



Hartley

Parish-wide design guidelines and codes

Final Report

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Quality information

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Executive Summary

This document has been prepared by AECOM Limited ('AECOM') in accordance with its contract with Locality (the 'Client').

Through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Programme led by Locality, AECOM was commissioned to provide design support to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, which was set up by Hartley Parish Council to consult with residents and to develop a draft Plan for Council approval.

As the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (paragraph 126) notes, 'good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities'.

*Research, such as for the Government's Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (now part of the Design Council; see, for example, *The Value of Good Design*¹) has shown that good design of buildings and places can improve health and well-being, increase civic pride and cultural activity,*

¹. <https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/asset/document/the-value-of-good-design.pdf>

reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and reduce pollution.

Therefore, this document seeks to harness an understanding of how good design can make future development as endearingly popular as the best of what has been done before.

Section 1 sets the scene by explaining the importance of good design, followed by a brief summary of the scope of this report as well as the steps followed up its completion (Final report).

Section 2 outlines the local context and key characteristics of Hartley by exploring green infrastructure, built environment, streetscape, heritage, local architecture, views and topography. The analysis will begin with a parish-wide focus to understand the wider context and then, have a closer look to Hartley Village settlement. The findings will then inform and shape the design guidelines and codes (included in Chapter 3) influencing future development. These design guidelines will also be consulted with the wider community by the NP Steering Group.

Section 3 presents two sets of design guidelines. The first is a set of general design considerations that should be addressed by applicants and their design teams, appropriate for Hartley's character. The second is a set of design guidelines and codes regarding key characteristics of Hartley. Both sets have been informed and shaped by the local character analysis of the parish aiming to guide any future development, of any scale, including infill developments and house extensions.

Section 4 explains why this report is a valuable tool in securing context-driven, high quality development in the parish and offers recommendations of various ways that this document could be used by each Stakeholder in the planning and development process.

It is intended that this report will become an integral part of the Neighbourhood Plan and be given weight in the planning process.

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Introduction

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1. Introduction

Through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Programme, led by Locality, AECOM was commissioned to provide design support to Hartley Parish Council.

1.1 The importance of good design

As the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (paragraph 126) notes, 'good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities'.

Research, such as for the Government's Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (now part of the Design Council; see, for example, The Value of Good Design¹) has shown that good design of buildings and places can improve health and well-being, increase civic pride and cultural activity, reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and reduce pollution.

This document aims to offer guidance for future development that promotes good design, respects and preserves local characteristics, whilst encouraging modern and innovative design.

1. <https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/asset/document/the-value-of-good-design.pdf>

Following the analysis of Hartley Parish, a set of architectural and design qualities will be created. This set of qualities combined with good design practice will inform the design guidelines and codes that any development within Hartley should follow in order to comply with this parish-wide design guidance.

1.2 The purpose of this document

The NPPF 2021, paragraphs 127-128 states that:

'Plans should... set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable. Design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining

characteristics. Neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development...'

'To provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, plans ... should use visual tools such as design guides and codes. These provide a framework for creating distinctive places, with a consistent and high quality standard of design. However their level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified.'

The Government is placing significant importance on the development of design guidance in order to set standards for design upfront and provide firm guidance on how sites should be developed.

The village of Hartley is situated in north west Kent about 20 miles south east of London and it is located within the Metropolitan Green Belt. It is 3 miles south of the A2, 4 miles east of the M25 and 3 miles north of the M20. The centre of Hartley is 1 mile south of Longfield Station which is used by many commuters to reach their workplace in London and elsewhere.

Hartley is 4 miles south of the Ebbsfleet International Railway Station. With this main transport link giving (currently indirect) access to the Channel Tunnel and the main London Airports, the present rural aspect of Hartley will be under considerable pressure from further development.

Hartley's vision is to enhance the village of Hartley as a pleasant place to live and to provide the environment to engender a true community spirit for all the residents of Hartley. The Metropolitan Green Belt, the housing mix, the richness in architectural

styles and details, as well as the large green coverage in many forms within and around the built environment should be protected and promoted in any new development of any scale.

Hartley's Village Design Statement (published in 2008), the Parish Plan (2009), Hartley Parish Landscape Character Assessment (2022), and this document aim to celebrate the key qualities and characteristics of Hartley as well as providing design guidance for future developments.

Specifically, this parish-wide design guide will provide design guidance to ensure that any potential development, of any scale, housing extension or conversion within the parish follows good design practice and contributes to a sustainable and thriving community that retains the local character and the vernacular.

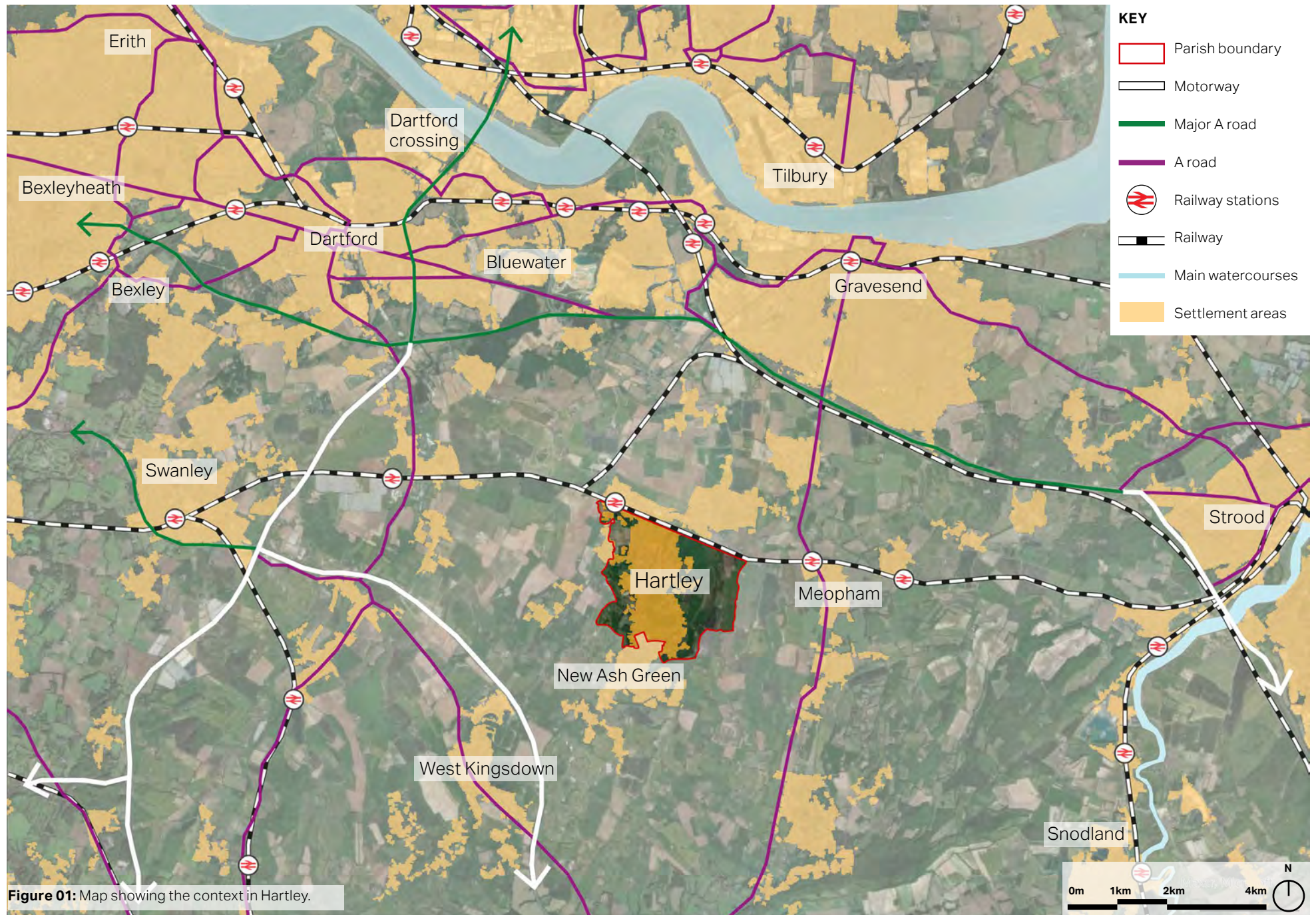
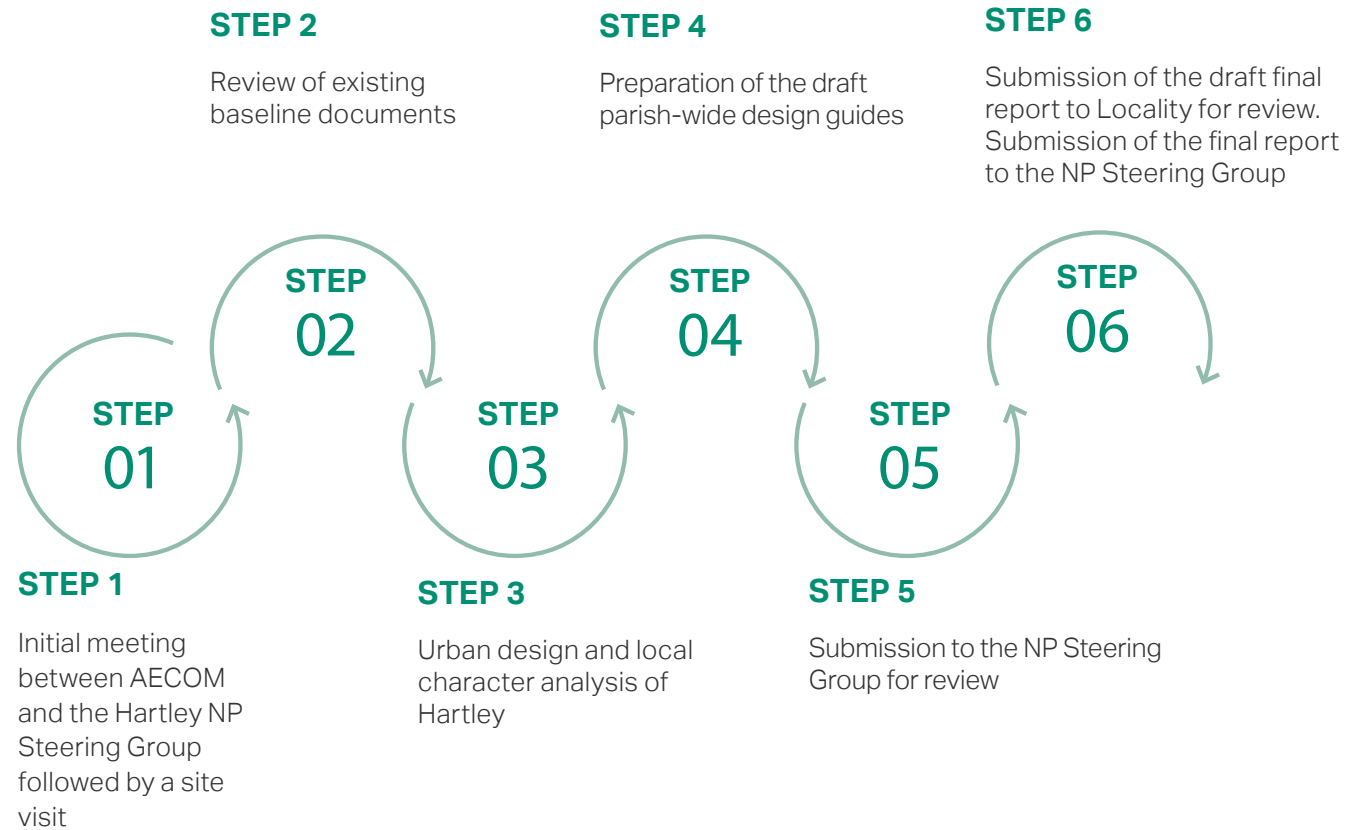


Figure 01: Map showing the context in Hartley.

1.3 Preparing the design guidelines and codes

Following an inception meeting and a site visit with members of the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Steering Group, the following steps were agreed with the Group to produce this report:





Local character analysis

02

2. Local character

This chapter details the local context and key characteristics of Hartley by exploring its heritage, built environment, streetscape, views, landscape and topography.

2.1 Parish-wide analysis

2.1.1. Access and movement

Access and movement around Hartley are sustained through a hierarchy of routes that enable onward connectivity to surrounding villages, towns, and urban centres. Public transport options include a regular rail service from Longfield Station. Active travel is supported by good pedestrian and cycle access along most routes within and around Hartley.

Major routes: Proximity to multiple A-roads within approximately 10 minutes drive from the village core underpins much of Hartley's overall connectivity with surrounding areas. These include the A2 for onward travel to Ebbsfleet, Dartford, London, the Kent Coast and north via the M25 to the Dartford Crossing and Essex; the A20 for Maidstone; the A225 for access to Sevenoaks Town

Centre via Otford; and the A227 for connectivity with Gravesend and Royal Tunbridge Wells.

Access to the wider motorway network is made possible by these routes, onward travel around throughout the south east via the M25 and travel to London, Ashford and Folkestone for the Channel Tunnel and Dover along the M2 and M20.

Local routes: Multiple local routes link Hartley with surrounding settlements. Ash Road, a C category road, is Hartley's main spine enabling access to most residential routes within the village with limited street lighting. This road has a relatively rural character justified by its meandering layout and prevalence of green features along the road. It also features much of Hartley's commercial frontage and is critical for journeys to the retail cluster close to Longfield Railway Station. However, this route is susceptible to congestion and other traffic-related issues such as speeding.

Similarly, Church Road sustains access to multiple residential routes and the Cherry Trees retail parade, while the B260 through Longfield is a critical link for further

onward travel outside of Hartley. The northern part of Church Road shares similar characteristics with Ash Road, whilst it becomes a country lane towards the south.

Furthermore, a network of rural routes sustains movement through nearby settlements. These include Hartley Bottom Road along Hartley's eastern edge and Fawkham Valley Road along the western edge.

Public Rights of Way: Hartley is well served with good access to its rural surroundings through an extensive network of public footpaths and bridleways. These are commonly used, recreationally, but also provide well used 'green' links to Longfield, Fawkham, New Ash Green and Meopham.

In absence of any significant dedicated cycle infrastructure, these local and rural routes also sustain cycling and pedestrian movement beyond the village core.

Railway: Longfield Railway Station serves many surrounding settlements. There are two direct services to London Victoria and two additional services terminating at Gillingham and Dover Priory.

2.1.2 Heritage & green infrastructure

Hartley is surrounded by the Metropolitan Green Belt, much of it falling within the parish boundary. Within its rural surrounds are multiple areas of ancient and deciduous woodlands, as well as multiple high value heritage assets, all of which enhancing Hartley's rural and historic character.

Designated landscape areas: Areas of greenbelt within the parish boundary include swathes of open land underpinning Hartley's overall landscape character. These include the Valley of Hartley Bottom as well as the woodland and rural surrounds of Church Road to the south. Furthermore, Hartley is located approximately three miles from the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), further emphasising the village's rural character. More details on the landscape character of Hartley can be found in [Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment \(LUC, Jan 2017\)](#) and the more recent detailed [Hartley Parish Landscape Character Assessment in 2022](#).

Ancient woodlands: There are extensive areas of ancient and deciduous woodlands surrounding Hartley. Most notably, Hartley Wood and Foxborough Wood to the east and south of the parish. Rectory Meadow to the north west of the Parish is also an area of deciduous woodland and a local nature reserve. Tree Preservation Orders are in place within these woodland areas, demonstrating their importance as critical green spaces within the parish.

Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs): TPOs are also in place in multiple areas throughout the village. Significant areas include the mature tree line along Old Downs, extending to the wooded area close to the residential home. Similarly, Billings Hill Shaw, Manor Drive, Gorse Way and the wooded track nestled behind Springcroft are all covered by TPOs.

Flood risk: Hartley lacks any significant blue bodies of water or watercourse. Therefore, the area within the parish boundary is considered a Flood Risk Zone 1 area (least risk of flooding).

Listed buildings: Hartley's rural heritage is well preserved with a varied collection of listed buildings. The Grade I listed All Saints Church is the oldest building in Hartley and can be dated as far back as the 12th century. A number of dwellings survive as examples of Hartley's development as a rural agricultural community throughout the 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. Many feature thatched roofs and timber frames, typical of a rural setting within the South East of England. Examples include the Grade II listed Woodins along Church Road, two cottages on Hartley Green and St Francis De-Sales Catholic Church, built initially as a timber barn but in use as a Catholic Church since 1913. Another notable listed building is the Grade II listed Hartley Court, which was rebuilt in 1770.

Monuments and archaeological sites: There are no Scheduled Monuments, though there are several Roman and archaeological sites within the Parish.

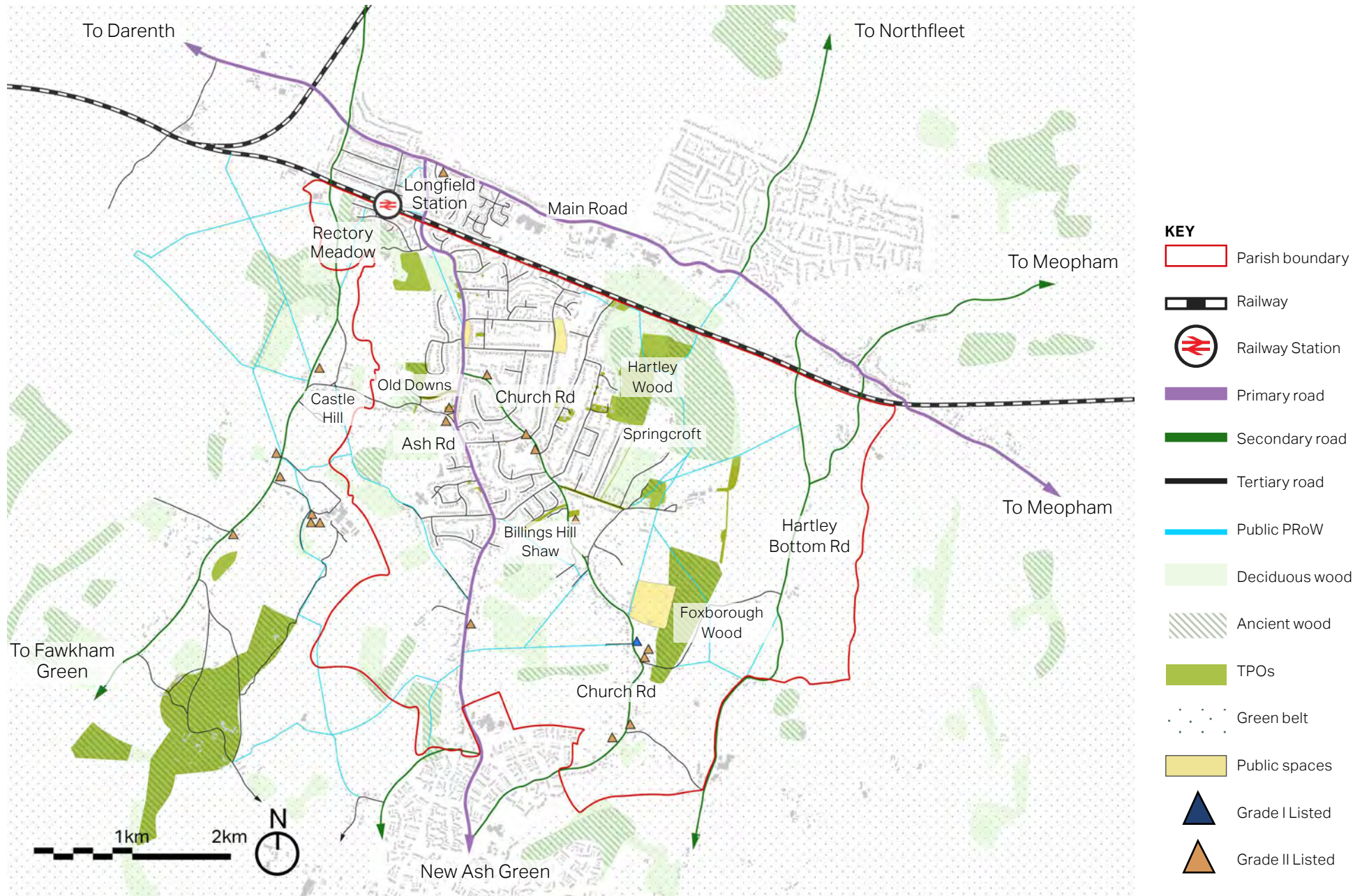


Figure 02: Map showing the access and movement network and important designations in Hartley.

2.2 The character of Hartley Village

This section will offer a spatial analysis of Hartley Village regarding the streets, development patterns, buildings, views, green infrastructure, architecture and materials.

Other documents, like the Hartley Village Design Statement and the Parish Plan will be used as reference and will be mentioned throughout, where appropriate.

Relevant documents:

- **Hartley Village Design Statement (adopted in 2008)**, Sevenoaks District Council. Link: https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/downloads/file/387/hartley_village_design_statement_-_adopted_april_2008;
- **Hartley, Longfield Kent, Parish Plan (2009)**, Hartley Parish. Link: https://www.hartleyparishcouncil.gov.uk/UserFiles/Files/Parish%20Council/Misc%20Documents/parish_plan_final_version.pdf

- **Hartley Parish Landscape Character Assessment (March 2022)**, Hartley Parish.

Street character

The streetscape in Hartley Village offers great interest due to the variety of street characters.

Diagrams A to C on page 15:

Ash Road and Church Road, running through the centre of Hartley in north/south direction, are the main ancient roads that carry traffic within and around the village. Ash Road has a single carriageway permitting two-way travel. This road has a more rural character along its northern and southern edges, where it passes through woodland areas and the Green Belt. It is bordered by green verges of various widths, large street trees, vegetation, and pavement on one side only. To the middle, where it passes through the main built environment, the character changes slightly to become more formal, and the street is bordered with pavements and street lighting on both sides and green verges in places. Unfortunately,

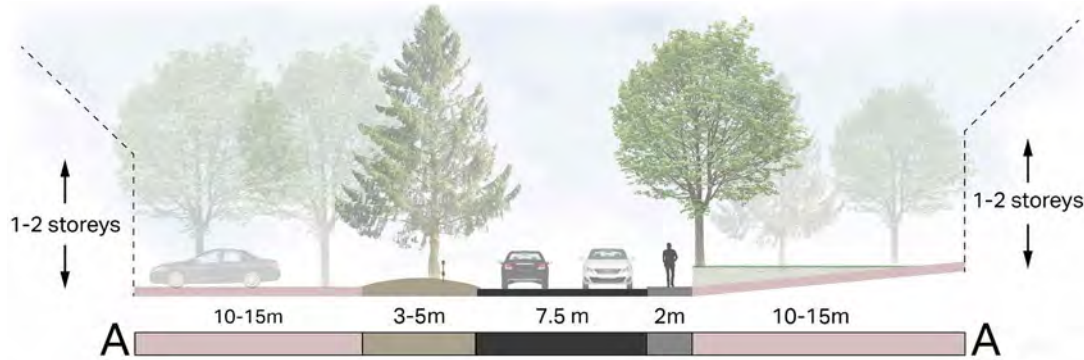
the general rural character and qualities of Ash Road are undermined by heavy traffic during peak hours.

Church Road, for most of its northern part where it runs through the built environment, shares similar qualities with Ash Road. However, towards the south where it enters the Green Belt, it changes character and becomes a narrow meandering rural lane that is well-vegetated with no pavements or street lights, successfully celebrating the rural surroundings. The sense of enclosure, created by the narrow width of the lane and the rich vegetation that borders it, is stronger than in other parts of Church Road and Ash Road.

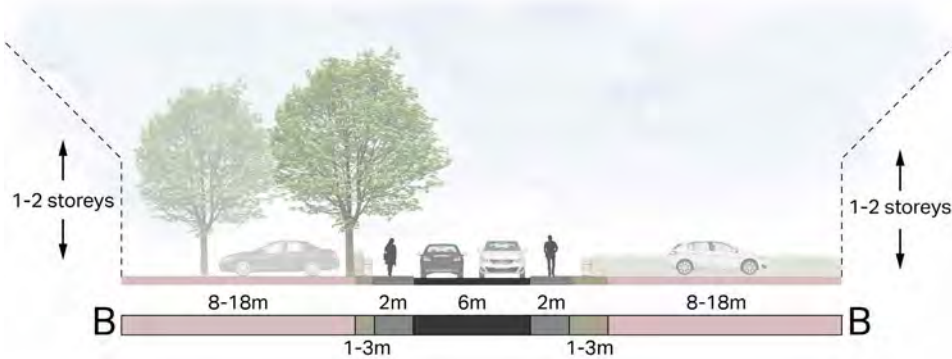
Diagrams D and E on page 16:

Other pre-1900 roads include Gorsewood Road, Castle Hill and St John's Lane, all of which have abundant vegetation that enhances the rural character of the village. St John's Lane, in particular, is bordered with generous green verges, well-sized front gardens, and low-height hedgerows or bushes that together create a feeling of openness along the street. Gorsewood

A. Ash Road (northern & southern edges)



B. Ash Road & Church Road within built environment



C. Church Road (southern edge)

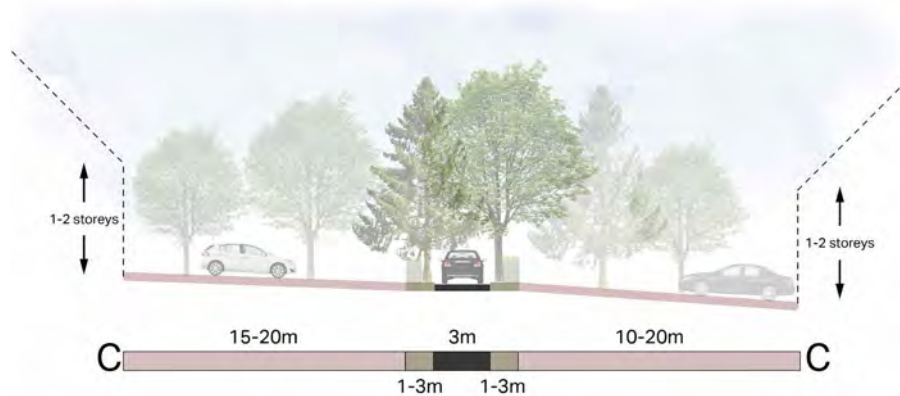


Figure 03: Indicative sections (diagrams) showing the key qualities/elements of some local roads in Hartley that could be used as positive reference in future development.

Road and Hartley Hill are characterised by a variety of soft and harder boundary treatments (hedgerows, trees, low-height brick walls, and timber fencing) that creates a clear separation between private and public space. Lastly, Castle Hill and Hartley Hill are narrow meandering country lanes, narrower than the southern end of Church Road, bordered with rich vegetation on both sides. Occasionally, there are properties set along Castle Hill with either small or larger front gardens. The level of enclosure along Castle Hill exceeds the one created along Church Road, due to the rich vegetation.

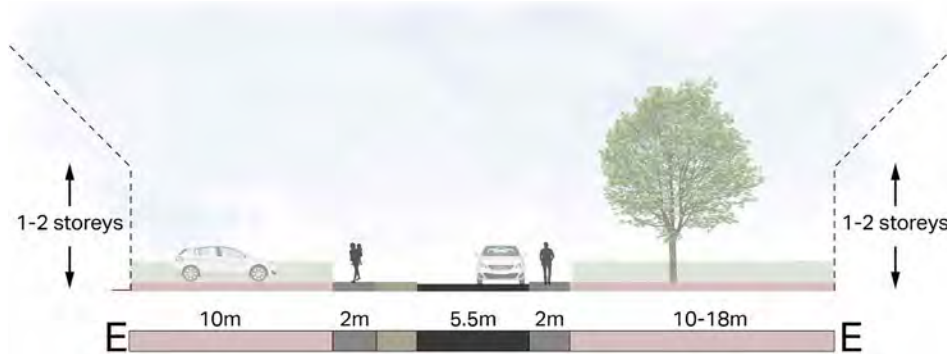
D. Castle Hill



KEY

- Road
- Pavement
- Verge
- Front garden
- Green edge

E. St John's Lane



F. Cul-de-sac streets (Billings Hill Shaw)

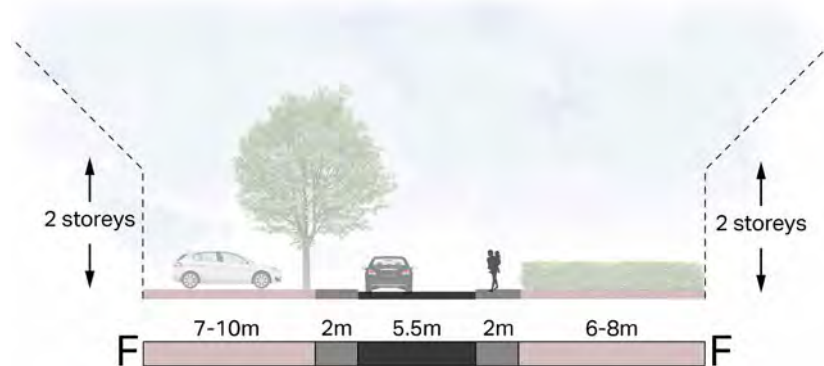


Diagram F on page 16:

In neighbourhoods organised along cul-de-sac streets, those are characterised by a 'shared' feeling, since the lack of boundary treatments creates a less clear separation between private and public spaces.

Along primary, secondary, or tertiary streets organised in a permeable pattern of interconnected streets, the boundary treatments serve as clear demarcations of the private property, as more traffic is coming through those roads.

Figure 04: Indicative sections (diagrams) showing the key qualities/elements of some local roads in Hartley that could be used as positive reference in future development.

Development patterns

Hartley's built up area comprises a variety of development patterns which are influenced by the street layouts, the proximity level to the open fields and woodland areas, the landscape and the scale of the development.

In general, 7 different development patterns are identified in the village, each one offering a distinct sense of the place, either positive or negative.

Linear Neighbourhoods (no.1)

Properties are set in a linear pattern along Castle Hill and southern ends of Church Road and Ash Road. However, this linearity is often interrupted due to the rural meandering character of these streets which offers views along the street.

Due to the low building density of these neighbourhoods, the building plots are larger compared to those in the main village settlement, whilst the widths and the depths offer great variations enhancing the rural context. In particular, plot widths and depths

range considerably. However, there are also cases of infill development over the years which has introduced more variety into the plot patterns by sub-dividing larger plots to fit more houses.

Building setbacks and orientations also vary, creating irregular building lines and thus maintaining a level of informality appropriate to the rural environment.

There is a good amount of green assets including views to backdrop woodland and the Green Belt, as well as natural boundary treatments. For example, large trees and hedgerows prevail along Castle Hill and the southern end of Church Road, whilst low-height timber fencing or brick walls can also be found, especially along Ash Road. However, there are also examples of high timber or brick walls which erode the general rural image and have a major effect on the openness of the Green Belt. They also block the movement of species and thus, hinder biodiversity. In addition, blue assets are also found along Church Road, reinforcing the countryside aspect.

There is a mixture of building typologies along those streets, up to 2 storeys high, ranging between detached, semi-detached, terraced houses, and bungalows. Some positive examples are the Norman All Saints Parish Church and the adjacent Georgian Hartley Court along Church Road or Hartley House, the Black Lion Public House, Bay Lodge, and Old Forge along Ash Road.

Perimeter Blocks (no.2)

An extensive portion of Hartley's village core is made up of low-rise, detached housing arranged around large perimeter blocks. A rectilinear street pattern is formed around Well Field, Larks Field, Woodland Avenue and Gresham Avenue.

These blocks evidence Hartley's first phase of large-scale expansion in the early 20th century when the Payne Trapps & Co. purchased a sizable amount of land in 1905. A range of small plots were sold to self-builders, many of whom came from London looking to settle in rural surrounds and commute into the city from the newly built railway station.

This approach created a relatively consistent pattern of development, offering generous front gardens, allowing for distant setbacks of around 10-20m, which for more recent builds gave ample room for parking.

Furthermore, there is a prevalence of soft boundary treatments such as low shrubbery, lawns, verges and street trees, enhanced by differentiation in landscaping between private front gardens. Back gardens are similarly generous and backing onto one another, a common feature for the cores of large, low-rise residential perimeter blocks.

Building lines are relatively consistent within this pattern of development, with houses and bungalows fronting onto residential streets in a regimented manner. This sustains enclosure when moving around these blocks, though permeability is limited given their size and the lack of any direct mid-block links to parallel streets.

Cul-de-sacs (no.3)

Cul-de-sacs are a common street typology at the periphery of the built-up area or, in some cases, nestled between perimeter blocks. Each route possesses its own distinct vernacular contributing to Hartley's residential setting and overall character.

Notable examples include Old Downs, a mature tree-lined street with a varied building orientation, typical of Hartley's rural context. Billings Hill Shaw and Fairby Lane achieve a similar impact with both streets nestled among dense woodland, with the latter feeling to its end like a country road. Furthermore, a lack of definitive boundary treatments create a much more open and shared feel when moving through the street.

Banckside features a hilly topography and winding street pattern, enabling evolving views of the Rectory Meadow and the land to the west. This also creates visual distinction within the street scene as plot sizes and house types differ in response to the street's physical characteristics, contrasting with its consistent architectural style and material palette.

Bramblefield Estate (no.4)

This neighbourhood is separated from the main part of Hartley by land in the Metropolitan Green Belt, including areas of woodland.

The key characteristics of Bramblefield Estate, which eventually affect its development patterns, are the hilly topography which allows views to the surrounding woodland and the large green coverage (either in the form of green verges or communal/private gardens).

There is a 'shared' feeling in the area which is promoted by the lack of boundary treatments and thus, a less clear separation between private and public space. Trees, bushes, and flowerbeds decorate the green spaces with a positive aesthetic contribution.

The area is generally secluded and communicates with the rest of Hartley via Ash Road. In addition, there are also pedestrian links to Longfield, and the buildings are organised in clusters along cul-de-sac lanes which are equipped with

parking courtyards, footways and well-sized open spaces. Building typologies, up to 2 storeys high, include bungalows, terraces and maisonettes.

Wellfield Estate (no.5)

This neighbourhood was originally a council estate and thus, followed a different development pattern from the rest of Hartley. Similarly to Bramblefield Estate, the buildings are set along cul-de-sac lanes and the neighbourhood connects to the rest of Hartley via Well Field and Woodland Avenue. In addition, the northern railway boundary and the woodland area to the east reinforce the feel of a secluded neighbourhood.

The hilly topography is a key characteristic of Wellfield Estate and allows for long-distance views towards the open fields to the north. The building layouts to the north also contribute to the unobstructed views to the fields as they are set perpendicular to the road.

The building lines and setbacks are relatively regular compared to the rest of Hartley's built environment. Plots do not

show great variations in widths and depths, whilst plot sizes are smaller compared to the rest of Hartley's envelope. In general, there is a certain level of formality along the streetscape which, however, is interrupted by the hilly topography, the backdrop woodlands, and open views to the fields. Boundary treatments range between soft (bushes, hedges, trees or flowerbeds) and harder surfaces (low-height brick walls and timber fencing).

The buildings are organised in clusters interrupted by parking courtyards and open green spaces at places. Building typologies, up to 2 storeys high, include bungalows, terraces, maisonettes, and sheltered housing.

Backland Developments (no.6)

These are examples of buildings located in the back gardens of residential properties found, for instance, along Church Road, Gorse Way, Manor Drive, and Ash Road.

The general layout of those developments includes shared driveways, usually non-permeable paving, a lack of front gardens,

and small-sized back gardens. Although this design approach offers an alternative to building more housing on the road frontage, it also creates issues of access, privacy, conflict, disturbance, and visibility, whilst altering the plot patterns in the village envelope.

This kind of development is not recommended for best design practice. Where backland development is allowed, it will require careful examination to ensure proper and safe means of access with an acceptable layout.

Infill Developments (no.7)

Infill development is the main design approach in Hartley village since around 1978 when the last large estates were completed. Also, due to the housing pressures and the Green Belt designation surrounding the village, infilling has been taking place along many pre-existing roads.

Although infill development is recommended in villages to maintain the village settlement boundary and gradually, and sustainably, increase the number of

Photo gallery

housing, there have been examples that are not in keeping with the local context. For example, older properties with large gardens along Church Road and Gorsewood Road were demolished and replaced by 2 or 3 'executive style' houses which do not match the surrounding local architectural styles and materials.

In addition, there have been infill developments where the new 2 houses are identical, breaking the general diversity and mix of styles and sizes in the village.

New housing developments tend to use fewer boundary treatments in the form of soft surfaces and more hard ones like brick walls and timber fencing, either low or high, railings, as well as non permeable paving. All those elements erode the general rural environment.

Linear neighbourhoods



Figure 05: Most properties along the southern end of Ash Road are in keeping with their surroundings.



Figure 06: The level of enclosure along Church Road is strong due to the narrow width and the rich vegetation and trees.



Figure 07: Properties along the southern end of Church Road are set back from the street, allowing for well-sized front gardens.

Cul-de-sac neighbourhoods



Figure 08: Positive example of recent development that offers a mixture of styles, sizes, and boundary treatments, Broomfields.



Figure 09: Topography and meandering street layouts offer interesting perspectives and views along the street, Bancksie.



Figure 10: A tree-lined street bordered by natural boundary treatments celebrates the rural character of Hartley.

Photo gallery

Bramblefield Estate



Figure 11: There is a mixture of housing types ranging between flats, maisonettes, terraces, and bungalows.



Figure 12: Houses are organised in blocks centred around open green spaces and car parking courts.

Wellfield Estate



Figure 13: Building lines and setbacks are generally regular with no variations, creating clear unobstructed views.



Figure 14: The hilly topography is a key characteristic of this neighbourhood, allowing for views towards the open fields to the north and providing visual interest along the streetscape.

Backland development



Figure 15: Although backland developments decrease the number of frontages along the street, they are also characterised by long driveways, access and visibility issues, lack of soft boundary treatments and smaller plot sizes, Church Road.

Infill developments



Figure 16: Example of infill development (right) which is in close proximity to a listed building (left) creating overlooking issues, Church Road.



Figure 17: Example of infill development where identical buildings are proposed contrasting with the general mixture of styles and sizes in the village, Church Road.

Land uses

The built-up area of Hartley occupies approximately one-third of the Parish and is surrounded on three sides by the Green Belt consisting of farmland, woods and open spaces. Much of the commercial and retail uses are focused on Ash Road and Church Road including a post office, convenience stores, estate agents, two primary schools, and clubs.

Additionally, the shopping parade at Cherry Trees provides some more key services but the design of the building is out of keeping with the area owing to its concrete architecture and flat roof.

Further community and commercial uses include the St Francis De-Sales and All Saint's Churches, the Country Club, a dentist, and a pre-school. These are located or accessed via key routes such as Ash Road and Church Road.

Green infrastructure

The term 'green infrastructure' includes all the green elements, any type or scale, within and around Hartley Village.

In general, Hartley's character as a 'green' village is promoted by several features: large street trees on Old Downs Woodlands Avenue, large green verges on Larks Field and Gresham Avenue, or a country lane arrangement like Castle Hill or Church Road.

Open green spaces are also an important component of green infrastructure. The main ones in Hartley are Rectory Meadow, Hoselands Green, Hartley Green and Hartley Court Green.

Most of the private gardens, both front and rear, are well-vegetated and bordered by natural boundary treatments. However, there are also fewer positive examples where concrete paving prevails, or where high brick and timber gates erode the general 'green' context.

Other open spaces include the allotments, the playgrounds, playing fields, woodlands areas, the open fields, and the surrounding Green Belt.

Topography and views

The generally low building density in Hartley, the hilly topography in places, and the close proximity of the village to woodland areas and the Green Belt allow for long views over the open fields and valley to the east and west of the village.

These views can be appreciated from many places, however, some indicative ones are illustrated in [Figures 18-19](#). More detailed descriptions of views within the parish can be found in the Hartley Parish Landscape Character Assessment.

Local architecture

Hartley is characterised by a mixture of housing typologies, sizes, architectural styles and roofscapes. This variety, analysed in Hartley's Village Design Statement, creates visual interest along the streetscape and gives Hartley a distinct character.

Photo gallery



Figure 18: The large open space allows for unobstructed views to the backdrop woodland.



Figure 20: The hilly topography in the Wellfield Estate and the layout of the buildings allow for long views towards the open fields to the north, Caxton Close.



Figure 19: Views towards the open fields to the west.



Figure 21: Billings Hill Shaw cul-de-sac is bordered with woodlands and open fields.

The next pages present a gallery of the materials, roof types, wall finishes, boundary treatments, and other decorative features that are found in Hartley.

Roof types & materials

There is a wide range of roof types including gabled, gambrel, hipped and half-hipped roofs. However, there are also examples of flat roofs found in either housing extensions or in the Cherry Trees Shops. In general, flat roofs are not supported by the local community as this style is not in keeping with the general local roofscape.

Roof materials range between clay and slate tiles. However, other materials like thatching or Kentish peg tiles are found in older buildings positively contributing to the local architecture.

The rooflines are often decorated with chimneys, mainly in red brick, or dormers, either hipped or gabled, which add a level of informality in the roofscape.



Figure 22: Gabled roof with clay pantiles, a flat dormer window and brick chimney.



Figure 25: Half hipped roof with clay tiles, flat dormer windows and brick chimney.



Figure 28: M-shaped roof.



Figure 23: Cross-gabled roof with clay tiles.



Figure 26: Hipped roof with clay tiles and a skylight.



Figure 29: Hartley Cottage thatched cat slide roof .



Figure 24: Thatched roof with a brick chimney and 3 dormers.



Figure 27: Gambrel roof with clay tiles.



Figure 30: Kentish peg tiles and pitched roof dormers .

Façades and other decorative features

Brick is the prevailing material used on the façades of both older and more recent housing. The earliest brick house in the village dates back to 1770. Other materials include flint, pebbledash, clay hung tiles, timber weatherboarding, and timber frame with rendered infills.

Another characteristic of Hartley's built environment is the combination of different materials on the façades, for instance red bricks with timber frames, flint, weatherboarding or hung tiles. Those combinations are found in both older and more modern houses, a positive feature that seems to be preserved throughout the years.

The prevailing window types are casement and sashed windows which are painted white, black, or brown depending on the general colour palette used on the facade. Other window types bring some variety on the streetscape, for example the eye shaped window found on a blank facade along Stack Lane.



Figure 31: Red brick combined with hung clay tiles.



Figure 34: Hung clay tiles combined with limestone & red brick.



Figure 37: Pebble dashing.



Figure 32: White render.



Figure 35: White weatherboarding & red brick.



Figure 38: Rendered façade.



Figure 33: Black weatherboarding.



Figure 36: Flint wall with red brick dressing for windows and doors.



Figure 39: Hung clay tiles with variations & timber frames with white infills.

Boundary treatments and street furniture

As mentioned earlier in the document, the prevailing boundary treatments include grass areas, hedges, hedgerows, trees, bushes, and flowerbeds.

However, harder surfaces are also found in places and they are often combined with softer ones, for example low-height brick or stone walls, timber picket fences, as well as railing.

The combination of soft and hard surfaces can bring some visual interest along the streetscape, as long as it is done properly and it is in keeping with the rest of the village character. Less positive examples include high brick or timber walls which act more like gates limiting the 'transparency' that characterises the general environment of Hartley.

Street furniture, signs, and other distinctive features positively contribute to the character of Hartley and those are presented in Hartley's Village Design Statement.



Figure 40: Long hedgerow stretching along the front garden of the property. frames with white infills.



Figure 43: Hedgerow on the side with bushes and grass area.



Figure 46: Green verge and bushes along the front boundary.



Figure 41: Rich vegetation with low-height brick wall.



Figure 44: Hedgerow trimmed to create an entrance gate & red brick wall.



Figure 47: Stone wall & hedges on the side.



Figure 42: Timber picket fence.



Figure 45: Timber lattice fencing & trimmed hedges.



Figure 48: Brick and stone wall with patterns.

Summary table (positive characteristics)

Positive characteristics in Hartley that could act as references in future development	Relevance to the design guidelines and codes in Chapter 3
1. Hartley Parish is surrounded by the Metropolitan Green Belt which promotes the rural character of the area as well as ensuring clear separation with surrounding settlements.	5. Landscape and green belt protection
2. There is a good network of footpaths running within the built-up area of Hartley as well as in the open fields offering immediate connections to the countryside and surrounding settlements.	1. Access, parking and utilities - DG.3
3. There is a variety of street qualities in Hartley that create different atmospheres and thus, characters along the streetscape. Those characters include: main roads, secondary streets, country lanes, tree-lined streets, 'shared' lanes, well-vegetated streets with large green verges and pavements etc. Those street qualities found in Hartley need to be preserved and used in future developments.	1. Access, parking and utilities - DG.1
4. The levels of enclosure vary throughout Hartley, creating visual interest along the streetscape. Those different levels of enclosure are generated by the width of the road, the setback of the buildings, as well as the green elements featuring along the streets. This variety should be preserved in new developments.	2. Built form - DG.5
5. Natural boundary treatments prevail in the village, however harder surfaces like low-height timber picket fences or brick walls are also welcome to offer some variety along the streetscape.	2. Built form - DG.8
6. The types of boundary treatments should be decided depending on the street character. For example, along main traffic roads there is clear separation between private and public spaces with the use of hedges, hedgerows or timber fencing, whilst a more shared feeling prevails along cul-de-sac streets where mainly bushes or flowerbeds are chosen.	1. Access, parking and utilities - DG.1 and Built form - DG.8
7. There are different development patterns in Hartley, each one creating a distinct sense of place. Those patterns are influenced by street layouts, the proximity or not to the open fields and woodland areas, the landscape, and the scale of development. Any new development should understand the local patterns of development before suggesting any design.	2. Built form - DG.5
8. Hartley is a 'green' village surrounded by Green Belt and woodland, whilst natural boundary treatments prevail within the built environment. Green assets should be preserved and enhanced in any new development.	5. Landscape and green belt protection, 2. Built form - DG.4 and DG.8
9. Topography is a key characteristic of Hartley allowing views to the surrounding countryside and should be considered in any new development.	3. Views and vistas
10. There is a mixture of housing sizes that should be preserved and encouraged.	2. Built form - DG.6 and DG.7
11. Hartley's rich local architecture should be appreciated and promoted in new developments. There is a great variety in roof types and materials, wall finishes, boundary treatments, and other decorative features.	2. Built form - DG.9 and 4. Architectural details and eco-design - DG.10
12. Limited street lighting exists along Ash Road. Any further lighting scheme should be carefully considered to preserve the rural character and avoid light pollution.	1. Access, parking and utilities - DG.2.
13. Backland development will be considered only where separate access, privacy, and amenity issues are addressed.	2. Built form - DG.6.

Summary table (potential threats and issues)

Characteristics in Hartley that are considered as issues and threats and should be addressed by design guidelines and codes	Relevance to the design guidelines and codes in Chapter 3
1. The loss of Green Belt is a threat in new development which will affect the landscape and biodiversity, and will increase the possibility of coalescence with neighbouring settlements like Longfield, New Ash Green and Fawkham.	5. Landscape and green belt protection
2. Poorly designed backland development and inappropriate infill development will have an impact on the local development patterns and thus, erode Hartley's character.	2. Built Form - DG.5
3. Whilst infill development is preferred compared to larger developments, issues of overlooking, site coverage, architecture, and housing mix should be considered in future designs.	2. Built Form - DG.6, DG.9 and 4. Architectural details and eco-design - DG.10
4. Access points in new developments usually cause accessibility issues, whilst also increasing traffic along the street.	1. Access, parking and utilities - DG.1
5. Views towards woodlands and open fields are under threat in new developments.	3. Views and vistas
6. Gates and high brick or timber walls with no gaps should be avoided as they erode the general character of the village, block the movement of species, and create a major obstruction to the openness of the Green Belt.	2. Built Form - DG.8
7. Provision for car parking should be appropriate for the development to avoid having cars parked on the pavement or green verges. Also, permeable parking paving should be preferred over impermeable surfaces.	1. Access, parking and utilities
8. Loss of character due to new developments that are out of keeping with the general rural and quite mixed environment. Some examples are: materials that do not reflect the local architecture, 'executive' style houses that bring no variety to the local context, uniform housing sizes, flat roofs instead of pitched roofs, smaller building plots etc.	2. Built Form - DG.9 and 4. Architectural details and eco-design - DG.10
9. The existing retail centre at Cherry Trees is not in keeping with the rest of the village in terms of local architecture, massing, and scale. Improvements could be suggested.	4. Architectural details and eco-design - DG.10
10. There are less green features decorating new developments in front gardens, creating a contrast with the rest of the village.	2. Built Form - DG.8, DG.9

Design guidelines
and codes

03



3. Design guidelines and codes

This chapter provides design guidance aiming to shape future development, of any scale, in the parish including infill development and house extensions or conversions. Where possible, images and diagrams are used to exemplify the design guidelines and codes.

3.1 Introduction

This section is divided into two parts:

Part 1. General design considerations.

A set of general design considerations appropriate to Hartley’s built and natural character. Those considerations should be addressed by applicants and their design teams. Where those considerations are covered by planning documents or design guides in national, district or parish level relevant links have been added.

Part 2. Key design guidance. A set of design guidelines, regarding key aspects/ characteristics of Hartley Parish. Those guidelines are not fully covered by planning documents and therefore, more detailed guidance is provided.

Overall, both the design considerations and the design guidelines focus on residential environments, of any scale, including infill development, potential conversions or housing extensions as well. The table below offers an overview of Chapter 3.

Part 1. General design considerations	Part 2. Key design guidance
1. Access, parking & utilities	DG.1 Street character & public realm
2. Built form	DG.2 Lighting schemes
3. Views and vistas	DG.3 Accessible & attractive footpaths and cycle networks
4. Architectural details & eco-design	DG.4 Development edges in the rural landscape
5. Landscape & Green Belt protection	DG.5 Patterns of growth and layout of buildings and gardens
	DG.6 Infill developments
	DG.7 Housing extensions
	DG.8 Boundary treatments
	DG.9 Development in close proximity to heritage assets
	DG.10 Preserving and promoting local architecture

Part 1. General design considerations

3.2 Part 1. General design considerations

1. Access, parking and utilities

- Any new development should propose street designs that meet both technical requirements and the needs of all users. Streets must not compromise the needs of one over the other; drivers, pedestrians, cyclists and those with disabilities;
- Street design should take into account any visibility issues. For example, access to properties should not be next to junctions or busy turns. Please see [DG.1](#) (page 42) for more design guidelines on appropriate street design;
- Streets should contribute to the local character of Hartley. Thus, a good understanding of the existing street typologies and characteristics, widths and enclosure is needed so that any new design reflects the existing rurality. For example, as analysed in [Section 2.1](#) and [Section 2.2](#), some existing street typologies include country roads bordered with trees and vegetation, meandering lanes with green verges, settlement streets with fewer trees and more hedgerows and vegetation and cul-de-sac lanes. Please see [DG.1](#) for more design guidelines on street typologies appropriate for Hartley;
- In any new developments, a hierarchy of street typologies should be proposed to filter traffic as well as creating a variety of environments. Those new streets must reference the existing street typologies and ensure the character and environment of Hartley is preserved and enhanced;
- Development should integrate with existing networks in Hartley Parish and enhance them. These include Public Rights of Way (PRoW), footpaths, streets, and cycle routes. Please see [DG.3](#) (page 45) for more design guidelines on footpaths and cycle networks;
- Any new development should propose streets that incorporate opportunities for landscaping, green infrastructure, and sustainable drainage. This approach will enhance the rural character and environment of Hartley as well as boost biodiversity;
- Parking should be well integrated in the design and not dominate the public realm. For that reason, soft landscape is suggested along the edges as well as permeable paving materials, as opposed to concrete. This will mitigate any visual impact, increase visual attractiveness, and reduce non-permeable surfaces, refraction, and heat islands;
- Any new development should minimise on-street parking or parking on roadside verges. Parking should not erode the general character of the street;
- Parking courts should be overlooked by properties or other facilities to create a safe environment. High-quality and well-designed soft landscaping can also be used;

Part 1. General design considerations

- All parking areas must be constructed from porous materials to minimise surface water run-off and help mitigate potential flooding;
- Electric vehicles charging points, both for off-street and on-street parking, should be integrated into the design and promote Hartley's vision towards a sustainable future;
- Parking garages must not dominate the appearance of dwellings or be placed in front of the general building line;
- Adequate provision should be made for bin storage, including areas for waste separation, holding and recycling; and
- Adequate provision should be made for cycle parking.

Relevant planning documents:

- **Manual for Streets (2007)**, Department for Transport. Link: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1072722/Essex_Manual_for_Streets_Redacted.pdf
- **National Model Design Code (Part 2 - 2021)**, DLUHC. Link: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1009795/NMDC_Part_2_Guidance_Notes.pdf, Chapter 3: Movement.
- **Building for a Healthy Life (2020)**, Homes England. Link: https://www.udg.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/files/14JULY20%20BFL%202020%20Brochure_3.pdf, Chapter: 'Integrated Neighbourhoods', Chapter: 'Streets for All'.
- **Hartley Village Design Statement (2008)**, Sevenoaks District Council. Link: https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/downloads/file/387/hartley_village_design_statement_-_adopted_april_2008, Chapter 1.3.1 General Principles.

- **Hartley Parish Plan (2009)**, Hartley Parish Plan Steering Group, Link: <http://www.hartleyparishcouncil.org.uk/pdf/parish%20plan%20final%20version.pdf> Chapter 3: Transport and Communications.
- **Hartley Parish Landscape Character Assessment (March 2022)**, Hartley Parish.

Part 1. General design considerations



Figure 49: Example of cycle parking storage that fits sensitively within a rural environment, elsewhere in UK.



Figure 51: Example of an on-street electric vehicle charging point, elsewhere in the UK.



Figure 53: Local example of garage parking and permeable paving in driveway.



Figure 50: Local example of permeable paving in driveways that helps minimise surface water run-off whilst improving the rural environment and biodiversity of the area.



Figure 52: Example of bin storage surrounded by flowers and plants that improves the surroundings and enhances biodiversity.



Figure 54: Local side parking example with permeable paving in driveway.

Part 1. General design considerations

2. Built form

- Any new development should suggest design that is sensitive to the generally surrounding low density environment and should respond to the specific local context. For example, density in Hartley village centre is relatively higher than in the wider area which is more rural. Thus, the massing, height, and scale of the new structures including infill and extensions should match the surrounding context and also be appropriate for the plot size. Consideration should be paid to plot coverage to ensure there is sufficient garden space and to mitigate overlooking issues for neighbouring properties. Please see [DG.6](#) (page 53) and [DG.7](#) (page 55) for more design guidelines on extensions and infill;
- Any new development should retain any existing trees, hedges, hedgerows and woodlands and incorporate them into the new design. For example, those existing green features could be part of green spaces within the new development or green buffers along the development edges to allow for a smooth transition into the surrounding open fields. Please see [DG.4](#) (page 47) for more design guidelines on development edges;
- Any new development should propose design that allows for relatively irregular building lines and varied plot sizes and widths to match the surrounding context of Hartley. For example, the irregular building lines create visual interest along the streets with buildings either facing directly onto the pavements or having well-sized front gardens. Please see [DG.5](#) (page 49) for more design guidelines on patterns of growth;
- Any new development should propose a mix of housing to include a range of houses and bungalows of different types and sizes to allow for a variety of options and thus, meet the needs of a wider group of people;
- Infill development should complement the street scene into which it will be inserted. Thus, building lines, boundary treatments, massing, heights should all be appropriate to the surrounding context. In particular, any new development should respect the setting of Hartley's historic buildings by not building closer or higher than existing buildings. Please see [DG.9](#) (page 59) for more design guidelines;
- Buildings should front onto the streets and avoid having blank façades that hinder activity and movement. The pattern and layout of buildings should fit into Hartley's existing development patterns. Please see [DG.5](#) for more design guidelines on patterns of growth and layout of buildings and gardens;
- Buildings, where possible, should overlook green spaces, open fields and nature in general;
- Any new development should prioritise soft boundary treatments (trees, green verges, hedges etc.) over harder surfaces. Hard boundary treatments should be kept to the minimum matching and enhancing the existing rural character of Hartley; and
- New development should propose design that creates different levels of enclosure along the streetscape to offer visual interest.

Part 1. General design considerations

3. Views and vistas

- Any new development should relate sensitively to views and vistas within the built environment as well as the surrounding landscape. The different landscape character areas within the parish each contain views as described in the Hartley Parish Landscape Character Assessment. These include:

- Views into Pennis valley from surrounding high land including from the Central Fawkham Valley and Hartley Hill Plateau Landscape Character Areas;
- Views from the corner of Churchdown Wood, a popular viewpoint within Fawkham Parish;
- Views east-west across the Lower Fawkham Valley from the upper valley sides;
- View of Parish Church of St Mary and houses from the Lower Fawkham Valley;

- Views looking east from Churchdown Wood and looking north from high land to the north of the wood;
- Views looking west across the Lower Fawkham Valley from Hoselands Wood;
- Views west as far as London across non-developed slopes in the Lower Fawkham Valley;
- Views from Hartley Hill Plateau east to Hartley Bottom;
- Long views from Hartley Hill Plateau across areas of Public Open Space including Northfield and Hartley Manor Playing fields;
- Views from the eastern edge of Hartley Eastern wooded Plateau into Hartley Bottom; and
- Long views within Hartley Bottom which can be experienced both along and across the valley.

- All views mentioned in the Hartley Parish Landscape Character Assessment should be protected and respected in any new development. Any design that blocks views and vistas must be avoided. For that reason, massing and density should be sensitive to the surrounding context and generate a roofline that is in keeping with Hartley's local character;
- Sevenoaks District Council Planning Policy EN8 which designates areas of local landscape importance should be extended to the area of woodland at Downs Valley to protect the views in the adjacent Fawkham Valley from visual harm;



Figure 55: Long-distance view over Fawkham Valley.

- Any infill development, building extension or modification should not exceed the surrounding average building height or block any views towards important built landmarks and landscape features. Please see [DG.5](#) and [DG.6](#) for more design guidelines on infill development, housing extensions and modifications; and
- The visual impact of any development, including that from the road should be considered when dealing with planning applications so that the rural character of Hartley is maintained.

Relevant planning documents (for 2 & 3):

- **National Model Design Code (Part 2 - 2021)**, DLUHC. Link: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1009795/NMDC_Part_2_Guidance_Notes.pdf Chapter 5. Built Form, Chapter 9. Homes and Buildings.
- **Building for a Healthy Life (2020)**, Homes England. Link: https://www.udg.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/files/14JULY20%20BFL%202020%20Brochure_3.pdf, Chapter: 'Distinctive Places'.
- **Hartley Village Design Statement (2008)**, Sevenoaks District Council. Link: https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/downloads/file/387/hartley_village_design_statement_-_adopted_april_2008, Chapter 1.3.1 General Principles, Chapter 4. The Metropolitan Green Belt and the Countryside, Chapter 7. New Buildings, Extensions to Existing Buildings and Design Guidelines.

- **Hartley Parish Plan (2009)**, Hartley Parish Plan Steering Group, Link: <http://www.hartleyparishcouncil.org.uk/pdf/parish%20plan%20final%20version.pdf> Chapter 12. Housing Services, Chapter 13. The Countryside.
- **Hartley Parish Landscape Character Assessment (March 2022)**, Hartley Parish.

Part 1. General design considerations

4. Architectural details and eco-design

- Any new development should reflect, respect and reinforce the rich local architecture in Hartley, as analysed in [Section 2.2](#), and historic distinctiveness, avoiding pastiche replication. The materials and architectural details on listed buildings or notable buildings of great historic significance should be used as reference for any future development. For example the different types and qualities of brick, flint, pebbledash, and weatherboarding are some examples of local materials. Please see [DG.10](#) (page 60) for more design guidelines on architectural details and materials;
- New development should propose high-quality design that reflects and respects the rich local architecture;
- New development should ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well-related to each other. For

example, buildings should have open views towards green spaces, active frontages along the roads, and be bordered with vegetation to create soft edges;

- Any new development should incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable or unnecessary harm to retained features;
- Net Zero aims should be integrated and development should adopt low energy and energy generative technologies within the development at the start of the design process. Nature positive and biodiversity net gains should be a priority as well;
- Any new development should adopt contextually appropriate materials and architectural details, as analysed in [Section 2.2](#). Embodied carbon toolkits should be a guide to material specification;

- Any new development should demonstrate strong design rationale, quality material specification and good detailing;
- Building performance in terms of 'conservation of heat and fuel' over-and-above building regulations, should be a key design driver for new development;
- Window, door, eave, verge and roof details should be refined and considered in response to micro-climates, as well as in response to Hartley's local character. Please see [DG.10](#) for more design guidelines on architectural details and materials; and
- Every effort should be made to preserve the items of street furniture to maintain the beauty and character of the village in consultation with the owners. Please see [DG.1](#) for more design guidelines on public realm.

Part 1. General design considerations

Relevant planning documents:

- **National Model Design Code (Part 2 - 2021)**, DLUHC. Link: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1009795/NMDC_Part_2_Guidance_Notes.pdf Chapter 5. Identity, Chapter 9. Homes and Buildings, Chapter 10. Resources.
- **Building for a Healthy Life (2020)**, Homes England. Link: https://www.udg.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/files/14JULY20%20BFL%202020%20Brochure_3.pdf, Chapter: 'Distinctive Places'.
- **Hartley Village Design Statement (2008)**, Sevenoaks District Council. Link: https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/downloads/file/387/hartley_village_design_statement_-_adopted_april_2008, Chapter 1.3.1 General Principles, Chapter 5. The Central Built Up Area within the Village Envelope, Chapter 6. Existing Features needing Preservation, Chapter 7. New Buildings, Extensions to Existing Buildings and Design Guidelines.

5. Landscape and green belt protection

- Any new development should provide adequate open space in terms of both quantity and quality. Adequate private/communal amenity space should be proposed to meet the needs of the population;
- When considering planning applications, the existing trees, both those with tree preservation orders and those without, on both the site of the application and adjacent land must be taken into account in determining the application;
- Any new development should avoid threatening existing ecological assets within the parish as well as propose new ones to promote biodiversity. Some examples of design features which can be used to increase biodiversity are shown in [Figures 59-61](#);
- The present boundary between the built-up area of Hartley and the Metropolitan Green Belt should be retained. All development outside the village envelope should only be permitted within the policies and aims of the Metropolitan Green Belt, which can be found in both the 2021 Hartley Green Belt Assessment and more recent Assessment commissioned in 2023, as well as in Sevenoaks District Council Green Belt Assessment. Favourable consideration should be given to proposals which support the management of the Green Belt especially for agricultural and forestry purposes;
- Any new development should identify existing biodiversity corridors and contribute to their preservation and enhancement;
- Any new development should promote walking and cycling within the parish by improving access to the countryside and offering more opportunities for walking or cycling. Please see [DG.3](#) for more guidelines on footpaths and cycle networks;

Part 1. General design considerations

- Any new development should promote green links (cycle ways, footpaths, tree-lined and grass verge-lined streets) into the new design to connect with existing neighbourhoods within the parish and surrounding settlements;
- Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs) should be part of the overall landscape infrastructure and improve the environment; and
- Any new development should understand the landscape context and character of the parish and propose design that does not undermine the existing qualities of the area. Analysis, description, and guidance on Hartley's landscape character can be found in Hartley Landscape Character Assessment. There is further analysis of the local landscape character areas within the district including their characteristics and special qualities in Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment in which Hartley's

landscape is characterised as 'Type 1: Settled Downs'. Both these reports should be reviewed and taken into consideration in discussion about new design.



Figure 56: Woodland areas and vegetation should be preserved to retain the local character of Hartley.



Figure 57: View from Downs Valley to the west.



Figure 58: Mature trees within the built environment should be preserved and integrated into the design.

Part 1. General design considerations

Relevant planning documents:

- **Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment (2017)**, LUC. Link: https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/downloads/file/3633/sevenoaks_district_landscape_character_assessment_-_main_report_january_2017. Relevant pages: 20-26.
- **Sevenoaks District Council Green Belt Assessment, Report: Methodology and Assessment (2017)**, ARUP. Link: https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/downloads/file/3626/sevenoaks_district_green_belt_assessment_-_main_report_january_2017
- **Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2017)**, LUC. Link: https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/downloads/file/3634/sevenoaks_district_landscape_sensitivity_assessment_-_main_report_may_2017_compressed. Relevant pages: 30-41.
- **Biodiversity Analysis of Sevenoaks District (2018)**, Sevenoaks District Council. https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/downloads/file/3614/biodiversity_analysis_of_sevenoaks_district_february_2018
- **Hartley Village Design Statement (2008)**, Sevenoaks District Council. Link: <https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/downloads/file/387/>

[hartley_village_design_statement_-_adopted_april_2008](#) Chapter 1.3.1 General Principles, Chapter 4. The Metropolitan Green Belt and the Countryside, Appendix 3 Trees with Tree Preservation Orders in 2007, Appendix 4 Open spaces within the Built Up Area

- **Hartley Parish Plan (2009)**, Hartley Parish Plan Steering Group, Link: <https://www.scams.gov.uk/media/17663/chapter-7-delivering-high-quality-homes.pdf>, Chapter 13. The Countryside
- **Hartley Parish Landscape Character Assessment (March 2022)**, Hartley Parish.



Figure 59: Example of a bat box placed in the front or rear garden of a property,



Figure 60: Example of a bug hotel that could be placed in the front or rear garden of a property.



Figure 61: Example of a small pond located in the centre of a new infill development, elsewhere in the UK.

Part 2. Key design guidance

3.3 Part 2. Key design guidance

This section offers a more detailed design guidance on some of the design considerations presented in Part 1 and they are categorised in themes as shown in the table below.

The design guidance presented in both Part 1 and Part 2 will be used:

- As a guide for applicants, developers or landowners reflecting the preferences of the community in Hartley;
- As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications. This report should be

discussed with applicants during any pre-application discussions; and

- As a guide for the Parish Council when commenting on planning applications, ensuring that the parish-wide design guidance is complied with.

Design codes are highlighted with a light green box

Part 1. General design considerations	Part 2. Key design guidance
1. Access, parking & utilities	DG.1 Street character & public realm
2. Built form	DG.2 Lighting schemes
3. Views and vistas	DG.3 Accessible & attractive footpaths and cycle networks
4. Architectural details & eco-design	DG.4 Development edges in the rural landscape
5. Landscape & Green Belt protection	DG.5 Patterns of growth and layout of buildings and gardens
	DG.6 Infill developments
	DG.7 Housing extensions
	DG.8 Boundary treatments
	DG.9 Development in close proximity to heritage assets
	DG.10 Preserving and promoting local architecture

DG.1 Street character

DG.1 Street character and public realm

In Hartley there is a variety of street characters, as analysed in Chapter 2.

A clear street hierarchy is important to filter traffic and manage traffic speeds, as well as corresponding to existing street characters in the parish. Thus, some design guidelines on street hierarchy are:

Primary streets

- Primary streets are the main connecting routes which constitute the main accesses into any new development. They are usually the widest roads in the neighbourhood;
- Those streets should be wide enough to cater for vehicles, bicycles, as well as utility, emergency vehicles, and buses; and
- Dimensions should include a min. 5.5m carriageway, a 2.5 m tree verge with parking bay, and a 2 m footway.

Secondary streets

Secondary streets provide access between the primary street and neighbourhoods.

- Secondary streets should emphasise the human scale and be designed for lower traffic volumes and speeds compared to the primary street;
- Secondary streets should accommodate carriageways wide enough for two-way traffic; and
- Dimensions should include a min. 5.5 m carriageway, a 2 m tree verge, and a 2 m footway.

Tertiary streets

Tertiary streets have a strong residential character and provide direct access to residences from the secondary streets.

- Carriageways should accommodate two-way traffic;
- Traffic calming features such as raised tables can be used to reduce speeding;
- Tertiary streets should be formed with a high degree of built form enclosure, with consistent building lines and setbacks;
- Dimensions should include a min. 5 m carriageway (shared between vehicles and cyclists), a 2 m tree verge, and a 2 m footway;
- Tertiary streets should be designed for low traffic volumes and low speeds, ideally 20mph.

DG.1 Street character

Edge lanes

When new development is adjacent to the open countryside, edge lanes may be appropriate to provide a green buffer to the wider countryside beyond.

- Edge lanes should be designed for low speeds and low traffic volumes;
- Edge lanes should feature houses which front onto the road with gardens on one side and green space on the other;
- Carriageways can be a single lane of traffic in either direction and should be designed for cyclists to mix safely with motor vehicles;
- The lane width can vary to discourage speeding and introduce a more informal and intimate character;
- Variations in paving materials and textures can be used instead of kerbs or road marking; and
- Dimensions should include a max. 6.5 m street, shared by all users.

Street planting

In general street planting helps maintain visual consistency along the public realm or the rural character along countryside lanes, whilst offering other benefits like better mental health and well-being by reducing stress, and providing shading and protection from wind and rain.

- To ensure resilience and increase visual interest, a variety of native tree species should be used;
- This variety should be decided based on the existing tree species in the parish; and
- Flower beds, bushes and shrubs should be welcomed in new developments, since they contribute to the livelihood of the streetscape and create visual interest.



Figure 62: Local example of a tertiary street, Woodland Avenue, with pavement, some street planting and grass verges.



Figure 63: Local example of an edge lane, Downs Valley where properties face out onto open field land opposite.

DG.2 Lighting schemes

DG.2 Lighting schemes for private properties

The incorporation of lighting schemes in any new development, in front or back gardens, should be carefully considered and designed in order to preserve the rural character of Hartley and minimise light pollution in order to benefit both people and wildlife.

In general, street lighting is not supported in the village and thus, any large lighting scheme must be avoided.

This page offers examples of low-level lighting solutions that can be implemented in private properties and improve the aesthetics and safety, whilst retaining dark skies and the rural character of the parish.

Those examples include lighting schemes that could be turned off when not needed ('part-night lighting') as well as down looking lighting.

Up-lighting: Focus light and attention on an object or tree from a low fixed location.



Figure 64: Example of up-lighting which is used to illuminate the trees within a property.

Downlighting: Bullet type fixture placed well above eye level on an object or tree.

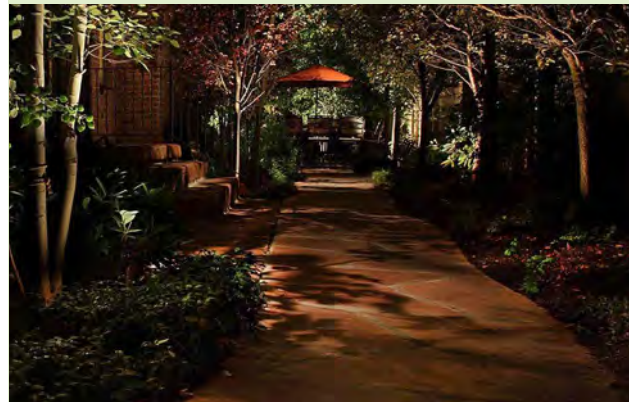


Figure 66: Example of down lighting which was used to illuminate the pathway.

Backlighting: Fixtures placed at the back of an object to create a 'glowing' effect.



Figure 65: Example of backlighting used at the back of a bush to create a glowing effect.

Path lighting: Use of low fixtures which direct illumination downward and outward.



Figure 67: Example of down lighting which was used to illuminate the pathway.

DG.3 Accessible and attractive footpaths and cycle networks

DG.3 Accessible and attractive footpaths and cycle networks

Hartley is characterised by a good network of footpaths and bridleways which are used recreationally and as 'green links' to Longfield, Fawkham, New Ash Green, and Meopham. The network includes both access into the surrounding countryside and routes through the built environment of Hartley.

Establishing a robust pedestrian network across new developments and among new and existing development is key in achieving good levels of connectivity and promoting walking and cycling.

The following design guidelines offer guidance on the materials and quality of the footpaths as well as the relationship between residential developments with pedestrian and cycle networks:

- Walking/cycle routes within new communities should be the primary network and first consideration, whilst roads should be secondary;
- Where possible, newly developed areas must retain or provide direct and attractive footpaths between neighbouring streets and local facilities and amenities;
- Public Rights of Way should be properly signposted;
- Pedestrian and cycle links within residential communities should always be overlooked by properties to create natural surveillance and offer good sightlines to make people feel safer;
- Shared lanes are recommended within the residential developments, however, for wider network and connections dedicated cycleways are recommended, in their own right to increase safety;
- Cycle parking should be encouraged in public spaces, next to amenities or even along cycle lanes within the countryside, to encourage cycling in the parish;
- Design features such as barriers to vehicle movement, gates to new developments, or footpaths between high fences must be avoided;
- Paving used along the pedestrian and cycle links should, in principle, be permeable to help absorb surface water and mitigate flooding. Thus, concrete paving should be avoided. In addition, materials should reflect the context, though an overall earthy palette is recommended to fit with Hartley's rural surroundings. Different colours and shapes of stones can be used within the village, whilst on the outskirts or along edge lanes, a less formal character can be introduced using mainly gravel;
- Footpath networks need to be in place before first occupation of houses on the sites; and
- Widths for the footpaths/cycle ways should be a minimum of 2m if located within residential developments and can be wider if located in open countryside or integrated into the road in the form of a shared lane.

DG.3 Accessible and attractive footpath and cycle network

Footpaths through the countryside



Figure 68: Local example of a footpath through Hartley's surrounding countryside which uses natural materials and wooden gate with gaps which is appropriate for the rural context and does not obstruct wildlife.



Figure 69: Local example of footpath through Hartley's countryside.



Figure 70: Example of signage that could be implemented along footpaths within the open countryside to navigate people towards important destinations.

Figure 71: (top right) Example of a pedestrian route through a residential area (elsewhere in the UK) where high wooden fencing without gaps faces onto the path. This should be avoided in Hartley to preserve the rural character and also natural surveillance onto pedestrian routes should be encouraged, as in Figure 72.

Figure 72: (bottom right) Local positive example of a pedestrian routes through the residential area of New Ash Green where permeable materials are used. There is natural surveillance from buildings overlooking the path, and natural boundary treatments are used to define the private and public space.

Pedestrian routes within the built-up area



DG.4 Development edges in the rural landscape

DG.4 Development edges in the rural landscape

Hartley Parish has a strong rural character and landscape as well as rich vegetation including woodlands, hedges, hedgerows, tree-lined and grass verge-lined streets and open fields. Mature trees are prevalent across the parish and many trees are protected through tree preservation orders, as outlined in the Hartley Village Design Statement.

Those ecological assets should not be undermined by any new development. In particular, any new development set on the edges of the village or next to existing woodlands needs to respect the existing nature and enhance it. Thus, some design guidelines on how new development should treat rural development edges are:

- New development should conserve existing native trees and shrubs along the lanes and within any potential developable site and incorporate any green/ecological asset within design, whilst any unnecessary loss of flora should be avoided;
- Abrupt edges with little vegetation or landscape on the edge of the development should be avoided. On the contrary, rich vegetation including native trees and hedgerows should be incorporated to provide a smooth transition from the built-up areas to the rural landscape;
- Green corridors should be proposed to provide additional pedestrian and cycle links that will improve connectivity between neighbourhoods and contribute to the successful integration of any new development within the parish;
- Natural boundary treatments like thick evergreen and leylandii should be avoided as those are not in keeping with the village character nor do they support biodiversity;
- New development adjoining public open spaces should face onto them, as shown in [Figure 73, 75 and 76](#), to improve natural views and vistas; and
- New development adjoining open fields and countryside should have a soft landscaped edge, as shown in [Figure 74](#) to create a gradual transition into the surrounding rural landscape.

DG.4 Development edges in the rural landscape

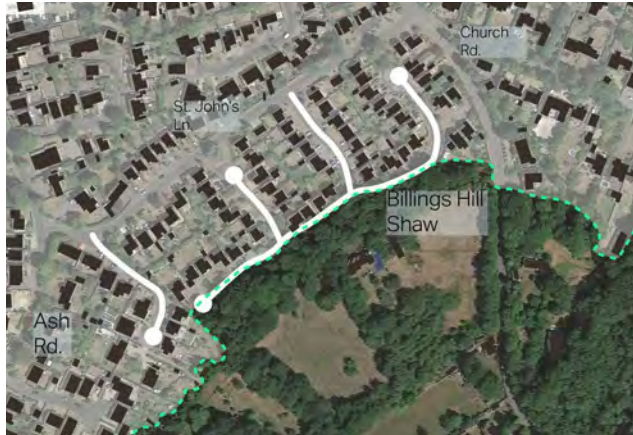


Figure 73: Diagram to illustrate positive treatment of the edges that respect the adjacent woodland, preserving the rural character of the village, Billings Hill Shaw.



Figure 74: Diagram to illustrate good design, elsewhere in the UK, of recent development that respects the existing green features integrating them into the design with proposed soft edges and a footpath.



Figure 75: Local example of development along Hoselands Views facing onto a tree-lined public green space.



Figure 76: Example of good design practice elsewhere in the UK where properties overlook the public open space with the large tree as a landmark improves natural views.

DG.5 Patterns of growth and layout of buildings and gardens

DG.5 Patterns of growth and layout of buildings and gardens

As analysed in [Section 2.2](#), Hartley's built-up area has a variety of development patterns, which fall into 7 main development types. These are linear neighbourhoods, perimeter blocks, cul-de-sacs, Bramblefield Estate, Wellfield Estate, backland development and infill development. The different development patterns present different qualities in terms of street layout, building lines, plot sizes, and widths. The relationship of the village with the countryside also contributes to the character of these patterns. Thus, any new development should include design that matches the existing patterns of growth and some design guidelines are set out below:

- Any new development must demonstrate a good understanding of the built environment (building lines, roofline, orientation, materials) as analysed in [Sections 2.2](#), and propose design that reflects the rural qualities of the area;
- In general, any proposal that would adversely affect the physical appearance of a rural lane, or give rise to an unacceptable increase in the amount of traffic, noise, or disturbance must be avoided;
- Building setbacks and building lines should be slightly irregular to introduce an informality and therefore, reinforce the rural character of Hartley;
- The size of plots and their pattern should be varied to contribute to the rural character of Hartley;
- The sizes of front and back gardens should be varied to reinforce the rural character of the village. However, they should not show great discrepancies with the front and back gardens of the surrounding properties;
- Existing hedges, hedgerows and trees should be integrated into design, whilst more planting and vegetation is encouraged to form part of the green network strategy;
- Buildings should front onto streets and should be designed to ensure streets and public spaces have good levels of natural surveillance. Although there are examples of backland development within the parish, this development pattern is not recommended for best design practice;
- The building densities of any new development should reflect the rural character of Hartley. For example, any development in close proximity to the village centre should be of approximate density 18 dwellings per hectare (dph). This density fits with the prevailing character of the settlement, but still seeks to maintain an efficient use of land; and
- Any new development should be within the parish settlement boundary, whilst protecting important views (as highlighted in Hartley Landscape Character Assessment) to the countryside and existing vegetation.

DG.5 Patterns of growth and layout of buildings and gardens

Examples of layout of existing buildings in Hartley:

Linear and cul-de-sac development pattern



Linear layout along Ash Road

- Building lines are generally consistent, with breaks featuring more irregular arrangements.
- Front gardens vary between 5-15m.
- Rear gardens vary between 8-20m.

Banckside cul-de-sac layout

- Building lines and rotations are often irregular owing to the rural character of the village.
- Front gardens vary between 5-15m, with some instances of up to 20m.
- Rear gardens vary between 16-27m.
- Average building density is approximately 17 dph.

Figure 77: Diagram showing examples of a linear layout and a cul-de-sac layout within the village, illustrating key elements like building lines, density, and dimensions for front and rear gardens that should be referenced into the new development.

DG.5 Patterns of growth and layout of buildings and gardens

Bramblefield estate development pattern



Figure 78: Diagram showing Bramblefield estate development pattern.

Bramblefield estate layout

- Building lines are consistent, though orientation differ between blocks, with many fronting onto courtyards stemming from access routes.
- Units generally front onto courtyards, or the pavement. Courtyards are 25-30m deep.
- Many units lack a dedicated rear garden. Some feature shared spaces to the building rear, approximately 15m deep.
- Apartments are the prevailing typology.

Wellfield estate development pattern



Figure 79: Diagram showing Wellfield estate development pattern.

Wellfield estate layout

- Consistent building lines between some blocks and along some access routes with some exceptions.
- Orientations vary, though these follow a perpendicular pattern.
- Front gardens vary between 5-8m. Rear gardens vary between 5-10m.
- Some units front onto shared courtyards, approximately 25m deep.

Perimeter block development pattern



Figure 80: Diagram showing perimeter block development pattern within Hartley.

Perimeter block layout

- Building lines are consistent, with regular setbacks, fronting onto linear routes.
- Front gardens vary between 10-15m.
- Rear gardens are generous, varying between 20-35m.

DG.6 Infill developments

DG.6 Infill developments

The context and scale of infill development will vary according to the location of the infill site; however, any proposed infill development can have significant impact on the character and appearance of the built environment. Therefore, some design guidelines for infill sites are:

- Infill development should complement the street scene into which it will be inserted. It does not need to mimic the existing styles but its scale, massing and layout need to be in general conformity with the existing. In particular, infill development should not be located too close to existing buildings and should not be of a larger scale which dwarfs existing properties and/or presents overlooking issues;
- Infill development in close proximity to heritage assets should be carefully considered and propose sensitive design which respects the proximity setting of the heritage asset. This includes the

scale, massing, boundary treatment, and materials of the infill development;

- The building to plot size ratio of infill development should ensure a good amount of outdoor amenity space. There are differing sizes of front and back gardens in Hartley, though in general most properties are set back with both a front and back garden. At the edges of development where it is more rural larger gardens are more common. Infill development should follow existing context whilst also meeting national standards;
- The density of any new infill development should reflect its context and its location in the village. The optimum density will respond to surrounding densities while making efficient use of the land;
- Where there are opportunities for infill development, proposals should retain existing views and vistas between buildings and along view corridors wherever possible; and

- The building line of any new infill development should be in conformity with the existing. Where there is an existing strong building line, for example with terraced or dense groupings of houses, the building line of infill should be similar in order to preserve the character of the street. In other cases where the building line is more informal, for example in less dense areas, a more varied building line may be acceptable.



Figure 81: A positive example of infill development where the scale of the property is appropriate for the plot and does not overwhelm existing buildings, St Johns Lane.

DG.6 Infill developments

Backland development

Backland development, in particular tandem development, is a concern in Hartley Parish. Tandem backland development is where a new dwelling is placed immediately behind an existing dwelling and served by the same vehicular access. This type of development is generally unsatisfactory because of the difficulties of access to the house at the back, by fire engines and delivery lorries and the disturbance and lack of privacy suffered by neighbours and the house at the front. In addition it creates a detrimental change to the character of the area.

In general, backland development should be discouraged to preserve the existing patterns of development. Any backland development which is proposed should meet the following criteria:

- Access roads to backland development should meet technical requirements to ensure sight lines are clear and use appropriate materials and boundary treatments to fit with surrounding context and incorporate attractive planting;

- To ensure good road safety, backland development should not be accessed from main roads or at points in the roads with limited visibility for example junctions;
 - Any new backland development should respect the neighbouring properties and avoid causing privacy, daylight, or parking problems. This could be resolved by proposing appropriate massing that is sensitive to the surrounding properties, whilst parking should be accommodated on-plot;
 - Green buffers are encouraged to mitigate visual impacts with surrounding properties;
 - Any proposals must consider the effect on wildlife, biodiversity, and amenity space of neighbouring properties; and
- Distances between back-to-back properties should be minimum 19m, whilst distances between back-to-side properties could be reduced up to 15m. Lower distances could create privacy issues.

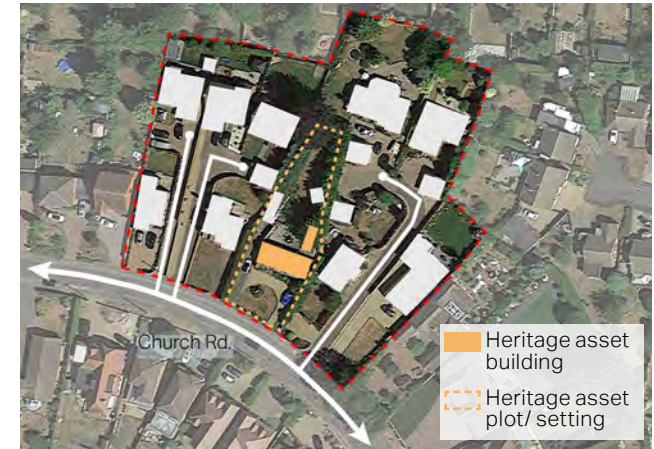


Figure 82: Plan view (top) and photograph of the access road to the east side shown in Figure 86.

Figure 83: The current design of local backland development on Church Road creates some issues such as potentially crowding the heritage asset as well as safety issues due to access roads located off a bend on the road where there is reduced visibility, demonstrating how backland development can be challenging.

DG.6 Infill developments

Privacy and space between buildings

Hedges and fences usually protect privacy at ground floor level, so any privacy issues tend to arise from upstairs windows either looking into neighbours' windows or down into their private garden space.

Future housing developments should design the spacing between dwellings to allow for retrospective introduction of garden and cycle storage as well sustainable measures such as air source heat pumps.

New developments should adhere to the following guidelines to ensure any new houses have good levels of privacy and do not impact on the privacy of existing houses.

- Any proposed backland or infill development must not cause an unacceptable impact on the residential amenities of adjacent residential properties;
- The proposed density should respond to surrounding densities whilst making efficient use of the land;
- To avoid the overlooking of habitable rooms and gardens, a minimum distance of 15m should be achieved between dwellings where a side elevation of one dwelling faces a rear elevation of another;
- Where a side elevation is windowless the separation distance can be reduced to 12m;
- A minimum separation distance of 21m should be achieved between rear elevations having windows; and
- Where dwellings with facing elevations are positioned on different levels, the above separation distances should be

increased by 2m for every 1m difference in level. Where there is a level difference and distances are increased, the lower dwelling should have the longer garden to compensate for any slopes or retaining structures.

DG.7 Housing extensions

DG.7 Housing extensions

Extensions

Housing extensions to dwellings can make a dwelling more suited to its occupant's space requirements. There are multiple ways to create extra space within a building using different types of extensions. However, it is important that housing extensions are designed to an appropriate scale to the original building to preserve the character and appearance of the building itself as well as the street scene within which it sits.

The pitch and form of a building's roof forms part of its character; therefore, extensions should respond by enhancing the existing character. Extensions should consider the materials, architectural features and proportions of the original building and be designed to complement these existing elements.

Many household extensions are covered by permitted development rights, meaning that they do not need planning permission. However, the design guidelines presented here aim to set expectations regarding the design outcome.

Some general guidelines for extensions are:

- The character of the existing building, along with its scale, form, materials and details should be taken into consideration when preparing proposals for alterations and/or extensions;
- External extensions should respect or enhance the visual appearance of the original buildings and the character of the wider street scene;
- Extensions should be subordinate in terms of scale and form and shall not be visually dominant or taller than the existing building;
- The roof form of the extension should harmonise with that of the original building and flat roofs should be avoided;
- Extensions should be designed using materials and details to match the existing building or alternately, use contrasting materials and details with a contemporary design approach. However, in either case, extensions

should create a harmonious composition overall and a strong degree of unity with the original building. More details on the local architecture and materials that are used in the village are analysed in [Section 2.2](#):

- Extensions should safeguard the privacy and daylight amenity of neighbouring properties and side windows should be avoided unless it can be demonstrated that they would not result in overlooking of neighbouring properties; and
- Extensions should retain on-site parking capacity and a viable garden area to meet the needs of future occupiers.

DG.7 Housing extensions

Front extensions

As general guidance, these extensions are not acceptable as they overwhelm the original building form.

- If proposed, front extensions should take the form of the existing building, mirroring the roof pitch, replicate or have lower cornice height and their ridge should be below the existing ridge height; and
- The extension can project a maximum of 2 metres beyond the front facade and should not cover more than 50% of the front elevation.

Side extensions

- Side extensions should not distract from the appearance of the building, its surrounding and the wider rural setting;
- Single-storey and double storey side extensions should be set back from the main building and complement its materials and detailing, while the roof of the extension should harmonise with that of the original building; and

- Side windows should also be avoided unless it can be demonstrated that they would not result in overlooking of neighbouring properties.

Rear extensions

Single storey rear extensions are generally the easiest way to extend a house and provide extra living space.

- The extension should be set below any first-floor windows, and designed to minimise any effects on neighbouring properties, such as blocking daylight;
- A flat roof is generally acceptable for a single storey rear extension;
- Double storey rear extensions are becoming more common, but they can affect neighbours' access to light and privacy, however, sometimes the size and style of the property allows for a two-storey extension; and
- The roof form and pitch of double storey rear extensions should reflect the original building and sit slightly lower than the main ridge of the building.

Upward extensions

Based on government guidance, the new permitted development rights for upward extensions mean that houses, amongst other building types, can add additional storeys to create housing space. However:

- Upward extensions should be sensitive to the surrounding context in terms of materials and massing; as well as
- Minimise overlooking to preserve the privacy of adjacent properties and gardens, and
- Not disturb the existing roofline setting.

Extensions within the Green Belt¹

Para 149 (c) of the NPPF states that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. However, exceptions to this are the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original buildings.

1. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/13-protecting-green-belt-land>

DG.7 Housing extensions

Therefore, all design guidelines regarding extensions are relevant here to ensure that the design is sensitive to the surrounding context and does not obstruct important views and vistas towards the open countryside. Those are mentioned in Hartley's Landscape Character Assessment² which also recommends that extensions in the Green Belt should be placed at the rear to protect the Green Belt's open character.

² Hartley Parish Landscape Character Assessment (March 2022), Hartley Parish.

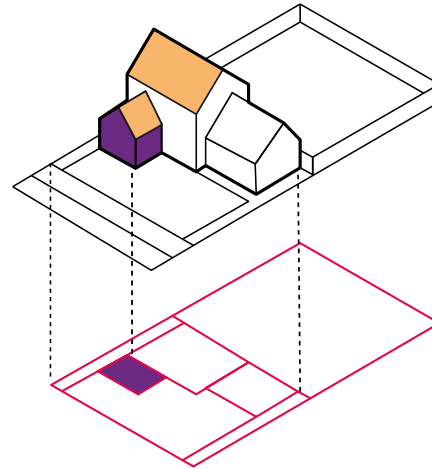


Figure 84: An example diagram of a front extension.

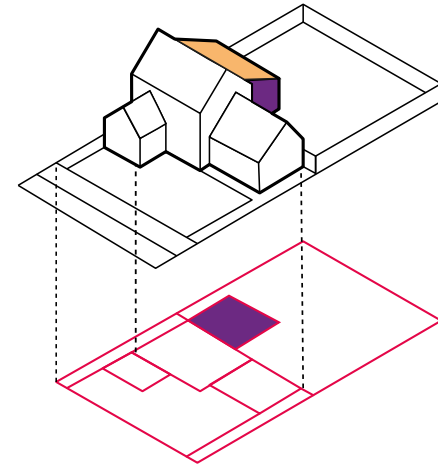


Figure 86: An example diagram of a rear extension.

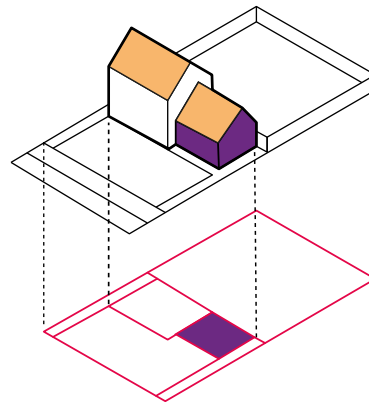


Figure 85: An example diagram of a side extension.

DG.7 Housing extensions

Loft conversions

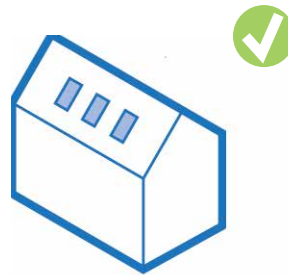
Loft conversions can provide extra liveable space in a house.

- Use of skylights are generally the most acceptable form of loft conversion and do not alter the shape of the existing roof. Any skylights should be proportionate in scale to the building and excessive use of glazing should be avoided; and
- Loft conversions incorporating gabled dormers should use dormers which are proportionate in size to the roof and should reflect the existing window rhythm of the building. They should not detract from the characteristic roof profile of the street and therefore shed dormers which visually dominate the roof should be avoided.

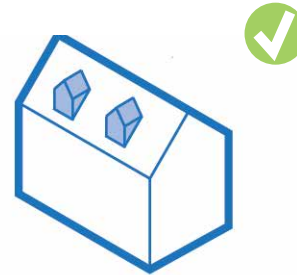
Loft conversion examples



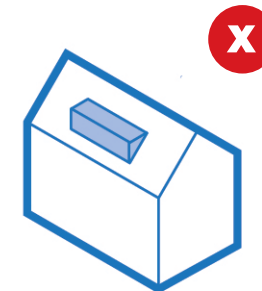
Original roofline of an existing building.



Loft conversion incorporating skylights.



Loft conversion incorporating gabled dormers.



Loft conversion incorporating a long shed dormer which is out of scale with the original building.



Loft conversion incorporating gable dormers which are out of scale and do not consider existing window rhythm or frequency.

Figure 87: Loft conversion examples.

DG.8 Boundary treatments

DG.8 Boundary treatments

As analysed in [Section 2.2](#), though there are a range of boundary treatments used in Hartley Parish, natural methods such as trees, hedgerows, and vegetation are most widely used and also are most appropriate for the rural character of the parish. The use of boundary treatments help define public and private spaces and can contribute to the character of the street. In the case of edge development, natural boundary treatments can act as buffer zones between the site and the countryside. Whilst trees, hedgerows and vegetation can enforce the rural character of the settlement, hard boundary treatments such as high fences, brick walls and railings can erode the rural character.

Variations in street character within the parish mean there are different boundary treatments which should be used. For example, on more rural roads with higher vegetation and enclosure levels, natural boundary treatments are encouraged, especially trees, as they are more appropriate to the surrounding rural character. Within more built-up areas of the parish, a mixture of hard and natural

boundary treatments can be used, for example low-height brick walls with hedges and planting. There are also areas of the parish where streets have a more open character and other areas where there is higher enclosure. Therefore, some guidelines related to boundary treatments are:

- Boundary walls and natural treatments should reinforce the sense of continuity of the building line and help define the street;
- Front gardens should be bordered with hedges, flowerbeds, bushes, and trees to offer some soft landscaping and improve visual impact; and
- Boundary treatments should be of forms and materials appropriate to the character of the parish, for example low-height brick and stone walls, hedgerows, and vegetation. High walls and timber panel fencing along a boundary abutting a highway, and walls or fencing over 1 metre in height will not be supported and will require specific planning consent.

Some positive and negative examples are shown to the right and on the following page.



Figure 88: Low hedges as boundary treatment along Woodland Avenue.



Figure 89: Stone wall combined with hedgerows as boundary treatment along Woodland Avenue.

DG.8 Boundary treatments



Figure 90: High fence boundary treatment can erode the rural character of an area (elsewhere in the UK).



Figure 91: A combination of brick and hedgerows as boundary treatment on Church Road achieves the high level of privacy provided by the fencing in the photograph at the top, but the hedges soften the boundary and maintain the rural character.



Figure 92: Lack of boundary treatments to define the front garden of this house elsewhere in the UK. Plants or low hedges along the boundary would provide definition, while still retaining the open character as shown in Figure 94 below.



Figure 93: While there is a less defined boundary treatment here, the tree and vegetation provide definition for the front garden while retaining the more open character of the street.



Figure 94: An example from elsewhere in the UK of a formal, high brick and iron gate design which does not represent the rural character of Hartley and therefore similar designs should be avoided.



Figure 95: Low brick wall with a wooden gate, an example of a hard boundary treatment which still fits within the rural context.

DG.9 Development in close proximity to heritage assets

DG.9 Development in close proximity to heritage assets

There is a rich history in Hartley Parish, with a variety of listed buildings that contribute to the local architecture.

Therefore, it is possible that there will be new development proposals in close proximity to heritage assets and for that reason design guidelines are needed to ensure that any new design is aware of those assets and stimulate ways in which they could be further promoted and protected:

- Any new development proposed in close proximity to a heritage asset must respect its settings and significance and demonstrate how local distinctiveness is reinforced. For example, the new development should allow for a generous setback from the asset and be of a massing and scale that is sensitive to the neighbouring structure;
- New development proposals should not block key views to and from heritage

assets. This should be achieved through proposing appropriate density and design including footpaths and green links;

- New development should retain the existing open spaces, vegetation and trees to preserve the historic form and pattern of development close to the asset;
- New development should respect the setting of the heritage asset as well as the built form and use design and material which is complimentary to the existing character. This includes the garden, boundary treatment, surrounding street scene and vegetation; and
- New development should propose architectural details and materials that match the ones used in the surrounding heritage assets and their setting, to preserve and respect the local architecture. More details on the local architecture and materials that are used in the village are analysed in [Section 2.2](#) and [DG.10](#).



Figure 96: Local positive example where new development is of a massing and scale that is appropriate and follows similar setbacks to the existing building line to preserve the pattern of development.

DG.10 Preserving and promoting local architecture

DG.10 Preserving and promoting local architecture

Hartley has a wide variety of architectural styles and details, presented in [Section 2.2](#), that can act as references for new developments, for instance, the pleasing mixture of buildings of different styles in Church Road and in Ash Road.

New developments should be respectful of architectural styles and use of materials of surrounding housing, whilst ensuring that a mix of styles are provided that is in keeping with the Hartley Parish style and colour palette. Some design guidelines for new developments are:

- Architectural design in new development should reflect the high-quality local design references in both the natural and built environment and make a valuable contribution to the rural character of the village;
- The use of traditional, natural and preferably locally sourced materials are generally more appropriate than man-

made synthetic, pre-coloured materials, as they lack the variation on colour and texture found in natural materials;

- The pleasing mixture of buildings of different styles in Church Road and in Ash Road should be maintained;
- Architectural details appropriate to the local architecture can be used, for example there are cases of pitched and hipped roof dormers on buildings across the parish, which add informality and interest to the roofline. Dormers should be of an appropriate form, scale and material, see [DG.7](#) for more information on dormer design;
- The choice of colour and finish of materials is an important design factor in reducing the impact of the buildings on the surrounding landscape. Generally large areas of intense strong colours do not blend well with the rural landscape. Muted and darker tones should be adopted; and

- Buildings should be finished with materials appropriate to the local context. Special consideration should be given to materials particularly representative of Hartley's vernacular: brick, flint, pebble dashing and weather boarding for the walls and clay or slate tiles for roofs.



Figure 98: Example of the local architecture of Hartley: weatherboarding, red brick, clay tiles and smalls dormer windows at The Black Lion.



Stakeholders

04

4. Stakeholders

The Design Guidelines will be a valuable tool in securing high quality development in Hartley, especially on potential sites that might come forward in the future. They will give more certainty to both developers and the community in securing developments that are designed to meet the aspirations of the community and potentially speed up the planning process.

This table summarises the various ways that this document can be used by stakeholders in the planning and development process.

Stakeholders	How they will use the design guidelines and codes
Applicants, developers, & landowners	As a guide to community and Local Planning Authority expectations on design, allowing a degree of certainty – they will be expected to follow the Guidelines as planning consent is sought.
Local Planning Authority	As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications. The Design Guidelines should be discussed with applicants during any pre-application discussions.
Parish Council	As a guide to support the Hartley Neighbourhood Plan when commenting on planning applications, ensuring that the Design Guidelines are complied with.
Community organisations	As a tool to promote community-backed development and to inform comments on planning applications.
Statutory consultees	As a reference point when commenting on planning applications.

Table 01: Delivery

About AECOM

AECOM is the world's trusted infrastructure consulting firm, delivering professional services throughout the project lifecycle — from planning, design and engineering to program and construction management. On projects spanning transportation, buildings, water, new energy and the environment, our public- and private-sector clients trust us to solve their most complex challenges. Our teams are driven by a common purpose to deliver a better world through our unrivalled technical expertise and innovation, a culture of equity, diversity and inclusion, and a commitment to environmental, social and governance priorities. AECOM is a *Fortune 500* firm and its Professional Services business had revenue of \$13.2 billion in fiscal year 2020. See how we are delivering sustainable legacies for generations to come at [aecom.com](https://www.aecom.com) and [@AECOM](https://twitter.com/AECOM).

