

Planning context and introduction

Bowmans Cross has been identified by Hertsmere Borough Council in the Draft Hertsmere Local Plan as the location for a new community to help meet future housing needs in the local area.

The Draft Local Plan sets the Council's vision for Hertsmere to 2038, which includes the requirement for approximately 12,000 new homes across the Borough Council area, alongside jobs, infrastructure and services. The identification of Bowmans Cross forms an important part of a strategy focused on sustainable growth for the local area and it is proposed the development would deliver no more than 6,000 homes.

The area of Bowmans Cross is currently designated Green Belt and is home to a range of activities including quarrying, waste to energy production, offices, farming and equestrian businesses.

To help us develop plans for Bowmans Cross, this website shares the latest thinking about the development. You will find a number of questions at the end of each section, beginning with 'a nature-led development.' You can submit your feedback in each section before moving on to the next.



The plan shows the perimeter of the land allocated in the Draft Local Plan – within the red line. About a third of this area will not be developed, a third will be homes, shops and business space, and a third will be green space, parks and woodlands. The area marked in yellow shows where new homes, facilities and businesses, and new open spaces will be created.

Green Belt development

The site of Bowmans Cross is currently designated as Green Belt and parts of the site form a diverse ecological habitat, while other parts have seen industrial activity, like quarrying, on large parts of the land.

Green Belt is a national policy designed to provide important green space and separation between communities and, in the case of parts of Hertfordshire, the outward spread of Greater London. Approximately 80% of Hertsmere is designated as Green Belt. The boundaries were defined 40 years ago and have remained largely unchanged since then.

The extent of the Green Belt in Hertsmere means that the Council has some hard choices to make to meet the required housing needs of the local area.

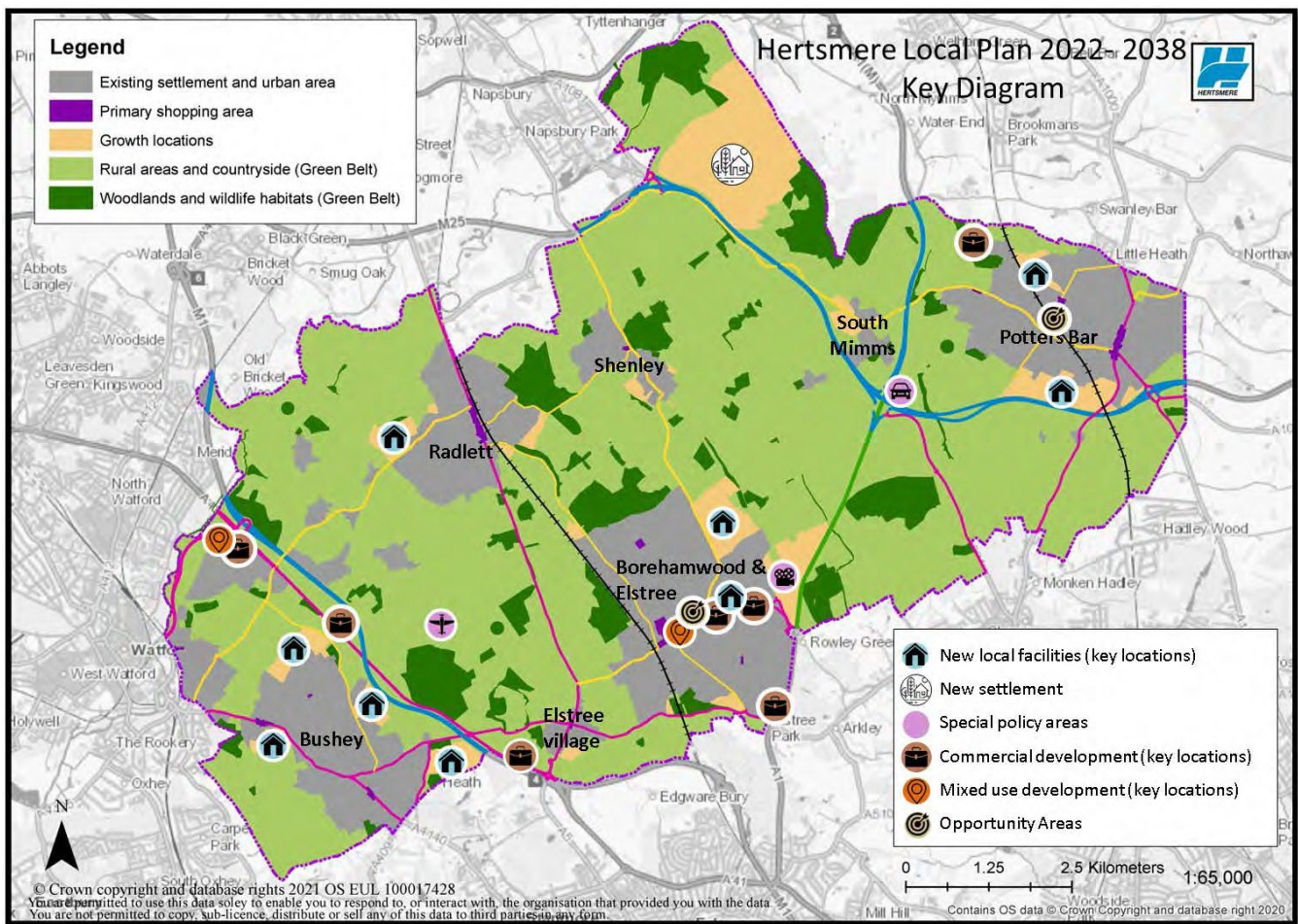
The development of a new settlement is considered essential to support the Council's spatial strategy for growth and to help meet its objectively assessed housing needs both now and in the future.

Why Bowmans Cross?

The area of Bowmans Cross that would need to be removed from the Green Belt represents 4% of the overall Green Belt in Hertsmere. The proposals ensure a new Green Belt boundary would be established to protect and maintain a clear distinction between communities.

Alongside this, the overall design of the new development will be landscape and nature-led, to ensure that the natural assets of the area are protected and enhanced within and around the new development.

Critically, the vision also ensures that green space is opened up for local communities to enjoy: ensuring cycling, walking and equestrian routes are increased through enhancing existing Rights of Way.



Hertsmere Local Plan 2022 - 2038

Who is Urban&Civic?

Urban&Civic is the masterdeveloper leading the design, development and delivery of the proposed new community at Bowmans Cross.

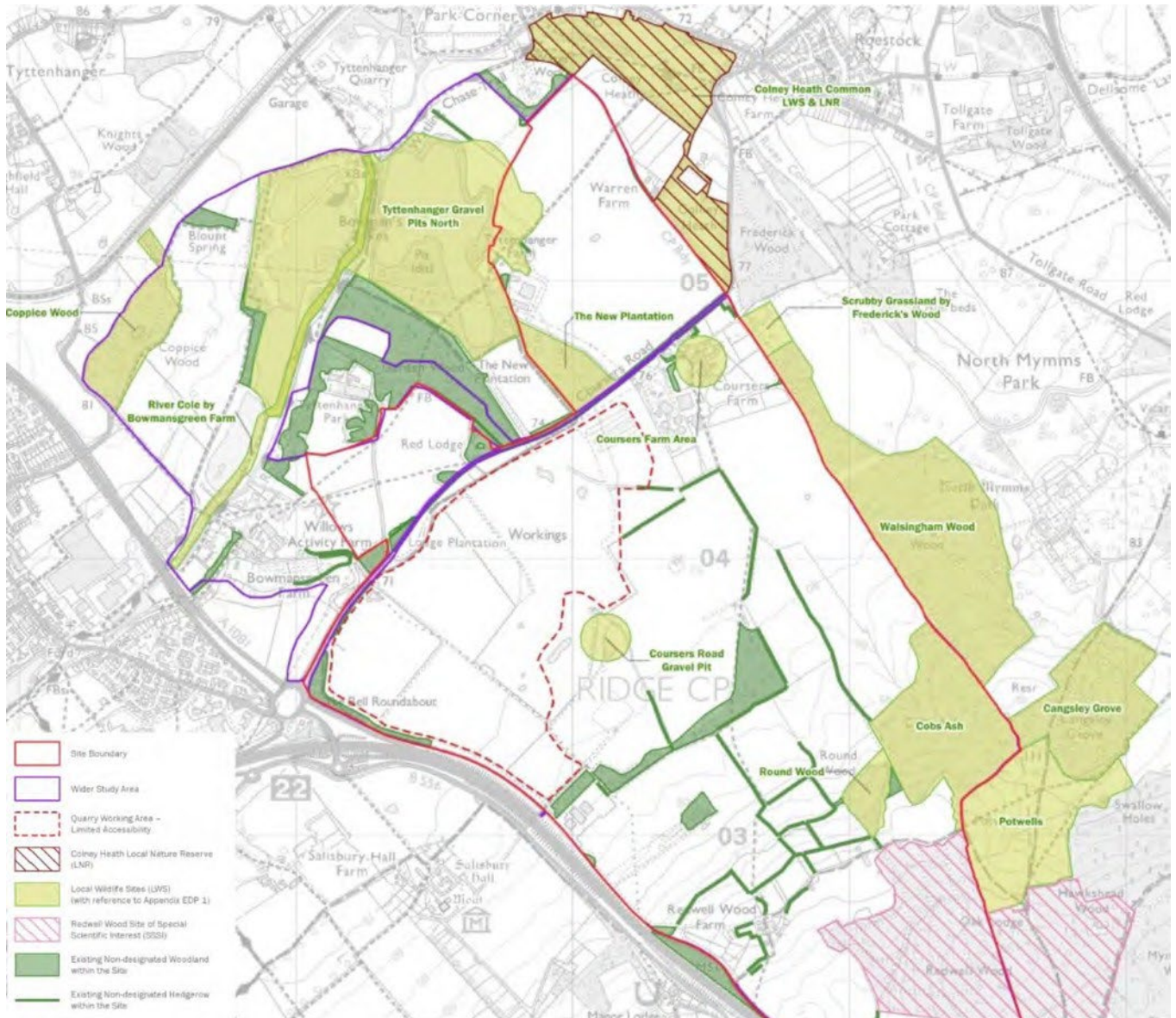
With a long tradition of brownfield development and regeneration, Urban&Civic is committed to designing, delivering and supporting the long-term maintenance of sustainable communities, always listening to and engaged with local communities.

We are at an early stage in the development process for Bowmans Cross and are working with the Tyttenhanger Estate and local partners to define the right approach to development here. This exhibition and the team here today are the first stage of listening to our neighbours, to ensure any plans coming forward work with local aspirations, address your concerns, and bring forward a place we can all be proud of and enjoy.

For more information about us, visit: www.urbandandcivic.com

A nature-led development

This area is home to a rich variety of landscapes, habitats and species. The proposals protect and enhance these special locations and the species that call them home. Part of this approach will be to provide over 70 hectares (173 acres) of new park and woodland, which will be designed to act as a buffer: attracting and supporting people to get out and enjoy nature, while protecting the more sensitive habitat areas.



Key local sites for nature in and around the development are shown above. These have formed the starting point of the plans to ensure they are protected and enhanced.

Some core principles we have developed to support our work so far include:

Woodland:

All ancient seminatural woodland will be preserved and provided with at least a 30– 50m buffer. Newer woodland will have a minimum 20m buffer. Working with local partners, the detailed design of paths, information boards and features will encourage people away from the most sensitive habitats.

Hedgerows and trees:

The hedgerow and trees network will be strengthened with infill planting and managed for nature. Its veteran trees will be celebrated as focal points around the development.

Ponds, streams and ditches:

Many of the existing water features are in poor condition, frequently drying out and heavily overgrown. These will be enhanced and supported by a wider sustainable water management approach, which will see the existing stream reprofiled and planted to create a valuable wildlife corridor. Enhancement of the existing ditches will also create a network of blue (water) infrastructure, connecting across the wider area, providing both sustainable water management systems, and important wetland habitats for nature.

New woodlands

Watling Chase Community Forest

Alongside the existing woodland, the development would bring forward a major new tree planting programme as part of the Watling Chase Community Forest. With all they do for carbon reduction, nature and people, we have an aspiration to plant thousands of new trees within the lifetime of the development.

Trees being planted will be drawn from species already occurring in the local area. We will also look at species that are able to tolerate the changing climate, as well as support the absorption of carbon.



Redwell Wood

Bowmans' Heroes

Here are some of the many species we will be working hard to provide better homes for as part of enhancing the natural environment.



Tree Sparrows

Smaller and rarer than house sparrows, the UK tree sparrow population suffered an estimated 93% decline between 1970 and 2008 and has only slowly begun to grow their numbers. We will continue to work with the Herts Bird Club to support its Tree Sparrow Recovery Project, which seeks to increase numbers and safeguard the future of tree sparrows within Hertfordshire.



Bats

Part of the role of the network of woodland edge and hedgerows will be to provide feeding routes for bats; including some dark zones, protected from light pollution. Any old buildings or older trees on site with the potential for bats to roost will also be protected.



Great Crested Newts

These are an important species, not only because of their rarity but because they represent a healthy ecosystem. A newt strategy will be developed around the existing population, which identifies opportunities to enhance the current ponds and create a network of new ponds, allowing this species to spread from its current location at Coursers Farm throughout the wider site.



Badgers

The site and surrounding landscape support a number of badger setts. The proposed network of new woodland, orchard and grassland habitats will link existing woodland habitats that are used by badgers and give them opportunities to create new setts and forage widely across the site's green spaces.

The developing vision

The natural assets at Bowmans Cross are at the heart of the vision that is emerging. It is this vision we want to test with you through these early engagement events and our online consultation. Discussions to date with local partners and parish councils, and feedback from previous discussions about this area, have helped shape the following key pledges that underpin the vision for the development:



Concept masterplan

Key pledges:

- **Shaped by the environment:** enhancing the natural world, embracing and protecting key environmental assets.
- **Connected but distinct:** ensuring the identity of local communities are protected, but the facilities coming forward can be easily accessed by all through sustainable transport connections.
- **Focusing on local:** both now and in the future - providing homes for all, with the quality infrastructure, space and facilities needed to live healthy, sustainable lives.
- **Net zero carbon:** ensuring a place fit for the future, with low impact living.

A huge part of that will be creating a whole new way of living within nature and creating new places for nature within and alongside new development.

We call this concept **Park Living** and want to explore what this means with you.

The next few pages will show how our plans are developing to deliver these pledges, but we welcome your feedback on the pledges, alongside the way we plan to take them forward.

Urban&Civic will not only take the evolving design through consultation and planning, but also into and through delivery: including timing and phasing all of the proposed facilities so they are delivered when needed against the homes being occupied by new residents.

This will be part of a legally binding planning framework that Urban&Civic will sign and stand by throughout the duration of the project. We will continue to talk to you, work with you and listen to you at each stage of design and delivery.



Illustration of how a local centre in the development might look: providing shops and cafes as well as key community facilities.



A huge parkland along the south of the development will provide over a 65m wide and 10m high buffer from the M25, and include water features, walking, cycling and horse riding routes.



The plans have been influenced by the shape of the land, working with the heights to minimise visual impact for the wider area.



The development will work with existing businesses on site and could include refurbishment of barns and buildings to deliver new spaces for businesses, shops and leisure, alongside them.

Bowmans Cross would deliver



No more than 6,000 homes of these up to 2,400 will be affordable homes targeted to meet local needs



Up to 5 primary schools



Up to 2 secondary schools



Health Centre



30 hectares (74 acres) of new parkland



40 hectares (99 acres) of new woodland and habitats



Allotments and orchards



Sustainable Transport Hub



District and local centres including shops, community centres, cafes and other amenities



Many new kms of routes for walking, cycling, horse riding and health and fitness trails



New sports facilities including a 3G pitch



Energy centre with localised renewable energy production

Shaped by the environment

Bowmans Cross currently has a mixed landscape across the site, which ranges from quarrying to ancient woodland, equestrian centres to homes for some of our most timid bird species. Across this extraordinary mix, the team has been working hard to understand the local environmental conditions, carry out surveys of habitats and species, and talk to a range of local partners to develop an approach to test with local communities and partners.



The landscape is a fundamental element of the proposed development:

- supporting the protection, enhancement and expansion of historic woodland, grassland and wetland features across the area. Ensuring a net gain for nature.
- drawing on Hertfordshire's historic tradition – not only as home to the world's first garden city, but its support of parkland through the centuries providing a high quality of life for people.

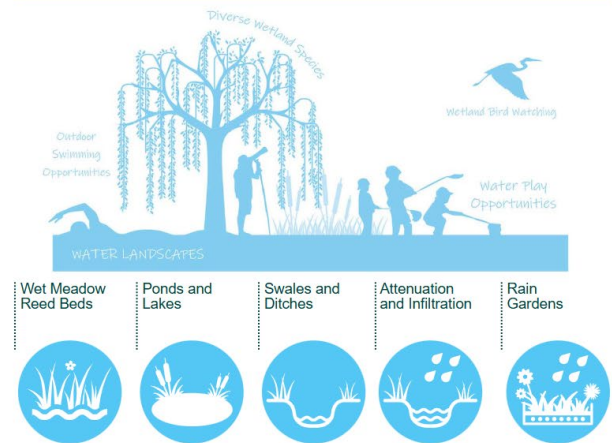
A huge part of that will be creating a whole new way of living within nature and creating new places for nature within and alongside new development.

The strategy we are developing looks to provide four landscape types as part of a designed, delivered and managed approach to Bowmans Cross.

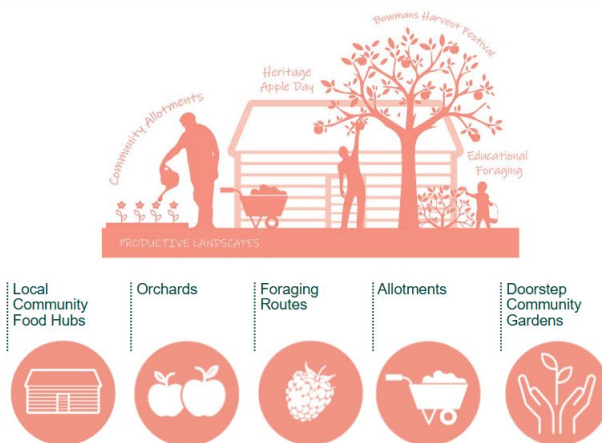
Biodiverse Landscapes



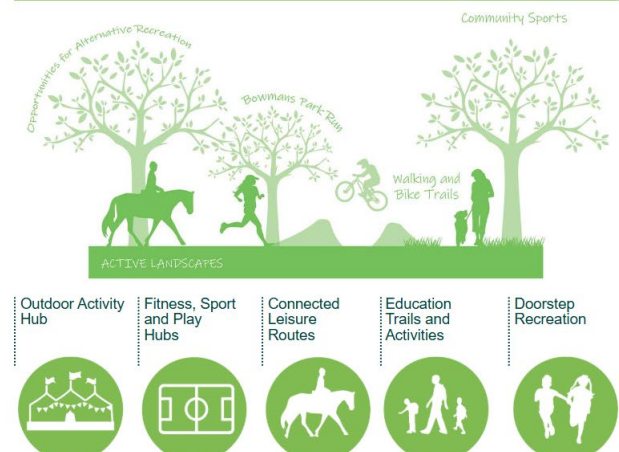
Water Landscapes



Productive Landscapes



Active Landscapes



Connected but distinct

Fundamental to our vision for Bowmans Cross is to bring forward a new community that forms a distinct new settlement; nestled into the landscape; and is a good neighbour to the local area. Regardless of District Council boundaries, we want all the neighbouring communities to play a role in shaping what comes forward here.

We know that each of the existing communities around the development wants to maintain their culture and identity. We are committed to embedding that into the plans for Bowmans Cross. Part of this will be through significant Green Belt secured within the design and additional green spaces set out in the landscape strategy.

We also know that transport is one of your biggest concerns, and that access to services and facilities can be a major challenge. So, we want your input to get that balance right.



There are eight rail stations within bus and bike distance of Bowmans Cross

Well connected

Bowmans Cross has all the key foundations of a sustainable development location, with good connections to local public transport networks and the opportunity to invest in active travel routes to help connect to nearby places sustainably. Our strategy is to reduce the need to travel by providing everything you need on your doorstep, and then to ensure transport choices are car-last not car-first.

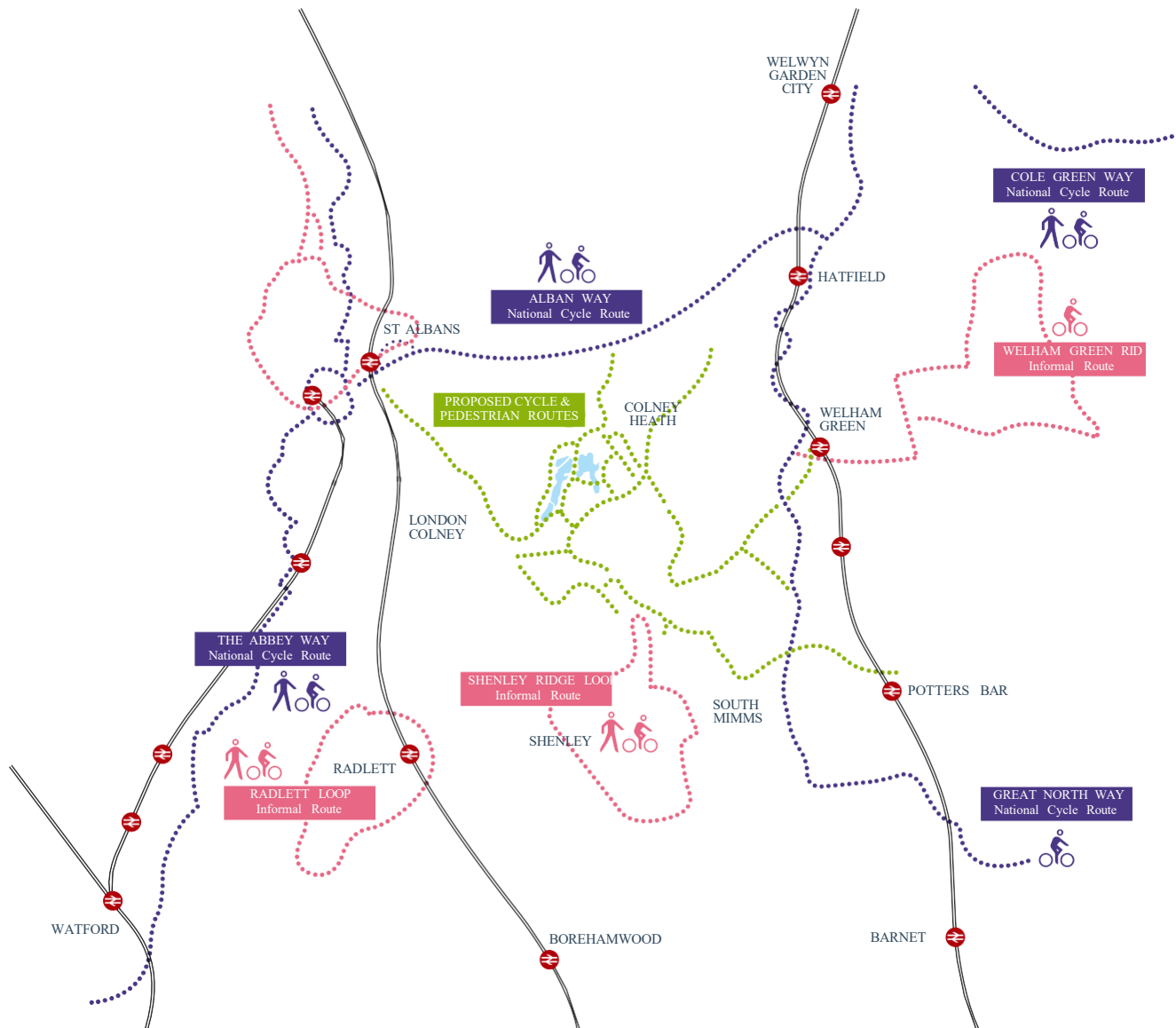
Pedestrian and pedal power

Bowmans Cross will be designed to encourage walking and cycling, with a network of footpaths and cycleways throughout the development and along a redefined Coursers Road spine route. These will connect to key destinations onsite including schools, district centre, local centres, transport hub and employment opportunities.

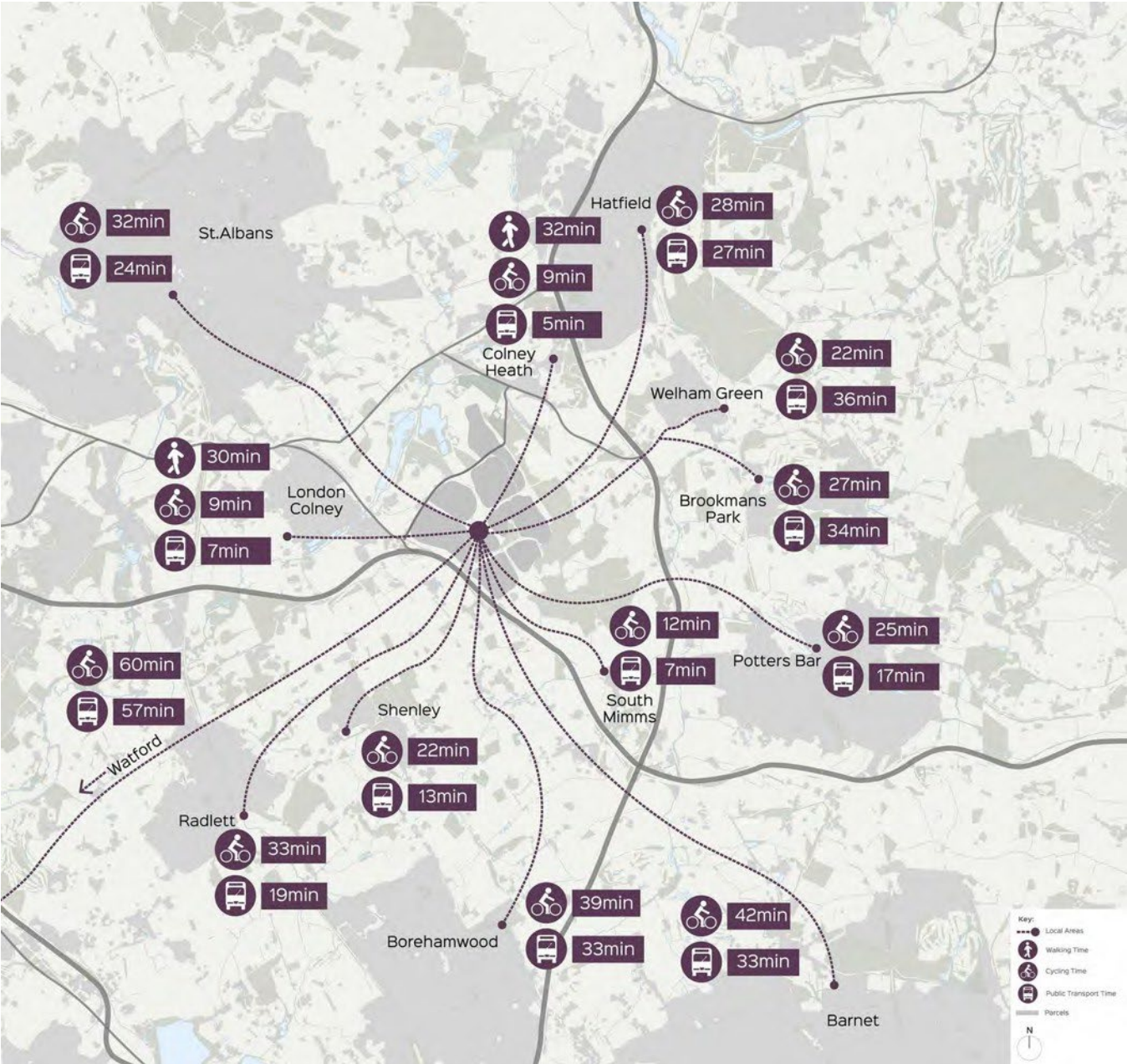
Routes will include segregated cycleways along all primary roads, traffic-free routes within green corridors and on-carriageway cycling on quieter residential roads.



Off site: For journeys further afield, there is an opportunity to create a new network of walking and cycling routes by plugging gaps in the existing infrastructure, providing connections between key destinations, and significantly improving links throughout the local area. This new network would benefit both existing and future residents.



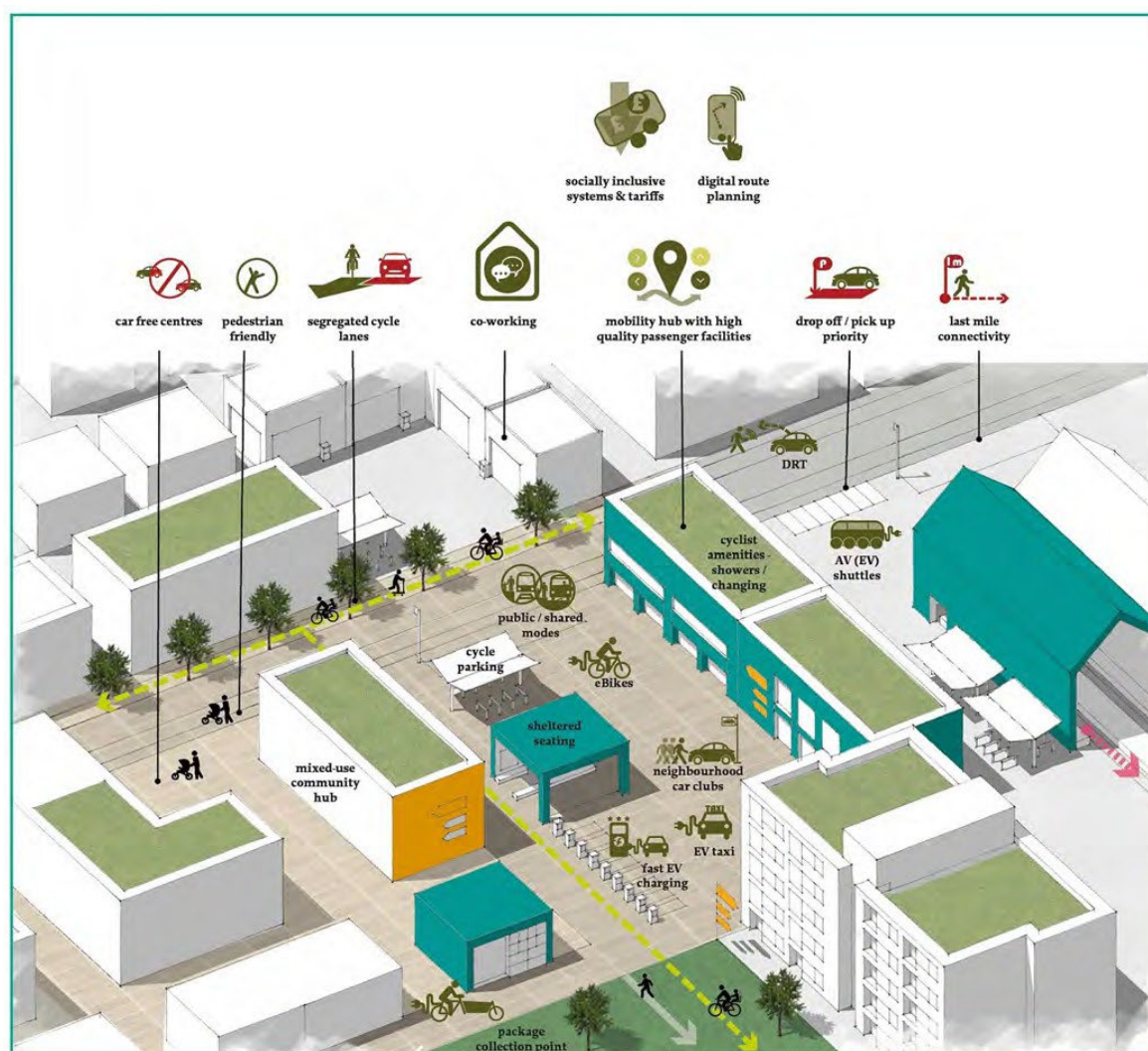
Active modes of transport



Journey times

Sustainable Transport Hub

Our vision is to provide low carbon and active ways of getting about. A Sustainable Transport Hub at Bowmans Cross will provide advice, support and connections so residents and people from across the area have information and access to more sustainable modes of transport; so they choose the car as the last option, not the first.



The hub will include:

- Travel advice and incentives for choosing public transport or active travel connections across the local bus network
- Connections across the local bus network
- Cycle parking and repair areas
- Cycle and e-bike hire schemes
- Car hire and car club facilities
- Parcel drop off and pick up

Bowmans Cross will be designed to support rapid movement of buses through the development, connecting to the Sustainable Transport Hub, and onward to key destinations across the local area, including local towns and railway stations.



Existing and proposed public transport network

Bus-only corridors will be strategically located on the internal road network, with bus gates prioritising bus movements throughout the development. These could also be considered across local villages to help speed up bus times and reliability.

Frequency of services will be increased to key destinations such as St Albans, Radlett, Borehamwood, Watford, Barnet, Enfield and North London.

This in turn will increase services and public transport options through Colney Heath and London Colney, South Mimms and Shenley.

Welcome packs and other incentives and events will promote bus travel, with regular and frequent services subsidised by our planning commitments until services become viable. Coursers Road.

What about Coursers Road?

Stopping people from rat running through local roads and encouraging more people to use buses with quicker journey times can require some radical choices. One option to help us achieve these big shifts in how people get about would be to put a bus gate on Coursers Road.

This would mean you could access the new development from either end of Coursers Road, but not use the road as a through-route. This might just be at peak times, or all the time. It would impact on local drivers, but also significantly cut the traffic through Colney Heath that uses the route as a short cut. We want to know your thoughts as we explore these options.



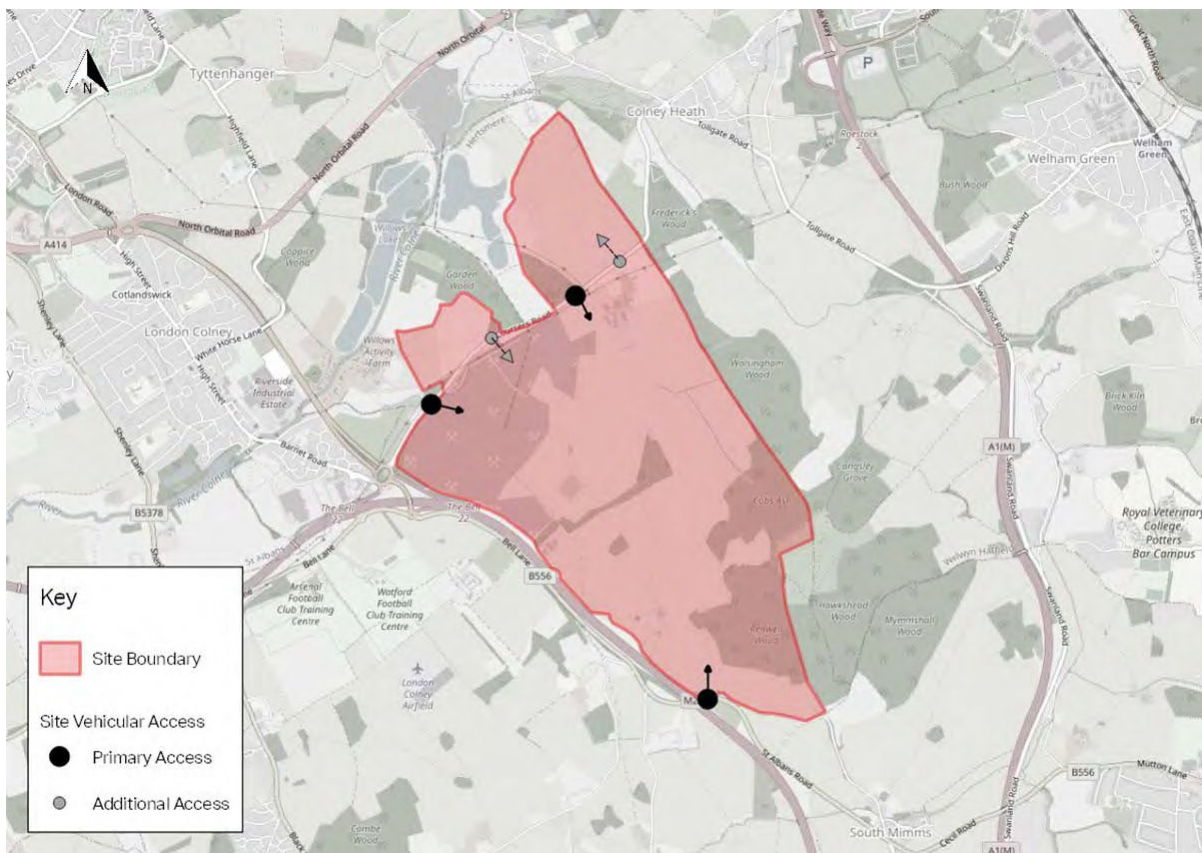
What about the car?

Bowmans Cross will be designed to discourage use of the car.

However we know people will still need to use and access the development by car. There are three primary vehicle accesses to Bowmans Cross (shown on the map):

- Three-arm roundabout on B556 Blackhorse Lane
- Three-arm signal-controlled junction at Coursers Road (West)
- Three-arm signal-controlled junction at Coursers Road (East)

Each of these accesses will serve a third of the development, but there will be no connection between each section to ensure people cannot 'rat run' through the development. The only connections running through the development will be by bus, bike or walking.



Primary vehicle accesses

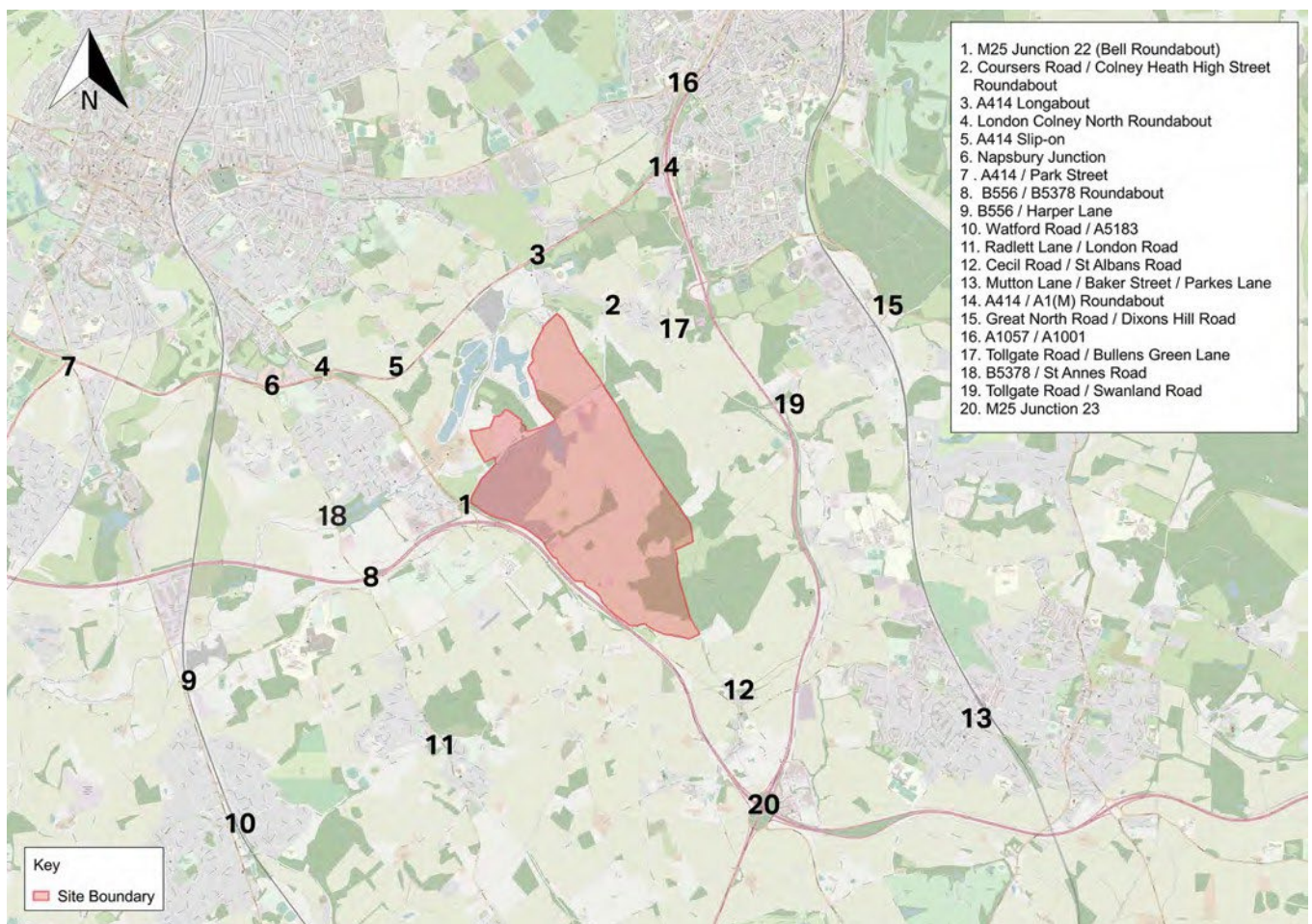
The local road network

We want your experience and views to help shape the sustainable travel strategy, which will commit future residents to swapping their carbased journeys for bus and cycle use. This will deliver a network of cycle and other connections not just within the development, but across the local area: from people's homes to where they need to go.

With the approach agreed, we will then be able to run projections on how the development would impact the local road network. Once that is completed, we would discuss and agree the investment needed in the local roads to create the capacity needed for these additional car journeys with the Transport Authority (Hertfordshire County Council).

This process will include conducting investigations at key locations, where we know there are current pinch points at key times (see map right), and working with local communities and partners to design solutions. We welcome your feedback on these locations, and your experiences of local traffic issues, to ensure we develop the right approach.

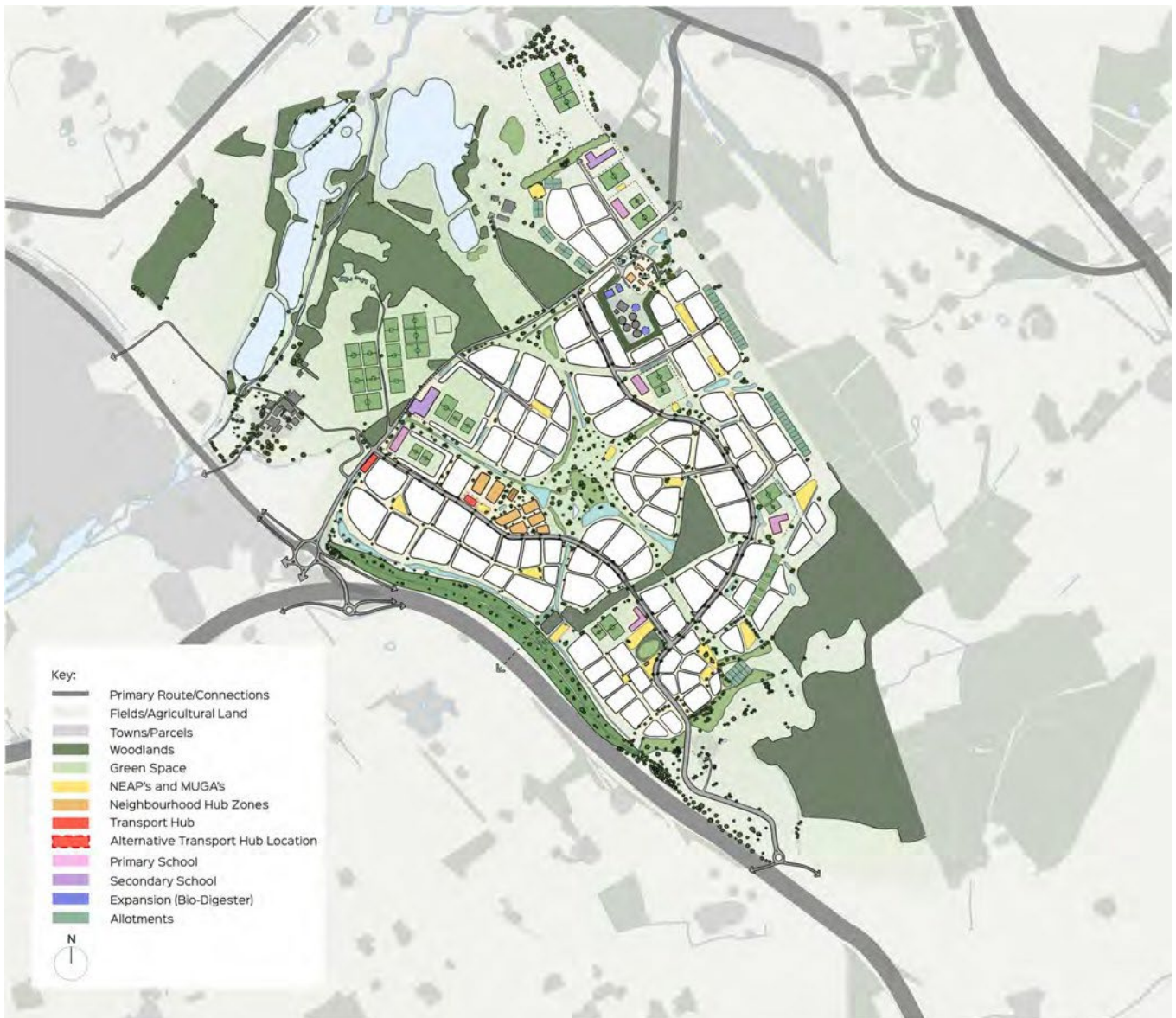
We have started work on a few options for the Bell Roundabout, and have plans on the table for you to talk through with the team or leave comments on. These should ideally include your current experiences and what you would like to see considered in future.



The local road network

Focusing on local

True sustainability comes from having facilities and amenities local to where you live. The vision for Bowmans Cross is to ensure it supports itself and neighbouring communities by bringing forward homes for all, both now and in the future, supported by quality infrastructure, space and facilities needed to live healthy, sustainable lives.



Concept Masterplan

All you need on your doorstep

As part of this commitment, the homes will come forward alongside a range of key facilities including:

Schools:

Up to five primary and two secondary schools, along with nurseries.

Urban&Civic is involved in the design and/or build of over 23 schools across our developments. Schools are a fundamental building block within a community, and we design them to be light, airy and inspiring spaces, where people can meet and spend time together inside and outside these important community hubs. Schools will be delivered at agreed milestones with the County Council and Department for Education.



**Wintringham
Primary
Academy** with
its distinctive
woodland grove.



**Ermine Street
Church
Academy**
opens its arms
to new
residents at
Alconbury
Weald.



**Houlton
Secondary
School**
transformed a
listed building
into a stunning
space for
learning.

Health hub:

Services and facilities will be agreed with local health partners, and a health centre will come forward providing a GP surgery and other health and wellbeing services. This will sit within the network of healthy cycle and walking routes, neighbouring allotments and orchards, so that proactive health advice and green prescriptions can sit hand in hand with clinical care.

We want to hear your experience of current health services to help inform both the timing and nature of these services as the planning process moves forward.

The District Centre will include shops, cafes and key services.

Health and wellbeing will be at the heart of the development, which will also see important facilities brought forward.

The design and layout of the development will be informed by Active Design Principles seeking to encourage people to move about safely by walking and cycling, rather than driving. Green space, key facilities and amenities, and bus stops will be within a short walk of all homes.



District and local centres:

Including shops, community centres, cafes and other services: providing amenities on the doorstep from day one and increasing as the development rolls out.

With three neighbourhood centres, including a District Centre and central park area, the range of facilities will grow as each phase comes forward, within easy and safe access from the homes around it, as well as connections to local villages.

New pitches and sports facilities:

Including a 3G pitch, which will be designed with local sports clubs and national governing bodies to support existing teams and clubs and bring new sporting opportunities to the area.

Active New Communities will seek to bring together and support local clubs and new residents to change their routine to adopt a more healthy lifestyle and enjoy the green space on their doorstep.

Business space:

Will provide local employment opportunities focusing on the creative sector, innovation and incubation space, and flexible, social working space for people living on site or wanting to work locally, alongside High Speed Broadband to support working from home. The employment opportunities coming forward should provide up to 2,000 new jobs.



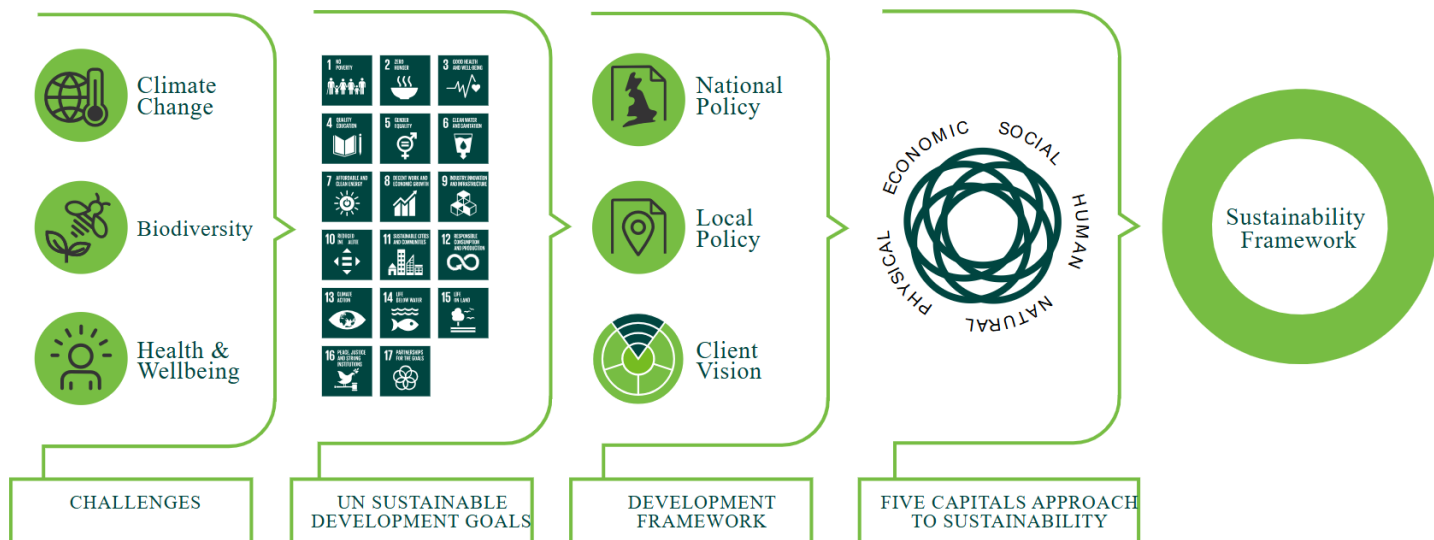
Sustainability

Net Zero Carbon

Bowmans Cross will be a place fit for the future, with low impact living. The opportunity to craft a new community provides a unique opportunity to define a new way of sustainable living, through a net zero carbon development.

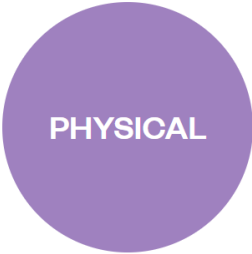
The Sustainability Charter

The Sustainability Charter that will be developed for Bowmans Cross is based on the five pillars of Sustainable Development, which form a wider part of Urban&Civic's commitment to be Net Zero as a company by 2030 and through its developments by 2050.



The five Capitals

These five Capitals are based on the contribution that we believe sustainable development can make in our work. Globally and locally this can support the fight against the three greatest challenges we face: climate change; the threat to nature and biodiversity; and human health and wellbeing.



PHYSICAL

Physical Value creates high quality places and is increased where buildings and infrastructure are designed for longevity, allowing people to navigate easily on foot/by bicycle or using low carbon public transport.



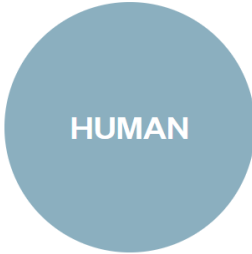
SOCIAL

Social Value is delivered where a great place brings people together and creates a cohesive community of active citizens: not just Bowmans Cross citizens, but ensuring the place respects and provides space for neighbouring communities and new residents to meet.



ECONOMIC

Economic Value is increased where all users of a place feel they have a stake, and a level of ownership and buy-in to the outcomes it is seeking to achieve: from local procurement and showcasing local innovation, to providing apprenticeships and space for local businesses.



HUMAN

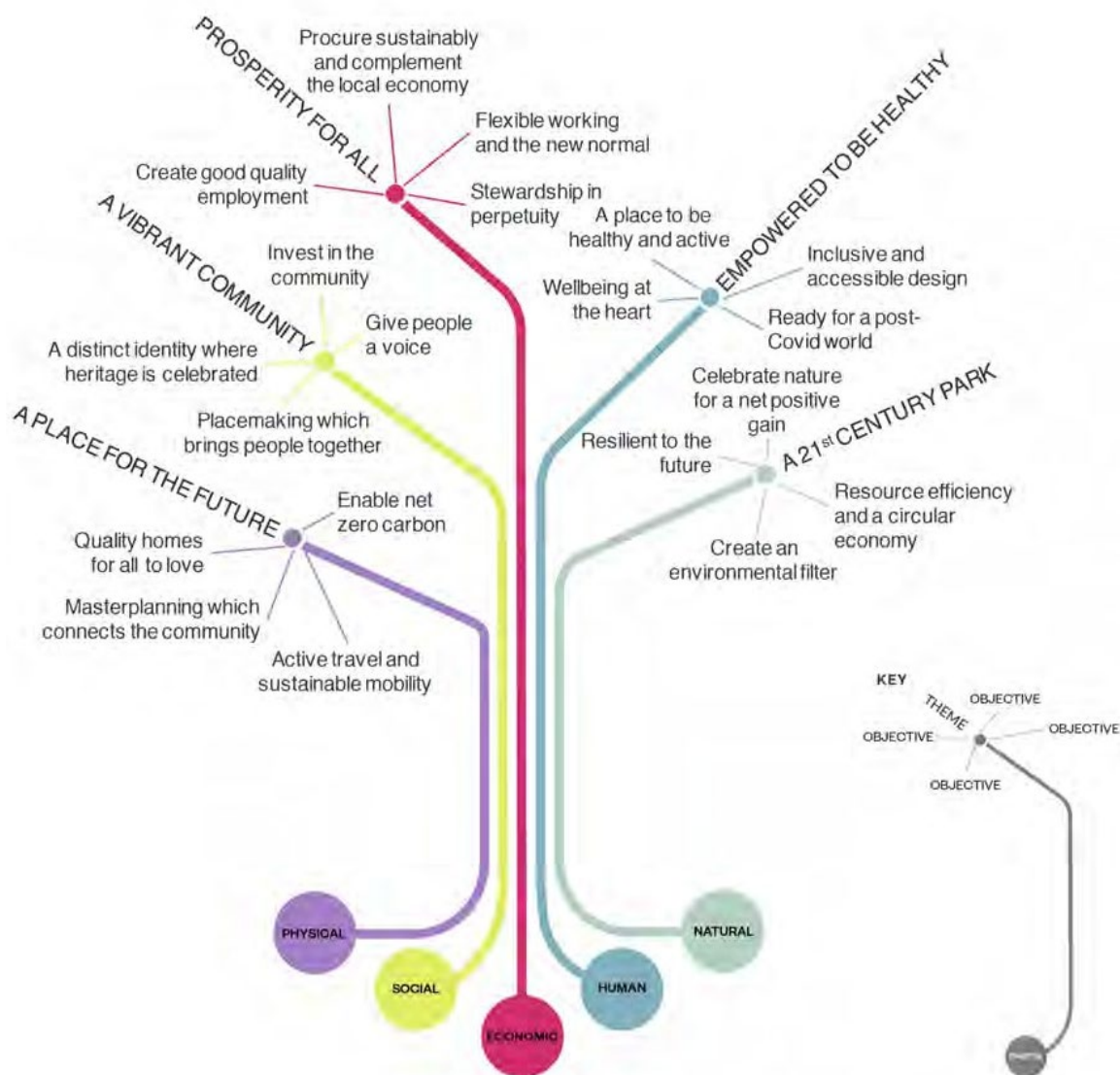
Human Value is grown where quality and longevity of life is improved and happiness is increased; supported by the individual experience of some or all of the other values.



NATURAL

Natural Value is embedded where existing natural assets are protected and new complementary resources delivered, ensuring a net gain for nature and the wider environment.

What that means on the ground:



Energy:

The energy approach – like other areas of the Sustainability Charter – focuses, in the first instance, on reducing the need for power or other resources, then seeking to supply what is needed as efficiently as possible and in a low carbon way.

Assess Low or Zero Carbon (LZC) Energy Sources

Nature as an environmental filter:

A significant parkland is being created on the southern boundary of the site, to act as a filter

against the M25. The landscape bund will rise 10m above the development, and a minimum of 5m above the M25. In width, while the detailed design is still being developed, we are looking at between 65-100m wide – the length of a Premier League football pitch.

The multi-functional landscape will buffer the wider area from the impacts of noise and air pollution, while providing an aesthetic design that provides real benefit to nature in the wetland, grassland and woodland habitats created for nature and people to enjoy..

Water:

Climate Change is causing a challenge to the world: with both a shortage of water, and more extreme weather conditions leading to more flooding. That is why water requires a holistic management cycle, which works with the wider area. The focus for the water management cycle will be:

Reducing the need:

low flow showers and taps, alongside creating a culture of careful use of water.

Recycling to meet demand:

greywater recycling, to enable use of bath water for flushing the toilet; or rainwater harvesting to water the garden.

Replenish:

the wider drainage system across the development will be designed to provide holding capacity for extreme rainfall events. Through the network of swales and ditches, ponds and lakes, it will also improve the quality of the water as it moves through the development, and protect the existing aquifer. The new water landscape would also provide important habitats for nature.



Energy Matrix

While the detailed delivery is still being explored, we wanted to share the matrix approach we have developed to support our thinking.

Be Lean



Fabric Performance

Reducing space heating demand through improved fabric efficiency



Glazing/Daylight

Balance daylight comfort and passive heating



Overheating

Overheating risk analysis to inform occupant comfort



Heat recovery

Mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR)



LED

High efficiency lighting throughout



Metering and controls

Network and building-level management for optimisation

Be Clean



All-electric servicing strategy



Fifth-generation network



Battery storage

Be Green



Air source heat pumps

Extract renewable heat from the air



Solar thermal

Convert the sun's energy into renewable heat



Hydrogen

Can be combusted to produce zero carbon heat



Ground source heat pumps

Extract renewable heat from the ground



Photovoltaic (PV)

Convert the sun's energy into renewable electricity



Anaerobic digester

Produces green gas which is combusted to generate electricity

Sustainable Transport Assessment

A key part of the planning for Bowmans Cross which will objectively assess the transport impacts of the development; taking into account the proposed sustainable transport measures and investments, and travel plan support for new residents; and set out the proposed investments to be made in the local transport network to achieve these.

Next steps

This consultation is just the first of many we will be holding to ensure your views continue to shape the developing plans, and that your questions and concerns are answered at each stage of the process. Even when we are not holding events, we will have a team dedicated to working with the communities around the development who you can call, email or meet.

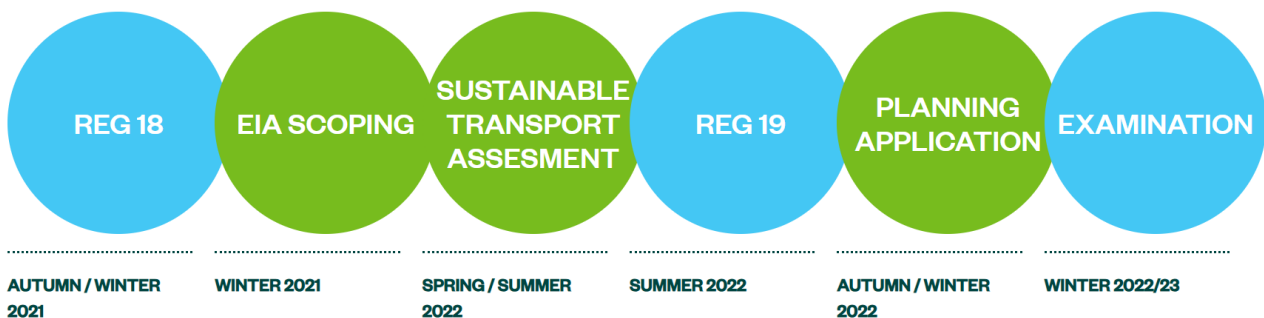
Planning is a complicated process, and we've set out some of the key milestones coming up as the Local Plan moves forward and the plans for Bowmans Cross evolve.

Key planning stages and what they mean

Indicative timeline

Local Plan

Bowmans Cross



Reg 18

This sets out specific bodies or persons that a Local Planning Authority must notify and invite representations from in developing its Local Plan.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping

For Bowmans Cross we will need to agree the extent of issues to be assessed and then reported in an Environmental Statement, which will be submitted as part of the Outline Application. I.e: what the potential impacts are of the development on the local environment and any mitigation required.

Sustainable Transport Assessment

A key part of the planning for Bowmans Cross which will objectively assess the transport impacts of the development; taking into account the proposed sustainable transport measures and investments, and travel plan support for new residents; and set out the proposed investments to be made in the local transport network to achieve these.

Reg 19

This is the Local Planning Authority's publication of its Local Plan for consultation. Once the Plan is consulted on and refined, then it will be formally submitted for examination.

Application

Urban&Civic will submit an Outline Planning application alongside the Local Plan Process. While it cannot be determined in advance of the Local Plan being adopted, this enables the detail of the proposals to be fully considered and tested.

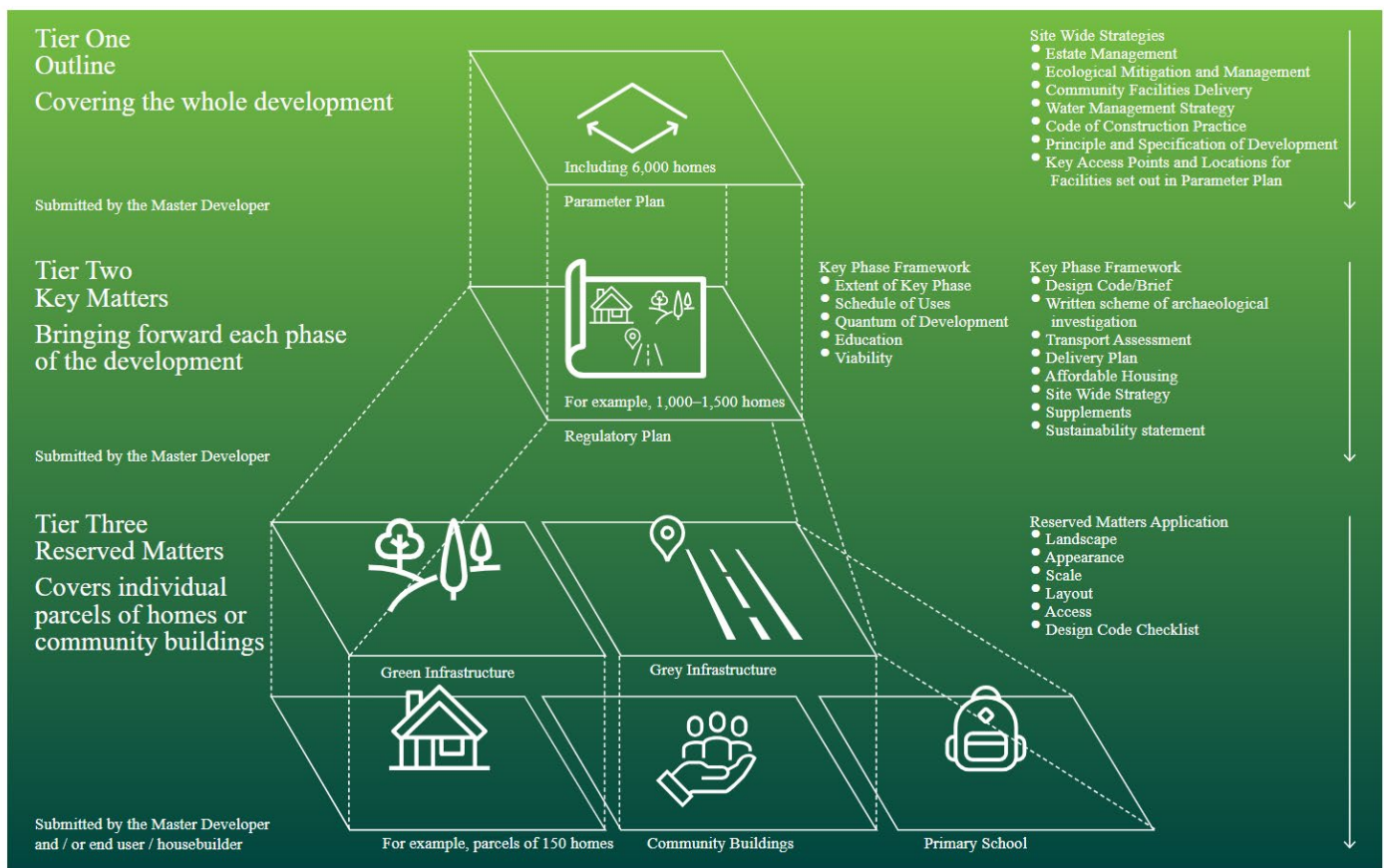
Examination

Once the Local Planning Authority has finished preparing and consulting on its Local Plan, it must be submitted to the Secretary of State who will appoint an Inspector to carry out an independent examination.

Planning to delivery

Even on the back of an Outline Application being consented, the nature of strategic development means that Urban&Civic will still need to undertake additional consultation and work to refine key details. This will include the detailed phasing of the development and detailed design work for each key feature or area.

All of these will be consulted on, and each level of the development must reflect the principles set out through the Outline Application. This is key as it ensures that, at all stages of the development, there is a guarantee that the development will be consistent with the vision – from the first tree planted to the last brick laid.



Homes for all

As we go through the planning process, we will define the range of house sizes, types and tenures that will be coming forward, and hand pick housebuilder partners to deliver Bowmans Cross with us. At least 40% of the homes, will come forward through Affordable Home schemes including:

- Shared ownership
- Rent to Buy
- Social rent

Urban&Civic will also work with housebuilders to explore Homes for Life opportunities – where homes can be adapted around you as your health needs change – and self build opportunities.

We want to hear about the homes you think the area needs, to help shape these plans.