



HEATHLANDS GARDEN COMMUNITY

MASTERPLAN DESIGN CONCEPT
JUNE 2020



Artist Impression of District Centre

1. INTRODUCTION

This document provides an overview summary of the driving principles that underpin the masterplan design concept for Heathlands Garden Community.

This Stage 2 of the masterplan develops the strategies and ideas of the 2019 vision document, incorporates revised land control information and takes account of the extensive technical work covering archaeology, transport, ecology amongst other disciplines prepared by RSK, commissioned by the Borough Council to refine the masterplan design.

This masterplan takes a deeper review of the site constraints and a more surgical approach to the preservation of existing archaeology and environmental assets to create a variety of habitats to achieve biodiversity net gain and environmental resilience, alongside greater sensitivity to retained dwellings and preservation of the local character of the area.

In parallel a comprehensive multi-modal transport strategy is considered, initially focusing on the provision of compact neighbourhood planning with ease of walking between home and required daily services, supported by high quality strategic cycle 'greenways' between key destinations connected to Lenham Railway Station. Over the longer term, provision is made for a new railway halt within the latter phases of the development.

Another critical component of our revised approach is the preservation and enhancement of identified heritage assets related to areas of high archaeology potential such as Royton Manor, Chapel Farm, Mount Castle Farm and areas around Forstal Road to create new parks and recreation areas, providing enhanced settings for retained listed buildings and preservation of archaeological features.

At a scale of around 4,000 units with a diverse mix of uses, the opportunity to integrate exemplar sustainable design, operational and management principles will be maximised, alongside ambitions for creating carbon neutral development. The planting of a new Country Park to the south of the M20, the preservation of Bull Heath and the extension of the Nature Reserve adjacent to the Main Line Railway provides prime opportunities for carbon offsetting and achieving biodiversity net gain.

The Borough Council has worked closely with the team of consultants to ensure its ambitions for Heathlands have been embodied in creating an exemplar landscape led Garden Community to meet the below strategic objectives:

- Create new Garden Community with exemplar eco credentials and biodiversity net gain.
- Provide a mix of high-quality homes, of which 40% will be for affordable housing let at genuinely affordable rents to local people.
- Develop a sustainable community with a blend of homes, businesses, community, social, as well as green and blue spaces, with the right infrastructure provided at the right time.

2. ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN

The 2nd Stage masterplan provides a landscape led vision for Heathlands Garden Community underpinned by a multi-functional grid of green and blue infrastructure that holds the development together. Concentrated between definitive infrastructural boundaries to the north and south the site is compact and easily lends itself to creating walkable and well-connected mixed-use neighbourhoods connected by a network of sustainable transport modes.

The following pages sets out the design concept and essential design principles for the masterplan, to create a resilient and adaptable development framework. The plan envisages a wide range of homes and places to work that can adapt and evolve to changing living requirements and economic needs. Placemaking is focused on enhancement of landscape and heritage assets and creating a strong sense of community. This approach will deliver a vibrant and dynamic place where residents have access to nature, and high quality recreational spaces and leisure on their doorstep, to promote a healthy and active lifestyle.

Following the RSK technical work key changes to the 2019 masterplan are:

1. Provision of two new vehicular links from the A20 to the north. The scale of the development does not presently support the creation of new junction on the M20.
2. Consideration for a new Railway Halt along the Main Line Railway in the later phases of the development.
3. Repurpose the highest areas of archaeological importance through the creation of main public spaces including Royton Town Park and Forstal Cricket Green centrally located in the scheme.
4. Relocation of Country Park to the south incorporating the Great Stour River corridor and nature areas as a major part the site's blue and green infrastructure.
5. Extension of developable area to the west as the latest phase of development vacated by relocating the Country Park to the south, increasing proximity to Lenham Railway Station.
6. Consolidation of the Rose Lane Industrial Estate into an employment campus providing accommodation for a variety of incubator, office, and light manufacturing spaces.
7. Removal of the Secondary School site due to available capacity at the Lenham Secondary School.
8. Safeguarded area: not presently proposed, but land for potential new motorway junction (if required) in the future.

The development achieves around 4,000 dwelling and delivers the following:

- Two new 3-Form Entry Primary Schools
- A 47ha Country Park
- A 5ha Employment Campus
- Over 150ha of multifunctional green and blue infrastructure
- A mixed-use District Centre of around 4ha and two Local Centres at 1ha each



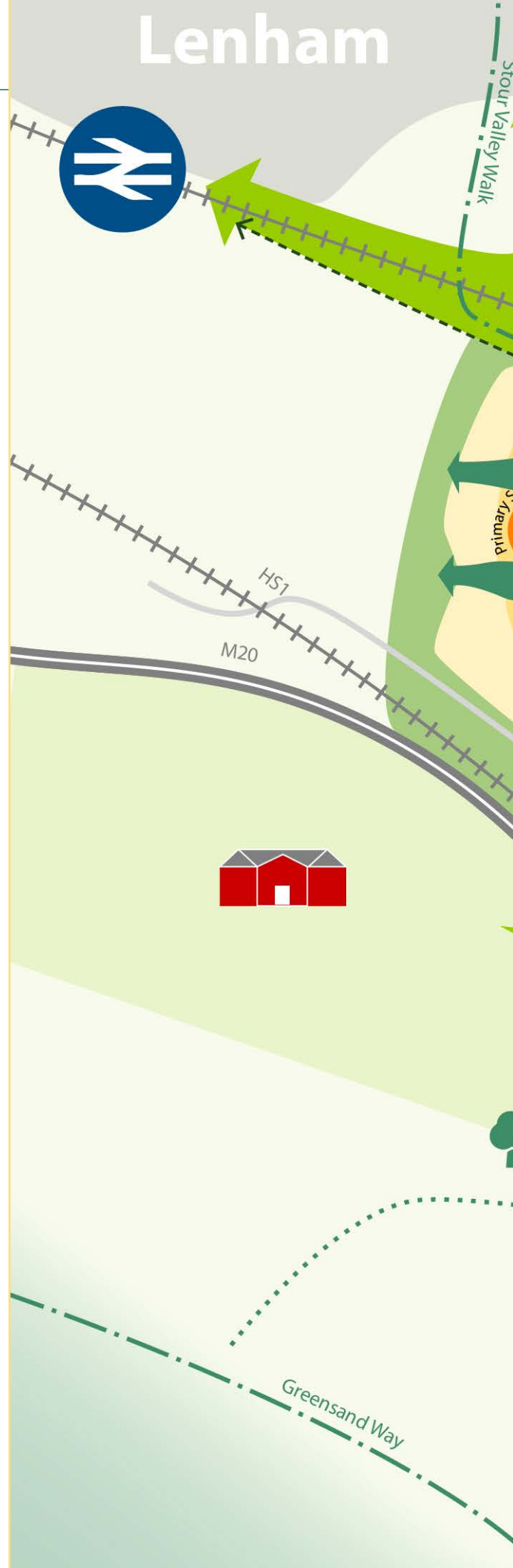
3. MASTERPLAN DESIGN CONCEPT

Our approach for Heathlands Garden Community is to root the place in its context, embracing and showcasing its landscape and heritage assets which will give this new settlement a clear and distinctive identity.

In keeping with the core principles of garden communities, the importance of a landscape led and contextual responsive approach are fundamental to the environmental and placemaking aspirations for Heathlands Garden Community.

The linear profile of the site lends itself to three compact neighbourhoods with a larger district centre sitting at the heart of the site. An internal loop of highways circuits connects the neighbourhoods together. Linear networks of east-west 'greenways' provide priority for sustainable modes and offer strategic connectivity for pedestrians and cyclist to Lenham Station.

A 'green grid' totalling over 150ha covers more than 50% of the site area. This is formed by the Great Stour River corridor and a new 47ha Country Park alongside a new Town Park, local greens and nature habitats. The green grid stitches the site together in a verdant and ecologically biodiverse setting, ensuring that every resident is never more than a minute's walk from a diverse collection of multi-functional open spaces with access to recreational spaces, leisure pursuits and active living.





4. CREATING HOMES FOR EVERYONE

Heathlands Garden Community will positively respond to Maidstone's housing needs including a range of units typologies, mix, tenures including self-build

Undoubtedly a development delivering around 4,000 homes will have a mix of tenures, variety of unit sizes and typologies. However the way we live, with greater reliance on extended family units, multi-generational living, increased need for better quality space to work effectively and successfully from home, also suggests that traditional housing forms need to evolve to become more flexible and adaptable to cope with the ever changing needs of modern life.

Key principles include:

- Allow a proportion of homes to come forward as self/custom build to enable residents to build bespoke to their needs
- Challenge the 'norm' of volume housing and place delivery through the proactive application of design standards such as such as MHCLG's

Building for Life 12, MBC's own Building for Life, BREAAAM and the Build Better Build Beautiful Commission mandate to create a truly diverse range of accommodation and raise design quality

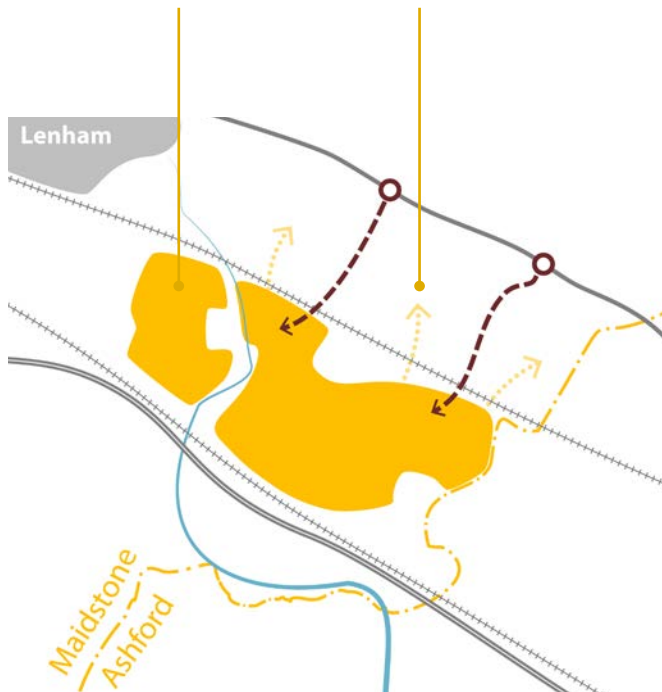
- Employ new innovative technologies for housing delivery such as prefab and modular construction to create energy efficient and accelerated delivery of high-quality homes
- Promote invention and delivery of beautifully designed new housing typologies to support a greater diversity of lifestyles such as communal living and scalable live work units
- Provide housing options for accommodating young individuals and families, and ensure opportunities for socially rented properties are readily available
- Make provision for later living accommodation close to public transport and local services and optimise potential synergies with community facilities and proximity to schools

HOUSING PROVISION

- 40% affordable target ensured by the Borough Council as master developer
- The current SHMAA will guide the mix of the homes to be provided.
- Neighbourhoods with different densities and design character will foster diversity of the housing provision with regard to type, mix and tenure
- Offer a variety of development parcel sizes to appeal to both national and local housebuilders

Around 4,000
within core area

Potential additional
capacity with land
north of the railway?



A PLACE WITH ROOM TO GROW

- Whilst not part of our present proposal, the decision to focus presently upon a package of sustainable measures (with access via the A20, as opposed to the M20), brings into the play the potential for future development in the area between the A20 and mainline railway line.
- This is where the principal vehicular access points are proposed, and further technical work could establish the ability or otherwise of some of these additional areas to see how Heathlands Garden Community could “grow” in the future.



Self-Built Precedent: Graven Hill, Bicester



Factory Built Precedent: Ebbsfleet

Live Work Precedent: Dragonfly Place, Brockley



Cohousing Precedent: Older Women Cohousing, Barnet

5. WORKING WITH HOMES ENGLAND

The Borough Council will be working in partnership with Homes England to deliver the Heathlands project.

Established Garden City principles enable ambitious Councils to form alliances with delivery partners to create and deliver new sustainable new communities, with good place-making at its heart. The Borough Council has held several preliminary discussions with Homes England, and has recently received formal support from Homes England in promoting this development.

As the Government's "housing arm", this will be a very secure public partnership that will provide certainty and ensure the delivery of this vision and ambition.

Homes England supports the ambitious and visionary position the Borough Council is adopting, as it will have a positive economic, social and environmental impact - including for the wider region. The scheme will deliver a high-quality designed scheme that accords with 'Building For Life 12' – a cornerstone for Homes England.

Homes England will be a joint partner and support promotion costs on 50/50 match funding basis. Homes England will also assist in the land partnership agreements necessary to deliver a comprehensive scheme.



AS A MASTER DEVELOPERS, THE BOROUGH COUNCIL AND HOMES ENGLAND WILL PERFORM THE FOLLOWING FUNCTIONS:



SECURE THE LAND OPTIONS



**PROMOTE THE PROPOSAL
THROUGH THE LOCAL PLAN
REVIEW PROCESS**



**CREATE AN EXEMPLAR LANDSCAPE
LED MASTERPLAN AND SECURE
PLANNING CONSENT**



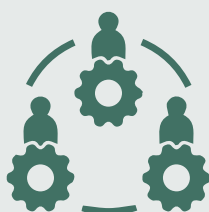
CREATE A DESIGN CODE



**CREATE AN INFRASTRUCTURE
DELIVERY PLAN SUPPORTED BY
LAND VALUE CAPTURE**



**CREATE A STEWARDSHIP
STRUCTURE**



**INSTALL HIGH QUALITY
MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**



**BRING IN DEVELOPMENT
PARTNERS TO UNDERTAKE PHASED
DELIVERY OF LAND PARCELS**

6. SUSTAINABLY DESIGNED AND CONNECTED

As experienced over the past three months the lack of access to services, shops and quality open space within easily accessible reach and walkable travel distances, has sharpened our focus on the benefit of having these facilities on our doorstep.

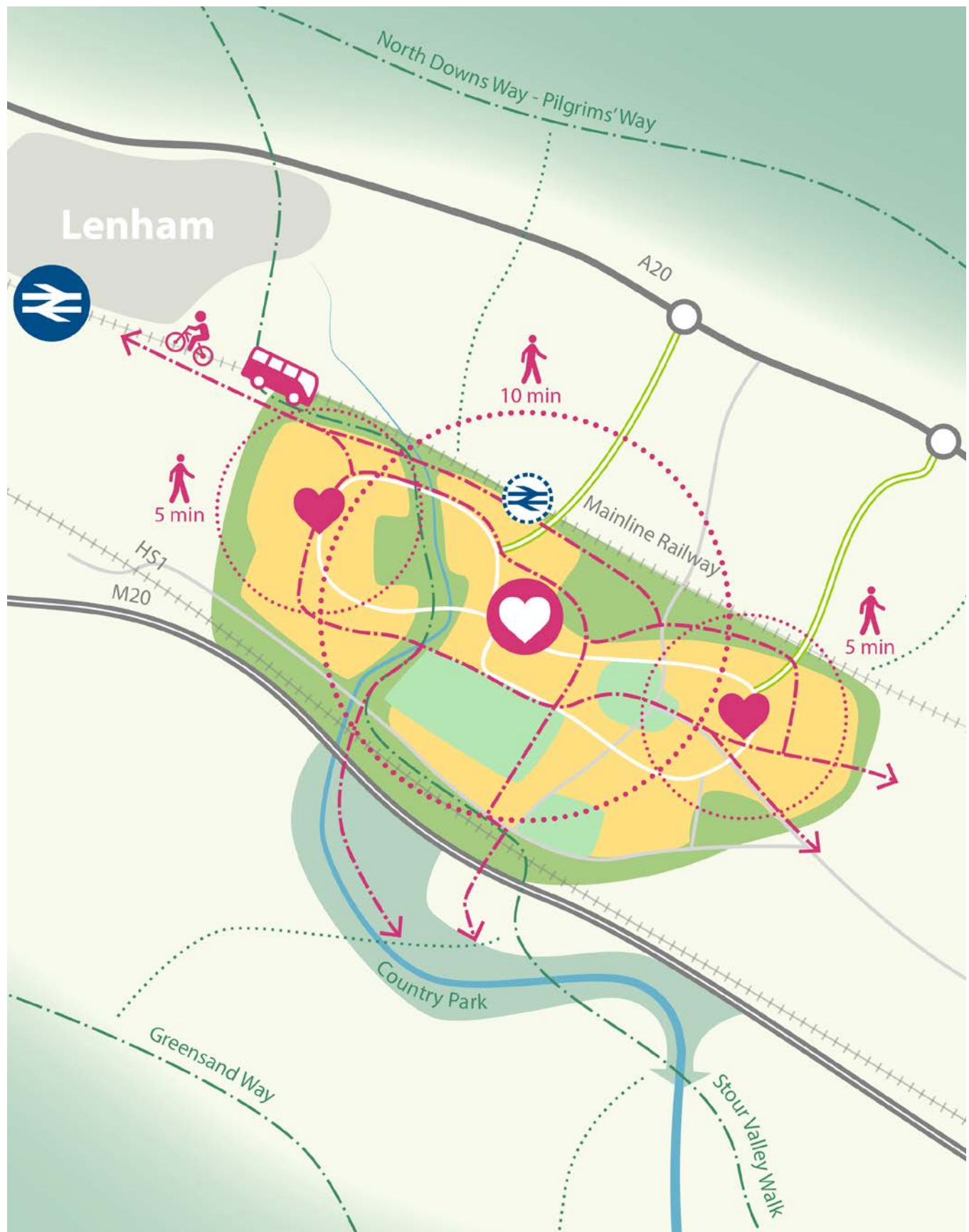
Supporting 'local', a sense of community and a compact neighbourhood structure has never been more important to support the Borough Council aspiration to meet its climate emergency objectives. As such, we are employing the following principles for creating Heathlands Garden Community:

- Capitalise on the relatively flat terrain within the site to create a network of 'greenways' shared between pedestrians, cyclists and in some cases public transport on a dedicated set of routes separated from general vehicular movement
- Use 'greenways' to connecting local parks, community, and neighbourhood hubs along with strategic connections to rapid mass transit service at Lenham Railway Station, thus promoting an active and healthy lifestyle and supporting the climate change agenda.
- Develop compact walkable neighbourhoods, based on the co-location of local education, health, community, and daily services within 7-10 minutes' walk of residents, to create a vibrant and sociable local heart
- Push densities traditionally associated with greenfield development sites to create critical mass to support viable sustainable transport options
- Provide dedicated routes for a reliable and efficient electric bus service for local and district centres in a 'figure of 8' circuits, linked to Lenham Railway Station and potential future rail halt located between the Great Stour River corridor and the Ancient Woodland block west of Forstal Road.

NOT A COMMUTER TOWN

- The provision of new local services and an innovative approach to inward employment opportunities, will **reduce the need for outward journeys.**
- Further detail of proposals covered in the "Social and Community" and the "Employment" sections.





WALKING

Walkable neighbourhoods will make walking and cycling the preferred options for internal movement

Improved existing and new links to the site surroundings will provide enhanced access to the countryside



HEALTHY COMMUNITY

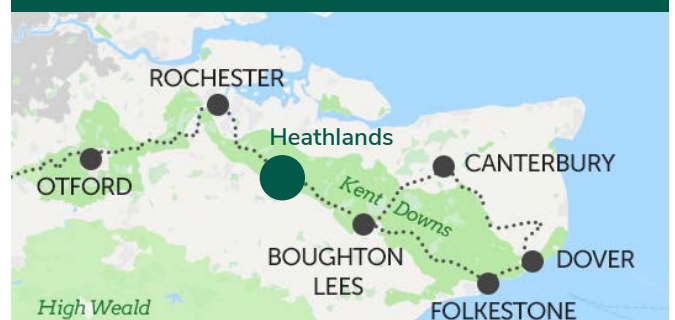
- Walkable neighbourhoods foster **healthy lifestyle and social interaction**, and discourage the use of cars

LEISURE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

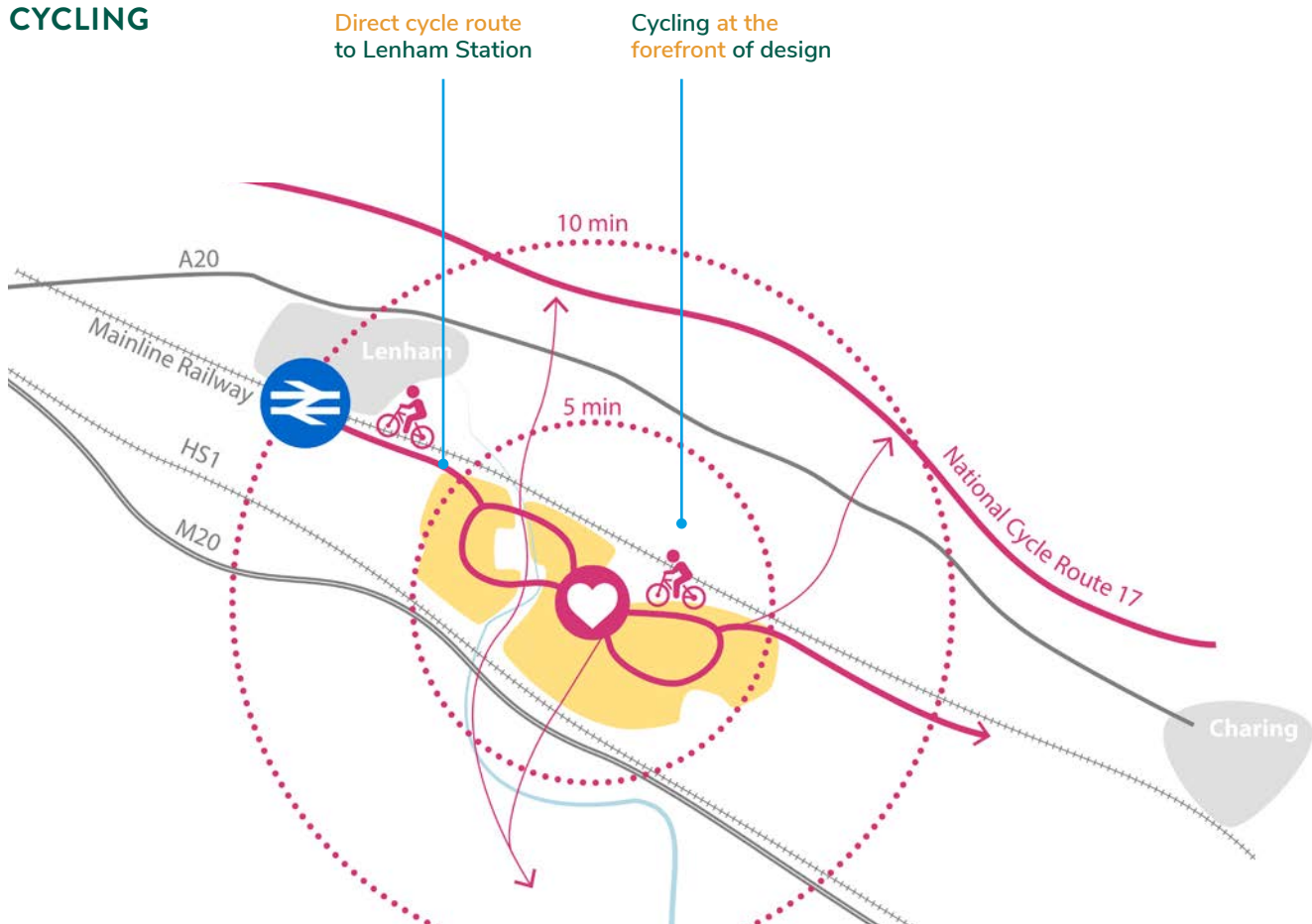
- Walking tourism is a growing sector which could add to the economic **growth of the area** and provide local jobs



Pilgrims' Way



CYCLING

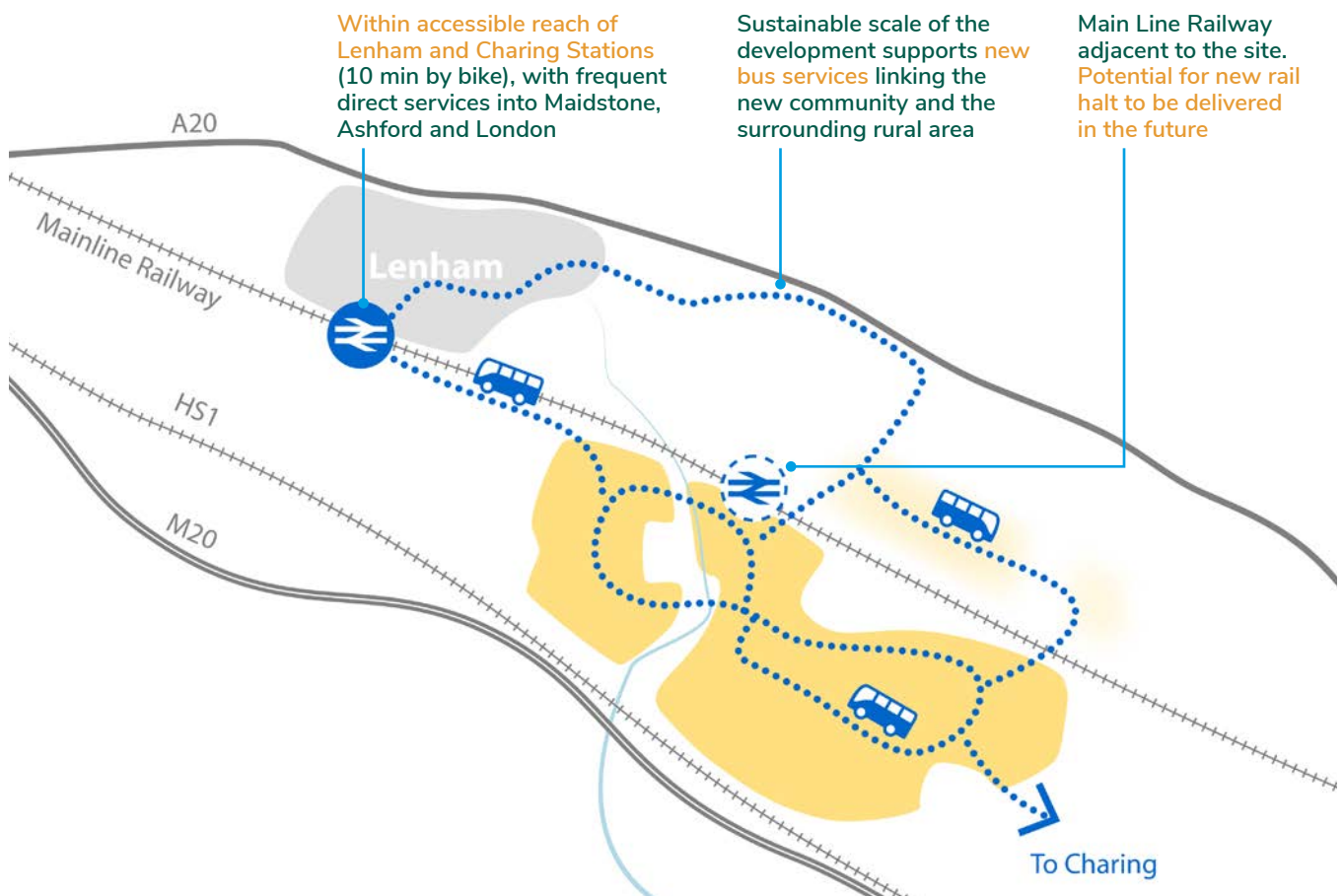


AN OPPORTUNITY FOR HEATHLANDS

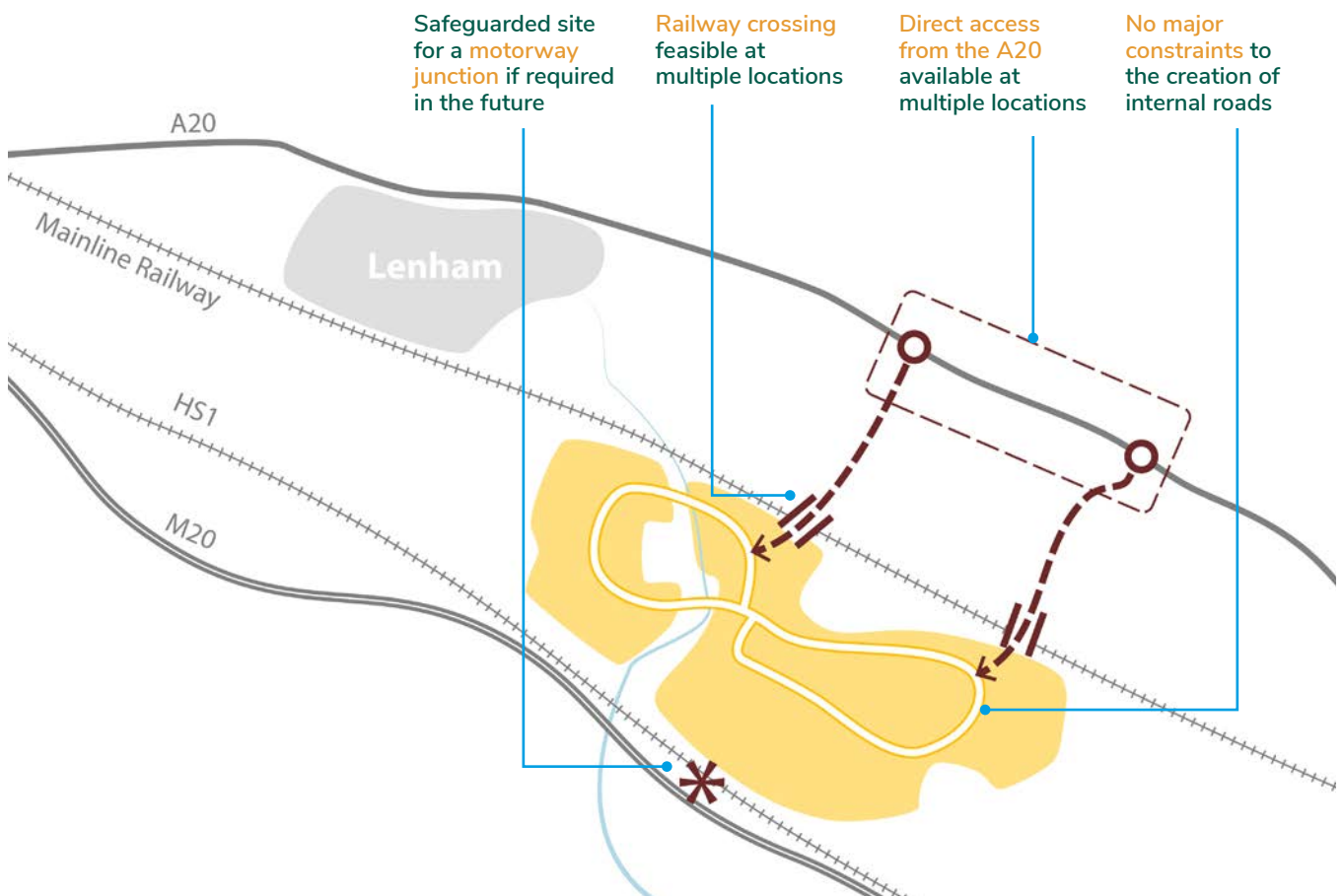
- Contribute to the delivery of new regional cycle infrastructure
- Promote active lifestyle and tourism
- Accommodate Electric-cycling as a sustainable travel option



PUBLIC TRANSPORT



HIGHWAYS



POTENTIAL NEW JUNCTION

- Potential for a new junction on the M20, if scheme grows to a larger scale in the future and/or in conjunction with other future new schemes along M20/A20 corridor.
- Land for a potential junction has been safeguarded on site, albeit it could ultimately be elsewhere along M20 corridor.



FOSTER INNOVATION AND CLEAN TRANSPORT OPTIONS

- On-demand transport
- Car sharing
- Electric vehicles
- Each house pre-wired for vehicle charging

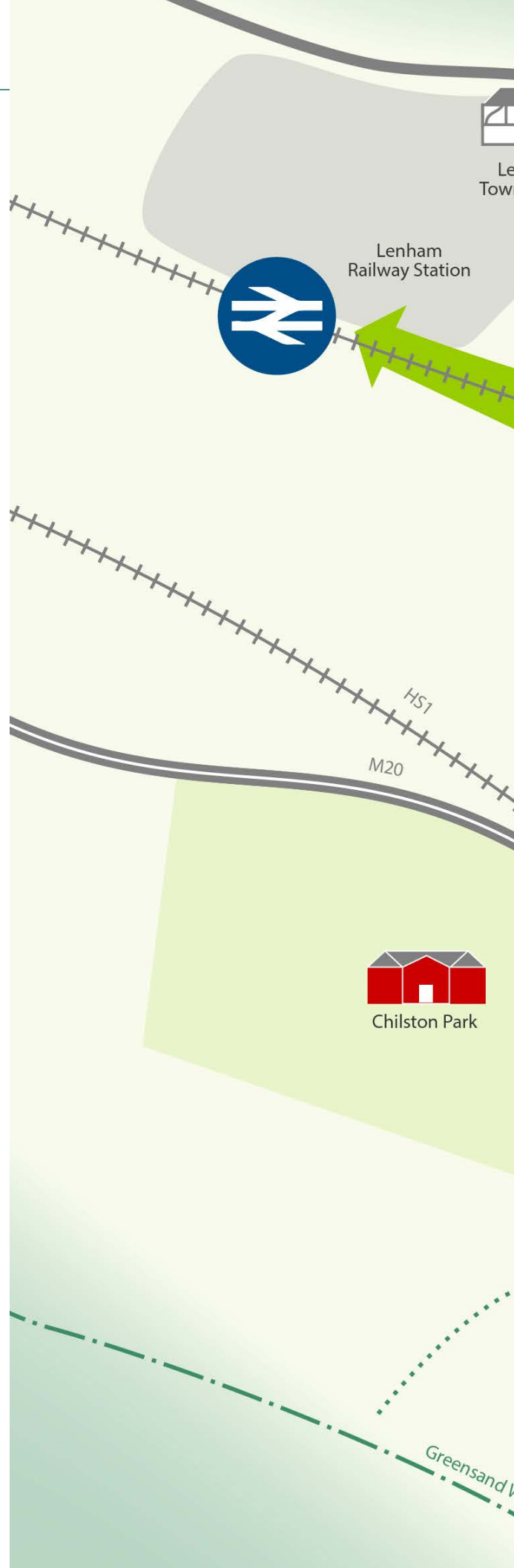


7. BEAUTIFULLY DESIGNED AND MAKING VIBRANT PLACES

The spatial organisation of streets, location of parks, alignment of connecting green corridors and the scale of buildings will be the primary characteristics that define a sense of place for Heathlands Garden Community.

Fundamental to our place making strategy are:

- Preserve and enhance existing archaeological assets through the creation of Royton Manor Town Park and Forstal Cricket Green as key event spaces and meeting places for the new community
- Protect Ancient Woodland and nature reserve adjacent to the Main Line Railway, Bull Heath and existing hedgerows corridors as important ecological assets to improve habitat creation along with new open spaces to increase biodiversity net gain in a comprehensive 'green grid' threading the development together
- Promote a variety of densities and building heights with a higher density district centre core (50-75dph), with supplementary mid density surrounding local centres (35-50dph) and sensitive lower density edges (25-35dph) to the east and adjacent to existing retained dwellings
- Promote an architectural style that is contemporary in feel but embedded in the characteristics of its locality, using local materials, incorporating detailing and form of local buildings and structures to create an identity that is unique, yet familiar to its locality
- Develop a Design Code to guide the quality of design and creation of places which support flexibility and evolution at building and land use scales incorporating Building for Life 12 principles for place making



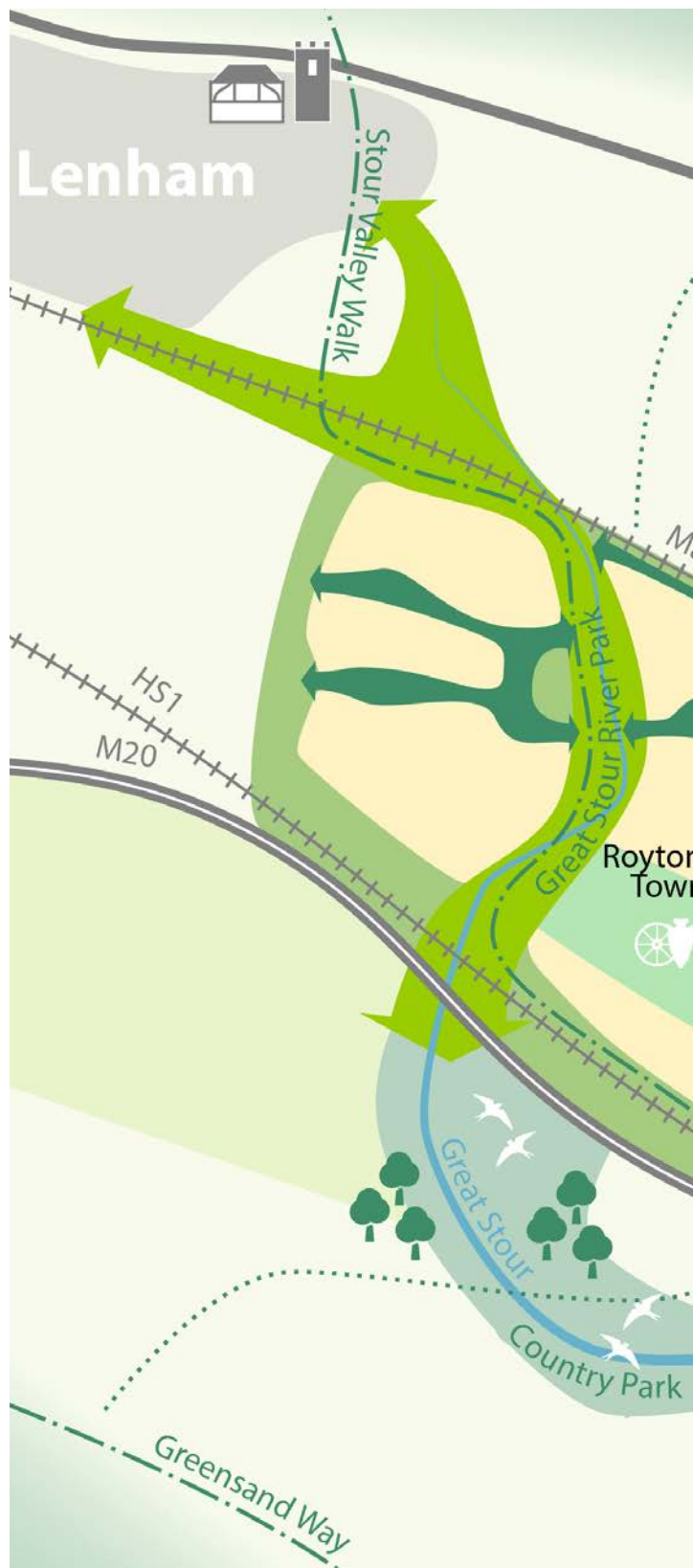


8. A VERDANT AND PRODUCTIVE PLACE TO LIVE

LANDSCAPE LED APPROACH

Heathlands Garden Community will be nestled in a rich and diverse landscape setting incorporating the many assets across the site. Access to nature for all residents and protection of views from the Kent Downs AONB through careful design, are paramount to our landscape led approach. The role of the green and blue infrastructure is not only to provide drainage, offer opportunities for food production and offer spaces for sport, leisure and recreation, but ultimately it will be the 'glue' that binds Heathlands together and ensure it is experienced as a holistic community:

- Creation of the 'Heathlands Ring' a collection of multifunctional open spaces, anchored by Bull Heath Nature/ Wildlife Reserve, Royton Manor Town Park, North Nature Reserve and the Great Stour River corridor.
- Creation of a new 47 ha Country Park linked to Great Stour River corridor and Bull Heath accessed by Bowley lane and PRoW leading to Hubbard's Farm Cottages.
- Reinforcement of structural planting along the Main Line Railway to mitigate views from the Kent Downs AONB.
- Incorporation of "green buffers" adjacent to retained buildings and homes along Lenham and Forstal Roads in particular to ensure a sensitive and soft interface between existing and proposed development.





GROWING COMMUNITY

During the present enforced isolation, our connection to nature and the renaissance of 'grow your own' have been some of the most comforting aspects in maintaining our mental health along with rediscovering the benefits of quality family time and having a sense of community.

Historically 'scratchy' back of house allotments have become pride of place as new social meeting places, hosting barbeques, vegetable exchange markets and plant nurseries.

Looking back at the original Ebenezer Howard Garden Village vision, the principles of access to nature and food production have been lost and diluted over the years though the evolution of new settlement movements. However, the opportunity to create an exemplar garden community with these features as fundamental components to the creation of community and place is now.



9. GOVERNANCE OF SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

The potential social value gain is significant, with numerous opportunities to empower locals to take ownership of local ventures with the support of the local authority to provide training and financial support. This will support local initiatives to evolve into self-sustaining businesses, creating a spirit of enterprise and self-reliance.

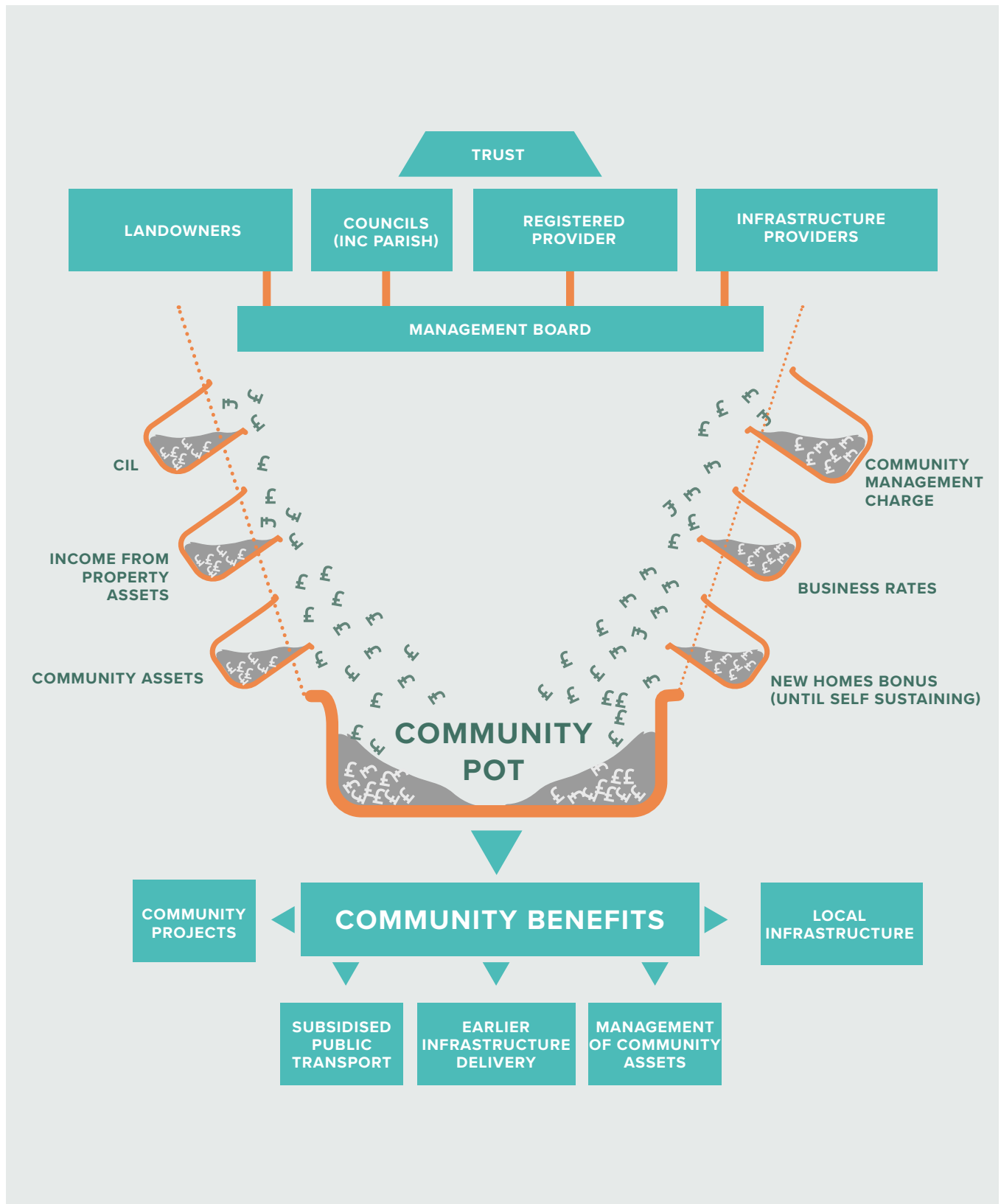
Specific proposals for Heathlands being promoted are:

- Create a management structure combining professional expertise and residents to establish governance and stewardship of the development to ensure that value created by the development is held in perpetuity. This accrued value is then reinvested in the development for residents to shape their community, supplement the maintenance of open spaces and support community programmes and enterprising initiatives.
- Create programmes for optimising social value across the themes of job creation and economic growth; health, wellbeing and the environment; community engagement and empowerment over the life cycle of the project, from Investment, planning, design, construction through to operation.
- Provide a “Community Hub” within the Local Centre for a variety of locally run events and groups to meet.
- Provision of space for a community run Garden Centre as a social hub, where every resident is given a tree for their garden as a welcome to the community.
- Co-location of education, health, community, and local services within Local Centres adjacent to open space, to create a neighbourhood heart; a place to meet, socialise and exchange ideas.
- Allow for the future development of later living accommodation and care facilities close to Local Centres to capitalise on potential synergies with Primary Schools and Community Hubs.

WHY NOT?

- Every resident is given a tree for their garden as a welcome to the community
- Establish a local plant nursery in the Country Park to support the greening of the community
- Offer new and existing residents free advice from the newly formed Heathlands Resident’s Association on what and how to grow
- Offer design expertise on how to create an entry for the annual ‘best in show front garden’ competition
- Create apps based and social media platforms to enable communication and encourage community engagement





10. AN ENTERPRISING COMMUNITY

The lines between living and working have become more blurred during recent times, with the real possibility of flexible agile home-working being the norm rather than the exception.

The ability to foster and accommodate this must be an essential component for Heathlands Garden Community. Opportunities to create and support the needs of an enterprising community through the provision of incubator spaces, home businesses and Co-Working Hubs are core aspects for creating jobs and a vibrant local economy.

- Establish a Co-Working Hub within the District Centre co-located with local services and shops supplemented with smaller flexible working spaces in Local Centres, that are well connected to local sustainable transport and strategic mass transit
- Deliver high speed fibre broadband throughout the site to facilitate efficient digital connectivity and smart technologies to support a wide variety of business operations, monitoring, analysis, and management systems
- Provide interim, flexible incubator studio space adjacent to Rose Lane Industrial Park alongside a mix of B1, B2 and possibly small B8 uses to create an employment campus with sustainable critical mass to support growth and succession of businesses
- Further employment uses to be considered for future expansion areas north of the mainline railway line with more direct access to strategic roads
- Create a proportion of purposely designed accommodation for home businesses e.g. professional services and online operations

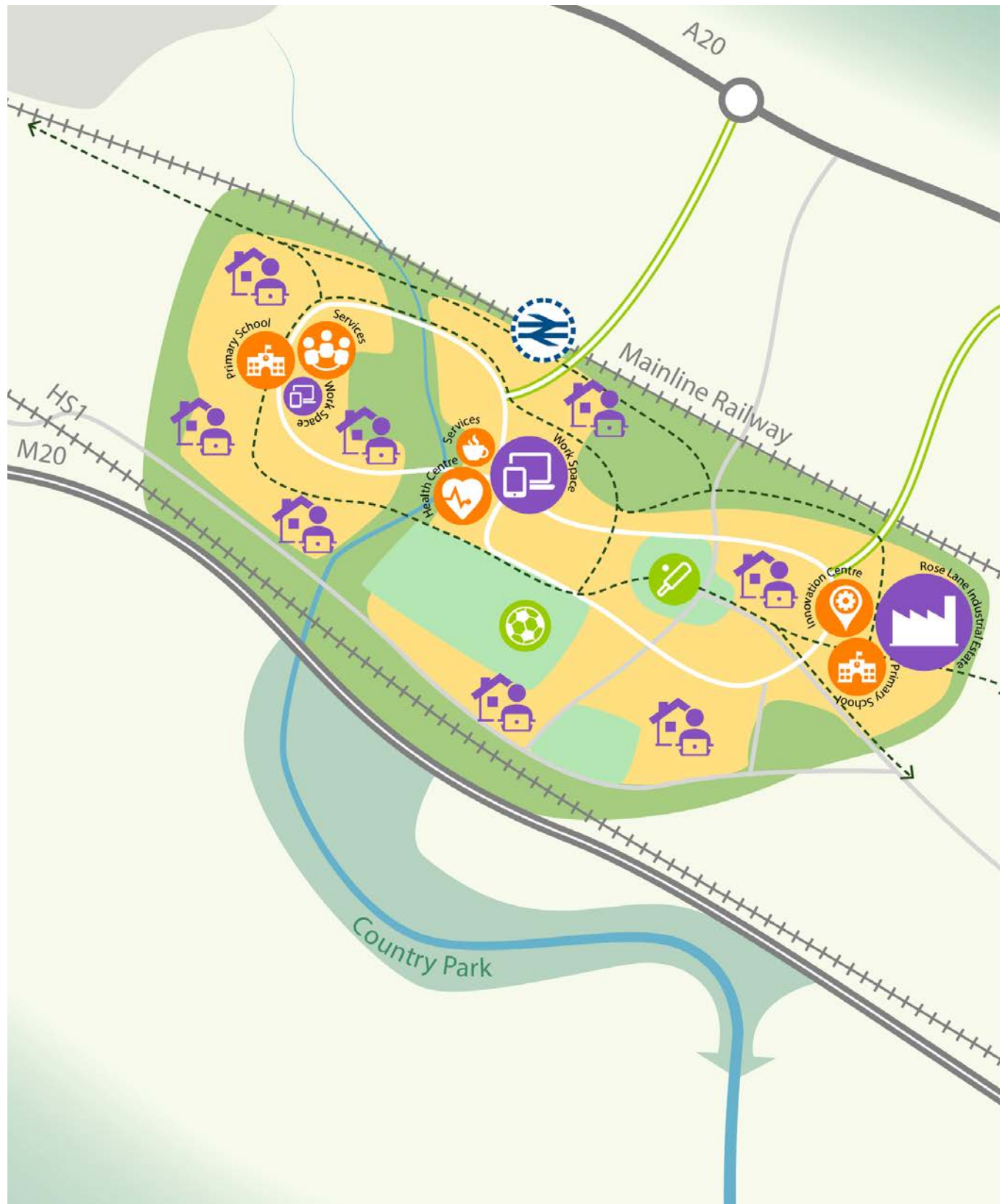
21ST CENTURY EMPLOYMENT

- The way we work is changing
- New homes will be designed with home working in mind
- Self build opportunities will encourage the creation of live-work units
- High Street offer will divert from traditional retail to favour leisure and production type of activities

BENEFIT TO THE EXISTING BUSINESSES

- Existing businesses will not be disrupted and will benefit from enhanced accessibility and new services





FOSTER BUSINESS AND ENTERPRISE

- A flexible approach to land uses will support an ever-changing demand for diverse range of production and business spaces
- Meanwhile uses such as a Start-Up Hub will foster the early establishment of new businesses in the area



MBC Leader Martin Cox breaking ground for Maidstone Innovation Centre

PRECEDENTS: MAIDSTONE INNOVATION CENTRE

The Maidstone Innovation Centre will offer flexible, serviced office accommodation combined with extensive on-site business support. Catering for businesses in the high net-worth med-tech, life science and health sectors.

Due for opening in Autumn 2021, Maidstone Innovation Centre is expected to support around 270 jobs and will generate a further £120m of additional gross value added to the local economy over the next decade.

MEDWAY'S INNOVATION STUDIOS

Customised shipping containers have been used to create Medway Council's new Innovation Studios Strood at Watermill Wharf, offering small and medium sized companies a sustainable, robust and affordable premises solution.

The Innovation Studios Strood is the second project in Medway's growing 'innovation business series'. With 13 of the 15 Innovation Studio Strood units already reserved, there's an appetite from the council to get going on its next business hub.



Medway's Innovation Studios

PROMOTE LEISURE AND TOURISM

- Heathlands is an attractive area which is well connected to London and other well established destinations
- Maximise opportunities for the creation of local businesses and jobs related to leisure and tourism
- Promote an active and healthy lifestyle with enhanced pedestrian and cycle access to local attractions and the countryside



11. A PLACE DELIVERED OVER TIME

The delivery of Heathlands Garden Community will happen incrementally over a number of years.

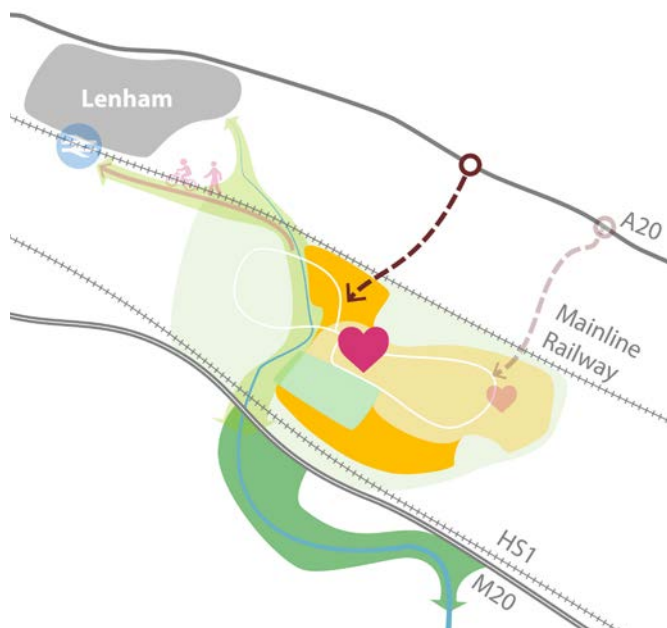
The adjacent diagrams indicate one possible road map for how the project could evolve and be delivered in three high level steps; accepting that there will be many sub phases and concurrent activities between phases as required.

The phasing for Heathlands Garden Community will take into account the existing and committed uses within the site, to ensure that strategic infrastructure is delivered when needed and new residential uses does not conflict with existing uses.



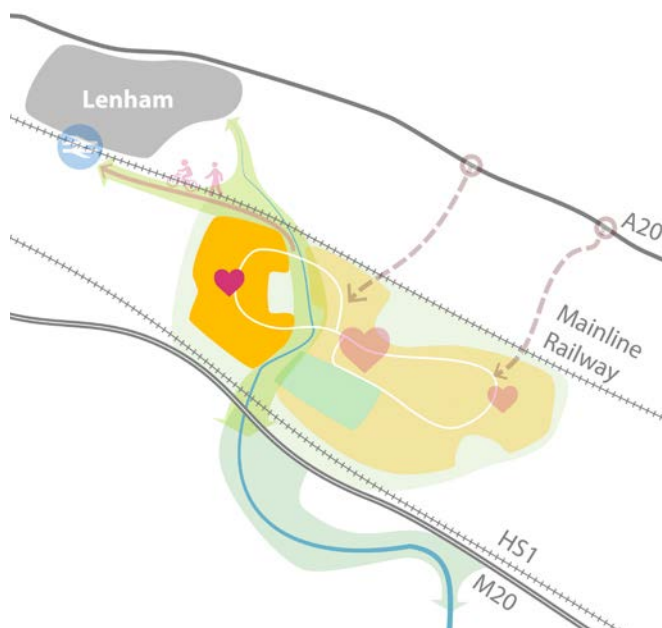
FIRST PHASE

- Focus development within the central area inclusive of a new Primary School, Local Centre and associated community uses
- Provide vehicular access from the A20 to the north and a new bridge across the Mainline Railway to service the site
- Install high quality pedestrian and cycle connections to Lenham Railway Station along new environmental corridor
- Enhancement of green and blue infrastructure as a linear park along the Great Stour River
- Delivery of Royton Manor Town Park
- Implement structural planting along Mainline Railway



SECOND PHASE

- Extend development to the west and south consolidating development around the Local Centre neighbourhood heart
- Intensification of non residential uses and higher density residential development around District Centre to strengthen critical mass and increase the provision of retail and community facilities
- Implement Country Park to the south with enhanced pedestrian and cycle connections linked to Great Stour River corridor
- Delivery of second vehicular connection to the District Centre
- Expansion of Employment Campus around Rose Lane Industrial Estate
- Establish Co-Working Hub in the District Centre



THIRD PHASE

- Expand development to the west following completion of mineral mining operations
- Creation of a second Neighbourhood Heart inclusive of a second Primary School, Local Centre and associated community facilities
- Enhancement to landscape buffer around existing Sewage Treatment Plant
- Creation of western landscape buffer with increased ecological habitat provision
- Potential consideration for development expansion north of mainline Railway

12. LAND USE AND SCHEDULE

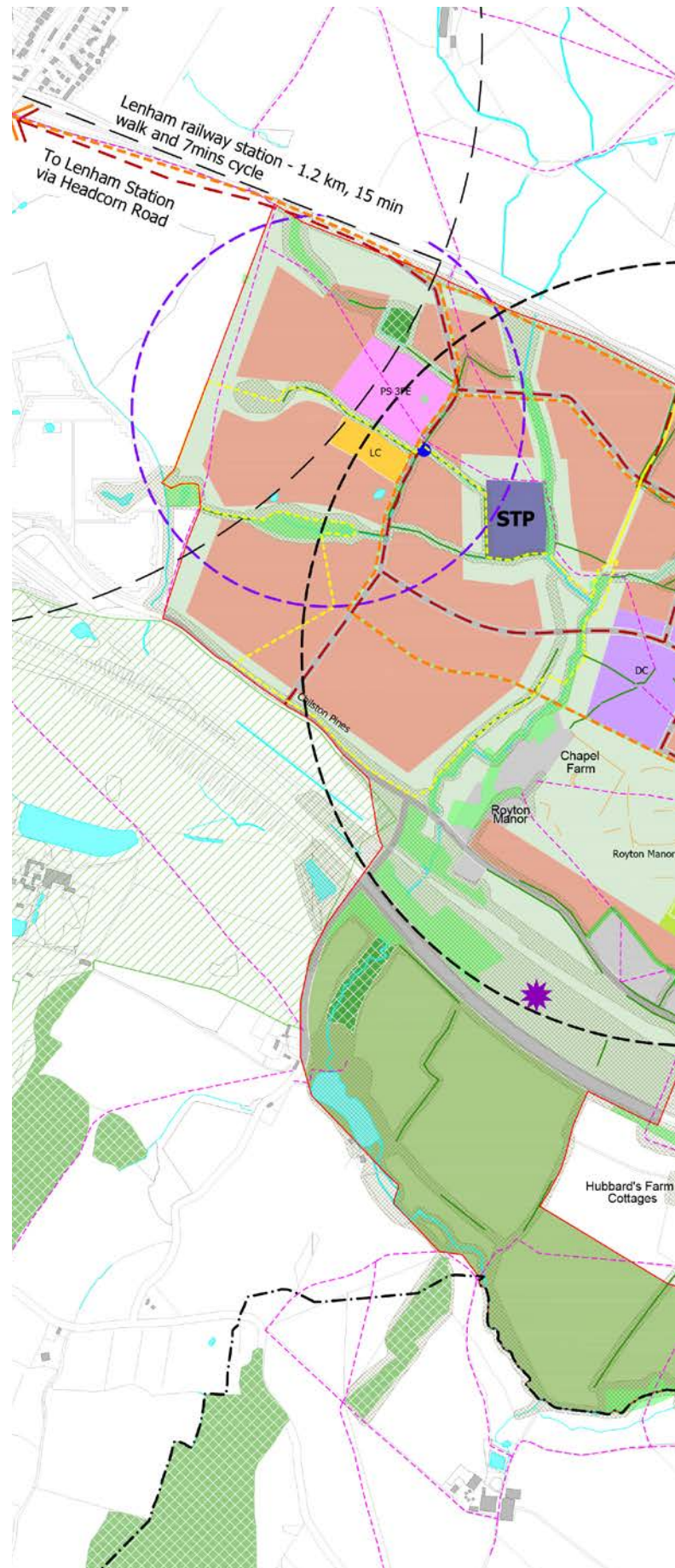
- Borough Boundary
- Local Wildlife Site
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Cat A & B Trees
- Hedgrows
- Ecological Connectivity
- 800m Catchment (10-15mins walk)
- 400m Catchment (5-7mins walk)
- Possible Bus Stop Location
- Indicative Connection Route from the A20 into the Site.
- Potential Railway Halt
- Mineral Boundary
- PRoW
- Gypsy / Traveller Site
- Green Buffer to Existing Properties
- Area Safeguarded for Potential Motorway Junction - if required in the future

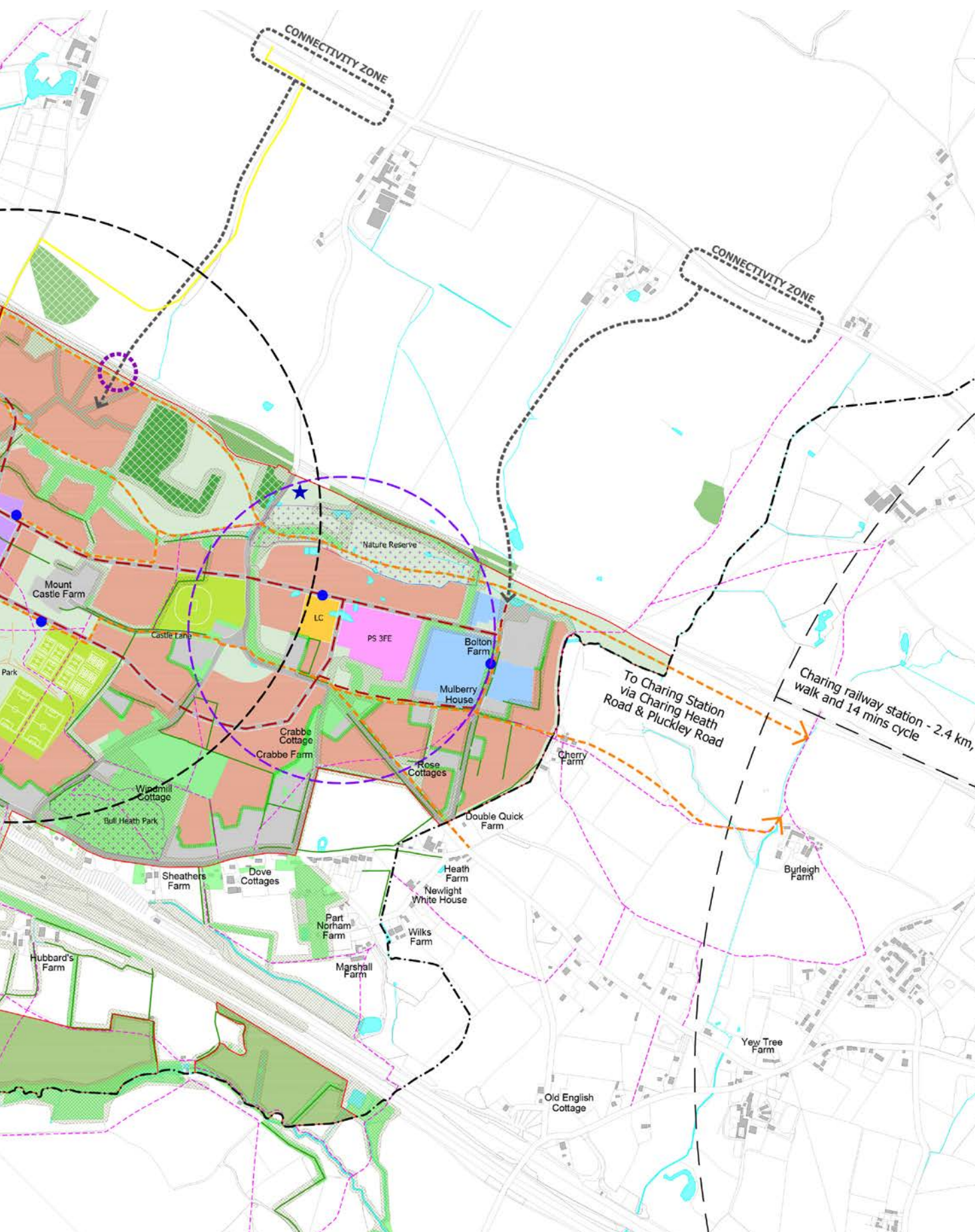
Area	Ha	Ac	DPH	Units	DPH	Units
Development						
Core Residential	100.00	247.11	40	4000	45	4500
District Centre (Including Employment)	4.01	9.90				
Local Centre (Including Employment)	2.00	4.95				
Employment	5.08	12.55				
PS 3FE Primary School (3FE)(x2)	5.80	14.34				
Sewage Treatment Plant	1.91	4.72				
Primary Road	8.16	20.16				
Existing Development	21.62	53.44				
Existing Road	11.86	29.32				
Development Total	160.45	396.48		4000		4500
Open Space						
Formal / Outdoor Sports	8.42	20.81				
Green Cycle / Bus Ways	4.56	11.26				
Ancient Woodland	4.81	11.90				
Country Park	47.47	117.30				
Natural / Semi Natural	88.61	218.97				
Open Space Total	153.88	380.24				
Sub Total	314.33	776.72		4000		4500

Maidstone Local Plan November 2017 - Policy DM19

Based on 2.4 people per dwelling = Dwellings: **4,000**
 Therefore the population = Population: **9,600**
 The Multiplier for the Allocations below = Multiplier: **9.600**

ALLOCATION	Ha/1000 pop	Requirement (Ha)
Amenity green space	0.70	6.72
Provision for children and young people	0.25	2.40
Publicly accessible outdoor sports	1.60	15.36
Allotments and community gardens	0.20	1.92
Natural/semi-natural areas of open space	6.50	62.40
TOTAL		88.80





For more information, please contact:

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Document Status:	Final
Revision:	D
Author:	SG
Checked by:	VA
Authorised by:	HE
Issue Date:	JUNE 2020