

LAND AT THANET WAY

WHITSTABLE, KENT

VISION FRAMEWORK ADDENDUM

AUGUST 2021

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document has been prepared to expand on the Vision Document prepared as part of the Call for Sites consultation in 2020, as well as support our representations to the Regulation 18 Canterbury District Local Plan 2040: Draft Vision and Local Plan Options May 2021 consultation.

The purpose of this document is to show how this Site can deliver a high quality and sustainable housing led scheme which delivers on the Council's aspirations in terms of connectivity, energy efficient homes and biodiversity enhancements.

2.0 CONNECTIVITY

A Transport Site Appraisal has been prepared which is also submitted with these Representations. The following summarises the main points around how the Site is connected and how this can also be enhancing in line with the Council’s connectivity objectives.

Existing Walking and Cycling Accessibility

As illustrated opposite and noted in Table 1, the Site is within easy walking and cycling proximity to a range of local services and facilities.

There is an existing shared footway/cycleway on the northern side of Thanet Way. It forms part of National Cycle Route 1 and connects to Regional Cycle Route 15 located to the north-east of the site. These links allow for a generally traffic-free route from the site to the railway station, centre of town and beech frontage.

There is also a footway on the southern side of Thanet Way to the north east of the site which provides connections with the wider pedestrian network and access to nearby retail and health facilities.

Proposed Walking and Cycling Enhancements

Pedestrian access from the development to Thanet Way will be provided via new footpaths either side of the site access. An existing pedestrian refuge allows crossing at the site access and this will be supplemented by a new footpath route to the existing pedestrian crossing to the north, further facilitating a safe and convenient route to local facilities, such as the Tesco Extra Store and Whitstable Town Centre.

The consented site to the north of Thanet Way includes a link through to St Luke’s Close. This together with the proposed enhancements on the southern side of Thanet Way provides a safe and direct link from the development to Joy Lane Primary School. The proposals will be designed to encourage foot and cycle movements both within the site and onto the adjoining PROW network. The scheme will include:

- A good level of street and path lighting.
- On-site roads will be designed to 20mph.
- Tactile and coloured surfacing; and
- Signage to direct pedestrians and cyclists to key facilities and places of interest, including distances.

A mix of cycle parking facilities will be provided at the development to comply with local standards and will be designed and tailored to the likely needs of future occupants.

Together with the enhancements considered above, we propose to prepare a green travel plan for the development to encourage non-car modes of transport. The green travel plan could include:

- Cycle Vouchers that could be put towards the cost of new cycles;
- Travel vouchers that could be used towards public transport tickets;
- Enhanced broadband speeds to facilitate home working;
- Potential improvements to local bus stops with the potential for real time bus timetables explored;
- Explore the provision of cycle lockers at the local train station; and
- Setting up a local car share scheme and organising a walking school bus.

Public Transport Connectivity

The nearest existing bus stop to the Site are located on Millstrood Road next to Tesco (approx. 960m) to the east and Sydney Road to the west. These stops provide access to Whitstable, Canterbury and Herne Bay and have a frequency every 1-2 hours.

We will engage with both the Highway Authority and the local bus company to explore the potential opportunities for improving the frequency of the bus service, and provide travel vouchers to encourage use.

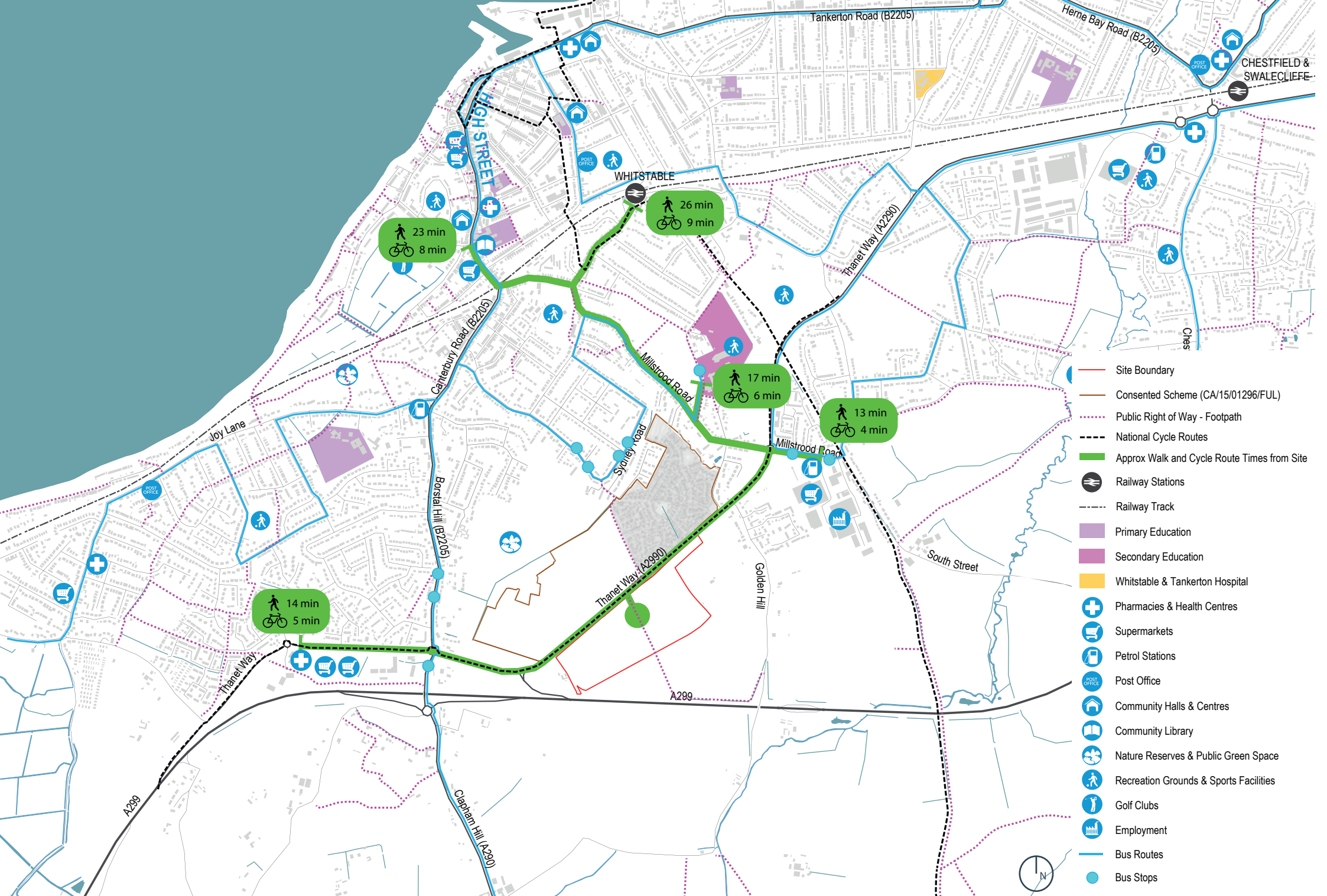
The Site is approximately 2.2km from Whitstable railway station and is accessible via the National Cycle Route 1 (9 minute ride), Regional Route 15 and also the bus service No.5 from outside Tesco.

The station provides frequent services to: London St Pancras via Chatham and Ebbsfleet; London Victoria via Chatham and Bromley South; Ramsgate, Deal, Dover, Priory and Ashford International; and Ramsgate via Margate.

Table 1: Local Amenity Accessibility

	Distance	Walking Time*	Cycling Time*
Tesco (incl. Petrol Filling Station)	1.1km	13 minutes	4 minutes
Joseph Wilson Industrial Estate	1.1km	13 minutes	4 minutes
Estuary View Medical Centre and Pharmacy	1.2km	14 minutes	5 minutes
Aldi, M&S Foodhall, Home Bargains, Halfords	1.2km	14 minutes	5 minutes
The Whitstable School	1.4km	17 minutes	6 minutes
Whitstable Library	1.9km	23 minutes	8 minutes
Whitstable Railway Station	2.2km	26 minutes	9 minutes

*Assumes a walking speed of 1.4m/s (3.2mph or 5.0kph) taken from the Guidance for Providing for Journeys on Foot (IHT, 2000) and cycling speed of 4m/s (9mph or 14.4kph), taken from Local Transport Note 1/86



3.0 ECOLOGY & BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

A Phase 1 Ecological Assessment was undertaken in May 2021, the findings of which have informed the following strategy and principles

Key Design Considerations

The majority of the site is of very poor ecological quality. Features of any value are constrained to the site corners and boundaries. Within the site, existing lines of hedgerows do provide some habitat connectivity, but these features are thin and gappy and there is considerable scope for improvement. Wider hedges formed into bands of woodland, and areas of created grassland that are allowed to develop into more naturalistic features, would substantially enhance habitat provision and connectivity between existing features. Strengthening boundary features will enable them to provide better value to wildlife such as reptiles and bats that may use these habitats.

Beyond the immediate site, connectivity is largely constrained by the A299 to the south and A2990 to the north. Connectivity between the area of woodland within the site and Benacre Wood can be enhanced by allowing trees to grow, permitting higher level connectivity between the site and the adjacent ancient woodland creating functional links that could be used by birds, bats and invertebrates.

The landscape design proposals illustrated introduce new woodland planting belts connecting and strengthening existing habitats, providing new and stronger linkages across the site and offering substantial benefits to wildlife. The value of these features would be further enhanced by their proximity to new grassland areas and open water features provided primarily for surface water attenuation.

Enhancing the ecological value of these areas alongside amenity grassland and public rights of way encourages people to connect with nature and adds to the value of the measures provided. Provision of street trees within developed areas offers additional benefit to bring people in closer contact with their environment.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Significant opportunities exist within the scheme to provide real benefits for biodiversity. The conceptual masterplan retains much of the existing features of ecological value present within the site, with development essentially contained within currently arable land of very low ecological merit.

Retained ecological features would be protected and enhanced by the provision of new planting and the areas of this alone would be more than enough to demonstrate a substantial net gain, easily meeting and exceeding the target value of 10% BNG. Not only would the scheme create new habitats but measures would be introduced to enhance existing habitats above their current, comparatively low, ecological value.

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN PRINCIPLES

- 1 Increasing the value of existing hedgerows by infilling of gaps with native species and strengthening by widening and provision of new planting. This would benefit birds, bats and a wide range of wildlife that may use these features as habitat linkages in the wider landscape.
- 2 Introduction of a management plan for the retained woodland to allow this to develop into a resource of greater ecological value than present. Measures would encourage the development of a diverse ground flora similar to that which may have been present in this area before construction of the A2990 and to encourage tree growth to improve connectivity with Benacre Wood to the north.
- 3 Including a range of nectar-rich and berry-bearing species within the proposed new planting, to provide feeding resources for a wide range of wildlife.
- 4 Provision of bird nest boxes, bat boxes, reptile hibernaculae and invertebrate hotels, to encourage the presence of these groups.
- 5 Retention of a proportion of dead and decaying wood material within wood piles for the benefit of invertebrates and wide range of wildlife that depend upon them.
- 6 Inclusion of a diverse range of native species in planting associated with water features provided primarily for purposes of water attenuation.



- Key:
- Site Boundary
 - Consented Development Site (CA/15/01296/FUL)
 - Primary access off Emerging Roundabout (currently under construction)
 - Primary Access Streets
 - Existing Public Right of Way - Footpath
 - Proposed Footpath Loops
 - Developable Area
 - Street Trees
 - Public Open Space
 - New Woodland Planting Belts (Landscape Mitigation)
 - Surface Water Attenuation Ponds
 - Surface Water Swale Features

4.0 DESIGN COMMITMENTS

The following describes the design commitments that are proposed for the development at. The commitments are underpinned by national best practice, emerging government policy and local plan policies and objectives.

EXEMPLAR HOUSE DESIGNS



The Government has confirmed that an interim carbon reduction target of 31% will be implemented to act as a stepping stone towards full implementation of the Future Homes Standard in 2025. To achieve this interim reduction target the new homes proposed will incorporate technologies including heat pumps (as part of the switch from gas to electricity) as well as increased use of solar PV.

House designs will also adopt high quality exemplar architecture responding to the coastal location and drawn from local high quality architectural precedents.

DELIVERING A MIX OF NEW HOMES



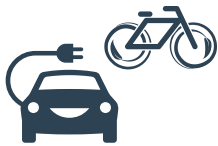
Delivering a significant number of new homes immediately connected to the existing settlement edge. Proposals will deliver a policy compliant provision of affordable housing (30%), which can include a proportion of First Homes and a range of low cost housing opportunities (such as discount market sales or innovative rent to buy housing). A mix of market house sizes, types and tenures will be accommodated responding to local housing demand.

Example of local modern vernacular - Estuary View Medical Centre



Example of local historic vernacular - The Two Brewers Public House





LOW CARBON TRANSPORT & INFRASTRUCTURE

The development can facilitate the use of low carbon transport through the provision of EV charging and ensuring all new homes have access to secure cycle storage facilities. This will also include the use of low energy infrastructure, such as LED street lighting and solar powered features.



SMART ADAPTABLE HOMES

Homes will be designed for future adaptation and will be able to incorporate smart energy systems to facilitate efficient energy use, battery technology and energy generation, as well as water efficiency. Technology to support home working will also be installed reflecting the recent and emerging changes in working patterns created by Covid 19 Pandemic.



CLIMATE RESILIENT DESIGN

Buildings and infrastructure, such as drainage solutions, will be designed and constructed to take into account the long term impacts of climate change including changing temperatures and rainfall extremes.



SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS

Home designs will specify the use of sustainable materials, considering the whole life cycle of materials to reduce the embodied carbon of the development.



IMPROVING SITE BIODIVERSITY

Through the delivery of significant new open space and landscape enhancement and creation of on-site habitats the development will provide a net gain in biodiversity.



ENHANCING ACTIVE TRAVEL OPTION

The development can offer a wide range of opportunities to connect people via walking and cycling to key destinations in and around the Site, and importantly to other sustainable transport options (bus and rail) providing access to a much wider range of important destinations.



PROVIDING ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY FACILITIES

In addition to the range of other uses proposed, development of the Site provides opportunities to offer new community facilities including on-site play areas, nature gardens, community orchards or a community meeting space. We will engage with the community to inform and shape the community proposals.



FLOOD RISK AND SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE

The Site is located in Flood Zone 1 and the development will include Sustainable Drainage Systems to manage surface water and are designed to take into account climate change in accordance with national guidance.

5.0 CONCEPT MASTERPLAN

The Illustrative Concept Masterplan shows one design response for the development of the Site which responds to the existing features and opportunities of the Site and context while also showing a logical and sustainable extension to the settlement pattern of Whitstable.

The following design approaches will be incorporated into the future development proposals:

- Focusing built development to the north of the Site, which is more closely related / influenced by the urban edge of Whitstable and A2990 Thanet Road.
- Avoiding development along the southern edge of the Site, which has a relatively open boundary; falls away towards the A229 Thanet Road dual carriage way; and as a consequence is more visible within the landscape to the south.
- Focusing green infrastructure within the more visible southern extents of the Site, which could include a combination of open space and habitat creation.
- Establishing a new woodland belt along the southern edge of the Site, connecting to the existing woodland. This would provide additional screening / integration; create new habitat; and supports the management and enhancement of woodland resource.
- Retaining and enhancing the small area of woodland / LWS within the Site (through appropriate management) and protecting its landscape and biodiversity value by providing an appropriate off-set to built development.
- Retaining and enhancing existing boundary vegetation to strengthen the landscape fabric of the site and help integrate development into the landscape, while improving the general hedgerow network.
- Establishing tree planting within the Site to further help integrate development into the landscape and break up the form of new buildings. This could include tree planting within areas of open space and along streets / areas of public realm.
- Retaining and enhancing the existing PRoW through the Site and improving opportunities for recreation by linking the footpath to new open space and routes within the Site.
- Utilising a more regular grid layout to respond to underlying site contours and characteristics of the town.
- Dwellings to be predominantly 2 storey with occasional 2.5 - 3 storeys in key locations and particularly closest to Thanet Way.

RESIDENTIAL - The site has the potential to accommodate around 220 new residential dwellings including a proportion of affordable homes (30%) all set within a new publicly accessible open space and landscape framework.

LANDSCAPE STRUCTURE & OPEN SPACE - Working with the existing woodland and tree belt features and responding to the ridge line character of the Site, significant areas of new woodland planting will be provided along the southern and western boundaries. This will provide a landscape backdrop along the ridge while also providing new ecological habitats and connections.

PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY - The existing public right of way will be retained and integrated within a green corridor passing through the Site. New looped footpath routes will be provided within the site linking the open spaces and providing a new recreation and leisure route.

SITE ACCESS - Utilising the roundabout currently under construction on Thanet Way, a fourth arm will be added providing vehicular access into the Site. Pedestrian footways either side of the access will also provide pedestrian permeability into the Site from Thanet Way, and connections to the Sustrans cycle route.

SUDS - A network of connected SUDs attenuation features and swales will be integrated into the open space at the lowest parts of the site. These will attenuate surface water flows from the development to mimic greenfield run off rates.

PUBLIC OPEN SPACES - A series of new public open spaces will be provided within the site. These will create opportunities for children's play, relaxation and recreation. The open spaces located on the higher ground will also provide opportunities for longer distance town and coast views.



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 - Existing Public Right of Way - Footpath
 - Proposed Footpath Loops
 - Residential Development Blocks
 - Landmark / Focal Buildings
 - Acoustic Frontages
 - Key Public Realm Spaces
 - Street Trees
 - Public Open Space
 - Formal Open Spaces (Incorporating Children's Play)
 - ←● Long Distance Coastal View Points
 - New Woodland Planting Belts (Landscape Mitigation)
 - Surface Water Attenuation Ponds
 - Surface Water Swale Features

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