



Statement of Community Involvement

Swangley's Green, Watton Road, Knebworth

Please note that this Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) contains complete copies of all correspondence received during pre-application consultation. Some of the correspondence includes personal details such as names, addresses and email addresses and have been provided in an unaltered form to ensure full transparency. A fair Processing Notice was included on the consultation leaflets and website, which made clear to members of public providing this data that it would be forwarded to the LPA as part of an application. The Council will of course need to handle this information in line with its own data protection policies.



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01260 288888

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 This Statement sets out the process of community engagement that has been undertaken by Gladman Developments Ltd, referred to herein as 'Gladman', to inform an outline planning application for residential development at Swangley's Green, Knebworth.

1.1.2 The site is allocated for residential development under reference KB4: Land East of Knebworth in the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031. The local plan went through an extensive consultation process in order to be formally adopted in November 2022. The site was therefore subject to extensive consultation from statutory bodies and the public throughout this process and has been deemed as being suitable for residential development.

1.1.3 Additionally, the application site has been subject to a very similar application proposal (application ref: 21/02586/OP) submitted in September 2021 seeking outline planning permission for up to 230 dwellings (including affordable housing), structural planting and landscaping, informal public open space and children's play area, surface water flood mitigation, vehicular access point and associated ancillary works. All matters reserved except for means of access.

1.1.4 This application has been made to address the detailed comments from statutory consultees and the public which were received to the first application. Thus, the purpose of this statement is to outline the consultation and engagement that has taken place between the submission of the first application and this second application. By way of summary, the main changes between planning application one and this revised planning application are:

- A reduction in the overall quantity of housing proposed from 230 homes to 200;
- Alterations to the site's proposed design and layout, and the inclusion of a Masterplan Framework document in accordance with the requirements Policy SP9 of the adopted Local Plan;
- Amendments to the site's access strategy, with new offsite highways works, also included as part of the proposals; and
- The relocation of the site's drainage basin, to a location east of the main site area.

1.2 Policy Background

1.2.1 This Chapter will consider relevant National and Local guidance with regards to community consultation.

National Planning Policy Framework

1.2.2 The most recent version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2021 by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). The document seeks to achieve sustainable development with three overarching objectives: an economic objective, a social objective, and an environmental objective.

1.2.1 Section 4 of the NPPF outlines the importance of pre-application engagement in relation to decision making. Paragraph 39 notes that *"Early engagement has the significant potential to improve the efficiency of the planning application system for all parties"* thus leading to *"better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community."*

1.2.2 Paragraph 40 further states that whilst a Local Planning Authority (LPA) *"cannot require that a developer engages with them before submitting a planning application"*, they should nevertheless *"encourage take-up of any pre-application services they do offer"*. Furthermore, and where deemed to be beneficial, the LPA should *"encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community before submitting their applications"*. This is to ensure that any potential issues are resolved as early in the planning process as possible.

1.2.3 There is, therefore, a clear rationale from the Government to increase the amount of public consultation undertaken in the planning process.

North Hertfordshire District Council's Statement of Community Involvement

1.2.4 North Hertfordshire's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was formally adopted in July 2020 and sets out the Council's approach to stakeholder engagement for planning applications within the Authority.

1.2.5 The SCI provides information on the Council's approach to engaging the wider community in the process of determining planning applications, particularly those involving major development proposals.

1.2.6 The SCI acknowledges that the consultation method will vary depending on the scale and nature of the proposals. Nothing that smaller developments would consider talking to

immediate neighbours and people who may be affected by proposals, while larger scheme would implement measures such as exercises for the public to have their say and shape the proposals prior to submitting an application.

- 1.2.7 As part of the previous application, Gladman undertook a thorough stakeholder engagement and public consultation exercise that met the expectations of both local and national policies.

2 ENGAGEMENT WITH LOCAL COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDERS

2.1 Engagement with North Hertfordshire District Council and subsequent consultee bodies

2.1.1 The Gladman project team and North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC) have been proactively engaging over the course of the determination process for the first application, these conversations have directly influenced the changes covered in this revised application proposal.

2.1.2 It is also worth noting that since the submission of the first application, the North Hertfordshire District Council Local Plan 2011-2031 has been formally adopted (November 2022). The application site is allocated for a residential led-development under Policy KB4 (land east of Knebworth).

2.1.3 Consultee bodies of NHDC from the Environment Agency and Affinity Water initially objected to the first application on drainage matters. The Gladman project team collaboratively worked with the EA and Affinity Water to reach a point of agreement on a revised drainage solution addressing the initial concerns satisfactorily. This solution is outlined in detail within the accompanying FRA which forms part of this revised second application.

2.1.4 Similarly, to the above the Gladman project team proactively worked with officers from Hertfordshire County Council highways to agree the detail of access proposals and proposed highways improvement measures in the vicinity of the site. The agreed proposals have been incorporated into this revised application.

2.2 Engagement with Design Review South East

2.2.1 In the North Hertfordshire Local Plan, Policy SP9: Design and Sustainability outlines the Councils expectation that sites proposing a development of a scale above 100 dwellings are required to provide a "Strategic Masterplan" that is agreed with NHDC prior to the submission of a planning application.

2.2.2 Since submitting the previous application, the Gladman project team and the Principal Strategic Planning & Implementation Officer have had multiple meetings and regularly exchanged correspondence regarding the design of the site and the justification underpinning

the design evolution. As part of this process, it was agreed that it would be beneficial for the proposals to be subject to review from Design South East as part of the North Hertfordshire Design Review Panel.

- 2.2.3 Gladman submitted the submission form to Design South East on 5th January 2023 and the design review panel session took place on 8th February 2023. The session consisted of a site visit with the Gladman project team and panel members followed by a 2 hour presentation and feedback from the panel on the proposals. Following the session on 8th February, a formal report was sent to Gladman on 22nd February 2023 and a copy of this report can be found at Appendix A and revisions have been made to the proposal.

2.3 Engagement with the Local Community

- 2.3.1 In order to seek to reach the widest number of residents, businesses and key stakeholders in the area, Gladman alongside Deetu undertook a public engagement exercise in Summer 2021.
- 2.3.2 As detailed below, details of the proposals were uploaded on a dedicated website and directed the local community to view details of the proposals there.
- 2.3.3 Recognising that not everybody is able to view information and respond through a website, Gladman also accepted correspondence via email and in hard copy.
- 2.3.4 A summary of the main topics raised within the consultation responses received can be found in the next section of this statement.

2.4 Website

- 2.4.1 Gladman alongside Deetu launched a website containing details of the site's location and our initial development proposals at <https://my.engaged.space/knebworth/#home> and was operational from 12th July 2021 and was open for survey comments until 2nd August 2021.
- 2.4.2 Two surveys were hosted on the website enabling the local community and stakeholders to provide a response to the development proposals. One survey focused on housing and the other survey sought general comments on the proposals. Details of how to write to Gladman to provide feedback are also provided on the website.
- 2.4.3 A copy/screenshot of the website landing page is included at Appendix B.

2.5 Drop in sessions

2.5.1 Three 30 minute virtual drop-in meetings were scheduled on the following dates, 18 slots were initially presented with reserve slots available should these reach capacity:

- Monday 26th 2021 / 16:00 – 19:00
- Tuesday 27th July 2021 / 09:00 – 12:00
- Wednesday 28th July 2021 / 16:00 – 19:00

2.5.2 These sessions allowed attendees to ask additional questions and be guided through the proposals by the consultation team comprising members of the Gladman project team and Deetu community engagement consultants.

3 CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

3.1 Consultation Outcomes

3.1.1 Gladman is pleased that a number of people engaged with the consultation process for the proposed site and provided comments during the pre-application process.

3.1.2 A number of the local community responded to the consultation indicating that they or someone they know is looking for a new home. Similarly, some respondents have faced challenges when looking for an affordable home and believe there is a need for more homes, particularly for younger people as they are aware that people have had to move out of Knebworth to be able to buy their first home.

3.2 Summary of Comments and Responses

3.2.1 The main topics of interest raised related to matters of traffic, access, drainage and flood risk, education capacity, sustainable design principles and green space. The main topics are discussed and responded to below.

Traffic

3.2.2 The potential generation of traffic from the development was a primary concern for those living closest to the development site.

3.2.3 A comprehensive Transport Assessment and Travel Plan, previously reviewed by Hertfordshire County Council Highways Authority (HCCHA), shows that the impact from the proposed development is acceptable in highways terms and the necessary highways important works that are necessary because of the development will be discussed further by the applicant and HCCHA.

Site Access

3.2.4 Points regarding the suitability and incorporation of Old Lane, St Martin's Road Swangley's Lane and Watton Road into the proposals.

3.2.5 As a result of the public feedback, the design and uses of Old Lane and St Martin's Road were revised considerably prior to the submission of the first application.

3.2.6 For this revised application, these public comments have continued to be hold their significance and through further discussions with HCCHA the access proposals, treatment of

Old Lane and wider highways improvements submitted with this application as detailed in the Transport Assessment have been agreed as being suitable in highways terms.

Drainage and Flood Risk

- 3.2.7 A small number of public comments raised concerns around increased flood risk arising from the proposed development, though noting these were largely in relation to Knebworth high street.
- 3.2.8 As previously mentioned, the drainage solution for this application has been agreed in principle by the Environment Agency and Affinity Water following engagement through the first application. The drainage solution, contained within the Flood Risk Assessment supporting this application, is now to the east of the residential development and is comprised of a SuDS basin which will ensure that the site is drained effectively and that flood risk is not increased within the vicinity of the application site factoring in the impacts of climate change.

Education

- 3.2.9 Several public responses mentioned that there were limited school places within the village and concerns were raised about the extra development meaning children would not be able to attend the local school.
- 3.2.10 As part of the first application, the Local Education Authority outlined that a financial contribution will be sought from KB4 to deliver the primary school proposed as part of the KB2 allocation, which the applicant is agreeable to.

Sustainable Design Principles and Green Space

- 3.2.11 A high percentage of the respondents supported the incorporation of sustainable design principles and significant areas of public open space into the proposals.
- 3.2.12 The Design and Access Statement and Masterplan Framework Document both evidence that a high quality, well designed scheme can be achieved on the site and the importance of sustainability is a core principle in these documents and had a strong influence on the proposals as submitted.

4 CONSULTATION REVIEW

4.1 Community Benefits

- 4.1.1 Throughout the consultation process, Gladman encouraged suggestions as to how the local community could benefit from the proposed development.
- 4.1.2 Significant community benefits will be provided including market and affordable housing, children's play areas, allotment provision, landscaping and ecological enhancements.
- 4.1.3 Potential suggestions for community benefits must be tested against Government rules which limit what those seeking planning permission can offer (which exist to ensure development cannot 'buy' consents). However, the applicant will discuss the ideas put forward by stakeholders throughout the planning process.
- 4.1.4 Implementation of the agreed community benefits will be guaranteed through their inclusion within a Section 106 obligation.

5 SUMMARY

- 5.1.1 Gladman has consulted the local community prior to a planning application being submitted. It is considered that the scope of the community consultation has met with, and gone beyond, the recommendations of local and national planning policies and legislation.
- 5.1.2 Gladman has taken account of the views expressed by those who were consulted and has engaged with the local community in a variety of different ways. This is to ensure that their opinions have been considered and acknowledging different members of the community will access information and respond in different ways.
- 5.1.3 This Statement of Community Involvement provides a response to the key matters that have been raised and how these have been considered within the planning application submitted.

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Appendix A

Design Review Panel Report

Report of the North Hertfordshire Design
Review Panel

Swangleys Green, Knebworth

22 February 2023

The design review meeting

Reference number	1978/080223
Date	8th February 2023
Meeting location	North Herts Council offices, Gernon Rd, Letchworth Garden City SG6 3JF
Panel/forum members attending	Paul Reynolds (Chair), landscape architecture and urban design Geoff Gardner, transport planning, and sustainability Janie Price, architecture, and historic environment Peter Neal, landscape architecture and ecology Vinita Dhume, urban design and regeneration
Panel manager	Helen Goodwin, Design South East
Presenting team	Daniel Houghton, Director FPCR
Other attendees	Helen Quinn, Design South East Lizzie Atherton, Design South East Chris Ball, Gladman Developments Amy Aldridge, Gladman Developments Josh Cornes, Gladman Developments Philip Tubbs, Landowner Katherine Tubbs, Landowner Shaun Greaves, North Herts District Council Helen Flage, North Herts District Council
Site visit	A site visit was conducted by the panel prior to the review.
Scope of the review	As an independent design review panel the scope of this review was not restricted.
Panel interests	Panel members did not indicate any conflicts of interest.
Confidentiality	This report is confidential as the scheme is not yet the subject of a detailed planning application. Full details of our confidentiality policy can be found at the end of this report.

Name	Swangley's Green
Site location	Land south of Watton Road, Knebworth, Hertfordshire
Site details	<p>A 12.6ha, irregular-shaped site immediately to the east of Knebworth, currently agricultural land. There are residential properties to the west, Watton Road (with a field beyond) to the north, and fields to the east and south. The site can be divided into three parcels by Old Lane (an historic lane bounded by ancient hedgerow) and Swangley's Lane.</p> <p>There is a large residential property immediately to the north-east of the site and a farmhouse to the south-east. There are trees within the hedgerow along Old Lane, a veteran tree within the central parcel of land, and trees around the edge of the site, including the Watton Road substation to the north of the site.</p>
Proposal	Outline planning permission for up to 200 dwellings (including affordable housing), structural planting and landscaping, informal public open space and children's play area, surface water flood mitigation, vehicular access point and associated ancillary works. All matters reserved except for means of access.
Planning stage	This is a second application for the site which amends the proposals of current live application 21/02586/OP, following comments by consultees. Changes to the proposals include a revised drainage scheme, alterations to access arrangements at Swangleys Lane, a reduction in the number of dwellings proposed and a reconfiguration of the internal layout.
Local planning authority	North Hertfordshire District Council
Planning context	The site is allocated in the North Hertfordshire Local Plan under reference KB4, which amongst other development plan policies is subject to masterplanning Policy SP9. The site falls within the setting of Grade II listed St. Martin's Church.
Planning history	The current live application for this site (21/02586/OP) was submitted in 2021.
Planning authority perspective	Whilst the overall masterplan structure has improved as it now includes less severance of Old Lane and integrates this important site feature into the green infrastructure network, the LPA believes there are still some unresolved issues around character, street hierarchy, parking and driveways, edge conditions, green spaces, biodiversity net

gain, pedestrian accessibility, layout, architectural language, and materials.

Community engagement

Virtual public consultation has taken place. The applicant has also engaged with the parish council.

Summary

This is an outline application with all matters reserved other than access. At the request of the LPA and applicant we provide detailed comments on the illustrative masterplan. However, we are conscious that much of this work has been done to demonstrate adherence to policy SP9 and may be superseded as the proposal progresses. To partially safeguard the work done to date, a design code could be submitted with the revised application.

We are supportive of both the principle of development and the quantum of homes - 200 homes is an appropriate number to deliver on this site. The panel welcomes the landowner's keen interest in the success and quality of what will be delivered. However, given the site's rural edge-of-village location, we query the formality of the site layout and the extent to which Lutyen's historic plan for Knebworth should be used as a design driver. The illustrative layout does not yet successfully balance rural and urban character.

Once our recommendations have been addressed, we would welcome reviewing this scheme again, at reserved matters stage.

Key recommendations

1. Investigate a more informal approach to the southern section of the site. Ensure the design is landscape-led by being contextually responsive to the site's contours, prominent topography, and rural edge.
2. Reconsider the formality of the avenue. Explore how its character might change along the route moving north to south, considering aspects such as the distance between building lines and how the street will relate to green spaces.
3. Take a more ambitious approach to sustainable drainage. Avoid an over-engineered approach and review if SuDS can be incorporated across the masterplan and particularly within the southern section of the site, where it is outside of the ground source protection area.
4. Take an early and strategic approach to sustainability. Ensure that homes optimise orientation and that carbon sequestration is incorporated into the sustainability strategy.
5. Maximise opportunities for permeability and connectivity - consider pedestrian, cycle, and vehicular connections. Ensure the development is well-connected to the west into Knebworth, to avoid unnecessary car journeys, and that it connects into the wider footpath network where possible.
6. Review the character areas and in particular how they relate to secondary streets and lanes.

7. Describe the edges and interfaces with the wider setting. In particular, consider the relationship between the site and the built edge to the west, and to the agriculture and open countryside to the south and east. This should be considered in as much detail as the road sections have provided.
8. Redesign the northern gateway. This is a key part of the site and needs to deliver a successful and inviting space that is well used and relates successfully to the built edge.

Detailed comments and recommendations

1. Character and placemaking

- 1.1. While the panel recognises the historic significance of the Lutyens plan for the expansion of Knebworth, this was only ever implemented in very small parts, and we think a more appropriate response for the site is to consider it as an edge-of-village extension. Therefore, the masterplan structure appears overly formal - especially in the southern part of the site (which is particularly visible from Knebworth) which may benefit from a more informal approach that responds closely to contours, prominent topography, and rural character.
- 1.2. Contextual analysis of the different edge conditions should support a more sensitive transition between the rural edges to the south and east and urban edges to the north and west. There is an opportunity to differentiate the character of the development between the north of Swangley's Lane and the south, which could become more rural and less rigid in structure. For example, a soft green and biodiverse boundary to the south which engages with the rural edge may be more appropriate than a hard boundary.
- 1.3. Swangley's farm, although not within the red line of the existing planning application, is proposed to become a creative community which could greatly enhance the identity of this place and be the destination that draws people to the south of the site. While we acknowledge the reasons why these proposals are not part of the current application, we encourage including the working farm within the vision for this place. The farm could be key to successfully developing a strong sense of place as well as providing employment and community facilities to support the new homes.
- 1.4. It is recommended that a design code should be considered as part of the outline application. This would be a useful tool to express aspirations and objectives and lock in future detailed design moves, while retaining the character expressed in the masterplan framework. For example, a code could describe formal and informal landscape treatments, where manicured Lutyens hedges will be used, and how they might relate to native hedgerows on the margins of the site.

- 1.5. The team should ensure the experience of entering and navigating the development is easy and intuitive, and that walking and cycling is the default transport mode of choice. It should always be clear to someone where they are in relation to the village centre. A positive outcome would be that it is not obvious when you have entered Swangley's Green, rather it merges instinctively with the existing village and with the countryside at the eastern and southern edges.
- 1.6. Different street characters are not adequately described in the illustrative masterplan; all the streets look the same. How the character of the avenue will change whilst moving along this route and how secondary streets and lanes will reinforce character areas should be clarified.
- 1.7. While it is recognised this is an outline application, the team should consider the layout of homes and how fronts and backs relate to one another and to existing green infrastructure. For example, at the point where the development meets St Martin's Road, proposed homes will face on to fences. It may be more appropriate for homes to back onto the edge so that gardens back onto gardens.
- 1.8. Parking requirements and ratios will impact the character and design of streets and plots. Deep plots are proposed which may result in all car parking being located in front gardens, risking encroachment of hardstanding and hedges becoming downgraded. Parking could be integrated into courtyards and on-street to retain green front gardens and ensure the development is as green as possible.

2. Sustainable design

- 2.1. The team should demonstrate how sustainable principles are driving the design, considering for example, how orientation can optimise solar gain, and how carbon sequestration can be maximised in the landscape.
- 2.2. The emerging approach to sustainable design and renewable energy was not discussed in detail at this review but should be given early attention in the development of the masterplan, as the right strategy at this stage will determine what can be achieved later.

- 2.3. The standing advice from Design South East is that at a subsequent design review and at planning application stage the proposal must produce a clear strategy that details how the development will minimise embodied, operational, and transport-related carbon emissions, and optimise the use of renewable energy to align with the Government's legal commitment to Net Zero Carbon by 2050. The proposal should demonstrate its compliance to a respected zero carbon pathway, for example the UKGBC Net Zero Whole Life Carbon Roadmap for the Built Environment. The sustainability strategy should be tied to measurable targets and detailed modelling work informed by respected calculation methods (as applicable), and also address water use, biodiversity net gain, waste reduction and circular economy principles.

3. Movement and connectivity

- 3.1. Considering the quantum of development proposed and given that it will not connect beyond the southern or northern site boundaries, the spine road is a large and expensive piece of infrastructure that is out of keeping with the rural character of the area. Although Lutyen's plan included a spine road, that street was proposed to continue south and connect with considerable amounts of wider development. While it is acknowledged that a suitable access to the farm must be maintained, alternative approaches to the spine road should be explored, particularly to the south of Swangley's Lane.
- 3.2. Should the spine be retained, further consideration should be given to the experience of the avenue in different parts of the site and how its character changes along the route. For example, the treatment of the route may change when it has development on either or both sides – or when it has no development on either side such as at the northern gateway.
- 3.3. Due to the proposed width of the avenue, the deep plots and long front gardens, there is likely to be a considerable distance across the street from building line to building line. The street will appear wider, suburbanising the character of this place and reducing opportunity for building a sense of community.
- 3.4. The character of "lanes" and "secondary streets" is unclear, and their design and management should be addressed at this stage (potentially through the use of a design code). Some of the precedents and references shown are unsuitable and not successful examples of urban design. Appropriate images should be used carefully to illustrate specific design characteristics that express the full potential of this place.

- 3.5. Pedestrian and cycle connections through to the west and south-west will be key to connect the development to the rest of Knebworth. We support a cycle and pedestrian connection linking the Haygarth estate with the proposed development—this should be assumed and designed for. Pedestrians should also be offered an attractive opportunity to walk along both St Martins Road and Swangley's Lane to further enhance permeability and connectivity.
- 3.6. It is unfortunate there are limited opportunities to connect with a wider footpath network. Both the applicant and local authority should work with wider stakeholders to achieve and extend connections where possible beyond the red line boundary, particularly to the north and east to the wider public right of way (PRoW) network. Furthermore, the quality of leisure routes within the site boundary should be considered and described clearly.
- 3.7. We encourage the team to maximise the opportunities presented by existing road infrastructure where possible. The proposal to close off Swangley's Lane to all vehicles should be robustly justified, as it appears to be a well-used route. Perhaps controlled access could be provided, to allow farm vehicles, buses and emergency vehicles to use the route.
- 3.8. Although there is a possibility of a school being delivered to the north of the site in the future, the Watton Road junction should be designed for the requirements of this scheme only, making the junction tighter but with space safeguarded to revisit widening the junction in the future, should the school be delivered. This would allow for enhanced landscape at this edge.
- 3.9. The detailed drawings of the proposed location for the northern access should be updated. The drawings presented are outdated as the proposed access has moved eastwards and the character of all access points should be considered further.

4. Landscape

- 4.1. The topography rises to the south; therefore, the southern parcel is a more visually prominent part of the site, and also the portion that engages the most with the rural edge. Long distance views, including views from the north-west, should be presented to understand the impact of the development and visibility of the masterplan from Knebworth and within the wider landscape. These should be used to test and drive design development.
- 4.2. The landscape edge to the north is unsuccessful in its current form, with the relationship between proposed landscape and homes and the existing fenced pumping house appearing awkward. It requires a more considered approach, as the path meanders but does not have a real destination and it is not clear how attractive or useable this space will be.

- 4.3. A refreshed approach should aspire to deliver an inviting northern gateway which relates to both the existing and proposed townscape. The allotments, an important community asset, are part of this area, and could extend and potentially give way to an orchard as a means to structure and formalise this prominent area of the landscape. Analysis of the wider Watton Road frontage, which rapidly transitions from suburban to rural, may offer clues to how this part of the site could be treated, considering the experience of approaching the development from both the east and west. The southern edge of Watton Road is also not in a flood zone - there may be scope for some development in this area, and the buildings could be used to help define the green buffer. To connect with wider amenity, options to integrate the path network with a permissive route north to the recreation ground and beyond should be explored.

5. Ecology and sustainable drainage

- 5.1. We endorse the proposed greenways, protecting the existing hedgerow network and enhancing pedestrian connections along Old Lane and ecological connectivity through to Pinker Woods, which is an important wildlife corridor offering opportunities for biodiversity net gain.
- 5.2. While the limitations on SuDS to the north due to the ground source protection area are understood, draining surface water via a piped system from the southern parcel to the north and subsequently off site to the proposed drainage attenuation basin may be challenging and suggests an over-engineered approach to blue infrastructure. The team should explore whether a partial on-site sustainable drainage strategy can be delivered in the southern section. SuDS could incorporate drainage and attenuation on site whilst providing additional ecological, habitat and amenity value for people and wildlife.
- 5.3. The landscape edge is an important aspect of the scheme and will play a strategic role as a mechanism for landscape and nature recovery. These green edges and connections should be drawn in the same level of detail as the road sections. Sectional drawings should describe how green infrastructure interfaces with both housing and the agricultural landscape to understand the quality and diversity of the edge condition and the role of green connections in enhancing ecological value, especially at the southern boundary where a secondary street is currently proposed.
- 5.4. Providing adequate green spaces of differing types for future residents is critical. The green spaces proposed should be revisited, including in discussion with the neighbouring school to explore how a new space in the southwest corner of the site adjacent to the school field might work. A clear strategy to show easy access for all residents to local open spaces should be provided, and incorporating features such as drainage ditches or swales could further strengthen the ecological benefit of these spaces.

This report is a synthesis of the panel's discussion during the review and does not relate to any discussions that may have taken place outside of this design review meeting. A draft report is reviewed by all panel members and the Chair ahead of issuing the final version, to ensure key points and the Panel's overarching recommendations are accurately reported.

The report does not minute the proceedings but aims to provide a summary of the panel's recommendations and guidance.

Confidentiality

If the scheme was not the subject of a planning application when it came to the panel, this report is offered in confidence to those who attended the review meeting. There is no objection to the report being shared within the recipients' organisations provided that the content of the report is treated in the strictest confidence. Neither the content of the report, nor the report itself can be shared with anyone outside the recipients' organisations. Design South East reserves the right to make the content of this report known should the views contained in this report be made public in whole or in part (either accurately or inaccurately). Unless previously agreed, pre-application reports will be made publicly available if the scheme becomes the subject of a planning application or public inquiry. Design South East also reserves the right to make this report available to another design review panel should the scheme go before them. If you do not require this report to be kept confidential, please inform us.

If the scheme is the subject of a planning application the report will be made publicly available, and we expect the local authority to include it in the case documents.

Role of design review

This is the report of a design review panel, forum or workshop. Design review is endorsed by the National Planning Policy Framework and the opinions and recommendations of properly conducted, independent design review panels should be given weight in planning decisions including appeals. The panel does not take planning decisions. Its role is advisory. The panel's advice is only one of a number of considerations that local planning authorities have to take into account in making their decisions.

The role of design review is to provide independent expert advice to both the applicant and the local planning authority. We will try to make sure that the panel are informed about the views of local residents and businesses to inform their understanding of the context of the proposal. However, design review is a separate process to community engagement and consultation.

Design South East Limited
Admirals Office
The Historic Dockyard
Chatham, Kent
ME4 4TZ

T 01634 401166
E info@designsoutheast.org
designsoutheast.org



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Appendix B

Website Landing Page

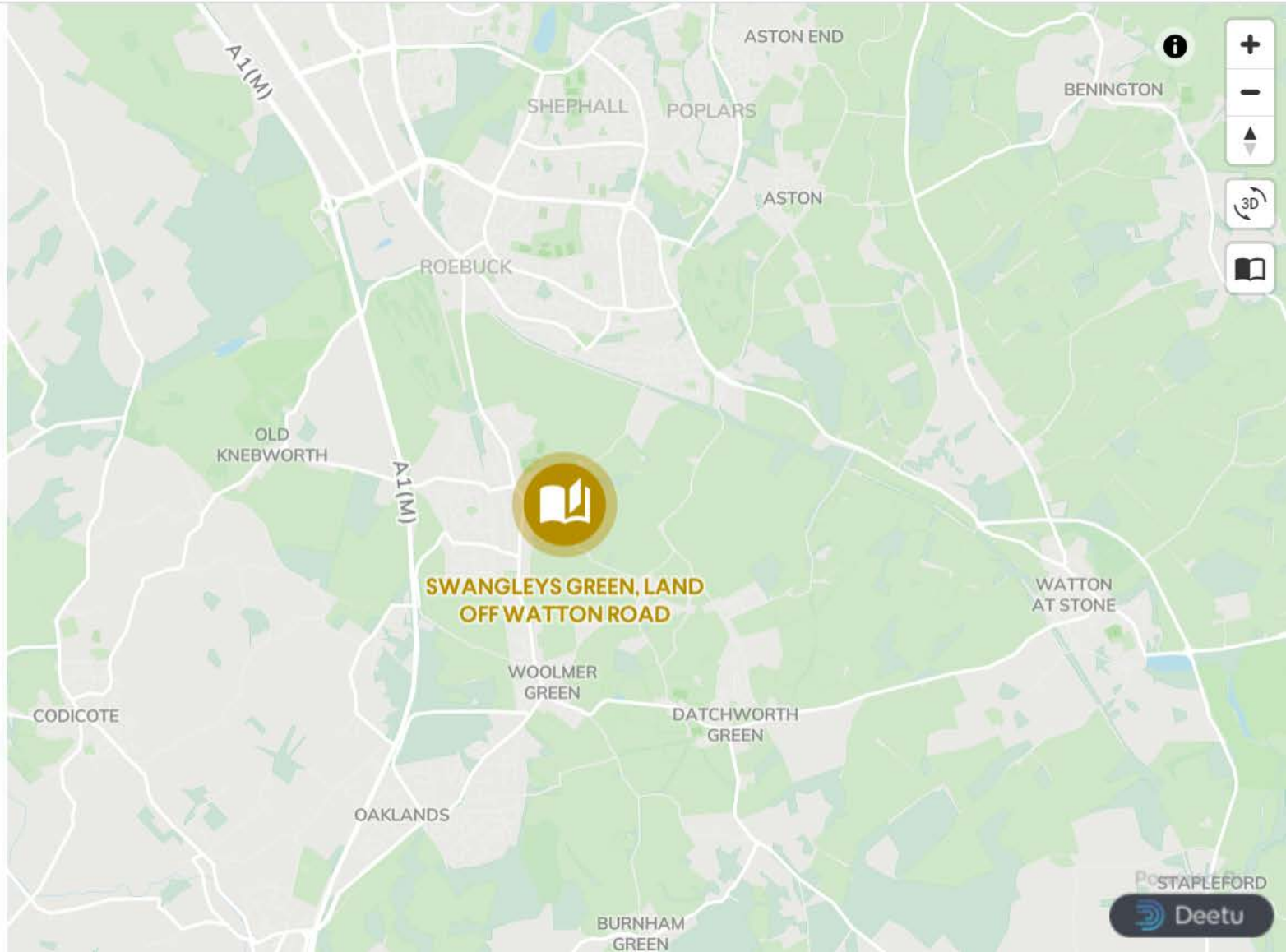
Development of Swangleys Green, land off Watton Road



Welcome to the community engagement for the potential development of **Swangleys Green, land off Watton Road, Knebworth**.

As part of the local plan preparation process, the Council has determined that the site is an appropriate location to meet housing needs.

This interactive website will guide you through our current proposals. At the end of the presentation



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