

# West Tring LA5

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP  
FINAL REPORT July 2013

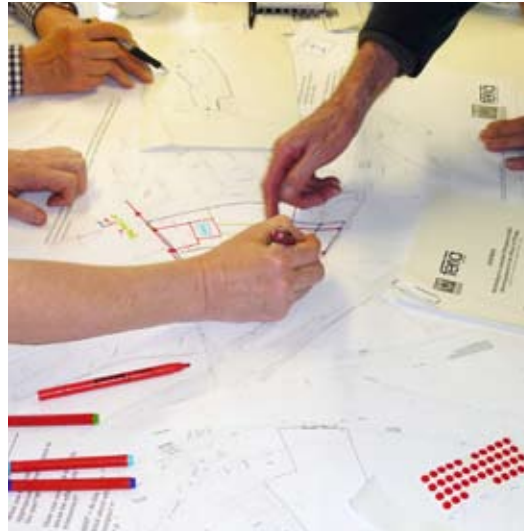


[ blank page ]

# West Tring LA5

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP  
DRAFT REPORT June 2013

[ blank page ]



**The workshop event was an opportunity for a range of stakeholders to influence and shape the proposed development in a way that helps meet their aspirations and concerns.**



doc. ref: **092\_Q\_130702\_LA5\_Feria-Urbanism\_FINAL**

Feria Urbanism is a planning + design studio that specialises in urban design, urban planning, urban strategies, public participation and community engagement. Established in 2007, we have been involved in a diverse range of projects across the UK and have developed key skills in organising community engagement events that inform urban and rural strategies.

contact for further information

**Richard Eastham | Feria Urbanism | [www.feria-urbanism.eu](http://www.feria-urbanism.eu) | + 44 (0) 7816 299 909 | + 44 (0) 1202 548 676**

All maps within this document are reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office. © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution and civil proceedings. Dacorum Borough Council, Licence No. 100018935 2013

report designed and produced by Feria Urbanism

# Contents

**01 Introduction**

**02 Workshop Structure**

**03 Workshop Results**

**04 Next Steps**

**Appendices**



*The LA5 Local Allocation, with the adjacent employment complex visible behind.*



# 01 INTRODUCTION



*The LA5 allocation site (top) is currently crossed by local residents to access a gate (above) that leads to Icknield Way. This is a popular recreational route to countryside and needs to be preserved as part of the new development.*

## Background

Dacorum Borough Council has an obligation to deliver development which meets the economic, housing and other needs of the borough. In response to this, the Council proposes to accommodate more than 11,000 new homes between 2006 and 2031.

While a large part of the provision is being directed to built-up areas, the Council estimates that land for around 1,550 homes needs to be found on new Green Belt sites (known as the “local allocations”). These are located around the main settlements, principally Hemel Hempstead. These allocations include land west of Tring. Space within this broad area will be set aside for open space, land drainage and landscaped areas.

## The Proposal

The proposal includes about 150 homes, open space and extensions to the existing cemetery and Icknield Way employment area. The proposal is contained in the Council’s Core Strategy. It is known as a local allocation and referenced as Proposal LA5 as set out in Section 20 of the Core Strategy.

At this stage in the process, no planning permissions have been granted. The Council does not intend the first homes to be completed until 2021.

The proposal cannot be built until a planning application has been submitted and approved. Policies in the local planning framework will guide any such planning application. The Council expects any application to conform to the local planning framework. The landowners will decide exactly when a planning application will be submitted.

## Core Strategy Context

Proposal LA5 for West Tring is part of the Core Strategy that has been the subject of examination by a Planning Inspector. The Inspector’s job is to examine, on the evidence, whether the Core Strategy is sound. He has considered very carefully the evidence provided to him, the need for more housing and the effect on the Green Belt.

He has suggested that the Core Strategy should move forward with the proposed housing target, provided the Council commit to an early review of the Core Strategy. The Inspector has indicated no issue of soundness with Proposal LA5.

The Inspector wanted the Council to consult on some modifications, which it has done. None of the modifications directly affect LA5.

Representations received on the main modifications were passed to the Inspector on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2013. The Council is now waiting for the Inspector's Report. It is expected that the report will declare the Core Strategy sound. If so, then the location will be agreed and the issues that remain will be the form and layout of the development.

## Landowners + Developers

Various parcels of land are owned or are subject to an options agreement to allow the proposal to come forward. Most parcels of land are owned by or are subject to options agreements to Cala Homes, a house builder. The remainder is occupied by the cemetery, which is owned by the Council and will remain so.

The Council has agreed a "Statement of Common Ground" with the landowner to assist the Planning Inspector. This demonstrates that the proposal can be delivered and its impacts controlled. It also provides a useful guide to the information available and indicates some of what needs to be done next. Together with community and stakeholder engagement, this will inform the master plan.

## Other Consultees

Aylesbury Vale District Council, Buckinghamshire County Council and Drayton Beauchamp Parish Meeting are being consulted about the principle of the development and its detailed planning.

Their main concerns relate to the accommodation of traffic on adjoining roads, and the mitigation of any visual impacts of new building on the landscape and Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The Chilterns Conservation Board is also an important consultee.

## Design + Development Questions

Particular questions the Council needs to address are:

- how development fits together including an indication of what it will be like to live in;
- how it integrates with the existing town and the community;
- how it relates to the landscape and surrounding countryside;
- the precise Green Belt boundary (which will be shown on a map);
- the precise extent of the development proposals (which will be shown on a map).

The first step in addressing these issues was a public engagement and consultation exercise conducted on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2013. This report is the summary of that event. The event has provided a key set of ingredients to the subsequent phases, that will include the preparation of a preparation of a Site Allocations document accompanied by a master plan for the proposal.

## Site Allocations Document

The Site Allocations document, like the Core Strategy, will form part of a new local plan for Dacorum Borough. The Council must submit the Site Allocations document for independent examination, just like the Core Strategy.

The Site Allocations document will delineate the Green Belt boundary and precise extent of each local allocation, including Proposal LA5. It will say more about the timing and delivery of each of the developments.



*View from Icknield Way looking south east across the site towards the existing residential neighbourhood. This photo faintly reveals the alignment of an informal pedestrian path across the grass, linking the gate on Icknield Way with Okeley Lane.*



*The facilitation team meet on site with local planning officers from Dacorum Borough Council.*

## Master Plan

A master plan will be prepared. Joint responsibility for its preparation will be with the developer, land owner and Council. The master plan will support each local allocation. This master plan will say more about the character of the proposed development and how it will work and fit in with its surroundings (e.g. the existing urban fabric and strategic landscaping). The Council will be responsible for considering consultation responses and approving the master plan.

## Range of Accommodation

The Government requires local authorities to make provision for all homes, including the identification of a target and five year land supply. Sites must be identified. This applies to both the settled community and travellers. The Council's policies do not exclude provision of homes for members of the travelling community within Proposal LA5 or on other local allocations: what will ultimately be considered appropriate will depend on the particular site circumstances and need over the plan period.

## Green Belt Revisions

The land at West Tring is currently within the Green Belt. The Core Strategy proposes removal of an area from the Green Belt west of the existing urban area in order to accommodate proposed development.

The Council intends to delineate the new boundary of the Green Belt and the town itself in the Site Allocations document. The Core Strategy establishes the general principle of the type and scale of development. The Site Allocations will help define the proposal. A master plan will inform that process, providing further guidance on layout, strategic landscaping and so on.

The Council must take into account Government advice when it draws a new line for the Green Belt. Boundaries should use physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.

The Council considers that Proposal LA5 represents the western limit of the town. It will remain important to protect the surrounding countryside from further building, to maintain separation from Aston Clinton and Drayton Beauchamp and to protect the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Special Area of Conservation (the Chiltern Beechwoods).

## Non-Residential Uses

The LA5 proposal specifies playing fields and open space, an extension to the existing employment area at Icknield Way and an extension to the cemetery (if needed). The detail of the proposal, its mix of uses and its contribution to education and community facilities in Tring will be the subject of further deliberation and consultation with stakeholders and the local community.

## Consultation + Engagement

The Core Strategy has been subject to extensive consultation over a number of years, as follows:

- 2008 Site Allocations
- 2009 Emerging Core Strategy
- 2010 Consultation Draft of the Core Strategy
- 2011 Pre-Submission Draft of the Core Strategy

The Core Strategy and issues associated with it are very wide ranging. The Council uses its web site, adverts, press releases and more recently social media to publicise the Core Strategy. The Council also uses an independent Citizens' Panel for feedback.

The Council has advised people of consultations through its magazine, Dacorum Digest, including pull out supplements. The Autumn/Winter edition 2010 helped advertise consultation on the "Consultation Draft Core Strategy" and specifically referred to a local development option on land west of Tring.

## Further Consultation

The principle of the development has been accepted by the Council. There is still a lot to consider however. There will be consultation on the master plan and Site Allocations document in 2014.



*The B488 Icknield Way runs along the northern edge of the site.*



*The LA5 workshop was held at the Victoria Hall, Tring on 16.05.13.*

## 02 WORKSHOP STRUCTURE

**“The decision on the principle of development at this location is confirmed, but there is still a long way to go in terms of planning and design”**

*Quote from the local planning authority used during the introduction to the workshop event.*

### Roles + Responsibilities

The workshop series for the local allocations LA1, LA3 and LA5 was organised by Dacorum Borough Council but it was structured and managed by an independent facilitator team from Feria Urbanism, a Bournemouth-based design practice with extensive experience of such a role.

All workshops were attended by representative stakeholders, including local residents, representatives of community groups and the County Council. The workshop series was observed by Dacorum Borough Council planning officers and landowner representatives.

The background to each workshop was informed by Core Strategy Proposal and other information.

### Task Based Workshop

The LA5 workshop was run over a single afternoon at the Victoria Hall, Tring on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2013. Given the limited amount of time, the facilitator team were keen to maximise the opportunities for participants to develop and share their ideas. This meant less talk from the planning officers and facilitators to give space to more discussion and debate from the participants.

The introduction was therefore kept to a maximum 15 minutes to help set the scene before handing over to a series of group tasks. These tasks comprised 4 x 30 minute tasks that progressively got more detailed as regards design and planning.

There was a break after the second task, that combined refreshments with a shared feedback session. The afternoon concluded with a 30 minute shared feedback session (after the fourth and final task) plus explanation of the next steps.

### Setting The Scene

The workshop opened with a welcome from Richard Blackburn, planning officer at Dacorum Borough Council. He introduced the people involved and their roles together with a brief explanation of the starting point to the local allocation as given by the Dacorum Borough Council Core Strategy.

The lead facilitator then explained that the purpose of workshop was to try to establish a basic set of design principles for the development of the site. These principles were to be captured in the form of a set of words and a series of sketch drawings and diagrams that will capture an assessment of the site's potential and opportunities.

The workshop structure was designed to identify areas of consensus and common ground but also allow for a variety of opinions and ideas.

## Technical Corner

The lead facilitator very briefly explained the technical data relevant to the site (such as topography, landscape, views, drainage, existing roads and paths etc) during the introduction. This was only a very brief overview to help set the scene.

Participants were encouraged to refer to the technical data throughout the afternoon — in the form of aerial photos, plans, maps, charts and diagrams — that was pinned on the walls of the workshop venue in the form of a “technical corner” and was used as a resource base.

## Shared Feedback Sessions

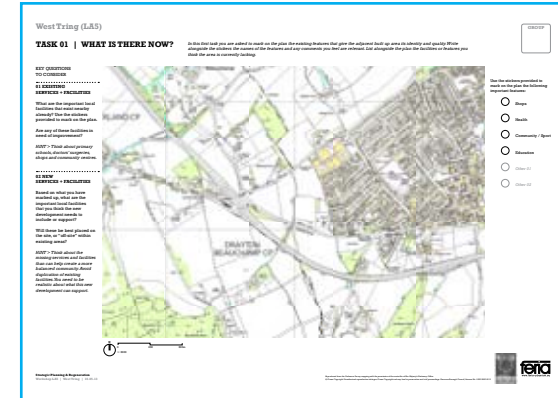
The lead facilitator provided a summary of the first two tasks at the halfway point. This feedback was enabled through the use of photos taken of each groups’ outputs projected onto a big screen. Group members were invited to share their thoughts with the wider room as their plans and work are presented. A similar technique was used at the end of the afternoon, after the fourth and final task, when the lead facilitator talked through the common ground and the points of difference. Groups and individuals were again asked to contribute to the debate and discussion.

In conclusion, the next steps in the process were explained by Laura Wood, planning officer at Dacorum Borough Council. These next steps include the preparation of the workshop report, the master plan work in support of the Site Allocations Document.



*The workshop was designed to help get participants involved in a range of development issues at an early stage in the process.*

**NOTE:** Larger copies of the workshop task sheets can be found in the Appendix B, pages 38 — 41.

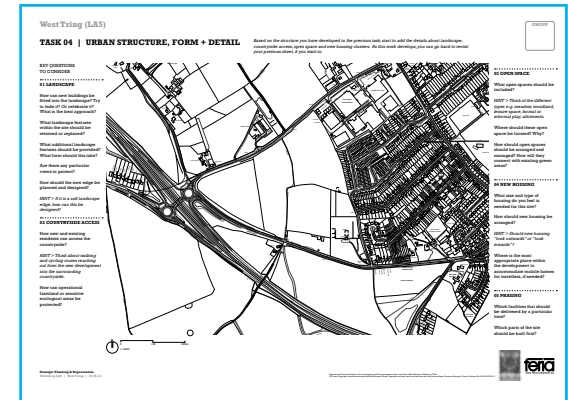
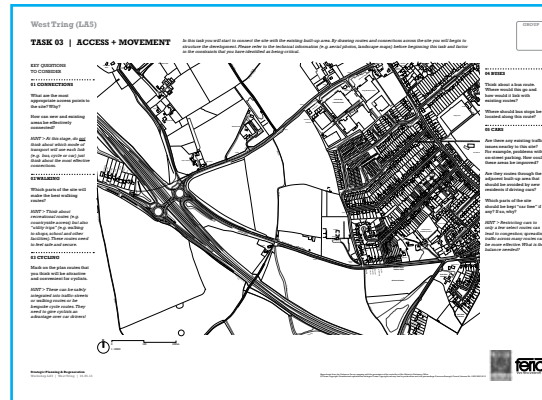
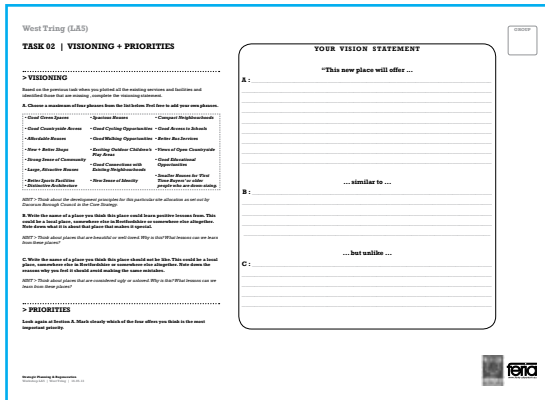


### TASK 01 What Is There Now? [30 mins]

What makes this place special? Participants were asked to use their local knowledge to mark on the plan a series of important features, both on the site itself and in the surrounding areas. These features could be natural (e.g. views, woodland areas etc), social (e.g. local schools, clubs, pubs) or commercial (e.g. local shops, services and facilities). Participants were also encouraged to add useful insights such as roads that are difficult to cross, areas of anti-social behaviour and so on.

Developing a pattern of uses and activities on a plan helps to reveal the gaps in local facilities and also the features worthy of retention, such as landscape features.

This first task was also designed to move the workshop away from a “constraints-led planning” to “opportunities-led planning” which is a more positive approach.



## TASK 02 Visioning + Priorities [30 mins]

Based on the results of the first task, participants were asked to set out in words a vision for the site and the priorities as regards what the development should deliver in terms of social, community and environmental infrastructure.

How can this development address existing issues as well as creating new opportunities? Participants were asked to select a set of phrases or characteristics from a range provided to help develop a defining characteristics for the new development.

This task also asked about other places, either nearby in Hertfordshire or further afield, that could provide a positive inspiration for the new development or a steer away from mistakes from the past that should not be repeated.

## TASK 03 Access + Movement [30 mins]

The next challenge for participants was to effectively connect the local allocations site with the adjacent urban context. The lead facilitator used a short slideshow (see pages 16 — 17) to give participants some ideas on the techniques that could be used. For example, safe pedestrian-only routes, shared surfaces and decent quality cycle routes.

The aim of this slide show was to broaden the debate away from just cars and parking towards more integrated thinking about streets and how they can help connect communities.

Groups were asked to layer into this task the technical data, such as slopes, topography, ecology and so on. The outputs by this stage in the afternoon were a sketch network of routes that showed ways in which the site can be plugged into the existing urban fabric.

## TASK 04 Structure, Form + Detail [30 mins]

Once the network of streets and spaces had been established in the previous task, the final challenge for the groups was to add details regarding land uses, housing form, density and other details, as they felt appropriate based on their visioning work in the second task.

For example, groups were encouraged to mark on the sketch plans where they felt the non-residential uses could best be placed, where and what type of recreational routes could be introduced and how built form should address the adjacent landscape e.g. look outwards or turn its back and look inwards.

Groups were asked to take the final task as far as they felt able, with the help of the facilitation team. This final task concluded the workshop in terms of the productive element of the event, and was followed by a shared feedback session.

## Best Practice in Urban Design

### ... or things to consider over the next 60 minutes

After the completion of Task 01 and Task 02, the lead facilitator explored the group results through a shared feedback session. Photographs of each of the group's work was projected onto the big screen so that all workshop participants could see the results.

This was followed by a short slideshow that gave all participants a brief insight into the issues they should consider during Task 03 and Task 04, when they were asked to examine the issues of access and movement together with urban structure, form and detail. The purpose of this slideshow was to provide a break in proceedings, give participants a chance to reflect on their work and give them some useful design ideas before they began the next phases in the process. Shown here are some key extracts from that slideshow.

### Integrated Thinking

Think about these four key issues in sequence, clockwise from the top. This will ensure no design principle is overlooked and that each issue is addressed at the appropriate time.



### Walkable Neighbourhoods

Can mixed-uses areas that comprise shops, community facilities and schools, be surrounded by residential areas to create a compact walkable neighbourhood? This is vital if we are to reduce dependency on the private car.



### Green Spaces

If green spaces are to be retained within the development, think carefully about how they can be integrated. Some spaces can be overlooked by new development (see illustration) in the form of a green or pocket park to ensure they are cared for and feel safe to use. Others can be more remote and isolated but they are likely to be used less often and less intensively.



### Different Generations

Think about how different generations might use the new place. This includes the elderly as well as young children and families. Many recent housing developments have failed to consider the wide range of abilities, likes and dislikes of different demographic groups yet one of the measures of successful place-making is how effectively different groups are integrated.

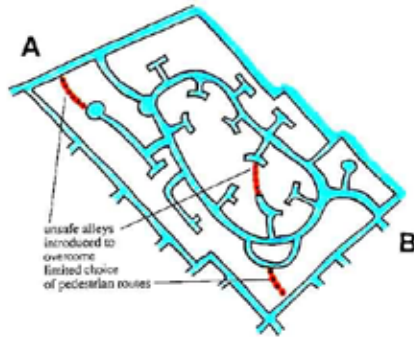
As an example, this toy shop in Spain (below) has been designed with a door for children and one for adults, adding an element of delight to the street scene. Meanwhile, a new housing development outside Bristol (bottom) has an expensive new green space but has banned ball games and bicycles. Why? Who is this space for? These issues need to be considered early in the design process.





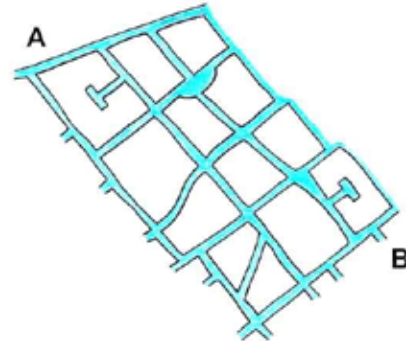
### Fragmented Network

Avoid creating a fragmented network of big fast roads (below middle) with few connections as these can easily get congested at key junctions and deter walking and cycling. Avoid pedestrian-only alleyways (bottom) as these feel unsafe for many people and only make car use more likely.



### Integrated Network

Create a flexible grid of well-connected streets and lanes to ensure good opportunities for walking and cycling; use cul-de-sac streets sparingly and carefully integrate car parking (both photos) into the street scene.



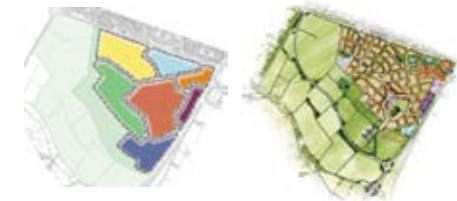
### Streets Last A Long Time

While land uses change fairly frequently (e.g. a shop can become an office) and buildings can be demolished and rebuilt after many years, streets tend to stay forever. Getting them in the right place is therefore more important than knowing exactly which vehicles will use them and when.



### Character Areas + Density

On larger sites, it may be possible to think about different areas of character rather than a place of more uniform design. This character could be informed by different housing density. Can the more dense areas of development be clustered around the mixed uses areas to help deliver a walkable neighbourhood? Can lower density development be located along a rural edge? What sort of edge condition will result? How will the development be viewed from afar?





*Working in small groups was an important element of the workshop process.*

## 03 WORKSHOP RESULTS

**“These aren’t easy decisions but all places are either growing or declining”**

*Quote from the introductory slideshow to the workshop event.*

**“Taking part in this event does not necessarily equate to acceptance of the development”**

*Quote from the shared feedback session that concluded the workshop*

### Consensus + Common Ground

There was consensus that there needs to be two main access points to the site to prevent the development being a cul-de-sac. One would be from Icknield Way in the north while the other would be to the south onto the Aylesbury Road.

The southerly access was seen as being the more significant one as this provides the most direct route the town centre retail uses and other services in the heart of Tring. Designing this new junction in the most appropriate way so that Western Road is able to benefit from slower traffic speeds. Being able to accommodate walking a cycling modes was also a shared goal.

All participants were keen to ensure that clear and well-signed routes connected the site with the surrounding countryside.

### Points of Difference

How to accommodate the wishes of the existing residents on the current western urban edge of Tring (e.g. preserve the views of Okeley Lane residents) while at the same time not being inefficient with the site allocation was a point for debate and something that requires further investigation.

Techniques discussed to meet this concern included giving existing residents longer back gardens with new dedicated access; creating a green “set back” of some sort that could also function as a community green space was another. The risk is that the space created is not big enough to function as a

proper community green space or is not effectively overlooked by new development to make it feel safe.

Most participants felt that an extension to the cemetery should be northwards while a minority felt that a linear expansion westwards could help consolidate a green approach to the town centre along Western Road. Making the right choice here will be important as the creation of an almost-permanent new piece of green space needs to be embedded into the new layout in the most useful and appropriate way possible.

### Areas for Further Examination

Another area of consensus was on the need to preserving views of open countryside but how to do this was not clear. It was felt by some participants that the layout of the new streets and spaces could help frame and enhance selected key views. The expansive wide open landscape views currently obtainable from the site will mostly be lost, but retaining and framing the most important ones could be achieved. This would add value to the new development and reassure existing residents.

The master planning process needs to generate some layout options to demonstrate how this might be possible. These layout options should also explore how best to “knit together” the new and existing neighbourhoods, by integrating the expanded cemetery land and creating new local links from Beaconsfield Road and Highfield Road. These focussed layout options can be used to help give local residents confidence that the design will be responsive to their concerns.



*The site sits on the edge of Hertfordshire, adjacent to the country boundary with Buckinghamshire. To what extent will new residents use services and facilities in the neighbouring district?*



*The site can be seen beyond the roundabout. The white built structures just visible is the roofline of the Icknield Way employment site.*

## Task 01

### What Is There Now?

#### Existing Services + Facilities

The town centre contains a well-regarded range of facilities, including shops and cafes but this is nearly 2kms to the east of the LA5 allocation site. Many participants regarded this as too far to be a regular walking distance.

The urban area to immediately to the east of the site does have a range of more local facilities. This comprises the a clustered collection of a local services along Western Road, including health services and convenience shops. Participants also identified a community-focused hub round St Joseph's Church.

#### Eastwards Movement

All participants agreed that the movement from the site to access services and facilities will almost always be in an eastwards direction, towards the town centre. This will have direct implications for the design of the internal street network to ensure that all access routes to and from the site are as convenient and as direct as possible.

While many participants felt the distance to the town centre was too far to walk, at around 2kms it should be a convenient cycle ride. This proximity supports the need for a better cycling environment between the town and the site.

#### Additional Services on Site?

Many participants felt that the western side of Tring lacked an essential range of services to the extent that they began to identify a mix of land uses for the site itself, including retail and education, even though the LA5 proposal specifies playing fields and open space, an extension to the existing employment area at Icknield Way and an extension to the cemetery (if needed) but no other non-residential

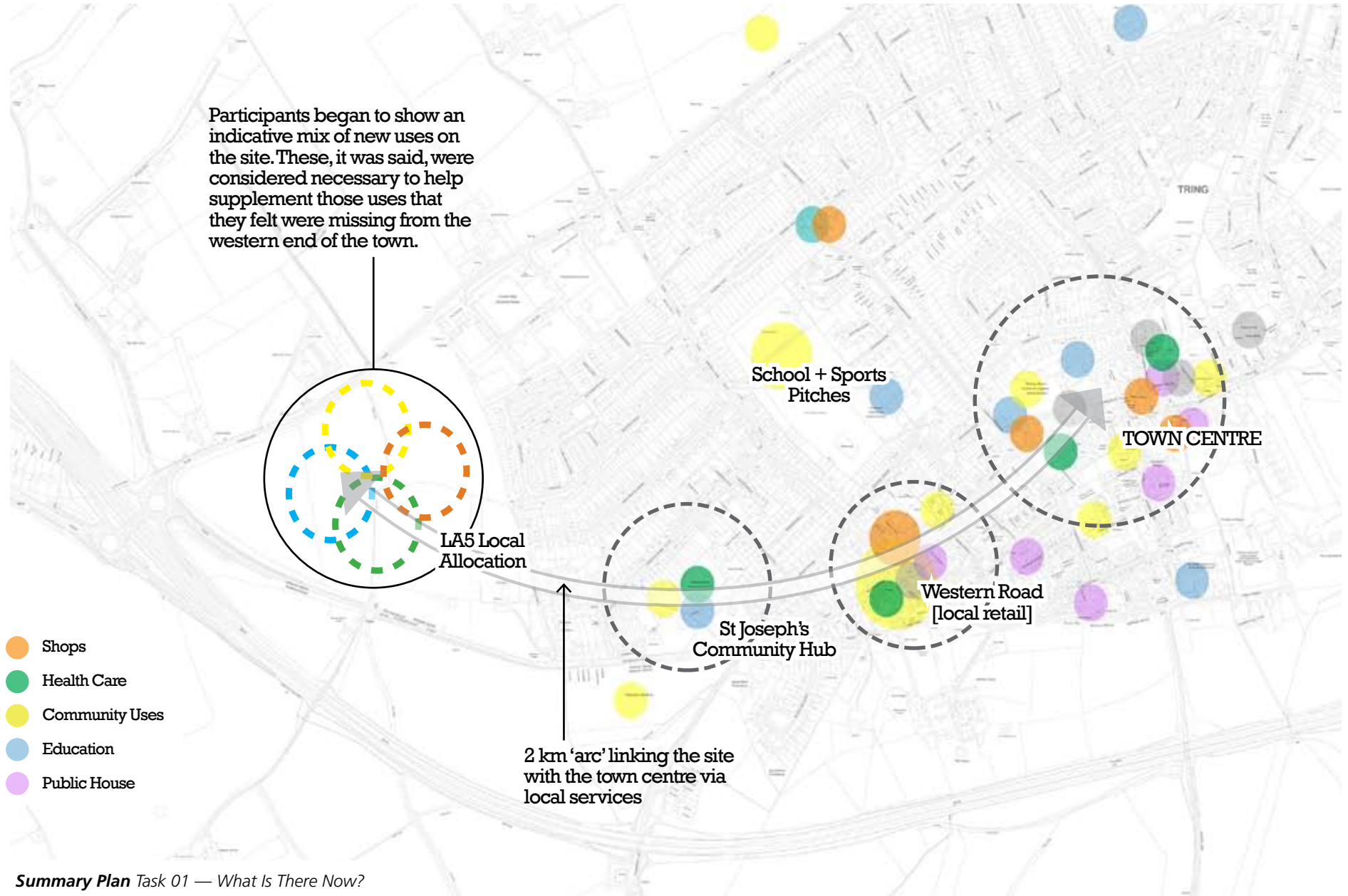


*Western Road provides the nearest cluster of shops and local services to the site.*



*Convenience store on Christchurch Road provides a good local service, but is limited in scope*

uses. That participants felt the western edge of Tring is lacking a suitable range of services is perhaps more an assessment of access and movement issues, and the perceived difficulties in reaching existing services, rather than the range and location of the services themselves.



Summary Plan Task 01 — What Is There Now?

## Task 02

### Visioning + Priorities

The second task asked participants to develop a vision statement and a set of priorities for the new development. The results from each group are set out here, supported by the additional notes generated throughout the workshop process.

#### Consensus + Common Ground

Many people used this task to express a wish to see better links to local facilities, underlining concerns expressed in the first task about fragmented or frustrating access and movement issues.

Most vision statements included a wish for smaller houses for first-time buyers and those who may be down-sizing rather than larger homes. Another common area of agreement was the need for better bus services to link this site to the town centre. This desire was in part influenced by the preferred housing mix of smaller units (perhaps occupied by older people) and it was also felt that car use would prove more difficult due to the limited availability of car parking spaces in the town centre.

#### Areas for Further Examination

This will be a very prominent site in that it will form a new western edge to the town and be visible on two key approaches. What is it that those arriving from the west will see? One group said that the built form appearance needs to reflect "traditional designs and structures" which have been successful for many years; another said that it should be "similar to the existing character of Tring".

In response to this specific workshop issue, the master planning work needs to provide the local community with a reassurance over the quality of the proposed architecture.



The recent Castlemead development at Pitstone (top and above) was cited as an example of a place with certain good qualities to aspire to.

## VISION STATEMENT 01

### This new place will offer

large attractive houses  
smaller house for first time buyers  
or older people who are downsizing  
better bus access to help  
overcome the increase traffic  
good multi-use green space for sports  
traditional looking housing — no flat roofs!

### similar to

Eastleigh (near to Southampton)

### but unlike

Grovehill Hemel Hempstead

#### Group 01 — Extra Comments

#### Uses + Activities

*Playing fields, dog walking + cycle access to areas of the adjacent AONB; Greater density of large spacious houses; No gypsy / travellers site; Possible small industrial extension; Fully develop all of the LA5 site to avoid need to develop other green areas at a later date.*

#### Landscape

*Buffer zone of some sort between existing and proposed houses; Make new access road a no through road; Introduce new rear access to existing properties on Okeley Lane*

### Employment Opportunities

*Will there be enough interest in housing if there are not enough employment opportunities locally?*

### Access + Movement

*Continue Donkey Lane to connect with to Icknield Way; Provide additional access to Okeley Lane residents; Possible extension of the cemetery along A41 to give a greener entrance further into Tring.*



*Streets that appear to be designed only for the car, a common feature in Hemel Hempstead new town, (Washington Avenue, above) can deter other forms of welcome and legitimate street activity, such as children's play.*

## VISION STATEMENT 02

### This new place will offer

maintain all existing footpaths  
affordable housing, low-rise houses  
smaller houses for first time buyers  
better bus services  
leisure ground for small children

### similar to

Castlemead + Pitstone  
Stanbridge Road, Leighton Buzzard  
traditional designs + structures which  
have been successful for many years

### but unlike

Fairford Leys, Aylesbury  
Hemel Hempstead — new town

### Group 02 — Extra Comments

#### Landscape + Countryside

*One of the reasons we bought our house was for the current view — can this be maintained?; New development to not look into existing houses and gardens; No more light pollution — already enough from the roundabout.*

#### Scale

*Is the portion of site that can be developed sufficient for 150 dwellings?; Can extension to light industrial area be included in addition to 150 houses?*

### Urban Form

*Gated footpaths for security to Okeley Lane as there is no access to back gardens right now, only from the fields; Longer back gardens for existing houses to make the back to back with new houses acceptable; Is this the right site if half of it cannot be built on just because of its AONB status?; How can older people access town centre facilities from the new development?*

### Access + Movement

*Access points difficult through Highfield Road and Beaconsfield Road and Buckingham Road — too many parked cars on these roads + dangerous junctions with Miswell Lane; top of Miswell Lane needs widening.*

*Speed limit along Icknield Way and Aylesbury Road will need to drop to 30mph up to roundabout; if access is from/to the Aylesbury Road B4635 will the 30mph limit be extended to the A41 roundabout?; acute bend at the cemetery gates; could a roundabout be added to Icknield Way?*

*Vehicle access via roundabout on B4635 west of cemetery would allow cemetery access to be moved away from dangerous corner with Donkey Lane as well as slowing speeds along this part of B4635.*

### General

*Getting information all through planning process has been difficult; Badgers are present on site.*



Hampden Hall, Aylesbury (top and above) was viewed as a positive place to which the LA5 development could aspire.

## VISION STATEMENT 03

### This new place will offer

good green spaces + play areas  
strong sense of community  
good access to schools — walk not car!  
smaller houses for first buyers + older people  
looking to downsizing  
sheltered housing + day centre

### similar to

Sallery's Field — schools + sports  
Hampden Hall

### but unlike

Castlemead — poor integration

### Group 03 — Extra Comments

#### Uses + Activities

Concerns over school places near to site being available, currently full roll in some schools; Facilities all to the east — too far?; This part of Tring needs splay areas, schools + retail.

#### Landscape

Longer gardens for existing residents or buffer to other houses with gardens?; Larger houses in a 'barn conversion' form with a courtyard for smaller units; Encourage community to link old and new with a joint play area for children but in middle of housing so it becomes a hub; Protect views for local residents with a green corridor.

#### Access + Movement

New development to help reduce noise from A41; No through access road to encourage safe cycling and pedestrian access; Groups of houses at end of 'private' roads with car parking spaces to avoid cars parking on pavements

#### Urban Form

No blank walls; Use brick not render — attracts graffiti and can get a tired appearance; No visible gas meters; No visible wheelie bins; Green spaces to be overlooked; 2 ½ storey housing as well as single storey and two storey; Not urban style but may be Rothschild style?; A mix of large expensive housing and high density.





*Bennetts End in Hemel Hempstead has some design flaws, such as poorly planned car parking that can block pavements and footways. These issues need to be designed out in the new neighbourhood.*



*The Berryfields development in Aylesbury was admired for its coherent style and efficient layout.*

## VISION STATEMENT 04

### This new place will offer

views to and from the surrounding countryside with a soft edge to the Chilterns AONB  
 good connections with existing neighbourhoods  
 opportunities for cycling, horse-riding + walking  
 complement the existing character of Tring  
 more employment opportunities  
 small scale manufacturing / start up units  
 mix of housing types  
 e.g. affordable + much more expensive

### similar to

existing character of Tring —  
 e.g. Rothschild character  
 architecture + urban design that works well with layout and materials  
 e.g. Berryfields in Aylesbury  
 Woodland Close

### but unlike

Bletchley — too many flat roofs houses  
 Hemel Hempstead — Bennetts End

### Group 04 — Extra Comments

#### Access + Movement

*Existing car parking is extremely limited along Western Road (close to the shops); Existing facilities should be adequate for existing and future housing but access is very difficult.*

#### Community Integration

*Integrate new community by creating an open green space directly opposite the existing houses in Okeley Lane, which back on to the development site — this will help for full community and neighbourhood integration of new and existing community.*

*The open space would then give an opportunity for the children and young adults and older people everyone to socialise and therefore a better safe environment rather than putting green spaces on the field of natural beauty with the access to the bypass being a safety issue.*

#### Countryside + Landscape

*Conserve and enhance the character and nature of AONB; Provide improved setting to town through selected screen planting, livestock grazing and a community orchard etc.*

## Task 03

### Access + Movement

The third task was focussed around access and movement issues. This was a critical stepping stone in the process as it allowed participants to make connections between what exists in the surrounding area now and the proposed development sites.

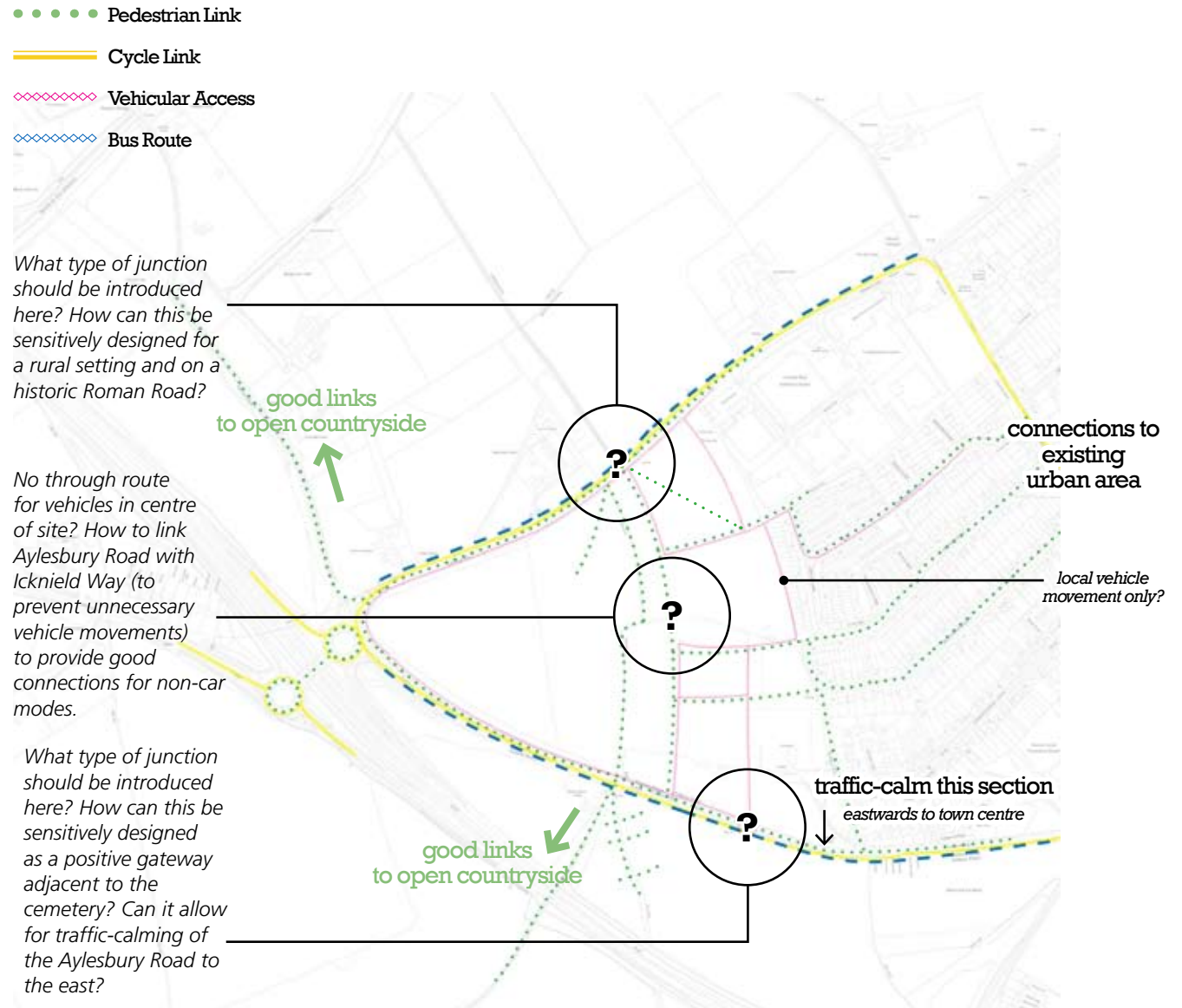
#### Countryside Access

Many groups discussed walking and cycling infrastructure to help encourage cycling and walking beyond the site for both leisure and utility trips. A cycle route was proposed by one group, circling the entire site, with access to wider countryside to the north and south of the site. Pedestrian routes were designed by participants to create multiple connections to the wider countryside. Links to The Holloway, Green Path (north of the site) and Fox Lane (south of the site) express this desire.

#### New Junctions

A junction was proposed in Icknield Way to access to site from the north. Some groups noted this could be a small roundabout or similar. Its precise location on the route would be important as this would set up the internal structure of the site in terms of a new street network.

Similar discussions were held regarding the southern access point. This generated more debate as an intervention on this part of the network could allow for wider benefits "downstream" on the Aylesbury Road, with the potential to use the new junction as a marker for reduced speed limits and traffic-calming into the town centre. This would support the wider aim of making utility walking and cycling off-site towards the town centre more appealing.



Summary Plan Task 03 — Access + Movement

### Public Transport

A bus route was encouraged, to run around the site, with stops located close to the new north and south gateway entrances. The bus route will connect to the main centre in Tring. No participants felt the bus should run through the site.

There was some debate about whether or not there should be any vehicle through routes across the site linking Aylesbury Road with Ickniel Way, with some groups feeling this would encourage "rat-running" but other groups wanting the spread traffic loads across a flexible street network and not make all cars use a single junction.

### Integrate Employment Areas

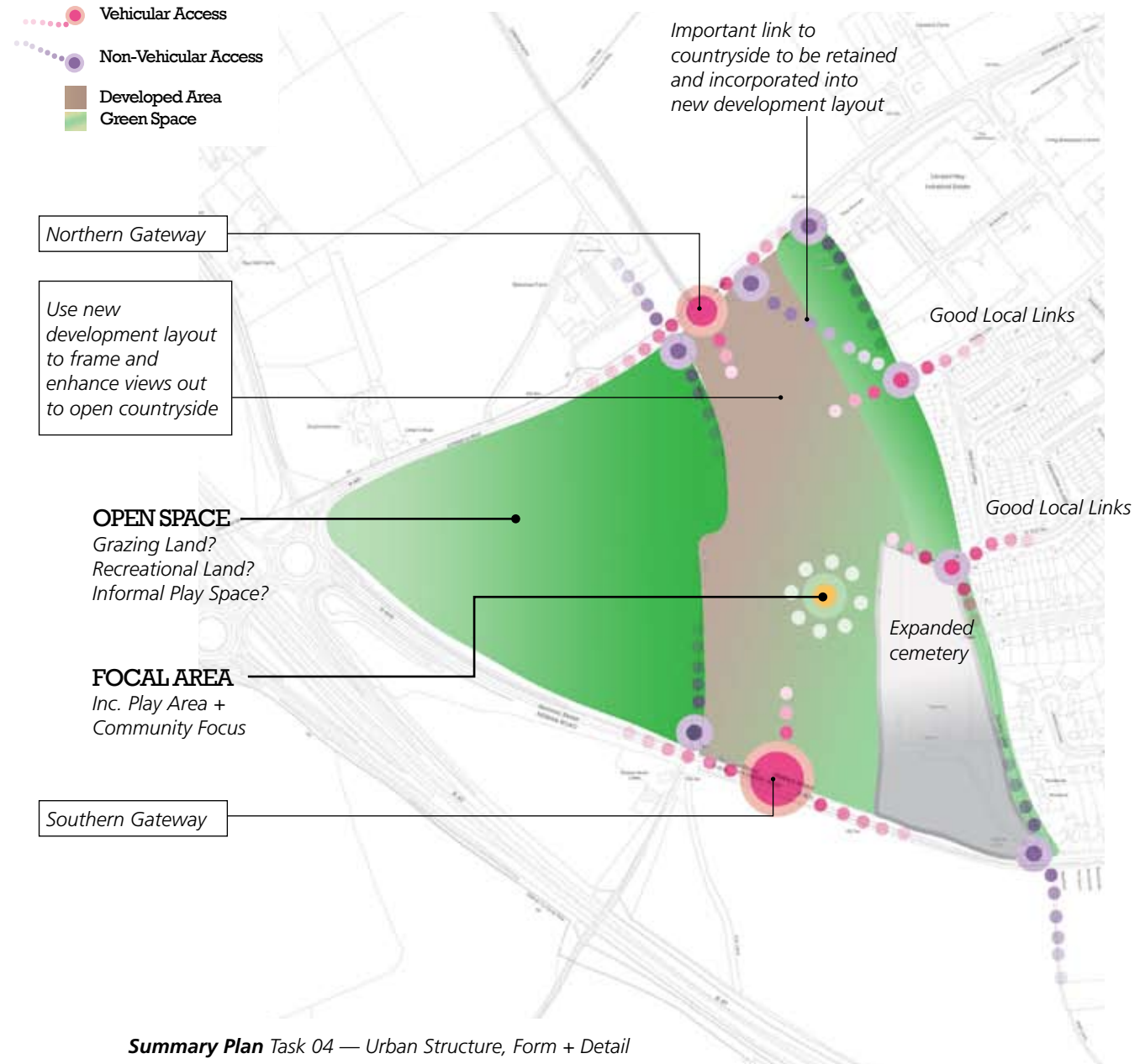
Participants felt that the employment land adjacent to the site is quite isolated with access almost exclusively by car and with no mixed-uses nearby (e.g. food and drink) to support those that work there. Some participants felt that, should the site be under-used or no longer fit for purpose, it could be redeveloped for housing, or redeveloped for a more appropriate modern forms of employment.

## Task 04

### Urban Structure, Form + Detail

#### Countryside Access + Open Space

The participants were interested in maintaining existing routes across the site and also introducing new ones. Participants particularly highlighted the diagonal route in the north east corner of the site as one to keep. Beyond the northern boundary of the site, participants noted that there are good views of open countryside. They would like to retain these long distance views by aligning streets and houses to frame views and preserve this important visual links with the surrounding landscape context.



Summary Plan Task 04 — Urban Structure, Form + Detail

## Movement to the South

The predominant vehicular access was identified by participants as being to the south, joining the Aylesbury Road and then onto the town centre. A few participants suggested a roundabout here to moderate vehicle speeds and regulate traffic flow into and out of the new development but other forms of junctions could be considered too.

## Landscape Issues

The main landscape issue is how to effectively integrate new development with the existing western edge of the town, in particular the houses on Okeley Lane. Residents here have strong concerns about the quality of life they currently enjoy, enhanced by views over undeveloped fields. These views will undoubtedly be disrupted.

The existing houses on the western edge of Tring currently enjoy uninterrupted views of the surrounding countryside and this is a crucial quality to residents that they would like to be retained as much as possible.

Local children currently use the allocation site as a play area, away from traffic but within view of many of the nearby houses; a combination seen as safe by many parents.

Therefore, a green setback of some sort between existing and potential new housing will help to retain some of this quality. However it is important that no unsafe routes are created in this area, through the creation of routes that do not benefit from natural surveillance. One idea for the green set back could be longer back gardens for existing residents.

The cemetery in the south-east corner of the site has been identified for expansion (subject to confirmation) and the majority of groups suggested an expansion to the north, although a linear westwards expansion could also encourage for formation of a new, permanent green gateway into the town centre.

The expansion of the cemetery, combined with the opportunity for green setbacks do start to lend themselves to a consolidated area of unbuilt space separating existing and new housing developments. However, this separation does not necessarily mean segregation, but could mean integration if it can become a focal point for the existing and new communities.

## Urban Form

To enhance the outward-looking appearance of the new development, some participants suggested that a row of houses edge the western perimeter of the site and face out over the safeguarded AONB fields.

While this land is identified for open space because of its AONB status, residents were looking for a more permanent solution ensure it is kept green in perpetuity. New residents over-looking the site from westwards looking properties would help secure this as they would become the “guardians” or “stewards” of the views.

The open land could also be for livestock grazing, bringing a visual and physical link to an active countryside.

Communal green spaces within the areas of built development have been highlighted in the summary plan. Residents would like higher-rise housing to be situated towards the south-west of the site: a place where, if the cemetery extends, there would be the least visual impact upon the existing homes running along the Eastern edge of the site.



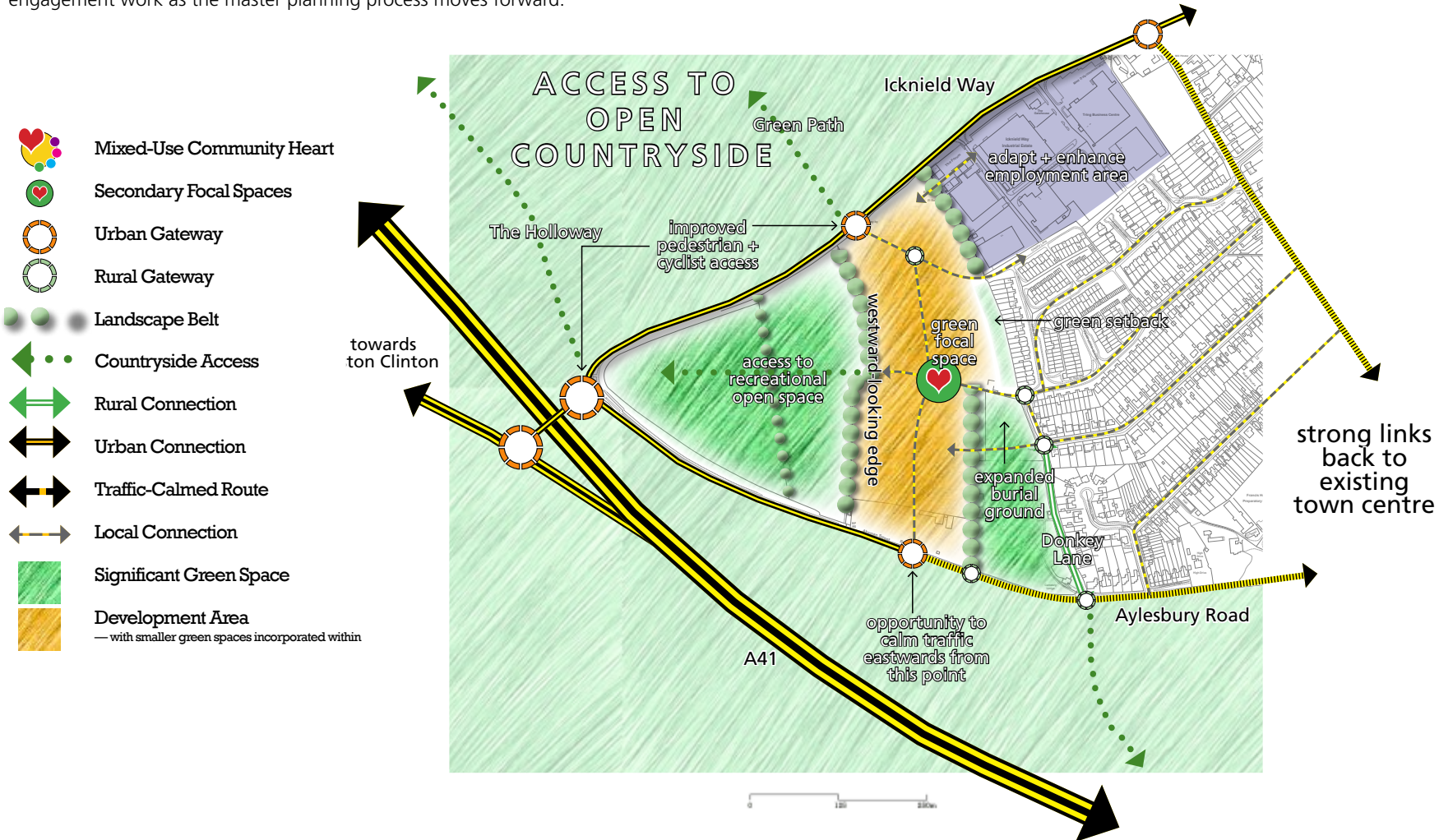
*Panorama image, taken from the bridge over the A41. The site is visible on the far right hand side of the photo, behind the roundabout.*

# Urban Design Concept Plan

## Bringing It Together

Based on the workshop outputs, an urban design concept plan has been prepared. This diagram begins to wrap the various strands of work from the participatory workshop into an overall guiding vision. This urban design concept should not be considered definitive as it is driven almost entirely by the limited consultation and engagement process undertaken thus far.

It now requires further analysis and testing from a technical perspective, including landscape assessments, transport, ecology, archeology and underground services through the master planning process. Refinements will also be sought from local stakeholders through further community engagement work as the master planning process moves forward.





*Richard Eastham (right) listens to questions and comments questions from participants.*

## 04 NEXT STEPS

### Workshop Report

The results of the workshop were written up and interpreted by the facilitation team. This process included the creation of a series of summary plans for each task, new graphics to capture the emerging concepts and supporting text. It is this work that comprises this report. This report has been made available online by Dacorum Borough Council.

### Future Consultation

The workshop process allowed the Council to gather all interested parties together and collate contact details. This will allow the Council to get in touch either by email or letter (depending upon which contact information has been recorded) with details of future consultation events.

### Further Comments Received

There was a comment was received from an invitee unable to take part in the event. This was a wide ranging comment and its main points are summarised below:

- The layout needs to include safe equipped play facilities for different ages of children.
- Play areas should be overlooked by dwellings to make them feel safe.
- There needs to be provision for housing suitable for older residents.
- Design and layout needs to have inherent security against anti-social behaviour.
- Concern about vehicular connections to Highfield Road, Beaconsfield Road or Okely Lane as these streets are quite narrow.
- Affordable housing provision should favour young Tring residents so that they can stay in the town.
- Affordable housing should be distributed across the site and not concentrated in just one area to create an integrated community.
- House style and layout should be of a "Chiltern rural style" and/or Rothschild style.
- Layout could place some allotments between existing dwellings and the new area of development to aid integration.
- Use some space within the local allocation that lies with the existing AONB for housing to allow the other housing and other facilities to be more less densely designed — the existing AONB in LA5 is not high quality and cannot be easily seen from the adjacent very fine AONB towards Drayton Beauchamp Manor.

### Master Plan

The Council will be meeting again with the landowners and their urban design teams to begin drafting a concept master plan for the LA5 Local Allocation. This master plan will be directly informed by the workshop discussions and outputs, including the urban design concept plan, and also by other technical work, such as detailed landscape, ecological and transport assessments.

### Further Technical Work

There is still further technical work that needs to be finalised. For example, an archaeological study is currently underway and depending upon what this finds it could have an impact upon what goes where on the site.



*Participants make their views known during one of the shared feedback sessions.*



# Appendix A

## Key Contacts

### — Laura Wood

#### **Dacorum Borough Council**

Civic Centre, Marlowes, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, HP1 1HH  
www.dacorum.gov.uk | strategic.planning@dacorum.gov.uk | + 44 (0) 1442 228660

### — Richard Eastham

#### **Feria Urbanism**

Second Floor Studio, 11 Fernside Road, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH9 2LA  
www.feria-urbanism.eu | richard@feria-urbanism.eu | + 44 (0) 7816 299 909

## Attendees List

### Participants

Susan	Andrews
Malcolm	Black
David	Broadley
Ian	Burrus
Olive	Conway
Iain	Digby
Mr + Mrs	Dobson
Mr + Mrs	Doughty
Ruth	Hart
Martin	Hicks
Nick	Hollinghurst
CW	Honey
Stephen	Kitchener
Mr	Mildred
Bill	Oram
Maria	Potter
Ray	Rideout
Ronald	Schafer
P	Scribbins
Robert	Woodman

### Observers

Loretta	Asare
Laura	Badham
Richard	Blackburn
Adrian	Cole
Mike	Emett *
Andy	Parrish
Phil	Stanley
Laura	Wood

*\* representing Cala Homes*

*Many thanks to all who gave up their time to take part in the workshop.*

## The Facilitation Team

**Feria Urbanism is a design and planning studio that specialises in urban strategies and public participation.**

We have organised and led many interesting and meaningful public engagement and participation events. Design workshops, exhibitions and consultation events have been an integral part of many of our projects. We have developed a range of successful techniques that allow people in both rural and urban areas to influence and improve the places in which they live. We have worked closely with parish councils, local community groups and we also support borough and district councils in their work with local residents. Our work with rural communities in Kent is featured as a best practice case study in the recent RIBA guidance on Neighbourhood Planning.



**Clockwise, from top left:**  
*Richard Eastham, Antonia Morgan, Eleana Orr  
and Esra Abdelrahman.*



*Participants assess how the site connects to existing uses, services and facilities.*

# Appendix B

## Copies of Workshop Task Sheets

West Tring (LA5)

**TASK 01 | WHAT IS THERE NOW?**

*In this first task you are asked to mark on the plan the existing features that give the adjacent built up area its identity and quality. Write alongside the stickers the names of the features and any comments you feel are relevant. List alongside the plan the facilities or features you think the area is currently lacking.*



KEY QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

**01 EXISTING SERVICES + FACILITIES**

What are the important local facilities that exist nearby already? Use the stickers provided to mark on the plan.

Are any of these facilities in need of improvement?

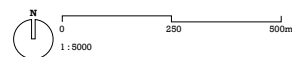
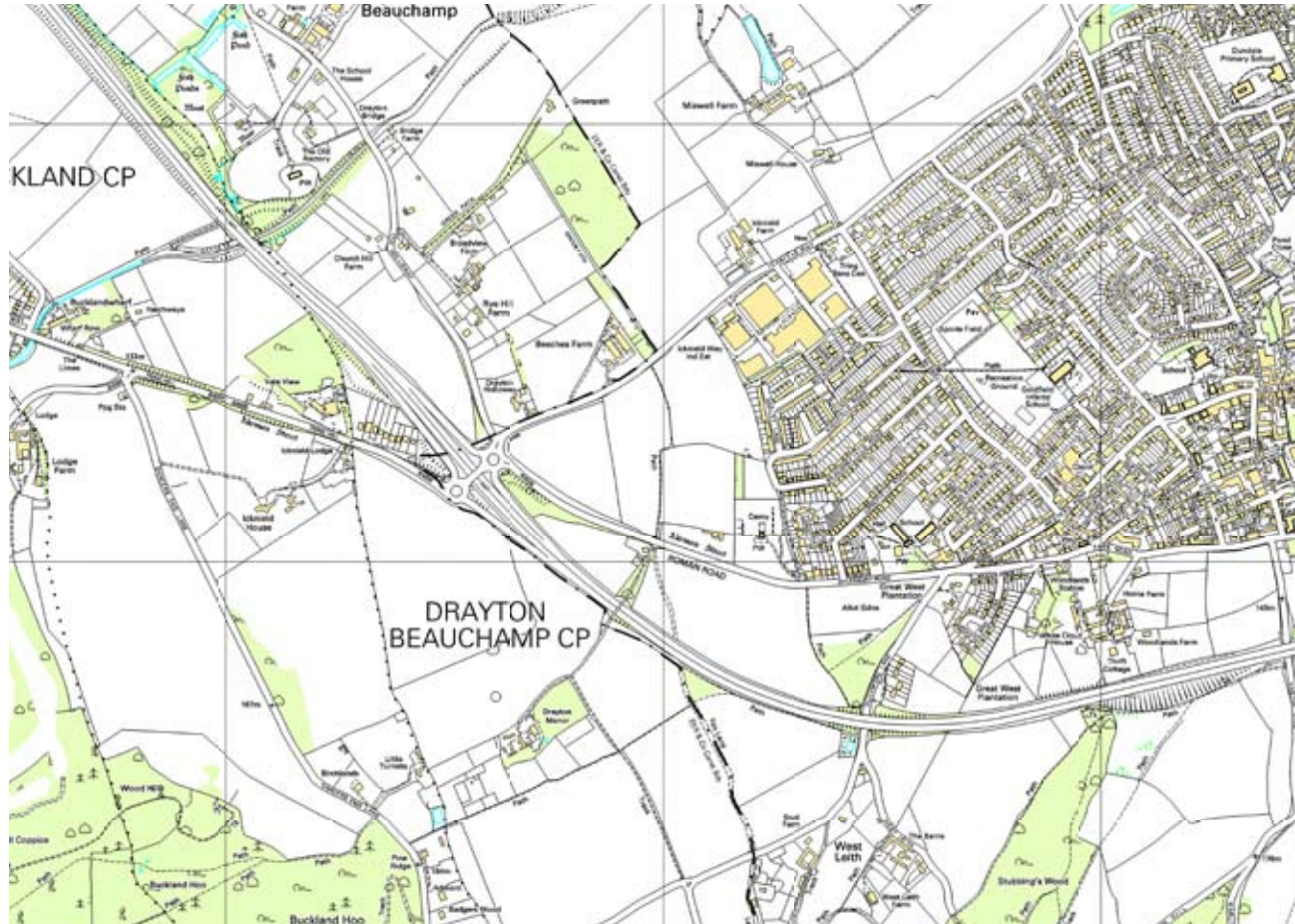
*HINT > Think about primary schools, doctors' surgeries, shops and community centres.*

**02 NEW SERVICES + FACILITIES**

Based on what you have marked up, what are the important local facilities that you think the new development needs to include or support?

Will these be best placed on the site, or "off-site" within existing areas?

*HINT > Think about the missing services and facilities that can help create a more balanced community. Avoid duplication of existing facilities. You need to be realistic about what this new development can support.*



Use the stickers provided to mark on the plan the following important features:

- Shops
- Health
- Community / Sport
- Education
- Other 01
- Other 02



### West Tring (LA5)

GROUP

## TASK 02 | VISIONING + PRIORITIES

### > VISIONING

Based on the previous task when you plotted all the existing services and facilities and identified those that are missing, complete the visioning statement.

A. Choose a maximum of four phrases from the list below. Feel free to add your own phrases.

- Good Green Spaces
- Spacious Houses
- Compact Neighbourhoods
- Good Countryside Access
- Good Cycling Opportunities
- Good Access to Schools
- Affordable Houses
- Good Walking Opportunities
- Better Bus Services
- New + Better Shops
- Exciting Outdoor Children's Play Areas
- Views of Open Countryside
- Strong Sense of Community
- Good Connections with Existing Neighbourhoods
- Good Educational Opportunities
- Large, Attractive Houses
- New Sense of Identity
- Smaller Houses for 'First Time Buyers' or older people who are down-sizing.
- Better Sports Facilities
- Distinctive Architecture

HINT > Think about the development principles for this particular site allocation as set out by Dacorum Borough Council in the Core Strategy.

B. Write the name of a place you think this place could learn positive lessons from. This could be a local place, somewhere else in Hertfordshire or somewhere else altogether. Note down what it is about that place that makes it special.

HINT > Think about places that are beautiful or well-loved. Why is this? What lessons can we learn from these places?

C. Write the name of a place you think this place should not be like. This could be a local place, somewhere else in Hertfordshire or somewhere else altogether. Note down the reasons why you feel it should avoid making the same mistakes.

HINT > Think about places that are considered ugly or unloved. Why is this? What lessons can we learn from these places?

### > PRIORITIES

Look again at Section A. Mark clearly which of the four offers you think is the most important priority.

### YOUR VISION STATEMENT

"This new place will offer ...

A : \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

... similar to ...

B : \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

... but unlike ...

C : \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---







# West Tring (LA5)

## TASK 04 | URBAN STRUCTURE, FORM + DETAIL

Based on the structure you have developed in the previous task, start to add the details about landscape, countryside access, open space and new housing clusters. As this work develops, you can go back to revisit your previous sheet, if you want to.



### KEY QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

#### 01 LANDSCAPE

How can new buildings be fitted into the landscape? Try to hide it? Or celebrate it? What is the best approach?

What landscape features within the site should be retained or replaced?

What additional landscape features should be provided? What form should this take?

Are there any particular views to protect?

How should the new edge be planned and designed?

*HINT > If it is a soft landscape edge, how can this be designed?*

#### 02 COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS

How new and existing residents can access the countryside?

*HINT > Think about walking and cycling routes reaching out from the new development into the surrounding countryside.*

How can operational farmland or sensitive ecological areas be protected?



#### 03 OPEN SPACE

What open spaces should be included?

*HINT > Think of the different types e.g. meadow, woodland, leisure space, formal or informal play, allotments.*

Where should these open space be located? Why?

How should open spaces should be arranged and managed? How will they connect with existing green areas?

#### 04 NEW HOUSING

What size and type of housing do you feel is needed for this site?

How should new housing be arranged?

*HINT > Should new housing "look outwards" or "look inwards"?*

Where is the most appropriate place within the development to accommodate mobile homes for travellers, if needed?

#### 05 PHASING

Which facilities that should be delivered by a particular time?

Which parts of the site should be built first?



[ blank page ]

[ blank page ]

**West Tring LA5**  
COMMUNITY WORKSHOP  
FINAL REPORT July 2013

**feria**  
urbanism