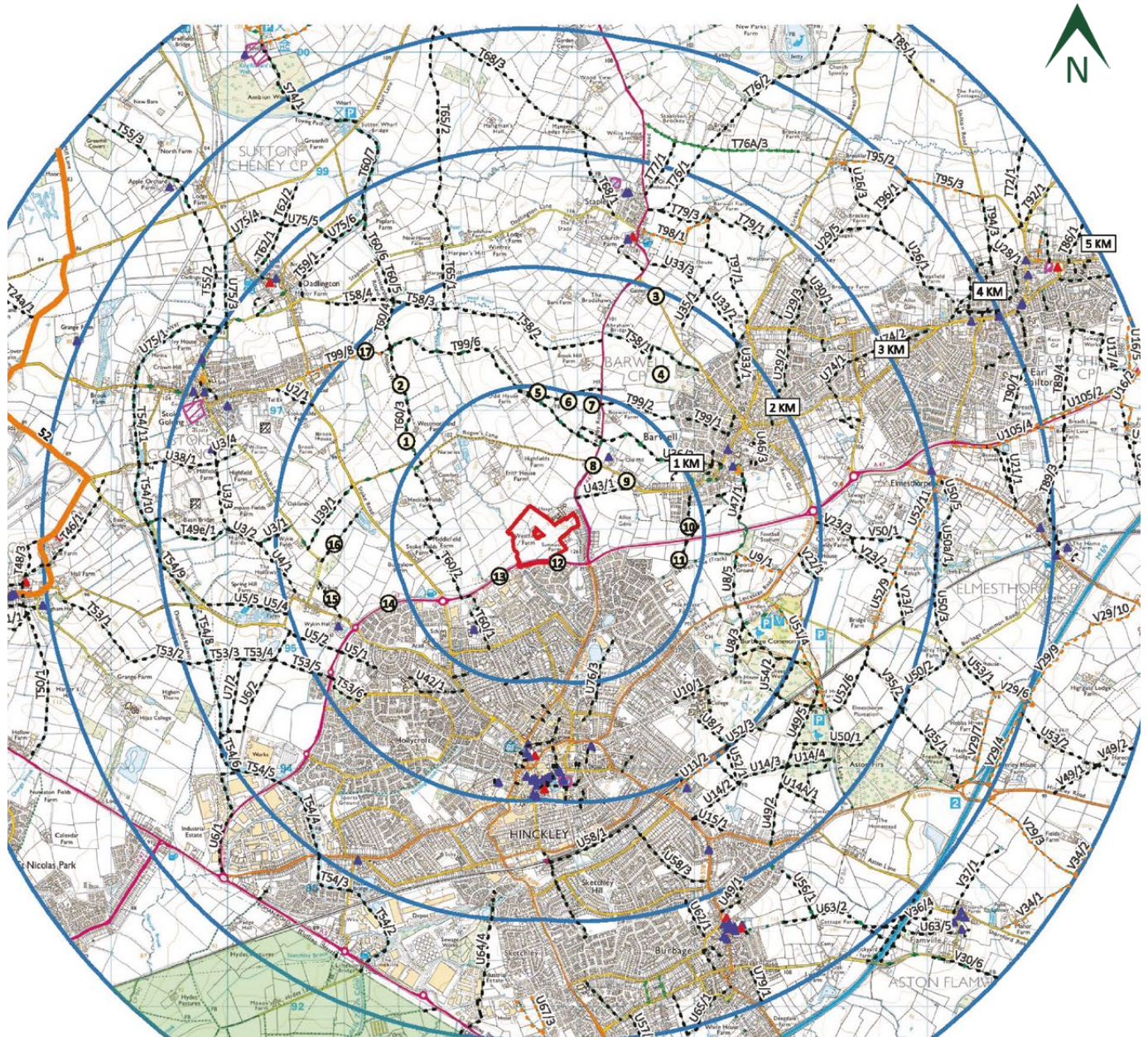


Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

The site is not situated within a National or local landscape designation. There is no Public Access Land or recreational access to the site area, with only a limited network of Public Rights Of way situated within the wider open countryside, and few routes passing between Hinckley and Barwell.

Guidance of the local landscape character of the area can be found in the Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Landscape Character Assessment, which was published in September 2017. The site is located wholly within the 'Stoke Golding Rolling Farmlands' Landscape Character Area, and wholly in the 'Rolling Farmlands' Landscape Type. The Stoke Golding Rolling Farmlands Landscape Character Area is described as follows:

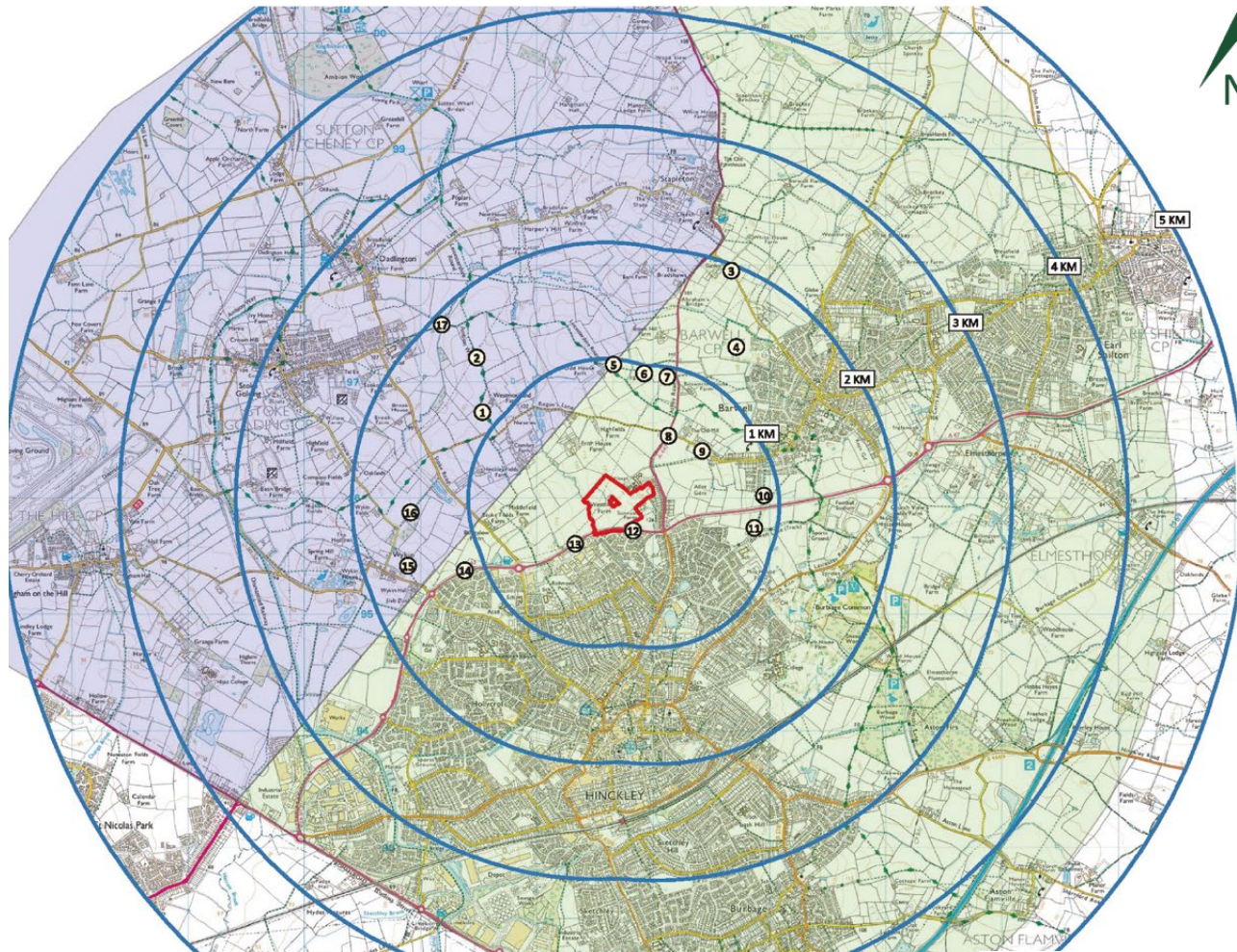
“a mix of arable and pasture farmland arranged in small to medium scale fields in a simple regular pattern..... Despite its proximity to the built up area of Hinckley, the area has a rural character, with little light pollution.....Hedgerows with trees and occasional woodland copses add visual interest to an otherwise open landscape. Occasional long distance views can be obtained from the high points across agricultural fields to distant horizons”



Landscape Context Plan

The published Landscape Character Assessment identifies a number of key landscape features:

- Undulating arable and pasture farmland with gentle valleys
- Smaller fields are often found around settlements;
- Small to medium scale rectilinear field pattern divided by low hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees typical of parliamentary enclosure;
- Tree cover in the wider character area is formed of mature trees within low hedgerows frequently define field boundaries, and occasional woodland clumps along small watercourses give the area a relatively wooded appearance;
- Rural settlement pattern with former agricultural villages typically demonstrating a historic core, modern outskirts and sporadic farmsteads on the outer edges, within a strong rural setting;
- Historic villages occupying higher ground with attractive red brick cottages fronting onto the road and connected by rural lanes with grass verges and well-maintained hedgerows; and
- Church spires and towers within villages in and around the character area form distinctive landmarks on the skyline.



Landscape Character Areas

The site demonstrates a limited number of these key characteristics, which are mainly landform, field pattern, hedgerows and scattered hedgerow trees. However, the site is influenced by the urban edge setting, and the direct views of the town (and built development enclosing the site and along the

Normandy Way), rather than the rural settlement pattern and village character experienced in the wider areas of the landscape. The site is situated on the urban edge of Hinckley adjacent to the A47 Normandy Way, and overlooked by extensive urban development; however, the site is generally not prominent in views.

Character of the Landscape around the settlement edge and site's location

The site is managed for livestock pasture, and contains typical features such as medium scale rectilinear field pattern and undulating landform. The fields area enclosed by native hedgerows and scattered broad leaf trees. However, it was noted there is a degree of degradation of landscape character noted on site including outgrown and gappy hedgerows, limited scattered hedgerow trees, direct views across the urban setting of the site including the effects of the A47 Normandy Way, road signage and road lighting set on high columns. To the south west of the site, Normandy Way continues along the urban edge, whereby the site is overlooked by existing industrial, commercial and employment buildings (i.e., Wheatfield Way and Bradleyfield), with existing residential areas situated beyond around Maidenfield Lane and Tudor Road.

To the north and west of the site, built form and development in the wider open countryside is dispersed and nucleated. The open countryside beyond the site is defined by open agricultural fields, field hedgerows, scattered hedgerow trees, woodland spinneys and extensive tree lines along watercourses (including the tributary of the River Tweed and the River Tweed).

Approximate extent of the Site



View south from the existing settlement edge towards the site from Normandy Way (A47)



View from the PRoW situated to the north east of the site looking south east



View from PRoW situated south west of the site

Approximate extent of the Site



View from approach to Hinckley town at the junction of Ashby Road and Hinckley Road

Approximate extent of the Site



View Normandy Way (A47) looking south towards the site from existing settlement edge



Aerial view from the existing settlement looking north east over the site

From a landscape and town character perspective, the neighbouring urban land uses definitely contribute to the site's perception as urban edge. The site rises up to the higher landform along the site's edge. This landform represents an approximate edge between land that is clearly 'undulating arable and pasture farmland with gentle valleys' to that which has an increasingly strong association with the town.



Viewpoint Locating Plan





4

The Site

The Site

Site Description

The site is defined along part of its southern boundary by Normandy Way (A47) and in partially in the east by the rear boundaries of dwellings fronting Ashby Road (A447) and Hinckley and Bosworth Community Hospital to the north-east. The western site boundary is defined by an unnamed watercourse and the northern boundary by existing hedgerows and associated trees.

Existing Buildings

There are no buildings within the extent of the application site boundary.

There is however a cluster of buildings including Westfield Farm Farmhouse and Sunnyside Farm Farmhouse adjacent to the site.

The only other external site boundary that has a direct interface with other buildings is to the north-east, where rears of houses and the Hinckley and Bosworth Community Hospital form the boundary of the site.



Aerial view of the Sunnyside Farm Complex



Aerial View of the Site



Sunnyside Farm Farmhouse (off-site)



Westfield Farm Farmhouse (off-site)



Important Hedgerows Plan



Surviving Ridge and Furrow Earthworks Plan



Existing Hedgerow



Surviving Ridge and Furrow Earthworks

Heritage

The application is supported by a Built Heritage Statement and Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment.

There are no designated heritage assets located within the site. There are two Listed Buildings and seven non-designated built heritage assets located within the defined search area of the reports and an additional Listed Building located outside of this area has also been considered. The report has established that only the Isolation Hospital, Ashby Road (non-designated built heritage asset) has the potential to be affected by development within the site through changes within its setting.

The site contains two non-designated heritage assets, Westfield Farm and areas of surviving Medieval ridge and furrow earthworks. The submitted report establishes that only Westfield Farm's farmhouse has any individual heritage interest, and this is of negligible historic significance.

There are no designated archaeological assets located within the site. No designated archaeological assets located outside of the site are assessed to be sensitive to the proposed development.

The surviving ridge and furrow earthworks are located in the fields to the west and south of Westfield Farm. They survive as an island within the site, where unusually selions stretching to in excess of 600m are visible.

The site is assessed to have a low potential for significant, non-agricultural, remains of all periods. A number of hedgerows within the site are first recorded on the 1838 Barwell Tithe Map are therefore 'important' under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

Arboriculture

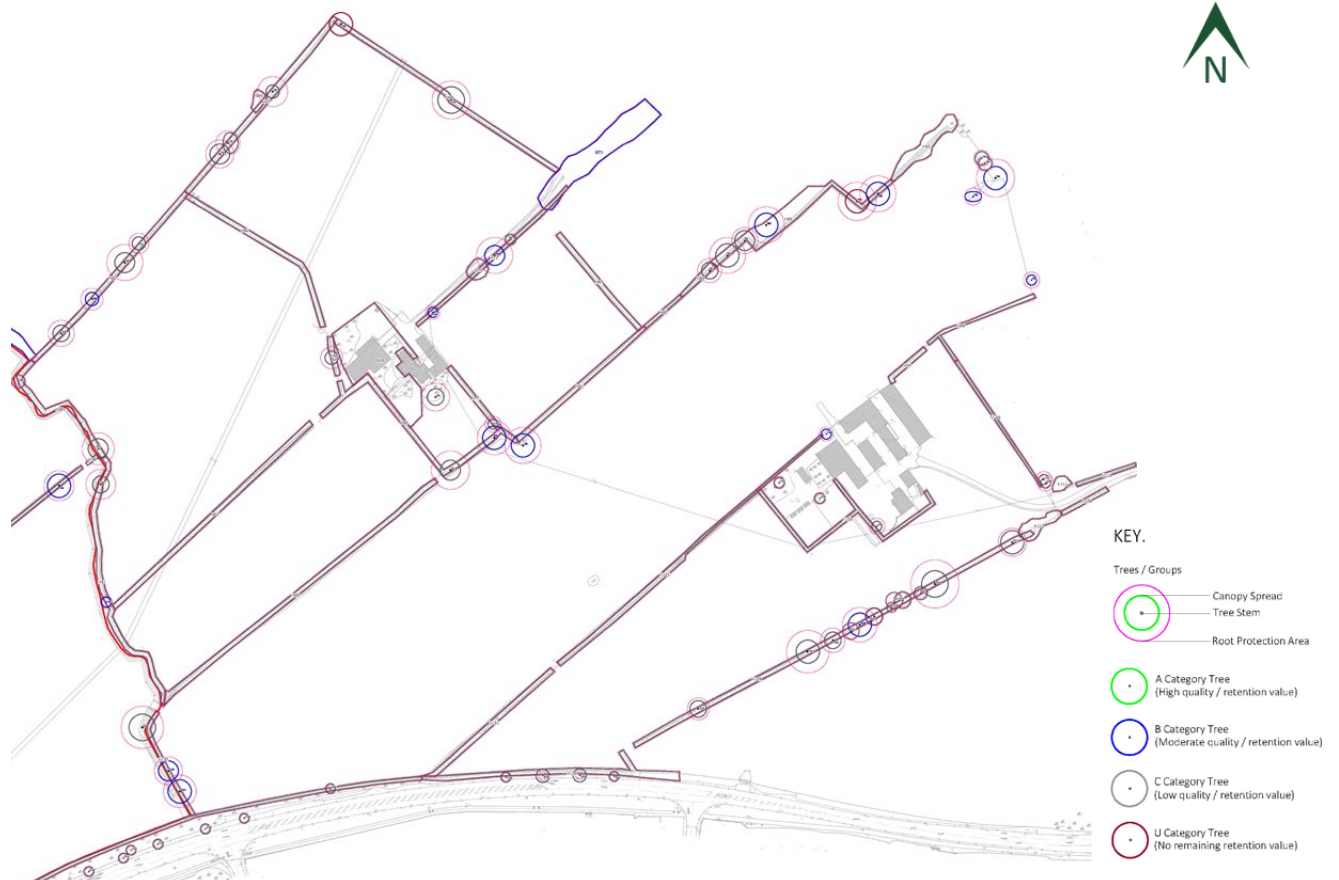
An Arboriculture Survey and Constraints Report has been prepared as is submitted to support the application. The Arborist found the following:

- a total of 101 individual trees, a number of field hedgerows enclosing the site and within its interior, as well as 8 groups of trees, totalling 162 items.
- Of all the surveyed items, the majority of trees were considered to be of low quality (categorised as C under BS 5837: 2012 criterion).
- The majority of items identified are primarily of low or no value, with the exception of minority of category B items, totalling 32 no. items.
- It is noted that these category B items are located around the periphery of the site, rather than its interior, and therefore does not adversely constrain proposed development of the site, or require removal.
- The majority of the tree and hedgerow fabric on site was made up of native species, which are found locally to site including – Common Ash, Field Maple, Common Lime, Horse Chestnut, and small number of Wild Cherry, Hornbeam, Common Alder and Oak.
- Hedgerows are made up of a number of native species including Blackthorn, Common Ash, Common Hawthorn, Field Maple and Wych Elm.

With regard to potential future development of the site, tree planting should be incorporated into the landscaping scheme, especially if tree removal is required to facilitate the development proposal. Such

planting would enhance the landscape setting of the site and provide long-term amenity benefits to the surrounding areas. In these situations, once matured, the new tree planting, retained (and enhanced) and new hedgerows would afford a beneficial effect on the local landscape and views experienced when walking along Public Rights of Way.

To the north of Hinckley, the tree and hedgerow structure forms an important landscape and habitat feature, and provide visual texture and diversity within an otherwise open and simple landscape. The loss of existing trees and hedgerow (and its lack of appropriate management) has the potential to erode the structure of the landscape, the framework of field parcels and the overall landscape fabric surrounding the town's northern edge.



Ecology

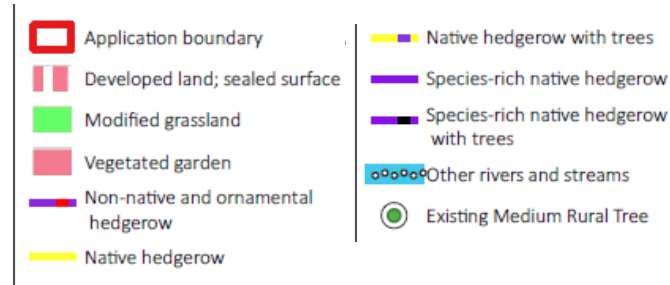
A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been undertaken to assess baseline conditions with further survey work informing site design mitigation requirements. Consideration has been given to the requirement for biodiversity net gain (BNG) within planning consents in England. An Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) will inform robust assessment of the development impacts in line with planning policy.

Nine statutory sites are present within 10km of the site. The closest being Burbage Common & Woods (LNR) located c.1.7km south-east. The Natural England SSSI Impact Risk Zones used to assess planning applications for likely impacts on SSSIs/SACs/SPAs & Ramsar sites was consulted via the government’s multi-agency website MAGIC. It is not anticipated that Natural England will need to be consulted on this application.

The site comprises species-poor modified grassland, developed land and associated vegetated gardens (two farmhouses and associated outbuildings) with occasional scattered trees. The fields are bound by a combination of species-rich and native hedgerows. A tributary of Tweed River runs off-site along the western boundary.

All fields comprise cattle-grazed modified grassland. The vegetation is dominated by fast-growing grasses on fertile, neutral soils forming a low distinctiveness habitat.

A low number of common bat species have been confirmed utilising the site for commuting and foraging purposes. Bird species present are largely common and widespread. Some of the more notable species utilising the site include common kingfisher and raptors such as common buzzard and Eurasian sparrowhawk. Survey work has confirmed absence of great crested newt, water vole, otter. The site does not support suitable habitat for reptiles and is not within a known location for hazel dormouse.



Topography

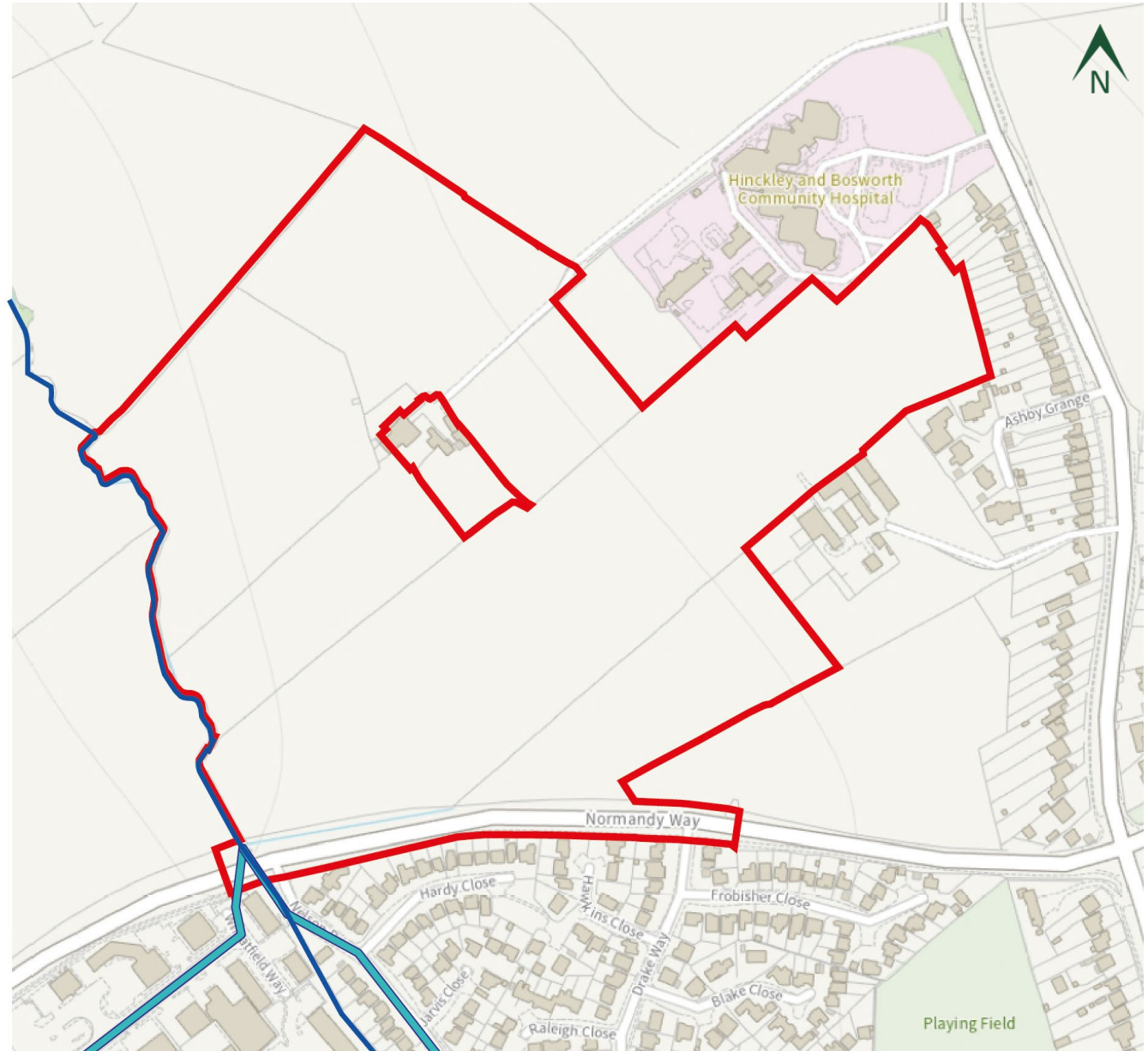
The site generally falls from a high point in the north-west toward the lower parts along the watercourse in the south.

Flood Risk

A Flood Risk Assessment is submitted in support of the planning application and demonstrates that the proposed development of the site is not at significant flood risk, subject to the recommended flood mitigation strategies being implemented.

and outfalls to the River Tweed approximately 2.0km downstream of the site. It is not represented on the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning due to its small draining catchment area.

The site has been reviewed for other potential sources of flood risk including canals, surface water, groundwater, reservoirs and large water-bodies and sewers. None of these sources have been found to represent a potential barrier to development.



Flood Risk Plan



Hedgerow and trees along the western site boundary associated with the existing watercourse

Noise

There are few significant sources of noise to which occupants following the potential development of the site would be exposed. The most notable source of noise is road traffic on Normandy Way (A47) which would be most perceptible at properties located toward the southern area of the site. For properties located further north, noise from road traffic on Ashby Road (A447) to the west may be perceptible, though not significant. This is as a result of the distance between the site and the highway, and the existing properties or business premises which lie to the east of the site.

Air Quality

The site is not located within an existing Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Air quality monitoring in the wider area shows that air pollutant concentrations are below the current relevant air quality objectives for England. The surrounding road network, in particular the A47 Normandy Way and A5 Watling Street, is considered to be the main pollution source in the vicinity of the site.

Design Concepts

- celebrate the heritage assets
- create a primary route which visually connects Sitwell House & Swinden House
- create a focal point/heart to the scheme around Swinden House and design a layout that pushes all residents through the space
- respond to the walled garden with a 'red brick' character, respecting historic patterns.
- create an attractive, tree lined walking & cycle route through the scheme using the existing trees across the site with very removal (low value), and extend the

deal aspect apartments to face Basewick Rd across and front the tree lined pedestrianized route.

pedestrianized route

main body of the development is surrounded by a green belt

existing street with trees / mature trees / large trees





"Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community."

National Planning Policy Framework

5

The Design Process

The Design Process

Constraints and Opportunities

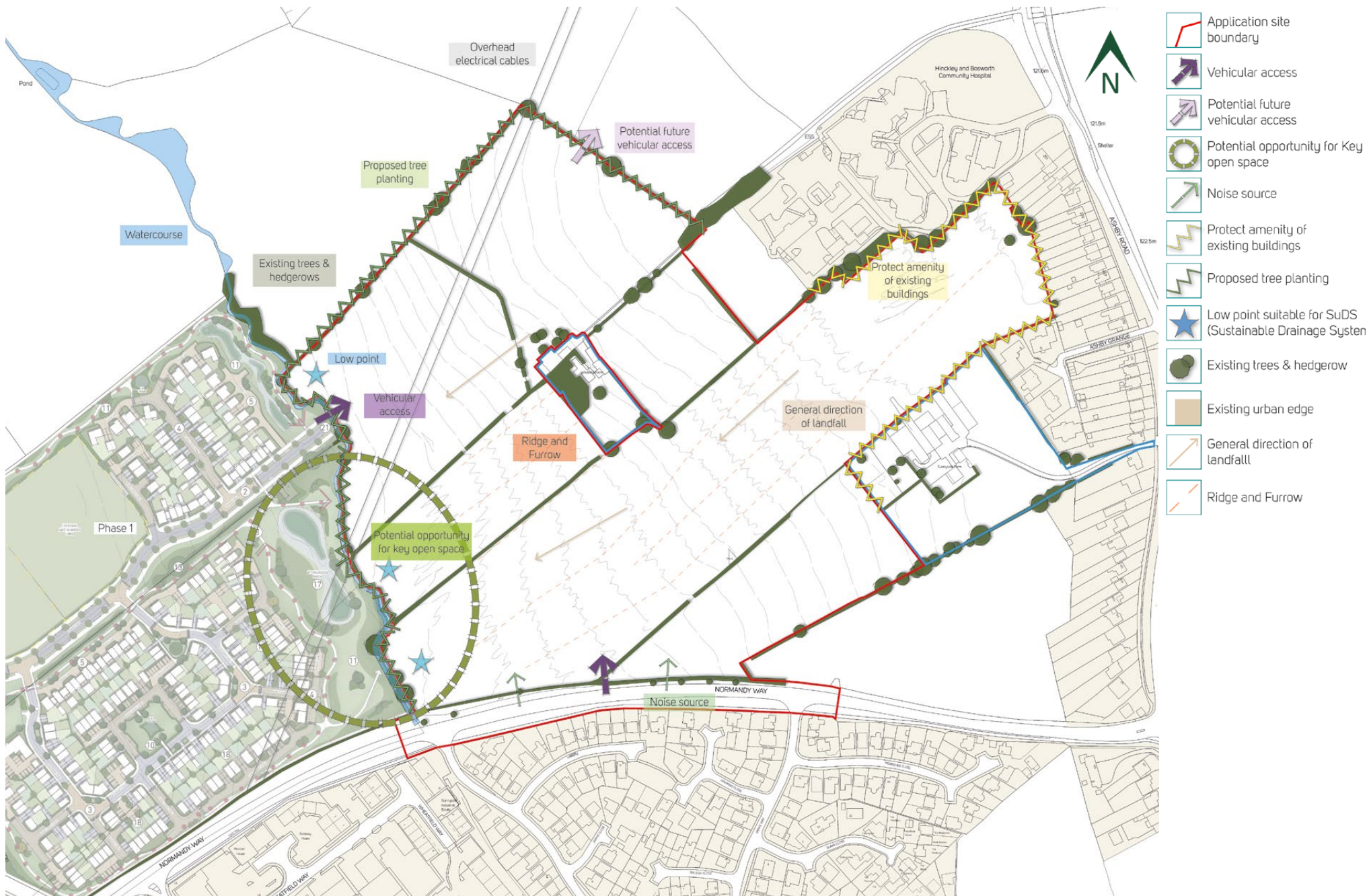
A clear understanding of the site constraints and opportunities has been gained through the work undertaken and summarised in sections 2, 3 and 4. The main considerations are presented on the accompanying constraints and opportunities plan and summarised below.

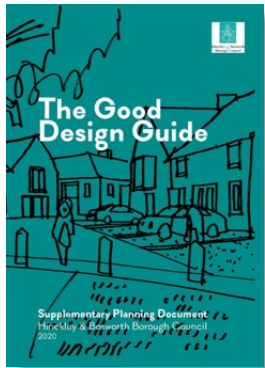
Constraints

- There are few significant sources of noise to which occupants following the potential development of the site would be exposed. The most notable source of noise is road traffic on Normandy Way (A47) which would be most perceptible at properties located toward the southern area of the site.
- In the north-west where the site rises up to the higher landform it represents an approximate edge between land that is clearly 'undulating arable and pasture farmland with gentle valleys' to that which has an increasingly strong association with the town.

Opportunity

- The site generally falls from a high point in the north-west toward the lower parts along the watercourse in the south
- Whilst trees are generally located at the boundaries of the site, there is a framework of field parcels defined by hedgerows and associated trees that runs broadly on a north-east to south-west orientation. These could form the basis of a new GI network opening up the site to new recreational areas and housing
- The surviving ridge and furrow earthworks offer the potential to maintain a legible narrative of the previous use of the site.
- The unnamed watercourse running along the western boundary of the site offers opportunities for ecology and as a setting for an area of informal public open space.
- The wider emerging context of further development proposals includes the potential provision of a new primary school, highway infrastructure and areas of open space that this site could connect with and enhance.





Design philosophy

At its core, good design is about putting people at the heart of decision making. Therefore, when approaching a design of any kind, the starting point should always be the people who will use or be impacted upon by the development.

The public spaces created by the scheme should next be considered, allowing wider agendas such as positive connections and creation of public space to be addressed.

Finally consideration should be given to how buildings can be used to define and enhance these spaces.

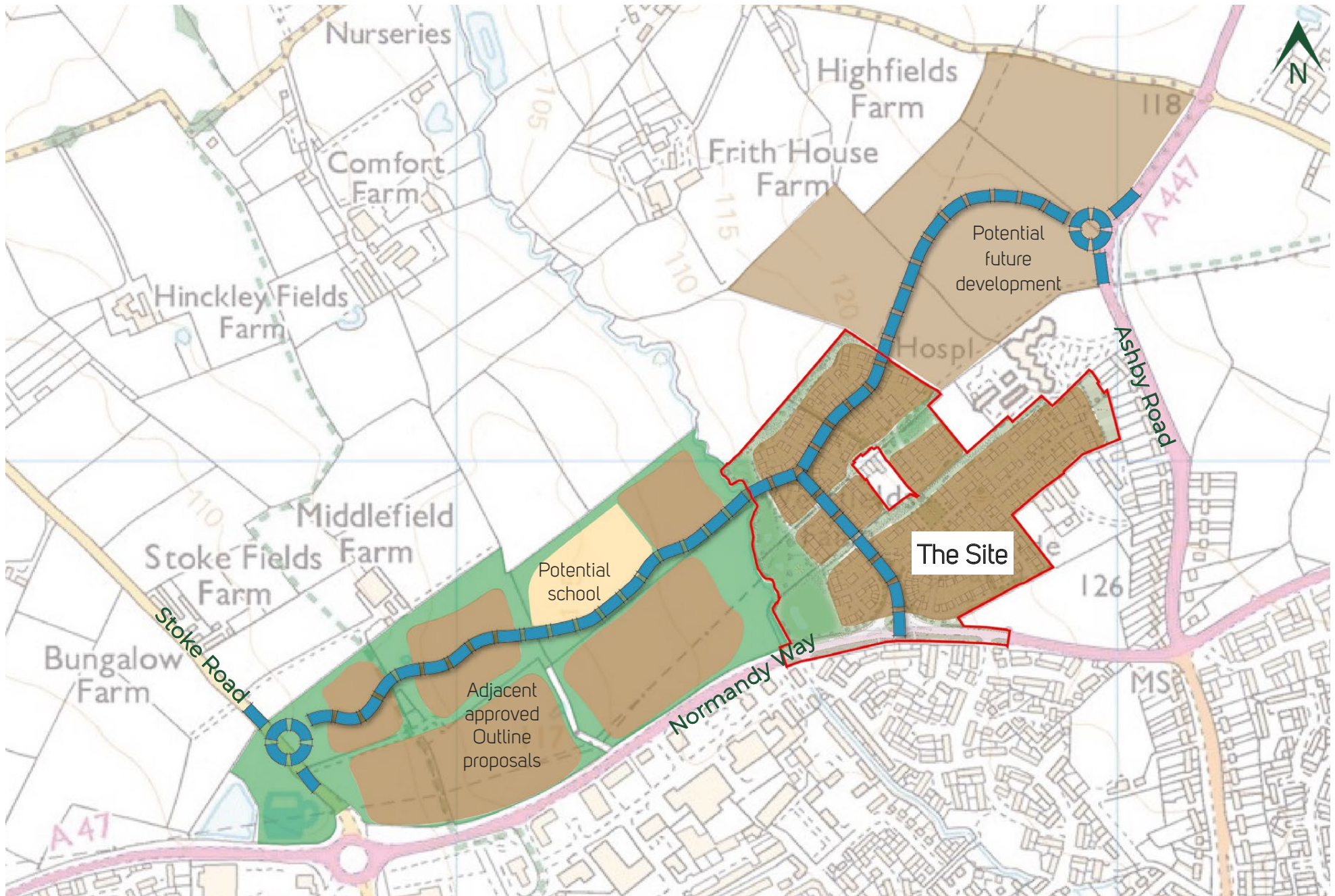


Figure 5 | Design philosophy

Developing a Vision

Having walked the site and its context and undertaken the various appraisals and assessments summarised thus far in the DAS, the design team collaboratively developed a Vision for development of the site that sets out to achieve the following objectives;

- Retention of the existing field pattern, defined by hedgerows and associated trees;
- Retain elements of the existing ridge and furrow that are present within the site, as part of a green corridor that retains the legibility of these features.
- Respond positively to the emerging adjacent proposals to the west, mirroring the approach taken by that scheme to create a large central area of public open space through which the existing watercourse meanders, and ensuring highway and footpath connectivity can be achieved.
- Establish a network of pedestrian and cycle routes within the site that are direct and anticipate desire lines.
- Form a hierarchy of streets within the site that have clear differences in character, setting out a permeable primary street network from which lower-order streets can be designed to maintain low vehicle speeds and prioritise pedestrians and cyclists.
- Define a series of nodes across the site that define gateways, enhance the street hierarchy and green infrastructure network, informing character.







"Creating a positive sense of place helps to foster a sense of belonging and contributes to well-being, inclusion and community cohesion. Well-designed places are based on a sound understanding of the features of the site and the surrounding context, using baseline studies as a starting point for design..."

National Design Guide

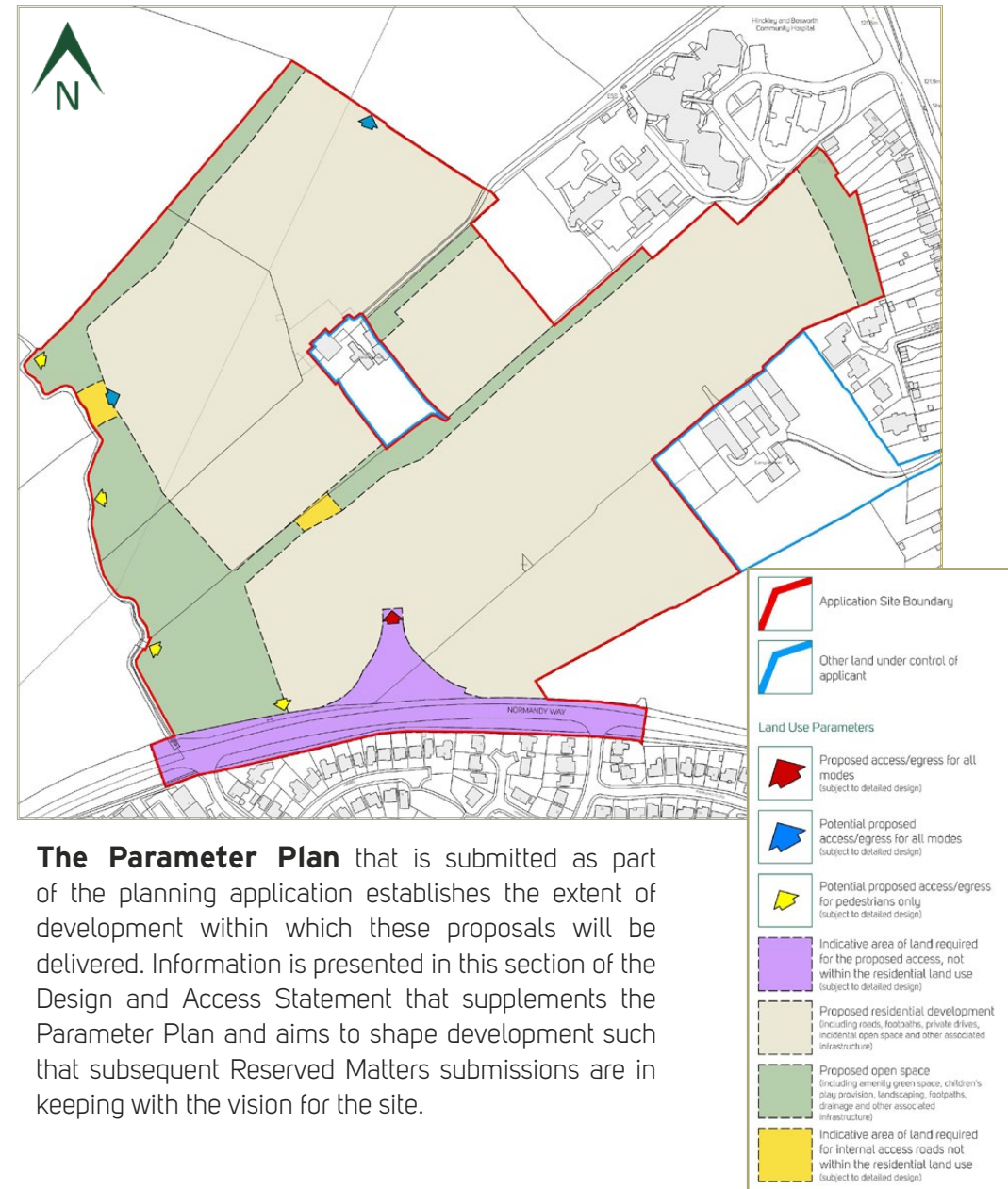
6

The Design Proposals

The Design Proposals

“Creating a positive sense of place helps to foster a sense of belonging and contributes to well-being, inclusion and community cohesion. Well-designed places are based on a sound understanding of the features of the site and the surrounding context, using baseline studies as a starting point for design...”

National Design Guide



The Parameter Plan that is submitted as part of the planning application establishes the extent of development within which these proposals will be delivered. Information is presented in this section of the Design and Access Statement that supplements the Parameter Plan and aims to shape development such that subsequent Reserved Matters submissions are in keeping with the vision for the site.



The Development Framework Plan is submitted as part of the planning application and sets out the broad structuring elements that it is anticipated detailed design proposals will follow.



The Illustrative Layout that is presented in this section of the Design and Access Statement accords with the Parameter Plan and Framework Plan and demonstrates how development could be brought forward in the spirit of the Vision for the site and the adjacent proposals, but it is not intended to do so prescriptively.

Use and Amount

The Land Use Plan opposite shows how the Development Framework Plan can be expressed as the different proposed land uses, such that the following approximate quantities are provided;

- Application Site Area: 16.89ha
- New Access Infrastructure: 2.18a
- Open Space: 4.49ha
- Residential: 10.22ha

New Access Infrastructure

The submitted detailed access proposals include the formation of a new roundabout along Normandy Way. The extent of land within the application site boundary required to form this is accounted for in this land use. Also accounted for here, are the corridors reserved for the delivery of highway connections to the adjacent proposals in the west and also for the potential future highway connection to future development beyond the site to the north.

Open Space

These areas will define a green infrastructure network within the site that includes retained and proposed trees and hedgerows, pedestrian and cycle routes, a green corridor allowing for the retention of an element of ridge and furrow, surface water attenuation features, children’s play, areas of ecological enhancement, allotments, community orchards and incidental areas of open space.

Policy 19 of the Core Strategy (Green Space and Play Provision) sets the total requirement of open space for all new developments. On the basis that a total of 415 dwellings are provided and the average household size of 2.4 people per dwelling (as stated in the Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Open Space and Recreation Study 2016), the open space requirement for the site totals 3.80ha.

The Use and Amount Plan (opposite) provides a potential total of approximately 4.50ha of open space including surface water drainage features, in excess of the total policy minimum requirement.

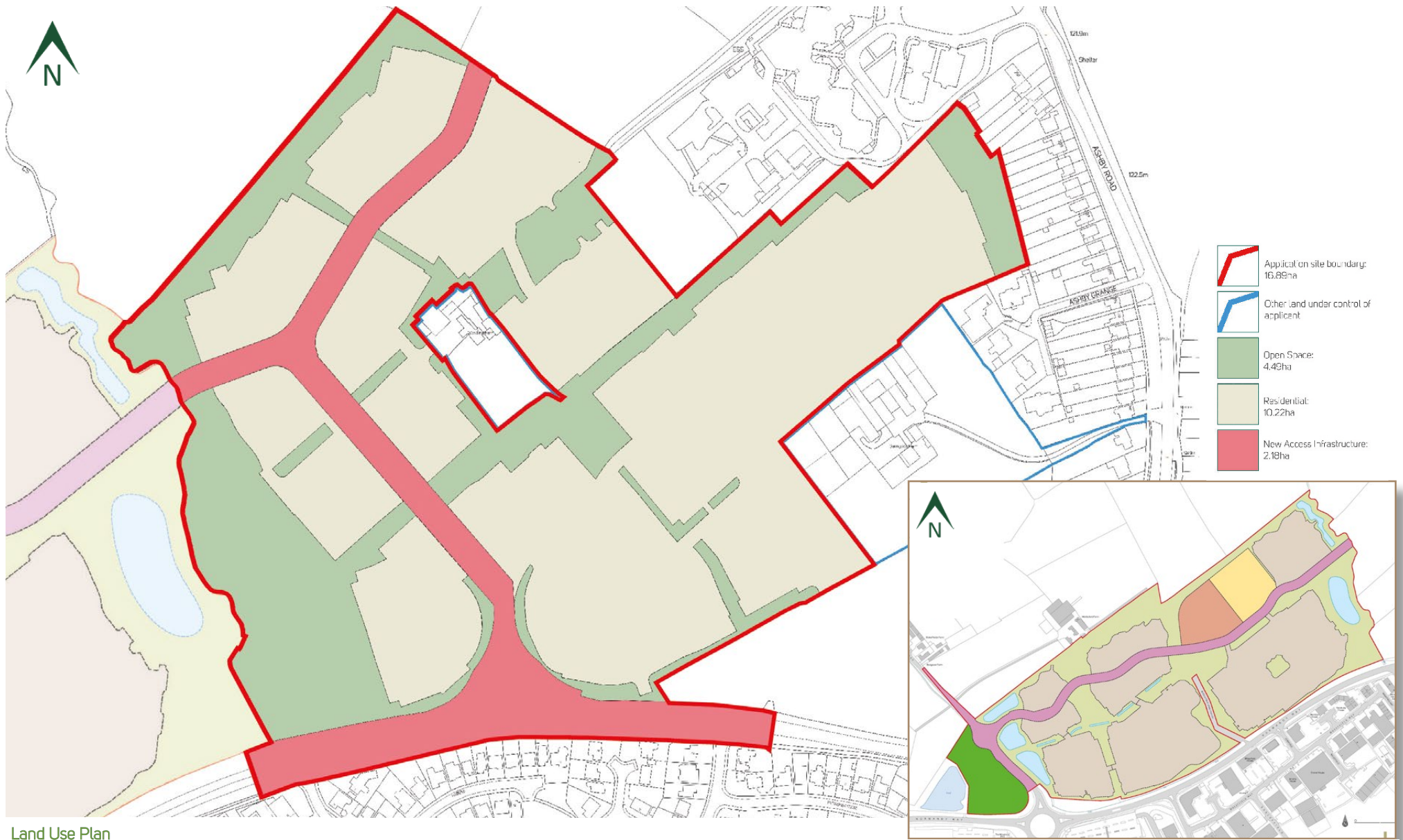
Further details of the proposed landscape strategy are provided within the Landscape section of this chapter of the DAS.

Residential

The Land Use Plan identifies 10.22ha of land for residential development for up to 415 dwellings that is likely to include a range of types, sizes and tenures of home. The residential areas identified on the plan include land required to facilitate the delivery of homes, associated car parking, private amenity space (such as rear gardens) and associated infrastructure such as streets.

The exact number and mix of new homes will be defined during detailed design stage. The Illustrative Layout demonstrates how up to 415 dwellings could be accommodated on the site within the parameters of the vision for the scheme set out in Section 5, but it is not intended to do so prescriptively. The Development Framework Plan is not intended to preclude alternative layout designs, so long as the overarching principles remain.

It is anticipated that affordable dwellings, unless it can be demonstrated at detailed stage that such provision is not viable, will be provided at 20% of the overall total in accordance with Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Core Strategy 2009, with a split between different affordable housing tenure types to be agreed at detailed design stage, but anticipated to be 75% social rented and 25% intermediate. The precise mix of unit types, sizes and details of tenure arrangements are subject to consultation and agreement with the LPA and will be set out in the Section 106 Agreement. Detailed design information regarding affordable housing provision will be submitted at the Reserved Matters Stage.



Land Use Plan

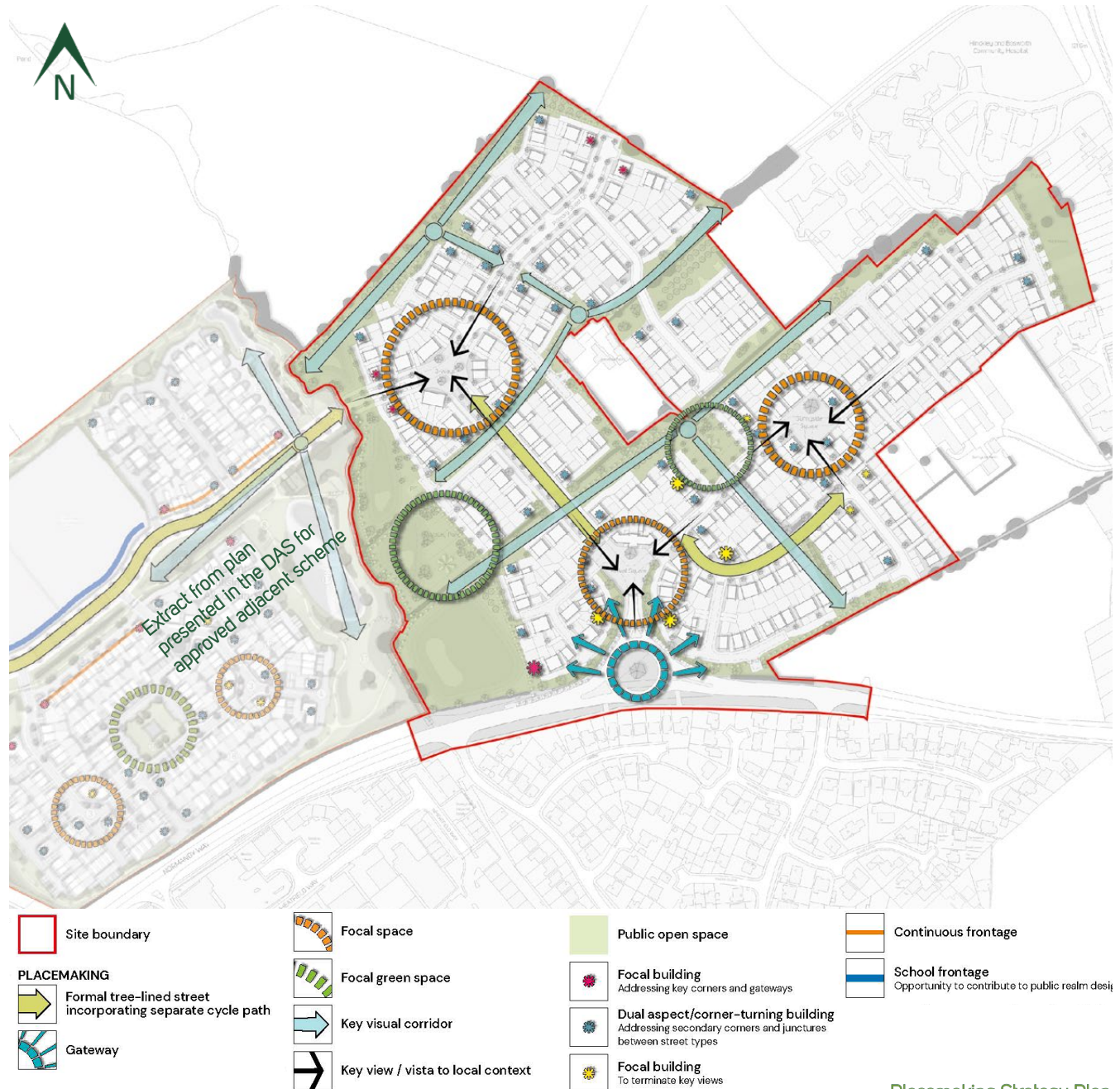
Extract from DAS for approved adjacent scheme: Land Use Plan

Layout & Scale

Features of the Layout

Set within the context of the “green and blue elements” of the Development Framework, it is anticipated that the residential areas will be set out at detailed design stage that, maintaining continuity with the place-making principles of the adjacent proposals;

- Is outward-facing.
- Uses building height and density appropriately.
- Forms focal spaces at logical locations.
- Maintains the landscape-led approach.
- Creates a place that feels safe and secure.
- Adopts good urban design principles such as turning corners, addressing views and vistas and creating memorable places.
- Creates character, distinctiveness, reinforces street hierarchy, establishes gateways
- Varied edge treatments and building line definition in relation to landscape buffers, play spaces, linear corridor and valley park.



Placemaking Strategy Plan

Scale

It is anticipated that buildings (other than garages) will generally be two storeys tall, but that across much of the site buildings could be up to two and a half storeys as a maximum. The preference is that where taller buildings are used, they are located with reference to the street hierarchy, positioned on higher-order streets, or located elsewhere to fulfil a place-making function.

Toward the higher north and north-western edges of the site, buildings are not expected to two storeys in height. Buildings of no more than two storeys are also expected at the interface with existing dwellings at the eastern boundary of the site.

In the lower south-western part of the site, there is the potential that taller buildings of up to three storeys could be successfully integrated and, whilst not essential for the success of the place necessarily, this could enhance the arrival experience around the proposed roundabout along Normandy Road.

“Create a network of streets and spaces that are well enclosed by buildings and/or structural landscaping, taking care to ensure that front doors and the principal façades of buildings face streets and public spaces.”

Building for a Healthy Life

Creating Memorable Places

Several focal spaces are defined on the Development Framework Plan that could perform important roles in the legibility and character of the place. These are locations that perform a transitional function in the movement framework and/or green infrastructure network that could feature enhanced buildings, hard surfacing and landscape treatment. “Gateway” locations are also identified in key strategic positions across the scheme where built form and landscaping should come together to “announce” arrival from the wider context.

Elsewhere within the residential area, focal spaces such as squares and feature junctions are shown on the Illustrative Layout that perform similar, localised functions.

Landmark buildings, or groups of buildings are also tools available at detailed design stage that could help to enhance nodes and feature spaces within the development area, or celebrate important areas of the green-blue infrastructure network. These buildings could use height and/or massing to emphasise their status in the streetscene, and/or include the creative use of form, materials and detailing.

Turning Corners and Framing Views

Houses should be located such that views along streets are terminated at the main elevation of a house rather than at a blank side gable, garage, or parking area; or are intentionally left open to allow views out into areas of open space. This is demonstrated by the Illustrative Layout.

The Illustrative Layout also shows how buildings with corner-turning plan forms that could be dual aspect at external corners of the perimeter blocks. Pairs of buildings are also shown on some corners that present primary frontages to both aspects, with the outer-most home having a “side garden” or car parking located to its side/rear.

There is the potential that a “hierarchy of corners” could be defined such that truly dual-aspect buildings are used on exposed corners, whilst buildings with some form of articulation of the secondary elevation are used in other locations where corners are less prominent.



Density

Based on the provision of 415 dwellings and a net site area consisting of the residential area and new access infrastructure shown on the Land Use Plan (previous spread), the density of these proposals is 32dph. This method of measurement is consistent with the adjacent proposals which achieve a density of 36dph and in both instances it could be considered that the figure is significantly impacted by the inclusion of areas of new access infrastructure not directly related to the development area.

Given the lack of guidance in policy about how the area used to calculate density is measured, it is also worth noting that if the residential area (excluding the new access infrastructure) is used, the resultant density is 40dph.

The density that the form of development shows on the Illustrative Layout is considered appropriate for the site, makes efficient use of the land available and could be considered to conform with the requirement of policy 16 of Hinckley and Bosworth Core Strategy for density of at least 40dph (unless site characteristics dictate otherwise).

The Illustrative Layout shows that at this density, a range of housing types, sizes and tenures can be provided, car parking can be successfully accommodated, and attractive and appropriate street scenes can be defined within and at the edges of the site. The approach taken to density is that areas of lower density occur in the northern and western parts of the site, and higher density development is focused on the arrival space and in the east of the site. Variety in the distribution of density is important to the character of the place and works in partnership with other elements such as building height, building typologies and car parking strategies.



Illustrative Layout Extract