

DACORUM

URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENT

MARKYATE



**Final report
January 2006**



urban
practitioners



CONTENTS

- 1. INTRODUCTION 1
- 2. URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES 2
- 3. MARKYATE - TODAY 3
- 4. MARKYATE - HISTORY 4
- 5. STRATEGY PLAN and SETTLEMENT PRINCIPLES 5
- 6. URBAN DESIGN ZONES 6
- 7. URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES 7
- 8. URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENT 13
 - MAKING PLACES 13
 - CONTINUITY AND ENCLOSURE 22
 - MAKING CONNECTIONS 26
 - QUALITY OF THE PUBLIC REALM 29
 - LEGIBILITY 32
- 9. KEY ISSUES, SENSITIVITIES, CAPACITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES 34
- 10. CONSULTATION WORKSHOP 39



INTRODUCTION

The Markyate Urban Design Assessment final report is structured into nine sections.

'Markyate - Today' describes the village's basic characteristics, including location, transport connections, population and social composition. The policy context summarises policy issues pertinent only to Markyate that have not been covered in the borough-wide document. 'Markyate - History' provides the historical context to the assessment.

STRATEGY PLAN and SETTLEMENT PRINCIPLES

The Strategy Plan and Settlement Principles lays out broad principles in both planimetric and text form which characterises the three Urban Design zones and sets out principles for circulation, views and legibility.

URBAN DESIGN ZONES

The Urban Design zones section defines the areas associated with each Urban Design zone and identifies the 'ideal norm' for each zone. The Markyate Urban Design zones have been created on the basis of existing characteristics, reflecting the morphology, density and typologies of each area, and an understanding of how these areas should be viewed in light of any potential development or regeneration of the zone. The norm, shown as a cropped portion of the zone and as a section, demonstrate the ideals for that zone in terms of such issues as building heights, setbacks, typology, morphology and densities.

URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENT

The Urban Design Assessment provides the baseline evidence and analysis which has shaped the strategy plan, settlement principles and urban design guidelines. The assessment follows the criteria described in the borough-wide report.. It is important to note that all maps used within thisreport are not to scale.

OPPORTUNITIES, SENSITIVITIES and CAPACITIES

The Key Opportunities, Sensitivities and Capacities section summarises the issues that emerged from the baseline evidence and analysis.

CONSULTATION WORKSHOP

The Consultation Workshop summary encapsulates the results of the Markyate stakeholder workshop. Many of the stakeholder comments have been used as evidence in the urban design assessment.

URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES and CASE STUDIES

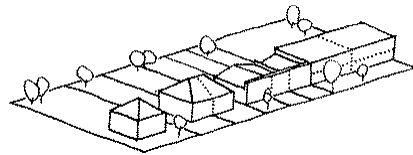
The Urban Design Guidelines have been created on the basis of each Urban Design zone. The guidelines have been developed following the Urban Design Assessment criteria described in the borough-wide report, although circulation, views and legibility have been addressed under the settlement-wide principles.

The guidelines rely on classifications for many of these criteria. These classifications are set out below:

Building types

Building types considered for Markyate include:

- Terraced housing
- Semi-detached housing
- Detached housing
- Two-storey block of flats



The drawing shows the range of typologies for Markyate

Architectural styles

Architectural styles within the Urban Design zones have been very broadly organised according to:

- Type of roof pitch



The gabled roof is common to the village centre zone, denoting a more urban appearance.

Building heights

Building types considered for Markyate include:

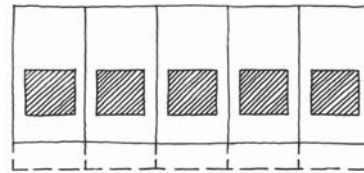
- One-storey
- Two-storey
- Three-storey (special consideration)

Density

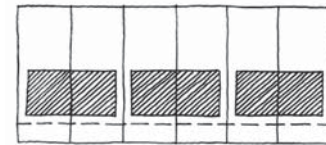
The classification for densities is based on Government guidance, reflecting advice in PPG3:

- Very low < 30 dph
- Low 30 - 40 dph
- Medium 40 - 50 dph
- High 50 - 60 dph
- Very high > 60 dph

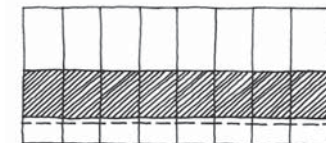
The following diagrams and drawings illustrate the generic typologies, plot sizes and setbacks that have been considered.



Detached housing, medium setback = 31 dph
(Assumes 5m setback, 11.5m rear garden, 13m x 25m plot)
Detached housing, large setback = 26 dph
(Assumes 10m setback, 11.5m rear garden, 13m x 30m plot)

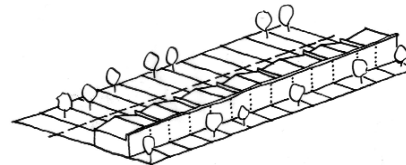
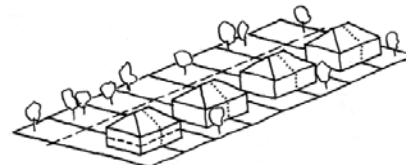
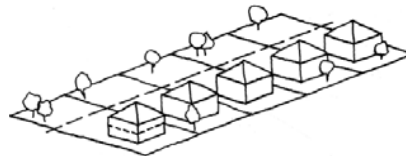


Semi-detached housing, medium setback = 42 dph
(Assumes 3.5m setback, 11.5m rear garden, 9.5m x 25m plot)
Semi-detached housing, no setback = 49 dph
(Assumes no setback, 11.5m rear garden, 9.5m x 21.5m plot)



Terrace housing, medium setback = 57 dph
(Assumes 4m setback, 11.5m rear garden, 7m x 25m plot)
Terrace housing, no setback = 68 dph
(Assumes no setback, 11.5m rear garden, 7m x 25m plot)

Drawings below illustrate the diagrams above.



Topography

Topography impacts on urban design in terms of:

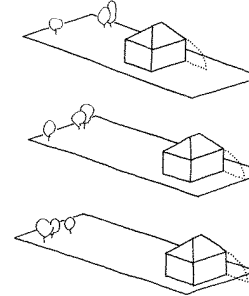
- Development on sloped streets
- Development on sloped sites
- Development on flat sites

Depending on the situation of the site, topography can impact the streetscape appearance and the privacy of adjacent dwellings.

Building lines

Building lines will be considered for each Urban Design zone in terms of:

- Large setback
- Medium setback
- No setback



The drawings above show large, medium and no setbacks

A medium setback assumes that the setback is approximately the same distance as the building height. A large setback assumes that the setback distance is greater than the building height.

Building orientation

Building orientation impacts on urban design in terms of:

- Building orientation toward street front
- No particular building orientation

Pattern of open spaces

Topography impacts on urban design in terms of:

- Divided front gardens
- Shared front gardens
- Divided rear gardens (back-to-back with rear gardens)

The type of garden reflects on such concerns as the appearance of the streetscape, the privacy of the dwellings, quality of the wildlife habitat, the type of development, and the size of the development site.

Parking

Parking options can be classified as:

- On-street parking
- On-site communal parking
- On-site individual parking

Decisions on the parking type relates to type of streets within the Urban Design zone (primary or secondary through streets, cul-de-sacs, or dead-end streets)

Case Studies

The case studies apply the various classifications of the guidelines to create a range of recommended possibilities for each Urban Design zone. Depending on the zone, case studies may suggest applying 'typical' conditions, 'enhanced density' conditions, 'increased density' conditions or 'special case considerations'.

MARKYATE- TODAY

Physical Location:

Markyate is situated in the northeastern corner of Dacorum Borough and sits in the Ver Valley, one of many river valleys coming down from the Chiltern Hills. Positioned between Luton and Dunstable, Markyate's location provides easy access to both the M1 and the A5. Central London is 35 miles from Markyate.

Transport Connections:

Markyate has no train station of its own. Bus services to surrounding towns such as Hemel Hempstead, St Albans (13 miles) and Harpenden Station (7.5 miles) provide more extensive travel links to destinations such as London.

Population and Social Composition

Markyate has a population of 2,749. The Markyate Village Appraisal (1995-6) surveyed the resident population for such information as employment, car ownership and transport usage. While much of the Markyate's working population commutes out of the village, a large percentage stays within the village throughout the day. 16% of the population described themselves as retired, 9% stated that they were a housewife/husband and 4% stated that they were unemployed. The average Markyate household owned 1.5 cars in 1995-6. 11% of the population relied on bus services as their main means of transport.

Planning Policy Context

The East of England Plan draft Regional Spatial Strategy designates Markyate as a village and the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011 designates it as a large village (policy 3). Development will be permitted if it is compatible with enhancing the character of these settlements and the maintenance of the Green Belt. However there is limited capacity. Large villages provide important services and facilities and play a role in maintaining Dacorum's vitality

The local plan designates Markyate, in retail terms, as a local centre with a neighbourhood shopping function and Markyate falls into accessibility zone 4, where normal maximum car parking standards apply. Markyate faces deficiencies in both formal and informal leisure space.

The historic village centre of Markyate is a designated Conservation Area and also contains two Areas of Archeological Significance, listed below:

- MarkyateCell Park
- Markyate (covering part of the village centre)



Landscape Characteristics of the Area Surrounding Markyate (taken from Supplementary Planning Guidance: Landscape Character Assessment for Dacorum May 2004)

Shows Markyate surrounded by just one landscape area: Markyate Ridges and Valleys

- Land cover and land use: Predominantly open arable farmland with pockets of woodland pasture and patches of industrial development. Residential settlements located predominantly on the ridges.
- Transport patterns: The M1 and A5 run through the area as well as a network of more minor roads.
- Key characteristics: Isolated settlements are farms, disturbed landscape in east, close to M1, ribbon development.

MARKYATE - HISTORY

The name Markyate comes from two words - 'mearc' and 'geat' meaning 'gates on the boundary'. The village name refers to the border of Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. Markyate lies in the Ver valley and the main street straddles Watling Street, the Roman road that ran between London and Chester. Although the wider area was settled widely, the first known reference to the Markyate was in 1119, when the village may have first formed along the spine of the main road. A Priory was established shortly afterwards. The Priory was dissolved in the late 1530s and the Crown leased the buildings and land to Humphrey Bourchier. By the time of Bourchier's death he had partly converted the priory buildings into a house, later known as the Cell. There were at least four inns by this time.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, non-conformists began to settle in the Markyate area, including Quakers, Baptists, and Wesleyan Methodists. The village did not have its own parish church, but a Chapel of Ease was built at Cell Park in 1734. Several non-conformist chapels, including two Baptist Chapels were built in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

In the eighteenth century, the section of the Holyhead Road through Markyate was a turnpike road with tolls charged to maintain the road. Much of the work in Markyate - inns, shops, blacksmiths and wheelwrights - was based around the coach traffic. Other industries included straw plaiting and the production of mineral water, lemonade, ginger beer and soda from the Markyate well water.

The turnpike sustained significant traffic stopping in Markyate, but with the coming of the railways, the traffic declined. By 1844 the tolls were not enough to maintain the turnpike, and most of the stage coaches passing through Markyate were simply local traffic. Railway service never reached Markyate.

With the advent of motor vehicles, Markyate once again experienced a significant amount of through traffic, with many lorries travelling through the village en route to the Midlands. Workers were able to travel into St Albans, Luton and Dunstable for employment, beginning a trend of commuting into urban centres that continues today. The Markyate bypass opened 1957, relieving the village of heavy A5 traffic between London and the West Midlands.



STRATEGY PLAN AND SETTLEMENT PRINCIPLES

Urban Design zones

- A The Village centre zone (1) should protect its historic character and maintain a land use mix that encourages activity accessible by pedestrians and vehicles.
- B The Inner zone (2) should provide quality low-rise, medium to high density housing with strong links to the village centre.
- C The Semi-rural zone (3) should provide quality low-rise, medium density housing which accentuates the existing street morphology and topography.

Circulation

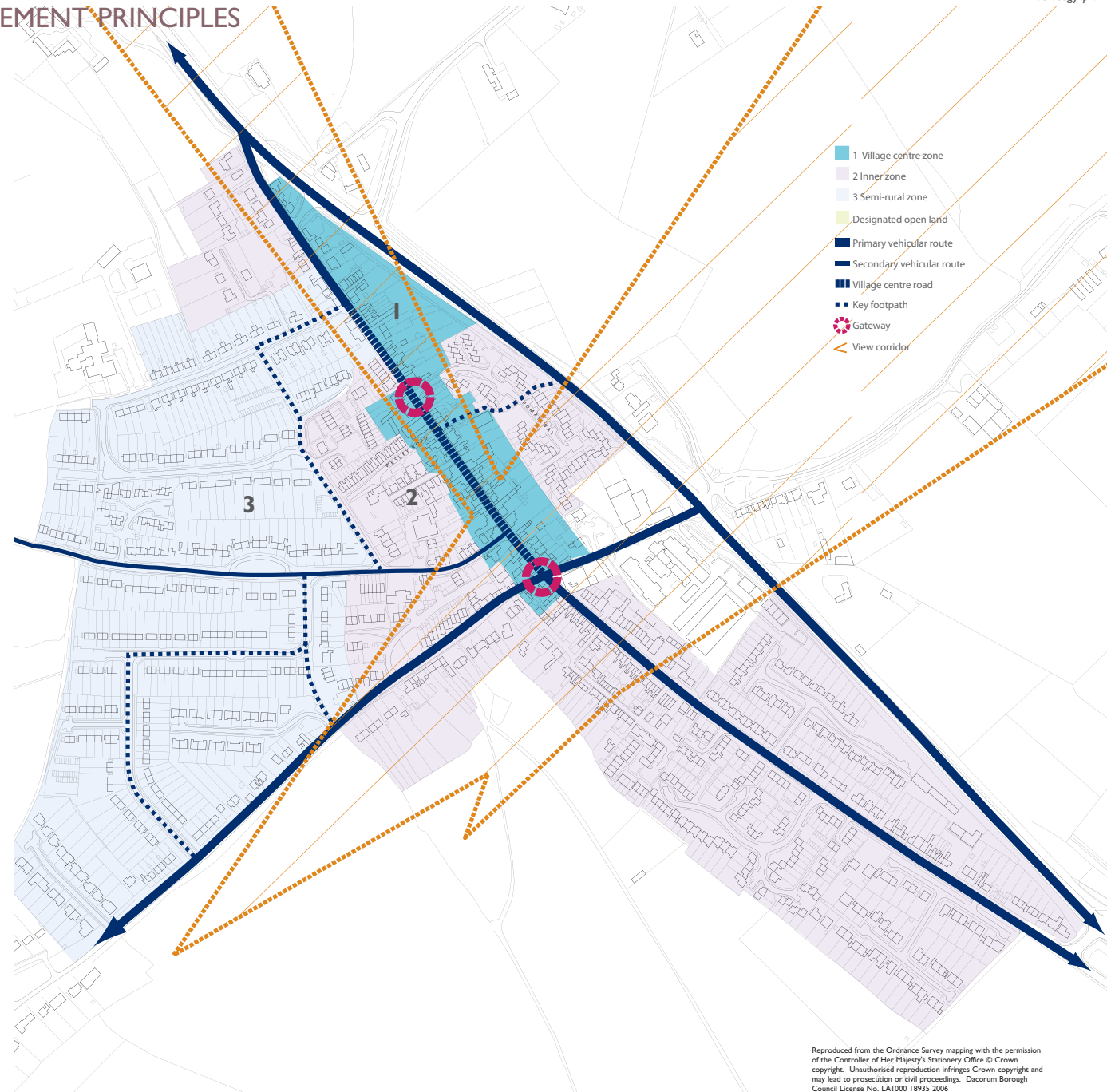
- E The primary road should facilitate through traffic, ensuring that two-way traffic is prioritised over on-street parking.
- F The secondary roads should facilitate through traffic, ensuring that two-way traffic is prioritised over on-street parking, with street design to ensure calmed traffic.
- G The three entrances to the bypass should be improved and made as safe as possible.
- H Markyate has several significant footpaths, and these should be properly maintained (particularly the bypass subway) and developed where possible.

Views

- I There is a key view across the River Ver valley, down Pickford Road into the village centre. This view should be protected, and the impact of the massing, building height and architectural quality of any new development within the view corridor should be considered as part of any planning applications.
- J The view corridor of the historic High Street facades on the High Street within the village centre should be protected. Consideration could be given to the potential for new orientation points - such as the fire station site - on the High Street, should development opportunities arise.

Legibility

- K The gateways at the two ends of the High Street, at the Hicks Road intersection and at the Roman Way intersection should mark the entry into the village centre through streetscape elements, signage, and building quality.



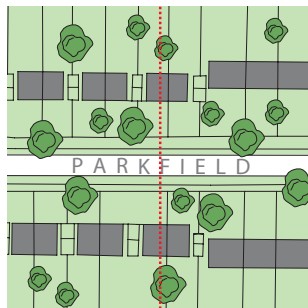
URBAN DESIGN ZONES



Village centre zone
 The village centre grew as a significant stopping point along the turnpike connecting London and Chester. The High Street is still characterised by the pubs that supported this traffic, and the 1957 bypass significantly reduced modern traffic travelling through the village. Additionally, the High Street is lined by densely built residential terraces which provide a consistent street facade.



Inner zone
 The inner zone consists of an array of residential areas including the Roman Way estate, single detached homes north of the village centre and cul-de-sac developments to its south. The densities vary from very low to very high, and the recommendation is that new developments should be of high and very high densities to add vitality to the adjacent High Street. The morphology of this zone is a mix of new cul-de-sacs and the original village through roads.



Semi-rural zone
 The semi-rural zone is a coherent estate consisting primarily of terrace houses and semi-detached houses with private front and rear gardens. The zone is of generally low to medium density. The morphology is primarily curvilinear through routes. Car parking includes individual on-site and shared on-site, and there is also considerable unplanned parking on the grassy verges.



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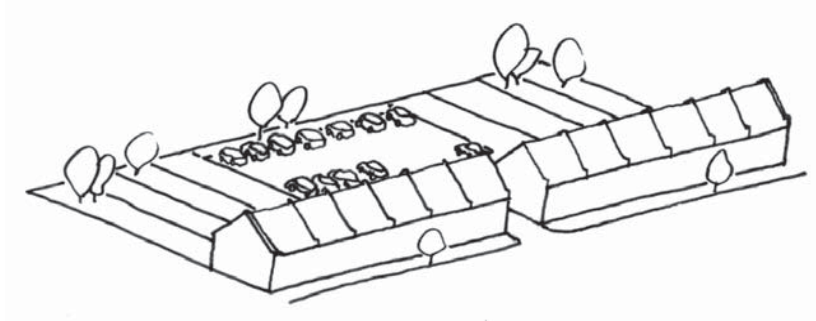
URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES: VILLAGE CENTRE ZONE

Assessment Category	Criteria	Guidelines	Page Reference	*Photo Reference
Making places	Building types	The village centre retains many of the 19th century shops, public house and inn buildings which are primarily terraces and front directly onto the street. The primary typology should be terraced buildings .	22	
	Materials / architectural styles	The village centre is made of predominantly high quality brick buildings. Traditional brickwork should be favoured over modern wirecut bricks. Clay tile or slate roofing material should be encouraged. The High Street's terraces typically display pitched roofs and flat roofs should be avoided.	13-15	36-37
	Listed buildings/ Conservation Area	Most of the village centre is a Conservation Area with several listed buildings. Guidelines should extend to the streetscape elements and shop signage to ensure the consistency of character.	16-17	
	Building Heights	The village centre is entirely two-storey, with the exception of some three-storey and one-storey buildings near the intersection of High and Pickford Roads. Three-storey buildings could be feasible as long as they did not disrupt the consistent street facade.	18	
	Density	The residential densities within the town centre are generally high and very high, and those densities should be encouraged in any future development.	19-20	38-39
	Topography	Buildings should accentuate topography and views. Currently there is no clear orientation point (such as a church) within the village centre, and an appropriately designed three-storey building could act as a useful landmark.	21	
Continuity and enclosure	Morphology	The existing street morphology should accentuate the importance of the High Street and the primary and secondary routes that extend off from it. Tertiary or cul-de-sac roads extending from the High Street should be avoided.	22	
	Building Lines	Buildings should have no setback from the street and should create an even street frontage along the pavement. The existing setbacks should be utilised as useful public spaces. The entryways into the original courtyards should be protected.	23	40-41
	Building Orientation	The fronts of building should be facing the street , with entrances accessible from the pavement.	24	
	Pavements	The existing pavement width should be protected and expanded where possible.	23	
	Pattern of open space	Where possible, shops should be serviced from the rear .	25	42
Making connections	Circulation, demand and linkages	Due to its narrow width, Markyate High Street suffers from significant traffic problems. Facilitating this through traffic should be a priority over the existing one-sided on-street parking. Pedestrian crossings and pedestrian safety along the pavements should be improved.	27	43-46
	Parking	Service courtyards should be considered for surrounding residences and the few shops still functioning on the High Street.	28	47-48
	Land Use	Despite their diminished numbers, the existing businesses, pubs and restaurants are essential to the character of the village centre and should be protected and enhanced. Any residential uses added to the village centre High Street should be coupled, where possible, with new retail shops uses.	26	
Quality of the public realm	Streetscape elements	Streetscape elements should fit the character of the village centre Conservation Area. These should include such elements as lamps, signage and paving materials. Streetscape elements should not impede pedestrian paths on the pavement and wall-mounted lamps should be considered.	29	59-52
	Quality of open space	N/A	25	42

* Photo references correspond to page numbers within the associated photo log.

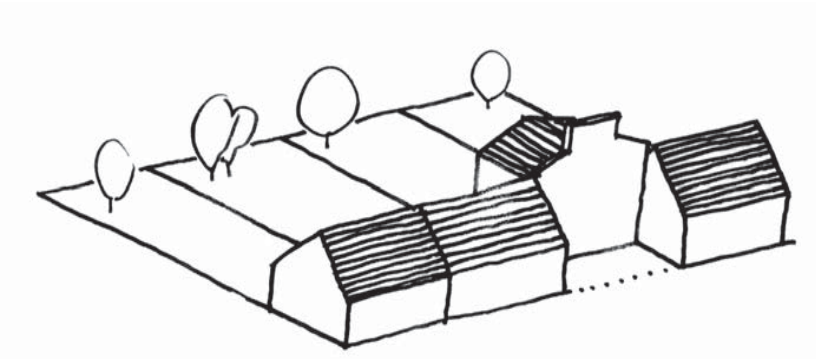
CASE STUDIES: VILLAGE CENTRE ZONE

The case studies apply the various classifications of the guidelines to create a range of recommended possibilities for each Urban Design zone.



CASE STUDY VC1: Typical character and density

This case study shows terrace buildings with pitched roofs and no setbacks and potential service/car parks behind them.



CASE STUDY VC2: Increased density, special consideration example

This special consideration site provides a case study for a key site where the current Fire Station is. Given the need for an orientation point along the High Street, this site - which already has a setback - could be useful for legibility.

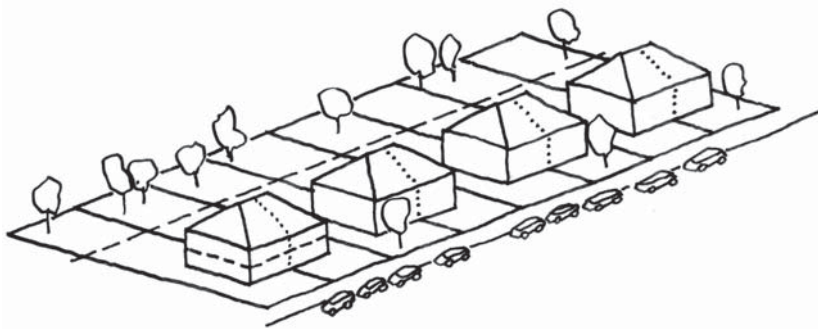
URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES: INNER ZONE

Assessment Category	Criteria	Guidelines	Page Reference	*Photo Reference
Making places	Building types	There are primarily three building types within this zone, including single detached houses, semi-detached houses and terraced houses. New developments should emphasise semi-detached and terraced housing types. Two-storey blocks of flats would be considered acceptable within this zone.	22	
	Materials / architectural styles	Traditional brickwork should be favoured over modern wirecut bricks. Clay tile or slate roofing material should be encouraged. The existing broad stylistic approach emphasises the visibility of the roof pitch .	13-15	36-37
	Listed buildings/ Conservation Area	The listed buildings and Conservation Area on Pickford Road should be protected, particularly with regard to the view down Pickford Road approaching the village centre.	16-17	
	Building Heights	Buildings should be two storeys .	18	
	Density	Building densities currently range widely from low to high, and new developments should be medium to very high (40-60+ dph) densities.	19-20	38-39
	Topography	The bulk of this zone occurs within the valley, so topography generally has little impact on the zone.	21	
Continuity and enclosure	Morphology	The existing morphology generally consists of the original through streets (the High Street and Pickford Road) with cul-de-sac and close developments located off of the through streets. Through streets should be encouraged.	22	
	Building Lines	Buildings should generally have a no setback or medium setbacks .	23	40-41
	Building Orientation	The fronts of building should be facing the street .	24	
	Pavements	All new developments must have pavements, contrary to some of the recent developments. Parking should be on-street or communal to minimise the interruptions along the pavement.	23	
	Pattern of open space	Houses should have rear gardens that back onto other rear gardens as a means of maximising wildlife habitat, privacy and sunlight. Front gardens should be shared or individual.	25	42
Making connections	Circulation, demand and linkages	Pedestrian linkages to the High Street should be well-kept and well-lit.	27	43-46
	Parking	On-street parking should be an option along roads that are not secondary routes. Off-street, communal parking should be encouraged on through routes and other roads instead of individual on-site parking to minimise the interruptions to the pavement.	28	47-48
	Land Use	N/A	26	
Quality of the public realm	Streetscape elements	Streetlighting on the streets and the footpaths should be improved.	29	49-52
	Quality of open space	The playground in the open space located off of Pickford Road should be well-signed. The access path to the space should be well-maintained. Informal open spaces in the Roman Way estate should be well-maintained and preserved.	25	42

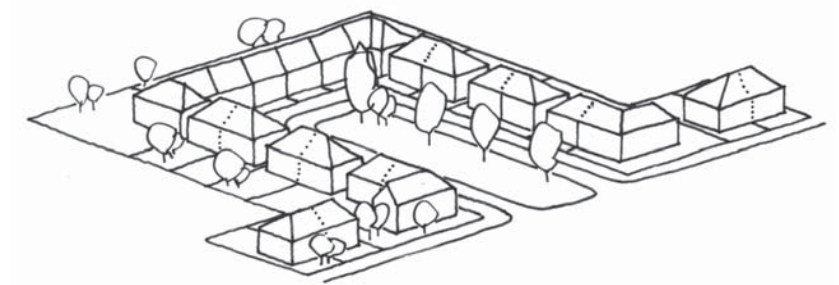
* Photo references correspond to page numbers within the associated photo log.

CASE STUDIES: INNER ZONE

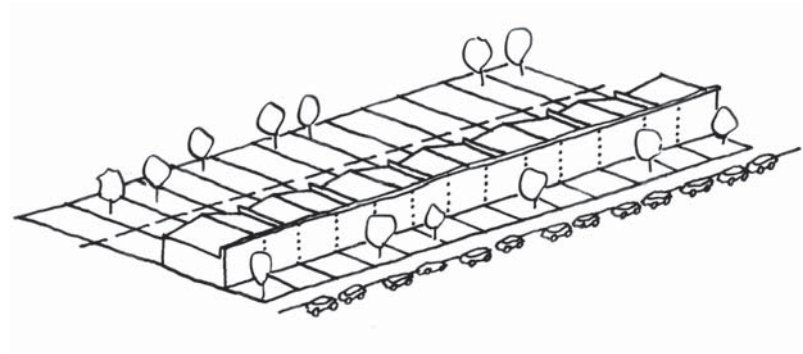
The case studies apply the various classifications of the guidelines to create a range of recommended possibilities for each Urban Design zone.



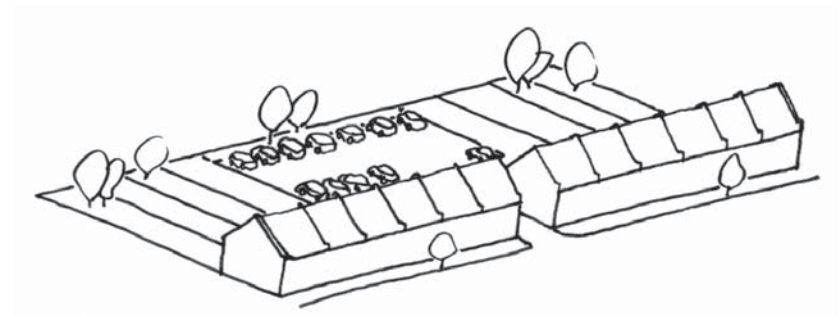
CASE STUDY 11: Typical character and density
The case study drawing shows semi-detached housing with medium setbacks.



CASE STUDY 13: Enhanced density
The case study drawing shows semidetached housing on a close.



CASE STUDY 12: Typical character and density, tertiary roads
The case study drawing shows terrace housing with medium setbacks.



CASE STUDY 14: Increased density
The case study drawing shows terrace housing with no setbacks.

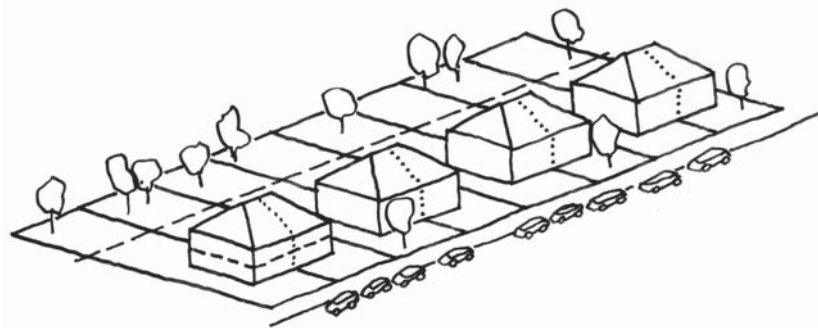
URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES: SEMI-RURAL ZONE

Assessment Category	Criteria	Guidelines	Page Reference	*Photo Reference
Making places	Building types	This zone is primarily semi-detached houses. New developments should be semi-detached or terrace housing .	22	
	Materials / architectural styles	Traditional brickwork should be favoured over modern wirecut bricks. Clay tile or slate roofing material should be encouraged. The existing broad stylistic approach emphasises the visibility of the roof pitch except in the case of terraced housing, and flat roofs should be discouraged.	13-15	36-37
	Listed buildings/ Conservation Area	N/A	16-17	
	Building Heights	Buildings should be two storeys .	18	
	Density	The existing density is generally low to medium density. The recommended densities should generally be medium to high density (40-60 dph). Much of this enhanced density would be gained by reducing the plot size and rear garden area.	19-20	38-39
	Topography	Due to the morphology of this zone, many of the buildings are on sloped streets and sloped sites . Where there are sloped streets, houses built on streets running up the valley slope should be lower than the buildings below them on the hill. Blocks of flats should be avoided on all streets running up hills. Where there are sloped sites, housing built on the higher side of the street should have roofs higher than those on the lower side of the street. Both sides of the street should endeavour to have front entrances at grade (whereas current housing on the lower side of the street has sunken entrances).	21	
Continuity and enclosure	Morphology	The existing street morphology shows a relative consistency of curvilinear through streets, providing a semi-rural character. This morphology should be encouraged.	22	
	Building Lines	Buildings should generally have a medium setback from the street.	23	40-41
	Building Orientation	The fronts of building should be facing the street (whereas some of the close developments result in backyards facing through streets).	24	
	Pavements	All new developments must have pavements, contrary to some of the recent developments. Parking should be on-street or communal to minimise the interruptions along the pavement caused by driveways.	23	
	Pattern of open space	Houses should have rear gardens that back onto other rear gardens as a means of maximising wildlife habitat, privacy and sunlight. Front and rear gardens should be individual.	25	42
Making connections	Circulation, demand and linkages	Existing pavements should be maintained and any new development should include pavements that run alongside the street. Linkages to the High Street and the surrounding open space should be encouraged. Pedestrian paths - which are currently heavily used - should be well-maintained.	27	43-46
	Parking	There is considerable concern regarding parking that currently occurs along the grassy verges. New developments should encourage on-site or communal parking , avoiding parking along streets and on the verges.	28	47-48
	Land Use	N/A	26	
Quality of the public realm	Streetscape elements	Streetscape furniture should be negligible in the semi-rural character area.	29	49-52
	Quality of open space	Access to the surrounding countryside should be encouraged.	25	42

* Photo references correspond to page numbers within the associated photo log.

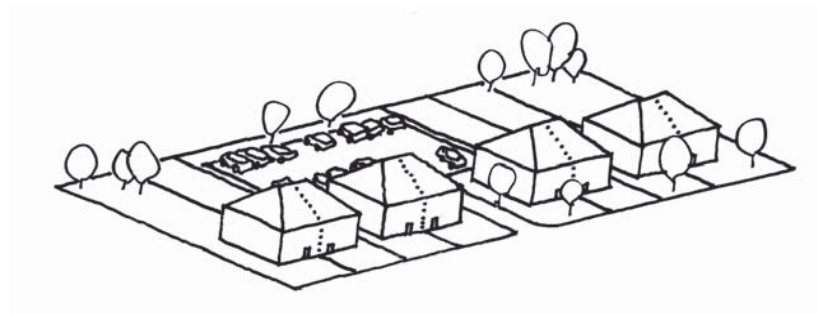
CASE STUDIES: SEMI-RURAL ZONE

The case studies apply the various classifications of the guidelines to create a range of recommended possibilities for each Urban Design zone.



CASE STUDY SR1: Typical character, enhanced density (reduced plot size)

The case study drawing shows on-street parking with rear servicing accessed from the side streets.



CASE STUDY SR2: Typical character, enhanced density (reduced plot size)

The case study drawing shows on-street parking with rear servicing accessed from the side streets.

MARKYATE



Urban Design Assessment



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MAKING PLACES MATERIALS AND TEXTURES

Up to the end of the 18th century, the transport of materials to inland areas like Hertfordshire was difficult and costly. Consequently builders used the sources they had to hand; flint, straw, timber and clay. The characteristic qualities of the Dacorum area owe much to the survival of such traditional materials. They have however been supplemented by many more recent materials, brought in from outside the region.

Stone

Hertfordshire has no significant source of quality freestone, being mostly reliant on chalk and its associated material, flint. Chalkstone (also known as clunch) of adequate strength for walls has long been quarried at Totterhoe near Dunstable. Its blocks have been used to construct churches or other important buildings, often in combination with flint.

Also to be found within the masonry of some buildings, including garden walls, is Hertfordshire 'pudding-stone' an unusual local stone of glacial origin, comprising rounded pebbles bound within in a flinty cement.

By the 19th century, imported limestones such as Bath stone or Portland were being employed, either for dressings or full construction and largely supplanted the use of flint.

Timber

Timber-framing and weatherboarding were common up to the 18th century, when brick became much more



This image shows high quality modern brick detailing.



The timber framed tradition shown above is infilled with bricks, often used to replace former plaster panels.

KEY ISSUES

MPI: MATERIALS AND TEXTURES

MPIA

Markyate consultation participants responded strongly to traditional materials and styles, including local brickwork, knapped flint and timber framing.

MPIB

Examples of high quality modern brickwork (as seen in the basket weave detailing) was received positively by Markyate consultation participants.

MPI C

The application of newer materials, including concrete and wood siding, received a negative response from Markyate consultation participants.

MPI D

The use of cobblestone along the street border and at the crossovers both adds historical character and serves an important traffic calming function.



Flint is the principal indigenous building stone, although chalk lump can sometimes be found in the area. Welsh slates were imported after the opening of the canals and railways.



Diaper brickwork using blue 'headers' and red 'stretchers' was a common decorative motif in the 19th century.

common. Oak and elm were the preferred materials for the structural members. Church spires are usually formed in wood and clad in copper, shingle or lead to form the characteristic Hertfordshire 'spikes'. Timber frames were infilled with wattle and daub or lath and plaster panels; sometimes they were later replaced by brick.

The timber frames were almost always hidden from view - sometimes behind weatherboarding or tiles, more usually behind a protective coat of lime plaster. The East Anglian tradition of decorative plasterwork known as pargetting reaches into Hertfordshire.

Later, the classical revival resulted in the use of rendered and painted surfaces in imitation of ashlar stonework.

Window joinery was almost always softwood, well seasoned and painted, but in some early buildings oak, elm or ash may have been used for the frames.

Brickmaking

Brickmaking was in evidence from 15th century and had become the accepted building material by the Tudor period. Local beds were used to source the clay but with improved transport, bricks were imported from further afield. In the early 19th century there was a vogue for using yellow and white bricks, often made from gault clay, in imitation of stone. In the Victorian era machine-made bricks and tiles became prevalent and coloured decorative patterns like diaper work were used to great effect.

Roofing materials

At one time thatch would have been the universal roof covering, using long straw rather than the more durable water reed that has been adopted in recent years. Thatch is however now rare in Dacorum's towns, being mainly confined to farm buildings or other rural locations.

Roof tiles were first made by the Romans but their manufacture fell out of use and was only revived during the medieval period. Until the 20th century the tiles used were normally hand pressed and made in clay, but since the 1920s machine made concrete and clay tiles have become common. Interlocking tiles, in imitation of Mediterranean or Roman tiles, are frequently to be found in postwar housing. Church roofs, if not in tile, were in lead sheet until slates became common.

An alternative to tile would have been cedar or oak shingles (wooden tiles). Most commonly, however, slate was imported in large quantities, especially from North Wales, and was almost universal for large or industrial buildings.



A modern building has a slate roof and tilesiding.



Consultation participants had mixed feelings about mock Tudor detailing .



A modern development of uniform shingled siding and brickwork housing.



The image above is an example of a modern building with a clay tile roof and machine-made bricks. Consultation participants were concerned with the quality of many modern buildings.

Paving materials

Paving materials in Markyate play a significant role given the narrowness of the High Street. The edge between asphalt road and the pavement is marked by two rows of cobblestone. Dropped kerbs and service entries are also distinguished by cobblestone paving.



Setts are used for entrance thresholds.



The durability of granite has made it the preferred material for kerbs and gullies.

MAKING PLACES

LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS

Markyate's listed buildings are primarily located along the historical High Street. The street retains much of its nineteenth century form, carried over from its days as a stop along the Holyhead turnpike. Several of the listed buildings include structures that were used as inns and public houses by stagecoaches passing through Markyate.

The High Street falls within one extensive Conservation Area, which also incorporates a number of the side streets.



Late nineteenth century map of Markyate (courtesy of Hertfordshire County Record Office)

KEY ISSUES

MP2: LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS

MP2A

The adjacency of Markyate's listed buildings provide the High Street with a consistent historic character.

MP2B

Streetscape elements contribute to the identity of the Conservation Area.

MP2C

Due to its historical position as a stagecoach stop along a regional through route Markyate High Street lacks clear orientation points.

Markyate's village centre is a distinctive historical High Street that serves as a local shopping area for surrounding residents as well as including residential properties. For the purposes of this study, the listed buildings and the Conservation Area are considered in light of their contribution to Markyate's urban design qualities.

High Street consistency

The adjacency of Markyate's listed buildings facilitates a significant consistency of character. The predominantly two-storey scale of the buildings and the narrow street width produces an intimate historic place. The pubs along the High Street are a reminder of the stagecoach stops along the turnpike to the Midlands.

Streetscape elements

The streetscape elements in the village centre perform an important role in maintaining the cohesiveness of the High Street's character. The use of streetlights, both wall-mounted (as seen in the bottom left image) and standing, are examples of this consistency.

Lack of orientation points

Historically, the village grew as a stagecoach stop along a through route between Midlands and London. As a result, there are no focal points at either end of the road. There was no parish church which the village orientated itself around, although there are listed church buildings just outside Markyate (bottom right). As a result, shop signage, streetscape elements and street setbacks become significant orientation points.



The village street is enlivened by a rich variety of traditional materials, colours and textures.



Cottage c. 1850. Until the 20th century building materials were sourced locally: red and blue bricks and handmade plain clay tiles.



A bold, early 19th century, Italianate facade bringing an urban quality to the village street.



Markyate Parish church, formerly the Chapel of Ease in Cell Park, is built in a distinctive plum-coloured brick with stone dressings.

MAKING PLACES BUILDING HEIGHTS

The building heights in Markyate village centre are all two-storey with the exception of three buildings on the western side of the High Street just north of Pickford Street. The two-storey consistency combined with the lack of major setbacks and gaps along the High Street gives the village centre a strong coherence.



- 1 storey
- 2 storey
- 3 storey
- 4 storey plus

KEY ISSUES MP3: BUILDING HEIGHTS

MP3A
The High Street is two-storey, with the exception of only three three-storey buildings.

MP3B
The two-storey consistency combined with the lack of major setbacks and gaps along the High Street gives the village centre a strong coherence.

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MAKING PLACES DENSITY

Markyate's residential areas are predominantly two-storey. There is considerable variation in density among the two-storey houses. There are very few detached houses in Markyate, with a predominance of terraced or semi-detached houses. The terraced houses on the High Street have no front gardens, while most other houses in Markyate feature front and rear gardens.

The adjacent images show a sample of these unit types. Whilst they are all two-storey buildings, they represent conditions including on and off-street parking; shared front gardens, no front gardens, both front and rear gardens; and detached housing, semi-detached housing, and terraced units. The examples include:

1. Detached house with private driveway and front and rear gardens,
2. Semi-detached housing with front and rear gardens and on-street parking,
3. Modern terraced housing with communal on-site parking, a communal front garden and a private rear garden, and
4. Terraced housing with no front garden, no on-site parking and a private rear garden.

The locations of each house and plot are shown on the following page.



1. Detached house with private driveway and front and rear gardens: Grange Close



2. Semi-detached housing with front and rear gardens and on-street parking: Parkfield Road

KEY ISSUES MP4: DENSITY

MP4A

The terraced housing on the High Street tends to be higher density than much of the newer Markyate housing.

MP4B

While higher density, the terraced houses often have larger building footprint.



3. Staggered terraced housing with small or no front garden, no on-site parking and a private rear garden: Roman Way.



4. Victorian terrace housing.

Size and density comparisons

1. Total plot size: 0.1400 hectares (ha)
Unit per hectare: 7.1
 (Total footprint area: 140 sqm)

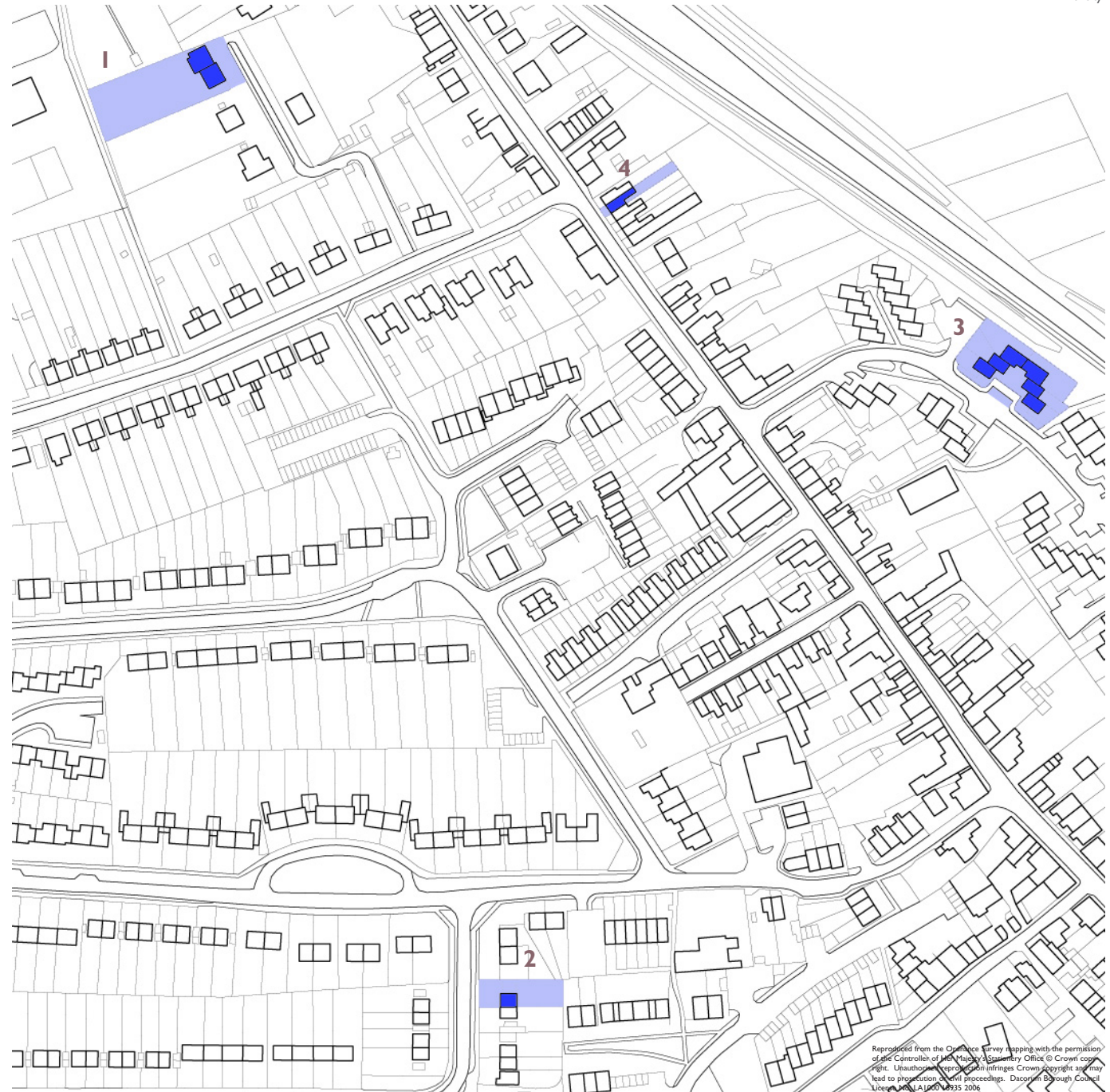
2. Total plot size :0.0410 ha
Unit per hectare: 24.4
 (Total footprint area: 33 sqm)

3. Total plot size: 0.0162 ha (includes 1/6 of car park and communal garden)
Unit per hectare: 62
 (Total footprint area: 39 sqm)

4. Total plot size: 0.0149 ha
Unit per hectare: 67
 (Total footprint area: 45 sqm)

Relationship between street and housing plot

The comparisons reveal that the highest density plot is a Victorian terraced house on the High Street. It is significant to note that while the two-storey terraced unit is the highest density, the building's footprint is bigger than two of the other comparison samples. The linear High Street proves to be the higher density but with larger houses than the cul-de-sac estate housing on Roman Way and many of the semi-detached houses on the hillside streets.



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MAKING PLACES TOPOGRAPHY

According to the Urban Nature Conservation Study, 'Markyate lies at the convergence of two well defined valleys at the head of the River Ver, on the dip slope of the chalk'. The High Street runs through the most consistently level portion of this area, while the residential area to the west of the High Street rises up to heights approximately 30 metres above the village centre.

As a result, there are significant views from the higher residential areas both into the village centre as well as out into the countryside.

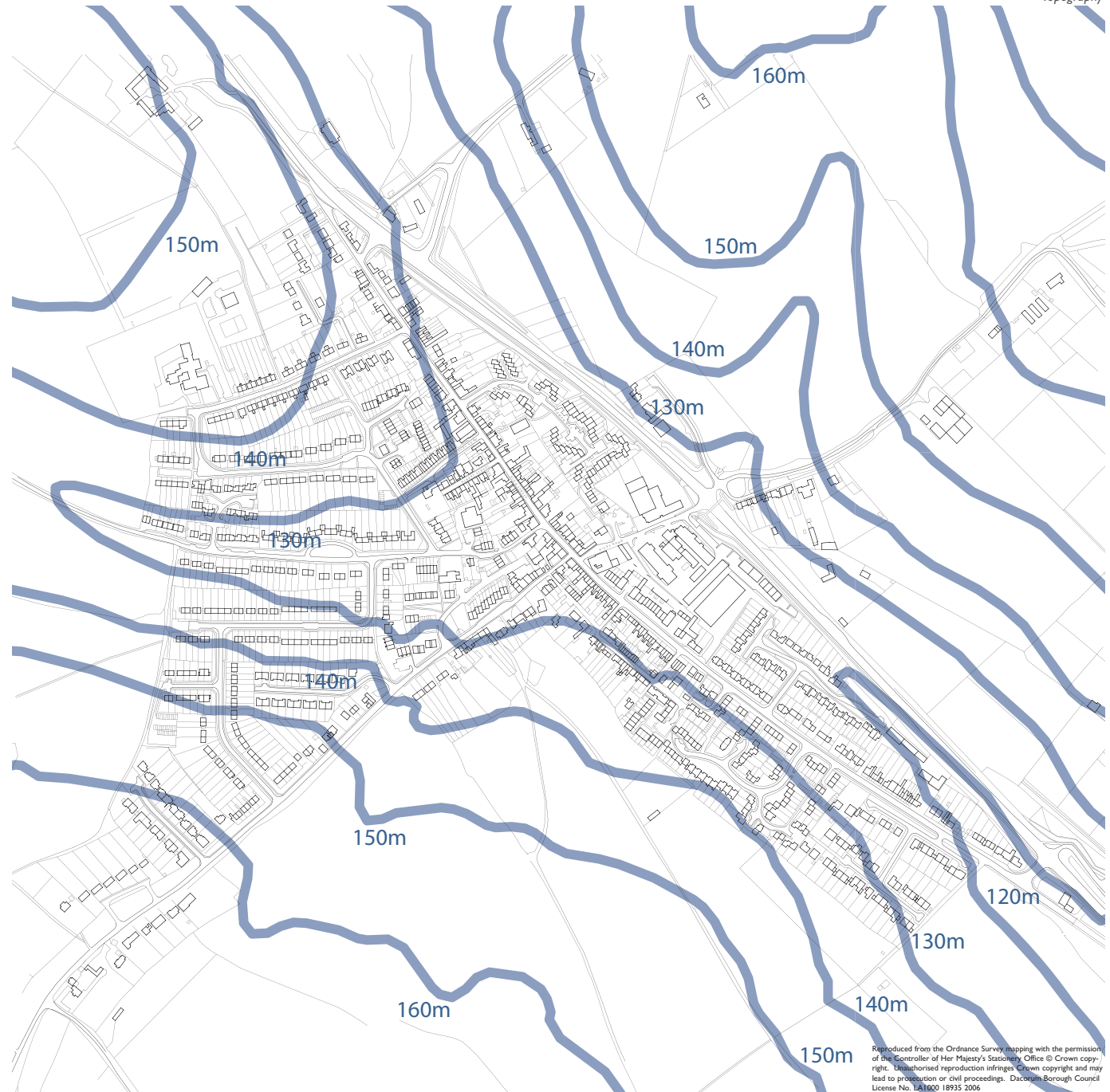
KEY ISSUES MP5: TOPOGRAPHY

MP5A

The High Street occupies level ground with the residential areas predominantly rising up the valley hillside.

MP5B

The valley creates strong views out to the countryside and into the village.



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CONTINUITY AND ENCLOSURE VILLAGE MORPHOLOGY

The morphology drawing shown to the right illustrates only the areas of built form. The drawing highlights a number of particular features with regards to the village centre, street pattern, building type and density.

Village centre

Markyate's village centre is clearly visible by the dense, narrow street wall that is formed by the historical buildings lining the High Street. As a former stagecoach stop along the turnpike, many of the buildings on the High Street were inns and public houses with service yards to park the stagecoaches. Many of these service courtyards remain today, particularly on the eastern side of the High Street (1). The morphology of the village centre becomes less dense as the High Street turns into the primarily residential London Road.

Street pattern

Markyate's street patterns form three general groups: through streets (2); dead-end and cul-de-sac streets (3) just off the main through streets (the High Street and London Road); and ribbon-style residential streets (4) (with some related dead-end streets) running up the hillside.

Building type and density

The residential streets along the valley side - primarily semi-detached housing - generally have larger plots than the other developments. The other housing types that are apparent in this drawing are old and new terraced (5) housing and a few areas of detached villas (6).



KEY ISSUES CE1: VILLAGE MORPHOLOGY

CE1A

The village centre is clearly visible as a densely built narrow cluster of buildings along the High Street.

CE1B

The ribbon-style developments along the hillside tend to have larger plots and consist of semi-detached housing.

CE1C

The more recent cul-de-sac developments have smaller plot sizes with less well-articulated streets.

CONTINUITY AND ENCLOSURE BUILDING LINES, SETBACKS, AND GAPS

Building lines establish the way in which a series of building structures meet the street and pavement. A continuous building line facilitates a clear image of the street. Setbacks and gaps, while sometimes providing interesting features or key gathering spaces, can impact upon the clarity of this continuous building wall.

Consistent street wall

The building lines drawing of Markyate village centre shows a high degree of regularity along the High Street. This uniformity is aided by construction over the service courtyards entryways (far right images). This architectural approach preserves the consistent two-storey nature of the High Street and should be protected.

Setbacks

There are only two areas with substantive setbacks. Both setbacks act as positive orientation points as opposed to negative spaces. The first image, now an estate agent, was once occupied by a greengrocer whose wares filled the space (1). The other space is the fire station (2).

Street narrowness

The setbacks are positive places because of the narrowness of the High Street. As can be seen in the drawing, the building lines rest very close to the street's edge. The pavement can be as little as one metre wide and is generally only 1.5 metres wide.

KEY ISSUES CE3: BUILDING LINES, SETBACKS, GAPS

CE2A

There is a high degree of building line uniformity along the High Street.

CE2B

The setbacks that occur are positive spaces for gathering.

CE2C

The building line is very close to the street, creating a narrow pavement.

CE2D

The construction over the service courtyards entryways preserves the consistent two-storey nature of the High Street and should be protected.



Building lines, setbacks and gaps



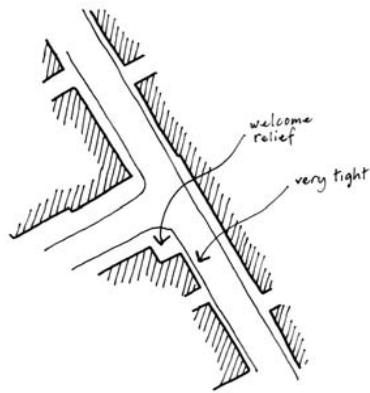
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CONTINUITY AND ENCLOSURE BUILDING ORIENTATION

Active building frontages can be a key factor in the success of a commercial street, providing both vitality and 'eyes on the street'. A site survey was conducted to establish which buildings fronted onto the High Street.

The buildings in the village centre are all active frontages which are very close to the street edge. However, as the land use drawing will reveal, many of these active frontages are residential uses. There is less activity on the High Street as a result of the high proportion of houses in the village centre.

There is one instance in which a courtyard - which historically was used for stagecoaches parking - now serves as an active frontage for residential units (1). The courtyard offers a great deal more space than the narrow pavement along the High Street.

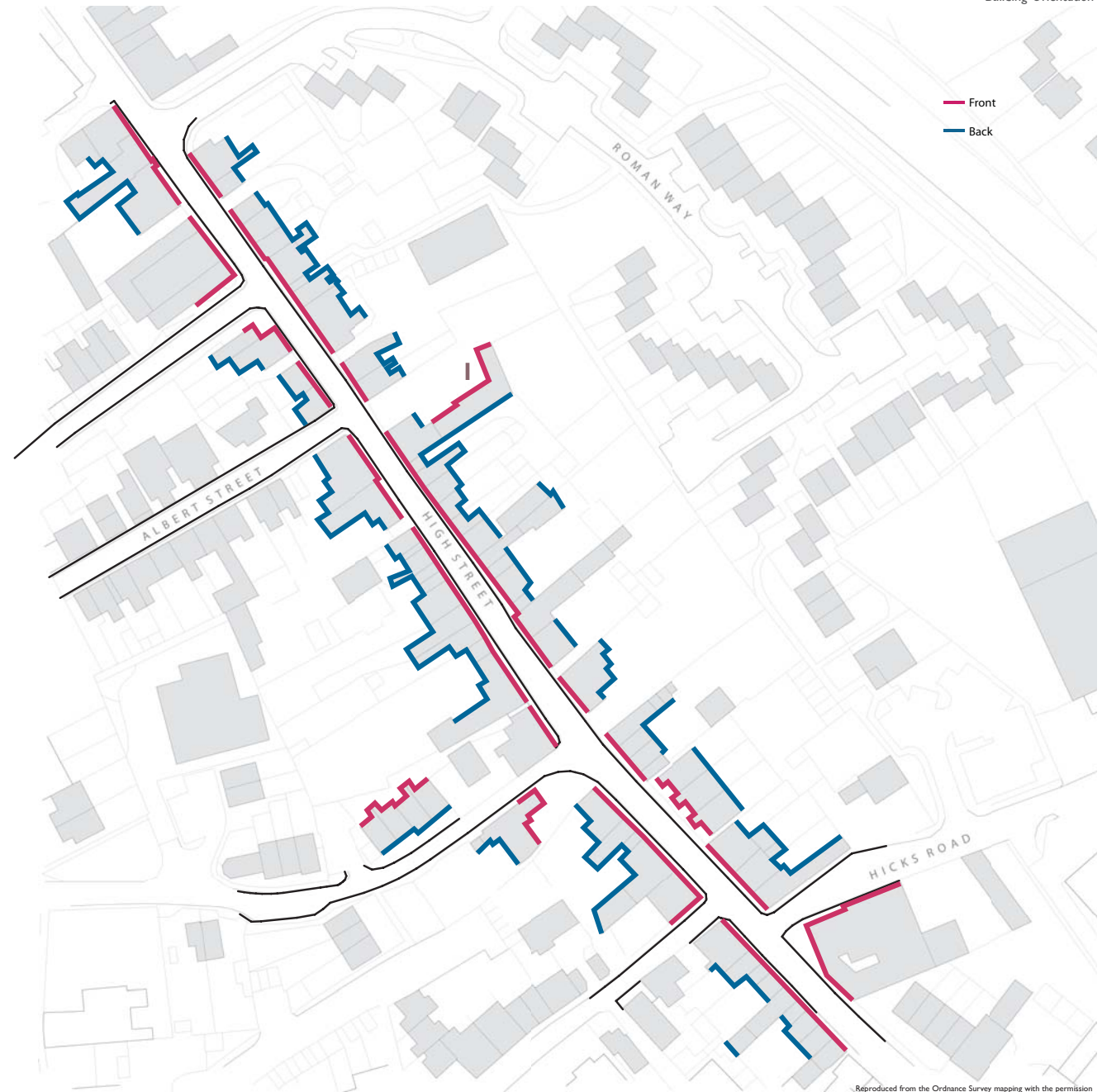


KEY ISSUES CE4: BUILDING ORIENTATION

CE3A
All the building frontages on the High Street are active.

CE3B
The majority of these active frontages are residential uses, detracting from the vitality of the village centre.

CE3C
There is one use of a courtyard as an active frontage for residential units.



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CONTINUITY AND ENCLOSURE DESIGNATED OPEN LAND

The land to the north and west of Markyate is outside of the Metropolitan Green Belt but considered an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The area to the north-east and southeast of Markyate is Green Belt Land. The only designated open land within Markyate is the land on which the community hall is built (1), an area of open land with a playground at the southern end of the village (2) and a small wooded verge along Pickford Road (located just off the map at the western end of Pickford Road).

There are no Local Nature Reserves or Wildlife Sites within the village. The most significant open land from an ecological perspective is Markyate Cell to the north of the village.

KEY ISSUES CE5: DESIGNATED OPEN LAND

CE4A

There are three small areas of designated open land within Markyate.

CE4B

There are no Local Nature Reserves or Wildlife Sites within Markyate.



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