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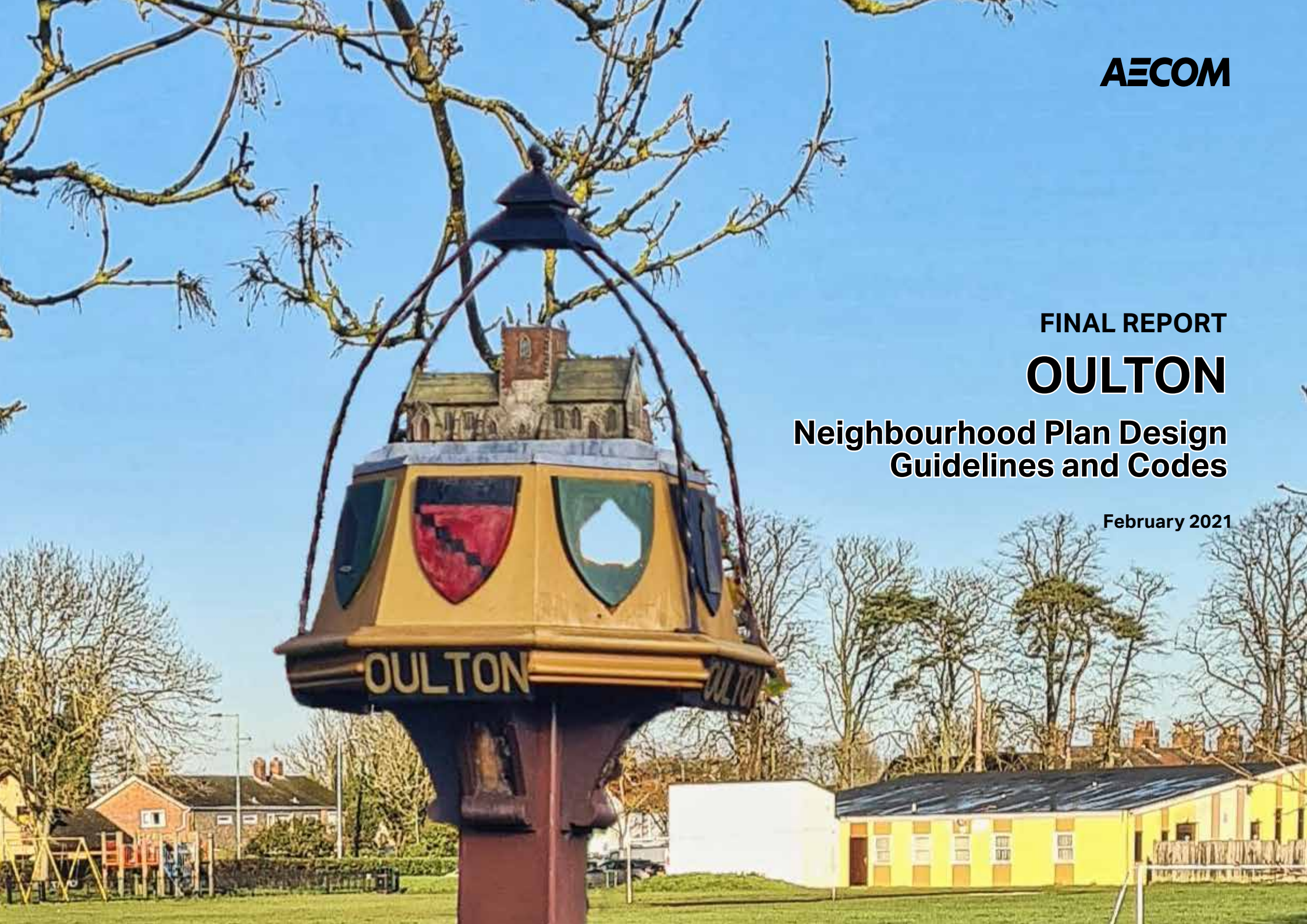**FINAL REPORT**

OULTON

Neighbourhood Plan Design Guidelines and Codes

February 2021

Quality information

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Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Name	Position
5	25-01-21	Review	Annabel Osborne	Locality
4	14-01-21	Review	Carla Petersen	Oulton Parish Council
3	09-12-20	Review	Ben Castell	Director
2	03-12-20	Review	Luis Galeana Juarez	Associate Director
1	30-10-20	Research, site visit, drawing	Jing Yuan	Senior Urban Designer
0	30-10-20	Research, site visit, drawings	Stela Kontogianni	Graduate Urban Designer

Contents

Introduction

01

1. Introduction

This chapter provides context and general information to introduce the project and the area of study.

1.1. Background

Through the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Neighbourhood Planning Programme led by Locality, AECOM has been commissioned to provide design support to Oulton Parish Council.

This document provides advice to address the Parish Council's views and concerns on design related matters that are needed to be addressed in future developments in the area. It also supports Neighbourhood Plan policies that aim to guide development proposals in order to create distinctive places that are well-integrated with the existing settlement.

1.2. Objective

The main objective of this report is to develop design guidelines and codes for the Neighbourhood Plan, and to inform the design of future planning applications and residential developments in Oulton Parish. In particular, it elaborates on strategic design guidelines, as well as on specific design codes that were agreed with the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group at the outset of the project.

1.3. Process

Following an inception meeting and a virtual site visit with members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, AECOM carried out a high-level assessment of the village. The following steps were agreed with the Group to produce this report:

- Initial meeting between AECOM and the Oulton Neighbourhood Planning Group and as this was during the national Covid 19 lockdown, a joint virtual 'site visit' was carried out via Teams and Google Streetview;

- Urban design and local character analysis;

- Preparation of design principles, guidelines and codes to be used to inform the design of the Parish and future developments;

- Draft report with design guidelines; and

- Final report.

1.4. Area of study

Oulton is a parish boundary in East Suffolk located approximately 3 km west of the centre of Lowestoft.

The village is served by the Millennium Way and B1375 to the east connecting it with Lowestoft and Oulton Broad.

The railway route runs from southwest of the parish boundary, and neighbourhood plan area, with the closest station being the Oulton Broad North.

The parish has a community centre which is located to the 'heart' of the village. It is run by the Oulton Community Council and it was built in 1975. The open space adjacent to the centre is open to the public and it is used for recreation purposes. The Blue Boar Inn is the only pub in the village which is also a public house built in 1600s and is located on Oulton Street.

Other buildings of interest are the Parkhill Hotel, an elegant country house hotel, Manor House, a listed building along Oulton Street and Barchester Centre, former site of the Oulton Work House, located north of Union Lane. It is now a privately run residential home for the elderly.

St Michael's Church was built in the 11th century and it is located southwest on Church Avenue. The village used to be served by two other churches, the chapel of St. Margaret's church and the Methodist chapel, both built within the village in the early 1900s, but sold later on to become private dwellings.

West of the built-up area there is an expanse of water and marsh which forms part of the network of man-made bodies of water known as The Boards. It is an area that attracts tourism and sports. In particular, it is used for a variety of watersports. Another landmark of environmental interest is Flixton Decoy approximately 0.5 km north of the parish boundary.
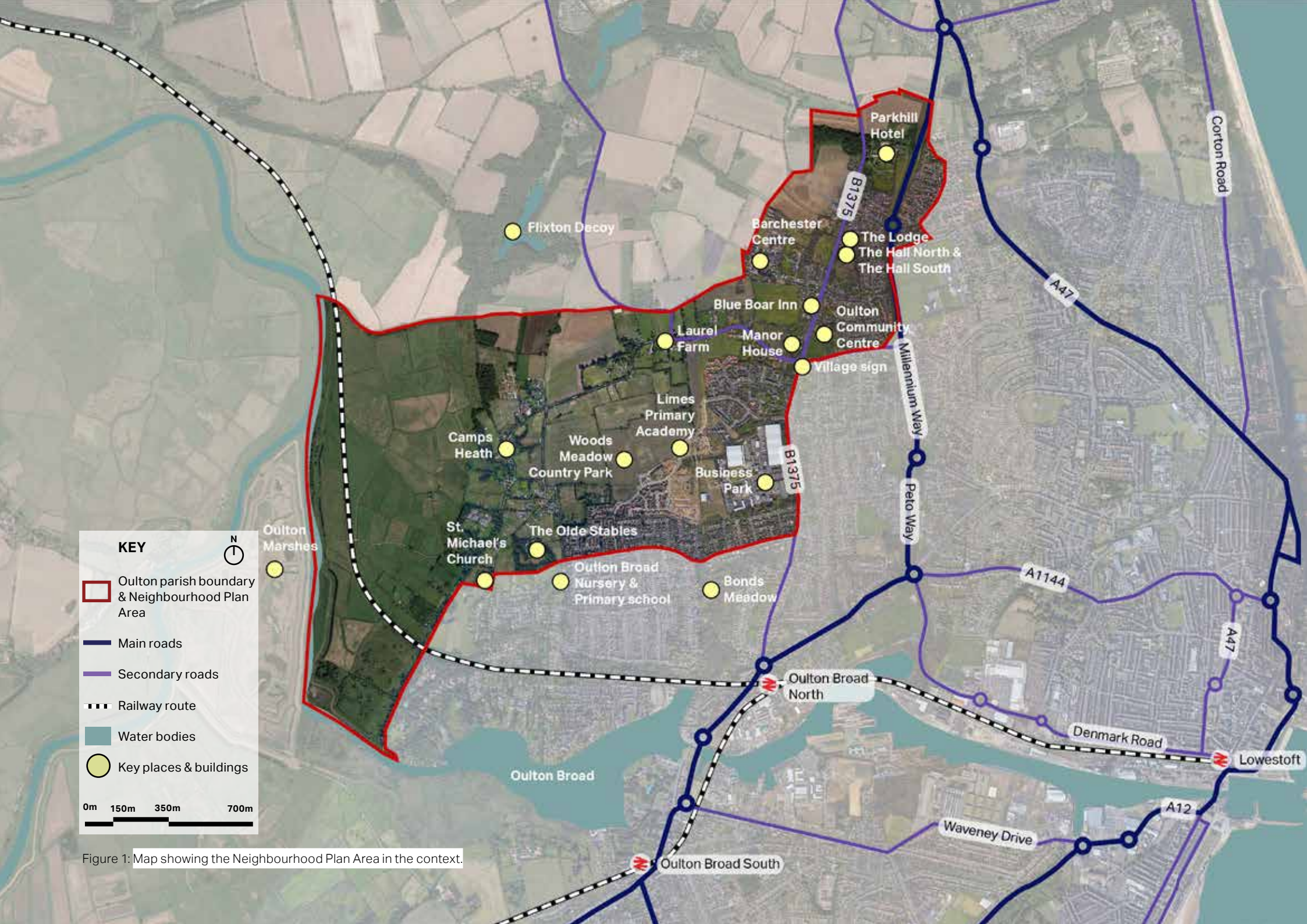
KEY

N

Oulton parish boundary & Neighbourhood Plan Area

Main roads

Secondary roads

Railway route

Water bodies

Key places & buildings

0m   150m   350m   700m

Parkhill Hotel

Flixton Decoy

Barchester Centre

The Lodge
The Hall North &
The Hall South

B1375

Blue Boar Inn

Oulton Community Centre

Laurel Farm

Manor House

Village sign

Limes Primary Academy

Camps Heath

Woods Meadow Country Park

Business Park

B1375

Oulton Marshes

St. Michael's Church

The Olde Stables

Outlon Broad Nursery & Primary school

Bonds Meadow

Millennium Way

Peto Way

A47

Corton Road

A1144

A47

Oulton Broad North

Denmark Road

Lowestoft

A12

Waveney Drive

Oulton Broad South

Oulton Broad

Figure 1: Map showing the Neighbourhood Plan Area in the context.

Local Character Analysis

02

2. Local Character Analysis

This chapter describes the local context, the key constraints and opportunities, as well as the key characteristics of Oulton village.

2.1. Opportunities and constraints

HISTORY, PHYSICAL FEATURES AND LANDSCAPE

It is believed that the village was originally clustered around St. Michael's Church, approximately around 1100. Later, it was moved where it is today possibly due to the principal location of The Manor House. In 1971, the built-up area reached the form the village has today, as seen from the maps on this page, sourced from the Parish website[1].

Figure 2: St. Michael's Church.

1. Link to the site: https://awalkaroundoulton.weebly.com/oulton-village-maps-1797-to-1971.html

Figure 3: Growth of Oulton village in 1905.

Figure 4: Growth of Oulton village in 1927.
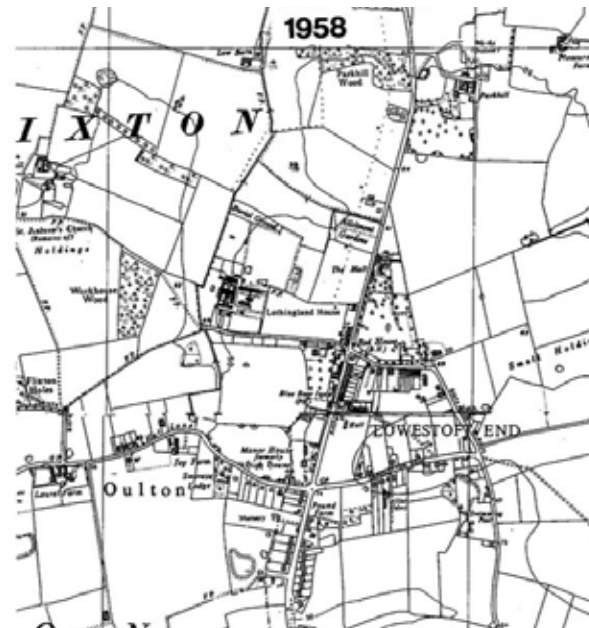
Figure 5: Growth of Oulton village in 1958.

Figure 6: Growth of Oulton village in 1971.

The main settlement is located to the east with some farm houses also spread northwest. Recent developments can be found along Fallowfields Road and Dunston Drive with the latest located west of the Business Park. In particular, this is the Woods Meadow development site which has been allocated for residential development in 1996 and planning consent has been granted in 2013 for 800 houses, community facilities, primary school and a county park.

The farmlands, the National Park and Oulton marshes are all located west of the settlement. In addition to this, the water element is also present around the village. Flixton Decoy lake is located to the north and Oulton Dyke river is running along the National Park to the west continuing to the southeast where it meets Oulton Broad.

Designated green spaces can also be found within the village. In particular, priority woodland areas and parklands are found to the north of the neighbourhood area and northeast and south of the National Park.
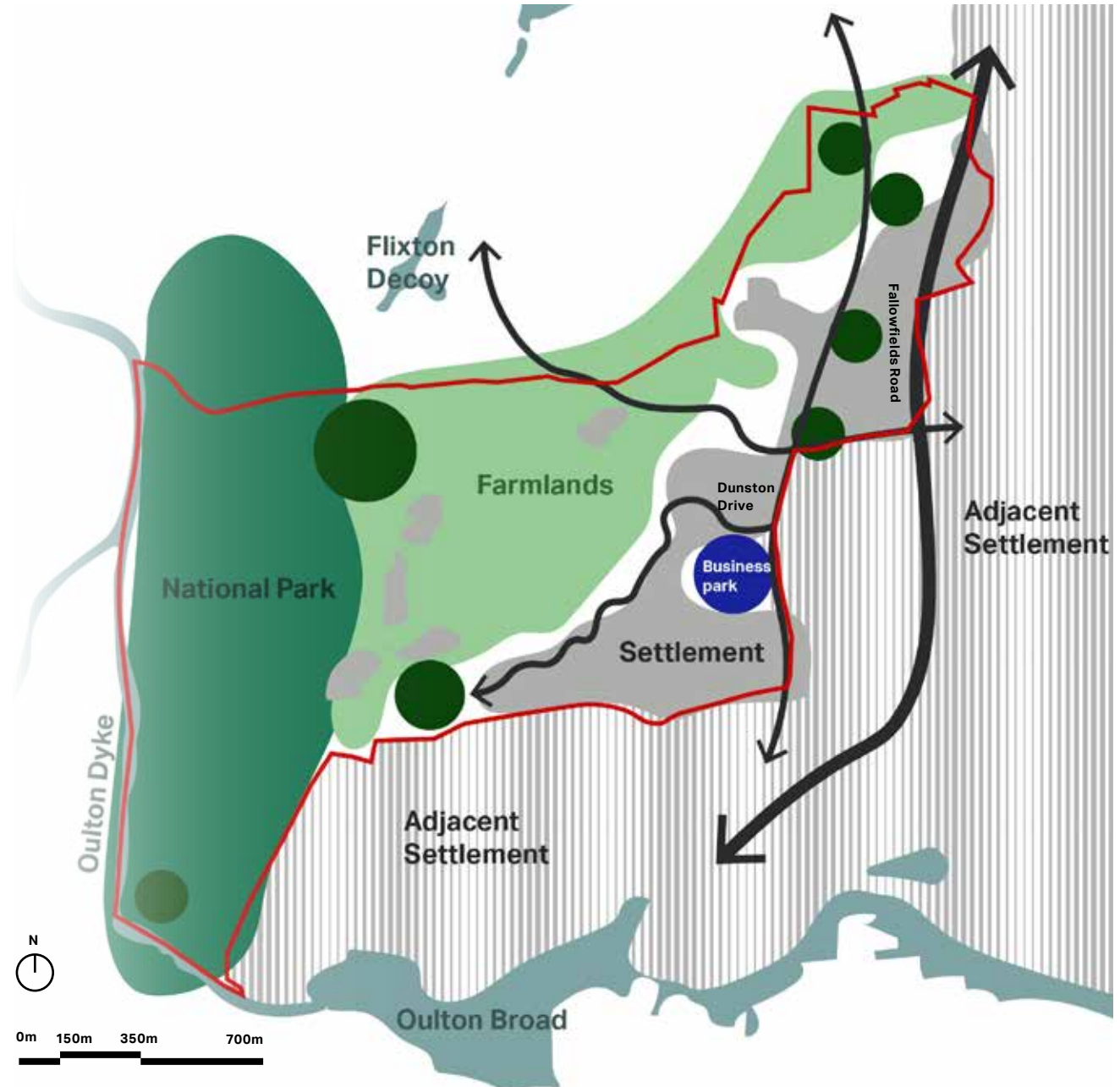
Figure 7: Diagram showing the structure of Oulton village.

HERITAGE

There is no designated conservation area, but there are several listed buildings around the neighbourhood plan area, shown on the opposite map. Among those are the Parkhill Hotel, located north of the village, the Blue Boar Inn, the Manor House, the Lodge, The Hall North, The Hall South and St. Michael's Church. There is also a historic monument, the remains of St. Andrew's Church, in close distance north of the village.

ACCESS AND FOOTPATHS

The neighbourhood plan area is accessed via main roads; the Millenium Way and B1375, to the northeast and southeast points and Hall Lane to the north west. Bus services also operate on these roads.

There is a significant network of footpaths and bridleways providing well used public access to the surrounding countryside connecting the village to Lowestoft, Flixton, Blundeston, Corton, Gunton and Somerleyton. Locals often use this network in order to get close to nature and enjoy fresh air.

ENVIRONMENTAL

The parish has some environmental designations which are mainly concentrated to the west where the National Park and marshes are. In particular, the National Park is also designated as an environmental sensitive area and coastal and floodplain grazing marsh. In addition, the village is affected by SSSI designation.

FLOODING

The farm houses located to the west of the parish suffer flooding from the marshes, as seen on the opposite map.

Figure 8: The Lodge listed building.

Figure 10: The Hall South listed building.

Figure 9: The Hall North listed building.

KEY

N

Oulton parish boundary & Neighbourhood Plan Area

Main roads

Secondary roads

Railway route

Water bodies

Listed buildings

Footpaths

Bridleways

Priority woodland

Parkland

SSSI

Flood risk zones (2,3)

Environmental sensitive area & National Park & Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh

Monument

0m   150m   300m   350m

B1375

Hall Lane

Millennium Way

B1375

Peto Way

Oulton Broad North

Figure 11: Oulton - constraints and opportunities plan.

2.2. Special buildings and places

Oulton parish includes some buildings and places of great significance. These buildings compose the character and identity of the area in terms of community feeling, history and environment. In addition, they are landmarks improving legibility in the area, for example the village sign located in the corner of Somerleyton and Gorleston Road signalises the entrance to Oulton parish.

Some of those are presented on this page and are also shown on the opposite map. More details on local materials and architectural styles and details are further analysed in the relevant section in Chapter 3.

Figure 13: Blue Boar Inn located along Oulton Street.

Figure 15: The Village sign is situated close to the Somerleyton Road/ Gorleston Road roundabout, on the corner of the community field. It was erected in 1990 and designed by the Parish Council. The sign symbolises the varied history of the parish and at the top of it there is a 3 dimensional model of St. Michael's Church.

Figure 12: The Manor House, late C16 listed building, located along Oulton Street.

Figure 14: St Michael's Church located along Church Avenue.

Figure 16: Parkhill Hotel, elegant country house hotel, located north of the Neighbourhood Plan Area.

KEY

N

⬜ Oulton parish boundary & Neighbourhood Plan Area

— Main roads

— Secondary roads

▪▪▪ Railway route

▨ Water bodies

🔴 Places & buildings of historic and environmental significance

0m   150m   350m   700m

Parkhill Hotel

Flixton Decoy

Barchester Centre

The Lodge
The Hall North &
The Hall South

Blue Boar Inn

Oulton Community Centre

Laurel Farm

Manor House

Village sign

Oulton Marshes

St. Michael's Church

The Olde Stables

Oulton Broad North

Oulton Broad

Lowestoft

Denmark Road

Waveney Drive

B1375

Millennium Way

Peto Way

Corton Road

A47

A1144

A47

A12

Figure 17: Map showing the places and buildings of historic and environmental significance within the Neighbourhood Plan Area.

2.3. Character areas

The next pages will present a brief analysis of Oulton Village into character areas based on street patterns, layout and age of the buildings, rooflines, car parking layouts and environment.

The character areas identified within Oulton Parish are five (5) and they are presented below as well as on the opposite map:

Character area 1 - Oulton's heart;

Character area 2 - Sands Lane & Dunston Drive;

Character area 3 - Fallowfields & Woods Meadow development;

Character area 4 - Rural area; and

Character area 5 - Business park.

The western part of the village, which has not been highlighted on the opposite map, includes the national park area mentioned on the pages before.

KEY

N

Oulton parish boundary & Neighbourhood Plan Area

Road network

Character area 1-Oulton's heart

Character area 2-Sands Lane & Dunston Drive

Character area 3-Fallowfields & Woods Meadow development

Character area 4-Rural area

Character area 5-Business park

0m   150m   300m   350m

CH4

CH3

CH1

CH4

CH2

CH3

CH5

CH2
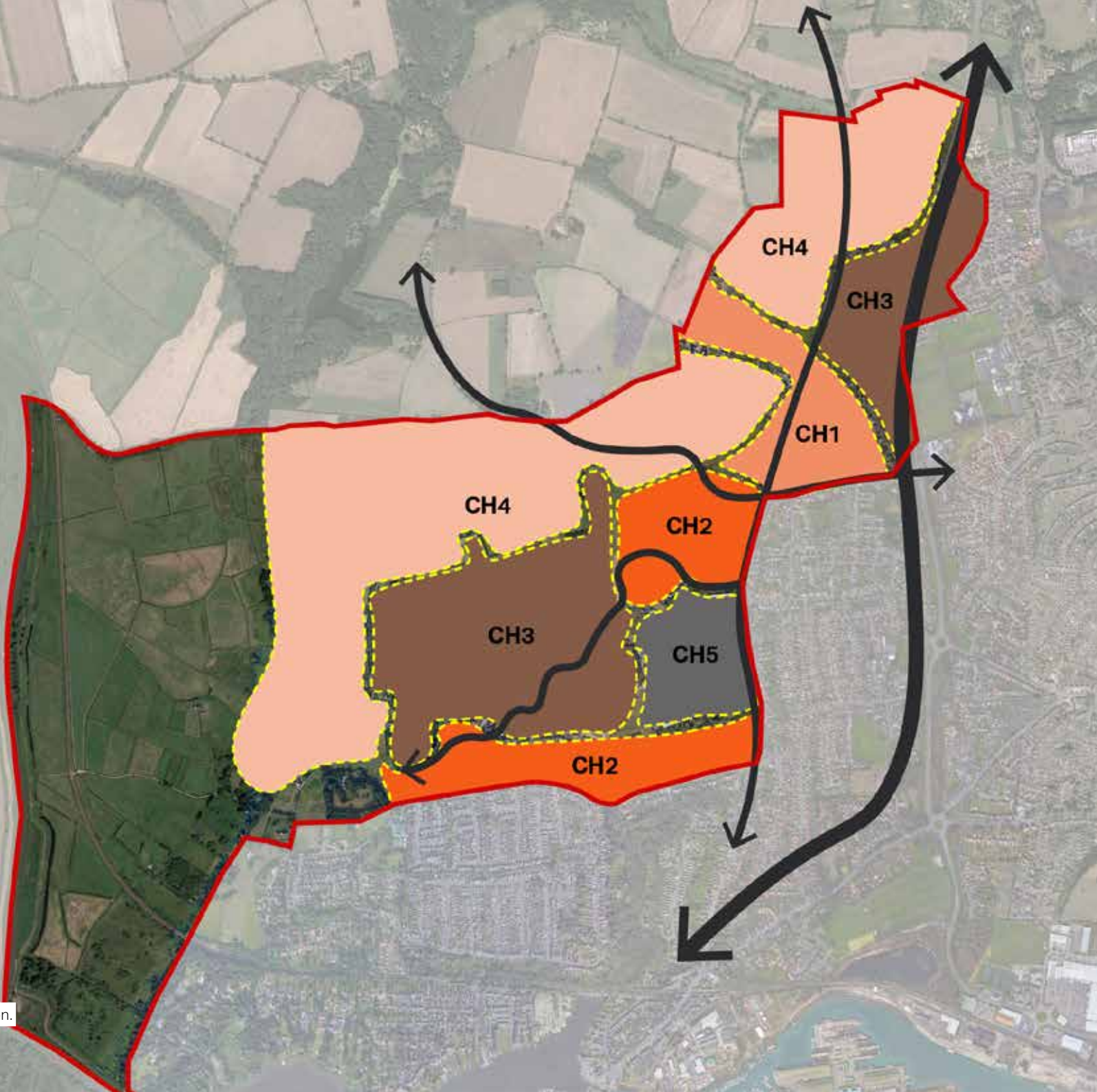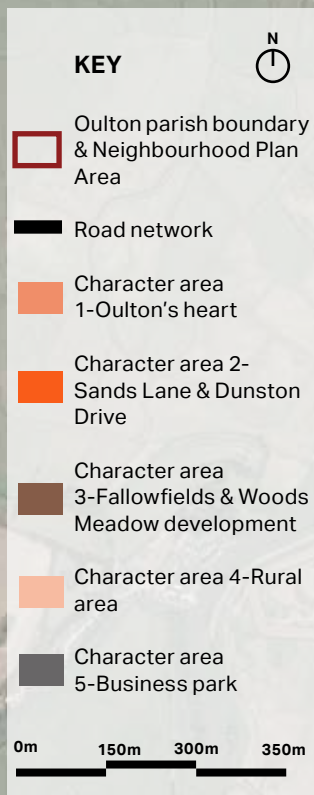
Figure 18: Map showing the character areas in Oulton.

Character area 1 - Oulton's heart

STREETS AND PUBLIC REALM	The most historic development is clustered along the main street, Oulton Street, which has an approximate width of 5m getting wider to approximately 8m to the south closer to the roundabout. The rest of the street network in this character area is approximately 5m as well. There are narrow pavements, especially along the main street, whilst in some other parts there is no pavement at all, with green verges, hedges and street trees prevailing. In other cases, pavement, green verges and street trees co-exist creating a pleasant environment for walking. The public realm also accommodates street furniture and bus stops along Somerleyton Road where bus services are offered. The community centre is also located within this character area, offering a good amount of green open space including a playground facility as well.
PATTERN AND LAYOUT OF BUILDINGS	There is a variety of building typologies ranging between bungalows, terraced, detached and semi-detached houses. A colourful pallet is used for the building façades along Oulton Street, whilst other materials used range between red and yellow brick, white and yellow rendering and tiles. The front gardens of the houses are relatively small, especially along Oulton Street and some parts of Oulton Road North. In this character area, the prevalent style for boundary treatments includes low brick walls with flowers or bushes. The front gardens along Somerleyton Road are better-sized allowing the buildings to set back from the road. The heights of the buildings go up to two storeys in this character area, while the roofline is not consistent since the typologies are varied as well.
CAR PARKING	On-plot parking is the prevalent parking layout in this area. However, parking courts are found as well along Oulton Street and Stirling Close. There is some on-street parking along Oulton Road North, which potentially creates some congestion issues.

Figure 19: Colourful façades create a pleasant environment and positively enhance the character of the village, Oulton Street.

Figure 20: On-street parking along narrow residential streets can create issues of traffic and congestion, Oulton Road North.

Figure 21: Green verges with large street trees and wider streets improve openness in the area and create a more pleasant environment for walking, Oulton Street.

Figure 22: The view to the community centre offers a pleasant feeling due to the large trees and hedgerow running along the main road, Oulton Street.

Opportunities to be used as an inspiration in Design Codes

– Community facilities attract people from all ages and create some activity in the area;

– Active open green spaces with facilities engage people from all ages;

– Large street tress along the public realm and irregular shapes of green spaces around them create interesting visual results;

– Architectural variety in terms of details (e.g. chimneys, arches, fenestration etc.) enhances the character of the area;

– Variety in typology creates an interesting, non-consistent roofline; and

– Use of a colourful pallet for the façades of the buildings.

Issues to be addressed in Design Codes

– Small-sized front gardens with limited space for plants and flowers;

– Lack of provision for a three system recycling bins in the properties; and

– Narrow streets and pavements create an unsafe environment for pedestrians and vehicles.

Character area 2 - Sands Lane & Dunston Drive

STREETS AND PUBLIC REALM	This character area is composed by main streets; Sands Lane and Dunston Drive, leading to cul-de-sacs which prevail here. The pavements are relatively wider than those in character area 1. This, combined with green verges and street trees, creates an openness along the main roads, but also within the cul-de-sacs where the public realm follows the same pattern. There is an abundance of greenery in this character area. Green spaces equipped with facilities to accommodate people's needs, landscape techniques to create a positive visual impact, large street tress along main roads and green buffers to minimise any unpleasant view to the neighbouring business park. All this creates a feeling of being closer to nature and gives the impression of a less car dominated place. Cycle paths and footpaths create a well connected network for easy access to the centre of the village and the countryside, whilst also promoting alternative means of transport.
PATTERN AND LAYOUT OF BUILDINGS	A variety of building typologies can be found in this character area as well. Apart from bungalows, terraced, detached and semi-detached houses, flats are also found in this area and more specifically on Whiting Road. Some properties are equipped with solar roof panels showing a general interest for eco-design techniques. The use of red and yellow brick is prevalent in this character area. However, the textures used on the façades are varied creating a good visual impact and enhance the architectural character of the village. In particular, these range between combinations of different colours of bricks, use of local stones, different colours for rendering and coloured waterboards. The majority of front gardens are well-sized and well-maintained with hedges, flowers, bushes or low brick walls decorating them. There is a feeling of openness in this character area, due to this style of boundary treatment that does not obstruct the view while also reassuring a separation between the public and private space. On the other hand, there are some other examples of boundary treatments consisted only by some flowers and green patches to signalise the property's boundary. The heights of the buildings go up to two storeys in this character area, with the exception being the flats on Whiting Road that reach up to three storeys.
CAR PARKING	On-plot parking is the prevalent parking layout in this area. However, parking courts and on-street designated areas are found as well along Grampian Way, at the end of Whiting Road and at the end of Culter Road.

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Figure 23: Open spaces within the city fabric create openness in the area, Bloomsbury Close.

Figure 24: Large street tress along busy roads provide a buffer to absorb noise and give the impression of a less car dominated place, Sands Lane.

Figure 25: Large trees in comparison to the scale of the buildings create a good visual impact and gives the impression of being closer to nature, Dunston Drive.

Figure 26: Level difference can lead to landscape techniques that create visually interesting street settings, Sands Lane.

Opportunities to be used as an inspiration in Design Codes

- Good green coverage in the area in the form of trees, green verges and hedgerows which create a pleasant environment;

- Large street trees along busy roads can be used as a buffer to absorb traffic noise;

- Landscape techniques can create visually interesting street settings;

- Variety in textures on building façades (e.g. different materials or colours used) enhances the architectural character of the area;

- Front gardens decorated with plants and flowers create a good visual impact and nicely separate the private from the public space; and

- Dedicated spaces for car-parking and parking courts help tackle issues of congestion; and

- Solar roof panels to show a positive attitude towards eco-design.

Issues to be addressed in Design Codes

- Prevalence of cul-de sacs creates a non permeable street network, congestion and potential difficulty in access for emergency and service vehicles.

Character area 3 - Fallowfields & Woods Meadow development

STREETS AND PUBLIC REALM	This character area includes recent developments (2000s) as well as on-going ones. The buildings are arranged along the main roads; Fallowfields, Park Meadows Roads and Lime Avenue, while the rest are organised in cul-de-sacs. This street network creates difficulties in accessing those roads, especially for emergency or service vehicles. Green features of any kind, are found significantly less in this character area in comparison to the other two already mentioned. In particular, there is a limited presence of green verges along the road or street trees which create a less pleasant environment and reinforce the feeling of a car dominated place. Cycle paths and footpaths create a well connected network for easy access to the centre of the village and the countryside, whilst also promoting alternative means of transport.
PATTERN AND LAYOUT OF BUILDINGS	A variety of building typologies can be found in this character area as well, ranging from bungalows, terraced, detached and semi-detached houses. The materials used are mainly red and yellow brick which creates a monotonous architectural style for this character area. There are few examples, however, of building façades that step away from this style and are dressed with other textures that immediately break the monotonous pattern of this character area. Long brick walls along the main roads reduce visibility for anyone walking by and affects legibility in the area. This happens due to the fact that the back to back gardens typology is used for the corners of the buildings blocks resulting in back gardens facing the roads. This can mainly be seen on Fallowfields, The Pastures or Willowvale roads where the back gardens of some properties face the residential streets and therefore the public realm. Boundary treatments are limited to grass patches and flowers creating a less obvious separation between private and public spaces. This, in addition to the lack of street trees, creates an environment where the green feature is less dominant and more decorative. The heights of the buildings go up to two storeys in this character area.
CAR PARKING	On-plot parking is the prevalent parking layout in this area. There is no designated on-street parking nor parking courts which often creates congestion.

Figure 27: Long non-transparent walls along an active street reduces permeability and creates a less pleasant environment, Fallowfields Road.

Figure 28: Variety of textures gives an interesting architectural character in the area, building along Tubby Walk.

Opportunities to be used as an inspiration in Design Codes

– Variety in textures on building façades (e.g. different materials or colours used) enhances the architectural character of the area;

– Large trees in the area can be used as landmarks enhancing the legibility; and

– Cycle path to promote alternative means of transportation and connect people with the countryside.

Figure 29: The lack of green verges or street trees along the road create a less vivid environment, Fallowfields Road.

Figure 30: The large tree at the corner of the road is used as landmark and helps navigation, Hunton Road.

Issues to be addressed in Design Codes

– Long brick, non-transparent, walls along active streets as a result of back to back gardens typology facing the streets;

– Prevalence of cul-de sacs results in non permeable street network, creates congestion and potential difficulty in access for emergency and service vehicles;

– Lack of green verges and trees along the streets;

– Lack of flowers, plants and hedges in the front gardens result in a less 'green' image for the area; and

– Lack of designated areas for visitors' parking or parking courts that would minimise congestion.

Character area 4 - Rural area

STREETS AND PUBLIC REALM	This character area consists of farm houses and stables set along Hall Lane. In addition, the dwellings along Union Lane share a similar character and can be included in this character area as well. The street layout is composed by the carriageway only, with no pedestrians paths running along. In some parts, however, there are long green verges on the sides to enhance the rural character of the area. The width of the road is relatively narrow and there is a need to monitor the speed of the vehicles, in order not to exceed 20 m/h. This character area is rural and in close proximity to the countryside and, in particular, the National Park.
PATTERN AND LAYOUT OF BUILDINGS	There is not a great variety of building typologies, since the majority of the dwellings here are detached with well-sized front and back gardens. However, bungalows and semi-detached houses are also found in the area. The green feature is prevalent in the area in many forms, for example large street trees, green verges and hedgerows. Properties are clearly separated from each other through fencing, brick walls, hedgerows and trees; all elements of boundary treatment are well-maintained. The heights of the buildings go up to two storeys in this character area.
CAR PARKING	On-plot parking is the only parking layout offered in this area.

Figure 31: Hedgerows, brick walls and large trees create a clear separation between properties but also private and public space, Holly Hill.

Figure 32: The majority of houses in the area are detached, but bungalows can also be found along the road, Fisher Row.

Figure 33: Houses have well-sized front gardens which are well-maintained with flowers and large trees, Fisher Row.

Figure 34: On-plot parking is the only available parking layout in the area, Holly Hill.

Opportunities to be used as an inspiration in Design Codes

- Good amount of green coverage in the area with large green spaces and large trees;

- Scale difference between dwellings and 'nature' gives the impression of a less car dominated area and the feeling of being closer to the natural environment. In particular, this could be achieved by adding soft landscaping in parking areas, physical boundary treatments on front gardens or large street trees along the public realm;

- Large front gardens with hedges and large trees as boundary treatment nicely separate properties; and

- Well-sized properties with well-sized front and back gardens.

Issues to be addressed in Design Codes

- The current width of the road requires a maximum speed of 20 m/h that needs to be respected by drivers.

Character area 5 - Business Park

This character area is located north of Sands Lane, east of Woods Meadow development and west of Gorleston Road.

The area is surrounded by a green buffer to the north, east and south. As a result of this, the large scale buildings within the business park are not entirely visible from the surrounding environment which mitigates any unpleasant visual impact for the residents. Entering the business park area via Mobbs Way one can witness large street trees set along the street. Thus, the green buffer is continued even within the area to give the impression of a less industrial place.

However, it is also noticed that there are congestion issues, whilst lorries are often occupying on-street parking spaces, which eventually affects the public health.

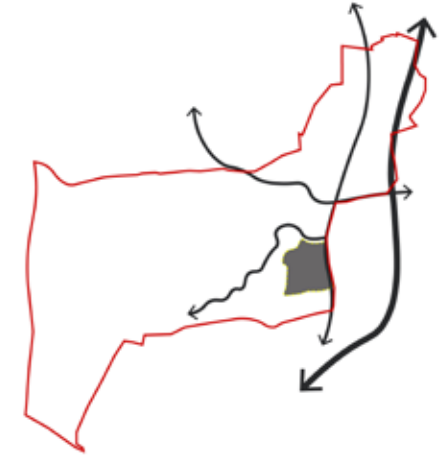Figure 35: Green buffer to the right eliminating any visual contact with the Business Park, Gorleston Road.
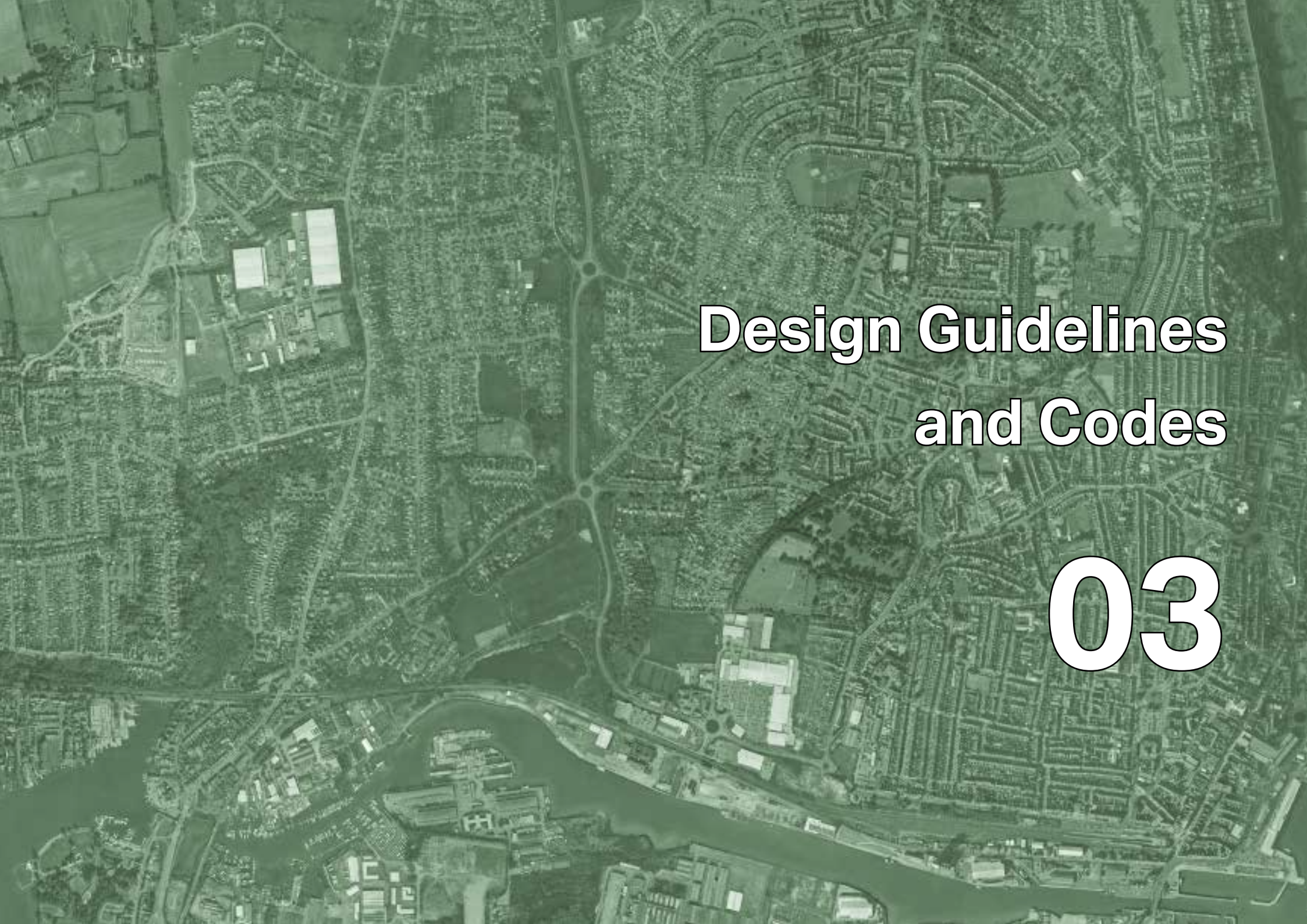

Figure 36: Street trees within the Business Park to give the impression of a less industrial place, Mobbs Way.

Figure 37: Nature prevails with the Business Park being in the background, view from Mendip Road.

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Design Guidelines and Codes

03

3. Design Guidelines and Codes

The aim of this chapter is to develop specific design guidelines and codes for future development that consider the local character and can enhance local distinctiveness by creating good quality developments, thriving communities and prosperous places to live.

3.1. Introduction

This chapter is divided into two parts:

Section 3.2 includes a set of general principles that are applicable to any development that may take place throughout the Parish.

Section 3.3 includes specific principles for the five identified character areas in the village.

This section is set out in a way that is straightforward to interpret. It is accompanied by descriptive text, general guidelines and principles, images from Oulton or other relevant case studies, illustrations and explanatory diagrams.

3.2. General design principles for Oulton

This section provides guidance on the design of development, setting out the expectations that applicants for planning permission in the village will be expected to follow.

The guidelines developed in this part focus on residential environments. However, new housing development should not be viewed in isolation but considerations of design and layout must be informed by the wider context.

The local pattern of streets and spaces, building traditions, materials and the natural environment should all help to determine the character and identity of a development. It is important with any proposals that full account is taken of the local context and that the new design embodies the "sense of place". Reference to context means using what is around as inspiration and influence and it could be a contemporary solution that is in harmony with the surroundings.

The set of design principles shown on this page are specific to Oulton and are based on the analysis of the village character and discussions with members of the neighbourhood plan steering group.

MAKE URBAN STRUCTURE WORK FOR EVERYONE

PROVIDE OR PRESERVE A CONNECTED STREET LAYOUT

IMPROVE LANDSCAPE AND ACCESS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE

PROMOTE LOCAL CHARACTER

TREAT VEHICLE PARKING AS A PLACEMAKING EXERCISE

DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABILITY

3.2.1. Make urban structure work for everyone

GP 1. Patterns of growth and layout of buildings

– New developments must demonstrate a good understanding of the scale, building orientation, enclosure, and facade rhythm of the surrounding built environment to respect its rural character.

– Development which is high density and does not reflect the current grain of the villages shall be avoided. Proposals need to consider existing density and the relationship between buildings and plot sizes.

– New properties should be clustered in small pockets showing a variety of types. The use of a repeating type of dwelling along the entirety of the street should be avoided to create variety and interest in the streetscape. However, avoid having too many different building types, which can lead to a confused and chaotic street scene.

– Boundaries such as walls or hedgerows, whichever is appropriate to the street, should enclose and define each street along the back edge of the pavement, adhering to a clear building line that can allow minor variations for each development group. In areas where properties are set back from the edge of the road with small gardens, consideration should be given to the most appropriate site boundaries.

– Where appropriate, new properties should aim to provide rear and front gardens. Where the provision of a front garden is not possible, small buffers to the public realm such as planting strips are still beneficial.

– The layout of new development should optimise the benefits of daylight and passive solar gains as this can significantly reduce energy consumption.

– Interfaces between the existing settlement edges and any village extension must be carefully designed to integrate new and existing communities.

– Edges must be designed to link rather than segregate existing and new neighbourhoods. A belt of hedges that defines the existing settlement edge can be integrated into the new neighbourhood by providing a shared back hedge.
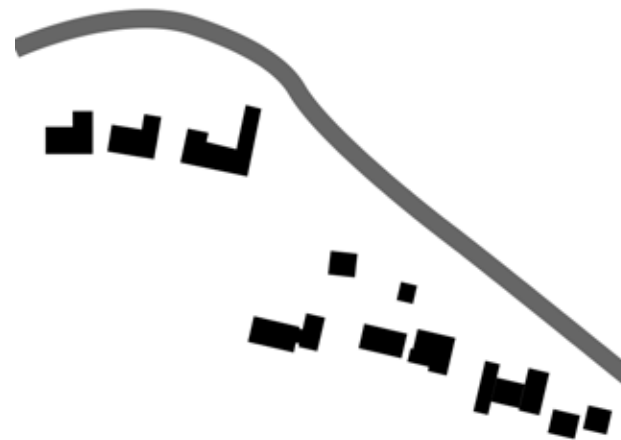

Figure 39: Green Fleet Drive - A layout dominated by cul-de-sacs.

Figure 38: Hall Lane - Oulton historic pattern is predominately linear with buildings setting back from the main road.
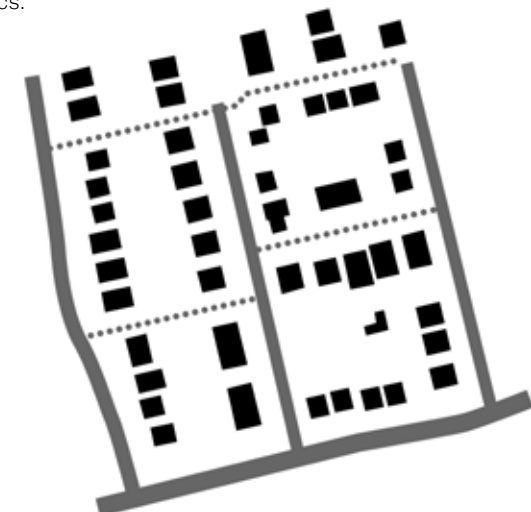

Figure 40: Cotswold Way - A connected layout, with back to back rear gardens typology.

GP 2. Enclosure

Public realm in new developments should be designed in good proportions and delineated with clarity. Clearly defined spaces help in achieving cohesive and attractive urban form. They also create an appropriate sense of enclosure - the relationship between a given space (lane, street, square) and the vertical boundary elements at its edges (buildings, walls, trees). The following principles serve as general guidelines that should be considered for achieving a satisfactory sense of enclosure:

– When designing building setbacks, there must be an appropriate ratio between the width of the street and the building height.

– Buildings should be designed to turn corners and create attractive start and end points of a new street or frontage.

– Generally, building façades should front onto streets. Variation to the building line can be introduced to create an informal character.

– In the case of terraced and adjoining buildings, it is recommended that a variety of plot widths, land use, building heights, and façade depth should be considered during the design process to create an attractive streetscape and break the monotony of the street wall.

– Trees, hedges, and other landscaping features can help create a more enclosed streetscape in addition to providing shading and protection from heat, wind, and rain.

Generally effective 1:1 ratio **Generally effective 1:2 ratio**
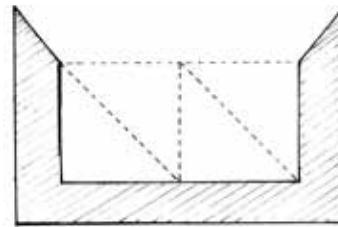
Spatial definition by building heights
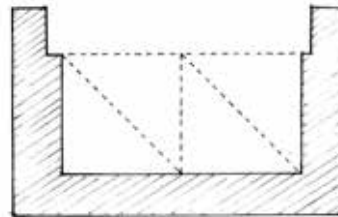
Spatial definition by recess line
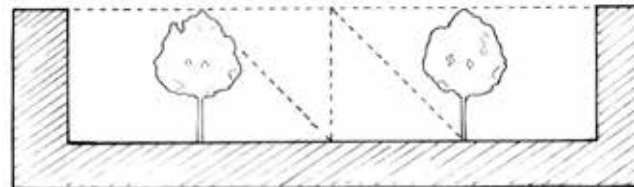
Spatial definition by tree canopy

CORNER TREATMENT

Corner buildings provide an opportunity to enhance natural surveillance and create activity at street level as well as to define the corner architecturally. Buildings should have multiple entrances and two active frontages if possible. For less visually prominent corners, such as within lower density residential areas, the corner should be addressed by having the main entrance and habitable room windows facing both sides to enable natural surveillance and encourage activity. To articulate the corner, the building can be taller or have a distinctive architectural element to provide a greater presence and enhance legibility.
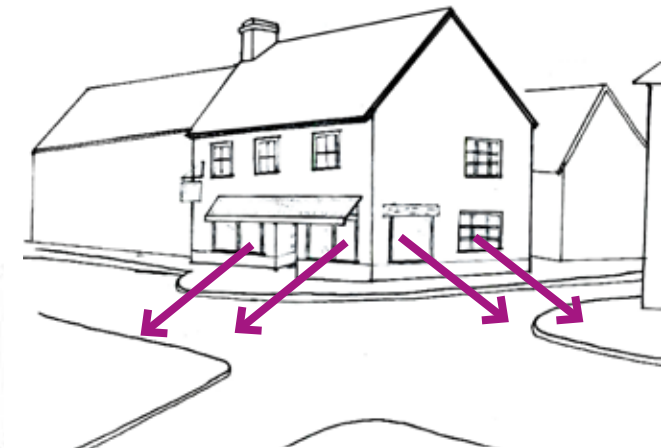
Figure 41: Windows on both streets facing façades provide enhanced natural surveillance.

3.2.2. Provide or preserve a connected street layout

GP 3. People friendly streets

– Streets must meet the technical highways requirements as well as being considered a 'place' to be used by all, not just motor vehicles. It is essential that the design of new development should include streets and junctions that incorporate the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and if applicable, public transport users. It is also important that on-street parking, where introduced, does not impede the access of pedestrians and other vehicles.

– Within the settlement boundaries, streets should not be built to maximise vehicle speed or capacity. Streets and junctions must be designed with the safety and accessibility of vulnerable groups such as children and wheelchair users in mind, and may introduce a range of traffic calming measures.

– New streets should generally be linear with gentle meandering, providing interest and evolving views while helping with orientation.

– Streets must incorporate opportunities for landscaping, green infrastructure, and sustainable drainage.

– Where appropriate, cycle paths should be incorporated into street design to encourage people to use alternative transport.

– Crossing points that are safe, convenient, and accessible for pedestrians of all abilities must be placed at frequent intervals on pedestrian desire lines and at key nodes.

– Along low-traffic lanes and residential streets, crossing points can be more informal. For example, pedestrians may cross at any section of a street whose surface is shared between different users.

– Junctions must enable good visibility between vehicles and pedestrians. For this purpose, street furniture, planting, and parked cars must be kept away from visibility splays to avoid obstructing sight lines.

– Sufficient width of footway should be provided to facilitate a variety of mobilities, such as young families with buggies, mobility scooters, wheelchairs, etc. The Department for Transport Manual for Streets (2007) states there is no maximum width for a footway, it suggests that in lightly used streets, the minimum unobstructed width for pedestrians should generally be 2 m.
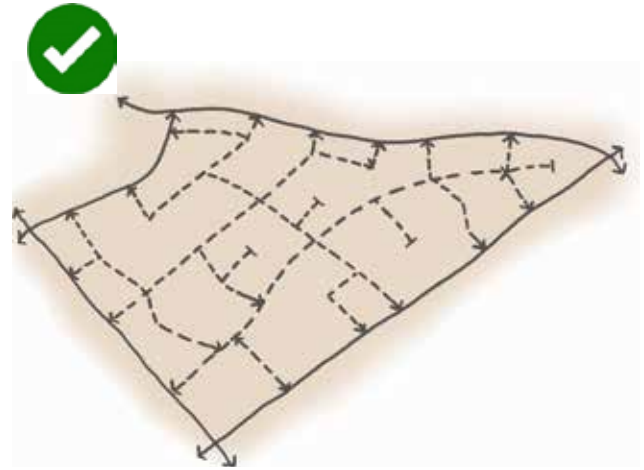
Figure 42: A connected layout, with some cul-de-sacs, balances sustainability and security aims in a walkable neighbourhood.
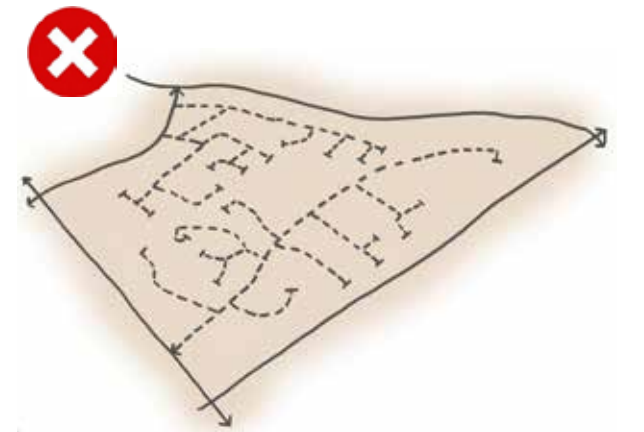
Figure 43: A layout dominated by cul-de-sacs encourages reliance on the car for even local journeys.

KEY

N
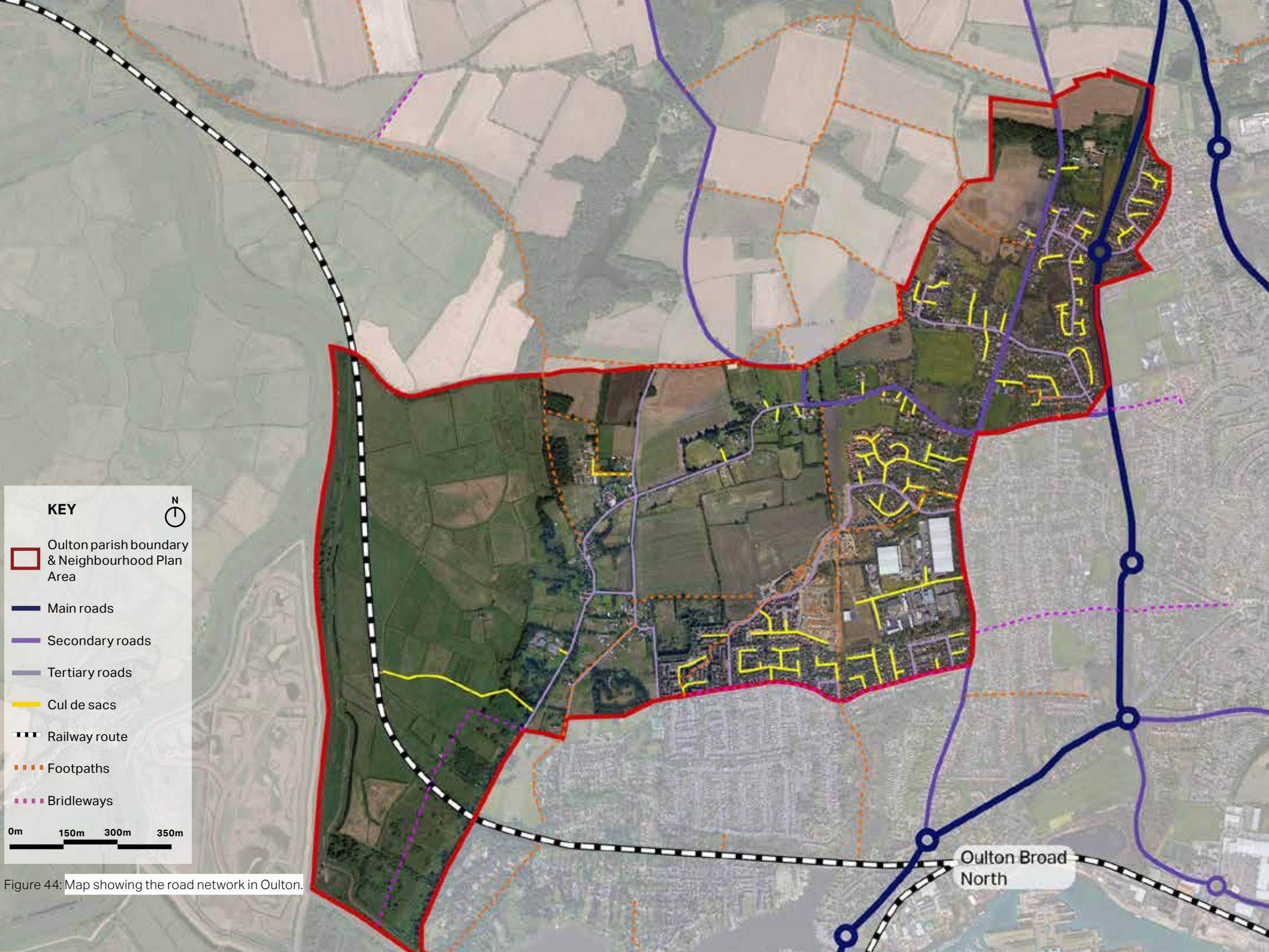
◻ Oulton parish boundary & Neighbourhood Plan Area

━━ Main roads

━━ Secondary roads

━━ Tertiary roads

━━ Cul de sacs

▪▪▪ Railway route

••• Footpaths

••• Bridleways

0m   150m   300m   350m

Figure 44: Map showing the road network in Oulton.

Oulton Broad North

GP 4. Connectivity

Streets should be connected with each other and different travel options and routes should be considered. Good practice favours a generally connected street layout that makes it easier to travel by foot, cycle, and public transport. A more connected pattern creates a 'walkable neighbourhood', a place where routes link meaningful places together. However, as shown on the previous map, the existing pattern in Oulton is a cul-de-sac based layout creating issues in permeability and movement. Therefore, new development should improve the existing street network by:

– Providing direct and attractive footpaths between neighbouring streets and local facilities. Streets must be designed to prioritise the needs of pedestrians and cyclists. Establishing a robust pedestrian network: a) across any new development; and b) among new and existing developments, is key in achieving good levels of connectivity among any part of Oulton.

– Proposing routes laid out in a permeable pattern, allowing for multiple connections and choice of routes, particularly on foot. Any cul-de-sacs should be relatively short and provide onward pedestrian links.

– Proposing short and walkable distances which are usually defined to be within a 10 minute walk or a five mile trip by bike. If the design proposal calls for a new street or cycle/pedestrian link, it must connect destinations and origins.

– Avoid designing features such as barriers to vehicle movement, gates to new developments, or footpaths between high fences must be kept at a minimum, and the latter must be avoided.

Cul de sac road

Footpath link to create a connection and flow in movement

Light columns to create safe environment during the night
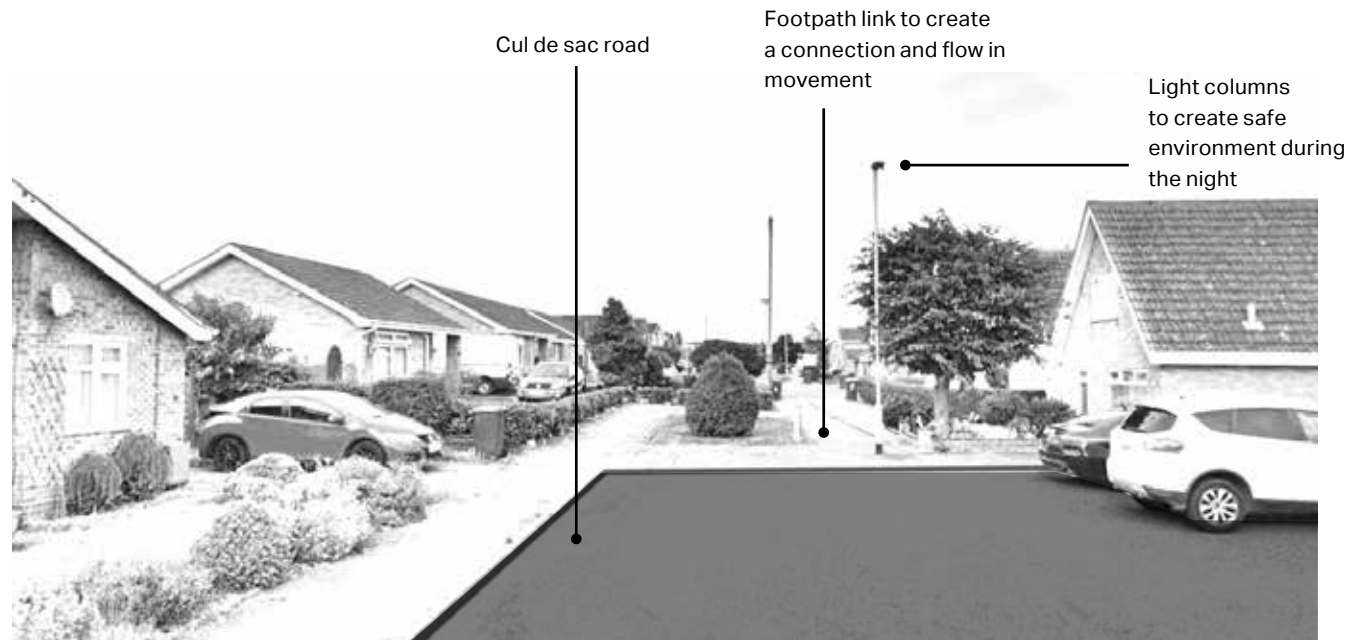
Figure 45: A cul-de-sac with a footpath link, Chiltern Cres.

Entrance for footpath with appropriate signage to promote walking and cycling in the area

Figure 46: A public footpath linked to new housing developments.

GP 5. Wayfinding and legibility

When places are well signposted, they are easier for the public to comprehend. People feel safer when they can easily memorise places and navigate around them. It is easier for people to orientate themselves when the routes are direct, particularly for people with dementia and related cognitive and sensory challenges.

– A familiar and recognisable environment makes it easier for people to find their way around. Obvious and unambiguous features should be designed in new development.

– Buildings which are located at corners, crossroads or along a main road could play a significant role in navigation.

– At a local level, landmark elements could be a distinctive house, public art, or even an old and sizeable tree.

– Signage is a common way of helping people to find their way to and around a place. New signage design should be easy to read. Elements likes languages, fonts, text sizes, colours and symbols should be clear and concise, and avoid confusion.

– Signage can also help highlighting existing and newly proposed footpaths and cycle lanes encouraging people using them more.

– Signage elements and techniques should be appropriate to the character of the area and be a nice fit to the existing architectural style and details.

Figure 47: Buildings located at corners and crossroads can be used as landmarks and enhance legibility.

Figure 49: Graphic/colour techniques on the road or on vertical elements can help highlighting key locations for the village as well as important assets of wildlife (Left photo: Richmond cycle route, Canada & Right photo: Meadow garden, Pennsylvania).

Figure 48: Any element used for wayfinding purpose should respect the existing character and architectural details in the village. Any proposal should be composed by local materials, aim to highlight key assets in the area and encourage people walking even during night hours by adding light installation techniques (Left photo: Nature sign design made from Forest Stewardship Council United Kingdom, Middle left photo: Meadow garden, Pennsylvania, Middle right photo: Samford village, Australia & Right photo: Signage-light installation technique, Turkey).

3.2.3. Improve landscape and access to the countryside

GP 6. Landscape and public realm

– Open spaces should offer a variety of spaces that can host a diverse range of activities and accommodate different users.

– Open spaces should respond to local character and encourage civic pride.

– Development adjoining public open spaces and important gaps should enhance the character of these spaces by either providing a positive interface (i.e. properties facing onto them to improve natural surveillance) or a soft landscaped edge.

– New and existing landscapes and open spaces should be located within walking distance from their intended users. If appropriate, these should be linked to form connected green networks. The networks are often more useful to create visual amenity, for recreational use and wildlife corridors than isolated parks. Where direct links are not possible, it may be appropriate to link these together through green routes, shared surfaces and streets. Tree lined avenues can achieve a visual and physical connection to open space.

– New developments should incorporate existing native trees and shrubs and avoid unnecessary loss of flora. Any trees or woodland lost to new development must be replaced. Native trees and shrubs should be used to reinforce the more rural character of the area.

Large tree with room to grow

Planters along street

Rear parking courtyard

Verge

Private or communal gardens

Green open space

Sustainable drainage system e.g. by swales, in rain gardens

In carriageway to calm traffic
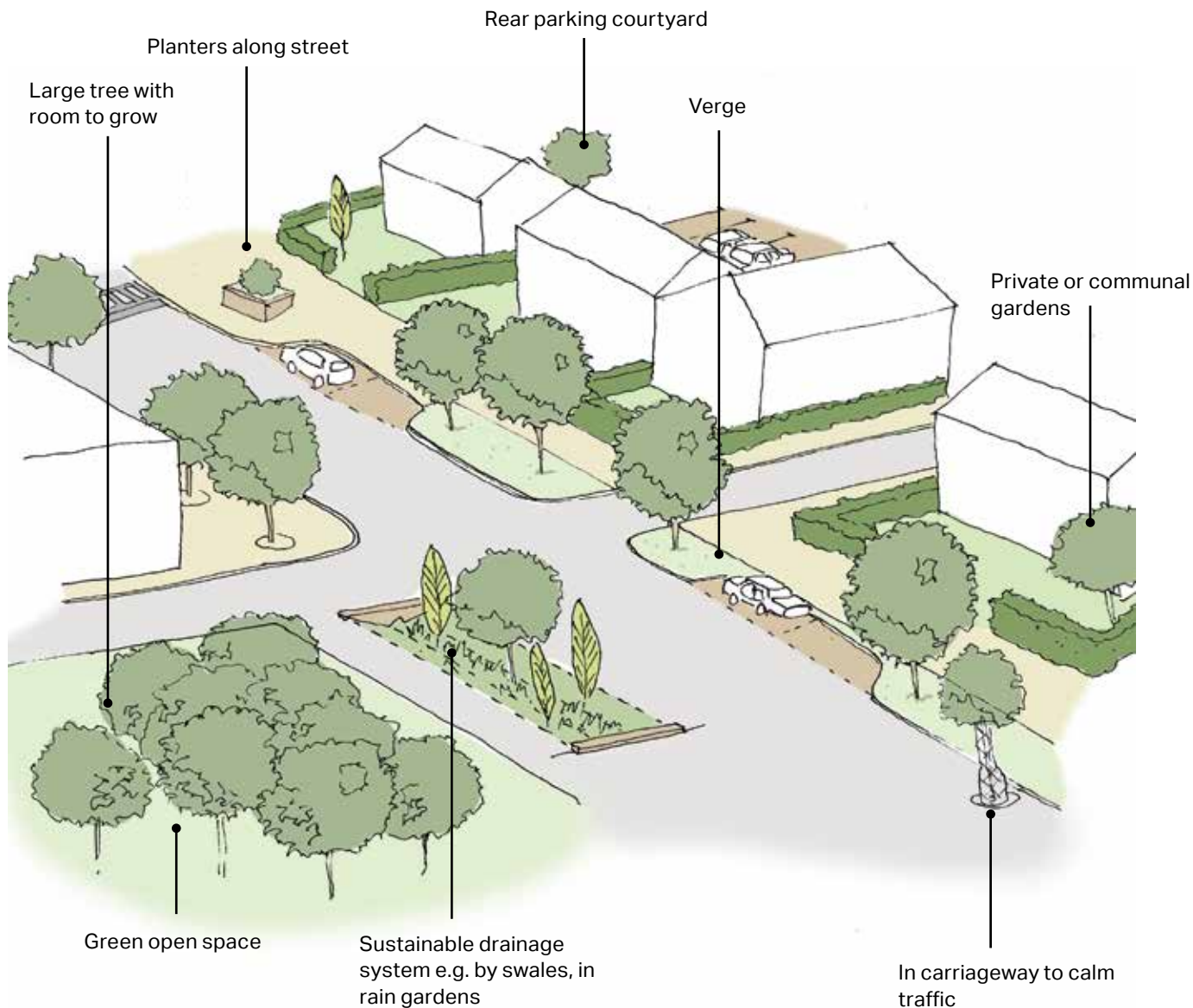
Figure 50: Different types of green elements on the public realm.

GP 7. Wildlife-friendly environment

– Biodiversity and woodlands should be protected and enhanced where possible. Hedges, trees, road verges along roads as well as natural tree buffers should be protected when planning for new developments.

– Abrupt edges to development with little vegetation or landscape on the edge of the settlement should be avoided and, instead, a comprehensive landscape buffering should be encouraged.

– New developments and building extensions should aim to strengthen biodiversity and the natural environment.

– Ensure habitats are buffered. Widths of buffer zones should be wide enough and based on specific ecological function.

– New development proposals should include the creation of new habitats and wildlife corridors. This could be by aligning back and front gardens or installing bird boxes or bricks in walls. Wildlife corridors should be included to enable wildlife to travel to and from foraging areas and their dwelling areas.

Green buffers enhance the green coverage in the area and create a good visual impact

Figure 51: Tree buffers along the edge of Birch Close.
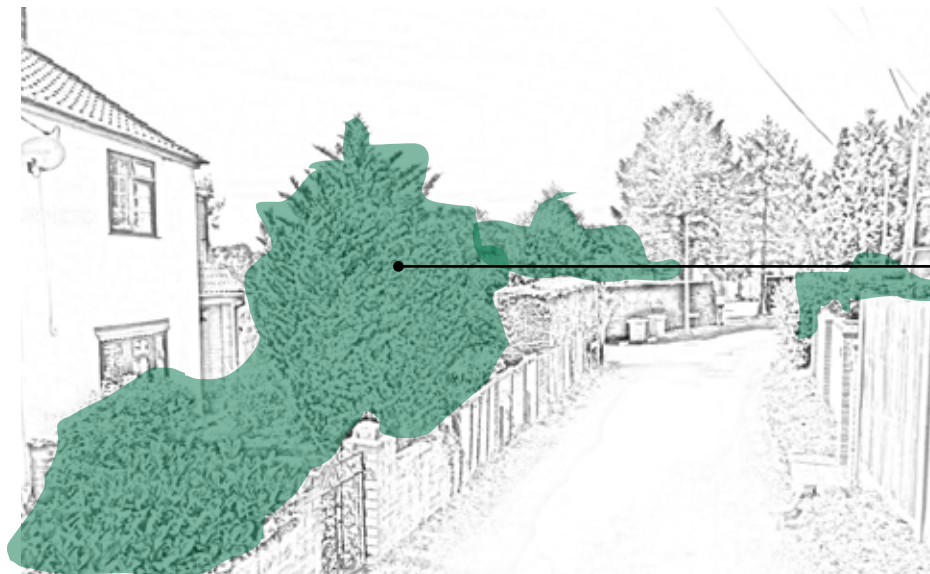
Flowers, trees, hedgerows and other types of physical boundaries can decorate front gardens creating an image of a wildlife-friendly environment

Figure 52: Well-planted front gardens on Fisher Row.

GP 8. Trees and landscaping

The abundance of trees is an important asset for a place. They provide shading and cooling properties, absorb carbon dioxide, act as habitats and green chains for species, reduce air pollution and assist water attenuation and humidity regulation. For people, they help to alleviate stress and anxiety, help with ill health recovery, and create a sense of positive mental health and well-being. In addition, they add life to the landscape and enhance open spaces.

The following guidelines focus on the design aspects and appearance of planting and trees in private gardens as well as public open spaces and streets.

– Aim to preserve existing mature trees and incorporate them into the new landscape design where appropriate;

– Consider canopy size when locating trees; reducing the overall number of trees but increasing the size of trees is likely to have the greatest positive long term impact;

– Size of tree pit should allow sufficient soil around the tree. Ensure tree stems are in the centre of the verge to provide a 1m clearance of the footway or carriageway;

– Existing tree root zones should be protected to ensure that existing trees can grow to their mature size. Root barriers must be installed where there is a risk of damaging foundations, walls, and underground utilities;

– New trees should be added to strengthen vistas, focal points, and movement corridors while retaining clear visibility of amenity spaces. They should however not block key view corridors and vehicular circulation sight lines;

– New trees should be integrated into the design of new developments from the outset rather than left as an afterthought to avoid conflicts with above- and below-ground utilities;

– To ensure resilience and increase visual interest, a variety of tree species is preferred over a single one. Species must be chosen according to climate change resilience, adaptation to local soil conditions, environmental benefits, size at maturity, and ornamental qualities.

– Regulations, standards, and guidelines relevant to the planting and maintenance of trees are listed below:

– Trees in Hard Landscapes: A Guide for Delivery;[1]

– Trees in the Townscape: A Guide for Decision Makers;[2]

– Tree Species Selection for Green Infrastructure;[3]

– BS 8545:2014 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape - Recommendations;[4] and

– BS 5837:1991 Guide for trees in relation to construction.[5]

[1] Trees & Design Action Group (2012). *Trees in Hard Landscapes: A Guide for Delivery*. Available at: http://www.tdag.org.uk/uploads/4/2/8/0/4280686/tdag_trees-in-hard-landscapes_september_2014_colour.pdf
[2] Trees & Design Action Group (2012). *Trees in the Townscape: A Guide for Decision Makers*. Available at: http://www.tdag.org.uk/uploads/4/2/8/0/4280686/tdag_treesinthetownscape.pdf
[3] Trees & Design Action Group (2019). *Tree Species Selection for Green Infrastructure*. Available at: http://www.tdag.org.uk/uploads/4/2/8/0/4280686/tdag_treespeciesguidev1.3.pdf
[5] British Standards Institution (1991). *BS 5837:1991 Guide for trees in relation to construction*. Available at: https://shop.bsigroup.com/ProductDetail/?pid=000000000000258384

Figure 53: Example of large street trees along Sands Lane.

Figure 54: Trees can be also used as landmarks helping people with orientation, Hunton Road.

3.2.4. Promoting local character

GP 9. Building scale and massing

– The majority of buildings in the Parish do not exceed two storeys in height. Therefore, new buildings should be sympathetic in mass, height, and scale to the existing context.

– Subtle variation in height is encouraged to add visual interest, such as altering eaves and ridge heights. The bulk and pitch of roofs, however, must remain sympathetic to the tree canopy, the local vernacular, and the low-lying character of the village. Another way to achieve visual interest could be by varying frontage widths and plan forms. The inclusion of a uniform building type throughout a development must be avoided.

– The massing of new buildings should ensure a sufficient level of privacy and access to natural light for their occupants and avoid overshadowing existing buildings.

– Higher buildings should be placed on important roads and junctions to be used as landmarks and improve legibility.

Figure 55: Building heights vary within the Parish but are generally in keeping with the neighbouring properties, Green Fleet.
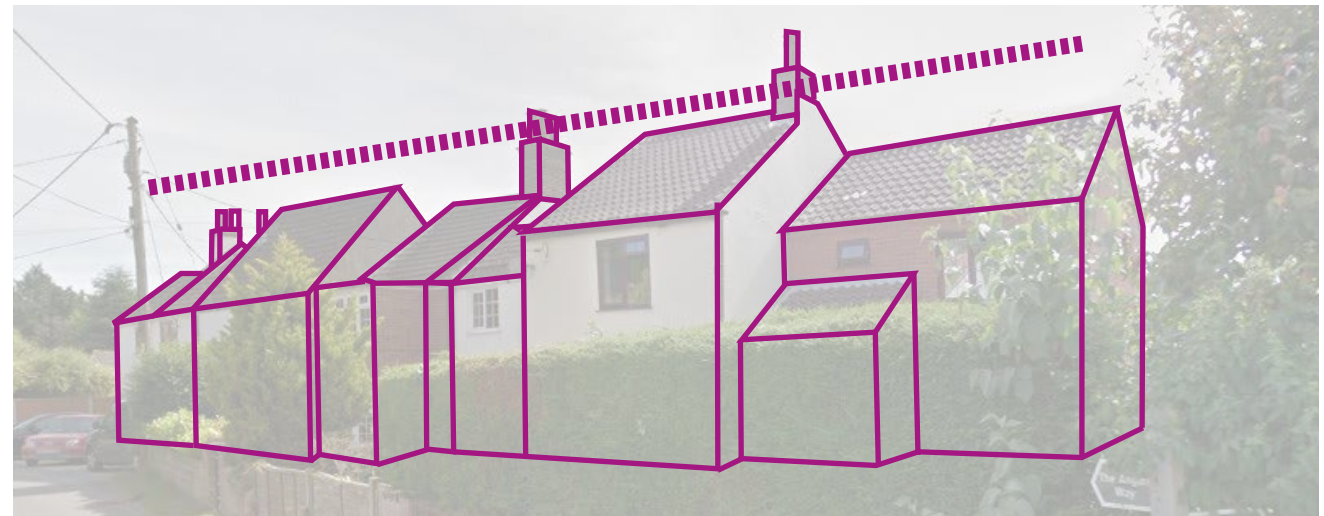
Figure 56: Subtle changes in roof pitch angle ensures a variety in rooflines.

GP 10. Building line and boundary treatment

- Any new developments should front onto, and have access from, the street or public space. Dead frontages should be avoided.

- Buildings should be designed to ensure that streets and/or public spaces have good levels of natural surveillance from buildings. This can be ensured by placing ground floor habitable rooms and upper floor windows facing the street.

- Any new development should have setbacks that can provide front gardens, or alternatively small areas that offer buffer zones between private and public spaces. Building setbacks should be varied by street level, local character, and type of structure.

- The transition between private and public spaces can vary from a well - defined to a looser boundary. A buffer zone could be defined by the use of railings, fences, plants, walls, etc.

- If placed on the property boundary, waste storage should be integrated as part of the overall design of the property. Landscaping could also be used to minimise the visual impact of bins and recycling containers.

Figure 57: Low hedgerows.

Figure 58: Low brick wall with hedgerows is a distinctive feature of the area that helps define the edge of private spaces.

Figure 59: Small front garden defined by low height brick walls.

Figure 60: Brick wall with railings strongly defined public and private spaces.

GP 11. Housing extension and conversion

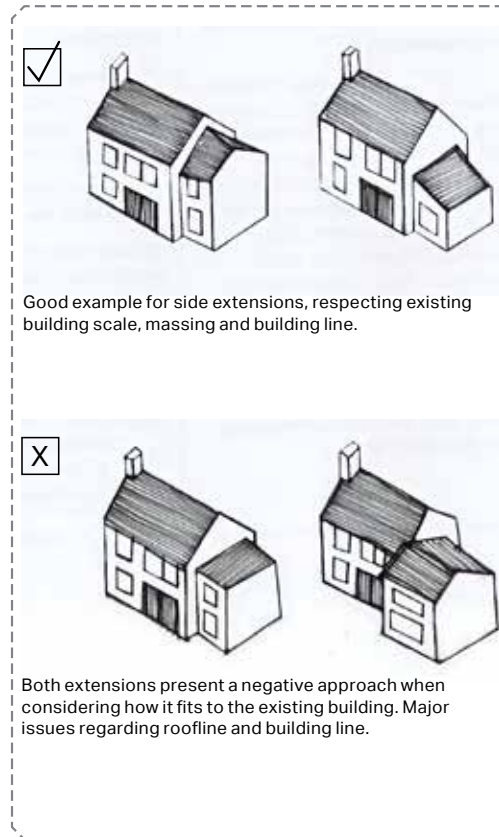Extensions to dwellings can have a significant impact not only on the character and appearance of the building, but also on the street scene within which it sits. A well-designed extension can enhance the appearance of its street, whereas an unsympathetic extension can have a harmful impact, create problems for neighbouring residents, and affect the overall character of the area.

There are a number of principles that residential extensions and conversions should follow to maintain character:
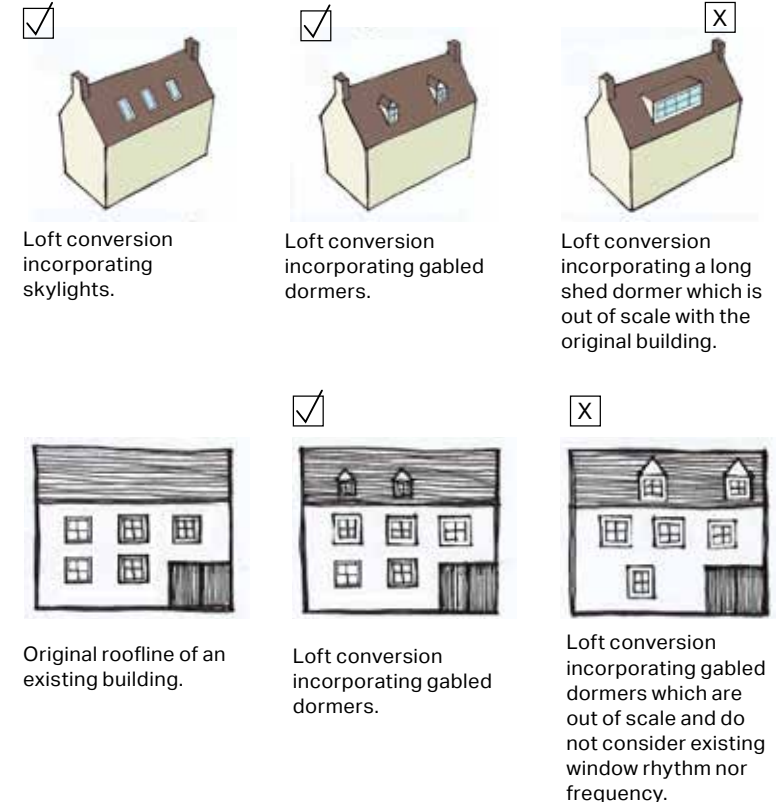
– The original building should remain the dominant element of the property regardless of the amount of extensions. The newly built extension should not overwhelm the building from any given point.

– Extensions should not result in a significant loss to the private amenity area of the dwelling.

– Designs that wrap around the existing building and involve overly complicated roof forms should be avoided.

– In case of side extensions, the new part should be set back from the front of the main building and retain the proportions of the original building. This is in order to reduce any visual impact of the articulation between existing and new.

– In case of rear extensions, the new part should not have a harmful effect on neighbouring properties in terms of overshadowing, overbearing or privacy issues.

– Many household extensions are covered by permitted development rights, and so do not need planning permission. These rights do not apply in certain locations such as Conservation Areas.

– Any housing conversions should respect and preserve the buildings' original form and character.

– Where possible, reuse as much of the original materials as possible, or alternatively, use like-for-like materials. Any new materials should be sustainable and be used on less prominent building parts.

– The pitch and form of the roof used on the building adds to its character and extensions should respond to this where appropriate.

– Extensions should consider the materials, architectural features, window sizes, and proportions of the existing building and recreate this style to design an extension that matches and complements the existing building.

Good example for side extensions, respecting existing building scale, massing and building line.

Both extensions present a negative approach when considering how it fits to the existing building. Major issues regarding roofline and building line.

Design treatment in case of loft conversion:

Loft conversion incorporating skylights.

Loft conversion incorporating gabled dormers.

Loft conversion incorporating a long shed dormer which is out of scale with the original building.

Original roofline of an existing building.

Loft conversion incorporating gabled dormers.

Loft conversion incorporating gabled dormers which are out of scale and do not consider existing window rhythm nor frequency.

GP 12. The Gable

Gable roofs are widely used within the Parish creating a good variety in the roofline.

The gable has an important place making role, both as a significant external elevational element of designing attractive places as well as increasing the amount of light into a building.

There are many ways that gables can be interesting:

– Creatively use materials.

– Introduce design details.

– Provide attractive windows.

Figure 61: Successful use of materials and window to gable.

Figure 62: Front gable with design details.

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GP 13. Details and materials

– Combine several materials in a facade is one of the characteristics of some areas in the Parish, which gives rhythm to building facade. Different materials can be used on different storeys and different parts of the structure, adding architectural richness.

– Richness can also be achieved through varied roofscapes, building styles and careful detailings.

– Featured architecture details should be introduced to new development in an appropriate and sustainable way.

– Any future development proposals should be based on an understanding of the surrounding built environment and demonstrate the local palette of colours and materials.

– Any new materials should be durable, sourced from eco-friendly, recycled and sustainable supplies when possible.

This section includes some examples of details and materials that contribute to the local vernacular within the Oulton Parish area, which could be used to inform future development. This list is not exhaustive and each design proposal should explain its material strategy and how it fits within the context of the area.

The local vernacular rendering is recommended to be pink and light cream

Brickwork

Timber boarding

Arched porch

Tile hung dormer

Combining materials - brick and cladding boarding

Brick quoins

Landscaping

Combining materials - sandstone brick and flint

3.2.5. Treat vehicle parking as a placemaking exercise

GP 14. Car parking

At the time of writing, the demand for private cars remains high and these have to be carefully integrated into neighbourhoods. There is no single best approach to domestic car parking. A good mix of parking typologies should be deployed, depending on, and influenced by location, topography and market demand. The main types to be considered are shown on this page and the next one.

– For family homes, cars should be placed at the front or side of the property. For small pockets of housing a front or rear court is acceptable. Multiple garage parking is encouraged.

– Car parking design should be combined with landscaping to minimise the presence of vehicles.

– Parking areas and driveways should be designed to minimise impervious surfaces, for example through the use of permeable paving.

– When placing parking at the front, the area should be designed to minimise visual impact and to blend with the existing streetscape and materials. The aim is to keep a sense of enclosure and to break the potential of a continuous area of car parking in front of the dwellings by means of walls, hedging, planting, and use of differentiated quality paving materials.

– New development should seek to provide electric vehicle charging points in all types of car parking areas.

– Cycle parking must be integrated into all new housing.

ON-PLOT SIDE OR FRONT PARKING

– On-plot parking can be visually attractive when it is combined with high quality and well designed soft landscaping.

– Boundary treatment is the key element to help avoid a car-dominated character. This can be achieved by using elements such as hedges, trees, flower beds, low walls, and high quality paving materials between the private and public space.

– Hard standing and driveways must be constructed from porous materials to minimise surface water run-off.

Figure 64: On-plot front parking, Fallowfields.
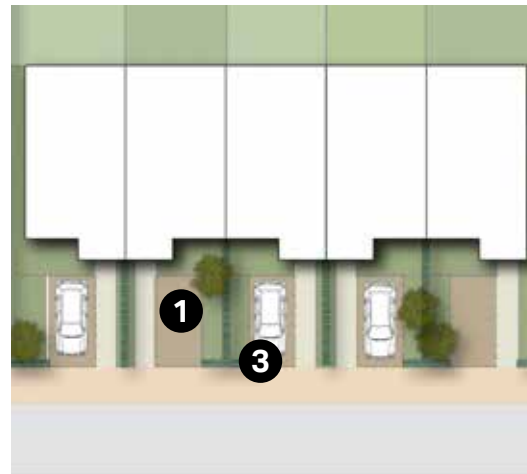
Figure 63: Illustrative diagram showing an indicative layout of on-plot front parking.

1. Front parking with part of the surface reserved for soft landscaping. Permeable pavement to be used whenever possible.
2. Side parking set back from the main building line. Permeable pavement to be used whenever possible.
3. Boundary hedges to screen vehicles and parking spaces.
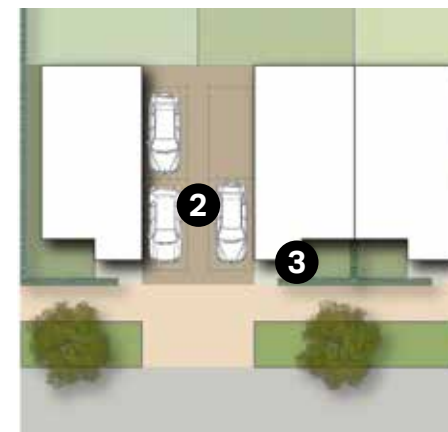
Figure 65: Illustrative diagram showing an indicative layout of on-plot side parking.

ON-PLOT GARAGES

–   Where provided, garages must be designed either as free standing structures or as additive form to the main building. In both situations, it must complement and harmonise with the architectural style of the main building rather than forming a mismatched unit.

–   Often, garages can be used as a design element to create a link between buildings and ensuring continuity of the building line. However, it should be considered that garages are not prominent elements and they must be designed accordingly.

–   It should be noted that many garages are not used for storing vehicles, and so may not be the best use of space.

–   Considerations must be given to the integration of bicycle parking and/or waste storage into garages.

Figure 66: On-plot parking with a garage, Green Fleet Drive.

1.   Side parking set back from the main building line. Permeable pavement to be used whenever possible.
2.   Garage structure set back from main building line. Height to be no higher than the main roofline.
3.   Boundary hedges to screen vehicles and parking spaces.

Figure 67: Illustrative diagram showing an indicative layout of on-plot parking with garages.

ON-STREET PARKING

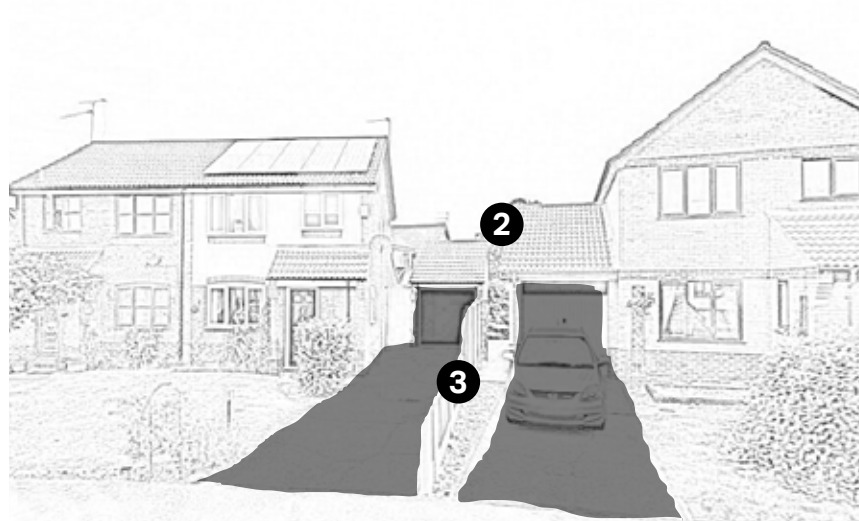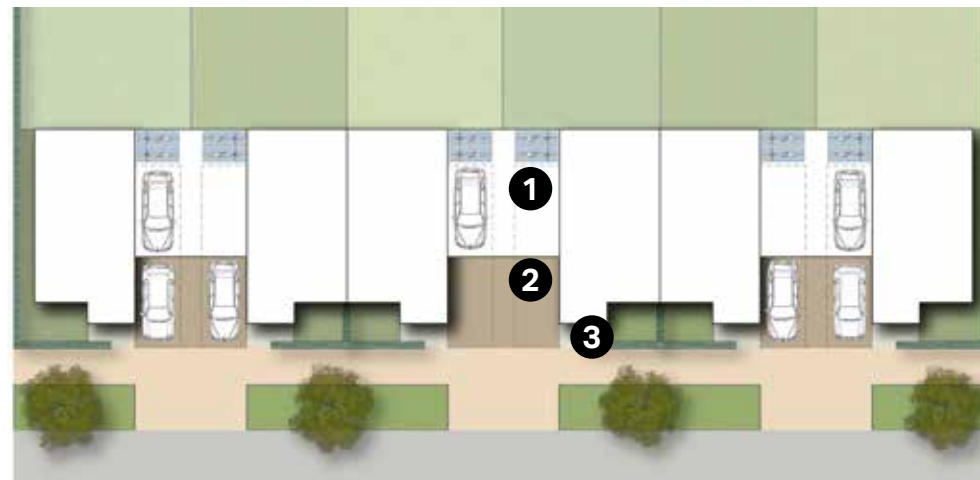– The streetscape should not to be dominated by continuous on-street parking spaces. Where possible, tree planting and other gaps between parking bays should be incorporated.

– On-street parking can be in parallel, perpendicular or echelon in relation with the traffic speed and the traffic volume.

– On-street parking must be designed to avoid impeding the flow of pedestrians, cyclists, and other vehicles, and can serve a useful informal traffic calming function.

– Parking bays can be inset between kerb build outs or street trees. Kerb build outs between parking bays can shorten pedestrian crossing distances and can host street furniture or green infrastructure. They must be sufficiently wide to shelter the entire parking bay in order to avoid impeding traffic.

– On low-traffic residential streets or lanes that are shared between vehicles and pedestrians, parking bays can be clearly marked using changes in paving materials instead of markings but must be of a different level to the pedestrian way e.g. with a kerb. This will provide drivers with an indication of where to park. The street must be sufficiently wide so that parked vehicles do not impede motor vehicles or pedestrians.

– Opportunities must be created for new public car parking spaces to include electric vehicle charging points. Such provision must be located conveniently throughout the town and designed to minimise street clutter.

Figure 68: A good practice example - on -street inset parking, Goldsmith Street, Norwich.

Figure 69: A good practice example - on-street perpendicular parking, Horstead Park, Kent.

1. On-street parking bay inset between kerb extensions.
2. Footway - additional green verge if street width permits.
3. Planted kerb extensions - width to be sufficient to fully shelter parking bay. Trees are optional but would be positive additions.
4. Boundary hedges.
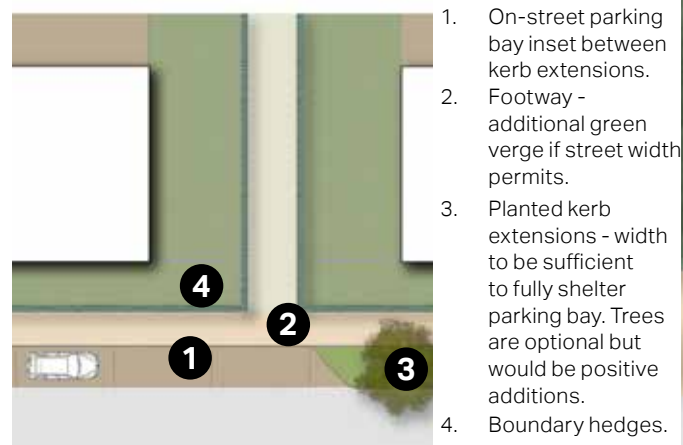
Figure 70: Illustrative diagram showing an indicative layout of on-street inset parking.

1. On-street perpendicular parking bay.
2. Footway.
3. Tree planting used to define car parking spaces.
4. Boundary hedges.
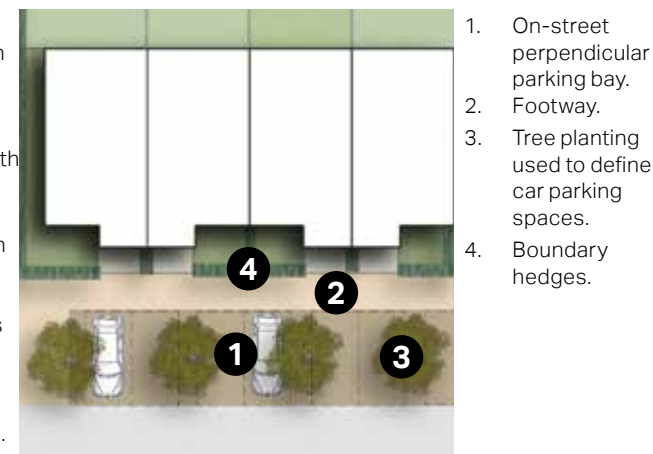
Figure 71: Illustrative diagram showing an indicative layout of on-street perpendicular parking.

SHARED SURFACE AND MEWS PARKING

– Shared surfaces should only be used in appropriate circumstances, at very low densities.

– Shared surfaces parking should not obstruct for vehicles, including for service vehicles, the emergency services and buses.

– Shared surfaces parking should not block footway and private accesses.

– For mews parking, most parking should be integrated on plot with some informal off plot spaces. These should be discretely marked and should not dominate the streetscape.

Figure 72: Good practice examples - The streets are designed with parking spaces and screened with planting.

Figure 73: Illustrative diagram showing an indicative layout of shared surface parking.

1. Shared surface parking.
2. Trees are used for screening car parking spaces, providing attractive streetscape.
3. Boundary hedges.
4. Pocket green space.

GP 15. Servicing

With modern requirements for waste separation and recycling, the number and size of household bins has increased. This poses a problem with the aesthetics of the property. Therefore, we recommend the following:

– When dealing with waste storage, servicing arrangements and site conditions should be taken into account; in some cases waste management should be from the front of the building and in others, from the rear. It is recommended that bins are located away from areas used as amenity space.

– Create a specific enclosure of sufficient size for all the necessary bins.

– Bins should be placed as close to the dwelling's boundary and the public highway, such as against a wall, fence, hedge but not in a way as to obstruct the shared surface for pedestrian and vehicle movements.

– Place it within easy access from the street and, where possible, with the ability to open on the pavement side to ease retrieval.

– Refer to the materials palette to analyse what would be a complementary material.

– Add to the environmentally sustainable design by incorporating a green roof element to it.

– It could be combined with cycle storage.

Bin storage design, minimising the visual impact of bins and recycling containers.

Figure 74: Bin storage design solution.

GP 16. Cycle parking

A straightforward way to encourage cycling is to provide secured covered cycle parking within all new residential developments and publicly available cycle parking in the public realm.

HOUSES WITHOUT GARAGES

–   For residential units, where there is no on-plot garage, covered and secured cycle parking should be provided within the domestic curtilage.

–   Cycle storage must be provided at a convenient location with an easy access.

–   When provided within the footprint of the dwelling or as a free standing shed, cycle parking should be accessed by means of a door at least 900mm and the structure should be at least 2m deep.

–   Parking should be secure, covered and it should be well integrated into the streetscape if it is allocated at the front of the house.

–   The use of planting and smaller trees alongside cycle parking can be used to mitigate any visual impact on adjacent spaces or buildings.

HOUSES WITH GARAGES

–   The minimum garage size should be 7mx3m to allow space for cycle storage.

–   Where possible cycle parking should be accessed from the front of the building either in a specially constructed enclosure or easily accessible garage.

–   The design of any enclosure should integrate well with the surroundings.

–   The bike must be removed easily without having to move the vehicle.

PUBLIC REALM

New development should promote cycling by providing more cycle routes and monitor the condition of the existing ones.

–   Bicycle stands in the public realm should be sited in locations that are convenient and that benefit from adequate natural surveillance. They should be placed in locations that do not impede pedestrian mobility or kerbside activities.

–   The chosen materials must be appropriate to its surroundings and follow the dimensions as illustrated below.

KEY
- Cycle storage
- Bin storage
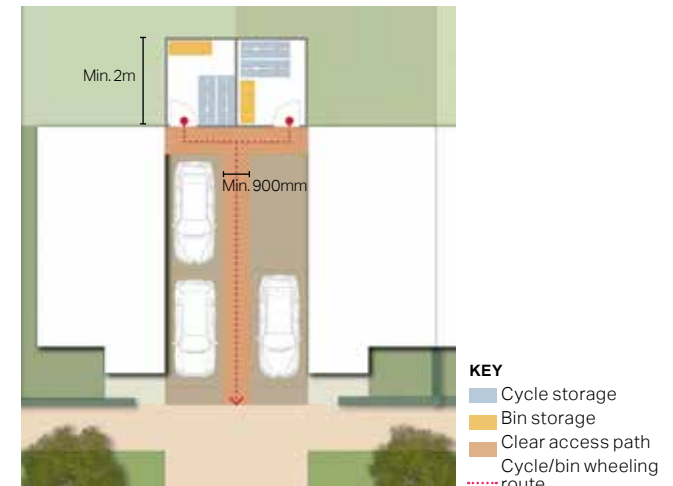- Clear access path
- Cycle/bin wheeling route

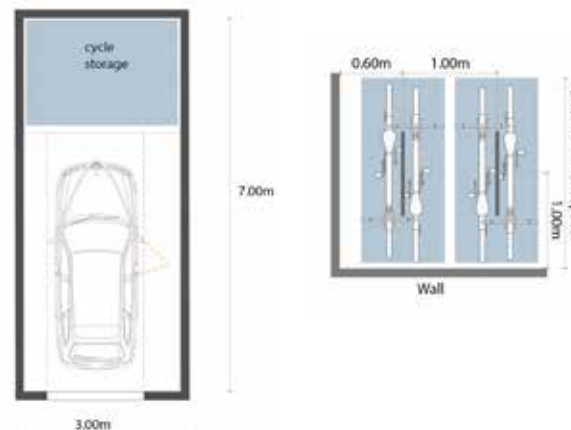Figure 75: Indicative layout of a bicycle and bin storage area at the back of semi-detached properties.

Figure 76: Indicative layout of a garage with a cycle storage area.
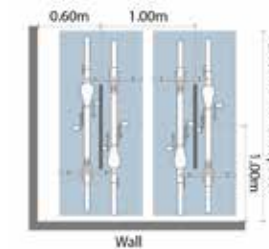
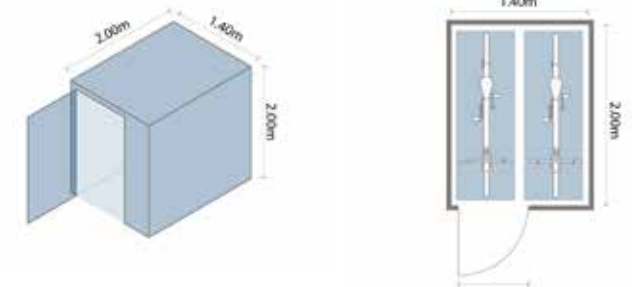Figure 77: Illustration of Sheffield cycle stands for visitors and cycle parking.

Figure 78: Illustration of secure covered cycle storage for two bikes.

3.2.6. Design for sustainability

GP 17. Sustainable building

The following section elaborates on energy efficient technologies that could be incorporated in buildings and a broader Parish design scale as principles.

Use of such principles and design tools should be encouraged in order to contribute towards a more sustainable environment.

Energy efficient or eco design combines all around energy efficient appliances and lighting with commercially available renewable energy systems, such as solar electricity and/or solar/ water heating.

Starting from the design stage there are strategies that can be incorporated to incorporate technologies such as passive solar heating, cooling and energy efficient landscaping which are determined by local climate and site conditions.
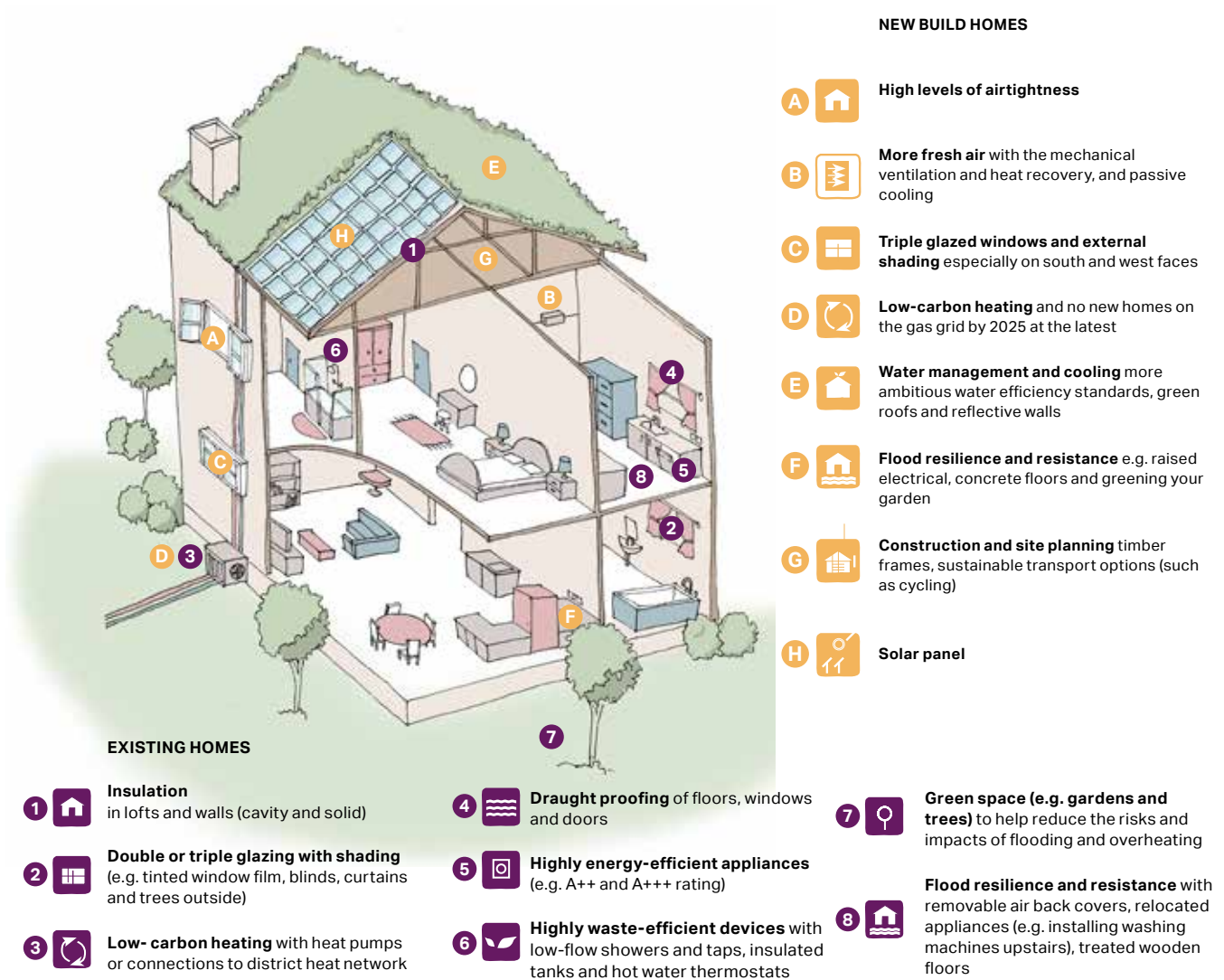

NEW BUILD HOMES

A **High levels of airtightness**

B **More fresh air** with the mechanical ventilation and heat recovery, and passive cooling

C **Triple glazed windows and external shading** especially on south and west faces

D **Low-carbon heating** and no new homes on the gas grid by 2025 at the latest

E **Water management and cooling** more ambitious water efficiency standards, green roofs and reflective walls

F **Flood resilience and resistance** e.g. raised electrical, concrete floors and greening your garden

G **Construction and site planning** timber frames, sustainable transport options (such as cycling)

H **Solar panel**

EXISTING HOMES

1 **Insulation** in lofts and walls (cavity and solid)

2 **Double or triple glazing with shading** (e.g. tinted window film, blinds, curtains and trees outside)

3 **Low- carbon heating** with heat pumps or connections to district heat network

4 **Draught proofing** of floors, windows and doors

5 **Highly energy-efficient appliances** (e.g. A++ and A+++ rating)

6 **Highly waste-efficient devices** with low-flow showers and taps, insulated tanks and hot water thermostats

7 **Green space (e.g. gardens and trees)** to help reduce the risks and impacts of flooding and overheating

8 **Flood resilience and resistance** with removable air back covers, relocated appliances (e.g. installing washing machines upstairs), treated wooden floors

Figure 79: Diagram showing low-carbon homes in both existing and new build conditions.

GP 18. Water management

ATTENUATION PONDS AND DETENSION BASINS

Where appropriate, opportunities to integrate attenuation ponds and detention basins into new and existing developments in Oulton should be examined to reduce the risk and severity of flooding.

Attenuation ponds are permanent bodies of water with stormwater storage capacity above the permanent water level. Detention basins are similar to attenuation ponds, but without a permanent pool of water.

Detention basins provide more attenuation storage per unit surface area than attenuation ponds of the same depth, so may be used when space is more limited. However, attenuation ponds are preferred due to the greater amenity and biodiversity benefits they can provide.

Attenuation ponds must be of a natural appearance to complement the rural character of the site. They can also be of educational benefit to schools and the local community.

– Detention basins should be vegetated to provide greater water quality benefits, such as through the removal of sediment. They should be designed to permit alternative uses when not in use, where appropriate.

– Attenuation ponds and detention basins must actively contribute as new public amenities and green spaces. It must be expected that people will interact with the water and landscaping, therefore they must be designed for safe public access and not fenced off.

Figure 80: Attenuation ponds and detention basins must be integrated into the green space strategy and designed with safe public access in mind so that they do not necessitate fencing. Designs similar to the facility in this picture must be avoided because they are dangerous and have unattractive fencing.

Figure 81: A good practice example - Derwenthorpe Phase One - York.

BIORETENTION SYSYEMS

Bioretention systems, including soak away and rain gardens, can be used within each development, along verges, and in semi-natural green spaces.

–   They must be designed to sit cohesively with the surrounding landscape, reflecting the natural character of the Parish. Vegetation must reflect that of the surrounding environment.

–   They can be used at varying scales, from small-scale rain gardens serving individual properties, to long green-blue corridors incorporating bioretention swales, tree pits and mini-wetlands, serving roads or extensive built-up areas.

These planted spaces are designed to enable water to infiltrate into the ground. Cutting of downpipes and enabling roof water to flow into rain gardens can significantly reduce the runoff into the sewer system. The UK Rain Garden Design Guidelines provides more detailed guidance on their feasibility and suggests planting to help improve water quality as well as attract biodiversity.[1]
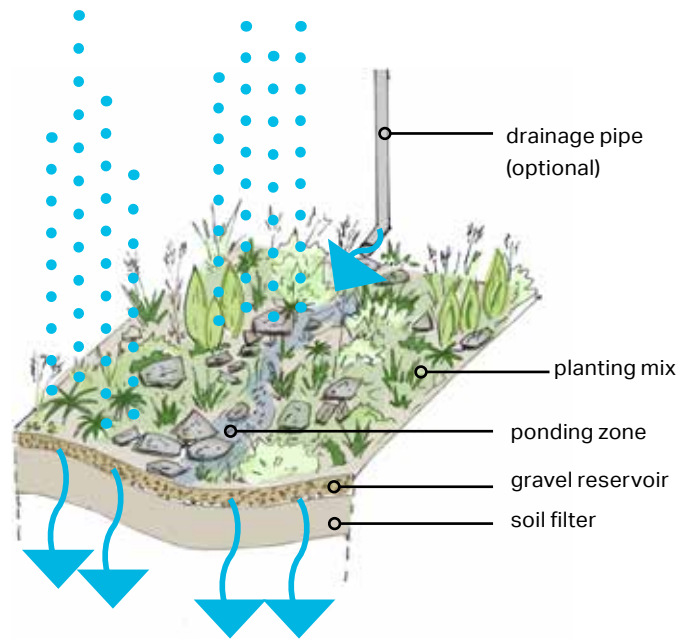
[1] UK Rain Gardens Guide. Available at: https://raingardens.info/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/UKRainGarden-Guide.pdf

drainage pipe (optional)

planting mix

ponding zone

gravel reservoir

soil filter

Figure 82: Diagram illustrating the functioning of a rain garden.

planting

paving

membrane

bedding layer

drainage pipe (optional)

soil

subbase
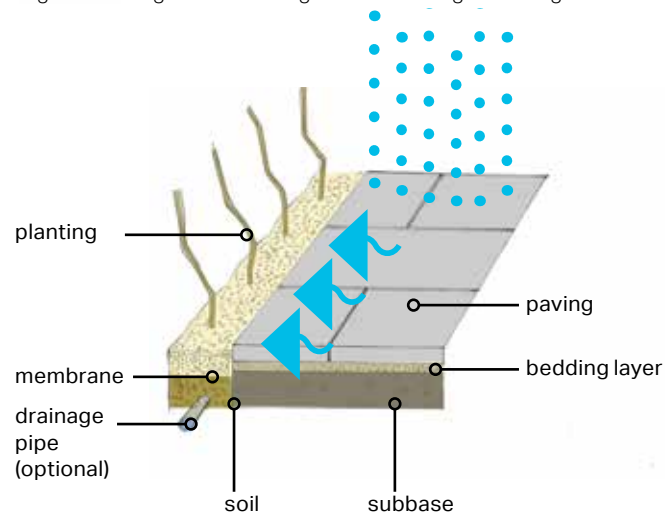
Figure 83: Diagram illustrating the functioning of a soak away garden.

Figure 84: Examples of rain gardens used along verges, Cambridgeshire.

STORAGE AND SLOW RELEASE

Rainwater harvesting refers to the systems allowing the capture and storage of rainwater as well as those enabling the reuse in-site of grey water. Simple storage solutions, such as water butts, can help provide significant attenuation. To be able to continue to provide benefits, there has to be some headroom within the storage solution. If water is not reused, a slow release valve allows water from the storage to trickle out, recreating capacity for future rainfall events. New digital technologies that predict rainfall events can enable stored water to be released when the sewer has greatest capacity to accept it.

These systems involve pipes and storage devices that could be unsightly if added without an integral vision for design. Therefore, some design recommendations would be to:

– Conceal tanks by cladding them in complementary materials;

– Use attractive materials or finishing for pipes;

– Combine landscape/planters with water capture systems;

– Underground tanks; and

– Utilise water bodies for storage.

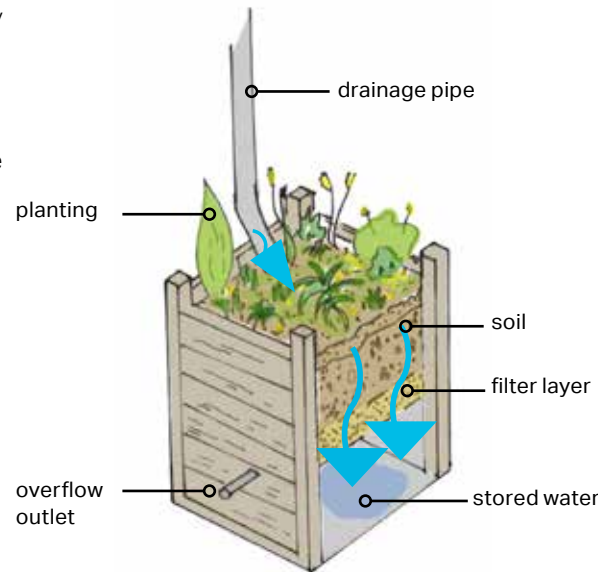Figure 85: Examples of water butts used for rainwater harvesting in Reach, Cambridgeshire.

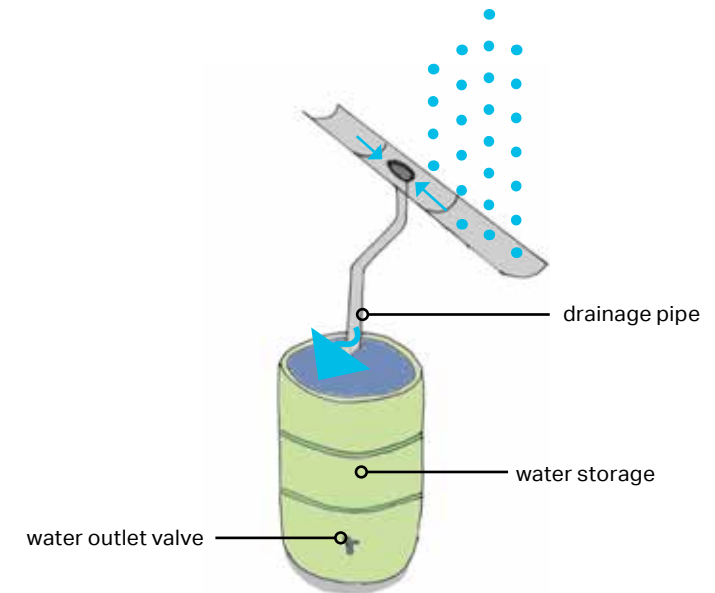Figure 86: Diagram illustrating the functioning of a stormwater planter.

Figure 87: Diagram illustrating the functioning of a water butt.

PERMEABLE PAVING

Most built-up areas, including roads and driveways, increase impervious surfaces and reduce the capacity of the ground to absorb runoff water. This in turn increases the risks of surface water flooding. Permeable pavements offer a solution to maintain soil permeability while performing the function of conventional paving. The choice of permeable paving units must be made depending on the local context; the units may take the form of unbound gravel, clay pavers, or stone setts.

Permeable paving can be used where appropriate on footpaths, public squares, private access roads, driveways, and private areas within the individual development boundaries. In addition, permeable pavement must also:

– Flood and Water Management Act 2010, Schedule 3;[1]

– The Building Regulations Part H – Drainage and Waste Disposal;[2]

– Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015;[3]

Regulations, standards, and guidelines relevant to permeable paving and sustainable drainage are listed below:

– Sustainable Drainage Systems - non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems;[1]

– The SuDS Manual (C753);[2]

– BS 8582:2013 Code of practice for surface water management for development sites;[3]

– BS 7533-13:2009 Pavements constructed with clay, natural stone or concrete pavers;[4] and

– Guidance on the Permeable Surfacing of Front Gardens.[5]

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[1] Great Britain (2010). *Flood and Water Management Act, Schedule 3*. Available at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/29/schedule/3
[2] Great Britain (2010). *The Building Regulations Part H – Drainage and Waste Disposal*. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/442889/BR_PDF_AD_H_2015.pdf
[3] Great Britain (2015). *Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015*. Available at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/596/pdfs/uksi_20150596_en.pdf

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[1] Great Britain. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2015). *Sustainable drainage systems – non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems*. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/415773/sustainable-drainage-technical-standards.pdf
[2] CIRIA (2015). *The SuDS Manual (C753)*.
[3] British Standards Institution (2013). *BS 8582:2013 Code of practice for surface water management for development sites*. Available at: https://shop.bsigroup.com/ProductDetail/?pid=000000000030253266
[4] British Standards Institution (2009). *BS 7533-13:2009 Pavements constructed with clay, natural stone or concrete pavers*. Available at: https://shop.bsigroup.com/ProductDetail/?pid=000000000030159352
[5] Great Britain. Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2008). *Guidance on the Permeable Surfacing of Front Gardens*. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7728/pavingfrontgardens.pdf
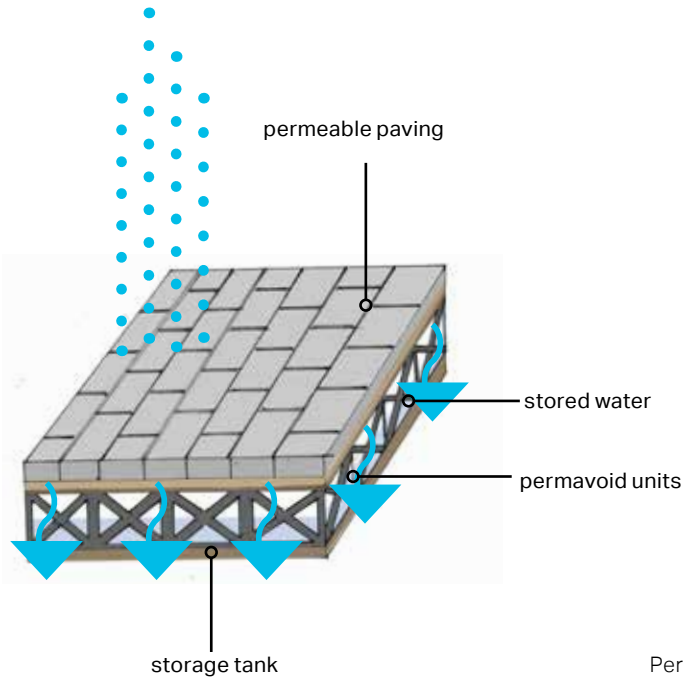
permeable paving

stored water

permavoid units

storage tank

Figure 88: Diagram illustrating the functioning of a soak away.

open graded bedding

permeable paving

open graded base

open graded subbase

drainage pipe (optional)
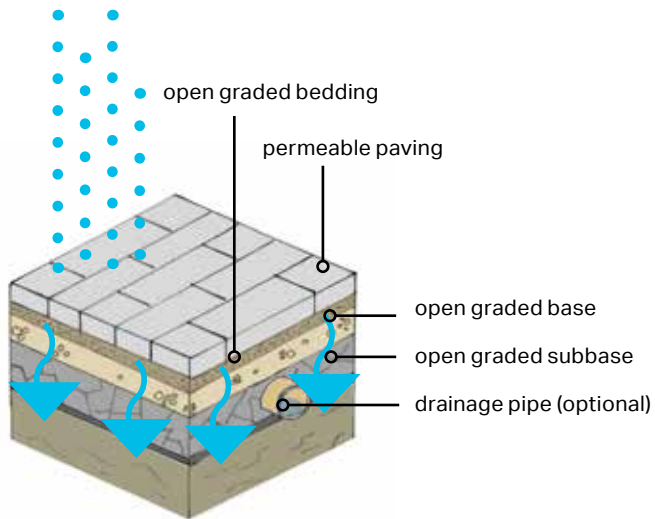
Figure 89: Diagram illustrating the functioning of a soak away.

Permeable stone bedding

Large permeable stone

Original soil

Planting area

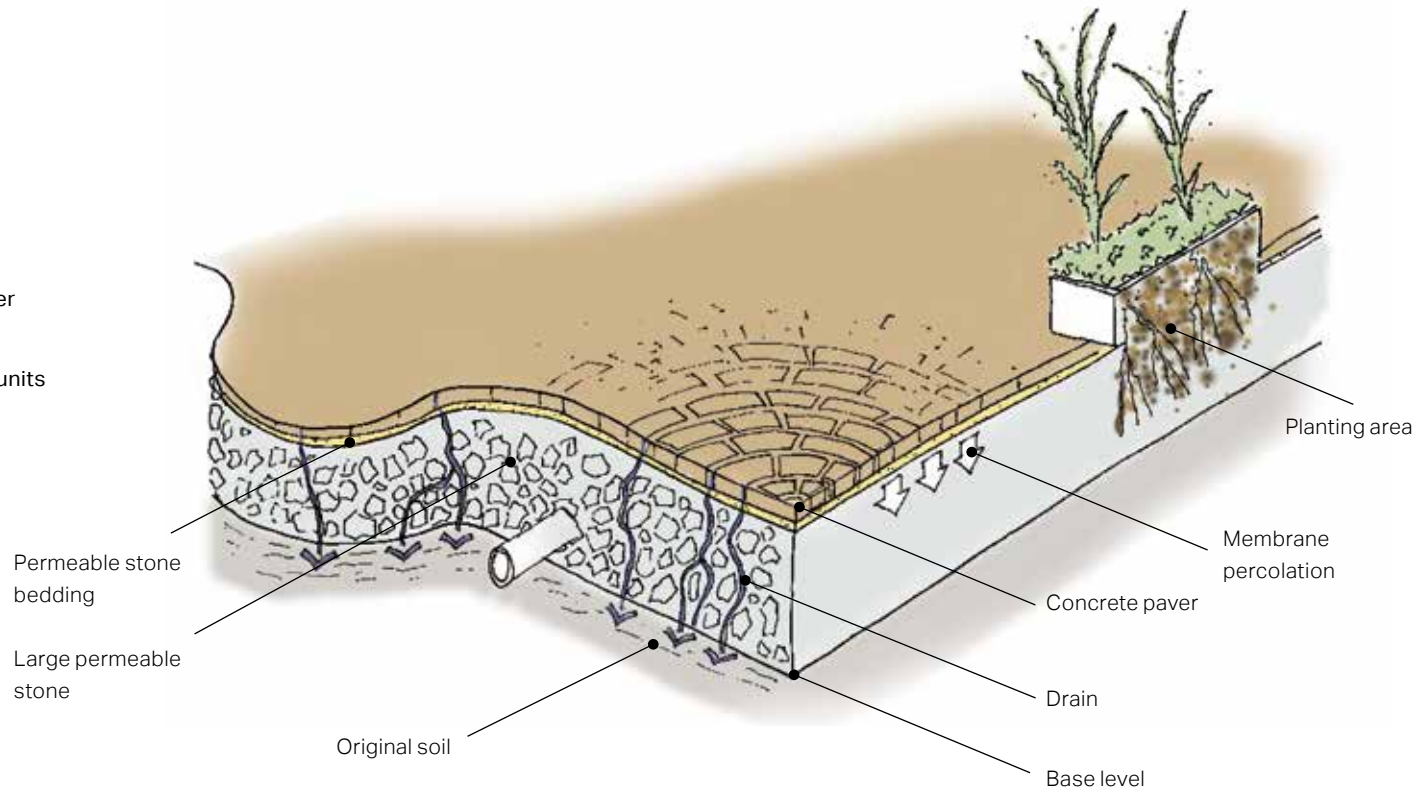Membrane percolation

Concrete paver

Drain

Base level

Figure 90: Permeable paving and considerations diagram.

Figure 91: Examples of permeable paving treatments: unbound clay pavers (left), precast concrete setts (centre), and gravel (right).

3.3. Design Codes for each character area

Character area 1- Oulton's Heart

The priority for this character area is to maintain the linear pattern of development along the roads with building setbacks varying in distance from the pavement.

LAYOUT AND BUILDING APPEARANCE

– Buildings should be organised in a linear format along main roads with well-sized front gardens, vegetated boundaries and where possible on-plot parking.

– New development should maintain the rich vernacular of the area in terms of architectural details and textures. More details can be found in the relevant section GP14.

– Buildings should not be repetitive, and should provide a variety of building types and design with coherent scale, massing and elegant simplicity in detailing.

– New development should maintain the variety in building typologies that already exist in the area (bungalows, detached, semi-detached and terraced houses). In addition, new buildings should match the height of surrounding properties and should not generally exceed 2 to 2.5 storeys.

– Monotonous building elevations should be avoided, therefore subtle changes in roofline should be ensured during the design process. Dormers and chimneys can be used as design elements to add variety and interest to roofs.

– Any future improvement related to streetscape should prioritise pedestrians and cyclists and promote road safety, while accommodating cycling, parking and service needs.
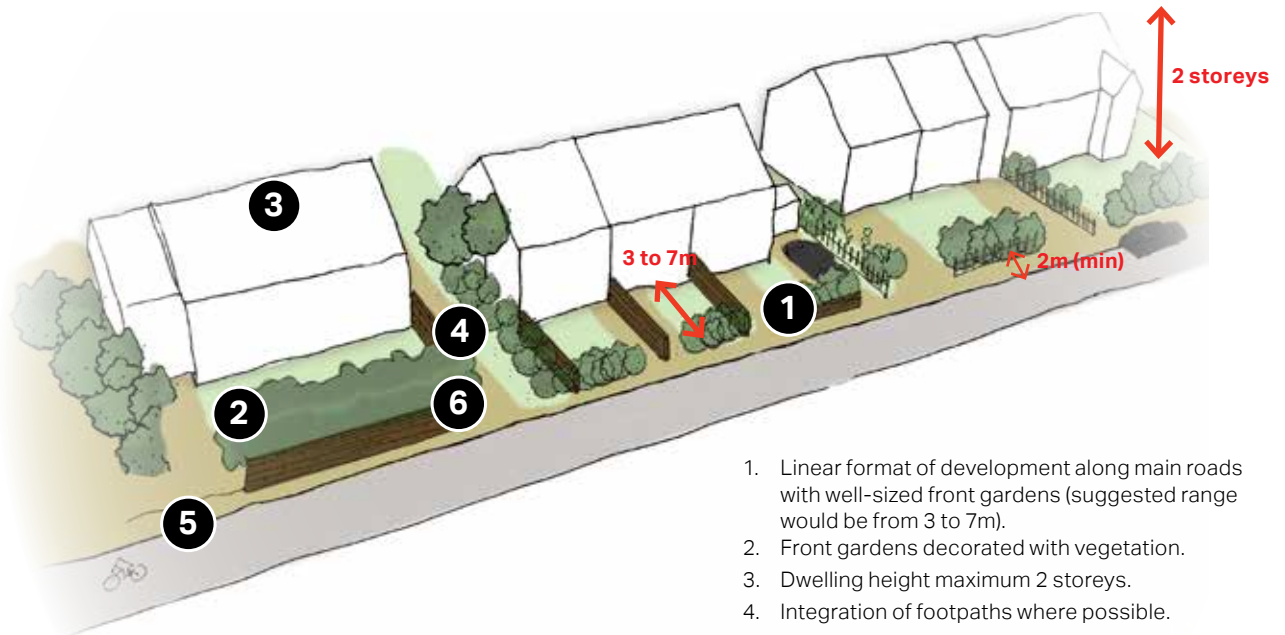
1. Linear format of development along main roads with well-sized front gardens (suggested range would be from 3 to 7m).
2. Front gardens decorated with vegetation.
3. Dwelling height maximum 2 storeys.
4. Integration of footpaths where possible.
5. Wider pavement (minimum 2m) along main roads to accommodate movement.
6. Low brick walls (or ironmongery as well) with vegetation to give a good visual impact to pedestrians and ensure a level of privacy for the owners. Panel fencing should be avoided.

Figure 92: Illustration to show a linear development highlighting design elements, related to the pattern and layout of buildings.

Character area 2 - Sands Lane & Dunston Drive

The priority for this character area is to preserve its well-connected street network which accommodates cycle lanes and footpaths and to enhance connections with the village centre and the countryside.

LAYOUT AND BUILDING APPEARANCE

- New developments should focus on creating an interconnected street network, avoiding creating cul-de-sacs, which prevail in this character area.

- The character area is well connected by footpaths. A permeable network should be achieved within development sites as well as connecting to the wider areas. Thus, any new surrounding development should provide attractive and direct footpaths to link up neighbouring streets, local facilities and open spaces.

- Parking provision should include on-plot parking as well as on-street. Green verges and street trees should decorate the roads to minimise the impression of car dominance. For more details, please see relevant section on page 56.

- Subtle deviations in alignment and small variations in enclosure of streets can allow the creation of small incidental spaces to create interest and legibility.

- New development should cater for a good distribution of open spaces, including facilities, e.g. playgrounds, to accommodate the needs of local people.

- Buildings should not be repetitive, and provide variety of building types and design with coherent scale, massing and elegant simplicity in detailing.

- New development should maintain the variety in building typologies that already exist in the area (bungalows, detached, semi-detached and terraced houses). In addition, new buildings should match the height of surrounding properties and should not generally exceed 2 to 2.5 storeys.
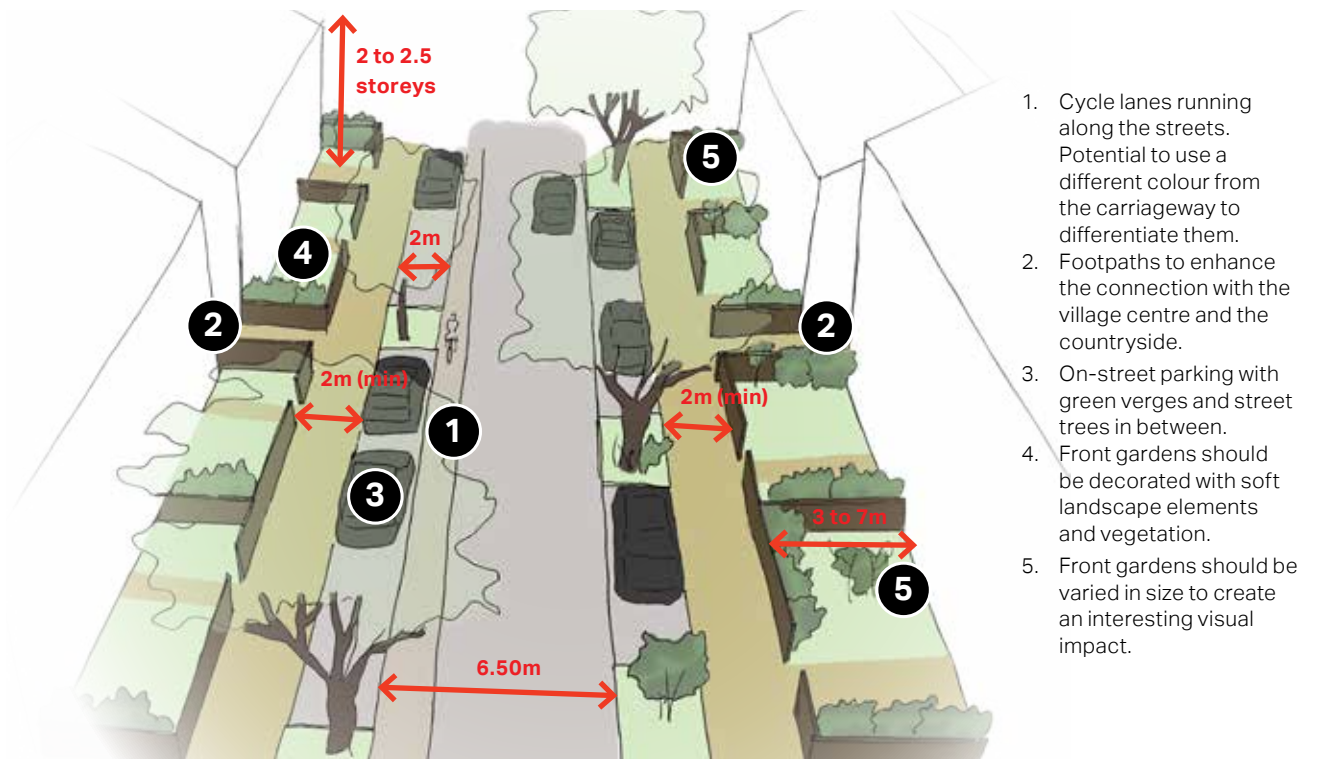
1. Cycle lanes running along the streets. Potential to use a different colour from the carriageway to differentiate them.
2. Footpaths to enhance the connection with the village centre and the countryside.
3. On-street parking with green verges and street trees in between.
4. Front gardens should be decorated with soft landscape elements and vegetation.
5. Front gardens should be varied in size to create an interesting visual impact.

Figure 93: Illustration to show a residential street highlighting design elements to improve connectivity and promote alternative modes of transport .

Character area 3 - Fallowfields & Woods Meadow development

The priority for this character area is to meet the needs of the residents in terms of parking conditions and to address congestion and access issues.

LAYOUT AND BUILDING APPEARANCE

– On-street parking provision should be integrated into the design to minimise issues of congestion and access for service vehicles. In addition, designated parking spaces for visitors, service and emergency vehicles should be integrated into design.

– Road network should be oriented in a way to preserve and enhance the views to the countryside. In addition to this, streets should accommodate green verges and street trees in order to enhance the feeling of being close to nature.

– Any new development close to the countryside should be carefully sited to minimise negative impacts on the appearance of the landscape. New buildings should be located away from ridge tops or prominent locations; instead, they should be placed where they can be screened by existing trees or new planting and where there is a backdrop of woodlands so that they do not break the skyline.

– Long brick walls resulting from back to back gardens of buildings facing main streets should be avoided. Alternatively, they can be replaced by hedgerows. In addition, buildings at the corners of building blocks should have both side façades animated with doors and/or windows.

– New development should propose a variety of building typologies; like bungalows, detached, semi-detached and terraced houses, as well as materials and building heights. New buildings should match the height of surrounding properties and should not generally exceed 2 to 3 storeys.
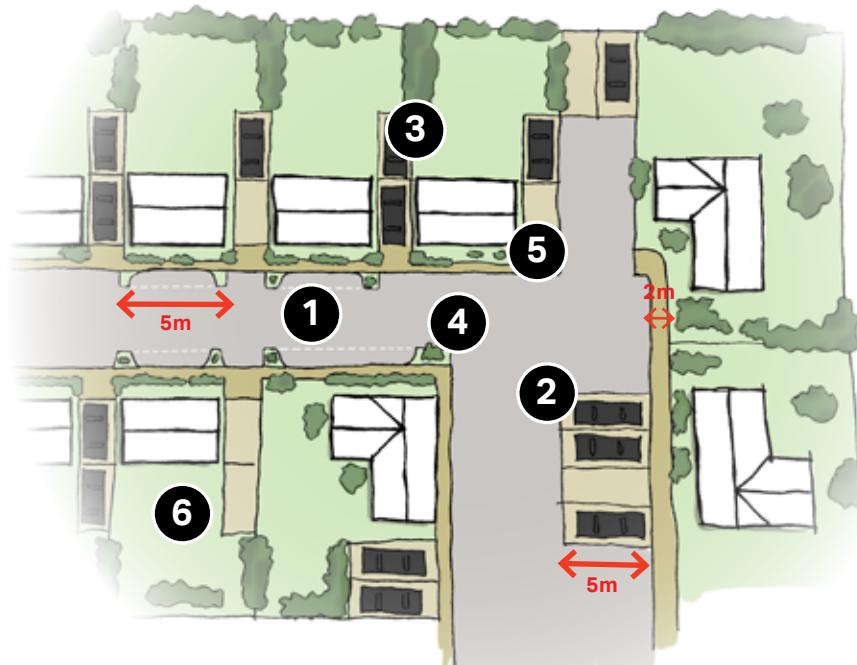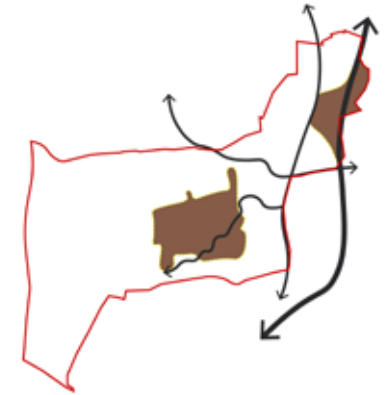
1. On-street parking provision available for visitors and drop-offs for service vehicles.
2. Parking spaces available for visitors, service and emergency vehicles.
3. On-plot parking with two car parking spaces.
4. Street trees between on-street parking.
5. Front gardens decorated with soft landscape elements and vegetation.
6. Well-sized front and back gardens.

Figure 94: Illustration to show a residential street highlighting types of parking that could be integrated into design.

Character area 4 - Rural area

The priority for this character area is to maintain the rural character and preserve the green infrastructure available in the area.

LAYOUT AND BUILDING APPEARANCE

– New developments must demonstrate a good understanding of the scale, building orientation, enclosure, and façade rhythm of the surrounding built environment to respect its rural character.

– Boundary treatment should include hedgerows and trees to fit nicely into the surroundings and create a feeling of enclosure. Long, medium height brick walls should be avoided as they diminish the rural character.

– New properties should be clustered in small pockets showing a variety of types. The use of a repeating type of dwelling along the entirety of the street should be avoided to create variety and interest in the streetscape.

– New properties should be set back from the edge of the road with well-sized gardens and vegetation.

– Any proposal that would adversely affect the physical appearance of the rural lane or give rise to an unacceptable increase in the amount of traffic, noise, or disturbance would be inappropriate.

– Appropriate signage should be incorporated along the road to indicate speed limits, which should be approximately 20 m/h.
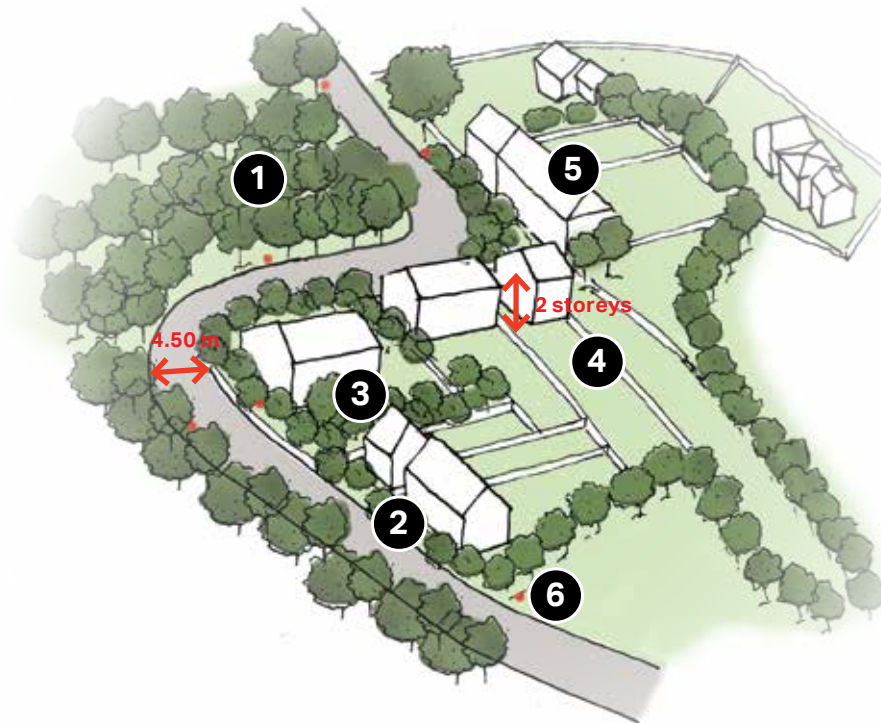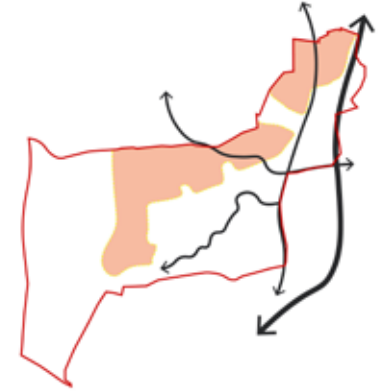
1. Green infrastructure should be protected and enhanced where appropriate.
2. Front gardens should be decorated with soft landscape elements and vegetation.
3. Properties should be separated with green buffers while long brick walls should be avoided.
4. Well-sized front and back gardens.
5. Variety of building typologies.
6. Appropriate signage indicating speed limits.

Figure 95: Illustrative plan for a rural edge development highlighting design elements, related to the pattern and layout of buildings.

Character area 5 - Business Park

The guidelines below aim to guide any potential development in close proximity to the business park.

LAYOUT AND BUILDING APPEARANCE

– Road network should be laid out in a way to facilitate the circulation within the business park.

– Proposals for new industrial developments should avoid the creation of access conflicts with the surrounding residential areas.

– Building layout should optimise the use of land according to the proposed land use, whilst ensuring the other design guidelines contained within this document are not compromised.

– Building height and mass should not create abrupt changes in proximity to existing residential areas, but should be integrated within the surrounding context.

– The design of new buildings in the industrial area should be consistent in scale with nearby industrial buildings.

– New developments should be attractively designed and use high quality contemporary building forms and materials.

– Parking lots should not dominate the area and should be screened by vegetation and mature trees and, where possible, be located to the rear of buildings.

VIEWS AND CONNECTIONS WITH THE COUNTRYSIDE

– Landscape buffer zones should be provided between the residential and the industrial area to soften the visual impact of the new developments.

– Potential view towards the open countryside should not be obstructed by new industrial buildings.

– Landscape screening and building orientation should be used to minimize the visual impact of new development over the surrounding settlement and countryside.

– The general design of the development should maintain and enhance view corridors from and to the site, potential focal points and gateway functions.

BOUNDARY TREATMENT

– Buildings should be well set back from main roads to provide opportunity for landscape planting to improve the visual quality of the streetscape.

– Boundary treatment for new developments should be designed to frame the building and improve the overall streetscape.

– Plot boundaries should be screened with native vegetation or other landscape design solutions.

MATERIALS

– A common material palette should be adopted and used throughout the area to provide a unified and identifiable image of the industrial area.

– Light and/or neutral colours should be used on industrial buildings to help reduce their perceived size into the surrounding landscape.

1. Locate the most active uses on the ground floor fronting the street to increase their visual permeability.
2. Locate yard and loading space to the rear.
3. Design public spaces and meeting places, avoid creating new low quality green space at the edge of an industrial site.
4. Use ancillary uses and landscaping to provide a buffer between residential and industrial uses.
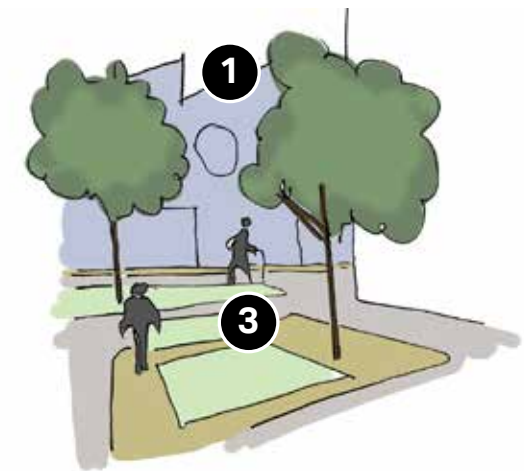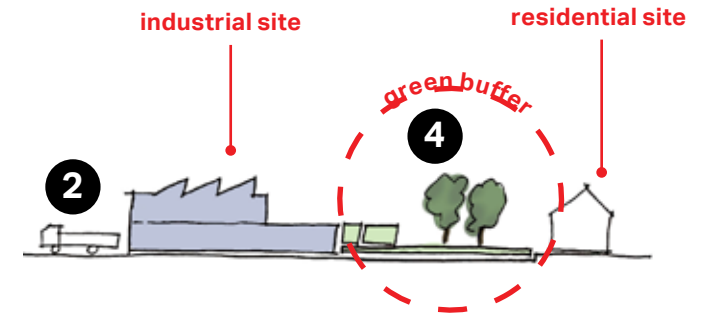

Figure 96: Illustrative plan for industrial development highlighting design elements, related to green spaces and movement.

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3.4. General questions to ask and issues to consider when presented with a development proposal

Because the design guidelines of this chapter cannot cover all design eventualities, this section provides a number of questions based on established good practice against which the design proposal should be evaluated. The aim is to assess all proposals by objectively answering the questions below. Not all the questions will apply to every development. The relevant ones, however, should provide an assessment as to whether the design proposal has taken into account the context and provided an adequate design solution.

As a first step there are a number of ideas or principles that should be present in the proposals. The proposals or design should:

1. Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity;

2. Reinforce or enhance the established village or smaller settlement character of streets, greens, and other spaces;

3. Respect the rural character of views and gaps;

4. Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use;

5. Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long-distance views;

6. Reflect, respect, and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness;

7. Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development;

8. Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;

9. Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;

10. Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;

11. Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;

12. Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other;

13. Make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation, and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours; and

14. Positively integrate energy efficient technologies.

Following these ideas and principles, there are number of questions related to the design guidelines outlined later in the document.

Street grid and layout
– Does it favour accessibility and connectivity over cul-de-sac models? If not, why?

– Do the new points of access and street layout have regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists, and those with disabilities?

– What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern? Are these reflected in the proposal?

– How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?

– Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?

– Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

Green spaces, views and character
– What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design; i.e. what are the landscape qualities of the area?

– Does the proposal maintain or enhance any identified views or views in general?

– How does the proposal affect the trees on or adjacent to the site?

– Has the proposal been considered within its wider physical context?

– Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?

– In rural locations, has the impact of the development on the tranquillity of the area been fully considered?

– How does the proposal affect the character of a rural location?

– How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?

– Can any new views be created?

– Is there adequate amenity space for the development?

– Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?

– Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?

– Will any communal amenity spaces be created? If so, how will this be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?

Gateway and access features

– What is the arrival point, how is it designed?

– Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between settlements?

– Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building or listed landscape?

– Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

Buildings layout and grouping

– What are the typical groupings of buildings?

– How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?

– Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the townscape?

– What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?

– Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters stemming from the main road?

– Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?

Building line and boundary treatment

– What are the characteristics of the building line?

– How has the building line been respected in the proposals?

– Has the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?

Building heights and roofline

– What are the characteristics of the roofline?

– Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing, and scale?

– If a higher than average building is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?

Household extensions

– Does the proposed design respect the character of the area and the immediate neighbourhood, or does it have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties in relation to privacy, overbearing, or overshadowing impact?

– Is the roof form of the extension appropriate to the original dwelling (considering angle of pitch)?

– Do the proposed materials match those of the existing dwelling?

– In case of side extension, does it retain important gaps within the street scene and avoid a 'terracing effect'?

– Are there any proposed dormer roof extensions set within the roof slope?

– Does the proposed extension respond to the existing pattern of window and door openings?

– Is the side extension set back from the front of the house?

Building materials and surface treatment

– What is the distinctive material in the area, if any?

– Does the proposed material harmonise with the local materials?

– Does the proposal use high-quality materials?

– Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves, and roof been addressed in the context of the overall design?

– Do the new proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?

Car parking solutions

– What parking solutions have been considered?

– Are the car spaces located and arranged in a way that is not dominant or detrimental to the sense of place?

– Has planting been considered to soften the presence of cars?

– Does the proposed car parking compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?

– Have the needs of wheelchair users been considered?

Architectural details and contemporary design

– If the proposal is within a conservation area, how are the characteristics reflected in the design?

– Does the proposal harmonise with the adjacent properties? This means that it follows the height, massing, and general proportions of adjacent buildings and how it takes cues from materials and other physical characteristics.

– Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing landscape features?

– Has the local architectural character and precedent been demonstrated in the proposals?

– If the proposal is a contemporary design, are the details and materials of a sufficiently high enough quality and does it relate specifically to the architectural characteristics and scale of the site?

Delivery

04

4. Delivery

The Design Guidelines and Codes will be a valuable tool in securing context-driven, high quality development within Oulton Parish. They will be used in different ways by different actors in the planning and development process, as summarised in the table.

ACTORS	HOW THEY WILL USE THE DESIGN GUIDELINES
Applicants, developers, and landowners	As a guide to community and Local Planning Authority expectations on design, allowing a degree of certainty – they will be expected to follow the Guidelines as planning consent is sought.
Local Planning Authority	As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications. The Design Guidelines should be discussed with applicants during any pre-application discussions.
Parish Council	As a guide when commenting on planning applications, ensuring that the Design Guidelines are complied with.
Community organisations	As a tool to promote community-backed development and to inform comments on planning applications.
Statutory consultees	As a reference point when commenting on planning applications.

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