

RECREATION, OPEN SPACE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

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12.0 RECREATION, OPEN SPACE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES STRATEGY

12.1 This section sets out the proposals for the active and passive recreation and open space concepts for Park Farm South and East. The structure and design of the proposed development has been arranged so that all parts of the site have easy access to areas of recreation and public open space. These areas form part of a comprehensive landscape strategy for the Park Farm development. The section should be read in conjunction with the section on landscape, ecology and archaeology.

Background

12.2 The following policies set out in the Ashford Borough Local Plan are considered the most significant regarding the recreation and open space provision on the site: LE5, LE7, LE8, LE9 and the shopping list of facilities set out under Site 17 in the Development Sites Section.

12.3 'Equipped Open Space', paragraph 10.23 makes reference to the requirement that the public outdoor playing space meets the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) standard of 2.4 hectares per thousand population and is calculated on an average of 2.52 people per dwelling being the average household size in Ashford Borough.

12.4 Other matters set out in these policies relate to the need for accessibility, appropriate layouts, surfacing and level of provision and maintenance of sports and play facilities.

12.5 On the basis of the proposed housing numbers, NPFA standards and Local Plan proposals, the total outdoor playing space required on the basis of 780 houses would be 4.72 hectares. This can be broken down into the following categories:

Outdoor Playing Space Requirement	
Pitch Sports	2.36 ha
Children's Play	1.38 ha
Informal Open Space	0.98 ha

The children's play provision should be divided between Park Farm South (240 dwellings) and Park Farm East (540 dwellings).

12.6 On the basis of the Borough Council requirement for 780 dwellings, the following provision should be made:

- Two or three sports pitches;
- Multi-use games area;
- Two tennis courts;
- Multi-purpose changing facility accommodating changing and refreshment facilities;
- Local play area; and
- Two neighbourhood play areas.

12.7 Discussions have been held with officers at the Borough Council. It has been proposed by them that there should be a provision of sports facilities within the Park Farm South and East area sufficient to meet the NPFA requirement. It was proposed that there should be a provision for older children play (e.g. skateboard area), located adjacent to the sports pitch area, with the amount of play for younger children reduced accordingly. It has been agreed that a sports pitch can be located adjacent to the Kingsnorth pavillion in order to improve the useage of the area and the range of facilities offered.

12.8 Discussions have been held with Kingsnorth Parish Council. They have confirmed agreement to the proposal to provide an additional sports pitch playing area associated with their changing room provision and existing cricket and sports pitches. The Parish Council have confirmed that they have received approval to the provision of a senior football pitch to the north of the cricket square. The location of the additional sports pitch was agreed to be to the west of the existing provision on land within the ownership of the Borough Council.

12.9 It is recognised that the recreational proposals need to be provided as part of an overall strategy including the Cheeseman's Green development site. It is important however that the provision for the Park Farm South and East development can be provided at Park Farm South and East. It is therefore proposed that the recreational facilities serving Park Farm are provided within the land ownership.

Proposed Provision

12.10 The following provision is proposed:

- Three suitably drained sports pitches – two to be provided at Park Farm East and the third as an addition to the facility at Kingsnorth;
- Multi-use games area and skateboard area with sports training lighting ;
- Two tennis courts with sports training lighting ;
- Sports pavilion including changing and refreshment facilities;
- Local play area; and
- Neighbourhood play area.

12.11 The existing Park Farm development provides children's play areas at the new Central Park and the neighbourhood play areas adjacent to Parklane Wood

and Hart Dyke. A financial contribution has been made as part of the southern extension of Park Farm for a hard surfaced multi-use games area in the new entrance park. The existing development also benefits from an extensive area of country park which has been designed for informal recreational uses. A network of footpath and cycleways link the recreational facilities with the surrounding residential developments.

- 12.12 The proposed development at Park Farm South and East has the benefit of being set within substantial areas of land within the ownership of the developer which are being retained or promoted as areas of grassland, woodland and floodplain. It is proposed as part of the development that these areas would be used for informal recreation in some cases with a strong bias for ecological conservation and enhancement.
- 12.13 Provision will be made for equipped play area in accordance with the requirements of the Local Plan Policies LE5 and LE7. Provision will also be made for sports pitches and support facilities in accordance with Policy LE8 and as discussed with the relevant council officers.
- 12.14 The footpath and cycleway network would be extended so that all residential areas would have good and safe access to a children's play facility. The location of the open space and play provision has been determined to take maximum advantage of the existing site features. The play areas have been located so that the majority of the proposed development is within 400 metres of a play or sports facility. The location of the play and sports facilities illustrated on Figure Fourteen and on the sketch layouts. They can be summarised as described below.

Park Farm South

- 12.15 The development at Park Farm South would be located to the east of Parklane Wood and to the north of a new area of woodland planting and open space. This has been designed to create a robust edge to the urban area.
- 12.16 Footpath links would be provided to the existing neighbourhood play area which is located to the north of Parklane Wood and to the proposed play area within the new local park.
- 12.17 Small areas of unsupervised open space (Local Areas of Play - LAP's) specifically designated for young children for play activities close to where they live would be located within the residential developments.
- 12.18 The extensive area of informal open space would be located to the south west of Park Farm South. It could be used for informal games and walking and

will consist of grassland located on the south facing slopes and enclosed by the existing and proposed woodland area to the north and south. Footpath links will be created from the new residential area to this area of open space with connections to the country park to the west.

Park Farm East

- 12.19 The proposed layout of the development at Park Farm East provides children's play, teenager play provision, active sports pitch provision and extensive areas of informal open space.
- 12.20 It is proposed that a neighbourhood play area will be provided to cater for children aged under eight set within a landscaped park to the north of the local centre. The park would be approximately 6000m² in area. This facility has been located so that it is within a 400m distance of the majority of the proposed residential areas, both at Park Farm East and South.
- 12.21 It is proposed that a local play area is provided as part of the sports area in the southern part of the site. It is proposed that this will cater for children aged under eight, those between eight and fourteen and with a provision for teenagers (possibly a skateboard area). It is considered that good levels of supervision will be provided because of its location adjacent to the sports pavilion.
- 12.22 It is proposed that 2 sports pitches, multi-use games area and skateboard area, and 2 tennis courts would be located to the north of Finn Farm Road. This area would be raised above the floodplain at a similar level to the adjoining residential areas. Drainage would be incorporated into the pitches to enhance their year round use.



Existing Park Farm play area

These sports facilities include the provision of changing and refreshment facilities. The sports pitch would be laid out to the recognised standards together with drainage provision. The sports area would be linked to the residential development at Park Farm East through new footpaths and cycleways. Vehicular access will be provided from Finn Farm Road and a car park will also be provided.

12.23 Small areas of unsupervised open space specifically designed for young children for play activities close to where they live, will be located within the residential development areas. These will have facilities for low key activities such as 'tag', 'hop-scotch' and play with small toys. They would be located to minimise the risk of accidents and there would be seating facilities for parents and carers.

12.24 A major area of open space will be created through the retention of the open area between the proposed flood alleviation area to the east of the development and the Ruckinge and Bilham Dykes. This will create a significant resource for informal recreation. It is not considered appropriate, because of drainage limitations, to use this area for sports pitches or other formal recreational facilities. It is proposed that the area between the development and the Ruckinge Dyke will be laid out primarily for informal recreation whereas the area between the two dykes will be laid out primarily to enhance the ecological interest of the area.

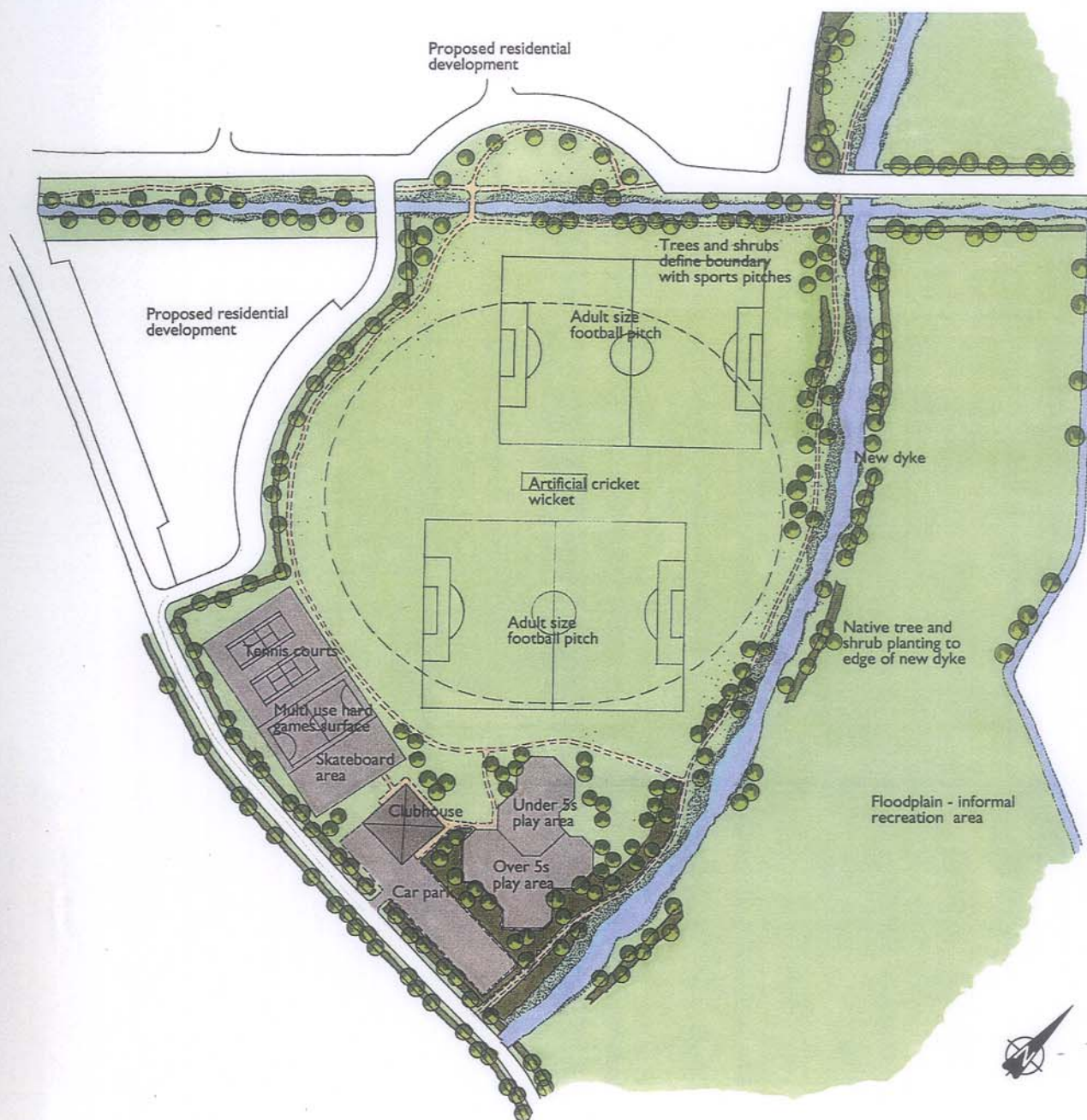
12.25 The form of the proposed enhancement of sports facilities has been agreed in principle with Ashford Borough Council and Kingsnorth Parish Council. It will consist of an area of levelled ground to the west of the existing provision. Appropriate drainage measures will be incorporated into the proposals.

12.26 Within the development it is proposed to create open spaces and greens which will provide informal recreational facilities as well as providing the focus for built development. These informal open spaces will largely consist of lawns set within shrub and tree planting. Seating will be provided alongside the footpaths running around and within these spaces. A linear open space will be created following the retained ditch to the south-east of the site and this will be treated in the same way as for the village greens with additional tree and shrub planting to create an attractive feature.

12.27 The layout and treatment of these areas is described in the section on landscape and ecology.

Design and Layout of Play Areas

12.28 The play areas will be designed to create a safe and attractive area with a variety of equipment in accordance with Policy LE7 appropriate to the age range and selected for play potential and stimulation. Safety surfacing will be provided under and around items of equipment as required by Relevant British Standards. The play areas will be enclosed by railings or fencing with access through self closing gates. Provision will be made for seating to encourage supervision by parents and carers.



Park Farm East sports pitch and play area proposals

UTILITIES

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Introduction
Foul Water Drainage
Surface Water Drainage
Water Supply
Gas Supply
Electricity Supply
Telecommunications
General

13.0 UTILITIES

- 13.1 A summary of each element of infrastructure is set out below:

Foul Water Drainage

- 13.2 Sewage discharge from developments to the south of Ashford outfalls to the Ashford sewage treatment works which is situated at Bybrook on the north side of Ashford, adjacent to the M20. Foul flows from existing developments in South Ashford are pumped to Bybrook by primary pumping stations located at Park Farm and South Stour Avenue. These pumping stations have limited additional capacity available and once all of the major developments in South Ashford are well underway additional facilities will be required to transport flows to Bybrook. Bybrook Sewage Treatment Works has capacity to serve the proposed development at Park Farm South and East.
- 13.3 Southern Water plc have confirmed that foul water flows from development at Park Farm South (up to 250 units) can be conveyed to the existing primary pumping station at Park Farm. For Park Farm East, Southern Water plc have identified that the most effective means of carrying future additional flows to Bybrook is by the construction of new strategic sewers between new developments in the South Ashford area and Bybrook.
- 13.4 Such new sewers would be provided by a requisition under the Water Industry Act 1991 and funded by all interested parties contributing to the cost of the works on a proportional basis. The current contribution is set at £670 per unit to fund the requisition. The new sewers would be constructed to a timescale compatible with the anticipated development programme (Spring 2004) and the capacity constraints of the existing sewer network.
- 13.5 To enable development at Park Farm South and East to proceed, foul water generated will be split to three distinct discharge points. The first for Park Farm South will be by gravity connection into the existing network of the Park Farm development. The second for Park Farm East will be via a new gravity network to a suitable location east of the A2070 Hamstreet Road and railway line, then via a pumping station and rising main arrangement across the transport corridor to discharge to the public foul sewers within the existing Park Farm development.
- 13.6 Further investigation is required to ascertain the storage capacity of the existing Park Farm pumping station to confirm it is able to fully service the initial phases of the development. There may be a cost involved in upgrading this pumping station which will be confirmed at a later date.

- 13.7 The third point of discharge for development at Park Farm East will take the form of the proposed new strategic sewer proposed by Southern Water plc for future development in South Ashford. This third discharge point will be achieved by a traditional gravity sewer and rising main network as required to suit the final design of the new strategic sewer.

- 13.8 All sewerage apparatus would be put forward for adoption by Southern Water plc and hence would be designed and constructed in accordance with Section 104 of the Water Industry Act 1991 and Sewers for Adoption 4th Edition.

Surface Water Drainage

- 13.9 The Park Farm East site is situated on the fringes of the 100 year floodplain of the East Stour River and its tributary the Ruckinge Dyke. All development is proposed above the 100 year floodplain, with appropriate run-off flow regulation to achieve no material impact on the existing flood regime and to be consistent with the Borough Council's flooding and development strategy established with the Environment Agency following flood studies in the 1980's.
- 13.10 The topography of the land and the location of the A2070 Hamstreet Road/railway line corridor dictates the need for a number of outfalls from the development. The first, for Park Farm South, is the utilisation of a ditch/swale arrangement to incorporate current policy on sustainable urban drainage to regulate flow for the normal storm events. This flow would be regulated via a suitable device before discharging into the existing ditch system. It is intended to offer this for adoption.
- 13.11 The second is a series of discharge points into a new linear ditch/swale arrangement to regulate flows into the Ruckinge Dyke and floodplain and thus to the East Stour River to follow the natural topography of the site. This ditch/swale will be constructed above the existing 100 year flood level to ensure development does not impede existing flood storage.
- 13.12 Discussions with the Environment Agency land drainage and conservation officers have confirmed that a number of basic principles must be adopted:
- The fringes of watercourses (for at least 5 metres from the top of bank) must be protected;
 - Dyke crossings must be by bridge rather than culvert;
 - Replacement habitat must be provided where habitat is lost due to essential works;
 - The ditch/swale is to be suitably landscaped to provide habitat and public amenity; and
 - Sustainable Urban Drainage systems as a priority, wherever possible.

- 13.13 Although Weald Clay ground conditions are not conducive to normal Sustainable Urban Drainage systems, every effort will be made during the detailed design stage to incorporate good SUDS practice. Reference should be made DETR / CIRA – Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems – Design Manual for England and Wales.
- 13.14 In addition to Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and such features as reed beds, it is also proposed to include where necessary measures such as oil interceptors and flow control devices to manage the surface water run-off and thus avoid pollution, excess velocity and uncontrolled volume of discharge. On-site pipe runs will be designed in accordance with Sewers for Adoption and all new main drainage runs will be offered to the local drainage authority for adoption under Section 104 of the Water Industry Act 1991.
- 13.15 Open space areas adjacent to watercourses will be designed to encourage safe public access. Treatment of these areas will be planned and managed to be compatible with identified leisure activities.
- 13.16 Agreement in principle has been reached with the Environmental Agency and Ashford Borough Council to construct the new ditch/swale arrangement described above to enable flow regulation from the development. It has been agreed that the ditch will retain the standard rainfall runoff from the proposed pipe network, while the swale would act as flow alteration for a 1 in 100 year storm. This will enable the swale component of the system to be used as a public amenity under normal circumstances
- 13.17 The design of the ditch/swale system will incorporate Best Management Practice in the disposal of surface water runoff from the site and comply with the current Environmental Agency policy, as well as the draft sustainable urban drainage principles, soon to be adopted. This policy intends to maximise flow regulation of runoff at source as much as possible.
- 13.18 Other source control techniques will be considered at the detailed stage. These will vary in type and size depending on the location on the site with respect to topography, geology and ecology. Among the options to be considered are:-
- Grey water recycling;
 - Further swales and utilisation of existing ditches;
 - Attenuation ponds both wet and dry; and
 - Underground storage structures.
- 13.19 In reviewing the most appropriate source control techniques, reference will also be made to SEPA/ Environment Agency publication "A Guide to Sustainable Urban Drainage" and Environment Good Practice Guide: Surface Water Disposal: Designers Manual.

Water Supply

- 13.20 The water supply company covering Ashford is Mid-Kent Water. Water supplies to this area of Ashford currently come from a source to the north west of Ashford. A new 300mm diameter strategic off-site main was laid to serve the existing Park Farm development. Mid-Kent Water accept that there is capacity in this main to serve development east and west of the railway by extending the existing Park Farm mains network.
- 13.21 In the long term a new strategic off-site main will be constructed to serve South Ashford. This main could be linked to the Park Farm main thus giving increased security of supply. Mid-Kent Water accept that capacity for approximately 2,500 residential units has been reserved for the Park Farm development. The capacity over and above the 1,500 committed units on Park Farm is thus available to supply Park Farm East.
- 13.22 It is acknowledged that there are currently water supply constraints in some parts of Ashford. As part of the overall development proposals, water conservation measures will be included in the detailed design specification for the new houses.

Gas Supply

- 13.23 Gas supplies to the area are provided from British Gas Transco's high pressure pipeline and transmission station at Kingsnorth. A new medium pressure main and new gas governor were constructed to serve Park Farm. Transco have confirmed that the gas main network within the existing Park Farm development can be extended east and west of the railway line to serve the Park Farm East development. As Cheeseman's Green is developed these mains will be extended to link with mains in the A2070 Southern Orbital Road, adjacent to the Waterbrook/ICD Roundabout.

Electricity Supply

- 13.24 The electricity supply company covering this area is Seeboard, based in Maidstone. A primary sub-station has recently been established on the Orbital Park site, north east of the development area now being considered. This has been designed with capacity to serve the anticipated future developments in South Ashford.
- 13.25 To develop early phases of the proposed development area east and west of the railway line, the existing high voltage network within Park Farm can be extended, by taking cables across the A2070 Hamstreet Road and the railway. As development of Cheeseman's Green proceeds this network can be

extended eastwards to link with existing services in the Southern Orbital Road, which will have been extended southwards into Cheeseman's Green, thus providing greater security of supply.

Telecommunications

- 13.26 The existing Sevington Telephone Exchange has capacity to serve the anticipated developments in South Ashford.

General

- 13.27 Utility companies above ground plant will be considered as an integral part of the urban design process and will be located in buildings that reflect and are sympathetic to the overall architectural approach for the development.
- 13.28 As part of the carriageway and footpath construction for the proposed development, common multi-utility trenches will be used as far as possible for all utility services. Accordingly, the provision of these services at the same time as the roads are constructed will create minimal environmental impact and allow a coordinated strategy for service corridors to be integrated with the street patterns. No services will be provided by use of above ground cabling
- 13.29 Within the site, the bulk of the services will be below ground, and where above ground will take the form of small electricity transformer sub-stations, and telecoms junction boxes all of which can be integrated into the design of the area.
- 13.30 The proposed telecommunications spine network within the multi-utility service corridors could allow for fibre optic cables capable of transmitting digital data both to and from a number of domestic mediums (i.e. TV, phone, modem), possibly using broad band reverse path interactive technology.

The outline of the proposed development is shown in the attached map. The development is located on the south-east corner of the intersection of the proposed road and the existing road. The development is a residential development consisting of a number of residential units. The development is a residential development consisting of a number of residential units. The development is a residential development consisting of a number of residential units.

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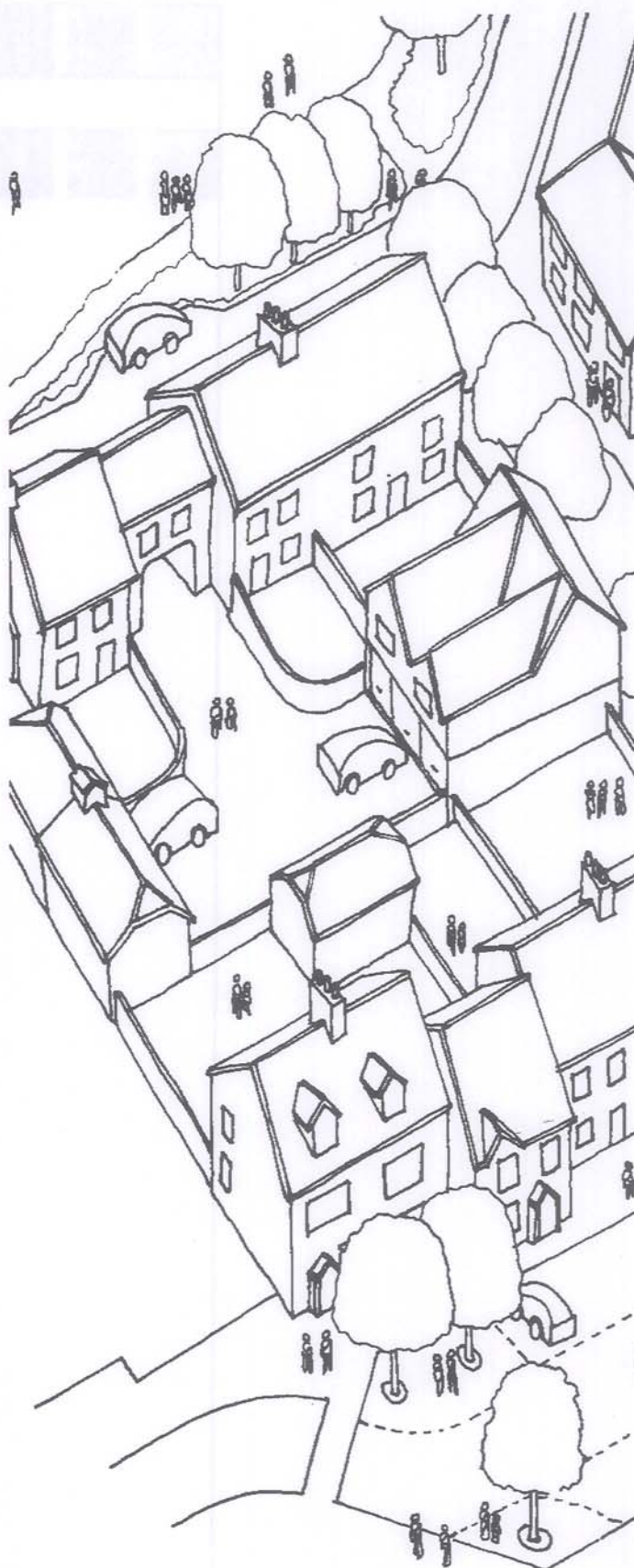
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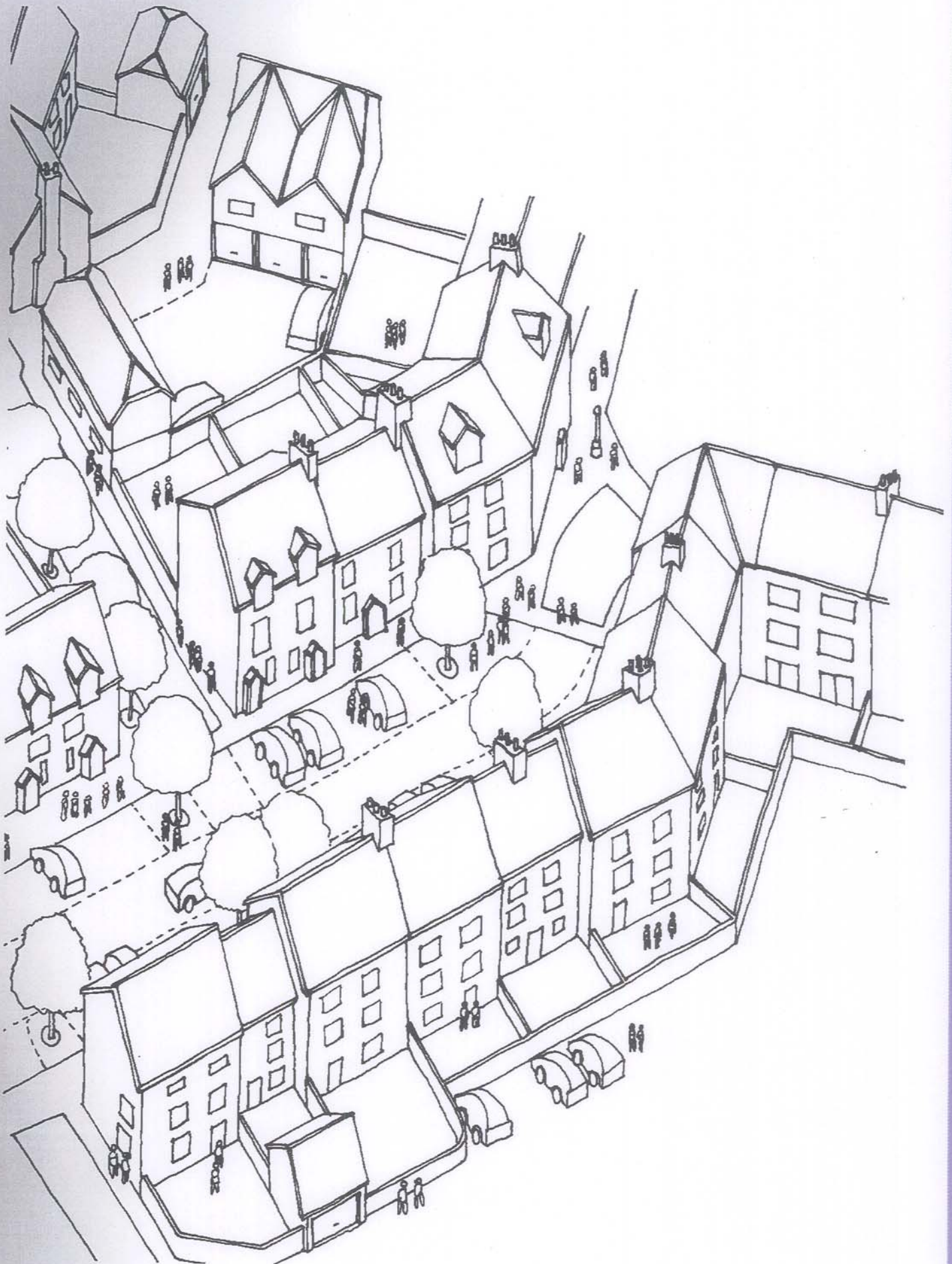
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14.0 IMPLEMENTATION

- 14.1 This Development Brief has been written in support of an outline planning application for the development of Park Farm South and East. It is intended that this Brief be adopted by the Borough Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance. As such, the Brief will be available to inform all future applications at Park Farm, including the submission of reserved matters applications following the initial grant of outline planning permission.
- 14.2 The outline planning application is supported by the submission of an Environmental Assessment (EA) which fully assesses the environmental implications of proposals. The Environmental Assessment comprises an Environmental Statement, supporting Technical Appendices and a Non Technical Summary. The outline application is also supported by the submission of a Travel Appraisal Report (TAR), together with Technical Appendix One.
- 14.3 In accordance with the outcome of Enquiry by Design an illustrative layout has also been submitted in support of the outline planning application.
- 14.4 It is envisaged that any grant of outline planning permission would be the subject of a number of conditions to control and regulate the development. It will also be necessary for the applicant to enter into legal agreements with the Borough Council and County Council prior to the grant of the outline permission. The purpose of the conditions and agreement will be to regulate and control the development and to ensure that the development is completed in the manner envisaged in this Brief. The legal agreements will deal with requirements such as social housing, education contributions, provision and maintenance of public open space, play provision and community facilities and transportation requirements.
- 14.5 The conditions will require further details of the development to be submitted to the Borough Council for approval. It is envisaged that this Brief, and the illustrative layout will form a 'bench mark' for assessing the quality of the development before any of these "reserved matters" applications are approved. Prior to, or as part of, the first submission of Reserved Matters a set of Environmental Minimum Requirements will be submitted to, and agreed with the Local Planning Authority which could include a code of construction practice, design and management of public open space, hours of working, lorry routeing etc. as well as the other issues specifically mentioned in this Development Brief. A Design Brief will also be required by the Local Planning Authority for every submission that includes a layout and/or elevational details to show how the implications of the Development Brief have been assimilated into the design. This approach is to accord with the advice in PPG1.







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