



# GILSTON PARK ESTATE VILLAGE 1 MASTERPLAN

Working Group - Workshop 2 Results

8th September 2021

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# INTRODUCTION

To ensure the vision of a sustainable new community is met for the Village 1 Masterplan (V1MP), a series of collaborative Working Groups with local community representatives (CWGs) are programmed. The purpose of these sessions is to identify critical concerns and aspirations for the project in order to reach an aligned approach where possible.

The second Working Group (workshop 2) was held on the 8th of September 2021 at Eastwick & Gilston Village Hall. The session provided a collaborative platform to gather local knowledge from the community and key stakeholders through Hands-On Planning; to influence and positively shape future proposals.

This document summarises the output from the workshop and will be combined with the results of previous and future Working Groups to provide a detailed record of this aspect of the V1MP engagement process, and its outcomes.

# WORKSHOP 2 AGENDA AND ATTENDEES

## WORKSHOP FOCUS

- Feeding back from workshop 1.
- Identifying the key opportunities for the site and consider the design principles and strategies of the masterplan.
- Continue to develop a shared vision for the Village 1 Masterplan.

## STRUCTURE FOR THE SESSION

- Introduction to the Working Group & Engagement Process. Cratus to introduce and pace the session.
- 10min presentation by JTP - feeding back from the Working Group workshop 1.
- Briefing and introduction to 'Hands-On Planning' and the key strategies and themes which will be covered during the session: Placemaking & Phasing; Character Areas & Density; Ecology & Biodiversity; Access & Movement; Green & Blue Infrastructure; Mixed-use Centres; Stewardship.

Small, mixed groups will be formed, with each group focusing on a different theme / strategy from those listed above. Each topic / theme will then be reported back to and discussed with the full Working Group.

- Activity 1 : Hands-On Planning Session 1 - working in small, facilitated groups to consider key opportunities for the site and its relationship with the wider area; beginning to spatially plan ideas for Village 1.
- Activity 2 : Report Back 1 - opportunity to report back the findings from the small group to the full Working Group.
- Break
- Activity 3 : Hands-On Planning Session 1 - working in small, facilitated groups to consider key opportunities for the site and its relationship with the wider area; beginning to spatially plan ideas for Village 1.
- Activity 4 : Report Back 2 - opportunity to report back the findings from the small group to the full Working Group.
- End of Workshop - Summary & Next steps.

## ATTENDEES

- Places for People – **Will Sendell**
- JTP – **Charles Champion, Graeme Phillips, Alex Macauley, Lucy Bird + Kieran Clarke Taylor**
- Cratus Communications – **Julian Seymour + Jennifer Cooper**
- EHDC Leader - **Cllr Linda Haysey**
- EHDC Ward Councillor - **Cllr Eric Buckmaster**
- EHDC Officers - **Kevin Steptoe, Sean Rushton + Jenny Pierce**
- Harlow Borough Council elected representative - **Cllr Mike Hardware**
- Hertfordshire County Council Division members - **Cllr Eric Buckmaster, Matthew Wood**
- Hunsdon Eastwick & Gilston Neighbourhood Planning Group representative - **Anthony Bickmore + Jamie Macarthur**
- Youth representative - **Jake Shepherd**
- Community representative - **Janet Bellingham (Church of St James - High Wych), Kirsty Feasey + Yasmin Gregory (Harlow Cycling Club)**

# INTRODUCTORY PRESENTATION

The workshop began with a presentation displaying the current stage of the project and an overview of the 14.07.2021 Working Group and emerging themes and also provided an opportunity for any questions to be discussed. The concept of Hands-On Planning was also introduced to attendees prior to the first of the sessions.



# INITIAL GROUP DISCUSSION

Following the introductory presentation, attendees were given the opportunity to raise in response any particular queries or concerns, prior to splitting into two groups for the Hands-On Planning Sessions. The key issues and opportunities raised were:

- Concerns over crossings of the A414, with the potential for these not to present a safe or appealing pedestrian route. The design of the foot/cycle bridge was questioned, with notable concern over the at-grade crossing to the west towards Parndon Mill. There was a request for the detailed design for the underpass under the proposed Fiddlers Brook Bridge to the east to be shared;
- The importance of safe, dedicated cycleways and the opportunity for existing public routes to be expanded e.g., routes towards Stansted;
- The desire for a cohesive masterplan with alignment between SLMP and VIMP proposals;
- The desire to design to avoid car dependency;
- The desire to provide infrastructure early in order to reduce car dependency; and
- The importance of creating soft edges to the Villages.

# HANDS-ON PLANNING SESSIONS

The following pages outline the key themes and consensus points which emerged from the Hands-On Planning sessions. These sessions involved members of the CWG working in small, facilitated groups to consider key opportunities for the site and its relationship with the wider area, with the aim to begin spatially planning ideas for the Village 1 Masterplan (VIMP). Members were able to pick a group depending on their interest, and over two sessions, four topic areas: Character, Density & Placemaking; Access & Movement; Mixed Use Centres; and Blue & Green Infrastructure. After each study there was a report back to the wider group which allowed both groups to discuss the key outcomes.

## SESSION 1:

Group A: Character, Density & Placemaking

Group B: Access & Movement

## SESSION 2:

Group A: Mixed Use Centres

Group B: Blue & Green Infrastructure



# HANDS-ON PLANNING SESSION 1




## GROUP A: CHARACTER, DENSITY & PLACEMAKING

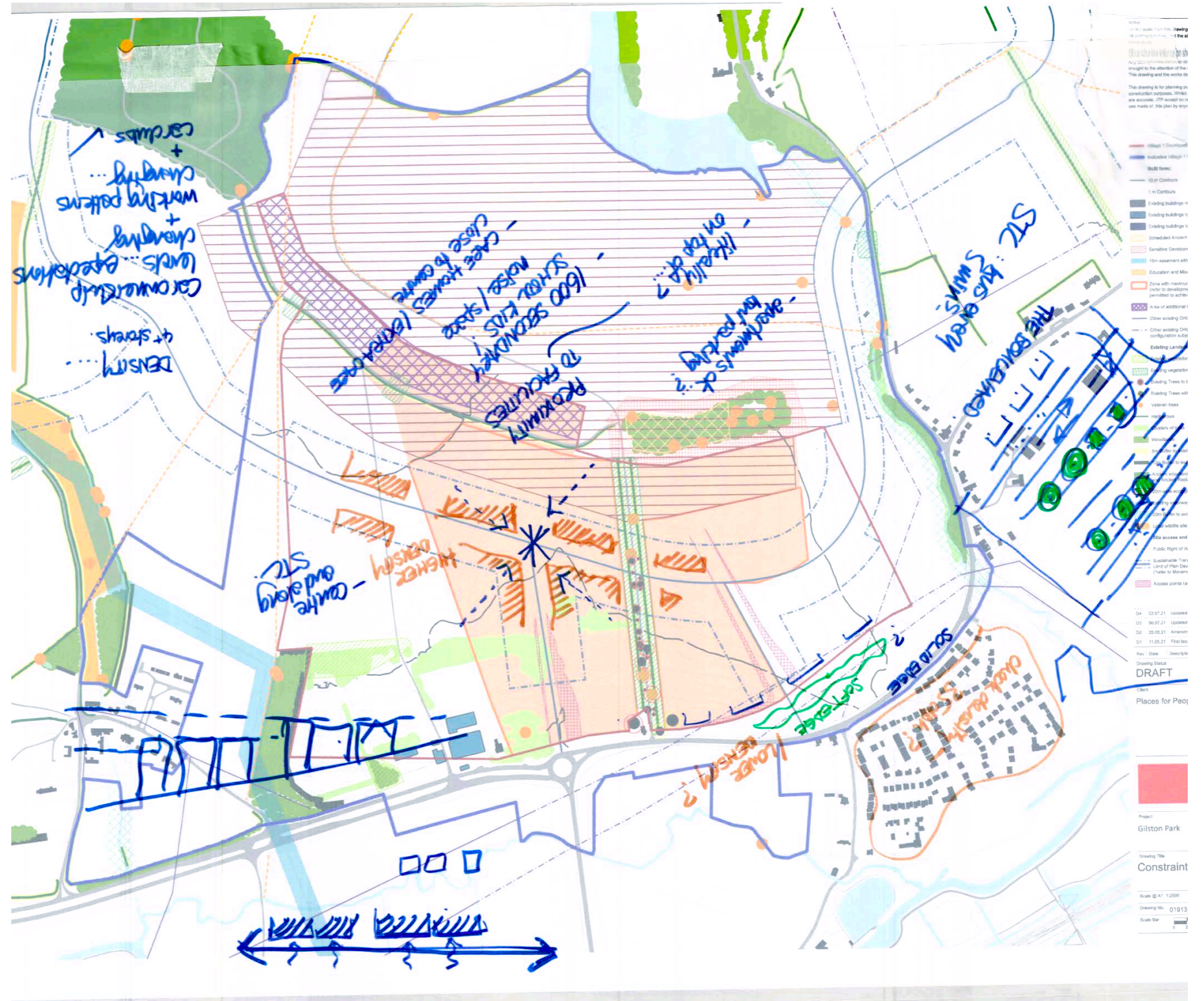
**CHARACTER, DENSITY & PLACEMAKING**

**“We’re designing for the future - we need to be brave!”**



### KEY

-  Focal point/centre
-  Opportunity for higher density
-  Opportunity for lower density



Charater, Density and Placemaking Group Drawing



# HANDS-ON PLANNING SESSION 1

## GROUP A: CHARACTER, DENSITY & PLACEMAKING

### KEY CHALLENGES

- ‘The edges of the proposed villages need to relate and interact with one another.’
- ‘How can the north west extent of the proposed village be successfully integrated?’
- ‘What do the density figures look like in practice?’
- ‘Can a higher level of density be achieved without increasing heights?’
- ‘A natural buffer to Eastwick Road is needed - not houses with small windows and mechanical ventilation.’
- ‘Can the STC route be utilised to accommodate taller, more dense buildings? Will this seem too urban for a Village?’
- ‘Can we design out the car at an early stage to increase average density figures?’

### KEY COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS

- ‘SuDS should be fully integrated into the landscape to form a sense of place.’
- ‘A soft edge to Eastwick Road so that buildings don’t take the brunt of noise and pollution.’
- ‘Existing buildings which already add character could be reused for long- or medium-term uses.’
- ‘Village 1 needs its own identity - not one of ‘suburban sprawl.’
- ‘Density and building heights could ‘pull down’ along the STC.’
- ‘Can the locally listed gardens of Gilston Park be integrated positively into the proposed village?’
- ‘Getting the density right in places with soft edges is key.’

### CONSENSUS

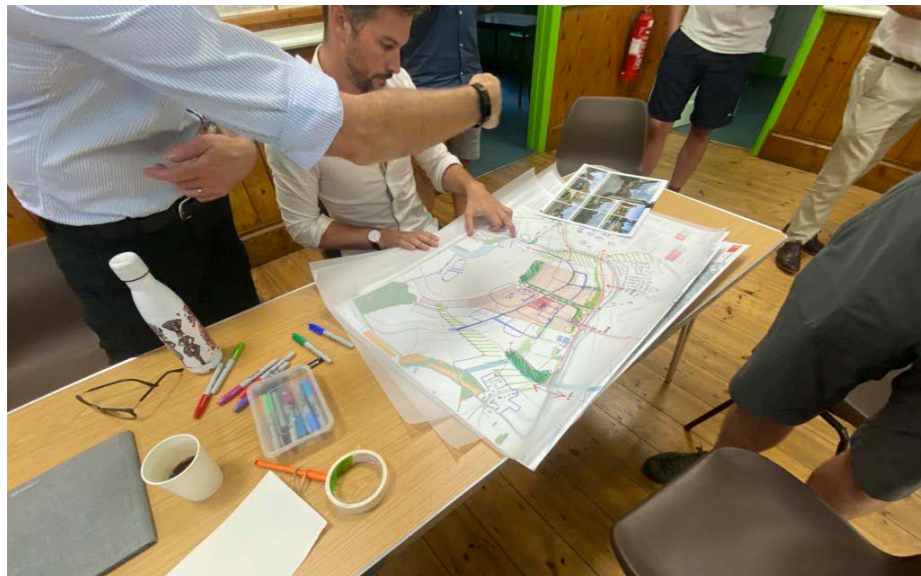
- The density of Village 1 should be higher than others proposed.
- ‘Soft Edges’ and existing landscape features can positively contribute towards the character of Village 1.
- There is an opportunity for higher density around the local centre and STC route, with lower density ‘soft edges’ to the east, west and potentially to the south.

# HANDS-ON PLANNING SESSION 1






## GROUP B: ACCESS & MOVEMENT

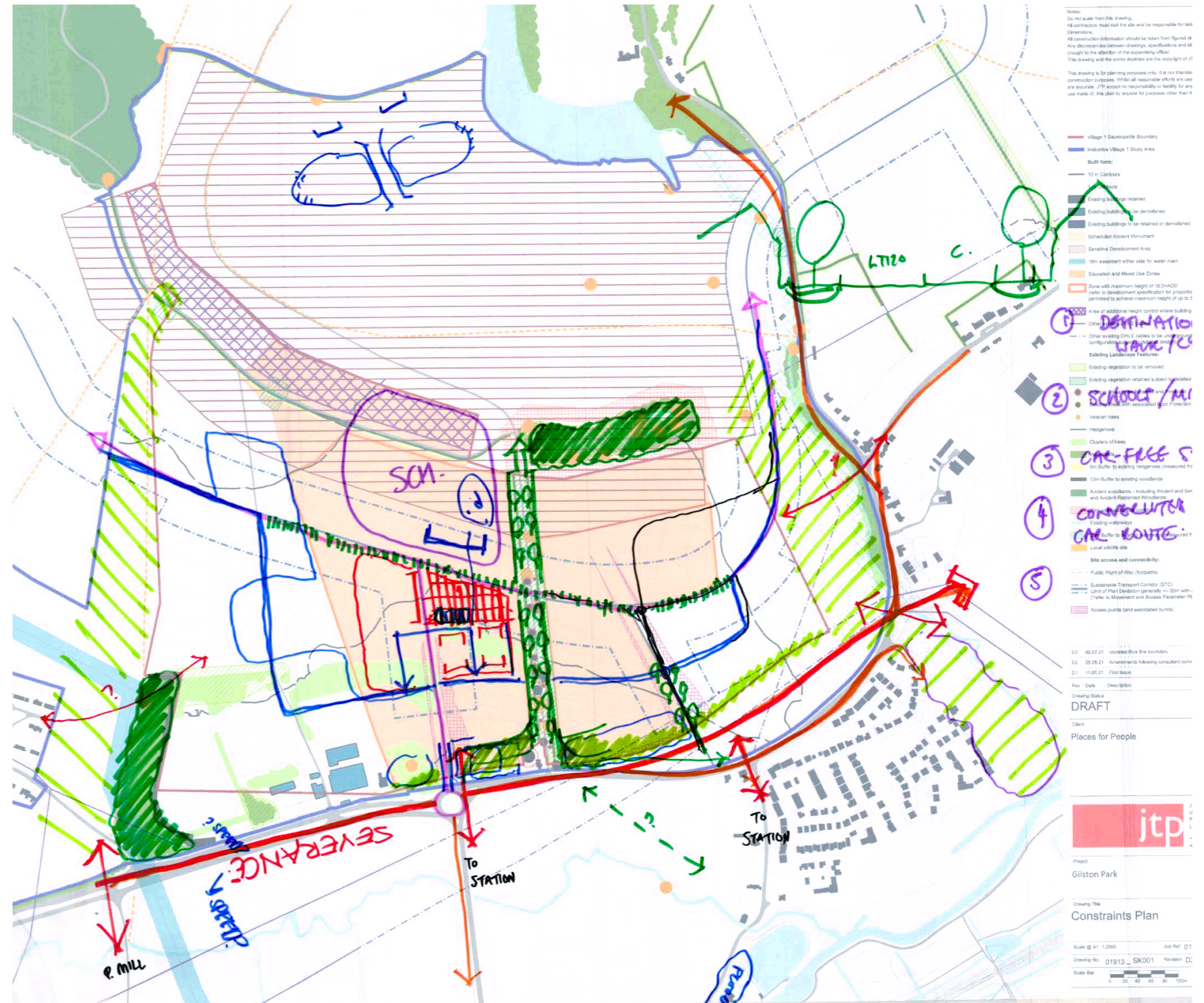
### ACCESS & MOVEMENT

“We want residential streets which prioritise people and are appropriately scaled”



### KEY

-  Approximate locations of proposed and potential A14/Eastwick Road crossing points
-  Potential desire line to Harlow Town Station
-  Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC - direct, unobstructed route)
-  Vehicular route (convoluted)
-  Potential for connections to Gilston



Access & Movement Group Drawing

# HANDS-ON PLANNING SESSION 1

## GROUP B: ACCESS & MOVEMENT

### KEY CHALLENGES

- ‘How people will travel needs to be designed from the outset.’
- ‘There are many routes in the current network that flood and so are only useable for 6 months of the year.’
- ‘Public Rights of Way are currently being misused by cyclists near Parndon Mill.’
- ‘The current PRoW network is designed for a rural place and routes need to be redesigned in the context of a significant number of new homes/residents.’
- How do you achieve/capture the opportunity for wider connectivity? There needs to be alignment between SLMP and VIMP.’
- ‘Links to Harlow Station are vital – the realigned A414 will create a barrier and links across need to be resolved and pedestrian and cycle friendly, with level changes avoided where possible.’
- ‘What will happen at the base of Lime Avenue and how links will be made to the south?’
- ‘How will inclusive access be designed? Not all sustainable modes are disabled friendly.’
- ‘To convince 60% of people to cycle is a massive behavioural change.’
- ‘School drop-off/pick-up points need careful thought.’

### KEY COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS

- ‘Make vehicular routes less desirable and convoluted to make travel quicker by public transport or cycling.’
- ‘Existing public routes have the potential to be expanded with the opportunity to upgrade existing infrastructure to give cyclist their own lane (e.g., towards Stansted).’
- ‘There should be a hierarchy and distinction between commuter (12 month a year) and leisure routes.’
- ‘A holistic approach to cycle infrastructure i.e., showers at work, parking etc.’

### CONSENSUS

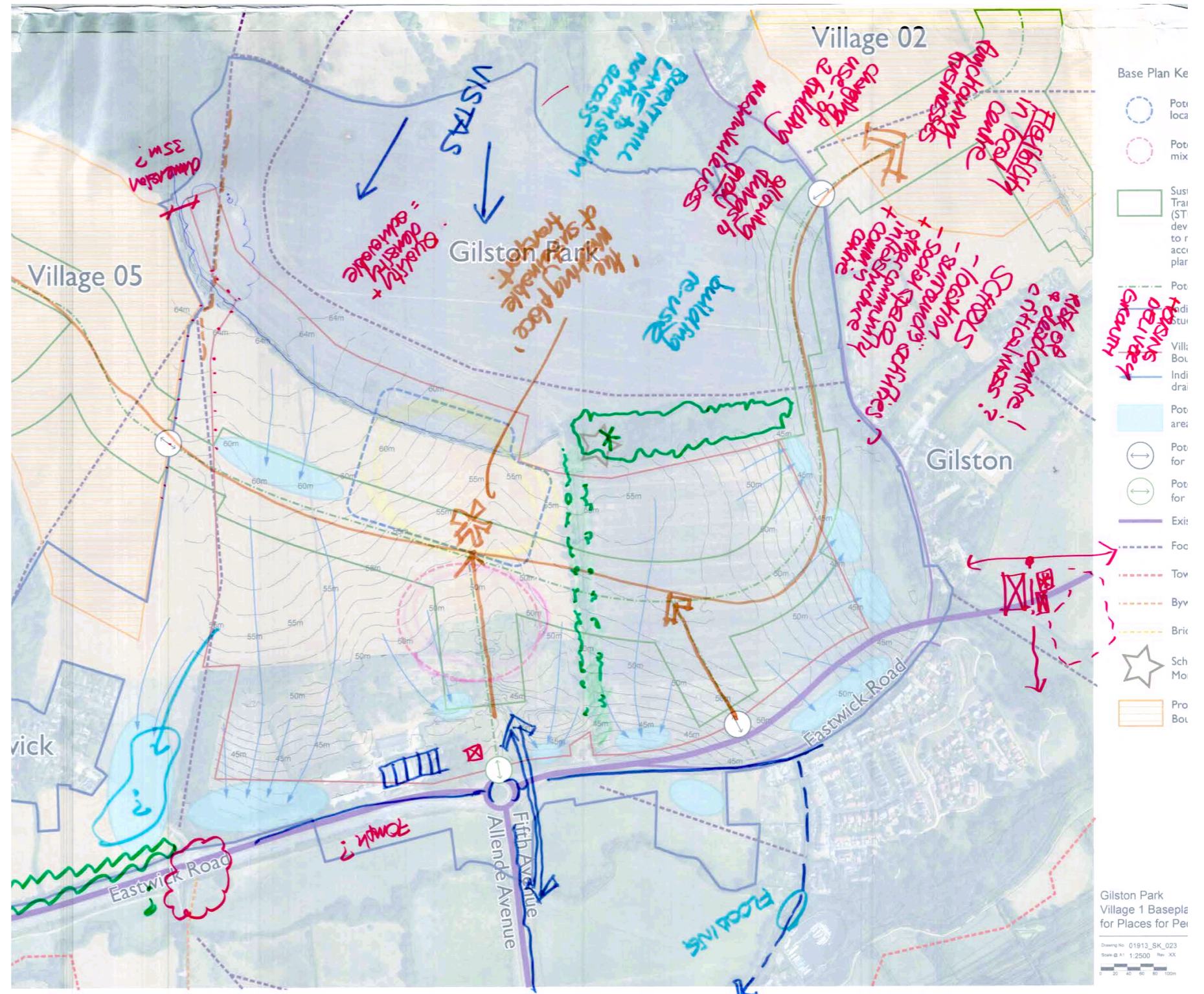
- The STC should be human scaled and prioritise pedestrians and cyclists as well as sustainable modes of transport.
- The STC should be the most direct and efficient route, with a more convoluted primary vehicular route.
- The location and design of A414 crossings are crucial to avoid the road severing links and providing a barrier.
- Commuter routes need to tie in with existing routes and must be accessible/useable year round.
- Access to nearby villages such as Gilston and Eastwick are key.

# HANDS-ON PLANNING SESSION 2

## GROUP A: MIXED USE CENTRES

### MIXED USE CENTRES

'The school can become part of the community and be surrounded by other uses.'



### KEY

 Meeting place for 'sustainable transport'

Mixed Use Centres Group Drawing

# HANDS-ON PLANNING SESSION 2

## GROUP A: MIXED USE CENTRES

### KEY CHALLENGES

- 'How much critical mass is needed to support retail uses?'
- 'Being so close to Harlow could draw people away from the proposed centre & its retail uses.'
- 'Failing retail centres could be emphasised by car use drawing people away from local centres.'
- 'Meanwhile uses - will safeguarding sites for certain uses be suitable? How long would they be empty?'
- 'Elderly residents might find school leaving time noisy if located adjacent to the school.'
- 'Where will parking be placed? How can it be designed to encourage residents to use the STC?'
- 'Parking needs to be designed for future use, not current trends.'

### KEY COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS

- 'Can there be a connection between the STC, density & the 'critical mass' needed for successful retail?'
- 'Could existing retail uses at Eastwick Lodge Farm be moved to the new centre?'
- 'The school can become part of the community and be surrounded by other uses.'
- 'Community shops will help create a unique retail experience.'
- 'Use classes could change and be flexible overtime as Village 1 grows.'
- 'Including a cycle shop early on at the mixed-use centre will encourage cycling as a mode of transport.'
- 'Cafes & bars to help keep younger people in the area.'
- 'The central area could accommodate elderly/retirement homes which can be integrated with other facilities nearby. Nurseries/crèche should be integrated with older residents.'
- 'Position schools in the centre of the development so they are accessible.'

### CONSENSUS

- The interrelationship between the school and mixed-use centre can help to create a vibrant hub, with a community centre near to the school.
- Elderly residents can overcome loneliness by integrating with other uses.
- The phasing of retail and commercial uses is vital, and it is important they are designed to be flexible and somewhere they can grow.







# HANDS-ON PLANNING SESSION 2

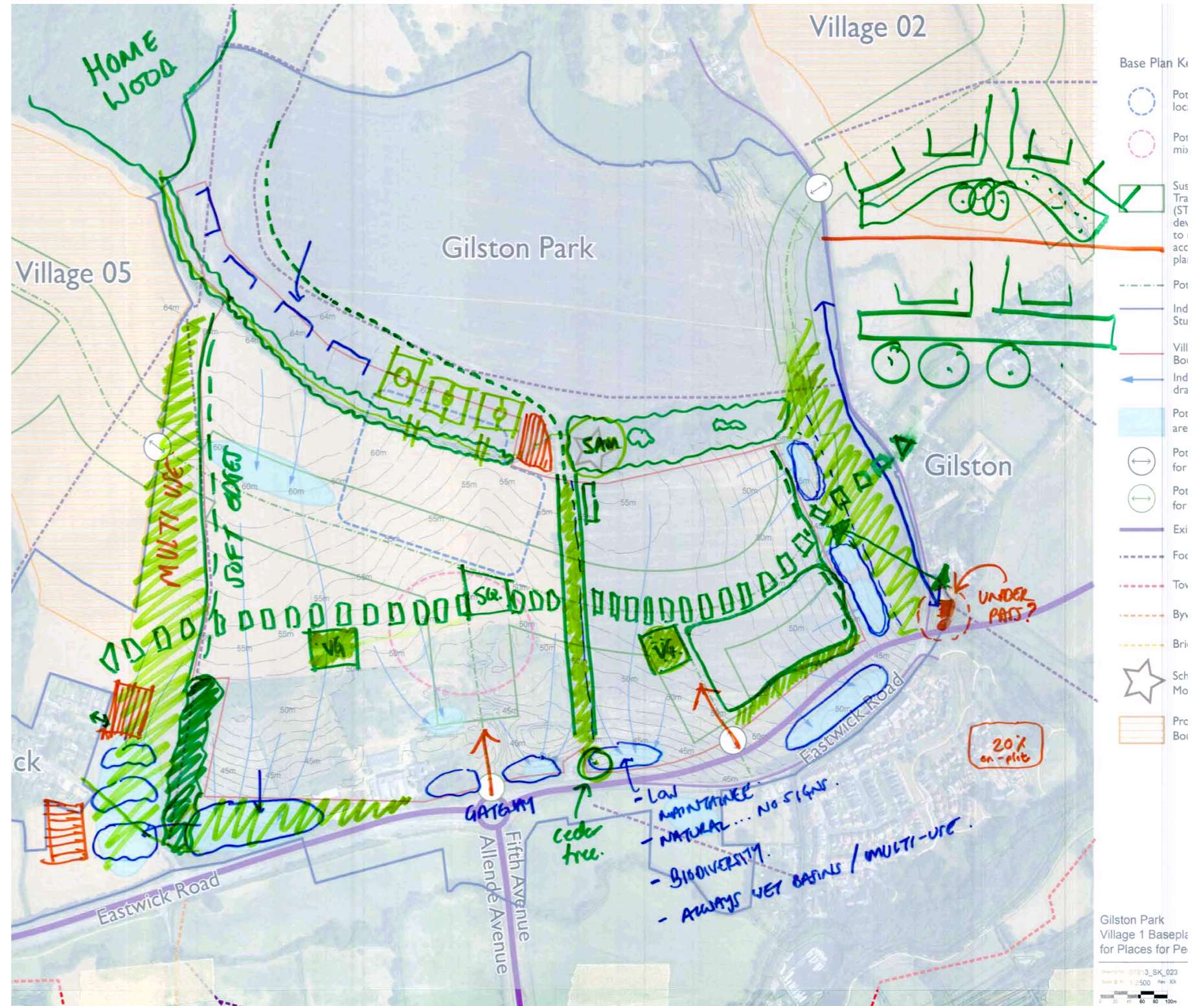
## GROUP B: GREEN & BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

**BLUE AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**  
 “We don’t want to see warning/beware signs, steep slopes or concrete walls”



### KEY

-  Multifunctional open space/landscape buffers
-  Village greens
-  Opportunities for allotments/orchards
-  Opportunity for a gateway feature
-  Green link (including a section of STC)
-  Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS)



Green & Blue Infrastructure Group Drawing

# HANDS-ON PLANNING SESSION 2

## GROUP B: GREEN & BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

### KEY CHALLENGES

- ‘Important views from Gilston House towards the northern boundary of the site and towards Home Wood need to be protected.’
- ‘The detailed design for the proposed Fiddlers Brook Bridge underpass needs to be shared – it’s very important.’

### KEY COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS

- ‘Benefits to existing residents need to come early – e.g., small trees to be planted along Fiddlers Brook to allow planting to grow over time.’
- ‘There is an opportunity to enhance and extend Lime Avenue along the historic carriageway route, with significant planting of new trees.’
- ‘SuDS need to be designed as multifunctional, ecologically rich and useable spaces with shallow slopes. Terlings Park is a successful local example.’
- ‘There is an opportunity to celebrate local heritage which people may not be aware of e.g., Scheduled Monument, alignment of historic carriageway route, Gilston Park, Deer Ditch e.g. adding signage for Gilson House and a Heritage trail.’
- ‘The Cedar tree at the base of Lime Avenue can be a focal point.’

### CONSENSUS

- Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) will mostly need to be located to in the southern area of VIMP.
- SuDS features should be naturalistic, low maintenance, multifunctional, biodiverse, with shallow slopes and no deep water signs.
- Eastern and western edges are sensitive and built form/layout addressing these should be ‘soft’.
- Village east-west corridors need to act as ecological connections.
- The landscape should be multifunctional.

# NEXT STEPS

## V1MP WORKING GROUP - WORKSHOPS 2-4

### WORKSHOP 3 - NOVEMBER 2021

#### WORKSHOP FOCUS

- Feeding back from workshop 2.
- A detailed look at Design Code examples and methodologies.

#### Design Codes:

- Methodology & Structure
- Contents & Examples
- Regulatory Plan
- Design Principles
- Character Areas & Typologies
- Materiality and Detailing
- Dos & Don'ts

### WORKSHOP 4 - JANUARY 2022

#### WORKSHOP FOCUS

- Feeding back from workshop 3.
- Presentation of Engagement findings.
- Presentation of Masterplan & Design Code.





