

**Infrastructure**

6.5.7 The proposals incorporate a boulevard link road that has been positioned to facilitate a future connection across part of the land allocation to the Kier application site and Thaxted Road. This future link would connect Radwinter Road to Thaxted Road and serve the development area.

A link is also proposed into Shire Hill Road, providing useful connections and serving to integrate the development area more closely in to the town.

**POS**

6.5.8 The proposals include approximately 2.23 hectares of public open space.

6.5.9 Local play areas are illustrated at accessible places on the site. A public open space strategy will provide the opportunity for amenity, informal recreation and informal play as an integral part of the design. The variety of safe, overlooked landscaped spaces will be provided around the site to provide easy access for all.

6.5.10 It is considered that the storm water attenuation areas could be included as part of the gross open space provision since they will be shallow, mainly grassed and landscaped areas that will contribute to the attractiveness of the development.



Diagram 22: Proposed and existing foliage



Diagram 23: Public open space

Type	Area
Attenuation area	1.17ha
POS exclu. attenuation	2.23ha
<b>TOTAL POS</b>	<b>3.41ha</b>

Table 4: Open space breakdown

## 6.6 Landscape Structure

6.6.1 Existing natural features, primarily the boundary hedge-lines and trees are largely retained, following consideration of the arboricultural constraints assessment undertaken of the site.

These field boundaries and wooded areas provide a basis for the definition of the site and its edges.

Storm water attenuation basins are required within the development area and these have been designed and located to maximise their landscape as well as practical value. The landscape strategy is arranged into two distinct themes, and draws on references from Saffron Walden and the wider context.

### Formal

6.6.2 The wooded edges to Tesco, Wild Hedges, and the Shire Hill Road business area define a green edge through the site which is addressed by a largely tree lined 'Boulevard' with grassed verges which passes through the site. 'The Boulevard' connects together much of the landscape infrastructure of the site. It will be fronted by apartments and houses often in terraced configuration to assist on the definition of space and formal character.

A defined and landscaped 'Entrance' frontage is set back from Radwinter Road which leads to a partially enclosed landscaped square where the 'Boulevard' passes west.

The original lane to Shire Hill Farm from Radwinter Road was closed when Tesco was constructed and relocated to the east. We have taken the opportunity to re-instate and at the same time enhance this link as part of the proposal. The unifying theme is a tree lined avenue passing south and up the hill toward the farm, a typical feature often forming part of a shelter belt for access to farms and estates. The 'Farm Avenue' starts as a dedicated footway and cycle link between the Retirement Village and Tesco, and as it crosses

the boulevard it becomes a vehicular route passing through a linear area of open space.

To the west a formal 'Crescent' is formed around one of the attenuation basins, seeking to give definition to this interface between Shire Hill Road and 'The Boulevard'. This space will have a generous formal landscaped character creating an attractive focus.

### Informal

6.6.3 Within the development areas a number of 'Village Greens' are located which will have an informal characteristic. It will be possible to glimpse these from the formal areas as you pass through the area, assisting in creating a legible environment.

The eastern Green is bisected by a retained hedgerow and will feature informal planting and open space overlooked by detached and semi-detached houses. The western green provides one large central open space again defined by family housing. It is proposed both 'Greens' will include play areas. These 'Greens' offer visual links to the site edges and landscape beyond.

Immediately to the south would remain a linear belt of arable farm land, which is not part of the application area. A conscious decision was made to address this as part of the design to influence how the remaining Uttlesford DC land allocation might evolve in the future. The belt has been considered as a potential future 'Linear Park', which would be framed by informally arranged housing to the north and the existing wooded field boundary to the south.

This 'Linear Park' would form a key component of the landscape structure of the completed allocation area, providing a green connection to the existing residential area to the west.

The 'Green Edge' to our proposal runs from west to east and is completed by informal open spaces including attenuation areas either side of Turnip Hall Farm, acting as a soft edge to the countryside to the east.



Diagram 24: Attenuation pond location and green integration across boundary

## 6.7 Landscape Proposal

### Masterplan Development

6.7.1 The location of the site on the south slope of a valley allows for views from the site towards the north. While the west end of the site slopes down to the urban area of Saffron Walden.

6.7.2 The proposed development will be split into two different characters: urban on the north part of the site and rural on the south part of the site. This approach will allow for creation of a more appropriate edge to the existing settlement.

6.7.3 The proposed development will be divided by a sinuous main access road branching into a network of narrow lanes of irregular pattern. The new built form along the northern boundary will continue the commercial character of the Radwinter Road frontage, with the urban character of Saffron Walden in a residential area behind. Further south the development would become more scattered with density falling as the land naturally rises.

6.7.4 Strategically placed public open spaces within the built up area link pedestrian routes and create a defined green infrastructure network within the site. The network creates an opportunity to connect to existing open spaces within the Saffron Walden urban area to the west and open countryside to the east. Public open spaces adjacent to the main access road provide soft visual focal points.

6.7.5 Proposed water features within green spaces enhance the landscape and increase biodiversity through the use of native species. Proposed vegetation associated with ponds attracts wildlife and enhances the potential for all year round biodiversity interest.



#### Benefits:

- ✓ Defendable stand alone development
- ✓ Reduction in impact from visual point of view
- ✓ Green infrastructure network throughout the site
- ✓ Vehicular bypass route to the Shire Hill Industrial Estate relieves traffic pressure on Radwinter Road and Thaxed Road junction



Figure 25: Landscape plan by First Environment

**Northern Sector Public Open Space:**

Formal Landscape Treatment

6.7.6 Defined by formal avenue planting which frame main vehicular route and provide visual reference for connectivity/linkages. Pedestrian movement is encouraged parallel to the central route allowing for intentional glimpsed views of surrounding water features and built form. This structured landscape approach provides a direct visual and contextual link between the northern sector of the site and the adjacent urban and industrial elements.



Figure 26: More detailed plan of Boulevard/crescent landscape treatment



**Southern Sector Public Open Space:**

Informal Landscape Treatment

6.7.7 Defined by a soft landscape strategy allowing for more interesting setting. Specific treatments may include mown footpaths, open greens with groups/clusters of tree planting. Pedestrian movement is fluid providing for informal recreation and potential for picnics and family usage. Play spaces include natural elements and varied pieces of equipment provide a diverse experience for children. The green is intentionally located to ensure adequate levels of passive surveillance from adjacent dwellings.



Figure 27: More detailed plan of Village green landscape treatment



## 6.8 Street Structure

6.8.1 A hierarchy of street types have been proposed in conjunction with the project engineers.

The Boulevard is the principle movement route through the development for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. It is designed in a way for the safe and convenient movement of pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles whilst responding to local distinctiveness. The building line is typically more formal in configuration with a fairly high degree of enclosure. The Boulevard/link road is 6.75m wide, the larger part of which has 2m verges and separate cycle and footways.

The secondary roads will be 4.8m wide with 2x2m footways, with the tertiary streets generally being 5.8m wide shared surfaces.

Private drives are located to the site edges and will be circa 4.3m in width to reduce the dominance of highway features.

## 6.17 Car Parking

6.17.1 Parking where possible should be provided on-plot but all parking must be located to allow natural surveillance and should relate to dwellings that they would serve. On street parking should be designed to reduce speed and the visual impact of parked cars. This can be achieved by suitable pinch points, appropriate landscaping and changes in material. Garaging should be no less than 7.0m x 3.2m as a minimum (Essex County Council Parking Standards 2009). Garage design and layout should go hand in hand.



Figure 28: Street types