

Draft Masterplan and Development Principles for Land South of Kington

May 2016

Prepared for Kington Neighbourhood Plan Group by
AECOM



My Community 

AECOM

Image: The site, looking south

Limitations

AECOM Infrastructure & Environment UK Limited (“AECOM”) has prepared this Report for the sole use of Kington Neighbourhood Plan Group (“Client”) in accordance with the Agreement under which our services were performed. No other warranty, expressed or implied, is made as to the professional advice included in this Report or any other services provided by AECOM.

Where the conclusions and recommendations contained in this Report are based upon information provided by others it is upon the assumption that all relevant information has been provided by those parties from whom it has been requested and that such information is accurate. Information obtained by AECOM has not been independently verified by AECOM, unless otherwise stated in the Report.

The methodology adopted and the sources of information used by AECOM in providing its services are outlined in this Report. The work described in this Report was undertaken in the period April 2016 to June 2016, although the evidence base goes wider, and is based on the conditions encountered and the information available during the said period of time. The scope of this Report and the services are accordingly factually limited by these circumstances.

Where assessments of works or costs identified in this Report are made, such assessments are based upon the information available at the time and where appropriate are subject to further investigations or information which may become available.

AECOM disclaim any undertaking or obligation to advise any person of any change in any matter affecting the Report, which may come or be brought to AECOM's attention after the date of the Report. Certain statements made in the Report that are not historical facts may constitute estimates, projections or other forward-looking statements and even though they are based on reasonable assumptions as of the date of the Report, such forward-looking statements by their nature involve risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from the results predicted. AECOM specifically does not guarantee or warrant any estimate or projections contained in this Report.

Where field investigations are carried out, these have been restricted to a level of detail required to meet the stated objectives of the services. The results of any measurements taken may vary spatially or with time and further confirmatory measurements should be made after any significant delay in issuing this Report.

Copyright
© This Report is the copyright of AECOM Infrastructure & Environment UK Limited. Any unauthorised reproduction or usage by any person other than the addressee is strictly prohibited.

Project Role	Name	Position	Actions Summary	Signature	Date
Researcher	Giuseppe Verdone	Urban designer	Research, site visit and drawings	Giuseppe Verdone	11.05.16
Project Manager/ Technical Specialist	Mark Hughes	Principal urban designer	Design revisions	Mark Hughes	31.05.16
Director / QA	Ben Castell	Technical Director	Approval of document	Ben Castell	31.05.16
Qualifying Body	Kington Neigh- bourhood Plan Group		Submitted comments		12.05.16
Project Coordinator	Ffion Batcup	Project Coordinator		Ffion Batcup	31.05.16

1

1.0 *Introduction*

2

2.0 *Policy Context*

3

3.0 *Site Analysis*

4

4.0 *Development Proposal*

5

5.0 *Design Principles*



1. Introduction

Kington is a small market town, of medieval origin, situated in the North West of Herefordshire, in close proximity to the border with Wales (2.0 miles). Located on the drovers' road along Hergest Ridge, Kington became important as a market town and still hosts a livestock market.

The Kington Area Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared by a Working Group including Councillors from Kington Town Council, Huntington Parish Council, Kington Rural and Lower Harpton Parish Council, together with volunteers from the local community. The plan's draft Mission Statement is:

“For Kington and surrounding parishes to be a vibrant, safe and caring community where residents enjoy living and working and feel valued, with a sustainable local economy and a high quality environment.”

Through the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) neighbourhood planning programme, AECOM has been commissioned to assist the Kington Neighbourhood Plan Group to explore masterplanning of a potential housing site, and prepare a high level design code to guide the development opportunity on that site.

The Working Group, assisted by advice from a number of consultants, assessed the merits of a number of potential residential development sites. At the end of this sifting process, the Working Group identified the site currently under consideration in this document - hereafter called Land South of Kington - as a pivotal site worthy of further investigation. The Land South of Kington has been identified for potential housing development by the Draft Kington Area Neighbourhood Plan.

This document sets out the context within which the Land South of Kington might be developed, a proposed layout that would deliver approximately 100 homes and the development principles which should inform the delivery of that development opportunity. This design development process is informed by some of the work carried out by other consultants, as well as AECOM's own baseline assessment of the nature and extent of the development opportunity on this site.

The following steps were undertaken to produce this report:

- Initial meeting and site visit;
- Urban design analysis;
- Site visit and meeting with Kington Area Neighbourhood Plan management representative;
- Preparation of options for development of the site;
- Preparation of design principles, and
- Preparation of this Design Code, for review by the Neighbourhood Planning Group.

1.1 Locational analysis

Kington sits within the valley of the River Arrow, surrounded by higher lying land, including Hergest Ridge, to the west. The attractive riverside setting, and the easy access to the wider countryside and a number of strategic walking routes, including Offa's Dyke, have resulted in the Kington becoming a hub for recreational walking in the border country between England and Wales.

The current study area, the Land South of Kington, is situated a few minutes walk from the town's commercial centre, focused on High Street, where most of the local shops and services are located, as well as the town's library and primary and secondary schools. There are number of attractive buildings within the historic town centre, some of which, although they possess frontages which are suggestive of the Georgian period, are clearly much older.

Located to the south of the River Arrow, the main site consists of two green fields framed by thick hedgerows. The fields making up the site are drawn from a longer list of sites considered and the original notation (K12 and K13) is retained in this document. The parcel shown as providing access, although not part of the main development opportunity site, is important because it contains the most readily achievable access route into the development land. This parcel is currently in third part ownership, although it may well pass to Kington Town Council. If the road was to be routed through this parcel, there would need to be compensatory provision of open space elsewhere, most likely on land within the site.

The site is currently given over to agricultural uses, principally pasture. The adjacent land is also largely green field with the exception of the eastern and northern boundary, as well as some parts of the western boundary, where urban development immediately abuts the site.

The A44 road passes around the town, effectively functioning as a relief road. This re-routing of traffic helps to alleviate the pressure on the town centre which resulted from traffic passing through the town via High Street. The nearest train station is located at Knighton and bus services are provided to Newtown, Powys, Llandridnod Wells, Knighton, Presteigne, Leominster and Hereford.



Figure 1.1 - Aerial photo

This page left blank



2. Policy Context

This section reviews the baseline position with regard to local policy and sets the development opportunity in the context of planning policy as it relates to residential development in Kington.

2.1 Local Plan policy

Following a detailed assessment of a number of sites by the Neighbourhood Planning Team the Land South of Kington site has been identified as a Potential site for the bulk of new housing required by the Hereford Local Plan Core Strategy 2011-2031 (October 2015). The Core Strategy allocates 200 homes to Kington. Of this number, 40 have already been provided and it is proposed that 80-100 of the remainder are provided on this site.

Policy KG1 provides guidance on the form and nature of this housing development. The housing requirements in that policy are as follows:

Policy KG1 – Development in Kington

Kington will accommodate around 200 new homes during the plan period. A Neighbourhood Development Plan will allocate sites to meet this level of housing. Development proposals for Kington will be encouraged where they:

- *deliver affordable housing in accordance with the requirements of Policy H1;*
- *provide a mix of market and affordable house sizes and types that meet the requirements of Policy H3 and the needs identified in the latest version of the Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment;*
- *enable an overall density of up to 35 dwellings per hectare;*
- *enable home working;*
- *make provision for green infrastructure and amenity space, including play facilities, community access to open space, and the linking of habitats into ecological networks within and surrounding the town;*
- *make provision for or improve walking and cycling links to the town centre,*
- *schools, shopping and employment;*

A high level of public open space and play space provision on the site can create the backbone for site landscape. The Core Strategy has generalised policies on this provision. (Core Strategy OS1 and OS2) The Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan, which is now superseded by the Core Strategy, provided more detailed guidance on play, open space and car parking provision within housing developments and this Masterplan draws on the earlier guidance:

RST3 Standards for outdoor playing and public open space

The following overall minimum standards of open space provision to meet the needs of all will be sought throughout the County until such a time as an assessment of need has been produced and local standards of provision established:

- *Outdoor playing space: 2.4 hectares per 1000 population, comprising 1.6 hectare for outdoor sport and 0.8 hectare for children's playing space;*
- *Public open space: 0.4 hectares per 1000 population, and*

The standards will be applied in considering further provision, including open space to be provided as part of housing schemes, and in assessing proposals that could lead to the loss of existing facilities.

The Core Strategy is silent on appropriate parking provision within estates. The UDP provides guidance and that is used in this document.

H16 Car parking

New housing developments will be subject to a maximum off-street car parking provision of an average of not more than 1.5 spaces per dwelling, with no minimum level of provision other than parking for disabled people. Site densities and off-street parking provision should reflect site location, the type of housing to be provided, the types of household likely to occupy the development, and the availability of public transport.

Within the Core Strategy supplementary guidance is provided on site choice and development (New Homes Para 4.4.3)

Developing peripheral sites will require compromise in terms of effect upon the landscape. Choice of sites should seek those with least impact and where the provision of significant landscape and townscape mitigation measures can best be achieved. Phasing will be necessary to overcome current infrastructure constraints.

In making the choice of the Land South of Kington Site the Neighbourhood Plan Team has received landscape and design guidance which reflects these policy obligations from Carly Tinkler CMLI and OHA Architects.

This advice emphasises that choice and development of the site should be landscape-led, informed by studies of local landscape characteristics and a full analysis of views and visual amenity with a strong emphasis on local distinctiveness and sense of place thus meeting design and landscape policies in the Core Strategy (especially policies SS6, RA2, LD1 – LD4).

This draft masterplan seeks to achieve these policy obligations by retaining and enhancing existing landscape cover and a housing layout responsive to the topography of the site. Most specifically great attention is paid to the landscaping of southern and western boundaries of the site because of the potential impact on the wider landscape. This landscape sensitivity is highlighted by the site boundary to the south and west also being the proposed settlement boundary for Kington.



Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan

Saved and Deleted Policies Introduction
March 2010



2.2 Site context

As seen in the photograph, opposite, the site nestles in the north facing slopes of the higher ground located to the south of Kington.

As noted, opposite, the landscape consultant appointed to the Town Council advised that the site is relatively well contained and capable of accommodating sensitively designed development. The aspect, topography and position of the site, relative to the surrounding countryside, means that development can be inserted into the landscape, forming part of a wider vista where open landscape is still the dominant component in the view, albeit with the urban area of Kington in the foreground.

This relationship with the existing urban area is important. The site's ability to accommodate development is a product of there being urban areas located immediately to the east and north, which allows for development to knit together with the existing urban area rather than create an isolated entity.

This notion of sensitively designed development which knits with the existing urban area, while respecting the wider landscape setting, has informed the design exercise set out in the pages below.



Figure 2.1 - View towards the site, looking south



3. Site Analysis

This section explores site constraints with regard to its environment, morphology, landscape and built environment. A site analysis plan, summarising all of these issues, serves as the starting point for the preparation of design proposals.

3.1 Landscape & Topography

The Land South of Kington comprises four parcels of land, as shown on the plan, opposite. The land that the site occupies is given over to agricultural uses, primarily pasture. The land falls away from a high point of 177m AOD (in the southwest corner of K13) to a low point (in the southeast corner of K12) of approximately 155m AOD. K13 is, in relative terms, flatter than K12, which has a more pronounced fall from its southern boundary adjacent to the hedge that separates it from K13, to its northern edge.

Beyond the site, the land falls away to the north, towards the River Arrow, while to the east, west and south, the landscape is undulating, with relatively small variations in topography before one reaches the higher land that forms the boundary and extent of the Arrow valley.

As noted, Land South of Kington is largely pasture with mature hedges and scrub vegetation demarcating the edges of the site as well as providing an internal boundary between K12 and K13. These mature hedges are a key characteristic of site, and it is envisaged that they should, as far as possible, be retained. A pond habitat is located in close proximity to the northern boundary, but beyond the site.

There are a number of open fields to the west of the site beyond Kingswood Road, and to the south, where large pockets of mature trees and woodland lie. To the north, beyond a narrow strip of residential development, there is an attractive recreation ground bounded by the River Arrow. To the east, more recent developer-led residential development is accessed off Old Eardisley Road.



Figure 3.1 - Landscape and Topography Analysis

3.2 Movement & Access

The site is located on the southern fringe of the urban area of Kington, approximately 10 minutes walk from the High Street. Pedestrian and vehicular access is currently achieved via Headbrook Road and then Kingswood Road. There is vehicular access via a couple of field gates on Kingswood Road, but it is proposed that a new access point is likely to be taken from Old Eardisley Road, from the east. However, in order to deliver this new access, it might be necessary to upgrade the junction of Headbrook and Old Eardisley Roads.

It should be noted that a main access via Kingswood Road is not anticipated because of the potential difficulty of upgrading the junction with Headbrook Road and the country lane character of Kingswood Road itself. The principal access will, almost certainly, come from the east, off Old Eardisley Road.

There is a network of pedestrian routes adjacent to the site, particularly to the west. Any development proposals for the site should seek to maintain these routes, enhance the existing connectivity and, where possible, extend the network, especially to the east of the site. It is envisaged that the existing pedestrian routes to the west would continue to provide a quick and easy access to the town centre, with existing access points from the site retained and new ones introduced, wherever possible.

Bus stops and bus routes are located further along Headbrook Road, to the north. These stops are within walking distance and link the site with the town centre and surrounding towns via routes 461, 462 and 463.



Figure 3.2 - Movement and Access Analysis

3.3 Land Use & Facilities

As the plan, opposite, shows, the site is located relatively close to the centre of Kington and the shops, services and amenities focused on High Street.

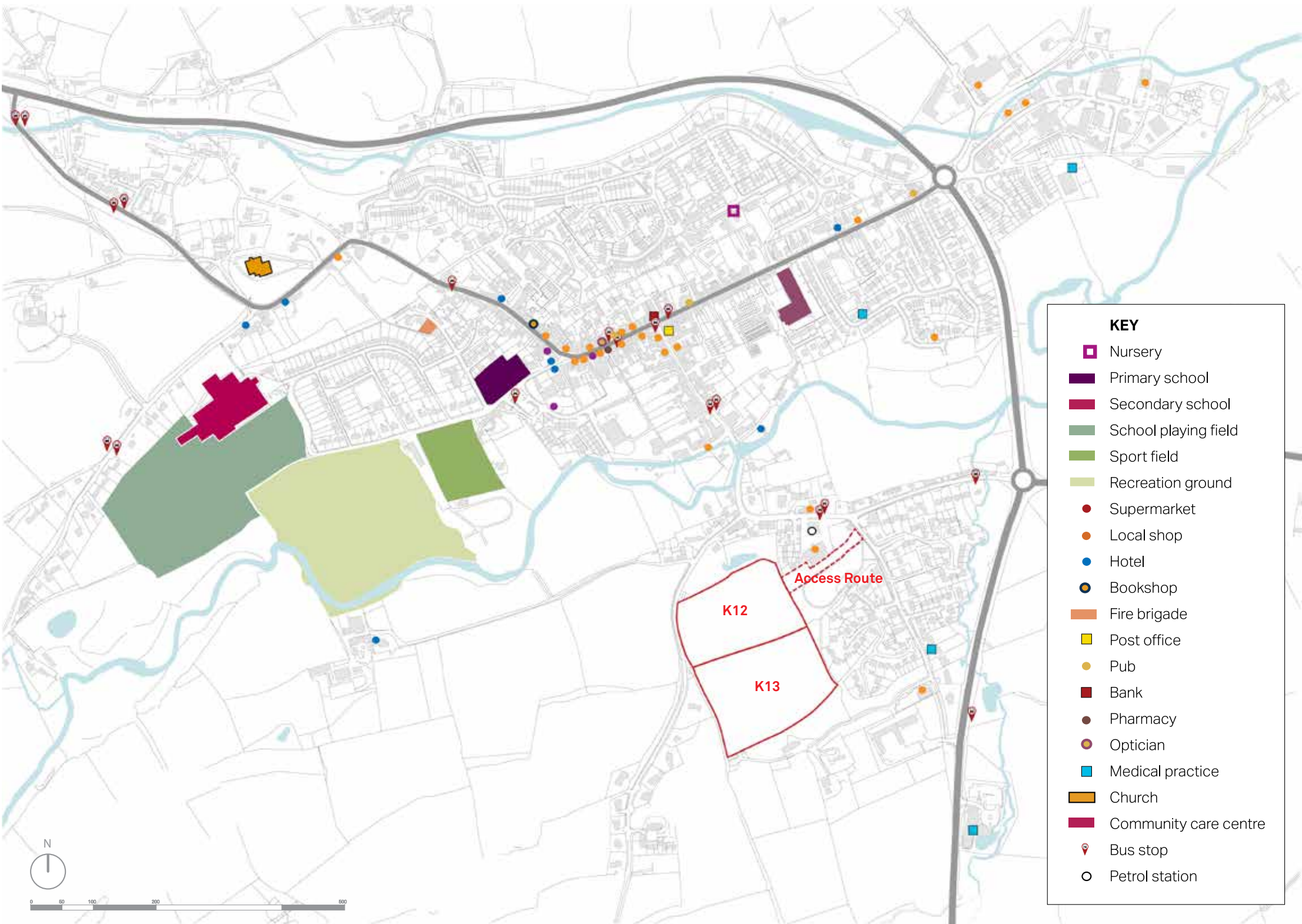
Walking distances to the centre, from most neighbourhoods within Kington, are relatively short, making for an easily walkable and accessible town. The Land South of Kington is no different and, with the retained pedestrian routes via Kingswood Road, it is envisaged that the new development will have relatively high levels of accessibility to the town centre and its services and amenities, including the schools located immediately to the west.

3.4 Site Analysis

The Land South of Kington is well located and favourably disposed to accommodate development.

As the plan on the following page illustrates, the site is outside the areas of flood risk emanating from the River Arrow. The land, while steep, is relatively even in its fall from south to north and it is clear that while the topography could be modified to accommodate development, there is also the opportunity to use that same topography to create an interesting townscape with a roofscape that helps to characterise and add interest to the site, both in long and shorter distance views.

There are issues relating to adjacent property, which will require careful positioning of development to avoid overlooking, but the relatively enclosed nature of the site (with hedgerows along almost the entire site boundary) means that inter-visibility is less than one might imagine.



The hedgerows along the boundaries (especially the northern and southern edges), in conjunction with the hedgerow that separates K12 and K13, provides an instant landscape structure within which development would sit. This is important when one considers just how new development might fit within the context of the existing town and its wider landscape setting. These important landscape features must be retained and enhanced, ideally by being integrated into the open space component of the development. Additional planting within the newly planned open space, streets and private gardens will help to reinforce the existing landscape structure. It is not proposed that development should be hidden from view, but that it should sit within a landscape matrix. This would result in long distance views, especially from the north, showing the site having development intermingled with substantial tree planting - a common feature of long distance views of the existing urban area of Kington.

Access is a key issue and it is important to consider how it might best be delivered via a new route from the east. Kingswood Road is unlikely to be able to deliver the principal site access because the current junction alignment, lacks footpaths and the proximity of buildings to the carriageway affect forward visibility on the junction, hence the need for access via Old Eardisley Road. To achieve this, some of the land at the north of the existing open space will be required, and it is proposed that any loss of open space, as a consequence of delivering a new access in this way, would be mitigated by the delivery of additional open space within the Land South of Kington, in excess of that required by planning policy. It should be noted that the delivery of a new road through this parcel, with the civil engineering works that would be required, would potentially create an opportunity to deal with some of the flooding issues currently affecting the new development to the west of Old Eardisley Road.



Figure 3.4 - Summary Site Analysis



4. Development Proposal

This section sets out the spatial options considered as part of the design development process and a final, preferred development option, which was presented to the Kington Neighbourhood Plan team for their consideration and approval.

4.1 Development Proposals

The development proposals are predicated on delivering an appropriate number of homes in such a way as to maintain the key landscape features (hedges and boundaries), retain the existing connections with the wider landscape and provide a setting for development that is attractive, accessible and capable of delivery.

The spatial arrangement of development, as proposed, has the potential to deliver the target number of homes, in a mix and range (density, house types, tenure mix) that would provide a more balanced and efficient use of land.

There is also a relatively even apportionment of development opportunity across K12 and K13, each with its own open space component that allows for a more easily achievable phased delivery of development.

Access is achieved via a new junction on Old Eardisley Road. The alternative route, via Kingswood Road, is not considered to be suitable, because the junction with Headbrook Road is too constrained to allow for safe pedestrian and vehicular movements.

This option is considered to offer the most efficient use of available land.

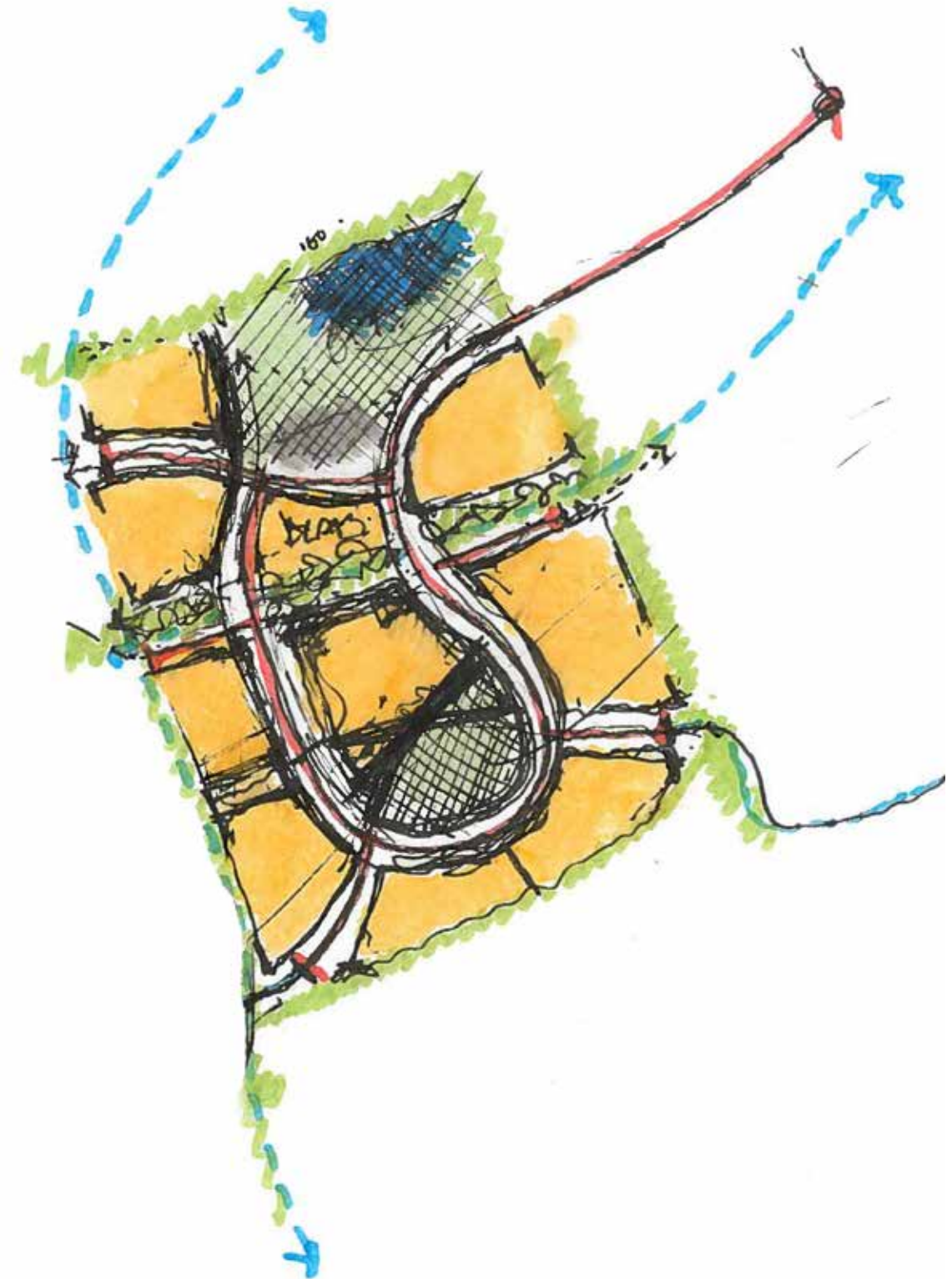


Figure 4.1 - Development Proposals Concept Sketch

4.2 Development Principles Plan

A Development Principles Plan was prepared, to set out the key spatial components of the preferred development approach. These are:

1. Access to the site via a new road (and pedestrian route) off Old Eardisly Road - this might entail junction improvement works on Headbrook and Old Eardisley Roads.
2. A principal access route which loops around the site, providing access and structure to the development parcels. It would change its character, depending on which part of the site it is located, with the southern section being more of a shared priority route, and the northern section, close to the site entrance being more of a formal road in terms of its design and character.
3. A network of secondary and tertiary routes, all of which would be shared access/pedestrian priority, would extend from the principal route, providing access to development parcels and potential connections to open space and the wider network of pedestrian routes beyond the site.
4. The northern public open space would be a multi-functional space, accommodating flood attenuation features, children's play and general amenity space.
5. The central, east-west hedgerow would be integrated into the open space network, providing structure to the development overall and a convenient edge, for the purposes of future phasing of development delivery, should it be required.
6. The southern open space is in the form of a village green, with a broad crescent of development to either side. This space gives focus and creates a particular character for development in this part of the site.
7. The existing hedgerows/structure planting on the site boundaries will be retained and enhanced to help knit the development together with the existing built and natural environments.
8. This is an important link space, connecting Parcels B and C, albeit via pedestrian movement only. The space either side of the footpath creates a single entity, the last of the three signature spaces that give focus to development and help create character and a sense of place.
9. The existing pedestrian route is retained and integrated into the site, allowing for connections back in to Kington town centre and also out into the wider countryside.



Figure 4.2 - Development Principles Plan

4.3 Illustrative Masterplan

The actual form of development, as it will be delivered at Land South of Kington, will be arrived at following a more detailed process of design exploration, based on a more comprehensive assessment of the site's constraints and opportunities. However, it is helpful to show how development might be arranged in accordance with the general development principles set out above.

The Illustrative Masterplan, opposite, shows how development could be arranged in such a way as to deliver the key open space components that give structure and character to the proposals. It also clearly shows a variety of development opportunity, with smaller and larger units arranged in short terraces, as semi-detached pairs and as single dwellings set within larger plots. There is an implied mix of tenure across the site, in accordance with planning policy.

It is worth noting that the development parcels, as set out in the Development Principles Plan, above, allow for relatively deep back gardens throughout the site. This is a deliberate attempt to create a more flexible plan, where garden space is part of the green infrastructure and helps to contribute to the sense of place of the wider development.

The Illustrative Masterplan shows the hierarchy of routes with the only formal road space being the short section along the northern edge that connects with the access route.

The Illustrative plan is just below the notional target of 100 homes.



Figure 4.3 - Illustrative Masterplan

This page left blank



5. Design Principles

This section sets out more detailed design guidance in respect of the general layout of development at Land South of Kington. It also includes more detailed commentary on the types of materials, boundary treatments, massing and form of development, drawing on local precedents and examples.

5.1 Movement & Access

The key to structuring the site, and providing access to development parcels, is the access and movement framework.

The plan, opposite, sets out how this key component of the site might be arranged relative to the Illustrative Masterplan, and drawing on the themes addressed in the Development Principles Plan.

There is a clear hierarchy of routes with the access route being the primary level of movement, which then breaks down, very quickly, into secondary and tertiary routes across the majority of the site.

The Development Principles Plan, and the associated Illustrative Masterplan, do not allow for a standard developer access road throughout the site. While access must be maintained for service and emergency vehicles, the Development Principles Plan envisages a network of routes that is predominantly shared/ pedestrian priority, with very low design speeds being the norm.

This network of shared/pedestrian priority routes integrates seamlessly with new and existing footpaths which permeate through and pass along the edge of public open space, creating a highly accessible and permeable new neighbourhood for Kington.



Figure 5.1 - Movement and Access

5.2 Green & Blue Infrastructure

There is also a network and a hierarchy of open space that derives from the Development Principles Plan. This sequence of open spaces provides focus and a sense of place for the built development, integrates the new development into the wider built and natural environments and, of course, provides the new residents with amenity space, play space and a chance to interact with the environment close to their homes. As noted above, the quantum of open space provision should allow for the re-provision of open space lost as a consequence of the delivery of the new access route from Old Eardisley Road.

At every opportunity, this network of open space must seek to integrate existing features. These existing features comprise, for the most part, the hedgerows around the edge of the site and the hedgerow, running east-west, which delineates the boundary between K12 and K13.

In certain locations, within open space, it will be necessary to construct flood attenuation features, which might be temporary or permanent bodies of water. These features, while functional, can also be aesthetically pleasing and have ecological benefit, and should be carefully located and designed to maximise each of these aspects.

In addition to this network of open spaces, private gardens, both front and rear, are an important part of the wider green and blue infrastructure. On site rainwater capture and infiltration into garden space, tree planting and habitat creation are key features of gardens that can help contribute to the overall quality and performance of the wider green and blue infrastructure. The treatment of front gardens, in particular, can help contribute to the sense of place and it is proposed that there should be few hard structures (walls and fences) to mark front boundaries and, instead, low hedges, shrub and perennial planting should be used. Where walls are used, these should be in materials that are complementary to the palette of materials used in the main buildings, consistent with the heights and detailing of adjacent structures and allow for planting to be integrated into the edge treatment.

Taken together, the public and private components of the green and blue infrastructure network tend towards the creation of a new neighbourhood for Kington whose character can be described as greener, softer and more open than other parts of the town.



Figure 5.2 - Green and Blue Infrastructure

5.3 Townscape

Development is arranged in a series of smaller parcels with a maximum of 12 dwellings in any one parcel. Each parcel has a relationship with open space, in some shape or form, whether it be fronting onto one of the three, key open spaces, the central linear space created by the retention of the central hedgerow or a combination of the two. Many of the parcels also have garden space that backs onto the hedgerows that bound the site. While it might be possible to integrate the hedges into the garden spaces, it is rare that this solution is successful, in the longer term. It is, therefore, proposed that the boundary hedgerows be included as part of the open space network, subject to the same maintenance and management regime and not given to owners of individual properties to manage.

Generally, buildings will sit within the development plot in such a way as to allow for a small setback from the back of the kerb/public realm. This setback might be anything from 1-4 metres, depending on the location, but the intention is that these setbacks will not be covered in hard landscape but, instead, shall be planted or grassed, with boundaries demarcate by hedgerows.

Buildings will be arranged with their frontages perpendicular to the road line and in such a way as to create a relatively complete sense of enclosure (allowing for openings for parking, access, etc. and the varying setbacks of building lines from development plot lines). Splayed units on corners of plots are acceptable.

As noted, above, many of the development parcels face onto the major open spaces, creating key frontages which will have to be carefully designed to deliver a coherent and consistent character and form. In addition, there are a number of points within the development, at junctions or the termination of short and middle-distance views, where landmark buildings, with a specific architectural treatment, might be appropriate. It is important that any future design exploration should take the townscape principles, opposite, as a starting point for that exercise.

Buildings can move back and forth within the setback parameters described above and have varying heights, but it is essential that groups of buildings be designed coherently, so that the pattern of heights and setbacks is consistent, can be read as a single piece of development intent and contributes positively to the wider townscape.

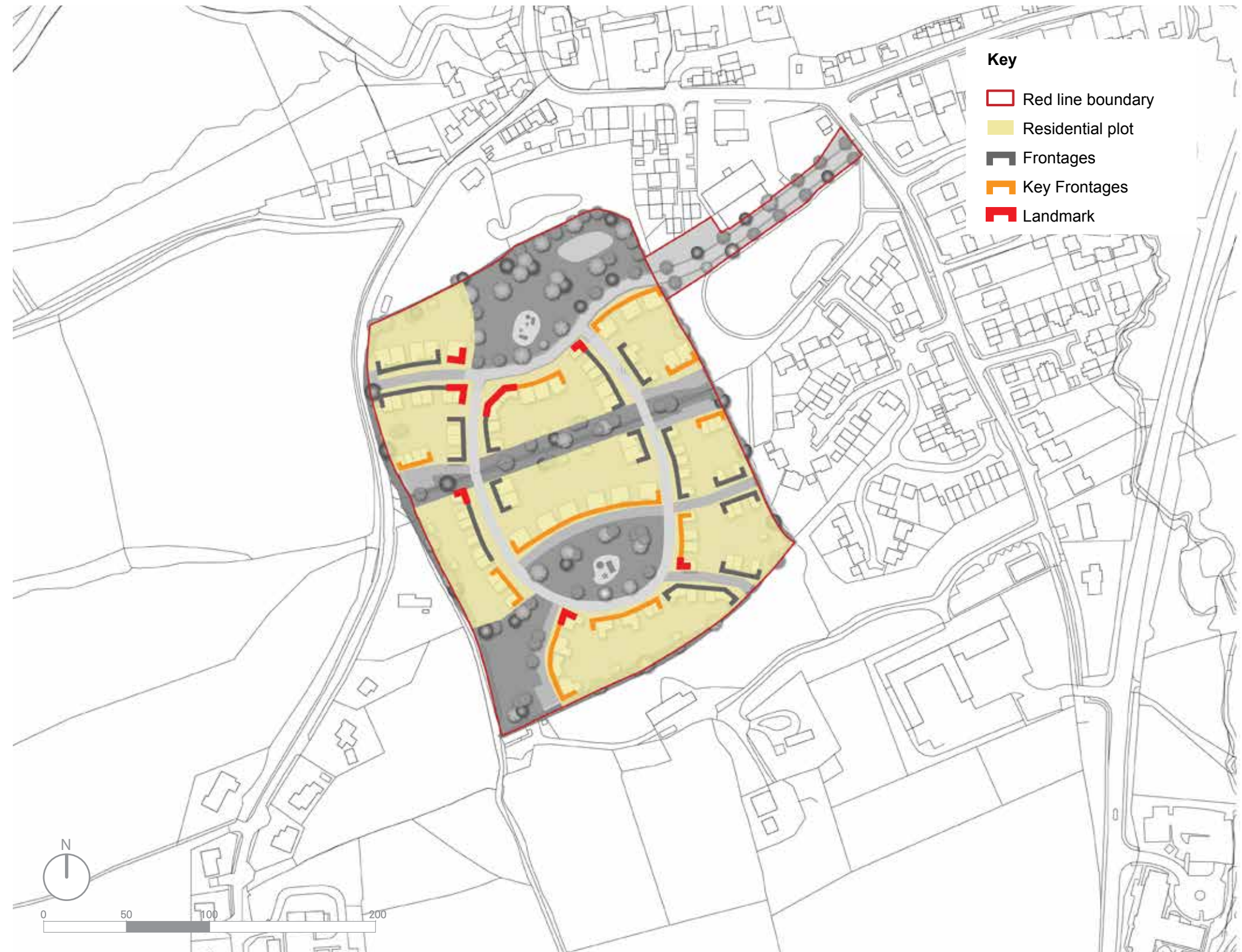


Figure 5.3 - Townscape

5.4 Buildings Heights

As noted, above, the design philosophy which underpins the preferred development option does not propose to hide new buildings behinds landscape buffers. On the contrary, it proposes that built development should be visible, but set within a substantial landscape structure that reflects the pattern of development which prevails though much of the rest of Kington.

To that end, and bearing in mind the relatively dynamic topography which creates a land form that falls from 177m AOD in the south west corner to 155m AOD in the north east corner, there is an opportunity to vary building heights in certain parts of the site.

This variation would help to contribute to the characterisation and sense of place of any new development and would also help to deliver a variety of different types of accommodation within the site.

Given the prevailing land form and the potential for existing and new landscape structures to provide the setting for built development, it is proposed that the three parcels indicated on the plan opposite in the top left hand corner, would be potentially capable of accommodating buildings of up to three storey. This is not to say that all buildings should be three storeys, as there will be a need to assess how the location of taller buildings affects neighbouring development and how it fits with the townscape principle set out previously.

Elsewhere within the site, as a consequence of topography, potential impacts on adjacent development and visibility in medium and longer-distance views, it is proposed that 2 storeys is the maximum building height.

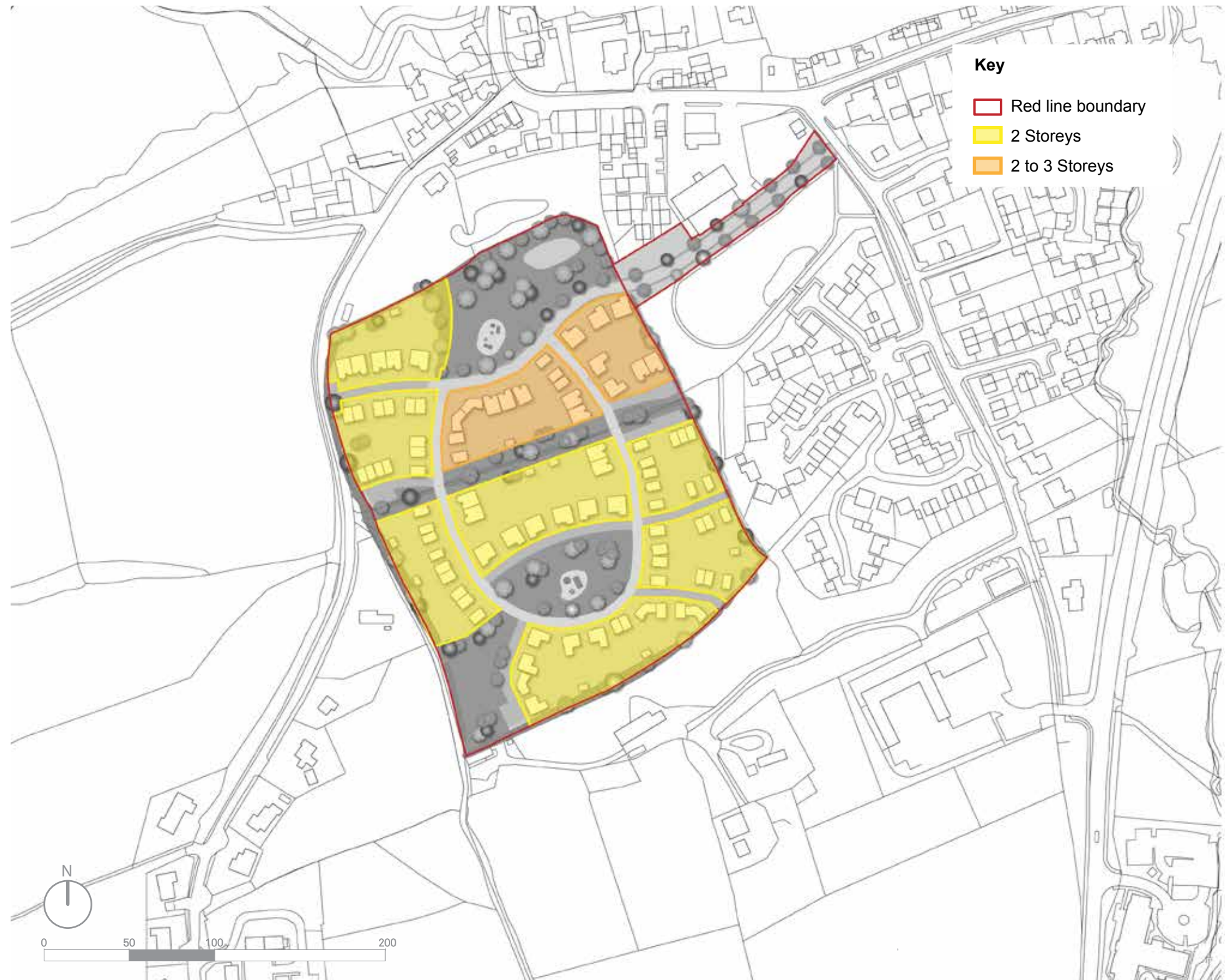


Figure 5.4 -Building Heights

5.5 Parking

Parking is always an issue for any development proposal, regardless of the scale or nature of development.

The Illustrative Masterplan has a set of assumptions relating to parking which would allow for a relatively high level of provision, without a major imposition of parking on the shared priority streets which form the majority of the public realm.

As shown, on the plan opposite, the majority of parking would be located on plot, primarily to the side of the property. There is scope for some component of parking on street, to provide visitor parking or as part of a suite of interventions in the highway designed to reduce vehicle speeds. Parking on street would also help enliven the street, in a way that parking courts, to the rear of buildings, would not. On-street visitor parking will be provided, such that it meets policy requirements.

Parking provision will be an issue that will be explored in more detail in subsequent stages of the planning and design process. As a consequence, the relative mix of on-plot and on-street parking and its general arrangement is subject to further design exploration and discussion. However, the key point to note is that this Illustrative Masterplan does not envisage rear parking courts in any shape or form on any part of this development.



Figure 5.5 - Parking

5.6 Residential Workspaces

While the plan is traditional in its form, reflecting the pattern of development which prevails through the rest of Kington, it allows for more contemporary usage of plots. In particular, there is an opportunity for workspaces to be created either as part of the main building envelope or in separate buildings elsewhere in the plot. The plan, opposite, suggests this potential, but allows for the delivery of such spaces to be achieved in a variety of different ways, as long as it does not undermine the primary, residential, land use.



Figure 5.6 -Residential Workspaces

5.7 Development Character

It is helpful to consider how the development might actually look once it has been built out in accordance with the Development Principles Plan and the design guidance set out above.

The sketch opposite shows how the site might look in a view from the south-west corner across the site back towards the main urban area of Kingston, to the north.

Location of Viewpoint (from south-west)



Figure 5.7- Sketch view from the South-west

The sketch view, opposite, is taken from the opposite corner (from the north-east, looking back across the site). It demonstrates the same principles of place making, townscape and landscape structure.

Location of Viewpoint (from northeast)



Figure 5.8- Sketch View from the North-east

5.8 Design Principles - Materials

There are some materials, colour tones and textures that occur regularly in the built environment of Kington. While architectural styles have changed over time, three different approaches to facade treatment have persisted:

- Locally sourced stone (in a variety of sizes and used either in a variety of ways, from rough masonry through to formal masonry) - typically, these are a mix of limestones and siltstones;
- Reddish, orange brick (with or without trim and string courses), and
- Rendered/painted facades.

It is not uncommon to see different materials used in combination, for example render or stone on a main facade, with brick elsewhere.

Development at Land South of Kington should continue to use this same palette of materials, but with the emphasis stone and brick on the principal facades and landmark buildings.



5.9 Design Principles - Boundary Treatments

As noted above, it is proposed that front boundaries should be less formal and contain as much in the way of planting as possible. Where feasible, hedges and mixed planting should be used to demarcate the boundary between private property and the public realm, but also between adjoining private property.

Where structures are used, they should be designed to be integrated with planting, using materials that are in keeping with, and complementary to, the surrounding built development.



5.10 Design Principles - Massing & Roof Lines

Typically, built development in Kington is older, which results in a particular form and detailing that reflects the period it was constructed. While this Design Code is not intended to give architectural guidance, there are some development principles that relate to townscape, character and the degree to which any new development can be integrated into the existing context (both built and natural) and middle and longer-distance views.

To that end, it is envisaged that development at Land South of Kington will avoid more modern roof lines and adopt a form and massing that reflects the prevailing pattern of development in the town.

Roof lines will tend to present eaves, rather than gable ends, on the principle frontage, except in those occasional circumstances where an accent might be required in the facade treatment or there are other reasons relating to the overall form and massing of the building.

Roofs should also be designed with a gradient that conforms with regulations and is structurally sound, but should avoid excessive heights that invite applications for extensions into the roof space. Given the visually sensitive location of this site, it is important that the roofscape, as seen in medium and longer-distance views is, and remains, coherent over time and avoids ad hoc, unsightly and unbalanced extensions to back or front. Extensions into the roof space which rely on dormer windows for internal illumination would be acceptable.

Within the development, all houses should have chimneys integrated into the design of the roof line - this is a very common feature of residential development in Kington. It would also help to create a more interesting and characterful townscape, where the combination of a syncopated roofscape, with chimneys provide rhythm, and topography would provide added interest.



5.11 Design Principles - Open Space

The public open space within the site shall be designed to allow for multi-functional use. In effect that means the open space will need to be capable of accommodating different uses and users at the same time and across the course of the day.

In addition to the usual amenity uses that public open space should provide for, there will need to be sufficient space allowed for the management of surface water flood risk, potentially by the creation of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) in key locations with the open space.

Children's play is also a significant use, and this will require careful consideration as to the siting, specification and surveillance of play areas, the aim being to create facilities which are safe, well used and attractive, but which do not impinge upon other users enjoyment and use of the space.

Outdoor sports provision is also an option, although the type of provision, and its location, requires discussion to ensure that it is well used and safe, without creating disturbance for other users and residents.



5.12 Design Principles - Public Realm

It is proposed that the public realm (streets) should utilise a number of design approaches, the aim being to create places which allow for vehicular movement but are not dominated by cars and other vehicles.

The use of trees, on-street parking and other elements, arranged in such a way as to discourage unsafe vehicle speeds, is fundamental to this approach. In addition, the use of materials that denote a different type of space - blocks, setts and bricks, rather than tarmac throughout - is another key component of this approach, as is the way in which kerbs are used to delineate pedestrian and vehicular spaces.

The added benefit of this approach is that it also tends to create a different sort of character for development, one which is less car orientated, of course, but which also has a more relaxed and softer environment, and a more subtle integration of public and private space.

Other than the main access road into the, from Old Eardisley Road, it is proposed that all streets spaces should be shared priority. This will require lower design speeds and the expectation, on the part of the driver, that they will encounter pedestrians within this shared space, at any point on their passage through the site.



