

Knebworth strategic masterplan

KB1 and KB2

For further information visit www.knebworth-strategicmasterplan-kb1kb2.co.uk or scan the QR code




Welcome

Welcome to the KB1 and KB2 Strategic Masterplan Consultation community drop-in event for the emerging proposals on land west of Knebworth.

The Knebworth Estate and Countryside Partnerships as part of Vistry Group have been working on a Strategic Masterplan to define how the masterplan for KB1 and KB2 comes forward in line with the Local Plan objectives.

Your feedback is important to us. Please interact with the plans and materials provided and leave your thoughts and comments directly on the boards. Alternatively, fill out a feedback form and leave it with us or return it to our Freepost address – **Freepost MEETING PLACE CONSULTATION** (no stamp required).



Members of the project team are at hand to discuss the materials with you and answer any questions you may have.

Aerial red line image of site allocation



Knebworth Strategic Masterplan Area as allocated in the North Herts Local Plan 2011-2031

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Story of the village

Knebworth has had a unique story to inform and influence the evolution to what makes Knebworth the place it is today. The villages of Old Knebworth and Knebworth have evolved through arrival of modern transport infrastructure, specifically the coming of the railway in 1850, with the station at Knebworth arriving in 1884 and the A1(M) motorway in the 1960s.

Knebworth is a village in Hertfordshire, with a population of circa 4,500, and just over 2,000 homes. The village’s strategic location, to the south of the new town of Stevenage, and its excellent transport connections to the East Coast Main Line and the Great North Road A1(M) create a sustainable location for growth.



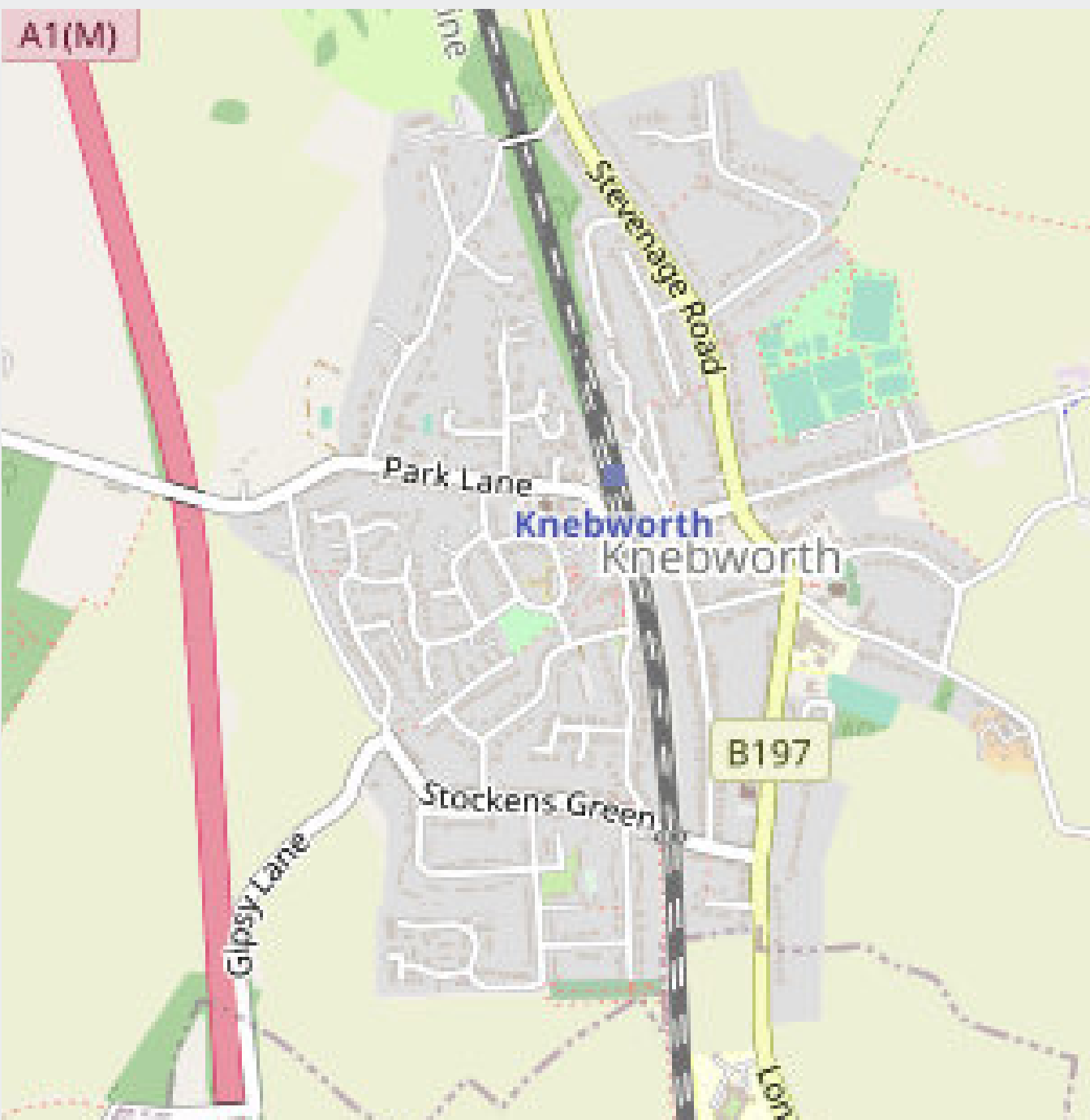
A small collection of houses associated with farms which responded to the landscape features.



Shows the arrival of the railway showcasing growth around the station.



A large-scale proposal for a Garden Community. Key aspects of the proposal include Deard's End Lane, Stockens Green, Swangleys Lane and Oakfields Road.



The arrival of the A1(M) has enabled further growth to Knebworth over the last 50-years.



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Planning context

The North Herts District Council Local Plan 2011-2036 (adopted November 2022) allocates land at Deard’s End Lane and Gipsy Lane (KB1 and KB2) for new homes, a school, green spaces, and infrastructure to meet housing, education, and community needs.

Knebworth’s excellent transport links, vibrant amenities, and Garden Village heritage offer a unique opportunity for sustainable, connected development. The KB1 and KB2 sites are ideally located near the A1(M) and Knebworth Station for easy access to surrounding areas and London.

The development design reflects Garden Village principles, preserving Knebworth’s natural beauty and historical charm while integrating with the existing community. Local Plan policies ensure sustainable growth, balancing environmental and community benefits.



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Strategic masterplan

What is a Strategic Masterplan?

We are preparing a Strategic Masterplan that will underpin the design principles for development of the KB1 and KB2 sites. This consultation will inform the final Strategic Masterplan that will be formally considered by North Hertfordshire District Council in 2025.

To ensure the delivery of well-designed quality places that meet local needs, North Herts District Council is committed to a rigorously tested Strategic Masterplanning Process for significant developments.

The Strategic Masterplan, amongst other things, seeks to achieve the following outcomes:

- Review the constraints and opportunities for the development of the KB1 & KB2 sites.
- The broad distribution of development across the site.
- Setting out the spatial vision early on including links and relationships with the existing community and infrastructure.
- Design principles for new buildings and spaces.
- Consultation and involvement with the community.

The key principles to guide the development of the KB1 & KB2 sites include, but are not limited to:

- Creation of appropriate defensible Green Belt boundaries.
- Transport Assessment to consider the cumulative impacts of the KB1, KB2 and KB4 sites upon key junctions and rail crossing points for all users, including walkers and cyclists and secure necessary mitigation or improvement measures.
- Detailed drainage strategy including addressing existing surface water flood risk issues where necessary, including any run-off from A1(M), through SUDs or other appropriate solution.
- Approximately two hectares of land adjoining the existing settlement reserved as an appropriate site for provision of a new Primary School.
- Sensitive design that responds to the setting of neighbouring heritage assets.
- Appropriate noise mitigation measures.

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Strategic masterplan



Key

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1. Village green on Park Lane, gateway to KB1 and active travel link to KB2 | 4. Active travel routes along old lane from KB2 to Knebworth centre | 7. KB1 central open spaces aligned with retained hedgerow, mature trees and pond |
| 2. School site | 5. Existing Gipsy Lane with reinstated hedgerows | 8. Retained high ecological value grassland |
| 3. Gipsy Lane active travel route linking school to KB1 | 6. Area for supporting green infrastructure | 9. KB2 valley bottom open spaces |

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Key opportunities

Sites KB1 and KB2 are intimately connected with each other and with the village of Knebworth as a whole. KB2 will be delivered first to enable the development of the primary school, with KB1 being delivered afterwards.

Vision principles:

-  Develop a well-connected, 21st-century village that links the proposed neighbourhoods with existing Knebworth communities, drawing inspiration from Knebworth’s heritage as a historic ‘Garden’ community.
-  Preserve and connect landscape features, create a central North-South Green Route, and design a focal village green to promote biodiversity, walking, and cycling.
-  Implement street design principles rooted in Garden Village traditions, ensuring safe, navigable, and aesthetically aligned streets that encourage healthy living and social cohesion.
-  Support walkable spaces and reduce vehicular impact, promoting healthier lifestyles and stronger community connections.
-  Utilise natural topography, existing hedges, and water features as focal elements within KB1 and KB2, harmonising with the village layout and connecting the school and residential areas effectively.

Key benefits

There is significant opportunity with the Strategic Masterplan for the KB1 and KB2 allocations to deliver much needed new homes, green open space, a new school and infrastructure that will benefit both existing and new residents. Some of the key benefits include:



For the residents

- Circa 384 high-quality new homes.
- Up to 40% affordable homes with a mix of tenures.
- A diverse range of housing options, including apartments and 2 to 5-bedroom houses that have been designed to reflect the local character of Knebworth.



For the environment

- Sustainable design features.
- Biodiversity net gain with new tree planting and preservation of existing natural features.
- Enhanced green spaces with a new village green, central open spaces, and improved landscaping.



For the community

- Land for a new Primary School.
- New walking and cycling routes to enhance connectivity between new neighbourhoods and the rest of Knebworth.
- Contributions to local infrastructure and services, including healthcare.
- Connecting with existing village infrastructure, maintaining Knebworth’s historical charm and character.

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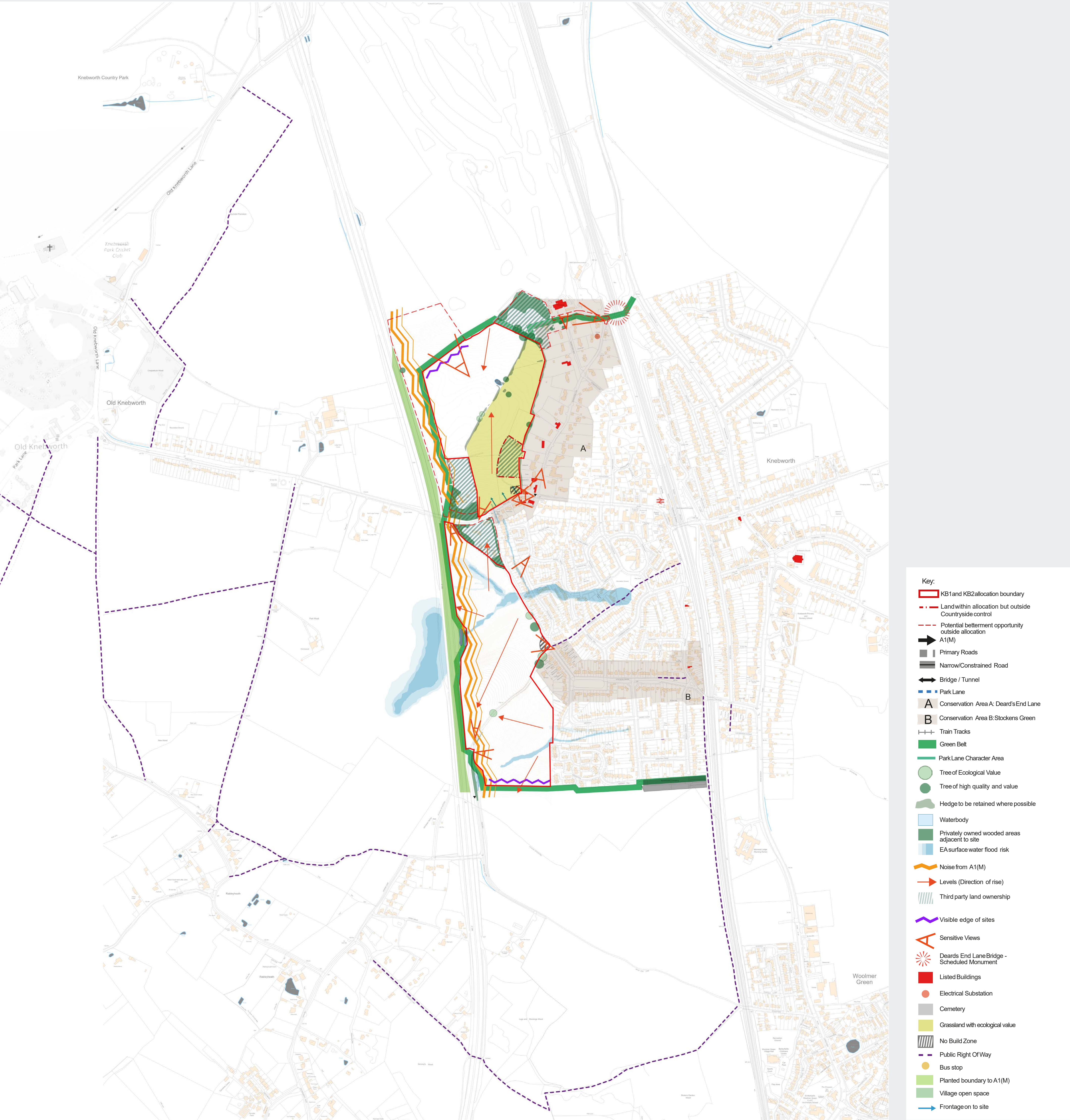


Constraints

The SP9 constraints plan maps all the technical and planning constraints pertaining to the sites.

Key constraints are:

- Acoustic issues from the A1(M).
- Heritage and neighbouring conservation areas in Deard’s End Lane and Stockens Green.
- Topography and flooding.
- Trees and landscape amenity.
- Sensitive boundaries.



Constraints plan

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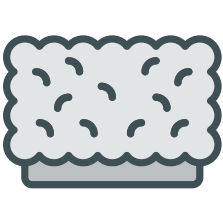

KB1

KB1 is the northern site and is currently subdivided into two fields with a hedgerow running north/south dividing the fields. A mature tree belt forms the eastern boundary, at the ends of private gardens.

The area to the east of the site around Deard's End Lane is a Conservation Area. To the west lies open countryside which is interrupted by the A1(M). Access to the site is from Park Lane at the southern end of the site.

The site sits at the top of a hill with its apex located close to the eastern boundary at the mid-point in the site. The site falls away to the south and north-west.

Key strategic objectives for KB1:

-  Using the existing central hedge as the structure feature for the layout.
-  Using the pond and associated trees to form a focal point.



Aerial Photo of KB1



The site is visible as open fields behind the raised pavement running on the north side of Park Lane



The existing access to the site opposite no. 53 Park Lane is on a tight corner



Historic view of Park Lane with KB1 on the right

Key aspects for development in KB1

Housing

KB1 is planned to accommodate circa 200 new homes of which will be a variety of size and tenure allowing for maximum opportunity for those wishing to downsize, move to a bigger family home or first-time buyers.

Open space

KB1 presents the opportunity for a central green space at the access point to KB1 along Park Lane, forming a gateway to Knebworth from the west and aligning with the top of Gipsy Lane for routes south to KB2 and the rest of the village.

Within KB1 the site takes advantage of retained trees, hedgerows and landscape features to add character, a pond and the large trees that are centrally located in KB1 offer an opportunity for a rich natural open space.

Knebworth strategic masterplan

KB1 and KB2

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KB2

KB2 is located between Knebworth and the A1(M), south of Park Lane, consisting of open arable land divided by Gipsy Lane, which crosses the site diagonally. The northern field is about twice the size of the southern one and tapers to a narrow frontage on Park Lane.

The southern boundary aligns with the Green Belt, while the site’s rolling topography creates diagonal valleys and green ribbons along its east and west sides. Existing hedgerows along Gipsy Lane and across the site will be enhanced to support new wildlife corridors.

The eastern edge includes trees and hedgerows bordering rear gardens, with Gipsy Lane separating Orchard Way properties from the site to the north.

Key strategic objectives for KB2:

-  Using the typography and surface water routes as the structuring features of the layout.
-  Create a new connected development between the housing and the Primary School.



Aerial Photo of KB2



Looking over the north field from Gipsy Lane



View south from potential access point on Park Lane



View over southern field from Gipsy Lane

Key aspects for development in KB2

Housing

KB2 is designated for circa 184 homes of which will be a variety of size and tenure allowing for maximum opportunity for those wishing to downsize, move to a bigger family home or first-time buyers.

Open space

The valley features through KB2 offer the chance to combine surface water drainage requirements with linked open spaces creating rich biodiversity.

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KB2 and the primary school

A key feature of the proposals on KB2 is the provision of land for the primary school which is a significant benefit for the local community promoting access to the new primary school to the west of the village.



Neighbourhood Plan draft concept masterplan 51 for KB2 showing school location in red

Land for a new primary school

Significant engagement has been undertaken with Hertfordshire County Council, as the education authority, to inform the location of the school site within the KB2 allocation and this indicative location has been shown on the Strategic Masterplan.

The school site will form part of the application for KB2, where following consent, the land would be transferred to Hertfordshire County Council as the education authority. It will then be for the County Council to submit a Reserved Matters

application providing the details for how the school site will be developed for the new school.

The position of the school provides good connections into the rest of the village with active routes directly into the centre of the neighbourhood. The location also creates the opportunity to situate the school at a key point on the foot/cycle network in KB2, and create a focal destination point at its entrance, coinciding with a key view over the KB2 site from Stockens Green Conservation Area.

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Design principles

The design principles for the Strategic Masterplan have taken inspiration from Knebworth and the surrounding Garden Villages to ensure the rich culture and heritage is continued through the new neighbourhoods. The defining aspects of the design can be found below.

Densities and height

The proposed density of the development follows the existing homes in Knebworth and will gently vary to suit the character and setting, with a lower density to the north and south that reflects the countryside edge and the east in KB1 with Deard’s End Lane.

Similarly, the height of the development will also reflect the existing character of Knebworth. The majority of the homes will be 2 storeys high, with some 2.5 storey houses with the potential for 3 storey buildings for the apartment blocks.

Street hierarchy

A hierarchy of road typologies are proposed through the new neighbourhoods each with a distinctive green character, based on the garden village precedents from Knebworth and beyond.

Street designs will prioritise pedestrians and cyclists with an integrated pedestrian/cycle network that connects into existing routes.

Street character and gardens

Streets will incorporate generous verges and tree planting creating a setting for homes and to screen parking and services. Front gardens on the primary avenue, connecting and other key frontages will be generous and accommodate parking, refuse and services. Back gardens will be a manageable size reduce private maintenance costs.

Parking

To maintain the ambience of a Garden Village, parking infrastructure will be subtle and suitable. While cars are important to village life, sufficient parking will be available in line with the Council’s parking requirements.



View down Wadnall Way to Stockens Green



Oakfields Road, an example of on plot parking shielded by hedgerows

Knebworth strategic masterplan

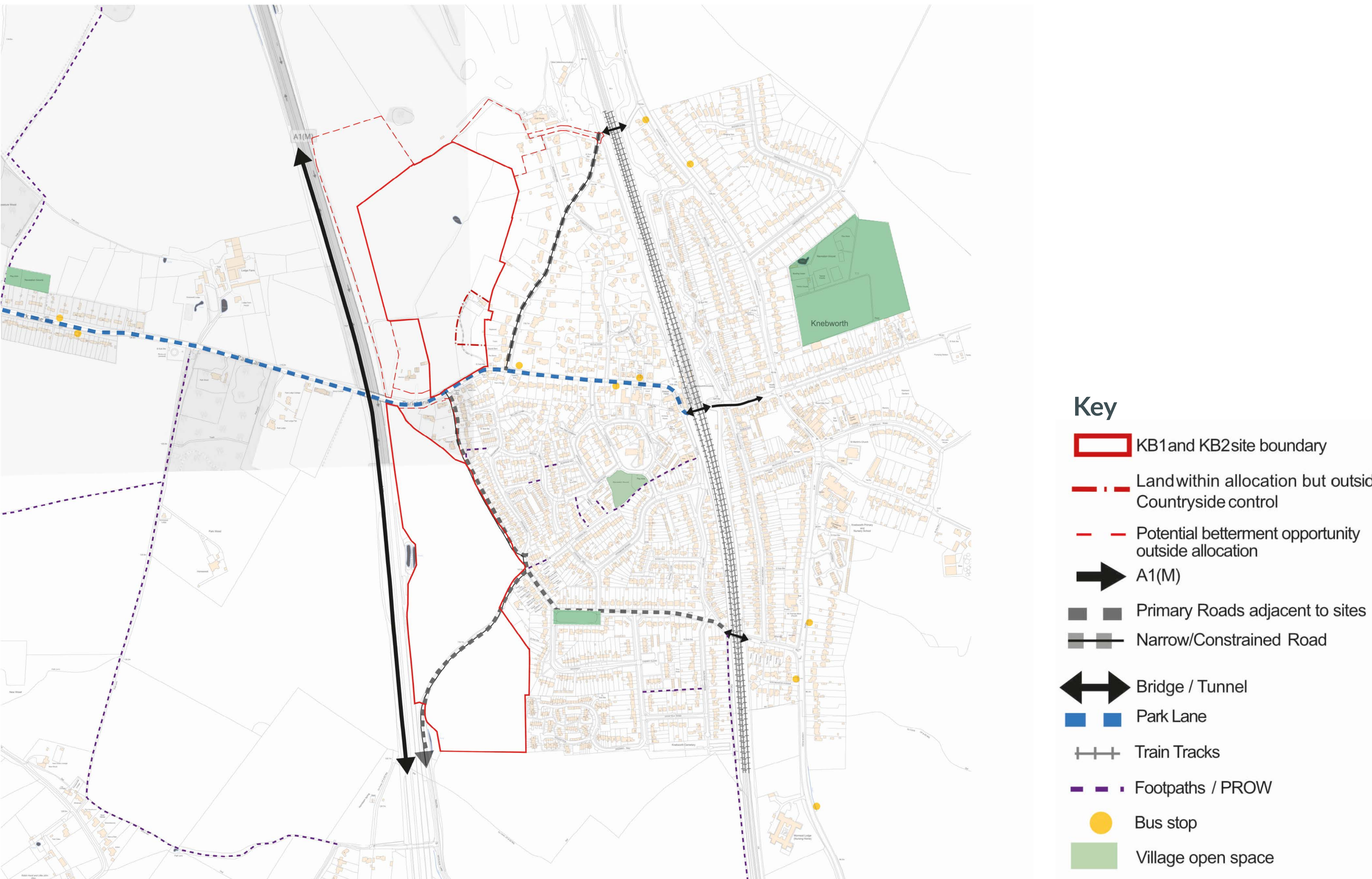
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Transport and access

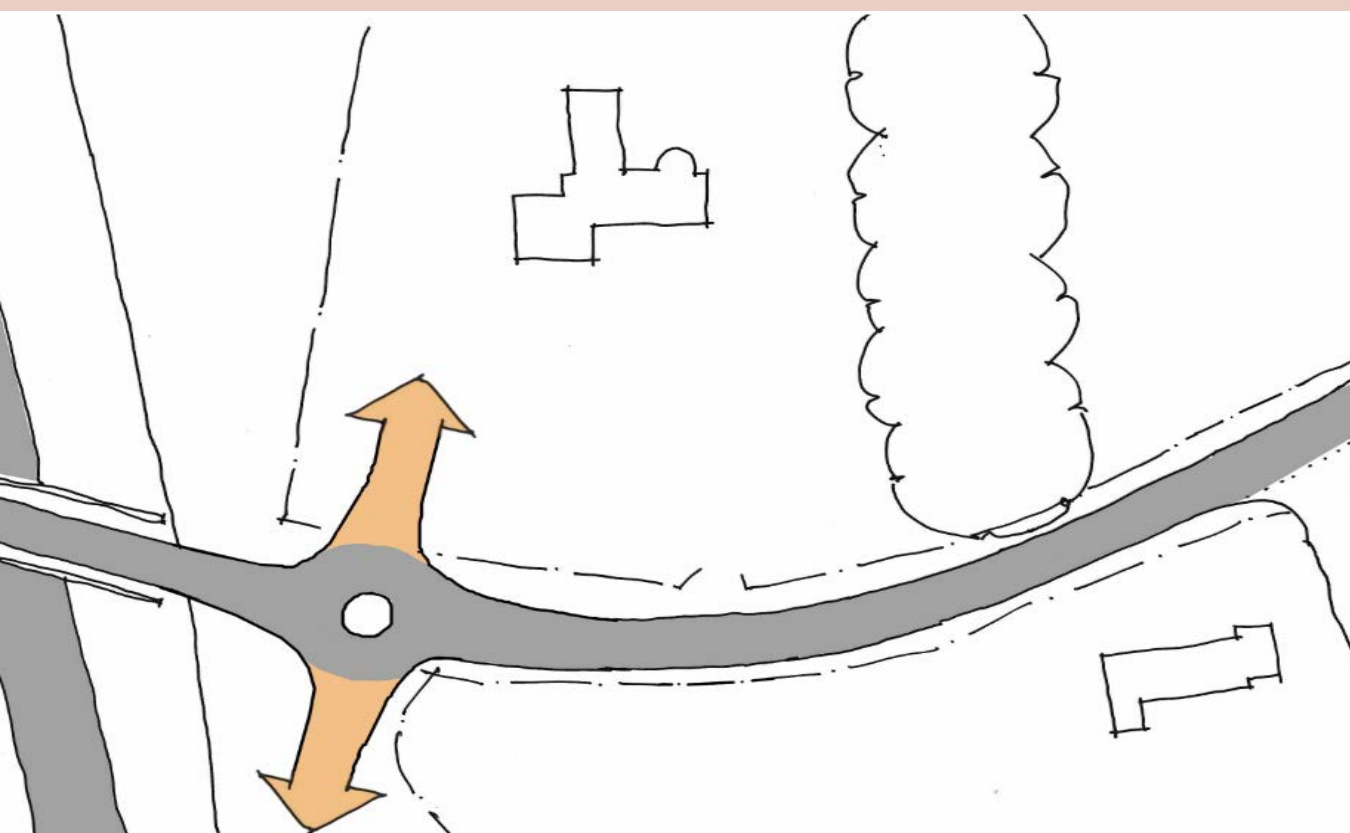
The key routes through the village are shown, including the crossings over the railway. The newer parts of the village south of Park Lane have a series of pedestrian routes giving access to the village centre from Gipsy Lane.



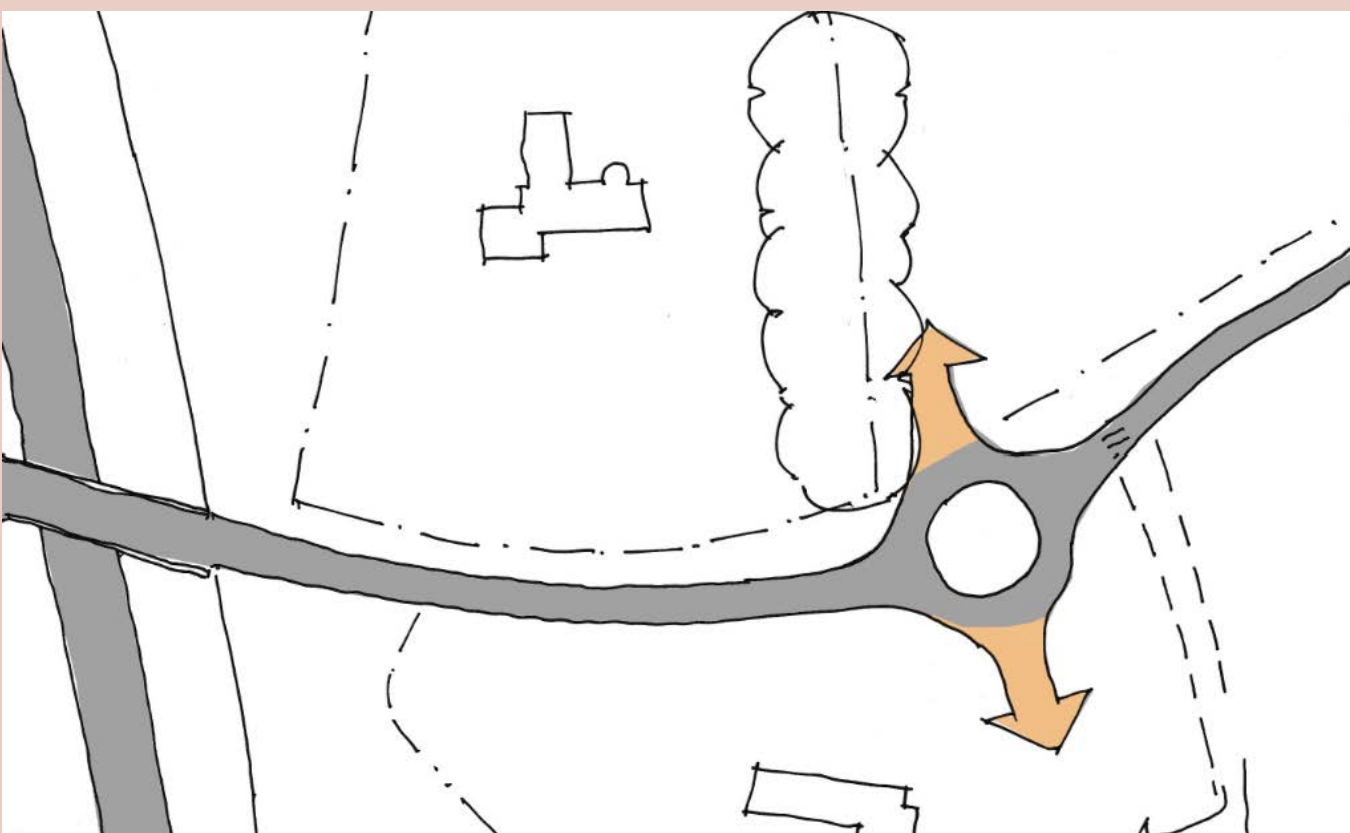
The access to the sites has been developed in consultation with the Council and Highways consultants after undertaking a review of options for third-party land inclusions and different junction types including roundabouts.



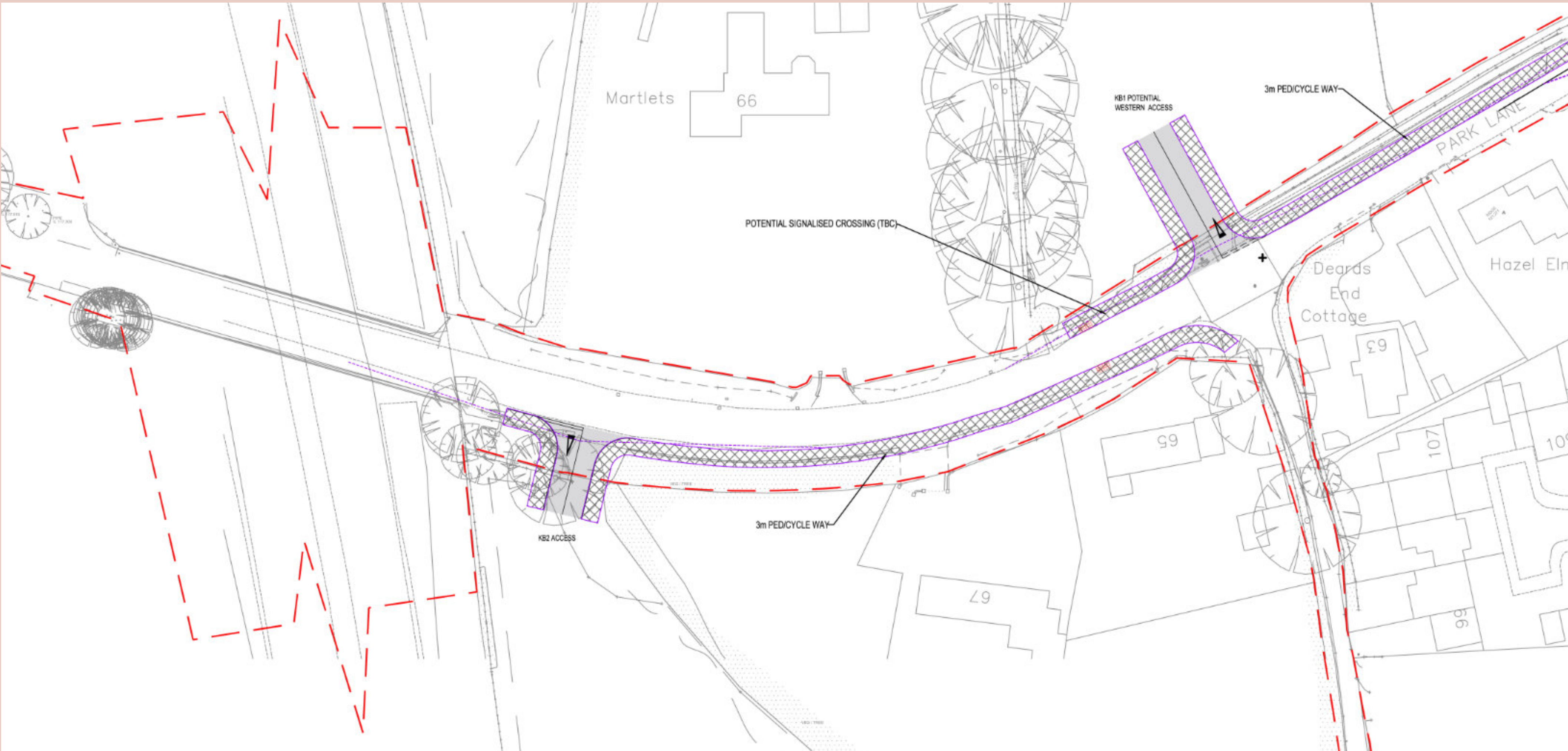
Option A: A pair of offset junctions, both utilising land in the current draft allocation. This options is the current proposal



Option B: A mini roundabout option, the access to KB1 utilising land currently in third-party ownership. The mini roundabout design was discounted as it did not meet HCC standards for access serving new development



Option C: A compact roundabout option, the access to KB2 utilising land currently in third-party ownership. This option also causes potential difficulties in terms of highways design



A pair of offset junctions, both utilising land in the allocations for the KB1&KB2 sites in the adopted Local Plan

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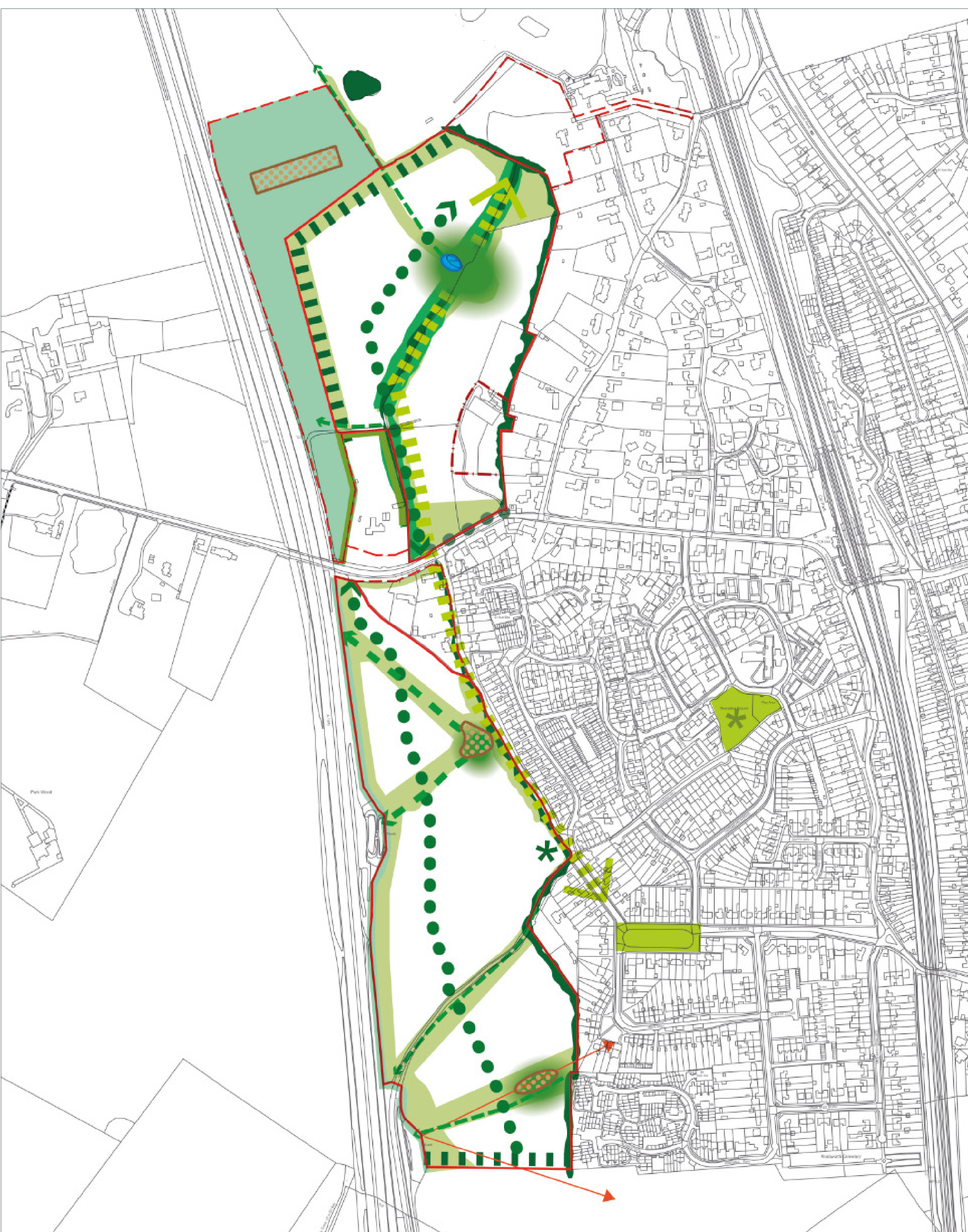
Landscape and ecology

The landscape strategy focuses on preserving existing hedgerows and tree belts within publicly accessible spaces, creating multifunctional areas that enhance biodiversity, support sustainable drainage, and provide public amenities alongside pedestrian and cycle paths.

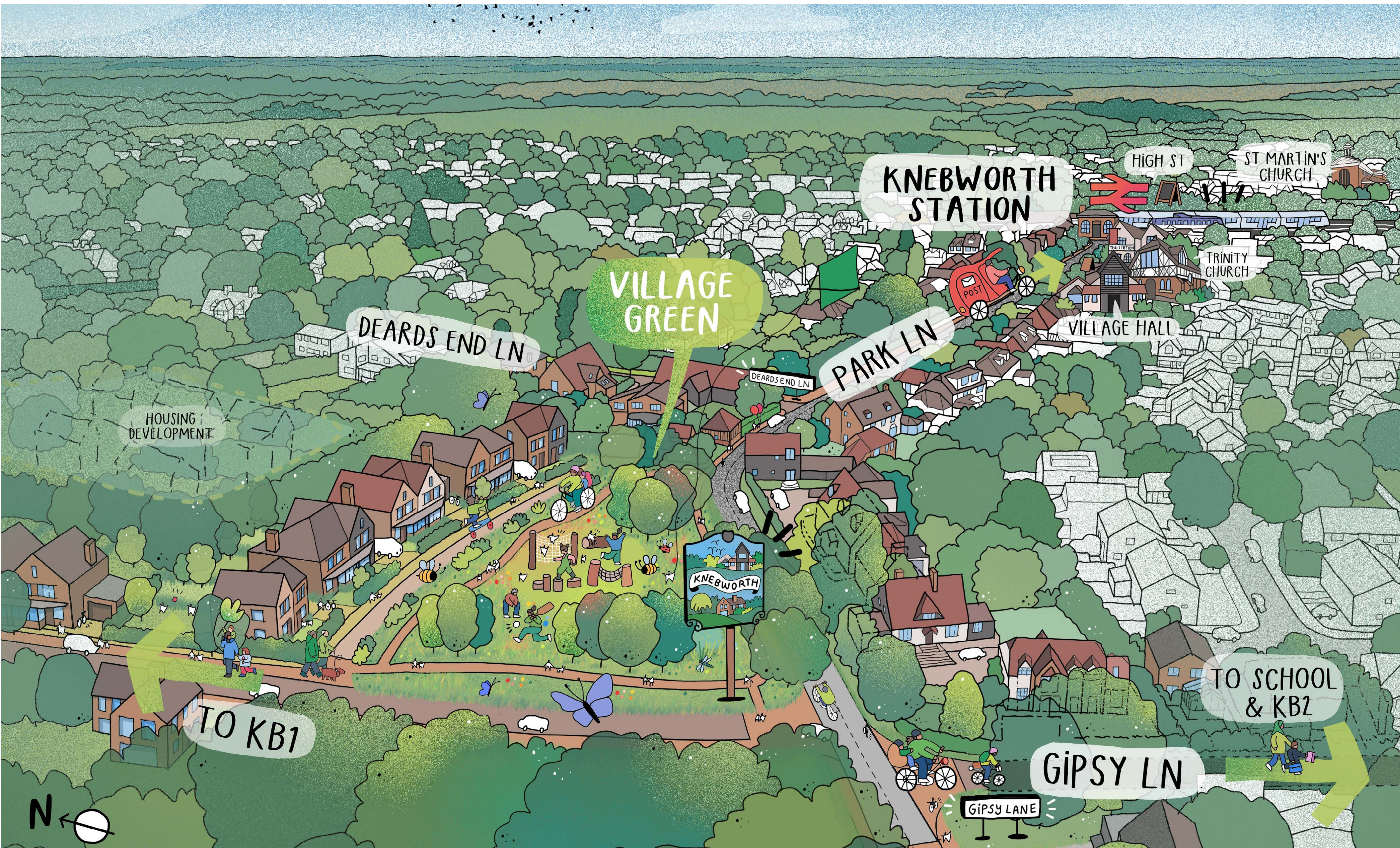
KB1 and KB2 each offer distinct landscape and ecological features that are carefully integrated into this landscape-led scheme, which aims to expand and enrich green spaces, promote biodiversity, and create a welcoming environment for Knebworth residents.

Key landscaping improvements include:

- Achieving at least a 10% biodiversity net gain.
- Protecting and enhancing areas of ecological value, such as established woodlands.
- Creating green corridors to strengthen local ecosystems.
- Distributing amenity green spaces throughout the development to enhance site character and provide incidental recreation areas.
- Incorporating play areas into open spaces, ensuring accessibility for both future and existing communities.



Green infrastructure plan



January 2025

Knebworth strategic masterplan

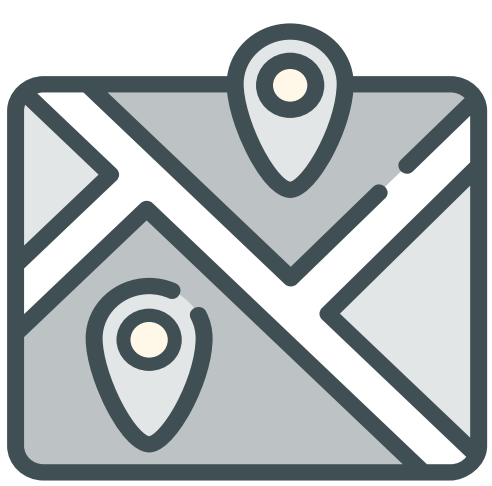
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Share your thoughts and ideas

Around the room, we have placed a number of the following:



Maps



Plans



Drawings



Feedback forms

We encourage you to interact with the boards, annotate our maps and plans, and discuss your ideas with the project team. Please fill out a feedback form and either hand it to a team member or leave it in the provided box. You can also take it with you and return it via our **Freepost MEETING PLACE CONSULTATION** (no stamp required).

We value your feedback and will consider all comments to help evolve the design of the Strategic Masterplan wherever possible.

Next steps

- Winter 2024
- Consultation on initial proposals
- Spring 2025
- Knebworth (KB1 and KB2) Strategic Masterplan to be considered by the Council
- Spring/Summer 2025
- Current anticipated council determination of Strategic Masterplan

Contact us



info@knebworth-strategicmasterplan-KB1KB2.co.uk



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0800 148 8911 (freephone)
(Monday to Friday – 9:00am-5:30pm)