



NOAK BRIDGE CHARACTER APPRAISAL

to support the Noak Bridge Neighbourhood Plan



CONTENTS

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Noak Bridge Parish
- 1.2 Introduction
- 1.3 Who is This Document For?
- 1.4 Policy & Evidence Based Review
- 1.5 National Design Guide
- 1.6 Essex Design Guide

2 Local Character Analysis

- 2.1 Parish Structure
- 2.2 History
- 2.3 Conservation Area
- 2.4 Policy & Evidence Based Review
- 2.5 Landscape & Ecology
- 2.6 The Nature Reserve

3 Character Area Analysis

- 3.1 Character Areas
 - Areas 1 & 4 Southwest of Bridge Street / The School and Green
 - Area 2 North of Bridge Street
 - Area 3 Gatelodge Estate
 - Area 5 East of the village
 - Area 6 West of South Wash Road
 - Area 7 Pre- 1900 farmsteads and historic buildings
 - Area 8 Recreational / commercial buildings
 - Area 9 Open Countryside, recreation and equestrian uses
- Conclusions

This document has been prepared by Bluestone Planning LLP with the collaboration of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and the local community.

The purpose of this report is to set out design expectations for the Noak Bridge Neighbourhood Plan Area.

The National Planning Policy Framework clearly states the importance of creating a clear design vision to provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage.

By undertaking a Character Appraisal, this will inform Design Guides and Codes, which will provide a framework for creating distinctive places through identifying special qualities of each area.

These defining characteristics inform the design policies collaboratively with the local communities aspirations, to ground the policies in the context of the locality of the neighbourhood plan area.

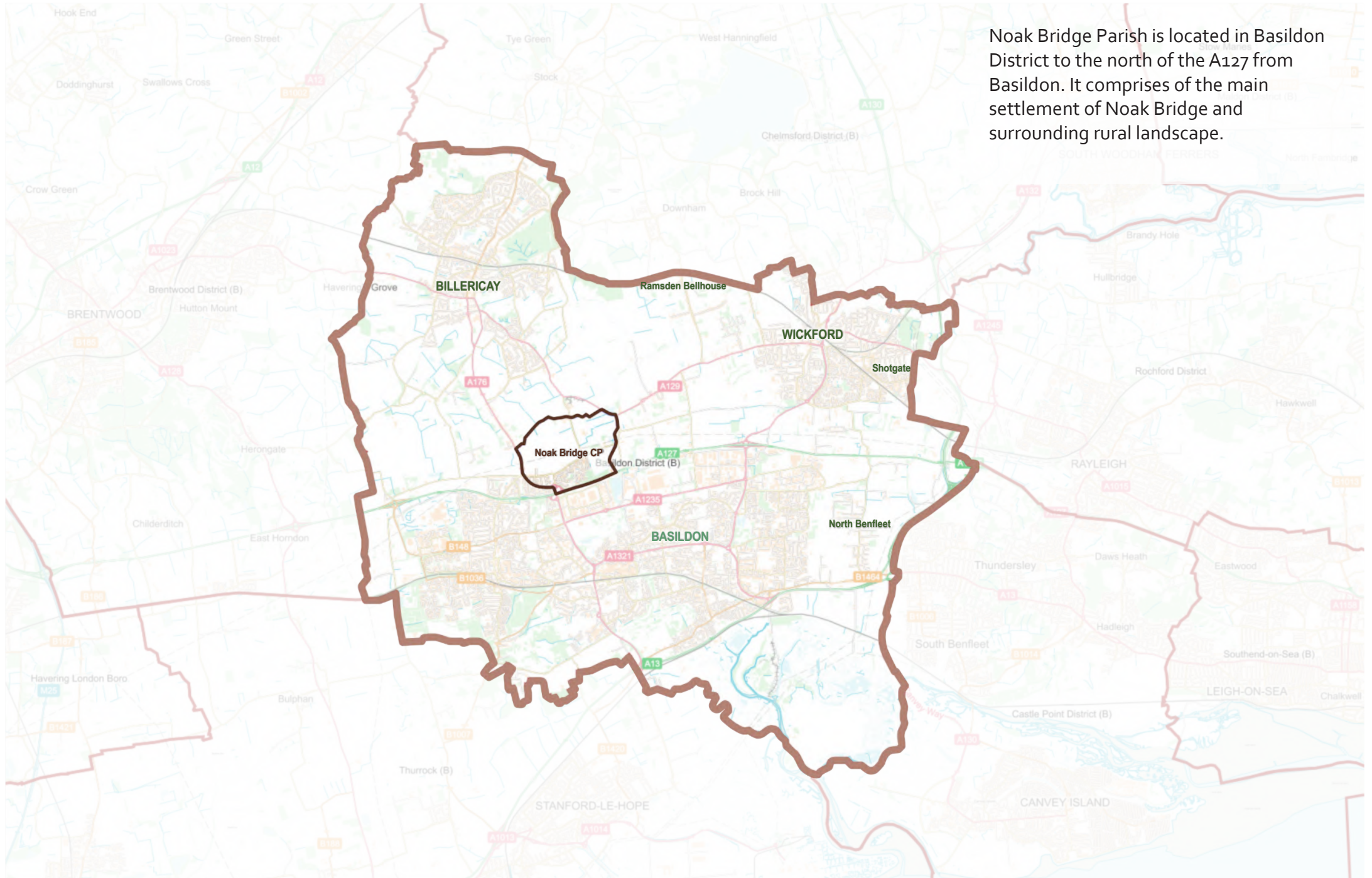


CHAPTER ONE

Introduction



1.1 | The Parish



Noak Bridge Parish is located in Basildon District to the north of the A127 from Basildon. It comprises of the main settlement of Noak Bridge and surrounding rural landscape.

1.2 | Introduction

This settlement character analysis is intended to be used as a basis for the application of local character and design policies and to ultimately provide a separate Design Code in the Noak Bridge Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan.

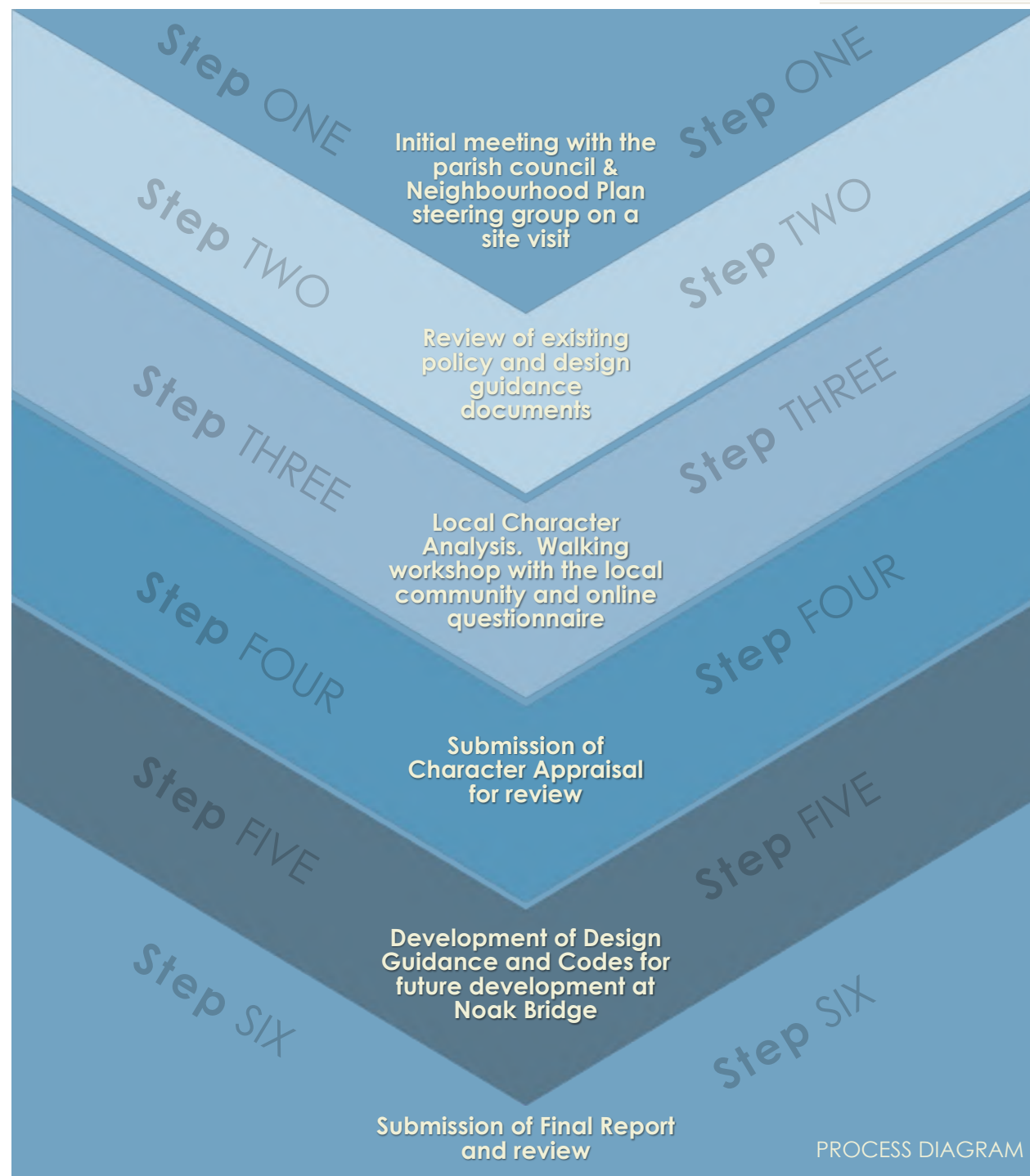
The document relates to the Neighbourhood Plan area, which contains the entire parish.

The Noak Bridge Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan was published by Basildon Council in 2010.

This document has been produced as a standalone update to the above appraisal. It should be noted that this document also includes the surrounding area, but does not supersede the adopted Conservation Area Appraisal.

A number of local history sources have contributed to this analysis.

This document primarily deals with those aspects which are deemed necessary to understand the context of the parish in relation to producing evidence to support the Neighbourhood Plan. It is not intended to be a comprehensive historical analysis and other aforementioned documents deal with this aspect in greater detail.

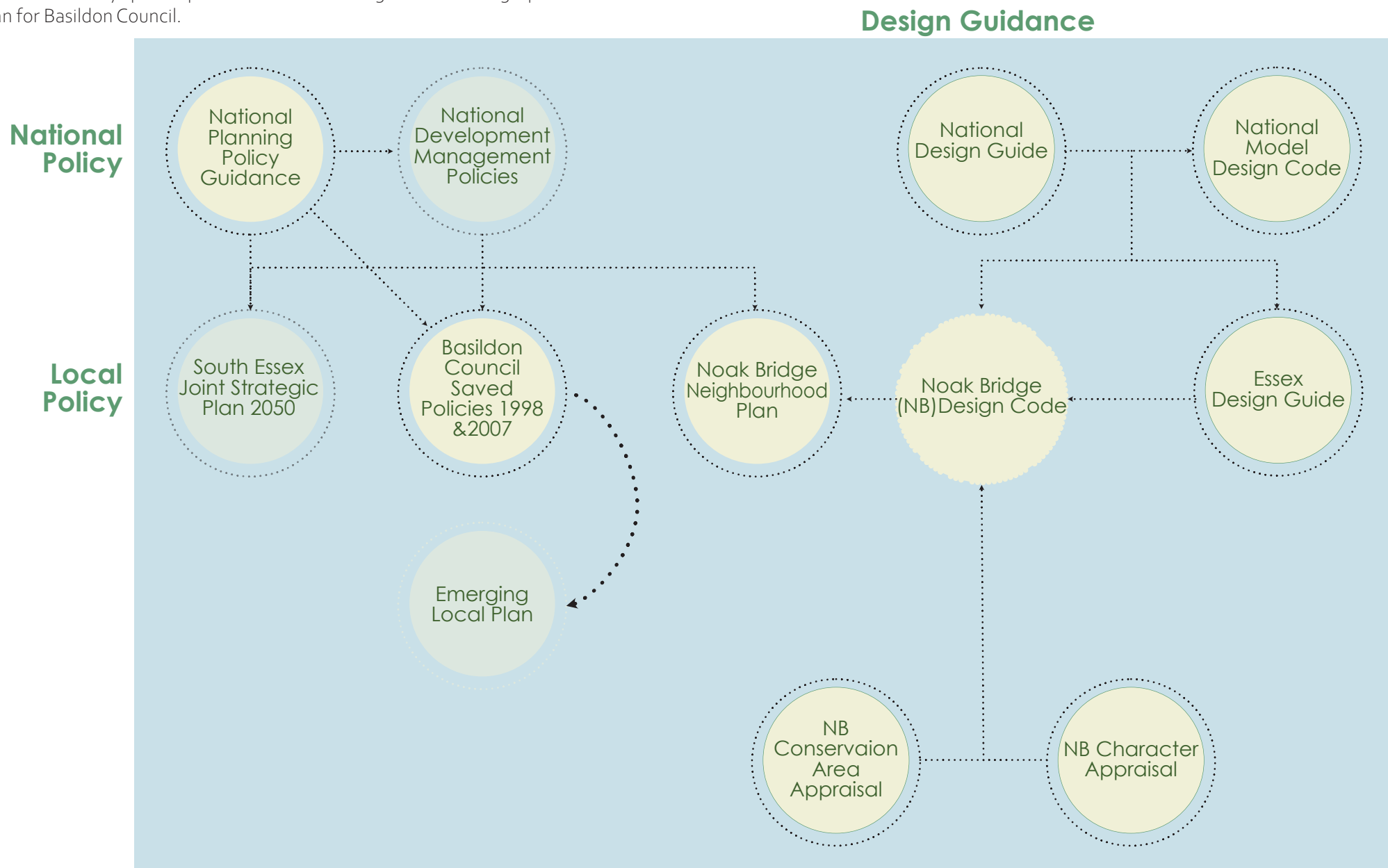


1.3 | Who is the document for?



1.4 | Policy & Evidence Based Review

The diagram below highlights how the The Noak Bridge Character Appraisal and Design Code will sit alongside other planning policy and guidance documents and how it feeds into the Neighbourhood Plan, which provides locally specific policies and will sit alongside the strategic policies contained in the Local Plan for Basildon Council.



1.5 | National Design Guide

The National Design Guide was published in 2019 and sets out the characteristics of well designed places and demonstrates what good design means in principle and in practice.

It supports the NPPF and is intended to be used by local authorities, applicants and local communities to establish the design expectations of the Government.

It identifies ten characteristics which underpin good design:

- Context.
- Identity.
- Built Form.
- Movement.
- Nature.
- Public Spaces.
- Uses.
- Homes and Buildings.
- Resources.
- Lifespan.

This appraisal will draw on the principles of this National Design Guidance to help inform the recommendations.

Building for a Healthy Life published in 2020 by Homes England replaces Building for Life. It sets out a design code for improving new places through demonstrating what a 'green' or 'red' (good or bad) development is.

Organised across three headings, 12 considerations are presented to think about the qualities of successful places, from macro to micro scale design considerations.

Manual for streets was published in 2007 from the Department of Transport in response to motor vehicle dominated design. The document sets out an approach for residential streets to recognise their contribution in creating places through good design to improve the quality of life by giving a higher priority to pedestrians and cyclists.



1.6 | Essex Design Guide

The Essex Design Guide was first published in 1973 by Essex County Council as a means to manage development in Essex. It represented an exemplar model in urban design principles, consequently, it served more widely as a general textbook for good urban design. Since this first publication the design guide has been updated several times and now exists as a website¹.

The Noak Bridge Conservation Area demonstrates these principles in its design and continues to improve resident's quality of life and establish place attachment.

Overarching Themes

The design guide explores design details with overarching themes in mind that are relevant to modern day living in Essex.

These themes are:

- Active Design Principles
- Ageing Population
- Health and Well-being
- Digital and Smart Technology
- Garden Communities
- Climate Change

More information can be found on the Essex design guide website.

¹ <https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/>

Design Detail Topics

Architectural Details

Addresses key habitable needs and details architectural characteristics in terms of space, scale and design to create attractive looking places.

Internal Design Details

Addresses internal space requirements and the possibility of future extensions affects on neighbouring properties.

Layout Details

The layout section addresses a large number of issues but is concerned with the overall shape and form of the development and how the parts work together.

Parking Design

Address all types of parking for all types of vehicles.

Streets & Roads

Explores how streets can be designed as places and be safe and accessible for all users.

Highway Technical Manual

Contains technical information relating to roads

Flood Management

Addressees ways in managing flood mitigation through design

Landscape & Greenspaces

Explores the important role landscape has on peoples lives and how to get the most benefit.

CHAPTER TWO

Local Context



2.1 | The Parish Structure



2.2 | The History

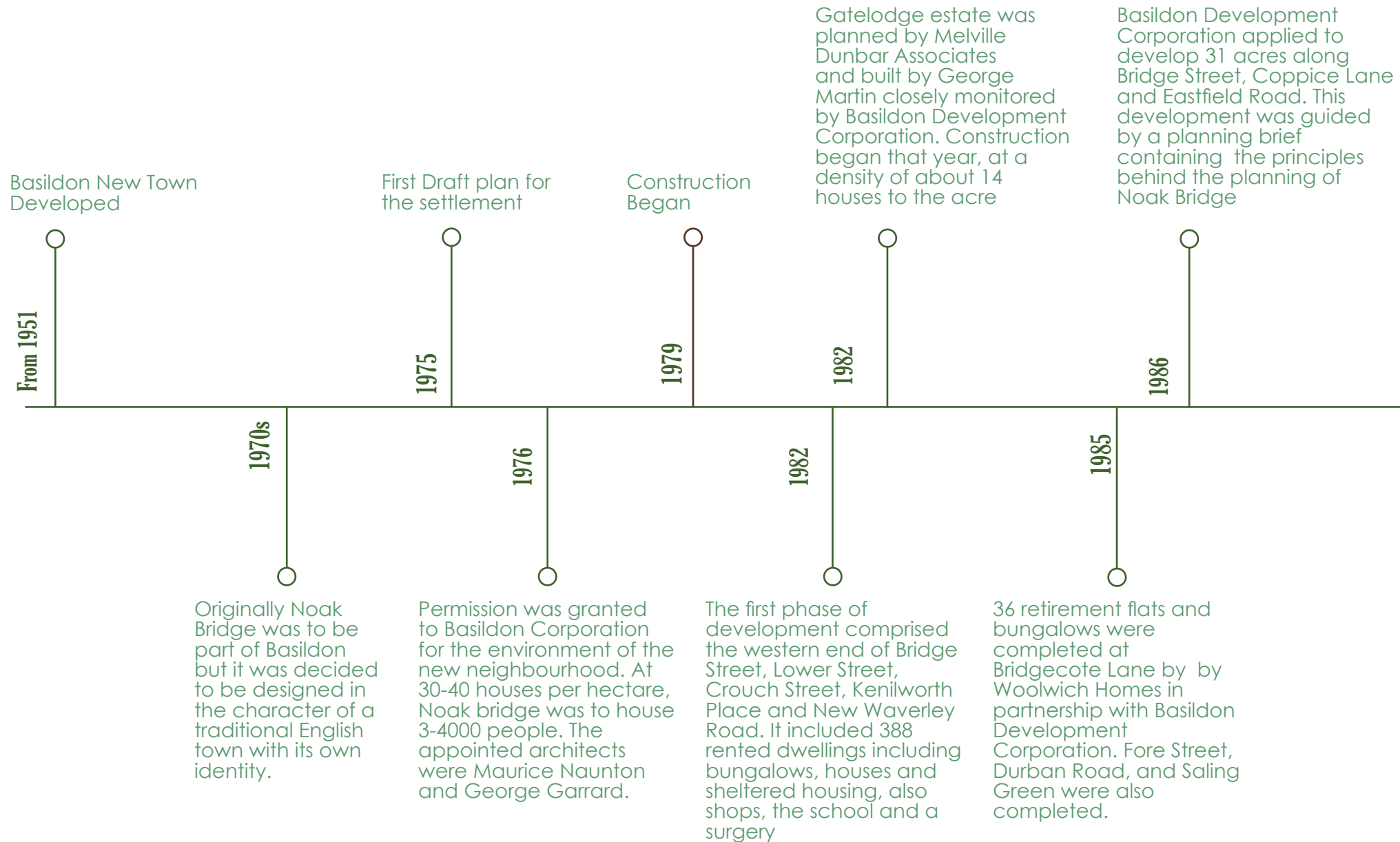
Noak Bridge was named after the bridge over the river Crouch located near the A176 between Billericay and Basildon.



The 1888 Ordnance Survey Map of the area overlaid onto a modern aerial photo (see <https://maps.nls.uk>) shows very little development other than farms, although the field pattern is visible in part, much has been altered by paddocks and recreation.

Between the 1930s and 1960s a large area was formed by plotlands with further new estate development to the west. The former plotlands were eventually replaced as discussed overleaf.

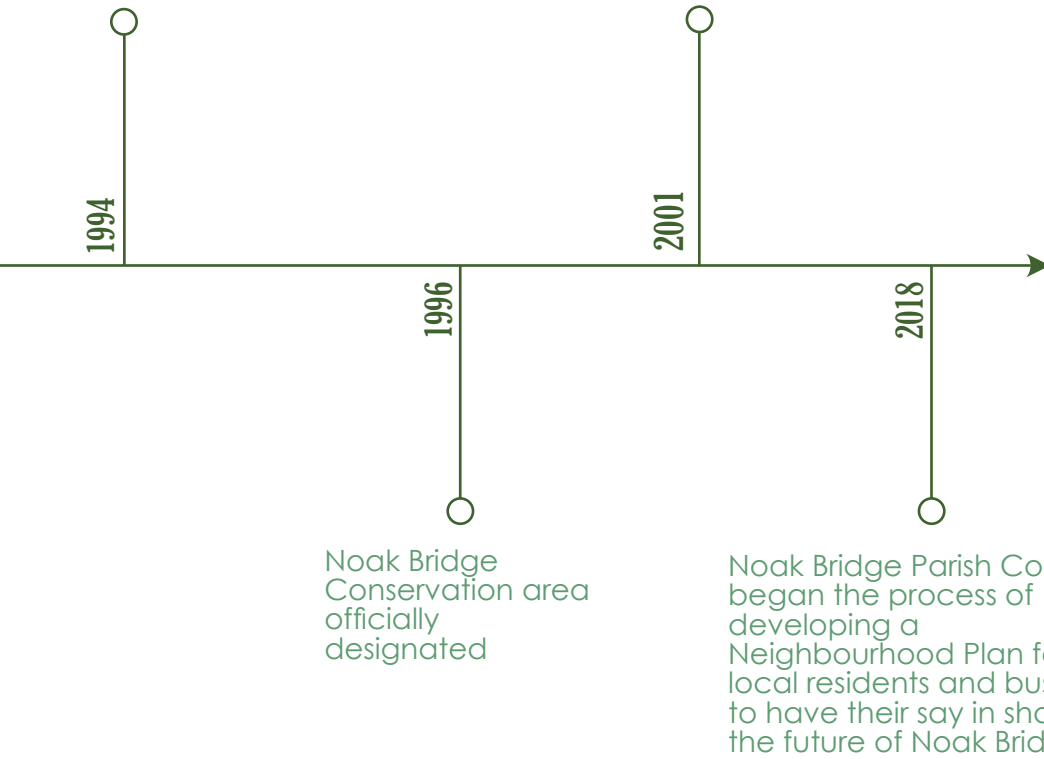
2.2 | The History



2.2 | The History

Basildon Local Plan -
it was proposed that
Noak Bridge be
designated a
Conservation Area.

Parish council was
formed



Concept Sketch from the original prospectus from Noak Bridge

2.3 | The Conservation Area



- Conservation Area
- Important Views
- Landmark Buildings
- TPO's
- Water Bodies
- Green Space

Designated in 1996, the conservation area comprises of the settlement of Noak Bridge to the east of south wash road excluding areas to the east of Littlehurst Lane and some to the south of Bridge Street.

Noak bridge was designed in the style of a traditional English village with an irregular street pattern retaining many original trees and hedgerows.

Houses were originally envisioned to be terraced houses close to the plot frontage and built to a standard, locally sympathetic form. This was to be 2 story with a 8-9m depth that was single story at the rear, all under an asymmetric roof.

A number of landmark houses were built at 2.5 storey in height, giving a variety of buildings and roof forms that are in keeping with a more organic form of development within the conservation area.

The Architectural style variants mostly represent different time periods of Essex vernacular architecture.

The overall design of the conservation area is tied together through a limited yet unifying colour and material palette in a balance between harmony and variety.

The streets are animated through identifying characteristics such as dutch gables, jettied first floors, and decorative brickwork. The area has its own unique finger post signs, which when paired with the landscape, create a sense of place much loved and valued by the residents.

The conservation area has no designated listed buildings but there are many landmark buildings which stand out from their immediate surroundings through architectural styling or physical presence in the street scene.

The irregular street pattern, street characteristics, greenery and architecture together create scenes of a traditional English village. As a result there are several important views in the conservation area, that should be protected.

There is ample green space including the village green, and pockets of green spaces and water bodies scattered throughout.



2.4 | Landscape & Ecology



Priority Habitats

Priority Habitats

- Deciduous Woodland
- No main habitat but additional habitats present
- Traditional Orchard



Priority habitats are identified as those which are most at risk and in need of conservation. The parish contains areas of deciduous woodland priority habitats along the south border and at the village green. Outside but in proximity to the parish are a number of traditional orchards and areas which have no main habitat but additional habitats present. This is not to say there are no other habitats present in the parish.

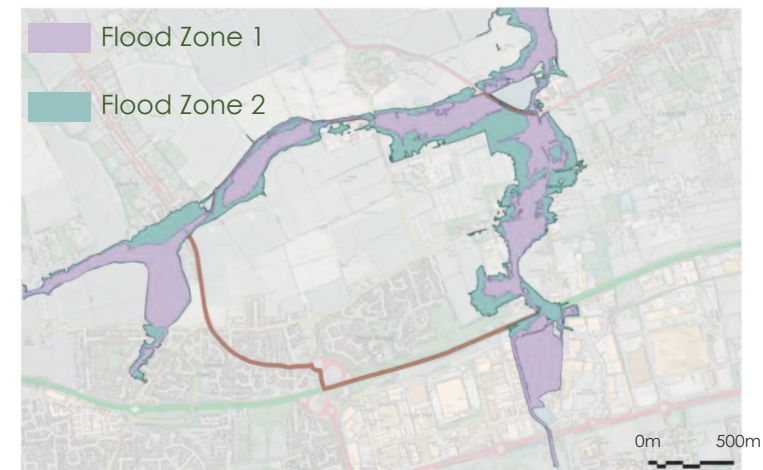
The site of greatest importance to the community is the nature reserve (see more overleaf).

The River Crouch also provides habitat for small aquatic life and the interconnecting hedgerows for small mammals and



Green Belt 2020-2021

A large proportion of the Parish is in Green Belt land other than the settlement area to the south of Wash Road and the plots surrounding Martindale Avenue.



Flood Zones

The River Crouch runs adjacent to the North and East boundaries of the parish. The areas around the river are subjected to flooding.

2.5 | The Nature Reserve

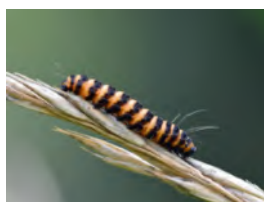


All images and information from:
<https://www.nbnrs.org.uk/wildlife.html>

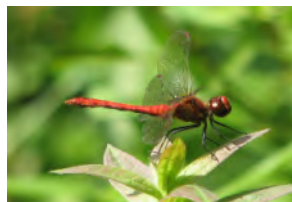
Some of the Species Which Inhabit the Nature Reserve



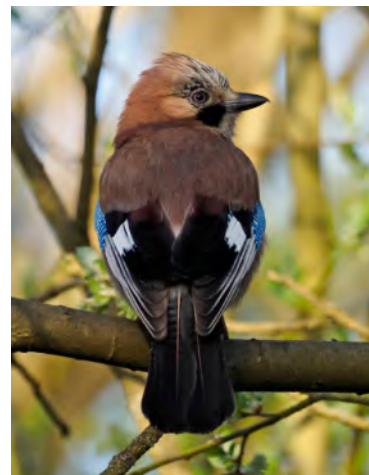
Edible Frog



Cinnabar Moth caterpillar



Ruddy Darter



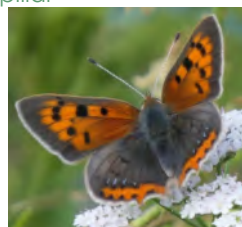
Jay



Goldfinch



Red Soldier Beetle



Small Copper



Common Lizard

The Nature Reserve

The Nature Reserve is a treasured community assets as an invaluable area for physical activity and possible education.

It comprises of 20 acres of developing woodland, grassland, scrubs and ponds. The diversity of grasses and flowers attract butterflies and other insects.

The 5 permanent ponds and 2 temporary ponds, the drainage channel flowing along the northern edge, ditch and small marshy area attract a wide range of species. Various species of dragonfly are seen around the ponds.

A considerable amount of the reserve is scrub providing nesting for birds. The Noak Bridge Nature Reserve Society have positioned bird and bat boxes in the remote areas further helping these species thrive.

The developing woodland is mostly oak with blackthorn, hawthorn and bramble. More recently other native species have been planted at the southern end of the reserve.

Possible Improvements Required

- Improvement of paths, especially slippery and muddy in winter.
- Possible picnic benches/ places to sit
- Appropriate lighting for safety

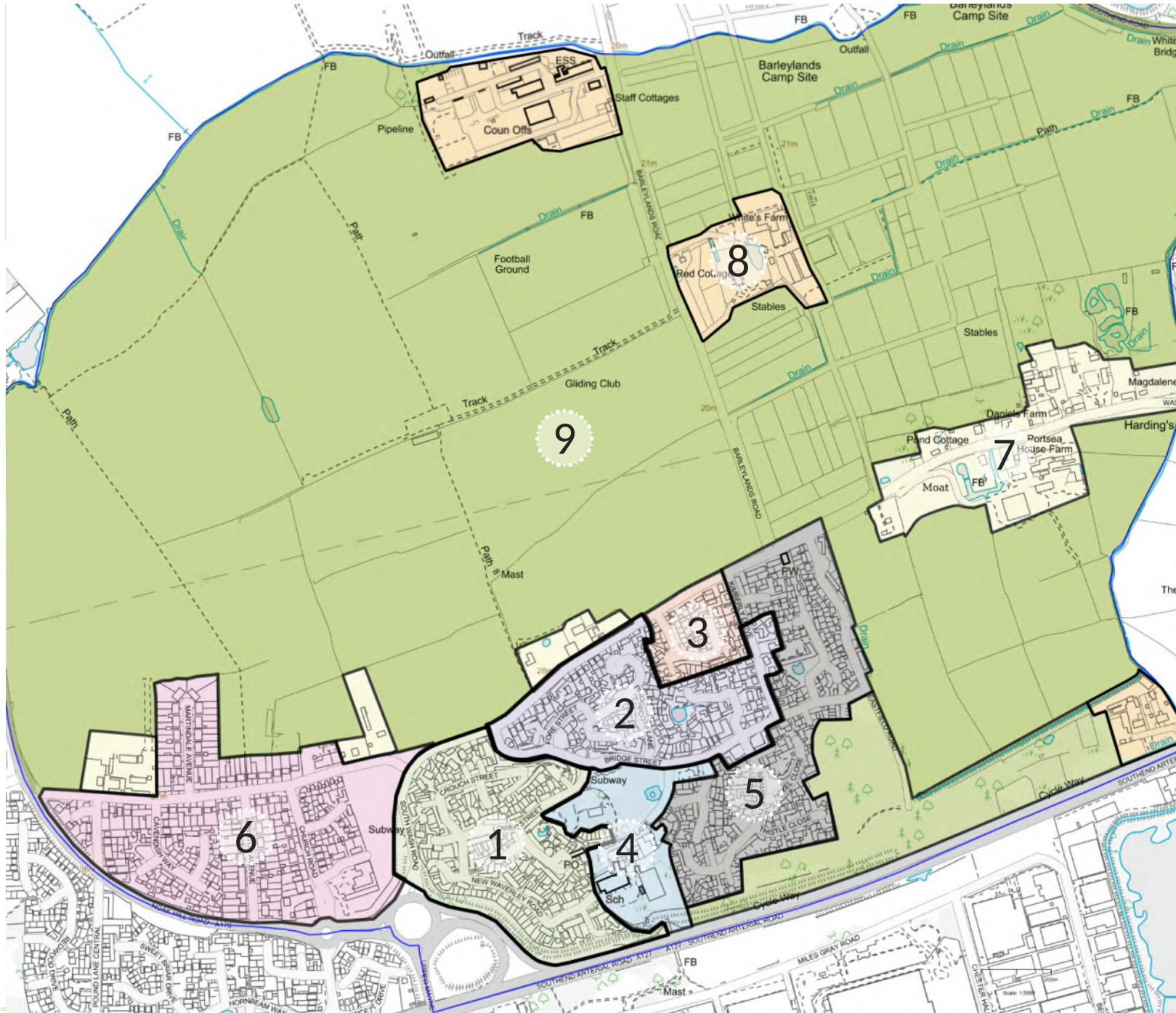
All improvements need to be balanced with the main wildlife habitats

CHAPTER THREE

Character Area Analysis



3.1 Character Areas



Character Areas

1. Southwest of Bridge Street
2. North of Bridge Street
3. Gatelodge Estate
4. The School and Green
5. East of the village
6. West of South Wash Road
7. Pre- 1900 farmsteads and historic buildings
8. Recreational / commercial buildings
9. Open Countryside, recreation and equestrian uses

This character appraisal is fundamental to understanding the large and small-scale elements which contribute to the sum of the overall character.

The little details such as street signs, street furniture, windows and doors etc are important features in maintaining the character and sense of place. It is these small but significant features, alongside the larger features, which help connect people to the area and create a place identity.



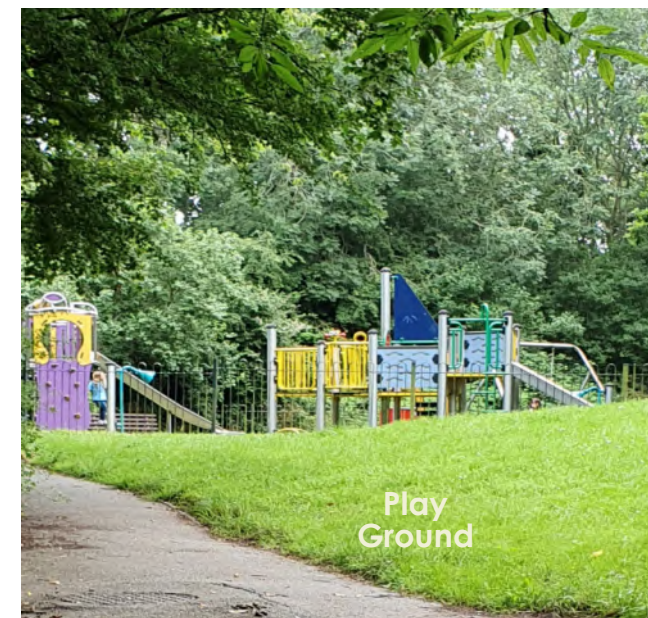
Area 1 Area 4

Central Green and Play Area

The central green provides an important community facility and is valued by the local community and wildlife. It sits at the heart of the village along the village high street (Bridge Street). There are a total of 8 entrances, 4 from Coppice Lane, 2 from Lower Street, 1 from Bridge Street and 1 from the pedestrian underpass under Bridge Street.

The space can accommodate organised sports and and community activities. There is a permanent semi-enclosed sports ground for activities like basketball and football and a semi- enclosed area with children's play equipment.

The green also features a large pond. A large proportion of it now comprises of a woodland of mature trees which reduces the visual connection to other areas of the village.



Although an extremely important space, the green does not act as originally intended. When planned, it was an open space, however the degree of enclosure separates the space from busle of village life. This is both a positive and a negative as there are no houses which face directly on to it so there is no natural surveillance.

The maintenance of play equipment, vegetation and general park preservation is costly.

Due to the tree and vegetation cover the park can fee unsafe, especially at night to some users and potentially more lighting is required.



Street Pattern



Lower Street is the arterial route into the character area leading to the cul-de-sacs Crouch street, New Waverley Road and Kenilworth Place. Coppice Lane can only be accessed from Bridge Street except by pedestrians and cyclist. People benefit from increased connectivity through a network of footpaths connecting the cul-de-sacs increasing legibility for people. The curvatures of the irregular street pattern creates interesting street views and sparks a sense of intrigue and interest through obscuring the field of vision. The layout of buildings, vegetation, street furnishings and plot frontage treatments interact to create the sense of a charming traditional English village.

Parking

Parking is arranged in the form of mews courts that are generally situated off the curves in roads enabling visibility at the junctions. They are distinguished from the street by a slight raise in levels and carriage arches. This visual change deters main traffic from entering the space.

Mews courts are designed to keep parking off the streets, however due to their location and increase in car ownership since development they do not function as intended and should be reviewed in their usage in future.

Other areas indicate parking space through a change in material.



Street Views



Street Greenery

The level of vegetation around the lanes and streets is variable throughout the character area. In general there is a higher level around pedestrianised and lower traffic areas and increases closer towards the village green. Part of Lower street and Coppice Lane which bound the village green have a significant degree of greenery.



Details



Street furnishings and details have a significant contribution to the charming character of the area. The traditional street signs seen in this area and other character areas are one of the principle features of the overall character of Noak Bridge.

The cobbled kerb presents a visual and textural change indicating a change in use of surface whilst adding to the attractiveness of the public realm.

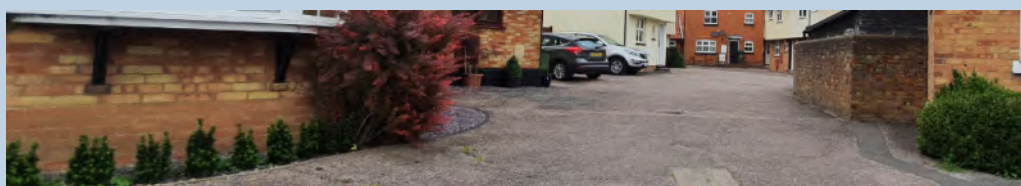
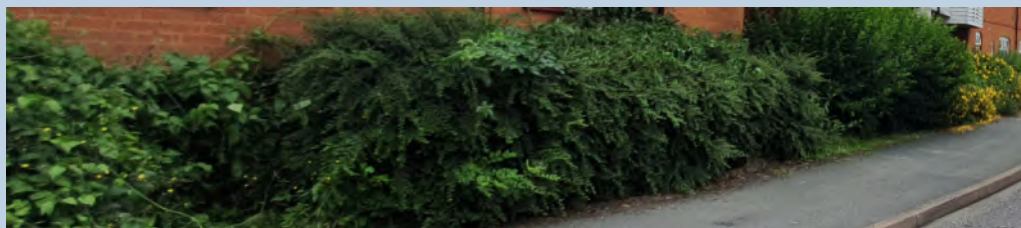


The black and gold railings add to the traditional feel, drawing on the Victorian era.



The bus shelter is black painted timber framed with arched detailing and a hipped tiled and ridged roof. It is one of the most notable street furnishings in the character area, and serves as a landmark with form and function.

Plot Boundaries



The majority of buildings are close to the plot frontage and feature a small area often with vegetation in the form of plants or hedges and with small pebbled areas. Some plot frontages have wooden fencing or metal railings and occasionally brick. The side and rear boundaries are wooden hurdle fencing or brick.

Building Typologies



- Terraced
- Apartments
- Semi-detached
- Detached
- Community Facilities and services
- Outbuildings

The majority of buildings are terraced housing with the iconic flats along Bridge Street and others scattered around. There are some semi-detached and a few detached dispersed throughout the area. The facilities and services are concentrated along Coppice Lane. Around half of the buildings have associated outbuildings to the rear of the properties.

Architectural Details & Materials



There is a wealth and variety of architectural detailing which contribute to the attractiveness of the street scene.

Roofs tend to be high pitched tiled gabled roofs, with some use of acardia pantiles. Some roofs are elongated from the first to ground floor. Many of the eaves feature with timber detailing.

The Landmark buildings incorporate a hexagonal shape through porches or footprint and tend to have ridged roofs. Buildings often protrude and are jettied at the first floor creating small overhanging elements, these are frequently a different material from the rest of the building.

Windows tend to be white timber framed rectangular with some bay windows and often feature a border of brick or protruding sill of a different colour.

Some of the buildings incorporate a small tiled porch canopy.

The area shares a palette of materials which enable a common denominator but with a variety of outcomes. The main materials are brick, white painted timber, white or black timber cladding, render with a variety of neutral colours. The colour palette used for the materials is simple and focused around neutral and 'Suffolk' pinks, terracotta, oranges and black and white.

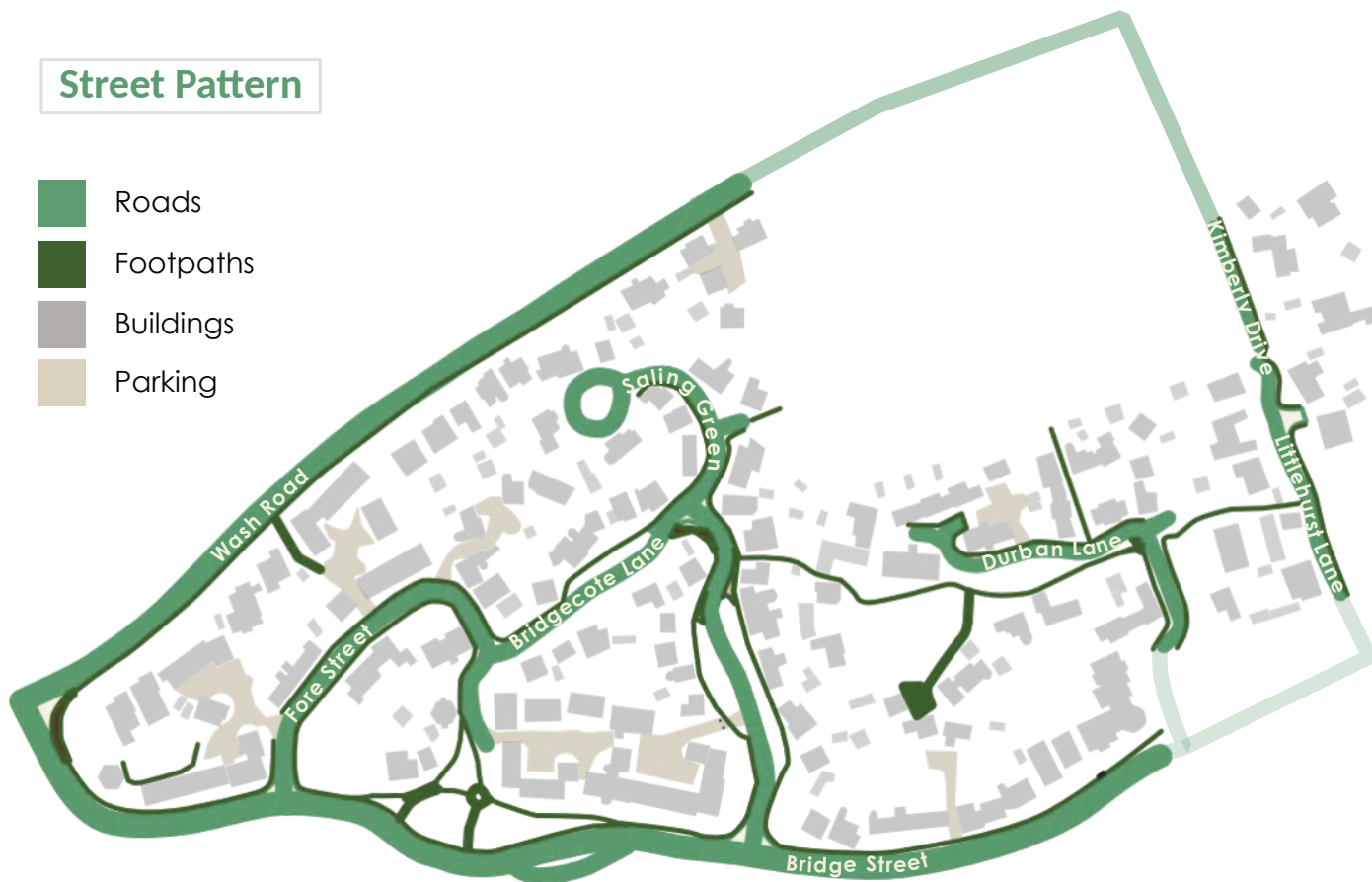




Area 2

Street Pattern

-  Roads
-  Footpaths
-  Buildings
-  Parking



Bridge street serves as the village high street from which all roads disperse off. Fore Street and Bridgecote Lane create a loop road from which the cul-de-sac Saling Green can be accessed. Durban Lane and Littlehurst Lane are also cul-de-sacs but are accessed off Bridge Street. Kimberly drive is another cul-de-sac. All cul-de-sacs are connected through a series of footpaths so people benefit from increased connectivity.

The separate footpaths create a more tranquil walking route for people and are likely to encourage active travel. The higher curvature of the roads and junctions decrease visibility and act as traffic calming measures to create a tranquil village feel.

PARKING

Street Parking is less of an issue in this character area, with the exception of parts of Bridgecote lane. The majority of properties either have access to a parking court or have their own driveway/ garage.



STREET VIEWS





There is significant street greening in most areas, this ranges from dense street trees and hedges, boundary hedges and shrubs. In part the greening comes from the plot frontage treatment through hedges, plants and shrubs either planted by residents or as part of the original design. The height of boundary hedges vary. Notably a few of the houses have climbing vine on the facades of the buildings, creating a cosy cottage village appearance.



Along Bridgecote lane is particularly vegetated with overgrown vegetation. The entrance to Bridgecote Lane from Bridge Street features a small grassed area, the level of vegetation increases from this point and separates the pedestrian footpath from the vehicular road. On many of the road curvatures there are areas of vegetated and/ or grassed areas.

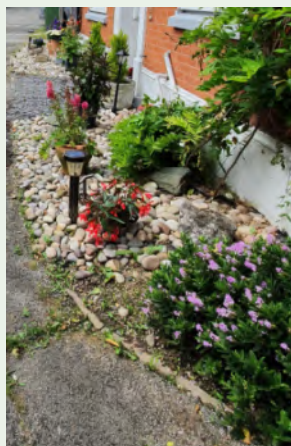
The pedestrian area leading to the underpass under Bridge Street creates a valley-like image with several area of grass on a sloping gradient creating visual interest.

The entrance to Fore street holds a large grassed area enjoyed by the residents for picnics and social gatherings.

There are further small areas along the street that have small verges of grass, some with additional structural vegetation and some without. As a whole the area has a verdant feel.



Plot Boundaries



Boundary treatments range but are similar to character area one. Featuring a small area often with vegetation in the form of plants or hedges and with small pebbled or grassed area with wooden picket fencing and in some cases Victorian style metal railings. The driveways are traditionally gravelled, however some driveways are block paved and look at odds with the surrounding the character.

Building Typologies



- Terraced
- Apartments
- Semi-detached
- Detached
- Assisted Living
- Outbuildings

The majority of dwellings in this character area are detached, closely followed by semi-detached. There are a few terraced housing and flats located predominately along Bridge street. Notable there assisted living in one of the landmark buildings the octagon.

Architectural Details & Materials



The architectural detailing and materials in the majority of the character area reflect a traditional English cottage. There are a number of Landmark buildings which have more elaborate architectural designs and details.

The majority of the buildings are dark brown or clay pantiles with gable ended roofs and have very little eaves overhang. Most of the roofs have a high pitch and some recede towards the ground floor at the rear of the house.

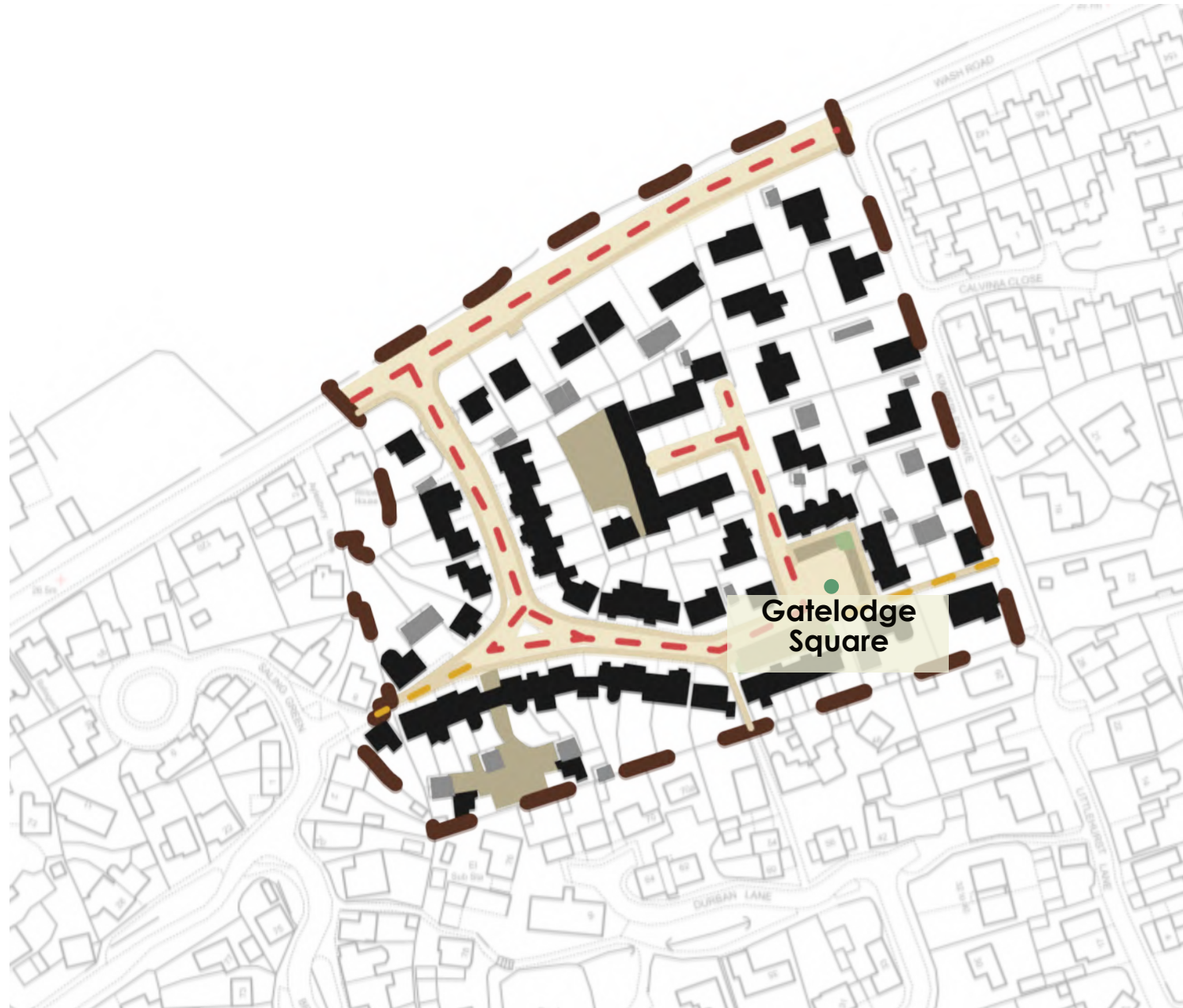
There are many properties which are 1.5 storeys with either pitched or lower profile, single plane (shed) dormers that tend to be in black timber cladding with a tiled roof.

The predominate building material is brick in oranges and buff with some painted white or cream. A small number of buildings are rendered, notably the octagonal gatehouse lodge has recessed arches in the facade with a cream render and brick detailing around the arches that imitate a post and highlight the curves.

The apartments on fore street are designed in a Georgian style building with two joined gable ends with parapets and crenels along the top. The porch also features a decorative elongated facade. There are double doors which open to Juliet balcony.

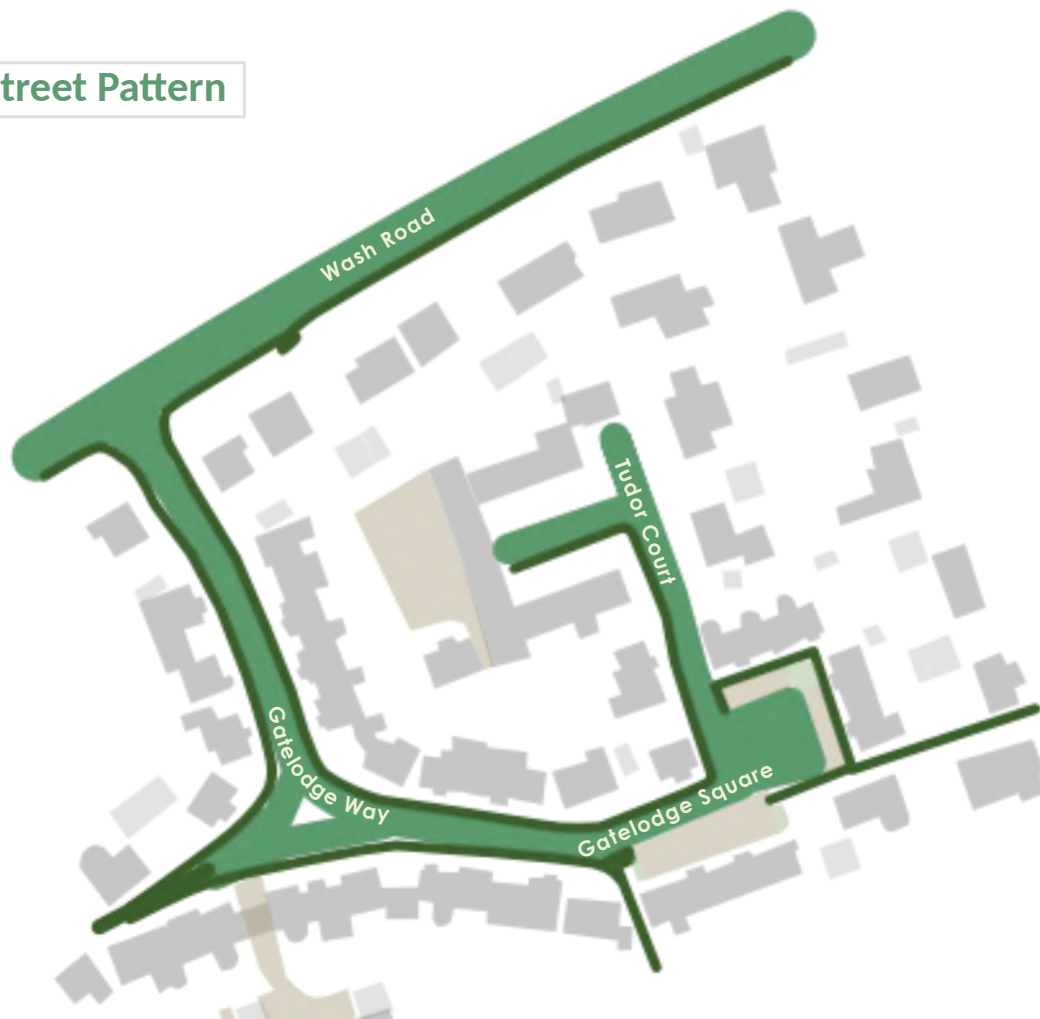
There are a few buildings which have decorative half timbering on with white rendered background creating an accent to the brick.





- Grassed Area
- Buildings
- Out Buildings
- Parking
- Vehicle Route
- Pedestrian Route
- Character Area Boundary
- Bollard

Street Pattern



- Roads
- Footpaths
- Buildings
- Parking

The Gatelodge Estate is built around a cul-de-sac connected to other streets via footpaths only. This street pattern creates a covert and well enclosed development, which is subjected to lower traffic, yet is still connected to the rest of the village.

The area is accessed off Wash Road via Gatelodge Way which leads to Gatelodge Square and Tudor Court. Gatelodge square and the triangle at the South-West corner create two open nodal points which both include a small vegetative feature adding a charming attribute to the character of the street scene.

Parking

A large number of dwellings have a gravelled driveways with space for one vehicle, some properties have an additional garage space. There is also two mews parking courts, one south of Gatelodge way and one at Tudor Court. Some parking occurs on roads in un-allocated spaces where properties do not have a driveway or garage. This occurs from Gatelodge Square to the footpath at the South-West.



Street Views



Street Greenery



Attention to detail in the landscaping of the road and lanes as well as the properties and plot frontages was taken into consideration by the designers, as overseen by the Basildon Corporation. Where possible they were keen to avoid over urbanising the development. Street Greenery occurs through predominately plot hedges and plot frontage vegetation. The vegetation ranges from flowers, small plants and shrubs to more significant trees of different species. The different layers and levels of vegetation ensures street greenery is vertically continuous and is still in vision from different perspectives.

Details

Unique to Gatelodge Estate, there is a sense of shared space through street design which is attractive and practical for an area with the absence of through traffic. The footpath and road have an equal elevation but are divided by recessed blockwork gutters. This conveys the road as an extension of the footpath available for the use of pedestrians but allows pedestrians to have a zone dedicated to walking. The block work adds an element of visual texture and difference creating an attractive and functional feature.

The square is also block paved, laid herringbone wise however the magnitude of the square results in a large area of a solitary material of a similar colour to the road, this element could be made more attractive through the interjecting different materials or colours.

There are two vegetation features one in the square and one at the Southwest triangle on Gatelodge Way both of these features are bordered in light grey block paving and raised at varying degrees from the street.

The entrance to Gatelodge Estate from wash road features two brick arches over the footpath, ridged in stone with a stone sphere on top of the post.



Plot Boundaries



Boundary treatments mostly comprise of formal vegetation either in the form of hedges or a group of shrubs and in some cases with trees. This is accompanied by a gravelled area in front of the building. Some residents have placed plant pots along their plot frontages where there are no hedges and buildings are close to the street.

A number of plot frontages are open with buildings set back to allow for pebbled driveways. There are a few cases where white or black painted fencing or post and chains indicate the extent of the plot.

Building Typologies



- Terraced
- Apartments
- Semi-detached
- Detached
- Outbuildings

There is a mix of detached and terraced housing with a few semi-detached and apartments. Less than half of the dwellings have an associated outbuilding. The building line is mostly continuous along the east and south of Gatelodge Way but it more dispersed along Kimberly Drive and Wash Road.



In comparison to earlier development the properties are larger and laid out more formerly along a straight building line. The buildings at the entrance to estate are designed to look like lodge houses. Beyond these, the terraced housing is designed to appear as if they are detached through building recesses.



The roofs are generally gable ended, some with accent front facing gable ends. These accents are white-painted render with false half timber framing. False half timber framing is used extensively along Kimberly drive and for the first floor of the apartments at Tudor Close.

The majority of porches are pitched or created by overhanging elements with timber supports and tiled roofs. The windows vary in colour and material with the later generally unwelcome introduction of white UPVC. Other brown painted timber and black painted timber are found, some of the windows benefit from latticed glazing.

Other building materials include cream-painted render, black timber cladding and red brick.



- Wooded Area
- Grassed Area
- Water Body
- Buildings
- Out Buildings
- Parking
- Vehicle Route
- Pedestrian Route
- Character Area Boundary
- Bollard

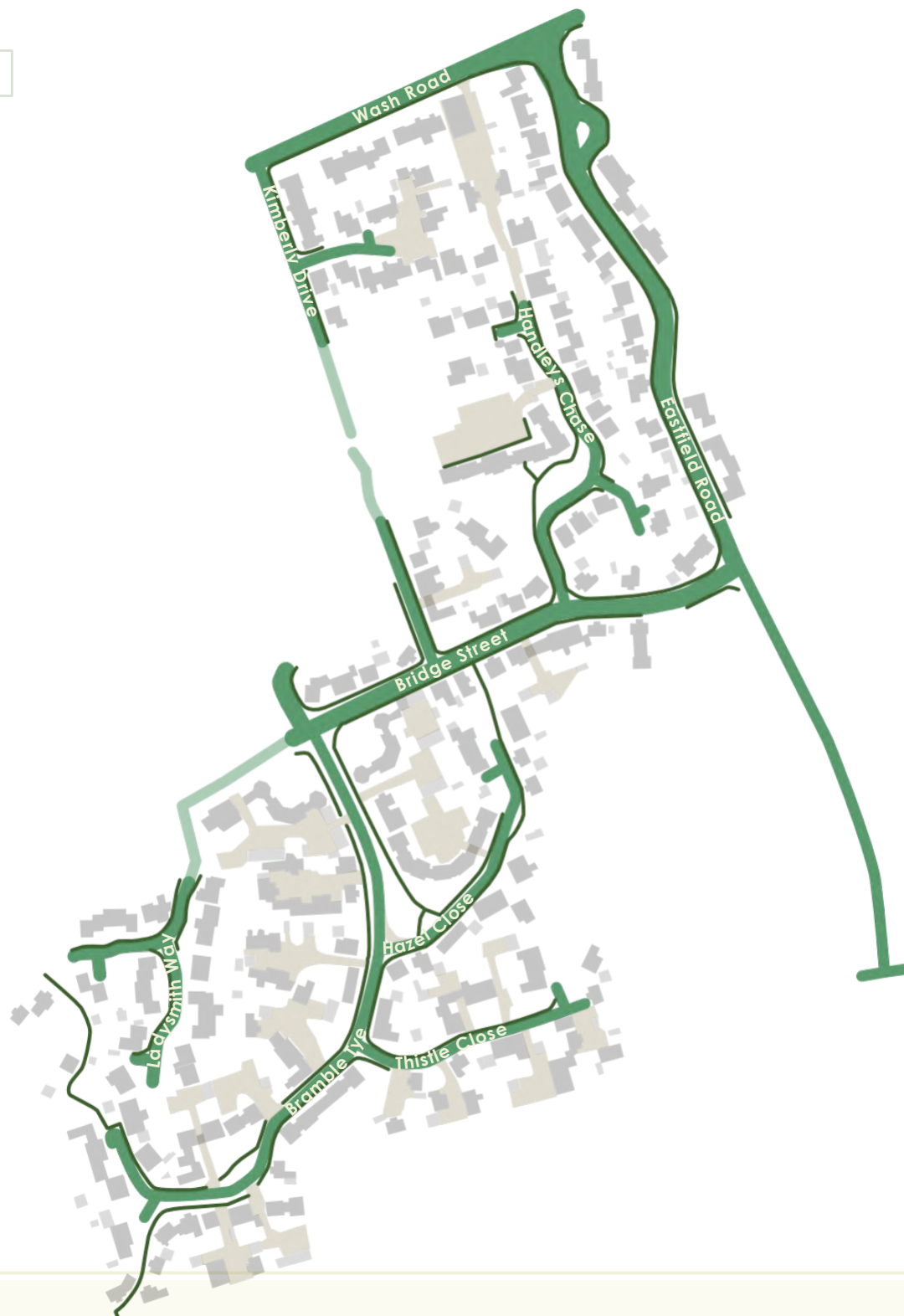
Noak Bridge
Christian Centre

The Nature
Reserve is open
countryside Area 9

Area 5

Street Pattern

- Roads
- Footpaths
- Buildings
- Parking



All the cul-de-sacs extend from Bridge street (the village high street) except Kimberly Drive which extends from Wash Road.

Bridge Street is connected to Wash Road via Eastfield Road which runs along the east of the village and extends into the nature reserve with limited access.

The street pattern is mostly irregular with branched cul-de-sacs creating pockets of quieter areas. The cul-de-sacs encourage people to build relationships with their immediate neighbours through grouping a small number of dwellings which share the same street.

The shared parking courts and shared driveways also create more opportunities for social interaction between neighbours. Bramble Tye has several cul-de-sacs projecting from it, of which have groups of buildings around a shared court. The west of Bramble Tye of has several shared courts all creating a small community within a larger one.

Bridge Street, Eastfield Road and Wash Road are more linear and the buildings are orientated towards the road rather than grouped together.

Parking

There are a variety of parking solutions in the east of the village. Parking courts are used for the apartment buildings. Some of the parking courts are accessed via carriage ways normally with just a roof over to continue the building line and clearly define public and private space. There are many areas which share a private court from which their driveway or parking space is accessed. The shared courts are often indicated by a change in material or slightly raised levels. These materials can be herring-wise blockwork tiles or gravel. Many of the dwelling have their own garages which are often attached the the neighbouring dwellings garage, in the shared parking courts there area often garages around the edges.

On street parking mostly occurs along bridge street, this may be due to insufficient parking for current car ownership or parking for visitors/services.



Street Views



Street Greenery

The street greenery varies in level throughout the character area. It is most prominent along Handleys Chase and the junction where Bridge Street meets Eastfield Road. At Handleys Chase there is a small park with scattered trees, a pond with plants and small hedges. Many of the plots close to this park have a degree of vegetation in their plot frontage and some use hedges to define the boundary. The junction where Bridge Street meets Eastfield Road is the entrance to the nature reserve as such there is dense vegetation at the south and east of this corner. The plots opposite are defined with hedges of varying heights, the hedges extend a little up Eastfield Road and many of the plots along the road have a degree of vegetation in their plot frontage. There is also a small lay-by which has separated from the main round through a raised patch of grass with a flower bed in the middle and a small tree.

There are several green patches along Bramble Tye and many of the plots have vegetation in their plot frontages. The entrance to Bramble Tye where vegetation is used to define the plot boundary of the apartments and provide screening.

Elsewhere in the character area the street greenery is a little less apparent and tends to be in the plot frontages or boundaries.

Details

A Noak Bridge village sign is placed in the flower bed on the lay-by along Eastfield Road.

The junction at thistle close has a raised speed bump which is highlighted through red herring-wise blockwork. In fact many of the street details use red herring-wise blockwork to indicate a an element of significance rather than signage clutter. The change alerts the user of a change in function or indication for drivers to be more focused.

At the entrance to the nature reserve there is a gateway which prohibits cyclists from entering keeping it safer and more tranquil for pedestrians and wildlife.



Plot Boundaries



With the number of plots in this character area the boundary treatments vary. Many of the plot frontages have vegetation, some behind fencing or railings and some as the main definition. Fences vary from picket fencing which is in keeping with the original design to close board fencing which in general is not. The more appealing fences are the white picket fencing which is used by several plots in the character area. Another common plot frontage definer is black metal railings with either arrows on the end of post or spheres. This type is also scattered through the character area.

Some plot frontages feature, often low, red brick walls with stone slabs across the top or a different colour of brick. The condition of the walls vary, some are coated in mould while others appear to be in better condition.

Many of the plot frontages are fairly open with little to no visual obstruction between the building and the street. The boundaries here are defined by a change of material often grass or pebbles, the space between the building and street varies.



Building Typologies



- Terraced
- Apartments
- Semi-detached
- Detached
- Outbuildings
- Community Facilities and Services

There is a varied mix of different types of dwellings in this character area. The detached and semi-detached are mostly north of bridge street although there are many to the south too. All apartments are south of Bridge Street apart from one at Handleys Chase. Terraced housing is more predominate south of Bridge Street but there are a number of the to the North. Many of the the dwelling have associated outbuildings in the form of garages often to the side or in a court.

Architectural Details & Materials



The roofs tend to be gable end or pitched with many being pitch with front gable. There are a few instances where half-hipped roofs appear, notably on the Christian Centre. Along Kimberly Drive there is a gable ended roof which changes pitch (pictured on the next page), however this is unusual. Often there are decorative ridge tiles with fleur de lys, club or crested patterns with statement finials. The roof materials are a mix of clay pantiles and slate (with some concrete alternatives).

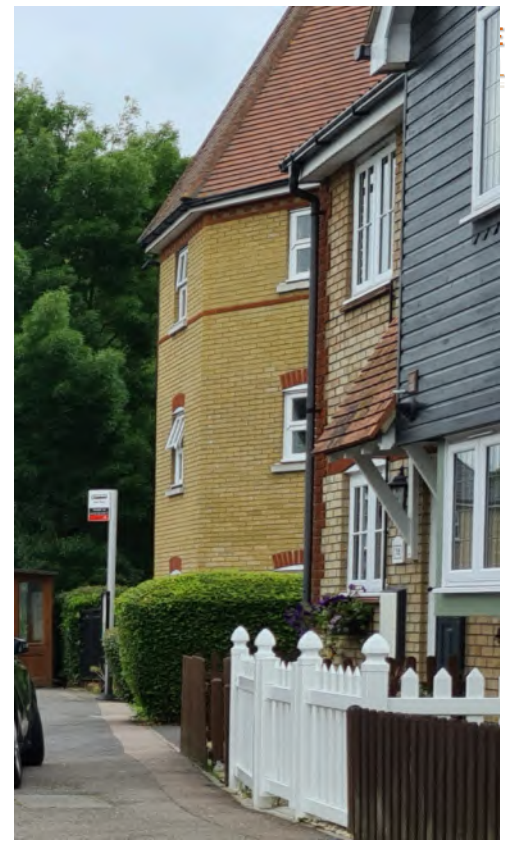
Of the buildings which have porches, the majority are open porches supported by with timber uprights.











There is use of different roof types but the materials reflect the main dwelling roof. The common roof types are, flat, pitched gable end open and pitched to the wall.

Almost all windows are white UPVC or white painted timber framed. In most cases these are cottage casement style or sliding sash effect. There is use of ground floor bay windows and first floor window in processions which are at varying scales. The majority of windows are rectangular 2-3 light of various dimensions. However the Christian Centre has a characterful small circular window below the centre of the half hip of the roof, there is brick detailing around its circumference.

Many of the windows have brick arch detailing above and cill detailing below which highlight the window and add character. A significant majority of the buildings have brick quoin detailing some of which are subtle and a similar colour to the main brick and others which use a different colour brick to the main brick. Often there is a differentiation between storeys through a material change or linear brick detailing defining the ground and first floor. Some building also have subtle brick detailing around the eaves of the roof.

Many of the buildings use different materials or colours to create a more visually appealing facade with character. The most common materials used are bricks of different colours, black or white timber cladding and cream rendering. The different materials are used to highlight are often used to highlight a change such as different story, a recession or procession, a change in property if it is a terraced. A few buildings have brick plinths which border the ground floor just below the window.








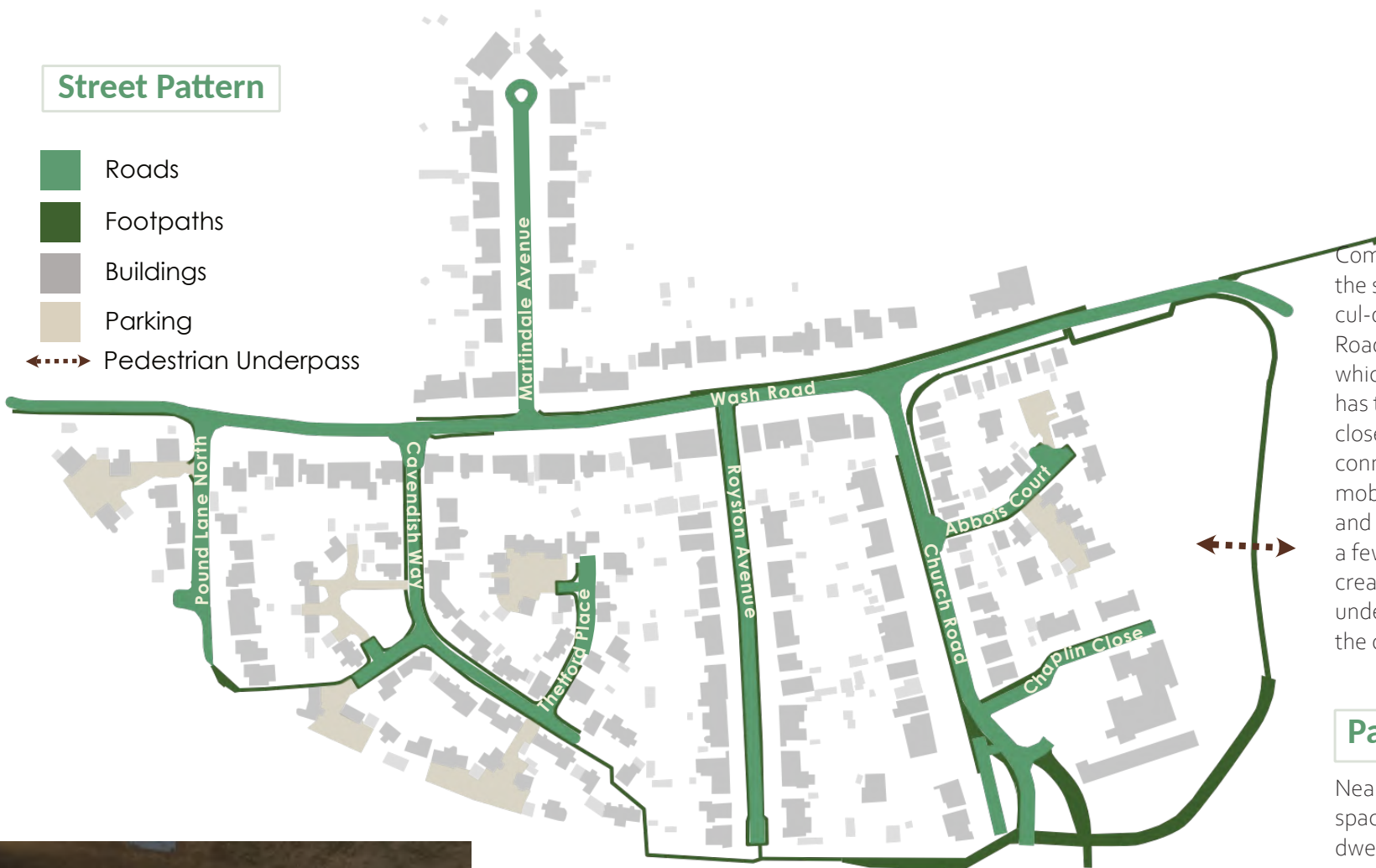
	Wooded Area		Vehicle Route
	Grassed Area		Pedestrian Route
	Play/Sport Area		Character Area Boundary
	Water Body		
	Buildings		
	Out Buildings		
	Parking		



Area 6

Street Pattern

-  Roads
-  Footpaths
-  Buildings
-  Parking
-  Pedestrian Underpass



Compared with the older areas of Noak Bridge the street pattern is much more linear, however cul-de-sacs are still present. All roads off of Wash Road are cul-de-sacs apart from Church Road which connects to Noak Hill Road. Church Road has two cul-de-sacs, Abbots Court and Chaplin Close extending from it. Again the cul-de-sacs are connected by footpaths increasing pedestrian mobility. The majority of buildings face the street and have a generally linear building line. There are a few which are orientated around private courts creating a more irregular building line. There is an underpass that connects from the green space to the other side of South Wash Road.

Parking

Nearly all the the properties have a driveway with space for 1 or 2 cars to park and many of the dwellings also have garages. Despite this some on street parking still occurs.



Street Views



Street Greenery

Moderate street greenery occurs throughout this character area. Along the footpaths there are many small grass verges in front of the plot boundaries which often have grass beyond or are defined by hedgerows. Many of the plot frontages also feature vegetation of varying degrees, from flowers and plants to shrubs, hedges or trees. This is scattered through the character area creating an equal level of greenery along all streets. However the entrance from to wash Road from South Wash Road is particularly green with larger grass verges, mature vegetation and hedgerows. Along Cavendish Way there is a small fenced in patch of grass with trees of varying scales and maturity scattered on. There is no playing equipment or benches but it would be suitable for picnics. There is a larger park running the length of South Wash Road which has a public dog agility park and extensive grass area suitable for many sports and physical activity.

Along the southern and west border of the character area which abuts Noak Hill Road there is dense vegetation which screens the road and acts as a sound barrier.

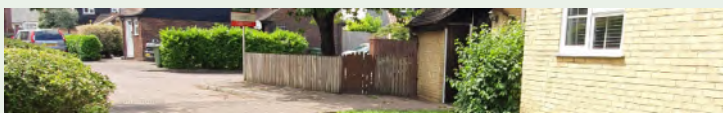


Details

There is a patch of cobbled/ sett surfacing at the entrance to Abbots Court, this signifies an area of difference, unfortunately this isn't used anywhere else. Similar areas are often indicated by a slight raise in the road surface. Along Abbots Courts parking courts are indicated by a colour asphalt and or change in surface level. At Pound Lane North this type of area is indicated through herring-wise blockwork.

On the border of the park adjacent to Wash Road there are small boulders which prohibit access for vehicles on to the grass. The boulders add a natural but functional feature which is in keeping with the character of a park.

PLOT BOUNDARIES



There are variety of materials and styles used for the plot boundaries, but with little consistency.

Along Pound Lane North the predominant material is brick, often a brick wall with either metal railings or picket fencing on top between the post.

Brick walls are used elsewhere at varying heights and some with brickwork detailing and some that are rendered.

Building Typologies



- Terraced
- Apartments
- Semi-detached
- Detached
- Outbuildings
- Community Facilities and Services

Nearly all the dwellings are detached or semi detached, There are a few terraced properties along Cavendish Way and three apartment buildings at Abbots Court. The buildings range from 1-11/2 to 2 story buildings. Many of the dwellings have associated outbuildings which are mostly garages. At the north along Wash Road there is pub/ restaurant called the Noak Bridge. At the South along Church /road there is an Essex police base and supplies shop.

Architectural Details & Materials

The most common characteristic in this character area is the type of dwelling as opposed to shared architectural details. With that said this character area provides a palette of some desirable architectural detailing and materials that are representative of Noak Bridge.

The Noak Bridge pub provides a traditional English village public house design of its time through the elongated pitched roofs with pitched dormers attached either side of the 2 story part with a pitched roof and front gable end. The first floor white painted timber framed, lattice windows further add to this character.

Pound Lane North is particularly elaborate in style reflecting features of the Georgian era. The roofs of the house and most porches are pitched with a front facing gable end of varying sizes and positions. The decorative headers around the windows and doors make them a prominent feature.

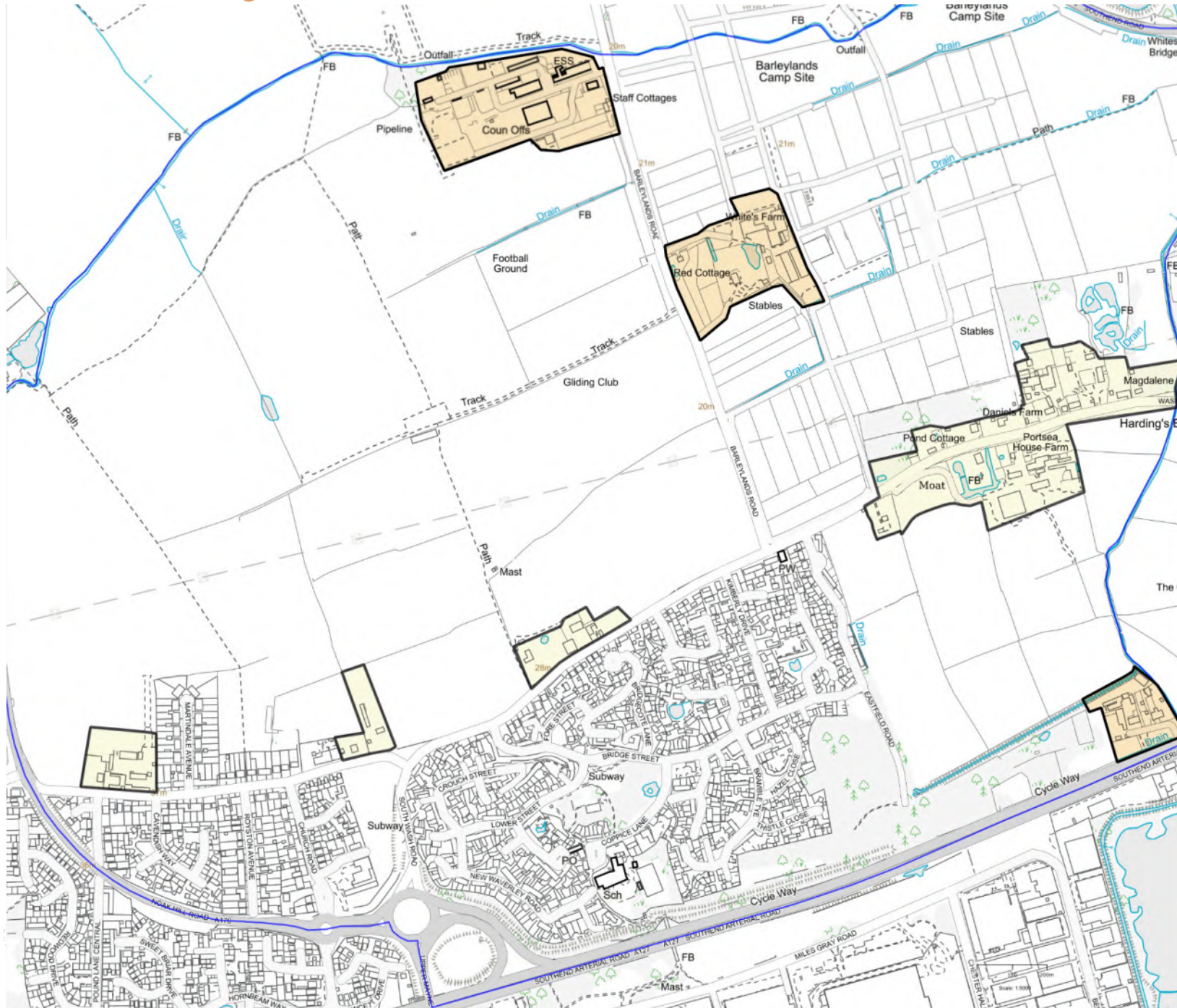
There are a variety of roof styles including pitched, gable and half hipped, some buildings have pitched roof with a front facing gable. Many dwellings have dormers which are pitched or shed style roof often small in comparison to the main roof. The predominate roof material is clay either pantile or straight tiles, slate is also commonly used with later composite or synthetic replacements. There are a few buildings along Church Road, Wash Road and Cavendish Way which roofs extend from the first floor to the ground floor in parts, some with dormers, and have front facing gables ends. These buildings tend to have false timber framing seen in other areas of Noak Bridge.

Many of the dwellings have closed porches which are predominately pitched to the wall with a door and single small window. There are other types of porches with pitch or hipped roofs and some open porches, the same material of the main roof tends to be used for all porches.

Similarly to dwellings in other character areas some dwellings use a different material for the ground floor to the first floor or have brick detailing splitting the floors. The ground floor tends to be brick whilst the first floor is either render painted timber cladding or tiles.



Character Area 7 & 8 - Pre-1900 farmsteads and historic buildings & Recreation / commercial buildings



Area 7 Area 8

Landscape & Building Typologies



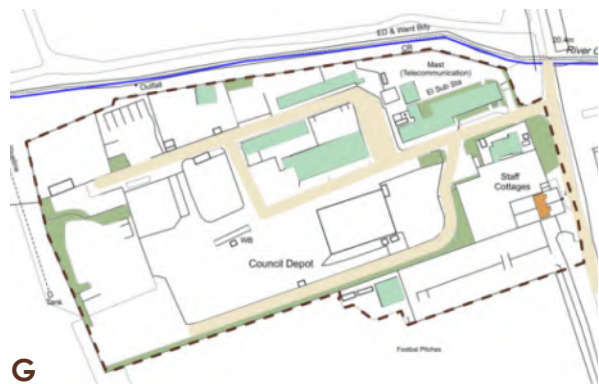
- Semi-detached
- Detached
- Outbuildings
- Farm Buildings
- Road

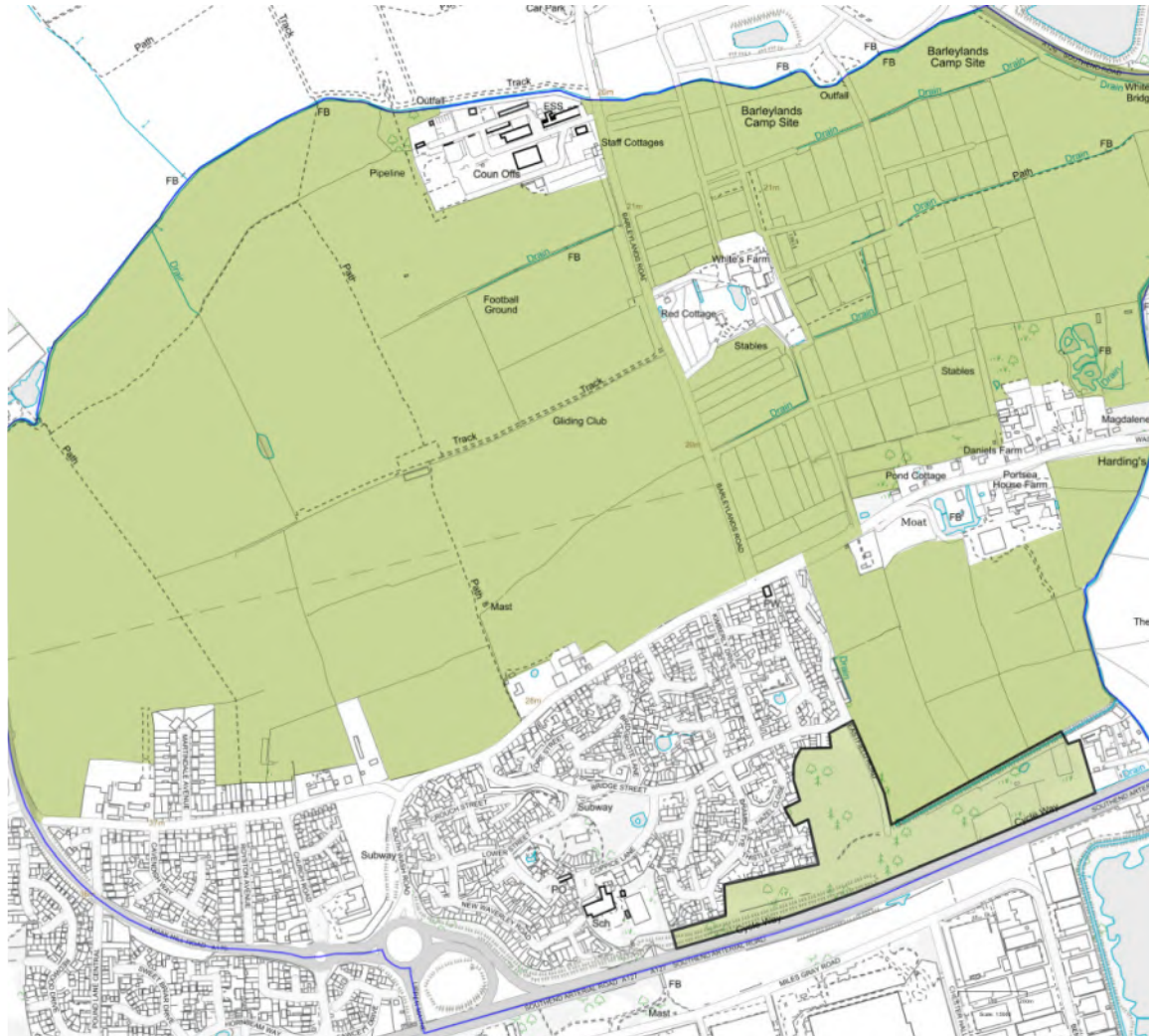
- Commercial and Services
- Water Bodies
- Wooded area
- Grassed area (not including residential gardens)

Character areas 7 & 8 consists of irregular forms and patterns predominately outside of the village settlement area. These are clusters of mostly commercial or farm related buildings, with a few residential dwellings which are detached or semi-detached. Where there are residential, buildings plots tend to be larger and more irregular than plots inside the main village settlement. The plot ratio of built up to non built up is also significantly smaller and dwellings tend to sit in extensive land, with the exception of a few. The architectural style varies but represents some of the characteristics inside the village settlement. The roofs tend to be pitched some with pitched dormers or large shed dormers. There is a notion to similar plot boundary treatment through the use of black and gold metal railings. There are detailing on buildings or there plot boundaries such as quoined brick walls, facades which extend upward beyond the roof line, there is also brick detailing work on some of the facades.

The commercial and service buildings are laid out in a more industrial format, with buildings scattered around a plot following service roads.

Given the larger plot sizes and smaller plot ratio than the other character areas the majority of area consists of landscaping of some form. Outside of residential garden the majority of grassed area is on the farm sites, the commercial and service sites have small patches scattered around along the boundaries of the sites or roads. Areas D and E have patches of wooded areas along the boundaries. Areas F and E have ponds of varies sizes and D has a small stream running along the north and east boundary. The rest of the landscape is hard surface of different materials.





The final character area contains the open countryside with recreation and equestrian uses. These include the Barleylands Campsite, the equestrian paddocks and outdoor arena, the numerous club football pitches, the Nature Reserve and agricultural land.

The land is generally open, with few hedgerows boundaries or trees, resulting in expansive field patterns. The exception being the equestrian uses, which although also have few natural features, the paddocks are subdivided by equestrian fencing into small parcels.

There are long ranging views over this area and it is highly visible from the Public Rights of Way network and local roads.

The land ranges from approximately 36m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) in the south west of the area down to 19m AOD in the east.

Much of the area is low lying and susceptible to surface water or fluvial flooding.



Findings from Landscape Character Assessment

Basildon Council commissioned the Landscape Partnership to produce the Landscape Character Assessment in 2014. Within the document, different landscape character areas (LCAs) were assigned throughout the Borough. The following text is summarised from the document, specifically in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Landscape Character

The open landscape in the Parish is situated within LCA 9— Upper Crouch Valley Farmlands and described in the assessment as:

"A low lying area of predominantly agricultural farmland ... A narrow finger of land extends along the majority of the course of the River Crouch...The area is principally agricultural with a mix of large open arable fields to west and east and more intact areas of medium sized well hedged fields to the centre. There are also a number of urban fringe land uses including sports pitches and some intrusive modern structures."

Key characteristics, Influences and Features:

- Large scale arable fields to east and west of area with limited hedges and trees
- Absence of woodland
- Urban fringe uses including playing fields, recycling

centre and Barleylands Farm/Craft Centre with seasonal exhibitions and markets

- Scattered intrusive commercial development in open locations Settlement limited to isolated properties and farm buildings
- Panoramic views to north towards Wooded Hills and ridge
- Sense of separation created between Billericay (including Great Burstead/South Green), Wickford and Basildon
- Meandering River Crouch flowing from west to east fed by a number of minor brooks, streams and drainage ditches. Vegetation following line of river
- Few discrete linear woods along River Crouch
- Views from Dunton Road and Wash Road to the north across the vegetated River Crouch valley and towards Little Burstead and Great Burstead
- Abrupt unsympathetic urban edge to south at developments of Noak Bridge
- Area around Barleylands has strong urban fringe character with Council recycling depot, car boot sale site, playing fields etc all prominent features

Relevant Management Guidelines:

- Protect remaining grassland habitats along river valley and improve the management of old

meadows and pastures

- Promote the creation of buffer strips along watercourses to prevent pesticide, herbicide and fertilizer run-off and provide habitat for wildlife; encourage their linkage to eco-corridors within the wider landscape
- Enhancement and creation of wetland landscape features such as ponds, scrapes and pollarded willows
- Promote hedgerow restoration and creation throughout the area to provide visual and ecological links. Pattern to follow historic field boundaries wherever possible
- Encourage new native hedgerow planting to historic field boundaries including roads and rights of way
- Ensure existing and proposed recreational land uses include appropriate measures to manage and enhance the existing historical and ecological value. Particular attention should be given to improve the landscape structure around sports facilities and other recreational land uses e.g. Barleylands that introduce a sub-urban influence in the countryside
- Promote improved rights of way including routes running east-west e.g. along course of the River Crouch
- Retain key viewpoints and vistas to landscape from public roads and rights of way



Conclusions

The appraisal of each of the character areas has contributed to understanding the characteristics of key features and small detailing which are used in Noak Bridge to portray the style of a traditional English village despite being built in the last century.

This document has intended to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of each area so moving forward future development can improve upon the original ideas behind Noak bridge to provide current and futures residents with improved function and increased quality of life.

The predominate opportunities found in this appraisal will lead to recommendations in the Design Code. The notable strengths will be carried forward and include permeability of the connecting footpaths allowing pedestrians to avoid busier roads, the orientation and layout of buildings contributing to a varied streetscape and the architectural detailing which add the finishing touches to make the buildings unique and create a sense of place.

The design code for future development will address the issues highlighted and frame a palette of materials and characteristics for new buildings and spaces to ensure the area continues with its distinctive style and character moving forward.