Corsham

COMMUNITY AREA FRAMEWORK

JUNE 2016

Wiltshire Council

Where everybody matters

1| SUSTAINABLE ACTIVE TRAVEL

Measures to promote sustainable and active travel within the Greater Corsham area will be supported. Key projects include:

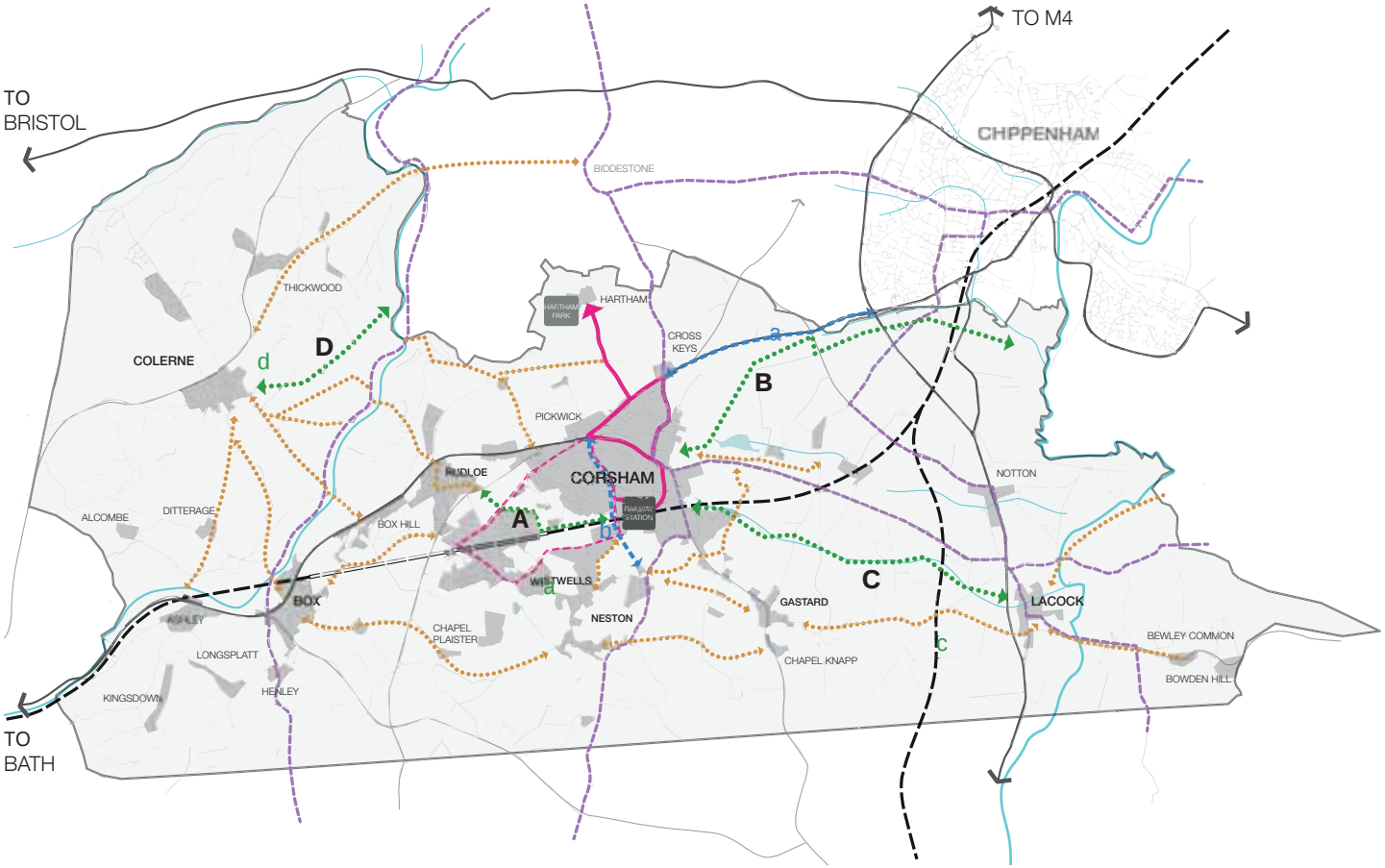
- New railway station at Corsham: This strategy is detailed in this section, under Proposal E.

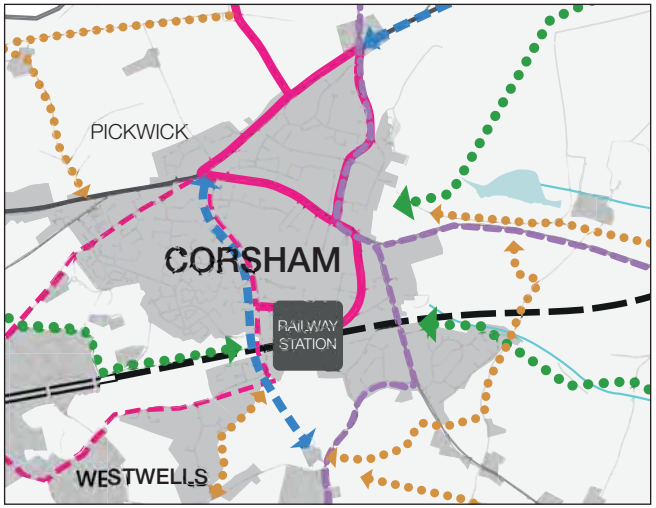
- Extend the proposed Corsham shuttle bus service linking to Corsham Station and West Corsham, if deemed appropriate.

- Reinforce existing off-road routes and designation of rural lanes as greenways. Improve accessibility for all non-motorised user groups, through enhancements to the public realm, area-wide signposting, wayfinding and route marketing. Key routes include:
  a. West Corsham Greenway
  b. Corsham Park
  c. Byde Brook
  d. Colerne Woods

- Extend the Corsham Town Cycle Network, creating on-road cycle links along:
  a. Valley Road (Pickwick Road to Corsham Station)
  b. Bath Road, between Cross Keys junction and Chequers Roundabout.

New railway station at Corsham
Corsham shuttle bus service
Potential expansion to Corsham shuttle bus service
Create on-road cycle route (a/b)
Reinforce existing off-road routes / greenways
Improve links to the existing network
Existing strategic walking and cycling links





CYCLE IMPROVEMENTS

Identify opportunities to consider how the Town Cycle Network can be expanded to create a creating a more comprehensive network that spans the Community Area. Support will be given for proposals which improve and extend cycling routes and link with the leisure agenda. Priority should be for routes that maximise the potential for both recreation and commuting and strengthen links towards the town centre or between Colerne, Box and Corsham.

Potential improvements: Wayfinding and route marketing for NCN and local routes; traffic calming; shared cycle routes; removal of barriers (e.g. stiles); public realm improvements and general maintenance. Generally, creating safe on-road routes should be the first option considered, but shared use or segregated cycle paths may be appropriate.

D. THE CORSHAM LINK

THE OPPORTUNITY

At present there is no clearly identifiable route around Corsham for safe walking and cycling journeys, with particularly poor connectivity east-west and northwards to Hartham Park. There is a strong opportunity to identify a green transport link which allows for both leisure and commuter journeys and promotes sustainable travel. This Link has multiple benefits as the 'glue' between the physical, social and economic parts of the town - linking current and future activity.

It is not possible to provide off-road access along the entirety of the route however measures such as improved signposting can improve wayfinding and increase visibility of non-motorised users.

ATTRACTIVE AND FUNCTIONAL ROUTES

GENERAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Signage: Consistent signage should be introduced at junctions along the route to indicate walking distance and time to key destinations. This could take the form of fingerpost signage, maps and interpretation boards.

- Wayfinding markers: Wayfinding markers (set into or painted onto the ground) or public art will help promote the route as a whole and could raise awareness of other users, particularly on-road cyclists.

- Surface materials: Surfacing should be replaced where required to create functional and attractive routes for walking and cycling, including formalisation of field tracks.

- Public realm enhancement: General enhancements are needed particularly at nodal points between sections of the route. Enhancements should consider lighting, surface materials and boundary treatments with provision of seating and litter bins where appropriate.

ROUTE SECTIONS

1. TOWN CENTRE LINK

The Town Centre Link runs from Bath Road, through the town centre and south towards the railway station on existing paths and roads.

WALKING DISTANCE / TIME: 2.1km / 26min

This section of the route is discussed in detail in Area 2: Refocus Corsham Town (section 3.2).

2. WEST CORSHAM GREENWAY

The West Corsham Greenway connects the employment development and MoD Corsham site to the town. The route runs along Pockeredge Drive and towards Bradford Road on existing lanes.

There is potential for an extra loop spurring from this which goes around MoD Corsham and Westwells Road to connect the employment sites along Spring Park and Skynet Drive.

WALKING DISTANCE / TIME: 1.8km / 22min

This section of the route is discussed in detail in Area 3: Create Corsham West (section 3.3).

3. HARTHAM PARK LINK

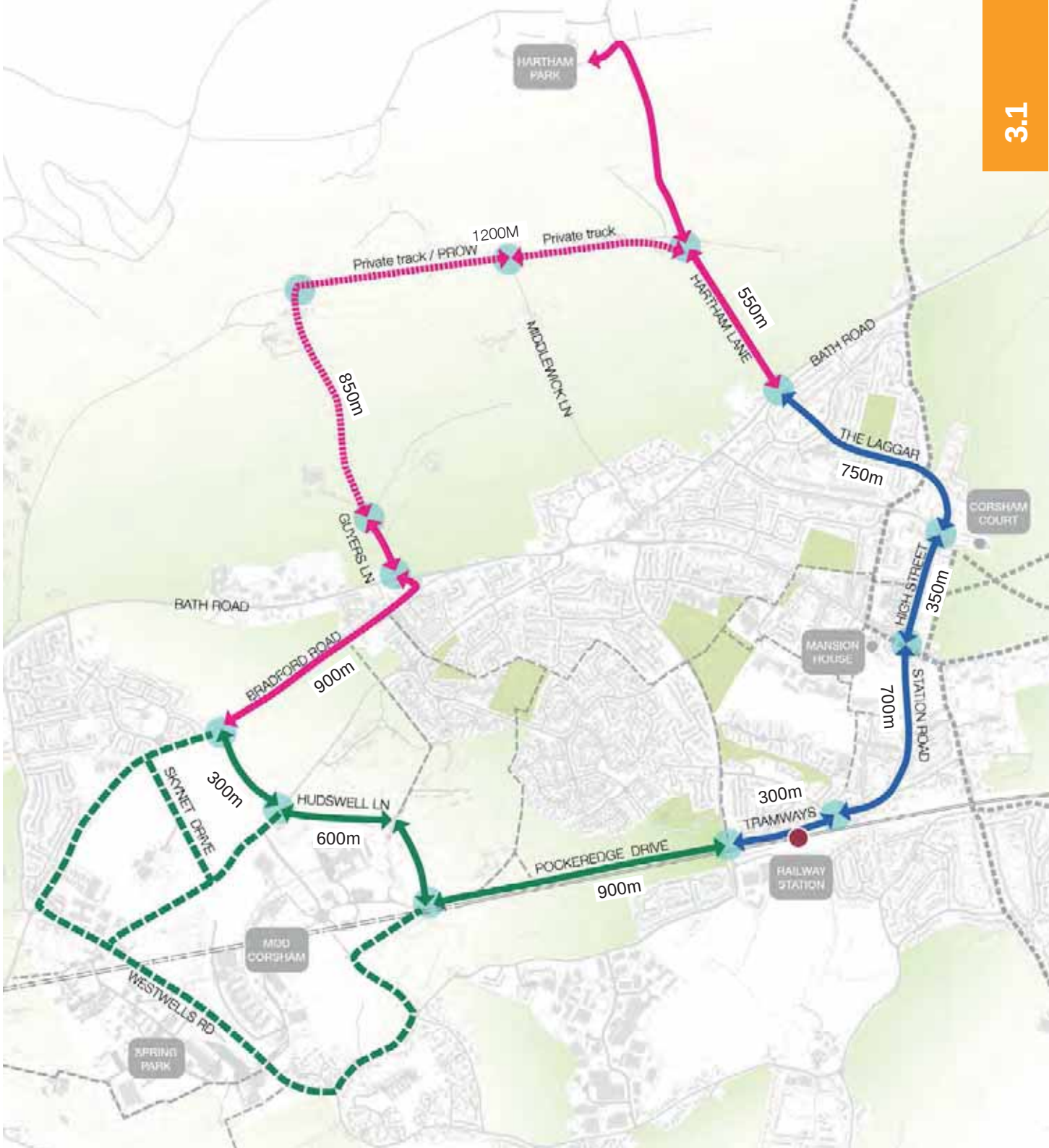
The Hartham Park Link connects along existing lanes around north of the town providing a strong route to Hartham Park. The lanes are lightly trafficked and required little enhancement to be made suitable for the Corsham Link. The most northerly section, north of Guyers Lane, is a private track with public right of way until the point where it meets Middlewick Lane. If access is not permissible, the route would need to divert along Bath Road and Hartham Lane. The key improvements on this section of the route would involve:

- Creation of crossing point on Bradford Road.
- Improvements to footpath / potential cyclepath installation on Bradford Road.
- Creation of crossing point at Bath Road to Guyers Lane.
- Improved wayfinding and environmental enhancement at nodal points.
- Where permitted, support walking and cycling access into Hartham Park from the private track.

WALKING DISTANCE / TIME: 3.5km / 45min

CORSHAM LINK

- Town Centre Link
- Hartham Park Link
- Hartham Park Link - private track
- West Corsham Greenway
- West Corsham Greenway - Westwells Road loop
- Long distance walking / cycling routes
- Public right of way - strategic links
- Key transition point



E. NEW RAILWAY STATION AT CORSHAM

THE OPPORTUNITY

Corsham lies on the Great Western Main Line between Bristol and Bath in the west and Chippenham and Swindon in the east however the station closed in 1965.

A new station would be within a 10 minute walking catchment of the town centre, encouraging sustainable travel, reducing pressure on the A4 and connecting rural roads in the Greater Corsham area.

The station, as part of a wider regeneration project, could act as a catalyst to unlock the potential of land to the south of the town centre.

A feasibility study has been undertaken by Wiltshire Council to examine the potential of a new station at Corsham.The Area Framework provides the opportunity to guide the future development associated with the opening of a new railway station looking specifically at the areas north and south of the railway line; promoting walking and cycling; accommodating bus use; taxi facilities; car parking; cycle parking; cycle hire facilities and electric car charging points.

CONTEXT

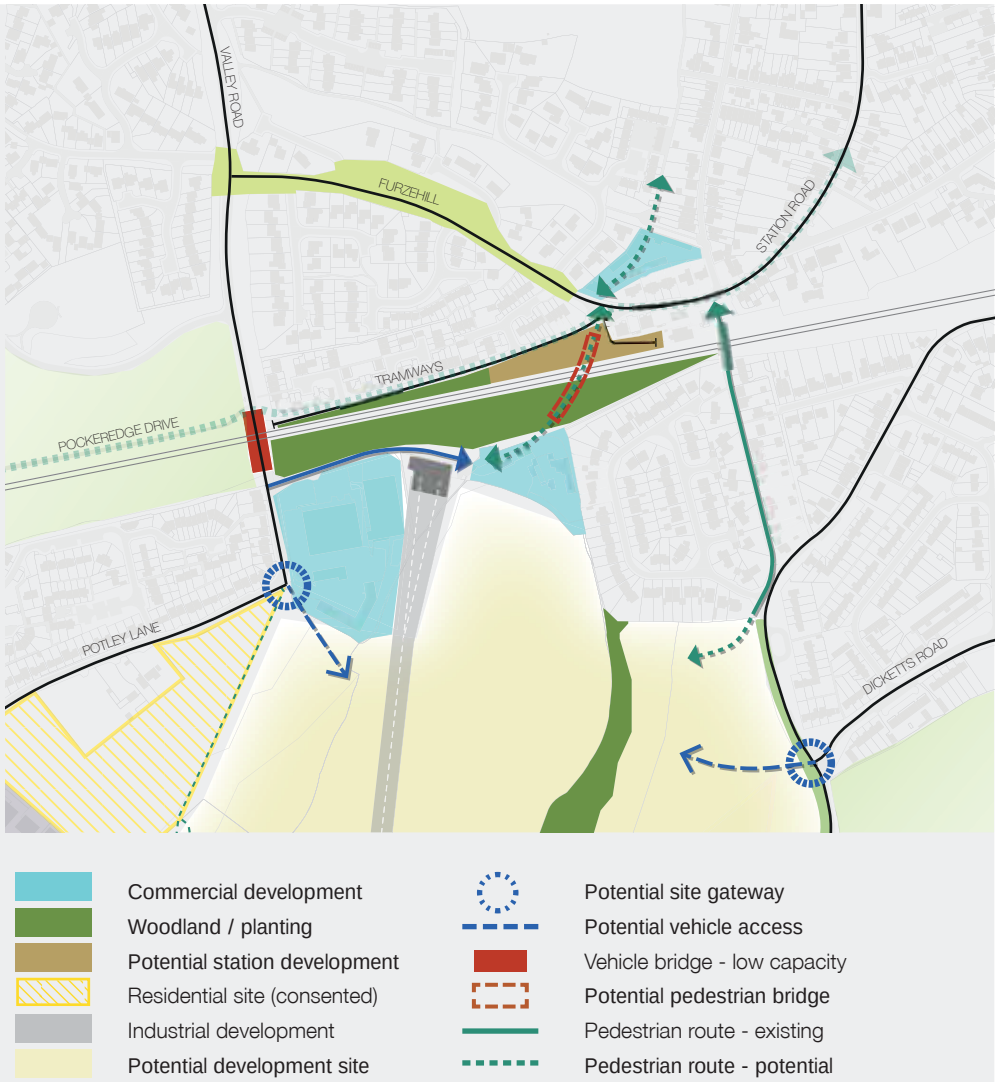
Wiltshire is well served by rail with a number of different services providing connections to London, the South West, South Coast, Wales and the Midlands. Some of the rail services also provide more local connections within Wiltshire and to nearby Swindon, Bath and Bristol.

A high proportion of rail trips have an origin or destination outside of Wiltshire with only a small number of rail trips wholly within Wiltshire. This is in contrast to the large number of car trips between Wiltshire towns.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

In addition to the station specific infrastructure, there would be a need to address 'pinch points' and constraints in the existing highway network:

- Dedicated car and cycle parking required, including appropriate quantity of disabled parking.
- Existing Grade II listed Potley Lane bridge has limited capacity to accommodate increase traffic flows to station or surrounding development.
- Need to reinforce clear and desirable walking and cycling connections between the town centre and the railway station - connect to the Corsham Link route.
- Opportunity to create a new pedestrian link through South Street Business Park site.
- New pedestrian bridge required to serve the station.



The Wiltshire Rail Study (May 2013) examined whether existing rail services best serve travel needs within Wiltshire and the potential rail demand within Wiltshire that would occur with new rail stations and new/ improved rail services. This study identified that the potential for a new station at Corsham should be re-examined, noting that this had been subject to detailed studies in the past. A new station at Corsham would require a new Bristol-Swindon service between the major attractors and rail destinations of Bristol Temple Meads and Swindon.

Feasibility work has been commissioned by Wiltshire Council to examine the potential of opening a new station at Corsham[1] which suggests the next steps should be to focus on demonstrating a suitable service could operate to serve Corsham station through engagement with key partners and further detailed analysis.

The land required for the station and associated land uses (i.e. car parking, highways, infrastructure) should be safeguarded, so that any future development in this location does not compromise the station opportunity. Likewise, any proposals to open a station should be careful to avoid prejudicing any development on land to the south.

THE PROPOSAL

Taking into account the constraints of the surrounding area, there are two main options for provision of access and parking to the station, Option A: Minimal intervention and Option B: More extensive network improvements. These correspond to differing levels of investment and development potential and have varied impact on surrounding areas.

1 Corsham Rail Station Initial Feasibility Report, Atkins (Dec 2015)

OPTION A

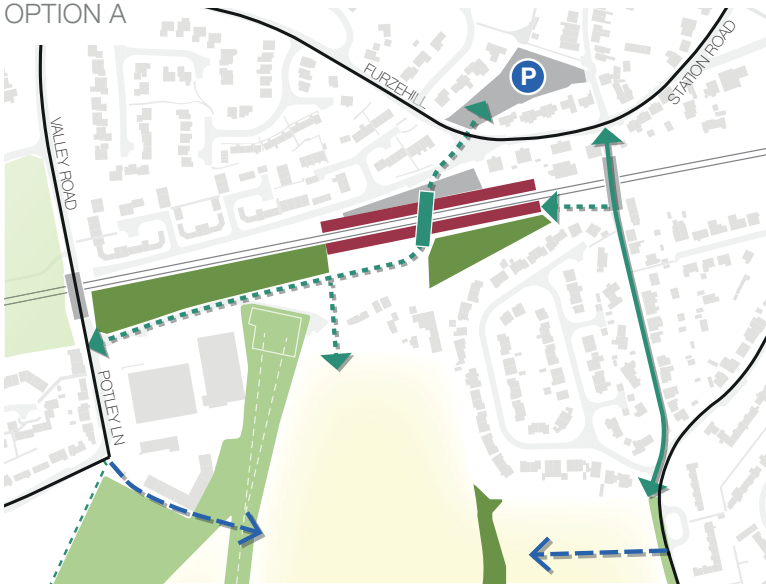
Option A represents a minimal approach which allows the reopening of the station but requires limited improvements to pedestrian and vehicle connectivity. A new lightweight footbridge is provided at the station with parking provided on the South Street Business Park site and along Tramways. Employment land could be reprovided on land to the south of the station. This option may limit the amount of development that can occur on land to the south.

- Potential development site
- Potential vehicular connection
- New pedestrian bridge
- Improved capacity vehicular bridge
- Improve pedestrian links
- Station car park
- Station platforms / site

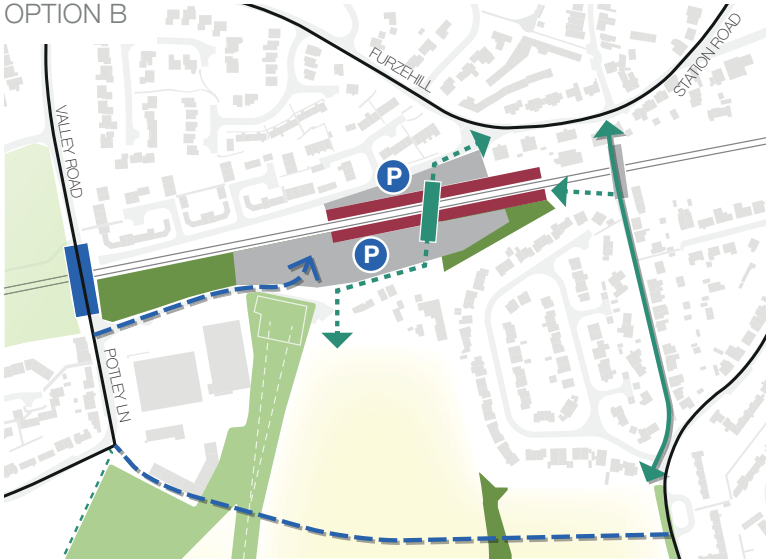
OPTION B

Option B provides greater potential for investment in the surrounding area. Improvements to the capacity of Potley Lane bridge could increase the capacity of surrounding roads and allow a through-route across the development site to Dicketts Road. Parking could be provided to the south of the station at an increased level. This option would allow a greater quantum of development to the south.

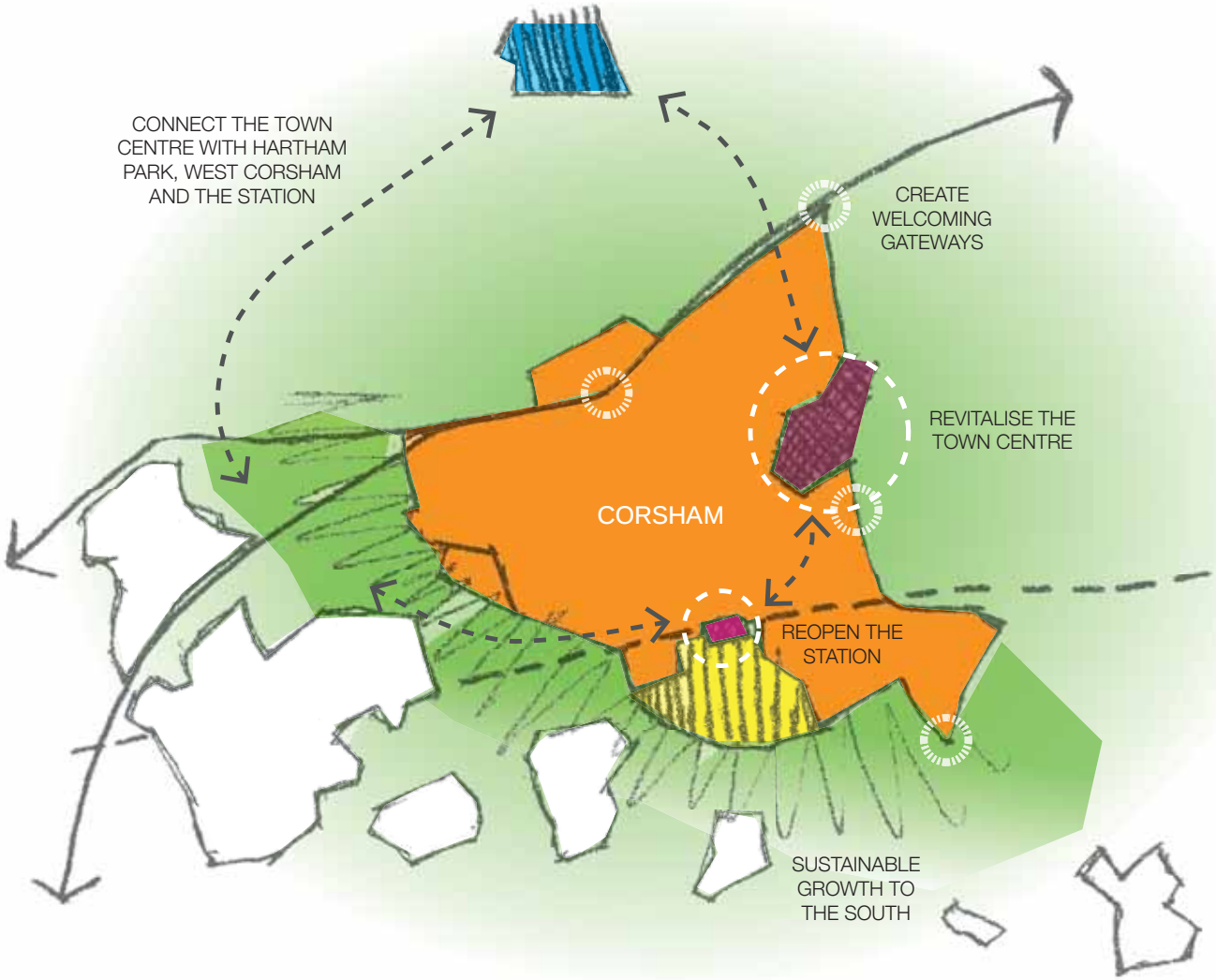
OPTION A



OPTION B



REFOCUS CENTRAL CORSHAM 3.2



A VISION FOR CENTRAL CORSHAM

Central Corsham will be more clearly defined with strong edges and a clear distinction between urban and rural. Gateways at the main points of entry will help define arrival and engender a clear sense of place. These will be supported by localised enhancements to the main movement routes leading to the town centre.

The town centre will be significantly enhanced to allow and encourage new development, and maximise the benefit of the existing historic character. The town centre will be improved as both a local centre to support residents' needs but also as a destination for visitors.

These objectives will be achieved through the promotion of existing assets and a diversification of retail, food and drink, cultural and community uses. The celebration of the town's heritage and distinctive character, together with significant environmental enhancements to less attractive areas, will be essential to regeneration.

There are opportunities for increasing and diversifying employment within the town centre especially in relation to the technology sector which will further support local businesses and services and add to the town's vitality.

The viability of the town centre will be supported by residential growth in areas that respect the rural setting.

New and existing walking and cycling routes will connect people and places and encourage an environment that is not dominated by vehicles. Opportunities for improved public transport connectivity and provision will be sought.

The key observations are as follows:

- The town's heritage assets present a strong character but are hidden from view of visitors passing through Corsham.

- The town centre's location on the eastern edge of the settlement reduces its accessibility on foot. The layout and structure of the town centre undermines its function.

- There are educational and economic activities within and to the north and west of Corsham town that will benefit from the establishment of strong connectivity.

- The historic pattern of the town's expansion has generally been to the west which presents issues with connectivity to the town centre and the degree of separation between settlements.

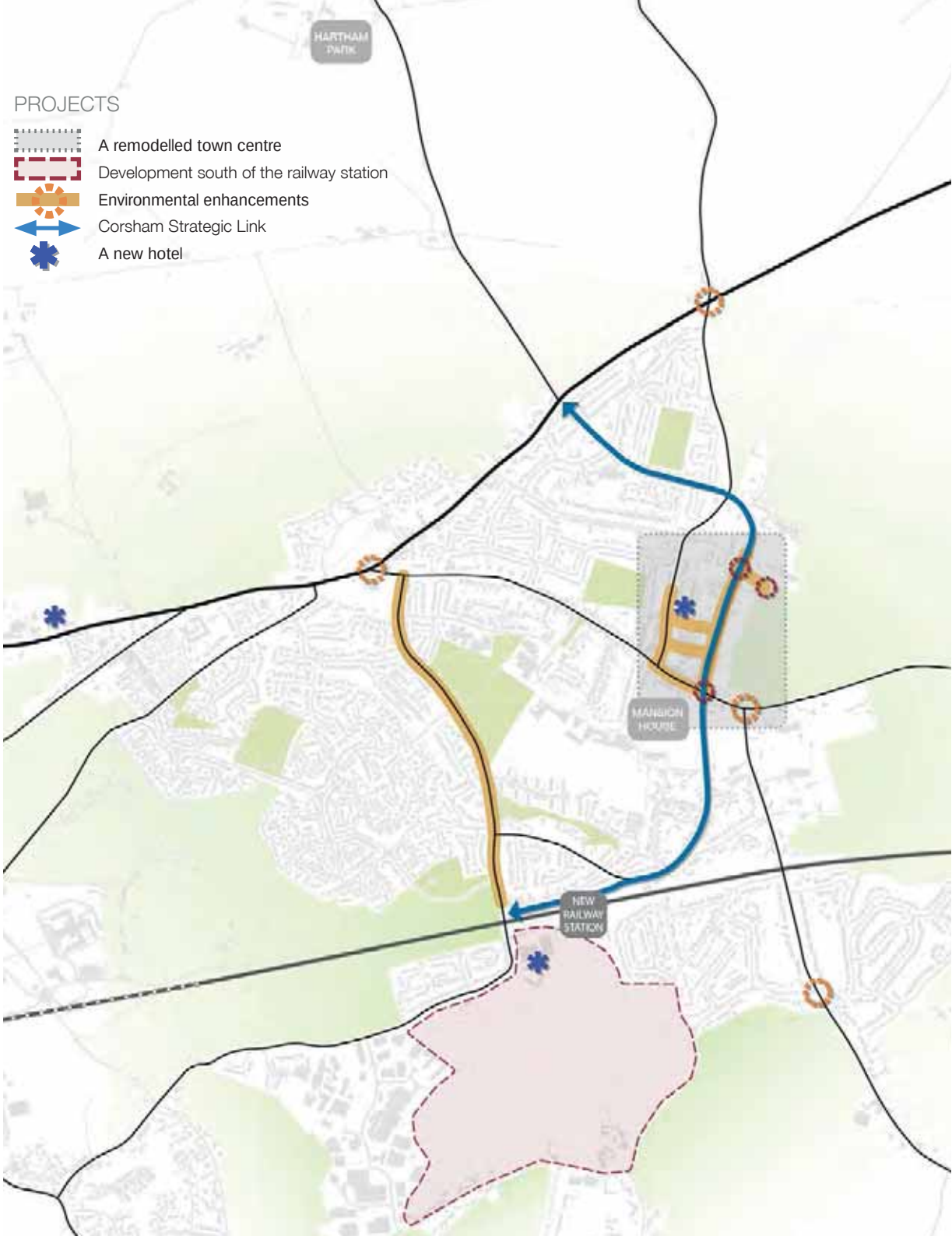
- The reopening of the railway station remains a long term objective to support Corsham's sustainable growth.

- There is an opportunity to extend the settlement to the south, close to the town centre and railway station.

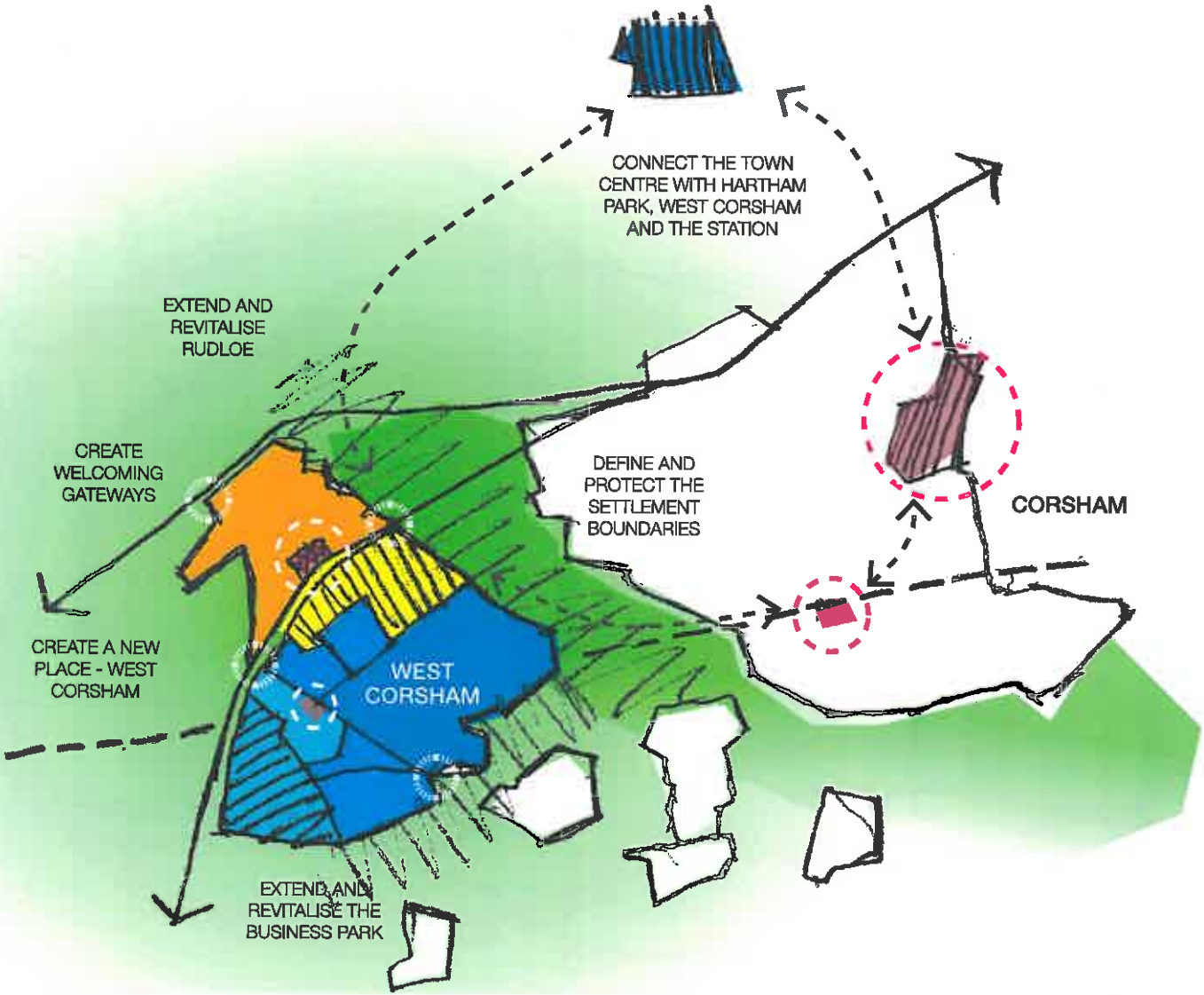
- Despite the attractions of the town centre, there is a lack of vitality and limited economic activity.

On this basis, the Framework identifies five 'projects':

A. A remodelled town centre
B. Sustainable growth to the south of the railway
C. Environmental enhancements
D. The Corsham Link - town centre
E. A new hotel for Corsham



CREATE WEST CORSHAM



A VISION FOR WEST CORSHAM

West Corsham has a discernible identity that is distinct from central Corsham and will be a discrete place that is clearly and geographically defined.

West Corsham will be a place where the dominant activities of living and working will comfortably coexist and interact to form a sustainable community.

Existing and new residential areas will be organised and designed to engender the sense of an extended community. This community will be supported by the provision of shared local facilities and connected through new movement routes. These routes should where possible take the form of streets and public spaces to facilitate safe, convenient and convivial movement by walking and cycling.

Local facilities will be limited to daily convenience and will support and complement rather than compete with the more extensive Corsham town centre offer.

The zone for digital and cyber enterprise will be enhanced around Spring Park and MoD Corsham and accessible from the town centre and potential new railway station. This could provide flexible workspace and live/work space clusters acting as the glue between the town, MoD activities and public and private sector enterprise.

- Existing residential
- New residential
- Existing employment
- New employment
- Retail / local services

Gateways at the main points of entry will help define arrival and engender a clear sense of place. The major road routes will be substantially enhanced to create a more attractive and welcoming environment without compromising security.

New walking and cycling routes will be established to create strong connections to the town centre and other key destinations.

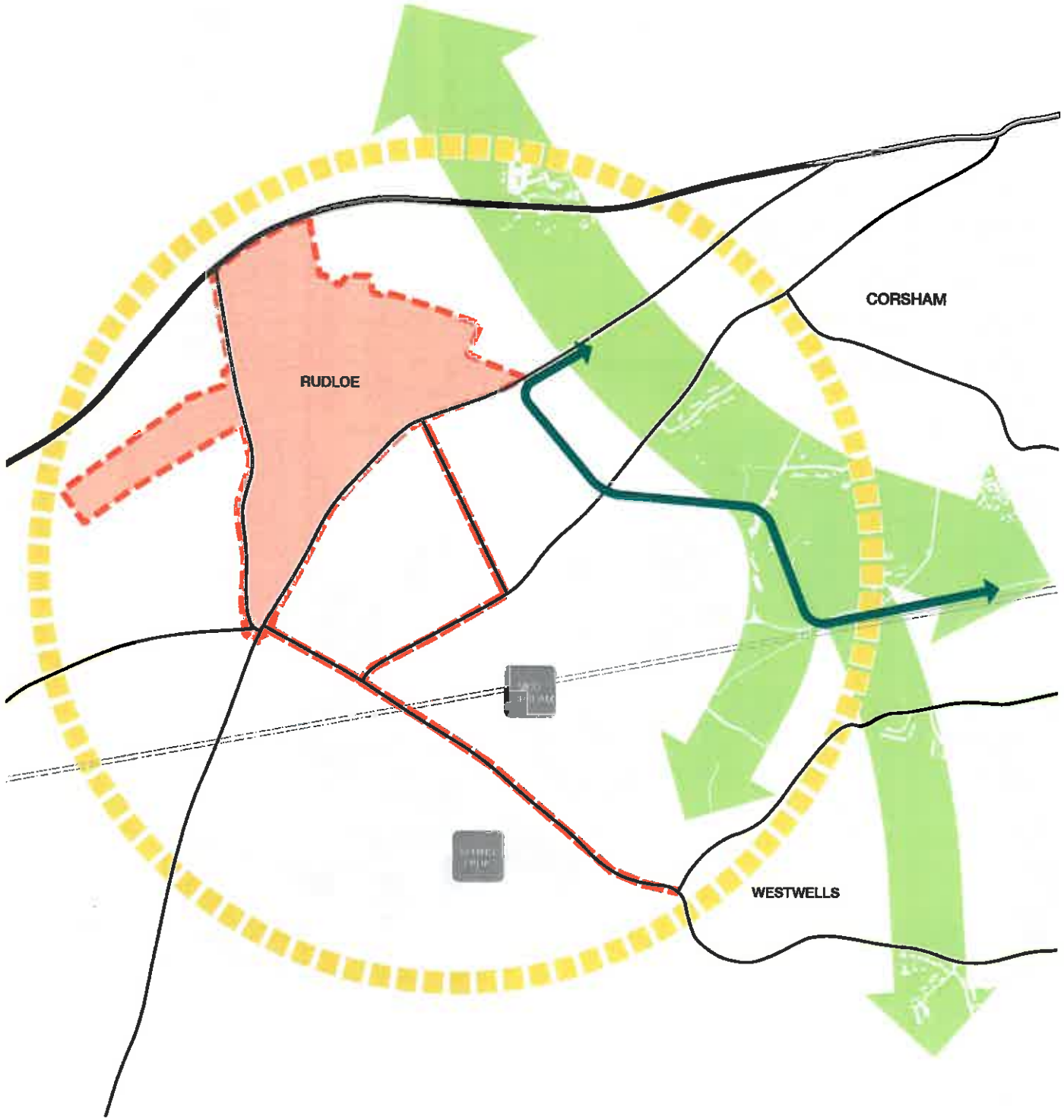
The Vision sets out an aspirational image for West Corsham and is intended to help identify the primary objectives for the Area Framework.

The Vision responds to the observations that have been derived from the baseline appraisal and through consultation with the project steering group.

The Framework identifies three 'projects' to realise opportunities and to create a discrete and distinctive place. The projects are:

On this basis, the Framework identifies the following projects:

A. A framework for West Corsham
B. Corsham Link - West Corsham Greenway
C. Rudloe environmental enhancement

PROJECTS

Rudloe Environmental Enhancements
Corsham Link - West Corsham Greenway
A Framework for West Corsham