



Land at Brook Road,
Tarporley

Concept Masterplan
Technical report

May 2012

UNITED
KINGDOM
& IRELAND



Concept Masterplan

Cheshire West and Chester Council





Tarporley

Brook Farm school site

Land east of Brook Road

Tarporley and the development sites

1 Introduction

URS was appointed in January 2012 by Cheshire West and Chester Council, working with Tarporley Parish Council, to:

- undertake a series of assessments of due diligence in respect of two sites off Brook Road, Tarporley, Cheshire and thereafter to
- consider and propose, following consultation, an indicative masterplan covering both sites.

The overriding objective is to use development to achieve genuine and substantial community benefit.

The former Brook Farm School site is owned by Cheshire West and Chester Council and has previously been the site for Brook Farm Special School but is now unoccupied, is surplus to Council requirements and is to be sold for development.

The land to the east of Brook Road is owned privately and the Council has entered into an option to acquire no more than 2 hectares (5 acres) of land for leisure purposes and up to 1.2 hectares (3 acres) for affordable housing. The site is undeveloped and comprises a series of fields used for pasture, several trees, hedgerow and two ponds.

The Council has entered into the option on the basis that the site could provide for an identified need for affordable housing for local people and a permanent base for local sporting and leisure activities and clubs which has previously been identified as a priority for the village in the Parish Plan 2008.

The aspiration is that the sporting/leisure facilities will be owned and run by some form of Development Trust which would need to raise the necessary capital funding to deliver the facilities.

This illustrative Masterplan presents the key design considerations and framework for development that will need addressing by interested parties and their design teams.

The aim is not to prescribe urban design and architectural product. Rather, it indicates the desired quality and approach.



Land east of Brook Road



Western boundary of Brook Farm School site



Brook Road

2.0 Site Constraints

The two sites are situated to the southern edge of Tarporley. Brook Farm School site (3.1ha) is partly bound to the north and south by residential land, and playing fields and countryside to the north and south west. The land to the east of Brook Road (5.5ha) is bound by Brook Road, Eaton Lane and Bowmere Road and beyond this, agricultural and countryside.

The main issues and constraints for each site are:

Brook Farm school

- division of the area into distinct parts; the vacant school site and the wooded area (adventure playground) to the south
- planning, management and future use of the wooded area (adventure playground) to the south.
- backs and sides of properties on the northern and southern boundaries
- a drainage channel and landscape edge that runs along the western edge towards Wattenhall Brook
- open views north and southwest and illegitimate access into the surrounding playing fields and countryside
- the lie of the land slopes gently towards the west

Land east of Brook Road site

- mature trees and hedgerows along the perimeter. In particular, a row of 6 trees define and divide the northern fields
- Long open views into the site from the north and rolling views out towards the east
- Two ponds; one located to the north east corner and the other below Flaxyard Cottage.
- Overhead electric lines along the length of Brook Road
- The site surrounds Flaxyard Cottages, which is excluded from the site area.



3.0 Design Vision

Site opportunities

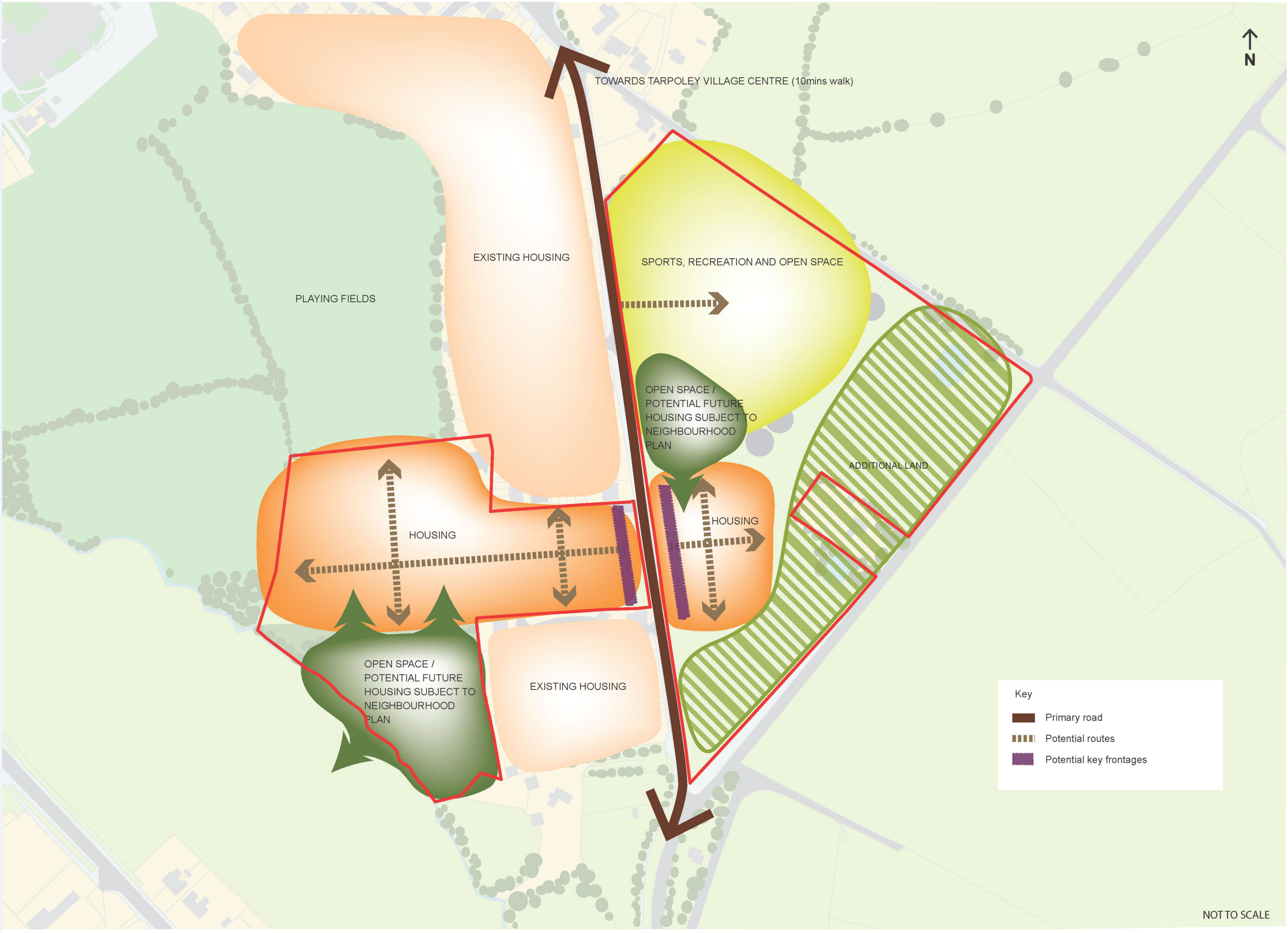
The key site opportunities to create a high quality development are:

- Potential for residential development on the vacant school site
- Potential for residential and sports and leisure development on the land to the east of Brook Road
- Open Space/Potential future housing subject to Neighbourhood Plan
- Development can enhance existing views into the surrounding countryside
- Potential for further future housing land

Design principles

The concept plan shown opposite illustrates the vision and key design principles. These principles aim to address the issues described above whilst also enhancing the site and its potential development. The core aims and principles for the concept masterplan are:

- A range of house types and tenure to provide homes for the whole community. Families, singles, young couples, older people and those with special housing needs can benefit from living in a green setting that will mature and establish over time.
- High quality built form that is in keeping with, and respect, the local character and vernacular.
- Provide a sporting and leisure facility that serves the community of Tarporley, one which includes multi-use sports pitches.
- Screen neighbouring properties from visual intrusion by activities pursued on the sports and leisure element of the site
- Retain and preserve where appropriate the existing landscape, large trees and surrounding green infrastructure
- Enhance and improve the provision of quality leisure and open space



4.0 Concept Masterplan

The concept masterplan illustrates how the site could be structured to maximise the benefits offered by the existing landscape components and development principles.

The residential development is divided into two parts. The school site will accommodate the market housing element and the land east of Brook Road the affordable. Note that only 2.1ha (of 3.1ha) of the school site and 3.2ha (of 5.5ha) of the land east is proposed to be developed.

A total of 86 homes are proposed across both sites. This number includes a range of detached and semi-detached homes of various sizes - a more detailed breakdown is shown on the drawing opposite.

The layout of the plan is shown as a flexible grid with development blocks that respond to the surrounding context to create an attractive and permeable network for pedestrians and vehicles within the site.

A new pocket park is proposed for the land east of Brook Road in a small section of the site that also has potential for future housing.

Homes will be carefully designed and detailed as groups and clusters to create variety and character. Street quality will be maintained by generously planted front gardens with car parking predominantly on plot or to front of properties in line with “Manual for Streets” guidance.

Key features

Other key features of the masterplan are:

- a new sports facility to include; an 11 - a side football pitch with spectator areas designed and built to level 4 FA league standards; a floodlit all-weather multi-purpose pitch also suitable for a junior league football; 4 outdoor tennis courts; and a new clubhouse with changing and parking facilities.
- potential to improve the two junctions north and south of Brook Road
- allocated areas for future housing if required



5.0 Movement

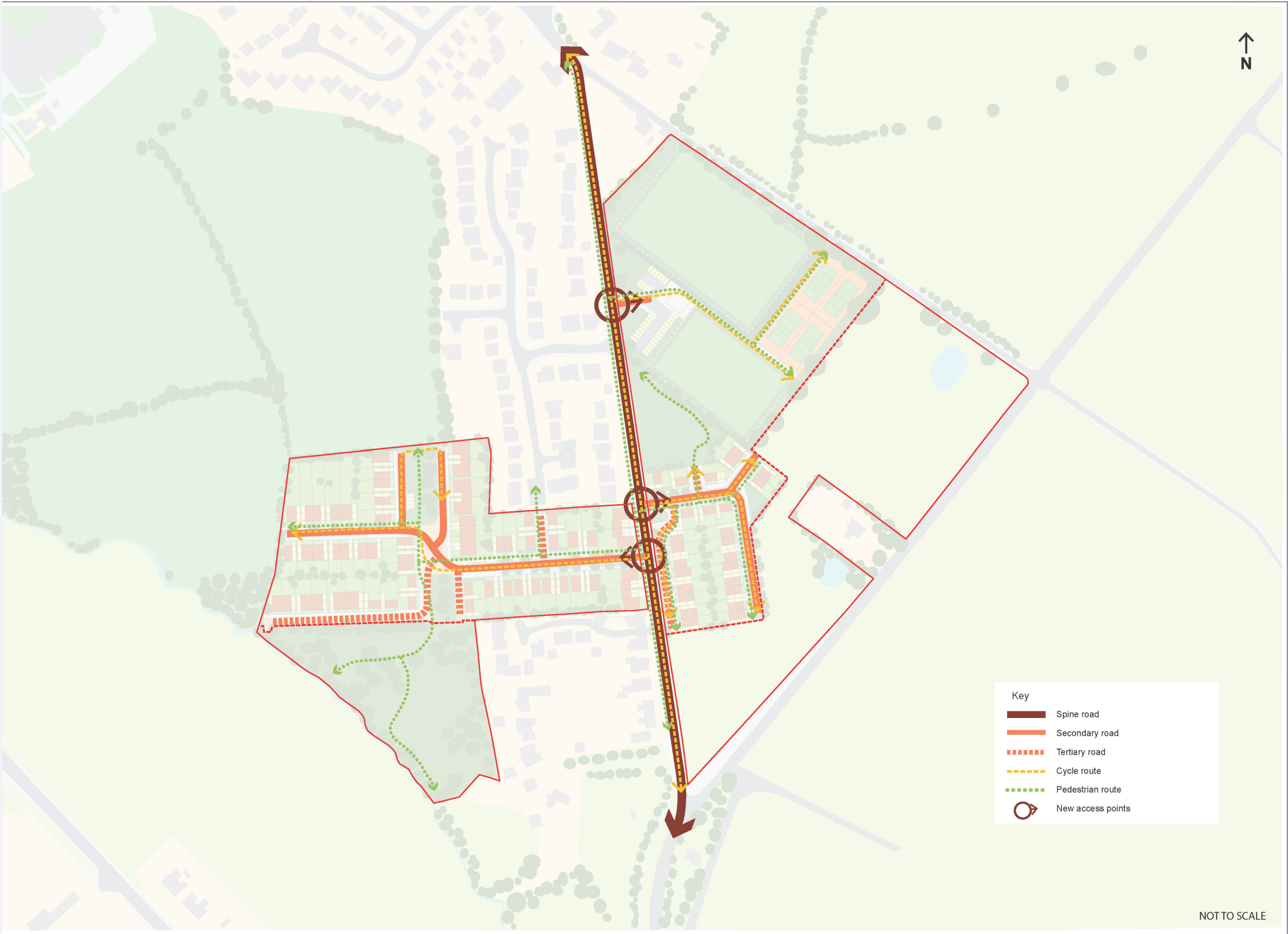
The movement network consists of three types of route, each of which is suitable for vehicular and cycle use.

- Brook Road is the spine road that links the development with the existing urban area of Tarporley.
- Three new access points to serve the development.
- The secondary routes provide access into the site, incorporating tree-lined streets that connect with the landscape structure.
- The tertiary routes are shared surface streets which permeate through the development blocks and these are treated more intimately.

Dedicated pedestrian/cycle routes tie the residential blocks and open space network together.

The quality of the public realm is important, crucial to the character of the development. It comprises of generous planting and green spaces and is designed for ease of walking, to provide attractive and convenient access to the village centre and other local facilities.

The main access to the sports and leisure facility will be achieved via Brook Road. However, there is potential to create an additional pedestrian access to the north via Bowmere Road.

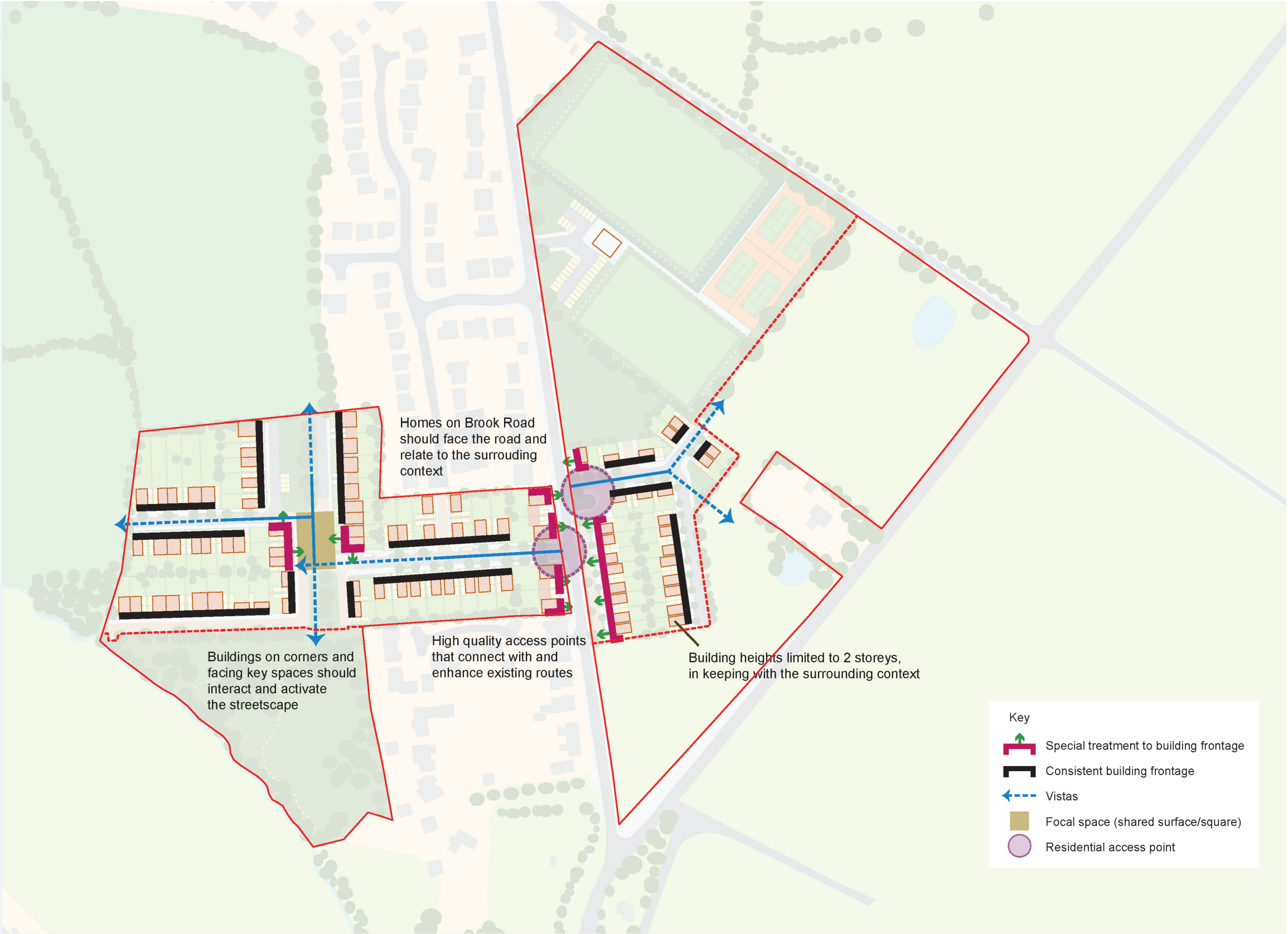


NOT TO SCALE

6.0 Townscape

The development seeks to retain the best features and qualities of the local character and vernacular. Special attention should be paid to the development's townscape and the following principles are proposed to achieve this:

- Homes built along Brook Road should face onto it to create a strong positive identity that interacts with the existing context. This helps the newer development to integrate with the existing street form and character.
- As corner buildings and those located at site entrances are more visually prominent, they provide special opportunities for more detailed design to create landmarks.
- A clear distinction is made between the backs and fronts of properties. Homes will face onto the street, squares and parks to create positive frontage that animates the public realm and provides 'eyes on the street'
- Continuous building line provides better enclosure to the street and generates active frontage, with frequent doors and windows animating the public realm.
- Building heights should be limited to 2 storeys, in keeping with the local context.



7.0 Green Infrastructure & Public Space

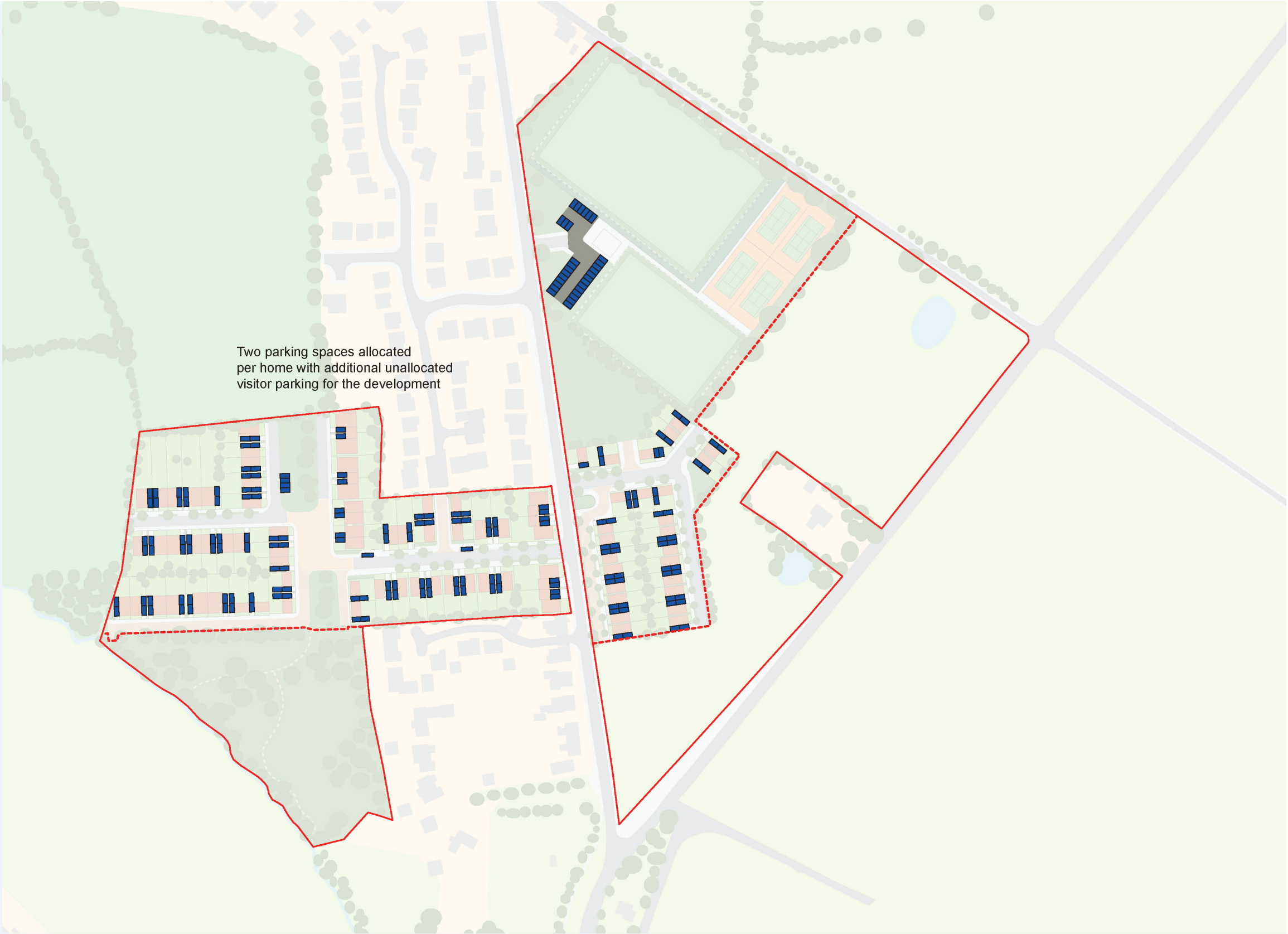
The green infrastructure and open space network is important to making the development an attractive and desirable place to live. Taking advantage of the existing landscape to enhance the quality of the public realm and outdoor spaces is essential. There is potential to create a series of open spaces on both sites, providing a range of outdoor recreational activities, that includes play spaces and public gardens.

- The “adventure playground” could be upgraded to a woodland park and become a key asset to the local community. Improving access via the school site, it provides a harmonious connection between the village and the countryside.
- Some of the larger street blocks provide opportunities for larger gardens with opportunities for bio-diversity and wildlife as well as a setting for mature landscape and trees.
- The landscape treatment on the edges of the sites are an integral part of the masterplan. The buffering and planting along the perimeter of the sports and leisure facility are particularly important, as they provide a visual screen for nearby residents. The existing mature hedge with associated tree planting would create an attractive and visually appropriate buffer.



8.0 Parking

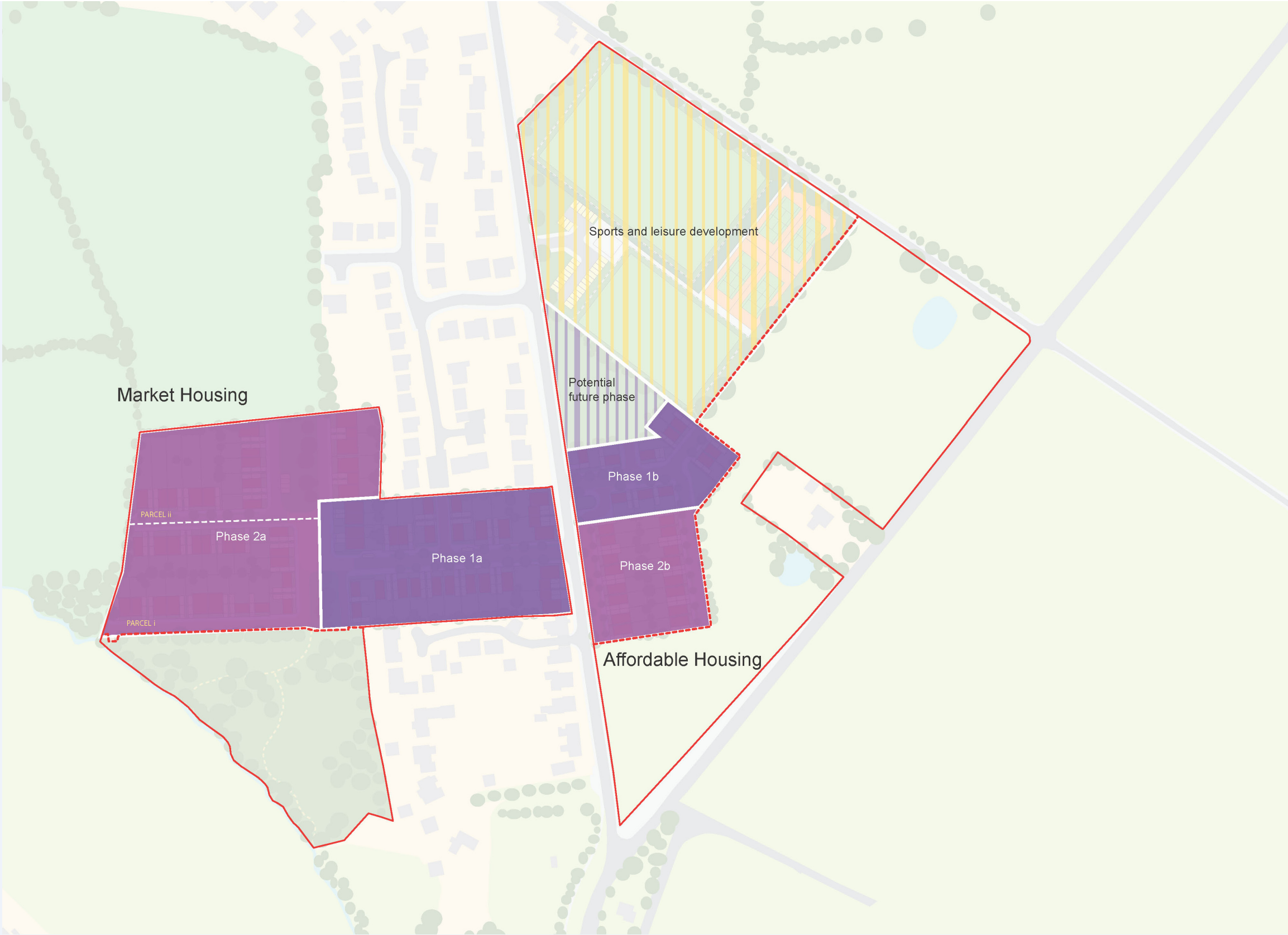
Streets are blocks and designed to accommodate on street and on-plot parking. A parking ratio of 2.1 spaces per unit is achieved across both sites. Each home is allocated 2 on-plot parking spaces with un-allocated parking for visitors provided on-street and in parking bays.



9.0 Phasing

Residential is envisaged for the Brook farm school site and a combination of residential and sports and leisure are envisaged for land east of Brook Road. The drawing opposite shows how the development could be phased and parcelled.

- There is scope for the new pocket park on the land east of Brook Road to be used as an additional phase of housing.
- The sports and leisure facility may be delivered alongside the housing or come forward at a later date if the process to fully scope uses, governance, management and funding for new sports/leisure provision goes beyond the timescale for the build out of the residential element.
- The affordable housing should be delivered alongside the market housing.





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