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Introduction

01

1. Introduction

This section provides context and general information to introduce the project and its location

1.1 Background

The Barlaston Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group requested support to establish a design guide with codes to preserve and enhance the character of the settlement located within the Neighbourhood Area (NA).

The Steering Group has expressed three key priorities to be addressed by this report:

- Define design codes to ensure the natural character of the NA is preserved;
- Define guidance to prevent Barlaston from becoming part Stoke-on-Trent's suburban expansion; and
- Identify codes to guide future development throughout the NA and in specific sites, with a predominant focus on the relationship with the natural environment and biodiversity.

1.2 Objective

The purpose of this document is to provide an appreciation of Barlaston's existing character to create a set of design codes which will apply to any future development. This will help to ensure that as any new development comes forward, it responds to its context and supports and enhances the quality of the existing character.

1.3 Methodology

The process that was undertaken to produce this Design Code document is as follows:



1.4 Study area

Barlaston is a civil parish located in the Stafford Borough within the Staffordshire County. It is located about 6.5 km (4 miles) south of Stoke-on-Trent and 16.2 km (10 miles) north of Stafford. The parish is also placed in a strategic location halfway between Manchester and Birmingham. The NA boundary is drawn by fields to the south, while Cocknage Road defines it to the east. The north of the NA area is mainly identified by the edge of Stoke-on-Trent's built area. Barlaston's NA area borders with the sewage works located to the west of the village, and it's also defined by the river Trent to the west.

The total population of the parish is 2,800 according to the most recent census information in 2021. The village is split into two parts by the railway and the canal, which cross the NA vertically.

A post-WWII development is located to the north of the village, along Wedgwood Drive. Other small farms and settlements are dotted around the NA.

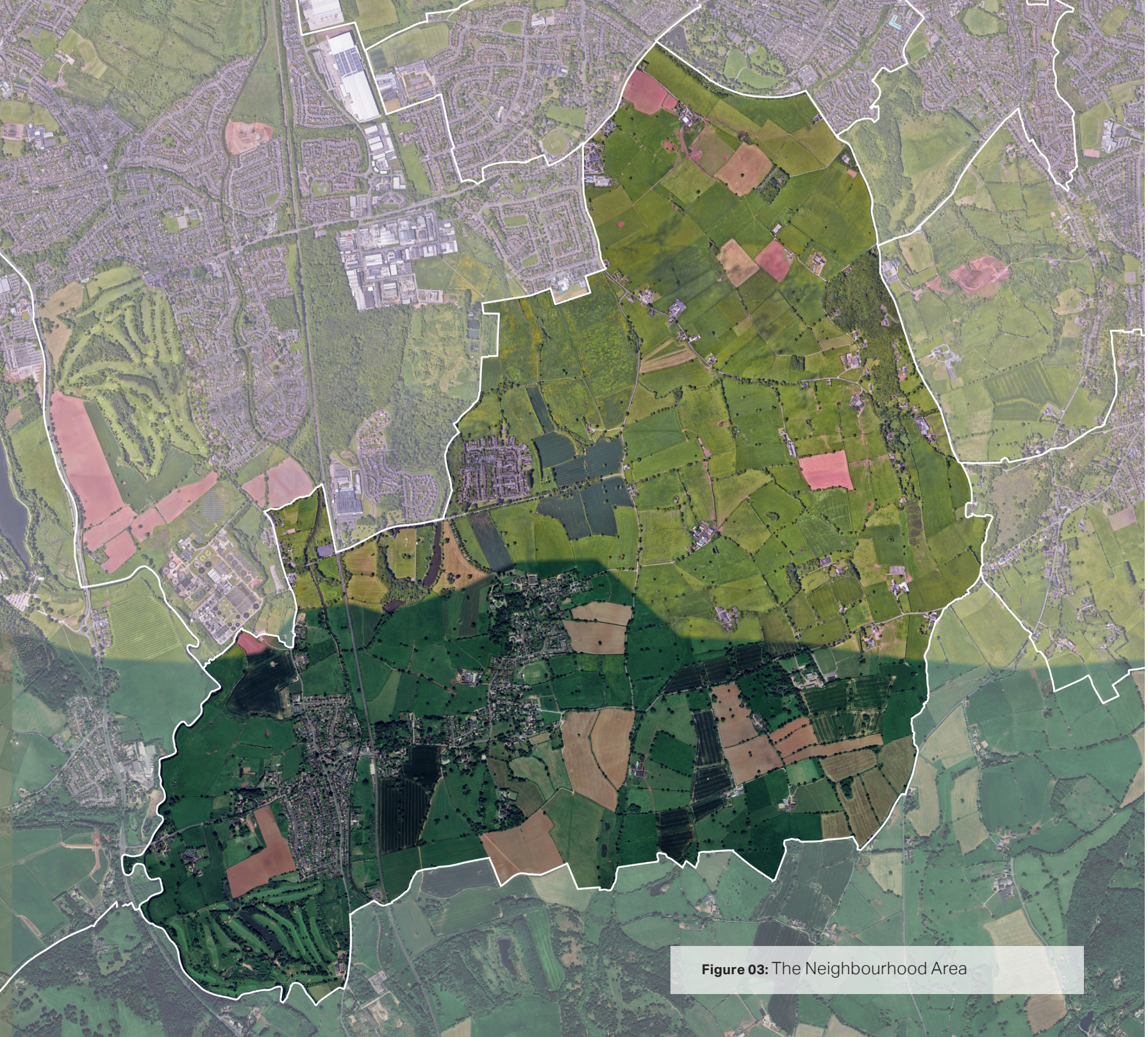
The main two routes are the Tittensor Road – Hartwell Lane axis and the Old Road – Meaford Road axis, however, a network of roads spreads out across the parish. Other relevant routes are Blurton Road and Longton Road. A network of PRoW and a recreational route can also be found in the NA.



Figure 01: Barlaston sign in the Village Green



Figure 02: Trent & Mersey Canal seen from Station Rd



N

500 m

Figure 03: The Neighbourhood Area

Who should use the guide

The Design Codes should be a valuable tool in securing context-driven, high-quality development in Barlaston. They will be used in different ways by different people in the planning and development process, as summarised in the table below. A valuable way they can be used is as part of a process of co-design and involvement that further understands and takes account of local preferences and expectations of design quality.
In this way, the guidance and codes can help to facilitate conversations on the various topics that should help to align expectations and help understand the balancing of key issues. Design codes alone will not automatically secure optimum design outcomes but should help to prevent poor quality development.

Potential users	How they will use the design guidelines
Applicants, developers, & landowners	As a guide to community and Local Planning Authority expectations on design, allowing a degree of certainty – they will be expected to follow the Guidelines as planning consent is sought.
Local Planning Authority	As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications. The Design Guidelines should be discussed with applicants during any pre-application discussions.
Parish Council or Neighbourhood Plan steering group	As a guide when commenting on planning applications, ensuring that the Design Guidelines are complied with.
Community groups & Local Residents	As a tool to promote community-backed development and to inform comments on planning applications.
Statutory consultees	As a reference point when commenting on planning applications.

Table 01: Potential users

1.5 Planning policy and design guidance

There are several national and local planning policy and guidance documents that have been referred to in the development of this design guide and the codes featured in it. This section highlights recent government initiatives such as the National Design Guide and Homes England adoption of Building For a Healthy Life (formerly Building for Life 12).

1.5.1 National Planning Policy & Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (revised December 2023)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) outlines the UK Government's overarching economic, environmental and social planning policies for England. It is a high-level document that attempts to make good design pivotal and to put communities at the heart of planning. The policies within the NPPF apply to the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and act as a framework against which decisions are made on planning applications.

The NPPF states that a key objective of the planning system is to contribute to balancing the impacts that development has on the economy, environment and community.

The parts of the NPPF which are of relevance to this document are:

- Part 2: Achieving sustainable development;
- Part 5: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
- Part 7: Ensuring the vitality of town centres;
- Part 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities;
- Part 12: Achieving well-designed and beautiful places;
- Part 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; and
- Part 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Part 12 (Achieving well-designed and beautiful places) emphasises the need to create high-quality buildings and places as fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.

It sets out several principles that planning policies and decisions will consider ensuring that new developments are well-designed and focus on quality.

The NPPF notes that "development that is not well-designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes".

This is supported by the National Design Guide, which sets out the 10 characteristics of a well-designed place.

2021 - National Model Design Code
DLUHC



This report provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design. It expands on 10 characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide:

Context, Identity, Built Form, Movement, Nature, Public Spaces, Uses, Homes & Buildings, Resources and Lifespan.

This guide should be used as an overarching reference for new development where topics are not covered in local guidance.

2020 - Building for a Healthy Life
Homes England



Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) is the new name for Building for Life, the government-endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. The new name reflects the key role that the built environment has in promoting wellbeing.

The BHL toolkit sets out principles to help guide discussions on planning applications and to help local planning authorities to assess the quality of proposed schemes, as well as useful prompts and questions for planning applicants to consider during the different stages of the design process.

2021 - National Design Guide
DLUHC



This companion document set out characteristics of well-designed places. It supports the ambitions of the NPPF to utilise the planning and development process in the creation of high-quality places.

The National Design Guide states that 'specific, detailed and measurable criteria for good design are most appropriately set at the local level'. The guide is expected to be used by local authorities, applicants and local communities to establish further design codes (such as this) and guides that can deliver this in line with local preferences.

1.5.2 Local Planning Policy & Guidance

Barlaston is located in the Stafford Borough (SB), part of the Staffordshire County (SC). The following documents were reviewed to gain a better understanding of the area.

The Plan for Stafford Borough, 2011 - 2031 (SBC, June 2014)

This document defines strategic policies, Strategic Development Locations for housing and employment, as well as more detailed policies for deciding planning applications. The vision of this document sets out key objectives for villages in the Borough, including the delivery of new housing, avoiding developments in flood risk areas, increasing high-quality services and public transport provision, providing new green infrastructure enhancement schemes, and supporting a diverse and regenerated rural economy. Relevant policies for Barlaston are Spatial Principle 3 (SP3) - Stafford Borough Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy; Spatial Principle 4 (SP4) - Stafford Borough Housing Growth Distribution; Policy E8 Town, Local and Other Centres; and Policy C2 Affordable Housing.

Design Supplementary Planning Document (SBC, 2018)

This SPD expands on policies identified in the adopted Plan for Stafford Borough 2011 - 2031. The document defines design guidelines that the Borough requires for new development, including new build (both commercial and residential), as well as alterations and extensions to properties in Conservation Areas. The guidelines set out in this SPD include Urban Design and Architectural Design Principles; Guidance for Large-Scale Residential Development; Residential Design Guidelines; Conservation Areas; and Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings.

Stafford Borough Local Plan 2020 - 2040, Preferred options (SBC, 2022)

This document is a step towards the final version of the new Local Plan (2020 - 2040), which is expected to be adopted in October 2024. The vision emphasises the attractiveness of the Borough and the importance of strong communities. Relevant policies for Barlaston are Policy 2. Settlement hierarchy, Policy 23. Affordable housing; Appendix 2: Other site allocations, where the Land at Longton Road site is identified.

Barlaston Neighbourhood Development Plan 2019 - 2031 (BPC, 2019)

This document was made in July 2019. It describes the main characteristics of the NA, including its History and Heritage; Natural Environment; Education; Business and Employment; Community Assets and Facilities; Traffic and Transport; Sport and Recreation; and Infrastructure. The report also identifies a set of key policies: Land Use Policies; Policies for Barlaston; Rural Settlement; Design; Business and Employment Policies; Community Facilities and Assets Policies; and Landscape and Natural Environment.

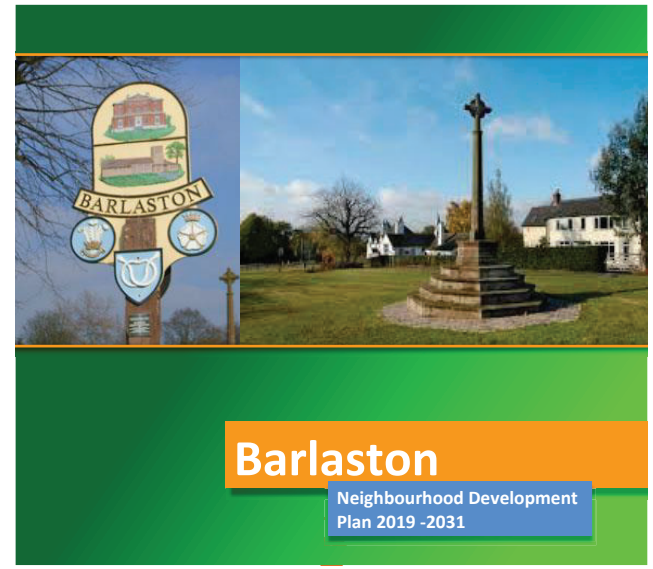


Figure 04: Extract of the Barlaston NDP 2019 - 2031

1.6 Site visits and engagement

A Teams meeting and virtual site visit was undertaken on 10.1.24 to begin to understand the plan area and discuss key objectives with the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group before visiting in person. Likewise, desktop analysis studies were undertaken to inform the later site visit.

A full day's site visit was then conducted on 13.2.24 with a meeting on site with available members of the steering group. This site walkover covered the whole village and allowed AECOM to undertake an extensive photographic survey.



Figure 05: Picture taken during the site visit: the Duke of York pub, Longton Road



Neighbourhood context

02

2. Neighbourhood context

This section presents analysis of the whole Neighbourhood Area, including the historic origins, landscape character and urban settlement pattern across the parish.

2.1 Historic growth

The village has Anglo-Saxon origins, with its name being Beornwulf's Tun. Domesday Book records the area as ploughland worked by a serf. Only in 1756 the Lord replaced a manor house in the upper village with a Palladian villa.

The lower part of the village started to change after 1777, when the Trent and Mersey Canal opened, bringing canal-side cottages and The Plume of Feathers Inn, which will remain the only pub in Barlaston until The Slater Arms beer house in the C19 (now The Duke of York).

The North Staffordshire Railway opened in 1848, with pottery manufacturers starting to reside in Barlaston becoming commuters. These manufacturers created much demand for domestic servants and a training school. The Girls' Home, opened in the 1870s.

During C19, the population grew significantly, producing changes to the village. Ribbon development appeared along Meaford and Old Roads during the 20s and 30s. A new "Wedgewood (Pottery) Ltd" factory was built in 1937 with its railway station and workers' garden suburb (Wedgewood Lane development, 1950). Orchard Place shopping precinct, housing estates and a rebuilt Plume of Feathers Inn made the lower village the key commercial hub of the Parish. In 2014, the lower village got the upper village's final shop, the post office.



Figure 06: Historic maps showing Barlaston's growth through time. 1889 (A), 1925 (B), 1950 (C) and nowadays (D).

2.2 Designations

Barlaston is included within the West Midlands Green Belt, except the settlement boundary of the village. A Local Nature Reserve, namely the Barlaston and Rough Close Common, is adjacent to the NA but fully located within the Rough Close parish.

There are 10 listed buildings in the NA, one is Grade I (Barlaston Hall) and the others are Grade II. Most of them are located in the upper village, which is the most historical part of the settlement. A Scheduled Monument (Moated site at Great Hartwell Farm) can also be observed at the eastern end of the NA.

Following, all the Listed Buildings located in the NA:

1. Barlaston Hall (Grade I)
2. Heyfield Cottages (Grade II)
3. Trent And Mersey Canal Meafordhall Farm Bridge Number 102 At Sj 8873 3750 (Grade II)
4. Trent and Mersey Canal Milepost at SJ 8860 3883 (Grade II)
5. Barlaston War Memorial (Grade II)
6. Highfield House (Grade II)
7. Catnip Cottage and Ivy Cottage (Grade II)
8. Highfield Cottage (Grade II)
9. Cemetery Chapel (Grade II)
10. Church Of St John The Baptist (Grade II)

Schedule Monument: Moated site at Great Hartwell Farm

2.2.1 Site allocations

The emerging Neighbourhood Plan doesn't allocate new sites, however the Steering Group are rolling over three undelivered allocations from the previous plan:

- The Limes (2.47 ha of which 1 ha is developable)
- Estoril House (1.49 ha with developable area of 0.9 ha)
- Leese's Garage (0.80 ha)

Based on the Stafford SHELAA (between 28 and 30 dph), these sites could accommodate around 60-65 dwellings. The emerging Stafford Borough Local Plan 2020 – 2040 sets a requirement of 500 homes across 11 villages, including Barlaston. This could potentially imply 45 new dwellings in the NA.

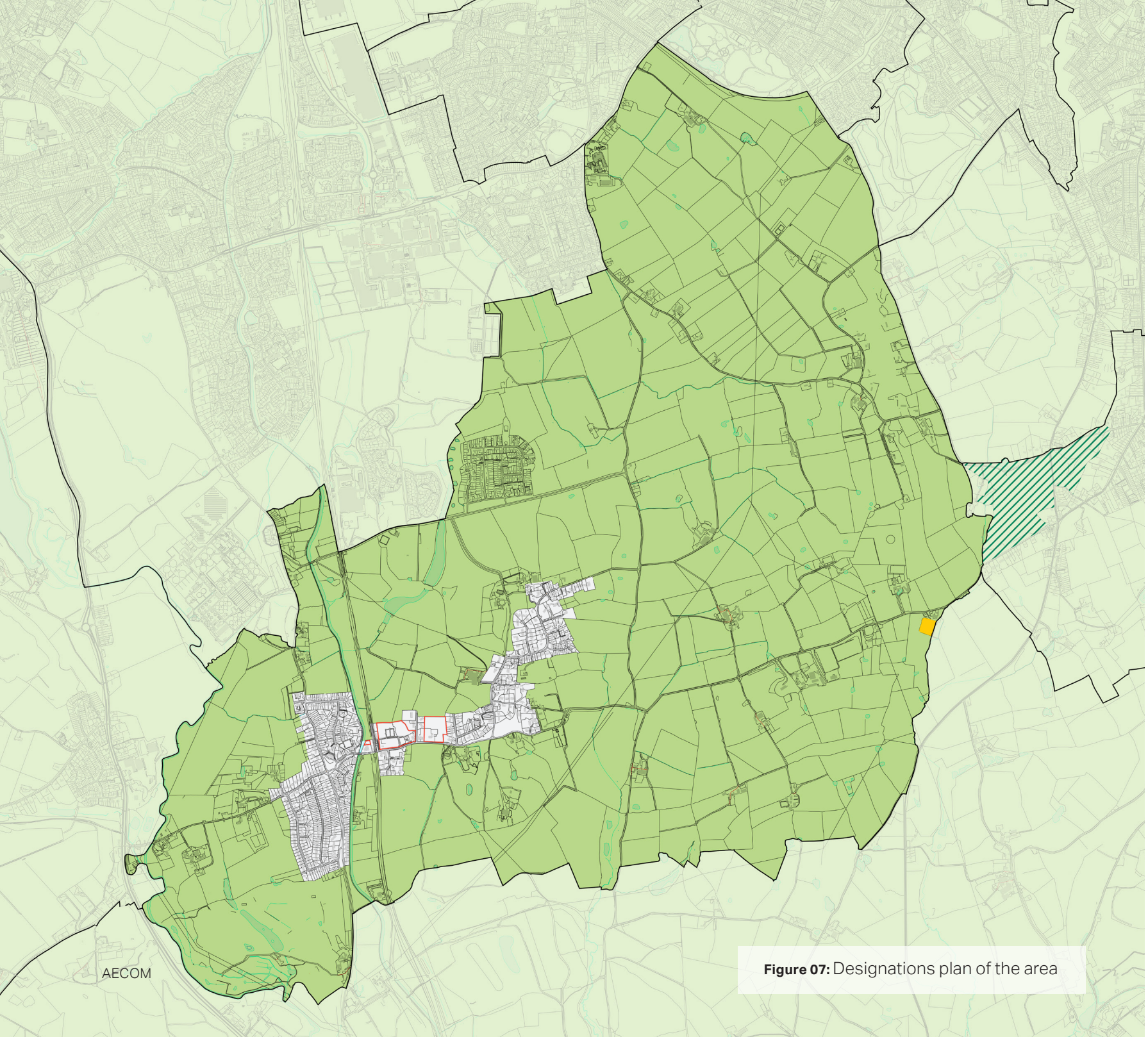


Figure 07: Designations plan of the area

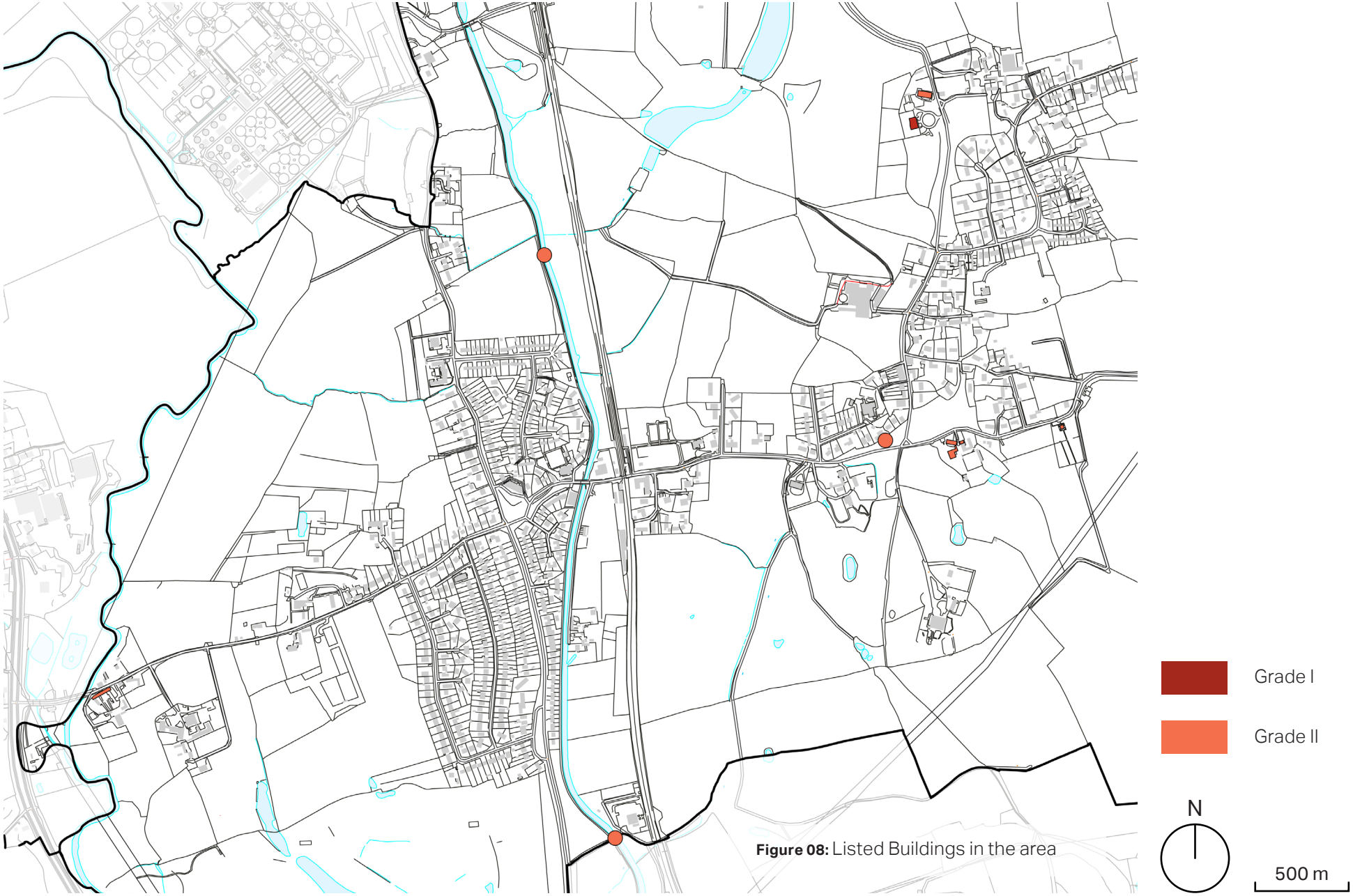


Figure 08: Listed Buildings in the area



Figure 10: Church of St John The Baptist (Grade II)



Figure 09: Cemetery Chapel (Grade II)



Figure 11: Barlaston Hall (Grade I)

2.3 Landscape

Landscape is a predominant feature in Barlaston, as it covers most of the NA. Nearly the full area is included within the West Midlands Green Belt.

According to Natural England, Barlaston falls within three different National Character Areas, namely Potteries and Churnet Valley; Needwood and South Derbyshire Claylands; and, Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain.

Potteries and Churnet Valley

This NCA covers most of the upper village and all the northern portion of the NCA, cutting it through the middle. The character area is characterized by dissected hills and a small plateau, alternated with river valleys and steep ravines. This setting contrasts with the industrial and densely built conurbation of the Potteries.

Needwood and South Derbyshire Claylands

This NCA only occupies a small section of the NCA to the southeast. This character area gently slopes from the southern end of the Peak District to the River Trent valley and includes ancient woodlands and hedged pastoral landscape, dominated by mixed farming.

Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain

This NCA occupies the western end of the NCA, including the whole lower village. The character area is mainly flat with gentle hills and is mostly occupied by pastoral farmland.

The Stafford Borough Recovery Network Report (2019) refers to the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan to identify Ecosystem Action Plan areas. Barlaston falls entirely in the Central Heaths & Woods.

The topography of the area is gently hilly and sloping from east to west, going towards the Trent & Mersey Canal and the River Trent. The highest point in the NA is about 225m asl and is located to the northeast; the lowest point is about 95m and is located to the west of the NA along the River Trent.

The character of the local topography allows views of the open landscape from different points within the NA. Hartwell Lane, Longton Road, Blurton Road and Barlaston Road to the east of the area offer a wide range of views over the gentle hills of the area. Views of the landscape are also available from other roads on the edge of the settlement, such as Tittensor Road and Station Road.

Another remarkable landscape feature of the area is the Wedgewood Arboretum, while the nearby Barlaston Downs are accessible from Longton Road in the NA.



Figure 12: Open landscape seen from Longton Road



Figure 13: View of the open landscape from Hartwell Lane

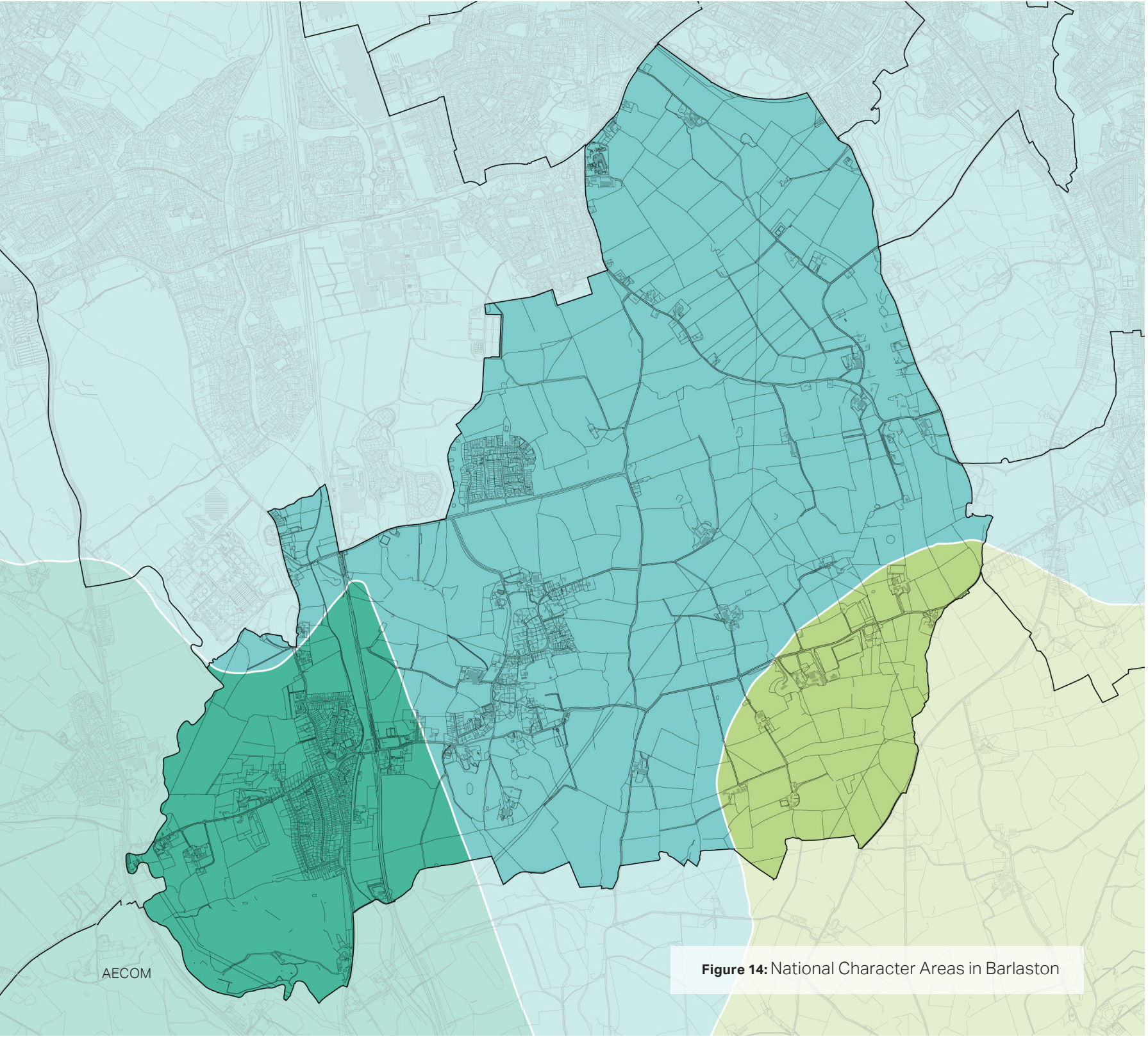


Figure 14: National Character Areas in Barlaston

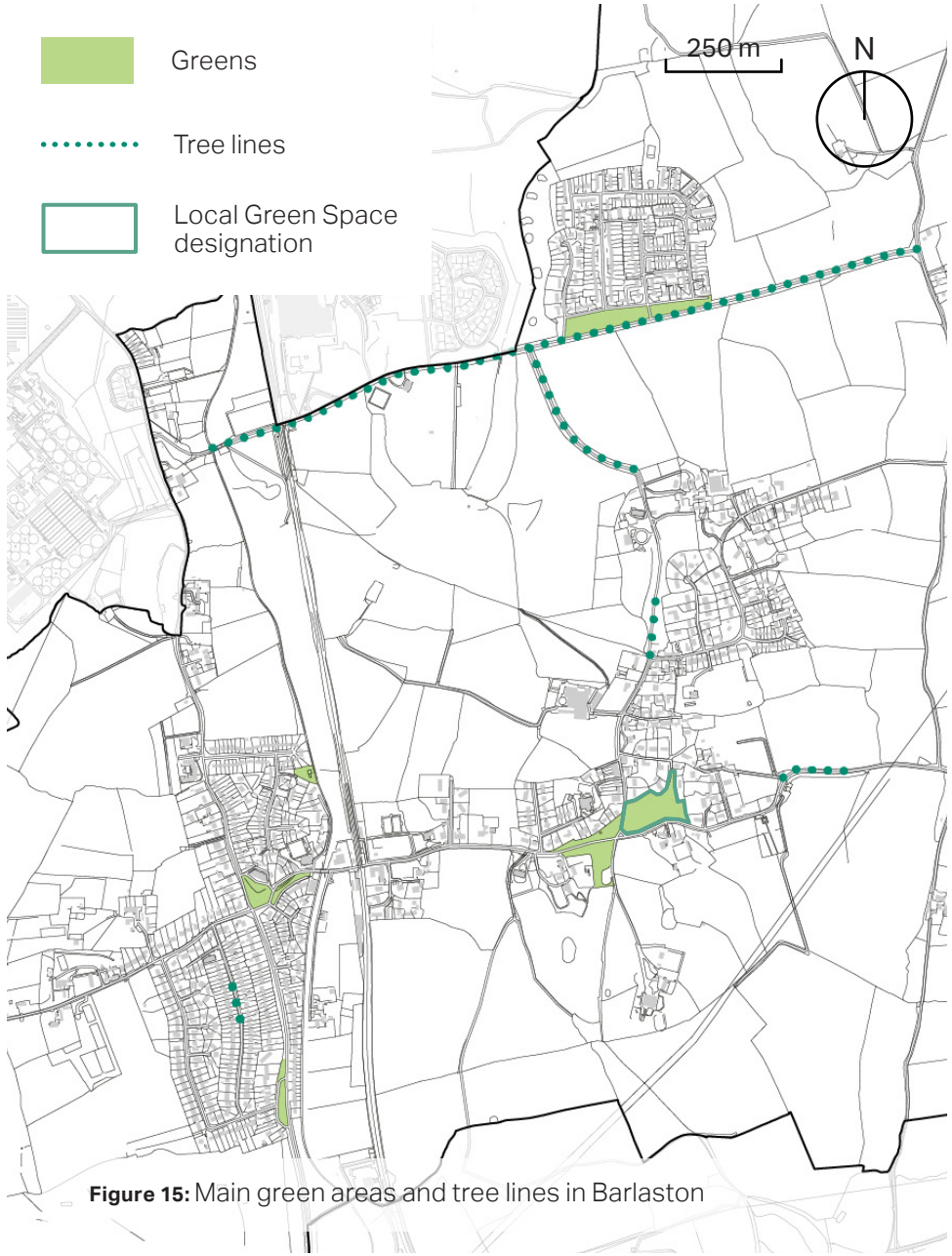


Figure 15: Main green areas and tree lines in Barlaston

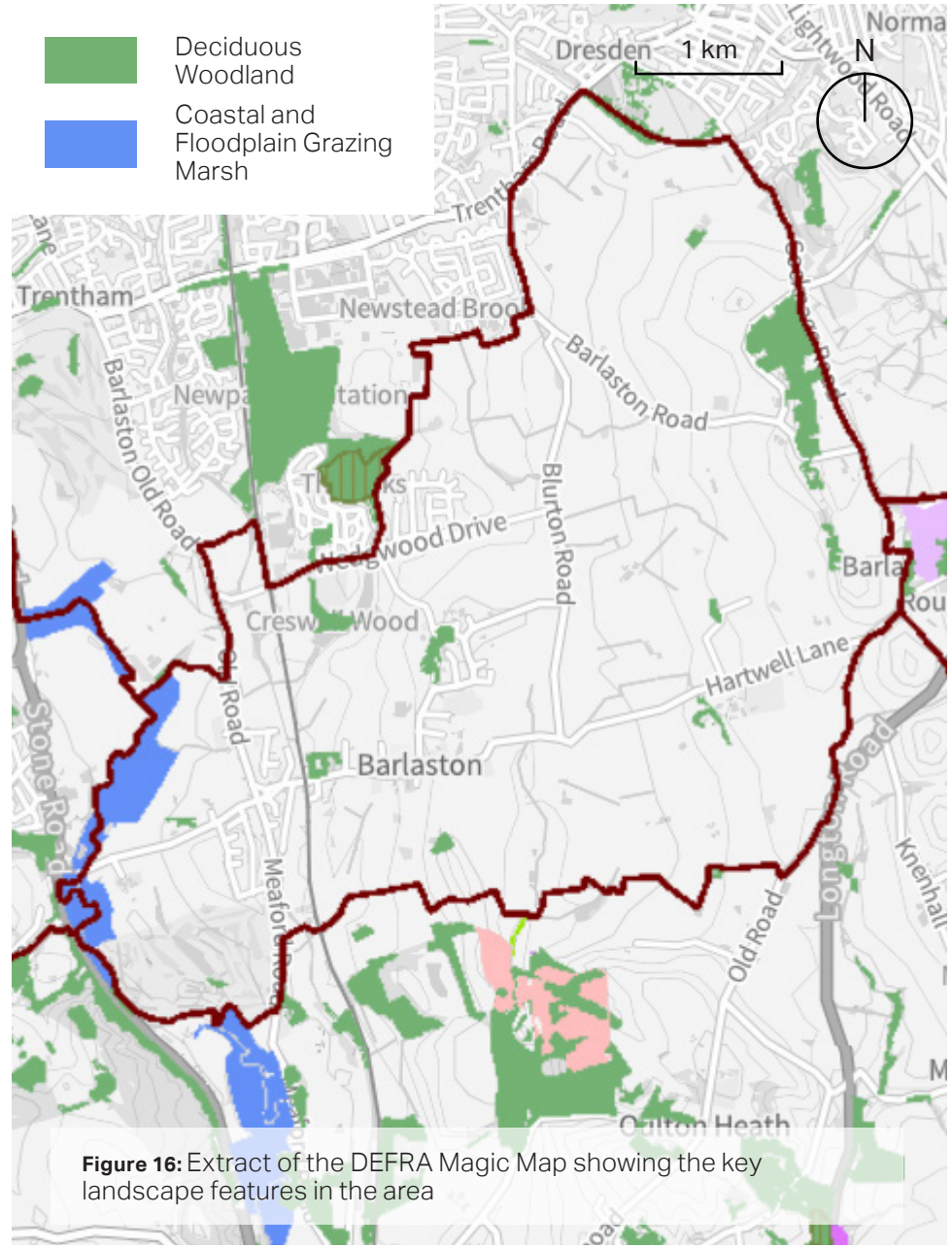


Figure 16: Extract of the DEFRA Magic Map showing the key landscape features in the area

2.3.1 Water and flood risk

The main watercourses within Barlaston are the River Trent, which defines the western boundary of the NA, and the Trent & Mersey Canal, which crosses the area from north to south. Different narrow watercourses and ponds can be observed in the NA.

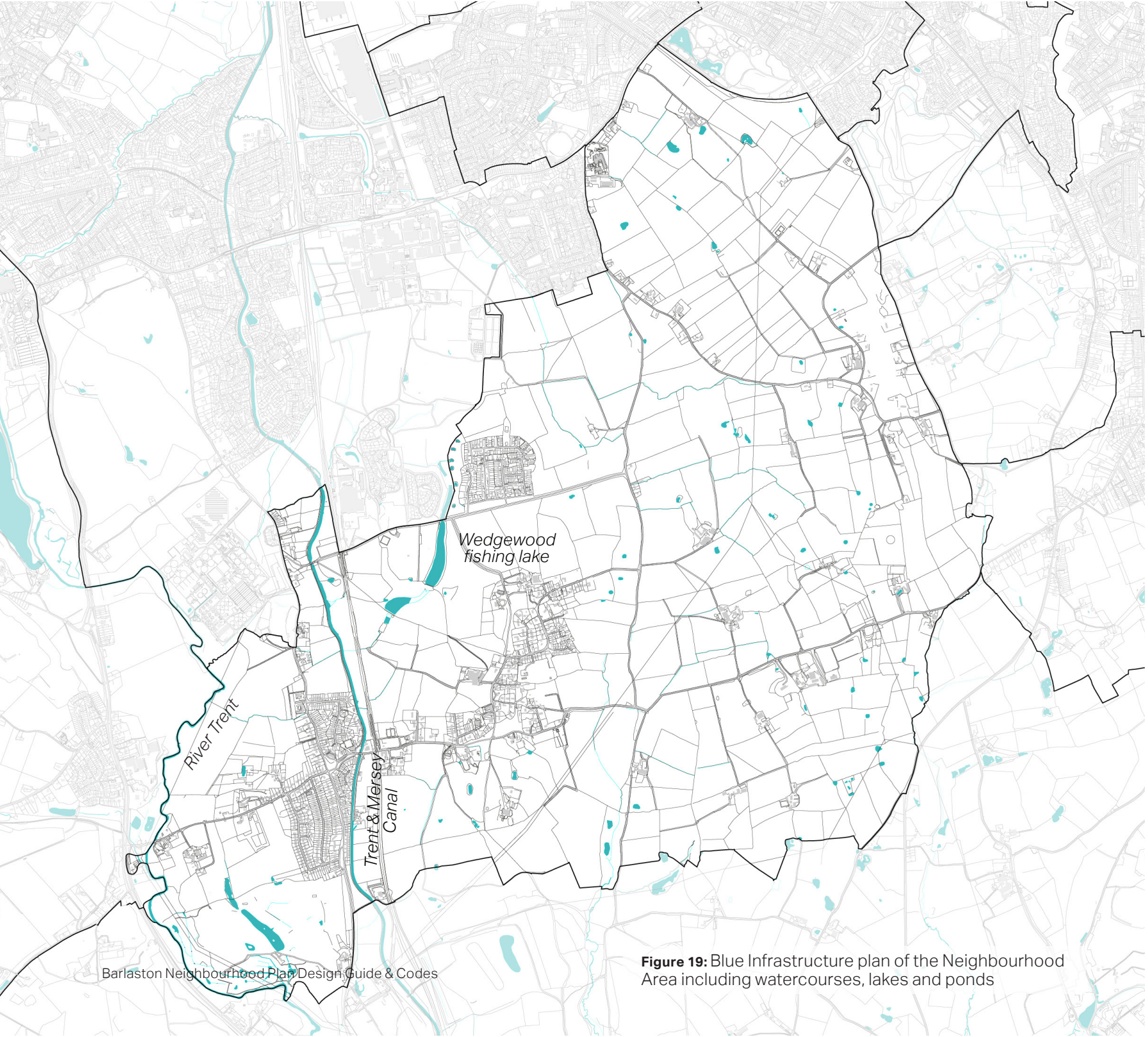
The River Trent floodplain is a key natural feature of the area. The River Trent catchment area includes a predominance of agricultural land, but also pasture areas and woodlands. Its geology is predominantly Triassic sandstones and response to rainfall is fast because of the steep nature of this catchment area. Therefore, flooding is a recurring event along the River Trent, where all the flood risk zones in the NA are located.



Figure 17: The River Trent seen from Tittensor Road



Figure 18: The Trent & Mersey Canal seen from Station Road



Water elements

N

500 m

Figure 19: Blue Infrastructure plan of the Neighbourhood Area including watercourses, lakes and ponds

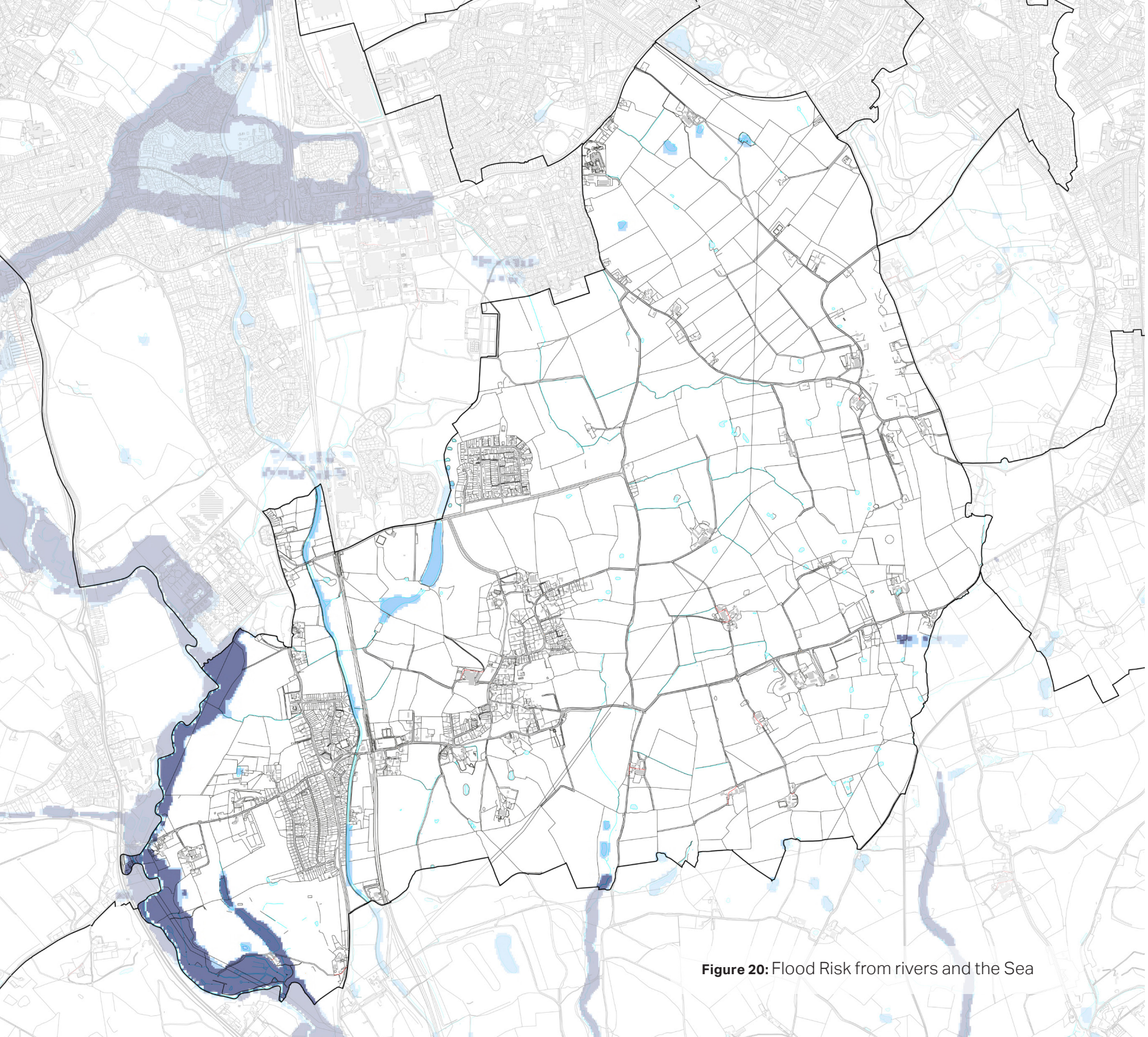


Figure 20: Flood Risk from rivers and the Sea

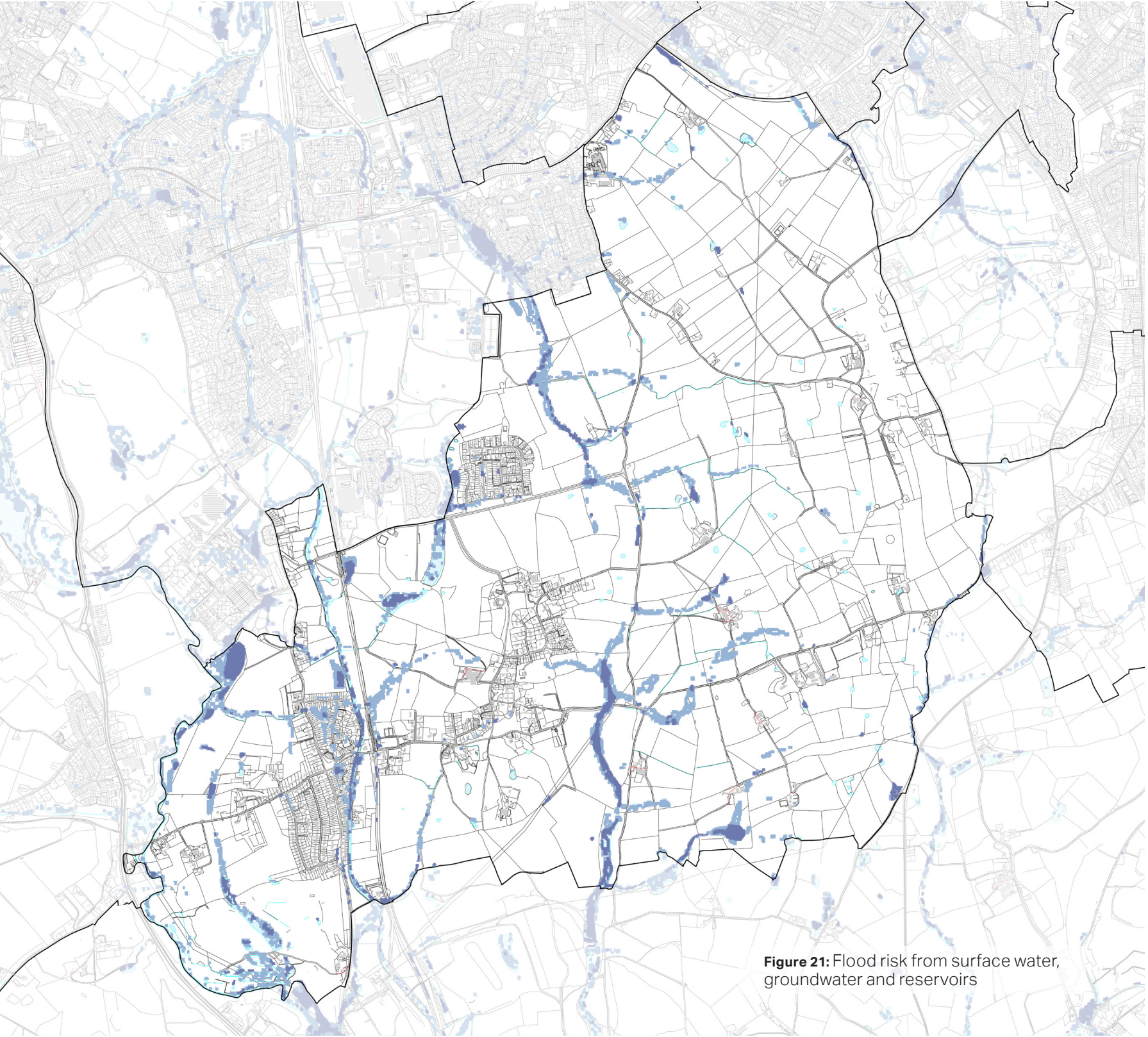


Figure 21: Flood risk from surface water, groundwater and reservoirs

2.4 Movement

Vehicular movement

The area is crossed by two primary routes, namely the Tittensor Road – Hartwell Lane and the Old Road - Meaford Road axes. The first crosses the area horizontally and links the upper village with the lower village, connecting them to the A34 to the west and Longton (Stoke-on-Trent) to the east.

A series of secondary routes can also be found in the NA. Longton Road has an irregular path and connects different parts of the upper village, to then link up to Blurton Road. The latter runs from Hartwell Lane to the north of the NA. Queen Mary's Drive is another relevant route in the village, as it joins the upper village to Wedgewood Drive and consequently the southern end of Stoke-on-Trent.

The remaining roads and lanes and tertiary. In the upper village, most of them are cul-de-sacs. However, cul-de-sacs can also be observed in the lower village. These roads mostly provide access to dwellings. Access lanes for farms are also located throughout the NA.

Pedestrian movement and public transport

Pavements are available in the majority of the settlement, particularly in the lower village and more recent developments in the NA. A network of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) is spread throughout the NA, providing access to the countryside from the village. Also, a towpath runs along the Trent & Mersey Canal crossing the area vertically. A recreational route can also be found in the area, namely the Stone Circles Challenge.

The West Coast mainline crossed the area to the west. There is a railway station in the area, but it's currently out of use. Two bus lines (14 and 14A) serve both the upper and the lower village.



Figure 22: Public footpath at the end of Vicarage Lane



Figure 23: Vehicular movement plan of the area



Figure 24: Pedestrian movement plan of the area



Figure 25: Queen Mary's Drive



Figure 26: Old Road



Figure 27: Queen Mary's Drive



Figure 28: Vicarage Lane

2.5 Settlement pattern today

Nowadays, two key patterns can be identified within Barlaston. One is the more informal and organic pattern, typical of the upper village, on the eastern side of the railway. In this area, the settlement is usually arranged along organic routes, which gives the settlement an irregular character.

To the west of the railway and at Barlaston Park, development has a more formal and planned arrangement with repeated housing typologies laid out in estates and cul-de-sacs.



Figure 31: 'Planned' and formal development on Green Close in the Lower village

2.4.1 Density

In the lower village, development is more formal and planned. This layout allows densities comprised between 14 and 25 dph throughout the housing estates. Higher densities can be observed in the apartment block along Old Road.

Density is variable in the upper village. Bigger houses with wider gardens are located along Longton Road, Broughton Crescent and Bedcroft. This type of layout entails densities that range from 7 to 11 dph. However, higher densities can also be observed in the upper village, particularly at Beechcroft development, where density is about 35 dph, and Wedgewood Lane development, where density is 44 dph.



Figure 30: Organic layout in the Upper village

Figure 29: Formal layout in the Lower village

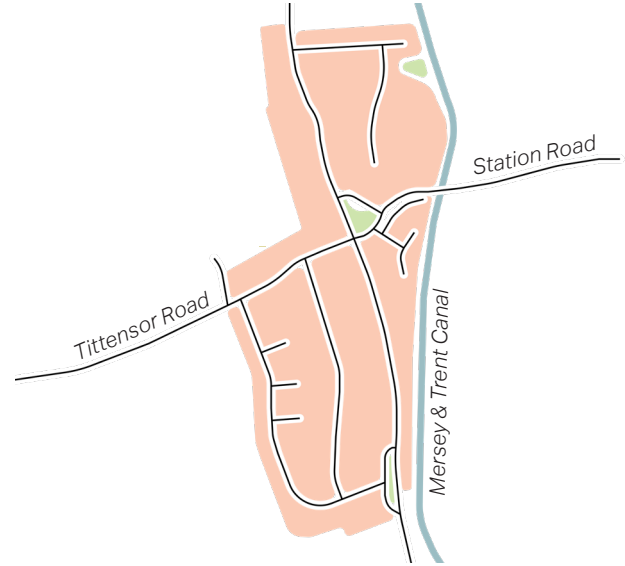




Figure 32: Figure-ground plan of the area showing density study areas (A and B)



Figure 33: Density study A

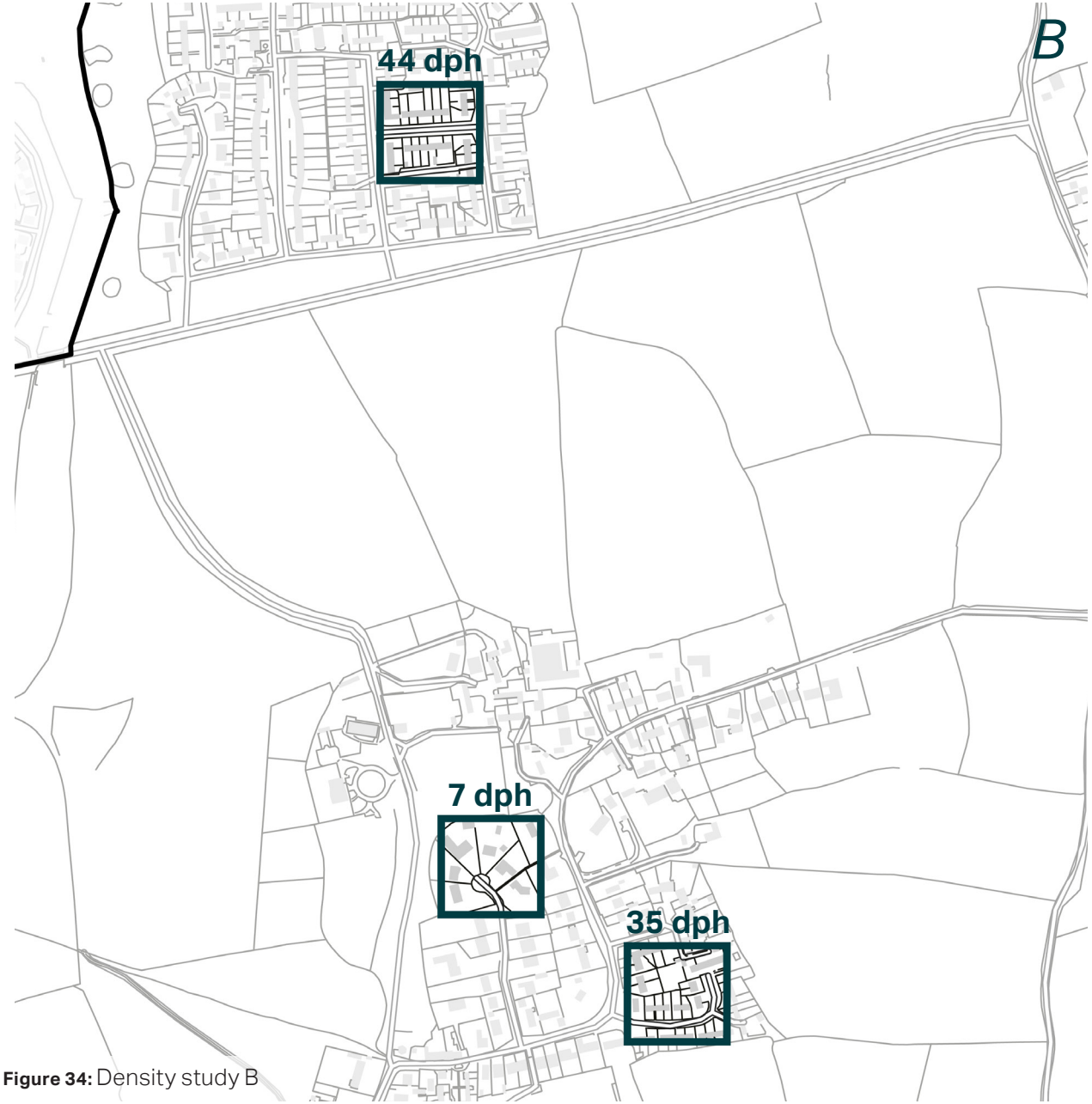


Figure 34: Density study B

2.6 Open space & amenities

The village counts three local green spaces. The main one is The Green, located along Station Road in the upper village. The other two are smaller, one located along the canal and the other at the intersection of Station Road and Old Road. There are some allotments in the lower village, just off Old Road and Meadow Road. A play area can also be found on the way to The Upper House.

A series of community facilities are also available in the village. The Barlaston Village Hall sits next to the Barlaston C of E County First School in the upper village. The Parish Church Of St John The Baptist is located just off Station Road, while the previous parish church of St John has been deconsecrated and is now used as a venue for events. Barlaston & Tittensor Scout Hut can be found on the eastern edge of the railway, while the Barlaston Methodist Church is on Park Drive in the lower village.

There are a few shops in Barlaston, particularly focused in the lower village, which has become the key commercial hub of the NA. The Orchard Place shopping precinct includes a series of local shops, including a pharmacy, a minimarket, a butcher and a barber. Other local shops can be found on Station Road in the lower village, as well as The Plume of Feathers pub. The Duke of York is located on Longton Road in the upper village.

The Barlaston Health Centre is located on Old Road at the northern end of the lower village.

Other facilities include the Barlaston Golf Club, at the southwestern end of the parish area, and the Barlaston Cricket Club in the upper village.

The community facilities and local green spaces available in the area also represent key landmarks that improve the legibility of the village.



Figure 35: Barlaston Cricket Club sign, Longton Road



Figure 36: Shopping precinct at Orchard Place

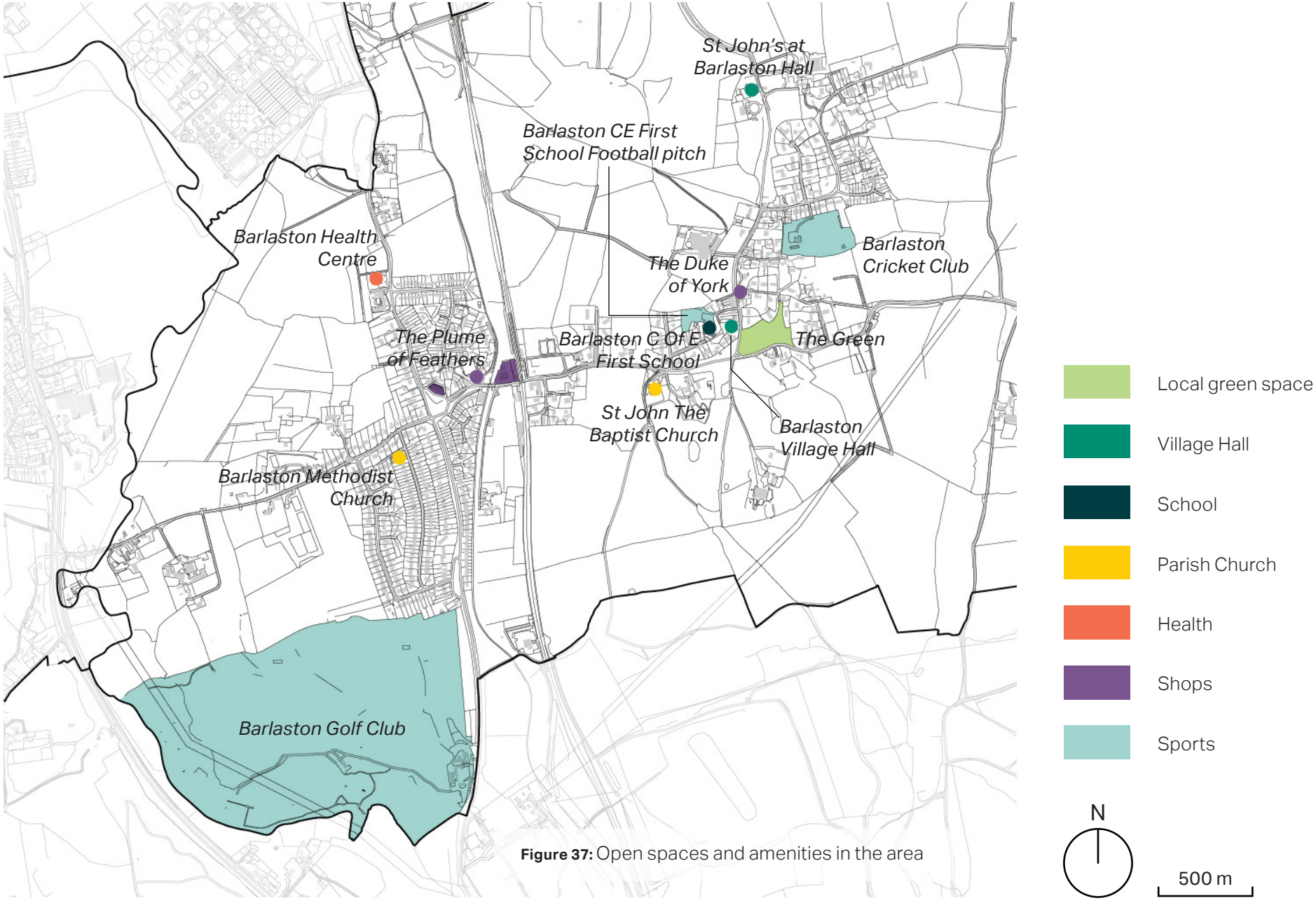


Figure 37: Open spaces and amenities in the area



Townscape & character

03

3. Villagescape & character

This section presents a study of the character of the Neighbourhood Area through the analysis of its four character areas.

3.1 Local character

Barlaston has a rural character, particularly in its eastern end. The rural character is reflected in the tranquil feel of the settlements. Buildings are low-rise and generally don't exceed 2.5 storeys throughout the area. The upper village generally has a more informal and traditional rural village character, while the lower village is more recent and has a more planned and standardised look, which makes it feel less rural. As a consequence, Barlaston has a mixed character, with a wide range of different house types can be observed, including detached, and semi-detached houses, terraces, bungalows, cottages and apartment blocks.

Materials are also varied throughout the NA with a combination of brick and render for elevations, while roofs have slate tiles, Rosemary tiles, concrete tiles and red pantiles.

The following character table reflects the mixed character of Barlaston and illustrates the key materials and design features that can be observed in the NA.

Key characteristics

Colours and materiality

Façade

Red brick



Pale render

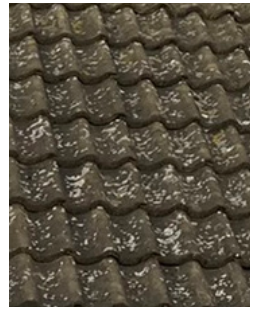


Roofing

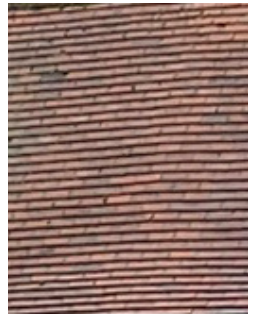
Grey slate tile



Concrete tile



Rosemary tile



Red pantile

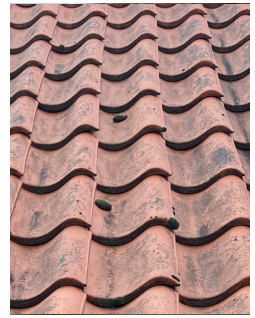


Table 03: Village characteristics table

Boundary treatments



Hedgerow



Low-rise red brick wall



Low-rise sandstone wall



Iron fence

Doorways



Doorway with porch



Unsheltered doorway

Windows



Casement window



Sashes



Dormer window



Bay and bow windows

3.2 Character Areas

Despite the features previously identified apply to the whole area, there are significant differences in terms of layout, plot size and shape and period of development throughout the settlement. This entails the distinction of three key character areas:

1. Lower village, Wedgwood and infill sites
2. Upper village
3. Open landscape

These character areas are shown in the adjacent plan and will be analysed in the following paragraphs.

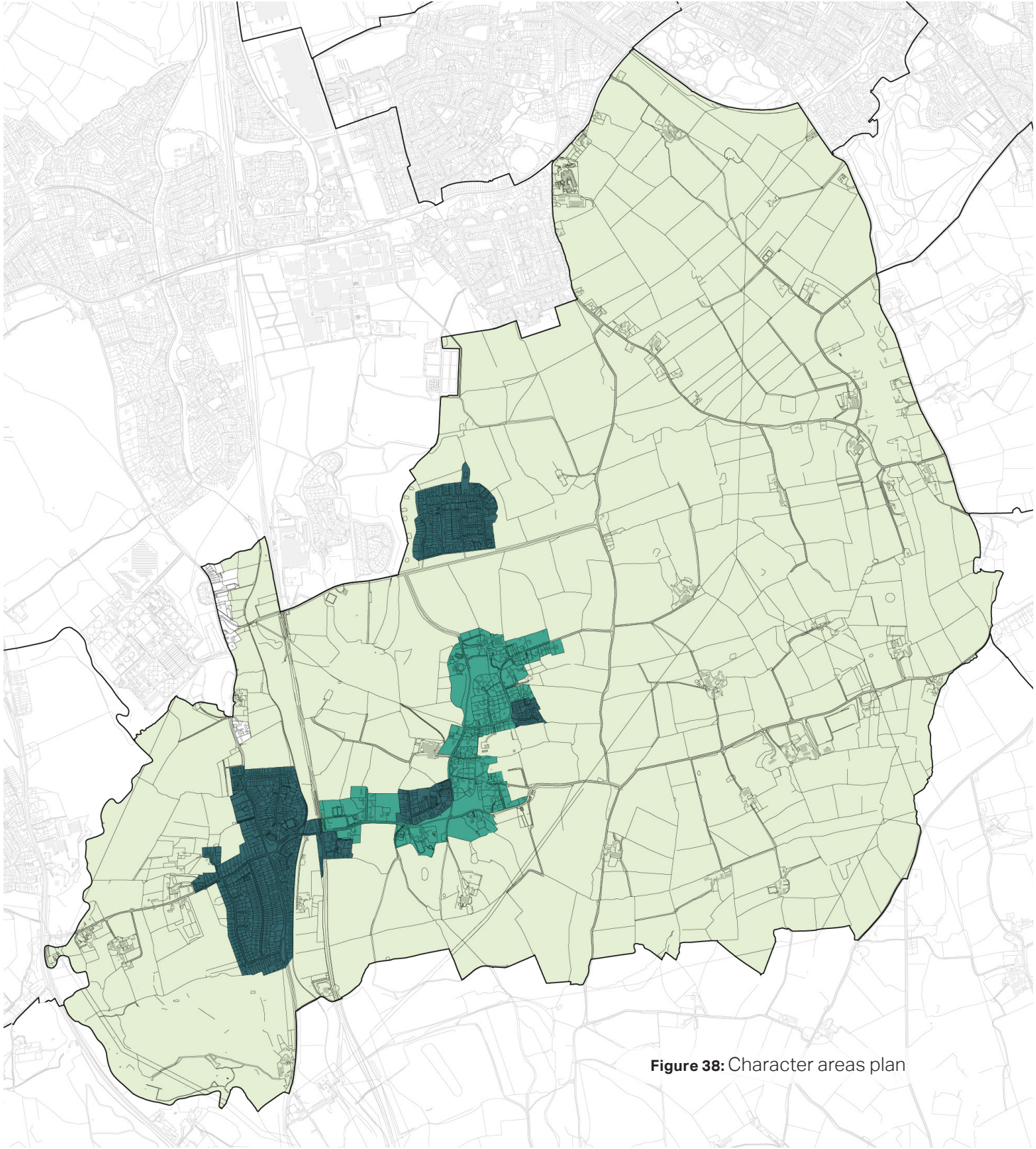


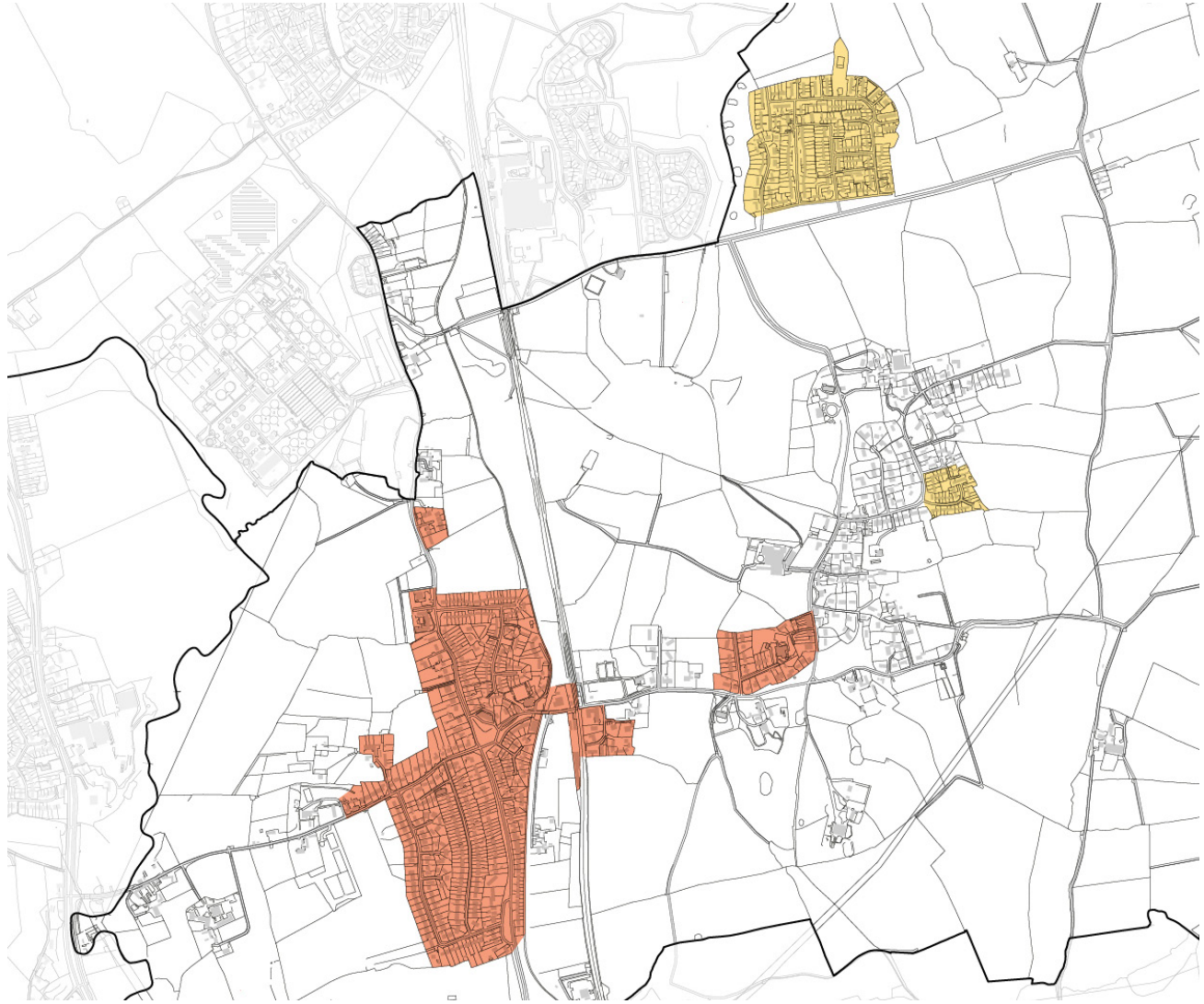
Figure 38: Character areas plan

1 Lower village, Wedgwood and infill sites

3.3 Lower village, Wedgwood and infill sites

This character area can be divided into two key zones, all developed in the second half of 1900:

- Lower village
- Wedgewood Lane development



Lower village

The lower village generally sees a bigger variety of materials, which include red brick, yellow brick, render and hanging tiles for elevations. It includes a combination of detached houses, semi-detached houses, bungalows, a few terraces and one apartment block. A series of bungalows are found on Diamond Ridge and the southern end of Park Drive, while bigger semi-detached houses are predominant in the rest of the sub-area. Buildings are set back from streets, with a distance ranging from 5 m to 30 m (on Meaford Road). Pavements can be found on all the roads and are from 1.5 to 2 m wide, while green verges are not always available. Highways are generally 5 m wide, although narrower lanes and slightly wider roads (Meaford Road) can be observed.



Figure 39: Semi-detached houses on Meadow Road



Highway width



Boundary treatments



Building front to front distance



Pavements



Building set-back



Grass verges



Figure 40: Semi-detached houses on Broughton Crescent

Wedgewood Lane development

Wedgewood Lane development is a planned estate, and as such is generally less varied in terms of materials, as red brick is predominant with only some render facades and details. This sub-area includes a large number of terraces, detached houses, semi-detached houses and a few apartment blocks. Buildings are set back from streets, with a distance ranging from 5 m to 10 m. All the roads in the Wedgewood Lane development have green verges and pavements or footpaths on both sides, which are about 2 m wide. Highways are generally 5 m wide.



Figure 41: Personalised front garden in the Wedgewood Lane development



Highway width



Boundary treatments



Building front to front distance



Pavements



Building set-back



Grass verges

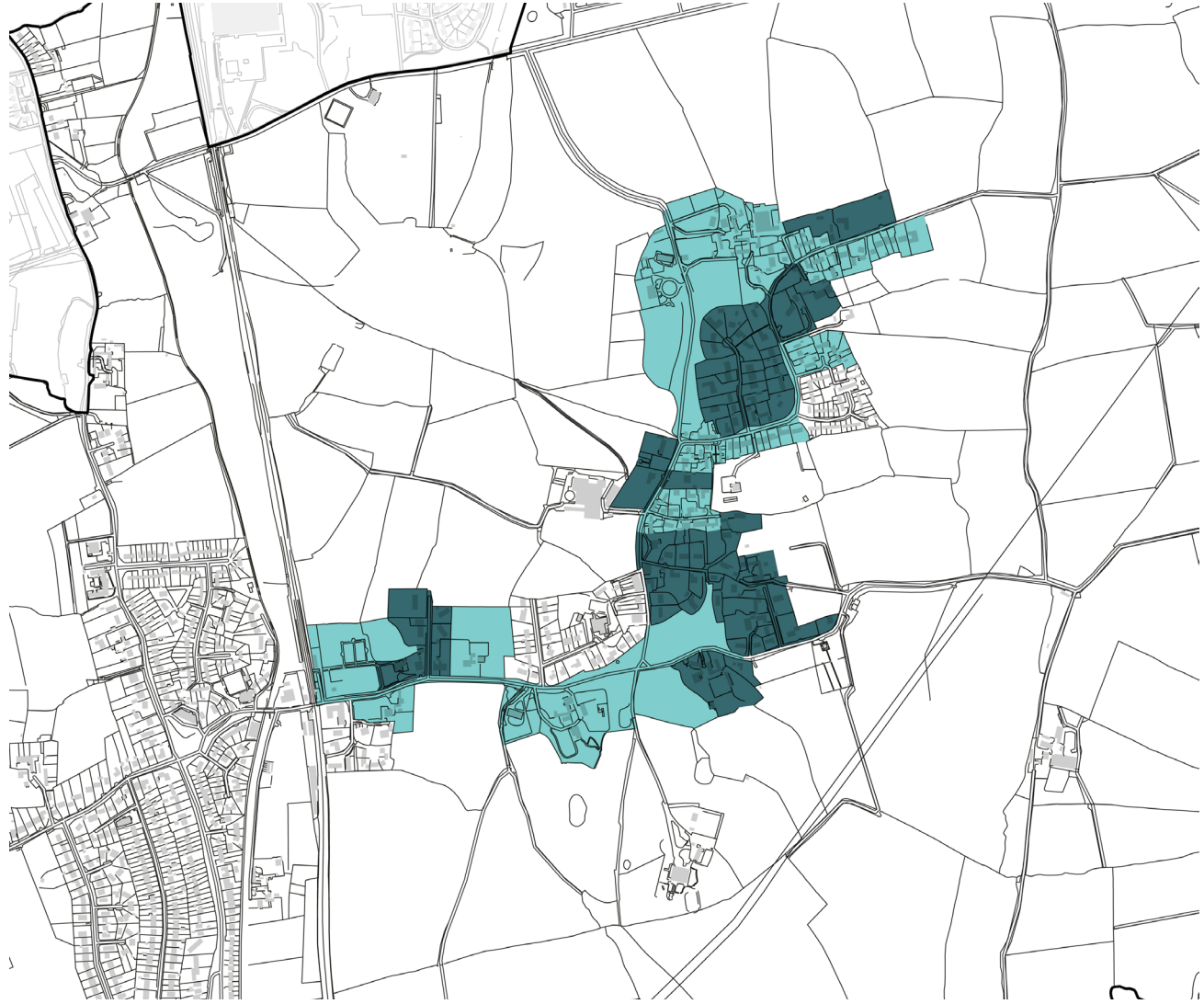


Figure 42: Semi-detached houses on Broughton Crescent

2 Upper village

3.4 Upper village

This character area is the older part of Barlaston. It can be divided into two key sub-areas: Wider properties and Finer grain development.



Wider properties

Finer grain development

N

500 m

Wider properties

This character area is marked by the presence of bigger houses with wider plots. Detached and semi-detached buildings are predominant. Buildings generally have wide setbacks from the street (25 – 30 metres) and wide space between each other, creating a less dense development. Streets look differently throughout the character area. Bedcroft has pavements on both sides (about 2 metres wide) of the road and stone / brick walls alternate with hedgerows, while Vicarage Lane has no pavements and boundary treatments are predominantly hedgerows with some timber fencing. Highways are 4 – 5 metres wide.



Figure 43: Detached house on Bedcroft



Highway width



Boundary treatments



Building front to front distance



Pavements



Building set-back



Grass verges



Figure 44: Red-brick detached house on Longton Road

Finer grain development

This sub-area is characterised by smaller properties and plots, which create higher-density developments and more enclosed streetscapes. Detached houses, semi-detached houses and terraces can be observed. Setbacks from the street are generally smaller and range from 0 to 20 metres. Longton Road and Station Road are the main routes through the character area and have pavements on both sides for most of their length. Other minor routes like Malthouse Lane don't have pavements. This sub-area includes the village green and other streets with wide green verges. A distinctive street Is Queen Mary's Drive, which is tree-lined with lime trees. Boundaries are generally hedgerows and brick / stone walls. Highways are about 5 metres wide.



Figure 45: Malthouse Farm on Malthouse Lane



Highway width



Boundary treatments



Building front to front distance



Pavements



Building set-back



Grass verges

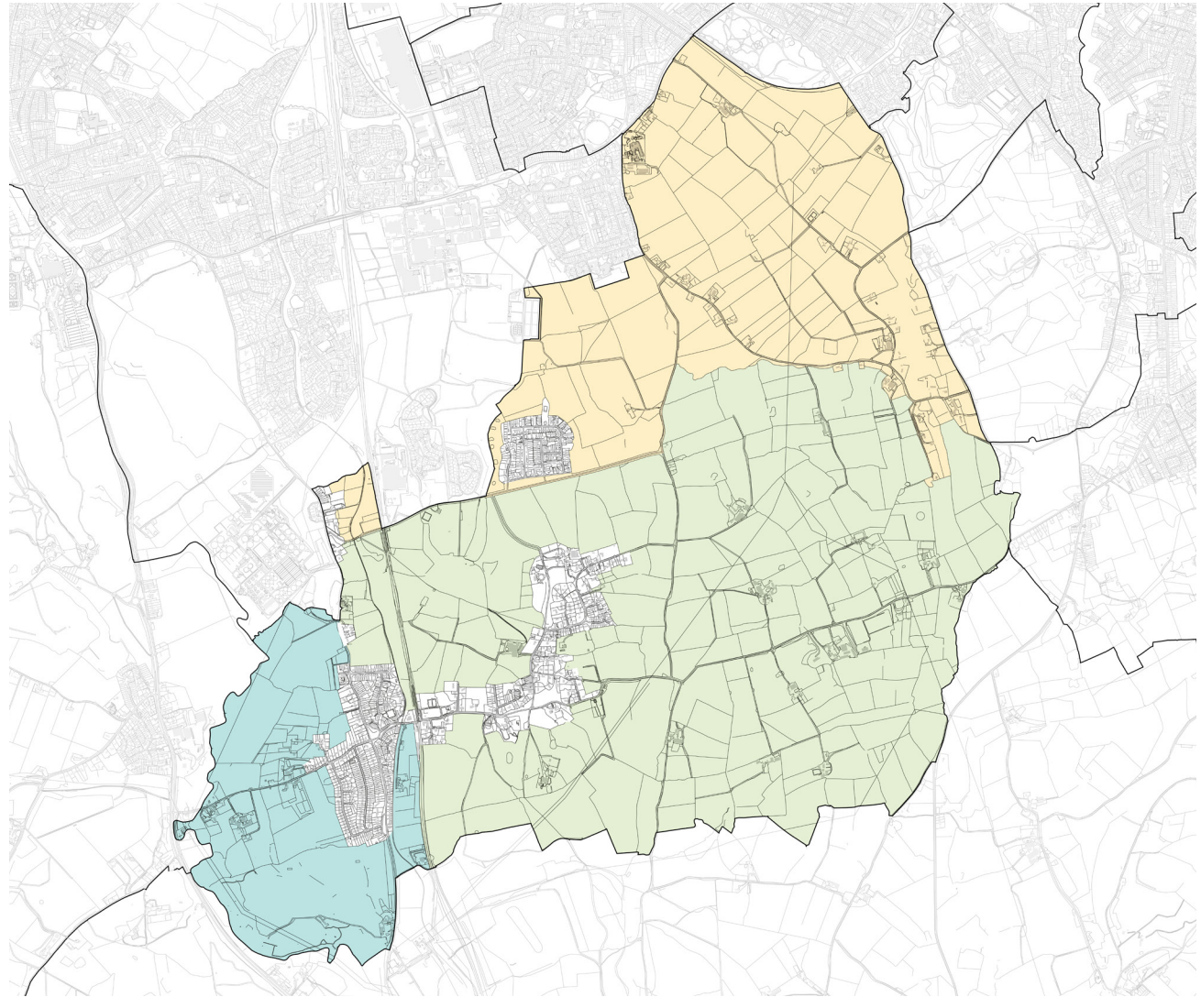


Figure 46: Terraces on Longton Road

3 Open landscape

3.5 Open landscape

This character area includes all the rural landscape that surrounds the main settlement. The landscape within the area is generally rolling and sloping towards the River Trent, with views of the surrounding areas and woodland patches. Three sub-areas can be identified: Western landscape, Central landscape and Northern landscape.



Western landscape

This sub-area is mostly rural but includes some properties, particularly on Tittensor Road next to the River Trent. These buildings include Heyfield Cottages (Grade II Listed Building) as well as farms and detached properties. The main roads are Tittensor Road, Old Road and Meaford Road, which all have one pavement and are 5 metres wide. Buildings at the end of Tittensor Road create an enclosed streetscape for a short segment and have a face-to-face distance of only 6 metres. However, this is an exception in such a rural area. Setbacks vary from 0 (some properties on Tittensor Road) to 30 m. Boundary treatments include hedgerows and timber fences. Another remarkable feature is the Barlaston Golf Club, which occupies the southern end of this sub-area.



Figure 48: View of the open landscape from Tittensor Road



Highway width



Boundary treatments



Building front to front distance



Pavements



Building set-back



Grass verges



Figure 47: Heyfield Cottages on Tittensor Road

Central landscape

This sub-area is predominantly rural with sparse farms. Some farms have been reconverted and are now properties. Buildings include farmsteads, barns and detached houses and generally have wide setbacks (25 metres) with some exceptions. Boundary treatments include hedgerows and timber fences. Roads that cross this area have a strong rural character, with grass verges and hedgerows, and are usually 4 – 5 metres wide, however narrower access lanes can be observed.



Figure 49: View of the open landscape from Longton Road



Highway width



Boundary treatments



Pavements



Grass verges



Figure 50: Wedgewood Drive

Northern landscape

The northern end of the NA is adjacent to Stoke on Trent's southern suburbs. This interaction entails that some roads on the edge of the NA have a slightly more suburban character, for example, the northern end of Barlaston Road. Despite the rural character of this sub-area, some semi-detached houses can be observed alongside detached houses, farmhouses and barns, with setbacks varying from only 5 (in particular on the northern end of the NA) to 50 metres. Boundary treatments are hedgerows, and red brick / stone walls. Some roads have pavements on both sides, particularly those roads bordering Stoke on Trent (Trentham Road, Barlaston Road), while others preserve a strongly rural character with no pavements and grass verges. Roads are usually 4 – 5 metres wide, however, narrower access lanes can be found.



Figure 51: View of the open landscape from Woodpark Lane



Highway width



Boundary treatments



Pavements



Grass verges



Building set-back



Figure 52: Detached house on Barlaston Road



Design guidance & codes

04

4. Design guidance & codes

The design codes and guidance set out in this section prioritise sustainability and contextually responsive design for new development, as well as active travel and infrastructural improvements within the Neighbourhood Area.

4.1 Introduction

This section provides guidance on the design of development, setting out expectations that relevant planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area will be expected to address. The guidelines developed in this section focus on residential environments. Development should not be viewed in isolation and the design and layout of the rural built form must respond to the wider development pattern and landscape context.

Understanding the character across the Neighbourhood Area is key to all new design proposals. The local pattern and use of streets and spaces, building types, materials and their interplay with the natural environment and wider landscape in which they sit will help to improve the character and identity of new developments, and make them more accepted locally. It is important that any proposal takes full account of the local context and that the new design embodies the 'sense of place', both in terms of local character and distinctive features, particularly the listed buildings and the conservation area.

Responding to the context means recognising existing positive design solutions and using existing cues as inspiration. Proposals for a new scheme could adopt a traditional approach or a contemporary design that is innovating with purpose, whilst being in harmony with the built environment and landscape.

There is not always agreement on aesthetic issues and architectural taste but using appropriate design precedents and a clear design process will give results that are less subjective and represent 'good design'.

Contemporary design must improve and enhance the setting and sustainability of the site/ Neighbourhood Area whilst not detracting from the appearance of the landscape character.

4.2 Code structure

The following topics are addressed by design codes in this section, that apply to the whole Neighbourhood Area:

A - Character & Quality in New Development

B - Responsive Design for Infill Development and Extensions

C - Sustainable Design & Climate Resilience

A Character & Quality in New Development

4.3 Character & Quality in New Development

The design codes below set out how to respond to the local features defined in the previous section. These responses must help formulate and review design proposals in line with local preferences for high-quality design.

A1 - Preserve and Enhance Character Features

- Development must be respectful of local character features, that must be preserved and enhanced within the settlement. These include:
  - The use of local materials for elevations: red brick and render create the varied character of Barlaston;
  - Roofs: grey slate; concrete tiles; Rosemary tiles; red pantile;
  - Fenestration: casements, sashes, dormers and bay windows are reflective of the local character. Also, timber should be preferred over UPVC;
  - Doorways (unsheltered / with porches);
  - Boundary treatments (low sandstone and red brick walls, hedgerows and iron fences); and
  - Quoins, dentillation, street-facing gables.
- Design of details and features must respond to the settlement in which it is sited or adjacent to (including the surrounding landscape) to enhance the positive qualities of the area;
- Designers must consider landscape and the rural character of the villages as a key feature to be preserved and enhanced; and
- Development located on the edge of the settlement is essential for a soft transition into the open landscape, and thus should be low density and include a higher amount of greenery, such as trees, hedgerows, green verges and lawns.



Figure 53: Semi-detached houses on Meadow Road



Figure 54: Key set of materials to be used in new developments

A2 - Massing and layout

- Development must reflect the massing and arrangement of surrounding buildings, including height, depth and setbacks;
- Development layout should respect Barlaston's historic and traditional character by reflecting the varied and mixed streetscapes of the village, with buildings not exceeding 2.5 storeys and mostly setback from the street (0 - 30 metres); and
- The massing and scale of buildings located on the edge of the settlement should be reduced and not impact the character and views of the open landscape.

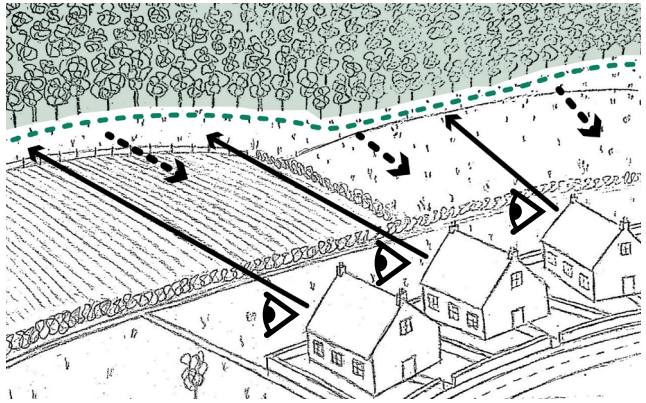


Figure 57: Development located on the edge of the settlement should be aware of the visual impact it can have on the open landscape

A3 – Local economy

- Promote and support local green power generation for community benefit, using sustainable methods;
- Public-facing businesses are encouraged. However they must not disrupt the distinctive rural character of the area when located in rural settlements or at the edge of the settlement;
- Small rural enterprise projects, such as local shops and craft workshops are encouraged to bring vitality to the rural settlements of the Neighbourhood Area (NA);
- Improve circular walks and permissible walkways in the area to connect the different settlements within the Neighbourhood Area and the surroundings;
- Upgrade existing footpaths and enhance connections to the neighbouring city of Stoke-on-Trent, villages and landscape; and
- Consider the rural character of the area as a distinctive feature and preserve the existing natural landscape to avoid the more urban character of Stoke-on-Trent impacting Barlaston.

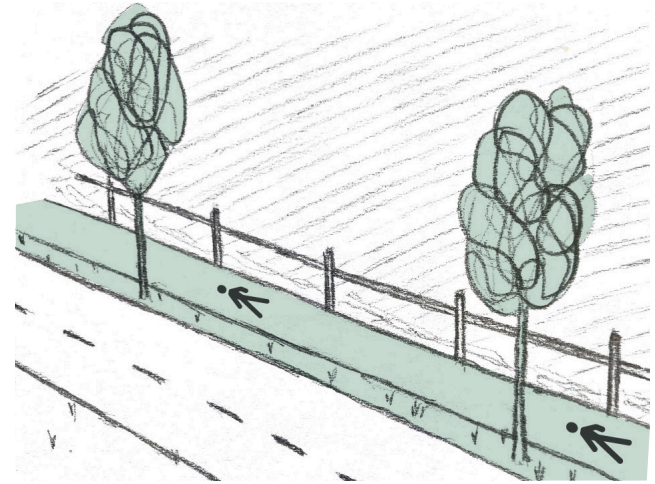


Figure 55: Footpath improvement



Figure 56: Existing business in the area - Adam Josef Hair, in the shopping precinct

A4 – Car parking

- Designers should consider different parking solutions, including:
  - On-plot car parks located at the front or side of the building;
  - Garages. Refer to local examples in the area.
- Service areas provided at the back of the building avoid visual impact on the rural character of the area. This solution should be particularly considered where car parks can have a major impact on the character of the streetscape;
- Integrate car parking sensitively within the streetscene. Where parking is required at the front of the plot it should be afforded sufficient space and utilise hedgerows to screen cars from the street. A series of unscreened car parks at the front of the building could have a detrimental impact on the streetscape;
- On-street parking, apart from visitor parking, should be avoided. Single garages will not be considered to be a parking space. Electric vehicle charging points should be accessible for cars on driveways, garages or carports;
- Porous surface and green parking spaces (for example grass-crete) are preferable to impermeable parking spaces; and
- Garages are sometimes used for storage rather than for parking and should be set to the rear of the plot in an internal service area if possible.



Figure 58: On-plot parking on Malthouse Lane



Figure 59: On-plot parking on Bedcroft



Figure 60: Garages on Longton Road

B Responsive Design for Infill Development and Extensions

4.4 Responsive Design for Infill Development and Extensions

Infill development is smaller scale development (historically 1 or 2 homes within the NP area) within an existing developed context. This type of development commonly consists of three main types:

- Gap site development within a street frontage;
- Backland development; and
- Site redevelopment (for example, replacement of existing building/s).

Every future development should include environmental and social benefits, consider natural habitats, and include measures to combat climate change.

B1 – Overarching Aims

The overarching aim of these guidelines is to promote context-sensitive infill housing and extensions of a high quality. This should improve the street scene and locate new homes close to and in support of existing amenities. The following are key aims of the guidance:

- Protect residential amenities, both of new and existing occupiers;
- Contribute to the creation of distinctive and sustainable communities, places and spaces;
- Respect local vernacular architecture;
- Be of good design and encompass sustainability principles; and
- Respond to the context and character of the area.

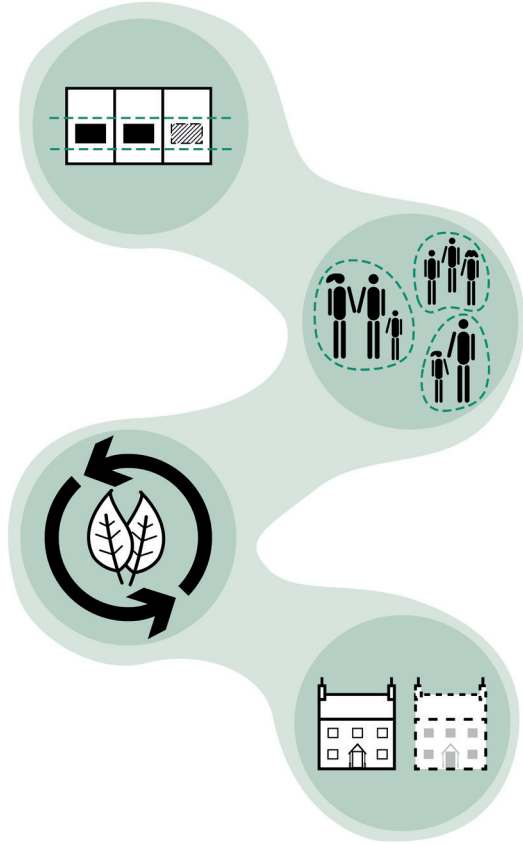


Figure 61: Infographic about Infill development overarching aims

B2 – Design Principles

The following design principles apply to infill development and extensions that may come forward via applications within the NA, although some extensions are covered under permitted development rights and so do not require planning permission:

- Artificial architectural features should be avoided (for example, fibreglass and chimneys);
- Side extensions within the built environment should be limited to a single-storey and shouldn't impact negatively the surrounding context;
- Building scale and massing should be in keeping with the prevailing development pattern and not be overbearing on existing properties or deprive them of light, including over-looking or over-shadowing of both windows and amenity space;
- The building line should reflect the street and be set back no more than a maximum of 1.5m from adjacent buildings unless additional landscaping or tree planting is being introduced to the street scene;
- Where buildings are set back from the street a boundary should define the plot and link up to adjacent buildings / plots (for example hedgerows or low stone / brick walls);
- Materials should reflect positive local characteristics and harmonise with adjacent buildings with matching or complementary materials. Red brick and render for elevations, and natural slate, red pantiles, concrete tiles and Rosemary tiles for roofs are the predominant materials in the Neighbourhood Area and should be reflected in new development. Refer to the character study in the previous chapter;
- Building fenestration and pattern should be in keeping with the predominant buildings' character in the Neighbourhood Area or harmonise with adjacent buildings of positive character. Casements, dormers, bay and bow windows and sashes are recurrent in the area and new development should seek to include them. Timber should be preferred over UPVC;
- Building entrances should address the street with a main access and main fenestration. Corner buildings should address both streets with fenestration but the main entrance could be on either subject to access requirements. Unsheltered doorways or porched doorways are recurring in the NA and should be reflected in new development;
- Building façade design should respect the horizontal rhythm of plots and building subdivisions on the street in order to integrate and maintain visual continuity or add to the visual interest where required;

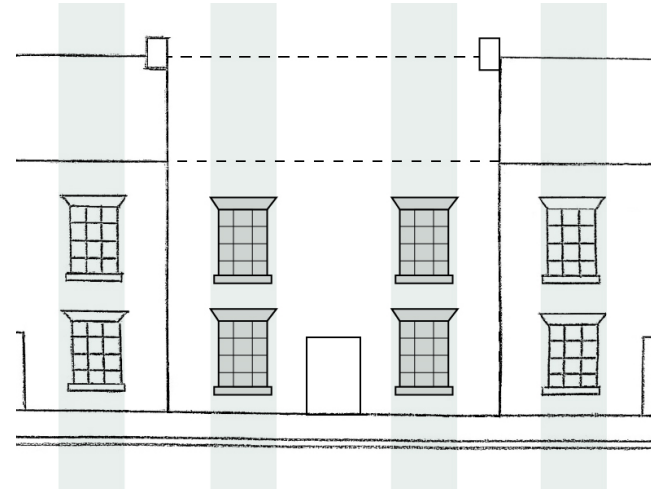


Figure 62: Good practice diagram: the window typology and fenestration pattern match the ones of neighbouring properties

- Building heights should vary between 1 - 2.5 storeys depending on adjacent plots. A variable eaves line and ridgeline is allowed to create interest but variation between adjacent buildings should be a maximum of 0.5 storeys in general;
- Front of plot areas and rear gardens should be of sufficient size and landscaped appropriately to fit in with prevailing planting pattern or to enhance the rural and natural character of the area;
- Rear or side plot boundaries which face public spaces should be hedgerows, stone walls or red brick walls to match adjacent plots and add to the streetscene quality. These boundary treatments should also be low to reflect the surrounding character of the area and allow natural surveillance;
- Boundary treatments (hedgerows, stone walls and red brick walls), matched with green verges or other soft landscaping, should define a clear separation between public and private land;
- Access and storage for bins should be designed to accommodate 4 wheelie bins and be located at the rear of dwellings or in a dedicated enclosure;
- Gaps between gables should be retained to preserve views of the surrounding countryside. Side extensions should also be limited to a single storey to preserve gaps between buildings. Extensions should avoid the loss of an on-plot parking space; and
- The 25/45˚rule illustrated in Figure 64 should be used to ensure that there is no blocking of light or overbearing mass to adjoining properties when designing extensions or new dwellings.

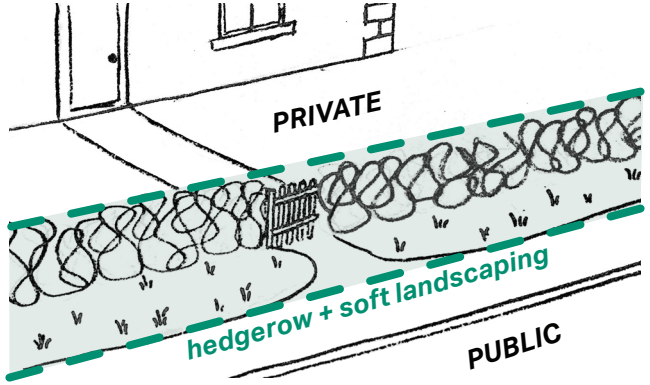
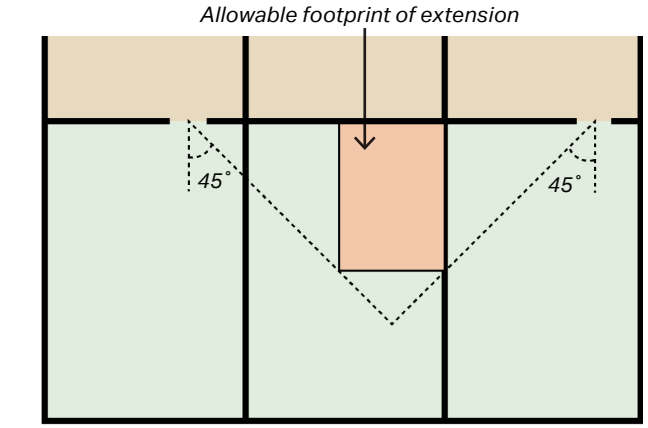


Figure 63: Positive example of clear separation between public and private land



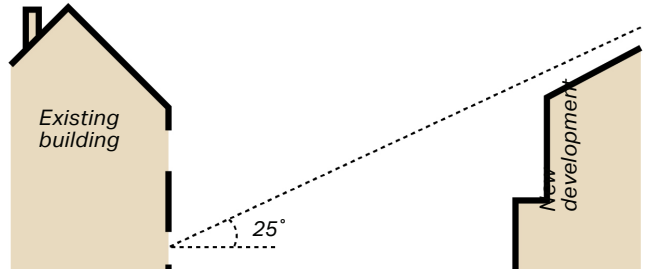


Figure 64: 25˚ / 45˚ rule

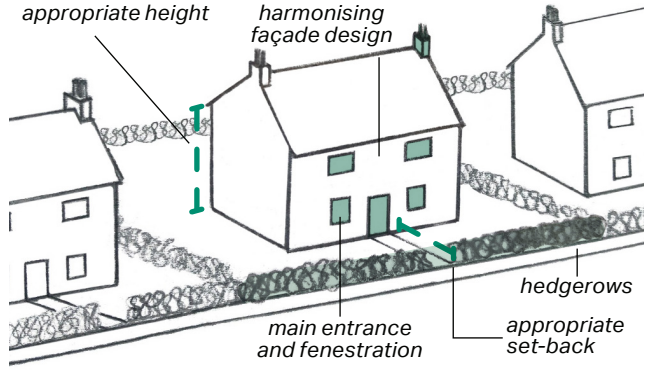


Figure 65: Positive example of infill development design

C Sustainable Design & Climate Resilience

4.5 Sustainable Design & Climate Resilience

Climate change has created the need to decrease our carbon footprint towards net-zero by providing innovative solutions to transportation (electrification) and the energy use of buildings. Sustainable design incorporates innovative practices at all scales of design to achieve less impactful development footprints, whilst future-proofing homes, settlements and natural environments. Reducing the use of limited natural resources whilst increasing the utilisation of local resources and sustainable natural resources can help to achieve this.

C1 - Resilience to Climate Change

All new development should work to moderate extremes of temperature, wind, humidity, local flooding and pollution in the NA:

- Homes should not be sited in high-risk flood areas nor in areas at high risk of surface water flooding. New developments must demonstrate how they intend to mitigate the risk of flooding with sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). These reduce the amount and rate at which surface water reaches sewers/watercourses. Often, the most sustainable option is collecting this water for reuse, for example in a water butt or rainwater harvesting system. This has the added benefit of reducing pressure on valuable water sources;
- Eco-systems cannot adapt as fast as the climate is changing leading to loss of biodiversity. Protecting and enhancing Barlaston's extensive natural landscape can combat this; and
- Use street trees and planting to provide shading and cooling and moderate and improve micro-climate for streets and spaces.



Figure 66: Protecting and enhancing the NA's natural elements can combat the loss of biodiversity

C2 – Assessing Alternative Energy Sources

Key considerations in the assessment of alternative energy sources for development may include (but are not limited to):

- Optimise solar orientation of buildings. Aim to increase the number of buildings on site that are oriented within 30' of the south (both main fenestration and roof plane) for solar gain, solar energy (solar panels) and natural daylighting;
- Ground conditions to accommodate loops for ground source heat and space for air source heat pump units;
- Links to local estates for sustainable coppicing, harvesting or recycling of biomass fuels; and
- Local wind speed and direction in Barlaston for micro-generation wind turbines.

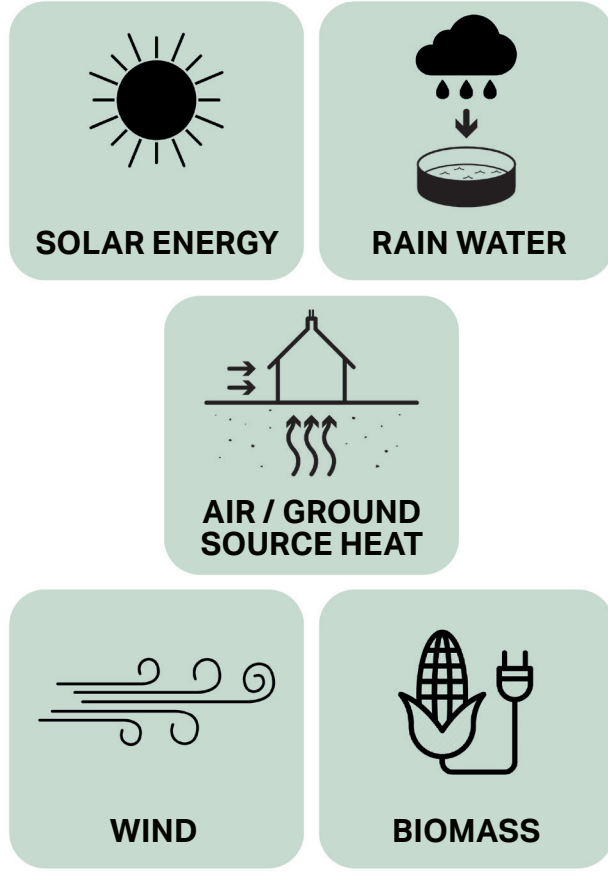


Figure 68: Key alternative natural energy sources



Figure 67: Micro-generation wind turbines can be discreetly applied on top of roofs

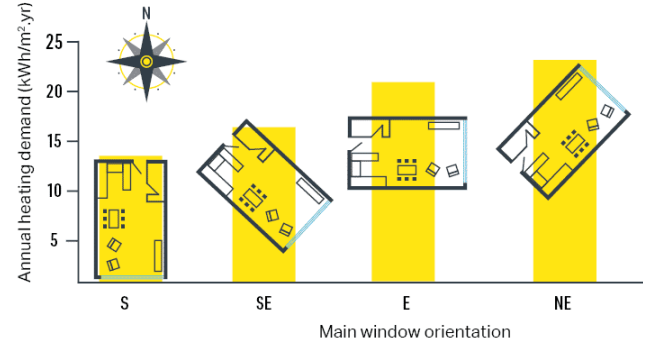


Figure 69: Building orientation influences the annual heating demand

C2 – Sustainable drainage

The term SuDS stands for Sustainable Drainage Systems. It covers a range of approaches to managing surface water in a more sustainable way to reduce flood risk and improve water quality whilst improving amenity benefits.

- Form a 'SuDS train' of two or three different surface water management approaches;
- Integrate into development and improve amenity through early consideration in the development process and good design practices;
- SuDS are often as important in areas that are not directly in an area of flood risk themselves, as they can help reduce downstream flood risk by storing water upstream; and
- Some of the most effective SuDS are vegetated, using natural processes to slow and clean the water whilst increasing the biodiversity value of the area; and
- The location of SuDS features will respond to the topography on site.



Figure 70: Roadside SuDS



Figure 71: SuDS precedent, Mavesyn Ridware

B3 – Electric Vehicle charging

Current transition to electric vehicle technology and ownership comes with related issues that must be addressed by new development. Two key areas are explored below - public parking areas and private parking for homes.

Design issues to address for public parking:

- Provision of adequate new charging points and spaces and retrofitting existing parking areas;
- Retrofitting existing public parking and upkeeping design quality of streets and spaces (attractiveness and ease of servicing/ maintenance);
- Integrating charging infrastructure sensitively within streets and spaces, for example, by aligning with green infrastructure and street furniture.

Design issues to address for Parking at the home:

- Convenient on plot parking and charging points close to homes;
- Potential to incorporate charging points under cover within car ports and garages;
- Still need to integrate car parking sensitively within the streetscene. For example, parking set behind the building line or front of plot spaces lined with native hedgerow planting;
- Need to consider visitor parking / charging needs;
- Existing unallocated / on-street parking areas and feasibility to provide electric charging infrastructure not linked to the home; and
- Potential for providing secure, serviced communal parking areas for higher density homes.



Figure 72: Public electric vehicles charging points



Figure 73: Home electric vehicles charging point

C4 - Energy efficiency measures towards Net-Zero carbon

By default, new development should adopt a fabric-first approach in line with the government's emerging Future Homes Standard, to attain higher standards of insulation and energy conservation.

- Reducing energy demand further by employing passive design principles for homes is desirable and can make some forms of development more acceptable to the community (window orientation, solar gain, solar shading, increased insulation, ventilation with heat recovery);
- Maximise on-site renewable energy generation (solar, ground source, air source and wind-driven); and
- Consider building form and thermal efficiency: terraces, semi-detached and detached all have different energy efficiency profiles. This must be balanced with local design preference and character considerations to ease acceptance for development.

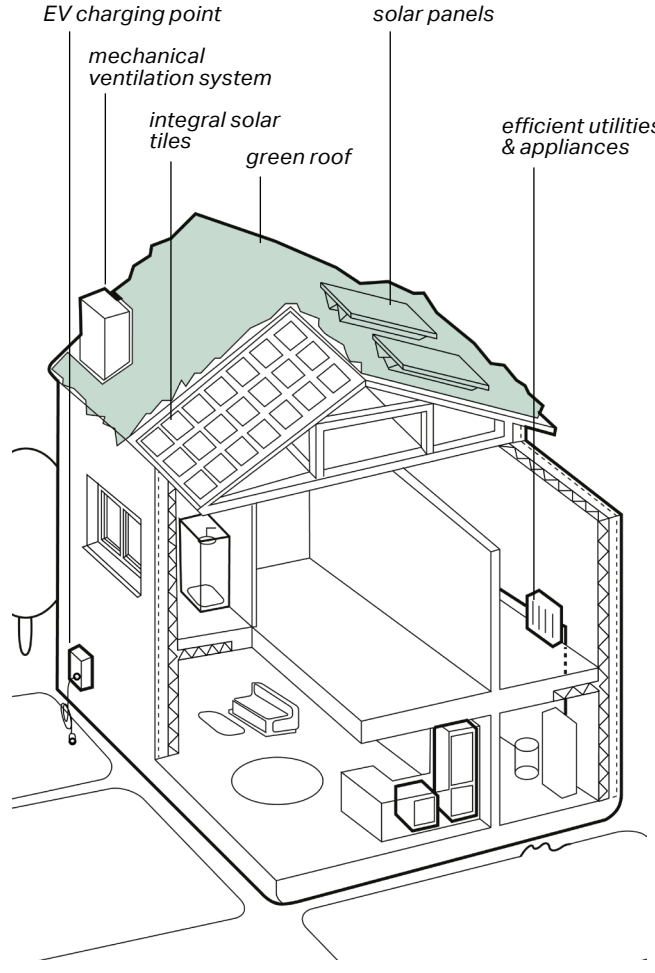


Figure 74: Cut-through diagram of an energy efficient home and its features



Figure 76: Solar panels on Longton Road



Figure 75: Air source heat pump housing covers the unit and harmonises with the building aesthetic



Character area-specific design codes

05

5. Character area-specific design codes

The following section presents design codes and guidance that will inform new development in the three distinct character areas in Barlaston.

Introduction

A primary purpose of this Design Guide and Codes is to help generate sensitive and characterful design responses to the existing settlements and their landscape settings.

The previous settlement analysis has highlighted that there are different character areas in Barlaston with distinctive features.

Therefore, this document adopts a character area-specific approach to enhance the distinctiveness of all the areas identified. This will avoid the progressive acquisition of standard and generic design approaches, which could result in the loss of the peculiar features that define their distinctive character.

The following section collects key features for the lower village, Wedgwood and infill sites, upper village and open landscape character areas, which will inform new development and provides specific codes to promote the preservation of these distinctive features that characterise these areas and enforce their relationship to the surrounding natural landscape.



Figure 77: Detached house Hartwell Lane



Figure 78: Barn conversion - Chestnut Barn

A Lower village, Wedgwood and infill sites

5.1 Lower village, Wedgwood and infill sites design codes

The design codes set out how to respond to the lower village, Wedgwood and infill sites features defined in the previous section.

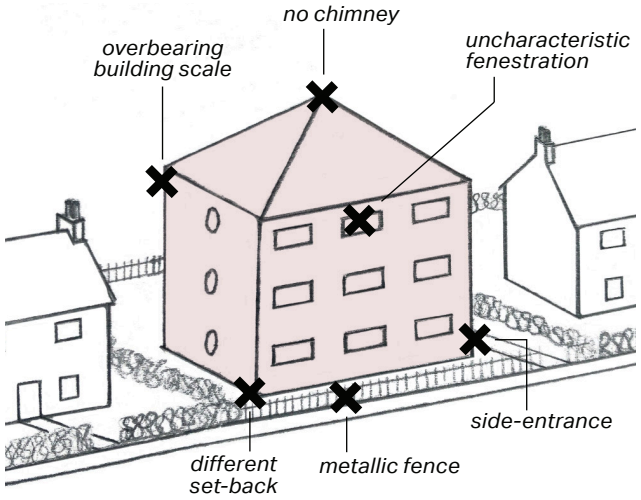


Figure 79: Inappropriate example of new development

Lower village, Wedgwood and infill sites design recommendations:

- New development should link up to the existing pavements and pedestrian movement network of the area;
- Green verges are often found next to pavements and should be preserved. New development should seek to include green verges;
- New buildings should be setback from the street like most of the buildings in the immediate area (5 - 30 metres);
- New development should keep the streetscape open to reflect the wide building front-to-front distance typical of the area;
- Despite the formal layout and look of the area, new development should still aim to reflect the rurality of Barlaston and avoid overbearing buildings exceeding 2.5 storeys;
- New development should reflect the mixed character of the area, including a mix of detached and semi-detached properties and terraces;
- Despite reflecting the more 'formal' and 'planned' character of the area, new development should still aim to reduce negative impacts on the landscape of the NA and sensitively integrate with the topography; and
- Boundary treatments facing the Trent & Mersey Canal towpath should be low-rise and allow natural surveillance.

B Upper village

5.2 Upper village design codes

The design codes set out how to respond to the Upper Village characteristics defined in the previous section.

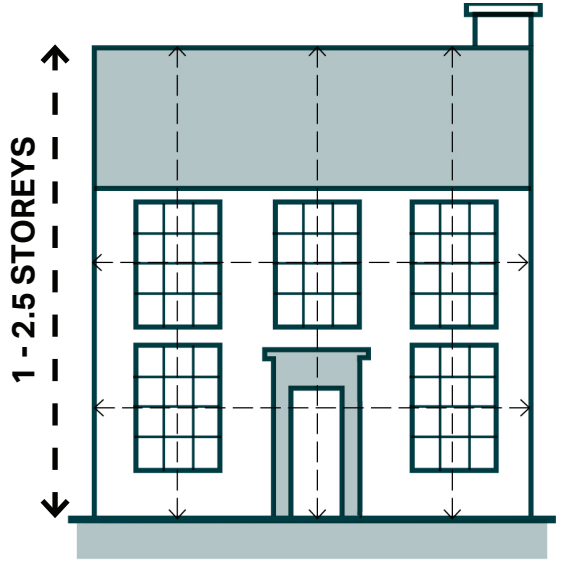


Figure 80: New buildings shouldn't exceed 2.5 storeys

Upper village design recommendations:

- New development should reflect the organic and informal layout of the Upper village;
- Different densities and layouts can be observed in the Upper village:
  - The Wider properties sub-area has wider front-to-front building distance and new development should preserve the open streetscape;
  - The Finer grain development sub-area has smaller front-to-front distances. New development should reflect the more intimate streetscape;
- Grass verges are an essential feature in such a rural context, and thus should be preserved by new development;
- Mature trees are abundant and represent a key feature of this character area. New development should aim to retain any mature trees located on the development site;
- The Upper village has a rural character. New development shouldn't exceed 2.5 storeys to preserve this;
- Views of the surrounding landscape are widely available from the edges of the settlement. New development should consider these views and avoid obstructing them; and
- Hedgerows boundary treatments are preferred alongside low-rise brick and stone walls in order to preserve the rural feel of the area.

C Open landscape

5.3 Open landscape design codes

The design codes set out how to respond to the open landscape features defined in the previous section.

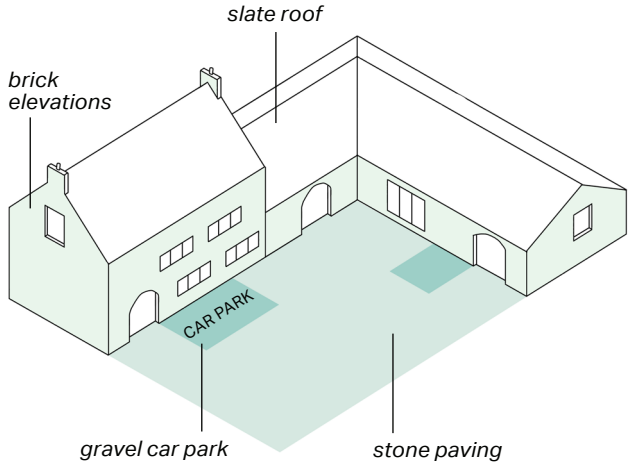


Figure 81: Farmsteads reflect the character of the area

Open landscape design recommendations:

- This area falls entirely within the Green Belt, and as such needs to be preserved. This will prevent Stoke-on-Trent's expansion to the south, that could impact the rural character of Barlaston.
- New development, if any and where Green Belt policy permits, should be minor scale and be in harmony with the rural character of the area. This includes the use of materials such as red brick for elevations and slate for roofing, which blend harmoniously with the landscape;
- Barn and farmstead conversions can include innovative design solutions but should always keep the original rural character of the building and be aware of any impact that the intervention might have on the surrounding landscape.



Figure 82: Red brick and slate harmonise with the surrounding landscape

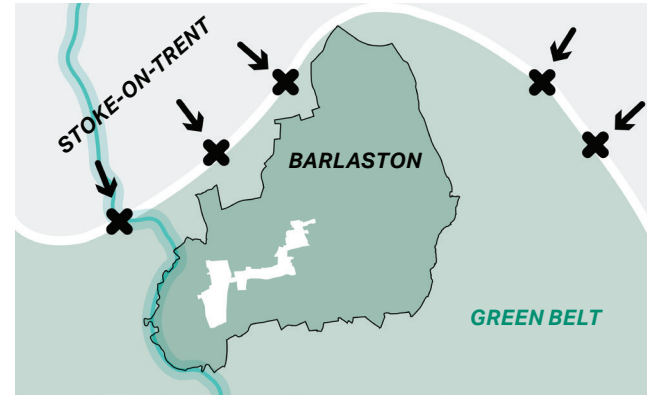


Figure 83: The Green Belt safeguards Barlaston's natural and rural heritage

- Scale and massing should reflect existing buildings in the area and not exceed 2.5 storeys;
- The rolling nature of the landscape allows several view points across the area. Any new development should consider these views and avoid any detrimental impact on them;
- Roads have a strong rural character and often include grass verges and hedgerows. These natural features should always be preserved and enhanced by new development; and
- Any natural features in the area, including woodland patches and the distinctive River Trent catchment area, should be preserved.

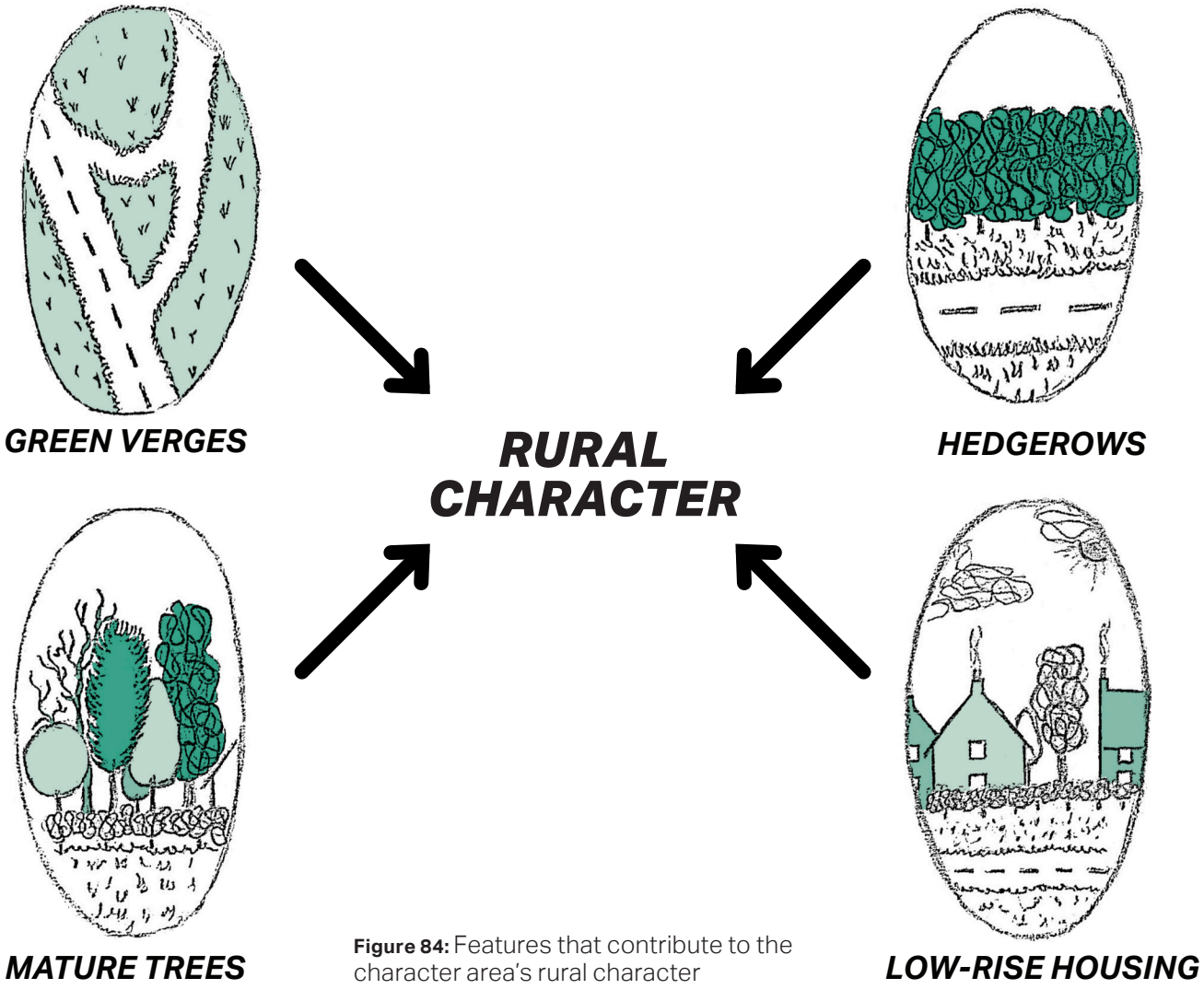


Figure 84: Features that contribute to the character area's rural character



Checklist

06

6. Checklist

This section sets out a general list of design considerations by topic for use as a quick reference guide in design workshops and discussions.

1

General design guidelines for new development:

- Does new development integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity to allow accessibility and connectivity?
- Is there an opportunity to reinforce or enhance the established settlement character of streets, greens, and other spaces?
- Does the proposal harmonise with and enhance the existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use?
- Does the proposal relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long-distance views?
- How can the local architecture and historic distinctiveness be reflected, respected, and reinforced?
- Have important existing features been retained and incorporated into the development?
- Have surrounding buildings been respected in terms of scale, height, form and massing? Are all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space well related to each other?
- Does the proposal make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation, and minimisation) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours?
- Has management, maintenance and the upkeep of utilities been considered by the proposal?
- Is there an opportunity to implement passive environmental design principles (for example, site layout being optimised for beneficial solar gain, techniques to reduce energy demands and the incorporation of renewable energy sources)?
- Does the proposal adopt contextually appropriate materials and details?
- Does the proposal incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features?

2

Street grid and layout:

- Does it favour accessibility and connectivity? If not, why?
- What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern; are these reflected in the proposal?
- How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?
- Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?
- Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

3 (continues)

Local green spaces, views & character:

- What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design; i.e. what are the landscape qualities of the area?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance any identified views or views in general?
- How does the proposal affect the trees on or adjacent to the site?
- Can trees be used to provide natural shading from unwanted solar gain? I.e. deciduous trees can limit solar gains in summer, while maximising them in winter.
- Has the proposal been considered within its wider physical context?
- Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?
- In rural locations, has the impact of the development on the tranquillity of the area been fully considered?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?
- Can any new views be created?
- Is there adequate amenity space for the development?
- Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?

3

Local green spaces, views & character:

- Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?
- Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how this will be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?
- Is there opportunity to increase the local area biodiversity?
- Can green space be used for natural flood prevention e.g. permeable landscaping, swales etc.?
- Can water bodies be used to provide evaporative cooling?
- Is there space to consider a ground source heat pump array, either horizontal ground loop or borehole (if excavation is required)?

4

Gateway and access features:

- What is the arrival point, how is it designed?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between settlements?
- Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building or listed landscape?
- Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

5 (continues)

Buildings layout and grouping:

- What are the typical groupings of buildings?
- How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?
- Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the villagescape?
- What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?
- Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters stemming from the main road?
- Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?

5

Buildings layout and grouping:

- Subject to topography and the clustering of existing buildings, are new buildings oriented to incorporate passive solar design principles, with, for example, one of the main glazed elevations within 30° due south, whilst also minimising overheating risk?
- Can buildings with complementary energy profiles be clustered together such that a communal low carbon energy source could be used to supply multiple buildings that might require energy at different times of day or night? This is to reduce peak loads. And/or can waste heat from one building be extracted to provide cooling to that building as well as heat to another building?

6

Building line and boundary treatment:

- What are the characteristics of the building line?
- How has the building line been respected in the proposals?
- Has the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?

7

Building heights and roof-line:

- What are the characteristics of the roof-line?
- Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing and scale?
- If a higher than average building(s) is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?
- Will the roof structure be capable of supporting a photovoltaic or solar thermal array either now, or in the future?
- Will the inclusion of roof mounted renewable technologies be an issue from a visual or planning perspective? If so, can they be screened from view, being careful not to cause over shading?

8

Household extensions:

- Does the proposed design respect the character of the area and the immediate neighbourhood, and does it have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties in relation to privacy, overbearing or overshadowing impact?
- Is the roof form of the extension appropriate to the original dwelling (considering angle of pitch)?
- Do the proposed materials match those of the existing dwelling?
- In case of side extensions, does it retain important gaps within the street scene and avoid a 'terracing effect'?
- Are there any proposed dormer roof extensions set within the roof slope?
- Does the proposed extension respond to the existing pattern of window and door openings?
- Is the side extension set back from the front of the house?
- Does the extension offer the opportunity to retrofit energy efficiency measures to the existing building?
- Can any materials be re-used in-situ to reduce waste and embodied carbon?

9

Building materials & surface treatment:

- What is the distinctive material in the area?
- Does the proposed material harmonise with the local materials?
- Does the proposal use high-quality materials?
- Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves and roof details been addressed in the context of the overall design?
- Does the new proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?
- Are recycled materials, or those with high recycled content proposed?