



Hurst Green Strategic Masterplan

September 2021

Hurst Green Strategic Masterplan

The assessment of Hurst Green character areas and analysis of potential development sites gave an in depth understanding of potential opportunities for improvements within Hurst Green Parish and highlighted existing constraints and challenges.

Upon a consultation and analysis of the findings with the Hurst Green Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group a Strategic Village Masterplan was developed addressing the key opportunities for the village and aiming to mitigate the key issues.

The Strategic Masterplan proposes improvements on three levels;

- connectivity improvements beyond the parish boundary,
- improvements within Hurst Green village, and,
- potential improvements around the identified village hub on Station Road.

It responds to and addresses the findings of the following studies;

The key role of the Strategic Masterplan for Hurst Green Village is to strengthen the objectives of the **Hurst Green 2030 Vision informing the Neighbourhood Plan**.

The key objectives of **Hurst Green 2030 Vision** identified following feedback from the resident surveys and from the public engagement events are as follows;

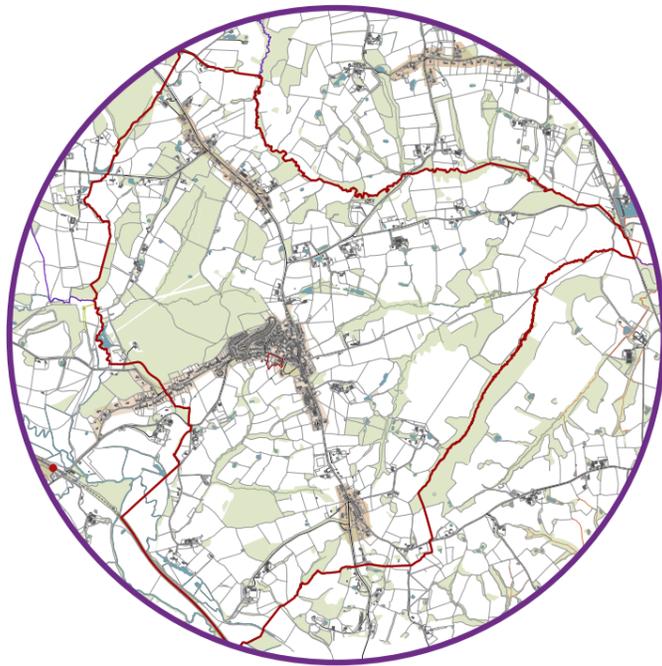
- 1) *Protect against inappropriate and speculative development and to provide guidance and greater influence over how Hurst Green should be developed in the future.*
- 2) *Improve public safety and reduce the harmful impact of road traffic, while providing sufficient parking for the community.*
- 3) *Develop local planning policies for Hurst Green to which development proposals should adhere.*
- 4) *Create an environment that encourages residents to live active, social, meaningful lives that promote good health and well-being.*

- 5) *Bring forward action on facilities and improvements, which are needed by the village of Hurst Green; and the hamlets of Silver Hill and Swiftsden.*
- 6) *Improve the visual appearance and overall perception of Hurst Green as a place where people want to live, work and visit.*
- 7) *Enhance our existing, and create new, open green spaces and improve access to the countryside.*
- 8) *Increase business, retail and tourism opportunities to encourage local employment, and grow the local economy.*
- 9) *Conserve and enhance the built and historic environment and improve the general street scene around the parish.*
[www.https://hurstgreen2030.uk/the-vision/](https://hurstgreen2030.uk/the-vision/)

The Hurst Green Masterplan provides a framework for;

- connectivity improvements beyond the boundary of the Parish,
- pedestrian environment and connectivity improvements in Hurst Green village,
- public open space & connectivity with wider landscape improvements, supported by; new sustainable development and delivery of 75 new dwellings within Hurst Green Parish,
- desing of specific interventions within the identified Village Hub on Station Road enhancing attractiveness of the village and providing infrastructure strengthening communal links within the Parish.

Figure 1 A Strategic Masterplan for Hurst Green



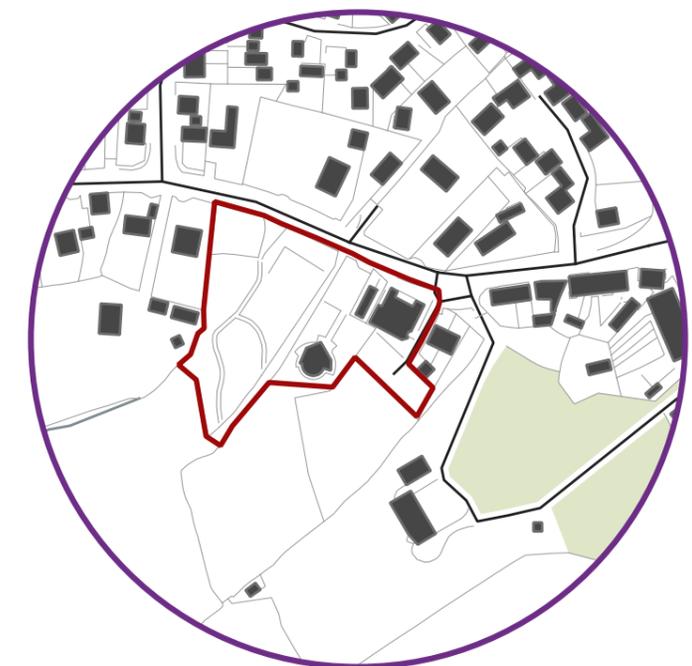
1. Parish and Beyond

Hurst Green Strategic Masterplan identifies opportunities to improve existing network of PRowS to better connect settlements within the Parish and improves pedestrian connectivity beyond the Parish boundary.



2. Hurst Green Village

Masterplan proposes connectivity improvements to create a network of safe routes linking potential development opportunities in Hurst Green with key destinations in the village and the High Weald.



3. Village Hub

Masterplan identifies the area comprising of Hurst Green Park, the Village Hall and the former post office building on Station Road as potential 'Village Hub' and it proposes local improvements.

Figure 2 Hurst Green Strategic Masterplan - Proposed Connections.

1. Connecting beyond the parish

Masterplan Objectives:

- Create environment that encourages walking, cycling and low carbon transport.
- Hurst Green Parish benefits from an extensive network of public rights of way. The quality and legibility of these routes vary. There is an opportunity to strengthen and improve this network and introduce cycle ways where feasible to better connect Hurst Green with the key destinations and neighbouring villages including; Etchingam and the railway station, Swiftsden, Hawkhurst, Silver Hill and Robertsbridge.

Key:-

-  Service Villages
-  Railway Station

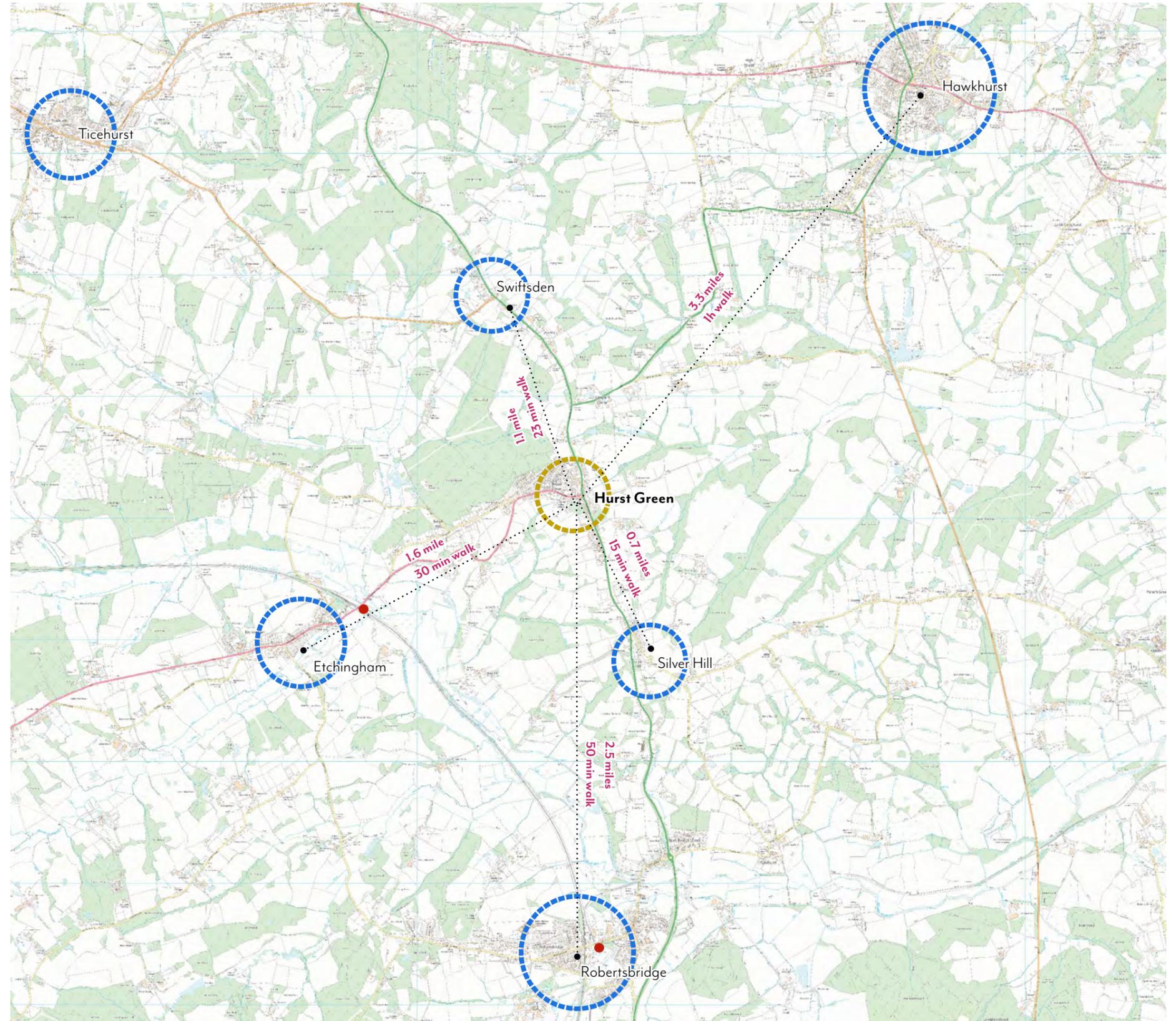
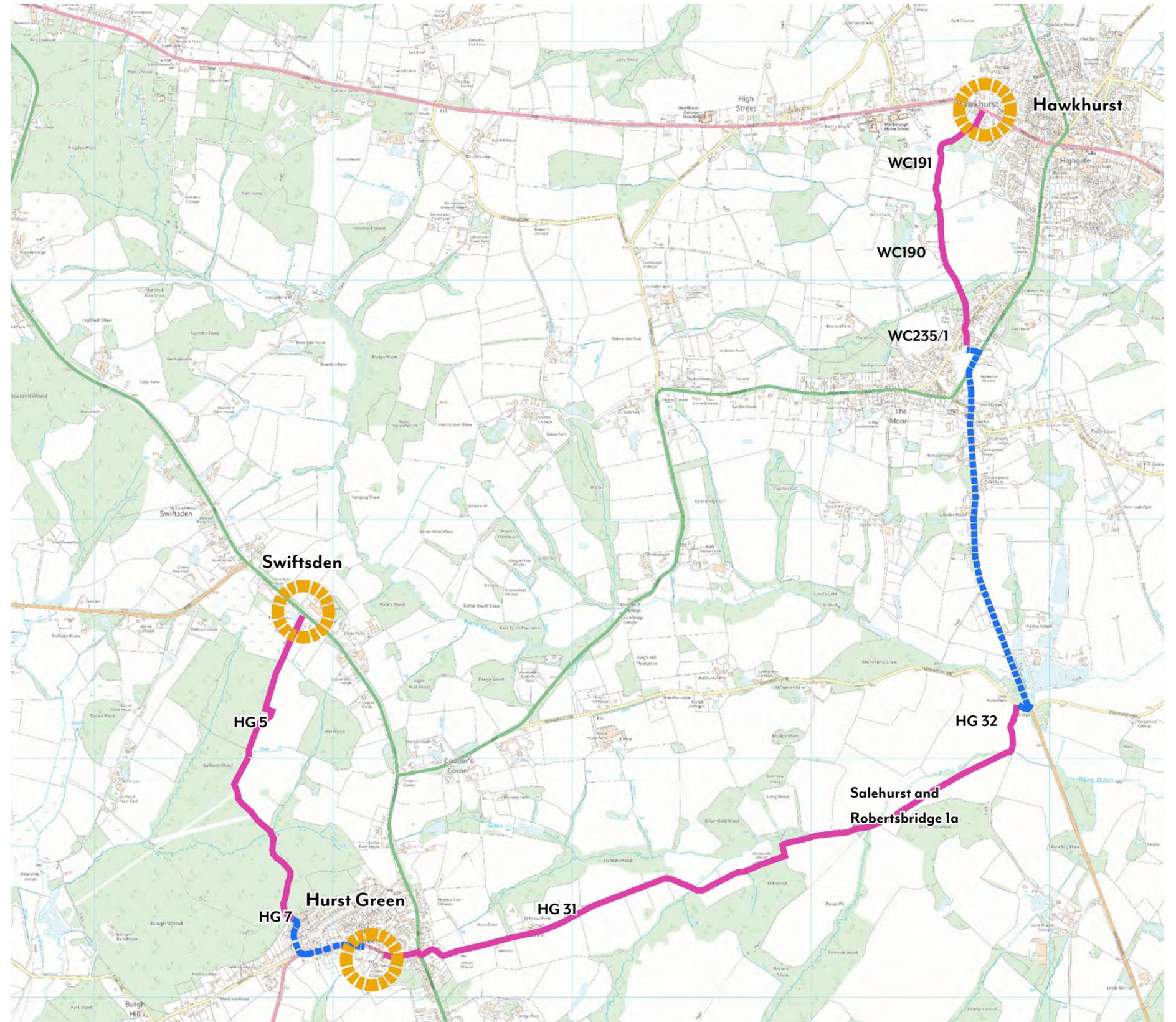


Figure 3 Potential Connections - North

Potential Improved Connections to Hawkhurst and Swiftsden



Key:-

-  Start and end point
-  Railway Station
-  Existing PRoW
-  Improved connection along existing road

Figure 4 Potential Connections - South

Potential Improved Connections to Robertsbridge, Etchingham and Silver Hill

- Key:-
-  Start and end point
 -  A challenging point; potential bridge over the A265
 -  A challenging point; potential crossing over the A21
 -  Railway Station
 -  Existing PRow
 -  Improved connection along existing road
 -  Potential new connection
 -  Potential new connection with Etchingham Station along the A265 ?

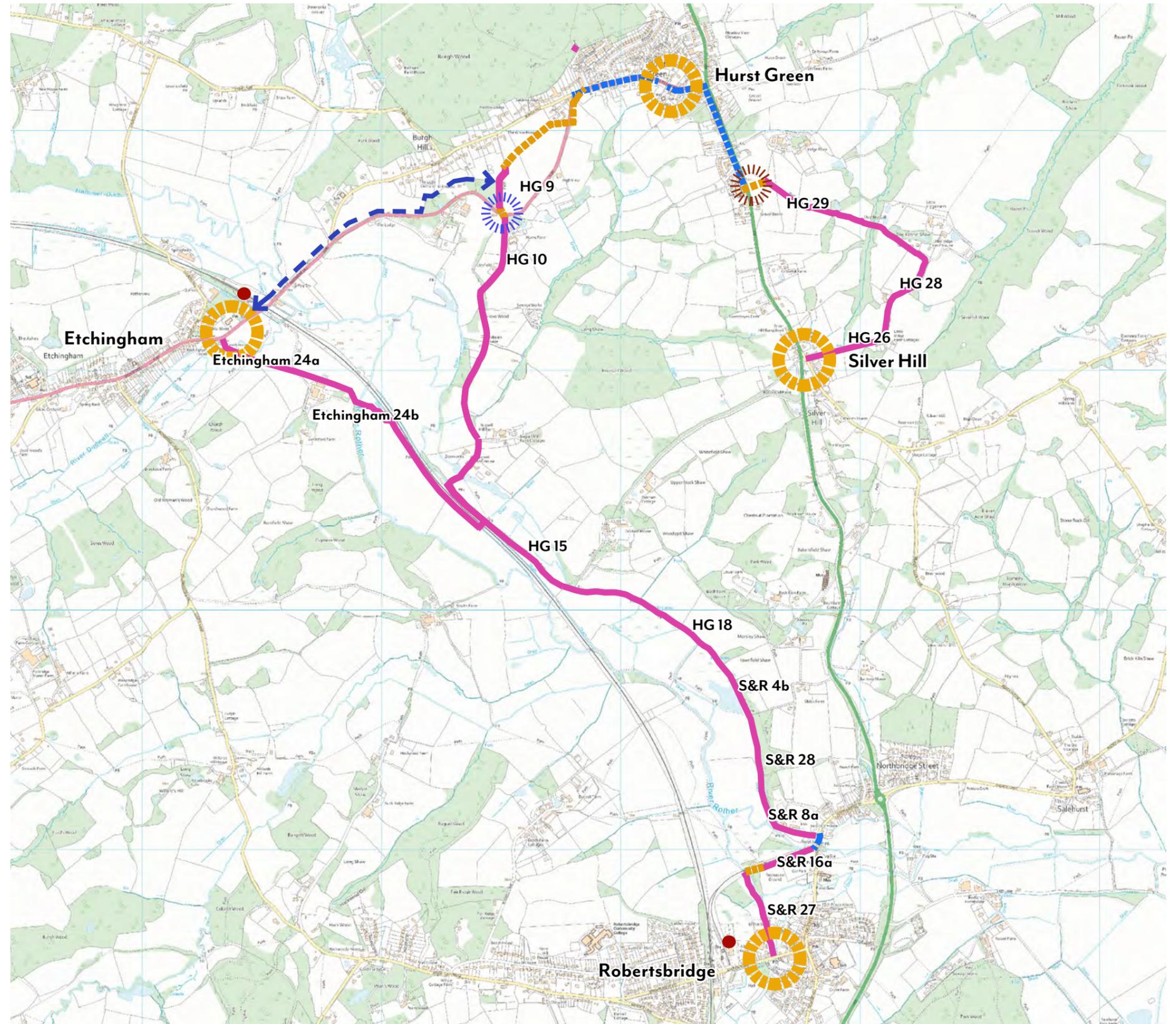


Figure 5 Connectivity and Permeability

2. Connectivity within the village

Masterplan Objectives:

- Create environment that encourages walking, cycling and low carbon transport.
- Improve pedestrian connectivity between various key village destinations; the village hub, the school and the church.
- Create safe walking routes.
- Reduce the impact of road traffic and dominance of the A21.
- Improve public realm around the parish.

1. Create a safe path connecting the village hub with the school (a long term opportunity),
2. Establish a connection between Drewetts field sports ground and the proposed Village Green,
3. Create a connection between potential development sites and Drewetts field sports ground,
4. Potential new crossing - North,
5. Potential new crossing - South,
6. Improved connectivity with Burgh Wood,
7. Potential green space/ connectivity node,
8. Potential small viewing space on new pedestrian link,

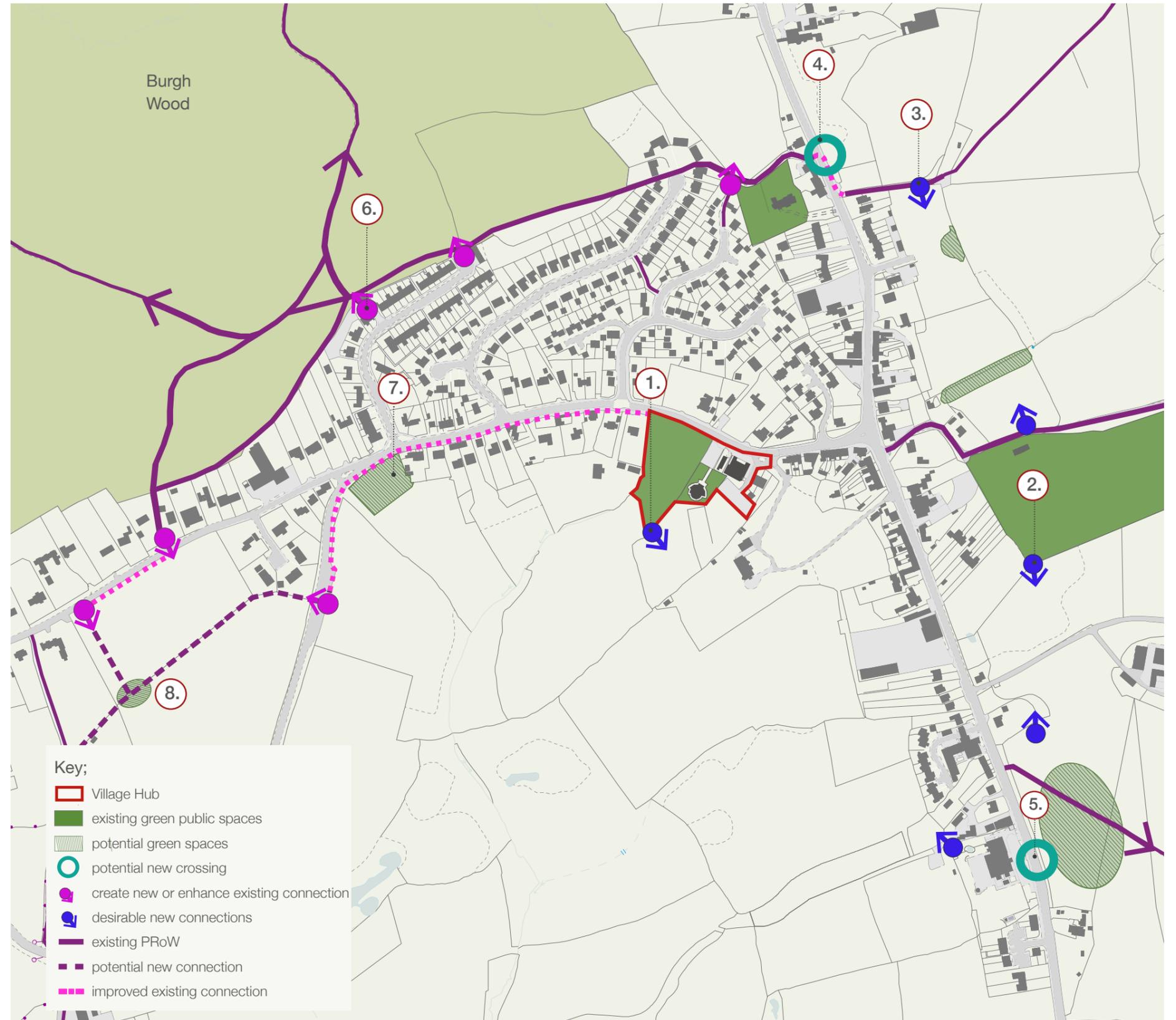


Figure 6 Space and Landscape

3. Open space & landscape enhancements

Masterplan Objectives:

- Enhance existing, and create new, open green spaces.
- Protect and promote natural environment and the High Weald AONB.
- Connect to wider landscape; improve access to the countryside and green spaces, for the benefit of people and wildlife.
- Create an environment that encourages residents to live active, social, lives that promote good health and well-being.

1. Hurst Green Park in the Village Hub
2. Churchyard,
3. Approved 'peace garden'
4. Potential green space along the 'ditch',
5. Improved sports and leisure facilities at Drewetts field sports ground,
6. Potential for a new green amity space,
7. Potential Opportunities for green space,
8. Ancient Woodland as the main nature asset,
9. Potential small viewing space on new pedestrian link,
10. Promotion of allotment gardens at the village edge.



Figure 8 The Village Hub

5. Building a strong Village Hub

Masterplan Objectives:

- A strong village centre to support businesses and community of Hurst Green.
- Improve visual appearance and overall perception of the village as a place where people want to live, work and a destination that they want to visit.
- Provide additional car parking spaces
- Enhance synergies with the church and Drewetts field sports ground

1. Hurst Green Village Hub,

2. Opportunity to provide an improved village shop/ cafe, improve public realm, and additional car parking spaces,

3. Potential public realm improvements,

4. Potential for improved public green space,

5. Future opportunity to demolish existing and create a good quality 2-storeys building on the junction.

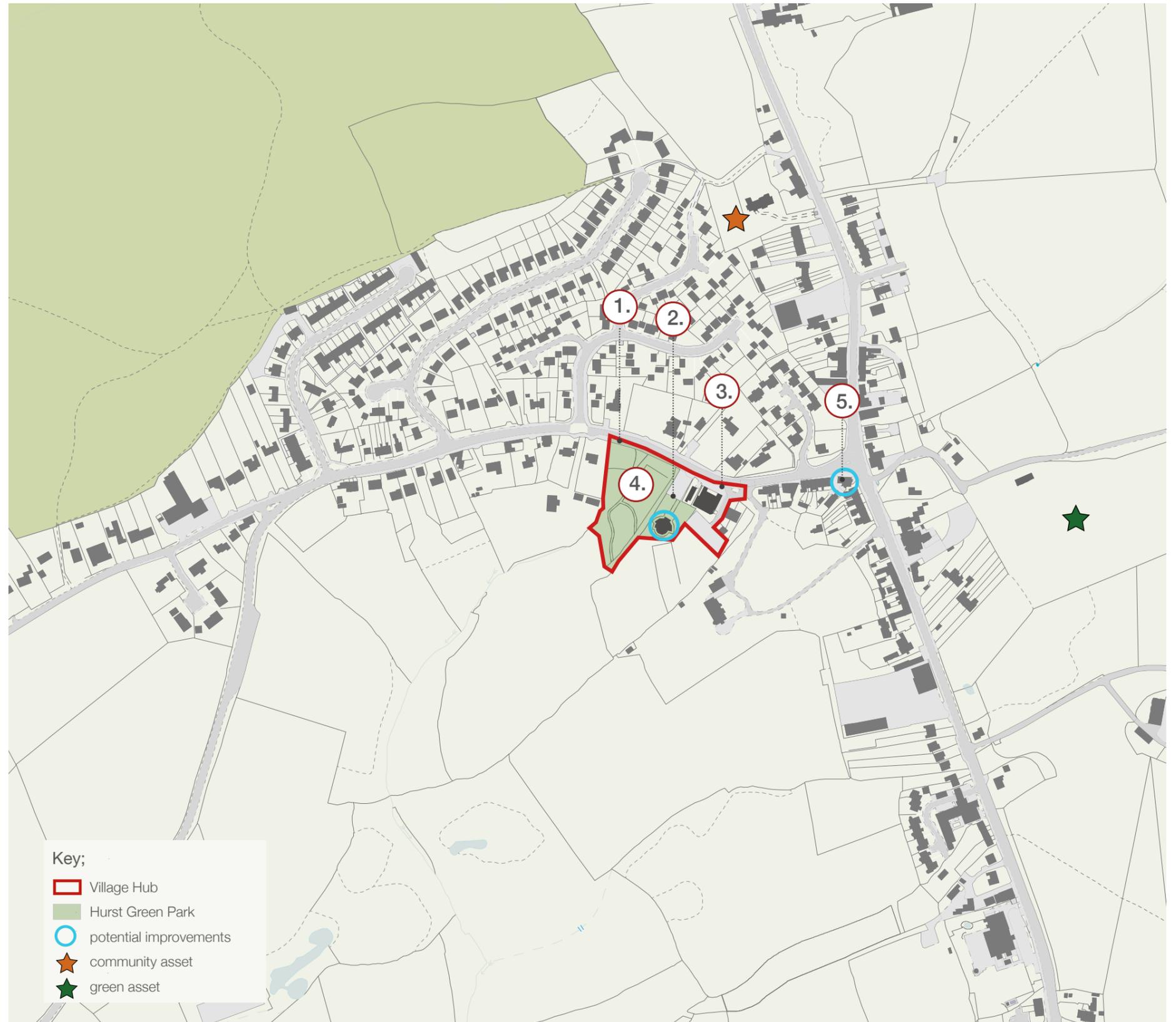


Figure 9 Village Hub_ potential improvements

1. Improved public realm and new sitting area,
2. Redesign access to car park from street to at least double the number of car parking spaces,
3. Improved former community shop and cafe pavilion with a new cafe facing the park,
4. New path in the park,
5. A 'container business incubator' space to house e.g bicycle surgery,
6. Potential access from the Village Hall Car Park?
7. Potential public realm improvements e.g new surface treatment and planters, in front of the Village Hall
8. Bicycle parking,
9. Potential future improvements to the existing poor quality former post office building.
10. New playground
11. Potential for landscape 'amphitheatre' seating in Hurst Green Park.
12. Improved Recycling Area



Potential Improvements within the Strategic Village Masterplan area

Streets and Spaces

- Public realm improvements throughout the village should recognise and enhance the special character of the village and the character areas and adopt an appropriate style of street and footpath design that incorporates landscaping typical for the High Weald.
- Any greening initiatives aiming at improving appearance of the village, utilising street verges and green amenity spaces should champion indigenous species and refer to the *High Weald Housing Design Guide section DG10*.

Connectivity and Movement

- A network of route-ways and pathways within the Parish should be enhanced and extended wherever possible in line with the Strategic Masterplan for Hurst Green.
- Opportunities should be taken to provide new and support existing pedestrian and cycle connections between the neighbouring settlements.
- Way finding strategy bespoke for Hurst Green could be implemented to enhance existing PRow connections linking village with wider landscape and in particular with the Ancient Woodland.

Heritage

- Any development or refurbishment in Hurst Green should aim to use traditional building materials typical for the High Weald and the Parish.

Landscaping & Green Spaces

- Rural plant species and tree planting are distinctive features of Hurst Green and should be encouraged wherever possible.
- Green spaces in the public realm should be designed to be multi-functional to cater for needs of local community with the emphasis on the Hurst Green Park which should be promoted as the key and most active green amenity in Hurst Green strengthening the objectives of the Strategic Masterplan to create the Village Hub on Station Road.
- Road verges within residential areas could be progressively enhanced by appropriate new tree species, hedgerows, flower beds or even allotments.
- Potential greening opportunities around residential streets and courts especially within Great Oak and Environs Character Area and Coronation Gardens & Ridgeway could be considered to ; enhance attractiveness of the village, enhance existing links with wider landscape and the Ancient Woodland and strengthen communal links in general.
- Trees and rural shrubs should frame views and create a transition between the village and open countryside.
- The new potential open spaces identified in the Strategic Masterplan should be named in consultation with the local community.

Parking

- Improvements to street verges should be implemented to discourage antisocial parking.
- Where possible existing parking provision around the village to be rationalised.

The Village Hub

- Opportunities to create a local hub on Station Road should take full account of the constraints of the local context (scale, massing and materials) and establish positive relationships to both the existing village and the landscape
- The local hub should incorporate mixed uses as e.g. a flexible container start up space and Farmer's Market together with the use of active frontage and adjacency to meaningful public realm and green open spaces (Hurst Green Park improvements) to promote vibrancy;

Potential Improvements outside of the village

New and Existing Connections

- Connectivity between local villages and enhancement to the existing network of PRowWs to be promoted to strengthen the objectives of the HG Strategic Masterplan .
- Improvements of connectivity and strengthening of the existing wide network of PRowWs throughout the parish should be encouraged to create environment that encourages residents to live active, social lives and promote good health, well-being and sustainable modes of transport.
- A wide stretching wayfinding strategy should be designed in order to better connect Hurst Green with landscape features special landscape destinations and villages outside of the parish boundary.

Promotion of the High Weald

- Landscape destinations and special points outside of the development boundary of Hurst Green should be identified to enhance attractiveness of the village and promote the special landscape character of the High Weald.
- Local attractive landscape spots including viewing spots offering spectacular views towards the AONB should be enhanced in line with the High Weald Housing Design Guide.
- There is an opportunity to create a local guide or an app providing residents and visitors with information about a local network of walking and cycling routes, heritage and special local attractions.

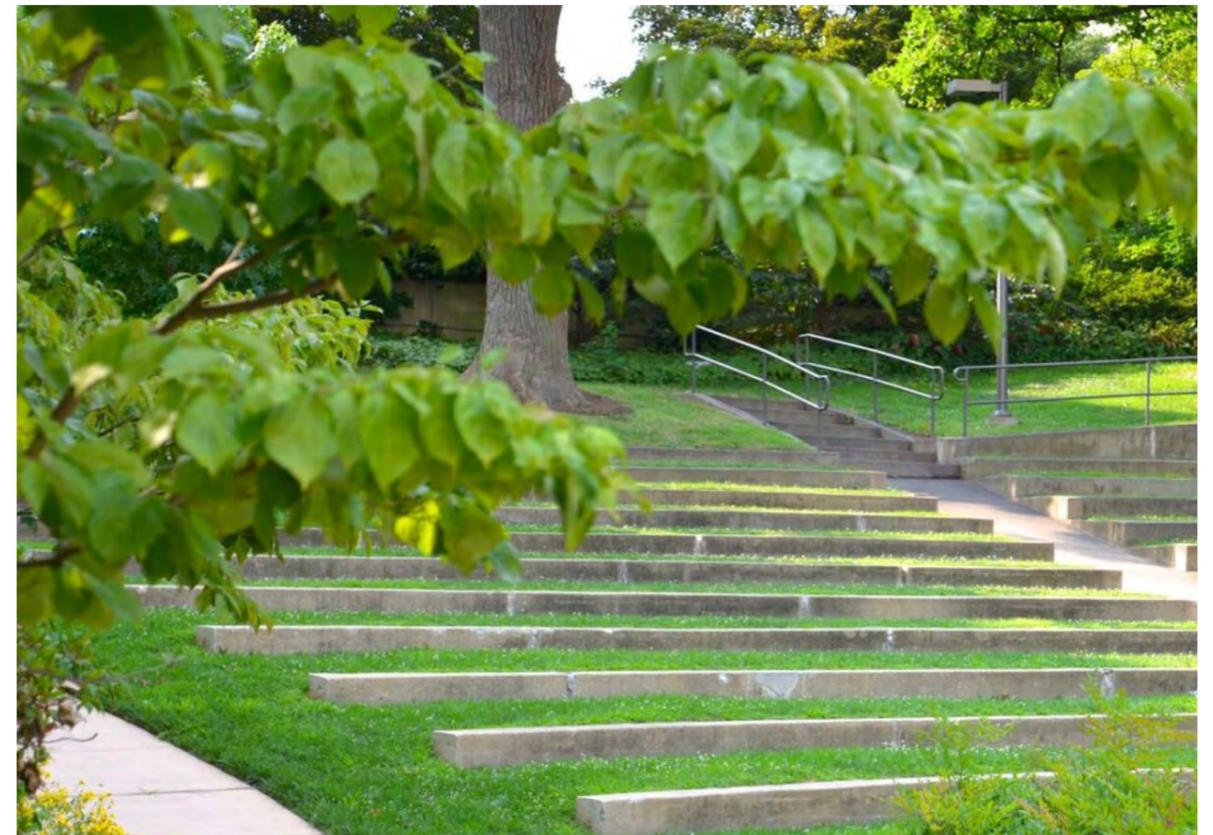
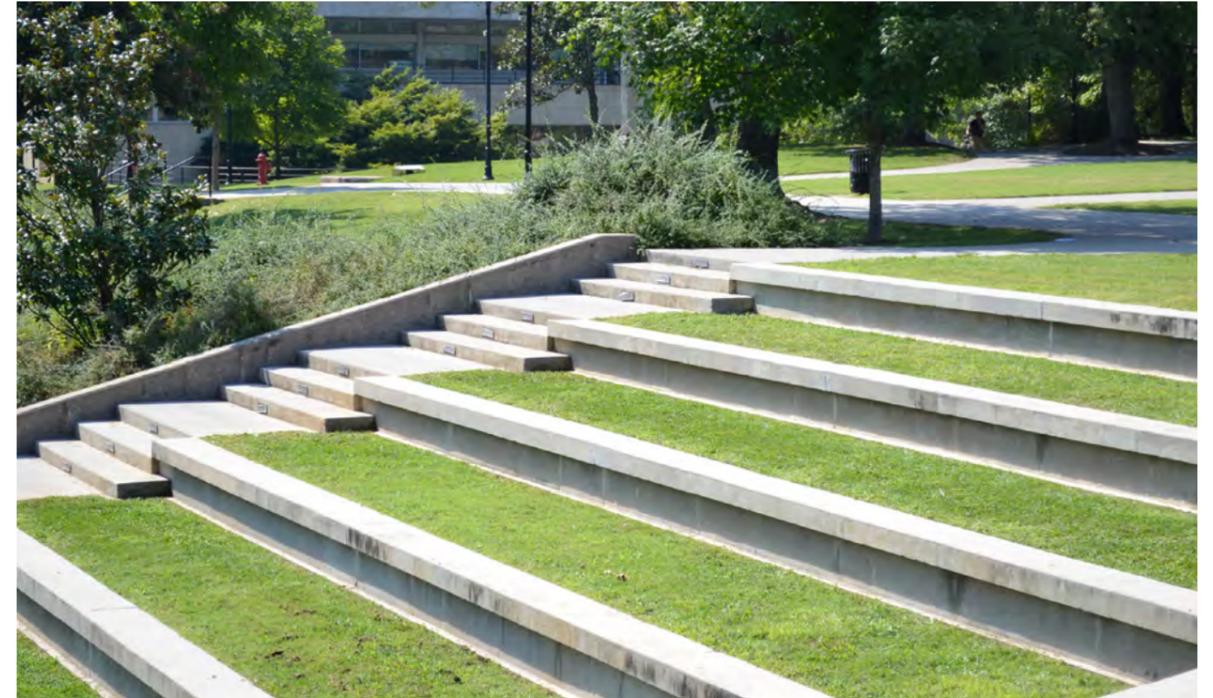
Wildlife and indigenous planting

- The rich diversity of wildlife and High Weald native planting species including wild-flowers should be enhanced and promoted. There are opportunities to create 'educational ' sites and educational signage promoting the local habitat and the High Weald.

Surfaces

- The rich diversity of wildlife and High Weald-native planting species including wild-flowers should be enhanced and promoted. There are opportunities to create 'educational ' sites and educational signage promoting the local habitat and the High Weald.

Precedent Images



Lowlands Recreation Ground; a landscape pavilion and a performance stage in Harrow by Adams & Sutherland.

Examples of 'amphitheatre like' steps in landscape



Examples of a container pavilions providing various uses.



Potential Activities in Hurst Green - local farmers market



Potential Improvements in Hurst Green - vegetable allotments and flower beds



Examples of benches in landscape



Examples of communal recycling facilities

Precedent Images



Long-distance rural cycle route, Maastricht-Gulpen Cycle Route



Silkin Way



Sutcliffe Park, London



'Rieselfeld, Freiburg:

Maastricht-Gulpen Cycle Route, Holland Long-distance rural cycle route between numerous rural settlements. A dedicated cycle lane and footpath has been provided within the field edges and separated from traditional yet constrained vehicular roads. This allows the maintenance of hedgerows and mature trees while providing a high-quality cycle route.

Silkin Way, Telford: An example of a network of existing footpaths/bridleways enhanced to cycling standards and providing increased amenity and sustainable connectivity between settlements.

Sutcliffe Park, London: Landscape improvements combine public access with environmental conservation and enhancement of biodiversity. The use of walkways provide high-quality leisure routes near sensitive habitats, increasing access and awareness.

Rieselfeld, Freiburg: An example of how a multi-functional green open space can combine flood attenuation and SuDS within a well-designed landscape recreation space and bring quality and amenity to local communities while enhancing sustainability.

Wald. Berlin. Klima; Exhibition in the Forest;

The exhibition takes a stance of allowing people a contact with a (protected) natural habitat. The exhibition makes visitors sensible to the natural environment on an emotional level and also educates them about the abstract topic of climate change. This is achieved through spatial measures as well as through information communication in form of graphics and text.



Exhibition and viewing platforms in the forest



Examples of way finding and educational signage in forest.

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