



F.70
Figure 70: Narrow access to Pepperslade to the east of Heathfield.



F.71
Figure 71: More recent properties on Woburn Mews are tucked away from the wider community.

AECOM



F.72
Figure 72: Local Character Area 3 - Whitehall Gardens and Woburn Place location plan.

Constraints

- 1 Unregulated parking around the central green space limits pedestrian access and creates a cluttered visual barrier contributing to its overall lack of community use.
- 2 To prevent unauthorised parking, timber bollards have been installed to create a defensive barrier around the secondary green space. This green space has limited function and is seemingly under used as a community asset.
- 3 The narrow hole in the wall to the eastern boundary of Whitehall Gardens and Woburn Place Local Character Areas restricts access to Pepperslade Local Character Areas and limits extended views east to historic buildings within Duxford IWM. Lack of obvious use and ownership of adjacent space encourages unattractive long-term parking and storage.
- 4 The alleyways surrounding Whitehall Gardens are narrow with lack of wayfinding providing limited connection to surrounding Local Character Areas, particularly around Pepperslade Local Character.
- 5 Access to the cycle and pedestrian route along A505 is limited to a narrow and unclear footpath from the southern cul-de-sac of Woburn Place. The other potential access point to the west cul-de-sac of Woburn Place is blocked with a shipping container.



F.73

Figure 73: Unregulated parking surrounds the central green space limiting pedestrian access and creating a visual barrier.



F.74

Figure 74: Timber bollards stop secondary green space being used for parking but creates a sense of detachment from the surrounding Local Character Areas. Potential sustainable travel access to A505 is blocked by shipping container.



F.75
Figure 75: Narrow access to Pepperslade to the east of Heathfield also used as unsightly long-term storage and parking.



F.76
Figure 76: Narrow paths with no wayfinding, limit connectivity to adjacent Local Character Areas within Heathfield.

KEY: LCA 3 - Constraints

-  Parking barrier
-  Traffic flow
-  Traffic dominated character
-  Traffic noise
-  Constraint feature identified in text
-  Heavy localised parking



F.77
Figure 77: Local Character Area 3 - Whitehall Gardens and Woburn Place constraints plan.

Opportunities

- A** Define areas for residential and visitor parking to break-up large lengths of vehicles and reduce their visual dominance, especially around central green space, creating clear and inclusive access routes.
- B** Create a sense of function and community ownership to both green spaces, either with items promoting imaginative play, street furniture or areas to be used for community gardening.
- C** Reprioritise the street scape from vehicular use to pedestrian and sustainable travel modes with change of surface material, signage, level changes and a one way system for vehicles.
- D** Maximise the biodiversity value of the green spaces with native trees, informal planting and species-rich wildflower meadows within this Local Character Area and provide good passive surveillance to offer the opportunity for safe play spaces for younger children.
- E** Visually open-up and celebrate, with creative signage, existing and new pedestrian routes to adjacent Local Character Areas and the A505.
- F** Create a sympathetic treatment to the sustainable travel route along A505 to enhance user experience and perceived safety.



F.78

Figure 78: Example of parking next to green space allowing good passive surveillance from adjoining residents and a clear pedestrian access route.



F.79

Figure 79: Example of green space with a mix of seating and planting maintained by local residents encourages a sense of community ownership.



F.80
Figure 80: Example of felled timber providing an environmentally friendly form of imaginative play.



F.81
Figure 81: Example of sculptures and other art trails as playful alternative to traditional signage and wayfinding.

KEY: LCA 3 - Opportunities

-  Green space
-  Enhanced pedestrian connections
-  One way traffic route
-  Traffic flow
-  Traffic calming
-  Enhanced sustainable travel route
-  Opportunity feature identified in text



F.82
Figure 82: Local Character Area 3 - Whitehall Gardens and Woburn Place opportunities plan

3.5 LCA 4 – Pepperslade

Pepperslade is a recent addition to Heathfield and comprises two cul-de-sacs largely separate from the rest of the settlement. It is the only Local Character Area without vehicular access from the main Heathfield Way entrance. Instead, access is gained via a road directly onto the A505. This access road abounds the northern site of Duxford IWM to the east and Heathfield to the west, taking a comparatively long meandering route through mature trees before reaching residential areas.

The Local Character Area feels isolated and independent from the wider settlement marked by its own notice board positioned against the closed off rear fence of Whitehall Gardens.

Whilst some parking challenges, evident in other Local Character Areas, have been mitigated at the design stage, the car remains a dominant feature within Pepperslade either parked in front drives or ad hoc along the street.

Properties comprise mainly detached and semi-detached family homes, some with

single adjoining garages. Gable end features and a range of red brick and white render provide some variety within the architectural finish and appearance of the dwellings. The majority of properties are set-back from the street scape with low fencing, hedging and walls used to define boundaries. Active frontages, such as windows and doors look directly onto the street in combination with low boundary treatment; good passive surveillance is clear throughout, contributing to a close-knit, albeit detached sense of community.

Pepperslade has its own entrance to Heathfield Open Space Local Character Area providing exclusive access to residents within this area.

Located next to the northern site of Duxford IWM, Pepperslade has views of numerous Grade II listed buildings. Several of these form inspiring glimpses between the dwellings.



F.83

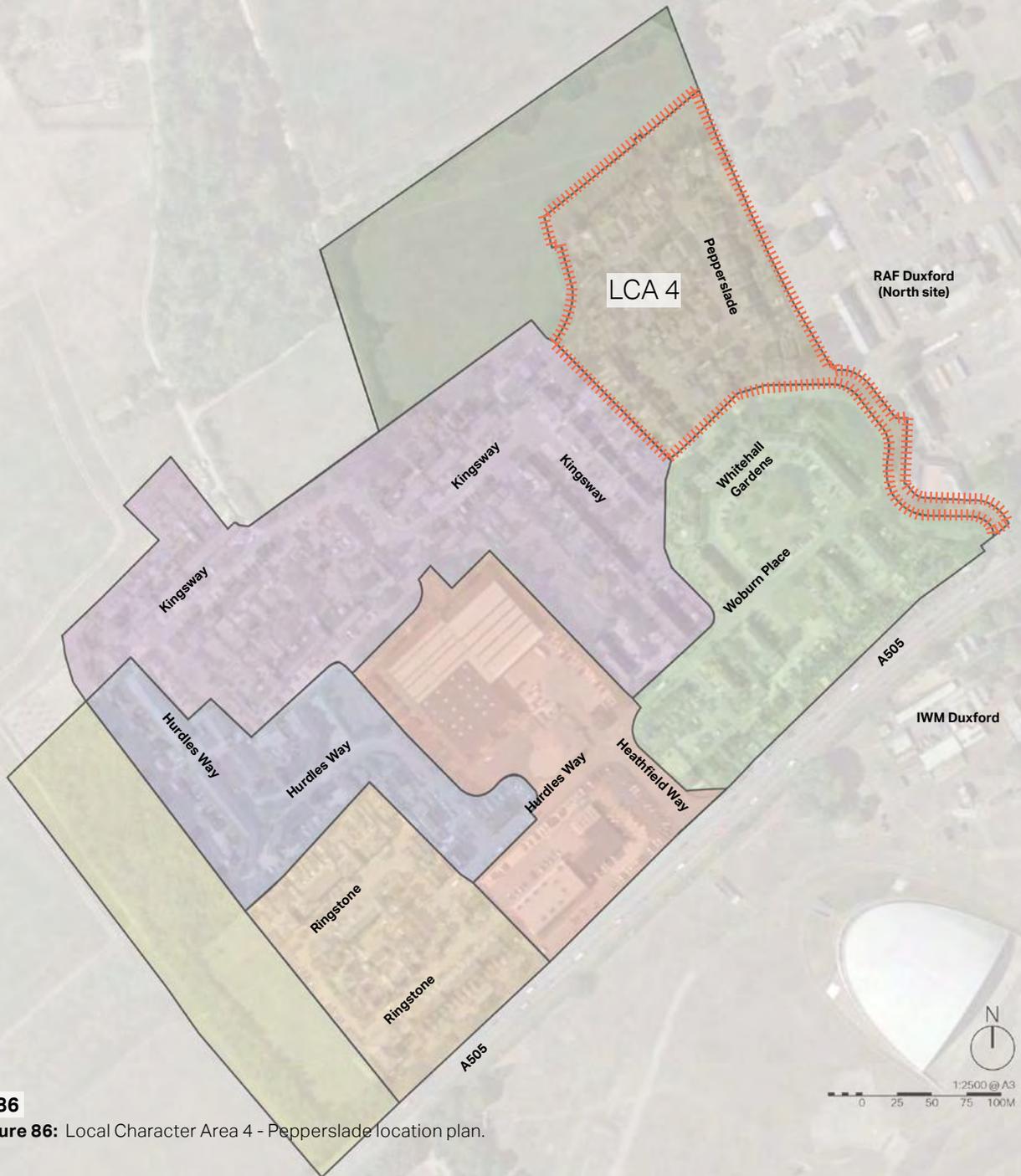
Figure 83: Front gardens are generally all or partially for parking with ad hoc on street parking common place throughout.



F.84
Figure 84: Low boundary hedging and active frontages facing the street creates good passive surveillance throughout.



F.85
Figure 85: Glimpsed views to the east of Grade II Listed buildings in northern site of Duxford IWM are possible.
 AECOM



F.86
Figure 86: Local Character Area 4 - Pepperslade location plan.

Constraints

- 1 Separate point of vehicular access to and from Pepperslade creates a sense of disconnect with the wider Heathfield community.
- 2 Linear green space adjacent to the A505 access point (figure 87) is dark and isolated from other Local Character Areas.
- 3 Dominance of unrestricted parking defines streetscape and limits useability for other forms of sustainable transport.
- 4 Access to Heathfield Open Space Local Character Area to the north of Pepperslade is dark and uninviting discouraging use of the amenity facility.
- 5 Only one narrow, not immediately obvious, pedestrian access point to Whitehall Gardens and Woburn Place Local Character Area contributes to the detached identity of Pepperslade.
- 6 A lack of road calming measures makes transitioning from an unpopulated access road to a residential neighbourhood area challenging.



F.87

Figure 87: Separate access road with under used green space is detached from residential areas and surrounding Local Character Areas.

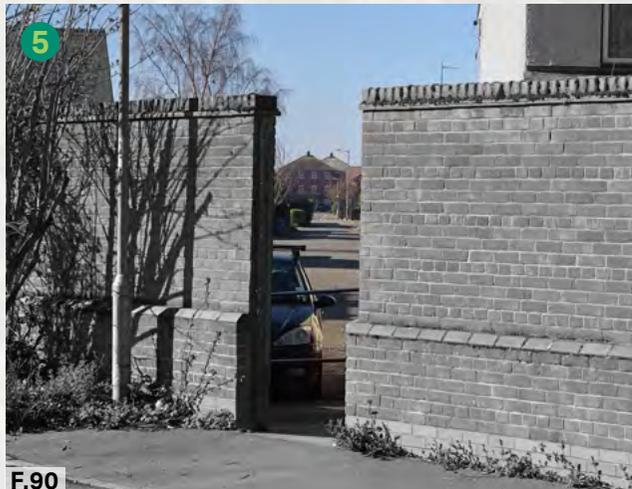


F.88

Figure 88: Car dominated street scape limits the usability for other sustainable transport.



F.89
Figure 89: Dark and uninviting access to Heathfield Open Space Local Character Area.

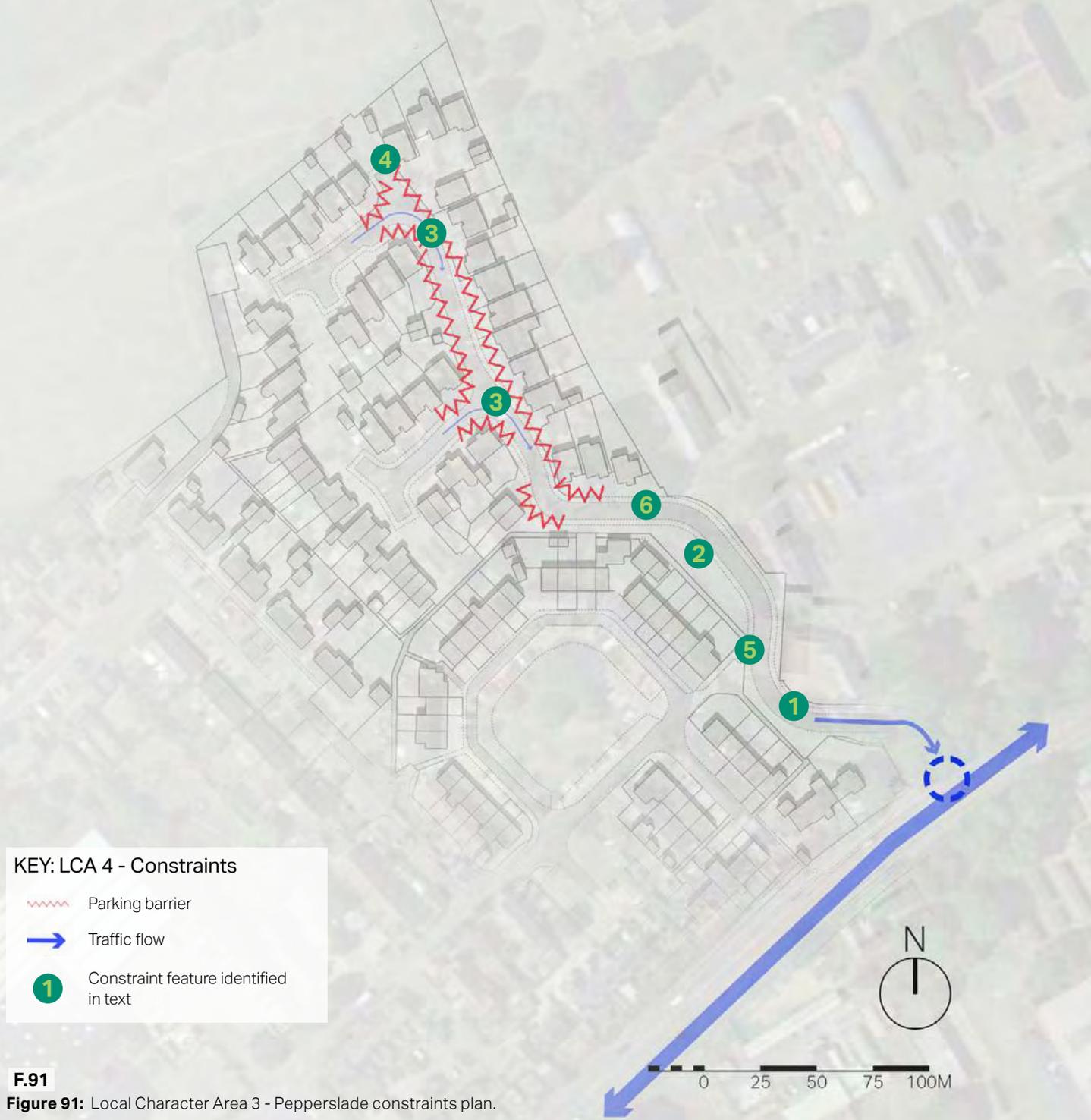


F.90
Figure 90: Narrow pedestrian access is only route to Whitehall Gardens and Woburn Place Local Character Area.

KEY: LCA 4 - Constraints

-  Parking barrier
-  Traffic flow
-  Constraint feature identified in text

F.91
Figure 91: Local Character Area 3 - Pepperslade constraints plan.



Opportunities

- A** Create a new north south vista to Pepperslade Local Character Area, finishing with views of Heathfield Open Space Local Character Area by opening up vegetated canopy to frame views north into the green space avoiding the current 'tunnel' effect.
- B** Add traffic calming measures and creative signage at the entrance to residential area of Pepperslade to denote change of character and use.
- C** Define areas of street parking bays with street trees and planting allowing for mixed use sustainable modes of transport.
- D** Activate under used green space creating an informal 'pocket park' that links, with clear wayfinding, to Whitehall Gardens and Woburn Place Local Character Area to the south and Heathfield Open Space Local Character Areas to the north.
- E** Open up and visually signpost the area and create ramped pedestrian and cycle access to Whitehall Gardens and Woburn Place Local Character Area. Use additional landscape interventions to enhance the eastern vista from Whitehall Gardens and Woburn Place Local Character Areas.



F.92

Figure 92: Example of buildings and planting framing views of green space.



F.93

Figure 93: Example of a raised table and different surface material indicating a change of character to the area and a reduction of traffic speed.



F.94
Figure 94: Example of trees and planting defining parking bays and visually softening large areas of hard surface material.



F.95
Figure 95: Example of existing trees adding a sense of maturity to 'pocket parks' and play spaces.

KEY: LCA 4 - Opportunities

-  Green space
-  Enhanced pedestrian connections
-  Street trees / green corridors
-  Traffic calming
-  Enhanced sustainable travel route
-  Opportunity feature identified in text

F.96
Figure 96: Local Character Area 4 - Pepperslade opportunities plan.



3.6 LCA 5 – Mixed use commercial

The commercial nature of the entrance to Heathfield is defined by the surrounding large scale buildings. These form the initial impression and character of the settlement with little reflection to the wider residential areas. Adjacent to the A505, a car dealership with a busy garage forecourt has an east and rear site boundary defined by a metal security fence. An evergreen hedge has been planted but is still establishing and therefore the fence is visible and unsympathetic to the adjacent residential Local Character Area. The eastern side of the road is defined by large expanses of rear garden fences creating another visually hard edge to the approach. This rear boundary treatment is continued to the east and west of the settlement contributing to the unattractive and hard edge along to the A505.

At the heart of the Local Character Area is the historic RAF Duxford Sergeant's Mess building, set-back from the road, and with a

focus on new technologies. Similar to the car dealership, this building has imposing boundary fencing that lacks sensitivity with the wider adjoining Local Character Areas, although some incidental 'softening' has been applied with the use of planters and climbers.

The remainder of the Local Character Area has a logistics focus and therefore contributes to noise, traffic and safety issues associated with heavy freight. The entrance is directly opposite the junction with the A505 and forms the approach to Heathfield. The wide expanse of road and roundabout has been designed to accommodate large vehicular use, including buses which need to reverse to get around and is not reflective of the residential settlement. Signage and a notice board is present east and west of the roundabout and provides wayfinding for the rest of Heathfield but is not immediately obvious for vehicular users.



F.97
Figure 97: Garage forecourt fronts onto the A505 with metal security fence and new hedgerow to east and south boundaries.



F.98
Figure 98: Boundary treatment to historic RAF Duxford Sergeant's Mess building with some planting 'softening' and screening the car park.



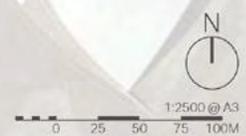
F.99
Figure 99: Entrance to logistics company is the first view of Heathfield from the A505.



F.100
Figure 100: Parish notice board, bus stop and wayfinding signage either side of roundabout are not immediately obvious.



F.101
Figure 101: Local Character Area 5 - Mixed use commercial location plan.



Constraints

- 1 Oversized road, roundabout and highway infrastructure encourages vehicular speeding, not reflective of the wider residential settlement and dominates the main approach to Heathfield.
- 2 Traffic lights, pedestrian crossing and signage create a cluttered view into and out of Heathfield.
- 3 Unsympathetic boundary treatments throughout visually degrade the surrounding residential Local Character Areas and create an unwelcoming approach.
- 4 Narrow and broken footpath along A505 with overhanging vegetation from rear gardens and traffic noise creates an unwelcoming edge to Heathfield unsuitable for pedestrians and bicycles.
- 5 Lack of clear and visible signage creates confused legibility and no overall identity to Heathfield.
- 6 Green spaces comprise linear strips of verge and incidental 'left-over' areas that are under used and provide little amenity and biodiversity value.
- 7 Minimal regular bus services from the bus stop and lack of other sustainable travel options encourages the use of the employee car park that could otherwise be reduced.



F.102

Figure 102: Main approach to Heathfield is dominated by oversized road and highway infrastructure for large scale commercial traffic not residential use.



F.103

Figure 103: Traffic lights, pedestrian crossing and associated signage obscures framed views out of Heathfield towards Grade II Listed American Air Museum at IWM Duxford.



F.104
Figure 104: Large expanses of unsympathetic boundary treatments create a harsh and unwelcoming character.



F.105
Figure 105: Narrow broken path along A505 with overgrown boundary vegetation is unsuitable for cyclists and pedestrians and forms an unattractive settlement edge.

KEY: LCA 5 - Constraints

-  Visually unsympathetic barriers
-  Traffic flow
-  Traffic dominated character
-  Visually unsympathetic commercial-use views
-  Unsuitable foot/cyclepath
-  Constraint feature identified in text

F.106
Figure 106: Local Character Area 5 - Mixed use commercial constraints plan.



Opportunities

- A** Maximise amenity value of green spaces with tree planting, informal season planting and species-rich wildflower meadows to break-up expanses of harsh boundary treatments, frame existing vistas and promote a network of green spaces identified within other Local Character Areas of Heathfield.
- B** Include visually sensitive traffic calming measures such as raised tables and rumble strips to reduce vehicular speed and denote the change of character to a residential area.
- C** Include clear signage, wayfinding and visual reference points to Heathfield Way approach promoting the residential use and identity of the settlement.
- D** Create a wider pedestrian and cycle path along the front of the car dealership continuing east and west along Heathfield boundary with trees and informal planting in verges where possible to improve and promote sustainable travel routes to the wider area and create a pleasant and welcoming settlement edge adjacent to the A505.



F.107

Figure 107: Example of green verges with tree planting creating a soft edge to streets, framing views and vistas and strengthening a network of green corridors throughout the settlement.



F.108

Figure 108: Example of a shared surface raised table with change of material continuing the 'banding' across pedestrian and highway to denote change of use and character of the area.

KEY: LCA 5 - Opportunities

-  Green space
-  Enhanced pedestrian connections
-  Trees and informal planting
-  Traffic calming
-  Enhanced sustainable travel route
-  Opportunity feature identified in text



F.109
Figure 109: Example of footpath/cycleway next to busy road with planting to improve user experience through clear visual references to support wayfinding.



F.110
Figure 110: Local Character Area 5 - Mixed use commercial opportunities plan

3.7 LCA 6 – Hurdles Way

Hurdles Way Local Character Area is one of the newer additions to the Heathfield area, comprising smaller family or starter homes at a relatively high density. Properties are generally terraces with up to three storeys creating a larger building mass compared with other residential Local Character Areas. A limited material palette is used throughout with buff coloured brick and white render with blue painted metal work fenestration as the main building material creating a slightly contemporary character, distinct from other Local Character Areas.

Properties either front directly onto the street or with narrow set-back and minimal planting. Parking is accommodated by a series of car ports and rear parking courtyards with garages, although on-street parking overspill is evident throughout.

Incidental areas of open space are present but under used without clear amenity function. Green space at Kingsway Local Character Area and Ringstone playing field and woodland are accessible via two narrow

paths which are unwelcoming and not immediately obvious.

The large massing, high density housing with minimal planting and a narrow street scape gives Hurdles Way an enclosed and unconnected feel with little sense of integration to the surrounding Local Character Areas and countryside.



F.111

Figure 111: Buff bricks, white render and blue metal fenestration building materials are continued throughout the Local Character Area.



F.112

Figure 112: Large massing of three storey housing and apartment blocks contribute to an enclosed character to the Local Character Area.



F.113

Figure 113: Under used seating space at the entrance to three storey housing block.



F.114

Figure 114: Rear parking courtyard creates hidden areas within Local Character Area.



F.115

Figure 115: Local Character Area 6 - Hurdles Way location plan.

Constraints

- 1 Parking congestion creates difficulty for emergency vehicles and other forms of inclusive access.
- 2 Raised footpaths provide clear demarcation between pedestrian and cars but unrestricted parking reduces visibility and safety.
- 3 Lack of wayfinding and clear access routes to neighbouring green space limits amenity value of Local Character Areas and connectivity to the wider settlement.
- 4 Larger massing of three storey properties is out of scale and character with other Local Character Areas. Minimal planting is present to soften the built form.
- 5 Rear parking courtyards are hidden unwelcoming spaces contributing little to the overall character of the Local Character Area.
- 6 The communal open space provides a seating area but is dominated by parking and hard surface with minimal planting to soften the space.



F.116

Figure 116: On street parking restricts emergency vehicles and limits safe and inclusive access whilst adding to the narrow and enclosed character of the Local Character Area.



F.117

Figure 117: Connections to neighbouring green space limited to narrow gaps in boundary fence contributes to the sense of disconnection to the wider settlement.



F.118
Figure 118: Rear parking courtyards and garages with minimal natural surveillance are hidden spaces throughout Local Character Area.



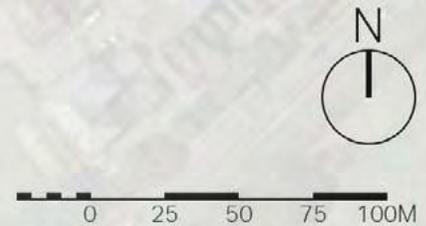
F.119
Figure 119: Under used seating area surrounded by hard surface materials and parking.



KEY: LCA 6 - Constraints

-  Parking barrier
-  Visually unsympathetic barrier
-  Constraint feature identified in text

F.120
Figure 120: Local Character Area 6 - Hurdles Way constraints plan.



Opportunities

- A** Reconnect to neighbouring green space at Kingsway Local Character Areas by replacing closeboard boundary fence with low planting to allow visibility. Create a defined footpath through space with clear access points.
- B** Define area of street parking to safe and accessible sections of street with trees and planting to visually soften the buildings and streetscape.
- C** Open up southern access route to neighbouring Ringstone playing field and woodland Local Character Areas with clear wayfinding and good passive surveillance from surrounding residents.
- D** Activate rear parking courtyard spaces with clear and prominent pedestrian access to adjacent woodland to the west. Private vehicular parking usage within courtyards can be further encouraged by providing street lighting to create light and welcoming spaces.
- E** Break up expanse of hard surface material in and around the seating area with planting to make the space more welcoming.



F.121

Figure 121: Example of low boundary treatment of adjoining houses and a defined footpath providing good visual connectivity to green space and clear wayfinding.



F.122

Figure 122: Example of defined on street parking bays creating unrestricted vehicular and pedestrian access whilst planting helps to soften the hard surface materials and built form.



F.123
Figure 123: Example of parking courtyard with good passive surveillance from properties and clear well-lit footpath through.



F.124
Figure 124: Example of planting breaking-up hard surfaced areas creating a soft backdrop for seating.



3.8 LCA 7 – Ringstone

As another more recent area of residential development within Heathfield, Ringstone Local Character Area has similar parking and massing constraints to the neighbouring Local Character Area of Hurdles Way.

The housing type is a mixture of linked terrace, semi-detached and several larger detached dwellings ranging from smaller starter homes to family properties. Larger landmark buildings are present at key points within the development, such as the junction between Hurdles Way and Ringstone, forming the end of the east / west vista that continues along to Woburn Place and Whitehall Gardens Local Character Area. This acts as an important visual reference point and assists with wayfinding around the settlement.

Housing density and, in areas, scale is similar to that of Hurdles Way however, a range housing types, wider shared surface street and planting all contribute to a less enclosed and unsympathetic character.

A range of traditional materials and architectural details are used on the buildings and street throughout providing variety and interest.

To the west, active frontages of properties predominately face onto the green space of Ringstone playing field and woodland Local Character Area providing good passive surveillance and a sensitive edge to the settlement.

The prominence of unrestricted parking is one of the main detracting features of this Local Character Area and is commonplace throughout. On street parking restricts inclusive access, screens and clutters views and diminishes strategic vistas and wayfinding.



F.126

Figure 126: Larger landmark buildings within the Local Character Area are located at the end of vistas as focal points and visual reference points.



F.127

Figure 127: Variety of building forms and types helps to mask the overall scale, massing and density of the Local Character Area.



F.128
Figure 128: Properties fronting onto green space provide good passive surveillance and a sensitive edge to the settlement.



F.129
Figure 129: Unrestricted parking is a dominant and detractive feature throughout the Local Character Area.



F.130
Figure 130: Local Character Area 7 - Ringstone location plan.

Constraints

- 1 Parking congestion creates safety issues for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly at the corners of the road where visibility is notably reduced.
- 2 Parking congestion along the linear sections of the road significantly reduces the otherwise open aesthetic of the street.
- 3 Failed street tree planting to some sections of the street scape creates expanses of hard surface material.
- 4 The large commercial unit at the neighbouring car dealership (Local Character Area 5) is visible and imposing at the south eastern corner of Ringstone.
- 5 Parking along the edge of the green space dominates the area, restricts access, views and visually detracts from the edge of the development.
- 6 Rear parking courtyards and garages are under used and constitute hidden spaces with limited positive contribution to the wider character of the Local Character Area.



F.131

Figure 131: Unrestricted parking limits inclusive access and diminishes the scale of the street scape.



F.132

Figure 132: Failed street tree planting creates expanses of hard surface material.



F.133
Figure 133: Unattractive views of the adjoining commercial unit within Local Character Area 5.



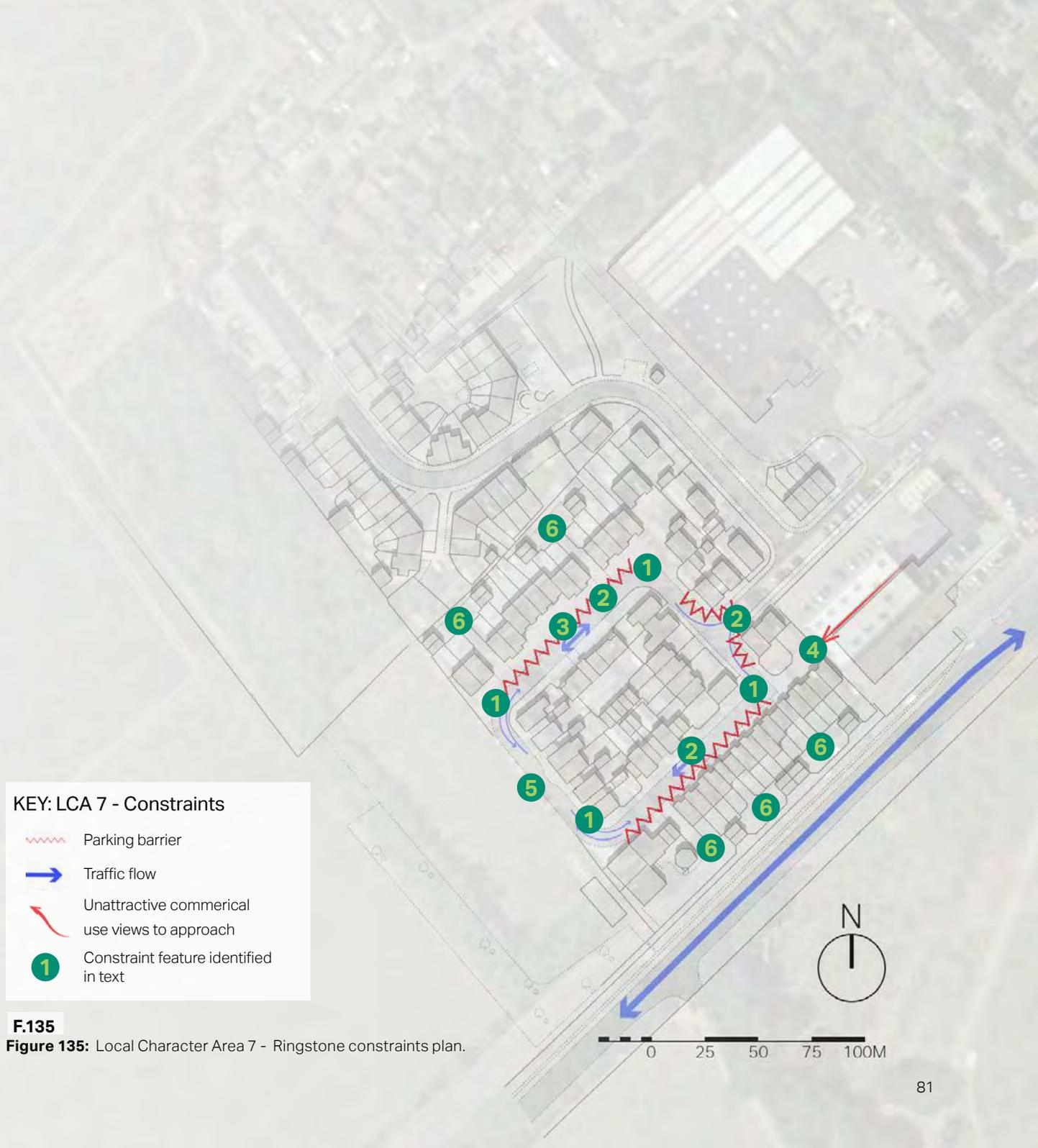
F.134
Figure 134: Unrestricted parking limits access to green space and visually detracts from the edge of development.

AECOM

KEY: LCA 7 - Constraints

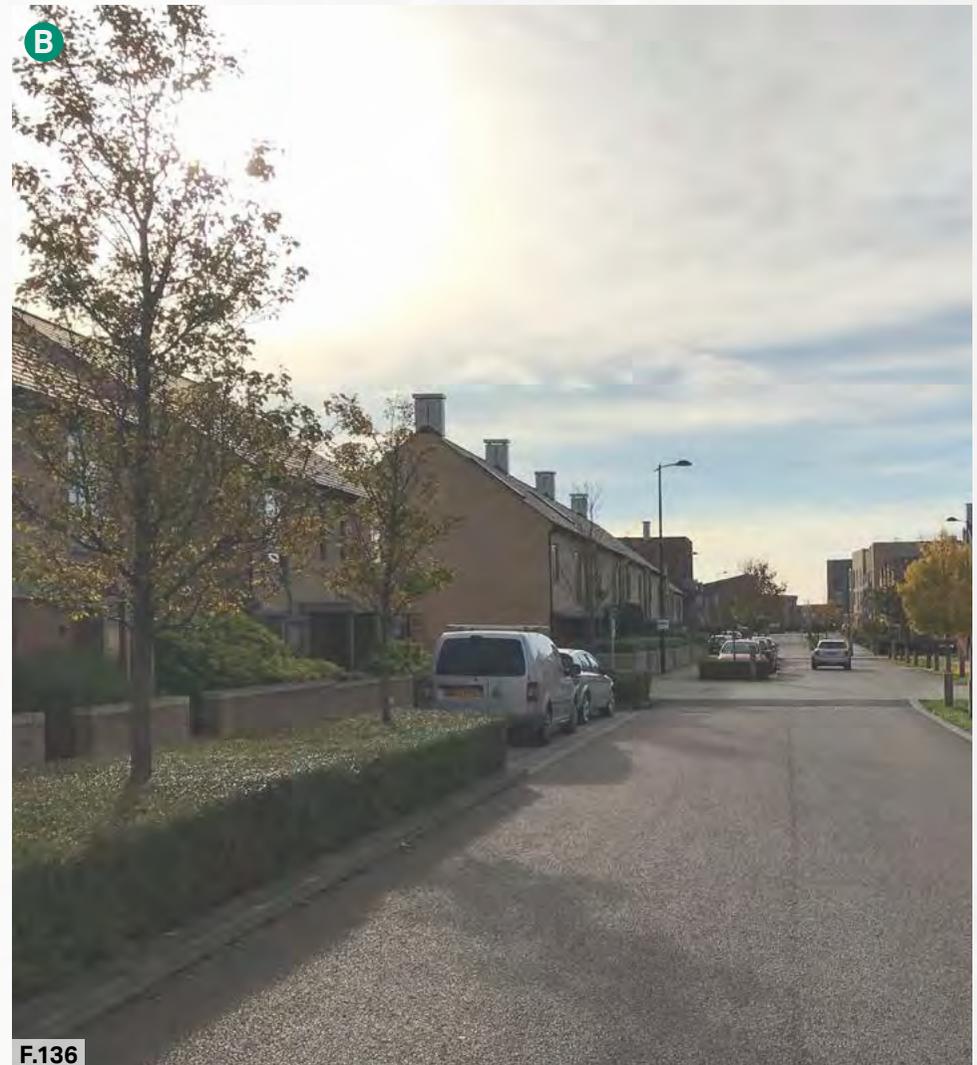
-  Parking barrier
-  Traffic flow
-  Unattractive commercial use views to approach
-  Constraint feature identified in text

F.135
Figure 135: Local Character Area 7 - Ringstone constraints plan.



Opportunities

- A** Implement a one way system through this Local Character Area to reduce parking congestion and promote an inclusive transport street.
- B** Replant street trees to act as visual reference points in support of wayfinding as well as defining communal parking areas. This could be extended to join the vista along Hurdles Way.
- C** Plant a green buffer to the rear of the car dealership to screen views of commercial units.
- D** Additional signage and wayfinding to public footpath access to A505 through Ringstone playing field and woodland Local Character Area.

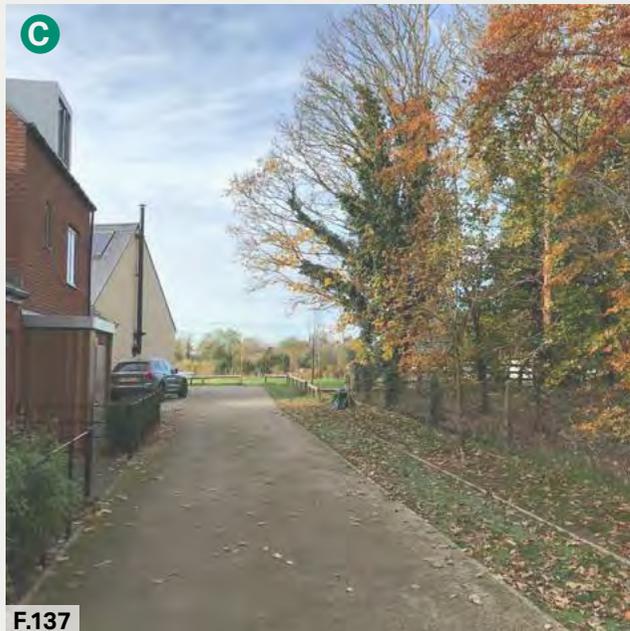


F.136

Figure 136: Example of street trees and planting helping to restrict parking in a sensitive way whilst framing views and vistas.

KEY: LCA 7 - Opportunities

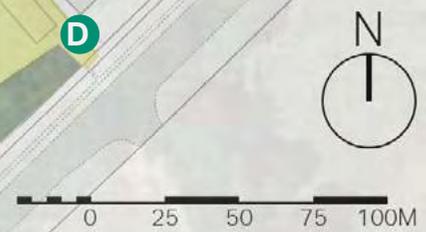
-  Woodland and canopy
-  Neighbouring green space
-  One-way vehicular traffic
-  Street trees and planting
-  Opportunity feature identified in text



F.137
Figure 137: Example of vegetated green buffer provides screening to neighbouring properties whilst giving seasonal interest.



F.138
Figure 138: Local Character Area 7 - Ringstone opportunities plan.



3.9 LCA 8 – Ringstone playing field and woodland

Located to the western edge of Heathfield, Ringstone playing field and woodland Local Character Area is the second largest green space within the settlement and provides a buffer between the settlement and rural landscape toward Fowlmere.

The Local Character Area is split in two; to the north, an area of woodland currently with no defined public access; and to the south an area of open space, predominately amenity grass, with an equipped play area in the north west corner and a fenced off utilities area in the south west corner. This area is open and has excellent passive surveillance from the adjacent properties in Ringstone Local Character Area which front onto the green space. Views out toward the A505 and surrounding countryside are limited by a thick native planting buffer on the southern and western boundary. A glimpsed view north west is possible as the public footpath, linking from the A505 to Thriplow, enters the northern native planting buffer.

To the east, views of the adjoining Ringstone Local Character Area provide a positive edge, although slightly diminished by vehicular parking, often along the extent of the kerb line.

Whilst the green space is well contained and has excellent passive surveillance, the open expanse of grass and traffic noise from the A505 contributes to a sense of exposure and therefore is under used as an amenity facility.



F.139

Figure 139: Views across the open amenity grass toward the equipped area of play in the north west corner.



F.140

Figure 140: Public footpath access providing glimpsed views from the Local Character Area north west towards Thriplow.



F.141

Figure 141: Thick native buffer planting along the boundary screens majority of views out to A505 and surrounding countryside.



F.142

Figure 142: Local utilities infrastructure for adjacent dwellings in the south west corner of the open space.



F.143

Figure 143: Local Character Area 8 - Ringstone playing field and woodland location plan.

Constraints

- 1 A505 traffic noise reduces tranquillity and perceived comfort for recreational use.
- 2 Equipped area of play has limited age range and therefore may result in use by only a restricted target demographic.
- 3 Wide expanse of amenity grass gives the perception of being sparse and exposed with only one well-trodden public footpath route through the space.
- 4 The dominant use of amenity grass is expensive to maintain and has a large carbon footprint associated with its regular mowing regime.
- 5 Presence of parking congestion at the boundary of the green space diminishes the amenity value of the space and reduces inclusive accessibility.
- 6 Utilities infrastructure visually detracts from the green space.
- 7 Woodland, whilst offering an important habitat for wildlife, offers little amenity value to residents.
- 8 A lack of clear infrastructure, wayfinding, and community focus contributes to this amenity space being under used and therefore exposed to undesirable and antisocial activity.



F.144

Figure 144: Play equipment designed for young children with limited use for a wider age range contributes to it being an under used amenity facility.



F.145

Figure 145: Wide expanse of amenity grass has minimal biodiversity value, is expensive to maintain and has a large carbon footprint.

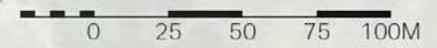


F.146
Figure 146: Unrestricted parking regularly limits access from the green space to the neighbouring residential area.



F.147
Figure 147: Only visible information board for the open space is not clear or in a prominent location.

AECOM



Opportunities

- A** Open up gap in boundary vegetation at public footpath entry point to frame views into and out of settlement and create an enhanced sense of arrival.
- B** Extend public footpath along southern boundary of Heathfield to connect to Duxford and Whittlesford beyond.
- C** Limit parking along the adjoining edge of Ringstone Local Character Area with sensitive planting to increase inclusive access to the green space and soften edge of development.
- D** Provide meandering access routes with areas of open glades within woodland for 'nature trail' experience for local residents.
- E** Enhance existing play equipment to include imaginative nature based play.
- F** Species-rich wildflower meadow with informally mown footpaths will break-up the expanse of amenity grass reducing mowing regimes, annual management costs and carbon footprint whilst increasing biodiversity.
- G** Log piles, hibernacula, bee hotels and other wildlife habitat features with information boards to increase biodiversity within the woodland area and engage community.
- H** Central area of mown amenity grass retained for informal 'kick-about' and other sports.



F.149

Figure 149: Example of open space access routes clearly signposted and visually prominent in the landscape.



F.150

Figure 150: Examples of informal seating areas within open woodland glades.



F.151
Figure 151: Example of creative nature based play, themed and used throughout the play spaces and 'pocket parks' within Heathfield.



F.152
Figure 152: Example of areas of low maintenance long rough grass providing definition to a space and increasing biodiversity.



F.153
Figure 153: Local Character Area 8 - Ringstone playing field and woodland opportunities plan.

3.10 Local Character Areas - constraints and opportunities

The site analysis of 8 Local Character Areas undertaken within this section has identified numerous Local Character Area specific constraints and opportunities. However, a series of common site-wide themes have emerged as follows:

Constraints

- Limited physical and visual connectivity between Local Character Areas, segregating communities and creating a sense of division within the settlement. Existing connecting footpaths are not immediately obvious and generally dark and unwelcoming.
- The main approach to Heathfield, via Heathfield Way, is dominated by oversized highway infrastructure which is defined by the mixed use commercial buildings adjacent. The residential identity of Heathfield is obscured,

contributing to a confused arrival experience.

- Existing green spaces are under used and disconnected with the surrounding community.
- Street scape is dominated by parking, causing accessibility restrictions and contributing to visual clutter throughout.
- Limited sustainable transport routes and access points from Heathfield to A505. Existing access points and path along A505 are narrow and unattractive contributing to an unpleasant user experience.

Opportunities:

- Celebrate the characteristics of the communities living within Heathfield whilst creating a united identity to the settlement.
- Create a network of existing green spaces, each with its own character and function, linked by a clear and comprehensive wayfinding strategy.

- Define street parking bays with trees and planting beds to reduce the visual dominance of the car whilst strengthening existing green corridors throughout the settlement.
- Reprioritise the approach to Heathfield via Heathfield Way to reflect the intimate scale of the residential use of Heathfield.
- Open up and clearly signpost footpath links to neighbouring Local Character Areas, green spaces and wider sustainable transport links.
- Maximise biodiversity and minimise annual maintenance cost of green spaces with creative nature based solutions that contribute to wider place making.
- Create a multifunctional space and all weather hub / sports pavilion for community led events.
- Promote the use of sustainable travel for residents and workers with additional services to the bus stop along Hurdles Way and user friendly footpath/cycleway along A505.



Figure 154: Well equipped play area in the centre of Heathfield - one of many under used green spaces within the settlement .

**Heathfield Neighbourhood
Masterplan**

04

4. Heathfield Neighbourhood Masterplan

A successful Neighbourhood Masterplan should be achievable and respond to the specific constraints and opportunities of the site and its wider context. It should also consider input from the local community.

It is important that the Neighbourhood Masterplan is flexible with capacity to adapt to unforeseen future changes whilst retaining the integrity of the original proposals.

Previous sections have analysed the defining characteristics (positive and negative) of Heathfield and its surrounding context. This section explores appropriate design solutions to the constraints and opportunities identified and illustrates

a series of key interventions on a Neighbourhood Masterplan.

The rationale for these interventions is explained in more detail and grouped into four themes which have been established by the Neighbourhood Planning Group through previous public consultation.

1. Green space, biodiversity and sustainable connections.
2. Streets and parking.
3. Identity and unity.
4. Community facilities.

4.1 Neighbourhood Masterplan

The following key interventions have been identified and illustrated on the Neighbourhood Masterplan on page 95. These are further explained in the remaining part of this section.

01 Existing play and fitness equipment retained and mown sports pitch marked-out for organised community sports. Remaining large expanse of amenity grass replaced with species-rich wildflower meadow and mown footpaths. Access points to be visibly opened up with clear wayfinding and defined circulatory paths for inclusive access.

02 All weather community hub / sports pavilion.

03 Multifunctional green space with creative signage and imaginative play features.

04 Tree planting in street curtilage for wayfinding and to regulate on street parking.

05 Multifunctional green space with creative signage, imaginative play features and clear pedestrian routes linking residential areas.

06 Multifunctional green space with creative signage, imaginative play features and provision for emergency vehicular access.

07 New pedestrian access routes from Hurdles Way to woodland through well-lit parking courtyards with good passive surveillance from neighbouring properties.

08 New meandering wildlife trails and open glades within woodland for seating, play and recreation.

09 Amenity grass replaced with areas of species-rich wildflower meadow, mown footpaths and a central informal 'kick-about' area. Access points to be visibly opened up with clear wayfinding and defined circulatory paths for inclusive access.

10 Tree planting within street curtilage to reduce the visual dominance of parked vehicles.

11 One way vehicular access route to limit required area for vehicular carriageway.

12 Tree planting to frame vistas and views of landmark buildings and features.

13 Additional planting to soften external boundary treatment to commercial units.

14 Reduced scale of roads and highway infrastructure with raised table to reduce traffic speed and to denote the residential character of Heathfield.

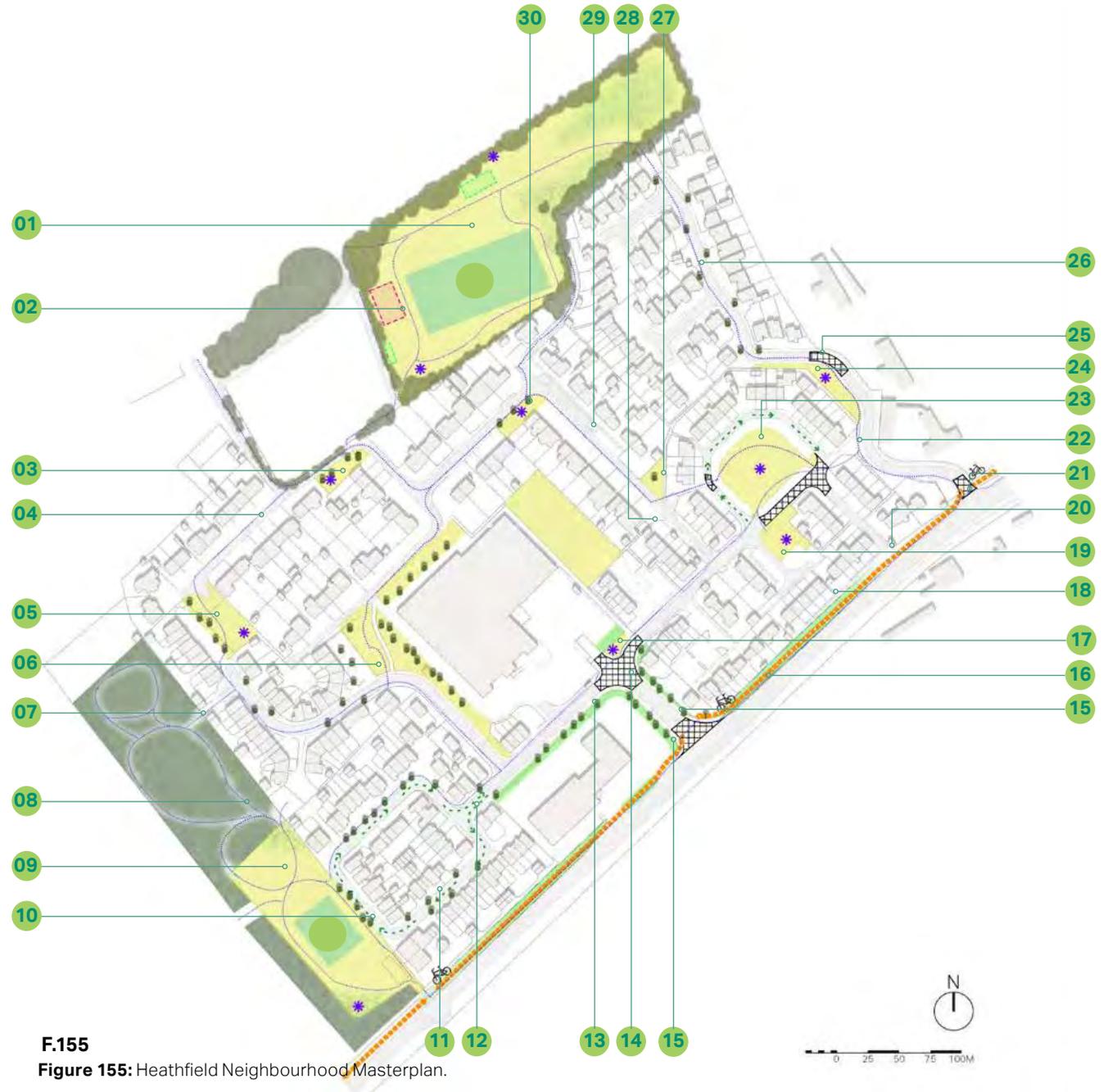
15 Planting to screen unattractive boundary treatments including traffic lights and pedestrian crossing and frame views of the main approach and exit to Heathfield.

16 Improved cycle and pedestrian access along A505, linked at various points to Heathfield via the southern boundary.

The remaining key interventions (18-30) are listed on page 96.

KEY: Heathfield Neighbourhood Masterplan

-  Woodland and canopy
-  Wildflower meadow / LNR
-  Extended green space
-  Existing green space
-  Street trees for wayfinding
-  Community hub / sports pavilion
-  Existing gym and playspaces
-  Walkable neighbourhood connections
-  Cycleway enhancements
-  One-way traffic route
-  Heathfield cultural / art trail locations
-  Traffic calming areas
-  Mown football pitch / 'kick-about' area



F.155
Figure 155: Heathfield Neighbourhood Masterplan.

17 Green space to become focal point of main approach to Heathfield with a clear and creative wayfinding art installation reflecting the identity of Heathfield.

18 Sustainable transport access point from Heathfield visually opened up with clear signage to create a safe and welcoming link to the enhanced cycle and pedestrian access along A505.

19 Multifunctional green space with creative signage and imaginative play features with clear pedestrian routes via a raised table linking to neighbouring green space to the north and sustainable transport access routes to the south along the A505.

20 Sustainable transport access point from Heathfield visually opened up with clear signage to create a safe and welcoming link to the enhanced cycle and pedestrian access along A505.

21 Secondary access roads of Heathfield visually linked with primary access route via Heathfield Way with raised table traffic calming measures and creative signage reflecting the identity of Heathfield.

22 Increase gap in wall and include creative signage to visually link Pepperslade with other areas in Heathfield.

23 Restrict parking around green space with trees and planting creating defined access points and routes to promote inclusive access, use and connections to other green spaces.

24 Multifunctional green space with creative signage and imaginative play features.

25 Raised table to reduce traffic speed on the approach to Pepperslade and denote the change of character to residential area of Heathfield.

26 Tree planting within street to restrict on street parking and create a vista framing access to Kingway playing field to the north.

27 Multifunctional green space with creative signage and imaginative play features linking to different residential areas within Heathfield.

28 Clear and welcoming access points to HeART equipped play area with traffic

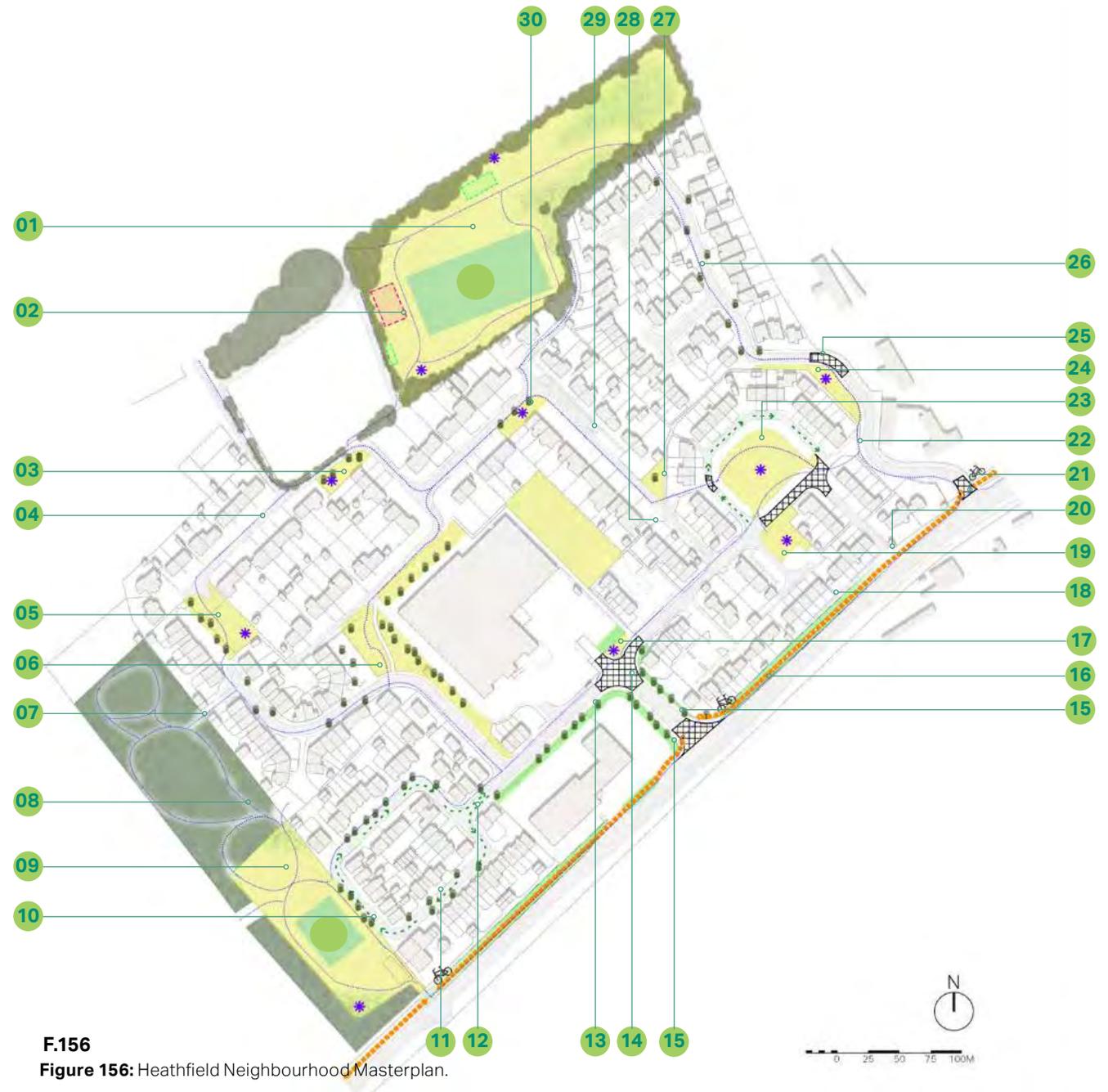
calming measures at the crossing point along Kingsway.

29 Tree planting with street to restrict on street parking and create a vista framing access to Heathfield Open Space to the north.

30 Multifunctional green space, creative signage and imaginative play features.

KEY: Heathfield Neighbourhood Masterplan

-  Woodland and canopy
-  Wildflower meadow / LNR
-  Extended green space
-  Existing green space
-  Street trees for wayfinding
-  Community hub / sports pavilion
-  Existing gym and playspaces
-  Walkable neighbourhood connections
-  Cycleway enhancements
-  One-way traffic route
-  Heathfield cultural / art trail locations
-  Traffic calming areas
-  Mown football pitch / 'kick-about' area



F.156
Figure 156: Heathfield Neighbourhood Masterplan.

4.2 Green space, biodiversity and sustainable connections

Heathfield has a comparatively large amount green space with even coverage throughout the settlement. Most of this green space is under used and could have higher biodiversity value with the application of a series of simple interventions as follows:

- Large areas of open space should be broken up into more intimate human scale spaces. This can be achieved with areas of informal planting and species-rich wildflower meadows with meandering mown grass paths.
- Smaller areas of detached green space within the settlement can be given a function with items of imaginative play, seating and art installations. Where possible furniture should be multifunctional e.g. forming a defensible barrier restricting parking.
- Green space should have clear access points and defined paths to key features of the space e.g. items of play or seating.
- Green spaces should be linked to each other with street trees and other forms of planting to create a network of green biodiverse corridors within the settlement, and assist with wayfinding.
- Green space should have its own identity, reflecting its scale and function. It should also have unifying features that connect with the wider green space network, this can be achieved by a uniformed palette of furniture, hard surface materials and signage, whilst having its own distinct theme with the use of planting and creative play or art installations.
- A sense of community ownership of all the green spaces should be fostered by engaging with residents as part of the design, implementation, and on-going management.
- Native species that provide a good source of food, nectar and habitat for local wildlife should be considered for planting on green spaces.
- Onerous long term management of green spaces such as regular cutting of amenity grass should be avoided or reduced and other more sustainable solutions should be considered e.g. annually cut wildflower meadows.



F.157

Figure 157: Sketch view A of proposed 'pocket park' of green space along Kingsway Local Character Area.

KEY: Green space extract

-  Woodland and canopy
-  Wildflower meadow
-  Extended green space
-  Existing green space
-  Street trees for wayfinding
-  Mown football pitch / 'kick-about' area
-  Sketch visual location



F.159

Figure 159: Heathfield Neighbourhood Masterplan - green space extract.



F.158

Figure 158: Sketch view B of species-rich wildflower meadow with mown grass paths at Heathfield Open Space.

4.3 Streets and parking

Streets that are safe and functioning well are crucial to the success of a place - Heathfield is no different. Currently there is a range of street typologies from shared spaces to large access routes with defined paths either side.

One common aspect to all the streets in Heathfield is the dominance of on street parking, in some cases restricting emergency vehicular access but more often that not, limiting inclusive access and adding clutter to the urban environment. The following interventions could be used to resolve these negative characteristics:

- At key locations to denote a change of character and use, such as an entrance to a residential area, a raised table shared surface should be used with 'rumbled' cobble sett ramps at the approach. The increased tyre noise from the cobbled setts and the shared surface will make drivers more aware of their speed. The lack of definition

between vehicular and pedestrian use will also create a sense of uncertainty slowing the driver down.

- In certain locations, such as Ringstone Local Character Area and Whitehall Gardens and Woburn Place Local Character Area, a one way circulatory system should be applied, this will reduce the need for two lanes and allow for additional areas of tree planting and defined parking bays.
- Street parking should be limited to locations where emergency access isn't blocked and inclusive access unhindered. This can be achieved by adding trees and planting beds within the carriageway to define parking bays, whilst avoiding long sections of parked vehicles and ensuring there is enough parking. Tree planting will also help to visually link green spaces and create framed internal vistas such as that of Hurdles Way looking towards Ringstone.
- The use of existing private garages, parking courtyards and driveways should be encouraged to reduce the amount of residential on street parking. This can be achieved through community engagement to promote a sense of individual ownership and accountability.
- Convenient sustainable transport connections such as an increased regular bus service from Heathfield and a safe and pleasant pedestrian and cycle path along A505 would create less reliance on the private car and therefore in the long term reduce the number of private vehicles in Heathfield. Employees at the commercial units can also use these facilities, reducing the parking requirements in the commercial areas which could be reallocated for residential visitor parking.
- Accessible car-share enterprise schemes located within Heathfield could provide an alternative to private vehicle ownership for infrequent users.

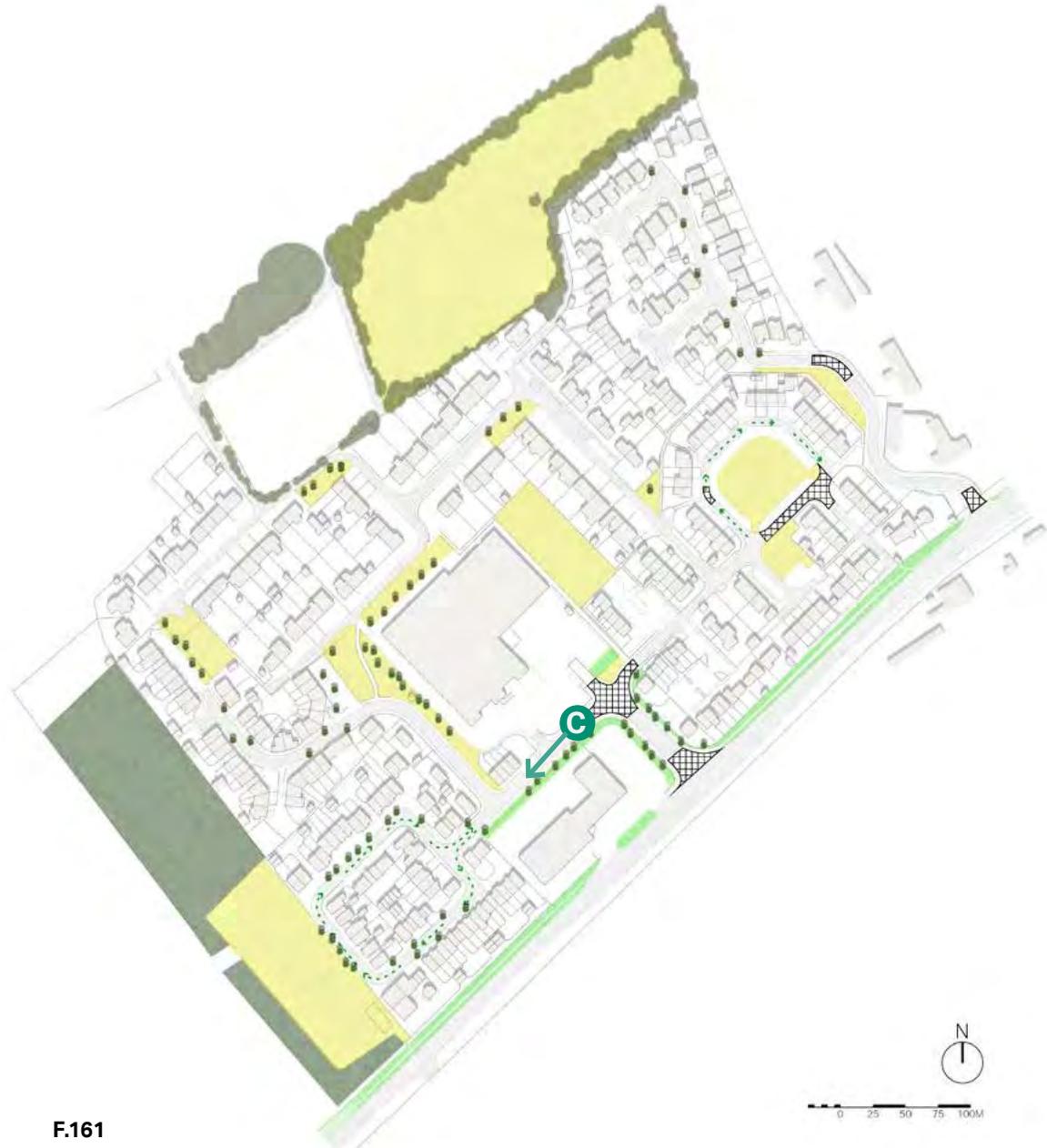
KEY: Streets and parking extract

-  Woodland and canopy
-  Extended green space
-  Existing green space
-  Street trees for wayfinding
-  Traffic calming measures
-  One way traffic
-  Sketch visual location



F.160
Figure 160: Sketch view C of proposed street tree planting framing an internal vista looking west toward Ringstone.

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F.161
Figure 161: Heathfield Neighbourhood Masterplan - streets and parking extract.

4.4 Identity and unity

As previously identified, five of Heathfield's eight Local Character Areas are residential, each with defining characteristics, some of which are different to the other Local Character Areas. This, in addition to the confused main approach via Heathfield Way, contributes to a disconnected place with a lack of a unified identity.

Creating unity and an identity to a place can be challenging and ultimately needs to be defined by the people that live and work there. The following interventions can assist with fostering Heathfield's unique sense of place.

- A common design language throughout Heathfield should be used to visually link one part with the other. This can be achieved by a select palette of surface materials, street furniture, and wayfinding signage. These items can be personalised with bespoke features such as emblems and graphics.
- Entrances and approaches are important locations to celebrate the

identity of a place and create connection to the wider context of the settlement. The most successful way of achieving this is with a series of interventions such as planting to frame and soften views, adding signage positioned in clear and prominent locations to identify the place and improve visibility to establish the function of the place.

- Community engagement with a professional artist or designer to

formulate a creative wayfinding and play space strategy that reflects the wider demographic of the residents and workers within Heathfield.

- Visual reference points such as landmark buildings, feature trees and art installations will assist with wayfinding and add vibrancy to a place without the use of unimaginative signage that can contribute to street clutter.



F.162

Figure 162: Sketch view D of proposed reconfiguration of Heathfield Way approach, framed with tree planting and green space as focal and arrival point to Heathfield.

KEY: Identity and unity extract

- Woodland and canopy
- Extended green space
- Existing green space
- Street trees for wayfinding
- Visual reference point (VRP)
- VRP Line of sight
- Heathfield cultural / art trail locations
- Sketch visual location



F.163

Figure 163: Heathfield Neighbourhood Masterplan - identity and unity extract

4.5 Community facilities

Whilst Heathfield is well provided for with regards to play and green space facilities, there are other facilities that the settlement is lacking, these are as follows:

- An all weather community hub / sports pavilion would provide a centre where a wide demographic of the community can meet for sports, craft, leisure and recreation. The position of it would help to activate Heathfield Open Space with spill-out functions for larger events using the adjacent green space. The use of the public bridleway sustainable link to Thriplow will be increased, providing access to the neighbouring village.
- Located near the main access point of Woburn Place, a bus stop with regular services to local settlements and facilities will reduce the reliance on private vehicular travel.

KEY: Community facilities

-  Bus stop
-  Woodland and canopy
-  Existing green space
-  Additional green space
-  Street trees for wayfinding
-  Walkable extended connections
-  Heathfield cultural / art trail locations
-  Incremental 5 min walking radii
-  Community hub / sports pavilion
-  Sketch visual location



F.164

Figure 164: Heathfield Neighbourhood Masterplan - community facilities.

Next Steps

05

5. Next Steps

This document builds on the work already undertaken by Thriplow and Heathfield Neighbourhood Planning Group in the development of a Neighbourhood Plan.

The recommendations are rooted in the engagement work that the Neighbourhood Planning Group has undertaken, combined with the specialist skills of AECOM's planners and urban designers.

The next section identifies a series of smaller and larger projects illustrated on the Neighbourhood Masterplan to assist with translating these proposals to something meaningful yet achievable on-the-ground.

5.1 List of actions

Small projects:

- Change management regime for Ringstone and Heathfield Open Space to reduce areas of amenity grass to be cut annually with mown meandering circulatory footpaths.
- Add hibernacula, insect refuges and 'bee hotels' and information signage to wildlife area associated with Heathfield Open Space and Ringstone woodland.
- Create access points, footpaths and glades within Ringstone playing field and woodland.
- Open up views of access points to Heathfield Open Space and Ringstone playing fields by clearing some boundary vegetation to frame views.
- Explore car-share enterprise scheme.

Large projects:

- Widen existing narrow gap in wall and create a more inclusive access arrangement between Woburn Place and Whitehall Gardens and Pepperslade.
- Define areas of visitor parking with street trees and planting throughout Heathfield including other traffic calming measures such as shared surface raised tables.
- Implement play space and green space strategy to all existing areas of green space within Heathfield.
- Reconfigure highway infrastructure, plant verges and create welcoming approach to both Heathfield Way and Pepperslade access points.
- Construct community hub / sports pavilion within Heathfield Open Space.
- Open up existing and create new sustainable access points to pedestrian and cycle route adjacent to A505. Widen and resurface existing path and plant verges where possible.

Next steps:

The recommended next steps for how to use the outcomes of this Neighbourhood Masterplan document are:

- Engage the community and apply for additional funding.
- Embed the document's content in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Engage with the Council to develop policies supporting the proposals.
- Engage with residents and landlords to begin public realm improvements.
- Work with those local organisations that can help to implement the recommendations.



F.165
Figure 165: Green space pedestrian cut through linking Kingsway to Hurdles Way.

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