



AXMINSTER NORTH EASTERN URBAN EXTENSION MASTERPLAN

January 2019

Prepared by:



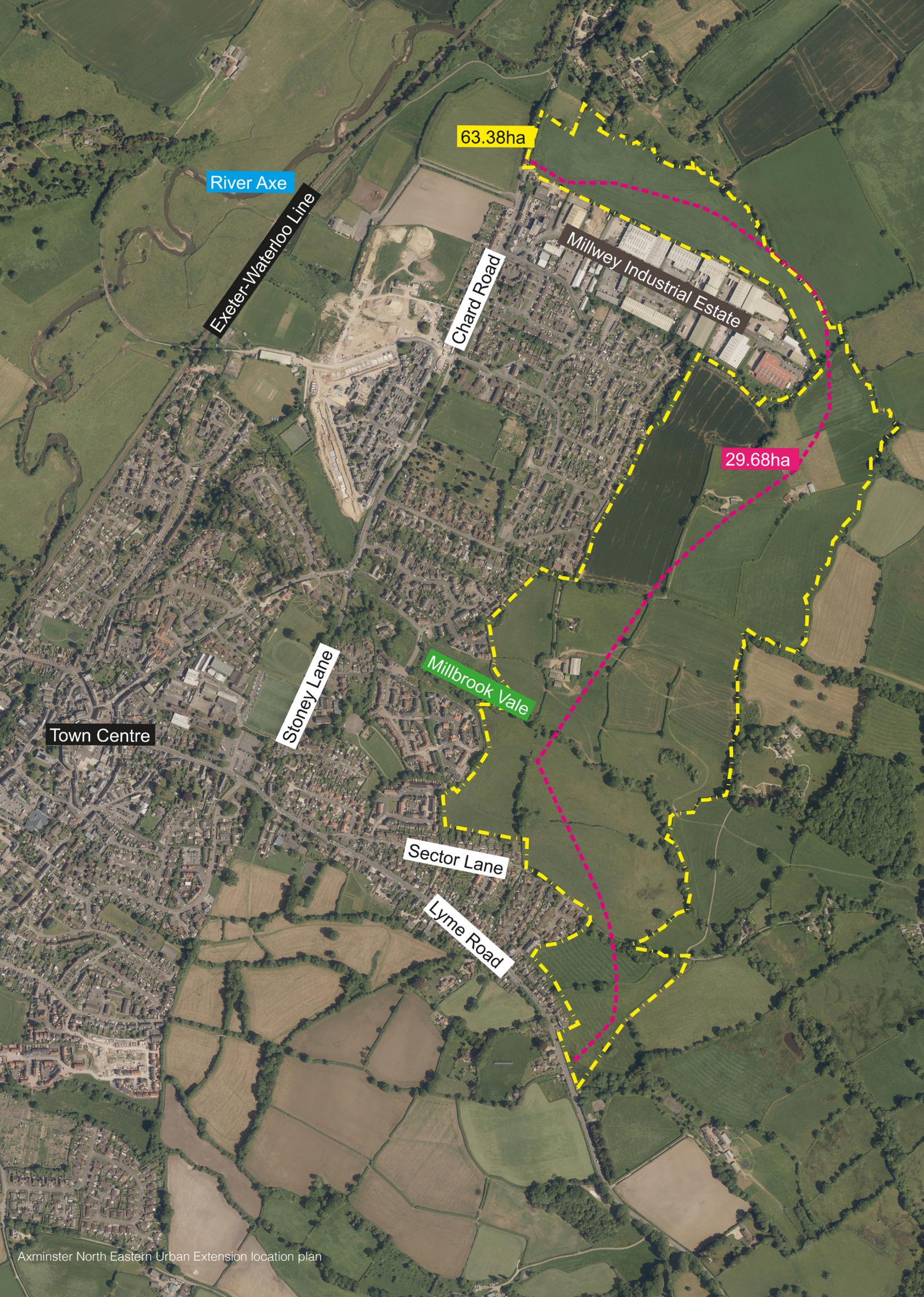
in conjunction with:



	Axminster NE Urban Extension Masterplan Document
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River Axe

Exeter-Waterloo Line

63.38ha

Chard Road

Millwey Industrial Estate

29.68ha

Town Centre

Stoney Lane

Millbrook Vale

Sector Lane

Lyme Road

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

The Axminster North East Urban Extension Masterplan has been commissioned by East Devon District Council (EDDC) working with Persimmon Homes and The Crown Estate. The aim of the work is to establish an overarching design approach for what is an important piece of development for the town as a whole but which will be delivered by individual landowners and developers. As these individual parties bring forward their own designs and planning applications for development the Masterplan forms a foundation of work at a broader scale on which they can build.

The Masterplan also forms an important tool in the development management process enabling the Local Planning Authority to gauge whether individual planning applications are taking account of the wider constraints and opportunities.

The Masterplan process has included an independent and area wide review of constraints, opportunities and the balance of the quantity and mix of development with a viable development which offers a delivery mechanism for a relief road around the north-east of Axminster.



THE PURPOSE OF THE MASTERPLAN

In regard to Axminster, the EDDC Local Plan identifies housing growth in Axminster to the north east of the town. A site of approximately 30ha is allocated for the delivery of the North East Urban Extension. The allocated area comprises a number of landowners and interested parties who have been involved in a variety of ways in considering how housing development in this location can be brought forward.

The Local Plan requires that a Masterplan for the North East Urban Extension is in place prior to the approval of any subsequent planning applications and that this takes account of the opportunity to coordinate development according to a comprehensive study of the site and its context. The Masterplan should also take into account the coordinated approach to the various elements of the Urban Extension and the appropriate location and relationship between the various uses proposed within the Urban Extension and the existing town.

The Masterplan process has been instrumental in drawing together interested parties to develop a coordinated strategy for the phased implementation of the Urban Extension acknowledging that the complete delivery of the Urban Extension relies upon the participation of all parties together in a coordinated way.

The Masterplan has a role in unifying the various requirements and guidance of the planning system and identifying the parameters within which these can be achieved.

The Masterplan Document, as a representation of the collaborative process, provides the basis around which individual applicants and development control officers can prepare and measure subsequent proposals but which are considered within the context of the design and delivery of the overall Urban Extension.

AN EXTENSION TO AXMINSTER

Development to the north-east of the town is to be conceived as an extension, not as a stand alone housing area. The Urban Extension has the potential to contribute to the sustenance, distinctiveness and quality of life within the town as a whole if designed correctly and the Masterplan has a role in coordinating how this can become a reality.

To achieve the latter part of the strategy a large urban extension was allocated in the local plan (Strategy 20) for a mixed use development comprising:

- i) Around 650 new homes;
- ii) 8 Hectares of land for mixed job generating commercial and employment uses;
- iii) a range of social, community and open space facilities to support development;
- iv) a 210 pupil primary school (1.5ha site – which forms part of the overall 8 hectare employment allocation), including a nursery and accommodation to support children’s centre services; and
- v) a North South relief road for the town will be delivered as part of this development linking Chard Road (A358) to Lyme Road (B261).

A RELIEF ROAD FOR AXMINSTER

Development to the north-east of Axminster is intrinsically linked to the opportunity to provide a relief road around the town. The relief road has been a long-standing aspiration of the town and the local authority and its necessity has been identified with reference to the sustainability and health of the town and its growth.

Housing delivery as well as a Local Authority objective in its own right, is a means by which a relief road can be delivered for the town and land to the north-east of the town has been identified by EDDC and

Devon County Council (DCC) as the best location for complimentary housing and infrastructure delivery.

The Masterplan has a role in outlining how housing development and a relief road can be comprehensively designed to optimise the opportunities of both, and contribute positively to the town as a whole.

HOUSING INFRASTRUCTURE FUND (HIF) AND VIABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) is a government capital grant programme, which is concerned with the delivery of housing in England. Funding is awarded to local authorities on a competitive basis, providing grant funding for new infrastructure that will unlock new homes in the areas of greatest housing demand.

EDDC is in the process of securing £10m of HIF money to put towards the NE Axminster relief road (estimated total cost = £17m) on the basis that this infrastructure enables the delivery of the North-East Urban Extension, contributing to the requirement for housing within East Devon. The shortfall of £7m of the cost of the road needs to be met by developer contribution. The Masterplan has considered the quantity of housing and other uses such that a viable development is possible.

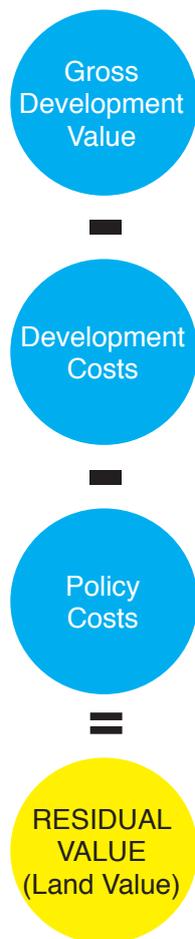
The Masterplan and accompanying technical work reviewing the viability of the Urban Extension have identified that in order to ensure viable delivery of all aspects of the proposed development, the Local Plan requirement of 650 houses will need to increase if the urban extension is also going to include employment space, community facilities, open space and affordable housing.

DEVELOPMENT VIABILITY ASSESSMENT

An economic viability assessment of the masterplan options has been undertaken and independently reviewed as part of the masterplanning work. The viability assessments tested viability of the different masterplan options, with the aim of securing a policy compliant delivery in terms of meeting affordable housing and other site-specific mitigation considered necessary by EDDC.

The viability assessment has been guided by government guidance (specifically the 'Viability' section of the PPG) and informed by discussions with the site's two main promoters (Persimmon and The Crown Estate), while also considering industry standards that

Residual Value Appraisal Approach:



might be applied to this type and scale of a mixed-use planning scheme. This evidence is used to inform a set of assumptions that feed into assessing the viability of proposed scheme options using the residual value method, which subtracts the total development and disposal costs of the proposed design option from the total value it will generate, to determine the residual land value which can then be compared to benchmark values to consider whether a proposal is likely to be viable.

There are significant benefits in undertaking the viability work, but it is important to recognise its limitations since it is not an exact science. It is a broad appraisal of the economic context for the masterplan at East Axminster and its viability, and is only a tool in assisting in the preparation of a robust planning proposal. It is not intended to be a formal 'Red Book' valuation and should not be relied upon as such. It is intended for planning purposes only, and as such it complies with the National Framework (as documented by the NPPF and the PPG) in testing market viability.

The report brings together evidence for the prevailing values and likely costs of the proposed scheme during the second half of 2017. Additionally, the EDDC Local Plan (adopted January 2016) policy requirements have been factored into the site appraisal.

These policies include:

- Strategy 34 Affordable Housing - provides a specific requirement that developments within Axminster should provide a target of 25% of dwellings as affordable housing. The policy also specifies a requirement that 70% of affordable dwellings are affordable or social rented and the remaining 30% are intermediate subject to market conditions and need.
- Strategy 36 Accessible and Adaptable Homes and Care/ Extra Care Homes - Residential developments of 10 or more dwellings should demonstrate that all the affordable and 20% of market dwellings will meet part M4(2) of the Building Regulations accessible and adaptable dwellings unless viability evidence indicates it is not possible.
- Strategy 43 Open Space Standards - Developments of 200+ dwellings will be required to provide for various open space items (including allotments, outdoor pitches, play space, etc.).
- H2 Range and Mix of New Housing Development - Seeks that developments "contains a mix of dwelling sizes or comprises predominantly, or totally, of smaller dwellings".

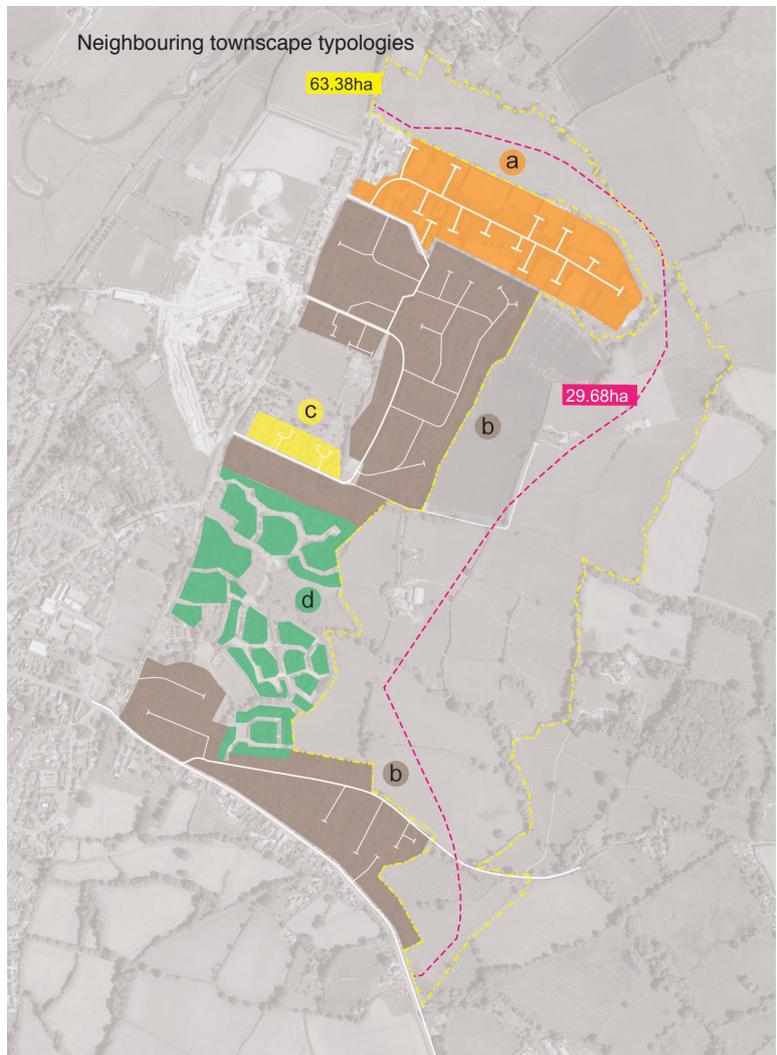
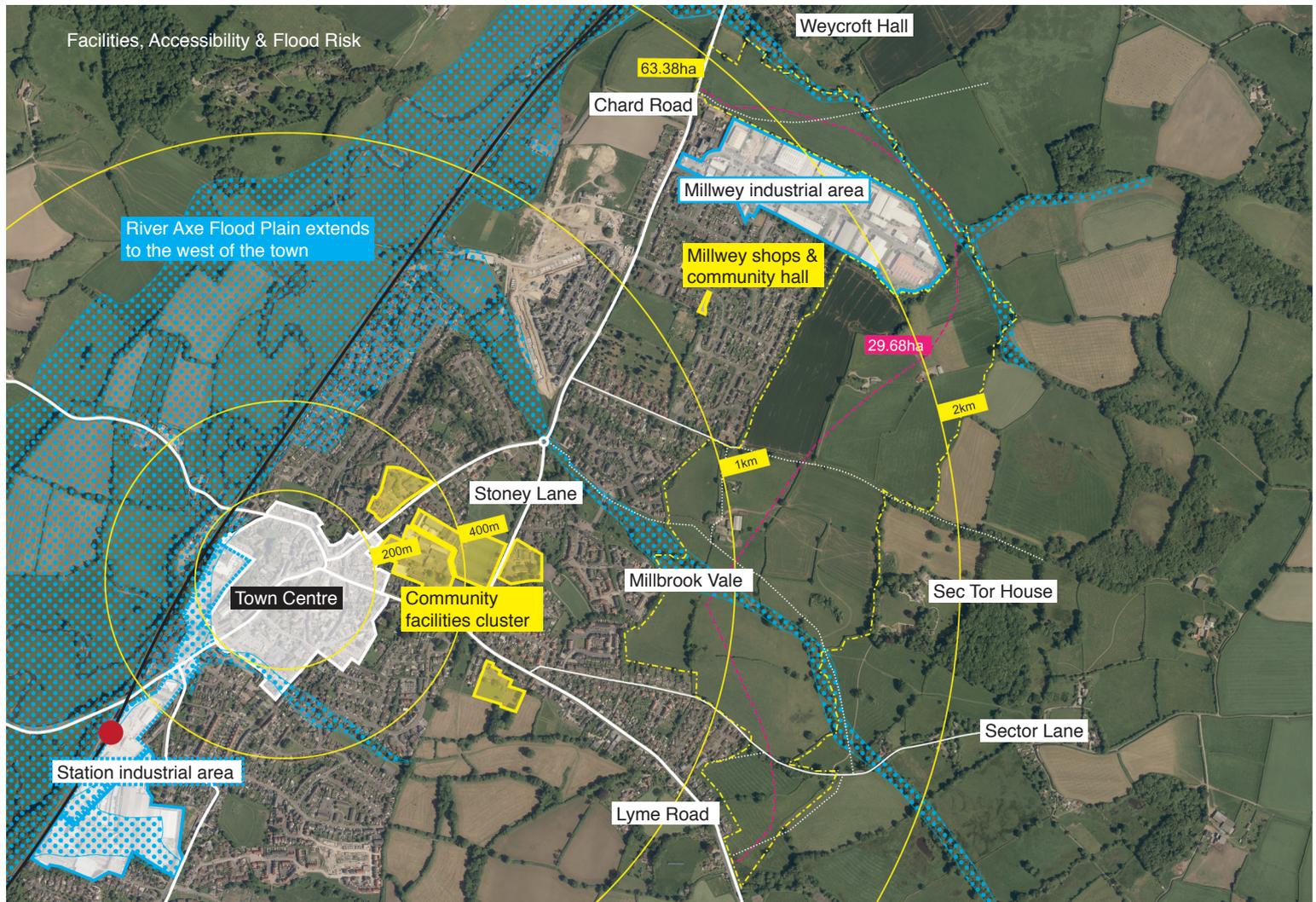
EDDC adopted its Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging schedule in September 2016. The charging schedule has a requirement for a CIL charge on residential and retail uses, including garage spaces associated with these uses. The site falls within the CIL chargeable area set at £80 per residential sqm, which at Q4 2017 is charged at £92.74 per sqm; and a CIL rate of £150 per sqm on retail units outside of the town centre shopping areas, which at Q4 2017 is charged at £173.89 per sqm. There is no requirement for employment floorspace to provide a CIL contribution. These current CIL charging rates have also been allowed for within the masterplan appraisals

Viability Assessment Findings

The viability assessment initially tested the masterplan that delivered the Council's ambition for development within Axminster based on the requirements of Strategy 20, Development at Axminster, in the EDDC Local Plan. In addition to the generic policies identified above, this policy required the allocation to provide around 650 homes, 8 ha of land for mixed job generating commercial and employment uses, a range of social, community and open space facilities to support development, a 210-pupil primary school including a nursery and accommodation to support children's centre service, a North South relief road for the town linking Chard Road (A358) to Lyme Road (B261). This was the base case test.

The viability assessment findings identified that the base case would not be viable under full policy requirements at this current time. Therefore, the masterplanning exercise considered different strategies for delivering the site, principally based on increasing housing numbers and design changes, as demonstrated in the masterplan. It concluded that additional land to that which has been allocated was required to accommodate an increase in housing and the appropriate distribution of other uses across the Urban Extension area.

Through various iterations of the masterplan, the viability assessment became positively viable with 800 dwellings and respective design changes, but this would still only achieve marginal viability. In compliance with national guidance that seeks to avoid planning at the margins of viability, the masterplanning and viability assessment identified that it would take 850 dwellings, a 2.5 ha local centre with a mix of residential and commercial units, and 3.3 ha of land for additional employment uses, before the site could be considered viable and unlikely to put the East Axminster scheme at risk of non-delivery.



ABOUT THE SITE

CONTEXT & SETTING

The Urban Extension to Axminster is proposed to the north-east of the town. Land to the north east is the most accessible and while there is a variety of topography throughout the site area, this remains some of the least constrained land around the town where sustainable development can be realised.

Axminster is situated on west facing slopes along the east side of the Axe Valley. The town’s western limit is broadly defined by the course of the River Axe and its flood plain as well as the railway line which runs along the eastern edge of the valley bottom. From this eastern edge of the valley bottom the land rises gently to the east and the town has developed an elongated form stretching north and south along the valley side. The eastern edge of the town is less regular with a variety of C20th housing developments now defining the settlement edge. To the north the site lies adjacent to the existing Millwey industrial estate. There is currently no access to or from this area into the site. Buildings on the industrial estate are screened by mature tree planting along its northern and eastern boundaries.

Further to the north of the site are a group of listed buildings including and associated with the Grade 1 listed Weycroft Hall, a medieval hall with buildings now used as a venue for events and hospitality.

The area around Millbrook Vale, a tributary to the River Axe, is steeply sloping to the north and the south. Other land slopes away from the town as localised ridges in the landform develop into north and west facing slopes with views opening out away from the town to the countryside beyond.

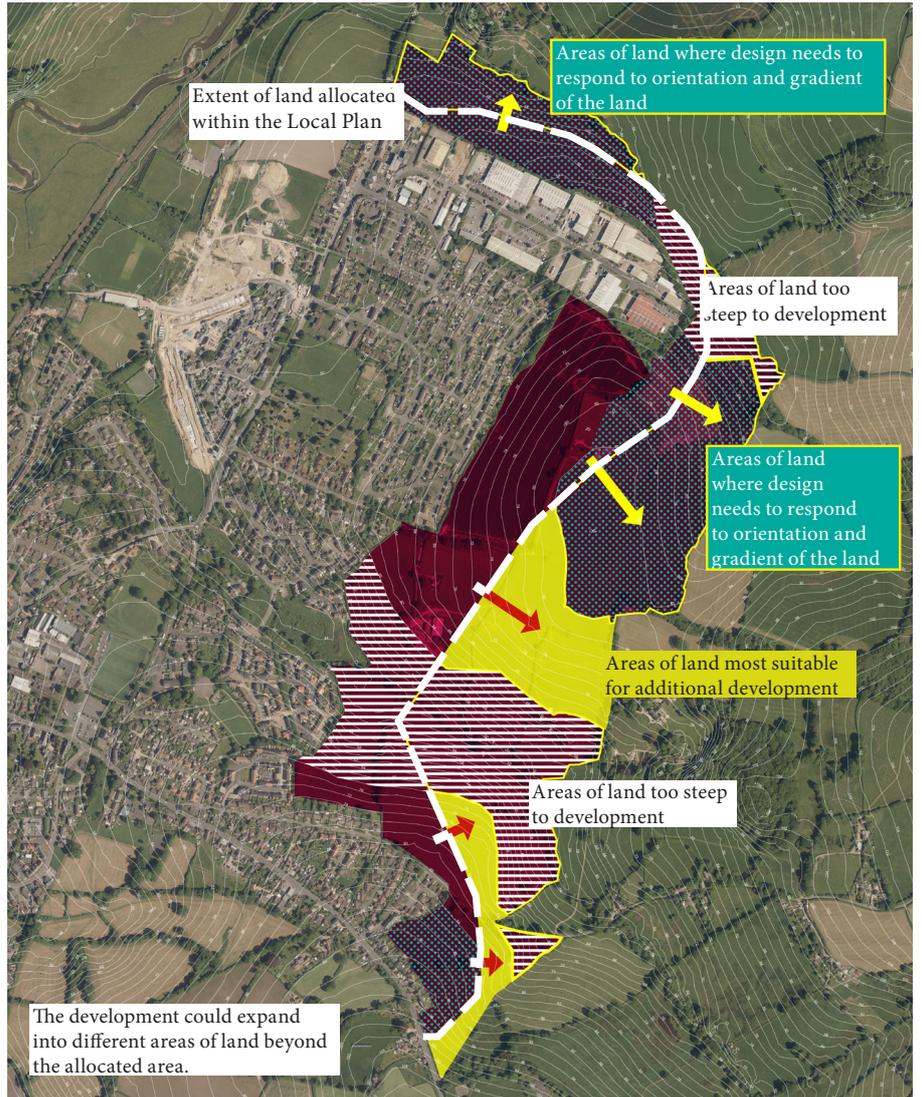
The site’s only existing road frontage is limited to where it meets with Chard Road in the north and Lyme Road at the south. The majority of the rest of the site boundary with the existing settlement is with the rear of existing properties. Some gaps in the existing settlement edge exist where footpath, or track access is provided to public rights of way and farmland. The site is currently in agricultural use with fields divided by well maintained hedgerows. Evil Lane and the stream course along the bottom of Millbrook Vale enjoy more mature tree belts and occasional small areas of woodland.

Settlement edge conditions:

- a** *Millwey industrial area, rear of large industrial buildings with tree planting along boundary.*
- b** *Rear of residential areas. Generally rear garden fences and boundaries with minimal overlooking at the existing defined settlement edge. Minimal planting screening along the rear of existing properties. Very limited access points to the site area.*
- c** *Recent residential development around Millbrook Vale. Valley bottom in use as public open space and remains as flood plain to the stream course. Many properties front onto the open space and overlook the vale. Many footpaths and accesses between blocks of development offer access to the site by foot.*

Neighbouring townscape typologies:

- a** *Millwey Industrial area: Single access from Chard Road with turning heads to each building plot. Large footprint buildings often require cut or fill to be level.*
- b** *Millwey & Sector Lane residential areas: A large residential area of similar age and layout of blocks up to approximately 80m. Majority of semi-detached houses which overlook the street with rear gardens. A network of streets which are generally all through routes.*
- c** *Occasional infill Cul-de-sacs: Small amounts of residential development in Axminster is cul-de-sac.*
- d** *Most recent development around Millbrook Vale: topography dictates a very small block size (sometimes 40m). High permeability results in potentially confusing layout with lots of cut throughs.*





DCC Road Alignment derived developable areas

Areas where road alignment needs to facilitate developable housing parcels

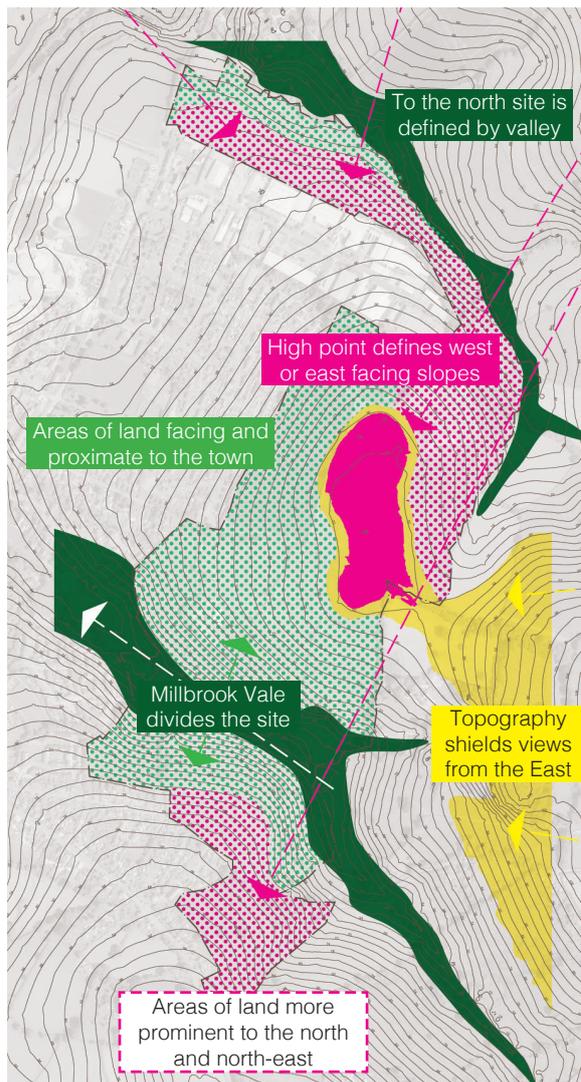
MASTERPLAN STUDY AREA

Prior to the commissioning of the Urban Extension Masterplan, work as part of the Local Plan process had defined an area suitable for an Urban Extension which subsequently became allocated within the Local Plan. Alongside this work, DCC was drafting proposals for a relief road proposal to the north east of the town which carried out initial assessment of topography, estimated the cost of the road delivery and made initial suggestions of the alignment of the road.

Work undertaken as part of this Urban Extension Masterplan process has built on the work carried out by DCC on the road alignment in relation to the anticipated size of the proposed Urban Extension. This work confirmed that the land remaining for development after the deduction of land required for the likely road alignment was not sufficient for the quantity of housing identified in the Local Plan. This initial scoping work also identified opportunities for realignment of the road in order to minimise the need for significant engineering works to achieve the road design standards necessary (gradients, speed etc.). This also took account of the access options to housing development and minimising height differences between the highway and development areas. This is in order to avoid potential division between residential areas caused by embankments or a road in cutting, and over emphasis on car use for short journeys due to unattractive and unsafe highways dominated environments.

The Masterplan was therefore required to consider a Study Area which could accommodate the joint needs of an achievable relief road alignment and unlocking sufficient land to deliver the quantity of housing identified within the Local Plan (650 homes) while also pursuing a criteria of sustainable and quality place making.

The wider study area defined for the Masterplan work was the area within which any additional development, necessary for achieving a viable development, would be located. Any other uses required within the Urban Extension were to be included within the wider masterplan study area as well.



Topography defines character and visual parameters. The site approach needs to take account of exposure to long views. Rising land to the east shields direct views from the East leaving land around Millbrook Vale, although facing north and south, less prominent in the surrounding landscape.

GEOGRAPHY & LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Axminster town currently lies on the eastern slopes of the Axe Valley which runs north-south along the river corridor. The majority of the area to the west of the river is low lying flood plain and the town's growth has been mainly to the east and extending northwards along the west facing slopes of the landform.

The site of the Urban Extension occupies a varied landform which is divided by the east-west Millbrook Vale into two main areas to the north and south of this steep sided landscape feature and tributary to the River Axe. The majority of land available for the development of the urban extension lies to the north of Millbrook Vale, extending around the north of the existing town to meet Chard Road, while about another third of the land area lies to the south of Millbrook Vale extending to the south to meet Lyme Road.

In the northern portion of the Urban Extension area land rises away from the existing eastern settlement edge to the east providing a westerly aspect in keeping with the majority of the existing town which occupies a similar slope condition and is contained within the Axe Valley landform. The land reaches a high point at a ridge running north-south across the northern portion of the urban extension area, from here land begins to slope away to the east and faces away from the existing town and the Axe Valley landform. Rather than the setting of the town within the valley that the west facing slopes enjoy, land beyond this ridge enjoys the setting of the wider landscape to the east and the north of the town with long reaching views beyond.

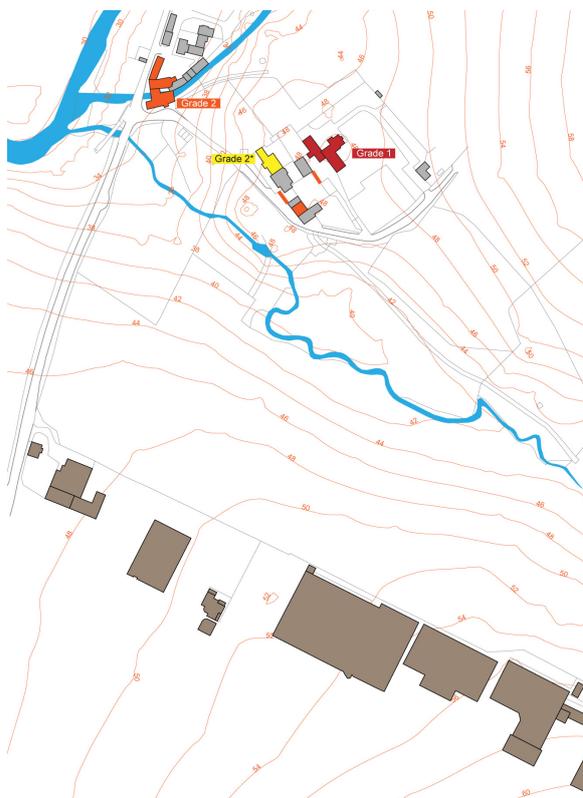
To the south of Millbrook Vale land generally slopes to the north or north east, but varies in elevation. The land further south rises to a higher elevation, resulting in it being more prominent to the east and north east landscape setting.

Land which surrounds Millbrook Vale and faces either north or south around the vale, while not contained within the Axe Valley landform has an elevation lower than much of the land further to the east of the town which results in these developable areas being contained within the localised landform which is Millbrook Vale.

These geographical and topographical factors naturally lead to some distinct areas to the site currently and which provide the basis for structuring the masterplan for the Urban Extension.

Listed building location and setting at Weycroft, to north of Axminster

- Grade 1 listed Weycroft Hall
- Grade 2 Listed Weycroft Mill, Manor outbuilding and garden wall and Hall garden wall
- Grade 2* listed Weycroft Manor & Well House



ACCESS & TOPOGRAPHY

The varied landform of the site area presents challenges in providing adequate access to the new Urban Extension. The design specification of the relief road through the Urban Extension requires that its alignment addresses the contours in a certain way. Further more, the road alignment must ensure that access to housing development provided by the relief road is not prohibited or complicated by the need for cut or fill along its route such that new topographical challenges are presented. Where possible the height variation between the road and areas of housing development should be minimised.

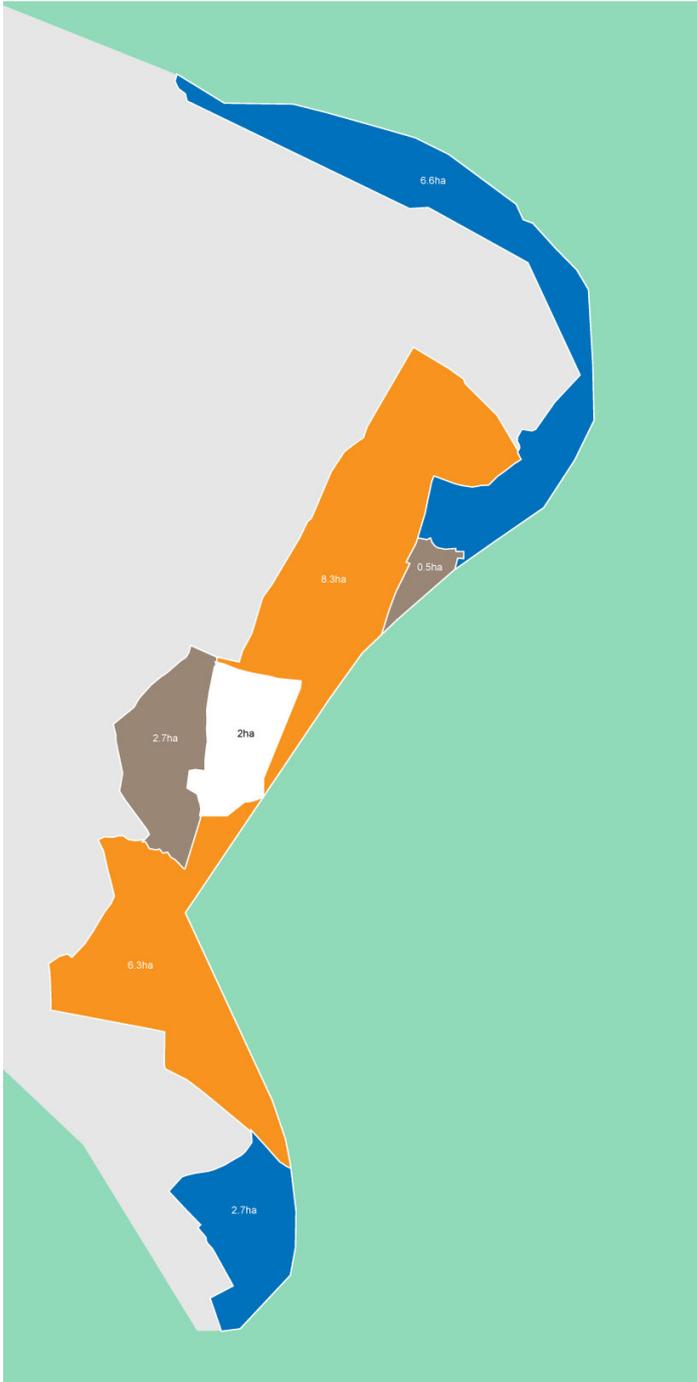
The relief road should be considered as multi-purpose, providing an adequate alternative to traffic currently moving through the town centre to 'bypass' the town centre, but at the same time providing a safe and attractive street as part of a network of streets and spaces within the new Urban Extension. Integrating the road corridors within developed areas which front onto the road corridor and interact with it is important and will only be achievable where the levels and the road's alignment are carefully considered.

LISTED BUILDINGS

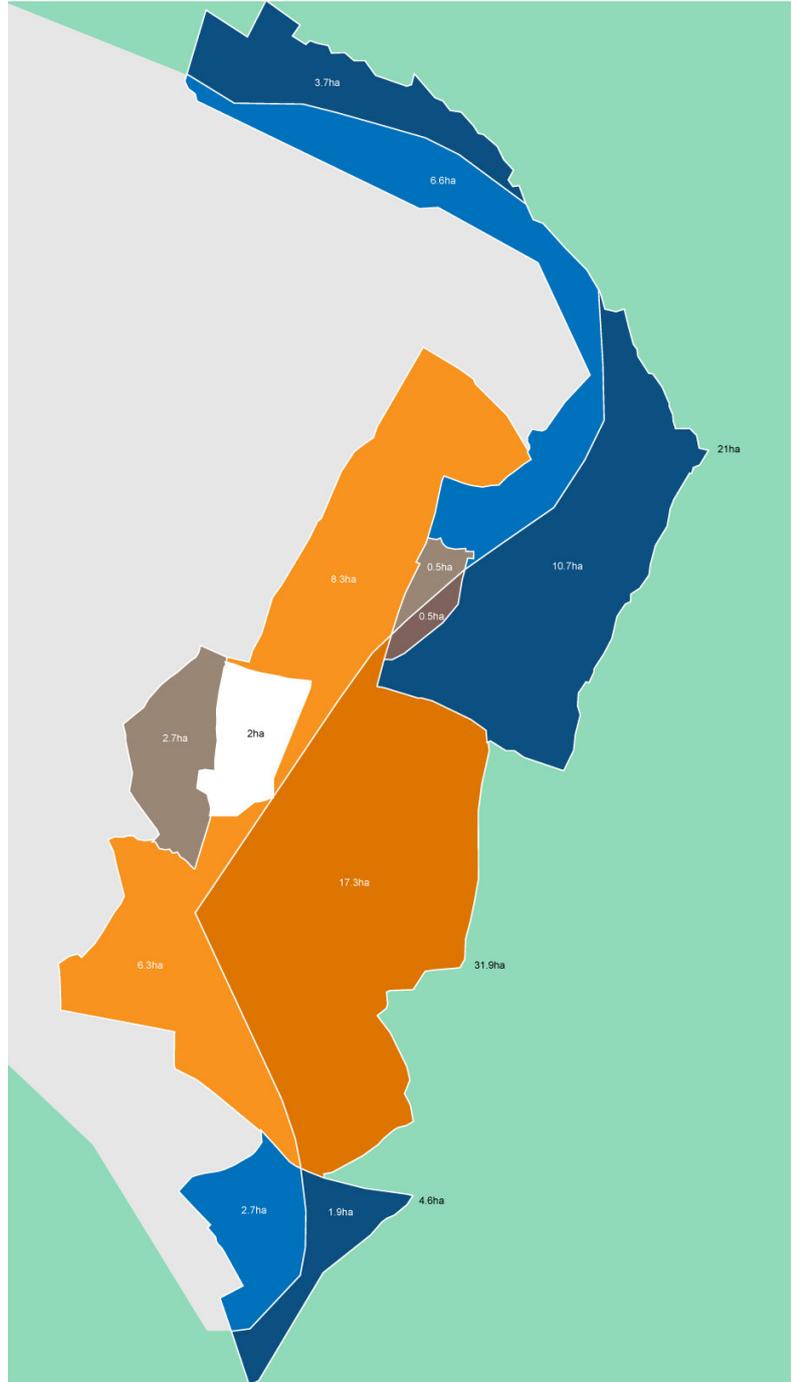
Located to the east of Chard Road is a small collection of listed buildings associated with the Grade 1 listed Weycroft Hall.

Weycroft Hall includes a great hall of circa 1400, restored in C19. The existing house is the greater part of the former Manor House (early C15, and C16 and C17). The building is up to 3 storeys in places with single storey elements and a square tower over the porch. The great hall of circa 1400 is to the south east. Other grade 2 and 2* buildings exist close to Weycroft Hall and adjacent to Chard Road and comprise outbuildings to the Hall and Mill buildings alongside Chard Road at Weycroft Bridge.

To the north of Axminster and the Urban Extension area the land slopes immediately away to the north before rising again at a similar gradient. Weycroft Hall and the buildings immediately surrounding it are at a similar elevation on the opposite side of the small valley to the buildings on the northern edge of Axminster. The listed buildings adjacent to Chard Road at Weycroft Bridge are set lower at river level.



Land Ownership and options within the Local Plan allocated area.



Land Ownership and options within the wider Masterplan Study Area.

Within Allocated Area:

	Persimmon	Crown	Other	Total
Area (ha)	9.3	14.6	3.2	27.1
% of total area	34%	54%	12%	

Entire Masterplan Study Area:

Area (ha)	25.6	31.9	3.7	61.2
% of total area	42%	52%	6%	

OWNERSHIP & CONTROL OF LAND

The two significant interests in the land comprising the area for the North East Urban Extension are The Crown Estate and Persimmon Homes South West.

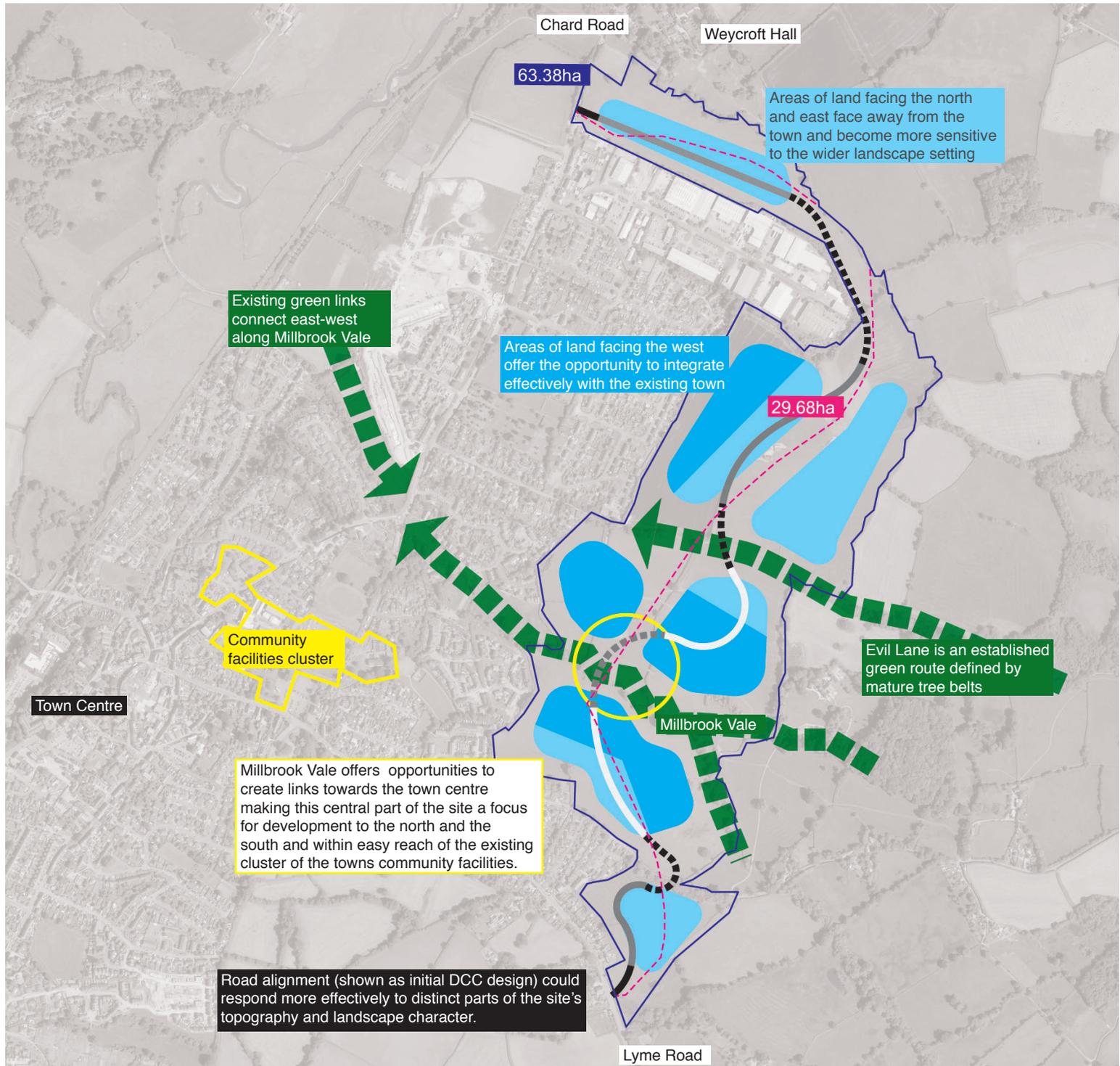
The Crown Estate owns the majority of land which forms part of the allocated site within the Local Plan. Persimmon Homes have an option to acquire the land from the existing land owners. In addition to these two parties there are three private land owners who control smaller parcels of land within the Urban Extension area.

Land under option with Persimmon Homes is at the northern and southern most end of the area and access to the urban extension, adjacent to Chard Road and Lyme Road is within these land parcels. Land developed by Persimmon will need to provide access to land owned by The Crown Estate since these two points provide the only existing primary road frontage to the site.

The Masterplan has had a role in coordinating how these two parties together facilitate a comprehensive approach to the development of the urban extension and its positive contribution to the whole town. It can promote continuity in the delivery of the relief road which is required to cross land within both party's control.

While the other smaller private land ownership has been considered in how it can contribute to an overall distribution of housing and other uses, it does not exert as much influence over the alignment or the delivery of the relief road, or the access and integration of other parts of the urban extension.

Therefore, it is primarily Persimmon Homes and the The Crown Estate who have been working with EDDC seek an agreement on a joined up strategy for the delivery of the Urban Extension.





To the north of the area the site has a boundary with Millwey industrial area. Weycroft Hall lies to the north and views are had towards the AONB to the west.



A localised ridge, east of Axminster runs north-south where the slope changes from facing west towards the town to facing east away from the town.



The land slopes steeply into Millbrook Vale from the north and south sides dividing the site north from south. It offers the best links with the town through existing development.

SITE CONSTRAINTS & OPPORTUNITIES

Topography & Green Infrastructure

The landform and landscape character provide the major constraints and opportunities of the site. The masterplan study area extends beyond land which slopes to the west and presents the challenge of the town growing into areas which for the first time occupy land which faces east. In addition there are steep slopes and changing topography which constrain the route the relief road can take through the urban extension and where development can be located.

Partly due to the town growing historically in a north and south direction along the valley, effective E-W movement is constrained. There are no good opportunities for vehicular access through existing parts of the town. This does provide the opportunity to integrate the Urban Extension by sustainable means of pedestrian and cycle infrastructure. Green links, via Evil Lane and Millbrook Vale offer significant opportunities to do this and at the same time enhance existing landscape assets.

Accessibility & Existing Uses

The alignment of the relief road is a key challenge in making efficient use of the elongated site. It is necessary to balance the highway function of the relief road with its role in providing safe, attractive and sociable neighbourhood streets. The opportunity to create town links and position a local centre which creates density and focus for the Urban Extension needs to sit equally with the need for reasonable highway design which facilitates access to housing parcels and between parts of the site for residents.

The area to the north east of the town centre provides for a cluster of community facilities including the hospital, schools and leisure centre. Creating links to this cluster of community facilities from the Urban Extension is a good opportunity to begin to integrate the Urban Extension into the existing town. The best opportunity for sustainable links is along Millbrook Vale to the junction of Chard Road with Stoney lane.

Variety

The site presents a variety of landscape conditions for which technical solutions which facilitate development and infrastructure will need to be found. The opportunity exists to create contrast and rich variety in the design of the Urban Extension which reflects the need to respond differently to different parts of the site.



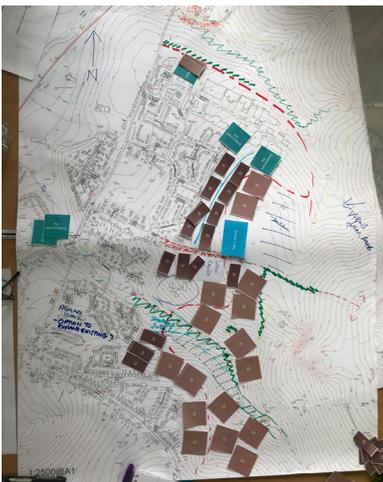
STAKEHOLDER & PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



Stakeholder Workshop output Group 1:



Stakeholder Workshop output Group 2:



Stakeholder Workshop output Group 3:

The early technical analysis and masterplanning work indicated that in order to develop a policy compliant scheme within the allocated site area, development would have to exceed densities which would be considered acceptable in this location and suitable to the landscape and settlement setting. Furthermore, it indicated that up to 850 units maybe necessary to raise sufficient contributions for the funding of the road.

In the light of this, initial engagement work considered how elements of the masterplan conceived in alternative ways to that anticipated in policy, could result in a high quality proposal with a quantity of housing somewhere between 650-850 units.

Two stages of consultation and engagement have been carried out during the course of the master planning process. The first was a technical stakeholder and a related public consultation event at the start of the master planning work which was designed to address the question of key priorities for the proposal among stakeholders and the public as well as reviewing the technical issues, constraints and opportunities of the area.

The second stage of consultation and engagement was designed to present the preferred masterplan approach and solutions and outline the work that had taken place since the last consultation to arrive at this position.

In summary, the key issues, themes and suggestions arising from the consultation and engagement were:

- Scepticism of the efficiency of the route of the relief road;
- Ensure a mix of uses are provided to support a growing community: GP, dentists, community facilities;
- Ensure variety of housing including affordable housing;
- Diversify employment space;
- Concern for the quality of the environment around the relief road;
- Ensure sufficient parking is provided;
- Concern for access/through traffic along Sector Lane;
- Questioning over the demand for quantity of housing locally;
- Concerns relating to the cumulative impact of growth on the wider town and economy.

VISION STATEMENT

EDDC's Local Plan vision for Axminster is one of: *"larger scale housing growth to promote and be a catalyst for further commercial activity. A focus will be placed on town centre regeneration with recognition of need for measures to address adverse traffic impacts and also to conserve and enhance the fine built heritage of the town and surrounding countryside.*

We will also plan for major mixed use strategic development to the East of the town for up to and in the longer term potential for more than 650 new homes and a North-South relief road, a key item of infrastructure for the town, and to also increase the critical mass of residents in the town to support the future vitality of Axminster".

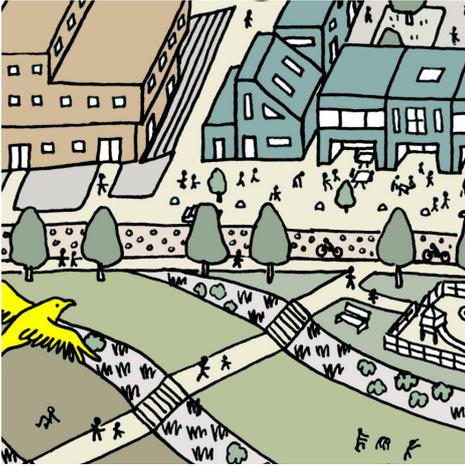
The masterplanning work, consultation and engagement has indicated that the vision for the proposals should be that it will become an integral part of Axminster in the years to come. North East Axminster will accommodate a diverse community of people by providing a wide variety of housing which compliments the Axminster housing market and satisfies the needs of a wide range of people.

Large areas of public open space and green areas will provide an attractive and healthy setting in which people can enjoy living. Good links with existing neighbourhoods mean that existing residents can also benefit from access to new parks and spaces.

For everyday and convenient use, local facilities will be provided within the Urban Extension and create a hub for community activity within walkable distance of all residents and establish a sociable place which is safe and designed to a high quality.

Axminster aspires to be a self sufficient town with a wide variety of employment currently available to residents within the town. This balance of local jobs and an increasing population is maintained by providing a variety of additional jobs within the Urban Extension area. This includes areas for the expansion of existing businesses which occupy industrial type space at the Millwey industrial estate at the north of the town, and a variety of space for new or relocating businesses within the heart of the Urban Extension integrated within the Local Centre.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES



As part of the process of developing the Masterplan, and through the 2 stages of engagement and consultation, several key Design Principles have been established. These Design Principles represent the interpretation of site and context analysis carried out by the masterplanning team and they have been the reference point for discussions relating to subsequent masterplan design work and any indicative designs which have emerged.

The following four Design Principles have been developed:

- Maximise sustainable links to the town centre
- Utilise landscape to create identity and a focus for the urban extension
- A mix of uses to facilitate creating a recognisable centre to the urban extension
- Using the road alignment and character to create variety to the development



Throughout the masterplanning process the Design Principles have formed the basis of communication with the client group, Councillors, stakeholders, and the public and have offered a meaningful way of seeking consensus on the approach to designing the Urban Extension.

It is also recognised that this Masterplan work has only reached a certain level of resolution and that further detailed design work will take place as part of future planning application processes. Therefore a series of overarching design principles is particularly important to ensure that the strategic objectives of the masterplan continue to shape future design work.





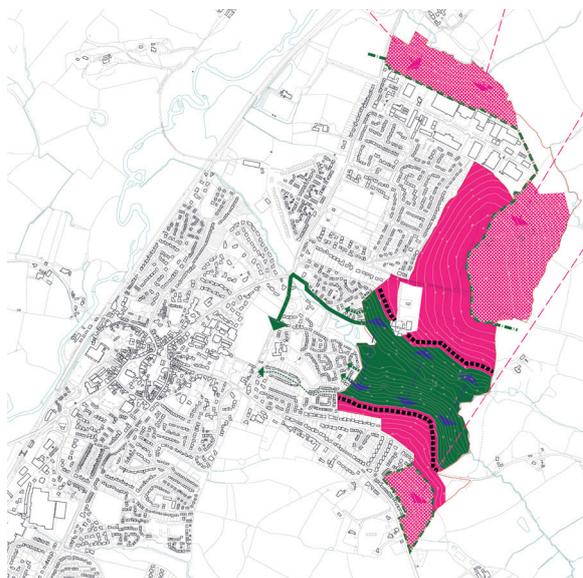
The masterplan should organise development within the Urban Extension to make the most of opportunities to link sustainably with the existing town and town centre

MAXIMISE SUSTAINABLE LINKS TO THE TOWN CENTRE

Greatest permeability and proximity to the town centre exists in an east-west direction from areas in, and immediately adjacent to, Millbrook Vale.

Although other minor links exist from the site into surrounding neighbourhoods development which is concentrated in areas surrounding Millbrook Vale offer the best opportunity to create sustainable links to and from the town centre.

Areas to the far north and south of the site are less attractive areas as a focal point for development as they are less likely to offer sustainable links to the town centre.



While Millbrook Vale includes steeper areas which are undevelopable, surrounding development and the integration of the valley as public green can create cohesion at the heart of the masterplan area.

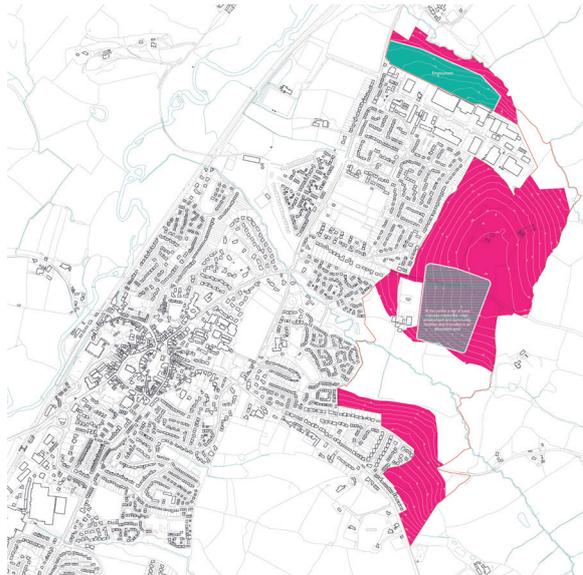
UTILISE LANDSCAPE TO CREATE IDENTITY AND A FOCUS FOR THE URBAN EXTENSION

Millbrook Vale is an existing green wedge which inevitably divides the site due to its undevelopable steep sloping valley sides.

The site also straddles a transition in the wider landform distinguishing land which relates directly to the Axe Valley (to the west) from land which faces east and north east and away from the existing town. This results in a structuring of the site into areas which slope towards the existing town and areas which face away from the existing town.

Millbrook Vale, while undevelopable, represents a central area for the town and the urban extension and can serve to integrate existing and proposed development.

Development which concentrates on town/west facing slopes maintains the settlement/valley pattern and relieving sensitive, periphery and north-east/north facing slopes development which is urban in form.



The masterplan should focus activity at the heart of the Urban Extension to promote sustainability, sociability and to promote links between the Urban Extension and the existing town and town centre.

A MIX OF USES TO FACILITATE CREATING A RECOGNISABLE CENTRE TO THE URBAN EXTENSION

A local centre is most suitably located within reach of the most amount of people (including existing residents). A mix of uses would contribute to a vibrant local centre and include employment, retail residential and community facilities.

Employment provided in a way compatible with an Urban Extension Local Centre can provide a greater amount of jobs for the given floor space than employment space which currently exists at the Millwey Industrial Estate.

The combination of compatible employment space, residential, retail and community uses could be used to create an active and sociable heart to urban extension which encourages sustainable patterns of living for existing and new residents of Axminster.



Since the relief road extends throughout the whole site it passes through the variety of landscape conditions. As it responds to these conditions development form and relationship is influenced. Together this can promote variety and contrast across the Urban Extension.

USING THE ROAD ALIGNMENT AND CHARACTER TO CREATE VARIETY TO THE DEVELOPMENT

The proposed relief road serves a variety of functions and requires a variety of approaches to its construction throughout the Urban Extension. It provides access in a variety of ways to different development but it also provides amenity as a high quality street and public space. It is appropriate therefore that the character of the road varies along its length.

The road alignment in part dictates the changes in development character along the road (gradients, views, sinuousness etc.) and it is paramount that the two are considered together.

Development typology also contributes to the changing character of the road and should be considered alongside the ongoing detail and technical design of the alignment in order that it contributes positively to the distinct and contrasting characters of the Urban Extension.



MASTERPLAN

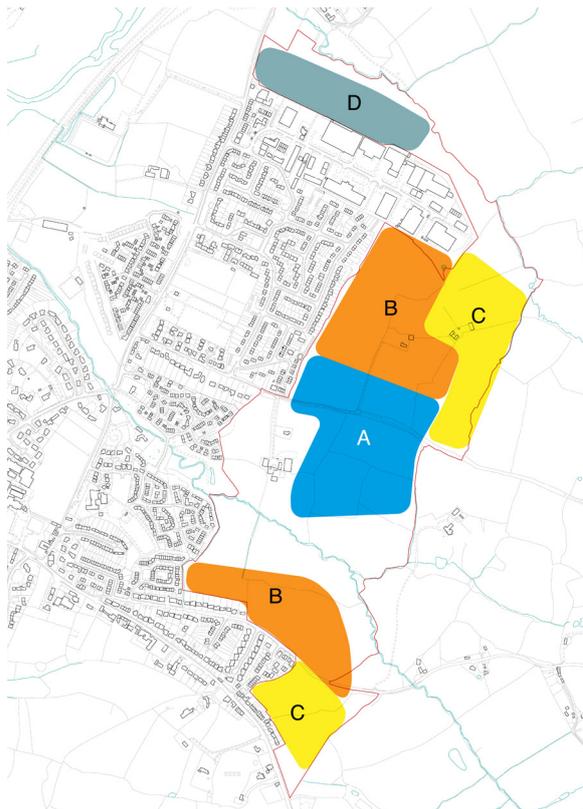
CHARACTER AREAS

The design approach within the masterplan varies across the urban extension area in response to the geographical, landscape character, topographical and accessibility conditions. This results in 3 development character areas and an area to the north considered for employment space. These determine the broad parameters for development throughout the Urban Extension:

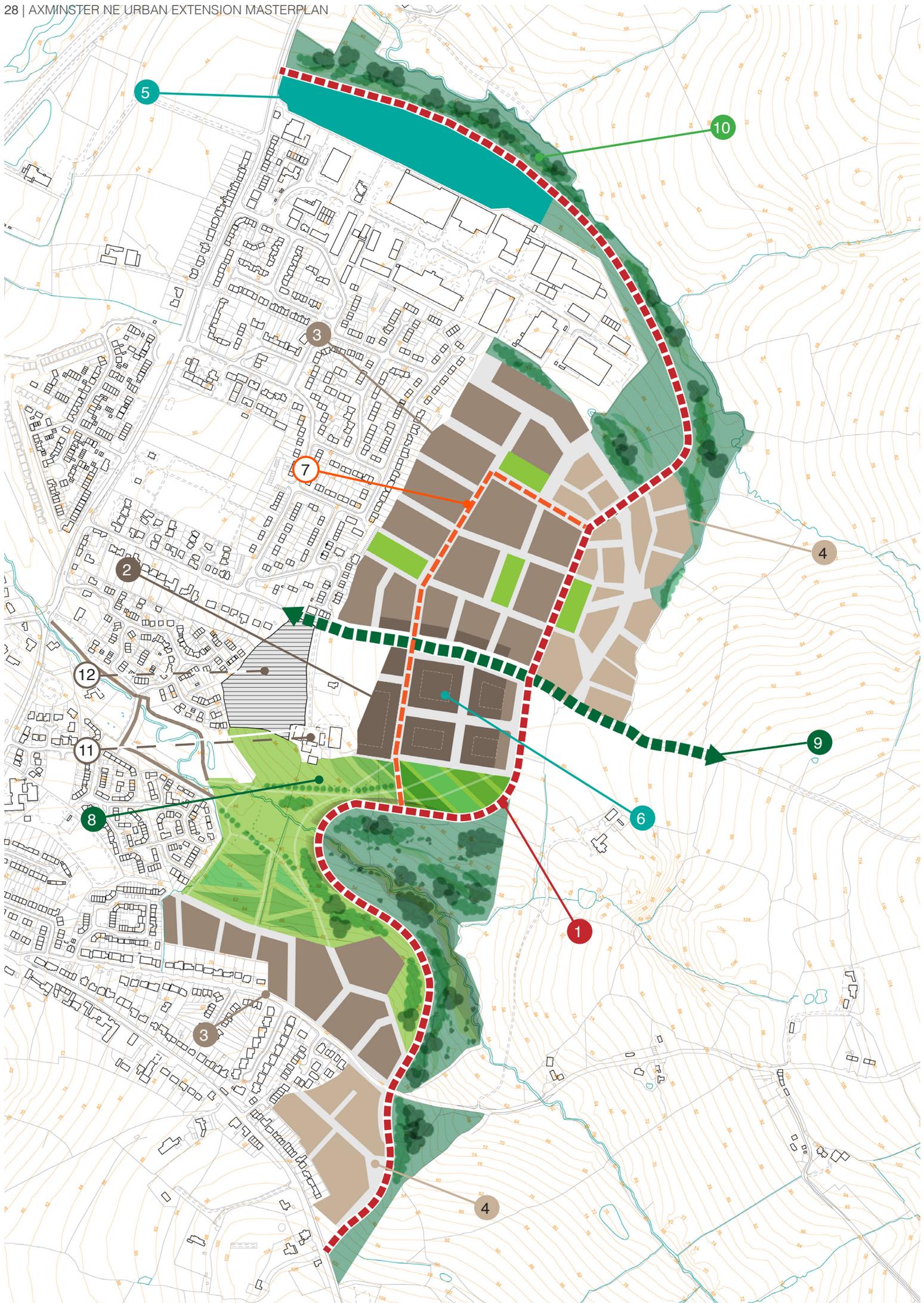
The **Local Centre** area benefits from its proximity to the existing town centre via links along Millbrook Vale. The area is visible or within walking distance from the majority of the Urban Extension. Development character can make the most of the southerly aspect slopes (becoming level on the higher ground to the north), and its central and accessible location. The character of the layout in this area should reflect the opportunity to provide a mix of uses at the centre of the Urban Extension and the need to provide flexibility for a variety of development types.

Outside of the centre, the **Suburban Residential** character areas are on land which is contained within the existing pattern of the town's development within the landform of the Axe Valley. This includes land immediately adjacent to the existing settlement edge at Millwey and land to the south of Millbrook Vale which, while facing north is lower than land to the east. Due to this it is not revealed in longer views from the east and its setting can be considered as that of the town to the west and the new development of the Urban Extension on the opposite side of Millbrook Vale. Development form here is reflective of the accessibility into and from existing neighbourhoods. It should have a permeable network of streets and provide direct and legible links towards the centre of the Urban Extension. The character of the layout here should provide the opportunity for a variety of housing types and sizes. There should be a clear street hierarchy since these areas join other residential areas, either existing or new, to the centre of the Urban Extension and to key open space within the Masterplan.

Areas towards the edge of the Urban Extension create a new settlement edge to Axminster. **Edge Residential** areas of land are located on slopes facing away from the town and create a new relationship between the town and countryside. The character here should be sensitive to the landscape setting to the north and east. Layout should still provide direct and legible links towards the centre of the Urban Extension. The use of different house types and sizes can be used to vary the development form in the landscape and the opportunity exists to create a contrasting development pattern here reflective of its distinctive location relative to the town and surrounding area.



A	Local Centre
B	Suburban Residential
C	Edge Residential
D	Northern Parcel



MASTERPLAN STRUCTURE & CREATING THE PLACE

- 1 *Road has a variety of characters along its route in response to the different types of development and open space through the masterplan*
- 2 *Housing at the centre of the urban extension enjoys the best access to facilities and open space. This housing would include some apartments (above shops or offices), terraced housing and smaller units.*
- 3 *Housing outside of the centre but not at the edge is formally arranged around streets and regular open spaces and providing a spacious and green feel. Housing will be a mixture of terraces and semi-detached houses with private gardens. The majority of housing will be 2 storeys with occasional 3 storey buildings on corners.*
- 4 *Housing at the edge of the settlement, generally on the steepest sloping ground and principally only two storeys high incorporating a mixture of short terrace, semi detached and detached houses with parking, overlooking green space.*
- 5 *3.3ha of Employment space is located adjacent to existing industrial area to allow for potential expansion of existing business.*
- 6 *2.5ha of Employment space provided within a mixed local centre and likely to be office, workshop and retail space.*
- 7 *Secondary route*
- 8 *A Variety of Green space throughout the masterplan includes utilising undevelopable areas as large open spaces, improving biodiversity, small local green spaces, green corridors, hedges and tree planting and providing facility for water attenuation and SUDS.*
- 9 *Evil lane retained as a green link. No vehicular access should be allowed along the existing green route but provided parallel if required.*
- 10 *Planting to the north creates a green edge to the north where views of the new employment buildings may be had.*
- 11 *Farm retained*
- 12 *Future phase development*

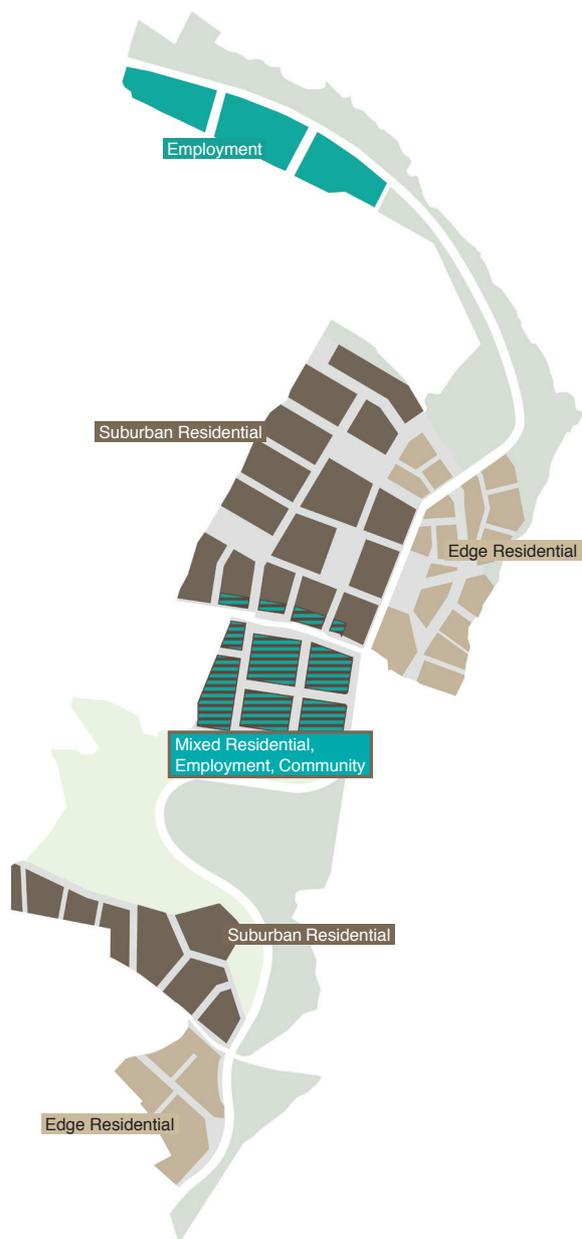
The Masterplan provides an illustrative demonstration of how the Urban Extension to the North East of Axminster could be realised. It shows how spatial elements -the character areas, streets and open spaces and various uses could be arranged in a coordinated way to ensure that the vision, the Local Plan requirements, the design principles and the character areas for the Urban Extension are realised in a viable way.

The Masterplan is designed in a way which is responsive to the existing topography and landscape character as outlined in the design principles. It also prioritises creating an extension to Axminster which can perform in a complementary way to the existing town's layout, economy and communities by enhancing sustainability and increasing diversity.

The Masterplan provides a framework for future design work showing how in a coordinated way the landowners, developers and Local Authority can deliver a wide range of housing, employment and community facilities which by themselves, any individual land parcel cannot achieve. It is not upon any one party to achieve all of the elements which are expected of the Urban Extension as a whole but by participating in this Masterplan and ongoing delivery process the wider picture is realised.

During the course of the masterplan process DCC has reached an agreement with two local primary schools and secured land to promote a sustainable expansion of existing schools as opposed to continue to require a school is delivered as part of the Urban Extension and considers this positive for Axminster.

In formulating the masterplan broad assumptions have been made on the number of houses that could be accommodated in each phase of development. Although these are not stated on the masterplan itself they have informed a phasing strategy and viability appraisal and should be read alongside the rest of the masterplan to inform the quantum of development in each part of the site. The quantum of development on each part of the expansion area is a response to the characteristics of that part of the site and its surroundings. The stated numbers are indicative and not intended to be definitive or prescriptive. The distribution of homes across the site can be reviewed through planning applications for their development provided the total number across the whole masterplan area is not exceeded. Material changes to the numbers of homes in any phase should however be considered both in terms of compliance with the design guidance and parameters relevant to that particular phase, but also in terms of the



The mix and distribution of uses within the Urban Extension establishes a focus of activity within the Local Centre -closest to open space and links to the town centre- and diverse and sustainable community growth.

delivery of the masterplan as a whole, its objectives and the viability and deliverability of all other phases.

The Masterplan is structured around some key elements, most notably the existing landform and the distinction between land which slopes towards the existing town and is included within the existing development pattern of Axminster as a whole within the Axe Valley, and that which slopes away from the existing town and creates a new relationship between the town and the countryside to the north and the east. The Masterplan also focusses development towards and around Millbrook Vale. The steep sided north and south slopes of this valley are undevelopable but do provide significant opportunity for high quality and distinctive open space which is accessible to and connects with the existing town. The relief road varies in design along its length to help define the way that development responds in different ways to different parts of the site.

The Masterplan has been laid out in a way which creates direct and walkable connections between all residential areas and the Local Centre and establishes sustainable patterns of living for the Urban Extension from the outset and enhances that of the wider town of Axminster.

DEVELOPMENT BLOCK LAYOUT

The Masterplan for the Urban Extension seeks to establish a permeable structure of development blocks of a variety of sizes and forms to suit the topography and location within the masterplan area.

The block form of a masterplan determines the network of streets and spaces and creates a structure which allows connections to be made with the existing town centre and surrounding neighbourhoods as well as create a safe, walkable and easy to understand layout within the new urban extension area.

The masterplan has been carefully designed to attend to the naturally occurring constraints of the landscape, topography and ecological assets of the area and the existing and historic form of the town of Axminster in its setting. The structure of the character areas governs how the block form of the masterplan varies across the urban extension area resulting in variety in size and form throughout the urban extension which relates to the underlying landscape form and surroundings as well as the differing relationship which is had between the urban extension and the existing town at different locations within

the urban extension.

1 At the centre, the block form is more regular with a grid of streets creating direct routes through the local centre and between the open space, the local centre and other residential areas. Large blocks allow for flexibility to accommodate a mix of uses including a variety of employment types, retail, community facilities and apartments and houses.

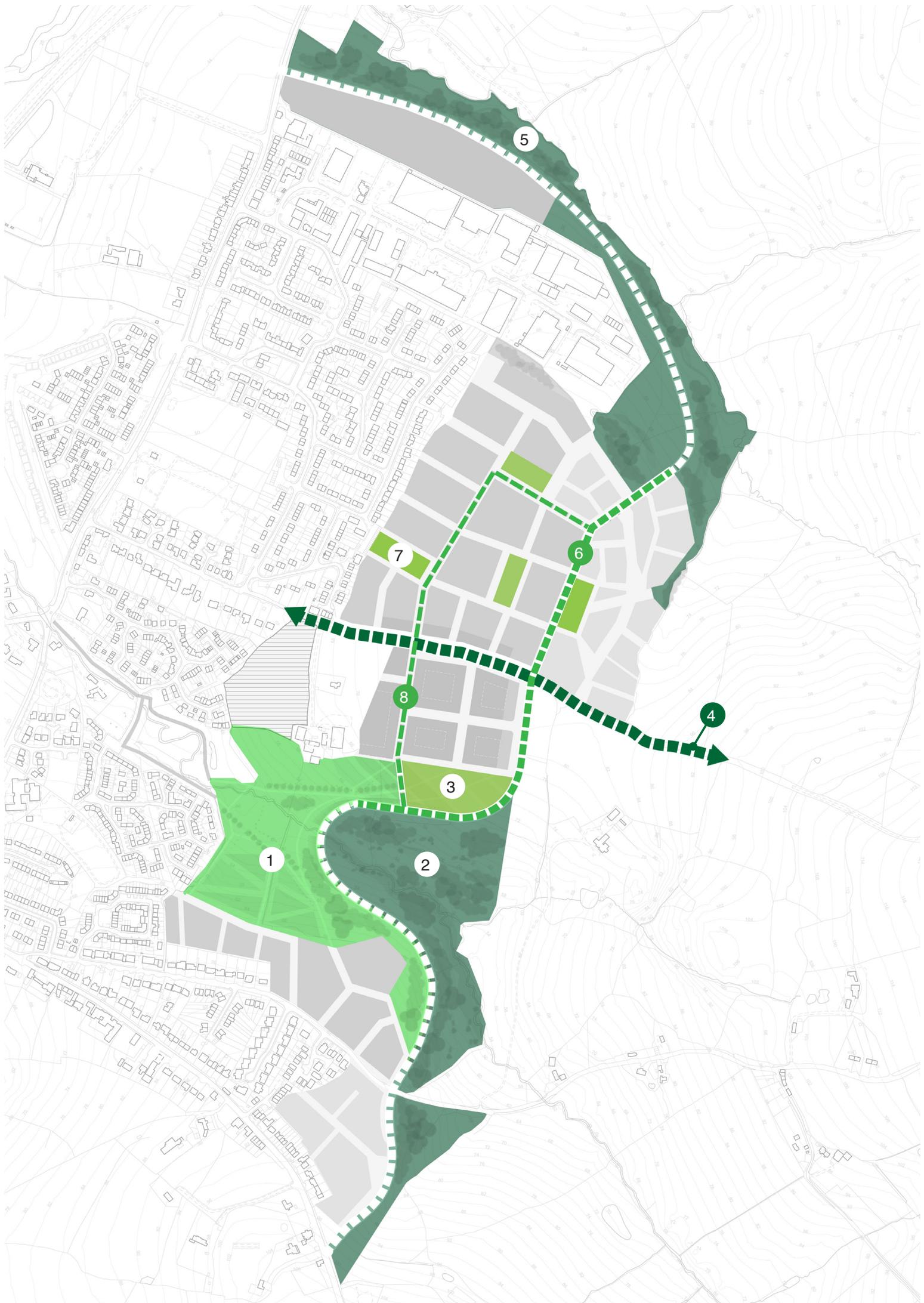
Outside of the central area of the urban extension residential development is located in two distinct landscape settings and relates broadly, in two distinct ways to the existing town:

2 Land which slopes towards the existing town (the easterly slopes of the Axe Valley) continues the pattern of the development of the town along the rising slopes to the east of the town. Block form within these areas remains regular. Smaller (than the local centre area), rectangular form blocks create a formal layout of streets and spaces and allow direct sight lines between spaces and the local centre, and to links with existing neighbourhoods and towards the Town Centre. Public open spaces and squares are regular in shape and occupy similar areas to an individual development block. Blocks and streets are orientated in parallel and perpendicular to the contours creating a mix of sloping and level streets.

3 Land which slopes to the north and east, away from the town, departs from the predominant development form of the town which until now has been contained within the Axe Valley landform. Block form in these areas towards to the edges of the urban extension should respond to the location and establish a more organic form, informally arranged broadly parallel and diagonal to the contours. Irregular block form and variety of sizes of block provide the opportunity to create a more fragmented form to the development creating a mixed patchwork of green and built form. Blocks could include a mixture of short terrace, semi detached and detached houses with parking, and retain and provide green space wherever possible. The distinction between private and public green space is more ambiguous and the definition of streets within the landscape less clear in order to reflect a more rural setting and the sensitivity of the outward facing aspect of these areas of the urban extension.



A variety of block forms and layouts help define distinct character areas across the Urban Extension and respond in different ways to the topography and the landscape character across the site.



1 *Millbrook Park. A landscaped area of publicly accessible green space with a range of open space function and providing links from the Urban Extension and into existing Neighbourhoods and the Town Centre.*

2 *Millbrook Vale: a naturally landscaped green area including measures to improve biodiversity and provide a variety of natural habitats and*

3 *The South Terrace: a formal green space adjacent to the Local Centre, sloping south for maximum sun and providing a space for people who work, visit or live in and around the Urban Extension. It also provides easy links from the Urban Extension towards the town centre, Axminster schools and other community facilities.*

4 *Evil Lane provides a valuable green link through the Urban Extension connecting existing public rights of way with the Urban Extension and existing neighbourhoods. If vehicular access is required it should be provided parallel to the existing retained green link.*

5 *Greening of northern slopes: a variety of planting to screen employment uses to the north of the Urban Extension. The greening of the northern and north eastern edge of the settlement will also create a wildlife corridor which can include a variety of habitats.*

6 *Where the Relief Road passes through residential areas and adjacent to parks it will include landscape features such as street trees and verges to create a green route through the Urban Extension.*

7 *Local Parks and Green Spaces are located within easy reach of all new housing areas and provide open space and green areas for residents.*

8 *Green Avenues through the Urban Extension provide attractive and legible routes. They include, street trees and planting. Routes lead directly towards the Local Centre for easy pedestrian and cycle access.*

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE & OPEN SPACE HIERARCHY

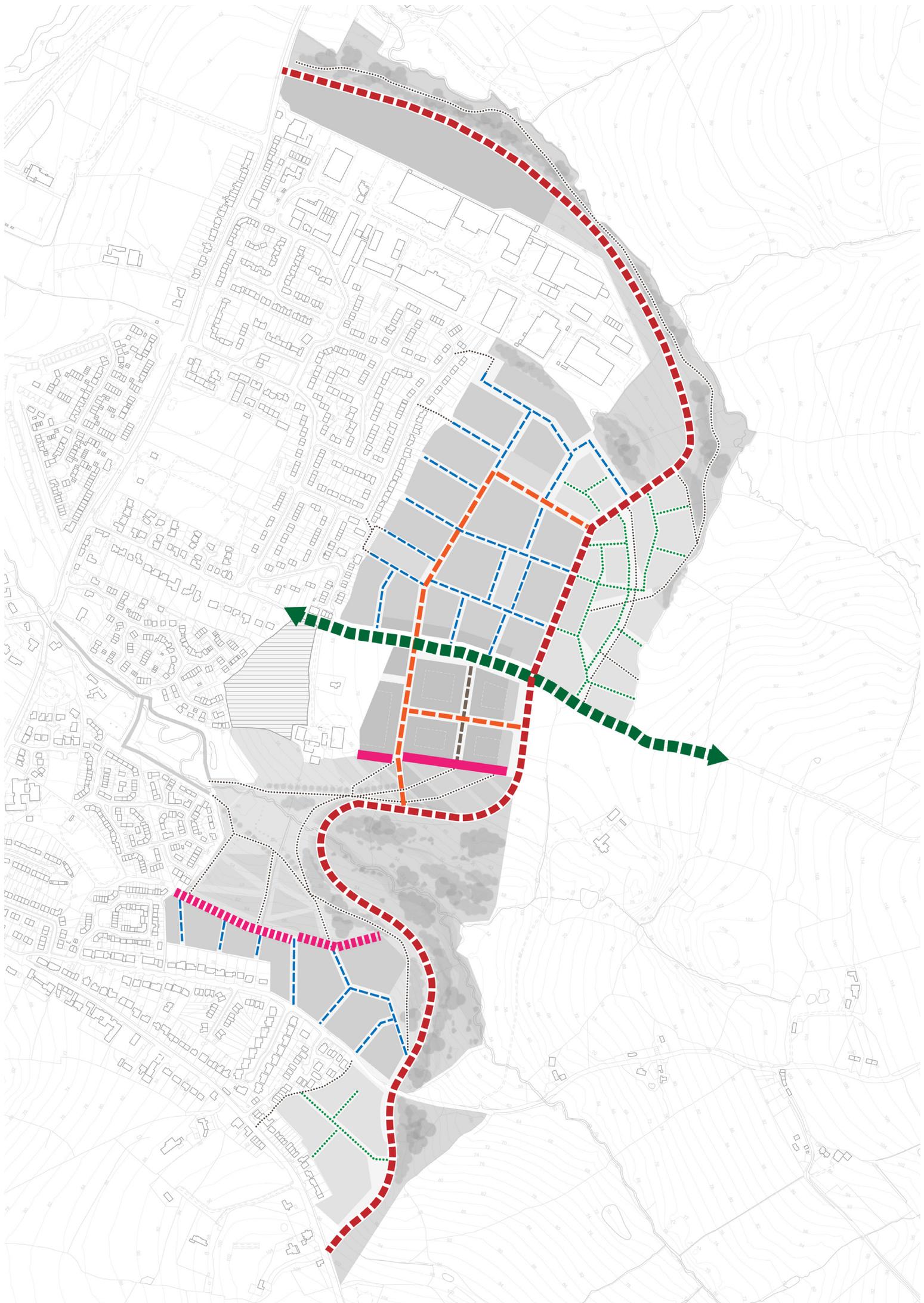
The Urban Extension is designed around a series and a variety of green spaces each with their own function and providing a variety of purposes as public open spaces.

Where topography constrains development, areas of green space are used to sustain habitats and to green the edge of the settlement. Maintaining the continuity of these features with other green elements within the development, or connected to the wider network of hedgerows or green features creates corridors which can support a variety of species.

Within the development green spaces provide a range of public open spaces which function in different ways from streets and avenues to small neighbourhood parks, to large district parks. Engineering solutions to drainage and flood attenuation can be integrated within this variety of green spaces to create an efficient and attractive multi-purpose green infrastructure network

APPROACH TO ROAD DESIGN

Far from just serving a transport function, roads, streets and links across the urban extension can become spaces and sociable places in their own right as well as accommodating key drainage and servicing requirements. Wider streets and green corridors can accommodate SUDS, while side streets and other links which can add to a green network with the provision of street trees, verges and other planting.



■■■■ **Relief Road:** Extending the entirety of the Urban Extension this is the longest continuous route within the Urban Extension. As a result the road requires a variety of treatments along its length whilst maintaining the carriageway size and capacity. Design of the relief road as it passes through residential areas should seek to avoid creating a barrier to pedestrian cross movement. See separate page for more information.

— — **Secondary Route:** This provides an alternative route through the body of the Urban Extension away from the relief road. It will form a direct connection between residential areas and the Local Centre and be connected at both ends to the relief road. The route should include on street parking, tree planting and be wide enough to accommodate SUDS where necessary.

— — **Urban Streets.** Only found within the Local Centre but not connected to the Relief Road. This street would be overlooked by mixed development on both sides. On street parking and a minimal carriageway create a slow traffic environment. Wide footways and minimal building setback or front gardens/privacy strip help provide a sense of enclosure.

— — **Suburban Streets:** Provide the main form of circulation within suburban residential areas and create a network of connectivity between routes higher in the hierarchy. Streets should be designed for slow traffic speeds, some may follow home zone principles but all streets will promote sociability among neighbourhoods, and recognisable as places people live.

..... **Lanes:** Provide circulation within the Edge Residential areas through a network of more informal routes. Simple design which minimises clutter and vertical elements such as signage or lighting will help to achieve the informal feel. A narrow carriageway with footway at a single grade (no kerbs), occasional on street parking and verges also contribute to an informal design.

■ ■ **Evil Lane green link:** Retain existing green lane. Where vehicular access is required this should be provided adjacent to the green route. Development should front the green route to create a safe pedestrian environment.

■ ■ ■ **Urban park frontage:** A space which provides access along the front of buildings but primarily is a public space at the margin of the park.

■ ■ ■ ■ **Suburban park frontage:** Where suburban residential areas meet the green space they should overlook the park. Slow traffic speeds and street design help create a unique relationship between houses and the green space.

..... **Other pedestrian and cycle links:** Safe attractive and accessible connections between areas.

STREETS AND MOVEMENT HIERARCHY

The approach to transport and movement within the Urban Extension is to promote walking, cycling and public transport. The structure of the masterplan facilitates this vision by providing a hierarchy of movement through the Urban Extension area.

The masterplan also has concern for pragmatic and commercial perspectives and therefore street design should ensure the various modes of transport, including cars are accommodated in an equitable way.

The masterplan is structured in a way to create walkable neighbourhoods with Local Centre facilities within easy reach of all houses. Development is oriented towards the Local Centre and the street hierarchy connects people to the centre in a variety of ways.

Links to the existing town are primarily by foot and by bike due to the nature of the existing settlement edge. Although some vehicular access may be beneficial where it can be proved achievable.

The masterplan for the Urban Extension shows how integration with the existing town can be achieved and the network and variety of streets throughout the Urban Extension are designed to facilitate this integration by allowing connectivity, creating safe routes through new and existing development and assisting way finding and orientation with contrasting street types.

Street design and specification is subject to the approval of DCC, however the masterplan anticipates the continuing collaboration of all parties to help realise technical solutions which aspire to high quality streets and spaces which are safe, accessible, attractive and function as public spaces forming the basis of a sustainable movement network throughout a residential Urban Extension and integrated with the wider town.



Chard Road.

1

Northern approach: This length of road should be punctuated by junctions which access employment development parcels. Junctions can serve as focal points and include pedestrian crossing to access green space opposite and traffic calming features. Tree planting along the northern edge of the road provides screening to the north and enclosure to the road.

2

North-east slopes: due to the ascent of the gradient by the road here it is anticipated that ground may need regrading and the road be in cutting or on embankment. Pedestrian and cycle provision adjacent to the road may be more suitably provided slightly away from the kerbside for safety and quality reasons. Planting of the surrounding margins and space around the road but thinning on approach to the residential area will help announce the approaching residential area and help naturally calm traffic speeds.

3

Residential corridor: across the plateau of the site on higher ground development occurs on both sides of the relief road and pedestrian cross movement should not be obstructed. Regular access between blocks should be provided although not all vehicular. Buildings should front the road in this area from both sides and the road be tree lined. Tabletops at junctions or occasional narrowing of the carriageway would be suitable traffic calming measures. No guard rails should be used. A small central median (at grade) might be suitable.

4

Local Centre: Buildings provide frontage to the relief road but may be set back to allow a generous public realm, some short stay on street parking and street trees separate pedestrian areas from the road. The focus is on public realm quality with vehicular access primarily for the servicing of shops and businesses.

5

Millbrook Vale Causeway: Treed embankments and screen planting to the adjacent park functions may be necessary where the road negotiates steep slopes and the stream crossing. The cycle and footway could be decoupled from the road route (routed through park) if beneficial and careful consideration be given to the location and design of pedestrian crossings for access to wider green areas to the east.

2

South-east slopes: as the road negotiates steep slopes ascending to the Lyme Road junction it is anticipated that development will need to be set back from the road corridor here to accommodate embankments or cuttings. Tree planting and a planted margin to the road will help mitigate any impact of these features.

Lyme Road.

- a** *Junction from Chard Road: the primary access to the site for relief road traffic and residential traffic and as such should be designed for functionality and as an attractive gateway to the Urban Extension.*
- b** *Entrances to employment parcels: The necessity to accommodate HGVs must be balanced by treatment in the public realm to promote safe pedestrian and cycle crossings. Junctions can create focal points and traffic calming events within the length of the road.*
- c** *Junction from relief road to secondary route: this junction is located near the top of the slope and the junction to the secondary route is an important one. The slowing of traffic on approach to this junction should mark the transition between character areas and with adjustments in building setback, narrowing of the carriageway and suitable crossing provision.*
- d** *Evil Lane crossing: it is important that the continuity of the green link is perceived as it promotes safe and attractive pedestrian movement. This is a unique junction between routes and is an opportunity to mark the transition between character areas and the difference in the relief road either side of Evil Lane. Vehicular access should not be provided along Evil Lane but parallel to it if required.*
- e** *Access into Local Centre: this junction forms the access to the secondary route from the southern end. It also creates an important traffic calming event slowing traffic as it descends from the north towards Millbrook Vale around the Local Centre.*
- f** *Stream crossing: the route of the relief road down the slopes either sides of Millbrook Vale and through the green space is without the need for any junctions and therefore the stream crossing, the lowest point of the road, provides the opportunity to create a contrasting feature along the road, slowing traffic and allowing the potential for a grade crossing, linking the green spaces for pedestrians.*
- g** *Sector Lane crossing: care should be taken here, whether a grade junction or a restricted access arrangement, to consider the advantages and disadvantages to all users, existing residents, traffic from the east and new residents.*
- h** *Access to southern housing parcels: the location of this junction should have regard to the consequences elsewhere of increased cut, fill or retaining structures. A minimal size junction suitable to the scale of the lanes within the character area should be considered.*
- i** *Junction from Lyme Road: the choice of movement at this junction should reflect the distinction between the approach to the town centre (along Lyme Road) and the route around the town, all be it through the Urban Extension. The junction provides the opportunity to create a stronger gateway to the town.*

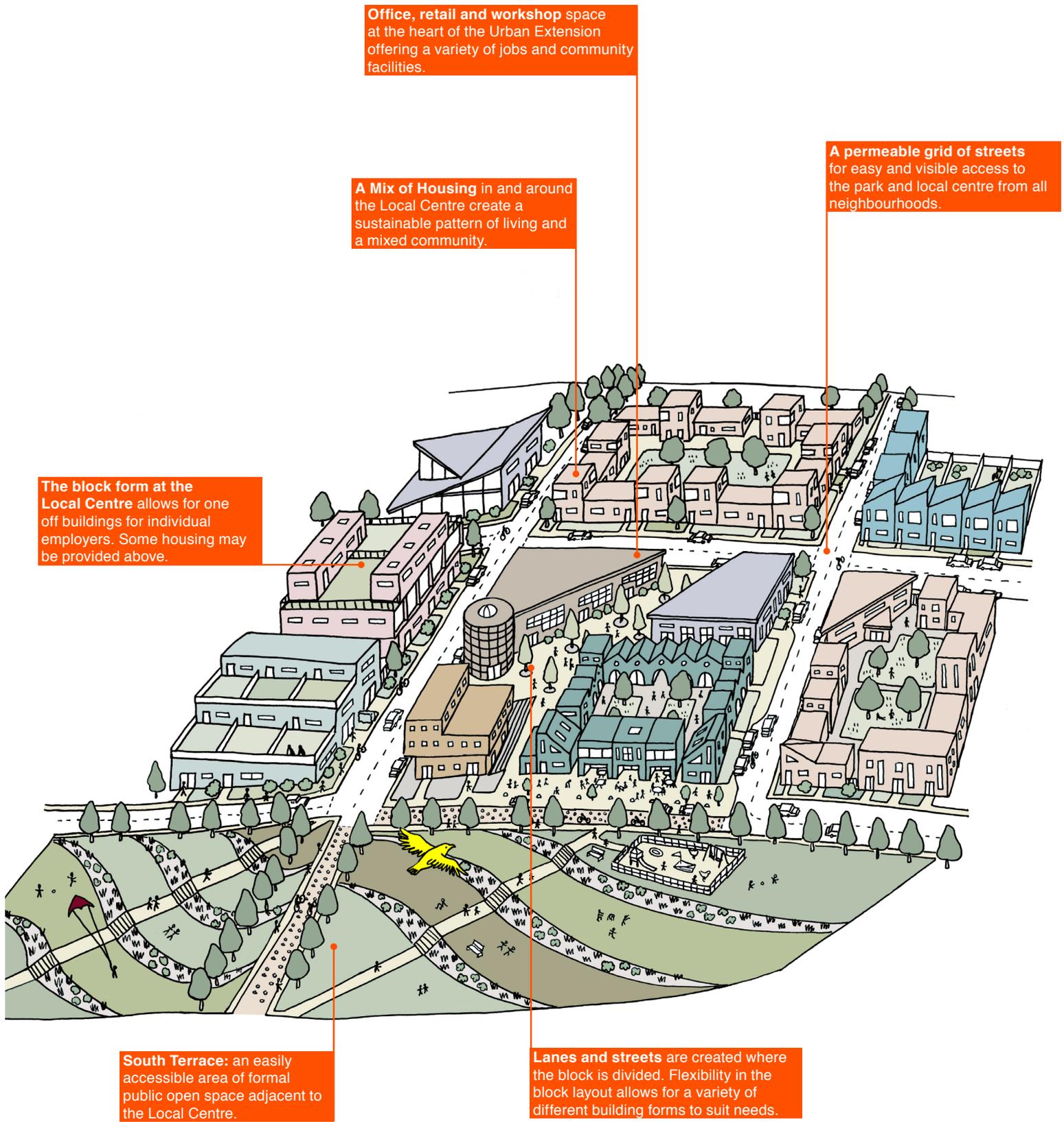
RELIEF ROAD DESIGN AND CHARACTER AREAS

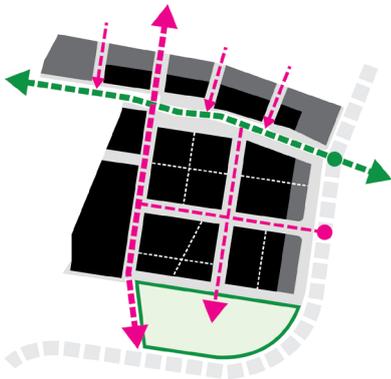
The Relief Road serves a purpose in providing an alternative route for traffic which currently travels into the town centre but has a destination else where. To be effective in this function the road needs to be designed to a standard suitable to the quantity and type of traffic as specified by DCC in their option selection work:

“The (relief) road will be a minimum of 6.5 metres, to allow for the movement of appropriate bus provision and HGVs. A 3.5m wide shared footway cycle way will be required on one side of the road with a 2m footway on the other side. It is anticipated that there would be some development frontage onto the road, although the topography of the site might make this difficult in places. Any development frontage is envisaged to have off street parking. A design speed of 30mph should be used with carriageway gradients no greater than 1 in 10. Visibility and Stopping Sight Distance (SSD) should be included in the junction analysis.”

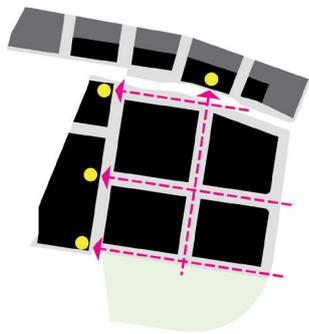
Along its length however, the relief road passes through a variety of different development conditions and through areas where there is no development. For this reason it is important that the design of the road also takes into account the surrounding development character and the dual purpose of the road in providing access to residential neighbourhoods and creating a safe, attractive and sociable street within the Urban Extension. Where development occurs both sides of the road the design of the road corridor and the development either side should be considered together to avoid the road creating a divide between neighbourhoods and prohibiting easy movement by foot around the area.

The adjacent plan shows how different parts of the road may have different characters appropriate to the surrounding development form. The transitions between these parts of the road are important in creating a sequence of movement and character through the site whilst also maintaining the function of the road as a relief road.

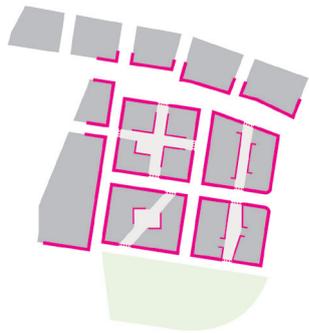




A grid layout creates flexible development blocks and a legible network of streets which link residential areas to employment, community facilities and open spaces.



Landmarks are created using prominent buildings and uses located at visually prominent locations.



All streets within the Local Centre should benefit from activity from the buildings which line them. Businesses and shop front windows, front doors and overlooking from the floors above ground level all help create active and sociable streets. Where blocks are split, internal lanes should also include some frontage.

CREATING A LOCAL CENTRE

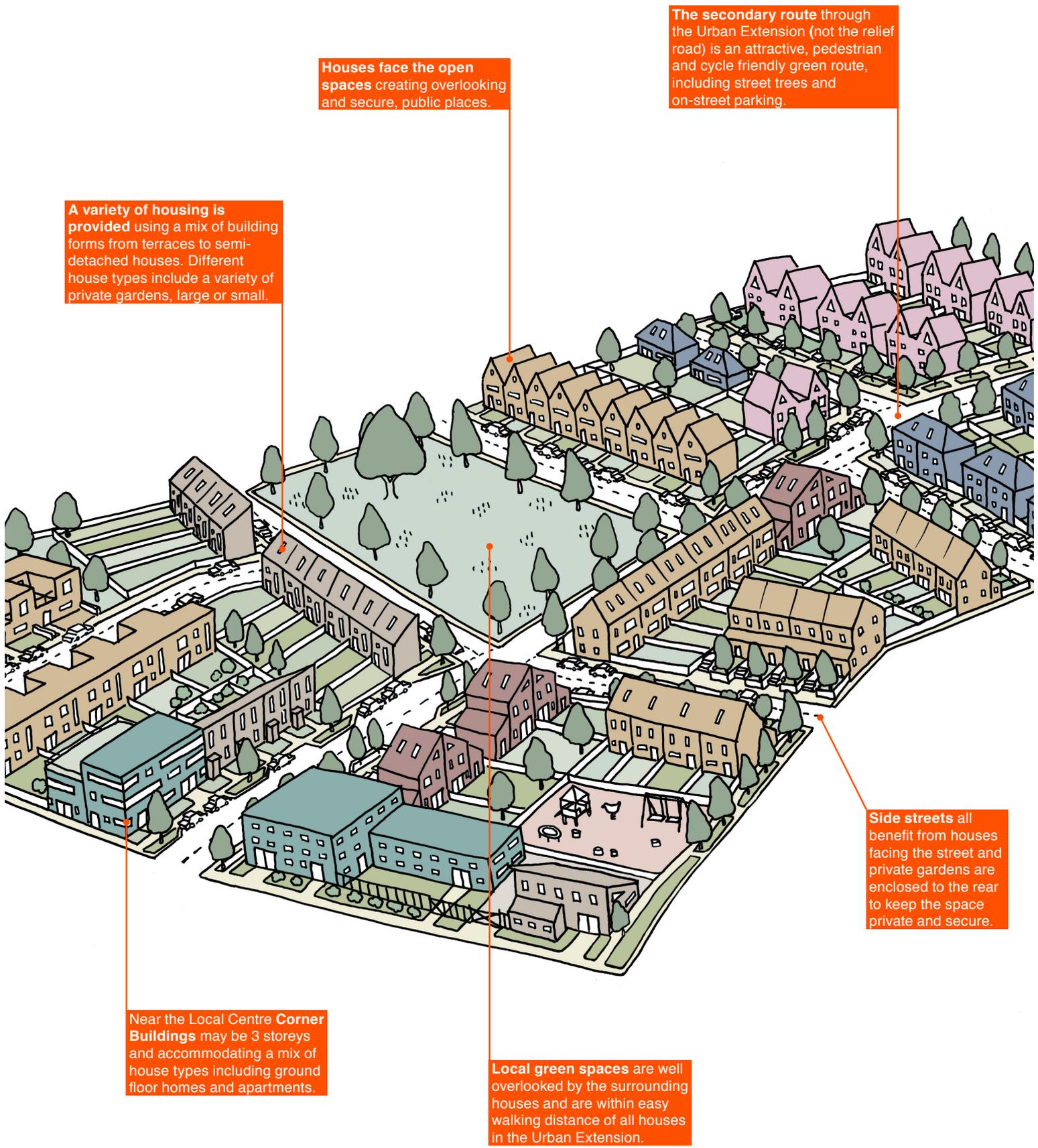
The Local Centre is an important part of creating a great new part of the town with the North East Axminster proposals. The Local Centre needs to serve the day-to-day needs of the residents by providing a small amount of convenience retail and key community facilities. The Local Centre should include some residential development which can be a mix of types from townhouses to apartments helping it become a sociable place with a sense of community. Mixed residential types mean a mix of people and activities which improves the diversity of the area. It will also include up to 2.5 hectares (gross) of employment space, suitable to being integrated with the other Local Centre uses: offices/workshops/quiet and light industrial space. Some employment uses will be suitable for occupying 1st and 2nd floors of buildings and the Local Centre will include 3 storey buildings along main streets and in landmark locations.

Summary Parameters:

- A mixed use centre including residential, employment and local centre facilities (shop, surgery etc.);
- Flexible block form to suit a variety of uses and combinations;
- Clear sight lines and permeability are created along tree lined avenues;
- Where blocks are split, lanes and mews should include good overlooking, smaller residential properties can be included here;
- Open space and amenity located in one centralised public area
- Up to 3 storey development or equivalent height single storey employment uses;
- Larger ground floor, floor to ceiling heights to accommodate variety of uses along the street front;
- Service or private and parking areas enclosed within the block;
- Public space and access around the external perimeter of the block.

Local Centre Area Parameters (see also Street Hierarchy plan):

	Block Size	Block form	Building Heights	Landmarks	Secondary Route design	Urban Street design	Other streets/ links	Open Space	Parking
Parameters/ Description	80-100m	Square or rectangular, gridded.	Up to 3 storeys. 2 storey buildings in the middle of elevations or within mews.	Corner buildings. Public/ community buildings. At ends of views along streets	5m carriageway. On street parking bays. Bus stops. Tree lined, verges & footway. Continuous frontage. No building setback.	4.5m carriageway. Some areas of shared surface. On street parking bays & footway. Some trees. 75% frontage. Some 1-2m building setbacks apart from at corners.	Divisions of blocks may create mews and service areas which should be considered public spaces with vehicular access.	High quality streetscape/ mews areas creates public realm. A single green space of civic quality on south slopes.	Mixed on street and courtyard. No on-plot parking. Some mixed parking/ service areas for employment.



Houses face the open spaces creating overlooking and secure, public places.

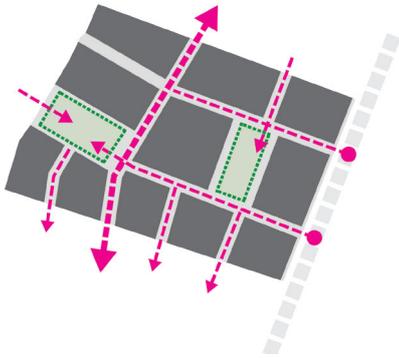
The secondary route through the Urban Extension (not the relief road) is an attractive, pedestrian and cycle friendly green route, including street trees and on-street parking.

A variety of housing is provided using a mix of building forms from terraces to semi-detached houses. Different house types include a variety of private gardens, large or small.

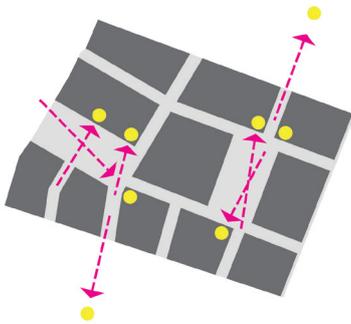
Side streets all benefit from houses facing the street and private gardens are enclosed to the rear to keep the space private and secure.

Near the Local Centre Corner Buildings may be 3 storeys and accommodating a mix of house types including ground floor homes and apartments.

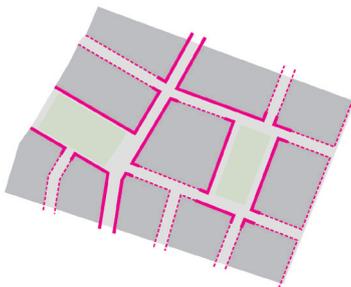
Local green spaces are well overlooked by the surrounding houses and are within easy walking distance of all houses in the Urban Extension.



An adapted grid accommodates a variety of block sizes and open spaces in an efficient way. Direct routes through residential areas provide a network of streets, easy movement and access to the Local Centre.



Landmarks are primarily on the corners of streets or viewed across open space and created by the varied design of residential buildings.



More formal frontage (minimal setbacks and closer continuity of buildings e.g. terraces) is focused around open space and along main streets but the perimeter of blocks whether frontage or other boundary retains a divide between public areas, streets & spaces and private gardens.

CREATING THE SUB-URBAN RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Areas outside of the Local Centre but not at the edge are considered ‘suburban’. The layout of block form in these areas retains a grid which is adapted to respond to topography and the changing constraints of the site in different areas. This creates a network of streets which can have a clear hierarchy and provide easy navigation around the Urban Extension. In particular, easy and direct access to the Local Centre is important and street orientation and connections should bear this in mind.

The adapted grid also easily accommodates appropriate sized public open spaces and allows for a variety of housing types including corner apartment blocks (nearest to the Local Centre), terraces, semi detached houses and some detached houses. House types which more easily create continuous street elevations should be located around open spaces and main streets to create enclosure to these areas and in order that they can be distinguished from other streets. Buildings positioned around the perimeter of blocks and facing outwards to the street or open space also enclose private space within the block.

Summary Parameters:

- Residential areas on west facing slopes and adjacent to the existing settlement boundary) also immediately south of Millbrook Vale;
- Clear definition of public and private space;
- Each dwelling has designated private space;
- Public space is located in accessible and overlooked locations;
- Opportunities to link to existing neighbourhoods and provide access to the open space and facilities the Urban Extension offers;
- SUDS and avenues of trees along main routes link green space together.

Suburban Area Parameters (see also Street Hierarchy plan):

	Block Size	Block form	Building Heights	Landmarks	Secondary Route design	Suburban Street design	Other streets/ links	Open Space	Parking
Parameters/ Description	60-80m	Rectangular, or regular, gridded.	Mainly 2 storeys throughout. 3 storey corners nearest Local Centre Higher gable or roof features at corners or other landmarks.	Corners or aligned to views along streets. Building features or variation.	4.5m carriageway. On street parking bays. Bus stops. Tree lined, verges & footway. 75% frontage. Some 1-2m building setback.	4.0m carriageway. Some areas of shared surface. Kerbside on street parking. Footway. Some trees. 1-2m building setbacks apart from at corners.	Occasional mews may be created within larger blocks. No cul-de-sacs. Can generally all be shared spaces with informal layout.	Several small squares/ neighbourhood parks. Located within in easy walking distance of all new residents and connected to existing.	Mixed on street/on-plot. Formality of on street varies across streets. Courtyard parking for apartment blocks only.

Houses face the open spaces creating overlooking and secure, public places.

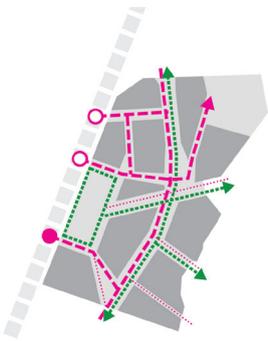
Local green spaces are well overlooked by the surrounding houses and are within easy walking distance of all houses in the Urban Extension.

A variety of housing is provided using a mix of building forms incorporating a short terrace, semi detached and detached houses with parking, overlooking green space designed in a character suitable for the edge of the urban extension. Houses are principally 2 storeys.

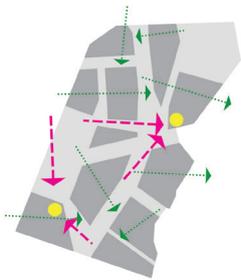


Lanes throughout the residential area are narrower and less formal.

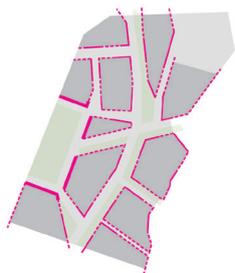
Green Corridors run along the contours linking existing wildlife corridors and providing attractive pedestrian routes.



A very permeable block form creates a fragmented development form within the landscape. Character of the lanes indicates a residential environment, and the form follows the contours. Development allows for green space and retention/provision of green strips reinforces the edge of settlement character.



Clustered groups of small houses and varied orientation create gaps and a high level of visual permeability. A few prominent buildings are visible in various views.



Apart from a focus around a single open space, there is little formal frontage or continuous frontage along the length of any lane despite a clear boundary to private space being created. Building setback from the kerb can vary from nothing to a driveway, garden or shared margin.

CREATING THE EDGE RESIDENTIAL AREA

Parts of the site to the north east and in the south (but facing north east) are prominent to the east and north of Axminster. Until now, no parts of the town have been visible from the east and as development is proposed to occupy these slopes the design needs to respond to the sensitivity of this context.

Residential areas at the edge of the Urban Extension can create a contrasting character to the rest of the Urban Extension by varying the orientation and grouping of buildings. The street layout follows the steeper gradients in these areas with a more irregular layout. This creates opportunity to provide a wide mix of housing reflective of a more rural setting. Buildings set parallel and perpendicular to the roads create a variety of parking solutions and a varied street as clustered housing allows for the contrast of visual permeability and enclosure in the same street.

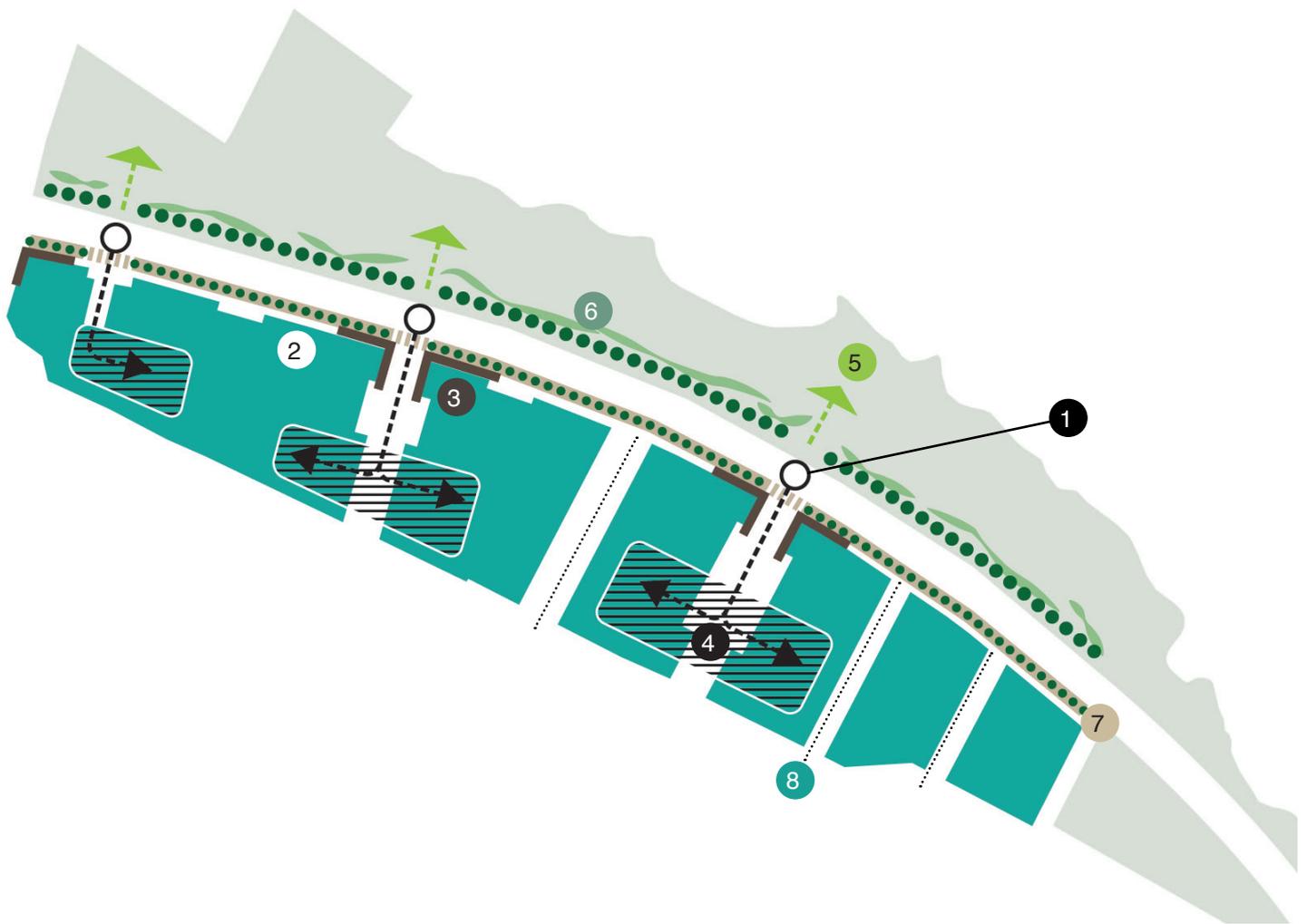
Lanes throughout the area have little hierarchy and a strong rural character. Green spaces soften the development and can also provide drainage facilities, as well as attractive incidental public green space.

Summary Parameters:

- Fragmented urban form which allows a patchwork of green and varied roof scape;
- Green space provided within the development that breaks up the area of built development;
- SUDS areas effectively integrated into green area(s);
- Irregular block form provides the opportunity for varied street character adding to the landscape character
- Introduction of semi-private spaces, shared driveways and overlooked courtyards with buildings clustered around them;
- Infrequent small open spaces are overlooked by houses.

Edge Residential Area Parameters (see also Street Hierarchy plan):

	Block Size	Block form	Building Heights	Landmarks	Lanes	Open Space	Parking
Parameters/Description	Upto 60m	Irregular and responding to topography.	up to 2.5 storeys (habitable space in the roof)	Few landmarks but in key positions and according to topography. One off or detached distinct houses.	3.5-4.0m carriageway. Little variation between streets. Majority no footway. Occasional verges. Trees contribute to street character from within private areas -at front or sides of properties. No formal on street parking. Varied orientation of houses to lanes creates mixed setback. Side and rear boundaries contribute to street quality.	Infrequent small formal open space. Other multi-purpose green linear strips and narrow corridors.	Mainly on plot but varied, at front, to the side or to the rear of properties. Occasional shared courtyard area or large driveway surrounding by houses.



Northern Employment area design parameters

1 *Junctions: provide the opportunity to create events and focus along the route adjacent to the employment. Building form, public realm and road design can respond to these features.*

2 *Building Elevation: Variation of the northern elevation to buildings enhances the street scene and improves the visual appearance of buildings in views from the north.*

3 *Corners: Where buildings include ancillary or office operations, these, as well as pedestrian entrances should be concentrated at corners, helping to focus activity at junctions and overlooking the public realm.*

4 *Rear service courtyards: turning areas for HGVs, access for other service vehicles and longer term car parking where possible should be located to the rear of buildings to minimise the prominence of vehicle noise and activity to the north.*

5 *Access to green space: gaps in planting should correspond to junctions and gaps in buildings and create access to green space and views towards to the north.*

6 *Planting: varied planting including trees along the northern side of the road screens buildings in views from the north.*

7 *Public Realm & Tree Planting: along the south side of the road care should be given to the continuity of the public realm, the safety and experience of pedestrians (particularly at crossings). The south side of the road should be tree lined and can include some short term on-street car parking.*

8 *Building orientation: should respond to the increasing gradients to the east with dividing and stepping of buildings where possible to avoid large cut and fill platforms. Buildings orientated parallel to the contours also create more gaps in the northern elevation altering their appearance when viewed from the north.*

CREATING THE NORTHERN EMPLOYMENT AREA

The masterplan proposes a portion of employment space to be located on the parcel of land located to the north of the existing Millwey industrial area. EDDC have indicated that many of the businesses that currently occupy space at Millwey may want to expand or find larger equivalent accommodation. Utilising this parcel of land for residential development would create properties which are isolated from the rest of the Urban Extension and do not benefit from the sustainability of pedestrian links to the local centre within the Urban Extension, or good links and integration with the existing town centre.

The area of employment to the north would constitute approximately 3.3ha (gross) and the masterplan allows for an ‘envelope’ of building form up to 8m high averaged from ground to ridge in order not to preclude a number of possible occupiers and building requirements in the future.

A number of sensitive elements create the setting for this northern parcel and building design and layout as well as complimentary landscaping need to be carefully considered in this context.

Summary Parameters:

- Listed buildings to the north including and around the Grade 1 listed Weycroft Hall are positioned at a similar height to the proposed employment space;
- To the north west of the town, the East Devon AONB is within sight of the northern parcel of land. Both elevation and roofscape are likely to be visible from the north west and design should consider appropriate responses;
- Employment buildings could mean a wide variety of form and arrangements;
- The nature of larger footprint buildings are likely to orientate with the contours to avoid excessive cut and fill resulting in longer elevations in an east-west direction, parallel to contours;
- Landscaping along the northern edge of new employment buildings will be necessary to screen the building elevation.
- Rising ground to the west would lend itself to a series of separated building forms with gaps to reduce visibility of building elevations;
- Due to falling ground to the north, height of buildings is unlikely to exceed that of existing industrial units to the south.



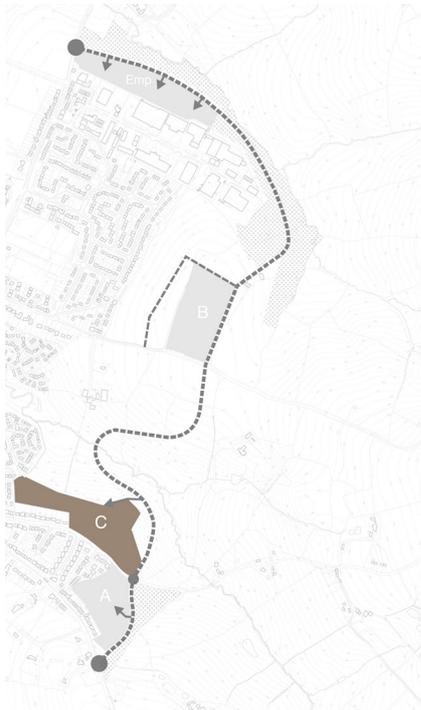
1a.
 South junction to Lyme Road
 Southern road in (300m)
 Access to housing parcels
 Persimmon housing parcel A (approx 70-95units)
 Sector Lane junction
 Green buffer to south east (1.9ha)



1b.
 North junction to Chard Road
 Northern road in (500m)
 Green buffer to north (2.5ha)



2a.
 Persimmon northern employment parcel (3.3ha gross)
 Road continuation from the north (900m)
 Access to housing parcels
 Road continuation from the south (300m)
 Access to housing parcels
 Green buffer to north east (5.8ha)
 Road completion across Millbrook Vale (800m) (HIF delivery deadline 2021)
 Secondary route (450m)
 Persimmon housing parcel B (approx 120units)



2b.
 The Crown Estate housing parcel C (approx 120units)



3a.
 Secondary road completion (300m)
 The Crown Estate central housing and employment parcel (Local Centre) D (approx 80 units & 2.5ha of Employment space within a mixed local centre.)
 Local Centre Public Open Space (1ha)
 Persimmon housing parcel E (approx 30units)
 Central Public Open Space (5.9ha)
 Green buffer to east (5.8ha)



3b.
 Persimmon housing parcel F (approx 135-160units)
 The Crown Estate housing parcel G (approx 270units)

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

This masterplan has been undertaken to ensure the effective coordination of a number of components and a number of parties coming together to deliver an Urban Extension to the north east of Axminster. This has involved balancing a number of qualitative and quantitative considerations and the implementation of this masterplan must ensure:

- The timely delivery of the relief road in accordance with the conditions of the HIF;
- The timely delivery of other key infrastructure, facilitating an integrated and sustainable extension to the town;
- Access to development parcels for the delivery of housing in accordance with commercial expectations;
- The appropriate and relative distribution of uses and housing quantum across the whole Urban Extension and according to the parameters within the character area specifications;
- Development is able to progress at a pace appropriate to developer and market expectation;
- As houses are occupied new residents are able to reasonably access the services and facilities they need and is envisaged within a sustainable urban extension;
- Flexibility over the course of the delivery to changing market demands and the evolution of the town's economy as a whole while retaining the qualities described within the masterplan of an integrated and sustainable urban extension.

The phasing diagrams shown provide a demonstration of this strategy and how the quantity and distribution of uses across the whole Urban Extension can be achieved. These have been the subject of iterative viability testing to prove cashflow throughout the delivery of the Urban Extension. Any variations to the relative ordering of uses must be considered in the context of the delivery of the whole Urban Extension and should not be to the detriment of achieving the quality or the quantity within each contrasting character area of the masterplan.

Achieving the effective delivery of the relief road requires the appropriate use of HIF money and will include:

- *The junction at Lyme Road and initial length of road accessing the first phase of development funded and delivered by Persimmon subject to a reciprocal arrangement relating to the funding and recouping of funds of the remainder of the road;*
- *EDDC & DCC working together to procure and deliver one single contract for the construction of the entire road;*
- *HIF money being provided to EDDC as the eligible authority;*
- *Construction of the road to be undertaken as one single project;*
- *A delivery deadline of 2021 in accordance with HIF conditions;*
- *A coordinated approach and working method regarding the design of access to development areas and junctions with the relief road between EDDC, DCC and landowner's and developer's design teams.*

Totals:
 850 units
 5.8ha gross employment
 2,800m relief road
 750m secondary road
 16ha Green buffer
 6.9ha Public Open Space



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