



Swanstree Avenue Sittingbourne

Design and Access Statement
September 2021

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01 Introduction

This section describes the vision and purpose of the Design and Access Statement



1 Introduction

Introduction

This is a Design and Access Statement (DAS) for a proposed residential development on land south of Swanstree Avenue at Sittingbourne in Kent.

The submitted planning application seeks outline planning consent for a high quality sustainable development. The application includes the following:

- Land for up to 135 new houses;
- Green Infrastructure (GI) including retained hedges, trees and new areas of greenspace incorporating habitat creation, sustainable drainage features, play and recreational space;
- Access is applied for in full.

It will also promote the use of sustainable transport and connect into the existing public right of way network. Housing will be set within a robust green infrastructure, which will include existing mature trees and hedgerows. This will help to integrate development within the landscape and create a distinctive sense of place.

What is a Design and Access Statement?

A Design and Access Statement is a concise report accompanying certain applications for planning permission and applications for listed building consent. They provide a framework for applicants to explain how the proposed development is a suitable response to the site and its setting, and demonstrate that it can be adequately accessed by prospective users.

Purpose of the Statement

Design and Access Statements can aid decision-making by enabling local planning authorities and third parties to better understand the analysis that has underpinned the design of a development proposal.

The level of detail in a Design and Access Statement should be proportionate to the complexity of the application, but should not be long.

What should be included in a Design and Access Statement accompanying an application for planning permission?

A Design and Access Statement must:

- (a) explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the proposed development; and*
- (b) demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the proposed development, and how the design of the development takes that context into account.*

A development's context refers to the particular characteristics of the application site and its wider setting. These will be specific to the circumstances of an individual application and a Design and Access Statement should be tailored accordingly.

Design and Access Statements must also explain the applicant's approach to access and how relevant national guidance and local plan policies have been taken into account. They must detail any consultation undertaken and how the outcome of this consultation has informed the proposed development. Applicants must also explain how any specific issues which might affect access to the proposed development have been addressed.

1 Introduction

The Vision

The overall vision for the site is to provide a distinctive and high quality place, reflecting the qualities and character of Sittingbourne.

The development will create up to 135 new dwellings along with associated public open space. Providing a choice of housing to meet the needs of the area, whilst respecting and enhancing the site's environmental and cultural assets. It will also promote the use of sustainable transport and connect into the existing public right of way network.

Housing will be set within a robust green infrastructure, which will include the retention of mature trees and hedgerows. This will help to integrate development within the landscape and create a distinctive sense of place.

Rather than attempt to imitate existing built development, the design will be informed and inspired by the character and detail found within Sittingbourne and the surrounding landscape. The masterplan in this document is illustrative only and further details would be provided at reserved matters stage.

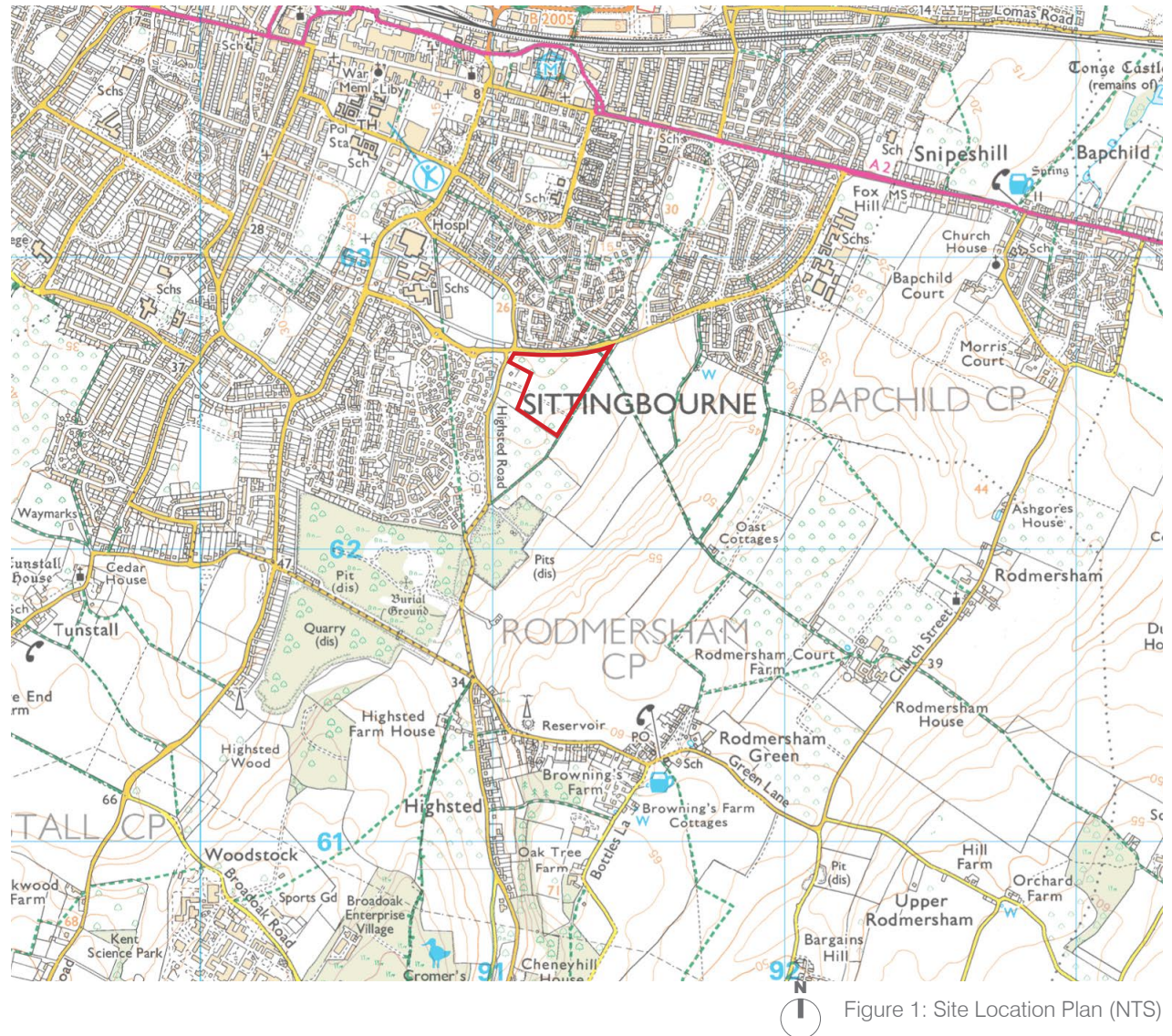


Figure 1: Site Location Plan (NTS)

1 Introduction



Site Boundary



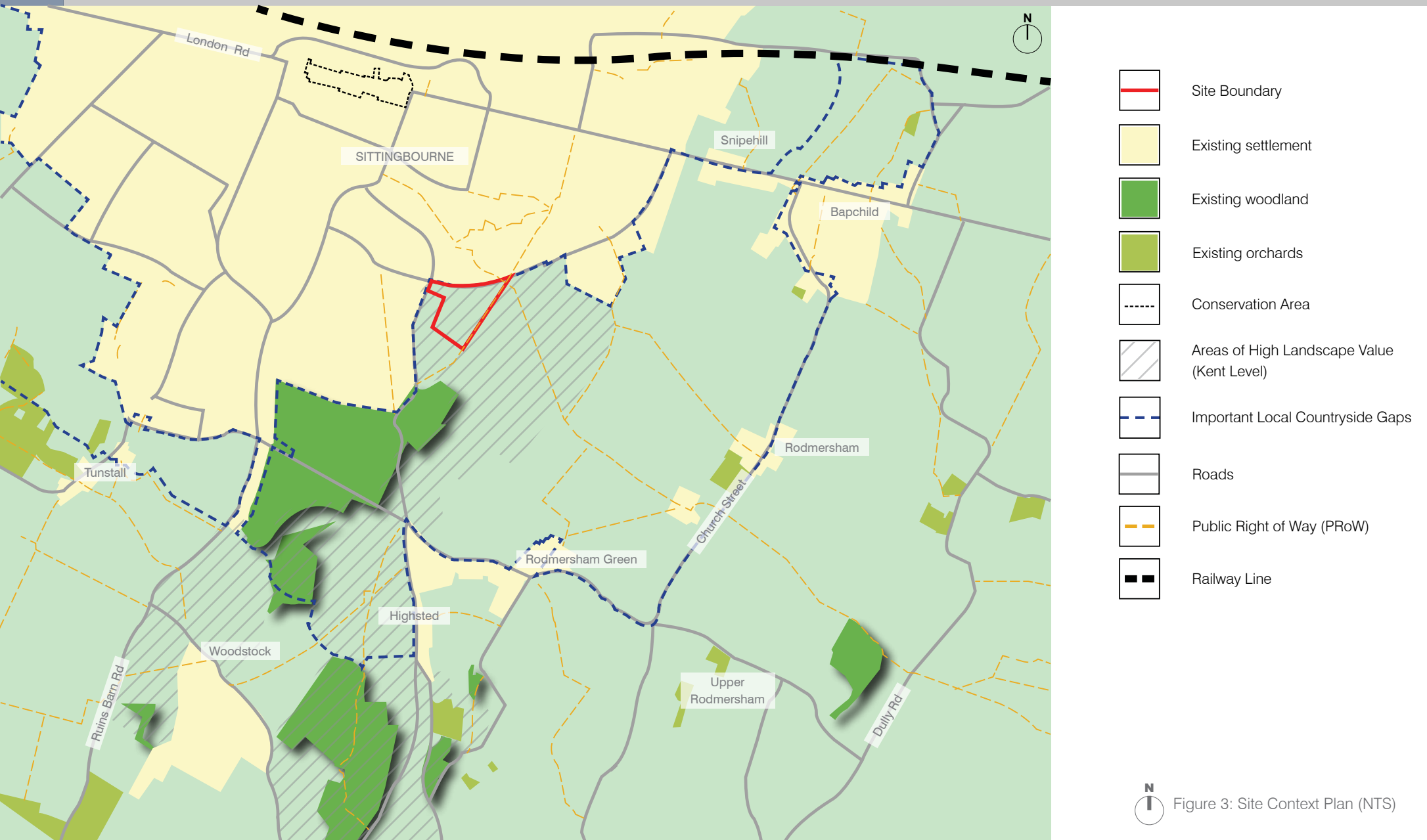
Figure 2: Aerial Plan (NTS)

02 Planning and Policies

This section demonstrates the steps taken to appraise the site and its context



2 Planning & Policies



2 Planning & Policies

Planning Context and Design Guidance

A detailed assessment of the planning policy framework is set out in the Planning Statement, which accompanies the planning application. This section focuses on the local planning policies most relevant to the design and access proposals for the development.

National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) revised July 2021 and the supporting Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) set out design guidance for new development and these design principles have been embraced as part of the design strategy.

At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Within Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places), paragraph 126 of the NPPF makes specific reference to good design as a key aspect of sustainable development.

“126. The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities...”

The matters which are most relevant to design in respect of this application are contained in paragraph 130, which states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- *will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- *are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- *establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- *create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users⁴⁹; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.*

National Design Guide

The National Design Guide January 2021, sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice. It notes (page 5) that:

“A well-designed place is unlikely to be achieved by focusing only on the appearance, materials and detailing of buildings. It comes about through making the right choices at all levels, including:

- *The layout (or masterplan)*
- *The form and scale of buildings*
- *Their appearance*
- *Landscape*
- *Materials; and*
- *their detailing”*

National Model Design Code

The National Model Design Code September 2021 provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies promoting successful design.

“It expands on the ten characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide, which reflects the government’s priorities and provides a common overarching framework for design.”

2 Planning & Policies

Swale Borough Council Local Plan (2017)

Bearing Fruits 2031, sets out the vision and overall development strategy for the borough for the period from 2014-2031, the Local Plan was adopted in 2017. The following policies are considered of relevance to this Design and Access Statement include the following:

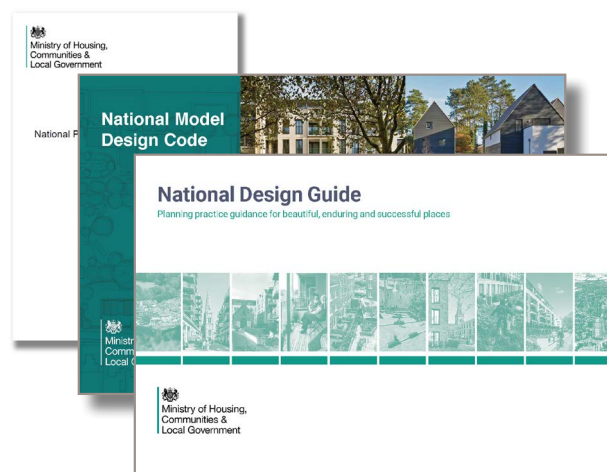
- Policy ST1 Delivering sustainable development in Swale
- Policy CP 3 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
- Policy CP 4 - Requiring good design
- Policy CP 5 - Health and wellbeing
- Policy CP 7 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment - providing for green infrastructure
- Policy DM 14 - General development criteria
- Policy DM 17 - Open space, sports and recreation provision
- Policy DM 19 - Sustainable design and construction
- Policy DM 20 - Renewable and low carbon energy

- Policy DM 21 - Water, flooding and drainage
- Policy DM 24 - Conserving and enhancing valued landscapes
- Policy DM 28 - Biodiversity and geological conservation
- Policy DM 29 - Woodlands, trees and hedges

Local Guidance

Documents of relevance to this application include the following:

- Swale Borough Council, Planting on New Developments - A Guide for Developers
- Kent Design Guide



Building for a Healthy Life

The scheme has been developed with consideration of the 'Building for a Healthy Life' approach, with the latest edition written in partnership with Homes England, NHS England and NHS Improvement.

These considerations "are presented to help those involved in new developments to think about the qualities of successful places and how these can be best applied to the individual characteristics of a site and its wider context." Building for a Healthy Life is a useful tool for leading design discussions and using as part of a design process. This Design and Access Statement outlines how the BHL considerations have helped inform the design process.

"Building for a Healthy Life is a Design Code to help people improve the design of new and growing neighbourhoods" BHL 2020.



03 Design Considerations

This section demonstrates the steps taken to appraise the site and its context



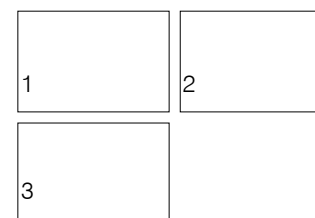
3 Design Considerations

Site Location and Context

The site is located to the south east of Sittingbourne, to the south of Swanstree Avenue and comprises 5.9ha of agricultural land. The site boundaries are defined by established trees and hedgerow. The north and west of the site is bordered by the existing residential settlement of Sittingbourne, while agricultural farmland adjoining the boundary to the east and orchards to the south. Chilton Manor Farm and the housing located off Marjoram Drive is located to the west.

The character of Sittingbourne's southern fringe adjacent the site is predominantly residential. There is a broader variety in built form, with a variety of building styles, materials and scales. This is largely due to the fragmentation of development over the past 50 years within the sites immediate context.

The wider countryside setting to the south is characterised by undulating pastoral and arable farmland. A pattern of large agricultural fields, bound by established hedgerows and isolated pockets of woodland / copses. A network of narrow lanes, tracks and numerous public rights of way traverse the wider landscape context.

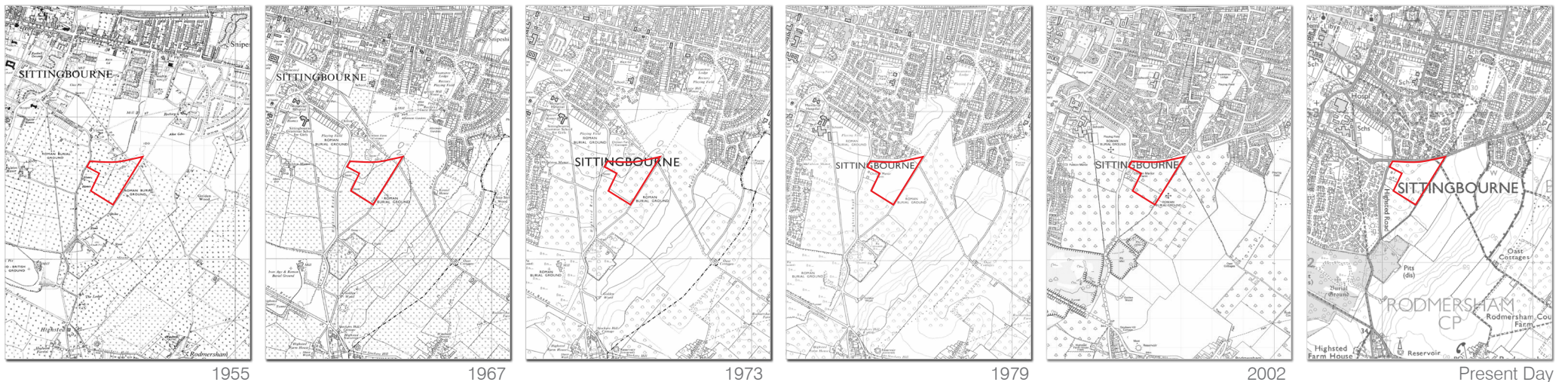


1. Properties located off Wadham Place
2. Public Right of Way (0211/ZU31)
3. Residential dwellings fronting Public Right of Way located off Brenchley Road

3 Design Considerations

Historic Development

The historical maps illustrate the expansion and growth of Sittingbourne. The historic core of Sittingbourne is evident from the 1955 map, along with the basis of the primary road network. At this time, the surrounding landscape to the south of Sittingbourne was largely characterised by large open fields punctuated by blocks of woodland, with the main land use being agricultural. Over time the town saw gradual expansion through residential development to the south, the land use of the surrounding context also became heavily influenced by orchard planting. This was facilitated through the use of agricultural land and the felling of surrounding woodland blocks. From 1955 to 1967 the maps indicate a large increase in residential development to the north of the application site, while from 1967 onwards has seen the gradual expansion of Sittingbourne to the north east and west of the site with properties located off Swanstree Avenue and Highsted Road.



3 Design Considerations

Existing Settlement Pattern and Character

Sittingbourne has gradually developed to the south east of the conservation area and railway line, as indicated on the historic maps and figure opposite. While development has predominantly expanded along the A2 and Bell Road the most recent development has occurred located off Swanstree Avenue and Highsted Road, adjacent to the site.

Settlement Pattern

- 1866
- 1866 - 1906
- 1906 - 1955
- 1955 - 1967
- 1967 - 1973
- 1973 - 1979
- 1979 - 2002
- 2002 - Present

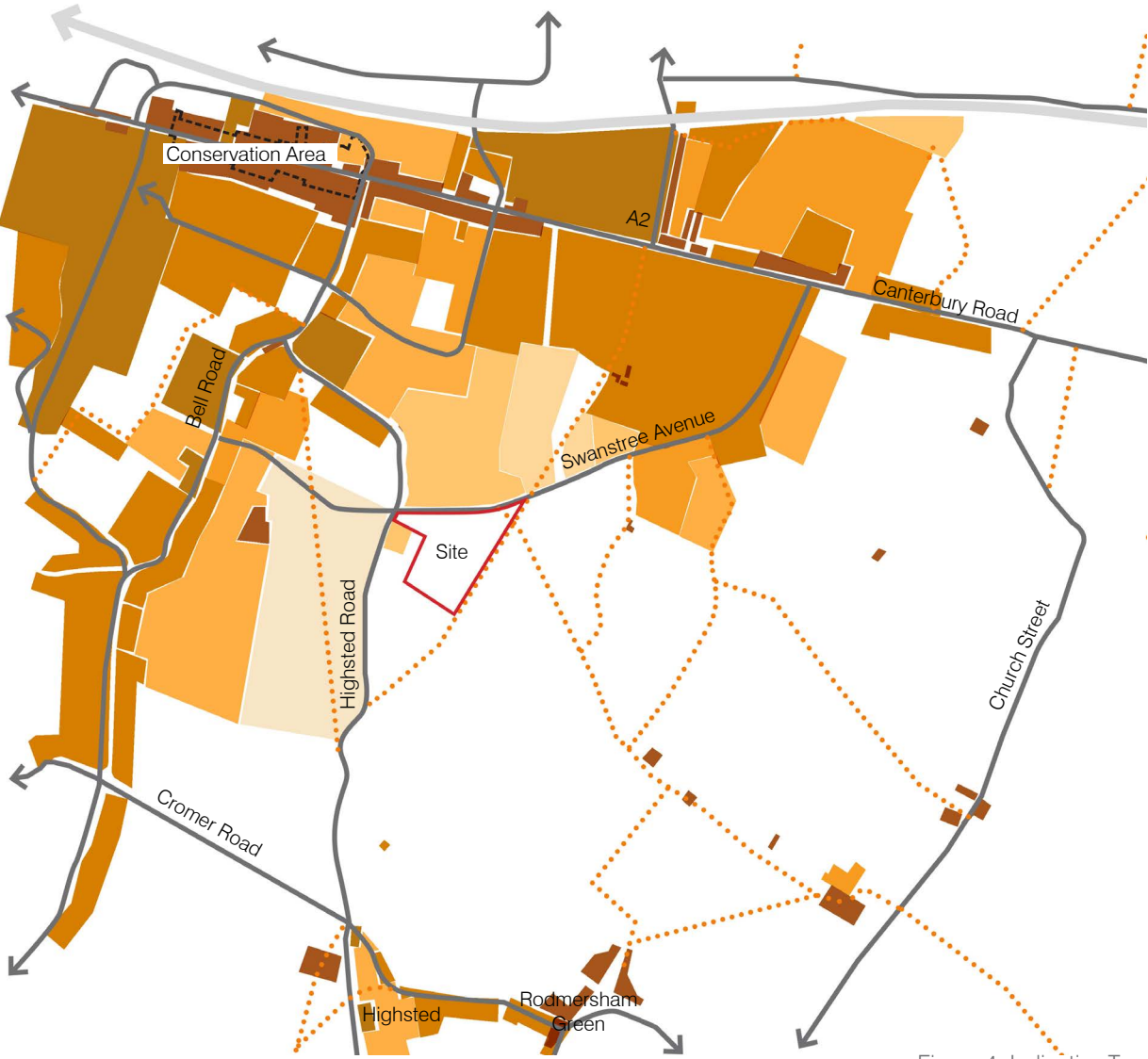


Figure 4: Indicative Townscape (NTS)

3 Design Considerations

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

A Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) of the proposed development has been carried out as part of an iterative design process by FPCR Environment and Design. The conclusions of the LVA are summarised below:

The site is not covered by any statutory or non-statutory landscape designations covering the site such as AONBs or National Parks. The site falls within an Area of High Landscape Value (Kent Level) locally designated within the adopted Local Plan, Policy DM24.

At a national level the site is located within the North Kent Plain 113, National Character Area. Within the Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal (2011), the site is located within the Landscape Character Area 42. Tunstall Farmlands.

The site contains existing hedgerows and hedgerow trees across the site which form the field parcel boundaries to the arable land and commercial fruit orchard of Chilton Manor Farm.

The northern boundary adjacent to Swanstree Avenue is defined by a chainlink fence with an established hedgerow beyond. Arable crops are located to the east and an existing orchard is located adjacent to the site to the south. The boundary of Chilton Manor Farm is bordered by a post and rail fence along the boundary of the site to the west.

Existing residential development of Highsted, Haysel, Farm Crescent, Harvey Drive and Peregrine Drive back on to Swanstree Avenue, located to the north. Chilton Manor Farm is located to the west, while the housing located off Marjoram Drive is located beyond Highsted Road to the west.

The majority of the Site is not considered to be of particular scenic quality, being influenced by the adjacent urban edge of Sittingbourne and audible nature of Swanstree Avenue and Highsted Road.

The character of Sittingbourne's southern fringe is predominantly residential, with a range of local facilities including shops, schools and public houses. The town centre lies approximately 1 mile to the north west of the site.

The majority of the site is not currently publicly accessible, however the PRoW ZU31 crosses the northern extent of the site, accessed off Swanstree Avenue, heading east to west. The PRoW ZU30 runs parallel to the site adjacent to the east. While the PRoW are accessible for recreational use, they are hemmed in on both sides by post and wire fencing. The Site has no other recreational use.

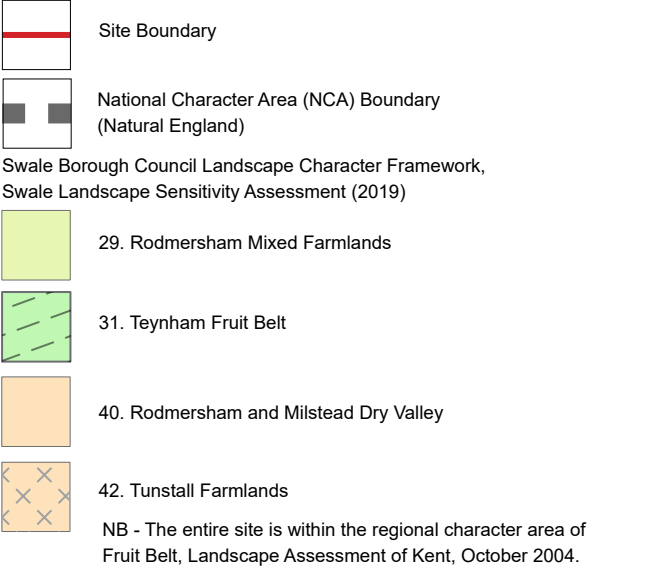
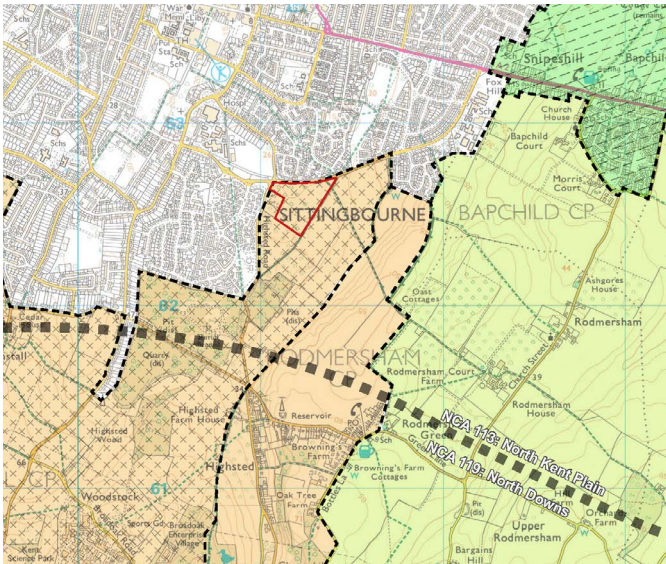


Figure 5: Landscape Character (NTS)

3 Design Considerations



1 View adjacent to Swanstree Avenue from the entrance of PRoW 0311/ZU31 looking east.



2 View west towards site from PRoW 0311/ZU31

3 Design Considerations

Topography

The site is broadly level, falling from the south east to the north west towards Swanstree Avenue. The site is located at approximately 36m AOD (Above Ordnance Datum) to the south east and approximately 29m AOD to the north west. Adjacent to the site the topography falls towards Muddy Lane at approximately 25m AOD located off Swanstree Avenue to the north east. To the east of the Muddy Lane the topography rises steeply to approximately 50m AOD

To the south east of the application site the levels slope up to higher ground on a localised ridge at approximately 55m AOD. This natural feature is characteristic of the North Downs and encloses Sittingbourne's southern settlement edge. To the south along the plateau created by this scarp lies the village of Rodmersham Green. The village of Highsted adjoins Rodmersham Green and lies within the valley to the south of the site.



Figure 6: Topography (NTS)

3 Design Considerations

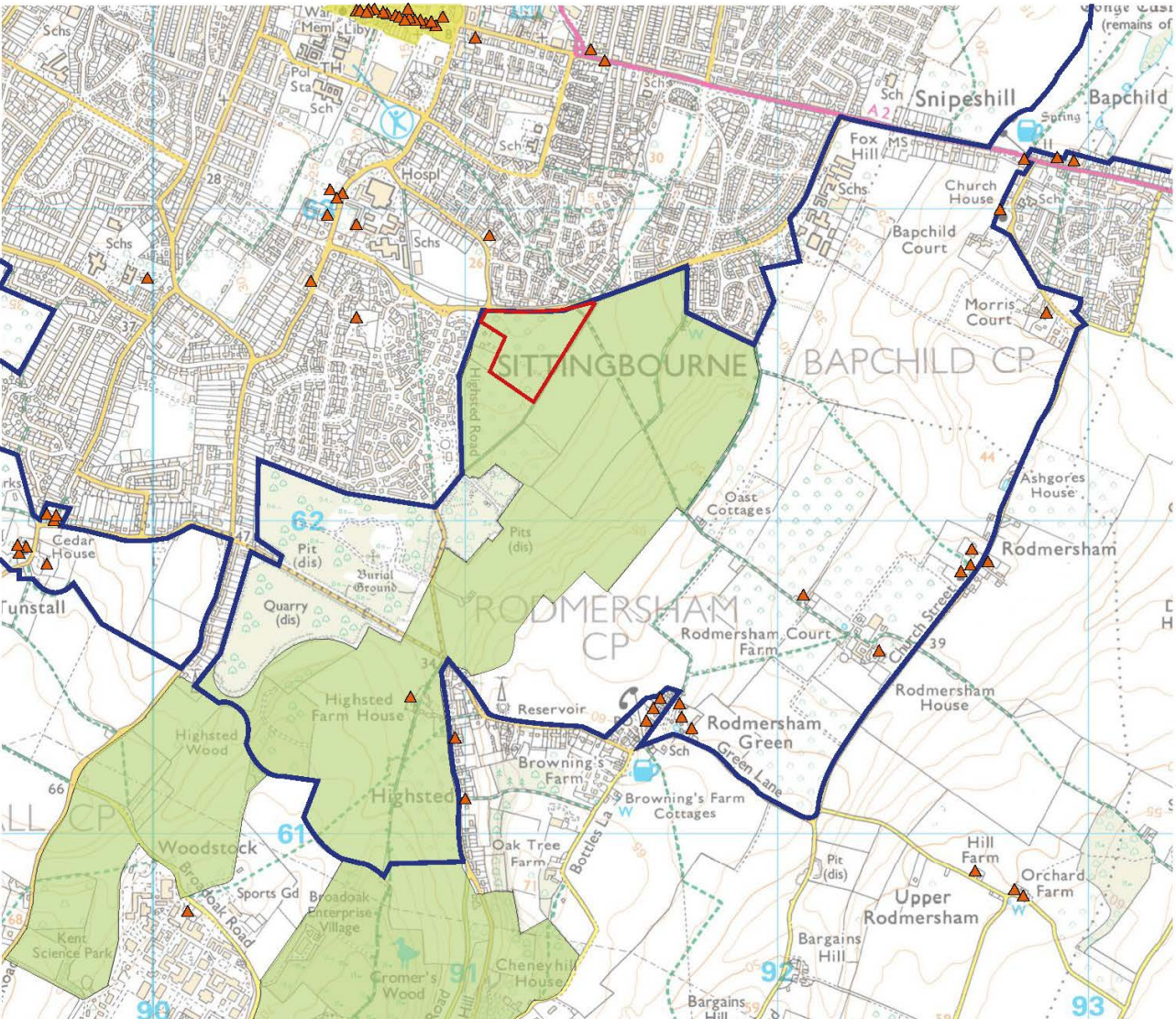


Figure 7: Designations (NTS)

- Site Boundary
- Swale Borough Council Local Plan 'Bearing Fruits' (2014-2031)
 - Conservation Area - Sittingbourne High Street (Policy E15)
 - Listed Buildings (Policy E14)
 - Area of High Landscape Value (Kent Level) Policy DM24
 - Important Local Countryside Gaps Policy DM25

3 Design Considerations

Access, Movement and Facilities

Sittingbourne offers a range of facilities within easily accessible distance of the application site, including numerous schools ranging from primary to sixth form level.

The development site has excellent access to public transport with a bus stop being located approximately 500m north east and approximately 300m north west of the centre of the site. Highsted Grammar School and Fulston Manor School lie approximately 500m to the north west of the site with easy access via an existing road / footpath network. The town centre is focused on the High Street which is just a short walk to the north of the site. A hospital, local shops, restaurants, public houses and sport facilities can all be found within 1250m radius of the site. Local buses run towards the town centre and surrounding towns on a regular basis. A number of PRow footpaths can be access from the site and out in to the wider landscape to the east and south.

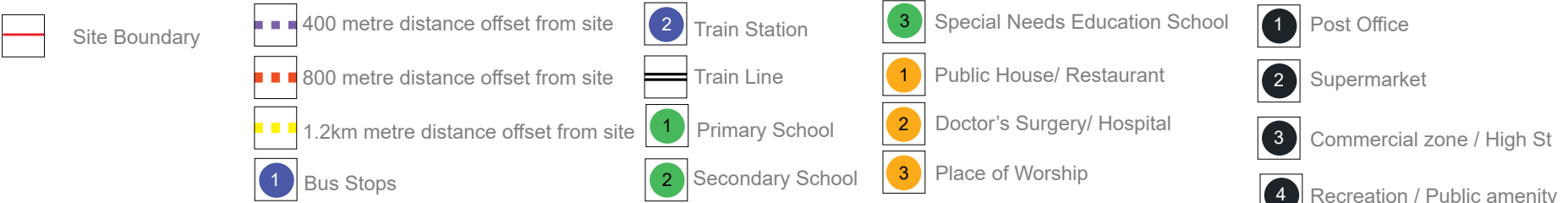


Figure 8: Services and Facilities (NTS)

3 Design Considerations

Local Townscape Character

Swanstreet Avenue is located adjacent to the northern boundary of the site, with housing off Haysel, Farm Crescent and Peregrine Drive backing on to Swanstreet Avenue. The housing is predominantly a mix of semi detached two storey properties. The west of the site is bordered by Chilton Manor Farm, Highsted Road and the housing development of Marjoram Drive and Crocus Drive further to the west. The PRoW ZU31 crosses the northern extent of the site accessed off Swanstreet Avenue heading east to west while the PRoW ZU30 runs parallel to the site adjacent to the east.

No Listed buildings are located within or surrounding the immediate site context. Within the centre of Sittingbourne there are a number of Listed Buildings. The Sittingbourne conservation area is focused along the linear High Street to the south of St Michael's Road to the north west of the site. The town's Conservation Area comprises most of the Listed heritage assets within the area, which is located approximately 0.9 km to the north west.



Properties located off Wadham Place



Longridge



Properties located adjacent Eden Village Park



Crocus Drive

3 Design Considerations

Nature Conservation and Ecology

An ecological assessment has been prepared by FPCR Environment and Design Ltd which forms a separate document which has been submitted to support this application.

The majority of the site comprised cultivated orchard and arable habitat, which was found to be of low intrinsic and conservation importance on account of its intensively managed nature. The small area of grassland in the north east of the Site was similarly dominated by common and widespread species with limited diversity.

The Site provided some degree of suitable habitat for a range of protected/notable species including bats, badgers, reptiles and breeding birds. A range of common and widespread bats have been identified on site to date and evidence of badger has been observed. The breeding bird assemblage identified includes a range of farmland bird species in addition to a variety of generalist/woodland and urban edge species.



Figure 9: Phase 1 Habitat Survey (NTS)

3 Design Considerations

Arboriculture

A full survey of the tree cover has been undertaken by Aspect Arboriculture which includes all specimens which may be present either within the site or within the immediate site context, in accordance with BS5837 (2012). The full details of the tree survey are contained within the separate arboricultural report which supports this application.

A total nine groups of trees and two hedgerows were surveyed as part of the Arboricultural Assessment.

With the exception of one hedgerow which was of moderate quality (Category B), the tree stock was of low quality (Category C) due to inhibiting features and the commercial nature of the orchard stock. The diversity of the tree stock was limited and the most abundant species were cherry *Prunus* sp, plum *Prunus domestica* and apple *Malus domestica*. Other species observed during the assessment included; Italian alder *Alnus cordata*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, silver birch *Betula pendula*, Lombardy poplar *Populus nigra 'Italica'*, field maple *Acer campestre*, hazel *Corylus avellana* and elder *Sambucus nigra*.

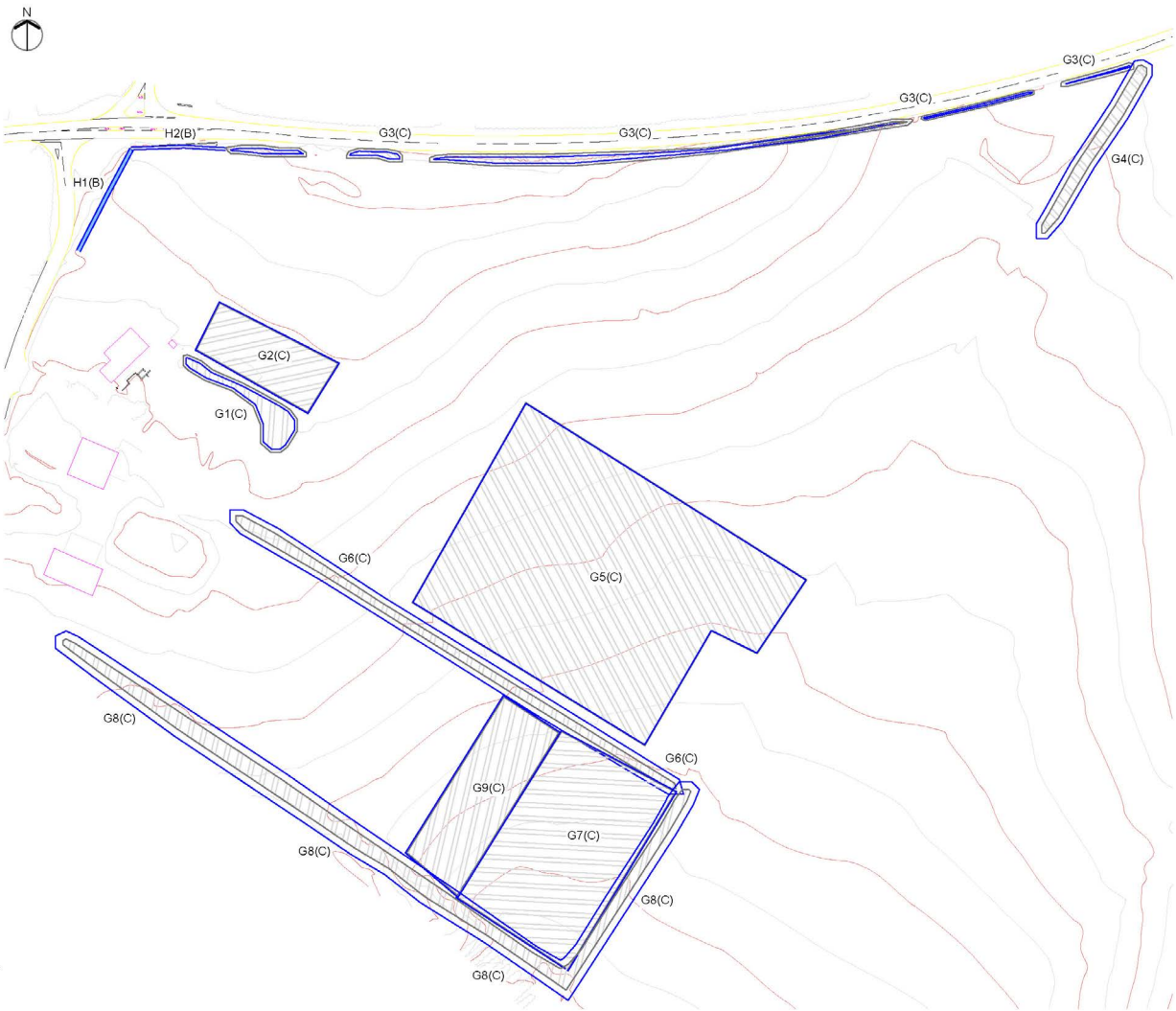
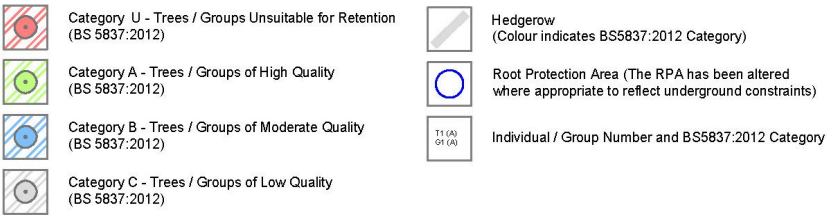


Figure 10: Tree Survey (NTS)

3 Design Considerations

Water, Drainage and Hydrology

A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been undertaken by Enzygo Ltd which forms a separate document which has been submitted to support this application.

The report includes an assessment of the surface water drainage requirements of the Site and details the flood risk and how this could be managed and mitigated to allow the Site to be developed in support of the outline planning application. The executive summary states the following:

- The Site slopes in a northerly direction and is underlain by loamy soils, clayey-silty superficial deposits and two types of bedrock with high and variable infiltration potential.
- There are no drains observed or mapped on the Site.
- The risk of flooding is assessed as followed:
 - The risk of flooding from all sources is assessed as negligible.
 - Flood risk mitigation methods are not required however the following approach is still advised:
- Adoption of a surface water management strategy.
- The proposed residential dwellings use is classified as more vulnerable. More vulnerable uses are considered acceptable in terms of flood risk in Flood Zone 1. Subject to the implementation of the above mitigation measures, the Sequential Test would be passed, and the Exception Test would not be required.

A SuDS drainage scheme is proposed to manage excess runoff from the development, comprising a range of SuDS features to improve water quality, before discharging to ground via borehole soakaways. Attenuation volumes have been designed to maintain runoff at pre-development rates.

The FRA demonstrates that the proposed development would be operated with minimal risk from flooding and would not increase flood risk elsewhere. The development should therefore not be precluded on the grounds of flood risk and surface water drainage.



3 Design Considerations

Consultation

Gladman Developments has engaged in a process of community engagement during the development of the proposals for the site.

A leaflet outlining the development proposals was distributed to households, businesses and to core stakeholders for information.

Through the 'Gladman Your Views' website a series of information boards were displayed providing background information to the proposals and identifying the factors which have informed the proposals. The public were invited to leave comments or email responses.

Full details of the consultation are set out within the Statement of Community Involvement which accompanies the planning application.



04 Evaluation

This section identifies the constraints and opportunities of the site and its context and sets out key urban design principles for the proposed development



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4 Evaluation

Constraints and Opportunities

A number of constraints and opportunities associated with the proposed development have been identified following the assessment of the site and its surroundings. These are listed opposite and shown on the constraints and opportunities plan overleaf. This assessment of the site and its surroundings has informed the design proposals.

Constraints

- Respect the visual amenity of the wider landscape with potential views from the east and south of the site.
- Consider the topographical and landscape features inherent to the site and surrounding context.
- Potential views from Residential, PRoW and Vehicular receptors located in close proximity to the site and at a distance.
- Potential views from the adjacent Chilton Manor Farm.
- Potential loss of the existing commercial orchards currently located on the site.
- Access to the wider agricultural land to the east of the site from the gated access along Swanstree Avenue.
- Consideration for the gradually rising topography of the site from the north to the south.
- Consideration for the existing PRoW that crosses through and adjacent to the site.
- Site located within an Areas of High Landscape Value (Kent Level).
- Site located within an Important Local Countryside Gap.

Opportunities

- To deliver a high quality, sustainable residential layout which can be integrated into the existing urban edge.
- The scale, layout and urban grain of the development should be appropriate to its setting.
- The scheme should be visually attractive, respecting the context, form and typology of existing built form and neighbouring local vernacular; To provide an integrated network of public open spaces incorporating play facilities, extensive landscape, sustainable drainage areas and ecological habitats.
- Provision of safe pedestrian movement between the development and the town, ensuring good connectivity with the community and facilities.
- Retention and enhancement of existing Public Right of Ways along with the creation of new pedestrian links across the site and out in to the wider landscape.
- Retention and enhancement of the existing vegetation structures such as existing hedgerows associated with the site boundaries and other environmental assets.
- Opportunities for extensive new landscaping to retain and further add to the existing green infrastructure.
- The creation of a robust and appropriate development edge which provides a sensitive transition between the proposed development and the wider countryside setting.
- Development should respect the visual amenities of the wider landscape setting and the importance of minimising the visual impact of the proposals with the retention and enhancement of the existing vegetation structures associated with the site boundaries.



05 Development Proposals

This section describes and illustrates the design proposals and demonstrates how they respond to the constraints and opportunities identified in the previous section



5 Development Proposals

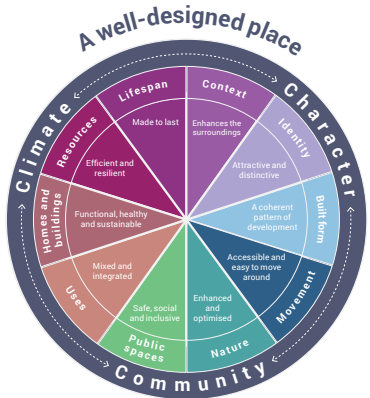


National Design Guide - A Well-designed Place

The National Design Guide sets out the principle characteristics of well-designed places and provides a guide to what good design means in practice. The scheme presents an opportunity to create a vibrant new community with high environmental quality. Through the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government’s National Design Guide (revised January 2021), a well-designed place is formed through the design of three overlapping themes; Climate, Community and Character.

“Well designed places have individual characteristics which work together to create its physical Character. The ten characteristics help to nurture and sustain a sense of Community. They work to positively address environmental issues affecting Climate. They all contribute towards the cross-cutting themes for good design set out in the National Planning Policy Framework”.

- Context** - enhances the surroundings.
- Identity** - attractive and distinctive.
- Built form** - a coherent pattern of development.
- Movement** - accessible and easy to move around.
- Nature** - enhanced and optimised.
- Public Spaces** - safe, social and inclusive.
- Uses** - mixed and integrated.
- Homes and buildings** - functional, healthy and sustainable.
- Resources** - efficient and resilient.
- Lifespan** - made to last.



National Model Design Code

The National Model Design Code expands on the characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide, providing an overarching framework for design. The document provides design guidance and is to be referred to in conjunction with the National Design Guide.

The following pages use this to set out how the scheme can realise the potential of a well-designed place.

5 Development Proposals

Development Framework

The development proposals are illustrated by the Framework Plan, which indicates the parameters of the development. The plan identifies the following:

- The application site boundary;
- The means of vehicular access into the site (See Transport Assessment for details);
- The location and extent of proposed land uses;
- The amount of built development.

Quantum of Development & Mix of Uses

Residential Development (3.81ha)

The development provides land for up to 135 houses with associated streets, private gardens and parking space. Housing will be set within an attractive network of connected streets and surrounding greenspace. Character streets will create variety and a sense of identity within the layout.

The housing mix will be determined at the detailed stage, but it is expected to include a broad range of house types as found within the local townscape that will allow for modern living and for a wide demographic. The development will also include the provision of affordable housing.

The average net density for housing blocks will be circa 35 dwellings per hectare. Higher densities will be located along the primary vehicular route and towards the existing settlement edge to the north where appropriate, generally lower densities will occur on the eastern edge.

Proposed Public Open Space (2.09ha)

The primary areas of amenity open space are proposed to the centre and to the north of the site and would include equipped areas for play and provide opportunities for both formal and informal recreation. An area of play would be located within the primary area of amenity space in the centre of the site and designed to provide a range of equipment for young children. The quantity of public open space would be provided in accordance with local standards.

Attenuation Features

An attenuation basin will be located to the lowest point of the site to the north west. The new attenuation features will relieve surface water drainage from the new built development. A separate pond will also be located in the site to the north east, designed to create an attractive landscape feature of value to wildlife and residents alike.

Green Infrastructure Woodland Planting

Structural woodland planting across the site and along the eastern boundary would comprise of native broadleaved species and include a number of heavy and extra heavy standard trees for immediate impact.



Figure 12: Development Framework (NTS)

5 Development Proposals

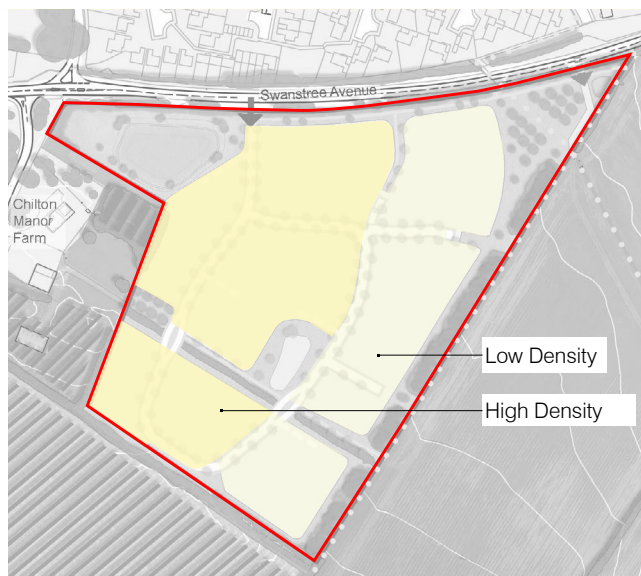
Design Evolution

The development proposals have been guided by an iterative design process, which has been informed by consultation with key stakeholders.

The process has comprised environmental and technical work, which has included an analysis of landscape, ecology, arboriculture, water and drainage and access.

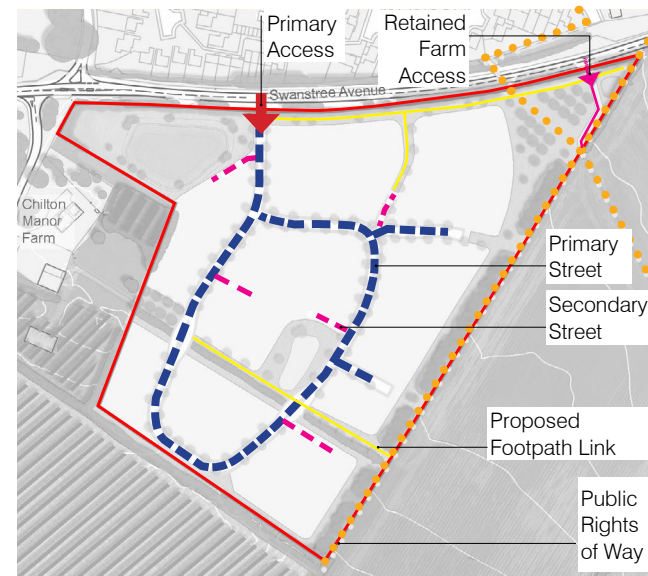
It has also considered the development's relationship with Sittingbourne and the surrounding context. Identifying the distinctive components that define local character has been a fundamental starting point for the design. The design specifically does not seek to recreate, or generate a pastiche of what has gone before, but instead looks forward to contemporary sustainable design solutions which effectively integrate into the existing fabric of the town through incorporation of vernacular building materials, layout and street hierarchy.

The principal components or the 'building blocks' of the scheme were gradually built up, layer by layer, into a series of design approaches for the site and ultimately a design concept as illustrated on the following pages.



Indicative land use strategy

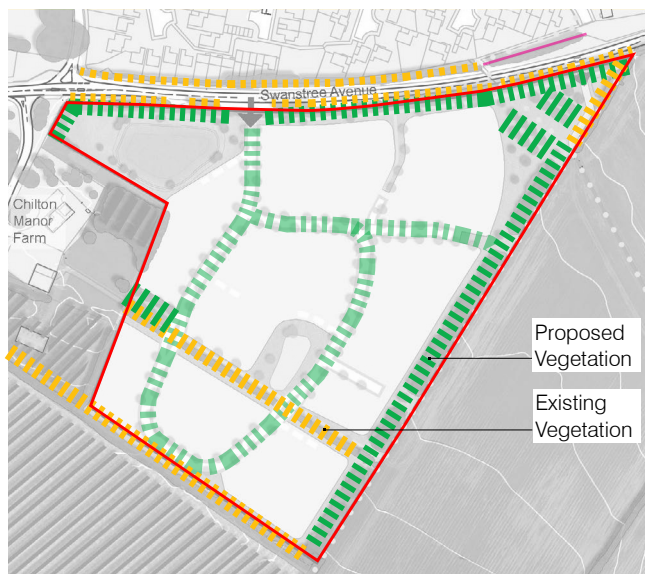
- Lower density development is proposed along the eastern boundary of the site in order to contribute to the key design aim of creating a softened settlement edge.



Access and Movement

- The primary vehicular access will be located off Swanstreet Avenue;
- The primary street would be designed to reflect the existing character of Sittingbourne;
- New footpath connections are proposed across the site, improving connectivity to the existing Public Right of Way network.

5 Development Proposals



Indicative structural planting strategy

- Proposed Structural planting across the site will help to integrate the development into the wider setting. Native planting along site boundaries will link the development into the wider context of surrounding mature tree lined hedgerows;
- Green corridors through the development will help to break up and soften the development proposals.



Indicative Public Open Space

- Public open space to inform the development, defined by existing routes of public footpaths and hedgerows. Focal spaces will inform the central area and north extents of the site.
- Equipped play located within walking distance of all residents;
- Existing hedgerows retained within proposed green corridors.
- An attenuation basin is proposed at the lowest point within the site located within the open space to the northern. It will be designed as an attractive, safe landscape feature and to maximise benefits to wildlife.



Scheme Evolution

- Gateway Buildings either side of boulevard. 2m tree verge either side of street with separated footpath;
- Avenue vistas along primary streets
- Focal Buildings at Key Junctions;
- Mix of frontage and rear parking, with frontage parking split up with trees along Avenues;
- Focal Green Spaces at key junctions;
- New footpath connections are proposed across the site, improving connectivity to the existing Public Right of Way network.

5 Development Proposals

Illustrative Masterplan

The Illustrative Masterplan along with supporting text and illustrations in this section of the Design and Access Statement indicate the principles of urban structure, (i.e. the framework and the layout of streets and pedestrian routes), and the urban grain, (i.e. the location, arrangement and design of the development blocks, plot arrangement, and green infrastructure).

The Illustrative Masterplan provides an indication of densities across the site and identifies the situations where taller buildings may be used to close a vista or turn a corner etc. In addition information is provided with regard to building scale and the appearance of the development both in terms of its architecture and landscaping.

The purpose of the Illustrative Masterplan is to provide a template for the detailed design stage of reserved matters applications. It sets out the key urban design principles that the development will seek to adopt.

Key Objectives for the development

- *Deliver appropriate housing growth for Sittingbourne.*
- *Provide up to 135 new dwellings with a mix of 1-4 bedroom properties, offering a range of living opportunities from linked townhouses to detached properties.*
- *Provision for 30% affordable dwellings.*
- *To create a considered and appropriate built edge to Sittingbourne and the wider countryside setting.*
- *Retain and enhance existing PRow across the site and create connections to adjacent PRow and links in to the wider context.*
- *Generate a high quality place by creating an attractive new community set within a landscape of open space, street trees and structural planting.*
- *Provide extensive public open spaces incorporating formal and informal play facilities, new landscaping and enhanced site biodiversity.*
- *Adopt the theme of inclusive design by making the development compliant with DDA standards and therefore accessible to all.*
- *Retain and incorporate existing boundary trees and hedgerow planting and improve biodiversity where possible.*
- *Re-inforce existing woodland features and habitats within the wider landscape context of the site, with woodland planting to the eastern boundary of the site.*
- *Create a 'place' which is designed for people and is easy to understand and move through, with quality 'communal' streets providing good pedestrian and cycle linkages both within the site and beyond.*
- *Aim to ensure the development is as safe and secure by design as reasonably possible.*
- *Promote sustainability through the design and construction process, reducing energy consumption and minimising waste.*
- *Embrace best practice solutions and contemporary design and construction methods. These will be ingrained from good examples of local distinctiveness found within and around Sittingbourne.*



Figure 13: Illustrative Masterplan (NTS)

5 Development Proposals

Access and Layout

The arrangement and the design of streets is the underlying element of place making and the creation of attractive places. Vehicular access will be provided via Swanstree Avenue as detailed in the Transport Assessment (TA).

The key urban design principles that are expected to be adopted at the detailed stage are the following:

- *To create a series of 'street types' that have different functions and design characteristics which will deliver changes in character across the layout;*
- *To provide streets and routes that are safe, direct and well connected which will deliver a legible environment.*
- *To maximise pedestrian and cycle connectivity with the existing urban edge of Sittingbourne, Public Rights of Way and the surrounding wider countryside;*
- *A layout that encourages people to walk and cycle and to use the Primary Street;*
- *To establish active and animated street frontages with an attractive public realm.*
- *Ensuring that all users (pedestrians, cyclists, car users, buses) can move safely, and calmly through the streets, with particular emphasis on non-car-users and less mobile people.*

- *To control, and seek to reduce, vehicle speed by urban design methods;*
- *To establish a legible environment of streets, routes, crossing points, surfaces, materials and edges.*
- *To provide safe and convenient access into the development.*

Street Pattern

An irregular pattern of streets similar to that found within Sittingbourne would be appropriate as this will deliver streets that are more direct and easier to navigate around as well as creating development (perimeter) blocks that are practical and efficient in their design. It will also allow the opportunity to introduce feature houses, spaces or village greens as streets intersect.

Indicative Street Types

A hierarchy of higher order and lower order street will be adopted. This helps residents and visitors understand the place and provides contrast and character.

The higher order Main Street will accommodate a series of feature spaces and feature buildings, whilst a lower order street such as a Lane, will be more intimate in character. Street types, will have different characteristics

in terms of width, building form and landscape treatment. This will generate a series of "character streets" that are distinctive and legible.

These will be the following:

- *The Main Street*
- *Secondary Streets*
- *Lanes*

There is further opportunity to create different street types at the detailed stage. It is possible that Lane arrangements may not be adopted. An aspiration is that some of the Lanes could be designed as shared surface streets.

Function

It is important that all streets cater for the needs of pedestrians and cyclists as priority, but also for the movement of car users, as well as refuse, recycling and emergency vehicles.

The detailed street design should not be overly engineered. It needs to consider all users, so that streets are safe, attractive, accessible and easy to move through.

5 Development Proposals

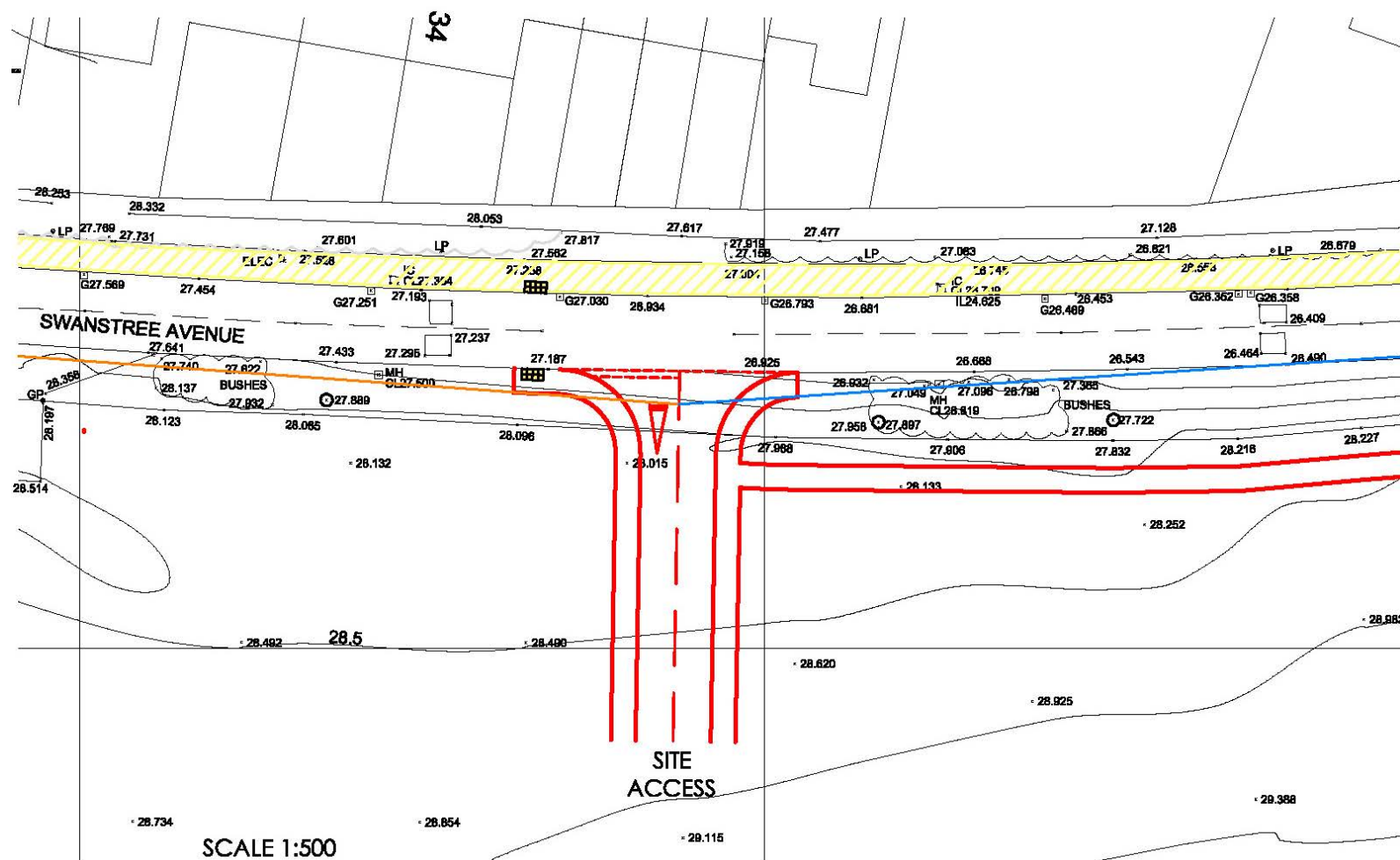


Figure 14: Access, Swanstree Avenue (NTS)

5 Development Proposals

Character

Within the development there are 3 specific character areas that help to define and differentiate between the spaces. These are:

Character Streets

- *Main Street*
- *Secondary Streets / Lanes*

Green Infrastructure (GI):

- *Green Corridors / Open Space*

Each area has subtle differences in the road width, planting, offset to road, building orientation and density. These variations provide each street with its own character.

The Main Street provides the main access into and through the development. It will incorporate footpaths to both sides and a medium density arrangement of linked properties with some detached or semi-detached fronting the street.

The next level of access is provided by the Secondary Streets. These streets are narrower than the Main Street and are more pedestrian focused. These streets provide access to the Lanes.

The Lanes comprises largely shared private drives that face onto the edges of the development parcels, including those that look onto public open spaces. These have no footpaths but are designed to give priority to pedestrians with very slow vehicle speeds.

The GI includes the public open space, incidental green space, as well as sustainable drainage and structural and woodland buffer planting. Further details can be found within the section later on in the DAS on GI.

Character and Sense of Place

Through an analysis of the constraints and opportunities of the site, it is possible to identify potential character areas, which might be used to influence a future detailed design strategy. The potential character areas identified are as follows:

- ① The Main Street
- ② Secondary Streets / Lanes
- ③ Green Corridors / Open Space

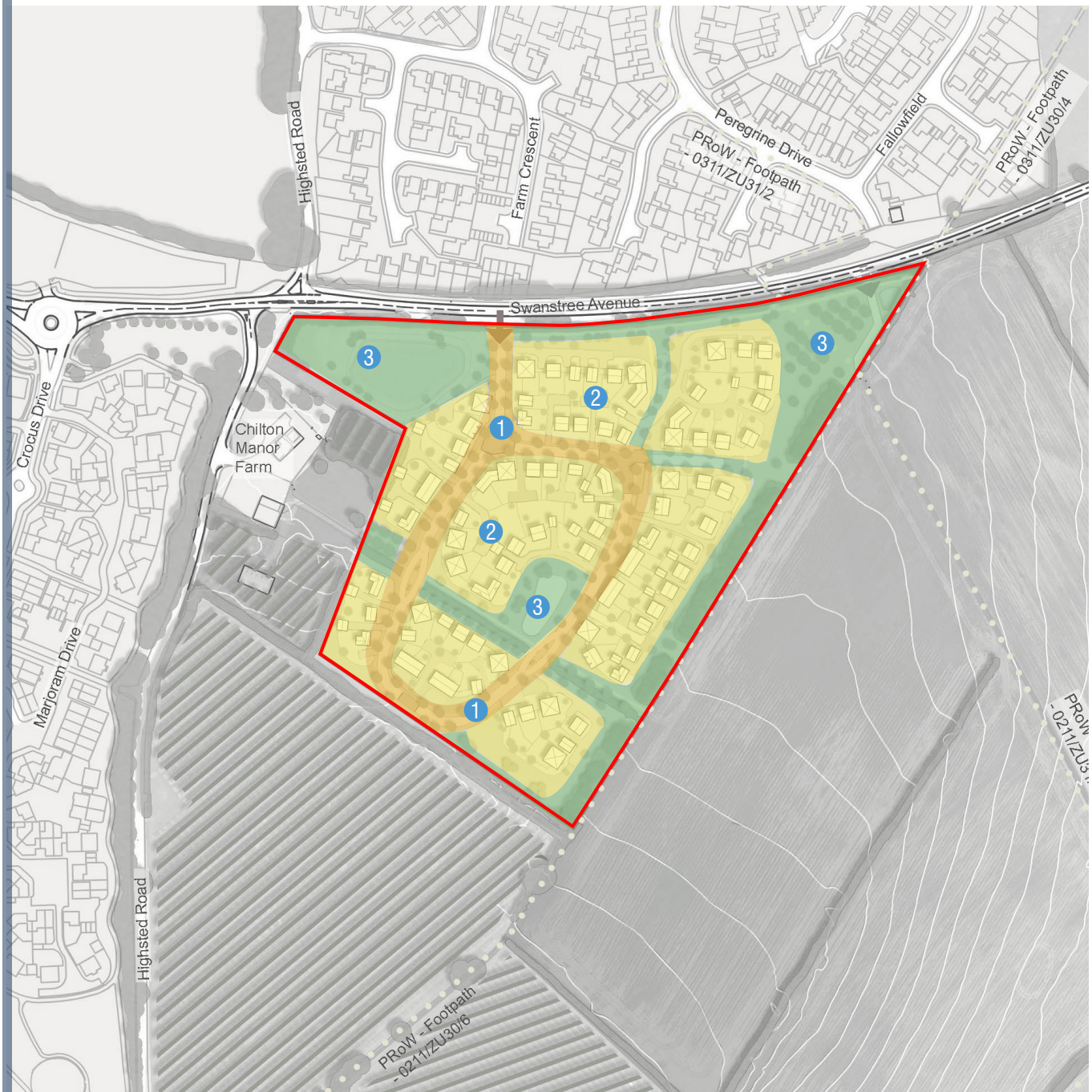


Figure 15: Character (NTS)

Arrival Points and Focal Spaces

The detailed block and street layout will be arranged so that it composes a series of attractive views and vistas. These will be defined by a sequence of connecting views (short or long), which lead or draw the eye from one feature to another. The use of a subtly curving main street will help to encourage views of landmark buildings, spaces or trees. More intimate, glimpsed, or framed views will also enrich the scheme. This will be achieved, for example, by including a street tree within the view that is framed by a building group, or a building line which deliberately restricts and then suddenly channels a view to a landmark building.

The detailed design will also include subtle variations in the building line, in terms of scale, height, and set back of buildings from the footway. This will be supplemented by quality materials and landscape treatment which will produce an attractive street.

-  Arrival / Focal spaces
-  View/Vista (Focal Spaces)
-  View/Vista (Green Corridors/Open Space)
-  Arrival Points - (Vehicular)
-  Arrival Points - (Pedestrian)



Figure 16: Arrival and Focal Spaces (NTS)

5 Development Proposals

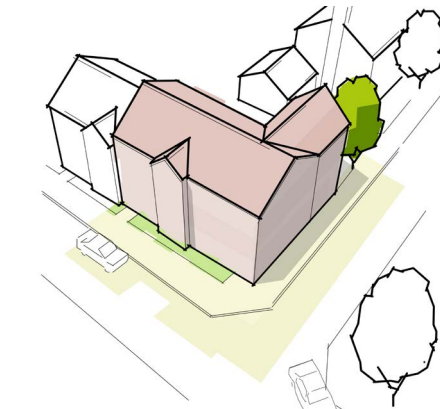
Housing Plot Arrangement

In broad terms, the street network is based around an irregular pattern of development blocks.

It is vital that the development is easy to navigate. The layout will provide a choice of interconnecting routes made identifiable through the use of landmark features and key spaces within the layout. This will help residents and visitors to easily navigate around the place and will ensure a high degree of legibility.

Corner Plot Arrangements

How blocks change direction, or move around corners, is an essential part of place making. The design will follow the best practice example of using, where appropriate a continuous built frontage 'wrapping' around corners, and thus enclosing and defining spaces. The benefit of this approach is that it maintains a positive definition to the street, and avoids 'weak' ill-defined edges. This will provide opportunities for locating landmark buildings on corners which in turn will help terminate, or frame views along the street.



Indicative corner plot arrangement

Landmark Features

The use of landmarks or a gable end facing onto the street in an otherwise straight line of buildings will provide identity within the layout. Other distinctions will be achieved by the careful use of building height and mass. A taller 2.5 storey building, if well located, can add prominence within a street of 2 storey buildings. The subtle use of materials and colour will also achieve this affect.

Streets that lead to landmark spaces will be a key design principle. These will be formed by the distorted grid and the intersection of blocks, as well as building groups.



Indicative corner plot arrangement

5 Development Proposals

Scale

In order to reflect local character, the majority of buildings within the site would not exceed 2 storeys and be a maximum of 9.0m in height from ground level to ridge.

Taller buildings (2.5 storey houses) should be used selectively and would be a maximum of 12m in height from ground level to ridge. In general these should occasionally occur in higher density blocks. The use of these buildings will be for good design reasons. Taller buildings, can, for example, add a vertical emphasis to a street, or help enclose a feature square. They could also be used as keynote buildings to encourage legibility.

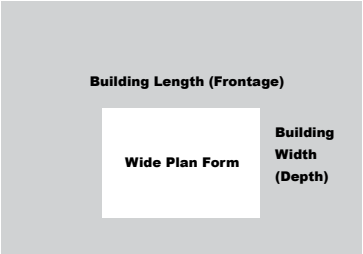
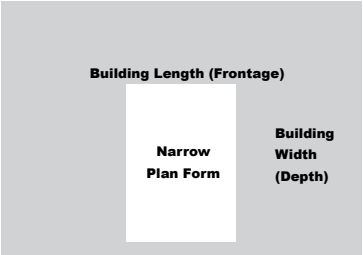
Attention will be given to the impact of height and massing of development on neighbouring streets. Higher buildings will be positioned adjacent to the main street, facing onto internal public open spaces and at key points such as corner plots to provide focal points.

Buildings will be designed to have a variation in their height from ground to ridge or eaves, and the arrangement of buildings within a plot will seek to ensure subtle changes in height to create a varied roof line across the development.

A high percentage of buildings will include chimney pots whether functional or decorative which will increase building heights marginally, but will also add significantly to ensuring a varied roofline across the development. There will also be a variation in the step of roof lines to reflect the local building style.

Building dimensions range in floor plan considerably between 1 and 4 bed units. Best practice advocates that a mix of both wide and narrow plan forms are to be used.

Wide frontage buildings allow for greater opportunity of facade variation along the street, whilst a narrow frontage approach will establish a run of linked dwellings and continuous frontages. The design uses both forms to create a varied street scene.



Density

Typically, the housing density determines part of the character of the streets, the design of the development blocks and the types of houses. Providing up to 135 dwellings at an average net density equates to 35 dph. This is considered to be a suitable average density given the site's urban edge location.

The layout will be designed with a variety of individual block densities. Higher densities will be achieved along the higher order main street, which will consist of more linked buildings to reinforce the character of these streets as the principal routes through the development.

Lower density development will be located at the plot edges overlooking the public open space responding to the site's location at the settlement edge.



Lower density areas would generally occur on plots to the east of the residential area



Higher density areas would be located along the main street

Housing Mix

It is proposed to provide a range of 1-4 bedroom dwellings with a choice of house types, from single occupancy units to family sized accommodation. This would generate a wide demographic and also encourage a mixed community.

A choice of homes would include terraced or linked units, townhouses, semi-detached and detached dwellings which broadly relates to the range of housing that can already be found within the local area.

Building design will consider flexible long-term living, with opportunities for home offices, and lifetime home standards.

The development will seek to provide the council's latest affordable housing requirement.

Street Frontage

To define the boundaries between private and public space, all dwellings will have some form of private frontage. These will tend to be smaller in higher density areas, appropriately between 0.5-3.0m in depth, whilst in lower density areas there will be the opportunity for increased frontages. However, it is important that frontages are not excessive and that buildings still relate and interact with the public realm.

In general, the use of smaller private frontages with larger rear gardens should be the predominant theme along the main routes and around public spaces, with larger front gardens used to define corners or vistas, along the lanes and towards the edges. Frontages will be defined by the use of consistent boundary treatments, which reflect the local vernacular.



Properties along Honesty Close front on and provide natural surveillance of open spaces within Sittingbourne

5 Development Proposals

Parking and Garages

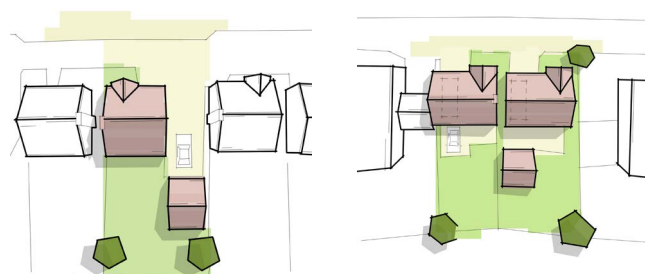
New homes should be designed so that have sufficient parking spaces based on the local authority standards, together with appropriate visitor parking.

The aim is that there will be a range of parking solutions that are based upon national and local design guidance. This should comprise a combination of the following:

- *garages and car ports;*
- *on-plot driveways;*
- *on-street; and*
- *shared courtyard parking.*

The key design principle is to locate vehicles so that they do not dominate the streetscene, but at the same time ensure that owners can see them, and that they have easy access to them. Careful detailing in terms of the plot arrangement, frontages and landscape will help to sensitively integrate vehicles into the layout.

Where plots allow, it may be possible to arrange the garage, stores and other outbuildings around an open courtyard rather than the driveway running directly into the garage or parking area. Parked cars can be further screened by hedges, trellis or pergolas.



Typical plot arrangements -
Parking to side of property

Typical plot arrangements -
Parking to rear of property

Footpaths and Cycleways

The Development Framework creates a number of walking and cycling routes through a connected pattern of streets, footpaths and connections to existing Public Rights of Way. This overall strategy will encourage the community to walk and cycle and will promote healthy active living. These will serve all significant desire lines within the site and offer safe and secure routes towards existing connections into the town centre.

The street design will also include footways to provide priority for pedestrians and cyclists in terms of movement and crossing points. This will help to facilitate safe and easy pedestrian and cycling movement through the development.

Calming Traffic

Calming and slowing traffic is an important part of delivering streets for people, and encouraging walking and cycling. To slow vehicles, and to encourage users to drive with caution, it is expected that some, or all of the following methods will be used.

- *Locating buildings so that they are close to the street edge or carriageway;*
- *The use of frequent street intersections and where practical the use of some tight junction and corner radiuses;*
- *The introduction of features that act as visual 'incidents' along the street;*
- *Changes in the carriageway surface with the use of 'unexpected' road surface materials;*
- *A section of the kerb to be built out to create a wider footway and a narrower carriageway;*
- *The use of well designed 'shared surfaces' to create streets for all; and*
- *Carefully restricting forward visibility through the arrangement of buildings, the building line and landscape treatment.*

Care will be needed to ensure that some methods, such as 'shared streets', are used in appropriate locations, and that they are inclusive in their design, with a particular focus on materials and demarcation.

5 Development Proposals

Safety and Security

A desirable place to live, work and play, which is safe and secure, is fundamental. This will be achieved by the way the development is laid out and by the street, block and plot design.

Buildings will be located to actively face streets and public areas in order to promote 24 hour surveillance, and to encourage safer places. Public areas such as the streets and play areas will be designed so that they are safe, easily accessible and attractive to use. All users will be considered as part of an inclusive design approach. It is important that there is good surveillance of public spaces by a number of properties and buildings, and that barriers, blank walls and 'dead ends' are avoided. Locating windows and doors on corners, or gable ends is a key principle, and occurs within the local context. Across the whole development careful attention will be paid to designing out crime through the layout, and promoting privacy and security.

This will be achieved by:

- High quality active streets;
- The position of buildings to the front of the plot;
- Well located windows and doors that survey the public realm clearly defining public and private spaces.

Sustainability

Sustainable construction methods and energy efficiency will be incorporated in the detailed design stage. This will promote a high standard of build and construction for the development.

The development proposals will follow the aspirations of sustainability order to provide a high quality environment. The nine design elements of; energy; water, materials, surface water run off and waste, pollution, health and well-being; and ecology will be thoroughly evaluated through the detailed design.

Best practice sustainability will be embraced, which will fully explore issues such as sustainable drainage techniques, and buildings that are resource and energy efficient.

It is expected that the design will explore the following in order to promote reduction in carbon emissions;

- *Flexible building and house design, allowing for the expansion of living areas and storage needs, and where practicable making better use of roof spaces.*
- *Ensuring that buildings can be easily adapted to suit different occupiers needs, through the use of non structural internal walling and easily extended services;*
- *The use of locally sourced or recycled construction, building materials and aggregates;*

- *The preference for using environmentally friendly and more sustainable materials and products, such as recycled timber;*
- *The use of porous/concrete block permeable paving and surfaces for some streets, driveways and spaces;*
- *Low flow showers, smaller baths and dual low flush toilets as part of controlled water demand and use;*
- *Low carbon lighting, energy controls and management;*
- *Double and triple glazing, and improved insulation;*
- *Wherever possible using an optimum plot orientation for solar gain with south facing windows;*
- *Conservation of natural resource such as the site's hedgerow and trees;*
- *Ground level 'urban greening' with the use of street trees, open space, private spaces and gardens;*
- *The planting and setting out of grassland, native trees, shrub and hedgerow species that will encourage wildlife, and sustainable drainage;*
- *Plots to provide suitable facilities and storage for recycling and waste.*

5 Development Proposals

Appearance

Whilst the development does not advocate pastiche or historic solutions, it is important that the new development has some connection with local character and place making. This is achieved through an analysis of street character, built form and materials. One of the most obvious ways of achieving a response will be by using traditional building materials, especially the use of colour and boundary details. This will be the guiding rationale for the development.

At this design stage, these photographic examples give an indication of the type of design treatments that are anticipated and the general appearance of the built form. The materials selected for the development would provide a modern interpretation of the traditional materials shown here. This includes canopy entrances, tile roofs, eaves details and stone and render materiality. Boundary treatments could include stone walls, timber fences and hedgerows. The emphasis will be upon well detailed buildings which are built on a human scale.



Properties fronting on to Public Right of Way



Properties located off Crocus Drive



Properties located off Blue Bell Drive



Properties located off Honesty Close

The Main Street



The key characteristics of the Main Street would be:

- *Primarily linked and semi-detached dwellings located closer to the road to create a more intimate and enclosed streets;*
- *Buildings set back from road at key junctions to reflect the surrounding character and to include a feature square at the centre of the residential area;*
- *Subtly curving layout and key buildings designed to create a series of linked views;*
- *Parking to be primarily to the side and rear of dwellings;*
- *Gateway building and attractive landscape treatment of public open space along the main street to include new street trees, boundary hedgerows and shrubs.*

Secondary Streets & Lanes



The key characteristics of The Lanes would be:

- *Development set back and informed by existing Public Rights of Way and proposed footpaths, while existing hedgerows will create attractive corridors through the development;*
- *Parking to be primarily to the side and rear of dwellings;*
- *New tree and shrub planting along the site boundary where appropriate;*
- *Lanes to be of lower density than main street;*
- *Provision of 'shared surfaces' to provide a pedestrian friendly environment and reduce traffic speeds.*
- *Dwellings fronting onto the lanes to provide informal surveillance,*

Green Corridors / Open Space



The key characteristics of The Green Corridor would be:

- *Built form to be lower density, typically detached dwellings with greater offset distances from the road and wider plots;*
- *Development will front onto the Public Open Space creating a positive frontage;*
- *Pavements and some shared surfaces to provide a pedestrian friendly environment and reduce traffic speeds;*
- *Car Parking to be primarily to the side and rear of dwellings;*
- *Larger landscape area including street trees, amenity grassland, grassland mixes and native woodland planting will inform the space.*

5 Development Proposals

Green Infrastructure

A quality landscape is essential to provide structure and detail to the character of the development. The Green Infrastructure proposed for the development has evolved as a result of analysis of the site and its setting and by responding to the best practice design guidance.

The following key landscape features are proposed;

- *A framework of structural planting around the sites perimeter which is both existing and proposed;*
- *Proposed formal and informal play including an equipped play area for the proposed housing within the central Public Open Space;*
- *Enhanced PRow and footpath links out in to Sittingbourne and the wider landscape;*
- *Existing trees, hedgerows and vegetation retained (wherever possible) within green corridors;*
- *Proposed orchard planting to include local varieties of fruit trees, insuring the continuity of the existing orchard character;*
- *Tree planting to punctuate the primary routes within the site. Throughout the site, trees and semi-ornamental planting will be used to establish a visually appealing environment for each building plot, to soften parking areas and the overall building setting;*
- *Large areas areas of open space within the centre of the site and to the perimeter will provide amenity to new and existing properties;*



Indicative; Public open space

- *A broad belt of planting will inform the eastern extent of the site adjacent to the wider landscape.*
- *The planting scheme will use native species with an emphasis on species bearing nectar, berries, fruit and nuts, to enhance the foraging opportunities for local fauna.*
- *Recommendations to include a range of bat, bird and invertebrate boxes (on trees and within buildings), hedgehog highways and native species planting within landscape proposals.*
- *A pond is proposed within the site to the north east, this will be designed to provide new habitat areas and a landscape feature within the green infrastructure.*

Water and Drainage

The FRA states the following: The proposed development will increase the area of impermeable surfaces and therefore increase the amount of runoff without mitigation.

Surface water runoff from the proposed development would be attenuated on-site up to and including the 1 in 100-year event, plus 40% climate change.

A SuDS drainage scheme is proposed to manage excess runoff from the development, comprising a range of SuDS features to improve water quality, before discharging to ground via borehole soakaways. Attenuation volumes have been designed to maintain runoff at predevelopment rates.

The FRA demonstrates that the proposed development would be operated with minimal risk from flooding, would not increase flood risk elsewhere and is compliant with the requirements of national policy and guidance.



Indicative; Attenuation basin



Figure 17: Green Infrastructure (NTS)

06 Building For Healthy Life

The following section provides a summary of the relevant elements of the scheme that have been considered against Building for a Healthy Life.



6 Building For Healthy Life

Building For Healthy Life: Summary

The following section provides a summary of the relevant elements of the scheme that have been considered against Building for a Healthy Life.

BHL is accepted as a useful design tool for residential masterplanning and the application proposals have responded to the 12 considerations. The following section provides a response to the BHL considerations which have helped guide the overall design process.



INTEGRATED NEIGHBOURHOODS

Natural Connections: Create places that are well integrated into the site and their wider natural and built surroundings. Avoid creating isolated and disconnected places that are not easy places to move through and around.

Response: This has been key to the masterplan. A new network of footpaths and cycleways within the Site will link to the existing settlement and form links to the wider countryside to the east of the site. This includes potential links to the existing Public Right of Way to the north, east and south.

Walking Cycling & Public Transport: Short trips of up to three miles can be easily made on foot or bicycle if the right infrastructure is in place, helping to improve public health and air quality whilst also reducing local congestion and carbon emissions.

Response: The development has easy access to public transport with close links to existing bus routes. Cycling routes within the site that connect to the wider surroundings will encourage people to be more active and less car dependent.

Facilities & Services: Places that offer social, leisure and recreational opportunities a short walk or cycle from their homes.

Response: The development is in close proximity to the centre of Sittingbourne where numerous facilities are located. New recreational spaces will be included within the Site including new equipped play space, new pedestrian footpaths and informal open spaces.

Homes for everyone: A range of homes that meet local community needs.

Response: The accommodation mix reflects the needs and aspirations of the local community. The design includes a range of dwelling sizes across the Site, to provide a mixed community. The tenure mix has been developed with market needs in mind. All dwellings proposed include private outdoor space which is recognised as important for mental health benefits.

6 Building For Healthy Life

DISTINCTIVE PLACES

Making the most of what's there: Understand and respond.

Response: The layout and green infrastructure for the scheme responds to its context and provides a distinctive character. At a detailed level, features are included in the design, to develop local distinctiveness. The architectural details of the proposals are inspired by and will contribute to the local character of Sittingbourne.

SuDS features take advantage of the Site topography whilst contributing to the Site biodiversity. The existing settlement has been considered and responded to in the overall site layout.

A memorable character: Create places that are memorable.

Response: The design approach retains the existing hedgerows and boundary trees wherever possible trees which will give immediate character for the development. Architectural details / materials reference local character and spaces within the Site have been considered for character benefits such as the entrance proposals and feature squares.

Well defined streets & spaces: 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 facades of buildings face streets and public spaces.

Response: The scheme is based on a series of development blocks, which interlock with the landscape. There would be a clear definition of the private and public realm, and properties would overlook the public space.

Easy to find your way around: Use legible features to help people find their way around a place.

Response: The layout for the scheme follows a simple approach with a central main route through the scheme linking to series of nodal squares. Key buildings are located at the feature square junctions - materiality also aids orientation and navigation within the Site.

STREETS FOR ALL

Healthy streets: Streets are different to roads. Streets are places where the need to accommodate the movement of motor vehicles is balanced alongside the need for people to move along and cross streets with ease. Activity in the street is an essential part of a successful public realm.

Response: The building layout has defined the street network, so that highways and car parking do not dominate. Where main pedestrian routes cross the streets levels would be raised to give pedestrians priority, and to assist in calming traffic. Highway layouts are designed in line with local requirements. Pedestrian and cycle priority is designed where appropriate. The streets and the public spaces are well overlooked by adjacent dwellings, allowing informal surveillance and safe routes.

Cycle & car parking: Well-designed developments will make it more attractive for people to choose to walk or cycle for short trips helping to improve levels of physical activity, air quality, local congestion and the quality of the street scene. Well-designed streets will also provide sufficient and well-integrated car parking. Well designed developments will make it more attractive for people to choose to walk or cycle for short trips helping to improve levels of physical activity, air quality, local congestion and the quality of the street scene. Well designed streets will also provide sufficient and well integrated car parking.

Response: Car parking is integrated into the overall layout and design. Car parking would be to the rear of properties within shared courtyards, as well as within the curtilage predominantly to the sides of dwellings. Where parking is provided to frontages, it is broken up by tree planting to avoid large expanses of parking.

6 Building For Healthy Life

STREETS FOR ALL continued

Green & blue infrastructure: Creative surface water management such as rills, brooks and ponds enrich the public realm and help improve a sense of wellbeing and offer an interaction with nature. As the richest habitat for a range of flora and fauna, they are also a key play in achieving the net gain in biodiversity sought by the 2020 Environment Bill.

Response: The landscape framework is formed by a series of interconnected green spaces and corridors. The SuDS strategy plays a strong role within the landscape framework contributing to an increase in biodiversity across the Site. Public spaces will provide opportunities for the community to interact within the landscape.

Back of pavement front of home: Garden cities, towns and suburbs used hedges to define public and private spaces, helping to create characterful and biodiverse places. The space between the back of the pavement and the face of buildings has a significant impact on the quality of a place. Clear demarcations between public and private spaces can encourage people to personalise the front of their homes whilst also offering opportunities to integrate level changes, utility boxes and waste storage.

Response: Boundary features to fronts of properties are well considered providing strong definition for public/private spaces transitions. A variety of boundary conditions are proposed, ranging from a low walls at feature squares, to hedgerows and estate railings.

Front garden depths help define the street character. The building layout allows for bins and recycling stores to be stored out of sight to minimise their impact on the streetscene.

Swanstreet Avenue
Sittingbourne

