



creating new residential environments

LAND NORTH OF BROMHAM ROAD BIDDENHAM DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

- *approximately 1200 new homes*
- *local shops and lower school*
- *country park*
- *employment areas*
- *park & ride facility*
- *new community facilities*
- *northern link of the western bypass*



BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL



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Land North of Bromham Road, Biddenham Development Brief

This development brief has been revised in the light of the comments received during the public consultation held between 27th January and 10th March 2002. The brief was adopted as supplementary planning guidance by the Borough Council on 29th January 2003.

This document has been prepared by the Policy Team within the Planning Services Group with the assistance of colleagues in other sections of the Borough Council.

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



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Contents

1	Purpose of Development Brief	page 1	8	Routes and Movement	page 25
	Introduction	1		Introduction	25
	The Need for Development	1		Pedestrians & Cycling	25
	The Status of the Brief	1		Public Transport	25
	The Structure of the Brief	1		Park and Ride	26
2	Policy Context	page 3		Highways	26
	Bedfordshire Structure Plan 2011	3		Traffic Calming	26
	Bedford Borough Local Plan	3		Parking Strategy	27
	Additional Design Guidance	4	9	Greening the Residential Environment	page 29
3	Site Appraisal	page 5		Public Open Space	29
	Location and Existing Land Uses	5		Pitch, Play and Amenity Space	29
	Landscape and Topography	5		Country Park and County Wildlife Site	30
	Archaeology	6		Energy	30
	Ecology	7	10	Implementation	page 33
	Utilities	7		Key Objectives	33
	Access	7		Submission Requirements for Outline	
4	Development Influences	page 9		Application	33
	Landscape and Topography	9		Planning Obligations and Conditions	33
	Archaeology	9		The Strategy Distributor Road	31
	Ecology	9		Design Guidance	34
	The Highway Network	9		Phasing	34
	Footpaths and Rights of Way	9		Phase One	35
	Bus Services	10		Phase Two	35
	Utilities	10		Submission Requirements for Reserved	
	Fire Safety Issues	10		Matters Applications	36
	The Rail Network	11		Adoption of Facilities	33
	Community Safety	11	Appendices		page 37
5	Key principles	page 13	1	Local Plan Policies	37
	Key Principles	13	2	Urban Design Objectives	39
6	Local Distinctiveness & Urban Design Principles	page 15	Figures		
	Introduction to Urban Design Principles	15	A	Block Structure - Perimeter Blocks	17
	Local Distinctiveness	15	B	Open Space Network	18
	Key Urban Design Principles	16	C	Connections	19
	Urban Design Framework	18	D	Legibility Analysis	20
	Urban Design Objectives	21	E	Illustrative Layout for the Village Centre	40/41
	Landscape Masterplan and Strategy	21	F	Urban Character Development	41
	Design Guidance / Implementation	21	G	Rural Character Development	42
7	A Mixed and Balanced Community	page 23	Maps		
	Housing	23	1	Constraints	
	Local Centre	23	2	Illustrative Masterplan	
	Employment	24	3	Land budget	
	Private Sports Pitches	24	4	Density	
			5	Country Park	
			6	Phasing	

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1 Purpose of Development Brief

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This brief provides the framework for guiding and co-ordinating the development of land on the north west fringe of Bedford. The site extends broadly from Bromham Road to the south, up to the River Great Ouse in the north, and from the A428 Gold Lane roundabout in the west, to the A6 Clapham Road in the east. It is located to the west of Bedford and north of the village of Biddenham and includes an area of approximately 134 hectares. The site is known as the land north of Bromham Road development area, Policy H8 of the Bedford Borough Local Plan.

1.1.2 The development area has been identified through the Local Plan process as an area suitable for accommodating housing, employment, recreational, community facilities and related highway infrastructure to provide for the needs of the town and meet the requirements of the County Structure Plan.

1.1.3 The principal objective of this brief is to guide and inform applicants for planning permission so as to ensure that new development provides an appropriate integrated extension to the urban area. Applicants will need to demonstrate a high quality environment that is responsive to the context of the locality. The following objectives will be achieved:

- Create a sense of place and identity, forming an appropriate expansion to north west Bedford. The development is to give identity to the new urban edge whilst respecting the character of surrounding rural settlements and landscape; that is, it is to incorporate existing rural and urban character into the design. The development should reflect and incorporate locally distinctive architectural styles;
- Encourage a mixed and balanced community;
- Give priority to public transport, pedestrians and cyclists;
- Prioritise the creation of a green setting to the residential environment;
- Promote energy efficiency and where practicable other sustainable techniques.

1.2 The Need for Development

1.2.1 The land north of Bromham Road forms an important part of the Local Plan strategy for the provision of new housing and employment, together with supporting recreational, community facilities and highway infrastructure to accommodate the development needs of the Borough in the period up to 2006 and beyond. It will assist in the implementation of one of the key strategies of the Local Plan, of directing new development to the western periphery of Bedford in association with the construction of the Bedford Western Bypass (A6 to A421). Development of the site will itself deliver the A6-A428 link, which forms part of that bypass. The proposed development is of strategic importance.

1.3 The Status of the Brief

1.3.1 When determining planning applications within the area covered by the development brief, the Borough Council as Local Planning Authority will require development proposals to fully comply with the principles laid down in this brief. This will ensure a consistent approach to the development of the site. The brief has been adopted by the Borough Council as supplementary planning guidance following public consultation on a draft brief which took place between 27th January and 10th March 2002. The brief provides advice for prospective developers who will need to demonstrate that they meet the brief's objectives and accord with supplementary design guidance for the site to be prepared before the issue of outline planning permission.

1.4 The Structure of the Brief

1.4.1 The brief sets out details of relevant Structure and Local Plan policies in Section 2, gives an appraisal of the site in Section 3 and outlines development influences in Section 4. The key development principles are described in Section 5. Sections 6-9 address the key themes of local distinctiveness and urban design principles, achieving a mixed and balanced community, routes and

movement and greening the residential environment. Finally a description of how implementation is to be achieved is given in Section 10.

1.4.2 In order to achieve the required standard of development, the brief's framework comprises the following elements:

- Sustainability principles.
- Design principles.
- Urban design objectives for individual districts proposed for the site.
- Development requirements for the main land uses.
- An illustrative masterplan showing land use, the main landscape and open space structure, key routes and junctions.
- Implementation guidance.
- A land budget.

2 Policy Context

2.1 Bedfordshire Structure Plan 2011

2.1.1 The County Structure Plan provides the strategic framework for the Local Plan. The Bedfordshire Structure Plan 2011 was adopted in March 1997 and covers the period 1991-2011.

2.1.2 Local Plan policies that specifically relate to the area covered by this Brief are listed in Appendix 1.

Structure Plan Policies

2.1.3 Policy 32 of the County Structure Plan states that provision will be made for about 16,200 net additional dwellings in Bedford Borough in the period 1991-2011 of which 11,700 are required by 2006.

2.1.4 Policy 33 states that new housing provision will be focused on locations in and adjoining major urban areas and in Strategic Corridors. Of the new housing provision required 8,900 dwellings are directed to locations in and adjoining the urban area of Bedford and 2,700 of these dwellings are to be provided in a strategic location of West Bedford. The North Biddenham location will contribute to the provision west of Bedford during the Local Plan period up to 2006 and beyond.

2.1.5 Policy 37 of the Structure Plan promotes an integrated Transportation Strategy. Policy 45 supports the construction of the A6 Bedford Western Bypass (A6-A421) during the plan period and the Structure Plan Key Diagram identifies the A428-A421 and the A6-A428 road links as new transport routes.

2.2 Bedford Borough Local Plan

2.2.1 The Bedford Borough Local Plan was adopted in October 2002. The Local Plan Inquiry was held between February 1999 and January 2000. The Inspector's Report was published in May 2001. Within the report the Inspector recommended the allocation of 900 dwellings on land north of Bromham Road as a major mixed use development area (Policy H8). In the absence of significant brownfield land within the urban area suitable for housing, the Inspector acknowledged that this was one of the greenfield sites which was a feasible source of housing land. In line with the

Inspector's Report the Council adopted policy H8 as follows:

The policy sets out the key principles of development to include:

- i) *The completion of a distributor road linking the A6 and A428 at Gold Lane to the satisfaction of the Highways Agency prior to the occupation of the 501st dwelling sanctioned by this policy. A planning obligation will be required:*
 - a) *to secure the funding and phasing of the provision of the link;*
 - b) *to ensure that the link will in fact be provided;*
- ii) *Sufficient land should be reserved to enable this distributor road to be built and fully upgraded to dual carriageway to the satisfaction of and dedicated to the highway authority on the issue of the first planning permission;*
- iii) *The improvement of the Ashburnham/Shakespeare Road junction and such other works to the satisfaction of the highways authority within one year of the occupation of the first dwelling sanctioned by this policy;*
- iv) *The provision of a road from the proposed A6/A428 link to Bromham Road in accordance with a phased programme of development to be agreed as part of the development brief;*
- v) *A mixed use development including housing, employment, local shopping facilities but excluding any retail development over and above that required to meet the needs of the development, community, educational facilities and open space consistent with the scale of development;*
- vi) *The extension of the Biddenham Country Park along the River Ouse, integrating footpath and cycleway networks, contributions to secure the provision of a new river crossing and contributions to a footpath/cycleway to Lower Farm Road, Bromham and to prepare and*

implement a management plan for the County Wildlife Site;

- vii) Separation/screening of existing residential areas on the Bromham Road and extensive structural landscaping to screen the new development from the Country Park and assimilate the development into the wider landscape as well as providing adequate separation distances between the new dwellings and the distributor link;*
- viii) The re-provision of school playing fields;*
- ix) Design of the internal transport infrastructure of the development to give priority to public transport, including measures to allow existing bus services to be extended into the development and the provision of a network of safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists with particular regard to safe travel to school routes;*
- x) In accordance with Policy H31 the Borough Council will negotiate for affordable housing to be provided on this site;*
- xi) Contributions to the provision of public transport facilities and services in order to encourage more sustainable journey patterns in particular; appropriate bus priority on the A428 Bromham Road and a Park and Ride Terminus adjacent to the A6;*
- xii) The provision of a pedestrian/cycle bridge across the distributor road within the length between the crossing of the railway and Gold Lane.*

2.2.2 The allocation of 900 dwellings was made prior to the publication of PPG3 which advocates higher density development. The Council anticipates that when the new guidance is taken into account it is likely that the capacity of the site will rise above 900 dwellings. Increased capacity will however only be acceptable where reserved matters applications (following outline approval) demonstrate that higher density schemes fully accord with the principles embodied in this brief, the Local Plan and other relevant supplementary guidance published by the Council.

2.3 Additional Design Guidance

2.3.1 The Borough Council has produced design guidance for all new residential development entitled *Achieving Quality in Residential Layout* (September 1997). This has the status of supplementary planning guidance and residential development proposals should accord with it. Developers will also be expected to take account of:

- Cycleway Design and Maintenance Guide (Bedfordshire County Council June 1996)
- School Travel Strategies and Plans (a DETR guide).

Other relevant guidance includes:

- Places, Streets and Movement (DETR companion to Design Bulletin 32)
- By Design (DETR)
- The Urban Design Compendium (English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation)
- Making Places (DTLR).

3 Site Appraisal

3.1 Location and Existing Land Uses

3.1.1 The site is located to the north of Biddenham village, north-west of Bedford and comprises land between the Bromham Road and the River Great Ouse.

3.1.2 The western and central areas of the site are given over to arable agriculture. Four fields to the north of the site, which form part of a County Wildlife site, are in permanent pasture, and are contained by hedgerows.

3.1.3 The eastern half of the site is an 18 hole golf course, playing fields and a small parcel of agricultural land. These extend as far as the railway, which cuts through the north-eastern corner of the site, and housing fronting Bromham Road. Beyond the railway embankment the site includes disused allotments and an area of rough ground with evidence of tipping. No public footpaths cross the site.

3.2 Landscape and Topography

Landscape Setting

3.2.1 The site lies within the Bedfordshire Claylands as defined by the Countryside Agency's Landscape Character Assessment. The area comprises a broad sweep of lowland plateau, dissected by a number of shallow valleys, including the River Great Ouse. It is typically an open gently undulating lowland landscape with expansive views of large-scale arable farmland, contained either by sparse trimmed hedgerows, open ditches or streamside vegetation. There are scattered ancient woodlands which tend to be clustered most noticeably in a band to the north of the Claylands area; elsewhere the woods are more isolated, yet form important visual and wildlife features.

3.2.2 West of Bedford, the Great Ouse meanders through Buckinghamshire, firstly around the northern edge of Milton Keynes and then through a picturesque and enclosed landscape of water meadows and attractive limestone villages towards Bedford. The river meanders around the site to the north and west before entering Bedford on its western side. Within Bedford the river corridor bisects the town, fronted by a series of linear parks, which maintain an attractive setting to the river.

3.2.3 The majority of the arable claylands are uniformly but sparsely populated. Small villages sit within the valleys while isolated hamlets and farmsteads are widely dispersed, particularly north of Bedford. Traditional building materials in the villages comprise a mix of brick, thatch, render and stone but there is no over-riding cohesion to the area; rather more localised pockets of style or materials. Most notable are the warm limestone villages of the upper Great Ouse at Olney, Harrold, Odell, Turvey and Felpersham, many of which contain elegant Northamptonshire-style church spires and distinctive multi-arched stone bridges, for example at Harrold, Turvey and Bromham.

Site Landscape

3.2.4 The site lies within the gentle valley slopes of the River Great Ouse, levels falling from 40 metres AOD along the Bromham Road northwards, to approximately 30 metres AOD beside the river. Cutting across the site between the existing golf course and abandoned allotment gardens is the main-line railway with its associated landform and vegetation. There has been minor regrading of the land form within the golf course to accommodate greens, tees and fairways.

3.2.6 A break of slope running south-west to north-east distinguishes between the river valley slopes and a plateau area adjacent to Bromham Road and Biddenham. The slopes and leading edge of the plateau drain towards the River Great Ouse whilst land to the south-east of the site drains towards the Bromham Road. There are no drains or ponds across the majority of the site. However, two small ponds are located on the southern boundary of the golf course, one is a rectilinear pond recently constructed, with some marginal vegetation, the other an old field pond overgrown and shaded by scrub vegetation. A short length of seasonally wet ditch abuts the Bromham Road in the south-east corner of the site.

3.2.7 There are three small woodland copses within the site. One, located on the northern boundary between the railway line and River Great Ouse, consists predominantly of ash with hawthorn. A second, between the river and the disused allotments includes mature oak and ash with a hawthorn and elder understorey; and a third situated in the south-western

corner to the site adjacent to The Baulk. The latter consists largely of mature sycamore and ash with a limited understorey.

3.2.8 Hedgerows and hedgerows with trees are largely confined to the boundaries of the arable agricultural land with the exception of the double hedgerow, with hedgerow trees, which flanks the southern end of The Baulk.

3.2.9 Elsewhere, particularly along the break of slope running through the site, there are scattered individual mature English oaks. Tree groups within the golf course include non-native hybrid Black Poplar, native Black Poplar, Lombardy Poplar and Leyland Cypresses.

3.2.10 The character of the site mirrors, to a large extent, land-use and degree of enclosure afforded by the site vegetation. The fields in pasture to the north are relatively small and well enclosed. They are low-lying, in close proximity to the River Great Ouse and, in winter, include areas of standing water; as such they form a significant part of the flood plain and riverside landscape of the River Great Ouse.

3.2.11 The golf course constitutes a relatively recent introduction into the landscape, which does not rely on, or relate to, the existing river valley landscape. Non-native planting and minor regrading articulate the views around a large relatively open space of little intrinsic landscape value. Beyond the golf course and railway line, lie the unmanaged allotments and rough ground. Land to the south of the golf course is a small-scale mosaic of playing fields, rough ground and agriculture.

3.2.12 The remainder of the site constitutes a large-scale, open agricultural landscape typical of the Bedfordshire Claylands with few distinguishing features, the exception being The Baulk and adjacent spinney.

3.3 Archaeology

3.3.1 Archaeological assessment has been undertaken of the site to identify previously recorded sites and potential for hitherto undiscovered archaeological deposits. Several potential archaeological sites have been recorded as lying within the site boundary including a cropmark complex

observed on an aerial photograph. This feature is likely to reflect a late prehistoric settlement. Aerial photographs have also revealed several discrete ring ditches in the west of the site which may be the remains of Bronze Age round barrows.

3.3.2 The Bedfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER) also confirms the site of a windmill in the southern centre of the site. Cartographic sources show the area as arable in more recent centuries. The HER also records the find of a Roman well in the south western corner of the site and associated artefacts. Although this area is likely to have been severely damaged by quarrying, it has been suggested that this site was used for ritual activity. Quarrying has also revealed Palaeolithic deposits within the site, although these are likely to lie at a considerable depth.

3.3.3 Extensive archaeological investigations in the immediate area have confirmed prehistoric and historic activity, with prehistoric and later settlement and ritual remains recorded.

3.3.4 Given the archaeological potential of the area, geophysical survey and fieldwalking have been undertaken across suitable areas of the site. The geophysical survey appears to have identified several features which may relate to buried archaeological deposits. The survey also confirmed the aerial photographic evidence and other anomalies. Fieldwalking failed to identify any concentration of archaeological material.

3.3.5 Further evaluation involving targeted trial trenching has also been completed in accordance with a specification agreed with the Council's Archaeological Adviser (BCC). Geophysical anomalies were targeted where there was potential for the remains to be of national or more local importance.

3.3.6 Areas of archaeological activity were identified including the remains of several probable Bronze Age ring ditches observed on air photographs, Roman activity and the post medieval windmill site suggested by documentary evidence. The majority of features sampled are likely to represent earlier field boundaries suggesting agricultural use of the site predominated.

3.3.7 Several of the geophysical anomalies originally interpreted as archaeological were confirmed as natural or the result of modern activity. The

archaeological remains themselves were all truncated by later ploughing and the overall density of the remains within the site is lower than is common in the surrounding area.

3.3.8 Although further evaluation will be undertaken to locate and define archaeological deposits elsewhere within the site as a condition of planning permission, the work to date has demonstrated that whilst the archaeological remains it has been shown to contain are important they do not require preservation *in situ*.

3.4 Ecology

3.4.1 The majority of the site is either intensively managed arable agricultural land or improved and heavily managed grassland within the golf course. There are three small woodland blocks within the site which are species poor and which support common plants and habitat types. The woodlands do however provide refuge and resource opportunities for protected wildlife and should be retained within the development with appropriate buffer zones around them or alternative habitats provided by agreement with English Nature.

3.4.2 Hedgerows and hedgerow trees are largely confined to the boundaries of the arable land with the exception of The Baulk. Boundary hedgerows generally consist of hawthorn, blackthorn and elder. Lines of trees within the golf course are predominantly non-native species and may provide a significant wildlife resource. Where appropriate existing trees should be utilised in the detailed design of the development. The Baulk contains substantial and over-mature trees which provide a variety of habitat types; development proposals should have regard to the retention of The Baulk minimising the effect of road and footpath alignments on the more significant existing trees.

3.4.3 River-side grassland together with the abandoned allotments and unmanaged paddocks to the east and south-east of the site have areas of ecological value. These include areas of semi-improved grassland and substantial areas of dense bramble and hawthorn scrub, the latter supporting a variety of breeding birds.

3.4.4 The riverside meadows, which lie to the north of the development area, comprise a County Wildlife site. The area comprises seasonally inundated grassland adjacent to the River Great Ouse, sub-divided by dykes and associated hedgerows.

3.4.5 The wildlife site is principally of interest for the botanical diversity of the meadows at the western end of the site and the Bromham heronry situated in the adjacent woodland.

3.5 Utilities

Drainage

3.5.1 In relation to existing surface water drainage, the main hydrological feature is the River Great Ouse which flows from east to west to the north of the development site. In addition, there are several ditches within the confines of the site, one of which runs along the south-east boundary of the site, parallel to Bromham Road.

3.5.2 Current surface water run off from the central and western part of the site drains into the river, whilst the small triangular area in the south east corner of the development site falls towards and drains into the ditch running parallel to Bromham Road.

3.6 Access

3.6.1 There are no cycleways, bridleways or footpaths within the existing site although the Bromham Road includes a cycle lane. Existing access points to the site, all of which are privately owned are as follows:

- At the southern end of The Baulk, to the east of the Gold Lane roundabout on the Bromham Road.
- At the golf course on the Bromham Road.
- From Beverley Grove, a track that runs to the eastern edge of the triangular area of fields and a recreation ground.
- From Cut Throat Lane, off the A6(T) Clapham Road.

3.6.2 There are a number of bus services currently provided along the A428 Bromham Road.

4 Development Influences

4.1 Landscape and Topography

4.1.1 The existing landscape features particularly the River Great Ouse corridor, will need to be considered in the design of the landscape framework and in the conceptual design for the riverside park. Individual landscape features, eg. the spinney adjacent to The Baulk, should be retained and enhanced as part of the wider landscape strategy for the site. The natural topography of the site should influence the layout of the development and careful consideration should be given to the arrangement of components of the development to ensure their appropriate 'fit' with the landform.

4.1.2 Much of the land within the site slopes gently to the north. Orientation and design of properties should address this northerly aspect so as to maximise energy conservation and efficiency within the site.

4.2 Archaeology

4.2.1 Local Plan Policy and the guidance in PPG 16 *Archaeology and Planning* provide the context for dealing with the impact of the development proposals on archaeology.

4.2.2 To date archaeological evaluation has been targeted on potential archaeological sites or features identified by non-intrusive survey techniques. Further trial trenching is required to locate and define archaeological deposits elsewhere within the site.

4.2.3 Although archaeological evaluation has confirmed that the development site does not contain archaeological deposits that will require preservation *in situ*, where development proposals allow archaeological remains could be preserved *in situ* beneath areas of open space or other non-intrusive land uses subject to the agreement of suitable management proposals.

4.2.4 Where development would involve a destructive impact on archaeological deposits, it will be necessary to preserve these remains by record through a programme of archaeological investigation and recording to a written scheme of investigation approved by the Borough Council on the advice of its archaeological advisor.

4.3 Ecology

4.3.1 Protected species occurring on the site, and the particular sensitivities of the adjacent County Wildlife Site, must be taken into account in the design and layout of the development areas and Country Park. The potential for existing habitats to be enhanced and new habitats to be added should be addressed strategically with habitats linking across the site and being provided for at detailed layout level. Structural landscape proposals and the circulation pattern within the site should have regard for the sensitivity of existing habitats and protected species.

4.4 The Highway Network

4.4.1 The linear character of the A6/A428 Link Road must not be reinforced by the development as this would visually impact on the character and setting of the Country Park and the northern edge of Biddenham in the wider landscape. Appropriate provision of open space, woodland planting and a varied settlement pattern will need to be used to reduce the impact of the road on the development and the wider landscape. A noise impact assessment will be required and the development will need to incorporate measures to mitigate against the adverse effect of the noise generated from the strategic distributor road in a manner which does not adversely affect the character and setting of the Country Park and the new residential areas. An initial noise impact study suggests that a minimum separation distance of 50 metres may be required from the edge of the carriageway to the new housing development. This is shown in the indicative masterplan shown as Map 2. The precise separation distances will be determined following further noise assessment work and in the context of the supplementary planning guidance on landscape and design matters (to be approved before the issue of outline planning permission).

4.5 Footpaths and Rights of Way

4.5.1 There are a number of potential links to Bedford town centre, employment areas and shops east of the proposed development area. Footpath and cycleway links must be exploited in the design of the

link road and improvements to the existing road network so as to maximise pedestrian and cyclist access to the town. Improvements should integrate with existing cycleway initiatives eg. the Bromham Road cycle lane.

4.5.2 Appropriate footpath and cycleway links between the urban area, Biddenham village and the new development should also be included with the incorporation of safe crossings for both existing and new users generated by the development.

4.6 Bus Services

4.6.1 The new access proposals should include bus priority at the key junctions and provide bus stops within 400 metres of all dwellings.

4.7 Utilities

4.7.1 Prospective purchasers/developers should satisfy themselves regarding the adequacy of existing service provision and any need for upgrading. In response to an enquiry in May 2000 the service providers have supplied the following information:

Gas

4.7.2 BG Transco advise that diversions will be required to existing mains. There is insufficient capacity in the existing network to serve the development. However, off site reinforcements are achievable.

Electricity

4.7.3 24 Seven advise that diversions may be required to existing underground services namely three 11kv cables, one 33kv cable and three low voltage cables. There are also overhead cables crossing the site, which where appropriate will need to be put underground. Two plots of land should be made available for sub-stations to serve the development. In the case of 33 kv lines any construction work within 15 metres of the pylon or wire it supports is to be approved by Eastern Electricity under Health and Safety Guidance GS6.

Water

4.7.4 Anglian Water Services Limited confirm that the existing water mains adjacent to the site will not have the capacity to supply the proposed development;

an off-site water main of approximately 2000 metres – 3000 metres in length will need to be laid from Manton Lane Reservoir to the site.

Telephone

4.7.5 British Telecom (BT) confirm that they have apparatus, and fibre optics in Bromham Road and the A6.

Cable

4.7.6 NTL confirm that they have apparatus in Bromham Road and are expected in the A6.

Surface Water

4.7.7 A flood risk assessment will be required as part of the planning application. This will need to satisfy the requirements of the Environment Agency.

4.7.8 As part of the development, sustainable drainage systems (SDS) should be provided to minimise the need to balance facilities within the development. However, clearly it is necessary to recognise that the nature of the sub soil in the area may not be appropriate for extensive sustainable drainage techniques and that inevitably there will be a need for some balancing pond facilities within the development. Accordingly, detailed site investigations should be undertaken to establish the nature of the sub soil and ensure that the use of SDS are maximised within the development. The system will need to satisfy the Environment Agency and ensure a failsafe that will prevent properties from flooding. Arrangements will need to be made to ensure the future management and maintenance of the drainage system.

Foul Water

4.7.10 Anglian Water confirm that they will adopt the foul water drainage system. This will connect into the orbital sewer which passes through the site.

4.7.11 All the above is subject to confirmation upon receipt by the service providers of a detailed layout together with level information.

4.8 Fire Safety Issues

4.8.1 Developers should consider the opportunities for and benefits of introducing fire sprinkler systems in new buildings including those which are currently

beyond regulatory requirements. They are also advised to seek the advice of the Arson Reduction Co-ordinator and Fire Safety Projects Officer of the Bedfordshire and Luton Fire and Rescue Service in relation to design measures to prevent fire related crime and disorder.

4.9 The Rail Network

4.9.1 The Midland Main Line runs through the site. Applicants should consult fully with Railtrack to ensure that the smooth, safe and efficient running of the operational rail network and future proposals for the network are not compromised by the development. Matters to be considered will include access to the railway line in the vicinity of the new bridge and acoustic screening for workers, impact on the existing Bromham Road bridge, impact on existing signal sighting and impacts on railway security.

4.10 Community Safety

4.10.1 To reduce crime and increase community safety requires an overall approach to ensure sufficient provision is made for social inclusion. The design and layout of the external environment can also play an important part in reducing opportunities for crime (including fire related crime and disorder), the fear of crime and the potential for anti-social behaviour. The following general principles can be identified.

- *Integrated approach* - the development's overall design and layout should be considered as a whole from the outset.
- *Legibility and identity* - take account of existing and proposed features and facilities to ensure that pedestrian routes have a clear reason and will attract a purposeful usage. Unnecessary paths

which could be used to gain unobtrusive access and escape should be avoided.

- *Environmental quality and sense of ownership* - a high quality environment is more likely to engender pride in its users, who will tend to feel comfortable and safe and have a sense of shared ownership and responsibility. Public areas will tend to be well used, which is itself a safety element. However, care needs to be taken to avoid inadvertently creating opportunities for crime through providing hiding places or by poor positioning and choice of planting, walls and fences.
- *Layout and building details* - key factors include: natural surveillance; the creation of defensible space; the use of physical boundaries; and the strength of materials used in construction.
- *Maintenance of public areas* - it is important that ownership and responsibilities are clearly identified and sufficient resources made available to adequately maintain buildings and communal spaces. High standards of maintenance will encourage active use and engender a sense of pride.
- *Public lighting* - there is a strong link between the standard of lighting and fear of crime. Different sources and patterns of lighting need to be considered for different environments and deep shadows should be avoided. Lighting is particularly important in the street environment, public footpaths and cycleways and in car parks.
- *CCTV* - closed circuit television surveillance may be an appropriate measure in certain situations, although it can be perceived as intrusive and a restriction on privacy and personal freedom.

4.10.2 Developers will be expected to take account of these principles in the detailed design and layout of the development.

5 Key Principles

5.1 Key principles

5.1.1 A range of key sustainable development principles have informed the production of the Brief.

The principles are as follows:

5.1.2 PRINCIPLE 1

Achieve a locally distinctive high quality development which is well connected to the existing fabric of Biddenham and Bedford and gives identity to the development whilst respecting the separate character of surrounding settlements.

- Aim 1* The development should create a locally distinctive area which displays the best in current urban design.
- Aim 2* The development should establish a landscape character which achieves a transition from the River Great Ouse and adjacent rural area to the village setting of Biddenham and the town of Bedford. The development should give identity to the new urban edge, create a sense of place, and form an appropriate adjunct to Bedford.
- Aim 3* The development should make connections between the development and the existing fabric of Biddenham and Bedford.
- Aim 4* Development should incorporate appropriate measures to prevent coalescence with Bromham and west Bedford and protect the amenity of existing residents.
- Aim 5* The development should reflect existing rural and urban character.
- Aim 6* The development should incorporate locally distinctive architectural styles.
- Aim 7* The surrounding landscape should be integrated into the design.
- Aim 8* The development should be designed to enhance community safety.

5.1.3 PRINCIPLE 2

Encourage a mixed and balanced community.

- Aim 1* The development should provide social and community facilities and employment alongside housing development in order to ensure a mixed and balanced community is created.
- Aim 2* The development should incorporate a range of different housing opportunities in terms of tenure, size and affordability.

5.1.4 PRINCIPLE 3

Give priority to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport access.

- Aim 1* The development should give priority to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.
- Aim 2* The development should incorporate a network of direct, safe and convenient paths and cycle routes along with bus priority measures.
- Aim 3* The development should ensure that the local centre conveniently accessible by pedestrians and cyclists.
- Aim 4* The development should incorporate measures to minimise the environmental impact of traffic from the development on the surrounding area.
- Aim 5* The development should provide safe road crossing facilities.

5.1.5 PRINCIPLE 4

Give priority to the greening of the residential environment.

- Aim 1* The development should provide a network of open spaces linked by foot and cycle routes, integrating existing landscape features, especially mature trees.

- Aim 2* The development should integrate the landscape into the development and provide an open space network for recreation and wildlife. (Map 5 provides an illustrative layout for the Country Park).
- Aim 3* The development should incorporate measures which will reduce the demand for the use of local water resources.
- Aim 4* The development should adopt best practice techniques of source control in the disposal and recycling of surface water run off.
- Aim 5* The development should adopt best practices for recycling and disposing of waste materials.

5.1.6 PRINCIPLE 5

Promote energy efficiency.

- Aim 1* The development should minimise energy consumption through attention to the layout and design of buildings.
- Aim 2* The development should use land efficiently and incorporate a range of density levels.
- Aim 3* The development should maximise the use of natural lighting and ventilation and opportunities to utilise alternative energy sources.
- Aim 4* The development should use locally produced renewable materials wherever possible and appropriate.

6 Local Distinctiveness and Urban Design Principles

6.1 Introduction to urban design principles

6.1.1 The development will reflect the distinctive characteristics of the settlement pattern of Biddenham and Bedford whilst providing focus and identity for new development. A local centre with a school and other community facilities will form the nucleus of activity. Links to the existing village and urban area should be provided so as to make the new development accessible to Biddenham and Bedford.

6.1.2 The development will incorporate a range of housing arrangements and character areas across the development site. The settlement pattern should be characterised by more urban development to the east of the site, grading to a more rural character to the west of the site. The open space network and green corridors through the development area should reflect the green and spacious character of the principal routes through Biddenham village. These routes not only provide pedestrian links and cycleways but act as wildlife corridors, linking the site to the local landscape beyond. Low density edges to the north and west of the development area, together with Country Park proposals, are intended to ensure a 'rural' buffer between the developed area and the River Great Ouse and its flood plain. The provision of open space, playing fields and supporting landscape structure on the eastern and western extremities of the site will ensure that a distinct and robust edge can be created to the development avoiding coalescence with residential areas of Bedford and Bromham village. (see Map 1)

6.2 Local Distinctiveness

6.2.1 In order to identify those elements which would make the new development locally distinctive, there is a need to consider the context within which the development sits.

Urban Character

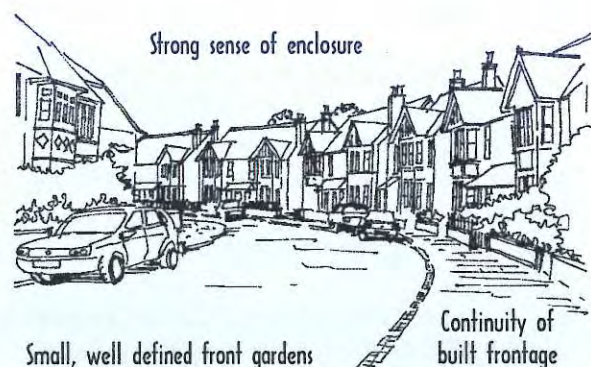
6.2.2 In the east, the site adjoins the urban area and therefore as a starting point, it would be reasonable to look at existing development in Bromham Road, Beverley Crescent and the Chaucer Road area for inspiration. These have similar characteristics in that development is grouped around the main pedestrian

and vehicular flows, the public realm is clearly defined by buildings and landscape, and spaces are relatively small in scale.

6.2.3 Analysis of these areas identifies a number of design approaches or 'cues' which can be incorporated into the higher and medium density areas of the new development. These are described below.

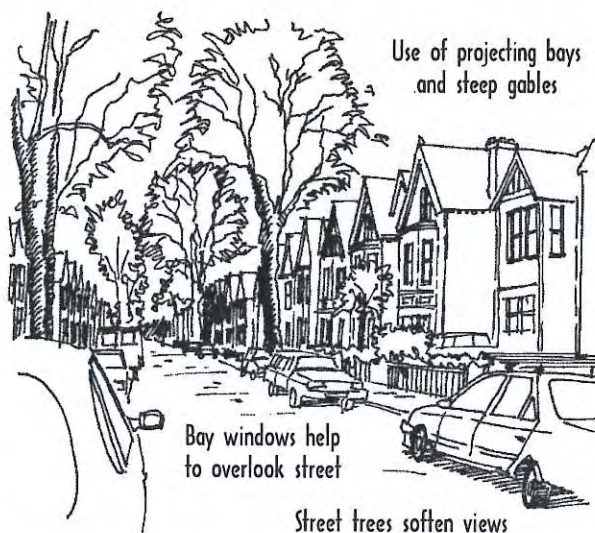
6.2.4 On main arterial routes, set buildings back from the road by the use of deeper front gardens. Use dwellings of 2½ - 3 storeys to emphasise the importance of the route and use extensive planting in the front gardens to provide a feature in the street and frame the dwellings eg. Bromham Road.

6.2.5 Use a mixture of 2, 2½ and 3 storey dwellings to provide variety in the streetscene and create an urban sense of scale eg. Chaucer Road. Buildings should be closely spaced so as to create a strong sense of enclosure and continuity of built frontage. Buildings should front onto the street and make a clear distinction between public and private space eg. Beverley Crescent.



6.2.6 Use small front gardens to introduce defensible space and ensure that they are well defined by appropriate boundary treatments - open plan gardens do not reflect urban character. Boundaries are defined by brick walls, railings or by the use of low brick walls with hedging.

6.2.7 Distances between building fronts should be kept to a minimum in order to achieve a strong sense of enclosure. Street trees can be used to provide features within the street scene and soften views eg. Chaucer Road.



6.2.8 Many dwellings are characterised by the use of projecting bays with steep gables. Bay windows are also a common feature and can be used to ensure that buildings 'turn the corner' satisfactorily.

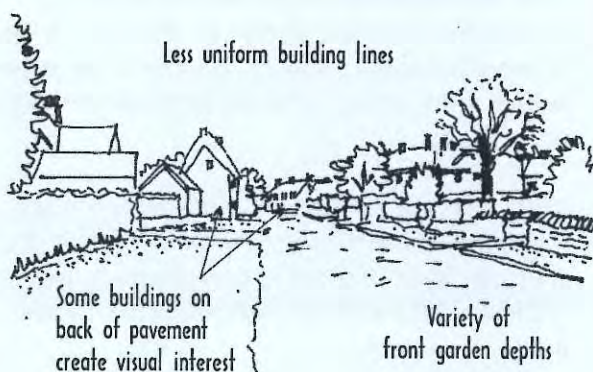
6.2.9 Materials are primarily brick and tile with occasional use of render.

6.2.10 Parking is accommodated on street, by use of integral garages and by means of courtyards to the rear of the dwellings.

Rural Character

6.2.11 To the south lies the village of Biddenham which has a much more rural character. Reference to the part of the village around Main Road shows a number of 'cues' which would be appropriate in the lower density areas to the west of the new development. These are described below.

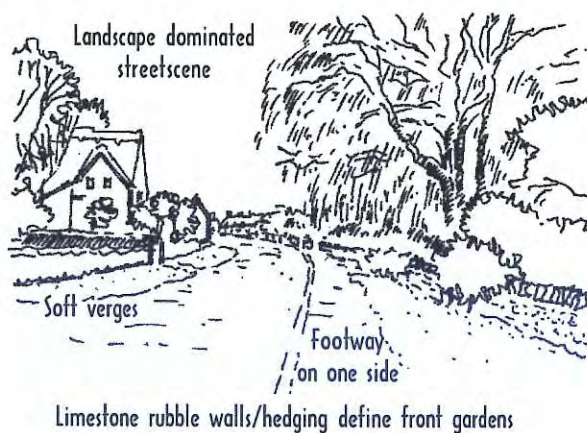
6.2.12 Buildings are generally 1, 1½ and 2 storeys in height. Spacing between buildings is more generous with considerable variety of front garden depths. Building lines are therefore much less uniform. In



certain cases, buildings are located on the back of the pavement with no front gardens. Others may be set well back into the plot. Whilst the majority of the dwellings front onto the street, occasionally dwellings are turned through ninety degrees thus presenting a gable end to the street.

6.2.13 The sense of enclosure is less than in the urban area and the streetscene is dominated by the landscaping within the front gardens rather than the buildings. It is therefore a landscape-dominated environment.

6.2.14 Front gardens and boundaries are defined by limestone walls, hedging or by the use of low limestone walls with hedging behind. Picket fencing and wooden gates are also used. Buildings are a mixture of brick and tile, lime-washed render and thatch and limestone and tile/slate.



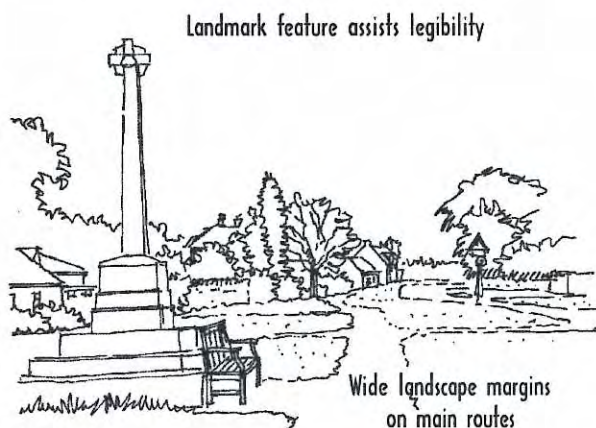
6.2.15 Main roads contain wide landscape margins with soft verges often with a footway on one side only. Drives and footways are generally in loose or rolled gravel.

6.2.16 Parking is primarily on-plot with visitors parking on street.

6.3 Key Urban Design Principles

6.3.1 In May 2000, the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions and the Commission for Architecture & The Built Environment published 'By Design. Urban Design in the Planning System: Towards Better Practice'.

6.3.2 The aim of the guide is to promote higher standards of urban design and it provides a companion to the Government's policy for design as set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 1 and other Planning Policy Guidance Notes.



6.3.3 It concludes that successful streets, spaces, villages, towns and cities tend to have common characteristics. These factors have been analysed and distilled into a series of principles or objectives for good urban design. They are:

Character

A place that has its own identity and a character that is locally distinctive in terms of both townscape and landscape.

Continuity and Enclosure

A place that has public and private spaces which are clearly defined by development and which promotes the continuity of street frontages.

Quality of the Public Realm

A place with attractive and successful public spaces and routes which are safe, attractive and accessible by all members of society including disabled and elderly people.

Ease of Movement

A place that is easy to get to and move through, which promotes accessibility and permeability, connects with its surroundings, puts people before traffic and integrates land uses and transport.

Legibility

A place that has a clear image and is easy to understand by incorporating recognisable routes, junctions and landmarks.

Adaptability

A place that can change easily in response to changing social, technological and economic conditions.

Diversity

A place with variety and choice through a mix of different land uses.

Fig A Block Structure - Perimeter Blocks



6.4 Urban Design Framework

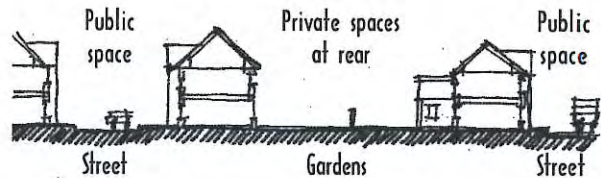
6.4.1 This section sets down the Council's vision of how the key urban design principles should be applied to this site.

Character

6.4.2 The new development must respect the local distinctiveness of its context (as defined in Section 6.2) and create a series of areas which are themselves distinctive. This will help to assimilate a development of this scale into both the urban area and Biddenham village. It will also help to create a development that is highly legible and easily understood.

Continuity and Enclosure

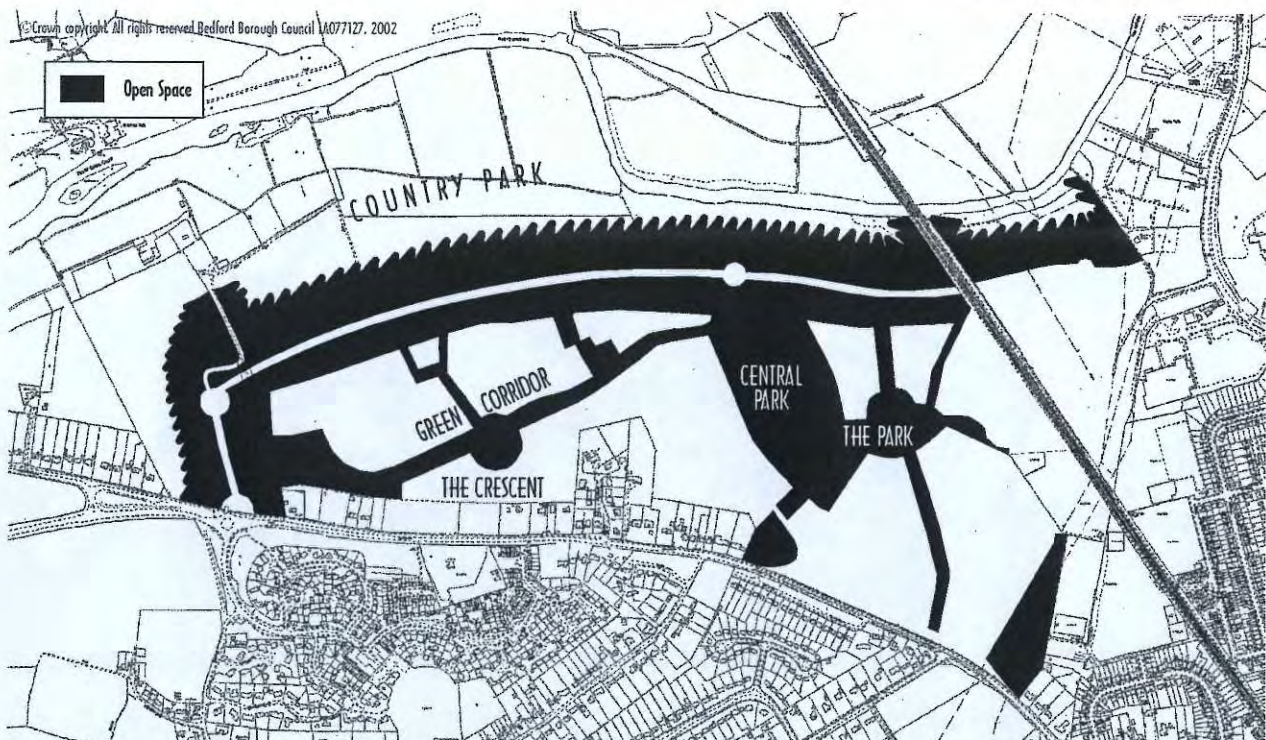
6.4.3 The relationship between buildings and public spaces is crucial if a successful place is to be created. The new development should be laid out so that there is a clear distinction between public and private space with the public domain being both overlooked and accessible. This is best achieved by sub-dividing the layout into a series of perimeter blocks. Figure A shows how the residential areas could be laid out to create a series of perimeter blocks arranged within an irregular street grid. This block pattern creates opportunities for natural surveillance at all times of day and thus assists community safety. There is no reason why every element of the grid must be a through route.



Quality in the Public Realm

6.4.4 It is important that the development includes a series of high quality public spaces in terms of their use, design, landscaping and materials. It is also vital that a mechanism is put in place to ensure that these are maintained to a high standard in perpetuity. Figure B indicates the main open space network within the development which comprises a number of elements. To the north, lies the country park which is described in more detail at 9.4. In the heart of the development, running from east to west are a series of connected spaces of different character. To the west, there is a green corridor which is overlooked by housing and in character should be reminiscent of Main Road, Biddenham. In the centre of the development and adjoining the local centre is a central park which contains formal sports pitches. To the east is a pocket park which is more urban in character. A series of green links run approximately north-south through the residential areas and connect all these spaces with the country park via the footpath or footpath/cycle network.

Fig B Open Space Network



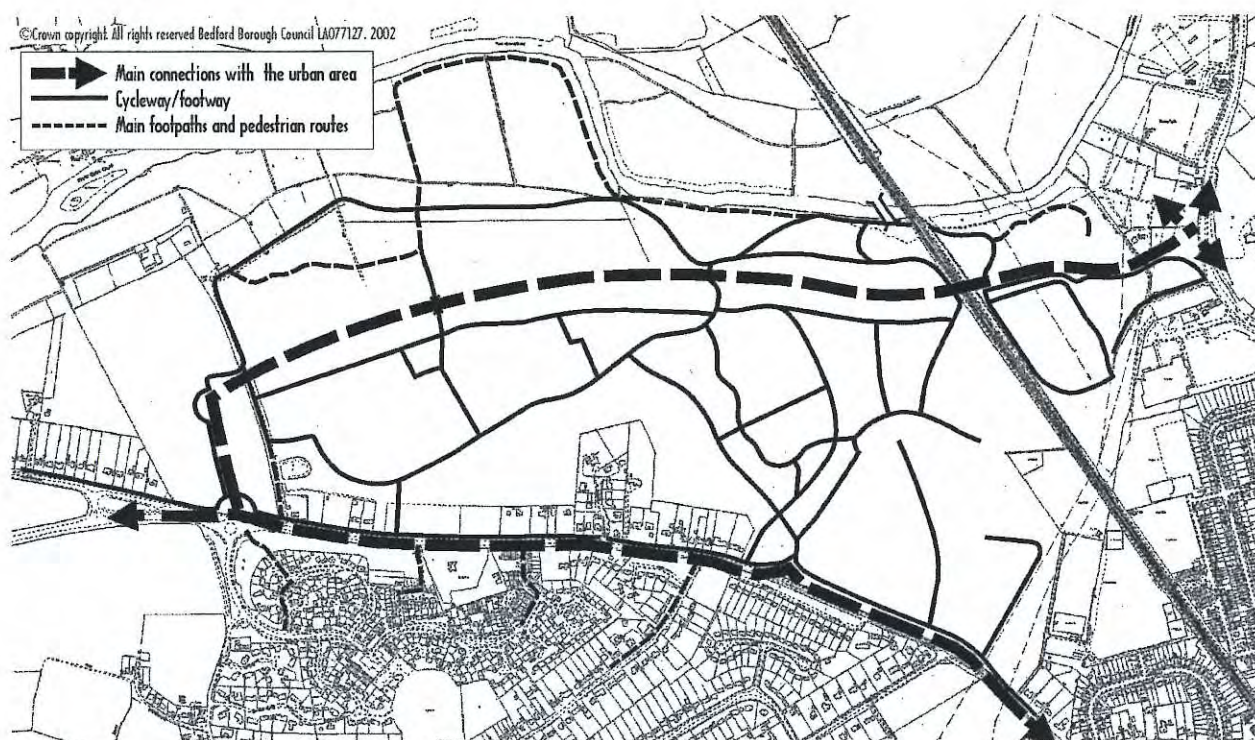


Fig C Connections

Ease of Movement

6.4.5 This principle has three distinct elements - connections, permeability and the integration of land use and transport.

6.4.6 Firstly, it is vital that the proposed development provides good connections to the existing urban area and Biddenham village.

6.4.7 Secondly, the layout of the site should incorporate an appropriate amount of permeability and choice of routes. Routes should be clear and direct, be overlooked and busy and should not undermine the defensible space of particular neighbourhoods.

6.4.8 Thirdly, it is important that the different uses on the site are easily accessible on foot, by cycle and by public transport. It is also important that links are created with other facilities such as schools and community buildings in the locality as well as with the open countryside beyond. Figure C shows the main points of connection and the footpath/cycle network.

Legibility

6.4.9 Legibility relates to how well a development is structured so as to help people find their way around. New development is often criticised for offering little to remember when moving through it. This results in a lack of orientation and a poor 'mental image'. Research

has shown that five types of physical features play a key role in establishing a strong mental image of a place. These are Paths, Nodes, Landmarks, Edges and Districts. Figure D shows a legibility analysis of the development using all of these elements.

Paths

6.4.10 These are channels of movement and relate primarily to main roads. The most significant path will be the A6/A428 link road which forms the western and northern boundary of the site. Other main paths include the existing A428 and to a lesser extent the highway network within the development.

Nodes

6.4.11 These are focal points such as junctions or public spaces. The main roundabout intersections along the A6/A428 link road will create the main nodes within the development.

Landmarks

6.4.12 These are reference points and could be prominent buildings, particular uses, or landscape features. The development provides a number of opportunities to establish landmarks which will help orientate people moving within the site and also

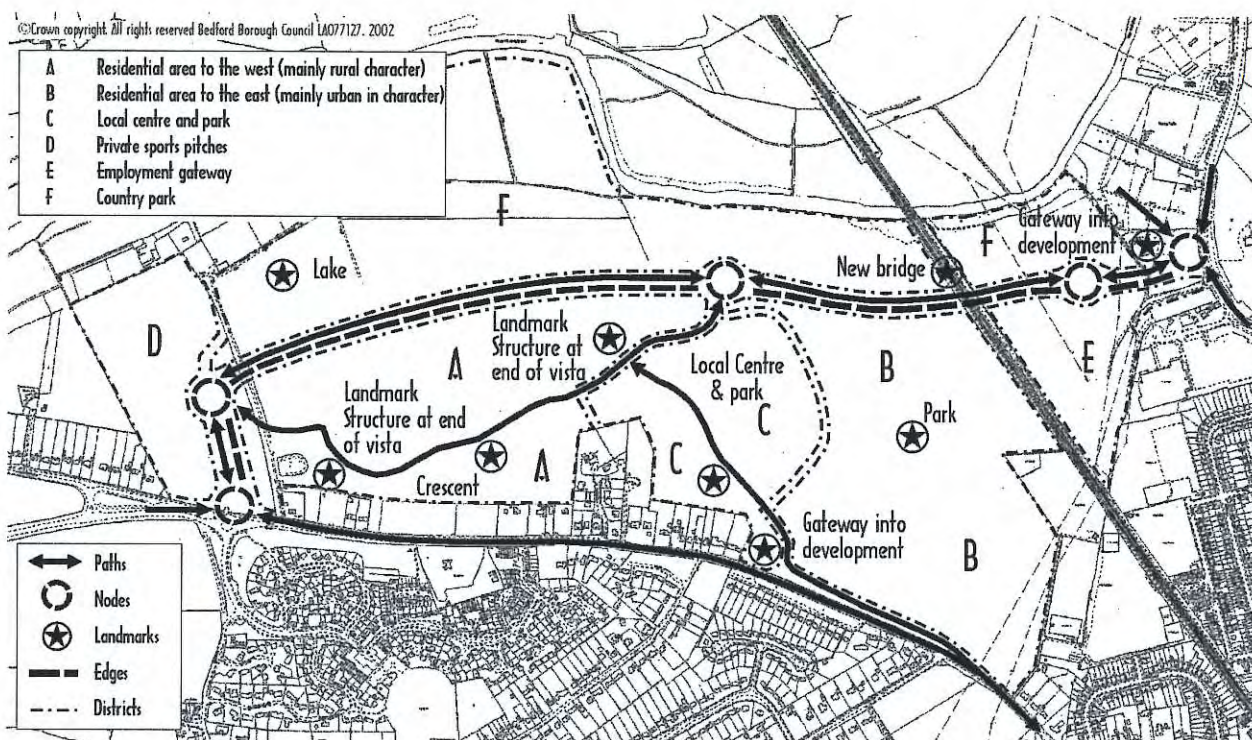


Fig D Legibility Analysis

along the A6/A428 link road. These include gateway features on the approach from the A428 and at the A6 intersection, the new bridge over the railway line and the balancing lakes located within the country park. Within the development, the concentration of the larger community buildings within the local centre will act as a landmark as will the main open spaces. At a smaller scale the use of landscape features, structures and public art at key locations can also have an important role to play.

Edges

6.4.13 These divide areas of different character or uses and are often linear in nature. The A6/A428 link road will create a new distinctive edge to the urban area and will mark the transition with the country park and the countryside beyond.

Districts

6.4.14 These are sections of the development which have a distinctive character. This character could be derived from the physical nature of the buildings and spaces as well as the uses and activities associated with those areas. The new development will create six potential districts. These are:

- The employment gateway to the east.

- The residential area to the east which will be mainly urban in character.
- The local centre and park.
- The residential area to the west which will be mainly rural in character.
- The country park
- Private sports pitches

Adaptability

6.4.15 Buildings and spaces should support a range of different activities and have the flexibility to change over time. This is particularly relevant in the case of the local centre.

Diversity

6.4.16 Whilst the majority of the development will be in the form of housing, it is fundamental to the sustainability of the scheme that a mix of uses is created with good access on foot, by cycle and by public transport. The employment area to the east of the site is well related to the strategic highway network. The greatest opportunity to create mixed use is in the local centre which will include residential, retail, community and educational uses.

6.5 Urban design objectives for individual districts or areas

6.5.1 Urban design objectives for individual districts or areas are set out in Appendix 2.

6.6 Landscape masterplan and strategy

6.6.1 Landscaping, both hard and soft, plays a key role in achieving a high quality development. It can be used to integrate the development into the wider landscape, frame views, enhance local distinctiveness and improve legibility.

6.6.2 As part of the outline planning application the developer will be required to undertake a landscape assessment of the site. This assessment should identify existing landscape features of note including trees and hedgerows and, where appropriate, incorporate them into the new development. In addition, a landscape masterplan and strategy should be prepared and agreed in advance of the grant of outline planning permission and should:

- Show how the distribution of open space (in tandem with the design of the foot/cycle network) provides connections with the existing open space network of Bedford and Biddenham.
- Give particular attention to creating a 'soft' edge at the interface between the developed areas and distributor road. This edge will form an important boundary to the urban area and in landscape terms should create a smooth transition between the country park and the built up area. Woodland areas, landform limited fencing and hedgerow planting, along with consideration of the arrangement of built development in relation to the distributor road should be used to establish the character of this edge.
- Demonstrate how landscape measures will be used to establish character and identity through the creation of gateways on the A428 and A6 and other focal points. Landscaping of the realigned section of the A428 should also be used to maintain the landscape dominated approach to the town.
- Soften the western approach to Bedford in particular through extensive planting on the western edge of the distributor road and western boundary.

- Demonstrate how continuity of landscape approach will be achieved across the site in terms of the planting design and linkage of open spaces through wildlife and green corridors.
- Provide an integrated approach to the design and maintenance of the County Wildlife Site and country park which maximises the nature conservation potential of the County Wildlife Site and achieves an appropriate level of access for local people using the country park.
- Provide a range of formal and informal spaces which create a sense of place and identity when moving through the development.
- Use landscape measures to achieve transitions between different character areas and to avoid the creation of abrupt edges at the boundaries between individual phases of development.
- Show how the integrity of the open spaces and trees will be sustained and protected from damage by vehicles and public utility services.
- Distinguish between those roadside areas which are to be reserved for tree planting and those to be used to house underground services.

6.6.3 The landscape strategy will be adopted as supplementary planning guidance before the issue of outline planning permission.

6.7 Design guidance/implementation

6.7.1 Map 2 shows an indicative master plan which draws together the urban design principles and legibility analysis described in Sections 6.3 and 6.4.

6.7.2 At the outline stage the Council will require the developers to prepare the following documents to show how the key urban design principles have been incorporated into their proposals. These are:

- A development framework plan and land budget.
- A landscape framework plan.
- Detailed design guidance which the Borough Council will adopt as supplementary planning guidance before the issue of outline planning permission.

This guidance will:

- Include specific guidance for key areas within the development including the residential areas, the local centre, the employment area, the main routes (vehicular, pedestrian and cycle) and the main edges. Such guidance should include a detailed legibility analysis for each area and a series of fully illustrated design concepts.
- Provide a clear vision of how the urban design requirements will be met and how the development will be distinctive in terms of character whilst achieving a balance and mix of dwelling types.
- Include detailed design codes giving details of the materials 'palette', public spaces, landscaping of

amenity areas, play areas and gateways, boundary treatments, street furniture, lighting, car parking areas and the road hierarchy giving street cross sections for the different types of route.

6.7.3 The Council will encourage the lead developer to use restrictive covenants to ensure that individual land parcels are developed in accordance with the detailed design guidance.

6.7.4 Prior to the granting of any reserved matters for each of the residential areas, the local centre, or the employment area, developers will be required to submit a design statement demonstrating how their proposals meet the requirements of this brief and the detailed design guidance and design codes prepared following the outline stage.

7 A Mixed and Balanced Community

A planned urban extension such as this should be well connected to the community it adjoins, and take advantage of the opportunity to share existing local facilities and services. At the same time the new development should have a range of housing tenure types and a mixture of land uses enabling it to function as a mixed and balanced community in its own right. This section details the development and design requirements for the local centre, employment and housing areas.

7.1 Housing

7.1.1 A variety of dwelling types, sizes and styles will be required to ensure that the varied needs of the community are served and also to ensure that visual diversity is achieved in the overall character of the housing development. House types that promote homeworking to reduce the need to travel and life-time occupation will be encouraged. This may be in the form of live/work units or through the installation of necessary infrastructure such as telecommunications.

7.1.2 The Local Plan estimates that the site can accommodate approximately 900 dwellings suitable for a range of housing needs. PPG3 sets out government expectations about higher housing densities. The guidance anticipates that from now on new development should generally achieve densities of 30 dwellings per hectare and above. In this context and to accord with the Government's requirements a site capacity of 1200 dwellings may be achievable but as stated in para. 2.2.2 above this can only be confirmed through the development control process.

7.1.3 In practice the density of development will vary across the site. A possible distribution of densities is illustrated in Map 4. There should be subtle transitions between the higher density areas in the eastern part of the site and the lower density areas to be located on the northern and western parts of the site. Housing densities should not be uniform across any one housing district but should include a variety of built form with a proportion of higher and lower density housing which may range from 30 - 40 dwellings per ha.

7.1.4 Precise densities will be determined on the submission of reserved matters applications. These applications will need to demonstrate that the densities proposed can be achieved through the use of appropriate, layout and built form and that a satisfactory mix and range of dwelling types and sizes can be provided. It is important that all applications have regard to Policy H32 of the Local Plan which expects the mix and range of housing types and sizes to reflect the needs of the community and should have specific regard to the needs of elderly people for smaller dwellings including bungalows. Applications will also need to accord with the landscape strategy and design guide for the site.

Affordable housing

7.1.5 Affordable housing will be provided in accordance with Policy H31 of the Local Plan which sets a target of 30% of housing to be affordable. Of this, 25% will be sought as social rented housing and 5% for market subtenures involving equity ownership. Affordable housing should be phased and integrated within the housing areas in small groups. It should be designed and built so as to reflect the main design elements of the private housing so that it is indistinguishable.

Accessibility

7.1.6 The site should also make provision for a proportion of the dwellings to be built to mobility housing standards in accordance with Policy H34 of the Local Plan and the Council's supplementary planning guidance on this topic.

7.2 Local Centre

7.2.1 The local centre will be a key feature and a focus for the community. The centre will need to be a distinctive area, with high quality detailing, reflecting local styles and materials. An illustrative layout for the local centre, incorporating community facilities, is shown in Appendix 2 (Figure E).

7.2.2 Access to the existing village and to all areas of the development via footpaths and cycleways will be provided in the layout of the centre. Safe routes to the village school will also be provided.

Education

7.2.3 Education requirements will be addressed with the provision of a new Lower school and contributions to Middle School provision to be agreed with the County Council. A site should also be provided for a 50 place nursery with outside play area.

Community/Health Provision

7.2.4 As the new community develops there will be a need for a community meeting place and health facility. Initially this will take the form of a temporary facility, located within a dwelling which could later be converted back to a house. The permanent community hall will be located within the local centre. It will provide 500 sq metres of meeting space comprising a hall with sufficient space to accommodate 2 badminton courts, meeting rooms changing rooms capable of independent access to serve the nearby playing pitches, toilets, kitchen and storage facilities. The hall should meet the appropriate specification for use by pre-school groups. Land should also be set aside for the provision of primary health care facilities consistent with the requirements of the NHS Primary Care Trust.

Shopping

7.2.5 Provision of up to 600 sq metres (gross) convenience retail floorspace should be fully integrated within the local centre. In addition to a supermarket of no more than 600 sq metres (gross) selling primarily food products to meet only the needs arising from the new development, it may be appropriate to include a limited number of smaller serviced shop units to

provide, for example, a restaurant/takeaway, hairdressers, and other appropriate local services. It will be a condition that these smaller units will not be subsumed within the foodstore to increase its floorspace.

7.2.6 Land should also be reserved for a public house within the local centre.

7.3 Employment

7.3.1 The land east of the railway line and south of the distributor road has been allocated for employment and park and ride uses. South of the strategic distributor B1/B2 uses and a hotel are anticipated. B8 uses will not be acceptable. These uses should 'wrap around' the park and ride site providing some shared parking. North of the strategic distributor there may be the potential for a pavilion building.

7.4 Private sports pitches

7.4.1 The land on the western edge of the site will provide private sports pitches as a replacement for the Harpur Trust pitches off Beverley Grove. The site will need to incorporate substantial landscaping to soften the approach to Bedford, to protect the amenity of local residents and to integrate the site with the Country Park. The scale and nature of any changing or other ancillary facilities (including floodlighting) will be a matter for reserved matters submissions or separate planning applications.

8 Routes and Movement

8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 The main routes through the site, both by vehicle and foot/cycle should be planned as a network of connected public spaces which will vary in character.

8.1.2 Routes throughout the site will need to be defined by the built forms. Schemes that are visually dominated by highway engineering-led designs will not be acceptable. The impact of roads and the private car on the residential environment will need to be minimised visually if detailed proposals are to be considered favourably. Countywide highway design guidance addressing these issues is being prepared by the County Council.

8.1.3 As part of the outline planning application a Travel Assessment will be required. This should demonstrate how it is proposed to minimise the cumulative traffic impact of the development of the whole site. The scope of the Travel Assessment will need to be agreed in the first instance with the Highway Authority and should be produced in accordance with the framework described in the document 'Travel Assessment Guidelines' published by Bedfordshire County Council in October 1998 and the latest government advice in PPG 13.

8.2 Pedestrians and Cycling

8.2.1 To encourage modal shift from the car, good quality footpaths and cycleways are required with in the development which provide connections to the strategic network of footways and cycleways in the Biddenham and Bedford areas.

8.2.2 To further encourage walking and cycling the network should:

- follow key desire lines and be as direct as possible;
- link with the existing footpath/cycle network beyond the boundaries of the site;
- be appropriately designed to cater for pedestrians only, or pedestrians and cycle movement;
- be safe, especially for vulnerable users;
- include safe road crossings;

- be designed with regard to the needs of those with impaired mobility or vision.

8.2.3 Pedestrian and cyclist links to the north of the development will need to be considered, particularly with regard to safe routes across the A428/A6 strategic distributor road. Crossing points will include the provision of a pedestrian/cycle bridge across the distributor road within the length between the crossing of the railway and Gold Lane, underpasses accommodated within the side spans of the new road bridge over the railway, and at grade crossing points at roundabouts.

8.2.4 Additional cycleway and footpath links will be provided within the existing railway arch that crosses the River Great Ouse to provide at-grade links between the housing areas, the employment zone and the eastern end of the country park.

8.2.5 The proposed network should link to the existing footpaths feeding into Biddenham and complete the link from Biddenham to Bedford and to the railway station with the extension of the existing cycletrack to Hurst Grove. It will be particularly important to make adequate provision for pedestrians/cyclists at the roundabout junctions on the A6 and A428. This should include a grade separated crossing for the Bromham/Stagsden strategic cycle route. Signing is required on all routes to direct users to the country park and to the local facilities within the development area. In addition contributions should be made to secure the provision of a new river crossing and footpath/cycleway to Lower Farm Road, Bromham.

8.2.6 Within the local centre and employment areas provision should be made for secure cycle parking.

8.3 Public Transport

8.3.1 The development will give priority to buses by:

- incorporating infrastructure such as bus shelters and bus priority measures into the highway design;
- contributing to the revenue cost of extending bus services into the area (the developer will need to

enter into discussion with the bus operators to establish how existing services along the A428 and A6 will be extended to run through the development). These arrangements should be in place before the grant of any outline planning permission.

- ensuring that the maximum walking distance to a bus stop from each dwelling does not exceed 400m;
- providing bus priority within the signalised junctions which form part of the development.

8.4 Park and Ride

8.4.1 A park and ride site will be provided as a necessary contribution from this development to the overall objective of encouraging modal shift from cars to bus and will be located as an integral part of the employment area located east of the railway line. The developer will provide surfaced car parking for 500 spaces, land for terminus/ administration buildings and security measures in the form of extensions to the CCTV network. It is vital that the site is close to the A6 and that it is convenient to use to promote take up of the service.

8.5 Highways

8.5.1 The planning policy for the site allows a first phase of 500 dwellings to be built and occupied before the distributor road (A6/A428 link) is completed.

8.5.2 As part of the first phase the developer will be required to carry out improvements to the Ashburnham/Shakespeare Road, Gold Lane and Biddenham Turn junctions and the realignment of the A428 incorporating bus priority measures before the occupation of the first dwelling to the satisfaction of the Highway Authority.

8.5.3 In addition primary access to the eastern end of the development will be provided via a new junction on the A428 in the proximity of the existing golf course access. The proposed access should also include improvements to the Biddenham Turn T-junction, incorporating bus priority and pedestrian facilities. The precise form of the junction at Biddenham Turn will be determined in the context of the planning application for the site.

8.5.4 As well as forming part of the Bedford Western bypass the A6/A428 link will of necessity provide the major junctions giving access to the site from the A6 and from the A428 at Gold Lane, where it will be necessary to increase the size of the existing roundabout. Along the length of the link there will be further junctions providing access into the employment area, residential area and private sports pitches. Safe crossings for pedestrians and cyclists will be provided at all of these junctions. The link will also incorporate a bridge across the Midland Main Line which should be designed with the capability for easy adoption for dualling.

8.5.5 The consultation highlighted issues concerning rat running in Biddenham village. Mitigation could include signs, speed cameras or other measures. Consideration will need to be given to the detailed measures which may be appropriate as part of the planning application process.

8.6 Traffic Calming

8.6.1 Within the development, road design must focus on the quality of the places and living environment created and give priority to the needs of the pedestrian and cyclist rather than car movement and parking. Developers should have regard to the DETR publication 'Design Bulletin (DB32) and Places, Streets and Movement' and the Council's own guide 'Traffic Calming - Streets for People'. Traffic calming will be achieved through a combination of highway and urban design using features such as visual pinch points and narrowings. There should be an emphasis on horizontal measures to achieve traffic calming wherever possible.

8.6.2 The internal layout will be designed to avoid drivers using the area as a through route from Bromham Road to the new A428/A6 link. Also the layout will not promote the unnecessary use of the private car for short journeys but maximise the opportunities to walk and cycle.

8.6.3 Road design must utilise the lowest order of road configuration possible. Shared surfacing with pedestrian priority should be considered with the use of appropriate materials for road surfacing to correspond with the layout. The use of seating and informal open space adjacent to shared surface should be positively considered to reinforce the priority of pedestrians and create safer 'home zones'.

Roads serving the residential areas should be designed to keep vehicle speeds low. It is anticipated that a 20 mph speed restriction will be imposed across the development.

8.7 Parking Strategy

8.7.1 In response to Government guidance contained in PPG3 Housing, it will be important for the site to minimise the provision of off-street car parking across the site in seeking to achieve more

sustainable communities. In high density areas it is considered that cars should be accommodated either within limited on-street parking, principally for visitors, or incorporated into appropriately designed dwelling as mews/courtyard developments located to the rear building line and accessed via the frontage development and overlooked by dwellings, through routes within parking areas should be restricted. On-street parking should be informal, but planned, and located to maintain highway safety and to maximise its potential to assist in traffic calming.

9 Greening the Residential Environment

9.1 Greening the residential environment includes actions such as:

- integrating the development into the existing landscape;
- providing for the formal and informal recreational needs of the development;
- protecting and supporting existing wildlife thus increasing biodiversity;
- reducing the use of energy, water and other resources;
- minimising pollution.

Landscape and wildlife issues are considered in Sections 4.3 and 6.6. This section focuses on open space, including the country park and energy.

9.2 Public Open Space

9.2.1 Public open space, in particular, the Country Park and green spaces network will be used to:

- achieve a high quality, safe and attractive environment.
- encourage residents to walk, cycle and use public transport by allowing pedestrians and cyclists to permeate through the development safely with a choice of routes linking the housing to key locations (such as employment areas, local shop, schools, community facilities and the countryside).
- create green spaces which deliver a variety of experiences within the network of external spaces, formed through planting, amenity and play areas and footpath design.
- extend the Linear Country Park which runs around the Biddenham Loop.
- enhance the character and identity of the built areas of the site.
- retain and enhance features of landscape and nature conservation interest by providing wildlife refuges and green corridors.
- explore the potential for incorporating measures to control surface runoff, such as rivers/streams and balancing ponds and reed bed technology for treating surface water.

- identify opportunities to incorporate public art.

9.3 Pitch, Play and Amenity Space

9.3.1 In accordance with the standards set out in the Local Plan Policies LR15, LR16 and LR17 and based on a development of a total of 1200 dwellings 9.0 - 10.2 ha of open space will be required for the development. The table below shows how this is derived. Should the capacity of the site exceed 1200 dwellings additional contributions will need to be provided on a pro rata basis.

	Standard	Provision for 1200 Dwellings
Outdoor Sport	0.4 - 0.45 per 100 dwellings	4.8 - 5.4 ha
Children's playing space		
Outdoor equipped space	0.05 - 0.075 ha per 100 dwellings	0.5 - 0.9 ha
Informal play space	0.10 - 0.125 ha per 100 dwellings	1.2 - 1.5 ha
Amenity open space	0.1 ha per 50 dwellings	2.4 ha

9.3.2 In accordance with policy LR16 provision for children's play will follow the NPFA guidance which defines three types of play areas. These are the Local Area for Play (LAP), Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) and Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP).

9.3.3 Local Equipped (LEAP) and Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAP) will be designed as focal elements of the scheme, not located in awkward areas. Sites will be positioned where they can be overlooked by adjoining dwellings without causing a nuisance to residents in general. Their location within the development area will reduce the need to cross busy roads with fast moving traffic. LEAPs should include approximately five types of different play equipment together with a small games area. NEAPs should include about eight different types of play

equipment, a kickabout area, and cycling opportunities. A dedicated kickabout area for teenagers will also be required. Local Areas for Play (LAPs) should be provided within the fabric of the housing layout and should provide equipment for toddlers and small children. Information on the type of play equipment and maintenance requirements may be obtained from the Service Manager Parks, Open Spaces and Community.

9.3.4 Playing pitches will be provided on the village green adjacent to the local centre. Changing facilities will be provided as part of the community hall.

9.3.5 The Council will wish to be satisfied that adequate provision for the future management and maintenance of all open spaces, play and youth facility provision, amenity and sports areas is made. If these are to be offered for adoption then a financial sum to ensure future management and maintenance will be required.

9.4 Country Park and County Wildlife Site

9.4.1 The country park should provide a landscape buffer between the River Great Ouse corridor and the new housing areas. Landscape types should reflect the character of the River Great Ouse valley landscape and include wetland, ponds, pastoral agriculture, woodland, amenity grassland and scrub. The balancing ponds should be fully integrated into the design of the Country Park. Existing native tree and shrubs should be retained and native species of local provenance. Woodland and meadows within the flood plain should reflect the character and species diversity typical of the River Great Ouse corridor. Planting associated with more elevated ground should reflect the local woodland species and native planting should predominate. The fishing club path and car park should be retained. Landmarks should be incorporated including ponds and tree groups. These are illustrated on Map 5.

9.4.2 A management plan for the adjacent County Wildlife Site (CWS) shall be submitted by the lead developer who will be required to liaise with the County Ecologist, English Nature and the Borough Conservation Officer and local wildlife groups. The CWS will be dedicated to the local authority or other suitable body and a commuted sum will be made available for its long-term management. The reserve will be managed as wet grassland by low intensity grazing. Ditches will be restored and an active water management system

proposed to maintain soil moisture in the summer. A phased programme of pollarding and hedgerow management is also anticipated.

9.4.3 The main components of the environmental proposals for the County Wildlife Site are as follows:

- The provision of a commuted sum for the long term management of the site as a nature reserve.
- Directed and managed public access to the perimeter of the semi-improved grasslands as close to the river as possible (consistent with the wishes of the riparian landowner, Luton Fishing Club). Footpaths within the nature reserve will be fenced or delineated by wet ditches and will be unsurfaced.
- Public access to the most sensitive wildlife sites will be restricted with no public access to the unimproved meadow at the western end of the reserve areas or the Heronry.
- Improved regulation of the water regime within the CWS, with the construction of an off-take from the river at the upstream end of the site (subject to Environment Agency approval) and a system of sluices that enable water to be channelled around the site and held up at the downstream end to prolong the wet period into summer.
- Phased management of the ditch system.
- A phased programme of willow pollarding and hedgerow laying.
- The implementation of a very low intensity grazing regime with separate grazing units, including a new dry grazing area in the country park for use in flood events. Grazing regimes will be set by nature conservation priorities.
- Some small ponds will be created (up to 200m² surface area) for amphibians, dragonflies and habitat diversity.
- All fields will have a water supply for the stock and will be securely fenced to retain cattle with appropriate gates and tracks for agricultural access.

9.5 Energy

9.5.1 The Council is keen to promote the efficient use of scarce energy resources. In particular, it will seek

to achieve energy efficient residential layouts and minimise waste. The Council will require the environmental assessment that accompanies the planning application for the development to specifically address energy, natural resource and waste minimisation impacts.

9.5.2 As part of the outline planning application the developer will be required to prepare an energy statement. The Energy Strategy shall address:

- minimisation of energy use;
- energy efficient layout;
- building design, an EcoHomes rating of 'very good' for residential buildings, a BREEAM rating of 'very good' for commercial buildings;
- use and implementation of renewable energy and innovative solutions to energy generation eg. the provision of suitable sites available for a combined heat and power system, wind turbine or alternative renewable energy systems, (including consideration of a private wire system), provision for energy generation by use of solar panels or photovoltaic cells;
- waste recycling, the provision of recycling facilities, including a local 'bring site', the provision of composting bins;
- water conservation, including SUDS, measures for water minimisation within buildings, water butts for dwellings, consideration of grey water recycling systems.

9.5.3 All dwellings will be required to meet the requirements of the Building Research Establishment's Eco Homes scheme and achieve a 'very good' rating. In seeking to ensure that the dwellings meet this standard the Council will enter into negotiation to incorporate solar panels into a proportion of dwellings. The principles contained in the energy statement will need to be reflected in the detailed design guidance which is to be prepared before the issue of outline planning permission.

9.5.4 It will be a condition of the outline planning permission that reserved matters submissions should accord with the energy statement and demonstrate

how the matters covered in the statement have been addressed in the design.

Waste Management

9.5.5 In line with the Council's adopted policy, the Council will seek to minimise waste and conserve water through simple and practical ways such as by encouraging the composting of garden waste and reuse of surface water run-off in garden watering. The Council will seek to ensure that all new houses built with gardens (ie. not flats) to be provided with compost bins and water butts. Compost bins should have a capacity of at least 200 litres for houses with up to two bedrooms and at least 300 litres for houses with three or more bedrooms. Water butts should have a capacity of at least 150 litres for houses with up to two bedrooms and at least 200 litres for houses with three or more bedrooms.

Water Demand Management

9.5.6 Water demand management has a role to play in making fuller use of existing infrastructure and reducing cumulative impacts of small scale development. A strategy for the management of the water system should be submitted to and approved by the relevant parties (Bedfordshire County Council, Anglian Water and the Environment Agency), prior to development commencing on site.

9.5.7 The Council will expect the development to provide a system which incorporates a range of measures which should include:

- soakaways, swales and filter strips and retention ponds in order to increase filtration and natural discharge;
- the use of permeable paving slabs to allow water to permeate, rather than simply run off;
- on site collection and storage of rainwater for irrigation and car washing including water butts and waste minimisation including compost bins;
- treatment of the open space network, in terms of incorporating landscapes which do not need irrigation in the summer months.

10 Implementation

10.1 Key Objectives

10.1.1 The key implementation objectives which developers will be required to address are to:

- secure by way of binding agreements and other mechanisms as appropriate, the development of the site including the provision of the strategic distributor road in accordance with the Local Plan and this brief;
- adopt the appropriate mechanisms for achieving and maintaining a high quality, distinctive development with a full range of appropriate infrastructure, affordable housing and facilities within acceptable time limits.

10.2 Submission Requirements for Outline Planning Application

Outline Planning Application

- Development Framework Plan
- Land budget (with floorspace for non-residential elements)
- Landscape Masterplan and Strategy.
- Strategic Highways Plan
- Details of the strategic distributor road
- Contractual arrangements for the delivery of public transport improvements
- Travel Assessment
- Energy Strategy.

Supporting Information

- Environmental Statement
 - Habitat Surveys
 - Archaeological Surveys
 - Landscape Assessment
 - Water Management Strategy
 - Noise Study

10.3 Planning Obligations and Conditions

10.3.1 The following matters will need to be dealt with by condition or if necessary by planning obligation.

- The timing and phasing of the development.
- The delivery of the strategic distributor road including the transfer of the land and air rights to the Highway Authority and contractual commitment to completion.
- Reserved matters applications to be accompanied by statements explaining how the supplementary design guide, energy strategy and landscape strategy have been incorporated. (see Sections 10.5 and 10.9)
- The provision and timing of all elements of the local centre including education, retail, community and other elements.
- The provision of on and off site highway improvements.
- The provision of bus facilities and contributions to bus services and green travel initiatives.
- Contributions to Park and Ride provision.
- Green Travel Plan for school and employment sites.
- The monitoring of traffic impact arising from the development.
- The provision of open space (including the country park) pitch and play facilities.
- Contributions to public art.
- Affordable housing provision.
- Ongoing management and maintenance of community facilities, including commuted sums as necessary for the amenity land and landscaped areas, public open space, play and youth facilities roads, footpaths and cycleways, the country park and the County Wildlife site.

10.4 The Strategic Distributor Road

10.4.1 The developer will be required to enter into a planning obligation to secure:

- 1) The funding and timing of the provision of the strategic distributor road.
- The planning obligation will require the payment of monies to secure the full cost of acquisition and transfer of land and air rights over the railway,

including transfer of land for future dualling, and the full construction costs of the strategic distributor road (payments to be on the basis of land sales) and will set out an arrangement for the holding of capital contributions. The method for establishing costs will be agreed by the applicant/developer with the Local Planning Authority and Highway Authority.

- The strategic distributor road must be completed and fully operational prior to the occupation of the 501st dwelling or within one calendar year of the completion of the 400th dwelling, whichever is the sooner.

2) The provision of the strategic distributor road.

Evidence to the satisfaction of the local planning authority will be required prior to the completion of the planning obligation that adequate air rights over the rail line presently exist or will be granted prior to the construction of the 401st dwelling to enable construction of the road bridge to be completed thereafter.

This evidence to include demonstration that the Highway Authority will be entitled to take an assignment of the contractual air rights or any option therefor or otherwise acquire those rights prior to the construction of 401 dwellings, in any case at no cost to the Highways Authority additional to the sum payable at 10.4.1 (1) above.

The planning obligation will ensure that the strategic distributor road is provided within the timescale laid down.

- Prior to the implementation of development all of the land necessary to complete the A428/A6 strategic distributor road, including land for future dualling, will be dedicated to the Highway Authority and transferred at that stage or thereafter on demand by the Highway Authority as it requires.
- Prior to the occupation of the 301st dwelling
 - (i) all the necessary funds will be in place and held by the Bedford Borough Council to fund the full construction costs of the strategic distributor road and acquisition of air rights.
 - (ii) details of pre-contract works will be submitted to the Highway Authority.

- Prior to the occupation of the 401st dwelling

(i) the A428/A6 strategic distributor road link between the Gold Lane roundabout and the roundabout junction west of the railway will be completed to an adoptable standard and open to traffic.

(ii) the A428 link between the A6 roundabout and the roundabout junction east of the railway will be completed to an adoptable standard and open to traffic.

- Prior to the occupation of the 501st dwelling or within one calendar year of the completion of the 400th dwelling the strategic distributor road will be completed and open to traffic.

10.4.2 It is likely that this obligation will necessitate that landowners enter into a landowners' agreement.

10.4.3 In order to give effect to the requirement for the land to be transferred to the Highways Authority the Council will require that full details of the strategic distributor road and the rail bridge are submitted as part of the outline application or that a full application is submitted concurrently with the outline application.

10.5 Design and Landscape Guidance

10.5.1 There will be a requirement to produce supplementary planning guidance in relation to design and landscape matters. The scope of these documents are set out in paras. 6.6.2 and 6.7.2. The guidance will need to be approved prior to the issue of outline planning permission.

10.6 Phasing

10.6.1 The Council will expect residential development to commence from two points of access on the A428. In the interests of establishing the community focus for the site the key elements of the local centre and connections with the two initial development areas will be provided early in the development. The private playing fields are likely to come forward early in the development subject to satisfactory access being achieved. Likewise the employment areas could come forward subject to the

completion of the Clapham bypass and the provision of adequate access arrangements which may include junction B.

10.7 Phase One

10.7.1 Phase one (shown on Map 6) will comprise:

- a mix of dwelling types and sizes – market and affordable housing.
- a local centre
- improvements to the Ashburnham Road
- realignment of the A428 incorporating bus priority measures
- provision of playing pitches and children's play areas
- structural landscaping
- country park
- temporary community facility
- employment areas
- Park and Ride (Phase 1).

10.7.2 The timing of development in phase one shall be as follows:

- Improvements to the junctions at Ashburnham Road, Gold Lane and Biddenham Turn and the realignment of the A428 incorporating bus priority measures before the occupation of the first dwelling.
- Transfer of serviced land for a medical facility (0.4 ha or similar to be agreed with the PCT) using all reasonable endeavours before the occupation of the 50th dwelling.
- Temporary community facility to be completed within one year of the occupation of the first dwelling.
- The provision of a LEAP on the eastern side of Phase 1 of the site before the completion of the 51st dwelling on that part of the site.
- The provision of a LEAP on the western side of Phase 1 of the site before the completion of the 51st dwelling on that part of the site.
- Serviced land for the shop and public square to be made available before the 201st completion.

- The first phase of the Lower School, comprising full provision of core facilities and classrooms for at least 90 pupils, should be provided by the occupation of the 300th house with the second phase to follow at a date to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Local Education Authority.

- A 'through link' (identified on Map 6) to adoptable standard to open before the completion of the 301st dwelling or at the time of the opening of a shop or the lower school (whichever is the sooner). The link will provide access for vehicles (including buses) pedestrians and cyclists. A public bus service (to be agreed with the bus operator) should start at the time that the link is opened.
- The main sections of the strategic distributor road, (roundabouts A-B and C-E) to be completed before the completion of the 401st dwelling.
- The pitches in the central park area to be provided and laid out to the satisfaction of the local planning authority, together with changing facilities before the completion of the 501st house.
- The completion of the strategic distributor link prior to the occupation of the 501st dwelling.
- The first NEAP (within the greenway) to be provided in tandem with the development/before the completion of the 501st dwelling (whichever is the sooner).
- Before the occupation of the 201st dwelling the detailed design and specification of the community hall to be agreed following consultation with local residents and the construction sum agreed. Full payment should be lodged with the Council before the occupation of the 301st dwelling.

10.8 Phase Two

10.8.1 Phase two (shown on Map 6) will comprise:

- a mix of dwelling types and sizes – market and affordable housing.
- the remaining areas of the Local Centre as necessary
- provision of playing pitches and children's play areas.
- structural landscaping
- Park and Ride (Phase 2).

10.8.2 The timing of development in phase two shall be as follows:

- The development of the residential parcels should proceed as shown on Map 6.
- Structural landscaping in accordance with the landscape strategy.
- Provision of children's play space in tandem with development.
- Extended site access running along the eastern edge of the central park area (see Map 6) which should be completed and available to function as a bus route at a date to be agreed with the bus operator.

10.9 Submission Requirements for Reserved Matters Applications

10.9.1 All reserved matters applications should be accompanied by statements explaining how the requirements of the supplementary design guidance, landscape strategy and energy strategy have been incorporated into the design of the scheme.

10.10 Adoption of facilities

10.10.1 Whilst it is beyond the scope of this brief to specify when roads, lighting and drainage are adopted, developers will be encouraged to pursue adoption of all relevant infrastructure as soon as is practicable.

The following Local Plan Policies relate to the area covered by this Brief.

Strategy		Policy BE44	Provision of new works of visual art and craft
Policy S3	Definition of extent of urban area	Policy BE45	Community safety and crime prevention
Policy S9	Provision of community facilities	Policy BE48	Accessible environments
Natural Environment		Employment	
Policy NE3	County Wildlife sites	Policy E1	Proposed employment sites
Policy NE4	Trees and Hedges	Policy E14	Working from Home
Policy NE5	Nature conservation and management	Shopping	
Policy NE8	Woodland protection	Policy SH7	New local shopping facilities
Policy NE12	Retention of landscape feature	Transport	
Policy NE13	Safeguarding and future management of landscape features	Policy T1	Integrated Transport Strategy
Policy NE15	River protection area	Policy T2	Local Transportation Network Improvements
Policy NE17	Provision of open space and creation of areas of high ecological value.	Policy T4	Highway Impact
Policy NE18	Protection of built character, open space and wildlife habitat	Policy T6	Improvement and provision of public transport infrastructure
Policy NE20	Landscape improvement	Policy T7	Bus priority measures, bus ways and Park and Ride
Policy NE24	Protection and enhancement of water resources	Policy T13	Pedestrian routes
Housing		Policy T14	Cycle routes
Policy H8	Land north of Bromham Road	Policy T15	Parking
Policy H31	The provision of Affordable Housing	Policy T17	Short Stay and Park & Ride facilities
Policy H32	The mix and range of housing type and sizes	Policy T20	Safety and traffic calming
Policy H34	Mobility housing	Policy T21	Accessibility for the disabled
Built Environment		Leisure & Recreation	
Policy BE3	Uses and infrastructure to promote self-sustaining communities	Policy LR1	New sports and leisure facilities
Policy BE4	Non residential uses	Policy LR7	Informal recreation - use of River Great Ouse
Policy BE5	Area of Special Restraint	Policy LR10	Access to countryside
Policy BE24	Archaeology	Policy LR15	Provision of outdoor playing space
Policy BE29	High standard design	Policy LR16	Provision of children's play space
Policy BE30	Supplementary Planning Guidance	Policy LR17	Provision of general amenity open space
Policy BE31	Statement of Design principles	Policy LR19	Provision of new community facilities
Policy BE32	Development on the edge of urban areas	Utilities	
Policy BE33	Gateways	Policy U2	Floodplain
Policy BE35	Quality in residential layouts	Policy U3	Waste Water Management
Policy BE38	Landscaping		
Policy BE43	Spaces around buildings		

LOCAL CENTRE

The local centre should be developed in accordance with the following design principles:

Character

- The local centre provides the opportunity to create a form of mixed-use development based on a traditional high street. Building scale and landmark features should be used to reflect the importance of this area as the focus for community activities.
- Residential properties should be located on the main street and should include parking behind frontage development in built courtyards.
- It is essential that residential use is located above the shops in order to maximise surveillance and liveliness. The housing should also have direct access to the public realm.
- Narrow plot widths should be used to promote more active frontages, increase the sense of enclosure and allow for higher densities.
- The central park should act as a focus for leisure and sporting activity. It should have good pedestrian and cyclist links to residential areas and the community facilities.
- A public square should provide seating areas and parking areas and a more formal focus to the village centre. The space should be overlooked by buildings, but should also have tree planting to provide a degree of enclosure and shade. This provides the opportunity for parking to be accommodated within a grid of trees.
- The use of local materials, building methods and details should be considered in order to enhance local distinctiveness.

Continuity and Enclosure

- The majority of the buildings should be linked, creating a sense of enclosure and continuity to the main street. Enclosure will be enhanced by having a building to building front distance in the order of 10 metres in places.
- Buildings should both front the street, public spaces and the central park. These should be linked, with a minimum of blank walls and gaps between

buildings thus maximising the extent to which the street and the central park is overlooked. Within the centre, buildings such as the school, community hall and retail unit should be fully integrated into the high street frontage and should not 'stand alone' in their own grounds.

- Buildings should face or overlook public space, wherever possible, in order to enhance natural surveillance, liveliness and community safety.
- The primary access to buildings should be from the street and building entrances should be easily identifiable.
- Private space, including service areas should be enclosed by the backs of buildings.
- Landscape works and planting on the Central Park should create a sense of enclosure whilst still allowing views to the space from neighbouring properties.

Quality of the Public Realm

- The local centre should include a new public square that is well overlooked and is designed to support a wide range of activities. Spaces should be kept as small as possible to encourage liveliness and a sense of human scale.
- Building entrances should be at frequent intervals so as to create activity.
- The fronts of buildings should be orientated around the main pedestrian flows to enhance security and vitality.
- Works of art and well-designed street furniture should be used to create identity and enhance the sense of place. Extensive seating opportunities should be incorporated into the design. Bins should also be provided.
- Street furniture should be co-ordinated in order to avoid clutter. Maintenance, resistance to vandalism and access to underground services should also be considered.
- Account should be taken of microclimate issues including sunlight and daylight, wind, temperature and frost pockets.
- The Central Park should be overlooked by buildings to provide a degree of security through natural surveillance.

Ease of Movement

- The high street should be traffic calmed, allowing for safe pedestrian and cycle movement whilst accommodating buses.

Legibility

- Legibility should be enhanced by grouping larger scale community buildings (eg. school and community centre) and using them to define public spaces; through the use of landmarks artworks, planting, seating areas, or architectural features such as clocktowers; through careful orientation of buildings in terms of views and vistas and through the detailing of buildings, street furniture and hard landscape materials.

Adaptability

- Consideration should be given to floor to ceiling heights and building depths. These influence how easy it is to convert a building to other uses. It should be recognised that the composition of the centre is likely to change over time and this should be facilitated in building design. The use of three storey townhouses provides the potential for the ground floor to be converted to other uses over time.
- For the centre to be successful, it must accommodate a range of different community and residential units as well as providing open space and play facilities. This will support a wide range of activities during the day and the evening.

RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

Character

- A variety of dwelling types, sizes and styles should be provided to ensure that the varied needs of the community are met and also that visual diversity is achieved.
- The character of the residential districts should reflect the character of existing housing areas within Bedford and Biddenham and should vary across the site reflecting urban streetscapes within high/medium density areas in the east, moving to medium/low density housing with a more rural character in the west (see Section 6.2).
- The development should reflect local building forms which include distinct housing types, spatial

relationships, boundary treatments, building lines, roof slopes, window types and gardens.

- Particular care will be needed to ensure a gradual transition between the more urban and the rural character areas. This too needs to be addressed in detailed design codes.
- Housing should incorporate local materials, building methods and details in order to enhance local distinctiveness.
- Traffic calming throughout the site must ensure that safe, pleasant residential areas are created. Highway design should vary through the site from the urban streetscape to rural lanes.
- Consider the scale, massing and height of new development in relation to the topography, function, and its potential to form landmarks in relation to views and vistas.
- Within the development, a network of open space and planting should be provided, incorporating a series of linked spaces with a variety of function, character and scale. This should enhance the character of the residential districts and should include landmarks such as artworks or seating areas.
- Recognise that every element in the street scene contributes to the identity of a place including sculpture, lighting, railings, litterbins, paving and street furniture. These should be considered as an integral part of the design process.

Continuity and Enclosure

- Development should be arranged in series of streets and perimeter blocks and thus create a clear distinction between public and private space.
- Buildings should front onto the street and public space to enhance liveliness and community safety. This can be achieved by the use of separate slip roads where access is restricted eg. where development fronts onto a main road or onto open space.
- The scale of new development on Bromham Road should reflect the scale and character of existing dwellings. Dwellings should front onto the A428 but be set back within individual plots. The landscape dominated approach to the town should be maintained. Vehicular access could be from a service road.
- Private space should be enclosed by the backs of buildings. Rear gardens should back onto other

Land North of Bromham Road Biddenham

Fig E Illustrative Layout
for the Village Centre



gardens rather than roads, footpaths or service areas. This will make them more secure.

- The primary access to buildings should be from the street.
- Frontage development at the eastern end of the site should include linked dwellings and flats at a variety of scales and configurations to provide higher density housing. Where courtyard development is used, access to parking courtyards should be controlled by means of gates or by overlooking. This may necessitate locating dwellings within the courtyard itself.

- Front gardens in the medium/high density areas will generally be of less depth than low density areas and distance between building fronts will be less thereby creating a strong sense of enclosure. Occasionally, buildings can be located on the back of the footway so as create visual pinch points. Similarly, the use of buildings which are set further back can create visual interest.
- Low and medium density housing districts should combine semi-detached, short terraces and individual properties. Dwellings will generally have larger gardens and be set back from the highway. There should be considerable variation in front garden depths between plots. The boundary between public and private realms should be delineated through the use of rubble walls, fencing and native/ornamental hedging.

Fig F Urban Character Development

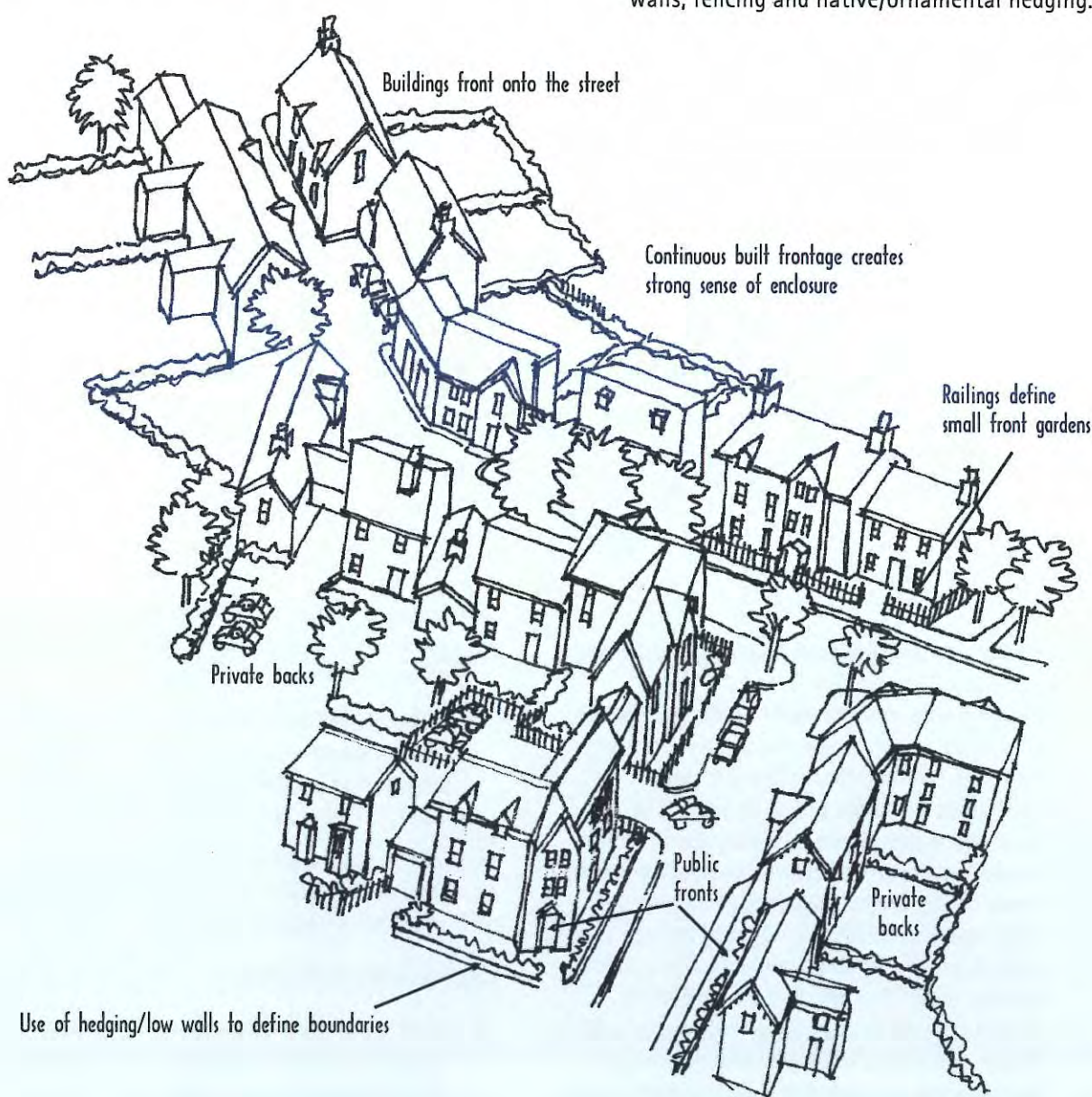
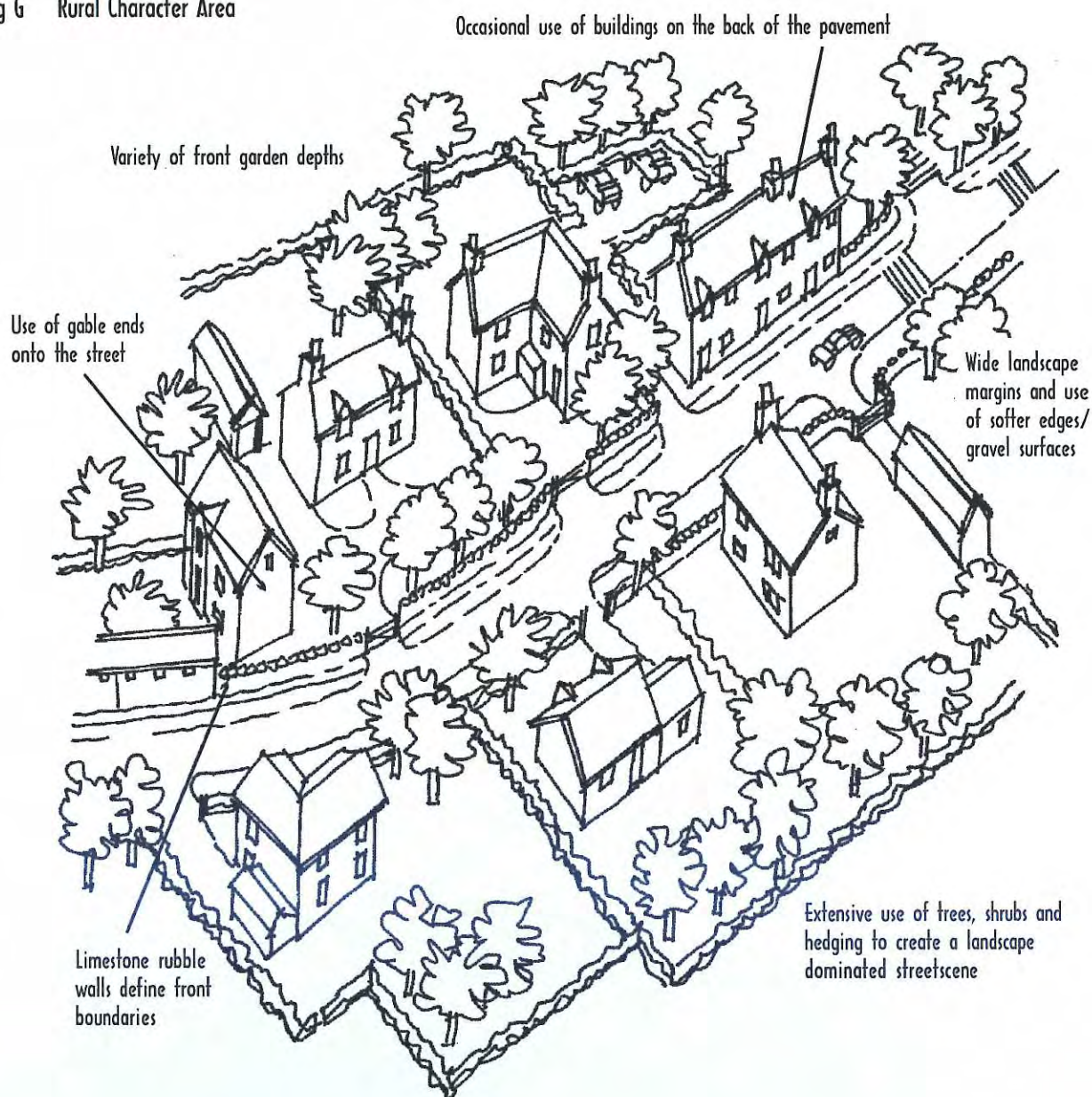


Fig 6 Rural Character Area



- Within rural housing areas property should include a higher proportion of detached and semi-detached units and the dwellings should relate in an informal and irregular manner to the highway. Properties should include 1½ and 2 storey development. Garages should be grouped where possible and provide studio workspace. The low density housing areas allow for larger garden plots, where houses are set a distance away from the main road corridor and are accessed through single tracked, gravel surfaced, rural lanes. The interface between public and private realms should be marked through the use of low rubble walls, picket fencing and native hedging. Surfacing materials should be low key and natural in appearance such as gravel lanes defined by granite setts.
- A limited palate of building materials, styles and detailing should be used to provide continuity to any one residential district.
- Structure planting within the network should be used to create a range of spaces of different character and scale, but providing a continuity in terms of the underlying species composition.
- Within houses, position the less private rooms (such as the living room) so as to face the street, especially at ground floor level.

Quality of the Public Realm

- Streets and spaces should be overlooked so as to maximise natural surveillance. This is particularly important in the case of play areas, communal space and parking areas.

- Public space within residential areas should include, footpath and cycleway corridors as well as larger green open spaces. Equipped areas of play should be accommodated within the larger open spaces, together with informal recreation facilities. There should be extensive seating opportunities and seating must be provided adjacent to the area of equipped play.
- Works of art and well designed, high quality, durable street furniture and surfacing materials should be provided to create identity and enhance the sense of place. This should be co-ordinated in order to avoid clutter. Maintenance, resistance to vandalism and access to underground services should also be considered.

Ease of Movement

- The layout of housing areas should maximise accessibility to public transport. In general, vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists should share the same movement corridor rather than be geographically segregated.
- All dwellings should be within 400 metres of a bus stop.
- Movement routes should be overlooked by residential properties or community buildings and should be lit as necessary so that they are safe and secure.

Legibility

- Use prominent buildings to enhance legibility. Consider how detailing of boundary treatments, surfaces, building materials, windows and doors, etc can be used to make the areas more legible.
- Incorporate limited non-native tree planting at strategic locations, especially within the low and medium density districts.

Adaptability

- House types that allow homeworking and life-time occupation should be provided.
- Consideration should be given to floor to ceiling heights and building depths. These influence how easy it is to convert a building to other uses.

Diversity

- To promote social inclusion, social housing should be fully integrated into the development.

PARK AND RIDE AND EMPLOYMENT SITES

Character

- The employment area provides an opportunity to create a major gateway into the development from the east. It also provides an important gateway into the urban area of Bedford and is prominent in terms of its location.
- The design quality of the buildings and landscaping should be of the highest order and should give character and identity to the gateway area.
- The fronts on the buildings should be orientated towards the key road linkages (the A6 and the A6/A428 link road).
- The site should include extensive peripheral landscaping to soften the visual impact of the buildings and avoid a hard urban edge being formed.
- Local materials, building methods and details should be used in order to enhance local distinctiveness.

Continuity and Enclosure

- The design should provide a buffer between the development and railway and between the development and link road.
- The spatial arrangement associated with buildings should provide open space for the employees with privacy and a degree of enclosure, creating attractive spaces at a human scale. Consideration should also be given to incorporating principles to enhance community safety in the design of both the Park and Ride and employment sites.

Legibility




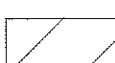



- Legibility should be enhanced by the use of landmark buildings and by the careful orientation of buildings in terms of views and vistas.
- Legibility should also be enhanced through the detailing of buildings, street furniture and materials.

Adaptability

- Consideration should be given to floor to ceiling heights and building depths. These influence how easy it is to convert a building to different uses. The buildings should be able to accommodate a range of business types.

Land North of Bromham Road Biddenham

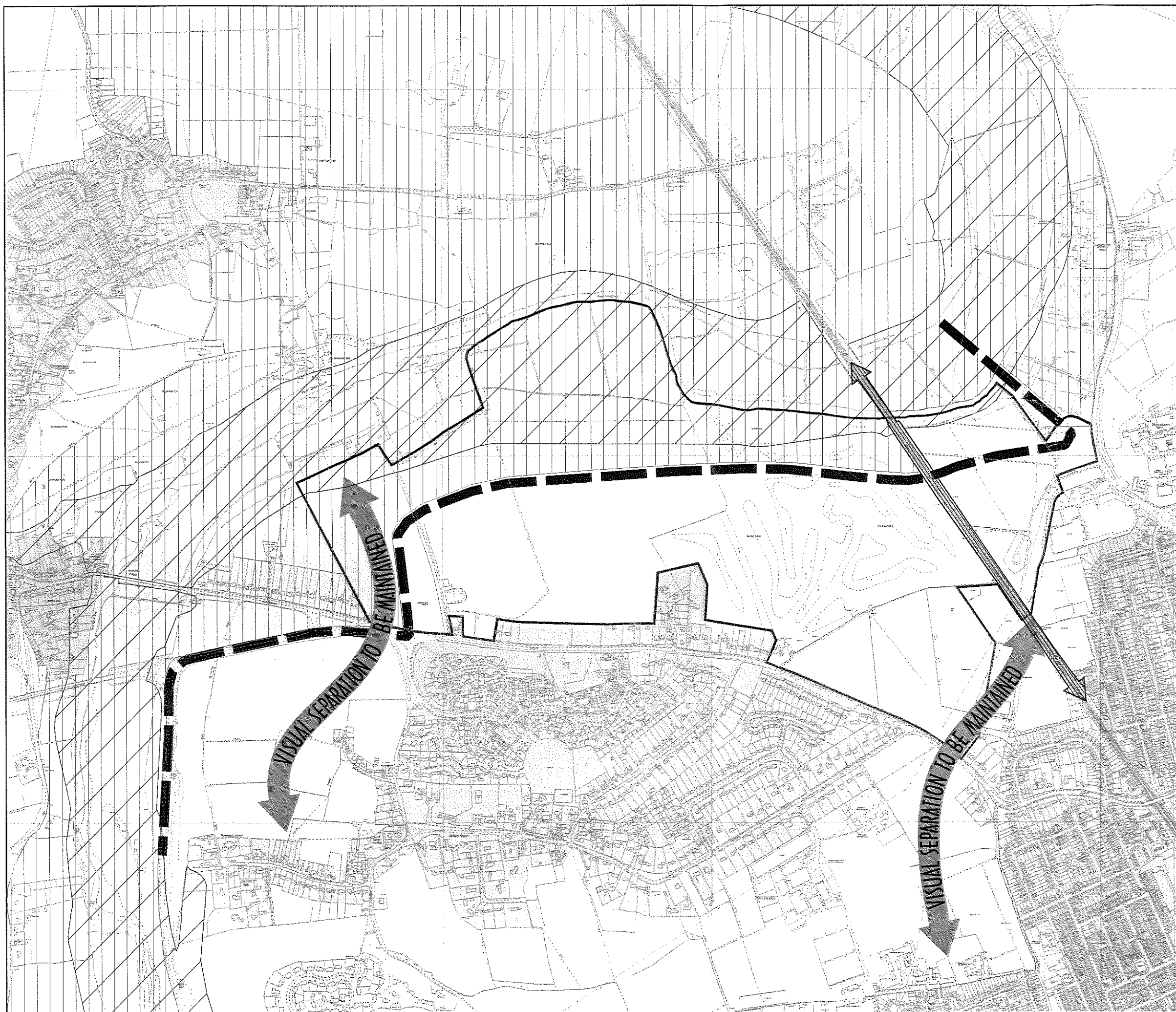
Map 1 Constraints

-  Site Boundary
-  Area of Special Restraint
-  River Protection Area
-  Land liable to Flood
-  Railway Corridor
-  Proposed route of A428/A6 link
-  Existing built-up area

Scale in metres

0 250 500

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Land North of Bromham Road Biddenham

Map 2 Illustrative Master Plan



- Housing
- Employment
- Community Uses
- YF Youth Facility
- Cycleway/Footpath
- Main footpaths and pedestrian routes
- Proposed road
- Bus only route
- P&R Park & Ride
- Footbridge
- LEAP/NEAP-Local/Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play
- Combined play facilities
- Hotel
- Pavilion Building
- Country Park
- CP Car Park
- Woodland, Trees & Hedges (existing & proposed)
- Open Water

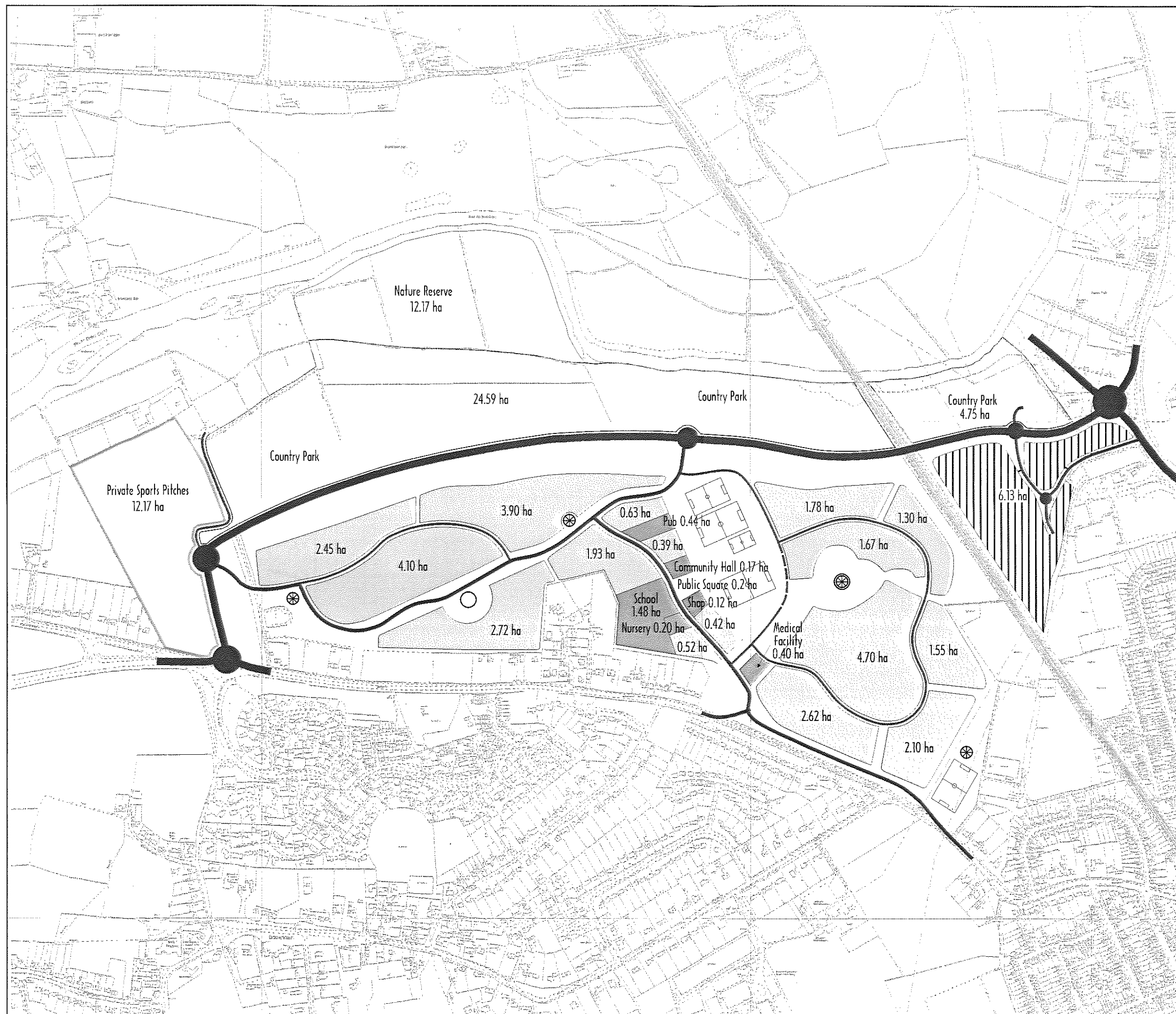
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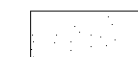

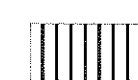
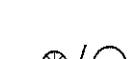


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Land North of Bromham Road Biddenham

Map 3 Land Budget



-  Housing
-  Community Facilities
-  Employment Area/
Park & Ride
-  LEAP/NEAP - Local/
Neighbourhood
Equipped Area of Play
-  Private Sports Pitches
-  Country Park

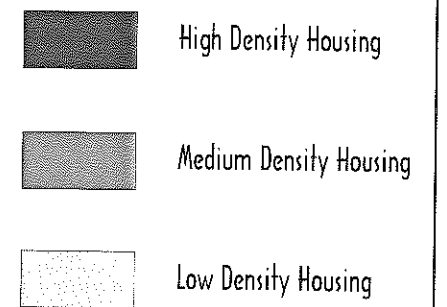
Scale in metres

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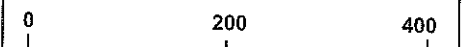
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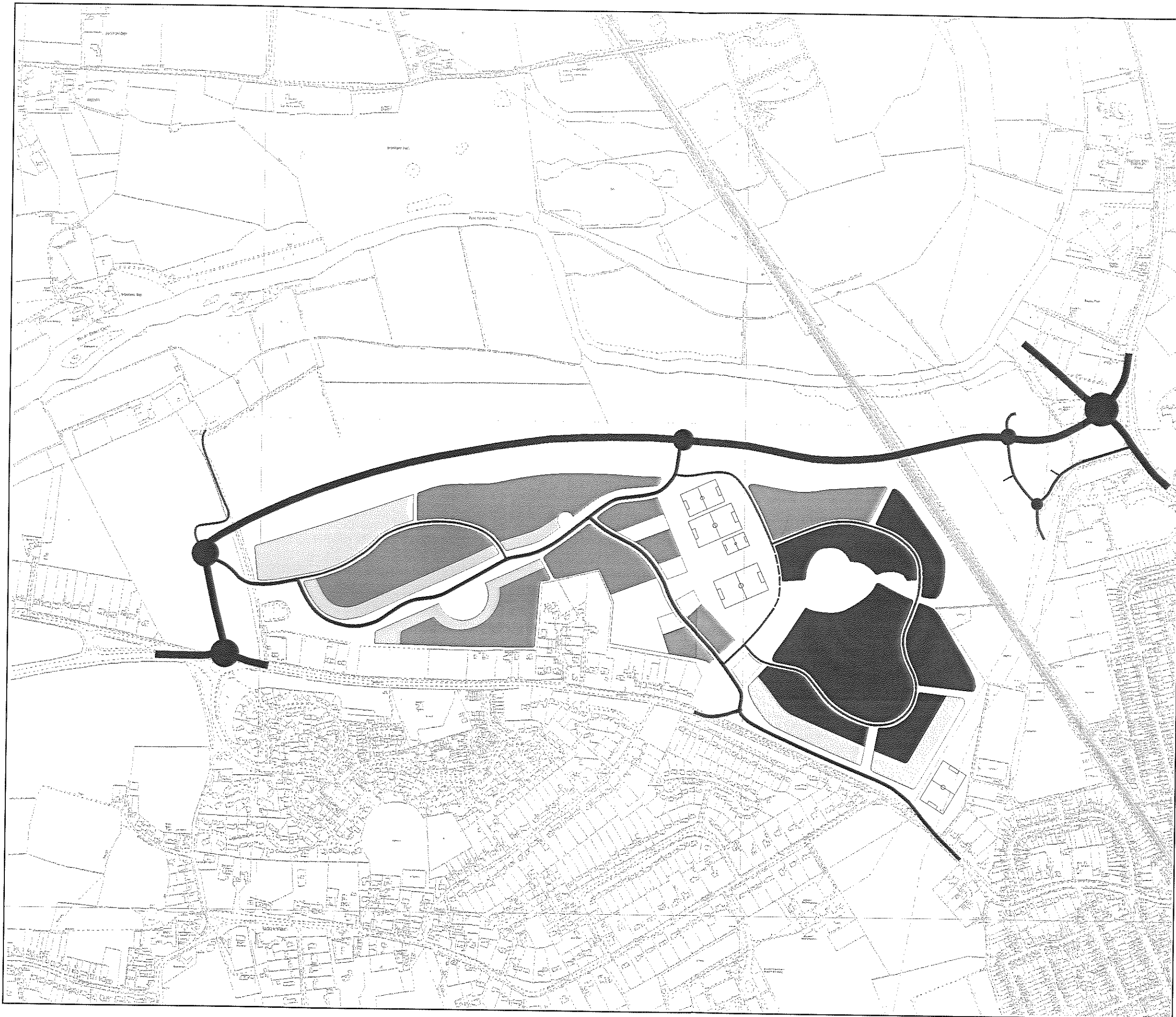
Map 4 Housing Density



Scale in metres

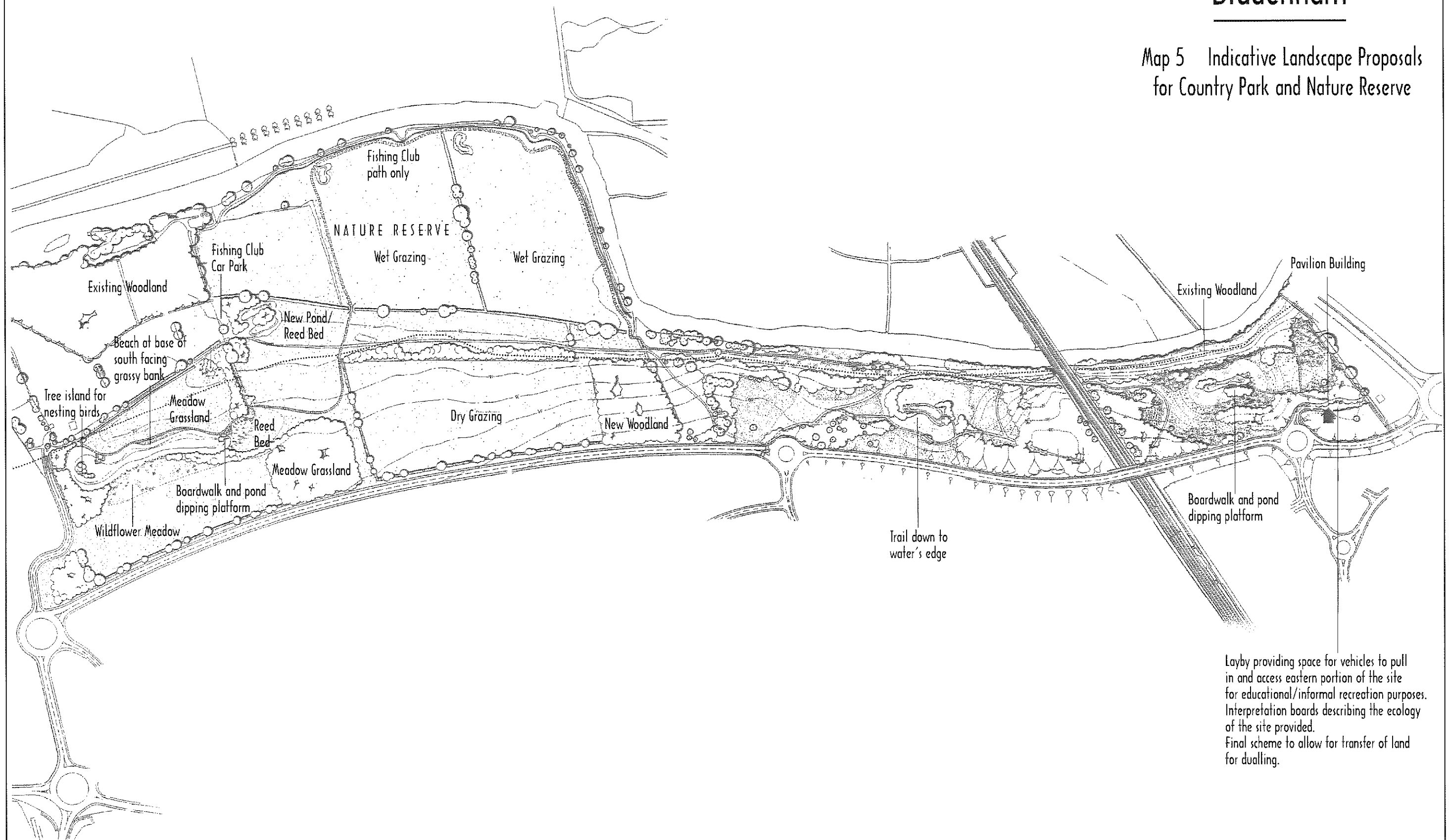


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Land North of Bromham Road Biddenham

Map 5 Indicative Landscape Proposals
for Country Park and Nature Reserve



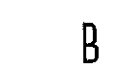




Layby providing space for vehicles to pull in and access eastern portion of the site for educational/informal recreation purposes. Interpretation boards describing the ecology of the site provided. Final scheme to allow for transfer of land for dualling.



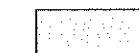
Land North of Bromham Road Biddenham





Map 6 Phasing

PHASE 1

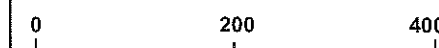
-  Phase 1 area
-  Strategic distributor link
-  Roundabout reference
-  Through link
-  Housing, Employment & Community Uses

PHASE 2

-  2A/2B Phase 2 area
-  Extended access/bus link
-  Housing

-  Youth Facility
-  LEAP/NEAP
-  Park & Ride
-  Hotel

Scale in metres



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