

7. NEW TOWN PHASE 1B

This chapter covers the later development phase of the original nine neighbourhoods identified in the Minoprio masterplan (1948), namely Tilgate and Gossops Green. These areas were built as completely new neighbourhoods with Gossops Green designed to attract more affluent settlers to Crawley. Tilgate was started in 1956 and Gossops Green in 1958. Gossops Green was the last of the nine original neighbourhoods to be developed.

Although very similar in character to the New Town Phase 1a areas, the later phase has a more rectilinear layout with long runs of terraces and a greater proportion of amenity grassland, verges and left over space.

This chapter also includes Furnace Green (originally Tilgate East) which was identified as a possible future expansion area in the original masterplan and was designated for housing in 1961. Although building did not commence here until around 1968, the layout of the area is generally more similar in style to Tilgate and Gossops Green than to the phase 2 neighbourhoods covered in the next chapter. Some of the later schemes within Furnace Green are included in the next chapter however, due to their experimental layout.

7.1 Neighbourhood Centres / Community Uses

Location:

Central to the neighbourhood accessed off main through roads.

Character:

Neighbourhood centres include similar elements to the earlier neighbourhood centres i.e. retail parade, church, school, pub and car parking, but have greater variation in their layout.

Tilgate is a larger retail parade which takes the form of a three storey crescent with pubs and church in an adjacent block. Schools in Tilgate

are located a walk away from the retail centre towards the edge of the neighbourhood.

Gossops Green follows the earlier arrangement of an off-street, three storey, rectangular arrangement of retail but the church and pub are located in the centre of the square and car parking is located to the side rather than in front of the retail. Both centres have residential units above the ground floor retail. Buildings are generally brick, with tile hanging and pitched roofs; the Windmill pub at Gossops Green has white painted timber cladding. Gossops Green is located on a commanding hillside site with views down the slope.

Furnace Green has a smaller centre designed on a typical rectangular layout with adjacent flats and church.

Continuity and enclosure:

Continuity is strong; the crescent in Tilgate is especially effective. Gossops Green is a weaker urban layout; the car park creating a gap in enclosure and amenity grass areas adding to the open character.

Public realm and landscape:

Gossops Green segregates pedestrian and traffic access. Access from the shops to the car park is via a short covered walkway. The central grassed area is not particularly useable due to level changes, although does serve as the beer garden to the pub. Tilgate public realm is tired and could do with improvement. Furnace Green has a central car park which is lowered from the main pedestrian route.

All centres are adjacent to amenity grassland which appears to be of limited functional value.

Ease of movement:

Parking is provided at each centre and they are accessible by bus, however due to changes in level, disabled access between parking and retail can

be poor e.g. Furnace Green parade. Streets and footpaths connect the neighbourhood centres to the residential streets effectively.

Legibility:

Tilgate crescent forms a local landmark, as does the Windmill pub at Gossops Green due to its unusual cladding and hilltop location. All centres are in central locations and on main roads which aids legibility although there is poor sense of hierarchy in terms of building scale and massing.

Adaptability and diversity:

Shops are fully occupied by a range of local and chain shops. There may be opportunities for infill development at Furnace Green due to the loose urban grain and potential for redevelopment of poor quality buildings.

Summary and Recommendations:

Detailed studies could assess the potential to increase activity in the local centres through infill development. Public realm and green infrastructure could be improved, especially in the Tilgate and Gossops Green areas to provide an improved setting for retail and community uses. Areas of retained amenity grassland could be given a clearer function as play areas or community gardens.

7.2 Housing: Flats and Sheltered Housing

Location:

Gossops Green neighbourhood contains a grouping of flats on Highams Hill and sheltered housing within a woodland setting at Woodhurstlea Close. Furnace Green has flats opposite the neighbourhood centre on Weald Green and also to the north of the neighbourhood off Greenacres. Tilgate contains flats at Wren Court adjacent to the neighbourhood centre.

Character:

Gossops Green flats at Highams Hill are four storey, T-shaped, standalone blocks set in the landscape, arranged at an angle to the street, with storage

/ drying areas to the side. Buildings are brick clad with coloured paint clad panels below windows and have shallow pitched roofs with chimneys. Highams Hill is in an elevated position and the flats are a visible feature in the surrounding area.

The character of sheltered housing at Woodhurstlea Close is dominated by the location within a wooded landscape. Buildings themselves are brick and two storey in height.

Furnace Green flats are two or three storey, stand alone blocks within smaller amenity grassed areas and are relatively well integrated into the street. Buildings have shallow pitched roofs with brick and timber cladding.

Continuity and enclosure:

Highams Hill flats are arranged at an angle to the street and do not create a strong sense of enclosure or continuity with adjacent houses. Woodhurstlea Close sheltered housing is developed in a cul-de-sac, with poor integration with adjacent areas. Furnace Green flats are relatively well integrated into the street.

Public realm and landscape:

The landscape setting at Highams Hill is amenity grassland which is well maintained but of low functional use. Woodhurstlea woodland forms the setting for sheltered housing and is a dominant feature in the local landscape. Furnace Green public realm is comprised of lawns and trees and is of average standard for the neighbourhood.

Ease of movement:

Access to the flats is generally via footpaths with parking on-street. Furnace Green has garage courts off-street. Sheltered housing is accessed from the street and has a surface parking court.

Legibility:

Highams Hill flats form a local landmark due to their height and location

and flats close to the neighbourhood centres are beneficial in increasing the scale and density adjacent to the centres of activity.

Adaptability and diversity:

Where amenity grassed areas surround the flat blocks there is potential to look at increasing their value to residents - this could include increased planting, community gardens, play space or sports areas or improved car parking and storage.

Opportunities and threats:

As discussed above there is potential to make improvements to parking, access and public realm which could link into wider neighbourhood strategies considering the role of amenity grassland.

7.3 Housing: Terraces

Location:

Terraces are the dominant housing type in Tilgate and amount to around two thirds of the housing in Gossops Green and around half of all housing in Furnace Green located around Sylvan Road and Greenacres.

Character:

Monotonous, two storey, long runs of terrace properties arranged in right angled perimeters occasionally around squares or green spaces. Occasional use of crescent and shorter runs of terraces. Block arrangement is rectangular but not consistently perimeter blocks – some arrangements have backs fronting onto parking courts or onto the fronts of adjacent properties (indicating a move towards a Radburn style of layout more typical of 1960s developments); or are arranged at right angles to the street.

Pedestrian and vehicle access is generally not segregated although access to properties may be via a short pedestrian walk from a garage court. Properties have pitched roofs and materials include brick, painted brick and

render.

Continuity and enclosure:

Continuity and enclosure are weakened by the extensive green verges, large property set -backs, land taken up by garage courts and surface car parking, and the angular and irregular arrangements of blocks to the street which result in blank facades / fences fronting the street.

Public realm and landscape:

The public areas are dominated by large grassed verges which are often degraded due to informal car parking and have limited amenity value. There are many grassed squares and larger communal recreation areas to the front or rear of the residential block structure which have low-medium functional value (i.e. lack sports or play equipment) and when to the rear, suffer through lack of overlooking and surveillance for example Oxford/ Winchester Road block, Tilgate.

Major landscape elements for example Bewbush Water Gardens, Gossops Green and Tilgate Park are poorly addressed by built frontage, having standard low rise houses fronting or in some case backing onto the green space. Tree planting is ad hoc or relating to historic field boundaries and remnant woodlands.

Furnace Green has fewer grass verges and increased number of small grassed squares and parking courts/rear garages accessed off a rear service road e.g. Sylvan Road.

Rear gardens are generally small to medium in size, with a range of front garden sizes. Few front gardens are paved due to a lack of access over grass verges which is a positive feature that contributes to the green character of the area.

Ease of movement:

Many houses have pedestrian-only access to their front doors via a short

walk from the street. There are many garage courts often within the centre of the block suffering from poor surveillance. Parking is possible on street and on plot. Informal parking on pavements / grass verges causes problems and creates a car dominated street scene on many roads.

Legibility:

The monotonous scale and style of housing, which does not follow a hierarchy of place limits legibility.

Adaptability and diversity:

Some potential for individual property expansion into larger rear gardens or rearrangement of public realm and garage courts to release land for infill development.

Opportunities and threats:

Opportunities to formalise parking arrangements and bring grass verges into more functional use could be established through detailed study, which might also include identifying areas which would benefit from additional planting and more formal use of green spaces. Garage courts and poorly overlooked open spaces may benefit from improvement and increased security. Opportunities for new development to front onto key parks could be explored.

The large proportion of left over space / verges may offer potential for regeneration and development subject to selective clearance to open up larger sites. However this would require a detailed study and would not be appropriate in all areas. Furnace Green has a tighter configuration limiting opportunities to infill on rear sites.

7.4 Housing: Semi-detached / detached

Location:

The area contains large pockets of semi-detached housing built by private developers on larger plots at the northern edge of Tilgate around

Livingstone Road and in areas of Gossops Green north (The Croft and Hillmead) and south (Buckwood Drive). This group also includes a pocket of development north of the railway line in Ifield (The Millbank) which shares similar characteristics.

In Furnace Green semi-detached and detached houses make up around half of the overall housing mix but were designed in a similar style to the terrace properties.

Character:

Character varies considerably within this group. Tilgate and Furnace Green semi-detached/detached properties follow a garden suburb 1950s style layout with curved perimeter blocks and cul-de-sacs. Buildings are 2 storey with shallow pitched roofs and brick /render elevations.

Northern Gossops Green around Nurserylands is later in construction and style with shallow pitched roofs and larger spacing between properties. Ifield north of the railway and the southern areas of Gossops Green around Buckwood Drive have a greater proportion of detached properties, many of which have a distinctive steeply pitched roofs with gable ends fronting the street in a Scandinavian or chalet style.

Properties off Buckwood Drive, Gossops Green follow a cul-de-sac layout suggesting they are of later construction.

Continuity and enclosure:

The loose but regular street edge and continuous character creates a good sense of continuity although enclosure is weak due to the low rise nature and wide streets with verges creating an open character which is attractive. Properties on Tintern /Woburn Roads are laid out informally with a poor relationship to the street and a lack of continuity.

Public realm and landscape:

Buckwood Drive, Gossops Green is dominated by large grassed verges and

front gardens broken by paved access to driveways allowing vehicle access to property parking in many areas creating an attractive open character. In Tilgate, grass verges are concentrated along the centre of roads rather than on pavements and properties have large front gardens some of which have been converted to driveways. Gossops Green properties have large rear gardens whereas gardens in Tilgate are smaller and constrained by the overall small dimensions of the perimeter block.

There is evidence of historic field boundary trees and woodland retained within private gardens or as landscape corridors within the development bringing a green character to the area despite a general lack of street trees.

Ease of movement:

Parking is generally on plot with many properties having drives or garages. On street parking also occurs and some areas have parking areas laid out at the end of the cul-de-sac e.g. Woburn Road, Gossops Green. Pedestrian access is by street pavements, but car borne travel is dominant due to the cul-de-sac dead ends and curved neighbourhood roads creating less direct walking routes to adjacent areas than in areas based on a stronger grid layout.

Legibility:

The detached chalet style housing is distinctive within Crawley however there are no notable built landmarks. Blocks of woodland and mature trees form local landmarks in the landscape.

Adaptability and diversity:

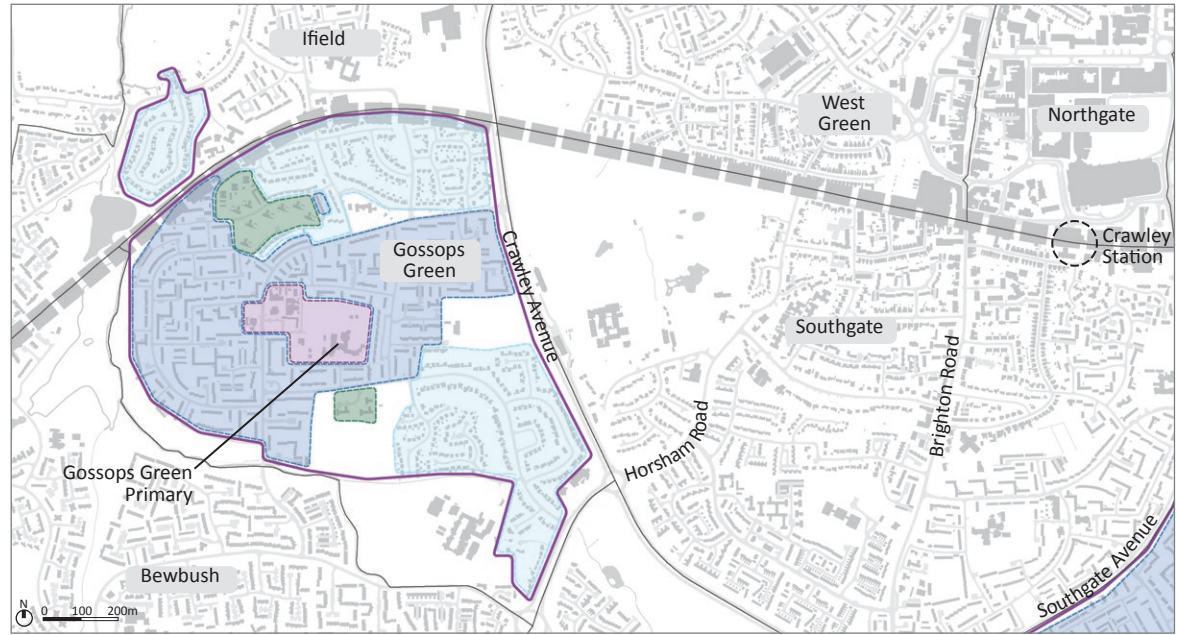
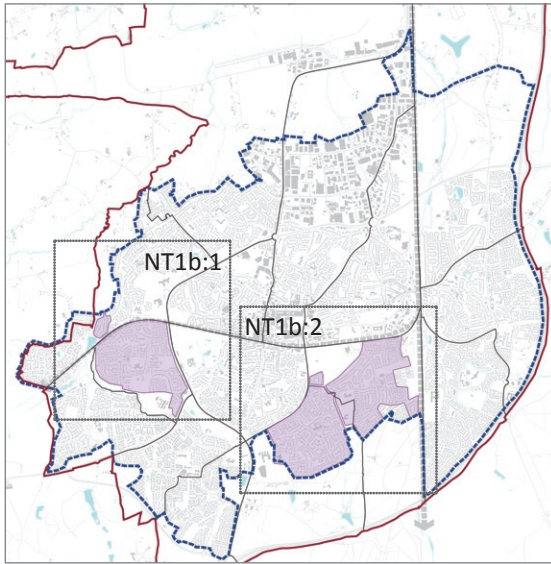
The areas are exclusively residential. There may be some potential for extension of individual properties within larger gardens and plots.

Opportunities and threats:

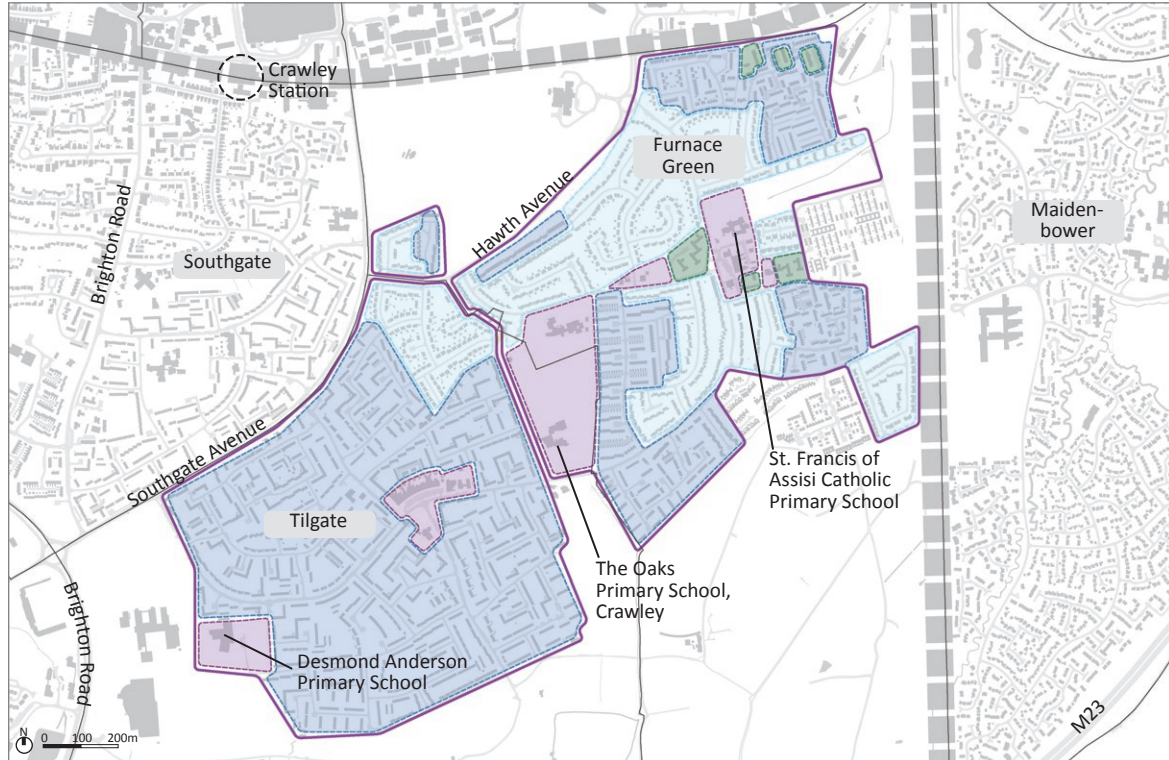
As with the majority of residential areas, tackling parking and finding more functional use for left over landscape areas may offer potential benefits.

However these neighbourhood areas are generally performing well, are well maintained and attractive residential environments.

Fig 25: Character Area details:
New Town phase 1b 01: Sub areas



NT1b:1: Gossops Green



NT1b:2: Tilgate/Furnace Green






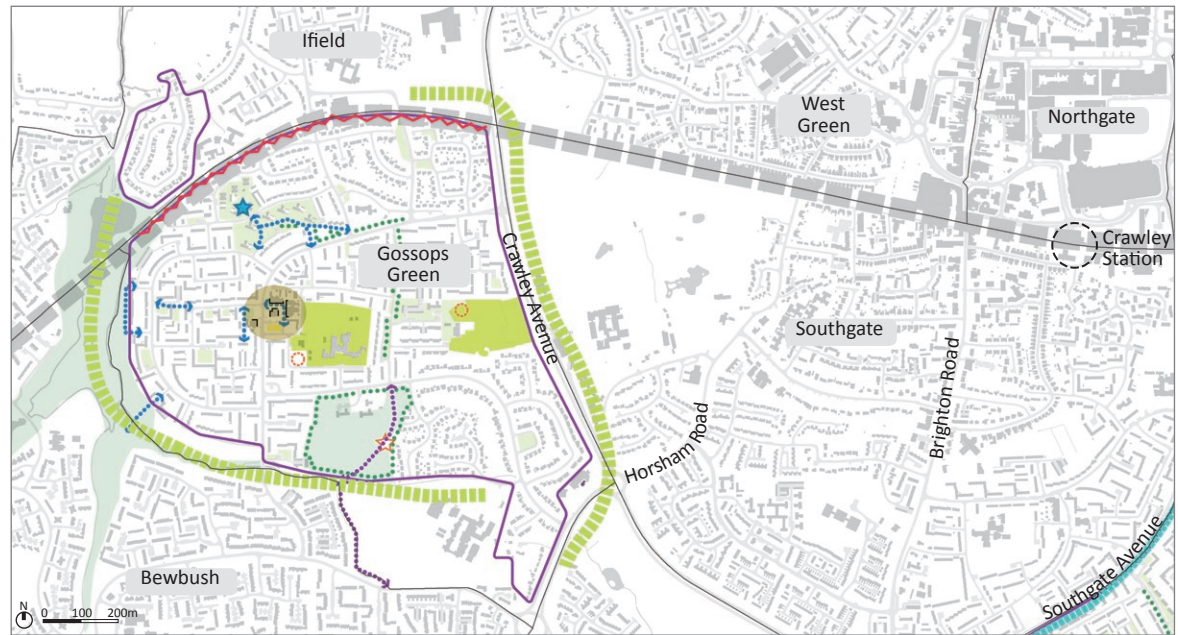
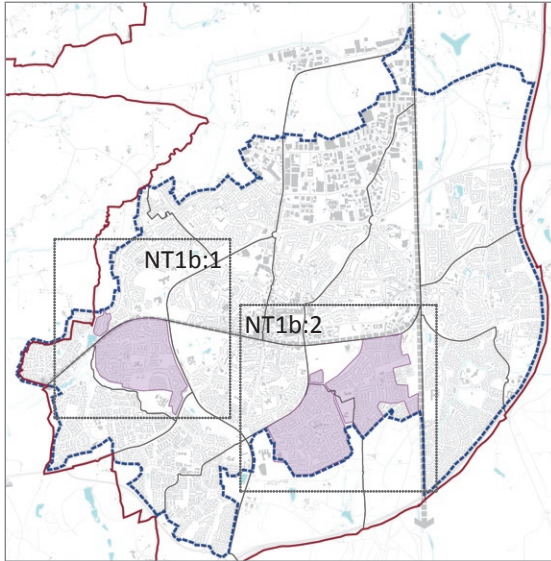
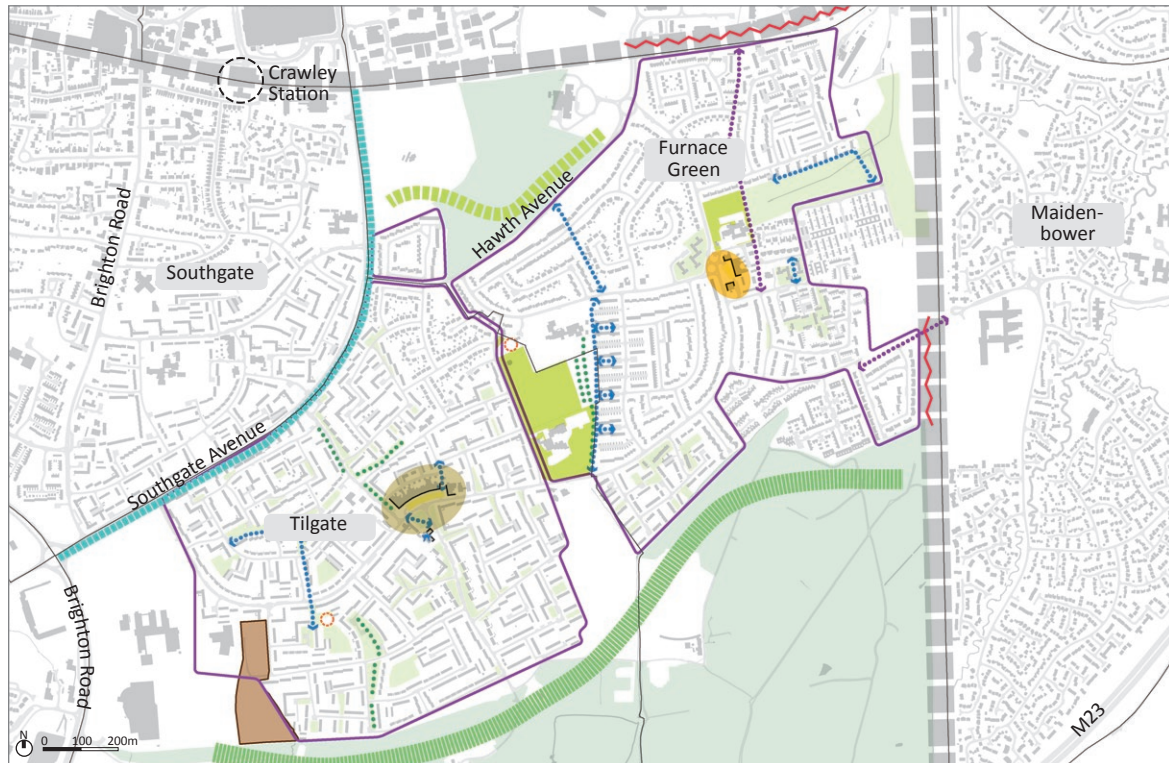
-  New Town Phase 1b Character Area
-  Neighbourhood centres/Community uses
-  Housing: Flats and sheltered Housing
-  Housing: Terraces
-  Housing: Semi detached/detached

Fig 25: Character Area details:
New Town phase 1b 02: Policy & Analysis



NT1b:1: Gossops Green



NT1b:2: Tilgate/Furnace Green

- New Town Phase 1b Character Area
- Potential for increased pedestrian priority
- Natural green edge to settlement
- Wooded corridor / open space corridor
- Negative edges
- Opportunity for infill development /public realm improvements
- Opportunity for public realm improvements
- Key frontages
- Designated Footpaths
- Pedestrian only connections
- Sports Pitches/recreation ground
- Amenity space
- Parks
- Tree lined routes
- Childrens Play
- Surface CP
- Landmarks
- Listed Buildings
- Strategic Housing development opportunity sites
- Neighbourhood Centre Renewal
- Archeological Sensitive Areas

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Fig 26: Character Area details:
New Town phase 1b Photos - Neighbourhood centres/Community Uses



IMG_0098
Tilgate Parade
Tilgate



IMG_3526
Tilgate Parade
Tilgate



IMG_3640
The Glade / Furnace Drive
Furnace Green



IMG_3567
Furnace Parade
Furnace Green



IMG_3273
Gossops Drive / Medway Road
Gossops Green

Fig 26: Character Area details:
New Town phase 1b Photos - Housing: Flats and sheltered Housing



IMG_3296
Highams Hill
Gossops Green



IMG_3328
Woodhurstlea Close
Gossops Green



IMG_3570
Ashburnham Road
Furnace Green

Fig 26: Character Area details:

New Town phase 1b

Photos - Housing: Terraces



IMG_3307
Rother Crescent near Cherwell Walk
Gossops Green



IMG_3321
Gossops Drive
Gossops Green



IMG_3564
Shackleton Road / Rhodes Way
Tilgate



IMG_3322
Gossops Drive / Rother Crescent
Gossops Green



IMG_3534
Titmus Drive / Hogarth Road
Tilgate

Fig 26: Character Area details:
New Town phase 1b Photos - Housing: Semi detached/ detached



IMG_3290
Nurserylands
Gossops Green



IMG_3287
Gossops Green Lane
Gossops Green



IMG_3345
Buckwood Drive
Gossops Green



IMG_3356
Buckwood Drive
Gossops Green



IMG_3618
The Glade
Furnace Green



IMG_3573
Weald Drive / Ashburnham Road
Furnace Green



IMG_3624
Walesbeech
Furnace Green