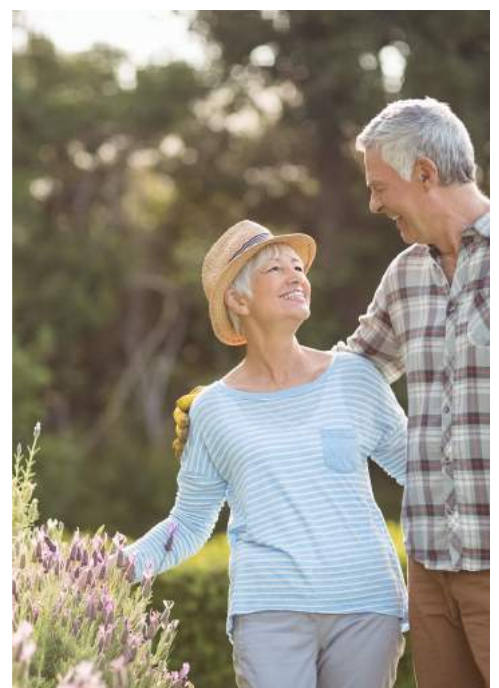
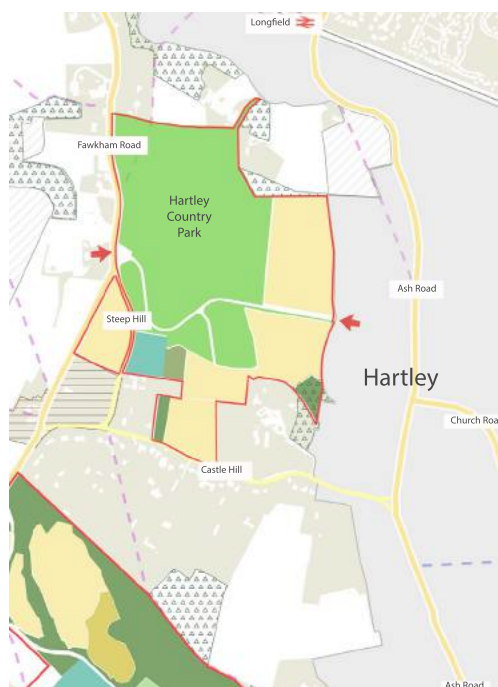




A Community Vision for Hartley

March 2018



A Community Vision for Hartley

Prepared by DHA Planning on behalf of Billings Group, the Leigh Academies Trust and Chapel Wood Enterprises.

March 2018



A Community Vision for Hartley

This submission is made to Sevenoaks District Council in support of a proposed expansion to Hartley and Longfield, in order to assist with the Council's projected housing need for the emerging Local Plan. The Council have identified a need for at least 12,400 houses in Sevenoaks District between 2013 - 2033 (an annualised target of 620 dwellings per annum).

There is therefore a need for the Council to assess the most sustainable forms of development to meet this housing need – through the process of a robust Sustainability Appraisal process – and this document seeks to provide the Council with the necessary information to fully appraise the site, and also to compare to other, perhaps less sustainable options put forward.

We believe this site is located within a sustainable location, adjoining the existing settlements, outside of the AONB which has a good level of services and infrastructure. What is also of note is that this proposal would allow for the enhancement of this existing provision and also a number of additional community benefits, which would not otherwise come forward as a result of the other or disbursed development. These benefits include:

- The provision of a new 3FE Primary and SEN Academy (to replace and enhance the existing Hartley primary school offer) in agreement with the Leigh Academy Trust;
- A new 14 ha Country Park, which could include a café, play spaces, picnic areas, woodland trails and community allotments;
- Enhanced sports provision at the well established Corinthians Football Club and Sports Centre;
- Improved highway provision within the locality with a new relief road to address congestion along Castle Hill;
- Up to 700 new market and affordable homes in a landscape setting abutting the existing settlement confines of Hartley;
- A new Retirement Village promoting the most recent model for independent living; and
- New areas of woodland, open spaces, greens and planting to enhance biodiversity.

This submission seeks to provide sufficient detail to Sevenoaks District Council to demonstrate that the proposal would be in a suitable location for housing development and there is reasonable prospect that the site is available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged.

The Billings Group have been investing in property and property related businesses in the South East for over 85 years. The group personally develops and actively invests in a variety of property types, this includes a significant private portfolio that encompasses residential, commercial, agricultural and industrial uses. The group are currently the largest private landowner in Sevenoaks district with over 3,700 acres.

Specifically the group have been key players in sports provision in Sevenoaks District, with Corinthians Sports Club, Corinthians Golf Club and Redlibbets Golf Club. The group have also been a forerunner of a unique non-profit elderly housing solution via its site at Bramblefields Close. The 210 unit scheme enables people to pay a license fee to live in a property for as long as they wish and when they move out have the license fee refunded. This has provided an immeasurable benefit to a large number of elderly people in the area.

The group's strategic land arm have been responsible for the award winning 4000 home development in Canterbury, Kent. Covering an area of 565 acres, upon completion Mountfield Park will boast quality new homes of mixed tenure alongside two new primary schools, a doctors' surgery, a dental practice, local shops, a community centre with indoor sports hall and 750,000 sqft of modern business premises, set within an extensive network of green open spaces and new parks.



Mountfield
Park

1.0

Introduction

This vision statement has been prepared on behalf of Billings Group and partners in respect of the promotion of land to the east of Fawkham Road and Valley Road and west of Banckside and Ash Road, Hartley.

The aim of this statement is to articulate how development immediately west of Hartley presents an opportunity for a high quality, sustainable extension to the existing settlement, providing much needed new homes, sports facilities, community facilities, open space and improvements to highway infrastructure.

The statement provides an assessment of the site and why it is a suitable for release from the Green Belt and introduces an early plan to aid ongoing discussion with the Council.

Document structure:

1.0	Introduction	6
2.0	Hartley and Longfield, Sevenoaks	7
3.0	Planning Policy Context	8
	Aims of the National Planning Policy Framework	8
	A new Local Plan	8
	Where should development be located?	8
	Hartley as a potential area for growth	8
	Protection of Green Belt	10
	Exceptional Circumstances	10
	Hartley Urban Extension	11
4.0	Expansion Site	12
5.0	Illustrative Zoning Plan	14
6.0	Illustrative Layout	15
	6.1 North	16
	6.2 South	17
7.0	Hartley Country Park	18
8.0	Green Infrastructure	20
9.0	Corinthians Sports Club	22
10.0	Education and Community	24
11.0	Residential Development	25
12.0	Access and Movement	26
13.0	Benefits of development	29
14.0	Summary	30

2.0

Hartley and Longfield, Sevenoaks

The Village of Hartley in Kent lies on the northern side of the North Downs between Sevenoaks, Dartford and Gravesend. The northern boundary of the village is defined by the mainline railway line to London. The southern boundary lies 2 miles south to the roundabout at New Ash Green.

The village benefits from two supermarkets for convenience shopping needs as well post office, local shops, a pub, social club and country club.

In respect of public transport links, Longfield mainline railway station is situated approximately 450m immediately north of the land at Banckfield and approximately 1200m from Corinthian Sports Ground. The line provides direct links to Central London via London Victoria (3 per hour) and other important stations including Bromley South, Canterbury East, Dover and Ramsgate. Furthermore, the site benefits from easy access to the High Speed rail network at Ebbsfleet International only 8km north of the site.

Numerous bus routes serve Hartley and Longfield and provide links to neighbouring settlement's and major centres such as Gravesend and Bluewater Shopping Centre where plentiful employment and leisure opportunities exist. Likewise, the settlements location provides excellent access to the strategic road network, including the A2 and the M25 Motorway providing direct links to London and the Kent Coast.

Hartley and Longfield benefit from excellent links to a number of important leisure and community facilities, including direct bus links to Bluewater Shopping Centre, a regionally important retail, entertainment and leisure complex. Likewise, Hartley and Longfield are situated only 5km south east of Darenth Valley Hospital, which provides Accident and Emergency facilities for the Sevenoaks catchment area as well as providing many local job opportunities. In this regard, it should be noted that none of the Council's higher order settlements benefit from better proximity to a major hospital or regionally important retail location.

In respect of education facilities, Our Lady of Hartley Roman Catholic Primary School, Hartley Country Primary School, Steephill School, Rowhill School and Longfield Academy are within walking distance of the areas proposed for growth. Further opportunity exists to strengthen these with new pedestrian links.



Hartley Village Sign



Black Lion Pub



Hartley Country Club



Hartley Primary Academy

Image Source:
Hartley Vision Design Statement 2008
<http://www.hartleyparishcouncil.org.uk/>
hartleypriamaryacademy.org.uk
www.hartleycountryclub.co.uk

3.0

Planning Policy Context

Aims of the National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was first published in March 2012 and replaced earlier Government guidance on planning. The framework is clear that the purpose of the planning system is to achieve sustainable development, which includes providing the homes needed to meet the needs of present and future generations. Furthermore, the NPPF stresses that sustainability is a holistic concept and therefore economic, social and environmental impacts must be balanced when taking decisions.

It cannot be ignored that the NPPF places emphasis on Local Authorities to 'boost significantly' the supply of housing by adhering to the requirements cited under Paragraph 47. This includes using their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area.

A new Local Plan

The Council recognises that the Sevenoaks Core Strategy is out of date and so work has commenced on a new Local Plan that will establish the number of homes and level of economic development to be accommodated and how and where this will be distributed. The first stage of this process was preparation of a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) in 2015 that identified a need for at least 12,400 houses in Sevenoaks District between 2013 - 2033 (an annualised target of 620 per annum).

A subsequent consultation by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in September 2017 sought views on further measures set out in the housing white paper to boost housing supply in England, a standard method for calculating local authorities' housing need. If implemented, this would see Sevenoaks District annual housing requirement increase to 698 homes per annum (13,960 for the plan period).

Given the annual need for housing has increased from 165 dwellings per annum to potentially 698, this is a watershed moment for the Council and clear evidence that Green Belt release is going to be fundamental to the Plan review.

Where should new development be located?

As to where these homes and jobs should be located, paragraph 52 of the NPPF recognises that the supply of new homes can sometimes be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or extensions to existing villages.

Hartley as a potential area for growth

In this respect, the population of Hartley may only be 5,600, but a further 5,000 live within Longfield creating an interconnected community of some 10,500 people. Whilst for administrative purposes the two villages are separate, the two operate as a single entity and have a far greater range of shops, services and community facilities than settlements with similar populations. In the interests of good planning, the two settlements and their sustainability credentials must be viewed cumulatively as a single settlement.

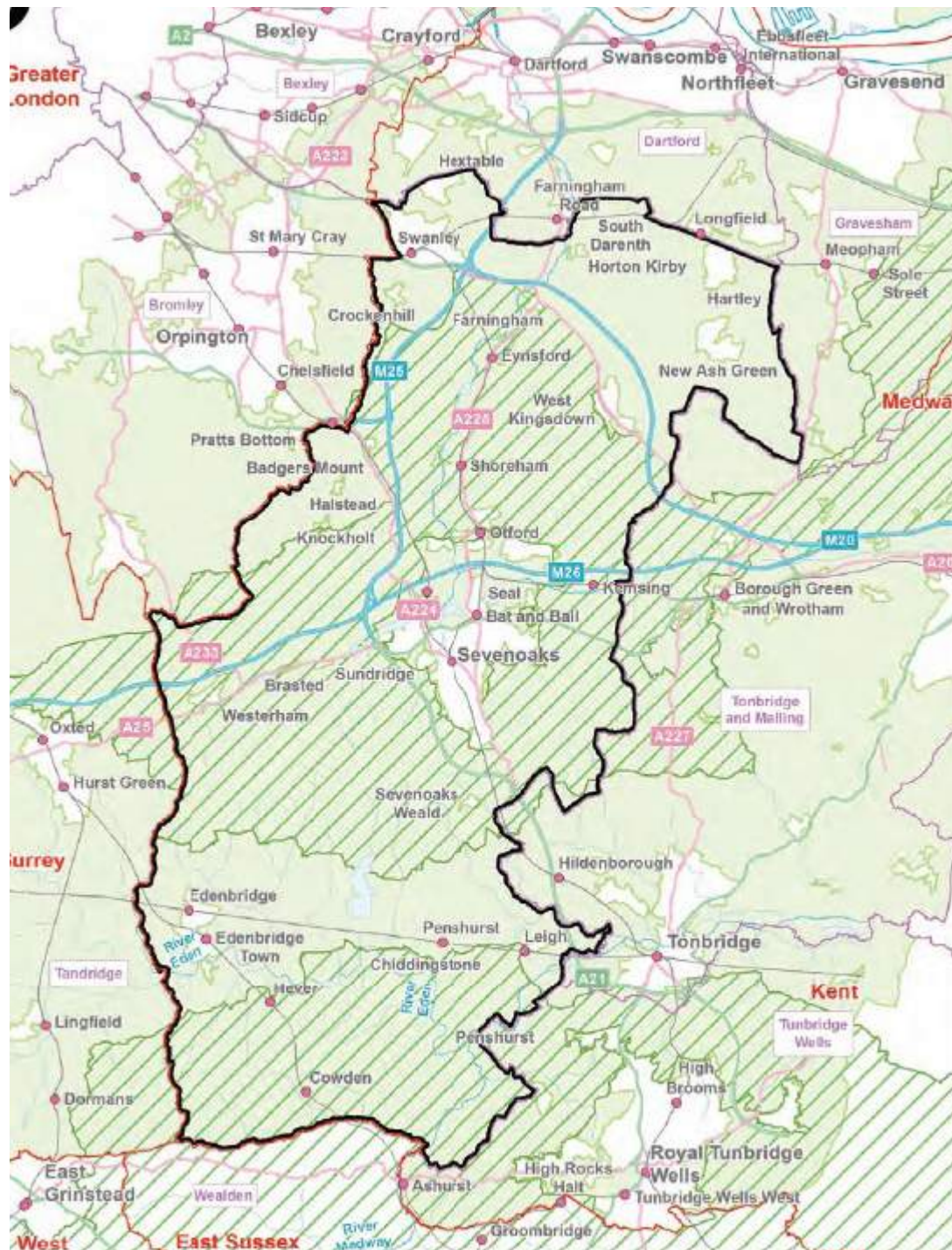
In light of the cumulative offer of Hartley and Longfield, previous decisions to define Hartley as a rural service village akin to Eynsford, Shoreham and Leigh remain highly questionable. To the contrary, Hartley and Longfield combined have a significantly greater population, with a wider range of facilities, than Edenbridge, Westerham, Otford and New Ash Green, all of which feature as higher ranking settlements within the Council's settlement hierarchy and two of which have been highlighted as locations for potential 'Exceptional Circumstance' Green Belt release.

It is for this reason that Hartley must be considered as a potential area for growth to help meet wider development needs.

'Hartley is a large and sustainable settlement that should be accommodating a significant level of growth given the current demand for additional housing.'

'The land promoted by Billings Group would deliver a wealth of physical and social infrastructure benefits.'

‘An urban extension to Hartley represents a wholly sound planning strategy’.



Context within
Sevenoaks District -
Hartley lies outside the
Area of Outstanding
Natural Beauty

Protection of Green Belt

Section 9 of the NPPF seeks to protect Green Belt land and that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Nonetheless, paragraph 83 of the NPPF also states that Green Belt boundaries can be altered in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the Local Plan. At this time, authorities should consider the Green Belt boundaries having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so that they should be capable of enduring beyond the plan period.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the District is heavily constrained, housing targets have fallen well short of the level of the homes that are required and housing prices continue to rise to such a degree that many can no longer stay within the District. Consequently, it is now necessary for Sevenoaks District Council to identify its full market and affordable housing requirement and make every effort to meet it in a sustainable way.

Exceptional Circumstances

Housing pressures alone represent Exceptional Circumstances for Green Belt release and this should take place in the most sustainable locations such as Hartley. Such critical decisions on the distribution of development must only be based upon sound planning arguments rather than dictated by local politics.

The Draft National Planning Policy Framework (DNPPF) was published for consultation in March 2018. It is yet to be formally published, but provides a clear indication of the Government's direction of travel with planning policy. The DNPPF confirms that local plans should continue to provide for objectively assessed needs for development, including unmet need from neighbouring areas, unless particular policies provide "a strong reason for restricting the overall scale" of development. It is also clear that a standard methodology for assessing housing need will be implemented and a housing delivery test will impose sanctions on councils failing to meet housebuilding targets in their local plans. Again, the emphasis is on housing delivery.

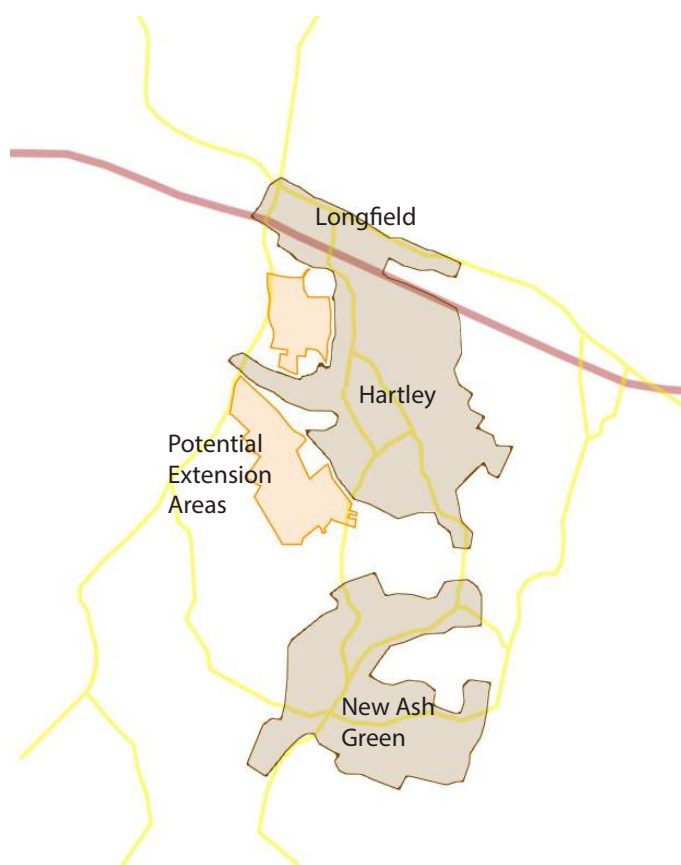
From a more strategic perspective, the DNPPF is clear that planning authorities must fully examine "all other reasonable options" for meeting their identified development needs before releasing green belt, but the Exceptional Circumstances provision remains and when drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should be taken into account.

The DNPPF directs that strategic plan-making authorities should consider the consequences for sustainable development of channelling development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages inset within the Green Belt or towards locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary. Where it has been concluded that it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should give first consideration to land which has been previously-developed and/or is well-served by public transport. They should also set out ways in which the impact of removing land from the Green Belt can be offset through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land.

Hartley Urban Extension

The Billings Group proposes a strategy of Green Belt release based around Hartley on the basis that 'Exceptional Circumstances' apply and that the development we could deliver would be genuinely sustainable.

The Council's evidence base confirms that there are many infrastructure projects that could improve the lives of those already living in Hartley. For example, the Sports Facility Strategy is clear that there is a lack of facilities for young people in Hartley. Improved multipurpose sports and community facilities would therefore assist in the delivery of this infrastructure. The same document also confirms that many Hartley residents travel to Dartford or Gravesend for retail and services and that this expenditure is therefore lost out of district. This could be partly remedied with further growth and the provision of improved facilities.



Sustainable Growth



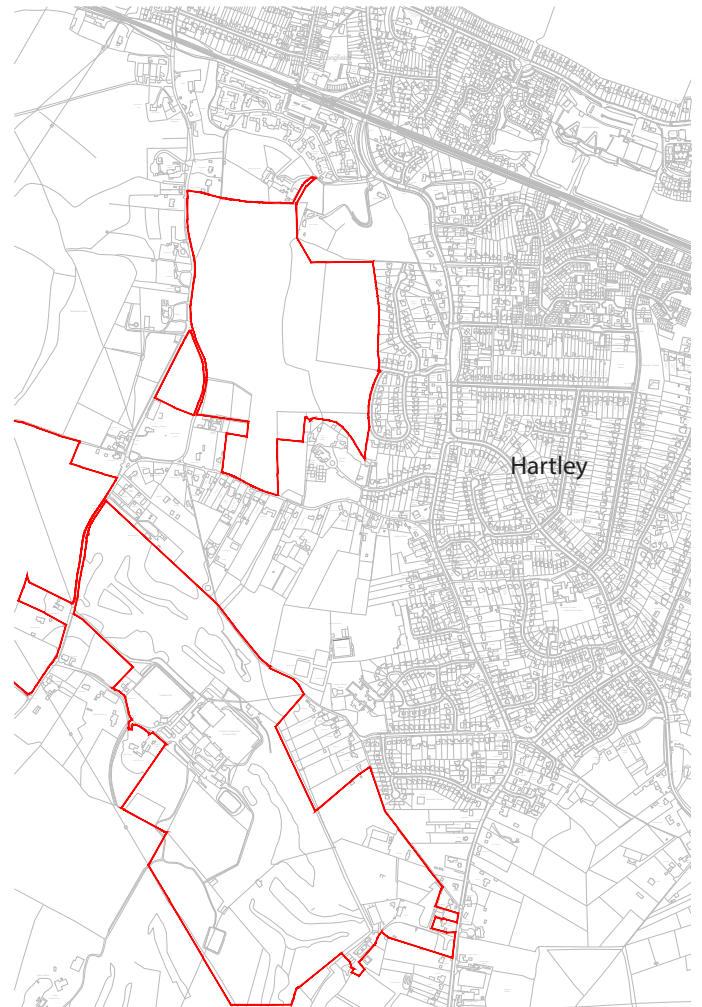
Pre-development

Post-development

4.0

Expansion Site

- The Billings Group and partners control a substantial amount of land in and around Hartley and as such the intention is to offer a series of community upgrades in the most accessible of locations.
- The main area of growth is centred around the well-established Corinthian Sports Club, located on Valley Road. The sports club currently contains two full sized, floodlit football pitches, indoor and outdoor 3G pitches, a 9-hole Golf Course and an 18-hole foot golf course. The leisure space is available for use by both the football and golf clubs and the latter has traditionally utilised this space as a bar, function and pro shop space. The range of uses has also expanded recently to include a children's day care nursery within the main sports club building.
- The main sports club site includes a two-storey building used as a sports clubhouse; containing changing rooms, former golfing shop, members lounge and function room. Attached to this is the indoor sports provision. To the front of this building is a car parking area where the access to the site joins to from Valley Road.
- Away from the sports provision, the applicant operates a number of office suites and space at Gay Dawn Farm on flexible terms and demand for this space is high. Beyond the offices are a range of former farm buildings, some of which remain in agricultural use whilst others operate in connection to the golf course, sports facilities and general estate management.
- East of the Corinthian nine-hole golf course is land associated with Chapel Wood Enterprises (SHELAA site HO 52). The site comprises a former transport yard containing a workshop building, a glazing business unit, a number of containers and hardstanding. There are also other vehicle related uses on the site including a car wash. Bound by Ash Road and a residential unit to the east, and open countryside to the north, west and south. The site was previously submitted by the landowner but now forms part of the wider masterplan area and would provide direct links to Ash Road.



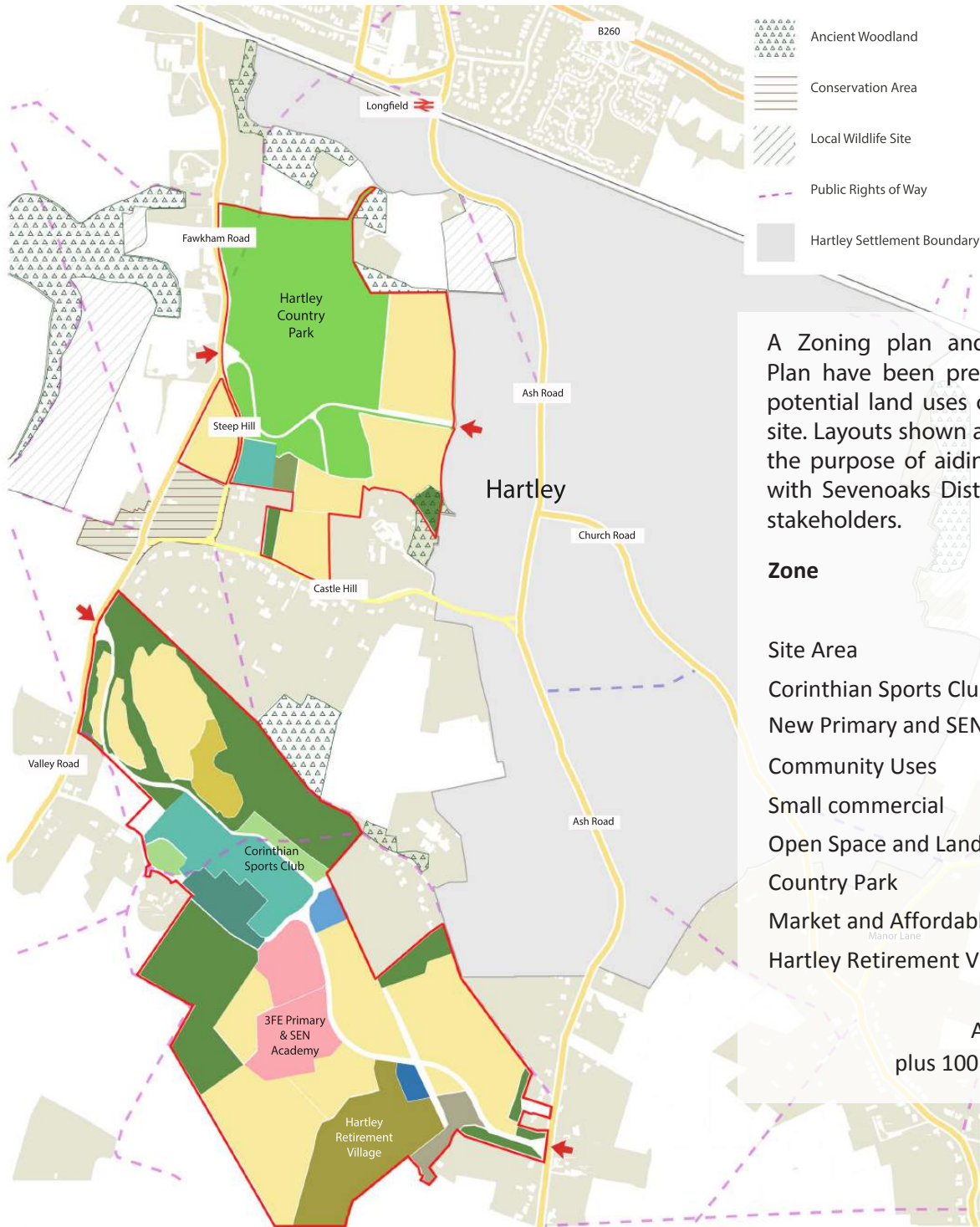
Land Ownership

- The land is situated on the western edge of the established settlement confines of Hartley and shares a long horizontal boundary with the residential streets of Banckside and Downs Valley which lie within the settlement confines of Hartley. To the north lie two distinct areas of woodland beyond which is the built up area of north Hartley/South Longfield.
- The western boundary of the site is formed by Fawkham Road, whilst to the south Steephill School and The Old Downs Residential Home.
- In respect of topography, the land rises gently from the east to the ridge of a hill broadly running north south in the centre of the site. From there it drops sharply away to the western boundary.
- All of the land to which this representation relates is situated on the outskirts of Hartley, within the metropolitan Green Belt. However, each parcel shares a boundary with well-established built up areas and are far from being isolated.
- None of the land has been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Area of Conservations (SAC), or a Special Protection Area (SPA). Furthermore, all of the land is within Flood Zone 1 with the lowest risk of flooding.
- In respect of accessibility, the Billings Group land is all situated on the southwestern outskirts of Hartley, very near to the town of Longfield, New Ash Green and Fawkham Green. The site's location provides excellent access to the strategic road network, including the A2 and the M25 Motorway providing direct links to London and the Kent Coast.
- Longfield mainline railway station is within comfortable walking distance being only 450m from the site.



 Potential Extension Site

5.0 Illustrative Zoning Plan



6.0 Illustrative Layout



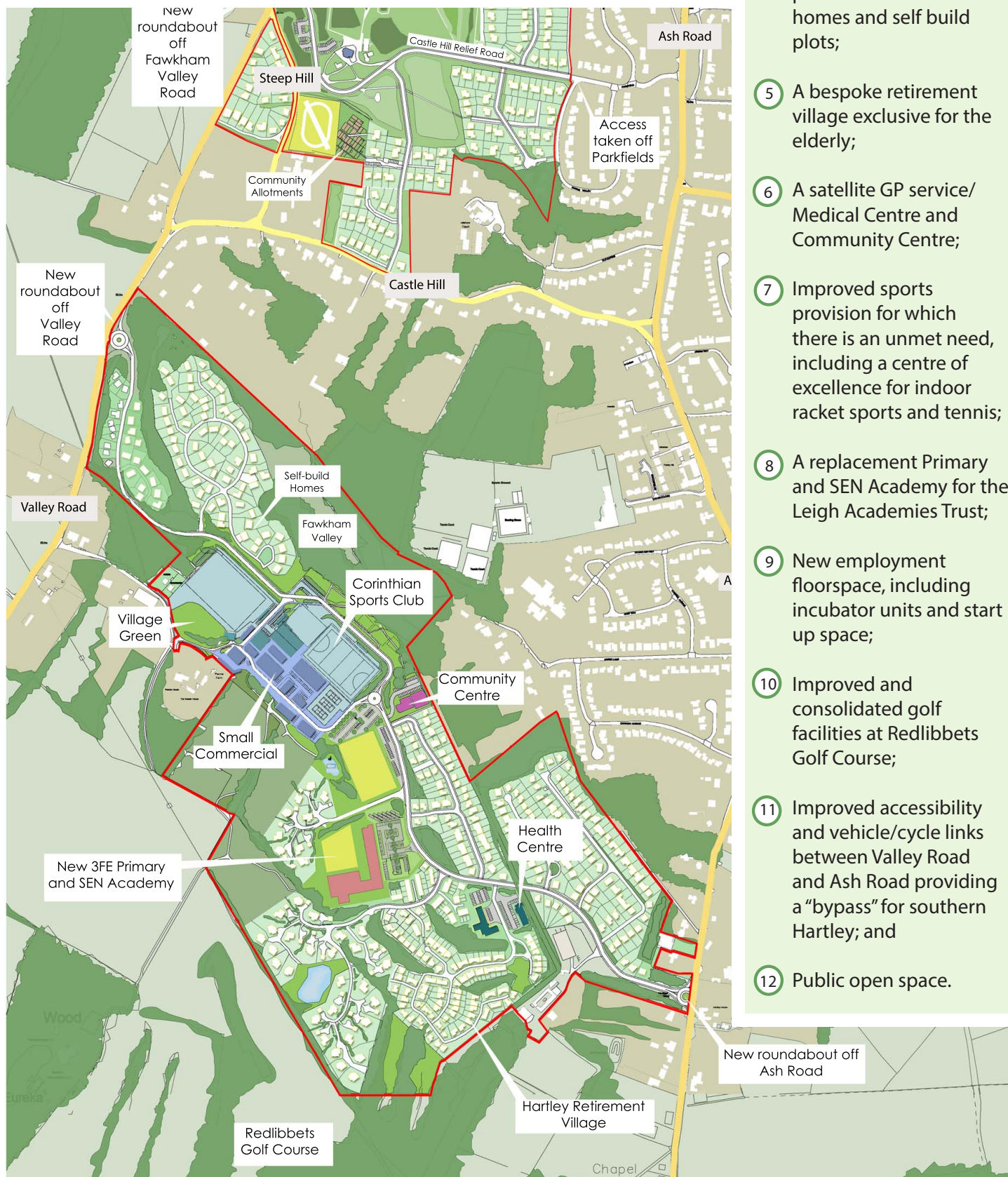
6.1 North



The proposed expansion of land west of Bancksides could provide the following:

- ① Up to 230 new dwellings, 40% of which would be affordable;
- ② A new relief road to allow improved traffic conditions on Castle Hill;
- ③ Provision of a new Country Park that could include;
 - Pedestrian and cycle links to Longfield Railway Station;
 - A children's adventure playground and outdoor gym;
 - A visitor café; and
 - A series of woodland walks with trim trails.

6.2 South



7.0

Hartley Country Park



The masterplan would bring about the provision of a new Country Park comprising woodland walks, new grasslands with scenic views and rolling pockets of new woodland planting bounded by, and offering protection to, areas of Ancient Woodland and Local Wildlife Sites to the north and west.

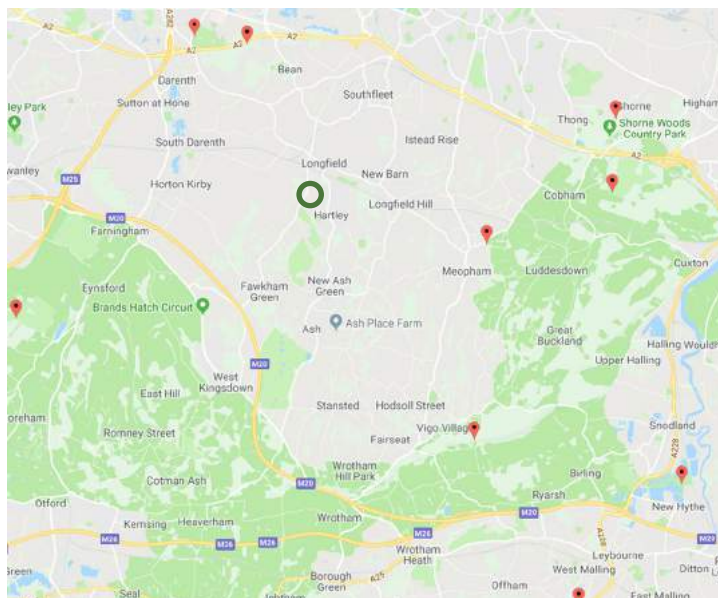
The park would be home to numerous leisure activities including community events, opportunities for picnics, children's play area, view points in the east across wider lawns, meadows and new pockets of woodland and leisure pursuits for the family.

Community facilities in the form of visitor car parking, toilets and a small cafe could also be provided here.

A series of looped woodland walks would be laid in response to the site contours with flat areas used for picnic spots and steeper slopes shaped by new woodland planting.

New footpaths would connect and make use of existing routes and Public Rights of Way into the surrounding countryside and north to Longfield Station.

All of the above would maintain the openness of the Green Belt land in perpetuity.



 Hartley Country Park





	Woodland Walks		Information		View Point
	Downland Trails		Toilets		Picnic Sites
	Hartley Trail (Easy access & Trim Trail route)		Parking		Refreshments

Hartley
Country
Park



8.0

Green Infrastructure

Sevenoaks District has a high quality landscape with a predominantly rural character. For this reason, 60% of the District lies within either the Kent Downs or High Weald Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Nonetheless, Hartley is not only wholly sustainable, but it is also within the 40% of the district that is of no notable landscape importance nor subject to statutory protection. Redevelopment in this location would therefore help preserve areas of higher landscape importance elsewhere.

From a localised perspective, a Countryside Character Assessment (CCA) was carried out by Jacobs on behalf of Kent County Council, Sevenoaks District Council and Natural England in 2004 and was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in 2011. Within this document, the land falls within the 'Mixed Settled Downs' sub area. Key landscape features of this area include:

- Undulating chalk downland with plateaus and some dramatic steep slopes;
- Open field systems and small scale enclosed pasture;
- Arable and grassland on slopes with woodland on hilltops;
- Small compact farmsteads and hamlets on higher ground;
- Urban influences;
- Views well contained;
- Major communication routes impact on landform and local highways;
- Characteristic cross-contour and direct valley-bottom roads link existing settlements;
- Blocks of coppice woodland. Beech and oak standards; and
- Large areas of formal recreational space.

Specifically to Fawkham and Hartley the CCA seek to conserve Ancient Woodland, conserve field patterns and conserve and manage highway works to maintain tall hedgerows. It also accepts the presence of suburban land uses such as the golf courses.

In summary, the CCA sets out the features of important landscape character, none of which will be undermined as a result of the proposed expansion of Hartley. To the contrary, in landscape terms the proposal the land is already developed and largely used for suburban purposes.

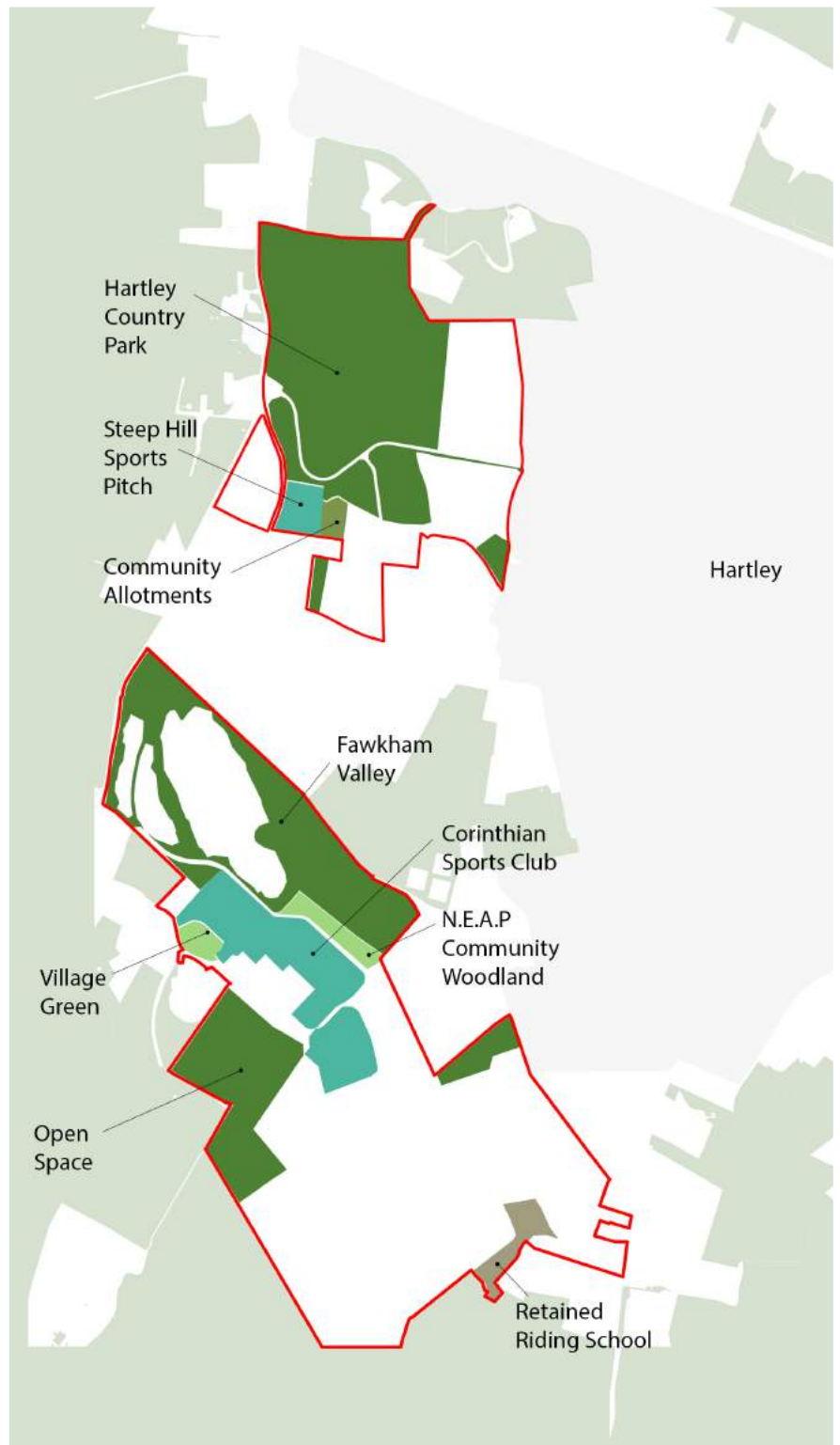
An updated Landscape Character Assessment (2017) has been commissioned to revisit each of the landscape types and character areas and to provide a comprehensive update. This has been carried out by consultants LUC. This report identified the site within zone H1 and subject to low to medium sensitivity. This means that the character and quality of the landscape or characteristics of the landscape are low moderately susceptible to being changed as a result of introducing the development type, in principle. It should be noted that no settlement has been identified as low sensitivity with the majority of other areas being classified medium to high. The report concludes:

'The frequent areas of ancient woodland form 'absolute constraints' to development. This area has low medium sensitivity to residential development and a higher sensitivity. Any new development should:

- Retain the small-scale field patterns and ensure any new built development is well integrated into the landscape;
- Retain the low density settlement pattern outside of the main villages;
- Protect the setting of valued heritage assets including the Conservation Area at Baldwins Green and the many listed buildings, including two Grade I listed churches;
- Maintain the sense of separation between Hartley and New Ash Green, as linear development has already resulted in a perception of coalescence. Avoid further linear development;
- Retain the character of the narrow rural lanes, avoiding suburban features such as kerbs and street lighting where possible. Avoid widening of roads and introduce formal passing places; and
- Protect the valued areas of ancient woodland and thick hedgerows.

In summary, the enlargement of Hartley could take place in an area of the district with that is less sensitive to change. Furthermore, the aspects of the landscape that are of local importance will be maintained and preserved as a consequence of the proposed expansion.

A landscape framework will provide multiple functions in terms of aesthetic improvement, links to existing landscape features, screening and enhanced habitat connectivity. As illustrated, a variety of open space and landscape typologies are suggested.



Open Space and Landscape Zones

9.0

Corinthians Sports Club



Corinthians Sports Club is a family friendly sport club with immaculately kept football pitches, golf course and footgolf facilities. The main area of growth is centred around this well-established Corinthian Sports Club, located on Valley Road.

The main sports club site includes a two-storey building used as a sports clubhouse; containing changing rooms, members lounge and function room. The leisure space is available for use by both the football and golf clubs and the latter has traditionally utilised this space as bar, function and pro shop space. The range of uses has also expanded recently to include a children's day care nursery within the main sports club building. Attached to this is the indoor sports provision.

Upon expansion, Corinthian Sports Club will provide:

- Three full sized, floodlit football pitches;
- Outdoor 3G ball court, fully floodlit, suitable for 7/8 a side football;
- Indoor 3G ball court, fully floodlit, suitable for 5/6 a side;
- Sports bar with indoor viewing areas of the indoor ball court and front pitch;
- Football Parties for children aged between 5 and 15 years.
- Squash and Raquetball;
- Indoor Tennis; and
- A retained 18 hole golf and footgolf course with pristine greens at Redlibbets.



In respect of the loss of the 9-hole golf course, membership numbers over the past 5 years have seen a gradual decline, which is reflected by national statistics from England Golf that suggest that Private Course membership dropped 20% between 2004 and 2013. Whilst membership numbers have stabilised over the past year, mainly due to the closure of Upper Austin Lodge Golf Course and the uncertainty over the future of nearby Woodlands Golf Course, there has been a significant decline in use of the ancillary club facilities for functions and club events. Accordingly, the intention is to rationalise the golf offering and transfer membership of the nine-hole course to the higher grade Redlibbets Golf Course which is also within the control of the Billings Group.

Detailed proposals have not been advanced and any future scheme would be subject to meaningful engagement with the local community, the Parish Council and Sevenoaks District Council. Nonetheless, in order to assist the Council, a sketch illustrative layout has been provided to emphasise how the site could be expanded.

On the basis that the existing Sports Club provides a valuable community facility, it is proposed to maintain this in its current form, but to use residential development to better integrate it with the main built up area of Hartley. The outcome would be a development that would create a high quality and better transition between town and countryside.

The existing agricultural uses are proposed for demolition with existing commercial uses at Gay Dawn Farm retained and expanded to provide start up and incubator units for small businesses.



Proposed refurbishment and expansion of Corinthian Sports Club

10.0

Education and Community

3FE Primary, Pre-school Nursery and SEN Academy

The masterplan shows provision of a purpose-built 3 form-entry Primary School, Nursery and Special Education Needs (SEN) Academy providing for mainstream pupils, nursery places and special needs pupils.

The need for a new Academy has been established via discussions with the Leigh Academies Trust. The existing Hartley Primary School is heavily oversubscribed and experiences parking/access issues due to its constrained location. There is therefore an identified demand for a 3 form-entry replacement.

The Trust are very keen to find new and modern accommodation for Hartley Primary Academy. The Trust also wishes to increase and improve the pre-school nursery provision for the residents of Hartley and are currently limited by the existing temporary facilities.

The existing Milestone Academy which is an SEN school is also in need of significant investment to bring it up to code. Discussions with the Trust have therefore clarified the benefits of a shared primary and SEN school in Hartley in order to benefit from shared facilities.

The illustrative layout presents south facing formal and informal play and recreation areas, a MUGA pitch and potential for dual use of adjacent Corinthian Sports Facilities. In light of issues currently experienced by the existing school, as a result of relocation there is an opportunity for ample parking and dedicated pupil drop-off/collection access thus minimising disruption to the remainder of the school and surrounding residential areas.

Health and Community

In addition to a new school and enhanced sporting facilities, the masterplan promotes the inclusion of a new community centre, a neighbourhood area of play, community allotments and a satellite GP health centre.



Facilities envisaged on site by the Leigh Academies Trust. Image: Cherry Orchard Academy, Ebbsfleet
Source: <http://cherryorchardprimaryacademy.org.uk>

11.0

Residential Development

Market and Affordable Housing

The masterplan and supporting density study promotes the potential for approximately 700 new homes across the two land parcels. Residential units would comprise a mix of 2,3,4 and 5 bed houses in accordance with the Council's housing policy and tenure mix. Building heights would vary between one, one and a half and two storeys in response to the surrounding character and in response to site topography and views.

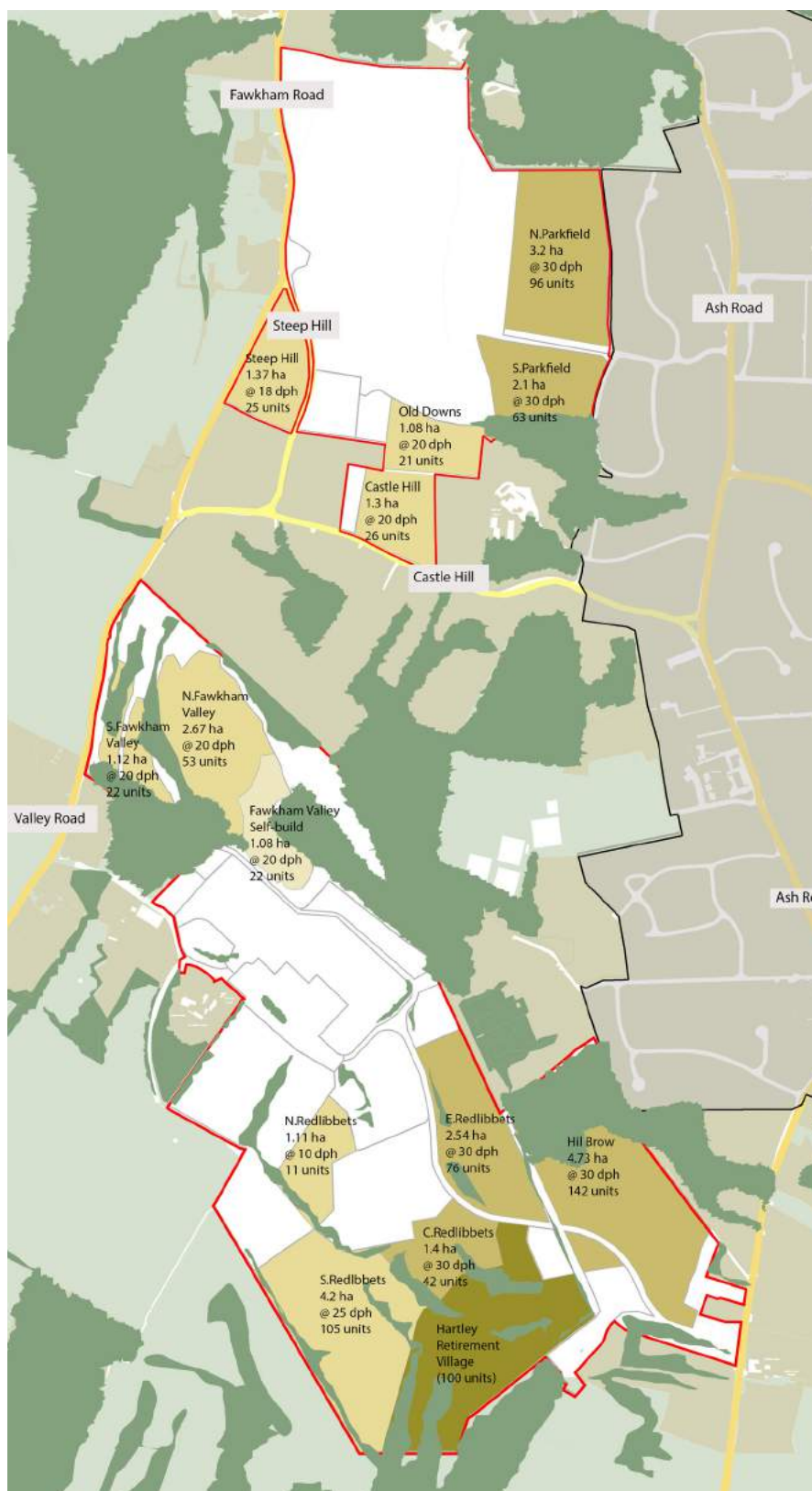
A range of densities are proposed in order to knit in with the existing settlement and to aid the creation of high quality residential character areas each with their own identity.

Starter Homes, Self-Build and Custom Build

In response to government initiatives, the masterplan will promote allocated areas for starter homes, self-build and custom build housing. This will result in a wider local accommodation offer and will promote innovative design in a quality landscape setting.

Independent Living (Retirement Village)

The retirement housing market is dominated by large providers offering a rigid model of limited choice to retirees. The UK has an ageing population, and more needs to be done to ensure availability and choice in the retirement housing market. The masterplan therefore promotes the creation of the Hartley Retirement Village offering alternative accommodation comprising single-storey bungalows of a range of type and tenure set in landscaped grounds in sustainable location.



Residential Parcel Study - the extension would see delivery of some 700 houses in addition to a retirement village

12.0

Access & Movement

Local Highway Network

A - Proposed Castle Hill Relief Road

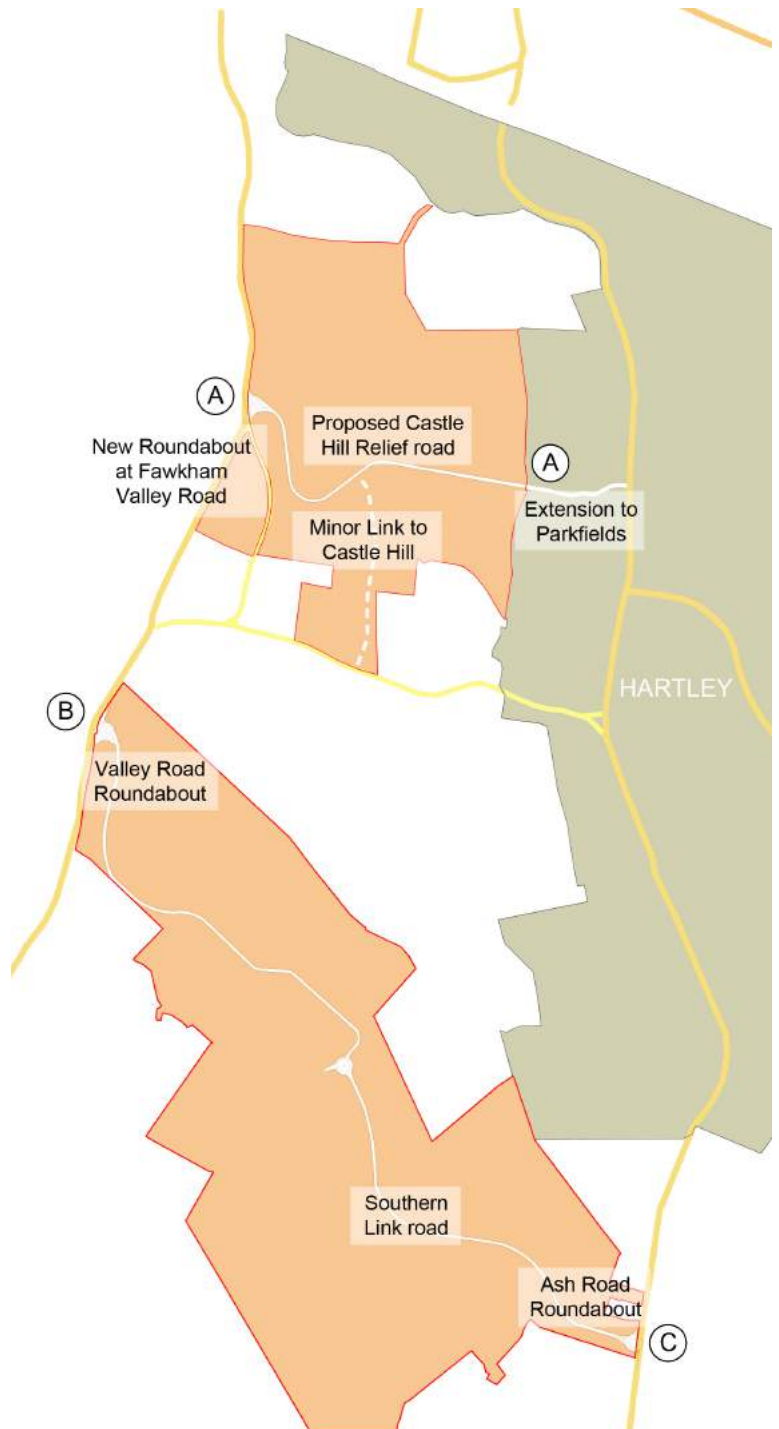
Fawkham Road runs in a general north / south alignment forming the western boundary of the northern parcel of the site. Fawkham Road measures approximately 5m in width and therefore accommodates two-way traffic flows. In this location Fawkham Road is subject to a 40mph speed limit. No footways or street lighting are provided.

To the north, Fawkham Road runs along the western boundary of Longfield and connects with the B260 Main Road at a four-arm mini roundabout. To the south, Fawkham Road routes towards the A20 London Road.

Parkfield abuts the eastern boundary of the northern parcel and is a residential road linking Downs Valley, Banckside and Ash Road. Parkfield measures approximately 7.5m in width and is subject to a 30mph speed limit. Footways are provided on both sides of the carriageway.

Castle Hill joins Fawkham Road at a priority junction and provides a route into Hartley. Castle Hill is narrow and can only accommodate one-way vehicle flows at a time. It is understood that this road is often used as a 'rat-run' for those routeing between Hartley and the A20.

It is therefore proposed to provide an alternative route via a new link road between Parkfield and Fawkham Road to relieve Castle Hill from congestion and aid reinstatement of the character of this lane. The new road will meander through the new Country Park and will be suitably screened by new planting.



Access Improvements

B - Valley Road Roundabout

Valley Road runs in a general north / south alignment, forming the western boundary of the southern parcel. Valley Road measures approximately 5.5m in width and therefore accommodates two-way traffic flows. In this location, Valley Road is subject to a 40mph speed limit. No footways or street lighting are provided.

A new roundabout is proposed north of the existing established access to the Corinthian Football Club providing a southern link road through to Ash Road in the east.

C - Ash Road Roundabout

Ash Road abuts the southeastern corner of the southern parcel. This road routes in a general north / south direction between The Street and Hartley Road / the B260, linking Longfield, Hartley and New Ash Green. Adjacent to the site, Ash Road measures approximately 5.8m in width and a footway is provided along the eastern side of the carriageway.

A new roundabout is proposed off Ash Road, just south of Orchard House, to provide an eastern link into the development site, linking through to Valley Road in the west.

Public Transport Infrastructure

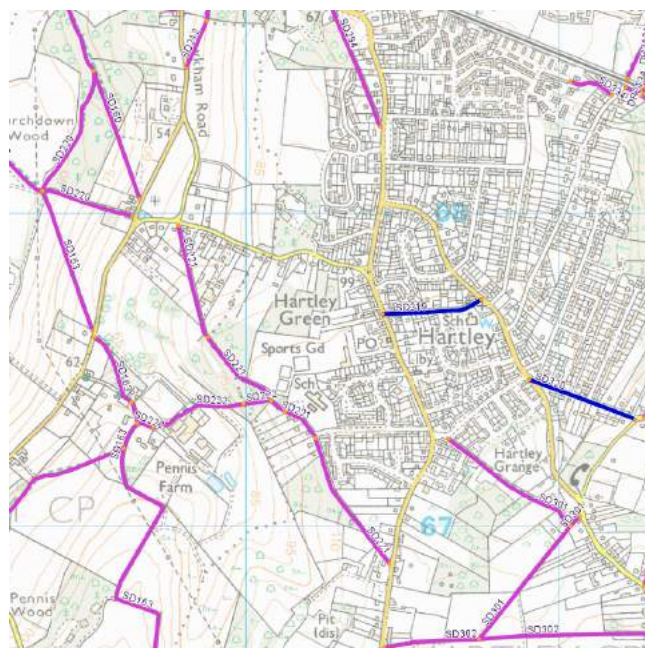
As shown on the accessibility isochrone plan, a number of bus stops are located to the north and east of the site. These stops provide access to a number of routes to destinations including Dartford, Bluewater, Greenhithe and Gravesend. In addition to this a number of school services can be accessed.

Longfield Railway Station is situated to the north of the proposal site. This station is operated by Southeastern and provides access to destinations including London Victoria, Dover Priory and Ramsgate. On average, trains depart six times per hour. A limited number of cycle parking spaces are provided at this station.

Ebbsfleet International Station is located approximately 8 kilometres north of the site, which equates to a 13-minute drive. From here, High Speed services can be accessed between London and east Kent, as well as Eurostar services to various European destinations.

Walking and Cycle Infrastructure

In addition to the footways outlined above a number of Public Rights of Way are provided within the local area, as is shown below in Figure 1. Purple lines indicate Public Footpaths and blue lines indicate Restricted Byways.



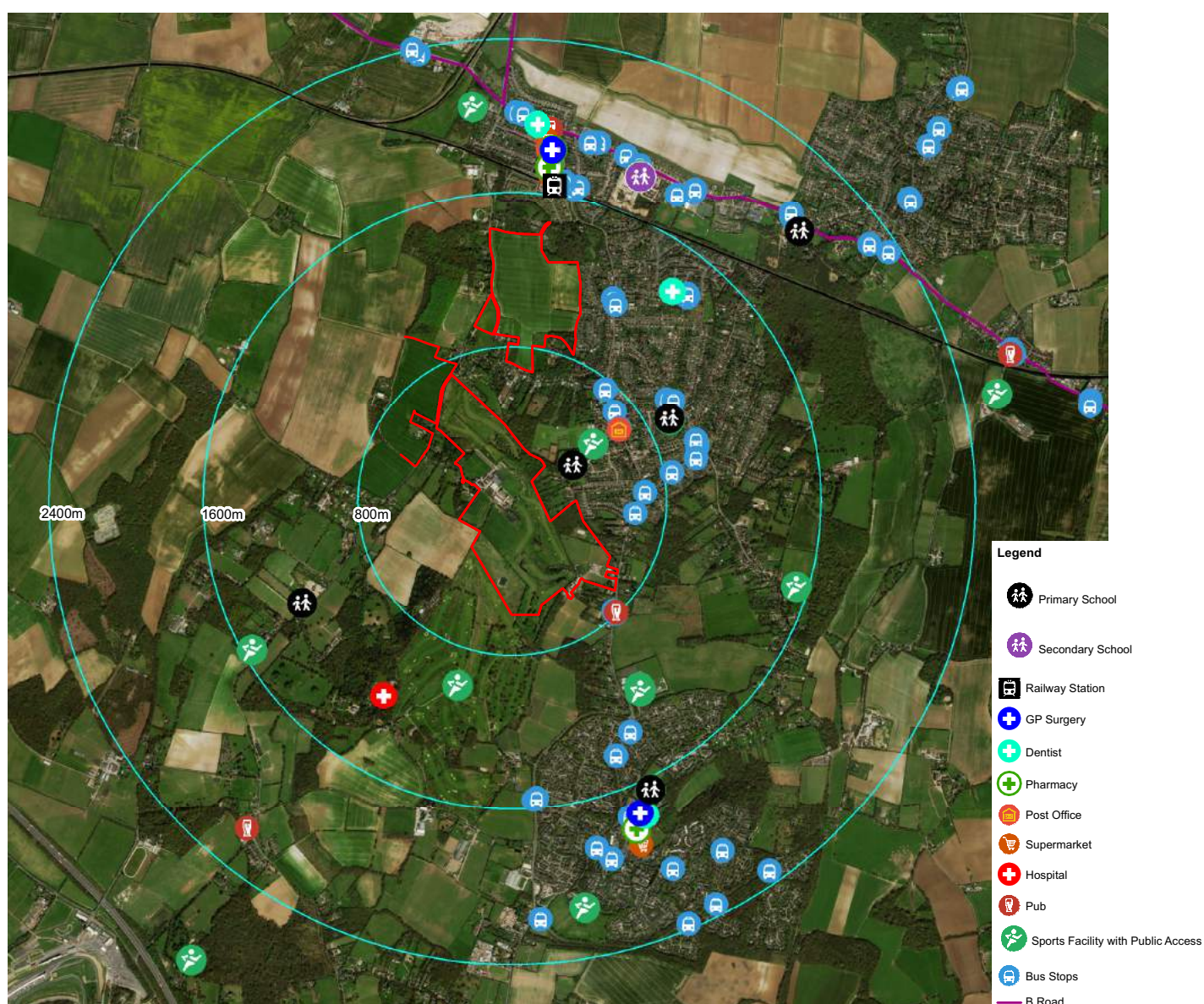
Public Right of Way Network (Courtesy of KCC)

Of particular note, Footpath SD222 runs east / west across the southern parcel. SD221 provides a link along the eastern boundary of the site between Castle Hill and Ash Road via Hartley Primary Academy.

No dedicated cycle routes run within close proximity of the site, however, it is considered that many of the local roads are conducive to on-road cycling.

Accessibility

As is shown in the accessibility isochrone plan, the site is located sustainably, with ready access to a high number of services and amenities. Notably, five primary schools are provided within close proximity of the site, including three within 1600m. A secondary school is located in Longfield, offering education to those between 11 and 18 years old. Medical facilities can be accessed in Longfield, Hartley and New Ash Green, along with a range of food retail options.



Walk Distance Isochrones

13.0

Benefits

In summary, the extension could lead to the following Economic, Social and Environmental benefits:



New Jobs

The illustrative masterplan suggests provision of 620 jobs via new community facilities. In addition to approximately 290 jobs per year of construction (assuming a 10 year construction period).



Support Local Jobs

New residents will increase spending in the local area thus supporting jobs within the community.



Council Revenues

Generation of up to £3.5M in Council Tax Income as a result of the Government's New Homes Bonus.



Section 106 Payments

A considerable sum will be paid in s.106 contributions to be used for local infrastructure.



First Occupation Expenditure

Additional expenditure on goods and services to make a house 'feel like home'. A proportion of this would be captured locally.



Community Spending

Opportunity to attract new spending power in the local area to enhance the vitality of local shops and services.



Addressing Housing Shortage

Significant opportunity to provide a number of houses to the area and widen the range and choice of homes within the locality.



Affordable Housing

Provision of 40% high quality affordable housing to meet the needs of the local community.



Retirement Village

The provision of accommodation for the elderly on the site will cut adult social care expenditure.



Play Areas

New play areas throughout residential zones and as part of the Country Park will provide a variety of equipment for local children.



Green Spaces

A variety of natural spaces will be incorporated including the provision of a village green and improved setting for adjacent listed buildings.



Allotments

Community allotments to encourage healthier living and home grown produce.



New Landscaping

Introduction of high quality public realm and landscaping throughout the development.



Biodiversity

Opportunity to enhance biodiversity through the addition of new green infrastructure.



Walking and Cycling

Encourage walking, jogging and cycling with sustainable pedestrian and cycle routes and incorporation of existing Public Right of Ways.



Improved Highway Infrastructure

New highway infrastructure to alleviate pressures on existing.



Sustainable Transport

Longfield / Hartley is a 0.5 / 2.4 kilometre walk distance from the site (4 / 23 minute walk time), and operates services every 30 minutes to London Charing Cross and Gillingham.



Hartley Country Park

Provision of a new Country Park for new and existing residents to enjoy.



Corinthians Sport Club

Refurbishment and expansion of the established community facility.

14.0

Summary

In summary, this document sets out a community vision for Hartley that will benefit both future and existing residents alike.

Based on the current local planning context, the land promoted represents an area suitable for removal from the Green Belt and for allocation to meet a range of needs, including; specialist retirement accommodation, market and affordable housing, self-build plots, community and leisure uses and state of the art new education facilities for which there is an evidenced based need. The benefits are wide reaching and will improve the lives of the youngest members of the community through enhanced education provision and will extend to the senior population via an exclusive retirement village.

Business owners will benefit from new opportunities to take up incubator units, whilst families will have the opportunity to benefit from the ability to build their dream home from the available self-build plots.

The aspirations are wholly deliverable and would be delivered within a logical extension to the existing built confines of Hartley, where there is the capacity to provide sustainable growth with limited risk of harm being caused to either the character or appearance of the locality.

The vision builds upon the existing offer of services available in Hartley and Longfield including the public transport links via Longfield Railway Station.

Taking all of the above into consideration, we consider that the land promoted at Hartley would deliver genuine community benefits that will be inclusive for all.