



VIEW 2

5. THE VISION

The Vision section brings together the learning from the preceding chapters, translating the baseline analysis, constraints and key considerations, alongside engagement feedback, into a clear set of design principles and place-making priorities. It explains the concept and vision framework that underpin the masterplan, and charts how the proposals have evolved since 2022 through ongoing dialogue with the community, stakeholders and the local authority, with the framework refined to respond to identified sensitivities and local aspirations.



THE VISION

Design Objectives

This site is a chance to create something truly special – a sustainable neighbourhood that looks to the future while respecting the past.

Guided by a landscape-led and heritage-led vision, the masterplan will weave nature into daily life, protect the setting of Southwater, and celebrate features such as ancient woodlands, green corridors, and the historic character of Great House Farmhouse.

It will deliver much-needed homes, schools, jobs and community spaces within a healthy, connected green environment, ensuring that both new and existing residents can enjoy the landscape, heritage, and identity of this place for generations to come.



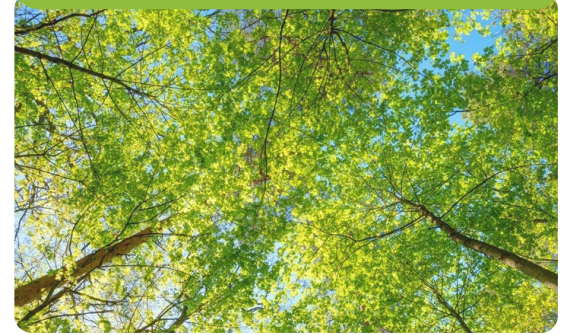
SUSTAINABLE LIVING



CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH NATURE & GREEN SPACES



PROTECTING & ENHANCING BIODIVERSITY



A SAFE, ACCESSIBLE & CONNECTED PLACE



CELEBRATING HERITAGE & CULTURE



QUALITY HOMES DESIGNED FOR ALL



A PLACE FOR ALL



NEW FACILITIES FOR THE COMMUNITY

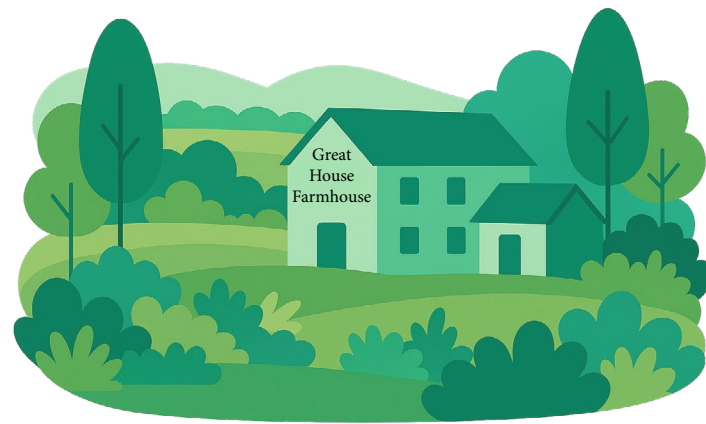


SUPPORTING EXISTING & NEW COMMUNITIES



THE VISION

Design Priorities



Heritage and character embedded in the framework

Responding sensitively to Great House Farmhouse and the wider historic setting, reinforcing local identity through a clear approach to character and place-making.

A balanced neighbourhood with homes, services and opportunities

Supporting day-to-day life locally through an integrated approach to education, community facilities, employment and access to everyday needs.



Strong connectivity and sustainable movement choices

Creating safe, legible walking and cycling networks, building on the Downs Link and strengthening connections to Southwater, Horsham and the countryside.



A proposal that supports and complements Southwater

A small neighbourhood centre and community facilities that strengthen the existing village offer, helping to support local services and reinforce Southwater's identity.

A healthy, sustainable and climate-resilient community

Prioritising wellbeing and low-carbon living, with a resilient landscape strategy that supports shade, habitat, water management and adaptable design over time.



Inclusive housing choice for all ages and needs & long-term stewardship

Providing a diverse mix of homes and tenures, including accessible homes and provision for older residents, to support a mixed community. Establishing a clear framework for delivery and long-term stewardship of green spaces and community assets.



Green infrastructure, biodiversity enhancement and access to nature

A connected network of parks, green corridors and natural spaces across the site, designed to deliver biodiversity net gain and everyday access to high-quality open space.

THE VISION

Framework Pillars

The masterplan is structured around three clear and interrelated pillars. Collectively, they provide the framework for decision-making as the proposals evolve, shaping how the development is planned, phased and delivered across landscape, land use, movement, infrastructure and community provision.

From these pillars, a series of design principles is derived. These principles translate the overarching direction into practical requirements for the masterplan and future detailed stages, and act as a checklist to ensure that the scheme consistently responds to baseline analysis, technical evidence, site constraints, and the feedback received through engagement and stakeholder discussions.



Landscape & Heritage Led Design

An approach that grows from the land itself, building on the site's inherent landscape and heritage value. Nature becomes part of everyday life, shaping a place that feels rooted, authentic and distinctive. Existing natural and heritage features are retained and strengthened, and carried through the neighbourhoods to create a landscape-rich setting with a strong sense of place grounded in its rural context.



A Thriving, Inclusive Community

Creating a balanced new part of Southwater that supports existing and future residents. Providing homes, services, education, community spaces and employment opportunities needed for everyday life, while complementing and strengthening Southwater village. Promoting a genuinely mixed and welcoming community through a diverse range of high-quality, sustainable homes and tenures, designed to meet changing needs over time and support successive generations.



A Well-Connected Place

A legible, people-first network of routes and spaces. Movement and landscape work together to prioritise walking and cycling, support easy access to open space, and promote health and wellbeing. Safe, attractive streets and green corridors connect neighbourhoods internally and link to the existing village and wider area, while keeping necessary vehicle movement efficient without allowing cars to define the experience of place.

THE VISION

Framework Principles



CONNECTED GREEN CORRIDORS

linked and integrated across the site, with retained hedgerows and mature trees forming the backbone of the landscape framework



BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

promoted through habitat enhancement, new planting and sensitive landscape design



PROTECT EXISTING ASSETS

protecting and strengthening mature tree belts, ancient woodlands and heritage assets



NATURE AT THE HEART OF DAILY LIFE

landscape-led design that improves health and wellbeing



A NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

brings together local services, in a vibrant cluster with facilities at walking distances



DISTINCT IDENTITY

celebrating valuable heritage and create a strong identity



A MIX OF NEW HOMES

for every generation and need



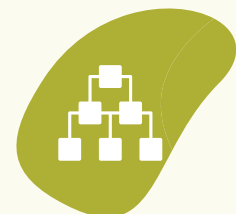
WELLBEING BY DESIGN

neighbourhoods that promote physical and mental wellbeing



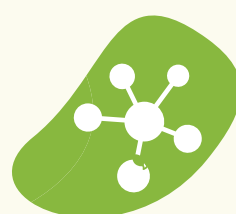
INFRASTRUCTURE FIRST

deliver schools and community spaces needed to support new and existing residents



A CLEAR HIERARCHY

of vehicular, pedestrian and cycle routes links the new community with surrounding neighbourhoods and the wider rural context.



A GREEN STREET NETWORK

connect distinct character areas and providing a strong civic and landscape focus



FOLLOW DESIRE LINES

permeable neighbourhoods connected through extended existing routes



PEDESTRIAN & CYCLE ROUTES

Public Rights of Way connect to the Downs Link, and a proposed circular trail encourages walking, cycling and access to the landscape for all ages

THE VISION

Landscape-Led Approach

A landscape-led vision that brings nature to the doorstep of every home, shaping a healthier, more inclusive and intergenerational place to live.

Rooted in Southwater's rural and historic landscape, the masterplan celebrates the Site's green character and creates everyday opportunities for wellbeing, learning and connection, with accessible routes and spaces designed for all ages, from play and recreation to quieter moments in nature.

Approximately 59 hectares of retained and enhanced open space: creating a “living landscape” where nature sits at the heart of daily life. Woodlands, meadows, parks and community greens are linked by safe walking and cycling connections, including a continuous trail network, so residents can move through the Site with landscape always in view.

Over 90% of historic hedgerows are retained and enhanced, reinforcing local character while forming wildlife corridors and green streets. Wider woodland buffers and new green corridors safeguard ancient woodland and mature trees, support biodiversity, and help manage water in a naturalised way, balancing access and recreation with long-term ecological resilience.

At the settlement edges, a softer rural transition is created through lower densities, planting and landscape structure, retaining key views and reinforcing the Site's green identity. New play spaces and sports provision are integrated within the open space network, complemented by shared community use of school facilities, supporting healthy, active living throughout the year.



Wetland landscape



Pedestrian and cycle routes



New planting growing into the existing landscape



Nature and play



Green corridors



New and mature planting



Protecting and celebrating existing mature trees and landscape

THE VISION

Design Steps – The Concept

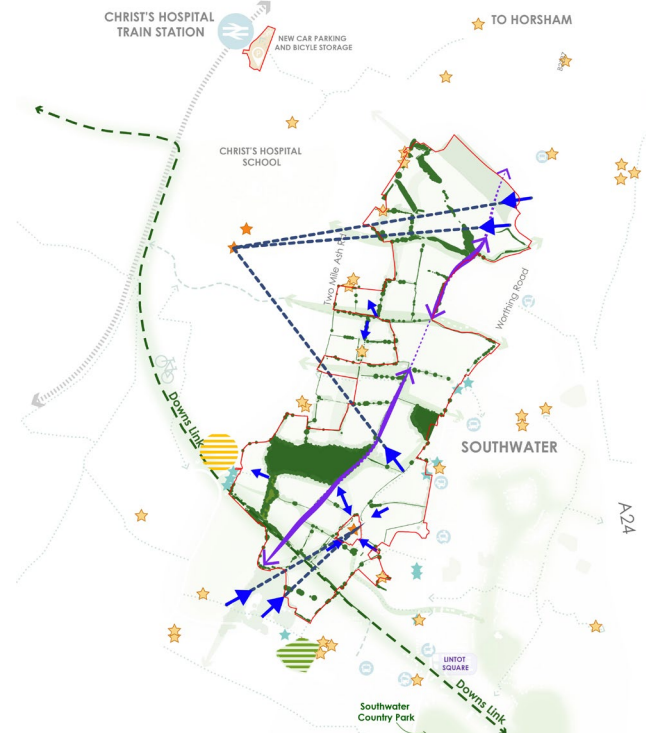
The design concepts below describe the key ideas shaping the masterplan. They set out the design direction from the outset and explain how the proposals respond to the site's opportunities and constraints, while delivering the overarching vision for the Land North West of Southwater.

1 Bringing nature and biodiversity into the heart of the development



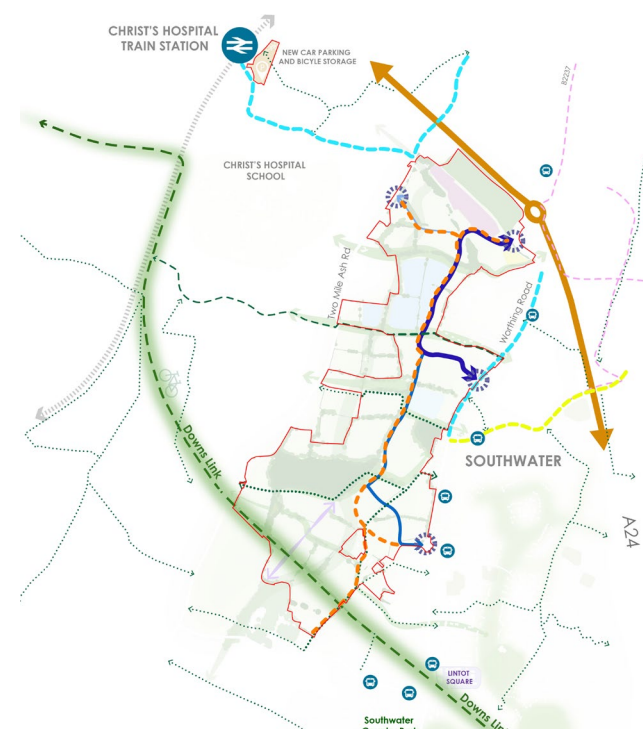
- **Connected green corridors** retaining and strengthening hedgerows, mature trees and key landscape features.
- **Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)** through habitat creation and enhancement.
- **Protected & strengthened mature woodland** (Courtland Wood, Two Mile Ash Gill and Smith's Copse) with new woodland creation to strengthen buffers and connectivity.
- **Downs Link** safeguarded and enhanced as a key ecological and recreational corridor.
- **Inclusive play and recreation** with play for all ages and accessible sports facilities.

2 Responding to the sites historical and landscape context



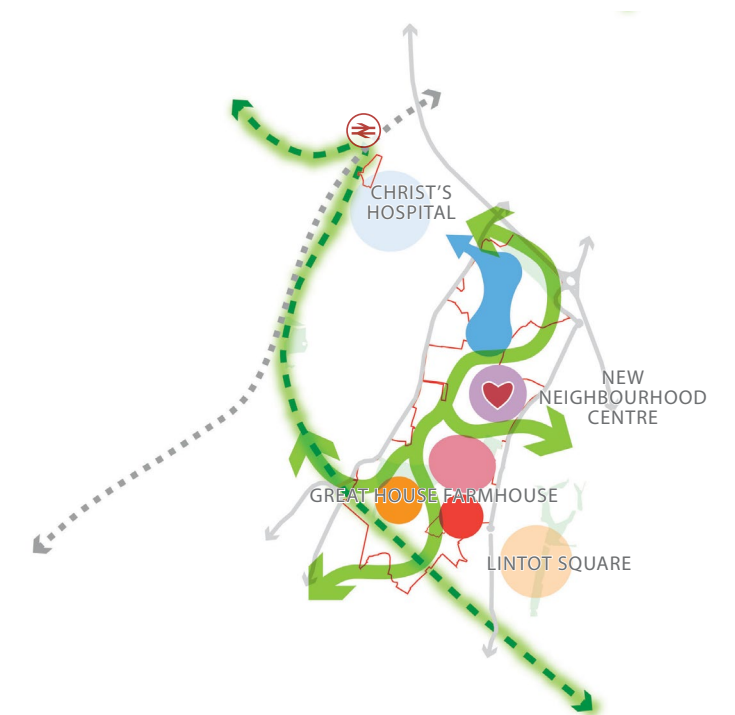
- **Great House Farmhouse setting** enhanced with enlarged green spaces, landscape buffers and retained key views.
- **Landscape buffers** to listed buildings and historic landscape features to safeguard their setting and significance.
- **Residential parcels reshaped** to retain most hedgerows and the historic manorial boundary, reinforcing local character.
- **Views** towards Christ's Hospital protected and integrated into the layout.

3 Connectivity



- **Connected routes** for vehicles, walking and cycling across the site and into the wider area.
- **New primary route** from Hop Oast roundabout, via the neighbourhood centre, to Worthing Road.
- **Public Rights of Way & Downs Link** protected and enhanced, including their setting.
- **New 5km circular trim trail** supporting walking, cycling and access to the landscape.
- **Secondary and tertiary green streets** designed with people as the priority.

4 Creating a distinct place



- **Land uses** and landscape arranged to form a series of distinct, well-defined neighbourhoods.
- **A new neighbourhood centre** bringing together the primary and secondary schools, nursery, later living, shops and community uses to create a vibrant heart
- **Employment land** located to the north of the site to support local job opportunities.
- **Gypsy and Traveller pitches** provided in the north of the site.
- **Historic barns** repurposed in the southern part of the site for flexible community uses.

THE VISION

Design Evolution

Previous planning application

The 2022 masterplan established the initial development concept for the site, setting out an ambition to deliver a large-scale, mixed-use extension to Southwater with new homes, schools, employment land and a range of community facilities. The proposals sought to support sustainable living through new infrastructure, enhanced movement connections, and significant areas of public open space.

This option also introduced key components that have remained important reference points as the masterplan has evolved, including employment provision with strong access to the strategic road network, dedicated provision for Gypsy and Traveller pitches, and a central community focus supported by education, recreation and green infrastructure.

Key Elements

- **Up to 1,500 new homes**, supported by associated infrastructure.
- **Education provision:** nursery, 1FE primary (expandable to 2FE) and 6FE secondary (expandable to 8FE).
- **Neighbourhood hub** with community uses and complementary retail.
- **Employment land** (up to 3 ha) in two parcels: a larger primary employment area at the northern edge with good connectivity to the A24. A smaller parcel aimed at supporting SMEs and varied business needs.
- **Gypsy and Traveller provision:** five pitches, with independent access off the new northern roundabout (road running along the north edge of the larger employment land).
- **Sports and recreation** opportunities incorporated within the development, located south of the Downs Link.
- **Public open space** (approx. 19.56 ha) including play, parks and gardens, and natural/semi-natural areas (parkland and woodland).
- **Approx. 5km walking trail** to support recreation and healthy lifestyles.
- **New allotments** for community growing, in the field next to College Farm house.
- **Historic barn buildings refurbished** for flexible community/retail uses (e.g., café, bike shop, farmers' market).
- **New internal roads and pedestrian/cycle routes** to support access and connectivity for both new and existing communities.
- **15 meters landscape buffers** to ancient woodland.

2022 Framework Masterplan



THE VISION

Design Evolution

Option 1

This option represents the first major evolution of the withdrawn 2022 scheme, reshaped in response to stakeholder engagement, technical work, and Local Authority feedback. The emphasis is on a more landscape-led and context-responsive approach, with development pulled back from sensitive edges, stronger woodland and green buffers, and a more appropriate built form character.

Overall, the changes focus on reducing impact where the site is most sensitive, strengthening green infrastructure, and improving the functionality of key land uses and access arrangements to support deliverability and long-term stewardship.

Key Elements

- **Evolved masterplan** responding to Local Authority feedback, with a stronger landscape-led and context-responsive approach.
- **Overall quantum reduced** from up to 1,500 homes to up to 1,000 homes.
- **Development pushed back** to achieve a 3m buffer to the retained tree belt west of the New Road area.
- **Woodland buffers increased** where possible, with c. 20m–50m setbacks compared to the previous c. 15m.
- **Four development parcels removed** to protect the sensitive western green edge, retained as landscape.
- **Apartment blocks reduced** across the masterplan to ensure the built form better responds to the surrounding context.
- **Green corridor between the two woodlands** significantly enhanced, creating a circa 15,000m² green space (previously circa 6,000m²).
- **Setting of Great House Farmhouse strengthened**, including a 40m setback (previously 10–15m) and reconfiguration of adjacent parcels to protect its rural context.
- **Allotments relocated** to improve access (from Worthing Road) and retain a more generous green setting around Great House Farmhouse and College Farm.
- **Employment land consolidated** into a single, more focused location.
- **Gypsy and Traveller pitches relocated**, with a clear independent access arrangement.
- **New secondary road link** introduced from the spine road to Two Mile Ash Road, improving connections towards Christ's Hospital School and the wider network.
- **School planned for delivery in Phase 1**, supported by a clear route providing direct connections to and from Worthing Road.
- **SuDS strategy reviewed** to respond to sensitivities around the Downs Link and its setting.
- **Blocks and parcels south of Courtland Wood redesigned** to retain key landscape and heritage features, including protection of a mature tree, retention of existing hedgerows, and safeguarding the archaeological embankment.
- **Development parcels south of Great House Farmhouse removed** and retained as open space for outdoor recreation, with sports pitches omitted due to landscape sensitivities.

2025 Framework 1



THE VISION

Design Evolution

Option 2

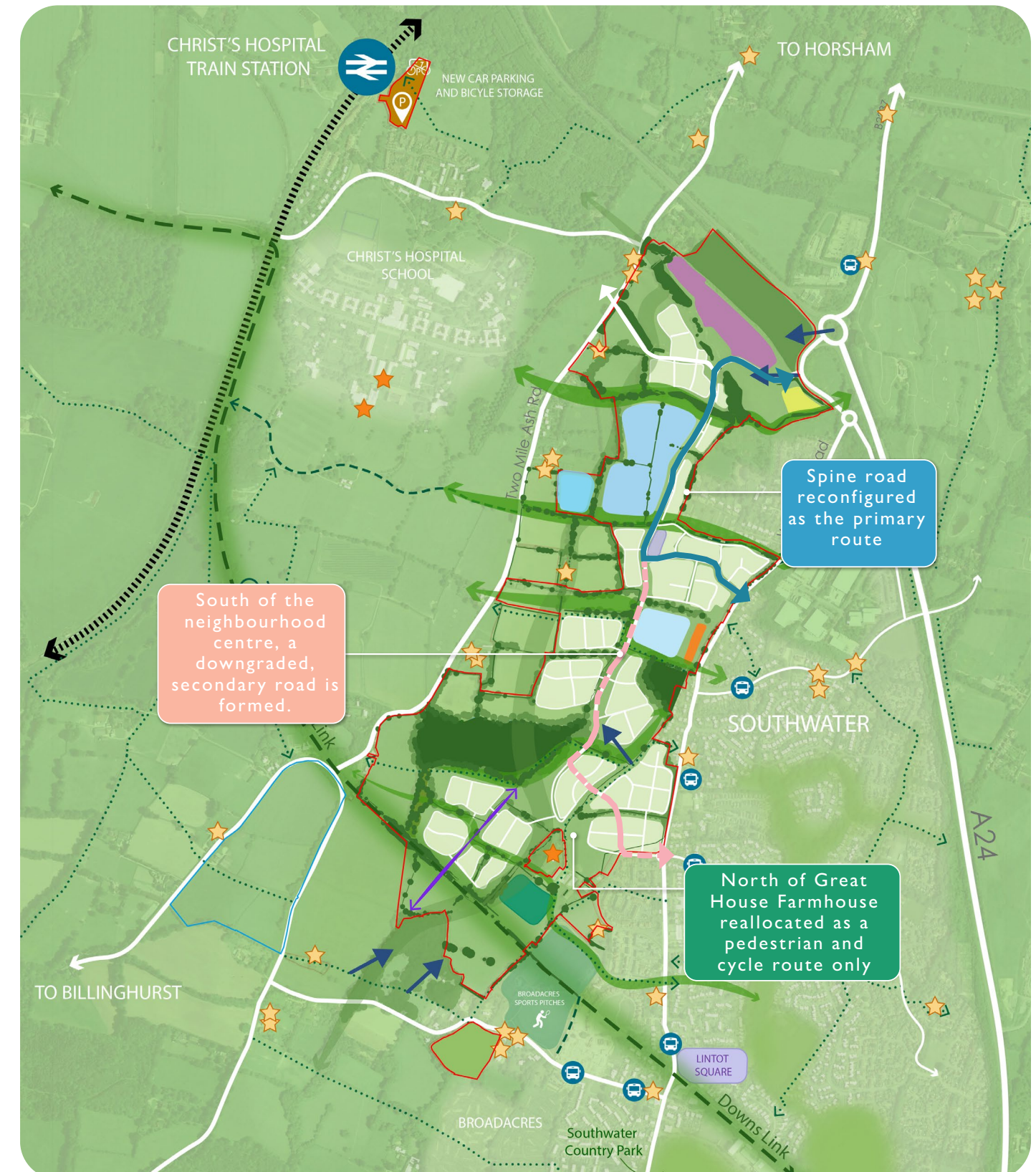
This iteration refines the masterplan's movement hierarchy and street character to create a more legible, people-focused place. The primary route is simplified and strengthened to support access and wayfinding, while the internal network is designed to feel greener and less engineered.

A key change is the introduction of a pedestrian and cycle-only route north of Great House Farmhouse, reducing vehicle movement close to the listed building and enabling a more continuous green setting that protects and enhances its setting. The option also increases community value through the redevelopment of the existing barn and the delivery of an additional new barn, providing flexible community space, alongside expanded allotment provision.

Key Changes

- **Spine road reconfigured as the primary route** from the northern roundabout, running through the neighbourhood centre and connecting to Worthing Road.
- **Carriageway reduced from 7.5m to 6.75m**, with variable verge widths, landscaping and SuDS to create a greener, less engineered street character.
- South of the neighbourhood centre, the former wide spine route **redefined as a secondary street**, weaving through the south-eastern neighbourhoods and connecting to the Broadacres roundabout on Worthing Road.
- Curved section north of Great House Farmhouse reallocated as a **pedestrian and cycle-focused route**, prioritising active travel.
- **Historic brick barn retained and refurbished** (approx. 230m²) for potential community use.
- **Allotments enlarged** to approximately 4,000m².

2025 Framework 2



THE VISION

Final Concept Framework

Final Framework Masterplan 2026

This final concept framework brings the masterplan together into a clearer, more coherent and more place-led arrangement. It refines the movement hierarchy to feel more natural through the neighbourhood centre, strengthens the role and quality of the centre as a genuine heart, and delivers a more generous and sensitive setting to Great House Farmhouse. Alongside this, the option improves connectivity for walking and cycling, reinforces landscape structure and retention, and introduces a small additional employment opportunity to support a balanced community.

Key Changes

- **Primary road realigned** to form a gentler connection through the neighbourhood centre to Worthing Road, naturally transitioning into the downgraded southern route continuing to the Broadacres roundabout.
- **Neighbourhood centre road refined**, smoothing the radius through the centre and ensuring the southern connection reads clearly as a secondary route via a T-junction off the primary road.
- **Additional employment parcel** introduced with independent access from the northern access near the new roundabout, separate from the primary road.
- **Neighbourhood centre redesigned** with mixed-use blocks and a new public square, creating a stronger “heart” and a richer mix of typologies on both sides of the main route.
- **New 20m-wide “village green” corridor** (approx. 0.3ha) introduced to create a clear transition between the civic square and the softer rural edge.
- **Walking and cycling connections improved**, with safer, more continuous routes.
- **Great House Farmhouse setting significantly strengthened**: Open space in front of the farmhouse enlarged (from approx. 0.5ha to approx. 1ha). Residential parcels north of the farmhouse refined, including an additional 30–50m separation between the farmhouse and new development, improving the relationship with the heritage asset and local amenity.
- **Former 20th-century shed structures removed** around the retained historic barn, enabling new landscape areas further improving the setting of Great House Farmhouse.
- **Landscape retention reinforced**, retaining approximately 90% of hedgerows and trees across the site.

Final Framework Masterplan 2026



THE VISION

Summary of Design Changes

Below we summarise the key changes between the withdrawn 2022 masterplan and the latest 2026 Concept Framework. This provides a clear, at-a-glance comparison of how the proposals have evolved in response to technical evidence, stakeholder engagement and ongoing discussions with the Local Planning Authority.



Less Development More Landscape

500 fewer homes



Heritage-led

Protecting and enhancing the setting and views of key heritage features

Sensitive repositioning of sports pitches, allotments and traveller pitches



Enhanced Green Corridors & Buffers

20-50m

In comparison to 10-15m previously

Neighbourhood Centre

Redesigning to ensure centrality and high-quality placemaking with new green verge

Enhance & Protect Nature
Retaining over 90% of hedgerows

5 times more open space provided than policy requirements

More traditional streets

A clear street hierarchy with distinct characters



THE VISION

Concept Masterplan Sketch



NEW HOMES

Up to 1,000 new high quality homes (C3) and up to 80 later-living homes (C2) are proposed with a mix of size and tenure including affordable homes to rent, shared ownership and market homes.



EDUCATION

A new secondary, primary and nursery school.



EMPLOYMENT

Approximately 4 hectares of employment land enabling new job opportunities.



NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

A neighbourhood centre provides a range of small-scale retail and community facilities, secondary to Lintot Square.



PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

- Safe play facilities and spaces for children of all ages
- Parks and gardens
- Natural and semi-natural spaces such as parklands and woodlands
- A walking trail of approximately 5km providing opportunities for exercise
- Outdoor gym and places to exercise in nature



ALLOTMENTS

New allotments for community growing.



GYPSY & TRAVELLER PITCHES

Five gypsy and traveller pitches as required by Horsham Local Plan.



EMPLOYMENT SITE

SECONDARY SCHOOL

5 GYPSY & TRAVELLER PITCHES

NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

ALLOTMENTS

A NETWORK OF GREEN SPACES

A NETWORK OF GREEN SPACES

A MIX OF BEAUTIFULLY DESIGNED NEW HOMES

REFURBISHED & NEW BARNs

SPORTS PITCHES AREA

A landscape-led neighbourhood shaped by Southwater's rural character and heritage, with nature at the doorstep of every home. Designed to connect people with nature, and create a lasting place for generations.