NORTHWEST QUADRANT (NAAS)

CHARACTER AREA GUIDANCE

June 2026

AECOM

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Northwest Quadrant (NWQ) Character Area Guidance is a design-led document prepared to support the delivery of a coordinated and Urban Extension to Naas. Building on the NWQ Framework Masterplan, it provides clear and structured design guidance to inform future planning applications and ensure a consistent approach to development across the NWQ.

The document establishes a comprehensive framework that translates strategic objectives into practical design principles, covering both site-wide requirements and area-specific guidance for key locations of design complexity, including neighbourhood and local centres. It is intended to guide applicants, designers and decision-makers in achieving high standards of urban design, placemaking and environmental performance.

Central to the guidance is a placemaking-led approach, which promotes the integration of movement, landscape, built form and community infrastructure into a coherent and unified structure. The document sets out clear expectations for the creation of walkable neighbourhoods, a strong hierarchy of streets and spaces, and a connected network of green and blue infrastructure that shapes the overall development form.

Quality information

Prepared by	Reviewed by	Verified by	Approved by
Niltay Satchell Technical Director Lavenya Parthasarathy Graduate Urban Designer Jessie Watson Associate Director	Niltay Satchell Technical Director	Patrick Clarke Director	Patrick Clarke Director

Revision history

Issue	Date	Details	Issued by
03	04/06/2026	Character Area Guidance Report Final	Niltay Satchell Technical Director
02	22/05/2026	Character Area Guidance Second Draft	Niltay Satchell Technical Director
01	09/02/2026	Character Area Guidance First Draft	Niltay Satchell Technical Director

DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter sets out the purpose and status of the document along with a summary on how to use this document. It also outlines the use of local and national guidance.

2. NWQ VISION AND MASTERPLAN

This chapter explains the Framework Masterplan's vision and structured, layered placemaking process. It summarises key components and attributes of the Framework Masterplan.

3. SITEWIDE GUIDANCE

This chapter provides guidance which applies to the full extent of the Framework Masterplan. It categorises the design features as follows:

- PLACEMAKING STRATEGY
- ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN
- LANDSCAPE DESIGN
- PUBLIC REALM DESIGN
- STREET DESIGN
- EMPLOYMENT DESIGN

4. AREA SPECIFIC GUIDANCE

This chapter provides specific guidance which applies to various parts of the Framework Masterplan. The specific guidance is categorised as follows:

- RESIDENTIAL AND MIXED USE CHARACTER AREAS
- AREAS OF DESIGN COMPLEXITY

5. APPENDIX A - CHECKLIST

This appendix provides a checklist to translate the guidance into a clear, practical tool.

Contents

1. Introduction

This report has been prepared by AECOM on behalf of Kildare County Council as a key component of the Northwest Quadrant Urban Extension masterplan. This document builds on the NWQ Framework Masterplan report and sets out the specific design-led development guidance for the NWQ masterplan.

This document has been informed by a comprehensive suite of planning policy documents and created in close collaboration with Kildare County Council, enriched by extensive engagement with stakeholders whose insights have helped shape a shared vision for this transformative new part of Naas.

PURPOSE AND STATUS OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document, together with the NWQ Framework Masterplan, has been prepared in response to the requirement of the Naas Local Area Plan 2021–2027 to inform an update to the statutory planning framework and provide a coherent development framework for the NWQ. The preparation of the Framework Masterplan has been the key mechanism for establishing a vision that the statutory planning framework can align with and support in the delivery of future development. It is intended to inform the preparation and assessment of subsequent planning applications, ensuring that proposals contribute to a coherent, plan-led approach to the long-term development of this strategic growth area.

The guidance contained herein **should** be treated as a foundation for design, reflecting the Plan's objectives for the NWQ Framework Masterplan, including including the delivery of an urban extension that comprises residential development at scale with supporting community infrastructure, a high-quality employment quarter, improved connectivity to the town centre and Sallins, and the integration of sustainable mobility and green and blue infrastructure networks.

The character area guidance adds further detail to the broad strategic framework established by the Framework Masterplan. It provides guidance on how the Northwest Quadrant should be designed in accordance with the vision, site-specific attributes, relevant policy, and best practice.

Given the scale and phased delivery of development within the NWQ Framework Masterplan, some flexibility may be required at detailed design stage. Where proposals deviate from the principles set out in this document, a clear and robust justification **must** be provided, demonstrating how the objectives of high-quality, sustainable and integrated development are achieved through alternative approaches.

This document comprises both written guidance, supporting diagrams and images which build upon the Framework Masterplan. All design teams should familiarise themselves with the statutory planning framework, the NWQ Framework Masterplan requirements, and the content of this document prior to developing detailed proposals.

The plans, diagrams and sections included are illustrative in nature and are intended to communicate how development may come forward in a manner consistent with the overarching vision, policy objectives, and future masterplanning of the NWQ.

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

This document provides detailed design guidance to assist future planning applicants in navigating and applying the principles of the NWQ Character Area Guidance across specific areas and development parcels within the Framework Masterplan. It is structured to allow users to easily access guidance relevant to particular locations, while also establishing a consistent design approach across the Northwest Quadrant.

The document should be read in full to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the overall design intent, spatial strategy and underlying rationale that inform the guidance. This holistic understanding is essential to achieving coherent, high-quality and coordinated development.

Guidance is presented through a series of clearly defined guidance and principles, categorised as either "**must**" or "should", reflecting their relative level of importance and flexibility:

- **Must**: Guidance identified as "**must**" is mandatory and represents critical components required to secure the delivery of the overarching vision and design quality of the NWQ. Compliance with these requirements is essential.
- Should / could: Guidance identified as "should" or "could" allows for a degree of interpretation and flexibility. Applicants are expected to demonstrate best endeavours to meet these principles; however, alternative design solutions may be considered where they can adequately achieve or exceed the intended design outcomes.

USE OF LOCAL AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE

The masterplan has been prepared taking into account current national guidance on urban design and placemaking, with the below key documents. More information is provided in the Section 2.2, Northwest Quadrant (Naas) Framework Masterplan Report (June 2026).

The NWQ Character Area Guidance has been developed with reference to a comprehensive range of relevant local and national policy documents, statutory guidance, and best practice publications. These documents have informed the overall design approach, ensuring that the guidance aligns with established planning policy, promotes high-quality placemaking, and supports the delivery of a sustainable, well-connected and resilient urban environment.

In preparing development proposals, designers should take account of the contemporary planning and design guidance context, including any updates to the statutory planning framework.

The following documents have been considered in the preparation of this guidance:

- Kildare County Development Plan 2023–2029
- Naas Local Area Plan 2021–2027
- Section 28: Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements 2024
- Design Standards for Apartments: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2025)
- Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012)
- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) (2019)
- Urban Design Manual (2009)
- Urban Development and Building Heights (2018)

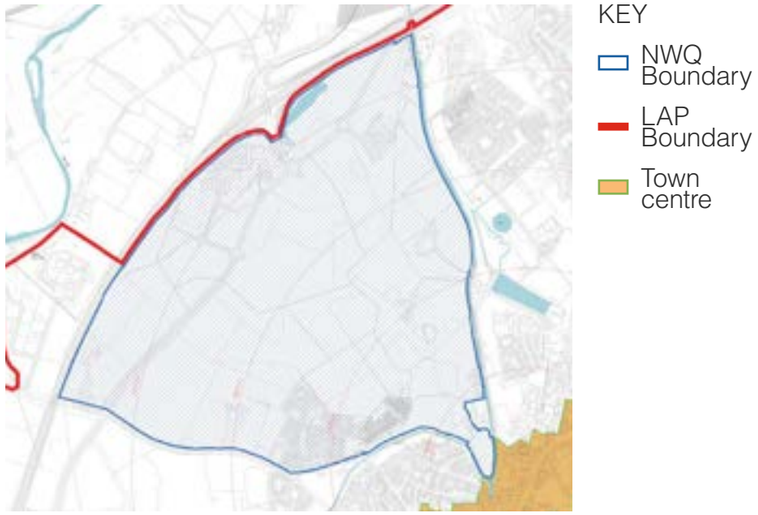


Figure 01: Policy NWQ 1 – Northwest Quadrant of Naas Local Area Plan 2021-2027.

- NTA Cycle Design Manual (2023)
- Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities (2021)
- Open Space and Outdoor Recreation in County Kildare 2021-2031
- Kildare County Council Sustainable Drainage Systems (2024)
- Kildare County Council Permeability Guidelines (2024)
- Greening and Nature-based SuDS for Active Travel Schemes (2023)
- Places for People National Policy on Architecture (2022)
- BRE Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight (2022)
- Home Zones: Residential Areas (Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation)

QUALITY URBAN DESIGN AND PLACEMAKING

In line with **Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2024)**, the NWQ Framework Masterplan and Character Area Guidance have been developed in accordance with the Key Indicators of Quality Design and Placemaking, ensuring that the proposals deliver a coherent, sustainable and high-quality urban environment. These indicators provide a clear structure for shaping places that are well connected, environmentally responsive, socially inclusive and visually distinctive.

The Framework Masterplan establishes the overall spatial structure and development strategy, while the Character Area Guidance provides detailed design direction to ensure that these principles are consistently embedded in the delivery of the NWQ. Together, they translate national placemaking objectives into a locally tailored approach that supports the long-term growth of Naas.

A short description on how Key indicators of Quality Design and Placemaking Figure 4.1, Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2024) are addressed as follows:

Figure 02: Key indicators of Quality Design and Placemaking Figure 4.1, Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2024)

ALIGNMENT WITH THE DESIGN MANUAL FOR URBAN ROADS AND STREETS (DMURS)

The Northwest Quadrant (NWQ) Framework Masterplan and accompanying Character Area Guidance have been prepared in accordance with the principles of the **Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS)**, which establishes a national, plan-led approach to the design of streets as multifunctional places that balance movement and placemaking.

DMURS promotes a **holistic, multidisciplinary and context-led approach** to street design, ensuring that streets serve not only as movement corridors but also as key components of the public realm that support social interaction, economic activity and environmental quality.

The NWQ Framework Masterplan is fully aligned with DMURS through its spatial structure, movement strategy and placemaking approach.

Key principles embedded within the masterplan include:

Place-led Street Design

- The masterplan recognises streets as important civic spaces, integrating movement, landscape and built form to create vibrant, people-focused environments rather than vehicle-dominated corridors.

Balance of Movement and Place

- In line with DMURS, the masterplan adopts a balanced approach between movement function and place value, ensuring that streets within centres and neighbourhoods prioritise pedestrians, cyclists and public transport over private vehicles.

Connected and Permeable Pedestrian and Cycle Network

- A highly permeable and legible network of pedestrian and cycle routes underpins the masterplan.

Compact and Walkable Neighbourhoods

- The NWQ is structured around walkable catchments, where homes, services, schools and open spaces are within easy walking and cycling distance, supporting reduced car dependency and sustainable travel patterns.

Street Hierarchy and Context-Based Design

- Streets are designed according to their role and surrounding context, ranging from primary routes and neighbourhood streets to local and shared streets, with design responses tailored to place function and intensity.

Streetscape and Enclosure

- The masterplan incorporates DMURS principles on enclosure, building-to-street relationships and active frontages, ensuring well-defined public spaces with appropriate proportions and strong spatial character.

Speed Management and Self-Regulating Streets

- Streets are designed to naturally calm traffic speeds through layout, enclosure and design features, creating safe and comfortable environments without reliance on excessive signage or engineering interventions.

Integration of Landscape and Movement

- Green infrastructure, street trees and sustainable drainage are integrated within street design to support biodiversity, climate resilience and placemaking.

Multidisciplinary, Plan-Led Delivery

- In line with DMURS, the guidance promotes a coordinated, plan-led approach requiring collaboration across urban design, transport, engineering and landscape disciplines to ensure coherent delivery.

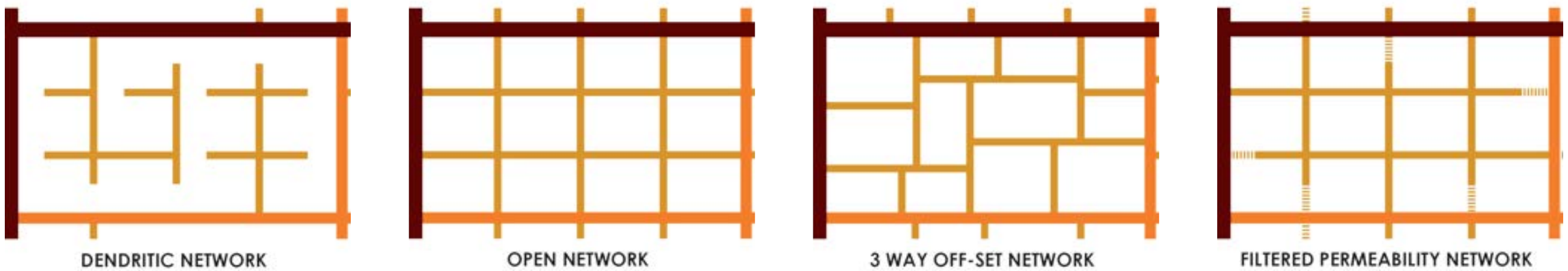


Figure 03: Types of Street Network identified within Road Safety Planning, Figure 3.22 Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS)

ALIGNMENT WITH THE URBAN DESIGN MANUAL

The North West Quadrant (NWQ) Framework Masterplan has been prepared in accordance with the principles and criteria set out in the **Urban Design Manual (UDM)**, which provides a nationally recognised framework for achieving high quality urban place making. The Masterplan addresses all 12 UDM criteria across the themes of Context, Connections, Inclusivity, Variety, Efficiency, Distinctiveness, Layout, Public Realm, Adaptability, Privacy & Amenity, Parking and Detailed Design, and positively responds to the associated indicators through an integrated spatial, movement and landscape strategy. Some of these criteria explained in more detail throughout this document.

01 CONTEXT

The NWQ Masterplan establishes a well-integrated and coherent urban extension to Naas, responding sensitively to its north-western setting. Key features such as the Grand Canal, Leinster Mills, existing hedgerows and movement corridors are used to structure development, ensuring that local identity is reinforced while supporting the town's long-term growth.

02 CONNECTIONS

A highly permeable and legible network of streets, greenways and routes underpins the masterplan, prioritising walking, cycling and public transport. Strong and direct connections link neighbourhoods, centres and key destinations, including the town centre and Sallins, helping to reduce reliance on private vehicles.

03 INCLUSIVITY

The NWQ is designed as an inclusive environment for all users. Community facilities, centres and open spaces are evenly distributed to ensure accessibility, while public spaces and routes are designed to be safe, universally accessible and well overlooked, supporting social interaction and cohesion.

04 VARIETY

The masterplan accommodates a diverse mix of land uses, including residential, employment, education and leisure supporting vibrant, adaptable neighbourhoods and a range of lifestyles, while maintaining a clear and coherent structure of centres and uses.

05 EFFICIENCY

An efficient use of land is achieved through compact neighbourhoods, walkable catchments and the concentration of services within accessible centres. Development densities are carefully aligned with infrastructure capacity and sustainable movement patterns.

06 DISTINCTIVENESS

A strong sense of place is created through clearly defined neighbourhoods, key destinations and landmark spaces. Features such as the canal corridor and local centres contribute to distinct identities, supported by contemporary architecture that responds to its context.

07 LAYOUT

The masterplan establishes a clear and legible street and block structure, supporting active frontages, natural surveillance and ease of movement. Streets are designed as both movement corridors and social spaces, enhancing their role within the community.

08 PUBLIC REALM

The key principles for delivering a high-quality public realm are set out in this document, placing it at the heart of development through a connected network of parks, streets and green corridors. The canal and wider green infrastructure play a central role in shaping everyday experience.

09 ADAPTABILITY

The framework masterplan allows for flexibility over time through adaptable block structures, mixed-use opportunities and phased delivery ensuring that development can respond to changing needs while maintaining a strong and coherent overall structure.

10 PRIVACY AND AMENITY

The key principles for clearly defining public, semi-private and private spaces, together with guidance on building relationships, orientation and separation distances, are set out in this document to ensure high standards of daylight, privacy and overall residential comfort.

11 PARKING

Parking would be accommodated in a manner that supports placemaking rather than undermining it. In line with UDM indicators this reports promotes balanced and well designed parking provision with series of guidelines.

12 DETAILED DESIGN

While the Framework Masterplan sets out the overarching strategic principles, it also establishes clear requirements for design quality to be addressed at the planning application stage. This document defines key principles relating to materiality, building articulation, active ground floor uses and landscape integration, ensuring that individual developments enhance overall place quality and contribute positively to the coherent structure of the NWQ.

Figure 04: The 12 Urban Design Manual (UDM) criteria across the themes of Context, Connections, Inclusivity, Variety, Efficiency, Distinctiveness, Layout, Public Realm, Adaptability, Privacy & Amenity, Parking and Detailed Design

2. NWQ vision and framework masterplan

Naas, the county town of County Kildare, stands as a vibrant retail and commercial heart for both the county and the wider region. The Northwest Quadrant (NWQ) represents a bold and forward-looking Urban Extension (in line with SRD+CG S28) identified by Kildare County Council as a cornerstone of the town's long-term development.

Encompassing c.300 hectares, the NWQ is poised to become one of the most ambitious urban extensions in Ireland, creating a series of distinctive new neighbourhoods supported by high-quality employment opportunities, amenities, services, and infrastructure seamlessly connected to the existing town. This transformative initiative aspires to enhance the quality of life for current and future residents, workers, and visitors, shaping a thriving, resilient, and inclusive future for the wider region.

VISION STATEMENT

*The Northwest Quadrant in Naas will be a **nationally and internationally recognised place** where people choose to live, work, visit and invest. **Embracing its Canalside location,natural beauty, historic landmarks**, and growing economic potential, it will be a **vibrant, resilient, and sustainable community** that will ensure Naas fulfils its role as a **key town and focus for compact growth**.*

*This dynamic **low-carbon district** will provide coherent new neighbourhoods that combine a wide range of housing and property options with **on the doorstep services and infrastructure** that meet the demands and needs of its communities. It will enable the success of global and local businesses through **opportunities for innovation and growth** supported by **housing choice** on the doorstep, excellent **transport and mobility connections** and a high quality of life in a healthy and stimulating environment.*

Vision objectives:

1. **Combining 21st Century living with historic character & identity of Naas**
2. **Enhancing and preserving the natural environment**
3. **Creating accessible, well-connected, low-car neighbourhoods**
4. **Promoting environmental responsibility**
5. **Delivering leisure, recreation, and green connections**
6. **Building cohesive, vibrant, and safe communities**
7. **Fit for the future**
8. **Promoting employment opportunities and supporting innovation**

Developing a Placemaking Framework

The masterplan has been shaped through a structured, layered placemaking process that responds to the site's physical context, landscape assets and movement patterns, alongside the overarching vision and development objectives. Each layer builds upon the previous one, starting with the identification of key environmental features such as watercourses and hedgerows, followed by the establishment of movement networks, centres, open space structure and development parcels.

The diagrams illustrate this step-by-step evolution, demonstrating how individual components are overlaid and refined to create a coherent spatial framework. This iterative approach ensures that the masterplan is not a single prescriptive diagram, but the result of a carefully considered process where landscape, movement and built form are integrated to support a strong sense of place and a clear, legible structure for future development.

MAIN GREEN CORRIDORS

Main green corridors are defined by historic watercourses and hedgerows, forming the key structural framework of the masterplan.

PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE CONNECTIONS

Key pedestrian connections follow the main green corridors, creating strong north–south and east–west links that ensure seamless integration with the wider Naas context.

CENTRES

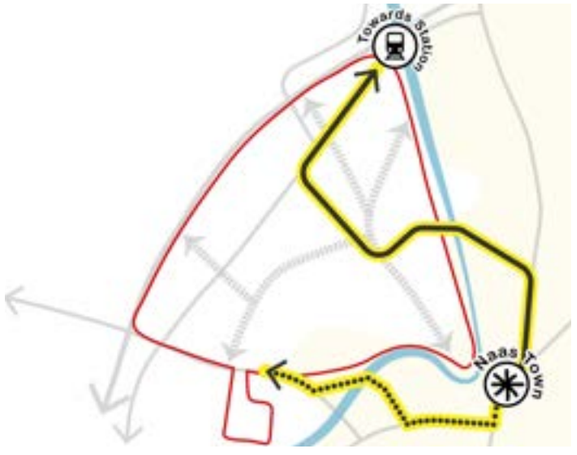
Centres are strategically located at key movement nodes and distributed so that all households are within a 15–20 minute walk of a centre.

OPEN SPACES

Open spaces are carefully positioned in response to the existing landscape and surrounding land uses, helping to reinforce the overall structure of the masterplan while ensuring that all homes are within a 15–20 minute walk.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community facilities, including schools, are located close to centres to create accessible catchments supported by convenient walking and cycling distances.



PUBLIC TRANSPORT

A public transport route is proposed to provide an efficient connection between Sallins and Naas Railway Station and the town centre, passing through the development and ensuring a high level of accessibility.

4,000

Approximately 4,000 new homes featuring a range of housing sizes, tenures and types.

95 ha

Approximately 95 ha of residential developable site area

40-90 dph

Proposed density range of 40-90 dph

95 ha

Approximately 95 ha of parks, playing fields, open spaces and amenity green spaces

3

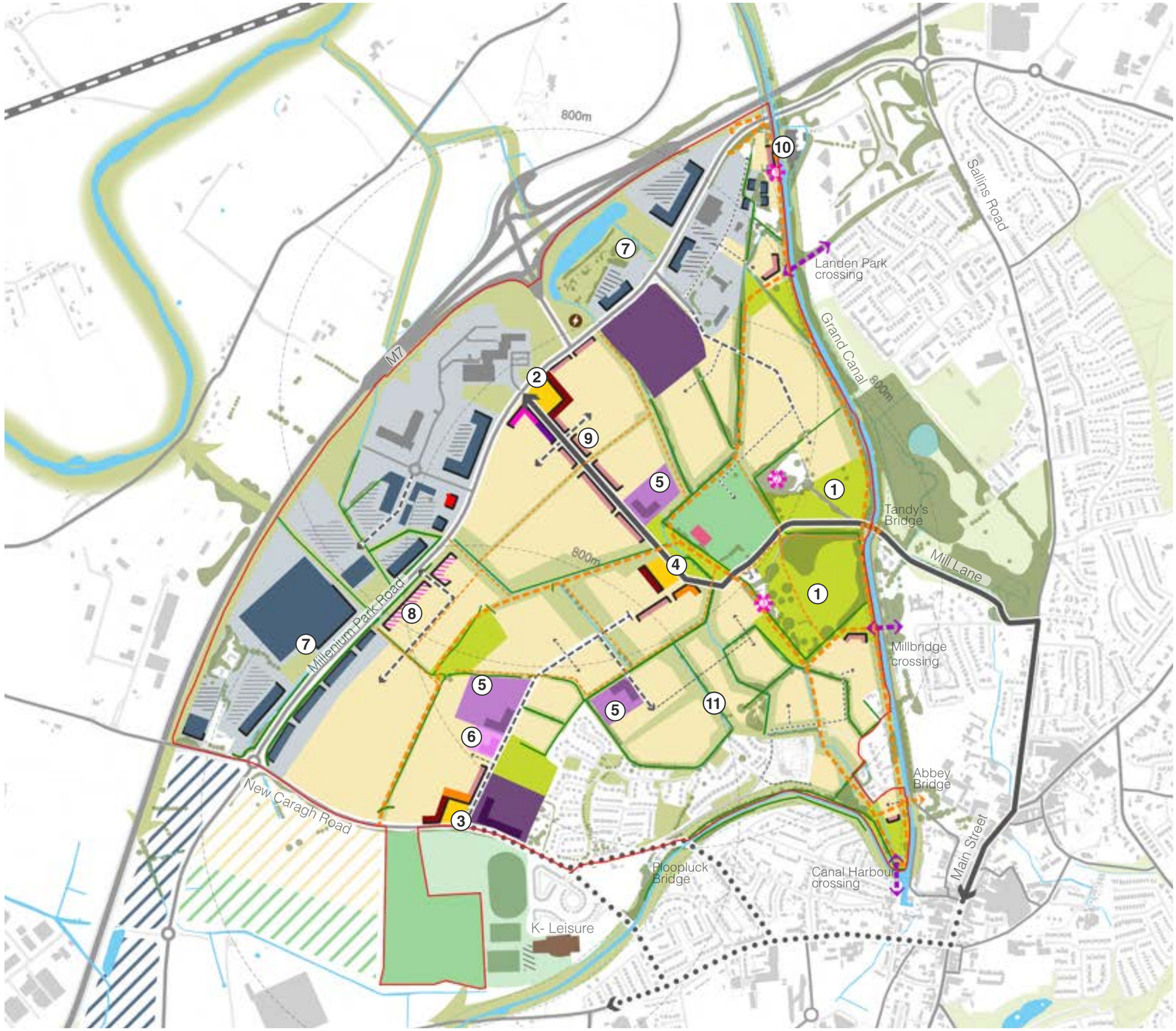
Neighbourhood and local centres strategically located at key movement nodes

5

New schools located close to centres to create accessible catchments

THE KEY ATTRIBUTES OF THE NWQ FRAMEWORK MASTERPLAN ARE OUTLINED, BELOW AND ON THE ADJACENT PLAN.

1. A large heritage park, set alongside the canal, will enhance the setting of protected buildings. It will offer a generous and accessible public space, providing scenic surroundings for community use, all within easy reach of the town centre.
2. The Millennium Park Road Neighbourhood Centre serves as the primary gateway to the NWQ, marked by signature architecture that establishes a clear sense of arrival. It will offer a welcoming focal point for the people of Naas, bringing together important commercial and community services, with a potential primary care centre to serve the Naas catchment.
3. The New Caragh Road Local Centre will form the western gateway to the NWQ, establishing a dynamic hub that accommodates key community facilities, including the new post-primary school and municipal sports grounds, and strengthening the presence of K-Leisure as one of the town's key destinations.
4. The Central Local Centre will establish a community hub at the heart of the development, featuring a new community centre and high-quality open space. It will sit within easy reach of the town centre and the Greenway along the Canal, ensuring convenient access for residents and strengthening connections across the NWQ.
5. Three primary schools are situated at accessible locations to ensure that all residents can walk / cycle to school.
6. A new special needs school contributing to the education hub in the New Caragh Road Local Centre and to serve the wider Naas catchment.
7. Two employment zones: the eastern office district and the western light industry and logistics hub, with complementary mixed use light industrial, offices and residential zone on southern side of Millennium Park Road.
8. Potential for horizontal mixed use development along the Millenium Park Road with employment and residential.
9. Potential further mixed use development opportunities along the sustainable transport route.
10. Leinster Mills presents a prime opportunity to establish a leisure destination, leveraging its built heritage significances and Grand Canal tourism potential.
11. Highest-priority hedgerows for protection and enhancement via green infrastructure, identified through desktop studies. Detailed ecological surveys are recommended.



KEY

Existing

- Site boundary
- Park and green space
- Water
- Grand Canal and 30m buffer zone
- Petrol station shop
- Railway
- Road/street network
- Cycle network
- Slí na Sláinte Routes
- Highest priority hedgerows
- Hedgerows
- Station
- Tree

Record of Protected Structures (RPS)

- Odium leinster Flour Mills
- Keredem House
- Knocks House

Opportunities

- Residential
- Potential future residential development
- Employment
- Potential future employment
- Employment car parking
- Further potential mixed use with retail and residential
- Further potential horizontal mixed use with employment and residential
- Secondary school
- Primary school
- Special education needs school
- Local centre
- Community centre
- Primary health care centre
- Further Education Training Centre
- Sports pavilion
- Park
- Green corridor
- Playing field
- Green space
- Sustainable transport route
- Future potential sustainable transport route
- Access street
- Lanes
- Pedestrian and cycle route
- Frontage
- Existing bridge over the canal
- Potential new bridge over the canal
- Proposed 38kV substation

Figure 05: Preferred Framework Masterplan

3. Site-wide guidance

Northwest Quadrant, A Connected, Living Place

The Northwest Quadrant will become a distinctive and vibrant place through the integration of **people, movement, landscape, and identity into a coherent whole**, rather than a series of separate developments. At its core, the masterplan establishes NWQ as a connected, mixed use urban extension that builds on Naas's strengths, its heritage, landscape, and strategic location, while creating a new, forward looking community.

A defining characteristic of the NWQ will be its **strong urban structure of walkable neighbourhoods,** each with clear centres, services, and amenities within easy reach. The provision of local centres, schools, healthcare facilities, and open spaces ensures that daily needs are met locally and fostering social interaction and community cohesion.

Movement will play a central role in shaping place. The NWQ is designed around a **sustainable mobility framework**, prioritising walking, cycling, and a new bus service linking the area to Naas town centre and Sallins & Naas Rail Station that should form a part of the Naas Town Bus Service. The active travel network reduces reliance on the private car and ensures that the development is a**ccessible, inclusive, and future ready**, enabling people to move easily between homes, workplaces, and amenities.

The **landscape and green infrastructure network** is a key driver of place identity. The Grand Canal, green corridors, and parks are **structuring elements**, shaping development and providing ecological connectivity, recreation, and visual amenity embedding the nature at every scale, contributing to wellbeing, biodiversity, and climate resilience.

The NWQ will also be defined by its **economic role and employment offer**, creating opportunities for people to live and work locally. Employment areas along Millennium Park Road, together with mixed use development, support a vibrant daytime economy and reinforce Naas' role as a strategic location for employment.

The masterplan draws on the historic and cultural assets of Naas particularly the canal, demesne landscapes, and industrial heritage to create a place that is rooted in its context. High quality architecture, active streets, and memorable public spaces will contribute to a **legible and distinctive environmen**t that people can recognise and enjoy.

The NWQ will be shaped by its commitment to **long-term adaptability and sustainability.** KCC will also explore the potential for NWQ to be energy resilient as well as low carbon district through district heating and local generation. The development promotes low carbon living through compact densities, green infrastructure, and resilient design, while allowing flexibility in how spaces and buildings evolve over time ensuring that the NWQ is not only a place for today, but one that can adapt to future social, economic, and environmental change.

NWQ NEIGHBOURHOODS

The NWQ is organised as a series of three interconnected neighbourhoods:

Northern Neighbourhood - structured around Millennium Park Road Neighbourhood Centre;

Central Neighbourhood - structured around Central Local Centre;

Western Neighbourhood - structured around New Caragh Road Local Centre.

Together, the neighbourhoods establish a clear spatial framework that underpins movement, placemaking and community life across the development.

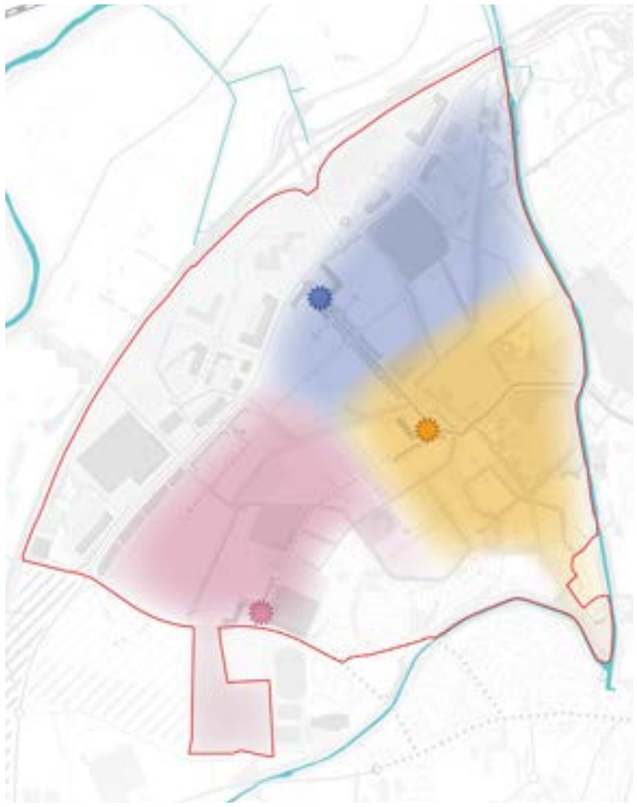


Figure 06: Indicative neighbourhoods within the NWQ masterplan.

Each neighbourhood, structured around centres, is planned to ensure that homes, services and open spaces are located within a short and convenient walking distance, reinforcing a compact and sustainable pattern of development. They are seamlessly linked to one another, to surrounding communities, and to Naas town centre through a coherent network of pedestrian and cycle routes, green corridors and sustainable transport routes, ensuring a high level of connectivity, accessibility and integration across the NWQ.

- The Northern Neighbourhood forms the primary gateway and principal centre of the NWQ. Positioned along a key movement corridor, it accommodates the greatest concentration of commercial, community and service uses, including opportunities for health, employment and mixed-use development. Its role is to provide a vibrant, active destination that anchors daily activity and establishes a strong sense of arrival into the new urban quarter.
- The Central Neighbourhood acts as the civic and community heart of the NWQ. Located within easy reach of the wider town centre and the canal corridor, it is focused on community-based uses, including local services, social infrastructure and high-quality public space. Its setting supports a more intimate and community-oriented character, providing a living within the close vicinity of the town centre.
- The Western Neighbourhood defines the western gateway to the NWQ and is closely associated with education, recreation and local services. Anchored by schools and nearby leisure facilities, it serves as a family-oriented hub with a strong emphasis on community infrastructure and active uses, supporting both the surrounding neighbourhood and the wider catchment.

NWQ Placemaking strategy

- Create **distinct, well-connected neighbourhoods** integrated with Naas.
- Structure place identity through a **hierarchy of centres, streets and public space**s.
- Establish **key centres as social and civic anchors** within walkable catchments.
- Combine **services, community uses and active public spaces** to support interaction and orientation.
- Design **streets as people-focused spaces** prioritising walking and cycling, with active edges and clear definition.
- Use the **Grand Canal and green infrastructure networ**k as the primary placemaking framework.
- Deliver a **connected landscape structure** of parks, corridors and retained features to organise development.
- Provide **overlooked, accessible open spaces** integrated with surrounding uses.
- Co-locate **education, sport and community uses** with high-quality public realm to embed activity.
- Create a **vibrant, inclusive and adaptable place**, integrating landscape, movement and community life.
- Support a **coherent long-term framework for sustainable growth**.

CENTRES

The NWQ will be structured around a clear hierarchy of centres, providing accessible, walkable hubs that support community life and define place identity.

- Development **must** align with the established NWQ hierarchy of centres as identified in the Framework Masterplan.
- The Millennium Park Road Neighbourhood Centre **must** be designed as the primary and largest centre within the NWQ and as the principal gateway to the development, in accordance with the Framework Masterplan. It is required to accommodate the greatest concentration of retail floorspace, together with health, education and community facilities. Further guidance on relevant placemaking principles is provided in Section 3.2.
- The New Caragh Road Local Centre **must** be designed to establish the western gateway to the NWQ and provide a smaller scale retail and service offer focused on meeting the day to day needs of the surrounding neighbourhood. Further guidance on relevant placemaking principles is provided in Section 3.2.
- The Central Local Centre **must** be designed primarily as a community focused centre, supported by a limited retail provision and high quality public space. Further guidance on relevant placemaking principles is provided in Section 3.2.

Figure 07: A primary neighbourhood centre that functions as a vibrant civic focus combining retail, community uses and high-quality public realm to create an active, well-defined destination consistent with the NWQ hierarchy of centres. Edington, Cambridge. ©Townshead Landscape Architects.

FOCAL POINTS

A network of well-defined focal points will structure the NWQ, creating memorable destinations that support movement, identity and community life. Positioned at key locations across the development, these focal points will anchor activity, enhance legibility and provide spaces for gathering and interaction at a range of scales.

- Development **must** deliver a coordinated series of focal points to reinforce place identity, improve legibility and support activity across the NWQ.
- Focal points **must** be visually distinctive and clearly identifiable through building form, height variation, landmark elements, landscape features or civic architecture, enabling them to be easily recognised and remembered.
- Focal points should be designed with flexibility to accommodate changing uses over time, allowing buildings and public spaces to evolve in response to community needs without undermining the overall place structure.
- A series of focal points **must** be introduced along the canal walk to encourage people to meet, pause, observe and gather, while framing key views and landmarks.

1. Focal points should be located at key intersections of pedestrian and cycle routes, reinforcing their role as gathering spaces for people and social network development destinations.
2. A major focal point **must** be established at Leinster Mills, with leisure-led uses creating a tourism destination that attracts visitors. The site's heritage significance **must** be emphasised through interpretation boards, high-quality public realm and integrated public art.
3. A focal point **must** be created along west of Landen Park Bridge with a new public plaza benefitting from south-facing commercial frontage.
4. The Tandy's Bridge focal point **must** be strengthened through the provision of a bus stop adjacent to the park and a small-scale retail offer, including a café, with an associated plaza serving local communities and visitors.
5. A focal point **must** be introduced at the Millbridge crossing, incorporating small-scale retail and a public plaza to provide a strong and legible connection between the NWQ and neighbourhoods to the east of the canal. Further guidance on relevant placemaking principles is provided in Section 3.2.
6. Harbour Park should function as a key focal point linking the NWQ with the Canal Quarter. Development in this area should align with the design initiatives and principles set out in the Canal Quarter Masterplan Report when adopted.
7. A local focal point **must** be created adjacent to each primary school, incorporating a small plaza and landscaped gathering space for parents, students and the wider community.
8. Focal points should be introduced at the intersections of green corridors, using distinctive tree groups or landscape features to create recognisable landmarks.
9. The western neighbourhood park **must** be emphasised as a school cluster focal point, incorporating gathering spaces, play areas and seating to encourage social interaction and community use.

Figure 08: Indicative focal points location within the NWQ masterplan

Figure 09: A public space anchored by art creates a clear focal point for gathering and orientation.Elephant and Castle, London.

LANDMARK BUILDINGS

Landmark buildings play a critical role in establishing a clear and legible urban structure across the NWQ. Carefully positioned at key gateways, centres and movement intersections, they act as visual markers that aid orientation, reinforce identity and define important nodes within the development. They also provide the opportunity to provide architectural quality that elevates the character of locations, spaces and character areas.

- To support placemaking and legibility across the North West Quadrant, key landmark buildings **must** be provided at key, clearly defined locations where they reinforce urban centres and designated local nodes.
- Key landmark buildings **must** be confined to locations identified in the NWQ Framework Masterplan, including gateways, centre cores and key movement intersections, ensuring a clear strategic role. Landmark buildings could also be public buildings that may or may not be located at designated landmark locations.
- Buildings exceeding the prevailing height parameters should only be considered at designated landmark locations where additional height strengthens place structure, orientation and identity.
- The suitability of a key landmark buildings **must** be determined primarily by architectural quality rather than height, with proposals required to demonstrate distinctiveness through design, massing and articulation.
- Key landmark buildings **must** be supported by high-quality public realm, including enhanced paving, planting, seating and lighting commensurate with their civic prominence.
- Design Statements for key landmark buildings **must** demonstrate contextual analysis and clearly illustrate visual, spatial and environmental impacts, including views, vistas and effects on sunlight and daylight.

Figure 10: A distinctive landmark building as the civic heart of the neighbourhood enhances legibility and strengthens orientation within the urban structure. Deptford, London. ©archdaily

Figure 11: A distinctive corner building with strong architectural identity with use of colour and active ground floor defines a key node, enhancing legibility and reinforcing the urban structure. Royal Seaport, Stockholm

Figure 12: A well-composed corner building using variation in height, form and detailing defines a clear landmark, strengthening legibility and orientation within the street network. Great Kneighton, Cambridge. ©bbukstudio

Figure 13: Indicative landmark buildings location within the NWQ masterplan

DEVELOPMENT BLOCKS

NWQ has a filtered permeability block structure designed for life, which also ensures that the site has an open and accessible urban environment for pedestrians and cyclists. A development block is defined by surrounding streets, green infrastructure and movement routes, with size and shape responding to context, topography and the movement framework.

- Variation in the size and shape of perimeter blocks **must** be used to respond to local context and create distinctive character areas across the NWQ. This variation **must** not compromise legibility, permeability or ease of movement, and irregular block forms should maintain clear and direct pedestrian and cycle connectivity.
- Perimeter blocks **must** be employed consistently throughout the NWQ, with their configuration responding to land use, surrounding character, density strategy and landscape structure to ensure coherence across the wider masterplan area.
- Larger blocks **must** be designed with flexible interiors capable of accommodating a range of uses and adapting to future change.
- Block interiors **must** be well overlooked by surrounding development, with a clear distinction between public, semi-private and private spaces to ensure safety, usability and long-term adaptability.
- Buildings **must** provide active frontages along all public edges to support animation, surveillance and street quality.
- Where a fine urban grain or mixed-use development is proposed, blocks **must** be carefully subdivided into smaller plots to enhance permeability and support activity.
- Block dimensions **must** respond to their function and setting, with mixed-use centres, The Village and the Canal Side character areas should incorporate smaller block sizes (not exceeding 100 metres) to improve walkability and create a more intimate urban character.

Figure 14: Perimeter blocks subdivided by mews create a fine-grained layout, improving permeability, activity and clear public–private definition. Great Kneighton, Cambridge

ACTIVE FRONTAGES

Active frontages should **be used to create lively, human-scaled streets and public spaces that support everyday activity, social interaction, and a strong relationship between buildings and the public realm.**

- The layout **must** prioritise safety by directing development along public streets, active travel routes and public spaces.
- Buildings **must** provide active frontages to public streets, with front doors and principal entrances directly addressing the public realm.
- Ground-floor façades **must** avoid blank or inactive edges along streets, routes and public spaces, particularly along key movement corridors and within centres.
- Front doors, entrances and frequent openings should be clearly visible from the street and public spaces to encourage everyday interaction and natural surveillance.
- Ground-floor uses and frontage design should contribute to animation, overlooking and a sense of safety throughout the day and evening.
- Streets **must** be designed as integral public spaces rather than solely movement corridors, reinforcing their role as places to meet, pause and interact.
- Cycle storage should be provided at ground floor level where basement provision is not feasible, with careful integration into the building frontage so that secure storage can be accommodated without undermining the quality of the public realm.
- Key active frontages **must** be prioritised along primary routes, neighbourhood centres, local centres and key public spaces with frequent entrances, large areas of glazing and higher floor to ceiling heights (double height spaces where appropriate) with floorplates to enable non-residential uses either at the time of development or to allow flexibility for possible future adaptation.
- The consistent relationship between buildings and streets should be used to strengthen enclosure, legibility and a clear sense of place across the development.

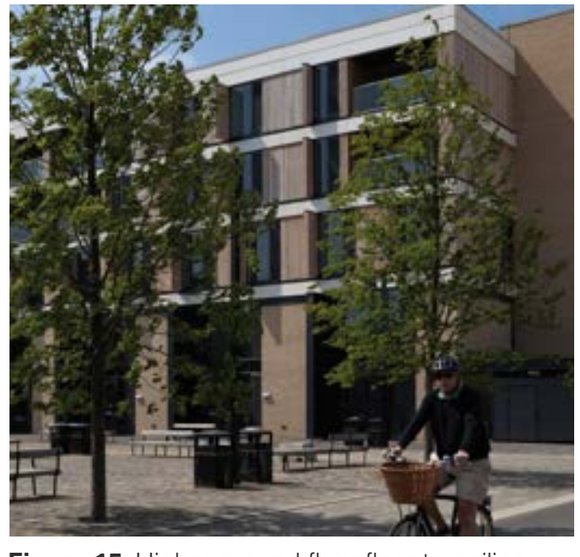


Figure 15: Higher ground floor floor-to-ceiling heights for flexible use. Clay Farm, Cambridge ©ADPArchitecture

ENCLOSURE

A strong sense of enclosure is a fundamental ingredient of successful urban placemaking. It is achieved where streets, squares and public spaces are clearly defined by continuous building frontages, appropriate building heights and consistent spatial edges. Well-enclosed spaces feel legible and human-scaled, giving people a clear understanding of where public life happens and how different parts of a neighbourhood connect.

Enclosure ratios are measured as the relationship between building or tree height and width between them. Careful consideration must be given to the consistency of this ratio along the length of each spaces frontage in order to achieve a coherent and legible places. In accordance with the *Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS), Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, 2019* a building height to width of the street or space ratio of approximately 1:2 creates a strong sense of enclosure, while a ratio of 1:3 results in a more moderate sense of enclosure.

- Primary streets within the NWQ should achieve a moderate sense of enclosure with an approximate height-to-width ratio of 1:2, reinforced by continuous street tree planting to strengthen spatial definition and comfort.
- Access streets and lanes within residential development areas should provide a varied enclosure experience, with a mix of very strong (1:1) and strong (1:2) enclosure ratios within development blocks to create spatial richness and legibility.
- Mews streets should achieve a very strong sense of enclosure, with tightly defined proportions that emphasise intimacy, low vehicle movement and residential character.
- An appropriate sense of enclosure should also be established along development edges, including the canal side and green corridors, using a combination of building orientation and planting to create intimacy while responding sensitively to landscape context.

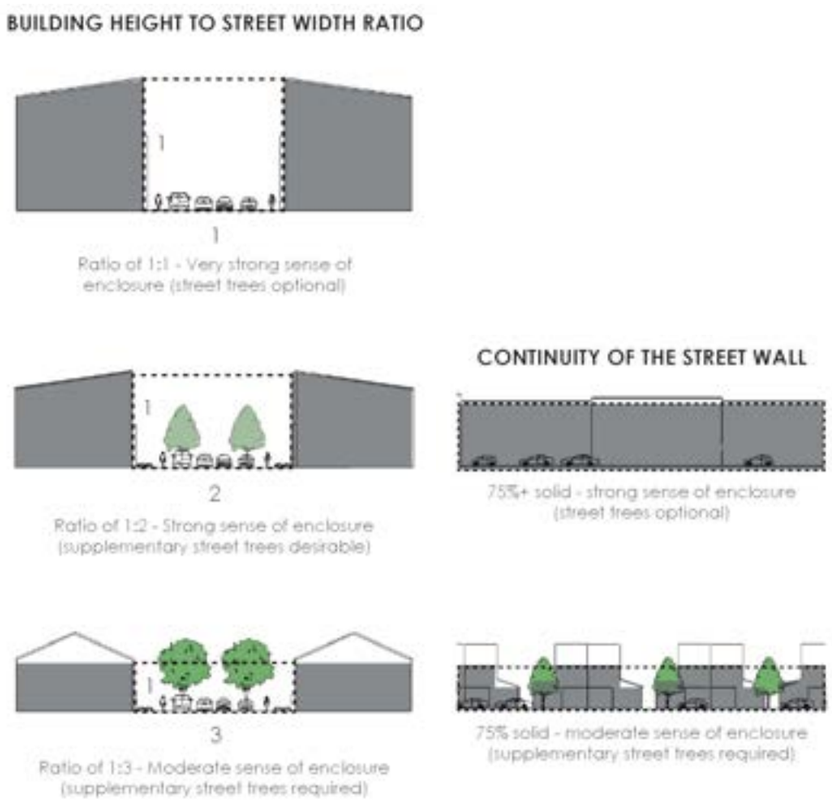


Figure 16: Measurements that indicate the sense of enclosure by way of building height to street width ratio and the percentage of the street wall that is solid.
Source: Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS), 4.2 Streetspace.

BUILDING LINES

Building lines and setbacks define the character and enclosure of streets within the NWQ. A consistent approach ensures a clear public realm, strong street definition and an appropriate response to different urban contexts.

- Building lines and setbacks **must** reinforce street character and contribute to a clear sense of enclosure.
- In higher-density areas and along Primary Streets, front threshold spaces should be shallow (typically 1–2m) to maintain strong enclosure.
- Continuous building lines with minimal gaps **must** define the public realm and clearly distinguish public and private space.
- Where setbacks are provided, threshold spaces should be well landscaped and enhance street character.
- In neighbourhood centres, commercial frontages **could** be setback to provide buildingg zones for café seating, foyer, window viewing, etc.
- Deeper front gardens with on-plot parking should be used where appropriate to create a softer transition to green spaces and surrounding development.

Figure 17: Continuous building lines close to the street edge create strong enclosure and a clear, defined streetscape. Pounbury

EDGES

Development edges play a key role in creating transitions between different character areas, ensuring that new development responds appropriately to both existing features and the emerging context.

- Development **must** positively address all edges, including streets, green corridors, open spaces and the Grand Canal, to create active, defined and well-integrated interfaces.
- Building frontages **must** face outward onto edges, ensuring natural surveillance, activity and visual continuity with the public realm.
- The scale, massing and form of development at edges **must** respond sensitively to adjoining contexts, including landscape, heritage assets and neighbouring uses.
- Development along green corridors and the canal **must** reinforce their role as key landscape and movement spines, with buildings overlooking and animating these spaces.
- Edge conditions should provide a clear transition between urban development and landscape, using planting, setbacks and building orientation to create a legible interface.
- Landscape design at edges **must** be fully integrated with built form to enhance biodiversity, ecological connectivity and visual amenity.
- Public routes along edges **must** be overlooked, continuous and well-defined to ensure safety, accessibility and legibility.
- Boundary treatments **must** not create inactive or defensive edges; blank walls, rear elevations and service areas **must** be avoided along public-facing edges.
- Development should vary edge treatments to respond to different conditions, including:
  - Urban edges (structured, continuous frontages)
  - Landscape edges (softer, planted transitions)
  - Canal edges (active, publicly engaged frontages)
- Edge conditions should contribute to place identity and character, using coordinated architecture, materials and landscape to reinforce the overall NWQ framework.
- Please refer to KCC's Permeability Guidelines (2024) when preparing development projects for planning

Figure 19: Active frontages addressing a green corridor edge, overlooking pedestrian and cycle route and integrated landscaping defining a clear transition. The Avenue, Saffron Walden. ©PTE Architects

PRIVATE AND SEMI-PRIVATE

Clear definition of public, semi-private and private spaces is essential to creating safe, legible and well-functioning places, ensuring strong boundaries and effective natural surveillance.

- Buildings **must** clearly distinguish between public fronts and private or semi-private backs to define streets and spaces.
- Development **must** provide clear transitions between public and private areas through layered landscaping.
- Primary entrances and active frontages **must** face streets, routes and public spaces to support activity and natural surveillance.
- Private functions such as gardens, servicing and refuse storage **must** be located to the rear and screened from view.
- Blank walls, high fences and boundary treatments that reduce overlooking **must** not be used.
- Streets and pedestrian/cycle routes should be overlooked by surrounding buildings to promote safety and security.
- Cycle storage and parking should be conveniently located, secure, and designed to integrate neatly with the surrounding building and landscape layout.
- Ambiguous or undefined spaces **must** not be created.
- Terraced houses should be well-designed with front gardens that accommodate practical solutions such as bin storage and cycle storage.

Figure 20: Outward-facing homes overlooking the water create an active, well-defined edge, with landscape and open space forming a clear transition between built form and the waterfront setting. Derwenthorpe, York. ©Partington studio

Figure 18: Clearly defined private and semi-private space with minimal privacy strip. Great Kneighton, Cambridge. ©Proctorandmathews

Figure 21: Clear frontages and defined thresholds create strong public and private boundaries with good natural surveillance. Marmalade Lane, Cambridge. ©Archdaily

CORNERS

Corner buildings must provide active frontages on both sides to ensure natural surveillance and a well-defined street edge.

- Buildings should be designed to positively address corner locations, particularly where sites are visually prominent such as along the street junctions, block edges along the green corridors and the canal, at centres, and around public squares.
- Prominent corner buildings should be architecturally expressed to define the corner, with active elevations on both frontages.
- Where possible, corner buildings should incorporate entrances and windows on multiple sides to create activity, surveillance, and strong street presence.
- In less prominent locations, including lower density residential areas, corners should be addressed through continuous built frontage, such as linked or terraced dwellings.
- Corner buildings may be taller or include distinctive architectural elements to reinforce their importance and provide a clear visual marker within the street network.

Figure 24: Active frontages on both elevations define the corner and create a clear visual marker. Great Kneighton, Cambridge

PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE LINKS

Pedestrian and cycle movement forms the core of the NWQ structure, providing a safe, direct and well-connected network that supports sustainable travel and high-quality places. During the detailed design stage the latest national and local guidances on pedestrian and cycle links must be used.

- A highly permeable walking and cycling network **must** be delivered as the primary movement structure across the NWQ, providing continuous and coherent connections without gaps.
- Routes **must** be safe for users of all ages and abilities, incorporating appropriate levels of segregation from traffic where speeds and volumes require it.
- Primary pedestrian and cycle routes **must** be direct and legible, linking key destinations within the site and the wider urban area with minimal delay.
- Segregated cycle infrastructure (minimum 3m) **must** be provided along primary corridors, designed to meet desirable minimum widths and provide high-quality, smooth surfaces to ensure comfort and usability.
- Strong connections to the surrounding network **must** be achieved, including new canal crossings and links to adjacent neighbourhoods.
- Local and access streets **must** ensure low traffic speeds and volumes to safely accommodate cycling in the carriageway.
- All routes **must** be designed to be overlooked, well-lit and accessible, supporting both actual and perceived safety.
- Secondary routes should be provided through green corridors as shared or segregated active travel routes, designed to support both recreational and functional use.
- Shared facilities (minimum 4m) should be used only where appropriate, with clear definition to minimise conflict between users.
- Routes should prioritise directness and continuity, ensuring cyclists and pedestrians can access key destinations more easily than by private car where possible.
- Cycle infrastructure should be integrated within the street hierarchy, with higher levels of segregation on primary streets and shared environments on low-speed residential streets, as defined in Section 3.4 Street Design Guidance.
- Landscape, planting and green infrastructure should be incorporated to enhance the attractiveness and usability of routes.
- Design should support a positive cycling experience, including adequate widths, smooth surfacing, minimal stopping points and comfortable gradients.

Figure 22: Segregated, well-overlooked pedestrian and cycle routes with clear hierarchy and landscape integration provide safe, direct and attractive movement corridors. Edington, Cambridge

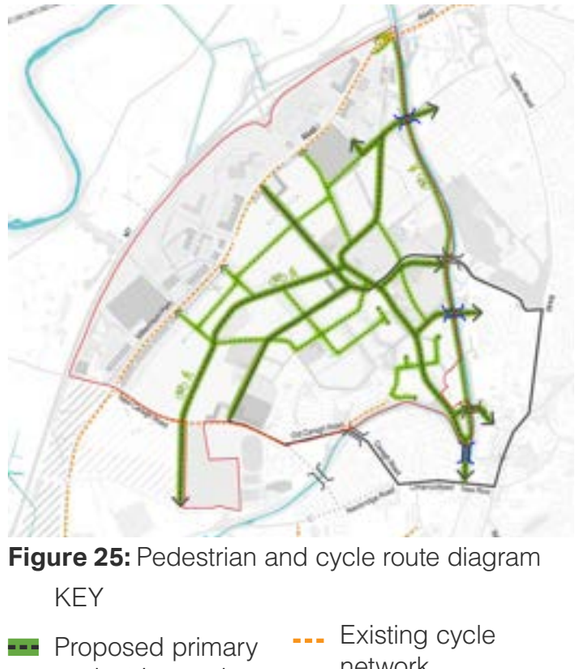


Figure 25: Pedestrian and cycle route diagram

KEY

- Proposed primary pedestrian and cycle routes
- Proposed secondary pedestrian and cycle routes
- Existing cycle network
- Proposed bridges
- Existing bridges

Figure 23: A continuous, traffic-free safe shared pedestrian and cycle route. ©NTA Cycle Design Manual September 2023

3.1 ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

Architecture within the NWQ must act as a primary placemaking tool, translating the Framework Masterplan's spatial structure, green–blue infrastructure network, and density strategy into legible, high-quality built form. Buildings should **reinforce the NWQ as a coherent extension of Naas, combining contemporary design with sensitivity to heritage, landscape, and canalside character.**

ARCHITECTURAL STRATEGY

- Architecture **must** reinforce the masterplan structure of centres, canal frontage, green corridors, neighbourhoods, and green infrastructure.
- Building form **must** clearly express the hierarchy of streets and spaces, with greater architectural emphasis placed on:
    - Primary Streets and sustainable transport corridors
    - Neighbourhood and Local Centres
    - Canal-side frontages and gateways
- Development should avoid isolated or inward-facing forms and instead contribute to a continuous public realm.
- Architectural design **must** respond to both NWQ specific character and national best practice guidance, ensuring consistency, legibility and long term quality.
- Architecture should balance a contemporary expression with references to local context, landscape and heritage, avoiding pastiche.

FRONTAGE HIERARCHY AND ARCHITECTURAL STATUS

- A clear hierarchy of architectural frontages **must** be established across the NWQ.
- Buildings fronting Primary Streets, Neighbourhood Centres, Local Centres and key public spaces **must** be treated as highest status frontages.
- Highest status frontages **must** demonstrate an enhanced architectural response through articulation, material quality, façade depth and ground floor treatment.
- Buildings addressing access streets, local streets and green corridors should adopt a more restrained, domestic architectural language while maintaining active frontages.
- Canal frontage and green corridor edges **must** balance enclosure, activation and landscape sensitivity.
- Buildings on both sides of street should work together to create visual interests and serial visions and thus create a strong sense of place.
- Buildings on both sides of street should present sufficient façade depth to create visual interests.

GROUND FLOOR DESIGN AND FLOOR TO CEILING HEIGHTS

- Buildings along primary streets should provide increased ground-floor floor-to-ceiling heights, including double-height spaces where appropriate, with flexible floorplates to support active and adaptable uses.
- Ground floors **must** present active, well defined interfaces with clear entrances, windows and thresholds.
- Blank façades or service dominated ground floors **must** not face public streets or spaces.
- Bins, bike storage and servicing **must** be fully integrated within buildings and screened from principal elevations.

BALCONIES, ROOF GARDENS AND PRIVATE AMENITY

- Balconies **must** be integrated into the building design and contribute positively to façade composition.
- Roof gardens should be provided on landmark or taller buildings where overlooking, wind, access and long term management can be satisfactorily addressed.
- Private amenity provision **must** respond to orientation, frontage status and character area.
- These should be integrated within buildings and screened from principal elevations.

Figure 26: Primary frontage articulated to create a strong, high-quality presence along the main street. Eddington, Cambridge

Figure 27: Balconies are formed as a continuous, externalised timber layer that creates semi-private outdoor rooms, providing a climatic buffer while adding depth, articulation, and social activation to the façade. Huebergass and District Park Bern Housing / GWJ Architektur ©Archdaily

PROPORTION

- The design of windows and doors **must** reflect the building's internal functions and intended uses, and should contribute positively to the overall composition and animation of the streetscape.
- Openings should demonstrate consistency in proportion across each façade. Vertically proportioned windows (taller than wide) should be used where appropriate, as they typically provide a more elegant and well resolved appearance.
- Fenestration, entrances and façade composition **must** be sensitive to and reflective of the surrounding local character and architectural context.
- For pitched roof buildings, the relationship between the roof and the main body of the building **must** be carefully considered. Eaves lines and ridge heights should align or step in harmony with adjacent buildings to achieve a cohesive streetscape.
- Dormers, roof lights and other roof features **must** be proportionate and subordinate to the primary roof form, and should align with the overall façade composition to avoid visual clutter.
- A strong sense of enclosure **must** be created within outdoor spaces such as streets, courtyards and squares.

FAÇADE TREATMENT

- Façades **must** express a clear vertical hierarchy. Taller buildings **must** adopt a legible composition comprising a defined base, middle and top, ensuring the building reads coherently within the streetscape. This layered approach should enhance legibility and civic presence.
- Fenestration **must** be well proportioned and rhythmically arranged, responding to internal functions while maintaining external coherence. Vertical window proportions should be used where appropriate to reinforce elegance and alignment with traditional architectural forms, while grouping or framing of openings may be used to support a contemporary expression.
- Traditional architectural elements such as string courses, cornices, lintels and reveals should be interpreted through a contemporary architectural language rather than literal replication.
- Variations in material use **must** be employed to articulate building elements, reinforce scale and add visual interest. Entrances, corners and upper storeys should be given particular emphasis through balconies, recessed elements, changes in plane or subtle projections that animate the façade.
- The overall façade composition **must** balance clarity and simplicity with richness and detail, ensuring durability, contextual relevance and a positive contribution to the surrounding built environment.

ROOFSCAPE

- Roofscape **must** be considered a key component of architectural quality and identity.
- Roof forms, pitches and parapets **must** respond to character area typologies and contribute to a coherent skyline.
- Poorly resolved or shallow roof forms **must** be avoided, particularly on prominent frontages.
- The proportion of the roof **must** relate appropriately to the height of the main body of the building. Roof form, pitch and materials **must** respond to the local context and should enhance overall architectural cohesion
- Shallow pitched roofs **must** be avoided.
- Dormer windows in pitched roofs **must** be proportionate and subordinate to the primary roof form. Their size and placement should reflect the internal layout and **must** not result in visual clutter on the elevation.
- Chimney features, whether functional or decorative, should be incorporated where appropriate to provide vertical emphasis and reference local architectural character.
- Rooflines **must** be carefully composed to support legibility and should be used to highlight key architectural elements such as gables, entrances or corner conditions.

Figure 29: The façades demonstrate a clear base–middle–top composition through material variation, with strong vertical window rhythms and articulated elements creating a balanced and cohesive contemporary design. Climate Innovation District, Leeds

Figure 28: A strong and coherent façade composition, with consistently proportioned vertical windows, clearly expressed entrances, and calibrated pitched roof forms that align across the terrace, collectively reinforcing a unified streetscape and a well-enclosed public realm. Kidbrook, London.

MATERIALS

- Materials **must** be durable and suited to the local climate, ensuring long-term performance and resistance to weathering. Low- or zero-maintenance finishes should be prioritised, particularly on large façades and hard-to-reach areas, to ensure buildings age gracefully with minimal intervention.
- Material selection **must** reinforce frontage hierarchy and character areas. Material choices should respond to local identity and heritage through contextual or traditional materials, or through carefully selected contemporary alternatives that complement their surroundings.
- Materials should be sustainably sourced, with low embodied carbon, and applied in a manner that enhances façade rhythm, architectural detail and overall streetscape legibility.
- Material selection **must** support façade articulation and relate to building height, with heavier, tactile and durable materials **must** be used at ground-floor level on key streets and public spaces to reinforce human scale, and lighter treatments should be used above to reduce visual bulk.
- Variation in appearance should be achieved through detailing, articulation, proportion and craftsmanship rather than excessive changes in material palette.

ORIENTATION

- Buildings and building heights **must** be orientated to maximise access to daylight and sunlight for streets, public spaces and amenity areas.
- Built form should be aligned to optimise east–west orientation and, where possible, allow for controlled southern exposure while mitigating overheating risk.
- Windows, balconies, overhangs and shading devices **must** be designed to balance solar gain and protection, and should incorporate deep eaves, recesses or brise-soleil where appropriate to limit summertime overheating.
- Habitable rooms **must** achieve minimum daylight standards. Excessive floorplate depths should be avoided, with higher floor-to-ceiling heights, light wells or similar measures used where required.
- Dual-aspect dwellings should be maximised wherever possible. North-facing single-aspect dwellings should be avoided or minimised, and cross-ventilation should be encouraged through aligning openings on opposing façades.
- Building orientation **must** be used as a tool to improve energy performance, maximising beneficial solar gain in winter while minimising overheating in summer through a combination of shading, ventilation and insulation strategies.

Figure 30: Durable brick façade with subtle pattern variation and detailing to create rhythm and articulation while ensuring a cohesive, robust, and low-maintenance facade treatment. Abode, Cambridge.

Figure 31: Stacked and interlocking duplex units within low-rise forms enable higher densities while maintaining own-door access, dual-aspect layouts, and a strong sense of individual identity for each home. Sandford Lodge, Dublin. ©Archello

HOUSING TYPOLOGIES

- All residential typologies **must** support the NWQ gentle density approach by prioritising compact form, clear frontage definition, and efficient land use.
- Typologies **must** be arranged within perimeter blocks or linear street structures to reinforce enclosure and legibility.
- Architectural design **must** express typological differences clearly, avoiding uniform façades across different dwelling types.
- All typologies should be capable of adaptation over time.
- Houses and duplexes should allow for attic or internal reconfiguration.
- Apartments and mixed use buildings should be designed with generous floor to ceiling heights and flexible layouts. Minimum floor areas and standards are outlined in *Design Standards for Apartments GPA (2025)*.
- All homes **must** comply with national space standards, daylight/dual aspect requirements, and private amenity standards.
- Cycle and refuse storage **must** be integrated into the building or block design and **must** not dominate principal elevations.

Figure 32: Dual aspect and entrance courtyard homes with multi-level amenity space. Wilkinson Brook, Hollystown, Dublin. ©Architecturetoday

Figure 33: Sheltered sequence of shared-surface streets. Wilkinson Brook, Hollystown, Dublin. ©Proctorandmathews

Figure 34: Urban 3 storey (back-to-back) houses. Urban House, Kidbrooke Estate, London.

Figure 35: 4 bed twownhouse with roof terrace garden. Urban House, Kidbrooke Estate, London.

Figure 36: Comprising range of 2-5bed houses, affordable family houses, smaller homes for people over 55, one-bedroom apartments, 25% affordable. The Avenue, Saffron Waldon. ©sussexexpress

Figure 37: Located within a conservation area in a historic market town. Saffron Waldon. ©PTE

Figure 38: Mix of typolgies including duplex and apartments. Sanford Lodge, Dublin. ©Archello

Figure 39: Ireland's first low-rise, high-density residential development. Sandford Lodge, Dublin. ©Architectum

HOUSING TYPOLOGY MATRIX				
Typology	**Key density areas**	**Building heights**	**Character areas**	**Design principles**
• Town houses • Terraces • Semi-detached • Detached houses	Low-Medium density	2-3 storeys (with occasional 4 storey elements)	• Compact neighbourhood • Village • Canal side	• All housing typologies **must** form continuous street frontages, with front doors directly addressing public spaces. • Plot widths should be compact to support higher densities without increasing building height. • Rear gardens **must** meet minimum size requirements, with reduced depths offset, where appropriate, by the provision of upper floor terraces. • Parking should be provided on plot or on street and **must** not interrupt or weaken the continuity of the street frontage. • Buildings **must** adopt strong vertical proportions. • Buildings should present a clear base–middle–roof composition. • Façades **must** be robust, well articulated, and capable of accommodating incremental adaptation over time.
• Duplexes • Masionettes	Medium density	2-4 storeys	All character areas but particularly: • Compact neighbourhood • Village • NWQ Boulevard	• Duplexes and maisonettes **must** be used to achieve medium to higher densities while maintaining direct street relationships. • Street-facing duplexes **must** incorporate their own front doors to reinforce active frontages. • Stacked and back-to-back duplex arrangements could be used where adequate daylight, privacy, and residential amenity can be clearly demonstrated. • Amenity provision **must** be delivered through a combination of private terraces, balconies, and/or small front gardens, appropriate to the dwelling type. • Façades **must** clearly express the subdivision of individual dwelling units. • Entrances and stair cores should be clearly articulated to enhance legibility and identity. • Building massing should be carefully modulated to avoid uniform, monolithic forms and to prevent an overly “apartment-like” appearance.
• Back-to-back	Medium - higher density	2-4 storeys	• Compact neighbourhood • Village • Canal side	• Back to back and courtyard typologies should be used to increase density where adequate daylight, natural ventilation, and residential amenity standards can be clearly demonstrated.

[continued overleaf...]

HOUSING TYPOLOGY MATRIX (CONT...)				
Typology	**Key density areas**	**Building heights**	**Character areas**	**Design principles**
• Apartments	Medium - higher density	Low to mid rise 3–6 storeys (with taller elements up to 7–8 storeys only on primary routes and centres)	All character areas but particularly: • Village • NWQ Boulevard • Millenium Park Street	• Ground floors **must** respond positively to streets and public spaces by provididing active frontages where facing primary streets, centres, or public spaces. • Apartment cores should be proportionate and efficient in size to maintain a domestic scale and minimise the extent of internal corridors. • Dual aspect units should be promoted where feasible; north facing single aspect apartments could be considered, where overlooking a significant amenity such as a public park, communal space or some other amenity feature. • Parking should be accommodated within parking courts, undercroft, or multi-storey facilities, in accordance with the NWQ parking strategy. • Buildings **must** demonstrate strong articulation and a clear façade rhythm to break down overall massing. • Entrances and vertical circulation elements **must** be clearly expressed to reinforce legibility and identity. • Balconies should be recessed and integrated within the depth of the façade to ensure a coherent architectural expression. • Proposals **must** refer to and comply with Design Standards for Apartments GPA (2025).
• Courtyard housing	Medium - higher density	2-4 storeys	• Compact neighbourhood • Village • Canal side	• Courtyard typologies **must** be arranged around well defined shared courtyards that are overlooked on all sides to ensure natural surveillance. • Courtyards **must** be designed and maintained as high quality amenity spaces and **must** not function as residual or leftover land. • Direct access dwellings should be prioritised at ground level to reinforce activity and connection to shared spaces. • Buildings should adopt a fine grain composition with rhythm and repetition to create visual interest and human scale. • Development **must** provide a strong sense of enclosure to shared courtyards and spaces through consistent building lines and massing. • A clear distinction **must** be maintained between public, semi private, and private realms through layout, thresholds, and landscape design.

3.2 LANDSCAPE DESIGN

The NWQ will deliver a diverse, inclusive, and multifunctional network of open spaces that integrates recreation, play, and amenity within the wider Green and Blue Infrastructure framework.

The strategy aligns with the Kildare County Council Play Strategy (2018–2028), Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Strategy (Appendix 3 to the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029) standards, ensuring high-quality, accessible, and safe recreational provision for all residents. The UK National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) standards have also informed the development of the landscape and open space strategy integrated into the Framework Masterplan where Irish guidance is less developed.

Key site-wide landscape principles include:

- Open space and recreation should be integrated within the Green and Blue Infrastructure network to promote active travel and well-being.
- A hierarchy of open spaces **must** be established to that provide equitable access to recreation, play, and amenity for all residents.
- Inclusive and accessible play provision **must** be in line with the KCC Play Strategy (2018–2028) and NPFA standards.
- All play and recreation facilities **must** be designed and maintained to European and Irish safety standards (EN 1176 and EN 1177).

OPEN SPACE TYPOLOGIES

The open space network will comprise a hierarchy of multifunctional spaces that integrate recreation, amenity, and nature, forming the recreational layer of the Green and Blue Infrastructure framework.

Natural Park

- Large open spaces **must** integrate SuDs, wildflower meadows, and woodland edges to combine flood management, biodiversity, and recreation. These parks should link to Main Park and the Grand Canal corridor, providing key landscape and ecological connections.

Green-Blue Corridors

- Green-Blue Corridors **must** be located alongside the existing hedgerows and watercources, providing landscaped pedestrian and cycle routes that connect neighbourhoods, community parks, and civic spaces and habitat connectivity.

.Community Garden

- Productive landscapes, including community gardens and allotments, **must** be woven into new development to provide opportunities for food growing, education, and social interaction, fostering community wellbeing.

Pocket Parks and Local Greens

- Local green spaces distributed throughout the masterplan **must** provide seating, planting, and informal play, offering safe and accessible recreation within walking distance of every home throughout the Masterplan Framework.

Figure 40: Natural woodland play elements, Maritime way playground, Broughton, England.

Figure 41: Natural woodland play area made with felled oak tree trunks on Chorleywood Common, Hertfordshire, England.

Figure 42: Natural play on the way elements, West Gorton Community Park, Manchester.

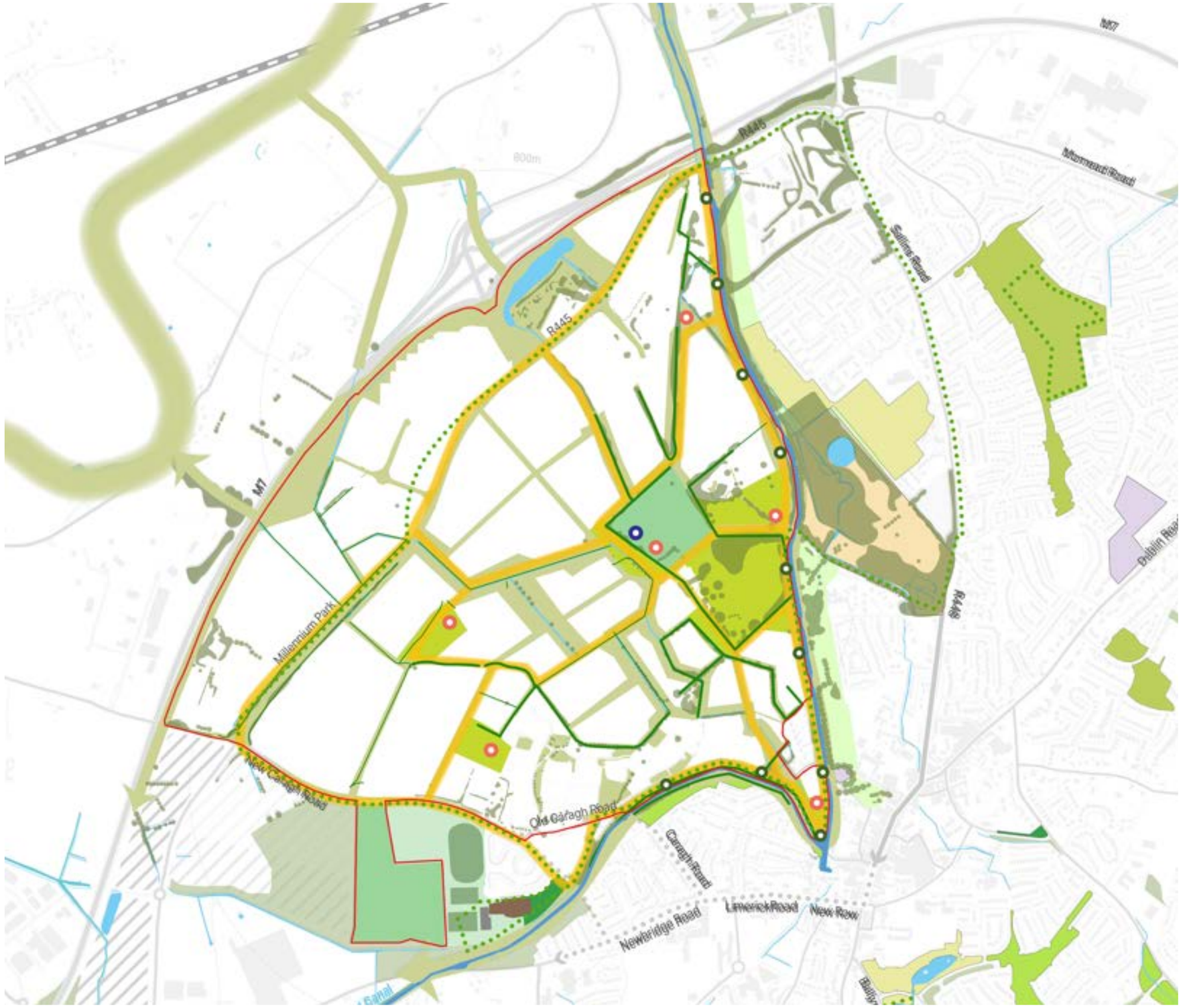


Figure 43: Green and blue infrastructure diagram

PLAY SPACE TYPOLOGIES

The recreation and play framework will complement the open space network by providing an inclusive and accessible recreation areas distributed throughout the Masterplan Framework. A hierarchy of Local Areas for Play (LAPs), Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAPs), and Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs) will provide opportunities for children and young people of all ages, supported by active recreation spaces, trails, and play-on-the-way features.

Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs)

- A NEAP **must** provide a multifunctional play and recreation space of at least 1,000 m^2, designed to serve older children and a wider age range. It should include a diverse mix of play equipment, open space for informal games, and seating areas set within a landscaped environment. Where feasible, NEAPs should be co-located with sports facilities or MUGAs to create vibrant community destinations. Each NEAP should serve a catchment of up to 15 minutes, or approximately 1,000 metres, walking distance from homes.

Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAPs)

- A LEAP **must** provide a medium-sized play space of approximately 400 m^2, designed for children up to eight years old. It should include a range of fixed play equipment supported by natural elements such as planting, seating, and gentle landscaping to encourage active and social play. Each LEAP should serve a catchment of 5 minutes, or approximately 400 metres, walking distance from homes.

Local Areas for Play (LAPs)

- A LAP **must** provide a small landscaped play space of approximately 100 m^2, designed for younger children up to six years old. It should incorporate natural play features such as gentle mounding, trees, and planting, supported by seating for carers to encourage supervision. Each LAP should serve a catchment of 1 minute, or approximately 100 metres, walking distance from homes.

Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs)

- The sports hub **must** be consolidated in the west of the masterplan. It should accommodate multi-use games areas (MUGAs), courts, pitches, and outdoor gyms, providing a shared amenity that serves the residential parcels within the NWQ as well as surrounding neighbourhoods. Integrated into the wider parkland landscape and connected to movement corridors, the hub should complement informal play and trail networks, creating a multifunctional destination that supports health, wellbeing, and social cohesion.

Nature play along wellness trail

- Nature play **must** be incorporated along trails and routes connecting residential parcels to neighbourhood greens, community parks, civic spaces, and the Grand Canal Greenway, while also linking to the existing Slí na Sláinte network in Naas. These routes should create informal play experiences that connect children with the natural environment, enhance biodiversity, and provide opportunities for informal learning.

Informal Play Opportunities

- Inclusive and sensory play features **must** be implemented across the masterplan, particularly within local nodes, civic squares, pocket parks, and along the Grand Canal Greenway, where play can be combined with seating, gathering areas, and planting. These facilities should incorporate accessible equipment, sensory planting, and natural textures, ensuring safe, stimulating, and inclusive play opportunities for children of all ages and abilities within everyday public spaces.

Figure 44: Play space typologies diagram

KEY

- Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs) - 1000m radius
- Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAPs) - 400m radius
- Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs)
- Nature play along wellness trail

GREEN-BLUE CORRIDOR TYPOLOGIES

A network of green corridors is proposed within the NWQ Framework Masterplan. The primary objectives of these corridors are to:

- Protect and enhance existing landscape features, including watercourses, hedgerows, and trees.
- Reduce habitat fragmentation and strengthen biodiversity connectivity.
- Provide opportunities for recreation and access to green space
- Promote health and wellbeing.
- Encourage long-term stewardship of the landscape.

Riparian Buffers

In line with the Kildare County Development Plan, the Naas Local Area Plan, and the NWQ Surface Water Management Plan, riparian buffers have been designed to create a strong interface between land and watercourses. These corridors aim to protect and enhance water quality, support biodiversity, and improve habitat connectivity, while also providing attractive landscaped spaces that encourage recreation and promote long-term environmental stewardship.

The table opposite sets out the required dimensions of the primary and secondary riparian buffer zones, along with their proposed uses, in accordance with the guidance contained in Planning for Watercourses in the Urban Environment (IFI, 2020).

The proposed types of uses in each zone are in line with those set out for streamside zones in Table 12.4 of Chapter 12 of the Kildare County Development Plan.

The classification of watercourses and riparian buffer zones and dimensions shown are indicative only. The ecological quality of each watercourse will need to be assessed at subsequent stages of the NWQ development, and riparian buffer widths should be defined accordingly for each watercourse based on survey findings.

The guidance set out in this section would vary depending on site attributes. Thus, further design and investigations **must** be undertaken by development in regards to landscape and ecological assessments.

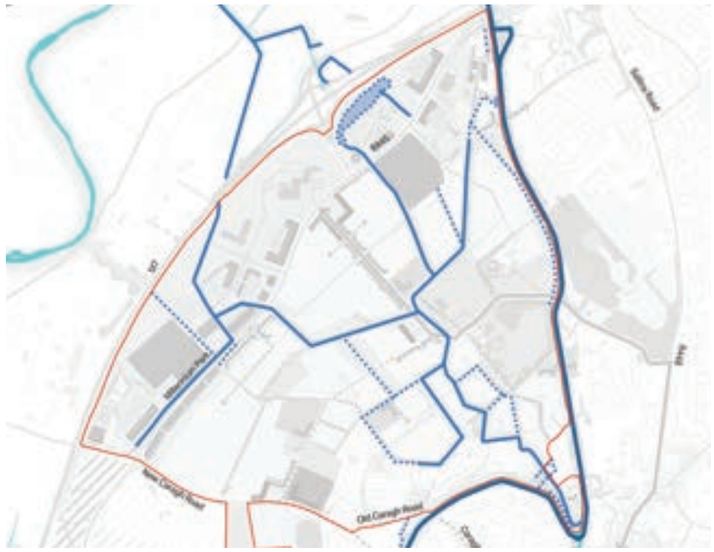


Figure 45: Existing watercourses clasification diagram

Watercourse classification	Description	Approach to classification	Streamside Zone	Middle Zone	Outer Zone
Primary	• Ploopluck Watercourse • Oldtown Demesne • Historical Watercourses	• Included on EPA/ WFD watercourse mapping, • Designated on the Local Area Plan mapping as G4 Open Space and Amenity, • Convey flows from outside of the masterplan site through the site and onward downstream of the site, • High & medium priority ecologically.	Development should provide a 10m streamside zone (measured from top of bank) on both sides of these channels to comply with the CDP Policy Objective INO36 requiring a 20m wide riparian/ streamside zone for river channels of less than 10m in width.	Development should provide a middle zone of 15m for these channels.	Development should provide an outer zone of 8m.
Secondary	Existing land drains within the masterplan site which will become part of the drainage system,e.g. swales.	• Currently provide a field & land drainage network within the masterplan site. • Existing land drains which do not convey flows from outside the masterplan site boundary. • Existing land drains with lowest priority ecologically.	Development should to provide a 3m wide streamside zone (measured from top of bank) on both sides of these channels. No development proposed within this zone for this type of channel.	Development should provide a 5m middle zone for these types of channels.	Development should provide an outer zonefor this type of channel.

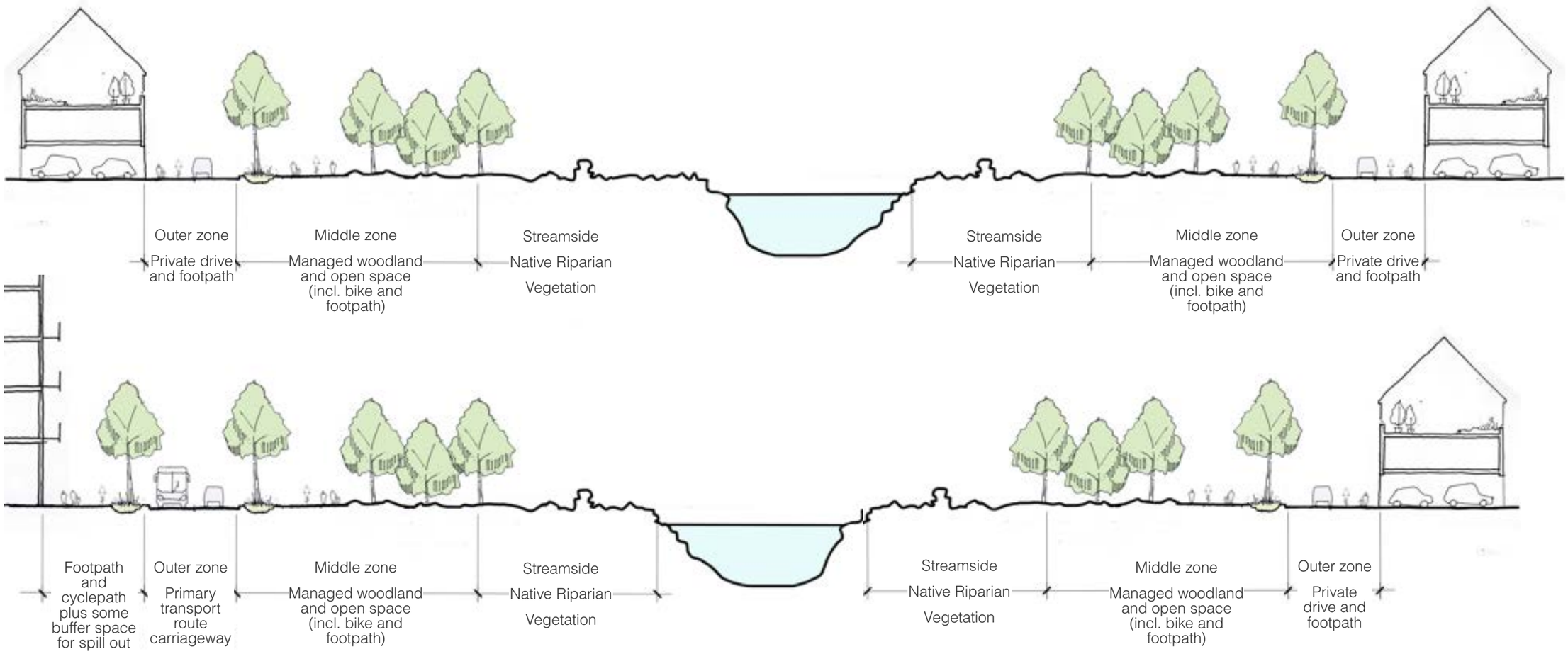
Figure 46: Blue corridor typology guidance.

Primary Green / Riparian Corridor Design Principles

Primary green / riparian corridors should be aligned with the primary watercourses. These corridors are to be structured into distinct zones, each with a specific role and function.

- The streamside zone should have a minimum width of 10 m, subject to accommodate flood extent zones. They should be planted with native riparian vegetation to protect the watercourse. No recreational uses should be introduced within this zone.
- The middle zone should be a minimum of 15 m wide and function as a buffer for nutrient and sediment filtration. This zone should include trees, shrubs, and ground-cover planting and should accommodate a segregated cycleway and footpath.
- The outer zone should be a minimum of 8 m wide and it can incorporate plantation areas, pedestrian and cycle routes, local carriageways, parks, and residential gardens where appropriate.

① PRIMARY GREEN / RIPARIAN CORRIDOR

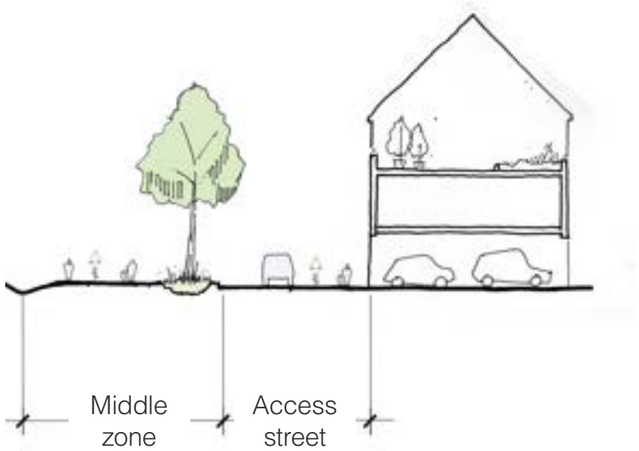


Secondary Green Corridor Design Principles

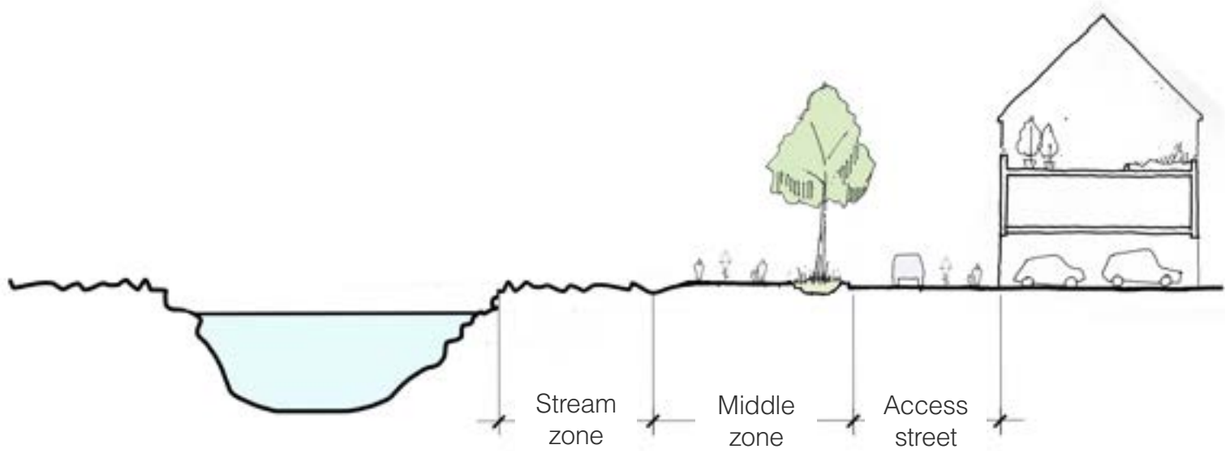
Secondary green corridors are mainly aligned with the secondary watercourses. These corridors are to be structured into distinct zones, each with a specific role and function.

- The streamside zone should have a minimum width of 3m and be planted with native riparian vegetation to protect the watercourse. No recreational uses should be introduced within this zone.
- The middle zone should be a minimum of 5m wide and function as a buffer for nutrient and sediment filtration. This zone should include trees, shrubs, and ground-cover planting and should accommodate a shared cycleway and footpath.

② SECONDARY GREEN CORRIDOR



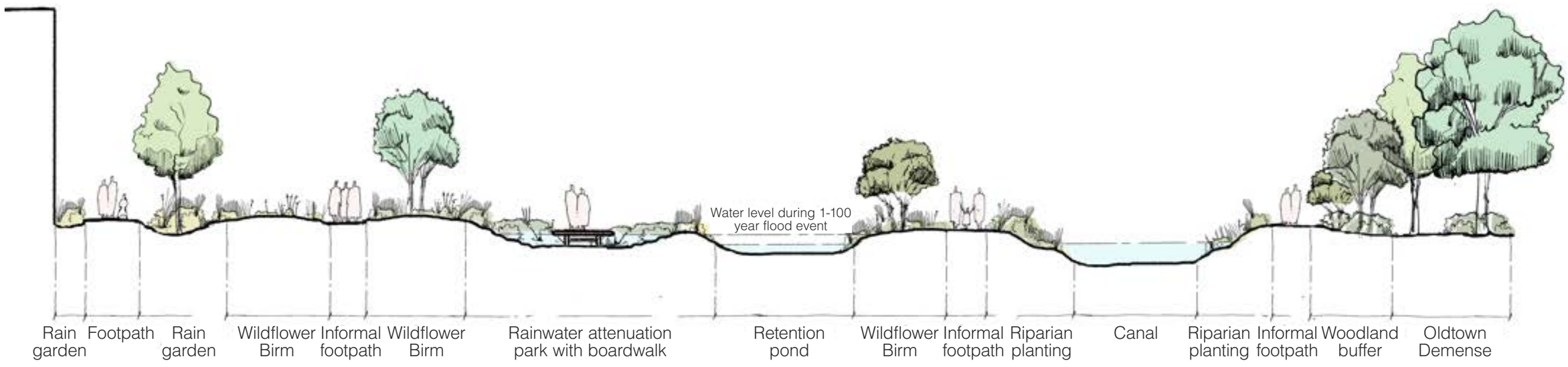
③ SECONDARY GREEN CORRIDOR (ALONG EXISTING WATERWAYS)



Canal Buffer Design Principles

- Riparian environments and water quality should be strengthened through a combination of marginal planting, wet meadow creation, and measures that improve ecological connectivity along the corridor.
- Where suitable, floodable parkland should be designed as a flexible, multi-functional landscape capable of accommodating periodic inundation while continuing to provide accessible walking routes, informal recreation spaces, and opportunities for rest and seating.
- Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) should be integrated within the floodable parkland and canal corridor, using linked swales, wetlands, and seasonal attenuation areas to manage surface water naturally, improve water quality, and reinforce ecological connections between the development, parkland, and the Grand Canal.
- A clear transition from urban environment to natural landscape should be expressed through planting structure and spatial hierarchy. Ornamental planting may be introduced closer to buildings, gradually giving way to native meadow and riparian species nearer the canal edge.
- Landform should be carefully modelled to establish a green buffer along the development boundary, incorporating gentle slopes, mounding, swales, meadow grassland, and informal groupings of native trees and shrubs to create a varied and naturalistic transition between the neighbourhood and the canal setting.
- Natural materials such as limestone, timber, and gravel should be used for paving and street furniture, reflecting the historic character of the canal and its surroundings.
- Continuous pedestrian and cycle routes should be provided along the canal, designed as either shared paths or segregated facilities, as appropriate to context and usage levels.

④ CANAL BUFFER



SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE

The Northwest Quadrant is defined by a network of water features, including the Grand Canal, Ploopluck, Oldtown, and Castlesize streams, and the Millennium Park pond, which form a key part of the landscape structure and provide a strong basis for sustainable surface water management. The Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP), informed by OPW national mapping and the draft Naas Flood Relief Scheme, confirms that the majority of the site lies within Flood Zone C (low risk), with Higher risk areas (Flood Zones A and B) confined to riparian corridors and lands immediately adjoining watercourses.

In response, the masterplan will ensure that highly vulnerable uses, such as residential or educational buildings, are excluded from Flood Zones A and B. The proposed development will provide a series of outfalls connecting into the existing stream and drainage network, replicating natural catchments where practicable. Each outfall will be designed to discharge at greenfield runoff rates, in line with the **Kildare County Council (KCC) Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) Guidance Document (2024)** and subject to approval by the KCC.

The SuDs strategy will reflect the site's existing topography, outfalls, and natural drainage patterns as far as reasonably practicable, ensuring that water management is fully integrated into the landscape framework of the Northwest Quadrant. The specific layout and types of SuDs features will be determined following detailed above-and below-ground site analysis, with outputs informing the detailed design at planning application stage. Where appropriate, planning applications will be required to include a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment, to be considered by the relevant planning authority in determining applications.

This section should be read in conjunction with the Naas NWQ Surface Water management plan.

Strategic Objectives

- Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) should be embeded at all scales, from strategic wetlands and attenuation ponds to neighbourhood-level swales, rain gardens, and infiltration features.
- Surface water should be managed for up to the 1 in 100-year storm event plus climate change allowances.
- Development should ensure no increase in downstream flood risk, with outfalls designed to discharge at greenfield runoff rates in line with the Kildare County Council (KCC) Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) Guidance Document (2024)
- SuDS should be integrated with the landscape and open space framework to deliver multifunctional benefits that contribute to placemaking, education, and community identity.
- SuDS should be designed to reflect the local ecology and character, considering also the context of the Grand Canal. They should form a connected network of corridors that follow stream alignments. These corrdidors should be shaped as multifunctional greenways that integrate biodiversity, recreation, and sustainable water management.

Figure 47: Surface water management by reducing runoff, treating water through rain gardens and bioswales, and mitigating flood risks. Sheffield Grey to Green scheme ©greenestate

Figure 48: Porous, salvaged materials to manage stormwater runoff naturally. Bridgefoot Street Park by DFLA, Dublin ©landezine

Figure 49: "No spoil" strategy that balances site levels to manage rainwater on-site. Airlie Park by DFLA, Dublin ©landezine

Rain gardens

- Rain gardens should be integrated within neighbourhood greens, civic squares, courtyards, and street verges to manage rainfall and surface run-off at source. In street verges, they will take the form of green strips adjacent to the carriageway, acting as bio-filtration systems while supporting resilient planting schemes. They should be planted with a mix of shrubs, wildflowers, perennials, and trees, rain gardens will create a biodiverse and attractive natural streetscape. Within civic squares and courtyards, they will enhance visual amenity, provide opportunities for informal environmental education, and strengthen the climate resilience of the built environment.

Meadows with seasonally wet attenuation basins

- Attenuation basins should be located within the north-eastern floodable parkland, extending the character of de Burgh's Woodland Garden and linking to the historic landscape of Oldtown Demesne. They should be connected to the north–south stream corridor, reinforcing its role as a multifunctional landscape spine. The basins will be managed as species-rich meadows, holding water during storm events and supporting biodiversity, informal recreation, and environmental learning, while ensuring capacity for the 1-in-100-year storm event plus climate change allowances without increasing downstream flood risk.

Retention ponds

- Retention ponds should be strategically positioned at gateway nodes, including the entrance greens and the local centre, where they will form visible nodes within the connected SuDS corridor. These ponds will attenuate stormwater, reduce downstream flood risk, and support biodiversity net gains. Through marginal and aquatic planting, they will also enhance landscape quality and contribute to the amenity value of the public realm.

Canal Buffers

- The 30m buffer to the Grand Canal should be enhanced as a multifunctional landscape of wet meadows, marginal planting, and specimen trees. This zone will safeguard the ecological and heritage character of the canal, delivering habitat enhancement and improved ecological connectivity. As a distinctive waterside amenity, it should also provide walking and cycling routes that link into the wider Grand Canal Greenway, celebrating the site's relationship with the canal as part of its public realm identity.

Figure 50: Rain garden in a residential development

Figure 51: Retention pond on the campus for University College Dublin.

Figure 52: Retention pond on the campus for University Cambridge, UK.

Figure 53: Riparian buffer with a mix of wildflower along the Deansgrange Stream passing through Kilboget Park, Dublin.

Permeable surfaces

- Permeable materials **must** be used where feasible to reduce runoff and support drainage at source.
- Existing permeable surfaces should be retained and enhanced.
- Permeable paving should be integrated with SuDS features to manage water and improve environmental performance.

Bio-Swales

- Swales could be designed as modern interpretations of the drainage ditches, integrated along the edges of development parcels and movement corridors. These broad, shallow channels will act as both water management features and linear ecological corridors, filtering pollutants, managing runoff at source, and conveying flows to larger basins and ponds. They should be combined with tree planting, hedgerows, and seasonal meadow vegetation, to create shaded greenways that buffer built form and reinforce the characteristic of the landscape.

Green-Blue Roofs

- Green-Blue roofs should be incorporated, where feasible, on buildings within development parcels across the Northwest Quadrant to manage rainfall, reduce surface water run-off, and enhance building performance through improved insulation and greening. Planted with resilient, pollinator-friendly species, they will also contribute ecological value and seasonal interest. The opportunity for bio-solar roofs, combining green roof planting with photovoltaic panels, should be explored to deliver additional renewable energy benefits alongside biodiversity and sustainable drainage functions.

Figure 57: Permeable paving, bioswales, planters, runoff management. Ballerup Boulevard by Marianne Levinsen Landskab ©Landezine

Figure 54: Bio-swale integrated within a landscaped residential garden, Shropshire, UK.

Figure 55: Extensive green roof ©Archdaily

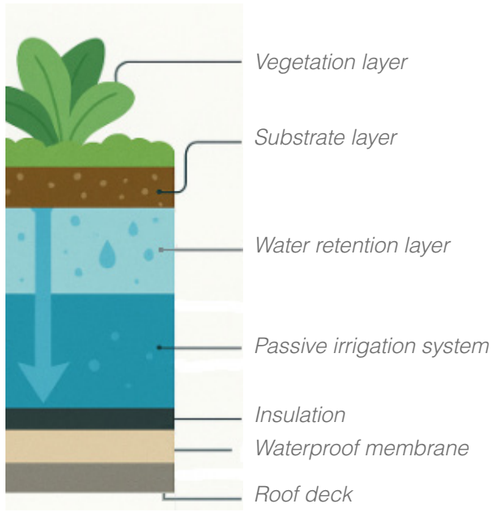


Figure 56: Illustration of Green-Blue roofs ©proteuswaterproofing

3.3 PUBLIC REALM DESIGN

A consistent and cohesive approach to the selection and placement of public realm elements will be applied across the streets and spaces.

The strategic design language draws from the defining characteristics of each character area and the local vernacular, resulting in a palette that is resilient, robust, and durable. Forms should be intentionally bold and simple, with an inherent sense of solidity. Texture, pattern, and repetition should be used sparingly to subtly modify these forms and create a distinct response to place.

The colour palette should be informed by local materials and natural tones, ensuring a strong sense of contextual integration. Each element should be designed with clear functionality, appropriate to its role and setting. Sustainability **must** be embedded throughout: materials are used efficiently, prioritising recycled and durable options that perform well under local conditions.

Overarching Public Realm Principles

- Public realm design should respond to key characteristics of character areas and requirements of all users.
- Public realm design should to consider the whole life cost and embodied carbon in materials to encourage innovated and sustainable use of natural resources. To include use of recycled materials and reducing quantity of materials and material waste/ offcuts.
- Design of public realm should consider sourcing and impact of transportation on the environment. Where possible materials to be locally sourced and/ or sustainably transported.
- Public realm elements should be durable and as part of the design consider the ease for deconstruction, adaptation and/ or reuse.
- Lighter surfaces and materials should be used to increase light reflected and minimise urban heat island/ overheating effects.
- Best practice guidance for inclusive design should be followed including furniture configuration which promotes accessible use by all.
- Public realm elements should be located to avoid conflict between users. For example, seating areas placed away from moving vehicles including cyclists or bollards and signs placed within vehicle sightlines at junctions.
- Ease of maintenance should be maximised in the design including consideration of materials, style of furniture and location of elements for ease of access.
- Access to manholes and other utility access points should form part of the public realm design to avoid unsightly access points or repairs, conflict between utilities and public realm elements and regular lifting and moving of elements to gain access.
- Utility boxes, where they need to be located in the highway, **must** be placed in inconspicuous locations such as verges and screened with planting.
- All public realm spaces should be designed to be inclusive and accommodate for all age groups.

Figure 58: A well-coordinated public realm with widening of footways to enhance the pedestrian feel of the busy nighttime economy, helping to create a high-quality, more attractive, and accessible city centre. Devonshire Street, Carlisle. ©curtins

Figure 59: Permanent pedestrian and cycle zone, featuring outdoor seating, biophilic planters, and flush surfacing, creating a welcoming green oasis in the city centre. Market Street, Oxford ©architectsjournal

Squares and Plazas

- Public squares and plazas must act as key civic spaces within the NWQ, forming focal points within the hierarchy of centres and movement routes.
- Each square must respond to its context and character area while maintaining alignment with the overall NWQ design language.
- The size of each square must reflect the hierarchy of centres:
    - Millennium Park Road Neighbourhood Centre Square: c1,400–2,000 sqm
    - New Caragh Road Local Centre Square: c1,000–1,400 sqm
    - Central Local Centre Square: c900–1,200 sqm
- Squares must function as both destinations and connectors, reinforcing movement networks, permeability and place identity.
- Primary pedestrian and cycle routes must align through or along squares to ensure accessibility and integration within the wider movement network.
- Squares and plazas must be clearly defined by strong building frontages and active edges, creating enclosure and a legible urban space.
- Ground-floor uses such as cafés, shops and community facilities must address the square to ensure active, animated edges throughout the day.
- Spaces must support a wide range of activities, including everyday use, social interaction, markets and community events.
- Squares must be designed to accommodate both programmed and informal uses, allowing flexibility over time.
- Open central areas must be maintained for events, while edges should accommodate seating, spill-out uses and informal play.
- The design must allow for temporary infrastructure such as markets or events without compromising everyday usability.
- Planting must be integrated to provide shade, shelter and visual amenity while maintaining open, flexible space.
- Tree placement should define subspaces and support a human-scaled environment.
- Features such as water elements, public art and play opportunities should be incorporated to reinforce identity and create focal points.
- SuDS features should be integrated where appropriate to support water management and biodiversity.
- Squares must prioritise pedestrians, with clear, direct and accessible routes through and across the space.
- Design must ensure full accessibility for all users, including step-free movement and clear wayfinding.
- Potential conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles must be minimised through layout, surface treatment and spatial definition.

Figure 60: Square (red) and plaza (yellow) locations.

Figure 61: A public square connected to surrounding green space demonstrates how squares can function as both destinations and movement nodes, combining open flexible space, strong edges and integrated landscape to create an active and legible civic place. Eyre Square, Galway ©Brite

Figure 62: A simple, high-quality paved plaza with integrated trees and a water feature creates a flexible and clearly defined civic space that supports movement and gathering. Esbjerg, Denmark ©archdaily

Figure 63: An integrated public realm feature embedded within the streetscape demonstrates how simple, robust elements can create playful, interactive focal points that enhance social engagement and place identity along everyday routes. Potgieterstraat, Amsterdam ©Titel.

Bridges

- Bridges **must** act as key public realm elements, providing strategic connections across the canal, green corridors and movement networks while contributing to a strong sense of place.
- Bridge locations **must** align with key pedestrian and cycle desire lines, reinforcing direct, legible connections across the NWQ.
- Bridges **must** be designed as extensions of the surrounding public realm, with continuity in materials, levels and spatial character.
- Materials and detailing **must** respond to adjacent streets, squares and landscape to create seamless transitions at bridge landings.
- Approaches and landing points **must** be carefully integrated with plazas, streets and green corridors.
- Bridge design **must** reflect its position within the NWQ hierarchy:
    - **Canal Harbour crossing (high status):** Landmark structure with strong architectural expression, high-quality materials (stone, concrete, metal) and a width of 4–6m, reinforcing its civic role.
    - **Landen Park and Millbridge crossings (moderate status):** Simpler, well-integrated structures with a restrained palette and widths of 3–5m, prioritising clarity and durability.
- Detailing **must** be simple, robust and durable, ensuring longevity and ease of maintenance while avoiding unnecessary complexity.
- All bridges **must** provide step-free access, with gradients compliant with inclusive design standards.
- Routes **must** be direct, clearly defined and integrated with the wider pedestrian and cycle network.
- Bridges should be designed as places as well as crossings, with opportunities to pause and experience views.
- Key views to and from the canal, landscape and landmarks **must** be framed and enhanced.
- Integrated lighting **must** support safety, legibility and nighttime character.
- Bridge design **must** respond sensitively to landscape and ecological corridors, minimising visual impact while enhancing surrounding character.
- Opportunities for planting and biodiversity integration should be incorporated at approaches where appropriate.
- Bridges **must** be well overlooked from adjacent development to ensure natural surveillance.
- Handrails, parapets and surface materials **must** be safe, robust and visually consistent with the overall NWQ design language.

Figure 66: Canal crossings

Figure 64: A high-quality bridge acts as a clear, legible movement route and landscape feature, connecting key destinations while framing views and integrating seamlessly with its surroundings. Riverview Bridge, Chicago ©archello

Figure 65: A bridge forming a key civic node, connecting multiple routes and public spaces while supporting movement and gathering. Corrib Salmon Wier Bridge, Galway ©Johnmclaughlin

Street furniture

Street furniture across the NWQ should follow a coherent approach, prioritising durability, functionality, ease of procurement, and a contemporary yet understated aesthetic.

- All items should be thoughtfully integrated with surrounding elements such as paving, tree planting, and other public realm features.
- Furniture should be positioned either individually or in considered groupings, based on use and functional relationships, to ensure clarity and avoid visual clutter within the public realm.
- A coordinated palette of colours and materials should be applied consistently, or in a complementary manner, across all street furniture elements.
- Where appropriate, the use of locally sourced timber should be explored to reinforce local character and support sustainability objectives.

Seating

Seating should be provided in a coordinated range of materials and styles to ensure visual consistency across the area.

- Provision should include a balance of backless benches, benches with backs and armrests, and informal seating opportunities such as low walls or planter edges, accommodating a variety of user needs and activities.

Seating locations should **be carefully considered to:**

- Allow clear space alongside for wheelchair users and people with mobility aids.
- Encourage social interaction through thoughtful grouping and orientation.
- Offer a choice of sunny and shaded positions throughout the day.
- Support inclusive and accessible use.
- Maintain a comfortable separation from vehicular and cycle movement so pedestrians feel safe.
- Be placed clear of primary pedestrian desire lines, avoiding locations where seated users could obstruct movement or create hazards.
- Seating **must** be concentrated within neighbourhood and local centres, squares, plazas and focal points as well as along the primary green corridors and canal edges.
- Seating **must** be provided at regular and legible intervals across the NWQ to ensure accessibility for all users.As a general guide:
  - Along primary routes and green corridors: every 50–100m
  - Within centres and squares: clustered and varied, based on use and activity
  - Within residential areas: every 100–150m, focused at key nodes and small spaces.
- Frequency should increase in areas of higher activity and for routes serving schools, older users and community facilities.

Figure 67: A selection of street furniture elements

Cycle stands

- Stands should be located at key destinations and positioned to avoid creating obstructions to pedestrian routes. Where practicable, they should be sited adjacent to walls, fences, or other built edges to support legibility and efficient use of space.
- Cycle parking should be provided primarily in grouped arrangements, using stands that allow the frame of the bicycle to be securely locked.
- All cycle stands **must** be set out clear of obstructions, with a minimum clearance of 800 mm between stands and adjacent walls or fences to allow comfortable and accessible use and be cognisant of the cycle design manual principles.
- Cycle parking areas should benefit from good visibility and natural surveillance to support user safety and security.

Bus shelters

- Bus shelters should be designed to allow for green roofs or other biodiversity features where feasible and should only be installed on pavements with a minimum clear width of 3 m.
- On pavements wider than 5 m, shelters should be positioned close to the carriageway; on narrower pavements, they should be set to the rear to maintain pedestrian movement.
- Shelter design and materials should reflect local character and contribute to a consistent identity across the NWQ supported by a coordinated range of signage types.

Figure 68: Secured cycle stands, Cambridge Housing ©Archello

Figure 69: A bus shelter with green roof and solar panel ©Wallbarn

Hard surfaces and materials

- Footpaths, cycleways and civic spaces **must** be paved using high-quality, consistent materials that contribute to a unified public realm.
- All hard surfaces **must** utilise bound materials to ensure smooth, durable and accessible routes for all users.
- Surface finishes **must** provide adequate slip resistance in both wet and dry conditions.
- Materials that are overly polished, excessively rough or highly textured **must** be avoided where they compromise comfort or accessibility.
- All surfaces **must** be laid to an even profile with gentle crossfalls to support safe movement and effective drainage.
- Gradients should not exceed 1:20 wherever possible; short steeper sections (up to 1:12) may be acceptable where unavoidable.
- Subtle variation in paving texture, tone or material should be used to highlight junctions, crossings and key destinations.
- Parking areas **must** avoid light-coloured finishes prone to staining and remain visually secondary to the public realm.

Material Strategy and Hierarchy

- A clear hierarchy of materials **must** align with the NWQ structure of centres, streets and focal points.
- Material quality and detailing **must** intensify at centres and key nodes to reinforce civic importance and identity.
- Materials **must** support streets as both movement corridors and places, consistent with DMURS principles.
- A coordinated palette of durable, low-maintenance and sustainable materials **must** be applied across the NWQ, allowing variation by character area while maintaining coherence.
- The following materials establishes a clear hierachy of provision, aligned with the varying character and function of different spaces and streets.

Centres and Key Focal Points (Highest Status)

- **Materials:** Natural stone or premium concrete paving in refined grey and buff tones.
- **Application:** Rich patterns and detailing define plazas, thresholds and gathering spaces.
- **Additional elements:** Coordinated metal, stone and timber street furniture with high-spec kerbs and edging.

Primary Streets (High Status)

- **Materials:** High-quality concrete paving for footways, asphalt carriageways, and smooth bound surfaces for cycle routes.
- **Application:** Clear material differentiation defines pedestrian, cycle and vehicular zones while maintaining continuity.
- **Additional elements:** Coordinated edging and consistent surface finishes reinforce enclosure and legibility.

Access and local streets (Moderate Status)

- **Materials:** Standard precast concrete or asphalt paving in grey/buff tones with asphalt carriageways.
- **Application:** Subtle tonal variation used to define parking bays, thresholds and shared areas.
- **Additional elements:** Integration with planting, SuDS features and simple edging treatments.

Mews (Lower Status / Intimate Scale)

- **Materials:** Block paving or enhanced asphalt in simple, robust finishes.
- **Application:** Minimal variation, with occasional contrast to define parking or shared zones.
- **Additional elements:** Simple timber or concrete edging and limited street furniture.

Green Corridors and Canal Edges (Landscape-Led)

- **Materials:** Resin-bound gravel, bound gravel and self-binding gravel or ashphalt in warm natural tones.
- **Application:** Softer surfaces blend with planting and ecological features, with clear transitions from urban materials.
- **Additional elements:** Timber or simple concrete edging integrated within the landscape.

Figure 72: A warm-toned buff coloured asphalt path blends seamlessly with surrounding grass and planting, demonstrating how softer, natural materials integrate with the landscape while providing a clear, comfortable route and a subtle transition from urban to green space.

Figure 70: Highest Status - Robust block paving with a consistent tone and a simple contrasting strip clearly defines movement and thresholds, creating a durable and legible surface suited to everyday use. Clay Farm, Cambridge.

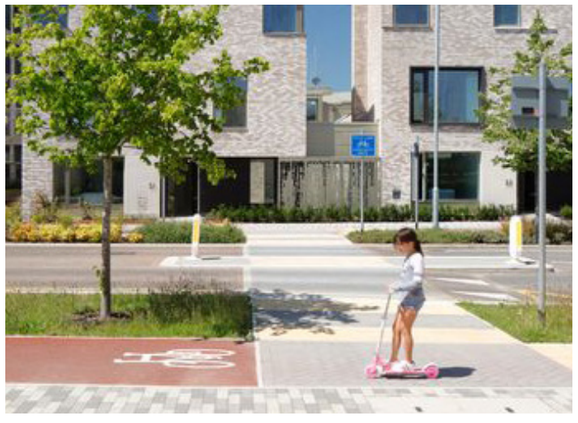


Figure 71: High Status - Clear differentiation between paving, carriageway and cycle surfaces defines pedestrian, cycle and vehicular zones, creating a legible, high-quality street environment while maintaining continuity across the space. Eddington, Cambridge.

Figure 73: Modarate Status - A simple palette of grey-toned block paving with subtle contrast bands clearly defines parking bays and thresholds, creating a legible and durable surface suited to low-speed residential streets. Trumpington, Cambridge

Figure 74: Lower Status / intimate scale - Simple, uniform block paving with minimal tonal variation creates a robust and understated shared surface, with subtle contrasts used to define movement and parking while maintaining an intimate residential character. Great Kneighton, Cambridge.

3.4 STREET DESIGN

PLACEMAKING LED MOVEMENT STRATEGY

The NWQ Framework Masterplan will provide a well connected movement network of varied character. A key feature of the network is filtered permeability (as per DMURS Fig 3.22), which promotes direct connectivity across the site for pedestrians and cyclists, whilst limiting vehicle movement to prioritise sustainable modes of travel. The objective is low car and high sustainable mobility, with the network allowing direct and convenient permeability for pedestrians and cyclists throughout the NWQ, while vehicular movement is more controlled and intentionally routed. Key elements include restricted vehicular access junctions, low design speed and enhanced pedestrian and cycle priority and reduced levels of car parking provision.

The Masterplan must also provide a new bus route running between Sallins Railway Station and Naas Town Centre via the NWQ with the majority of the route being bus, pedestrian and cycle only. Three bus stops should be located along the route strategically located at local centres and key destinations within the NWQ.

STREET TYPOLOGIES

The street hierarchy within the NWQ will provide a legible and permeable environment which puts non-vehicle traffic first, and provides low levels of car parking. The street hierarchy plan indicates the primary network of strategy through the site, comprising three overarching types: Primary Streets, Access Streets, and Local Streets.

Street typologies are to be used across the framework masterplan and the street hierarchy diagram is for illustrative purposes only and should not be read as prescriptive or exhaustive.

Within this hierarchy, there should be variations dependent on anticipated users and the destinations served by the streets. The typical features and character of each street type are described and illustrated on the following pages.

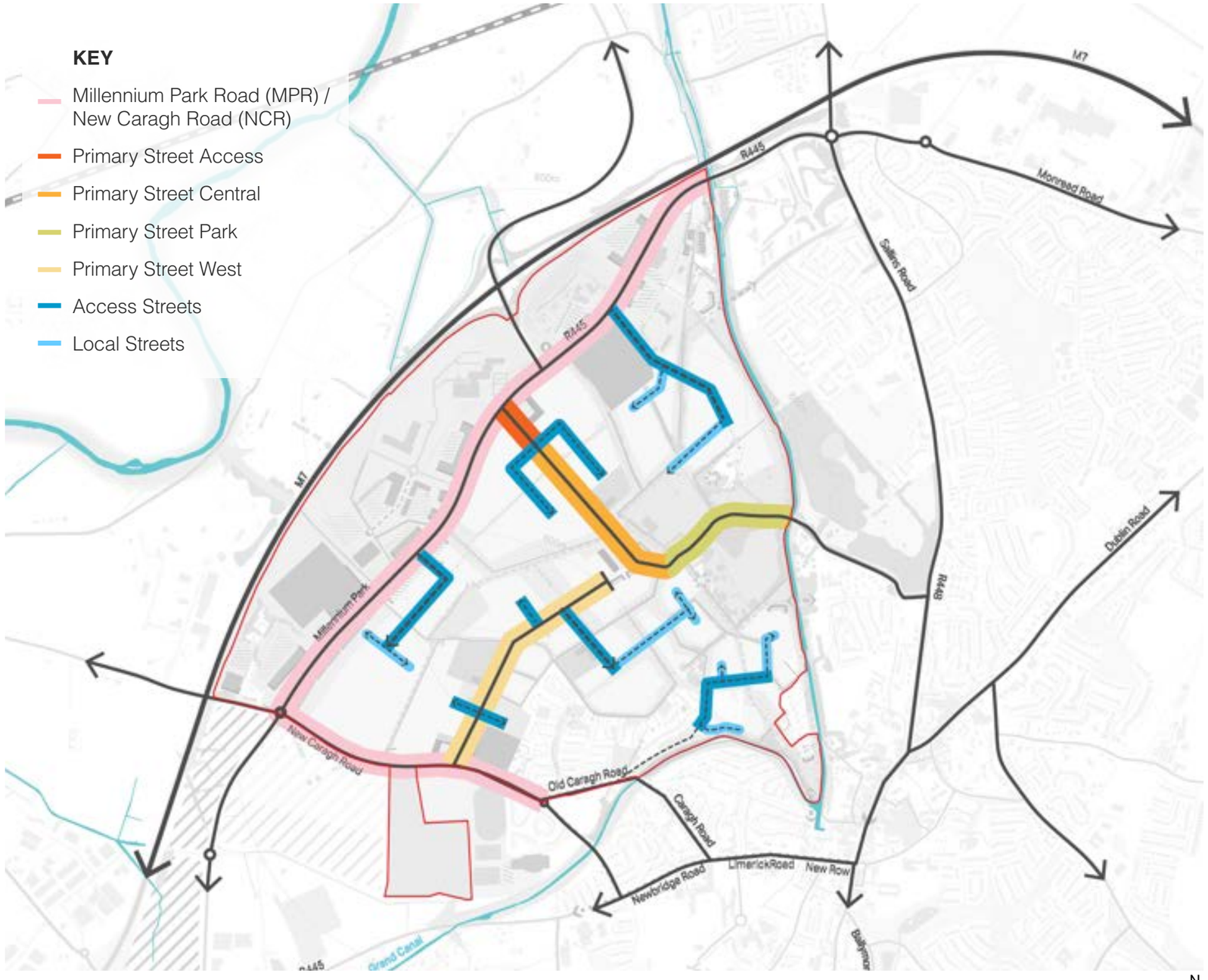


Figure 75: Indicative High-level Street Hierarchy diagram

The street hierarchy is prepared in accordance with DMURS and the Section 28 General Planning Advice (s28 GPA), and should be read alongside these documents.

INDICATIVE HIGH-LEVEL STREET HIERARCHY						
	Modal	**Footway width**	**Green verge / tree pit**	**Cycleway width**	**Carriageway width**	**On-street parking**
MPR / NCR		Existing width	Existing width	Existing width	6.5m	NA
Primary Street Access		3m	2.5 - 3 m	2m (One way)	6 - 6.5m	NA
Primary Street Central		3m	2.5 - 3m	2m (One way)	6 - 6.5m	NA
Primary Street Park		3m	2.5 - 3m	2m (One way)	3.5m (one-way bus route with passing bays)	NA
Primary Street West		3m	2.5 - 3m	2m (One way)	5.5 - 6.5m	NA
Access Streets		2m	2m	On the carriageway	5 - 5.5m	2.4m
Local Streets		2m	2.1m (occasional tree pit along on-street parking)	On the carriageway	5 - 5.5m	2.4m (on-street parking with occasional tree pit)
Mews		6 - 8m (Shared surface with occasional parking provision)				

Figure 76: Indicative High-Level Street Hierarchy table

MILLENNIUM PARK ROAD (MPR) AND NEW CARAGH ROAD (NCR) REGENERATION

Function: Millennium Park Road provides direct access to the northern stretch of the development, connecting to key employment sites and providing access to the M7 motorway. New Caragh Road provides access to the western stretch of the development. They are designed to hold higher volumes of movement and accommodate a mixed carriageway with public bus services, general vehicular traffic, pedestrians, cyclists and HGV traffic. The existing street junctions and roundabouts, except J9A and MPR and NCR junction, are expected to be replaced and redesigned with NWQ in consideration, subject to modeling for TII.

Location: The current locations for Millennium Park Road and New Caragh Road is retained and enhanced.

Design features

- Generous in width, with a 6-6.5m carriageway throughout to accommodate buses, cars and large vehicles, including HGVs.
- Dedicated cycleways and footways either side of the carriageway (both 3m).
- Street trees either side of carriageway planted into the exiting and potentially widened verge, to create enclosure and formality and separate cars / buses from active travel modes.
- MPR - Medium scale employment and / or mixed use residential with potential ground flood retail / commercial buildings fronting onto street along both sides.
- Building scale predominantly 4 storeys, with some taller buildings (up to 6 storeys) at gateway locations (at the access points into the site) and corners, creating street enclosure and active frontage.
- Utility ducting should be in alignment with surface types of pedestrian, cycle and carriageway.
- Building zone set-backs are likely to increase section widths, particularly where watercourses outside the buildable area are incorporated into the street corridor where space allows.
- On the north side, the Ploopluck Stream lies on the boundary and may be integrated within the street corridor, subject to available width and detailed design.

Car Parking

- There will be no on-street parking and any employment vehicular access and parking will be to the rear in courtyards.
- Parking will not dominate the area and be screened by vegetation and mature trees and, where possible, be located to the rear of the buildings.

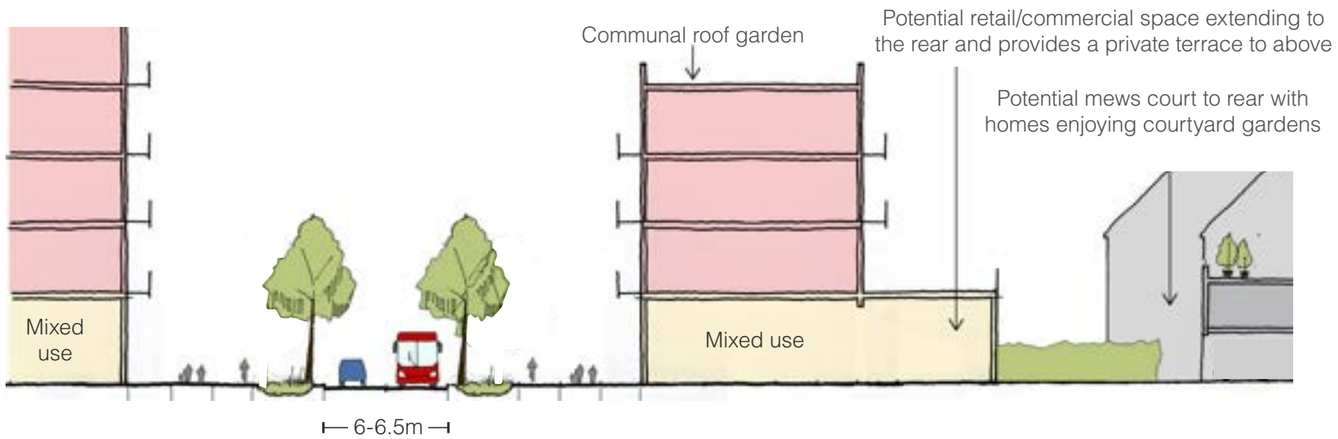


Figure 77: Millennium Park Road and New Caragh Road indicative section

PRIMARY STREET

There are four subcategories within the Primary Street typology, proving different functions:

- Primary Street Access
  - Bus, vehicular, segregated cycleway
  - South of Millennium Park Road
- Primary Street Central
  - Bus (two-way), segregated cycleway
  - Post bus gate, South of Millennium Park Road
- Primary Street Park
  - Bus (one-way), segregated cycleway with passing bays
  - West of Primary Street Central
- Primary Street West
  - Vehicular, segregated cycleway
  - West of New Caragh Road

These sections of the overall Primary Street typology should run through and connect different character areas within the site and therefore there will be elements that will need to be consistent, such as material, kerb alignments, street lighting, boundary treatments and tree planting. The following principles are shared and apply to all three subcategories.

Function: These parts of Primary Street provide access into the site. They are designed to provide main vehicular access with a carriageway and partially shared by public bus services, general vehicular traffic, pedestrians, and cyclists.

Further design principles are set out in Chapter 4.2 Areas of design complexity.

Location: Access is provided at two locations via new junctions on New Caragh Road and from Millennium Park Road.

Design features

- 5.5 - 6.5m carriageway should be provided throughout to accommodate buses and cars.
- Segregated cycleways (2m one direction only) and footways should be provided either side of the carriageway (both 3m).
- Street trees should be provided either side of carriageway planted in 2.5m bio retention channel, to create enclosure and formality and separate cars / buses from active travel modes.
- Well defined defensible space in front of building line (2m), it could accommodate street activity and provide window / seating areas.

Built character

- Formal and urban character should be with consistent building line and no set backs.
- Medium scale residential and retail / commercial buildings should be fronting onto street along both sides.
- Building scale should be predominantly 4 storeys, with some taller buildings (up to 6 storeys) at gateway locations (at the access points into the site) and corners, creating street enclosure and active frontage.
- Street trees and bio retention channels will create enclosure and formality and provide visual amenity.

Car Parking

- No on-street parking.
- Residential parking should be to the rear in mews courtyards and multi-storey car parks.

Figure 78: Biroretention green verge with street trees and plantation, Abode, Great Kneighton, Cambridge.

Figure 80: Bus gate prioritising public transport, cycling, and pedestrian movement and reducing through-traffic. Wapping, London ©TaxiPoint

Figure 79: Dedicated cycle route and raised crossing treatment to prioritise active travel. Eddington, Cambridge.

Primary Street Access

- Bus, vehicular, segregated cycleway
- South of Millennium Park Road

Figure 81: Primary street access location plan

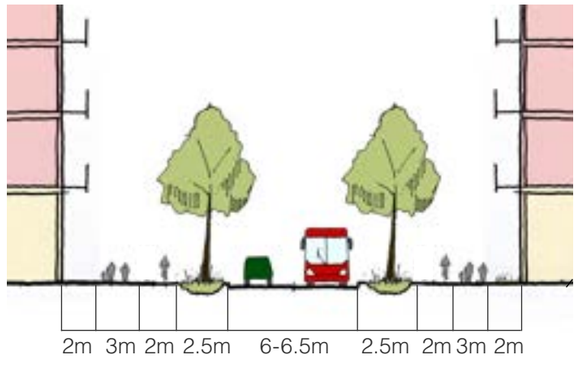


Figure 82: Primary street access section

Primary Street Central

- Bus (two-way), segregated cycleway
- Post bus gate, South of Millennium Park Road

Figure 83: Primary street central location plan

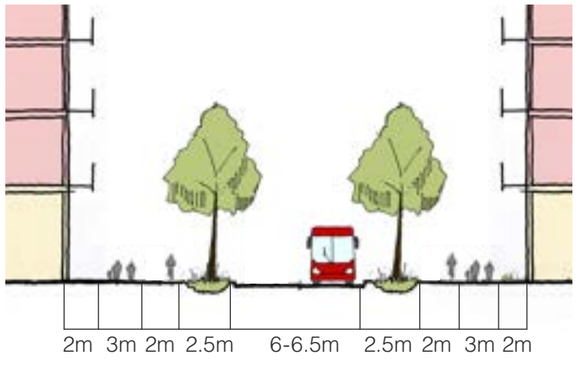


Figure 84: Primary street central section

Primary Street Park

- Bus (one-way), segregated cycleway
- East of Primary Street Central

Figure 85: Primary street park location plan

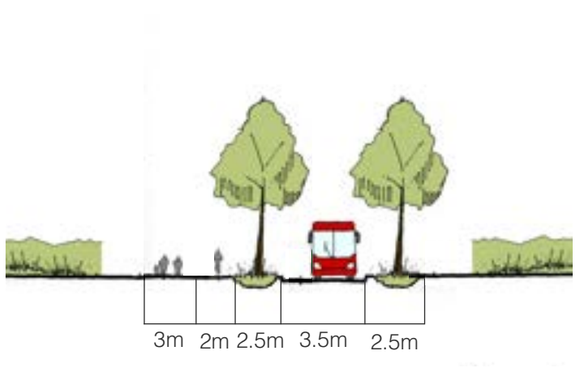


Figure 86: Primary street park section

Primary Street West

- Vehicular, segregated cycleway
- West of New Caragh Road

Figure 87: Primary street west location plan

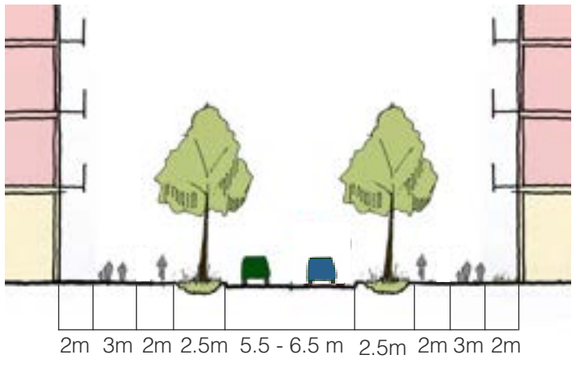


Figure 88: Primary street west section

ACCESS STREETS

Function: Access Streets provide the main part of residential connectivity, linking the Primary Street network to individual development parcels. Access Streets accommodate a mix of movement and local access and are designed for low speeds.

Location: Throughout the site but each contained within its own residential character area, connecting up with the Primary street network, and in some instances providing localised access into the site from the existing street network.

Design features

- 5-5.5m carriageway route should be provided for cars
- Combined cycle/footway should be provided either side of the carriageway (both 2m).
- Street trees should be provided either side of carriageway to separate active travel from car traffic.
- Wide planted area of defensible space in front of building line (2m).

Bio retention channel / Suds feature

Built character

- Domestic and informal character, with a street enclosure of 18-20m and street trees along bio retention channel should be created to provide a strong sense of enclosure.
- Enclosure ratio should be 0.3 - 0.6.
- Varied building line with set backs.
- Wide front gardens to create more private, residential setting.
- Building scale 2-3 storeys, with 4 storey homes to mark corners.
- Variety of housing typologies and rooflines to create interest.

Car Parking

- Residential parking should be parallel parking on street and on plot, in the form of tandem (one behind the other) parking to limit the impact of cars on the streetscape.

Figure 89: Indicative access streets location plan

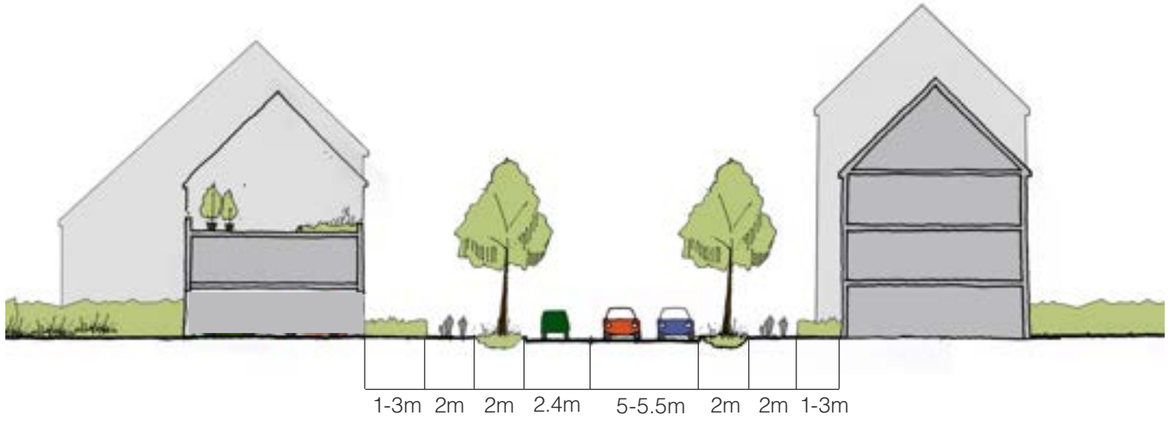


Figure 90: Access street section

Figure 91: Tree-lined access street with integrated on-street parking and strong enclosure. Abode, Great Kneighton, Cambridge.

Figure 92: Low-speed residential access street with generous planting and on-street parallel parking. Abode, Great Kneighton, Cambridge.

LOCAL STREETS

Function: Local Streets will be designed for low speeds and will provide motor vehicle and cycles with shared access. They will connect Access Streets to Mews and will provide secondary access to residential areas as well as some limited other mixed uses and car parks. Design speed reinforced by street design and passive traffic calming measures (see DMURS).

Location: Local Streets are located within the main residential areas of the site and are generally connected to Access Streets.

Design features

- Traditional street character with variable width (15-20m) should be created, with bicycles sharing the carriageway but having priority to ensure cars do not dominate.
- Passive traffic calming measures such as pinch points in the carriageway width.
- Street trees either side of carriageway planted in 2.1m bio retention channel, to create enclosure and formality and separate active travel from car traffic.
- Well defined, wide planted defensible space (1-3m) providing privacy from homes.

Built character

- Traditional character and low key, private setting.
- Varied building lines and roof heights.
- Low building scale (2- 3 storeys).

Car Parking

- Residential parking should be provided on plot in the form of tandem (one behind the other) parking to limit the impact of vehicles on the streetscape, and on-street parking will be arranged within the street tree pit alignment.

Figure 93: Indicative Local Streets location plan

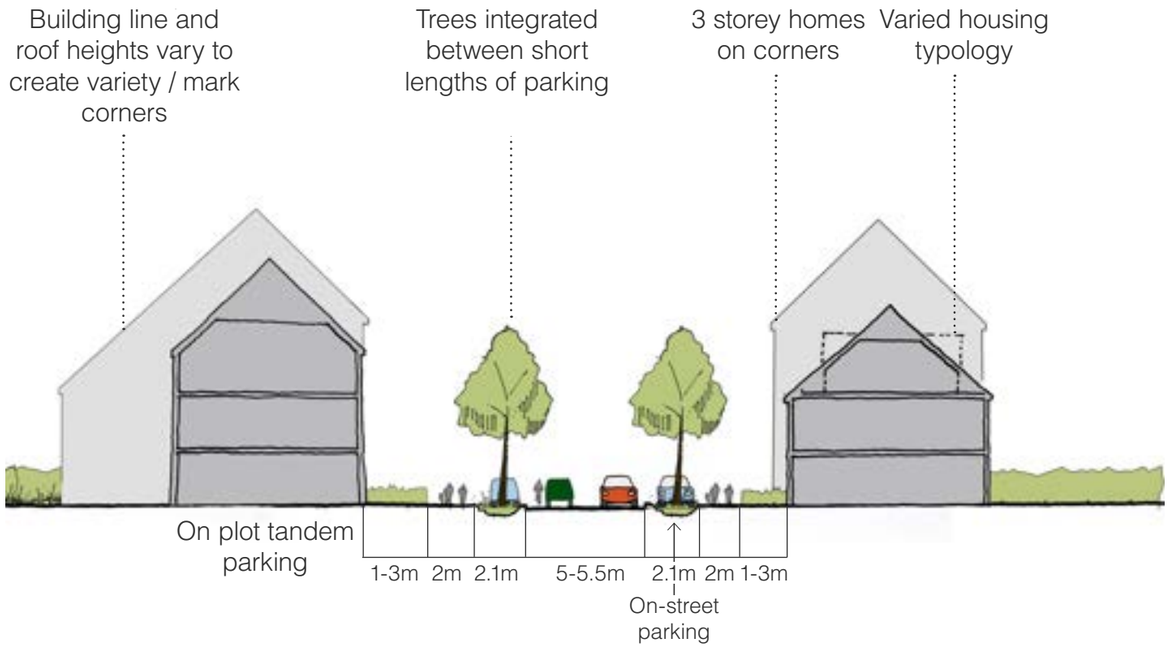


Figure 94: Local streets section

Figure 95: Curvilinear local street with strong landscape integration and low vehicle speeds. Abode, Great Kneighton, Cambridge.

Figure 96: Tree-lined local street with integrated on-street parking and generous planting. Abode, Great Kneighton, Cambridge.

MEWS

The mews typology reflects the principles of DMURS Home Zones by creating a low-speed, pedestrian- and cycle-prioritised environment. Through the use of shared surfaces, passive traffic calming and modal filtering, mews streets discourage through traffic while maintaining permeability for walking and cycling.

Mews are typically narrow and intimate in character, reinforced by landscaping, defensible planting and low-rise built form. Mews streets are not separately identified on the masterplan, as they function as small-scale shared residential access lanes within the wider movement hierarchy**.**

Function: Mews are the lowest order street type and provide fine-grained permeability and will be designed for very low speeds and shared motor vehicle and cycles. They will feature good visibility for cyclists and will include passive traffic calming measures such as pinch points in the street and modal filters at one end, preventing vehicular through movement. They provide private residential access only.

Location: Mews are located within the core of the residential neighbourhoods and are connected to Local Streets.

Design features

- Narrow in width (c.10m) and shared surface, as well as carriageway with equal bike priority with separate footways. Refer to KCC Taking in Charge policy.
- Passive traffic calming measures such as pinch points in the carriageway width and breaks in the carriageway to provide no-through zones except for local residents and emergency vehicles.
- Well defined, planted defensible space (2m) either side of shared surface street.
- Retained hedgerows and tree planting will soften and create intimacy.

Built character

- Informal, intimate and private setting.
- May have buildings on one side overlooking open space.
- Varied building lines and roof heights.
- Low building scale (2-3 storeys).

Car Parking

- Residential parking will be on plot, in the form of tandem (one behind the other) parking where necessary to limit the impact of cars on the streetscape.
- Occasional on street parallel car parking.

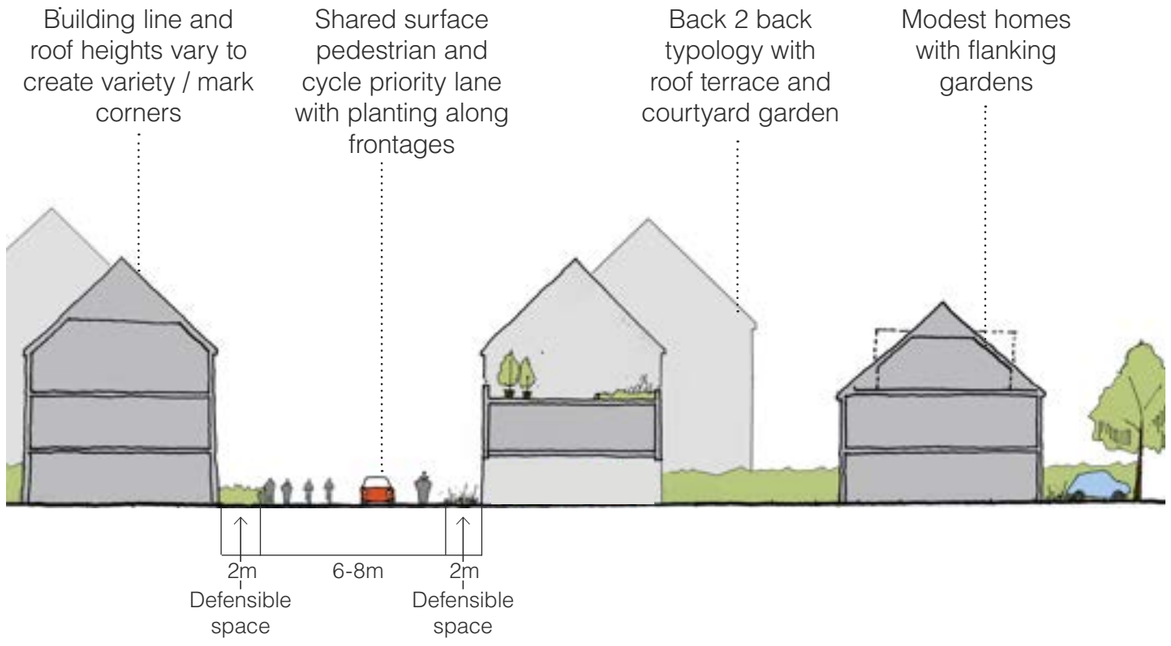


Figure 97: Mews Indicative section

Figure 98: Narrow, shared-surface streets with integrated landscaping, low building scales, and distinct architectural variations in roof heights and facade materials. Abode, Great Kneighton, Cambridge. ©Architectsdatafile

CAR AND CYCLE PARKING STRATEGY

PARKING APPROACH

The amount, type and location of car parking have a significant influence on the quality and success of a development. The approach to car parking at NWQ **must** prioritise non-vehicle traffic, reduced vehicular movement on residential streets, and provide low levels of car parking and very short-term on street vehicular commercial access for loading, deliveries and emergencies throughout the site.

A range of car parking typologies should feature across the various character areas, with the emphasis on parking provision being determined by the design of the street and public space, rather than by a number of spaces per unit and parking locations and types being integrated and well designed.

The overall strategy features two multi-storey car parks for residents and commercial uses, located within the Millennium Park Road and New Caragh Road Neighbourhood Centre and Local Centre and within 500m / 5 minutes walking distance from their house, alongside residential parking in the form of tandem (one behind the other) on-street / on-plot amongst street trees, to ensure that the streetscape is not cluttered, as well as remote shared parking courts / barns to make driving less appealing and convenient. This approach will free up space for placemaking features that will help to create a strong sense of place such as planting, play areas and public realm.

In order to help achieve a modal shift towards a reduced need for cars, appropriate levels of cycle and scooter parking provision as well as e-bike charging points should be located in local centres and the Mobility Hub. This will ensure that cycling, both as a means of commuting and for leisure purposes, is made as convenient as possible.

MAXIMUM CAR PARKING STANDARDS

Residential unit type	No. of bedrooms	NWQ accessible locations	NWQ intermediate locations	NWQ peripheral locations
Apartment	1	0.75	1	1.25
	2	1	1.25	2
Houses and duplexes	2	1	1.5	2
	3	1.5	2	2
Houses	4/4+	1.5	2	2
Visitor parking spaces	n/a	1 space per 10 units for 1, 2 beds	1 space per 10 units for 1, 2 beds	1 space per 10 units for 1 beds

PARKING TYPOLOGIES

The various car parking typologies that should be used are set out over the following pages. More information on the requisite car parking principles are set out in sections 2.4.1 and 3.2, in relation to street hierarchy and character areas.

Figure 99: Tree-lined residential street with on-street parking. Mulberry Park, Bath

Figure 100: Residential development with integrated front-drive parking under the building frontage. Abode, Great Kneighton, Cambridge.

Figure 101: Residential courtyard street showing low-speed shared access and parking. Abode, Great Kneighton, Cambridge.

On-street

- A limited level of residential on street parking should be provided, with an emphasis placed on cross-street permeability and landscape.
- On-street parking should be either parallel or mews and should be designed in accordance with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS).
- A parallel car parking space should be 2.4m wide x 6.0m long.
- There **must** not be more than 3 spaces in a line without landscaping or tree planting to break them up.
- Car parking located on a street to the rear of a house should be accessed by a mews parking arrangement to create a continuous building frontage.

Mews

- The car parking at the rear of the house **must** be accessed by a mews street.
- Apartments above garages should be provided at the appropriate locations to ensure natural surveillance to the street.
- This typology could be used for the residential units to create a continuous building frontage along streets such as access streets and local streets, where on-plot parking is not appropriate.
- Occasional on-street car parking to be provided where appropriate.
- Parking for back-to-back typologies should be carefully integrated, with a preference for on-plot provision rather than remote or overlooked parking courts.
- Refer to Mews street typology sub-section, where substantive design guidance is included.

Figure 103: Shared residential mews street with integrated parking and planting. Abode, Great Kneighton, Cambridge. ©Architecturetoday

Undercroft parking

- Undercroft and basement parking should be provided in higher-density locations, including along Primary Streets and within neighbourhood centres, where appropriate.
- Parking access **must** be taken from access or local streets and located away from junctions to ensure safe and unobstructed movement, while maintaining the continuity of primary street frontages.
- Parking **must** be integrated discreetly within building blocks, with the interface forming part of the overall architectural composition.
- Any parking elements facing the street **must** be carefully designed or screened, with architectural detailing and landscaping used to create active, visually engaging frontages.
- Opportunities **must** be taken to animate ground floors adjacent to parking areas and incorporate features such as podium gardens where appropriate.
- All parking solutions **must** support a high-quality public realm and ensure that the streetscape remains pedestrian-focused and not dominated by vehicles.

Figure 102: Housing court with pedestrian-oriented access and discreet parking. Abode, Great Kneighton, Cambridge.

Figure 104: Apartment building with undercroft parking access. Willow Court, Oxford.

Figure 105: Frontage with ground-floor parking and screened entrance. Merton Abbey, London.

Allocated on-street in front of property

- This arrangement should be used for terraces and town houses.
- Only 1 car parking space should be provided per property and should be located in front of the property.
- There should be an equal amount of landscape and car parking space provided within an enclosed landscaped front garden in order to avoid parked cars dominating the street frontage.
- Spaces should be overlooked by front windows of the property.
- Clear delineation is needed between the public and private spaces.
- Allocated on-street parking in front of the property could be appropriate for stacked units where it is clearly defined, directly overlooked, and integrated into a well-designed frontage.

Figure 106: Allocated on-street parking in front of terraced homes with a landscaped frontage. Horsted Park, Kent ©building

Figure 107: Terraced housing with discreet on-street parking integrated into the street scene. Kidbrook, London

Shared parking court / barn

- Parking courtyards **must** be overlooked by neighbouring properties.
- Access to the parking courtyards should be through archways where possible to ensure the continuity of the street frontage.
- Car parking courtyards should be kept small in scale, limited up to maximum 8 cars and they should have an easy access.
- Public and private spaces should be very clearly defined to avoid confusion and necessary design mitigations should be applied for maximum safety such as gates or barriers.

Figure 108: Shared parking court serving contemporary residential mews houses. Great Kneighton, Cambridge

Figure 109: Tree-lined residential parking court with soft landscaping and low-key parking provision. Great Kneighton, Cambridge

Figure 110: Undercroft parking integrated beneath an apartment building. Great Kneighton, Cambridge

Multi-storey

- Multi-storey car parking **must** be no more than 3-5 storeys and at least one principal façade should be fronted by development or screened (e.g. a green wall).
- They should be within 500m of all the houses that is serving and have enhanced architectural or landscaping design to ensure that the ground floor provides interest.
- Access **must** be provided from access streets and **must** not disrupt the continuity of the street frontage. Entrances should be discreetly integrated into the building line, avoiding gaps, setbacks or visual breaks that would weaken the enclosure, rhythm or active character of the streetscape.
- Access ramps should be located away from junctions so as not to restrict movement.

Figure 112: Multi-storey car park with a green wall facade. PARK'N'PLAY, Copenhagen. ©archello

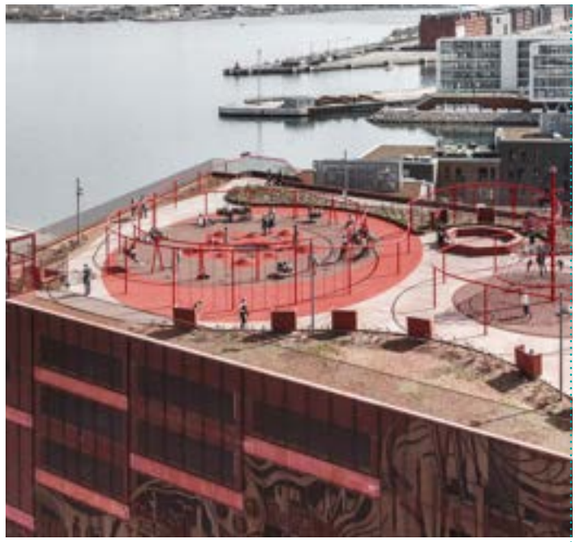


Figure 113: Multi-storey car park with a rooftop playground. PARK'N'PLAY, Copenhagen. ©archdaily

Cycle parking

- Cycle parking should be provided in a location with direct, easy access from the street and should be provided at the entry point to buildings.
- Cycle parking should be secure and overlooked, in defensible space lockers and/ or communal access / storage areas.
- Cycle parking should be provided in a location that is closer than car parking spaces or drop off bays to the entrances of community facilities such as schools and shops.
- Cycle parking could be provided in the MSCP.

Figure 111: A new public social space (Park of Olives) raised above a carpark Olive Grove Green Roof in Porto, Portugal, Porto ©us.edu.pl

Figure 114: Building with timber-louvered facade. Sadlers Mead multi-storey car park. ©vincenttimber

Figure 115: On-street cycle parking stands. Kings Cross, London. ©nigel.dunnett

- Cycle parking should be located to encourage the use of a bicycle as first choice for short trips and preferably within the footprint of the building and be developed in accordance with development plan standards.
- Domestic, secure cycle parking should be provided for all residents in secure, convenient locations in defensible spaces and shared storage areas, as close as possible to the main entry/exit points, along with short stay visitor parking throughout the development in appropriate locations.
- Cycle parking shoud be in accordance with C15 Development Management Standards of CDP.
- Proposals should refer to the National Transport Authority Cycle Design Manual and CDP.

Electric charging points

- All houses with on-plot parking **must** have a dedicated (Electric Vehicle) EV charging point.
- Refer to emerging national policy including National Transport Authority Zero Emission Vehicles Ireland (NTA ZEVI) and related provisions / CDP.

Other parking

- Parking provision for parklands/sport facilities and amenity space should be provided in accordance with the provisions set out in the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 and any s28 guidance.
- Commercial car parking provision is set out per character areas in Chapter 4.
- Parking and loading areas for smaller retail units should be designed for ease of access and quick turn over.
- It is envisaged that the main anchor retail unit/supermarket and immediately adjoining shop units should, however be served from a delivery area within the multi-storey car parks.

Figure 116: Tree-lined streetscape and parking court area.

Figure 117: Shared public space with cycle parking. Kings Cross, London.

Figure 118: Electric vehicle charging point. ©nesselectrical

Figure 119: Surface car park with integrated tree planting and landscaping. ©srtbuilds

3.5 EMPLOYMENT DESIGN

The NWQ is a strategic growth area with strong transport connectivity via the M7 motorway and Naas / Sallins railway station, making it attractive for mixed-use development, including employment in the form of office-based and light industrial business opportunities ensuring a mix of business and job creation opportunities for the benefit of the Northwest Quadrant, Naas, and reducing car-borne commuting. This area has the potential to complement Millennium Park (a key business hub) while addressing future employment and retail demands for a growing population.

The Framework Masterplan features a primary employment zone located to the north of the Millennium Park Road, leveraging its proximity with the directly adjacent commercial uses in this area and connectivity to existing infrastructure. Business linkages will be encouraged, building on the employment zones proximity to the new residential development, encouraging integration between existing employees and new residents.

The employment area should provide a diverse range of building typologies and plot sizes, accommodating start-ups, SMEs, and established businesses while future-proofing the area by enabling buildings and sites to adapt over time to changing business needs, work patterns, and economic conditions. The area **must** be designed to deliver a high-quality, vibrant, legible, and economically viable employment zone. It should include new small- to medium-scale light industrial units and a larger logistics hub to the south of the Kerry Global Innovation Centre and Applegreen Millennium Park, alongside new office development to the north of Naas Community College. Together, these uses will strengthen the economic base of the development and support job creation within walking and cycling distance for many residents.

These commercial uses are supported by a mixed-use zone fronting onto either side of the Millennium Park Road and that will combine residential, flexible workspace and light industrial uses, which will encourage a more substantial and varied employment site that is attractive for investment and reduce the need for long commutes.

There will be a cross fertilisation of services in this location, with the relative proximity of the new Neighbourhood Centre, which sits at the main gateway into the site on the Millennium Park Road and Northern Quadrant Boulevard, providing additional amenities for employees and students at the College. In time, new employees will increase footfall to the services and facilities on offer within the Neighbourhood Centre.

All employment areas will benefit from direct vehicular, pedestrian, and cycle access, with strong integration into the existing and proposed active travel network along Millennium Park Road. A new bus service proposed to operate through the Northwest Quadrant will provide frequent and convenient public transport connections to Naas town centre, Sallins Railway Station, Neighbourhood Centres, and surrounding residential areas, encouraging sustainable movement and reducing car dependency. This high level of connectivity will support sustainable commuting patterns and ensure that employment locations are easily accessible for workers, visitors, and customers by public transport, walking, and cycling alike.

Creche provision will be required to support the proposed employment uses and the needs of the wider workforce. These should be located to address the street and open space, with one creche in the office district and one in the light industrial district.

EMPLOYMENT PLACEMAKING PRINCIPLES

The employment and mixed use zones along Millennium Park Road **must** accommodate a range of office, light industrial, warehousing, and complementary commercial uses, and should deliver a high quality, coherent, and economically viable employment environment.

Employment Structure and Land Use

- Development should provide predominantly office-led uses on the eastern side of Millennium Park Road, while light industrial, logistics, and some office development should be located on the western side of Millennium Park Road.
- A range of smaller commercial and workspace uses should be integrated across the area to support diversity and flexibility.

Gateway and Arrival

- Development **must** create a strong sense of arrival through distinctive gateway buildings at key junctions and approach points along Millennium Park Road.
- Gateway buildings should act as landmarks, reinforcing legibility and identity.

Built Form

- Taller elements should be located at gateways and key frontages, with appropriate transitions to surrounding areas.
- Large buildings (generally exceeding 5,000 sq m or 60 m façade length) **must** be carefully articulated.
- Massing **must** be broken down through articulation, changes in plane, material

Figure 120: Articulated large-scale buildings with active frontages, green roofs, and landscaped routes create a cohesive and sustainable employment environment. Jinwan Aviatin City Industrial Service Centre, Zhuhai, China ©chinese-architects

variation, and the use of smaller perimeter buildings.

- Buildings should incorporate green roofs, solar panels, and other sustainable technologies to support energy efficiency and climate resilience.
- Materials and design approaches should prioritise durability, adaptability, and long term performance.

Relationship to Streets and Public Realm

- All buildings, including large buildings, **must** provide active and visually engaging frontages addressing streets and public routes.
- Entrances, receptions, offices, cafés and similar uses **must** be located on principal elevations to animate the street.
- Active frontages **must** incorporate windows and openings to provide natural surveillance.
- Spill out uses such as cafés should be provided where appropriate to support street activity.
- Ground floors **must** incorporate active and flexible uses, supported by increased floor to ceiling heights where appropriate.

Transition and Integration

- Development adjoining the M7 should provide appropriate setbacks in line with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) requirements, with built form and landscaping designed to minimise visual impact and create a softened edge when viewed from the motorway.
- Development **must** provide a sensitive transition between employment areas and adjoining residential neighbourhoods.
- This transition should be achieved through smaller scale buildings, changes in height and massing, and landscape buffers.
- Horizontal mixing of uses, including residential, light industrial, and office development to the south of Millennium Park Road, should be supported along key frontages to create active, diverse, and well-integrated environments.

Landscape and Green Infrastructure

- A strong landscape framework **must** be delivered using street trees, structural planting, and green infrastructure.
- Landscaping **must** be used to soften large scale buildings, structure movement, and enhance visual amenity.
- SuDS features, including rain gardens, swales, and attenuation basins, **must** be integrated as functional and visual elements.
- Site edges **must** be strengthened through layered planting and landscape buffers.

Car Parking and Servicing

- Car parking **must** be provided within small shared landscaped courts or multi-storey car parks, particularly within mixed use areas.
- Parking areas **must** be designed as landscaped environments, incorporating tree planting, permeable surfaces, and SuDS.
- Servicing arrangements **must** be designed to minimise impact on streets and public spaces, and should not dominate key frontages.

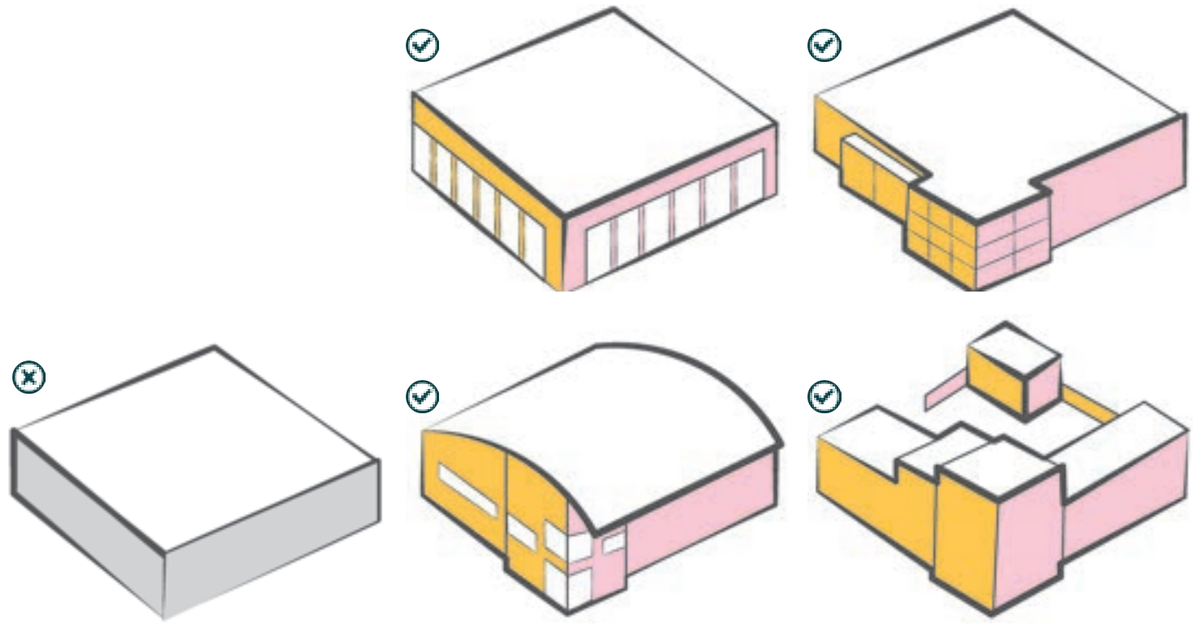


Figure 121: Various options showing how to break up the massing of large buildings, warehouses

Figure 122: Articulated warehouse buildings with a clear office-fronted edge, active entrances, and integrated landscaping create a well-defined and visually engaging employment frontage. ForD warehouse, Hangzhou, China ©archello

4. AREA SPECIFIC GUIDANCE

4.1 Residential and mixed use character areas

NWQ will feature five interconnected but distinctive character areas, as illustrated on the plan opposite. These are the Village, Grand Canal Side, Compact Neighbourhoods, Northwest Quadrant Boulevard and Millennium Link. Whilst strong physical and visual connections link these character areas, the overall character of each will be unique and distinct, relating strongly to their existing setting and surrounding elements. The unique character of Naas and the NWQ will be reflected in all five of the character areas, however each will also have distinct characteristics that are inspired by the design drivers and setting for each character area.

COMPACT DEVELOPMENT

Compact development enables sustainable housing delivery by providing more homes on less land through a design led approach. The design concept promotes proximate land uses to contribute towards placemaking and enable sustainable mobility for short trips. It maintains a human scale that supports local character, walkability and high quality placemaking. This approach typically comprises gentle density (low to mid-rise buildings) such as duplexes, townhouses and small apartment buildings.

Across all character areas, compact development will:

- **Deliver a strong, mixed use and sustainable community supported by local services and public transport.**
- **Be characterised by gentle density (low to mid-rise buildings), typically 2 to 4 storeys with some localised developmentof 5-7 storeys for placemaking and density reasons.**
- **Provide a diverse range of housing types, including duplex units, small scale apartment buildings, townhouses, mews houses and back to back housing, with an emphasis on compact own-door homes.**
- **Use compact layouts with reduced setbacks and efficient overlooking distances to support higher residential densities and active street frontages.**
- **Apply significantly reduced parking provision enabled by bus-based public transport, strong masterplanning, proximate development and a clear emphasis on active travel.**
- **Be designed to reflect and reinforce good interpretation of what vernacular means to NWQ in built form, materials and scale, while delivering a coherent contemporary character.**

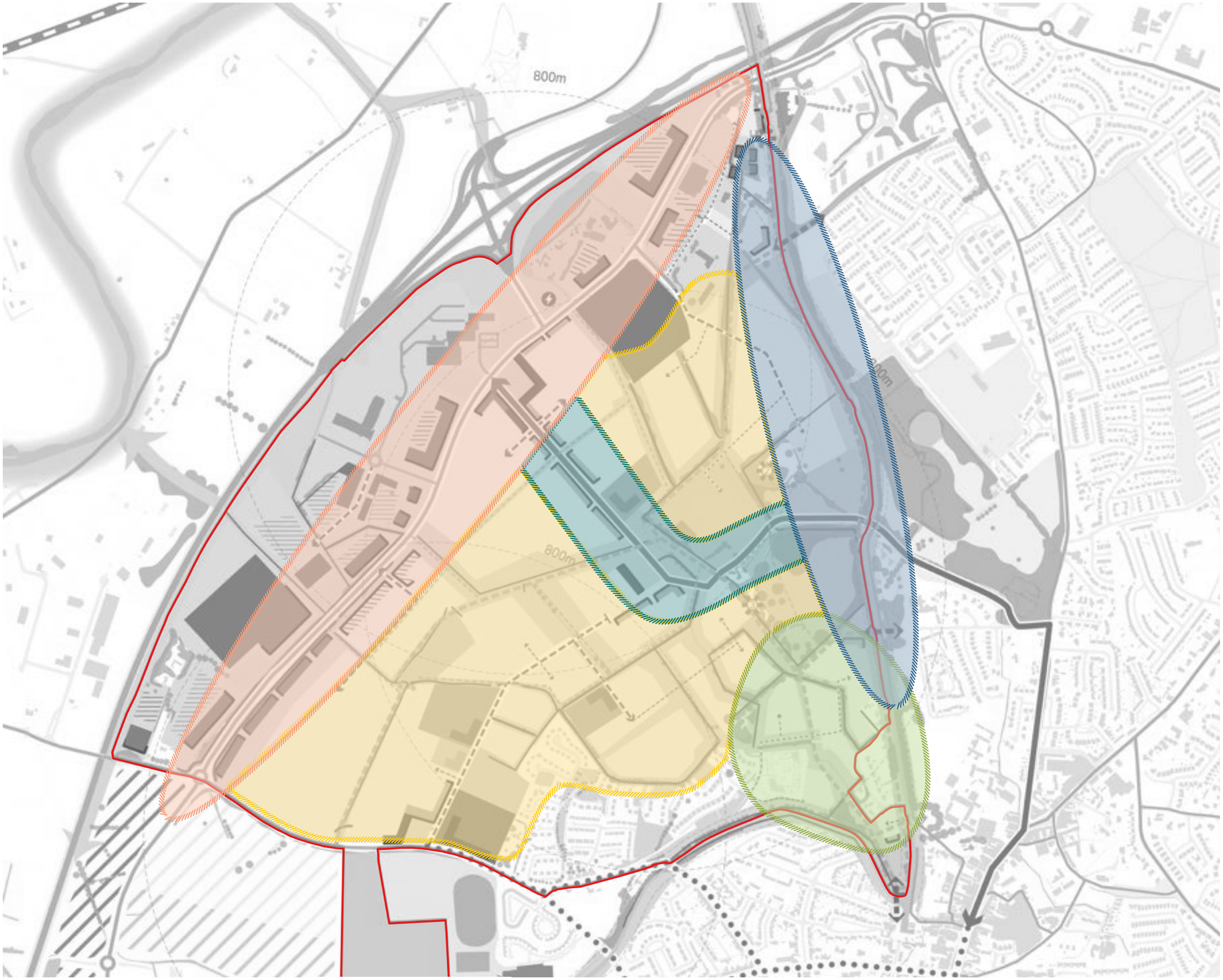


Figure 123: NWQ Character Areas

MILLENNIUM PARK ROAD

This character area is a key gateway due to its prominent location at a principal entrance into the NWQ, its strong frontage to Millennium Park Road, and its role in establishing a distinctive first impression of the wider masterplan area.

This gateway character area features an office district fronting onto the Millennium Park Road and forms an important frontage, combining residential, mixed use, workspace and light industrial uses, which will bolster and complement the existing commercial uses in this zone. It may include commercial typologies that enable conversion to residential. It will feature a mix of flexible spaces for a range of non-residential uses on lower levels, such as food and drink, with residential uses on upper levels. There is also potential to introduce a hotel in this area.

The Neighbourhood Centre and its plaza will be the key focal point for the character area. Residential typologies that enable conversion to commercial uses, with potentially 4m floor-to-ceiling heights at ground floor level. Comprising predominantly 3-4 storeys with buildings at 5-7 storeys along the main gateway frontage into the site from the Primary street access from Millennium Park Road. The new bus route will run northern section - from Sallins Station to the new NWQ Primary Street via the Neighbourhood Centre.

PLACEMAKING PRINCIPLES

1. **Key gateway frontage character area**
2. **Office district with potential for innovation**
3. **Light Industry and Office district fronting onto Millennium Park Road**
4. **Formal, urban character**
5. **Gridded orthogonal development pattern**
6. **Strong active frontage onto Millennium Park**
7. **Reduced car parking ratios**

KEY FEATURES	
Density Range	65 - 90 dph
Density Band	High
Building Scale	3-7 storeys
Land Uses	Employment, Residential, Neighbourhood centre
Potential Residential Typologies (in order of hierarchy)	Apartments, Duplex (maisonette), Houses
Street typology	Existing Millennium Park Road retrofitted to new sectional design (Ref. Section 3.4)
Open Space	Private / Communal open space, Courtyard gardens, Upper floor terraces. New public open space on Millennium Park Road in location of Oldtown Stream.
Car parking typology	Multi-storey, Shared parking court

Figure 124: A vibrant local centre with mixed use apartment buildings with ground floor retail, seating areas and cycle parking. High Street, Walthamstow, London ©JBRiney

Figure 125: Mid-rise buildings with a strong, formal layout and integrated landscaping create a dense, well-defined urban frontage Coopers Cross, Dublin ©O'mahony

NWQ BOULEVARD

This character area consists of both higher density development and the main park. It forms a key spine through the site, connecting the Millennium Park Neighbourhood Centre gateway with the Grand Canal at Tandy's Bridge. It will include some residential, playing fields and a new primary school and local centre, overlooking the main park, creating a community and educational hub.

This character area is central to the NWQ framework masterplan, as it connects the Millennium Park Road Neighbourhood Centre to the Central Local Centre, community infrastructure and the main park. It will form a strong heart for the wider NWQ, supported by a public transport corridor and a high level of activity. Development is expected to be predominantly own-door housing, with apartment buildings located at key corners and along block edges to provide definition and help animate the streets.

Housing will be 3-5 storeys with a strong and regular building edge forming a sense of enclosure. Typologies that support active ground floors will offer commercial space, live-work and some mixed uses, forming a lively character area. The car free / active travel sections of the Primary Street run through this character area. The new bus route will run through the northern section of this character area.

KEY FEATURES	
Density Range	65 dph
Density Band	Higher
Building Scale	3-5 storey
Land Uses	Neighbourhood Centre, local centre and sports grounds
Potential Residential Typologies (in order of hierarchy)	Apartments, Duplex (maisonette), Houses
Street typology	Primary Street Central, Primary Street Park
Open Space	Main park, Sports grounds, Courtyard gardens, Upper floor terraces
Car parking typology	Shared parking court

PLACEMAKING PRINCIPLES

1. **Clear, legible urban structure opening out onto the main park and the central local centre**
2. **Strong, orthogonal building line**
3. **Active frontage along street**
4. **Formal character**
5. **Continuous building line onto the NWQ Boulevard**
6. **Reduced car parking ratios**

Figure 126: Four storey apartments and townhouses along a primary street creating an urban character. Great Kneighton Cambridge (on the left), Kidbrook, London (in the middle), Århusgade, Copenhagen (on the right)

COMPACT NEIGHBOURHOODS

The compact neighbourhoods character area is the largest character area in NWQ and will form the main focus of everyday community life. It will feature housing at compact, low-to-medium density alongside a key community hub comprising a secondary school, primary school, local centre and a linear park.

This area includes the New Carragh Road Local Centre and its associated commercial and community uses, which will anchor activity and support day-to-day needs within the NWQ. The bus corridor serves the area by providing convenient access, although it does not run through the area itself. It is envisaged that it will accommodate the majority of the overall residential quantum, with a strong emphasis on own-door family homes and a smaller proportion of apartment buildings at key locations to provide enclosure and define corners.

A diverse range of typologies, including townhouses, mews houses, back to back homes, maisonettes and small scale apartment buildings, will support a well balanced, active community. Building heights will typically be low-to-medium, predominantly 2 to 3 storeys, with some taller buildings (up to 5 storeys) used selectively at landmark locations.

A main park in the eastern part of the character area will provide a multifunctional new green space while preserving the setting of Millbank House. The new bus route will run through this character area, and the mobility hub will be located within the Neighbourhood Centre.

KEY GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. **Mix of compact urban block typologies**
2. **Formal, enclosed and clearly defined streets and spaces**
3. **Strong hierarchy of streets, central square(s) and civic spaces**
4. **Wide range of housing types**
5. **High level of pedestrian and cycle permeability**
6. **Transition zone between adjacent character areas with higher densities**

KEY FEATURES	
Density Range	45 - 55 dph
Density Band	Medium / low
Building Scale	Predominantly 2-3 storey
Land Uses	Residential, Education, Local centre
Potential Residential Typologies (in order of hierarchy)	Houses, Duplex (maisonette), Apartments
Street typology	Primary Street West, Access Streets, Local Streets, Mews
Open Space	Rear gardens, Upper floor terraces, Main park, Linear park
Car parking typology	On plot, On street, Multi-storey, Shared parking court

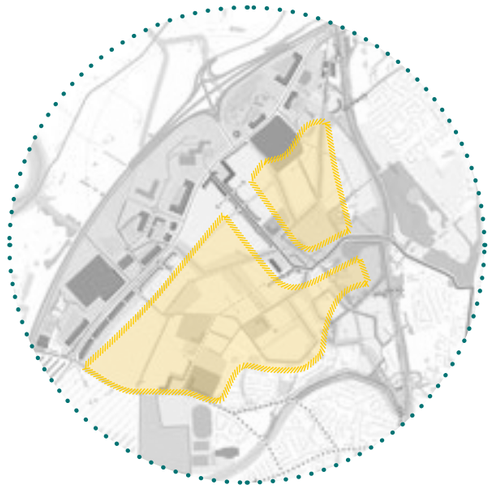
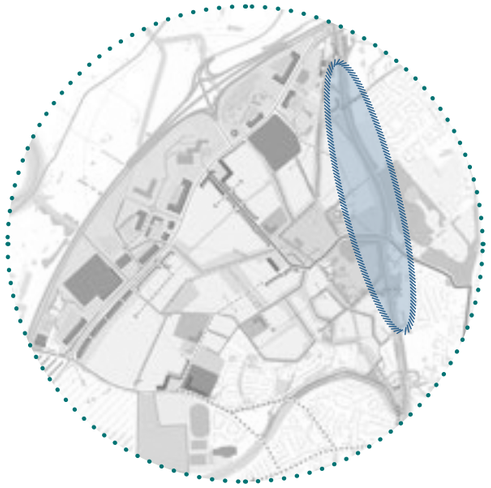


Figure 128: Duplex housing to increase density with "'own-door' approach. Sandford Lodge, Dublin ©archello

Figure 127: Increased density with mews arrangement. Abode Cambridge

Figure 129: Terraced houses facing an open space good typology for compact design. Accordia, Cambridge

CANAL SIDE



The Canal Side character area overlooks the Grand Canal and adjoining open spaces, including De Burgh's woodland garden. It will promote strong connectivity to surrounding areas through three new pedestrian bridges, ensuring NWQ is well integrated with its wider context.

The character area will have a semi rural character, with low to medium rise housing (typically 2 to 3 storeys, with key buildings or groups at 4 to 5 storeys) forming a strong frontage onto the Grand Canal in a contemporary architectural language. Canal frontages of the development will have an important space to frame and there is a need for a high quality frontage. It will connect to the main park around Millbank House and the bus only section of Primary Street.

The character area will include green streets and feature reduced car parking ratios.

KEY FEATURES	
Density Range	45 - 50dph
Density Band	Medium / low
Building Scale	Predominantly 2-5 storeys
Land Uses	Residential, Main Park, Canal Walk Focal Point, Leinster Mills Focal Point
Potential Residential Typologies (in order of hierarchy)	Houses, Duplex (maisonette), Apartments
Street typology	Primary Street Park, Access Streets, Local Streets, Mews
Open Space	Courtyard gardens, Upper floor terraces, Back gardens
Car parking typology	On street, On plot

KEY PLACEMAKING PRINCIPLES

1. **Strong building line overlooking canal Main Park, GBI and open spaces**
2. **Linear development aligned with the canal edge, often with more open block structures**
3. **Open, expansive and strongly influenced by the canal and its buffer zone**
4. **Landscape led structuring with a clear transition from urban to natural**
5. **Sensitive contextual development**
6. **Connectivity into wider area**

Figure 130: Buildings overlook a soft, natural water edge, illustrating a landscape-led canalside setting where planting and ecology define the character. Ninewells, Cambridge

Figure 131: High density parkside living, Littlemore Waterside, Oxford. ©prp

Figure 132: A mix of housing set behind a landscaped water corridor shows a soft, landscape-led edge Oak Grove, Miton Keynes. ©homeviews

THE VILLAGE

The Village character area is located in the south eastern corner of the site and has an / important relationship with the town centre and its Canal Quarter. The setting will be compact and intimate. The layout will comprise a tight urban grain at a low building scale of around 3-4 storeys. This character area will feature green streets and open spaces with lower parking levels suited this accessible location at the edge of the town centre. The character area will see high levels of active travelalong very attractive routes along the canal and its green corridors.

KEY PLACEMAKING PRINCIPLES

1. **Informal character**
2. **Irregular-built form**
3. **Green streets and open space permeating through**
4. **Reduced car parking ratios**
5. **Compact and intimate setting**
6. **Strong sense of arrival from Canal Quarter**

KEY FEATURES	
Density Range	55 - 65 dph
Density Band	Medium / high
Building Scale	3-4 storey
Land Uses	Residential
Potential Residential Typologies (in order of hierarchy)	Houses, Duplex (maisonette), Apartments, Back-to-back Houses
Street typology	Access Streets, Local Streets, Mews
Open Space	Courtyard gardens, Upper floor terraces
Car parking typology	On street, On plot

Figure 133: Green streets with townhouses, Accordia, Cambridge. ©Rightmove

Figure 134: Medium / high density residential with compact and intimate setting. Kidbrooke Village, London. ©divisare

Figure 135: Iconic linear park featuring landscaped swale. St. Chad's, Essex. ©EssexDesignGuide

4.2 Areas of design complexity

NWQ will include four key areas that will act as focal points and bring residents together: Millennium Park Road Neighbourhood Centre, New Caragh Road Local Centre, Grand Canal Walk and the Central Local Centre.

These areas will bring residents, employees and visitors together, with additional focal spaces (see page 14) complementing these key places.

Each will accommodate day-to-day facilities and services within walking distance of new homes.

The following pages set out design guidance that should be followed for each area of design complexity. In each case, the guidance features:

- Placemaking principles
- Axonometric diagram
- Land use plan
- Hand drawn illustrative sketch
- Precedent photographs

Precedent studies are included to inform the design approach and articulate the quality, character, and spatial principles envisaged for the development.

The precedents highlight key design principles and provide adaptable guidance on built form, materials, and landscape treatment, rather than serving as models for direct replication.

KEY

1. Millennium Park Road Neighbourhood Centre
2. New Caragh Road Local Centre
3. Central Local Centre
4. Grand Canal Walk

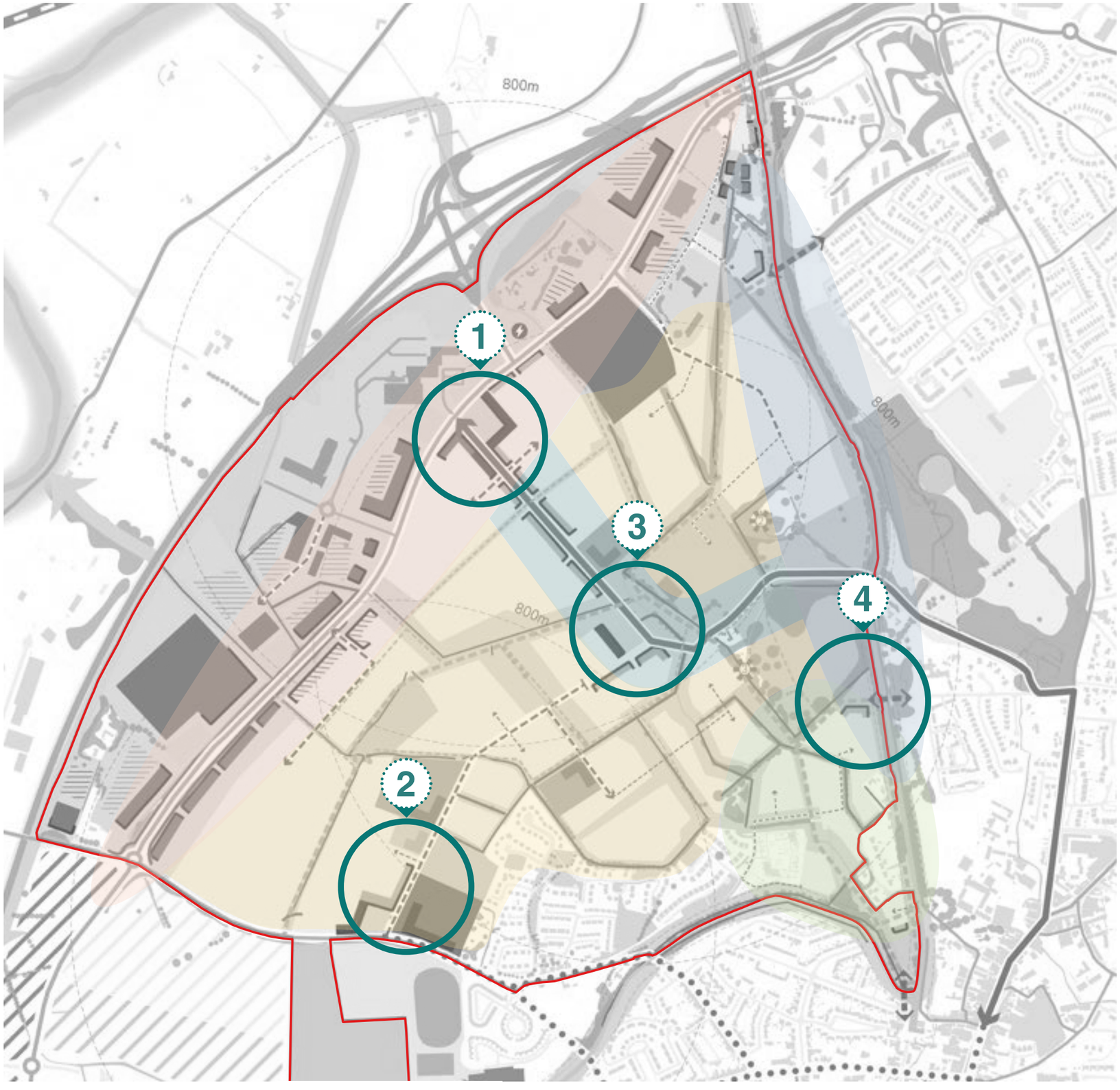


Figure 136: NWQ Areas of Design Complexity

MILLENNIUM PARK ROAD NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

The Millennium Park Road Neighbourhood Centre is located in the Northern Neighbourhood and Millennium Park Road character area and will be a lively focal point, bringing together retail and community uses and providing a welcoming and attractive gateway space into NWQ via the Millennium Plaza.

The Neighbourhood Centre has been designed to include new shops, café, restaurants, a supermarket, primary healthcare hub, further education centre as well as a creche and community wellbeing facilities. The Mobility Hub will be located in the plaza, promoting active travel and providing an anchor space for residents and visitors alike. The indicative axo, layout, and principles outline the key features and provide further detail on the area.

KEY PRINCIPLES

- Lively, mixed-use urban character. Active frontages on all sides of the square, in particular the eastern edge with retail / food and drink uses.
- Key gateway space with medium-rise buildings to form enclosure – 4-6 storeys.
- Key movement gateway with active travel provision and featuring a bus stop.
- The use of street trees and planting should be used for definition and enclosure, to demarcate the square.
- Multi-storey car park to provide for urban centre car parking for residential and non-residential. Limited on-street parking on centre streets.
- The public realm around the mobility hub should be animated by cafés in the ground floor with spill out spaces and outdoor seating.
- The plaza should offer a high-quality urban environment which provides spaces for the gathering of people and social network development.
- Streets should be designed with low design speed to maximise placemaking and pedestrian safety, including signalised junction at Millennium Park Road.
- Important commercial and community services, including a potential primary care and a further education centre will serve the Naas catchment.
- No on-street parking on the primary street will be provided.
- Filtered permeability through the use of a bus gate which prioritises public transport, cycling, and pedestrian movement and reduces through-traffic.
- Civic uses in the form of Primary Care Centre and Further Education and Training Centre anchor the western side of the plaza and gateway to NWQ, providing activity and opportunity for marker buildings of high quality.

KEY FEATURES

Components

1. Millennium plaza (c1,400–2,000 sqm) integrating mobility hub comprising bus stop, cycle parking and electric charging station for cyclists.
2. Pavilion building offering multi-purpose pop-up use.
3. Retail and community café spill-out space along building frontage.
4. Service yard and access to recycling facilities.
5. Health facility comprising pharmacy and dentistry.

Activity generators

- Gateway public space
- Mobility Hub
- Shops / retail uses (supermarket, cafe, restaurants)
- Primary healthcare hub
- Further education centre
- Crèche
- Community wellbeing facilities

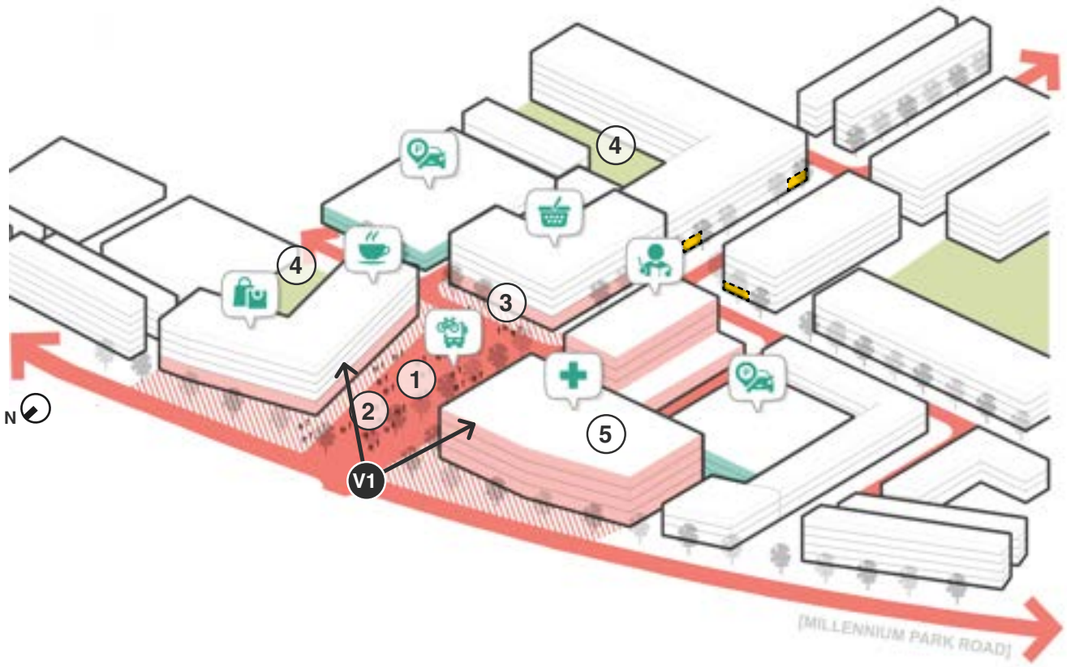


Figure 137: Millennium Park Road Neighbourhood Centre illustrative axonometric diagram

Figure 138: Mid-rise, mixed-use buildings with defined edges and integrated open space create a formal, high-density civic setting. Walthamstow Central ©pricemyers

KEY LAND USES

- Community Café
- General retail, Anchor retail, Community or Non-Residential
- Further Education Training Centre
- Primary Health Care Centre
- Multi-storey car park
- Residential
- Mixed use residential / active ground floor

Figure 140: Millennium Park Road Neighbourhood Centre indicative layout plan. For the numbering, see 'Key Features' table.

Figure 141: Pedestrian-friendly central square surrounded by ground-level retail, leisure, and commercial spaces. Yeoman Street, London ©Rightmove

Figure 139: Active ground-floor uses and mid-rise buildings create a lively, mixed-use frontage, illustrating a vibrant neighbourhood centre where public realm, social activity and strong urban edges come together. Wapping Wharf, Bristol ©alecfrench

Millennium Park Road Neighbourhood Centre indicative illustration.

NEW CARAGH ROAD LOCAL CENTRE

The New Caragh Road Local Centre is located in the Western Neighbourhood and the Compact Neighbourhoods character area, and will form an important gateway on the western edge of the NWQ, with an emphasis on community and learning. It comprises a linear gateway space, with large footprint buildings forming a sense of arrival and a strong building frontages onto the New Caragh Road, opening out onto a wider public square, which will be fronted by mixed use buildings, helping to create an active frontage and lively character.

Uses will include a new post primary school school and retail at the arrival point, with complementary community facilities overlooking the square such as a health care, community centre and cafés / restaurants. A primary school and special educational needs school also form a key focus in this local centre. The New Caragh Road local centre will be the key focal space for Phase 3, and the hub for non-residential uses and community destinations. It will be opposite K-Leisure and the Western Sports Grounds. The indicative axo, layout, and principles outline the key features and provide further detail on the area.

KEY PRINCIPLES

- Key education and community hub.
- Spacious campus style character formed by large footprint buildings, generous plaza and formal tree planting.
- Strong, rectilinear urban structure.
- Key gateway spaces with medium-rise buildings to form enclosure – 3-5 storeys.
- Higher density housing of up to 5 storeys along New Caragh Road
- Post primary school and corner retail / community unit should be high quality architectural buildings, to create a strong frontage onto the New Caragh Road.
- Active frontages on the public square, with café spill out.
- The use of linear planting to enclose and emphasise the linearity of the corridor.

KEY FEATURES

Components

1. Linear arrival space with retail and community enclosing space sense of formality created with corridor of street trees.
2. Post primary school with pedestrian access on opposite side of the square.
3. Local shops and facilities
4. Main public square (c1,000–1,400 sqm)
5. Health centre
6. Community centre and café spill-out space onto the square.
7. Primary school and playing pitches.
8. Multi-storey car park.
9. Special educational needs school.
10. Higher density residential building comprising apartments and duplex units at up to 5 storeys along New Caragh Road.

Activity generators (destinations)

- Gateway public square
- Retail uses (cafe and restaurants)
- Schools
- Community facilities

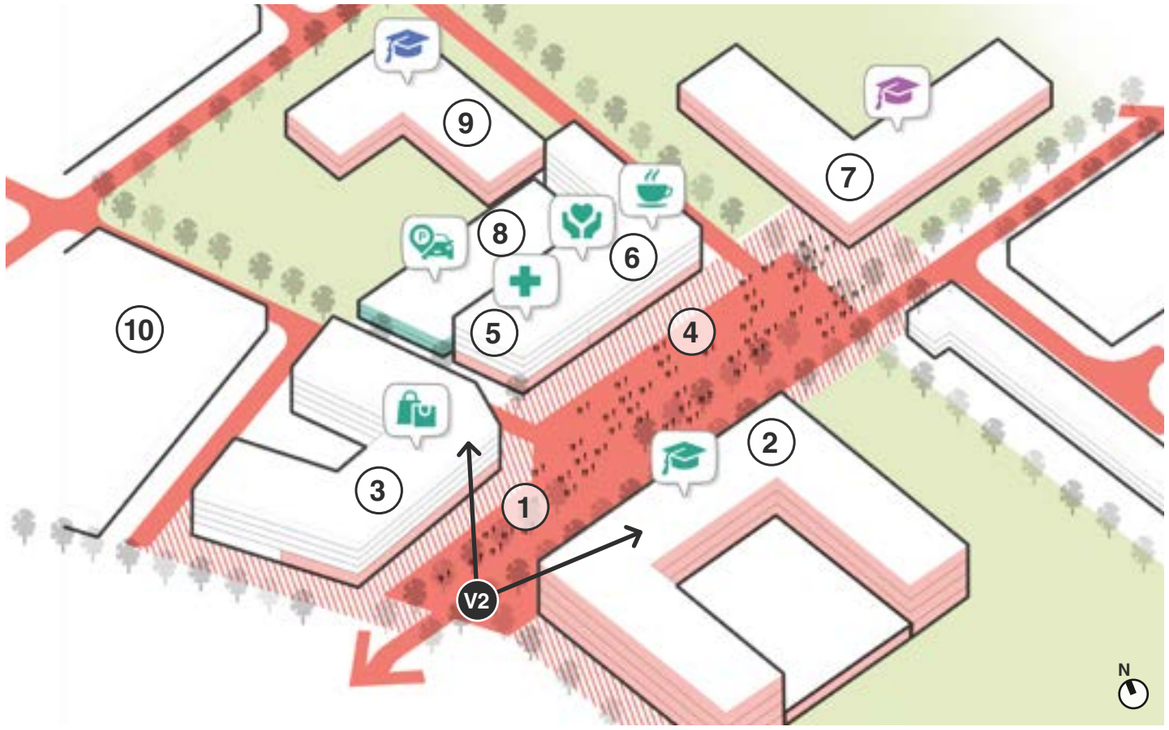


Figure 142: New Caragh Road local centre illustrative axonometric diagram

Figure 144: A robust, clearly defined secondary school building addresses the street through a strong frontage, active ground-floor entrances and large windows, creating a civic presence, natural surveillance and a welcoming interface with the public realm. Dunraven Sixthform, London © hamsonbarronsmith

Figure 143: New Caragh Road local centre indicative layout plan. For the numbering, see 'Key Features' table.

Figure 145: A prominent corner with active retail frontage creates a clear, well-defined local centre that reinforces a vibrant and accessible gateway.. Clay Farm, Cambridge ©hdawards

KEY LAND USES

- Community Centre & Café
- Health centre
- Multistorey car park
- Primary School
- Special Educational Needs School
- Post-Primary School
- General retail and other facilities with residential on upper floors
- Residential

Figure 146: A well-articulated brick façade with depth and a defined ground-floor entrance illustrates the strong, formal architecture and robust materiality. Amaryllis House / Tegnestuen LOKAL ©archdaily

Figure 147: New Caragh Road local centre indicative illustration.

CENTRAL LOCAL CENTRE

The Central Local Centre is located at the intersection of key green corridors and active travel routes, and forms an important social and civic hub in the heart of the community. The bus and cycle only section of Primary Street runs alongside a new public plaza, which will feature key anchor buildings and various mixed uses. Vehicular access to the centre will be provided from the west, incorporating filtered permeability, while avoiding any vehicular connection to the primary street central to the east.

There will also be flexible play spaces that cater for hard-to-reach groups such as teenagers. It will have a spacious, green setting, being flanked by parkland corridors on two sides and overlooking a new sports facilities and overlooking the main park beyond. The indicative axo, layout, and principles outline the key features and provide further detail on the area.

KEY PRINCIPLES

- Key nodal point in the development, forming destination location for community.
- Several key points of activity will ensure this Neighbourhood Centre has a vital and active character, with a focus on active travel.
- Sitting at the confluence of two parkland corridors and in close proximity to other key active community uses.
- SuDS to be designed as landmark feature.
- It will be a focal space for all age groups.
- The rhythm of the building line could be varied in places to create small pockets of open space and create a more informal, intimate setting than the two gateway centres.
- Higher density housing of up to 4/5 storeys with a strong sense of enclosure.
- Soft and hard elements in the plaza should be designed to accommodate events and play.
- The plaza will be designed to have multiple functions. Eg. Foyer, gathering, building zones, route, outdoor seating, and more.
- Refer to the site wide guidance on public realm strategy.

KEY FEATURES

Components

1. Plaza (c900–1,200 sqm) overlooking green corridor and recreation space, integrating play for all.
2. Community café and mobility hub.
3. Mixed use retail and community uses
4. Residential building comprising apartments and duplex units
5. Single aspect town houses
6. Residential courtyards integrating high quality amenity provision

Activity generators (destinations)

- Public plaza
- Flexible play spaces
- Sports facilities
- Bus and cycle corridor

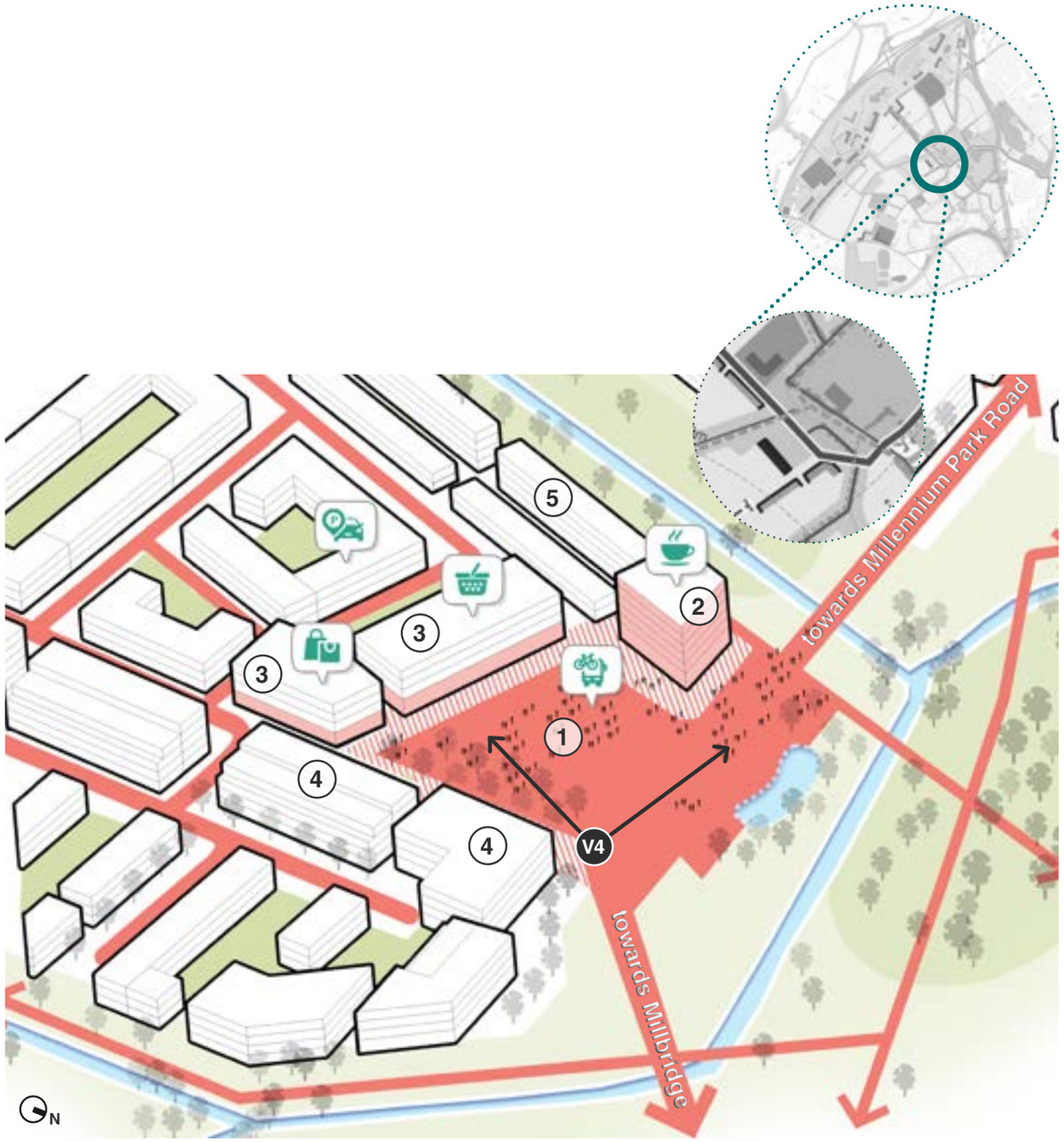


Figure 148: Central Local Centre illustrative axonometric diagram

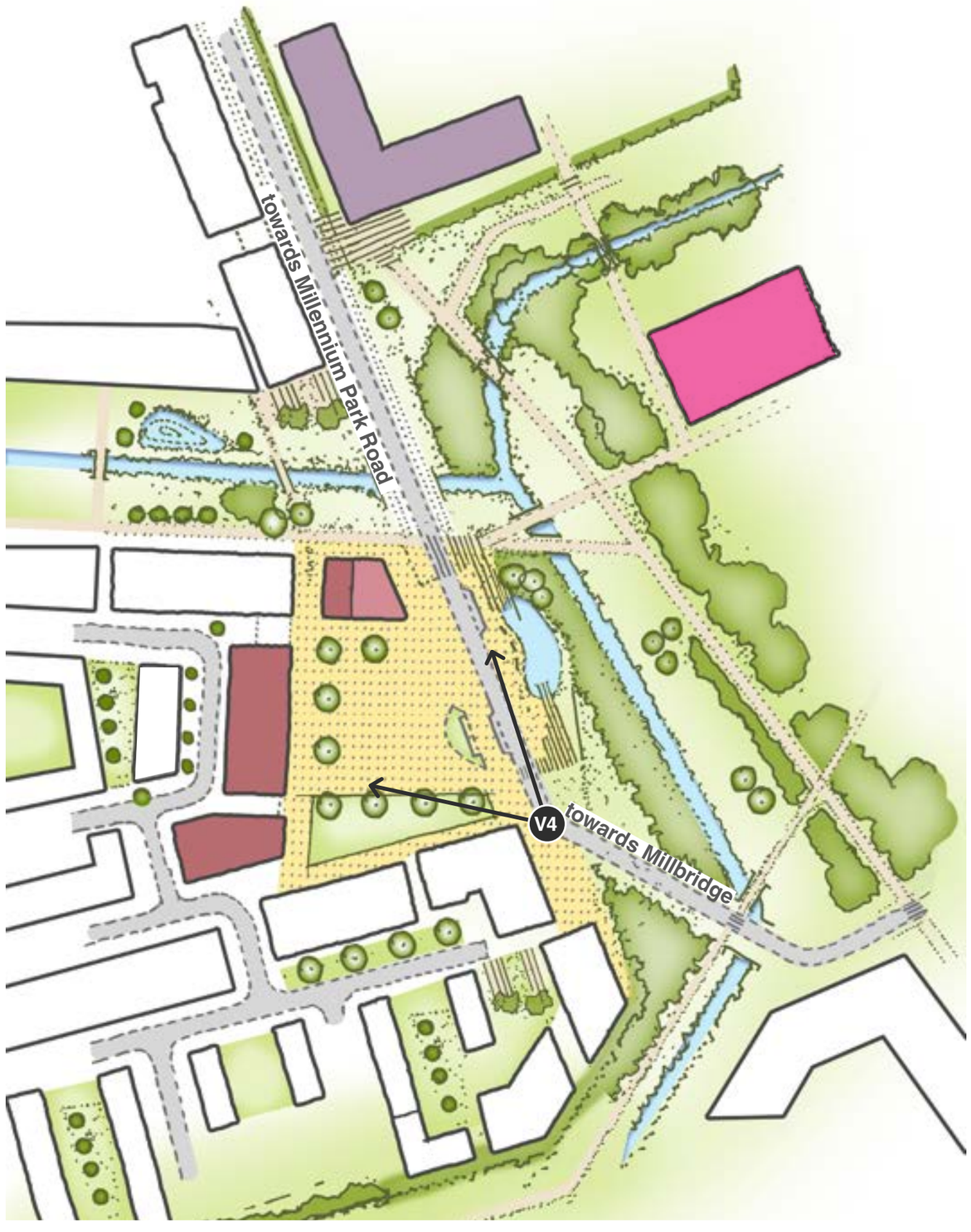


Figure 149: Central Local Centre walk indicative layout plan.
For the numbering, see 'Key Features' table.

KEY LAND USES

- Mixed use on ground floor
- Community centre
- Primary School
- Sports pavilion
- Residential

Figure 150: Inclusive local centre square with spaces for play. Pearl Street, Boulder ©carlworthingassociate

Figure 152: A local centre square with active ground-floor shops and cafés, creating a lively and well-used public space. Magna Square, Egham ©deepsouthmedia

Figure 151: Strong vertical emphasis with repetitive and regular rhythm, fenestration which contrast and add detail to the flat façade treatments. Timekeepers Square, Salford ©wienerberger

Figure 154: Central local centre indicative vision.

GRAND CANAL WALK

Key gateway space located by the Canal within the Canal Side character area with a plaza and a new bridge across the canal to link up with Millbridge and the town centre beyond. It is an important focal space for neighbourhood, canal, park and main park gateway for residents / visitors alike. An intimate, verdant residential area with on the doorstep facilities for new and existing residents, including access to the main park, a key multifunctional green space for the community. The indicative axo, layout, and principles outline the key features and provide further detail on the area.

KEY PRINCIPLES

- Key active travel gateway area on eastern edge of NWQ, with green streets and low parking provision.
- Public plaza space with opportunity for pop up uses within the space as well as permanent retail provision in pavilion building and via ground floor commercial uses in apartment buildings.
- Low key, intimate character with cues taken from proximity to natural assets (park, canal, woodland) and nature.
- Apartment buildings framing canal / plaza can be 4-5/6 storeys, subject to design quality.
- Strong building line and active frontage along plaza and canal green buffer to create overlooking and lively space. The active frontages could include 4m floor to ceiling height on the ground floor onto the plaza and around the corner onto the canal.
- Pedestrian access via a new bridge over the canal (to the south of the existing lock).
- Key relationship with main park, with housing overlooking.
- Corridor that extends that 30m from the edge of the canal, includes canalside active travel corridor, and landscape / biodiversity / open space corridor.

KEY FEATURES

Components

1. Pedestrianised gateway canal-side plaza
2. Cafe provision within pavilion building
3. Space for pop up uses
4. New active travel bridge over canal
5. Gateway apartment buildings and mixed use buildings onto plaza and canal frontage
6. Main park
7. Green buffer and active travel corridor along canal-side
8. Nature play along wellness trail

Activity generators (destinations)

- Canal bridge connection
- Access to the town centre and Millbridge
- Multifunctional community green space
- Pedestrianised plaza

Figure 155: Grand Canal walk illustrative axonometric diagram.

Figure 156: Accessible, nature-first waterfront space designed to boost biodiversity and wellbeing. Eden Dock ©HTADesign

Figure 157: Grand Canal walk indicative layout plan. For the numbering, see 'Key Features' table.

KEY LAND USES

- **Retail / food and drink use within pavilion**
- **Residential building with gateway articulation**
- **Potential hospitality use with active ground floor**
- **Residential**

Figure 160: A landscaped canal walk, framed by contemporary residential buildings. Ram Quarter, London ©architizer

Figure 161: A vibrant canal walk lined with contemporary brick residential buildings, featuring a waterside promenade that encourages social activity and public use. Kroyers Plad, Copenhagen ©wikipedia

Figure 158: Building frontages that face onto a the canal. Brentwood Lock ©watersideplaces

Figure 159: A green and active canal walk with pedestrian bridges and waterside spaces, creating a connected and attractive public route. Cambell Wharf, Milton Keynes ©HuftonCrow

Figure 162: Grand Canal Walk indicative illustration.

5. APPENDIX A - CHECKLIST

This checklist translates the NWQ guidance into a clear, practical tool to support planning, design and delivery of high-quality development.

1. PLACEMAKING AND STRUCTURE

- ☐ Does the proposal align with the NWQ masterplan structure (centres, streets, green corridors)?
- ☐ Does it reinforce a clear hierarchy of centres, streets and public spaces?
- ☐ Does it contribute to a walkable neighbourhood with local services within reach?
- ☐ Are focal points provided at key nodes, crossings or destinations?

2. CHARACTER AREA RESPONSE

- ☐ Does the design respond to the specific character area (Compact, Canal Side, Village, etc.)?
- ☐ Does it reinforce the distinct identity and setting of that area?
- ☐ Are building form, scale and materials appropriate to context?
- ☐ Does development address landscape features (especially canal and green corridors)?

3. MOVEMENT AND CONNECTIVITY

- ☐ Are direct, legible pedestrian and cycle routes provided throughout the site?
- ☐ Does the scheme prioritise walking, cycling and public transport over cars?
- ☐ Are routes continuous, overlooked and accessible for all users?
- ☐ Are connections made to existing networks and surrounding areas?

4. PUBLIC REALM DESIGN

- ☐ Is there a coordinated and consistent public realm palette across the scheme?
- ☐ Are materials durable, robust and appropriate to character area?
- ☐ Does the public realm prioritise simplicity, clarity and functionality?
- ☐ Are public spaces inclusive, safe and accessible for all users?

5. STREETS AND EDGES

- ☐ Are streets designed as places, not just movement corridors?
- ☐ Do buildings provide active frontages, doors and windows onto streets?
- ☐ Are edges (streets, canal, parks) clearly defined and positively addressed?
- ☐ Are blank walls, inactive edges and back-of-house conditions avoided?

6. SQUARES, FOCAL SPACES AND ACTIVITY

- ☐ Are public squares and plazas well located within the hierarchy of centres?
- ☐ Do they function as both destinations and connectors?
- ☐ Are spaces flexible and capable of supporting events and everyday use?
- ☐ Are edges activated with ground-floor uses (cafés, shops, community)?

7. LANDSCAPE AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- ☐ Is the scheme integrated with the green and blue infrastructure network?
- ☐ Are green corridors and canal edges treated as primary landscape features?
- ☐ Is planting used to define space, support biodiversity and improve microclimate?
- ☐ Are transitions from urban to landscape clearly defined and legible?

8. SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

- ☐ Are materials sustainably sourced and low in embodied carbon?
- ☐ Are SuDS features integrated into landscape and public realm?
- ☐ Does the design consider long-term maintenance and lifecycle costs?
- ☐ Are opportunities for reuse, adaptation and resilience incorporated?

9. SAFETY, INCLUSIVITY AND COMFORT

- ☐ Are all spaces step-free and accessible to all ages and abilities?
- ☐ Is there clear natural surveillance from buildings onto public spaces?
- ☐ Are conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles minimised?
- ☐ Is seating, lighting and furniture positioned to support comfort and safety?

10. DELIVERY AND QUALITY

- ☐ Does the scheme demonstrate high-quality architectural and public realm design?
- ☐ Are materials and detailing robust and suitable for long-term use?
- ☐ Is there a clear strategy for phasing and coordination across parcels?
- ☐ If deviating from guidance, is there a clear, robust justification?

AECOM