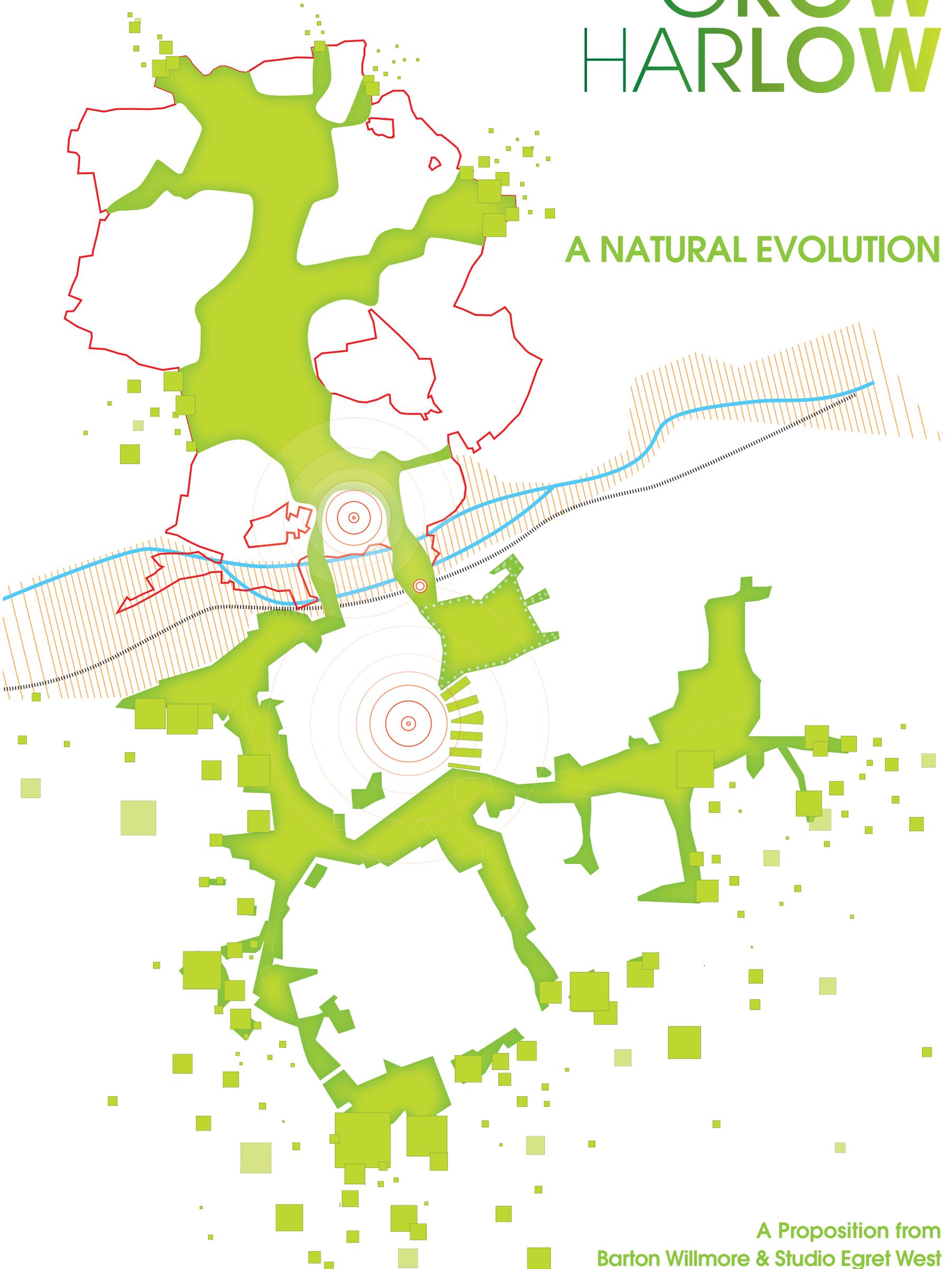


GROW HARLOW

A NATURAL EVOLUTION



A Proposition from
Barton Willmore & Studio Egret West



A NATURAL EVOLUTION – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The traditional Master Plan, which tries to shoehorn the unknown future into a fixed image is now probably defunct. It is akin to well meaning ambitious parents that dictate to their child the type of lifestyle, the job and even the spouse they should aim for. This deterministic vision is, more often than not, to the disappointment of the parents and the frustration of the child.

We have moved into a new era of urban vision. One anchored in principles and respectful of boundaries, but crucially one that learns as it goes along, one that responds to changing economic climates and one that gently evolves by reflecting back creatively and expressing this through the guidance of its empowered residents and owners.

We intend to follow an evolutionary approach at Harlow. To begin by giving Harlow's future communities a new paradigm for growth and new, sustainable designs for living will follow.

Defining a framework not a Master Plan.

Defining the limits of growth and the interfaces with the existing settlements – Harlow itself and the villages to the north – not the exact form of the future settlement.

Defining the long term ambitions of the place in terms of size and the potential number of homes and jobs rather than a restrictive density diagram applied across the site.

Defining the principles of a 500 home community that can be refined as time goes by rather than a prescriptive design code for 10,000 homes.

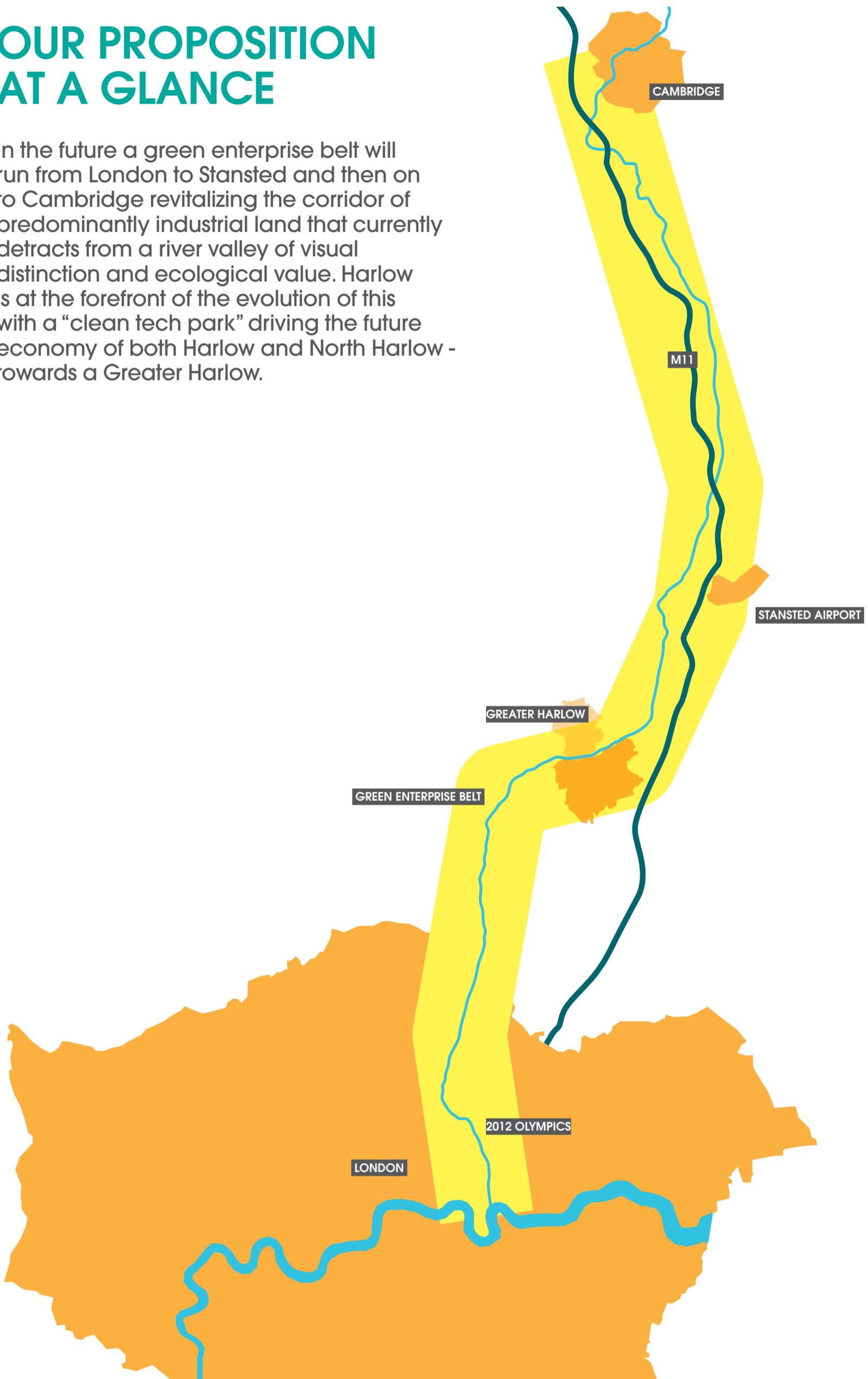
What is cutting-edge environmental design and technology today is likely to change. The same is true of the way people live. A good framework should allow adaptation through time.

Allowing each and every community to come forward as and when required, signing up to a constitution that supports growth, tightly collecting and aggregating each one to slowly create a compact, greater whole. The design of each community adapts as they accumulate to respond to the particular needs of the time and the ambitions of those next pioneers joining the North Harlow partnership. Here the sense of ownership is not one of personal accumulation but of being part of something bigger, like the heart is part of the body.

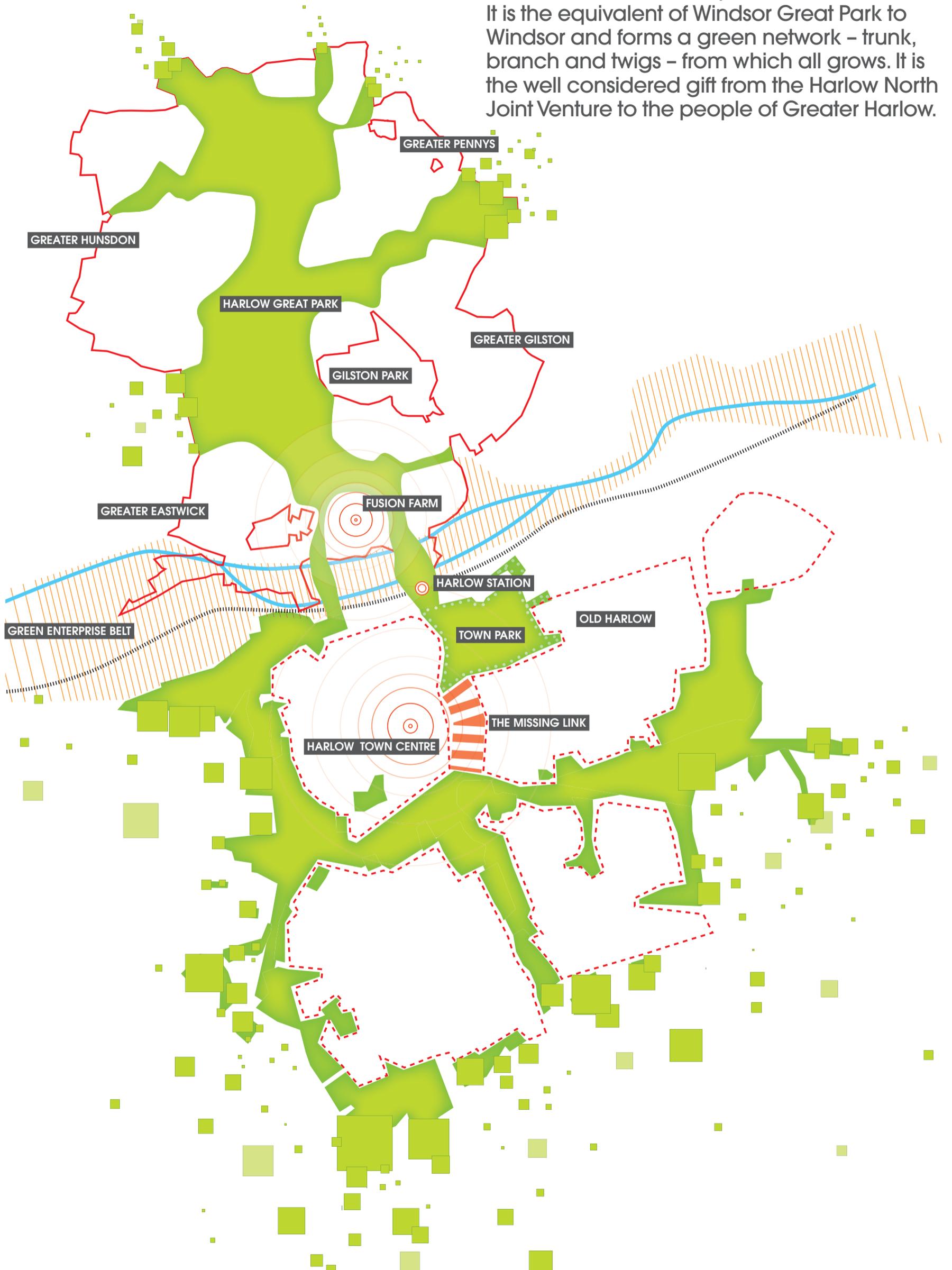
In essence our approach to North Harlow can be seen as a Natural Evolution.

OUR PROPOSITION AT A GLANCE

In the future a green enterprise belt will run from London to Stansted and then on to Cambridge revitalizing the corridor of predominantly industrial land that currently detracts from a river valley of visual distinction and ecological value. Harlow is at the forefront of the evolution of this with a “clean tech park” driving the future economy of both Harlow and North Harlow - towards a Greater Harlow.



A Great Park extends like a giant tree from Harlow's Town Park deep into North Harlow. It is the equivalent of Windsor Great Park to Windsor and forms a green network – trunk, branch and twigs – from which all grows. It is the well considered gift from the Harlow North Joint Venture to the people of Greater Harlow.



OUR PROPOSITION AT A GLANCE

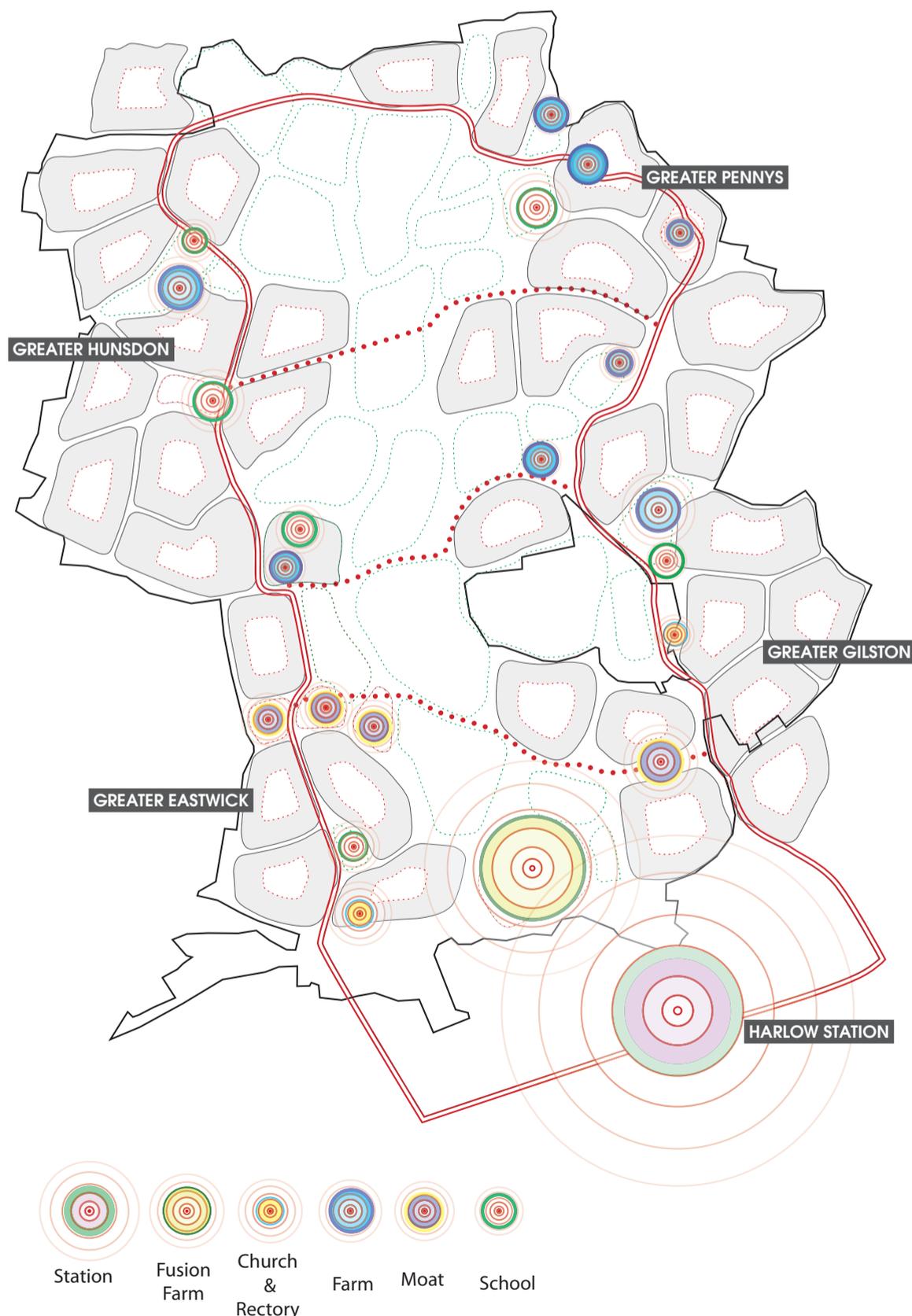
Harlow Great Park is highly programmed, productive and playful. Clearings are allocated as either inhabited or not. The programme agreed within each space is then either temporary or permanent.



Four expanded villages sit on the edge of Harlow Great Park – Greater Eastwick, Greater Gilston (including Gilston Park), Greater Pennys and Greater Hunsdon. Each village is a cluster of pioneering community cooperatives.

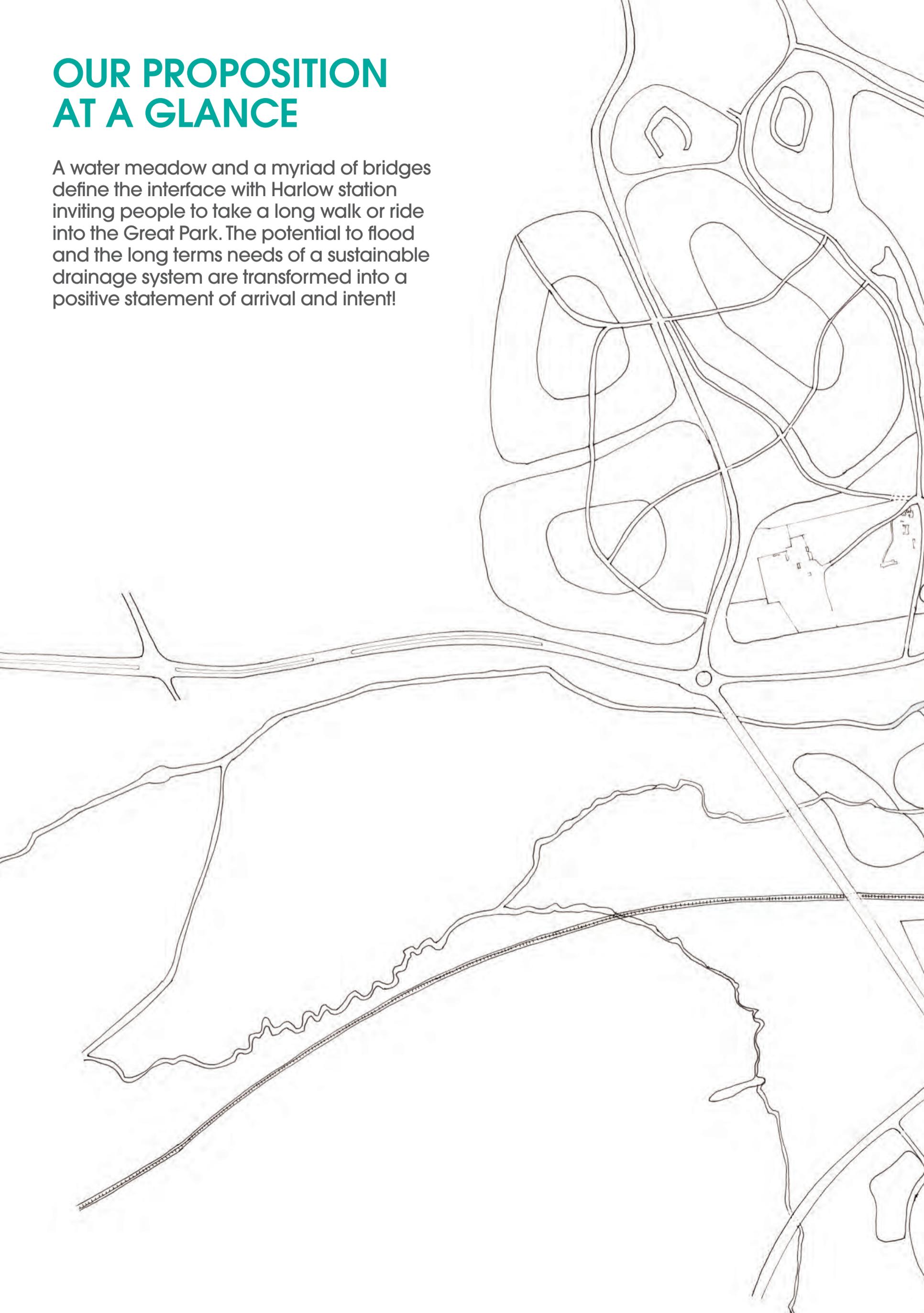
Existing farms are reinvented as social meeting places and the community heart of each village. They are connected by a public transport denominated “market route” that feeds back into Harlow.

Each community has a distinct character and a level of self sufficiency established by a core of shared common ground. The particular nature of this space – for example, a market garden, a small holding, a wildflower meadow, an orchard – is determined by the particularities of the residents who all own a share – the agricultural equivalent of John Lewis or Waitrose.



OUR PROPOSITION AT A GLANCE

A water meadow and a myriad of bridges define the interface with Harlow station inviting people to take a long walk or ride into the Great Park. The potential to flood and the long terms needs of a sustainable drainage system are transformed into a positive statement of arrival and intent!



HARLOW GREAT PARK

FIRST COMMUNITY OF 500 HOMES

FUSION FARM

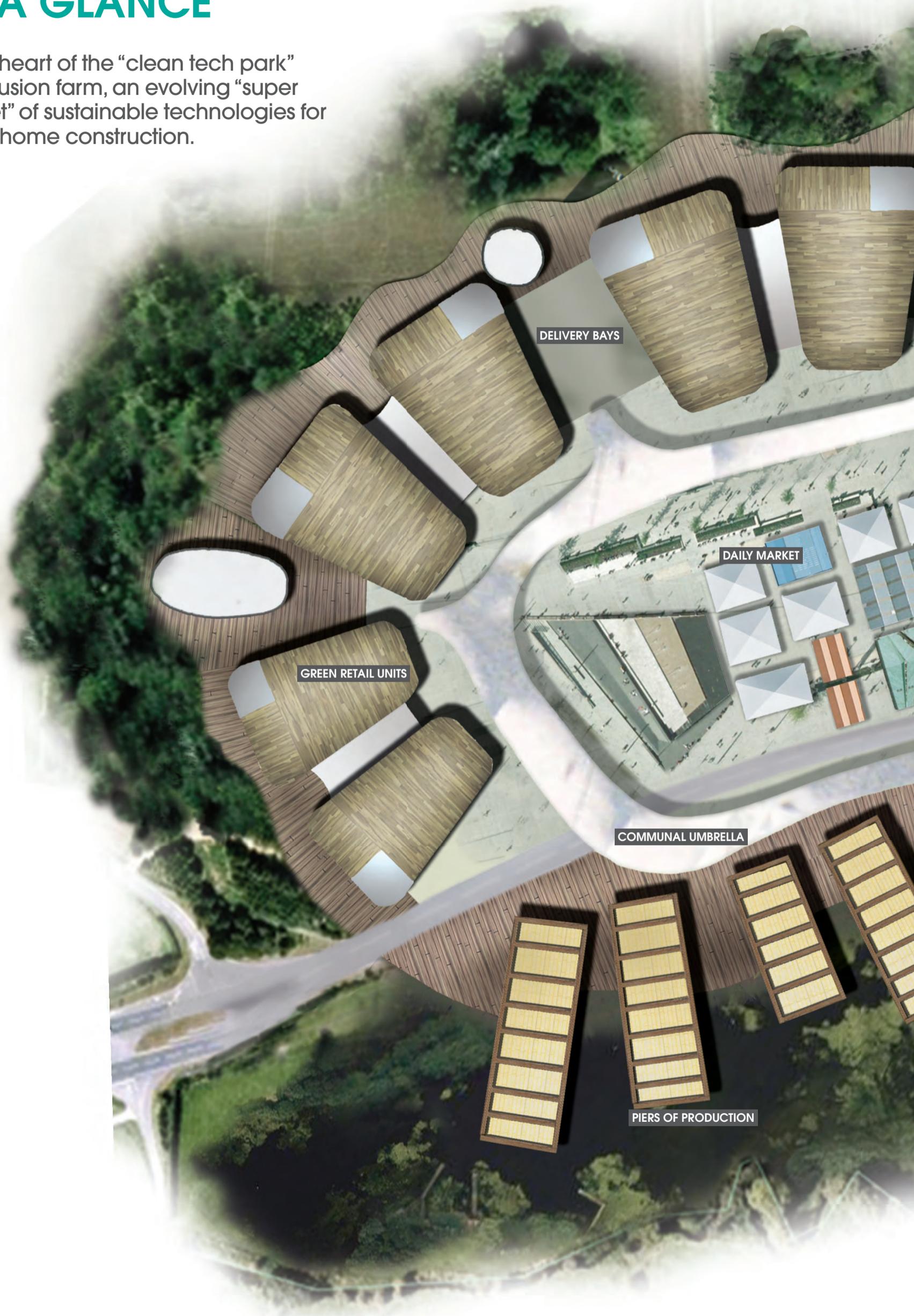
WETLANDS

BRIDGE CONNECTING HARLOW GREAT PARK AND HARLOW TOWN



OUR PROPOSITION AT A GLANCE

At the heart of the “clean tech park” is the fusion farm, an evolving “super market” of sustainable technologies for use in home construction.



GREAT PARK

ORGANIC FOOD OUTLET

CAR PARKING

BOARDWALK

EASTWICK LODGE FARM

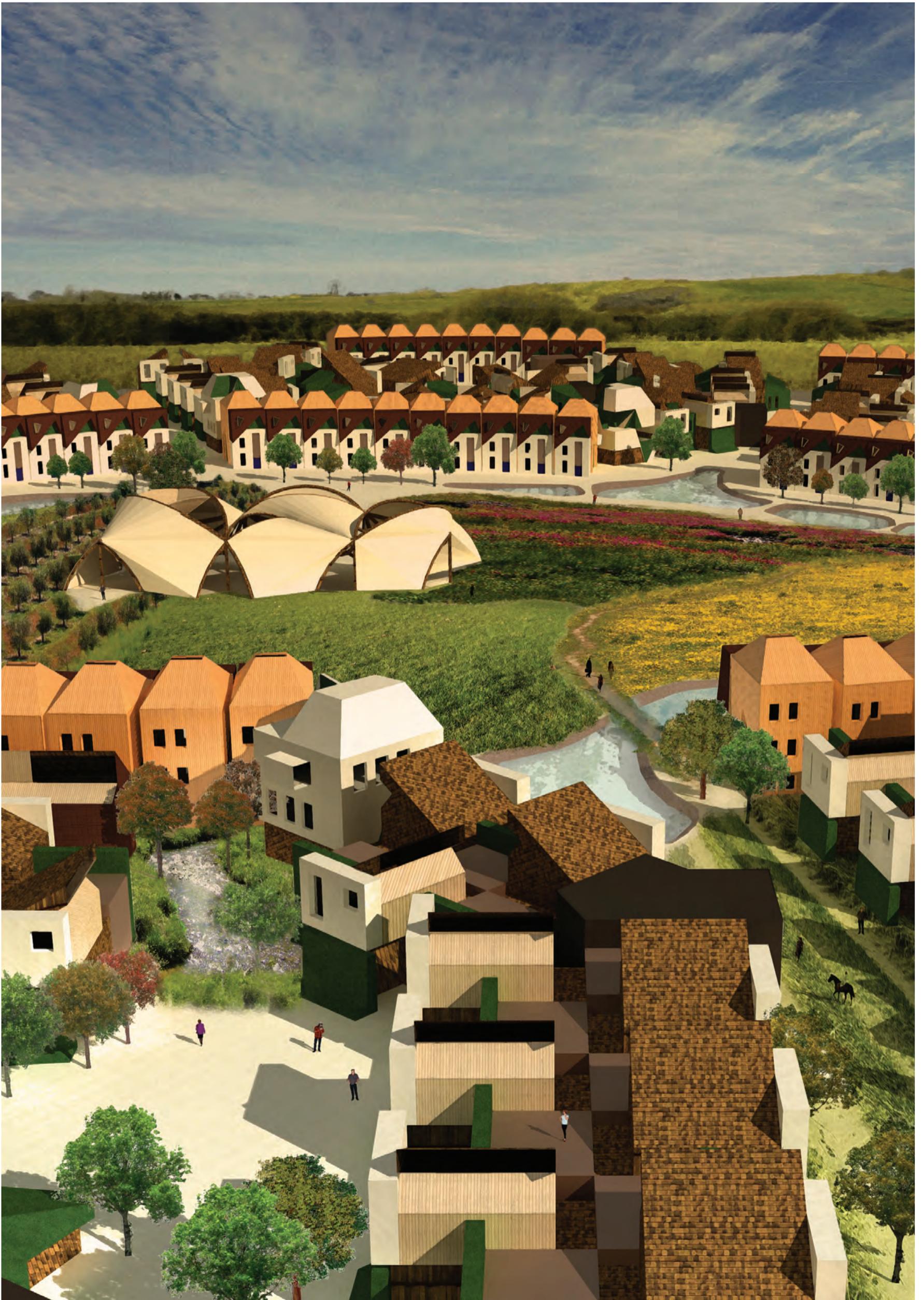
FUSION HALL - CONFERENCE CENTRE

STIRLING PRIZE WINNING SHED

HOTELS

WATER MEADOW





OUR PROPOSITION AT A GLANCE



The “first 500” homes are arranged around a common working landscape which forms, as a cell, the building block of the whole settlement.

OUR PROPOSITION AT A GLANCE

The new, highly visible bridge link provides a turning point in the renaissance of Harlow, enticing the residents of Harlow to access the leisure facilities of the Stort Valley and Harlow Great Park and characterizes the renewal of Harlow to the visitor arriving at Harlow Town Station.



HARLOW GREAT PARK

FIRST COMMUNITY OF 500 HOMES

FUSION FARM

WETLANDS

BRIDGE CONNECTING HARLOW GREAT PARK AND HARLOW TOWN



YOUR CHALLENGE

In January 2009 you asked us two questions.

PART 1 – A NARRATIVE

It is the year 2030 and you are writing a book about the role played by North Harlow in establishing current thinking about urban development in the 21st Century.

What makes North Harlow so remarkable?
How has it achieved its place in history?
What elements have been less successful?
What makes it different from other places?

PART 2 – A DESIGN RESPONSE TO CONNECTIVITY

What role can Harlow Town Station and the surrounding area play in creating an integrated Harlow, comprising the existing town and a major expansion to the north?



Tough questions. How do you answer Part 1 without seeing the future? Who could have guessed how the internet and mobile phones have changed our lives over the last twenty years? Who are we to be so arrogant as to guess how life will change over the next twenty years?

Fortunately the questions do say answer "using whatever means you wish", which gives us the freedom to imagine the potential evolution of this place, North Harlow. The Barton Willmore/Studio Egret West team choose therefore to answer the question by offering a timeline of events and associated growth - The potential moments in history. The potential highlights and the setbacks until we reach 2030 and can look back at the fruits of our labour so far.

Answering Part 2 seems easier but again must be an evolving entity. The first infrastructure works may hit the ground in 2011 but the role of Harlow station will continue to grow as North Harlow grows, so again this must be part of our timeline.

They are not simple questions. So we do not offer simple answers. Read the whole timeline and get the whole gist. Dip into the timeline and get just a flavour of our thinking.

JANUARY 2009: BRITAIN IS OFFICIALLY IN A RECESSION

Happy new year? You must be joking. 2009 began with a wail, and then got worse. Millions of people have already been put out of work, across the world, by this first truly globalised crisis of capitalism. Tens of millions more will be made jobless soon. Those of us lucky enough still to have work will feel poorer and less secure. To celebrate his Nobel prize in economics, Paul Krugman promises us months of “economic hell”. Thank you, Paul, and a happy new year to you too.



It is time to take a deep breath and re-appraise our moral and political positions. In 1989 the old communist regime of Russia collapsed, China has embraced capitalism with open arms and spearheading one of the most ambitious regeneration programmes the earth has ever seen, the USA is on it's knees and it's capacity to fight wars and police the planet greatly reduced, free-market capitalist economies across the world have shown their frailty. Have we reached a “fin de siecle” decadent end to our previous golden age? Have we lost some fundamental ordering intelligence through greed and selfishness? Is capitalism dead?

These are the sorts of questions that kicked off 2009.

Alongside these came two questions posed by the North Harlow Joint Venture to each of the four shortlisted Master Planners competing to be its advisor.

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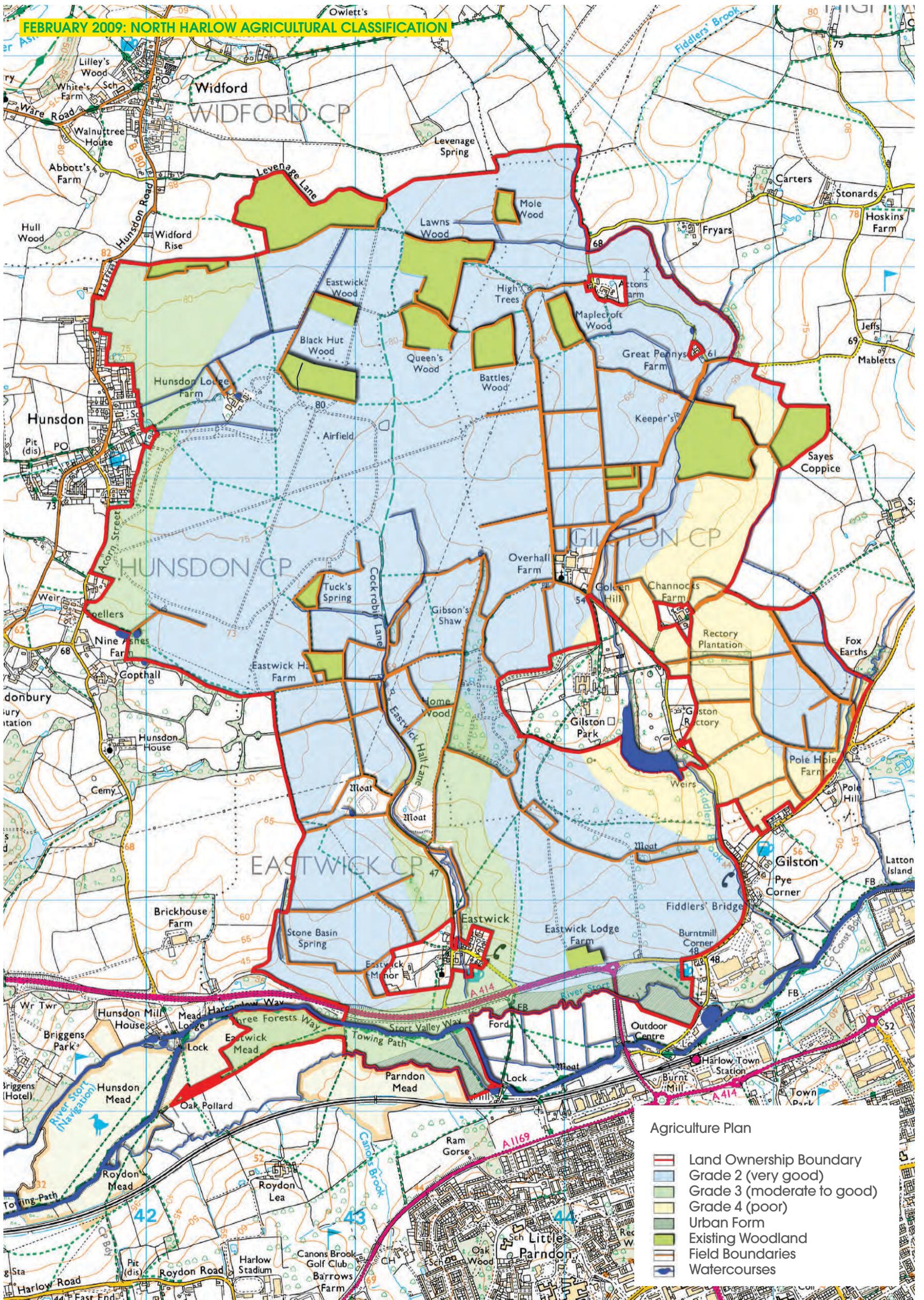
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Meanwhile at a more prosaic level, the recession has brought two things into sharp focus.

A big pause has been pressed on the housing market button – we need to find a different, more affordable, more resilient way to deliver carbon-neutral communities, in eco town terms, “designed to meet the challenges of climate change, the need for more sustainable living, and the need to increase housing supply”. Maybe the answer lies in talking to the people who might one day inhabit the homes? We also need to find a way to bring manufacturing back to Britain. There is now a common realization that the UK is too reliant on others and that jobs are more virtual than real. Maybe we need to set aside some common ground within each community to allow a spirit of home made entrepreneurship to thrive again?

FEBRUARY 2009: NORTH HARLOW AGRICULTURAL CLASSIFICATION



- Agriculture Plan**
- Land Ownership Boundary
 - Grade 2 (very good)
 - Grade 3 (moderate to good)
 - Grade 4 (poor)
 - Urban Form
 - Existing Woodland
 - Field Boundaries
 - Watercourses

FEBRUARY 2009: FOOD FUTURES

The publishing of Food Futures: Rethinking UK Strategy which carries a chilling warning that the UK cannot consider itself immune to what is happening in the global food system and that recent spikes in commodity prices are set to continue leading to soaring costs of living.

Over the next few decades, the global food system will come under renewed pressure from the combined effects of seven fundamental factors:

Population growth, the nutrition transition, energy, land, water, labour and climate change.

The combined effects will create constraints on food supply and if action is not taken, there is a real potential for demand growth to outstrip increases in global food production. Expectations of abundant and ever cheaper food could come under strain. The UK can no longer afford to take its food supply for granted. Our former colonies now face a struggle to feed themselves, not their former "masters". The Food Futures report places a new focus on the UK's use of resources and in particular the consumption of agricultural land.

At 70% agricultural land, North Harlow is just the sort of place to be scrutinized. The report calls for more money to expand farm expansion, agricultural innovation and skills. With an ambition for growing a sustainable community, integrated with the farms that preceded it, Grow Harlow is highlighted as just the sort of place to lead the way!

In a serendipitous move, on 19th February 2009 the BBC reported that the National Trust has freed up land for 1,000 allotments on some of the best known country estates in Britain. This demonstrates that the appetite for "growing your own" within a community has never been stronger and Harlow is well placed to lead the growing revolution!

A conversation with Fiona Reynolds of the National Trust:

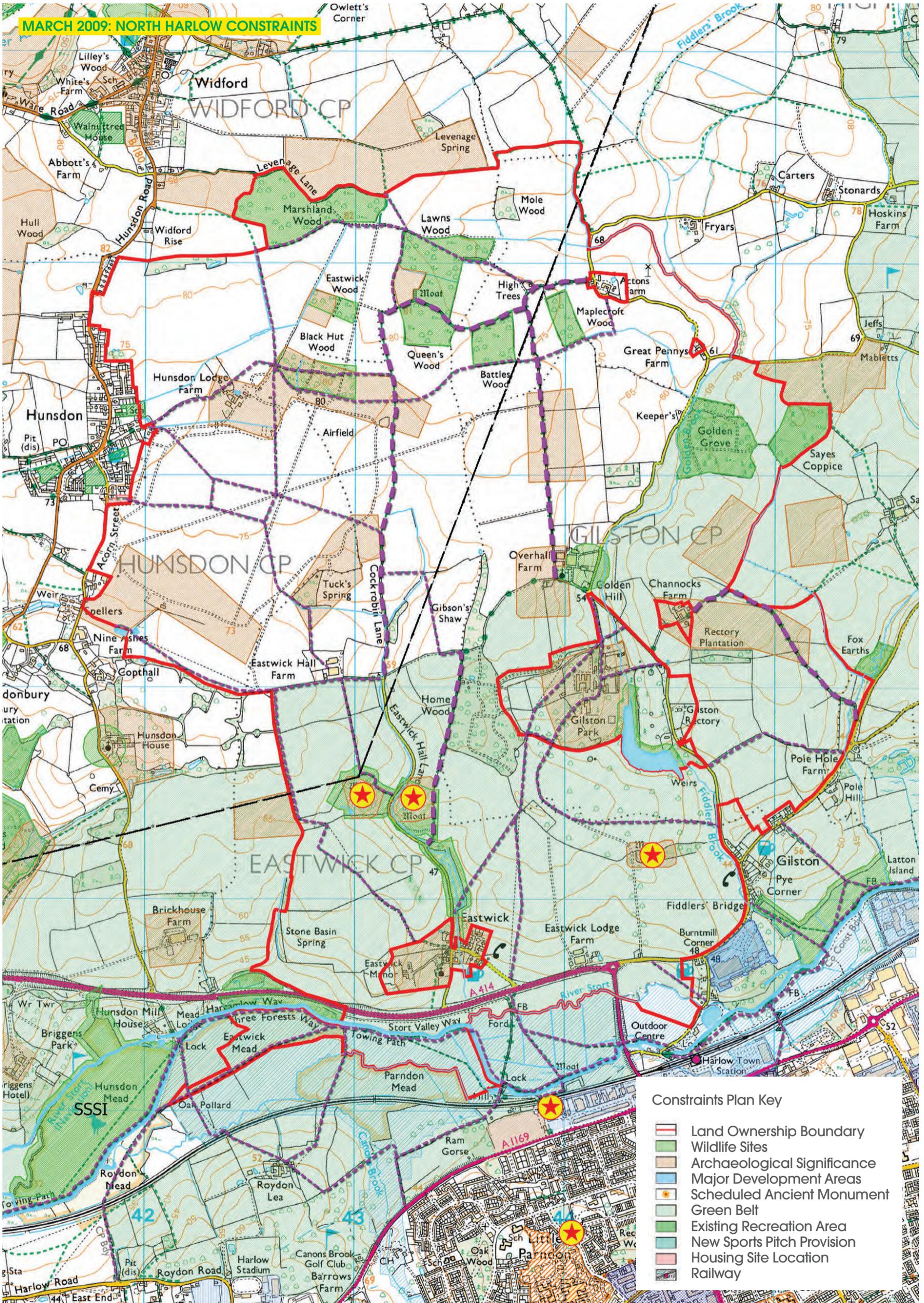
"It wasn't that long ago that "allotment gardening" was almost a synonym for "unfashionable". It was something that people did when they were too old to have anything interesting to do with their summer evenings, before going home to put their slippers on and have a cup of cocoa. But, spurred on by Jamie, Gordon, Hugh and the rest of the TV cheferati, and combined with concerns about climate change and sustainability, there has been a dramatically increased interest in growing your own. Up and down the country, old allotment hands are pestered for advice, as yummy mummies and other urban trendies rediscover the joys of peas fresh from the pod and just-dug potatoes.

Those who sneered at the allotment brigade are now green-fingered with envy, as waiting lists top 100,000 nationally. In some areas, it's more difficult to get an allotment than it is to get in to the most exclusive London clubs, with waiting lists running to 10 years - those that have not been closed altogether.

We've taken the first steps to increase the amount of growing spaces available. The land will be available to individuals or community projects at about 40 sites in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, ranging from small patches suitable for first time veg growers, to larger areas which could be co-worked by community groups."



MARCH 2009: NORTH HARLOW CONSTRAINTS



Constraints Plan Key

-  Land Ownership Boundary
-  Wildlife Sites
-  Archaeological Significance
-  Major Development Areas
-  Scheduled Ancient Monument
-  Green Belt
-  Existing Recreation Area
-  New Sports Pitch Provision
-  Housing Site Location
-  Railway

MARCH 2009: SUSTAINABLE GROWTH OF HARLOW

The Harlow North Joint Venture appoints Barton Willmore/Studio Egret West team as framework planners to guide and nurture the sustainable growth of Harlow to become a Greater Harlow.

And we are delighted!

In the late 1940s, worried that the post-war building boom might spread out from London and other major cities and fragment the countryside, the government allowed towns to legally limit growth by restricting building beyond established borders. And so it was that green belts came to be.

Strict lines on a plan; Rigorously protected. Where a town ends, countryside begins.

The Barton Willmore/Studio Egret West team think there is a different way and set about trying offer an alternative pattern to urban growth. Where town and countryside become well and truly integrated.

Our knowledge and experience gives us confidence that we can deliver this evolutionary master plan through the hoops of the planning system meeting all the policy guidance including circular 1/2006 as interpreted by the North Field Filton decision.

The emphasis changes from endless and superfluous detail to clearly stated principles process and review. This approach ensures that rules are kept decisions are made at the appropriate time and the idea of change is fully embraced. Clarity safeguards and the inspiring beauty of the proposals should secure early approval. The application should be configured to achieve an early start on site on the elements that precede the building of the first dwelling.

This could mean getting started on smaller scale applications working towards a larger, growing vision that we complete over time, yet that still remains a framework. One of the largest park regeneration schemes in Europe, the Emscherpark in the Ruhr area of Germany took a similar approach with no masterplan for 10 years, simply working on smaller scale interventions with immediate effect and bringing together key stakeholders once they could see the precious, gem-like quality and effect of small-scale interventions in the landscape.

On top of such early, fine-grain progress and events, we make our gifts – to come a little later, but we do so in a beautifully choreographed exercise of media management – a media opera if you will, where, directors, players, leads and support members play out their role amidst dramatic scenery. In all this land is the key, land and access. HNJV holds all the cards it needs!





SHARED LAND FOR COMMON GOOD



A GROWING GREEN FRAMEWORK



REFLECTIVE EVOLUTION



HUMAN SCALE OF MOVEMENT



CREATING DOMESTIC EMPLOYMENT



"MADE IN GROW HARLOW"



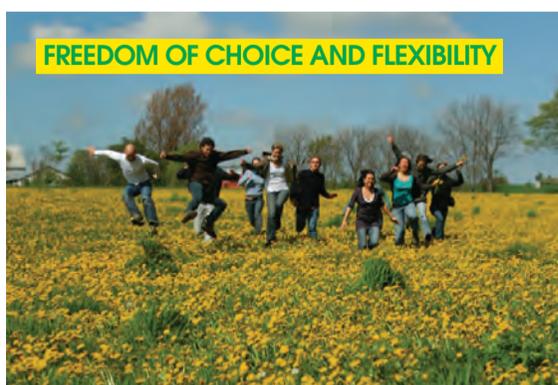
DISTINCTIVE MODERN VERNACULAR



BRINGING NATURE HOME



MANAGED INHERITANCE



FREEDOM OF CHOICE AND FLEXIBILITY

A conversation with Feroz Suleman, of John Lewis, Oxford Street

"When our founder, John Spedan Lewis, set up the Partnership, he was careful to create a governance system, set out in our Constitution, that would be both commercial allowing us to move quickly to stay ahead in a competitive industry, and democratic giving every Partner a voice in the business they co-own. His combination of commercial acumen and corporate conscience, so ahead of its time, is what makes us what we are today.

The Partnership's reputation is founded on the uniqueness of our ownership structure and our commercial success. Our purpose is 'the happiness of all our members, through their worthwhile, satisfying employment in a successful business', with success measured on our ability to sustain and enhance our position both as an outstanding retailer and as a thriving example of employee ownership.

Our strategy is based on three interdependent objectives Partners, customers, profit which together will make us a successful business:

Partners should gain personal satisfaction by being members of a co-owned enterprise in which they have worthwhile, secure and fulfilling employment and confidence in the way the Partnership conducts its business.

The Partnership should recruit and retain loyal customers through their continued trust and confidence in our reputation for value, choice, service and honesty and for behaving as good citizens.

The Partnership should make sufficient profit to sustain our commercial vitality and distinctive character, allow continued development and distribute a share of profits each year consistent with Partners' reasonable expectations.

I believe that the community co-operatives at North Harlow can embrace this partnership spirit. It will define what is truly important to the Grow Harlow initiative. It does not change from time to time, situation to situation or person to person; it transcends Harlow's growth ambitions."

2010: THE CHARTER/ 10 FOUNDING PRINCIPLES

Rather than a fixed visual and formal plan, Grow Harlow is founded on a charter of 10 founding principles that capture the essence of the vision without compromising it's flexibility.

The traditional Master Plan, which tries to shoehorn the unknown future into a fixed image is now probably defunct. It is akin to well meaning ambitious parents that dictate to their child the type of lifestyle, the job and even the spouse they should aim for. This, to the disappointment of the parents and the frustration of the child. We have moved into a new era of urban vision. One anchored in principles and constrained by boundaries, but crucially one that learns as it goes along, one that responds to changing economic climates and one that gently evolves through trial and error and the guidance of it's empowered residents/owners.

We intend to follow an evolutionary approach at Harlow. To begin by giving Harlow's future communities a new paradigm for growth and new, sustainable designs for living will follow.

Shared Land for the Common Good – The environment as a Partnership. Every home business or activity in Grow Harlow will share responsibility for nurturing the beauty and resilience of the common whole. With each house comes not only a garden, but a slice of countryside, neighbourhood green or wood which is invested in the free- and lease-holders as a resource for current and future generations.

A Growing Green Framework – A network of accessible parks coming together to form 'Harlow Great Park' as the driver behind life at Grow Harlow. This central park extends to connect a series of aggregated settlement villages, blurring the divide between town and country and providing a gift and protective layer surrounding and connecting communities and in particular Harlow New Town.

Reflective Evolution – Organic growth that focuses on well being, lifestyle and slowdown reflecting on providing quality of life for all and learning intelligently from mistakes and applying the lessons immediately. Grow Harlow's vision is constantly evolving rather than goal orientated. This creative reflectionism allows each cell (DNA) to adapt gracefully and adapt to change and events.

Human Scale of Movement – Rediscovery of the benefits and joys of walking and cycling and clean, frequent and sustainable public transport. At Grow Harlow movement will be safe, easy and free with a grid of early, well planned foot and cycle links connecting to a growing and changing public transport loop – reducing commuting encouraging a change to low footprint, shared use modes of transport where streets are for people.

Creating a Domestic Employment Market – Capitalising on Grow Harlow's strategic position in the London – Stansted – Cambridge Arc, developing a wider "Green Enterprise Belt" building on local strengths of research and innovation and environmental industries regenerating neighbouring employment areas along a revitalised urban boulevard.

"Made in Grow Harlow" – Moving towards a self reliant society where materials, buildings, employment, food and energy are sourced, made and built locally. This can both help to empowering ownership as well as drive employment opportunities as individuals or cooperatives. E.g. House Farming, Food Farming, Energy Farming etc.

Developing a Distinctive Modern Vernacular – Based on local materials and characteristics, building materials and building construction skills should be sourced locally. Ensuring Grow Harlow develops a commonality of design features, colour palettes and construction features that unify yet distinguish the appearance of the built elements. Roofs, hedges, road surfaces, fences, lighting form a comprehensive vocabulary.

Bringing Nature Home – Every dwelling at Grow Harlow should be afforded a view of the countryside. A view of an active landscape where plants and animals are always visible and integrated into the fabric of Harlow.

Managed Inheritance – From adoption of parks and open spaces to the determination of the design of new schools, the community at Grow Harlow will be active in the participation of issues of community governance, maintenance and funding, influencing its own destiny, growth and international profile.

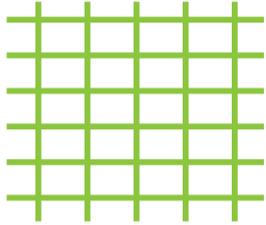
Freedom of Choice and Flexibility – Grow Harlow will be a community for all ages, backgrounds and persuasions. A home at Grow Harlow can grow or even contract to match lifestyle, work patterns and family size. Future proofed for advances in energy and building technology and designed to last for countless generations.



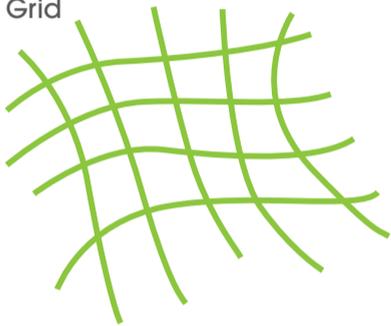
How the Principles might shape the Framework

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

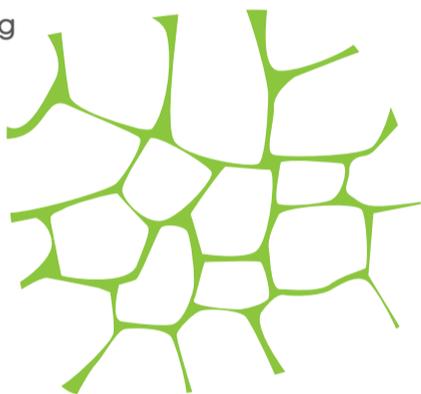
Basic Grid



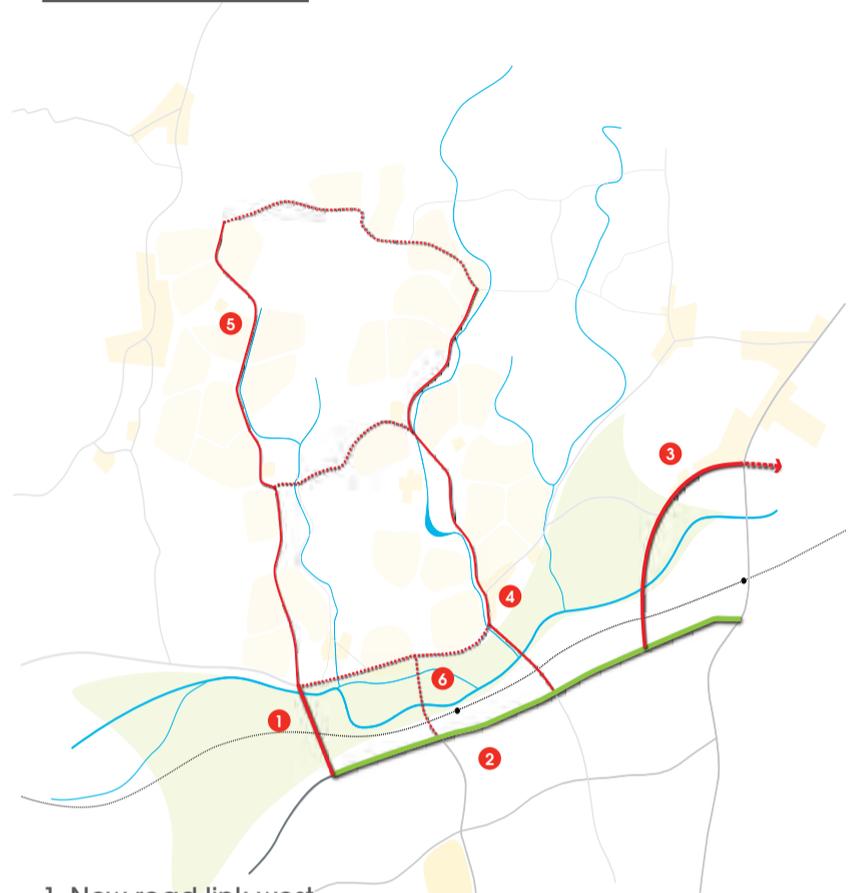
Distorted Grid



The Real Thing

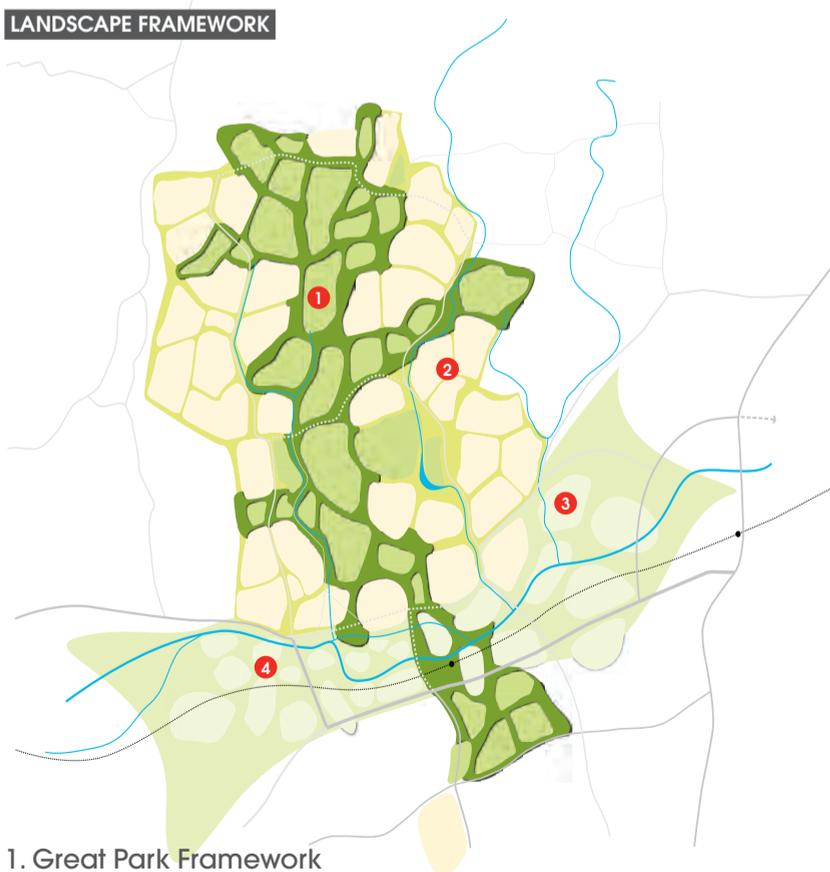


MOVEMENT FRAMEWORK



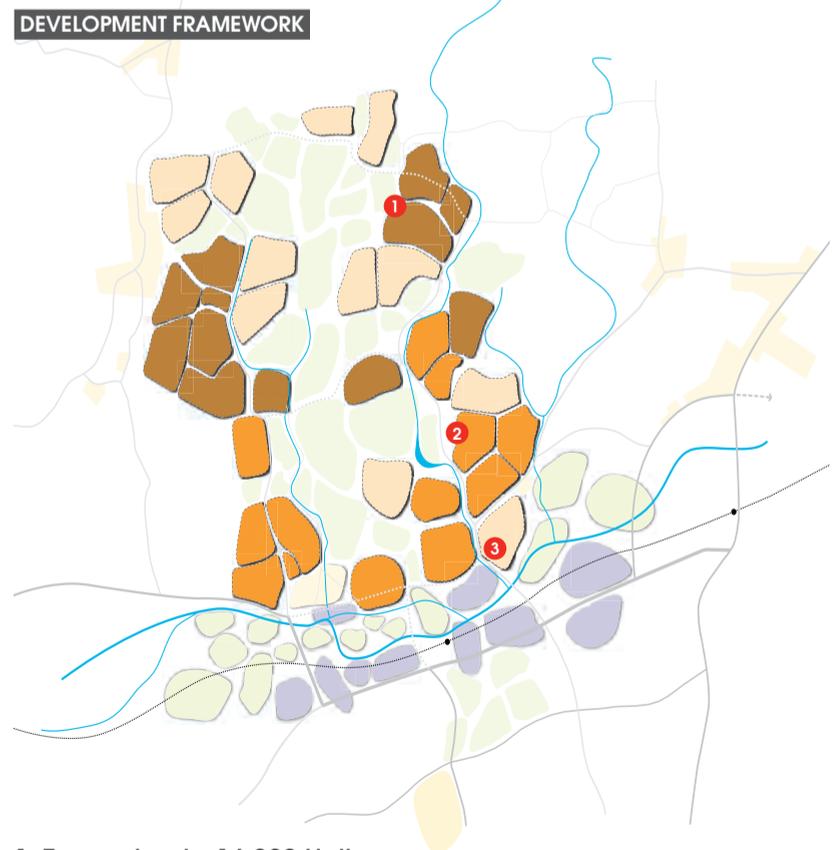
1. New road link west
2. Creation of urban boulevard
3. Strategic road link east with potential to link to M11
4. New road link
5. Principle access spine
6. Downgrading of existing roads to public transport greenway and minor access streets

LANDSCAPE FRAMEWORK



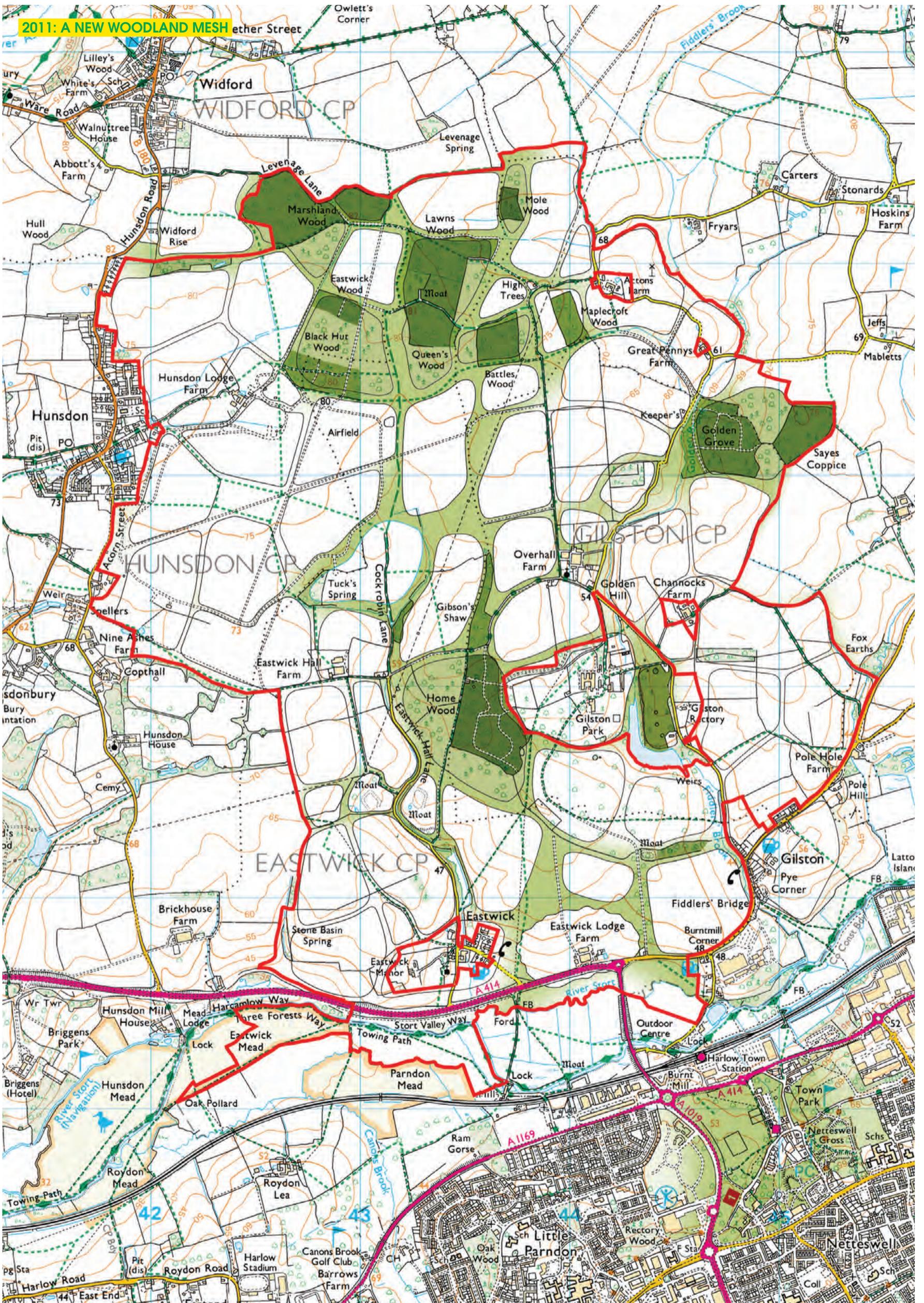
1. Great Park Framework
2. Urban Landscape Framework
3. Future Development and Communities
4. Stort Valley Landscape Framework

DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



1. Expansion to 16,000 Units
2. Development to 10,000 Units
3. First 5,000 Units

2011: A NEW WOODLAND MESH



2011: THE FOUNDATION – HARLOW GREAT PARK

As important to North Harlow as The Great Park is to Windsor, Harlow Great Park provides the structure from which the new community grows. Rooted in Harlow's Town Park the Great Park leaps the railway line on a broad new green bridge and flows up the northern slopes of the River Stort valley.



Building upon the existing woodlands a woodland mesh of one million broadleaved trees provides the backbone of the park. The planting of this mesh, starting maybe even before the granting of planning permission, defines a series of clearings. One million trees take a lot of planting, and more importantly looking after while to maximise their ecological potential the existing woodlands require extensive management to maximise their ecological potential.

As well as the mesh of existing trees and newly planted woodland belts water will play a critical role in structuring the character of the park. As water shortages increase nationwide the park is able to absorb new lakes and reservoirs to increase storage capacity for Grow Harlow. Surface water will run through the park in a network of open canals and rills rather than in closed underground pipes.

Woven through the structure of the park, and running alongside the water network, a network of paths laid out in the first stages of the park's development allow the exploration and understanding of what had once been a closed agricultural landscape. As the community develops, so these routes will naturally evolve. Footpaths will become tracks and tracks will become lanes as a pattern of movement emerges which responds to the needs of the parks users. By 2012 early in the parks development already a extensive network of routes has been created, titled the 20-12 network this consists of 20km of new footpaths and 12km of cycle routes and bridleways.

John Hawes was one of the first recruits to the locally based team of park rangers who have started this work.

"Its been a steep learning curve, its not just about planting trees, but building a community as well, we've had local groups out here planting trees in all weathers. This year sees the graduation of our first group of forest managers trained at our newly established park centre" Next year we will start work the forest clearings creating a huge range of meadows, wetlands and willow coppice biomass production areas".

Like the trees which make up its structure the park is robust yet flexible, able to respond to the changing needs of the developing community. Beautiful, yes, but not a static design driven by a fixed aesthetic. A dynamic and working landscape, Harlow Great Park will evolve to support the needs of Grow Harlow's growing population. As the newly planted trees grow areas will be coppiced and pollarded to provide local fuel and building material.

"Its fantastic."

Says Holly age 11, as she runs through the flower meadow near Home Wood.

"Me and dad used to walk here when it was just fields, it was really boring, now there's so much going on and different places to explore, my favourite are the new viewing platforms which let you see what's going on all over the park"

Harlow Great Park Leisure Map

- *** Art events
- Queen's route - 4 km
- Golden path - 3 km
- Gilston view - 2,5 km
- Eastwick tour - 1 km
- ☞ Pic-nic place



SAILING SCHOOL

BIRD WATCHING TOWER

FARM

THE SPIRAL

FISHING SPOT

FISHING SPOT

ORGANIC CAFE

ART EXHIBITION

AGORA

RESTAURANT

CAFE

RESTAURANT

How Harlow Great Park compares...

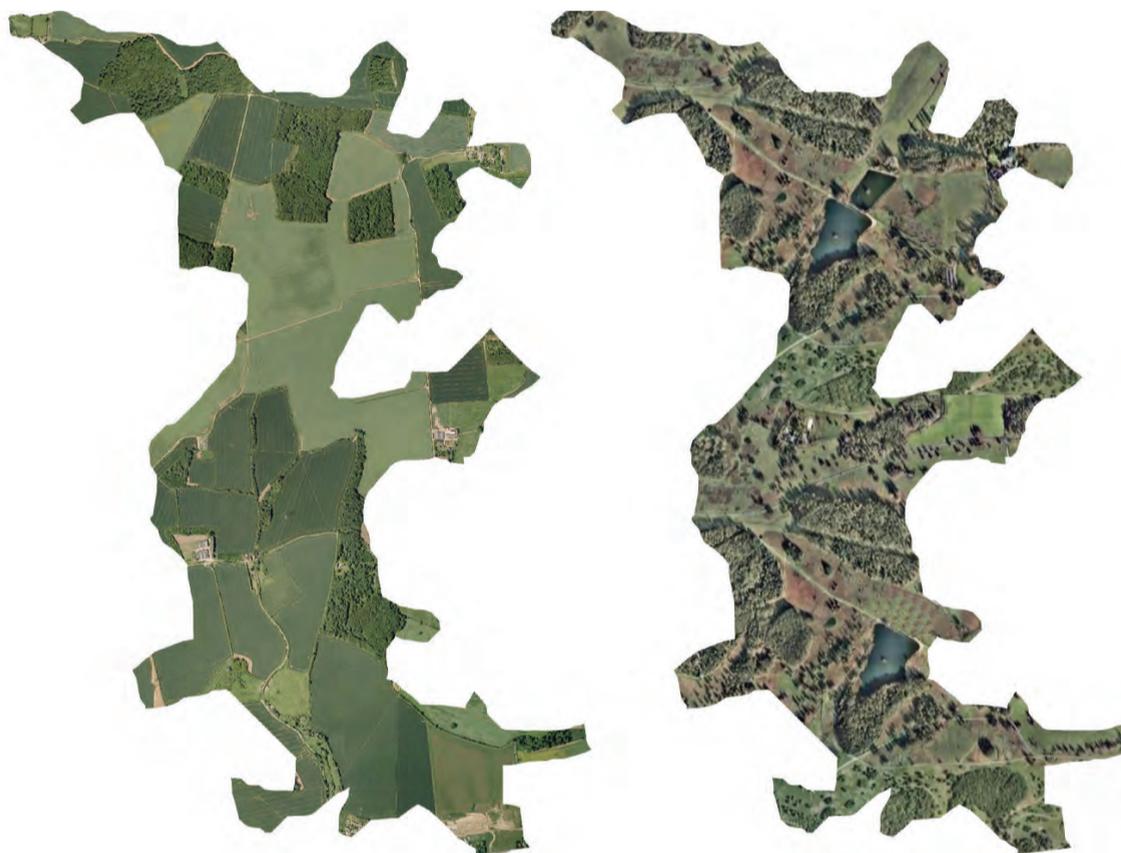


HYDE PARK

RICHMOND PARK

HARLOW TOWN PARK

HARLOW GREAT PARK



HARLOW GREAT PARK

PROFILE OF HARLOW GREAT PARK OVER RICHMOND PARK



A conversation with John Haxworth, Landscape Director, Barton Willmore

"Above all the Great Park is about fun, a place for the new and existing residents of Harlow to relax and recharge. The Great Park provides a new landscape of meadows for kite flying and picnics, forest clearing for camping and barbeques and fields for concerts and fiestas, slopes for sledging. A family of small jewel like structures gradually populate the park. Tea shops, viewing towers, play houses (for grown ups too) and follies provide destinations for a post Sunday lunch walk.

Like our approach to Grow Harlow as a whole, the design and management of the park is not based on a traditional 'top down' Master Plan. A partnership based on new patterns of ownership and control will allow the residents of Grow Harlow to actively guide the evolution of the park in response to changing needs and priorities. Harlow Great Park, a place for the people, made by the people.

2012 THE RECREATION OF THE NATURAL FLOODPLAIN



2012: OLYMPIC FEVER SWEEPS THE LEA VALLEY AND SPREADS TO THE STORT VALLEY

And Grow Harlow plays its part...

The creation of the 20-12 network: 20 km of footpaths and 12 km of cycleway within the embryonic landscape structure.

Following the establishment of the water meadow and improved links to central London and adjacent networks, some residents even cycle to the Olympic Park!

The Great Park is seamlessly linked with the new landscape of the Stort Valley River Park via a new landmark bridge. The existing A414 dual carriageway along the northern edge of the floodplain is downgraded to a causeway for public transport and pedestrian traffic to cross the river valley. Through traffic is diverted onto the existing east west route running to the south of the valley which is redefined as an urban boulevard.

The downgrading of the existing damaging infrastructure allows the recreation of a natural floodplain landscape. Subtle ground remodelling will create an interlinked matrix of open water, wetlands and ecologically rich wet grasslands through which the existing courses of the River Stort and the Stort Navigation will be retained. The capacity of the floodplain to accommodate floodwaters during times of extreme rainfall will be retained and enhanced.

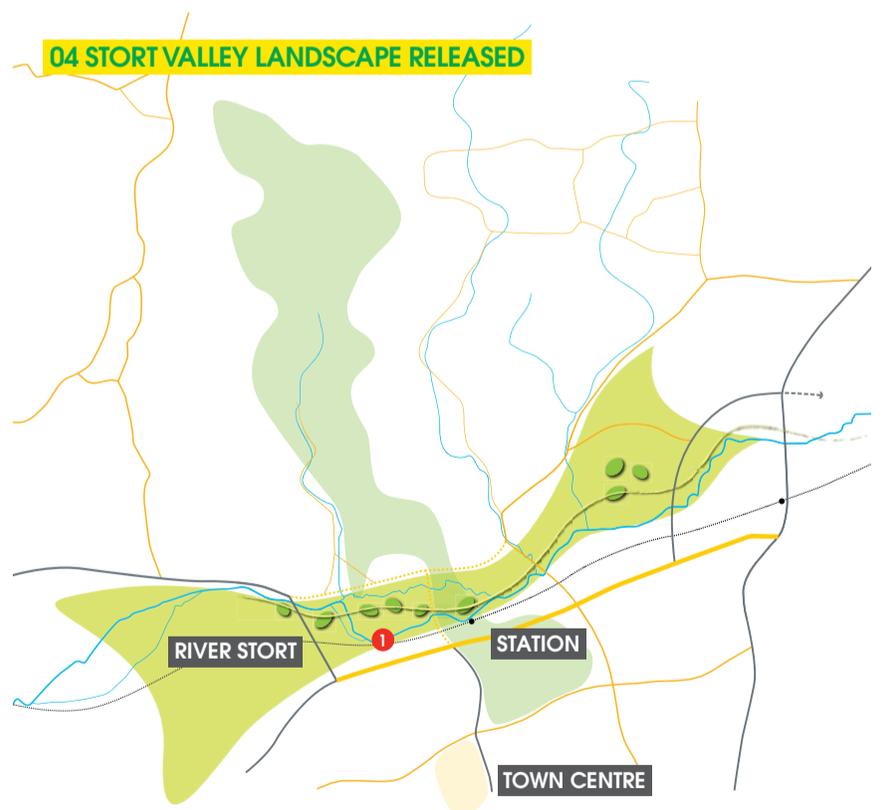
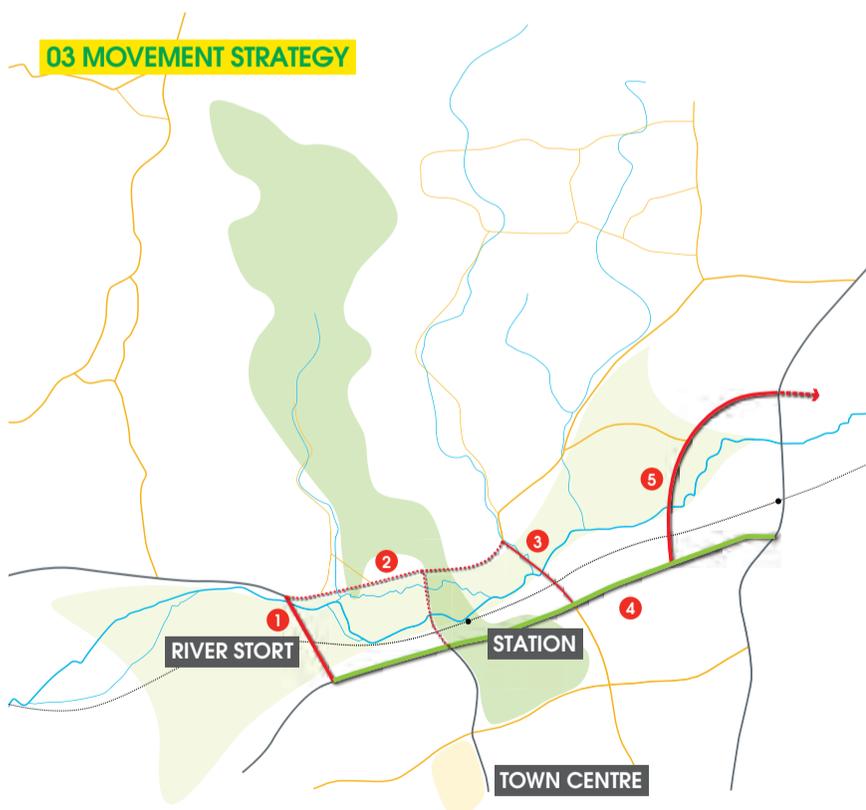
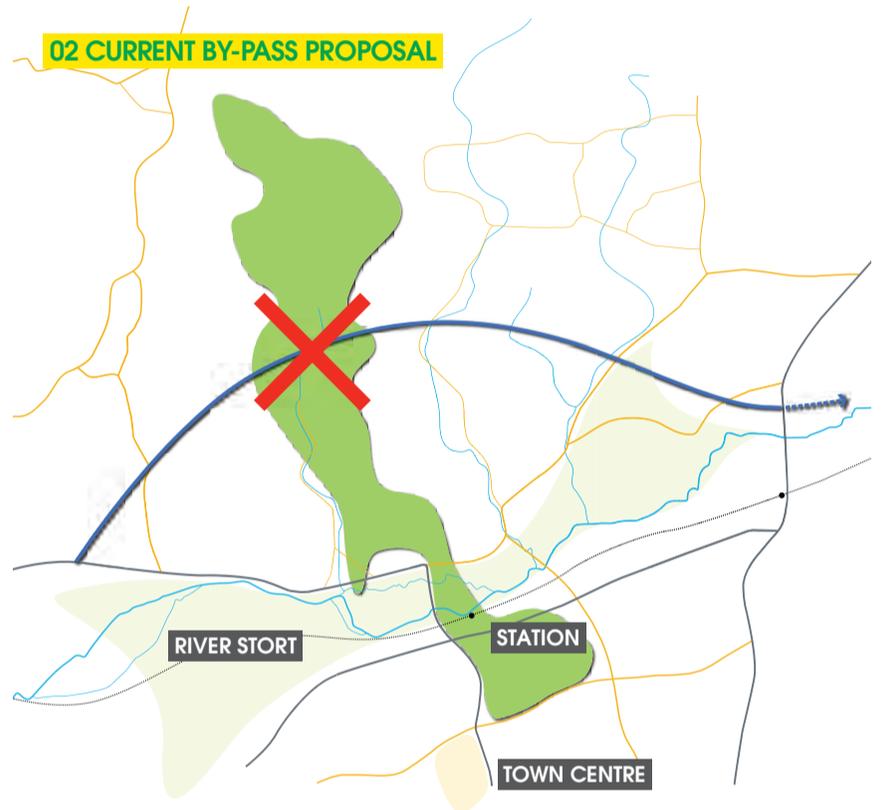
Punctuating the floodplain, a series of small islands, linked by narrow boardwalks, rise gently from the reed beds. The islands will be populated by viewing towers and jetties, bird watching and boating will be encouraged in an incredible aquatic landscape linking Harlow to the new community.

With the existing road crossing of the river valley downgraded a series of elegant new bridges cross the new landscape. Leaping from island to island these elegant new pedestrian and public transport bridges seamlessly stitch the new community to Harlow. Most notable among these new bridges is the new green bridge linking Harlow Town Park, via the railway station, to the site of the new Fusion Farm - the local centre for integrated thought. The sinuous form of the bridge skilfully disguises the structure required to support the soil on the bridge. Grown within lightweight growing medium the verdant vegetation growing on the bridge subtly signifies the arrival of Grow Harlow and its connection to the existing town.

Unimpeded by the existing road the new landscape will run up to the margins of Eastwick, the site of the Fusion Farm and the first cells of development on the northern slopes of the Stort valley and into the Great Park. The fingers development which make up the Fusion Farm and the Clean Technology Park will extend out into the new landscape providing a stunning environment research and employment.



The downgrading of the existing damaging infrastructure allows the recreation of a natural floodplain landscape.

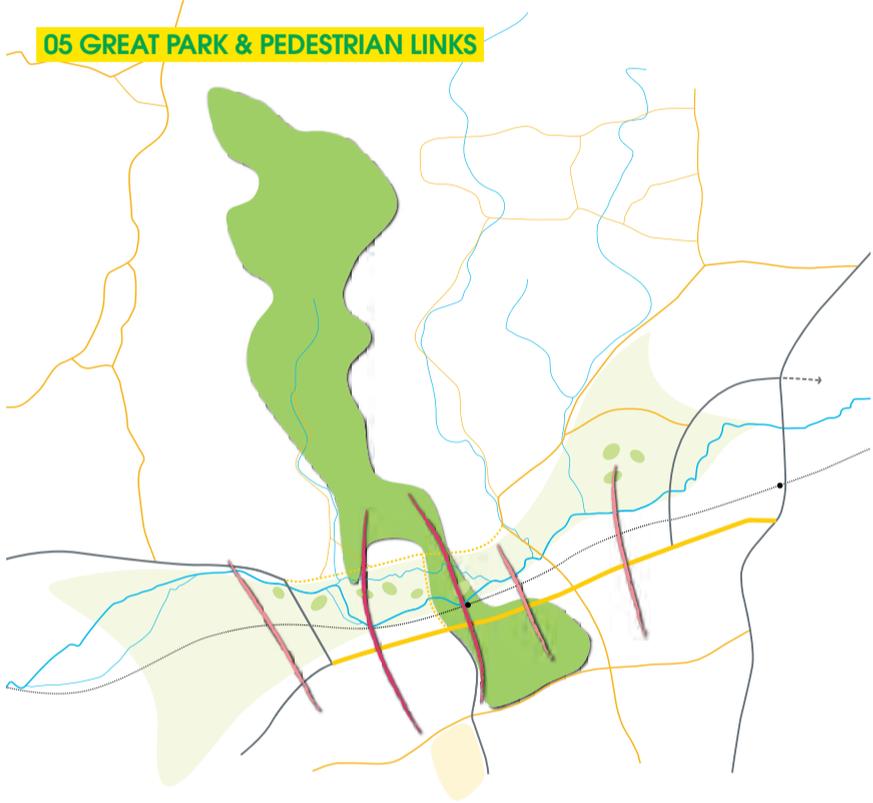


1. Re-route A414 and create new road link further west.
2. Create strategic link east with potential to connect to M11.
3. Turn Edinburgh Way into Urban boulevard.
4. Downgrade existing roads to Public Transport Greenway and minor access roads.
5. Create additional minor link road over Stort Valley that connects to road network.

1. Create new flood plain landscape with islands, reed beds, wetlands and water.

Unimpeded by the existing road the new landscape will run up to the margins of Eastwick, the site of the Fusion Farm and the first cells of development on the northern slopes of the Stort valley and into the Great Park.

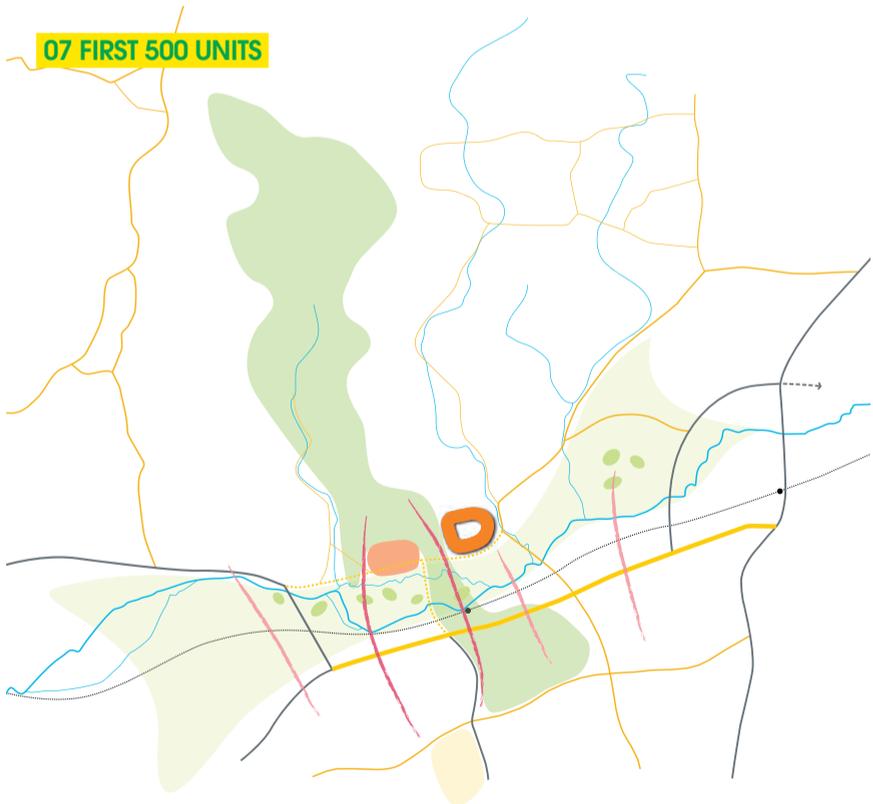
05 GREAT PARK & PEDESTRIAN LINKS



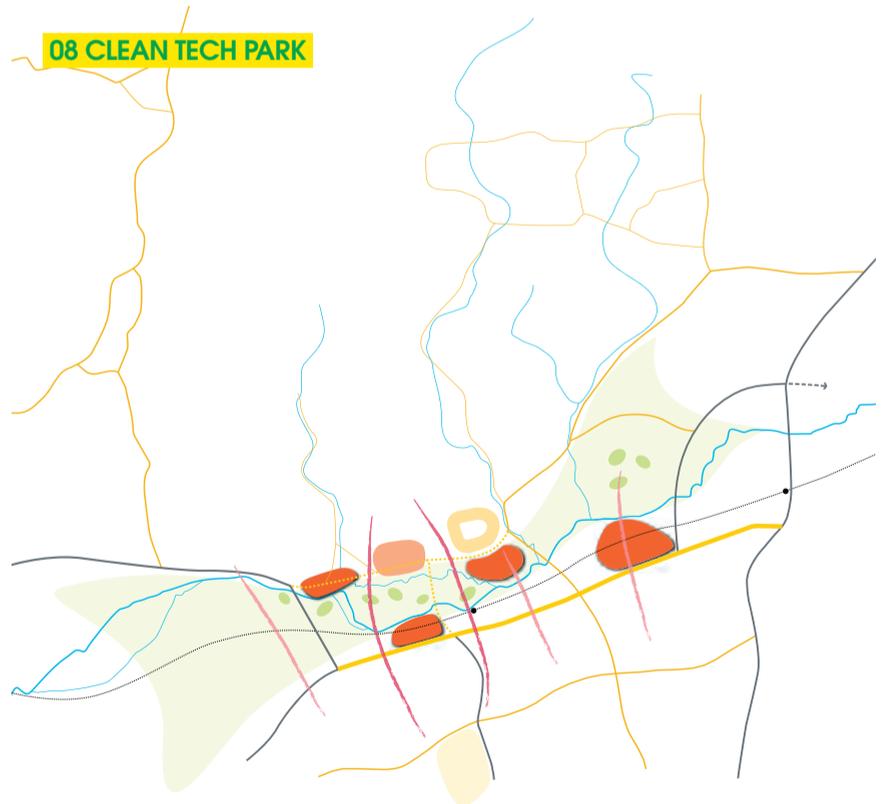
06 FUSION FARM



07 FIRST 500 UNITS



08 CLEAN TECH PARK





A conversation with the venerable Bill Bryson, President, Campaign to Protect Rural England

"Between 1997 and 2005 a shocking 45,250 new homes were built on Green Belt land. Our research suggests that over 2,250 hectares of Greenfield land is at risk from being developed for housing. Since May 2006, 48 planning applications involving development in the Green Belts have been permitted as a result of which 450 hectares of supposedly protected green space have been built on.

Our green open spaces could be under threat from the Governments' plans for 3 million new homes by 2020. The credit crunch means that it is more likely for developers to look for cheaper plots of land to build new housing rather than previously developed 'brownfield' land which costs more to prepare for building.

However, there is some good news. CPRE are delighted to report that the first thing the North Harlow Joint Venture decided to do in considering its landholdings at North Harlow was designate XX Ha of their greenbelt land to create the Harlow Great Park. And then to set about genuinely enhancing and making more accessible Harlow's Green Belt for the wider public to enjoy. Their starting point was to plant 1 million trees to define the fields of inhabitation and the fields of production and play! The permanent restoration and reformation of historic woodlands. The management of farmland. The rekindling of the British love for the land and the pursuit of a compact form of residential development truly connected to the countryside means that Harlow North has the possibility of becoming an exemplar beyond the expectations of the Governments Eco Towns programme."



Stort Valley Plan showing how Harlow Town Station and the surrounding area is stitched together with North Harlow



The new, highly visible bridge link provides a turning point in the renaissance of Harlow, enticing the residents of Harlow to access the leisure facilities of the Stort Valley and Harlow Great Park and characterizes the renewal of Harlow to the visitor arriving at Harlow Town Station.





A conversation with Andreas Lebisch, architect, Studio Egret West

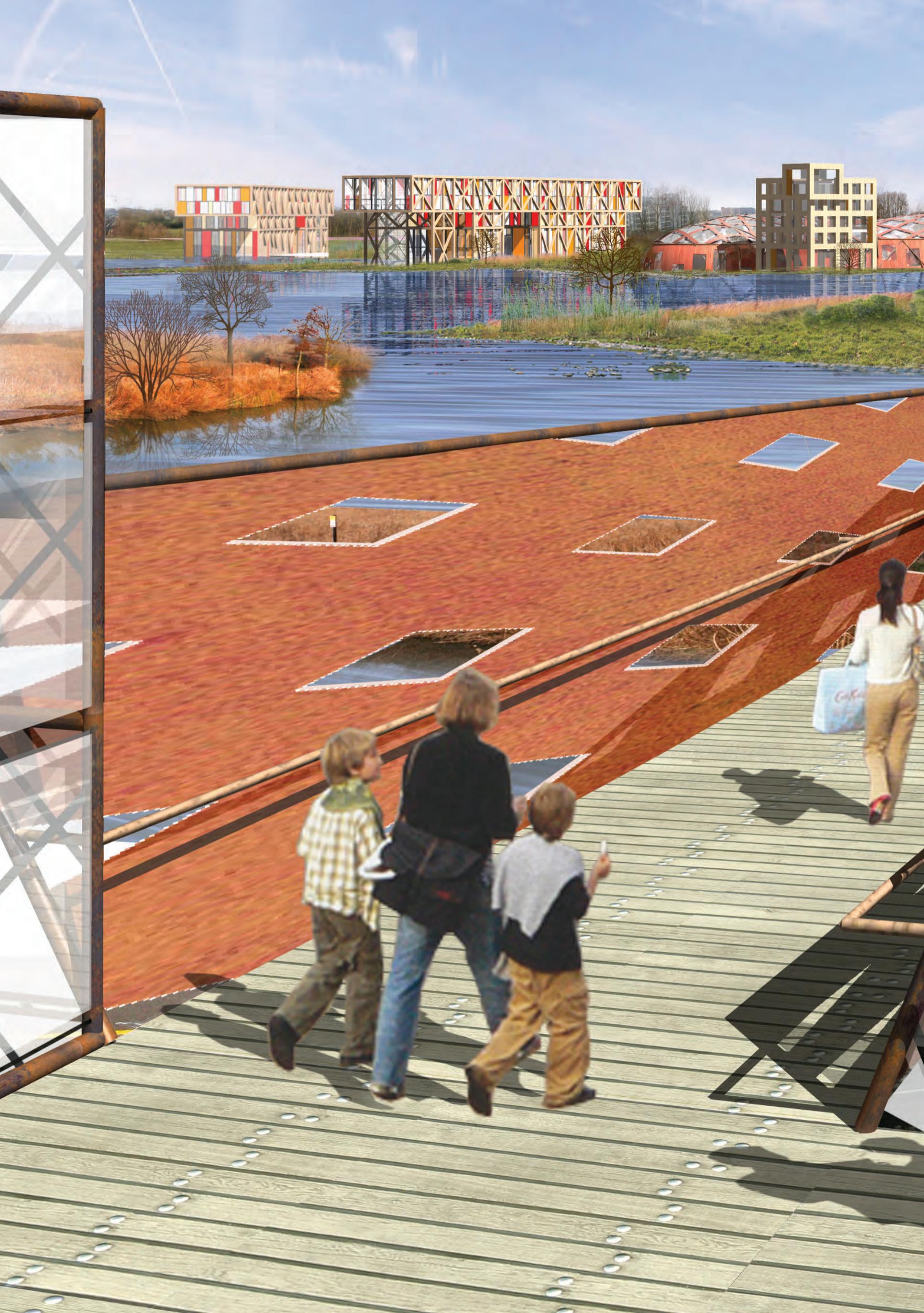
The new link encourages the residents of Harlow to realise the potential of the Stort Valley waterfront, strengthening the relationship between North Harlow and South Harlow. Rather than a series of ramps and landings the new bridge is of generous width and provides a continuous shallow gradient of less than 1 in 20 (defined as an inclined pavement to ensure it does not discriminate against any user groups). Access to Harlow Town station platforms from the bridge is provided by lifts.

The bridged link was subject to a number of constraints that relate to the operational procedures of the various stakeholders including Network Rail, The Environment Agency and Harlow Council's Highways Department. Network Rail and the DfT (Department for Transport) are working up four tracking proposals which will one day see an additional two railway lines added to this section of the West Anglia Route towards Stansted and Cambridge. At the time of the design Network Rail could not provide guidance on where these additional lines would be placed. Due to this, the bridge section was designed to provide a clear span over the area that could be affected by these proposals. A minimum height of 5.3m was provided between the top of the rail and the underside of the bridge. A minimum distance of 1.1m was provided between the outside edge of the rail and any structure. Balustrades had to be a minimum of 1.5m above bridge deck level and extend at least 3.0m from the edge of the overhead cables. Balustrades must be vertical, solid, imperforate and provide no foot or hand holds on the inside to a minimum height of 1.5m above the finished deck level. The bridge section above the Network Rail land had to be structurally independent and allow for replacement of bridge bearings.

During construction, the operational times of the West Anglia Route were maintained where possible and any disruption was kept to a minimum. In order to meet the gradient requirements the on-off ramps extended up to 120m in either direction from the main bridge section.

In line with the ethos of "Grow Harlow", the materiality of the bridge link feels like it literally grows out of the environment of Harlow. The structural walls of the bridge are made of sheet metal in weathering steel (Cor-ten). A grid-like pattern is cut into the sheets to achieve a lattice that roughly corresponds with the loads and forces of the structure. A wider open mesh towards the ends of the bridge link and a dense overlapping mesh of the actually bridging element in the middle reflect the increasing physical loads of the structure. The warm and earthy colour of the weathering steel mimics a tree-like edifice or growing frame. Beautiful and resilient!





View from the new Harlow station
bridge over the water meadows
towards the Fusion Farm



2013 THE FIRST 500 AT GREATER GILSTON VILLAGE



2013: THE FIRST FIVE HUNDRED HOMES COMPLETED

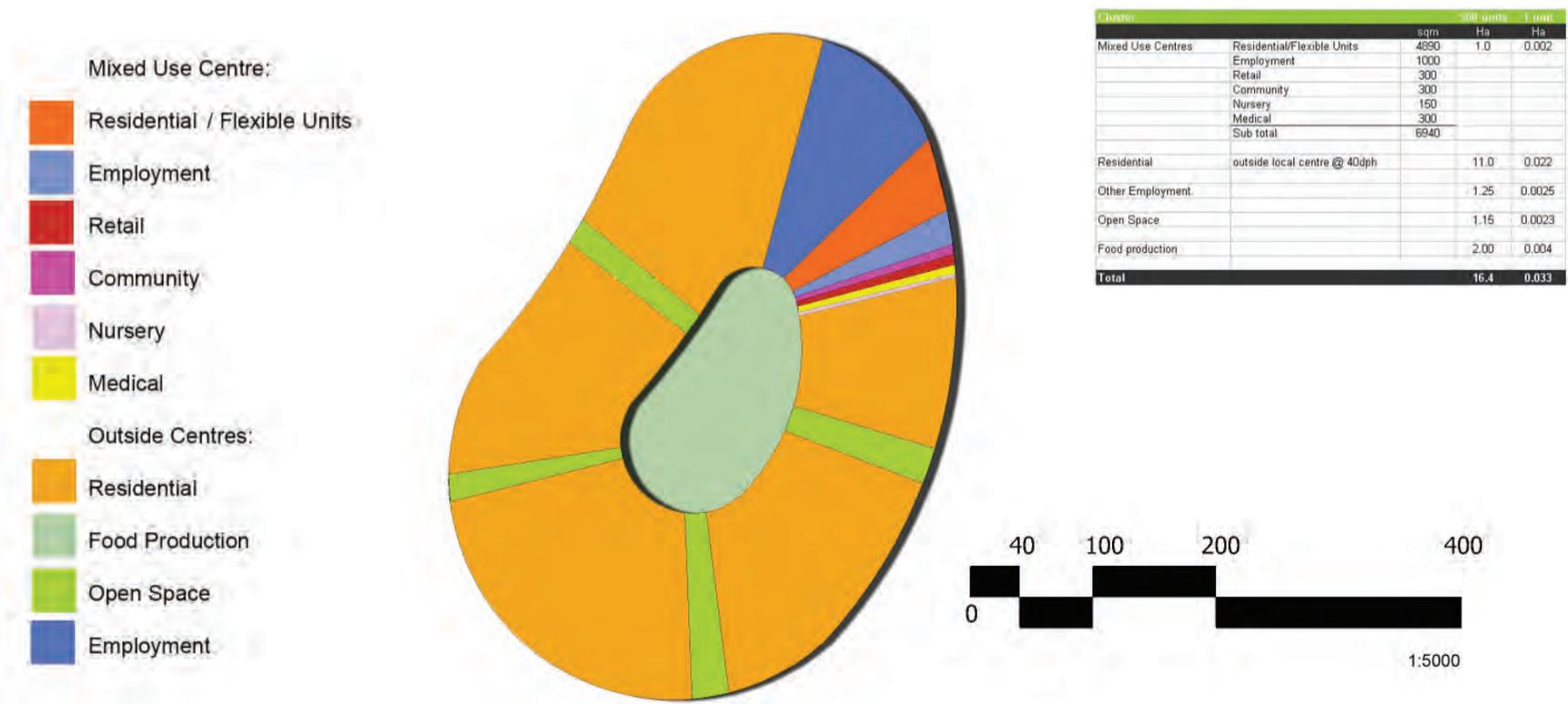
Its finished! The completion of 500 units at Grow Harlow has been celebrated with a series of community events and workshops and of course a huge neighbourhood party! Residents and employers in this the first of the ground-breaking community clusters that will eventually see 10,000 – 25,000 new homes in the area north of Harlow New Town join together to discuss the successes and initial teething problems with the development model.

Each cluster has been conceived as a microcosm of a successful settlement, providing a flexible framework for growth and adaptation of buildings, spaces and uses.

Life in the neighbourhood is quite a departure from the alternative residential offer within the town 'south of the river', and anywhere else for that matter. Finding residents for the first 500 homes and the businesses that support this model community has not been the rollercoaster we could have expected.

There has been so much press surrounding rising energy prices, food scares and alternative 'slow' lifestyles, that the market issues that have affected the UK housing market as a whole have not been felt to the same extent at Grow Harlow.

The fact that our offer is so different has seen interest in becoming a resident develop from the initial flurry of speculative applications for residency received as a result of the HNJV media campaign and exposure on Channel 4's 'Landshare', to what is now a steady stream of dedicated, well-researched families, individuals and businesses, committed to making a better life for themselves.



View of productive common ground
at the heart of the first community





2014 THE ARRIVAL OF THE FUSION FARM



2014: STIRLING PRIZE FOR PRODUCTION PIER AT THE FUSION FARM

Having established the concept of adaptable evolution over that of fixed idealism, we understood that the engine of this evolution could not be fuelled simply by this initial intellectual premise. The Fusion Farm is this engine.

A place of enlightened thoughts, where the best minds across all disciplines come together and stay ahead of the game when it comes to guiding the principles of Grow Harlow.

It is in the tradition of great institutions such as Dartington Hall or the LSE, but also one step ahead because it also crosses the divide between intellect and production: **it is a farm of thoughts, a place of making and a market place for commodities that the town needs to follow and meet it's aspirations.**

Within the same entity we find the Hall and it's hotel and conference facilities where biochemist researchers and artists, philosophers and entrepreneurs meets to fuse together their knowledge and wisdom.

Projecting manufacturing "piers" test new products that fabricate them in a variant of Silicon Valley for the computer industry. This is the heart of the new local economy.

And around a traditional market place, the muscle of larger (and by now wiser) retailers and local manufacturers. Here you can buy the new Ikea flat pack house, the B&Q green paints, the local roof tiles and timber fences, the seeds for your allotments and your next electric bicycle.

And in November the Fusion Farm's first two "production piers" were awarded the Stirling Prize! It's the first time in the history of the prize that the award has been presented to an industrial building.

The jury remarked on the refreshing use of natural materials for the construction of the envelope, the focus on workman's well-being and the landscape setting within the edge of the wetland. It commented that they hoped the prize would spearhead a renaissance in industrial building masterplanning. On the strength of this, CABE have successfully negotiated with the planning authority the need to include a design and environmental statement for the planning application of any proposed "industrial shed" within the Stort Valley Enterprise Belt.



A conversation with Christophe Egret, architect and partner of Studio Egret West

"This takes me back to 2000 when we won the Stirling Prize for Peckham Library (whilst a Director at Alsop). A building that boldly eschewed the norm for the library typology and set a striking precedent for libraries nationwide.

Now 14 years later and after numerous galleries, bridges, stations, houses, hospitals and community buildings have all won this prestigious prize, the one sector still not recognised as an opportunity for good architecture was the industrial building.

Here we have delivered an ambitious but affordable structure using locally grown timber which delicately floats above the newly landscaped wetlands.

Saying that substandard tin sheds are all we can afford will no longer do!"



View of the first “pier of production” at the embryonic Fusion Farm





2015: A BUMPER YEAR FOR THE GROW HARLOW FOOD FESTIVAL

Harlow has become synonymous with organic food production and the nurturing of innovative farm technology – allowing it to produce a balance of slow and intensive products.

By encouraging on-site food production and a diversity of crops and product development, Grow Harlow is becoming increasingly self-sufficient in a selective range of produce. Large scale mechanized production and smaller scale market gardening is providing a complement to existing regional farming, producing a well balanced mix of fruit and vegetables, meats and dairy, and grain.

Four separate farms are active in the area, all preceding the Grow Harlow evolving framework. With new business development incentives and growing communities, the farms are expanding their roles as mono-producers to centres for organic food and growing supplies, learning, and research & development. Produce is sold directly to customers through the Eastwick Lodge Farm Shop, weekly markets and ambulating/home-delivery services. Overhall Farm and Eastwick Hall Farm have plans to establish their own local shops in anticipation of expanding villages. In addition, each farm is developing a “children’s farm” together with adjacent primary schools, providing learning facilities for children and teenagers.

The farms have as part of their business plans developed a competitive specialism, and are in addition to harvesting crops and breeding livestock, investing in product development. Apart from being one of the largest grain producers in the area, Overhall Farm is a preparing and selling related products from their on-site headquarters. Overhall Farm employs a total of 50 staff through its subsidiaries: The Overhall Organic Granola Bar, The Overhall Muesli Loaf, and The Overhall Crunchy Cereal.

Eastwick Hall Farm has long produced organic turkey, and has expanded their range of products to include The Tasty Turkey Sausage, which has an all year demand. It is still a family run business, but the production side of the operation is now employing 20 additional full-time staff.

Eastwick Lodge Farm has been incorporated in the regional enterprise belt, and is now an established centre for farming material and produce, as well as clean tech merchandise. The farm has re-installed their popular ‘pick-your-own’ scheme to the approval of local residents.

After the initial “pioneers” programme with Hugh Fearnley, Whittingstall market gardening has really taken off as part of the lifestyle pull of Grow Harlow. Small scale hobby/co-op gardening produces a wide variety of cash crops inside selected inhabited cells that can be sold directly to consumers and restaurants via the market gardens themselves or local shops. They provide a steady supply of fresh produce during the local growing season. Harvesting is done weekly, providing a steady cycle of planting and harvesting throughout the growing season. Work within the market gardens is mainly manual, employing one or a few full-time farmer(s) and a team of 10 to 20 people seasonally. This has proved an excellent part time occupation for parents with young children or retired people – a co-op of hobby cultivators!

In celebration of the prosperous local farming establishments, an annual food festival has been installed to introduce ‘Grown In Harlow’ to a wider audience. A market route connects all farms and villages with the Harlow train station, allowing easy access for visitors. An edible walk within the Great Harlow Park is the artery of the festival, interspersed with field kitchens and stalls representing local producers. Visitors have an opportunity to try anything from wine and beer to smoked cheese and black pudding.



A conversation with Cecilia Lindstrom, Urban Designer, Studio Egret West

“Farming has played an important role in Grow Harlow from day one and has helped to preserve the rural character of the area.

The fundamental move was to sustain and encourage existing producers to develop and diversify through local and governmental support and funding. This incentive has produced local jobs and a sound economic base as well as a great sense of pride and identity for Harlow.”





**A Conversation with Hugh Fearnley
Whittingstall, Celebrity Chef,
The River Cottage**

Build a growing community! Fantastic!

Back in 2009 we were planning our next TV series, with more from the River Cottage. We were looking for Home Growing Heroes – people who were growing or producing their own food in a surprising way or in a challenging or unusual place.

We were really surprised to be approached by the Grow Harlow initiative to help seek out 500 pioneers to go beyond growing food and to be part of growing a place!

It all sounded a bit crazy to start with but on reflection it made total sense. It was the obvious next step in the “slow movement” sweeping the nation. A lifestyle choice associated with a new place to live. With allotment waiting lists massively over-subscribed and people right across the country keener than ever to grow their own fruit and veg, the Grow Harlow initiative was completely in tune with our own Landshare, UK wide initiative, to make British land more productive and fresh local produce more accessible to all.

2010 was a scream with over 2000 people offering their services and support. We had to narrow it down to 500, who all put their £1000 on the table. A bit like when people put a deposit down for a “buy to let” flat 10 years ago but now they were doing it for a slice of real community subsistence...

Now five years later and Grow Harlow is already more than reaping the benefits. Beyond the crops there is a genuine sense of community here at Grow Harlow far beyond more conventional town extensions...



2016 THE EXPANSION OF THE CLEAN TECH PARK



2016: THE AWARD WINNING HARLOW CLEAN TECH PARK EXPANDS!

The planning negotiations that saw the consent and now delivery of Grow Harlow included a robust review of the Harlow and South Hertfordshire Green Belt. The designation of lands either side of the River Stort, including nearly 200ha of lower grade employment land within Harlow New Town as a 'Green Enterprise Belt' has been acknowledged as one of the ingenious concepts that have, and continue to distinguish Grow Harlow from other leading destinations in the UK.

Starting from a premise of light-touch, light-foot intervention, the Clean Tech Park, or CTP as it's come to be known, extends this 'lightness' to regulation and control. The CTP is not a science park with a gateway policy – any company, local or global can come to locate here. What's needed from the companies that choose to site themselves within a pleasant walk of Harlow town centre and the open landscape of Harlow Great Park, is a commitment to the founding principles of Grow Harlow's business users that they:

ARE ZERO CARBON

Ensure Grow Harlow remains Energy Secure through commitments to the highest standards or energy efficiency.

Work with the Grow Harlow Business Partnership to support a Zero Waste Harlow. Support long terms objectives of achieving water neutrality.

These 4 principles have already determined the philosophy of companies that have located to the CTP, to the extent that a 2nd cluster of the park is being laid out and the infrastructure developed to welcome another phase of 40 or more businesses to Grow Harlow.

Companies already settled in the CTP are involved in waste management, recycling or the production of renewable energy, among other green activities but also conventional businesses that have signed up to new way of doing things are driving the demand for additional space within the CTP as they jostle for one of the most sustainable business addresses in Europe

Existing Tenants include Solux, a solar panel company; Ageratec who manufactures equipment that turns chip fat into clean biodiesel; and Returpack who recycles all the aluminium packaging in the UK. They all expect to save close to 60 percent in utility costs thanks to low-flow water fixtures and efficient insulation.

However the changing demographic of Grow Harlow has also attracted senior and middle managers who in turn, looking for a quality lifestyle, are working with HNJV to facilitate new residential development, promoting staff relocations, marking a significant change from the typical outer London commuter mindset. Not just back office functions, but major investors who have come out on top of the last recession have now realised it makes sense to relocate to lower cost base, energy secure destinations close to homes of both senior management and more junior staff. Property investment arms of both Lloyds TSB and Eurohypo who have both underwritten Grow Harlow have taken significant floorspace 'on the doorstep' of their flagship investment.

Part of the appeal of Grow Harlow and the CTP lies in the recycling processes that are working hard to consign the concept of 'waste' to history. Companies in the

CTP already recycle over 85% of material derived from Grow Harlow. An example of this is Harlow Biogas, which extracts methane out of agricultural waste, which is then used to power vehicles. "We started in 2011-2012, and we had 200 private customers then," says Fraser Ayre, Harlow Biogas marketing chief. "Now we have 1,000 customers and we are doubling the production at this plant." The biogas is used to power Grow Harlow's fleet of buses which can also run on locally produced biodiesel from waste oil. The fuel can be used in adapted conventional vehicles too and is popular with local taxis. Harlow Biogas's plant benefits from the cluster effect. The CTP is in the middle of an agricultural area, but also has the advantage of being near other green companies. The advantages are clear explains Richard Field, the plant's production boss. "It's important that we are situated here, as farmers are both our suppliers and clients and transport costs are expensive."

A conversation with Maria Morley, Acting Head of Harlow Council

"You have to lead by example. I have been driving a hybrid biogas Opel Zafira since 2009. The ambition of Grow Harlow to become green will be reflected in the country at large.

Developing a green economy is not only about saving the environment and meeting climate standards. England has a long industrial history, and the success in developing a green sector comes back, in many ways, to the number one rule of business. There will be no belief in green industries without the belief that you can make money out of it. This, not concern for the environment, is the biggest motivator for change."

**A conversation with James Gross, Director and Urban Designer,
Barton Willmore**

"The resilient beauty of the Clean Tech Park is the simplicity of the occupier obligations - anyone can join, but only those who do are the true energy, waste and water champions of Harlow employers. Every new business becomes a cog in the great recycling wheel, saving water, reusing materials and increasing the efficiency of systems. Stick to the rules and its a walk in the park to work in the park!"





2017: CHANNOCKS FARM ENTREPRENEURIAL PARK



2017: THE FIRST GROW HARLOW GREEN CONSTRUCTION FESTIVAL

The 2014 Sterling Prize Winning Sustainable Shed on the CTP has grown to accommodate the regional tour of both 'Eco-build' and 'Home Building and Renovating' culminating in a Grow Harlow Construction Festival fortnight which attracts mainstream press and media coverage.

The construction fair is just one of those examples of activities and events at Grow Harlow that have come about by chance. The early decision in the life of Grow Harlow and the CTP to allocate one of the pier sites as a centre of fusion and exchange, the so called Fusion Farm, where ideas develop out of chance meetings and liaisons result in spontaneous encounters, creates a sudden blooming of ideas, flourishing within civilisations, speeding up of the evolutionary clock in nature. This is the nature of the Festival – its more than a fair or expo. The fact that its held in a location that relates to the subject of constructing sustainably, is what really seems to make the difference.

All very worthy, but on a practical level, the fact that every structure and event at Grow Harlow is in some way unique, is testimony to the individualism that underpins what to many is seen as a slightly precious, defensive collective.

Where else on such a scale, can we honestly say the community has had such a major role in determining urban form, from simple choices of paving and planting, to decisions about water, waste and infrastructure. The skills, the choices and the research is all home-grown, and with each new structure and cluster, the model continuously improves itself.



Andrew Brown, formerly of head of Harlow Renaissance and who is now Chief Executive of the wider CTP Corridor Investment Agency heralds it a success.

"The construction fair is just one of those events that since we committed to Grow Harlow, has really put this place on the map. People come from all round Europe to visit our manufacturing facilities. The decision by Home 10 to begin prefabrication of bespoke housing units in the CTP has been a key catalyst in all this. Their work with HNJV to offer people bespoke housing and business premises but on a mass produced scale where the structure can literally be erected in 10 days, has seen growth and research into sustainable construction and associated suppliers from blacksmiths to Home AV consultants spread like wildfire – everyone wants to share in the growth of their own piece of Britain here at Grow Harlow!"

2018 AN ECOLOGICALLY DIVERSE LANDSCAPE



2018: A CREATIVE ECOLOGY

By 2018 the progression from ecologically sterile intensive farmland to an ecologically diverse and interconnected community is well advanced. The individual cells within Harlow Great Park are the pinnacle of this process, a diverse series of habitats from forest edge to species rich coppiced woodland have been created and are successfully managed in a pattern closely monitored by the local community.

This process has resulted in the designation in the spring of 2019 of the Lammas pastures to the south of the park as a Site of Special Scientific Interest as a result of a decade of the re-introduction of this ancient grazing practice.

Around this, the Wildflower Centre was established within the Great Park in 2016. The centre, the first of a series hived off from the National Seed Bank at Wakehurst Place in Sussex has rapidly established a national reputation for research conservation and habitat recreation of native flower meadows. Within Harlow Great Park this expertise has been used to great effect.

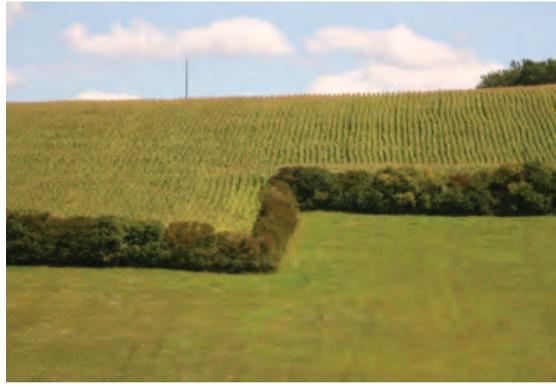
The ecological diversity of the new community extends beyond Harlow Great Park. Within the new residential communities, green walls and brown roofs are commonplace. As global temperatures rise these help with passive building cooling and atmospheric moisture retention as well as providing species rich habitats at the core of the community. The village greens within the residential clusters are managed as organic land and double as havens for butterflies and invertebrates.

As the success of Grow Harlow's ecologically based development principles are recognised, the scheme's influence starts to extend beyond the original boundary. Recognising the need to provide interconnectivity between habitats, local landowners start to provide green corridors connecting Grow Harlow to their isolated pockets of woodland and ponds. The emerging consensus is that Grow Harlow provided the catalyst for the ecological regeneration of the wider region to the north of Harlow.



A conversation with Jean-Baptiste Lacombe, Landscape Architect, Barton Willmore

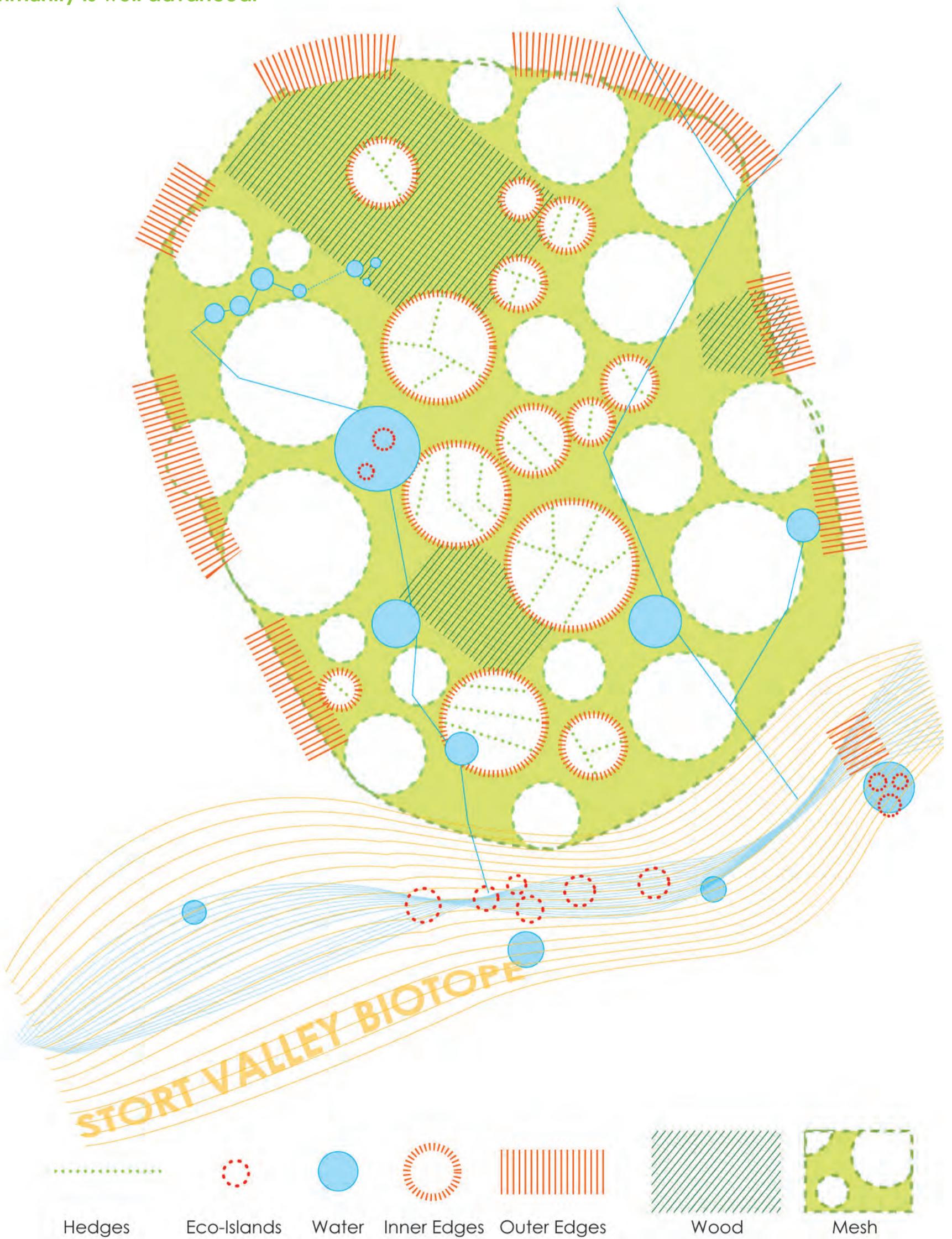
"In Harlow great Park we have managed to create a series of new meadows, what excites me more is what we call creative ecology, we're working with the local community to create a series of huge fields of colour, single species plantings which when in flower maximise the visual impact of our work. I like to think of it as a twenty first century environmental take on the Dutch tulip fields which you see on so many postcards for the people, by the people."



The ecological diversity of the new community extends beyond Harlow Great Park.



By 2018 the progression from ecologically sterile intensive farmland to an ecologically diverse and interconnected community is well advanced.







2019 A CULTURAL LANDSCAPE



2019: HARLOW ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS

“Its amazing to think how far we have come since this all started five years ago” says Nick Redfern, festival coordinator as we walk through the outer reaches of Harlow Great Park.

“Obviously I was aware of the tradition of sculpture within the landscape which had existed at Harlow since its designation as a new town, but otherwise, perhaps unfairly I had always regarded the town as a bit of a cultural desert. My views changed during one of my frequent visits to the Henry Moore foundation. Polly Moore, the foundation’s director had become involved in working with the new community at Grow Harlow to establish a programme of cultural events and employment schemes. My background in working with community based arts groups for the Bath International Festival made me keen to get involved”.

“In previous years the park has made a fantastic backdrop for the installation of major sculptural pieces and the fabric of the park has benefited from the retention of several major pieces of land art, (we were lucky in 2012 to convince Anish Kapoor to produce his first of his now well known ‘Hidden Ground’ series). But this year the range of events is incredible. The Big Knit has produced a series of woollen tapestries (all from local sheep of course), there are performances in the new ‘forest rooms’ a series of temporary structures in Queens Wood created from forest thinnings” as well as the latest showing of the video diaries charting the creating of the new community”

“For many people I guess the high point will be the Circus Olympic. It was a major coup, following the closing ceremony of the 2012 Olympics that we managed to convince the core of this now famous troupe to move to the new facilities in the Stort Valley Park. Last year their performance drew over four thousand residents from Harlow and the surrounding area to Harlow Great Park.

The park has also attracted the interest of influential philanthropists...



A conversation with Wilfred Cass of the Cass Foundation

“The Cass Foundation is a charity and is the authority on planning, producing, selling and loaning (yes, loaning) large scale sculpture throughout the world. All of the Cass Sculpture Foundation’s works are now available on loan. This initiative parks operated in partnership such as at Grow Harlow the opportunity to temporarily display acclaimed sculpture from the best emerging and established sculptors, including artists such as Tim Morgan, Tony Cragg, Steven Gregory, Eilís O’Connell, Thomas Ostenberg, Bill Woodrow, Anthony Caro and Sophie Smallhorn.

The Cass Foundation is delighted to loan ten supersize sculptures to Harlow Great Park for 6 months. The Joint Venture has shown great foresight in embracing artistic intervention within its park, inspiring the latent creativity of its burgeoning communities.”



2020: 4,000 HOMES COMPLETED



2020: CENTENARY – HARLOW WINS “BEST OF BRITISH” AT 4000 HOMES

2020 marks a triumphant year of competition wins, seeing the latest housing in Grow Harlow secure an RIBA national award, civic trust award and a shortlist entry for the Housing Design Awards. However, it is Grow Harlow’s “Best of British” win that the developers and residents of Grow Harlow are particularly proud of. It is the first time an architectural development has won such an award and is seen by many in the industry as a seminal point where new British architecture is once again rooted to place, context and innovation.



Past laureate of the “Best of British” award, James Dyson whose work has continued to redefine the everyday activities of British life, from wheel barrows to vacuum cleaners, hand dryers and bathtubs, acted as chair of this years jury.

He spoke to Dan Brady, who has been leading a team of researchers and fabricators within the Fusion Farm since the establishment of Grow Harlow in 2009.



“Was this a reaction to the existing house building in Britain?”

“In part, yes. You see, towards the end of the 20th century we have seen pre-fabrication, modern methods of construction (MMC) and off-the-shelf products whose origin is usually mixed up around Europe being reassembled and configured as houses in the UK. Such building products have become systems of assembly (structure) and catalogues of façade elements (skin) brought together and assembled in a different country to their origins with no distinction be they built in Aberdeenshire or Sussex. The problem with a materials palette whose origins lie in a stereotyped vernacular, i.e. the pitched roof box house, means we end up with an architecture made from ‘foundling’ materials – roof tiles that are manufactured in Austria whose design is based on a French townhouse, bricks made in Newcastle that are built in Devon – the result is a house, whose material fabric is essentially homeless!”

“I’d like to know more about this idea of Britishness and how this developed in Grow Harlow?”

“To design a new British vernacular does not require us to define what ‘Britishness’ is, but to understand that a new British vernacular should be distinct and different to that of a new Dutch vernacular for instance. It is through the relationship to the particularities of place, both historically with tradition and by embracing contemporary design and innovation that a new British vernacular may be forged that distinguishes itself as specific to the land and desires of the communities who forge it. At Grow Harlow, we wanted to strengthen the communities relationship with the land and their architecture by designing a new vernacular that would establish identity and engender pride in the ownership and occupation of a particular architecture; particular to its place.”





"I found this when designing the first Dyson vacuum. I was reacting in many ways to the generic products that were being designed with an Eastern or American mindset to vacuuming rather than the Freddie Mercury eccentricity of vacuuming."

Exactly! Rather than overlooking tradition, context and place. The new British vernacular was developed in the Fusion Farm to embody exactly what you say - the joy, boffinity and eccentricity of British design with the rigour, engineering and pioneering technology that shares its research on a wider global scale.

"Can you give us some examples of Grow Harlow's new vernacular?"

"A favourite of mine is the Light-Warm-Wall. In many respects, this was developed in homage to the humble brick, which we felt was being seriously misused and treated as wallpaper where once the brick would speak clearly of a building's origin: red brick in Manchester, yellow stock brick that built Georgian London. Coupled with various bond patterns we can trace these old buildings heritage, societal conditions and technological advancement simply from the brick. This, however, is sadly lost to us and the brick rudely mistreated. The Light-Warm-Wall is our form of masonry construction. Inspired by the local sheep; researchers in the Fusion Farm looked at how the animals maintain a temperate body through both winter and summer with the same coat of wool. Analysis led to the development of a quilted masonry block made up from recycled plastic fibres which are thatched between an outer plaster coat. Set into the panels are breathe holes which serve to both ventilate the house and percolate light through the façade at night."

"I noticed walking around the community at night that people weren't afraid to stay out that bit later - the lights really animate the street. Congratulations again, we look forward to the next ten years."







2021: A SETBACK FOR PRODUCTIVE LANDSCAPES



2021: THE GREAT DROUGHT – CROP FAILURE

When forecasters predicted 2021 would be warmer than usual, they surpassed Michael Fish's previous misjudgement of the 1987 hurricane, as the meteorological understatement of the century.

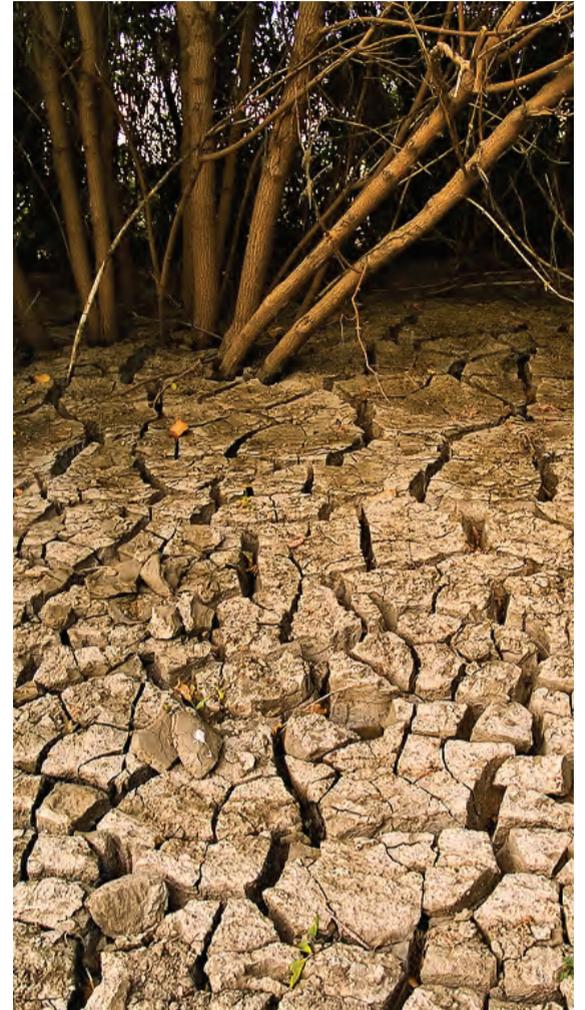
Many of Grow Harlow's longer standing residents had voiced concerns in the past. "We always knew we could have done more to be water neutral, or at least water-secure if this sort of thing ever happened" explained Janet Barrymore resident of one of the first 500 dwellings. "Because Grow Harlow already delivered such fantastic standards of water saving over the norm in 2013, 71 litres per person vs 105lpp from the Government's Code targets, the investors and backers of Grow Harlow were reluctant to take the project up a notch towards water neutrality".

Regretably this decision has been to the cost of much of the hard work and investment the Grow Harlow Community has made into its localised food production facilities.

Water neutrality is not a new phenomenon, other places such as Singapore and Namibia are already doing what we are still talking about, okay they aren't the norm, but to see water dry up in the canals and ponds around the community and all our hard work going to waste because the key infrastructure to take water clean enough to wash your clothes in, to a level where it's good enough to drink, was considered a sustainable step to far, is quite galling" states Barrymore.

The drought has of course affected the East of England and the Southeast as a whole. At least in Grow Harlow there is still enough greywater to flush to loo. Other locations, even Grow Harlow's sister developments, the urban extensions to the east and the smaller settlements to the south and west, have been yet harder hit still with standpipes and water rationing and neighbourhood patrols watching out for errant water wasters.

The drought though has more serious consequences, with valuable potable water needed to maintain operational levels in the reed-bed greywater system, Grow Harlow is exposed at a time it should have been secure.



A conversation with Gemma Noakes, Architect, Studio Egret West

"I was really gutted. I lost all my apples and I got a really bad sun burn. No cider this year!"



2022 AN UPGRADED WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM



2022: EXPANDED WATER SYSTEM

Evolution and 'Old Earth' theory are predictable bedfellows – we needed to start believing in a prehistoric earth to explain why we can't see evolution in practice.

Grow Harlow is different, a common observation of visitors to this place, is the speed at which you can see things change.



The response to last year's drought is typical. Where other areas in the Country were stricken by the severe drought to the extent they could not use their bathrooms for even the most basic human needs (even in areas where this had predicted as far back as 2005), the Community Water Partnership at Grow Harlow has already begun to commission work into the upgrading of the settlement's potable water infrastructure.

The network of canals and greywater mains that are the backbone of the water efficiency processes that had worked up until 2021, are being revisited for a new role to take water beyond its current tertiary treated status - the existing system of 15ha of reedbeds connected by 30km of canals, ditches and rills, weaves in and out of the neighbourhood clusters, greenways and the Great Park providing water for landscape irrigation, loo flushing and domestic washing.

In line with Grow Harlow's gradual shift towards solar energy, part of Solux's hyper efficient Solar PV Roofing Programme, (the reason behind all homes post 2020 compliant with the Cluster Design Code requiring 25m² southfacing roofspace for all new properties), 1 third of the individual neighbourhood

Biomass chp systems are gradually coming offline to support a Grow Harlow wide network of Portable reverse osmosis (RO) water processors (also known as Roo-poo's), first trialled by the US military to provide potable water in a conflict situation and now available at a neighbourhood scale, supporting approximately 1,500 homes each.

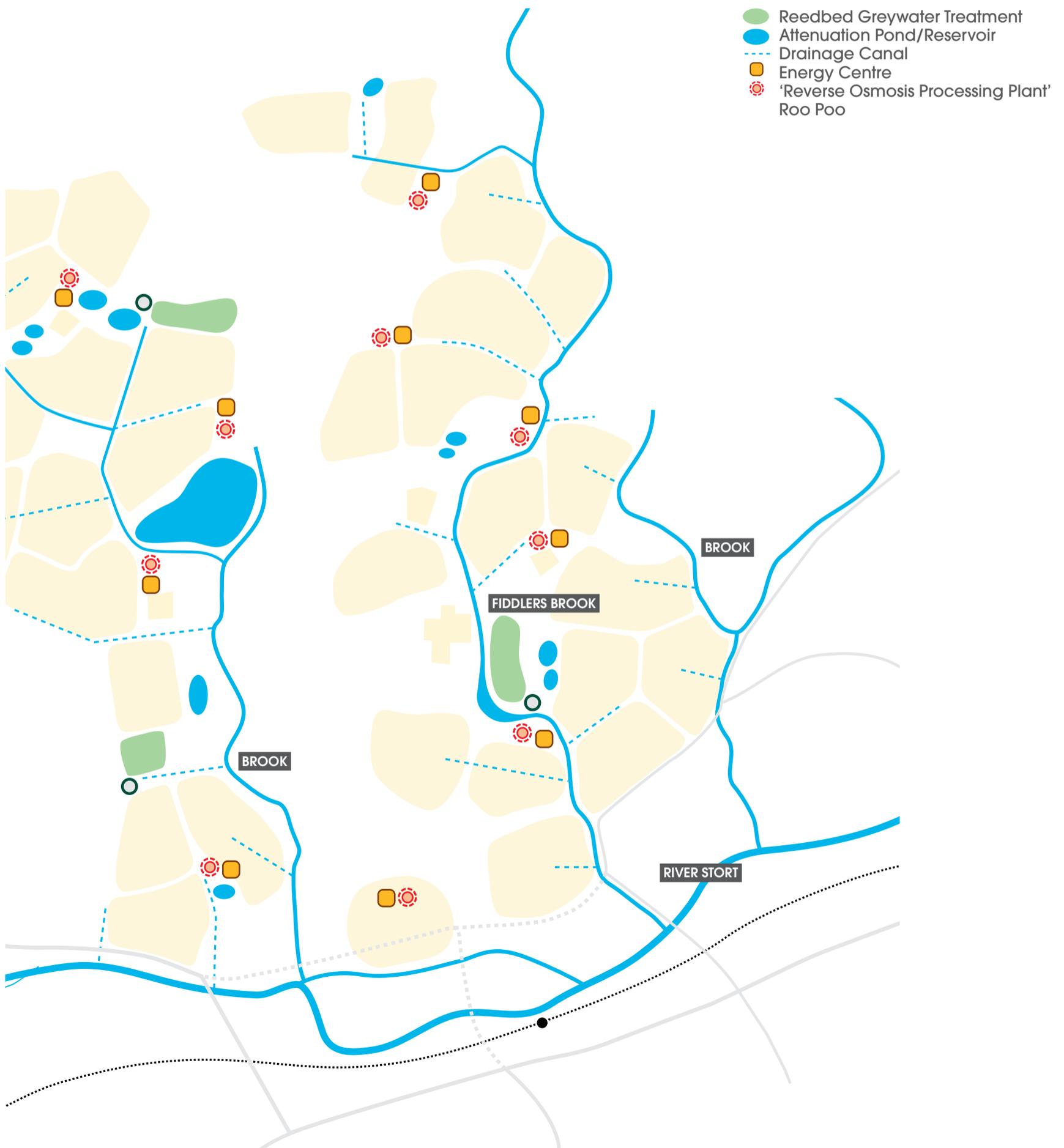
Over the 20 year shift towards solar sufficiency, 12 Roo-poos will be phased into groups of 3 clusters, feeding a new 20ha potable water reservoir storage facility, the centrepiece of Harlow Great Park and the jewel in the crown of Grow Harlow's autonomy from water waste and energy.

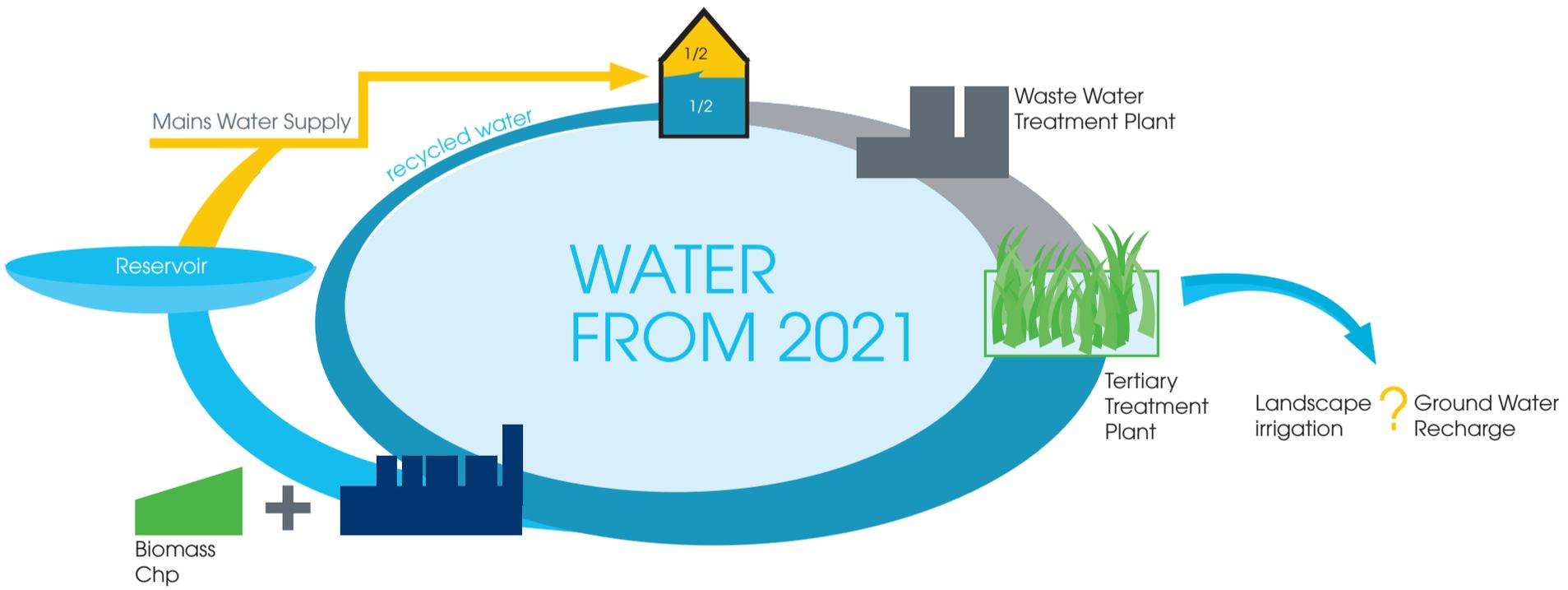
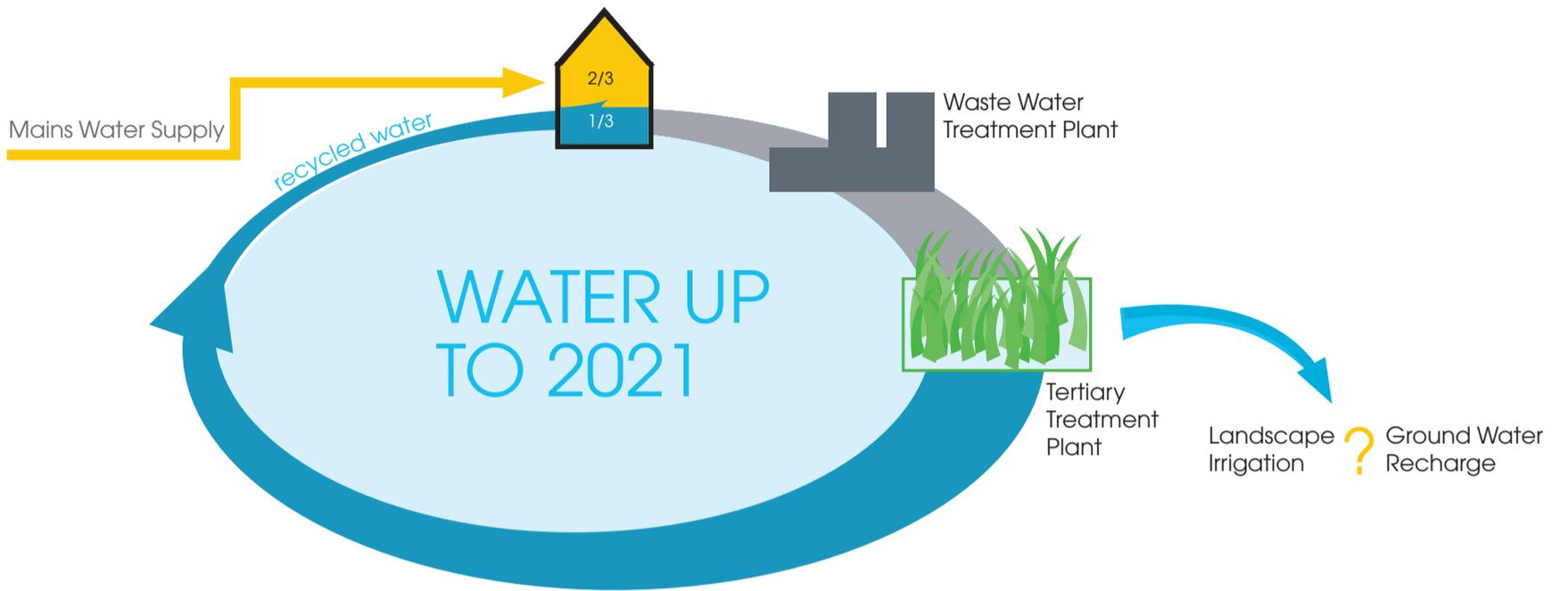
In this way, up to 2 thirds of Grow Harlow's water demand is met by recycled 'grey' and 'new' water. Tests in Singapore have shown that 'new' water created in this way can be effectively recycled up to 11 times before consumers remark on the taste become 'processed'.

Once the system is fully rolled out across Grow Harlow, per person water usage of potable mains water supply is expected to drop to less than 25l per person per day less than 20% of the mains potable water usage of the average Harlow resident in 2009.



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2023: EASTWICK PARK ACADEMY



2023: 6000 HOMES AND STRONG INITIAL RESULTS FOR GROW HARLOW'S NEW ACADEMY

Education has always been one of the success stories of Grow Harlow. Traditionally UK development standards relating to school provision, particularly primary schools, have moved forward little since the Victorian age. Of course Government programmes such as Building Schools for the Future (BSF), mean that few schools these day still teach in Victorian classrooms.

Grow Harlow from the outset took an alternative approach to education provision, based mainly on the concept of the cluster and neighbourhood sizing of 500 units.

Clearly the first phases of the development didn't warrant full sized primary schools, let alone secondary education centres. However the context of bussing small children out to schools was anathema to the first 'pioneers', many of whom still live in or around the first cluster at Gilston.

Instead the community and the Joint Venture worked with (sometimes this wasn't too easy!) Herts County Council to develop a new community model of neighbourhood primary education. Educators of all backgrounds featured strongly amongst the first pioneers at Grow Harlow, something the development has had in common with European environmental development initiatives. The unique concept of the central - working landscape in each of the clusters, meant that this could function equally well as education space, as it could for orchards, neighbourhood greens or more intense food production. The inclusion of multifunctional community building space in each cluster provided even the first neighbourhood with local, walkable and secure opportunities for nursery and primary education at the core of every neighbourhood.

Secondary Education has been a harder nut to crack.

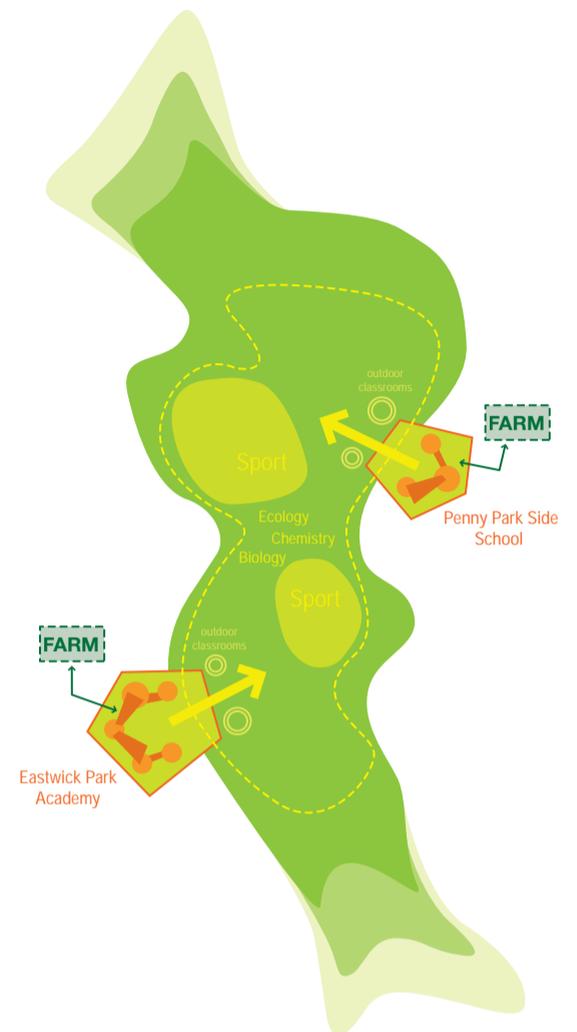
With a network of 6 specialist secondary schools in arts, science, business, and technology, and a college offering foundation degrees in association with Anglia Ruskin University, the first decade of development at Grow Harlow, with its early investment of strong links back down to Harlow town, have meant insufficient demand for the significant infrastructure development a new secondary school plus tertiary facilities would require.

However for the last 5 years signs of pressure on the existing education infrastructure have been showing signs of strain. The opening last spring of the Eastwick Park Academy, adjacent to the Goody Benevolence Fields - providing sport for all opportunities to the inhabitants of Harlow in its entirety, has already shown signs of improvements for Harlow's education offer as a whole.

According to County Councillor Sandy Fenchurch, portfolio holder for education the exact improvement on Harlow as a whole is "difficult to say for sure, but the mere presence of our new 'super school' has seen our specialist schools take note and effort and attendance is up across the board".

The Eastwick Park Academy provides secondary and sixth-form education, as well as access to distance learning programmes to several universities and has simultaneously opened a satellite unit in the CTP, providing a research and vocational training link connected to locally available employment and environmental technology skills.

The sports infrastructure network spans the entire length of the Benevolence fields in the centre of the Great Park and a second school site is reserved for the Greater Penny's expansion area of Grow Harlow, the education anchor for the north of the scheme is scheduled to open in 2030.



2024: LETS MOVE TO...



2024: IS THIS ALL A BIT WORTHY?

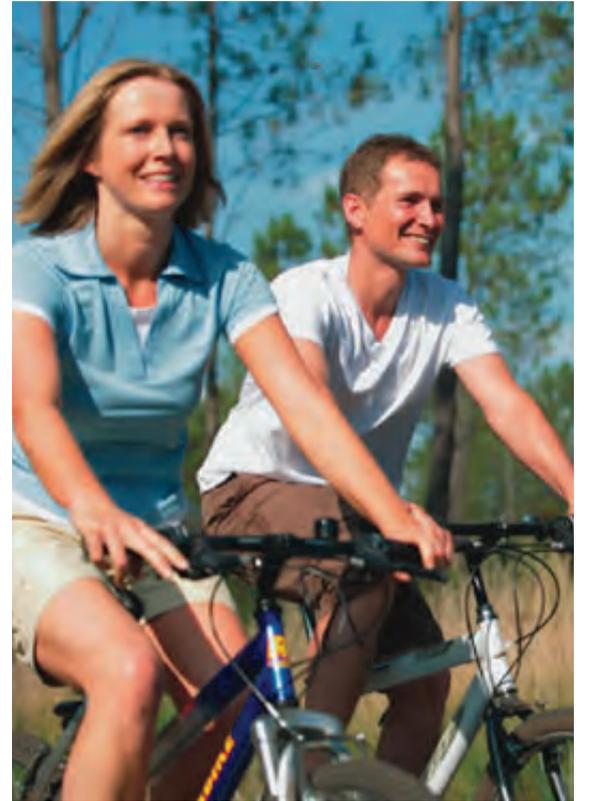
In the naughties the obsession was with sustainability and productive landscape. In the Teens the focus was on re-appropriating our manufacturing heritage and with inventing technologies relating to a sustainable future.

The farmers markets were a daily rather than a weekly event and car ownership had dropped to an all time low. The younger population was sensing without properly understanding it an irritating awareness of self satisfaction by the greater part of the population (the original settlers): in a word WORTHINESS. The great english sense of self-deprecation and humour was severely eroded by the earnest energy propelling the great project of Grow Harlow.

A large proportion of Grow Harlow residents had become self righteous and frowning over any behavior that could distract from the founding Principles!

One of the key sessions at this years conference week at the Fusion Farm brought together novelists, psychologist and renowned free thinkers to discuss whether it was possible to instill the rarefied qualities of urban grit in this idealised environment.

One new venture which broke the ice was the decision by one resident to convert to biofuel the engines of the great old combustion engines cars up to now relinquished to their garages (Porshes, Audi's etc.). Four times at year a rally of these cars (some 35 of them) raced on the great orbital road of Grow Harlow to the great delight of the young and the cherished emotional memories of the older generations!



A conversation with Phil Griffin, film maker, architectural critic and bon viveur

"Clean and green it might be but Grow Harlow is truly self righteous and boring. All I see is nuclear 2.4 children families cycling around their common land with superior grins. Where is the f*!ing italian bar open at 3 in the morning, the indian restaurant selling the best Masala Dosa, the real independent brewery pub or the decent secondhand bookshop!

These kids have no idea about what's going on in the rest of the world, they are too involved with their little own comfy self satisfied life. They behave as if they were in this giant grown up playground. And why is it that these "settlers" are all predominantly white middle class? Where are the Darfur refugees or the third generation jamaicans?

This looks to me like a society lacking any kind of rich diversity. I'm off back to Manchester. Cheers!"





2025: CHANGING COMMUNITY, CHANGING PARK



2025: THE NORTH SOUTH DIVIDE

Perhaps it takes more than a few classic cars to unify a community the size of Greater Harlow? Essex and Hertfordshire Wildlife Trusts confirm to their dismay that youths have set fire to part of Grow Harlow's largest reed bed south of Gilston Park and part of the Site of Special Scientific Interest on Sunday 15th April. Over 3 hectares, more than a quarter of the entire reed bed, has been burnt devastating this nationally important habitat. It took at least three fire engines to put out the fire.



Reed beds are not common or extensive in North Essex or Hertfordshire which is half the story why this particular reed bed is so important. The larger the reed bed the better the chance for species such as bittern to breed. In addition to the nature conservation aspects, this bed, 1 of 3 in the development at Grow Harlow, performs a key greywater recycling function.

This came at the end of a series of disturbances ranging from a late night summer party which ended with the partial rampage through one of the largest allotments and the ruining of a whole orchards by picking and damaging the year's harvest of apples.

At first it was assumed that the problem came from gangs of South Harlow, only to discover that the problem was from within. The postcode rivalry gave way to a real moment of introspection for the parents of North Harlow.

"Urban Teen" a community service group that provides opportunities for teens to work in partnership with community organizations was brought to help channel the frustration of the adolescents into positive rather than destructive energy.

Clearly this was an element of community work that desperately needs funding and additional support to make a difference quickly. Groups of teens were given the opportunity to convert the dull "ecopark" into a heart pumping adrenaline sport and adventure park. Others were given the project to build an extension of the existing elevated forest walkway to cover the whole length of the Great Park.

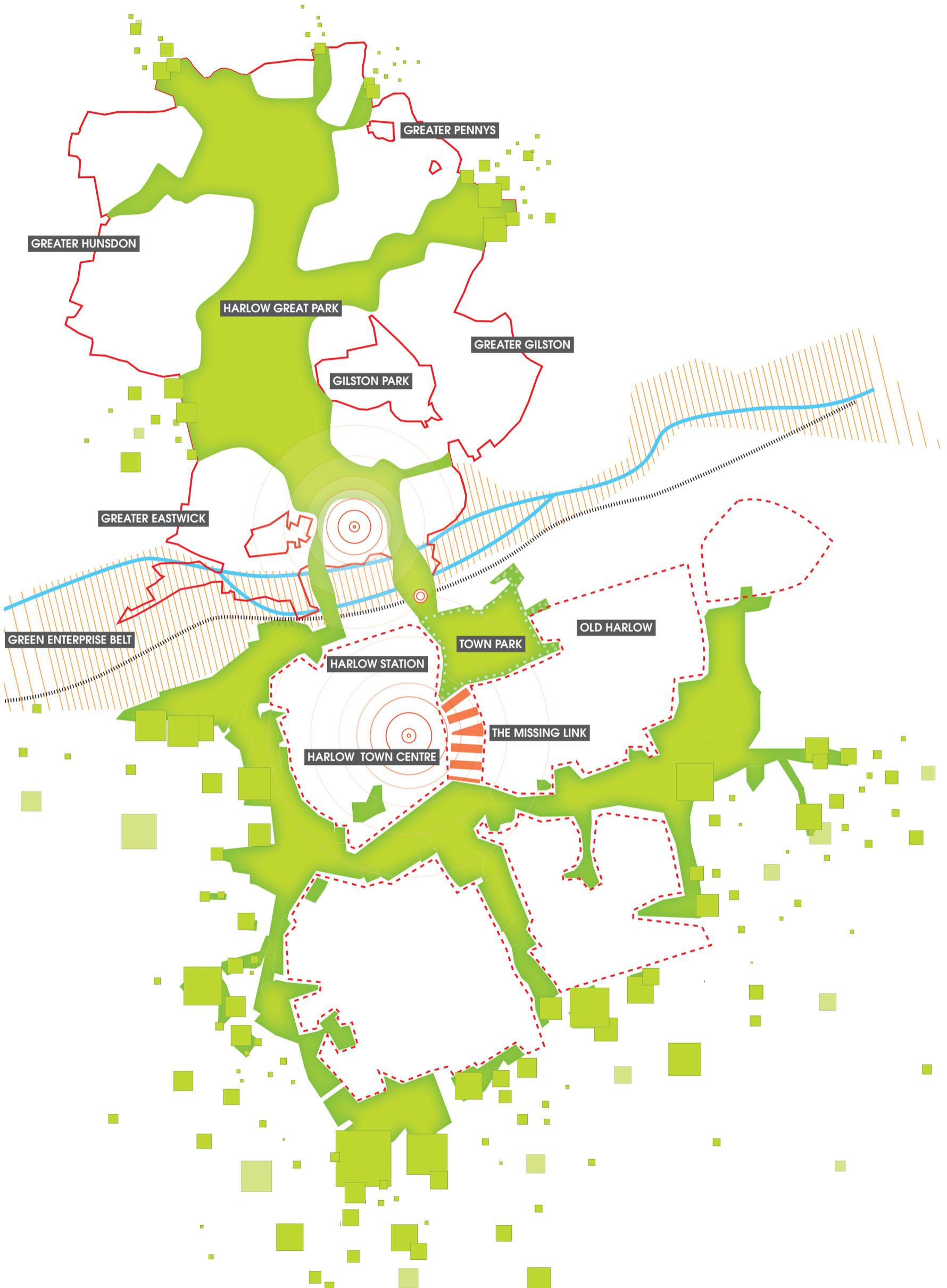
John Hawes, Conservation Manager who has worked in Grow Harlow and the Great Park setting up the reed beds from the beginning said, 'This could not happen at a worse time of year as birds, such as reed bunting and reed warbler, are just starting to build their nests. Many plants, insects and small mammals such as mice and voles will have perished in the fire. This mindless act of vandalism has not considered the wider implications to some of the county's best wildlife habitat.'

A conversation with Jocelyn Llewellyn, who organises youth training workshops

"This is a common problem: urban designers focus their visions on creating places for families, children and the older generations. They too often forget to cater for teenagers.

Adolescents are notoriously rebellious. They need to test themselves and experiment beyond what they have acquired from their parents. We need to make this right of passage into adulthood stimulating and emancipating."

2026: NORTH AND SOUTH HARLOW MERGE



2026: OSMOSIS – REVISITING HARLOW

A decade has passed since Stockland Halladale's ambitious attempt to comprehensively redevelop Harlow town centre off the back of major retail investment coupled to a very strong leisure offer. This was in turn supported by quality new housing and a transport interchange.



But... Has it worked?

Well, similar to other such ambitious urban renaissance visions hit by the unforgiving timing of the 2008 – 2012 Recession, the housing/apartment credentials of the scheme were hit hard by lack of investor confidence in the urban living concept. Where metropolitan cities struggled, new town locations such as Harlow, Basildon and Stevenage really felt the brunt of a tough market.

Recession hits all sectors, however such was the wider support underpinning the regeneration of the town centre that the funding base remained unwavering and key elements of the scheme were delivered with reasonable success and quality.

Therefore the local consensus is that the Stockland scheme has helped the town centre, no doubt, but the longstanding issues of access into the centre from the surrounding residential areas and genuine links into the beautiful network of open spaces that comprise Harlow Great Park still falters south of the station and new A414 Boulevard unless travelling by bus. In short the impact of the scheme to deliver the required renaissance has not been achieved. And the aspiration of both Grow Harlow to mesh with Harlow proper, and of the existing town to connect both inwards and outwards remains largely unfulfilled, manifest in the disquiet and division between the 2 communities.

Re-enter the Grow Harlow design team – The JV and design team have held a long-bridled desire to unfold the beautiful and flexible framework for growth and community development that has been the success of Grow Harlow, onto its larger, southern sibling.

Of course the team hasn't waited completely before attempting this. It has already had great success in accommodating 6,500 jobs (about a third of Grow Harlow's total employment targets) within the wider CTP as an extension of the Stort valley both east/west and north/south, resulting in dynamic employment led regeneration in these areas,

However by 2026, the desire is to go further, to dramatically welcome and entice Grow Harlow and the Harlow Great Park into the centre of Harlow proper, and in doing so, repair some of the most deprived wards in the new town and in Essex as a whole.

This missing link in the green chain that would provide the ultimate connectivity between north and south revolves around the Hides Estate and Hughs Tower. Unlocking this blockage in the network unveils a myriad of connectivity and sequence, linking the Great Park, to the CTP and Fusion Farm, to the station, through the town park and providing a contemporary piece of urban landscape, repairing the links between the centre, Harlow College, local neighbourhoods and Grow Harlow through the Great Park.

Of course such wide scale estates removal is not without significant constraints, yet the opportunity offered of moving across the valley is a carrot as sweet as necessary to bridge the divide and create the final fusion of new town and living, working landscape.

In this scenario, the Stockland scheme suddenly finds meaning to its urban living aspirations. The new urban landscape along the Hides appreciates in value, context and desirability. The former residents of the Hides and Hughs tower become new ambassadors - welding the new, with the 'new' new, maintaining their strong family links to the south but equally sowing positive disquiet and unrest that quickly infects the new town with the fervour and dynamic thirst for change that extends the Great Park deep into Harlow proper. Thereby dissolving the artificial bonds preventing the golf course linking with the valley, with the park, with the clusters, with the villages and beyond to 2030, 2040 and yet deeper still into the psyche, landscape and soul of this place.

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2027: PUBLIC TRANSPORT EVOLUTION



2027: THE GREATER HARLOW METRO AT 8,000 HOMES

How positive is it to be considered a victim of your own success? That's the question transport bosses are asking themselves this year at Grow Harlow which has just switched its almost 15 year public transport network to a new system and schedule of routes.

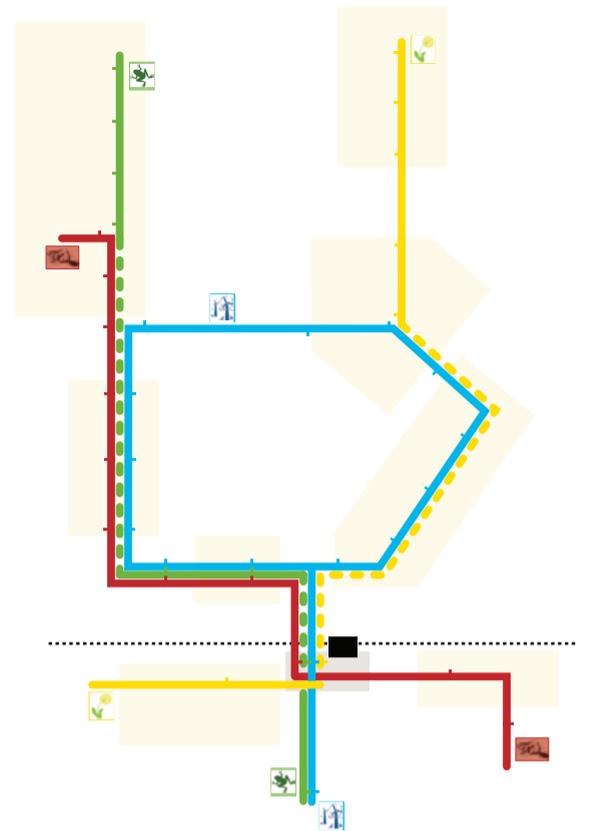
"Change in all forms takes getting used to" states Don Draper of Stansted Transit who have operated the acclaimed Grow Harlow Public Transport Loop (PTL) since 2013. "Operating a fleet on biodiesel has not been without its problems, until we had a steady supply of green bio-diesel coming in from the wider community, we were relying on recycled cooking oil for our vehicles, I remember the first residents complaining about the smell - here comes the chip van they used to shout at us".

Of course all that has changed since the Great Park has started producing clean bio-fuels, refined in the CTP.

"More people means more custom for us", notes Draper, who lives in the community and uses his own bus service to travel to Harlow station each day, "but with more residents and patrons, keeping to schedule becomes harder".

"There's never been a timetable at Grow Harlow, we started the service with 3 simple commitments, the first - once the initial developer funding dried up, residents and business occupiers we required to honour their pledge in the constitution to maintain the indefinite subsidy of transport on the PTL. Our side of the deal is that all journey times in the development are limited to 10mins and that you should never wait for more than 5mins for a bus 18 out of 24hrs a day. With the added growth of 8,000 homes, the old 3 loop system is struggling to keep journey times down to 13 mins from the north."

"We've also renamed the services" says Draper. "Local children and schools held a competition, so we now run the Beaver, Dandelion, Frog and Windmill routes. Like the sculptures in the park, we might have a change around in 6 months!"



A conversation with Tina Schmidt, Urban Designer, Barton Willmore

"The new system is simpler and only a single looped service through the park remains. Instead of looping over the top of Grow Harlow, the new routes, and there are only four, run high frequency, co-directional routes with new 'offline' bus stops set back into the apron of neighbourhood clusters to allow the northern services and vice versa, to make high speed passes through either the top or bottom of the development to maintain frequency and bring journey times back down to within the 10 minute tolerance."

2028: HARLOW BECOMES A TRANSITION CITY



2028: EUROPEAN TRANSITION CITY

Greater Harlow becomes part of the European Federation of Transition Cities!

Greater Harlow had for some time been in conflict with central government due to new European laws threatening to undermine the Principles of it's own Constitution created back in 2009.

When Europe was looking to establish and support the first 20 exemplar European Transition Cities, Greater Harlow welcomed the opportunity to join this select club: cities which have acquired substantial independence in both energy and food production and which can generate their own employment needs can now elect to become free from central government and administer their own future. The European Commission is spearheading this experiment in order to support communities that are clearly demonstrating an interest in the running of their own future and in a manner that meets the best principles of enlightened self-reliance.

Harlow has been selected this year to become the twelfth of such European Transition Cities!

A conversation with Duffey Morley, the multi-lingual daughter of a former Council Leader and now head of the Harlow International Friendship Association.

"Harlow already had strong links to Velizy-Villacoublay in France and Havirov in the Czech Republic. We are developing connections all the time. It seems other places which have a global reputation as laid-back, and slightly slower, yet still at the cutting edge of technology, want to become formally linked to the phenomenon that is Grow Harlow. We are in advanced discussions with Portland - Oregon, Vancouver and the first French Eco-Ville in Nice about technical associations, study tours and lifestyle exchanges. Grow Harlow has become the Davos of the international eco-scene!"

A conversation with Clare Short MP

"Just before Easter, I accepted an invitation to contribute to a course on development at the Fusion Farm which is situated in the great park at Harlow. It is famous for its commitment to environmental sustainability as is the Grow Harlow Trust. On the road sign for Greater Harlow someone has painted "Twinned with Narnia". It is a beautiful part of the world and large numbers of green minded, alternative sorts of people live there. This has made Harlow the ideal place for the Transition Towns movement to evolve.

The Transition Towns movement, which started in Totnes has spread across the country and the world, is about local people coming together to prepare for the change that is coming. Its founder, Rob Hopkins, who lives in Totnes, is convinced that we must localise massively to live in the future.

It started with groups meeting to think of how food will be provided, where energy will come from and how people will survive. Then at Harlow this was taken one step further with the cooperative approach to nurturing community creation adopted within the framework for growth.

They have even launched a Harlow pound which local businesses agree to take in order to encourage business to source their products locally.

I do not know how quickly peak oil will create a crisis for our way of life, but I am sure that the combination of forces at work will drive massive change and risk a global economic depression. The only way through will be more localisation. And the beauty of Harlow is that it has drawn people together into greater contact with each other and greater community co-operation. I have in recent months visited numerous of the communities here at Harlow that are co-operating to reduce their carbon emissions, working together locally and trying to face up to the environmental challenge.

I think this is the force of the future. And the beauty of it is that people are working together to create change instead of sitting around predicting doom and gloom."

2029: NEARLY THERE...



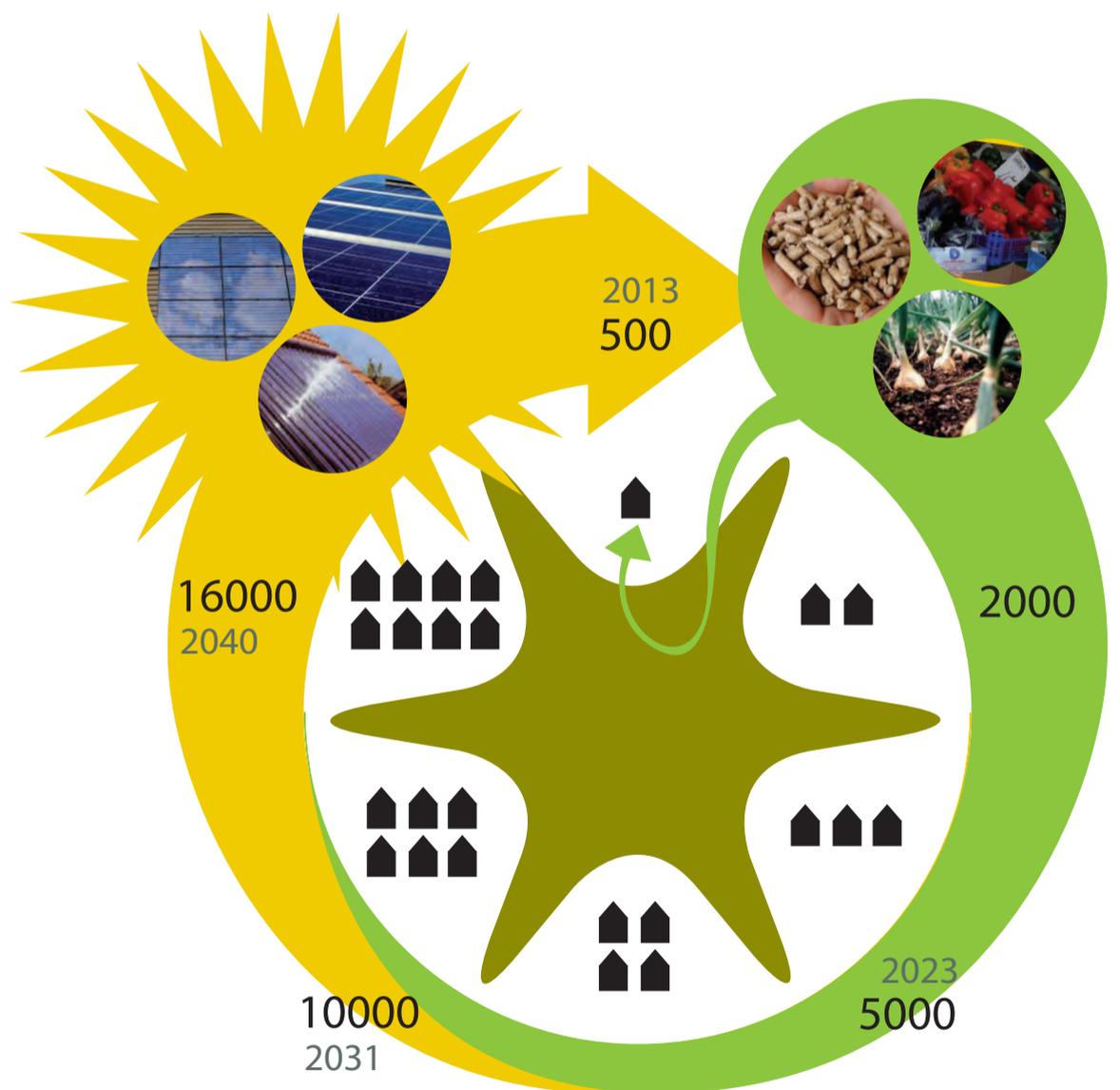
2029: THE SUNSHINE VALLEY

The furore in 2020 about Grow Harlow and the Clean Tech Park being suggested as the location for a huge Waste Transfer Station (WTS) coupled to Herts County Councillors suggesting our green gem of a location (conveniently on the borders of their constituency) as the most suitable for an Energy from Waste (EfW) plant, requiring 180 lorry movements per day on the long since downgraded A414, has been finally put to rest.

After almost a decade of intense research, involving the combined efforts of academics from MIT, Cambridge and the best of Harlow's innovative technology teams from the CTP, Solux and their partners have begun mainstream manufacture of clean produced, recyclable PV 'energy module' manufactured in sizes specifically matched to the Home 10 roof module dimensions used throughout the community. Whilst not all homes are able to embrace this technology, due to design considerations and the 30° Southern Roofspace Rule only coming into effect from 2020 onwards, nevertheless, almost 60% of the now almost 10,000 dwellings at Grow Harlow can move to this locally developed, community subsidised secure energy resource.

The backlash of technologists, researchers, residents and even the hitherto delicate and slightly segregated residents of Grow Harlow's original 4 villages, united in spirit against the joint County proposals, rejecting and fighting against a technology masquerading as sustainable, and toughing it out to continue along with the original ideology of locally produced and renewed biomass, future-proofing the design and layout of the community until such point that cleaner, cheaper and more reliable renewable energy sources have been developed.

The CTP, now dubbed internationally 'Sunshine Valley' seized on the combined initiatives of fusing of ideas which has now seen overall employment in Harlow rise by , driven by almost 20,000 new jobs. This has been achieved through the desire to need to react and rebel, and the locational advantage of Grow Harlow adjacent to international connections as a bastion of research and learning. Initiatives here have changed the landscape, both literally, but also politically and economically to develop an energy solution in partnership with US, German, Indian and Chinese commercial thinktanks, to solve a very local issue whilst providing a very real global advantage to clean energy production worldwide.



2030: 10,000 HOMES!



2030: NORTH HARLOW HITS 10,000 HOMES

Is it 20 years ago we won the harlow competition?

Twenty years is long time in terms of our careers but a brief moment in the life span of a community. It took about twenty years to expose the frailties of the harlow new town master plan; the incompleteness of the vision and above all the inability to respond to change. But what about North Harlow?

A conversation with Clive Rand (or the answer to Question One)

"Being "fixed" was a universal problem with master plans. I remember visiting the Sicilian baroque towns and seeing the glorious failure, sterility and futility of a highly definitive master plan. There is a palpable sense of inhabiting someone else's dream.

Up until 2010 here in the UK the response to a lack of housing quality was more and more jargon and a "harking back" through the placatory language of new urbanism. The result was glorified housing estates dressed up in a new guise.

Grow Harlow was very much a turning point in the history of master planning. The breakthrough with our "evolutionary" approach to the framework plan was to strike a balance between delivery and creating space for individual and community endeavours. In this way Grow Harlow has been remarkably responsive and possesses continued vitality and dynamism as the years have progressed.

It was always going to be difficult to guide a major development through the period of such dramatic change that we've seen in the last 30 years. Who could have foreseen the material shortages, the water crisis and the changes in energy technology. Grow Harlow has taken all these in its stride. Revisiting and retrofitting has certainly kept people busy!

I still go back there once a year even now. Harlow Great Park is always a joy. Although the Stort Valley has appeared in many press and tourist brochures I still find it spellbinding. I get the biggest buzz from just watching ordinary life with people who are happy to be there. In some way we have enriched the lives of thousands of people.

That's the best accolade a master planner can hope for."

A conversation with David West (or the answer to Question Two)

"For me the great sense of success comes from what now appears like a seamless transition between North and South Harlow. I remember our first task was to design a steel and timber "Green bridge" which spanned over the railway tracks and into the Great Park. In the credit crunch years it was all we could afford! At the last count there are five of these bridges.

The next big change was the conversion of the flood plain of the Stort Valley into a green industrial belt with "clean tech" industries enjoying the immediate proximity of the wetlands and the natural environment of Greater Harlow.

Another significant moment was the creation of the Fusion Farm which counterbalanced the efforts to revitalise the town centre on the other side of the track. There was a vigorous competition between north and south but that was not all bad!

The most significant change came when over time the planned relocation of South Harlow communities to the other side of the tracks created a cross fertilization, a sort of osmosis. It allowed amongst other things the upgrade of the southern housing stock and to my delight the carving of a green corridor that allowed the Great Park to extend all the way to the southern countryside.

And now we are celebrating the opening of the new transport hub on the site of the old station, justified but the new population reaching a critical mass. 20 minutes to Central London and direct trains to Paris and the rest of Europe. Not bad!"



2035: GROW HARLOW!



2035: AND THEN... 16,000 HOMES AND STILL COUNTING

The Grow Harlow Team are still hard at work.



CLIVE RAND



CHRISTOPHE EGRET



DAVID WEST



JAMES GROSS



JOHN HAXWORTH



DAN BRADY



TINA SCHMIDT



CECILIA LINDSTROM



JEAN-BAPTISTE LACOMBE



ANDY LEBISCH



GEMMA NOAKES



ANDREW SUTTON

A Note from Andrew Sutton, Graphic Designer, Studio Egret West

“Disclaimer: Quotes and names used within this document are either reported out of context or completely made up to articulate a key statement within the evolving narrative. I hope you enjoyed them!”

