

Weaverham South

Vision Document



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1. Introduction

Introduction

Weaverham South

This Vision Document has been prepared by Bloor Homes and seeks to clearly articulate the opportunity that exists for the land at Weaverham South (the site) for release from the Green Belt and allocation for residential-led development, by providing:

- An analysis of the site and its surroundings;
- A vision and illustrative masterplan that articulates and illustrates the opportunities presented by the site;
- A demonstration that the site is deliverable, available and achievable; and
- A summary of the key benefits of the site.

This Vision Document has been informed by a series of design studies which have been commissioned by Bloor Homes to demonstrate that this site is suitable to accommodate residential and associated development. The results of these initial studies are summarised within this Vision Document.

The site represents a highly sustainable location that offers an opportunity for sensitive land release and allocation for housing development as part of the forthcoming Cheshire West and Chester (CWAC) Local Plan. Bloor Homes welcomes the opportunity to work collaboratively with the council and key stakeholders throughout the Local Plan preparation process.



CBRE aerial image of the site

Benefits of Weaverham South



Creation of an exemplar edge of settlement community that is well integrated into the existing community and surrounding landscape.



A Community Hub at the centre of the site to include a shop and/or cafe along with community uses to serve both new and existing residents.



A deliverable site within single ownership with very few technical constraints.



1.8ha of land provided within the illustrative masterplan for potential expansion of Weaverham High School.



Development of 900-1100 new homes in the Northwich urban area, of which 45% will be affordable.



Well connected to Acton Bridge, Hartford, Greenbank and Cuddington train stations.



2.3km of enhanced Public Right of Way (PRoW) to provide direct connectivity between the settlement of Weaverham and the proposed Community Hub, natural open space, sports facilities and parks.



Proximity to the local National Cycle Network (NCN) routes that can be connected into at the north of the site to create good quality cycle routes for the community.



Creation of 9.6ha of varied open spaces to include a linear parkland, recreation, play, natural amenity spaces, woodland pockets, allotments and orchards, all within walking distances of new and existing communities, enabling sustainable, social and healthy lives.



Extension of Beach Hill Wood into the most northern parcel of the site, creating 8.5ha of proposed Nature Reserve and enabling provision of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) on site.



Provision of natural green and ecological links throughout the site, connecting retained habitat to include hedgerows, trees and ponds.

2. Understanding the Context

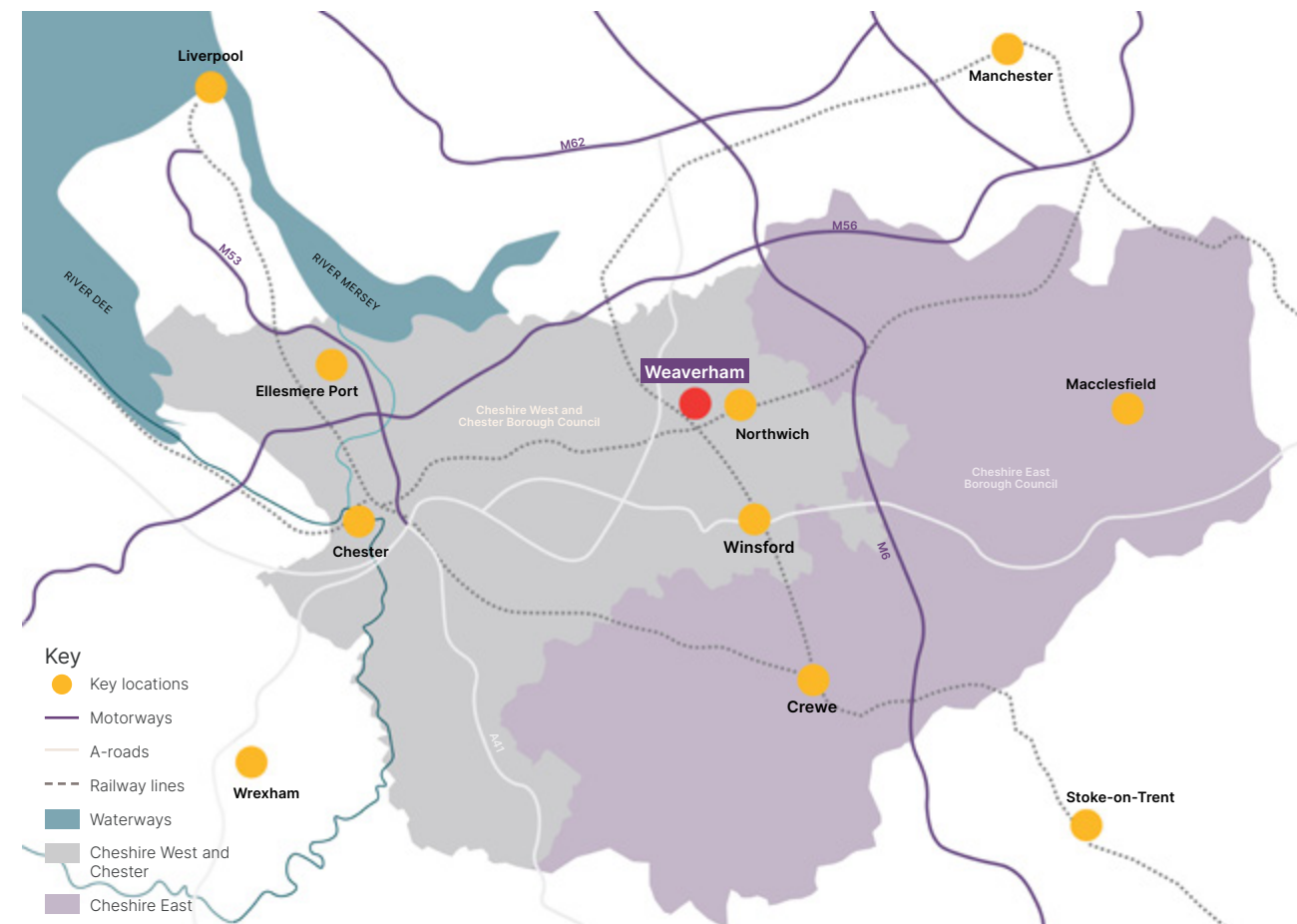
Location

The proposed site is located approximately 3.5km west of Northwich town centre, a Roman market town with a salt mining heritage.

The site's position within the borough grants it access to the amenities and services of Weaverham and Northwich, and to the rest of the North West via a range of public and private transport options.

Acton Bridge and Greenbank train stations provide a regular service connecting Weaverham to the cities of Manchester and Chester, as well as further to Birmingham New Street and Liverpool Lime Street.

Northwich Road (B5153) runs through Weaverham connecting the site to the heart of Northwich town and beyond towards the M6 via the A559. The A49 to the south-west links Weaverham to the M56 integrating the site into the North Cheshire motorway network.



Strategic Context

The site is strategically located, with local connections to Northwich and beyond available via a network of sustainable travel routes.

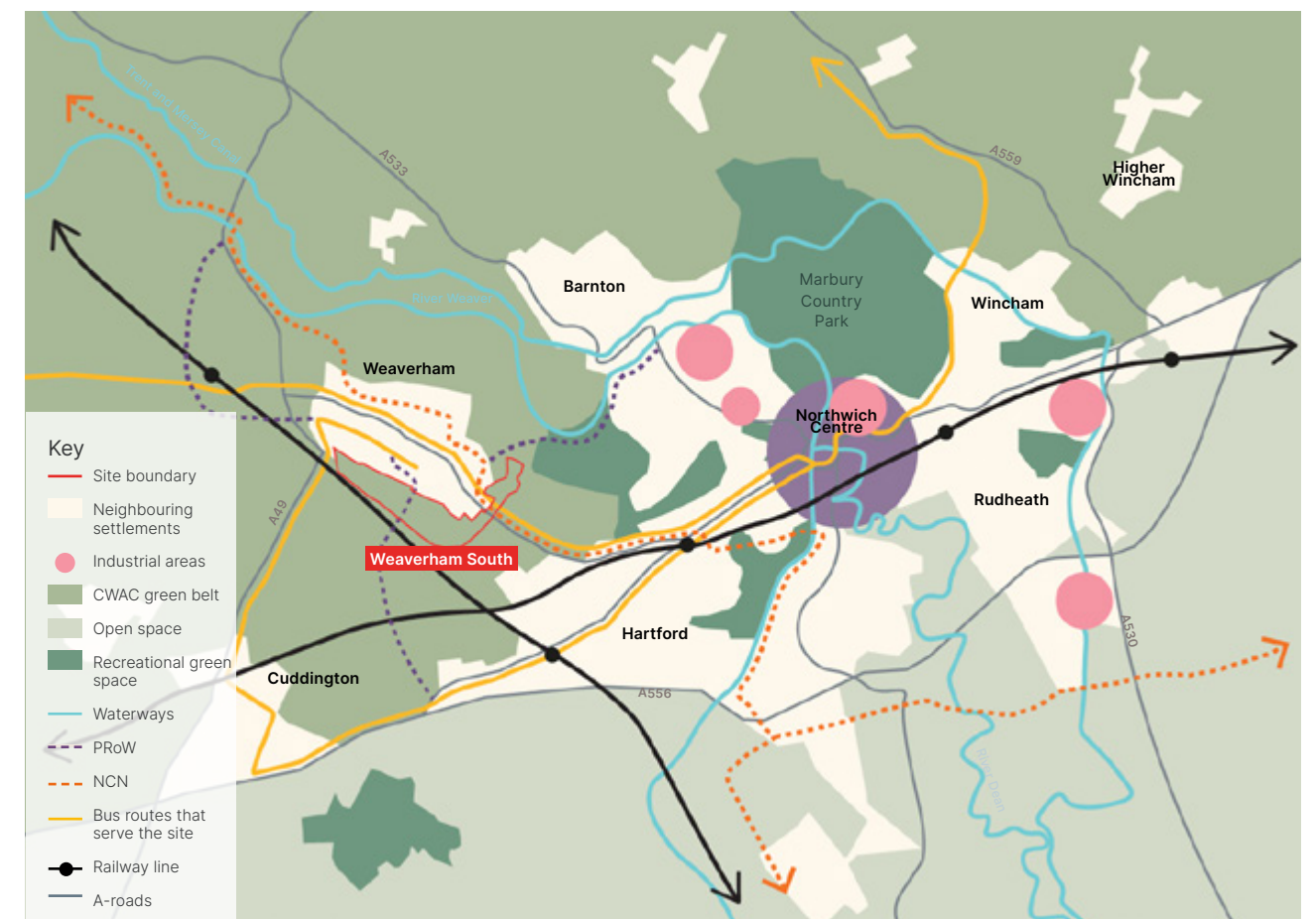
The site is in close proximity to Northwich town centre, providing employment opportunities, retail, service and leisure facilities, including the Barons Quay retail and leisure hub.

Acton Bridge is the closest station, located 3km to the west, with Greenbank 2.2km to the south east, providing a direct rail connection to Northwich town centre in 5 minutes. The south of the site is bounded by the London Northwestern railway creating a natural and defensible boundary on its southern edge.

Bus services connect Weaverham with two direct connections to Northwich town centre including Route P9 and Route 48. The bus service bolsters connectivity between the surrounding settlements of Cuddington and Hartford to the south.

NCN Route 5 intersects the site at the northern most corner, directly connecting it to Northwich town centre and a wider area network of 590km of cycle ways.

PRoW also serve the site well with three key routes from Weaverham into the surrounding landscape and onto the River Weaver tow path.



Site Context

Local community and facilities

The site lies within approximately 10 minutes walking distance of existing facilities and services in Weaverham. With a population of around 7000 people, the settlement provides a range of services and facilities to meet the day to day needs of residents including a doctor's surgery, dentist, library, community centre, pharmacy and convenience stores. It is also well served by existing schools including St. Bede's RC Primary School, Weaverham Forest Primary School, University Primary Academy Weaverham and Weaverham High School.

Connectivity and Access

The site is accessed via the B5153 Northwiche Road which provides connectivity through to the M56. There are also several train stations within 4km of the site, including Acton Bridge, Hartford, Greenbank and Cuddington.

Two Public Rights of Way pass directly through the site (Weaverham FP9 and FP10).

Landscape

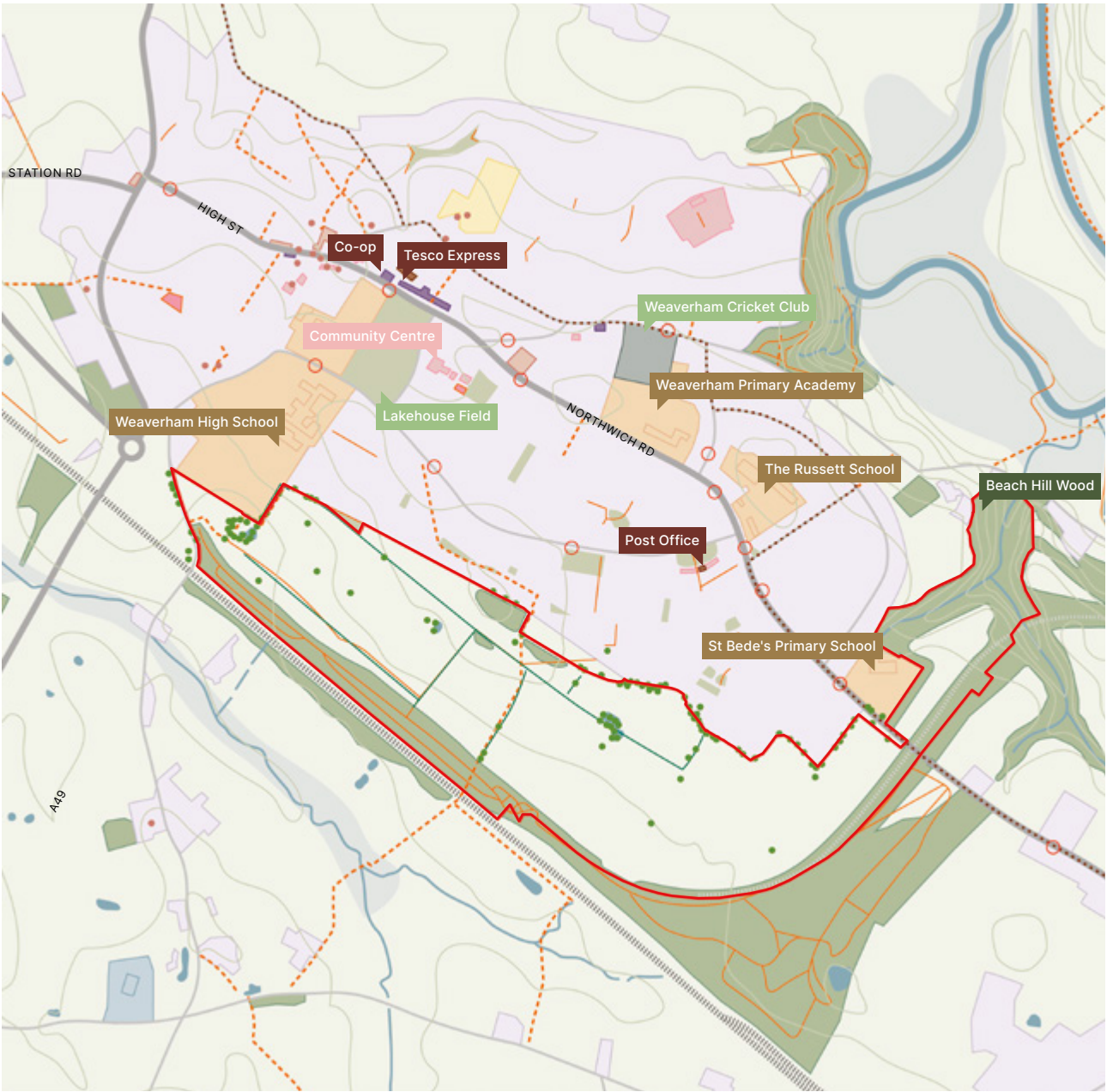
The land is predominantly agricultural and contains several existing landscape features including trees, hedgerows and ponds.

The woodland belt to the south of the site is a distinctive landscape feature, following the curve of a disused railway track. Beach Hill Wood contains semi-natural broad-leaved woodland and is a Site of Biological Importance that encloses the northern parcel of the site.

The parcel of land to the north is comprised of flat or gently undulating topography with a gradual fall towards the railway line at the southern boundary.



CBRE Aerial view of the site looking east



Site Context

Key

- | | | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| — Site boundary | - - - PRow | ■ Woodland | — Hedgerow | ■ Community |
| Railway | — Footpath | ■ Park | — Contours | ■ Church |
| — Primary road | - . - . NCN | ■ Sports pitches | ■ Residential | ■ Pub / restaurant / bar |
| — Secondary road | Dismantled railway | ■ Playground | ■ School | ■ Healthcare |
| ○ Bus stop | ■ Water bodies | ● Individual tree | ■ Retail | ● Listed building |

Site Context



London Northwestern railway along the southern boundary



PROW through the site



Significant specimen trees



Self-seeded woodland belt along dismantled railway forms strong boundary edge



Houses fronting onto site



Agricultural fields surrounded by woodland



CBRE aerial image of the proposed site and Weaverham

Site Considerations

The site has very few technical constraints, however there are several existing features to be considered. These elements have formed the framework for the design process, ensuring the proposal responds sensitively to the surrounding context.

Movement and Connectivity

There are two PRoW through the site, one of which connects the centre of Weaverham though the site and across the London Northwestern Railway to the south.

Ecology and trees

The site is not within a designated National Landscape, National Park or World Heritage Site and is not subject to any statutory nature conservation designations. There are two Sites of Biological Importance (SBI) on the site; Beach Hill Wood and an unnamed pond. Beach Hill Wood is a steep sided valley comprising semi-natural broad-leaved woodland. These areas should be retained and protected within any future development.

The site and surrounding area is relatively low-lying and largely comprises of undulating farmland. The principal habitat feature within the site is arable fields delineated by hawthorn dominated hedgerows. The field boundaries and disused railway line support a range of ruderal and herbaceous species. Four ponds are present within the site, one of which is designated as a SBI.

There is a limited stock of trees across the site although several mature oak trees and a row of Lombardy poplar are present. These trees should be retained where possible. The southern boundary of the site is wrapped by woodland which forms a defensible boundary to the site.

The Environment Agency online flood mapping indicates that the site lies within Flood Zone 1.

Edges

The northern edge of the site adjoins the settlement of Weaverham, with a combination of properties fronting, siding and backing onto the site. There are a series of cul-de-sacs that connect to the north-western boundary with views overlooking the site. To the north-east, properties predominantly back onto the boundary.

The site interfaces with two schools; Weaverham High School to the north-west and St Bede's Catholic Primary School to the north-east.

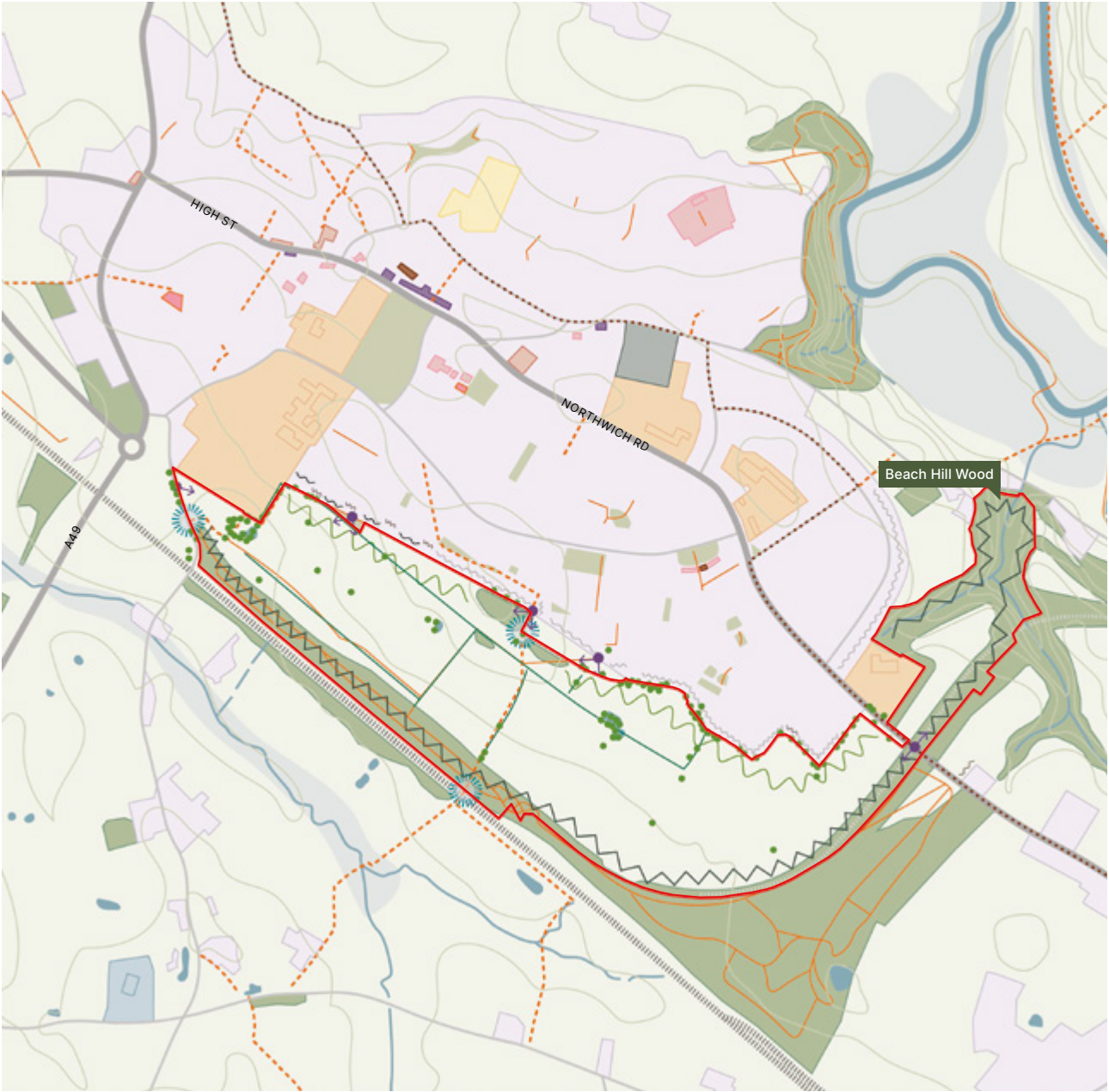
The woodland belt to the south creates a strong landscaped edge, providing a buffer and screens the development from the active railway. It establishes a clear, defensible and permanent boundary.

Heritage

The site does not contain any built structures or Scheduled Ancient Monuments. There are several listed buildings within the centre of Weaverham but none within close proximity of the site.

Utilities

A high-level utilities assessment has been undertaken that confirms no utility constraints in the site and the availability of all major services within close proximity.



Site Considerations

Key

Site boundary	National cycle route	Playground	Community	Front of house (facing boundary)
Railway	Dismantled railway	Individual tree	Church	Sensitive residential edge
Primary road	Water bodies	Hedgerow	Pub / restaurant / bar	Defensible boundary
Secondary road	Flood zone	Contours	Healthcare	Pedestrian access points
Bus stop	Woodland	Residential	Listed building	Views onto the site
PRoW	Park	School	Back of house (facing boundary)	
Footpath	Sports pitches	Retail	Side of house (facing boundary)	

Site Opportunities

The site presents a unique opportunity to create an exemplar edge of settlement community, enhancing Weaverham to create an attractive and sustainable neighbourhood.

Movement and Connectivity

There are a number of potential access options to the site from Northwiche Road and Gorstage Lane. The most appropriate option is a roundabout arrangement from Northwiche Road and a ghost island right turn junction from Gorstage Lane. A proposed primary street through the development could incorporate a bus route as well as pedestrian and cycle connectivity to encourage sustainable modes of travel.

There is an opportunity to utilise and enhance the existing PRoW through the middle of the site to provide direct connectivity to the proposed Community Hub at the centre of the site which could serve both new and existing communities.

The cul-de-sacs to the north provide pedestrian permeability between the proposed development and Weaverham.

Landscape

The site presents an opportunity for a landscaped masterplan with significant provision of green infrastructure for the benefit of new and existing residents. Existing hedgerows, trees and ponds add landscape character, key placemaking features and form the structure of the development.

The creation of a linear park with a village green at its centre enables the retention of existing landscape features whilst creating accessible green space, sports pitches, spaces for community growing and play.

The woodland belt to the south presents an opportunity to create a distinctive new edge to Weaverham. A series of woodland courtyards along this edge could create unique amenity spaces, drawing the landscape character into the site.

A legible network of streets and green spaces provide opportunities for Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) facilitating nature based solutions towards a resilient landscape.

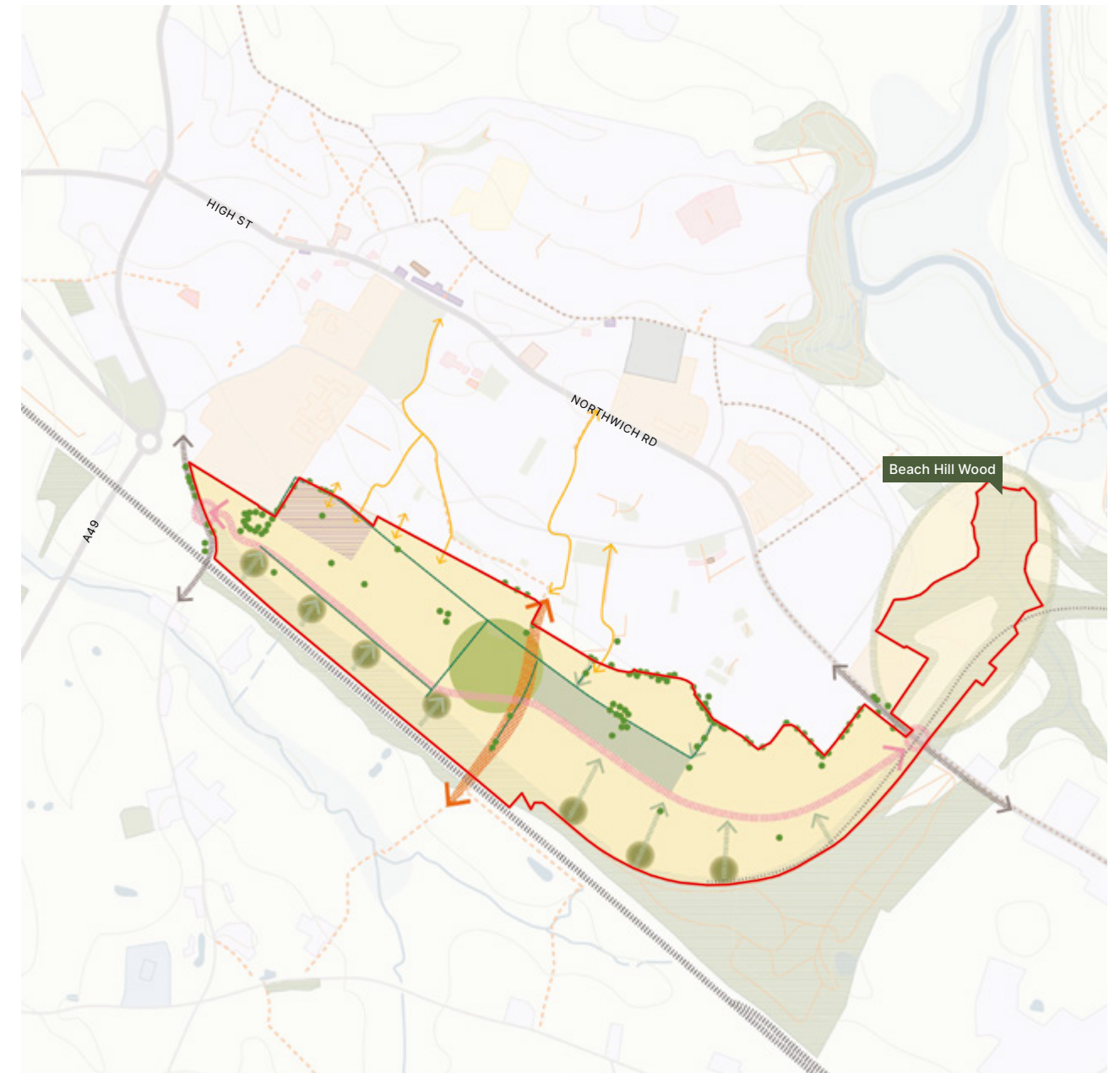
The parcel of land to the north of Northwiche Road presents a unique opportunity to create a nature reserve that connects into Beach Hill Wood, to provide enhanced habitat and an attractive natural open space for existing residents to enjoy. The provision of land for this purpose also enables BNG to be provided on site.

Uses and Built Form

There is the potential to introduce non-residential uses at the heart of the site at the intersection of the proposed primary street and the existing PRoW. This could include a shop and/or cafe along with other community uses, serving both new and existing residents.

There is an opportunity to provide land within the north-west of the site for the potential expansion of Weaverham High School should this be required.

The general layout and built form of the site should respond to the adjacent context with residential parcels structured around the existing landscape. The northern edge of the site provides the opportunity to integrate with existing housing taking into consideration sightlines, overlooking, response to densities, and connectivity. The southern part of the site provides the opportunity for more informal layouts on the woodland edge. The gateways to the site from Northwiche Road and Gorstage Lane will create welcoming arrival spaces with residential frontage and green spaces.



Site Opportunities

Key

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| Red line boundary | Existing woodland | Connections to existing street openings and footpaths | Area for potential school expansion |
| PRoW footpath | Opportunity for green corridors stemming from existing woodlands and connecting existing trees | Opportunity for linear park | Potential nature reserve location |
| Vehicular access | Opportunity for woodland courtyards at interface between woodland and development | Opportunity for green heart | Existing roads - opportunity to connect to existing infrastructure |
| Primary vehicular road - opportunity to connect to existing infrastructure | | Opportunity for residential development | Existing and operating railway line (London Northwestern) |
| Existing trees | | Potential location for Community Hub | Existing and disused railway line |
| Existing hedgerows | | | |

3. The Vision for Weaverham South

The Vision for Weaverham South



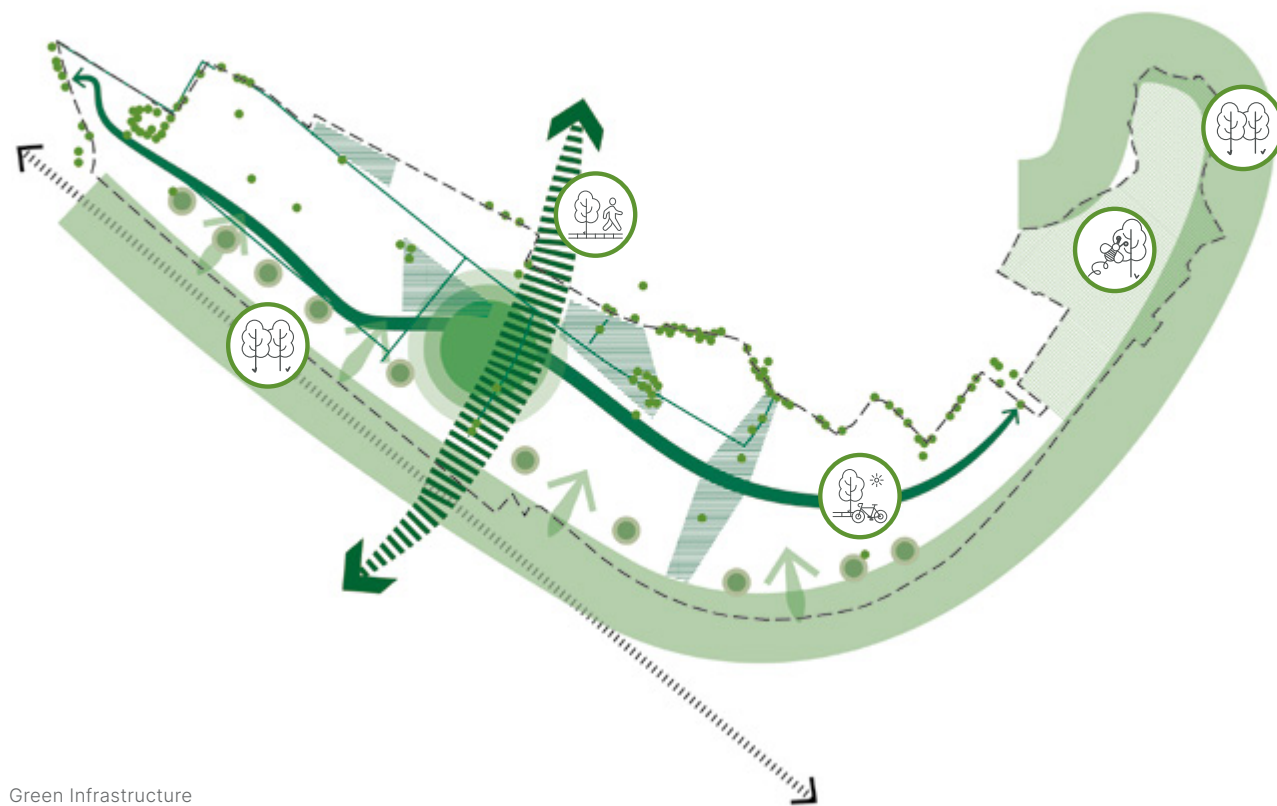
Development Principles

Green infrastructure

The following pages outline the design principles which have shaped the development of the illustrative masterplan.

- Deliver the Linear Park and Village Green within the heart of the neighbourhood, providing ample green community spaces, overlooked by homes.
- Locate community orchards and allotments near the Community Hub to serve the new and existing residents and encourage community growing.

- Deliver a new nature reserve to the north of Northwich Road to increase biodiversity in Weaverham, as well as a walking destination for the community.
- Use the existing hedgerows, trees and ponds to define the structure of the masterplan and integrate features into the design of open spaces.
- Provide street trees and SUDs as prominent features within open spaces and on streets as a way of integrating natural water management solutions.



Green Infrastructure

Key

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| --- Site boundary | ● Existing trees |
| === Linear park | — Existing hedgerows |
| ● Village green | ▨ Nature reserve |
| → Main pedestrian link | ▨ Railway line |
| → Primary street | ● Woodland courtyards |
| → Existing woodland | |
| → Drawing woodland into the site | |



Retaining existing trees as a key consideration of development by Bloor Homes ↑



Properties fronting onto green edges by Bloor Homes ↑



SUDs features create an attractive outlook whilst enhancing biodiversity at Woodford Garden Village ↑



Landscape features create character to open spaces and provide opportunities for play ↑

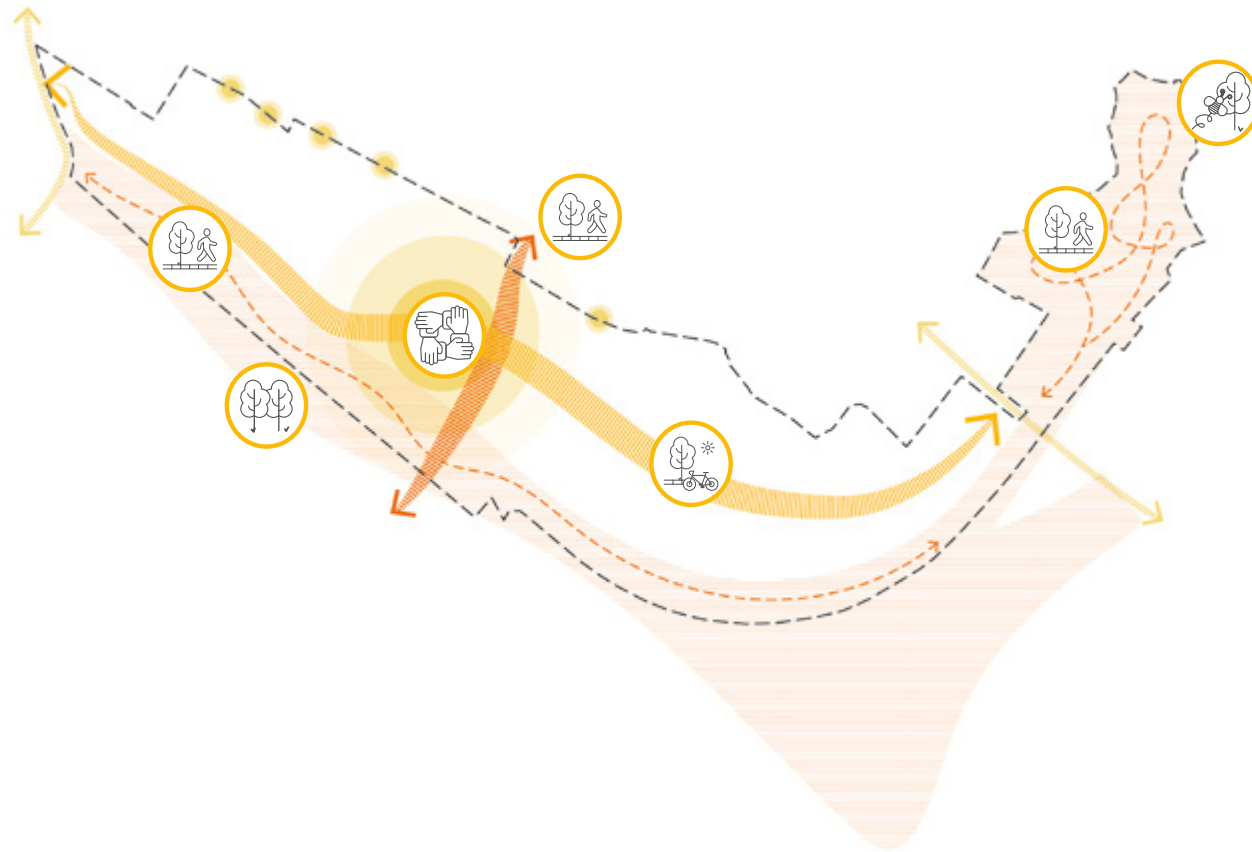
Existing landscape features incorporated into new development by Bloor Homes ↓



Development Principles

Movement

- Deliver a Neighbourhood Street that connects the Community Hub to the residential parcels and the settlement of Weaverham with access from Northwich Road and Garstage Lane. The street should be multi-modal with cycle lanes and opportunity for a bus service.
- Provide welcoming cycle and pedestrian access points from Poplar Road, Walnut Avenue, and from the pedestrian bridge over the train tracks to the south, creating active travel connections within the site and to the wider area.
- Improve north-south PRoW routes to connect the proposed Community Hub with Weaverham and out to the wider landscape.
- Connect pedestrian routes into existing streets to knit the proposed development into Weaverham, creating a permeable and accessible neighbourhood.
- Implement a clear street hierarchy to ensure a legible and memorable network.
- Provide woodland footpaths through the nature reserve connecting into the existing woodland and PRoW.



Movement

Key

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| --- Site boundary | Woodland and nature reserve |
| Community heart | Neighbourhood Street |
| Enhanced PRoW | |
| Informal pedestrian routes | |
| Existing roads | |
| Pedestrian access | |



Integrated cycle network to encourage active travel ↑



Tertiary streets connect into open spaces ↑

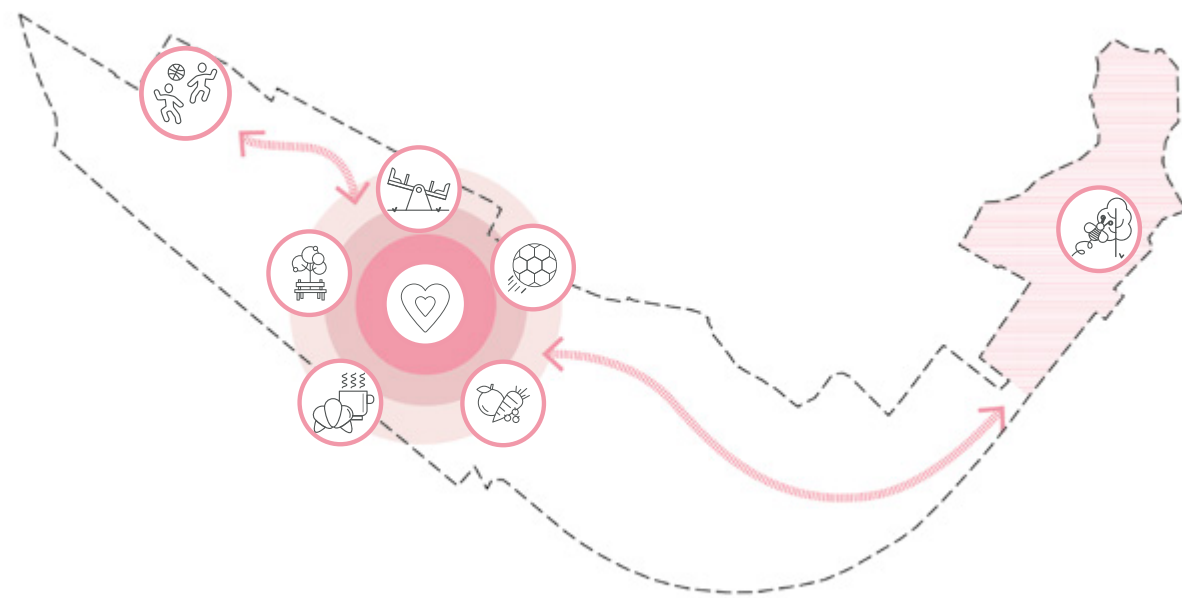
Safe and attractive green streets by Bloor Homes ↓



Development Principles

Uses

- Provision of a residential-led development with a significant quantum of green infrastructure such as sports pitches, parks and gardens and amenity spaces.
- Deliver the Neighbourhood Hub at the heart of the development with potential for mixed-use community facilities such as a cafe or shop. Site the Hub next to the village green so it is well-connected to the residential parcels across the site.
- Provide opportunity for the potential expansion of Weaverham High School if required.
- Create a nature reserve around Beach Hill Wood, providing enhanced biodiversity and sensitively and network of public footpaths.



Uses

Key

- Site boundary
- Neighbourhood Hub
- Nature reserve
- Connectivity



Opportunities for play ↑



Community growing areas ↑



Potential for local shop/cafe or community facility ↑



Picnic benches invite residents into green communal spaces ↑

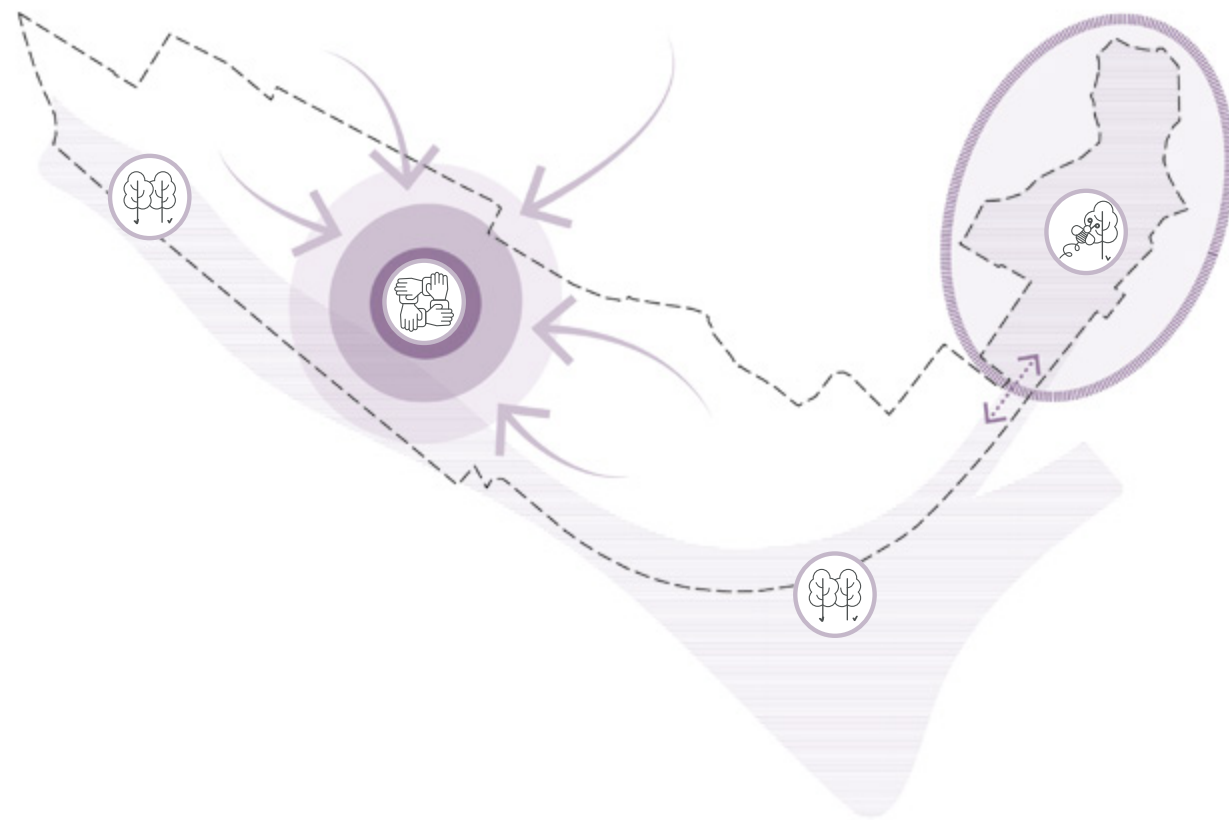
Opportunities to meet and interact within attractive green spaces ↓



Development Principles

Placemaking

- Reflect the character of the site such as the woodland edge, the settlement of Weaverham, and adjacent landscape features within the development.
- Vary the character of the built form, open space and streets across the site to create visual interest and strengthen legibility.
- Provide diverse uses and open spaces such as the Community Hub, village green and linear park that offers the opportunity for community gathering such as markets, festivals or community events.
- Provide smaller amenity spaces, orchards and growing areas, together with play and sports facilities to encourage residents to meet and build a strong community.



Placemaking

Key

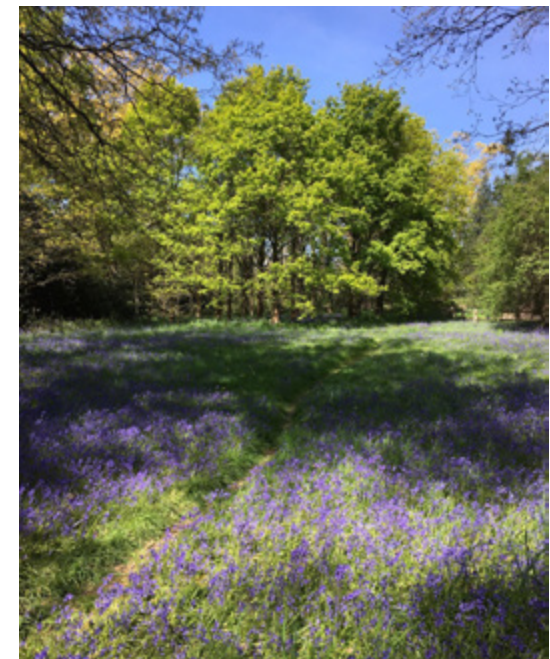
- Site boundary
- Neighbourhood heart
- ≡ Woodland
- Nature reserve
- ← Connectivity



Varied form, streets and open spaces strengthens legibility of places ↑



Playful elements encourage interaction and physical activity within the public realm ↑



Nature reserve provides calm spaces to relax and reflect ↑

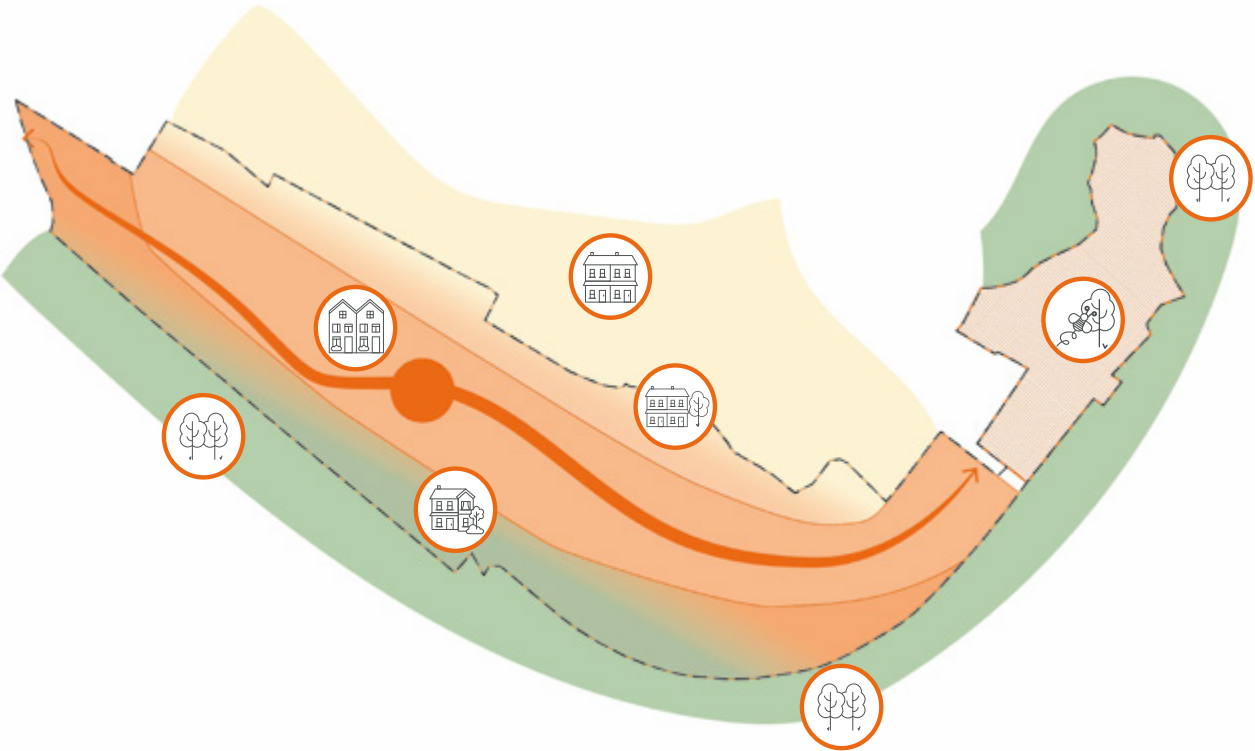
Central focal space provides heart to development ↓



Development Principles

Built form and density

- Respond to the adjacent context when developing the general layout, built form and approach to density on the site with residential parcels structured around the linear park and Community Hub and series of amenity spaces.
- Reflect the density of existing housing along the northern edge of the site and increase permeability through pedestrian access and routes connecting into the street network.
- Provide more informal layouts along the woodland edge with woodland courtyards between parcels, drawing the landscape character into the site, screening development and providing amenity spaces for residents.
- Create welcoming arrival spaces with residential frontage and green spaces at the gateways to the site from Northwiche Road and Gorstage Lane.
- Consider the orientation of buildings to create opportunities for passive solar gain and cross ventilation.



Placemaking

- Key
- Site boundary
 - Community Hub
 - ▨ Nature reserve
 - ← Neighbourhood Street
 - Woodland edge
 - Density to reflect context



Primary frontages create natural surveillance over green spaces and notable corner buildings by Bloor Homes ↑



Drawing landscape character into the site and amenity green spaces ↑



Creation of amenity green spaces ↑

Development fronting onto landscape edge ↓



Illustrative Masterplan



Capacity

The illustrative masterplan provides for a capacity of 900-1100 homes and associated uses, with open space provision exceeding the CWAC policy requirement and BNG proposed to be delivered on site.



Total site area: 56.4ha



Residential: 900-1100
(Average 36.5 dph)



Non-residential use: 0.5 ha



Primary Road: 3 ha



Parks and gardens: 2.3 ha



Nature reserve: 8.5 ha



Pitches: 2.7 ha



Play: 0.5 ha



Allotment: 0.7 ha



Potential school expansion:
1.8 ha



Existing woodland: 5.9 ha



Amenity: 3.3 ha



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