

HARLOW TOWN CENTRE

Area Action Plan

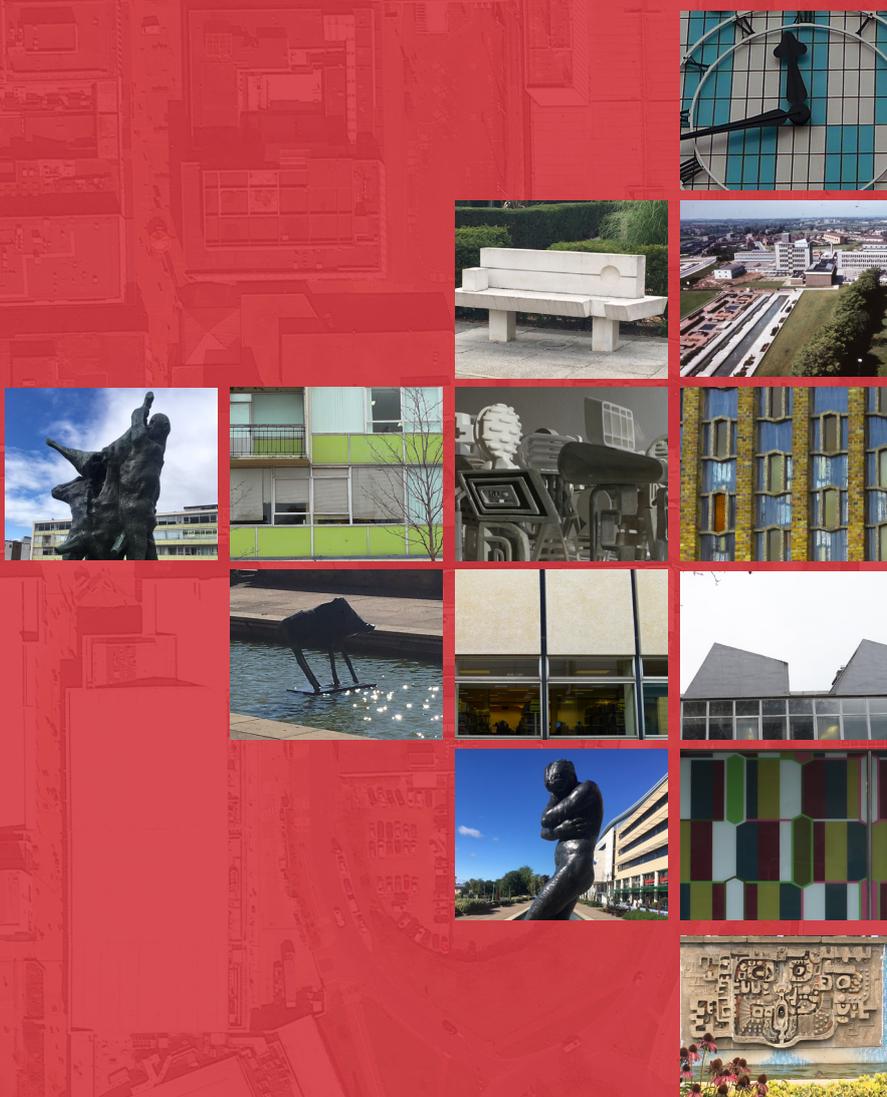
Regulation 19 - Pre-submission draft

Work-in-progress final draft

Harlow Council

Allies and Morrison
Urban Practitioners

December 2019





**“An organism which would go on changing and
being rebuilt as the needs of the people altered”**

Sir Frederick Ernest Gibberd
Masterplanner of Harlow New Town
1908 - 1984

CONTENTS

	1	INTRODUCTION	4
	2	PORTRAIT OF HARLOW TOWN CENTRE	10
	3	POLICY CONTEXT	23
	4	VISION AND OBJECTIVES	30
	5	TOWN CENTRE STRATEGIC POLICIES	39
	6	TOWN CENTRE SITE SPECIFIC POLICIES	82
	7	IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY	100
	8	MONITORING FRAMEWORK	X
		GLOSSARY	
		APPENDIX - PUBLIC REALM GUIDANCE	
			
			
			
			

1 INTRODUCTION

Status and purpose of the HTCAAP

- 1.1. The Harlow Town Centre Area Action Plan (HTCAAP) provides detailed policies and proposals for Harlow Town Centre and reflects the overall planning strategy for Harlow as set out in the Harlow Local Development Plan (HLDP).
- 1.2. The HTCAAP provides a spatial planning framework to guide development and secure the regeneration of Harlow Town Centre for the period up to 2033 and beyond. This takes into account the key role the Town Centre performs across the wider Harlow district, Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) and wider sub-region, encompassing the areas of Harlow, Epping Forest, Uttlesford, East Herts and Broxbourne; reinforced by the need to accommodate additional retail provision, arising from increased housing growth being brought forward. The proposals and guidance in the HTCAAP will set the context for an ongoing process of change and growth beyond the plan period.
- 1.3. Ultimately, the policies in the HTCAAP, in tandem with the HLDP will replace all policies relevant to the Town Centre as set out in the Adopted Replacement Harlow Local Plan July 2006 which have been saved.

- 1.4. The policies in the HTCAAP are consistent with national policies and guidance which set out the Government's planning policies and guidance for England and how it expects them to be applied.
- 1.5. The National Planning Policy Framework states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, which has three roles:
 - An economic role by contributing to a strong, responsive and competitive economy.
 - A social role by supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities.
 - An environmental role by contributing to the protection and enhancement of the environment.

Process and programme

- 1.6. The following diagram summarises the stages of preparation for the HTCAAP:
 - Evidence base and background research including consultation;
 - Synthesis of evidence and initial consultation;
 - Preparation of Issues and Options report and Sustainability Appraisal;



Figure 1 Programme for preparation of the Area Action Plan

- Regulation 18 consultation on Issues and Options Report;
- Preparation of draft Area Action Plan which has been informed by the iterative development of the Sustainability Appraisal;
- Regulation 19 Pre-submission consultation;
- Submission of Final Draft to Inspector and Examination in Public; and
- Inspectors report and adoption of the Plan

Previous consultation and community engagement

- 1.7. The Issues and Options stage of HTCAAP production represented the first stage of formal consultation on the Area Action Plan for the Town Centre. As set out in the NPPF para 182, the purpose of the document was to set out and consider reasonable alternatives. Building on baseline analysis, emerging evidence base studies and early engagement, the document identified the key issues, challenges, and opportunities facing the Town Centre and set out different options for the HTCAAP to consider and explore.
- 1.8. The document was published for formal consultation and feedback on the options has

shaped the development of policy guidance in response to the issues. This has formed the basis of the draft HTCAAP. The overarching summary of comments are:

- **General support for the HTCAAP** and its overarching vision for a sustainable town centre with a strong mix of uses. Many recognise the combination of several options to set a robust context for delivery. Support for either the medium or high intervention scenario.
- **Place greater emphasis on the relationship between the Town Centre and the wider area** by considering the opportunities the Garden Town could bring to the town centre; the role of Town Centre in the wider area; and the Town Centre's position within the UK Innovation Corridor.
- **Seek more opportunities for engagement with Essex County Council and Garden Town authorities.**
- **Emphasis on flexibility of policy guidance** to allow design to be led on a site-by-site basis.
- **Emphasis on quality** for all new proposals within the Town Centre.
- Support for the emphasis made on the **importance of culture and heritage** in achieving the HTCAAP's vision and outcomes.
- People were pleased to see the spatial objective to **retain the plan aesthetic of Gibberd's original masterplan.**
- **The southern part of the Town Centre** should be given enough focus within the HTCAAP to ensure it remains an attractive and viable part of the Town Centre.
- **Support for quality green space** in the town centre and for opportunities to connect green infrastructure.
- The document should make **recommendations for 'quick wins'** and



set out a phasing plan for the package of measures.

- **Approach to movement received the most comments.** These related to the location of the bus station, recognising two sustainable transport corridors, pedestrian and cycling movement and the approach to parking. Work with ECC and Garden Town Board to explore way forward for bus station and sustainable transport corridors.

- 1.9. The representations received at this stage of consultation have informed the preparation of the draft HTCAAP document.

How to respond

- 1.10. The new HTCAAP contains Policies which provide an overarching framework for the Town Centre.

- 1.11. We are now publishing the Pre-submission consultation draft of the HTCAAP. This is the version of the Plan that will be submitted for examination. Comments made should be limited to the tests of soundness. In accordance with national policies, a Local Plan (including Area Action Plan) is considered sound if it meets four tests:

- Is it positively prepared? It should be based upon a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development;
- Is it justified? It should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based upon proportionate evidence

- Is it effective? It should be deliverable over the Local Plan period and based upon effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities
- Is it consistent with national policy? It should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with national policies.

- 1.12. Comments can be submitted in one of the following ways:

- Using the **online consultation portal** - external website (recommended option)
- Complete the **representation form** (pdf) and post it to: **Forward Planning, Place Services, Harlow Council, Civic Centre, The Water Gardens, Harlow, Essex, CM20 1WG** or email it to **myharlow@harlow.gov.uk**. Copies of the representation form can be found on the website above, and hard copies are available in the Civic Centre reception; or
- Send an email or letter to the Council with the data consent form.

- 1.13. All comments must be submitted by **XXX**. Any comments received after this date will not be considered.

Important notes

- 1.14. Please note that it is not possible for representations to be considered anonymously. You must include your name and address on any comment in order for it to be accepted.
- 1.15. For more information on how Harlow Council collect, use and protect personal information, please visit **www.harlow.gov.uk/privacy-notice**

Structure of the document

- 1.16. Following the introduction, Chapter 2 provides a concise portrait of Harlow Town Centre and includes a historic overview and mapping of contextual elements e.g. geographic context and green space. Chapter 3 summarises the existing policy context. The Vision for Harlow Town Centre is set out in Chapter 4 alongside Spatial Objectives and desired outcomes.
- 1.17. The main focus for the document is Chapter 5. Chapter 5 gives both strategic and site specific policies, structured around the themes of: growth and development; movement; urban design and heritage; and land uses. The final chapter sets out the delivery and phasing strategy.

Background

- 1.18. Although it has experienced significant change over the past 65 years, many of the distinctive attributes of Sir Frederick Gibberd's original masterplan remain evident in the structure and character of Harlow Town Centre, as the heart of Harlow New Town.
- 1.19. Similar to many town and city centres across the UK, shifting economic trends have had, and continue to have a profound impact on the performance and prosperity of Harlow Town Centre, which is in part evidenced by the town centre having experienced a decline in the retail ranking from 168 in 2012 to 185 in 2017 (Harlow Town Centre Market Analysis Final Report, May 2017).
- 1.20. The HLDP establishes the primacy of Harlow Town Centre and seeks to protect and enhance its performance. There is the potential for the planning process to strengthen the vitality

and viability of the town centre and enabling regeneration. The preparation of a specific set of planning policies presents an opportunity to create the conditions for a resilient and successful centre. The HTCAAP, in combination with the HLDP and other guidance will enable Harlow Council alongside wider stakeholder, landowner and developer partners to plan positively for managed change and a sustainable, coordinated approach to growth.

Growth context

- 1.21. The role and performance of the town centre requires broader consideration in the context of the proposed growth which is anticipated across the wider area and neighbouring districts.
- 1.22. Harlow Council, alongside Epping Forest District and East Hertfordshire District Councils have identified potential for 16,100 new homes at Harlow and Gilston Garden Town through their Local Plan processes (up to 2033), with an additional c.7,000 new homes identified in the Gilston area beyond this plan period.
- 1.23. The Strategic Site Assessment (September 2016) identified sufficient suitable sites in and around Harlow to accommodate around 16,100 new homes. These strategic sites fall across all three authorities and form the basis of Harlow and Gilston Garden Town.
- 1.24. It should be noted, that in addition to the strategic sites, approximately 6,600 new homes will be developed within Harlow District either through completions and commitments, as well as through intensification and development of brownfield sites.

1.25. This residential growth is part of ambitious plans for Harlow and Gilston's future economy, which is uniquely placed to benefit from the UK Innovation Corridor (previously referred to as the London Stansted Cambridge Corridor) - one of the UK's fastest growing economies, with jobs growth 2.5 times the national average between 2009 and 2014.

1.26. In addition to housing growth, there is also significant economic momentum, with Public Health England relocating to the former GSK offices. Office floorspace and other employment opportunities are also being realised through Harlow Enterprise Zone which includes significant focus on life science, advanced manufacturing and ICT / digital.

1.27. These economic growth developments provide a significant opportunity to the district and the town centre, acting as a catalyst and argument for major investment and regeneration.

HTCAAP boundary

1.28. Harlow Town Centre and its environs have changed over the years and the town centre boundary has been amended in the HLDP to reflect and align to the natural boundary that exists today but also to take account of potential changes in the future. The new boundary incorporates the current pattern of commercial, civic, leisure and educational uses and recognises sites of future change that are likely to have significant impact and opportunity on the town centre. Although Princess Alexandra Hospital has a relationship with the town centre, it is considered to be beyond the HTCAAP boundary. The new areas incorporated within the updated boundary include:

- Harlow College campus, which is an important education site incorporating Harlow College, Harlow Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Centre and Burnt Mill Academy Trust Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Academy which is a major trip generator for the town centre;
- Harlow Leisurezone, which is both a very popular leisure centre in the town and serves as a town centre car park for many visitors;
- The northern site which includes the Sainsbury's supermarket, which could have a stronger relationship with the existing centre and could come forward for redevelopment in the Local Plan period, up to 2033; and
- The Clarion Housing site on the north-west edge of the town centre, which has recently been demolished, has planning permission for residential development and is likely to progress within the Plan period.

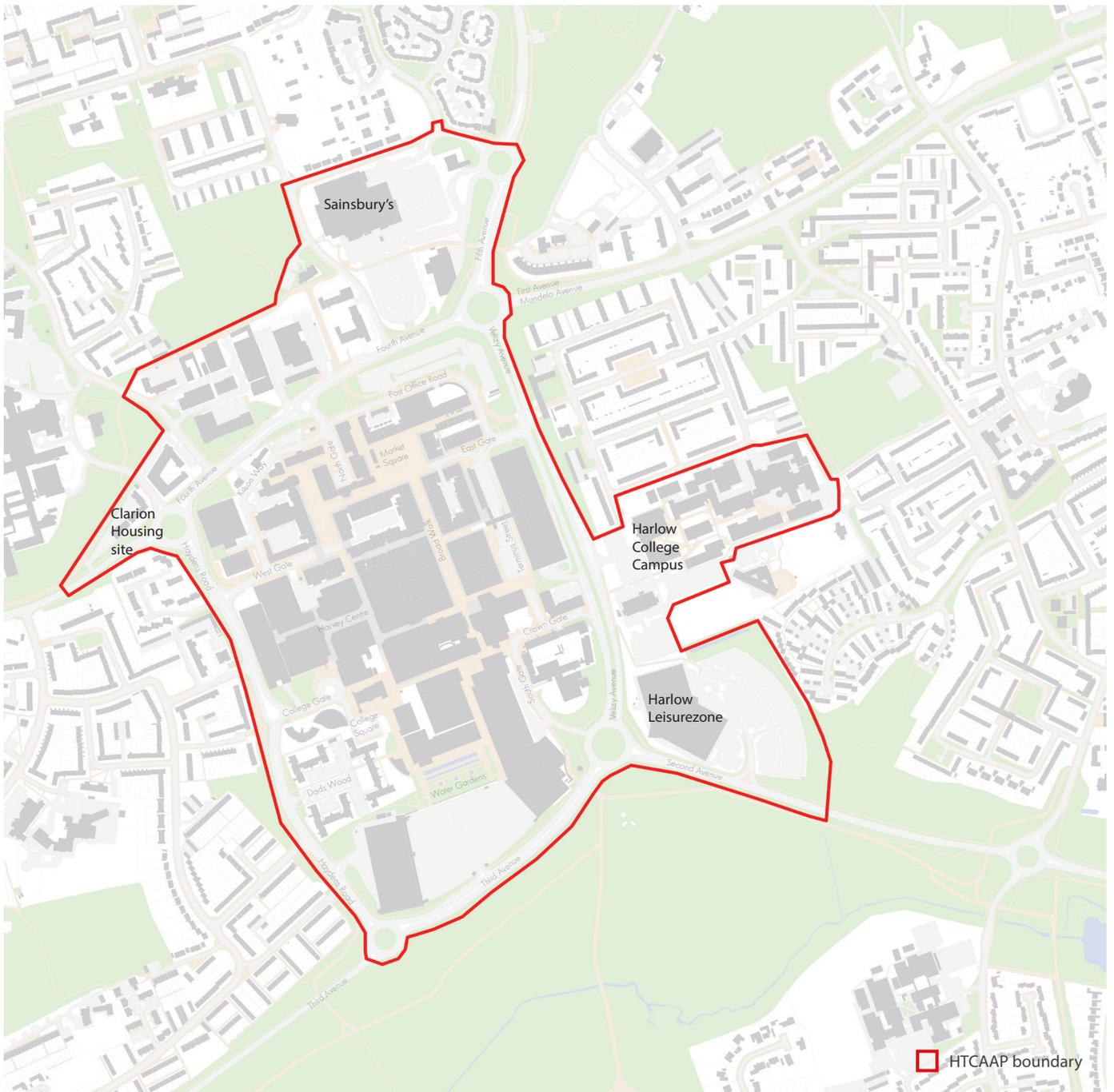


Figure 2 Town Centre Area Action Plan boundary. The boundary as shown now coincides with the revised town centre boundary as per proposed Local Plan Policy RS2-1. Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2018). All rights reserved. Harlow District Council Licence No.100019627 (2018)

2 PORTRAIT OF HARLOW TOWN CENTRE

Town Centre position and context

- 2.1. Harlow Town Centre is positioned in close proximity to major transport corridors, including the A10, M25, A414 and the M11, which stretches from London to Cambridge and beyond towards Peterborough. Stansted Airport is located to the north of Harlow. The town centre is served by Harlow Town Railway Station alongside a network of local buses. The integration of transport planning with efficient mixed land uses and improvements to the public realm are essential for the regeneration of the town centre. Harlow has a strong relationship with Cambridge which lies just 50km north of Harlow and is part of the 'Core Area' within the UK Innovation Corridor.

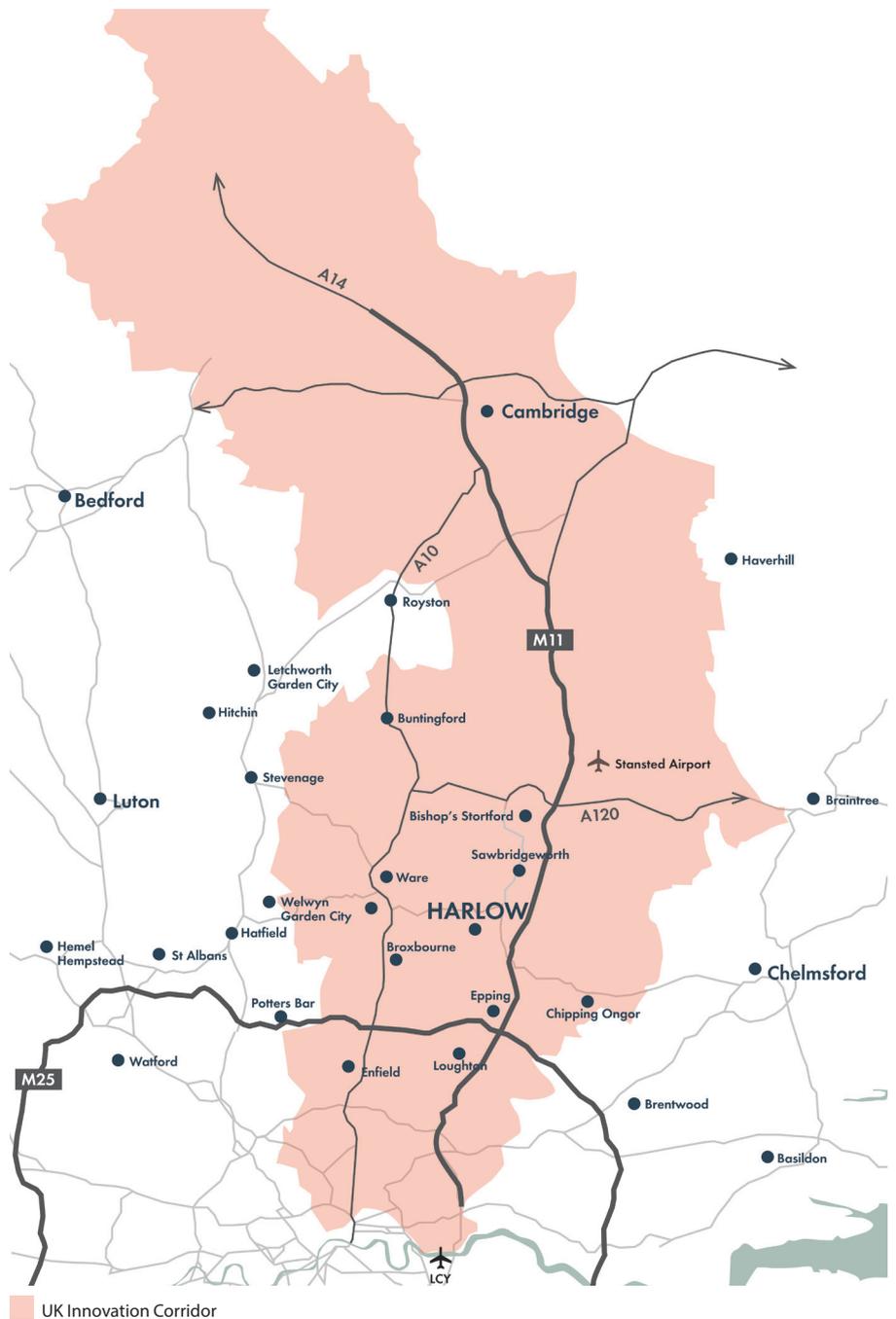


Figure 3 Regional context ©Allies and Morrison

Retail sector context and trends

- 2.2. Harlow has a large shopping population in its catchment but the town centre has experienced a decline in retail ranking from 168 in 2012 to 185 in 2017 (Harlow Town Centre Market Analysis Final Report, May 2017). This could be due to a lack of inward investment and changes to the national retail sector and shopping habits, alongside the relative improvement of directly competing centres in the wider area including Bishops Stortford, Brookfield and Welwyn Garden City. Competition from major sub-regional shopping centres, such as Lakeside, Bluewater and Stratford also has an impact.
- 2.3. As set out in the recent Market Assessment for the Town Centre (2017), recent studies indicate a significant expenditure leakage to competing centres. The centre has a lack of major occupiers and a relatively poor evening economy offer. The proximity of the town centre to a strong out-of-town retail offer, notably Queensgate Centre and The Oaks Retail Park, also affects the performance of the town centre retail economy.
- 2.4. The HTCAAP Delivery Strategy (Cushman & Wakefield, 2019) summarises the latest sector trends that are changing the function of town centres and high streets across the UK. These include:
- Reducing store portfolios - large retailers are increasingly focusing on a smaller number of prime locations for their stores;
 - New, flexible store formats - shopping is becoming more leisure focused and activity based;
 - The click-and-collect market - reduces 'last mile delivery' costs and can create additional sales volumes;
 - Improved digital capability - online interest has created 'digital economy' demands and opportunities which should be embraced by town centres;
 - Shared space - greater collaboration between retailers in terms of sharing space;
 - Increase in pop-up shops and other uses enables retailers to lease space on a short-term basis and bring animation and vibrancy to the high street; and
 - Leisure and all-round experiences - importance of strong leisure 'anchors' increasingly evident. Leisure plays an important role in supporting the night time economy.
- 2.5. The Strategy also points to a weaker economic outlook and Brexit uncertainty during the final quarter of 2018 which has taken a toll on consumer confidence.
- ## Growth potential
- 2.6. Significant housing growth will be required to support the level of forecast population growth (19.6% increase by 2032). The SHMA identified the need for 7,409 new homes within the Harlow District between 2011 and 2033 with demand mostly for two and three bedrooms. The award-winning Newhall development at Harlow offers an innovative approach to accommodating new homes and goes some way to meeting the identified need.
- 2.7. The existence of employment opportunities associated with Public Health England and Enterprise Zone status have significant potential to establish greater momentum in Harlow. Other positive drivers for growth include the Town's strategic role in the UK Innovation Corridor and investment in sustainable transport modes and an integrated walking and cycling network.

- KEY**
- Competing centre
 - Other New Towns
 -  Retail ranking



Figure 4 Town Centre performance rating ©Allies and Morrison

- 2.8. The town centre is no longer an established office market due to the size and quality of the existing stock. Landowners and investors have taken advantage of historic high vacancy rates and changes in permitted development rights resulting in all existing offices seeking or already been permitted change of use from office-to-resi. However, significant growth opportunities exist that could see some office uses being brought back into the town centre. Projects such as Harlow Enterprise Zone with a focus on MedTech, Life Science and ICT sectors alongside SME manufacturing space and the emergence of a national science hub for Public Health England provide an opportunity for the town centre to support the wider supply chain.
- 2.9. The recent and significant conversion of office to residential within the town centre is undermining good quality growth and impacting upon the amount of employment space needed to help meet wider economic needs associated with the new homes proposed for the District. The Council is seeking Article 4 Directions for a number of areas including Harlow Town Centre to remove the right to Permitted Development conversions from offices to residential.
- 2.10. Residential growth and employment generation are expected to go hand-in-hand with growth in future town centre consumer demand and its regeneration which is an opportunity for Harlow Town Centre.
- 2.11. The table opposite illustrates the forecast level of retail capacity over the plan period under a high housing growth scenario, as set out in the Harlow Retail & Leisure Needs Study (2016). Assuming a high growth scenario, the table shows that the Council will need to plan for up to 40,200 sq.m net additional comparison goods floorspace by 2033. There

is a quantitative 'need' for an additional 3,200 sq.m net convenience goods floorspace for the period to 2026, increasing to (indicatively) 5,500 sq.m net by 2033. This identified need includes other retail areas such as Neighbourhood Centres, Hatches and Out-of-Centre Retail Parks, however the HLDP states that Harlow Town Centre will look to deliver a significant proportion of the retail floorspace requirements.

- 2.12. A preferred option has been identified for the relocation of Princess Alexandra Hospital (PAH) from its current site north of the town centre to a greenfield site east of Harlow, close to J7a on the M11 and the planned eastern HGGT – East of Harlow – New Garden Town Community.
- 2.13. This will enable the hospital to respond to population growth and increasing demand. The hospital is the largest employer in the district and serves an extended population of up to 500,000. The relocation away from the existing site will impact town centre employment figures and daily footfall and the Council will consider how some of these jobs may be reprovided. The existing site has been identified for approximately 500 new homes, which will support the town centre.

	Forecasting year			
	2021	2026	2031	2033
Comparison goods floorspace capacity (sq. m net)	4,900	17,200	31,600	37,900
Convenience goods floorspace capacity (sq. m net)	1,600	2,900	4,200	4,700

Existing retail floorspace: 82,000 sq. m net

Figure 5 Forecast Retail Capacity - Medium Housing Growth / 'Baseline' Scenario (figures are cumulative)
Source: Harlow Retail & Leisure Needs Study, 2016, GVA.

Key market drivers

2.14. The Harlow Town Centre Market Analysis report (2017) identifies five main market drivers. It is important that these drivers are embedded in parallel with the spatial objectives set out in Chapter 4.

2.15. Social infrastructure

- The town centre has strengths in education, and convenient and safe pedestrian links would encourage users to visit the Town Centre more frequently.
- The cultural offer should be retained and enhanced where possible.
- Other community facilities in the centre are disparate in sub-optimal locations. There is scope for co-location of facilities in more convenient locations in more efficient buildings.

2.16. Quality of environment

- A high quality public realm is important for attracting shoppers seeking a high quality experience
- Positive environmental characteristics will promote development and growth.

2.17. Accessibility

- The town centre has a significant amount of parking but quality and security is generally poor.
- Relative distance between the rail station and town centre hinders the success of the centre. There is a need for better walking and cycling links and a more efficient and frequent bus route.
- There is an opportunity to consider the re-provision of the bus station to release land for development and to provide a safer, better quality facility.

2.18. Site promotion

- A clear planning framework can assist in encouraging development and growth in the town centre. In this context, the HTCAAP will provide a coherent framework that sets the direction for change in Harlow Town Centre.

2.19. Place management

- Proactive town centre management can improve quality of environment, safety and security and marketing and promotion of the town centre.
- Town centre management vehicles and active Town Centre Partnerships such as Business Improvement Districts can also improve performance.



Figure 6 Photos of Harlow Town Centre

SWOT analysis

2.20. Drawing on the Market Assessment report (2017), the following summary analysis assists in distilling the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) impacting the future of Harlow Town Centre.

Strengths 	Weaknesses 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harlow's strategic location • 30 minutes to London by train (Harlow) • Large and growing consumer catchment • Adequate town centre parking • The Water Gardens and Harvey Centre (shopping centres) • Harlow College Campus and Harlow Leisurezone • Public art and sculpture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too much retail floorspace which could result in a fragmented town centre in the event of a downturn in retail performance • Lack of medium - large and higher end retailers • Lack of vibrant night-time offer • Limited commercial leisure offer • Location of train station • Poorly laid out and unwelcoming bus station
Opportunities 	Threats 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential development sites • Increase the resident population of both the town and within the town centre • Consolidation of town centre shopping area • Planning permission granted for major redevelopment of town centre west • Public Health England and Enterprise Zone (Harlow) • Role of the development of Harlow and Gilston Garden Town for the delivery of better, more sustainable accessibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited town centre development pipeline or certainty of developments • Minor developments / investment delivered in isolation • Increasing competition from other centres (including Chelmsford) • Trends in retail sector (polarisation, multi-channel retailing, changing store formats) • Poor quality office-residential conversions



Historic overview

- 2.21. Before the planned development of Harlow New Town, the area was largely fields with dispersed farmsteads and manors. The commercial centre grew around Old Harlow's medieval market square and the more informal Churchgate Street to the south-east. The population grew from 1,514 people in 1801 to 3,471 in 1931, small in comparison to the 60,000 people for whom the new town was planned (later this increased to 90,000). In 2017 the population was 86,191 people (Office for National Statistics - mid-year population estimates, issued June 2018).
- 2.22. Frederick Gibberd's vision and masterplan for Harlow New Town reflected the New Town ethos of the 1940's, drawing inspiration from

the earlier Garden City movement and the drive to provide high quality and spacious homes with access to clean air and open space. Gibberd's masterplan was influenced by the area's distinctive landscape and environmental features, such as the River Stort in the north, the valley ridges and wooded areas in the south and other important ecological assets.

- 2.23. The 1952 masterplan was based on three fundamental principles - an essentially human environment (that the design should be based on the pedestrian); an urban atmosphere; and the principle of evolution. According to Gibberd, "the third predicted a flexible approach. The first two were basic to the concept of new towns."

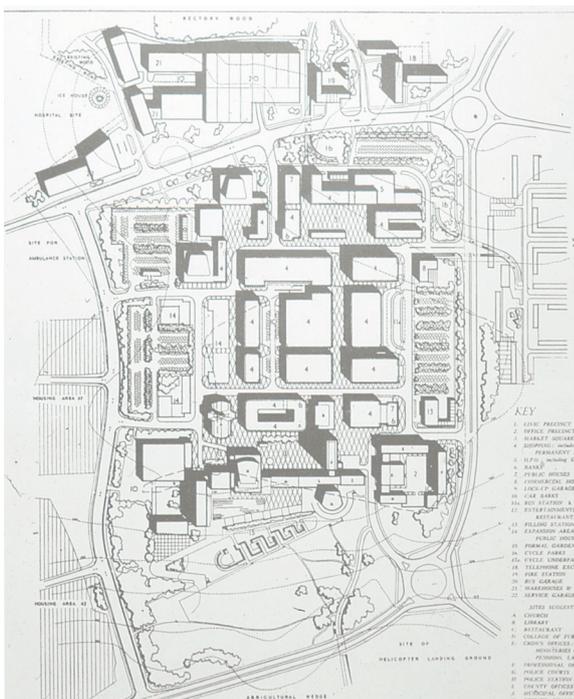
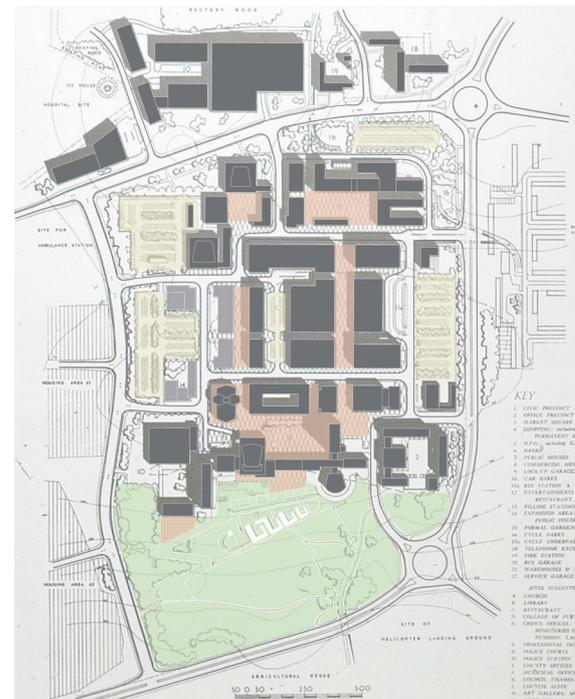
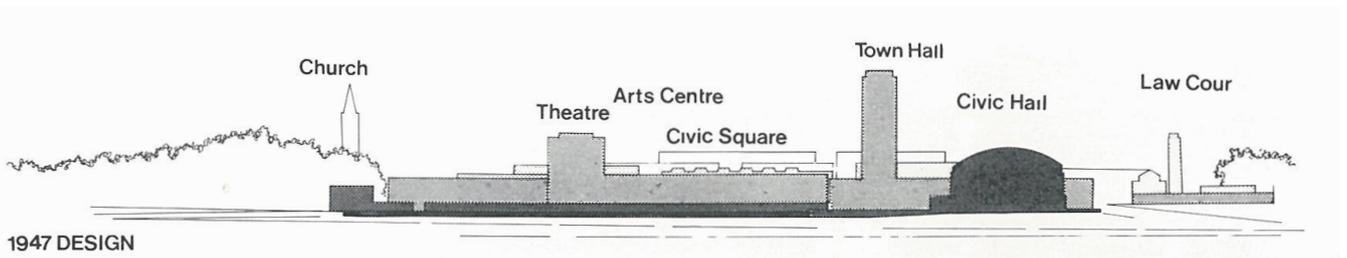


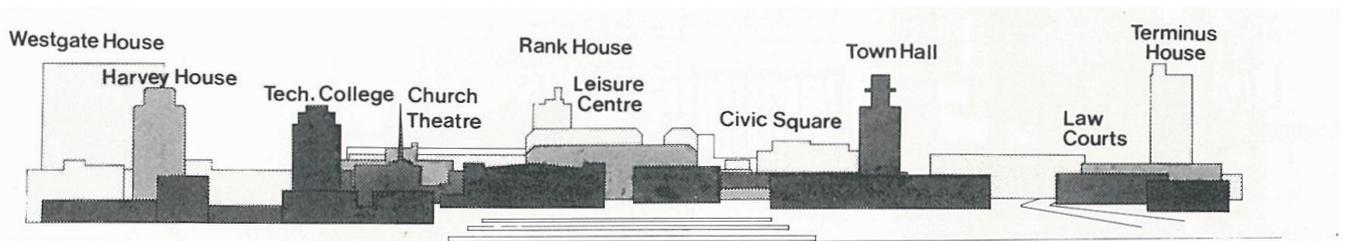
Figure 7 1952 masterplan of Harlow New Town



- Pedestrianised public realm
- Parking
- Green space



1947 DESIGN



1977 DESIGN

Figure 8 Gibberd's vision of rationalising and separating the town and industry from surrounding residential neighbourhoods

Evolution of Town Centre

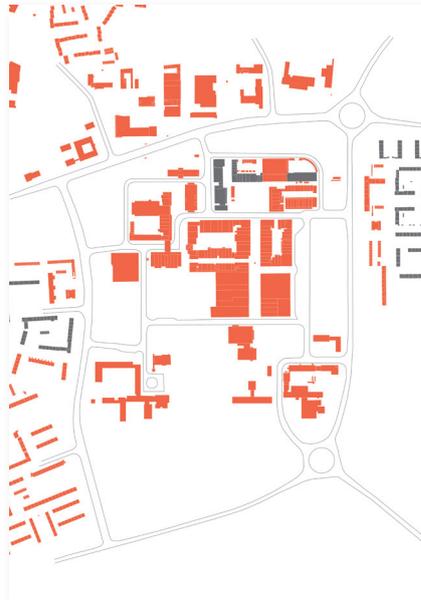
- 2.24. Since the conception of Harlow New Town, the Town Centre has undergone several stages of expansion. The diagrams below show its evolution from 1952 to today. The original plan intentionally separated residential areas from the Town Centre. This now has a negative impact on the current operation of the Town Centre, in contrast to historic market towns which are activated in the evening by people living in the centre.

1952-1960



The first buildings were completed around the Market Square.

1960-1966



The area north of Fourth Avenue is built out including the Wych Elm area and Fire Station. The Market Square, Town Hall and Library have been built south of Fourth Avenue.

Car parks around the perimeter of the town centre act as arrival points.

The original Water Gardens are completed to the south with a large green area as the setting.

1960-1975



Multi-storey car parks and Joseph Rank House (as commercial uses) are developed on car park sites.

The Playhouse is built next to the Church.

There is further development of businesses and light industry in the Wych Elm area.

Figure 9 Plans showing the evolution of Harlow Town Centre
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1975-1980



1980 marks the dissolution of the Development Corporation.

The Harvey Centre is extended to include a multi-storey car park and BHS department store between the Library and Church.

Redstone House is built opposite the Library to announce the end of the Broad Walk.

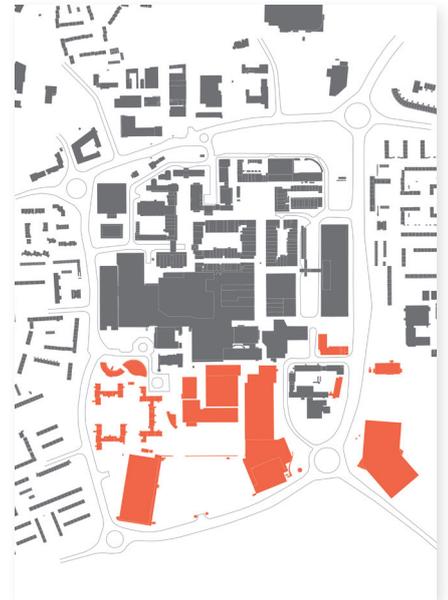
Vehicular connections across the Town Centre are lost between East Gate and West Gate and from College Square to Crown Gate.

1980-1995



Harvey Centre begins to fill out the area west of the Broad Walk and infill development bridges across North Gate.

1995-2017



The early 2000's saw a large amount of development to the south of the town centre alongside residential development in the centre at Dads Wood including Ocassio House. There is a loss of the majority of green space in the town centre.

The Water Gardens development involved the relocation of the Water Gardens and demolition of the Town Hall to provide new retail and leisure uses and the addition of a multi-storey car park to the south of the Water Gardens.

Harlow Leisurezone is built south east of the town centre and there is major investment at Harvey Centre including a new cinema.

Neighbourhood Infrastructure

- 2.25. Harlow is built on a simple infrastructure pattern with neighbourhoods separated by major roads and green wedges with this separation continuing for the neighbourhoods adjacent to the town centre.

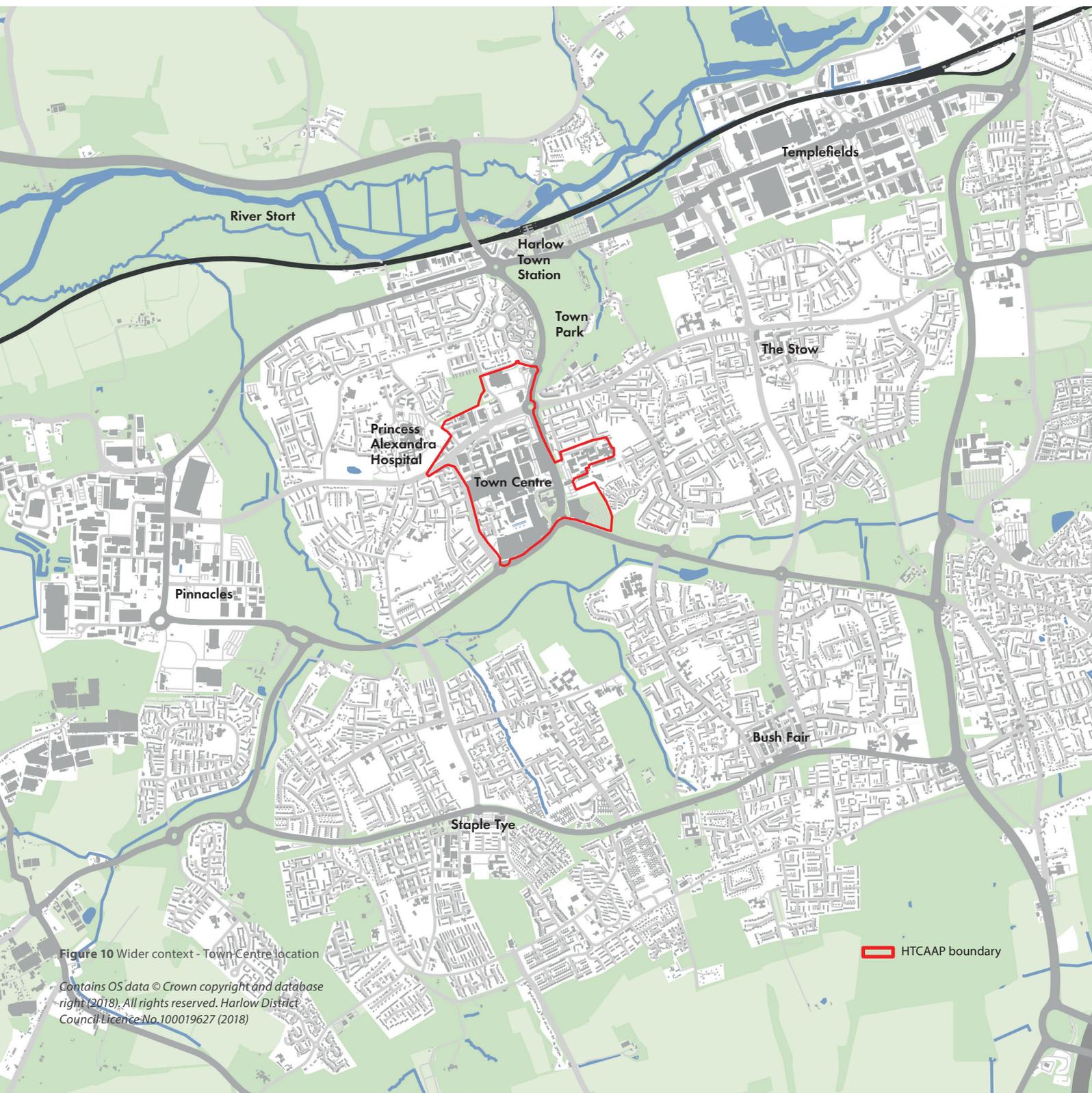


Figure 10 Wider context - Town Centre location

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Green Infrastructure

2.26. Natural landscape and green space can be easily reached by foot from the Town Centre, including the Town Park, although the centre itself lacks planting and open spaces. The Green Wedge network was an essential part

of Gibberd's vision for Harlow and often accommodates cycling and walking routes. The HTCAAP seeks to strengthen the relationship between the town centre and Town Park.



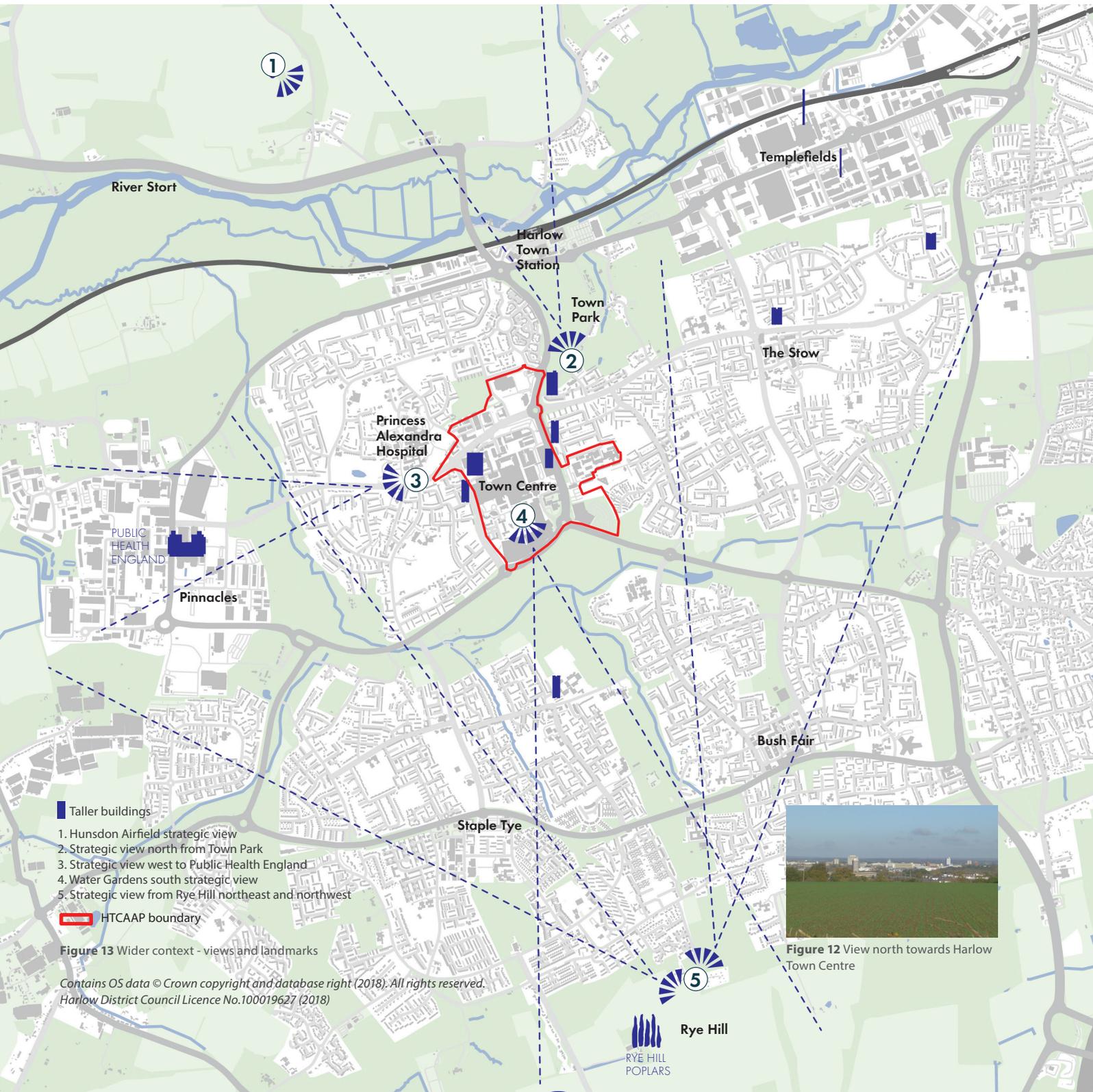
Figure 11 Wider context - Green space

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Landmarks

2.27. Views of landmarks aid legibility across Harlow. A row of poplar trees at the former Woodbridge Farm and the southern water tower are clear features on the horizon and can be viewed from

The Water Gardens looking south. The view back is shown in the photo below.



3 POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) February 2019

- 3.1. The HTCAAP has been prepared in line with the revised NPPF (February 2019). The revised NPPF sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

Harlow Council: Working Together for Harlow, Corporate Plan 2019/20-2021/22

- 3.2. The Corporate Plan sets out the Council's vision, priorities and goals to steer improvement over the next three years.
- 3.3. The five Council priorities are:
- More and better housing
 - Regeneration and a thriving economy
 - Wellbeing and social inclusion
 - A clean and green environment
 - Successful children and young people
- 3.4. The Plan recognises the important role the town centre plays as a sub-regional destination and gives goals for the next three years relating to the Council's priority to support regeneration of the town. These include driving forward the regeneration of the town centre by producing an Area Action Plan, delivering public realm improvements and continuing to explore and develop opportunities in partnership with town centre stakeholders and potential investors.

Harlow Local Development Plan Pre-Submission Publication (May 2018)

- 3.5. The new Harlow Local Development Plan (Pre-Submission Publication) (HLDP) guides future development in the District to 2033 and replaces the 2006 Harlow Local Plan. The plan sets out a long term planning vision which ensures that development is sustainable and meets the needs of residents, businesses and visitors in the area. It is the basis upon which planning applications will be determined. The HTCAAP sits underneath and complements the HLDP.
- 3.6. The HLDP is currently undergoing examination. The final version of the HTCAAP will be updated to incorporate any modifications arising from the examination process.
- 3.7. The document includes a number of relevant strategic objectives for the regeneration of the Town Centre in Chapter 3. These cover the following areas, all of which reflect the Council's wider aspirations for achieving a town centre where everybody has an improved quality of life:
- High quality built environments connected to revitalised green spaces;
 - High quality design of new development;
 - Protecting and enhancing the historic environment;
 - Climate change adaptation and mitigation;
 - Identification of sites to meet local housing needs;
 - Range of high quality housing tenure and type;
 - Diversifying and investing in the district's employment base;
 - Economic revitalisation - reinforcing Harlow's reputation as a centre for Research and Development;
 - Improving educational opportunities and skills base;

- Regenerating the town centre to provide a range of shopping needs;
 - Enhancing sporting, leisure, recreational facilities and cultural opportunities;
 - Education, healthcare and other community facilities to support residents;
 - Reducing reliance on car travel by promoting sustainable modes of transport; and
 - Improving transport links to community facilities.
- 3.8. Policy SD1 sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development that accords with the HLDP will normally be supported unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 3.9. The main chapters regarding the redevelopment of the town centre are Chapter 9 - 'Retail Ambitions and Town Centre Redevelopment', and Chapter 15 - 'Prosperity'. A number of strategic growth policies are set out within Chapter 9 and are listed below:
- RS1 - Retail Hierarchy: redevelopment must be directed to Harlow Town Centre first (followed by the centres set out in the retail hierarchy).
 - RS2 - Future Retail Floorspace: RS2 identifies a need to provide up to 18,100sqm of comparison floorspace and up to 3,200sqm of convenience floorspace and refers to the emerging Harlow Town Centre Area Action Plan which will look to deliver a significant proportion of the retail floorspace requirements through site redevelopment and regeneration opportunities, and which will identify the future retail floorspace capacity of the town centre. The HTCAAP will also identify environmental and public realm improvements, alongside access and infrastructure schemes and opportunities for providing a broader range of uses in the town centre. These include community, leisure, commercial and residential uses.
 - RS3 - Protecting and Enhancing Existing Retail Centres: RS3 highlights the importance of retail floorspace which contributes towards the viability, vitality and function of Harlow Town Centre. The policy indicates that this will be protected, subject to the outcomes of the HTCAAP.
- 3.10. Other relevant strategic policies are:
- ED4 - Developing a Visitor Economy: a visitor economy will be developed, building upon the district's arts and cultural attractions, the 'Sculpture Town' status, the New Town heritage and natural features such as the River Stort. Proposals will be supported where they provide local economic benefits, are underpinned by appropriate infrastructure and are scale, type and appearance appropriate to the locality.
 - WE4 - Heritage: heritage assets and their settings will be preserved and enhanced.
 - SIR1 - Infrastructure requirements: a commitment to work alongside groups to deliver the timely provision of infrastructure and to review and update the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
 - SIR2 - Enhancing Key Gateway Locations - includes reference to integrating and improving the vehicular and pedestrian access points to the north of the town centre.
- 3.11. The HLDP also includes a number of Development Management Policies. Several policies are of specific relevance to the Town Centre including the following:
- PR5 - The Sequential Test and Principles for Main Town Centre Uses: PR5 reiterates the sequential approach to main town centre

uses – specifically, that these must be directed to the Town Centre first. The policy also includes general principles for main Town Centre uses which encourage active frontages, preservation and enhancement of retail vitality and viability and improvements to public transport facilities.

- PR6 - Primary and Secondary Frontages in Town Centre – PR6 states that Primary Frontages would be supported where the development is for an A1 class use, or development is for use class A2 or A3 and 60% or more of the overall primary frontage length is retained for A1 uses and the site has been vacant and actively marketed for at least 12 months. Main town centre uses (except office use), evening and night-time uses will be supported in town centre secondary frontages.
- PR7 - Sub-division and Internal Alteration of Town Centre Units: PR7 supports sub-division of town centre units if: for units larger than 2,500 sqm, evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the unit has been marketed to the satisfaction of Council for at least 2 years and sub-division or internal alteration would retain active frontage
- PR11 - Evening and Night Time Economy: PR11 states that evening and night time uses must be directed to the town centre first. Evening and night time uses will be supported if development has a positive effect on the vitality and viability of the retail centre, its night-time economy and local area, and mitigation through legal agreements or conditions to minimise negative impacts on the local area.
- H8 - Affordable Housing: H8 supports major residential development where affordable housing has been secured at a rate of at least 30%. Any reduction of this

rate will require an independent viability assessment.

- IN1 - Development and sustainable modes of travel: IN1 encourages sustainable accessibility patterns in the town centre. Improvements will be required to provide safe and direct cycleways and footpaths (including contributions), safe and convenient cycle storage, other facilities for cyclists where appropriate and electric charging points for vehicles.
- L3 - Development Involving the Provision or Relocation or Loss of Public Art: L3 indicates that public art should be provided within major developments, and that any proposals involving the provision, relocation or loss of public art should be agreed with the Council.
- PR3 - Employment development outside employment areas and neighbourhood service areas: PR3 supports proposals for B1 office uses above ground floor level in the town centre and sets criteria for the assessment of their loss.
- L2 - Sporting, Cultural and Community Facilities: Development for the provision of recreational, sporting, cultural and community uses and facilities will be supported if there is evidence of need and if it is easily accessible by all sectors of the community by public and private transport. Proposals which result in a loss of facilities will only supported if it meets one or more criteria
- PL12 - Heritage Assets and their Settings: Development will be assessed on harm it causes to the significance of heritage assets. Key factors to be considered include the impact of development on the character and appearance of the asset, the design quality of the development, and the extent to which the development is sympathetically integrated within the area.

Local Development Scheme

- 3.12. Harlow Council is required to prepare a Local Development Scheme under section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011). The Development Plan Documents that comprise the Local Development Scheme for Harlow include the HLDP and Harlow Town Centre Area Action Plan, alongside a number of other Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), strategies, Article 4 Direction's and Local Development Orders (LDO's).

Supplementary Planning Documents

- 3.13. SPDs for the HTCAAP are:
- Harlow Design Guide SPD (2011) - sets out design principles to guide future development in Harlow and to encourage a design-led approach to development.
 - Open spaces, sport and recreation SPD (2007) - sets out the Council's approach to the provision of open space in conjunction with new housing development.
 - Affordable Housing SPD (2007) - clarifies the Council's policies on affordable housing and sets clear guidelines about how the Council will determine the type and tenure of dwellings, as well as their design and layout.

Harlow Economic Development Strategy (2017)

- 3.14. The Strategy sets out priorities and ideas for delivery for the next five years that, among other goals, will lead to "a vibrant, creative Town Centre that is an asset to our communities and businesses". 'Priority 4: Transformation of Harlow Town Centre' (within the 'Place' theme)

promotes a "high quality, high amenity centre that provides for residents of all backgrounds and aspirations, and provides attractions for the workforce of key employers."

- 3.15. Proposed actions for delivery include:
- Public realm improvements;
 - Increase community, leisure and commercial activity;
 - Deliver quality residential opportunities;
 - Secure longer term investment and regeneration;
 - Embed modern working environments into future Town Centre developments;
 - Ensure opportunities to deliver space and resources to enable business activity (for example shared/co working space, meeting spaces, access to wifi, live/work accommodation etc.); and
 - Support continued space for creative industries and cultural activities.

Harlow Retail and Leisure Needs Study (2016)

- 3.16. The study forms part of the evidence base which underpins the new HLDP and informs the retail policies and potential allocation of retail floorspace in Harlow Town Centre. The study considers:
- The national trends in the retail sector;
 - The wider study context including key competing centres;
 - The composition, role and function of current shopping and commercial leisure provision in Harlow town centre through a health-check assessment;
 - Retail capacity;
 - The quantitative 'need' for additional

- convenience and comparison retail floorspace in the District up to 2033;
- A review of commercial leisure provision within and outside of the District; and
- Conclusions, strategic guidance and recommendations on future change and growth within the District’s network of centres, including Harlow Town Centre.

Harlow Retail Frontages Study (2019)

- 3.17. The Retail Frontages Study gives an annual review of the primary and secondary retail frontages in Harlow and has helped to inform the preparation of planning policies set out in the new HLDP. The amount of vacant primary frontage in the town centre in early 2019 was 11.5%, a 3% increase since 2013. The BHS unit vacancy accounts for 5.5% of the vacant frontage. Whilst some previously vacant frontage became in use again between the start of 2018 and 2019, other units became vacant, including the Harvey Centre units previously occupied by Argos and Sole Trader.
- 3.18. The amount of vacant secondary frontage in the town centre in early 2019 was 15.7%, a decrease of 7.5% since 2013. The study also gives a table of frontages that require further review and a series of maps with proposals for possible new frontages, as well as the possible removal of frontages within the town centre.

Statement of Community Involvement (2014)

- 3.19. The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how the Council involves the community in preparing local planning policy and deciding planning applications within the District. The statement outlines the Council’s commitment to consult with as many people

and organisations as possible, meeting at the very least the required minimum legislative requirements. The SCI gives the various methods for planning policy consultation, with explicit reference made to ‘hard-to-reach groups’.

Harlow District Cycling Action Plan (2018)

- 3.20. The Cycling Action Plan for Harlow District sets out a long term plan that will lead to a significant and sustained increase in cycling in Harlow District and in Essex. One of the aims of the Action Plan is to create a usable, high quality cycle network that connects residential areas with key employment locations, railway stations, and town centres. A recommendation of the Plan is to enable improved cycle access through the currently pedestrianised town centre, and improving the cycle infrastructure links between the town centre and nearby railway stations. Cycle routes around the town centre are considered particularly important routes and these should be maintained.

Draft Harlow Town Centre Area Action Plan Delivery Strategy (2019)

- 3.21. The emerging Delivery Strategy for Harlow Town Centre establishes a broad viability and delivery context for the HTCAAP. The



Figure 14 Sample of relevant policy documents

strategy provides an overview of the property markets relevant to Harlow Town Centre and considers the overall proposed scale and mix of development, for the town centre as a whole and for specific opportunity areas. The work has informed Chapter 7 of the HTCAAP on implementation and delivery.

Other evidence base documents

3.22. The AAP has also had regard to:

- Harlow Health and Wellbeing Partnership Strategy 2018-2028
- Green Wedge Review (2014)
- Sports Facilities Study (2017)

HGGT strategies, guidance and frameworks

3.23. The HGGT partners are preparing a number of key documents which are relevant to Harlow town centre including the following:

- **HGGT Vision and Design Guide:** These documents set out the expectations and requirements that need to be met by developers to ensure the delivery of good quality villages and neighbourhoods, homes, jobs and infrastructure for new and existing residents. These guides will be used as a material planning consideration when considering planning applications/proposals and masterplans, and will provide assurances to communities and businesses about what they should expect from Garden Town developments.
- **HGGT Infrastructure Delivery Plan:** The purpose of this plan is to set out the infrastructure that will be required to

deliver the planned level of housing and employment growth and covers a wide range of types of infrastructure. The plan also identifies how expected developer contributions from various sites will be apportioned.

- **HGGT Sustainable Community Transport Hub:** As part of the HGGT project, guidance is being produced for Sustainable Community Transport Hubs also known as Mobility Hubs. These hubs are a key part of the overarching strategy for the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town in the context of the emphasis on active and sustainable modes of movement. They will act as a focus for convenient interchange across a series of different scales.
- **HGGT Healthy Town Framework:** HGGT is preparing guidance for health infrastructure and the creation of creating healthy places.

Essex County Council documents

3.24. Public consultation is currently taking place on the draft Essex Walking Strategy 2019-2025 which sets out a strategy to promote more walking and improve the pedestrian environment. The document will replace the last Essex Walking Strategy (2001) to be in line with the revised NPPF (2019) and other more recent Government policies.

3.25. Essex County Council have produced a draft Green Essex Strategy (2019) that takes a proactive approach to enhance, protect and create an integrated network of high-quality green infrastructure in Essex. The document is currently out for public consultation.

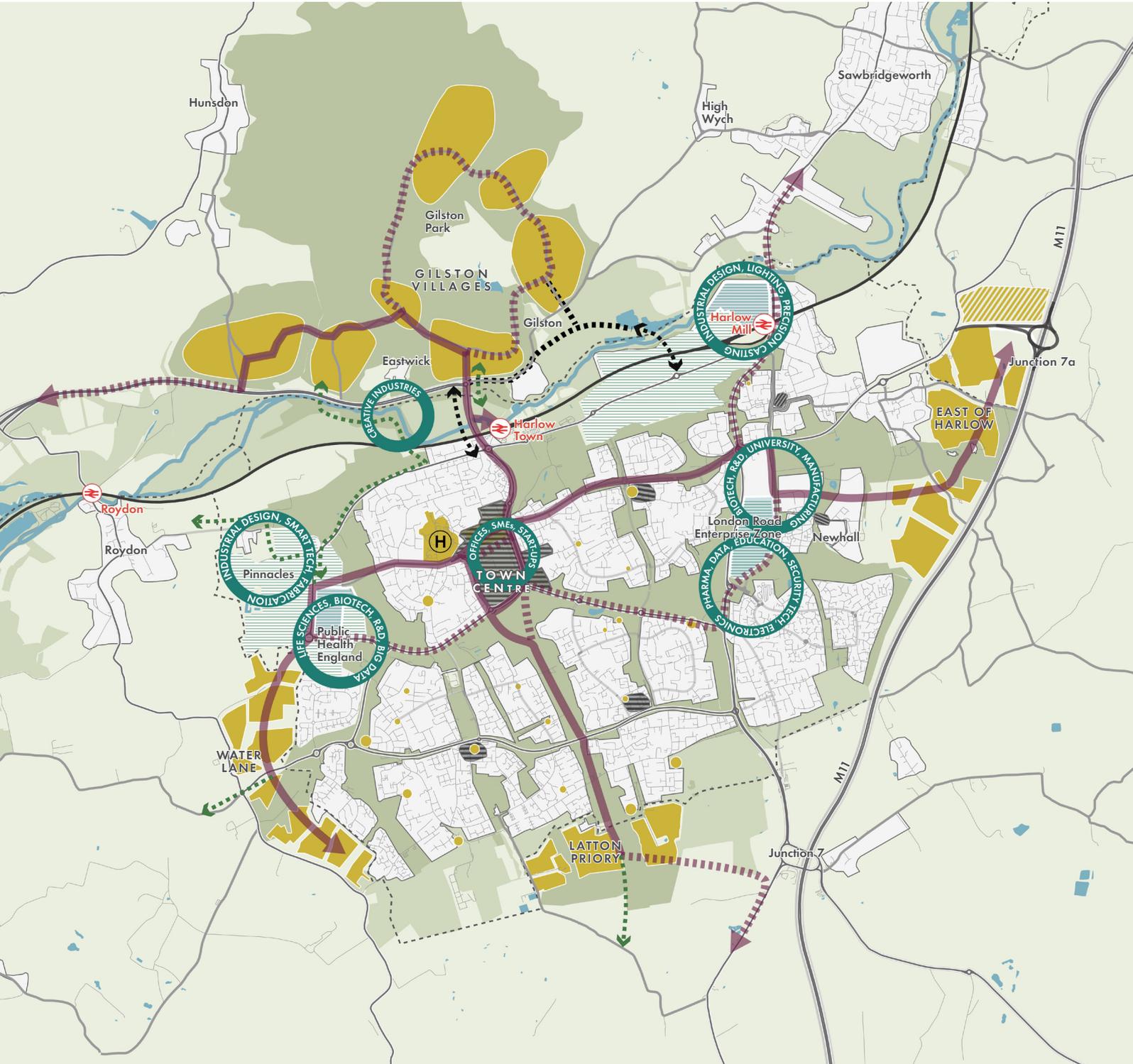
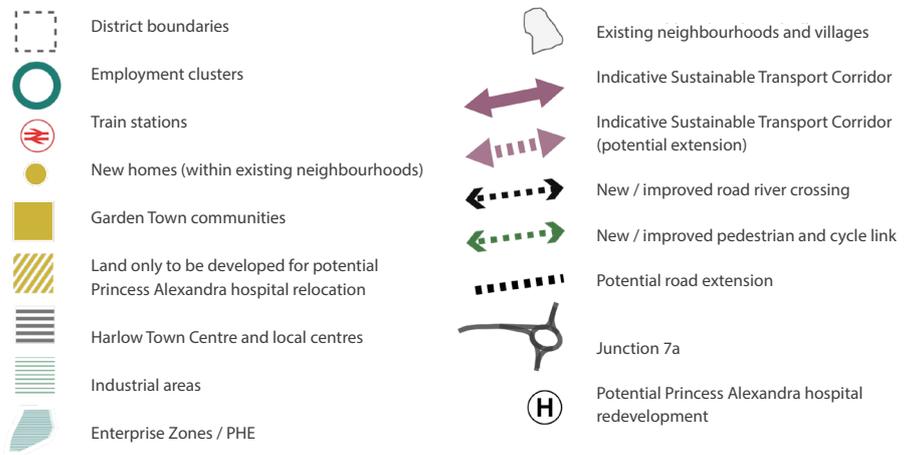


Figure 15 Growth context showing all strategic site developments which will be delivered in the Plan period and beyond within the Housing Market area (Harlow District Council, Epping Forest District Council and East Herts District Council) Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2018). All rights reserved. Harlow District Council Licence No.100019627 (2018)

4 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Vision

- 4.1. In the future, Harlow Town Centre will be a successful, sustainable place which serves as the commercial centre for the existing town of Harlow and the wider Garden Town. The town centre will play an important part in helping Harlow and Gilston to step up to a more active economic role within the UK's Innovation Corridor.
- 4.2. In order to do this, the town centre will have a diverse mix of shops and services; offer high quality office and employment spaces; civic and wide ranging leisure uses including cafés and restaurants; and a thriving evening economy and cultural offer. The town centre will also have a range of high quality homes that can support a mixed and balanced community.
- 4.3. The town centre will be accessible to all, by public transport, cycle, on foot and by car whilst helping the District to minimise reliance on private cars in the future. The town centre will be a healthy place for everyone, contributing to the well-being of the community and the protection and enhancement of the natural and historic environment.

Strategic Objectives

- 4.4. The following strategic objectives have been defined to help assess whether proposals and investment will help to deliver the vision. By 2033, the HTCAAP will have supported and created:



A **unified town centre** which re-balances the northern and southern areas.



A town centre which supports **wider economic growth** across the District providing shops, services and homes, and a diverse mix of commercial activity.



A **strong retail and leisure offer** which enhances the attractiveness of Harlow as a sub-regional shopping centre and remains competitive amongst other retail and leisure centres.



A **high quality public realm** and environment with active and engaging public spaces.



An **inclusive and accessible destination** with excellent transport links capitalising on Harlow's strategic location that enable and encourage local trips by sustainable and active travel modes.



A **strong cultural offer** which is supported by residents and visitors to the town centre.



First class community facilities which supports the population.



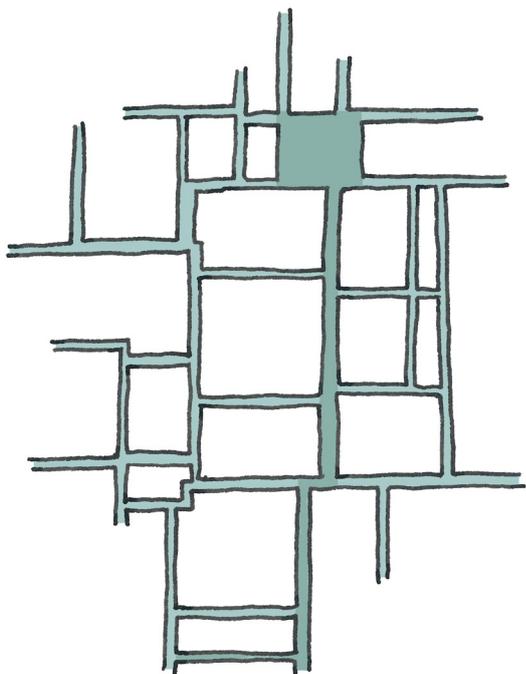
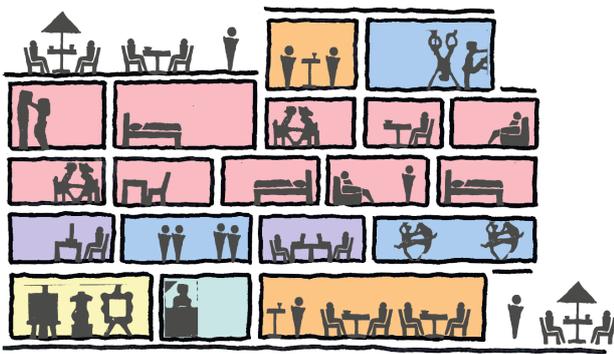
A **cohesive place**, supported by uses and design proposals which complement one another and work towards the overarching vision.



A **commitment to retain the ethos** and respond positively to the defining elements of Sir Frederick Gibberd's Masterplan including the plan aesthetic, public art and spaces, heritage assets and positive architectural characteristics.



A town centre that is **increasingly resilient** to variable conditions resulting from **climate change** with environmental sustainability embedded throughout.



All spatial principles sketches ©Allies and Morrison

Spatial Objectives

- 4.5. As well as the Strategic Objectives a series of Spatial Objectives have also been defined to ensure proposals and investment support the place making aspirations and continue to respect the plan aesthetic of the town centre.

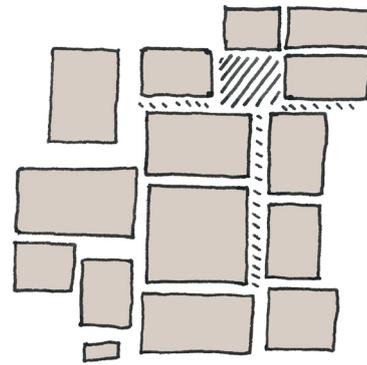
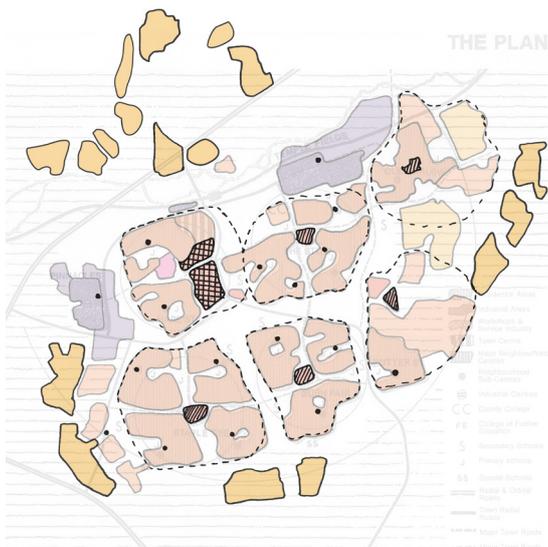
1 A vibrant and active town centre

- 4.6. Looking forward, Harlow Town Centre should continue to play a role as a destination for a range of retail and leisure uses.
- 4.7. The HTCAAP will seek to create a resilient framework which is capable of responding to the changing economic dynamics.
- 4.8. Building on a core retail offer, the HTCAAP seeks to create a context for a rich and flexible mix of community and civic uses, varied workspace, cultural and leisure activities, homes and shops.

2 Plan aesthetic

- 4.9. There is a formal composition to the arrangement of the streets and spaces in Harlow Town Centre which was carefully planned by Sir Frederick Gibberd and Harlow Development Corporation.
- 4.10. Buildings and public spaces have been set out on an irregular rectilinear grid, aligning frontages and with clearly defined corners.
- 4.11. Formal composition such as this enhances the design and place making of the town centre. Innovative and flexible approaches that seek to protect and expand the arrangement of streets and spaces will continue the evolution of Gibberd's plan aesthetic as well as providing interesting and unique design traits across the town centre.

Spatial objectives (continued)

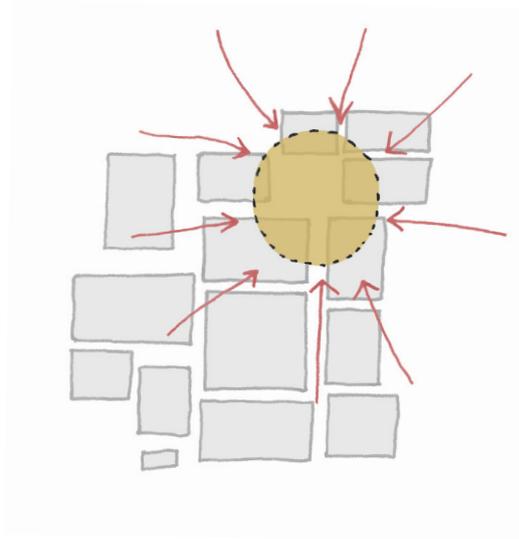


3 Garden Town

- 4.12. The future role and prosperity of the town centre is intertwined with the success of the Garden Town and wider movement proposals e.g. strengthening the links from the town centre to Harlow Town train station.
- 4.13. The town centre has the potential to be reinvigorated as a vibrant place set in the heart of the Garden Town and acting as the community and commercial hub that brings together the existing town and new villages.
- 4.14. Future developments in the town centre can play a key role in future-proofing multi-modal movement interventions, ensuring the town centre is accessible to the existing town and new Garden Town villages, whilst leveraging investment and embedding place-making aspirations.

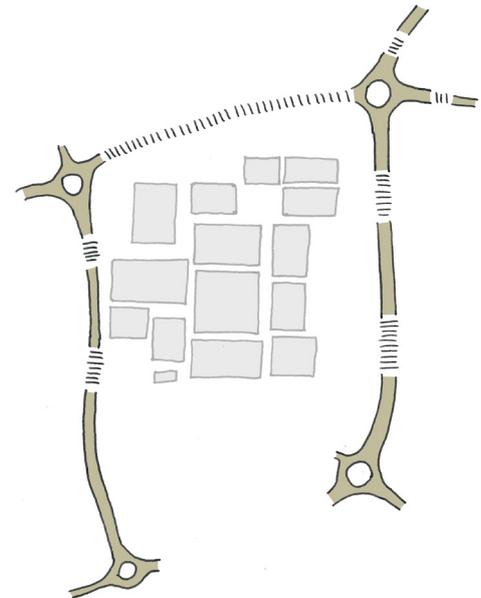
4 Respond to the urban structure

- 4.15. Running through the town centre is an 'original bone' structure (centred around Broad Walk, East Gate and Market Square), with a network of streets and spaces that follow the plan aesthetic.
- 4.16. The Masterplan 'repairs' the spatial conditions which are not currently working and supports spatial conditions which are currently successful (and should be retained and enhanced) or have potential to be so.



5 Rebalance the focus of gravity northwards

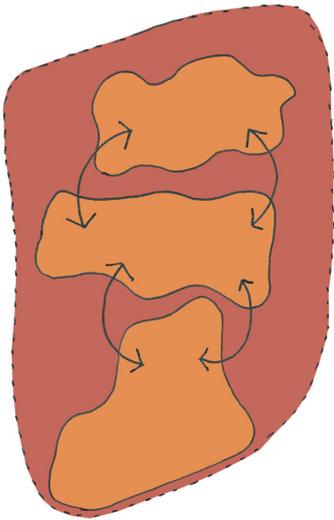
- 4.17. Accommodating uses which can help to shift the centre of gravity within the town centre northwards again.
- 4.18. This does not mean to make the southern and the western areas less active, but to bring the Market Square area up to this level, supporting a balance across the town centre.



6 Change the street character of the inner ring road

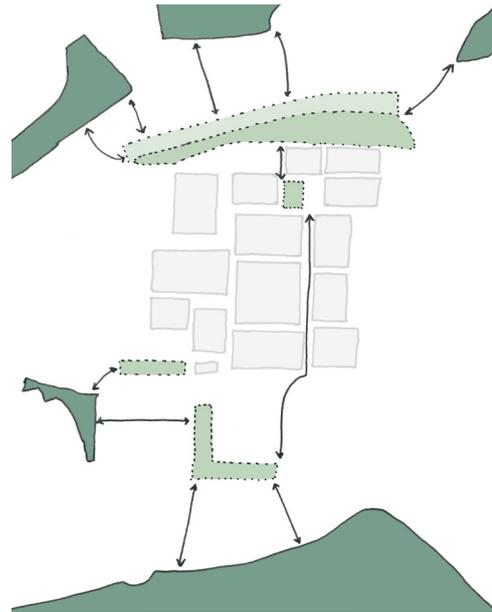
- 4.19. Changing the character of the inner ring road to a fronted boulevard on First Avenue with connections across to shift away from a dual carriageway and reversing the inward facing landscape that currently exists.
- 4.20. Adding at-grade pedestrian crossings increasing accessibility and priority given to pedestrians / cyclists to encourage sustainable and active travel to and from the town centre, whilst bringing the town centre closer to its adjacent neighbourhoods.

Spatial objectives (continued)



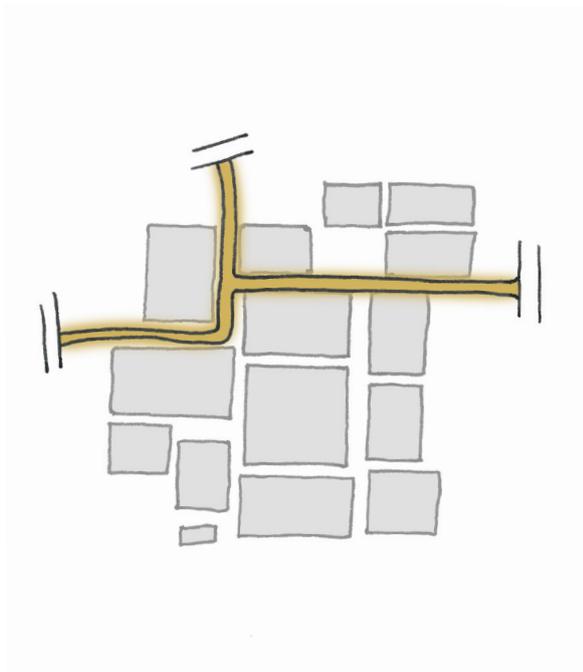
7 Establish a unified centre

- 4.21. Helping the town to operate as one centre rather than three separate areas.
- 4.22. At present, The Water Gardens and Harvey Centre act successfully as insular areas but have very different characters and do not have a relationship with one another or with the northern areas.



8 Connect to and draw in green spaces

- 4.23. A strategic area of green space along the northern edge of the town centre reflecting Gibberd's original Masterplan principles.
- 4.24. Stronger connections to the green spaces that surround the Town Centre, as intended in the original plan and which will facilitate and promote better sustainable accessibility to and from the town centre.



9 Improving access

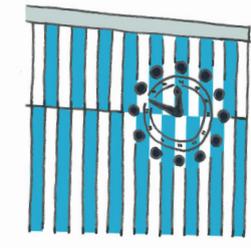
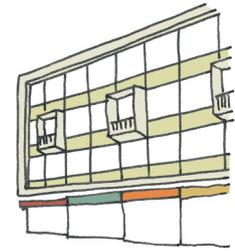
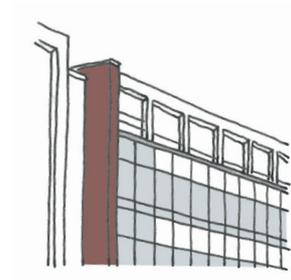
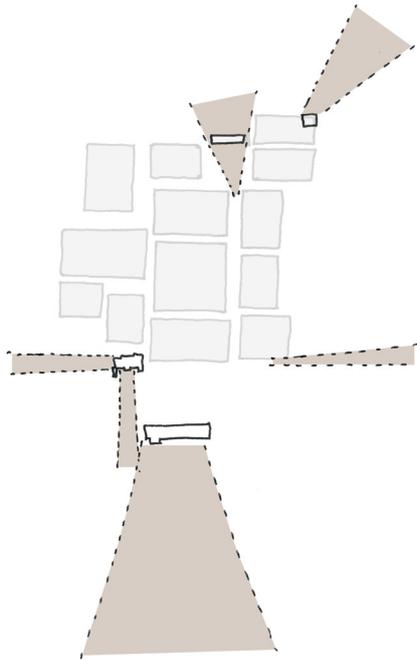
- 4.25. Improving public transport and creating first class transport connections whether it be on foot, cycle or vehicle to provide efficient, comfortable and a safe environment at all times of the day throughout the town centre.
- 4.26. Working with partners to connect the town centre to the proposed HGGT Sustainable Transport Corridors, bringing back multi-modal public transport through the town centre to raise the profile of the Market Square and East Gate areas.



10 Establish street frontages and attractive approaches

- 4.27. Addressing servicing approaches to the town centre, where possible, so that people are welcomed to Harlow Town Centre as they approach.

Spatial objectives (continued)

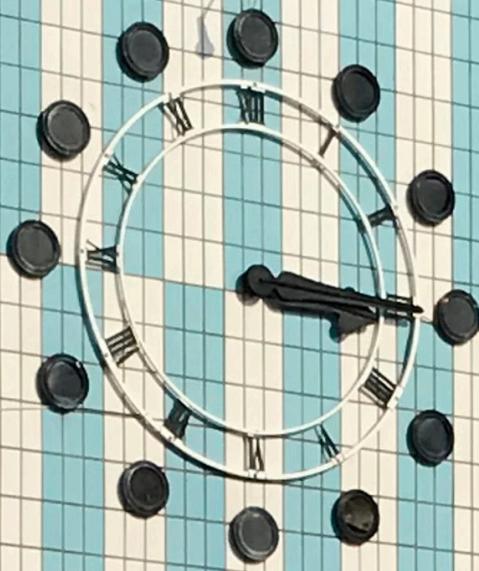


9 Frame views of key buildings and spaces

- 4.28. Improving the visibility of the Town Centre from the surrounding roads and framing views of key buildings such as the church to improve their setting.

10 Celebrate and reflect design heritage

- 4.29. Celebrating the unique design heritage of Harlow and using this to inform future development proposals.
- 4.30. Ensuring that these design cues are followed for future development in the town centre taking regard to scale, massing, colours, materials and detailing of the original fabric, and the integration of public art and sculpture.
- 4.31. Identifying buildings and qualities of value which could be transformed through refurbishment.



THE CLOCK HOUSE

THE CLOCK HOUSE
CONCERTS
FORI



TERMINUS

CITIZEN

Broad Walk

Welcome

ARRIVA

CASH LOANS

PHARMACY

HANDS.CO.UK

5 TOWN CENTRE STRATEGIC POLICES

Overview of policies

- 5.1. This sections gives policies to guide future sustainable development in Harlow Town Centre.
- 5.2. The policies are:

Strategic Policies

HTC1: Growth and Regeneration

HTC2: Opportunity Area Principles

Development Management Policies

HTC3: Sustainable Movement

HTC4: Car and Cycle Parking and Servicing

HTC5: Public Realm and Urban Design Principles

HTC6: Views, Gateways and Landmarks

HTC7: Green Infrastructure

Structure

- 5.3. The following headings sit beneath each policy:
 - **Introduction** - background to the policy.
 - **Policy statement** - concise statement of policy guidance.
 - **Justification** - statement justifying the approach as set out in the draft policy.
 - **Implementation** - supporting text which sets out how the policy will be progressed and taken forward.
- 5.4. The town centre Policies Map (Figure 32) identifies the key spatial policy allocations and designations in the HTCAAP area.

Figure 16 Looking towards Terminus House

STRATEGIC POLICIES

Introduction

- 5.5. The Strategic Policies are overarching policies that set the ambition for high quality sustainable growth in the town centre and how this will be delivered.
- 5.6. Harlow Town Centre is at an important juncture in the process of plan-making, regeneration and place-making. It benefits from a strategic location with a growing catchment. It is important that the town centre capitalises on recent investments and capitalises on the catalytic relationship with the Harlow Gilston Garden Town Project. In this context, the Strategic Policies encourage a comprehensive, long-term view, establishing a context for positive incremental change across the plan period.
- 5.7. The HLDP sets an agenda for significant growth in Harlow and neighbourhood authorities of up to 15,000 new homes and 20ha of employment space. The Strategic Policies in the HTCAAP set out the ambition to deliver a mix of complementary uses and strengthen the overall role of the Town Centre as an economic, social and cultural hub. A diverse mix of commercial activity will support nearby neighbourhoods and the planned Garden Town of Harlow and Gilston.
- 5.8. The HTCAAP identifies eight Opportunity Areas to direct appropriate uses to certain areas and to provide tailored guidance that responds to the unique role and characteristics of each area. Policy HTC2 sets out the overarching principles for the eight opportunity areas. Further area specific guidance is set out in Chapter 6.

Corporate Priorities

- 5.9. This section and the policy contained within it will help deliver the Council's Corporate Priorities, as follows:

- More and better housing
- Regeneration and a thriving economy
- Wellbeing and social inclusion
- A clean and green environment
- Successful children and young people

Policy context

- 5.10. Relevant Policies in the HLDP include guidance for:
- Sustainable development (SD1)
 - Retail, leisure and evening economy activities (RS1,RS2, RS3, PR5, PR6, PR7, PR11)
 - Housing (H1-H10; H8 sets out requirements for affordable housing)
 - Employment uses (PR3)
 - Recreational, cultural and community facilities (L21, SIR1)

HTCAAP objectives

- 5.11. Policy HTC1 and HTC2 will assist in the delivery of the HTCAAP objectives as follows:
- A **unified centre**
 - A Town Centre which supports **wider economic growth** in the District
 - A **competitive retail and leisure offer**
 - A **high quality public realm**
 - An inclusive and accessible destination with **excellent transport links** and that encourages local trips by sustainable and active travel modes
 - A **strong cultural offer**
 - **First class community facilities**
 - A **cohesive place**, supported by uses and design proposals which complement one another
 - A commitment to retain the ethos and **respond positively to the defining elements of the Gibberd masterplan**
 - A town centre that is increasingly **resilient to climate change**

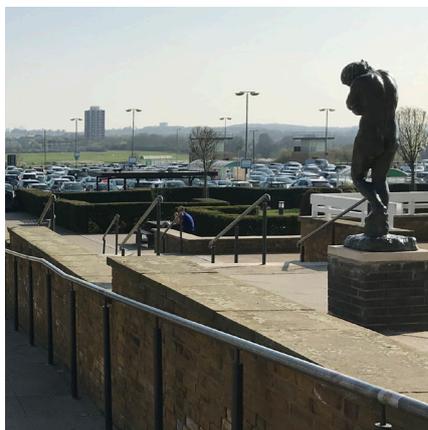
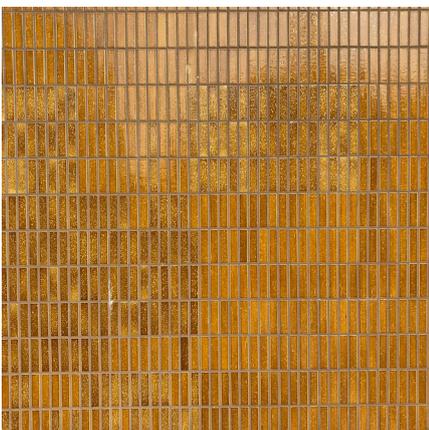
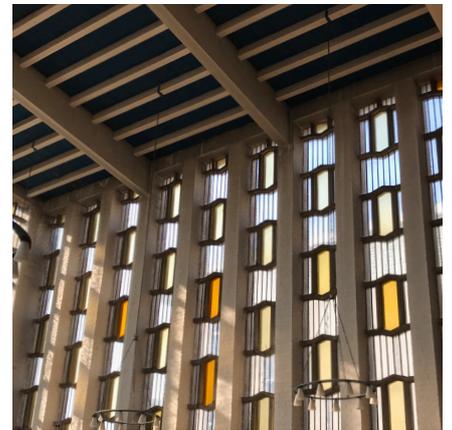


Figure 17 Harlow Town Centre

Policy HTC1 Growth and Regeneration

Development proposals for the town centre which demonstrate how they meet the Vision and Spatial Objectives set out in Chapter 4 and which are in accordance with the relevant Opportunity Area Policies will be supported.

Development proposals should avoid piecemeal development and instead adopt comprehensive approaches to growth, regeneration and placemaking which create the conditions for a successful and sustainable town centre with an emphasis on high quality streets, spaces and buildings.

Development proposals for new retail, commercial or leisure uses in the town centre must be responsive and demonstrate adaptability to shifting market trends and dynamics. Units must be capable of amalgamation and, sub-division, and the provision of mezzanine floors will be supported.

Retail Growth

Harlow Town Centre will seek to deliver the majority of retail floorspace needs identified in HLDP Policy RS2. Comparison and convenience floorspace will be protected in the Core Retail Areas (RC1 and RC2) subject to HLDP Policies PR5 and PR6.

The town centre primary and secondary retail frontages are identified on the Policies Map and should be read in conjunction with HLDP Policy PR6.

Employment Growth

High quality office and commercial floorspace which includes a range of units from large operators to single tenants, to more flexible co-working spaces, will be

supported in the town centre. B2 General Industrial and B8 Storage/Distribution will not be accepted in the town centre.

Housing Growth

Residential development must accord with HLDP policies and the nationally described space standards which form part of the Optional Technical Housing Standards set out in national planning guidance.

In residential developments of more than 10 dwellings it will be expected that at least 30% affordable housing is provided in accordance with HLDP Policy H8.

Civic, Community and Leisure Growth

The existing town centre theatre will be protected unless a suitable and viable alternative site is available and planning permission has been secured for a larger capacity facility. The Leisurezone which forms part of the Leisure Core will be protected for sport, leisure and other indoor/outdoor activities. Community and voluntary sector uses in the town centre should be retained and opportunities sought to improve their position and setting. Proposals for new community uses in the Town Centre will be supported.

The loss of civic, community and leisure facilities will be determined in accordance with HLDP Policy L2.

Education Provision

Land north of the town centre has been allocated for a primary school and will be protected from other forms of development.

Justification

- 5.12. Harlow Town Centre benefits from a strategic location with a large catchment and significant investments including the Harvey Centre upgrade which has had a wider catalytic impact. The Town Centre has a distinctive character and an impressive collection of public art and amenities which should be better celebrated. Clear opportunities exist to enhance the public realm and to capitalise on the latent development potential of the area.
- 5.13. The future role and prosperity of the town centre is intertwined with the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) and wider movement proposals. The town centre has the potential to be reinvigorated as a vibrant place set in the heart of the Garden Town. Through the Garden Town proposals and the forthcoming arrival of Public Health England's science campus and headquarters in the district, there is a genuine prospect that the town centre could harness the benefits of major residential growth in the immediate vicinity of Harlow (16,100 new homes to 2033 with a further 7,000 at Gilston after 2033).
- 5.14. A joined-up approach to growth, regeneration and placemaking is required to ensure the right conditions are created for a successful, sustainable and high-quality town centre environment.
- Retail**
- 5.15. In parallel with the need to accommodate retail expansion and to define a clear retail core, the Council recognises the need for broader growth and diversification in response to on-going changes in the retail and leisure industries.
- 5.16. The NPPF (2019) places an emphasis on achieving long-term vitality and viability and references the need to allow growth and diversification in a way "that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries."
- 5.17. The HLDP Policy RS2 identifies 18,100sqm of comparison floorspace and up to 3,200sqm of convenience floorspace in Harlow up to 2026. An indicative requirement for up to 40,200sqm of comparison floorspace and up to 5,500sqm of convenience floorspace is identified to plan for residential development coming forward in the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town beyond this period.
- 5.18. The Retail Hierarchy in HLDP Policy RS1 identifies the town centre as the best location for retail facilities for the district and the sub-region. Policy RS2 states that the HTCAAP will look to deliver a significant proportion of the retail floorspace requirements. The policy is informed by the Retail and Leisure Needs Study which advises that most of the retail growth should be directed to the town centre. Population growth anticipated through the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town will boost investment and stimulate regeneration in the town centre which will support the case for new retailers to locate to Harlow.
- 5.19. The primary and secondary retail frontages have been allocated based on an annual assessment made as part of the Harlow Retail Frontages Study (2019).
- Employment**
- 5.20. The supply of office space has been eroded by Permitted Development conversions of office space to residential and the Council is in the process of seeking to remove the right to Permitted Development at sites in the town

centre. The relocation of Public Health England to Harlow and the Enterprise Zone status will bring significant benefits to the town centre alongside improved connections from the town centre to nearby employment sites.

- 5.21. Harlow Town Centre is not considered to be an established office market “owing to its size, quality of existing stock and high vacancy rates” (Harlow Town Centre Market Analysis report, May 2017). Some limited provision is located close to Harlow but these units are not fully let and some have been converted to residential use. In addition, a number of Permitted Development conversions of office space to residential have already occurred in the Town Centre which has eroded the supply of workspace in the Town Centre.
- 5.22. The decision for Public Health England to locate a national science base in Harlow is a major opportunity and is forecast, alongside Enterprise Zone status, to have positive effects on the office market and values. Other opportunities exist within the Enterprise Zone including 20,000 sqm of “Grade A” office space and Data Centre development at London Road South, a 14ha design and build site at London Road North for Med Tech, Life Science and ICT sectors, and SME space at Templefields industrial estate. Use classes B2 (general industrial use) and B8 (storage or distribution) are considered inappropriate due to potential environmental and transport impacts on priority town centre uses and the overall vitality of the town centre.
- 5.23. There is potential to establish a more contemporary workspace offer in the town centre. The development of flexible workspace in the town centre could serve smaller businesses and micro firms and cater for a different market compared with existing supply

across the District (HTCAPP Delivery Strategy, 2019). Employment space in the town centre will bring more day time footfall and balance of uses.

Housing

- 5.24. The HLDP sets out a requirement for 9,200 new dwellings from 2011-2033. Most new homes will be delivered in surrounding areas in the district, but those that are in the town centre could improve the overall viability of regeneration proposals, bring greater footfall into the town centre, encourage modal shift in transport use and improve the evening economy.
- 5.25. National planning guidance sets out space standards which form part of the Optional Technical Housing Standards. This provides best practice guidance that should be adhered to. The Council requires schemes to comply with all HLDP housing policies (H1- to H10), including HLDP Policy H8 regarding affordable housing.
- 5.26. Chapter 7 provides further details on the indicative phasing and location of residential development sites in the town centre. The capacity estimates are indicative and will evolve as schemes come forward during the HTCAAP period.

Civic, Community and Leisure

- 5.27. There is a strong tradition of civic, community and leisure activities in Harlow Town Centre which continues to have a positive impact on the town centre offer, creating diversity and bringing a different audience to a town centre location. The HTCAAP has a role to play in reflecting this strength and potential as a component in the broader growth of the area.
- 5.28. Harlow Leisurezone is a very popular leisure centre and a significant non-retail attraction at the southern end of the town centre.

- 5.29. Harlow Playhouse is a popular, well-used venue. There is potential to expand the theatre offer through a larger capacity facility to improve its offering, and HTCAAP identifies a number of potential locations which could be suitable for this. The Council will work with partners to consider the feasibility and funding / delivery options for a new facility.
- 5.30. There is also limited creative business space at the Gibberd Gallery and Eastgate Arts. These are both centrally located in the town centre but could have a far greater profile.
- 5.31. There are currently various community services that exist within the town centre in units on temporary leases yet which provide diverse and added uses. There is scope for a more efficient approach to community facilities in terms of locations and buildings across the town centre.
- Education**
- 5.32. Harlow Town Centre has clear strengths in education including Harlow College, Sir Charles Kao UTC and Harlow Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering Centre. These assets are poorly integrated with the town centre and feel are physically separated from the core of the town centre by Velizy Avenue. Integrating existing education facilities into the town centre as well as identifying other locations and buildings across the town centre for educational facilities is a key priority of the HTCAAP.
- Implementation**
- 5.33. Development proposals should refer to, and respond positively to, the Vision and Spatial Objectives set out in Chapter 4. This will ensure new development supports the wider ambition of the Council for a joined up, high quality and sustainable approach to growth and placemaking in the town centre.
- 5.34. The Council intends to work closely with Central Government, Homes England and other key delivery agencies to progress the HTCAAP. A range of supporting strategies and initiatives will be developed relating to the co-ordinated planning and development of public estate assets, joined-up proposals for transport and infrastructure, initiatives and strategies related to the successful performance of Harlow as a town centre, and branding / marketing initiatives. The Council will adopt a proactive approach to developing funding bids and initiatives as set out in the delivery strategy in the HTCAAP.
- 5.35. Where there is a compelling case in the public interest, the Council will consider the use of its compulsory purchase powers to assemble sites within the HTCAAP Area. Chapter 7 sets out the proposed approach to delivery across the plan period and beyond. Proposals are earmarked according to early phases (0-5 years), medium-term (6-10 years) and long-term (defined as being beyond the plan period).
- 5.36. The HTCAAP embeds a degree of flexibility around the precise mix of town centre land uses. Proposals should respond positively to the indicative ground and upper floor plan (figures 19 and 20) and the indicative town centre site specific guidance in Chapter 6. Taken in combination, these set out the broad character and mix which is considered appropriate for different parts of the town centre. These should not be treated as prescriptive, and the Council will require proposals to provide a clear narrative and justification for the proposed mix of uses in relation to property market demand and opportunities on a site-by-site, and phase-by-phase basis, informed by the preparation of a more detailed masterplan and / or development briefs as noted in policy HTC2 implementation section.

5.37. The Council will encourage the introduction of new residential accommodation in the town centre. In addition, the Council will take a flexible view of uses and activities on the ground floor in areas outside the designated retail frontages. A rich mix of uses will be embraced including retail and leisure, workspace, civic, cultural and community uses. The Council will also take a positive view of meanwhile (short-term) or temporary activities to animate key spaces or ground floors. Development proposals should be coordinated with public realm improvements which will set the tone for investment and high-quality development.

Retail

5.38. A significant proportion of retail floorspace will be provided in Harlow Town Centre, particularly to the north of the town centre, through site redevelopment and regeneration opportunities.

5.39. To ensure development proposals contribute towards a thriving and sustainable town centre, applicants must consider any new retail evidence and changes in economic circumstances and their associated impact on retail floorspace needs. This is an important dimension in maintaining a flexible town centre. The Core Retail areas (RC1 and RC2) and retail frontage designations are the main mechanisms for maintaining and providing retail uses in the town centre and enhancing the experience of visiting Harlow.

Employment - offices and workspace

5.40. Although residential development is likely to form the predominant upper floor use on many sites, workspace will be an acceptable alternative. Proposals will be encouraged to respond positively to the potential location of workspace clusters as set out in the indicative ground and upper floor plans (figures 19 and 20) and the town centre site specific policies in Chapter 6.

5.41. The Council will be proactive in seeking to encourage affordable, start-up space for businesses in the town centre. Delivering flexible workspace in the town centre will require important pre-requisites, for example improvements to the quality of the town centre's environment and its amenity and leisure facilities. A careful approach to phasing will be necessary, having regard to factors such as potential occupier demand and avoiding market saturation (HTCAPP Delivery Strategy, 2019). Civic office space will also be encouraged in the town centre.

Housing

5.42. Proposals should adhere to the nationally described space standard as set out in national planning guidance. The standard deals with internal space within new dwellings for all tenure types. It gives requirements for the Gross Internal (floor) Area of new homes at a defined level of occupancy as well as floor areas and dimensions for bedrooms, storage and floor to ceiling height.

5.43. Residential development in the town centre should also adhere to the following principles:

- New homes should be of a high design quality in relation to internal space standards, environmental and sustainability performance and architectural character / materiality. Relevant HLDP policies are PL1 and H8. Provision of flexible, accessible internal layouts will be encouraged as far as possible.
- The Council will be proactive in encouraging landowners and developers to adopt a comprehensive approach to development wherever possible.



Figure 18 Mix of uses in the town centre

- Within the town centre, residential dwellings are likely to come forward as terraced apartments or perimeter blocks. Proposals should seek opportunities to create terraces and balcony spaces, or podium level amenity spaces where possible.
- 5.44. As set out in the supporting text of Policy HTC4, parking spaces should be accommodated at undercroft / podium levels, on-street or within surplus capacity in town centre car parks. Car parking should be carefully designed and integrated to avoid the creation of long, blank frontages which undermine opportunities to create attractive streets and spaces.
- 5.45. As part of the ambition to establish active uses on ground floors, there may be occasions, beyond the key town centre primary frontages, where residential accommodation at ground floor level is appropriate.
- 5.46. In regard to affordable housing, HLDP policy H8 sets out the context for any consideration of a reduction in the proportion of affordable housing on a specific development proposal. It is important to highlight that the realisation of HTCAAP aims and objectives should be considered as part of any independent viability assessment of the development to ensure a complete consideration of viability.
- Civic and Leisure**
- 5.47. Civic and leisure facilities should play a key role in the activation and animation of ground floors and public spaces, potentially as temporary or meanwhile activities. For example, community, co-working, evening economy and cultural facilities might form part of an ensemble of ground / first floor uses clustered around key public spaces.
- 5.48. The Council will work closely with partners including Harlow Art Trust to explore potential for new facilities in the town centre including gallery space and music venues. The HTCAAP is supportive of the long-standing ambition to deliver a larger capacity theatre in the town centre and will continue to consider the more detailed business case and brief for a new building alongside or in place of existing facilities.
- 5.49. The Council will work with public sector partners including Essex County Council, Homes England and Central Government to establish opportunities for the co-location of civic uses where this would allow the wider release of sites for development to support an overall regeneration strategy for key parts of the town centre, and the enhancement of civic facilities. This is currently being progressed through the One Public Estate initiative.
- 5.50. The Leisure Zone will be protected for sport and leisure uses which could include the enhancement of existing or incorporation of additional leisure activities (for example, a climbing wall).
- 5.51. Development proposals should also seek to identify opportunities for community and voluntary sector space at ground floors and lower storeys within the town centre as part of a broader mix of active town centre uses.
- 5.52. Opportunities to find synergies between different activities, uses and public spaces will be encouraged, particularly where this enhances the deliverability of new facilities and cultural activities or enterprise.
- Education**
- 5.53. Text awaiting outcome of discussions with Essex County Council.

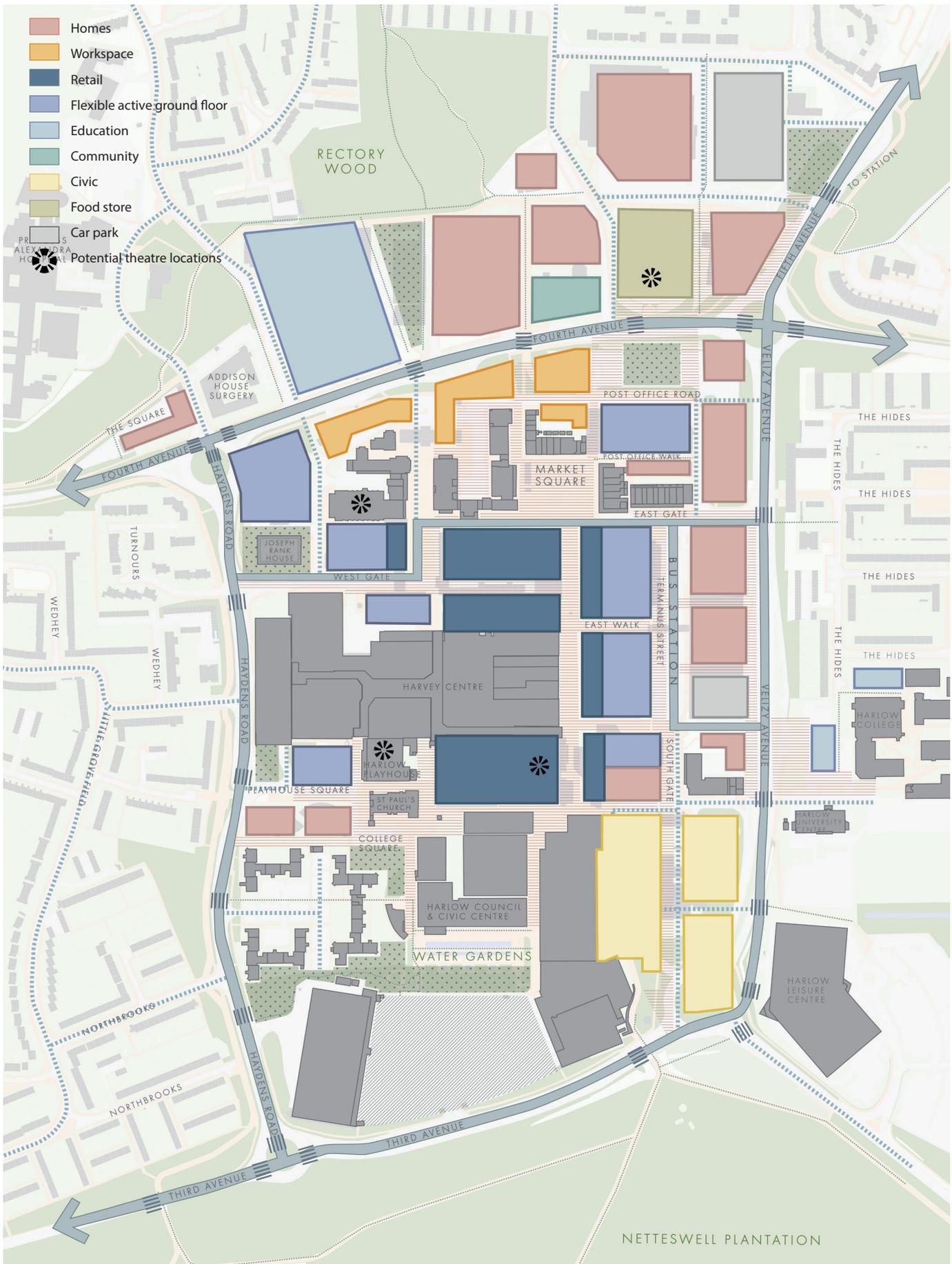


Figure 19 Indicative ground floor uses plan Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2018). All rights reserved. Harlow District Council Licence No.100019627

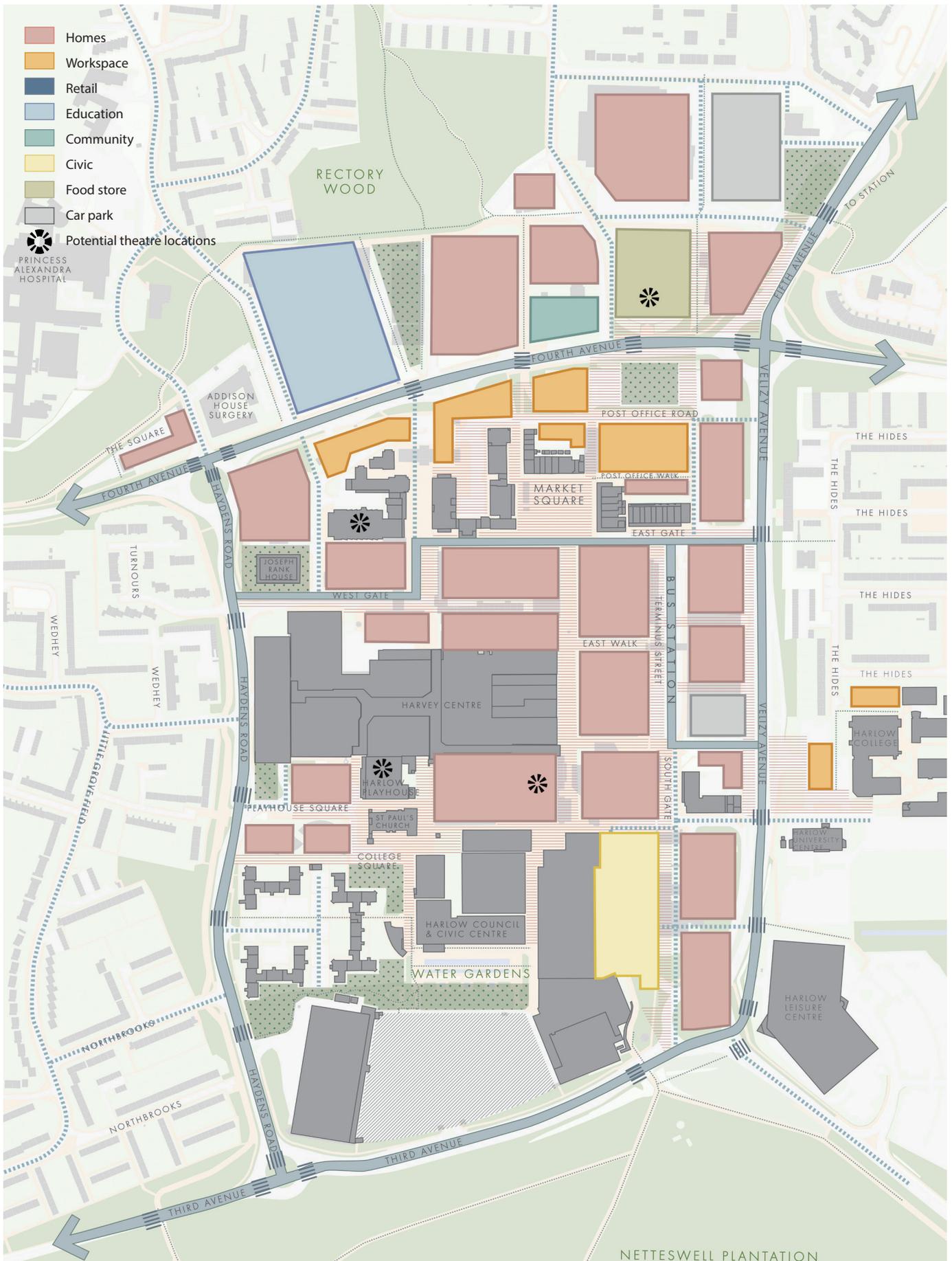


Figure 20 Indicative upper floor uses plan Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2018). All rights reserved. Harlow District Council Licence No.100019627

Policy HTC2 Opportunity Area Principles

Development proposals must accord with the Opportunity Area policies relevant to where the proposal is located, with specific reference to appropriate land uses, the public realm and Public Realm Strategy in the Appendix, movement and highways and design.

Where an alternative use is being proposed which does not accord with the relevant Opportunity Area, an applicant must demonstrate how the proposal accords with the Vision and Spatial Objectives. The development must also:

- a) form part, or be capable of forming, part of a mixed use development with flexible spaces;
- b) be compatible with neighbouring or adjacent land uses;
- c) do not prejudice deliverability of safeguarded uses identified on the Policies Map.

Land uses which have not been identified in any of the Opportunity Area policies or in the emerging town centre masterplan as a whole will not be considered acceptable.

Short-term, medium-term and long-term development proposals must demonstrate how they accord with spatial opportunities and facilitate the realisation of longer-term proposals in the HTCAAP. Development proposals which prejudice the long term future of the HTCAAP objectives will be refused.

Adjacent land uses must be compatible and where possible complement each other and have regard to neighbouring Opportunity Areas and the masterplan for the town centre as a whole.

Developer contributions towards projects and schemes is expected. Types of contributions are set out in Chapter 7.

Justification

- 5.54. Policy HTC2 establishes the overarching approach for the town centre specific policies set out in Chapter 6. The spatial opportunities refer to the town centre as a whole. A flexible approach to development is required to ensure that the overall masterplan for the town centre is delivered, whilst allowing for appropriate uses to be delivered in other locations, as well as the delivery of mixed-use schemes.
- 5.55. Initial masterplanning guidance has been established for each of the main Opportunity Areas and key sites in the town centre (see Chapter 6). Initial guidance for short-term and longer-term public realm projects has also been prepared (see Appendix). This work has played a key role in influencing the policy direction in the HTCAAP and is appended to the HTCAAP for reference.

Implementation

- 5.56. Specific guidance is required to enable the Council to steer and assess development proposals in the town centre. It is important that a proactive approach is taken to facilitate the delivery of the HTCAAP and to achieve a joined-up approach to regeneration.
- 5.57. The Council will consider the preparation of a more detailed masterplan and / or site-specific Development Briefs to supplement the HTCAAP. Working in partnership with stakeholders, the local community and development partners, Development Briefs will provide an opportunity to establish specific parameters around uses, design and infrastructure, which advance the more general principles and indicative illustrative material in the HTCAAP. Development Briefs will be led by the Council, but where appropriate, these documents

will be prepared jointly in partnership with landowners or development partners. Key sites which would benefit from Development Briefs include the Post Office site, Crowngate Island and the Bus Station area. Alternatively, site-based guidance might be incorporated in a more detailed town centre masterplan which is currently being prepared by Harlow Council, Essex County Council and their regeneration partners.

- 5.58. Proposals should demonstrate how they adhere to the general and site-based policy guidance and criteria in the HTCAAP. In doing so, positive reference should be made to the illustrative material which is set out in Chapter 6 and the appended Public Realm guidance.
- 5.59. The Council will require development proposals to demonstrate how they integrate with the specific principles of the relevant Opportunity Area with reference to public realm, movement and highways, land uses and design.
- 5.60. The Council will embrace a phased delivery strategy comprising a range of short-term projects and longer-term initiatives and development proposals including the future-proofing of infrastructure (including digital). Early delivery of public realm and infrastructure improvements will be encouraged, alongside a creative approach to meanwhile uses to set a positive context for future proposals.
- 5.61. Proposals for key sites should be proactive in integrating and embracing the proposed public realm projects as set out in the Appendix and Policy HTC5. Schemes will be expected to make development contributions to enable delivery of key public realm interventions, potentially via pooled contributions (see Chapter 7 for further information). Where fundamental

to the transformation of a site, public realm interventions should be delivered as a core element of the scheme. All proposals should demonstrate how they future-proof the future delivery (or phased delivery) of public realm proposals as set out in the HTCAAP and supporting documentation.

- 5.62. Proposals for transformational projects which are beyond the HTCAAP boundary but would benefit the performance of the town centre such as connections to Harlow Town Railway Station will also be promoted by the Council.
- 5.63. The Council expects major town centre development schemes (including streetscape, highways and infrastructure proposals) to engage with the Harlow & Gilston Garden Town Quality Review Panel. Early review will play a key role in securing the commitment to quality as set out in the HTCAAP.
- 5.64. The Council is also considering the establishment of a town centre Business Improvement District and a regular landowner and developer forum.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES

Introduction

- 5.65. The Development Management Policies underpin the overarching Strategic Policies to help achieve sustainable development in the town centre. They provide a detailed planning framework from which to assess planning applications. The policies cover sustainable movement, parking and servicing, public realm, urban design, views and green infrastructure.
- 5.66. The 1952 masterplan for Harlow New Town was based on the concept of a “human environment” which prioritised people and pedestrians. The HLDP sets the context for a modal shift to establish a more sustainable pattern of transport. Policy HTC3 gives overarching movement guidance for walking, cycling and public transport that sets the context for a range of interventions which will support this modal shift across the town centre and wider Harlow District. The balance and integration of these different movement strands are vital for the future success of Harlow Town Centre.
- 5.67. Policy HTC4 sets the approach to car parking, cycle parking and servicing in the town centre. The policy supports the wider ambition of the Council towards sustainable transport modes. It also helps to meet the HTCAAP’s spatial objectives to improve access and to address servicing approaches so that people are welcomed to the town centre as they approach.
- 5.68. Frederick Gibberd’s vision and masterplan for Harlow New Town reflected the New Town ethos of the 1940’s, drawing inspiration from the earlier Garden City movement and the drive to provide high quality and spacious homes with access to clean air and open space. Gibberd described Harlow as, “an organism which would go on changing and being rebuilt as the needs of the people altered.”
- 5.69. Policies HTC5, HTC6 and HTC7 sets a context for managing this process of on-going evolution and change. HTC5 defines criteria to protect and enhance the characteristics and identity of the town centre. The policy also establishes a bold approach to resolving and repairing parts of the town centre which are less successful to create a more successful, sustainable place.
- 5.70. Policy HTC6 describes the Council’s approach to views, gateways and landmarks in Harlow Town Centre. The policy ensures future development proposals improve legibility and arrival points in the town centre whilst responding positively to its topography and heritage assets.
- 5.71. HTC7 sets out the approach to green space in the town centre which reflect Frederick Gibberd’s vision for clean air and open space in, and around, the town centre. The Policy supports the HTCAAP’s spatial objective, set out in Chapter 4, to connect to and draw in green spaces.

Corporate Priorities

- 5.72. This section and the policy contained within it will help deliver the Council’s Corporate Priorities, as follows:

- More and better housing
- Regeneration and a thriving economy
- Wellbeing and social inclusion
- A clean and green environment
- Successful children and young people

Policy context

- 5.73. Relevant Policies in the HLDP include guidance for:
- Sustainable movement (SIR1, SIR2, IN1)
 - Servicing (IN2)
 - Public realm and urban design (PL1, PL2, PL3, PL12, L3, WE4)

- Views, gateways and landmarks (PL12, SIR2)
- Green infrastructure (PL4, PL6, PL7, PL8 WE2, WE3, SIR2)

5.74. Harlow Design Guide (2011) and Essex Design Guide (2005) gives underlying design principles to guide development and encourage a design-led approach. The documents make reference to general place-making principles, urban character, building heights, inclusive design, public open space, permeability and legibility.

5.75. A Spatial Vision and Design Charter for Harlow and Gilston Town has been prepared in parallel with the HTCAAP which sets out a clear vision and framework that will support the regeneration of Harlow Town Centre by drawing on true Garden Town principles.

HTCAAP objectives

5.76. The Development Management policies will assist in the delivery of the HTCAAP objectives as follows:

- A **unified centre**
- A Town Centre which supports **wider economic growth** in the District
- A **competitive retail and leisure offer**
- A **high quality public realm**
- An inclusive and accessible destination with **excellent transport links** and that encourages local trips by sustainable and active travel modes
- A **strong cultural offer**
- **First class community facilities**
- A **cohesive place**, supported by uses and design proposals which complement one another
- A commitment to retain the ethos and **respond positively to the defining elements of the Gibberd masterplan**
- A town centre that is increasingly **resilient to climate change**

Policy HTC3 Sustainable Movement

Major developments which have an impact on the transport network in and around the town centre will be required to provide planning contributions towards improving sustainable transport.

Development proposals must accord with the following principles:

Walking and Cycling

In order to encourage more walking and cycling in and around the town centre, development proposals must:

- a) ensure that key gateway locations identified on Figure 31 are protected and safeguarded;
- b) include measures which seek to improve walking and cycling usage to the town centre and prioritise sustainable modes of transport in accordance with the modal hierarchy set out in HLDP Policy IN1;
- c) provide attractive and green cycling and walking routes which connect development with key public spaces and facilities, transport interchanges and existing residential neighbourhoods both in and around the town centre taking into account natural desire lines;
- d) provide surface level crossings for pedestrians and cyclists both within and, where appropriate, outside of the development;

Access for People with Disabilities

Development proposals must ensure that suitable access and movement arrangements are in place for persons with disabilities or reduced mobility including to and within the

building/facility and give consideration to gradients, materials and unnecessary obstacles.

Public Transport

The bus station will be retained and developed to become a major transport hub for the town and form an important transport interchange for the Sustainable Transport Corridor. Legibility and links to the bus station will be protected or enhanced.

An East Gate West Gate cycle and public transport link connecting the bus station will be safeguarded from development. The route is identified indicatively on the Policies Map.

Justification

Promoting sustainable movement

- 5.77. The Council, working in partnership with Essex County Council has identified a clear priority of promoting a more sustainable pattern of movement in the town centre through a series of key moves and policy principles as part of an overall ambition that 60% of all journeys within the new Garden Town Communities, and 50% of all journeys across existing areas of Harlow, will be undertaken by sustainable (including active) modes.
- 5.78. Policy HTC3 aims to help realise these strategic modal shift targets by promoting sustainable transport modes in and around the town centre, as well as the Garden Town and wider Harlow District. The provision of sustainable transport modes has a number of benefits, including:
- Better linkages to and from the town centre to the new Garden Town and wider Harlow District.
 - Reduction in the number of vehicles on the road thereby easing congestion levels and improving the effects of climate change by reducing carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions.
 - Cycling and walking to services, particularly facilities within a radius of 1 to 8km, can improve public health, physical activity and quality of life.
- 5.79. Furthermore, a greater shift to active travel modes in and around the town centre is harmonious with Sir Frederick Gibberd's original masterplan for Harlow New Town (1952) which was based on the concept of a "human environment", prioritising people and pedestrians.

- 5.80. To enable people to choose more sustainable modes of transport, Policy HTC3 sets out a requirement for major developments in and around the town centre to contribute to the delivery of adequate infrastructure that will encourage sustainable movement, by ensuring that it is safe, secure, direct, frequent and affordable.

Implementation

- 5.81. The Council will work collaboratively to encourage a joined-up approach in relation to sustainable movement in the town centre alongside HGGT.
- 5.82. In order to realise aspirations for a more sustainable pattern of movement, the Council will promote a series of interventions to create a clearer hierarchy of streets in the town centre. In clarifying the overall hierarchy, the Council



Figure 21 Moving around Harlow

will place greater emphasis on access for less able people, walking, cycling and public transport. Vehicular movement will continue to be important, but the HTCAAP embodies a general shift away from cars in terms of decision-making priority.

Walking and cycling

- 5.83. Alongside interventions to create a clearer hierarchy of streets in the town centre, the Council will seek to integrate the following key priorities and interventions specific to walking, as illustrated in the Opportunity Area policies:
- Integration of walking routes beyond the town centre, drawing Green Wedges / Fingers and neighbourhood desire lines across the collar roads and across the town centre supported by a coherent set of public realm proposals and greening where possible.
 - Safe, secure conditions for walking, with good over-looking providing natural surveillance;
 - Surface-level crossings and dedicated footways as part of boulevard streets;
 - Improved walking connections, wayfinding and legibility from Harlow Town Railway Station to the town centre;
 - Better integration of walking routes between the Broad Walk and Velizy Avenue via the bus station;
 - Strengthening of east-west connections to Harlow College, University Centre and the Leisure Zone; and
 - Clearer views and improvements to legibility and routes at the junction of Cross Street, Broad Walk, the Water Gardens and the link between Water Gardens and the Green Wedge to the south.

5.84. As illustrated in Figure 25 and the Opportunity Area policies, the HTCAAP seeks to enhance the accessibility of the town centre for cycling through a series of east-west and north-south cycling connections, and provision of cycle parking hubs in key locations. The diagram indicates that while some key shopping streets are not appropriate for cycling such as Broad Walk and Water Gardens, parallel routes would allow an appropriate level of accessibility.

- 5.85. Alongside Policy HTC3 and the specifics set out in the Opportunity Area policies, proposals should also seek to integrate the following:
- Step-change in the quality of cycling provision between the railway station, the town centre and beyond to Public Health England and other employment locations;
 - Excellent and accessible cycling routes along the four boulevard routes which define the current boundaries of the town centre;
 - Cycle provision east-west from Velizy Avenue to Haydens Road via East Gate and West Gate;
 - Potential provision of a further east-west cycle connection via Crown Gate and Cross Street and St Paul's Church.
 - Retention of a cycle connection along Terminus Street as part of any future enhancement of the bus station area.
 - Dedicated cycle connections across the boulevard streets, ideally as surface crossings, with potential for existing crossings to be re-purposed as cycle-only routes.
 - Provision of cycle hub parking in strategic "interceptor" locations adjacent to key spaces and streets, and near onward connections north-south or east-west.

- Provision of other incidental cycle parking spaces adjacent to key destinations in the town centre.
- Provision of high levels of private cycle parking for residential and non-residential uses in the HTCAAP area, making positive use of ground floor and internal courtyard / podium spaces as appropriate.
- Potential to encourage cycling excellence in Harlow town centre with an integrated cycle cafe and community facility as part of hubs including the bus interchange area

Access for People with Disabilities

- 5.86. The Town Centre should be accessible for people with disabilities. This includes the provision of accessible commercial units and residential dwellings, as well as an accessible public realm.
- 5.87. Development proposals must be in accordance with HLDP Policy H5. This states that all new dwellings should be at least Building Control Part M4(2) standard for accessible and adaptable homes to meet the occupier's future needs. In addition, major residential development should provide Building Control Part M4 (3) standard dwellings for wheelchair users. The proportion is set out in the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).
- 5.88. The provision of specialist housing developments will be supported on appropriate sites that will meet the needs of older people and other groups.

Sustainable Transport Corridors

- 5.89. Sustainable Transport Corridors (STC) are set out in Policy SIR1 of the HLDP will support active travel in Harlow through a high-quality network of cycle and walking 'Super Greenways'

that run along these. Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) will run on routes that connect key destinations including Harlow Town Railway Station, the HGGT settlements, key commercial locations and other locations including schools and local centres.

- 5.90. The Council will work with partners to prioritise the implementation of the BRT / STC with a view to supporting enhanced connectivity with the town centre. In the longer term, the Council will seek to promote the future extension of the Bus Rapid Transit network to wider settlements and transport hubs including Broxbourne, Epping and Stansted Airport.
- 5.91. Policy HTC3 proposes the provision of an East-West gate cycle and public transport link which will introduce buses via East Gate and West Gate in order to realise sustainable movement objectives alongside wider aspirations for a thriving evening economy. Changes to bus routing across the town centre must demonstrate how bus movements are to be balanced with aspirations for place-making to facilitate wider pedestrian and cycling benefits. The East Gate West Gate connection will incorporate cycle and pedestrian movement.
- 5.92. The Council will work closely with Essex County Council to future-proof the potential routing of the BRT and local services through and around the town centre. As illustrated in Figure 26, public transport routes could follow any one of the boulevard routes which define the four sides of the town centre. The detailed approach and management of movement should be considered holistically, with a balanced approach to establish the character and emphasis on walking / cycling.

Bus routes

- 5.93. Through the HTCAAP, the Council will seek to preserve sufficient flexibility for the strategic improvement of public transport facilities in the town centre and wider District / HGGT area. Strategic interventions will be promoted to enhance the operation and character of the existing bus station, alongside the creation of a new bus connection for BRT services along East Gate West Gate. The potential location of other routes and local stops on the collar roads will be integrated in the future phased design and implementation of the boulevard streets.
- 5.94. Strategic provision must also be incorporated for bus standing areas, potentially on Velizy Avenue or at the edge of the town centre.

Planning contributions

- 5.95. Planning contributions towards improving sustainable transport in and around Harlow Town Centre will be sought which will support the following interventions and projects:
- Sustainable Transport Corridors across the HGGT and wider District including the East Gate West Gate cycle and public transport link in the town centre
 - Improving walking and cycling infrastructure between the town centre, Harlow Town Railway Station and local neighbourhoods
 - Cycle hubs or cycle parking across the wider town centre
 - Electric charging points

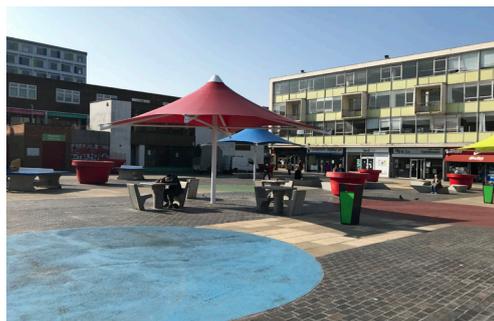


Figure 22 Active travel in Harlow Town Centre

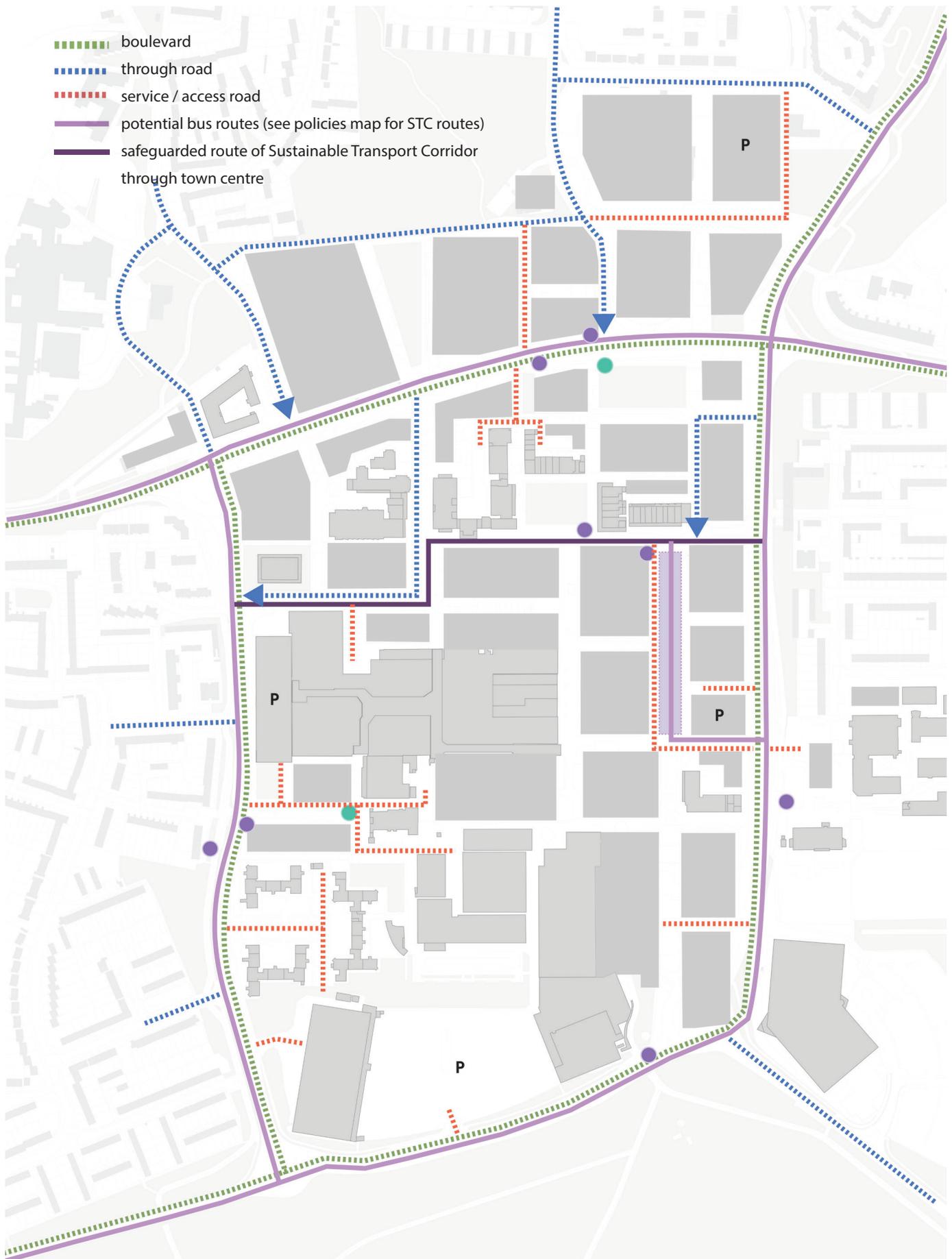


Figure 23 Indicative street hierarchy (including servicing) Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2018). All rights reserved. Harlow District Council Licence No.100019627 (2018)



1. Rapid bus station stop
2. Improved signage and crossing
3. Rapid Bus Route
4. Improved pedestrian route with new lighting
5. Improved signage
6. Direct cycle link
7. 'T' junction with new pedestrian and cycle connections
8. New four-way junction
9. New building frontage on Fourth Avenue
10. New public space with direct link to Town Centre
11. Rapid bus Town Centre interchange

Figure 24 Indicative diagram showing proposals for improved connection between town centre and Harlow Town train station (see policies HTC1, HTC2 and HTC4)
 ©2018 Google earth



Figure 25 Indicative cycling framework Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2018). All rights reserved. Harlow District Council Licence No.100019627



Figure 26 Indicative public transport framework - bus and taxi Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2018). All rights reserved. Harlow District Council Licence No.100019627

5

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES

Policy HTC4 Car and Cycle Parking and Servicing

Car Parking

Vehicle Parking Standards for the town centre will be determined with a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Until such time as this SPD is in place the Essex Vehicle Parking Standards will apply.

The consolidation of surface car parking as decked structures or multi-storey car parks will be supported where they make more efficient use of town centre sites. These opportunities are set out in the relevant Opportunity Area policies.

Cycle and Powered two Wheelers Parking

Dedicated parking spaces for bicycles and, where appropriate, mobility aids (such as mobility scooters) and powered two wheelers should be provided as part of new developments.

Cycle parking should be more convenient than car parking and new developments should offer appropriate locations to park cycles including spaces outside the development site where appropriate. Development proposals should also provide supplementary changing and charging facilities.

Electric Charging Points

In new car parking areas, such as supermarket parking courts or multi-storey car parks, infrastructure should be put in place (via underground ducting) to allow for connection to electric charging points.

The level of provision of electric charging points should be appropriate to the

development size and type, its level of parking provision and its context and location.

Servicing Arrangements

Servicing for retail areas must be via the rear of the units and must not have a detrimental impact on pedestrianised areas in the town centre. Servicing arrangements for all developments must protect gateway locations, the legibility for pedestrians entering the town centre and enhance the public realm and appearance of these areas. Proposals must also accord with HLDP Policy IN2.

Justification

- 5.96. In many cases, under-used public car park sites occupy very visible locations which undermine the overall quality of the street environment and sense of arrival in the town centre. Surface car parking is an inefficient use of valuable town centre land which could be used more intensively. Therefore, the Policy supports the use of decked or multi-storey car parks. A summary of car parks within the study area is provided in Figure 27. In addition to this, several alternative car parks are available outside of the HTCAAP boundary, but still in walking distance to the town centre.
- 5.97. The town centre has a particularly important role to play in realising the shift to more sustainable transport modes – being a key destination, and incorporating the interchange between the bus station and the Sustainable Transport Corridor.
- 5.98. Cycling is prohibited in the pedestrianised town centre although cycle parking is provided. This is often remote from building entrances and in less convenient and less secure locations.
- 5.99. Policy HTC4 therefore seeks to encourage more cycling through the provision of dedicated parking areas which are conveniently located as well as changing and charging facilities where appropriate. The intention is for this to contribute towards achieving modal shift across the HGGT.
- 5.100. In keeping with the HLDP, policy HTC4 seeks to embrace other sustainability initiatives to reduce the use of the car and to reduce the emittance of carbon dioxide, such as encouraging the use of electric cars through the provision of new charging points.

- 5.101. Servicing is a particular issue in the town centre, with the structure of streets and blocks often resulting in exposed service areas in key gateways which is detrimental to the vitality of the town centre. This should be addressed through new development as identified in spatial objective 10.

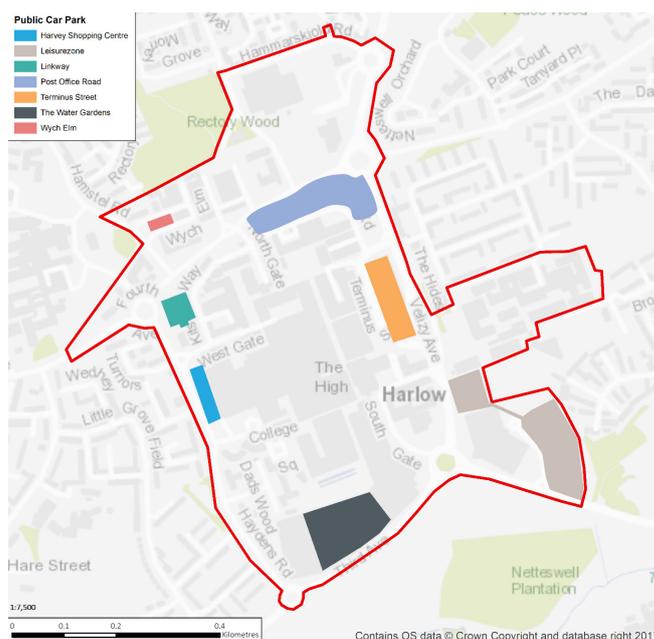


Figure 27 Existing public car parks Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2017

● Harvey Shopping Centre - 720 spaces	● Terminus Street - 600 spaces
● Leisurezone - 550 spaces	● The Water Gardens - 1200 spaces
● Linkway - spaces unknown	● Wych Elm - 120 spaces
● Post Office Road - 139 spaces	

Implementation

- 5.102. The Council will prepare a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for parking in the town centre. The SPD will set out new requirements regarding the amount and design of vehicle parking for residential and non-residential developments in the town centre, in the context of a wider aspiration to encourage a shift to more sustainable transport modes. The SPD will respond to the wider promotion of a more sustainable pattern of movement across Harlow and the Garden Communities.

Public / town centre parking

- 5.103. In order to realise the regeneration potential of the town centre, the Council will encourage the consolidation of surface car parking as decked structures or multi-storey car parks to make better use of valuable town centre sites. This would free up space for development of new town centre uses. The Opportunity Area policies identify areas where this may be appropriate.
- 5.104. Wherever possible, opportunities to create parking facilities which are integrated into the street scene to establish active streets should be taken.
- 5.105. Flexibility should be established to future-proof parking buildings to allow conversion to other uses as demand for parking falls in the future in response to the implementation of public transport and active transport proposals and the establishment of modal shift in transport use. It is anticipated that the overall quantum of town centre parking spaces will remain broadly consistent across the plan period. Given that the amount of town centre floorspace is projected to increase, this would represent a proportional reduction in the parking standard.

Residential parking

- 5.106. Overall, a low level of parking provision will be supported in new residential developments with appropriate justification on a scheme-by-scheme basis. The Essex Vehicle Parking Standards (2009) provides guidance on the provision and role of parking within residential, commercial and leisure areas in the county. Section 2.5 entitled 'Parking Standards in Urban Areas' states that a reduction to the vehicle parking standard may be considered particularly for residential development in urban areas where there is frequent and extensive public transport and cycling and walking links. This includes for example the town centre.
- 5.107. Proposals for residential uses should consider existing and future public transport accessibility and provide a clear parking strategy which considers the overall level of allocated and unallocated spaces in relation to the type and size of dwellings proposed. Proposals should consider the identification of unallocated parking provision within the consolidated town centre car parks, with the allocated provision forming part of the developments themselves. Alternatively, some unallocated parking could be provided as on-street parking within the new town centre streets. Early engagement with Harlow District Council will be encouraged in relation to this issue.

Commercial workspace parking

- 5.108. Through proactive use of Travel Planning and an integrated approach to the enhancement of public transport, the Council will seek to encourage a low level of dedicated parking for new commercial workspace in the town centre, potentially car-free.

Cycle and Powered two Wheelers Parking

5.109. The HTCAAP seeks to enhance the accessibility of the town centre for cycling through a series of east-west and north-south cycling connections, and provision of cycle parking hubs in key locations. Policy HTC4 seeks to implement better cycle parking facilities through the:

- Provision of cycle hub parking in strategic “interceptor” locations adjacent to key spaces and streets, and in close proximity to onward connections north-south or east-west.
- Provision of other incidental cycle parking spaces adjacent to key destinations in the town centre.
- Provision of high levels of private cycle parking for residential and non-residential uses in the HTCAAP area, making positive use of ground floor and internal courtyard / podium spaces as appropriate.

Electric charging points

5.110. Electric Vehicle Charging points should be provided in line with HLDP Policy IN1. More details on this will be set out in an updated Design Guide SPD and/or the Town Centre Car Parking SPD.

Town centre access and servicing

5.111. Local points of access should be provided from the boulevard streets into the town centre and wider HTCAAP area. In general, the continued location of car parking at the edge of the town centre will seek to avoid unnecessary penetration of private vehicles. Proposals should seek to demonstrate how existing / new access will be provided for residential and non-residential properties in the town centre. Out-of-hours servicing will be promoted as far as possible.

5.112. The Council will be proactive in exploring improvements to existing servicing arrangements where this could result in wider benefits to the vitality of the town centre. The Council will work with Essex County Council to avoid the proliferation of potential rat-running via through-routes.

5.113. Proposals should demonstrate an integrated approach to the deliveries and collection points, with potential to identify consolidated facilities at accessible points adjacent to hubs / key town centre gateways.

5

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES

Policy HTC5 Public Realm and Urban Design Principles

Development proposals should respond positively to the original plan aesthetic of the town centre, its public art and spaces, heritage assets and positive architectural characteristics.

Development proposals will be supported where they accord with the Public Realm Strategy set out in the Appendix and protect and enhance the overall public realm of the town centre through for example improved landscaping, street furniture, lighting and surface treatments.

Where appropriate development proposals should factor into their masterplanning the short and/or long term public realm improvements identified below or contribute financially towards them.

Short Term Projects:

1. The creation of boulevard streets around the town centre
2. Public realm interventions at Broad Walk
3. Improvements to Market Square
4. East Gate and West Gate
5. St Paul's Square

Longer Term Projects:

6. Post Office Gardens
7. Rectory Park
8. The Bus Interchange and West Square
9. South Gate public space linking to Netteswell Plantation

Further details of the projects are set out in the Public Realm Strategy.

Buildings, structures and sculptures which have a distinctive historic character, including a number from the original Gibberd Masterplan will be protected and should be interwoven into new development proposals where appropriate.

Development proposals should take cues of the features and palette of materials of Harlow's original New Town character to inform building design. They should incorporate new public art and sculpture into the layout and/or design of new developments in accordance with HLDP Policy L3.

Justification

- 5.114. Despite its relatively recent evolution, Harlow Town Centre has an important story to tell in terms of its historic development, heritage, public realm and urban design. The town centre retains its authentic plan aesthetic, as well as a number of individual buildings and sculptures that date back to Gibberd's original masterplan. Opportunities exist to retain and enhance this grain and heritage through the HTCAAP.
- 5.115. The original plan aesthetic consists of a formal composition to the arrangement of the streets and spaces in Harlow. Buildings and public spaces have been laid out on an irregular rectilinear grid with aligning frontages and clearly defined corners. The ring road that encloses the rectilinear grid has contributed to a high degree of separation between residential neighbourhoods, the town centre and surrounding open spaces, including the Green Wedge to the south. In addition, a lack of clear hierarchy and absence of a typical structure reduces the overall legibility of the town centre from surrounding neighbourhoods. However, a number of central landmark buildings characterise views from the rural hinterland and act as a marker for the town centre.
- 5.116. Within the town centre, many public spaces lack any sense of night-time or leisure uses which contributes to a significant lack of life and vibrancy in the evenings and, therefore, there are opportunities to improve the night-time economy. Similarly, low quality arrival points, poor legibility and the absence of frontages on some pedestrian routes has a very negative impact on the experience of being in the town centre.
- 5.117. There is a varying quality of public realm across the main shopping areas. The existence of street clutter, poor quality street furniture and poor paving create a negative perception. Service yards and associated access severs many central areas of public realm.
- 5.118. HTC5 therefore seeks to improve the quality of the public realm and urban design through a series of principles and specific set of projects to ensure that the town centre remains an attractive place to invest in and visit both in the day and at night. This also includes the protection of important buildings and assets in the town centre and the provision of public art.

Heritage

- 5.119. St Paul's at College Gate is the only listed building in the town centre, however, several buildings have distinctive historic character, including a number from the original Gibberd masterplan which are still present. Some of these examples include features which are specific to New Town architecture and Harlow. The Water Gardens are Grade II listed, built between 1960 and 1963 to the designs of Gibberd, and along with their setting, contribute positively to the heritage of Harlow Town Centre. A number of sculptures also have a special historic character and identity which are an important part of the fabric.
- 5.120. Building heights and scale also influence the town centre experience and can negatively impact the setting of heritage assets if not sympathetically integrated. Policy HTC5 seeks to protect and retain the important heritage assets in the town centre and interweave them into the design of new development proposals where it is appropriate to do so.

Implementation

Urban design

- 5.121. Development proposals should provide a clear understanding of their design rationale taking into account the detailed Opportunity Area policies and the following principles:
- 5.122. **Plan aesthetic:** The retention and enhancement of the original “Plan aesthetic” of Harlow Town Centre. The layout of blocks, streets and spaces should have a formal composition, reflecting the prevailing irregular rectilinear grid. This should be strengthened by aligning frontages and retaining existing, and establishing new, clearly defined corners.
- 5.123. **Integration:** Address the sense of severance and separation between the town centre and the surrounding neighbourhoods through the introduction of a greater mix of uses, and the transformation of the collar roads into a more welcoming and accessible series of boulevards.
- 5.124. **Edges and thresholds:** Key edges of the town centre are poorly defined by weak parking or service areas and backs of buildings. These poorly defined spaces have a negative impact on the perception and identity of the town centre. As part of the creation of boulevards, proposals should seek to the Council will seek to resolve and repair these thresholds to create safer and more legible views and points of arrival.

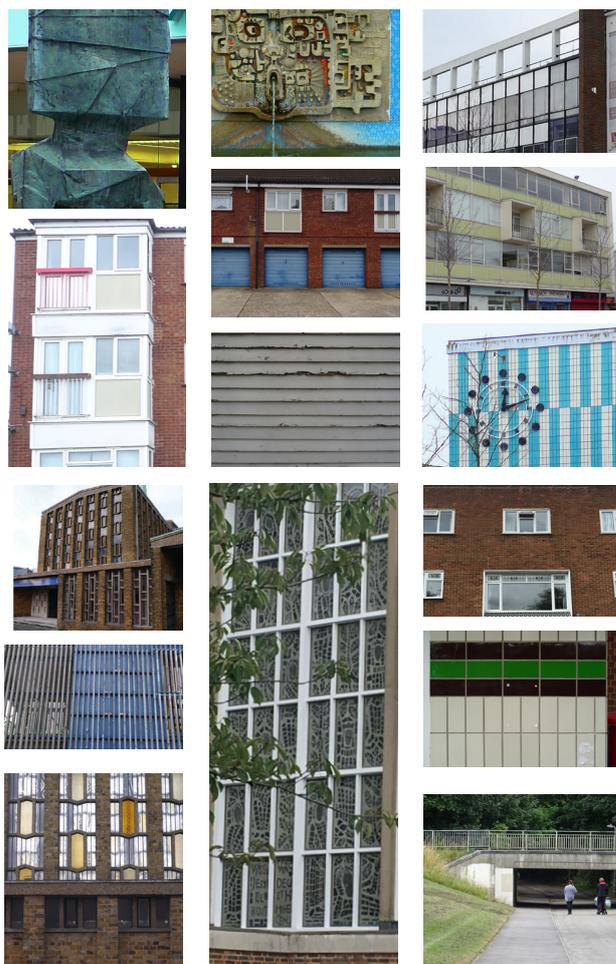


Figure 29 Features and materials specific to Harlow Town Centre



Figure 28 Harlow is visible from the outer edges of the town, shown diagrammatically above. ©Allies and Morrison

- 5.125. **Mix of uses:** A richer mix of uses in the town centre will be supported as a counter to the original zoning strategy. The blurring of boundaries, particularly through the growth of town centre living on upper floors, will play an important role in enhancing the vitality and resilience of the town centre. Flexibility in block design and dimensions will be encouraged to establish greatest flexibility for alternative future uses.
- 5.126. **Hierarchy of spaces:** Parts of the town centre suffer from a confusing arrangement of building frontages and spaces. The open grid of streets and spaces has resulted in areas where service areas or building backs open onto public spaces or thoroughfares. Opportunities for comprehensive redevelopment, the completion of urban blocks and public realm interventions to establish greater clarity or activity will be supported.
- 5.127. **Enclosure:** The general height of buildings in the town centre is two or three storeys. The Council will encourage denser forms of development across the town centre. Key streets and spaces could accommodate a general height of four to six storeys. This will create a greater sense of enclosure, overlooking and natural surveillance of key streets and spaces. Key marker locations might also be appropriate for slightly taller elements subject to Policy HTC6 including a clear rationale and a high standard of design.
- 5.128. **Views:** Proposals should respond positively to the topography of the town centre and the surrounding landscape. Further guidance is set out in policy HTC6.
- 5.129. **Sustainable design:** Development proposals must consider HLDP Policy PL3 in relation to the realisation of high standards of sustainable design, construction and energy usage. Reference should also be made to other sustainability guidance including the HGGT Vision and Design Guide, and the adopted Harlow Design Guide SPD. Opportunities for brown, biodiverse and/or green roofs and walls, and Modern Methods of Construction should be considered.
- 5.130. As noted in the supporting text of Policy HTC1, the Council will be proactive in encouraging schemes to engage in a process of design review with the HGGT Quality Review Panel.
- Public realm**
- 5.131. The Council will take a proactive role in facilitating the delivery of a series of short-term and longer-term projects which will play an important role in defining the quality of the environment in the town centre and supporting broader strategies to enhance health and wellbeing.
- 5.132. Alongside Policy HTC5 and the specific Opportunity Area policies, proposals should consider the following overarching public realm principles:
- 5.133. **Setting the tone:** Avoid street clutter, poor quality street furniture and paving to improve the overall perception of the town centre
- 5.134. **Work with and enhance the New Town:** Embrace a simple, rational approach which is consistent with the overall plan aesthetic and the Modernist character of the original buildings in the town centre. Negative conditions including poor legibility, the confused arrangement of fronts and backs and exposed services will be improved.

- 5.135. **Public art and sculpture:** Harlow benefits from a unique collection of public art and sculpture, much of which is of national or international significance. The Council will work with Harlow Art Trust to protect and enhance the collection. This might entail refurbishment or repair of existing works and the careful curation of the collection – either retaining pieces in situ or establishing appropriate new locations. There might also be opportunities to commission new sculpture if this is of the highest quality and consistent with the typical ethos of the existing sculptures in the town.
- 5.136. **Playful town centre and performance:** Opportunities to create the setting for informal, playful activities which assist in creating safe and successful spaces will be encouraged. This could include sculpture as playable pieces. Designated sites for busking and performance will also be encouraged.
- 5.137. Trees, planting and green space are set out in more detail in Policy HTC7.
- Heritage**
- 5.138. The Council will actively encourage landowners and developers to consider options to work creatively with existing buildings, structures and sculptures where they contribute to the townscape character and identity of the town centre.
- 5.139. Buildings which have a distinctive historic character include:
- Market House
 - Adams House
 - 12 East Gate
 - St Pauls Harlow (Grade II Listed)
- 5.140. Harlow has a unique collection of modern sculptures of national importance, with artworks by celebrated sculptors such as Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth located within the town centre and surrounding neighbourhoods. Through redevelopment opportunities and national funding sources, the HTCAAP presents an opportunity to guide investment to maintain and expand the town's collection. This could be through the creation of new pieces, the refurbishment of existing pieces, or the relocation of existing pieces. Current sculpture locations are shown in Figure 30.
- 5.141. Development proposals should take cues from the features and typical palette of materials of Harlow's original New Town character to inform its building design. Buildings have colour accents and use is made of tile and other materials to complement brick, stone and concrete.
- 5.142. Features to consider include the vertical articulation of façades, large protrusions on façades and rhythm through the repetition of geometric shapes. The glazing on many buildings is encased by slender window frames which give a delicate distinctiveness to the façades and is fundamental to Harlow's character.



Figure 30 Location of existing sculptures in Harlow Town Centre (pink dots) *Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2018). All rights reserved. Harlow District Council Licence No.100019627*

Policy HTC6 Views, Gateways and Landmarks

Protecting Key Views

Development proposals must protect and enhance key views and vistas both within and out of the town centre. Opportunities to enhance and open these views will be supported.

Views towards heritage assets, historic buildings and their settings within the town centre should be protected unless the development proposal enhances these views. Any development in the foreground and background should be of exceptional design quality and contribute positively towards the composition and setting of these buildings.

The key views have been identified in Figure 31 of the HTCAAP.

Tall Buildings

Tall buildings will be supported in the town centre subject to their location, proximity to key views, gateways and landmark areas, their surrounding context including adjacent buildings and layout of streets and the building use/s.

Building heights on the perimeter of the town centre and adjacent to the boulevard streets in particular should not create a barrier between the town centre and neighbourhoods and must avoid any over-concentration of tall buildings in that area. Proposals must also consider the spacing between buildings and views of the skyline.

Gateway locations and landmark buildings

Key gateway locations will be protected and enhanced in order to improve legibility and points of arrival to the town centre. Development proposals that improve the overall public realm, environment and accessibility to the town centre at these gateway locations will be supported. Key gateways are identified on the Policies Map and in the relevant Opportunity Area policies.

Development proposals for buildings or structures at landmark locations must be of exceptional design quality both in terms of the building/structure and the surrounding public realm. They should also assist in wayfinding within and to the town centre. Landmark locations have been identified in the relevant Opportunity Area policies.

Justification

- 5.143. Views are important as they assist an understanding of the character of the Town Centre and can help to establish a strong sense of arrival. Landmark buildings add visual interest for views and assist with wayfinding.
- 5.144. It is important for development proposals to respond to views and integrate them in proposals as they have potential to strengthen the connection between green spaces and the town centre, as intended in Gibberd's original masterplan principles. Policy HTC6 seeks to embed an integrated approach to views as part of a positive place making strategy.
- 5.145. A number of locations in the town centre present an opportunity to increase in height. In some cases, additional massing and taller buildings might be appropriate subject to appropriate townscape assessment and design quality. This represents a sustainable use of brownfield land which will support the vitality and viability of the town centre and associated infrastructure /placemaking priorities.
- 5.146. The policy also identified key gateway locations and landmark buildings. These need to be considered carefully through design proposals as they assist in defining a legible and welcoming town centre which is an important dimension in supporting Harlow as a place for businesses, shopping and leisure.

Implementation

- 5.147. The key primary and secondary views are identified indicatively for reference in Figure 31.

Views of heritage assets

- 5.148. Development should adhere to HLDP PL12 in relation to views of heritage assets and their settings. The Council will consider the extent to which development is sympathetically integrated within the town centre, including its setting in relation to wider vistas and views.
- 5.149. Existing and future potential views to sculpture should also be considered and integrated.

Long views towards green spaces

- 5.150. Long views out of the town centre towards green spaces are encouraged. The Council will support proposals that seek to establish and / or contribute positively to a long view between the town centre at North Gate towards Rectory Wood, along a proposed strategic area of green space (View 9), and from St. Paul's Church south towards Rye Hill (View 20).
- 5.151. The panoramic view south towards Rye Hill from the Town Hall and The Water Gardens (View 21) has historic significance as an important element of Gibberd's original vision for the town. This view must be protected and opportunities sought for its enhancement.

Tall buildings

- 5.152. Harlow lies to the south of the valley of the River Stort set below the higher ground to the south and north. It was part of Sir Frederick Gibberd's original vision to contain the town within the natural landform pattern. Land to the east and west is more undulating. New development in the town centre should

consider the impact of development on views towards and across the town centre. Proposals must minimise negative visual effects of built form both on views towards and across the town centre, and outward views to key landscape skylines.

- 5.153. Proposals for taller buildings must provide a clear rationale and integrated approach to urban design and public realm principles as set out in Policy HTC5 and the Opportunity Area Policies. Where a sequence of taller elements are proposed, proposals must demonstrate an appropriate spacing of buildings to respond to the urban design principles, particularly in relation to the prevailing plan form, block structure and local views. There must be an emphasis on accessible, safe connections, and strengthening of the overall permeability of key streets including Fourth Avenue and Velizy Avenue. As set out in the supporting text for Policy HTC2, the Council will consider the preparation of more detailed masterplanning work and/or development briefs prepared for key sites which will provide further detail on height, scale and massing.

Gateway locations and landmark buildings

- 5.154. Proposals should seek to improve the sense of arrival to Harlow Town Centre by strengthening and creating long views along north / south and east / west routes from pedestrian and cyclist entry points into the town centre.
- 5.155. Suitable locations for landmark buildings are shown in Figure 31 and in the relevant Opportunity Area policy. Landmark buildings should be of exceptional design quality and views towards landmark buildings should be promoted, protected and enhanced.

Key views

1. Long view from Harlow Town Park along Fifth Avenue towards landmark building
2. Panoramic view from Fifth Avenue towards landmark building and open space
3. Panorama from Fourth Avenue towards open space
4. Panorama across open space from Fourth Avenue
5. Market Square from northeast corner
6. Market House, Adams House and Square from north-west corner
7. Market House, Adams House and Square from southwest corner
8. Adams House and Square from southeast corner
9. Long view north towards Rectory Wood from along North Gate
10. Long view south from strategic green space towards North Gate
11. View east along West Gate towards Town Centre from Haydens Road
12. View north along Broad Walk towards Market Square
13. View south along Broad Walk
14. View east along Playhouse Square towards St. Paul's from Haydens Road
15. Panoramic view north of St. Paul's and open space
16. View west towards St. Paul's from Broad Walk / Cross Street space
17. View west from Harlow College along Cross Street towards St. Paul's
18. View north towards bus station
19. View south towards Third Avenue
20. View south towards Rye Hill from St. Paul's Church
21. Panorama towards Rye Hill

Key gateway locations

- A. Post Office site
- B. Green gateway
- C. Market Square / Birdcage Walk
- D. Velizy Avenue to the Bus Station through Broad Walk
- E. Green route south to Green Wedge
- F. West through Cross Street

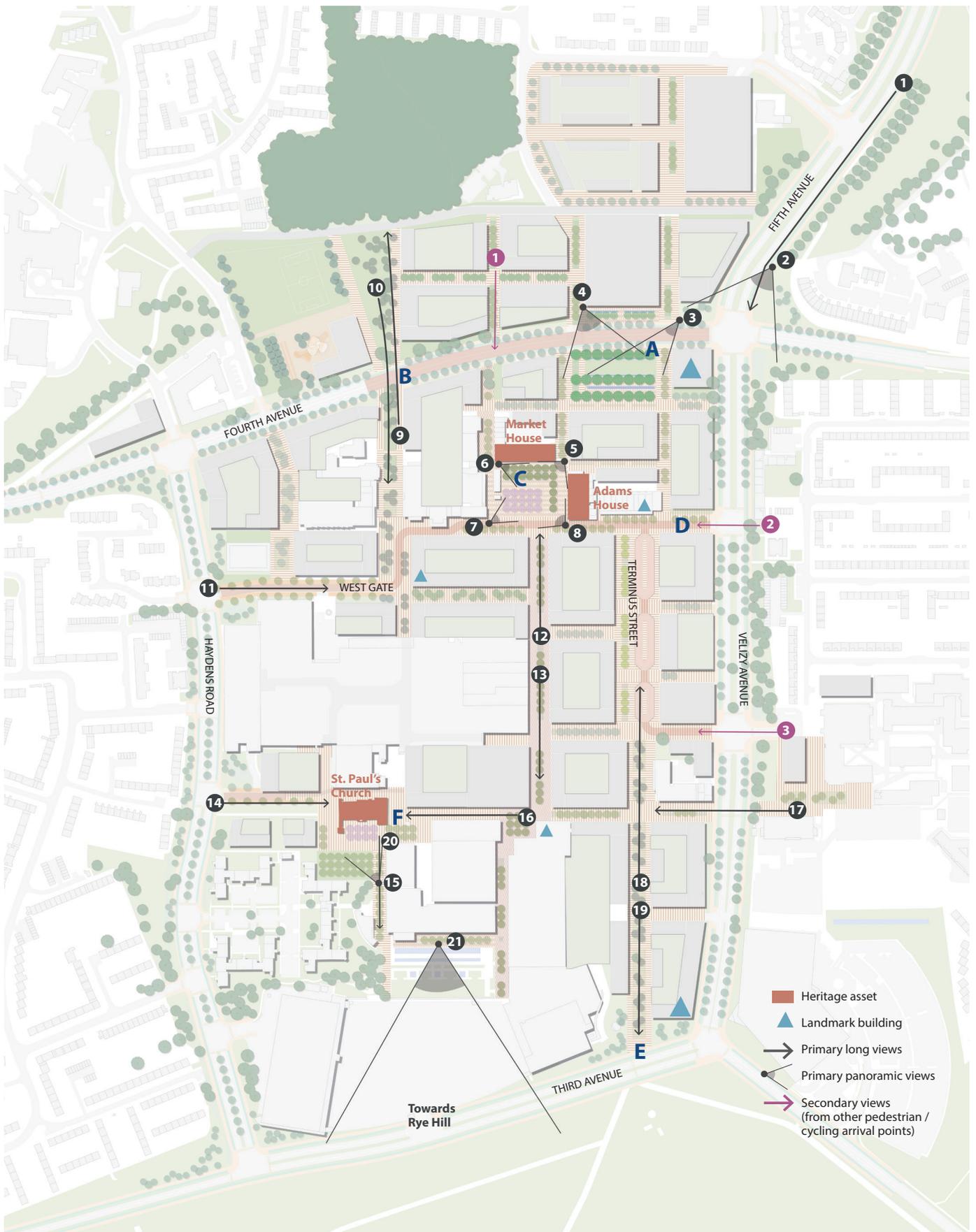


Figure 31 Indicative views and landmarks Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2018). All rights reserved. Harlow District Council Licence No.100019627

Policy HTC7 Green Infrastructure

Development proposals should seek to provide or contribute towards the provision of Green Infrastructure in the town centre and ensure a net gain in biodiversity as set out in HLDP Policy PL9.

Development proposals should not have a detrimental impact upon the green spaces identified in the Opportunity Area policies. Alternative green space may be considered appropriate subject to their location, quality of provision and quantity.

A strategic area of green space connecting Rectory Wood in the north to Fourth Avenue has been identified on the Policies Map in order to establish a stronger relationship between the town centre and surrounding green spaces.

Justification

- 5.156. As a planned New Town, Harlow benefits from networks of open spaces which provide for a range of leisure activities, strengthens the character and appearance of the town and contributes to the biodiversity of the district. HLDP Policy PL9 sets out guidance regarding biodiversity and geodiversity assets. Development should ensure a net gain in biodiversity, by contributing to new biodiversity assets and protecting and enhancing existing biodiversity or geodiversity assets.
- 5.157. Feedback from discussions with the community has shown support for quality green space in the town centre and for opportunities to connect green infrastructure. Whilst natural landscape and green space can be easily reached by foot from the town centre, including the Town Park, the centre itself lacks planting and open spaces. Mature tree planting is often limited to car parking areas rather than public spaces or streets. There is a need for a concerted programme of tree planting and “greening” across the town centre. This intervention will enhance the experience of arriving, passing through or spending time in the town centre.
- 5.158. It is a spatial objective of the HTCAAP to connect to and draw in green spaces into the town centre. The creation of a strategic area of green space connecting Rectory Wood to Fourth Avenue reflects Gibberd’s original masterplan principles, will provide ecological benefits, and will facilitate and promote better sustainable accessibility to and from the town centre.

Implementation

- 5.159. The HTCAAP seeks to strengthen the relationship between the town centre and its surrounding green spaces, including the district's network of Green Wedges, and Green Fingers, and the Town Park.

Trees and planting

- 5.160. Individual schemes will be required to deliver or contribute to public realm planting for adjacent urban spaces as appropriate. Although planting is likely to come forward incrementally in response to a phased programme of delivery, the Council will take a coordinated approach to delivery to ensure species selection and layout responds to the indicative guidance in the Appendix.

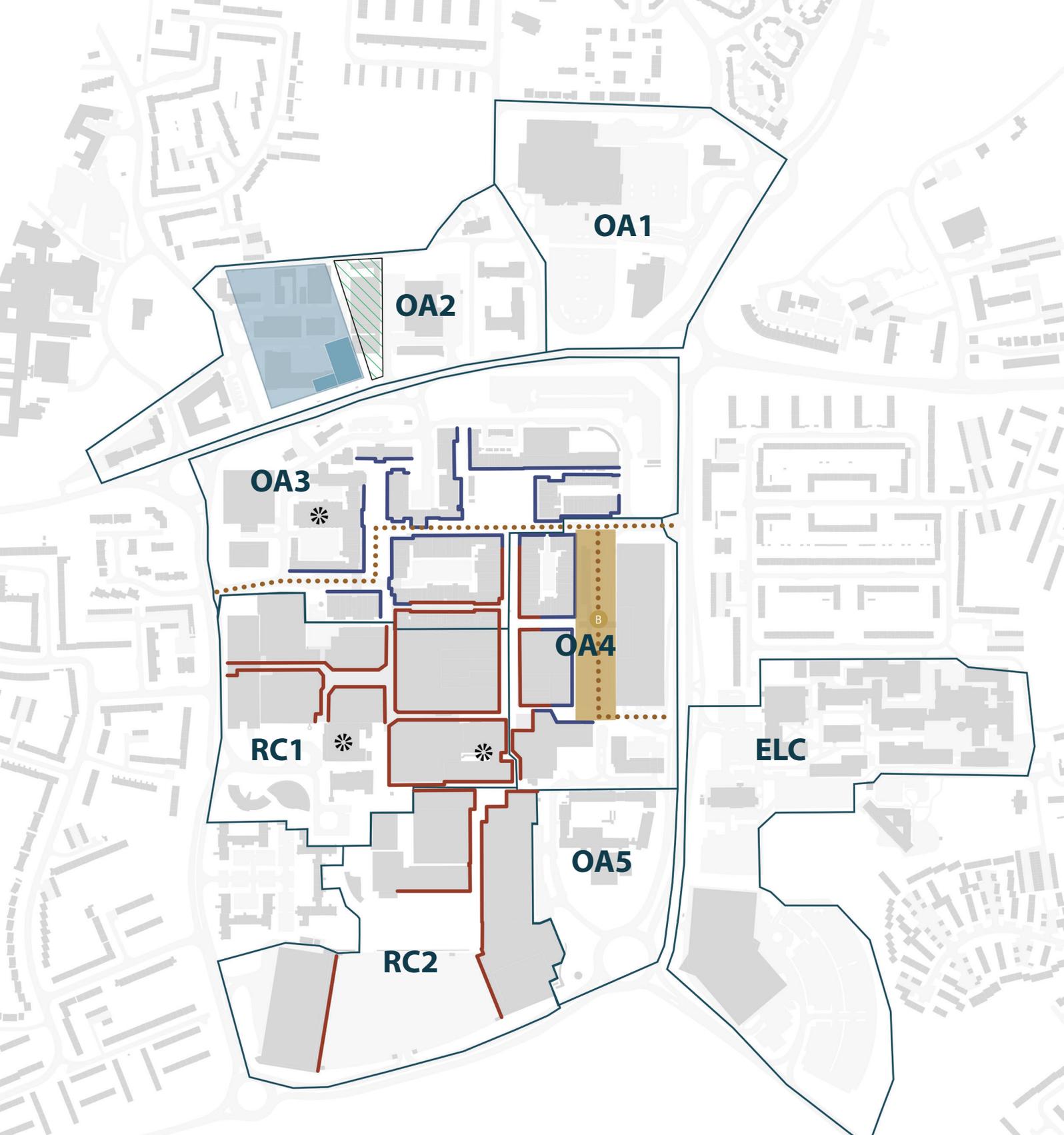
Strategic green space and green streets

- 5.161. The relevant Opportunity Area policy and illustrative indicative guidance (see Appendix) promote the creation of a new strategic green space to improve strategic connections from the broader network of Green Wedges to the town centre. The green space has the potential to draw green space into the town centre, crossing the collar roads and penetrating the core town centre as a series of strategic "green streets". The Council will liaise with landowners to consider how groups of sites could be brought forward in tandem to enable the delivery of new strategic green spaces. Potential locations include Wych Elm to connect into Rectory Wood, and South Gate as part of the Crowngate proposals.
- 5.162. **Green Infrastructure including Sustainable Urban Drainage:** Proposals should seek to integrate proposals for Green Infrastructure including Sustainable Urban Drainage and ecology at an early stage in the design process drawing on indicative guidance in the Appendix.

POLICIES MAP

Policy summary

- 5.163. Figure 32 summarises where the different HTCAAP policies apply.
- 5.164. The principal movement interventions are:
- Indicative Sustainable Transport Corridor including a safeguarded route through the town centre, along East Gate and West Gate (Policy HTC3)
 - Reconfiguring the bus station (Policy HTC3)
- 5.165. The plan also shows the opportunity areas. Each opportunity area has its own policy which are set out in Chapter 6. These are:
- OA1 Sainsbury's Northern Gateway Site
 - OA2 Wych Elm
 - OA3 Town Centre North
 - OA4 Terminus Street
 - OA5 Crown Gate Island
 - RC1 Harvey Centre
 - RC2 The Water Gardens
 - ELC1 Education / Leisure Core Harlow College Campus and Leisurezone
- 5.166. There is potential for a new strategic green space for the town centre that would extend from Rectory Wood to Fourth Avenue.



KEY

- Opportunity Area boundary
- Indicative Sustainable Transport Corridor (policy HTC3)
- Bus station
- ▨ Strategic Green Space
- Education site
- Primary frontage
- Secondary frontage
- ⊗ Possible theatre locations (OA3 / RC1)

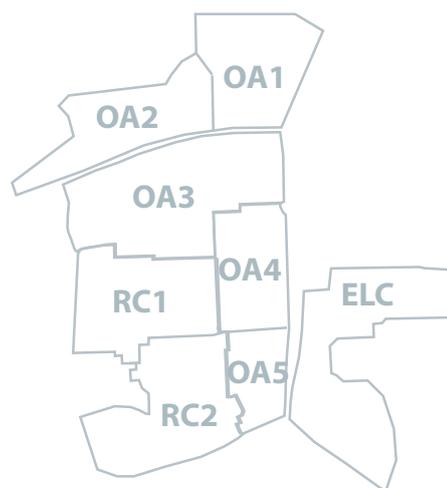
NOTE: Should we identify the Boulevard / avenue streets on policies plan (HTC5 and OA1, 2, 3, 4, 5)? Should we identify pedestrian route by Harvey Centre to align with wording in OA3?

Figure 32 Policy map Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2018). All rights reserved. Harlow District Council Licence No.100019627

6 TOWN CENTRE SITE SPECIFIC POLICIES

Overview

- 6.1. This section sets out the Town Centre Site Specific policies that will guide development for opportunity areas within the HTCAAP boundary. The areas are:
- Opportunity Area 1 (Sainsbury’s Northern Gateway Site)
 - Opportunity Area 2 (Wych Elm)
 - Opportunity Area 3 (Town Centre North)
 - Opportunity Area 4 (Terminus Street)
 - Opportunity Area 5 (Crown Gate Island)
 - Retail Core 1 (Harvey Centre)
 - Retail Core 2 (The Water Gardens)
 - Education / Leisure Core (Harlow College Campus and Leisurezone)
- 6.2. Development proposals within each opportunity area must be of the highest design quality, providing a site-specific design response which incorporates the key principles set out within each policy.
- 6.3. The policies must be read alongside the area-wide policies in the HTCAAP. The policy text for each opportunity area make reference to potential uses that might come forward within each site alongside indicative development capacity. Indicative ground floor uses are also illustrated on each opportunity area plan. Indicative guidance on potential target uses at ground and upper floor are set out in Figure 19 and Figure 20. As set out in policy HTC2, Harlow Council, Essex County Council and their partners have commissioned a more detailed masterplanning exercise which clarify specific uses and capacity for key sites.
- 6.4. For specific guidance on views and townscape, please refer to policy HTC6 and its associated plan (Figure 31), which shows the key views, gateways and landmarks that development proposals for each site should consider.



Land uses		Movement	
Residential	Frontage	Key retail frontage	Possible theatre locations
Back	Education	Bike routes	Opportunity area boundary
Frontage	Frontage	Pedestrian connections	
Back	Back	Primary roads (with bus routes)	
Civic	Frontage	Secondary roads	
Frontage	Commercial / Non residential	Indicative pedestrian crossings	
Frontage	Back	Key connections	
Back	Frontage	Level change	
	Frontage	Car parking	
	Back		
	Townscape merit		
	Proposed green space		
	Public realm		
	Green connections		

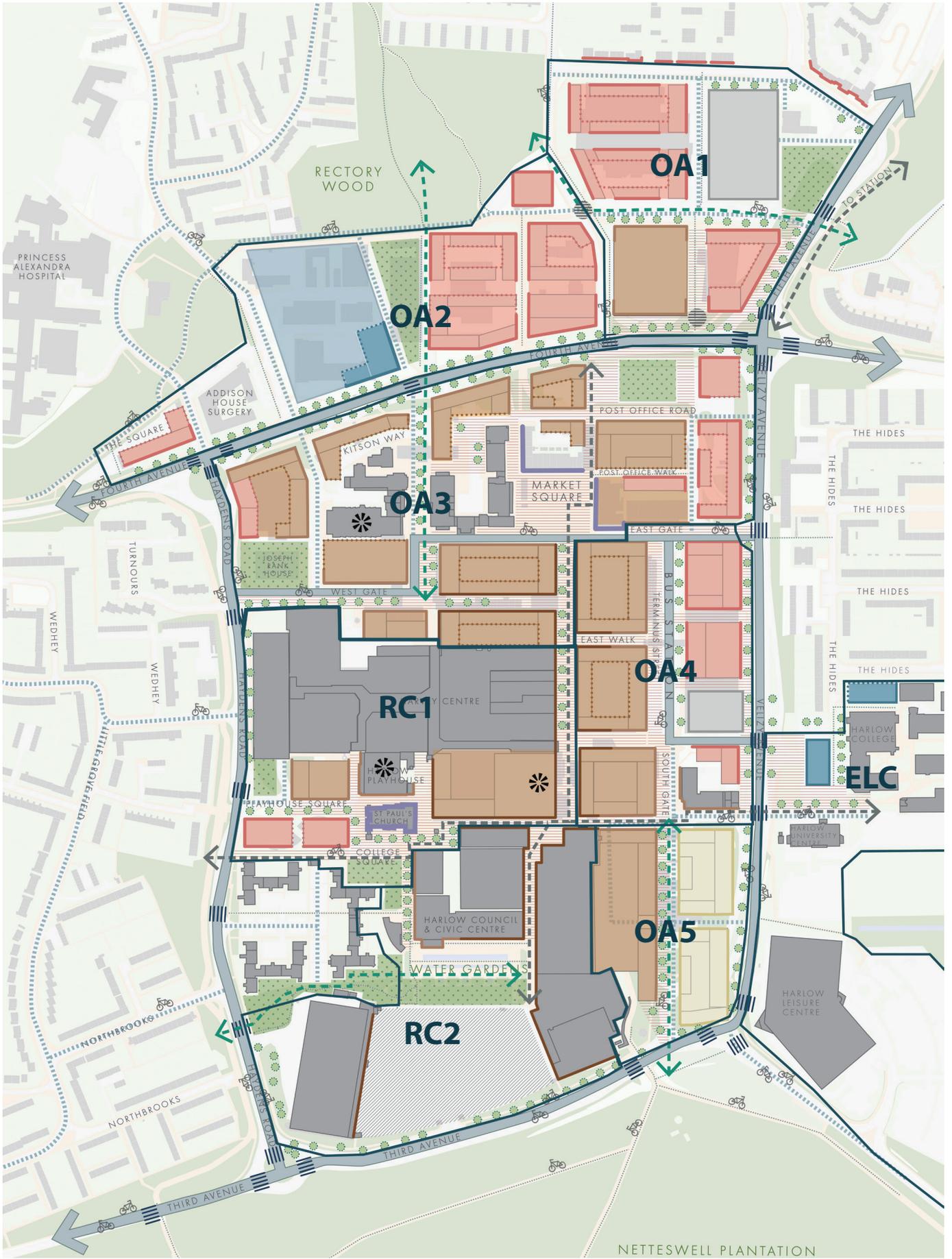


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OPPORTUNITY AREA 1 - SAINSBURY'S NORTHERN GATEWAY SITE

Policy OA1 - Opportunity Area 1 (Sainsbury's Northern Gateway Site)

Sainsbury's Northern Gateway Opportunity Area has been identified for residential development and the provision of a retail convenience store. Leisure, entertainment, community and civic uses with ground floor entrances onto both Fourth Avenue and Hodings Road will also be supported. Opportunities to provide a more efficient use of space through the provision of a multi-storey car park will be supported subject to its location and height.

Development proposals within Opportunity Area 1 must be of the highest design quality, providing a site-specific design response which, alongside the strategic and development management policies, incorporates the following key principles:

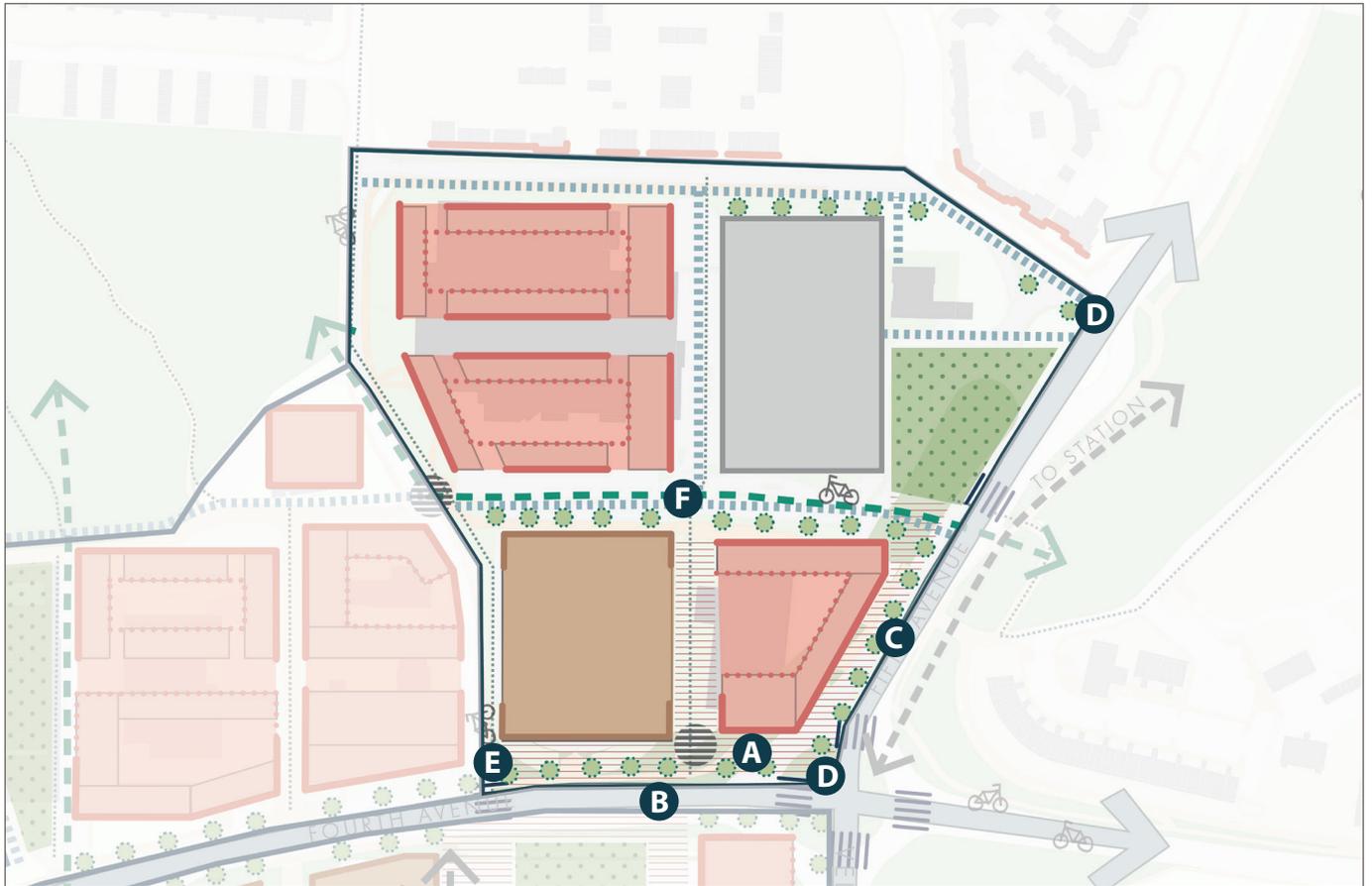
- A. Development proposals must provide a high quality public realm with active frontages which address Fourth Avenue and Fifth Avenue at the junction with Velizy Avenue.
- B. Development proposals must facilitate the transformation of Fourth Avenue into a boulevard character with a coordinated approach to planting and pedestrian crossings.
- C. Development proposals must improve walking and cycling connections to surrounding neighbourhoods, the Town Park to the east and towards the town centre.
- D. Development proposals must not prejudice potential highway and junction improvements including a possible new junction between Fifth Avenue and the Northern Gateway site (Hammar skjold Road) and potential reconfiguration of the Velizy Avenue / Fourth Avenue junction.
- E. Development proposals should facilitate the provision of at-grade entrances off of Fourth Avenue.

Justification

- 6.5. The Sainsbury's Northern Gateway Site is a key site on the approach to the town centre from Harlow Train Station. It is located to the north of Fourth Avenue and east of Fifth Avenue, and currently accommodates a food store and car parking area. The existing site is underutilised, and there are opportunities through redevelopment and public realm projects to establish a gateway to the town and improve the arrival experience for those travelling on foot and by bike.
- 6.6. Currently Fifth Avenue favours free vehicular movement to the detriment of pedestrian connectivity. Roundabouts are generally not pedestrian and cycle friendly because they encourage continuous flows of vehicles, with fast exit speeds. The ample space along Fifth Avenue presents an opportunity to improve the junction design with Hammar skjold Road.
- 6.7. The key principles for Opportunity Area 1 will help to realise the wider vision and strategic objectives set out in Chapter 4. Specifically, the policy will help to better integrate the area to the north with the town centre, which is currently separated by the busy inner-ring road. This would benefit the regeneration of the wider town centre, particularly the market area.

Implementation

- 6.8. Subject to the relocation of existing uses, the Sainsbury's Northern Gateway site could be suitable for higher density residential development and other commercial / non-residential uses which could include employment, community space and a refurbished or reprovided foodstore. The indicative AAP proposals identify approximately 216 new homes within the opportunity area.
- 6.9. The new junction between Fifth Avenue and the Northern Gateway site (Hammar skjold Road) is a principle to help realise the short-term public realm project for Boulevard Streets, set out in the HTCAAP's public realm strategy (found in the Appendix). The junction could be improved by replacing the current roundabout with a T-junction. Any improvements should be made in parallel with the other principles to ensure a coordinated approach to public realm enhancements.



- | Land uses | Movement | Townscape and public realm |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Residential | Bike routes | Proposed green space |
| Frontage | Pedestrian connections | Public realm |
| Back | Primary roads (with bus routes) | Green connections |
| Commercial / Non residential | Secondary roads | |
| Frontage | Indicative pedestrian crossings | |
| Back | Key connections | |
| Opportunity area boundary | Level change | |
| | Car parking | |



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OPPORTUNITY AREA 2 - WYCH ELM

Policy OA2 - Opportunity Area 2 (Wych Elm)

Wych Elm Opportunity Area has been identified for residential development with community and civic uses supported at ground floor in order to provide active frontages along Fourth Avenue. Proposals should adopt a comprehensive approach and seek to facilitate the re-location of the existing ambulance, bus depot and fire station to suitable and viable locations.

This Opportunity Area also identifies a site for a new primary school which has been safeguarded on the Policies Map. This would meet the needs of the projected increase in residential population from the town centre. [HDC to confirm with LEA].

A new strategic green space which will link Rectory Wood to the town centre is allocated on the Policies Map. Development proposals must incorporate and safeguard this green space as part of their layout and design.

Development proposals within Opportunity Area 2 must be of the highest design quality, providing a site-specific design response which, alongside the strategic and development management policies, incorporates the following key principles:

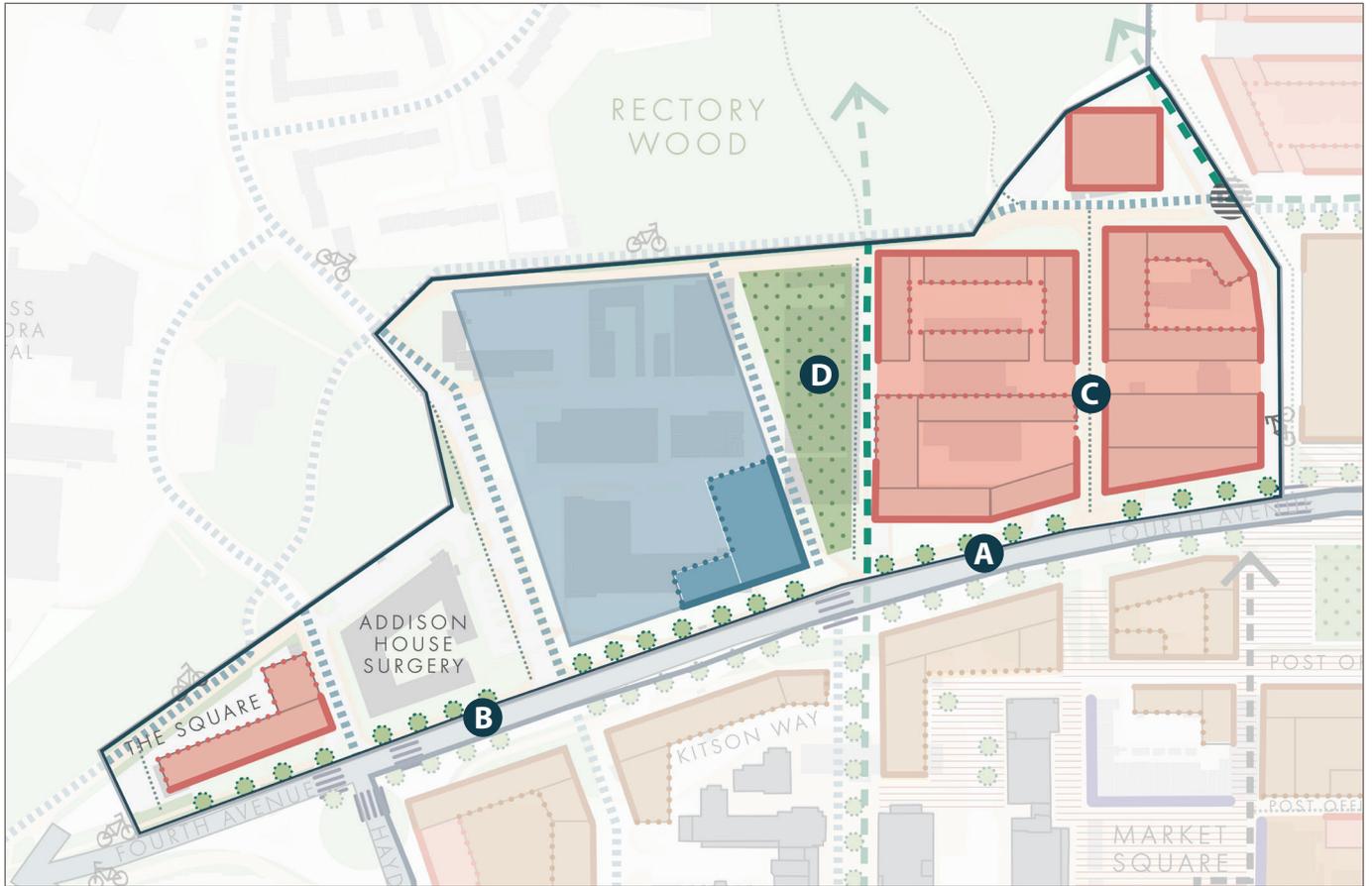
- A. Development proposals must provide a high quality public realm with active frontages which address Fourth Avenue.
- B. Development proposals must facilitate the transformation of Fourth Avenue into a boulevard character with a coordinated approach to planting and pedestrian crossings.
- C. Development proposals must improve walking and cycling connections to surrounding neighbourhoods, Rectory Wood to the north and towards the town centre.
- D. Development proposals must demonstrate how they have responded and incorporated the strategic green space into their masterplan in terms of pedestrian and cycle connectivity, the creation of new landscaping and green spaces, and through the design of buildings and public realm.

Justification

- 6.10. The Wych Elm site is located to the north of Fourth Avenue and currently accommodates a bus depot and Harlow Central fire station. The site could be used more intensively and there are opportunities through redevelopment and public realm projects to better integrate the town centre with the area to the north, which is currently separated by the busy inner-ring road. This would benefit the regeneration of the wider town centre.
- 6.11. The key principles for Opportunity Area 2 will help to realise the wider vision and strategic objectives set out in Chapter 4. Specifically, the policy will help towards a unified town centre, first class community facilities and a cohesive place.

Implementation

- 6.12. It is likely that the existing bus depot and fire station uses would need to be relocated for the site to come forward for development. This will require finding suitable alternative sites and funding for replacement facilities, and should be considered within the broader growth of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town.
- 6.13. Subject to the relocation of existing uses, the Wych Elm area could be suitable for higher density residential development. The indicative HTCAAP proposals identify approximately 394 new homes within the opportunity area.
- 6.14. The HTCAAP proposes a potential new school (3,650sqm GEA) which could be delivered within the Wych Elm site. The precise need, demand and phasing of a new school will be subject to ongoing review by the Council.



- | Land uses | Movement | Townscape and public realm |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Residential | Bike routes | Proposed green space |
| Frontage | Pedestrian connections | Green connections |
| Back | Primary roads (with bus routes) | |
| Education | Secondary roads | |
| Frontage | Indicative pedestrian crossings | |
| Back | Key connections | |
| Opportunity area boundary | Level change | |
| | Car parking | |

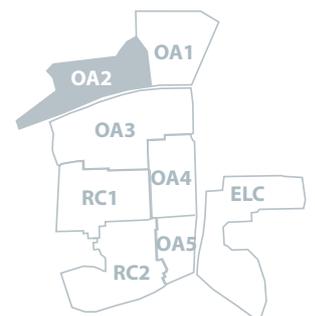


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OPPORTUNITY AREA 3 - TOWN CENTRE NORTH

Policy OA3 - Opportunity Area 3 (Town Centre North)

Town Centre North Opportunity Area has been identified for a mix of uses but with a focus on residential development fronting Velizy Avenue to the east; modern, flexible office space fronting Fourth Avenue and at Post Office Walk; and a mix of retail and active uses at ground floor with residential above across the south and west of the area. A site for a potential new theatre location has also been identified.

An east-west Gate cycle and public transport link connecting the bus station with West Gate has been safeguarded from development. The route has been identified indicatively on the Policies Map.

Development proposals within Opportunity Area 3 must be of the highest design quality, providing a site-specific design response which, alongside the strategic and development management policies, incorporates the following key principles:

- A. Development proposals must facilitate the transformation of Fourth Avenue and Velizy Avenue into a boulevard character with a coordinated approach to planting and pedestrian crossings.
- B. Development proposals must not prejudice future highway and junction improvements including the potential reconfiguration of the Velizy Avenue / Fourth Avenue junction.
- C. New development on the Post Office site fronting Fourth Avenue should look to retain the mature

trees, replace the existing surface car park with a new public space and create a pedestrian gateway into the town centre.

- D. Development proposals for the Fourth Avenue / Velizy Avenue junction must be of exceptional design quality and seek opportunities to provide a landmark building.
- E. Development proposals must provide a high quality public realm with clear and active frontages which address Velizy Avenue.
- F. Development proposals should seek through reconfiguration of the existing street and block structure, the creation of a new green gateway which connects the proposed strategic green space with West Gate.
- G. Development proposals should seek opportunities to enhance the public realm at Market Square through the use of tree planting, incorporation of children's play facilities and enhancement of gateway connections through to Post Office Road, Bird Cage Walk and the underpass.
- H. A new east-west pedestrian connection connecting the Harvey Centre entrance to Broadwalk will be safeguarded with active frontages adjoining the route (**pedestrian route shown on the Policies Map**).
- I. The East Gate West Gate cycle and public transport link will be safeguarded from development. Development proposals should seek opportunities to enhance this route through public realm and streetscape improvements including shared surface treatments, street tree planting along the route and enhancements to West Square and the Harvey Centre entrance plaza.

Justification

- 6.15. Town Centre North takes in land north of the Harvey Centre and the market area which currently accommodates commercial uses, car parking and a Royal Mail distribution facility. There are opportunities through redevelopment and public realm projects to enhance the vitality of the area by encouraging a mix of uses, supporting a balance across the town centre. The roundabout at the junction of Velizy Avenue / Fourth Avenue currently gives priority to cars and does not support active travel.
- 6.16. The key principles for Opportunity Area 3 will help to realise the wider vision and strategic objectives set out in Chapter 4.

Implementation

- 6.17. The indicative HTCAAP proposals identify approximately 723 new homes within Town Centre North, 6,687sqm of flexible non-residential space, 24,087sqm of workspace, 14,719sqm of flexible workspace / residential and 6,118sqm of retail.
- 6.18. The reconfiguration of the Velizy Avenue / Fourth Avenue roundabout in a continental design will give tighter entry and exit paths and a narrower circulatory carriageway which will result in slower traffic speeds and easier crossings for pedestrians and cyclists.

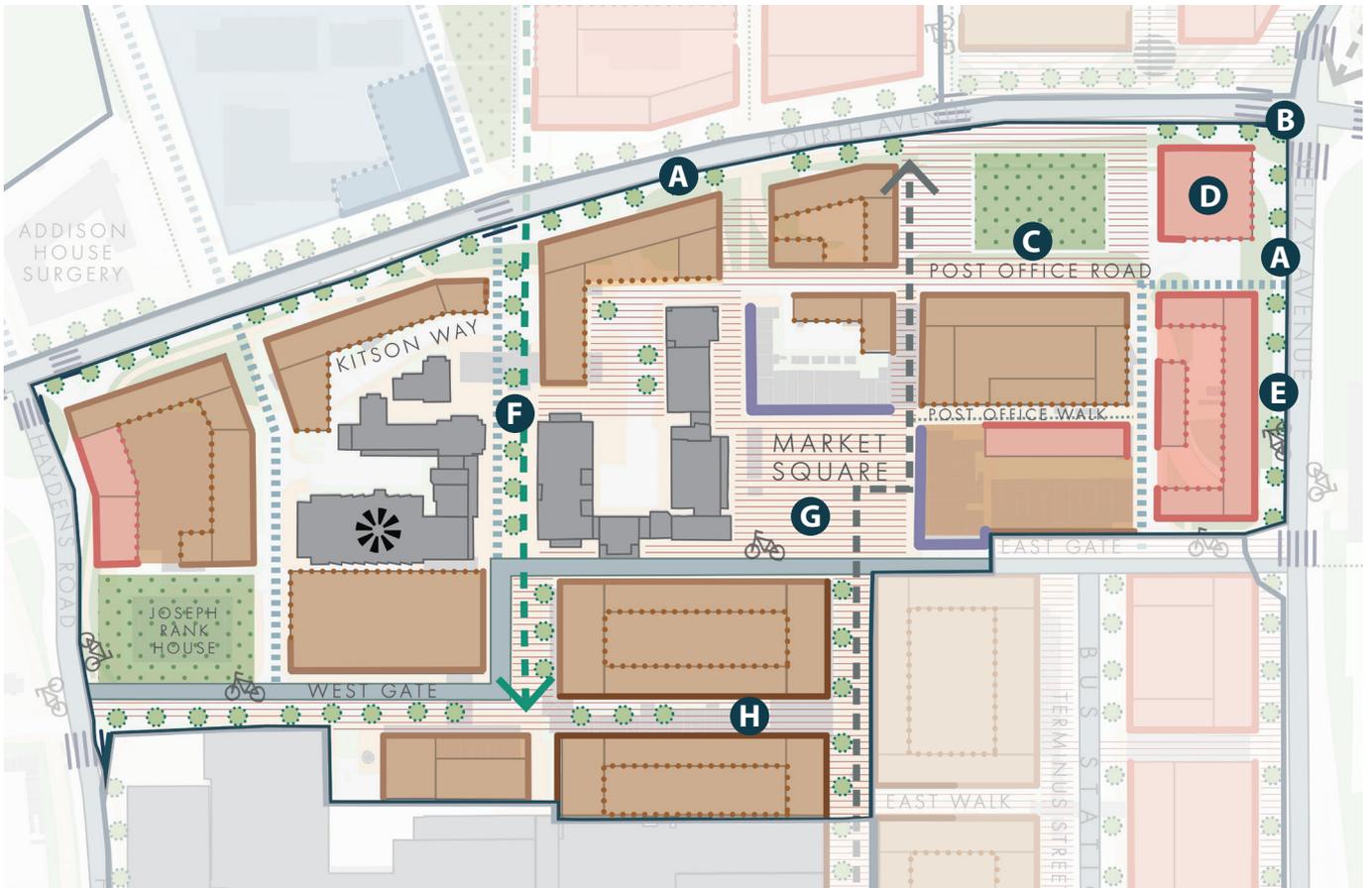


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OPPORTUNITY AREA 4 - TERMINUS STREET

Policy OA4 - Opportunity Area 4 (Terminus Street)

Terminus Street Opportunity Area has been identified for a mix of uses with a focus on retail, community and leisure uses to the west of Terminus Street and residential to the east fronting Velizy Avenue. Retail uses fronting Broad Walk will be maintained at ground floor to support the primary frontage in this location. A more flexible approach to uses on the ground floor fronting Terminus Street which could include a variety of retail, office, commercial leisure and community uses will be supported. These blocks have also been identified for residential use above ground floor.

The bus station will be maintained in this Opportunity Area and has been safeguarded on the Policies Map.

Development proposals within Opportunity Area 4 must be of the highest design quality, providing a site-specific design response which, alongside the strategic and development management policies, incorporates the following key principles:

- A. Development proposals must not prejudice the delivery of future interchange facilities at the bus station including the provision of suitable bus stops, the circulation of buses and the potential for two-way movements.
- B. Development proposals must contribute towards creating a greener, more attractive bus street/area through high quality public realm improvements, active frontages and natural surveillance.

- C. Development proposals must facilitate the transformation of Velizy Avenue into a boulevard character with a coordinated approach to planting, pedestrian crossings and active frontages.
- D. Development proposals must safeguard and look at opportunities to improve pedestrian gateway connections to Broad Walk from Velizy Avenue and the bus station.
- E. Development proposals should facilitate improvements to the public realm at Broad Walk through the use of tree planting, materials and surface treatments ensuring that they complement the Water Gardens and Market Square improvements.
- F. A reduced level of car parking in a new smaller footprint, with direct surface level access will be supported in this area subject to measures being put in place or contributions towards improving public transport provision to the town centre.
- G. A comprehensive and transformational development of Terminus House car park for residential-led redevelopment may be supported subject to it; being fully integrated with surrounding development; creating frontages to Terminus Street and Velizy Avenue; achieving a safe pedestrian environment; and maintaining key gateway entrances into the town centre.
- H. Development proposals must maintain the existing cycle way along Terminus Street in order to provide connectivity with the east-west Gate cycle/public transport link.

Justification

- 6.19. Opportunity Area 4 includes Terminus Street, the bus station and Terminus House. The site is a key gateway into the town centre and there are opportunities through redevelopment and public realm projects to strengthen its strategic role. It is important to consider the site's potential to support a higher quality and more efficient public transport network which ties in with the Sustainable Transport Corridor and wider growth anticipated with the development of Harlow and Gilston Garden Town.
- 6.20. The key principles for Opportunity Area 4 will help to realise the wider vision and strategic objectives set out in Chapter 4, specifically to ensure an inclusive and accessible destination with strong transport links.

Implementation

- 6.21. The indicative HTCAAP proposals identify approximately 550 new homes alongside 4,580 of flexible non-residential space and 6,599sqm of retail within Opportunity Area 4. There could be an opportunity to develop an effective car parking solution that replaces the existing car park with a new facility and that delivers residential units on surplus land.
- 6.22. The enhancement of the bus station and associated public realm improvements presents an opportunity to expand retail units to the west to provide larger, more flexible units for modern retailers. These could include new homes above.
- 6.23. There must be a coordinated approach to delivery that considers broader Harlow Gilston Garden Town-related growth which will bring improved public transport links between the town centre and proposed growth areas.

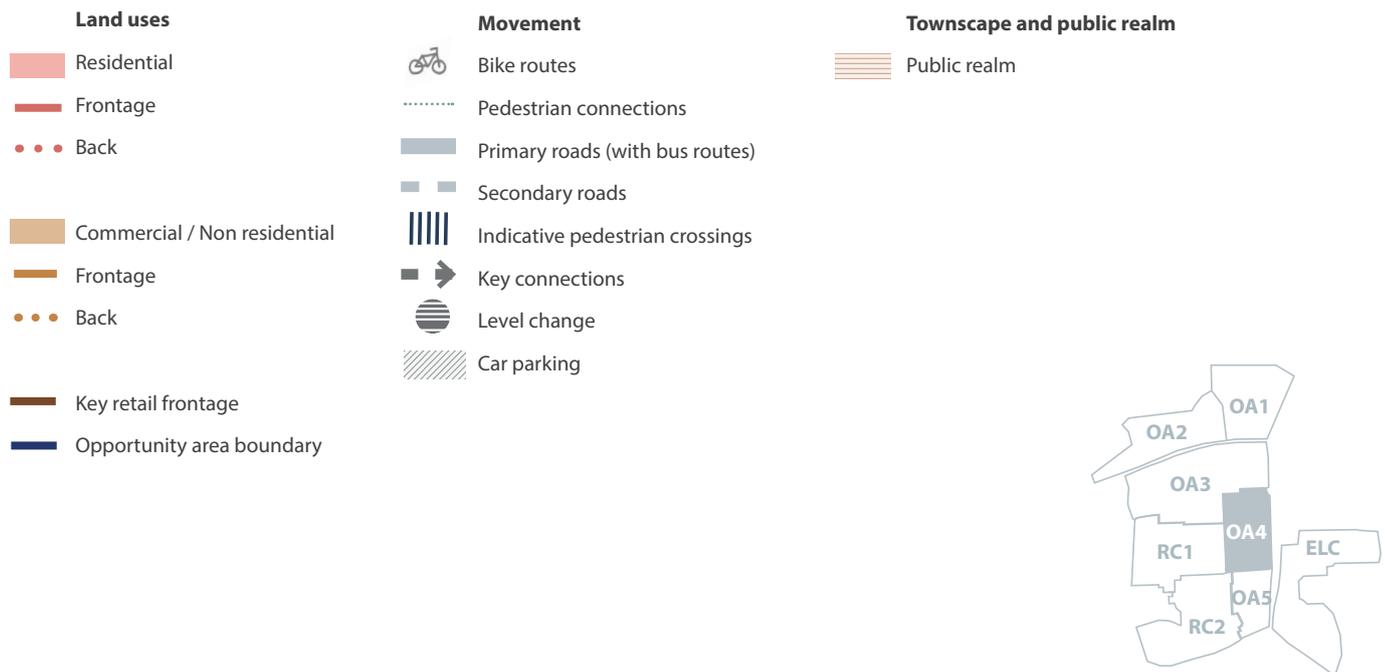
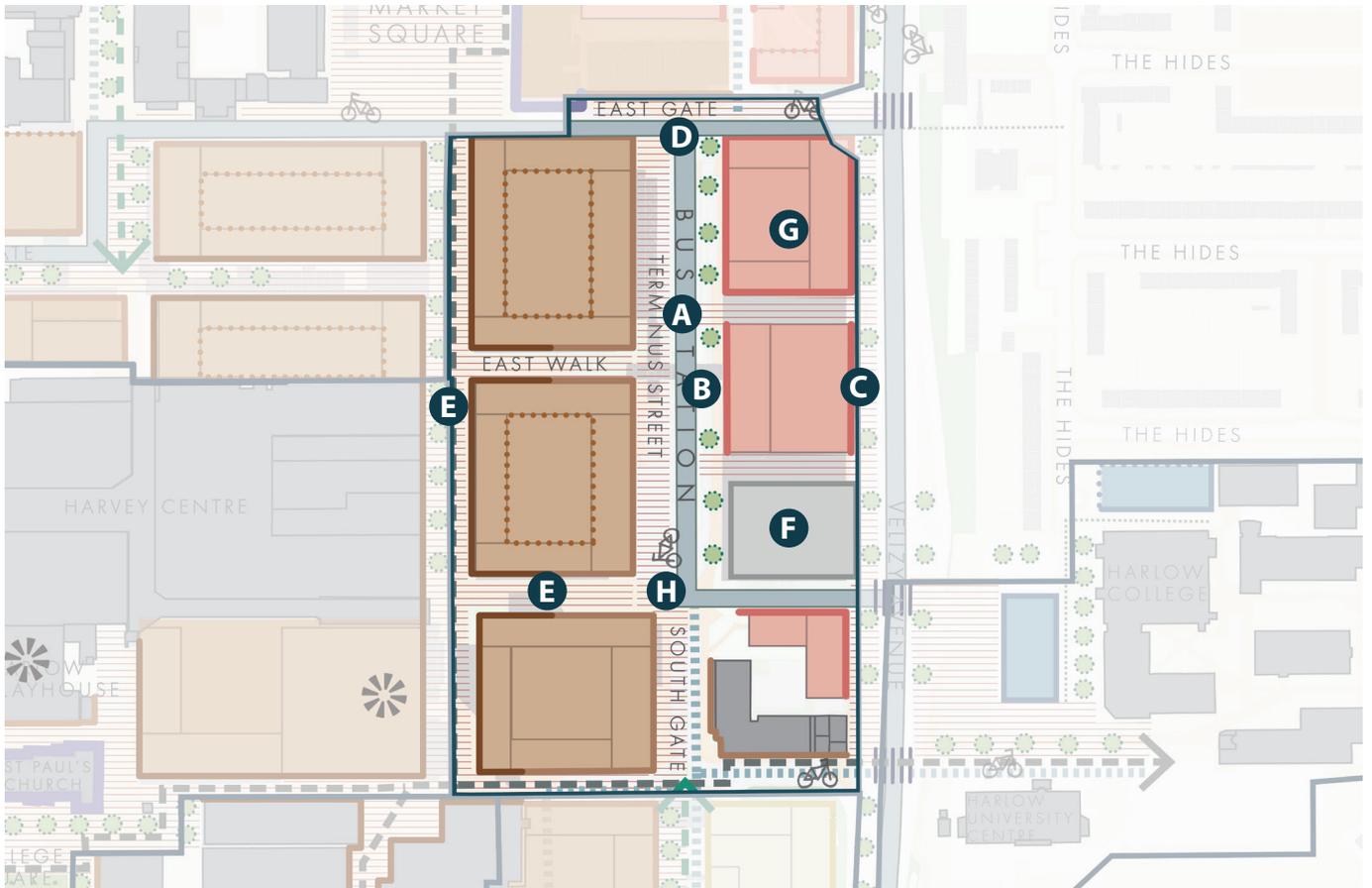


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OPPORTUNITY AREA 5 - CROWN GATE ISLAND

Policy OAS - Opportunity Area 5 (Crown Gate Island)

Crown Gate Island Opportunity Area has been identified for a mixed-use civic quarter which should be delivered in a comprehensive way with consolidation or relocation of existing uses to suitable and viable sites. A mix of civic, community and retail uses provided at ground-floor alongside civic and/or residential uses above will be supported in this area.

Development proposals within Opportunity Area 5 must be of the highest design quality, providing a site-specific design response which, alongside the strategic and development management policies, incorporates the following key principles:

- A. Development proposals must facilitate the transformation of Velizy Avenue to a boulevard character with a coordinated approach to planting and pedestrian crossings.
- B. Development proposals must not prejudice future highway or junction improvements including the potential re-configuration of Third Avenue /Velizy Avenue junction to enhance connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists.
- C. Development proposals must provide a high quality public realm with active frontages which address Velizy Avenue.
- D. Development proposals for the Third Avenue / Velizy Avenue junction must be of exceptional design quality and seek opportunities to provide a landmark building.
- E. Development proposals should safeguard and seek opportunities to enhance a new green gateway route (South Gate) for pedestrians and cyclists through the centre of the Opportunity Area. The route should maintain connections from the southern part of the town centre to the adjacent Green Wedge and Harlow Leisurezone.
- F. Development proposals must integrate with the adjacent Water Gardens area, ensuring a coordinated and improved approach to servicing arrangements with the potential for sharing servicing space where possible.
- G. Development proposals must safeguard an east-west cycle connection via Crown Gate and Cross Street to St Paul's Church.

Justification

- 6.24. Crown Gate island is situated to the southeast of the town centre, bordered by Velizy Avenue, Crown Gate and South Gate and currently occupied by the Police Station and Job Centre. The site is a key gateway into the town centre with good connections to / from the main shopping area. There are opportunities through redevelopment and public realm projects to strengthen this.
- 6.25. The key principles for Opportunity Area 5 will help to realise the wider vision and strategic objectives set out in Chapter 4.

Implementation

- 6.26. The indicative HTCAAP proposals identify approximately 184 new homes alongside 19,823sqm of civic space within Opportunity Area 5. The site presents an opportunity for public sector consolidation on a more efficient footprint. A One Public Estate opportunity for collaboration and funding could be explored and may assist in accelerating development.
- 6.27. Development proposals should respond to the public realm guidance in the Appendix which sets out design principles for South Gate, a new public space creating a link to Netteswell Plantation. The linear street park could be composed of mixed species trees in a loose arrangement in contrast with the avenues along the pedestrian streets. The public realm guidance also sets out proposed changes to Velizy Avenue to give it a 'boulevard' character. This would include improved crossings, reduced lane width, simplified junctions, cycle lanes and new planting.
- 6.28. A three-way junction at the Velizy Road / Third Avenue junction would create a tighter building to building condition.

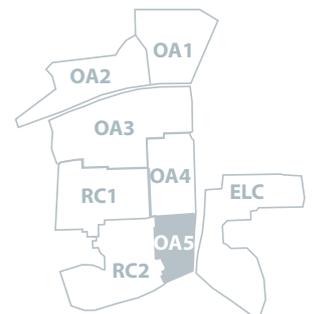
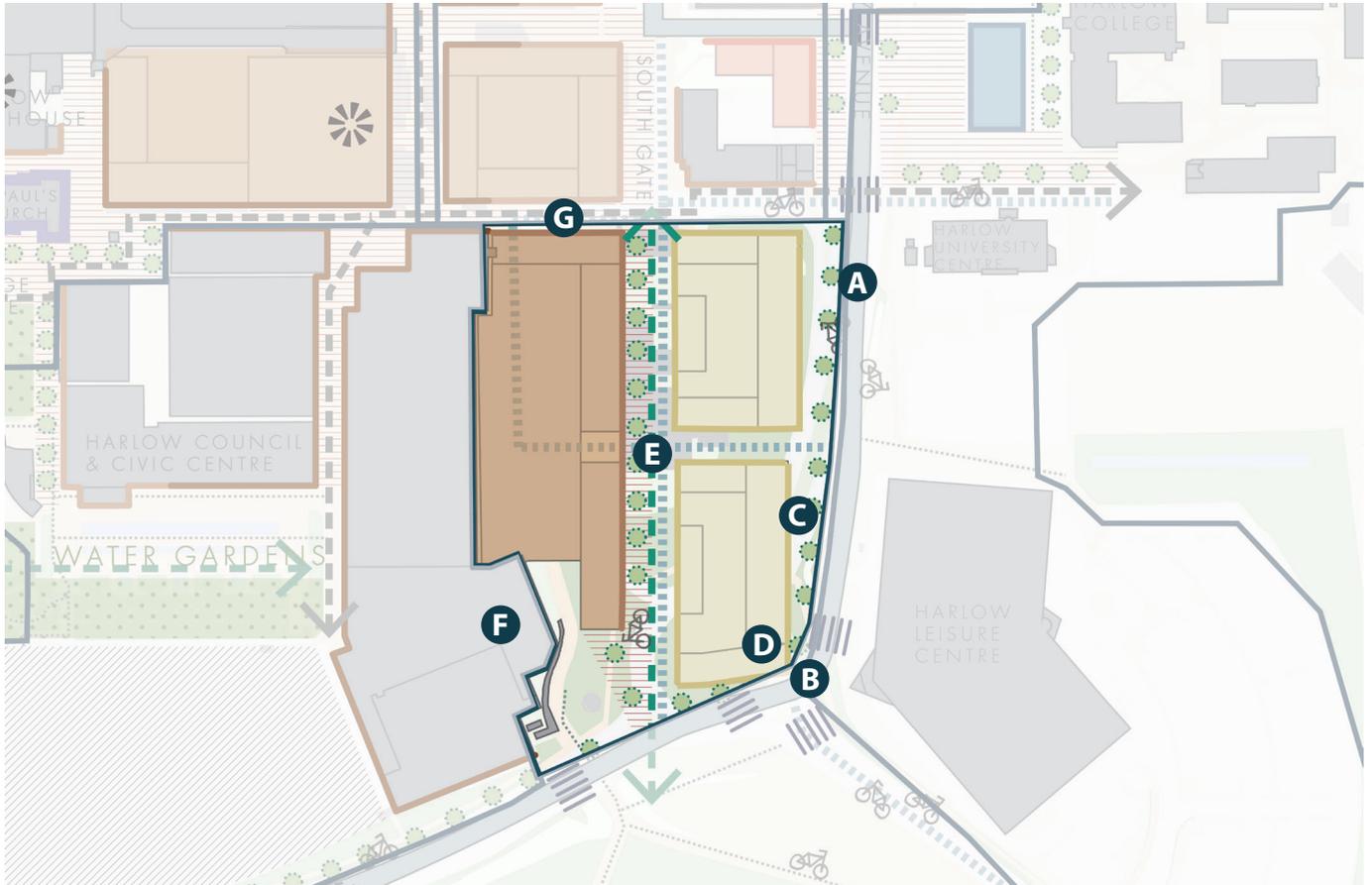


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RETAIL CORE 1 - HARVEY CENTRE

Policy RC1 - Retail Core 1 (Harvey Centre)

The Harvey Centre Retail Core Area 1 will be protected for the continued operation of retail and commercial leisure uses, respecting the primary and secondary frontage designations on the Policies Map. Leisure, community, office and residential uses will be supported on upper floors, particularly where these enhance the overall vitality and viability of the town centre.

Development proposals within Retail Core 1 must be of the highest design quality, providing a site-specific design response which, alongside the strategic and development management policies, incorporates the following key principles:

- A. Development proposals should seek to create active frontages, provide opportunities for natural surveillance and eliminate poorly defined “back-streets” through the town centre.
- B. Development proposals which front onto Cross Street, including the former BHS site, must maintain the existing pedestrian east-west route, create active and enhanced frontages along Cross Street and open-up views towards St. Paul’s Church. Retail or mixed retail/commercial leisure uses at ground floor with residential above, subject to HLDP Policies PR5 and PR6, will be supported as will a potential enlarged theatre venue on the current library site.
- C. Development proposals for the redevelopment or reconfiguration of the existing library will be supported subject to an appropriate alternative site for the library being available and permission secured. Development proposals for the redevelopment of the library should look at opportunities to open up views and pedestrian connections to Broad Walk.
- D. Development proposals should facilitate or contribute towards improvements to the public realm at Broad Walk, St Paul’s Church and at the College Square drop-off area through the use of tree planting and amenity green spaces, materials, public art, seating and surface treatments complementing the Water Gardens and Market Square improvements. Development proposals in this area should maintain pedestrian gateway connections through to Cross Street and the town centre from surrounding neighbourhoods to the west.
- E. Infill development to the south of the Harvey Centre and west of Harlow Playhouse will be supported for flexible active ground floor uses including retail, office, commercial leisure and community uses, with residential above. Re-development of Occasio House for residential use will be supported.

Justification

- 6.29. Retail Core 1 comprises Harlow Playhouse, St. Paul’s Church, Occasio House and The Harvey Centre, which is Harlow’s main shopping area. The changing nature of retail means there is an opportunity to consider the diversification of its offer to better meet consumer needs and expectations. The size of the BHS unit restricts retailer demand and / or potentially limits the end-user to the ‘value’ end of the market.
- 6.30. St. Paul’s is a Grade II Listed building and important local landmark. Its setting currently detracts from its distinctive historic character. There are opportunities through redevelopment and public realm projects to improve the setting of the church and create and enhance views towards it. The church and Harlow Playhouse provide a focus for community and cultural life and a natural gateway into the town centre from the west. A new theatre would strengthen this area’s role as a focus for cultural activities.
- 6.31. The key principles for Retail Core 1 will help to realise the wider vision and strategic objectives set out in Chapter 4, specifically to achieve a competitive retail and leisure offer and a strong cultural offer.

Implementation

- 6.32. The indicative HTCAAP proposals identify approximately 150 new homes alongside 2,213sqm of flexible non-residential space and 5,154 of retail space within Retail Core 1. The site presents an opportunity for a new theatre and possible locations for this are identified on Figure 39. A potential location is the former BHS unit. Other options for this area include housing and / or the sub-division of the unit, thereby creating a number of smaller but flexible units suitable for the needs of modern retailers.
- 6.33. There is scope to explore options for a replacement library facility which could be combined with a new theatre. A funding case could be developed in the context of anticipated growth of Harlow in relation to the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town, which would help justify the provision of new community and cultural facilities.

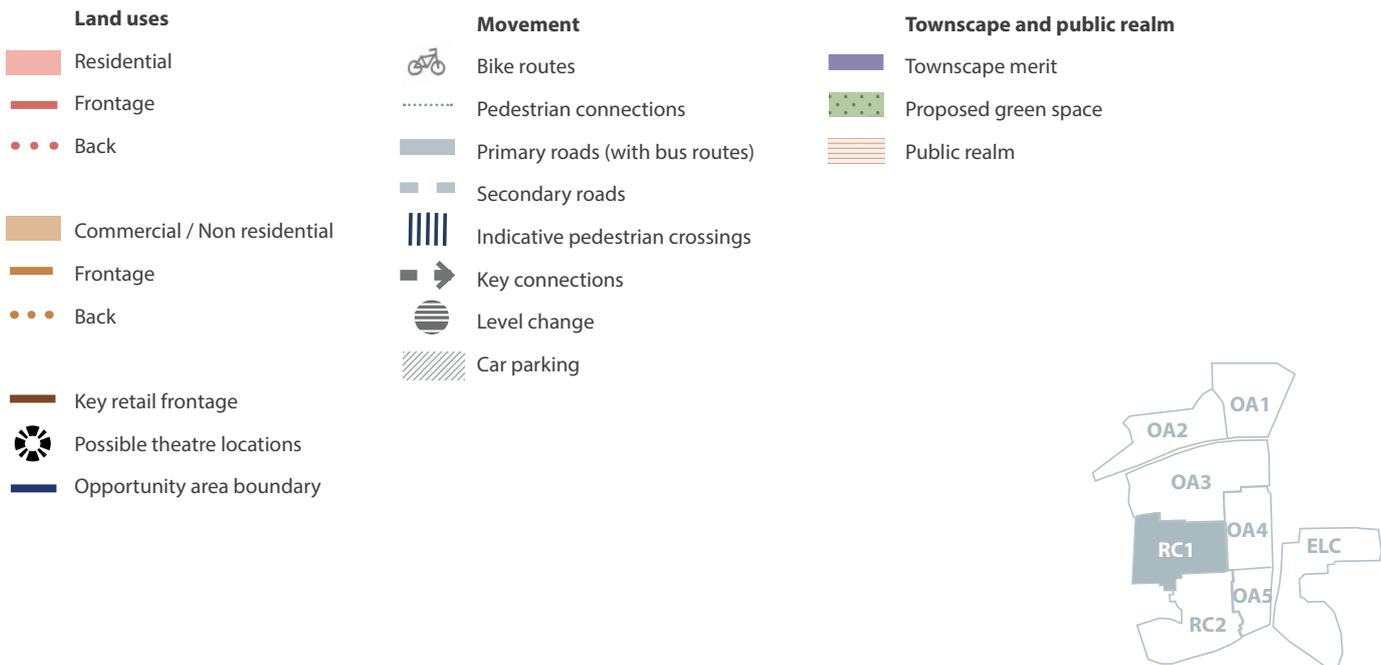
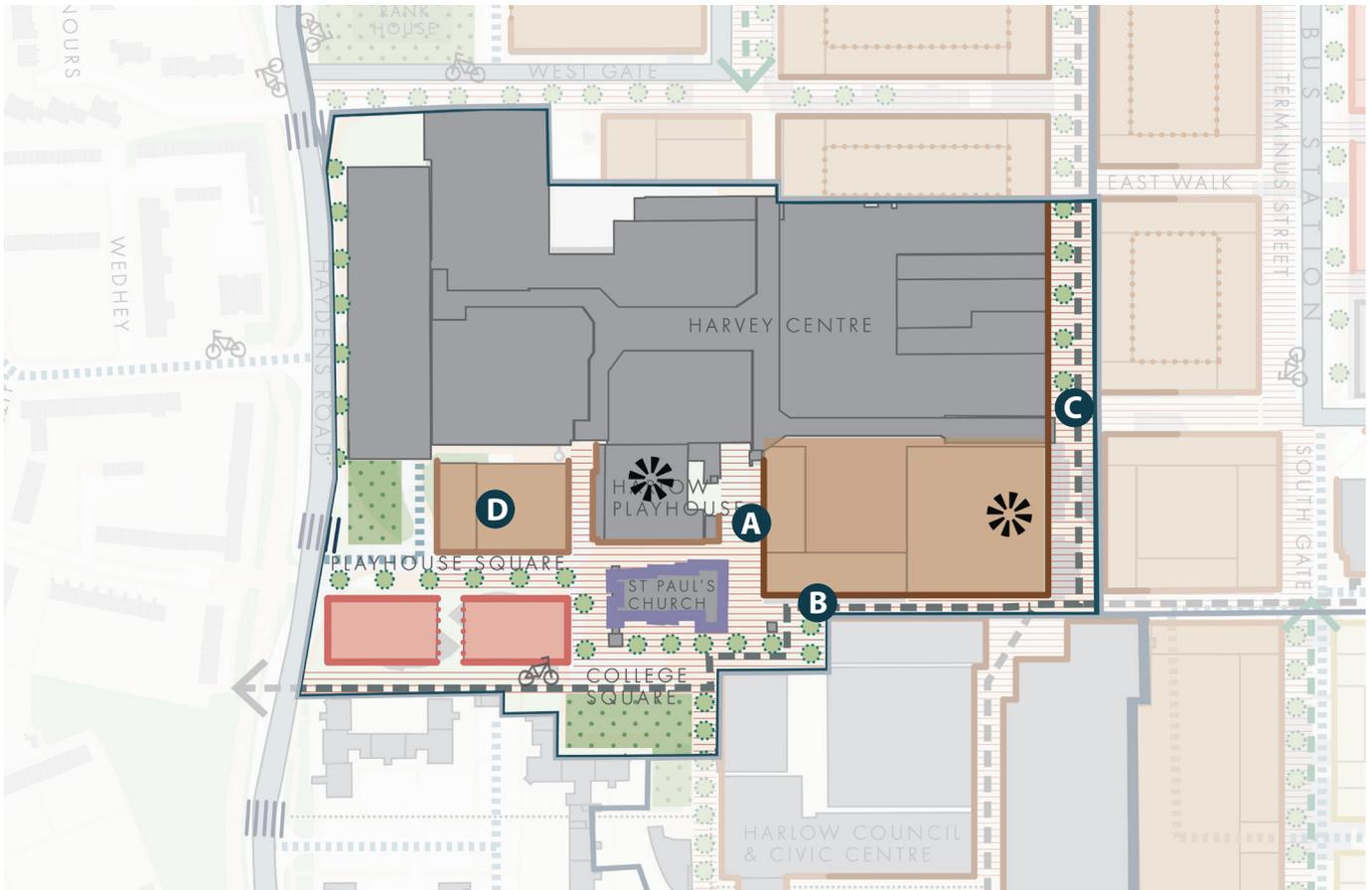


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Policy RC2 - Retail Core 2 (The Water Gardens)

The Water Gardens Retail Core Area 2 will be protected for the continued operation of retail and commercial leisure uses, respecting the primary and secondary frontage designations on the Policies Map.

Development proposals within Retail Core 2 must be of the highest design quality, providing a site-specific design response which, alongside the strategic and development management policies, incorporates the following key principles:

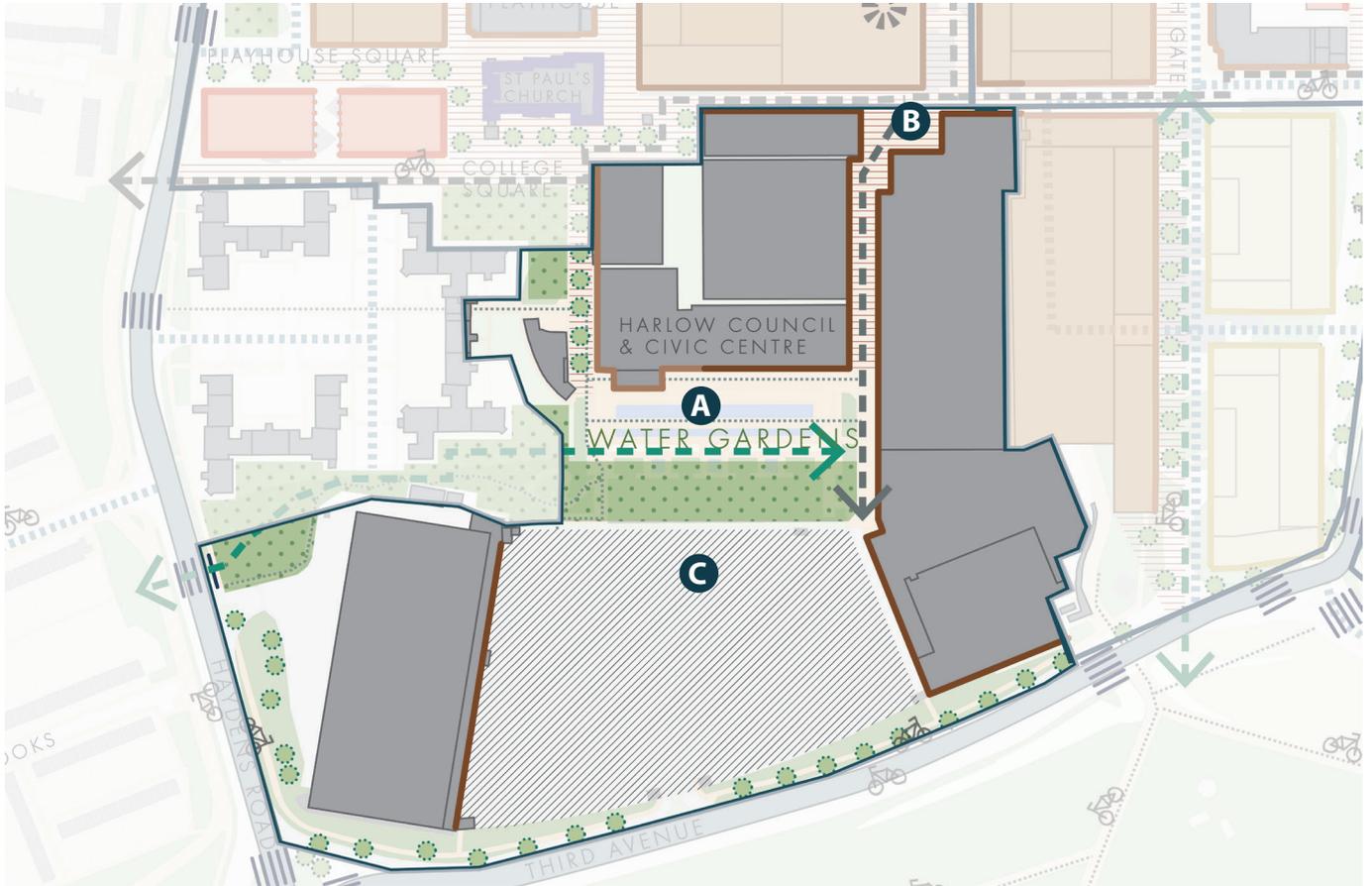
- A. Development proposals should enhance and safeguard the setting and identity of Gibberd's original Water Gardens concept and the key view south to Rye Hill.
- B. Development proposals should maintain Cross Street Square and facilitate improvements through public realm enhancements and improved pedestrian connections to Broad Walk and east-west along Cross Street.
- C. Opportunities to enhance the Water Gardens area by upgrading the parking structure, improving the public realm, introducing more landscaped areas with links to the Green Wedge and creating a stronger gateway for pedestrians and cyclists will be supported. Opportunities to introduce new flexible uses on first floors and above creating active frontages at Haydens Road will be considered. This includes residential, office and commercial leisure uses.

Justification

- 6.34. Retail Core 2 comprises The Water Gardens which is an edge-of-centre shopping destination with food and beverage uses and extensive car parking.
- 6.35. The key principles for Retail Core 2 will help to realise the wider vision and strategic objectives set out in Chapter 4, specifically to achieve a competitive retail and leisure offer, high quality public realm and a cohesive place.

Implementation

- 6.36. No immediate proposals have been identified for Retail Core 2 although there are longer-term opportunities (beyond the plan period) to enhance the area, including upgrades to the parking structure and to introduce new flexible typologies to create a stronger relationship to Haydens Road.



- Land uses**
- Commercial / non residential frontage
 - Key retail frontage
 - Opportunity area boundary

- Movement**
- Bike routes
 - Pedestrian connections
 - Primary roads (with bus routes)
 - Secondary roads
 - Indicative pedestrian crossings
 - Key connections
 - Level change
 - Car parking

- Townscape and public realm**
- Proposed green space
 - Public realm
 - Green connections

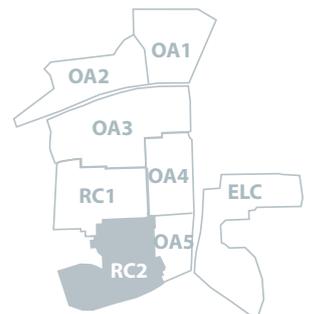


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Policy ELC1 - Education / Leisure Core (Harlow College Campus and Leisurezone)

Harlow College Campus and Leisurezone have been identified as an education and leisure core. Development proposals must prioritise the continued operation of the area for education and leisure uses, as key activities for the ongoing vitality of the town centre.

Development proposals within the Education / Leisure Core must be of the highest design quality, providing a site-specific design response which, alongside the strategic and development management policies, incorporates the following key principles:

- A. Development proposals must facilitate the transformation of Velizy Avenue to create a boulevard character with a coordinated approach to planting and pedestrian crossings.
- B. Development proposals for new education and ancillary buildings at Harlow College and leisure uses at the Leisurezone will be supported. Development proposals which make more intensive use of the surface car parks with an improved public realm alongside infill development will be supported. This is subject to measures being put in place which improve public transport provision for the College and Leisurezone.

Justification

- 6.37. Harlow College and Leisure Zone are important education and leisure uses at the southern end of the town centre. Both facilities front Velizy Avenue which is currently a poor pedestrian environment with few crossings, dominated by vehicular movement. There is an opportunity to improve this through public realm enhancements, alongside strengthening the offer of Harlow College through the introduction of complementary uses, to ensure this area of the town centre is sustained.
- 6.38. The key principles for the Education / Leisure Core will help to realise the wider vision and strategic objectives set out in Chapter 4, specifically to achieve a high quality public realm, community facilities and a cohesive place.

Implementation

- 6.39. The indicative HTCAAP proposals identify approximately 6,136sqm of potential education uses within the Education / Leisure Core. New education uses, potentially combined with nursing or co-education workspace could complement and support the college.
- 6.40. A public realm project to transform Velizy Avenue to create a boulevard character is set out in the HTCAAP's public realm strategy (found in Appendix) which includes principles to help achieve this.

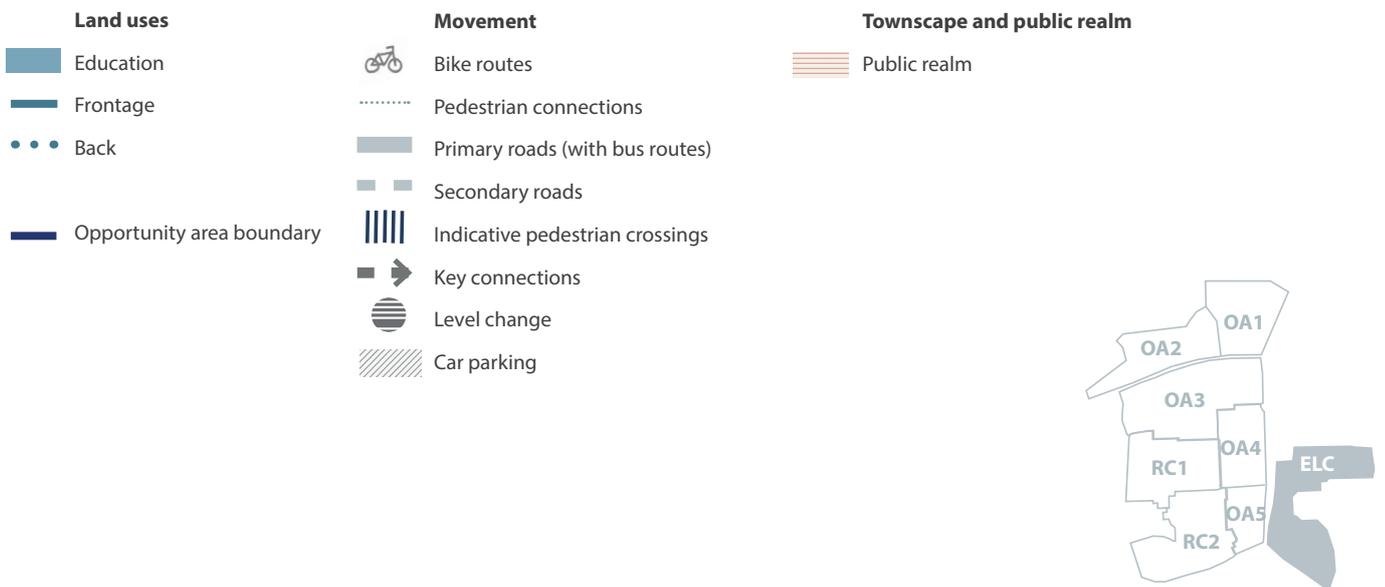


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7 IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY

Summary

- 6.1. This chapter summarises the delivery strategy for Harlow Town Centre Area Action Plan (HTCAAP) as prepared by Cushman and Wakefield (2019). The Delivery Strategy is a standalone document prepared as a companion document to the HTCAAP which follows Cushman & Wakefield’s Harlow Town Centre Market Analysis (2017) (‘the 2017 Market Analysis Report’).
- 6.2. The full delivery strategy report provides an up-to-date overview of the property market sectors relevant to Harlow Town Centre (namely residential, retail and offices) and considers the overall proposed scale and mix of development for the town centre as a whole and within broad Opportunity Areas. It then sets out delivery considerations for individual Development Sites that will likely be the main foci for the bulk of development over the course of the HTCAAP period and beyond.
- 6.3. This summary captures the main points from the Delivery Strategy in relation to the indicative amount of development for each use, delivery commentary for each site and an estimation of the estimated phasing strategy.

HTCAAP development delivery

- 6.4. The HTCAAP will provide a spatial planning framework to guide the scale and mix of development in Harlow Town Centre up to 2033 and beyond.
- 6.5. This section considers the overall proposed scale and mix of development envisaged by the HTCAAP, for the town centre as a whole and within broad Opportunity Areas, in the context of the Council’s evidence base and market signals. Within each Opportunity Area key Development Sites and the indicative phasing relevant delivery considerations have also been reviewed.
- 6.6. It is important to note that these figures represent an early estimate of development capacity in the town centre. Over time, these figures will be subject to ongoing review and refinement as Council-led development briefs and wider proposals come forward.
- 6.7. The indicative development schedule is set out in Figure 44 below.

Land use	Indicative ground floor (sqm GEA)	Indicative upper floor (sqm GEA)	Total (sqm GEA)	Indicative residential dwelling numbers
Residential	26,127	201,329	227,455	2,216
Flexible non-residential	13,479	0	13,479	-
Education	2,984	6,802	9,786	-
Workspace	3,989	20,098	24,087	-
Flexible workspace / residential	845	13,873	14,718	133
Community	2,001	0	2,001	-
Foodstore	5,200	0	5,200	-
Retail	17,870	0	17,870	-
Civic	9,817	10,005	19,822	-
Car park	7,908	26,940	34,848	-
Totals	90,221	279,046	369,268	2,216 to 2,349

Figure 42 Harlow Town Centre AAP development schedule (indicative capacities for the plan period and beyond)

6.8. The development schedule indicates that the residential floorspace equates to [2,216] new dwellings; or up to [2,349] new dwellings including the flexible workspace/ residential floorspace. For the plan period, the emerging estimated figure is likely to be lower [1,478 to 1,562 dwellings].

6.9. The HTCAAP provides a flexible approach to land use planning, particularly since some of the Development Sites are longer term and unlikely to come forward over the course of the HTCAAP period. Flexibility in the precise mix of uses will be important to maximise delivery prospects and to ensure that the future regeneration of the town centre can adapt to emerging market trends and 'needs' as they evolve.

6.10. The delivery of the overall quantum of development envisaged by the HTCAAP will require the co-ordination of Development Sites and a complex set of interrelated factors such as viability, market capacity and phasing. It will also be necessary to ensure that existing and planned infrastructure (physical and social) can support the development proposed for the town centre and its proposed increasing resident population. This will need to be coordinated in terms of delivery with broader population growth and infrastructure investment associated with the Harlow Gilston Garden Town.

Residential

6.11. The indicative HTCAAP proposals include approximately [2,216 – 2,349] new dwellings within the town centre, of which [1,478 to 1,562] are identified as being in the plan period (see figure 120), which would be additional to those planned at strategic growth locations in the District or on the edge of the Harlow urban

area.

6.12. The figures for Harlow town centre envisaged by the HTCAAP therefore equate to 24.1 – 25.5% of the total number of new dwellings planned through the Pre-Submission Local Plan (i.e. at least 9,200 dwellings as described below). Aside from contributing towards the District's housing land supply, there are significant benefits associated with high density housing and the resulting step-change in the resident population of the town centre. In particular, it will generate additional expenditure to support local shops and services and improve the general vibrancy of the town centre. This will be key to transforming Harlow Town Centre and perceptions of it as a place to live, work and socialise. In addition, there is an opportunity for this higher density housing in a town centre environment to complement the different types of housing that will be provided as part of the Harlow Gilston Garden Town growth, helping to give Harlow as a whole a more diverse and mixed housing market in the future.

6.13. Objectively assessed need for some 51,700 dwellings between 2011-2033 is forecast by the West Essex and East Hertfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2017 (SHMA), including both market housing (38,100 dwellings) and affordable housing (13,600 dwellings). Of this, the SHMA identifies a need for 7,409 dwellings in Harlow between 2011-2033 (or 337 per annum).

6.14. Policy HS1 of the Pre-Submission Local Plan seeks to deliver at least 9,200 dwellings over the same period (thus more than the objectively assessed need). Of these:

- 1,436 dwellings are completed as at 31 March 2017;
- 4,122 dwellings are committed as at 31 March 2017; and
- 2,600 dwellings are allocated at Strategic

Housing Site East of Harlow.

- 6.15. The Pre-Submission Local Plan states that 1,042 dwellings are to be identified. For a more up-to-date picture, it is helpful to consider the latest Annual Monitoring Report 2017-2018 (AMR) and recent commitments. The AMR reports that 281 dwellings were completed during 2017-2018, which is lower than the preceding year (340 dwellings during 2016-2017) and the annual target of 337 dwellings.
- 6.16. Since the above reported commitments, inter alia, planning permission ref. HW/FUL/17/00097 has been granted (2 August 2018) for 447 new dwellings as part of the mixed use redevelopment of land adjacent to the Harvey Centre in the town centre. This development has not been implemented to date.
- 6.17. Objectively assessed housing needs should not be treated as 'ceilings' or maximums not to be exceeded: they are minimums and the Council should plan for such needs accordingly. A co-ordinated approach to delivery and phasing will be necessary to mitigate the risk of 'flooding the market' and exceeding infrastructure capacity. To that end, it is unlikely that all 2,216 – 2,349 new dwellings identified for the town centre will come forward over the course of the HTCAAP period. Some residential development will continue beyond 2033 as longer term Development Sites are delivered, as considered under section 3 below.
- 6.18. A key objective for housing delivery in Harlow town centre relates to the creation of a balanced and sustainable housing mix. An important factor will be the Council's affordable housing policy which. This policy approach will have wider associated benefits, such as increasing the economically-active resident population and thus expenditure to support local shops and services. The proposed affordable housing policy for the HTCAAP is set out in chapter 4 (see policy HTC13).

Education

- 6.19. The HTCAAP proposes a potential new school (9,786 sqm GEA) to serve the growing resident population. It will be important to plan for such social infrastructure over the HTCAAP period and beyond, which will add to the mix of active uses within the town centre boundary. The precise need, demand and phasing of a new school will be subject to ongoing review by the Council.

Workspace

- 6.20. The indicative HTCAAP proposals identify 24,087 sqm GEA of workspace in the town centre (or up to 38,805 sqm GEA including the flexible workspace/ residential floorspace). Relative to existing workspace within the town centre, this is a substantial quantum.
- 6.21. The Employment Land Review (ELR) (2013) reports that Harlow is not a recognised office location and therefore struggles to attract footloose requirements for major office occupiers. Delivering the overall proposed scale of workspace development in the town centre, as envisaged by the HTCAAP, will require improvements to the quality of the town centre's environment and its amenity and leisure facilities. These are important pre-requisites for town centre working and attracting demand from occupiers who, at the national level, are increasingly seeking flexible workspaces.
- 6.22. The Cushman and Wakefield property market review identifies that Harlow's office market is overwhelmingly focused on small businesses and micro firms with 0-9 employees. The development of flexible workspace in the town centre has the potential to serve these types of occupier and cater for a different market compared with existing supply across the District. That said, delivering the substantial quantum of workspace envisaged by the HTCAAP will require a careful approach to phasing, having regard to factors such as potential occupier demand and avoiding market saturation.

Community

6.23. The indicative HTCAAP proposals identify 2,001 sqm GEA of community floorspace. Like other non-retail floorspace proposed at ground floor level, such floorspace will provide opportunities for community facilities and supplement the wider mix of town centre uses.

Retail/ Food store

6.24. The HTCAAP proposals identify 17,870 sqm GEA of retail floorspace (note this is not net additional floorspace) and a food store measuring 5,200 sqm GEA (note this is a replacement store for the existing Sainsbury’s and is not therefore net additional floorspace). The flexible non-residential floorspace (13,479 sqm GEA at ground floor level) could also comprise retail or community uses, subject to location and demand.

6.25. Policy RS2 of the Pre-Submission Local Plan states that the HTCAAP ‘will look to deliver a significant proportion of the retail floorspace requirements through site redevelopment and regeneration opportunities.’ This reflects Harlow town centre’s position at the apex of the retail hierarchy, as per Policy RS1 of the Pre-Submission Local Plan.

6.26. The revised NPPF (2019, paragraph 85 bullet d) requires planning policies to ‘allocate a range of suitable sites in town centres to meet the scale and type of development likely to be needed,

looking at least ten years ahead. Meeting anticipated needs for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses over this period should not be compromised by limited site availability, so town centre boundaries should be kept under review where necessary.’

6.27. Harlow’s retail floorspace requirements are set out in the Retail & Leisure Needs Study 2017 (RLNS). The requirements are based on potential housing growth scenarios which could come forward over the plan period and beyond.

6.28. The RLNS ‘high growth’ scenario, which forms the basis of Policy RS2, assumes 17,650 new dwellings in and around the Harlow urban area between 2021-2036. It forecasts capacity for net additional comparison and convenience goods floorspace up to 2033, as set out in Figure 119.

6.29. Clearly the GVA retail capacity forecasts, which are net additional, are substantially greater than the quantum of retail (and flexible non-residential) floorspace envisaged by the HTCAAP. However, since the preparation of those forecasts in 2017, the retail market has continued to evolve at pace.

6.30. Our property market review set out in section 2 identifies the latest UK trends that are changing the retail landscape and in turn the function of town centres. A significant trend in recent years has been the polarisation and downsizing of

Year	Comparison goods floorspace capacity – HIGH GROWTH (sqm net)
2021	4,900
2026	18,100
2031	33,500
2033	40,200
Year	Convenience goods floorspace capacity – HIGH GROWTH (sqm net)
2021	1,600
2026	3,200
2031	4,900
2033	5,500
	7,908
Totals	90,221

Figure 43 Retail capacity forecasts (RLNS, 2017)

retailers to a smaller number of prime locations, as they adapt to the growth of online retailing. Administrations and CVAs mean that there are fewer retailers to fill the voids left by others, while retailer collaborations (e.g. Sainsbury's and Argos) are increasingly common as occupiers look to share space. As a result, many town centres have too much retail floorspace and Harlow falls into this category (as identified by the Harlow Town Centre Market Analysis 2017).

Civic

- 6.31. The indicative HTCAAP proposals identify 19,822 sqm GEA of civic floorspace. This quantum of floorspace is driven by the understanding that in the future:
- the existing police facilities will be relocated out-of-town, with only front-of-house offices and custody suites being re-provided within the town centre; and
 - the existing job centre requires only front-of-house desk space.
- 6.32. The delivery of the overall proposed scale of civic floorspace in the town centre will largely depend on the relocation of existing facilities. Notwithstanding, such floorspace will form an important component of the broader mix of town centre uses proposed by the HTCAAP.

Theatre

- 6.33. The HTCAAP masterplan proposals identify potential locations for the re-provision of the existing theatre to larger, more suitable premises in the town centre.
- 6.34. The RLNS provides a qualitative assessment of the need for commercial leisure floorspace in Harlow (focusing on restaurants, cafes, bars, cinema and cultural facilities such as theatre, galleries, etc). The analysis reflects the potential housing growth scenarios and the additional leisure spending likely to be available.
- 6.35. The RLNS comments that 'commercial leisure activities are being an increasingly important component of successful, vital and viable town centres, and the relative lack of many types of

leisure uses in Harlow town centre represents a key opportunity area for the Council to improve [over the plan period]'. It identifies the opening of the new Cineworld cinema and restaurants in the Harvey Centre and states that further leisure provision – namely restaurants and cafes – is necessary to support the town centre and its existing cultural facilities, such as the Playhouse theatre.

- 6.36. The foregoing is consistent with the property market review, which highlights the importance of strong leisure-orientated 'anchors' in town centres as consumers seek non-retail attractions and all-round experiences. Good cultural/leisure facilities will also help to support flexible workspace opportunities and a shift towards town centre working.
- 6.37. A replacement theatre, in the right location, will contribute towards the future vitality and viability of Harlow town centre, improving the evening economy and complementing the broader mix of uses proposed by the HTCAAP.

KEY SITES

Overview

6.38. A total of 8 Opportunity Areas have been identified for the purpose of the HTCAAP. These are:

1. Sainsbury's
2. Wych Elm
3. Town Centre North
4. Bus Station
5. Harvey Centre
6. Water Gardens
7. The Courts
8. College & Leisure Zone

6.39. We consider each Opportunity Area in terms of the scale and mix and approximate disposition of land uses across the town centre as envisaged by the HTCAAP. Several Development Sites (i.e. the main foci for the bulk of development over the course of the HTCAAP period) and the indicative phasing of such. Many of these were loosely defined in the 2017 Market Analysis Report as catalytic opportunities and key priorities for action in the town centre, requiring some form of Council intervention.

6.40. Commentary on the principal Development Sites / Opportunity Areas (see Figure 41) is provided below, including with regards to delivery considerations and potential interventions.

6.41. Further detail on delivery considerations for Development Sites within the Opportunity Areas is set out below.

Areas 1&2 - Sainsbury's and Wych Elm

6.42. This site currently accommodates a bus depot and Harlow Central fire station as well as part of the car parking area for the Sainsbury's foodstore. It is prominently located off Fourth Avenue to the north of the town centre. Subject to the relocation of existing uses, we consider that this site would be suitable for employment uses and/or residential development.

6.43. In terms of delivery considerations:

- It is considered that the existing uses under-utilise this site, which has good connections

with the town centre.

- For the entire site to be considered as a potential development opportunity, it is likely that the existing bus depot and fire station uses would need to be relocated. We understand that Harlow Central Fire Station would be open to a relocation; however, the position is uncertain with regards to the Arriva Bus Depot. Relocation is unlikely to be straightforward as it is likely that suitable alternative sites would need to be found and replacement facilities funded. Strategically, these relocations should be considered not just in the context of the HTCAAP for the town centre but in relation to the broader growth of the greater Harlow area linked to the Harlow Gilston Garden Town initiative to ensure all appropriate relocation opportunities are considered and delivery can be phased appropriately.
- The HTCAAP identifies the potential to locate a theatre on part of what is currently a car park servicing the Sainsbury's foodstore. The acquisition of land, replacement of any lost car parking and funding for the construction of the theatre are likely to require significant public sector funding in order to be delivered. Given these delivery challenges on this site, the HTCAAP proposes a number of different alternative options for a new theatre as part of the regeneration of the town centre.
- In terms of alternative uses, we consider that employment uses and higher density residential development would be suitable options for this site.
- The site presents an opportunity to better integrate the town centre with the area to the north, which is currently separated by the busy inner-ring road. This would benefit the regeneration of the town centre including the Market Area.
- Due to the extensive work which would be required to relocate the existing uses, the site is considered to be a longer term opportunity (over the HTCAAP period and

beyond).

Area 3 – Town Centre North

6.44. This area comprises:

- The Market Area
- Land North of the Harvey Centre

The 'Market Area' broadly covers the part of the north eastern corner of the town centre which lies within the ring road. It currently accommodates a range of land uses including car parking, a Royal Mail distribution facility, commercial uses and public open space. Within the context set by the HTCAAP, the site is likely to be most suitable for residential-led mixed use development with flexible ground floor retail and/or commercial uses.

6.45. In terms of delivery considerations:

- The proposed extent of commercial floorspace proposed for the area could be challenging to deliver in terms of viability due to low rental values prevailing in the town centre at present and limited occupier demand for an area that lies beyond the commercial core of the town centre. This position could change over time as improvements in the town centre promoted by the HTCAAP encourage occupier demand, for example, and demand for business space rises linked to the arrival in the town of Public Health England and the growth of the Harlow Gilston Garden Town. However, in the shorter term it is prudent to assume flexible commercial uses for these sites or residential.
- Given the range of existing ownerships, land assembly may be challenging if a comprehensive scheme for the area is sought.
- The multiple ownerships and/or unwillingness of key landowners to 'commit' to the vision for Market Area could constrain the pace and extent of any regeneration scheme. Therefore, a flexible approach to the regeneration of this area

should be adopted in terms of the scale of the potential development opportunity.

- The relocation of existing occupiers, principally Royal Mail and the Post Office, would be potentially time consuming and costly. For example, in relation to the Royal Mail facility it is likely that an alternative suitable site would need to be found and a replacement facility funded and built.
- Due to the complex nature of the site, its overall comprehensive redevelopment is considered to be a phased medium-to-long term opportunity (over the HTCAAP period and beyond). However, this would not preclude certain schemes coming forward for part of the area and accelerating development, for example the Council-owned land at Post Office Road where delivery can be proactively pursued by the Council and could help to establish momentum in the area, build confidence amongst other landowners to bring forward schemes and could establish expectations in terms of quality of design.
- In terms of the land North of the Harvey Centre, it is understood that Strawberry Star Group acquired land in this area from Addington Capital (owners of the Harvey Centre) in March 2019. The site has planning consent for 450 residential units and 40,000 sq m of retail floorspace. The framework set by the HTCAAP for the broader regeneration strategy of the town centre

assumes this scheme will be delivered.

Area 4 - Bus Station

6.46. Terminus House has recently been converted to residential use. As such – and given the likely significant costs of redevelopment due to the complexity of the building structure – we do not anticipate redevelopment being viable in the short to medium term.

6.47. Subject to viability and development of a feasible car parking solution, there could, however, be an opportunity to develop a more effective car parking solution in this area that would replace the existing multi storey car park with a new facility and deliver residential units on any surplus land.

6.48. Following the enhancement of the bus station and improved quality of pedestrian links from the bus station to the rest of the town centre, there is an opportunity to expand the retail units to the west (fronting Broad Walk) to provide larger, more flexible units suitable for modern retailers. Such a redevelopment could also include residential above. Such a redevelopment will be encouraged by improvements to the bus station and is hence linked to infrastructure improvements that relate not just to the town centre but to the broader Harlow Gilston Garden Town-related growth which will bring improved public transport links between the town centre and the rest of Harlow, including the proposed growth areas. Delivery therefore needs to be coordinated appropriately.

Area 5 - The Harvey Centre

6.49. The Harvey Centre is the town centre's main shopping centre. It accommodates a range of retailers predominantly catering for the mass and 'value' ends of the market, and a growing leisure-based offer (with the new Cineworld-anchored scheme). It is considered that the opportunity presented by The Harvey Centre is one of good asset management, including the diversification of its offer to better reflect consumer habits and expectations.

6.50. The Harvey Centre is a purpose-built indoor shopping centre owned by Addington Capital

(acquired in 2011). Current occupiers include Tesco, Wilkinson, Argos, Primark, Clintons Cards, Poundland and a range of other multiple and independent retailers.

6.51. Recent changes at the Harvey Centre include:

- The delivery of a new cinema (Cineworld) and a number of restaurant units
- Reconfiguration of the former Marks & Spencer unit which has been re-occupied by several operators including Holland and Barrett, Peacocks, F Hinds, Nationwide, Starbucks and Papa's Café.

6.52. In terms of development potential, similar to the recent reconfiguration of the former M&S unit, there is an opportunity to re-use the former BHS unit. This could potentially involve the sub-division of the unit, thereby creating a number of smaller but flexible units suitable for the needs of modern retailers. We consider that this option, if feasible, would be more appropriate than retaining the unit as existing, the size of which would restrict retailer demand and/or potentially limit the potential end-user to the 'value' end of the market. Some residential uses and/or a new theatre (two potential theatre locations are identified by the HTCAAP) could also be options for this area, potentially combining a replacement library facility subject to viability and a likely need for public sector funding in the case of a theatre and library. The business case for this funding may be strengthened by consideration of the provision of these facilities in relation to the growth of Harlow including the Harlow Gilston Garden Town initiative and the growing population that will help to justify the provision of new community and cultural facilities.

6.53. Other asset management options for the centre could include general refurbishment and the continued diversification of its offer, in order to

improve activity and unit take-up.

Area 6 - Water Gardens

6.54. The Water Gardens comprises an edge-of-centre shopping destination with food and beverage uses and extensive car parking.

6.55. No immediate proposals have been identified for this site, but longer-term opportunities (beyond the plan period) to enhance the area as annotated on figure 44.

Area 7 - The Courts

6.56. The site is situated to the southeast of the town centre. The predominant occupier is the Police Station. We consider the site to be suitable for a taller building, most likely comprising a high density residential-led development.

6.57. The site is situated to the southeast of the town centre and is bordered by Velizy Avenue, Crown Gate and South Gate. It is a prominent site viewed from the inner-ring road and has good connections to/from the town centre's main shopping area. The site comprises the town's Police Station, Job Centre and the (recently closed) magistrate's court. The existing buildings are somewhat dated; the Police Station site in particular appears inefficient/unsuitable for their operational requirements. In terms of delivery considerations:

- The site is well located for a well designed, relatively tall 'gateway' building.
- We consider that a higher density residential-led development would be appropriate on this site, subject to the relocation of existing occupiers.
- Alternatively, the site represents an opportunity for public sector consolidation on a more efficient footprint, releasing land for residential development alongside. Demand for employment uses in the town centre is low at present but could be an opportunity in the future (please see the comments made on this point in relation to the Market Area, above)

- A One Public Estate opportunity for collaboration and funding could be achievable which could assist in accelerating redevelopment.
- Likely a short-medium term opportunity (over the HTCAAP period).

Area 8 - College and Harlow Leisurezone

6.58. Harlow College and Leisure Zone are significant non-retail attractions at the southern end of the town centre.

6.59. Education (potentially to include nursing/co-education workspace) are proposed to complement and support the College. This medium-term proposal would provide 'spin out' space for the College to extend its activities and further sustain this part of the town centre.

DELIVERY STRATEGY

- 6.60. To support these site-specific delivery initiatives, the following initiatives to improve the town centre as a whole are also being considered:
- The Council is exploring the potential to establish a town centre **Business Improvement District**.
 - The Council is aiming to establish a regular **landowner and developer forum** to improve communication and encourage coordination of activity.
 - The Council also has a lead role to play in terms of forward funding **short term and longer term public realm projects** that set high quality standards and contribute towards a step-change in the town centre's physical environment, which is an important pre-requisite for growth by helping to create the conditions necessary to attract and retain investment. The delivery of these improvements needs to be planned and delivered in harmony with the growth in greater Harlow that the Harlow Gilston Garden Town project will bring. This is because the successful future of the town centre will significantly benefit from attracting custom from new Garden Town residents as well as the existing Harlow population. To help ensure new Garden Town residents are persuaded to use Harlow town centre rather than competitor locations, it is critical that improvements to the town centre are delivered in a coordinated way with the Garden Town's growth trajectory.
 - The Council will continue to explore opportunities for **funding bids** to Central Government and other funding partners. Potential / ongoing streams include One Public Estate, Future High Streets and housing delivery funding.
- 6.61. For those Development Sites where the Council is able to take a more proactive role in implementation, potential roles (disposal, contractual partnership, joint venture or direct delivery) that the Council could take are set out in Figure 47 overleaf.
- 6.62. Policy HTC1 sets out planning guidance associated with the delivery strategy.

	Disposal	Contractual partnership
Key characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council would secure planning permission then dispose of sites on the open market, leaving subsequent purchasers to bring forward proposals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council procures a development partner, with delivery arrangements governed by a development agreement between the parties. There would be various conditions precedents and subsequent phasing and subsequent schemes could be brought forward through the mechanism of a development proposal notice.
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relatively cheap (costs of planning and disposal) Sale and capital receipt could be achieved quickly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tried and tested approach, well understood by the market No separate entity created Clear delineation of objectives, roles and responsibilities.
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council would lose influence over development on their land beyond planning Does not necessarily optimise value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential lack of flexibility and ability to manage change requiring, as we have seen, deeds of variations to account for/ deal with market conditions. Lack of a separate identity, making dealing with third parties more complex in that reference has to be "made back" to the Development Agreement and cascaded through.

Figure 44 Potential delivery mechanisms

Joint venture	Direct delivery
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council procures a partner and establish a common enterprise JVCo in which they share returns and risks. This sharing would be controlled through the shareholders agreements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council implements the scheme themselves by appointing a development manager & contractor rather than a developer to deliver the scheme. Council could retain freehold of the land and take ownership of the completed properties which could then be leased.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of distinct entity encourages focus on shared business plan and objectives • Easier branding and marketing • JV Co can enter into contracts in own right if required • Flexibility and durability to address changing market circumstances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level of control for Council • Development profit (but also risk) would sit with Council and could either be retained or folded back into the scheme to deliver greater outcomes • Assets would be retained by Council who could therefore potentially benefit from both revenue streams and capital growth • Existing framework agreements could be utilised.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively complex and costly to establish • Parties will need to consider the majority of issues pertinent to the contractual partnership route as elements which would in that route form part of a development agreement will need to form part of the Shareholders Agreement • Potentially exposes Council to different types and levels of (commercial) risk • Potential concern of insufficient accountability to parent organisations • Council would need to understand its role as members/officers who take on the role as directors of the JV will be liable as directors and there are potential conflicts of interests between their duties to the Council and to the JV. • Dilution of the Councils "independence" in that should JV be in breach, the Council may need to consider how it deals with itself as shareholder in the JV being in breach • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council would need to provide capital funding for the scheme to be delivered. • Council would be exposed to commercial risk rather than this being passed on to a developer. • The absence of a developer would mean the scheme is less likely to maximise its commercial potential, as the developer's skill set is absent.

PHASING

- 6.63. Figure 48 below sets out the overall scale and mix of development proposed in Harlow Town Centre based on indicative phasing. This is illustrated graphically on Figure 49. The details of phasing and development extents will continue to evolve through the plan period.
- 6.64. The HTCAAP will establish a spatial planning framework to guide future development up to 2033 and beyond. Given the length of this timescale and the potential for change and uncertainties facing the property markets relevant to Harlow Town Centre, a flexible approach to land use planning will be important. This will serve to maximise delivery prospects and ensure that the future regeneration of the town centre can adapt to emerging market trends and ‘needs’ as they evolve.
- 6.65. The delivery of the overall quantum of development envisaged by the HTCAAP will require the co-ordination of Development Sites and a complex set of interrelated factors such as viability, market capacity and phasing. It will also be necessary to ensure that existing and planned infrastructure (physical and social) can support the development proposed for the town centre and its increasing resident population. This will also need to be phased to link with the growth in population and infrastructure delivery associated with the Harlow Gilston Garden Town initiative.
- 6.66. The level of housing delivery proposed for the town centre is significant. Net dwelling completions across the District have totalled 1,176 homes over the past five years (since 2013-14), while the HTCAAP plans for [788] homes over the next five years within Harlow Town Centre alone. An additional [690] homes are proposed in 6-10 years. Notwithstanding the risk of ‘flooding the market’ and exceeding infrastructure capacity, there is a clear strategy for the proposed level and phasing of key residential development opportunity sites in the town centre:
- In the **short term** (0-5 years) a high proportion of the [788] homes will be delivered by Strawberry Star at the Land North of the Harvey Centre; and at the Post Office Road site, which is Council-owned
 - In the **medium term** (6-10 years), when the HTCAAP plans for [690] homes, the preceding delivery of the short term opportunities will have served to enhance developer confidence in the town centre housing market and set the conditions necessary to unlock additional Development Sites. These include but are not limited to the Sainsbury’s foodstore and car park, the Royal Mail site and (part of) the Bus Depot / Fire Station site to the north of the town centre. However the delivery of these sites will also be contingent on – for example – early actions to work to relocate the bus depot and fire station.

Land use	Short-term (0-5 years) sqm GEA	Medium-term (6-10 years) sqm GEA	Long-term (10 years + / beyond plan period) sqm GEA	Total sqm GEA
Residential	37864 [788]	76548 [690]	81988 [739]	196401 [2216]
Flexible non-residential	1556	5299	6625	13479
Education	0	9786	0	9786
Workspace	5687	0	18400	24087
Flexible workspace / residential	0	9344 [84]	5375 [48]	14718 [133]
Community	0	1001	1001	2002
Foodstore	0	5200	0	5200
Retail	11272	0	6599	17870
Civic	4956	14867	0	19822
Totals	61334	122044	119986	

Figure 45 Overall capacity and phasing - note: residential dwelling numbers in square brackets as appropriate - please note that phasing and capacity by phase is subject to review and testing through the evolution of the evidence base and supporting documents to the AAP - the precise number of units/ floorspace is therefore square-bracketed where these are quoted in policies, supporting text and the monitoring framework.

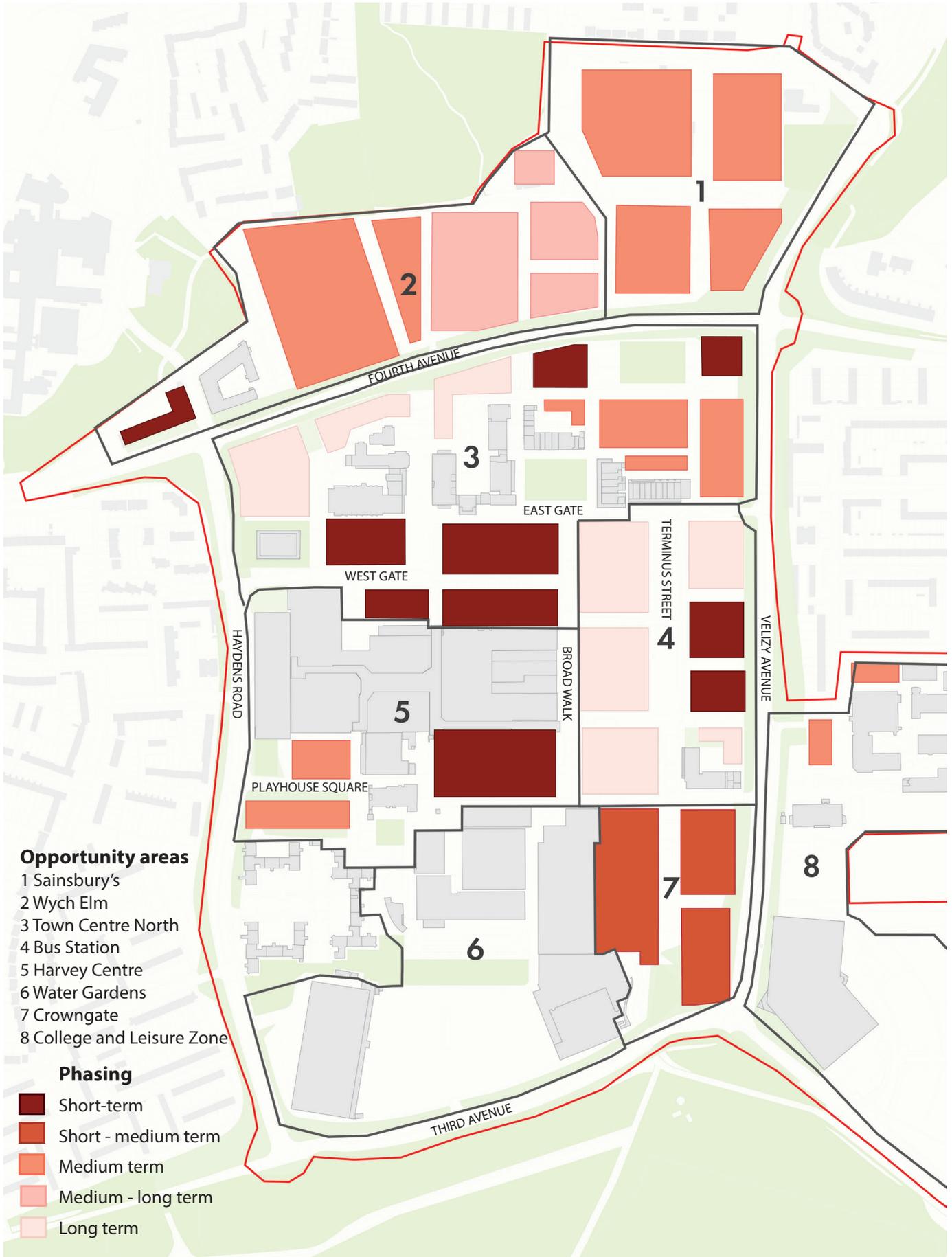


Figure 46 Indicative phasing plan - this phasing plan is currently under review and will be updated prior to publication Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2018). All rights reserved. Harlow District Council Licence No.100019627

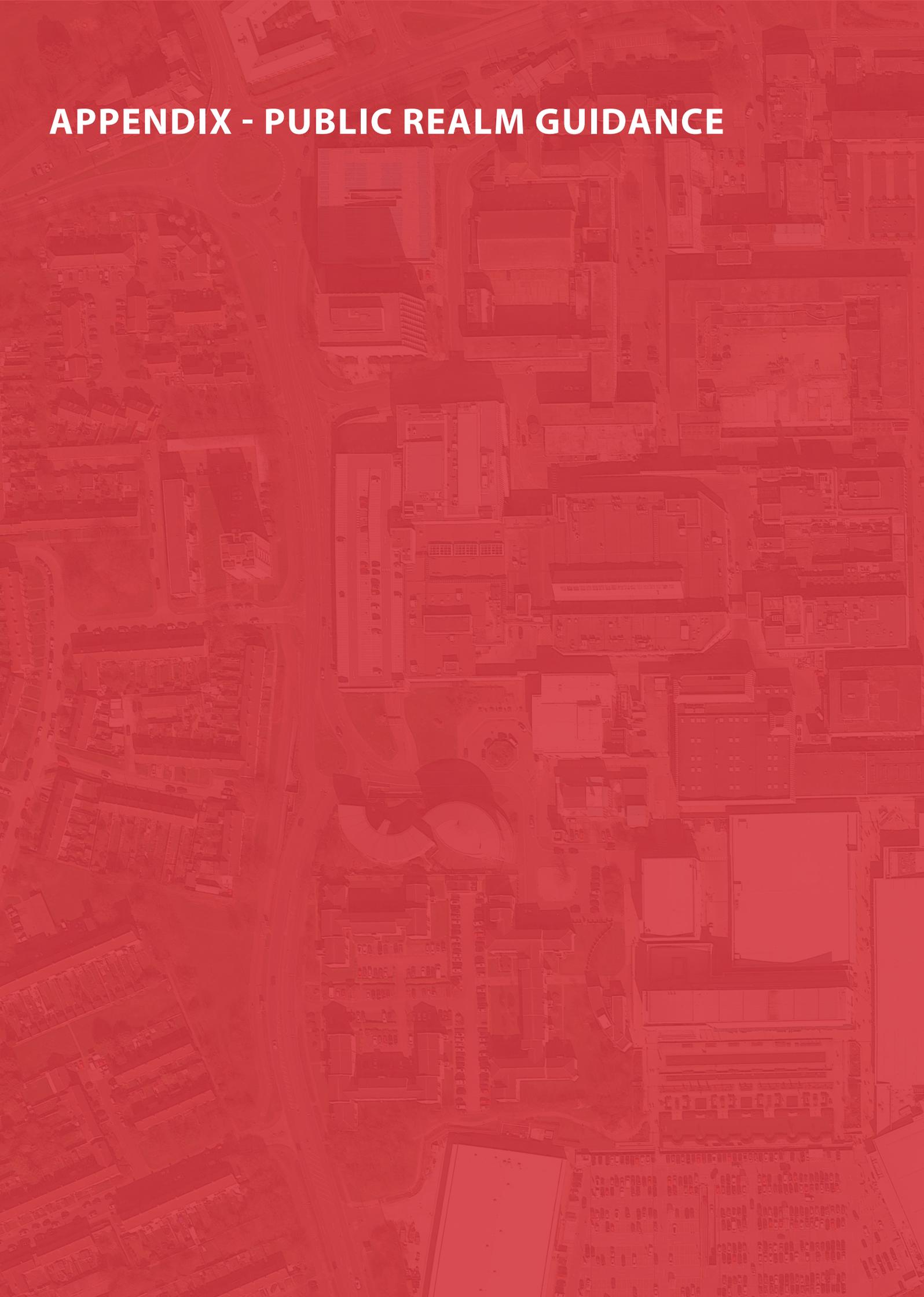
8 MONITORING FRAMEWORK

- 7.1. Monitoring the Local Plan is an important, ongoing activity which identifies how the policies contained in the Plan are being implemented. The Council is required to produce an Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) at least annually. The AMR monitors progress against milestones in the Local Development Scheme and contains an assessment of the extent to which objectives set out in the Local Plan are being achieved.
- 7.2. Where it becomes apparent that objectives and targets are not being met, or if circumstances have changed nationally or locally, this may give rise to a review of the Local Plan or other elements such as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) or additional Development Plan Documents (DPDs).
- 7.3. The monitoring framework for the Area Action Plan is set out below. This contains a series of performance indicators and other areas on which updates may be given which will be incorporated into the AMR.
- 7.4. It should be noted that the Local Plan sets out monitoring requirements in relation to Local Plan policies.

Policy area	Indicator	Target	Monitoring policies
Housing Strategy and Growth Locations	Net additional dwellings built	Deliver up to [1,478] dwellings on the short and medium term sites up to 2033	HTC1, HTC12
	Percentage of Affordable Housing built in new major residential developments	At least 30% for the new major residential development (Reduction of this rate will require an independent viability assessment)	HTC12
Economic Development and Prosperity Strategy	New workspace in town centre	Deliver up to [5,687] sqm of new workspace in town centre - flexibility in location, earmarked to south of Fourth Avenue	HTC13
Retail Ambitions and Town Centre Redevelopment	Quality of retail environment in Harlow	Qualitative improvements to streets, spaces and accessibility in the town centre through an annual high level "healthcheck"	HTC9, HTC10
	Provision of new retail floorspace in the town centre	Provide up to 11,272 sqm new retail floorspace and up to 6,855 sqm of new flexible no-residential space (potentially including retail) up to 2033 Increasing trend in evening and night time uses	HTC10, HTC11, HTC14
	Percentage of Primary Frontage in the Town Centre in Use Classes A1, A2 and A3	At least 60% of the overall Primary Frontage length is A1 use and 100% retention of primary frontage length	HTC10

Policy area	Indicator	Target	Monitoring policies
Linking Development Sites to the Wider Environment	Delivery of trees and planting on key streets and spaces in the town centre	Delivery of new town centre trees alongside all development and major infrastructure schemes in the town centre	HTC1, HTC6
	Potential delivery of a new strategic green space in Wych Elm area	Planning progression / delivery of new strategic green space connecting from Rectory Woods to the town centre towards the end of the plan period	HTC6
	Change in number of heritage assets in the town centre	No loss in number of heritage assets Retention and positive refurbishment of assets (including non-designated assets as identified)	HTC7
	Townscape setting and character	Protection or enhancement of setting of heritage assets (including non-designated assets) Protection and enhancement of existing views, or creation of new views Improvements in setting / townscape character / legibility of key sites in the town centre	HTC6, HTC8, HTC9
Strategic Infrastructure Requirements	Delivery of enhancements to public transport	Enhancement of local bus service provision and interchange by 2033 Realisation of STC provision to / through the town centre by 2033 Enhancement of connections to Harlow Town railway station by 2033	HTC4
	Delivery of improvements to town centre walking and cycling connections	Improvements to walking and cycling connections across the urban collar roads by 2033	HTC3
Lifestyle	Enhancement of urban streets and public spaces	Enhancement of key streets and spaces by 2033	HTC9
	Quality of public art provision in Harlow	Increase in the number of public art / sculptures and number of refurbished / relocated pieces in the town centre	HTC9

APPENDIX - PUBLIC REALM GUIDANCE





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