Codicote

Design Codes and Guidance

Final report

October 2023

Delivering a better world

Quality information

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Revision History

Issue no.	Issue date	Details	Issued by	Position
5	12-10-2023	Final report	Jimmy Lu	Senior Urban Designer
4	10-10-2023	Locality review	Madeleine Gohin	Neighbourhood Planning Officer
3	18-09-2023	Review	Jacqueline Veater	Planning Consultant, Codicote Parish Council
2	31-08-2023	Report updates	Jimmy Lu Holly MacMahon	Senior Urban Designer Graduate Urban Designer
1	17-08-2023	Review	Jacqueline Veater	Planning Consultant, Codicote Parish Council
0	07-07-2023	Research, site visit, drawings	Jimmy Lu Holly MacMahon	Senior Urban Designer Graduate Urban Designer

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Introduction

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1. Introduction

Through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Programme, led by Locality, AECOM was commissioned by Codicote Parish Council to provide design support as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process.

1.1 Purpose of the report

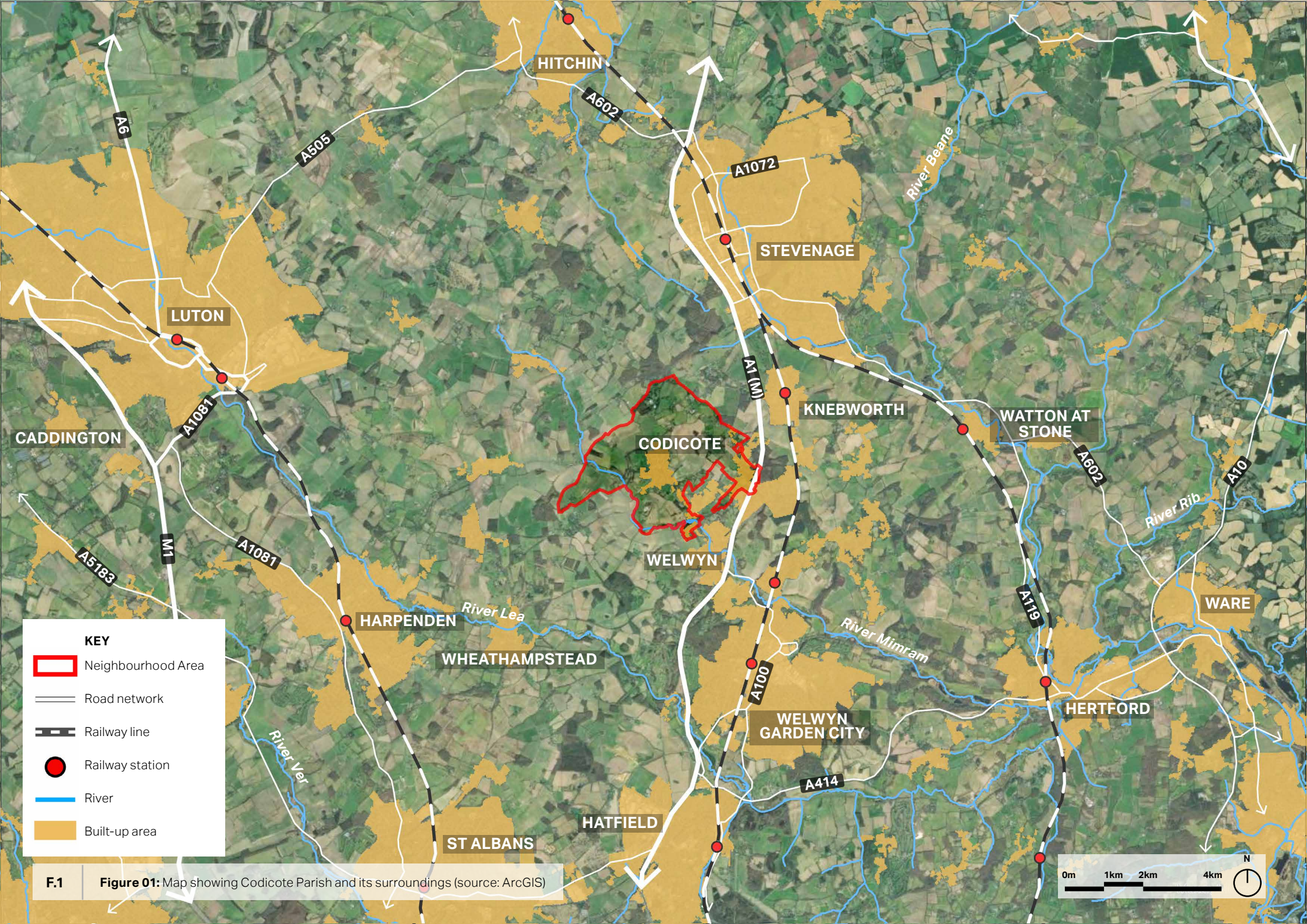
The purpose of the report is twofold and was agreed with Codicote Parish Council at the outset of the project:

First, it establishes area-wide design guidelines and codes that aims to provide design guidance to ensure that any potential development within the Neighbourhood Area follows good design practice and contributes to a sustainable and thriving community.

Second, it provides strategic guidance on the layout of Site CD3, which was allocated for residential development in the Local Plan. Drawing from the design guidelines and codes, it demonstrates how the site can best accommodate development that respects the character of Codicote.

1.2 Process

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



F.1 **Figure 01:** Map showing Codicote Parish and its surroundings (source: ArcGIS)

1.3 Area of study

The Neighbourhood Area is the Parish of Codicote, located in the district of North Hertfordshire. Codicote is located 12 km east of Luton, 5 km south of Stevenage, 2 km north west of Welwyn and 5 km north west of Welwyn Garden city. As of 2011 the population was 3,344 for the entire Parish.

The village of Codicote constitutes the main settlement of the Parish and there are several smaller hamlets: Drivers End, Nup End, Hogsnorton, Rabley Heath and Potters Heath.

Codicote Parish is bordered by the civil parishes of Kimpton to the west, Knebworth to the north, Welwyn to the east/ south-east and Ayot St. Peter and Ayot St. Lawrence to the south. The River Mimram flows into the parish from the west and along the southern parish boundary.

The original settlement of Codicote dates to the 13th century and primarily grew to the north and south, creating the High Street, an important route between Hatfield, Welwyn and Hitchin. The conservation area in the village is formed around the High Street and contains many listed buildings which demonstrate the rich heritage of Codicote.

There have been several stages of expansion within the village with significant development in the 19th century of terraced houses on Newtown and during the 1960s-1970s of many cul-de-sacs including Meadow Way, The Elms, The Chesnuts and Bury Lane, Valley Road and The Birches. The Local Plan has allocated 4 development sites in Codicote to be built on former Green Belt Land.

The Parish has good travel connections both nationally and to neighbouring towns and villages. Luton Airport is located just 10km west of the village. The A1 (M) runs along the eastern side of the Parish and is reached by the B656 which runs through the village centre.

There is, however, no railway station in the Parish; the nearest are at Knebworth and Welwyn North, approximately 3.5 km and 4km from the village centre respectively. Both are served by the Great Northern line which provides direct connections to London King's Cross and runs from Stevenage to Sevenoaks.

Figure 02: View of High Street which is part of the historic road network in the centre of Codicote.

1.4 Planning policy and guidance

This section summarises the relevant design policy and guidance produced at national and local levels which have informed this design guidance and codes document. It specifies how the relevant policies and guidelines have been incorporated in the production of the design codes included in this document. Any application for new development should be familiar with those documents.

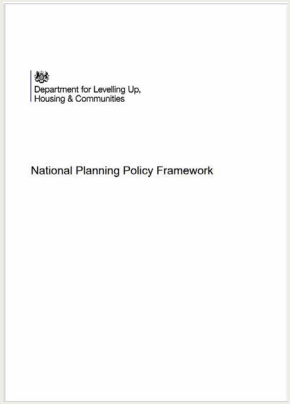
1.4.1 National Planning Policy and guidance

The following section summarises key relevant policy and guidance documents at the national level.

2023 - National Planning Policy Framework

DLUHC Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

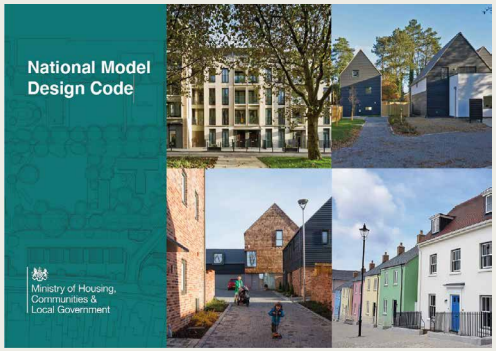
Development needs to consider national level planning policy guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG). In particular, NPPF Chapter 12: Achieving well-designed places stresses the creation of high-quality buildings and places as being fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It sets out a number of principles that planning policies and decisions should consider ensuring that new developments are well-designed and focus on quality.



2021 - National Model Design Code

DLUHC

This report provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design. It expands on 10 characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide. This guide should be used as reference for new development.



2020 - Building for a Healthy Life

Homes England

Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) is the new (2020) name for Building for Life, the government-endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. The new name reflects the crucial role that the built environment has in promoting wellbeing. The BHL toolkit sets out principles to help guide discussions on planning applications and to help local planning authorities to assess the quality of proposed (and completed) developments, but can also provide useful prompts and questions for planning applicants to consider during the different stages of the design process.

2019 - National Design Guide

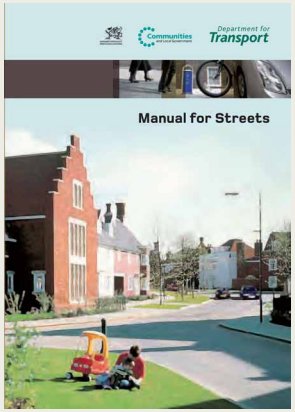
DLUHC

The National Design Guide (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 2019) illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.

2007 - Manual for Streets

Department for Transport

Development is expected to respond positively to the Manual for Streets, the Government's guidance on how to design, construct, adopt and maintain new and existing residential streets. It promotes streets and wider development that avoid car dominated layouts but that do place the needs of pedestrians and cyclists first.



1.4.2 Local planning policy context

The following section summarises key relevant policy and guidance documents at the local level.

2022 - North Hertfordshire Adopted Local Plan 2011-2031

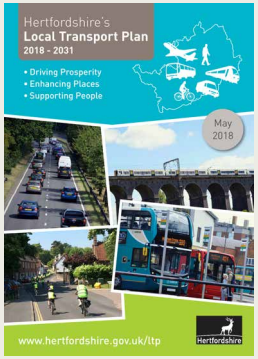
North Hertfordshire District Council

The North Hertfordshire Local Plan, adopted in 2022, sets out district wide policies, as well as more specific development policies and housing allocations for the parishes in the district. Policy SP2: Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution classifies Codicote as one of 5 villages in which higher levels of development are planned. The plan allocates over 300 new homes in Codicote across four development sites, including 48 homes on Site CD3.

2018 - Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan 2018-2031

Hertfordshire County Council

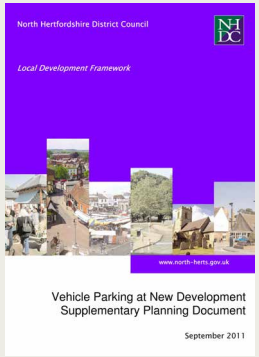
Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan sets out county wide policies regarding transport within Hertfordshire with a focus on more sustainable transport networks including reducing traffic growth and improving walking, cycling and public transport in the county. The Local Transport Plan also outlines how transport will support any housing development proposed by the district/borough council's Local Plans.



2011 - Vehicle Parking at New Development Supplementary Planning Document

North Hertfordshire District Council

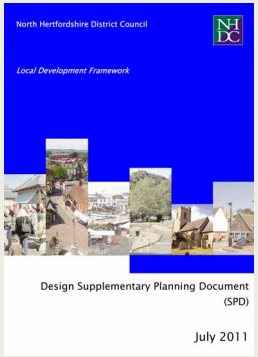
This Supplementary Planning Document provides guidance on parking provision for new developments and includes policies on the minimum dimensions and provision of different forms of residential parking spaces.



2011 - Design Supplementary Planning Document

North Hertfordshire District Council

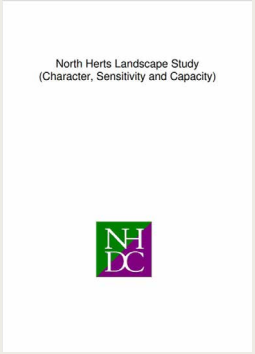
This Supplementary Planning Document supports the 2011 Local Plan for North Hertfordshire and sets out design principles and guidance which builds on policies in the Local Plan. These are district wide with brief, more focused design principles for the villages within the district. The relevant section for Codicote provides a succinct analysis of the history of the village, its built form, landmarks and views, massing and materials and sense of place; concluding with 3 main design principles.



2011 - North Hertfordshire Landscape Study (Character, Sensitivity and Capacity)

North Hertfordshire District Council

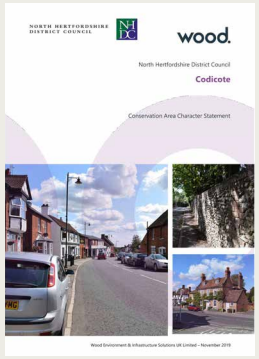
North Hertfordshire Landscape Study divides the district into different landscape character areas based on the distinctive characteristics of the natural landscape. The report evaluates the sensitivities, value and capacity to accommodate development for each landscape character and sets out guidelines. Relevant landscape character areas for Codicote are Codicote Plateau and Danesbury - Rabley Heath.



2019 - Codicote Conservation Area Character Statement

North Hertfordshire District Council

Codicote Conservation Area was designated in 1970 by North Hertfordshire District Council and the Character Statement document details the characteristics, justification for its designation, the designated and non-designated heritage assets, key views within the conservation area and opportunities for improvement. There is also an appendix with the boundary of the conservation area alongside images of important features within the area.



1.5 Summary of spring 2023 resident consultation

Codicote Parish Council conducted a resident consultation in spring 2023 for the Codicote Neighbourhood Plan. Respondents were asked about their views on the construction of additional housing in Codicote, the design of new buildings, and community facilities. These views are summarised on this page.

Respondents expressed approval for housing with the following characteristics:

- Well-sized gardens;
- Larger windows;
- Provision of on-plot parking;
- Solar panels;
- Green amenities;
- Bungalows that cater to the needs of senior residents and fit the existing character of Codicote;
- Spacious homes; and
- A variety of architectural styles.

Housing with the following characteristics were viewed more negatively by respondents:

- Architectural styles that clash with the existing built environment;
- Insufficiently sized gardens;
- Narrow pavements and lack of cycling infrastructure;
- Insufficiently sized homes;
- No provision of spaces to play; and
- Lack of planting.

Some residents also expressed concerns about the loss of fields, views and wildlife, noise, littering, and the safety of construction sites.

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Context analysis

02

2. Context analysis

This section outlines the broad physical, historic and contextual characteristics of the Neighbourhood Area

2.1 Settlement patterns

The main settlement of the parish is the village of Codicote with the smaller hamlets of Drivers End, Nup End, Hogsnorton, Rabley Heath and Potters Heath scattered around the surrounding countryside. These hamlets have a strong, rural character and are formed of linear development along narrow country lanes. Development is very low density consisting of detached or semi-detached houses which are either 1 or 2 storeys in height.

Codicote originated as a medieval settlement and was first recorded in the Domesday Book. The Conservation Area contains the oldest buildings in the village and retains aspects of its original settlement pattern. Traditional buildings survive from the 16th century and are arranged in linear patterns along the oldest roads in the village such as the High Street, St Albans Roads and Cowards Lane. Older developments in the built up area have little to no set back and have a strong presence within the streetscape.

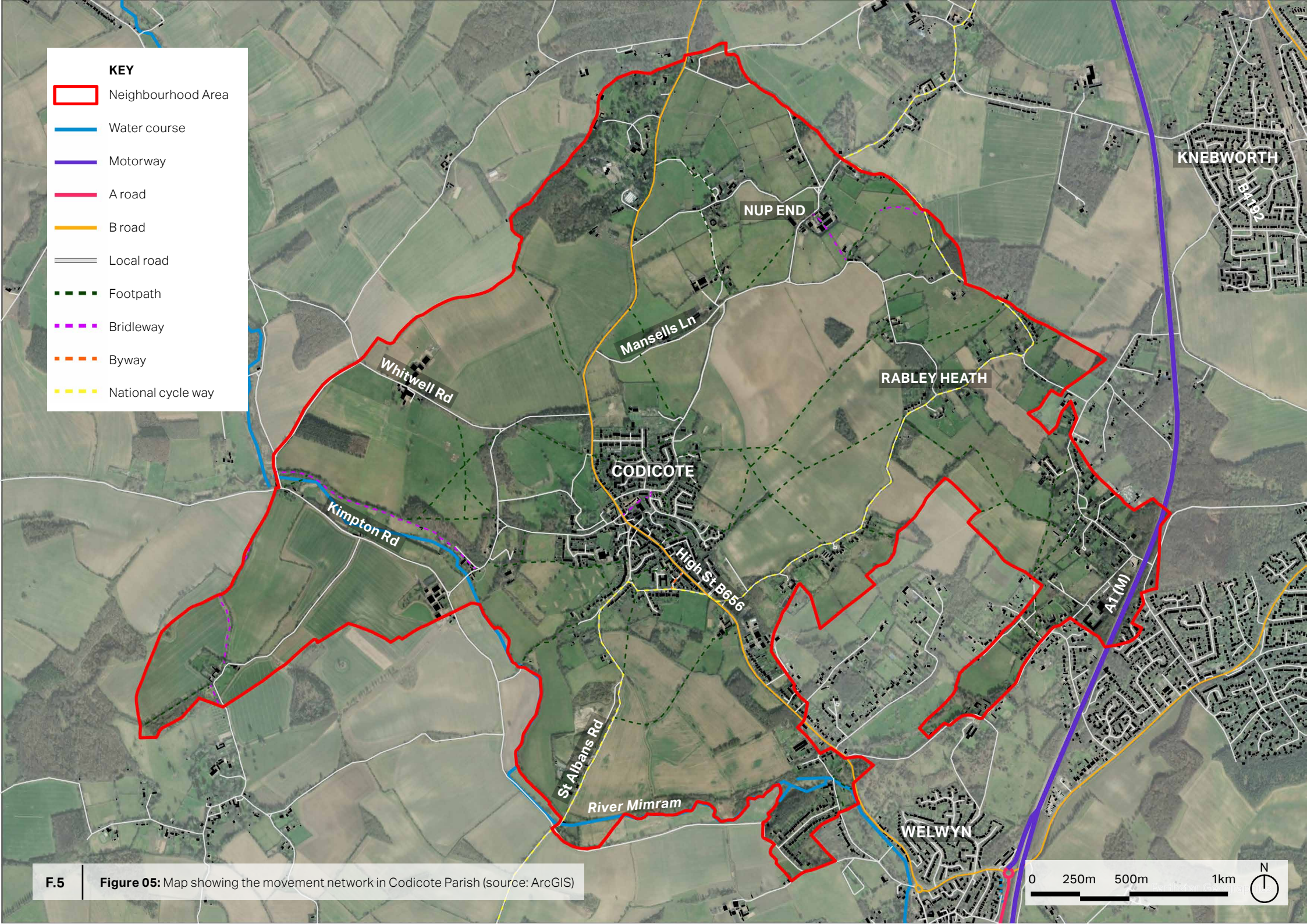
Development within the New Town dates back to the 19th Century. It is higher in density with a more formal settlement pattern. The overall feel is characterised by terraced houses and a regular building line, providing greater enclosure.

Post-war 20th- and 21st-century developments are detached, semi-detached or short terraces, usually of just 3 properties. Development is arranged in cul-de-sacs radiating from the High Street.

More detailed descriptions of the settlement patterns of each character area can be found in the Draft Neighbourhood Plan, and a summary of them is provided in Chapter 3.

Figure 03: 19th-century terraced houses on New Town

Figure 04: 20th-century terraced houses arranged around a cul-de-sac road



F.5 | **Figure 05:** Map showing the movement network in Codicote Parish (source: ArcGIS)

2.2 Movement patterns

Road network

The main road through Codicote is the High Street, which runs north-south through the Neighbourhood Area as the B656. This road continues south from Codicote to Welwyn where it connects to the A1 (M) at Junction 6. As a result there are significant traffic issues along this road, especially at peak times during the morning and afternoon.

Country roads form the remaining connecting road network. They have a rural character, narrow with grass verges and hedges on either side. Nearby towns such as St Albans, Harpenden, Luton and Stevenage are accessed by these narrow roads which also suffer from heavy traffic during peak hours as people travel from Codicote to surrounding towns for work.

Within the parish settlement roads vary in character. The older street network within the centre of the village is formed of the High Street, New Town, Bakers Lane, St Albans Road with old, long established country lanes towards the edge such as Cowards Lane and The Riddy. The remaining road network mainly serves 20th century expansion and consists of cul-de-sacs and perimeter development.

Public transport

There is an aspiration to improve public transport provision. There is no railway station - the nearest are at Knebworth and Welwyn North - and the bus service is limited with infrequent weekday services and no services in the evenings or on Sundays. Full details of the relevant train and bus services are detailed in the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

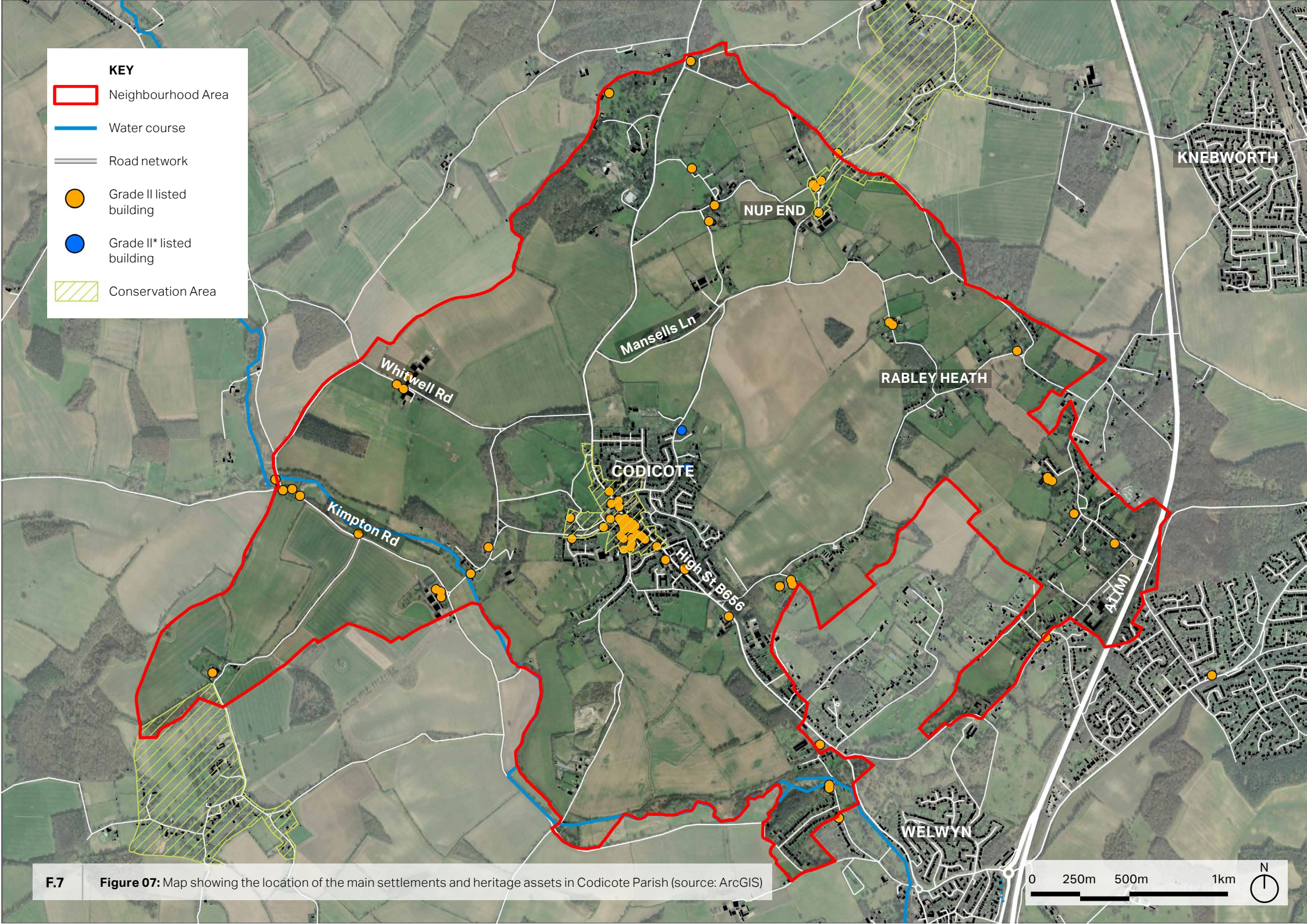
Public rights of way

There is a network of footpaths in Codicote Parish which form pedestrian routes through the village, as well as walking routes out into surrounding countryside. These include the Hertfordshire Way, a 195 mile circular route. Issues with the footpath network are listed in the Neighbourhood Plan and include lack of direct, off-road footpaths to Old Welwyn; poor interconnectivity between footpaths; footpaths which are not well maintained; dog fouling and rubbish.

Cycle and horse riding routes

The 121 mile National Cycle Route 12 runs through the parish and there is a documented cycle route through the Parish mentioned in 'Twenty Cycle Rides in Hertfordshire'. There are also 6 bridleways within the parish which cater for cyclists and horse riders. However there are no dedicated cycle-only paths and a lack of cycle lanes along roads. There are safety issues for both cyclists and horse riders, as detailed in the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

Figure 06: The small green which sits at the junction with St Albans Road (source: Codicote Parish Council)



F.7 **Figure 07:** Map showing the location of the main settlements and heritage assets in Codicote Parish (source: ArcGIS)

2.3 Built form and heritage

Heritage designations

There is a Conservation Area designated around the oldest part of the village including the High Street. Within this area there is a concentration of Grade II listed buildings which contribute to the strong historical character in this area of the village. Important listed buildings include:

- The George and Dragon restaurant;
- The Goat Public House; and
- The Pond House

There are additionally listed buildings in other areas of the village, such as the Grade II* listed St Giles Church to the north of the village centre, as well as other listed buildings scattered around the countryside and within the smaller hamlets.

Built form

There is a variety of architectural styles and materials in Codicote. Overall red brick laid in Flemish bond is the dominant material and is used for both buildings and boundary treatments. Non-local or contemporary materials include hung clay tiles, vinyl cladding, pebbledash, and other forms of bricks. Roofs are either pitched or hipped, there are many examples of cross-gabled roofs and dormer windows. The majority of buildings are 2 storeys in height with a few bungalows. Building heights above 2 storeys are not typical.

Clay tiles are the predominant roofing materials, with some slate tile examples, mostly on older buildings along the High Street. More recent development or renovations have concrete tiles.

Materials used in the parish for building walls, roofs, fenestration, porches and boundary treatments are shown on the following pages.

Figure 08: Grade II* listed St Giles Church

Figure 09: Grade II listed former Red Lion PH, now a house called The Noggins, with 17th Century timber frame, painted brick façade and dentilled eaves (source: Codicote Parish Council)

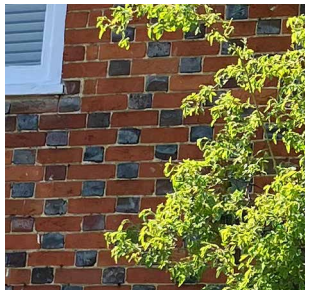
Building walls

Red bricks in Flemish bond

Off-white render

Half timbering with render or brick infilling

Timber weatherboarding



Checkered bricks in Flemish bond

Rendered brick

Hung clay tiles

Yellow brick

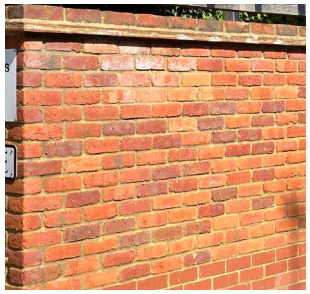
Roofs

Clay plaintiles

Slate tiles

Concrete tiles

Boundary treatments



Red brick

Landscaped hedge

Red brick dressing with flint infilling

Timber fence

Red brick with hedges

Fenestration

Sash windows

Bay windows

Gabled dormers

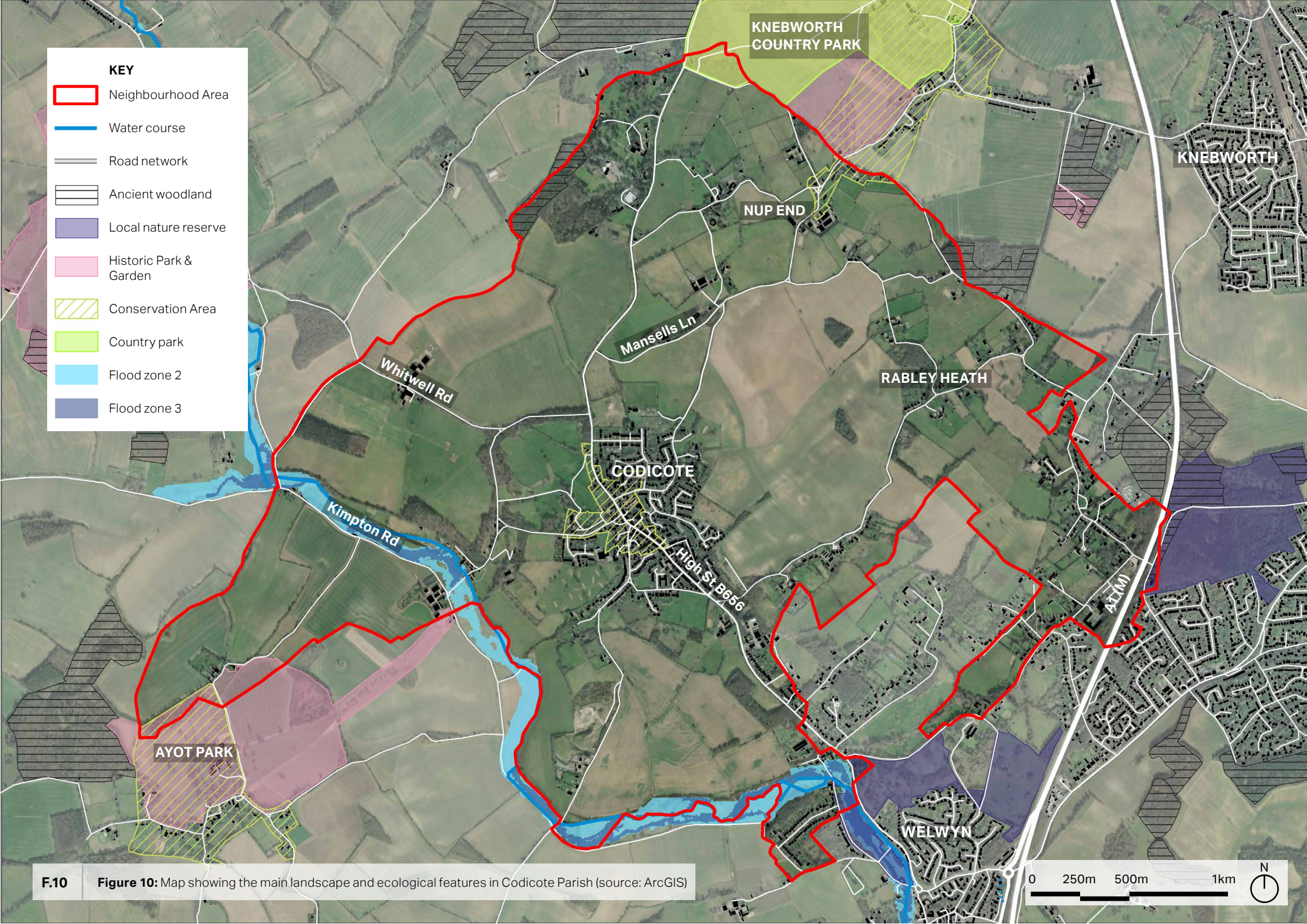
Casement window

Porches

Enclosed front porch with slate roof

Pitched roof canopy porch

Pentice canopy porch



F.10 **Figure 10:** Map showing the main landscape and ecological features in Codicote Parish (source: ArcGIS)

2.4 Landscape and ecology

The North Hertfordshire Landscape Study categorises the landscape of the settlement of Codicote and the countryside to the north of the parish as 'Codicote Plateau'. Key characteristics of the landscape include:

- "Rolling landscape"
- "Varying sized blocks of woodland"
- "Arable farmland"
- "Old winding and often sunken lanes"

Landscape to the south of the parish is categorised as 'Codicote Bottom Arable Valley' and has key characteristics including:

- "Broad, curving open valley with gently undulating slopes and a flat open valley floor"
- Openness
- "Lack of hedgerows and woodlands
- Extensive areas of farmland

Designations

Within the parish there are small areas of ancient woodland near Driver's End and north of Rabley Heath. There are two historic park and gardens which border the parish, one to the north which is also part of Knebworth country park and one to the south west called Ayot Park. There are a few Local Nature Reserves to the east and south east of the parish and blocks of ancient woodland are scattered around the parish's border. River Mimram runs through the south western part of the parish and there are areas of both flood risk zone 2 and 3 associated with the river.

Local green spaces

There are important green spaces within the parish which are not designated. These include the allotments, John Clements Sports and Community centre grounds, an open space used yearly for festivals and the churchyard of St Giles Church to the north of the village. There is also a playground along the pedestrian route from Valley Road to the High Street.

Figure 11: View over the open surrounding landscape of Codicote

Figure 12: Allotments in Codicote

Character areas

03

3. Character areas

This chapter presents the character area identified in the Draft Codicote Neighbourhood Plan

3.1 Introduction

This chapter draws from Section 4.2: Village Layout and Character of the Draft Codicote Neighbourhood Plan. This chapter is divided into two parts. Section 3.2 expands the analysis of the High Street character area started in the Neighbourhood Plan. Section 3.3 provides a succinct summary the remaining character areas with additional photos. Maps of each character area cab be found in Section 4.2: Village Layout and Character of the Draft Codicote Neighbourhood Plan.

3.2 The High Street

The High Street forms the main spine running through village centre and lies within the Conservation Area. There is a concentration of listed buildings with traditional architectural styles and building typologies, contributing greatly to Codicote's overall character.

The original settlement was centred around a small historic green located at the junction with St Albans Road forming a key focal point along High Street. Development in the 18th-19th centuries extended along the north and south of High Street, stringing out the settlement from its original nucleated layout to a linear one.

Further piecemeal development took place in the 19th-20th centuries, particularly to the east of the village filling in spaces between existing buildings.

Building typologies

- At the north end of the High Street properties are semi-detached or detached and generous in scale.
- Around the historic village core there is a concentration of listed assets, including large historic buildings such as the pub and Pond Hill house. However, buildings are mainly short terraces, detached and semi-detached properties.
- Towards the middle of the High Street, density increases. There are mainly terraces and other smaller properties.
- Further south are a mix of terraces and semi-detached houses with more infill developments from 19th-21st centuries.
- South of the High Street at the transition with the surrounding rural landscape density decreases, with development ending at 2 detached bungalows on the eastern side of the street.

Materials

The majority of buildings are in red brick. There is timber framing on a small number of older properties including The George and Dragon and the Goat Public House. There are a few instances of weatherboarding alongside other timber-framed buildings rendered in white and muted colours. Roofs are mainly tiles, in both plain clay and slate.

Building height

Buildings heights are consistent along the High Street, mainly 2 storeys with subtle variations. There are some dormer windows and a subtle variance in roof pitches. At the southern end of the High street are lower building heights as the built up area transitions to the countryside.

Building line

At both the northern and southern ends of the High Street, the building line is set back with properties featuring front gardens and on-plot parking. Though for along for much of the route the building line has no setback and buildings front directly onto the pavement. Some subtle variations and small setbacks become more apparent to the south, but generally the building line remains consistent.

Density

35-40 dph (dwellings per hectare) between Cowards Lane and St Albans Road with lower densities at the northern and southern ends of the street.

Parking

The High Street suffers from car parking issues. Due to the narrow road width, lack of off street parking and lack of on-street car parking bays, cars parked on pavements are seen along almost the entirety of the street. The common terrace typology and lack of set back means on plot parking is not possible for many of the properties with pub car parks providing much of the off street car-parking provision.

Figure 13: View of the High Street showing cars half parked on the pavement

Figure 14: The historic village green overlooked by listed buildings in the village including The George and Dragon

3.3 Summary of the remaining character areas

This section provides a summary of the remaining character areas identified in the Draft Codicote Neighbourhood Plan.

Newtown

Building typology: mostly terraces, with semi-detached properties at the southern end

Building height: 2 storeys

Building line: mostly consistent. Front gardens either absent or very small with deeper set-backs at the southern end

Density: 31-34 dph (dwellings per hectare)

Parking: mostly on-street, with some in front gardens.

Tower Road

Building typology: short terraces and semi-detached

Building height: 2 storeys

Building line: varying with large front gardens

Density: 19-23 dph

Parking: front garden and on-street

St Giles Road/ Bentick Way/ Gomer Close

Building typology: mostly semi-detached

Building height: 1-2 storeys

Building line: varying with small and medium front gardens

Density: 19-25 dph

Parking: front garden and on-street

The Elms/ The Chestnuts

Building typology: mostly detached

Building height: 2 storeys

Building line: varying with small and medium front gardens

Density: 20 dph

Parking: front garden and on-street

Old School Close

Building typology: semi-detached and short terraces

Building height: 2 storeys

Building line: varying with small and medium sized front gardens

Density: 20 dph

Parking: front garden and parking court

Bury Lane/ Church Close

Building typology: detached

Building height: 2 storeys

Building line: varying with small to large front gardens

Density: 20 dph

Parking: front garden

Valley Road, Grange Rise, Hillside, The Ridgeway, The Close, The Paddock

Building typology: detached, semi-detached, flats and terraces

Building height: 1.5-3 storeys

Building line: varying with small to large front gardens

Density: 23-41 dph

Parking: front garden, on-street, garages and parking court

Heath Lane

Building typology: detached, semi-detached and terraces

Building height: 1-2 storeys

Building line: varying with small to large front gardens; no gardens on terraces

Density: -

Parking: front garden and on-street

Hill Road / Meadow Way

Building typology: semi-detached and short terraces

Building height: 2 storeys

Building line: consistent with small and medium front gardens

Density: 21 dph

Parking: front garden, on-street and parking court

St Albans Road

Building typology: detached, semi-detached and terraces

Building height: 1.5-2 storeys

Building line: varying with small to large front gardens; no gardens on some terraces

Density: 13 dph

Parking: front garden and on-street

Cowards Lane and The Riddy

Building typology: detached

Building height: 1.5-2 storeys

Building line: varying with large front gardens

Density: 10 dph

Parking: front garden

The Opening and Winch Close

Building typology: detached and terraces

Building height: 1-2 storeys

Building line: consistent with small or no front gardens

Density: -

Parking: front garden, on-street and parking court

Tithe Close and Croftens Mews

Building typology: mostly detached

Building height: 1-2 storeys

Building line: varying with small and medium front gardens

Density: 25 dph

Parking: front garden and on-street

Poynders Meadow

Building typology: terraces and flats

Building height: 2 storeys

Building line: consistent with small and medium front gardens

Density: -

Parking: front garden, on-street and car park

Valley Road South, Mayflower Close and The Birches

Building typology: terraces

Building height: 2 storeys

Building line: varying with small and medium front gardens

Density: -

Parking: front garden, on-street and garages

Dark Lane

Building typology: detached

Building height: 2 storeys

Building line: varying with large front gardens

Density: -

Parking: front garden

Old Chapel Mews, Dollimore Close and Porters Mews

Building typology: detached and terraces

Building height: 2 storeys

Building line: varying with small or no front gardens

Density: -

Parking: front garden and parking court

Bakers Lane, The Green, Farriers Close and The Orchard

Building typology: detached, semi-detached and terraces

Building height: 1 and 2 storeys

Building line: varying with small or no front gardens

Density: -

Parking: front garden and on-street

Design guidance and codes

04

4. Design guidance and codes

This section sets out the principles that will influence the design of potential new development and inform the retrofit of existing properties in the Neighbourhood Area. Where possible, local images are used to exemplify the design guidelines and codes. Where these images are not available, best practice examples from elsewhere are used.

4.1 Introduction

This section is divided into two parts:

Part 1. General design considerations. A set of general design considerations appropriate to the Neighbourhood Area's environment and character. Those considerations should be addressed by applicants and their design teams. Where those considerations are covered by planning documents or design guides in national, district or parish level, relevant links have been added.

Part 2. Key design guidance. A set of design guidelines, regarding key aspects/ characteristics of the Neighbourhood Area. Those guidelines are not fully covered by planning documents and therefore, more detailed guidance is required.

Overall, both the design considerations and the design guidelines focus on residential environments, of any scale, including infill development, potential conversions, and house extensions.

4.2 Part 1. General design considerations

4.2.1 Access, parking and utilities

- Streets should be designed to meet the needs of all users and should not compromise the needs of one over the other - drivers, pedestrians, cyclists and those with disabilities;
- Streets should be considered a 'place' to be and contribute to the local character of the Neighbourhood Area. Thus, a good understanding of the existing street typologies and characteristics, widths and enclosure is needed so that any new design or retrofits reflect the existing rurality;
- Development should integrate with existing networks in Codicote Parish and enhance them; Public Rights of Way (PRoW), footpaths, streets and cycle routes;
- Streets should incorporate opportunities for landscaping, green infrastructure and sustainable drainage. This approach will enhance the rural character and environment of Codicote as well as boost biodiversity;
- Parking should be well integrated in the design of, and not dominate the public realm. For that reason, soft landscape is suggested along the edges as well as the use of permeable paving materials. This will mitigate any visual impact, increase visual attractiveness and reduce impervious surfaces, refraction and heating;
- Parking areas should be overlooked by properties or other facilities to create a safe environment;
- All parking areas must be constructed from porous materials to minimise surface water run-off and help mitigate potential flooding;
- Electric vehicles charging points, both for off-street and on-street parking, should be integrated into the design;
- Parking garages must not dominate the appearance of dwellings and must not reduce the provision of active frontage onto the street;
- Adequate provision should be made for bin storage, including areas for waste separation, holding and recycling;
- Adequate provision should be made for cycle parking, in public and private land;
- Energy-efficient lighting schemes, where absolutely required, that do not affect biodiversity should be in place to promote safety in movements; and

More detailed guidance on the design of roads and active travel in Codicote can be found in ND.01 and ND.02 respectively.

Relevant planning documents

- **Manual for Streets (2007),** Department for Transport. Link: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1072722/Essex_Manual_for_Streets_Redacted.pdf
- **National Model Design Code Part 2 (2021),** DLUHC. Link: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1009795/NMDC_Part_2_Guidance_Notes.pdf
- **Building for a Healthy Life (2020),** Homes England. Link: https://www.udg.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/files/14JULY20%20BFL%202020%20Brochure_3.pdf
- **Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan 2018-2031 (2018),** Hertfordshire County Council. Link: https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/sites/default/files/TI15%20Hertfordshire%27s%20Local%20Transport%20Plan%202018-2031.pdf
- **Design Supplementary Planning Document (2011),** North Hertfordshire District Council. Link: https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/sites/default/files/files/design_spd_july_2011a-2.pdf
- **Vehicle Parking at New Development Supplementary Planning Document (2011),** North Hertfordshire District Council. Link: https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/sites/default/files/files/vehicle_parking_at_new_development_spd_sept_2011.pdf

Figure 15: Parking courtyard with porous gravel surfacing on Dollimore Close

Figure 16: A garage structure constructed with traditional materials that respect the local vernacular

4.2.2 Built form

- New development should gain a good understanding of the rich local vernacular of Codicote to make sure any new design reflects the diversity of the parish. Please see BF.01 for more design guidelines on architectural details and materials;
- The massing, height and scale of the new structures should match the surrounding context;
- New development should retain any existing trees, hedges, hedgerows and woodlands and incorporate them into the new design. For example, existing green features could be part of green spaces or gardens within the new development or green buffers along the development edges to allow for a smooth transition into any surrounding open fields;
- New development should propose designs that allows for gentle variations in building lines, plot sizes, and widths to match the surrounding context of the Neighbourhood Area. For example, the irregular building lines create visual interest along the streets;
- New development should propose a mix of housing to include a range of house types and sizes to allow for a variety of options and thus, meet the needs of a wider group of people;
- Infill development should complement the street scene into which it will be built. Thus, building lines, boundary treatments, massing, heights should all be appropriate to the surrounding context;
- Buildings should front onto streets and avoid having blank (windowless) façades that hinder activity and passive surveillance;
- Buildings, where possible, should overlook green spaces, open fields and nature in general;
- New development should prioritise boundary treatments (brick walls, trees, green verges, hedges etc.) that respect the character of the Neighbourhood Area; and
- New development, if any, should propose designs that creates different levels of enclosure along the streetscape to offer visual interest.

Relevant planning documents

- **Building for a Healthy Life (2020),** Homes England. Link: https://www.udg.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/files/14JULY20%20BFL%202020%20Brochure_3.pdf
- **National Model Design Code (Part 2 - 2021),** DLUHC. Link: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1009795/NMDC_Part_2_Guidance_Notes.pdf
- **North Hertfordshire Adopted Local Plan 2011-2031 (2022),** North Hertfordshire District Council. Link: https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-12/North%20Hertfordshire%20Local%20Plan%202011-2031.pdf
- **Design Supplementary Planning Document (2011)**, North Hertfordshire District Council. Link: https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/sites/default/files/files/design_spd_july_2011a-2.pdf

Figure 17: Two-storey terraced housing with large front gardens on St Albans Road

Figure 18: Bungalows with front gardens and garages on Church Close

4.2.3 Views and vistas

- New development should relate sensitively to views and vistas within the built environment as well as the surrounding landscape; and
- Any building extension of modification should not exceed the surrounding average building height or block any views towards important built landmarks and landscape features.

Figure 19: Eastward view towards the open countryside along The Close from Valley Road

Figure 20: Codicote's irregular topography enables frequent glimpses into the countryside

Figure 21: View of St Giles Church from Bury Lane

4.2.4 Architectural details and eco design

- New development should propose high-quality designs that reflect and respect the rich local vernacular in Codicote, and historic distinctiveness, as analysed in Section 2.3, avoiding pastiche replication. The materials and architectural details on listed buildings or notable buildings of great historic significance should be used as reference for any future development. The different types and qualities of bricks, coloured render, or roof tiles are some examples of local materials that could be used in new constructions;
- New development should ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well-related to each other. For example, buildings should have open views towards green spaces, active frontages along the roads and be bordered with vegetation to create soft edges;
- New development should incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable or unnecessary harm to retained features;
- Net Zero aims should be integrated, and development should adopt low energy and energy generative technologies within the development at the start of the design process. Nature positive and biodiversity net gains should be a priority as well;
- New development should adopt contextually appropriate materials and architectural details should be a guide to material specification;
- New development should demonstrate strong design rationale, quality material specification and good detailing appropriate for the local climatic conditions of the Neighbourhood Area; and
- Building performance in terms of 'conservation of heat and fuel' over-and-above building regulations, should be a key design driver for new development.

Relevant planning documents

- **National Model Design Code (Part 2 - 2021),** DLUHC. Link: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1009795/NMDC_Part_2_Guidance_Notes.pdf
- **Design Supplementary Planning Document (2011),** North Hertfordshire District Council. Link: https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/sites/default/files/files/design_spd_july_2011a-2.pdf
- **Codicote Conservation Area Character Statement (2019),** North Hertfordshire District Council. Link: https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Codicote%20CA%20Character%20Statement_0.pdf

Figure 22: Grade II listed building with clay tiles and black weatherboarding

Figure 23: A house on Mayflower Close equipped with solar panels

Figure 24: Half-timbered wall with different patterns of brick infilling

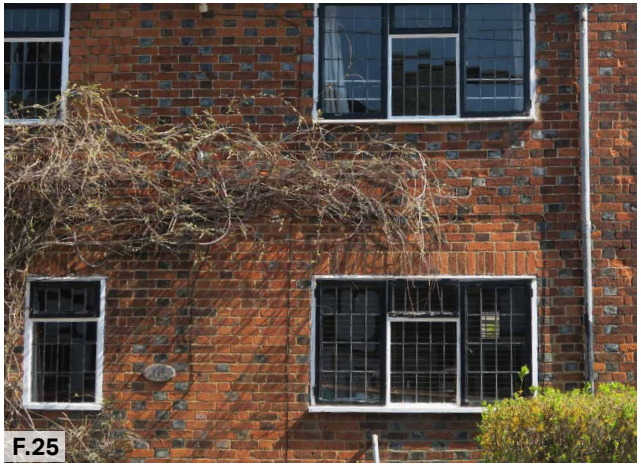


Figure 25: House façade with checkered brick patterns and casement windows with leadlights

4.2.5 Green infrastructure and landscape

- Adequate open space should be provided both in quantity and quality. Adequate private/communal amenity space should be proposed to meet the needs of the population;
- Existing ecological assets within the parish should not be threatened;
- New development should identify existing biodiversity corridors and contribute to their preservation and enhancement;
- New development should promote walking and cycling within the parish by improving access to the countryside and offering more opportunities for walking or cycling;
- New development should promote green links (cycle ways, footpaths, tree lined and grass verge-lined streets) into new development (if any) to connect with existing neighbourhoods within the parish and surrounding settlements;
- Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) should be part of the overall landscape infrastructure and improve the environment; and
- New development should gain a good understanding of the landscape context and character of the parish and propose design that does not undermine the existing qualities of the area.

Relevant planning documents

- **National Model Design Code (Part 2 - 2021),** DLUHC. Link: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1009795/NMDC_Part_2_Guidance_Notes.pdf
- **North Hertfordshire Landscape Study (2011),** North Hertfordshire District Council. Link: https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/sites/northherts-cms/files/CG16%20NHerts%20Landscape%20Study%202011%20-%20Part%201.pdf

4.3 Part 2. Key design guidance and codes

This section offers more detailed design guidance and codes on some of the design considerations presented in Part 1.

The design guidance presented in both Part 1 and Part 2 will be used:

- As a guide for applicants, developers or landowners reflecting the ambitions of the community in Codicote;
- As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications. This report should be discussed with applicants during any pre-application discussions;
- As a guide for the Parish Council when commenting on planning applications, ensuring that the parish-wide design guidance is complied with; and
- As a tool to promote community-backed development and inform comments on planning applications.

4.3.1 Guidance for new development

ND.01 New streets

It is essential that the design of any new streets both meets the technical highway requirements and incorporates the needs of pedestrians and cyclists. Some design guidelines for future development are:

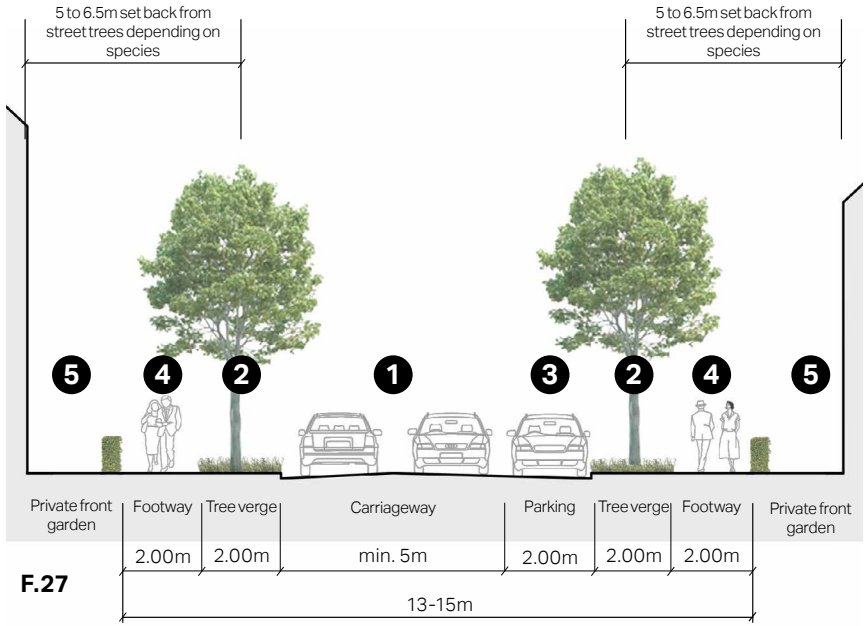
- Streets should be considered a 'place' to be and contribute to the local character of Codicote. Thus, a good understanding of the existing street typologies and characteristics, widths, enclosure or meandering character, is needed so that any new design reflects the existing local character;
- New developments should employ street typologies appropriate to the existing character, while also providing evolving views either along the streetscape, built environment or surrounding countryside;
- Streets should not be built to maximise vehicle speed or capacity. There should be a focus instead on safety for all users, in particular pedestrians and cyclists to encourage walking and cycling in Codicote. For that reason, lower speed limits and traffic calming measures should be implemented;
- Although the prevailing parking typology is on-plot parking, it is important that where on-street parking is introduced, it does not impede the access for pedestrians and other vehicles (including emergency vehicles), and it is well-landscaped; and
- Streets and footways should be laid out in a permeable pattern, allowing for multiple choices of routes, particularly on foot and bike.

Figure 26: Example of a residential street with inset parking bays alternating with trees and landscaping in Dewenthorpe, York

Secondary streets

Some guidelines for secondary streets are:

- Secondary streets provide access between primary streets and neighbourhoods. They should emphasise the human scale and be designed for lower traffic volumes compared to primary streets;
- Secondary streets should accommodate carriageways wide enough for two-way traffic and on-street parallel car parking bays. On-street parking may be on or accommodated on the street or inset into green verges;
- Carriageways should be designed to be shared between motor vehicles and cyclists. Vertical traffic calming features such as raised tables may be introduced at key locations such as junctions and pedestrian crossings; and
- Where possible, secondary streets should be tree-lined (with green verges) on both sides.



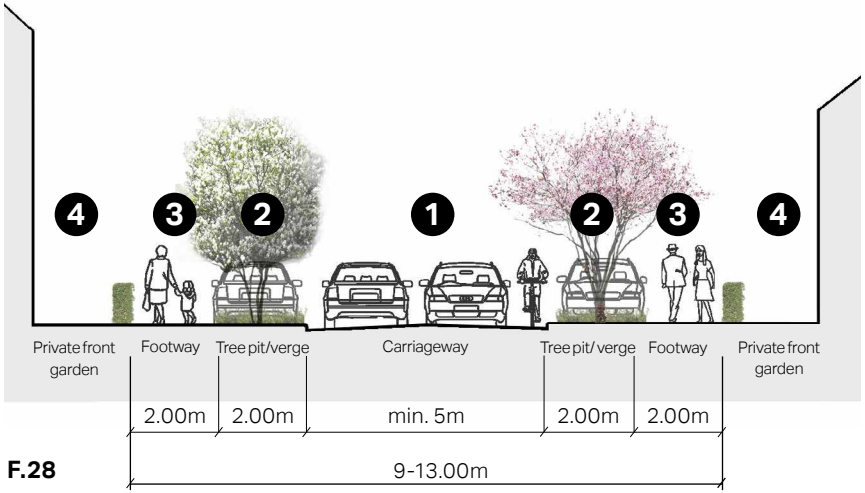
1. Shared carriageway (neighbourhood traffic). Traffic calming measures may be introduced at key locations if needed.
2. Green verge with medium trees. The latter are optional but would be positive additions.
3. Parking bay (may also be inset into verges).
4. Footway - utilities typically located underneath.
5. Residential frontage with boundary hedges and front gardens.

Figure 27: Cross-section to illustrate some guidelines for secondary streets.

Tertiary streets

Some guidelines for tertiary streets are:

- Tertiary streets have a strong residential character and provide direct access to residences from the secondary streets. They should be designed for low traffic volumes and low speeds, ideally 20mph;
- Carriageways should accommodate two-way traffic, cyclists and parking bays. These streets should also accommodate footways, with a 2m minimum width on both sides, and must be designed for cyclists to mix with motor vehicles. Traffic calming features such as raised tables can be used to prevent speeding; and
- Tertiary streets should be formed with a high degree of built form enclosure, with consistent building lines and setbacks; and
- Street trees should be provided with suitable gaps, wherever possible.



1. Carriageway should accommodate both vehicles and cyclists (local access). Traffic calming measures may be introduced at key locations.
2. Tree verge or pit with small trees. The latter are optional but would be positive additions. Parking bays on both sides of the carriageway to alternate with trees to avoid impeding moving traffic or pedestrians.
3. Footway.
4. Residential frontage with boundary hedges and front gardens.

Figure 28: Cross-section to illustrate some guidelines for tertiary roads.

ND.02 Footpaths and cycle networks

This section offers guidance on the design of footpaths as well as the relationship between residential developments with pedestrian and cycle networks:

- Good connectivity is key to the promotion of walking and cycling. New development must therefore retain or provide direct and attractive footpaths between neighbouring streets and local facilities and amenities;
- Footpath networks must be in place before the first houses are occupied. Walking/ cycle routes within new communities should be the primary network and first consideration, whilst roads should be secondary;
- Pedestrian and cycle links within residential areas should always be overlooked by properties to create natural surveillance and offer good sightlines;
- Design features such as gates to new developments or footpaths between high fences must be avoided;
- Cycle parking should be installed in both private or public spaces and next to amenities;
- Paving used along pedestrian and cycle links should, where possible, be permeable to help absorb surface water and mitigate flooding;
- Footpaths should be at least 2 metres wide. Shared lanes may be acceptable within residential streets, however they must be accompanied with appropriate traffic calming measures; and
- Strategically placed signage should offer guidance and help with navigation. The materials and design of the signage should be appropriate of the rural character of the parish.

Figure 30: A signpost for a footpath linking The Close to the open countryside

Figure 29: Footpath integrated within residential development offering alternative walking and cycling routes, Great Kneighton, Cambridge

ND.03 Development edges

Codicote is surrounded by attractive areas of open countryside whose setting must be respected. Thus, some design guidelines on how rural development edges should be treated are:

- New development should incorporate existing native trees, shrubs, and green/ ecological assets into the design. Any unnecessary loss of flora should be avoided;
- Abrupt development edges with little vegetation or landscape should be avoided. Edges should be planted with rich vegetation including native trees and hedgerows to create green buffers that provide a smooth transition from the built-up areas to the rural landscape; and
- Edges must be designed to link rather than segregate existing and new neighbourhoods. Therefore, green corridors should be proposed to provide additional pedestrian and cycle links that will improve connectivity between neighbourhoods and contribute to the successful integration of any new development within the parish.

Figure 31: Diagram of a positive treatment of the edges in a development surrounded by a green buffer that offers a smoother transition into the open fields

Figure 32: Diagram of a less positive example of a development edge with limited natural buffer that results in an abrupt transition to the surrounding countryside

ND.04 Patterns of growth and layout of buildings

An understanding of the existing patterns of growth in Codicote is required for any new development. Any new development should adhere to the following principles:

- Development should be considered strategically at the settlement level and should not be designed in isolation;
- New development should take into account the existing variety of patterns of growth and propose design that sits sensitively within the existing character areas. For example, new development should study the surrounding patterns of the buildings lines, building setbacks and plot sizes and widths and make sure to incorporate similar qualities into new design.
- Where higher densities are deemed appropriate, an appropriate level of green coverage and vegetation should be in place to avoid an over-built character;
- Where an intrinsic part of local character, properties should be clustered in small pockets showing a variety of types. The use of a repeating type of dwelling along the entirety of the street should be avoided;
- New developments should have short blocks to provide a choice of well-overlooked pedestrian routes and maximise connectivity with the rest of the settlement;
- Existing and new vegetation should be integrated into the design;
- New development should have a compact form with distinct edges to enable a sympathetic transition between the built-up area and the countryside - see ND.03.;
- New development must demonstrate a good understanding of the building orientation, building lines and building setbacks of the surrounding built environment and propose design that reflects the rural qualities of the area;
- In order to provide a sense of security and natural surveillance, the windowed front elevation of dwellings should face the street. Street-facing rear boundaries should be avoided;
- New development should respond to site specific micro-climates and sun paths and use these as key design drivers to increase the environmental comfort for building users, both internally and externally; and
- Corner buildings should have both side façades animated with doors and/or windows. Exposed, blank gable end buildings with no windows fronting the public realm should be avoided.

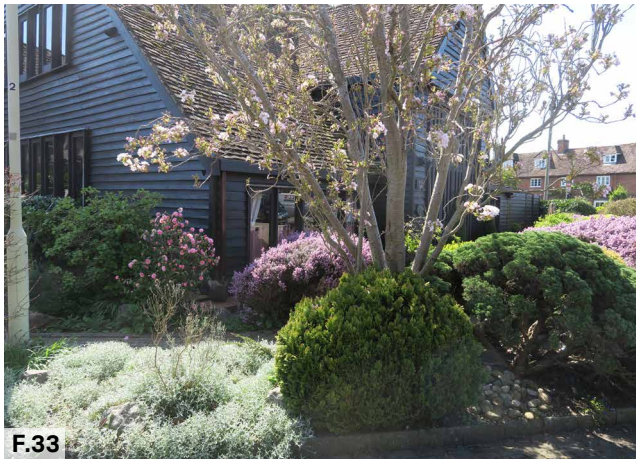


Figure 33: A house with a front garden that provides privacy while enabling passive surveillance of the street

Figure 34: A small courtyard at the back of a plot with adequate overlooking from houses

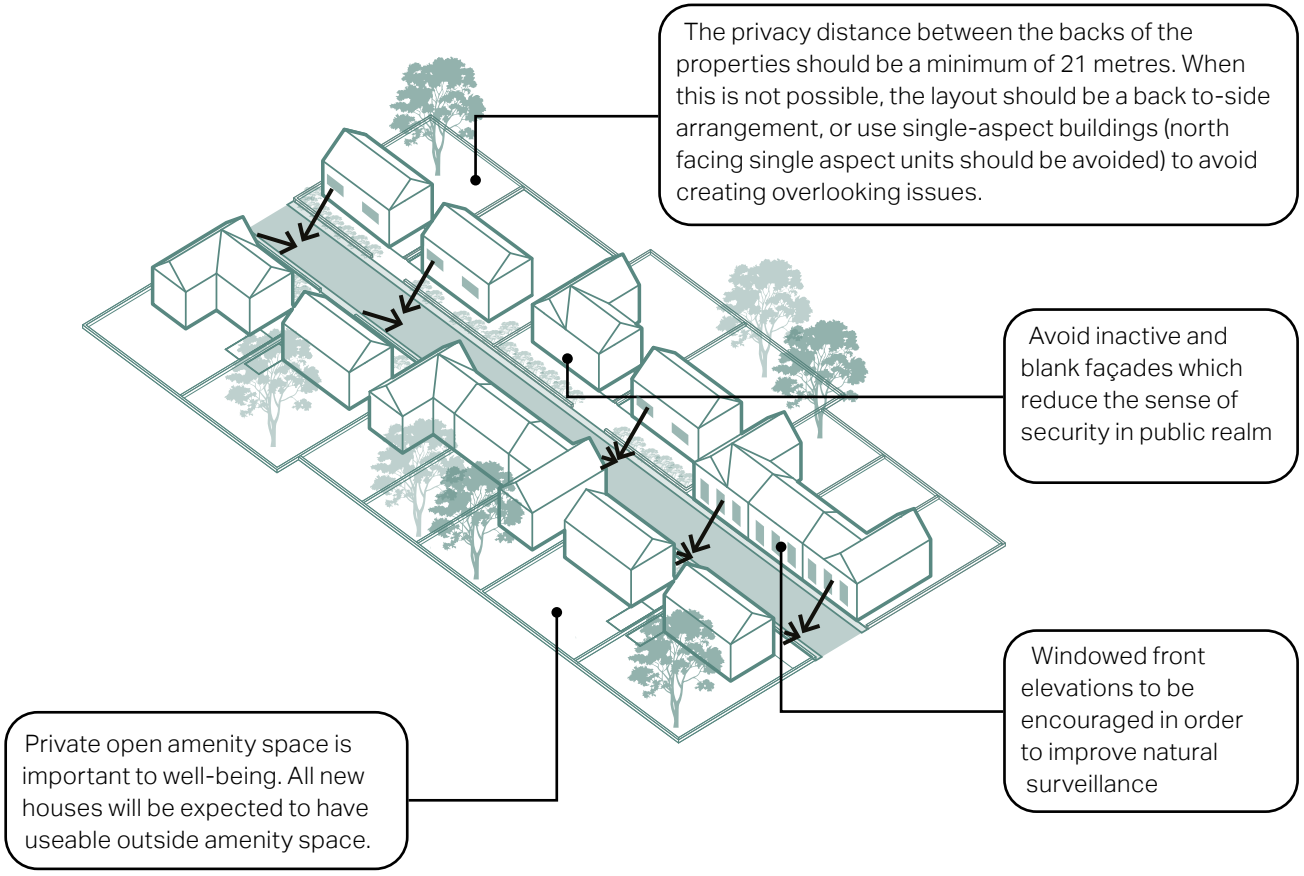


Figure 35: Diagram highlighting the importance of natural surveillance to improve security

ND.05 Infill development

Infill development is smaller-scale development (generally fewer than 10 homes) within an existing urban/ developed context. This type of development commonly consists of three main types:

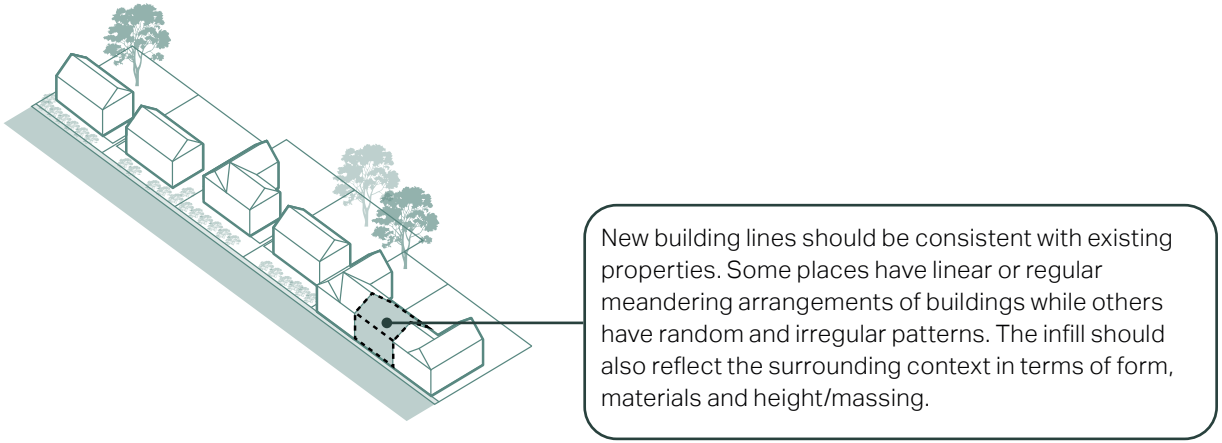
- Gap site development within a street frontage;
- Backland development; and
- Site redevelopment (for example, replacement of existing building/s).

The following principles should apply to infill development:

- Building density, scale, and massing should be in-keeping with the prevailing development pattern. They should not be overbearing on existing properties or deprive them of light, including overlooking or over-shadowing of both windows and amenity space;
- The building line should reflect the existing street pattern and level of enclosure;
- Materials and architectural details should reflect positive local characteristics and harmonise with or complement adjacent properties, subject to the degree of variety in the character area;
- Building fenestration should be in keeping with the predominant positive buildings' character on the street or harmonise with adjacent buildings of good character;
- Building façades should respect the horizontal rhythm of neighbouring plots and subdivisions on the street in order to maintain visual continuity;
- Buildings heights should vary from 1.5 – 2.5 storeys depending on adjacent plots. A variable eves line and ridge line is allowed to create interest but variation between adjacent buildings should be a maximum of 0.5 storeys in general;
- Front and rear gardens should be of sufficient size and landscaped appropriately to fit in with the prevailing planting pattern or enhance greenery where it is lacking;
- Access and storage for bins should be provided with bin stores integrated within plot boundaries. Ginnels should be considered for terraced buildings with 4 or more units so that bicycles and bin storage can be satisfactorily brought to the front; and
- Parking should be integrated on-site rather than on-street.

F.36

Figure 36: An indicative diagram highlighting a site before infill



F.37

Figure 37: An indicative diagram highlighting a site after infill building

F.38

Figure 38: Small infill development on Taverners Place using traditional weatherboarding

F.39

Figure 39: Back of plot infill development under construction

4.3.2 Built form

BF.01 Materials and architectural details

Codicote has a rich built heritage that should be referenced in new development. New constructions and renovations should be respectful of the architectural styles and materials of surrounding buildings, whilst ensuring that a mix of styles are sympathetic to the Codicote palette. They should demonstrate an intelligent understanding of the historic building forms and details without resulting in low-quality imitations of past styles.

Some design guidelines are:

- New development should reflect the high-quality local design references in both the natural and built environment and make a valuable contribution to the historic character of the Parish - see Section 2.3 for an analysis of the local traditional materials;
- New development shall only use appropriate materials that match or complement the local vernacular;
- The choice of colour and finish of materials is an important design factor in anchoring buildings within the surrounding built environment and landscape. References to the local palette should therefore be made;
- The number and size of windows should be appropriate and within scale of the building façade;
- Where brick is used, bricks that match buildings in the surrounding area are preferred. Particular attention should be given to the bonding pattern, size, colour, and texture of bricks; and
- The use of traditional, natural and preferably locally sourced materials is generally more appropriate than man-made synthetic, pre-coloured materials, as they lack the variation on colour and texture found in natural materials.

Figure 41: A building with traditional materials such as black weatherboarding and clay tiles

Figure 40: Detail of a roof with an octagonal chimney stack, clay tiles, and weatherboarded gable

The following pages illustrate acceptable materials and detailing for future housing developments in Codicote:

Wall materials

The main traditional wall material in Codicote is red brick, often in Flemish bonding patterns. Grey and yellow bricks also feature in some buildings, sometimes in combination with red bricks. Another widespread material is render, usually in off-white tones. Black weatherboarding is common among agricultural buildings.

Roof materials

Clay pantiles and slate tiles are the most common forms of traditional roofing in Codicote. The majority of traditional buildings have pitched roofs, while hip and gabled roofs are also in use. Some roofs incorporate dormers, usually hipped or gabled.

Fenestration materials

Houses in Codicote traditionally feature multi-pane vertical sash windows as well as side-opening casement windows. Ground floors may include bay or oriel windows.

Boundary treatment materials

Boundaries mostly consist of low red brick walls and landscaped hedges, sometimes in combination. Other garden walls have red brick dressing and flint infilling, and some properties are fronted with painted timber fencing.

Figure 42: Detail of a ground floor with restored multi-pane bay windows

Figure 43: Shallow front garden marked by landscaped hedges and posts

BF.02 Conversion of commercial properties

Some shops may experience a change in use over time from commercial to residential units. Guidance is needed so that such units remain sympathetic to the character of Codicote. This is particularly important as most shops are located in the Conservation Area.

General guidelines

- The design should have a positive impact on the host building and demonstrate compatibility with the character and appearance of the area;
- The original shopfront's historic features such as cornices, corbels, pilasters, and fenestration should be retained wherever possible;
- Where the retention of the shopfront's original features is not feasible, the new design should be sympathetic to the overall appearance of the building. This can be achieved by relating the fenestration of the ground floor with that of the upper floors while maintaining some visual distinction in the wall treatment;
- The design should ensure adequate privacy. This can be achieved by reserving the street-fronting rooms for more active uses, reinstating boundary treatments where there is a building recess, and integrating venetian blinds or shutters into the design of the windows.

Fenestration

- The original fenestration should be retained. Where this is not possible, the design of new windows should follow that of the upper floors in terms of vertical alignment, shape, style, and details such as window heads; and
- On corner units, both elevations should have windows.

Figure 44: Conversion of a pub into residential units that retain the building's original architectural details

Materials

- The material of the ground floor must match or complement that of the upper floors. For example, new brickwork should follow the colour, texture, and bonding patterns of the upper floors.

Access and servicing

- The conversion design should consider how upper floors are to be accessed;
- The original doors should be retained. Where this is not possible, replacement doors should be placed at the front of the property and match the style of the building; and
- The integration of refuse storage should be carefully considered. This can take the form of internal storage, or bin stores inset into the façade. If the building is sufficiently recessed from the property line, waste storage and/or cycle parking can be integrated into the design of the boundary.

Boundary treatments

If the ground floor is recessed from the property line, the space in between can be treated like a front garden. Such treatments improve privacy without obscuring ground floor windows. Bin storage and/or cycle parking can also be integrated into the design.

4.4 Checklist for new development

Because the design guidelines and codes in this chapter cannot cover all design eventualities, this concluding section provides a number of questions based on established good practice against which the design proposal should be evaluated.

The checklist can be used to assess all proposals by objectively answering the questions below. Not all the questions will apply to every development. The relevant ones, however, should provide an assessment as to whether the design proposal has taken into account the context and provided an adequate design solution.

As a first step there are a number of ideas or principles that should be present in all proposals. These are listed under "General design guidelines for new development." Following these ideas and principles, a number of questions are listed for more specific topics.

Figure 45: Listed building with half-timbered structure and red brick infilling

Figure 46: Grade II listed building with traditional materials and landscaped front garden

Figure 47: Agricultural buildings with weatherboarded gables and red brick boundary walls

1

General design guidelines for new development:

- Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity;
- Reinforce or enhance the established settlement character of streets, greens, and other spaces;
- Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use;
- Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long-distance views;
- Reflect, respect, and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness;
- Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development;
- Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;
- Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;
- Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;
- Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;
- Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other;
- Positively integrate energy efficient technologies;
- Make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation, and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours;
- Ensure that places are designed with management, maintenance and the upkeep of utilities in mind; and
- Seek to implement passive environmental design principles by, firstly, considering how the site layout can optimise beneficial solar gain and reduce energy demands (e.g. insulation), before specification of energy efficient building services and finally incorporate renewable energy sources.

2

Street grid and layout:

- Does it favour accessibility and connectivity? If not, why?
- Do the new points of access and street layout have regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists and those with disabilities?
- What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern; are these reflected in the proposal?
- How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?
- Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?
- Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

3

Local green spaces, views and character:

- What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design; i.e. what are the landscape qualities of the area?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance any identified views or views in general?
- How does the proposal affect the trees on or adjacent to the site?
- Can trees be used to provide natural shading from unwanted solar gain, i.e. deciduous trees to limit solar gains in summer, while maximising them in winter?
- Has the proposal been considered within its wider physical context?
- Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?
- In rural locations, has the impact of the development on the tranquility of the area been fully considered?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?
- Can any new views be created?
- Is there adequate amenity space for the development?
- Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?

3 (continued)

Local green spaces, views and character:

- Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored and do any proposals retain the green character of amenity space, i.e. no hard surfacing with exception of pedestrian access purposes, as required by local policy?
- Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how this will be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?
- Is there opportunity to increase the local area biodiversity?
- Can green space be used for natural flood prevention e.g. permeable landscaping, swales etc.?
- Can water bodies be used to provide evaporative cooling?
- Is there space to consider a ground source heat pump array, either horizontal ground loop or borehole (if excavation is required)?

4

Gateway and access features:

- What is the arrival point, how is it designed?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between settlements?
- Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building or listed landscape?
- Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

5

Building layout and grouping:

- What are the typical groupings of buildings?
- How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?
- Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the townscape?
- What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?
- Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters stemming from the main road?
- Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?

5 (continued)

Building layout and grouping:

- Subject to topography and the clustering of existing buildings, are new buildings oriented to incorporate passive solar design principles, with, for example, one of the main glazed elevations within 30° due south, whilst also minimising overheating risk?
- Can buildings with complementary energy profiles be clustered together such that a communal low carbon energy source could be used to supply multiple buildings that might require energy at different times of day or night? This is to reduce peak loads. And/or can waste heat from one building be extracted to provide cooling to that building as well as heat to another building?

6

Building line and boundary treatment:

- What are the characteristics of the building line?
- How has the building line been respected in the proposals?
- Has the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?

7

Building heights and roofline:

- What are the characteristics of the roofline?
- Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing and scale?
- If a higher-than-average building(s) is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?
- Will the roof structure be capable of supporting a photovoltaic or solar thermal array either now, or in the future?
- Will the inclusion of roof mounted renewable technologies be an issue from a visual or planning perspective? If so, can they be screened from view, being careful not to cause over shading?

8

Household extensions:

- Does the proposed design respect the character of the area and the immediate neighbourhood, and does it have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties in relation to privacy, overbearing or overshadowing impact?
- Is the roof form of the extension appropriate to the original dwelling (considering angle of pitch)?
- Do the proposed materials match those of the existing dwelling?
- In case of side extensions, does it retain important gaps within the street scene and avoid a 'terracing effect'?
- Are there any proposed dormer roof extensions set within the roof slope?
- Does the proposed extension respond to the existing pattern of window and door openings?
- Is the side extension set back from the front of the house?
- Does the extension offer the opportunity to retrofit energy efficiency measures to the existing building?
- Can any materials be re-used in situ to reduce waste and embodied carbon?

9

Building materials and surface treatment:

- What is the distinctive material in the area?
- Does the proposed material harmonise with the local materials?
- Does the proposal use high-quality materials?
- Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves and roof details been addressed in the context of the overall design?
- Does the new proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?
- Are recycled materials, or those with high recycled content proposed?

9 (continued)

Building materials and surface treatment:

- Has the embodied carbon of the materials been considered and are there options which can reduce the embodied carbon of the design? For example, wood structures and concrete alternatives.
- Can the proposed materials be locally and/or responsibly sourced? E.g. FSC timber, or certified under BES 6001, ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems?

10

Car parking:

- What parking solutions have been considered?
- Are the car spaces located and arranged in a way that is not dominant or detrimental to the sense of place?
- Has planting been considered to soften the presence of cars?
- Does the proposed car parking compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?
- Have the needs of wheelchair users been considered?
- Can electric vehicle charging points be provided?
- Can secure cycle storage be provided at an individual building level or through a central/ communal facility where appropriate?
- If covered car ports or cycle storage is included, can it incorporate roof mounted photovoltaic panels or a biodiverse roof in its design?

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Proposals for the High Street

05

5. Proposals for the High Street

This chapter proposes interventions to improve the walking environment on the High Street

5.1 Introduction

The High Street forms the main spine in Codicote. As the backbone of its centre, it concentrates most of its retail and Listed Buildings and is therefore a key gathering space and transport corridor in Codicote. However, it suffers from issues related to its role as a the local B656 connector such as traffic congestion and pavement parking. These prevent it from reaching its full potential as a vibrant shopping street and do not enhance the quality of its historic setting.

This chapter first identifies the constraints and opportunities on the High Street, adding to the analysis of the High Street character area undertaken in Chapter 3. Flowing from this analysis, a series of recommendations, both short- and long-term, are then proposed to address the main issues that the High Street faces.

It must be noted that the scope of this report excluded any technical studies on topics such as ground conditions, traffic and drainage. This report is just a step in that direction, enabling the community to progress from an informed position.

5.2 Analysis

This section provides an analysis that focuses on the public realm and transport issues that the High Street is currently facing. For an analysis on the High Street character area, please see Section 3.2.

The main observations include:

- Most of Codicote's retail activities are concentrated along the High Street, which generates a large share of both pedestrian and vehicular traffic in Codicote as well as demand for parking;
- Within Codicote, the High Street serves as a distributor road that provides access to most of its residential streets. There is evidence of servicing competing with parking giving rise to difficulty servicing local businesses as well as disrupting traffic flows;
- Many of the residential properties fronting onto the High Street do not have off-street parking;
- The High Street is composed of one traffic lane in each direction, with widths varying along its length. Due to its role as a section of the B656 linking the A1(M) at Welwyn with Hitchin, it carries a heavy amount of traffic;
- Traffic problems within the village will be exacerbated with the planned future development of 330 homes;
- There is a pinch point around the chemist and the bakery where the road narrows and there is traffic parking for the chemist, the bakery and exiting New Town;
- There is a large amount of plant and construction traffic;
- Based on the most recent five years of data, there has been a small cluster of collisions adjacent to The Goat Inn/ Costcutter; this should be considered as the High Street proposals are developed;
- The width of pavements varies considerably. In places it is under 2 metres, which is not satisfactory for wheelchair and buggy access;
- Parking is a key issue along the High Street and in the village centre. Kerbside regulations are limited to junctions and crossovers with very few designated parking bays; most of the on-street parking is informal and impedes the flow of traffic;
- Pavement parking is widespread along the High Street. This produces a poor walking environment by further restricting pavement space, restricting visibility, and creating a vehicle-dominated environment;
- There is no off-street public parking within the town centre to serve local businesses;
- Bus stop provision is currently low-quality and would benefit from being upgraded as part of any improvement scheme;

- There are only two signalised pedestrian crossings on the High Street: one north of Dollimore Close, and one north of St Alban's Road;
- The pavement material, which consists mainly of tarmac and concrete kerbs, has aged poorly and contributes negatively to the quality of the public realm;
- The upcoming lowering of the speed limit in the built-up area from 30 to 20 mph could reduce noise and air pollution, and expand the set of available traffic calming and pedestrian improvement interventions; and
- The Parish Council aspires to acquire land for the construction of an off-street public car park to alleviate parking pressure on the High Street. One potential site is the current BT building.

As outlined in the Local Transport strategy as well as responses to planning applications, it had been expected that the A1(M) upgrade would result in a significant reduction in through traffic, particularly during congested periods on the motorway. However, as of 15 April 2023 the National Highways initiative to introduce smart motorways has been cancelled, including cancellation of the proposed upgrade of the A1(M) which would have increased the capacity of the motorway to three lanes. As a result, the congestion issues on this stretch of the motorway will persist and could be exacerbated by growth in the local and wider areas.

Codicote is understood to experience congestion as a result of traffic using the High Street as part of a route to avoid delays on the motorway. With the cancellation of the A1(M) upgrade this is likely to persist for the foreseeable future and this should be taken into account in the consideration of further development in the local area. Capacity increases within Codicote are only likely to increase the volumes of traffic using this route, so preference should be given to improvements for pedestrians and to the operation of village-related traffic, seeking to provide additional capacity for through traffic.

The Neighbourhood Plan indicates that this through traffic includes significant volumes of HGV traffic. Measures to discourage HGV through traffic from using Codicote, especially to avoiding motorway congestion, would be beneficial to the village and it is suggested that surveys be undertaken to quantify the level of HGV traffic using the High Street. Depending on the outcome of this, it may be appropriate to consider whether weight limit restrictions (except for access) would be appropriate.

Figure 48: Only two formal pedestrian crossings available along the length of the High Street

Figure 49: Informal kerbside parking straddling pavements, impeding the flow of traffic and reducing pedestrian access

Figure 50: Car-dominated public realm that does not enhance the architectural quality of the High Street

Figure 51: Ageing, uneven and unattractive paving materials

Figure 52: Additional traffic and parking pressure caused by new development

Figure 53: Low-quality bus stop provision

Figure 54: High architectural quality of historic streetscape

Figure 55: Diversity of retail offer in comparison with the size of Codicote

Figure 56: Potential site to be acquired and converted into a new off-street public car parking space

5.6 Recommendations and potential solutions

The High Street would benefit from improvements to parking and pedestrian amenity through changes to the parking and operations of the High Street in the village centre. The following should be considered:

5.6.1 Parking study

A parking study, including surveys, should be undertaken to quantify the existing on-street parking demand on the High Street as well as side roads where appropriate. This should include night-time/dawn surveys to establish residential parking demand.

5.6.2 Car parking strategy

A car parking strategy should be developed to seek to address the existing on-street parking issues:

How to best meet the needs of existing residents on the High Street who have no alternative parking opportunity:

- Provision of marked on-street parking bays near residential properties; and
- Consideration of whether a resident permit system would be suitable and whether this would be supported by local residents.

How to best meet the needs of local businesses on the High Street:

- Consider the need to provide on-street parking bays to serve the businesses on the High Street, these could be restricted to short durations in order to avoid them being used by residents;
- Provision of places that vehicles can deliver to business premises.

F.57

Figure 57: Use of stone channels to delineate parking areas in Lavenham, Suffolk (source: Historic England)

Improve vehicular flow through the High-Street:

- To remove parking from locations which are not considered safe;
- Remove pinch points as far as possible, however it should be noted that a balance needs to be struck in order to avoid creating additional capacity that could result in increased traffic flows, particularly in the context of the A1(M) upgrades being cancelled. The aim will be to smooth the flow of traffic rather than to increase overall capacity.

Short-and long-term solutions:

- The aim will be to ensure that sufficient parking is available to local residents and to maintain operational needs of local businesses;
- In the short-term the strategy would be to convert the largely uncontrolled parking to a more formalised arrangement which seeks to rationalise parking to where it can best be accommodated and identify locations where parking should be removed/prohibited. On footway parking should be avoided in order to improve amenity for pedestrians.
- In the longer term, if an off-street car park can be secured, it will provide the opportunity to further reduce the availability of car parking on the High Street, providing the opportunity for enhanced footway and public realm improvements. This could also provide an opportunity to convert areas of the carriageway with excess width into pedestrian areas.

5.6.3 Review of collisions

A review of detailed collision reports should be undertaken, especially considering the cluster of collisions between The Goat Inn and Costcutter to determine whether there are any common causation factors which should be taken into account in developing proposals for the High Street.

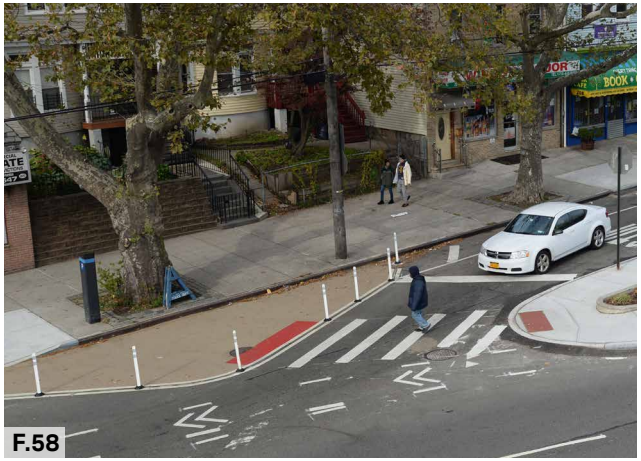

Figure 58: Kerb buildouts increase pedestrian space and prevent pavement parking at key locations (source: New York City Department of Transportation)

Figure 59: Kerb buildouts provide opportunities to convert excess road space into pedestrian space or street greening (source: Cycling Embassy of Denmark)

5.6.4 Public realm and pedestrian improvements

In combination with the parking study, options to improve the pedestrian amenity and reduce the severance impact of traffic should be investigated. Formalising parking provision should remove the current tendency for vehicles to park half on the footway.

- The provision of additional pedestrian crossing points should be considered given that the two existing crossings are at opposite ends of the village centre some 300m apart;
- A review of desire lines should be undertaken to establish suitable points for crossing(s) to be provided. This could be a combination of informal refuge crossings where pedestrian demand is lower and controlled crossings where key desire lines exist;
- Measures to improve the experience of passengers waiting at bus stops should be investigated. Measures could include raising the pavement at bus stops to help boarding and alighting. Where the width of the pavement allows, bus stops could include shelters with seating;
- Proposals for the High Street should identify potential measures to converting carriageway areas with surplus width into pavements to provide more pedestrian space. Long-term solutions would entail reconstructing the public realm with high-quality material that highlights the historic setting of the High Street. In the short term, quicker and cheaper solutions could be envisaged such as delineating additional pedestrian areas with movable planters; and
- Should a site be selected for a new off-street public car park, it should be designed to minimise the impact of vehicles. This can be done by soft landscaping to screen unsympathetic views and reduce impervious surfaces. Public lighting should be designed to ensure safety while minimising light pollution.

Figure 60: Reconstruction of a commercial street in Altrincham with high-quality materials (source: Vantage Point Photo)

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Applying the design guidelines and codes

06

6. Applying the design guidelines and codes

This section seeks to apply the design guidelines and codes set in the previous chapter to Site CD3 to ensure it integrates with its setting.

6.1 Introduction

The aim of this study is to apply the design guidelines and codes of the previous chapter to Site CD3, taking into account site constraints including topography, vegetation, access, and neighbouring land uses.

The 2.4 ha site was allocated for housing in the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 (Policy CD3: Land North of The Close) alongside three other sites in Codicote (CD1, CD2, and CD5). The Local Plan expects Site CD3 to have a capacity for 48 new homes, which would amount to a density of 19 dwellings per hectare (dph). The policy also calls for:

- Contribution towards the expansion of Codicote Primary School;
- Measures to mitigate the cumulative impact of development on the village centre and minor roads;
- Sustainable drainage solutions and other appropriate measures to address existing surface flood risks;
- The sensitive incorporation of Footpaths Codicote 007 and 008 within the site providing a connection from the High Street to the wider countryside; and
- A sensitive design to ensure the appropriate approach to nearby Grade II* listed The Bury.

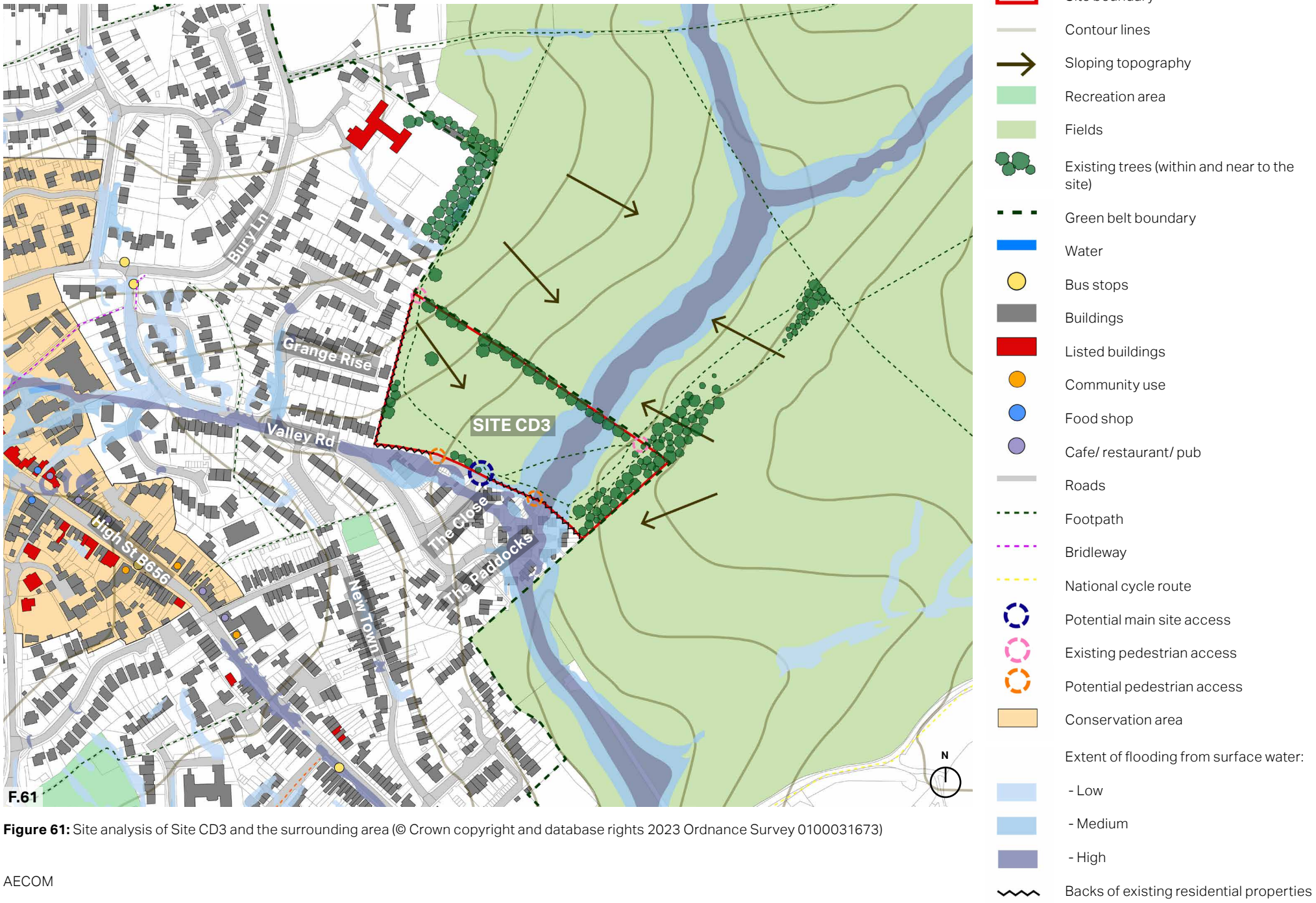


Figure 61: Site analysis of Site CD3 and the surrounding area (© Crown copyright and database rights 2023 Ordnance Survey 0100031673)

6.2 Site analysis

The site is on greenfield land and approximately 2.4 ha in size. It is located on the eastern edge of the village adjacent to existing 20th century cul-de-sac developments.

Natural constraints include a sloping terrain, with higher land at the west of the site and existing trees along the northern edge and the eastern side. The site is currently fieldland.

There are a few footpaths and undesignated paths through the area which are popular with residents and often used for dog walking. These would need to be preserved. The east of the site is subject to high and medium extents of surface water flooding which should be addressed in any development schemes. As stated in North Hertfordshire Local Plan this site requires a detailed drainage strategy.

There are no existing buildings on site. The site adjoins the back gardens of residential properties on the western and southern edges. At the western side there could be overlooking issues over existing properties to the south so an appropriate buffer with trees and vegetation should be used. The Bury, a Grade II* listed heritage asset is located just north of the site. As stated in the North Hertfordshire Local Plan, a heritage impact assessment is needed to ensure development is sensitive to the setting of this heritage asset. The existing treeline on the east edge of the Bury's plot provides some existing screening for development in Site CD3.

The neighbouring area is predominantly characterised by semi-detached houses and short terraces no higher than 2 storeys. There are areas of smaller, lower-cost housing in this area such as The Paddocks and there is existing demand for greater provision of starter homes which could be an appropriate typology for this site.

There is one potential vehicle access point off an existing cul-de-sac, The Close. Currently this is an existing access for pedestrians. There is potential to create additional pedestrian access into the site and integrate with the current network, subject to agreements with landowners. The current shortcut from Valley Road to High Street and New Town could be extended and improved as part of the development of the site.

There is a lack of green space and parks in the immediate area, with just a small play area served by the footpath that connects Valley Road to New Town. There is therefore an opportunity to provide these amenities for both the new development and the existing properties in the area.

Figure 62: View of the public right of way through Site CD3, linking The Close centre to the open countryside

Figure 63: Northward view of Site CD3

Figure 64: View of the site from the backs of neighbouring properties, with an opportunity for a new pedestrian connection

Figure 65: View of the back gardens of the houses facing The Close

Figure 66: The Paddocks, a neighbouring 20th century cul-de-development

Figure 67: Eastward view of The Paddocks showing the open countryside at the back of the properties

6.3 Site layout

This section presents a masterplanning option, created to illustrate the application of the design guidelines introduced previously. The plan allows for the retention of most trees and woodland, which would be integrated into a scheme for up to 48 new housing units on 2.5ha of residential development at an average density of 19 dwellings per hectare (dph). New roads and footpaths are proposed. The main characteristics of the proposal are summarised below:

Access, parking and utilities

- Development should integrate with existing road, pedestrian and cycling networks in Codicote Parish and enhance them. For example, the masterplanning option proposes an improved pedestrian link from the High Street, through the site and to the north into the countryside, with further links also to The Bury;
- Streets are designed for low-speed traffic, with a gently meandering layout that still enables easy wayfinding. It reflects existing street widths and layouts of the surrounding area;
- On-plot parking is provided for each residential unit, with additional street parking spaces within the site to accommodate visitor parking. Parking provision follows standards set out in the North Hertfordshire Vehicle Parking at New Development Supplementary Planning supplementary planning document. Parking provision must be sufficient to ensure there is no overflow parking onto the access road, The Close; and
- Trees are encouraged to border streets to provide shading and act as natural traffic calming features.

Built form

- Buildings are oriented to front onto the streets; and
- Buildings overlook the proposed green spaces and footpaths to provide natural surveillance.

Views and vistas

- The massing and height of new houses take the topography of the site into consideration. Houses proposed on higher ground to the west of the site are orientated to avoid overlooking properties and green spaces and buffers are positioned between backs new development and existing houses;
- Bungalow or lower-height building typologies could be appropriate for the higher ground in the west of the site; and
- Areas of open space within the site are placed to maintain continuity with the rural and open character.

Figure 68: Potential layout for Site CD3 (© Crown copyright and database rights 2023 Ordnance Survey 0100031673)

Architectural details and eco design

- Architectural details and construction materials should demonstrate an intelligent understanding of the local vernacular; and
- Due to the surface water flood risk, as previously shown in the site analysis, SuDS are proposed. These are incorporated as a blue feature into a proposed green space in the eastern part of the site.

Green infrastructure and landscape

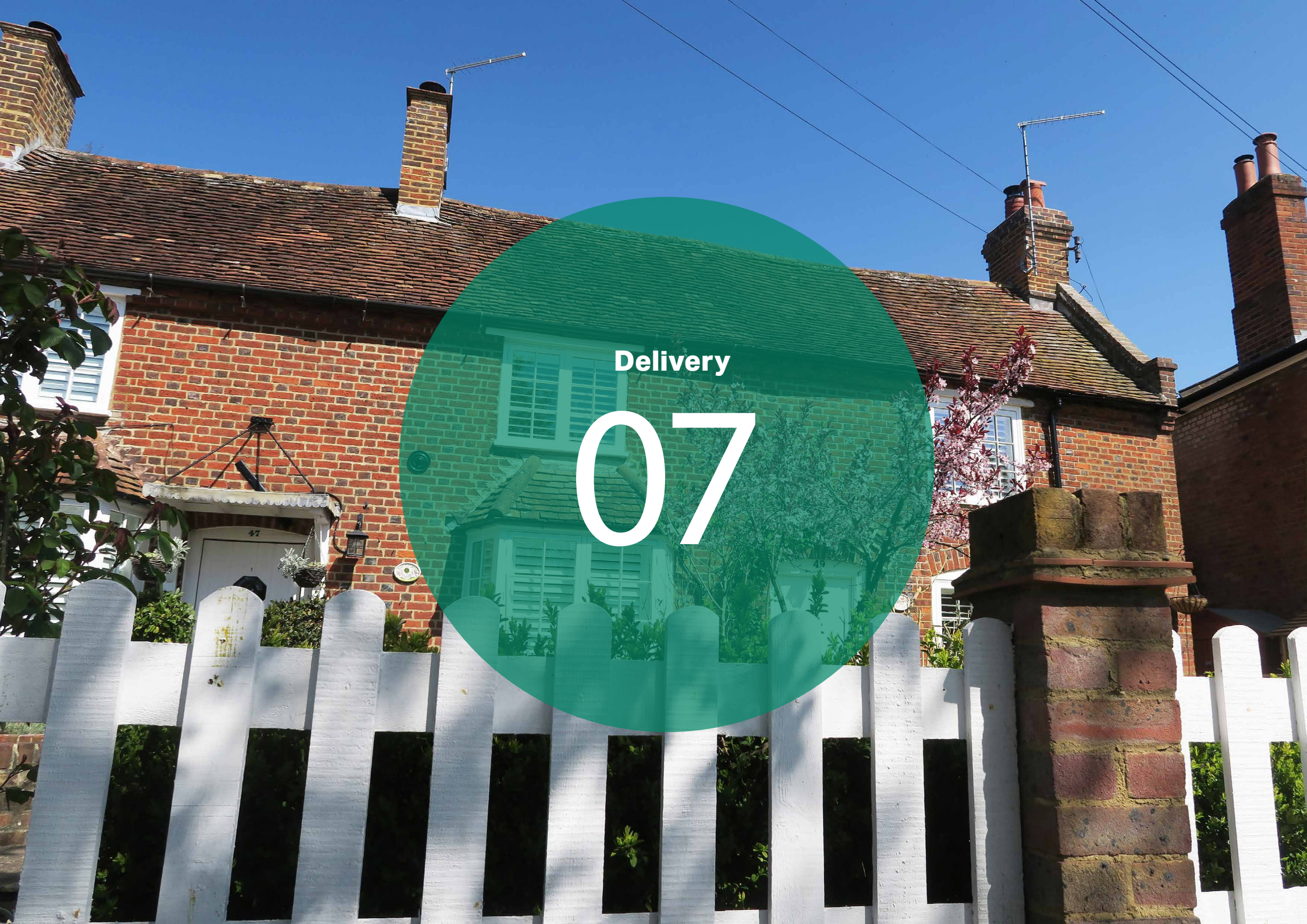
- New development retains existing trees and hedgerows and incorporates them into the new design; and
- Small local green spaces with opportunities for play areas are proposed along with residential development to benefit the new development and existing residents of Codicote.

Development edges

- Edges are planted with vegetation and green buffers. Furthermore, the green space to the east acts as a transition to the surrounding open countryside.

Pattern of growth and layout of buildings

- New development has short blocks to provide a choice of well-overlooked pedestrian routes and maximise connectivity with the rest of the settlement; and
- The corner buildings on the site should have both side façades animated with doors and/ or windows.


Delivery
07

7. Delivery

7.1 How to use this guide

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

A valuable way they can be used is as part of a process of co-design and involvement that takes account of local preferences and expectations of design quality. In this way the guidance and codes can help to facilitate conversations on the various topics that should help to align expectations and help understand the balancing of key issues. A design code alone will not automatically secure optimum design outcomes.

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

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