

The following chapters deal with the development of Crawley New Town from 1947 to the present day. In contrast to previous chapters, sub-areas in these chapters are grouped by land use and predominant house type and fall within the following classifications:-

- Neighbourhood centres / community uses
- Housing: flats and sheltered housing
- Housing: terraces
- Housing: semi-detached / detached.

6. NEW TOWN PHASE 1A

West Green, Northgate, Three Bridges, Langley Green, Pound Hill, Ifield and Southgate (east) neighbourhoods were developed quickly during the first five to ten years of New Town growth in line with the Minoprio masterplan. Langley Green is the only area that was an entirely new neighbourhood. Ifield, West Green, Northgate, Three Bridges, Southgate and Pound Hill were all new residential areas based around existing settlements. These earlier neighbourhoods follow the ideology of the original masterplan clearly; they are based around walkable neighbourhoods (houses are less than half a mile from a neighbourhood centre) and layouts are designed to discourage through traffic.

Generally neighbourhoods are bounded by major roads including the ring road. Neighbourhood distributor roads serve smaller streets off which perimeter blocks and cul-de-sacs are served.

Tinsley Lane to the north of Crawley Avenue is included within this character area due to its predominantly mid-late twentieth century character. However, it was not part of the New Town plan and is distinct in character.

6.1 Neighbourhood Centres /Community Uses

Location:

Neighbourhood centres are fairly centrally located within the neighbourhoods on neighbourhood distributor roads. They generally contain a parade of shops, clustered with a pub, church and primary school and local employment. In some areas additional primary schools are located within the residential streets. Centres are often arranged to form a square with parking off street. In comparison with some other 1950/1960s new town neighbourhood centres in the UK which suffer from poor layout, declining use and anti social behaviour, the Crawley neighbourhood centres from this period appear well used and continue to function well - West

Green is a particularly good example.

Character:

The retail parades are generally two-three storeys in height often with ground floor retail and flats above. Local shops usually including a grocers, newsagent, bookmakers and takeaway with a mix of chain and local independent stores. Buildings are early 1950s brick/render in style with some pitched and some flat roofs. Pubs and churches are stand alone buildings often on corner plots and are usually of brick. Langley Green is a good example of a typical arrangement of buildings and is one of the larger neighbourhood centres. In Ifield the school has moved from its original location breaking the planned cluster arrangement with the retail parade.

Continuity and enclosure:

In general, centres form squares around a car parking area, although some sides are open. There is a loose urban grain due to the proximity of playing fields / amenity grass which creates an open aspect.

Public realm and landscape:

The quality of the public realm varies, for example recent regeneration works to West Green have improved standards, but elsewhere public realm would benefit from updating. Trees are often included within pedestrian plazas and there are generously sized pedestrian walkways in front of the shops

Ease of movement:

Car parking dominates the public realm of the neighbourhood centres serving the retail uses. Pedestrian routes around the centres are good, and generally neighbourhood centres are linked into a network of pedestrian routes connecting into the residential streets. Some areas of raised paving present problems for disabled access but generally pedestrians are well catered for with wide pavements. Centres are served by local bus routes.

Legibility:

Centre locations on main roads are relatively easy to locate and on arrival the layout of the centres are generally legible. The scale of buildings is not considerably different to the surrounding residential streets and to that extent not very legible as the 'centre' of the neighbourhood.

Adaptability and diversity:

Several neighbourhood centres including Langley Green, Ifield, Three Bridges and Pound Hill have areas of land within the centres that have potential for infill development, leading to an intensification of development and reorganisation of parking /public realm to improve function and activity of the neighbourhood centres.

Opportunities and threats:

The local centres are set-pieces of the New Town masterplan and continue to be relatively successful. Where opportunities exist, any infill or redevelopment should respect the heritage of the early New Town layout and avoid insensitive infill or rearrangement of land uses. Development should also be careful to avoid increasing the dominance of road infrastructure or over engineering traffic solutions.

6.2 Housing : Flats and Sheltered Housing

Location:

Flats form small pockets within neighbourhoods where houses are the dominant typology. Generally, but not exclusively located adjacent to neighbourhood centres / schools. Pockets of flats in Langley Green are located to the west of London Road at the edge of the neighbourhood.

Sunnymead flats are a standalone grouping designated as a Conservation Area. A Conservation Area Statement provides further detail.

Character:

Flats are generally two - three storey, with occasional four storey blocks

with a mix of shallow pitch and flat roofs. Sheltered housing takes a flatted form. Brick or concrete with red tile hanging or white / brown painted timber cladding to elevations. Quality is generally poorer than the houses, with concrete buildings showing signs of decline (e.g. Sunnymead).

Each group of flats has a bespoke layout and they are markedly different to the house dominated streets. Flats can form a distinctive set-piece within a neighbourhood – an example of which is the Y shaped flats of Sunnymead Conservation Area.

Continuity and enclosure:

Flat groups sit within the general street layout but blocks are often at unusual angles to the street and do not directly address it, reducing continuity and enclosure.

Some blocks have large communal spaces to the front which form an open aspect to the street. Boundaries are generally poorly defined or non-existent creating difficult semi-public areas.

Public realm and landscape:

Flats generally have large communal areas many of which have mature trees, for example the flats on Ifield Drive, Ifield which are arranged around treed lawns. Public realm is utilitarian with parking and small areas of amenity lawn.

Ease of movement:

Some flats are accessed via pedestrian walks off street, however pedestrian access is relatively good with no deck access. Parking is relatively limited with some off street surface parking courts accessed from the street.

Legibility:

Flats form local landmarks to a certain degree due to their increased height in comparison to adjacent housing areas. In particular the Y shaped flats on Sunnymead Road which are 3 storey and pink and white render.

Adaptability and diversity:

Mono use area with limited potential for adaptability of built form but potential for improved functionality of public realm areas for example introducing play equipment, sports, planted gardens or car parking.

Opportunities and threats:

The public realm surrounding flats is often lacking in privacy and function with poor definition of public / private boundaries. There is an opportunity to investigate improvements in quality for example introducing new planting, street furniture, lighting or facilities for the flats such as car parking, play space or gardens. Boundary treatments could also be improved to define areas of private space for residents.

6.3 Housing: Terraces

Location:

The dominant housing type across the New Town phase 1a neighbourhoods.

Character:

Monotonous, two storey, generally short runs of terrace properties arranged on curving perimeter blocks which often have the addition of a cul-de-sac within the block. Occasional use of longer terrace blocks with a crescent form or a perimeter of houses arranged around a square which may be pedestrian-only access. Arrangement of fronts and backs is generally good, in secure perimeter blocks, but in some cases properties back on to open space unsatisfactorily e.g. Honeysuckle Lane, Langley Green. Roofs are almost all pitched, with chimneys and generally of brick and white render. In contrast to Victorian terraces, houses are lower, wider, with low pitched roofs emphasising the horizontal rather than the vertical.

Continuity and enclosure:

Continuity is fairly strong although in some areas wide verges, set-backs and properties at an angle to the street break the sense of enclosure. Short runs of terraces form a rhythmic arrangement.

Public realm and landscape:

Streets are dominated by grassed verges which create an open 'green' aspect to the neighbourhoods although they have no formal play or recreation function. However in narrower streets they are often used for informal car parking which destroys the quality, and creates an unattractive streetscape.

Parks are in some cases arranged along natural landscape features such as woodland e.g. Ewhurst Wood in West Green Park. Often where woodland corridors are retained, the housing layouts have not responded to them positively and in many areas woodland is now to the rear of development. Public realm is utilitarian.

Allotments are provided across the neighbourhoods and often form the protected centre of a perimeter block. Houses generally have small front gardens some of which have been paved for parking, and medium sized rear gardens. Streets are generally not tree lined and tree planting is informal or within landscape corridors.

Ease of movement:

Some houses have pedestrian-only access to their front doors via a short walk from the street, particularly where the houses front onto parks. Generally however houses have vehicle access from the street and pedestrian and vehicle access is not segregated. The looping road arrangements may encourage car travel although the area is served by local bus routes. Parking is generally on street although some properties have integral garages / car ports, driveways or small communal garage courts. Informal parking on pavements and grass verges causes problems and creates a car dominated street scene on many roads.

Legibility:

Housing along neighbourhood distributor and minor roads is of the same scale and style, limiting legibility and creating a monotonous environment.

No notable landmarks.

Adaptability and diversity:

Potential for extension of individual properties within larger gardens.

Opportunities and threats:

Look to formalise parking arrangements and bring grass verges into functional uses. Garage courts and poorly overlooked open space, for example Rushetts Road, Langley Green could form the focus for a regeneration programme to include improved surveillance and security.

6.4 Housing: Semi-detached/ detached

Location:

Pockets or corridors of semi-detached houses often, but not always, located towards the edge of the neighbourhoods.

Character:

Very similar in style to the terrace character i.e. monotonous, two storey, and arranged on curving perimeter blocks. Houses are generally semi-detached, with few detached properties and have pitched roofs with chimneys. Materials are generally brick and white render.

Ifield contains the moated Ewhurst Place a remnant farm house which is listed and a scheduled ancient monument. Rusper Road, Ifield has an unusual character, having detached properties with steeply pitched roofs and gable ends fronting the street.

Continuity and enclosure:

Continuity is fairly strong although in some areas wide verges, set-backs and properties at an angle to the street break the sense of enclosure.

Public realm and landscape:

The areas is dominated by grassed verges which are both destroyed by car parking and are not functional public open space. Functional green space

is generally private, the most notable being the landscaped gardens of Ewhurst Place, Ifield.

Public realm is utilitarian. Houses generally have small – medium sized front gardens some of which have been paved for parking, and medium- large sized rear gardens.

Ease of movement:

Vehicle and pedestrian access is to the front with parking on street or within plot. Properties are more likely to have front drives and garages than in the terrace areas. Parking on grass verges causes nuisance and is an unattractive element within the street scene.

Generally in more fringe locations but still within walking distance of local centres and public transport in most cases.

Legibility:

Ewhurst Place, Ifield is a notable historic building although relatively hidden from view by mature vegetation. The nearby Crawley Hospital towers over the semi-detached area around Meadowlands, West Green. Generally, however there are few residential landmarks and legibility is relatively poor.

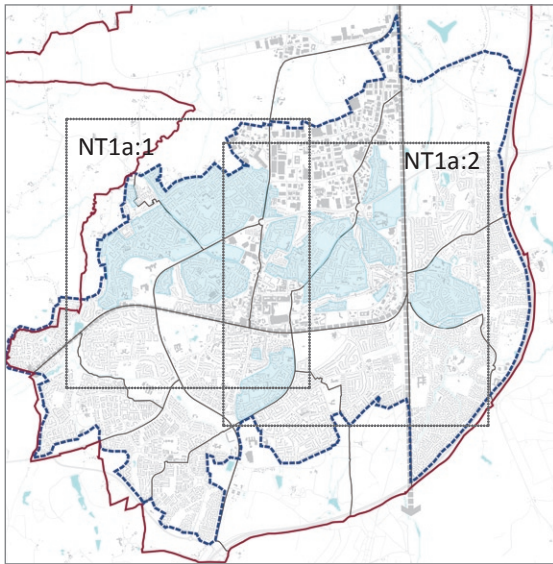
Adaptability and diversity:

Potential for extension of properties with larger gardens.

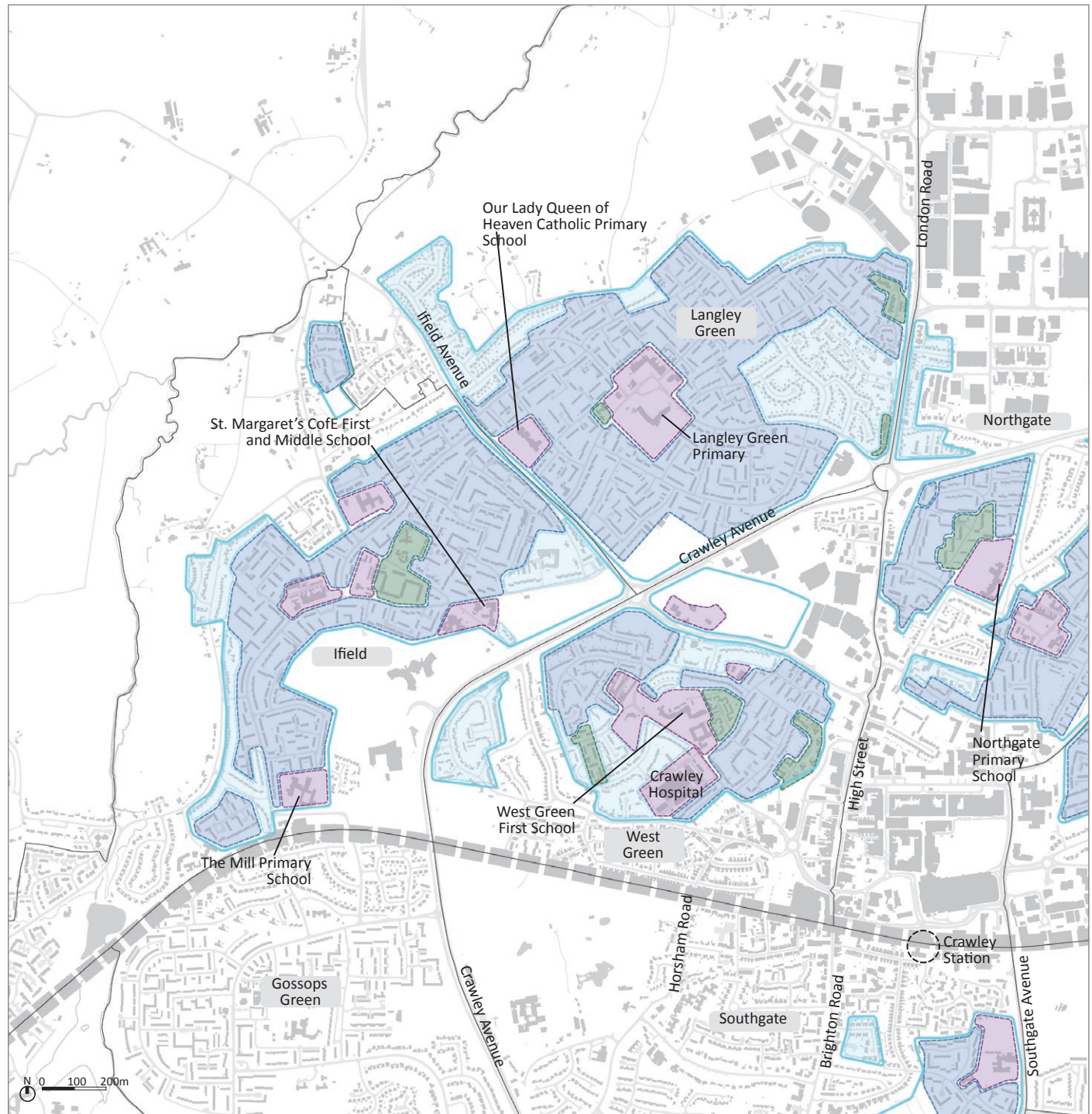
Opportunities and threats:

Further detailed study of the role of grassed amenity space in these neighbourhoods could identify opportunities for improvements to verges through planting, or opportunities to remove verges where parking is in particular shortage and the value of the verges has already been degraded.

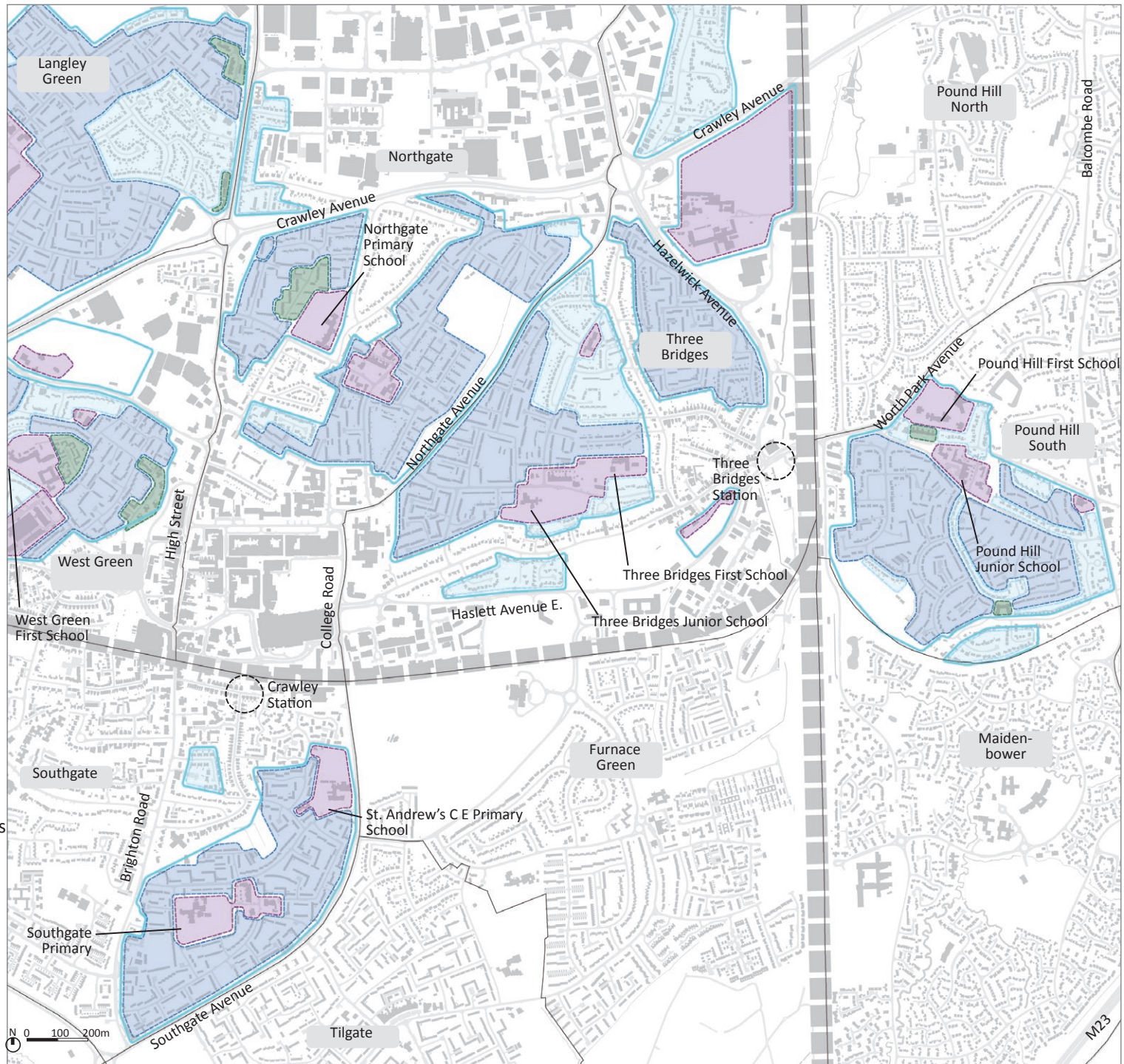
Fig 23: Character Area details:
New Town phase 1a 01: Sub areas



- New Town Phase 1a Character Area
- Neighbourhood centres/Community uses
- Housing: Flats and sheltered Housing
- Housing: Terraces
- Housing: Semi detached/detached



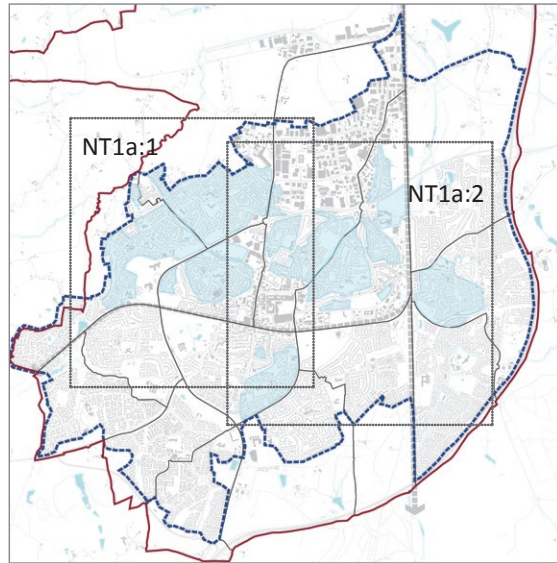
NT1a:1: Ifield/Langley Green/West Green



NT1a:2: Northgate/Southgate/Three Bridges.Pound Hill

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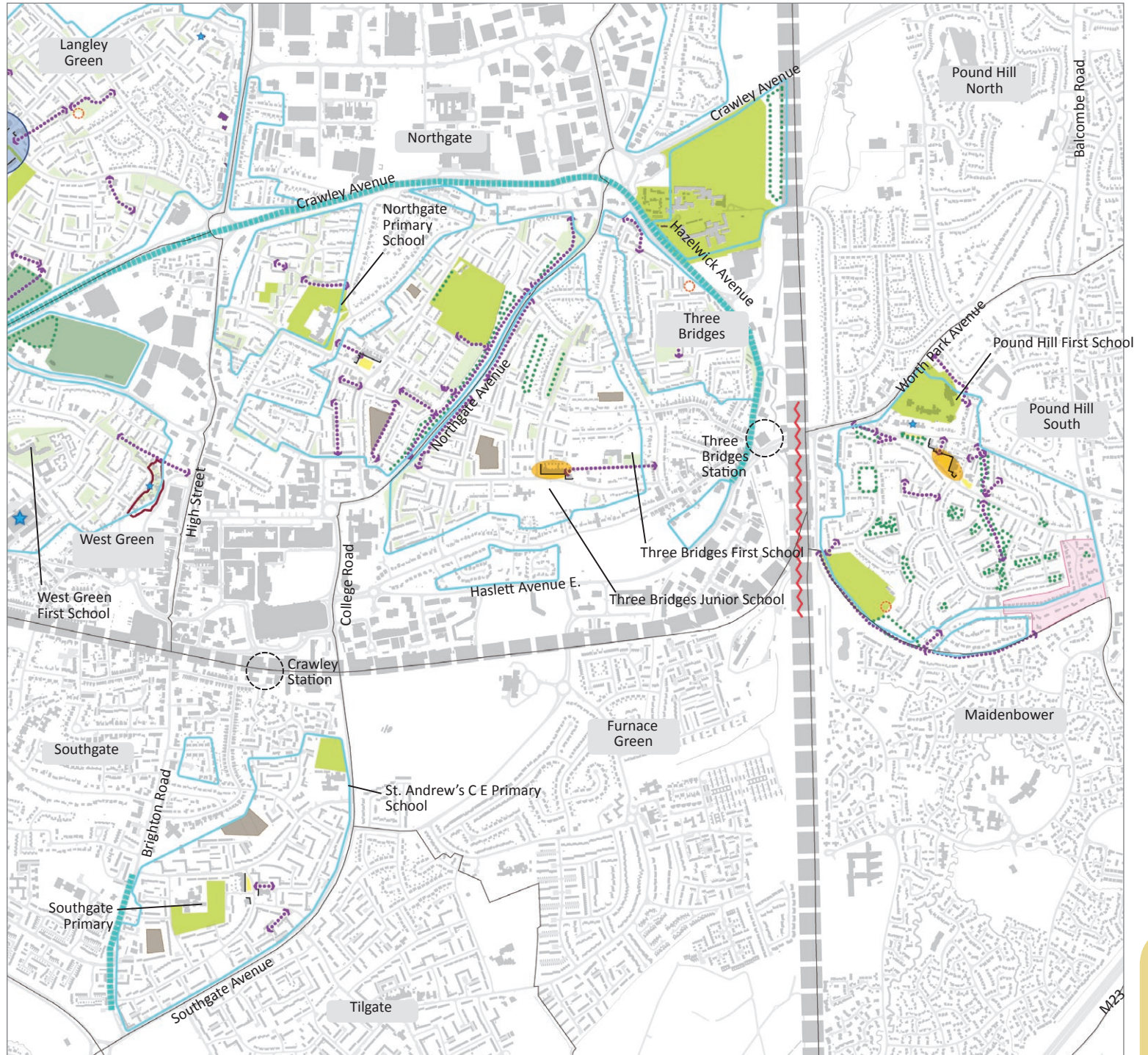
Fig 23: Character Area details:
New Town phase 1a 02: Policy & Analysis



- New Town Phase 1a Character Area
- Opportunity for public realm improvements & infill development at neighbourhood centres
- Potential for increased pedestrian priority
- Negative edges
- Key frontages
- Designated Footpaths
- Pedestrian only connections
- Sports Pitches/recreation ground
- Allotments
- Amenity space
- Parks
- Natural green edge to settlement
- Tree lined routes
- Childrens Play
- Surface CP
- Landmarks
- Listed Buildings
- Conservation Areas
- Areas of Special Environmental Quality
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- Neighbourhood Centre Renewal



NT1a:1: Ifield/Langley Green/West Green



For legend see page 84

NT1a:2: Northgate/Southgate/Three Bridges.Pound Hill

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Fig 24: Character Area details: New Town phase 1a
Photos - Neighbourhood centres/Community Uses



IMG_3235
Ifield Drive
Ifield



IMG_3187
Langley Parade
Langley Green



IMG_2993
Ewhurst Road / West Green Drive
West Green



IMG_3090
Ifield Avenue / Ewhurst Road
West Green



IMG_3120
Woodfield Road / Barnfield Road
Northgate

Fig 24: Character Area details: New Town phase 1a
Photos - Neighbourhood centres/Community Uses



IMG_3658
Wakehurst Drive / Collier Row
Southgate



IMG_4014
Crossways / Hermits Road
Three Bridges



IMG_4020
Gales Drive
Three Bridges



IMG_3813
Worth Road
Pound Hill / Worth

Fig 24: Character Area details: New Town phase 1a
Photos - Housing: Flats and sheltered Housing



IMG_3010
Ewhurst Road near Ginhams Road
West Green



IMG_0228
Sunnymead
West Green



IMG_3162
Oakway
Northgate

Fig 24: Character Area details: New Town phase 1a
Photos - Housing: Terraces



IMG_3231
Warren Drive / Lancing Close
Ifield



IMG_3234
Ifield Drive / Warren Drive
Ifield



IMG_3189
Rushetts Road
Langley Green



IMG_3192
Langley Drive near Honeysuckle Lane
Langley Green



IMG_3169
off Martyrs Avenue
Langley Green

Fig 24: Character Area details: New Town phase 1a
Photos - Housing: Terraces



IMG_2995
Copse Crescent
West Green



IMG_3002
Reynolds Road / Ewhurst Road
West Green



IMG_3101
Ifield Avenue / Ewhurst Road
West Green



IMG_3130
North Close / Shaws Road
Northgate



IMG_3128
Shaws Road
Northgate



IMG_3154
Railey Road
Northgate



IMG_3155
Railey Road
Northgate



IMG_4025
Gales Drive between Ridgesides & Broomdashers Rd
Three Bridges



IMG_4037
Priors Walk
Three Bridges

Fig 24: Character Area details: New Town phase 1a
Photos - Housing: Terraces



IMG_3835
Alicia Avenue
Pound Hill



IMG_3656
Wakehurst Drive
Southgate



IMG_3670
Southgate Drive / Baker Close
Southgate



IMG_3808
Worth Road
Pound Hill



IMG_3830
Banks Road
Pound Hill

Fig 24: Character Area details: New Town phase 1a
Photos - Housing: Semi detached/ detached



IMG_3242
off Climping Road
Ifield



IMG_3001
Reynolds Road / Ewhurst Road
West Green



IMG_3823
Blackwater Lane
Pound Hill / Worth



IMG_3096
Ifield Avenue / Little Crabtree
West Green



IMG_4017
Crossways / Forge Road
Three Bridges