

HEATHLANDS GARDEN COMMUNITY

Masterplan Framework Pre-Reg19 Submission

August 2021



The Vision for Heathlands Garden Community

A new garden community rooted in garden village design principles, Heathlands Garden Community will become a new sustainably planned place with connected, walkable, vibrant, sociable neighbourhoods for the residents of Heathlands, Lenham, Lenham Heath and Charing in which to live and work.

Active and Vibrant Place

There will be new local jobs, community facilities, schools, cafes shops, and leisure facilities set in high-quality public spaces creating an active and vibrant place with enhanced biodiversity.

Health and Wellbeing

To facilitate healthy lifestyles, high-quality connected landscapes and green infrastructure will provide spaces for exercise, sport, play, walking, cycling, and leisure, sitting alongside facilities for growing food and managing flood risk.

Sustainably Designed

Pedestrians, cyclists and public transport will be prioritised providing sustainable travel opportunities with convenient and safe linkages within Heathlands, to surrounding communities and to community facilities, jobs and leisure. There will be a sensitive transition between the AONB and Heathlands, with a heathland landscape and strong planting in the northern parcels, along with landscaped spaces for village greens, parks, commons and naturalistic green spaces throughout.

Well Connected

A new Heathlands Rail Station along the Ashford-Maidstone line will be explored to achieve a wider sustainable connected network, providing opportunities for residents and businesses along the A20 corridor.

Live and Work

Homes will be provided for all stages of life with affordable provision and will be of a high-quality innovative design reflecting the local vernacular, incorporating its heritage and landscape character. Flexible business space and communal workspace facilities will be provided for new and established local companies and for those that reside locally.

00 7 19000 000

Good for the Planet

The ambition is for Heathlands to align with Government's target of reducing emissions towards zero carbon by facilitating low carbon lifestyles through a range of measures, including the provision of sustainable travel options, construction using sustainable methods of design and use of on-site renewable energy generation.



HEATHLANDS GARDEN COMMUNITY



Heathlands Development Principles

The following Development Principles make up the DNA of Heathlands, inspiring and shaping the strategy for the Site, while highlighting the benefits and opportunities for future residents and the surrounding existing community.

These Development Principles have informed the Framework Plan that is presented in this document. As the project evolves and as we engage with the community and stakeholders, the Vision and Development Principles will evolve further and they will continue to shape the Framework Plan and future masterplanning work.





A new settlement rooted in garden village design principles, strategically located between Ashford and Maidstone on the East West Railway line providing an opportunity for sustainable growth, good connectivity, economic diversity and improved access to the Kent Downs AONB.



The delivery of approximately 5,000 new homes at a range of densities and mix of tenures, including affordable homes, and use of modern methods of construction, to create a genuinely sustainable, mixed and balanced new community.



Over 50% of the Site area will consist of green infrastructure, with a variety of local parks, community spaces, retained and enhanced woodland, extensive new tree planting, and green and blue (corridors to comprehensively meet the needs of local people, providing attractive, active, fun & multifunctional landscapes, and a new Country Park for both the local Heathland community and for visitors from the wider area to enjoy.



Protection and enhancement of existing ecologically valuable features within the site, including the Lenham Heaths Habitat Corridor, Local Wildlife Sites, existing water courses and other ecological features to deliver 20% Biodiversity Net Gain.



A new rural innovation hub, located close to the district centre to take advantage of its local services and connections, will be part of a highquality, modern employment offer alongside a generous allocation of employment land to support and encourage enterprise and economic initiatives, connecting residents to a range of jobs and lifestyle opportunities.



Delivering a low carbon lifestyle with the ambition to be operationally net zero carbon in line with the Government's 2050 target, with a holistic approach to prioritise active travel, maximising passive design, enabling the provision of on-site renewable energy generation, improving water quality and including in-built capacity resilience measures.



At the heart of the settlement a new vibrant district centre with higher density living alongside a mix of commercial, community and employment uses formed around a potential new railway station or public transport hub complemented by two local centres, to serve not only the new community but also existing residents in the area.



Schools located alongside local centres and open space to facilitate the creation of a sociable community and neighbourhood focus, supporting walkable and accessible services while promoting active and healthy lifestyles and a sense of wellbeing.



Control of a substantial area of land to support development of a sustainable scaled place, serviced with significant infrastructure delivered using forward funding and land value capture under the stewardship of Homes England as master developer, in partnership with Maidstone Borough Council, to ensure delivery of a sustainable, high-quality development.



Transport hubs will be integrated into key destination points and activity nodes throughout the settlement, which together with the new railway station and or bus services, and a comprehensive network of high-quality pedestrian and cycle routes will provide excellent sustainable travel choices for movement throughout and beyond the settlement.



A distinctive, legible, and beautifully designed place harmoniously blending the requirements of 21st century living, whilst respecting local heritage and responding to the existing landscape and trees, offering the best of town and country on the doorstep for a broad range of users, age groups and abilities.



HEATHLANDS GARDEN COMMUNITY

Contents

1 - Introduction 8 Purpose of this Document 10 Working Together 10 What's Next 11 Why Here? 12 The Site 14 Being Sensitive to the Place 16 Historic Landscape 18 Existing Site Features 20 Composite Constraints Plan 28 Site Opportunities 30



2 - Masterplan Framework	32
2A Green and Blue Infrastructure	34
Landscape and Visual Assessment	36
New Planting and Woodland	37
Ecology and Biodiversity	38
Places and Activity	39
Managing Flood Risk	40
Nutrient neutrality	41
An active and verdant landscape	42
2B - Access and Movement	44
Walking and Cycling	46
Promoting Shared Mobility	50
Potential for a New Railway Station	51
Mobility Hubs	52
Public Transport	53
Vehicular Access and Circulation	54
2C - Land Use	56
Mix of Uses	58
District Centre	59
Local Centres	60
Education	61
Employment	61
Development Parcels and Densities	62
2D - Framework Plan	64
Framework Plan	66

3 - Place and Character	68
Illustrative Concept Plan	70
A Beating Heart for the Community	72
Walkable and Sociable Neighbourhoods	73
An Enterprising Community	74
Rural Innovation Hub	75
Diverse Job Offer	76
Varied Character Responding to the Place	78
Heathlands Country Park	80
Great Stour Walk	82
Lenham Nature Park	83
Forstal Common - Town Park	84
Shelve Farm Park	85
4 - Resilient and Energy Efficient	86
Climate Change Mitigation Strategy	88
5 - Making it Happen	90
Phasing: A Place Evolving Over Time	92
Stewardship and Leadership	96
Key Timeline	100
6 - List of Technical Reports	102

1 - Introduction







Purpose of this Document

This purpose of this document:

- Present Maidstone Borough Council and Homes England's emerging Vision and Development Principles, and a Framework Masterplan that will inform future masterplanning and development proposals for the Site.
- 2. For the Framework Plan to reflect national Planning Policy and to use it to promote the Site in the Maidstone Local Plan.
- Show how the Vision and Development principles translate spatially to achieve a Framework Plan that will steer and guide future development proposals.
- 4. Provide an up-to-date assessment of the Site in response to the latest technical studies to demonstrate that it is a viable, sustainable, and deliverable proposition.

The Framework Plan for Heathlands has been informed by the emerging Vision and Development Principles. The Framework Plan has been evolved to respond to the constraints and opportunities identified by updated technical due diligence recently completed, and to address the questions raised by the local planning authority and other stakeholders in relation to aspects of the Site's deliverability.

This document demonstrates the deliverability of the Site and sets out a robust approach to creating a lasting high-quality garden community with a clear identity and sense of place.

The emerging Framework Plan has been informed by a series of technical workshops on landscape, transport and movement, ecology, drainage, archaeology and heritage, discussions with the local planning authority and various stakeholders.

Working Together

Maidstone Borough Council will be working in partnership with Homes England, the Government's Housing Agency, to create and deliver Heathlands as a new sustainable community based on established Garden City principles with good place-making at its heart.

This will be a very secure public partnership that will provide certainty over the funding of key infrastructure and ensure the delivery of the Vision. Heathlands will be a place that accords with current government guidance such as 'Building for Life 12' and the new National Model Design Code (NMDC).



What's Next

The high-level timeline presented here illustrates the next stages in progressing the plans for Heathlands, via the Local Plan process through to the anticipated delivery of new homes.

As the proposals progress through the Local Plan process and towards an outline planning application, Homes England and Maidstone Borough Council will accelerate its engagement strategy with the local and wider community to ensure that the public is kept informed of the key stages of progress and will have opportunities to help shape the proposals.

Timeline

- Summer 2021 Submission of evidence to support the Regulation 19 Local Plan
- Autumn 2021 Regulation
 19 Local Plan Consultation
- Spring 2022 Submission of Local Plan
- Summer 2022 Local Plan
 Examination
- Winter 2022/23 Adoption of Local Plan

- 2023 Preparation and submission of outline planning application
- 2025 Secure outline planning permission
- 2027 Early infrastructure works commence
- 2029 First homes completed



Why Here?

Maidstone Borough lies in the heart of Kent, the "Garden of England," bordering the Boroughs of Tonbridge and Malling, Tunbridge Wells, Ashford, Swale and Medway.

Maidstone Town Centre forms the main urban area, and provides a large proportion of the social, cultural, and economic opportunities available in the Borough.

Other important large 'Rural Service Centre' settlements include Marden, Staplehurst, Headcorn, Lenham and Harrietsham with large villages including Boughton Monchelsea, Coxheath and Sutton Valence to name a few. The following factors support the identification of Heathlands Garden Community as a location for a new sustainable settlement:

- The area is sustainably located in terms of its proximity to strategic road and rail infrastructure, with opportunities to utilise and enhance the existing road and rail network.
- The position of the Site in between Lenham and Charing is a natural location for a new standalone settlement in the linear settlement pattern along infrastructure between Maidstone and Ashford. This location positively contributes to the wider strategy for growth in the area including delivery of strategic infrastructure including a possible new modern railway station.

- The Site is relatively unconstrained in heritage, ecological and flood risk terms.
- Topographically the land in this area is relatively flat which helps with the deliverability of development and makes it more visually contained.
 - The proximity to the Kent Downs AONB, provides an opportunity to capitalise on the attractive setting and with appropriate landscape mitigation will create a settlement with a distinctive sense of place and identity.
 - Landownership of parcels are large and contiguous, and Homes England and Maidstone Borough Council will facilitate the delivery of strategic infrastructure and the development.





Extraction works at Lenham Quarry are now finished and the site awaits remediation



East West Main Railway Line

M20 Motorway



The Site

The Site boundary for the garden community has been defined through initial contextual site analysis and landscape visual assessment (LVA) which has identified natural boundaries influenced by the natural topography and setting of the Kent Downs AONB, as well as the availability of land.

This process identified an area of search and following discussions between Homes England, Maidstone Borough Council and landowners the Site and boundary was identified.



Dispersed hamlets and farmsteads sit in the landscape amongst the remaining clumps of woodland and field boundaries. The existing development pattern, mature woodland, water ways and landscape assets are starting points for the framework and are intrinsic to the creation of a sense of place and identity of Heathlands.



The Site is approximately 330ha. It includes the Great Stour River which defines its southern boundary with the A20 defining the northern edge. The western boundary of the southern most parcel is defined by Chilston Park and Gardens (Grade II), Lenham Solar farm and green buffer to separate the new settlement from Lenham to avoid coalescence. The eastern boundary is organically defined by existing settlements and land ownerships.

The Site is characterised by gentle undulating topography with a historic wooded character. The morphology and settlement pattern has evolved over time with woods being cleared for agricultural uses.



Site Boundary Plan





Being Sensitive to the Place

A considered and careful approach to placemaking will ensure that the proposed future development fits in comfortably with the existing farmsteads, settlements, and historic landscape features that are already on site.

Avoid coalescence with Lenham and Charing

The location for Heathlands has been selected to avoid potential coalescence with Lenham, Charing Heath and Charing allowing for generous landscape gaps to the east and west of the settlement.

Minimise impact on views

A 'feathered' lower density approach to development parcels on the edge of the Site creates a 'softer' built edge and provides a gentle transition to the surrounding landscape.

Respect existing residential properties

The proximity of proposed development and alignment of future routes and connections have been designed to minimise the impact on existing homes, with generous green buffers to retain their privacy.



Retain existing access routes

Existing roads and public rights of way will be retained to allow access to existing properties with minimal disruption.

Maintain the operation of on site businesses

Disruption due to construction works to existing businesses will be minimised and the new community will provide an opportunity for them to grow and thrive as the project comes forward.

Improve transport options

Increased connectivity with the provision of additional sustainable transport choices for existing and future residents, as well as visitors.

Create a new destination

New leisure and recreation opportunities open to everyone will create a new destination in Kent.

Providing additional facilities and services

Access to a broader and diverse variety of uses and community facilities including, new schools, employment, shopping, and leisure opportunities supported by the increased population.

Enhance local ecology

Enhancement, management, and preservation of existing green and blue infrastructure assets with new habitat creation, and improved access to the surrounding countryside.

Homes for everyone

Provision of a significant number of efficient highquality accommodation for living and working in a tranquil and leafy setting, supporting health and wellbeing alongside providing an environment to support enterprise to grow the local economy.



Historic Landscape

The Masterplan Framework is informed by an Historic Landscape Assessment, undertaken alongside a Built Heritage Appraisal and Archaeological Desk-Based Appraisal (ABDA), which are discussed in the following sections, to understand the heritage constraints of the Site and guide development accordingly.

The Site is currently made up of predominantly agricultural fields separated by occasional hedgerows and drains featuring pockets of woodland, shaws and a mix of both arable and pastureland. The consistent change of use at the Site has meant that the internal layout and field divisions have undergone several phases of establishment, removal, and re-establishment. As such, some of the historic landscape features have been retained and are of some antiquity. There is an aggregate extraction site in the eastern part of the central portion of the Site.

The Site and its wider landscape are characterised by a series of dispersed medieval and later farmsteads (including Chapel Farm, Mount Castle Farm, Crabbe Farm, New Shelve and Old Shelve Farms), and were associated with medieval Lenham, c.2km to the north-west. There is a lane, Forstal Road, bisecting the Site, which runs southwards from the A20 Ashford Road towards Lenham Forstal, and a No Through Road (Mount Castle Lane) at Lenham Forstal running westwards to Mount Castle Farm. The remaining road network lies out with the Site boundary and comprises Crabtree Lane and Bull Hill, which both lead down to Lenham Heath Road.

The historic landscape character of the Site is one exhibiting considerable time depth and moderate coherence. Despite some historic boundary loss, the fields still largely respect the former historic land divisions.

There is a moderate to good survival within and around the Site of various historic landscape features pre-dating 1840, and earlier, including hedgerows, ancient woodland, and trackways.

The boundary banks and associated planting flanking Forstal Road, Bull Hill and Lenham Heath Road are particularly well-preserved and historically significant. These historic features give Heathlands an inherent character and sense of place which makes it unique and distinctive. To capture these qualities, the following principles will be considered in developing the Framework Plan:

- Incorporate existing streets (e.g., Forstal Road) footpaths and Public Rights of Way as part of the movement network
- Avoid and retain existing woodlands, hedgerows, and water courses as part of a multifunctional and varied landscape
- Integrate existing and historic field boundaries to define proposed development parcels, locate new connections and define new recreational spaces
- Use existing native species in the enhancement and creations of new landscape areas
- Apply a sympathetic scale and grain of development to enable the development to fit comfortably in its surroundings
- 6. Provide a minimum of 15m buffers to ancient woodland





Existing Site Features

To inform the design process a comprehensive set of base mapping has been compiled of the site's constraints with inputs from the consultant team.

These have been investigated and analysed to identify the main opportunities for the Site. This has been an evolving process running in parallel with the technical work , which has led to changes in the Framework Plan as a more in-depth understanding of the Site has emerged.

Existing Infrastructure

The East-West Main Railway line bisects the northern and southern areas of the site. Further south, the M20 and Channel Tunnel Railway line are set within a cutting which helps to reduce the impact of noise to proposed development and existing bridges provides good access to the Great Stour River walk and wider countryside.

On Site Activities

There are three significant existing and future operational considerations on the Site which will impact the layout, timing of delivery and design approach for the Framework Plan. The Waste Water Treatment Works adjacent to the Great Stour River with its associated cordon sanitaire, and an allocation for extracting minerals which we understand will commence towards the end of this decade and will be ongoing for approximately 15 years. Both uses are in the west of the Site and will need consideration in the phasing plan.

Extraction activities at Lenham Quarry have finished, and discussions with the local authority are on-going for the remediation and backfilling of the Site to enable development to come forward early.

Utilities

At the time of the writing there is no knowledge of any major utilities or easements constraining the site.



115m 5m Conoutrs





Public Footpaths

There are numerous Public Rights of Way (PRoW) providing connections across the Site. Existing PRoW connections into centre of Lenham and Charing Heath and to Pilgrims Way provide established routes for integrating Heathlands with the surrounding areas and the wider countryside.

These existing routes form part of the primary integrated sustainable movement infrastructure in the Framework Plan, and positively support the aspiration for promoting active and healthy lifestyles.

Green, Blue Infrastructure and Ecology Assets

In keeping with our Landscape-led approach the Lenham Heaths Corridor, which extends diagonally across the Site and along the Great Stour River, and existing ancient woodland block along the Main Line railway line, along with other ecological designations, have been incorporated as an integral part of the landscape structure for the Framework Plan.

Similarly, the existing network of waterways, ponds, hedgerows and trees are also integrated. These features create a network of blue and green infrastructure corridors across the Site. These features significantly enhance and support biodiversity and natural habitats.

Future detailed ecological investigations will be undertaken as the project develops which may identify additional ecological assets, considerations and opportunities to be incorporated in the Framework Plan.

Stour Valley Walk Sign



Site Boundary Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty





Ancient Woodland With a 15m Buffer

- Existing Trees and Hedgerows
- Existing Public Rights of Way
- • Stour Valley Walk National Trail
- Lenham Heath Corridor





Archaeology

As part of the technical work undertaken for the Site, three areas of potential archaeological importance have been identified within the Site boundary.

The Framework Plan has adopted a proactive and sensitive approach in keeping these as open space areas to minimise potential impact on these features. Should archaeological remains of historic landscape features be present within the Site, any groundwork associated with the proposed development could have a potential adverse impact on these. Such impacts can, however, be mitigated through an agreed programme of archaeological investigation, monitoring and recording.

Subject to further detailed investigation it is proposed that existing archaeology could remain in situ. This will support opportunities to provide information boards for educating and engaging residents and visitors.

Where there is a need to regrade the land, and potentially disturb archaeology, it is proposed that a 'preservation by record' approach be adopted, in accordance with an agreed strategy with Kent County Council, to ensure that all relevant interest is recorded for future reference.









Potential Areas of High Archaeological Importance



Registered Parks and Gardens Archaeological Crop Circles





Built Heritage

Built heritage assets in close proximity to the Site are: Chilston Park, Grade I; Royston Manor, Grade II*; Mount Castle Farm, Chapel Mill, The Forstal, Forstal Cottages, New Shelve Farmhouse, Old Shelve and Crabbe Farmhouse.

Grade II listed buildings have also been assessed beyond the Site boundary. However, the plan has not proposed any particular mitigation for these buildings as they are not in proximity to the immediate boundary of the Site, and their setting is unlikely to be affected.

Protecting the setting and enhancing views of the buildings within or adjacent to the Site boundary are important considerations in the development of the Framework Plan with development set back from these assets and additional landscape buffers being provided.

The following principles will be incorporated in the Framework Plan in response to the heritage analysis:

- Set back development edge from Royston Manor (Grade II*) and provide enhanced landscape buffer
- Provide landscape buffer to the western edge of Crabbe Farmhouse (Grade II) coupled with lower density development to reflect 'farmstead' typology
- Provide enhanced tree planting along proposed western access road to screen views to New Shelve Farmhouse



- Create a new park to the south of Mount Castle Farm to preserve its setting and provide views of the listed building to reinforce a sense of place and identity.
- This approach has been informed by a detailed Built Heritage Appraisal of the affected heritage assets

Key:

- New Shelve Farmhouse and Dovecote 1.
- Old Shelve 2.
- 3. Mount Castle Farm Cottage
- 4. Forstal Cottages and The Forstal
- 5. Crabbe Farmhouse
- 6. Vine House
- 7. **Royston Manor**
- 8. Chilston Park
- 9. Burnt Mill Building and House





Mount Castle Farm







New Shelve Farmhouse

Composite Constraints Plan

The following is a composite of the Site constraints layers explained in the preceding section.

There are no constraints that significantly impact on the potential for the Site to be brought forward for development. A summary of the key considerations is:

- Mitigate and soften the impact of the development with respect to the proximity of views and setting of the Kent Downs AONB
- Need to construct new vehicular junctions along the A20 to provide access into the development
- Allowance for the potential expansion of the existing Waste Water Treatment Works to serve the proposed development
- Requirement for additional and/or enhanced vehicular and pedestrian cycle bridges to adequately connect and integrate the Site across the railway lines and M20
- Retention of existing ancient woodlands (with 15m buffers), hedgerows, mature trees and vegetation and water courses, public rights of way and ecological corridors to contribute to achieving 20% biodiversity net gain
- Protecting the setting of existing listed buildings and archaeology primarily located within the central land parcel of the Site area
- Requirement to provide and maintain access to minerals extraction site to the west of the central parcel while early phases of the development to the east are brought forward.







Site Opportunities

In keeping with Heathlands' Vision and Development Principles, the Site offers several opportunities for the creation of a new garden community



Preserve and enhance the natural assets and Site features to create an attractive, multifunctional and verdant setting for development with a unique and distinctive sense of place



Incorporate and improve the quality of existing public right of ways to provide better access to new facilities for existing and new residents



Deliver a new Country Park and enhanced Great Stour walk with improved access and increased biodiversity





Capitalise on the proximity of the A20 and existing railway line to provide sustainable access options to the Site alongside a potential new railway station to contribute towards achieving the Government's net zero target in 2050



The scale of the Site allows for multiple access points, which will facilitate the early delivery of homes and employment to the east while maintaining on-going mineral operations to the west.



Substantial contiguous area of land under control facilitates the creation of a compact development pattern and to deliver a sustainably connected and integrated new settlement with a wide variety of uses, home types and tenures



Protect existing archaeology and listed buildings through the considered location of parks and open spaces to preserve their setting and views while providing easy access to amenities, recreation, and sport to support an active and healthy lifestyle



2 - Masterplan Framework

The Vision and Development Principles, along with the key issues and opportunities identified through the initial technical studies have provided a clear set of parameters for the spatial layout and masterplan layers for the Framework Plan.

These are expressed in the number of Framework layers which are explained in the following section:

- Green and Blue Infrastructure
- Access and Movement
- Land Use





2A Green and Blue Infrastructure

Heathlands provides a beautiful rich network of open spaces making it a desirable place to live and work and a great destination to visit, supporting healthy lifestyles and improving local biodiversity.

The following section describes how each component of the landscape strategy has been brought together to inform the Framework Plan for Heathlands. These include:

- Structural Planting to mitigate views of the development
- Ecology and Biodiversity
- Places and Activity
 - Flood Risk Management







Landscape and Visual Assessment



View indicating natural bowls formed by the topography



A contextually responsive Landscape-led approach has been adopted for the Vision. Through this process a comprehensive design rationale has been established.

In keeping with a Landscapeled approach, the starting point and base layer of the Framework Plan is the landscape strategy which has been informed by the contextual analysis and Landscape and Visual Appraisal.

The formation of two natural bowls to the east and west of the Site area created by the undulating topography naturally lend themselves to development areas.

In addition to these sheltered areas the extent of development area is generally defined by the 110-115m contour to the north in response to the visual relationship with the Kent Downs AONB.

Collectively this strategy defines the extent of the development platform in the northern and central parcels.


New Planting and Woodland

New planting and existing woodlands create a generous landscape buffer to development areas and provides a soft transition to the surrounding landscape.



New planting and woodland soften and mitigates views from the Kent Downs AONB, restores a historic wooded character in the northern part of the Site and reinforces the landform structure.

Informed by the Landscape and Visual Appraisal, in order to protect the AONB a tree belt is proposed along the northern boundary of the Site. These extends into a series of green fingers which relate to the contours and incorporate existing vegetation and watercourses on the Site.

The green fingers break the Site into neighbourhoods and smaller character areas while providing opportunities for new leisure routes, enhanced ecological and wildlife corridors across the Site.

Additionally, they reflect the historic landscape character in this part of the Site and create an attractive and memorable backdrop to contribute to the sense of arrival into the development from the A20.

Ecology and Biodiversity

The landscape strategy puts 'nature' at the heart of Heathlands in a way that is good for wildlife and people, and is an integral ingredient of its place making strategy.

20% biodiversity net gain is expected to be achieved on-site.

A diverse and enhanced biodiverse network offers a variety of habitats and ecological benefits as well as a comprehensive drainage strategy consisting of a variety of swales and attenuation basins to adequately meets the needs of the development.

Ecological corridors have been identified throughout the development, linking existing and new habitats and creating an interconnected network that makes the development permeable and diverse for wildlife.

To ensure that the quality of the landscape is maintained and held in perpetuity for its residents, it is recommended that the Garden Community is managed to maximise the benefit to wildlife through a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) which should be updated every 5 years.











Places and Activity



A network of multifunctional, and attractive open spaces available to everyone will create new destinations and promote health and wellbeing among new and existing residents.

Heathlands will create an extensive multifunctional open space network connecting people and places. They will offer new facilities to the surrounding communities. Daily access to good quality open space is crucial to promote health and wellbeing, and aligns with the Government's initiatives to promote healthy and active lifestyles.

Heathlands will offer a variety of opportunities for sports to appeal to and meet the needs of a broad range of users and abilities, including both formal sports facilities as well as occasions for more informal physical activities beyond traditional 'whistle and white line sports'.

The inclusion of all-weather pitches which can be accessed all year round, with lighting and changing facilities to be considered at the north-eastern corner of the Site. This location will create an opportunity for a 'shared facility' near residents in Lenham and provide a catalyst for integrating the new and existing communities.

Other seasonal sports provision, not requiring major infrastructure (i.e., cricket) are being considered for more sensitive locations towards the A20 and within Forstal Common.

The inclusion of productive landscapes such as allotments, community orchards and gardens is an essential part of the offer at Heathlands. These uses and functions are located at the heart of each neighbourhood to provide a space and opportunity to get to know your neighbour, and to build a sense of community, civic pride and belonging.





<image>

An integrated SuDS network of conveyance channels and ponds threads its way through the Site, improving water quality and creating biodiverse habitats and beautiful landscape.

SuDS features are proposed along the Wildlife Nature Park and Great Stour Country Park corridors, both of which incorporate significant existing landscape features. Additional features are provided along the northern side of the railway within a newly created ecological corridor.

The drainage network include SuDS channels collecting into a series of attenuation ponds to form a wetland habitat along the railway line. The use of SuDS will intercept and treat surface water run-off and mitigate against potential gain in nutrients entering the Great Stour and other water bodies downstream.

Technical work undertaken by the team has informed the indicative locations and sizes for attenuation ponds indicated in the Framework Plan, based on the natural fall and gradient of the land and least sensitive areas. The site-wide drainage strategy is based on a principle of accommodating 80% of the Site requirement allowing plus 40% for climate change, with the remaining 20% required to be accommodated on plot.

Subject to further site investigation infiltration to ground should be used where feasible to reduce the volume of above ground attenuation that is required.

Future detailed hydraulic modelling will be required to define the extent of flood risk caused by climate change from the ordinary watercourses. This will likely evolve the strategy and identify possible impacts on net developable area.





Managing Flood Risk

Nutrient neutrality

Newly created wetlands will provide the ability to filter nitrates & phosphates arising upstream alongside new waste water treatment provision.

An integrated drainage strategy at Heathlands incorporates significant areas of wetland planting within the green and blue corridors along the Great Stour River, around the Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW) plant as well as additional planting in the Country Park to mitigate the impact of nitrates and phosphates infiltrating the existing network of waterways.

Technical studies undertaken by the consultant team has identified that there are elevated levels of nitrogen and phosphorus being caused by the discharge of effluent from the on-site WWTW plant and surface run off which is adversely impacting the water quality of the Stodmarsh Lakes downstream.

The development of Heathlands will further contribute to nutrient loading and coupled with a lack of operational capacity at the current WWTW requires mitigation measures to be considered for the development. Given the uncertainty around the redevelopment or relocation of the WWTW and timescale to provide a suitable alternative solution, a green buffer to accommodate the cordon sanitaire is provided, along with a ring of employment uses to protect more sensitive residential development creating flexibility within the Framework Plan.

Progressive discussions and work to determine opportunities for improving the capacity, odour contour and quality of the effluent being discharged from the WWTW are ongoing.

A minimum of three dedicated sewage pump stations might be required due to the size and topography of the Site and the requirement to convey foul drainage over the railway line. An indicative location and land take for these pumping stations are incorporated into the Framework Plan.

New waste water treatment provision will be required to serve the development from the outset.



An Active and Verdant Landscape

At over 150ha, more than 50% of the Site is allocated as green infrastructure, sensitively integrating the development with the surrounding countryside.

The following plan draws together the various components of the landscape structure for Heathlands. It illustrates how the constituent parts of its blue and green infrastructure are combined to provide drainage requirements, addressing nutrient neutrality, creating biodiversity, and providing spaces for recreation and exercise to promote healthy and active lifestyles.

In parallel, it shows how existing landscape assets, proposed landscape mitigation, opportunities for productive landscape and the requirement of providing space for sports and play are threaded throughout the development, creating a attractive place to live while supporting a healthier active lifestyle and wellbeing.

Five major open spaces and an extensive network of green and blue corridors incorporating SuDS and attenuation basins are incorporated within the Framework Plan to create an ecologically rich, verdant and attractive setting, ensuring that every resident is never more than a couple minutes' walk to beautiful multifunctional green spaces from their home or work.







2B - Access and Movement

A fundamental principle of the Framework Plan is to create a place that is sustainably integrated and connected.

The following section describes the proposed strategies for how Heathlands will promote sustainable mobility, prioritising walking, cycling and shared mobility in a safe and attractive environment, thus reducing the need for single-use car journeys to contribute to reduce carbon emissions and tackling climate change.

A hierarchical approach puts pedestrians at the top of the pyramid, followed by sustainable modes of cycling and public transport, and then the car.







Walking and Cycling

Heathlands will be a place that connects us to each other and what we need, without having to use a car. Reducing the need for using a car aligns with 20-minute neighbourhood principles, aimed at creating compact walkable neighbourhoods, based on the co-location of education, health, community uses, and daily services within 10 minutes' walk back and forth from home.

Living in a walkable place with easy access to attractive, active and biodiverse natural open spaces is proven to be good not only for our physical health, but also for our mental wellbeing.







20-minute Neighbourhood

Compact walkable neighbourhoods based on 20-minute neighbourhood principles guided by 5-10minute catchments has influenced the location of neighbourhood hearts.

of cars reducing the need for outward journeys, and contribute to creating vibrant people oriented place while influencing the location of land use and transport hubs.

Greenways

A network of 'greenways' for pedestrians and cyclists will connect residential areas with mobility hubs, parks, local and district centres and employment areas.

These routes will be designed to prioritise pedestrian and cycle movement above the car. They will be separated from vehicular routes, be lit and attractively planted to encourage the choice of walking and cycling as preferred modes. A direct link will be created in the early development of Heathlands to Lenham Secondary School, Railway Station and other existing facilities in Lenham to capitalise on the use of these services.



Greenways Concept Plan



Links to the Countryside

The network of "greenways" and existing PRoWs will offer links to the surrounding countryside, in particular to the National Cycle Route 17 running north of the site, providing leisure opportunities for new and existing residents.

Additionally new footway and cycleway will be provided along the A20 to further improve access to Lenham and Charing.



Links to the Countryside Concept Plan





Potential for a New Railway Station

A primary objective of the Heathlands mobility strategy is to deliver a new railway station along the existing East-West railway line.

Initial investigations carried out by the team considered topography and operational requirements such as accommodating a straight length for the platform and ease of public access for creating a new station. A series of options were explored following which the preferred location for a station as indicated below was identified. The delivery of a new station will significantly improve the sustainable aspirations for the Site and would be a logical anchor for a primary activity node, such as a district centre.

Based on walkable catchment principles promoted by 20-minute neighbourhoods, two other activity node locations are identified to the east and west to strategically cover the Site and support a primary activity node around a possible station. A new railway station will not only provide access to jobs outside of Heathlands for its residents but also provides an opportunity to make Heathlands a local and regional destination, by attracting visitors and locals for leisure and recreational activities in its centres, many parks, wildlife sites and nature trails.

The proposal for a new railway station reinforces an already robust strategy for sustainable mobility for Heathlands, capable of supporting the new community ahead of the station's completion, or in the event of its delivery being redefined by future technical work.







Mobility Hubs

Mobility Hubs are proposed to facilitate and promote multimodal and on-demand transport at a local level through sustainable and shared transport modes.

A main hub will be associated with the proposed railway station by the district centre, with smaller satellite hubs distributed across the site, making sure that every home is no more than 5 minutes walk from one of them.

Mobility Hubs are distributed across the Site to optimise accessibility for residents to their daily needs within a 5-minute walking journey, based on 20-minute neighbourhood concept. The selection of these locations is reinforced by the primary circulation strategies for walking, cycle and vehicles within the Site.

Mobility Hubs take advantage of locations where existing and proposed pedestrian, cycle and bus routes converge, thus providing opportunities for interchange and intensification of land use and development density.

The distribution and network of hub locations provides a resilient and robust strategy to sustainably connect and access the Site. Whilst the delivery of a new railway station offers a significant number of benefits for the scheme the comprehensive distribution of mobility hubs provides a viable alternative for the project.

Mobility hubs differ in size and combination of services which are tailored to the needs of each location. They can include Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points, car club, e-bike sharing, and be co-located with bus stops.

Mobility Hubs can incorporate delivery interchanges where goods are transferred from conventional road transport to last mile sustainable delivery alternatives. Additionally they can function as community concierges where residents can drop and collect packages thus avoiding the need to be at home to receive them.

The integration of a mix of land uses is fundamental to improving the use of sustainable transport. Concentrating a range of ancillary facilities, such as a post office and corner shops within the Hub will be symbiotically beneficial and help increase uptake by residents.

Public Transport

Heathlands will support new bus services through the site.

Bus stops will be located as part of a Mobility Hub and will link the new community to Lenham and Charing. They will provide services to the surrounding rural area while connecting proposed activity nodes within the site.





Vehicular Access and Circulation

Heathlands will be ready to embrace new technology when it comes to sustainable travel, making sure that streets are attractive, comfortable and for safe everyone to use.

Site Access

The A20 runs along the northern boundary of the Site allowing for direct access into Heathlands. The amount of development proposed at Heathlands will require two access points. Initial transport work indicates that these can be delivered on land that is available and included as part of the proposal.

With the modal shift anticipated by a comprehensive sustainable mobility strategy that is proposed, the amount of additional traffic that will be generated should be limited with no need for major improvement works on the wider network.



Streets Designed as Places

Heathlands movement network of streets will ensure permeability and connectivity to all parts of the development.

Streets will be designed as places for everyone with priority for pedestrians and cyclists. They will include trees, SuDS and planting to contribute to biodiversity and manifest Heathlands' Garden Community character. There are no known constraints to the proposed internal street network. Internal circulation will primarily rely on new infrastructure to be built, which will minimise the increase in traffic on existing roads.

Crossings over the railway line will be achieved by retaining the existing bridge on Forstal Road, and the construction of an additional bridge further west.

Motorway Junction

The proximity to the M20 offers potential future opportunity for additional connectivity.

There is currently no junction on the M20 between Maidstone and Ashford. Whilst not currently proposed, a new junction could be provided between the two towns, subject to further technical investigations which would further enhance the accessibility of the area.



2C - Land Use

The combination of the landscape structure and access and movement proposals create the skeleton for the Framework Plan on which the strategy for distributing land uses at Heathlands is established.

It is the fusion and inter-relationship created between beautifully designed landscape and public realm; a hierarchy of routes and multi-modal streets alongside a mix and variety of land uses which will create a distinctive sense of place at Heathlands.







Neighbourhood hearts formed around Mobility Hubs will provide a collection of education, retail, health and community uses around highquality public space, with good transport access and links to the surrounding area and wider countryside.



Mix of Uses and Walkable Neighbourhood Diagram

Mix of Uses

Combining different uses together will help to support their viability by increasing footfall, as well as optimising opportunities for social interaction and walking which is essential to promote active lifestyles and good mental health.

Based on the access and movement strategy a hierarchy of centres is created: a district centre is formed around the potential railway station to capitalise on the high levels of accessibility.

The district centre is supported by two local centres anchored by larger multimodal hubs to serve early phase of development to the east and for later phase in the west. Higher density accommodation around district and local centres with taller building and more compact development parcels will capitalise on the increased levels of accessibility, bringing a real intensity and vibrancy to these places.

Further away from the district, local centres and mobility hubs, development will be less dense, with more generous open spaces and greenery, creating a seamless transitional interface with the surrounding countryside.

District Centre

Geographically located at the centre of Heathlands, the district centre will allow most of the new homes to be no more than ten minutes cycle from its services.

At the heart of Heathlands, the district centre will be mixed use destination anchored by high-quality public realm.

Envisaged as a pedestrian oriented precinct, a civic scaled space will provide the opportunity for staging local events and a weekly market place, bring residents together and attracting visitors regionally.

Its location in proximity to the new proposed railway station and main mobility hub will make it a destination for residents and visitors, allowing commercial activities to benefit from the footfall of this transport hub. The district centre will include retail and work spaces, alongside a health centre, commercial and entertainment offer, artisan shops restaurants and cafés, to create a vibrant heart and diverse offer for the new community.

Flexible commercial spaces will promote the creation of jobs, and include opportunities for shared working spaces, making spaces and business incubators.

Housing within the district centre will be at its highest density within Heathlands, to make the most of the proximity to the railway station and other services.



District Centre Location and Catchment





A Hierarchy of Centres with a Mix of Uses





Local Centres

Two local centres are provided to complement and supplement the offer of the district centre to ensure that every resident will have easy access to all they need for their daily life within 5 minutes walk from home.

To ensure viability the district centre, it will only come forward when the amount of new residents that have moved into Heathlands achieve sufficient critical mass to support its commercial activities.

Hence, a smaller local centre will be delivered to provide essential services to the earlier phase of development located in the north-eastern part of the site. Once the district centre is delivered, this local centre will remain as a smaller hub for the neighbourhood. A second potentially slightly larger local centre will be delivered as part of the later phases of the development, to the west of the Great Stour River once the mineral extraction activity is completed.

Local centres will be designed as community hubs, with a schools, community hall, neighbourhood park, and local shops to provide a focus for the community to gather and socialise.

A mix of homes at a variety of densities, tenures and new hybrid typologies including co-living, and intergenerational housing integrated within the district and local centres will create a diverse and inclusive environment and establish a local 'resident' population close to the services and amenities on offer.





Education

Schools constitute a key use in creating the "soul" of the community, and as such they are located as an essential part of the local centres, which form the beating heart for Heathlands.

Two schools are currently envisaged to be delivered on site to support the needs of the new community. As part of the local centres, they will benefit from being in an accessible location enabling residents and kids to walk, cycle and scoot to school.

Locating schools alongside other uses also optimises opportunities to create synergies with other local services such as crèche or community centre as well as generating additional footfall to support retail and commercial activities. The existing secondary school at Lenham has the capacity to potentially support a part of the new development, along with its potential extension. This creates an opportunity for new and existing residents to meet, which will be beneficial for bringing both communities together.

The potential requirement for on-site Secondary Education provision is to be assessed in liaison with Kent County Council, and if required in the future will add to the facilities being provided at Heathlands.





Employment

To enable Heathlands to become an enterprising community creating jobs for those living locally and nearby, a range of accommodation types for broad sector of industries are proposed to attract external occupiers and to promote local start-up businesses.

The inclusion of some employment space within district and local centres is a vital ingredient for the mix, as it will help to increase greater volumes of activity over longer hours in the day over the course of the week, thus enhancing the commercial viability for other uses while supporting the provision of public transport in these locations. A total of 16 hectares of employment space is provided across Heathlands. This includes 2ha in the district and local centres, providing a range of employment opportunities and accommodation including office, industrial and home working with capacity for grow-on space as firms expand their businesses. The remaining 14hectares is split between two campuses located to the east and western parts of the Site.

The location of employment land in the first phase to the north east is considered important to establish the destination as early as possible in the development, and to capitalise on the new A20 access and proximity to the new local and district centres and potential new railway station.

Development Parcels and Densities

The landscape framework for Heathlands identifies a series of development parcels all of which benefit from being close to a major open space, interlinked by ecological corridors and well enclosed by the proposed structural planting.

The extent of and accessibility to highquality public open spaces through a network of leafy streets and green and blue corridors will make Heathlands a desirable and attractive place to live and raise a family. Residents will be surrounded and feel connected to nature.

Opportunities to grow your own locally on new community allotments will give a sense of pride and belonging. The distribution of 5 major parks and kilometres of green corridors will provide a huge choice of options for recreational activities and create a high value setting and commercial return for variety of homes.





A range of parcel sizes and variety of landscape settings are created at Heathlands. This will allow the Site to accommodate different uses in a diverse set of character areas each with its own unique sense of place and identity

Larger development parcels are created in the northern area of the Site due to less constraints and existing properties. Towards the central and southern part of the site, the landscape structure, the presence of existing properties and settlements which include several listed buildings, creates a more organic pattern of development, with smaller parcels that blend into the grain and morphology of the existing pattern of hamlets and farmsteads.

Higher density areas are concentrated around primary rail and road infrastructure corridors to capitalise on the levels of accessibility in these locations. These gradually reduce in density and building scale toward the edges. This is particularly important for the south eastern edges of the developable area to sensitively relate proposed development to existing homes and landscape around Lenham Forstal Road, Bull Hill and Lenham Heath Road.

A variety of parcel sizes and characters will offer a range of development opportunities to be brought to market. The range of products will appeal to both large scale national, modular and smaller local housbuilders, creating variety and diversity of place and product. Several development parcels can be readily brought forward, which provides an opportunity to accelerate delivery to help meet local housing need targets.





2D - Framework Plan

The combination of these Framework layers come together to create a dynamic place for Heathlands Garden Community.

The adjacent plans summarise the respective design strategies underpinned by a suite of technical studies and inputs. They provide a sound basis for the plan and ensures that the proposed ideas are deliverable.

The resulting Plan is a robust yet flexible Framework capable of accommodating a mix of uses and homes in sustainably connected, attractive, beautiful and biodiverse setting, geared towards achieving low carbon living while promoting healthy and active lifestyles.



Landscape Strategy



The main elements of the landscape strategy are:

Provision of structural planting along the northern, eastern, and western edges of the site, along the valley of the central parcel and in pockets along the southern edges help to soften views from the Kent Downs AONB, restore historic wooded character and reinforce landform structure.

Two strategic intersecting nature and wildlife corridors are created along the Great Stour River and along the Lenham Heaths habitat corridor which stitches the Site together

Hierarchy of five major open spaces, each with a variety of landscape characters, activities and functions creating leisure destinations ensuring no resident is ever more than 2-minutes away from nature and parkland:

- 1. Shelve Farm Park
- 2. Lenham Nature Park
- 3. Forstal Common
- 4. Great Stour Walk
- 5. Heathlands Country Park



The main elements of the strategy for access and movement within Heathlands are:



Establish an internal 'figure of 8' circulation circuit formed by an attractive tree lined street with dedicated routes for buses with priority for pedestrians and cyclists to efficiently connect residents to places in a beautiful, safe and appealing environment.

Create a hierarchy of centres to support a mix of uses formed around mobility hubs connected by an integrated network of walking, cycling and public transport routes

Integrate existing pedestrian and cycle routes to provide access and connectivity between the new and existing places and destinations with improved access to the countryside

Land Use Strategy



The main elements of the strategy for proposed location of primary land uses and distribution of development densities are:

- Create a new garden community accessed by a sustainable movement network with a higher density mixed use district centre formed around a new potential railway station.
- Create two main neighbourhoods with higher densities, a variety of built form and a rich mix of uses to offer a variety of parcel sizes and development characters
- Create vibrant neighbourhood hearts through the co-location of uses, around high-quality public realm and mobility hubs with good connections to the surrounding area.

Framework Plan

The Framework Plan establishes the structuring design principles and spatial parameters for the development created by the respective landscape, movement and land use layers. It indicates the disposition of landscape, open space, primary connections, location of transport hubs and distribution of land use.

The Framework Plan is the outcome of an iterative and collaborative design process with the Local Planning Authority, Homes England, Maidstone Borough Council and the consultant team. It demonstrates the deliverability of the proposals, and is envisaged to inform future detail work and community engagement.

The Framework Plan establishes the following structuring principles:

- 1. Location of main open spaces
- 2. Alignment of ecological and environmental corridors incorporating wild life corridors, ancient woodland, existing water ways and proposed location of attenuation basins based on catchment areas and Site topography
- Extent and variety of development platforms sizes to accommodate a range of uses and development typologies
- Preferred location of primary land uses
- Incorporation of existing PRoWs and Forstal Road providing connections to Lenham, Charing Heath and Pilgrims Way and the surrounding area
- 6. Primary road structure and connections to the A20



 Maidstone and Ashford Borough Boundary





3 - Place and Character

Heathlands will be a beautifully designed and vibrant place, rich with a variety of contemporary and traditional architecture rooted in its locality.

Neighbourhood parks, play areas, community gardens and easy access to the countryside will embed activity and nature in the daily life of residents, while providing opportunities for social integration and building community spirit.

This section encapsulates the vision for the quality, lifestyle and feel of the places that will be part of Heathlands.





Illustrative Concept Plan

Guided by the Framework Plan, the Illustrative Concept Plan provides one interpretation of how the grain and density of development could be developed in line with the strategic design strategies.

The layout, type and disposition of the indicative built form is meant to portray the sense of place, character and pattern of development envisaged for different parts of the site.

Key components of the masterplan are:

- A higher density mixed-use district centre created around new proposed railway station, public square and mobility interchange creating a tighter urban grain.
- Neighbourhood hearts formed around schools, local centres and open space with children's play served by sustainable travel mobility hubs.
- A network of mobility hubs including interchange locations and charging points for electric vehicles, e-bikes, scooters and a buses.
- Inclusion of two high-quality employment campuses including a 'Rural Innovation Hub' with energy efficient buildings and flexible space to create an entrepreneurial environment for a broad range of employment sectors.
- Safe, attractive, and comfortable tree lined primary spine with designated cycle routes designed to prioritise sustainable travel across the Site.

- High-quality greenways for pedestrians and cyclists throughout the Site and to Lenham High School.
- Large parks and gardens interconnected by a network of green and blue corridors to provide opportunities for exercise, sports, leisure, growing food and recreation supporting active lifestyles and contribute to a sense of health and wellbeing.
- Lower density development with softer organic edges to integrate sensitively with surrounding landscape.
- In support of creating a place with a distinctive character identified areas for self and custom build will provide opportunities to showcase individuality and attract 'creative' residents who wish to design their home to suit their specific needs and lifestyle choices.



Lenham



6

^{East} West Main Line

1. Proposed railway station and district centre

A20 Maidstone Road

TIL

- 2. Local Centre
- 3. Primary School
- 4. Town Park
- 5. Primary Tree Lined Avenue
- 6. Ancient Woodland
- 7. Main access from A20
- 8. Pedestrian Footbridge
- 9. Employment
- 10. Rural Innovation Hub
- 11. Country Park
- 12. Waste Water Treatment Works
- 13. Greenway
- 14. Sport Ground

A Beating Heart for the Community

Clustered around the proposed new Railway Station and primary Mobility Hub, the district centre will be a destination anchored by high-quality public realm and a mix of uses.

The district centre will be populated with retail and work spaces, alongside a health centre, commercial and entertainment offer, restaurants and cafés, to create a vibrant heart to the new community. The co-location of retail, education and community uses offer a mix of services and activities to ensure that the needs of daily residents are catered for, thus reducing the need for travel and reducing carbon emissions. Higher density homes will create a resident population creating footfall to support commercial uses.




Walkable and Sociable Neighbourhoods

Local centres will be designed as community hubs, with schools, a community hall, neighbourhood parks, and local shops to provide a focus for the community to gather and socialise.

A mix of homes at a variety of densities, tenures and new hybrid typologies including co-living, and intergenerational housing integrated within the district and local centres will create a diverse and inclusive environment and a local 'resident' population close to the services and amenities on offer.

ustrative Concept Plan Extract - Western Local Centre





An Enterprising Community

A diverse range of employment types will be encouraged to settle and grow at Heathlands, from flexible industrial spaces to artisan studios and 'making' workshops.

Proposed typologies and building scale will be sensitive to the place and ethos of Heathlands, and suitable to be co-located in proximity to homes.

The Covid pandemic has accelerated a shift in working from home. The option to choose to live and work locally is an important part of Heathlands sustainable agenda, reducing the need to travel and improving work-life balance. New homes will be designed to provide designated spaces for home working, whilst self build opportunities will encourage the creation of live-work units.

Concept Plan Extract - Employment Area







Rural Innovation Hub

Fuelled by the idea of encouraging innovation and fostering collaboration to generate new business opportunities for the future is the creation of a 'Rural Innovation Hub'.

The Rural Innovation Hub will be a meeting place and learning centre, and will provide incubation space and supporting facilities for new businesses and experimental industries to settle at and grow at Heathlands.

The Rural Innovation Hub will explore the potential to offer structured apprenticeships linked to Lenham High School and other local community groups and will foster an entrepreneurial spirit and engender a strong sense of community and engender social value.

Concept Plan Extract - Rural Innovation Hub

al. 198.

Local precedent: Innovation Park Medway

Diverse Job Offer

Heathlands will support around 5,000 jobs, a number that could grow in the future as the place becomes an attractive and desirable place to set up a business.



Potential to deliver 3,000sqm of office space



20,000sqm of workspace in a mix of small and medium-sized industrial and warehousing units





At least 670 jobs created within community facilities and services as a result of locallygenerated demand

This is a conservative estimate, as the out-turn at Garden Communities that have been 'delivered' is higher than this.



1,300 jobs could be accommodated through home working,



2,500 jobs created in response to 'external' demand, occupying office or industrial facilities.

These are envisaged to be primarily small medium enterprise based, within a flexible offer.

Creating jobs and a vibrant local economy is essential for making Heathlands a sustainable settlement and a desirable place to live.

Two main employment campuses are proposed, at the east and west of the settlement with smaller employment uses interwoven within the district and local centres in the form of co-working and traditional office space close to home.

A mix of B-type uses create a modern employment campus close to the new proposed railway station with direct access to the A20. This offer is complemented by a Rural Innovation Hub dedicated to start-up type and grow on space for businesses, integrated with other 'making' spaces and artisan studios alongside community uses to create a rich 'soup' of activity. Employment locations will have close access to facilities shared with the rest of the community, which could include a community crèche, local concierge, last mile logistics and convenience shop for instance to support agile working and contribute to creating an environment that supports an entrepreneurial spirit.

Heathlands will create opportunities for start-ups and independent businesses, with Co-Working Hubs and flexible working spaces within the district and local centres alongside local services and shops.

High speed fibre broadband will be delivered throughout the Site to support home and mobile working and a wide variety of businesses.



Varied Character Responding to the Place

The scale and character of the new neighbourhood will vary to respond to the local character and context to create a diversity of places which respect existing natural and heritage assets on-site.

As indicated by the extract from the Illustrative Concept Plan presented here, the character of Heathlands will vary, with higher density housing around the proposed Railway Station and district and local centres, and lower densities around the edges and in proximity to sensitive natural or heritage assets.





Around the station and within the District Centre, higher density living with places to work, eat, shop, socialize and enjoy free time in high-quality and pedestrian-friendly public realm.



Farmstead-like clusters reflect the rural character of the surrounding areas and relate sensitively to existing listed buildings and other homes.















Feathered landscaped, with lower density development at the edges promote access to nature and soften views of the settlement.



Leafy tree lined streets, pocket parks and building blocks easy to walk around create neighbourhood places for the community to meet and children to play.











Medium density development including a higher ratio of tow houses and some apartments make the most of the proximity to district centre and proposed railway station, with easy access to parks and community facilities.





At just under 50 hectares, Heathlands Country Park will be a beautiful and ecologically rich regional multifunctional green space, delivering new habitats and biodiversity net gain, assisting in achieving nutrient neutrality, and provide high-quality leisure and amenity space for residents and visitors to the area.

Key features this space are:

- Provide a variety of new habitats inclusive of wetland, heathland, and woodland to create a place that is biodiverse and attractive.
- Create a network of paths to encourage people to walk, cycle, explore and exercise, learn about nature and experience and enjoy the Great Stour and Heathlands landscape incorporating wildlife viewing areas and information boards.
- Improve and enhance existing public footpaths through the park, along with the provision of new routes to expand the network of internal leisure routes to explore the wider countryside.
- Create a high-quality and safe connection to the Great Stour Park.
- Infrastructure to provide access to the park will be kept to a minimum. The car park will be screened by planting and softened by including permeable surfaces and soft landscaping.

Heathlands Country Park

Major new open space connected to the Great Stour River corridor







The Great Stour Walk creates an enhanced wetland landscape along the existing river and provides a strategic leisure connection between residents and the Country and Town Parks.

The park will provide opportunities to contribute towards achieving nutrient neutrality and biodiversity net gain through the introduction of wetlands, SuDs and ponds.

Key features of the space are:

- Create a destination and unifying space to integrate the western and central neighbourhoods within Heathlands
- Provide a attractive setting and outlook for Employment campus and Rural Innovation Hub
- Protect and enhance the setting of Royston Manor
- Provide a buffer to and provide potential expansion area for Waste Water Treatment Works
- Provide enhanced leisure links to Lenham and the new Country Park to encourage walking and cycling to promote an active and healthy lifestyle.

Great Stour Walk

Enhances existing water course and national walking trail





Lenham Nature Park incorporates the existing wildlife corridor traversing the development, linking to Lenham to the west and Charing Heath to the east.

Along with the Great Stour Walk it will provide a green lung for Heathlands. This park encapsulates a defining characteristic at Heathlands connecting residents to nature and the outdoors. The park provides opportunities for walking, cycling and recreation on the doorstep, contributing to a positive sense of well being for residents.

Key features of the space are:

- Protect and enhance the existing Lenham Heaths Wild Life corridor with new attenuation areas, as part of an integrated biodiverse nature park as a central green spine for Heathlands
- Provide a destination and easily accessible high-quality parkland at the heart of the higher density areas around the potential railway station
- Integrate and protect existing ancient woodland, and local wildlife habitats in a managed landscape
- Incorporate new sensitively designed footpaths and cycle routes as part of the wider leisure and nature trails
- Provide a concentration of sports and multi-functional open space to the west of the Site to bring the residents of Lenham and Heathlands together.

Lenham Nature Park

Integrates existing habitats and historic landscape





Sitting centrally in the Site on higher ground, Forstal Common encompasses a series of spaces to create an extended Village Common.

Collectively these spaces focus on the provision of leisure and recreational amenity for residents and a offers advantage point for panoramic views to the Kent Downs AONB to the north and Greensand Ridge to the south. It protects the setting of the Mount Castle Farm to the north and Royston Manor to the west.

Key features of the space are:

- Provide amenity space to new and existing residents, within a bucolic landscape with ornamental public gardens
- Sensitively developed to preserve and protect existing heritage and archaeology
- Provide flexible open space to accommodate spaces for social events, fairs, markets, and community gatherings
- Create new ornamental gardens to showcase local flora and provide educational resource
- Provide walking circuits, exercise stations and unintrusive sport courts to promote active and healthy living
- Provision of high-quality destination play offer.

Forstal Common - Town Park

Relates sensitively to existing heritage and potential archaeological assets





Shelve Farm Park provides a lush and verdant gateway into Heathlands contributing to a memorable sense of arrival.

New structural planting along the northern and eastern edges of the park and along the central valley, follows and highlights the topography of the Site and restores the historic wooded character.

The park enhances the setting and character of the Kent Downs AONB, with the new woodland structural planting softening views from the higher grounds to the north of the development.

Key features of this space are:

- Provision of new nature walk connected to the AONB and Pilgrims Way
- Creation of natural meadow and heathland habitats reflective of the seasons and local ecology
- Inclusion of informal play to spark the imagination and a sense of discovery.
- Linear landscape fingers, incorporating existing water courses and hedgerows to support nature recovery alongside, new SuDS channels to manage surface water and form connected movement corridors for wildlife linked to the Lenham Heaths Corridor
- Bands of structural planting to create distinct neighbourhoods.

Shelve Farm Park

Creates a gateway into the Site and sense of arrival



4 - Resilient and Energy Efficient

The need to deliver the Government's annual housing target, reduce inequality and facilitate a Green Recovery against a Government's trajectory of Net Zero Carbon by 2050, whilst protecting and enhancing biodiversity and designing for health and wellbeing presents a challenge and a great opportunity at Heathlands.







Climate Change Mitigation Strategy

The Climate Change, Health and Wellbeing (Hereafter, CCHWB) Strategy outlines the approach to delivering a sustainable, net-zero carbon development which promotes healthy lifestyles.

We have set objectives in this vision that will deliver multiple benefits for climate change and wellbeing in its broadest sense (mental, physical, psychological, social and community). They are focused commitments but flexible enough to allow the design to adapt and change as future policy, regulation, technology, and lifestyles also change. A 'Fabric First' approach to Building design and performance will be applied to maximise efficiency gains with potential to explore Passivhaus principles within areas of the development to meet the Government's aspiration of operational net-zero carbon.

The integration of living roofs and roof gardens will create additional habitats and contribute to the overall greening of the development while contributing to creating a sustainable thermal building envelope. The core themes underpinning the CCHWB are:

- Building & Infrastructure design & Performance (covering heating, electricity, materials and waste);
- Energy Supply (covering heating and electricity);
- Connectivity (covering transport and communications infrastructure); and
- Waste.



Opportunities

- Eco-housing principles
 Increased MMC build
- 100% on-site renewables or off-site from increasingly
- Infrastructure to support electric cars and autonomous vehicles integrated into the new neighbourhood
- De-carbonised grid

Flexible energy system

- Make active travel for short trips the norm
- EV prioritised
- Sustainable mass transit options
- Establish circular economy principles

Objectives

- 20% Biodiversity net gain across the site
- Active travel modes prioritised over the private car
- Create local employment opportunities to encourage trip internalisation
- Tree planting in all streets, where feasible
- Proportion of energy demand to be provided by onsite low/zero carbon generating systems

- Integrate green, blue and grey infrastructure in a network of green corridors interconnecting habitats, connecting people to nature, support biodiversity and provide opportunities for localised food growing
- Tenure-blind housing
- All homes to be within a 2-minute walk of a green space.
- A 'Fabric First' Approach to Building design and performance to maximise efficiency gains alongside Passivhaus principles to meet the aspiration of operational netzero carbon

- Water-efficient homes to minimise potable water demand, with water harvesting and greywater recycling where appropriate.
- Roll-out of smart systems which utilise real-time monitoring feedback loops to support environmental monitoring and learning, apps for sharing community information (sustainable transport times, schedules, community events etc.), energy use.

5 - Making it Happen







Phasing: A Place Evolving Over Time

The delivery of **Heathlands Garden Community will** happen incrementally over several years. As such our **Framework Plan has** been designed to be implemented incrementally, be flexible to accommodate and respond to economic changes, technology advances and lifestyle choices.

The creation of a place from the outset is a primary aim. A mix of uses and sufficient provision of homes to create a substantial population to support local services and occupy a new school are essential is establishing a successful community.

The adjacent diagrams indicate how the development could be phased; accepting that there will be many sub phases and concurrent activities between phases as required.

The phasing for Heathlands Garden Community will consider the existing uses within the site, ensure that infrastructure is delivered when needed and homes do not conflict with existing and planned uses and operations, such as the mineral extraction and backfilling exercises to the western part of the site.

The proposed approach to phasing at this time is for development to commence in the northeast of the Site taking access from the A20, moving towards the District Centre and Forstal Common. Once mineral extractions are completed, the development will move westwards, building out from the south-west to the north-west.

It is envisaged that the new settlement will begin delivering new homes in 2029 with a delivery period of approximately 20 years.

Key Principles of the Phasing Strategy are:

- Ensure the early deliver of key public transport infrastructure as early as possible to influence travel habits
- Create easterly vehicular access to open up the site
- Early delivery of new and enhanced pedestrian and cycle routes to Lenham Station and High School
- Early delivery of open spaces such as park lands, new planting and woodland to provide early amenity, mitigate views from the AONB and provide environmental enhancements for e.g. Shelve Farm Park and Heathlands Country Park
- Ensure that environmental mitigation is appropriately phased
- Provide a mix of land parcels sizes to enable development of a variety of uses by a range of development partners
- Maintain 'haulage'
 route access to mineral
 extraction site

First Phase

- North Eastern Primary access delivered
- Significant new structural planting
- Approximately 750 homes
- Approximately 7 ha of employment land
- Approximately 35ha of open space (Shelve Farm Park)
- 3FE Primary school
- Local Centre
- New waste water treatment works
- Relocation of gypsy traveller site
- Railway station construction commenced
- Remediation of Lenham Quarry



Second Phase

- Railway station complete
- Extension of structural planting
- Approximately 1,350 homes
- District Centre
- Approximately 27ha of open space
- First phase of Lenham Nature Park
- North Western access constructed
- Initial east-west road link



Third Phase

- Heathlands Country Park
- Forstal Common town park
- Approximately 700 homes
- Approximately 66ha of open space
- Second phase of Lenham Nature Park



Fourth Phase

- Great Stour Walk
- Extension of structural planting
- Approximately 1,350 homes
- Approximately 7ha of employment land
- 3FE Primary school
- Completion of Lenham Nature Park
- Local Centre
- Approximately 36ha of open space



Fifth Phase

- North Western Primary access complete
- Complete structural planting
- Approximately 850 homes
- Approximately 19ha of open space



Stewardship and Leadership

As it is developed as a true "Garden Community" Heathlands will be designed and implemented in accordance with the TCPA's Garden City principles. They encompass the need for stewardship and leadership, underpinned by the idea of self-generating funding and community building.

The "Stewardship Plan" will be developed over time, as the proposals for the scheme are designed and planned through the approval processes. At this stage, it is appropriate to set out the principles that will guide the development of the stewardship body that might be formed at Heathlands. Works on these principles that will guide development will progress in line with the Local Plan Review and adoption of the site.

The Plan will bring together the first three of the Garden City principles against a clearly defined aim:

 "The aim of the stewardship body will be to enable local people to control, develop, enhance, manage and participate in the widest possible range of physical, digital and virtual assets that are of relevance to their community." Physical assets would generally be land and buildings, digital assets encompass community interaction and the use of internet-based assets, whilst virtual assets go to the heart of the community, being events and cultural assets that really make a place a "place".

Core objectives would be developed to support this, recognising that, at Heathlands:

- Stewardship goes beyond pure management, and provides a means for community ownership of assets
- 2. The Plan will put local people at the heart of community building and place-making
- Stewardship will be achieved by a locally managed organisation structured in a flexible way to plan and deliver a range of services of public benefit

- The Plan will be structured to seek to ensure that assets (physical, digital or virtual) can be maintained to a high standard for collective benefit in perpetuity.
- The stewardship body would be entrepreneurial in its approach, willing to adapt, enhance, change and develop the asset base to ensure it remains relevant to the community it serves.

The Stewardship Plan will recognise that the initial resources required to establish the asset base and the stewardship body will arise from the value created through development of the wider landholding. By this mechanism a proportion of the land value uplift will be captured for the benefit of the future community.

Leadership Strategy

The way that the stewardship body functions, and who has responsibility for it and its operations will change over time. In the early stages this will be almost wholly within the hands of the promoters of the scheme. They will need to form and establish the stewardship body and the structures around it so that they are suitable for the community to take over in time.

Once development commences, there will be a series of transition stages, as the community increasingly becomes involved in the running and development of the stewardship body, like this:

- Local Plan: Homes England and Maidstone BC
- Pre-planning: Homes England & Maidstone BC
- Planning Application: Homes England & Maidstone BC
- Development Commencement: Master Developer – with oversight from Planning Authority in respect of planning obligations
- Early-stage development (up to 25% occupation): Master Developer, key stakeholders and residents
- Development completion: Residents and key stakeholders
- Development +20 years: Residents and key stakeholders

Key stakeholders would include: business owners and operators on site, selected community leads – Parish Councillors, School Heads or Governors, religious leaders, and so on, to properly represent the local community.

Proposals for Stewardship Body

However it is established, the stewardship body should be an accountable Trust, meaning that it will be:

- Easily accessible contact details should be easily available, notes of proceedings should be available and so should aims and objectives, policies and operational decisions
- Transparent there should be clarity about what the body does and does not do, it should regularly publish information about its operations
- Pro-active open to suggestions and ideas, whether these are in respect of operations, or in the management of assets and the ways that they could be enhanced.

The final decision on the structure of the Trust should be taken once the diversity and complexity of the assets it is to control has been finally determined.

Governance

The most likely governance structure that would meet the needs for Heathlands would be a charitably established Trust, with a governance structure that provides for the ownership of community assets of all types.

The Trust will be set up with an overarching Board of Trustees, and below that would be committees specific to the particular aspects of management of activities of the stewardship body. The Board takes the overview, and the committees concentrate on areas of implementation.

Anyone with a legitimate interest in the Site would benefit from Membership of the Trust:

- Homeowners
- Tenants of social housing or private rented homes
- Representatives of social landlords with houses on site
- Business owners and operators with premises on site
- Representatives of community groups and voluntary organisations that are operating on the site
- Employees of the Trust, if appropriate to their role and responsibilities

Engagement

The Trust will have a clear engagement strategy, which will be embedded as part be identified and logged within the and parcel of the way that the body is run - from the outset and continuing.

The way that engagement takes place will be key to the long term success of the Trust, and achieving the objective of it becoming community led. Therefore, the principles of engagement will be:

- Transparent to residents (especially those paying a service charge)
- Diverse in representation - residents, authorities, stakeholders all have a role
- Have a clear purpose and objectives
- Continuing two-way dialogue needs to be managed and appropriately resourced

To this end, the Trust will develop and publish an Engagement and Communication Strategy that addresses:

- The establishment of the Trust, and an overview of its aims and objectives
- Adoption of a vision of stewardship at Heathlands that can be understand by residents and associated community groups
- Make clear that the Trust will play a central role in the future wellbeing of the community at Heatlhlands - in terms of residents, businesses, assets and the environment
- Promote greater knowledge of the role and activities of the Trust amongst public, voluntary and community organisations leading to practical engagement for public benefit.

The Trust will have a number of audiences with which it will communicate regularly, and who will strategy, including:

- Residents of the new homes at Heathlands
- Residents of the existing homes in the surrounding area and settlements
- Owners and staff of the businesses and enterprises within the Site and the surrounding area
- Local politicians, at all levels
- Core statutory bodies and partners (Parish Council, Maidstone BC, Social Landlords)
- Community groups (voluntary organisations, faith groups, charities, clubs and societies)
- Potential users of community facilities
- Visitors to the facilities and users of emerging enterprises on site
- Potential funding, supplier and service partners
- Public agencies: police and emergency service, doctors and health and social care workers
- Education bodies local schools and education authorities, academy operators, FF and local universities

The communication strategy will set out means by which communication and engagement will be undertaken, but at this stage it is envisaged that this would comprise:

- Contact database contacts gained through planning engagement and consultation and other outreach exercises during the planning phase.
- Trust Membership an emerging list of residents and those with a stake in the Site over time
- Leaflets, Brochures and Literature - these still have a role alongside marketing information, bringing together multiple media approaches, including posters, newssheets, flyers, website, social media, meetings, and informally through word of mouth.
- Website a website outlining activities, news and information from a community perspective.
- Social Media and Public Relations - a professionally managed social media presence.
- Outreach direct community development work by the Trust Manager.

Activities of the Stewardship Body

The final range of activities of the Trust will emerge through the design development and planning process, but could include things like:

- Estate management
- Upholding design standards
- Owning community assets:
- Community halls
- Work hubs and spaces
- Educational centres and spaces
- Public realm assets squares, plazas
- Green infrastructure, like community gardens and allotments
- Public infrastructure, like car parks, cycle parking and hubs, paths and tracks
- Place-making reviewing and enhancing the public realm
- Community building activities and events - devise, initiate and promote activities and events that specifically build a strong sense of community
- Arts and cultural heritage owning and maintaining public art
- Co-ordinating clubs and societies, voluntary and community organisations - making space and other resources available in the community buildings, potentially offering loans, grants etc

- Education Support for schools in local cultural and environmental education
- Support for community groups involved in education – especially where this meets the aims and objectives of the Trust, or involves assets within the site
- Develop collective services of benefit to the community
- Managing "meanwhile" uses that may be desirable for a while as construction continues

Funding

The Trust won't only rely on a land value precept to establish it, with a range of capital funding sources potentially available:

- Endowments
- Public funding
- Charitable grants
- Equity Funds
- Bonds
- Natural Capital Accounting

Meanwhile, the ongoing operation of the Trust, once established, will also rely on a range of sources of revenue income:

- Estate management charges maintenance and service charges imposed on householders, social landlords and business and commercial properties
- Direct Trading income rents and income from operational activities
- Lease and concession income – rents paid by long term asset operators
- Public fund raising charitable bodies can adopt fund-raising efforts to bolster income to help meet their charitable objectives

Key Timeline



routes



6 - List of Technical Reports

This Masterplan Framework has been informed by an extensive range of technical reports and studies, interwoven with a project team meetings and workshops on all key technical areas across many months of collaboration with a strong consultant team.

All technical study areas will continue to evolve as the masteplanning process progresses in the coming months and years. The reports and this Masterplan Framework therefore represent a point in time and a clear, robust case to support the deliverability of Heathlands at the Local Plan preparation stage.



Agricultural Land Classification Technical Note RPS

Archaeological Desk Based Appraisal RPS

Community Facilities Assessment Barton Willmore

Landscape and Visual Appraisal Barton Willmore

Ground Conditions Review Ramboll

Services and Utilities Review Ramboll

Air Quality and Odour Review Ramboll

Noise and Vibration Review Ramboll

Ecology Review Ramboll Drainage and Flood Risk Review Ramboll

Nutrients Review Ramboll

Arboriculture Technical Note RPS

Historic Landscape Assessment RPS

Sustainable Transport Strategy Vectos

Built Heritage Appraisal Montagu Evans

Minerals Strategy Barton Willmore

Employment Analysis SQW

Climate Change, Health and Wellbeing Strategy Barton Willmore

Development Project Delivery Plan Homes England



BARTON WILLMORE



rps

SQW

vectos.

All plans are reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Map with the permission of the Controller of HMSO. Crown copyright Reserved. Licence No. ARI52684. Barton Willmore The Blade, Abbey Square, Reading Berkshire RG1 3BE

T: 0118 943 0000 F: 0118 943 0001 E: info@bartonwillmore.co.uk Desk Top Publishing and Graphic Design by Barton Willmore Graphic Communication © Barton Willmore The contents of this document must not be copied or reproduced in whole or in part with-

copied or reproduced in whole or in part without the written consent of Barton Willmore. J:\29000\29248 - MBC GV Heathlands\ A5 - Reports & Graphics\Graphic Design\ Documents\29248 - RG-M-ID03 - Framework Masterplan

Document Status:	Final
Revision:	A20
Author:	VARIES
Checked by:	VA
Authorised by:	HE
Issue Date:	AUGUST 2021

