



**REPORT of  
INTERIM HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES**

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**to  
PLANNING AND LICENSING COMMITTEE  
2 MARCH 2017**

**STRATEGIC DESIGN CODES - NORTH HEYBRIDGE GARDEN SUBURB**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek the Committee's approval of the Strategic Design Codes as a basis for the determination of planning applications for development within the North Heybridge Garden Suburb. Reserved matters applications are anticipated shortly following resolution to grant approval of outline applications subject to signed Section 106 (S106). The determination of Reserved Matters applications is conditional on the prior approval of the Strategic Design Codes.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

That the North Heybridge Garden Suburb Strategic Design Codes (**APPENDIX 1**) be approved for Development Management purposes in the determination of planning applications within the Garden Suburb.

**3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 Policy S3 Place Shaping in the Local Development Plan (LDP) sets out important principles to guide the development of the North Heybridge Garden Suburb [and South Maldon Garden Suburb] to ensure it is planned and developed as a high quality neighbourhood that will enhance the character of the District and protect and enhance the environmental quality of the surrounding area. The North Heybridge Garden Suburb Strategic Masterplan Framework (SMF) was endorsed by the Council in October 2014 and is a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications. Likewise, the South Maldon Garden Suburb Strategic Masterplan Framework was endorsed by Council in September 2014. The Council requires all planning applications to be in compliance with the principles set out in the LDP and Strategic Masterplan Frameworks.
- 3.2 Reports to the Committee on 14 November 2014 and 1 October 2015 set out the governance arrangements for implementation of both Garden Suburbs and the requirements of planning applications to deliver the design quality expected. Planning applications have now been submitted in respect of all six of the strategic sites located in the Gardens Suburbs. The Strategic Masterplan Frameworks have assisted the Council in ensuring that planning applications satisfy the requirements of Policies S3 Place Shaping and S4 Maldon and Heybridge Strategic Growth to deliver the necessary infrastructure and a high quality development in accordance with

garden suburb principles. Planning Performance Agreements (PPA) with applicants has ensured that applicants have been appropriately informed about the requirements of the Council, the LDP and the recommendations of the Strategic Masterplan Frameworks prior to the submission of an application. This has included the production of Design Parameter Plans for outline applications to secure the key structuring elements for land use, green infrastructure, movement and access, density and storey heights and Strategic Design Codes (**APPENDIX 1**) to inform detailed planning and Reserved Matters applications.

The status of planning applications in respect of the sites within the Garden Suburb is summarised in the following table. All strategic applications are reported to extraordinary meetings of the Council for determination taking into account relevant planning policies and responses to statutory and public consultation.

Site	Application Reference	Proposal	Current Status
<b>North Heybridge Garden Suburb</b>			
Site S2(d) North of Heybridge	OUT/MAL/15/00419	Mixed use development comprising 1138 dwellings, residential care, neighbourhood uses, primary school, strategic flood relief infrastructure, relief road and open space	Resolution to grant outline consent approved at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council (EMC) subject to Section 106 (7 December 2016)
Site S2(e) land north of Holloway Road	OUT/MAL/14/00990	Up to 100 residential dwellings	Resolution to grant outline consent approved at an EMC subject to Section 106 (31 March 2016)
Site S2(f) land west of Broad Street Green Road	FUL/MAL/15/00885	145 residential dwellings, open space and ancillary infrastructure	Resolution to grant outline consent approved at an EMC subject to Section 106 (19 May 2016)

- 3.3 With the submission of planning applications for individual sites, it is important to ensure applications are fully coordinated and there is a joined up and comprehensive approach to design and delivery of the Garden Suburbs over the longer term. In order to ensure design quality throughout the Garden Suburbs, consultants have been appointed by the Council in May 2015 to prepare Strategic Design Codes for both Garden Suburbs taking into account the endorsed Strategic Masterplan Frameworks and Design Parameter Plans submitted with outline applications. The cost of the consultants has been funded through the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Capacity Funding. The Strategic Design Codes for the South Maldon Garden Suburb were endorsed by the Committee via the report of Director of Planning and Regulatory Services on 3 March 2016.

- 3.4 The North Heybridge Garden Suburb Strategic Design Codes (**APPENDIX 1**) take forward the vision and development framework set out in the North Heybridge Garden Suburb Strategic Masterplan Framework and the Design and Access Statements and Design Parameter Plans prepared by developers in support of outline

planning applications. The purpose of the North Heybridge Garden Suburb Strategic Design Codes is to provide greater certainty on aspirations for the design quality of the key structuring elements of the SMF and to ensure that the key garden suburb principles are carried through to the detailed design and implementation.

- 3.5 The Strategic Design Codes are split into design codes and design guidance. The design codes will be mandatory and set standards for strategically important elements of the North Heybridge Garden Suburb notably in the design and landscaping of principle streets and green spaces and the creation of an integrated network of green spaces and pedestrian and cycle routes throughout the garden suburb. The design guidance is less prescriptive and sets out key principles in response of other aspects of the development which are central to achieving the vision for the garden suburb such as character areas, car parking, materials and public realm, cycle accommodation and bin storage. Reserved Matters applications will be required to comply with both the design codes and the design guidance.
- 3.6 The design of streets and spaces between buildings will have a key role in delivering the vision for the garden suburb and ensuring that they accommodate all necessary functions of movement and parking as well as creating an attractive high quality and comfortable environment throughout the garden suburb. A Structuring Plan identifies four Strategic Design Codes for Primary Streets, Green Edges, Green Spaces and Built Edges.
- **A Structuring Plan** – the basic development framework and infrastructure including streets, pedestrian / cycle networks, location of community facilities, green infrastructure network, density and height parameters and urban design principles.
  - **Primary Street Codes** – design criteria for the primary road network including street tree planting.
  - **Green Edge Codes** – design criteria for how buildings interface with the rural green edge.
  - **Green Space Codes** – design criteria for greenways and greenspaces.
  - **Built Edge Codes** – design criteria for how buildings relate to existing streets and development to ensure integration with the wider area.
- 3.7 The document will be used by applicants and by the Development Management team in ensuring that development proposals come forward in line with the Strategic Design Codes and Design Guidance. In practice this means that:
- infrastructure and plot development reflect the spatial distribution of the elements as defined by the Structuring Plan.
  - street cross-sections for primary streets, green spaces and built edge and green edge treatments are compliant with the mandatory Strategic Design Codes.
  - proposals for individual plots reinforce the identity of the character context.
  - parking, materials and bin storage arrangements take due regard of the design guidance.
- 3.8 **Primary Street Code** – The treatment of the primary street established the character of the Garden Suburb at important gateway entrances and within the Garden Suburb.

The code will ensure continuity of character and identity across plot boundaries. The Strategic Design Code sets out performance specification in respect of street dimensions, design criteria, public transport and materials and landscape including street trees and street furniture. The codes states that no more that 50% of the plot frontage of individual houses will be occupied by parking spaces and a single species clipped hedge will be provided to the property boundary. Key elements of the primary street cross-section which must remain constant include:

- A consistent landscape strip with formal tree planting on both sides of the street to create an Avenue.
- Parallel pedestrian and cycle access.
- Pedestrian and cycle access separated from the carriageway by a landscape strip or verge which will also accommodate parallel or bay parking.
- A flexible strip adjacent to the carriageway for; parking, bus layby, additional lane on approach to junctions or extension to landscape strip.

- 3.9 **Green Edge Code** – The green edge code will ensure that the relationship between green space and development and the interface with open countryside is attractive and well planned. Green spaces will be overlooked by development and designed in accordance with principles of ‘Secured by Design’. Landscape treatment will be required to reflect the character context areas by responding to the wooded character of Heybridge Wood in the west and the more open rural character to the north where it merges with the landscape corridor to the south of the relief road and flood alleviation infrastructure. Provision is made for shared streets adjacent to green edges to create an attractive interface between the development and green space.
- 3.10 **Green Space Code** – Green infrastructure is an essential component of the Garden Suburb and will be required to fulfil a number of roles including recreation and opportunities for increased biodiversity. The code sets minimum requirements for green spaces and the creation of a network of greenways and green fingers which will include provision for pedestrian and cycle routes, play space, allotments and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs). Provision is made for shared streets adjacent to green spaces to create an attractive interface between the development and green space.
- 3.11 **Built Edge Code** – The built edge code requires all frontage development to be orientated to face the street or public realm in order to provide attractive and animated frontages. The code includes the treatment of the Maypole Road, Holloway Road and Broad Street Green frontages and ensures integration of new development with existing built and natural features.
- 3.12 **Design Guidance** – Three Character Context Areas are defined: *Village Edge*, that has a close physical relationship with the rural villages north of Heybridge and reflected in a looser grained rural edge of dwelling sizes arranged around informal and irregular shaped green spaces; the *Garden Suburb* is towards the centre of the site where a more formal, planned layout of regular, formal street patterns with vistas and characteristic tree lined streets and formal open spaces and *Woodland Edge* where a protective green buffer provides an opportunity for development to face towards the woodland with informal shared space creating a soft edge between the built area and

ancient woodland. Design guidance is provided in respect of urban form, planting, colour and materials and boundary treatment.

- 3.13 Guidance is provided on parking. This will be provided in accordance with adopted standards and the guidance states that it should be achieved predominantly with on-street and on-plot parking with the occasional use of courtyard parking areas or where there are flatted blocks but with maximum of ten spaces, but preferably six to eight spaces. Courtyard parking should always be visible from the street and well overlooked by the fronts of buildings.
- 3.14 Guidance is provided on materials and public realm design. Proposals will be required to incorporate materials which visually link and unify all parts of the development with a consistent treatment of carriageways and footways across each phase of development. Materials will be required to be robust and durable and allow for easy maintenance and replacement.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 Outline applications that have been approved in the Garden Suburbs have planning conditions attached whereby any future Reserved Matters applications must be in accordance with the approved Strategic Design Codes. Reserved Matters applications are anticipated shortly in both Garden Suburbs. The South Maldon Garden Suburb Strategic Design Codes are already in place to inform Reserved Matters applications. Likewise, it is important that the North Heybridge Garden Suburb Strategic Design Codes are in place to inform the preparation of detailed design proposals for Reserved Matters applications.
- 4.2 The Strategic Design Codes will ensure delivery of design quality throughout the North Heybridge Garden Suburb in accordance with the LDP and North Heybridge Garden Suburb Strategic Masterplan Framework.

#### **5. IMPACT ON CORPORATE GOALS**

- 5.1 Planning supports corporate goals which underpin the Council's vision for District and in particular protecting and shaping the District and balancing the future needs of the community, meeting the housing needs of the District and enabling, supporting and empowering communities to be safe, active and healthy.

#### **6. IMPLICATIONS**

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – Planning applications for development within the Garden Suburb will be determined in accordance with the principles set out in the Strategic Design Codes ensuring delivery of necessary infrastructure and a high quality of development.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – The development of the North Heybridge and South Maldon Garden Suburbs will provide sustainable and well planned

communities which promote social cohesion and help to provide for the future needs of the community.

- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – The Strategic Design Codes have been prepared in accordance with the Submitted Local Development and the Strategic Masterplan Framework which has been endorsed by the Council as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. From the day of publication decision makers may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to the stage of preparation of the emerging plan.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – The Strategic Design Codes have been funded with external resources. Without the Strategic Design Codes the Council could be at increased of planning appeals which could potentially have resource implications.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – Without Strategic Design Codes for the determination of applications for development within the area, each application will need to be treated in isolation which will have resource implications and will also affect the ability to meet the objectives and principles set out in the LDP. The Strategic Design Codes will facilitate the Development Management process and make efficient use of available resources.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – The Strategic Design Codes will assist the Council in promoting high quality and inclusive design and sustainable development, securing the necessary infrastructure to support new and existing communities and safeguarding the local environment in accordance with the policies set out in the submitted LDP and the Strategic Masterplan Framework.

**Background Papers:**

Report to Planning and Licensing Committee, 13 November 2014

Report to Planning and Licensing Committee, 1 October 2015

Report to Planning and Licensing Committee, 3 March 2016

North Heybridge Garden Suburb Strategic Masterplan Framework October 2014)

Local Development Plan 2014 - 2029 as submitted for examination

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