

Land North & East of Ware

Images from Community Planning Event May 2019



Team Briefing & Site Visit



Post-it Workshop



Young People's Workshop: Chauncy School



Hands-on Planning Group



Background exhibition



Report Back from Hands-on Planning Group

Submit Feedback

“ We need to keep the discussion going. Lots of people from here are happy to engage. ”

Please continue to help us develop the proposals by either speaking to us in person, by completing a comment form or by emailing community@jtp.co.uk.

The exhibition panels are available online at jtp.co.uk/projects/ware for review and comment from Thursday 18 July. Please submit comments no later than Monday 22 July.

Land North & East of Ware

Masterplanning Framework Consultation July 2019



Community Planning Event May 2019, Hands-on Planning Workshop

Land North & East of Ware

Carefully designed neighbourhoods set in landscape, designed to respect Ware's heritage and responding sensitively to the rural edge location; new neighbourhood hearts with employment, schools, community facilities and open spaces; Cowfields retained and enhanced for people and nature; sustainable transport links, including a new circular bus route connecting to the town centre.

These were just some of the ideas to emerge from the Land North & East of Ware Community Planning Event at Ware Priory, which ran from Friday 17 to Saturday 18 May 2019.

Background

Land North & East of Ware has been allocated in the adopted District Plan for a residential-led, mixed-use development of 1,000 homes, with a further 500 homes subject to suitable highways mitigation measures. Ptarmigan Land and JTP are committed to working closely with the local community to shape the new proposals and contribute to an emerging Masterplanning Framework Document (MFD).

Community Planning Event

Over 700 people took part at the Community Planning Event, which provided an opportunity for local people to share their knowledge and help shape the future plans for the area, through workshops, walkabouts and hands-on planning groups.

Masterplanning Framework Consultation

After the Community Planning Event, the design team analysed and summarised the ideas that emerged, in order to start shaping the proposals to draw up a Vision for Land North & East of Ware, including an illustrative masterplan. This is being presented back to the local community on Tuesday 16 and Thursday 18 July at Ware Priory where people can view the outcomes from the Community Planning Event and study, ask questions and comment on the emerging Masterplan Framework for the site.

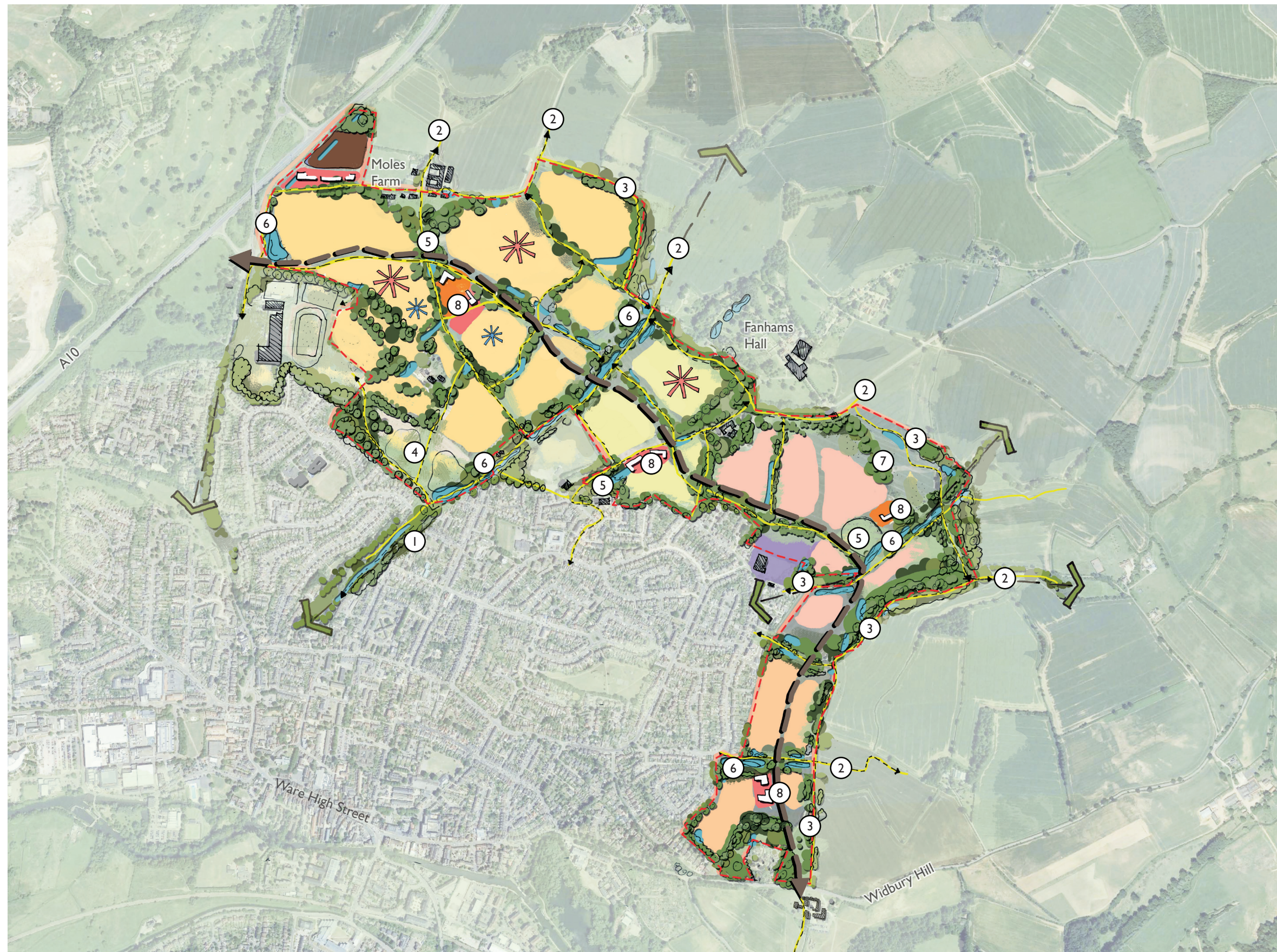
Next Steps

Following the Masterplanning Framework Consultation and after all comments have been fully considered, a final version of the MFD will be produced and submitted to the District Council for approval. Once approved, all development at the site will need to comply with the contents of the MFD.

Land North & East of Ware

Masterplanning Framework Consultation July 2019

Concept Masterplan



Key

- Mixed use
- Employment
- Priors Wood Primary School Expansion
- Travelling Showpeople
- Moles Farm neighbourhood
- Fanhams neighbourhood
- Priors Wood neighbourhood
- Widbury neighbourhood
- Indicative Corridor for Link Road
- Footpaths / Cycle lanes
- New Secondary School possible locations
- New Primary School possible locations
- Connections to the Bourne
- Connections to the Green Belt
- New Green Belt Edge
- Cowfields enhancement
- Village Green
- Ponds and Attenuation features
- Informal Play
- Neighbourhood hub

Land North & East of Ware

Masterplanning Framework Consultation July 2019

Key Themes

The following key themes are a summary of the various discussions and design workshops that have taken place to date. All quotes are from participants in the process.

Shaping the best possible proposals

Land North & East of Ware has been allocated in the adopted District Plan for a residential-led, mixed-use development based on Garden City principles, with 1,000 homes initially, and a further 500 homes subject to suitable highway mitigation measures being agreed. Although many local people resisted the principle of development, it is now generally accepted that it will happen and that community participation is important to shape the best possible proposals and to maximise the benefits for Ware. Around 700 people attended the community planning event to ask questions, raise issues and co-design ideas for the future of the site.

“We discussed the strategy: what’s necessary, how do we do it, how do we link everything up?”

“If it’s done well it could be quite beneficial to the town.”

Neighbourhoods set in landscape

People accepted that there is housing need, especially to enable young families to get on the housing ladder, but feared the construction of a single, amorphous ‘estate’, which could impose a change of character on the area. Rather than an isolated ‘estate’, ideas emerged for a carefully designed framework of places and spaces to respond sensitively to the context of the rural edge location, including to adjacent properties, and integrate with the neighbouring communities and Ware as a whole. The new development should comprise distinct neighbourhoods or ‘hamlets’ set in the landscape, with mixed-use community hubs connected by sustainable green links.

“We could build a series of smaller places connected by woodland – a series of community hubs.”

“Shared use and overlap is important – we need integration between and within.”

“The new edge of the site must be part of the surrounding landscape and not the end of someone’s garden.”

Respecting local heritage

Ware began as an ancient settlement on the River Lea and has built up a rich physical and cultural heritage over the centuries, with a strong and active community. Those who live and work in Ware are passionate about the town and keen that new development should respect the town’s local distinctiveness, its historic heart and their quality of life.

“Ware has a unique history which must be respected.”

Traffic, parking and getting around

Traffic is both an existing and future concern as Ware’s road network is often congested at peak times and made worse by on-street parking and unloading of deliveries. There is a perceived lack of town centre car parking and residents of nearby villages are concerned about potential future rat-running. However, the new development will be planned to encourage sustainable and active transport and brings with it the potential for significantly improved bus, pedestrian and cycling provision, including to the town centre, the train station and Wodson Park Leisure Centre. The car will need to be accommodated and the routing and timing of the new link road will be important.

“With the best will in the world, people will want to use their cars. Teenagers get cars as soon as they turn 18... and so there are even more.”

The Cowfields

The Cowfields is used as a natural, community space including for the annual Rotary Club fireworks display, dog walking, blackberry picking, hedgerow exploration, and as a place for children to sledge in winter (when there is snow). It was emphasised by all age groups that Cowfields is an important and well-used space that should be retained.

“Cowfields is so important for recreation, wellbeing and environment.”

“There has to be change...we know there has to be more houses...but you must keep the Cowfields community space.”

Please continue to help us develop the proposals by either speaking to us in person, by completing a comment form or by emailing community@jtp.co.uk.

Key Themes (Continued)

Open space and rights of way

Participants were worried that existing paths and rights of way may be blocked by the new development. Planning a network of green and blue open spaces and corridors will help maintain a 'rural' character for the new development and foster active lifestyles. A network of footpaths and cycleways should be designed to encourage sustainable movement and link the new neighbourhoods to rural tracks, local facilities and the rest of Ware.

"We must have ways in which people can access the countryside outside the new development, using footpaths and bridleways."

"We want the development to be very outdoorsy!"

Drainage

Participants reported problems with water run-off and ground water drainage in certain locations. Many ideas emerged of how to plan water infrastructure and management to create attractive and bio-diverse habitats and through the masterplanning process possible on-site drainage solutions will be assessed.

"Tap into the poor drainage. Water can be a benefit – why not create a pond or a lake?"

Community facilities and employment

The provision of local, inter-generational community facilities (shops, healthcare, community, employment, village greens, etc) will help build community and minimise vehicle use. However, shops and businesses within the neighbourhoods should complement, not compete, with Ware's town centre uses. Other suggested provision included space for worship, community orchards, gardening and food production, outdoor gym, crafts centre and 'sheds for men'. It was felt that employment use could be distributed throughout the new neighbourhoods, rather than one single location, and that community infrastructure should be phased in tandem with housing.

"Give the development a community focus...have lots of village greens, lots of opportunities for people to congregate together."

Housing

Housing should be well designed, in keeping with the local context and with sustainability built-in. A mix of style, size and tenure is important to build a balanced community. The provision of affordable housing is key, and the suggestion was made that the development offers the opportunity to think creatively about variety of residential provision, perhaps incorporating self-build, bungalows, co-communal housing, supported living for appropriate young people and even a dementia village.

"Why not introduce co-housing - which could be a pioneering part of the scheme?"

Trust & delivery

Some participants were sceptical about the community participation process and whether proposals that emerge will actually be delivered. Trust in the process is important and will need to be built over time, so that the community can see that engagement can genuinely help shape viable, contextual proposals that will be delivered. Exploring how this planning process can lock in quality and delivery is key.

"Make sure that you actually listen to what we say, and act on it."

Continued community engagement

Many participants appreciated the opportunity to be involved at the early stage in helping shape the Vision for Land North and East of Ware and are keen to stay involved and informed. The masterplanning process includes regular liaison with the broadly based Masterplanning Steering Group and the wider community. The next community wide exhibition of the emerging masterplanning framework will be in July and it is expected that the Masterplanning Framework Document will be submitted to East Herts Council for approval in autumn 2019.

"We need to keep the discussion going. Lots of people from here are happy to engage."

"We need to know the time line and be kept informed by a regular progress report. We must know what is happening."

