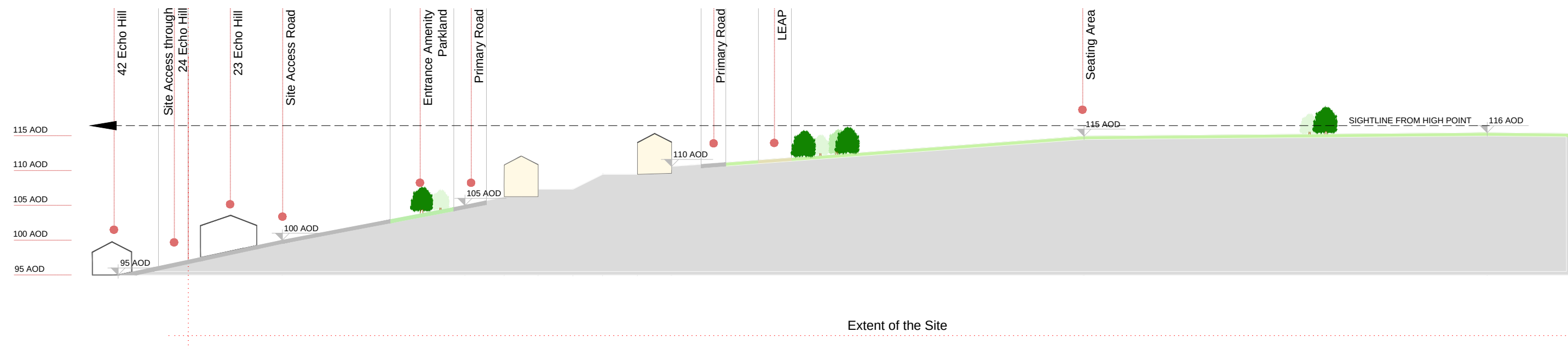


6.2 INDICATIVE SECTION

The illustrative section demonstrates how the topography has influenced the arrangement of properties and green infrastructure, with the elevated point offering views across the development, extending towards Royston.



6.3 USE AND AMOUNT

The proposed framework includes a residential development of up to 84 dwellings set within a 3.01 hectare developable area, resulting in a net density of approximately 28 dwellings per hectare.

While this density aligns with local precedents and is appropriate given the Site's characteristics and constraints, the NPPF encourages higher densities and the efficient use of land. By limiting the built area, the development allows for significantly more usable open space, enhancing community benefits by providing opportunities for recreation and supporting meaningful ecological improvements.

A total of 5.96 hectares of green infrastructure is proposed, forming a green corridor around the new homes and extending south west. This extensive provision far exceeds policy requirements, reflecting the development's commitment to enhancing environmental and community well-being.

The proposed open space provision exceeds the 2016 Open Space Standards requirement for multi-functional open space. Part of the open space will be designed for amenity and recreation, while other parts will be designed to be semi-natural areas. Formal sports provision is not proposed to be provided on the Site, due to the small scale of the development, and a necessary contribution could be made to off-Site facilities.

An area dedicated to Locally Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) is proposed within the open space, adjacent to the proposed residential development. The proposed areas of public open space offer the opportunity for informal recreation, as well as encouraging interaction with nature and walking, via the proposed recreational routes.

-  The Site **8.97ha**
-  Residential Development **3.01ha**
-  Green Infrastructure **5.96ha**



Fig.32: Use and Amount Framework Plan

6.4 BUILDING HEIGHT & DENSITY

The development will be at an average density of 28 dph with the layout carefully considering the Site's topography and surrounding views. The design allows for varying building heights to be incorporated at the Reserved Matters stage, ensuring a sensitive response to the local context.

All residential development will be situated below a datum of 111m AOD, ensuring a thoughtful response to the Site's topography while preserving sightlines and minimising visual impact. The layout is designed to enhance streets and public spaces, with strong, continuous frontages along key routes that emphasise these areas as the heart of the development.

Beyond these areas, the scale of development transitions to harmonise with surrounding open spaces and neighbouring properties, fostering a cohesive and balanced setting.

Overall, the proposal balances efficient land use with consideration for the Site's topography and edge-of-town setting.

-  The Site
-  Buildings Up to 2 Storeys
-  Buildings Below 2 Storeys



Fig.33: Building Height Framework Plan

6.5 GREEN & BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

The proposed residential development is set within a framework of open spaces, which form the Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) on the Site. The GBI is focused towards the south west and outer edges of the Site, and will surround the new homes, although smaller areas of open space will also be located amongst the houses.

The existing boundary hedgerows and the hedgerow running between existing field parcels will be retained, and a 12m deep area of open space will be provided along these hedges. These hedgerows will continue to serve as vital navigation and feeding pathways for bats. Within this open space, additional structural vegetation will be planted, including native thicket and tree species, to strengthen the existing vegetation belts. Wildflower meadows and areas of amenity grass will also be located in these areas.

Along the eastern and northern boundaries of the Site, a green corridor is proposed, which will include the retention of existing vegetation, as well as new native thicket and tree planting alongside it to further mitigate views of the surrounding development. Conveyance swales will lead through this corridor, and will transfer surface water run-off to wetland ponds on the north eastern and south western corners of the Site. Drainage will be supported by an infiltration basin and cellular infiltration trenches, as detailed in the supporting Drainage Strategy. Swales and ponds will be planted with marginal vegetation and wildflowers to create an attractive feature that enhances the wildlife habitats on the Site.

Denser areas of new tree planting will be incorporated within the Site, in order to filter the new homes in views from the longer distance to the east, thereby ensuring an appropriate edge between the settlement and the countryside beyond. Within the south west of the Site, new tree planting, amenity grass, seating and play will provide informal recreation and allow long views over the development. An area will also be allocated for a potential Community Orchard.

Targeted habitat creation measures will be implemented to support species such as great crested newts, reptiles, and badgers, including the potential development of sett-friendly spaces for badgers. Nesting and roosting provisions will be incorporated to benefit local bird populations, including barn owls and farmland species. Additional habitat features will provide refuge for reptiles and amphibians, ensuring their continued presence on-site.



Fig.34: Green and Blue Infrastructure Framework Plan

6.5 GREEN & BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

The Illustrative Landscape Strategy Plan shows how the new areas of open space could be treated to create an appropriate transition between the settlement and the countryside, whilst ensuring an attractive environment for residents, which also benefits wildlife.



Fig.36: The drainage basin will be planted and be attractive



Fig.37: Green corridors will provide recreational spaces

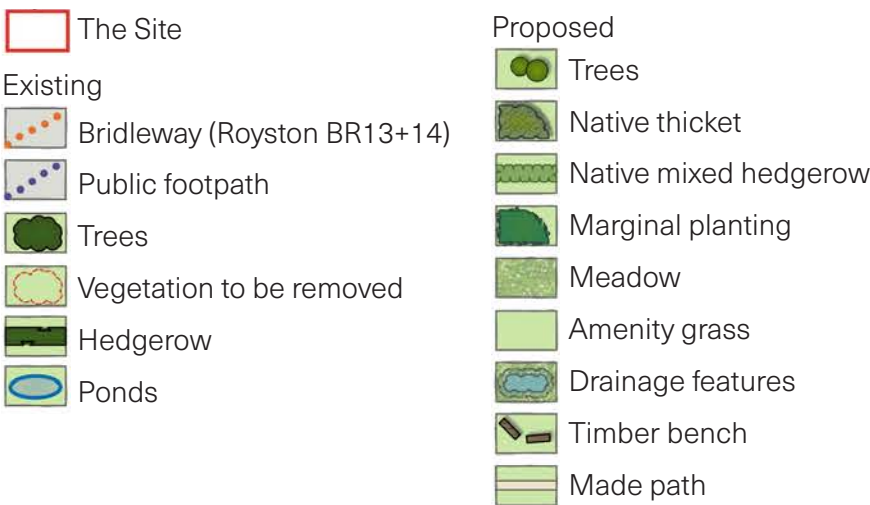


Fig.35: Illustrative Landscape Strategy Plan

6.6 ACCESS

The proposed development will be served via Echo Hill, with a new access point through the property at 24 Echo Hill.

The house is proposed to be demolished in order to provide access to the Site off Echo Hill via the plot. It extends to 0.06ha, and comprises a 2 storey detached house and its gardens. It is not of architectural or historical value, and dates from the late 20th Century.

The footways will be extended as a part of this access arrangement to provide pedestrian access into the Site.

The application is supported by a Transport Assessment, Travel Plan, and detailed Access Plans, all of which demonstrate that the proposed development can be safely and appropriately accessed. The Transport Assessment confirms that the existing road network has sufficient capacity to comfortably accommodate the additional vehicle movements associated with the proposed dwellings.



Fig.39: Access via 24 Echo Hill

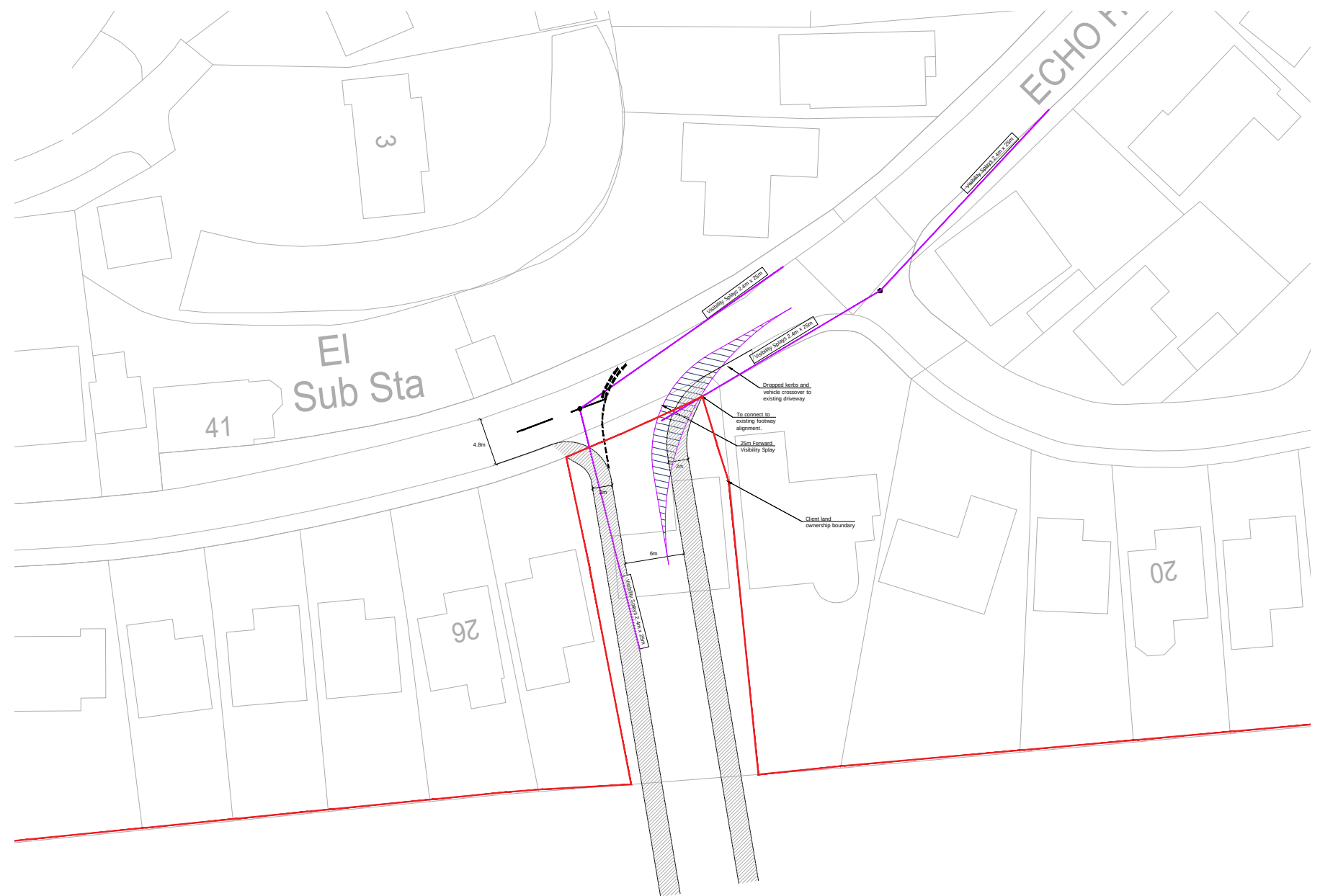


Fig.38: Vehicular Access Plan

6.7 MOVEMENT HIERARCHY

The proposed development features a well-defined hierarchy of streets, consisting of a primary route, several secondary streets, and private drives/mews providing access to all dwellings. The street hierarchy follows the Site's topography, running along contour lines where possible, reflecting the local character.

The proposed primary route will include a 5.5m wide carriageway, flanked by 2m wide footways. Additionally, there will be opportunities for 2.5m wide planting areas and on-street parking. The primary route also incorporates shared surfaces close to the proposed vehicular access, which is designed to serve as focal points within the development.



Fig.41: Drives to front and integrate with proposed landscape

- The Site
- Echo Hill
- Primary Route
- Secondary Street
- Drives/Mews
- Focal / Key Spaces



Fig.40: Movement Hierarchy Framework Plan

6.8 PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT

The development aims to create a walkable neighbourhood through a network of streets and footways that prioritise pedestrian movement within a safe and welcoming environment.

New footways will be provided along the primary route and secondary streets, while private drives will follow shared surface principles, accommodating pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles in a low-traffic, quiet setting.

Recreational routes will encircle the new homes, offering both amenity space and access to the surrounding landscape, as well as connections to the wider network of Public Rights of Way and footpaths beyond the Site boundary.



Fig.43: Homes overlooking footpaths promoting safe and inviting routes

- The Site
- Pedestrian movement within development
- Pedestrian movement in open space



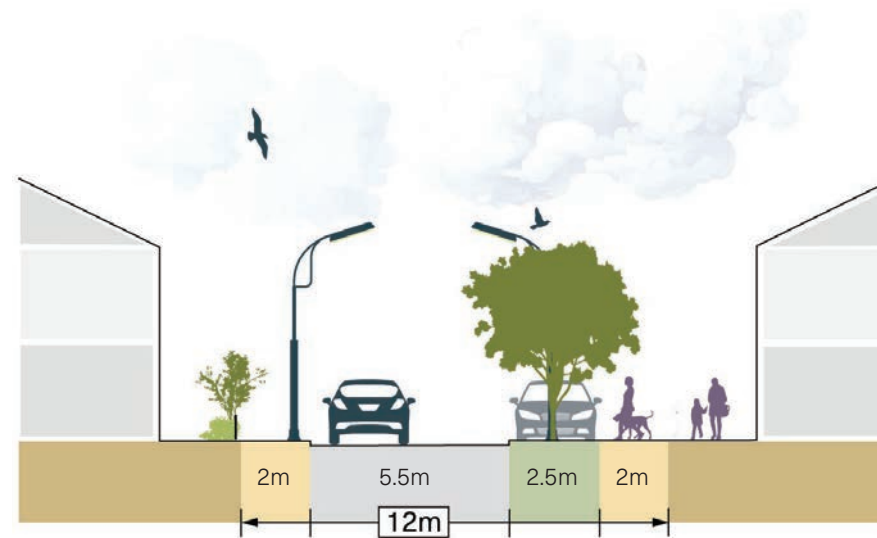
Fig.42: Pedestrian Movement Plan

6.9 STREET TYPOLOGY

The street type sections illustrate how routes are intended to be designed as public spaces to enhance the sense of place and character of the development, in lines with the principles set out by the Manual for Streets (2007).

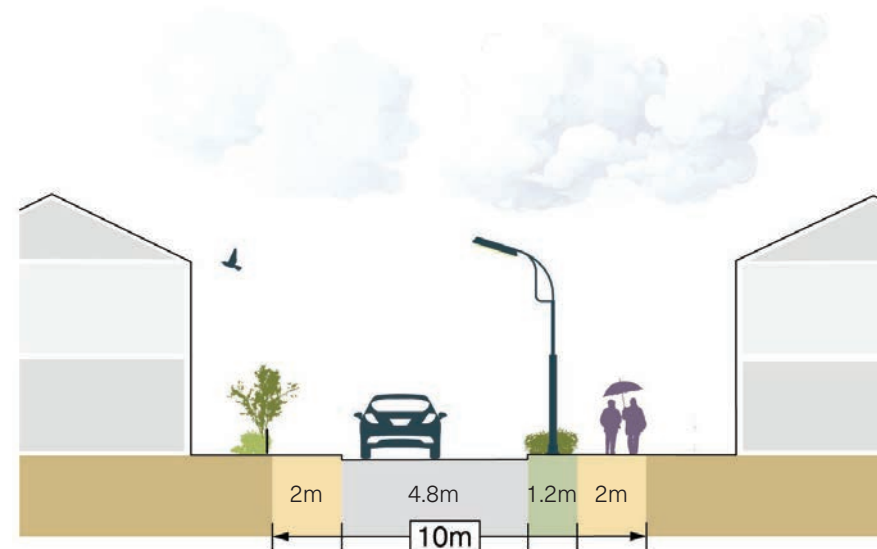
Primary Route (Access Road): a street type applicable to all sites on the outskirts of main towns or infill sites within existing suburban areas and generally serves 50 to 300 dwellings.

- + Carriage width not necessarily constant (min. width 4.8m).
- + Opportunity for boulevard or avenue planting.
- + Target speed: 25mph.



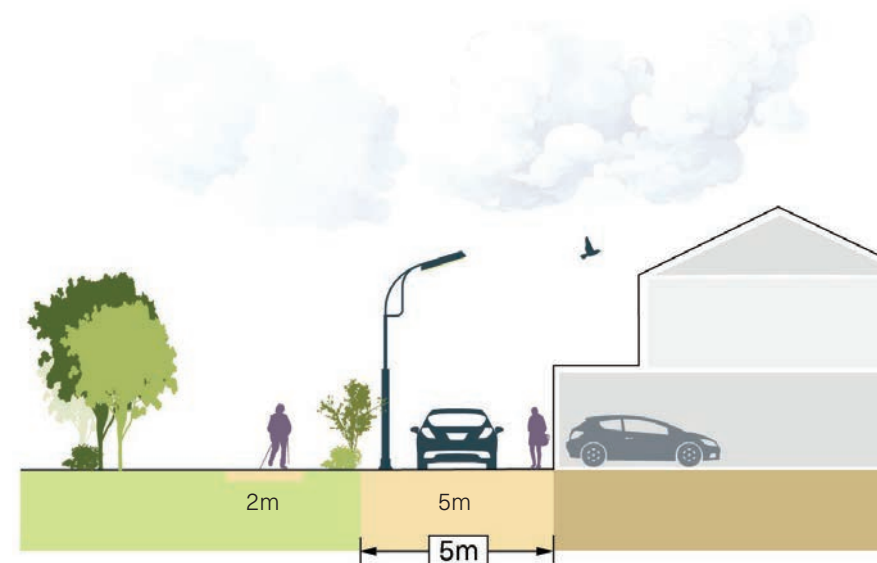
Secondary Street (Minor Access Way): a road type applicable to all sites on the outskirts of main towns, infill sites within existing suburban areas and Sites adjacent to, or within, large or small village centres and generally serves up to 50 dwellings.

- + Carriage width not necessarily constant (min. width 3m).
- + Opportunity for shared surface.
- + Target speed: 20mph.



Private Drives (Shared Private Drive/Mews/Homezone): appropriate in all types of residential areas including suburban, urban and village areas and can be surrounded by terraced, semi-detached and detached houses.

- + Serves only essential traffic with direct access to dwellings.
- + Residential areas in which the living environment clearly predominates over provision for traffic. The aim is to promote neighbourliness, quality of life and social interaction.



6.10 PARKING STRATEGY

In North Hertfordshire, parking standards for residential developments are guided by the Vehicle Parking at New Developments Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

These standards aim to ensure that sufficient off-street parking is provided to meet the needs of new residents while also encouraging the use of sustainable transport methods where feasible.

The SPD adopts a minimum standard approach for residential parking, based on local car ownership levels and the need to reduce overspill parking onto surrounding streets. These standards apply to both allocated (private) and unallocated (shared) spaces and vary depending on the number of bedrooms in a dwelling.

Typical residential parking requirements include:

- + 1-bedroom dwellings: 1 allocated space, plus 1 unallocated space per 3 dwellings
- + 2-bedroom dwellings: 2 spaces per dwelling (can be a combination of allocated and unallocated)
- + 3-bedroom dwellings: 2 spaces per dwelling
- + 4-bedroom dwellings: 2 spaces per dwelling
- + Cycle storage: 1 secure, covered space per bedroom

In addition to these residential standards, the SPD also encourages the provision of visitor parking, typically at a rate of 1 space per 4 dwellings, and supports the inclusion of garages or carports provided they meet minimum dimensions and usability criteria.

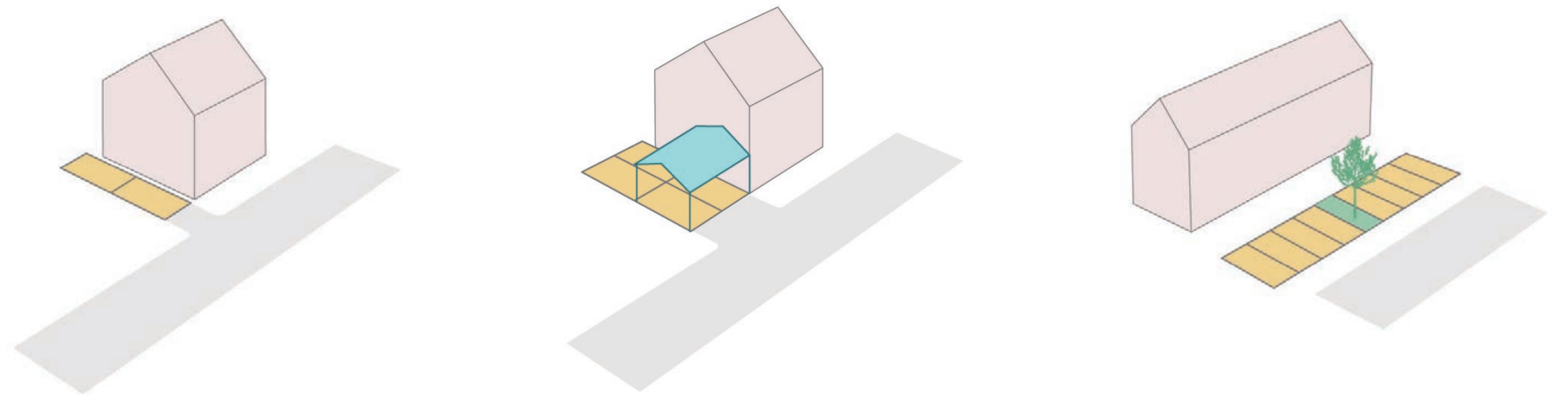


Fig.44: Parking Type Examples

6.11 CHARACTER AREAS

Anchored in its edge-of-town location and shaped by the surrounding landscape, the proposed development at Royston is designed to respect its setting while offering a distinct, high-quality living environment.

1. Briary Hill and Ponds Character Area

This area, defined by its relationship with the Site's topography and the surrounding development, integrates with the wetland ponds to form a natural, informal corridor marking the Site's boundary and entrance from Echo Hill.

The key characteristics include:

- + A set back from the Site's edge and lower building heights in the north east corner and along the western edge to respect the adjacent existing residential housing and enhance visual integration.
- + Dwellings oriented towards open space, offering natural surveillance and a framed, welcoming interface with the landscape.
- + Focal space treatment at the key intersection, framed by proposed trees, hedging, and amenity grassland, creates a welcoming and cohesive gateway into the Site while fostering pedestrian-priority environments and encouraging informal interaction.
- + A network of secondary streets and private drives, ensuring a quieter, more intimate neighborhood atmosphere with carefully considered spaces for community interaction.
- + Integration of green and blue infrastructure, including sustainable drainage features that enhance both functionality and aesthetic appeal, with footpaths weaving through wetland areas to provide close interaction with the informal habitat.

-  The Site
-  Briary Hill and Ponds Character Area
-  Eastern Edge and Woodland Corridor Character Area
-  Upper Edge Recreational Character Area



Fig.45: Character Areas Framework Plan

6.11 CHARACTER AREAS

2. Eastern Edge and Woodland Corridor Character Area

This area integrates residential development within a structured woodland corridor, connecting to the adjacent woodland to reinforce the ecological network. It features the primary movement corridor, a thicket edge boundary, and a wetland drainage pond in the south eastern corner, enriching biodiversity and enhancing the landscape's visual quality.

Key characteristics include:

- + A tree-lined primary street that establishes visual landmarks and enhances wayfinding throughout the development.
- + A network of secondary streets and private drives creates a neighbourhood setting, designed to encourage community interaction.
- + A structured woodland corridor complemented by surrounding meadow planting, connecting to the adjacent existing woodland, filtering views and framing nearby recreational spaces.
- + Green valley and thicket planting along the eastern edge, offering visual relief, enhancing biodiversity, and creating linear spaces for walking and exploration.

3. Upper Edge Recreational Character Area

Situated in the south west of the Site, on higher topography, this character area faces out onto the wider landscape and forms the development's green edge. It has been designed to offer both a sensitive response to the Site's topography and the views from it, and valuable recreational opportunities for residents.

Key characteristics include:

- + A well-connected leisure route weaves through the open space, linking to public footpaths beyond the Site.
- + Integrated seating areas afford long views across and beyond the development.
- + A dedicated play space, strategically positioned near dwellings, fosters social interaction and ensures passive surveillance for safety.
- + The western edge presents an opportunity for a community orchard, enhancing local biodiversity and providing a shared amenity space.



6.12 APPEARANCE

The proposed homes are expected to be of a similar scale and massing to those already found in Royston.

While the new houses should reflect the local character, there is also an opportunity to incorporate modern, energy-efficient materials and design approaches. These should be balanced with traditional forms and building materials to create a development that is both respectful of its surroundings and well-suited to contemporary and future lifestyles.

The images on this page highlight architectural features found in Royston, which should serve as inspiration during the detailed design phase.



CONCLUSIONS

07

7.1 CONCLUSIONS

This application is submitted in outline, with all matters reserved except for access. The proposed development includes up to 84 new homes, with vehicular access provided from Echo Hill at the northern edge of the Site.

The proposals have been shaped by a thorough understanding of the Site's existing context and its relationship with Royston. The design process follows best practice in urban design and draws on both national and local design guidance. The goal is to create a high-quality development with a strong sense of place - one that responds sensitively to its surroundings, is built to last, and meets the needs of both current and future generations.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) identifies three pillars of sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental. It emphasises that planning decisions should actively guide development towards sustainable outcomes, while also taking local context into account to reflect the unique character, needs, and opportunities of each area.

The Economic Role

- + The development will support the local economy in Royston by creating employment opportunities and generating tax revenue during the construction phase.
- + In the longer term, it will contribute to economic growth through the provision of housing for the local workforce, investment in infrastructure and services, and increased spending in local shops and businesses.
- + Additional funding through the New Homes Bonus and increased Council Tax revenue will help enhance local services and community facilities.

The Social Role

- + The development will provide much-needed new housing within North Hertfordshire District, including affordable homes to meet local needs and support existing residents.
- + New public open spaces and recreational routes will promote community health and well-being.
- + The Site benefits from a highly accessible location, with pedestrian links and public transport connections, including access to Royston Railway Station.

The Environmental Role

- + The scheme has been designed to retain the majority of existing trees, hedgerows, and woodland on-Site, which will be reinforced through additional planting and structured landscaping.
- + Well-connected areas of public open space, including landscaped areas and walking routes, will ensure all new homes are within easy reach of high-quality green spaces.
- + On-Site biodiversity will be enhanced through naturalistic landscaping, the preservation of key ecological features, and the creation of new habitats.
- + Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), including swales, will be incorporated to mitigate flood risk.
- + At the detailed design stage, homes will be built to meet both national and local targets for reducing energy consumption, carbon emissions, and improving energy efficiency.



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