

Welcome

Welcome to our public exhibition, where we are seeking your views on our evolving proposals for Wixams End.

Wates Developments are preparing proposals for new sustainable homes at Wixams, on the Land at Wixams End. The landscape-led scheme will deliver new community facilities and infrastructure, alongside much-needed new homes.

We envisage that the proposals could include affordable homes, new community facilities including new allotments and sports pitches, a transport hub and woodland planting with ecological benefits. This community and green infrastructure would accompany up to 430 low-carbon homes, with a mix of homes including for first-time buyers, and a range of family homes.

Wates Developments

Wates is one of the UK's leading family-owned development, building and property maintenance companies.



Founded over 125 years ago, we know about the built environment. We partner with a wide range of public and private sector customers and partners to create the places, communities and businesses of tomorrow.

Wates is committed to delivering exceptional projects that meaningfully impact the communities in which we operate. We have a track record of local delivery. Recently, this includes the delivery of Rivertree, a 200-pupil SEND School in Kempton and one of the largest in the country, by Wates Construction.

Project Team



Consultation

Wates is preparing a planning application for approximately 430 homes, community facilities, and associated infrastructure. The site is a draft allocation in the emerging Bedford Borough Council Local Plan for residential development under Policy HOU15.

Wates has been promoting the site since 2019 and have undertaken a considerable amount of survey work to assess the site. Wates also supported Bedford Borough Council at their Local Plan examination stage in order for the site to be allocated for housing in the emerging Local Plan. Wates Developments has also met with the elected Mayor of Bedford and senior Bedford Borough Councillors to discuss the emerging proposals.

Before submitting a planning application for the site, we want to hear your feedback. The aim of today's event is to inform you of the plans, to set out the benefits of the proposals and to get your feedback.

Feel free to ask a member of the project team any questions and do fill out one of our feedback forms.

For further information, you can visit our project website at:

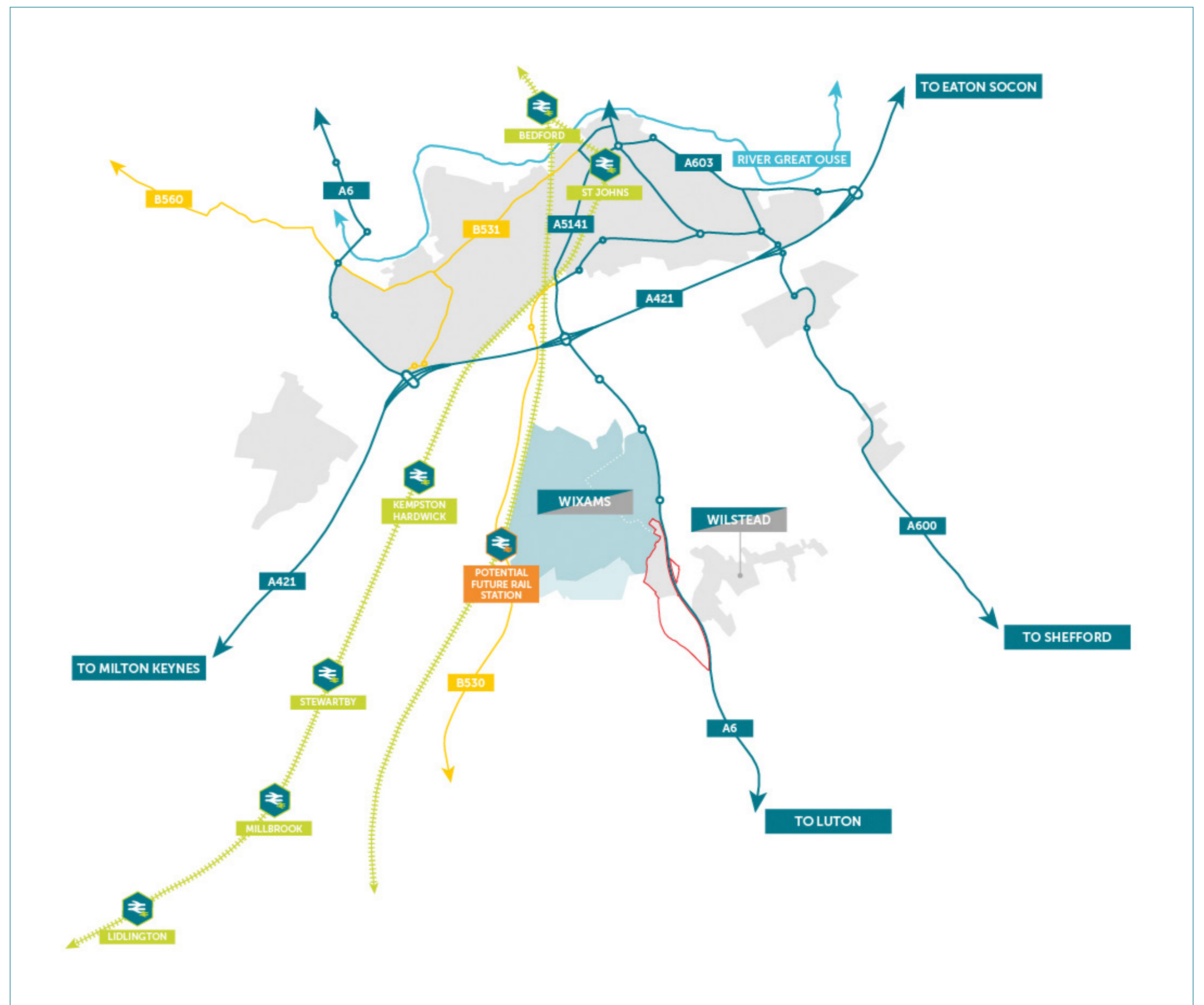
wixamsendconsultation.co.uk



Wixams is a new town and civil parish located in Bedfordshire, with a large number of new homes being constructed since 2007. It is likely to become the third largest settlement in the borough of Bedford, with over 4,000 new homes and a rail station planned for the near future.

Wixams End (the site) has been identified in the emerging Bedford Borough Council Local Plan 2040 to provide new residential development, community facilities and open green spaces, as an extension to the existing community at Wixams.

Wixams End is located to the south east of Willow Grove. Bounded by the A6 to the east with mature hedges, open land and raising topography to the southwest. Wixams End also includes land to the east of the A6 which will be retained as open space and used for biodiversity enhancements and surface flooding attenuation.



Constraints

- Consideration to be given to the development interface with surrounding residential development to the north.
- Existing green corridor along the northern extents of the site needs a sensitive landscape-led design to conserve its character.
- Design proposal should consider how to utilise the existing topography, particularly the raised levels to the south.
- Parts of the northeastern edge of the site are at low to high risk of surface water flooding, therefore SuDS features should be considered in these locations.
- Adequate buffer to be provided along the eastern edge to mitigate potential noise from the A6.
- Overhead power cables to the northeast may need re-diverting underground.

Opportunities

- Create a cohesive built environment which responds to the Wixams Village 2 development, the Wixams green corridor and that secures a new strategic gap with Wilstead.
- Opportunity to enhance the setting of existing Public Rights of Way (PRoW) by incorporating active edges, cycle routes and public open spaces.
- Potential to provide a bus route through the site connecting the A6 with Bedford Road in the north.
- Potential to provide a central community space at the intersection of the PRoW with the existing mature hedge to the west.
- Potential to enhance the local ecology and maintain the settlement edge by providing a meaningful planted corridor along the eastern edge of the site, further utilising existing hedges.
- Opportunity to provide a green/blue corridor running east to west along the centre of the site, contributing to the preservation of the existing hedges and ditches.
- Opportunity for public open spaces, including amenity spaces and SuDS features along the low-lying northern extents of the site, adjacent to the Wixams green corridor.
- Potential for new sports and play spaces to the south with enhanced woodland planting and biodiversity improvements.



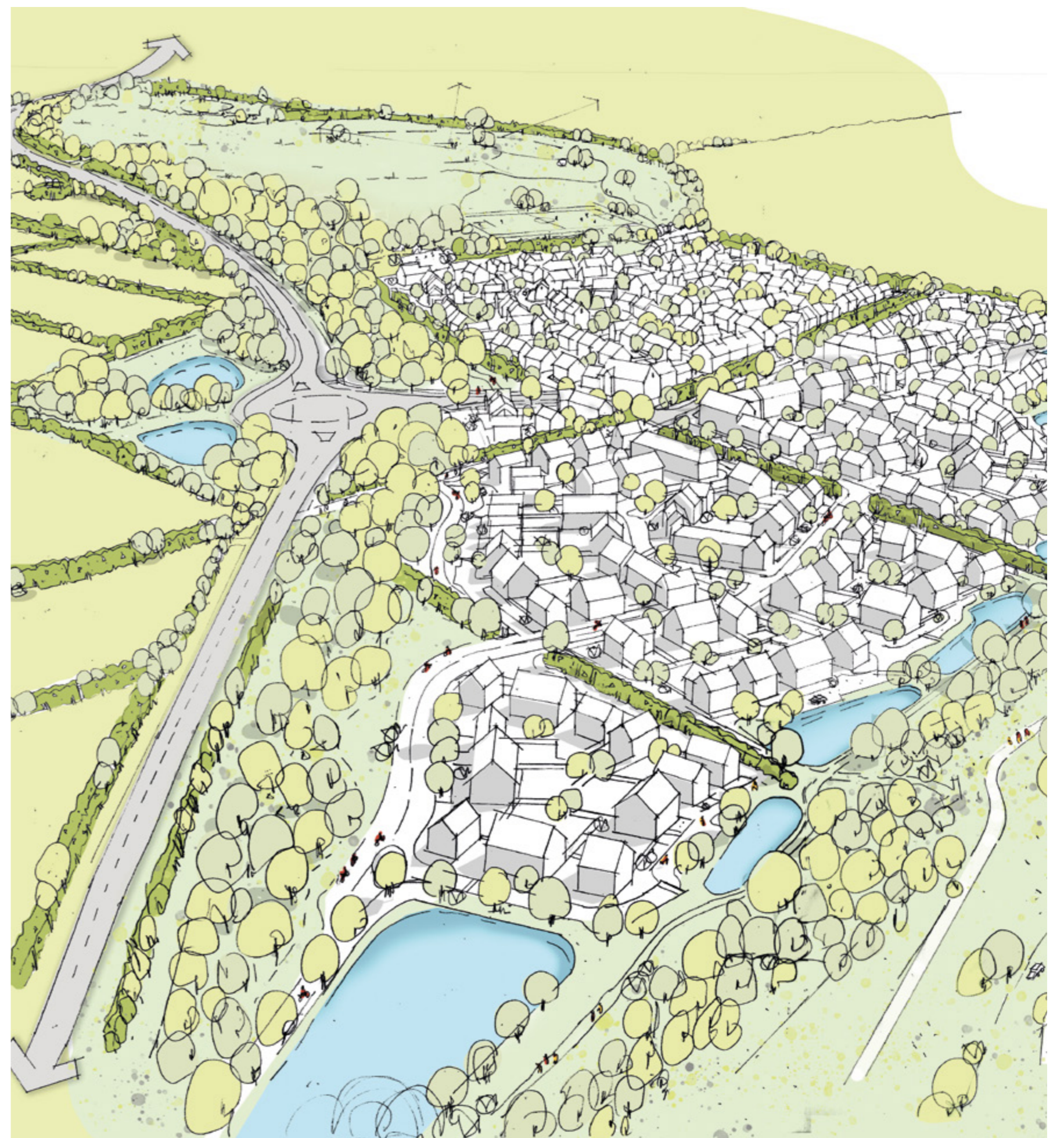
Constraints and opportunities plan

Wixams End will promote sustainable living close to existing and upcoming community facilities and the new Wixams Station.

It will provide attractive new and improved pedestrian and cycle links through the site to make walking and cycling the preferred modes of travel, centred around a new mobility hub at the entrance to the development.

The new neighbourhood will enhance the health and well-being of the community, designed to be beautiful and inclusive and with a variety of homes to respond to local needs.

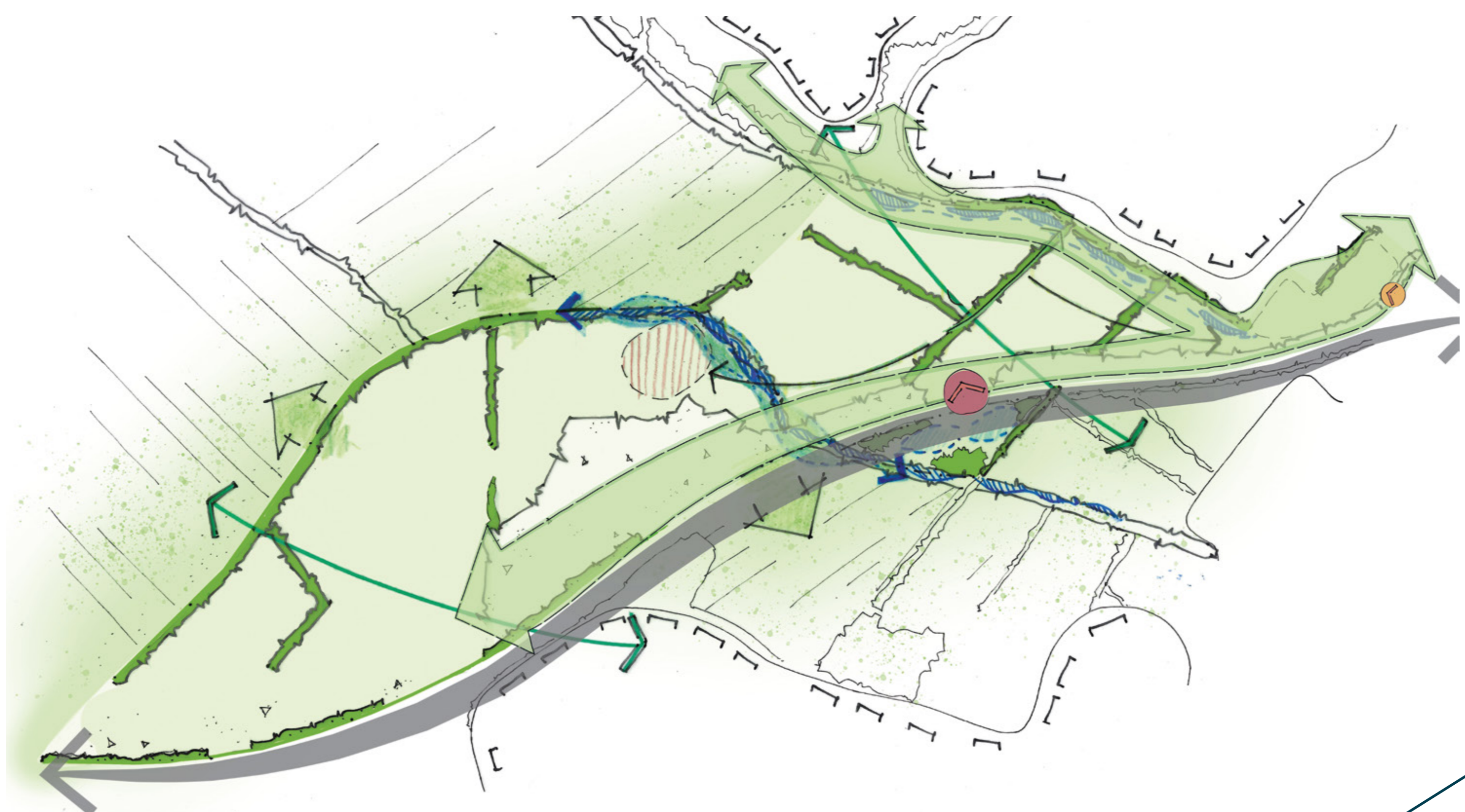
A generous woodland area together with a network of well managed open spaces will provide multiple opportunities for sports, play, food production, relaxation, recreation and contact with nature.



Proposed Wixams Aerial View

A landscape-led scheme

- Existing natural features like trees, hedges and ditches will be retained and integrated within the network of public open spaces. This will include a new woodland area and landscape buffer separating Wixams End and Wilstead, to help reinstate the settlement gap.
- The development will include a network of multifunctional open spaces accessible to new and existing residents. This will include mixed active spaces, sports areas and garden meadows.
- Existing hedge and ditch along the southern part of the site act as a natural barrier for the development.
- Existing topography is utilised by concentrating development on the less visually sensitive part of the site and by providing open spaces and viewing points on the elevated land.
- The development will include a network of green and blue infrastructure with SuDS features on the northern and lowest part of the site. SuDS features will provide opportunities for the creation of new habitats adjacent to Wixams Green Corridor.



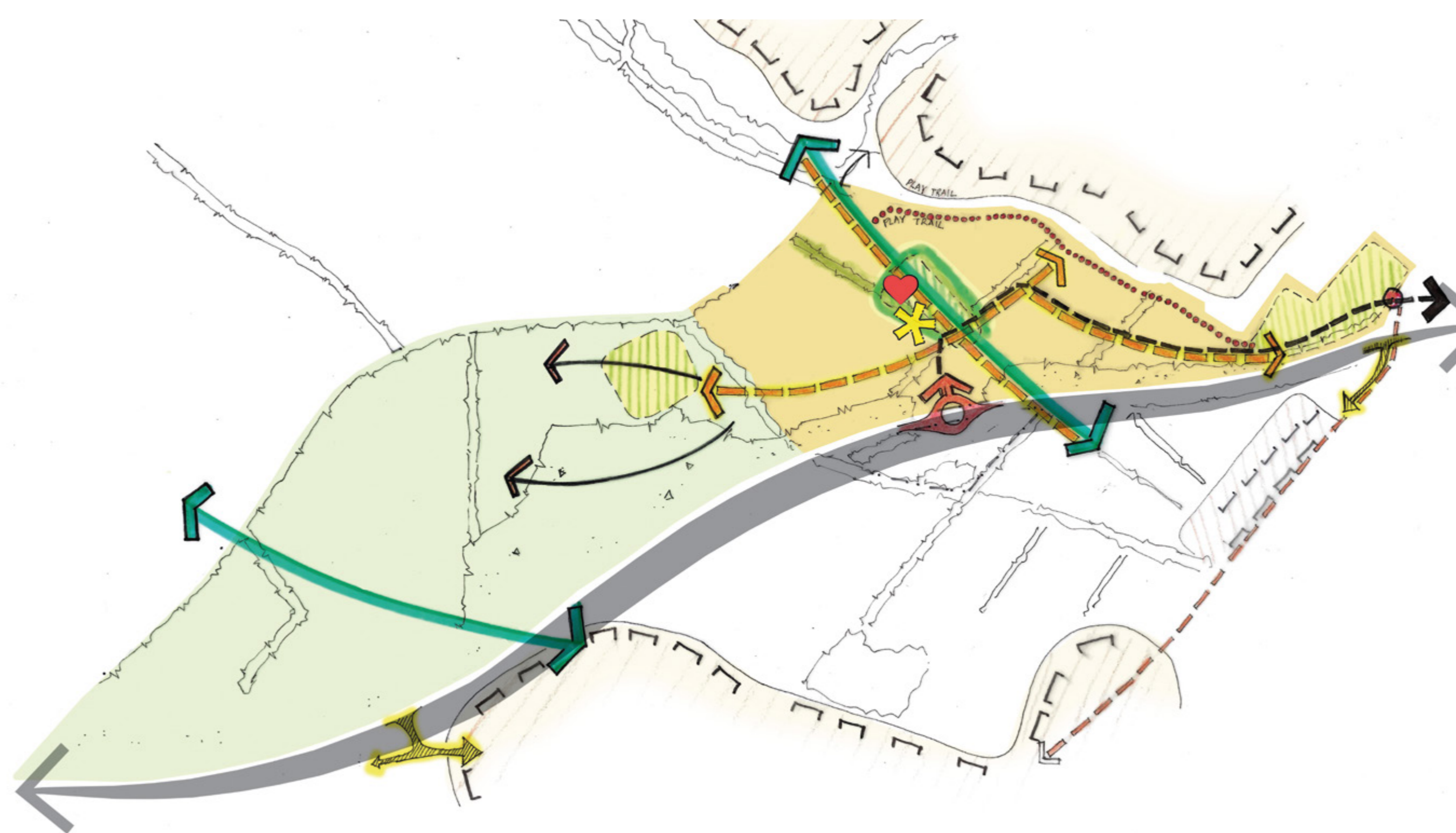
Landscape led setting image

A network of new routes

- The primary access to the site is proposed from the A6 and there is potential to provide a further pedestrian, cycle and emergency access from the north. These accesses allow for the proposal of a bus route from the primary access that links with Bedford road to the north.
- The development will provide a network of well-connected streets and cycle and pedestrian paths that will connect with the existing PRow and the wider network of routes.
- The PRow running along the north will be enhanced and include a new designated cycle route that will connect to the west into Wixams developments.

Responding to local context

- The proposal will respond to the existing local townscape and landscape.
- Houses will be concentrated towards the northern part of the site and provide an active frontage to Wixams Green Corridor and Wixams Village 2 development, whereas the area to the south will be retained as open space with biodiversity enhancements, play and sport areas and enhanced woodland planting to support the strategic gap.
- A new community space will be created at the intersection of two of the site's key features, an existing PRow and a mature hedge. This space will be centrally located within the development and include a mobility hub.
- Existing hedges within the development will be retained and act as natural corridors between the built area and public open spaces or routes.



Permeable network



Context responsive

Whilst we are currently at very early stages in the Planning process, our initial proposals for the site include:

- A range of up to 430 new homes including c.125 affordable homes.
- A mix of different dwelling types and sizes to reflect local needs.
- A mobility hub at the entrance to the development to promote sustainable transport (a space where people can access multiple types of transport in a central location).
- Vehicular access from the A6, with a pedestrian, cycle and emergency access from Bedford Road.
- The potential for a bus stop/loop on site or a bus route to Bedford Road to enable new/diverted routes.
- Several new footpaths and cycle links integrating with the existing Public Rights of Way (PRoW) on site and the wider local network of paths, including a new cycleway along the existing PRoW to the north.
- A landscape-led scheme that retains existing natural features (trees, hedges, drains etc.) with enhancements to existing and creation of landscape buffers around sensitive site boundaries.
- A green infrastructure network including; new open spaces and green corridors with existing and new native planting, and sports and play areas that are accessible to all.
- A new area of publicly accessible woodland in the more sensitive land to the south/south east which will also redefine the settlement gap, secure a permanent green buffer between Wixams and Wilstead and provide a noise buffer to the A6.
- An integrated network of SuDS, which will include detention basins, swales and permeable paving. SuDS features will mitigate potential surface water flooding and provide opportunities for the creation of new habitats.
- A low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to Climate Change.
- The potential for some of the land to the south to be retained in productive agricultural use.



Flood Risk

- The majority (97%) of the site lies in Flood Zone 1, at low risk of flooding, with only a small area (3%) located in Flood Zones 2 or 3, at medium to high risk of flooding. Any built form proposed on the site will be located outside of Flood Zones 2 or 3.
- Flood risk from all potential sources has been assessed based on the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning and Long-Term Flood Risk, Bedford Borough Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, and bespoke site specific assessments.
- A Sustainable Drainage Strategy will accompany the outline planning application to mitigate any potential risk of flooding. A Flood Risk Assessment will also be undertaken and submitted alongside the application.

Landscaping

The Landscape Strategy for the proposed scheme was developed to account for the site's context, the strategic gap between Wixams and Wilstead, and to minimise any visual effects of the development on the wider landscape.

The landscape strategy includes:

- Retaining existing hedgerows and trees along field boundaries within the site where possible along with new planting incorporated into the site.
- Play facilities throughout the development with public open spaces around the edges of the site to maintain the strategic gap between Wixams and Wilstead.
- Setting back development from the A6 and the northern boundary of the site to reinforce the gaps between existing settlements, provide areas of open space containing allotments and new planting.
- New planting and areas of woodland within the southern part of the site to increase Biodiversity Net Gain.
- Retaining the southern extent of the site for agricultural use, to reduce the loss of agricultural land and minimise landscape impacts.

Ecology

- We have undertaken a thorough ecological assessment of the site as part of our proposals, and the site is not subject to any nature conservation designations.
- The scheme will provide an onsite Biodiversity Net Gain of at least 10%.
- The majority of habitats of ecological value will be retained, with opportunities to enhance and create new habitats throughout the wider site as part of the development proposals.

Proposed areas of open space:

- 9.56ha of parks and gardens – mostly consisting of the woodland buffer to the A6 which also supports the gap between Wixams and Wilstead.
- 5.36ha of accessible natural greenspace – forming the large, publicly accessible open space to the south of the development with walkways and views.
- 4.39ha of amenity green space – this is the open space within the development area and the area adjacent to Wixams village with ponds and walkways throughout.
- 8 different natural play areas located within the development area and adjacent to the sports pitches.



Open Space Plan

Wixams End will promote active and sustainable travel, rather than reliance on private car usage.

To support this, a network of dedicated footpaths and cycleways will be provided throughout the scheme to integrate the new community with the wider Wixams area, providing safe and direct connections, with a mobility hub delivered at the centre of the development to promote sustainable travel. There is the potential for a new bus link between the A6 and Bedford, to prioritise sustainable public transport long-term.

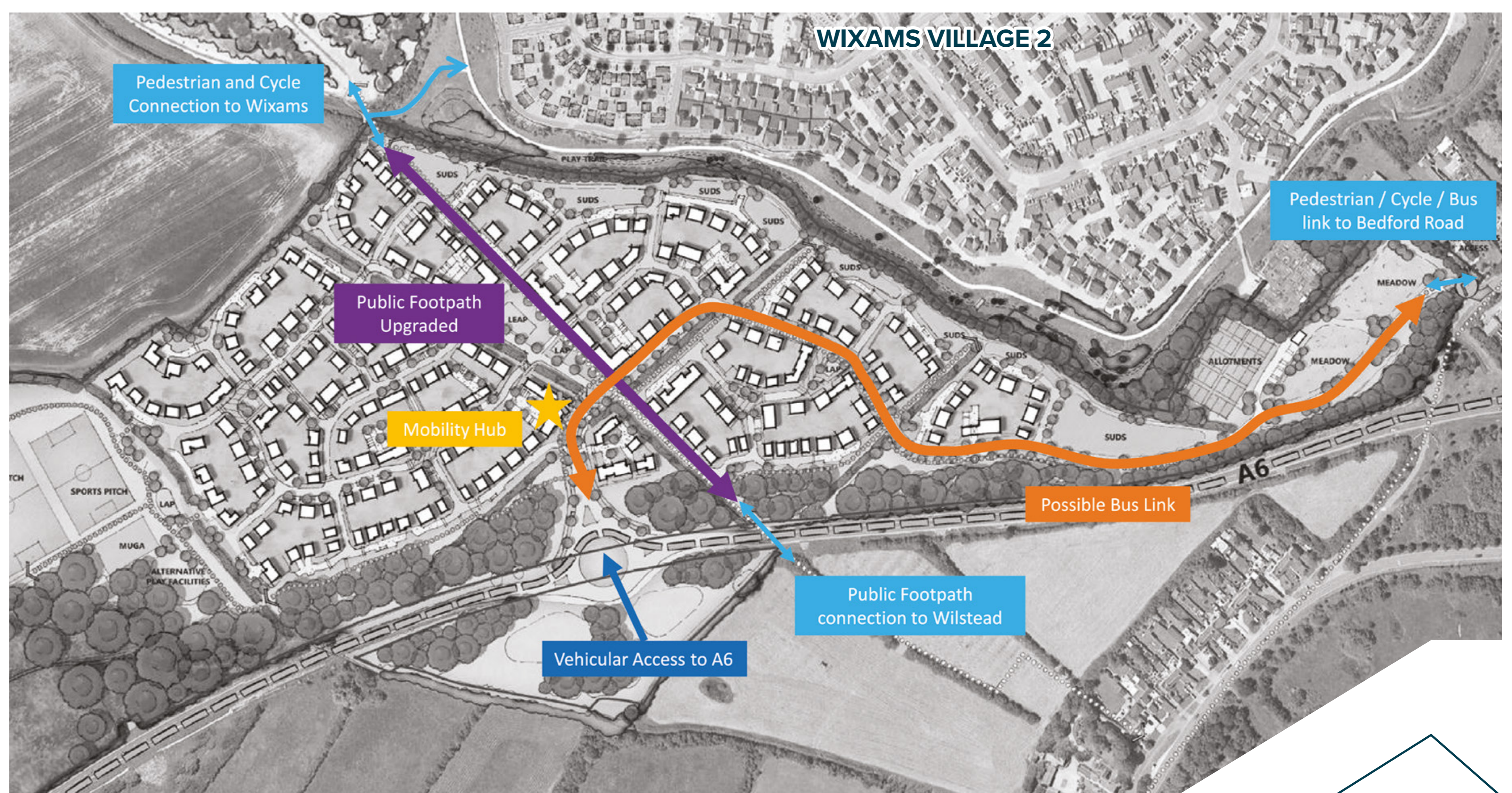
A vehicular access from the site to the A6 will be delivered via a new roundabout to reduce the impact of vehicle movements on Wixams and direct vehicles to the most appropriate roads. This will maintain the traffic flow on the A6 and offer a safe vehicular connection, directing traffic from the development to the most appropriate roads and routes. Pedestrian and cycle access will be delivered to Bedford Road and Wixams village 2 to ensure a permeable development that prioritises active travel.



Mobility hub diagram



Proposed access



Access strategy overview

The core vision for Wixams End is to shape a community with a unique identity, intricately intertwined with the natural surroundings. Our objective is to seamlessly integrate modern living spaces, new homes, new and existing green infrastructure and enhanced connections to create a permeable, legible and stimulating environment for new communities to thrive.

Sense of arrival

To enhance the sense of arrival, a new central space, designed around existing site features, will create the first impression. This space will be defined by a seamless integration of buildings and landscape features, ensuring a continuous and visually engaging frontage. The buildings will play an important role in shaping the space, contributing to a cohesive aesthetic while providing a sense of enclosure. This central area will host an open space with a LEAP and a LAP, offering nature and recreational elements.

To further define the southern edge of this space, a new green corridor will be introduced, featuring the existing hedge. This green corridor will also incorporate SuDS features such as swales or rain gardens which will not only contribute to the aesthetic of the space but also play a functional role in managing water runoff and enhancing ecological diversity.

Dynamic Edge

The northwestern edge of the development is designed to offer a vibrant and engaging interface, combining architecture, landscaping, and SuDS features in response to the Wixams Village 2 and the Wixams Green Corridor. At this boundary, the emphasis is on creating a dynamic frontage characterized by detached buildings, accessible through discreet private lanes or edge streets with a softer, more informal character that harmonises with the adjacent green corridor to the north.

Distinctive in its character, this development edge is delineated by a network of attenuation ponds integrated with new trees and low-level planting.

To further enhance the natural and recreational elements, an informal play trail will weave alongside the ponds. This trail not only provides a recreational experience but also serves as a connecting route, linking the existing PRow to the west with the northern edge of the site and Bedford Rd. This integration ensures a seamless transition between existing pathways and the new development, promoting connectivity and accessibility.



Park Edge

The southern fringe of the development, in tandem with the existing hedge, is designed to serve as the frontage for the Multifunctional Active Space and the woodland area situated further to the south/south east. The preservation and enhancement of the existing hedge and ditch are integral to this vision, aiming to create a well-managed landscape feature not only intended to act as a picturesque backdrop when viewed from the south but also to have a practical purpose of mitigating the visual impact of the development from distant southern views.

By retaining and improving the hedge, we aim to define an aesthetically pleasing boundary that contributes to the overall landscape management. Beyond its visual role, the hedge plays an important function as a soft screen and transitional element, demarcating the residential areas from the adjacent sports and recreational facilities.

This edge of the development will have a more varied frontage characterised by detached two-story buildings. Streets within this area will lead to pedestrian links, incorporated through the existing hedge to serve as gateways connecting the residential area to the Multifunctional Active Space and enhancing accessibility to recreational amenities and the existing PRow located further south.

Harmonious Interface

Development within the transitional area will be composed of predominantly semi-detached houses, complemented by small terraces and limited detached houses. Key elements of this area are pocket parks and incidental green spaces, which will play a vital role in fostering a sense of community and connection.

These green spaces are intended to become vibrant hubs, offering immediate opportunities for recreation, play, and social interaction right at residents' doorsteps.

Enriched with a variety of trees and low-level planting, these areas are intended to provide welcome soft/natural environment.

To further reflect the significance of these communal spaces, adjacent streets will change character and provide areas of shared surface crossings. This not only enhances accessibility but also emphasises the relevance of these key areas in fostering a sense of safety and community.



The development will provide a number of key benefits for the whole community including, but not limited to:



Approximately 430 new homes including approximately 125 affordable homes addressing an identified need in the borough



Sympathetic design to respect and enhance the local character with a development that blends into the landscape



New community facilities including a central mobility hub and meeting spaces



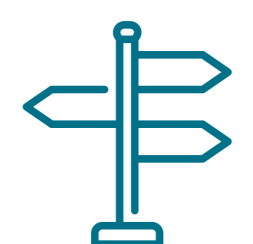
A potential new bus route or bus stop on site to promote sustainable transport



Attractive new open spaces and play areas for the whole community to enjoy



A landscaping strategy which protects and enhances the natural environment and increases biodiversity with an onsite net gain of at least 10%



A network of new cycleways and footpaths, offering connections into Wixams and Wilstead, encouraging healthy active travel and promoting wellbeing



Thank you for attending our public consultation event. Your feedback is essential in shaping our proposals.

Following consultation with the local community, we will review feedback and update our proposals before the submission of a planning application later in the year.

We will keep the local community updated throughout the planning process.

You can have your say by:

Wates

thrive.

Boyer

Cratus
group

i-Transport

aspect ecology
APEM Group

JNP GROUP
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

SLR



Providing your feedback and comments via the project website – wixamsendconsultation.co.uk



Completing a feedback form available today



Writing to us at **FREEPOST – Cratus Communications**
(no further address details or stamp required)



Emailing us at info@wixamsendconsultation.co.uk



Calling us on **0203 026 3143**

Data protection: Your data will be held by Cratus Group on behalf of Wates Developments and may be passed onto the Local Planning Authority as part of a future planning application. For our full privacy statement, [please visit cratus.co.uk](http://www.cratus.co.uk)



THANK YOU

WIXAMS END

Wates