

# 3. The Masterplan Framework: What will the village look like?

This section establishes the over-arching masterplan framework and the development principles that underpin the proposed approach to developing the Yeovil Urban Village Masterplan. This section also sets out the core elements of the Masterplan in terms of the public realm (streets and spaces strategy), indicative land use patterns, indicative building heights, character areas, and the urban design performance of the plan in terms of townscape and legibility. Additional design code guidance is provided in the Appendix on the creation of the total street environment which includes adjacent buildings (set back, boundary treatment etc.) and to a more limited extent on the nature of the key open spaces.

## 3.1 The Vision

Out of all the consultations and research, a clear and exciting proposition for the village emerged, which could be called Summerhouse Village, reflecting the names of both the adjoining road and hill, and also the ecological appeal of the development.

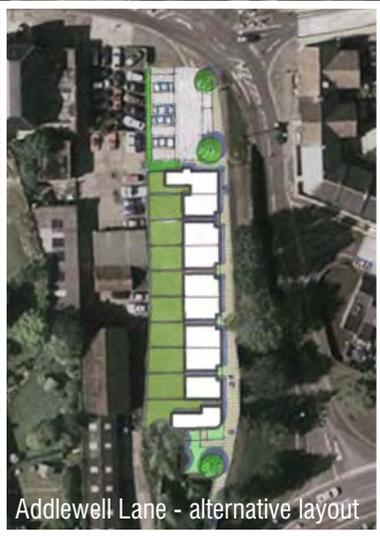
### The Masterplan vision is:

***An exemplary urban village for Yeovil – a distinctive and highly memorable experience with a high quality public realm commensurate with its role as a sustainable extension to the town centre offering the principal links to Summer House Hill.***

The urban village will fundamentally shift the character of this part of Yeovil from an underused 'backwater' disconnected from the Country Park to a vibrant, distinctive new urban quarter that acts as gateway to the countryside as well as providing new homes and improved job opportunities. Key features of the Masterplan include:

- A high quality physical environment, including an enhanced Dodham Brook and promenade, that is safe, clean, and easily accessible for pedestrians and other users.
- High quality new developments that will maximise the potential of underperforming and vacant sites.

- Strengthening of Yeovil's distinctive character, especially its relationship to adjoining landscape – a countryside town.
- A range of improvements to streets and spaces enhance its attractiveness for residents, businesses, workers, shoppers and other visitors, in the daytime and evenings.
- The opportunity to create a new, innovative and exciting development that will raise the profile of Yeovil, and act as exemplar in attracting people to live in urban areas in a more sustainable way.



Addlewell Lane - alternative layout



## 3.2 Defining the Urban Village Area

The Masterplan Core Area comprises of approximately 6.7 Hectares (gross site area) or 3.13 hectares (net site development area) and is situated on the southern edge of the town. Figure 3.2 illustrates the study area boundary. This has been defined to encompass key components of the area informed by the previous Yeovil Urban Development Framework (June 2005) and to include elements of the adjacent Country Park in consultation with SSDC. The area includes: sites to the north of South Street, the Stars Lane car park area including the Box Factory, the Vauxhall Garage site connecting to Dodham Brook, the site west of Addlewell Lane, Summer House Terrace and the former Ski Slope area. The area excludes The Gateway community church and the adjacent car showrooms to the south.

Existing development within the study area affected by the proposed plan includes: the Box Factory (vacant and currently on the market), the Vauxhall car showrooms, and three buildings fronting Stars Lane south of the former night club/Bingo (Harry's Bar, Star Kebabs and West Country Windows). The

importance of redeveloping these three latter buildings is to achieve:

- comprehensiveness of the overall scheme;
- direct visual and physical connection along the proposed diagonal spine leading to the Dodham Brook, Country Park and new Summer House Hill Gardens;
- improved building quality to the area (the three buildings in question are of poor-average architectural quality); and,
- efficiency of layout, where retention of these 3 structures would result in a compromised plan and reduced development area.

At present redevelopment of the car showrooms south and west of the Gateway church is not indicated, however this area can and should form a future phase of mixed residential and commercial development. This study recognises that for these later phases to happen a change in economic circumstances will be required, building on the shift in character of this part of the town through initial successes in developing the urban village.

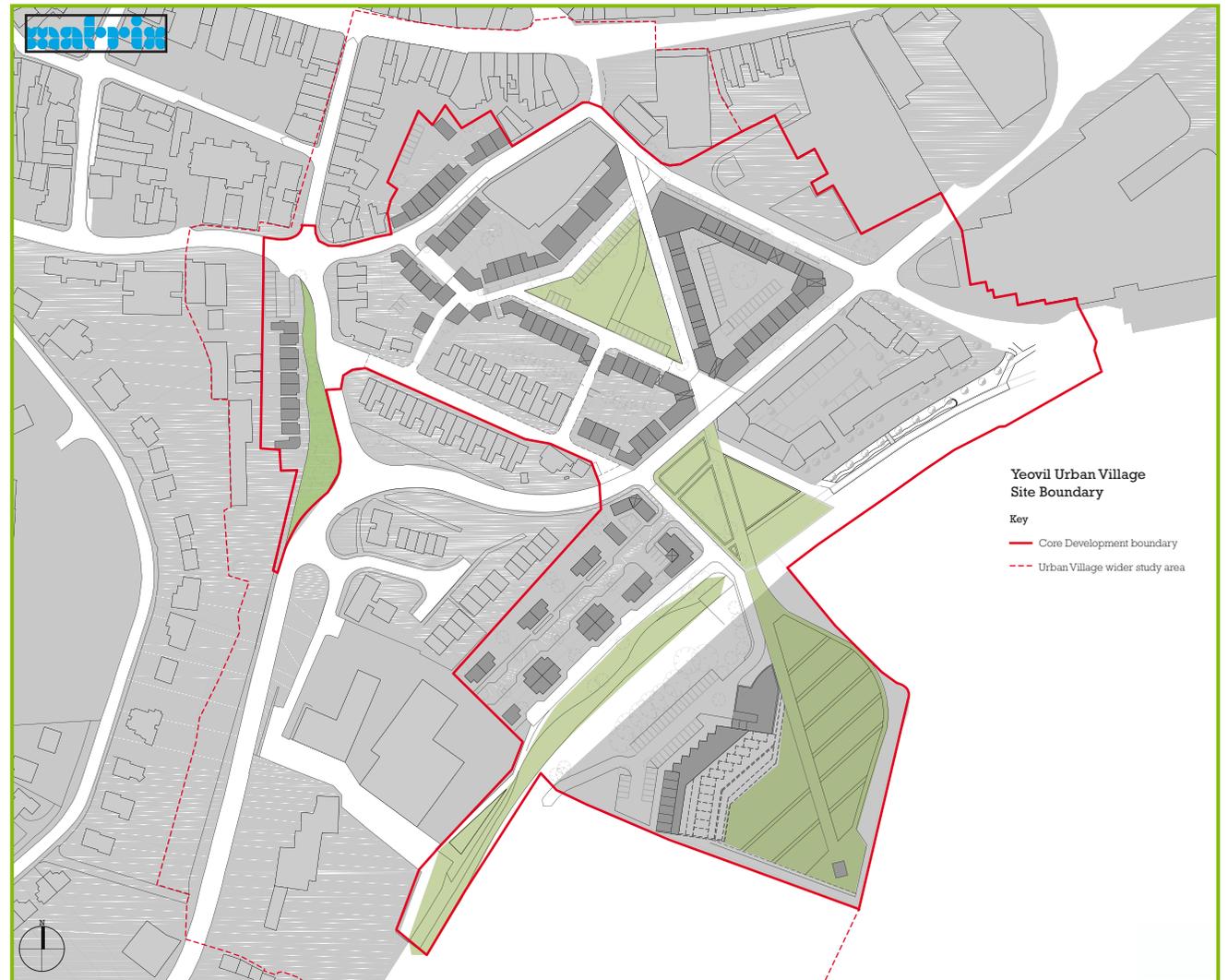


Figure 3.2 The Urban Village study area

### 3.3 The Urban Design Framework

Figure 3.3 describes the urban design performance of the proposed masterplan, conveyed through an Urban Design Framework. This concentrates on the key urban structuring principles, the skeleton that underpins the Masterplan proposals. The Framework establishes the over-arching requirement to improve:

- Circulation, particularly for pedestrians.
- The creation of a high quality public realm network (mainly streets and spaces) that has at its heart the creation of new green open spaces and quality pedestrian routes.
- Buildings, both existing (e.g. the Night Club) and new, reflecting the need to reinforce traditional street frontages and the need to sensitively place any potential leisure-related development on the Ski Slope site.

Each of these considered together creates a mutually reinforcing urban structure – with a network of open spaces, each acting as focal points for adjacent development, inter-linked via high quality pedestrian routes and ‘announced’ with landmark or key corner buildings.

A network of distinctive places (as defined character areas - see later section) is proposed to make the area more ‘legible’ (legibility describes how one finds their way around an area). At present, the surface car parking and over engineered highways/junctions provide major barriers to movement

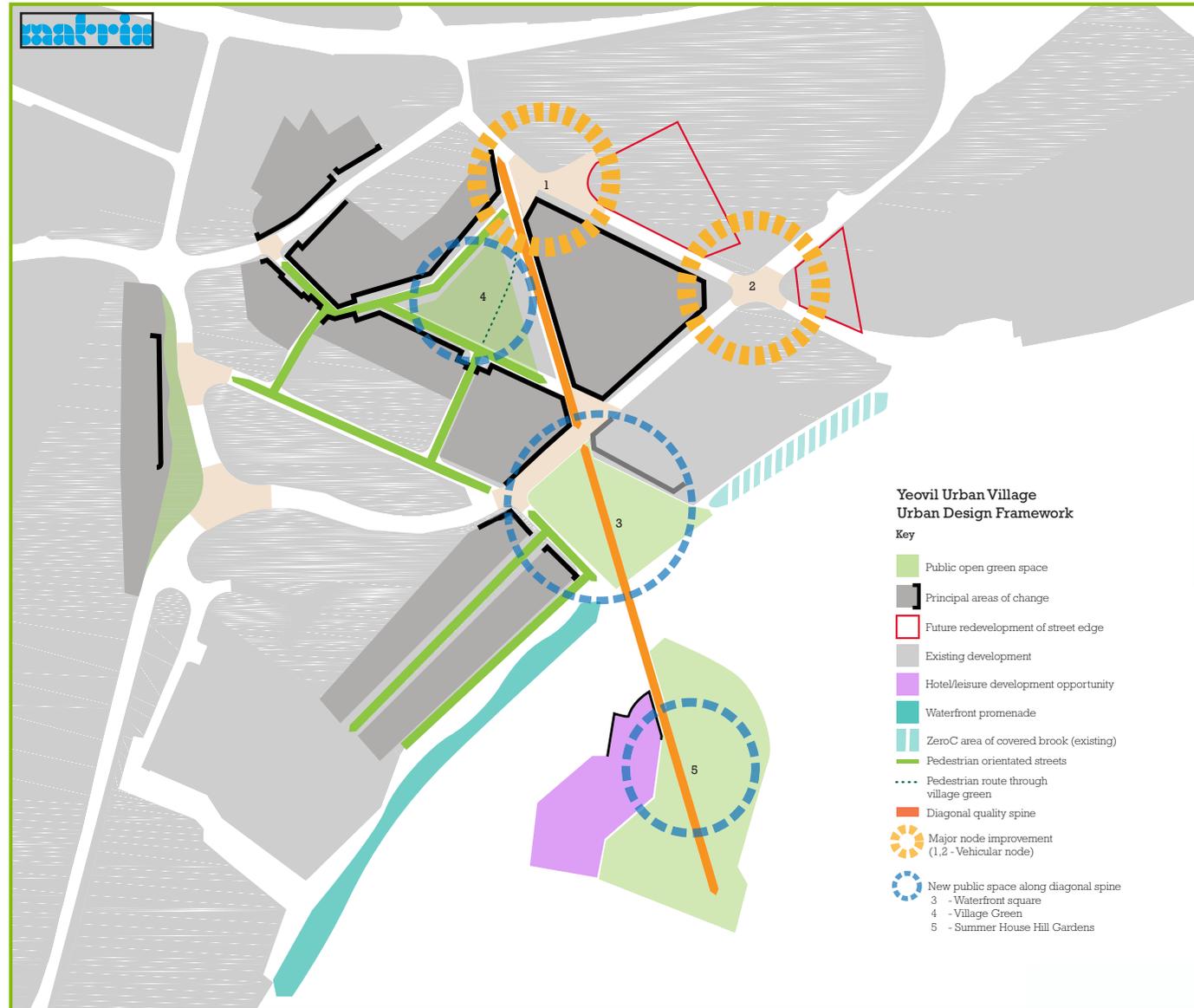


Figure 3.3 A clear strategy provides a sequence of linked green spaces between the Country Park and the town centre

between the town centre and Country Park / Dodham Brook and areas to the south west of the town. The Masterplan proposes ways to overcome these barriers to pedestrian movement, to make it much more pleasant and convenient to stroll from one place to another.

### 3.3.1 Building Frontages

Figure 3.4 (Legibility) indicates the underlying block structure to the masterplan and illustrates both existing and proposed building frontages. Types of building frontages are defined thus:

- Primary building frontages: Active and accessible ground floor uses orientated outward and located on important routes and spaces. May contain commercial uses at ground floor level.
- Secondary building frontages: Semi-active ground floor uses (principally residential use) with some breaks for servicing and access, located on secondary routes and spaces.
- Tertiary building frontages: intermittent building frontages located on minor access streets and lanes.

New development should accord with this hierarchy of building frontages to establish a clear townscape structure for the urban village and to seamlessly connect with the town centre.

### 3.3.2 Gateways and nodes

The masterplan proposes to emphasise the three principal points of arrival (see Fig. 3.4), both in terms of public realm improvements, junction re-modelling, and the design of adjacent corner buildings. These comprise:

- The point of arrival/gateway from the southeast: the junction of Summerhouse Terrace / Stars Lane – with the former Glove Factory forming the principal existing welcome landmark and potentially accompanied by a new prominent corner building on the car park site. The corners of the leisure complex and Wilkinsons require improvements.
- The point of arrival/gateway from the north: the junction of Stars Lane / South Street – with the existing club (now Top Ten Bingo) and former Chicago forming the principal existing welcome landmarks. New key buildings to the north eastern corner of the Stars Lane car park site which redevelop Harry's Bar, Star Kebabs and West Country Windows will complete this gateway
- The point of arrival/gateway from south: the new public open space along Summer House Terrace that connects with Summer House Hill and Dodham Brook.

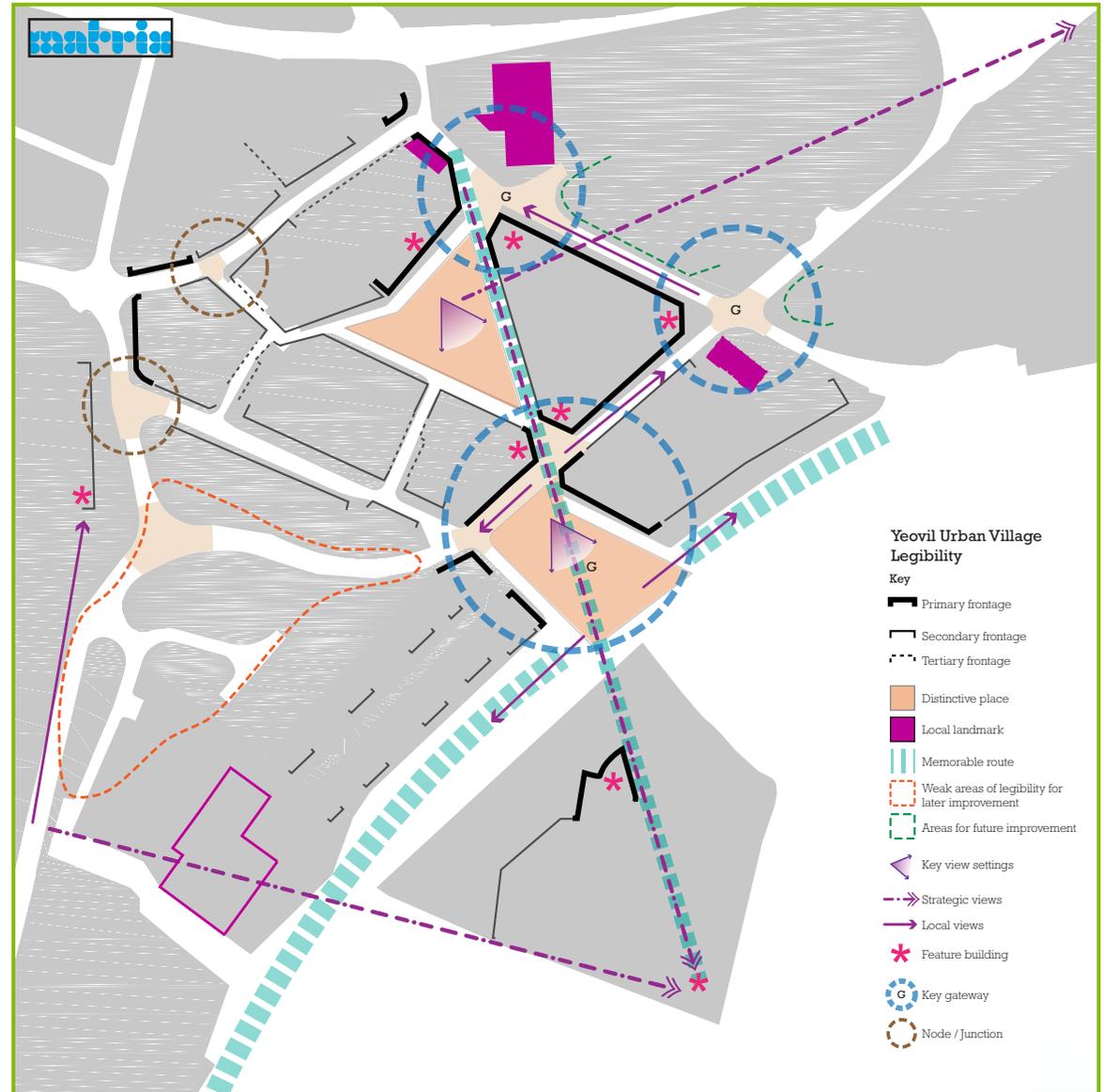


Figure 3.4 Legibility - finding your way round easily

At these three focal points architectural, landscape and infrastructure design improvements will combine to create a series of 'events' or points of distinction in the overall townscape experience along Summer House Terrace and Stars Lane.

In addition, two minor nodes are acknowledged. Each provides points of arrival, though they are of lesser significance to the three key gateways mentioned above, namely:

- The new junction where the homezone area of new development to the upper level of Stars Lane carpark meets South Street.
- The junction of Mill Lane and Addlewell Lane is to be improved as a pedestrian link.

Development should respect the principle that these locations are identified as gateways and/or nodes into the urban village area and should thus be designed accordingly.

### 3.3.3 Landmarks and key corners

Landmarks fall into two categories: townscape landmarks, which consist of buildings that stand out within the townscape as a result of their scale; and cultural landmarks or features which are of value to local people and visitors.

As identified in Figure 3.4, townscape landmarks comprise:

- The Glove Factory
- The new buildings at the corners of the triangular block on the Stars Lane car park.
- The new building on the southern edge of the existing club that fronts the new village green
- The proposed folly/gardens structure at the termination of the diagonal on Summer House Hill.
- The proposed southern-end dwelling on the Addlewell Lane site.
- The potential hotel/leisure building on the derelict Ski Slope site.
- The new bridges over Dodham Brook.

Beyond the study area Summer House Hill and Wyndham Hill provide key landscape 'markers', of which the former is particularly important in helping people to orientate themselves.

Existing architecturally distinctive buildings that tend to be observed from close by and which form cultural landmarks comprise the former Night Club (now Top Ten Bingo), The former Glove Factory (now part of the recent ZeroC development) and, to a lesser extent, the former Chicago Rock Café at the top of Stars Lane.

Figure 3.4 also identifies the location of potential key corners, whether they

comprise buildings given a distinctive architectural treatment or potentially emphasised with public art. Each of these helps to frame a principal public space, key street/link or gateway.

### 3.3.4 Key views

Views are defined as: strategic views; local views; or view settings and shown in Fig. 3.4. Strategic views comprise long distance visual connections between the urban village area north of Summer House Terrace and Summer House Hill. Important views also exist from Park Street south towards Summer House Hill over the car showroom rooftops.

Key local views identified include:

- Along the proposed diagonal access linking the country park to the town centre wherein the proposed hotel would form a key feature.
- Along Summer House Terrace (east / west).
- Looking northwards from Summer House Terrace along the new diagonal pedestrian route to the village green.
- Looking southwards from Summer House Terrace towards the Dodham Brook new bridges and open space.
- Looking north up Stars Lane towards the town centre.
- Along the new Dodham Brook lake routes.

View settings include the contained views within the proposed village green and new public open space at Dodham Brook.

Future new developments should seek to frame these views and help to provide a 'sense of place' through visual continuity.

### 3.4 Proposed Character Areas

Figure 3.5 identifies the 4 sub-areas that have been identified within the urban village as having different characteristics and are referred to as 'character areas.' These are defined below and will have a distinctive streetscape, urban form and grain, building type and arrangement. Each of these character areas are briefly described in turn with precedent images to indicate how each new development could make a positive contribution to its local character area.



Figure 3.5 Four distinctive character areas

### 3.4.1 Character Area 01: The Urban Village Heart

The urban village heart extends from Summer House Terrace north to South Street, east to Stars Lane and west to Mill Lane and is mainly comprised of redevelopment to the Stars Lane car park. Key positive characteristics of the area that should be respected in new development include:

- South-facing sloping land, falling with the natural topography to the valley bottom and Dodham Brook.
- Expansive southern views to Summer House Hill.
- Medium building heights of generally 2-3 storey.
- An established surrounding street network of relatively fine grain block size and walkable scale.
- Directly adjacent to the town centre and amenities (part of the area falls within town centre designation);
- Strong residential context with mixed use elements.
- Existing mature trees on bank above the carpark.
- The landmark night club announces the transition between the town centre and the urban village site.

Existing negative characteristics that should be addressed include:

- Over-engineered highways and in particu-

lar junctions (Stars Lane / Summer House Terrace).

- Large surface car parks of indistinct character and unsafe at night.
- Unclear linkages and connections for the pedestrians to the surrounding area including the Country Park.
- Lack of quality open space and tree cover.
- Poor quality buildings (Harry's Bar, West Country Windows, Star Kebabs).
- Exposed 'backs' to numerous buildings including the Night Club making the area feel unwelcoming.
- Poor quality streetscape throughout.

**Design principles:** The following design principles are proposed to enhance the Urban Village Heart Character Area:

- Comprehensiveness: it is essential that redevelopment of the area is considered comprehensively in relation to design of the central open green space and adjacent streets.
- Greenery: a sequence of quality open spaces along the diagonal route linking the country to the town.
- Character: the character of the proposed scheme should look to take a cue from the scale and grain of the existing area, whilst providing a high quality, contemporary expression incorporating environmental building technology.

- Layout: a street-based layout is promoted, with a network of pedestrian priority routes connected into the surrounding area. A centralized layout is envisaged with a village green at the heart
- Environmental standards: the use of a neighbourhood-based combined heat and power system at least partially powered by renewable energy sources should be seriously explored. High environmental standards should include the use of roof space for biodiversity, energy, and amenity benefits.
- Streetscape: a high quality pedestrian environment, with consistent use of materials and street furniture and opportunities for public art. Car access will be limited and subservient to the pedestrian through the use of shared surfaces and home zones.
- Cycle routes: linked to Yeovil's system of cycle ways, and connecting up with the railway stations and town centre (Pic Summerhouse Village will be cycle friendly).
- Parking: located in defined areas separate from housing and incorporating sheltered cycle parking, communal parking for residents and visitors alike and the club car cars. frontage: all new development along the Stars Lane and Summer House Terrace Street frontages should relate to the existing street scale (generally 2-3 stories) and character, with:
  - 3 storey development / 4 storey accents at key locations/corners
  - vertically mixed-use buildings, with upper-storey flats or offices above

- ground floor shops;
- active frontage, with frequent doors and windows;
- a consistent building line;
- attractive facades (including shop fronts) that incorporate a regular vertical rhythm.

• Frontage onto the proposed village green is to be a mix of residential, commercial and community use of generally 3 storeys. Residential buildings to be set back from back-edge-of-pavement as shown in Street Types/Open Space Guidance.

• The creation of a positive, active street frontage onto Stars Lane (both sides) is to be achieved, providing attractive links to the Dodham valley. The plan recognises the need for more detailed /future studies to the eastern street edge dealing with the 'backs' to Wilkinsons.

• Attention will be focused at gateways and crossing points as described above, both in terms of building and streetspace design as well as ease of pedestrian and cycle access. These include the northern and southern gateways along Stars Lane.

• New open green space: will be achieved in the form of a village green that includes tree planting, grassed areas, hard landscape, play facilities, seating, lighting and which makes the most of the level changes to achieve interesting design and view points to Summer House Hill.

• Net density target: 70-75 DPH (plan calculation indicates 75 DPH)



An attractive, safe, Home Zone character to the area with quality surface materials/street scape. A pleasant green heart with contemporary housing designed to respond to the sloping site.



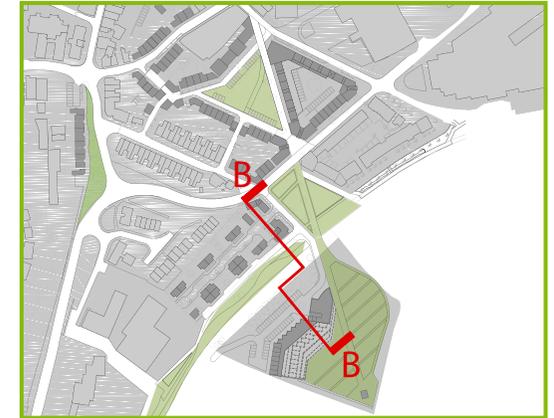
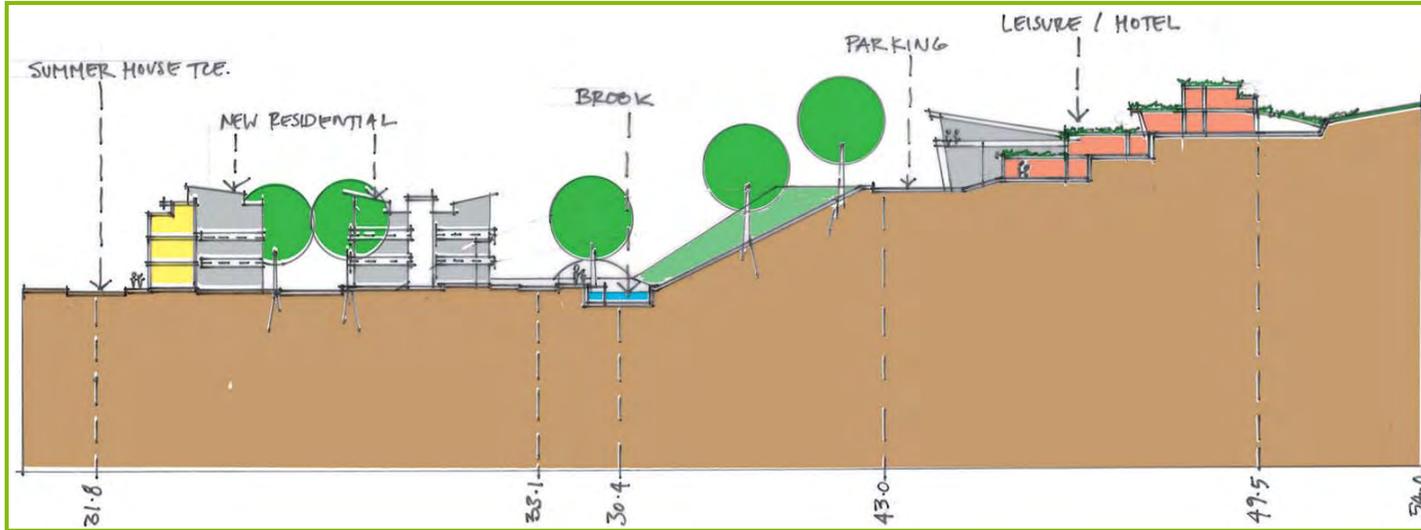


Figure 3.6  
Cross Section B-B

### 3.4.2 Character Area 02: Dodham Lake

This area has been defined as Dodham Lake to suggest a new character for an important location that is currently dominated by car show rooms, poor links to the Country Park and an underwhelming brook. There are few positive features in the area to be reinforced. Those that do exist include the natural topography of a valley bottom, a watercourse (albeit canalised) and a strong, if unmanaged, mature tree structure.

Existing negative characteristics that should be addressed include:

- Lack of quality waterfront access.
- Lack of overlooking to cycle/pedestrian paths.
- Landscape areas along the stream

are of low quality, overgrown and poorly managed.

- Poor quality car showrooms and associated tarmac areas.
- Weak links to the landscape/Summer House Hill.
- Lack of active building frontage.
- Disconnected areas of housing sitting adjacent to show rooms.

**Design principles:** The park is an important linear open space and recreational corridor that in this locality is of low quality, poorly managed and not well overlooked. There is a real need for improvement both in upgrading its local environment and in making new connections to both the town and the country park. Such improvements are considered

important in achieving the wider aims of increasing accessibility and use of this special asset to both pedestrian and cyclist.

The following design principles are proposed to enhance the Dodham Lake Character Area:

- Character: the character of the lake-area scheme should look to establish a new relationship between the 'town' and the 'country', one that opens out to the landscape rather than utilising the area as a 'back edge' as at present.
- A new bridge crossing over Dodham Brook, providing a direct link between the 'town' and the 'country' for pedestrians and also providing access to the potential new leisure/hotel facility on the former Ski Slope site.

• High quality pedestrian links are established between the Brook, Summer House Hill and the upper urban village heart and town centre to the north. The lake front will include a high quality pedestrian priority promenade with limited vehicular access and crossing under the bridge to the hotel. New promenade tree planting and quality landscape design is to be established.

• Streetscape improvements at the new junction with Summer House Terrace, with resurfacing of the crossing area to make it seamless with the new public open waterfront space. Improved pedestrian crossings to the north into the urban village heart site and on into town centre.

• Active frontage needs to be provided, animating the new waterfront space and promenade with windows, doors and an element of commercial/café use at street

level. Restaurant/cafe/bar uses that spill-out onto the new public open space should be considered provided they do not conflict with cyclists.

- New housing that displays exemplary 'eco' credentials is to be established. Houses are proposed that re-combine the traditional terrace form in a 4-square grid, allowing considerable open space/visual/green connections between the town and the country, avoiding the creation of a 'wall' of new development that blocks views.

- Dodham Brook is to be widened through the introduction of a new weir close to and upstream from the new bridge with the northern edge of the concrete canal wall broken out to establish a small lake. The water level will be allowed to rise, controlled by the weir at times of flooding, to create a direct relationship with the water.

- Net density target: 60-70 DPH (plan calculation indicates 70 DPH).

Flooding: At the valley bottom this area is rated Flood Risk 3. Proposals affecting the Vauxhall Garage site in particular are dependant on the results of a Flood Risk Assessment, and the costs of mitigation works, which have not yet been undertaken. There are a number of measures in the masterplan that would mitigate the effects of flooding, such as use of permeable surfaces, proposal for gardens or cultivation around the proposed hotel, which would slow the rate of run-off. The impact of a weir on flood risk and viability only affects

sites in the valley bottom, and would be linked to proposals for Sustainable Urban Drainage that would clean and hold any run off before it was released. This would need to be considered as part of a hydrological study if the Council decides to take the scheme forward. The great majority of the proposed homes lie above the flood risk area.



Eco-housing character along the Dodham lake front.

### 3.4.3 Character Area 03: Summer House Hill

This part of the site is situated outside the existing urban area to the south of the Dodham Brook and is the site of the former ski centre including the former reception building, car park and the ski slope itself as well as adjacent green space. The site has indirect access along Addlewell Lane through the car showrooms site and past The Gate Way before crossing the stream and along a narrow track on the south side of the stream.

The site is essentially rural and undeveloped in character, despite the ski-slope, and is steeply sloping, but rather less so at the level of the building and car park. Although the sloping topography makes the site potentially highly visible from the town opposite, the lower parts are in fact largely screened by trees, many of which are evergreen planted no doubt to screen the ski centre building.

Key positive features of the area include:

- Attractive rural context close to town centre
- Views across Urban Village site;
- Direct connection to the Country Park;
- Direct connection to the strategic cycle and pedestrian route along Dodham Brook
- Previously developed site available for redevelopment.

Existing negative character effects that should be addressed are:

- Currently very poor and indirect road and

pedestrian access (new access required)

- Currently poor frontage towards the town centre that a hotel would require
- Developed part of the site mostly concealed from external views. (Negative feature for uses needing frontage and visibility). However this site is potentially highly visible
- Steep slopes affect development costs for both roads and hotel.

#### Design Principles:

- A dramatic opportunity to link the town to the country and the recreational potential of the Country Park.
- An opportunity to increase public awareness and use of the Country Park/Summer House Hill.
- The extension of the proposed diagonal axis across the Urban Village connecting town and country, work and leisure.
- The development of a new 60 bed hotel on the site of the existing derelict ski centre with the entrance clearly visible from the Urban Village site and Summer House Terrace.
- The construction of a new direct access road to the hotel from Summer House Terrace including a new bridge across Dodham Brook.
- Comprehensive landscape management of this currently derelict and unmanaged area including a new area available for gardens above the hotel.
- The creation of a new viewpoint at the

higher level of the site overlooking the Urban Village and the wider town centre.

- The creation of a community 'summer house' facility or similar at the higher southern end of the diagonal axis.

#### Access issues:

The former ski centre is accessed from Addlewell Lane as it extends south through the showrooms area and to the rear of the Gate Way church. As an access for the proposed hotel this is inadequate. King Sturge advise that a direct vehicular link to the front of the hotel which aligns with visual connections from town centre to hotel is required to achieve a market-viable proposition.

A new link and bridge is established over Dodham Brook that rises up to the proposed hotel site in a 1:5 gradient. Such gradients are acceptable for private access drives (eg the hotel at Lake Vyrnwy in Wales). Alternatives access alignments were considered that reduced the gradient, however these required transverse routes cutting across contours up the embankment south of the brook which would require removal of a large proportion of the existing mature tree planting. Future work should include preparation of a design brief for the hotel site that would include engineering inputs (civils, transport) to fully test the highway design, cut/fill, stabilisation and retaining of any new access road.

Alternative access via the existing Addlewell lane ski centre route would also be utilised into the rear of the hotel car park.



Existing access to former ski centre runs through a 'backlands' part of the study area



Proposed new hotel access and parking

### 3.4.4 Character Area 04: Addlewell Lane

The Addlewell Lane character area contains a relatively small development site of circa 10 houses to the west of, and rising above, Addlewell Lane itself. It is a prominent site in relation to arrival into the urban village area from the southwest (Park Street) but is relatively independent of the main urban village development area and can thus establish its own character. Key positive characteristics of the area that should be respected in new development include:

- The site is elevated above the valley bottom and affords views across to Summer House Hill.
- The area is generally southeast/east-facing and has good sunlight orientation.
- Extensive mature tree planting.
- Good vertical separation from Addlewell Lane – has potential for a quieter residential environment.
- Medium building heights of generally 2-3 storey.
- Close to the town centre and amenities with good pedestrian links.
- Strong residential context with mixed use elements.

Existing negative characteristics that should be addressed include:

- Overlooks backs of housing along Mill Lane.

- Overlooks poor quality-designed housing south of Summer House Terrace.
- Embankment to the west calls for terraced rear gardens.
- Poor quality pedestrian and cycle links.

**Design principles:** The following design principles are proposed to enhance the Addlewell Lane Character Area:

- Character; the character of the proposed scheme is to be a comprehensively designed residential terrace using materials reflecting that of the nearby buildings.
- Scale: a medium-rise residential development of 3 storeys is to be provided with a distinctive form that complements the elevated site position, whilst avoiding negative environmental impacts on the existing mature tree planting.
- Green public open space: the existing open green space is envisaged to be retained with enhanced pedestrian links and the addition of play facilities and seating to the southern end of the site.
- Existing trees to be retained.
- Parking for the new housing would be consolidated into a well landscaped setting to the north of the development with pedestrian/cycle access only along the fronts of the houses and separately charged for. Cycle parking will be provided under cover.
- Active frontage that presents an animated edge to the eastern/Addlewell Lane side of the site.

- Existing trees to be retained.
- Net density target: 50-55 DPH (plan calculation indicates 55DPH).

Subsequent development proposals should reflect the principles demonstrated in this section for each of the character areas, and developers are encouraged to engage with the Council early on in forming development proposals for sites.



A contemporary approach to traditional terraced and paired villas housing types with a consolidated parking court and pedestrian access to individual dwellings in a mature green landscape setting

## 3.5 Building Heights and Density

### 3.5.1 Planning policy

*'The now revoked RSS suggested that a density of 40 dph should be achieved across the whole of the South Somerset Housing Market Area (HMA) and higher densities of 40-50 dph achieved in Yeovil. High density, high quality, sustainable places to live can be achieved in town centres and urban extension(s) through careful planning including the incorporation of public and private amenity space and access to public transport'. (Core Strategy, Policy HG2 and para 8.9)*

Higher density development in town centres is desirable from the commercial viability of such schemes but should be compatible with the local context, design principles and public transport accessibility. Given the need to achieve a development that is fundamentally urban in character, adjacent to and part of the town centre, and to ensure sufficient development for market viability, the proposed (net) densities range from 50-75 DPH according to the character area location (described in the above section). In summary the net densities of each area include:

- Area 1: 70-75 DPH
- Area 2: 60-70 DPH
- Area 3: N/A (Hotel/leisure site)
- Area 4: 50-55 DPH

These density ranges influence building height, and are achieved, through testing the capacity of the site in terms of open space, parking provision, townscape etc.). Within



Figure 3.7 Indicative Building Heights

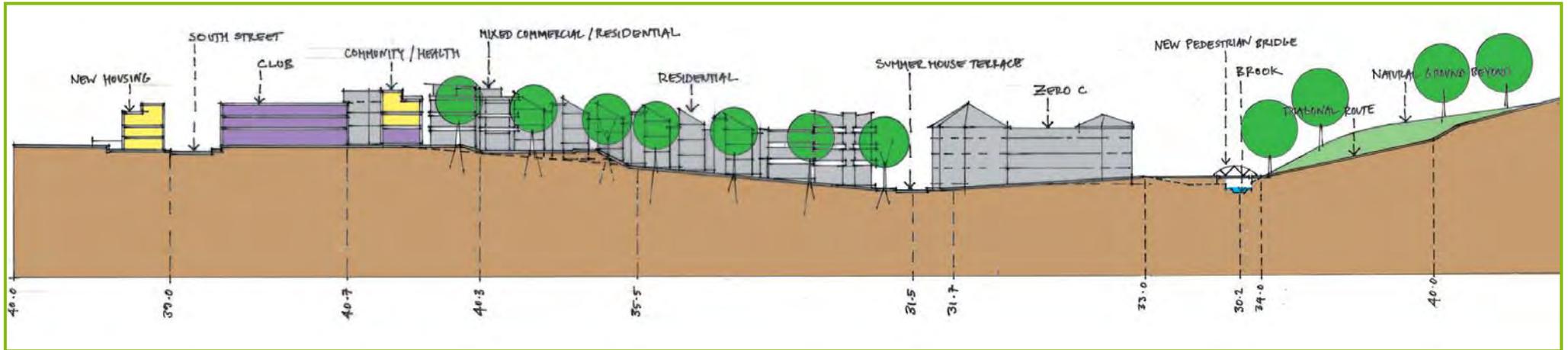


Figure 3.8 Cross Section A-A

the urban village, the strategy proposes a building height datum of 3 storeys with some 4 storey accents at landmark/corner locations. The strategy for the urban village is to reinforce the current scale of buildings on existing streets and to ensure that excessive height is avoided to maintain Yeovil-scale townscape and important strategic views.

The quantum of development proposed for each character area and block has also been influenced by commercial viability considerations to ensure that development proposals are capable of delivery.

### 3.5.2 Townscape influences on building height

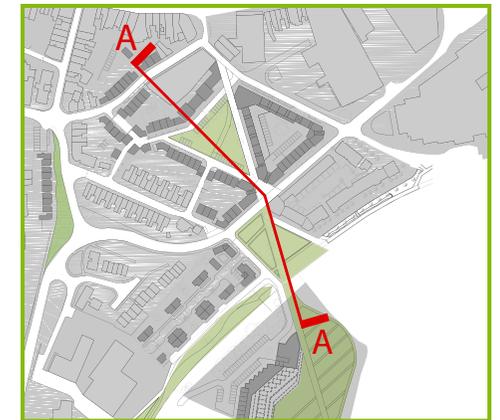
As identified in Figures 3.7 and 3.8, there are particular parts of the area that are 'character sensitive' where building height needs to be strongly influenced by the char-

acter, scale and prevailing height of existing buildings. These comprise:

- Summer House Terrace where the ZeroC scheme opposite has established a building height datum and particular relationship with the street (height-to-width) ratio.
- Dodham Lake housing which should maintain a low-medium height (2.5-3 storeys max) to prevent impeding of views to the Country Park and to avoid a feeling of overdevelopment in an area that is landscape-sensitive.
- New housing backing onto existing Mill Lane houses needs to maintain a height sensitive and relative to that of the Mill Lane terraces, to prevent overlooking of back gardens and minimising reduction in daylight.
- Summer House Hill with development on the lower ski slope needing to sit below the

skyline and within the existing tree structure. The proposed hotel/leisure building is to step up the slope in a terraced fashion with strong green roof planting.

Within this context, the potential for new key corner buildings has been identified within some of the character areas. In these locations, it is proposed that buildings could be extended beyond the existing datum level to a maximum of four storeys to accentuate these prominent punctuation points in a way that enhances the overall townscape whilst respecting the existing scale and character of their setting.



### 3.6 Land Use Patterns

The urban design framework and overarching development objectives provide the basis for arranging how land uses and the placement of particular buildings might work. Overall development should support the regeneration of this part of Yeovil as an urban village and uses should complement the vision and objectives for the area as set out in section 3.1 above.

Overall, the masterplan proposes a predominantly residential use strategy with particular locations suitable for mixed-use (Figure 3.9). This strategy aims to:

- Reinforce the role of the site adjacent to (and partly within) the town centre area.
- Reinforce existing housing character and seeks to shift character away from that of the car showrooms type environment.



Figure 3.9 Indicative Land Uses

- Introduce new facilities in areas that are currently underperforming and in need of a new ‘life’.

It is important to emphasise that the masterplan cannot be used to allocate land. Land use policies are set out in the Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy, which is currently at the Preferred Options stage as of October 2010. The land use strategy is therefore indicative, but development should respect the rationale for the strategy proposed. Future development should seek to achieve the following broad land use principles:

### 3.6.1 Housing Provision

The masterplan indicates the capacity exists within the urban village to deliver approximately 151 new dwelling units. The housing mix seeks to achieve 60% family houses to 40% flats and the masterplan indicates development sites that are particularly suitable for incorporating significant family housing provision (3 bedrooms +) in low-medium rise family townhouse forms. Housing density is discussed above in section 3.5, seeking to achieve a range of densities from 50DPH – 75DPH according to character area.

Residential developments should:

- Contribute to achieving PPS 3 which states that 60% of new housing is to be on previously developed land (PDL). The former South Somerset Local Plan set a target of 45% of housing to be built on PDL though this is no longer extant. Core

Strategy policy HG3 now requires 30% of new dwellings to be built on previously developed land over the period of the Core Strategy.

- Meet the Core Strategy affordable housing provision target of 35% for schemes above 6 dwellings or sites above 0.1 Hectares (policy HG4). The policy states that this target may only be achieved “where it is viable to do so” and further that “the number, type and tenure of affordable housing will be negotiated on a site by site basis informed by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment which indicates that there is a requirement for 75% of affordable homes to be 1-2 bedrooms with the remaining 25% to be 3-4 bedrooms.

- Consider the need for a mix of homes that provide for larger families, especially for those unable to afford market prices.

- Be of sufficiently high architectural and urban design standards, as well as meet Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 regardless of tenure.

- The future housing in the urban village should include all the 16 design criteria of Lifetime Homes and achieve CSH level 4 or better.

### 3.6.2 Retail and Commercial Provision

The masterplan proposes locations where retail use would be appropriate. Those locations benefit from good levels of footfall and support the townscape strategy.

Approximately 1,100 sq.m of new commer-

cial ground floor space is proposed to be accommodated in the masterplan of which a proportion could comprise retail/shops/café/restaurant as well as commercial office space. New retail should be largely accommodated as follows:

1. Along Stars Lane; and,
2. At the junction of the proposed pedestrian ‘diagonal’ routes with Summer House Terrace.

In addition, locations benefitting from south-facing, potentially sunny aspects should be considered as ideal locations for as cafes or restaurants that could spill-out and help animate the proposed public spaces, especially around the village green and the new waterfront space at Dodham Brook.

### 3.6.3 Hotel and Leisure Provision

To broaden the ‘offer’ of the town centre and provide a new life for various derelict parts of the area (ski slope) it is proposed that a site be found for a new hotel facility. This would be combined with leisure-related uses and potentially incorporating a Farm Shop linked to the adjacent farm and suggested Summer House Hill gardens.

The masterplan indicates that a hotel in terraced form stepping up the ski slope site (lower levels) could be developed to provide circa 60 beds. Advice from King Sturge has indicated that to attract a commercial developer and operator the hotel would need to be at least 60 beds in size, with related car parking for staff and guests. Parking is provided at the ratio of 1 space per

room plus an allowance for staff. The plan indicates 41 spaces can be accommodated along the southern (down slope) side of the hotel with additional parking space located to the south and west of the hotel on the nearby farm site (a further 30 spaces could be provided), providing a total of circa 70 spaces.

## 3.7 The Public Realm

### 3.7.1 The importance of the public realm

The public realm encompasses our streets, public squares, parks and everything within. It includes benches, trees, paving, and so on and it is well documented that the quality and nature of these places can have a profound impact on our individual experiences, the propensity to walk and the economic success of areas. An unkempt or threatening public space can provide a negative experience and discourage use. The frontages of adjacent buildings lining open spaces and streets form part of the public realm setting and therefore the design of buildings and spaces should always be considered in concert.

### 3.7.2 The overall approach

The urban design analysis of the urban village area, combined with findings from the Urban Development Framework (2005) highlights the very poor quality of the public realm in this part of Yeovil. There is a distinct lack of quality, usable, public open space and streets generally lack activity and vibrancy from adjacent development. The public realm within the current site and its linkages are not designed on a 'human scale' where pedestrians and their activities dominate the streetscape. These issues are specifically addressed in the masterplan and the aim is to redress this deficiency by creating open spaces that will provide richness and interest for both residents and visitors alike, making people the focus, creating a



Figure 3.10 The Public Realm - defining quality streets and spaces

coherent network of spaces and places that will help define a distinctive urban village character.

The masterplan includes further guidance in the form of design coding on the various street and space types (see Appendix).

Key features of the public realm strategy includes:

- To develop a network of formal and informal public open spaces (both green and hard-landscaped) that knit the village together and link it into its context.
- Special attention to be given to key locations and significant streets, allowing a focus of investment and establishment of a hierarchy of spaces to assist legibility.
- In addition to the above, providing a unifying treatment of public streets and spaces that ties the central part of the urban village together with the lower/southern waterfront area and links to Summer House Hill.
- A hierarchy of streets and spaces that is determined by the significance of locations within the urban village and the role or function that it serves.
- To utilise the most suitable, durable and high-quality materials available and with special attention to detail and maintenance (see subsequent sections on design guidance).
- To promote active building frontages that

contribute to the public realm visually and functionally by designing building frontages that face onto the public realm, placing private space primarily behind buildings, within courtyards or next to the private space of adjacent neighbours (e.g. along the backs of existing Mill Lane housing); arranging new development so that they make a clear distinction between public and private spaces; and, encouraging active ground floor uses as much as possible, particularly along principal routes and spaces (Summer House Terrace, Stars Lane).

- To emphasise the gateways into the urban village and into the Home Zones through creative surface redesign, improved pedestrian crossings, redesigned junctions (reducing junction splays).
- Respecting open spaces and streets by not overshadowing them with inappropriate or out-of-scale building forms.
- Accommodating a range of functions and activities within the key open spaces to cater and appeal to a future varied population of the urban village, including developing new principal public spaces and routes as follows:
  - New village green in character area 1
  - New waterfront urban square at Dodham Brook – character area 2
  - New Dodham Lake promenade
  - New diagonal pedestrian link between town centre and country
  - New allotments on the former ski slope.

• Incorporating play spaces of different sizes and space types aimed at a variety of ages, particularly:

- One Local Playable Space within the proposed village green
- One Doorstep Playable Space with informal play equipment along Dodham promenade
- One youth/sport equipped space at Dodham Lake within the new open space as part of a Summer House Hill circuit

A schedule of key public realm elements is provided below:

Public Realm Schedule		
<b>1</b>	<b>Public Open Space</b>	<b>Area (sq.m)</b>
POS 1	Village Green	2,404
POS 2	Dodham Waterfront urban square and meadow	2,290
POS 3	Dodham Lake promenade	2,882
POS 4	Summer House Gardens	5,746
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>13,322</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Streets - new and improved</b>	<b>Length (m)</b>
	New Streets	580
	Enhanced Streets	200
	Ped only (incl diagonal route)	180
	Ped bridge	10
	Road bridge	10
<b>3</b>	<b>Junctions - new and improved</b>	<b>Area (sq.m)</b>
J1	Stars Lane/Summer House Terrace	535
J2	Summer House Terrace/ Meadow	183
J3	South Street/ Home zone	114
J4	Mill Lane/ Home zone	75
J5	Stars Lane North	900