

September 19

# Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan

FOR CONSULTATION

**DRAFT 1.1**

HUNSDON EASTWICK AND GILSTON  
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN GROUP

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# 1. Introduction to the Neighbourhood Plan

## Why have a Neighbourhood Plan?

- 1.1 The Green Belt designation, which restricted development in the area around Gilston and Eastwick, was removed with the East Hertfordshire District Plan adopted in October 2018, when the area was allocated for significant growth (10,000 homes, jobs and services). The development forms a part of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town government initiative, which is expected to deliver comprehensive infrastructure upgrades in the area and regenerate Harlow, with support of government funding and substantial housing development.
- 1.2 People living in the area are concerned about the impacts of this on their communities and are determined to influence the character and quality of the new development to ensure that the integrity of Hertfordshire settlements is respected and development takes place in a way that protects the landscape, heritage, and the essential quality of living in this area. A shared aspiration is to ensure that the removal of Green Belt status from this area genuinely leads to a development of exceptional quality, that will create a set of distinctive villages each with their own individual identity set within an attractive rural landscape, while at the same time protecting and enhancing the existing settlements and delivering benefits for existing and new communities.
- 1.3 The preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan provides a very important instrument to shape the future of the area. Whilst it cannot change the site allocation made in the District Plan, it can set out more detailed planning policies to guide how development takes place and how the existing settlements and new villages will be shaped in the future. Crucially, the Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan<sup>1</sup> (GANP or simply 'the Plan' hereafter) is being prepared directly by the local community, through the Hunsdon Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Group which represents the Parish Councils and is made up of people living within the Parishes<sup>2</sup>. Once 'made', after the Referendum, (see Plan Preparation process below), the Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan will have a policy status similar to that of the District Plan and provide the statutory planning policy framework for the determination of all planning applications in the Neighbourhood Plan area: this means that developers will have to take account of its policies when putting forward development for approval.
- 1.4 The Neighbourhood Plan enables the community to be an effective part of the decision-making process and it is an important way to influence the future of the area. Other ways include:
  - Commenting through formal representations on the District Plan and taking an active part in the Examination in Public (EiP) – undertaken in 2017-2018

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<sup>1</sup> The Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan (GANP) refers to the Eastwick, Gilston and part of Hunsdon Neighbourhood Plan designated area – See Fig. 1 - Neighbourhood Plan Area Boundary

<sup>2</sup> The Hunsdon Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Group has been constituted in 2017, and has been working hard in trying to influence the future of the area. It meets regularly in Gilston and is open to all local residents wishing to join and take an active role - [www.hegnp.org.uk](http://www.hegnp.org.uk)

- Participating proactively in other initiatives, such as the strategy for the A414 (Hertfordshire County Council) and the preparation of guidance documents for the Garden Town – in 2018 / ongoing
  - Providing technical responses to the major planning applications in the area – ongoing
  - Maintaining collaboration and dialogue with the local planning authorities, the developers and their technical teams so that they can understand and take account of local perspectives – also ongoing.
- 1.5 Critically, between summer 2017 and spring 2018, the local community worked closely with the developers, landowners and East Hertfordshire Council in the preparation of the Gilston Area Concept Framework<sup>3</sup> (CF) which was finalised by the developers and endorsed by the Council in July 2018 as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. This document sets out a vision and key development principles, which emerged from engagement of the community through workshops in September 2017 and January 2018 and have been jointly agreed by all parties. The Parish Councils believe that the Concept Framework (2018) sets appropriate foundations for respectful development but they recognise it does not have the status of formally adopted planning policy.
- 1.6 For this reason, the Parish Councils agreed to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan, which is essentially based on the agreement reached by the Council, developers and community through the CF and elevates it to formal policy status so that, together with the District Plan, it will provide the planning policy framework for the determination of all planning applications in the Neighbourhood Plan area. This is of significant importance to local people who are concerned about the potential impacts of such large scale development and want to ensure that the principles set out in the District Plan and the Concept Framework are carried forward in the design and development of the proposed villages.
- 1.7 This Consultation Draft of the Neighbourhood Plan sets out in policy terms what matters to the community and reflects what has been agreed with the Council and developers since September 2017. In developing a Neighbourhood Plan from the extensive discussions and consultations which have taken place over the past couple of years, the Neighbourhood Planning Group and local communities aim to give the strongest possible weight to their views and priorities whilst respecting the aspirations of the Council and developers. With this in mind, the GANP sets out:
- **A shared vision** for the Neighbourhood Area
  - **Key development principles** for comprehensive and integrated development, respectful of the character of Hertfordshire villages and maximising benefits for the existing and new communities;
  - **Planning policies for determining future planning applications**, with a particular focus on the preparation of a comprehensive landscape masterplan for the improvement of whole area (including the existing settlements) which will provide the framework for the creation of individual new villages;
  - **Other controls** needed to protect existing communities **and actions** required to deliver improvements;

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<sup>3</sup> See - <https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/article/36592/Other-Material-Considerations>

- **Priority projects** for future funding and implementation;
  - Delivery strategy.
- 1.8 The Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to review to ensure that it can respond to changes over time and if necessary, provide revised policies and development guidelines for future phases of development.

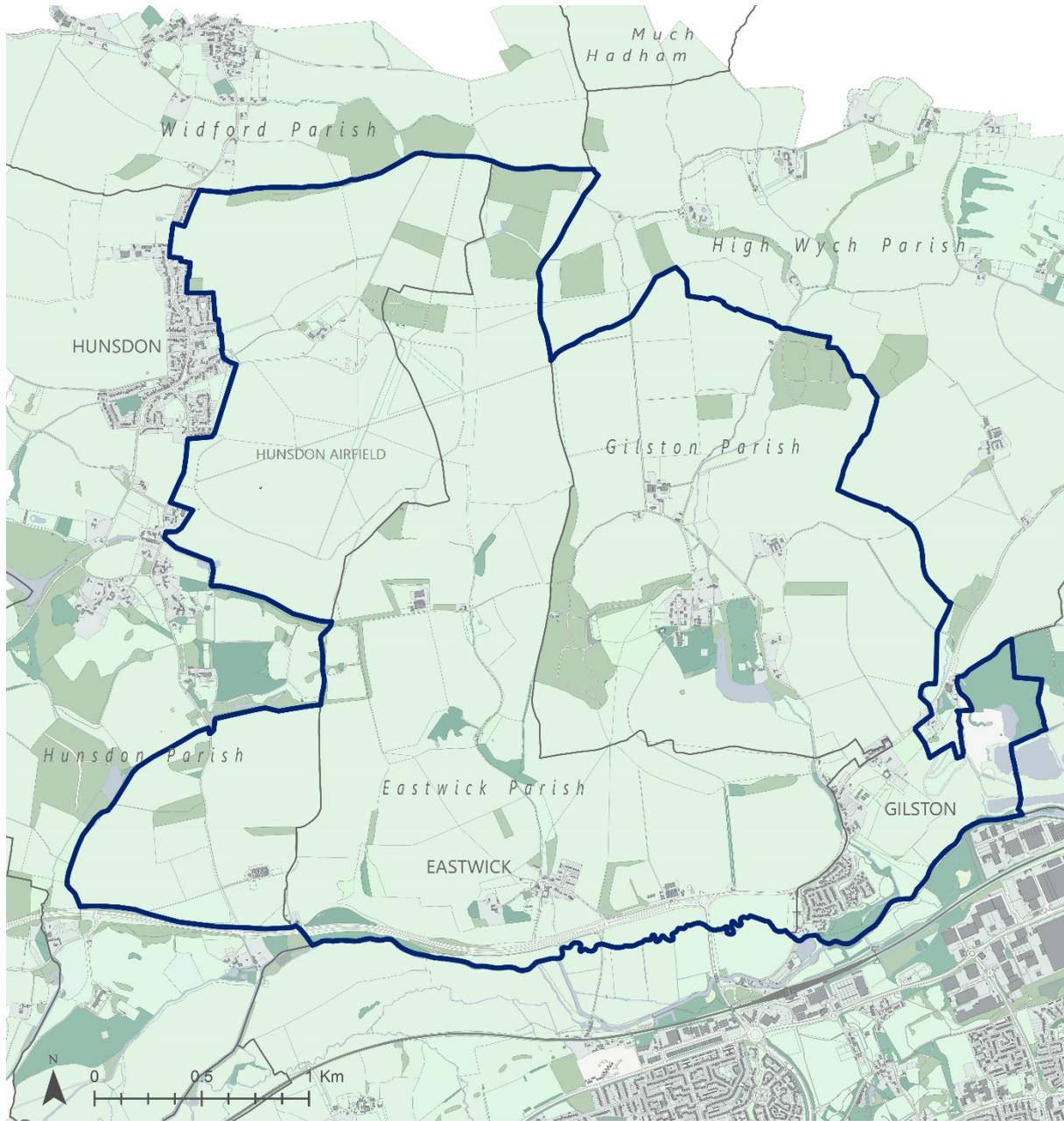
### Designation of the Neighbourhood Area

- 1.9 The Neighbourhood Plan covers the entirety of Gilston Parish, Eastwick Parish and that part of Hunsdon Parish which lies within the proposed Gilston Area (Policy GA1) outlined in the East Hertfordshire District Plan and constitutes the rural portion of the Parish of Hunsdon east of Hunsdon village, from the outer boundaries of Hunsdon House (excluded) and the land to the south of it to the A414 (see Fig. 1).
- 1.10 The application for designation of the Neighbourhood Area was approved by East Hertfordshire Council on 28 November 2017.
- 1.11 The remainder of the Parish of Hunsdon (including the village, the SSSI and part of the Stort Valley and Briggens House) is a separately designated Neighbourhood Plan Area, for which a Neighbourhood Plan is currently in preparation<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Hunsdon Neighbourhood Plan - <http://hunsdonneighbourhoodplan.org.uk/>

Fig. 1 - Neighbourhood Plan Area Boundary



-  Neighbourhood Plan Boundary
-  Parish Boundaries

## Plan Preparation Process

- 1.12 The GANP has been prepared in accordance with the policies in the District Plan and is founded on the extensive public consultation which took place with the local community during development of the Concept Framework between September 2017 and January 2018, and subsequent meetings and discussions within the communities and with the Neighbourhood Plan Group and Parish Councils.
- 1.13 It also takes account of the outcomes of Steering Group Meetings formally hosted by East Herts Council, and attended by the developers, the County Council and the Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Plan Group.
- 1.14 Neighbourhood Plans must be prepared in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended)<sup>5</sup>. As a result, preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan is required to satisfy a number of basic conditions. The Plan has had regard to and is in general conformity with strategic policies contained in the following documents:
- National Planning Policy Framework (as amended March 2019)
  - East Hertfordshire District Plan (adopted March 2019)
- 1.15 A more detailed explanation of how this draft plan conforms with national and local planning policies will be outlined in the Basic Conditions Statement at the next stage.
- 1.16 The Neighbourhood Plan will attain the same legal status as the East Hertfordshire District Plan once it has been agreed at a local referendum.<sup>6</sup> At this point it will become part of the statutory development plan and applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise<sup>7</sup>.

## Scope of the Plan

- 1.17 The GANP Area is located on the southern facing lower slopes of the Hertfordshire uplands reaching the Stort Valley to the south. It is mainly rural and comprises arable fields, clusters of veteran trees and woodland, and the parkland of Gilston Park. Notable is the vast Hunsdon Plateau, which during WWII was cleared of trees and hedges and transformed into an airfield, whose footprint is clearly identifiable even if today it comprises just open arable fields.
- 1.18 The southern edge of the Area, in part reaching the county boundary at the River Stort, extends into the valley (the remaining designated Green Belt), which separates Gilston from Harlow and links to significant areas of protected biodiversity within the Stort Valley and the Lee Valley Regional Park, a major Natural Green Space within the catchment set by Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt).

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<sup>5</sup> Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended)  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>

<sup>6</sup> Currently it is assumed that the referendum for GANP will take place in late Summer 2020 and the plan formally 'made' in early summer 2020.

<sup>7</sup> See section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 -  
[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/pdfs/ukpga\\_20040005\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/pdfs/ukpga_20040005_en.pdf)

Further afield, but still relevant for their size and importance are Epping Forest and Hatfield Forest.

- 1.19 Arable fields and grassland surround the compact village of Eastwick to the south, and the scattered village community of Gilston, which comprises several building groups around St Mary's Church, at Gilston Park, along Gilston Lane and at Pye Corner and Terlings Park. Isolated farms, often included as Listed Buildings, are built among the fields.
- 1.20 The Neighbourhood Plan Area is entirely within East Hertfordshire District (Hertfordshire) bordering Harlow (Essex) and encloses the major development Policy Area GA1 of East Herts District Council (EHDC) Development Plan. All key boundaries are illustrated in Fig. 2.

### Evidence Base

- 1.21 Preparation of the Draft Neighbourhood Plan has drawn on the extensive evidence base that supports the East Hertfordshire District Plan, the Gilston Area Concept Framework and the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town documents. This includes, amongst others, landscape assessment, environmental assessment, housing need studies, etc.
- 1.22 This has been supplemented by direct inputs from the community, either in the form of comments or through their knowledge of local history, character and environmental sensitivities.

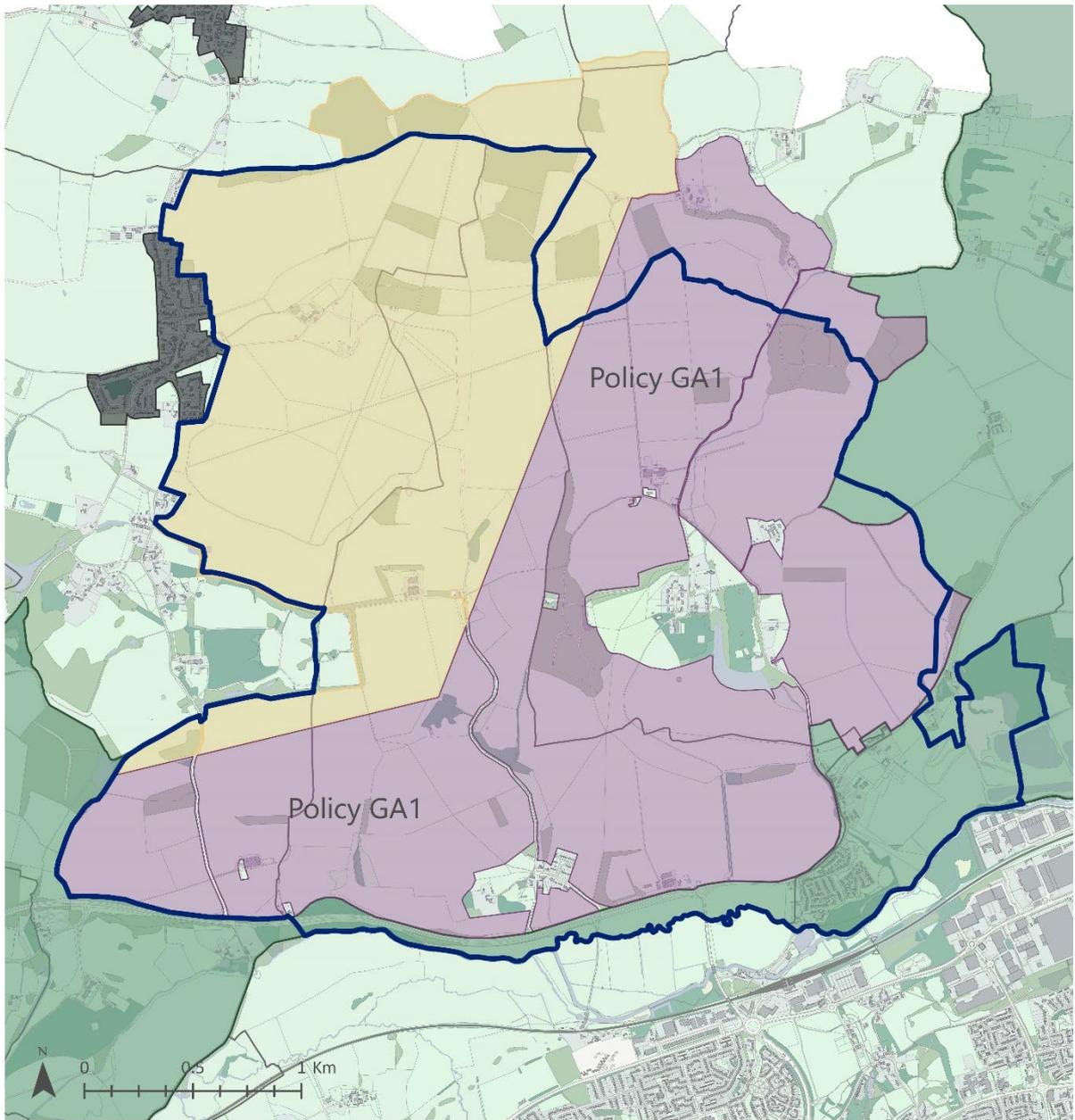
### Key Community Concerns

- 1.23 Consultation with the local community during the past couple of years has highlighted:
  - A strong, cohesive community with a clear sense of identity and pride in their local area;
  - Support for the preparation and enforcement of specific planning policy guidance to ensure a high quality development and protection of landscape character, heritage assets and existing settlements;
  - The need to ensure that necessary infrastructure is provided in advance of new development being occupied to ensure adequate capacity is available to meet the needs of new development *and* existing communities;
  - The need to protect the rural setting, heritage assets and the general character of the area;
  - The need to enhance the landscape, green spaces and areas of importance for nature conservation;
  - A desire for on-going engagement with the community on the development of proposals and planning decisions affecting the area and future stewardship and management of community assets.
- 1.24 The community, through the Parish Councils, the Neighbourhood Planning Group, groups like Stop Harlow North and through individual representations, objected for many years to the removal of the area from the Green Belt and its allocation for housing. Despite these strong objections, the land was removed from the Green Belt and allocated for major development in the East Herts District Plan which was formally adopted in October 2018. Since then, the community's focus has shifted towards

ensuring that development takes place in the most appropriate way for the benefit of the area and its current and future residents.

- 1.25 The community has, through meetings with the Council, Garden Town Board and the developer/landowners and through the planning process, particularly through the constructive inputs and suggestions which led to revisions to the Concept Framework (see Paragraph 2.40), consistently expressed their fundamental concerns as follows:
- Gilston, Eastwick and Hunsdon have a different identity and history from Harlow, and – although part of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town initiative –development in the area should emphasise this distinctiveness and sense of place rather than inappropriately expanding Harlow and its very different development model.
  - Development in the Gilston area should take the form of individual Hertfordshire villages in the Hertfordshire countryside, rather than that of suburban districts separated by green fingers; this perspective is widely shared and has had the support of the Leader of East Herts District Council and led to the graphic diagram of the Gilston and Harlow Structural Plan (Fig. 15).
  - The community would like to see that the removal of Green Belt status in this area genuinely leads to development of exceptional quality, that will create a strong and distinctive community and mature into attractive villages for the future.
  - The development will lead to complete transformation of the Gilston area, and this should be accompanied by improvements, such as better connectivity and better services for the whole area, including existing communities – rather than simple mitigation of impacts.
  - The importance of upholding the provisions in the District Plan to protect and preserve the natural open spaces in the northern section of the Gilston area from development and to transfer them to the community to ensure their long-term stewardship and governance for the benefit of the existing and new communities.

Fig. 2 - District Plan Policy GA1 and the Neighbourhood Plan Area



-  Neighbourhood Plan Boundary
-  Development Allocation (Policy GA1)
-  Open Space Land (Policy GA1)
-  Green Belt (East Herts only)
-  Village Boundaries (Group 1)
-  Parish Boundaries

## 2. Planning Policy Framework

*The Neighbourhood Plan expands and tailors to the local area the policies of the national, strategic and District Plan context, within whose framework it is set and complies.*

- 2.1 This section sets out the national, strategic and local planning policy context which is relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the Local Development Plan and must conform with other national, regional and local planning policies (see Paragraph 1.14).
- 2.2 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to promote sustainable development in conformity with national, strategic and local planning policy objectives. It does not duplicate these policies but rather seeks to tailor and reinforce their application at the Neighbourhood Area level. It provides an additional level of detail and/or a distinct local approach to that set out in the strategic policies without undermining those policies.

### What is Sustainable Development?

- 2.3 Pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life, including (but not limited to):
  - Making it easier for jobs to be created where appropriate within settlements
  - Moving from a net loss of bio-diversity to achieving net gains for nature
  - Replacing poor design with better design
  - Improving the conditions in which people live, work, travel and take leisure
  - Widening the choice of high-quality homes
- 2.4 Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching and interdependent objectives which need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways:
  - **An economic objective** –to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
  - **A social objective** –to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being;
  - **An environmental objective** – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment including making effective use of land, helping not to harm and to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 2.5 These roles should not be undertaken in isolation, because they are mutually dependent. Economic growth can secure higher social and environmental standards,

and well-designed buildings and places can improve the lives of people and communities. Therefore, to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system.

- 2.6 The Neighbourhood Plan has taken local circumstances into account and has responded to the different opportunities for achieving sustainable development.

## National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.7 The Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan promotes sustainable development in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) together with improvements to the environment, economy and wellbeing of people (existing and new communities) in the Neighbourhood Area. It has been prepared having regard to national policies and advice
- 2.8 The NPPF is the key document setting out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Critically, it established a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' unless there are policies which provide a specific reason for refusing development. Principally, the NPPF stipulates that any planned development is sustainable and achieves improvements in in the environment, economy and wellbeing of people. This provides a framework within which local authorities and local communities can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans which reflect the needs and priorities of the community.
- 2.9 The NPPF (updated February 2019)<sup>8</sup> incorporates policy proposals previously consulted on in the Housing White Paper and the 'Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places' consultation. The presumption in favour of sustainable development remains at the heart of the Framework but there is a stronger focus on improving the supply of new homes. However, *the NPPF makes it clear that in guiding development to sustainable solutions, the planning system must take into account local circumstances to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.*
- 2.10 Paragraph 29 of the NPPF states that Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies. Paragraph 30 makes clear that once a neighbourhood plan has been brought into force, the policies it contains *take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a local plan* covering the neighbourhood area, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by subsequent policies.
- 2.11 Of particular importance is the emphasis placed on the importance of good design: the NPPF Paragraphs 124-125 state:  
*'The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be*

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<sup>8</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/810197/NPPF\\_Feb\\_2019\\_revised.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf)

tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.

*Plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable. Design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics. Neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development'.*

- 2.12 The NPPF makes it clear that design quality must be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals and that early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests. Early, proactive and effective engagement with the community is expected.
- 2.13 The East Hertfordshire District Plan has amended the Green Belt boundary in the Gilston Area to accommodate growth. The NPPF sets out clear guidelines regarding the protection of Green Belt land. Paragraph 136 states:  
*'Once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified, through the preparation or updating of plans. Strategic policies should establish the need for any changes to Green Belt boundaries, having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so they can endure beyond the plan period. Where a need for changes to Green Belt boundaries has been established through strategic policies, detailed amendments to those boundaries may be made through non-strategic policies, including neighbourhood plans'.*
- 2.14 The NPPF also places emphasis on keeping the Green Belt permanently open. Paragraph 141 states:  
*'Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance their beneficial use, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land'.*
- 2.15 Other key principles set out in the NPPF may be summarised as follows:
1. **Delivering a sufficient supply of homes** - ensuring that large scale development is well planned and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities; setting clear expectations for the quality of development and how this can be maintained and ensuring that a variety of homes to meet the needs of different groups in the community will be provided
  2. **Building a strong, competitive economy** - allowing for new and flexible working patterns and responding to changes in economic circumstances whilst meeting local needs;
  3. **Promoting healthy and safe communities** - promoting social interaction through mixed use development, strong neighbourhood centres and street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods; enabling and supporting healthy lifestyles; providing the social,

- recreational and cultural facilities the community needs access high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport;
4. **Promoting sustainable transport** - mitigating the impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure and realising opportunities from changing transport technology and usage; maximising sustainable transport solutions and limiting the need to travel and providing for high quality walking and cycling networks;
  5. **Making best use of land** - meeting the need for homes whilst safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions; achieving net environmental gains such as new habitat creation and improved public access to the countryside recognising that undeveloped land can perform many functions such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk management, carbon storage or food production; achieving densities that reflect the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services;
  6. **Achieving well designed places** - developments should be visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping; sympathetic to local character and history; establishing a strong sense of place and creating attractive, welcoming and distinctive places that are safe, inclusive and accessible;
  7. **Meeting the challenge of climate change** - mitigating and adapting to climate change taking into account long term implications for flood risk, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes; increasing the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy;
  8. **Conserving and enhancing the natural environment** - protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and sites of biodiversity value and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and the wider value from natural capital and ecosystem services including the benefit of woodlands; minimising impacts and providing net gains for biodiversity including establishing coherent ecological networks;
  9. **Conserving and enhancing the historic environment** - heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance so they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life for existing and future generations.

## Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission

- 2.16 The Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission<sup>9</sup> is an independent body which has been established to advise government on how to promote and increase the use of high-quality design for new build homes and neighbourhoods. It will be responsible for developing practical measures that will help ensure new housing developments meet the needs and expectations of communities, making them more likely to be welcomed, rather than resisted, by existing communities. Commissioners will aim to prepare and submit a final report to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government by the end of 2019.
- 2.17 The commission has 3 primary aims:
1. To promote better design and style of homes, villages, towns and high streets, to reflect what communities want, building on the knowledge and tradition of what they know works for their area.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/building-better-building-beautiful-commission>

2. To explore how new settlements can be developed with greater community consent.
3. To make the planning system work in support of better design and style.

The Gilston Area and its Neighbourhood Plan should aim to provide an exemplary showcase of the principles of the Commission, through the commitment of its communities, the council and the developers to high quality design,.

## East Hertfordshire District Plan

- 2.18 The East Hertfordshire District Plan was adopted in October 2018. The plan allocates the Gilston Area for a total of 10,000 new homes in seven distinct villages with approximately 3,000 homes to be delivered in the Plan period to 2033 along with a significant amount of supporting infrastructure including roads and sustainable transport provision, schools, health centres and public open space. The plan also requires the equivalent of 5ha of employment land, either as a business park or planned within its village centres. This would account for a significant proportion of the District's housing and employment needs and in addition, is intended to support the regeneration of Harlow.
- 2.19 In order to meet its housing requirements within the District, it has been concluded that *exceptional* circumstances existed to justify the release of land from the Green Belt. The Gilston Area contains the single greatest release of land from the Green Belt in the Plan, of around 590 hectares (areas marked as Policy GA<sub>1</sub> in Fig. 2). The boundary leaves a relatively narrow strip of GB between the built form of Harlow and the Gilston Area corresponding to the Stort valley corridor. This remaining Green Belt corridor will perform an important function, preventing Harlow from expanding northwards into Gilston, and allowing development at Gilston to take a different form: that of villages rather than urban districts. **The Inspector at the District Plan Examination in Public (EiP) stressed the importance of a well-defined physical and visual boundary to the Green Belt to mitigate the impacts of development in accordance with the NPPF.**
- 2.20 Development in the Gilston Area will be required to complement, and have regard to, ongoing work in relation to the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (see Paragraphs 2.31 onwards).
- 2.21 The District Plan strategic policies with which the GANP must comply are the ones that relate to the development at Gilston (Policy GA<sub>1</sub> and GA<sub>2</sub>). Other plan policies will apply unless replaced by equivalent policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, which will then take precedence. The key elements of the strategic policies are outlined below and the full policy text included in Appendix 1.

### Policy GA<sub>1</sub> – The Gilston Area

- 2.22 Policy GA<sub>1</sub> provides the main strategic planning policy context for this Neighbourhood Plan. Following the EiP, Policy GA<sub>1</sub> was modified to give greater emphasis on community involvement in the preparation of a vision for the area and how the Garden City principles would be applied. As the Inspector stated in her Final Report, community involvement is '*necessary to achieve a long term sustainable community which meets the needs of both existing and future residents*'<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/article/36321/Inspectors-Final-Report-para-101>, p. 23

- 2.23 As a result, particular weight is placed in Policy GA1 on community engagement and the joint preparation of the Concept Framework by the landowners, Council and local community, which at the time of the EiP was just emerging in its revised and final form, following extensive community inputs. This is intended to identify design principles, potential land uses, infrastructure requirements and phasing and be used as a benchmark in reviewing proposals for development.
- 2.24 The Policy requires development to be provided in distinctive villages each based on Garden City principles respecting the following:
- *‘Strong vision, leadership and community engagement;*
  - *land value capture to deliver the social and physical infrastructure for the benefit of the community;*
  - *long-term community ownership of land and stewardship of assets mixed-tenure homes and housing types including those that are genuinely affordable;*
  - *a wide range of local jobs within easy commuting distance of homes;*
  - *beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with access to open space, combining the best of town and country to create healthy communities, and including opportunities to grow food;*
  - *development that enhances the natural environment, providing a comprehensive green infrastructure network and net biodiversity gains, and that uses energy-positive technology to ensure climate resilience;*
  - *strong cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable, vibrant, sociable communities; and*
  - *integrated and accessible sustainable transport systems, with walking, cycling and public transport designed to be the most attractive forms of local transport for new residents to travel within the Gilston Area and to key local destinations.’*

- 2.25 The main components of the development strategy for the Gilston Area established in Policy GA1 are as follows:

**Housing:** development in this location will provide a mixture of house sizes and tenures across seven distinct villages, including affordable housing and homes for older people. The site will make provision for self-build and/or custom build opportunities and respond to other housing needs.

**Education:** the site will deliver land for twenty forms of entry for both primary and secondary education in order to fully cater for the needs arising from the development. Early Years Education will also be provided for.

**Transport:** a wide range of small and large scale interventions and sustainable transport measures will be required to ensure that development in the wider Harlow area, including the Gilston Area, is able to proceed without causing unacceptable congestion in Harlow, the surrounding towns and villages, as well as the wider strategic transport network. These interventions include a new Junction 7a on the M11, upgrades to Junctions 7 & 8<sup>11</sup>, a second River Stort crossing, widening of the existing crossing, and upgrades to the Amwell Roundabout. Sustainable transport measures will also be

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<sup>11</sup> Upgrades already committed by government through the Gilston and Harlow Garden Town initiative.

required including new bus services, connecting to Harlow and the wider area, as well as provision for walking and cycling<sup>12</sup>.

**Community Facilities:** the Gilston Area will provide new community facilities based around a network of village centres. The facilities will include community meeting spaces, libraries and sport and recreation facilities. A range of local shops will also be provided, along with healthcare centres which will accommodate both family doctors and other health services such as dentists, pharmacies, physiotherapy and outpatient services.

**Employment:** the development will provide local employment, including small scale office space. This will be in the form of either a business park of 5ha or distributed across the village centres having regard to Garden City principles. Residents will also be able to access more substantial employment opportunities within Harlow, including the Enterprise Zone. The proximity of the site to Harlow Town station will also enable sustainable access to employment opportunities further afield, including Stansted Airport, Cambridge, Bishop's Stortford and London.

**Open Space:** Only the south and south eastern sections of the Neighbourhood Plan Area (Policy GA1 area in Fig. 2) are allocated to be developed. In addition to development, Neighbourhood Area will deliver new green spaces including sports pitches, parks and recreation areas. Within the north and north western sections of the Neighbourhood Plan Area, a substantial amount of public open space will be provided as part of wider managed open lands including some continuation of farming and new woodland. This area will therefore remain undeveloped, with the exception of small buildings associated with its recreational use. A community land trust, or other governance mechanism as appropriate, will be established in order to deliver local ownership and management of these assets. This should take place early in the overall development programme. In addition, the environment of the Stort Valley will be enhanced through the provision of new green infrastructure links and net biodiversity gains.

**Character:** The development will be of high-quality design, with careful consideration given to layout, architecture, building heights and materials. It will also be sensitively integrated visually in the wider context of the surrounding landscape. Landscape buffers will be provided in order to maintain the distinct identities of Eastwick, Gilston and Hunsdon within the context of the overall development.

**Heritage:** The site contains multiple heritage assets, including listed buildings and Scheduled Monuments. The development will be designed in order to ensure that these assets and their settings are conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced within the context of the overall development, through appropriate mitigation measures, having regard to the Heritage Impact Assessment (Montagu Evans, October 2017). Gilston Park (the designed landscape), a locally important historic asset, is also located within the Gilston Area. Development will be designed to respect this asset.

**Ecology and Environment:** The development will retain and protect important hedgerows, Local Wildlife sites and ancient woodlands. New habitats will be created in order to achieve an overall net gain in biodiversity. A Sustainable Drainage (SUDs)

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<sup>12</sup> A subsequent target of 60% of all trip from new development through sustainable transport modes (buses, shared mobility, cycling and walking) has been set by the Gilston and Harlow Garden Town.

network will be integrated to provide additional planting and biodiversity and to facilitate drainage and water retention having regard to the objectives of the River Stort Catchment Management Plan.

**Landscaping:** there should be new landscaping and planting, both within the site and on the periphery, which responds to the existing landscape and complements development, as appropriate, and the establishment of a defined, recognisable boundary to the Green Belt.

- 2.26 Policy GA1 IV also requires the preparation of a community engagement strategy, working with the two local Parishes, which will include consideration of managing the effects on local residents, and opportunities for them to participate in the emerging new community. Active engagement with the local communities and other relevant stakeholders should take place through the planning application process and through the development of Village Master Plans
- 2.27 Policy GA1 V specifies that provision should be made for:
- (g) quality local green infrastructure throughout the site including opportunities for preserving and enhancing on-site assets, maximising opportunities to link into existing assets and enhancing biodiversity. This will include the protection of Local Wildlife Sites and other assets of environmental value;*
  - (h) significant managed open space and parklands, and a limited number of buildings associated with that use..., the ownership of which will be transferred to a community trust or other mechanism that ensures long term stewardship and governance for the benefit of the community;*
  - (i) a variety of public green spaces across the site, including the provision of play areas and opportunities for outdoor health and fitness activities, as well as space for wildlife;*
  - (l) sustainable transport measures which encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport ...;*
  - (n) the use of appropriate landscape buffers in order to protect the individual character and integrity of Eastwick and Gilston villages ...;*
  - (s) indoor and outdoor sports facilities (which may be shared use) ...;*
  - (t) consideration of need for cemetery provision...;*
  - (u) landscaping and planting, both within the site and peripheral, which responds to the existing landscape and complements development, as appropriate, and a defined recognisable boundary to the Green Belt.*
- 2.28 Any application for development will be required to include an indicative phasing plan for the delivery of infrastructure and utilities across the villages. The delivery of the Gilston Area will also be required to include a mechanism for:
- Securing the long-term stewardship, protection and maintenance of the parkland, open spaces, play areas and community assets;
  - Managing the construction process to address potential impacts on existing and future communities;

- Encouraging a successful and active community, including an innovative approach to create the conditions for local resident participation in the design and stewardship of their new communities.

2.28 Policy GA1 is reproduced in full in Appendix 1.

### Policy GA2 – Stort Crossings

- 2.29 The District Plan promotes transport improvements in the form of two improved crossings of the River Stort to accommodate housing and employment growth. Para 11.4.2 of the District Plan states that additional crossing options are being reviewed both to the east and west of the existing crossing and that any proposals will need to address environmental factors such as visual amenity, ecology and flooding. Policy GA2 states that the Council aims to facilitate the delivery of the following transport improvements to crossings of the River Stort, including:
- *A widening of the existing A414 crossing (Central Crossing / Fifth Avenue) to enable a dualling of the northbound and southbound carriageways and provision of a new footway/cycleway, which will form part of a north-south sustainable transport corridor through Harlow; and*
  - *A new vehicular, cycle and pedestrian crossing either to the east of the existing crossing (connecting the A414 to the River Way), or to the west of the existing crossing (connecting the A414 to Elizabeth Way).*
- 2.30 Policy GA2 requires development proposals for both Stort Crossings to protect and, where appropriate, enhance heritage assets and their settings through appropriate mitigation measures, having regard to the Heritage Impact Assessment

### Harlow and Gilston Garden Town

- 2.31 The Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) Project is an initiative born out of the common aspiration of five partner Councils, East Herts, Epping Forest and Harlow District Councils with Essex and Hertfordshire County Councils, working together to deliver housing and economic growth and regenerate Harlow. Their common vision is set out in the HGGT Vision that has been formally adopted and published by all five Councils.
- 2.32 In January 2017, the HGGT was awarded formal Garden Town status by the Government. A HGGT Board (the Garden Town Board) has been established since late 2017, which comprises senior elected representatives of the five partner Councils and their Chief Executives/Executive Directors. The Board is supported by an Officer core group.
- 2.33 The Gilston Area forms a key part of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town project. As such, the proposals for the Gilston Area will be required to complement, and have regard to, ongoing work relating to the Garden Town.
- 2.34 The Garden Town Vision was published in November 2018. It highlights that and has been informed by the Town and Country Planning Association's (TCPA) Garden City Principles. The overarching Vision is that the Garden Town will be adaptable, healthy, sustainable and innovative. It incorporates the concept of the 7 distinctive villages in the Gilston Area established in Policy GA1 and the Concept Framework and sets out a

vision for the Garden Town that is adaptable, healthy, sustainable and innovative based on a range of principles ordered into four main themes: Economy and Regeneration, Placemaking and Homes, Landscape and Green Infrastructure and Sustainable Movement. These are set out in Appendix 2.

- 2.35 These themes are interpreted further in the **HGGT Design Guide** (Nov 2018). For each of the themes the Design Guide provides further information and some detailed examples as to how development could fulfil the expectations set out in the Vision. Strategic Site Guidance is provided in the Design Guide relating to all of the Garden Town sites, including for the Gilston Area. In particular the Design Guide identifies a clear distinction of development form between Harlow (neighbourhoods separated by green wedges or corridors) and Gilston, where individual villages in the rural landscape are to be provided (see Fig. 15).
- 2.36 Both the Vision and Design Guide have been formally endorsed by the Garden Town Board and the three Districts have also approved the documents as material considerations in relation to all HGGT planning applications.
- 2.37 The **HGGT Transport Strategy** is in preparation in line with HCC's Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4). It sets out three headline objectives. These are to:
- Achieve a target of 60% of all journeys within the new Garden Town communities (and 50% across the whole of the HGGT) to be undertaken by sustainable modes,
  - To deliver mobility options on a hierarchy that prioritises reducing the need to travel, walking, cycling and public transport and,
  - To support a culture of active and sustainable travel within the HGGT.
- 2.38 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), Strategic Viability Assessment (SVA) and How To Guide for Planning Obligations and Viability were jointly produced by all five Garden Town partner Councils and were developed in consultation with the main developer stakeholders. These documents were published in April 2019 and have been considered through the Independent Examinations for the Harlow and Epping Forest Local Plans.
- 2.39 The IDP sets out the range of infrastructure that will be required in order to support the development of the Garden Town sites and is an evidence base document. A key expectation is that a Statement of Delivery will be produced in line with the requirements set out in these documents.

### The Gilston Area Concept Framework

- 2.40 The Concept Framework preparation was led by the landowners / developers and has received substantial inputs from the local community (September 2017-January 2018) and was endorsed by East Hertfordshire District Council in July 2018. It represents therefore the main joint document supported by all main parties. It identifies design principles, potential land uses, infrastructure requirements and phasing.
- 2.41 The Concept Framework was also the subject of formal consultation between 24 July 2017 and 8 September 2017 and comments were received from a wide range of stakeholders including statutory bodies, interest groups, community representatives and the general public. Subject to that consultation, revisions were incorporated to the Concept Framework in December 2017. These were informed through further

engagement undertaken with the community facilitated through the Neighbourhood Planning Group. The revisions sought to strengthen the concept of delivering the Gilston Area as a series of distinct villages.

- 2.42 At the meeting of the Executive on 12 June 2018, the Council agreed the Gilston Area Concept Framework as a material consideration for Development Management purposes and in accordance with Policy GA1, resolved to use it as a benchmark against which future development proposals will be assessed.

## Summary

- 2.43 National, strategic and local planning policies set a clear context for the Neighbourhood Plan and the overriding importance on the promotion of sustainable development, high quality design and placemaking, protection and enhancement of the built and natural environment, promotion of sustainable transport modes and climate change mitigation and adaptation. Above all national, strategic and local policies actively endorse and promote the engagement of local communities in shaping the environment they live in.
- 2.44 The Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan (GANP) complies with national and strategic policy and it is set within the context of the aspirations of the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission and the framework of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Board.
- 2.45 The Concept Framework for the Gilston Area, prepared by the developers with substantial inputs from the community and endorsed by the EHDC in June 2018, has provided the basis for this Neighbourhood Plan.

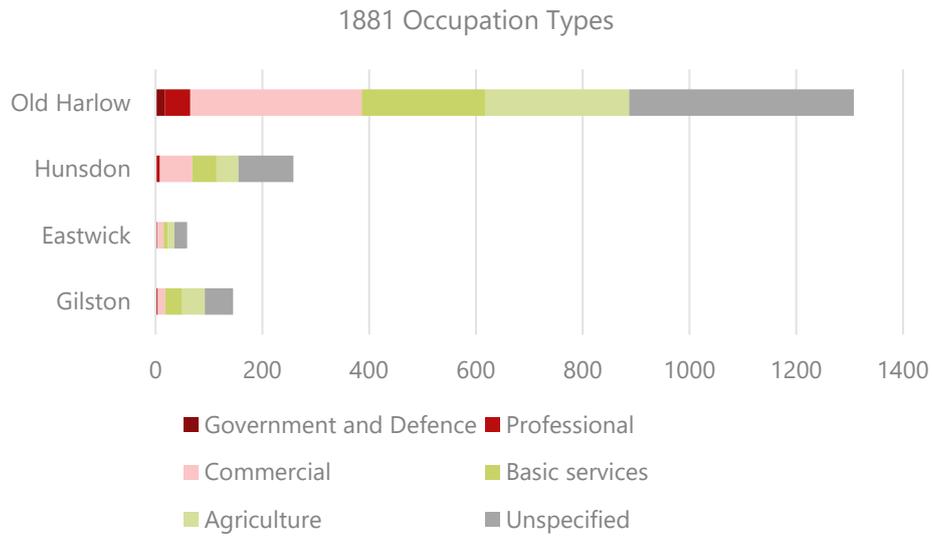
### 3. Local Context

*Understanding the local context is essential in promoting sustainable development in the Gilston Area. It is important to understand local character and aspirations of the local community in accordance with national guidance and strategic policy objectives.*

#### A Brief History of the Parishes and Villages

- 3.1 The Area contained small settlements since before pre-Roman times and was continuously inhabited since then around Eastwick and Hunsdon. Both villages are mentioned in the Domesday Book: both had a priest (and therefore a church or chapel), around 50 people and farms with arable land, pasture and livestock. Both were important royal landholdings in Tudor times.
- 3.2 Since the 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries the area was the site of three churches and manor houses, all located outside the main working settlements:
  - St Botolph's in Eastwick (Grade II\* Listed Building), founded around the 13<sup>th</sup> century but largely rebuilt in 1872-73, and accompanied by Eastwick Manor (former rectory built in the 17<sup>th</sup> century). Eastwick Hall, build by the Norman landlords to the north of the current village, is no longer there.
  - St Mary's in Gilston (Grade I Listed Building) surrounded by wealthy farms and the manors of Overall and Netherall, which then became New Place, the hall which preceded Gilston Park.
  - St Dunstan's built as part of the complex of Hunsdon House (both Grade I Listed Buildings, located just to the west of the Area).
- 3.3 All three settlements share a common history: royal connections and common rural economies: so much so that the landlords of Hunsdon House acquired Eastwick from Elizabeth I, and then sold it to Sir John Gore of Gilston in 1637. Connections with Harlow were limited, as the villages were all outside the main routes connecting London to Cambridge which helped Old Harlow grow into a small market town even before the time of the railways.
- 3.4 Throughout the great periods of urban expansion (late Victorian times with the railways and in the post-war period) Eastwick, Gilston and Hunsdon retained their small size and character of rural settlements, despite major changes in nearby Harlow, which developed into a sizeable market town in the 1870s and then a major new town in the post war period. Fig. 3 shows the variety of jobs in the 4 parishes in 1881 – clearly indicating the difference in size and employment structure between Old Harlow and this area, where employment was limited to commercial and agricultural activity, with additional employment in basic services within the manor houses. Old Harlow, however, already has the scale and variety of an urban settlement.

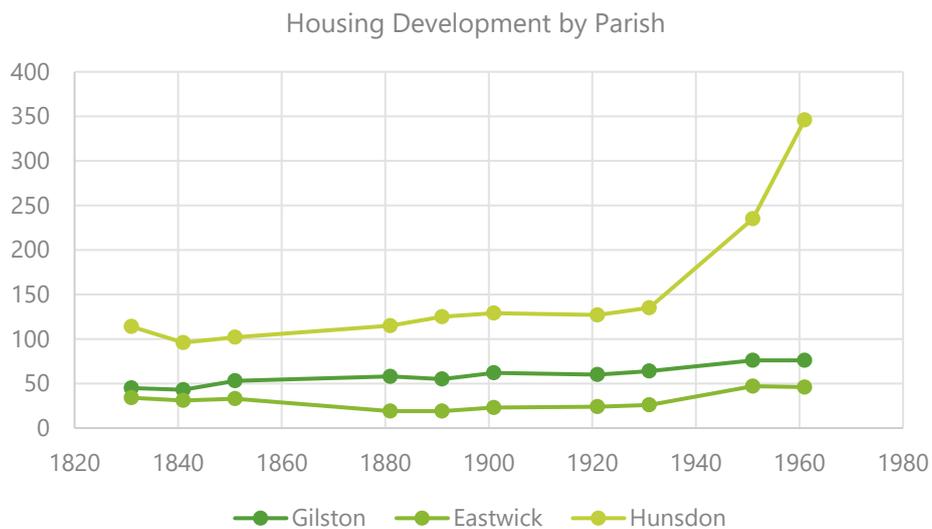
Fig. 3 - Range and number of jobs in Late Victorian period as identified by the 1881 Census  
(Source: [www.visionofbritain.org.uk/census](http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/census))



3.5 During both periods, physical growth in the settlements of the Area was very limited (Fig. 4 - number of houses until 1961), even if large changes took place:

- In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the new owner of Gilston Park, John Hodgson made massive investments in his estate, with a new manor house, cottages, farmhouses and ancillary buildings.
- Between 1941 and 1945 the RAF built and operated the airfield at Hunsdon, by altering fields and removing woodlands at a time of national emergency. The site at peak had around 2,000 personnel, mostly living in the village.
- Terlings Park, formerly a manor house to the south of Netherhall, became a medical research facility before being redeveloped for around 200 houses in 2017.

Fig. 4 - Housing development remained slow in Gilston and Eastwick throughout the Victorian and post-war periods (Source: [www.visionofbritain.org.uk/census](http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/census))



- 3.6 Small size, access to the countryside and slow growth appear to have served the area well, as the price of local properties increased substantially, especially when compared with nearby Harlow (Fig. 5).

*Fig. 5 – House prices in Hunsdon Ward (including the three Parishes) have been significantly and increasingly higher than those in Harlow – although with higher volatility  
(Source: ONS Housing Statistics)*



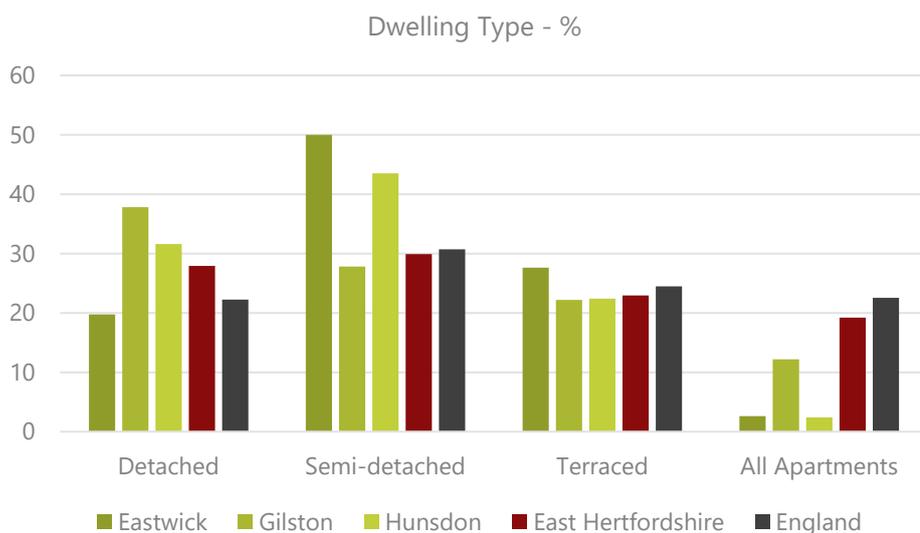
- 3.7 Green Belt status for the area was removed with the East Herts District Plan of 2018, when the Area became a strategic land allocation for 10,000 housing units to be designed as ‘seven separate villages’ and the Green Belt retained only for the Stort Valley.

### Population and Socio-Economic Overview

- 3.8 Census data of 2011 do not fully represent the current population of the Area, particularly in Gilston, where the development of Terlings Park has brought 200 new households to the settlements and increased variety of age, ethnicity, and economic profile.
- 3.9 Bearing this in mind, the 2011 Census still paints a picture of the Area as an affluent established family area, with high employment and proportion of people in managerial and professional occupation. Overall Eastwick appears to have smaller houses and middle range of employment, while Hunsdon has older population and a slightly lower proportion of people in high-level occupation (see Fig. 7) Fig. 7 – Key economic and occupation indicators for the three Parishes (Source: NOMIS, Local Area Profiles Census 2011). The socio-economic profile of the three Parishes is clearly different even from the ward of Old Harlow, which has the profile of a decidedly more urban area: higher proportion of flats, many singles, higher proportion of elderly and lower skills.
- 3.10 Below is a summary of key census data:

- The Area had extremely low density of population: 0.5 and 0.6 persons per hectare in Eastwick and Gilston respectively, and 1.1 in Hunsdon (including the Parish as a whole) compared to an average in East Herts of 2.9 and 11.6 in Old Harlow.
- In 2011 in each of the Parishes of Eastwick and Gilston lived around 200 people (now probably around 600 in Gilston) in 76 and 87 (now nearly 300) households. In Hunsdon Parish lived 1,080 people (449 households).
- The three Parishes of the Area provided a place of residence mainly for established families. All three had above average proportions of family households of mature working age (30-74) compared to the rest of East Herts, and especially Harlow. This is probably a reflection of the high price of houses in the areas.
- Older population was significant lower in Eastwick and Gilston (4.6% and 2.6% respectively) compared to the East Herts average of 7.3%. Hunsdon had a higher proportion of older population at 9.4%.
- Detached and semi-detached houses prevailed in 2011 – with a predominance of semi and terraced properties in Eastwick and detached in Gilston (see Fig. 6)

Fig. 6 – Prevailing dwelling typologies in the three Parishes  
(Source: NOMIS, Local Area Profiles Census 2011)



- The three Parishes had higher than average availability of cars in the household: 1.7 in Hunsdon, 1.9 in Eastwick and a very high 2.3 in Gilston – well above Old Harlow (1.35) and East Herts (1.5). In Gilston 18% of households had 4 or more cars or vans (3.5% in East Herts).
- Eastwick and Gilston had both a ratio of around 0.6 active people to total population (national average 0.51), with Gilston having a much higher than average proportion of active people with higher qualifications and in higher professional occupation (Fig. 7).

Fig. 7 – Key economic and occupation indicators for the three Parishes  
(Source: NOMIS, Local Area Profiles Census 2011)

|   | Eastwick | Gilston | Hunsdon | Old Harlow | East Herts | England |
|---|----------|---------|---------|------------|------------|---------|
| <b>Economically Active People</b>                                       | 116      | 133     | 572     | 3817       |            |         |
| <b>Employment ratio (of tot. population)</b>                            | 0.60     | 0.58    | 0.53    | 0.55       | 0.73       | 0.51    |
| <b>Unemployment</b>   | 2.1%     | 3.8%    | 3.6%    | 3.5%       | 2.8%       | 4.4%    |
| <b>Higher qualifications (level 4 and above)</b>                        | 24.8%    | 34.0%   | 28.7%   | 23.6%      | 33.5%      | 27.4%   |
| <b>No qualification</b>   | 17.0%    | 13.6%   | 23.7%   | 22.4%      | 17.2%      | 22.5%   |
| <b>Managerial and professional occupations</b>                          | 31.0%    | 36.5%   | 33.1%   | 28.4%      | 35.0%      | 28.4%   |
| <b>Sales, customer service, process plant or elementary occupations</b> | 20.4%    | 14.3%   | 22.6%   | 22.8%      | 18.7%      | 26.7%   |

## Landscape Setting and Relationship of Villages and Countryside

- 3.11 The overall landscape is characterised by the southward facing slopes from the Hertfordshire uplands to the north, furrowed by relatively steep streams feeding into the River Stort to the south. The soil of the area is characterised by poor drainage, which has led over the centuries to the creation of a network of field ditches and holloways, which are now characteristic of the area.
- 3.12 The 2007 Landscape Character Appraisal SPD identifies three main zones:
- The southern Eastwick Slopes (part of Area 81 – Stanstead to Pishiobury), characterised by parklands linked to the many manor houses and arable farmland on gently undulating slopes. This is a cultural landscape, shaped during centuries by the interplay between large residences with parks, grasslands and hunting woods and the agricultural enclosures of medium sized fields. Blocks of woodland of elm, ash, willow and hornbeam remain in between the fields. Typical of this area are the sunken winding lanes bordered by hedgerows, the groupings of cottages and the large farmhouses, many of which are of heritage value.
  - The River Stort (Area 82), a valley running from the southern edge of Bishop’s Stortford to Rye Meads Nature Reserve where it meets the River Lea and the Lee Valley Regional Park. The river is fed by a number of streams from the Eastwick Slope and Harlow and in part has been “canalised” by the Navigation Canal and its accompanying towpath. The valley contains a mix of floodplains, discontinuous pasture, biodiversity-rich water meadows (SSSI and other wildlife areas), wetlands and mineral extraction sites. 19th century water related industrial buildings (maltings and mills). The railway added another layer of historic influences to the valley. The noise of the A414 to the north and the presence of Harlow to the south have not been overly detrimental to the otherwise tranquil setting of the valley.
  - The Hunsdon Plateau (Area 83) is characterised by the large scale open arable farmland on the flat upland plateau south of the village of Hunsdon. Part of the plateau has been transformed by the creation of the WWII Airfield, which led to the removal of all trees and hedgerows, which are now in intensive arable production. To

the north-east large blocks of ancient woodland linked by sunken hedgerows are still in place. Elm is prominent, with willow along the ditches. The area is crossed by several paths (Right of Way – see Fig. 9) but has poor vehicular access.

- 3.13 Pockets of woodland and many veteran trees are distributed throughout the area, in between large arable fields. These have been identified by the District Plan as Wildlife Sites (see Fig. 9), which could potentially connect the water landscapes of the Stort Valley and Lee valley to the south and west (Floodplain marshes, water bodies and important SSSI/ RAMSAR sites) to the upper plateau woodland to the north.
- 3.14 Within the Neighbourhood Plan Area there is Gilston Park: the designed parkland of the eponymous manor house. The park is not formally designated but still important for its landscape design and groupings of mature trees. The park of Hunsdon House is adjacent to the Area, while two listed Ancient Gardens are located just to the south: at Briggens House and Pardon.
- 3.15 Dramatic change in the landscape occurred when field and woodland were cleared in 1939 to create the Hunsdon Airfield. This has created a vast nearly flat upland area at the edge of Hunsdon village.
- 3.16 Numerous paths and Rights of Way cross the area and intersect farmhouses and other dwellings.
- 3.17 The overlay of urban development over time – when comparing to the 1886 map of the area – has not dramatically transformed the area: the patterns of most lanes, woodland and fields remain the same, with the notable exceptions of the construction of the A414 and the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue bridge over the Stort and railways and the Hunsdon Airfield. Settlements and farms have obviously grown with time, but they never altered the patterns that were there before. Because of this, still today, local settlements have a close relationship with the countryside: open views over the field; trees, hedgerows and planting of a rural nature; simple access lanes rather than streets, etc.

## Settlement Character

- 3.18 Settlements are all unique, but there are some layout characteristics of the villages within and nearby the Area (including the larger Hunsdon, Widford, Much Hadham and High Wych):
  - They are all linear settlements, compact along the main street/ lane that crosses the countryside (historic settlement) and only as deep as a small group of houses (5-20 units) served off a cul-de-sac developed starting from the 1940s. The older and more compact part of the villages are typically along a bend in the road at the junction between country lanes: this is the case in Gilston, Pye Corner, and in Eastwick before the A414 created a bypass.
  - Historically village development was driven by the investments of the manor houses (Hunsdon, Gilston, Eastwick, Briggens, etc. - see sections above), which often funded the construction of a church near the main house and clusters of cottage houses for the workers, located nearby but separated.
  - Because of this origin, the villages do not have well defined centres where the main buildings and services are co-located around a common space: shops and workshops are located all along the main linear spine, with the school (developed later in time)

towards the edge of the settlement and the church well outside. The manor house, if still in existence, is located outside the village and screened from view.

- Agricultural modernisation of the 19<sup>th</sup> century led to the creation of a number of model farms under the leadership of John Hodgson, who took over Gilston Manor. These historic farms, sometimes with imposing family houses, are now among the Listed Buildings the area, dispersed among the fields.
- This development structure leads to a multitude of small settlements, all served by narrow lanes and too small to sustain services, but all with very close relationship with the countryside: always visible at the end of the road or across the picket fences.
- Most village lanes have no street lighting and no pavements, or a narrow one to one side only. Development of the past 50 years adopted wider similar approaches, for example the 1960s houses of Eastwick have narrow pavements and central green spaces, the Daintrees in Widford provide access through a shared surface (although wider than the main road that serve the development) and Terlings Park have a mix of roads with one sided pavement and shared surface access.
- Most settlements occupy an area with a well-defined perimeter. However, the built frontage and building orientation typically varies significantly along the edge, often with tall trees and mixed hedging providing a very soft edge and transition between the built area and the countryside.

## Transport and Mobility Patterns

- 3.19 At present the existing settlements are only served by the Eastwick Road and narrow lanes. As there is no public transport service to either Harlow, Bishops Stortford or Hertford, most journeys have to be undertaken by car. This includes most school trips and commuting patterns to work in Harlow or London.
- 3.20 Cycling trips to Harlow Station are undertaken by some local residents, but this is not helped by the lack of safe crossing facilities at the A414 and Eastwick Roundabout and poor cycle parking facilities at Harlow Station. Harlow Mills, further east, and Roydon have fewer and slower train services and are therefore less used.
- 3.21 Most residents are aware of the impacts of through movements using, for example, Church Lane and the main village street in Hunsdon to go to Bishops Stortford or Eastwick Road serving Sawbridgeworth. These movements are particularly intense when there is congestion on the M11, spilling over onto the A10. Often in these occurrences, the Eastwick Roundabout causes severe delays, and Church Lane and Eastwick Road become dangerously busy.
- 3.22 The community would like to see substantial change in the transport and mobility patterns of the area, leading to:
  - Reliable and frequent bus services providing an attractive alternative to using the car for journeys to Harlow, Bishops Stortford, Hertford, etc;
  - Safe and convenient cycling provision;
  - Measures to control, reduce and slow down through movements, either routine or in cases of congestion on the strategic network;
  - Improved facilities and services at Harlow Station as a priority, and potentially also at Harlow Mills and Roydon; and

- Improved pedestrian commuting and leisure routes extending the existing network of Rights of Way.

Fig. 8 - Views from Eastwick and Gilston

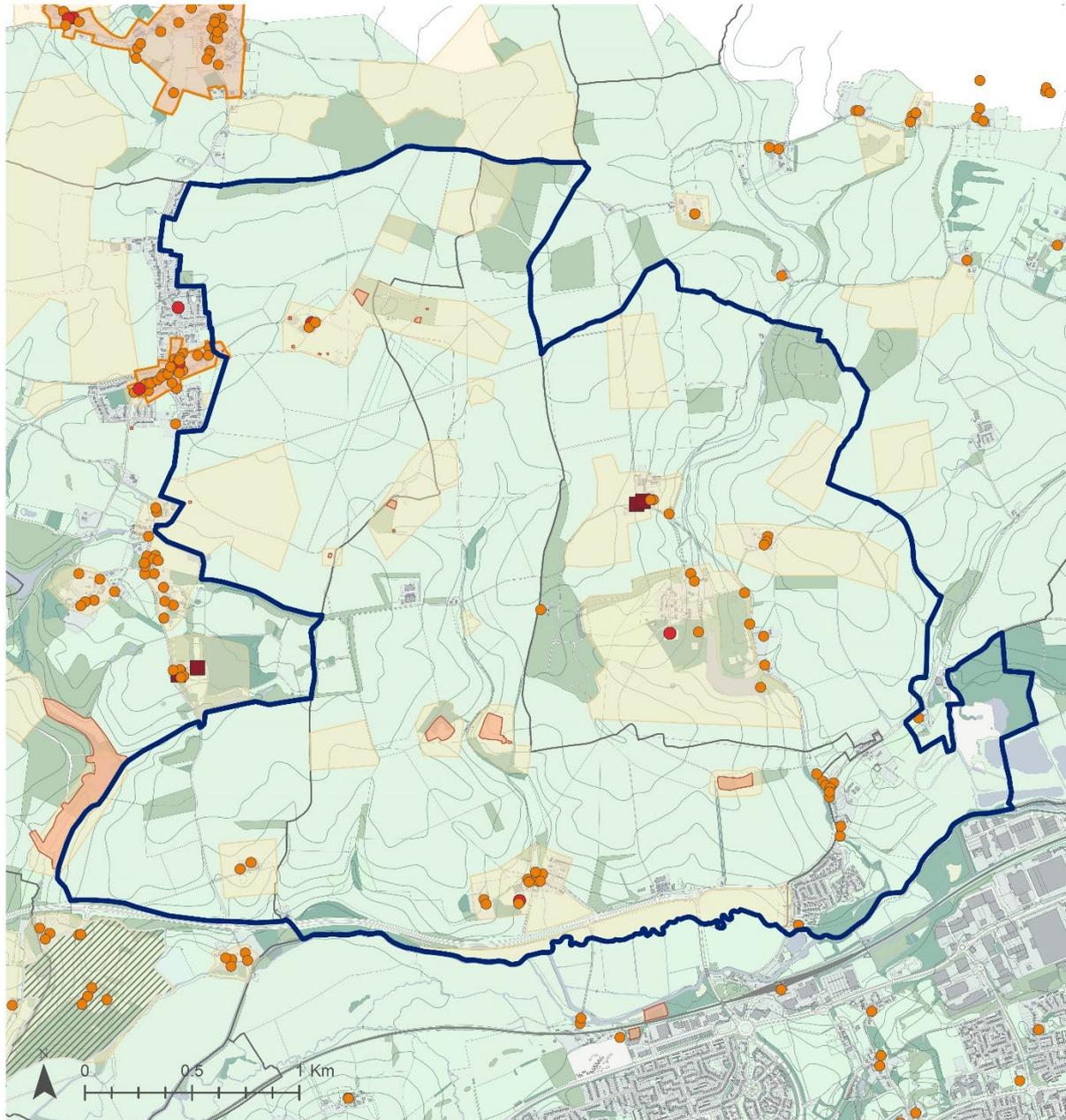


Fig. 9 - Protected Landscape Designations  
(Source: District Plan and Natural England)



- |                                 |                                      |  |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Neighbourhood Plan Boundary     | Wildlife Sites                       |  |
| Paths and Bridleways            |                                      |  |
| Bridleway                       | Local Nature Reserve                 |  |
| Byway open to all traffic       | Priority Habitats (Natural England)  |  |
| Footpath                        | Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh |  |
| Restricted Byway                | Deciduous woodland                   |  |
| Woodland and Wildlife           |                                      |  |
| Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland | Good quality semi-improved grassland |  |
| Ancient Replanted Woodland      | Lowland fens                         |  |
| SSSI                            | Lowland meadows                      |  |
|                                 | Additional habitat                   |  |
|                                 | Traditional orchard                  |  |
|                                 | Parish Boundaries                    |  |

Fig. 10 - Protected Heritage  
 (Source: District Plan, Historic England)



- Neighbourhood Plan Boundary
- Listed Grade I
- Listed Grade II\*
- Listed Grade II
- Scheduled Monuments
- Conservations Areas
- Historic Parks and Gardens
- Areas of Archaeological Significance
- Parish Boundaries

## 4. Vision and Objectives

*The Vision and Objectives for the Area are the result of collaborative joint work between the community, the local authority and the promoters of the development.*

### Overview

- 4.1 The Vision and Objectives of the Concept Framework (see Paragraph 2.40) provide a shared foundation for the Neighbourhood Plan as they have been:
- Penned by the promoters of the site, as main authors of the Concept Framework;
  - Subject to several rounds of public consultation between August 2017 and June 2018;
  - Modified and agreed by representatives of the Parish Councils and the Neighbourhood Plan Group following consultation with hundreds of residents;
  - Used by the District Council to justify the site allocation at the Examination in Public of the Local Plan (November 2017);
  - Approved by the Council as a Material planning Consideration on 25 July 2018.
- 4.2 The vision for the Gilston Area which is set out in the Concept Framework and has been endorsed by the community, landowners and Council, has been adopted in this Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4.3 The agreed concept for the Gilston Area is to develop a series of villages set around the historic landscape of Gilston Park, each village having its own distinct character and identity within one overall landscape vision. A landscape led approach will be adopted with much of the existing landscape being used to create an attractive place and setting for people to enjoy. The Gilston Area should have a singular and coherent identity as a whole, while accommodating a wide range of diversity and character within. This concept also makes possible the potential to incorporate two existing settlements Gilston and Eastwick while retaining their individual form and identity,

### Vision

- 4.4 The shared vision for the Gilston Area is as follows:
- I. To deliver new housing in the Gilston Area within several distinct villages each of individual character, that are informed by the landscape, topographical and built features of the area and establish a positive relationship with the existing settlements.
  - II. The new villages are to be located on the Eastwick slopes and around the historic Gilston Park, south of the electric powerlines which provide a well-defined boundary to the development area. Each new and existing village will be clearly separated by meaningful and high-quality landscape.
  - III. New villages will have a compact centre, with softer edges facing onto green space. The centres will be designed to be individually distinctive and to become natural meeting places, providing a good range of day to day services and facilities alongside housing for groups who will benefit from close location to village services.

- IV. Every new village will be designed using a palette of locally inspired materials and features of character which respond to existing local context and architecture.
- V. The villages will be planned to support healthy community lifestyles, including a range of housing types and tenures, reducing car dependency, encouraging participation in community life, active mobility, sport and enjoyment of the countryside.
- VI. The housing mix will include typologies and tenures suitable for all ages, will support home working and learning and offer a range of accessible tenures including genuinely affordable housing and homes for those with care and support needs.
- VII. Particular care will be taken to ensure that homes front the streets and lanes and car parking is carefully designed into the new villages so as not to dominate the street scene. Sustainable transport choices, new technologies and the creation of walkable neighbourhoods to reduce the dependence on car borne traffic will be strongly promoted.
- VIII. A cohesive and enhanced rural landscape will bind all the new and existing settlements together. Community ownership and management of these areas will ensure an attractive and permanent green setting, offering substantially increased access to open spaces and amenity for all. Existing villages and communities / clusters of houses will be physically respected but functionally integrated to form a unified wider community.
- IX. The Gilston Area development will draw on the strategic thinking of the original 'Garden City' values of equality, good health, quality of life, a sense of community and access to employment, facilities and the countryside.
- X. The landowners and East Hertfordshire District Council have committed to the principle of land value capture and the funding and delivery of services and infrastructure needed to support the Gilston Area, alongside the long-term community stewardship of community assets and land.
- XI. New infrastructure will be phased to mitigate the impacts of the development (including on existing communities).
- XII. Development of the Gilston Area will be delivered in conjunction with initiatives to further develop and regenerate Harlow through the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town initiative.
- XIII. This will relate in particular to the delivery of strategic infrastructure to remedy current deficiencies, coordination of the infrastructure delivery to service the growth areas surrounding the town and seeking potential funding/investment to support its delivery.

## Objectives

- 4.5 The vision is underpinned by a number of interrelated objectives and development principles which the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to achieve through policies, actions and projects. These reflect Garden City principles in accordance with Policy GA1 and the development and sustainability strategies proposed by the promoters of the site.

## OBJECTIVE 1: CREATING DISTINCTIVE AND BALANCED COMMUNITIES

- Seven new villages with a distinctive and individual identity to complement the existing three villages, each informed by Garden City principles;
- Location and extent of village development to be influenced by the existing landscape character, topography, heritage assets and respond sympathetically to existing settlements and communities;
- New villages to be separated by green corridors of sufficient width to ensure the villages are separate and distinctive whilst also performing a green space role and function;
- Boundaries to each village will generally have softer edges and lower density development to reinforce separation;
- There will be a defined centre to each village of an appropriate size and scale which will provide the heart of community life;
- The village centres will generally be higher in density with a mix of uses including retail, community and education facilities and will be distinct from other parts of the village (middle and edge);
- The new villages will be designed around a network of streets, walking and cycling routes and green spaces;
- A wide range of homes, employment, local retail, education and community facilities will be provided well connected by pedestrian, cycle and public transport routes.

## OBJECTIVE 2: MAINTAINING DISTINCTIVENESS AND MANAGING THE IMPACTS OF DEVELOPMENT ON EXISTING VILLAGES

- The setting of Eastwick, Gilston and Hunsdon and other clusters of existing buildings will be protected through the creation of landscaped green buffers of sufficient width which will separate them from new villages and ensure they remain distinctive;
- The green corridors will contain walking and cycling routes to connect the existing settlements with new villages in the Gilston Area;
- The provision of necessary infrastructure will be phased and delivered in a timely fashion to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to accommodate the needs arising from the new development and that existing communities are equally and adequately served;
- The extended network of pedestrian, cycle and public transport routes will connect existing communities to the new villages, and the facilities contained within them;
- Early landscape improvements will be delivered to strengthen the green buffers around the existing settlements;
- Construction and traffic impacts on existing communities will be minimised and mitigated.

## OBJECTIVE 3: DELIVERING A WIDE CHOICE OF QUALITY HOMES

- A wide range of different housing typologies and tenures (including market and genuinely affordable housing) will be provided in each village to create mixed and balanced communities and meet the housing needs of East Hertfordshire;
- New homes will be designed and constructed to a high-quality standard:

- Homes will be flexible and adaptable to different and changing lifestyles, providing for a variety of needs;
- New homes will meet high standards of sustainability and internal space;
- A range of specialist housing will be provided including assisted living for older residents, and opportunities will be created for self-build and custom building;

#### OBJECTIVE 4: WELL CONNECTED TO, BUT DISTINCTIVE FROM, HARLOW

- Development in the Gilston Area will be physically separated from Harlow by the open landscape (save for the river crossings) of the Stort Valley, an amenity to be preserved for its natural and water-related character and shared by all communities when appropriate to the sensitive natural and wildlife environment;
- The character and feel of the new villages will be clearly distinct from the predominantly urban development characteristic of the wider Harlow area south of the Stort Valley;
- Land uses, streets and public spaces will be in line with the character of a village and not be inspired by urban places;
- Green landscape should be rich in biodiversity and characteristic of the countryside of the wider area, rather than designed and managed like urban parks;
- Both existing and new communities will be well connected to Harlow, particularly through public transport, walking and cycling

#### OBJECTIVE 5: PROMOTING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

- The design of new development will create safe and accessible living environments with clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes and high-quality public spaces designed to encourage active lifestyles and social integration through everyday use;
- Each village will provide some community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services as relevant to the scale and size of that village;
- Access will be provided for all residents to high quality open spaces and the wider countryside;
- Opportunities for sport and recreation within the development will be available for all age groups; sport pitches will be provided in a variety of accessible locations, but should be designed to reflect the setting of their location, e.g. floodlighting and large carparks will not be permitted in historic or rural open settings;
- Accessible homes and neighbourhoods, and housing with care and support, will be integrated into the villages to enable people to live independently within their community.

#### OBJECTIVE 6: PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

- All villages and facilities will be well connected and easily accessible by walking, cycling and bus by all Gilston communities, new and existing;
- All streets and connecting roads within the villages will be designed to limit road speeds, pedestrian friendly and in character with the village concept;

- Streetlighting should be minimal and sensitive to the darkness of the countryside;
- Development in the Gilston Area will promote sustainable transport choices through the provision of a well-connected network of safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle routes within each village and between villages, including the existing communities;
- Frequent and extended public transport services will serve new and existing settlements with bus stops within walking distance of most new and existing houses to encourage the use of public transport;
- Development in the Gilston Area will be integrated with sustainable travel initiatives in the wider Harlow area including the creation of sustainable transport corridors;
- Safe and direct cycle and pedestrian routes will be provided to Harlow Town station including convenient crossing facilities across the A414;
- Smart cycle schemes and cycle parking facilities will be provided at Harlow Town station.;
- The development will anticipate changes in transport technology and support smart mobility services, reducing the need to own a car;
- Electric charging facilities will be provided in all developments to encourage the use of low carbon emission vehicles;
- Car parking (on and off road) will be well integrated into the street design and carefully managed to minimise the visual impact on the street scene and to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport.

#### OBJECTIVE 7: CREATING WALKABLE NEIGHBOURHOODS

- A balance of land uses will be provided in each village (relative to the scale, size and role of the village) to encourage people to minimise journeys for shopping, leisure, education and other activities;
- Key facilities such as primary schools and local shops will be located within walking distance of most properties;
- Layouts will cater for and encourage pedestrian and cycle movement and each village will be developed around a legible street hierarchy which connects new housing to the village centres and other facilities;
- Walking and cycling will be prioritised within each village.

#### OBJECTIVE 8: PROMOTING HIGH QUALITY DESIGN

- The new villages will draw inspiration from the morphology and character of existing settlements in the Gilston Area and elsewhere in Hertfordshire;
- The potential to create open layouts with variable building lines integrated with the landscape should be adopted as characteristic of the area, following natural contours and minimise cut and fill wherever possible;
- New development will be appropriately scaled to reflect the village location, local heritage and landscape elements;
- Buildings will be designed to front onto spaces to provide activation, security and surveillance: back fences onto green areas for public use should be avoided;
- Frontages should be interesting, attractive and designed to be part of a street or landscape space;

- Durable and high-quality buildings and public spaces will positively respond to local landscape character and history and reflect the identity of the local area;
- Internal space layouts should allow flexibility and adaptation to accommodate changing lifestyles.
- High standard of sustainability will be adopted.
- Smart Technologies for the home should be anticipated;
- Clear and detailed design guidance will be developed for each village, drawing on local materials and character, from traditional to contemporary and reflecting individual village character.

#### OBJECTIVE 9: A PROTECTED AND ENHANCED LANDSCAPE AND NETWORK OF GREEN SPACES

- New and existing settlements will have a protected and enhanced relationship with the surrounding landscape and an attractive rural landscape setting;
- The revised Green Belt will be protected from physical and visual encroachment of urbanisation;
- Opportunities will be taken to improve access to the countryside and enjoyment of rural amenity, with a high standard of Accessible Natural Green Spaces (as defined by Natural England);
- The designs for each village will identify long and short range views to create visual connections with notable heritage and landscape features;
- The existing network of parks, views and paths will be integrated with new connections to form a rich and permeable network of green spaces will be linked by a series of environmentally viable green corridors between new and existing settlements which will provide walking routes and promote rich biodiversity appropriate to the area;
- Each village will have a range of useable open spaces, local play areas, countryside inspired landscaped areas and SUDS carefully designed to be safe and pleasant, forming an essential part of the experience of living in the Gilston Area;
- The landowners will transfer the undeveloped open land into community ownership, supported by a comprehensive long term management strategy.

#### OBJECTIVE 10: PROTECTING AND ENHANCING NATURAL ASSETS

- Existing areas of ecological, wildlife and landscape value will be protected, enhanced and incorporated as part of the integrated network of green spaces;
- Existing woodland will be restored, integrated and well managed for future preservation at an early stage of the development process;
- Development will be designed to minimise impacts on areas of ecological importance through the creation of adequate separation distances and buffer zones;
- Key habitat features will be preserved as a priority and enhanced while new habitats will be created to improve biodiversity.

## OBJECTIVE 11: PROTECTING AND ENHANCING HERITAGE ASSETS

- Development in the Gilston Area will respect and have a positive relationship with its heritage assets;
- Historic boundaries, such as the former deer park pale and ditch will be respected, preserved and enhanced;
- The layout and design of new development will respond sensitively to the form, proportion, scale and character of heritage assets;
- Open spaces will be strategically positioned to preserve the setting of heritage assets;
- Development will be positioned and landscape will be designed to respect, protect, and in some instances, enhance, the setting and views to/ from heritage assets.
- Long term conservation and management plans will be developed for all heritage assets, in consultation with the local community as part of the planning process;
- Opportunities will be promoted to increase public appreciation and understanding of heritage through village design and the incorporation of appropriate references.

## OBJECTIVE 12: ENGAGING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

- Local communities (existing and new) will be fully, meaningfully and collaboratively engaged with each stage of the development process;
- The undeveloped land to the northwest of the Gilston Area will be transferred early on into community ownership or similar instrument, supported by a comprehensive long-term management strategy;
- Through the Governance Strategy, measures will be put in place to ensure that the community will have the necessary means to secure the long term operation and maintenance of community assets.

## OBJECTIVE 13: ENSURING THE PHASED DELIVERY OF NECESSARY INFRASTRUCTURE TO MEET THE NEEDS ARISING FROM THE DEVELOPMENT

- Infrastructure requirements and the timescale for provision will be determined as part of the approval of future planning applications.
- The provision of necessary infrastructure will be phased in relation to development to ensure there is adequate capacity to meet the cumulative needs of new and existing communities and phased to minimise and manage the impacts of the development on the local area;
- Construction traffic will be managed to minimise impact on existing and new communities, with stringent operational management plans agreed prior to the commencement of development in a village.

4.5 The Neighbourhood Plan policies set out in the subsequent Sections address these objectives and contribute individually and collectively to the over-arching objective of delivering sustainable development in accordance with Policy GA1 and the Concept Framework.

*Fig. 11 - Historic Gilston Park*



## 5. Neighbourhood Plan Policies

*The Neighbourhood Plan policies address the Vision and Objectives for the Gilston Area and contribute individually and collectively to the over-arching objective of delivering sustainable development in accordance with the District Plan and Concept Framework*

### Overview

- 5.1 The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan have their foundation in the East Hertfordshire District Plan and are intended to clarify and add weight to the Vision and Objectives of the Concept Framework. They build on the Garden City principles and the strategic objectives set out in Policies GA1 and GA2. The policies relate to the development area allocated under Policy GA1 unless otherwise stated. The policies are arranged under the following key headings:

#### A. Accommodating Growth

These are the strategic policies guiding the structure and relationships of the existing communities, new development and the wider area. They address the locally specific aspects of sustainability, landscape and relationship with the countryside, village character, infrastructure and partnership working.

- Policy AG1 Promoting Sustainable Development
- Policy AG2 Creating a Connected Green Infrastructure Network
- Policy AG3 Protecting and Enhancing the Countryside Setting
- Policy AG4 Hunsdon Airfield and Area Surrounding Eastwick Woods
- Policy AG5 Maintaining the Individuality and Separation of All Villages
- Policy AG6 Securing Hertfordshire Village Character
- Policy AG7 Infrastructure Delivery Ahead of Need
- Policy AG8 Infrastructure Parity for the Existing Settlements
- Policy AG9 Community Partnership

#### B. Delivering Quality Places

These policies address and aim to inform the shape of future development in a way that is respectful of local context and provide appropriate design for landscape and built-up areas, heritage, community assets and mobility.

- Policy LA1 Landscape within the New Villages
- Policy LA2 Enhanced Landscape within Existing Settlements
- Policy BU1 Housing and Residential Neighbourhoods
- Policy BU2 Village Cores/Centres
- Policy BU3 Employment Areas
- Policy BU4 Village Streets and Lanes
- Policy H1 Celebration of the Existing Heritage Assets
- Policy C1 Community Facility Provision
- Policy C2 Community Ownership and Stewardship

- Policy TRA1 Sustainable Mobility
- Policy TRA2 Outstanding Connectivity
- Policy TRA3 Minimising Impact of Traffic and New Road Infrastructure
- Policy TRA4 Access to the Countryside

*C. Enhancing the Existing Settlements*

This section specifically outlines the essential measures to ensure that existing communities are not set back or inappropriately affected by the development and construction activity.

- Policy EX1 Mitigating the Impacts of Development and Enhancing Existing Settlements

- 5.2 The thread between the Neighbourhood Plan policies, the adopted District Plan and the Vision and Objectives which underpin the Concept Framework is set out in Appendix 3.

## A. Accommodating Growth

*Proposals should find their foundation in the landscape, topographical and built features of the area to accommodate new housing within a comprehensive plan for distinct villages of individual character and establish a positive relationship with the existing settlements.*

- 5.3 This group of policies address the strategic aspects of future change and development: the meaning of sustainability for the Gilston Area, the relationship with landscape and countryside, the meaning of villages and the relationships between new and existing settlements and the wider area.

### AG1 - Promoting Sustainable Development

#### Rationale and Justification

- 5.4 The Harlow and Gilston Garden Town makes a clear distinction between Gilston and Harlow. This is reinforced by the Development Principles of the Concept Framework ('Well Connected but Distinctive from Harlow'). It is also very explicit in the illustrations and diagrams in the Garden Town Design Guide (see Fig. 15) which indicate that development in Gilston should take the form of villages set in the landscape in the Gilston Area, while in Harlow growth is made of interlocking districts separated by green wedges. This not only indicates a clear overall distinction of built form, but also the predominance of the landscape setting and character over the built area in Gilston.
- 5.5 The intention is to develop the Gilston Area as a series of villages set in the open countryside and around the historic landscape of Gilston Park, each village having its own distinct character and identity within one overall dominant landscape or rural character.
- 5.6 A unified landscape led approach will be required with the existing landscape being enhanced and managed to create an attractive place and setting for people to enjoy. There should be a singular and coherent identity as a whole, primarily expressed in the landscape and scale of Hertfordshire villages, while accommodating a wide range of diversity and character within. It will also be important to incorporate the existing settlements whilst retaining their individual form, character and identity.
- 5.7 This approach is clearly expressed in the guidance documents of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town, in Policy GA1 of East Hertfordshire District Plan, and very clearly in the Concept Framework.
- 5.8 This policy is a general policy which supplements existing guidance and policy to ensure that local character and distinctiveness are informed by the understanding of the local community, and will be taken into account in the determination of planning applications.

- 5.9 In considering development proposals, the area must be considered as a whole. Policy GA<sub>1</sub> will enable planning applications to be determined in the context of the overall objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan and avoid proposals being considered in isolation.

### Community Perspective

- 5.10 The community places great value on living in the Hertfordshire countryside and on the identity of the Eastwick, Gilston and Hunsdon area. Local residents recognise that there is functional interrelation with Harlow, but would like to ensure that the aspects of village character, community spirit and lifestyle of the area that they love and enjoy are extended to the future communities.
- 5.11 The community is concerned that major development could bring a new urban or suburban character to the area, which is inappropriate to the rural setting and the existing settlements, eroding local distinctiveness and individuality of the Gilston area from Harlow on which they place great importance. They are also concerned about the impact of development on existing infrastructure which is already operating at capacity and would wish to ensure that necessary infrastructure is provided in advance of development to accommodate the additional demand.
- 5.12 A comprehensive framework of proposals, considering landscape, development and infrastructure as a whole (including the existing settlements), is seen as key to prevent piecemeal development and control character and impacts on the local area.
- 5.13 Policy AG<sub>1</sub> will enable planning applications to be determined in the context of the overall objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan and avoid proposals being considered in isolation.

## **POLICY AG1 - Promoting Sustainable Development in Gilston**

Development proposals in the Gilston Area will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria have been satisfied:

1. Development proposals must be put forward in the context of the overall development of the Gilston Area and not considered in isolation.
2. Development proposals must positively consider the relationship of the new and existing settlements of Gilston, Eastwick and Hunsdon, respect their character and setting and enhance their landscape setting and access to services and facilities in line with new development;
3. The scale, location and form of development in the Neighbourhood Area should be appropriate to the character of the area and existing settlements and provide living and working environments of exceptional quality, supported by a network of local services and facilities. New development will be required to:
  - i. Adopt a landscape led approach to ensure predominance of the landscape setting and enhance the existing rural landscape assets;
  - ii. Create separate, distinctive and balanced communities with 7 new villages each with a distinctive and individual identity which complement the existing 3 settlements;
  - iii. Minimise and mitigate impacts on existing settlements;
  - v. Protect and enhance the character of the built and natural heritage of the area;
  - vi. Protect existing areas of ecological, wildlife and landscape value, the landscape setting of the villages and create a network of natural open spaces;
  - vii. Promote healthy communities and seek to improve the walking and cycling environment to improve access to local services and public transport provision;
  - viii. Be physically separated by rural landscape and distinguished in built form from Harlow;
  - ix. Respect and reinforce the integrity of the Green Belt through well-preserved sympathetic landscape in the Stort Valley, complementary to the river settings and environment;
  - x. Be supported by necessary physical and social infrastructure at each stage of development to ensure the needs of existing and future residents are met in advance of requirement and without pressure on existing services;
  - xi. Promote high design quality and draw inspiration from the morphology and character of existing settlements in the Gilston Area and elsewhere in Hertfordshire.

## AG2 - Creating a Connected Green Infrastructure Network

### Rationale and Justification

- 5.14 The setting of villages within a predominant landscape is a key feature of the guidance and policy documents of the area. The rural character of the area has remained broadly unchanged since Tudor times (see Section 3), and substantially unaltered in the post-war period, when Harlow and many villages and towns around Hertfordshire grew and changed in both size and character.
- 5.15 The slopes and plateaus of Eastwick, Gilston and Hunsdon offer agricultural fields, semi-natural parkland (Gilston Park and nearby Hunsdon House), veteran trees and established hedgerows and ditches and pockets of ancient or replanted woodland (see Fig. 9). Important wildlife areas exist nearby at the Lee Valley Park, Stort Valley marshlands and SSSI, and the Forests of Epping and Hatfield.
- 5.16 It will be important to protect existing wildlife sites and biodiversity and retain connectivity for wildlife across the wider area, as the area gets developed.
- 5.17 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to promote the creation of a network of green natural spaces to achieve multiple purposes:
- Ensure the protection of existing landscape features, wildlife sites and establishment of wildlife corridors of sufficient width to retain wildlife and biodiversity habitats and connectivity across the area;
  - Protect and establish a strong landscape setting of rural character that provides individuality between new and existing settlements / communities;
  - Create an extended network of accessible natural green spaces, through existing trees, hedgerows and landscape features to provide enjoyment of the countryside, walking routes and biodiversity appropriate to the area.
- 5.18 This policy is complemented by AG3 which guides the protection and enhancement of the rural setting of the area.

### Community Perspective

- 5.19 The existing community places great value on the countryside setting of their villages, the proximity of wildlife and access to natural green space. Consultation on the Concept Framework (September 2017) has highlighted concerns about the impact of development on the relationship between countryside and villages and the need to protect and expand existing wildlife habitats and achieve a net biodiversity gain for the area.

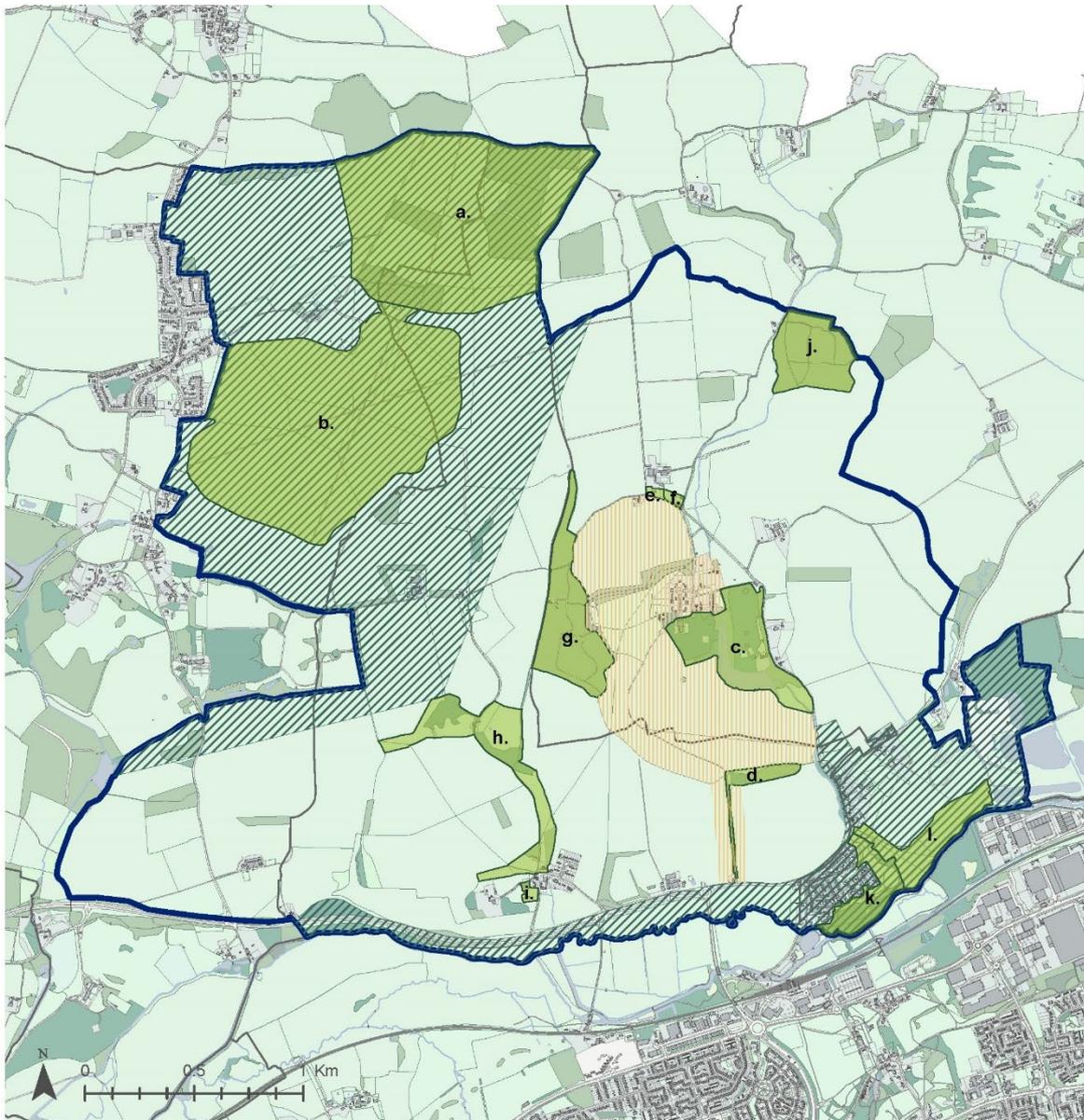
## **POLICY AG2 – Creating a Connected Green Infrastructure Network**

Development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria have been satisfied:

1. An overall Landscape Masterplan has been prepared for the Gilston Area as a whole, including the existing settlements, prior to the preparation of individual Village Masterplans and the commencement of development. The Landscape Masterplan will incorporate a Green Infrastructure Network comprising:
  - i. The existing network of parks, woodlands and wildlife sites (see Fig. 9);
  - ii. Connected green corridors of adequate width and appropriate landscape character to ensure:
    - Safeguard of biodiversity, natural assets and establishment of ample and wildlife corridors connecting with a wider green infrastructure network including Stort Valley, Lee Valley Park, Epping Forest and Hatfield Forest;
    - Separation between villages to ensure their individuality and establishment of a predominant landscape and rural setting;
    - Walking and cycling access to the countryside in accordance with best practice such as Natural England Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGst), without encroachment into wildlife areas and the green separation between villages (see also Policy TRA4).
  - iii. Clearly defined natural / rural open landscape separating Gilston Area from Harlow at the Stort Valley;
  - iv. Protection of existing views and establishment of new ones over the open countryside;
  - v. Establishment of new habitats to promote a net gain in biodiversity;
  - vi. Creation of effective sustainable drainage systems, which takes account of current flooding occurrences in the existing settlements, protects the Stort water systems and is well integrated into the local landscape, using traditional ditch and pond features as inspiration.
2. Development will be designed to minimise impacts on areas of ecological importance through the creation of adequate separation distances and buffer zones according or exceeding best practice;
3. Existing woodlands will be enhanced or extended, and management plans developed at an early stage of the development process;

4. The following sites are designated as Local Green Space (see Fig. 12):
  - a. Eastwick Wood
  - b. Hunsdon Airfield
  - c. Historic Gilston Park
  - d. The Avenue and Chase, including Ancient Monuments
  - e. St Mary's Church
  - f. Gilston Cottages
  - g. Home Wood
  - h. Eastwick Valley and Eastwick Hall Corridor, including moated sites (Ancient Scheduled Monuments)
  - i. St Botholph's Church
  - j. Golden Grove
  - k. Terlings Park
  - l. Fiddlers Brook Area and Lowland Fens
5. The Green Infrastructure Network and Local Green Spaces will be retained in perpetuity and subject to management and maintenance plans. Long term maintenance will be considered as part of a site-wide Governance Strategy, including measures to enable long term management by the community.

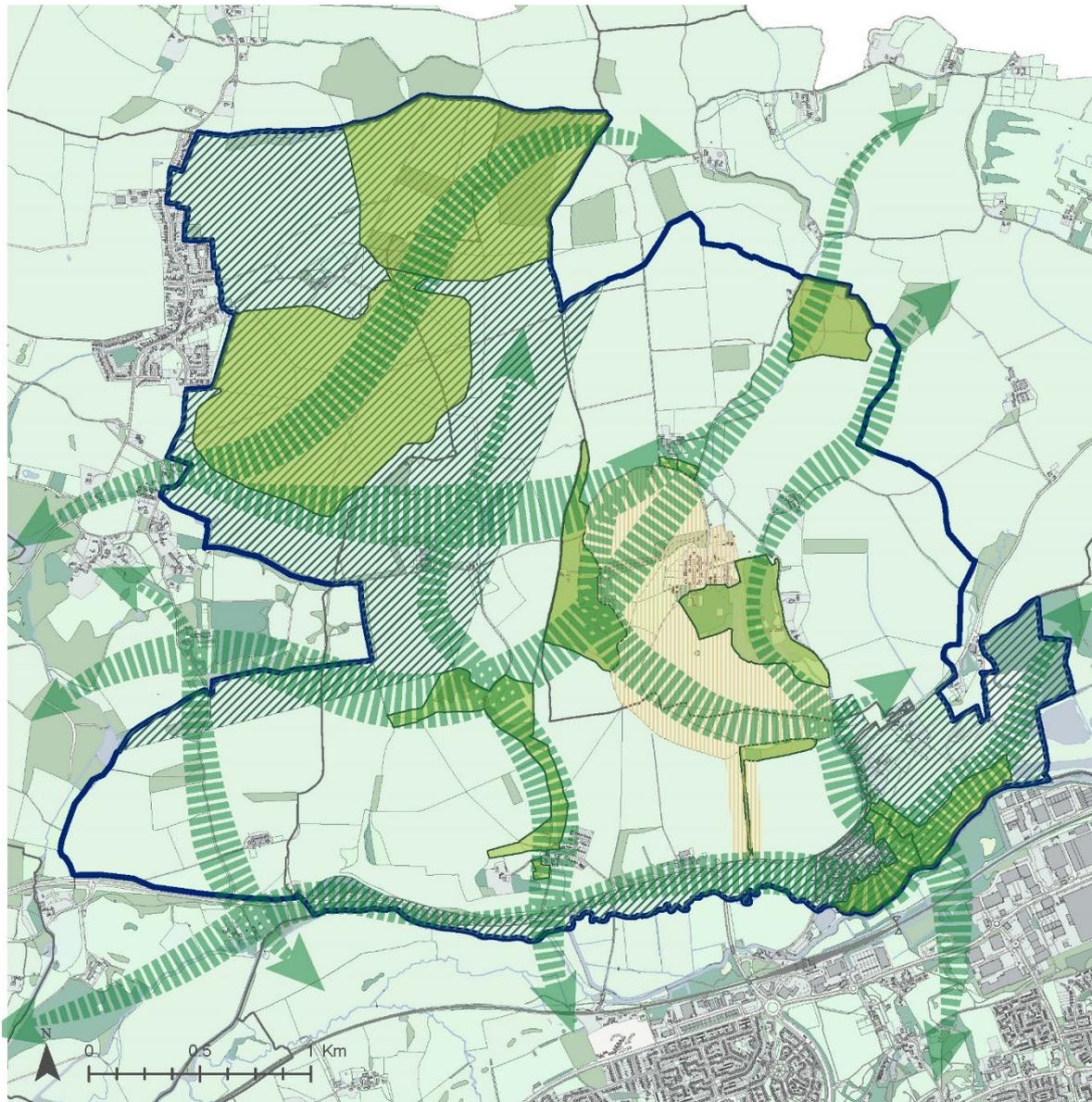
Fig. 12 - Proposed Local Green Spaces



-  Neighbourhood Plan Boundary
-  Local Green Space
-  Green Belt and Open Land
-  Sensitive Historic Setting
-  Parish Boundaries

- a. Eastwick Wood
- b. Hunsdon Airfield
- c. Historic Gilston Park
- d. The Avenue and Chase, including Ancient Monuments
- e. St Mary's Church
- f. Church (or Gilston) Cottages
- g. Home Wood
- h. Eastwick Valley and Eastwick Hall Corridor, including moated sites
- i. St Botholph's Church
- j. Golden Grove
- k. Terlings Park
- l. Fiddlers Brook Area and Lowland Fens

Fig. 13 – Indicative Green Infrastructure Network



-  Neighbourhood Plan Boundary
-  Local Green Space
-  Green Belt and Open Land
-  Sensitive Historic Setting
-  Indicative Green Corridors
-  Parish Boundaries

## AG3 - Protecting and Enhancing the Countryside Setting of New and Existing Villages

### Rationale and Justification

- 5.20 Protection and predominance of the rural landscape setting of villages (existing and new) is essential if the vision for the Gilston area is to be realised. Rural and natural open space inspired from the planting of the countryside of Hertfordshire is essential to retain the character of the area and reinforce the distinctiveness from Harlow and its urban parkland.
- 5.21 Landscape features and areas of ecological significance within village boundaries should be retained and integrated into the development to retain the countryside setting which is an essential feature of village character. This will be reinforced by the retention and protection from development of landscape corridors of adequate width between villages which will reinforce the distinctiveness of individual villages and their relationship to the countryside and create rich areas for wildlife habitats and informal recreation.
- 5.22 It is important that the landscape between the villages retains an open rural character and appearance of common land rather than that of a formal parkland. The countryside must be subject to effective management. Uses which would have a negative impact on the character of the countryside or require new buildings or infrastructure such as intensive agricultural use, commercial leisure activities will not be permitted

### Community Perspective

- 5.23 The community places great importance on the rural character of the area. The proposed development will impact on the existing character, but these impacts must be managed and mitigated to retain and enhance the natural green setting and separation of new and existing settlements and to enable wildlife to flourish.

### **POLICY AG3 – Protecting and Enhancing the Countryside Setting of New and Existing Villages**

Development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria have been satisfied:

1. Measures have been taken to mitigate the visual impacts on the landscape, minimise encroachment of urbanisation on the countryside and to retain its essential open rural character.
2. The Green Infrastructure Network (Policy AG2) and Community Open Land (Policy AG4) should be designed as Natural Greenspace (as defined by Natural England) and make clear references and take inspiration from their rural setting of woodland, common land, hedgerows, fields and grassland, large countryside trees and wetland by the brooks and ditches;
3. Plant species should be typical of the area and of the rural setting, maximising opportunities for enhanced biodiversity and habitat creation and adaptable to changing climate conditions;
4. Paths and cycle/ bridleways should have natural / permeable finishes and all walls and gates take inspiration from the local countryside;
5. Historic boundaries such as the former deer park pale and ditch should be preserved and enhanced;
6. Sport pitches and recreational facilities will generally be allowed within the Green Infrastructure Network where;
  - i. They do not require significant alteration of contours;
  - ii. A natural surface is provided with no artificial surface or fencing;
  - iii. Ancillary built facilities are small scale, appropriately sited and of exceptional design (club-house, changing rooms, etc.);
  - iv. Access roads and car parking are small, peripheral to the area and not encroaching any views over the open fields;
  - v. Floodlighting or night use will generally not be permitted unless it is demonstrated that there is no impact on wildlife, dark skies or quietness.
7. Measures have been taken to minimise and mitigate the impacts of light and noise pollution within the Green Infrastructure Network or Community Open Land or from spill-over from development;
8. Villages (new and existing) should be clearly set within the rural landscape and clearly separated by fields and woodland blocks as meaningful buffers to protect individuality and rural open space (see also Policy AG5). Development of the new villages will also be required to retain existing trees and significant hedgerows and create a visual relationship between the village and the countryside, through style of planting and views.

## AG4 - Creating a New Country Park at Hunsdon Airfield and Eastwick Wood

### Rationale and Justification

- 5.24 The area of Hunsdon Airfield and Eastwick Wood is allocated in the District Plan as Open Space Land, and it is part of the wider Green Infrastructure Network (Policy AG2). It is intended that this area will remain undeveloped, with the exception of a small number of existing buildings potentially converted to recreational use. District Plan Policy GA1 states that a community land trust, or other governance mechanism as appropriate, will be established in order to deliver local ownership and management of these assets and that this should take place early in the overall development programme.
- 5.25 The Airfield and Eastwick Woodland offer significant potential as a natural Country Park which will benefit new and existing residents and provide opportunities for informal leisure and countryside pursuits. It will be important however to ensure that future uses make a positive contribution to the rural character of the area and do not impact on the amenity of existing communities.
- 5.26 Appropriate connections to new and existing settlements through a network of footpaths, cycleways and bridleways should be created.

### Community Perspective

- 5.27 The Airfield has been an essential part of the modern history of Hunsdon. Hunsdon Airfield and Eastwick Woodland are important areas of open space for the existing communities, and the Airfield has a strong legacy within Hunsdon. This history is recognised and celebrated by the local community who are concerned that this cultural link should not be lost. It is also essential to the setting of the village and enjoyment of the countryside for Hunsdon residents. For these reasons this area cannot be considered a resource to be planned only for the benefit of the new communities – they already are very important for the communities of today.
- 5.28 The local community is supportive of the creation of a community trust and would wish to ensure that the existing community is fully involved in its establishment and future operation. The Concept Framework suggests that the area north of the powerlines is to be placed in a locked trust prior to the commencement of development, and the community strongly supports this approach.
- 5.29 Concerns have been expressed about existing non-conforming uses which detract from the rural character of the area and generate noise and heavy traffic within Hunsdon. There is an expectation that non-conforming uses and activities with negative local impacts will be removed at the earliest opportunity and prior to commencement of development. The local community of Hunsdon and Gilston would wish to see the airfield used as a rural park for the enjoyment of walking, cycling, horse riding and the countryside.

## **POLICY AG4 – Creating a New Country Park at Hunsdon Airfield and Eastwick Wood**

In accordance with Policy GA1, development in the Gilston Area will be required to include provision for the establishment of a country park on Hunsdon Airfield and the area around Eastwick Woodland. This area will be designated as Community Open Land and the following requirements should be addressed in any proposals for the Country Park;

1. The Country Park will be established to guarantee retention in perpetuity and transferred prior to the commencement of development to a community trust or equivalent instrument securing the long term involvement of the new and existing communities; funding and design support will be made available prior to the transfer of the land to enable community involvement in the design and preparation of a Management and Maintenance Plan;
2. Long term revenue streams not requiring the establishment of commercial uses within the site itself will be included in the Governance Strategy, including funding to enable long term involvement by the community;
3. Provision should be made for early planting, woodland restoration and termination of existing non-conforming uses;
4. The design of the Country Park is an essential part of the overall Landscape Master Plan and will developed in consultation with the local community and other stakeholder groups at the very early stages of development. The design should be in accordance with Policy AG3 and also include:
  - i. Substantial increase in biodiversity value and natural interest including woodland planting, natural grassland, etc;
  - ii. Protection of the legacy and appreciation of the Airfield footprint;
  - iii. Facilities for informal recreation which will be in keeping with the character of the area;
  - iv. Restoration of existing heritage buildings to provide a visitor centre with interpretation facilities relating to the history and natural environment of the Airfield and small-scale leisure uses such as a café or similar;
  - v. Car parking may be permitted where this is provided in small groups on the edge of the Country Park and well-integrated with the landscape;
  - vi. Establishment of appropriate footpath, cycleway and bridleway connections to existing and new villages and the wider countryside;
  - vii. No leisure or commercial uses should be permitted where these would impact on the rural and natural character of the park or local amenity;
  - viii. New buildings will generally not be permitted unless these are ancillary to the informal recreational use of the area, discreetly designed and of exceptional architectural quality;
  - ix. Flood water retention, especially to remedy current flooding patterns within Hunsdon village should be carefully integrated with the landscape;
  - x. Protection of key views, and particularly the sensitive gap before entering Hunsdon village.

5. The site will be transferred to a community trust prior to the commencement of development and funding should be made available at an early stage in the development of the Gilston Area to enable the establishment of the Country Park.
6. The Country Park will be retained in perpetuity and subject to management and maintenance plans. Long term maintenance will be considered as part of the governance strategy, including measures to enable long term involvement by the community.

*Fig. 14 - The open views across Hunsdon Airfield from Church Lane*



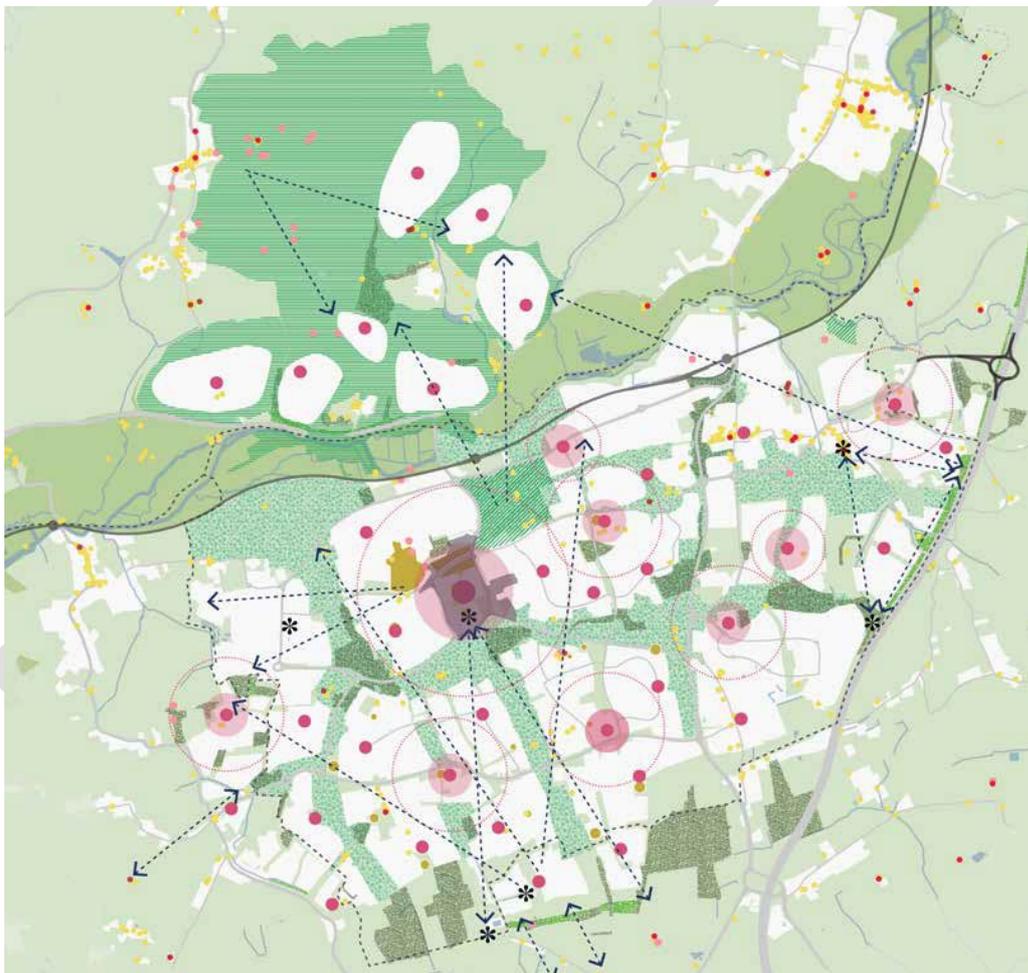
## AG5 - Maintaining the Individuality of all Villages

### Rationale and Justification

- 5.30 The principle of avoiding coalescence between settlements is very well established in planning policy and expressed in the principles set out in the Concept Framework, in the Garden Town Design Guide and in good practice.
- 5.31 All planning policy and guidance documents consistently refer to Gilston as an individual place separate from Harlow: this is the case of EHDC District Plan Policy GA<sub>1</sub> which states ‘development in this location will provide a mixture of house sizes and tenures across seven distinct villages’ (Policy GA<sub>1</sub> III) and of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision which refers to ‘series of distinctive neighbourhoods and villages’ (Vision Placemaking A) and to connecting ‘out to the wider countryside and Stort Valley’ (Landscape & Green Infrastructure A).
- 5.32 The Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Strategic Plan (Fig. 15) illustrates clearly in diagrammatic form the expected difference in the balance between green and built areas in the Gilston area as opposed to Harlow: in Gilston there will be individual and organic villages set within the landscape, while Harlow has an urban layout of interrelating districts separated by green wedges.
- 5.33 Even prior to the development of Harlow as a New Town, the Gilston Area has always been different from Harlow, with its own distinctive history and pattern of development (see Section 3). Today, it still remains separated from Harlow by the Green Belt and the configuration of the Stort Valley with watercourses, wildlife and floodplains. The lack of crossings between Gilston and Harlow is both a result of separate histories and a source of individuality today.
- 5.34 Within Hertfordshire, villages are typically isolated and surrounded by a rural landscape of fields and woodlands. In some cases, villages along a road corridor are separated by smaller fields of 100-200m width and clear discontinuity in the built form that maintains identity and prevents coalescence. This is the case of Hunsdon and Widford, or High Wych and Sawbridgeworth.
- 5.35 The Gilston Area should have a singular and coherent identity as a group of villages within the landscape, while accommodating diversity of character within. This concept also makes possible the potential to incorporate two existing settlements Gilston and Eastwick while retaining their individual form and identity.
- 5.36 The form of development will be determined by an in-depth understanding of the landscape, topographical and built features of the area in order to accommodate new housing within a comprehensive plan for distinct villages of individual character and establish a positive relationship with the existing settlements.
- 5.37 Distinctiveness and identity of each of the new villages will need to be reflected in discrete built areas, clear detachment, separation of frontages over rural fields or woodland with a clear perception of distance, sufficient to ensure that the villages are not to be perceived as neighbourhoods of a single settlement (as in Harlow) but genuinely distinct and individual villages.

- 5.38 Firm boundaries for the new villages and the communities of Eastwick and Gilston (Gilston being formed by a loose grouping of buildings rather than a compact settlement) should be defined through a landscape-led approach to ensure that an adequate separation distance and open countryside corridor is provided between individual settlements This will required in conjunction with Policy AG2 above.
- 5.39 The villages should be well connected to the infrastructure, facilities and employment of Harlow, but will be physically separated and distinctive in their spatial form and design. The development will respect the strategy and vision for the Garden Town initiative and through this it will contribute to the wider aspiration for the sustained economic regeneration and growth of Harlow.

*Fig. 15 - Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Design Guide Structural Plan (2018)*



### Community Perspective

- 5.40 The community has expressed concerns about the potential urbanising effect of new development and the risk of merging into the urban area of Harlow. Local residents support the sentiment of the diagram of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Design Guide (Fig. xx above) and have a strong desire to ensure that new development respects the character of existing settlements and creates new contained villages which are sympathetic to the character of the Gilston Area and have a distinctive individual character.

## **POLICY AG5 – Maintaining the Individuality and Separation of all Villages**

Proposals for new villages in the Gilston Area will be supported where they satisfy the following criteria:

1. Measures are incorporated to protect the setting of Eastwick, Gilston and Hunsdon and other clusters of existing buildings through the establishment of Community Boundaries and landscaped green buffers outside the boundary of sufficient width to separate them from new villages and ensure they remain distinctive:
  - i. The Community Boundaries are not intended as areas where intensification and infill are allowed, as the character of the existing settlement is that of loose built up form and scattered buildings;
  - ii. Gilston should remain a settlement made of groupings of buildings dispersed in open space;
  - iii. The open views out of Eastwick should be retained particularly from Eastwick Road towards the Memorial and around St. Botolph's Church.
2. The new villages should have a firm Village Boundary within which development should be contained to create distinctive and individual identity:
  - i. Location and extent of village development will be landscape-led and determined by existing landscape character, topography, heritage assets and respond sympathetically to existing settlements and communities;
  - ii. New villages should be separated by green buffers and corridors of sufficient width to ensure the villages are separate and distinctive;
  - iii. Each village should have soft edges (planted frontage and irregular built and rooflines) with lower density development towards the outer boundaries to reinforce separation.
3. Green buffers and corridors should form part of the Green Infrastructure Network (Policy AG2) and be retained in perpetuity. They should be established to provide:
  - i. Clear separation between villages;
  - ii. Sufficient width, darkness at night and quiet space to constitute a viable corridor for wild animals;
  - iii. Early landscape improvements to strengthen the green buffers around the existing settlements;
  - iv. Paths and cycle connections only if incidental, without reducing the depth of vegetation and physical separation between villages.
4. Development in the Gilston Area will be physically separated from Harlow by the open landscape (save for the river crossings) of the Stort Valley, which should be protected from encroachment of urbanisation, including protection of rural and wetland settings and views, exclusion of urban noise and light pollution.
5. Landscape improvements should be delivered early in the development to strengthen the green buffers around existing communities
6. The detailed design and treatment of the landscape buffers will be established in the Landscape Masterplan in consultation with the local community.
7. The detailed design of each village will be undertaken at the Village masterplan stage in consultation with the local community.

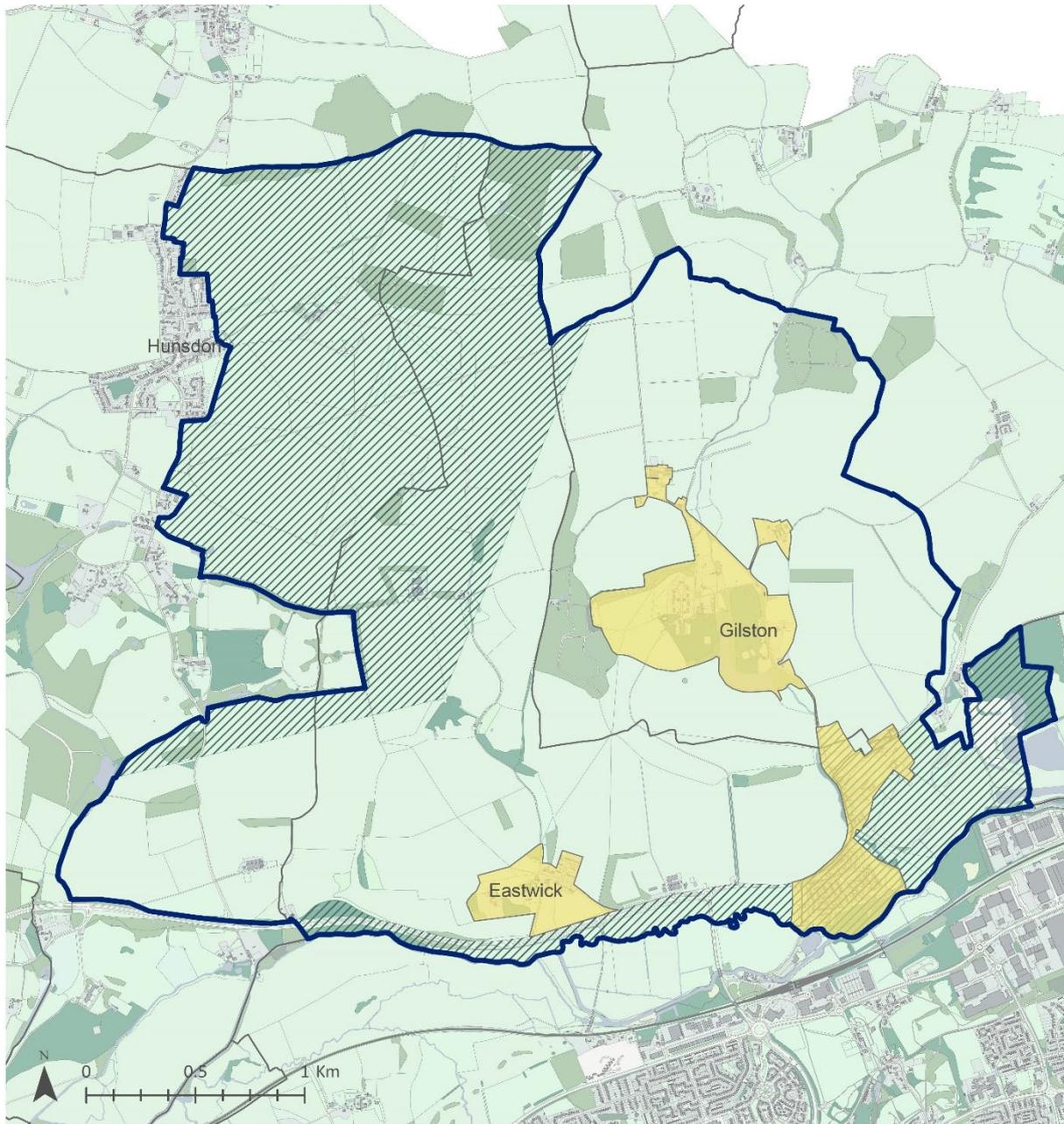
*Fig. 16 - Typical gap between villages, for example Hunsdon and Widford*



Fig. 17 - Typical 'soft edges' at the boundaries of development in Hunsdon and Gilston



Fig. 18 - Community Boundaries



-  Neighbourhood Plan Boundary
-  Community Boundaries
-  Green Belt and Open Land
-  Parish Boundaries

## AG6 - Securing Hertfordshire Village Character in the Design of the New Villages

### Rationale and Justification

- 5.41 The Gilston Area should be developed with a distinct character inspired from the Hertfordshire countryside, respecting the two existing settlements Gilston and Eastwick while retaining their individual form and identity.
- 5.42 The design of each of the villages will be required to draw from a deep understanding of the site's existing landscape, village form and heritage assets to create seven distinctive and individual village characters. The following characteristics of local villages should be reflected in the design of the new villages:
- Local villages are typically organised starting from a main spine which also constitute the village main street;
  - Countryside fields and woodland are never very far away from the main spine of the village, and often views over open rural landscape open up from crossroads from within the core of the village;
  - Often blocks of natural / semi-natural landscape with big countryside trees or fields are enclosed within the settlement area and bring the rural landscape right within the village;
  - Access roads to the villages are narrow, often in a ditch and surrounded by thick hedgerows, tall bushes and magnificent trees;
  - Arrival into the village do not present a 'gateway' point: typically arrival is through a transition area with buildings partially hidden by deep green open space at the front;
  - Within the village, the main spine is the focal point of active land uses and community facilities. It is typically narrow, informally laid out with narrow side pavements and low or no lighting. Despite limited pedestrian provision, it is pedestrian friendly allowing safe informal crossing and spill-over walking into the carriageway;
  - Secondary streets are typically very short and informal. Pavements are minimal and replaced by an informal green verge towards the outer edges of the village, with the carriageway shared by all users;
  - Heights are typically two-storey, with the ridge of the roof typically lower than the crown of the surrounding mature trees;
  - There is considerable variety of built form and massing: from compact and continuous frontages in the core of the village (Hunsdon, Eastwick, High Wych) to deeply set back isolated buildings (Gilston Lane, Eastwick Road upon entering the village from the A414, outer fringes of Hunsdon);
  - Hertfordshire villages display 'soft' and informal edges, without continuous frontages or repetitive rooflines and with built volumes partly hidden by tall trees and thick bushes.

## Community Perspective

- 5.43 The Community highlighted the need to reflect local village character in the design of the new villages during consultation on the Concept Framework and this is reflected in the Vision and Objectives. It is recognised that contemporary and innovative design may be acceptable subject to development being of an appropriate form and scale with views and connections to the surrounding countryside. Particular importance is placed on the variety of building design and informality of layout.

### **POLICY AG6 – Securing Hertfordshire Village Character in the design of the new villages**

Proposals for the new villages will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria are satisfied:

1. The layout of the new villages has been informed by analysis of typical Hertfordshire village layout and character, the site's existing landscape, traditional development patterns and heritage assets to create distinctive and individual village character;
2. The design of the new villages should be contemporary and innovative, but also appropriate to the location; its landscape, topography, built form, scale and materials. The design should be inspired by the characteristics of a Hertfordshire village, its relationship with the landscape, and its informality and diversity;
3. The character and feel of the new villages should be clearly distinguishable from the predominantly urban development characteristic and built form of the wider Harlow area;
4. The village layouts should clearly reflect Hertfordshire village patterns (see Paragraph 5.42) and this should be reflected in the density, the hierarchy of streets and lanes and the softer edges;
5. Each village should have a clearly identifiable village core along its main spine, which will act as the focus of the community and be designed to be compact and pedestrian friendly.
6. A detailed Masterplan will be prepared for each village in consultation with the local community.

## AG7 – Phased Delivery of Infrastructure

### Rationale and Justification

- 5.44 The provision of necessary infrastructure is critical to the delivery of growth in the Gilston Area. However, of greater importance is to ensure that it is provided in advance of requirements to ensure that there is adequate capacity to meet the needs of new and existing communities.
- 5.45 The District Plan sets out the requirement for infrastructure provision to support growth in the Gilston Area. One of the objectives of the Concept Framework is to ensure the phased delivery of necessary infrastructure to meet the needs arising from the development.
- 5.46 East Herts Council has been working with the other Councils involved in this project (Hertfordshire County Council, Essex County Council, Harlow District Council and Epping Forest District Council) to produce an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) for the Garden Town. An Infrastructure Delivery Plan was published in April 2019. This identifies the infrastructure requirements associated with the new villages and the apportionment of costs. Very importantly the IDP establishes the principle of comprehensive infrastructure upgrades, to serve the needs of the new communities, assist the regeneration of Harlow and address local deficiencies as part of a comprehensive plan.
- 5.47 The definition of infrastructure within the District Plan and the IDP covers:
- Transportation (roads, walking and cycling and transport services: buses and other forms of mobility services);
  - Utilities (water, sewerage, energy, etc)
  - Social infrastructure (education, healthcare, social care, community facilities and sport and leisure facilities).
- 5.48 The critical infrastructure required to mitigate the impact of the development, as well as that required to assist with place making, will be provided to support the development that creates the demand for it. Infrastructure will be provided such that it is operational at the appropriate point to mitigate the impact of development. The timing for the delivery of the main physical or social infrastructure items will be identified through specific and robust development triggers, linked to a certain quantum of development or a specific event. Details of the infrastructure triggers to control the delivery of key infrastructure must be provided as part of the outline planning applications.
- 5.49 Each new village will be supported by an appropriate range of social infrastructure, reflecting the scale of each village, including education, health, faith, open space, leisure, retail and alongside excellent links to the undeveloped open countryside especially that in community ownership and management

### Community Perspective

- 5.50 The community has made clear its concerns about the capacity of existing infrastructure to accommodate demand, this include the capacity of roads, the current absence of bus and cycle facilities, the poor capacity of Harlow rail stations, the weakness or absence of the sewage network and the absence of good quality broadband and telecom service

among other things. The community sees in the development of the Gilston Area an opportunity for a step change in infrastructure provision and would like to ensure that development should not take place in advance of necessary infrastructure provision, as this would place unacceptable additional strain on existing infrastructure capacity.

- 5.51 The community would therefore wish to see the improvements to necessary transport and utility infrastructure in advance of development and provision of social infrastructure ahead of occupation of any of the development to ensure that necessary capacity is available to address current deficiencies and meet the needs arising from the new development without placing further pressure on the existing community and the already overloaded infrastructure.

#### **POLICY AG7 – Phasing of Infrastructure Delivery**

The early delivery of infrastructure will be encouraged, and development proposals will be supported where the following criteria are satisfied:

1. An assessment of needs arising from the development has been undertaken and an Infrastructure Delivery Plan will be secured through a legal agreement which demonstrates how infrastructure will be phased to ensure that the needs of new and existing communities will be met;
2. No development should take place unless it can be demonstrated that there is sufficient capacity to accommodate new and existing needs at the time of first occupation;
3. Infrastructure requirements and the timescale for provision will be subject to public consultation and determined as part of the approval of future planning applications.

## AG8 - Infrastructure Parity for Existing Settlements

### Rationale and Justification

- 5.52 A key objective of the Concept Framework is to protect the attractiveness of existing settlements / settlements in the Gilston Area and carefully manage the impacts of the development and construction of the new villages on existing communities with the timely provision of improved infrastructure (roads, public transport, social infrastructure, etc.).
- 5.53 Infrastructure provision in the existing settlements should be upgraded to be comparable to that of existing communities: this would be particularly important for utilities, telecoms and access to public transport. Access to key destinations within Harlow from the existing settlements will be protected and improved.
- 5.54 Existing communities will be provided with easy access to the new leisure and community facilities in the villages through an extended network of pedestrian, cycle and public transport routes.

### Community Perspective

- 5.55 The community is concerned that the comprehensive vision for infrastructure upgrades proposed by the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town will not materialise within their smaller scale settlements and would like to ensure that major change in the area will result in an improvement within Eastwick, Gilston and Hunsdon as well. This should include better access to utilities, access to public transport and cycle network, and convenient and easy access to local facilities. There is a clear expectation that the existing community will benefit from new and improved provision.

### **POLICY AG8– Infrastructure Parity for the Existing Settlements**

Development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria are satisfied:

1. Existing communities should be provided with comparable standards of access to technical and social infrastructure and services;
2. As new villages are developed, provision should be made to connect existing communities to upgraded infrastructure (telecom, electricity, water, sewage, protection from storm water, etc) and enjoy the same quality of service;
3. Transport and convenient access to key destinations within Harlow and to Harlow Town Rail Station from the existing communities should be retained and improved;
4. An extended network of pedestrian, cycle and public transport routes will be established which connects existing communities to the new villages, and the facilities contained within them including education, health and social facilities.

## AG9 - Establishing a Partnership with the Community

### Rationale and Justification

- 5.56 The community has a key role to play in taking forward growth in the Gilston Area and ensure that development is appropriate to the location and distinctive.
- 5.57 Community engagement lies at the heart of delivering growth in the Gilston Area in accordance with Garden City principles. According to these, the community must be fully engaged at each stage of the planning and development and in future governance arrangements.
- 5.58 The Garden City principles highlight the importance of strong vision, leadership and community engagement and long-term community ownership of land and community assets. This is reflected in the District Plan: Policy GA1 IV requires the preparation of a community engagement strategy, working with the local parishes, which will include consideration of managing the interrelationship between new and existing settlements, and opportunities for local residents to participate in shaping the future of the area through the planning application process and through participatory preparation of Village Masterplans.
- 5.59 The community engagement strategy should reflect the progressive change as the existing community grows to include new residents, as the new villages get occupied.
- 5.60 The framework for governance arrangements for the long term stewardship of the Gilston Area that will bring together the new and existing communities should be established at an early stage in the planning process whilst ensuring the long term protection of the green spaces and their high quality management by the community.

### Community Perspective

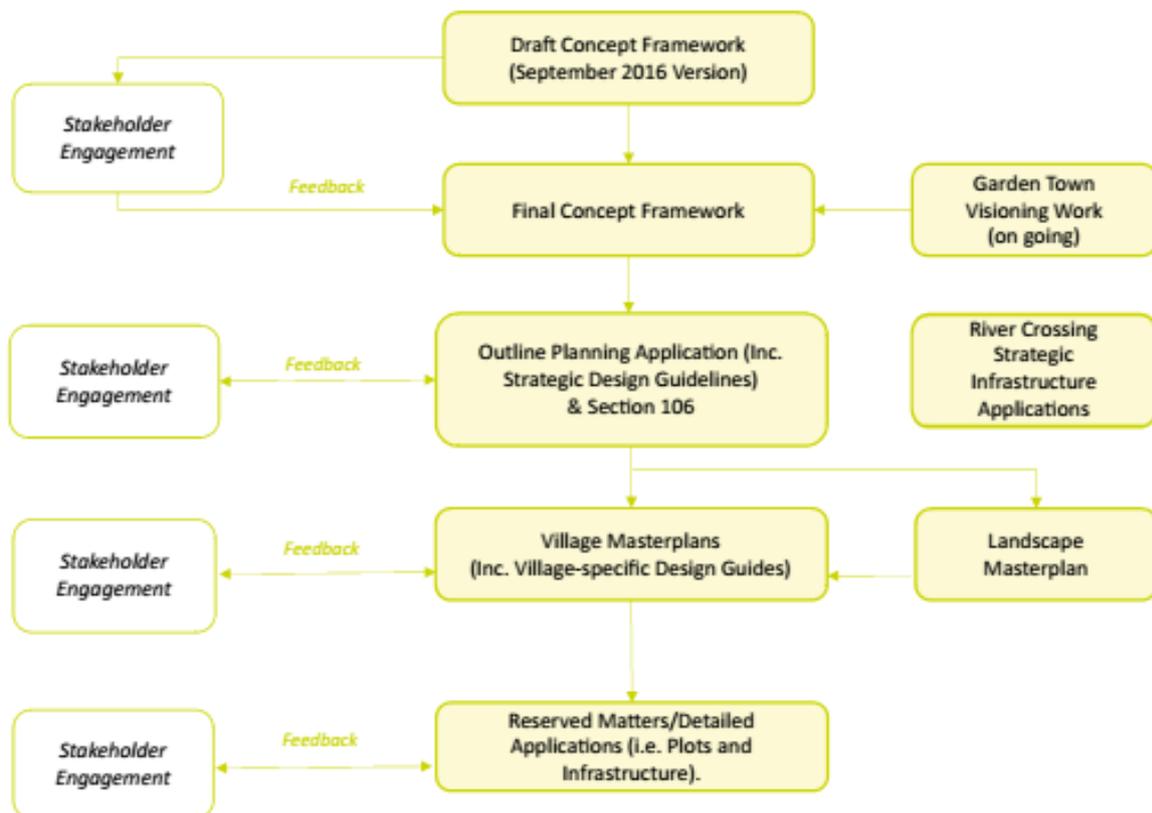
- 5.61 The existing community has engaged proactively in the development of the Concept Framework and has worked hard at creating a climate of collaboration with local authorities and developers in the interest of achieving development that is of exceptional quality and appropriate to the location. They expect to be fully engaged in the development of proposals for the new villages and future stewardship of open space and community assets in accordance with garden City principles and as envisaged by planning policy.

## POLICY AG9 – Establishing a Partnership with the Community

Development proposals will be supported which have been developed in partnership with the community and meet the following criteria:

1. Local communities (existing and new) are fully, meaningfully and collaboratively engaged with each stage of the development process (see Fig. 19); this will include, as a minimum:
  - i. Evidence that community views have been taken account in the development proposals;
  - ii. Involvement of the community in the choice of the key designers (master planners, transport engineers, landscape architects) and making sure that these professionals are appropriately and directly briefed about the local area and community views;
  - iii. Setting up of Design Charrettes / Co-Design workshops to ensure active engagement in the process of preparation of the site-wide Landscape Master Plan and individual Village Master Plans so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics.
2. Through the Governance Strategy, measures will be put in place to secure the long-term operation and maintenance of community assets by the community.

Fig. 19 - Gilston Area Planning Process - Source: Concept Framework (June 2018)



## B. Delivering Quality Places

- 5.62 This set of policies address the development choices related to the delivery of quality places and appropriate design for the area, within the framework of the general and strategic policies of Section A above.
- 5.63 Appropriate design and development is considered for the following:
- Landscape design within new and existing settlements
  - Built environment
  - Heritage setting
  - Community facilities
  - Sustainable transport.

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### Appropriate Landscape Design

*The structure of villages within the countryside will be reflected within the villages themselves, which will draw inspiration from the landscape of existing settlements in the Gilston Area and elsewhere in Hertfordshire. Each village will have a strong landscape framework, incorporating new and existing landscape features, and maximises access to open spaces and healthy lifestyles.*

#### LA1 - Landscape within the New Villages

##### Rationale and Justification

- 5.64 In addition to the countryside landscape setting and structural landscape (Policies AG1 to AG5 included), also the landscape design within the new villages should reflect the aspiration to create a strong sense of place and local character, appropriate to a Hertfordshire village.
- 5.65 High quality public spaces will positively respond to local landscape character and history and reflect the identity of the local area, using plant species and trees that are typical of the area, restoring and integrating the hedgerows and planting new hedgerows as features to delimit spaces, and adopting local patterns for lane verges and front gardens.
- 5.66 Landscape will also play a key role in defining the individual village character which will make the villages distinctive.
- 5.67 The new villages will be designed to maximise the continuity of the Green Infrastructure Network (Policy AG2) through the village and provide walking and cycling access to open spaces and the wider countryside. Each village will have a range of multi-functional open spaces, local play areas, landscaping and SuDS carefully designed to be safe and pleasant, forming an essential part of the experience of living in the Gilston Area. Existing landscape features will be retained in the design of new villages such as the existing holloways and historic tree planting to create distinctive green links and tree lined pedestrian walks.

## Community Perspective

- 5.68 During the preparation of the Concept Framework, the community highlighted the need to ensure that the development would reflect the character of Hertfordshire villages rather than the urban character of Harlow. Landscape design appropriate to the Hertfordshire countryside is critical to establishing village character and the local community would wish to ensure that each village has an individual character informed by local rural features and rich-biodiversity.

*Fig. 20 – The natural landscape character of the existing settlements and manor house parks*



## **POLICY LA1 – Landscape within the New Villages**

Development proposals will be supported which satisfy the following criteria:

1. The design of each village responds to the existing landscape character and topography and to have a positive relationship with the surrounding landscape and rural landscape setting; this will be required as part of the Village Master Plans.
2. The landscape design within the boundary of each village incorporates existing and new landscape features and a network of green spaces designed to maximise the continuity of the Green Infrastructure Network (Policy AG2);
3. Pedestrian/ cycle routes connect the green and public space within the villages to the recreational facilities in the Green Infrastructure network and connect with the wider countryside and neighbouring villages (see also Policy TRA4);
4. Village Master Plans demonstrate a balanced provision of development and green areas and to incorporate a comprehensive landscape framework which:
  - i. Reflects the character and setting of each village as a Hertfordshire village in the countryside;
  - ii. Enhances and integrates existing landscape features, hedgerows, mature trees and tree lines;
  - iii. Preserves and enhances important views and connections;
  - iv. Integrates heritage features, SuDS and sport facilities in an overall comprehensive design.
5. The planting of indigenous or locally customary rural species with high biodiversity value will be encouraged;
6. Provision for outdoor sport and leisure, including sport pitches will be supported in appropriate locations where they are set within an overall structure of enhanced landscape, visual amenity and ease of access. Sport's facilities including artificial surfaces and floodlighting will be acceptable within village boundaries provided there is no adverse environmental impacts on the landscape setting, biodiversity or residential amenity.
7. Provision has been made for early planting of key landscape areas will be required to ensure that rich landscape and mature trees will provide a dominant visual and biodiversity feature before occupation of the development;
8. Provision has been secured in perpetuity for long term management and maintenance of landscaping and green spaces as part of an overall Governance Strategy.

## LA2 - Enhanced Landscape within the Existing Villages

### Rationale and Justification

- 5.69 The site wide Landscape Master Plan should also include provision for the safeguarding and enhancement of landscape features within the Community Boundaries (Policy Ag5) of existing settlements and clusters of existing buildings. This should include any tree and hedgerow maintenance along streets and lanes or around the churches and war memorials. Buffers to the Community Boundaries will reflect the character of the landscape within the existing settlements and ensure continuity.
- 5.70 This will be essential to ensure comprehensive and integrated development as advocated by the policies of the District Plan and the vision and design approach of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town, which indicate that new development should support and encourage regeneration and enhancement of existing areas.
- 5.71 The proposed development in the Gilston Area will have a significant impact on existing settlements and it is important that measures are incorporated to enhance and integrate the character of landscape and public spaces within the existing settlements as well.
- 5.72 An indicative list of Priority Projects is provided in Paragraph 5.124.

### Community Perspective

- 5.73 The proposed development in the Gilston Area will have a significant impact on existing settlements and the community wish to ensure that measures are incorporated to mitigate these impacts and improve the existing settlements on a par with the new ones including landscape maintenance, integration of green buffers around existing settlements and enhancement of existing green spaces.
- 5.74 The community would also wish to ensure the integration of an extended network of green spaces and walking and cycle routes linking the new and existing communities to the countryside, while respecting the privacy of existing properties (see also Policy TRA4).

### **POLICY LA2 – Enhanced Landscape within the Existing Villages**

Development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria are satisfied:

1. The landscape of lanes, streets and community spaces within existing settlements will be protected and enhanced and integrated with the buffers forming part of the Green Infrastructure Network (Policy AG2);
2. The existing network of parks, green spaces and paths will be integrated with new connections to form a comprehensive network linking green areas, wildlife corridors and providing access to local facilities in agreement with local residents; the provision of paths should also consider Policy TRA4;
3. The planting of indigenous or locally customary rural species with high biodiversity value will be encouraged;
4. Provision will be made for long term management and maintenance of community landscaping and green spaces as part of an overall Governance Strategy.

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## Appropriate Design of the Built-Up Areas

*The design of the villages, their layout, buildings and materials should be clearly inspired from Hertfordshire villages, drawing on settlement structures of the area, local materials and character used in contemporary and creative ways. Each village should provide a balance of land uses (relative to the scale, size and role of the village) to encourage community life and minimise journey for shopping, leisure, education and other activities.*

### BU1 – Housing and Residential Neighbourhoods

#### Rationale and Justification

- 5.75 The development will provide for up to 10,000 homes distributed across the new villages, which will offer a range of housing types and tenures to create sustainable and inclusive communities. In order to assist in meeting local needs a mix of market and genuinely affordable housing will be provided, as well as a range of specialist housing including assisted living for older residents and opportunities for self-build and custom building.
- 5.76 The development offers the potential to create a high-quality living environment for new and existing residents with a commitment to quality and environmental efficiency. Density should reflect the character of existing settlements. As a general rule density will vary across each village with higher density within the village centre and reducing to the village edge

#### Community Perspective

- 5.77 During the preparation of the Concept Framework, the community expressed concern about the form of development and the impact this would have on the character of the area. There is support for high quality development which is respectful of village and landscape character but a strong view that the density and height of development needs to be controlled to avoid urbanisation of the area.

## **POLICY BU1 – Housing and Residential Neighbourhoods**

Development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria are satisfied:

1. Village Master Plans (see also Policy AG9) should clearly define the character and individuality of each village, still within an approach clearly inspired from Hertfordshire villages, and including distinctive layout appropriate to existing landscape and topography, built-form, materials, etc.; contemporary interpretation of traditional character is welcome;
2. A wide range of different housing typologies and tenures (including market and genuinely affordable housing) will be provided in each village to create mixed and balanced communities;
3. The height and density of development should be appropriate to village character drawing from the local character of Gilston, Eastwick and Hunsdon and the wider context of East Hertfordshire:
  - i. Residential development should be variable in scale and height to create distinctiveness but the overall net density in each village should not exceed 33 dwellings per hectare;
  - ii. Higher densities may be acceptable subject to a high-quality design which respects village character in the areas within 15 minutes walking distance of Harlow Town Station;
  - iii. Lower densities will be required along sensitive landscape edges, the village boundaries ('soft edges' – see also Policy AG5-2(iii)), within proximity to the existing settlements and in areas that fall within sensitive views from Hunsdon, the Stort Valley and High Wych.
4. The design of new residential development should be landscape-led and:
  - i. Contribute positively to the overall landscape structure of the area, the street or space and be in scale and proportion to each other and their function;
  - ii. Provide frontage to the surrounding community open spaces and amenities;
  - iii. Follow natural contours and establish visual links to wider reference assets and neighbouring villages;
  - iv. v. Be appropriately scaled and sensitive to existing built and landscape heritage assets;
  - v. Be appropriately scaled in relation to existing settlements;
  - vi. Optimise orientation for sustainability benefits;
  - vii. Ensure every home is within 300m of a green space;
  - viii. Deliver a range of high-quality low carbon homes.
5. Car parking provision should reflect the objective of encouraging more sustainable transport modes and encourage take up of shared mobility services. Car parking provision should be lower than current standards and progressively reduced to reflect advances in the provision of sustainable transport and modal shift in early phases of development.

## BU2 - Village Cores/ Centres

### Rationale and Justification

- 5.78 The creation of mixed-use village centres with a range of services and community facilities is critical to the promotion of sustainable development and the creation of distinct villages. Whilst the typology, mix and forms of these centres will vary, the village centres will form the hearts of each of the villages, serving as a meeting space critical to the creation of a strong community. The village centres should provide a range of different facilities and community infrastructure required to support a growing community including schools, shops, cafes and restaurants, leisure facilities, health centres, community spaces, faith buildings and civic buildings. These local facilities will complement the more strategic retail provision within Harlow Town Centre.
- 5.79 Village centres will also be the location of employment areas (see Policy BU3).
- 5.80 They will be located to optimise walking distances from home to the local amenities. While each village centre primarily serves its local community, it is anticipated that each will provide a slightly different and complementary offer to promote movement between each, variety and distinctive character.
- 5.81 They could be designed as central streets (more typical of most Hertfordshire villages) or as public spaces / local greens animated by active frontages and primarily designed for pedestrian movement and social interaction.

### Community Perspective

- 5.82 The local community places great importance on access to new local services and community infrastructure and the role that village centres can play in creating a cohesive community. There is a desire to take advantage of the new centres and see that they are designed to reflect the character of the local areas, where an active village centre with a mix of uses and meeting places is the heart of each community. New facilities should benefit new and existing residents.

## **POLICY BU2 – Village Cores / Centres**

Development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria are satisfied:

1. Village centres should be clearly identifiable and located along an active pedestrian friendly street or a central public space or village green and well connected to housing areas through a network of walking and cycling routes;
2. Village Centres should provide a mix of uses to serve the new communities with active frontages and ground floor uses comprising retail, workspaces, community and leisure uses; it should normally be the location of nursery and primary schools to encourage their role as community meeting place;
3. A higher density of development will be acceptable in village centres but the overall density of development should be in accordance with Policy BU1.
4. The height of development will be required to respect village character. Variations in height will be acceptable but should not normally exceed the height of the crowns of mature trees; the location for taller buildings will be defined in the Village master Plans;
5. Village centres should be well served by public transport.

## **BU3 - Employment Areas**

### **Rationale and Justification**

- 5.83 District Plan Policy GA1 V(q) identifies a requirement for employment area/s (of around 5ha), within visible and accessible location/s, which provides appropriate opportunities to promote self-containment and sustainability.
- 5.84 Employment development should be located in village centres which are the most accessible locations in terms of sustainable transport modes. Freestanding business park development is not considered to be appropriate in the Gilston Area because they are typically car-based development which make limited contributions to community life.

### **Community Perspective**

- 5.85 The community is concerned about the impact of large scale free standing employment areas on achieving the shared vision and objectives for the Gilston Area for villages with strong community life. The community is of the view that this type of development is likely to give rise to increases in traffic generation with limited synergies with the local area. Such facility would be more appropriately located in the enterprise areas as defined in the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision.
- 5.86 A range of smaller scale employment development should be promoted in village centres, to assist in meeting local needs and complement residential development. This could include a mix of market and affordable employment spaces such as shops, small

workshops, offices and other facilities to serve the local community and provide opportunities for businesses to locate in the area.

### **POLICY BU3– Employment Areas**

Development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria are satisfied:

1. Employment uses should be located in preference within the village centres to meet the requirements of Policy GA1;
2. Applications for Business Parks and free-standing employment areas will generally not be supported in the Gilston area, unless pedestrian orientated and well integrated in the fabric of the villages;
3. A range of workspace should be provided and provision for SMEs will be encouraged;
4. Parking provision for employment spaces should be progressively reduced from current standards and located away from the main public spaces.

## BU4 - Village Streets and Lanes

### Rationale and Justification

- 5.87 Village streets and lanes are essential elements defining villages character and should be primarily designed as spaces and not as transport corridors. Their treatment should include features typical of the countryside: big trees, hedgerows, mixed shrubs and verges with a clearly defined relationship with adjoining buildings and open views onto the landscape where possible. The network of roads should reflect topography and function, adopting standards as close as possible to typical village street patterns. Informal layouts, with short cross-roads and limited grids are typical of the area and should be reflected in the Village Master Plans.
- 5.88 New streets and lanes will create safe and accessible living environments with clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes and high quality public spaces. The development should encourage active lifestyles and social integration by limiting car dominance and maximising opportunities for rich planting, biodiversity and safe informal use. The quality and character of the primary street network linking the villages should be defined in the Landscape Master Plan. Village streets and lanes should be defined in the Village Master Plans.

### Community Perspective

- 5.89 The community has expressed concerns about the urbanising effect of roads and the need to ensure that the design of streets reflects the informality of villages and landscape character.

### **POLICY BU4 – Village Streets and Lanes**

Development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria are satisfied:

1. The design of village streets and lanes reflect and contribute to village character;
2. All streets, connecting and main access roads are designed to limit road speeds, and will be pedestrian and cycle friendly and in character with the village concept;
3. Each village will adopt a layout typical of rural settlements developed around a legible street network connecting new housing to the village centres and other facilities;
4. Streetlighting should be minimal, designed to assist pedestrians and sensitive to the darkness of the countryside;
5. Street planting including countryside trees and hedgerows will be required;
6. Car parking (on and off road) will be well integrated into the street design; adequate parking for visitors will be provided on street in designated bays;
7. The quality and character of the primary street network linking the villages should be defined in the Landscape Master Plan; village streets and lanes should be defined in the Village Master Plans.

*Fig. 21 - Typical informality and landscape of the streets and lanes of the villages of the area*



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## Heritage

*Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and intrinsic to the character of the Gilston Area. They should be enhanced so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations*

### H1 - Celebration of Existing Heritage Assets

#### Rationale and Justification

- 5.90 There are just under 50 designated heritage assets within the wider site area including St Mary's Church, Gilston, Listed Buildings in Eastwick including St Botolph's Church, Gilston Park and its associated Listed Buildings and locally listed parkland; Hunsdon Airfield; scattered listed farmhouses, and the Scheduled Monuments at the Mount and Eastwick Hall. There are also many heritage assets just outside the Neighbourhood Plan area, including at Hunsdon, Hunsdonbury, Hunsdon Pound and Little Parndon. Other assets include the War Memorials at Pye Corner and Eastwick. All these currently have a rural setting, location and use that make a positive contribution to the area and give it clear significance as independent meaningful rural communities.
- 5.91 Existing heritage assets should be protected, enhanced and become the inspiration for the design of the new villages. The proposed development layout and buffers will incorporate appropriate mitigation measures to minimise impacts on local heritage assets and their settings, retain key views but also safeguarding their role and significance and celebrating them for the qualities they will bring to the new communities.
- 5.92 As highlighted in their representations on the Draft Concept Framework, Historic England place great importance on protection of the rural setting of heritage assets in the Gilston Area, and would like to see meaningful integration going well beyond the simple safeguard and protection of the buildings. This is reflected in the approach of the National Planning Policy Framework.

#### Community Perspective

- 5.93 The community places great importance on the protection of heritage assets which are critical to the character of the area and wish to ensure that development in the Gilston Area will respect and have a positive relationship with its heritage assets, so that their history and significance to the area can still be appreciated after the changes brought by the new development.

## **POLICY H1 – Celebration of the Existing Heritage Assets**

Development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria are satisfied:

1. The layout and design of new development responds sensitively to the form, proportion, scale and character of heritage assets. Open spaces will be strategically positioned to preserve the setting of heritage assets and key views;
2. Development proposals should demonstrate that the significance and historic role of heritage assets in the area will be respected and integrated in the new development, so that their meaning will not be lost;
3. Development in the Gilston area will also be required to:
  - i. Promote opportunities to increase public appreciation and understanding of heritage assets by integrating them in an appropriate layout;
  - ii. Consider options for strategic positioning of open spaces to preserve the setting of heritage assets and making them key elements of the new development;
  - iii. Design layouts that respond sensitively to the form, proportion, scale and character of heritage assets;
  - iv. Respect, preserve and enhance where possible historic boundaries, such as the former deer park pale and ditch;
  - v. Consider where appropriate set back distances and appropriate buffers to preserve and enhance the setting of key heritage assets;
  - vii. Consider views to/ from heritage assets in order to preserve or enhance the setting and understanding of their historic role as appropriate.
3. The parkland setting of Gilston Park and Hunsdon House will be protected from visual encroachment or pollution (noise or light) and enhanced;
4. The importance of the structure of the model farms will be reflected in design proposals;
5. Opportunities will be promoted to increase public appreciation and understanding of heritage through village design and the incorporation of appropriate references.
6. The overall Landscape Masterplan and the Village Master Plans will be required to include a clear approach for the protection and enhancement of heritage assets.
7. Long term conservation and management plans will be developed for all heritage assets, in consultation with the local community as part of the planning process and included if appropriate in the Governance Strategy.

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## Community Assets

*The development of strong and sustainable communities is dependent on the provision of necessary community facilities within close proximity to home which will meet the needs of new and existing residents over the lifetime of the development.*

### C1 - Community Facility Provision

#### Rationale and Justification

- 5.94 The development of 10,000 homes will need to be supported by an appropriate level and quality of community facilities and services. An overall strategy is required to guide the location of new facilities, so that they are easily accessible.
- 5.95 A balanced mix of land uses should be provided in each village (relative to the scale, size and role of the village) in accordance with Policy GA1 of the District Plan and the Concept Framework. This will facilitate social interaction and the development of community life as well as encourage people to minimise journey lengths for shopping, leisure, education and other activities. Key facilities such as primary schools and local shops should be located within walking distance of most properties.
- 5.96 The Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Infrastructure Development Framework clearly indicates that new infrastructure (including community facilities) will be required to serve the new communities but also the needs of the current settlements.
- 5.97 Facility provision must be phased so that it becomes operational in time to ensure there is adequate capacity to meet the cumulative needs of new and existing communities (see also Policy AG7). This should be clearly articulated in an Infrastructure delivery Plan as requested by Harlow and Gilston Garden Town.

#### Community Perspective

- 5.98 The local community is concerned about the capacity of existing infrastructure and the impacts of large-scale new development in the area unless community facilities are provided to meet the current needs and future demands arising from new residents in the area.

## **POLICY C1 – Community Facility Provision**

Development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria are satisfied:

1. Development proposals should demonstrate how the requirements for new community facilities (taking into account the needs of new and existing residents) will be met over the lifetime of the development and to demonstrate that funding is in place to deliver these at the appropriate time in advance of need in accordance with Policy AG7;
2. The provision of community facilities should take place in accordance with an agreed Infrastructure Delivery Plan which has been prepared in consultation with the local community: infrastructure requirements and the timescale for provision will be determined as part of the approval of planning applications;
3. The provision of necessary infrastructure will be phased in relation to development to ensure there is adequate capacity to meet the cumulative needs of new and existing communities;
4. Village Master Plans will be required to demonstrate how the needs of all residents (new and existing) will be met by provision within the village or in a neighbouring village which is easily accessible walking or cycling or by public transport.

## **C2 - Community Ownership and Stewardship**

### **Rationale and Justification**

- 5.99 As part of the development process the developers will be required to fund and/or deliver the necessary infrastructure to support new and existing residents and will be required to establish arrangements for the planning, development and long-term stewardship of the Gilston Area that will put local people at the heart of the decision-making process. This will include:
- Management arrangements for the development as a whole which will ensure that:
    - Funding for maintenance and reinvestment is in place
    - Uplift in land values is re-invested and
    - Residents and other stakeholders can be part of decision-making.
  - Land ownership, funding and management arrangements which guarantee independent control of the undeveloped open land (according to Policy GA1 of the District Plan) and the Green Infrastructure Network (see also Policies AG2 and AG4).
  - Robust investment models in place to ensure that community assets can be maintained in the long term. This long-term maintenance will be secured via a Governance Strategy.
- 5.100 Each village will have agreed costs for community facilities, social infrastructure and amenities and be required, through policy and legal agreements, to meet a common level of investment and standard of maintenance. The detailed approach for each village will be brought forward within the framework of the overall masterplan. Alongside the village infrastructure will be site wide infrastructure which serves the development as a

whole. This includes, for example, parklands, leisure facilities and secondary schools. Each new village will be required to make a proportionate contribution to the cost and maintenance of this infrastructure.

- 5.101 Completed villages will need long term stewardship arrangements, which could be through company or trust vehicles, as will the site wide infrastructure.
- 5.102 The landowners or developers will be required to establish these arrangements at the outset, and will include consultation and involvement of the local community and local stakeholders. Existing residents and residents moving in to the development will have a right to be involved in the Governance structures and will be able to influence the ongoing development, and, if they choose, become actively involved in the management of villages or specific types of infrastructure

#### Community perspective

- 5.103 The local community has made clear its desire to be fully engaged in future governance arrangements and are supportive of the transfer of the Open Land north of the powerlines into community ownership to help mitigate the impacts of development and provide a community asset for existing and new residents in the Gilston area.

### **POLICY C2 – Community Ownership and Stewardship**

Development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria are satisfied:

1. Measures will be put in place before the commencement of development to ensure the community has the necessary means to secure the long-term operation and maintenance of community assets;
2. A Governance Strategy will be developed with the full engagement of the local community;
3. The undeveloped land to the north west of the Gilston Area will be transferred into community ownership supported by a long term management strategy and funding prior to the commencement of development in accordance with Policy AG7.

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## Mobility and Transport

*Development in the Gilston Area will be required to make essential contribution to the significant modal shift towards sustainable transport choices advocated for the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town through the provision of a comprehensive sustainable mobility strategy for the new villages and the existing communities*

### TRA1 - Sustainable Mobility

#### Rationale and Justification

- 5.104 Development in the Gilston Area must promote sustainable transport choices, anticipate foreseeable changes in transport technology and reduce the dominance of cars and traffic within existing and new communities and on the wider transport network across the locality.
- 5.105 The Harlow and Gilston Garden Town has set itself a very ambitious target of 60% of all movement in new areas to be by sustainable transport modes (walking, cycling, shared mobility services or public transport), and 50% in existing areas of Harlow. This is a very significant shift, and one which will not happen unless a comprehensive strategy for mobility is developed and adopted for the site and for the wider area, which also take account of progressive changes in travel habits and technology changes.
- 5.106 Notwithstanding the indeterminate future of transport technology, it is to be anticipated that a sustainable mobility strategy should consider at least:
- Order of priority which gives precedence to walking, cycling, public transport, mobility as a service vehicles, freight and delivery vehicles, private cars and through traffic, in this order;
  - Village layouts that are open and permeable, to shorten distances and offer multiple safe routes;
  - Enhanced cycling and pedestrian access to all rail stations;
  - New efficient and frequent public transport connectivity to link new and existing settlements in the Gilston Area with surrounding areas, in particular Harlow Town Station and the town centre;
  - Exclusion of road layouts that give priorities to cars or encourage speed;
  - Reduced provision for the car (including parking) and minimised visual presence.

#### Community Perspective

- 5.107 The local community is very concerned about the existing capacity of the local highway network and public transport services and the capacity and accessibility of the existing rail station and the impact of major new development on local communities. The local community would wish to see an increased focus on sustainable transport modes and improved public transport facilities and services, in particular improved access and cycle facilities at Harlow Town Station.

## **POLICY TRA1 – Sustainable Mobility**

Development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria are satisfied:

1. Development should be designed to achieve the sustainable mobility targets set by the Gilston and Harlow Garden Town Transport Strategy, and demonstrate that the targets can be realistically achieved through a comprehensive Sustainable Mobility Strategy for the development, which clear objectives, targets and range of practical and achievable solutions.
2. Development will be required to:
  - i. Promote sustainable transport choices with a clear order of priority: walking, cycling, public transport, innovative mobility, shared transport, private transport; through traffic through the area should be minimised;
  - ii. Be integrated with sustainable travel initiatives in the wider Harlow area including the creation of sustainable transport corridors;
  - iii. Provide multiple safe and direct cycle and pedestrian routes to Harlow Town Station including improved crossing facilities across the A414, smart cycle schemes and cycle parking facilities and consideration of a northern entrance to the station dedicated to active mobility;
  - iv. Improve sustainable access to Roydon Station, Harlow Mill Station and Harlow's key shopping and employment destinations;
  - v. Make provision for frequent and extended public transport services to serve new and existing settlements with bus stops within walking distance of most new and existing houses to encourage the use of public transport
  - vi. Anticipate changes in transport technology and support smart mobility services, reducing the need to own a car;
  - vii. Make provision for cycle parking and electric charging facilities to encourage the use of low carbon emission vehicles;
  - viii. Reduce parking from current standards;
  - ix. Set clear targets and strategies for individual sustainable modes, including shared mobility and car clubs.

## TRA2 – Outstanding Connectivity

### Rationale and Justification

- 5.108 Promotion of sustainable transport choices requires an extensive network of safe and convenient routes linking new and existing settlements and providing access to their facilities, open space and the countryside. Attractive village character and prioritisation of walking and cycling will be essential.
- 5.109 New villages will be designed on active design principles, which indicated that multiple links and outstanding connectivity help creating vibrant, inclusive and healthy communities with a distinctive sense of place. New homes will be located within short walking distance of open space, community facilities, shops, and schools to promote a healthy and active community.
- 5.110 The network will be well- integrated with existing Public Rights of Way and routes within and beyond the site.

### Community Perspective

- 5.111 The local community currently enjoys a village setting in which meeting known people along streets and lanes is a common occurrence. They believe that this is essential for community cohesion, enjoyment of the countryside and encouragement of walking and cycling for need or leisure. They would like to see that the new development creates comparable or better opportunities for a healthy community lifestyle.

### **POLICY TRA2 – Outstanding Connectivity**

Development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria are satisfied:

1. Key facilities for shopping, leisure, education and other activities should be located within walking or short cycling distance of most properties, including those of existing settlements; all routes should be attractive and safe;
2. Layouts should be open and permeable, with multiple links and excellent connectivity especially by walking and cycling, and will be required to:
  - i. Provide a well-connected network of attractive, safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle routes within each village and between villages, including the existing communities as part of appropriate street design (Policy BU4);
  - ii. Incorporate a legible street network which connects new housing to the village centres, community facilities, employment and other facilities;
  - iii. Integrate with the wider area and network of paths, bridleways and cycle routes (Policy TRA4)

## TRA3 - Minimising the Impact of Traffic and Transport Infrastructure on Existing Communities

### Rationale and Justification

- 5.112 In order to deliver the vision for the Gilston Area, existing communities should also have convenient access to facilities and be protected from severance, noise and light pollution, through appropriate road and street infrastructure design.
- 5.113 All streets and connecting roads in the Neighbourhood Plan Area, within and between the new and existing settlements, should be designed to limit through traffic, contain road speeds, and should be pedestrian friendly and in character with the village concept.
- 5.114 The likely increase in the volume of heavy vehicle movements and deliveries, particularly during the construction period, but also to serve the future community should be adequately managed to minimise impacts on existing and emerging communities.

### Community Perspective

- 5.115 The local community is concerned about the impact of major new road infrastructure (which may have a strategic function) on the character of the Gilston Area and the ease of movement and amenity of existing residents.
- 5.116 There is particular concern about through traffic being routed via Pye Corner/ Terlings Park leading to severance and noise within the Gilston Community Boundary Area (Policy AG5) and additional car use of the narrow Church Lane towards Hunsdon. Local residents of Gilston Lane are anxious to retain the low volume of traffic in their lane, but would not want to be 'cut off' from accessing facilities and services.
- 5.117 There is also the desire to see that some of the existing Rights of Way that pass very close to existing properties and are used by a small number of people, do not become major footpaths or cycle routes serving thousands of users (addressed in Policy TRA4).

### **POLICY TRA3 – Minimising the Impact of Traffic and New Transport Infrastructure**

Development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria are satisfied:

1. The design of new road infrastructure minimises impacts on existing communities, avoiding severance and adverse impacts on the character of the area;
2. Measures will be taken to ensure that adverse impacts from traffic and road infrastructure on the existing communities will be negligible in terms of safety, speed, pollution and local character;
3. New vehicular access arrangements should limit additional traffic on existing roads and lanes and retain convenient access for existing residents and activities;
4. The developers should demonstrate that there will be no increase in the volume of heavy vehicle movement through the existing communities;
5. A Construction Management Plan will be prepared to limit the impact of construction traffic in agreement with the community.

## TRA4 - Access to the Countryside

### Rationale and Justification

- 5.118 Living in close proximity to the countryside is a key part of the vision for the Gilston Area. It will therefore be necessary to ensure that new development delivers an extended network of footpaths, rights of way, cycleways and bridleways which will link existing and new villages to each other and the wider countryside.

### Community Perspective

- 5.119 The community places value on access to the countryside and the opportunities for integration and expansion of the existing network of footpaths presented by development in the Gilston area.
- 5.120 There is a concern, however, that existing rights of way, which in some cases pass through sensitive areas and very close to houses, will need to be protected from the possibility of very significant increase in use, as the population of the area increases.

### **POLICY TRA4 – Access to the Countryside**

Development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria are satisfied:

1. The development provides an extended network of footpaths, cycleways and bridleways integrated with the extensive existing network of Rights of Way to ensure that residents of existing and new villages have access to the countryside for informal leisure activities and enjoyment;
2. The network should be designed to extend to provide access to the major Natural Open Space in and around the area (the Green Infrastructure Network – Policy AG2 and the Stort valley /Lee Valley Park, and further away to Epping Forest and Hatfield Forest);
3. The design of the routes should consider the protection of darkness and quiet of the Green Infrastructure Network and in the sensitive areas in proximity to existing properties;
4. The Landscape Master Plan will be required to incorporate details of the extended network in consultation with the community and specifically residents adjacent existing Rights of Way.

## C. Improving the Existing Settlements

*The scale of the proposed development will have a significant impact on existing settlements outside the boundaries of the new development. It is therefore important to ensure that impacts are mitigated and that existing residents may benefit as a result of the proposed development*

### EX1 – Improving the Existing Settlements

- 5.121 These policies address the ways in which the existing settlements can be enhanced, either through collaboration and direct investment by the developers of the new villages, or through a range of priority improvements commissioned directly by the Parish Councils and funded through a share of S106 funding or equivalent mechanism.
- 5.122 Neighbourhood Plan (Version 2), following further consultation, will expand this section with more detailed policies for development and change within the settlements.

#### Rationale and Justification

- 5.123 A comprehensive approach to development of the Gilston Area is required to ensure that the existing settlements in the Eastwick and Gilston and Hunsdon Parishes are positively considered as part of the overall scheme: respected in their integrity, supported to flourish in a time of great change and placed at the foundation of the future community. The existing settlements will be significantly affected by the proposed development and it is important from the outset to consider how they can be improved during the extended construction programme. Section 106 funds should be made available to improve them in order to mitigate the impacts of development. Enhancement projects will be identified in consultation with the local community.
- 5.124 Priority projects which have been identified by the local community include:
- 1) Comprehensive improvement of Pye Corner to create a safer and welcoming pedestrian space;
  - 2) New design and landscape setting for the Gilston War Memorial;
  - 3) Enhanced churchyard and setting for St Mary's Church, Gilston; St Botolph's Church, Eastwick and St Dunston's Church, Hunsdon; provision of faith and community facilities;
  - 4) Improvement to the village halls;
  - 5) Shared surface / public space design in Eastwick Road between the Red Lion Pub and the War Memorial;
  - 6) Creation of green / play spaces in the existing communities and an all-weather multi-use play area in Hunsdon;
  - 7) New planting and maintenance of the existing lanes, etc.

## Community Perspective

The local community has expressed great concern about the impact of development on the existing settlements and their quality of life. There is an expectation that effective measures will be taken to minimise impacts and to ensure that existing residents share in the benefits of development.

### **POLICY EX1 – Improving the Existing Settlements**

1. New development will be required to:
  - i. Demonstrate how existing settlements will be enhanced as part of the overall development scheme;
  - ii. Incorporate measures to mitigate the impacts of development on existing settlements;
  - iii. Make provision for early landscape improvements to strengthen the green buffers around existing settlements and planting along the key lanes.
2. Section 106 funding will be made available to undertake improvements to the existing settlements to mitigate the impacts of new development; priority projects will be identified in consultation with the local community.
3. There will be accountability for the implementation of local improvements and continuous communication with existing communities.
4. Long-term maintenance of green and public spaces within the existing communities will be considered as part of the Governance Strategy.

## 6. Implementation and Delivery

*It will be important to ensure that development takes place in accordance with relevant planning policies and the vision and objectives set out in the Concept Framework, Community engagement will take place at each stage of the planning and development process*

### Planning Process

- 7.1 The Key stages in the planning process are set out in Figure xx.

#### Stage 1: Outline Planning Application

The outline planning application will demonstrate how the policy requirements have been incorporated into the development. It will set a spatial framework for the detailed masterplanning of the villages, establishing parameters for the location of built development, protection of open space and heritage assets, provision of infrastructure, etc. The application will also be supported by a set of design guidelines to inform future design work and ensure a high quality development is delivered.

#### Stage 2: Landscape Masterplan and Village Masterplans

Adhering to the principles in the outline planning application, a Landscape Masterplan for the whole area and masterplans for each Village will be prepared which will fix the location of key village components such as the primary road network, key open spaces, the location of primary and secondary schools, key cycling and pedestrian links etc. Building on the design guidelines each masterplan will also provide a specific design guide/code which will inform Stage 3 detailed design. The local communities will be fully engaged in the preparation of this masterplanning work

#### Stage 3: Reserved Matters Applications/Detailed planning applications

The reserved matters and/or detailed planning applications process is the mechanism for submitting detailed designs for individual buildings or types of building for approval. The applications will be required to accord with the relevant approved Village Masterplan and Landscape Masterplan.

### Community Engagement and Governance Strategy

- 7.2 The Principal Landowners and developers will be required to engage with the local community and stakeholders across Harlow and East Herts at each stage of the planning and development process. Full engagement will be undertaken at each stage of the process, including with the two local parishes and the Neighbourhood Plan Group, and that will include consideration of managing the effects on local residents and opportunities for them to participate in the emerging new community.
- 7.3 The Governance Strategy must relate to all 7 new villages to ensure that the overall area will be managed effectively, coherently and in the interest of all current and future residents.

## 7. Monitoring and Review

- 7.4 The Neighbourhood Plan will be monitored by the Neighbourhood Plan Group in partnership with East Herts Council to determine the progress being made in relation to the objectives and policies set out in the Neighbourhood Plan and the delivery of necessary infrastructure.
- 7.5 2 If necessary, a formal review of the Neighbourhood Plan or parts of the Plan will be undertaken to reflect changes in national, strategic or local policies affecting the Neighbourhood Plan area.

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# Appendix 1 - Key Policies

## East Hertfordshire District Plan - Policy GA1 The Gilston Area

- I. In accordance with Policy DPS<sub>3</sub> (Housing Supply 2011-2033), land at the Gilston Area is allocated for development to accommodate 10,000 homes, to be delivered within this Plan period and beyond. It is anticipated that at least 3,000 homes will be delivered by 2033.
- II. A Concept Framework is being jointly prepared by the landowners, the Council and the local community. The Concept Framework identifies design principles, potential land uses, infrastructure requirements and phasing, and will be used as a benchmark in reviewing proposals for development. Prior to the submission of any planning application(s) further design work through the pre-application engagement process will be required in order to agree, among other things, the quantum and distribution of land uses, access and layout principles.
- III. The Gilston Area will provide for 10,000 homes across distinct villages, each based on Garden City principles respecting the following:
  - strong vision, leadership and community engagement;
  - land value capture to deliver the social and physical infrastructure for the benefit of the community;
  - long-term community ownership of land and stewardship of assets mixed-tenure homes and housing types including those that are genuinely affordable;
  - a wide range of local jobs within easy commuting distance of homes;
  - beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with access to open space, combining the best of town and country to create healthy communities, and including opportunities to grow food;
  - development that enhances the natural environment, providing a comprehensive green infrastructure network and net biodiversity gains, and that uses energy-positive technology to ensure climate resilience;
  - strong cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable, vibrant, sociable communities; and
  - integrated and accessible sustainable transport systems, with walking, cycling and public transport designed to be the most attractive forms of local transport for new residents to travel within the Gilston Area and to key local destinations.
- IV. A community engagement strategy will be prepared, working with the two local parishes, which will include consideration of managing the effects on local residents, and opportunities for them to participate in the emerging new community. Engagement with the local communities and other relevant stakeholders shall take place through the planning application process and through the development of village Masterplans.
- V. The development is expected to address the following provisions and issues:
  - (a) *a range of dwelling type and mix, in accordance with the provisions of Policy HOU<sub>1</sub> (Type and Mix of Housing);*
  - (b) *Affordable Housing in accordance with Policy HOU<sub>3</sub> (Affordable Housing);*

- (c) *a care home/ flexi-care or sheltered properties in accordance with the provisions of Policy HOU6 (Homes for Older and Vulnerable People);*
- (d) *Self-Build and Custom Build Housing in accordance with Policy HOU8 (Self-Build and Custom Build Housing);*
- (e) *the provision of a serviced site for Gypsy and Travellers, in accordance with Policy HOU9 (Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople) which should deliver 15 pitches for longer term needs beyond the Plan period;*
- (f) *the provision of a serviced site for Travelling Showpeople in accordance with Policy HOU9 (Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople) which should deliver 8 plots for longer term needs beyond the Plan period; (each of sufficient size to allow for the provision of accommodation and equipment plus storage/maintenance);*
- (g) *quality local green infrastructure throughout the site including opportunities for preserving and enhancing on-site assets, maximising opportunities to link into existing assets and enhancing biodiversity. This will include the protection of Local Wildlife Sites and other assets of environmental value;*
- (h) *the provision of significant managed open space and parklands, and a limited number of buildings associated with that use, on the northern section of the site as identified in Figure 11.2, the ownership of which will be transferred to a community trust or other mechanism that ensures long term stewardship and governance for the benefit of the community;*
- (i) *a variety of public green spaces across the site, including the provision of play areas and opportunities for outdoor health and fitness activities, as well as space for wildlife;*
- (j) *access arrangements and local highways measures and commensurate financial contributions to addressing impacts on the wider strategic highways network, including the provision of additional crossings to the River Stort;*
- (k) *land for twenty forms of entry for both primary and secondary education, including Early Years facilities, subject to more detailed modelling. All schools should provide for the dual use of facilities for community purposes;*
- (l) *sustainable transport measures which encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport including:*
  - *the provision of cycleways and footways that provide links throughout the site and into Harlow;*
  - *enhancement of existing bridleways and footpaths;*
  - *enhanced passenger transport services including the creation of a sustainable transport route through the site which will link into a sustainable transport corridor which links the Gilston Area to the urban area of Harlow; and;*
  - *the setting of objectives and targets for the use of sustainable transport modes.*
- (m) *consideration of the potential of the site to facilitate the delivery of a re-located Princess Alexandra Hospital;*
- (n) *the use of appropriate landscape buffers in order to protect the individual character and integrity of Eastwick and Gilston villages within the context of the development;*

- (o) *the protection and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings, both on-site and in the wider area through appropriate mitigation measures, having regard to the Heritage Impact Assessment. Gilston Church and the Johnston Monument (both grade I listed), the moated site Scheduled Monuments at Eastwick, the Mount Scheduled Monument, and Gilston Park house (grade II\*) are of particular significance and sensitivity and any planning application should seek to ensure that these assets and their settings are conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced, through careful design; landscaping; open space; buffer zones; protection of key views; and, better management and interpretation of assets, where appropriate;*
- (p) *neighbourhood centres in accessible locations, providing local retail and community uses, including healthcare facilities to meet the day-to-day retail and health needs of new residents;*
- (q) *employment area/s (of around 5ha), within visible and accessible location/s, which provides appropriate opportunities to promote self-containment and sustainability;*
- (r) *consideration of opportunities for local supply chains as well as opportunities for local employment and training including apprenticeships and improving skills base for local people;*
- (s) *indoor and outdoor sports facilities (which may be shared use) taking into account the Council's evidence on sports and open space needs;*
- (t) *consideration of need for cemetery provision;*
- (u) *landscaping and planting, both within the site and peripheral, which responds to the existing landscape and complements development, as appropriate, and a defined recognisable boundary to the Green Belt;*
- (v) *assisting the delivery of all other necessary on-site and appropriate off-site infrastructure;*
- (w) *necessary new utilities, including integrated communications infrastructure to facilitate home working;*
- (x) *satisfactory water supply, including acceptable water pressure for occupants;*
- (y) *sustainable drainage and provision for flood mitigation;*
- (z) *other policy provisions of the District Plan and relevant matters, as appropriate.*

VI. Any application for development will include an indicative phasing plan for the delivery of infrastructure and utilities across the villages.

VII. The delivery of the Gilston Area will include a mechanism for:

- securing the long term stewardship, protection and maintenance of the parkland, open spaces, play areas and community assets;
- managing the construction process to address potential impacts on existing and future communities;
- encouraging a successful and active community, including an innovative approach to create the conditions for local resident participation in the design and stewardship of their new communities.

- VIII. Proposals for the Gilston Area should complement, and have regard to, ongoing work in relation to the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town.

## East Hertfordshire District Plan -Policy GA2 The River Stort Crossings

- I. I. The Council will work with key stakeholders including Hertfordshire County Council, Essex County Council, Harlow Council, Hertfordshire LEP, and others as appropriate, to facilitate the delivery of the following transport improvements to crossings of the River Stort:
- A widening of the existing A414 crossing to enable a dualling of the northbound and
  - southbound carriageways and provision of a new footway/cycleway, which will form
  - part of a north-south sustainable transport corridor through Harlow; and
  - A new vehicular, cycle and pedestrian crossing either to the east of the existing crossing (connecting the A414 to the River Way), or to the west of the existing
  - crossing (connecting the A414 to Elizabeth Way).
- II. Development proposals for both Stort Crossings should protect and, where appropriate, enhance heritage assets and their settings through appropriate mitigation measures, having regard to the Heritage Impact Assessment.

# Appendix 2 - Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision

## Harlow and Gilston Garden Town - Vision

The Garden Town Vision was published in November 2018. It incorporates the concept of the 7 distinctive villages in the Gilston Area established in Policy GA1 and the Concept Framework and sets out a vision for the Garden Town that is adaptable, healthy, sustainable and innovative based on the following key principles:

### Placemaking and Homes

**A Responsive and distinctive-** sitting comfortably in its context- distinctive neighbourhoods and villages

**B Balanced, diverse and functional communities-** the right kind of homes and densities- a series of self sufficient neighbourhoods and villages with local centres

**C Healthy, safe and connected neighbourhoods and villages-** good access to services and public transport

**D Maximising visibility and appreciation of our heritage-** engagement with communities in participative design

### Landscape and Green Infrastructure

**A Enhancing the Green Belt and expanding the Green Wedge Network –** Green Wedges between villages will be rural in character

**B Landscape-led masterplanning: responding to natural character and function-** existing landscape to shape the pattern of new development

**C Designing in biodiversity, climate resilience and food security-** robust governance and maintenance strategies and a community led approach

**D Making best use of technology in energy generation and conservation-** best practice in low carbon design

### Sustainable Movement

**A Revitalising the walking and cycling network-** the Green Wedge network as movement corridors

**B The value of place: changing the character of roads to streets-** a clear street hierarchy and creating healthy and sociable places

**C Integrated transport; a viable and preferred alternative to cars to achieve a modal shift-** 50% of all trips by sustainable active transport modes

**D Anticipating change and future proofing infrastructure-** support the implementation of new travel technology

### Economy and Regeneration

**A The heart of the UK Innovation Corridor-** growth and investment in the Harlow Enterprise Zone and enhancement of Harlow Town Station

**B The right work spaces, homes and community facilities-**variety of homes, offices, studios and accessible work space in local centres

**C A diverse employment base and skilled labour supply-**including community based learning schemes

**D A vibrant and resilient Town Centre for all the Garden Town-** accessible by foot, bicycle and public transport and sustainable transport corridors

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## Appendix 3 – Policy Relationship

### Relationship between Neighbourhood Plan Policies, East Hertfordshire District Plan Policies and Gilston Area Concept Framework

Table A3 - Thread between Neighbourhood Plan policies, Adopted District Plan Policies and Concept Framework Vision and Objectives

| NP Policy   | Adopted District Plan Policies GA1 / GA2  | Endorsed Concept Framework (2018) Vision   | Endorsed Concept Framework (2018) Objectives   |
|---|---|--|--|
| <b>A. Accommodating Growth</b>                                    |   |  |  |
| General Principles  |   |  |  |
| POLICY AG1 - Promoting Sustainable Development                    | GA1/ all  | I – Several distinct villages informed by the features of the area<br><br>Garden City Principles - all | 10 – Protecting and enhancing natural assets, with topography and landscape informing village layouts  |
| Rural Natural Landscape Setting                                   |   |  |  |
| POLICY AG2 – Green Infrastructure Network                         | GA1/III - Garden City Principles – comprehensive green infrastructure network and net biodiversity gains<br><br>GA1/V – Quality green infrastructure (g); significant open space (h); a recognisable boundary to the Green Belt (u) | II - Clearly separated<br><br>VIII – Cohesive and enhanced rural landscape                             | 9 – A protected and enhanced landscape and network of green spaces, with a series of environmentally viable green corridors<br><br>10 – Protecting and enhancing natural assets with early restoration of woodland |
| POLICY AG3 – Protecting and Enhancing the Countryside Setting     |   | II – Meaningful high-quality landscape<br><br>VIII – Cohesive and enhanced rural landscape             | 9 – A protected and enhanced landscape and network of green spaces, with retention of existing landscape features  |
| POLICY AG4 – Hunsdon Airfield and Area Surrounding Eastwick Woods | GA1/ policy map   | II – Development only south of the electric power lines  | 9 – A protected and enhanced landscape and network of green spaces, transferring parkland into community ownership   |

|  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| Individuality of the villages                                  |   |   |  |
| POLICY AG5 – Maintaining the Individuality of all Villages     | GA1/V – appropriate landscape buffers to protect the individual character (n)   | I - Distinct villages of individual character   | 2 – Maintaining distinctiveness<br>4 – Well connected to but distinctive from Harlow                         |
| POLICY AG6 – Securing Hertfordshire Village Character          |   | I – Positive relationship with existing settlements<br>IV – respond to existing local context                                     | 8 – High quality design, appropriate to a Hertfordshire village  |
| Ensuring timely infrastructure                                 |   |   |  |
| POLICY AG7 – Phased Delivery of Infrastructure                 | GA1/V – all necessary on site and off site infrastructure (v-z)<br>GA1/VI – Phasing plan for delivery   | X – Funding and delivery of needed services and infrastructure<br>XII – Delivery of infrastructure to remedy current deficiencies | 13 - Ensuring the phased delivery of necessary infrastructure to meet the needs arising from the development |
| POLICY AG8– Infrastructure Parity for the Existing Settlements |   | IX – Garden City values of equality and access to employment, facilities and the countryside                                      | 13 - Ensuring the phased delivery of necessary infrastructure to benefit existing and new communities        |
| Partnership with the community                                 |   |   |  |
| POLICY AG9 – Community Partnership                             | GA1/II - Prior to the submission of any planning application(s) pre-application engagement process will be required<br>GA1/III - Garden City Principles of strong vision, leadership and community engagement<br>GA1/IV – Community engagement strategy with engagement through the planning application process and village master plans<br>GA1/VII - Participation in the design and stewardship of their community | Garden City Principles of strong vision, leadership and community engagement  | 12 – Engaging local communities, with an early framework for governance                                      |

## B. Delivering Quality Places

### Appropriate Design – Landscape within the Settlements

|   |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| POLICY LA <sub>1</sub> – Landscape within the New Villages                  | GA <sub>1</sub> /V – Quality green infrastructure (g); significant open space (h); variety of green spaces (i); landscaping and planting and a recognisable boundary to the Green Belt (u) | II – meaningful high quality landscape       | 9 – A protected and enhanced landscape and network of green spaces, with viable green corridors and rich biodiversity |
| POLICY LA <sub>2</sub> – Enhanced Landscape within the Existing Settlements |  | VIII – Cohesive and enhanced rural landscape | 10 – Protecting and enhancing natural assets with protection and enhancement of woodlands and habitats                |

### Appropriate Design – Built Up Areas

|   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| POLICY BU <sub>1</sub> – Housing and Residential Neighbourhoods | GA <sub>1</sub> /V – A range of dwellings (a to f)                                     | V – range of housing types and tenures<br>VI – Housing mix, genuinely affordable           | 3 – Delivering a wide choice of quality homes<br>8 – High quality design, appropriate to a Hertfordshire village                           |
| POLICY BU <sub>2</sub> – Village Cores / Centres                | GA <sub>1</sub> /V – Neighbourhood centres in accessible locations (p)                 | III – natural meeting places; range of services  | 8 – High quality design, appropriate to a Hertfordshire village  |
| POLICY BU <sub>3</sub> – Employment Areas                       | GA <sub>1</sub> /V – Employment areas and opportunities for local employment (q and r) | IX – Access to employment  | 8 – High quality design, appropriate to a Hertfordshire village  |
| POLICY BU <sub>4</sub> – Village Streets and Lanes              |  | V – healthy community lifestyle, active mobility<br>VII – Homes to front streets and lanes | 7 – Creating walkable neighbourhoods, with a distinctive sense of place<br>8 – High quality design, appropriate to a Hertfordshire village |

### Heritage and Culture

|   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| POLICY H <sub>1</sub> – Celebration of the Existing Heritage Assets | GA <sub>1</sub> /V – Protection and enhancement of heritage assets and their setting (o)<br>GA <sub>2</sub> /II – the crossings should protect and enhance heritage assets and their settings – Heritage Impact Assessment | I – Positive relationship with existing settlements | 11 – protecting and enhancing heritage assets, including protection and celebration of all assets |
|---|--|---|---|

| Community Assets   |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| POLICY C1 – Community Facility Provision                                 | GA1/V – Land for education (k); indoor and outdoor sports facilities (s); cemeteries (t)   | III – A good range of day to day services and facilities   | 1 - Creating distinctive and balanced community<br><br>5 – Promoting healthy communities   |
| POLICY C2 – Community Ownership and Stewardship                          | GA1/III - Garden City Principles – Long-term community ownership and stewardship of assets<br><br>GA1/VII – Long term stewardship, protection and maintenance of parkland and community assets, including participation in the design and stewardship of their community | X – Long term community stewardship of community assets and land<br><br>Garden City Principles – Long-term community ownership and stewardship of assets | 9 – A protected and enhanced landscape and network of green spaces, transferring parkland into community ownership<br><br>12 – Engaging local communities, ensuring high quality management of open spaces by the community                    |
| Transport and Mobility   |  |  |  |
| POLICY TRA1 – Sustainable Mobility                                       | GA1/V – Sustainable transport measures, including setting objectives and targets<br><br>GA2/I – existing crossing to include footways / cycleways to form part of a north-south sustainable transport corridor   | VII – Sustainable transport choices, new technologies, walkable neighbourhoods   | 6 – Promoting sustainable travel, particularly to Harlow Town Station<br><br>7 – Creating walkable neighbourhoods, where walking and cycling is prioritised  |
| POLICY TRA2 – Outstanding Connectivity                                   | GA1/III - Garden City Principles – Integrated and accessible transport systems<br><br>GA1/V – Access arrangements addressing the wider network (j)   | Garden City Principles – Integrated and accessible transport systems   | 4 – Well connected to but distinctive from Harlow  |
| POLICY TRA3 – Minimising Impacts of Traffics and new Road Infrastructure | GA2/II – the crossings should protect and enhance heritage assets and their settings   | IV – Locally inspired features<br><br>V – Reducing car dependency; active mobility<br><br>VII – Parking not to dominate the street                       | 6 – Promoting sustainable travel, with presence of the car carefully managed to reduce visual impact and encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport<br><br>7 – Creating walkable neighbourhoods, with a distinctive sense of place |

|   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| POLICY TRA <sub>4</sub> – Access to the Countryside | GA <sub>1</sub> /V – Sustainable transport measures and enhancement of existing bridleways and footpaths | V – Active mobility and enjoyment of the countryside<br><br>VIII – Substantially increased access to open spaces for all |  |
|---|--|--|--|

**C. Improving the Existing Settlements**

|   |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| POLICY EX <sub>1</sub> – Mitigating the Impacts of Development and Enhancing Existing Settlements |  | I – Positive relationship with existing settlements<br><br>VIII – Existing villages physically respected but functionally integrated to form a unified community | 2 – Managing the impacts of development on existing settlements |
|---|--|--|---|

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