

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Revision B June 2024

Land off Ashwell Street, ASHWELL

Detailed Planning Application For The
Construction Of 14 Homes

Prepared by AT Architecture Ltd on behalf of Manor
Oak Homes www.atarchitectureltd.com

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Upon receiving public feedback and consultee comments on the initial planning submission, the proposal has been amended, resulting in updates to this document;

* New sections post submission
* Updated post submission

1 INTRODUCTION & ANALYSIS

Chapter 1 aims to give an introduction to the detailed planning application for the construction of 14 homes at the land off Ashwell Street, Ashwell. Since the refusal of the scheme, we have aimed to respond to council feedback to create a new scheme.

This section of this document contains contextual and site analysis, as well as defining the brief for the project.



INTRODUCTION

Purpose of this Document

This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by AT Architecture Ltd, on behalf of Manor Oak Homes to support a Detailed Planning Application for 14 new residential dwellings. This will include market and affordable housing, access, car parking, associated works, open space and landscaping.

Please also refer to the architectural planning drawings prepared by AT Architecture and all accompanying consultant information.

The purpose of this document is to demonstrate design evolution via our initial design studies, pre application process and public exhibition. The aim is to illustrate that the proposed scheme is entirely appropriate for the site. The statement focuses on the relationship the proposals have with the local vernacular, density and site constraints and how the proposals consider local and national planning policies, along with the Ashwell Village Design Statement.

The site will contain a number of affordable homes, as well as a wide range of house types, which will provide a suitable mix based on Local Authority aspirations and local need.

The document will also explain how the scheme has evolved to cater for vehicle movement, pedestrian linkages and connectivity, open space, and the prevention of crime through Secured by Design principles.

The requirement to provide a Design and Access Statement (DAS) and what it should contain, is set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010. Article 8 of this summarises the content of a DAS as:

“the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development, and how issues relating to access to the development have been dealt with.”

Consultation with both the Local Planning Authority and local residents has influenced the scheme.

Finally, regard has also been had to paragraph 122 of the Government's 2010 Guidance on Information Requirements and Validation:

“Whilst its length and complexity may vary, what is important is that the document is concise and takes a proportionate approach, while effectively covering all of the design and access issues for the proposed development.”

This document is to be read as a whole. The design process is organised chronologically, however, certain design strategies and resolutions are illustrated further into the document.



APPLICANT

Manor Oak Homes is an experienced land promoter with a multi-disciplined approach to suitable land offering residential opportunities. Manor Oak Homes works pro-actively with all parties and has been commended on numerous occasions by both local residents and local councils on their approach to development and the sensitivity of their design ethos.

Sustainability is very high on the agenda of Manor Oak Homes and has always been of key importance to the company when selecting sites and beginning work on their projects.

The assessment, evaluation and detailed design of the scheme has been informed by various technical assessments carried out by specialist consultants, which are submitted as part of this application. This document should, therefore, be read in conjunction with these reports. The project team consists of:

Lanpro | Planning Consultant

AT Architecture | Architecture

MAC Consulting | Highways & Drainage

Aspect | Landscape

Asset Heritage | Conservation & Heritage

Origin Environmental | Arboriculture

Blackstone Ecology | Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain



BRIEF

The carefully selected design team were briefed and instructed to initially appraise and evaluate the site, along with the context, and together we generated some key design drivers, principle ideas and visions. These enabled us to produce an initial working site plan comprising various house types, carefully located houses of varying types, generous green space, and new amenity areas.

Initial sketch working drawings (illustrated within the ‘Masterplan Design & Concept’ Chapter) have been used to develop the brief through continuous consultation between the design team and Local Planning Authority.

Public engagement is an important part of the process and provides local residents the chance to comment and influence the scheme. Our brief is to listen to comments and concerns and reflect these in our final proposal. We intend to design a scheme that resides harmoniously within the existing context, sensitive to the site's size, opportunities, constraints and Design Guidance.

That initial brief has developed, but the principles have remained the same, and we wish to deliver the following:

- Appropriate housing to a mix required for the area
- A layout and design that responds to the key issues and concerns raised by the LPA, feedback from local residents and principles outlined within the Ashwell Village Design Statement.
- Ample affordable housing, including housing to meet accessible standards for wheelchair users.
- High quality amenity space for the residents and visitors that is well connected and surveyed, respecting the sites edge of settlement position and location within the Conservation Area.
- Parking provision, both allocated and unallocated, to a level that reflects current standards to avoid casual on-street parking, including EV charging.
- Provide housing development within the settlement boundary of Ashwell and in a sustainable location (in terms of its proximity to local shops and services).

As well as wider brief aims, there are a number of specific key objectives to Ashwell:

- Encouraging sustainable development reflecting the village and ensuring the community can develop and evolve appropriately.
- Supporting local businesses and encouraging the development of the economy.
- Providing accessible and enhanced facilities to support the changing needs of the village.
- Conserve the historic character of the village and its rural setting.
- To conserve the natural environment of the Parish, and reduce greenhouse gases by using renewable and low carbon energy technologies in new housing and infrastructure developments.



DESIGN GUIDANCE

Throughout the design process, the design team have utilised a range of guidance documents, including the National Design Guide.

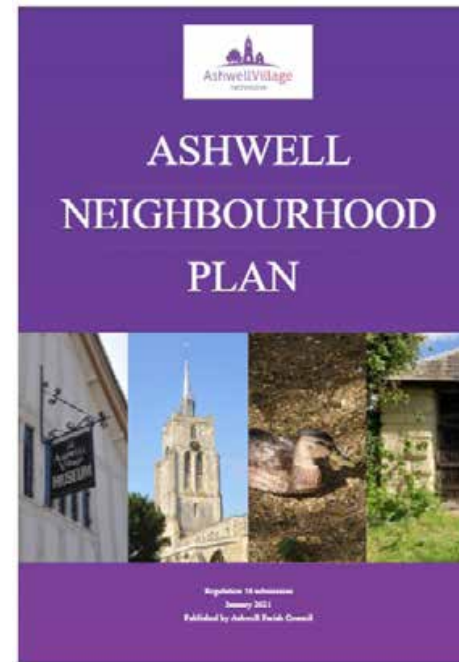
North Hertfordshire District Council published a Design Supplementary Planning Document, adopted in November 2021, that contains design criteria and guidance to help create high quality and sustainable new developments. The guide sets out important design principles based on recognised good practice.

The Design Guide is divided into 6 Chapters covering aspects such as design standards and sustainability. As this is a district wide Design Guide, it is important to note that large elements of this document are not entirely relevant for this application. We have also taken into account the Ashwell Conservation Area Character Statement, which concentrates on retaining and enhancing the architectural character and style of Ashwell.

This Design & Access Statement will demonstrate how the proposed masterplan has responded to various design principles contained within this guide, and how our masterplan has evolved to a design resolution through extensive research, analysis of constraints and opportunities and positive design development.

The Design Supplementary Planning Document gives guidance on the design principles:

- **'The environment and setting of the village are particularly important to its future protection.'**
- **'Protect the historic core and historic environment for inappropriate development that could be detrimental to the village's character' .**



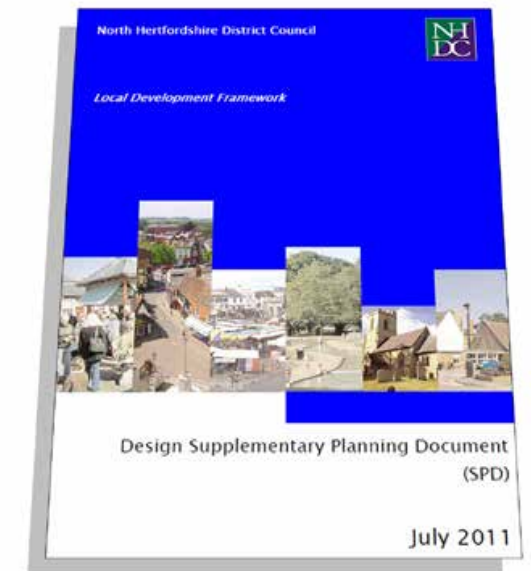
Neighbourhood Plan

This document also takes into account the Ashwell Neighbourhood Plan. It encompasses the villages current and future visions for the area, and deals with a number of areas from the local economy to space strategies and housing. We have used this document throughout the design process to ensure that the proposed development meets the vision and aspirations of local people.



Ashwell Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

The character appraisal and management plan strives to ensure that the historic character of Ashwell is preserved and enhanced in any new developments. It deals with all design aspects from materiality to boundary treatments and the public realm, to ensure that the area's architectural character and style is maintained.



Ashwell Village Design Statement 2011, as amended in 2018

This document provides guidance on producing an in keeping, and characterful development, with information ranging from the settlement patterns to local materials and craftsmanship of buildings.

PLANNING CONTEXT

Key Planning Policy Context

The adopted development plan for the North Hertfordshire District comprises:

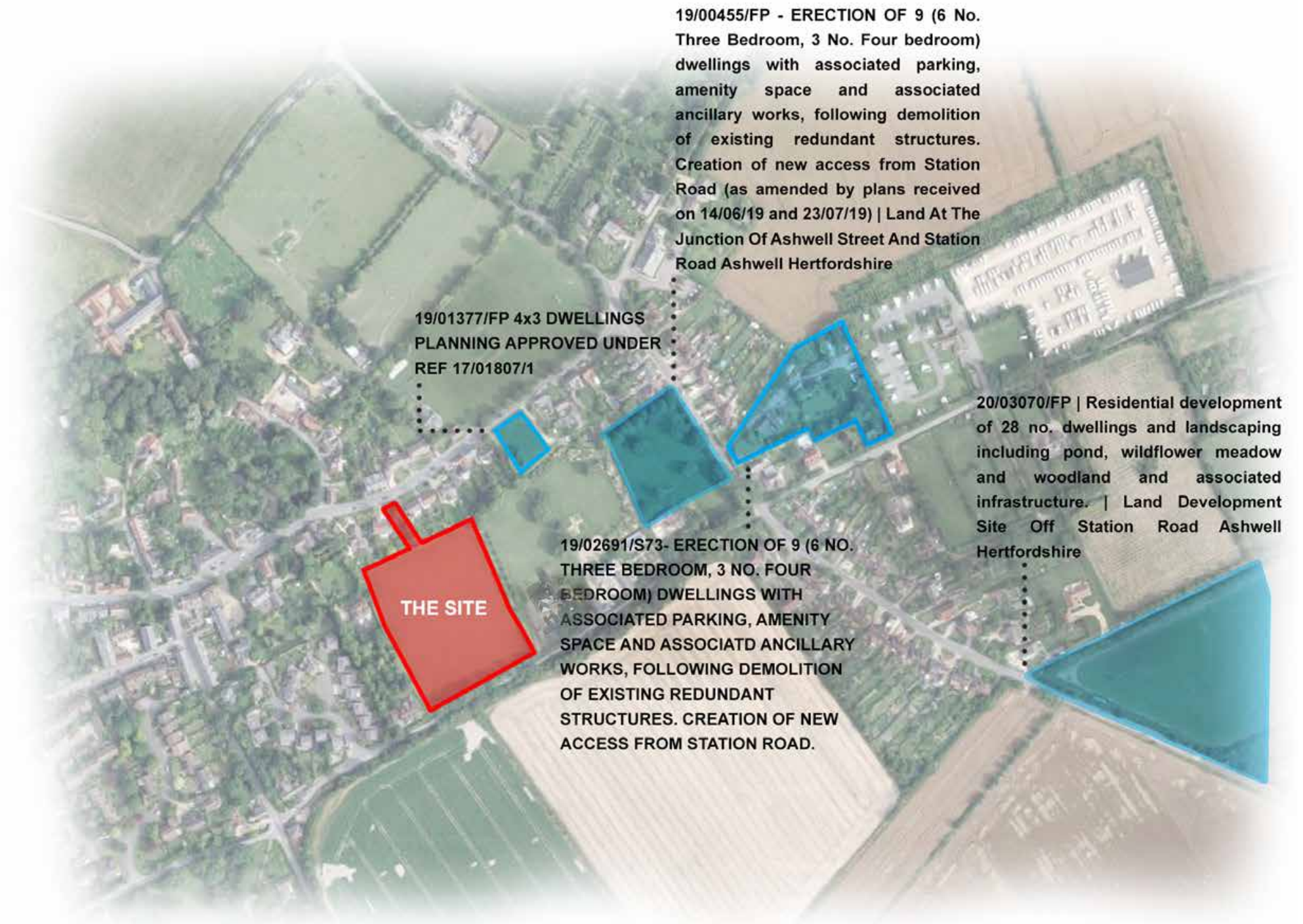
- North Hertfordshire District Local Plan;
- North Hertfordshire Proposals Map; and
- Hertfordshire Minerals Plan.

The North Hertfordshire Local Plan has been updated and adopted as of 8 November 2022. The new Local Plan covers the period 2011-2031 and is now an important material consideration in the determination of any planning application for the site.

The Local Plan has defined a settlement boundary for Ashwell that includes the land north of Ashwell Street, and Policy SP2 defines Ashwell as a 'Category A' village where general development will be allowed within the defined settlement boundary.

Wider Planning Context

Two nearby residential developments within the Conservation Area have been recently approved, as illustrated on the plan to the right.



CONTEXT ANALYSIS

Analysing and understanding site context is the first step in the design process to ensure that the proposals reflect the area in which they reside. Site and context research has been completed, using the adopted Ashwell Conservation Character Statement April 2019, and the Ashwell Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan June 2023. These documents have been used throughout the document to understand the historical context of Ashwell, and its reflection in the architectural style as well as expectations of future developments.

Extensive research and analysis has been undertaken exploring the wider area, immediate area around the application site, and the site itself.

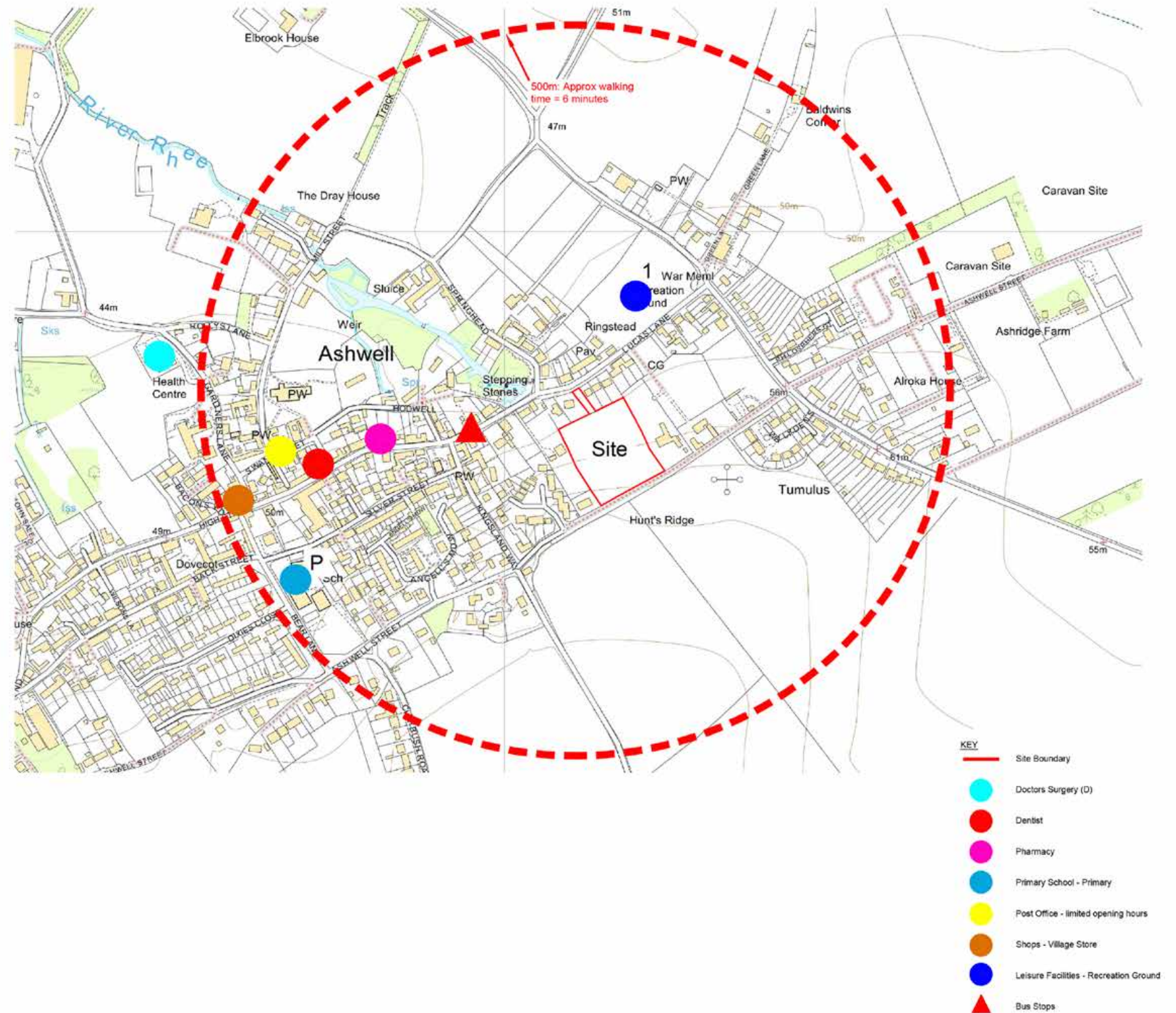
About the site:

The application site is located on the eastern side of the village of Ashwell, to the south of existing houses that front onto Lucas Lane and to the north of Ashwell Street, which runs south-west from Station Road and forms the southern boundary of the village for most of its length. The site comprises approximately 1.18 ha of land that is rectangular with a frontage onto Ashwell Street. The site is currently in use as pastoral land.

The southern boundary of the site is marked by a line of mature trees along the north side of Ashwell Street, which are to be retained and enhanced by new public open space.

The remaining boundaries border existing residential development of varying scale. The strip of land to the north, which is approximately 10 metres in width, provides access into the site from Lucas Lane.

The site is well screened with some specific long distance views outwards towards St Mary's Church, which has been a fundamental design consideration from the start.



BUILT ENVIRONMENT ANALYSIS

Following images show the existing built context along the High Street and Lucas Land running north of the site, these mainly consist of housing. Key features have been picked up from both the Village and associated Ashwell Village Design Statement, which has been heavily referenced during the design process.

As mentioned in the Ashwell Design Statement, Ashwell village consists of various architectural styles and materials. The development of the village is noticeable through the changes of styles on the High Street. The village consists of some red brick buildings from the 19th Century and other are rendered in pale colours. These often include dark stained weatherboarding.

The window styles are mainly both vertical sash and casement windows, that are mostly wooden framed. However, there are also plastic framed sealed windows found in mainly new buildings. The modern build doors and porches are based on traditional forms, with older property doors made from traditional materials .

There is a variety of gable roofs in the village with varying pitches and materials. Gables with 'scaloped barge-boards' are a well known feature.



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BUILT ENVIRONMENT CHARACTER ANALYSIS

In the Ashwell Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan, it is shown that the Ashwell Conservation Area is divided into four main character areas. These four areas distinguish the historic development of Ashwell, as well as key views throughout the Conservation Area. Each character area features designated heritage assets, that can be found in Appendix 6.3 to the Ashwell Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan. The application site is located in Character Area 1, where new housing development has been recently granted (highlighted previously).

Character Area 1 - Ashwell's Historic Core

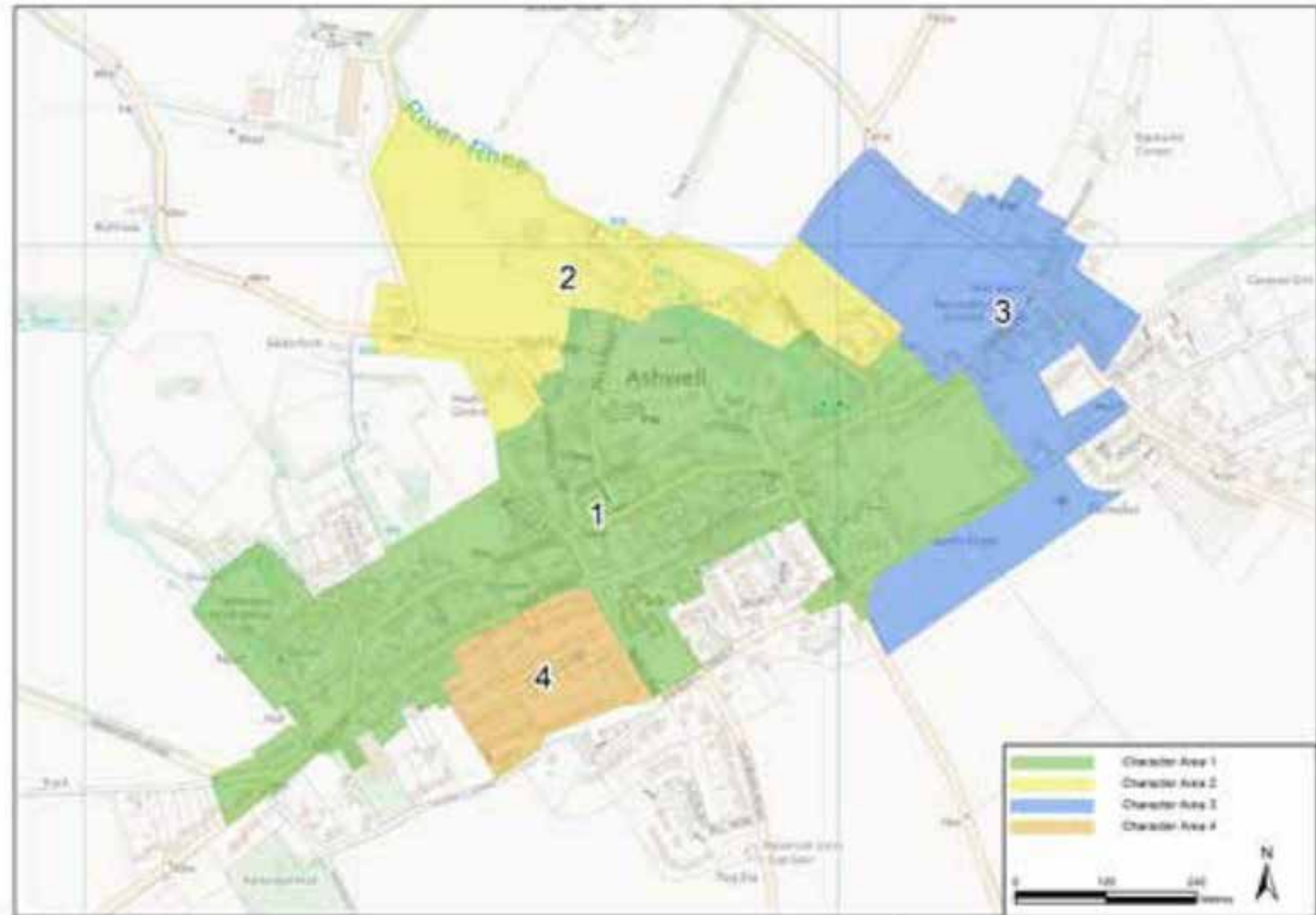
Ashwell's historic core comprises the main southwest to northeast areas of the West End and High Street, as well as Lucas Lane (to the north of the site). It includes prominent buildings such as St.Mary's Church, as well as spaces such as Ashwell Springs.

Buildings in this area include the timber framed farmhouses as well as more recent infill development. There are 56 listed buildings within this area. Gables are prominent in the area, as well as brick chimneys. Exposed brick, timber framing and plastering/render are frequently used on the facades of these buildings.

Character Area 2 - The Northern Rural Periphery and Ashwell Bury Estate

This character area is less dense than other areas of the village, and features the River Cam. There are eight listed buildings within the area, but there are also many non-listed buildings that contribute positively to the character of Ashwell.

Roof materials in this area include slate, pantile, tile and thatch, and chimneys are prominent features of roofs in this area. Timber frame and red brick are prominent in this area, and the agricultural origin of this area is the main architectural influence. Green infrastructure as well as brick walls with copings and cap stones, and post rail fencing are common boundary treatments in this area.



Character Area 3 - Interwar Development

Most buildings in this area contribute to an early-twentieth century civic character, enhanced by the Station Road cemetery. This area also features a large Recreation Ground, which is an important amenity for Ashwell's residents.

Slate is the most frequent roof material in this area, with instances of ceramic roof tiles. Chimneys remain prevalent, and there is a mixture of roof styles. There is a mix of red brick and render in this area, with casement windows.

Character Area 4 - Post-war Development

The post-war section of Ashwell show mainly semi-detached properties, and the area is exclusively residential. Grass verges and other green infrastructure such as hedgerows and trees are prominent in this area. There are no listed buildings in the area, and materiality is mainly brown roof tiles, brown brick with casement windows. Chimneys remain a frequent roof feature in these areas.

BUILD ENVIRONMENT: ASHWELL FEATURES

The following images show the existing architectural features. These key features have been taken from the Ashwell Village Design Statement and the village itself.



Walls and Windows

Research gathered from the pages 12 and 13 of the Ashwell Design Statement shows the variety of building styles and materials used around Ashwell. Some red brick buildings with Arleseey and Cambridge white bricks also used as the styles have developed over the years. Some buildings use decorative brickwork below the eaves or above windows and doors. There is also a use of contrasting colours using brickwork.

Roofs and chimneys

Both vertical and casement windows are used throughout the village, there are mainly small paned in wooden frames. The windows panes are more tall than wide. Plastic framed windows are found in many of the new builds, or replacements in older buildings

Many houses in the village have porches and doors that reflect the time they were built. Doors are mainly plain with some glazing. Canopies over doors are more of a feature.

Doors and Porches

Most roofs around Ashwell are either 'finished with plain clay tiles or natural slates'. Some thatched roofing still remains. There is a range of gables and hipped roofs with a variety of materials used. Decorative bargeboards are a feature of the village. Chimney's from the older houses are an ornamental feature, whereas the modern houses tend to be 'utilitarian'

LOCAL VERNACULAR & FRONTAGES

These images illustrate the type of dwellings nearer to the application site. Understanding the type, scale, form and materiality of the immediate context is important to establish what design cues can be drawn in order to deliver a successful, high quality scheme. The properties bordering the site are not reflective of the properties deeper within the Conservation Area, albeit the larger Queen Anne Style house to the north is a nice example of the architectural style. The setting of this property will be respected.

The colour palette varies and there is an opportunity to rationalise this by utilising an appropriate palette of materials and apply this to the site (under planning condition).

Page 14 of the Ashwell Village Design Statement also sets out criteria about the built context, and guidance of how to deliver high quality design within areas of historic importance and sensitive locations. The site falls within the Ashwell Conservation Area, so the proposed development aims to add a high quality 21st Century contribution to the architecture and history of Ashwell. The site should respect it's location within the Conservation Area, even though the site is located on the edge of settlement, it is still part of the heart of the village.



Property on Lucas Lane, backing onto the application site



Property on Lucas Lane, to the North of application site



Queen Anne style property in Ashwell



Properties on Lucas Lane, backing onto the application site

HERITAGE CONTEXT

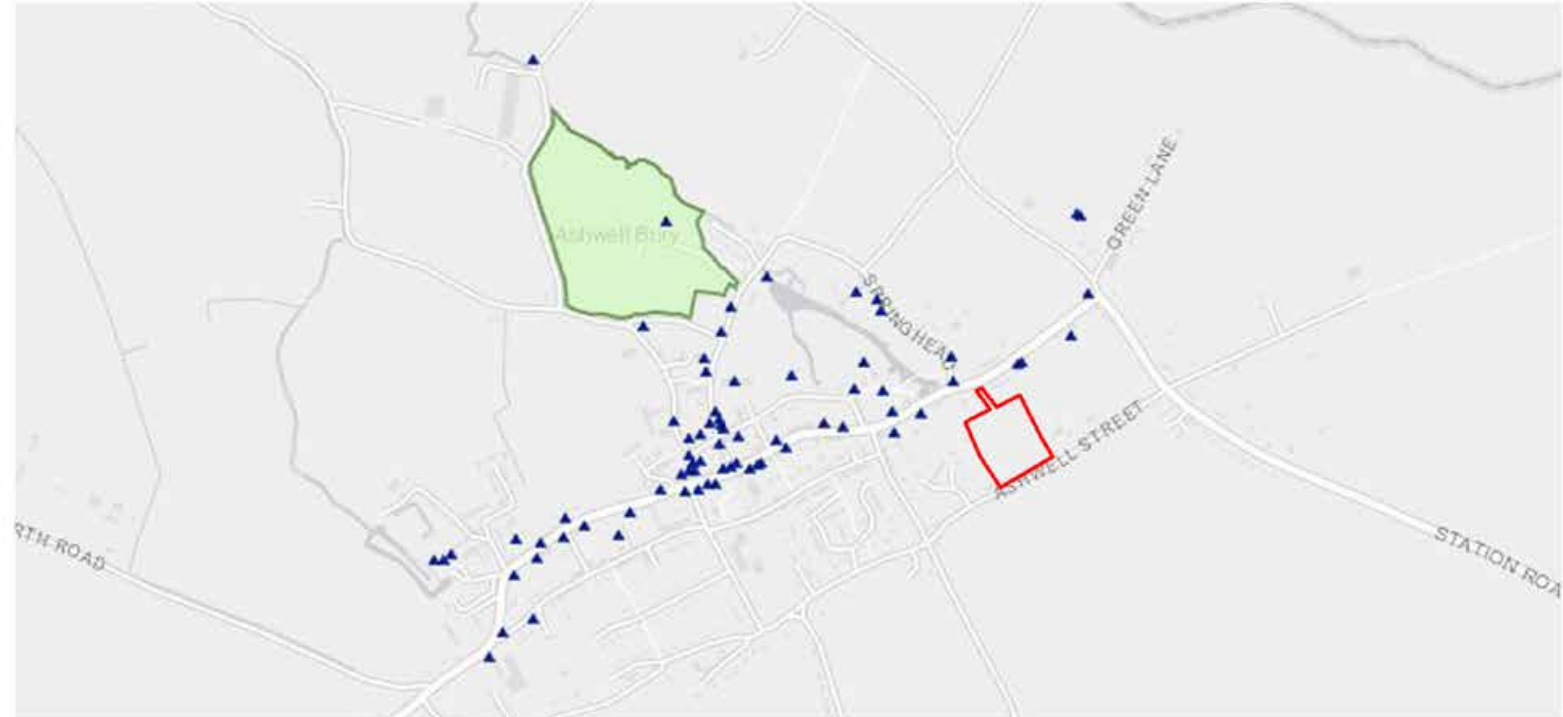
Historic Background

Ashwell is a significant historic village with a long history dating back to Roman times. By the Domesday Survey of 1086 and throughout the medieval period, it was a thriving market town and during the 18th and 19th centuries it was a centre for brewing and farming. It is Ashwell's continued development, and its successive layers of history over the last millennium, that make the town such a special place today.

Archaeology

MOLA Northampton was commissioned by Manor Oak Homes to carry out archaeological desk based and trial trench evaluations on land north of Ashwell Street, Ashwell. The trenches were sited to target features of potential archaeological interest, as indicated by a geophysical survey, and to determine the archaeological potential and character of the whole area.

Pease refer to the report prepared by MOLA for further information.



Listed Building Map



Archaeology Map

HERITAGE CONTEXT

The site falls within the Ashwell Conservation Area, with 20th century housing to the Northern, Western and Eastern boundaries. There are listed buildings nearby on Lucas Lane and significantly, St. Mary's Church tower is visible from within the site. Consequently, specialist consultants Asset Heritage Consulting have been appointed to ensure that the development takes full account of Ashwell's important heritage.

The proposed development aims to add a high quality residential contribution to the architecture and history of Ashwell. It will occupy an undeveloped site to the east of the village, located between Lucas Lane to the North and Ashwell Street to the South, reinforcing the East/West orientation which characterises the form and growth of the village.

The design, materials and layout of the proposed housing will be developed to take full account of the Ashwell Village Design Statement. The intention is to create a unique development that reinforces the village's traditional and indigenous character and responds positively to its rich history and heritage.

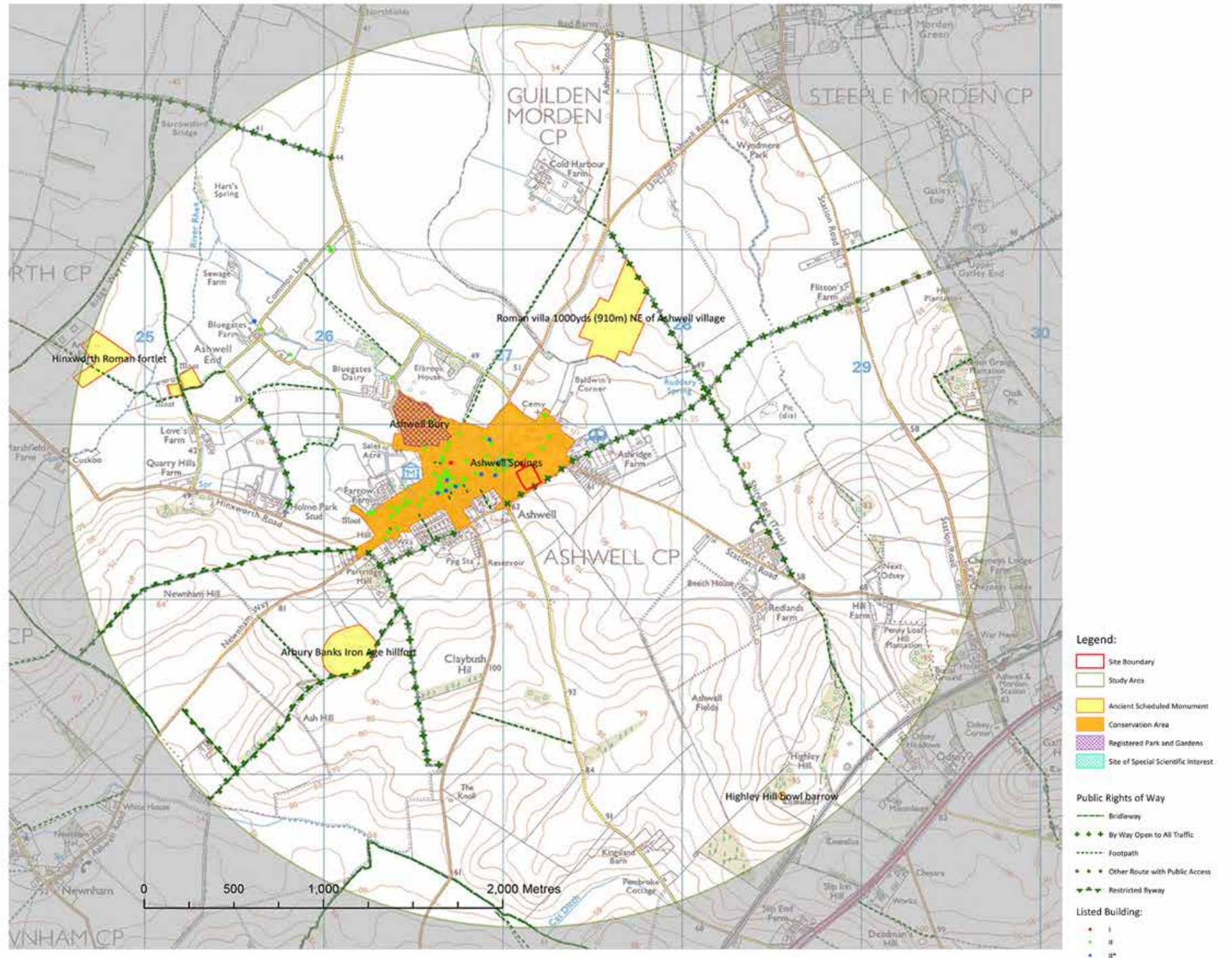
A heritage appraisal has been carried out by Assets Heritage Consulting, and a statement has been produced. The statement concludes that the site amendments (to 14 units from 24) positively addresses the concerns and reasons for refusal (for the previous scheme).



St Mary's Church, Ashwell



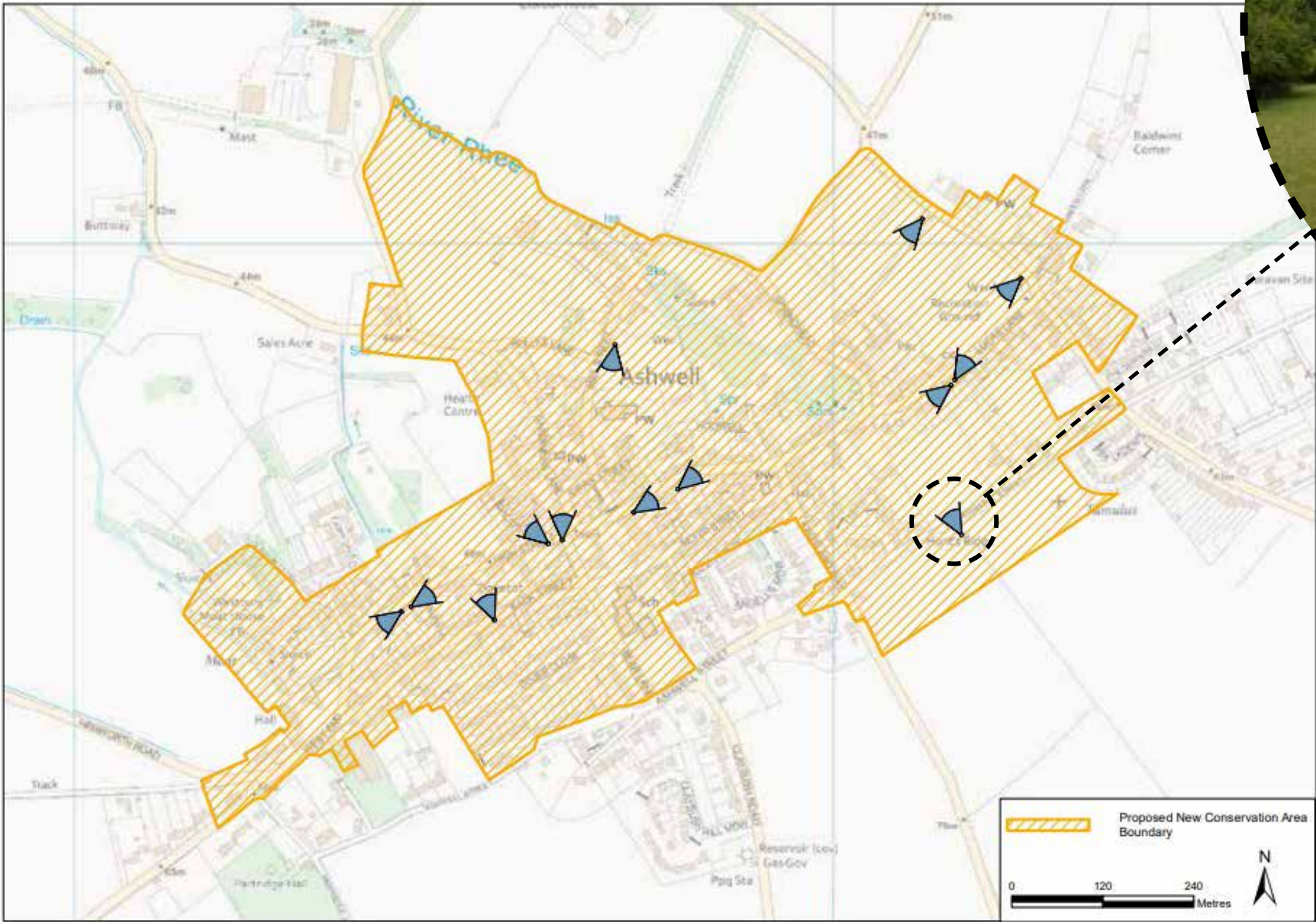
20th century housing bordering the site.



HERITAGE CONTEXT: VIEWS

Within the Ashwell Conservation Area Character Statement, a number of views are highlighted as being important within the Conservation Area. The map below, alongside images shows views in close proximity to the site that should be taken into account through the design process.

From Ashwell Street looking north across field towards Alder Cottage including the tree coverage within the Conservation Area (KV23).



Views map, Proposed 2022 Ashwell Conservation Area

PHOTO ANALYSIS

A photographic study of the site, has been completed which has informed this Design & Access Statement. The application site comprises a pastoral field enclosed by established mixed native hedgerows and vegetation structure that contain the field.

The southern site boundary is defined by mixed native hedgerow with mature trees which lines Ashwell Street. Five properties neighbour the site on the north west boundary that front Lucas Lane. One single large property neighbours the site to the east and two large properties neighbour the site to the west.

The site is well screened, however the level change from north to south exposes the southern part of the site to wider views. As part of our design development, the intent is to locate green public open space within this area.



Internal view, facing North towards Ashwell village



Internal view, facing South-East towards existing site access and Ashwell Road



Internal view, facing South-West towards Ashwell Road



View facing South-West towards the site

ROAD NETWORK ANALYSIS

Page 70 of the Residential Design Guide states;

**‘How does the proposal relate to its wider setting?
Are the street patterns and grain of the surroundings respected?’**

There are many aspects that effect the design of a residential street network, context (rural or urban), existing settlement pattern, types of dwellings, local and national criteria etc. As competent designers, time is invested to fully understand the context and evolution of the settlement pattern and street network of the area. The scheme design should reflect this, whilst acknowledging the sites fundamental location within this context. The teams design development and input will ensure that the scheme is developed to sit comfortably within its setting. Further advice from the Local Planning Authority will enhance this process.

The proposed road network within the site will draw upon design cues from the context within the western side of Ashwell Village and the general street network as a whole. The road pattern is typically linear with a series of 90 degree junctions and perpendicular building.

It is highlighted in the Ashwell CACAMP, that opportunity sites through the Conservation Area, should be within the defined settlement boundary and create a character appropriate to the sites context. Lower density development should be concentrated around the outer edges in order to protect views.



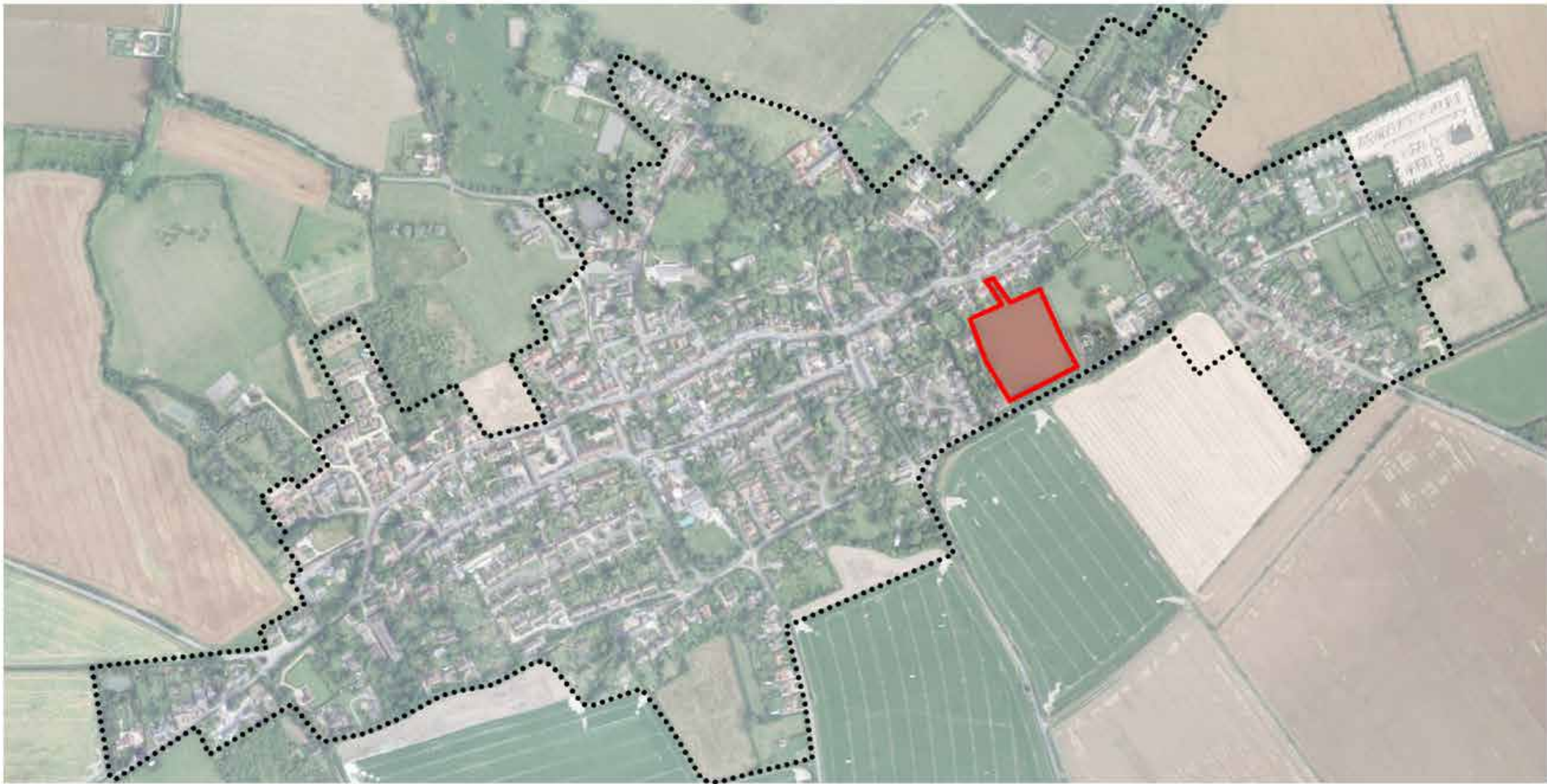
Typical Street Network of Ashwell

THE EVOLVING SETTLEMENT PATTERN

Ashwell Village’s current settlement pattern provides an indication of the history of the growth of the village. Most buildings in the town are two storeys with a few three storey. There are some single storey bungalows facing Lucas Lane (within the context of the application site). There has been residential development on agricultural land throughout the village over the decades. Houses in the centre are located more closely together whereas away from the centre the house are set back from the street to a varying degree.

The Ashwell Settlement Boundary has been extended, and now encompasses the proposal site. It was highlighted in the Ashwell draft Local Plan, ANP, and draft CACAMP that new development should be focussed within this boundary. No new housing sites have been allocated yet, but this extension of the settlement boundary demonstrates a recognition for the need to consider future development in this area.

The application site sits comfortably within this part of the village that is characterised by the growing development pattern. The continuing built form eastwards is in keeping with the evolving settlement and permitted planning applications.



FLOODING & DRAINAGE

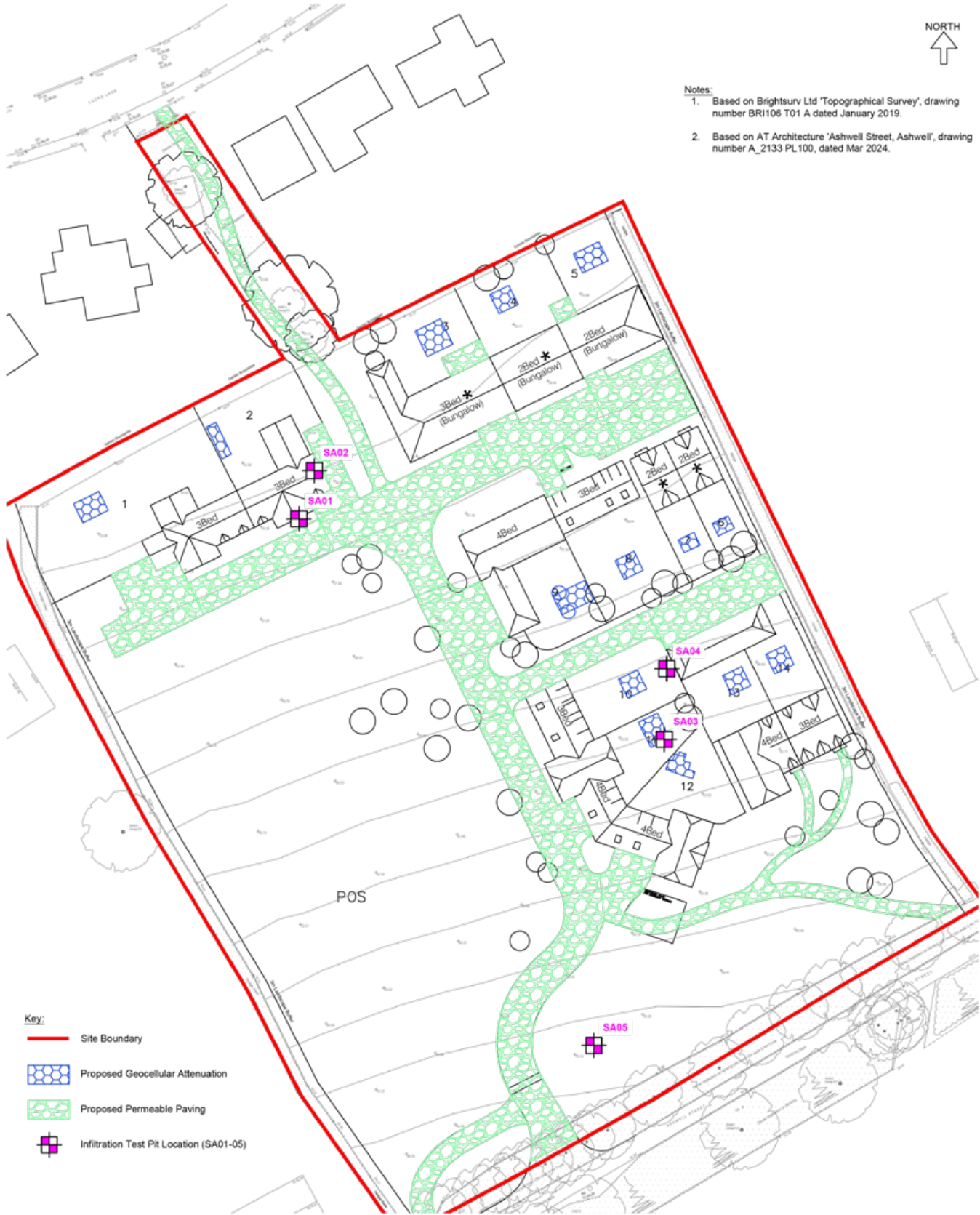
The site is at a low risk of flooding from all sources.

A geotechnical investigation of the site found that the site is underlain by Zig Zag chalk formation. The chalk has good permeability with infiltration rates in the order of 6.2x10⁻⁶ m/s to 4.7x10⁻⁴m/s. As the geology of the site allows for the use of infiltration techniques, plot soakaways and permeable paving will be used to dispose of surface water. Therefore, no surface water will discharge off site.

Anglian Water has confirmed that their sewer has adequate capacity to accommodate foul water flows from the development.



Flooding Map



- Key:
- Site Boundary
 - Proposed Geocellular Attenuation
 - Proposed Permeable Paving
 - Infiltration Test Pit Location (SA01-05)

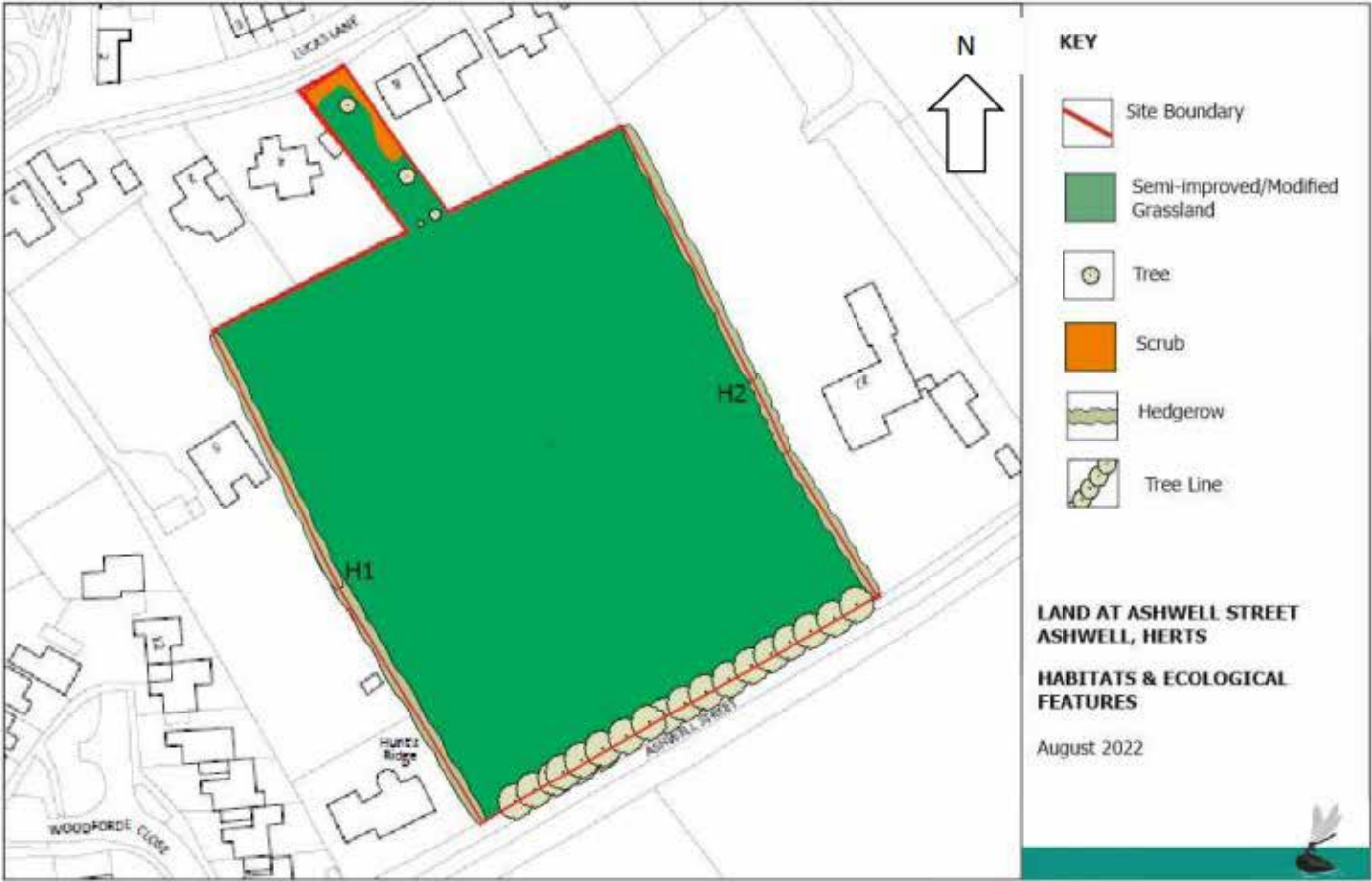
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 Martin Andrews Consulting Ltd

- Transport Assessments
- Flood Risk Assessments
- Highway Advice
- Access Design
- Drainage Strategies
- Vehicle tracking

Client: Manor Oak Homes		Project: Land off Ashwell Street Ashwell	
Title: Proposed Drainage Strategy		Date: 31.05.24	Drw: ZS
Drawing No: 190-FRA23		Revision: -	Chk: MJA
		Scale: 1:500	Size: A3

Extract from the flood risk assessment by MAC Engineering

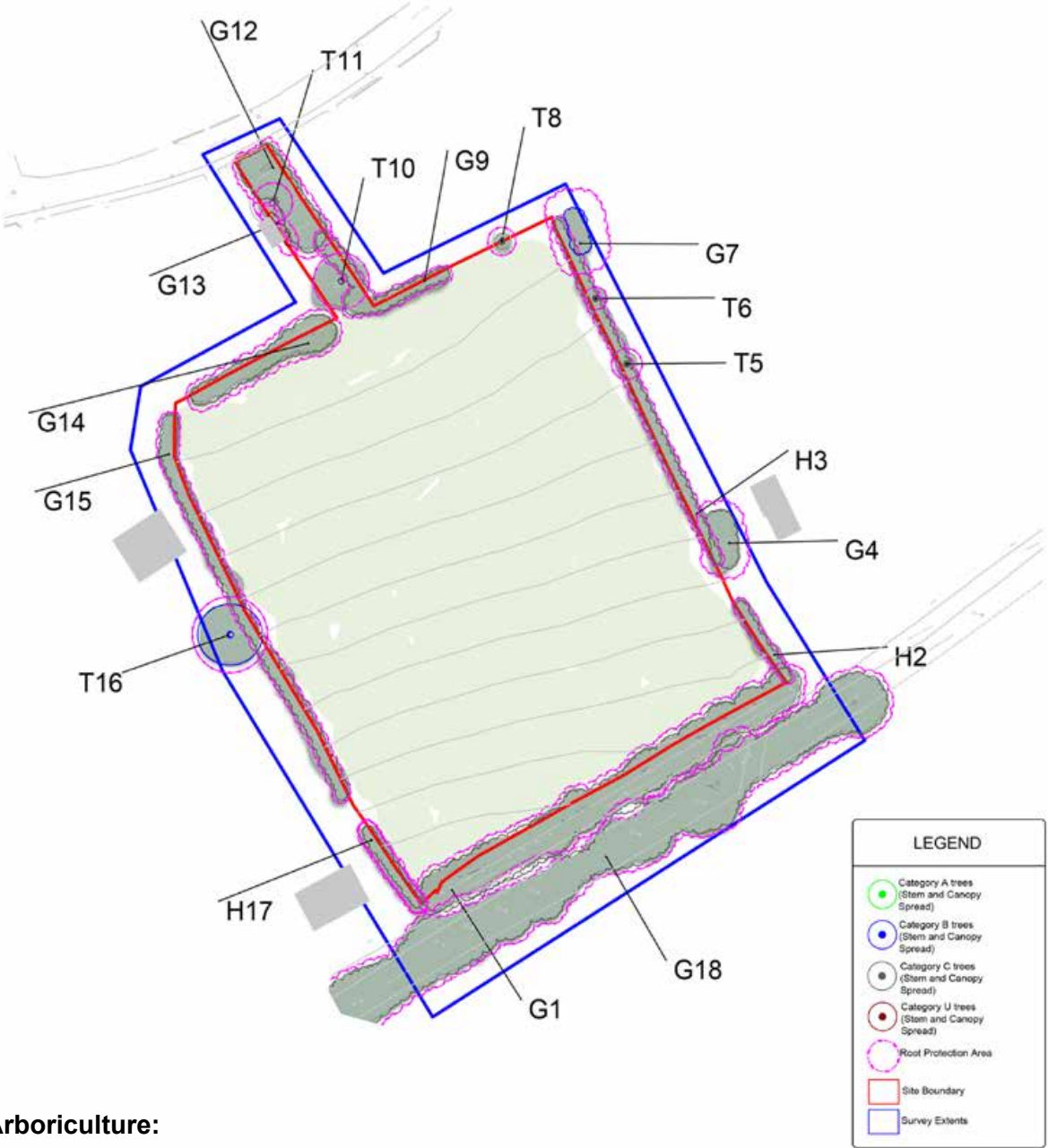
ARBORICULTURAL & ECOLOGICAL



Ecology:

In the ecology statement, by Blackstone Ecology, it is stated that the site is able to create a biodiversity net gain. The site supports only hedgerow priority habitat and has limited potential to support protected species, namely nesting birds and foraging bats. There is minor potential for reptiles, amphibians and Badger to occur within the site.

The proposals will benefit to the sites ecology by introducing more, and a greater variety of habitats for both flora and fauna. The landscape strategy includes large areas of windflower meadows, new tree planting, hedge planting, and a variety of features that allow wildlife to thrive.



Arboriculture:

A tree survey was undertaken at the site in accordance with the guidelines provided in BS5837 (2012) Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction (illustrated left).

The majority of the trees are located at the boundary of the site and are of moderate or low arboricultural quality.

The trees will largely be unaffected though some trees may require removal to provide appropriate visibility for the proposed new access road.

Proposed mitigation planting for any removals will provide a net gain in canopy cover, biodiversity benefit and visual amenity.

An Arboricultural Impact Assessment of the proposal will be completed and submitted as part of the planning application submission. The site is within the Conservation Area, therefore all trees on site are protected.

LANDSCAPE CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Landscape Proposals:

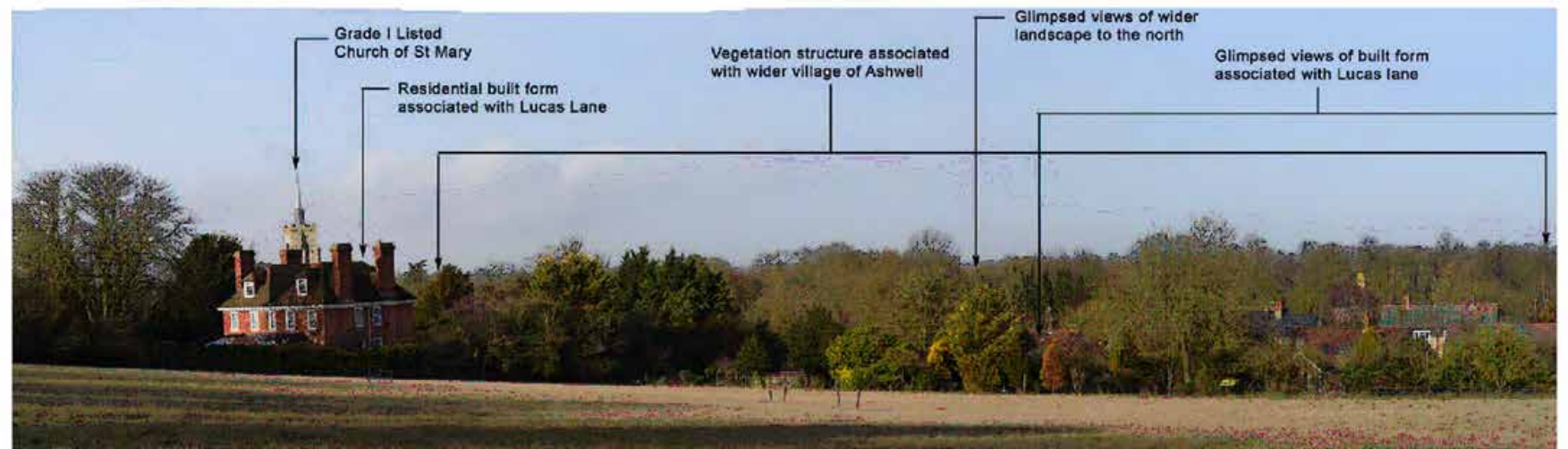
The Landscape Proposals will ensure that the scheme can be successfully integrated into the site context and that an appropriate and high quality landscaped setting is achieved. A detailed landscape strategy will be submitted as part of the planning application with the following principles outlined below ensuring that the proposals relate positively to the character of the site and its setting, and do not appear incongruous when viewed from the wider village setting and the wider landscape context:

Areas of Public Open Space proposed to the north west and southern boundary, to limit the degree of change within views from neighbouring properties and wider landscape to the north;

Proposed placement and design of residential dwellings to preserve, where possible, the existing line of sight that runs north-west to south-east across from the Grade I Listed Church of St Mary;

Retention and enhancement of all existing boundary vegetation, particularly along the Site's northern and western boundary where vegetation cover is weakest, to preserve the degree of visual containment afforded to the Site. KV23 will most likely be retained and provide views towards Lucas Lane and the countryside beyond.

Promote the use of locally native plant species, where appropriate, to ensure that the proposals are in keeping with the character of the Site, its setting and the wider landscape context, and existing mature vegetation within the village of Ashwell.



2

DEVELOPMENT & CONCEPT

This section aims to document the process of using the context and analysis to establish constraints and opportunities on the site, and use them to create a versatile framework plan. This framework is then development into the concluding proposed master plan.



HISTORY

In January 2020, an application was made for 24 dwellings at the site, including creation of vehicular access off Ashwell street, a footpath link to Lucas Lane, associated public open space and landscaping.

The scheme was refused in November 2020 for two primary reasons:

1. *“By reason of the following: the very positive contribution the application site makes to the character and appearance of the Ashwell Conservation Area; the fact that the site represents the last area of land that could be developed along Ashwell Street; the removal of the sole remaining opportunity to experience the village nestled in the so-called ‘river valley’ from the south side of the village and unfettered by development in the fore or mid ground; the impairment of views towards an area to the east of the historic core, the impact upon the high degree of inter-visibility between Townsend House, 5 High Street and the parish church of St Mary the Virgin; and the adverse impact upon the character of the medieval route that is Ashwell Street; it is considered that the proposal would occasion less than substantial harm to the significance of the Ashwell Conservation Area toward the upper end of the continuum such that would outweigh any public benefits associated with the delivery of 24 dwellings”*
2. *“The development would have a detrimental effect on the rural character of Ashwell Street, resulting from the creation of an access onto Ashwell Street with the tree removal and surface upgrading that would be involved. In addition, the setting of the Conservation Area as experienced when viewed from the existing gate on Ashwell Street would be adversely affected by the development. Therefore, the proposed development would not function well or add to the overall quality of the area and would not be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.”*



Previously submitted illustrative masterplan, proposing up to 24 dwellings on the land off Ashwell Street.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Following the refusal of the application, we carried out the following design changes illustrated in the sketches to the right.

Design Changes:

A - Queen Anne House

This impressive property had been considered during the development of the previous master plan. A radius of 20m was to be left unbuilt upon, to ensure the property is not disturbed. This iteration of the proposed master plan has widened the radius of the no-build zone to 50m allowing for even greater protection of the Queen Anne Style home.

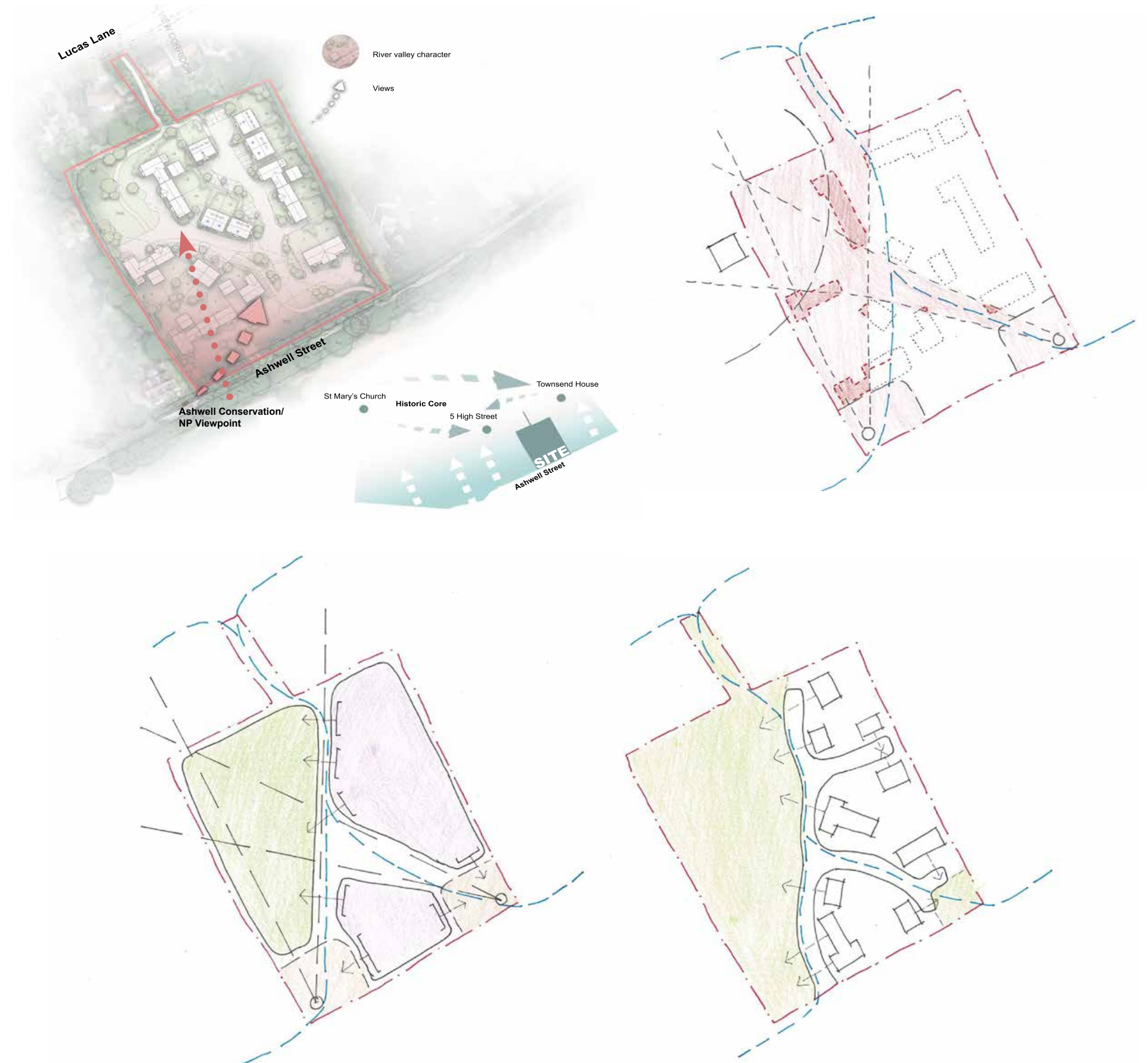
B – POS

The proposed view corridors (D & E) and the no-build zone (B), led the design team to investigate the opportunity to include a larger area of POS. The overlapping view corridors and no-build radius on the adjacent concept sketch bring the rationale of the large POS forward.

The site is currently private land, inaccessible to the public, meaning the opening up of the site with the proposed POS provides a large net gain of public green spaces within Ashwell, benefiting the entire village.

C - Notional Building Line

Due to the inclusion of the large POS, a suitable built-form line would be required to frame the space and create an identity. The notional building line follows curves, as well as descends down the hill (see the following page). The building line creates a clear separation between public and private areas of the scheme.



APPLICATION REFUSAL

In November 2022, we submitted a new application for 14 dwellings (Application ref. 22/03094/FP), an overall reduction of 10 dwellings from the previous application. Although this scheme was refused in January 2024, the principle of residential dwellings was acceptable. This was confirmed by officers at the planning control committee.

Therefore, the key issues will be how the design, scale, and layout impact the character and appearance of the conservation area. The revised scheme will take a completely different approach following the pre-app advice with officers. From traditional housing typology to a farmstead typology to reflect the previous use of the site and semi-rural character of Ashwell Street.

The scheme was refused on the following grounds:

- The application site is seen to make a positive contribution to the appearance and character of Ashwell Conservation Area.

The council state that as the last remaining undeveloped land along Ashwell Street, it is highly valuable in its experience as a village nestled in the 'valley' to the north. In the creation of a new scheme, we should aim to preserve view corridors and maintain the appearance of an undeveloped space.

- The potential impairment of views towards an area to the east of the historic core, and the impact on visibility between Townsend House, 5 High Street and St Mary the Virgin parish church.

The high intervisibility between these areas is of high importance to the character. It is also noted that the council state the scheme would have an adverse impact on the character of the medieval route of Ashwell Street.

- Creation of an access onto Ashwell Street would have



PRECEDENT STUDIES

As part of the scheme redesign, the following precedents were suggested for our consideration by the local authority.

The primary aspiration within the site redesign for this application is to create an inkeeping scheme that mirrors the character of Ashwell Street. These precedents are schemes that have successfully created inkeeping designs and have been approved by the local planning authority.

1. Police Row, Reading

Police Row was a scheme by Woods Hardwick, and this precedent was suggested to us based on the manifestation of courtyards and the traditional layout and elevation design of the houses.

This could be incorporated into the design by creating a more traditional structure to the site plan, with a ‘farmstead’ aesthetic.

2. The Rookery, Hertfordshire

The Rookery is a scheme by Jarvis homes, which also adopts a courtyard structure to the site plan, with sensitive 1.5 storey dwellings. The character shown within the elevations is implemented through careful material application, and use of timber within the facade.

Within our scheme, we should return to assess the material palette, form and roof design of house types to ensure they contribute positively to the character of Ashwell.

Key Features

- Linear site arrangement
- Court yard areas
- Materials and Material hierarchy
- Variety in size and form
- Modest but characterful details
- Fenestration inspired by agricultural architecture

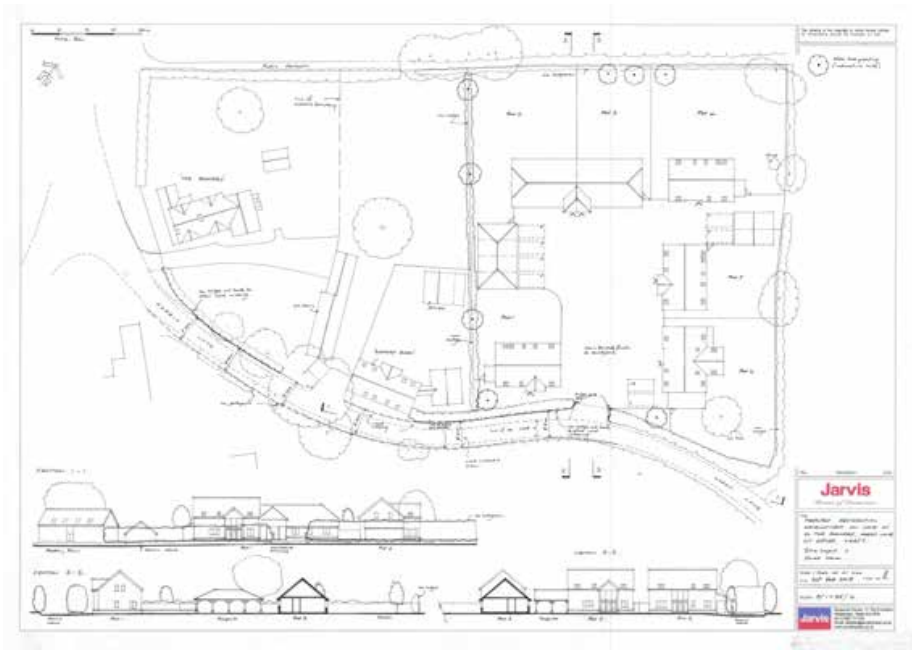
The above elements, along with several more subtle details, create a farmstead type feel within the example sites. This architectural style would be extremely appropriate at Ashwell Street due to the sites agricultural history and the rural village context of today.



Police Row Site Plan



Police Row Example Elevations



The Rookery Site Plan



The Rookery Example Elevations

CHARACTER & FEATURES

The detailing and fenestration of the new properties is of key importance and will define whether the scheme successfully integrates well within the Conservation Area. The design team have invested a lot of time analysing the Ashwell Village Design Statement to ensure that each plot reflects the local character and style of the village, and utilises suitable windows, porches, materials and street furniture.

Clear design cues have been taken from both the Ashwell Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan, and local context, some of which are illustrated on this page. Each plot has been carefully detailed, please refer to the elevational drawings of each plot that accompany the application.

Roofs are traditional pitched with a number of dwellings having chimney stacks, also incorporating scalloped bargeboards. We have investigated the general character of the area as we do not want our development to appear detached from the feel and impression of this. However, we do feel that our scheme is more informal in nature and offers an appropriate termination to development within this location against the open countryside.

One of the defining elements of the scheme was to create a varied and interesting place, with varied frontage depths to each plot, all in accordance with the Village Design Statement.

As the design team's ambition is to portray a farmstead's feel, this means considering the site as a whole. A traditional farmstead would have a variety of building types including barns, sheds, workers' cottages, and owners' farmhouses. In keeping with this idea the site has been divided into style areas. The largest area comprises barn-type structures with a hierarchy of materials. Here the larger, more prominent aspects will be brickwork with large openings, reminiscent of barn doors, and barn-style timber cladding to other parts of the dwellings. The site also contains a small area for workers' cottages. These modest but characterful dwellings will provide variety to the overall scheme, appropriate within the context of both the farmstead concept and Ashwell village. The final area contains the owners' farmhouses. These have been located to provide views to and from them over a large portion of the site. They have also been located at the lowest point of the site, meaning that, whilst they will be a prominent feature within the site, they will not be visually prominent from outside of the site. The architectural style of owners' farmhouses often differs significantly from the rest of traditional farmsteads, so these properties will be designed with an arts and crafts style mentality, taking inspiration from all over Ashwell village.



Sketches & Extracts From Ashwell Village Design Statement



FARMSTEAD LAYOUT CONCEPT



CHARACTER CONCEPT SKETCHES

The sketches on this page demonstrate our response to the perceived character and style of Ashwell.

High quality design in the context of Ashwell is of high importance, and these concept sketches were created for the initial public exhibition in order to describe the character and style of the development to the public. Key features picked out from the Ashwell Village Design Statement have been incorporated and adapted to create a scheme that is inkeeping with Ashwell.

Although these sketches were produced for the previous scheme, the character and style remains relevant, and these design concepts will be retained in the development of the new proposal.



Proposed Character Concept Sketches

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Whilst iterating the site plan for resubmission, we focussed on changing the feel of the layout, to ensure the scheme designed matches the aspirations of the Local Planning Authority whilst responding to the local context.

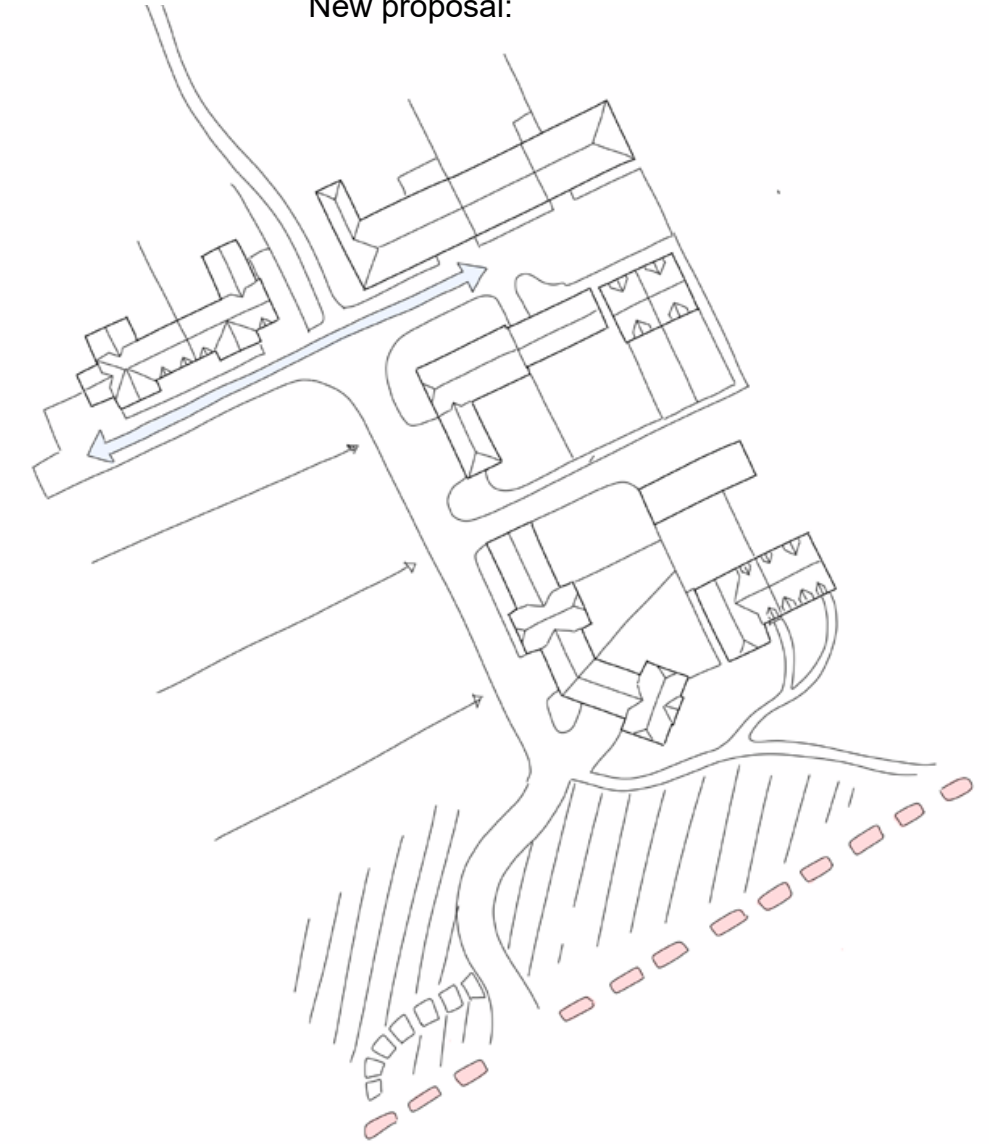
As communicated by the sketches to the right, the key move for maintaining character within the scheme and producing a positive contribution to Ashwell, is by a more traditional urban grain. The scheme aims to achieve this with the farmstead concept. Further to the initial arrangement of character features mentioned on page 28, the site has been laid out in a linear formation, common amongst agricultural developments. The dwellings feature varying roof heights, depths, openings, and materials to represent different buildings on a farmstead that would have different purposes, and therefore, different buildings with different physical characteristics. Roads and paths around the site also lean on the farmstead concept, using shared surfaces and courtyard areas.

Other key steps include a green buffer along the length of the southern site boundary, and increasing the amount of public green space.

Previous proposal:



New proposal:



Sketch site comparisons: the previous proposal (to the left) featured a more organic urban grain, however the new proposal (to the right) features a traditional layout with courtyard style features.

REFUSED SCHEME VS NEW PROPOSAL

Following the development through the document, from the previous scheme, through to the new amendments, this page reflects on the core differences between the most recently refused scheme submitted in November 2022, to the new proposition.

The core strategy driving the design changes is the farmstead concept as influenced by officers in the pre-app advice. This concept paired with the successful elements from the original application such as the new viewpoints towards St Mary's Church, large public open space, viewpoints retained, greenery retained, etc. create a proposal entirely appropriate for the site.

They are broken down into the following categories:

- **Scale**

Whilst the number of dwellings remains at 14, the arrangement of dwellings towards the rear of the site ensures reduces the visual impact of the scheme from Ashwell Street. We have also introduced a number of 1.5 and single storey dwellings to reduce the scale of individual dwellings.

- **Form**

The form of site development ensures that view corridors are preserved. The initial form making is a direct representation of views that are valued by local residents, and ensures the inter-visibility between the wider village and its historic core, are maintained. The form (wider to the south and narrower to the north) also protects the view of the site from the gate on Ashwell Street, that is valued by existing residents.

The creation of bungalows and 1.5 storey dwellings has allowed us to push development further away from Ashwell Street. In addition, responding to feedback from the council we have adopted a more traditional courtyard form to the road structure and dwelling form.



The previous scheme:

- Proposed heavier development towards the south of the site, close to Ashwell Street.
- Had a more organic road structure and arrangement of houses, not reflective of traditional character.

- **Integration**

The protection of key views to historic buildings and the conservation area creates a more seamless integration to the village. One of the key views across the site is from the existing field gate, looking over the site and to the village beyond. The development will not significantly impact these views, but the design of the dwellings, particularly the owners' farmhouses, will create an additional level of interest. The proposals will also open up a new public view from the proposed southeastern pedestrian path across to St Mary's church and the historic core of Ashwell. It ensures that surrounding developments are not encroached upon. The scale of the site also creates a more suitable integration to the side, with the new footpaths to Lucas Lane, and to the South East, connecting the site to surrounding developments.



The revised scheme from initial planning submission:

- Positions dwellings further from Ashwell Street, providing a green buffer along the entirety of the sites boundary to this road.
- Boasts a courtyard structure with traditional road layouts and dwelling arrangement, informed by communications with the local planning authority and precedents Police Row, and The Rookery.

- **Layout**

During the development process, the team investigated alternative access strategies such as creating a new vehicle access point off Lucas Lane, this was deemed unviable, and would significantly impact the residents either side. This leaves access off Ashwell Street into the southwestern edge of the site the most viable and least impactful access option. Overall, the revised layout responds to concerns over the character of the scheme in regard to Ashwell Street. The design team have done this carefully considering the officers' comments received from the pre-app advice and reviewing the precedents suggested.

PROPOSED SITE PLAN

The development of the preceding concept and framework plans conclude with the detailed masterplan of the site. This illustrates mix, parking provision, vehicular and pedestrian networks, open space, and amenity space. The masterplan provides well-designed streets and public open space whilst respecting the site's constraints and utilising the site's opportunities, all of which will contribute significantly to the success of the scheme and integration within the Conservation Area.

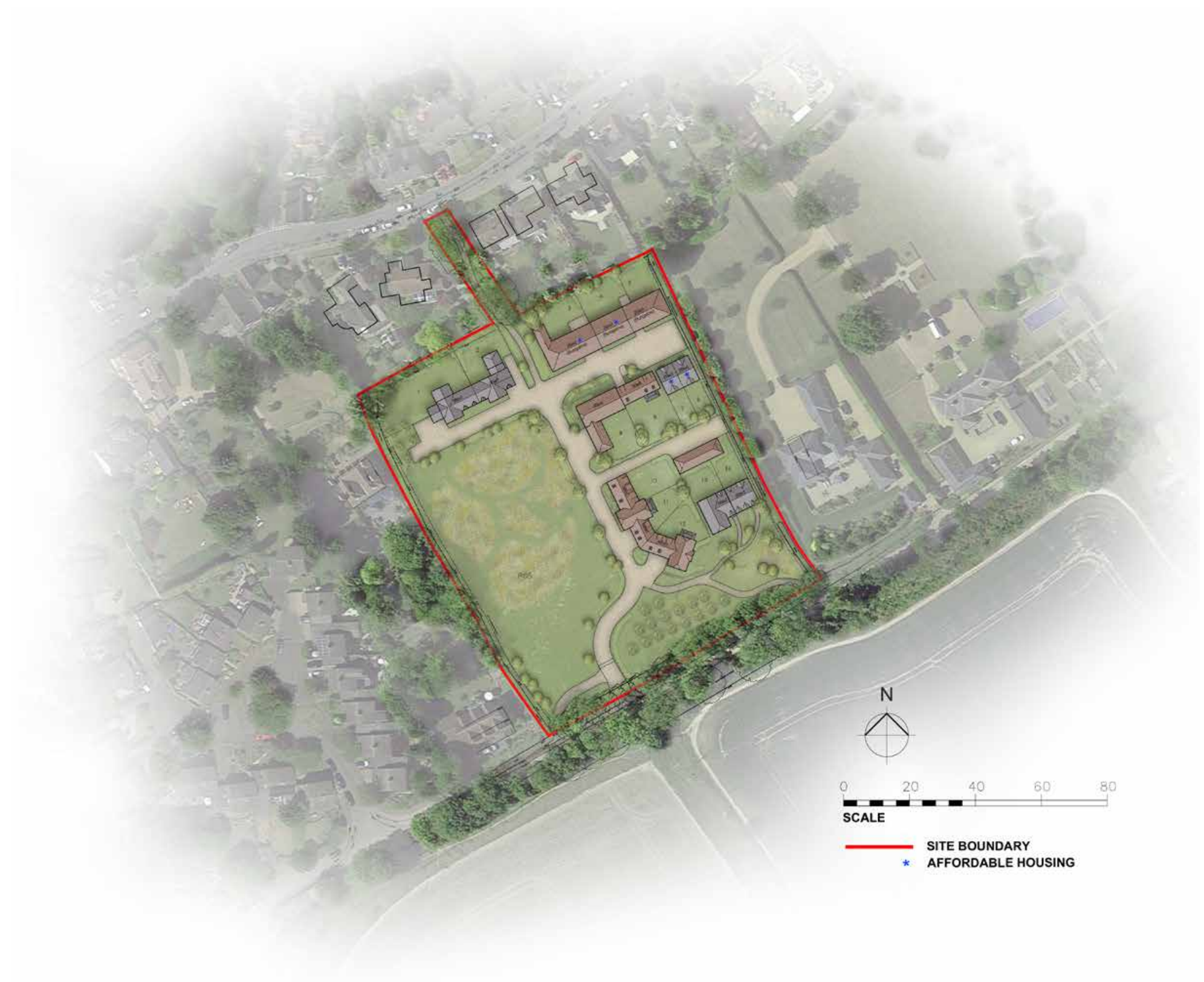
The site features a large green space for the enjoyment of local residents, opening up the site that was previously private land, to the community. The proposed building line creates a backdrop to this space, aesthetically in keeping with the village vernacular, creating a distinctive space.

Mindful of comments from the previous refusal of the proposal, key changes have been made to ensure that the development contributes positively to the character of Ashwell. This includes a more traditional courtyard structure to the urban grain, and pushing built form to the rear of the site, to ensure a green buffer is present for the entirety of the elevation along Ashwell Street.

The orientation of the layout reflects the settlement pattern of Ashwell with views toward St Mary's church tower retained, protected and made publicly accessible as part of the scheme.

The scheme is relatively low density to reflect its rural location. Verges are varied and generous in places, relating to traditional-style houses that front outwards in a traditional village manner.

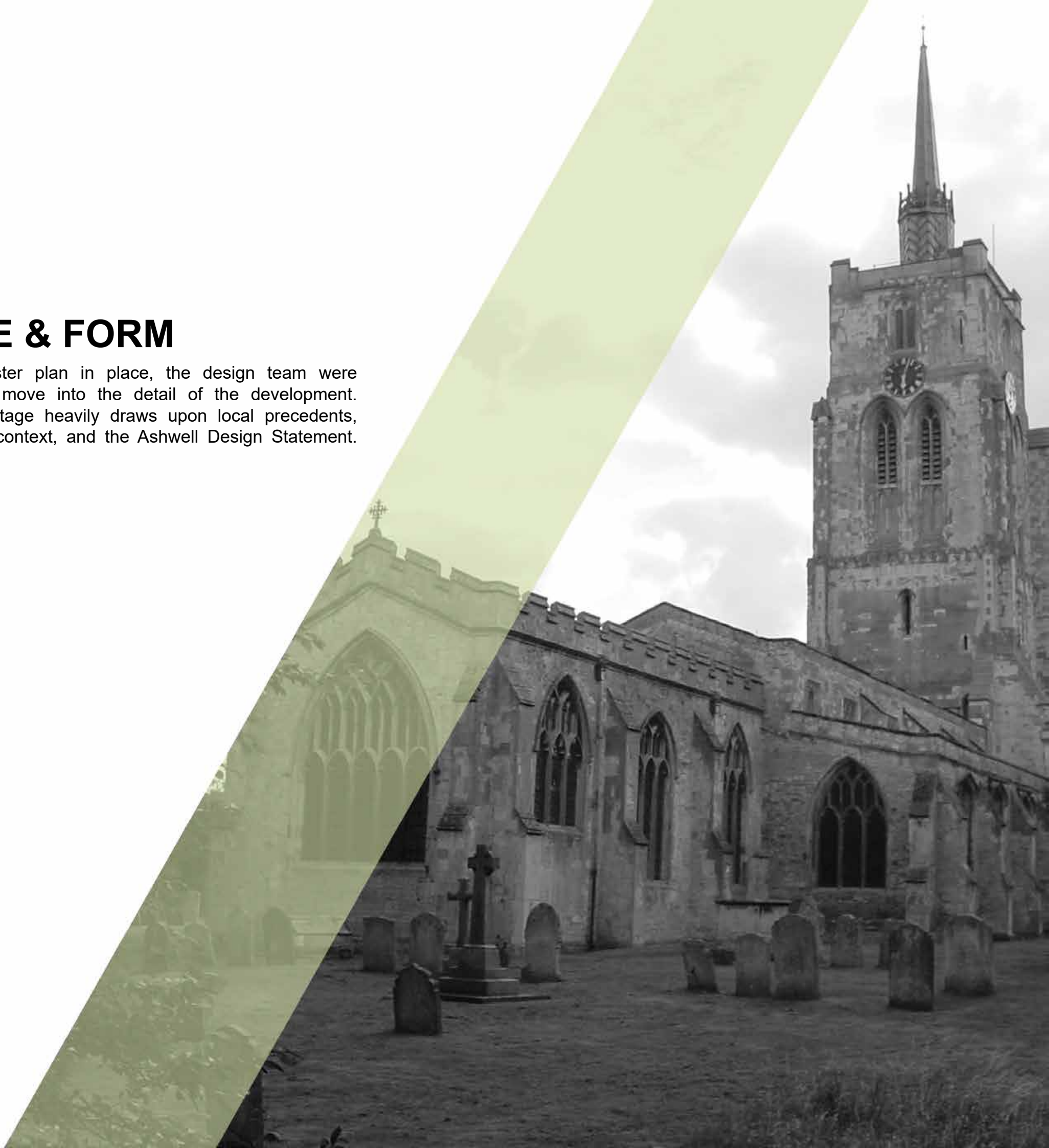
Each area has been specially considered to avoid any residual and unused spaces that may become neglected and encourage anti-social activity. The design of the scheme follows the contextual research carried out as part of our analysis. Key vistas have been recognised with positive termination of views providing interest and variation around the scheme, this includes the use of dual aspect 'corner-turning' plots.



3

SCALE & FORM

With the master plan in place, the design team were then able to move into the detail of the development. This design stage heavily draws upon local precedents, neighbouring context, and the Ashwell Design Statement.



HOUSING MIX

Tenure

Affordable housing has been catered for on site in accordance with policy requirements. There will be a range of house sizes across the site that reflect local need and local development policy. The mix plan diagram indicates the type and location of all affordable properties, including 2-3 bedroom units. 29% of the plot total has been allocated affordable. Housing affordability is a local issue, and Ashwell demonstrates a high need for smaller housing and affordable housing. Currently, average incomes mean that even affordable housing is out of reach, the scheme strives to address this issue.

All affordable units are tenure blind, which means they cannot be identified from the street when read alongside private sale units, please see the accompanying detailed elevations.

On street and forecourt parking will be clearly defined and demarked specifically to each affordable property. The surface treatment will also differ from the road. Forecourt parking has been kept to a minimum, many of the affordable plots have on plot parking alongside the property. There are no rear parking courts.

Scale

Although there are some elements of two-storey gables, most of the dwellings are single or 1.5 storey, to ensure the scheme is sensitive to the area.

The scale of plots 1 & 2 has been carefully considered as they are the bridge between the proposed bungalows to the east and the existing Queen Mary house to the west. The plots have a mix of 2, 1.5 and single-storey elements, in keeping with their arts and crafts-inspired design, which also provides an appropriate visual transition from bungalows to the large Queen Mary house, although, heavily vegetated boundaries will visually separate them at eye level. These plots are at the lowest point on site meaning that whilst they will provide a level of visual interest to the views from the top of the site (southern boundary), they will have a relatively low visual impact on the overall site.

All garages will be single storey. The actual constructed height of each plot will vary due to differing depth of plan and varying pitch, adding to the variety and rural feel to the scheme.



Tenure Plan:

- Affordable Housing
- Market Value



Scale Plan:

- Single Storey
- 1.5 Storey
- 2 Storey

HOUSING MIX

Dwelling Sizes

We have provided a broad mix of house types across the site, many of which are 2 and 3 bedrooms in size, in-line with local housing demand. There are 2x 4-bedroom properties in key locations. The wide typology offered will allow for a varied composition of households creating a diverse and integrated community scheme.

Larger properties form corner plots and entrances to private drives, to aid in wayfinding and reflect the architectural character of Ashwell. Smaller plots are oriented towards site boundaries, where relationships between new and existing development may be of higher sensitivity.



STREET NETWORK

The road network and hierarchy is essential in creating a successful scheme. We propose a mixture of roads and private driveways, with subtle changes in surface and texture to define these. Private driveways successfully terminate roads in an 'un-engineered' manner and provide an informal transition between green space and plot frontage.

The site does contain a number of new footpaths and pedestrian links, with most of the key pedestrian routes set away from the road edge to promote pedestrian safety.

The main site access into the development will be formed to meet highways standards. As part of our site wide strategy and its evolution, the proposed roads will have a hierarchy. The primary roads will offer opportunities for low level planting in places.

Due to the courtyard and traditional structure of the roads, a shared surface will be used throughout the scheme, with subtle colour changes for private parking areas.



Surfaces Plan:

-  Shared Surface (5m min)
-  Pedestrian Only Path (2m min)

MATERIALS: WALLS

The use of materiality is very important for this scheme and will determine how well the proposal will sit in its surroundings. The team have investigated the use of materiality throughout Ashwell village. We have created a diagram to show sketches of our scheme and swatches of materiality use. These also link to examples of the local context, showing how our scheme reflects the local style and character of the village.

These materials will be used across the scheme, which will include;

- Cambridge White Brick
- Farmhouse Red Brick
- Off-white Render
- Timber Boarding

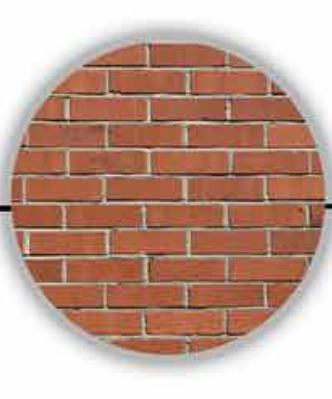
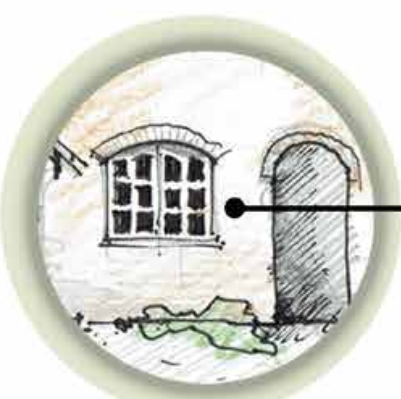


Extract from Page 9 of the Village Design Statement

PROPOSED CONCEPT ELEVATION

MATERIAL SWATCHES

ASHWELL EXISTING MATERIALS



MATERIALS: ROOFING

The team have analysed the Ashwell Design Statement, to make sure the use of roofing materiality reflects the local context. Design cues have been taken from the existing buildings to ensure our scheme does not feel detached from the village.

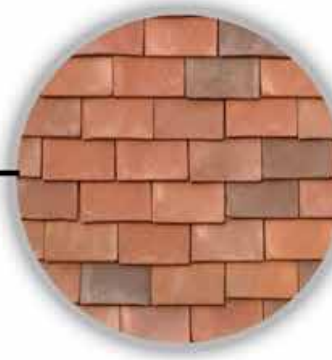
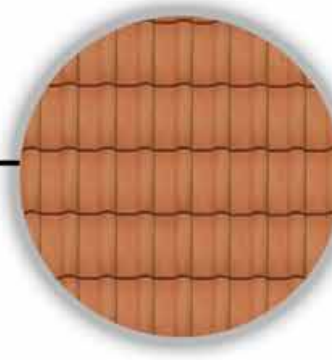
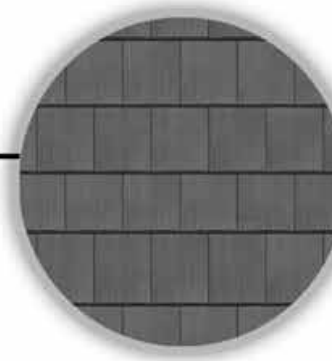


Extract from Page 12 of the Village Design Statement providing examples of roof

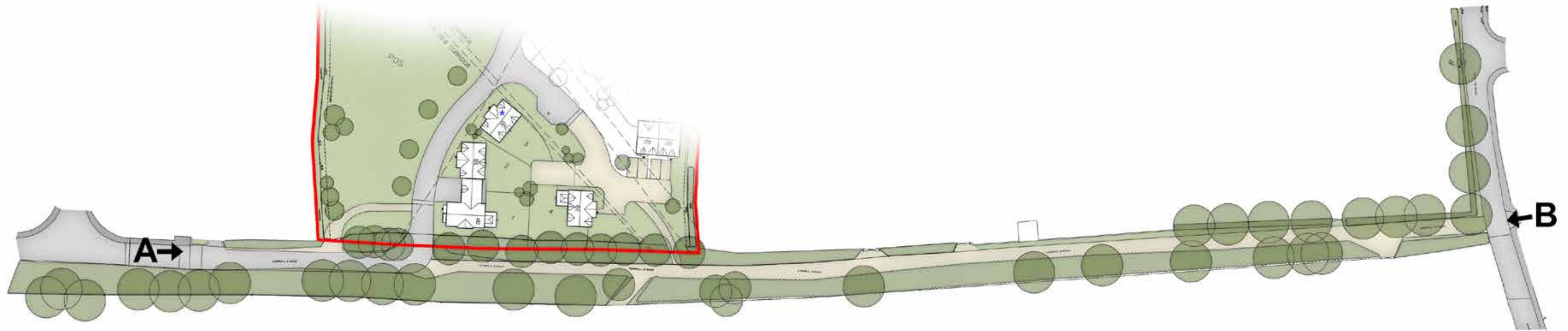
PROPOSED CONCEPT ELEVATION

MATERIAL SWATCHES

ASHWELL EXISTING MATERIALS



MATERIALS: SURFACES



Ashwell Street currently consists of an asphalt road surface to the west and an uneven hardcore track to the east. The proposals will extend the asphalt road by approximately 55m to meet the site access point. The location of the access point has been selected to balance the desire to retain as much green space as possible within the site and to reduce the need to formalise the road surface as much as possible.

The materiality of the proposed asphalt road extension will be matched as closely as possible to the existing road.

The hardcore track to the east of the site access location will see no change and remain publicly accessible. The design of the access road will discourage its use, leaving approximately 265m of this section of the track undisturbed. Visually there will be no change to the view of Ashwell Street from Station Road.



A-Existing View From Ashwell Street
Road surface terminates into hardcore track



B-View From Station Road
Hardcore track to remain



A-View From Ashwell Street
Proposed road to match existing

STREET DESIGN: ELEVATIONS

The detailing and fenestration of the new properties have been carefully considered due to the sensitive location within the Conservation Area. The design team have analysed the Ashwell Village Design Statement to ensure that each plot reflects the local character and style of the village, and utilises suitable windows, porches, materials and street furniture.

Clear design cues have been taken from both the Village Design Statement and local context, as well as local authority feedback. The house types proposed have a much more considered character type. Dormer windows, barn-style elevations and a mix of brick and timber facade treatment have a traditional feel.

The site features a variety of dwellings inspired by different aspects of a traditional farmstead.

Plots 1 & 2

These plots represent the owners' farmhouse. It draws inspiration from the arts and crafts architectural style and is the most elaborate of the designs whilst remaining in keeping with the theme. These plots are a soft focal point of the scheme, with expressive gables looking the green space to the front.

Plots 3-5

These draw inspiration from life-stock barns. The single storey dwellings feature large openings with similar proportions to stable door, ideal for modern windows to allow in plenty of natural light. The material palette contains a sturdy brickwork plinth with traditional timber cladding above. A canopy to the front of the property is supported by thick timber posts providing a rural feel.

Plots 6 & 7 & 13-14

These represent the workers' cottages you would be likely to find on a traditional farmstead. Whilst they feature similar elements to the farmhouse, which would traditional be due to material availability, they are more modest in comparison.

Plots 8-12

The largest number of dwellings, and the first that visitors will see upon entering the site are inspired by agricultural barns. Traditional barns would be built for specific purposes and would therefore not necessary line-up in terms of shape, size or design. The design team have taken inspiration from this to create a series of dwelling with unique character that mixed those traditional building conventions and contemporary ideology. These provide a backdrop to the public open space that clearly represent the farmstead concept and hint at the sites historically context.



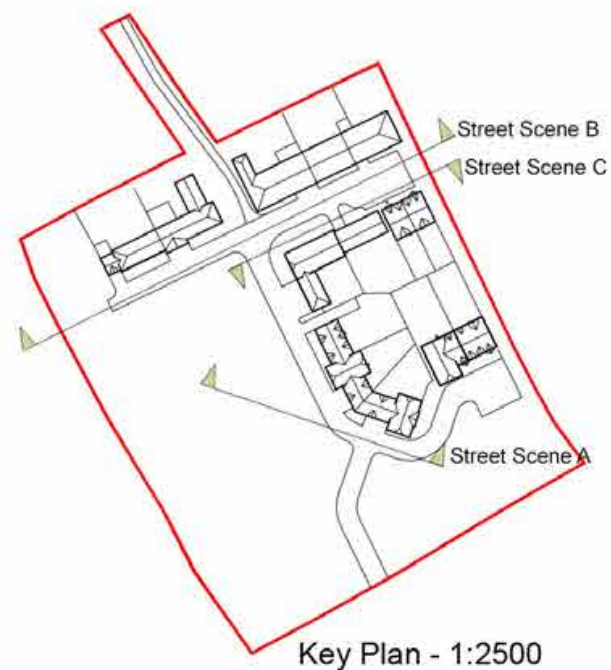
STREET DESIGN: STREET SCENE

The street scene has been designed to incorporate a mix of materials and details inspired by Ashwell's built context. This will enable the development to harmonize with the existing built form of the village.

The development also works with the topography to create place representative of the natural landscape of the village as well as creating a distinctive place.

Key Views

The Key plan shows the key building frontages, that will be particularly visible at important points on the site. Each of these elevations will be designed with active frontages, ensure all public spaces are well surveilled and provide a sense of place.



Street Scene A



Street Scene B



Street Scene C

BOUNDARIES & GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Boundaries

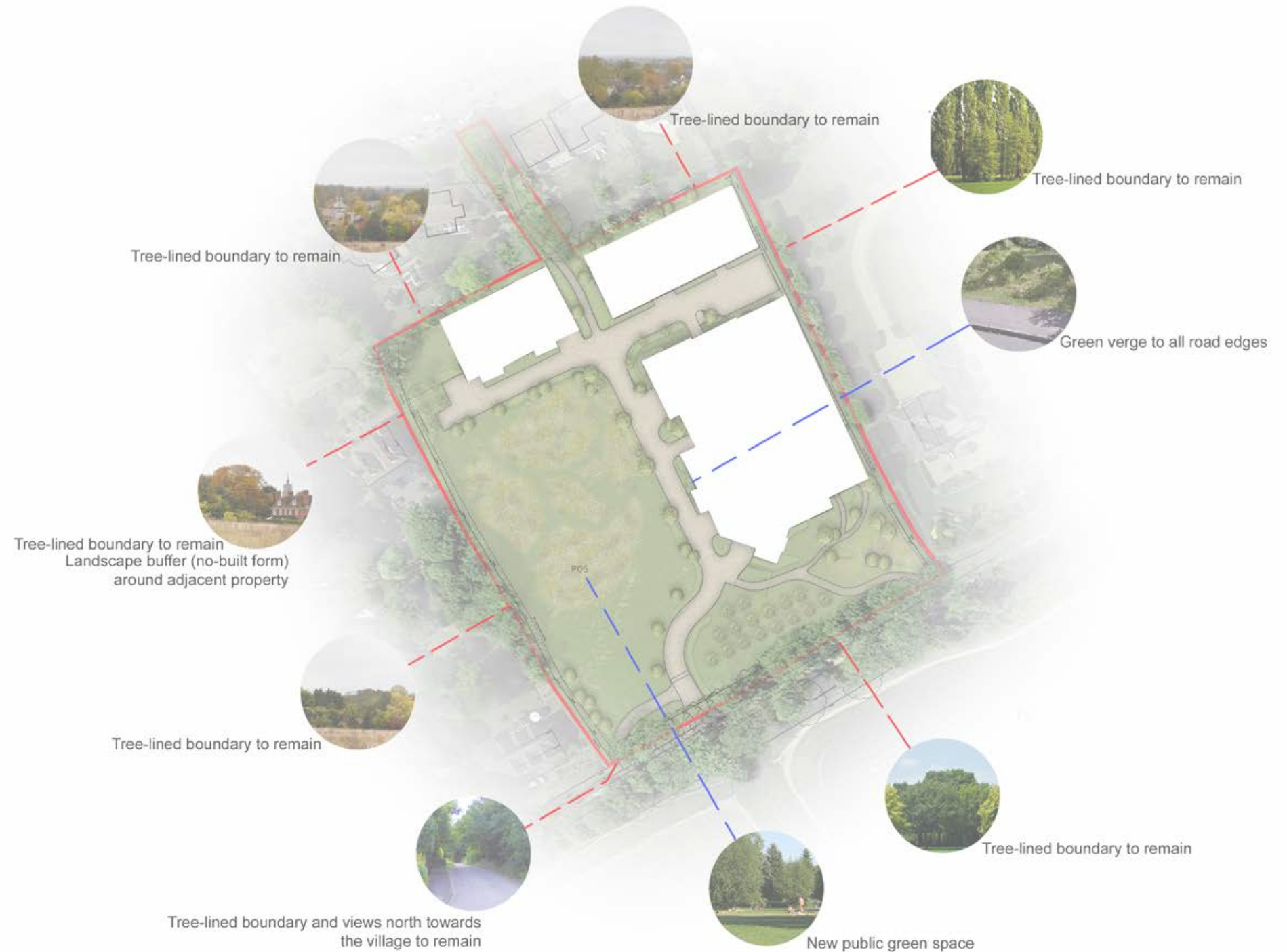
All boundaries to the site are defined by mature vegetation, this is to remain along all boundaries. To ensure this, a buffer zone has been left between each boundary, meaning built form is set back from the boundary, protecting the existing vegetation.

The proposed development will have virtually no impact on any adjacent property or land.

Green Infrastructure

The major green addition is the large POS proposed in the north-west half of the site. The publicly accessible area is approximately 1.4 acres, a welcome addition to Ashwell's network of open green spaces. It comprises a wildflower meadow, open grassland, ornamental fruiting trees and will provide habitats for local wildlife.

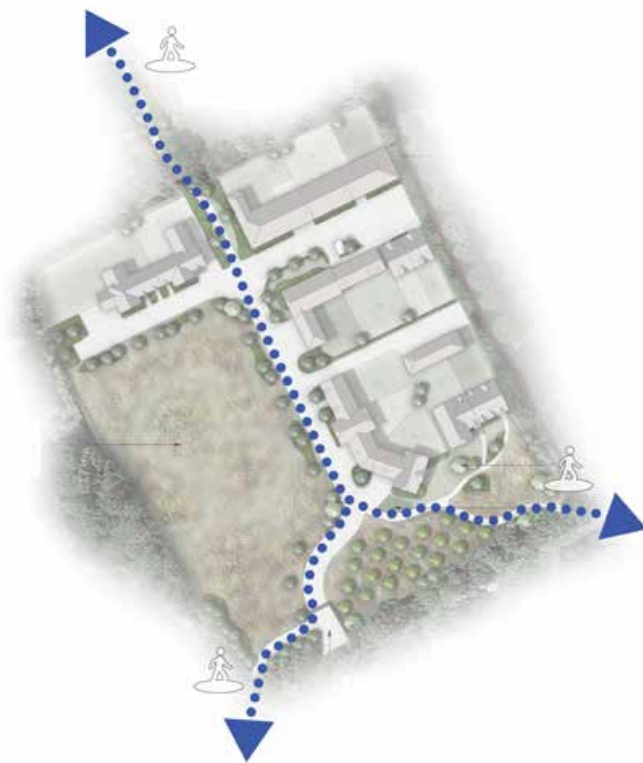
The verge of each road/ path abuts greenery, in the form of either gardens or landscape buffers between public areas and dwellings. Hedges and small trees will usually occupy the landscape buffer.



LANDSCAPE DESIGN

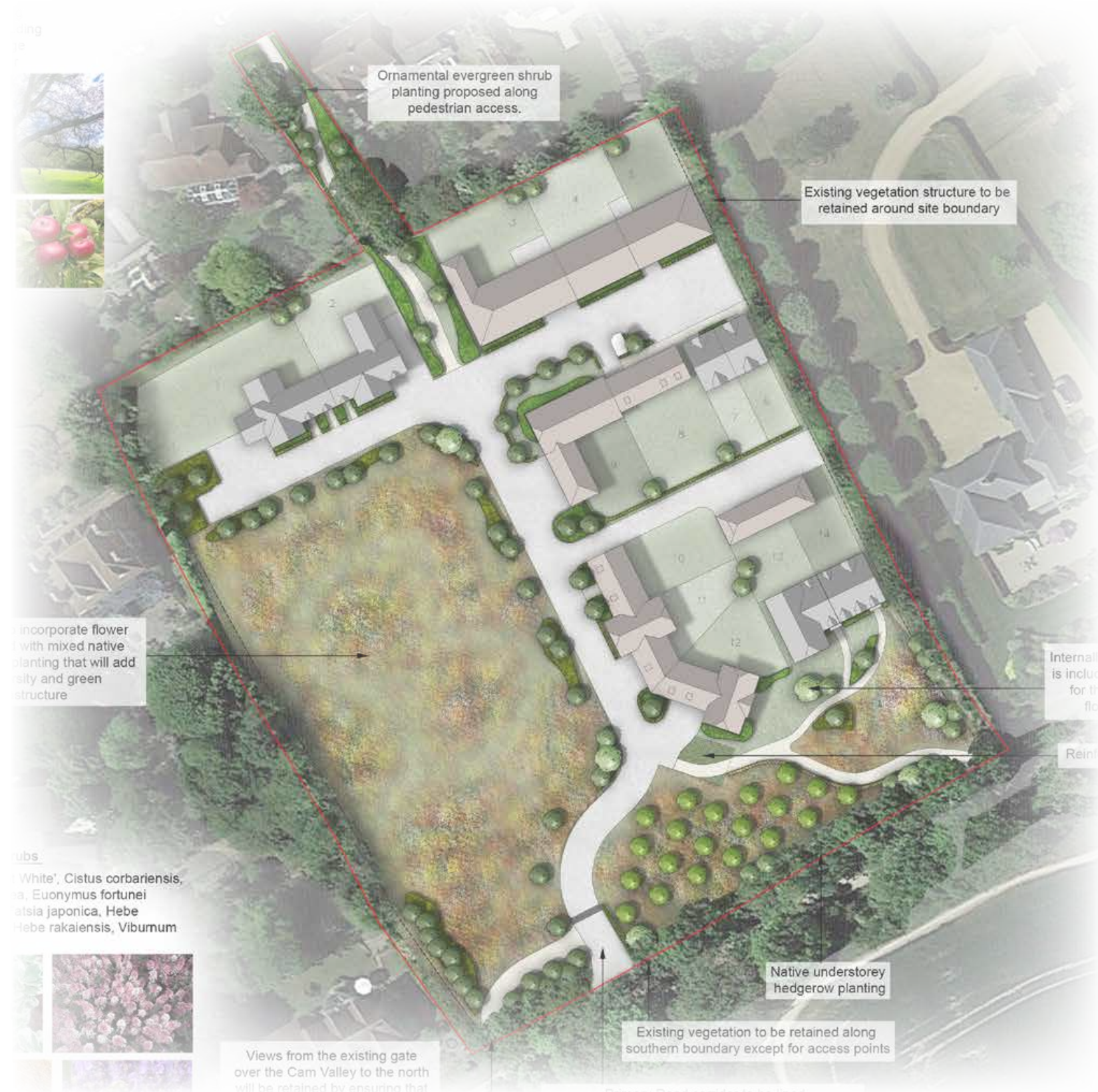
The landscaping strategy has been designed in accordance with the ecologist to demonstrate biodiversity net gain. The plan below shows the proposed layout along with the proposed species. The layout has been designed to complement the site's natural topography, whilst the species have been selected based on relevant native species to the area.

For details see: *Landscape Strategy Plan - 7615.LSP.03A* provided by Aspect Landscape Planning.



Pedestrian Movement

The layout enables easy pedestrian movement between Ashwell Street and Lucas Lane. Creating good pedestrian links is key to reducing vehicular traffic around residential areas as well as bringing life to the streets. Pedestrian routes have been designed to naturally blend into the site by using the same surfacing material as the road, as would be common on farmsteads, and by designing the paving to meander around existing and proposed landscape features.



WIDER CONTEXT

IMPACT

Built Form Boundary

Ashwell village's current settlement pattern provides an indication of the history of the growth of the village. There has been residential development on agricultural land throughout the village over the decades. Houses in the centre are located more closely together whereas away from the centre the houses are set back from the street to a varying degree.

The application site has been incorporated into the settlement boundary as part of the new Local Plan. It sits comfortably within the part of the village that is characterised by the growing development pattern. The continuing built form eastwards is in keeping with the evolving settlement and permitted planning applications.

As illustrated on the adjacent plan the proposed development of the site fills in gaps within the existing settlement pattern, rather than adding offshoots to the built form boundary.

Open spaces/ Public areas

The site is in private ownership and so is not currently accessible to the public. The proposal will create an extensive area of POS which will be available for public use and create a pedestrian link between Lucas Lane and Ashwell Street.

The site comprises approximately 50% POS (0.65 hectares of 1.18) that will be appropriately landscaped to allow for a biodiversity net gain, and public enjoyment on the previously un-accessible land.



4

ACCESS & SECURE BY DESIGN

A well designed place should include comprehensive strategies for issues such as access, crime prevention, waste collection, ect. The following section sets out plans for such issues.



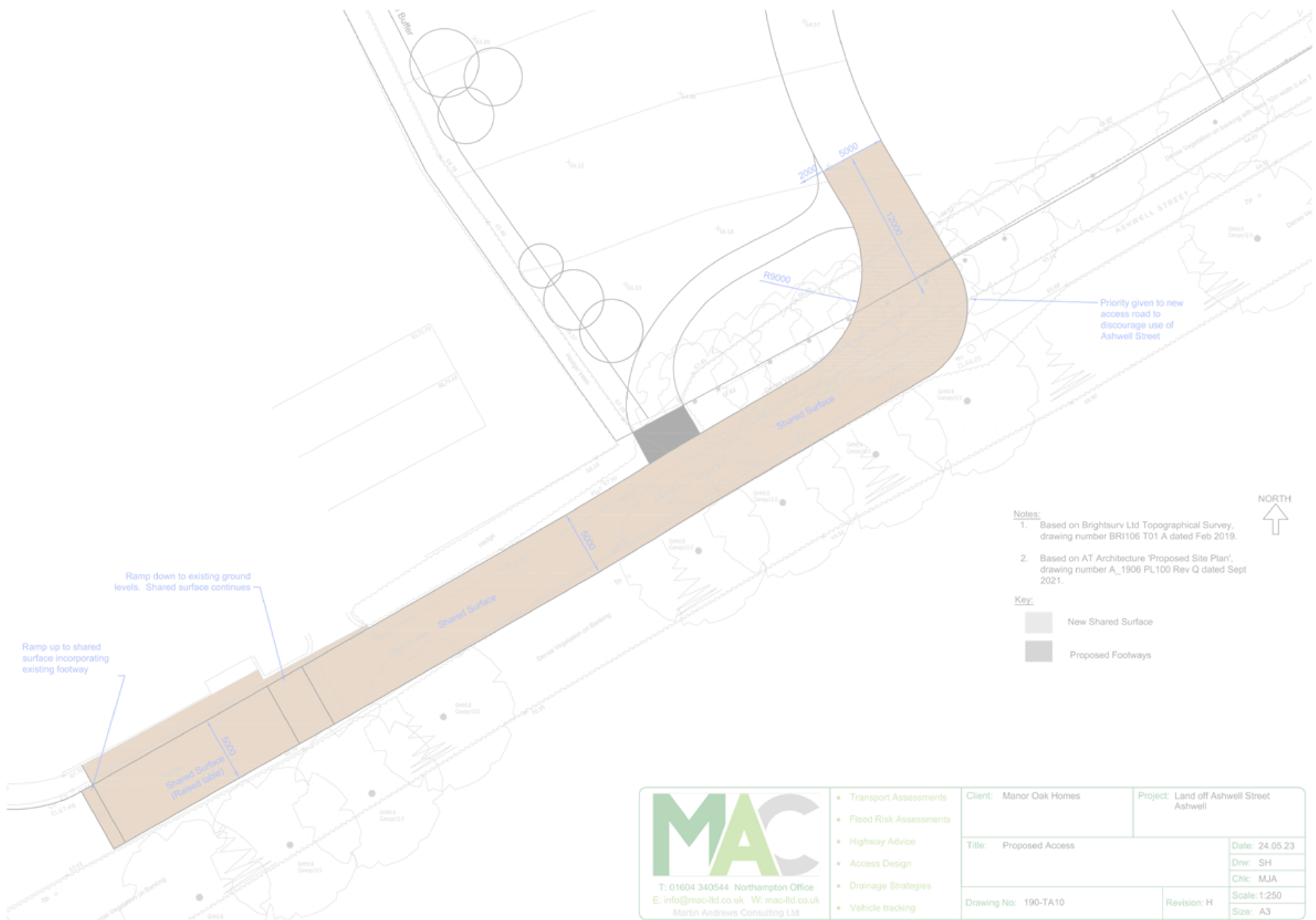
ACCESS STATEMENT: CONNECTIONS

The proposed highway improvements and access were considered acceptable to the Highways Authority in the previous scheme.

Pedestrian and cycle access points are located to the north of the site leading to Lucas Lane, and in both eastern and western corners leading onto Ashwell Street. The three access points provide good connectivity with the facilities within the centre of Ashwell. Pedestrian/ cycle paths will have a minimum width of 2m, allowing ample room for passing cyclists.

The vehicular access will be provided off Ashwell Street in the southwest corner of the site. A raised table will provide a transition from the existing traditional carriageway to a proposed shared surface with a minimum width of 5m.

The proposed development will not have a significant adverse impact on the highway network.



ACCESS STATEMENT: PARKING STRATEGY

Parking :

The scheme provides parking in accordance with current standards. Many of the properties have private garages along with space in front to park.

Best practice principles recognises that the location of parking is fundamental to good design, whilst balancing practicality and avoiding casual parking along the street. Every plot has 2 allocated parking spaces. Garages provide an additional parking space to each private dwelling and covered bicycle storage. Plots without garages will have secured covered bicycle storage within the garden.

There is a hierarchy of parking in place, dependent primarily on the size of the dwelling. Most vehicular parking is located on plot alongside the dwelling it serves. In a few occurrences, on plot parking located at the front is utilised for smaller dwellings. All parking is well surveyed and does not dominate the street scene or setting. This is fundamental to achieving an exceptional design standard across the scheme in accordance with aspirations derived from Village Design Guide and what would be expected within the Conservation Area.

EV Charging :

Each plot has an associated charging electric vehicle charging point. These are located directly adjacent to parking spaces, and where possible, are located on the dwelling's external wall for simpler connections.

For more details see plan: A2133_PL300



INCLUSIVITY

Fully inclusive access to all areas will be available to everyone, regardless of ability. All dwellings will have level thresholds and comply with the necessary Building Regulations requirements for access. A lot of the properties have been designed to allow easy conversion to meet Lifetime Homes standards. 29% of the properties will be allocated 'affordable' to allow a diverse spread of new residents. The scheme's focus on accessible homes is a direct reflection of the ageing population in Ashwell, where a high number of residents are within the two oldest age brackets (45 to 64 and 65+).

The proposed development is located in a sustainable location, which is within an acceptable walking and cycling distance of an array of local facilities and amenities. Any proposed new roads within the development will be constructed to the local council's adoptable standards, (even if they do not get transferred) allowing emergency vehicles and refuse vehicles access to all dwellings. The proposed scheme includes a mixture of new public accessible open areas for the enjoyment of residents and visitors. These areas of fully accessible and connected via hard-standing footpaths.

Policy M4 (1)

This is a mandatory standard, and as such, all properties have been designed to meet all M4(1) requirements.

'M4 (1) will be met when a new dwelling makes reasonable provision for most people, including wheelchair users, to approach and enter the dwelling and access habitable rooms and sanitary facilities on the entrance storey.'

Policy M4 (2)

This is an optional standard within the building regulation, however, within the emerging Local Plan policy, HS5 suggests 50% of all new properties meet this standard. The team has designed 50% (7 homes) to meet the standards.

'allow simple adaptation of the dwelling to meet the needs of occupants who use wheelchairs'



Policy M4 (3)

This is also an optional standard within the building regulations and the requirements for meeting this standard within the local plan aren't applicable to these proposals. However, the team has designed 14% (2 homes) to meet this standard.

'M4(3) will be met where a new dwelling makes a reasonable provision, either at completion or at a point following completion, for a wheelchair user to live in the dwelling and use any associated private outdoor space, parking, and communal facilities that may be provided for the use of the occupants.'

The emerging Local plan, which is in an advanced state, states in policy HS5 that;

"Planning permission for major residential development will be granted where:

- a. Applicants demonstrate that at least 50% of homes can be built to the M4(2) Accessible and Adaptable standard; and
- b. On schemes where 10 or more affordable units will be delivered, 10% of these can additionally be built to the M4(3) wheelchair user standard."

Furthermore, Paragraph 8.33 states:

"Requiring 50% of new homes on major residential schemes to meet the intermediate standard will make a positive contribution to future needs as the population ages. This requirement should be applied across both market and affordable homes."

Accommodation Plan

- M4 (1) Visitable Dwellings
- M4 (2) Accessible & Adaptable Dwellings
- M3 (3) Wheelchair User Dwellings

SECURED BY DESIGN

Established in 1989, Secured by Design (SBD) is owned by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and is the corporate title for a group of national police projects focusing on the design and security for new & refurbished homes, commercial premises and car parks as well as the acknowledgement of quality security products and crime prevention projects.

The proposal has been designed to accord with 'Secured By Design' principles. This is demonstrated by the following SBD titles:

Access & Movement – Gardens to houses are generally arranged to abut each other, providing continuity of landscape and habitat. Front doors are generally overlooked via a number of different means to ensure all connections are adequately surveyed.

Parking is provided close to the dwellings that it serves within the curtilage of the properties. Highways and pedestrian routes are integrated to provide ease and safety of movement whilst maintaining legibility through the site.

All routes and passageways are naturally surveyed. There are no dead ends or dark corners that may encourage anti-social activity.

Surveillance – Dwellings are orientated to overlook highways and footpaths so that all round surveillance is provided. Green spaces are over-looked by several properties and are designed in a way not to create secluded areas created by excessive or over planting.

Structure – Houses are spaced to ensure privacy and amenity is respected. Green spaces are of useful size and layout to be used for play and recreation. They are clearly defined by footpaths and roads and are heavily surveyed. Property frontages are landscaped in a way that the threshold from public to private is obvious, whilst maintaining an uncluttered street scene.

Activity – The proposal is for a residential development with no conflicting uses, appropriate to this area of Ashwell. Pedestrian routes are provided and enhanced across the site that provide links into existing residential areas and the new areas of Public Open Space which are all well surveyed.

Ownership – Affordable houses are distributed within a policy compliant cluster which will be tenure blind in appearance. As mentioned previously, boundaries to properties are clearly defined using specific low level landscape features to ensure a sense of ownership and security, without blocking views or providing secluded frontages.

The green spaces have been designed of low maintenance landscaping, including grass and native trees. If the public greens spaces are well maintained, there is less likelihood of vandalism or anti-social behaviour taking place.



Building for a healthy life:

A new design toolkit is also becoming used more frequently in the design of new developments. This design tool has also been used to create places that are better for people, and for nature.

The 12 points that fit into 3 categories: integrated neighbourhoods, distinctive places, and streets for all, have been used throughout the design process, and the proposal has been designed to accord with all Building for a Healthy Life principles.

The development design rejects a car dominated street, and prioritises ownership, carefully curated surveillance and structure to the roads. Affordable homes are tenure blind and arranged in policy compliant clusters, to ensure that overall we can achieve the 'homes for everyone' principal.

14	INTEGRATED NEIGHBOURHOODS
	Natural connections
	Walking, cycling and public transport
	Facilities and services
	Homes for everyone

62	STREETS FOR ALL
	Healthy streets
	Cycle and car parking
	Green and blue infrastructure
	Back of pavement, front of home

38	DISTINCTIVE PLACES
	Making the most of what's there
	A memorable character
	Well defined streets and spaces
	Easy to find your way around

5

CONCLUSION

The final section of this document subs up the project by comparing the proposed scheme with the check list provided in the Ashwell village design statement, and a summary statement.

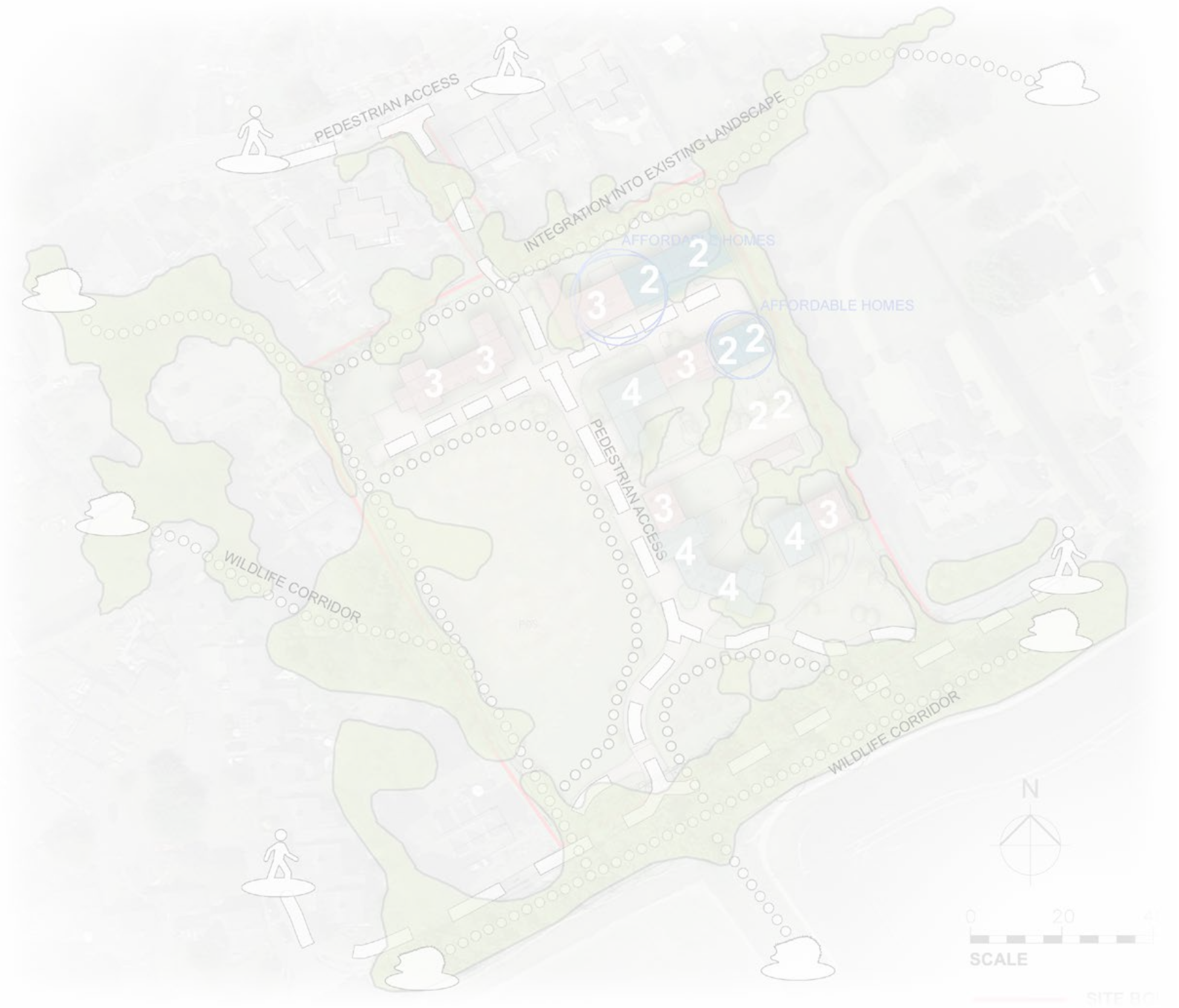


CHECKLIST: LAYOUT

The layout has been designed in response to both the local context and the 'Ashwell Village Design Statement'. The adjacent diagram shows specific aspects of the design that relate to key points set out within the design statement's checklist for large development layouts.

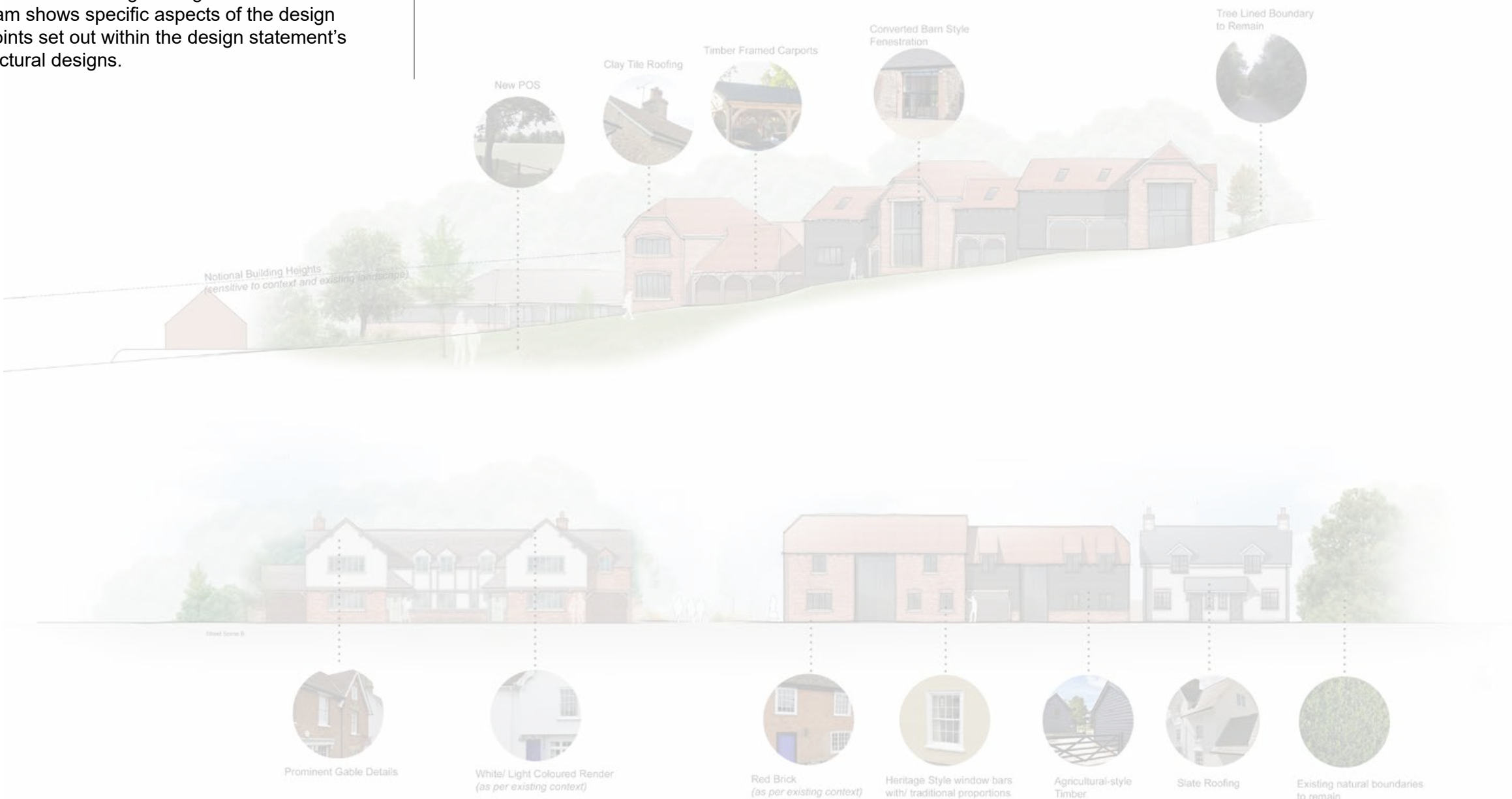
A successful scheme should:

- Blend in with the landscape ☒
- Make allowance for local wildlife ☒
- Enhance the social mix ☒
- Strengthen Ashwell as a working community ☒
- Respect the traditional settlement pattern of the village ☒
- Blend in the surroundings in terms of scale, density, character, and building, materials. ☒
- Provide additional open space ☒
- Provide new or preserve existing vistas into, out of the village ☒
- Encourage pedestrian access and link in with existing footpaths ☒
- Include high-quality street furniture which is appropriate for its settings. ☒
- Develop within the settlement boundary ☒
- Have a housing mix that responds to local housing need ☒
- Enhance biodiversity (10% net gain) ☒



CHECKLIST: DESIGN

The architecture has been designed in response to both the local context and the 'Ashwell Village Design Statement'. The adjacent diagram shows specific aspects of the design that relate to key points set out within the design statement's checklist for architectural designs.



Is its position and size In keeping with neighbouring buildings?



Is the roof and pitch appropriate for the area and the style of building?



Are the construction materials in common use in Ashwell and is their colour appropriate?



Are the type of windows to be used appropriate for the building and the area, and is the size and proportions in keeping with the historic norm?



Are the parking arrangements sufficiently inconspicuous so that, for example, the garage does not dominate the frontage?



Will there be sufficient storage to allow the garage to be used for its proper purpose and avoid on-street parking?



Are you retaining all existing hedgerows and native trees?



Will what you are proposing to harmonize with the existing buildings and make a positive contribution to the character of the area?



CONCLUSION

This statement demonstrates that this scheme has been designed with clear acknowledgment of the requirements and guidance contained within the Ashwell Conservation Area Character Statement, Ashwell Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan, and advice received during the pre-application process with the Local Planning Authority. Further to this, architectural styling, parking standards, amenity space and vehicular impact have been fundamentally considered during the design process.

The development will bring forward much needed affordable family housing and starter homes to the area supporting social and economic aspiration for the area. The site also delivers ecological enhancements and open communal areas and new walking routes for the enjoyment of new and existing residents. Ashwell enjoys good transport links and has outstanding local amenities within a short distance of the site.

The scheme reflects the local character, is low in density, and meets all relevant policy requirements. The impact within the Conservation Area is mitigated by sensitive design and a delicate touch on the landscape. All plot detailing and the general layout has thoroughly acknowledged the feedback and guidance received throughout the design process resulting in an exemplar scheme within the Ashwell Conservation Area.

This document clearly showcases significant development of the scheme taking into consideration comments and feedback from a variety of sources. Since the initial proposal, we have reconsidered the needs of the village and redesigned the scheme to preserve the view corridors, and a large portion of the Conservation Area as public open space. The development now responds sensitively, and reflects the need, density and layout of Ashwell. Through character concept sketches, it is showcased that the preservation and enhancement of architectural style and character within Ashwell is prioritised.

The final proposals have been developed in conjunction with pre-application advice from officers.

Overall, the scheme demonstrates an excellent understanding, and sympathetic response to Ashwell's context, history and future development visions. We therefore respectfully request that planning permission be granted.

