

## 6.6. DM5 Pre-App Meeting

6.6.1. The team were programmed to produce the following items at DM5:

- First Draft of floor plans including the various house types and the Local Centre spatial planning, as well as street elevations.
- A coordinated design and access statement structure.

6.6.2. In addition, and following DM3/DM4, the Illustrative Masterplan experienced a number of positive moves which included:

- The re-positioning of the Local Centre & Extra Care block which formalised an enhanced civic space and created an engaging community domain. The move presented a better outlook in view of the attenuation basin and green open space to the north of the extra care facility. It also led to the coagulation of a single point of vehicular access to the B4 site.
- The 2FE Primary School was also repositioned so that a direct line of sight and a strong axis could be formalised with the civic space.

6.6.3. The DM5 presentation also contained supplementary information such as a synergies plan touching on the college square/civic space link, the SuDs/Raingarden theme and threads of Green Open Space & Habitation. Details on the third material style emerged and a study of the western edge became available.

6.6.4. The team received the following feedback:

- Site wide synergies praised, but additional recommendations made
- The re-positioning of the Local Centre, the Extra Care facility and the 2FE primary school were strongly supported. As the Local Centre and the School bookend a primary street, additional information in terms of built form, architecture and landscaping, was requested.
- Recommendations surrounding work to the southern access of the school.



Figure 67. The DM5 Illustrative Masterplan depicting some of the key moves

## 6.7. DM5 Pre-App Meeting

6.7.1. For the first time in the pre-app process, details of the Local Centre & the Civic Space began to emerge. The below illustration was created to start conveying the aspiration for a public domain facilitating activity, whether that's as a travel link or an engaging community space where people can meet or sit and enjoy a coffee. An architectural vision for an attractive marker building was also starting to emerge, and the primary school can also be seen in the backdrop.

6.7.2. The sketch on the right epitomised the key development ahead of DM5. It embodies three of the key buildings situated within the B4 parcel, showing a clear relationship/axis along the primary spine road. The SACDC Strategic Sites Toolkit refers strongly to visually connected spaces and neighbourhoods with identifiable spaces, which the diagram demonstrates.



Figure 68. Initial concept sketch of the Civic Space

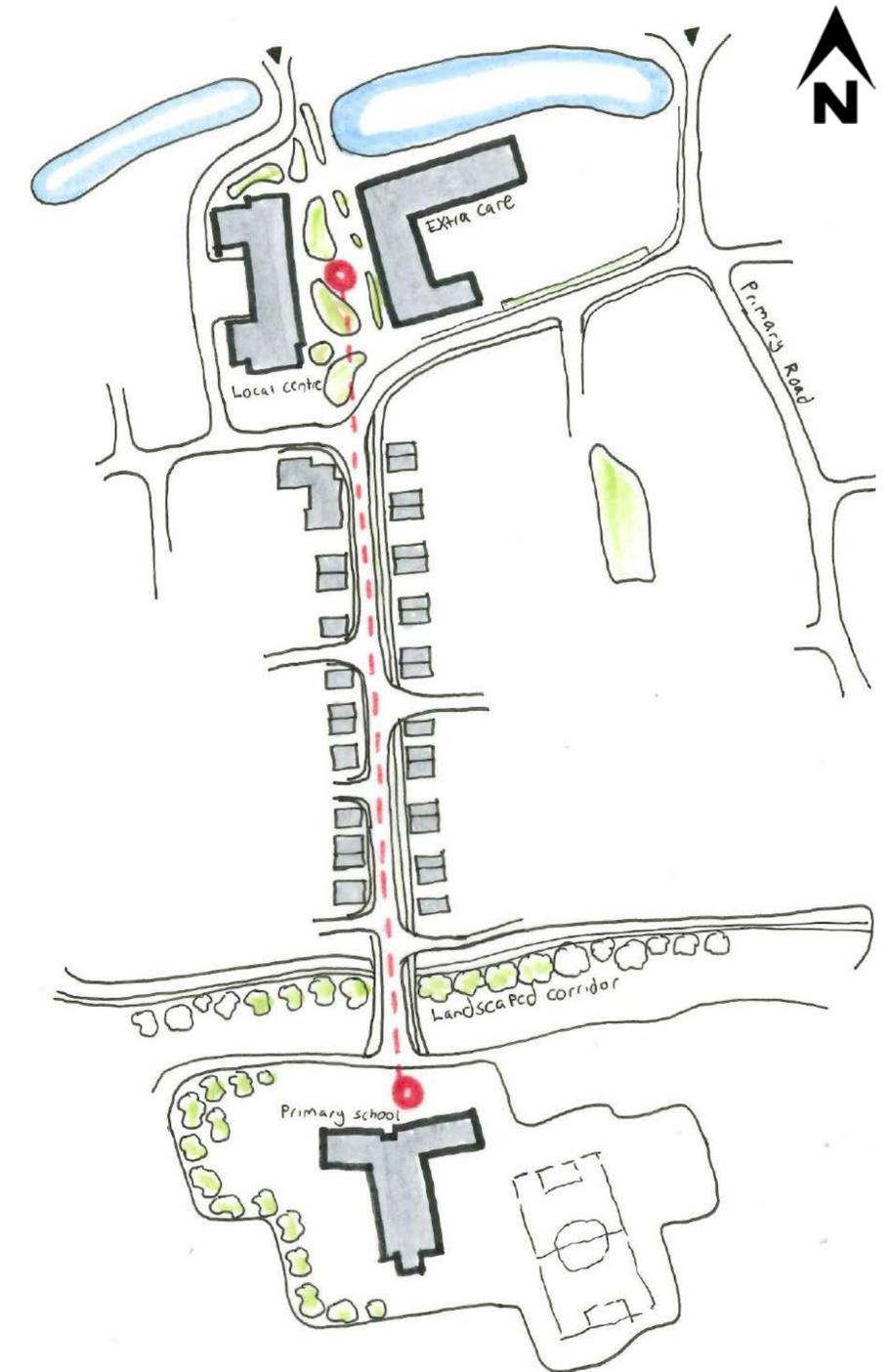


Figure 69. Sight Line Concept Sketch

## 6.8. DM6/DM7 Pre-App Meeting

6.8.1. A revised DM6/DM7 agenda was issued following the conclusion of DM5. The agenda contained some of the following:

- A joint vision diagram and a revised movement framework, following public consultation updates & takeaways.
- A panoramic visualisation showing the relationship between the College & Residential development.
- Detailed layouts of Primary, Secondary & Tertiary streets in plan, section, elevation and 3D.
- Landscaping plans for each of the key spaces.
- Firmed up Local Centre plans and elevations.

6.8.2. The Illustrative Masterplan also underwent a number of minor changes including the re-alignment of the North/South & East/West PRow, amendments to residential plots for efficiency and an improved central courtyard space which allows greater permeability.

6.8.3. During the meeting the team received the following feedback which could be summarised as the following:

- The visuals, which guided the audience through the detailed part of the site, appeared too vehicular focused, given the emphasis the proposals give to the active travel routes and permeability.
- There was a substantial dialogue around the Local Centre proposals, which covered scale i.e. distances from the houses to the rear and along Sandpit Lane, as well as the appropriateness of character which encompasses the experience of form, materiality, solid to void ratios and the architectural details. This necessitated the requirement for context sections and 3D's, as the Local Centre was mainly presented in isolation.
- Other minor questions were posed around roof orientation, and pedestrian routes serving the school.



Figure 70. The Illustrative Masterplan presented at DM6/DM7

# 6.9. DM6/DM7 Pre-App Meeting

6.9.1. Right: A selection of visualisations presented at DM6/DM7, showing how the character of the detailed area was developing at this point in time. Some of the illustrations were deemed more successful than others, for example the Tertiary street elicits a clear character and sense of place, whereas other images could be viewed as too vehicular focused, given the projects design aspirations.



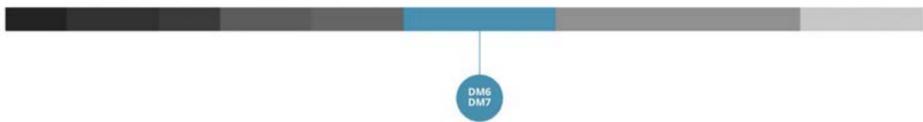
Figure 72. DM6/DM7 3D Illustration - Site Entrance



Figure 73. DM6/DM7 3D Illustration - Civic Space



Figure 71. DM6/DM7 3D Illustration - Tertiary Street



## 6.10. DM8/Matter 2 Response Pre-App Meeting

- 6.10.1. As DM6/DM7 was the last of the programmed pre-apps, the applicant design team were encouraged to re-submit information pertaining to three specific matters. These could be summarised as; College edges, the Local Centre and mitigating the impact of the new Sports Hall and Film Studio.
- 6.10.2. The team also spent some time refining the Illustrative Masterplan, driven by revised developable area zones in conjunction with an improved drainage strategy. The layering of surface waterflows and landscaping, was extended through the college site to create a significant habitat corridor and better linking the B4 parcel.
- 6.10.3. A document focusing on the Local Centre amendments was assembled. The team addressed DM6/DM7 comments, and in addition draft level information and FFLs became available. As a consequence, the proposals floor plate reduced, whilst more appropriately responded to the contours of the site. A character study of St. Albans was also undertaken and the proposal better reflected the rhythm and silhouette, whilst an enhanced material palette was proposed.
- 6.10.4. During the meeting it was mooted that the form and massing presented at DM8 is a step forward, however more context was needed i.e. longer views from Sandpit Lane and North Drive. The architectural direction was generally supported, however further refinement was needed - aspects of the proposal was deemed too busy and needed simplifying.
- 6.10.5. The narrowing of the Civic Space was supported, but questions were raised in regards to the privacy at the northern end.



Figure 74. The Illustrative Masterplan presented at DM8/Matter 2 Response

# 7. Scheme Design



# 7.1. Design Aspirations

- 7.1.1. The scheme aspires to produce a high-quality, sustainable new neighbourhood on the outskirts of St Albans that complements the local surroundings in the Oaklands area.
- 7.1.2. The design drivers include:
- 7.1.3. **High Quality Homes** - Creation of new homes, a new local centre and new educational facilities that allow for clubs, events and learning opportunities.
- 7.1.4. **Safety & Surveillance** - Produce houses that provide natural security and deter anti-social behaviour.
- 7.1.5. **Community** - Create spaces that bring people together and reflect the needs and values of local community.
- 7.1.6. **Active Travel** - Establish a network of safe active travel routes that promote healthy and sustainable methods of travel.
- 7.1.7. **Landscape Thread** - Strengthen networks of woodland blocks, lines of hedgerow and ecological habitat corridors.
- 7.1.8. **Green Open Space** - Integrate green open spaces into the urban fabric, to allow for recreation, relaxation and social connection to flourish within the local community.



**High Quality Homes**



**Safety & Surveillance**



**Community**



**Active Travel**



**Landscape Thread**



**Green Open Space**

Figure 75. Design Drivers

## 7.2. Design Principles

### Surface Flood Water

- 7.2.1. A key factor influencing the design is the risk of surface water flooding, which runs from west to east along the gradient of the topography.
- 7.2.2. A drainage strategy was developed from the site in conjunction with project engineers JNP. The below diagram illustrates proposals for attenuation areas and sustainable drainage solutions.



Figure 76. Surface Flood Water

### Development Parcels

- 7.2.3. The extent of the developable area has been shaped by surface water landflow, the evolving sustainable drainage strategy, the NEB12 green open space requirement and the landscaping thread which accommodates active travel routes for permeability and connection. Existing clusters of trees particularly to the south and northeast, coupled with the distinct band of trees bisecting the site also influenced the development parcels, whilst the LPA's 'Part B - Local Plan Sites' outlining key development requirements and uses also had an impact.



Figure 77. Development Parcels

### Access

- 7.2.4. The project transport consultants advised on the optimal vehicular access point from Sandpit lane. A second vehicular access point was also advised along Sandpit Lane, for the purpose of serving the Local Centre visitor parking and allowing service/refuse vehicles to access the rear of the Local Centre, whilst also allowing emergency vehicles to pass through. As one of the key project themes is permeability, the proposal benefits from a number of new pedestrian/cycle access points along the western Oaklands Grange boundary, connecting through to North Drive which runs adjacent to the eastern boundary. A new toucan crossing will be constructed along Sandpit Lane, integrating the development within the existing pedestrian network.



Figure 78. Access