

HARDINGSTONE



rise

Catesby Estates plc
part of Urban&Civic

Introduction

To support the continued growth and prosperity of Northampton, and to help the Council meet their housing need, new strategic sites need to be identified to deliver high quality, sustainable growth.

Hardingstone Rise presents an opportunity to consolidate recent growth to the south-east of the town. The proposal would form part of a sequence of ridge top neighbourhoods that together define the edge of the settlement and make a positive contribution to Hardingstone's community.

This document has been commissioned by Catesby Estates as part of representations to the Spatial Options consultation of the emerging West Northamptonshire Strategic Plan. It sets out emerging ideas for how a sustainably located new neighbourhood of approximately 1000 homes can help meet the housing needs of West Northamptonshire.



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About Catesby Estates

Catesby Estates plc is a specialist strategic land promotion and infrastructure business working to plan and deliver sustainable and community focused developments where housebuilders want to build and people want to live.

As a leading promoter of large scale strategic sites, Catesby Estates are proud of the sustainable communities we design and the quality of placemaking subsequently delivered. In 2015 Catesby Estates plc was acquired by Urban&Civic plc, the UK's leading Master Developer.

For further information on Catesby Estates plc please visit www.catesbyestates.co.uk

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PLANNING FOR GROWTH

Spatial Vision

As the principle urban area at the heart of West Northamptonshire and a key centre in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc, Northampton has a strategic position as a major town which has supported significant housing and economic growth over the last decade and more. Further growth is anticipated, building on the town's economic success and its location with excellent strategic road and rail connectivity, as well as its relationship to the wider economic corridor of the proposed Oxford-Cambridge Arc.

This is reflected in the Council's overarching Spatial Vision which seeks to focus growth in and around the Northampton Principal Urban Area.

It is important to ensure that housing and new services and infrastructure are provided to support the planned economic growth of the town and the increase in population.

Hardingstone Rise is located approximately 4.5km south-east of Northampton town centre and forms part of the wider Spatial Option 1E 'Northampton South East', identified in the Strategic Plan Spatial Options consultation document (October 2021). The Council state "The area is located adjacent to the principal urban area of Northampton with the potential to connect new communities to the established services and facilities in Northampton and would be of a scale to provide local facilities on site to meet the needs of future residents".

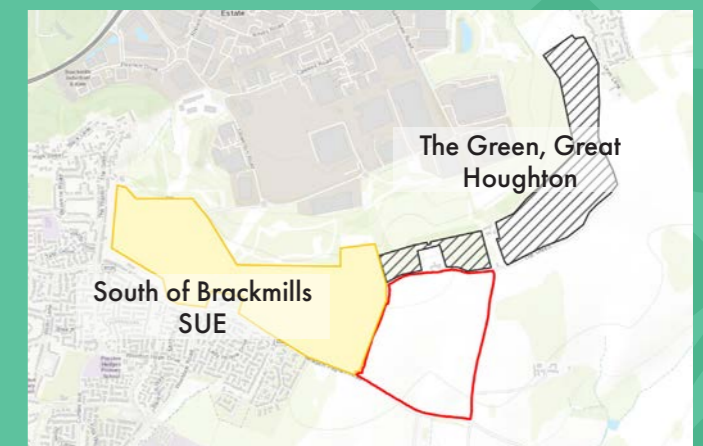
A location for Sustainable Growth

Northampton has continued to grow through strategic urban extensions and other allocated sites which are identified in existing and emerging local plans. There are several developments consented or planned along Newport Pagnell Road, which demonstrate that this is an appropriate and sustainable location for growth.

South of Brackmills Sustainable Urban Extension

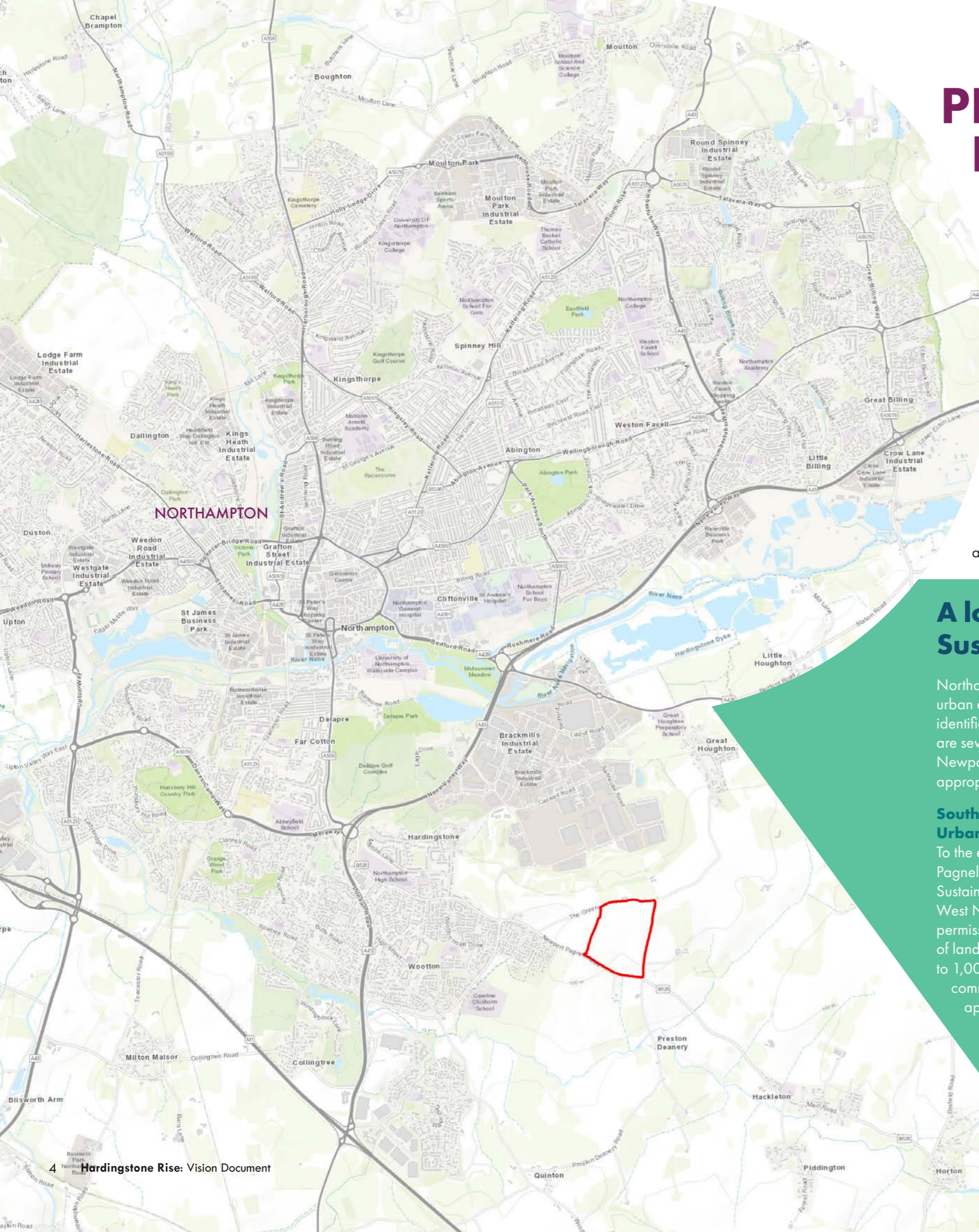
To the east of Hardingstone and north of Newport Pagnell Road is the Northampton South of Brackmills Sustainable Urban Extension, allocated in the adopted West Northamptonshire JCS (2014). Outline planning permission was granted in July 2015 for the development of land adjacent to Hardingstone for up to 1,000 dwellings, new local centre, primary school and community uses, with the first phase reserved matters application being granted permission in August 2019.

In early 2022, Martin Grant Homes and Harcourt Developments will submit their reserved matters application for 525 dwellings, open space and associated infrastructure on the eastern half of the SUE adjoining the western boundary of the Site.



To the north of Hardingstone Rise, a site known as **The Green, Great Houghton**, has a draft allocation for up to 800 dwellings in the emerging Northampton Local Plan Part 2 (site ref. LAA1089).

The masterplan proposal for the site will be designed to connect into these adjacent planned developments to form a natural extension to the settlement boundary, in keeping with the existing sustainable area of growth to the south-east of Northampton.



SUSTAINABILITY

Future growth of Northampton needs to be delivered in a sustainable manner which aligns with the key spatial objectives of the Strategic Plan and addresses the challenges of climate change.

A strategic approach to growth will enable the development of integrated sites on the edge of the Northampton urban area that are connected in terms of movement and sustainable travel, landscape and biodiversity enhancements and access to infrastructure and services and facilities. This is a more sustainable approach than relying on a piecemeal approach to the development of isolated sites, including increased pressure on land in rural locations.



Active Lifestyle



Community Facilities



Biodiversity & Nature Recovery



Water Management



High quality, energy efficient, low carbon homes.



Sustainable Transport



Climate action

An opportunity exists for Hardington Rise to achieve a 'step-change' in performance and quality, demonstrating how new communities should be explicitly responding and adapting to climate change in the 21st century.

There are two main considerations for the development: first how the proposals respond and adapt to the effects of climate change which are already set in motion, such as increased temperatures, flood risk and a decline in biodiversity; and second how the development mitigates its own impact on future climate change, in particular through reducing carbon emissions associated with the development.

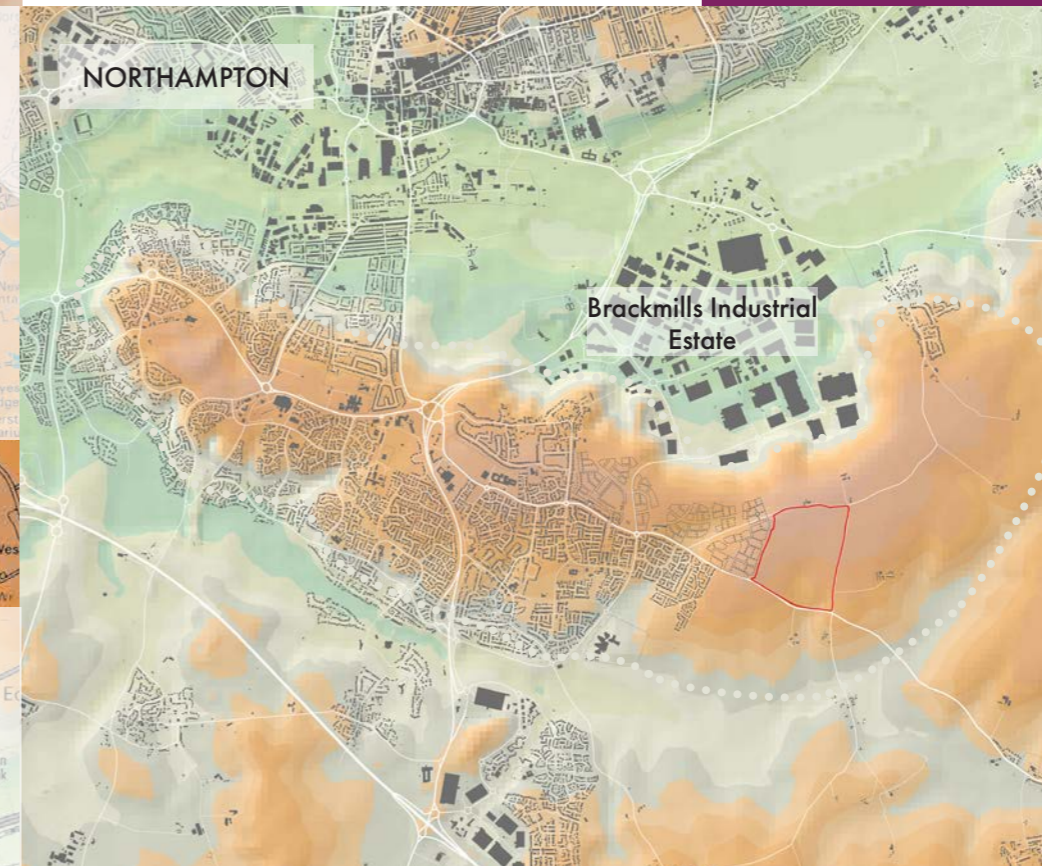
The following principles will be taken forward and guide the evolution of the masterplan to help create a successful, resilient, 'climate proofed' community.

- Promote health and wellbeing through high quality development and access to public spaces which support independence and encourage active and healthy lifestyles.
- Provide facilities that foster social interaction and create inclusive and safe communities, including opportunities for local food production.
- Conserve natural habitats and species, providing net gains in biodiversity and enhancing West Northamptonshire's network of natural capital to support nature recovery and encourage carbon sequestration.
- Harvest rainwater and greywater within onsite green and blue infrastructure. Implementation of a sustainable drainage strategy, incorporating natural solutions such as swales and ponds to attenuate rainwater, will provide resilience to future flooding whilst providing a wealth of ecological, amenity and wellbeing benefits.
- Provide an appropriate range of high quality, well designed, energy efficient, low carbon homes and buildings. Explore building-level solutions for reducing demand for potable water, such as low flow fixtures and fittings, leak detection and flow control devices.
- Balance the benefits of minimising heat loss in winter with the risk of excessive solar gain during the summer through the layout and orientation of streets, plots and buildings.
- Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport, providing attractive alternatives to the use of cars.

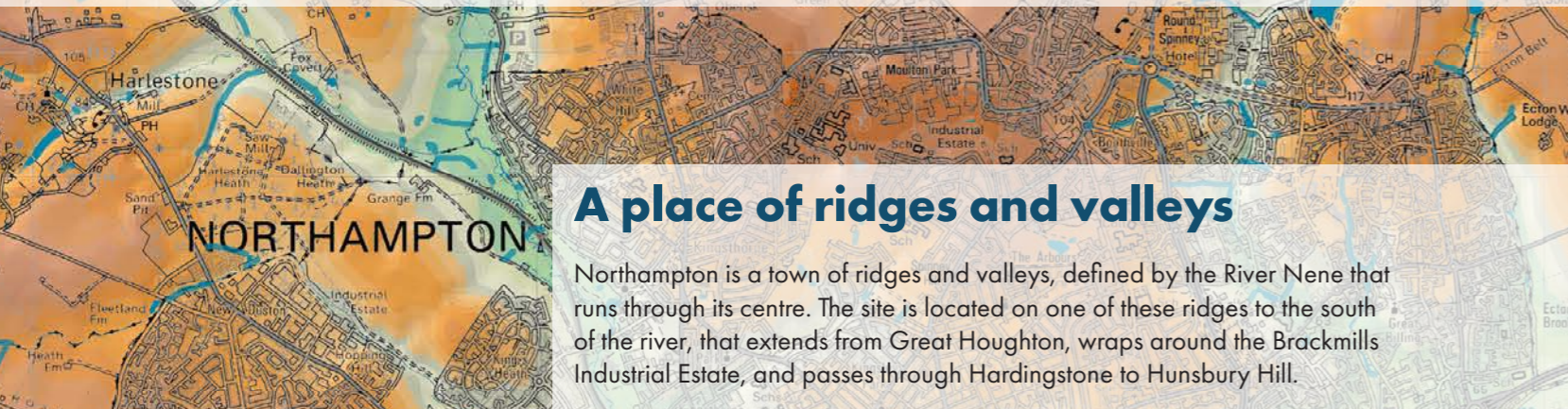


CONTEXT

A site's context - the characteristics of its surroundings - influences the design of new developments. A sound understanding of context ensures developments are appropriately located, well grounded in their locality and foster a sense of belonging. This section sets out how the proposal is influenced by and would positively integrate with its surroundings.

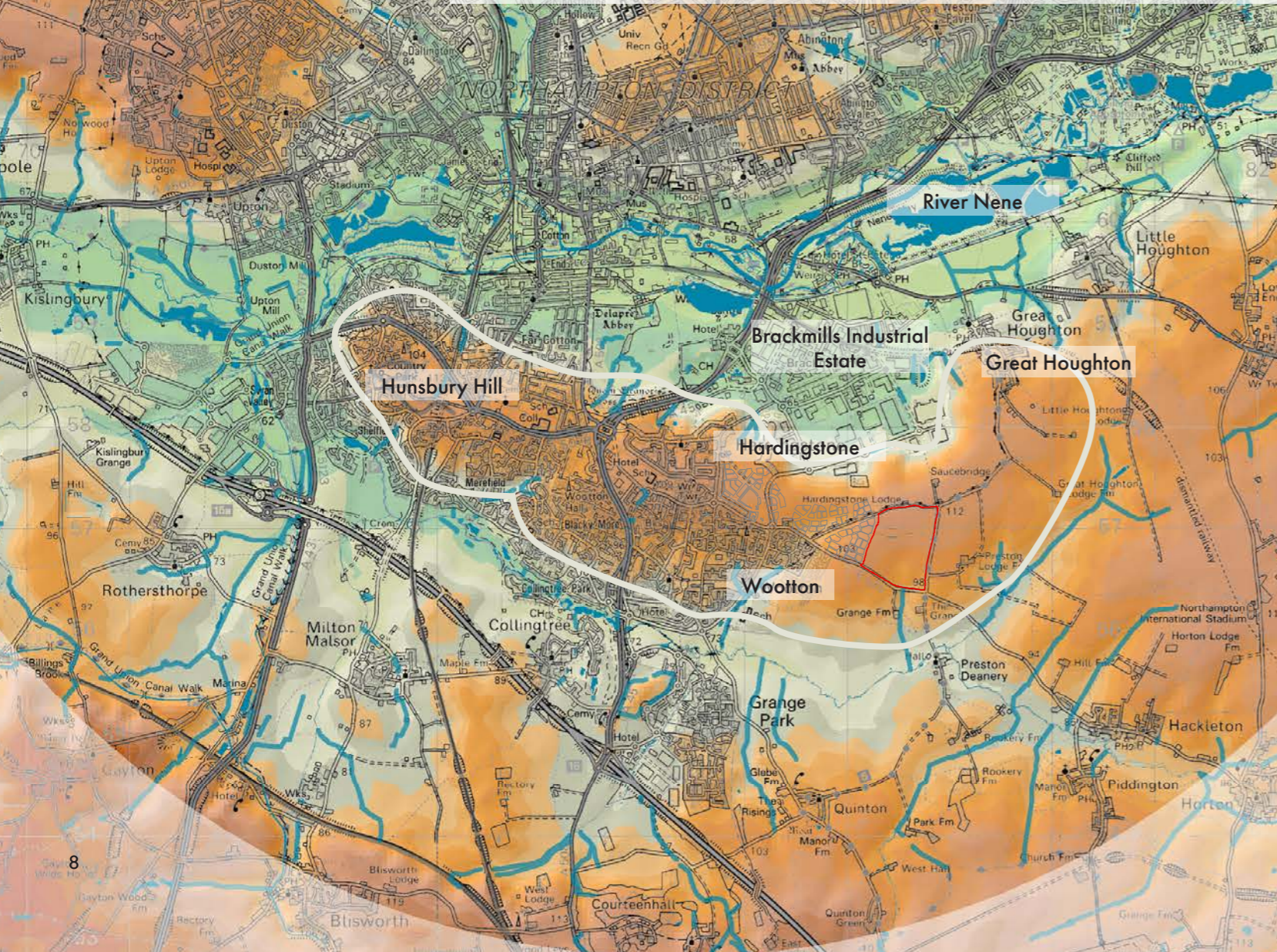


The “**Hardingstone Ridge**” forms the southern backdrop to the east side of Northampton. To the north, the ridge slopes steeply to the river valley. To the south of Brackmills, the terrain is less marked, transitioning to a broader, undulating landscape typical of the south-eastern outskirts of the town and its outlying villages. From the high ground of the site, there are distant views to the broader ridge that contains Northampton to the south, along which Salcey Forest and Road Wind Farm are located.



A place of ridges and valleys

Northampton is a town of ridges and valleys, defined by the River Nene that runs through its centre. The site is located on one of these ridges to the south of the river, that extends from Great Houghton, wraps around the Brackmills Industrial Estate, and passes through Hardingstone to Hunsbury Hill.

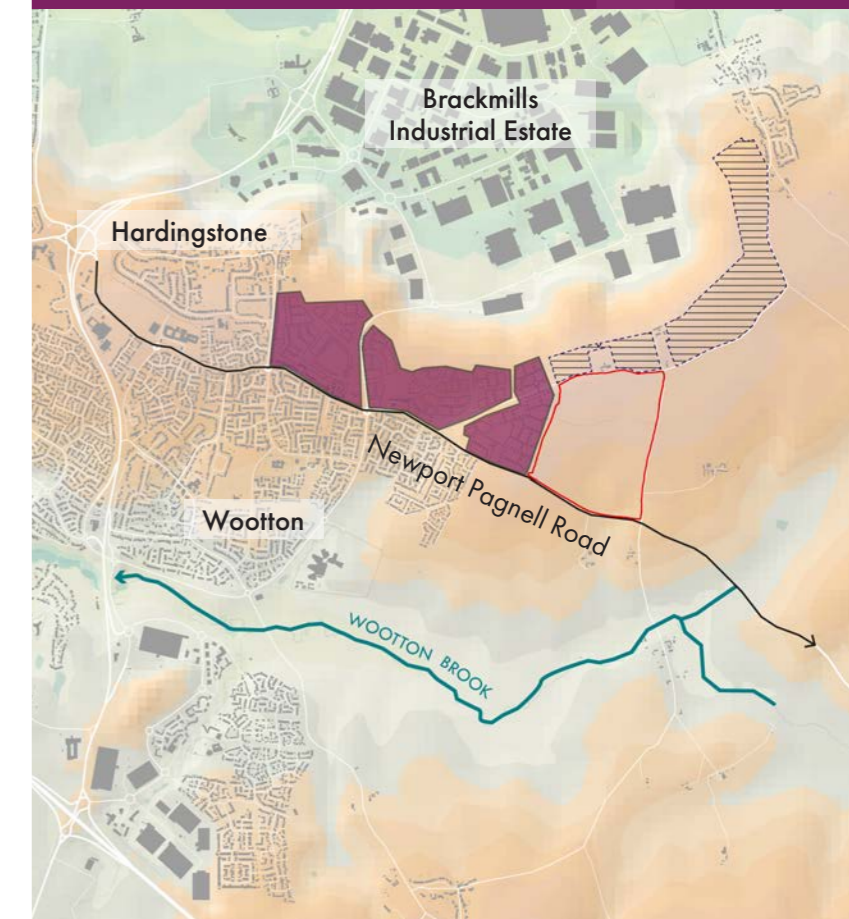


A Sequence of neighbourhoods along the ridge

The past two decades has seen Northampton extend to the south-east along Newport Pagnell Road, encompassing Hardingstone and Wootton, where recently permitted developments to the north of the road relate to the high ground of the ridge; and developments to the south of the road relate to the valley formed by Wootton Brook.

Developments along the high ground form a sequence of interconnected neighbourhoods, bounded to the north by steep valley sides and Brackmills Industrial Estate, and to the south by Newport Pagnell Road.

The site relates to this sequence of ridge top neighbourhoods and would form part of a linked community with common characteristics, shared facilities and sustainable connections.



CONTEXT



A defensible edge to Northampton

Along the site's eastern boundary runs a rural lane that forms part of National Cycle Route 6, connecting Salcey Forest to the Nene Valley. This recreational route provides a link between the historic settlements of Quinton, Preston Deanery and Great Houghton, and marks a subtle break in slope between the wider countryside to the east and the outskirts of Northampton to the west.

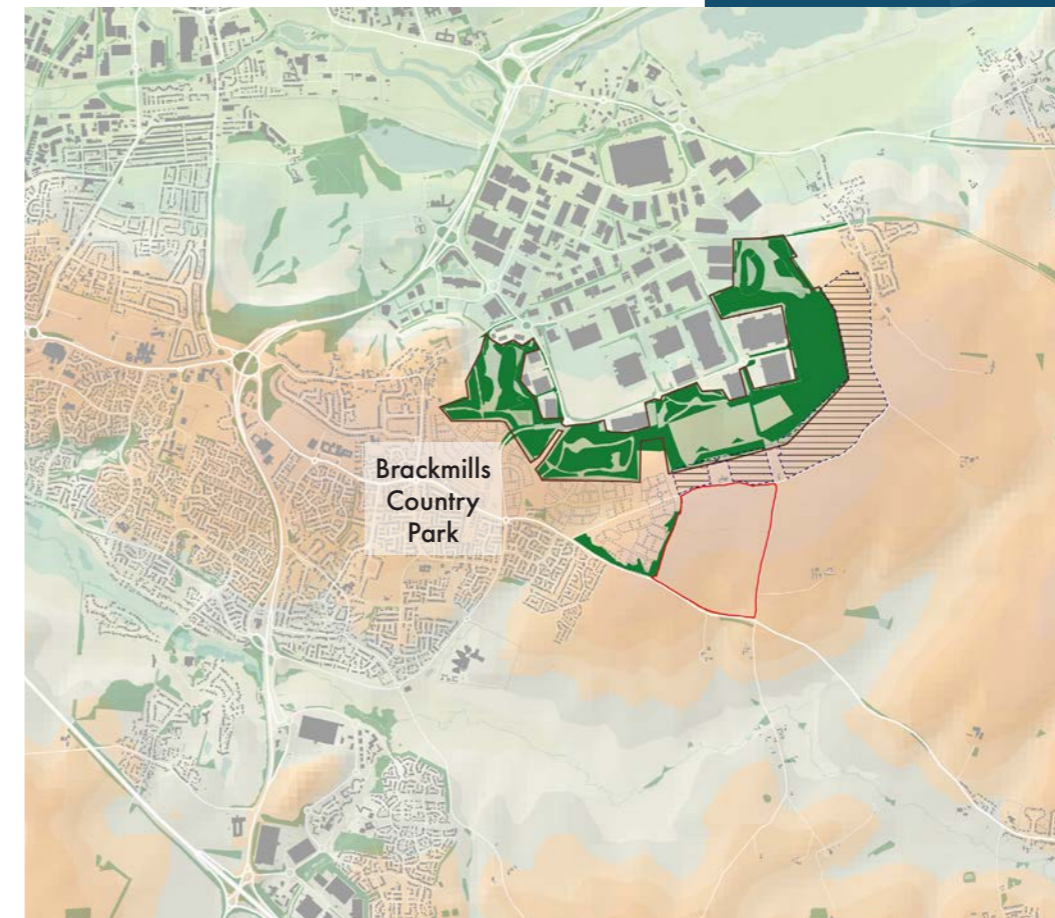
By using the lane as a defensible boundary to Northampton's south-eastern expansion, the identity of the settlements along this lane could be maintained, and the use of the lane promoted as part of Northampton's wider recreational infrastructure.

Wooded Framework

The landscape at the south-eastern edge of Northampton is well treed, characterised by a wide belt of woodland, scrub and open space that comprises Brackmills Country Park and defines the horizon, giving this quarter of the town a wooded character.

The woodland acts as an effective screen between the industrial estate and the wider landscape, as well as providing ecological connectivity from the ridge to the valley floor.

The proposals should seek to retain the wooded edge to this side of the town, maintaining the green approach to Northampton. However, consideration should be given to retaining views out from open, more elevated parts of the site, providing a visual connection between the new neighbourhood and its landscape context.



UNDERSTANDING THE SITE

Well-designed developments respond positively to the features of a site, creating identity rooted in place. This section sets out how the site's features and characteristics can be harnessed to provide a structure for the new neighbourhood.

Topography

The site is located on gently sloping terrain that rises from Newport Pagnell Road and reaches an area of high ground that defines the peak of the ridge. There is a localised plateau at the high point that provides views out to the wider countryside to the south and east. The sense of openness gained from the ridge top should be retained within the masterplan.

At the break of slope, marked by a ditch and field boundary, the land slopes towards the centre of the site and southwards, forming the head of shallow, dry valley that continues beyond the site to Wootton Brook.

Surface water run off gathers within this shallow valley and at the foot of the site. Green space should be associated with the valley and southern end of the site, providing areas for surface water attenuation.

Vegetation & Ecology

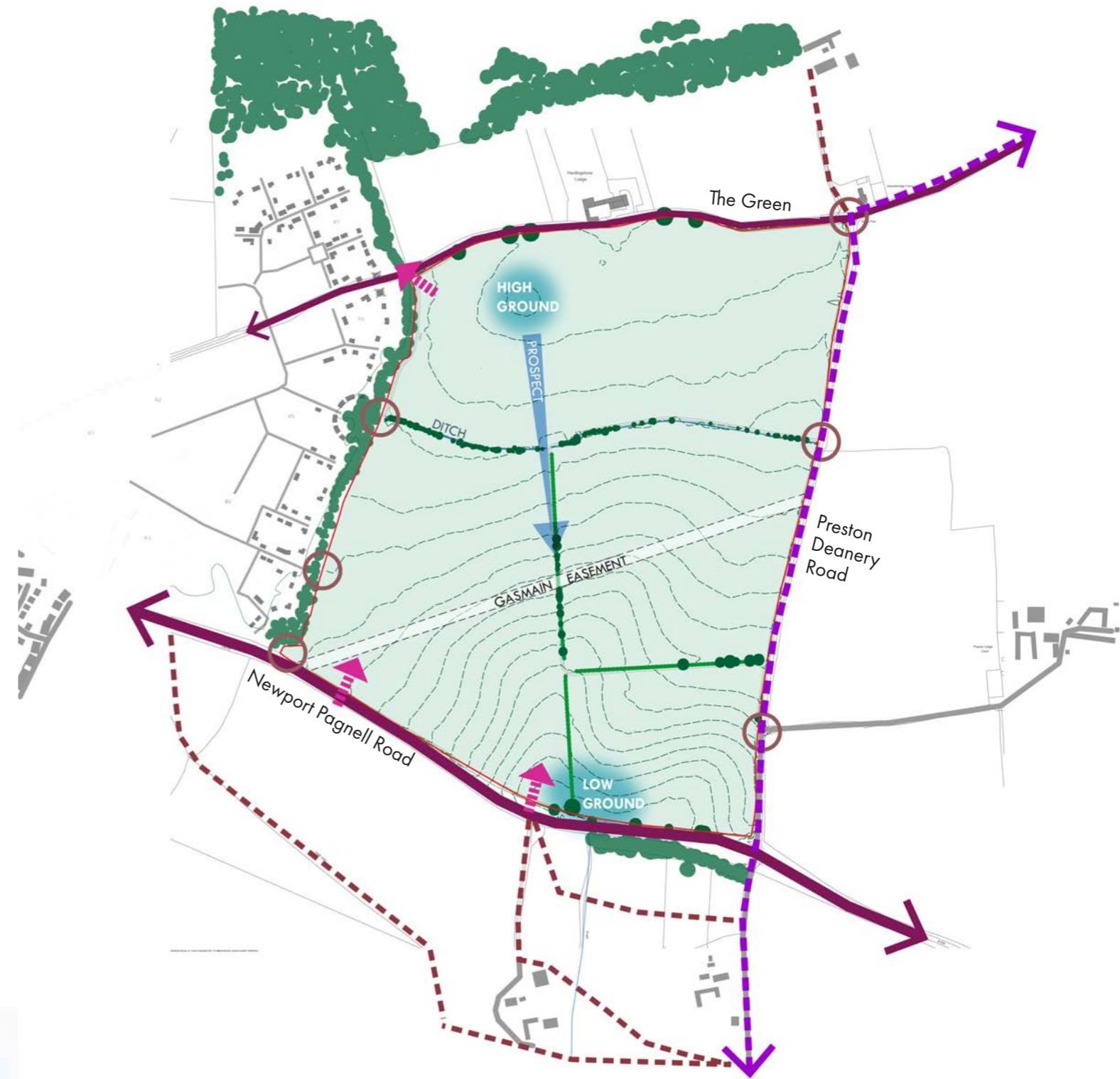
The site's field pattern is intact and legible, defined by hedgerows (also containing trees) of varying quality. The site's fields are intensively cultivated and offer limited ecological distinctiveness, the value being confined to the site's grassy field margins, hedgerows and trees, which provide habitats and routes for foraging and commuting.

These field boundaries (both internal and along the site edges) should be retained within the masterplan and be enhanced to improve the site's green infrastructure framework.

The Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area and SSSI is located approximately 3km to the north of the site. Any proposals for development should consider the potential impacts to this internationally important conservation area. The proposals should provide areas of open space for both nature and recreation to help reduce pressure on the SPA, retaining and linking ecological features, and providing additional habitats to ensure a net gain in biodiversity.

Gas Pipeline

A high-pressure gas pipeline runs through the site's southern fields on a south-west to north-east alignment. The pipeline requires a 6m easement either side of the pipeline and a building proximity distance of 8m. The alignment of the pipeline connects the site's western and eastern edges and should be incorporated into the masterplan as a useable green route. The Morris Homes development to the south of Newport Pagnell Road demonstrates how the gas pipeline can be successfully accommodated within a residential layout.

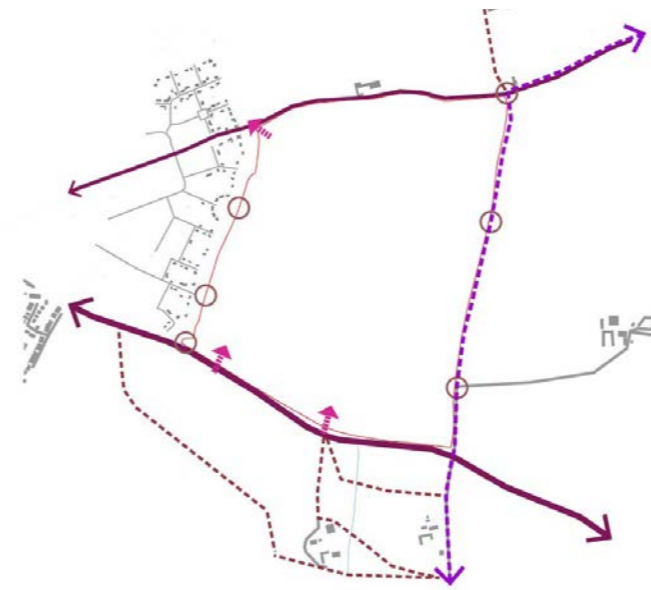
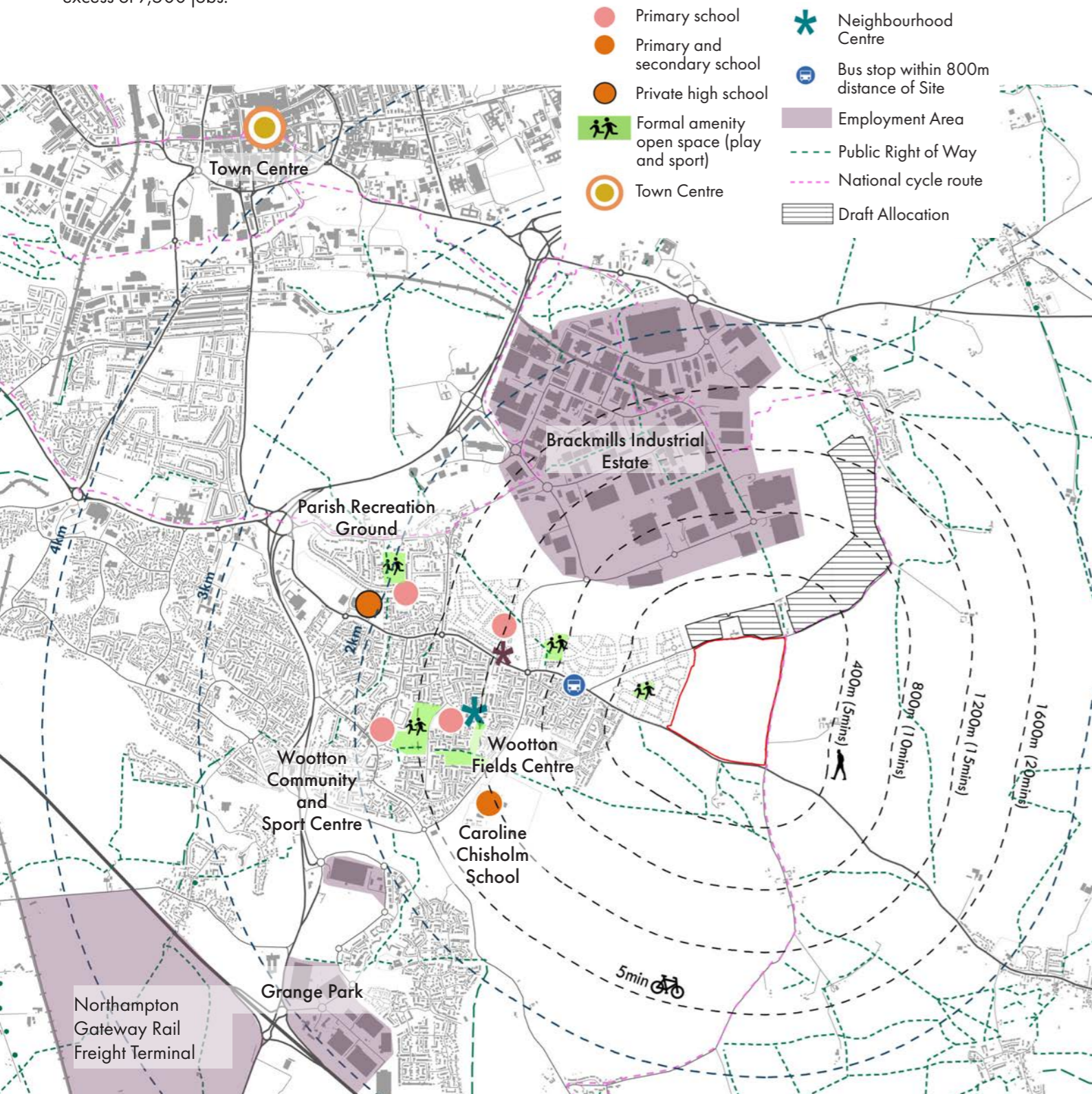


UNDERSTANDING THE SITE

Amenities & Facilities

The site is close to a range of existing and proposed local services, facilities and employment opportunities within nearby neighbourhoods and Northampton Town Centre. Several large-scale employment sites are in the vicinity of the site, including Brackmills Industrial Estate to the north; and Grange Park and the new Northampton Gateway Rail Freight Terminal to the south-west, which will generate in excess of 7,500 jobs.

It is anticipated that the development would require a two-form entry primary school, and amenity open space for play and recreation. On-site facilities should be suitably located to the proposed and neighbouring communities; and connections to off-site facilities via sustainable modes of transport should be clearly defined.



Connections

The site is well served by a network of roads on the northern, eastern and southern boundaries.

The Green to north is a narrow country lane. There is an aspiration to downgrade a section of the lane within the South of Brackmills SUE developments and prioritise it for recreational use.

Detailed discussions have taken place with local bus operators and West Northants Council, concluding that it is clear the site can be readily accessed by bus. Ongoing discussions with the Local Planning Authority will take place to ensure that links through the adjacent Martin Grant Land, principally via The Green at the site's north-western corner, can be secured, thereby delivering a logical efficient extension to future services.

Preston Deanery Road to the east is a narrow lane along which runs a National Cycle Route. The character of this rural lane should be maintained, with opportunities to provide direct cycle access to the NCR.

Newport Pagnell Road to the south provides the primary means of vehicular access and could accommodate two points of access.

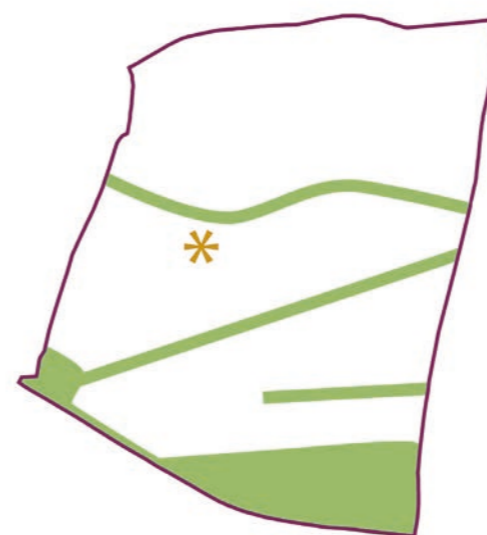
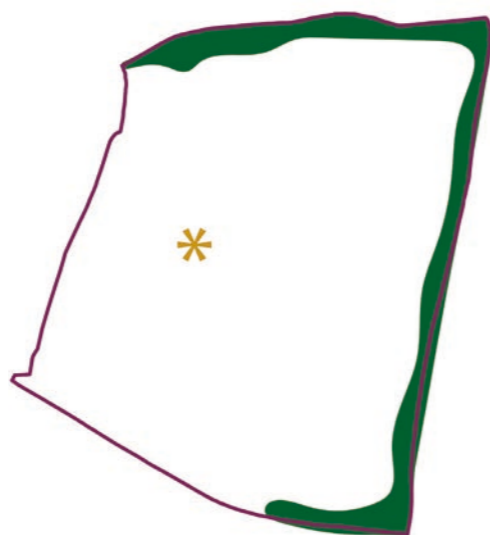
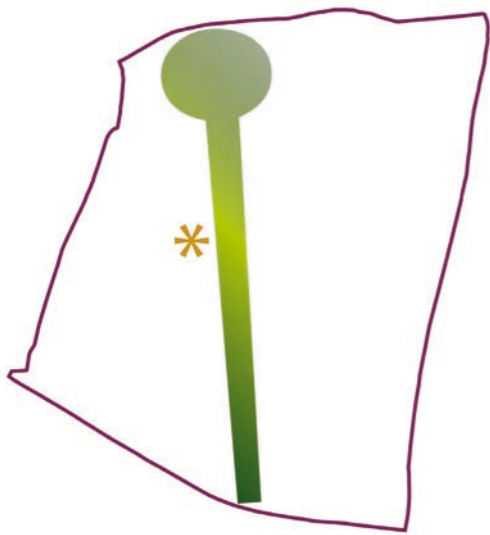
There are several public footpaths bounding the site, providing access to the valley landscape around Preston Deanery and a direct link to Brackmills Country Park. Where these Rights of Way interface with the site, they should coincide with pedestrian priority routes.

There are also several points along the site's western boundary where pedestrian access could be provided to the adjacent neighbourhood. These potential links should be designed to coincide with greenways and pedestrian priority streets.



DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Analysis of the site's context and features has led to a series of landscape led design principles that reflect the qualities and characteristics of the site and its surrounding environment. At the heart of these principles is a green infrastructure framework that provides the setting for a range of uses and activities, promoting active living and community cohesion and contributing to nature recovery and climate resilience.



The Rise

The main structuring element of the development is a linear park located at the very heart of the development. Aligned with the subtle valley and hedgerow at the centre of the site, the park rises from the foot of the slope to a high point at the top of the ridge. Here the park opens up to a green, providing space for a range of activities, with channelled views along The Rise to distant ridges containing Northampton.

The Rise links the development's key features – the main landscaped entrance, the primary school, formal play areas and pitches, intersected by greenways and pedestrian routes. It also plays an important role in controlling surface water conveyed in swales to the site's wetland.

The Wooded Edge

Wrapping around the northern, eastern and southern boundaries is woodland defining the edge of the settlement, retaining the wooded character of Northampton's south-eastern edge.

At the top of the ridge, a copse and belt of woodland reinforce the wooded skyline, anchoring houses within a wooded framework. A belt of trees descends the eastern edge of the site and connects with a wet woodland at the site's south-eastern corner. This treeline visually contains the lower reaches of the site, retaining the green approach along Newport Pagnell Road as far as the site access.

The location of carefully chosen breaks along the wooded edge, aligned with pedestrian and cycle access points would allow an interplay of views out and glimpsed views into the site, connecting the development to its wider setting.

The Greenways

The site's greenways are key in reinforcing the primary green infrastructure of the Rise and the Woodland Edge. Running east-west, they provide routes for people and wildlife to move easily between different quarters of the neighbourhood. Following the existing field pattern, the greenways incorporate hedgerows, tree lines and drainage ditches within landscape corridors. The creation of a green corridor along the gas pipeline adds to the network of greenways.

Hardingstone Rise - Primary School *

Connected to the Rise is the neighbourhood's primary school. The school, alongside the site's open space, is central to the community and will act as a focal point for residents. Adjacent to the school within The Rise is a Local play area, which leads to a larger Neighbourhood play area and Forest School at Beacon Park – all within walking distance of the school.

Permeability

The site's green infrastructure provides a framework for traffic free movement (for people and wildlife) across the entire development through different types of landscape and habitat. This high level of internal permeability through the site's open space is key in establishing community cohesion and will be reinforced by a street network that readily intersects with the public realm.

Permeability is equally important at the site edges to enable the development to integrate with the surrounding environment – both urban and rural. There would be a combination of vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access points, potentially along all four boundaries of the site, with an emphasis on the use of sustainable modes of transport.



CONCEPT MASTERPLAN

Our emerging concept masterplan shows how the key principles translate into a distinctive and sustainable neighbourhood that forms part of the wider Hardingstone community.

The concept masterplan is the first step in defining what Hardingstone Rise could be. It would form the basis of discussion with the local authority, stakeholders and local groups.

We envisage there being three distinguishable character areas tied together by The Rise linear park.



Ridge Top

The Ridge Top character area draws from its elevated location along the limestone ridge. This part of the neighbourhood is centred on the green, where limestone and ironstone houses bring a more traditional feel to the hilltop neighbourhood. Streets would be orientated southwards, laid out to take advantage of more open aspects of the site.



Neighbourhood Core

At the break of slope, to the west of The Rise, the character area is anchored around the primary school, where taller buildings are located and higher densities suit a more formal, contemporary character. Street trees, regularly spaced, direct people along the primary street to The Rise and connect with the adjacent neighbourhood.

Village Edge

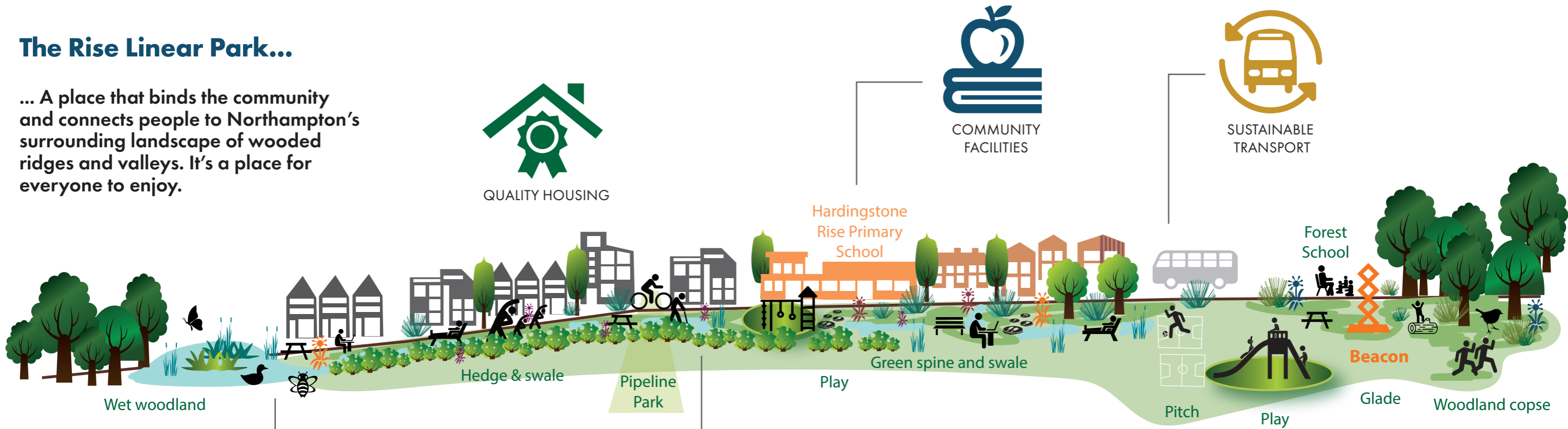
To the east of the Rise, the Village Edge character area is lower density and more intimate, contained by a woodland belt along the site boundary. Trees extend into the development area, lining streets, drawing people to the site peripheries. Timber clad buildings blend with the wooded edge, glimpsed through breaks in the woodland, connecting the site to the wider countryside.



CONCEPT MASTERPLAN

The Rise Linear Park...

... A place that binds the community and connects people to Northampton's surrounding landscape of wooded ridges and valleys. It's a place for everyone to enjoy.



DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Underpinning the concept masterplan is a Development Framework that defines land uses, potential access points and principal assumptions on movement. The framework is underpinned by a suite of technical studies on landscape, ecology, transport, utilities and drainage. These studies form part of the written representation submission.

Development Parcels

The framework defines residential parcels and land identified for a 2 Form Entry Primary School. Densities will vary across the site, with potential for higher densities to the west within the neighbourhood core and lower densities to the east at the edge of the development. Based on an average density of 40 dwellings per hectare, the site is capable of accommodating approximately 1000 homes.

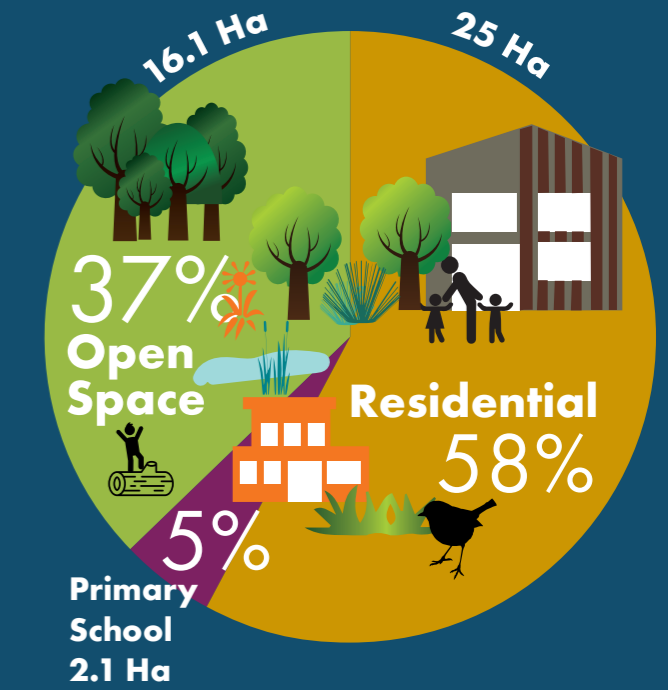
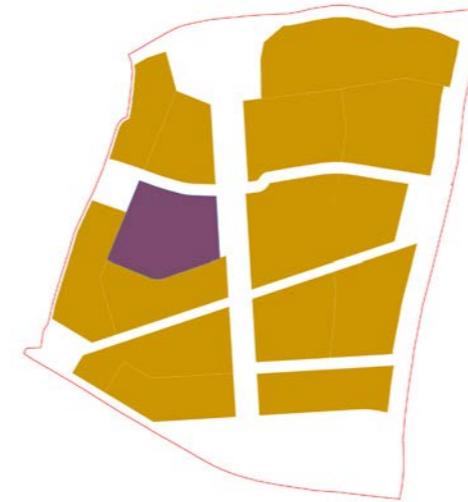
Green Infrastructure Framework

The framework illustrates the provision of open space, exceeding the requirements set out in policy. The open space types are apportioned as follows: 9.8 hectares of amenity space, including play areas; 3.7 hectares of semi-natural open space (including proposed woodland); 1.9 hectares of drainage infrastructure (swales and basins); and 0.7 hectares for allotments. The new greenspace will deliver a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity to ensure the development has a positive impact on nature.

Sustainable Movement Framework

The movement framework highlights routes identified for travel by bus, cycle or foot. The exact access arrangements and street layout will be subject to further refinement but the principle of providing a bus route through the site is positively supported by the bus operator - Stagecoach. The framework identifies how pedestrian and cycle connections could be provided at numerous locations along the site boundaries, to neighbouring residential areas and the wider countryside.

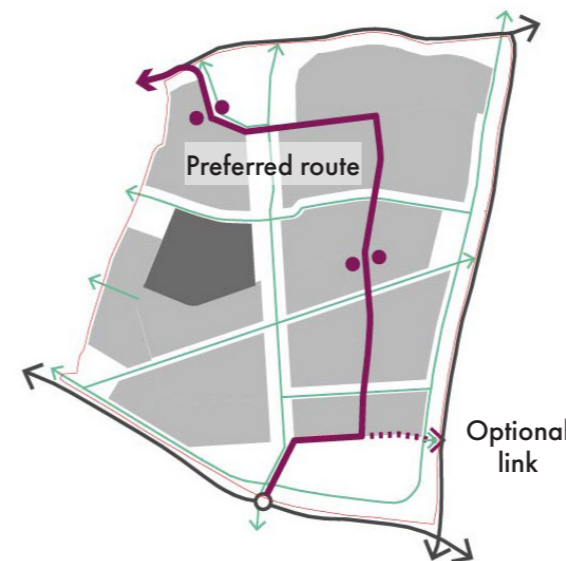
Development Parcels



Green Infrastructure Framework



Sustainable Movement Framework



- | | |
|---|---|
| Site boundary | Allotments |
| Primary streets | Woodland / semi-natural open space |
| Secondary streets | Retained hedgerows |
| Public Rights of Way | Retained trees |
| Strategic footpaths | Existing drain |
| Potential bus only link (including pedestrian & cycle routes) | Swales |
| Residential | Drainage basins |
| 2 form entry primary school | Landscape feature |
| Amenity space / children's play | Draft allocation: The Green, Great Houghton |
| NEAP | |
| LEAP | |

Next steps

Catesby Estates are committed to fully engaging with the local community and stakeholders to discuss and develop the emerging concept for Hardington Rise. We would welcome the opportunity to engage with West Northamptonshire to facilitate a discussion with key officers and Members.

From early 2022 onwards a programme of engagement and regular dialogue will commence to discuss how the emerging proposals can be developed to respond to local issues and requirements.

L D A D E S I G N

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