive towards the arrival court



Location plan

Key

- 1. Planted edge to Burston Manor
- 2. Trees and hedges filter views to the garden centre with a verge planted with a conservation mix grass and wildflower mix and bulbs
- 3. Open swale
- 4. Cottages
- 5. Arrival court
- 6. Gatehouse cottage
- 7. Visitor parking





Illustrative section through Burston Lane, looking east towards How Wood



Woodland edge planting



Swale



Wide grass verge with bulbs and wildflowers

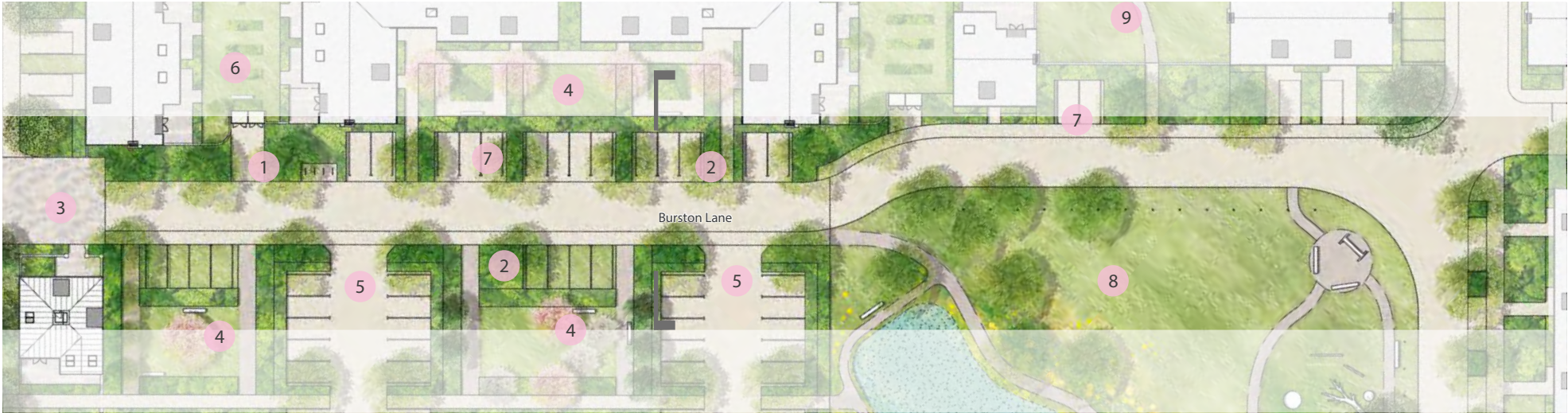
Burston Lane

This is the main route through the development and follows the alignment of the historic tree lined route across the site. It provides access to all other parts of the site and gives clear views across the village green to the clubhouse entrance. It is an integrated street with dedicated footway to the south side. The lane is bound to the north by a tree line in a planted verge, with some parking bays. A communal seasonal garden front properties facing this road.

To the south of the lane parking is set between two gardens, one a spring garden and the other a summer garden. Each is edged with a hornbeam hedge, has plant beds, lawns feature trees and seating.

Key

- 1. Conservation grass verge with bulbs
- 2. Tree line to lane
- 3. Arrival court
- 4. Seasonal gardens
- 5. Parking court
- 6. Edible gardens
- 7. Care bungalows parking
- 8. The village green
- 9. Orchard gardens



Location plan

Illustrative sketch of Burston Lane



Illustrative section through Burston Lane, looking east towards How Wood



Prunus avium avenue trees



Feature Oak Tree

The Village Green

The village green is the key open space at the heart of the new community. It is an open amenity lawn for picnics, play and events through the year. It contains feature trees and smaller groups of trees. A village pond is located close to the clubhouse with seating located under the trees overlooking the water. It forms part of the water management attenuation features for the site.

Natural play features such as tree trunks and logs are incorporated into the green, set between a group of trees for shade and enclosure. It is envisaged that the play area would be used by children visiting their relatives. Its close proximity to the clubhouse terrace allows for natural surveillance of the play area, whilst enjoying refreshments on the terrace

An interpretation board will be located on the green that explains the history of the site and its relationship with Burston Manor.



Location plan





Illustrative section through Burston Lane and the Village Green



Typical examples of the village green, with the large lawn as the focal point of the space

Edible and Orchard Gardens

Throughout the scheme residents will have access to communal gardens to meet, socialise and grow food and flowers in raised beds. To the east the gardens form part of the wider communal landscape whilst, to the north of Burston Lane, they form discreet gardens located next to the cottages. Here the residents' gardens open onto the extensive orchard gardens that extend to the northern boundary and contain conservation, wildflower grass meadows, with individual fruit trees and other native plant species.

A swale is incorporated into these gardens as part of water management proposals for the site and it will be planted with suitable grass species and form a ribbon through the north and eastern edges of the site.

Footpaths through the orchard gardens provide a walk around much of the perimeter of the site, linking Burston Lane with the village green and residential courts.



Location plan



- Key**
- 1. Orchard Gardens
 - 2. Defensible Planting
 - 3. Private terraces with raised planters
 - 4. Seating/ tables/ chairs
 - 5. Raised growing beds
 - 6. Edible Garden
 - 7. Orchard Garden Walk
 - 8. Swale
 - 9. Seasonal Garden



Illustrative section looking north through the edible courtyard garden



Precedent images illustrating the Edible gardens character

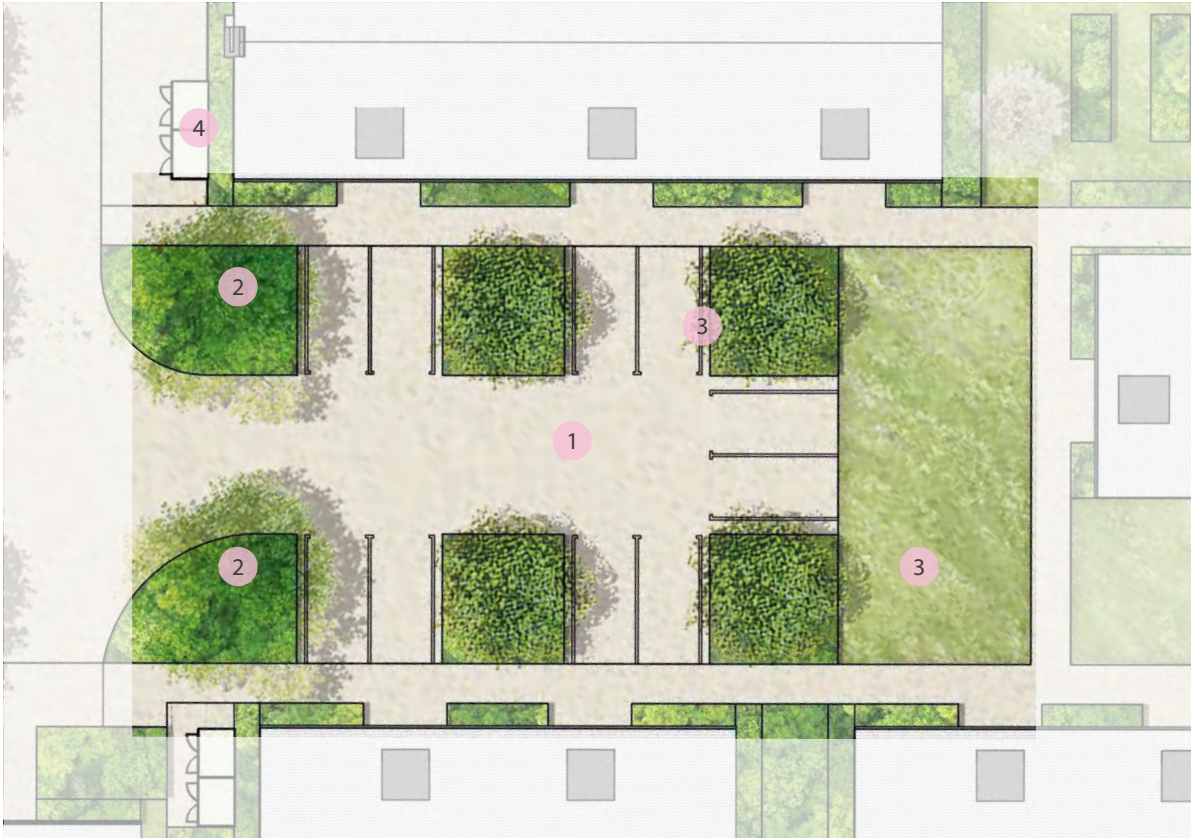


Precedent images illustrating the Edible gardens character

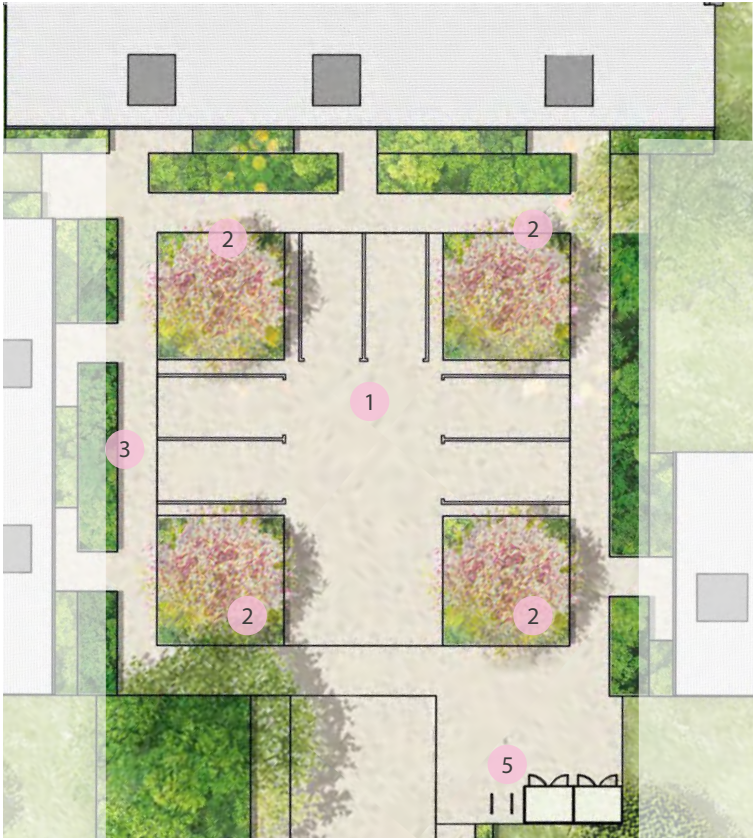
Parking Courts

These simple paved spaces enable parking and pedestrian circulation to property frontages. The courts integrate significant trees and lower level shrubs, groundcover and perennials to form a strong green character to the spaces and reduce the visual dominance of vehicles. It is envisaged that these spaces will be paved with brindle coloured sett paving and offer flush access to adjacent properties.

Visitor parking to the south-west corner of the development is surfaced in reinforced grass to assist site drainage and minimise the extent of hard surfacing.



Hornbeam Lane parking court



Parking court



Location plan

Key

- 1. Sett paving
- 2. Proposed trees
- 3. Planting to the edge of the parking
- 4. Bin stores
- 5. Cycle parking



Image illustrating a parking court within a tree grove

Woodlands Glades

The assisted living homes and the clubhouse open onto south facing gardens with views to the surrounding woodland. The gardens are organised with a flag paved terrace next to the communal entrance from the building for sitting and dining outside. These lead to open lawns with feature tree planting. In the clubhouse garden there will be an orchard grove of fruit trees.

Individual private terraces have a planted edge to provide a clear defensible space. Each has direct access to the communal garden areas. The close mown lawns give way to conservation grassland with a succession of bulbs and wild flowers. Towards the boundary a significant new woodland buffer in the form of trees, shrubs and woodland herbs is provided which integrates the proposed landscape into the woodland surroundings. Shallow swale features will be incorporated into this area as part of the site water management strategy. These will be planted with woodland edge species and the boundary with the bridleway is formed by a native hedge.

From the clubhouse a path provides a circular walking route formed of resin bound gravel through the woodland gardens with seating along the way. Secondary paths provide an alternative route through the woodland planting where beehives and garden pavilions are located as eye catchers and points to pause.



Location plan



Key

- 1. Clubhouse
- 2. Clubhouse terrace
- 3. Service access to parking court
- 4. Croquet lawn
- 5. The Orchard
- 6. Woodland walk
- 7. Garden pavilion and beehives
- 8. Primrose garden
- 9. Bluebell garden
- 10. Private terraces with raised planters
- 11. Native woodland edge
- 12. Feature trees
- 13. Swale



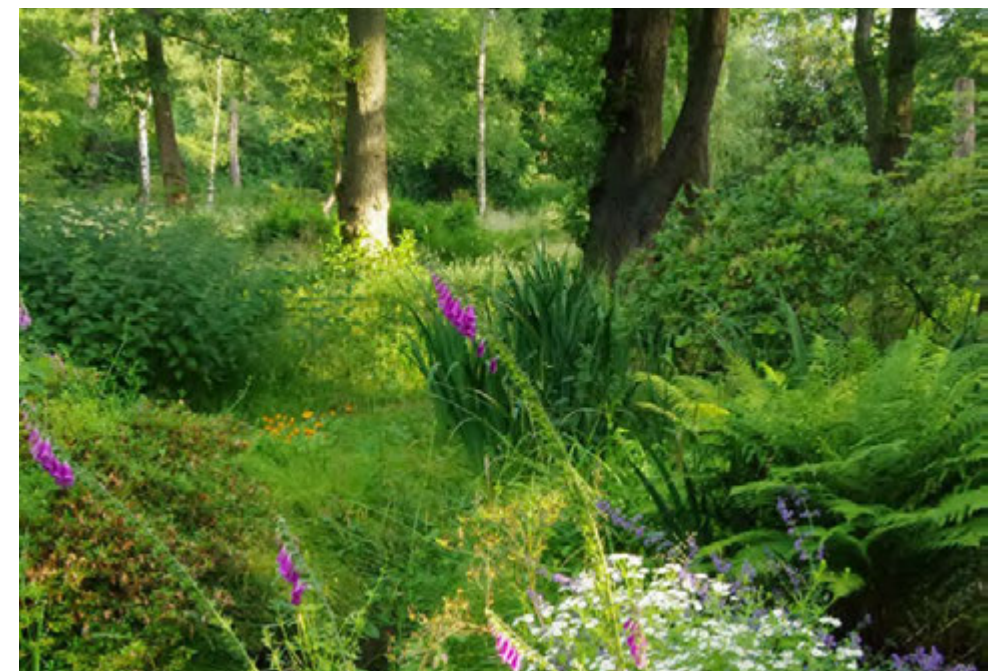
Illustrative section through The Orchard looking south to Birchwood



Conservation grassland with bulbs and wildflowers



Beehives



Lawns with feature trees

The Courtyard Garden

This large courtyard garden provides communal space for residents which has, at its heart, a large informal lawn with feature trees. Generous planting beds surround the lawn, providing a colourful and richly textured character to the gardens.

Communal growing areas are provided and a mini orchard is located next to the boundary with opportunities for seating, beehives and wildlife refuges such as insect hotels, log piles and bird / bat boxes.

A swale runs through the garden with banks planted with perennials and shrubs that can withstand both drought and occasional standing water. The swale widens to a pond that will have gentle sloping slides richly planted. Timber bridges provide access over the swale and around the pond.

There is a footpath through the courtyard garden that links the central green and the bridleway boundary. Entrances to garden are secured with gated entrances and a 1.1 metre high post and rail fence on the boundary which is planted with native hedge and tree spaces.



Location plan





Illustrative section through the courtyard garden looking north



Images depicting the planting character of the courtyard garden



Planted borders



Pond



Swale with planted banks

Native Woodland Edge

The north eastern and south eastern boundaries of the site will be planted with a mixture of native trees and shrub species, to create a woodland edge to the development and help to integrate it with the surrounding area. The existing close boarded fence next to the bridleway will be removed and replaced with the new woodland planted edge. Along part of the south eastern boundary where space is more limited, the planting will take the form of a native hedge with native trees.

The boundary with Burston Manor will remain open to retain the visual link between the woods and the Manor house across the site.

Along the edge of much of the woodland planting will be a swale which forms part of the water management measures for the development. The swale will have sloping sides and will be planted with grass and wildflower species that can withstand both drought and occasional water-logging. The swale broadens in several locations to form balancing ponds within the courtyard and woodland glade gardens. In the courtyard garden a pond will be created as a wetland feature, whilst in the woodland glade garden the swale will be a gently sloping, shallow feature planted with woodland species appropriate to its location.

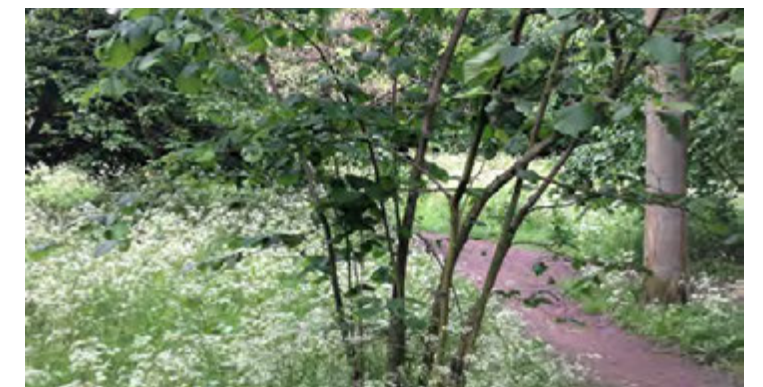
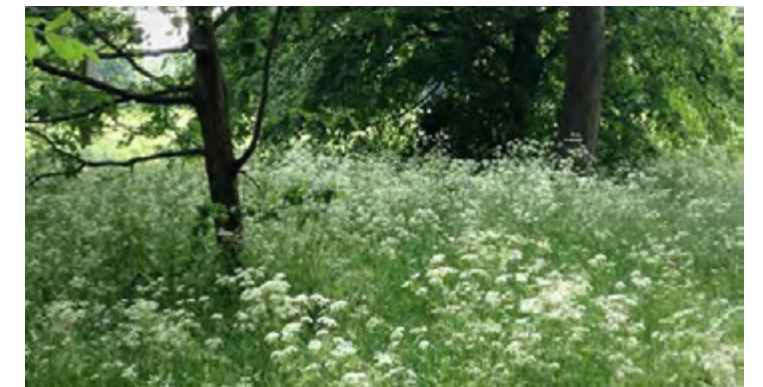




Section AA'



Section BB'



Precedent images illustrating the Edible gardens character

Boundary Treatment

A new public bridleway will be introduced along the southern boundary and will link to the existing bridleway and will be paved with self binding gravel with timber edging. The bridleway will link to the visitor parking area and provide access westwards along the boundary of the garden centre.

Fences and Railings

The majority of the fencing and railings are discreet and associated with the boundary planting. They consist of a metal mesh fence that is 1.8 metres high which recedes into the hedge to the garden centre boundary and assisted living boundaries. The mesh fence lines will return to the building to provide secure garden areas for these homes.

The remaining boundaries to the north and east will have timber post and wire fences 1.1 metres high with associated timber gates at footpath access points. Small lengths of metal estate railings are also used to secure the courtyard garden.





Illustrative section A-A



Illustrative section B-B' through the Courtyard Garden boundary with mixed native hedge, access track and existing bridleway



Hornbeam hedge to boundary



Mixed native hedge



Timber post and tensioned wire with grass verge



7. Access and Movement

Movement Diagram

- Key
- Primary vehicular route
 - Secondary vehicular route
 - Pedestrian routes
 - Pedestrian entrance
 - Vehicular only entrance
 - Service delivery access
 - Care bungalow entrance
 - Communal refuse storage
 - Cycle parking locations



Vehicular and Pedestrian Access

The application includes a proposal for improvements to the existing site access junction with the A405 in line with the previously approved signalised junction and new signalised pedestrian crossing points. The proposed junction improvements provide safer access to the new development, as well as the garden centre to the west and the residential properties to the east. It will substantially improve safety for vehicles entering and exiting the site, particularly for motorists approaching from the west turning into the site. The junction will be signal controlled and providing a safer crossing point for pedestrians and cyclists (connecting them to the existing bridleway). The existing footpath along the edge of the dual carriageway will be extended to link it to the new crossing as well as continue into the garden centre and internal routes. As part of the junction improvements the entrance into the garden centre is more clearly defined and the access to the existing residential properties to the east maintained. For further details please refer to the drawings and the Transport Assessment prepared by Peter Evans Partnership which accompanies the application.

The existing service/working route along the edge of the garden centre is to be retained and widened with pedestrian access to one side. This improved road, Birchwood Drive, provides vehicular access to the new retirement village, built to adoptable standards. Birchwood Drive is a tree lined road with informally planted borders, reminiscent of the approach to a country estate, which will enhance the green and welcoming nature of the access road. The established hedge and tree screening to Burston Manor will be retained and enhanced with the additional planting along the new road.

Arrival into the main area of the development is announced by the gatehouse dwelling and a raised table, Arrival Court, constructed in a contrasting finish to calm vehicles on entering the village. The arrival court leads onto a tree lined route, Burston Lane, which runs the length of the site, emulating the historic route which once provided access for carriages from Burston Manor to How Wood. Burston Lane passes by orchards, parking courts, along the edge of the village green and culminates with a pedestrian access to How Wood beyond.

Central to the concept is how the groupings of buildings link to each other and with the rest of the site. The masterplan arranges the groupings along Burston Lane, off which are a series of interlinked green spaces for community use. The Clubhouse with its shared facilities is conveniently located at the heart of the site, overlooking the village green.

The surface treatment, trees and carriageway width of Burston Lane will highlight this as the primary route, differentiating it from the connecting secondary routes and parking courts. A secondary arrival court in front of the Clubhouse provides space for cars and minibuses to drop-off and pick-up near the main entrance.

Footpaths are provided to one side of Burston Lane and Hornbeam Lane. Parking courts, which are screened by hedges and trees, are treated as shared surfaces, creating a sense of priority for pedestrians.

As part of the application a new bridleway will be provided along the southern part of the retirement village to connect the existing bridleway to Lye Lane.

Car parking

In total 140 spaces have been provided across the masterplan, comprising 44 spaces for the care bungalows, 80 for the assisted living apartments and 16 additional spaces and a drop off space. The additional parking spaces are designed to allow for their flexible use by residents, staff and visitors to the whole development. A large parking space for mini bus parking is provided near to the club house entrance. A Transport Assessment, prepared by Peter Evans Partnership, is included with the application which outlines the projected requirement for vehicles and how the proposals address this.

Car parking is arranged in clusters close to each block demarcated by landscape features. The parking areas are shared surfaces with tree planting and hedges to soften the spaces. Some are enclosed with walls and hedging to relate the spaces to each block or group of buildings. The care bungalows will all have designated parking spaces, many of which will be on plot.

With spaces located close to all the buildings it will be possible for residents and visitors to park their cars close to their destination. By means of an allocation strategy, it is envisaged that residents who own a car will be able to use a dedicated space close to where they live.

A dedicated minibus will be provided to add additional access to transport for residents, reducing the reliance on individual cars. The minibus will be located on site and be available to make planned return trips to places such as local supermarkets, St Albans' market or eateries at Park Street. In addition, as part of the Travel Plan and subject to the resident's demand, a car club vehicle will be provided on site for use by residents. This will enable residents who do not own a car to have access to a vehicle on an hour by hour basis.

Peter Evans Partnership has prepared a detailed Transport Assessment and Travel Plan which concludes the following:

- The proposed car parking, at 140 spaces, allows a level of parking provision which is satisfactory to serve the operational needs of the retirement village based on the nature of the scheme and is in general accordance with the St Albans Local Plan parking guidance for this type of accommodation.
- The level of parking provision also allows flexibility for a separate number of spaces being available for staff / visitors, with this being reflective particularly of a combination of staffing levels tailored to residents' needs and the significant travel planning to be brought forward to encourage sustainable travel.
- Traffic flow for the proposed development would be less than that for family housing as the majority of residents will not work. This will minimise the impact on the A405 and adjacent roads during peak travel times.

Mobility Scooter Storage

It is expected that residents with impaired mobility will make use of mobility scooters/buggies to get around the site. To this end dedicated buggy stores with charging points are provided within the Assisted Living scheme for 15 buggies. The larger buggy store is located within the clubhouse for visitors to the communal facilities with a smaller store within the Assisted Living block. Each of the bungalows has sufficient space to the front of the property for undercover storage of a scooter.

Cycle storage

The Clubhouse building has space for 8 double stacked bicycles, located within the buggy store. For visitors to the site 16 cycle spaces have been provided adjacent to the assisted living building.

Cycle parking for the care bungalows is provided adjacent to these properties within the shared gardens at a ratio of 1 space per 2 dwellings,

Servicing & Waste Strategy

Delivery, emergency and refuse vehicles will enter the site via Burston Lane and will be able to manoeuvre and turn around at key points within the site with the inclusion of overrun areas as and where required at corners and side junctions. Please refer to tracking drawings, prepared by Peter Evans Partnership as part of this application.

Regular deliveries to the site will most likely be in 'transit-van' type vehicles rather than larger lorries and will be managed as part of the service management strategy. Delivery access to the catering kitchen in the clubhouse has been designed to ensure that deliveries are segregated from the main entrance to the building itself.

There is good access to most elevations of each building for fire fighting equipment. Where this is not available on the assisted living building there will be access to dry risers located within stairwells.

Drop off points or parking courts near the main entrances can be used by ambulance access in the event of an emergency.

Refuse and recycling Strategy

The proposals for the care bungalows take account of the requirements for households as indicated on the St Albans' District Council website. We have also been in discussion with the Recycling & Waste Officer at St Albans City & District Council on the earlier applications and the design proposals accord with their requirements.

The table below shows the provision has been made within the masterplan for each of the different typologies.

In assessing the required level of storage for refuse and recycling across the masterplan the following has been taken into consideration:-

- The dwellings (assisted living apartments and care bungalows) across the site can only be occupied by people over 55 with anticipated permanent occupancy of each dwelling not exceeding 2 adults.

- It is also anticipated that, due to there being an on-site restaurant, the quantum of waste from the dwellings will be less than if occupants were cooking all of their own meals. The main catering kitchen has a separate store as indicated above.
- The garden areas across the site will be shared garden spaces and, whilst residents may wish to take part in gardening activities, the gardens will be maintained by the management company on site. As such no garden waste provision has been made to individual dwellings as it is anticipated that the garden maintenance company will dispose of this waste as part of their contract.

Please refer to tracking drawings, prepared by Peter Evans Partnership as part of this application, which indicate proposed access for refuse and recycling collection and confirm that large vehicles can satisfactorily enter and leave the site in a forward gear.

Building Typology	Refuse	Recycling
80 Assisted Living apartments & Clubhouse building	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7 Eurobins plus• 2 Eurobins for catering kitchen	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7 x 360L paper & card• 7 x 360L cans/glass & plastic• 6 x 240L food waste
44 Care Bungalows	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 x 240 L wheelie bin per dwelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 x green box per dwelling <p>Communal recycling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5 x 360L paper & card• 5 x 360L cans/glass & plastic• 4 x 240L food waste

Accessible Design

The external areas of the masterplan and the communal areas within the buildings are designed to be accessible by wheelchair users. Appropriate use of colour, tone and good signage will be used in the interior design throughout to enhance the visual environment for those who need it. Furniture in communal areas will be selected and installed on the basis that there will be wheelchair users and those with frames or walking sticks. Seating, both internally and externally, will vary in height with some provided with arms and some without to suit the range of anticipated impairments.

Each of the assisted living and care bungalow units has been designed with the requirements of older people in mind (exceeding category M4(2) of the Building Regulations), applying PRP's years of knowledge and experience, to create enabling environments with features which will assist those with a variety of impairments including mobility, hearing, visual and cognitive impairments. These features include level thresholds, wide door openings, appropriate ironmongery, high level sockets, ovens and radiator valves, easy to use controls, good lighting internally and externally, non-slip flooring in wet areas and floor coverings to allow wheelchairs and mobility scooters to operate without obstruction.

Flush floor showers will be standard throughout every dwelling and turning circles for hoists and wheelchairs will be achieved within all living areas. WC areas and shower rooms will be designed to allow front transfer, the use of mobility aids and grab rails should people need to have these fitted to suit their requirements. Assisted bathrooms have been included within the assisted living building in the event that a resident may require assistance by carers. The care bungalows have been specifically designed to enable the dwelling to be used flexibly depending on the occupant's specific needs at any stage in their life. Please refer to section 5 of this document for further details on how this can be achieved.

All lifts will be a minimum of 13 persons and be able to accommodate a 'stretcher'. This will suit all types of long base wheelchairs, furniture moving and access by ambulance staff using stretchers in an emergency.

The infrastructure for smart assistive technology will be installed to all of the dwellings from the outset to allow tailored features such as automated door openers, PIR's, alarm call systems etc to be fitted as and when residents need them.



8. Scheme Management and Operational Proposals



Scheme Management and Operational Proposals

The Burston Garden Retirement Village will provide a range of accommodation designed to create appealing and appropriate homes promoting and enabling independence for individuals and couples over the age of 65 years. The buildings are specifically designed to cater for a variety of care needs and each individual home is designed in accordance with the principles of Lifetime Homes and Category M4 (2) of the Building Regulations. The Village is designed to ensure that residents will be provided with a personal level of care to meet all of their specific needs throughout their later years.

Choice of Accommodation

Residents who choose to live in the assisted living (AL) apartments or care bungalows at Burston Garden Retirement Village will be considering both their current and emerging care needs in informing the decision to move to a property that allows them to receive care in their own home, with the additional social benefits that are offered in the village setting. Like any other housing decision we make during our lives, this includes having a choice of accommodation.

The choice of accommodation includes both 1, 2 and 3 bedroom AL apartments and care bungalows set out around the main communal facilities. Amongst others, these will include a restaurant, bar, library, spa, treatment and function rooms. This central core will also have space for both the management and on-site care teams. With care close to hand and in a specialist setting, the resident’s independence is maximized, enabling them to continue to lead fulfilling lives with the comfort of knowing that extra help is on hand when needed.

The accommodation is designed to make sure that it is not only care appropriate and adaptable, but also set out in a way so the properties feel neither institutional or clinical – creating an attractive ‘home’ for residents.

The Village is designed to ensure that residents will be provided with a personal level of care to meet all of their specific needs throughout their later years.

Care and Management Teams

All residents will receive a base level of support from the operator that will be funded through their service charge.

Residents of the assisted living apartments and care bungalows will be able to choose from the on-site domiciliary care service or their own independent service; this is in line with the philosophy of providing residents with maximum choice and flexibility.

The teams employed include care assistants, operational and management staff (administrative personnel, village assistants and a range of others including chefs, maintenance and ground staff).

The support team will offer a 24/7 presence, with the ability to deal with emergencies, not only giving peace of mind to the residents but also their families. They will also ensure that day to day personal care and support is being carried out and help the residents in planning for changing requirements.

Qualifying Criteria

To be considered to live in the new village, one member of the household needs to be aged 65 years or over and be assessed by a professional carer to have a minimum care/support need. The initial assessment forms the basis of the care/support plan drawn up for each resident which needs to be in place when they move in, and this will be followed up with a programme of regular assessments to ensure any changes needed are planned and implemented. Burston Garden Retirement Village will provide a range of accommodation designed to create appealing and appropriate homes promoting and enabling independence for individuals and couples over the age of 65 years. The buildings are specifically designed to cater for a variety of care needs and each individual home is designed in accordance with the principles of Lifetime Homes and Category M4 (2) of the Building Regulations.



9. Sustainable Design



Sustainable Design

- Burston Garden Retirement Village will provide a sustainable community which
- Meets the range of needs of the ageing population in St Stephens' Parish and surrounding areas
 - Promotes health and wellbeing of its residents with a variety of Clubhouse facilities providing a wide range of activities, promoting social inclusion and interaction
 - Inspires an active outdoor lifestyle through the design of a series of distinctive activity gardens
 - Creates an enabling environment allowing residents to age in place and live as independently as possible for as long as possible, safe in the knowledge that there is continuity of care on-site for all stages of life.
 - Enhances ecology and biodiversity on a currently disused, previously developed site.

The design of each of the different buildings has been carefully considered to maximise their energy efficiency and reduce their impact on the environment as outlined below.

Sunlight and Daylight

The site has been developed with large open spaces for the residents to enjoy. The aim is to ensure an overall village feel to the scheme. All the outdoor amenity areas have been carefully designed so that there is access to adequate sunlight levels. The development is designed so that dwellings face east or west, with no north facing dwellings being introduced. All dwellings have generous windows so that habitable spaces like bedrooms and living rooms, can have access to satisfactory daylight levels

Materials

The design of the development has closely followed the use of traditional construction features in keeping with the surrounding architecture, mainly featuring natural durable materials such as clay tiles on the pitched roofs and red brick façades, typically known to withstand the test of time. The design and materials allow the construction of the development in traditional methods – Load Bearing Masonry, Timber Frame etc. but are also equally suited to Modern Methods of Construction such as Modular Construction, Panellised Timber Frame, Prefabrication of elements such as dormers, chimneys and porches.

External Lighting

The landscape plan will create a scheme with a strong village feel with extensive outdoor spaces that are designed to be used mainly during the day. There is no intention or need to introduce flood lighting on the proposed site, although terraces and roads will require suitable lighting. The lighting scheme will give preference to light fittings that will mitigate obtrusive lighting to residents, neighbours or wildlife, in line with the ILP Guidance notes for the reduction of obtrusive lighting, 2011.

Waste

Communal waste storage facilities will be created in each of the club house blocks. These will be accessible and large enough to cater for the storage of both non-recyclable and recyclable waste. The houses will have individual external storage areas (on plot and nearby) for waste segregation. All dwellings have been designed with sufficient space within the kitchen to segregate and store different waste streams.

Carbon Reduction

It is proposed that the energy strategy for the site will be based on solutions to meet Building Regulations requirements and reduce carbon emissions on site.

A building fabric first, reduce demand, approach will be introduced. The buildings will feature an exemplary building fabric, which will include high levels of insulation (external walls, roofs and floors), double glazing, reduced thermal bridging and good levels of air tightness.

In the assisted living apartments, the heat and hot water demand will be met by installing Combined Heat & Power Units backed up by a gas boiler system. The roofs can be fitted with photovoltaic panels if required by design calculations to reduce carbon emissions. This will also reduce the developments dependence on mains electricity and reduce service charges.

The care bungalows will be fitted with high efficiency individual gas boilers with best practice controls, and mechanical ventilation with heat recovery system (MVHR), which will reduce heat demand and therefore carbon emissions.

The clubhouse facilities will be served by its own communal gas boiler system (for space and hot water).

There is also the opportunity to install solar photovoltaic panels to all the buildings on the south of the development if required to meet energy efficiency standards. This will be determined during the technical design phase of the project once planning permission has been granted.

Climate Change

The proposals have been designed to minimise the impact and mimic as closely as possible the pre-development scenario, as the landscape scheme proposes generous and varied soft landscape spaces. Shading of the outdoor spaces and building façades will be optimised with the addition of a significant number of new trees, as well as maintaining the trees that bound the site as a whole.

Light coloured materials have been introduced, such as the clay tiles on the roofs and red bricks on the façades, which will help reducing urban heat island effect overall. The reduction of the urban heat island effect will also contribute to the reduction of overheating in the buildings.

Surface water run-off will be minimised by the introduction of attenuation crates and porous sub-bases on carriageways.

Buildings orientation, with occupied spaces facing east or west, has been carefully considered to optimise internal thermal comfort throughout the year. All occupied rooms have openable windows for ventilation. Where possible, cross ventilation has been introduced into the scheme within the dwellings.

Noise

The development proposal is for a continuing care retirement community as a result the proposed uses for the site are not expected to introduce sources of noise that might have an adverse impact on human health, amenity or wildlife habitats.



10. Conclusion



Conclusion

The proposal for a retirement village at Burston will provide high quality, modern accommodation for later living. The development will create:

- A retirement housing and care offer for the growing older population in St Stephens Parish and the wider St Albans area.
- A well designed and high quality environment in a beautiful location where older people can thrive in their later years.
- A village design that responds to the beautiful setting in terms of scale, access, massing and materials.
- A design which respects the important heritage asset of Burston Manor House through enhancing and improving the landscape edges along its boundary, and preserving the wider heritage views.
- An enabling environment designed to create independence and pride to those who will live there.
- Revitalised and enhanced site, designed in a sensitive way, led by the landscape context.
- A clubhouse which provides a wide range of communal facilities for residents and visitors to enjoy.
- An enhanced landscape and ecology setting with a village green at the heart of the new community.
- An accessible design delivered in a way to foster independence and pride to those who will live there.
- Self-contained apartments and bungalows which are well designed with generous space standards to enable the residents to retain independence, providing care and support as required.
- The opportunity for movement in the housing market to release existing family housing currently under occupied by older people with no incentive to move.
- Improvements to the traffic and transport setting of the site with junction improvement on the A405.
- Developed sensitively in the context of the Metropolitan Green Belt, improving rather than harming the visual setting.

