



Hertsmere Vision Documents

Borehamwood - Key Themes & Priorities Report

October 2026

AR Urbanism



Borehamwood Key Themes & Priorities Report

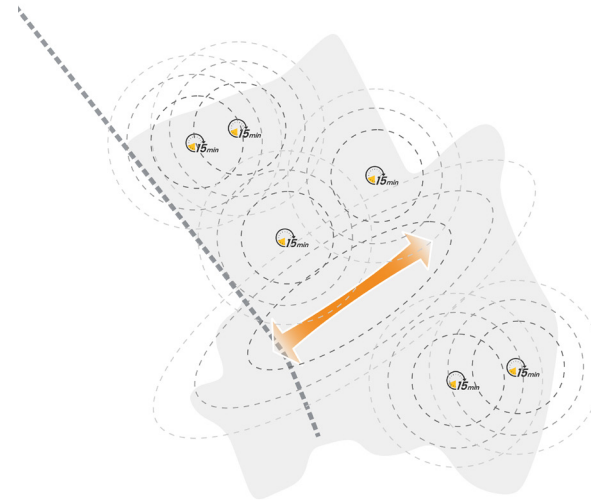
Celebrating its silver screen legacy, but defined by the people who live here, Borehamwood looks to a future where its distinct community character is protected and celebrated.

Through sensitive and incremental growth, the town will evolve to meet the needs of its residents without losing its sense of place.

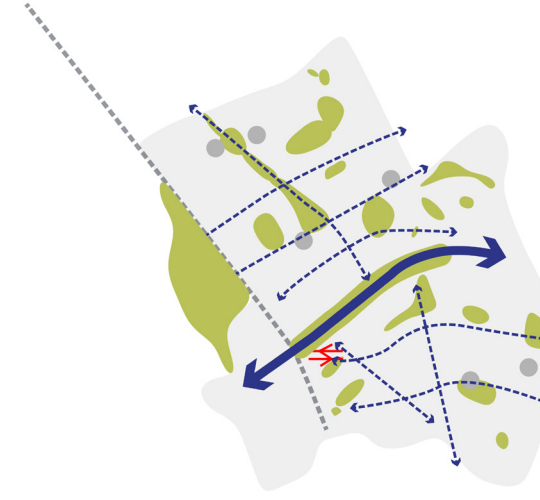
Borehamwood will evolve into a network of connected neighbourhoods supported by the infrastructure required to thrive. Instead of a “one-size-fits-all” approach, our town will feature a diverse mix of housing—from affordable first homes to larger family properties—allowing residents to put down roots and stay in the town they call home through every stage of life.

We will reinvigorate our High Street to be safe, welcoming, and distinct, bridging the divide between our neighbourhoods. By protecting our vital access to the surrounding Green Belt and enhancing our local parks, we will ensure a prosperous, healthy, and inclusive future for all ages.

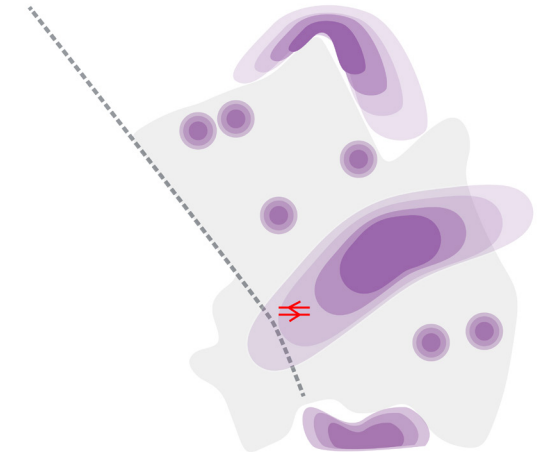
1. Quality of Life



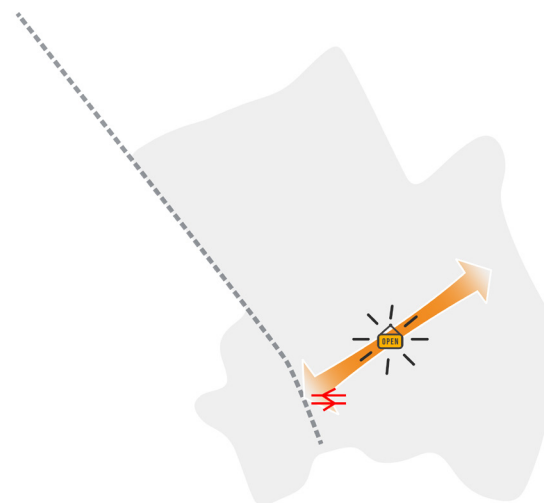
2. Connectivity & Active Travel



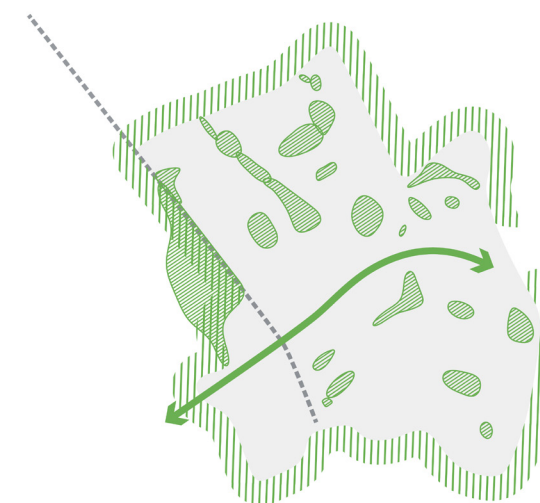
3. Sustainable Growth



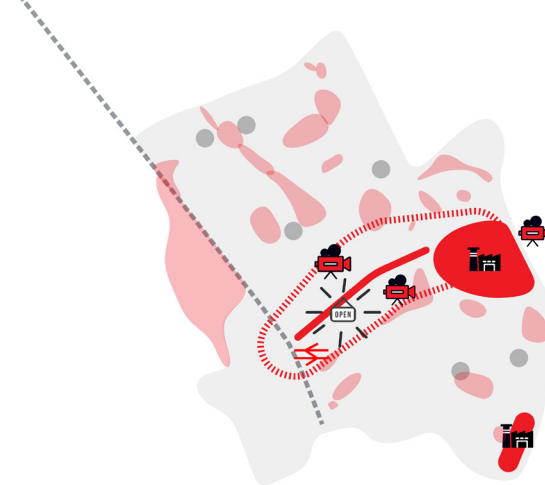
4. Town Centre Public Realm & Character



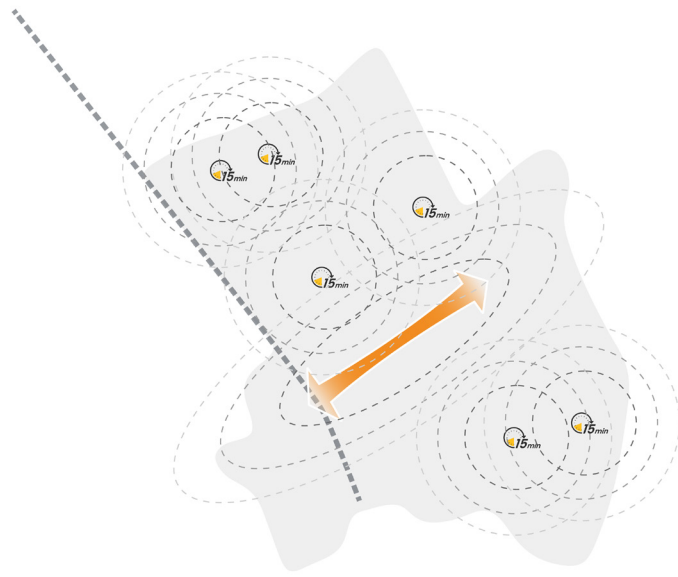
5. Green/Blue Infrastructure & Sustainability



6. Culture, Community Life & Prosperity



1. Quality of Life



Reinforce and develop existing neighbourhood hubs to deliver true 15-minute neighbourhoods, ensuring fair and easy access to key services and opportunities for all residents.

- Identify and fill gaps in essential local services at local centres (especially grocery stores, healthcare, and flexible workspaces) through targeted investment.
- Involve residents in the co-design process to ensure that new developments and infrastructure meet the specific needs and character of the local community, promoting a sense of belonging and ownership.
- Ensure neighbourhood hubs are supported by active travel
- Create an environment that facilitates and promotes active lifestyles and recreational choices, targeting improvements in health challenges.
- Ensure a diverse housing mix that allows residents to stay in Borehamwood throughout their lives. This includes prioritising high-quality family homes (3-5 bedrooms) for growing families, and affordable rental options for young adults, rather than additional care homes for the elderly.
- Address the shortage of local services by investing in new health hubs and community centres.



Fig 1



Fig 2



Fig 3



Fig 4



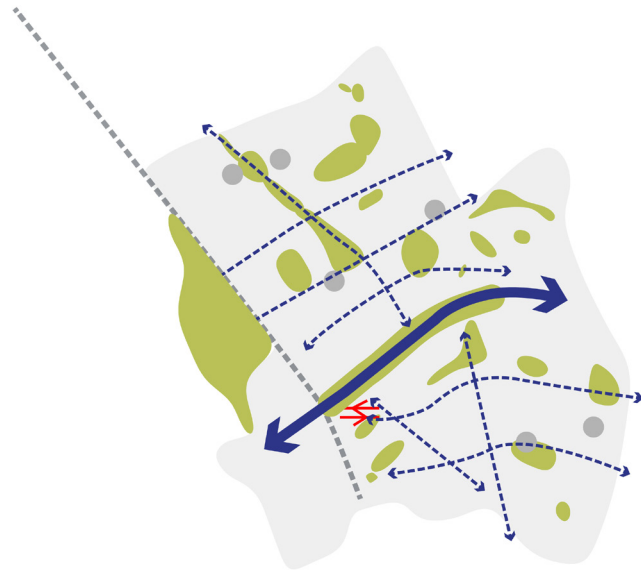
Fig 5



Fig 6

Fig 1. Living Well Hub in Warrington, a health and well-being support centre
 Fig 2. The Nourish Hub, a community kitchen and cafe located in London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham | designed by RCKa Architects
 Fig 3. Exterior of Cafe OTO, an independent music venue and cafe located in the Dalston area of East London
 Fig 4. The New Place Andrée Lachapelle public parklet designed to mitigate climate change in dense neighbourhood in Montreal | designed by INT Design
 Fig 5. Pedestrian and cycle friendly streets, in De Pijp, Amsterdam, Netherlands
 Fig 6. Pedestrian wayfinding system, created for the Brent Cross Town development in North London | designed by design studio Fieldwork Facility

2. Connectivity & Active Travel



Provide attractive alternatives to car trips within Borehamwood by strengthening pedestrian routes and improving cycling infrastructure. Improve pedestrian experience on the High Street and at the Railway Station by tackling car dominance. Improve access to local amenities on foot and by bicycle.

- Reconfigure the High Street to mitigate traffic dominance. Ensure measures include the creation of small-scale spaces and, where possible, increase greenery.
- Implement a wayfinding strategy.
- Reconfigure the railway station forecourt to improve the sense of arrival by delivering a small square. Improve the accessibility to the station forecourt to/from Shenley Road.
- Review pedestrian crossings at the three roundabouts along Shenley Road.
- Provide alternative east-west cycle routes parallel to Shenley Road and Elstree Way, both to the north and to the south.
- Improve pedestrian and cycle access to the railway station and Shenley Road from Elstree
- Explore more frequent bus services to connect outer residential areas, such as Cowley Hill, to the town centre, ensuring those without cars are not isolated.



Fig 7



Fig 8



Fig 10



Fig 9

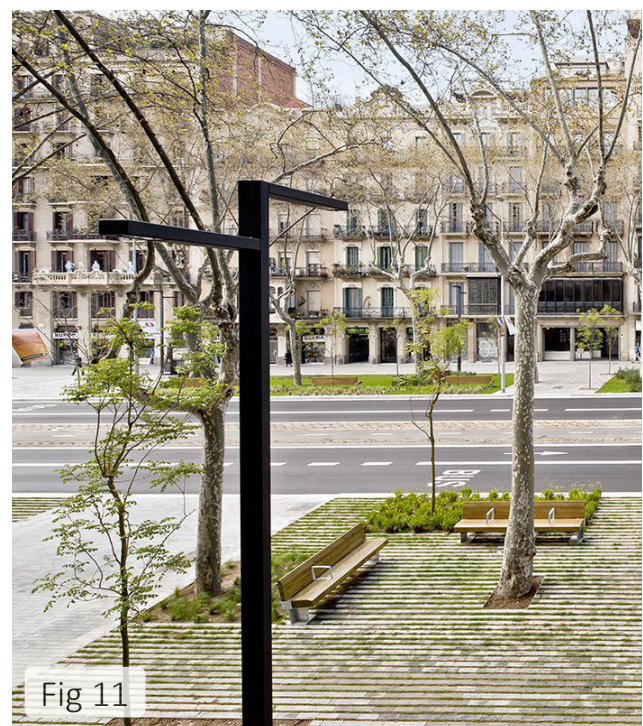


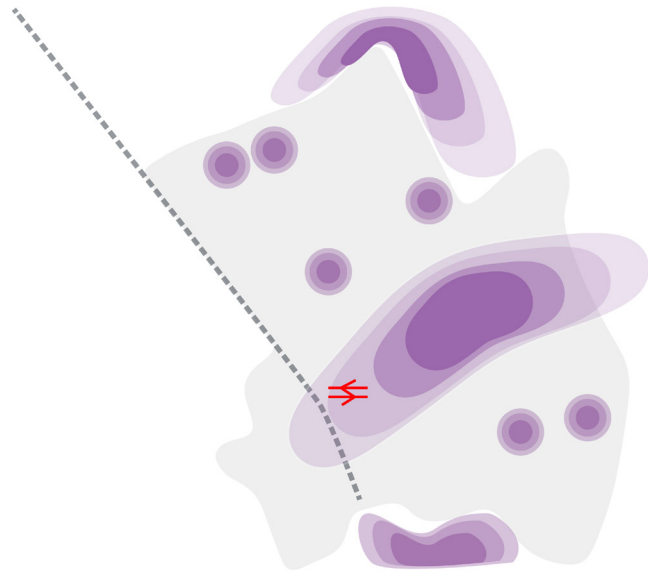
Fig 11



Fig 12

Fig 7. Tiered park area at Water Works Park in Minneapolis, Minnesota | design led by Damon Farber Landscape Architects
 Fig 8. Playable street that runs the length of Murrain Road | designed by muf architecture/art
 Fig 9. Path with motivational text painted on, located within the Huachiao Vibrant Sports Park in Kunshan, Suzhou
 Fig 10. Interactive art and play elements, in Seattle centre | designed in collaboration with Trimpin Judith, Caldwell, Site Workshop & Highwire
 Fig 11. Urban green zone and improved pedestrian use in Passeig de Sant Joan boulevard, Barcelona
 Fig 12. A pedestrian area part of the "superblock" (superilla) plan promoting cycling and car free zones within the city's grid in Barcelona, Spain | designed by Salvador Rueda

3. Sustainable Growth



Prioritise brownfield land for targeted densification to deliver sustainable and affordable housing. This focus will ensure more efficient land use, minimise the impact on green spaces, and create vibrant, mixed-use communities with excellent access to amenities and public transport, thus contributing to a more sustainable urban form.

- Ensure the delivery of the required housing stock by densifying Borehamwood.
- Prioritise brownfield and greybelt development by promoting
- Support new densities with delivery of critical infrastructure, specifically regarding sewage capacity, flood mitigation, and secondary school places.
- Avoid ribbon development and areas that create coalescence with surrounding settlements.
- Ensure a substantial part of the new homes are clustered in the town centre and support the evolution of the High Street offer.
- Continue to invest in social housing and intermediate housing to improve affordability, especially for singles and young families.
- Set clear sustainability standards on all new builds to protect local biodiversity and the environment in general



Fig 13



Fig 16

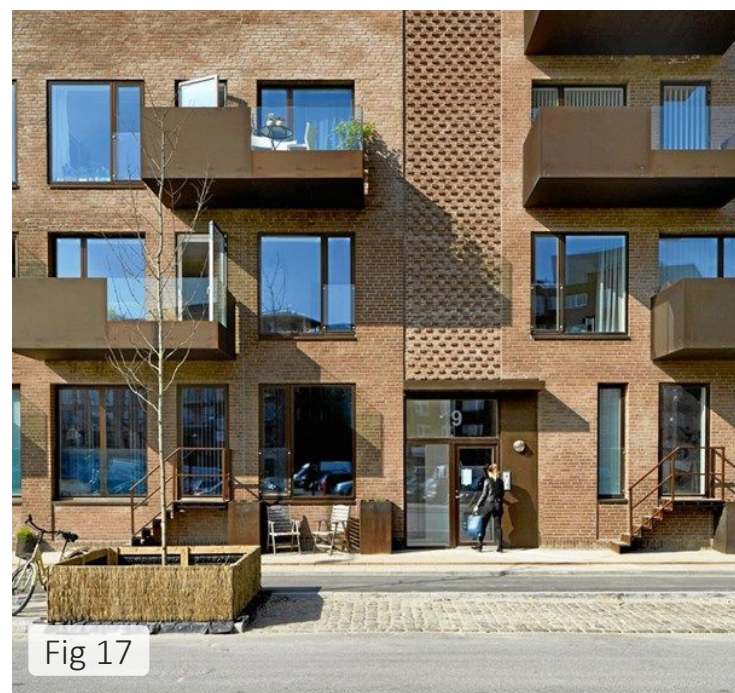


Fig 17

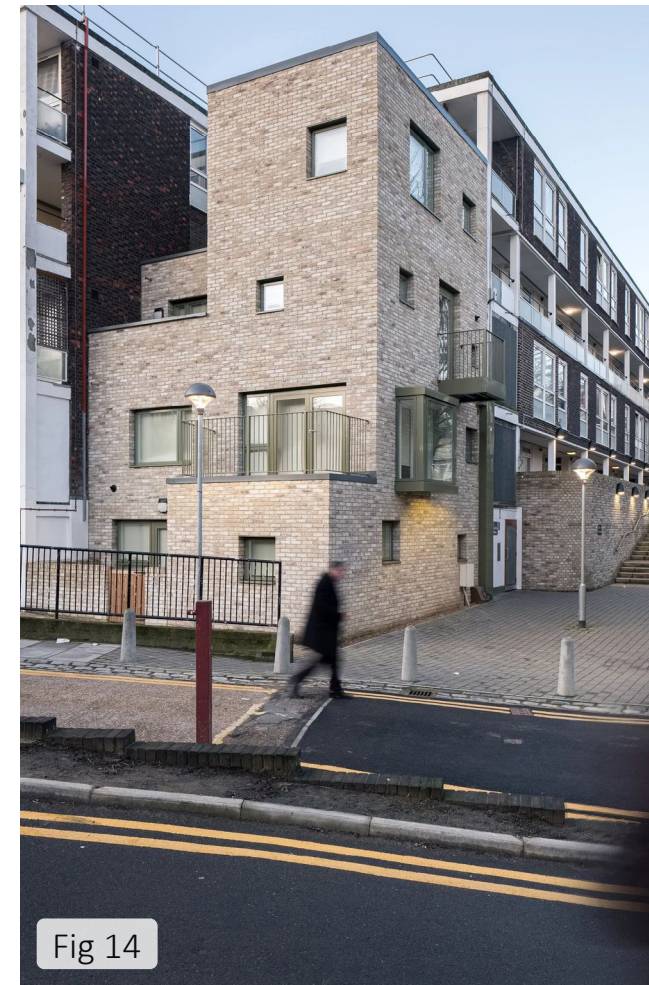


Fig 14

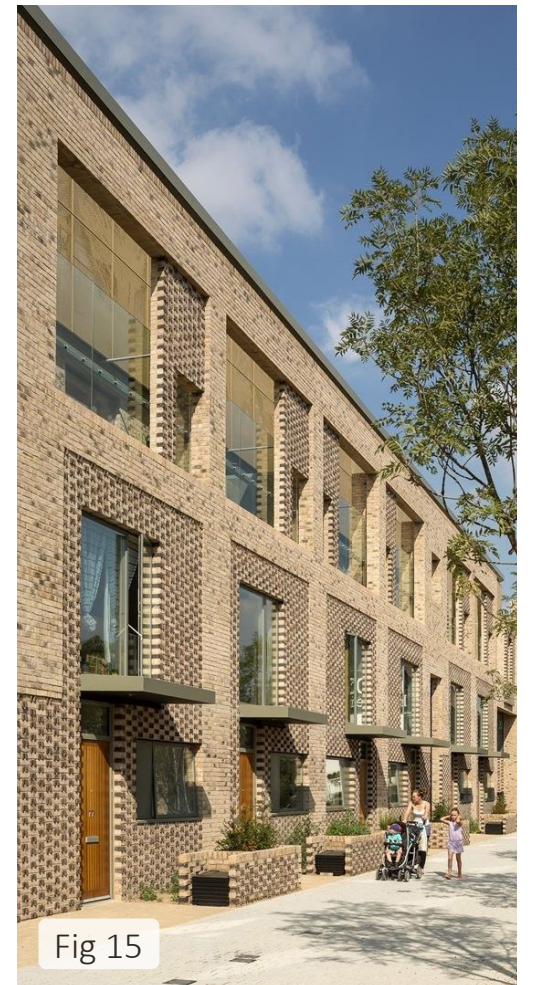


Fig 15



Fig 18

Fig 13. Evolution South, Edgware | designed by Maccleanor Lavington

Fig 14. 'Kiln Place' a housing development in Kentish Town, London | designed by Peter Barber Architects.

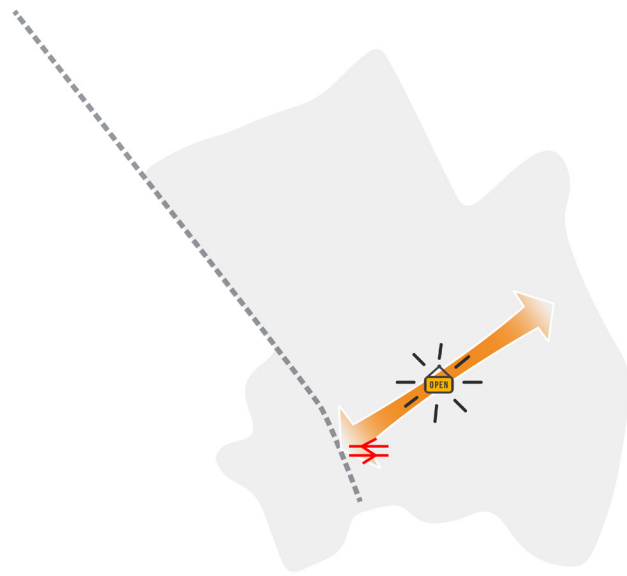
Fig 15. Townhouses at the Abode development in Great Kneighton, residential area in South Cambridge | designed by Proctor & Matthews Architects

Fig 16. The 'New Ground' cohousing community in High Barnet, North Londo | designed by Pollard Thomas Edwards (PTE)

Fig 17. 3 - 4 Storey residential building, part of the urban development in Nordhavn district of Copenhagen | design led by COBE architects

Fig 18. Unity Place, a 100% affordable social housing development in South Kilburn, North West London | designed in collaboration with Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios, Alison Brooks Architects, & Gort Scott

4. Town Centres Public Realms & Character



Reimagine the High Street as the heart of Borehamwood, bustling with life and easy for pedestrians. Enhance its vitality, showcasing and preserving the town's distinct and rich heritage for everyone to enjoy.

- Reconfigure the town focal points: Redesign or remove high street roundabouts (Tesco/Council offices) to create new, pedestrian-friendly focal points and improve accessibility of existing and planned facilities.
- Celebrate heritage: Implement a more coherent cultural/heritage strategy, including a thematic approach to better celebrate and communicate the town's film and TV history.
- Rationalise car parking areas so they continue to provide easy access to the town centre but do not dominate it.
- Improve the experience of arrival and ensure the High Street performs as the main public space in Borehamwood.
- Reintegrate the station into the town centre, and improve the experience of arrival in Borehamwood.
- Deliver high-density housing in the town centre securing a "captive audience" for the High Street.
- Improve the appearance of the High Street, both its public realm and shop frontages, increasing quality and consistency.
- Address security issues of alleys off the high street.
- Encourage a broader mix of shops beyond food outlets to give residents reasons to "dwell" in the town centre, creating spaces for conversation and interaction.



Fig 19



Fig 20

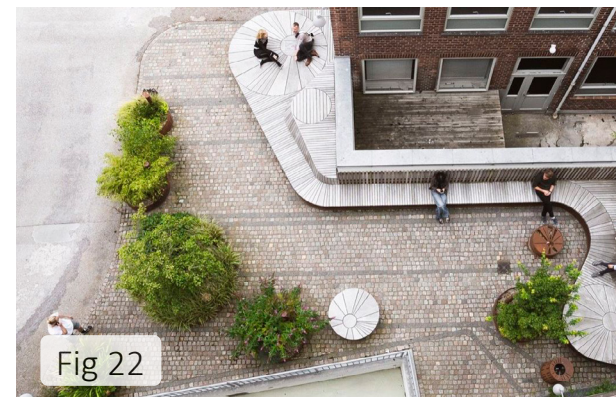


Fig 22

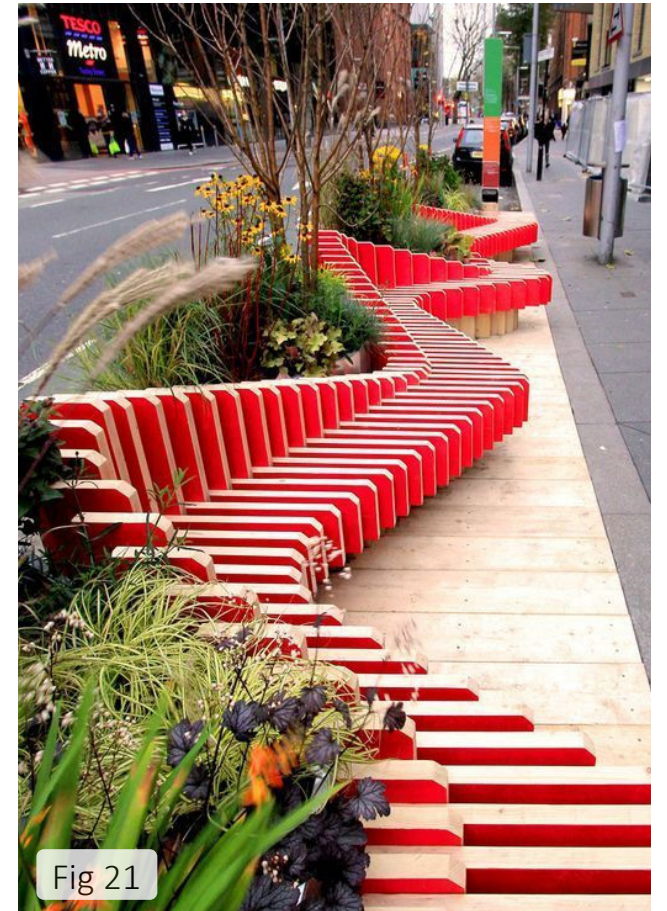


Fig 21



Fig 23



Fig 24

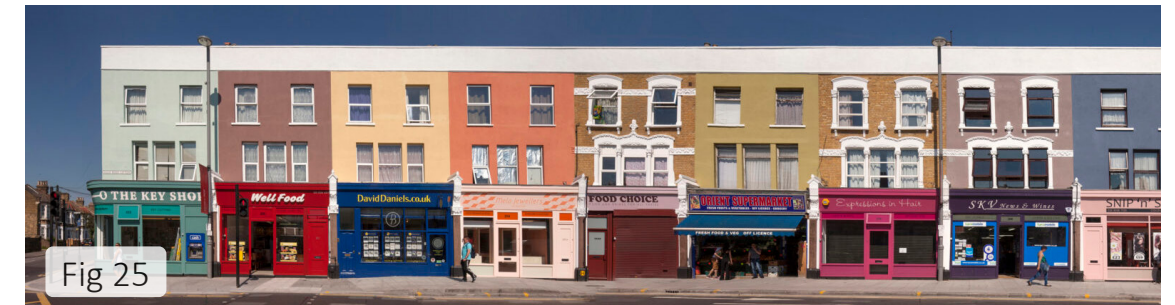


Fig 25



Fig 26

Fig 19. A parklet transforming a former parking space through low-quality materials and construction, in University City, Philadelphia | designed by Shiftspace Design.

Fig 20. A permanent shared green space, Gibbon's Rent community garden, located in an alleyway between Magdalen Street and Holyrood Street in London | designed in collaboration with architect Andrew Burns and landscape architect Sarah Eberle

Fig 21. Parked bench 'portable micro park' transforms two parking spaces into a public seating area with planting and air quality monitoring, in London | designed by WMB Studio

Fig 22. Corporate garden and courtyard, 'Urban Bubble' in Denmark | designed by MBYland

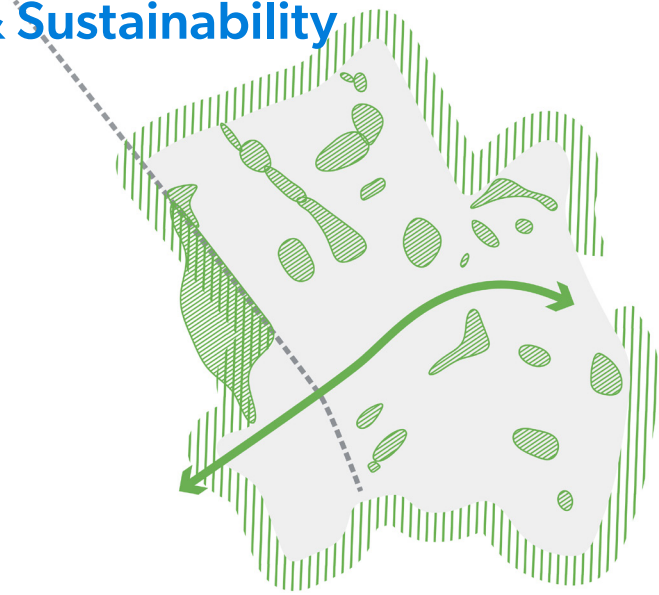
Fig 23. Green square, Rouen-Station in Rouen, France | designed by landscape architects OKRA

Fig 24. Green square, Rouen-Station in Rouen, France | designed by landscape architects OKRA

Fig 25. Regenerated shopfronts on High Road Leyton in London | designed by Jan Kattein Architects (JKA)

Fig 26. Broadway market, a historic, vibrant street market known for its bustling Saturday and Sunday stalls in Hackney, East London

5. Green/Blue Infrastructure & Sustainability



Enhancing and connecting the town's green infrastructure is instrumental to creating a healthier, more sustainable environment. This involves improving the provision, quality, connectivity and accessibility of green spaces and aims to strengthen the town's climate resilience.

- Green infrastructure: Maximise Borehamwood's green areas potential by linking up existing greenspaces into a continuous network.
- Ensure green spaces are not "over-landscaped" but retain areas for biodiversity and nature, allowing young people and families space to relax and connect with the natural environment.
- Make the open spaces network safer and cater for diverse needs.
- Improve "perimeter footpaths" to ensure easy, walkable access to the Green Belt and surrounding countryside recognising this is integral to the quality of life in Borehamwood.
- Climate resilience: improve flood resilience and climate adaptation through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in parks and streets.
- Sustainable Infrastructure: Promote a low-carbon approach, addressing the threat of water neutrality and improving the ecological quality of watercourses.



Fig 27



Fig 28



Fig 29



Fig 30



Fig 31

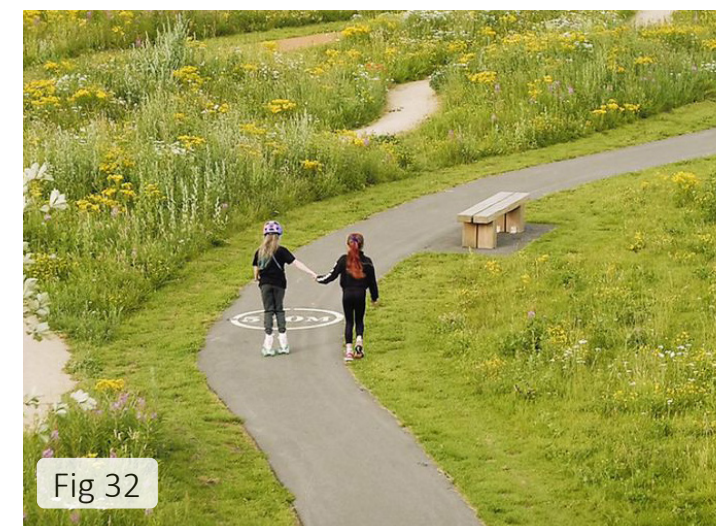


Fig 32

Fig 27. Landscaped steps at Waller Park at the Alta Laguna complex in San Francisco, California | designed by Meyer + Silberg Landscape Architecture (MSLA)
 Fig 28. A green corridor, prioritizing pedestrians and green spaces over car traffic, Passeig de Sant Joan boulevard, in Barcelona | designed by architect Lola Domènech

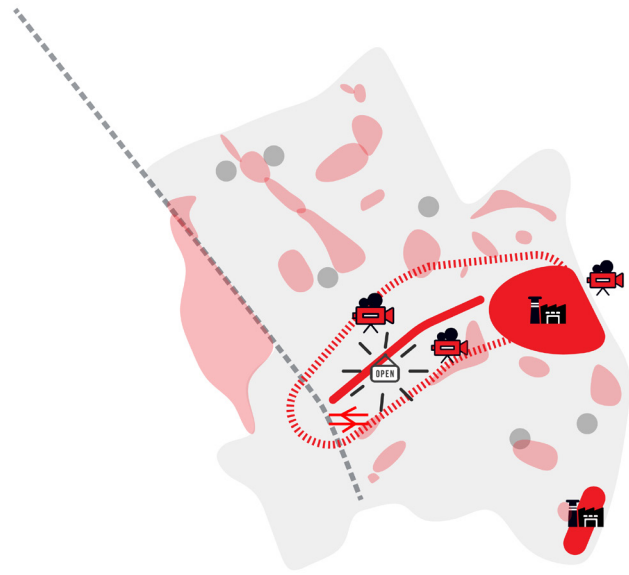
Fig 29. Elevated linear park and public thoroughfare, the Goods Line, in Sydney, Australia | designed in collaboration with ASPECT Studios and CHROFI

Fig 30. Public space design of the Santa Bárbara Square in Madrid, Spain | designed by Nieto Sobejano Arquitectos.

Fig 31. Communal space, pace University Sculpture Garden, in Manhattan, New York | designed by ECOM NYC Landscape Studio

Fig 32. 1km long activetrack, a multi-use path for running, cycling, and walking, at Sowerby Sports Village | designed by re-form landscape architecture

6 . Culture, Community Life & Prosperity



Leverage Borehamwood's unique creative economy, particularly its film and media industries, to drive growth.

This will be complemented by a focused effort to reinforce the vitality of the High Street and make significant investments in quality local employment areas to create a diverse and resilient job market.

- Creative Economic Hub: Strengthen Borehamwood's role as a leading creative and economic hub by building on its internationally significant film and television production district. Capitalise on the studios cluster as a major cultural and economic asset, reinforcing a distinctive brand for Borehamwood while improving the visibility of the industry and supporting complementary leisure, cultural, and visitor experiences linked to film and television.
- Bridge the gap between the studios and the local community by creating clear pathways for local youth employment and integration, ensuring visibility of how the "creative economy" benefits local people directly.
- Reinforce the High Street offer with additional cultural and leisure uses.
- Preserve the existing employment area and only consider the redevelopment of sites with uses less compatible with the urban settings including logistics.
- Support local businesses and community groups by ensuring affordable workspace and venue hire is available, preventing important local assets from being lost due to rising costs.
- Cater for young people by delivering varied facilities and sports, and ensuring services are affordable.

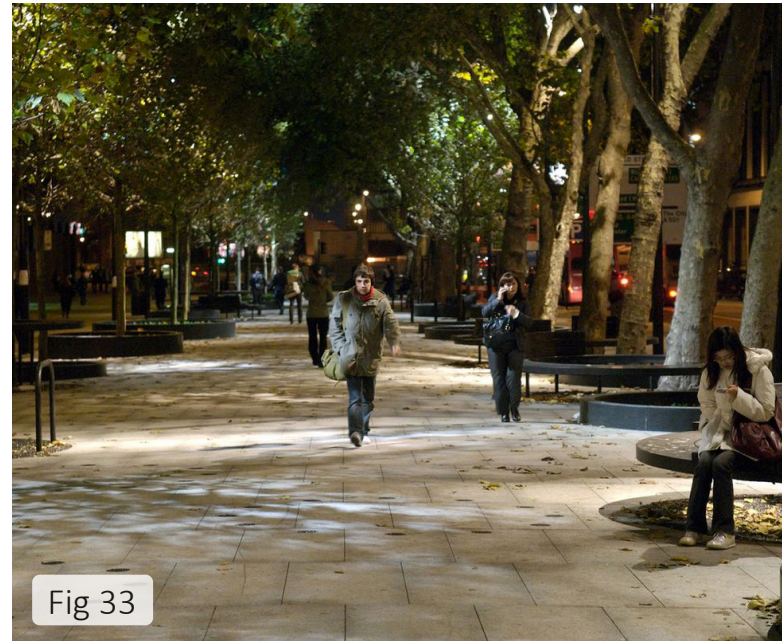


Fig 33



Fig 34

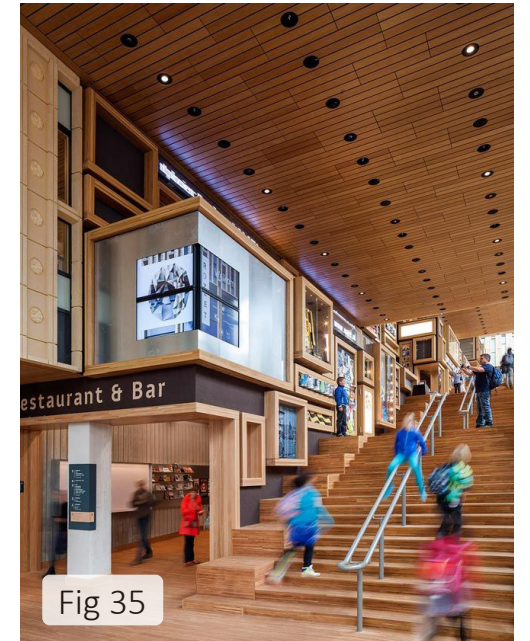


Fig 35



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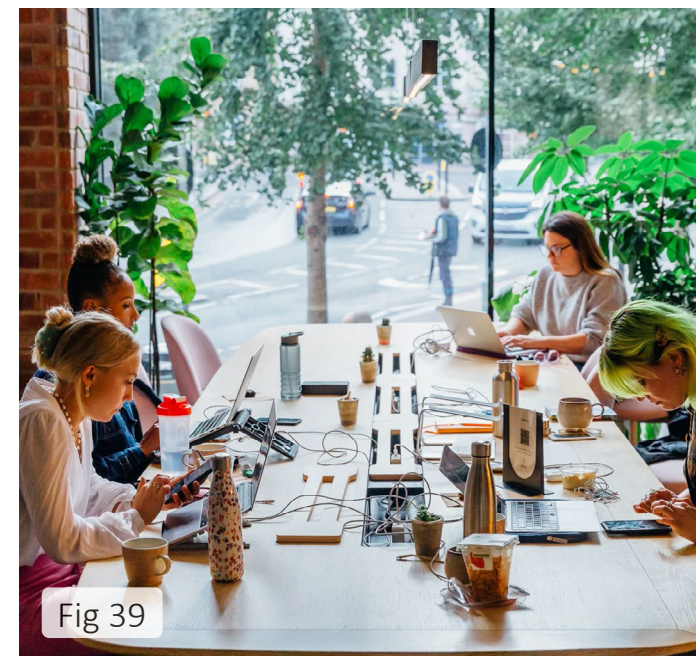


Fig 39

Fig 33. 'Promenade of Light' vibrant urban redevelopment scheme in Old Street, London | designed by architects Tonkin Liu

Fig 34. Casual, open-air dining setup under awnings in Melbourne, Australia | designed by Projects of Imagination

Fig 35. Rozet Cultural Center in Arnhem, Netherlands | designed by Neutelings Riedijk Architects,

Fig 36. Open-air cinema

Fig 37. Modular wayfinding system in Berlin | designed by nowakteufelknyrim

Fig 38. Industrial warehouse | designed by BuildGreenNewHomes

Fig 39. Uncommon workspace in the Borough area of London | designed by the interior designer David Thulstrup



Appendix

Phase 1 Engagement Summary

Borehamwood Workshop 01/12/2025

Community Identity

Improve sense of character

- Borehamwood lacks a strong identity, with variations in built form and differences between the north and south sides.
- Greater cohesion in style, architecture, and materials is desired, including higher-quality homes and construction in new developments.
- The area generally feels safe, though there is some fear or mistrust of young people coming from surrounding towns

Celebrate local community and cultural offer:

- Community theatre, clubs for older people, and opportunities for young people (e.g. more integration with Elstree Studios) are valued.
- Introduce better signage, signposting and sharing of local news and events to strengthen community engagement.

Preserve connection to the surrounding greenbelt:

- Preservation of the surrounding countryside and access to green spaces is important to maintain local character.

Town Centre and employment

Create more reasons to 'dwell' in the town centre

- Borehamwood lacks reasons to dwell in the high street. The area could be more welcoming, enjoyable and navigable.
- Residents value spaces for conversation and learning

Improve cohesion of the high street experience

- High street shops are unappealing dominated by food and there is lack of variety
- Some areas, like Shenley Road, feel shabby and unsafe. Railway bridges and surrounding areas are not welcoming for pedestrians, cyclists, or drivers.
- Cohesive shop fronts, signage, and lighting improvements would enhance the area's character and sense of place.

- Public realm improvements, including better crossings and pavement quality, greenery, benches, and community-sponsored planters, would make the high street more welcoming.

Repurpose old buildings to ensure there is town centre healthcare provision

- There is potential to repurpose unused buildings (e.g. old library or fire station) for health services, community use, or local clubs.
- Residents want more local employment opportunities. Sky and BBC exist but are not always accessible to the wider community.

Housing

Consider higher density housing in the town centre

- Greater density and taller buildings are acceptable in the town centre.

Ensure there is a good mix of home prices, tenure types and sizes

- Residents want high-spec family homes, with up to five bedrooms to suit families with children.
- There is a need for social housing and affordable rent to allow mobility, particularly for young adults. Current options are limited. Consideration could be given to ring-fencing housing for local people.
- Housing costs are currently skewed toward high-income buyers, making affordability a key concern. Mortgages tie people into areas, whereas affordable rent provides flexibility.

Restrict the amount of care homes

- Residents feel there is no need for additional 'retirement'/'care homes' for older people in the area.

Enforce strong sustainability standards in new builds

- New housing should meet high sustainability standards and maintain environmental and ecological balance.

Encourage gradual growth and infill

- Unused buildings and areas could be redeveloped for community, health or housing purposes, supporting gradual growth.

Transport & Movement

The narrow layout of roads and railway bridge restricts all modes of movement throughout Borehamwood

- Roads are narrow, in poor condition, and dangerous for cycling, congestion is a major problem, particularly around the railway bridge and roundabouts.
- Cycling is unsafe due to traffic, potholes, and narrow paths.
- Walking in the high street is difficult due to narrow pavements and obstacles like tables and signs.

Improve access to public transport

- Bus services are expensive and infrequent, making access to the town centre difficult, especially from Cowley Hill.

Consider town centre parking

- Potential loss of Parking could create further challenges for visitors and locals however it could also create opportunities for improved public realm on the high street

Green spaces

Make Aberford Park more welcoming:

- Some green spaces (e.g. Aberford Park) feel unsafe or underused, particularly for older young people, while others (e.g. Furzehill) are well-used and valued.
- Residents want more variety in sports and social activities beyond football. Some spaces could include table tennis or other facilities.

- Green spaces like Aberford Stream bring people together and provide a sense of wellbeing.

Allow community groups and residents to be involved in community planting

- Residents would like more control over planters and small public spaces to improve the environment.

Improve walking access to surrounding countryside

- Some areas are difficult to access without going through the town centre. Improving perimeter footpaths would increase usability, including in winter.

Ensure greenspaces are not over landscaped and enough space is designated for nature

- Some green areas feel overcrowded or overdeveloped, limiting opportunities for young people to simply relax or be in the space.

Acknowledge the social value of sites on the boundary of the area of study

- Strangeway Stables is an important asset, providing access to outdoor activities such as horse riding.
- Cowdy Hill Woods is an important green space for families and should be protected and maintained.

Local services

Retain and enhance access to health services

- Health provision is poor, hospitals like Barnet are overrun, and more local health services or walk-in surgeries in the centre are needed.

Improve school provision

- The area lacks sufficient secondary schools, and new

development should consider impacts on schools.

Improve access to existing community provision

- Community facilities exist but are not always accessible due to cost or location.
- The cost of living and local services for young people is high, limiting access and opportunities.

Infrastructure

Ensure new development is supported by infrastructure

- Specifically, consider the capacity of local roads and current issues with gridlock through the town centre.
- New development should consider impact on schools, sewage, flooding and overall infrastructure.

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