

Land West of School Lane, Higham

Design & Access Statement

July 2026



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1. PURPOSE OF THIS STATEMENT

- 1.1.1 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by DHA Planning on behalf of M Scott Properties Ltd in support of an outline planning application (all matters reserved except access) for residential development on Land West of School Lane, Higham.
- 1.1.2 The purpose of this design and access statement is to set out the rationale behind the design proposal and how it responds to the detailed site and context assessments undertaken. The statement sets out the following:
- Proposed Use and Amount
 - Layout
 - Scale
 - Landscaping
 - Appearance
 - Access
- 1.1.3 A series of outline parameter plans are submitted alongside an indicative masterplan and proving layout. These plans define the proposed extent of built development, areas of landscaping and open space, and the access arrangements for the site.
- 1.1.4 This document is to be read alongside the supporting planning documents and application plan pack.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.2.1 An outline application for residential development of a 2.8 hectare parcel of land West of School Lane, Higham is being submitted by M Scott Properties Ltd to Gravesham Borough Council for determination.
- 1.2.2 The outline application seeks permission for the development of up to 46 residential dwellings (including affordable housing), vehicular access road from School Lane, internal roads, car parking, landscaping, public open space, and other associated works and infrastructure. All matters to be reserved with the exception of the main site access.
- 1.2.3 An outline parameter plan pack, outline indicative masterplan and proving layout have been prepared and support this Design and Access Statement. The indicative layout presented by this document has been arrived at following a thorough site and context assessment of opportunities and constraints and third party technical input from the project team.
- 1.2.4 The outline masterplan puts forward a scheme of up to 46 residential units comprising 1,2,3 and 4 bed homes with 50% of units allocated as affordable.
- 1.2.5 Approximately 1.4 ha of the 2.8 ha site is dedicated to landscape and open space and located in collaboration with heritage and landscape consultants to mitigate any impacts. In accordance with standards, this has been broken down into natural and semi-natural green space, amenity space, recreation and informal play. An equipped area of play and informal play together with enhanced natural and semi-natural spaces for Biodiversity Net Gain are provided.
- 1.2.6 The site currently has an on-site baseline value of 6.12 habitat units. The new habitat areas proposed would achieve the minimum requirement of 10% for biodiversity net gain. No offsite habitat units would be required.
- 1.2.7 A new single vehicle access has been provided via School Lane with the existing public right of way incorporated maintaining a pedestrian and cycle link between Taylors Lane and School Lane.
- 1.2.8 A public consultation was held in January and amendments made as a result. Pre-application discussions have been held with officers at Gravesham Borough Council throughout. These discussions have shaped the evolution of the scheme submitted.



ADDRESSING HOUSING SHORTAGE

The proposal seeks permission in outline for up to 46 residential units. The scheme presents a significant opportunity to provide a number of houses in the area and widen the range and choice of homes within the village.



AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Provision of 50% high quality affordable housing to meet the needs of the local community.



DOWNSIZING

The smaller units proposed on site will free up under-occupied family housing in the area.



GREEN SPACES

Approximately 1.4ha of the 2.8ha site will be open space.



PLAY AREA

The new formal play area will promote the social cohesion between new and existing residents.



BIODIVERSITY

Opportunity to enhance biodiversity through the addition of new green infrastructure. Boundary planting improvement and creation of landscape buffers. The scheme results in a 10% net gain in biodiversity.



SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

Higham rail station is a 1.1 kilometre walk distance from the site (14 minute walk time) and operates services every 30 minutes to London Charing Cross.



DIRECT EMPLOYMENT

The development will directly support the jobs linked with the construction of the site.



SUPPORT LOCAL JOBS

New residents will increase spending the local area thus supporting jobs within the community.



COUNCIL REVENUE

Additional Council Tax revenues will be created from the new properties.



SECTION 106 PAYMENTS

S106 contributions to be used for local infrastructure and indentified mitigation.



FIRST OCCUPATION EXPENDITURE

Additional expenditure on goods and services to make a house feel like a home. A proportion of this would be captured locally.



COMMUNITY SPENDING

The scheme presents an opportunity to attract new spending power in the local area to enhance the vitality of local shops and services.

2.0 SITE ASSESSMENT

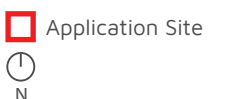
2.0 SITE ASSESSMENT

2.1 Site Location

- 2.1.1 The application red line extends to approximately **2.8 hectares** and comprises an existing agricultural field.
- 2.1.2 The application Site is located entirely within the administrative boundaries of Gravesham Borough Council. It lies outside, but immediately adjacent to, the current development boundary for Higham and accordingly is considered to fall within the countryside and Green Belt in the context of the Council's adopted Proposals Map (September 2014).
- 2.1.3 The Site has been brought forward within the emerging Gravesham Local Plan: Local Plan core strategy partial review and site allocation October 2020. The Site is referenced under GBS-W as seen in figure 2.
- 2.1.4 To the east, the Site is bordered by School Lane. To the immediate south lie residential properties. To the west, the Site is bounded by Taylors Lane, beyond which lies further residential development to the south-west and open countryside to the north-west. To the north, the Site is enclosed by a dense belt of vegetation, beyond which is the Knowle Country House wedding venue.
- 2.1.5 Access on foot is achievable along the eastern boundary via School Lane and along the western boundary along Taylors Lane via the public right of way. This restricted byway (Reference: NS153) runs across the site centrally before dog legging south. It connects the eastern and western boundaries of the site and is to be maintained.
- 2.1.6 The Site is not subject of any specific landscape or environmental designations, being outside of any National Landscape or National Park. It is located within the Higham Arable Farmlands Character Area.
- 2.1.7 Two Grade II Listed Buildings are within 400 metres of the Site, which includes 'Firtrees' and 'Church of St John, Higham Upshire'.
- 2.1.8 The Site lies wholly within Flood Zone 1 (for present day and 2070 – 2125) and is therefore at the lowest risk of fluvial flooding. With regard to surface water flooding, it is noted that there is an isolated parcel along the southern Site boundary (at the 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000), which would not constrain the development of the Site.



Figure 1 - Site Location (wider context)



2.1.9 The existing footway on the western side of School Lane provides a continuous route to Higham Railway Station, located approximately 1.1km to the north of the site (representing a 14-minute walk or four-minute cycle time). The station is provided with 14 cycle parking spaces and is served by regular Thameslink train services between the Medway Towns and Luton, via Gravesend, Dartford, London Bridge and London St Pancras at a frequency of up to three services per hour in each direction. The site is afforded convenient road links via the A226 to Gravesend, Rochester, and the wider Medway area.



Figure 2 - Site allocation under emerging local plan



Figure 3 - Site Location

Application Site
N

2.0 SITE ASSESSMENT

2.2 Higham Village

- 2.2.1 The two parts of Higham are often referred to as Lower Higham (referring to the original village) and Higham (referring to the newer village). Lower Higham is smaller. Situated here are a few pubs; a garage and Higham Railway Station.
- 2.2.2 Higham is the larger settlement and is the site of the main parish church of St John, a primary school, GP surgery, a library, a post office, several public houses and a number of convenience shops (a greengrocer, a fish and chip shop, a Chinese takeaway and an Indian takeaway). Higham is home to Gads Hill; considered a key heritage asset of the Borough being the former home of Charles Dickens.
- 2.2.3 The village school, village hall (Higham Memorial Hall), park (Higham Recreation Ground), tennis courts and the Knowle Restaurant are approximately halfway between the two parts of the village on School Lane.
- 2.2.4 Public transport is well served, with Higham Railway Station approximately 1 km north, offering direct services to London Blackfriars and Strood, which is additionally accessible via footpath. Local bus routes (111, 311 and 417) provide regular connections to surrounding towns, with the nearest bus stop located within 250 metres of the Site at School Lane.
- 2.2.5 Higham Parish extends south-east from the River Thames across the Higham Marshes and then climbs some 250 feet to the A2 trunk road, which marks Higham's southern boundary. Close to this boundary is the head of an attractive dry valley, which runs north-east through the southern end of the Parish. The Parish of Higham nestles between the River Thames and the North Downs midway between Gravesend and the Medway towns. Higham (from the Old English, meaning 'high village') is part of Gravesham Borough within the County of Kent.



Figure 4 - Site image 1 - School Lane



Figure 5 - Site image 2 - Taylors Lane

2.0 SITE ASSESSMENT

2.2 Higham Village continued

- 2.2.6 As has been noted, there are a number of everyday services and facilities within a short walking and cycling distance of the site. These facilities are all located within approximately 450m of the site (representing a six-minute walk or a two-minute cycle time). Higham Primary School is located approximately 500m from the site (representing an eight-minute walk or three-minute cycle time) and is situated opposite a pre-school, recreation ground and Higham Memorial Hall.
- 2.2.7 More extensive employment, education, retail and leisure facilities are available in Strood and Rochester to the south-east and Gravesend to the west.
- 2.2.8 The closest bus stops are on School Lane at the junction with Taylors Lane, approximately 250m to the south of the site, representing a 4 minute walk. There are three bus services that route through Higham.



Church of St John



The Knowle wedding venue



Local Shops



Gardeners Arms

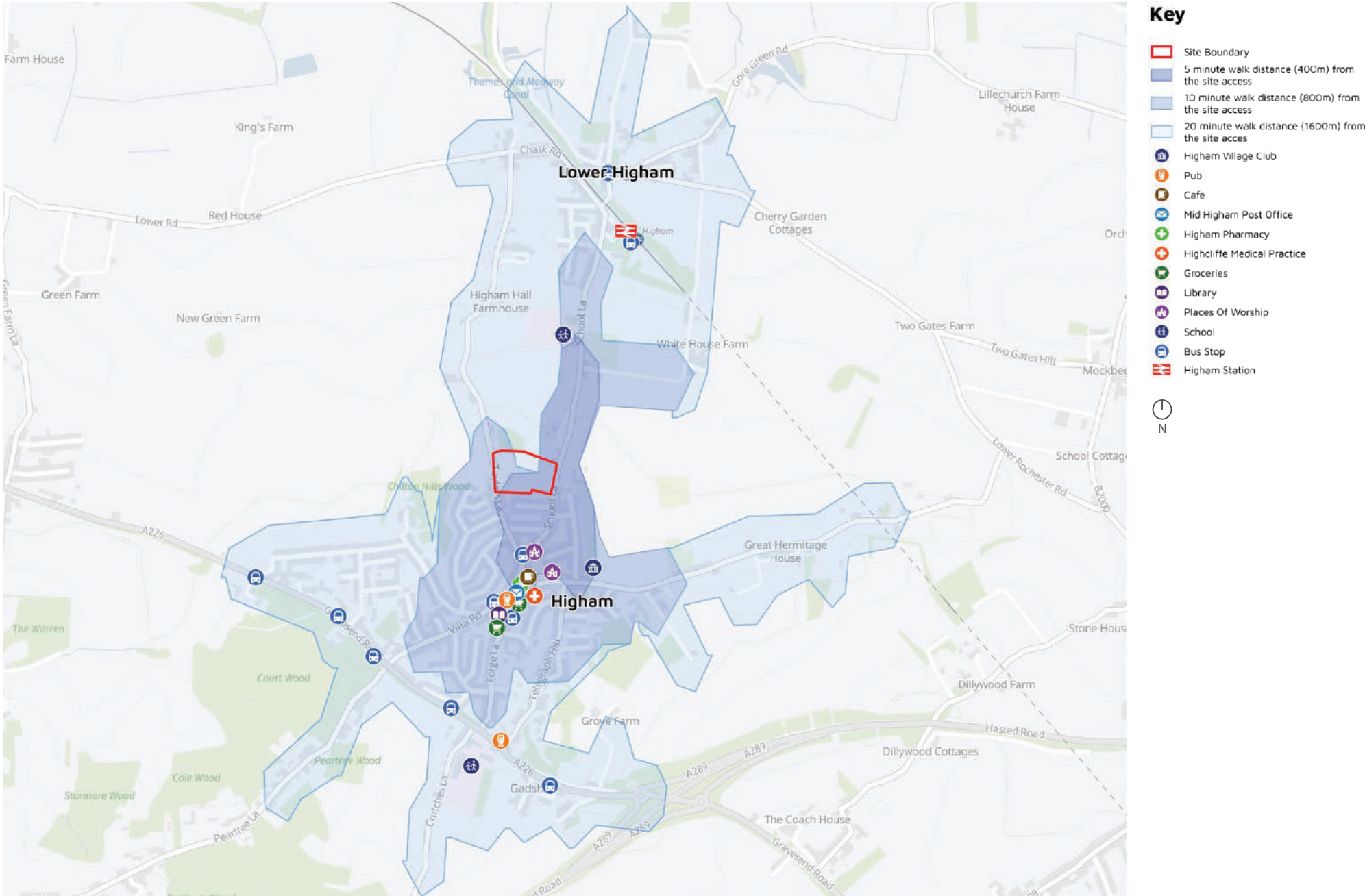


Figure 6 - Local facilities Plan

2.0 SITE ASSESSMENT

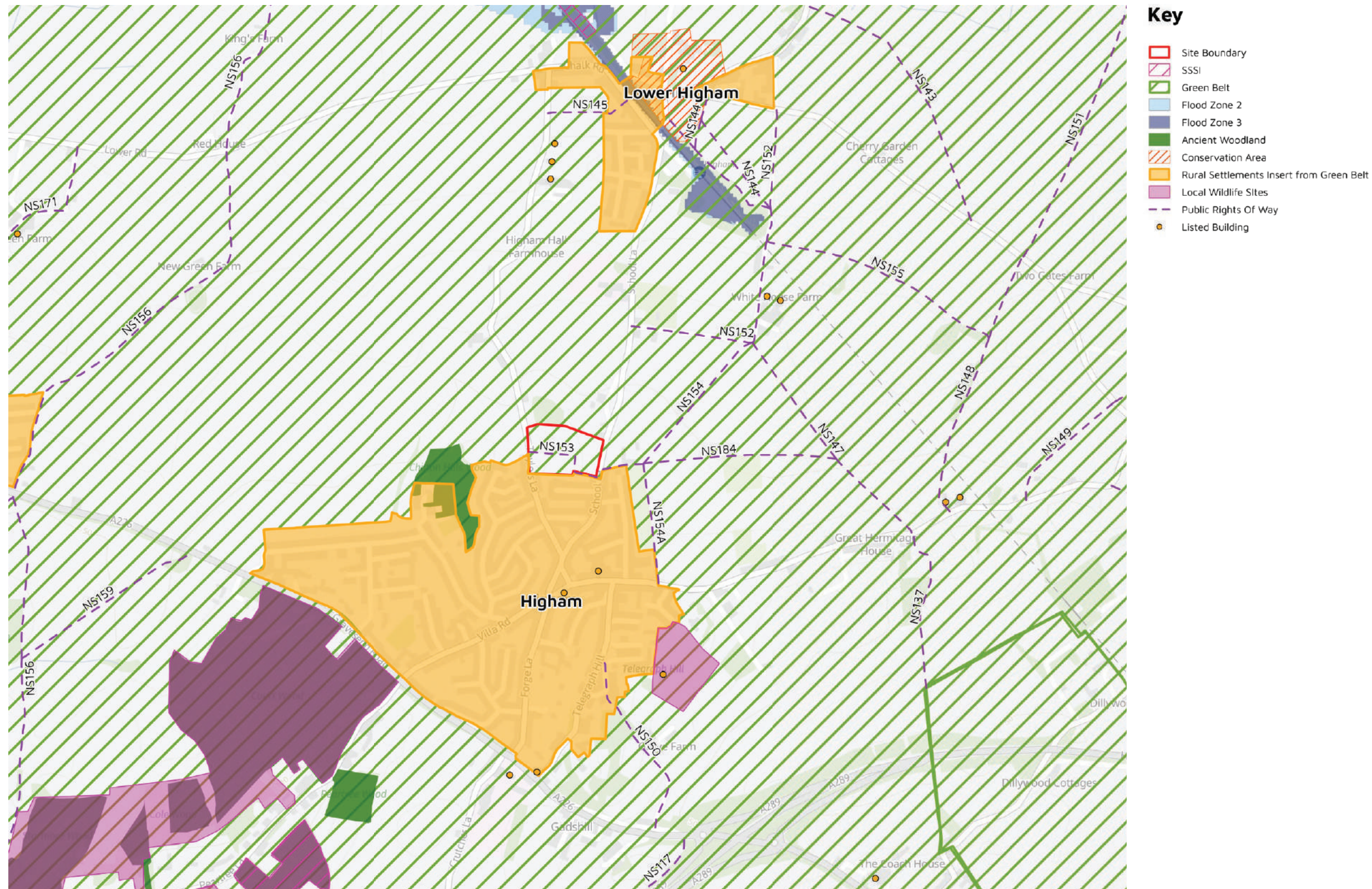


Figure 7 - Policy Plan

2.0 SITE ASSESSMENT

2.3 Site History



Figure 8: Historic mapping presenting the growth of Higham and Lower Higham.

2.0 SITE ASSESSMENT

2.4 Technical Surveys

Topography

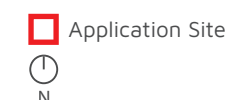
- 2.4.1 The site's topography generally slopes steadily downwards from a high point running north to south along a central ridge set at approximately 60m (AOD). The landform then slopes towards the west (down to approximately 55m AOD) and to the east (down to 58m AOD). There are some minor variations within the site but 'The Mount', on the northern edge of the site forms a noticeable rise that is an anomaly within the generally falling topography.

Phase 1 Ecology Survey

- 2.4.2 The development site forms a single field currently in arable production. There are narrow strips of modified grassland and ruderal vegetation on the field boundaries, which is heavily influenced by the high nutrient levels. There are small areas of mixed scrub along the southern boundary.
- 2.4.3 A small woodland, The Mount, is outside of the application boundary although branches from the trees on the perimeter overhang the field and have allowed an area of gorse scrub to establish.
- 2.4.4 There is a group of three early-mature trees on the southern boundary.
- 2.4.5 There is a section of native hedge on the northern boundary west of The Mount.
- 2.4.6 There are no watercourses on site.



Figure 9 - Habitat Plan



2.0 SITE ASSESSMENT

Trees

2.4.7 The submitted tree report concludes that the development proposals are in accordance with BS5837:2012 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations'.

2.4.8 All retained trees can be protected as per BS5837:2012 requirements, and there is ample tree planting proposed that will result in a net gain in tree cover as a result of the development.

Drainage

2.4.9 The site-specific flood risk assessment determined that the area of the site to be developed to be entirely within Flood Zone 1; low risk of flooding from rivers. The site is not at risk from any other sources of flooding.

2.4.10 NPPF Annex 3: "Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification", states that sites used for residential use can be classified as "more vulnerable".

2.4.11 Given the development will be located entirely within Flood Zone 1, the site is considered to have passed the Sequential Test. More vulnerable development is appropriate in Flood Zone, and an Exception Test is not required.

2.4.12 The online British Geological Survey maps indicate that the site is underlain by bedrock geology comprising of the Seaford Chalk Formation (Chalk). Shallow infiltration testing was initially carried out at depths of between 0.5 and 4m below ground and provided low to very low infiltration rates across the site. Further deep bored testing was carried out in two locations at depths up to 20m which provided very good soakage potential.

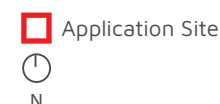


Figure 10 : Existing Site Plan

2.0 SITE ASSESSMENT

2.5 Summary Opportunity and Constraints

- Red line
- Residential
- Open Space
- Roads
- Views out to Open Countryside
- Site Entrance
- Pedestrian Access
- Public Open Space
- Attenuation
- LEAP
- Key Focal Building
- Frontages
- PRoW
- Ridge of Hill
- Site Slope
- School Route
- Woodland

Application Site



Figure 11 - Summary Opportunities and Constraints

3.0 DESIGN AND ACCESS

3.0 DESIGN AND ACCESS

3.1 Use

- 3.1.1 The outline application seeks permission for the residential redevelopment of the existing arable field. The description of the proposal is as follows:

"Outline planning application for the development of up to 46 residential dwellings (including affordable housing), vehicular access road from School Lane, internal roads, car parking, landscaping, public open space, and other associated works and infrastructure. All matters to be reserved with the exception of the main site access."

3.2 Amount

- 3.2.1 The site area equates to 2.8 hectares.
- 3.2.2 The indicative masterplan puts forward a scheme of up to 46 units comprising 1,2,3 and 4 bed family homes with 50% of the units allocated to affordable.
- 3.2.2 An outline proving layout is presented in this statement to demonstrate how the site could potentially be developed subject to future reserved matters detail.
- 3.2.3 Around 1.4 ha of the 2.8 ha site is dedicated to landscaping and open space. In accordance with standards, this has been broken down into natural and semi-natural green space, amenity space, recreation and informal play.
- 3.2.4 An equipped area of play and informal play together with enhanced natural and semi-natural spaces for Biodiversity Net Gain are provided.
- 3.2.5 A new single vehicle access has been provided via School Lane with the existing public right of way incorporated maintaining a pedestrian link between Taylors Lane and School Lane.

Site Area: 2.80 Ha

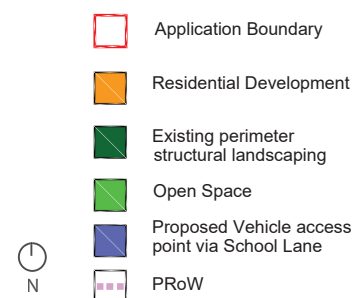


Figure 12 - Land Use Parameter Plan

3.0 DESIGN AND ACCESS

3.3 Layout

Indicative Outline Masterplan

- 3.3.1 An indicative masterplan has been prepared building on the land use framework. Clear developable areas are shown alongside suggested access routes and open spaces to guide detailed layouts at the reserved matters stage.
- 3.3.2 The drainage requirement has dictated proposed developable areas. The current drainage strategy takes the form of an infiltration basin located in the north eastern corner of the site (as illustrated).
- 3.3.3 Glimpsed views across to the church are maintained with view corridors respected in accordance with heritage advice. The public right of way cutting through the centre of the site allows for the creation of 'green' vistas and a network of connected amenity areas.
- 3.3.4 Vehicle access is provided via School Lane. An indicative internal loop services emergency access requirements only and leads to a number of smaller private drives.
- 3.3.5 Pedestrian access will continue to be provided from Taylors Lane along the alignment of the existing and retained public right of way NS153.



Figure 13 - Indicative Outline Masterplan

3.0 DESIGN AND ACCESS

A layout informed by a careful analysis of the site's edge-of-settlement location, bounded on three sides by existing residential and facing open fields to the West.

Indicative Proving Layout

- 3.3.6 An indicative block layout has been prepared to show how the development could look. The block layout presents a total of 46 units made up of 1&2 bed maisonettes, 2, 3 and 4 bed houses all 2-storey. 50% are allocated as affordable.
- 3.3.7 Consideration has been given to land levels with the site sat elevated above neighbouring 'High View' with the brow of the hill requiring consideration in terms of storey heights and building orientation. As a result, development is set back from the southern boundary.
- 3.3.8 2-storey development is proposed to address School Lane, framing the current view of the church and to mirror that of 2-storey properties on the other side.
- 3.3.9 The indicative maisonette/flatted block is located on the northeastern boundary with School Lane due to the land falling here allowing for the larger mass and given the neighbouring density set by the terraced row running north towards Lower Higham. It is intended this unit be double aspect to create an attractive entrance to the scheme.
- 3.3.10 Higher density development is focused in the southeast and central core of the site. Development is offset from the central northern boundary to mitigate any impacts on the Knowle Country House venue.
- 3.3.11 At reserved matters stage, vehicle and cycle parking will be provided in accordance with the recently adopted KCC Parking Standards (2025) for residential development in 'Suburban' locations. This reflects its aforementioned accessibility to everyday services, facilities and public transport nodes.
- 3.3.12 The proposals will also comply with Part S of the Building Regulations in relation to Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure.
- 3.3.13 Vehicle tracking has been applied to test the use of refuse and fire access.



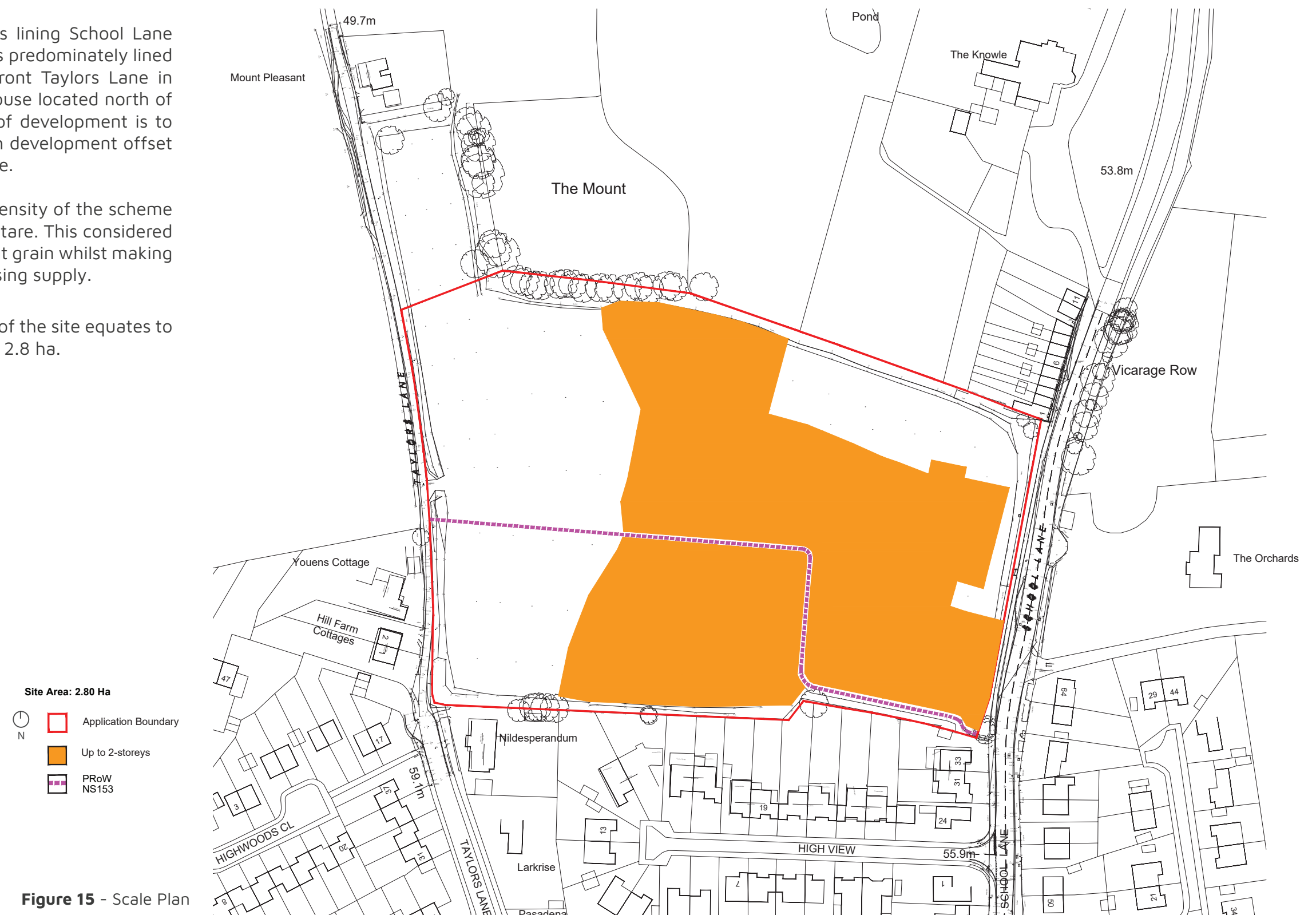
Figure 14 - Indicative Layout Approach



3.0 DESIGN AND ACCESS

3.4 Scale

- 3.4.1 In terms of storey heights, properties lining School Lane reach 2-storeys, where as High View is predominately lined with bungalows. Chalet bungalows front Taylors Lane in the west with a large 2-storey farmhouse located north of Taylors Lane. In response, the scale of development is to be set at a maximum of 2-storey with development offset from certain boundaries as appropriate.
- 3.4.2 With a site area of 2.8 ha, the gross density of the scheme at 46 units sits at 18 dwellings per hectare. This considered in keeping with the adjacent settlement grain whilst making the most efficient use of land for housing supply.
- 3.4.3 Additionally, the net developable area of the site equates to approximately 1.4 ha of the sites total 2.8 ha.



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3.5 Massing

3.5.1 The sketch aerial view below shows illustrative massing within the site to get a sense of scale for the proposed development.



Figure 16 - Indicative Massing Model - a natural infill

3.0 DESIGN AND ACCESS

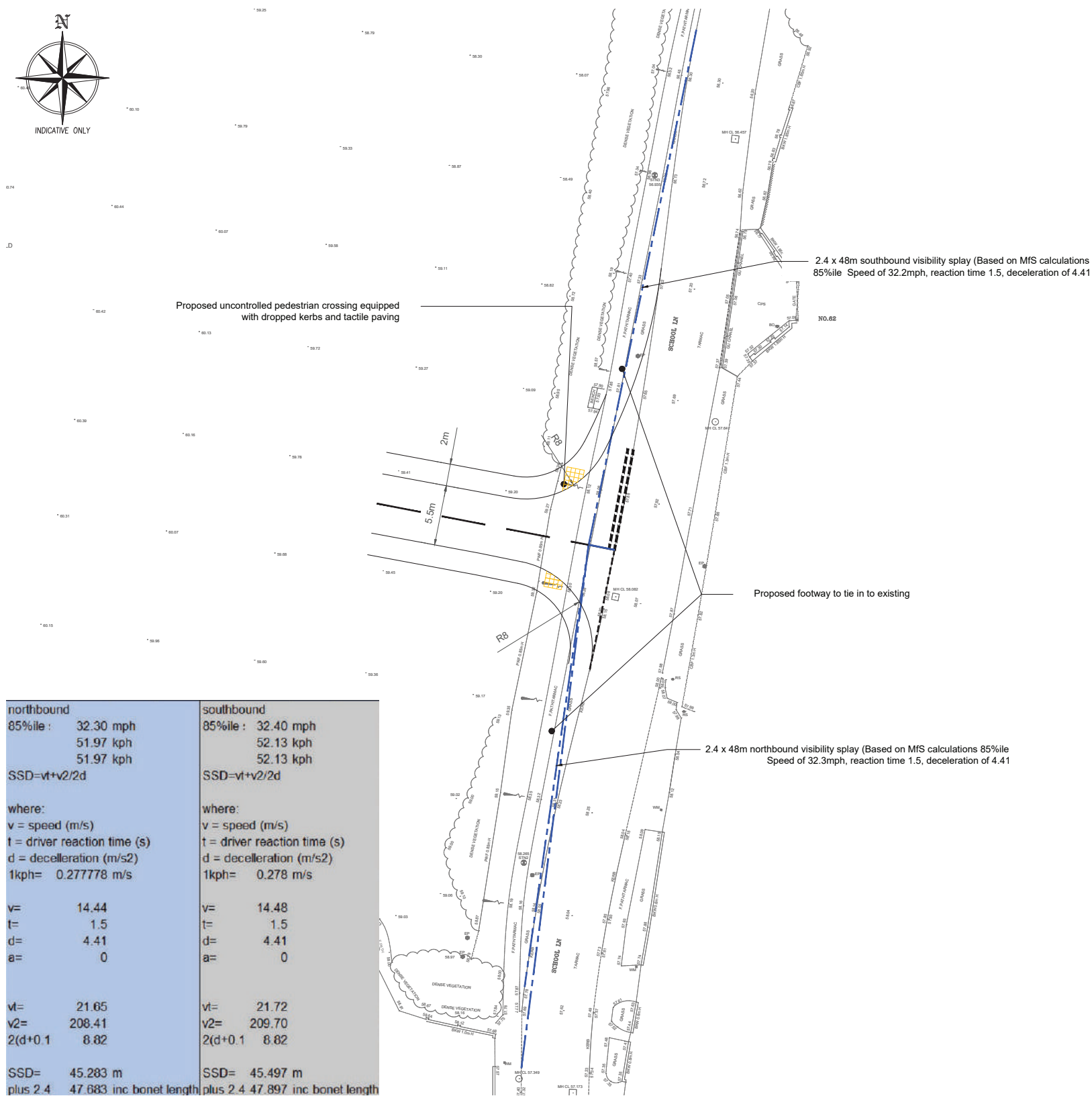
3.6 Access

- 3.6.1 Primary vehicular access to the site will be achieved via a new priority junction off School Lane, which will have an initial carriageway width of 5.5m. The 5.5m carriageway will split within the site to form two cul-de-sacs. The proposed plots along School Lane will follow arrangements of the existing opposite dwellings.
- 3.6.2 Shared surface private drives are proposed at the end of these cul-de-sacs, measuring a minimum of 4.8m in width. Access drives are to be bounded with post and rail fencing and hedgerow/shrub planting or left open in places as appropriate with the meadow planting approach to the open spaces promoting a rural aesthetic.
- 3.6.2 Primary pedestrian access to the site will be achievable via the vehicular access. 2.0m wide footways will be installed on both sides of the access, tying into the existing provision on School Lane. An uncontrolled pedestrian crossing with dropped kerbs and tactile paving will be provided at the site access junction to enable pedestrians to cross.
- 3.6.3 There is a 1.8m wide footway on the western side of School Lane that provides access north to Higham Primary School and south through the village centre.
- 3.6.4 Restricted byway (PRoW) routing through the centre of the site will be retained and enhanced as part of the development proposals, with 2m wide sealed paving footways marking this route more accessible to new and existing residents of Higham.
- 3.6.5 Earthworks will be re profiled along School Lane as necessary to allow for both accesses with new planting proposed.
- 3.6.8 Each indicative plot suggests a driveway for parking. Parking has been planned to be provided in accordance with the Council’s residential parking standards.



Figure 17 - Access parameter plan

3.0 DESIGN AND ACCESS



School Lane as existing



Bench to be removed/reprovided as necessary.
Bank to be reprofiled

Figure 18 - Access design

3.0 DESIGN AND ACCESS

3.7 Landscape and BNG

- 3.7.1 Existing perimeter trees and shrub are set to be retained to maintain the existing sense of enclosure, to screen the development and for ecological purposes.
- 3.7.2 Pockets of new planting will line the public right of way creating a central green corridor through the scheme.
- 3.7.3 Additional planting is proposed along the site’s southern edge to buffer against the existing garden fences.
- 3.7.4 The equipped area of play is located to the west. A number of bulbs will be planted up in this area for seasonal visual interest and habitat diversity.
- 3.7.5 The northern boundary is currently comprised of a hedgerow which will be gapped up as necessary to strengthen with new trees.
- 3.7.6 An amenity meadow is proposed with large areas of open space for formal and informal play. The area will comprise mown pathways for exercise and dog walking and drifts of bulb and shrub planting for seasonal visual interest and habitat creation.
- 3.7.7 Amenity grassland area to the west to remain open for long distance views to the north-west. Benches placed to make use of vistas.
- 3.7.8 Western hedgerow enhanced with new planting for robust edge and to filter views from properties addressing Taylors Lane. Boundary strengthening around site perimeter in general where required.
- 3.7.9 The site currently has an on-site baseline value of 6.12 habitat units. The new habitat areas proposed will achieve the mandatory 10% requirement. No offsite habitat units would be required.

The proposal brings forward approximately 1.4ha of open space with new planting achieving a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain.



Figure 19 - Outline Landscape Strategy

3.0 DESIGN AND ACCESS

3.8 Drainage Approach

- 3.8.1 A Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) has been provided as part of the surface water drainage layout to deal with the surface water generated from the development to ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere.
- 3.8.2 The site has been split into two surface water catchments. Catchment 1 comprises of the centre of the site. It is proposed to lower the ridge of the site by circa 1m to provide an increased plateaux which will allow permeable paving. Adjacent roof areas will drain directly to the areas of permeable paving. Catchment 2 comprises of the East of the site. As with catchment 1, roof areas will drain into the adjacent hard surfacing. This part of the site drains from the plateaux level of 61m AOD to the level of circa 58.2m AOD on the eastern boundary with School Lane. Given the relatively low infiltration rates, the permeable paving alone will not deal with the surface water generated. It is therefore proposed that the permeable paving is to discharge into an infiltration blanket with a shallow swale above.
- 3.8.3 The foul drainage for the development has been shown draining to the existing 225mm diameter sewer located in School Lane.

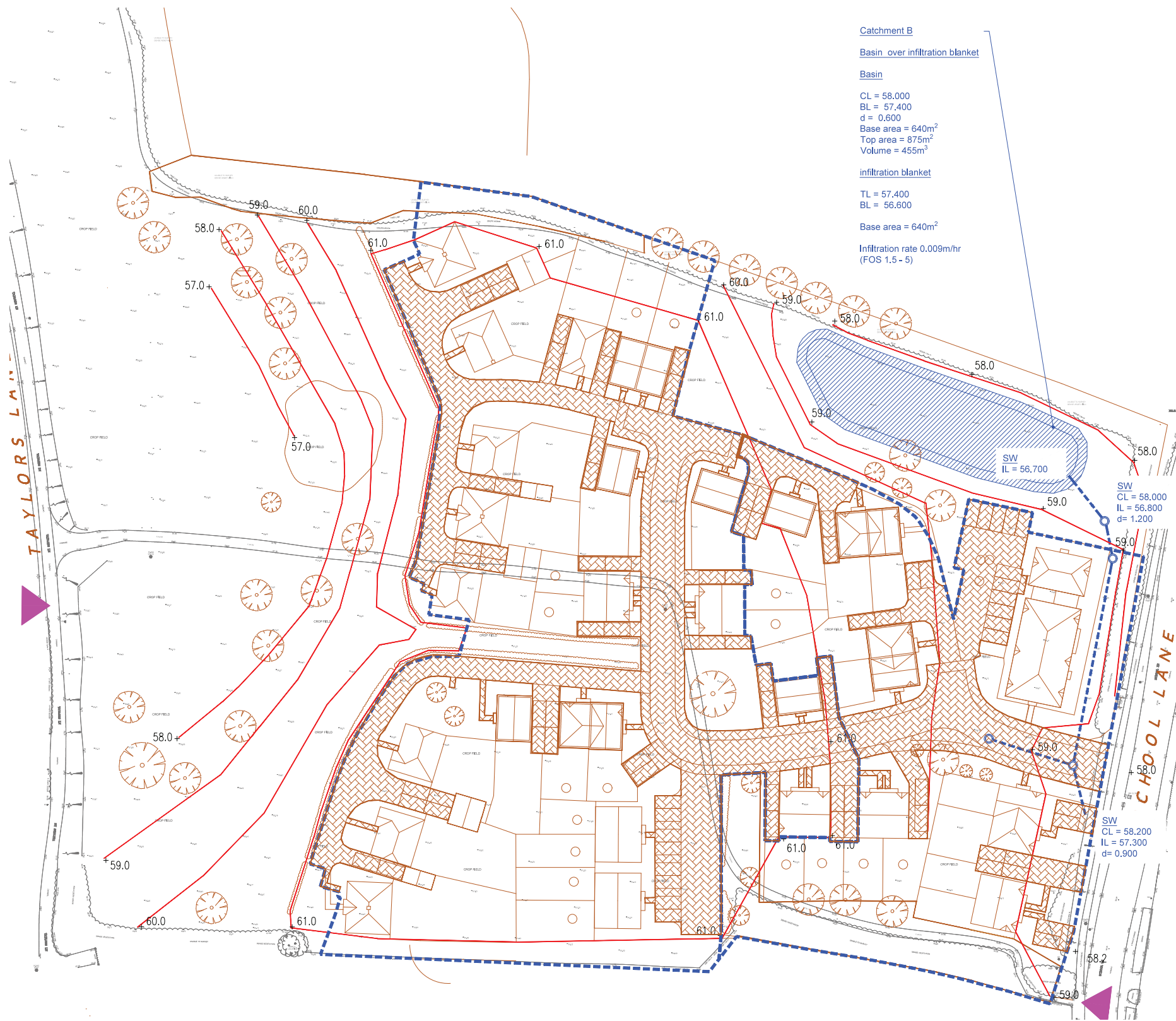


Figure 20 - Drainage Approach

3.0 DESIGN AND ACCESS

3.9 Appearance

- 3.9.1 The application is submitted in outline with layout and house type detailing reserved for future consideration.
- 3.9.2 An analysis of the surrounding residential streets produced no overriding prescriptive style of architecture but a mix of styles and scales of properties ranging from 2-storey semi-detached and detached properties to single storey bungalows. High View for example comprises of bungalows sat on higher ground. The remainder of the village is largely made up of 2-storey semi-detached properties.
- 3.9.3 It is envisaged that the proposed plots will take a traditional approach to reflect the surrounding neighbourhood.
- 3.9.4 The following pages explore local house types, materials and detailing that could be applied to remain in keeping with the character of the surrounding development.



Existing variety of architectural styles and densities found on site boundaries. From left to right: Terraced properties on School Lane (north east), bungalows on High View (south), chalet bungalow on Taylors Lane (west) and farmhouse on Taylors Lane.



Existing housing stock found in Higham.



Recent infill / redevelopment in Higham.

Figure 21 - Local Architectural styles

3.0 DESIGN AND ACCESS



1.



2.



3.



3.



4.



1. Suggested boundary treatment to open spaces.
2. Naturalistic planting approach to informal meadow areas with grass mown paths.
3. Double aspect feature properties for aesthetic purposes and natural surveillance. Chimney and porch detail. Suggested character and variety of larger properties facing west.
- 4.

3.0 DESIGN AND ACCESS

3.10 Heritage Mitigation

- 3.10.1 The area to the north-east of the site (shown in pink) is on higher ground. Consideration was therefore given as to how the development would be viewed from the site of The Knowle which sits behind on lower ground. The amended masterplan (to that shown) pulls development away from this northern boundary as a result with a large area of open space focused here to form a green buffer and provide breathing space to the terraced row.
- 3.10.2 The proposed Local Equipped Area of Play is considered well located, with sufficient distance from The Knowle to avoid any playpark activity impacting the setting of the non-designated heritage asset. New tree planting will further screen this from view.
- 3.10.3 The areas in blue were considered the least sensitive areas in heritage terms. To make the best use of land and achieve housing numbers, densities are intensified in these areas.
- 3.10.4 All views towards the church are incidental and are considered to hold a relatively low value. Maintaining the pink viewing corridor to the church along the existing and retained PRow however has shaped the outline masterplan. The PRow in the south west in particular has been 'opened up' to frame the view of the church elevation. Glimpsed views of the church at various points are maintained.



Figure 22 - Heritage assessment on previous pre-application concept



Church of St John



The Knowle wedding venue

3.0 DESIGN AND ACCESS

3.11 Visual Impact

- 3.11.1 The site shares a clear relationship with the settlement edge given the strong intervisibility with the rest of the village. As set out in the previous section, viewing corridors maintain glimpsed views towards St John's Church have been maintained.
- 3.11.2 The other important view is the one towards the River Thames. The western section of the site has therefore been kept free from development to make use of these long views.
- 3.11.3 The majority of the new properties are focused along the southern and eastern edges of the site to sit up against the existing settlement.
- 3.11.4 Boundary treatments along the southern edge are to be enhanced to soften views of the development from this point. The development is set back here to take account of changing land levels. Any ground modelling /section work required will be addressed at the next detailed reserved matters stage.
- 3.11.5 The village continues north along School Lane in the form of residential properties, The Knowle Country House Wedding Venue and Higham Primary School, and therefore built form within the site will not extend the village further than it already lies.



Figure 23 - Development set back from western edge for visual impact mitigation. Radial layout to frame the open space and make the most of long distance views.

4.0 SUMMARY

- 4.1 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by DHA Planning on behalf of M Scott Properties Ltd in support of an outline planning application (all matters reserved except access) for residential development on Land West of School Lane, Higham.
- 4.2 The outline application seeks permission for residential development of the site.
- "Outline planning application for the development of up to 46 residential dwellings (including affordable housing), vehicular access road from School Lane, internal roads, car parking, landscaping, public open space, and other associated works and infrastructure. All matters to be reserved with the exception of the main site access."*
- 4.3 A suite of technical surveys regarding topography, ecology, drainage, heritage and landscape and visual impact studies have shaped the outline masterplan and plan pack submitted.
- 4.4 The indicative layout puts forward a scheme of up to 46 units comprising 1,2,3 and 4 bedroom homes with 50% allocated as affordable.
- 4.5 Over 1ha is suggested in accordance with standards comprising amenity space, recreation including an equipped area of play and informal play together with enhanced natural and semi-natural spaces which achieves the 10% requirement for biodiversity net gain.
- 4.6 A new vehicle access has been provided via School Lane with the existing public right of way incorporated providing pedestrian links between Taylors Lane and School Lane.
- 4.7 Proposals have evolved in response to consultation with both the public and Gravesham Borough Council as part of a pre-application process.
- 4.8 For the reasons set out in this Design and Access Statement, the outline proposals are considered acceptable in design and access terms.



Figure 24 - Proposed Framework Plan

