

Assessment

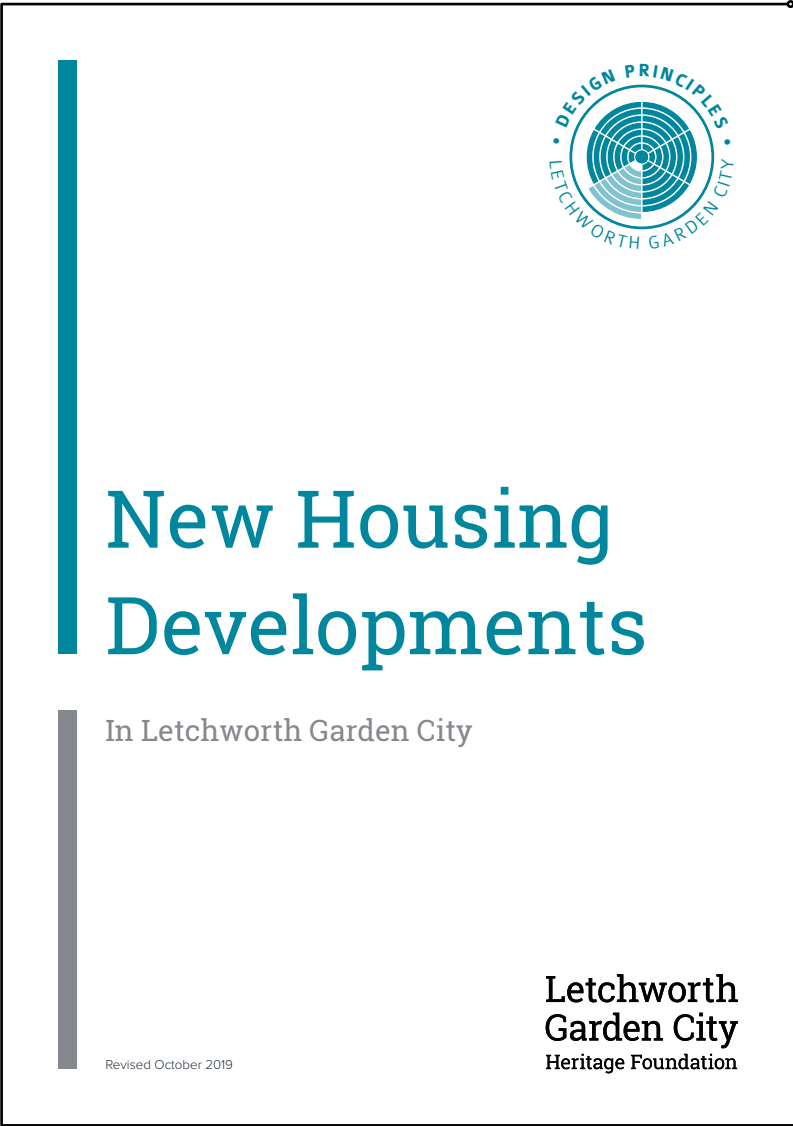
Design Policy Context

LGCHF DESIGN PRINCIPLES

LGCHF's document 'New Housing Developments in Letchworth Garden City' contains guidance for new developments to align with the Design Principles.

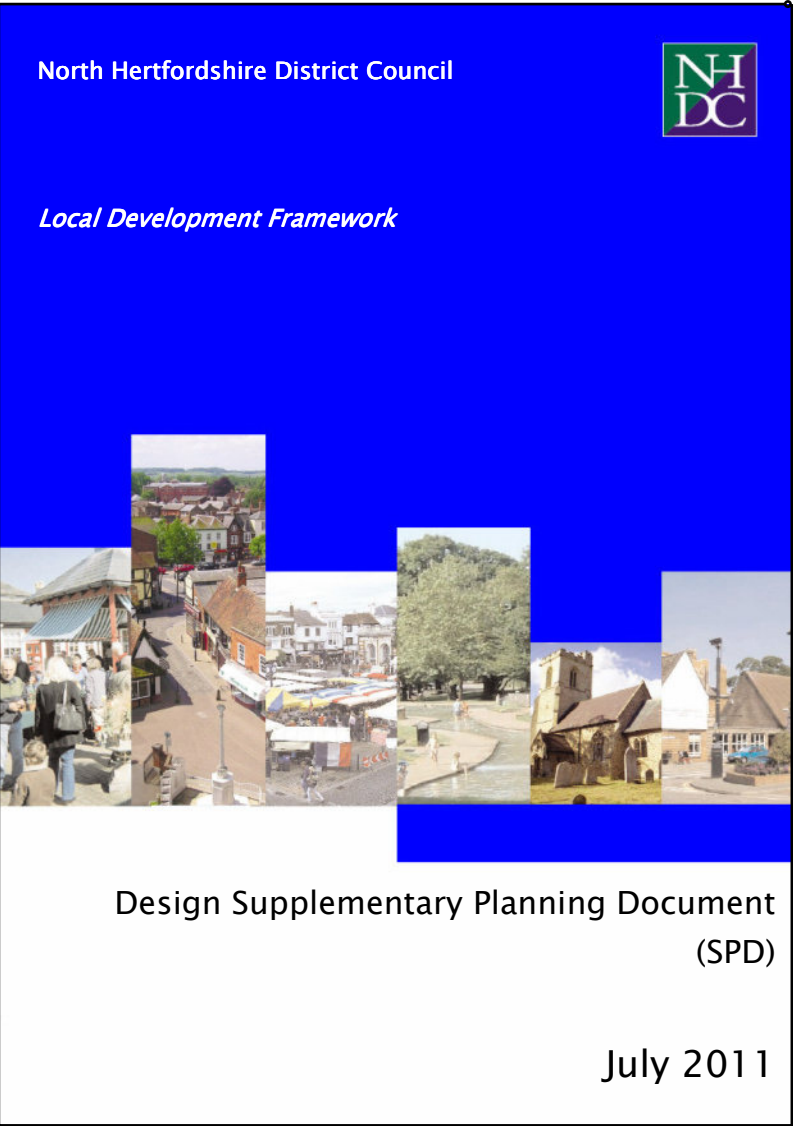
LG3 sits in the Modern Character Area, and the submitted proposals follow the guidance in the document.

The Sustainability section is addressed outside of the DAS in the submitted Sustainability Statement.



NHDC DESIGN SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

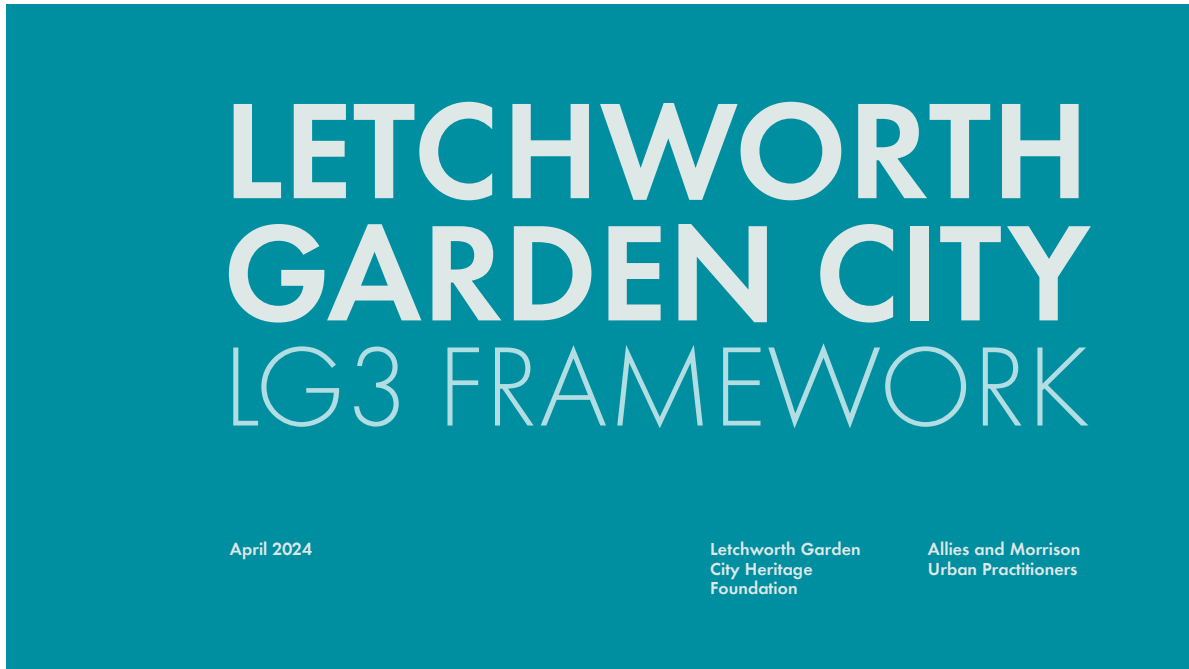
NHDC's Design SPD dates from July 2011 and is in the process of being updated. Section 4.3 describes Letchworth Garden City and the Design Principles of Layout, Design, Views, Streetscene and Public Realm, which overlap with the LGCHF Design Principles.



LG3 FRAMEWORK

The LG3 Framework document sets out LGCHF's expectations for the layout and distribution of new homes and green spaces in any Reserved Matters Application following approval of the Outline Application.

These frameworks were reviewed and critiqued internally before developing the submitted bid-stage layout and have been a reference point during design development of the final proposals submitted here.



Assessment

Urban Design and Architecture

GARDEN CITY PRINCIPLES AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF LETCHWORTH

An OS Map of Letchworth from 1937-39 is shown here with Site LG3 bound in red.

This shows LG3 is similar in size to a single block on the larger avenues that contribute to the distinctive feel of the Garden City, such as Pixmore Way and Ridge Avenue, and not much bigger than some of the smaller, single streets like Haselfoot and Redhoods Way East once the existing woodland and buffer zones on the site are taken into account.



Local Architecture

Precedents for a Gateway

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

The Framework and approved Parameter plans suggest the southern end of the site should act as a gateway, and we have explored Letchworth for precedents, finding examples of strong frontages used to mark key thresholds and to enclose landscaped green space.

In the examples shown here, distinctive building forms are emphasised by contrasting materials. Symmetry and scale provide some formality.

The key characteristics are described in more detail below.

LOCAL PRECEDENT

- Feature gables
- Scale and prominence
- Symmetry and formality
- Primary materials: brick and render
- Bay windows
- Dormer Windows

FORMALITY IN KEY LOCATIONS



MIXTURE OF BRICK AND RENDER



Local Architecture

Precedents for an Avenue

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

The Frameworks suggests a key feature of any layout will be a strong primary route or Avenue connecting two green spaces. Again, we have explored Letchworth for precedents.

Distinctive features include a combination of eaves and gables composed to create a calm and rational rhythm, set behind verges and trees.

Paired gables are used to define corners and terminate vistas where side streets join this route.

Contrasting materials are reduced with most homes using one primary material.

LOCAL PRECEDENT

- Calm and ordered
- Defined rhythm
- Vista composition
- Legibility
- Mixed materiality

GABLES USED TO IDENTIFY CORNERS AND COMPOSE VISTAS



Local Architecture

Precedents for Terraced Housing

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

To provide flexibility and distinction within the limited site area of LG3 it is important to understand how terrace housing in Letchworth is distinctive.

Materials are primarily earth toned with reduced contrast, with low eaves and a horizontal emphasis.

LOCAL PRECEDENT

- Hipped roofs
- Terraced Housing
- Primary material: brick

PRE-GARDEN CITY TERRACE PRECEDENT



BRICK TERRACED HOUSING



Local Architecture

Precedents for an Rural Edge Lane

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

The east edge of LG3 will form the visible edge of the Garden City itself, so it is important to understand how edges are treated in Letchworth.

Near the site the edge takes the form of a lane with housing on one side facing out to the countryside, such as Croft Lane.

Houses that front such streets have a clear Arts & Crafts aesthetic.

An informal approach to elevations is emphasised by the the use of catslide roofs and asymmetrical building forms.

Architectural detailing references the craftsmanship of the Arts & Crafts movement.

LOCAL PRECEDENT

- Informal composition
- Asymmetry
- Varied roof line
- Detailing and ornament
- Covered porches
- Dormer windows
- Bay windows

INFORMAL COMPOSITION



CATSLIDE ROOFS



ASYMMETRICAL BUILDING FORMS



4. DESIGN CONCEPT AND DEVELOPMENT

Design Concept

Two Greens and an Avenue

HOMES CONNECTED TO NATURE, REINFORCING THE PRINCIPLES OF THE GARDEN CITY

The Design Concept is shown in the diagram on the right.

- The arrangement of elements shown in the LG3 Framework document has been refined to accommodate technical requirements including SuDS.
- A key part is rebalancing the greens, making the Gateway Green on the lower part of the site bigger so there is more capacity for surface water where it naturally flows, and the Village Green smaller. The overall area does not change - see the parameter plan comparison table page at end

These elements are described in the legend.

- Some of the open space from the Village Green is re-distributed to the Gateway Green to suit the increased volume of underground SuDS storage at the lower end of the site.

This has the added benefit that both greens now provide large green open settings for new homes.

- In addition the verge along the Avenue has additional width so rain gardens and bio-retention can be provided along the full length as well as street trees.

All streets have views to and from green space providing residents with direct physical and visual connections to nature.



- Homes and Gardens
- Taller Gateway Frontage
- Open Space: Village Green
- Open Space: Gateway Green
- Existing woodland
- Proposed buffer planting
- Avenue Green Link
- Green Street with view to native woodland
- Green Street with view to allotment boundary
- Local Equipped Area of Play
- Adjacent footpaths
- Connection to adjacent footpath
- Doorstep Play
- Woodland walk
- Main Vehicle Access

Diagram showing key features of the Design Concept

Land Use

STRUCTURAL GREEN SPACE AND URBAN BLOCKS

The Land Use diagram to the right shows proposals to enhance existing native woodland planting and create a sequence of linked green spaces along which new homes are arranged to create a series of recognisably distinct streets and open spaces.



Diagram showing land use

Landscape Components

A GREEN NETWORK PERMEATING STREETS

The Landscape Components support the concept of new homes in a sustainable and welcoming place connected to nature.

The landscape strategy draws upon the strong precedent set by the surrounding area and throughout Letchworth Garden City.

Four principal open green spaces, the surrounding native woodland planting, and allotment boundary planting are connected by planted streets and a woodland play route to form a continuous network of accessible green spaces for residents to move through in their everyday lives.

-  Open Space: Village Green
-  Open Space: Gateway Green
-  Open Space: Green Avenue
-  Open Space: Woodland Glade
-  Existing native woodland
-  Additional native woodland planting
-  Avenue Green Link
-  Street with view to native woodland
-  Street with view to allotment boundary planting
-  Woodland walk
-  Connection to adjacent green network
-  Local Equipped Area of Play
-  Local Area of Play
-  Doorstep Play



Diagram showing landscape components

Building Character

MATERIAL CHOICES AND ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

The Building character diagram on the right shows which buildings inform the character area.

The material choices extent of embellishment and decoration of architectural elements on each building, such as porches, window surrounds, and bay windows, will be determined by which character area they are in, as well as their position in relation to the key frontages and vistas which are shown on the following page.

-  Gateway Green
-  Avenue
-  Woodland Edge
-  Allotment Boundary
-  Potential apartment block location



Diagram showing building character

Heights Strategy

FRAMING AND ENCLOSURE

The building Heights diagram to the right shows the initial strategy for using height to define open spaces and streets.

The 2.5-3 storey elements fronting the Gateway Green help establish this key open space as a gateway to the development from the south.

The woodland edge is a mix of 2-2.5 storey houses.

3 storey apartments address the south west allotment edge, with smaller 2 storey dwellings forming the remaining streets abutting the allotments.

The Avenue is a predominantly 2-2.5 storey houses with occasional 3 storey elements at key corners.

- 2 - 2.5 storey
- 2 - 2.5 storey. Potential 3 storey where Parameters permit
- 2.5 - 3 storey
- potential apartment block location



Diagram showing building character

Key Frontages and Vistas

LEGIBLE STREETS AND SPACES

Buildings terminating key vistas and forming key frontages are distinguished by distinctive architectural and landscape treatments aiding navigation and creating a strong sense of place.

CGI Illustrations later in this document illustrate typical treatments to Key Vista buildings.

- Village Green Frontage
- Avenue Frontage
- Gateway Green Frontage
- Countryside Edge Frontage
- Allotment Boundary Frontage
- Green Street Frontage
- Side gardens
- Rear gardens
- Key vista building
- Secondary vista building
- Green terminating vista



Frameworks

Movement and Play

LOW SPEED TRAFFIC

The diagram on the near-right shows the proposed road network.

- There is no through-route so rat-running is avoided
- The highways have been designed for refuse trucks
- Traffic calming on the Avenue and the loop road serving the SE parcel manage speeds on straighter runs
- This helps keep streets as safe and welcoming as possible by design

WALKING THROUGH NATURE, AND PLAY

The Pedestrian and Cycle Movement and Play Network shown on the right encourages everyday active travel by making walking, cycling and wheeling convenient and attractive through careful design of safe and pleasant routes between attractive destinations.

Given the low volume of motor traffic expected the main spine road is considered suitable for cycling along and provides access to shared surfaces leading to private drives.

- There are connections to the wider footpath network through the north and eastern boundaries
- There are attractive, convenient and direct pedestrian routes to Norton to the north,
- Residents can choose to walk or cycle around their home and further afield.
- There is an attractive amenity route through the woodland planting on the southern and eastern boundaries which includes woodland play
- This diagram also includes proposed play spaces - as these are a key driver of shorter pedestrian trips throughout the site.

The Woodland Walk, LAP and LEAP create destinations for play, in addition to doorstep play which is provided on each side street.

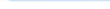


Diagram showing vehicle network

-  Carriageway and footpaths separated by verges
-  Shared Surfaces and Mews Streets
-  Private Drives including realignment of existing allotment access road



Diagram showing pedestrian and cycle networks and play areas

-  Cycling on carriageway
-  Shared surfaces
-  Footpaths
-  Footpaths
-  Woodland Walk
-  Local Equipped Area of Play
-  Doorstep Play

Landscape and Drainage Strategy

BRINGING NATURE HOME

The diagram on the right shows the concept landscape and drainage strategy.

This supports the Design Concept:

- LEAP and SuDS on the Village Green
- Active travel, doorstep play and bio-retention on the Gateway Green
- Street trees and SuDS Swale/Rain Garden on the Avenue
- Pocket Parks with Green Space, Door Step Play, and Bio-Retention feature at the head of each Green Street
- The Rural Edge Lane is characterised by an informal edge interspersed with open space and clumps of trees
- A range of street trees for different streets
- Views towards the allotment edge and the woodland edge



Formal greenspaces



Circular walks through natural spaces



SuDS used to enhance streets



Informal play



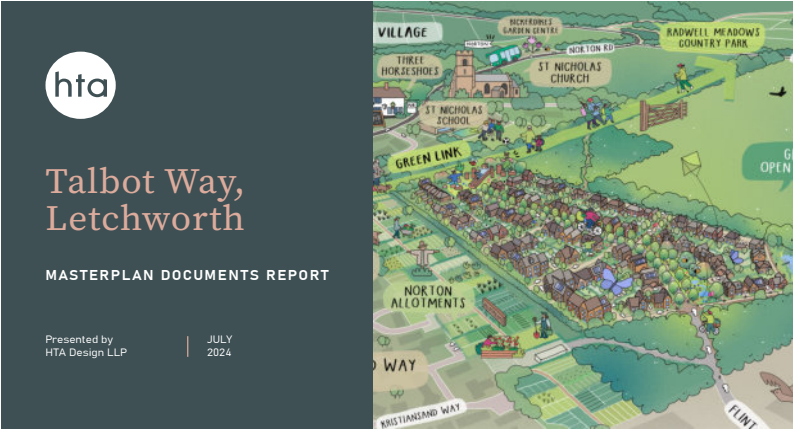
Indicative Landscape Strategy showing green and blue infrastructure



Engagement with LGCHF

Feedback and Response

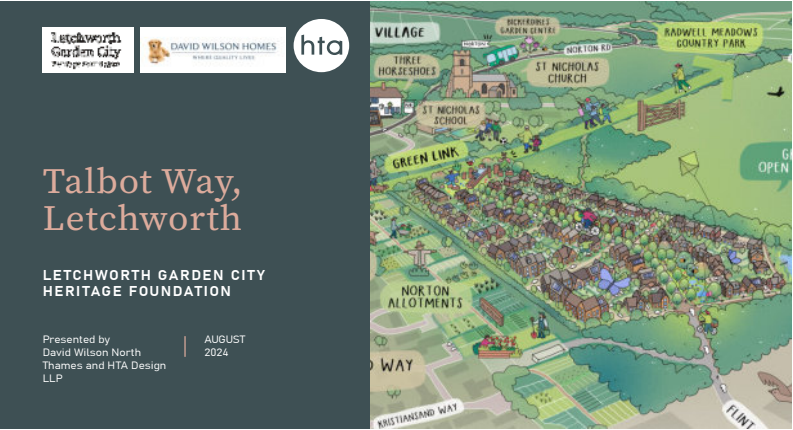
PREFERRED BIDDER



Bid Masterplan July 2024

We developed a layout for the bid based on LGCHF and NHDC design guidance, our own research, the approved Outline Parameter Plan and the LG3 Framework document.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT



Developing Design submitted for review August 2024

After becoming preferred bidder we developed the design with input from technical consultants including drainage, levels and highways.

The developing design was shared with LGCHF's consultants.

FORMAL REVIEW AND FEEDBACK



Detailed feedback from LGCF consultants October 2024

LGCHF's heritage and urban design consultants reviewed the developing design and provided formal feedback.

The layout was well received by the Foundation and some points were highlighted for further consideration:

- The Rural Edge Lane character
- The Primary Route (the Avenue)
- Corner buildings and buildings in key views
- Internal communal green spaces.

Detailed comments on architectural elements were provided, and these informed the future design development of housetypes and apartments.

DESIGN ASPIRATIONS DOCUMENT



Design Aspirations Document December 2024 - March 2025

Following LGCHF review the layout and architecture design developed and a draft Design Aspirations Document was prepared to record Barratt's commitment to the layout and architecture design to be agreed with LGCHF.

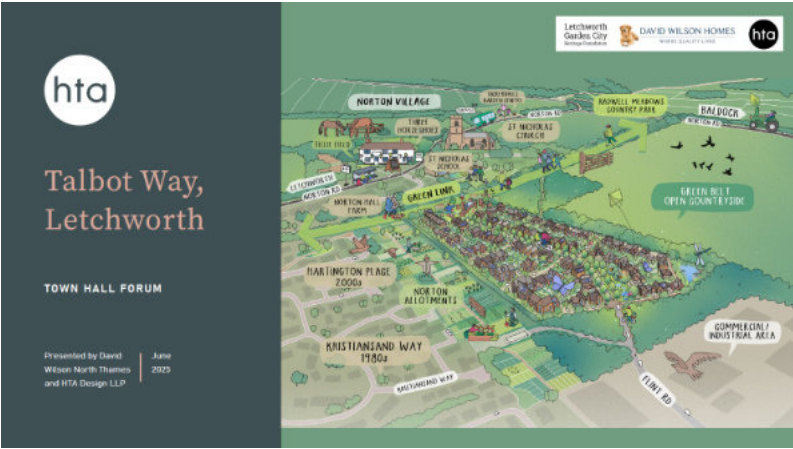
This draft was shared with LGCHF in December 2024 and presented to Governors on the 16th January 2025.

Further feedback was provided in that meeting and the final Design Aspirations Document issued in March 2025.

Engagement with LGCHF

Feedback and Response

TOWN HALL FORUM



Town Hall Forum booklet June 2025

Wider resident feedback was sought at the annual Town Hall Forum in June 2025, with a booklet and stand prepared for the Town Hall lobby so residents could meet Barratt and the planning and design team in person to ask questions.

During this period design development continued and the sketched layout amendments in the Design Aspirations Document were made to the proposed layout and further refinements were made following coordination with the rest of the design team including levels, drainage and highways.

DRAFT FINAL SUBMISSION MATERIAL SHARED WITH LGCHF



Cover slide of presentation to LGCHF

The draft final submission material was shared with LGCHF on 8th Spetember 2025, and the designs presented in a slide show to Governors on the 15th September 2025.

At the presentation the proposals were again met very positively, and requests made for further information on the following aspects of the designs:

- Enhancements to be made to the elevations of houses in the Allotment Green Streets Character Area to increase visual interest
- Proposed apartment balcony screen materials
- Architectural materials and details.

Work was done to enhance these elevations, and a short report prepared with these and the additional information requested.

COMMENTS FROM LGCHF GOVERNORS AND CONSULTANTS



Cover of LGCHF's consultant's review document

LGCHF's consultants also reviewed the draft submission material and compared it to the layout and architecture proposals recorded in the Design Aspirations Document.

- Relevant comments related to:
- Explanation for changes to building line arising from observance of ecological buffer zones along the woodland edge
 - Confirmation of greenery, play, planting and rain gardens in the Green Streets
 - Street trees on the avenue - these have been increased in number
 - The Gateway Green CGI and vista stopper house design - these have been refined
 - Canopy and porch support detail - posts removed
 - Driveways - these comply with M4(2) guidance.

Comments on elements not included in the Design Aspirations Document are, strictly speaking, beyond the scope of LGCHF consultant review however these have been acknowledged and affected the design along with the relevant comments above, these include:

- Creasing Tile detail - flush, not projecting
- Window colour - there was a suggestion that a lighter grey colour would be better than dark grey.

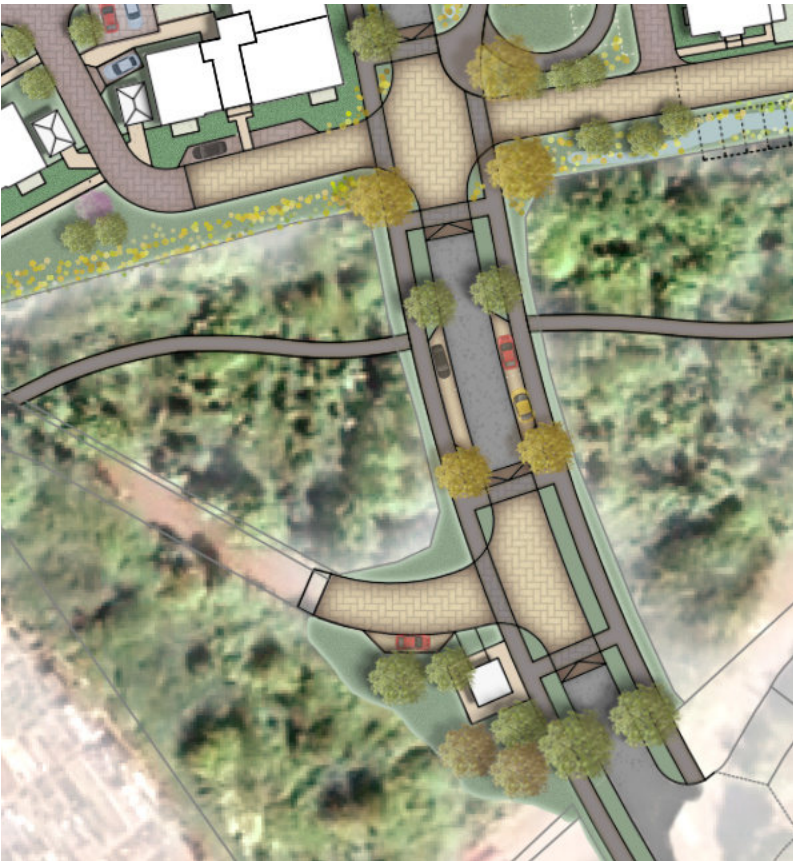
Engagement with LGCHF

Pre-submission Assessment and Feedback

WINDOW COLOUR AND VISITOR PARKING

Further feedback was received immediately prior to submission. This included more detailed explanation of the concern over window colour: that windows in the garden city are almost always white; and asked whether visitor parking could be moved away from the southern entrance to the site.

The proposals have been altered to show the light grey window colour suggested by LGCHF, and visitor parking has been reviewed and the space closest to the entrance to the site has been moved out of the Avenue and additional street trees shown bookending the remaining visitor car parking spaces to help screen them.



Detail of Illustrative Masterplan showing relocation of visitor car parking next to substation and additional avenue trees



CGI test showing previously proposed window colour - Anthracite Grey



CGI test showing current proposed window colour suggested by LGCHF - White Aluminium



CGI test showing cream-white window colour - Oyster White

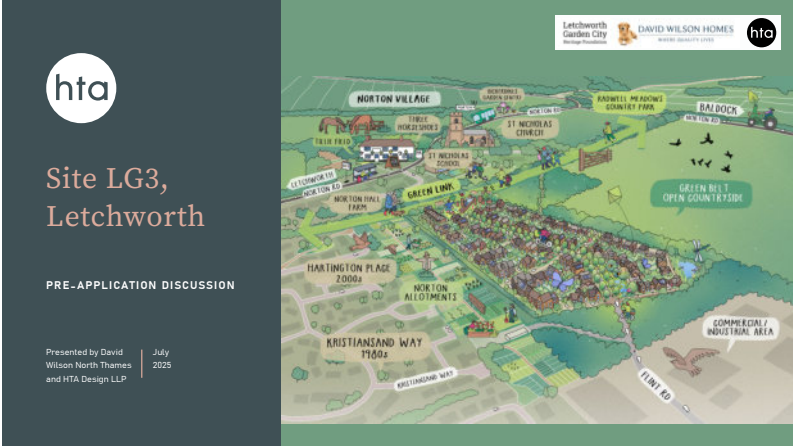


CGI test showing off-white window colour - Cleanroom White

Engagement with NHDC and Hertfordshire County Council Highways

Pre-application Meetings and Discussion.

PRE-APPLICATION MEETING WITH HCC HIGHWAYS OFFICER



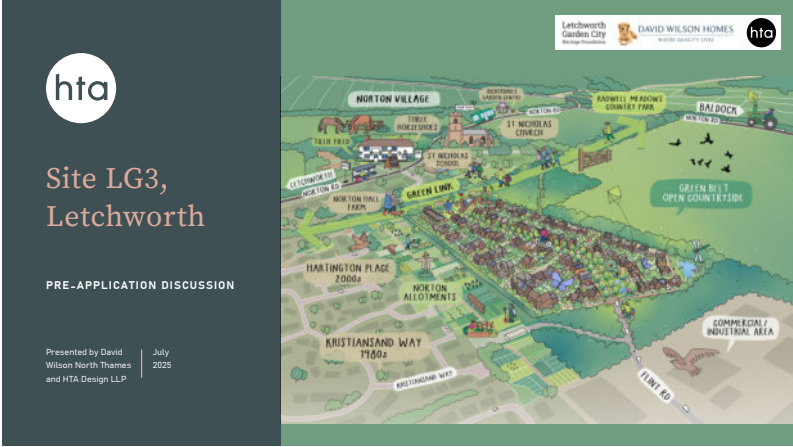
Cover of presentation to HCC Highways

A pre-application meeting with Hertfordshire County Council's Highways team took place on the 9th July 2025.

The officer consulted was happy in principle with the proposed road layout and junction arrangements, if radii were tightened to 4m, with space for overhang demarcated in a different colour surface if required.

No objections were raised to the proposed road hierarchy and street widths, nor to the proposed level of provision of private and visitor car parking.

PRE-APPLICATION MEETING WITH NHDC PLANNING OFFICERS



Cover of presentation to NHDC Planning Officers

A pre-application meeting with the Planning Lead and officers from Urban Design, Transport, Housing and Ecology took place on the 10th July.

The architecture and provision of play were praised, and comments raised on the legibility of east-west pedestrian connections and visibility of green edges. Alternative road layouts and parcel structures were discussed, but these were fundamentally different from the arrangements in LGCHF's approved Frameworks and the design development done to date.

To address the underlying concerns of legibility and east-west movement we revisited the surface treatments of raised tables connecting Green Streets and provided additional planting at the end of each Green Street.

We also clarified boundary treatments along the Allotment Edge, and distributed the affordable tenures on both sides of the Avenue reducing the clustering effect.



Illustrative layout presented to NHDC Planning Officers

Revised design with raised tables providing visual and physical continuity of east-west routes.



5. PROPOSED LAYOUT AND APPEARANCE