

Mill Green Charrette



*Post Charrette Paper
September 2011*

You may have been one of many residents or friends of Mill Green who took the time to visit or become involved with the Mill Green Charrette over three days during mid-September at Mill Green Museum.

The Charrette's purpose was to give residents of Mill Green the opportunity to discuss the problems Mill Green faces, and allow a full and open discussion on how to improve the built environment whilst also creating a stronger village community.

Whilst resources precluded setting up a full design studio at Mill Green, staff from Hatfield Park Estate and Brooks Murray Architects were present throughout the three days, and proposals were prepared based upon comments and feedback received.

Each night the latest thoughts were presented to residents and other attendees. These were steadily refined throughout the three day period.

Generally speaking, people responded very positively to the opportunity to consider ways in which village facilities can be rejuvenated, the museum strengthened, open spaces improved or landscaped and new development sympathetically incorporated within the village envelope.

We are delighted to present the initial conclusions of our deliberations.

This paper sets out the work the team undertook during the Charrette. It presents some of the requests that resulted from discussions with residents, together with the design team's site analyses and draft ideas together with the proposals presented on the final day.

We hope that this booklet clearly illustrates the discussions which took place. We will of course be pleased to answer any queries which might arise in the weeks preceeding future meetings.

The proposals include a variety of improvements and changes that could be incorporated at Mill Green. These might

be introduced as separate projects over time or subject to viability and widespread support, more rapidly and together. As stated throughout the Charrette, any improvements at Mill Green can only happen with the widespread support of the community. It is inevitable that following the publication of this paper, people will wish to offer further feedback.

It is intended that a further meeting will be arranged later this year. Subject to further positive feedback, the proposals will be refined and presented to Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council in order that possibilities for necessary planning consents can be positively explored.

We are enjoying the reaction that the Charrette has provoked to date and greatly encouraged by the degree to which residents and other friends of Mill Green are engaging in the process.

The process does not stop here, this being only the first part of what might become a new chapter in Mill Green's history. We very much hope that you will continue to take part in future meetings and as we move on to further stages.

Peter Clegg and Anthony Downs

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Project Goals

Much discussion during the Charrette centred upon the existing environment at Mill Green and options for improving it.

Prior to the first presentation at Mill Green Museum, several residents had kindly completed a questionnaire providing a valuable first impression of people's concerns.

This initial feedback and points raised during the Charrette provided a backdrop as to what people perceive as current problems, how these problems might be solved, and which improvements would be widely supported.

Subjects of particular concern included;

- A lack of a pub or social meeting place for the village residents.
- Poor street lighting
- Noise from the A414
- Untidy and overgrown green space
- Concerns over long term funding for the Museum.

All of these concerns were given balanced consideration throughout the Charrette. It was highlighted that many of these requests would require significant capital outlay.

If this funding is to be found, it is likely that a limited quantity of enabling development would be required.

Consideration was given to what form this might take and how it might best be incorporated within the existing village envelope.



A summary of completed questionnaire:

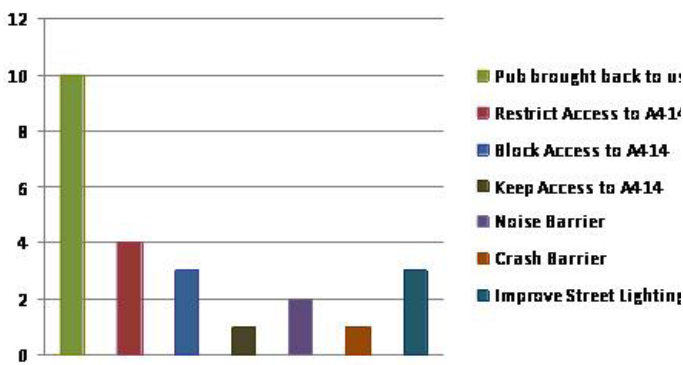
What you liked:

- The ambience of the area
- The community
- The historic context

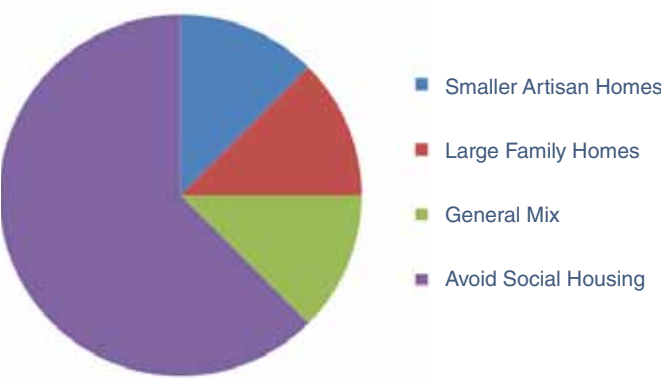
What you disliked:

- Poor amenities
- Slow development of forge

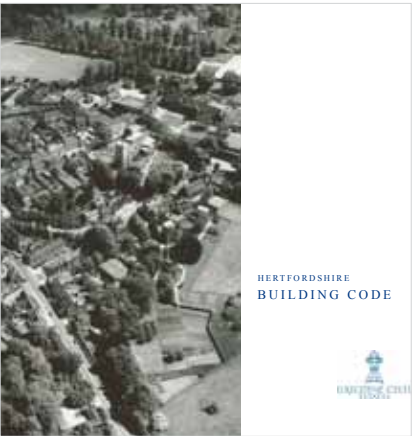
What you would like to change



Your preferred housing mix:



The designs and themes produced at the charrette broadly followed the Gascoyne Cecil Estates Design Code, which sets down minimum standards in and around Hatfield Park Estate.



An aerial photograph overlaid with a hand-drawn site plan. The plan shows a winding river or stream flowing through a valley. On the left bank, there are several red-outlined building footprints, some labeled "The Old Mill House" and "Museum". A road labeled "Mill Lane" runs along the top left. On the right bank, more red-outlined buildings are shown, some labeled "The Lodge" and "The Green". A road labeled "Kiln Lane" runs along the right side. At the bottom, a road labeled "Bush Hall Lane" is visible. Various other labels like "The Forge", "The Mill", and "The Old Mill" are scattered throughout the plan. Elevation points such as 61.90, 61.80, 61.70, 61.60, 61.50, 61.40, 61.30, 61.20, 61.10, 61.00, 60.90, 60.80, 60.70, 60.60, 60.50, 60.40, 60.30, 60.20, 60.10, 60.00, 59.90, 59.80, 59.70, 59.60, 59.50, 59.40, 59.30, 59.20, 59.10, 59.00, 58.90, 58.80, 58.70, 58.60, 58.50, 58.40, 58.30, 58.20, 58.10, 58.00, 57.90, 57.80, 57.70, 57.60, 57.50, 57.40, 57.30, 57.20, 57.10, 57.00, 56.90, 56.80, 56.70, 56.60, 56.50, 56.40, 56.30, 56.20, 56.10, 56.00, 55.90, 55.80, 55.70, 55.60, 55.50, 55.40, 55.30, 55.20, 55.10, 55.00, 54.90, 54.80, 54.70, 54.60, 54.50, 54.40, 54.30, 54.20, 54.10, 54.00, 53.90, 53.80, 53.70, 53.60, 53.50, 53.40, 53.30, 53.20, 53.10, 53.00, 52.90, 52.80, 52.70, 52.60, 52.50, 52.40, 52.30, 52.20, 52.10, 52.00, 51.90, 51.80, 51.70, 51.60, 51.50, 51.40, 51.30, 51.20, 51.10, 51.00, 50.90, 50.80, 50.70, 50.60, 50.50, 50.40, 50.30, 50.20, 50.10, 50.00, 49.90, 49.80, 49.70, 49.60, 49.50, 49.40, 49.30, 49.20, 49.10, 49.00, 48.90, 48.80, 48.70, 48.60, 48.50, 48.40, 48.30, 48.20, 48.10, 48.00, 47.90, 47.80, 47.70, 47.60, 47.50, 47.40, 47.30, 47.20, 47.10, 47.00, 46.90, 46.80, 46.70, 46.60, 46.50, 46.40, 46.30, 46.20, 46.10, 46.00, 45.90, 45.80, 45.70, 45.60, 45.50, 45.40, 45.30, 45.20, 45.10, 45.00, 44.90, 44.80, 44.70, 44.60, 44.50, 44.40, 44.30, 44.20, 44.10, 44.00, 43.90, 43.80, 43.70, 43.60, 43.50, 43.40, 43.30, 43.20, 43.10, 43.00, 42.90, 42.80, 42.70, 42.60, 42.50, 42.40, 42.30, 42.20, 42.10, 42.00, 41.90, 41.80, 41.70, 41.60, 41.50, 41.40, 41.30, 41.20, 41.10, 41.00, 40.90, 40.80, 40.70, 40.60, 40.50, 40.40, 40.30, 40.20, 40.10, 40.00, 39.90, 39.80, 39.70, 39.60, 39.50, 39.40, 39.30, 39.20, 39.10, 39.00, 38.90, 38.80, 38.70, 38.60, 38.50, 38.40, 38.30, 38.20, 38.10, 38.00, 37.90, 37.80, 37.70, 37.60, 37.50, 37.40, 37.30, 37.20, 37.10, 37.00, 36.90, 36.80, 36.70, 36.60, 36.50, 36.40, 36.30, 36.20, 36.10, 36.00, 35.90, 35.80, 35.70, 35.60, 35.50, 35.40, 35.30, 35.20, 35.10, 35.00, 34.90, 34.80, 34.70, 34.60, 34.50, 34.40, 34.30, 34.20, 34.10, 34.00, 33.90, 33.80, 33.70, 33.60, 33.50, 33.40, 33.30, 33.20, 33.10, 33.00, 32.90, 32.80, 32.70, 32.60, 32.50, 32.40, 32.30, 32.20, 32.10, 32.00, 31.90, 31.80, 31.70, 31.60, 31.50, 31.40, 31.30, 31.20, 31.10, 31.00, 30.90, 30.80, 30.70, 30.60, 30.50, 30.40, 30.30, 30.20, 30.10, 30.00, 29.90, 29.80, 29.70, 29.60, 29.50, 29.40, 29.30, 29.20, 29.10, 29.00, 28.90, 28.80, 28.70, 28.60, 28.50, 28.40, 28.30, 28.20, 28.10, 28.00, 27.90, 27.80, 27.70, 27.60, 27.50, 27.40, 27.30, 27.20, 27.10, 27.00, 26.90, 26.80, 26.70, 26.60, 26.50, 26.40, 26.30, 26.20, 26.10, 26.00, 25.90, 25.80, 25.70, 25.60, 25.50, 25.40, 25.30, 25.20, 25.10, 25.00, 24.90, 24.80, 24.70, 24.60, 24.50, 24.40, 24.30, 24.20, 24.10, 24.00, 23.90, 23.80, 23.70, 23.60, 23.50, 23.40, 23.30, 23.20, 23.10, 23.00, 22.90, 22.80, 22.70, 22.60, 22.50, 22.40, 22.30, 22.20, 22.10, 22.00, 21.90, 21.80, 21.70, 21.60, 21.50, 21.40, 21.30, 21.20, 21.10, 21.00, 20.90, 20.80, 20.70, 20.60, 20.50, 20.40, 20.30, 20.20, 20.10, 20.00, 19.90, 19.80, 19.70, 19.60, 19.50, 19.40, 19.30, 19.20, 19.10, 19.00, 18.90, 18.80, 18.70, 18.60, 18.50, 18.40, 18.30, 18.20, 18.10, 18.00, 17.90, 17.80, 17.70, 17.60, 17.50, 17.40, 17.30, 17.20, 17.10, 17.00, 16.90, 16.80, 16.70, 16.60, 16.50, 16.40, 16.30, 16.20, 16.10, 16.00, 15.90, 15.80, 15.70, 15.60, 15.50, 15.40, 15.30, 15.20, 15.10, 15.00, 14.90, 14.80, 14.70, 14.60, 14.50, 14.40, 14.30, 14.20, 14.10, 14.00, 13.90, 13.80, 13.70, 13.60, 13.50, 13.40, 13.30, 13.20, 13.10, 13.00, 12.90, 12.80, 12.70, 12.60, 12.50, 12.40, 12.30, 12.20, 12.10, 12.00, 11.90, 11.80, 11.70, 11.60, 11.50, 11.40, 11.30, 11.20, 11.10, 11.00, 10.90, 10.80, 10.70, 10.60, 10.50, 10.40, 10.30, 10.20, 10.10, 10.00, 9.90, 9.80, 9.70, 9.60, 9.50, 9.40, 9.30, 9.20, 9.10, 9.00, 8.90, 8.80, 8.70, 8.60, 8.50, 8.40, 8.30, 8.20, 8.10, 8.00, 7.90, 7.80, 7.70, 7.60, 7.50, 7.40, 7.30, 7.20, 7.10, 7.00, 6.90, 6.80, 6.70, 6.60, 6.50, 6.40, 6.30, 6.20, 6.10, 6.00, 5.90, 5.80, 5.70, 5.60, 5.50, 5.40, 5.30,

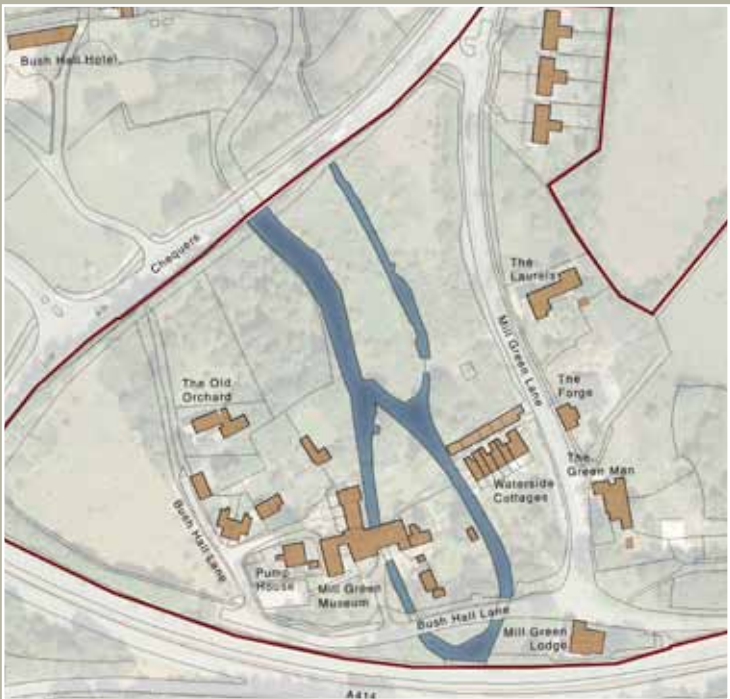
Design Brief

The design team were given a clear design brief to guide them when considering proposals for Mill Green.

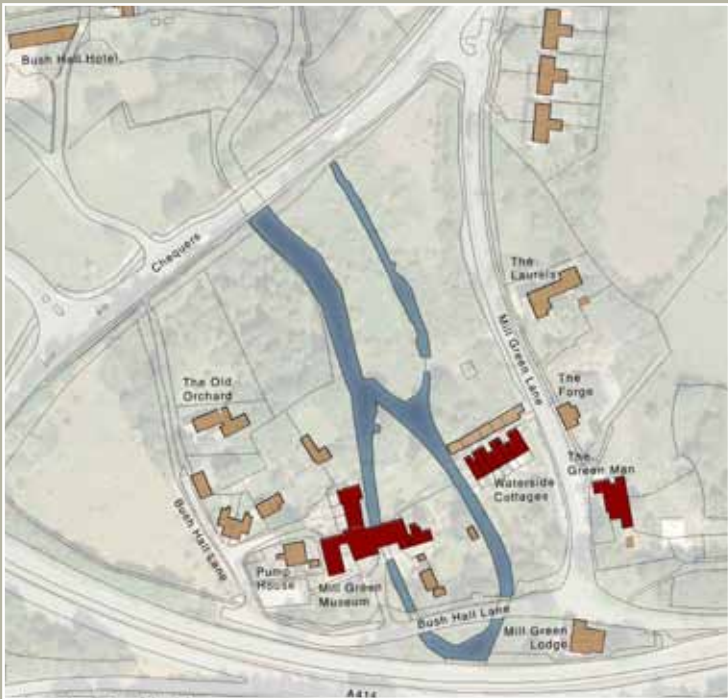
Notwithstanding those improvements and observations which had been highlighted within residents pre-charrette questionnaires, there were a number of physical and statutory constraints which needed to be given due consideration.

These included an understanding of the existing Mill Green envelope, listed buildings, and the flood plain. Irrespective of individual wishes, these are all factors which would influence decisions in relation to planning and construction should proposals be formally adopted in the future.

Principle parameters are illustrated below;



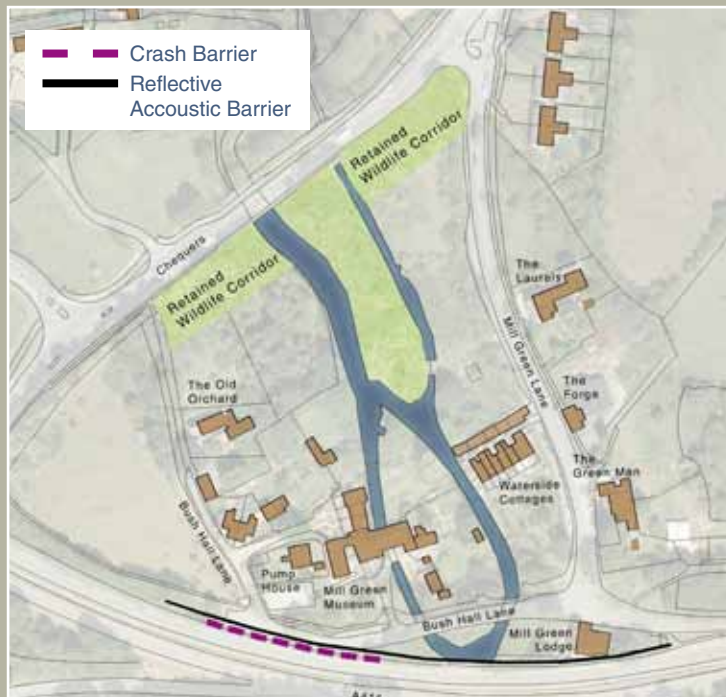
1. Site Boundary
The site boundary is contained within this red line, this shows the extent of the area considered within this charrette.



2. Listed Buildings
The listed buildings found within the site are shown in red. The information was found on www.enlgh-heritage.org.uk.



3. Flood Plain
The extent of a flood from the River Lee over the site is shown in dark blue. The lighter blue shows the extent of extreme flooding. This information was found on www.envionment-agency.gov.uk.



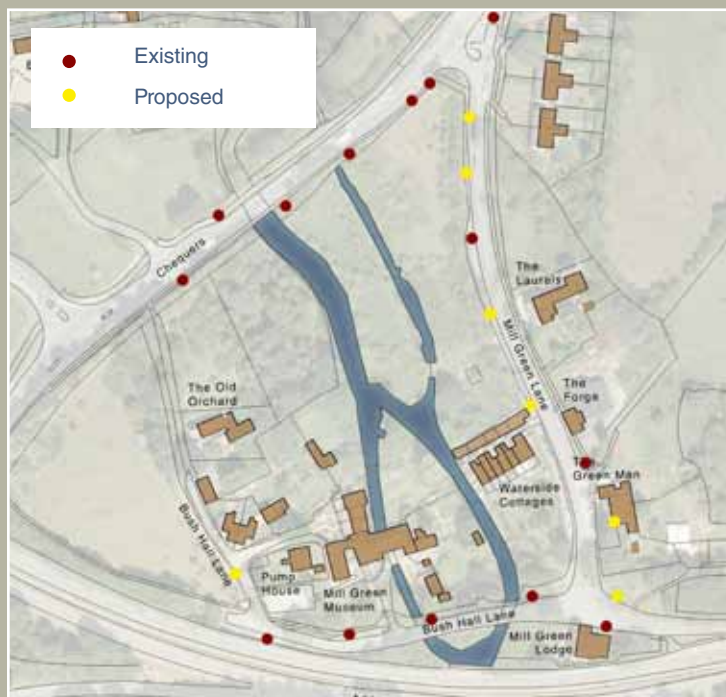
4. Crash Barrier and Noise Abatement

A retained wildlife corridor is to be kept at the north of the site. A crash barrier and a reflective acoustic barrier to be installed at the southern side of the site - along the A414 could significantly reduce traffic noise.



5. Footpaths

The existing footpaths are all to be retained. Additional footpaths could be added connecting Mill Green lane to the existing footpaths, the Wildlife Corridor and Mill Green Museum.



6. Lighting

The installation of additional street lighting could be considered along Mill Green Lane with an additional light at the entrance to Bush Hall Lane.



7. Traffic Calming

A speed camera could potentially be installed along the A414 to help reduce the speed limit. A speed restriction of 20 mph has been suggested along Mill Green Lane. Additional speed deterrents could be installed such as rumble strips, restricted entry from Chequers and gated entry from the A414.

Monday 12th September
Day 1:
Concept Design



Residents met with representatives of Hatfield Park Estate and Brooks Murray Architects to discuss the findings of the pre-consultation questionnaires and generally discuss future improvements for Mill Green. Many of these comments can be found within the section on design brief and project goals. A number of sites were identified which could provide suitable locations for enabling development.

These sites included;

- The Orchard located between the three existing semi-detached houses and The Laurels to the East of Mill Green Lane.
- The former Riding Stables site to the west of Mill Green Lane
- The Old Forge site, south of The Laurels
- Land to the rear of the Green Man Public House
- Existing garden land to the north of Mill Green museum, east of Bush Hall Lane

Consideration for improvements and general land use was also given to;

- The island site behind Mill Green Museum and adjacent to the sluice
- Land to the rear of Waterside Cottages, to the west of Mill Green Lane

Site constraints were explained in the context of the flood plain, listed buildings and areas of designated green belt.

A number of possibilities were shown on each of the sites illustrated to the left. These proposals were designed to illicit feedback that could subsequently be used to modify or refine proposals over the duration of the charrette.

In summary these initial proposals included;

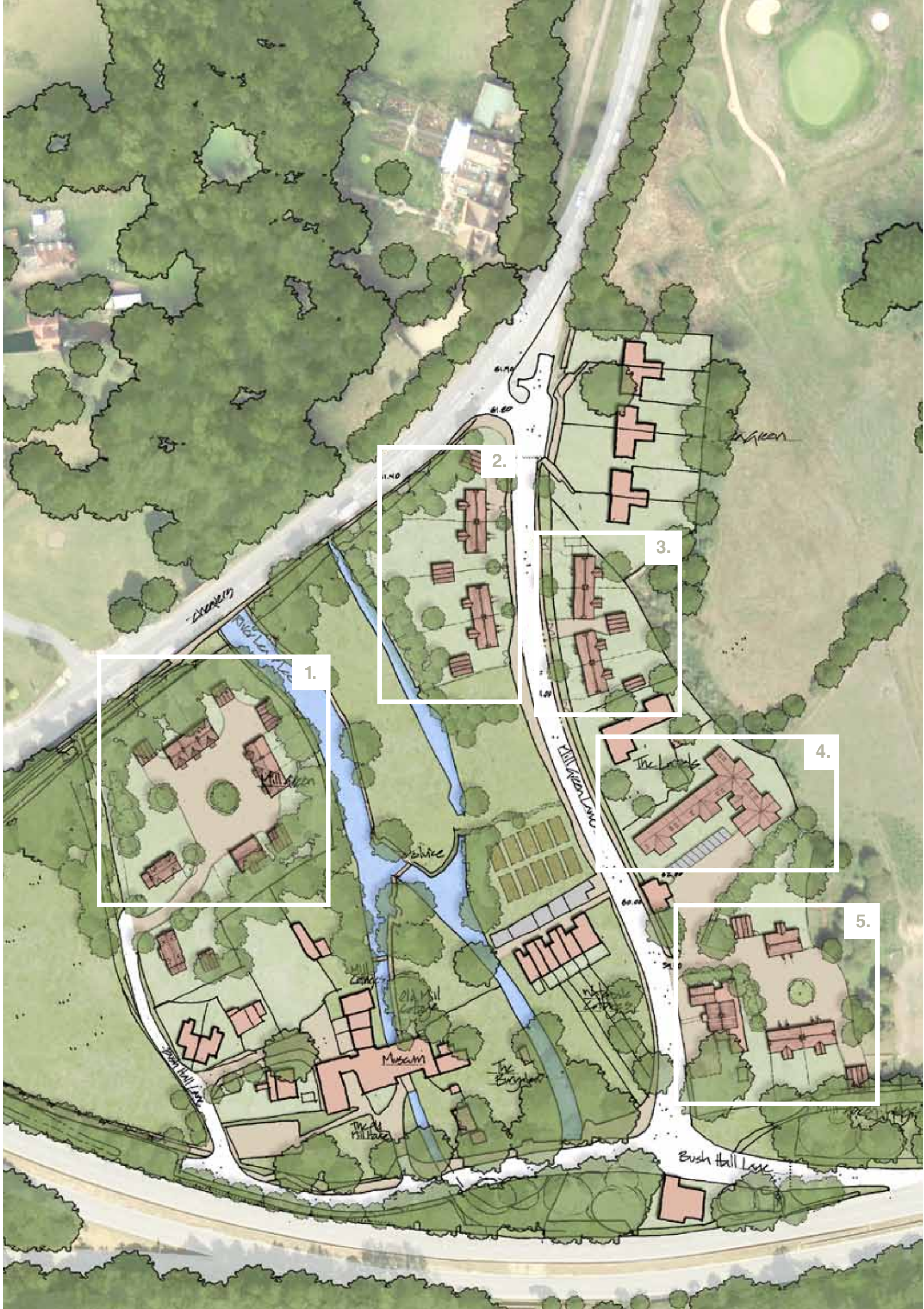
1. Three smaller detached cottages upon garden land to the rear of 'The Old Orchard' to the South of the A1000 and to the rear of Bush Hall Cottages.
 2. A pair of cottages on the opposite side of Mill Green Lane facing the Orchard Site. It was felt the formation of a facing row of dwellings provided a greater sense of arrival with in Mill Green and would help to slow approaching traffic.
 3. Two pairs of semi-detached cottages, to be constructed on the Orchard site, (between the three existing semis and The Laurels).
- These Cottages would be of traditional appearance and based upon designs for cottages previously built by Gascoyne Cecil Estates.
4. The proposed B1 Office Scheme (with an existing planning consent) for the old Forge Site. This is a complex of small offices and would be of traditional appearance. Buildings would be clad in feather edged timber weatherboarding above a red brick plinth and be roofed with clay peg tiles.
 5. A cluster of new dwellings on land situated to the rear of the Green Man Pub. These included a further six dwellings in the form of three blocks of semi-detached cottages and three detached mews units. The Green Man is shown as being refurbished with small extension.

In addition to the new development, it was envisaged that many of the environmental improvements might be undertaken including improved street lighting and noise attenuation.

The overgrown land (former riding Stables) is shown as a landscaped green with enhanced public access. Community allotments were proposed to the Southern half of this area to the rear of Waterside Cottages.

Many general topics were discussed and comments received were noted for inclusion within the next day's design work.





Tuesday 13th September
Day 2:
Concept Design A



Comments and feedback obtained from residents during Day one were incorporated within a number of revised proposals.

These included;

1. A modified proposal on the Old Orchard which retained the existing dwelling.
2. Incorporation of small 'green' at the entry to the village from the A1000 Welwyn Road
3. Two alternative designs for cottages to the western side of Mill Green Lane with rear gardens stretching back to the river.
4. A further high density variation of residential development to the rear of the Green Man.

Public open space and allotments have been retained to the west of Mill Green Lane as indicated at the previous evenings presentation.

The overall number of proposed new dwellings had increased when compared with the proposals shown at the conclusion of Day 1.

A small car park had been incorporated to the rear of the Green Man and the beer garden reduced in size.

Discussions included;

- The size and orientation of the small green at the entry to the village.
- The extent of public access along the river and green space between the Museum, A1000 and Mill Green Lane.
- The desirability and location of community allotments
- Tree planting and street lighting
- Refurbishment of the Green Man
- Costs and viability



Proposed view of live/work units upon the Old Forge Site



Tuesday 13th September
Day 2:
Concept Design B



As an alternative to the previous proposals, alternative schemes were shown in respect of:

1. Three semi-detached cottages were shown to the rear of the existing 'Old Orchard' cottage. These were larger in size than the cottages shown in Day 2 Concept Design A.
2. A further three semi detached cottages were shown set back from Mill Green Lane with garages or small work units fronting the entrance to each plot.

Access for these three properties were taken from a new lane achieved by extending Bush Hall Lane along the line of the existing informal footpath

3. Finally, two smaller cottages are shown on the paddock to the south west of Bush Hall Lane. It should be noted that this land is outside of Hatfield Park Estate ownership and any development would be subject to discussions with the landowner.
4. An alternative live/work development upon the Old Forge Site.
5. A third variation of residential development to the rear of the Green Man pub, a mixture of 2 and 3 bedroom cottages, and mews dwellings.





Once again the feedback received at the previous evening's meetings was incorporated into a series of revised proposals.

A number of changes had been made which might be summarised as;

1. The small 'green' at the entry to the village from the A1000 Welwyn Road was enlarged. The entry to the village was denoted with a village sign and proposed tree planting along Mill Green Lane further serves to enhance the sense of arrival.
2. Both previous designs for cottages to the western side of Mill Green Lane (from the previous evening) were rejected.

These were replaced with a row of smaller cottages with reduced ridge height and whose orientation accentuates the small green and again helps to mark the entrance to Mill Green. Rear gardens no longer stretch back to the river and the green open corridor alongside the river has been broadened.
3. Cottages between the Laurels and the three existing semi-detached houses to the East of Mill Green Lane have also been amended. Whilst of similar traditional appearance, the footprint has been marginally reduced.

Due to concerns raised about the number of houses being proposed, the live / work scheme has been deleted and the previously consented office scheme shown on the Old Forge Site. The existing footpath between the Green Man and the Old Forge site is retained. Public access around the village is generally improved.

4. A further variation of residential development is shown to the rear of the Green Man. Subject to the Green Man being proved as a viable trading proposition in its traditional role as a Public House, the pub will be restored. If viability cannot be proven, the Green Man could be sympathetically restored as a self-contained dwelling.

Additional parking is shown between the proposed allotments and Waterside Cottages. This formalises an existing arrangement and improves parking provision generally.

5. The Old Pumping Station neighbouring the Museum is shown as having been refurbished. Should re-opening of the Green Man not prove viable, this building could provide the basis of a new village hall or community meeting space. Alternatively it could provide additional space at Mill Green Museum for a variety of potential uses. If the existing security fencing is removed, then existing car parking provision can be expanded.
6. The proposal on the Old Orchard has also been amended. Whilst of similar traditional appearance, the footprint has been marginally reduced.

Land to the rear of Waterside Cottages is still shown as public green space but in the form of more natural parkland. Space for allotments has been retained but reduced in area.

The overall number of proposed new dwellings has decreased when compared with the proposals tabled at the first evening's presentation. Feedback received upon the final evening seemed to generally support the direction proposals were proceeding in.



Artist's Impressions



View towards Mill Green Lane from Chequers (Welwyn Road A1000)



View Down Mill Green Lane towards the amenity space and Mill



View Mill Green Lane towards Chequers (Welwyn Road A1000)



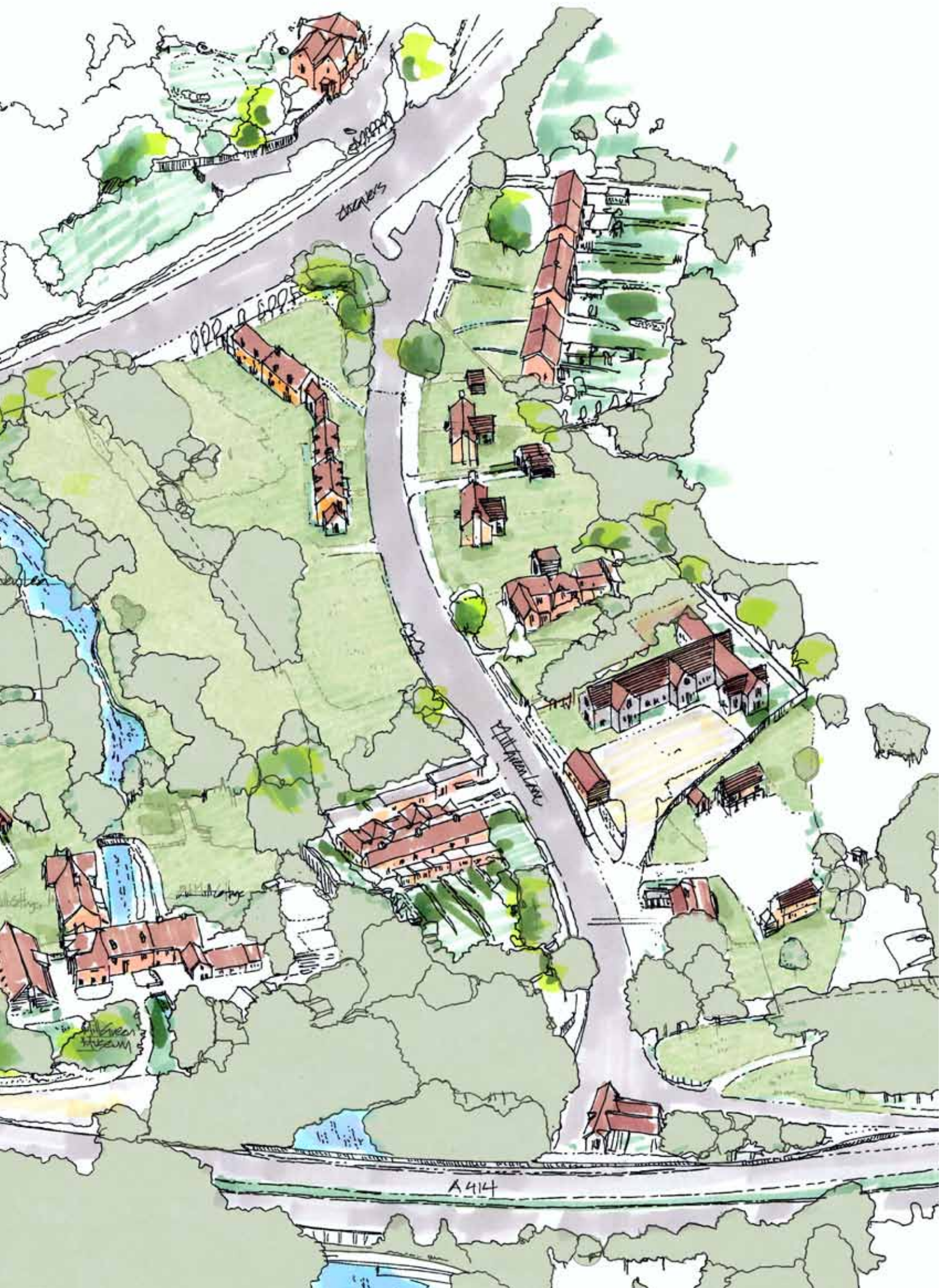
View towards Farmer Green Man Pub - conversion to House

Existing Site Plan



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What Next?

These proposals aren't the end of the story and simply form the first part of an ongoing consultation exercise.

Any regeneration of Mill Green will inevitably take time but it stands the best chance of being able to move forward efficiently if residents are actively involved.

This paper has been produced in time for a further public meeting which will take place during November 2011. This will allow further feedback, review the outcome of the meetings to date and consider the next steps.

It is hoped that this meeting will be attended by all those who attended and took part so enthusiastically in the initial exercise which has been outlined within these pages. Future meetings will also be open to other residents or friends of Mill Green who perhaps were unaware or unable to attend previously.

Assuming these proposals gain broad support, the Estate will discuss the broad plans with local organisations, Councillors and Planners and further refine the opportunities that may exist at Mill Green.

As these discussions evolve, further public meetings will be planned for the coming months. The dates of these meetings will be publicised extensively but, should you have any queries or concerns in the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact Hatfield House Estate Office.

For more information please contact;

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