



Easton Community Centre

Design & Access Statement

Ref: 266-21 R1000_P2 – Design & Access Statement


Prepared for: Easton Parish Council | September 2021

Application Type: Reserved Matters Application

WTD



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'All development will be designed to the highest possible standards, creating a strong sense of place... Development proposals will respect local distinctiveness...'

South Norfolk Place-Making Guide,
Supplementary Planning

Section 1

Introduction

INTRODUCTION


This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by WT Design Ltd. on behalf of Easton Parish Council, for consideration alongside a reserved matters application for a new Community Centre along Marlingford Road, Easton.

In accordance with Local Design Guides and National Planning Policy, this statement reviews the overall design and principles of the centre, in-line with the existing character of the area and new development approvals in the immediate area.

This Design and Access Statement is submitted alongside supporting documents which may be referenced throughout the sections where necessary. The full report referenced will be included as a document alongside the reserved matters application and should be read in conjunction with this Statement.



Site Boundary

An aerial photograph of a suburban residential area. A road runs horizontally across the top. Below it, a dense cluster of houses and trees is visible. To the left, there are large, open fields. In the bottom center, there is a small building with a white roof. The overall scene is a mix of built-up areas and open land.

“Enhancing our quality of life and the environment we live in’ is one of South Norfolk Council’s key priorities.’

South Norfolk Place-Making
Guide, Supplementary Planning

Section 2

Site & Planning History

SITE HISTORY

The site is currently unusable agricultural land but has been subject to previous agricultural use.

The land has been included as part of Persimmon Homes planning application under reference 2014/2611. The application submitted was for phased development of 890 homes in Easton with associated village stores, community centre, increased allotment capacity and public open space.


This application for the Community Centre and associated landscaping and parking will supersede the Persimmon planning application for all works within the red boundary submitted on our Site Plan.

The proposal for 890 dwellings in the area has been approved with conditions. Recommendations from Sport England was that alongside the increase of population in Easton, a Sports Hall facility should be included and could be completed as part of the Community Hall.

The site to the West of Phase U has been allocated for the provision of the new Community Centre. This land provides the best location for a central facility, accessible to new and existing residents.



Persimmon Phase Plan reference: 2014/2611



‘The position of new facilities in a new development may influence their use. At the heart of a new development, they may promote a sense of identity, but they may also be seen as being for new residents only, whereas **if they are sited towards the edge of a development, they may be used by both new and existing residents.**’

South Norfolk Place-Making Guide,
Supplementary Planning

Section 3

Local Area

LOCAL FACILITIES MAP



LOCAL FACILITIES

The site is situated in an ideal location for easy access to other facilities available throughout Easton.

The Facilities map marks the location of facilities within a 5 to 15-minute walking distance from the proposed site location. Facilities available in Easton include, primary school, College, Guest Houses, Restaurants and vital retailers such as the Post Office. More recreational activities can also be found within these walking distance parameters, including the Jubilee Playing Field and Norwich Family Golf Centre.

The new Community Centre sits towards the edge of the overall site allowing use by both new and existing residents, integrating the new amenities into the existing facilities of the local area. In line with the South-Norfolk Place-Making Guide, the Community Centre is positioned carefully within the surrounding facilities, allowing smooth integration as a community space, enhancing the overall quality of life to existing and new residents of Easton.

- St. Peter's Church
- Church of England, Diocese of Norwich
- Post Office
- Rembrandt Restaurant
- Easton Guest House
- Jubilee Playing Field
- Norwich Family Golf Centre
- Easton College
- St. Peter's C of E Primary School



Jubilee Playing Field



Church of England, Diocese of Norwich



St Peter's Church

ROAD LINKS

The Community Centre will be accessible via a new entranceway from Marlingford Road to the west of the site.

Easton has a road network consisting of Primary and Secondary roads which connect between Easton's parcels of development and the local amenities. A 2-minute drive away, Dereham Road connects to the A47, where road links to the wider community provide vehicular access between the neighboring parishes.

The A47 connects southeast towards the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital and continues eastbound to Great Yarmouth. If heading Westbound on the A47 from Easton, the road links up with Dereham, King's Lynn, Wisbech and Peterborough.

The extensive road network and simple link to the A47 makes the site and Easton, easily accessible to surrounding developments and other Norfolk parish council towns and villages.



Road Map

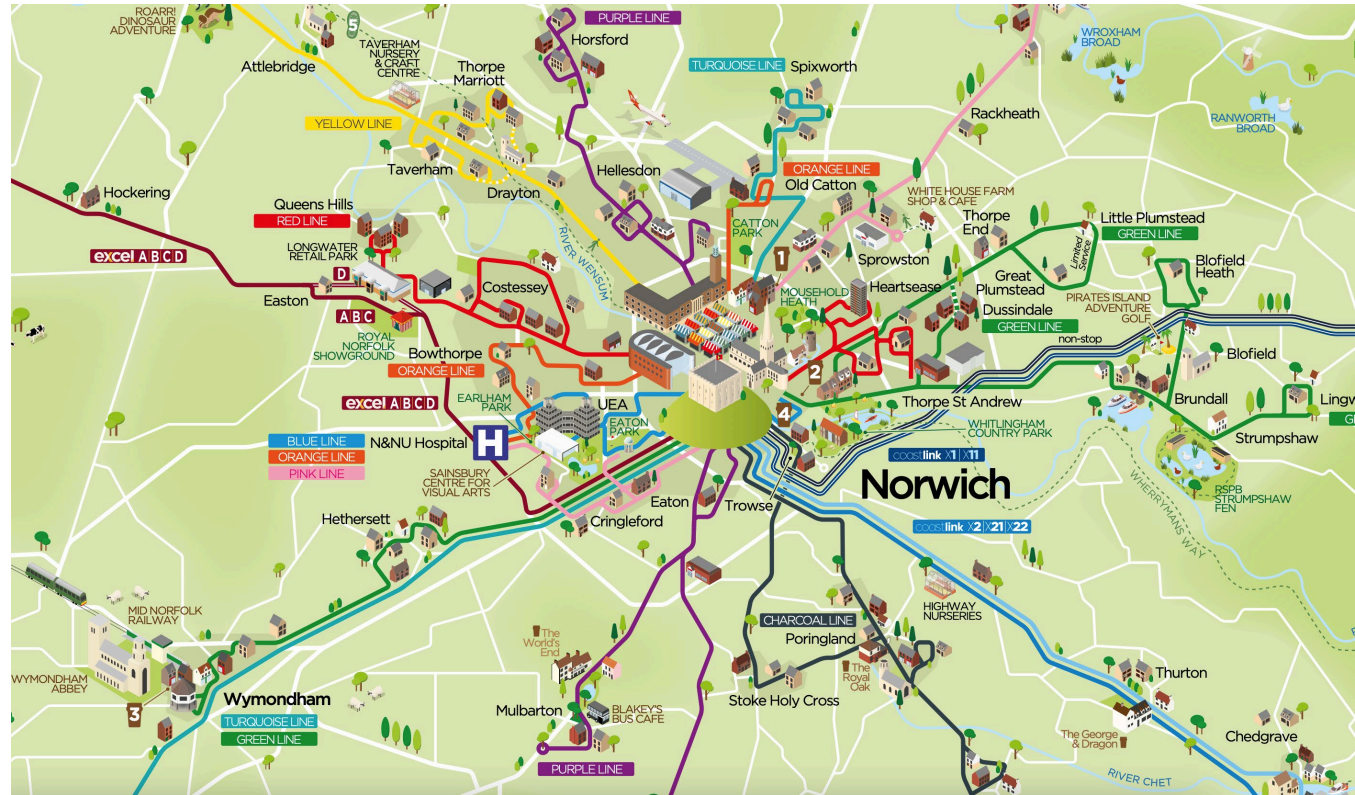
PUBLIC TRANSPORT LINKS

Within a 2-minute walk from the site location, bus stops for eastbound and westbound services can be found on Dereham Road.

The local bus stops provide access to First Bus and Excel operated public transport.

Connecting to the Norwich City Centre, these bus routes offer stops at vital locations on the way from Easton, including the Royal Norfolk Showground, Bowthorpe, Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital, Cringleford and Eaton.

The interconnectivity of the bus network across Norfolk provides Easton Community Centre with easy connections from the village to the wider communities without the specific need for a car, providing environmental benefits and limited parking restrictions and reducing congestion.



Bus Route map

PEDESTRIAN LINKS

As a Community facility, the proposed centre aims to be accessible to all in the local community and any new future residential developments within the Parish boundaries. This includes ensuring pedestrian links between local residential developments and the proposed site.

The main access to the community centre is proposed via Marlingford Road. A Desktop study of the site location shows easy walkable routes along the road, with side overlooking windows from residential properties on Buxton Close.

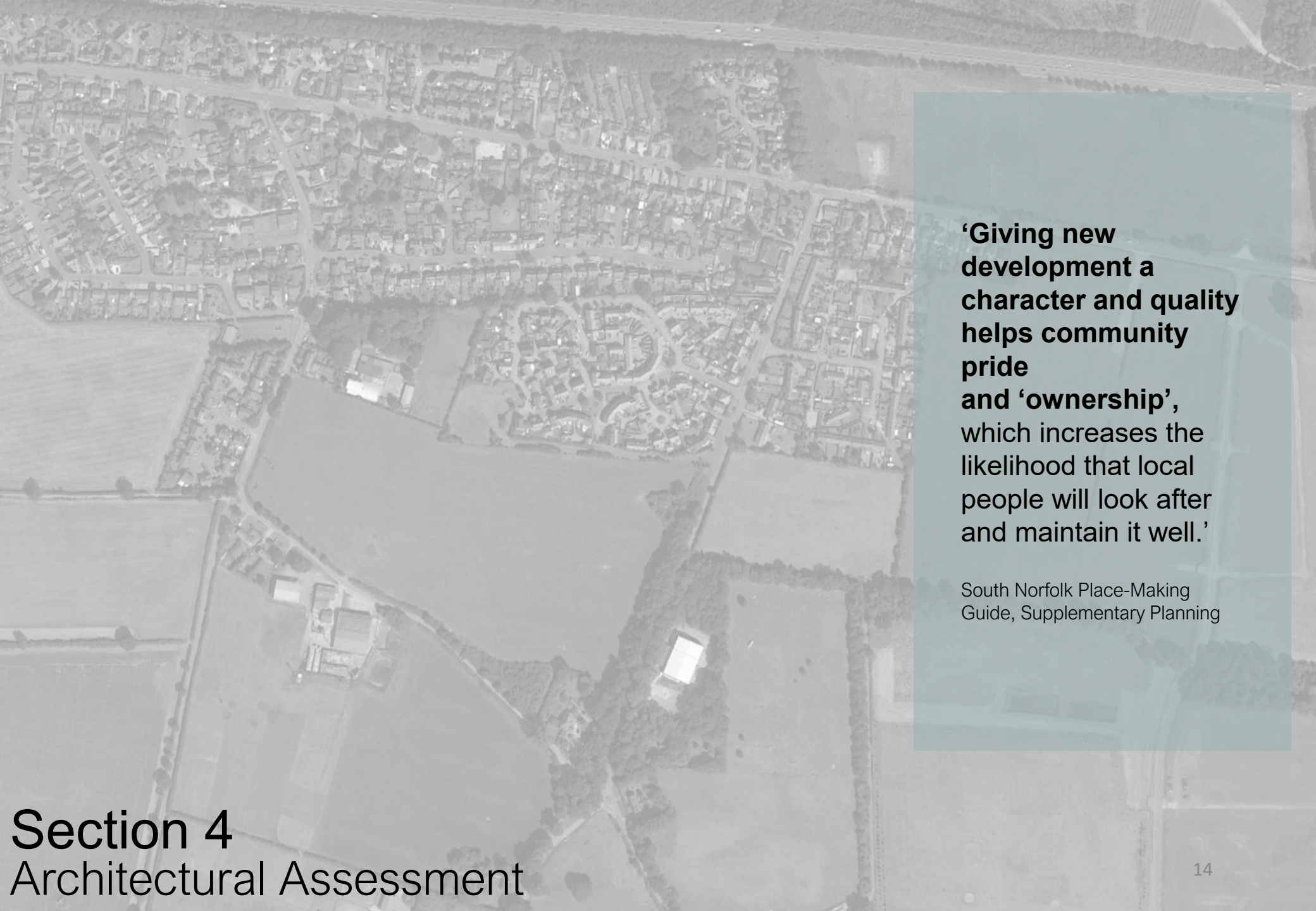
To the north side of the site, Dereham Road and Marlingford Way offer pedestrian access to many of the local residential developments. Both streets show clear views each way, overlooking from residential properties and well-sized pavements. These routes provide natural security for anyone who wants to access the community facility via the existing pedestrian routes.



Google map view of Marlingford Road and Marlingford Way



Google map view of Dereham Road and Bawburgh Road



‘Giving new development a character and quality helps community pride and ‘ownership’, which increases the likelihood that local people will look after and maintain it well.’

South Norfolk Place-Making
Guide, Supplementary Planning

Section 4

Architectural Assessment

ARCHITECTURAL ASSESSMENT



Buxton Close

Red-Multi Brick



Eddington Way

Timber Cladding



Marlingford Way

Red Brick

During the initial design process, an architectural review of the local area has been undertaken to ascertain the key design principles and material choices administered in the local build form. The South Norfolk and National Design Guide place emphasis on creating a community with character and identity. As a result of guidance, the materials in the local properties have been assessed to ensure that, although the overall design creates individual character, the overall design aesthetic still provides a sense of place and community.

Common materials and design in the local area shows gable fronted properties with red brick, timber cladding and modern windows.

ARCHITECTURAL ASSESSMENT



Wereham Village Hall



Thornham Village Hall



The Nest Community Centre



Trimingham Village Hall



Lyng Community Hall



Cawston Community Centre



Lingwood Village Hall

ARCHITECTURAL ASSESSMENT

Assessing the architectural vernacular and design principles of other community buildings was paramount to ensuring a design that not only fits with the local vernacular but harmonizes with the wider architectural principles for community projects in Norfolk.

Reviewing seven different community centre facilities in Norfolk, the overall materiality, design and build form are taken into consideration.

Four out of the seven community halls reviewed include natural treated timber cladding or timber features.

Each Community Halls design offers a different and unique character but have sympathetic materials in line with the Norfolk vernacular, creating a sense of place and character across community use buildings in Norfolk.

Common materials used are:


- Timber cladding
- Red Brick
- Metal Clad Roofing
- Modern aluminium or uPVC windows and doors

A small number of the halls reviewed utilised area specific materials, such as:

- White Render
- Coloured Render (Purple)
- Red Pantile Roof

Based on the architectural assessment, it is noted that although they have an individualistic style, sustainable materials are used to incorporate the build form into the natural surroundings and resonate with the identity of the area.

Following these principles, the emerging architectural design for the new proposed Easton Community Centre should follow similar material and design principles.



‘The proposed functions of the building must be carefully considered **to achieve an efficient plan form that permits flexibility** and concurrent occupation by different user groups...’

Sport England Design Guidance
Notes for Village and Community
Halls

Section 5

Conscious Design

SPORT ENGLAND DESIGN GUIDANCE

Criteria for the Community Facility has been taken from the Sport England Design Guide to meet the standards for size, layout and overall design.

The Sport England Design Guide focuses on the technical specification and layout requirements, to ensure the community facility is usable for as many user groups possible.

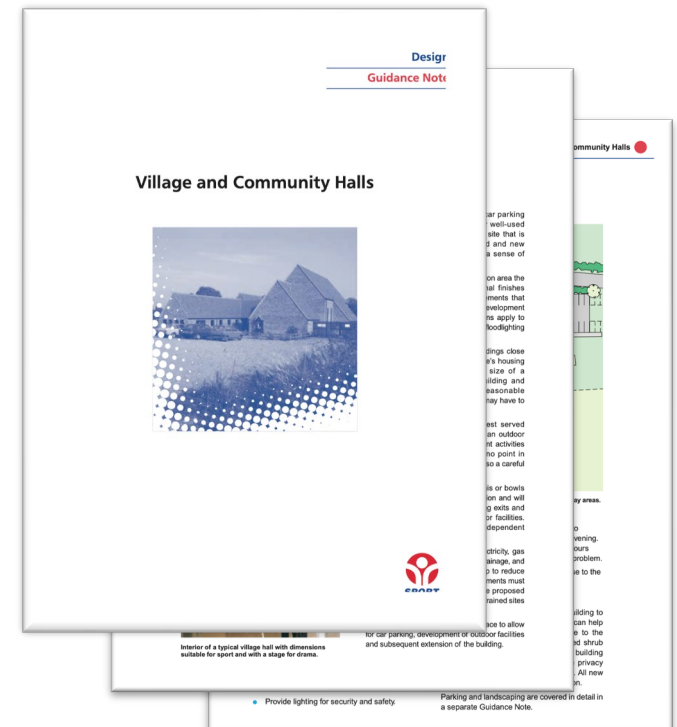
The Hall will meet minimum criteria of 18m x 10m with a height greater than 6.1m high. This criteria allows the hall to cater for a large catalogue of uses.

Equipment and furniture stores are to be designed so that they are directly accessible to the area to which they should be used. The incorporation of storage facilities in the immediate area of use, helps to avoid trip hazards and unnecessary trips to alternate rooms to move equipment, creating a safer, more user and staff friendly environment.

The Main Hall incorporates the design elements suggested to allow use for the following activities:

- Badminton
- Short Mat Bowls
- Gymnastics
- Aerobics / keep fit
- Martial Arts / Judo
- Yoga
- Playgroups
- Table Tennis
- 5-a-side (softball)
- Short tennis
- Fencing
- Clubs / Societies
- Concerts
- Meetings / Conferences
- Dance Classes
- Drama / Film
- Receptions / Private Functions
- Cheese and Wine
- Auctions
- Guides / Scouts
- Discos
- Private Functions

The Sport England Design Guide has been carefully reviewed to incorporate best practice where appropriate. The layout has been revised during our design development stages to incorporate advices within the design guide regarding room sizes, window placements, door openings etc.



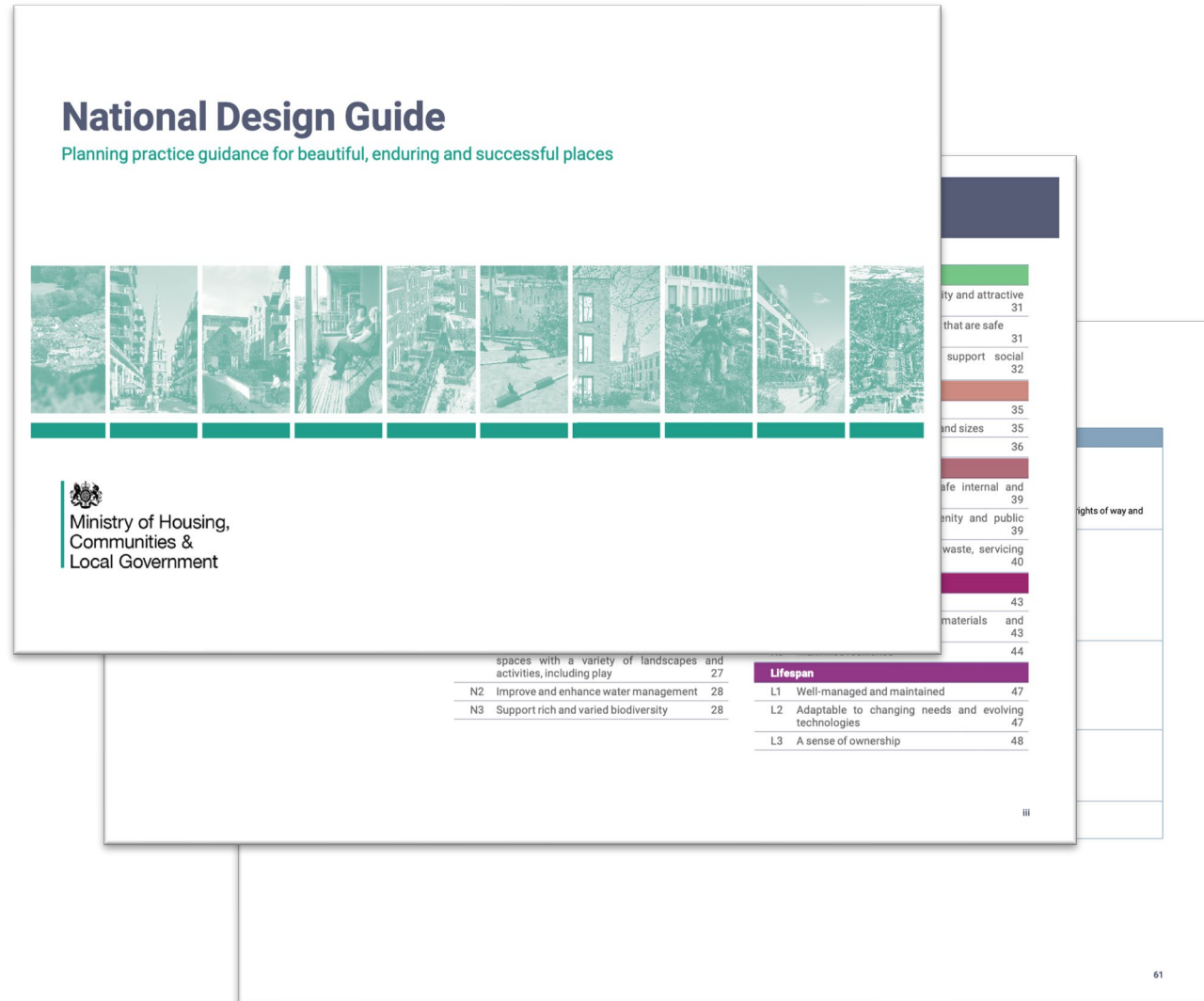
NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

The National Design Guide provides expected design principles for the build form, movement and identity of an area.

Well-designed new developments should be influenced by the build form of the area, the scale and proportions, roofscapes, legibility and façade design.

During the design development of Easton Community Centre, care has been taken to choose materials which will integrate into the natural surroundings and vernacular of the area whilst keeping the identity, in accordance with Guidance I3 of the National Design Guide.

The Community centre is placed towards the edge of the site, within constraints, to allow for easy pedestrian access. A connected network of routes for walking, public transport have been considered to comply with National Design Guide, complying with sections M1 and B1, encouraging less reliance on car access through the build form.



SOUTH NORFOLK PLANNING POLICY

Alongside National Design Guidance and Sport England Design Guides, South Norfolk local plans must also be considered in order to make a coherent design and a facility which sits well in the existing Community.

To create a well-designed proposal, the following design guides have been reviewed:

- Easton Neighbourhood Plan
- South Norfolk Place Making Guide
- Adopted South Norfolk Local Plan
- Emerging Local Plan

The Easton Neighbourhood Plan places emphasis on sustainable growth and positive impact from any new proposals. A sustainable development is considered as one that meets Economic, Environmental and Social standards.

Contributing to a strong and competitive economy, supporting healthy lifestyles and protecting the natural, built and historical environment should be strongly considered during design development of any new build within Easton Neighbourhood plan boundaries.

Theme 3 of the Neighbourhood Plan provides guidance on Community Facilities. Community Facilities within the village of Easton are currently limited. The local plan shows support for a Community Centre facility, providing suitable design and consideration is made in accordance with the Local Plan and other supplementary design guides.

A comprehensive community facility should encourage wellbeing and social cohesion, encouraging day-to-day social interaction or community-based events.

Theme 3 in the Neighbourhood Plan identifies that residents of Easton are anxious to see new community facilities within the boundary itself. Any community facility should incorporate appropriate car-parking allocations but encourage pedestrian and cycle access as much as possible through location and access points.

Section 3 of this Design and Access Statement shows local area assessment, where importance and consideration for pedestrian routes and public transport have been considered in relation to the proposed location of the new community centre.

SOUTH NORFOLK PLANNING POLICY

Purpose Built Village Hall

The Local Plan shows that facilities that include a new purpose-built village hall should incorporate a village hall that is large enough to support multi-use activities. This has been incorporated into the final design according to the Sport England Design Guide for space requirements and layout.

Community Feedback

Community feedback received during the Emerging Local Plan placed focus onto requirements for Parking facilities to prevent pavement parking and traffic issues.

During the design evolution section of this statement, parking and access is considered further to ensure sufficient allocations with 19 standard spaces, 3 disabled and 2 motorbike spaces. The proposal includes 16 cycle storage spaces, split between staff and visitor allocations. The focus on pedestrian and cycle access helps improve road traffic and parking restrictions.

Encourage Health & Wellbeing

Community facilities should be designed to encourage the overall health and wellbeing of residents. By offering a sports hall which complies with best standards for the new community centre, offers an indoor sport facility that allows use from a variety of sporting groups, welcoming a large diversity of users.



‘...This approach recognises that **every scheme will have different challenges, different design priorities and specific design qualities that respond to its particular circumstances.**’

South Norfolk Place-Making Guide, Supplementary Planning regarding Building for Life Assessments

Section 6

Opportunities & Constraints

OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

Opportunities

The proposal has been considered against the opportunities and constraints specific to the site. The proposal for a new community centre offers opportunities to the local area by:


1. Increasing community spaces within the immediate area, encouraging social interaction
2. Offering sports facilities, promoting healthy lifestyle and wellbeing
3. Bettering the street scene along Marlingford Road
4. Boosting local economy, allowing external hire
5. Increased landscaping through formal landscape scheme
6. Re-purpose currently unusable, open space

Constraints

The site has had to consider possible constraints as part of the design process, limiting any impact of the proposal where possible. The constraints to the site / proposal are:

1. Contamination Risk
2. Parking issues or road congestion
3. Lack of footpath to the south of the site

These constraints have been addressed carefully through design development, either removing the constraint completely by implementing appropriate resolutions, or mitigating the impact.



‘South Norfolk has a considerable wealth of buildings and settlements of architectural and historic interest with important examples of most periods and many types of architecture and traditional methods of construction.’

South Norfolk Place-Making Guide,
Supplementary Planning

Section 7

Design Evolution

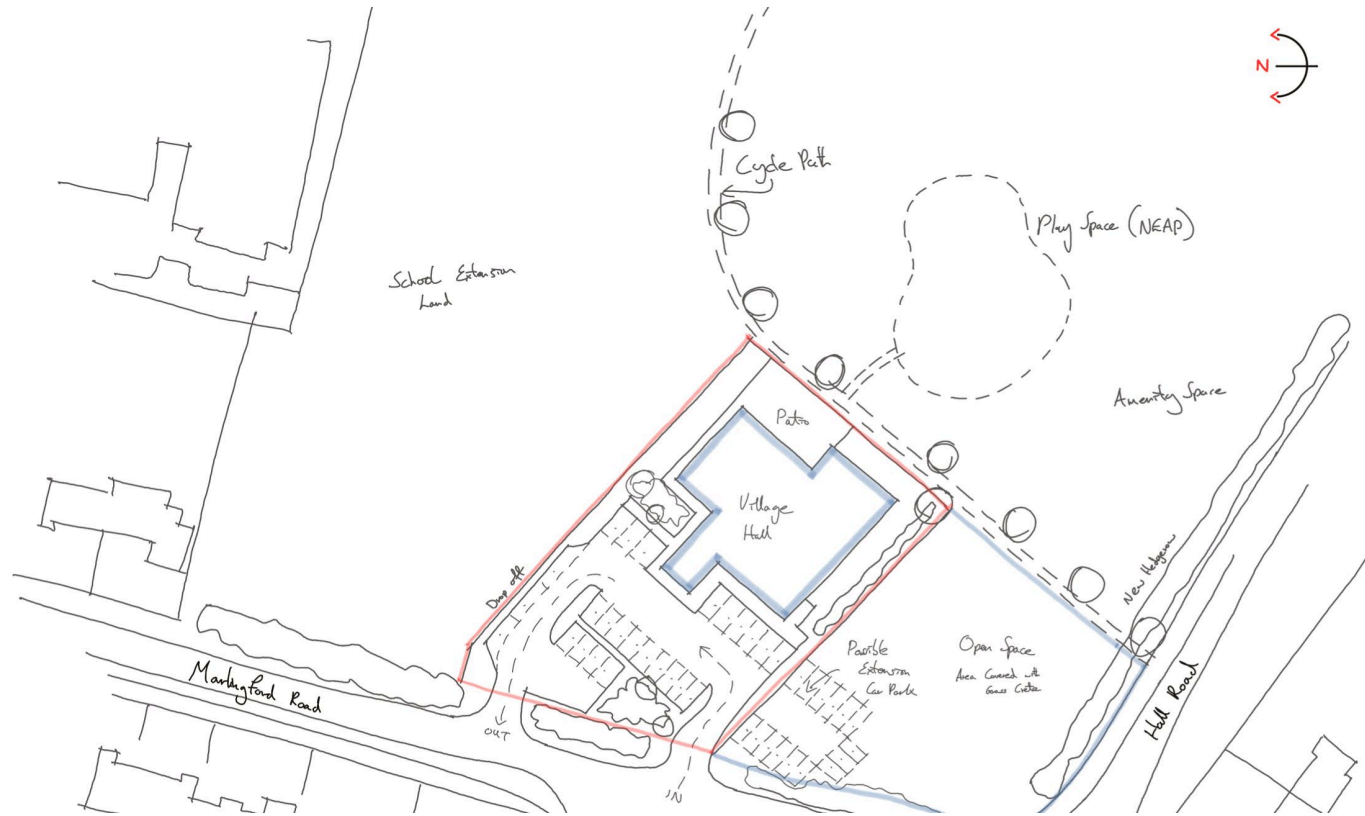
SITE PLAN

The earlier stage sketch designs for the community centre orientates the build form away from Marlingford Road, with the main entrance fronting onto the car parking provision.

This design was reviewed in accordance with Design Guides, improvements were sought to place the Community Centre more towards the road to provide a greater sense of place and improve the street scene.

By re-orientating the site and build form, the car park can be moved to the side of the Community Centre, limiting the visual impact from the road.

Safe pedestrian access can then be placed at the front of the building, wrapping around the side to a new side entranceway which overlooks the carparking for natural surveillance.

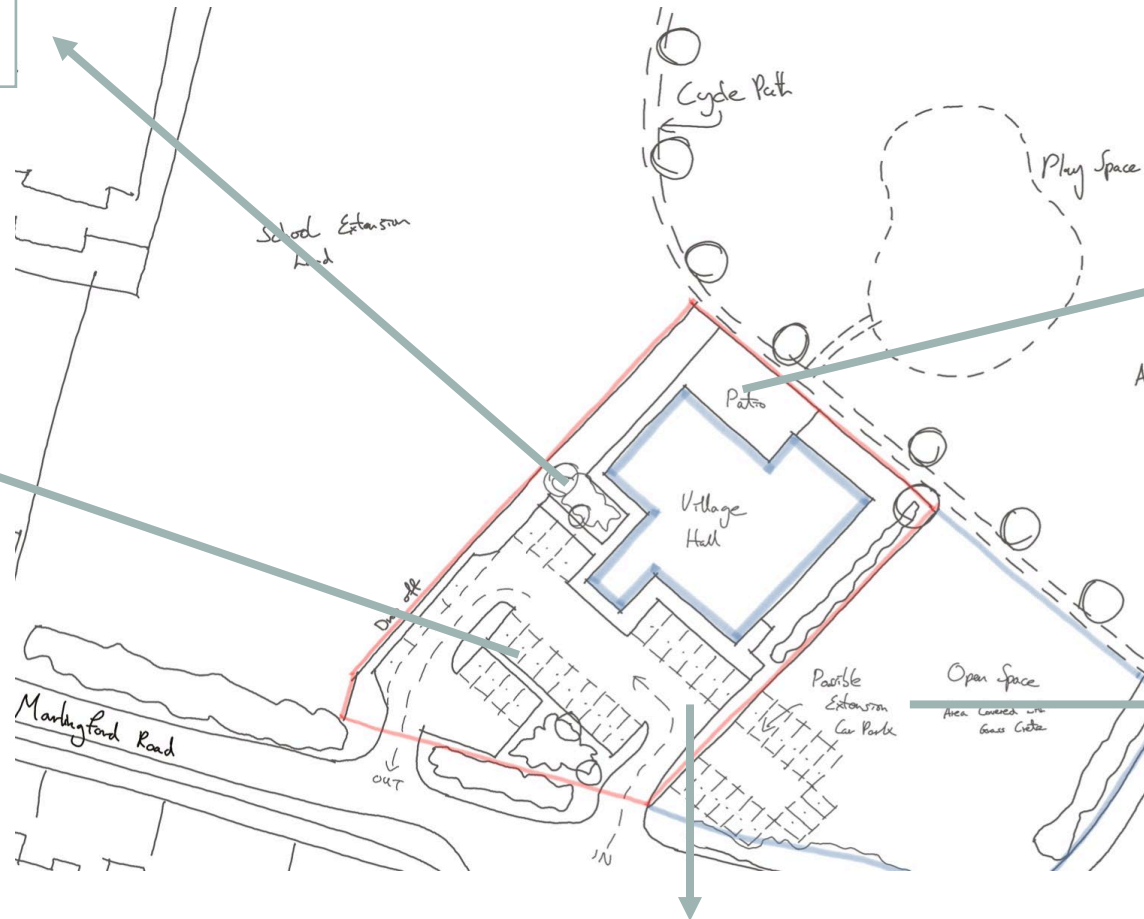


Early-stage initial site plan

EVALUATING THE INITIAL SITE PLAN

Landscaping scheme to be undertaken to enhance the natural area and limit visual impacts of the build form.

Carpark fronting onto Marlingford Road provides easy and safe turn off however, impacts the streetscene and opportunity to improve the architectural aesthetic along Marlingford Road.



Shared patio facility promotes social interaction with residents but proximity to school extension land could be improved.

Open space allocation as required for the Persimmon Homes masterplan referenced in Section 2.

Parking allocations provided according to feedback from the Emerging Local Plan but increased cycle and promotion of pedestrian access to be considered.

INITIAL DESIGN

The initial design was completed with sustainability at the forefront, opting for a natural and sustainable approach to materiality and design.



INITIAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Overhang to assist with Passive heating and cooling

Sustainably sourced Standing Seam roof materials

Sustainably sourced timber cladding

Modern, energy efficient, Windows & Doors

Natural surroundings with incorporated landscape design

Glazing placement to ensure benefits of natural lighting are optimized. Rooflight placement above main hall for ventilation to allow passive cooling



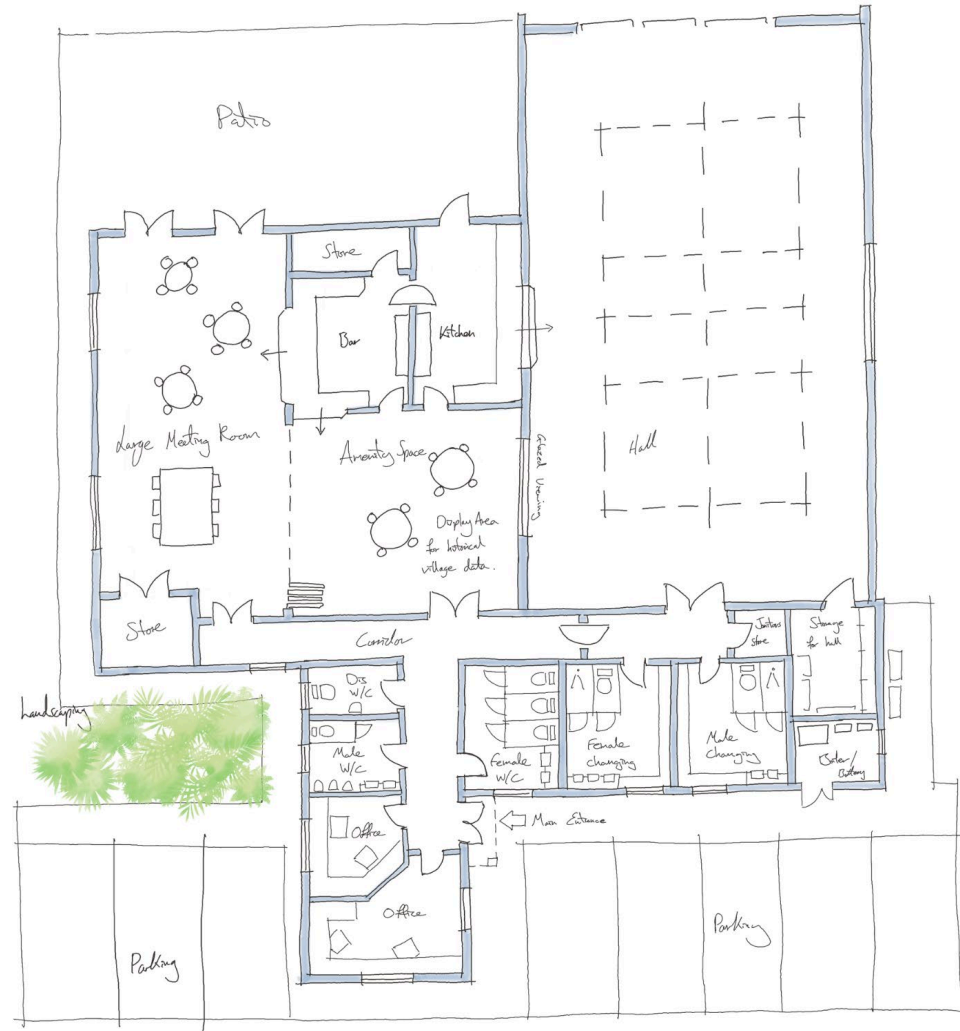
FACILITIES

The incorporation of multiple facilities offers encouragement and support for a healthy lifestyle, promoting wellbeing to residents.

The community centre consists of:

- 2x Office spaces
- Kitchen facility
- Bar facility with associated store
- Amenity Space with access to the Kitchen and Bar Large meeting room space
- Sports Hall
- Disabled toilet and wet room facilities
- Women's and Men's changing facilities
- Male and Female toilet facilities
- Janitor Storage
- Plant room accessible from the external
- Electric car charging ports

The initial layout sought to include all facilities in a user-friendly layout. The design was then reviewed according to Part M building regulation accessibility to proceed to a final design.



Initial layout plan prior to further development

PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

The site design has used the existing pedestrian access network, shown on the sketch on the right.

Access on the roadside closest to the community centre from the south has been deemed as a constraint due to not currently being present. A resolution has been sought to ensure safe pedestrian access from both the north and south of the community centre.

A footpath to the south of the site and leading to the community centre has been proposed as part of Persimmon Homes development to the land adjacent to the community centre. The proposed footpath will provide safe access from the south of the site that is currently not available.





‘The character of a development comes from a combination of different design decisions relating to the layout, the design of buildings and the landscape, and includes existing features as well as new purpose designed ones.’

South Norfolk Place-Making
Guide, Supplementary Planning

Section 8

Final Design & Site Layout

SITE PLAN

Following the initial site plan shown in Section 7 of this Design and Access Statement, the site has been re-orientated following the review. The site boundary has also been amended in line with Persimmon Homes latest allocation plan.

The new site plan offers bin storage within easy walkable access to the Kitchen facilities, this has been discussed with Sport England representatives to ensure appropriate placement.

The side elevation has been re-orientated to face onto Marlingford Road, this creates a greater sense of place, with uninterrupted and simplistic design, creating a design conscious street scene.

The final design looks to incorporate information following the architectural and local assessments, design guide reviews and design principles identified in the Initial Design stage.



SITE PLAN

Office and entranceway section placed protruding towards Marlingford Road, providing interest in the street scene and frontage onto Marlingford Road.

Open space allocation according to the Persimmon Homes application as referenced in Section 2 of this Design and Access Statement.



Visitor cycle storage provided. Storage placed on the Marlingford Road-side for natural security and to emphasise to passers-by access via cycling instead of vehicle.

Carparking included to the side of the community centre to limit its fronting onto Marlingford Road but still providing easy visual access for safety of users.

Disabled carparking spaces provided close to the entranceway of the proposed Community Centre.

FINAL DESIGN

The Final design of Easton Community Centre incorporates advices from the Design Guides reviewed in this Design and Access Statement, Accessibility regulations with Part M compliance, in addition to the architectural and local assessments completed.

The proposed plans and elevations offer multiple benefits based on the overall design. These key design principles will provide the community with a centre that is usable, has a long building life and provides an anchor and focal point to the population of Easton.

The design follows initial ideas to provide a build that utilises sustainable materials and heating solutions. The final design will incorporate solar panels, air source heat pump with individual room controls and restrictors on water fixtures to limit water usage per person.



Proposed Elevations

KEY DESIGN PRINCIPLES

High level window placement to allow benefits of natural lighting.

Standing Seam roofing material for longevity and to maximise building life.

Modern window and doors to promote energy efficiency and compliment overall design.

(Marlingford Road elevation)

Sport England Deign Guide compliant window placements to allow natural light and ventilation whilst maintaining privacy to certain areas.

Natural surveillance onto Marlingford Road.

North-West Elevation

Change in height offers a differentiating build form, creating an architecturally pleasing aesthetic and improving the street scene. Additional height allows internal space changes to suit Sport England Design Guide for required facilities.

Clear identity of building on the street side to create an anchor point in the community.

(Facing Car Park)

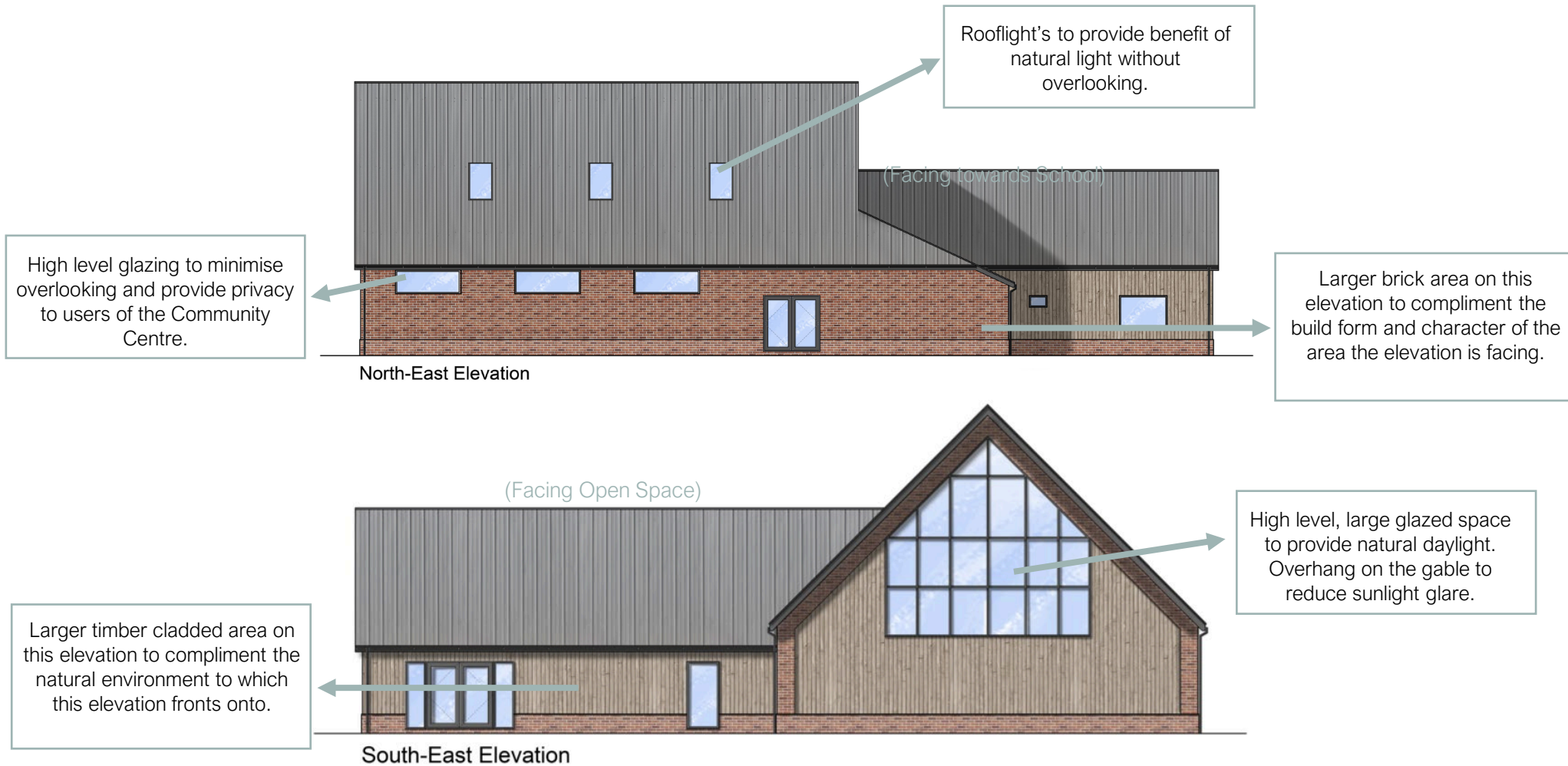
Natural surveillance for carpark with overlooking during facility use.

Brick material chosen to blend with existing developments according to local architectural context.

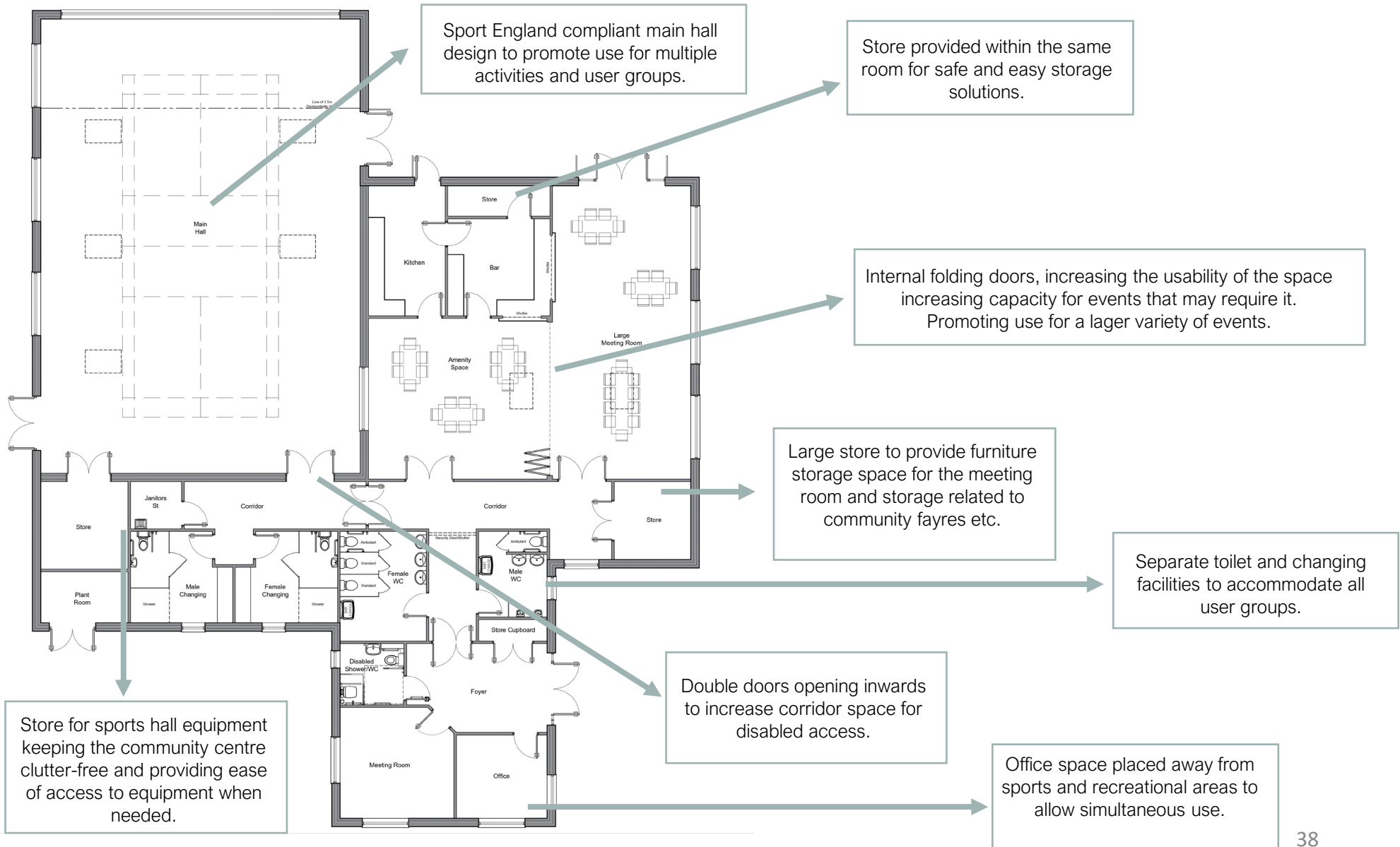
South-West Elevation

Sustainably sourced timber cladding – providing a design identity to the centre but offers a complimentary elevation against natural surroundings, breaking up the brick build form.

KEY DESIGN PRINCIPLES



FINAL LAYOUT

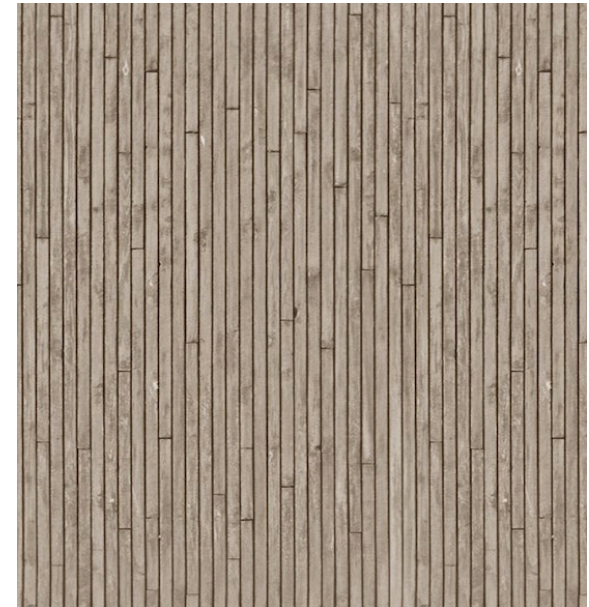
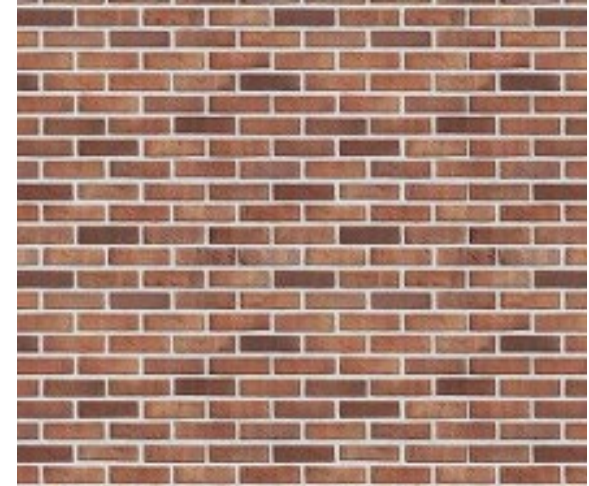



MATERIALS

Following assessment of the local vernacular and materiality of other community facilities, materials have been carefully chosen. Materials have been chosen to reflect the identity of similar builds, whilst maintaining a clear and unique design approach which helps to promote a sense of place and local ownership with the residents of Easton.

Materials chosen for use on the external facade:

- Timber Cladding
- Red-Multi brick
- Anthracite Grey windows and doors
- Grey Standing Seam roofing





‘Good architecture is well ordered. There are many different ways of ordering the design of a building and different architectural traditions are based on different approaches. Any of these can result in well-designed buildings that are appealing to look at.’

South Norfolk Place-Making Guide,
Supplementary Planning

VISUALISATION




VISUALISATION



VISUALISATION





‘It is important that a design solution is reached that **positively responds to the character of the site and its surroundings** based on the site analysis and the Place-Making and Design principles.’

South Norfolk Place-Making
Guide, Supplementary Planning

Section 10

Conclusion

CONCLUSION

Reviewing the Local Plans and Design Guidance for Community facilities in Easton, it is clear there is a need for additional, multi-use, facilities that can be accessed by both new and existing residents. Taking into consideration the existing pockets of development and the new Persimmon Homes development, the centre provides an anchor point to integrate the two areas seamlessly.

With careful design consideration to each elevational treatment, careful material and roofscape choices provide a break in the street scene whilst providing a complimentary elevational design dependent on the way in which it faces and the characteristics of the sites in which the community centre will act as a backdrop to.

The build of the Community Centre will incorporate sustainable options, limiting any impact to environmental factors common with new construction.

Providing a catalogue of uses, the careful use of internal space and adhering Sport England Community Hall Design guidance, the centre offers an accessible social space for all in Easton's community.

Careful consideration has been given to resident's concerns raised during consultation of the emerging Local Plan, providing carparking solutions for the users of the new facility. Increased cycle storage and emphasis on using the new pedestrian access, provided during the new Persimmon Homes development scheme, the proposed design and cycle storage areas helps to promote a reduction in car travel.

In conclusion, the design provides great representation for the future of Easton, through conscious material choices, build form, landscaping and increased amenity space for local resident use. Whilst limiting impact caused by any constraints, the opportunities provided by the new Community Centre will ensure

Easton continues to be a great place to live, through architectural character, community spirit and enhanced facilities, creating a sense of place.



END OF DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

September 2021