

Staple Tye Supplementary Planning Document

December 2022



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1 Introduction

1.1 Background and Purpose

- 1.1.1 This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been produced to help guide future developments in the Staple Tye Neighbourhood Centre and surrounding area.
- 1.1.2 The SPD will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and will also inform pre-application discussions on relevant developments. The SPD aims to provide further guidance in respect of Policy RS3 which seeks to protect and enhance existing retail centres, and Policy ED2 which seeks to protect existing employment areas.
- 1.1.3 The SPD will also provide a framework to secure the regeneration and enhancement of the area in accordance with the Harlow Local Development Plan (HLDP), the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) Vision and Corporate Priorities that support sustainable urban renewal as part of a programme of regeneration and redevelopment. It will promote and guide development opportunities, whilst identifying how funding, reinvestment and planning gain might be used to improve existing buildings and the public realm, as part of a combined regeneration package for the area.
- 1.1.4 In June 2021, Harlow Council was successful in its bid for funding from the Towns Fund and was awarded £23.7 million. The Towns Fund projects are to be led by the Harlow Growth Board and will support the regeneration of Staple Tye as well as projects in the Town Centre, a new junction at Cambridge Road and River Way and provide Institute of Technology facilities at Harlow College.
- 1.1.5 The Town Investment Plan identified reasons as to why Staple Tye is in need of regeneration, these included:
- Staple Tye being amongst the 30% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country
 - Staple Tye neighbourhood is run down and in need of investment
 - The Harlow Youth Council knife crime survey identified Staple Tye area with a perceived high rate of knife crime. Youth Councillors identified Staple Tye as an area that they do not feel safe in
 - Aging built infrastructure and employment space
- 1.1.6 The regeneration and enhancement of the area could help to address the issues identified above. The Towns Fund will provide investment at Staple Tye to provide high quality business units and flexible workspace as well as improvements to the cycleway and underpasses. The investment will see the redevelopment of council owned sites as well as providing a catalyst to promote opportunities for the redevelopment of privately owned sites so they are developed in a cohesive way. The employment area provides a mix of employment opportunities for the area whilst the shopping area provides retail for local residents.
- 1.1.7 Neighbourhood Centres continue to be a focus and destination for each district neighbourhood, providing local services and convenience retail within a 10-minute walk of homes. Improvements to the Staple Tye area, especially enhancing connectivity within the area and surrounding area, will help support the 20-minute neighbourhood concept which will attract a wider catchment of visitors and workers to Staple Tye.

1.2 Outline Strategy

- 1.2.1 The outline strategy for the Staple Tye Neighbourhood Centre and surrounding area will focus on the following four key areas:
- 1.2.2 **Redevelopment Opportunities** – the area includes a HLDP allocation for 30 residential units at Staple Tye Mews, Staple Tye Depot and The Gateway. Further development opportunities are located at the Former Lister House site, which is currently vacant after demolition and relocation of the Medical Centre to the northern side of Southern Way, the Great Parndon Library, as well as a vacant site on the corner of Parnall Road and Pinceybrook Road.
- 1.2.3 **Connectivity Improvement** – the area is accessible by walking and cycling routes and this will continue to be prioritised for improvement to support the 20-minute neighbourhood. The area is also served by public transport and is also accessible by car. Connectivity improvements between the surrounding residential areas, employment area, shopping area and future development should prioritise the use of active travel and public transport, therefore, the existing walking and cycling routes will be improved and where possible new routes identified. The underpasses connecting the area to the Medical Centre will also be improved to ensure safety for pedestrians and cyclists. The Council would support the provision of a Mobility Hub which would provide sustainable transport options for travelling to and from the centre.
- 1.2.4 **Public Realm Improvement** – public realm improvements that will be put in place across the area will help Staple Tye become a more attractive place to live and work and assist to secure its wider regeneration.
- 1.2.5 **Retention of Key Uses** – the Staple Tye Employment Area and Staple Tye Mews are currently performing well in terms of having low levels of vacancies and their key role for employment use is protected through policies set out in the HLDP. The Shopping Centre within the Neighbourhood Centre is also performing well with no vacant units¹ and its continuing key role for retail use is protected through policies set out in the HLDP. Key community uses within the area, which are also to be protected in the HLDP, include the Great Parndon Library, Kingdom Hall and St James Church.

1.3 Location

- 1.3.1 Staple Tye Neighbourhood Centre is located to the south of Harlow on Southern Way within the Staple Tye ward. As a Neighbourhood Centre, Staple Tye provides local retail and services to local residents and follows Sir Frederick Gibberd's principles relating to the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods by being well connected and within walking distance of residents and accessible by public transport. Staple Tye is also very well connected to Harlow Town Centre via public transport and pedestrian and cycle routes. The Great Parndon open space, north of Staple Tye Neighbourhood Centre, provides green amenity space and recreation space for local residents. The Staple Tye Employment Area provides local employment with a mix of office, industrial and warehouse uses whilst Staple Tye Mews provides space for smaller start-up units. The area also provides two places for worship at St James Church and Kingdom Hall as well as community facilities at the Great Parndon Library. There is also Stewards Academy, a secondary school located on Pinceybrook Road and the Great Parndon Community Centre and Medical Centre on Abercrombie Way

¹ Retail frontage survey undertaken 2022.

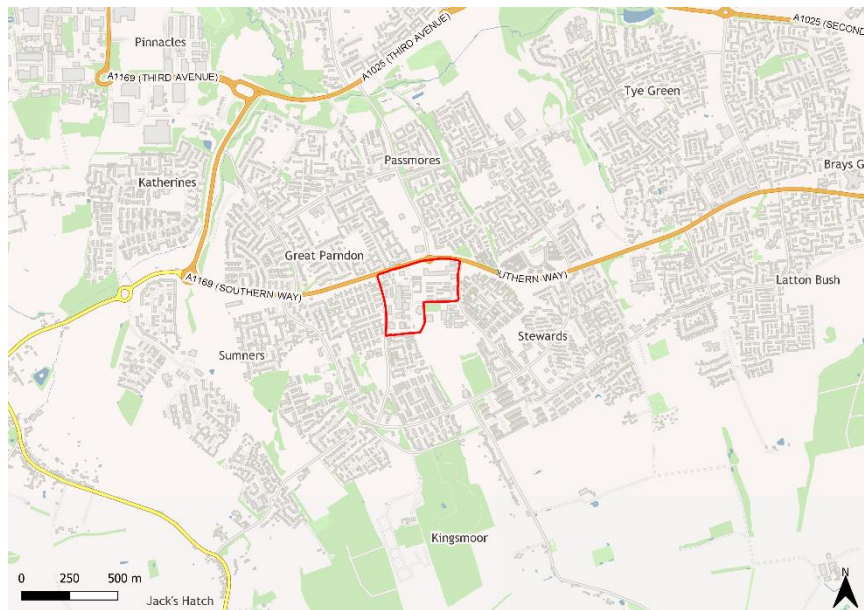


Figure 1 – Map of location of Staple Tye

1.4 Study Area

- 1.4.1 The study area for the SPD is defined by Southern Way to the north, Parnall Road to the east, Pinceybrook Road and Perry Road to the south and Ployters Road to the west. The area therefore broadly includes Staple Tye Neighbourhood Centre as well as the surrounding area including the Staple Tye Employment Area, a HLDP allocated site and a residential area. Outside the SPD area to the north there are residential areas, as well as the newly built replacement Lister Medical Centre and Great Parndon Community Centre, sports and activity centre and open space. The areas outside the SPD area to the east and west are residential and the area outside the SPD area to the south includes residential as well as Stewards Academy secondary school.

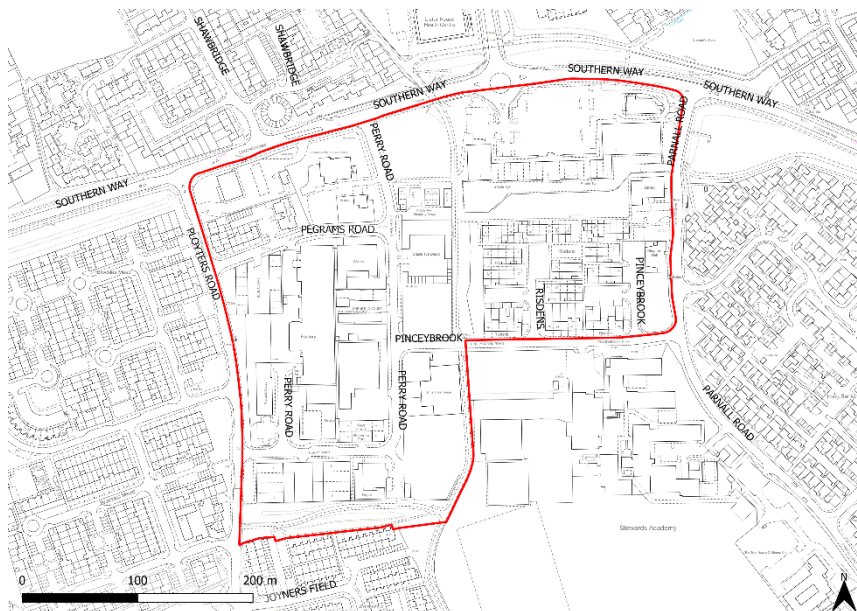


Figure 2 – Map of SPD boundary



Figure 3 – Map of SPD boundary (aerial)

2 Background Policy and Initiatives

2.1 National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 2.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.
- 2.1.2 Chapter 8 Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities states policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which 'promote social interaction...are safe and accessible....enable and support healthy lifestyles' (paragraph 92). It goes on to state 'access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities...and support efforts to address climate change' (paragraph 98).
- 2.1.3 Chapter 9 Promoting Sustainable Transport states applications for development should 'give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements...address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility...create places that are safe, secure and attractive...allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles...be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles...' (paragraph 112).
- 2.1.4 Chapter 11 Making Effective Use of Land states planning policies and decisions should 'promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions' (paragraph 119).
- 2.1.5 Chapter 12 Achieving Well-Designed Places states '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' (paragraph 126) and also states 'development that is not well designed should be refused...' (paragraph 134).

- 2.1.6 Chapter 15 Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment (paragraph 174).

2.2 Harlow Local Development Plan

- 2.2.1 The Harlow Local Development Plan (HLDP), which was adopted in December 2020, sets out the long-term planning vision for the district and guides future development across Harlow to 2033. It includes a number of policies and site allocations for specific uses and land designations. The HLDP also notes that it may be necessary to provide further clarity and guidance through the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs).
- 2.2.2 Policy HS1 identifies that 9,200 dwellings will be delivered during the Local Plan period (1 April 2011 to 31 March 2033). Allocated sites set out in Policy HS2 includes a site located within the Staple Tye SPD boundary with a potential capacity of 30 dwellings at Staple Tye Mews, Staple Tye Depot and The Gateway. The site will be delivered in accordance with HLDP policies, particularly Policy H1, Policy H2, Policy H5, Policy H6 and Policy H8 on residential development, accessible and adaptable housing, housing mix and affordable housing.
- 2.2.3 Policy ED2 aims to protect existing employment areas, including Staple Tye, and states that these areas will be retained and enhanced for a mix of office, industrial and warehouse uses and other associated activities in accordance with Policy PR1 which sets out general presumption against the loss of office, industrial or distribution/warehouse uses from the allocated employment areas. The Neighbourhood Service Area at Staple Tye, known as Staple Tye Mews, is also to be protected in accordance with Policy PR2 and the provision of smaller start-up units, shared spaces and workhubs in these areas will be encouraged. Policy PR2 sets out general presumption against the loss of office uses (E(g) uses but was formerly B1(a)).
- 2.2.4 The retail hierarchy which reflects the role and function of the district's retail centres is set out in Policy RS1 with Harlow Town Centre being where retail development should be directed in the first instance. Neighbourhood Centres, such as Staple Tye, provide a secondary function in the hierarchy that meet specific local needs as well as providing a range of community services. Policy RS2 identifies comparison and convenience floorspace needs in Harlow where a significant proportion will be delivered in Harlow Town Centre. The remaining floorspace requirement will be delivered through redevelopment opportunities in Neighbourhood Centres. Policy RS3 protects and enhances the role and function of Neighbourhood Centres with support given in principle to new retail and community uses that are of an appropriate scale and residential development which supports the centres uses. Policy PR8 supports a wide range of services and facilities within Neighbourhood Centres.
- 2.2.5 Policy WE2 has regard to the Green Belt, Green Wedges and Green Fingers in Harlow and sets out their roles. Policy PL5 protects the Green Wedges and Green Fingers from encroachment and visual intrusion, while recognising there may be opportunities for some development within them, where the development benefits the wider community or improves the biodiversity and/or the landscaping. Policy WE3 states that development on, or which negatively affects, a Local Wildlife Site or Local Nature Reserve will not be supported unless certain measures are in place. Policy L4 considers measures that will improve the health and wellbeing of residents.

- 2.2.6 Policy IN1 provides detailed advice on the provision of appropriate and adequate infrastructure having regard to the modal hierarchy to ensure those who wish to walk, cycle and use public transport as an alternative way of moving in and around the district are prioritised as well as the provision of electric charging points in accordance with the latest Government guidance. Policy IN3 states that vehicle parking must be provided in accordance with the Essex Vehicle Parking Standards unless otherwise indicated elsewhere in the Local Plan and/or supporting documents.

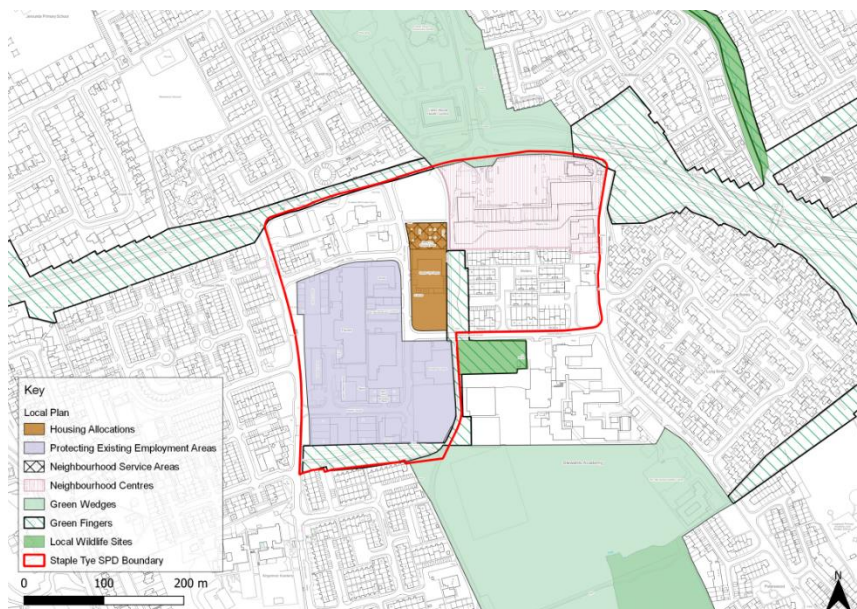


Figure 4 – Map of SPD boundary and policy designations

2.3 Harlow and Gilston Garden Town

- 2.3.1 Harlow forms part of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT), which comprises new and existing communities in and around Harlow. The partnership authorities of Harlow, East Hertfordshire and Epping Forest District Councils and Hertfordshire and Essex County Councils are working together to deliver the vision for HGGT.
- 2.3.2 The HGGT Vision helps support the delivery of the locally-led Garden Town. The principles which will inform the Garden Town's growth and management are centred on four areas; Economy and Regeneration, Placemaking and Homes, Sustainable Movement and Landscapes and Green Infrastructure. These principles have been considered as part of the development of this SPD. The Vision was endorsed by Harlow Council as a material consideration.
- 2.3.3 The HGGT Design Guide supports the HGGT Vision and sets out the expectations and aspirations for the delivery of high quality and sustainable developments in the Garden Town. The Design Guide was endorsed by Harlow Council as a material consideration. The HGGT has also developed a Sustainability Guidance and Checklist. The guidance provides practical and technical guidance on how to apply sustainability indicators and policies into new major developments in the Garden Town.

2.3.4 The HGGT Transport Strategy helps to deliver the HGGT Vision and principles through identifying measures to reduce the need for travel. The strategy contains the modal shift target that 50% of all journeys across Harlow will be made by active and sustainable modes and this target rises to 60% of all journeys within the new communities. This will be achieved by applying principles on user hierarchy, which reduces unnecessary travel first, followed by walking and cycling, public transport and then private vehicles, as well as principles on the culture of active and sustainable travel and accessibility and inclusion. The strategy's actions are enabling choice, streets for people, quality public transport, a network that works and maximising opportunities.

2.3.5 Supporting documents to support growth, delivery, sustainability and long-term stewardship across HGGT include the 'How To' Guide for Planning Obligations, Land Value Capture and Development Viability as well as the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).

2.4 Harlow Design Guide SPD (2011) and Addendum (2021)

2.4.1 The Harlow Design Guide SPD was adopted in 2011 and the Harlow Design Guide Addendum SPD was adopted in 2021. These documents provide general design guidance for informing site specific policy and planning applications.

2.4.2 Section 4.4 of the Harlow Design Guide SPD focuses on neighbourhood centres and includes Principle DG13 Improvement of Existing Neighbourhood Centres, which sets out what the improvement and enhancement of existing Neighbourhood Centres should achieve. Sections 4.9 (Building Design), 4.10 (Building Interface) and 4.11 (Building Performance) all set out principles for new residential development.

2.4.3 The Harlow Design Guide Addendum SPD contains additional design guidance on tall buildings, privacy and overlooking, amenity space and gardens and climate change which have been addressed in recently updated national planning policy and guidance.

2.5 Essex County Council Design Guide

2.5.1 The Essex County Council Design Guide was originally created in 1973 to pioneer local design, creating space for innovation and encouraging high-quality development. In 2018, the Design Guide was digitally revamped and now receives ongoing updates to ensure the content remains contemporary and effectively responds to the challenges and opportunities for Essex. The update included new integrated social-economic themes, new highway standards, references to SuDS and new case studies. As set out in Policy PL1 of the HLDP, the chapters which refer to access and services are specifically a material consideration in the determination of planning applications in Harlow.

2.6 Green Infrastructure and Public Open Space Standards SPD

2.6.1 The Green Infrastructure and Public Open Space Standards SPD was adopted March 2022 and replaced the 2007 Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation SPD. The objectives of the SPD include the implementation of the HLDP policies relating to open spaces, recreation, green and blue infrastructure and biodiversity as well as ensuring that biodiversity levels are improved in the town through Biodiversity Net Gain.

3 Baseline Analysis

3.1 Historic Context

- 3.1.1 Staple Tye Neighbourhood Centre was built in 1965 as a three-level reinforced concrete centre. The ground floor was for parking and service areas, shops were located on the first floor with pedestrian access via short ramps and flats were located on the second floor. Frederick Gibberd argued that The Stow, Bush Fair and Staple Tye Neighbourhood Centres demonstrated the evolution of the shopping function in Harlow with Staple Tye being an innovative 'decked centre' where the shops were raised above the vehicular servicing.
- 3.1.2 During the original construction of The Stow Neighbourhood Centre, the number of retail units predicted to be needed at a neighbourhood level was overestimated. Shopping patterns had changed before the completion of 50 retail units at Staple Tye, consequently, 9 units were converted to office use instead. The retail units fronted onto a mall which was spanned by four maisonette blocks. The bowl shape of the site enabled the main approach on the east to be by a shallow ramp within which also sited the library. Antanas Brazdy's Echo sculpture was placed on a mound as a focus for the approach views. At the opposite end the mall extended to the first floor included a pub, with ramps and stairs leading down to the health centre and service industry. However, structural issues with the building necessitated the redevelopment of the centre in 1990, with the three-level centre being replaced with a single-level centre to provide larger, more modern retail units. The shopping centre now currently has 17 shops.
- 3.1.3 The Staple Tye industrial estate was built in 1973 where individual factory units were all around 2,000sqft (~186sqm) in size. Currently this Employment Area now has a number of units that vary in size and use.

3.2 Planning Applications

- 3.2.1 The Staple Tye SPD area has remained relatively unchanged over the past 10 years in terms of new development. The employment and shopping area has seen very few permitted changes of use and has, therefore, broadly maintained the existing employment and retail floorspace. The demolition of the Lister House Medical Centre and approval of new residential and commercial space on the site, as well as the Network House new build industrial/office building, which is currently under construction and approval of a replacement industrial building at 16 Perry Road, have been the only major development in the area. There have been some other minor development over this time but broadly the overall character and main uses have remained the same. More recently, however, the Towns Fund will bring significant opportunity for redevelopment in the Staple Tye area that will serve as a catalyst for future development.

3.3 Land Use

- 3.3.1 There are currently nine main character areas in the SPD area as set out in figure 5.

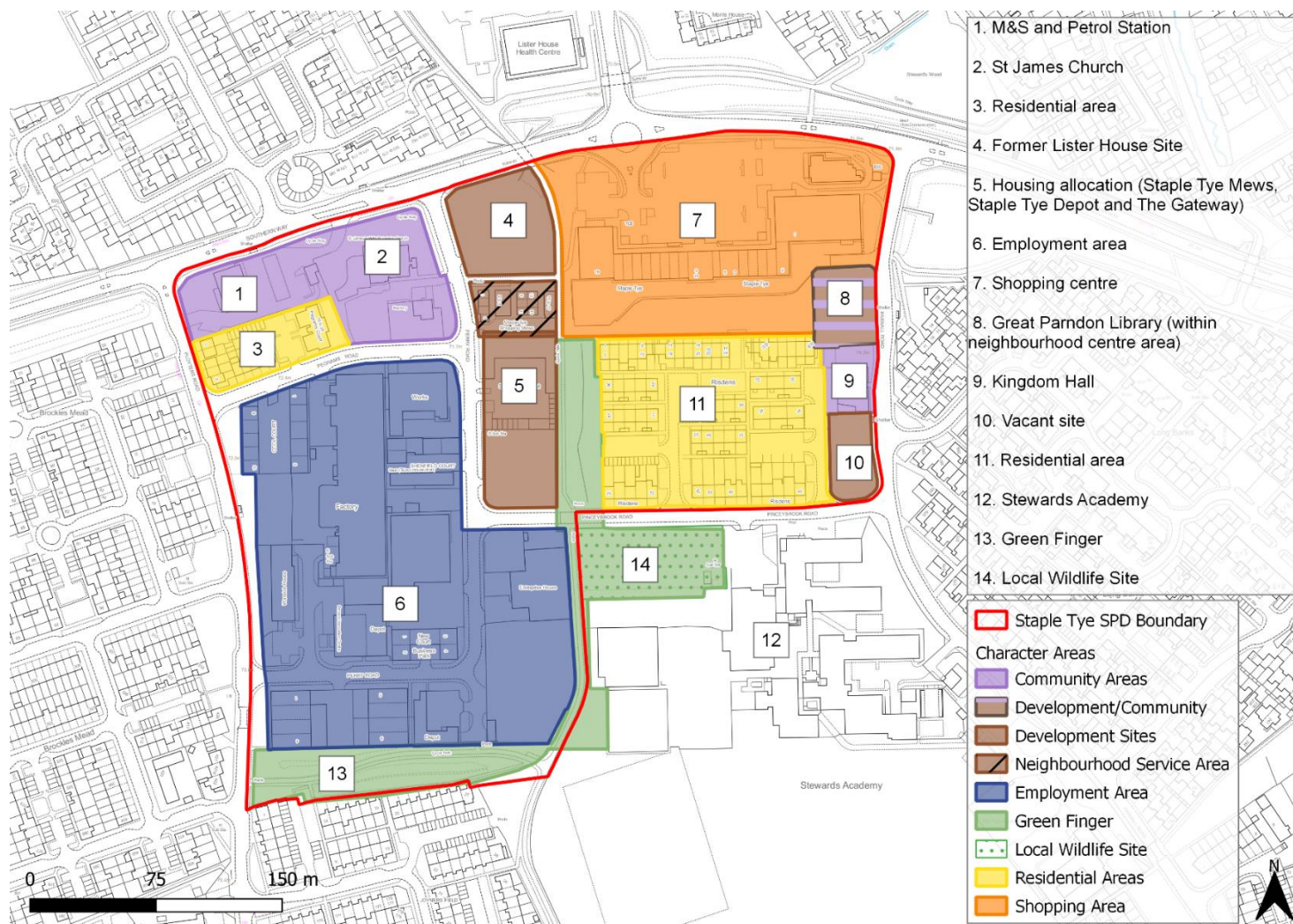


Figure 5 – Map of character areas and key buildings

3.4 Shopping Centre

- 3.4.1 The shopping centre serves a large area of southwest Harlow. The location of the shopping centre on cycling and walking routes and on Southern Way attracts trade from pedestrians and cyclists as well as passing vehicle trade. The shopping centre is all privately owned.
- 3.4.2 Audits of retail frontages across Harlow Town Centre, Neighbourhood Centres and Hatches have been undertaken since 2001 and are published in a Retail Frontage Study to inform the preparation of planning policies and an analysis of changes that have occurred in the retail frontages.
- 3.4.3 In March 2020, the UK experienced national restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which closed all non-essential shops, as well as restaurants, pubs, bars, cafes and other uses. These closures lasted until summer 2020, but further national restrictions saw closures again in November 2020 and most of the period from December 2020 to April 2021.
- 3.4.4 The audits undertaken in the past 4 years (2019-2022) for Staple Tye Neighbourhood Centre show a well-used and vibrant neighbourhood centre. There have been few vacancies, with only two vacancies during the 2020 audit which were occupied during the following audit. The lack of vacancies in the neighbourhood centre during COVID-19 restrictions could be a result of residents shopping locally. The majority of uses at the centre are retail followed by take-aways, restaurants and hair salons.

3.5 Staple Tye Mews

- 3.5.1 Reflecting the policies of the HLDP as a Neighbourhood Service Area, Staple Tye Mews is intended for small businesses and business start-ups to support the local economy at affordable rents. Although Staple Tye Mews is included in the housing allocation within the HLDP, the employment uses are to be protected. The units located here are all privately owned except the Depot which is owned by the Council.

3.6 Employment Area

- 3.6.1 The Employment Area, as reflected in HLDP policies, is intended for a mix of office, industrial and warehouse uses. The units located here are all privately owned.
- 3.6.2 To ensure the objectives for employment set out in the HLDP are being achieved, monitoring of employment floorspace and land is now to be undertaken to inform targets set out in the monitoring framework in the Authority Monitoring Report.

3.7 Residential Area

- 3.7.1 The Risdens residential area on Pinceybrook Road comprises of four-storey flats to the back of the shopping centre, bungalows in between and three-storey housing to the south of the residential area facing Pinceybrook Road. The four-storey flats and bungalows are owned by the Council and the three-storey housing is a mixture of privately and Council owned.
- 3.7.2 There is also a small residential area on the corner of Ployters Road and Pegrams Road which consists of 10 houses and a three-storey block of flats. The residential area is all privately owned.

3.8 Potential Development Sites

- 3.8.1 The site on the corner of Parnall Road and Pinceybrook Road is currently vacant. The site had planning permission for a 4-storey 55 bed care home but this consent has now lapsed.

- 3.8.2 The Great Parndon Library on Parnall Road is a one-storey building with car parking and amenity space adjacent to the building. There are opportunities here to re-use the space and buildings to provide a mix of uses including an improved library service.
- 3.8.3 The Former Lister House site on Perry Road had planning permission for 46 residential units but remains vacant after the demolition and relocation of the Medical Centre to the northern side of Southern Way. This site forms part of the Towns Fund programme.
- 3.8.4 The housing allocation site in the HDLP includes Staple Tye Mews, Staple Tye Depot and The Gateway and is allocated for 30 residential units.

3.9 Community Areas

- 3.9.1 The Great Parndon Library on Parnall Road is an important community asset for the area. The Essex County Council library strategy, Everyone's Library Service 2022-2026, indicates a commitment to retaining all 74 libraries open within the Essex area.
- 3.9.2 Places of worship are provided at Kingdom Hall and St James Church. There is a well-established petrol station and M&S on Southern Way. Although not within the SPD boundary, Stewards Academy secondary school is located on Pinceybrook Road opposite the Risdens residential area and the Great Parndon Community Centre and Medical Centre are both on Abercrombie Way.

3.10 Green Finger and Walking and Cycling Route

- 3.10.1 A Green Finger, as shown on the Policies Map of the HLDP, runs along the southern edge of the employment area linking to the Green Wedge of Stewards Academy and north through the middle of the SPD area towards the Green Wedge north of Southern Way.

3.11 Ownership

- 3.11.1 The area is largely in private ownership, including the Employment Area, Staple Tye Mews and the shopping centre. Figure 6 shows the Council's land ownership in blue.



Figure 6 - Map of Harlow Council ownership

3.12 Urban Design, Building Design and Public Realm

- 3.12.1 The shopping centre on Southern Way is a single-storey crescent shaped building built in the 1990s with two large retail units at each end (Poundland and Lidl) and a number of various retail uses in between. This replaced a retail neighbourhood centre dating from the 1960'. There is also a separate McDonalds, with a drive-thru, and parking serving the shopping centre to the front of the shops on Southern Way. The public realm is dominated by the car park and leaves only a walkway in front of the shops which has little landscaping and limited areas for cycle parking.
- 3.12.2 Staple Tye Mews covers a small area on Perry Road largely consisting of single storey buildings and a two-storey building. It is well connected to the walking and cycling routes and the shopping centre. The public realm is, however, poor and lacks landscaping. The layout, however, is poorly designed with most units hidden behind the rows of buildings when viewed from Perry Road.
- 3.12.3 The Employment Area covers a large area and consist of varying uses and building sizes. There is an issue with a lack of designated parking for the employment uses as many vehicles are parked on and obstructing pavements causing issues for accessibility and movement across the area. There is also a lack of landscaping to provide a setting for the buildings and render the area more attractive.
- 3.12.4 The residential units located on Poytters Road and Pegrams Road consist of 10 residential units and were built in the late 1990s along with a block of flats at Pegrams Court that contain 28 residential units. The houses on Poytters Road have small front gardens on an incline. The 5 houses on Pegrams Road have off-street parking on possibly converted front gardens, whereas Pegrams Court has parking within the site.

- 3.12.5 The Risdens residential area located on Pinceybrook Road consist of three-storey houses to the front, bungalows in the centre and four-storey flats to the rear. The houses and bungalows all have back gardens whereas the block of flats have amenity space to the rear of the building. The public realm for the Risdens residential area is poor, lacking in landscaping and largely consists of land given over to vehicle parking. There is also a safety concern due to the alleyways between the rows of bungalows in the centre of the area being poorly lit with little overlooking.
- 3.12.6 It is important that existing neighbourhoods and new development proposals in Harlow continue to reflect the towns New Town heritage and design principles. They must also have the same quality of placemaking as the new HGGT planned neighbourhoods which will be delivered on the edge of town.
- 3.12.7 In addition, the Harlow Design Guide reflects this through principle DG12 Neighbourhood Centres as follows:

Neighbourhood Centres should be part of the movement network, located at the intersections of main roads and visible from the street. Parking and servicing should not dominate the streetscene and cycling facilities should be incorporated.

Each Neighbourhood Centre should be distinctive, accessible and inviting, providing a centre public space in which activity and socialising can be promoted and accommodated.

The size of public spaces created in neighbourhood centres should be related to the height of enclosing development to provide enclosure and a sense of place.

Taller buildings should be incorporated into the design of Neighbourhood Centres where they assist legibility and wayfinding.

- 3.12.8 The HGGT Design Guide sets out four principles to ensure healthy neighbourhoods that are attractive and can support community life as follows. This SPD aims to incorporate these principles into the identified regeneration opportunities and development sites:
- Responsive and distinctive – neighbourhoods that sit comfortably in their context
 - Balanced, diverse and functional communities – the right kind of homes and densities
 - Healthy, safe and connected neighbourhoods and villages
 - Maximising visibility and appreciation of our heritage

3.13 Transport and Movement

- 3.13.1 Pedestrian and cycle access through the area is served by the Green Finger walking and cycling route which runs from Ployters Road, south of the employment area, heading towards Stewards Academy and north towards the Great Parndon open space. The only access is then via the underpass under the road network with no other at-grade crossing facilities on Southern Way. The underpass is poorly maintained and is poorly overlooked, lacking in natural surveillance. Access to the shopping centre from this walking route is directed to those travelling north but it lacks easy access to those travelling from the underpass which has resulted in an unsatisfactory short cut to be created up a steep hill. The main walking route also facilitates access to Staple Tye Mews. However, there are no wayfinding/legibility features provided on these paths to show how these connect with the wider network. A pedestrian route from Southern Way to the shopping centre is provided across the car park but it doesn't marry up to a crossing point on Southern Way.

- 3.13.2 The area is well served by the bus network, with a bus stop on Southern Way with buses serving the local area and the Town Centre as well as buses from Waltham Abbey accessing the Town Centre. There is also a bus stop on Parnell Road with buses serving the local area towards the Town Centre. These are, however, not conveniently located which accentuates the perception that Staple Tye is a place that is focused and optimised for car access.
- 3.13.3 The car park at the shopping centre is well used by passing trade and those travelling to the centre via car. However, car parking around the employment area is limited and has led to vehicles parked on the pavement, restricting safe pedestrian movement. The Great Parndon Library, Kingdom Hall, St James Church and Risdens residential area all have dedicated parking areas. The impact from the road network isolates the shopping centre from its surroundings and undermines walking and cycling permeability.
- 3.13.4 Staple Tye lies approximately 1 mile from the Strategic Housing Site that is to be brought forward in Epping Forest District. It will be important that walking and cycling links are enhanced so that the existing and new communities can access the facilities currently available at Staple Tye, as well as those that may be provided within the new development, to reflect the principles of the HGGT.

3.14 Potential Constraints and Opportunities

- 3.14.1 The following section sets out the strengths and weaknesses of the Staple Tye area, partly derived from observation and responses to the public consultation, which has informed the development framework in the following section. Staple Tye does have a number of opportunities for improvement and enhancement, and these are also listed although there are threats to delivery of this SPD as listed below. The SPD is also informed by the Towns Fund framework outcomes, and these have informed the vision and objectives for this SPD and the Staple Tye area and are also listed below.

Strengths

- Location of the shopping centre attracts trade from pedestrians and cyclists from the walking and cycling routes
- Bus stops serving the local area
- Strong employment area with a mix of uses
- Library serving local residents
- Kingdom Hall and St James Church providing places of worship
- Lister Medical Centre attracting further visitors to the area
- Access to a Green Finger and Open Spaces
- Close to schools

Weaknesses

- Shopping centre is very car dominated
- Vehicles parked on the pavements and roads around the employment area
- Safety of the underpass
- Safety of crossings and junctions across the area
- Lack of direct easy access to the shopping centre causing unsatisfactory footpaths
- Perceived safety issues
- Poor public realm, landscape, and greening in the area
- Poorly designed frontages

Opportunities

- Enhancements to the shopping centre to encourage walking and cycling

- Residential development opportunity on vacant site on the corner of Parnall Road and Pinceybrook Road
- Redevelop Risdens into a higher density and quality residential area
- Residential development of the HLDP housing allocation site
- Residential and employment development of the Former Lister House site
- Work with employers, landowners and developers to reduce the need for and availability of car parking spaces
- Investigate opportunities to discourage parking on pavements
- Improvements to access to the shopping centre from the underpass
- Improvements to the Green Finger and landscaping
- Improvements to the walking and cycle routes
- Improvements to Staple Tye Mews
- Connectivity to the Green Finger and walking and cycling route from the new developments to encourage active travel
- Provision of a Mobility Hub
- Improvements to the crossings and junctions across the area
- Provide new local workspace to work in locally
- Reduce congestion by encouraging residents to shop and work locally
- Enhance the natural and local environment
- Improve signage and accessibility to key community facilities/services and assets including the existing public artwork

Threats

- Major re-development of the shopping centre or Staple Tye Mews would require the relocation of many well used shops during development
- Ownership issues of Staple Tye Mews and the need to protect them for employment use
- Securing funding for improvements and enhancements

Towns Fund Intervention Framework Outcomes:

Urban Regeneration outcomes

- Enhanced townscape that is more attractive and more accessible to residents, businesses and visitors

Enterprise outcomes

- Increased number of enterprises utilising high quality, affordable and sustainable commercial spaces
- Increased number of start-ups and/or scale ups utilising business incubation, acceleration and co-working spaces

Towns Fund wider project outcomes

- New local space to hire to work in locally
- Safeguarding jobs
- New jobs
- Increasing skills in local people
- Increase in local businesses
- More people working locally in their neighbourhoods
- Increase in business rates
- Improve the attractiveness of the neighbourhood
- Reduce congestion as fewer people travel – supporting the modal shift

- Improved and increased digital connectivity
- Improve quality of design and streetscape

4 Development Framework

4.1 Vision

- 4.1.1 The vision for the Staple Tye SPD has been shaped by the HLDP, HGGT and Corporate Strategy visions and is set out below.

Staple Tye will continue to provide a healthy, vibrant and active Neighbourhood Centre where residents, visitors and employees will want to work, shop, relax, eat and socialise within a 20-minute walk of homes.

Residents and visitors will be able to move in and around Staple Tye easily by walking and cycling and feel safe and secure doing so. Improvements to the walking and cycling network will help prioritise sustainable modes thereby improving connectivity and health.

Residents and visitors will feel a sense of pride for the Staple Tye area through enhancements to the public realm including improved landscaping, streetscapes, building designs and provision of play space.

The Staple Tye Employment Area, Staple Tye Mews and Shopping Centre will continue to provide local employment and the provision of more start-up businesses and co-working spaces will be supported. New employment opportunities will be provided within the development opportunity sites.

The supply of housing will be increased through several development opportunities. This will deliver a wider choice of high-quality affordable homes in Staple Tye.

The Great Parndon Library, St James Church and Kingdom Hall will continue to provide important spaces for the community.

4.2 Key Principles

- 4.2.1 Building on this vision, a set of key principles have been developed to inform the future development of Staple Tye.

- Retain a healthy, vibrant and active Neighbourhood Centre
 - Staple Tye should continue to be the heart of the neighbourhood providing local services and convenience retail within a 20-minute walk of homes.
- Promote economic growth and local jobs
 - Opportunities for new businesses at development opportunity sites in emerging growth sectors should be sought. The Staple Tye employment area and the shopping centre must continue to support the local economy.
- Enable high quality and diverse housing

- New homes are needed in Harlow to meet local need. The Staple Tye area is set to deliver several new residential development opportunities which are identified at the Site on the Corner of Parnall Road and Pinceybrook Road, Great Parndon Library, Former Lister House and at the three sites that make up the HLDP housing allocation at Staple Tye Mews, Staple Tye Depot and The Gateway. These development opportunities will provide a mix of unit sizes and tenures, including affordable housing, in line with HLDP policies.
- Improved transport and movement options
 - Improving walking and cycling routes through the Staple Tye area to support the modal shift as well as the idea of delivering a 20-minute neighbourhood. Road crossings and routes for pedestrians and cyclists will be reviewed and improved, including the potential for new crossing points, to provide a better and safer experience. The area has the opportunity to provide a mobility hub for active transport uses with improved access to bus provision.
- Enhance the natural environment and public realm
 - The Staple Tye area is already well connected to the Great Parndon open space as well and benefits from the Green Finger which runs through the area. Enhancements to the natural environment, public realm and delivery of landscaping within the new developments will help provide a high-quality safer and healthier environment for local residents.

4.3 Development Framework

- 4.3.1 The following sites have been identified for redevelopment. An explanation of what is expected on each site is provided including what uses are considered appropriate, potential layout options together with design, access and public realm requirements.

Redevelopment Sites

Site on the corner of Parnall Road and Pinceybrook Road

Location and History

- 4.3.2 The site on the corner of Parnall Road and Pinceybrook Road and to the east of Risdens residential area covers an area of approximately 0.13ha. The site is currently vacant and has been since the demolition of a two-storey former Builders Merchants Federation's office block following approval of the planning application to construct a 3-storey 46 bedroom residential care home (HW/PL/05/00286). Consequent planning applications for the approval of a four-storey 55 bedroom residential care home (HW/PL/06/00361) have not been built out since a renewal of extant permission being granted (HW/PL/10/00012) and a further renewal of extant permission being refused (HW/PL/13/00116).



Figure 7 - Site on corner of Pinceybrook Road and Parnall Road

Land Ownership

- 4.3.3 The site is in the ownership of Harlow Council.

Constraints

- 4.3.4 There is no flood risk and no environmental or historical designations on the site.

Development Potential

- 4.3.5 The site would be suitable for residential development for 5-15 residential units. The surrounding building heights of Risdens residential area where three-storey housing is located opposite the site as well as previous approved planning applications suggest that development up to four-storeys in height would be suitable for the site. The site would therefore be most suitable for either housing or flats.
- 4.3.6 Active travel and public transport are to be prioritised to continue Gibberd's sustainable neighbourhood principles and to accord with the HGGT modal shift targets. The development would therefore need to provide sufficient cycle spaces and continue direct pedestrian access to the bus stops on Parnall Road. Improvements to the pathway to include a cycle path would benefit sustainable travel across the area. Vehicle parking must be provided in accordance with the Essex Vehicle Parking Standards, unless otherwise indicated elsewhere in the Local Plan and/or supporting documents.

Landscaping and Public Realm

- 4.3.7 The frontage onto Parnall Road and Pinceybrook Road would need to open up to the entire area contributing to the public realm through enhanced landscaping and amenity space. The sites redevelopment could help reinvest into possible improvements or redevelopment of the Great Parndon library and the amenity of the local area.

Timescales for Delivery

- 4.3.8 The site delivery timescale would be short-term.

Great Parndon Library

Location and History

- 4.3.9 The Great Parndon Library is on Parnall Road and covers an area of approximately 0.9ha. The library is one-storey and has a small parking area and amenity space adjacent to the building.

Land Ownership

- 4.3.10 The site is in the ownership of Essex County Council.



Figure 8 - Site on corner of Parnall Road and Pinceybrook Road viewed from Pinceybrook Road



Figure 9 - Site on corner of Parnall Road and Pinceybrook Road viewed from Parnall Road



Figure 10 – Great Parndon Library

Constraints

- 4.3.11 There is no flood risk and no environmental or historical designations on the site.

Development Potential

- 4.3.12 The site would be suitable for a redevelopment or for a repurposed building and would need to ensure the continued use of the library as well as provide amenity space for the community. The building frontage has the potential to be improved to increase the attractiveness for users. Adding an additional storey would help increase community floorspace or provide additional residential units.

- 4.3.13 Active travel and public transport are to be prioritised to continue Gibberd's sustainable neighbourhood principles and to accord with the HGGT modal shift targets. The site already benefits from access to the bus stops on Parnall Road. Cycle parking should be provided to encourage use of the cycle paths in the area. Any development must ensure it does not affect a potential new cycleway that could cross the amenity space outside the flats adjacent. This is set out on more detail in the Connectivity section of the SPD and is included in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan for Harlow. Vehicle parking must be provided in accordance with the Essex Vehicle Parking Standards, unless otherwise indicated elsewhere in the Local Plan and/or supporting documents.



Figure 11 – Great Parndon Library viewed from Parnall Road



Figure 12 – Great Parndon Library viewed from Parnall Road viewing car park and amenity space

Landscaping and Public Realm

- 4.3.14 The amenity space and car parking area would need to be improved with additional landscaping and seating or possibly play space. Better signage to the library is needed, particularly to attract users using public transport.

Timescales for Delivery

- 4.3.15 The site delivery timescale would be medium-term.

Former Lister House

Location and History

- 4.3.16 The Former Lister House site on the corner of Perry Road and Southern Way covers an area of approximately 0.33ha and forms part of the Towns Fund. The Medical Centre has recently been demolished and re-provided on the northern side of Southern Way. The site has since been vacant after the approved planning application for 46 residential units was not built out. There has since been an approved planning application for 12 residential units as well as commercial floorspace (HW/FUL/22/00237).



Figure 13 – Former Lister House Site

- 4.3.17 The new residential units and employment space provided by the Towns Fund will have high specification digital infrastructure exploiting the new Local Full Fibre Network intervention at the newly built Lister Medical Centre. Art and creativity elements will also be incorporated into the design.



Figure 14 – Former Lister House Site viewed from Southern Way

Land Ownership

- 4.3.18 The site is in the ownership of Harlow Council.

Constraints

- 4.3.19 There is no flood risk and no environmental or historical designations on the site.

Development Potential

- 4.3.20 The site would be suitable for an employment and residential development, providing 10-15 residential units. The site would therefore be suitable for a mixed-use flatted development, with employment uses located on the ground floor.
- 4.3.21 Active travel and public transport are to be prioritised to continue Gibberd's sustainable neighbourhood principles and to accord with the HGGT modal shift targets. The development would therefore need to provide sufficient cycle spaces and create connections to the walking and cycle route along the Green Finger to encourage active travel and improve connectivity across the Staple Tye area.



Figure 15 – Former Lister House Medical Centre Site potential development

- 4.3.22 The site location already benefits from access to the bus stop on Southern Way, however, access using the underpass or crossing for the bus stop on the other side of Southern Way will need to be provided. Natural surveillance of the underpass and the walking and cycling route from the new development is needed to enhance the safety, permeability and setting of the walking and cycling route. Vehicle parking must be provided in accordance with the Essex Vehicle Parking Standards, unless otherwise indicated elsewhere in the Local Plan and/or supporting documents.

Landscaping and Public Realm

- 4.3.23 There is an opportunity to provide a much improved landscaping and public realm environment through this development particularly as the site will be used for both residents and employees as well as being a key gateway site at this part of Staple Tye. The landscaping could include greening, seating areas, public art, SuD features and natural play space. It must provide some form of frontage onto the Green Finger walking and cycling route.

Timescales for Delivery

- 4.3.24 The site delivery timescale would be short-term.

Staple Tye Mews

Location and History

- 4.3.25 Staple Tye Mews on Perry Road covers an area of approximately 0.16ha. This is a small area of the HLDP allocation. The units consist of a mix of uses, unlike those the service area was intended for. The original purpose of the area was to provide units for 'start-up' businesses whereas they are now mostly used for takeaways. Planning history of the units are largely for change of use. The site forms part of the HLDP housing allocation along with Staple Tye Depot and the Gateway site and is allocated for a total of 30 dwellings.

Land Ownership

- 4.3.26 The units are in private ownership.

Constraints

- 4.3.27 There is no flood risk and no environmental or historical designations on these sites.

Development Potential

- 4.3.28 The site would benefit from improvements or redevelopment at either a short-term or a long-term delivery timescale.



Figure 16 – Staple Tye Mews site



Figure 17 – Staple Tye Mews site viewed from Perry Road

- 4.3.29 A long-term redevelopment of the site would require the existing Staple Tye Mews uses to be temporarily re-sited during construction or permanently relocated where they are considered not appropriate. Redevelopment of the site would need to provide space specifically for small start-up businesses with units of approximately 20 to 40sqm in size. A low-level residential development would also be supported, however, start-up business units would need to be provided on the ground floor to continue to support the service area's original purpose.
- 4.3.30 The redevelopment of Staple Tye Mews would have to consider development proposals for the Former Lister House site including any impact on future occupiers' amenity, although development of more than two storeys at Staple Tye Mews will be supported. It will also need to have consideration of future redevelopment of the Staple Tye Depot and Gateway sites. Connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists to the walking and cycling route to the east would need to be provided enhancing the setting, permeability and safety of the route.

Landscaping and Public Realm

- 4.3.31 Short term improvements to the site would include improvement to the public realm as well as frontage design of existing buildings. This could include the provision of seating areas and landscaping as well as a connection to the walking and cycling route adjacent to the site to encourage active travel.

Timescales for Delivery

- 4.3.32 A full redevelopment of the site is considered to be a long term delivery timescale due to landownership constraints and the potential need to find alternative sites for the existing uses.

Staple Tye Depot

Location and History

- 4.3.33 The Staple Tye Depot on Perry Road covers an area of approximately 0.25ha. The site has no recent planning history. The site forms part of the HLDP housing allocation along with Staple Tye Mews and the Gateway site and is allocated for a total of 30 dwellings.

Land Ownership

- 4.3.34 The site is in the ownership of Harlow Council.

Constraints

- 4.3.35 There is no flood risk and no environmental or historical designations on the site.

Development Potential

- 4.3.36 The site would be suitable for residential use as per the HLDP housing allocation. Redevelopment of the site would be suitable for approximately 10-15 homes. There may be an opportunity to redevelop this site along with the Gateway site as a comprehensive scheme.

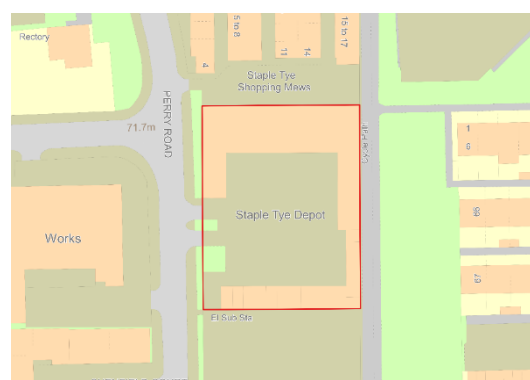


Figure 18 – Staple Tye Depot site



Figure 19 – Staple Tye Depot site viewed from Perry Road

- 4.3.37 It would require improved connections to the walking and cycling route to encourage active travel, improve connectivity across the Staple Tye area and provide better natural surveillance of the path. The location and orientation of buildings, landscaping and parking areas within the site will need to have careful consideration of the adjacent employment area and possible redevelopment of Staple Tye Mews to the north and the Gateway site to the south. Orientation of buildings should also provide opportunities to open up the site to the walking and cycling route to the east to provide better natural surveillance and overall public realm around the path to enhance the setting, permeability and safety of the route.
- 4.3.38 Active travel and public transport are to be prioritised to continue Gibberd's sustainable neighbourhood principles and to accord with the HGGT modal shift targets. Vehicle parking must be provided in accordance with the Essex Vehicle Parking Standards, unless otherwise indicated elsewhere in the Local Plan and/or supporting documents.

Landscaping and Public Realm

- 4.3.39 The landscaping and public realm of the development should benefit from the open frontage onto the walking and cycling route.

Timescales for Delivery

- 4.3.40 The site delivery timescale would be short-term.

The Gateway Site

Location and History

- 4.3.41 The Gateway site on the corner of Perry Road and Pinceybrook Road covers an area of approximately 0.20ha. The site currently has temporary planning permission for B8 mixed open storage and containers for three years. The site forms part of the HLDP housing allocation along with Staple Tye Mews and Staple Tye Depot and is allocated for a total of 30 dwellings.



Figure 20 – Gateway site

Land Ownership

- 4.3.42 The site is in private ownership.

Constraints

There is no flood risk and no environmental or historical designations on the site.

Development Potential

- 4.3.43 The site would be suitable for a residential development as per the HLDP housing allocation. Redevelopment of the site would be suitable for approximately 10-15 number of homes. There may be an opportunity to redevelop this site along with the Staple Tye Depot site in order to achieve a comprehensive scheme.

- 4.3.44 Active travel and public transport are to be prioritised to continue Gibberd's sustainable neighbourhood principles and to accord with the HGGT modal shift targets. The development would therefore need to provide sufficient cycle spaces and create connections to the walking and cycle route to encourage active travel and improve connectivity across the Staple Tye area. Natural surveillance of the walking and cycling route from the new development is needed to improve the safety, setting and permeability of the route and this may determine the layout and orientation of buildings and landscaping.
- 4.3.45 Redevelopment of the site may help to provide investment in delivering an improved connection across Pinceybrook Road which connects the walking and cycling route. Vehicle parking must be provided in accordance with the Essex Vehicle Parking Standards, unless otherwise indicated elsewhere in the Local Plan and/or supporting documents. To ensure safe access into the site, parking restrictions for on-street parking would need to be enforced.

Landscaping and Public Realm

- 4.3.46 The development may need to be set back from Pinceybrook Road and Perry Road due to the industrial uses opposite the site in order to protect future occupiers amenity. This could be through landscaping or parking areas creating a green buffer to mitigate the impact from the adjacent industrial uses.

Timescales for Delivery

- 4.3.47 The site delivery timescale would be medium-term.

Redevelopment Sites Note

- 4.3.48 All of the proposed redevelopment sites are located within walking distance to the Great Parndon Open Space and Community Centre, which provides amenity and recreation space, employment at the Employment Area, Staple Tye Mews and the shopping centre, where retail is also provided. Community assets are also available at the Lister Medical Centre, Great Parndon Library, Kingdom Hall and St James Church.
- 4.3.49 In order for the regeneration of Staple Tye to be both successful and sustainable, development of the sites will need to be undertaken in a cohesive way. Therefore, there may be opportunities for the sites to be delivered together comprehensively if this enables a better development to come forward that achieves the objectives and principles set out in this SPD. The Council will work actively with the development industry to deliver the sites identified above, as well as key partners and statutory bodies including Essex County Council who own the library site and who are the local highway authority.

Connectivity Improvements

- 4.3.50 The Towns Fund will focus on creating a safe, social and connected place supporting the 20-minute neighbourhood concept. This will include improvements to the cycleway and footpath as well as the underpasses that connect the neighbourhood to the new Lister Medical Centre. Wherever possible, space will be given over to space that supports pedestrians and cyclists to ensure that the area is more safe and convenient for those who want to use more sustainable modes of travel.

Improvements for cyclists, pedestrians and public transport users

- 4.3.51 The existing cycleways and footpaths in the area are in need of repair and modernisation to ensure that they are safe to use, well-lit, direct and well connected. This will ensure there is full permeability within the area to access the community assets and services that are currently available. Although the HGGT modal shift target for the urban area of Harlow is 50% of journeys to be made by sustainable mode, a well-connected neighbourhood centre, such as Staple Tye, which already provides a lot of local services, facilities and jobs, should aim for the higher target of 60%, in order to balance with areas less well connected.
- 4.3.52 The HGGT Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) identified nine priority LCWIP cycling corridors and four Core Walking Zones (CWZ) in Harlow.
- 4.3.53 The cycling corridor identified in the LCWIP, which goes through Staple Tye is Route 7 (Tye Green – Harlow Fields – Town Centre). It is a combination of low-traffic residential streets and off-road shared use facilities. This route runs specifically through the Staple Tye area from Paringdon Road to the Great Parndon Library as shown in Figure 15.

4.3.54



Figure 21 – Extract from HGGT LCWIP on the section of cycle route 7 running through Staple Tye

- 4.3.55 This section of the cycling route uses the existing cycle track adjacent to the footpath to Staple Tye shopping centre and the path north of the Risdens residential area. The recommendations for improving this section of the route set out in the LCWIP are as follows:
- Cycle crossing across Paringdon Road to meet new path in Public Open Space. The existing post/gate arrangement to be changed to ensure accessibility by all cycle types (7D on Figure 15)
 - Resurface the cycle track in red aggregate and provide lighting. A cycle crossing or cycle priority across Pinceybrook Road (7E on Figure 15)
 - New link across the Public Open Space to the north of Risdens housing estate which will provide a separate cycle track (7F/pink line on Figure 15)
 - The bus stop lay by along the eastern side of Parnall Road could be filled in to create a new cycle track, with a cycle crossing tying in to the new link created to the north of Risdens. The Bus stop could then be relocated north, closer to the Zebra Crossing which currently connects into the Staple Tye Shopping Centre (7G on Figure 15)
- 4.3.56 The Core Walking Zone for Staple Tye is focused around the local shopping centre and adjoining residential streets. A number of design recommendations is set out in the LCWIP for walking improvements to the Staple Tye area (Figure 16) which include the following:
- Introduce at-grade toucan crossings on Southern Way (301)
 - Upgrade existing pedestrian/cycle junction to provide more attractive and clearer link at shopping centre (303)
 - Install new parallel crossing facility across Ployters Road at Brockles Meat junction (321)
 - Introduce controlled pedestrian/cycle crossing to connect adjoining paths at Pinceybrook Road (333)
 - Install controlled pedestrian/cycle crossings at roundabout (344)
 - Improve legibility of pedestrian crossing between path and Perry Road (364)
 - Introduce at-grade parallel walking/cycling crossing at Southern Way/Shawbridge (367)

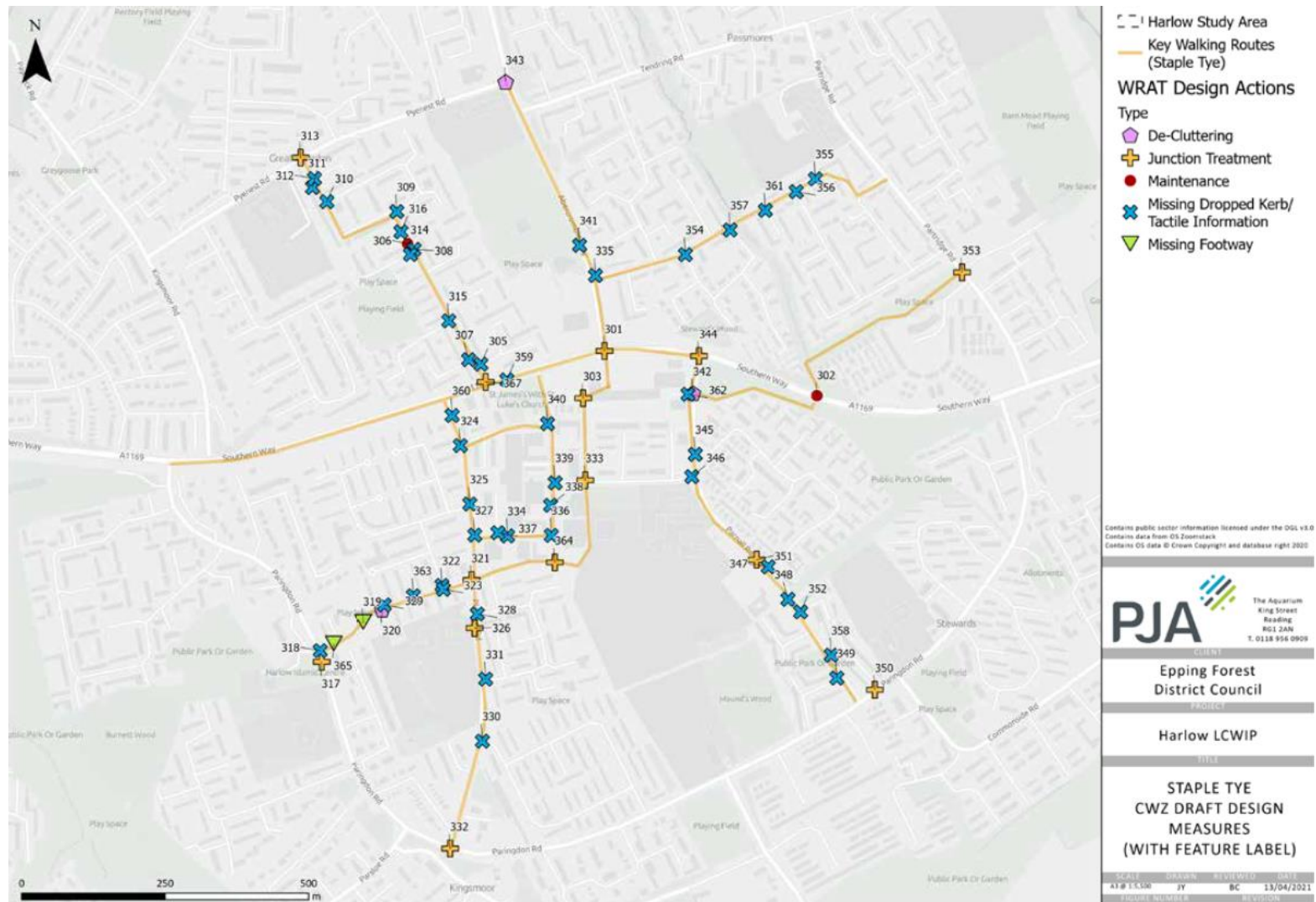


Figure 22 – Extract from HGGT LCWIP identifying projects and improvements to the walking network for Staple Tye and the surrounding area

- 4.3.57 The delivery of the Core Walking Zone for Staple Tye is within 0-4 years for design and build.
- 4.3.58 The Council will work with Essex County Council in relation to junctions and crossing points that have not been included in the LCWIP to improve connectivity throughout the area, ensuring safe access for pedestrians and cyclists. This will include the junctions, for example, at Perry Road and Ployters Road with Southern Way. Improvements to junctions and crossing points will also ensure those with disabilities can move easily around the area and this should also be considered in the design and layout of any development scheme. Speed limit options will also be considered to ensure the safety of pedestrians and cyclists.
- 4.3.59 Improvements to the walking and cycling route along the Green Finger will also need connecting into the new developments to encourage active travel. Access to open space and encouragement of active travel will ensure improvements to the health and wellbeing of local residents. The Neighbourhood Centre is considered to be an important location for the wider community area in which active modes of transport are accessible and will support the transition between modes e.g. bus to bike.
- 4.3.60 A Mobility Hub located within the Staple Tye area would be supported to help reduce car dependency and support sustainable ways of travel. Guidance set out by CoMoUK should be followed in providing a successful Mobility Hub. The Council will also work with landowners to provide electric vehicle charging points in the Staple Tye area.
- 4.3.61 As set out, there are a number of connectivity improvements that could be brought forward to improve access across the Staple Tye area for pedestrians and cyclists. However, there needs to be interventions in solving the issue of on-street parking in the employment area to ensure safe travel. This may be through:
- Considering the use of parking restrictions in the area
 - Providing and discussing sustainable transport options/green travel plans with existing and new businesses
 - Provide new parking areas where possible or where opportunities arise
 - Delivery of cycling and walking improvements set out in the LCWIP to improve cycling routes and links to bus stops to encourage sustainable transport
 - Cycle parking is also needed within the employment area to discourage the use of vehicles.
- 4.3.62 It is important that the Designing out Crime Officer is consulted early in the design process to ensure Secured by Design Principles are used when improving the underpass, whilst ensuring safety along the Green Finger, as well as any other connectivity improvements and site redevelopments that take place.

Public Realm Improvements

- 4.3.63 Public realm improvements help create a safer, greener and healthier environment. The residential areas as well as the walking and cycling route connecting key destinations with local facilities and residential areas would benefit from improvement. The Green Finger and walking and cycling routes will be enhanced through additional structured landscaping and planting and the creation of wildflower areas will increase biodiversity and open the area up to becoming a wildlife corridor. Natural areas for play could also be provided through the development opportunity sites encouraging the route to become a nature trail for pedestrians.

- 4.3.64 The public realm at the shopping centre is currently dominated by the car park. To encourage the use of active modes of travel, additional secure cycle parking will be provided. This could be in the form of a Mobility Hub, providing space for cycle spaces and space for additional sustainable transport options. This could reduce the need for some of the parking spaces which can thereby be turned into additional landscaping e.g., planters, street trees and seating areas. This will ensure enhanced townscape for residents, businesses and visitors.
- 4.3.65 The small parking area north of Poundland could be converted into a welcoming pedestrianised zone which would include an enhanced public realm area that connects to the walking and cycling route along the Green Finger. This area has potential to include public art, seating areas and play space and possibly more outdoor café seating areas and pop up market stalls to create a multipurpose space. This would become the main pedestrian and cycle route into the shopping area avoiding the existing car dominated entrance point off the roundabout. Providing more crossing points around the shopping area which connect to the walking and cycling routes will enhance this walking gateway. There is also opportunity to landscape around this entrance point and provide a better connection from the underpass to avoid visitors creating their own direct paths across existing grassed areas.
- 4.3.66 The walking and cycling route that runs along the Green Finger parallel to the development opportunity sites identified above must be directly accessed from these future developments. Orientating buildings to face onto the path will open the area up and avoid blank frontages which currently exist and will create natural surveillance. Improvements to the Green Finger route, in addition to landscaping opportunities identified above, would include:
- Modern lighting
 - Seating areas
 - Signage to key facilities/services in the area and to the wider network
 - Clear dedicated footpath and cycle path through, for example, the use of separate coloured tarmacking.
- 4.3.67 The amenity space north of Risdens and car park around the Great Parndon Library could be improved to include a play space and landscaping as well as creating an extended cycle path as set out in the LCWIP. The library frontage would also benefit from improvement although this could form part of the wider redevelopment of this site as set out above.

Retention of Key Uses

- 4.3.68 Existing employment areas continue to make a significant contribution towards employment needs in Harlow and the local area will be maintained and enhanced. The Staple Tye Employment Area and Staple Tye Mews are both protected for employment use as set out in the HLDP. Development of employment space funded by the Towns Fund will ensure additional business space is provided with digital connectivity as well as respond to the impact of COVID-19 and how working patterns have changed because of this.
- 4.3.69 The Shopping Centre and Staple Tye Mews are doing well and were both essential areas for local residents to shop locally during the COVID-19 restrictions. The shopping centre will continue to be protected for retail use as per HLDP policy.
- 4.3.70 Community facilities, such as the library at Staple Tye are also key assets for the local area and are protected under policies in the HLDP.

5 Delivery

- 5.1.1 This SPD has identified a number of issues in the Staple Tye area which need to be addressed through the preparation of future development schemes, and by the other regeneration initiatives being brought forward, in order to maintain its function as a key Neighbourhood Centre and to continue to attract new business, investment, and visitors as well as improving the area for existing residents and businesses. The opportunities, schemes and projects identified in this SPD aim to help to resolve these issues through public realm and connectivity enhancements and through the development of sites that will help meet local needs and enhance the character of the area. The Towns Fund investment, in particular, will act as a catalyst to help fund and bring forward these improvements. It will provide a framework to bring forward new homes, high quality business units and flexible workspace, as well as facilitating improvements to the cycle and walking network and the overall environmental character of the area.
- 5.1.2 Applications for development in the SPD area will be required to demonstrate how they will support the achievement of the vision and principles for the Staple Tye Neighbourhood Centre and surrounding area and how they address the specific issues identified in this SPD and respond positively to context in accordance with policies in the HLDP and other material considerations.