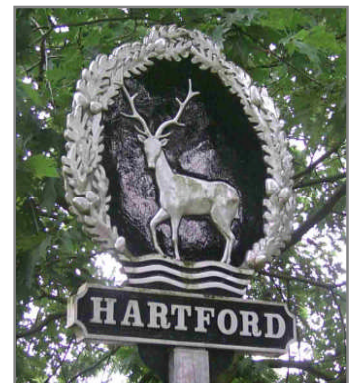




Hartford

Village Design Statement



Adopted by Vale Royal Borough Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance
January 2005

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1. Introduction

1.1 What is a VDS?

Village Design Statements are unique in that they offer a positive way for residents of Hartford to influence the way that the statutory planning system operates at a local level.

A Village Design Statement (VDS) is a mechanism that allows the views and wishes of the village to be taken into account when changes to buildings and landscape are proposed.

It is a tool to help manage change in both buildings, landscape and other development, whether large or small, in a way that reflects and harmonises with the local character of its buildings, spaces and landscape setting.

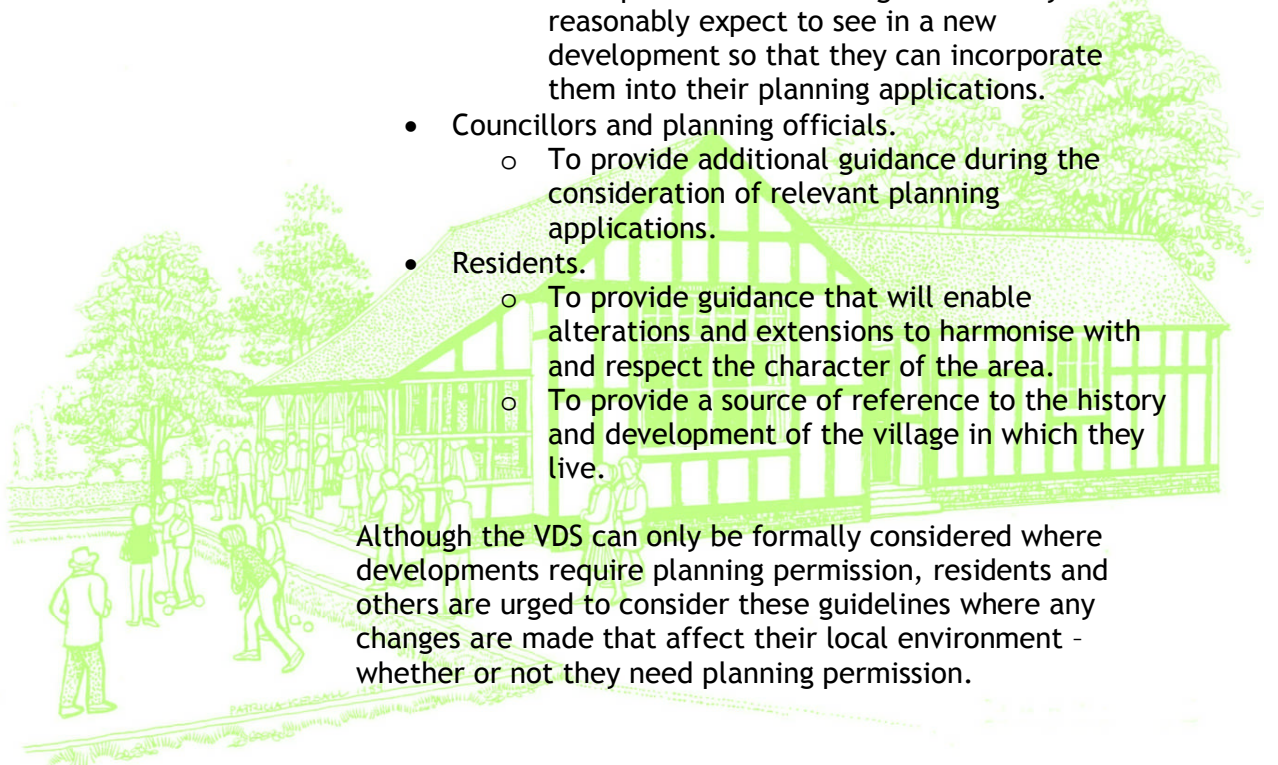
It is not about whether or not a development should take place; that is the job for the Local Plan. It is not meant to, and will not, stop development and change from happening. It will however help influence how any new development fits into the village, respecting the qualities and characteristics that village residents have indicated that they value.

N.B. For the purposes of this document Hartford is defined in terms of its civic parish boundary, not the ecclesiastical one. See Map **Appendix A**.

1.2 Who is it written for?

- Developers, architects and designers.
 - To explain what the village community would reasonably expect to see in a new development so that they can incorporate them into their planning applications.
- Councillors and planning officials.
 - To provide additional guidance during the consideration of relevant planning applications.
- Residents.
 - To provide guidance that will enable alterations and extensions to harmonise with and respect the character of the area.
 - To provide a source of reference to the history and development of the village in which they live.

Although the VDS can only be formally considered where developments require planning permission, residents and others are urged to consider these guidelines where any changes are made that affect their local environment - whether or not they need planning permission.



1.3 How was the VDS developed?

The preparation and co-ordination of the VDS was undertaken by the Hartford Civic Society, working in close cooperation with the Parish Council.

The process for its development was designed to be as inclusive as possible in order to ensure that it genuinely represents the views of the widest cross section of the village.

This process of engagement included:-

- Open public meetings
- A village characterisation workshop
- A village questionnaire - in conjunction with the Parish Plan development
- Hartford Civic Society website
- Press releases to the local newspapers
- Open feedback sessions at the Hartford Rose fete
- A presentation of the first draft at the Village Hall
- Public consultation on early drafts of this VDS



1.4 How does the VDS fit in with other Local Planning Guidance?

The VDS should be seen in the context of the Cheshire Structure Plan and the Vale Royal Borough Local Plan.

- The Cheshire Replacement Structure Plan 1999, covering the whole county, produced by the County Council, sets out the key strategic policies as a framework for local planning.
- The Vale Royal Borough Local Plan (First Review 2001) sets out more detailed policies to guide development in the area, including proposals for specific sites.
- The Hartford VDS is Supplementary Planning Guidance having been adopted by VRBC on 27th January 2005.

As the name suggests, the guidelines in this document 'supplement' the more general guidance in the Local Plan. They provide a village specific focus to the more general guidance.

In order to make the connection between this VDS and the Local Plan more explicit, references to the associated [Local Plan policies](#) have been added in [blue](#) after each set of guidelines. A list of the policies is included as **Appendix C**.

1.5 Relationship to the Parish Plan

This document is a 'sister' document to the Parish Plan (published November 2004). Whilst this VDS deals primarily with planning issues the Parish Plan covers the wider societal issues of the village. The Parish Plan sets out a vision for the future of the village encompassing social, economic and environmental issues of concern.

2. The Village Context

2.1 Historical context

Hartford as a Cheshire village can be traced back as far as the Domesday Book of 1086 where it is mentioned as being part of the Barony of Kinderton, held by Gilbert de Venables.

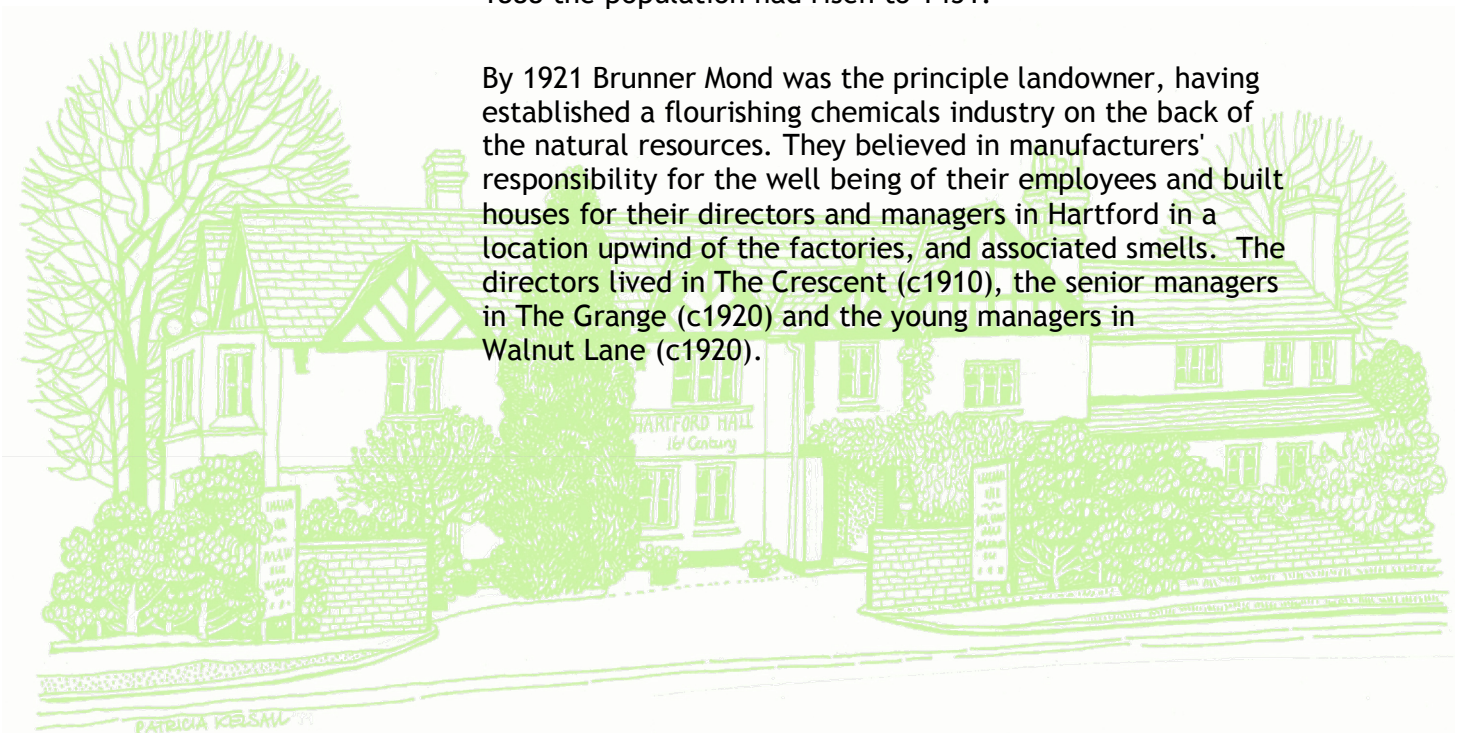
Much of the history and development of the village can be found to have its origins in the local association with salt, and the chemicals industry that sprang up to exploit this natural resource. The village is situated on what was the main salt route from Northwich to Chester. Chester Road, which runs through the centre of the village, follows the line of Watling Street, a Roman road.

Over the centuries the land of Hartford was divided up, with eleven different families owning areas. However by the 18th century Lord Delamere owned most of the village. The roads that still form the triangle in the centre of the village can be seen on the 1777 Burdett Map.

In 1821 the population was 772 and the Tithe map of 1840 shows mainly fields with dispersed groups of cottages and a terrace along Chester Road.

The London to Glasgow railway, then the Grand Junction Railway, was constructed to the west of the village in 1837, which provided a strong impetus for expansion to the area. The first commuters were the gentry from London, followed by the wealthy gentleman industrialists from Liverpool and Manchester, as well as the local salt barons. Between 1800 and 1850 several wealthy salt manufacturers from the Northwich area built individual houses in Hartford and by 1888 the population had risen to 1451.

By 1921 Brunner Mond was the principle landowner, having established a flourishing chemicals industry on the back of the natural resources. They believed in manufacturers' responsibility for the well being of their employees and built houses for their directors and managers in Hartford in a location upwind of the factories, and associated smells. The directors lived in The Crescent (c1910), the senior managers in The Grange (c1920) and the young managers in Walnut Lane (c1920).



2.2 The village today

From its historical beginnings, and its early close relationship to the local chemicals industry, Hartford has expanded rapidly and has become a magnet for commuters. The population has risen significantly, from 2,272 in 1961 to almost double that number (5,515) in 2001.

It has however largely maintained its identity as a dormitory village that is near the hub of things going on, but sufficiently off-centre to achieve a degree of independence. Despite many pressures it has avoided being seen as a western extension of the town of Northwich. Equally, despite much recent development, it has managed to retain a feeling of 'country' via the existence of many open green spaces and a high degree of tree cover.

Central to its expansion have been two key issues: its excellent transport links, and the existence of a wide variety of educational establishments that feature highly in national 'league tables'.

Hartford is within easy commuting distance of the major Manchester and Merseyside conurbations via its excellent links to the M6 and M56. Equally it has good rail links both north/south from Hartford station and east/west to Chester and Manchester from the nearby Greenbank station.

Hartford has a unique feature that creates many knock on effects for transport and development - it has more educational establishments than any other village in Europe. Over 6,000 children/students attend the ten educational establishments on a daily basis.

School traffic can be a major source of congestion at the beginning and end of the school day. This is further compounded by a large number of pupils living outside the village requiring transport into the village.

The transport links and the excellent range of private and state schools have made the village a desirable place to live. This encouraged the building of a number of estates of residential properties in the village (predominantly in the south west quadrant of the village to the south of Chester Road) resulting in infill, extension of the built up area into the countryside and the building of large 'executive' homes.



Schools and colleges.

Hartford Primary

Hartford Manor

St Wilfrid's

Hartford High

St Nicholas

Mid Cheshire
College

Cloughwood

Greenbank

The Grange Junior

The Grange Senior

3. Landscape Character and Setting



Sitting on a slight ridge near the centre of the Cheshire Plain, Hartford consists of a central core of residential property around a small retail centre with ribbon developments of housing along Chester Road and Hodge Lane. To the east the village is linked to Greenbank and Northwich - this being the only side of the village where the boundary is indistinct. The village occupies an area of 556 hectares (1374 acres, or a little more than two square miles).

On all other sides the village is surrounded, for the most part, by open, gently rolling farmland. This well maintained agricultural land is mainly given over to dairy pasture and the fields are small with traditional hedgerow and ditch boundaries. This green patchwork of fields contributes greatly to the rural feel of the village and maintains its existence as a separate entity by acting as a buffer between Hartford and the adjacent villages. The farmland to the south of the village is designated as open countryside and is subject to specific protection.

The importance of this is realised in the Vale Royal Local Plan where provision is made for the protection of these areas from inappropriate development. In particular “SPG 5 - Areas of Significant Local Environmental Value (ASLEV) - Character Appraisal”, describes the character and importance of maintaining the ‘green gaps’ between Hartford and the adjacent villages of Cuddington, Weaverham and Leftwich (Kingsmead). These ASLEVs are designated through [policy NE12](#) of the Local Plan and are seen as essential to maintain the identity and integrity of the village and should be strictly maintained.

Although the area has a relatively low percentage of woodland, the overall impression of the village and its surroundings is of a much greater intensity of tree cover. This impression is created by several factors. Firstly, the village itself has a high number of tree lined roads within the housing areas and large mature trees are to be found in the gardens of many houses, especially those built within a parkland setting. Secondly, some of the approaches to the village appear to be wooded although there is no depth to the plantings and thirdly, there are a small number of large woods on the edge of the parish.

The Weaver Valley lies on the southeast border of the village and is especially valuable, combining as it does a high quality landscape, recreational amenities and a rich variety of environments for wildlife. The nature reserve at Marshall’s Arm contains the remains of ancient broadleaf woodland (the area being too steep to support agriculture). In addition, there are areas of open water, wetland and natural grassland.

Further south Vale Royal Wood fringes the valley. The whole area is accessible on extensive public footpaths and contains areas designated and protected for their Special Scientific or Biological Interest (SSSIs and SBIs). To the northwest the newly planted Thorn Wood, including open grass and marshland, is owned by the Woodland Trust and is accessible to the public. To the north are Beach Hill, Back and Royalty Woods and although they are not accessible they add considerable character and value to the area.

Despite the elevated position of the village there are few locations where you have the ability to get a long distance view out to surrounding areas. Exceptions include the Hartford campus which provides an open view to Jodrell Bank, the Peak District and the Pennines, although some of that view has recently been spoilt by the installation of high palisade fencing.

There are however other vantage points that provide a more local outlook on to the adjacent farmland and open countryside that contribute substantially to maintaining the village feel. These include views across Grange Farm, Hodge Lane, Beach Road, and from Littledales Lane. See Map Appendix A.

Guidelines

Future planning and development should:-

- **Protect the identity of Hartford as a separate and distinct village.**
- **Rigorously enforce the ASLEV status of the land that protects the boundaries of the village.**
- **Seek to provide greater clarity at the village boundary with Northwich.**
- **Ensure that any future developments do not block or obscure the current views out of the village.**
- **Protect the wildlife and amenity value inherent in the surrounding green areas.**
- **Protect trees within the urban setting and rural areas and, if possible, plant or extend woodland for amenity use.**
- **Maintain the open green approaches to the village.**
- **Retain existing field patterns and maintain and, wherever possible, enhance traditional tree and hedgerow boundaries.**

Principal Local Plan Policy Links:-
BE1, GS3, GS6, NE1, NE3, NE8, NE9, NE12

4. Settlement Pattern Character

4.1 Shape

Hartford is a pleasant residential village whose boundaries are shown on the Map included at Appendix A. It has a north/south divide created by the A559 Chester Road running west to east through the parish and this acts as the central backbone of the village and the main road into Northwich. All secondary routes run off this main road - with the focal point of the village being Chester Road, School Lane, The Green and Bradburns Lane. The Church, Village Hall, two public houses, two garages, Social Club and shops all lie along this middle spine.

Two railway lines bisect the village both in a north/south and east/west direction and the ability to travel around the village is dependent upon the critical railway bridges on Chester Road, Bradburns Lane and Hodge Lane.

The A556 bypass (Manchester to Chester) completed soon after the Second World War runs across the southern perimeter of the village and takes a significant amount of traffic out of and into the village. The northern and western boundaries of the village are also well defined and distinct. The eastern boundary however is the least well defined due to the housing development at the eastern end merging into the Castle district of Northwich.

The River Weaver, a major source of local amenity, runs on the east of the village.

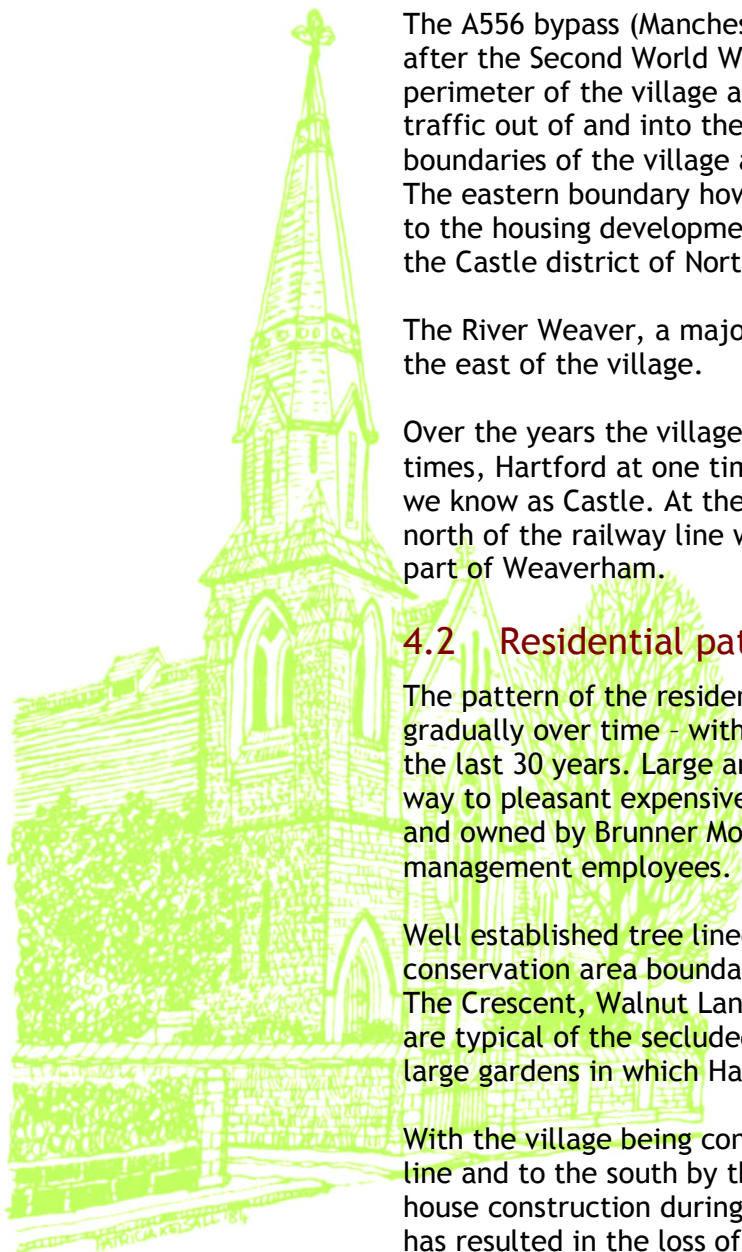
Over the years the village boundary has changed several times, Hartford at one time extending eastwards to the area we know as Castle. At the westward side, the land to the north of the railway line was previously designated as being part of Weaverham.

4.2 Residential pattern

The pattern of the residential development has evolved gradually over time - with the pace of change accelerating in the last 30 years. Large and impressive properties have given way to pleasant expensive buildings which were initially built and owned by Brunner Mond for their executive and middle management employees.

Well established tree lined roads are contained within the conservation area boundary and can be found in The Grange, The Crescent, Walnut Lane and Chester Road. These houses are typical of the secluded executive type properties with large gardens in which Hartford abounds.

With the village being constricted to the north by the railway line and to the south by the bypass, the significant volume of house construction during the second half of the 20th century has resulted in the loss of many of Hartford's open spaces.



Even as late as 1968 it is recorded that there were 6 farms around the centre of the village. In more recent times a mixture of post-war development, flats, council houses and new housing estates have taken place on both sides of Chester Road and west of School Lane up to the bypass, and in the Hodge Lane area.

4.3 Commercial

Within Hartford there are virtually no centres of industrial or commercial employment, except for a small business centre in Chester Road and an office facility in School Lane.

There is however a relatively thriving group of local shops centred on School Lane, The Green and Chester Road. The continuing commercial success of these ventures is essential to retaining a vibrant local community focus. Without the shops it is felt that Hartford could rapidly degenerate into a soulless dormitory commuter village.

The shops cope with local needs but draw their clientele from a high volume of passing traffic, which is essential to their survival. For that balance to be maintained, adequate and convenient parking for shoppers needs to be maintained.

4.4 Recreation and open space

Hartford is fortunate in that it has within its boundaries an extensive and varied array of formal sporting and leisure opportunities. These facilities all contribute greatly both to the sense of openness and also to community cohesion and village life.

The existence of the Mid Cheshire College gives the village access to running tracks, sports fields and all the open facilities a modern educational structure requires for our young people.

Informal play areas include not only the major area at Grange Park but also a number of more local areas such as those at Stones Manor Lane, Mornant Avenue, and Parker Avenue.

The allotments adjoining the Jubilee Field off The Green add horticultural ambience and much needed ground for keen growers.



Sporting activities

Vale Royal Athletics Club

Hartford Bowls & Tennis Club

Hartford Cricket Club

Hartford Football Club

Hartford Golf Club

Hartford Gymnastics Club

Hartford Sub Aqua Club

Mid Cheshire Table Tennis Club

4.5 Woods, trees and open environmental areas

Hartford is also fortunate in having within its boundaries, or immediately in the vicinity, an extensive network of more informal open spaces, woodland and natural environmental areas.

The existing Grange Farm Fields within the centre of the village, farmed until recently, provide a high amenity value as open green land, enhancing the tranquillity and appearance of the area and providing a much needed wildlife habitat, harmonizing with the mature trees of the gardens which abound.

Accessible woodland areas are Marshall's Arm, which has formal designation as a Local Nature Reserve (and in 2004 won a prestigious 'Green Flag Award' from the Civic Trust), Vale Royal Wood (containing an area of special scientific or biological interest), and Thorn Wood which includes some 42 acres of woodland and open meadow. (The Marshall's Arm LNR won a Green Flag award again in 2005, although this was after the VDS was adopted).

That sense of greenery is further enhanced by the extensive use of roadside hedging, which again provides miles of habitat around the village. A similar valuable wildlife corridor is provided by the land adjacent to the railway lines which, by virtue of security and safety aspects, is largely unaffected by the village population.

In the Parish Household questionnaire 92% of respondents rated green spaces, woodlands and parks; and 91% rated trees, as 'very important' to the character of the village.

The River Weaver and its associated walkways along the river banks, provides both a local amenity for the village population, and a habitat for a wide variety of plant, animal, bird and insect species. Part of the Weaver Valley is designated a Site of Biological Importance (SBI).

Hartford is also fortunate in having within its boundary a number of small ponds. Whilst the majority remain unseen they provide a valuable habitat for many species and are under threat from infilling or encroachment.

In addition to the formal public open space, the original Brunner Mond developments were provided with large gardens, some up to three acres, within a woodland setting, which play host to a large bird population. The avenues were planted with horse chestnut trees, lined with grass verges, fenced with oak palings and hedged with laurel and evergreen, giving a sense of unity and contributing in a major way to the sense of greenery and openness of the village.

Guidelines

- Trees, shrubs, hedgerows within and around any new development should be conserved and supplemented.
- Existing open areas, including school and sports facilities, should be adopted and retained.
- Any future uses of Grange Farm should retain the open aspect at the centre of the village.
- Ponds within the village should be retained and their wildlife value enhanced.
- Any discussion on traffic in relation to future development should ensure that the parking necessary for the survival of the local shops is maintained.
- Any enhancement of existing spaces will have to reflect and reconcile the needs of the community without impinging on the privacy and security of those living nearby.

Principal Local Plan Policy Links:-
BE1, NE1, NE3, NE7, NE8, NE9, RT1, RT2



5. Buildings

The village of Hartford, despite lying astride the old Roman Watling Street, has retained few pre-19th century dwellings, with the mid 19th and early 20th century housing boom resulting in the demise of a number of the older houses.

In the late nineteenth and early part of the twentieth century the coming of Brunner Mond to Winnington led to a doubling of the village population. From the existence of four hundred houses, in 1967 a further 1000 were built within a decade. Considerable further development followed, leading to a population of over 5,500 in 2001.

Much of the 20th century house building extends to both the eastern and the western edges of the parish boundary with the main thrust of development being squeezed within the confines of the Chester Road to the north and the by-pass to the south.

In the Parish Household questionnaire 22% gave 'village life' as a reason for living in the village and an overwhelming 93% did not want to see any further increase in the population.

5.1 Diversity and scale

Because of the continuous, yet relatively recent era of their construction, (mainly post dating the use of purely local materials), it is difficult to make an overall categorization of the characteristic features of the buildings. There are large variations in style between, and in some cases within, the different developments.

However, despite that variation, there is still a strong sense of coherence both in the layout and arrangement of housing and the use of materials.

There is a consistent placing of property set back from the roads and nearly all housing is orientated parallel to the road (not with gable end towards the road nor at an 'off-set' angle). The consistent arrangement of private garden filling the space between house and road enhances the coherent character of the village.

Whilst there is considerable variety of housing style, there is a significant use of brick and white painted walls. That and the presence of similar roof pitches ensure an overall sense of village design continuity. A number of houses are exceptionally large and impressive in scale, including their gardens. Many of the houses are set back unusually far from the road or cul de sac, which is often tree lined.

Whilst there is no evidence of any traditional timber framing in Hartford, modern timber-frame effect detailing has been used to good effect on the Village Hall, the Church Hall and

Church extension and also on the first floor and gable details of many early 20th century residential properties.

Apart from the Church there are no buildings tall enough to intrude on the eye. However, one set of flats is noted for its stark angular construction which is totally out of character with the village.

As a reflection of the many buildings and features of interest, the centre of the village around the Church was designated a Conservation Area in 1974. The extent of the Conservation Area was reviewed in 2003 and, after extensive consultation the boundary of the Conservation Area was formally extended in 2004, and adopted by VRBC on 26th February 2004.

Key local buildings are described in a roughly chronological way.

5.2 Pre-mid 19th Century buildings

A number of noteworthy buildings have survived the recent boom in new developments and contribute greatly to the character of the village.

Hartford Hall, 17th century, is now a hotel although until the late 1950's it remained a private residence.



Sandiway House, built in sandstone on a grand scale, some time before 1794. A former home of Sir John Brunner, it is now occupied by AMEC.



Grange Farmhouse c1800, in Georgian style, redbrick with blue headers and some original sash windows. This building is rapidly becoming dilapidated.

The Beeches built for Thomas Marshall, Salt Manufacturer, in 1802 and remodelled between 1814 and 1824 - a large and rambling building in Georgian style with neo gothic style windows, white stucco, and slate roof.

Sandiway Cottage, built some time before 1829, in small manor-style traditional Cheshire black and white mock Tudor design with large gardens and lodge.

Stable block in Walnut Lane. This predates the housing in the vicinity and was part of the demolished Walnut Cottage. It is the surviving relic of the horse drawn era when Hartford once stabled 500 horses.

Whitehall, built in 1835, and formerly known as Hartford Lodge. It was designed by John Douglas senior (a local builder) and the gardens were once full of unusual trees and plants. Once the home of Gaston Jarmay, MD of Brunner Mond, it is now offices subject to a planning application.



Elmfield, Georgian/early Victorian villa, birthplace of the actress Ann Todd.

267 Chester Road (1835) with 3 gables and decorative bargeboards in white stucco.

Hartford Railway station, opened in 1837, on the main line to London, Liverpool and Scotland and designated a 'first class station' (i.e. all trains stopped). Refurbished in the 1960s.

The Coachman formerly the Railway Inn and Station Hotel which was originally a changing point for horses along Cheshire Turnpike Road.

The Red Lion Public House has been a feature of the village for a considerable time and is shown on the 1840 Tithe Map.

Weaverham Grange, for a brief period of its life the HQ of North West Water.

The Hollies, originally a farmhouse, is the former home of Lord and Lady Rochester.

5.3 Late 19th Century buildings

There are two notable mid/late 19th century terraces in the village constructed in Flemish bond. The terraces at The Green, date to 1864 and those in Chester Road, opposite the Grange Farm, were constructed in 1857.

The Church of St John the Baptist was first built in 1824 and subsequently rebuilt in 1875 at a cost of £5,000 by architect John Douglas, one of the leading provincial architects of his generation. The tower was added in 1889. It is of Gothic style, with careful details and a sense of craftsmanship. The 1990's extension has roofline, tiles and porch in keeping.

Large Edwardian Houses in School Lane and on Chester Road are impressive in proportion and scale, many of which have retained original stained glass and sash windows.

The Methodist Chapel was erected in 1891 at a cost of £2000.

5.4 Early 20th Century buildings

The Brunner Mond corporate staff housing in The Crescent, Walnut Lane, Walnut Cottages and The Grange. This corporate social housing was influenced by the concept of the model industrial village and garden suburb concept. Building and architectural style includes the use of the cul-de-sac (to create a sense of community), the houses grouped and positioned in an interesting way to maximize privacy.

The use of a variety of finishing treatments - (especially in The Crescent) including half timbering, rendering, Ruabon and rustic looking brickwork with Flemish bonding, steep high

pitched roofs sometimes sweeping down, gables, high chimney stacks and hand made tiles. In many of the houses what would normally be the main entrance or most imposing elevation is placed facing the rear of the house. Windows have a variety of styles including small paned, leaded, splayed and square bayed, single, double or more. Doors equally reflect a variety of styles from mediaeval to classic, including the use of semi-circular arches.

Brunner Mond's policy in the 19th century of providing their houses with large gardens has provided the opportunity for infill developments and a number of infill dwellings have already been constructed in three of these locations over the last thirty years, many of which have failed to reflect the existing design characteristic. Areas at potential future risk would include the grounds of Sandiway Cottage, gardens in The Crescent, Walnut Lane and The Grange with their attendant outbuildings ripe for demolition or redevelopment.

The Martin Building. The former kindergarten to the Grange School was designed by Leslie Martin (famous for being co-architect of the Royal Festival Hall), in 1933. It was ahead of its time in the use of flat roof and open plan design, with a climbing frame as an integral part. In 2002 it was rebuilt for use as a day nursery in the style of the original design.

Bowls and Tennis Pavilion/Village Hall. Provided by Brunner Mond and later acquired by the Parish Council.

1930's - 50's. Housing on School Lane, Lodge Lane and The Riddings. Amongst the standard 30's style semis along School Lane there are a few rare examples of modernistic Bauhaus houses with strong geometric minimalist lines, white rendering and unusual metal window treatments.

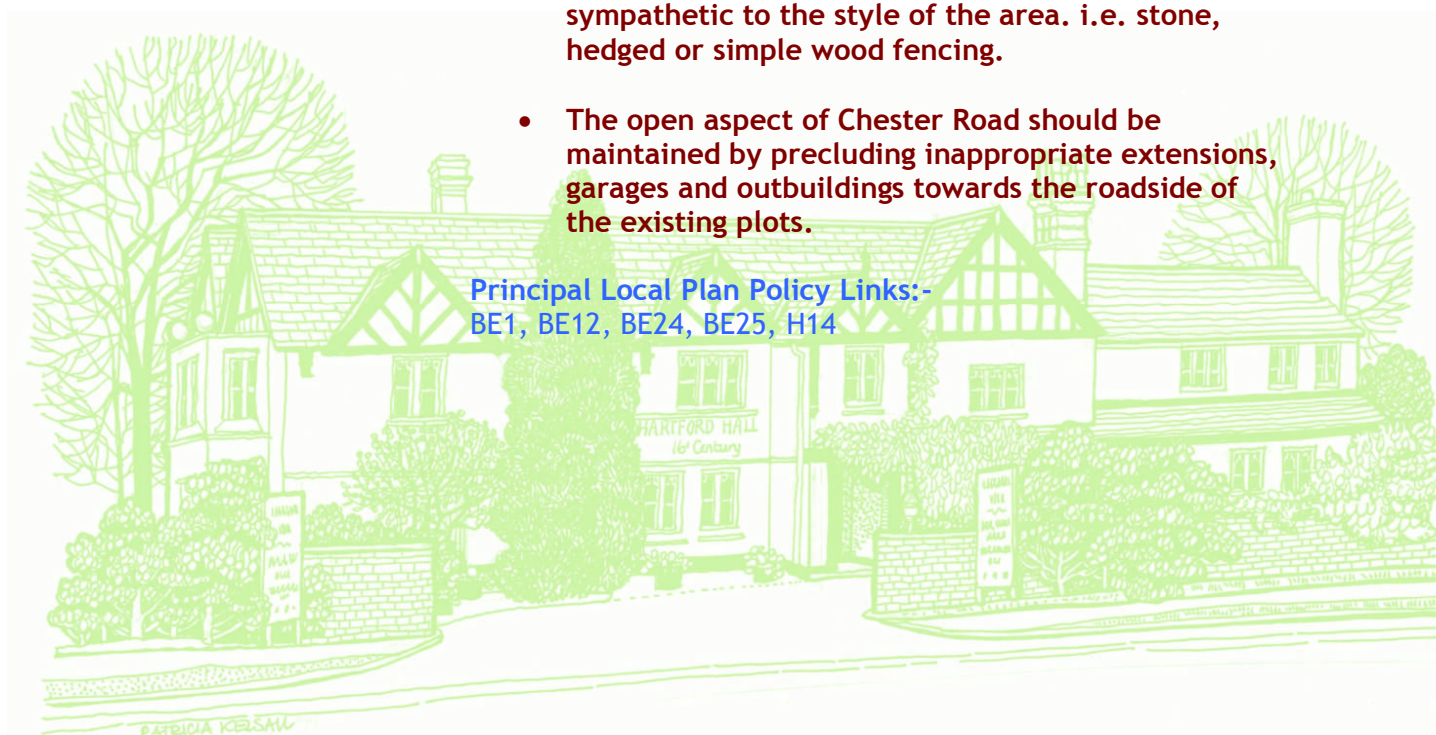
The area bounded by the by-pass, the Crewe-Liverpool railway line, School Lane and Chester Road has been infilled with a variety of housing providing a wide range of types.

The Grange School. An educational establishment that has grown significantly over a number of years, gradually evolving into a consistent architectural style.

Guidelines

- There should be consultation with the community at the concept design and planning stages of any significant proposed development.
- Any new or modified buildings should respect the character of the surrounding area (especially in the Conservation Area).
- Development should take account of the almost complete lack of tall structures and have most careful regard to the height of any new development in the interests of retaining the present landscape.
- Whilst no potential areas for housing development have been readily identified, any change in planning policy which would allow “new build” to be approved should involve restricted numbers of dwellings. They should meet the housing needs of future members of the community and be sympathetic to the ambience of the village.
- Infilling developments that undermine the character of the surrounding area should not be allowed.
- Windows and glass front doors in uPVC are inappropriate to Hartford’s character and should be discouraged.
- Front garden boundaries should reflect and be sympathetic to the style of the area. i.e. stone, hedged or simple wood fencing.
- The open aspect of Chester Road should be maintained by precluding inappropriate extensions, garages and outbuildings towards the roadside of the existing plots.

Principal Local Plan Policy Links:-
BE1, BE12, BE24, BE25, H14



6. Highways and Byways

The village of Hartford is split into four areas by the principal road system and has significant traffic problems during certain periods of the day generated by the movement of children, students and adult workers to the village's education establishments.

The morning movement between 0815 and 0930 and afternoon between 1500 and 1600 of approximately 6000 pupils and 700 staff, many of which are in buses and coaches, causes major problems centred around the traffic lights in the centre of the village. This has caused the development of several 'rat runs' through the housing estates. Appropriate traffic calming measures are being introduced through the Riddings Lane estate for the children at the village primary schools as part of the 'Safer Routes to School' initiative.

Earlier proposals for addressing the queuing traffic problem, and allowing major development in the village, centred around a series of sequenced traffic lights along Chester Road. It is felt that any such solution is inappropriate and would impact significantly on the village feel of the locality. 73% of the respondents of the household questionnaire did not want to see any more junctions in the village controlled by traffic signals.

The majority of roads in the areas of the village built before 1980 are tree-lined and have grass verges. However, the new estates, especially those built since 1990, do not have any pavements except along parts of the spine road. This is inherently dangerous for children, elderly people and dog walkers. The roads are surfaced with asphalt with some new estate roads enhanced by red chippings and red block paviors. Pavements are constructed of concrete paving slabs or asphalt, many are in poor condition but a few have been altered to allow easier wheelchair access.

A number of footpaths and cycleways exist within and adjacent to the village, however their existence is not well known and they are not well signposted. These include routes along both banks of the River Weaver Navigation, which forms the eastern boundary of Hartford Parish and connects with the Cheshire network. A spur from this path crosses Hartford Campus and routes along Stones Manor Lane and Riddings Lane to the A556 at the railway bridge. Thorn Wood accessed via a gateway on Northwich Road provides a small network of tranquil paths to enjoy the countryside. A right of way footpath runs from Chester Road across fields to Hodge Lane and a footpath connects from Littledales Lane to Sandiway.

Several alleyways connect the cul-de-sacs in some housing estates to provide vehicle free movement in these areas. (e.g. Walnut Lane to The Crescent; Grosvenor Avenue to Riddings Lane; Needham Drive to Grosvenor Avenue).



Guidelines

- Good and safe access for pedestrians and cyclists must be provided to and within the village centre and to the educational establishments.
- Traffic calming measures should be further investigated to give pedestrians priority in housing areas and to limit the use of lorries along the through routes transversing the village.
- New developments should be planned for pedestrians and cyclists as a first priority with a presumption in favour of provision of pavements where viable.
- Change the flow patterns of the village traffic lights to reflect the traffic flow patterns of eastbound in the morning and westbound during the afternoon exodus.
- Any schemes to resolve the traffic problems within the village should be appropriate to a village setting and not result in the creation of a busy urban streetscene.
- All footpaths and rights of way should be suitably marked.

Principal Local Plan Policy Links:-
BE1, T9, T12, T17, T21



7. Street Furniture

Street furniture such as road signs, street lamps and litterbins are a mixture of sizes and shapes, as such they lack the consistency necessary to create a sense of local identity. Most are of a modern functional design. Lamp standards are a mixture of concrete and galvanised steel design with the concrete posts being slowly replaced with modern metal lamp-posts.

Gateway signs are positioned, at the village boundaries, on all the major roads into the village. Other street furniture obstructs some of these signs.

A significant number of signs are situated around the village, some being directions to local towns and villages and a number relating to local facilities e.g. the campus. Hartford is meant to be a village and the A556 was specifically constructed to relieve through traffic in the village. A number of the highway signs are of a size more appropriate for derestricted highways with fast traffic, all of which add to a sense of urban clutter.

Most commercial premises are small and the majority independently owned. Shop fronts and signs are inoffensive.

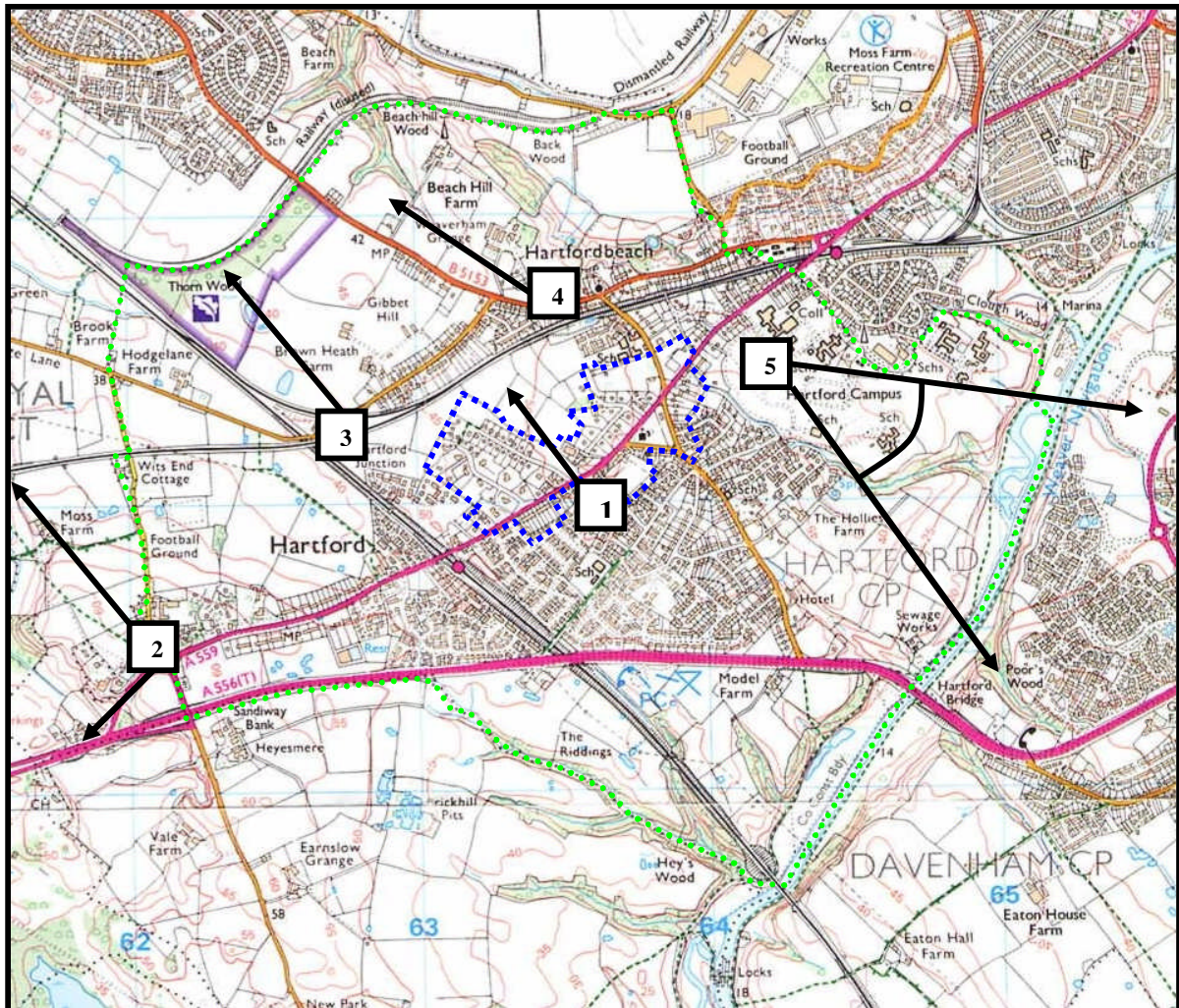
Guidelines

- **A consistent and appropriate style should be adopted for street furniture (e.g. bins) and all modern functional items eventually replaced.**
- **The number and size of statutory road signs should be kept to a minimum.**
- **Replacement shop fronts and signs, especially in and around the Conservation Area, should be discreet and of a quality to complement the area. Illuminated shop signs are not appropriate.**
- **Wherever possible cables should be placed underground in all new developments and efforts made to persuade the utilities companies to place replacement cables underground.**

Principal Local Plan Policy Links:-
BE1, BE12, BE18

8. Appendices

A. Conservation Area, Parish Boundaries and Important Views



Vale Royal Borough Council licence number LA 100023301

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Boundaries

Green = Civil Parish Boundary

Blue = Conservation Area Boundary

Views to be preserved

1. From the Village centre over The Grange farmland
2. From Littledales Lane over open countryside
Wooded approach to the Village from the bypass
3. From Hodge Lane over open countryside towards Thorn Wood
4. From Beech Road across open fields
5. From Hartford Campus towards Davenham

B. Listed Buildings in the Civil Parish of Hartford

Location or Street	Listed Building Name	Grade
OS Map ref SJ 6410 7081	Cattle tunnel 170m NW of Vale Royal Railway Viaduct	II
BRADBURNS LANE	Kindergarten building at Grange School	II
CHESTER ROAD	Church of St. John	II
CHESTER ROAD	No. 224 (The Beeches) and No. 226 (Hartford Beach)	II*
CHESTER ROAD	Turnpike milepost between Nos. 453 and 455	II
HODGE LANE	Barn 20m W of Brown Heath Farmhouse	II
HODGE LANE	Barn 20m W of Hodge Lane Farmhouse	II
HODGE LANE	Hodge Lane Farmhouse	II
PARK LANE	Riddings	II
SCHOOL LANE	Hartford Hall Hotel (formerly listed as Hartford Manor)	II
SCHOOL LANE	Hollies	II
SCHOOL LANE	Front wall and steps to Whitehall	II
SCHOOL LANE	Whitehall	II
WEAVER NAVIGATION	Vale Royal Railway Viaduct (part of this is in Davenham Parish)	II

Grade I: These are buildings of exceptional interest (less than 5 percent of the listed buildings so far are in this grade).

Grade II: These are buildings of special interest, which warrant every effort being made to preserve them. (Some particularly important buildings in Grade II are classified as Grade II*).

C. Principal Local Plan Policy Links

BE1	Safeguarding and Improving the Quality of the Environment.
BE12	Conservation Areas.
BE24	Locally Important Buildings.
BE25	Conservation Area Character Appraisals.
BE18	Advertisement and Signs.
GS3	North Cheshire Green Belt.
GS6	The Open Countryside.
H14	Alterations, Improvements and Extensions to Buildings in Town and Village Policy Boundaries and are not Washed Over by Green Belt.
NE1	Protection of the Nature Conservation Resource.
NE3	Designated Sites of Local and Regional Nature Conservation Importance.
NE7	Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Features.
NE8	Provision and Enhancement of Landscape in New Developments.
NE9	Trees and Woodland.
NE12	Areas of Significant Local Environmental Value.
RT1	General Requirements for Recreation/Tourism Developments.
RT2	Sport Facilities and Open Spaces.
T9	Pedestrians
T12	Cycling
T17	Cycling
T21	Car Parking

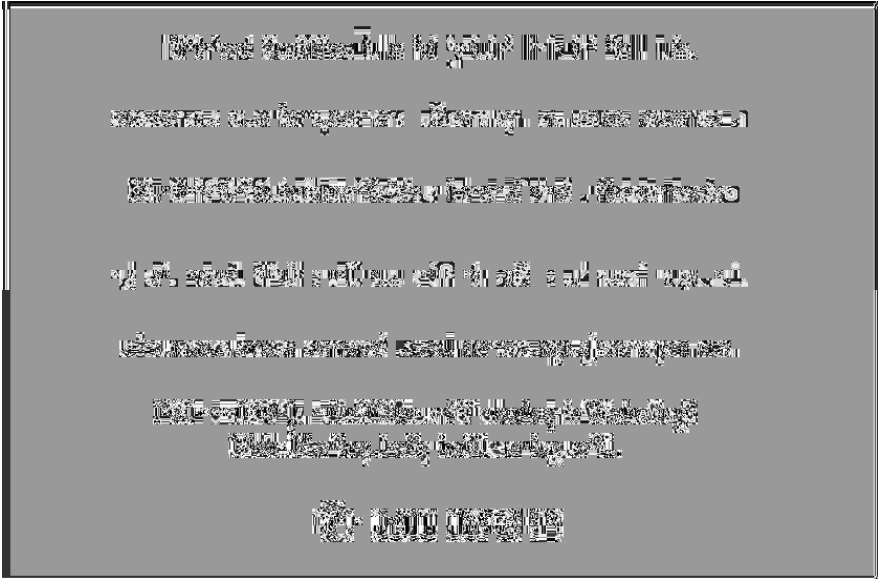
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Hartford Village Design Statement