

2.0 Response to Context

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

A Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) of the proposed development has been carried out. The report concludes that a residential scheme can be accommodated without any unacceptable landscape or visual effects. The conclusions of the LVA are summarised below:

- The Development Framework plan has been sensitively designed with robust Green Infrastructure which will break up and soften the features of the built development.
- The site has no public access and is visually well contained and mostly screened from the surrounding landscape by the substantial areas of woodland plantation.
- The site is located within the National Character Area (NCA) 119 'North Downs'
- The site is located within 'The East Kent Arable Belt' Landscape Character Area, from the Landscape Assessment of Kent and within the 'Eastry Arable and Woodland Clumps' landscape character area of the Dover District Council Landscape Character Assessment (LCA).
- Long-term landscape effects on the site and immediate context are considered to be Moderate to Minor Adverse.
- The visual envelope of the site is restricted from the north and west by developed areas of Walmer and Deal. Visual receptors are primarily located to the south and east and, although some long views towards the site are possible from more distant locations, these would be restricted to glimpses of rooftops at most.
- Sensitive visual receptors in close proximity to the site predominately consist of the residents of properties immediately adjacent to the site. Close range views of the proposed development will be immediately apparent to these receptors.
- Users of the PROW network surrounding the site would have partial views of the new development experienced at a distance and perceived as glimpses through trees and in the context of the existing residential edge of Walmer.

- Whilst there would inevitably be some adverse landscape and visual effects at completion, it is considered that the effects of the proposed development would be localised and limited in their physical extent. The effects arising from the proposed development would not give rise to any unacceptable landscape or visual harm.



Figure 6: Viewpoints

- Site Boundary
- ① Photo Viewpoint Location (see opposite)



2.0

Topography

Figure 7 illustrates the topography of the local area. The general topography of the wider area consists of ridges of higher land to the south west which fall away towards the coastline to the north east and east.

The topography of the area in which the site lies is described by the Dover District Landscape Character Assessment (2006) as a “distinct pattern of ridges and valleys”. Within the vicinity of the site this includes a ridge of higher land to the south west of the site, towards the village of Ringwould, which slopes downwards towards Deal.

The landform of the site itself generally slopes from south west to north east with a high point of 47m AOD located in the south west of the site falling to a low point of 36.5m AOD in the north eastern corner of the site.

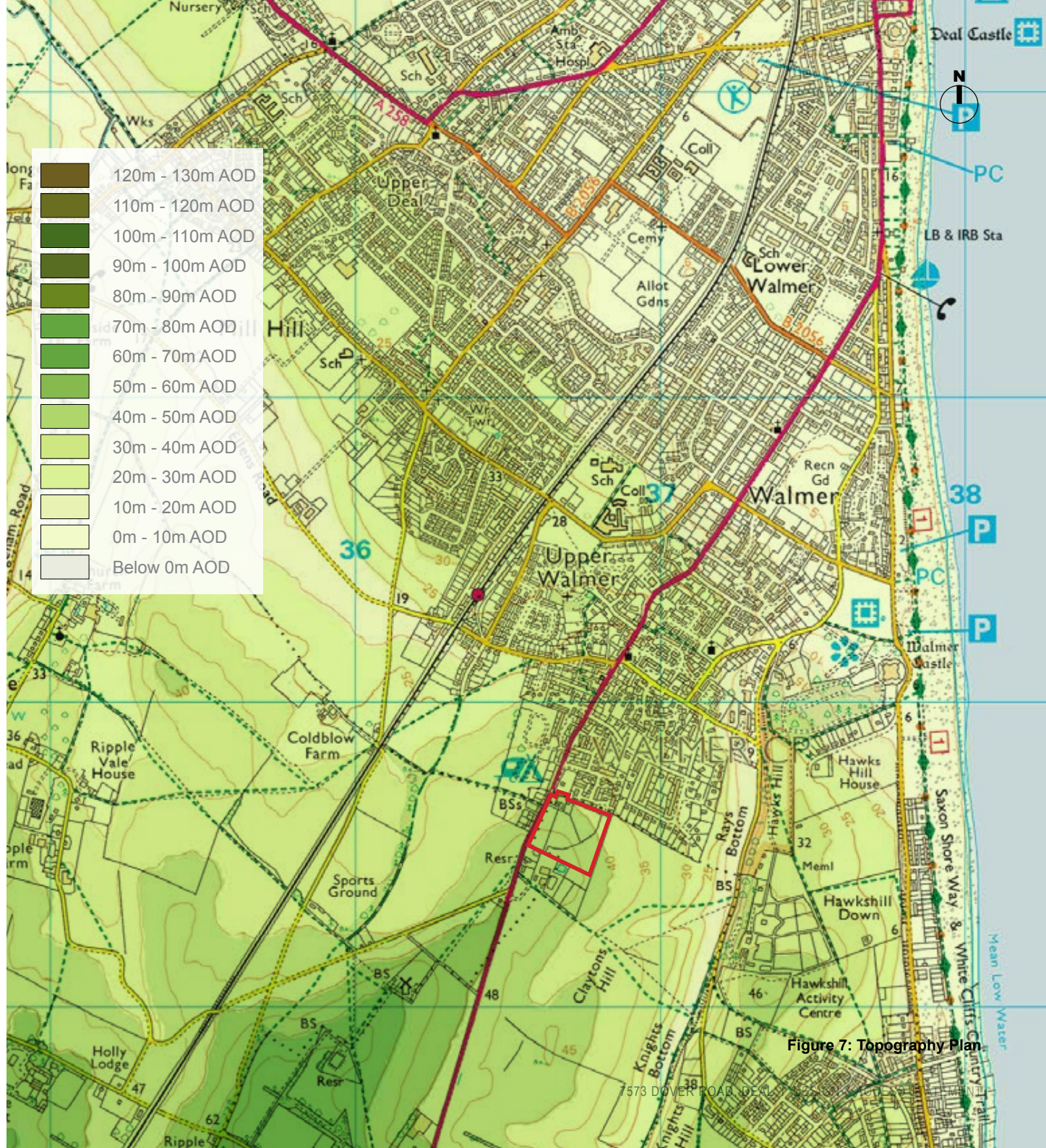


Figure 7: Topography Plan

Designations

The site is not subject to any local or national designations such as National Park or AONB. The South Foreland Heritage Coast is located approximately 2.0km to the south of the site at its nearest boundary and the Kent Downs AONB approximately 1.2km to the south. The Walmer Castle Registered Park and garden is located approximately 600m to the north east of the site at its nearest boundary beyond existing development and intervening vegetation.

Figure 8 opposite illustrates the designations within the local area. These include:

- Two Scheduled Monuments (Artillery castle at Walmer and Medieval manor house, Walmer);
- A number of listed buildings within the historic core of the Walmer;
- Conservation Areas at Walmer and Ripple.

An appraisal of the potential effects of development upon these built heritage assets has been undertaken by White Young Green.

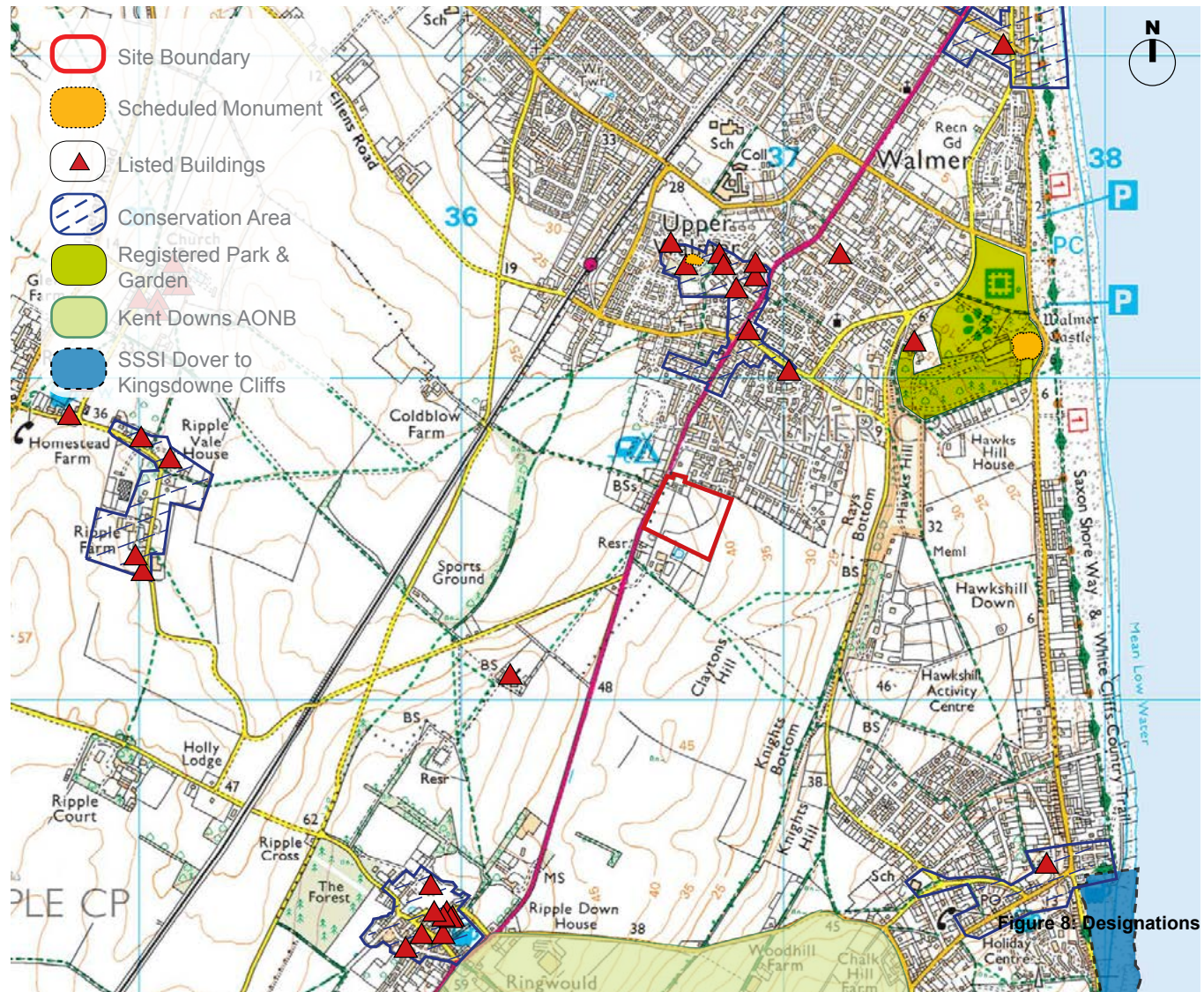


Figure 8: Designations

2.0 Response to Context

Nature Conservation and Ecology

An Ecological Appraisal for the site has been prepared by FPCR Environment and Design. The key findings and recommendations of the study are described below.



Existing grazing land

An ecological survey was conducted in November 2016 and concluded that overall the site appeared to be of low ecological value.

The site is dominated by grazed and un-grazed horse pasture with associated stable buildings. At the time of survey the pasture appeared to be species-poor. However, it is recommended that a further survey is completed in the spring to confirm this. One hedgerow formed the eastern

boundary with arable farmland but had poor connectivity and a lack of diversity. As such the hedgerow was found to be only of moderate value under the Hedgerow Evaluation Grading System (HEGS) and was not classed as 'Important' under the Hedgerow Regulations. There was an area of immature mixed plantation woodland on-site. Scrub and small trees surrounded the potential access route to the south of the site, and the adjacent off-site reservoir.

Apart from the presence of reptile species, the survey found no evidence of any other protected species within or immediately adjacent to the site boundary.

The site lies within 10 km of the following sites of international importance for nature conservation:

- Dover to Kingsdown Cliffs SAC (2020m SE);
- Thanet Coast & Sandwich Bay Ramsar site (nearest section 3120m NW);
- Thanet Coast & Sandwich Bay SPA (4300m N);
- Sandwich Bay SAC (4500m N);
- Lydden & Temple Ewell Downs SAC (8910m SW).

The site lies within 2km of the following site of national importance for nature conservation:

- Dover to Kingsdown Cliffs SSSI (1510m SE).

The site lies within 1km of the following site of local importance for nature conservation:

- Kingsdown & Walmer Beach LWS (nearest section (Hawk's Hill 470m E)

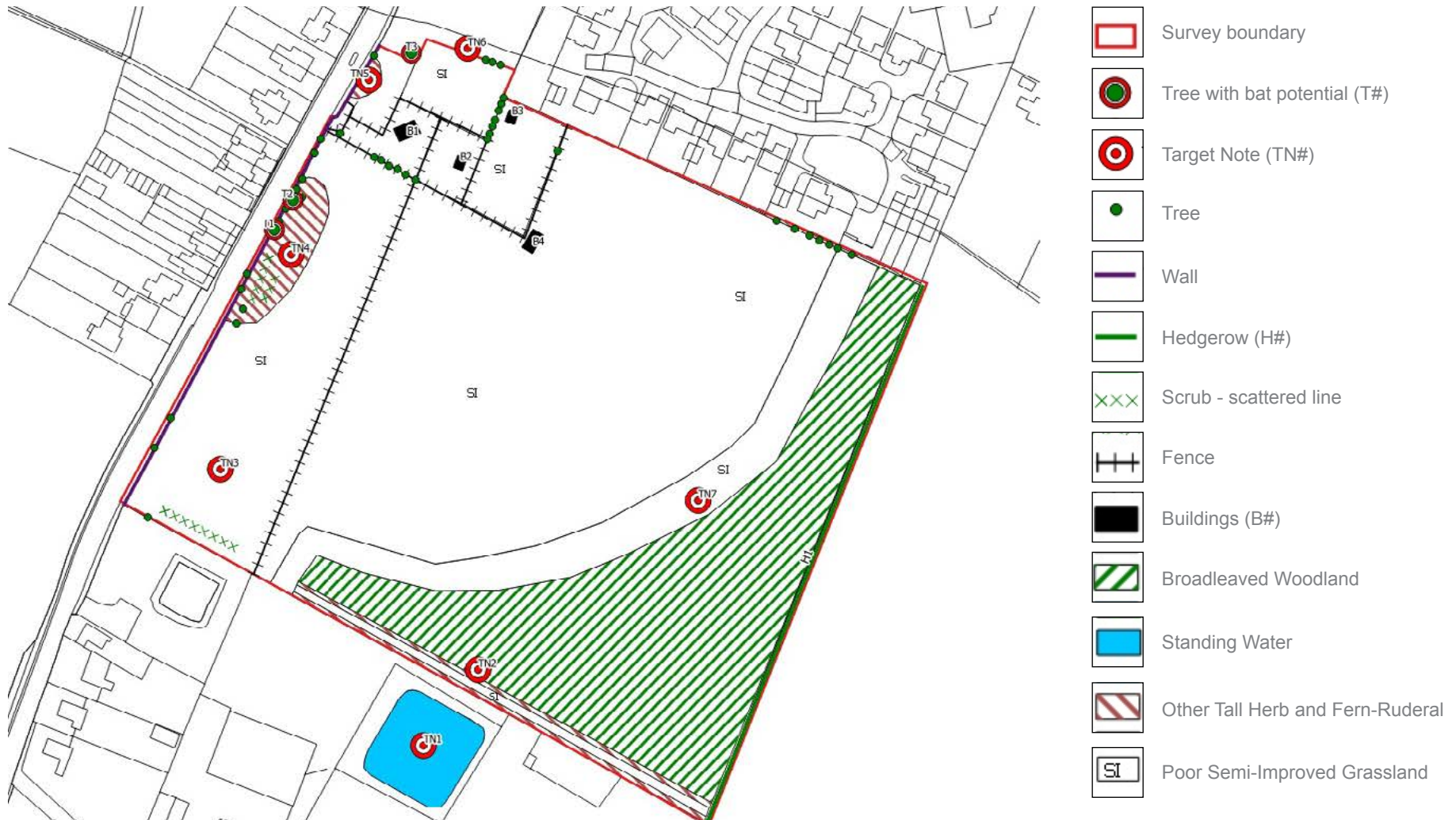


Figure 9: Phase 1 Habitat Survey

2.0 Response to Context

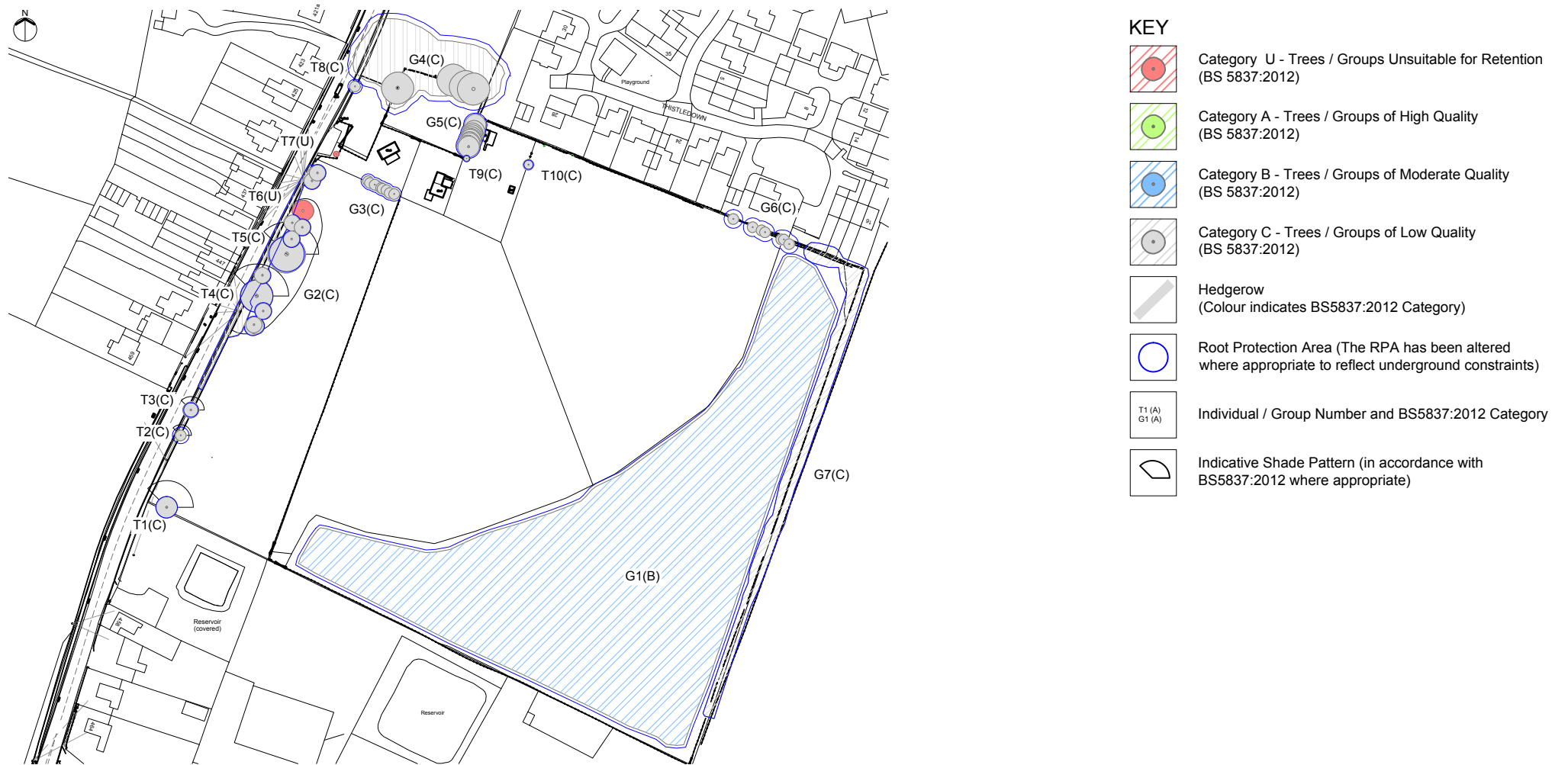


Figure 10: Tree Survey

Arboriculture

The assessment area comprised a single field parcel, divided into numerous paddocks and an area of new woodland planting to the east. The majority of tree cover found on site was associated with the area of mixed woodland and comprises semi-mature specimens of mixed native species. This area of tree cover was regarded as being moderate in arboricultural quality.

Mature trees were also located to the north west and along the Dover Road to the west. Overall this tree cover was regarded as being in fair condition although a lack in general tree management and the presence of livestock had resulted in a low arboricultural quality around the site boundaries.

A broad range of species were recorded which included ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, beech *Fagus sylvatica*, English oak *Quercus robur*, sessile oak *Quercus petraea*, holm oak *Quercus ilex*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, alder *Alnus glutinosa*, sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, elder *Sambucus nigra* and English elm *Ulmus procera*.

To facilitate the proposed development a small proportion of tree cover will need to be removed due to the requirements for access and the developable area. A series of highway

alterations along Dover Road will require the removal of tree cover along the western boundary. In addition to this a proportion of the semi mature planting to the east will be removed to facilitate the residential parcel and drainage attenuation.

Despite this loss of tree cover all remaining trees are to be incorporated and reinforced within landscape buffer strips as part of the green infrastructure, which will also include a sufficient amount of new tree planting. The provision of new tree planting will create the opportunity to improve and enhance tree cover in the local area in the future.

Water and Drainage

The outline planning application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and the development will incorporate measures to deal with storm and surface water drainage which are in accordance with all current national and local guidance.

2.0 Response to Context

Public Consultation

Gladman Developments has engaged in a process of community consultation, which has informed the development of the proposals for the site.

A leaflet covering the application proposals was delivered to businesses and residents in the vicinity of the site for information.

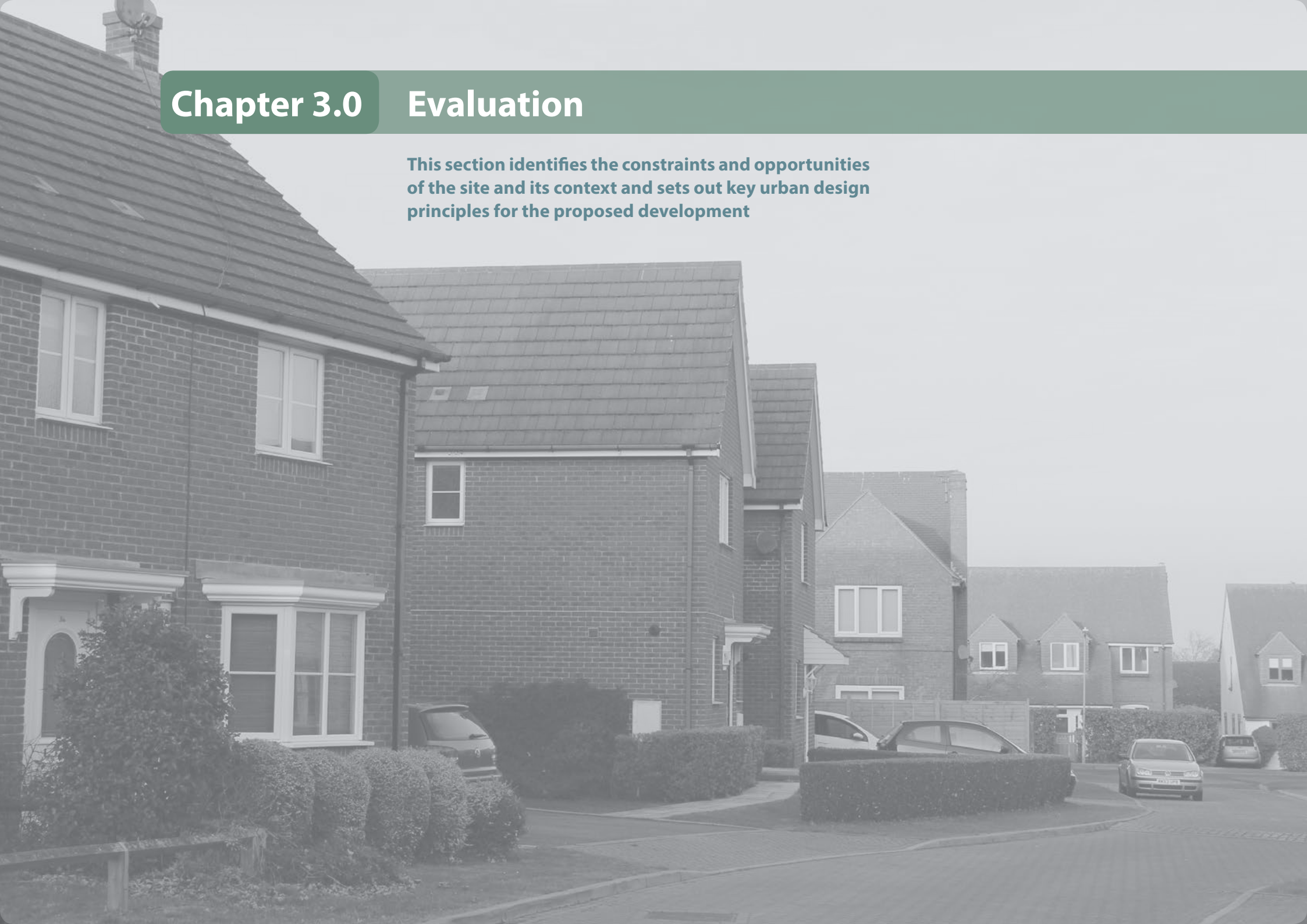
Full details of the consultation and information presented, which includes the consultation boards opposite, are set out within the Statement of Community Involvement accompanying the planning application.



Public Consultation boards 1 to 7 used at the consultation stage

Chapter 3.0 Evaluation

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



3.0 Evaluation

Constraints and Opportunities

Figure 11 opposite highlights the key on-site and off-site features which have informed the decision making process and continuing evolution of the design proposals. In summary, the site has relatively few constraints to the type of development proposed. The key constraints and opportunities are categorised and outlined below.

Physical and Environmental

- Existing vegetation along the site's boundaries, which would be retained wherever possible. In line with the Walmer Design Statement, which states 'existing features which contribute to amenity and biodiversity should be retained to make the development attractive in its early years';
- Existing large tree group in the south east of the site, which would be retained as far as possible and provide a mature landscape backdrop to new built development. There is also an opportunity to extend this tree planting westwards towards Dover Road;
- The proposed layout should respond to existing local character and the surrounding built context in terms of mass, scale and appearance;
- Water mains to the north west of the site would require an easement;

- Existing habitats such as the mature trees and hedgerows would be retained and new habitats created wherever possible e.g within areas of open space, attenuation area etc.
- Low point to the north of the site would be a potential location for an attenuation basin.
- The Walmer Design Statement states that 'The layout and design of any development affecting the southern edge of Walmer should demonstrate a suitable, carefully landscaped transition with the adjacent open countryside' this will need to be considered as part of the design of the development.

Views

- Opportunity to screen views from the wider landscape through the retention and provision of structural planting along the site boundaries;
- Potential views from the Public Right of Way to the south of the site should be considered;
- Views towards the site are possible from a relatively small number of properties along Thistledown and Dover Road including a proposed dwelling adjacent to the site's southern boundary.

Access

- Vehicular access is available directly off Dover Road;
- Potential pedestrian connections to Dover Road and the Public Right of Way to the south of the site have been identified;
- Areas of open space provide opportunities to create an informal pedestrian route along the eastern and southern boundaries;

Social and Neighbourhood

- The creation of new public open spaces, an equipped play area and pedestrian routes would be available to new and existing residents.

The site is located immediately adjacent to existing residential areas and provides an excellent opportunity for an appropriate housing development which respects existing local character.














-  Application Boundary (4.06ha)
-  Proposed site access
-  Existing Public Right of Way
-  Existing Mown Access Corridor
-  Potential Footpath Connection
-  Existing Development
-  Contours
-  View Towards Site to Consider
-  Approved Dwelling
-  Low point of site - Potential location for SUDS
-  Relationship with Adjacent Properties
-  Tree Root Protection Area
-  Proposed Vegetation



Figure 11: Constraints and Opportunities

3.0 Evaluation

Design Principles

The following design principles have been developed following the evaluation of the site's context, constraints and opportunities. They are also informed by national and local design guidance as noted at Section 2.0.

In order to reflect local character, the design approach will adopt, for example, the commonality of local materials and colour, block patterns, street trees and narrow and wide building plan forms.

The emphasis should be upon simplicity and legibility with well proportioned buildings and spaces which deliver attractive high quality designs. The design principles outlined in the following section aim to deliver a high quality place which is sustainable, safe and attractive.

Housing

- To provide up to 85 new homes;
- Deliver a mix of housing, offering 1-5 bedroom properties comprising a range of house types, from terrace/linked mews cottages to detached properties. The housing mix will include a proportion of affordable housing;
- Create a series of character streets (Main Street, Secondary Street and Lanes) that will deliver changes in street design;
- Car parking to be located so as not to dominate or detract from the street scene;
- Provide a high quality built and landscape design that incorporates best practice design principles detailed in 'Manual for Streets' and 'Building for Life';
- Creation of feature spaces at key locations within the residential area e.g through set backs of buildings, tree planting;
- Create a development which addresses the street with active frontages.

Access and Movement

- To provide vehicular access from Dover Road;
- Establish a legible environment with a choice of interconnecting attractive streets and pedestrian routes which provide excellent connectivity across the site and into the surrounding context;
- Create a hierarchy of higher and lower order streets that are designed as primary and minor movement routes;
- To provide a network of well connected, attractive and inclusive streets and footpaths that deliver a choice of different movement routes;
- To introduce footpaths around the perimeter of the development for informal recreation;
- To design streets that are principally for people with priorities for pedestrians and cyclists e.g varied surface treatments, tree planting.

Social infrastructure

- To provide functional recreational open spaces for play and informal recreation in accessible locations, which are overlooked by adjacent properties;
- To incorporate the use of public spaces at key intersections to reinforce legibility and provide focal areas within the layout as a place to meet. Public spaces should be faced by the fronts of buildings;
- To provide an equipped children's play area that is easily accessible, overlooked and integrated with existing and proposed landscape features.

Environment

- To provide green infrastructure encompassing a network of integrated green spaces with links to the surrounding area;
- To ensure that native specimen trees are integrated into the design, either by retaining suitable trees or reserving sufficient space for new tree planting, including mature specimen trees where appropriate;
- To create an attenuation basin which is designed to provide habitat for wildlife and amenity benefits e.g attractive, naturalistic design and marginal planting;
- To retain and reinforce the existing tree group with additional tree planting along the southern boundary to provide a visual screen and to help integrate built form with the wider landscape setting;
- To create a green frontage along Dover Road.
- To conserve existing landscape and habitat features to deliver an immediate mature landscape setting for the built development;
- To encourage use of sustainable materials and techniques including measures to deliver energy efficiency and water conservation.



Typical Image: Areas of public open space and play



Typical Image: Attenuation pond and wetland planting



Typical Image: New public footpath routes

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Chapter 4.0

Design Proposals

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



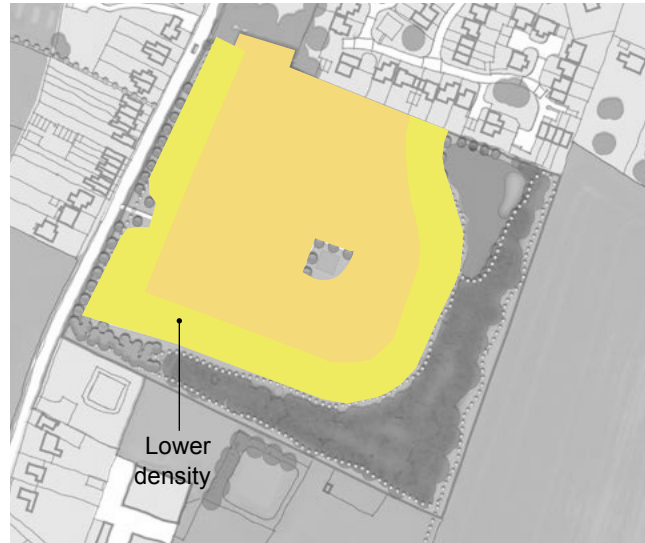
4.0 Design Proposals

Design Evolution

The development proposals have been guided by an iterative design process, which has been informed by consultation with key stakeholders. This process has comprised environmental and technical work including an analysis of landscape, ecology, water and drainage, heritage and movement.

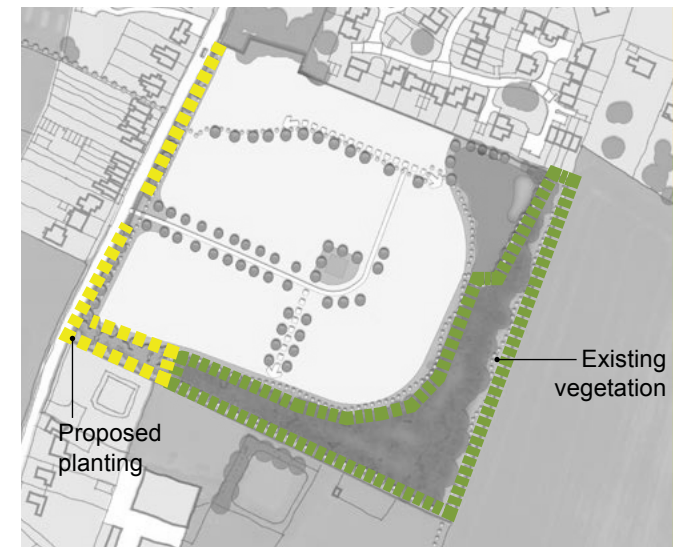
It has also considered the development's relationship with Walmer and the surrounding context. Identifying the distinctive components that define local character has been a fundamental starting point for the design. The design specifically does not seek to recreate, or generate a pastiche of what has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

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



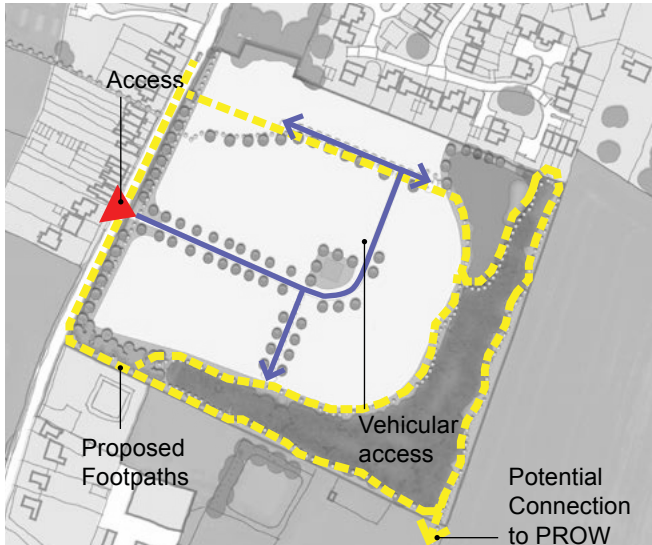
Indicative land use, scale and density

- *Development would be set back from the site boundaries to allow for existing vegetation to be retained and the creation of a green frontage along Dover Road;*
- *Areas of public open space are proposed: along the site boundaries as well as in the centre of the site, reflecting the green spaces found in the adjacent Thistledown development.*
- *Development on the edges of the developable area will be lower density creating a filtered edge to the proposals.*



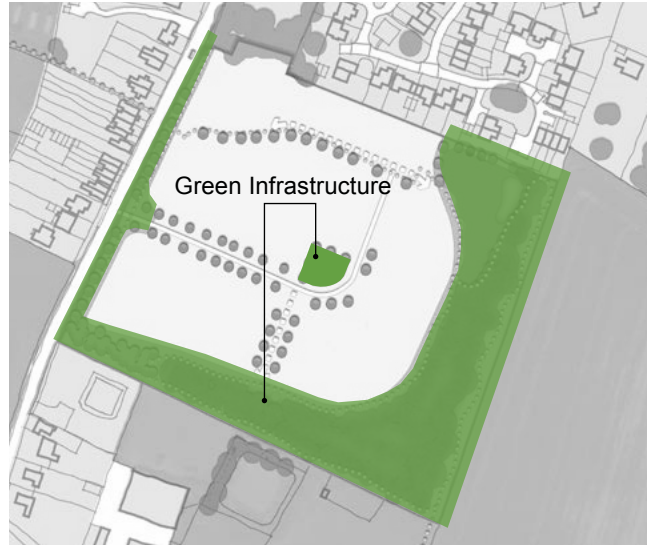
Views

- *Retention of tree group along eastern and southern boundary and extension of tree group along southern boundary to mitigate the visual effects of built form on the wider landscape;*
- *Planting along western boundary to mitigate effects on Dover Road.*



Access and Movement

- The primary vehicular access point would be from Dover Road;
- Creation of a primary street as part of a legible street hierarchy;
- Provision of footpaths around the site perimeter and potential connection to the PROW to the south of the site.



Green Infrastructure

- Built development set within robust framework of multi-functional Green Infrastructure;
- Areas of public open space provide opportunities for informal and formal recreation and habitat creation;
- Equipped play area located in focal area of open space to the centre of the site reflecting local character of incidental open space;
- Existing vegetation retained within landscape buffers and setbacks;
- New planting along site boundaries where appropriate, within areas of open space, on plots and along streets.



Topography and Drainage

- Attenuation area within open space in the north east of the site;
- The attenuation area would be designed as an attractive, safe landscape feature and to maximise benefits to wildlife, etc. through provision of planting.

4.0 Design Proposals

Use and Amount

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

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

The outline planning application covers an area of 4.06Ha and comprises of the following elements:

- *Residential Development (2.54Ha)*
- *Green Infrastructure (1.52 Ha)*

Residential Development (2.54Ha)

The development provides land for up to 85 houses with associated streets, private gardens and parking space. Housing will be set within an attractive network of connected streets and surrounding greenspace. Character streets will create variety and a sense of identity within the layout.

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

The average net density for housing blocks will be approximately 33 dwellings per hectare. Generally, lower densities will occur along the southern, eastern and western edges. Higher densities will be primarily located along the main vehicular route.

Green Infrastructure (1.52Ha)

One of the key elements of the design vision is to create an attractive, multi-functional landscape setting for the development. The green infrastructure (GI) would deliver functional well designed spaces that will enhance biodiversity and landscape character as well as providing play and recreation opportunities. The GI would include the following:

- *Existing retained habitats and features (e.g existing tree group, boundary vegetation) as supported by both the Walmer Design Statement and the Kent Design Guide;*
- *New areas of greenspace along the southern, western and eastern boundaries;*
- *Focal square at centre of development to reflect local character;*
- *An attenuation basin in the north east of the site;*
- *Equipped children's play area;*
- *New footpaths through the open space within the site.*



Figure 12: Development Framework