

# LAND SOUTH OF HALSTEAD ROAD, EIGHT ASH GREEN

VISION DOCUMENT

PEGASUS  
GROUP

BLOOR HOMES<sup>®</sup>

Prepared by Pegasus Group on behalf of Bloor Homes (Eastern)  
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A field of white daisies with yellow centers under a blue sky with light clouds. The text is overlaid on the image.

**“The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. 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...”**

(Para. 126, NPPF 2024)

## ABOUT PEGASUS GROUP

Since 2003, we've been solving planning and development problems for our clients successfully, and we're really proud of that. Even though our work is complex, what we deliver for our clients is very simple: we deliver results.

Expertly Done sums up our approach. We listen and learn from our clients, working as true partners who are passionate about delivering excellence and expertise on every step of the journey.

Everything we do is **Expertly Done**.

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NOTE: THIS DOCUMENT IS DESIGNED TO BE VIEWED AS A3 DOUBLE SIDED

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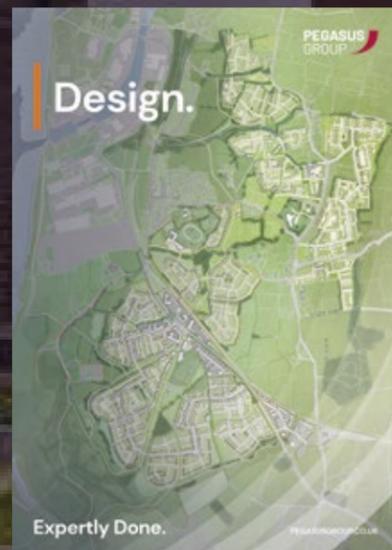
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## ABOUT PEGASUS DESIGN

Pegasus Group's experience embraces all types of projects within the development industry, from large scale urban extensions and strategies for area regeneration, to renewable energy and residential schemes.

Our work supports planning applications and we have an exceptional understanding of the development control process and planning policy requirements in relation to design. Our design team is well regarded and is increasingly involved in expert design review and witness work.



## THE VISION – DESIGN OVERVIEW

The circa 15 Hectares site to the south of Halstead Road presents an opportunity to create a sustainable, landscape-led new neighbourhood to the south of Eight Ash Green.

Vision to development on Land South of Halstead Road includes the following benefits:

- **New Homes** – Approximately 250 new homes of all sizes to meet a range of housing needs, including affordable housing.
- **Landscape Led** – Provision of multifunctional public open space as an attractive backdrop for the new homes, facilitating sustainable alternative modes of movement and enhanced pedestrian and cycle permeability.
- **Movement** – A robust strategy of movement, supporting links to existing vehicular, cycle and pedestrian routes within the site's context, to assist in promoting a permeable, safe and convenient network of movement corridors, which supports sustainable modes of travel.
- **Character and Identity** – Proposals will respect the local character of Eight Ash Green and at the same time move the community towards a more sustainable future, through an increase in housing choice. Development on the site will accord with well-established principles of high-quality design and placemaking, as set out in local and national design guides, to create a townscape that is both varied, and yet sympathetic to its environment. The aim is to achieve a development with a strong identity and distinct sense of place, whilst at the same time integrating with the existing community of Eight Ash Green.
- **Sustainable Community** – The development proposals comprise a range of land uses, providing a good basis for the creation of a sustainable community. Residential development is proposed alongside public open spaces, offering easily accessible areas for play and recreation, as well as creating a truly walkable neighbourhood, while encouraging opportunities for social and community cohesion. A mix of house types, tenures and sizes will be proposed, which will limit social exclusion and ensuring the creation of a truly varied and mixed community.
- **Climate** – Incorporating site-wide Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), integrated into the public open spaces to form a consolidated green-blue infrastructure which also benefits biodiversity enhancement.
- **Ecology and Biodiversity Enhancement** – Wide-reaching environmental enhancements across the entirety of the site, including tree planting, preservation of existing habitats and additional habitat creation.

# 01 Introduction

- 1.1 This Vision Document has been prepared by Pegasus Design (part of Pegasus Group) on behalf of Bloor Homes (Eastern) as part of Colchester City Council's Regulation 18 Consultation on the "Preferred Options Local Plan" (2025), proposing a development approximately 250 dwellings (including affordable housing), public open space, landscaping, children's play areas, sustainable drainage infrastructure and all other associated infrastructure.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Vision Document is to set out the overarching design principles which will guide development on the site, in line with the National Design Guide (NDG), published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2021), which outlines ten characteristics underlying a well-designed place.
- 1.3 The Vision Document achieves this purpose within the following sections:

**Section 1: Introduction.** Outlines the purpose and structure of this document;

**Section 2: Opportunities & Constraints.** Outlining the opportunities for development and its constraints, based on surveys and studies prepared in support of the document;

**Section 3: Design Overview.** Presentation of the indicative Development Framework Plan, highlighting the key design features;

**Section 4: Character Areas.** Presentation of the proposed distinctive Character Areas, which will contribute to enhancing the development identity and placemaking, while ensuring response to context; and

**Section 5: Conclusion.**





-  SITE LOCATION (9.33HA)
-  POTENTIAL RESIDENTIAL PARCELS
-  POTENTIAL COMMUNITY PARK / COMMUNITY FACILITY
-  POTENTIAL LOCATION FOR A CHILDREN PLAY AREA
-  OPPORTUNITY TO ENHANCE EXISTING BOUNDARY VEGETATION
-  ECOLOGICALLY SENSITIVE EDGE - OPPORTUNITY FOR ECOLOGICAL BUFFER
-  SENSITIVE EDGE - POTENTIAL VIEWS INTO THE SITE FROM MALTING HOUSE (GRADE II LISTED BUILDING)
-  POTENTIAL LOCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE SYSTEMS (SUDS) (SUBJECT TO FUTURE SPECIALIST INPUT)
-  POTENTIAL PRIMARY ACCESS POINT (SUBJECT TO FUTURE SPECIALIST INPUT)
-  POTENTIAL EMERGENCY ACCESS POINT (SUBJECT TO FUTURE SPECIALIST INPUT)
-  POTENTIAL PEDESTRIAN/CYCLE CONNECTION TO EXISTING PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY (UP TO SITE BOUNDARY)
-  POTENTIAL PEDESTRIAN/CYCLE LINK (WITH POTENTIAL CROSSING POINTS OVER HALSTEAD ROAD)
-  VIEWS INTO THE SITE FROM EXISTING PROPERTIES
-  VIEWS INTO THE SITE FROM EXISTING PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY
-  POTENTIAL VIEWS INTO THE SITE FROM THE MALTING HOUSE (GRADE II LISTED BUILDING)
-  EXISTING PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY (PROW)
-  EXISTING VEGETATION - TO BE RETAINED WHERE POSSIBLE (SUBJECT TO FUTURE TREE SURVEY)
-  EXISTING WOODLAND (LOCAL WILDLIFE SITE)
-  PRIVATE AMENITY OF ADJACENT PLOT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED
-  ESSEX AND SUFFOLK WATER - WATER MAIN AND ASSOCIATED 12M EASEMENT
-  LOCAL HIGH PRESSURE (LHP) GAS MAIN (CADENT GAS) AND ASSOCIATED 19M EASEMENT
-  CONSULTATION ZONE ASSOCIATED WITH THE LHP GAS MAIN (74M WIDE)

OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS PLAN

# 02 Opportunities & Constraints

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2.1 The results of the various site studies are used to inform and structure the development proposals. These are illustrated, where appropriate, on the Opportunities & Constraints Plan presented opposite.

## **LAND USES**

- Opportunity for provision of a sustainable development, which can accommodate approximately 250 new homes (including 30% affordable housing), supported by public open space, landscaping and attenuation areas;
- Opportunity to making an efficient use of land through the application of appropriate density assumptions.
- Neighbouring residential properties along the site's northern and eastern boundaries should be considered so as to protect the private amenity of existing dwellings;
- An existing woodland (a Local Wildlife Site), outside the site's south-western boundary, presents an opportunity to integrate green amenity space with existing landscape features.

## **ACCESS AND MOVEMENT**

- Opportunity for a primary access point into the site off Halstead Road, along the site's northern boundary;
- A potential additional, emergency access point at the north-eastern corner of the site, also off Halstead Road, will facilitate pedestrian and cycle permeability, as well as access to emergency vehicles;
- Opportunity to enhance pedestrian and cycle connectivity through integration of proposed routes with the existing network of Public Rights of Way within and around the site. Potential links to the existing Footpaths 15, along the site's western boundary, will enhance connectivity to the built-up area of Eight Ash Green;
- Opportunity for a potential future footway along the southern side of Halstead Road, at the site's frontage, as well as pedestrian crossings, to enhance connectivity to the existing residential parcels to the north; and
- Opportunity for a network of pedestrian/cycle paths within the public open spaces, which could enhance accessibility between residential parcels and amenity greenspaces, as well as encourage sustainable modes of travel.

## **HYDROLOGY AND DRAINAGE**

- The Environment Agency's mapping confirms that the site falls within Flood Zone 1. As such, it is at a low risk of flooding from rivers. The same mapping facility confirms that the vast majority of the site is at low risk of surface water flooding with only very small, isolated pockets of flooding identified;
- Drainage needs and flood risks should be considered as part of a site-wide drainage strategy; and
- Opportunity to integrate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) within public open spaces, facilitating habitat creation, biodiversity enhancement and added amenity areas.

## **ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY**

- Opportunity for habitat creation within new attenuation areas (subject to detailed design) and as part of landscaped areas within the public open space;
- The site is located in a wider arable mosaic, with the residential area of Eight Ash Green to the north of the site;
- The arable habitat dominating much of the site is considered to be of low ecological value and hence more suitable for development than the valuable boundary habitats, comprising the hedgerows and adjacent woodland. These habitats should be retained, buffered and enhanced;
- The preliminary survey identified potential for the site to support a number of protected and notable species;
- The site supports a range of notable and priority habitats, including mature trees, hedgerows, and adjacent woodland, in addition to areas of lower value arable habitats; and
- Proposals should aim to follow the mitigation hierarchy - avoid, mitigate, compensate and enhance.

## **LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT**

- The existing trees, vegetation and other landscape features within and adjacent to the site are to be retained where practicable, particularly any vegetation of ecological interest and those acting as wildlife habitats;
- Opportunity to provide high quality areas of public open space, including children's play areas; and
- Opportunity to provide a community facility, such as a skatepark, at the site's north-eastern corner, for the benefit of both new and existing residents.

## **HERITAGE**

- The settings of Heritage Assets situated to the south-east of the site, along Turkey Cock Lane, will require consideration. To mitigate views into the site from the adjacent Grade II listed building of The Malting House, a potential landscape buffer and enhancement of existing boundary vegetation, at the site's south-eastern corner, will provide visual screening.

## **UTILITIES**

- There are number of underground and above-ground utilities running through the site;
- A number of these utilities can either be diverted and or grounded without a significant constraint to the available developable area;
- The presence of Local High Pressure Gas Main and Water Main need to be addressed as part of the design process as it is likely that these utilities will need to remain in situ and associated easement distances adhered to;
- Access to pipelines is to be maintained, while adhering to the relevant PADHI guidance; and
- A Utilities Appraisal confirms that the site will be served by all the necessary utilities to support residential development.



DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN-WIDER SITE (OPTION 3).

# 03 Design Overview

## DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN - OVERVIEW

1. Primary access point
2. Potential secondary / emergency access point
3. Utilities constraints and easements
4. Indicative location for children's play area
5. Sustainable Drainage Systems - attenuation basins and swales
6. Indicative location for a skate park (subject to consultation with the Parish Council)
7. Proposed pedes/cycle path
8. Potential connections to existing Public Rights of Way (up to site boundary)
9. Community parkland

3.1 The Development Framework Plan provides a blueprint for the development and will include, in overview, the following components, as illustrated in the plan opposite, where appropriate:

### **USE:**

- Overall site area is 15.96ha.
- The main use of the proposals is residential (Class Use C3) – approximately 250 dwellings;
- Public open space; and
- Highways infrastructure to facilitate access into the site.

### **BUILT FORM:**

- Varying levels of density will respond to the site context and assist in integrating the development to its surroundings, while reinforcing placemaking principles and distinctive character areas;
- Incorporating the principle of 'Continuity and Enclosure' to reinforce the separation between public and private realms, facilitating active frontages and overlooking onto public open spaces, while promoting a safe environment;
- Integrating landmark buildings across the development in key locations, to assist in placemaking, enhance site legibility and add interest to the streetscene; and
- Incorporating a consistent strategy to proposed building heights, responding to the site's context and in keeping with the scale of surrounding development.

### **MOVEMENT:**

- Incorporating 'Active Travel' principles to the Movement and Access strategy, so that sustainable modes of travel, primarily walking and cycling, become an attractive choice throughout the development and as part of connection to local facilities Eight Ash Green;
- Incorporating attractive pedestrian and cycle routes and links so that to increase the development's permeability and encourage sustainable modes of travel;
- Incorporating a primary access at the site's northern boundary, off Halstead Road, as well as an additional emergency access point further to the east, also off Halstead Road;
- Incorporating a clear hierarchy within the proposed network of streets, assisting in reducing vehicular speed and prioritising the movement of pedestrians and cyclists, while also reinforcing placemaking and distinctive character areas.

### **LANDSCAPE & ENVIRONMENT:**

- Landscape strategy which aims to provide multi-functional public open space, such as green amenity space, children's play areas, a skate park and Sustainable Drainage Systems;
- Incorporating a network of pedestrian and cycle routes within the green public open spaces; and
- Incorporating ecological mitigation measures and enhancements, to achieve a Biodiversity Net Gain.

### **PLACEMAKING:**

- Reinforcing the identity of the development through the inclusion of distinctive character areas which respond to the site's context and structuring development components.



- SITE LOCATION (15.96HA)
- CA1 - PRINCIPAL AVENUE
- CA2 - NEIGHBOURHOOD CORE
- CA3 - GREEN EDGE

INDICATIVE CHARACTER AREAS PLAN

# 04 Character Areas

## CHARACTER AREAS

- 4.1 The proposals will comprise a distinctive character and a strong sense of place, informed by important site features, while taking cue from existing development within Great Horkesley and the wider context.
- 4.2 Key placemaking principles are set out to inform the more detailed design proposals.

*“The identity or character of a place comes from the way that buildings, streets and spaces, landscape and infrastructure combine together and how people experience them. It is not just about the buildings or how a place looks, but how it engages with all of the senses.”*

*(Para. 50, NDG 2021)*

- 4.3 Character Areas (CA) are a useful way of helping assimilate the design proposals within its surroundings, whilst providing a continuity of themes across the development and helping to generate a sense of place. Each character area will contain its own individual design components, which aid in making it distinct from other areas. These components of character include the built form elements, such as architectural detailing, materials and building types, as well as landscape treatments and street types.
- 4.4 The site has been divided into three proposed Character Areas, each with a distinctive identity in response to the site’s context and surroundings. The character areas are detailed below as follows:
  - **CA1 - Principal Avenue**
  - **CA2 - Neighbourhood Core**
  - **CA3 - Green Edge**



## CA1 – PRINCIPAL AVENUE

Dwellings situated along the development's primary movement route and around focal public open spaces will be arranged at regular intervals, with a consistent building line, contributing to a formal appearance, which will reinforce the importance of the Principal Avenue in the street hierarchy.

Typical Characteristics for the Principal Avenue CA include:

- **Street types** – Dwellings in the Principal Avenue CA will be access directly off the Principal Avenue. Such access arrangement facilitates a narrow building setback, which contributes to the appearance of an enclosed streetscene, adding to its formal appearance.
- **Building types** – A mix of detached and semi-detached houses, contributing to the sense of enclosure within the streetscene.
- **Building heights** – Predominantly 2 storey dwellings, with the occasional increase of height (up to 2.5 storeys) to denote key buildings, particularly those surrounding focal public open spaces.
- **Building Line Setback and Parking** – A formal building line characterises the arrangement of buildings in the Principal Avenue CA. Building footprints are arranged in regular intervals and along a consistent building line, with narrow building setbacks, contributing to the formal appearance of the streetscene along the Principal Avenue. Predominantly on-plot parking will be provided along the Principal Avenue, mostly to the side of dwellings, which assists in ensuring a consistent building line and narrow setback.
- **Density** – Medium density levels will characterise the Principal Avenue CA, particularly with the inclusion of mostly detached and semi-detached houses.
- **Landscape and Boundary Treatments** – Dwellings in the Principal Avenue CA will have low hedgerows to the front of plots, so that to define the semi-private space. Tree planting will be incorporated into the streetscene where possible, to help soften the appearance of the streetscene. The choice of tree specimen will contribute to reinforcing the importance of the Principal Avenue within the street hierarchy.



## CA2 – NEIGHBOURHOOD CORE

Dwellings within the inner parts of the development will be arranged at regular intervals, with a consistent building line and small gaps between buildings, reinforcing a sense of enclosure, which in turn, will encourage social interaction and a vibrant streetscene.

Typical Characteristics for the Neighbourhood Core CA include:

- **Street types** – Dwellings in the Principal Avenue CA will be accessed directly off the Principal Avenue. Such access arrangements facilitate a narrow building setback, which contributes to the appearance of an enclosed streetscene, adding to its formal appearance.
- **Building types** – Predominantly semi-detached and terraced houses, contributing to the sense of enclosure within the streetscene.
- **Building heights** – Predominantly 2 storey dwellings.
- **Building Line Setback and Parking** – A formal building line characterises the arrangement of buildings in the Neighbourhood Core CA. Building footprints are arranged in regular intervals and along a consistent building line. Predominantly on-plot parking to the front of dwellings will be provided in this CA, which assists in creating narrower gaps between buildings and, as a result, continuous massing.
- **Density** – Medium-high density levels will characterise the Neighbourhood Core CA, particularly with the inclusion of mostly semi-detached and terraced houses.
- **Landscape and Boundary Treatments** – Dwellings in the Neighbourhood Core CA will have low hedgerows to the front of plots, to define the semi-private space. Soft landscaping and tree planting will be incorporated in gaps between frontage parking spaces, to soften the appearance of the streetscene and ensure the streets are not dominated by cars.



### **CA3 – GREEN EDGE**

Dwellings framing areas of green open space, such as landscape buffers and green corridors, will be designed to reflect their importance in defining the transition between the built-up area and the open space.

Typical Characteristics for the Green Edge CA include:

- **Street types** – Dwellings in the Green Edge CA will be accessed predominantly via shared private drives.
- **Building types** – Predominantly detached houses.
- **Building heights** – Predominantly 2 storey dwellings.
- **Building Line Setback and Parking** – A looser arrangement of building footprints compared with the other CAs, contributing to softening the edge of the built-up area. Predominantly on-plot parking arrangement, typically to the side of dwellings, while allowing room for soft landscaping to the front of plots, assisting in softening the appearance of the streetscene.
- **Density** – Medium-low density levels will characterise the Green Edge CA, reflecting the inclusion of predominantly detached houses.
- **Landscape and Boundary Treatments** – The relatively generous building setback typical to this CA allows for opportunities for soft landscaping to the front of plots, further assisting to soften the appearance of the built form, in transition to open space. Low hedging will typically define the private realms to the front of dwellings.







Creating a future place.

# 05 Conclusion

***“Well-designed places and buildings come about when there is a clearly expressed ‘story’ for the design concept and how it has evolved into a design proposal. This explains how the concept influences the layout, form, appearance and details of the proposed development. It may draw its inspiration from the site, its surroundings or a wider context. It may also introduce new approaches to contrast with, or complement, its context. This ‘story’ will inform and address all ten characteristics. It is set out in a Design and Access Statement that accompanies a planning application.”***

***(Para. 16, NDG 2021)***

- 5.1 This Vision Document has set out the key design principles which will guide proposals for development on the site. It establishes the vision for the development as a sustainable, landscape-led new neighbourhood to the south of Eight Ash Green, on land to the south of Halstead Road.
- 5.2 The development of Land South of Halstead Road provides a unique opportunity to create a new neighbourhood, which is integrated into its surroundings and at the same time, incorporates distinctive character. Additionally, the development presents an opportunity to create housing choice and provide areas of accessible public open space, whilst improving public access across the site.
- 5.3 The masterplan is founded on best practice urban design principles, community integration and sustainable development.

- 5.4 The development proposals will offer the following main benefits:
  - The delivery of approximately 250 new homes, in a range of dwelling types, size and tenure, offering an accessible and acceptable choice of lifestyles;
  - The creation of an integrated and sustainable residential community with a sensitive relationship to the existing village;
  - Delivery of new open spaces, including children’s play areas and a skate park, for the benefit of both new and existing residents in the area;
  - Providing a development that is well connected, readily understood and easily navigated, with the delivery of a new access off Halstead Road;
  - The creation of legible routes through the development, complementing existing routes and providing sustainable transport choices;
  - The creation of pedestrian and cycle routes through the development, with links to the existing Public Right of Way to the west of the site;
  - The creation of a strong landscape structure, focused around the retained vegetation, responding to the local area, and enhancing and optimising the immediate locality;
  - The retention, and enhancement where appropriate, of trees and vegetation of key significance, with particular regard to vegetation which provides habitat. New planting will be provided to ensure there is a ‘net gain’ on the site; and
  - Promoting the objectives of sustainable development through layout and design.



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