

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT DOCUMENT

Proposed Residential Development

Willowbrook

Land east of Iwade

June 2024



W I L L O W B R O O K

I W A D E

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PROJECT TEAM

Client

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Ecology

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01 Willowbrook, Land East of Iwade INTRODUCTION

1.0 THIS DOCUMENT

This document is a Design and Access Statement intended to support the Reserved Matters Application for 455 dwellings and a community building to the land east of Iwade, known as Willowbrook for the purposes of the application marketing.

The 15.957ha site was approved, under the hybrid application 19/503974, for outline permission of up to 466 dwellings across three parcels; E1,E2 & N2, a community building and full permission for the adjoining country park.

This reserved matters application is for parcels E1 and E2, totaling 455 dwellings, and the community building.
Parcel N2, for the remaining 11 dwellings, covered by the outline application, will be subject to a separate application.

The document seeks to explain the design evolution from the parameters and concepts, which were considered at outline application stage, and how these have been realised and expanded upon into the final design to meet the vision for a contemporary, locally distinctive development.

This Design and Access Statement, in accordance with Swale Borough Council guidance, aims to:

- Describe the design principles and concepts applied to the development, including aspects such as amount, layout, scale, landscaping, and appearance.
- Outline the steps taken to assess the development's context and explain how the design considers this context in terms of its proposed use and the specified aspects.
- Explain the adopted design approach for access.
- Justify the selection of the internal access routes, detailing how these choices have influenced the overall design principles of the development site.
- Put forth the design approach for the housing and how the character areas influence the elevational treatment across the site.
- Showcase a high quality and well through out landscaping scheme that links through to the country park



02 Willowbrook, Land East of Iwade SITE ASSESSMENT

2.0 THE SITE & WIDER CONTEXT

The land is situated in Iwade, within the Swale District of Kent, approximately four kilometers from the district center of Sittingbourne and two kilometers south of the Sheppey Crossing, which connects the mainland to the Isle of Sheppey.

Both Iwade and Sittingbourne have been designated for residential expansion in the Swale Local Plan to address housing demand, utilising suitable lower-quality agricultural land.

The 15.957ha Site is located just East of Iwade, a rural service centre. The western boundary of the site is characterised by residential development which principally backs onto the site. At the southern boundary the new site access is under construction on Grovehurst Road. The new roundabout junction also serves a new residential development of 69 homes also currently under construction

LANDSCAPE & BIODIVERSITY

The landscape around Iwade features two distinct environments: historical fruit farming countryside and marshes and wetlands that were once used for sheep and cattle grazing. Iwade is near several areas of natural significance, including the Medway Estuary, River Swale, North Kent Marshes, Isle of Sheppey, and Milton Creek Country Park.

The site is within 300 meters of a Ramsar Wetland designation, the Medway Estuary and Marshes (a Site of Special Scientific Interest), and a designated Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV). According to the Kent County Council Landscape Assessment, the site lies within the Greater Thames Estuary and the Fruit Belt around Sittingbourne.

The Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal states that development in Iwade should adhere to the generic guidelines for Fruit Belt Landscape Types to protect fruit and hop production in the area. The Swale Local Plan indicates that, outside the Isle of Sheppey, Iwade is one of the few areas in the borough with lower-quality agricultural land.

Summary:

Iwade is surrounded by a variety of high-quality landscapes, but the site itself is of low agricultural quality.

Action for Design:

Enhance the quality of multi-functional green spaces on the site and ensure good links and views to the significant green landscapes beyond, while maintaining a sense of separation between Iwade and Sittingbourne.



The Kent Trust Orchards for Everyone



Surrounding Marshes & Wetlands



Surrounding Agricultural Land

CHARACTER

Sittingbourne, with a population of 49,300, is the main town at the center of the borough, offering primary employment opportunities and services. Its expansion was initially driven by its strategic location between the London to Dover route, and more recently, its direct rail connection to central London has contributed to further growth.

Near Iwade is the Isle of Sheppey, separated from the mainland by the Swale. Sheerness, the island's main town, is notable for its traditional seaside character and its historical and ongoing industrial activities, including a former naval dockyard and a current port facility. A new bridge, built in 2006, enhances connectivity to the island and is highly visible from Iwade.

Iwade itself appears on maps dating back to 1769. While only a few historical buildings and orchards remain, most of the built environment dates from the 20th and 21st centuries.

Summary:

Iwade’s character is defined by its proximity to the coast and its rapid growth since the late 1990s, evolving from a small cluster of development around Ferry Road. Iwade expanded in a planned manner following its identification as a new settlement in RPG9A and later became a ‘demonstration project’ for Kent Design. Since then, the village has experienced rapid expansion, showcasing various styles of traditional Kent vernacular. The design process for this submission has been guided by examples of good design that are deemed most effective for the village.

Action for Design:

A review of the character of local Kent architecture is needed to support the design and inform design principles for the layout, scale, and density of buildings in central areas, residential roads, and rural fringes.

MOVEMENT

The A249 is a major road that runs along the eastern side of Iwade, connecting the village to the Isle of Sheppey and Maidstone, and providing vehicular access to the A2, leading to Chatham/Rochester and Faversham/Canterbury. However, the A249 acts as a physical barrier, especially for cyclists and pedestrians.

The area is relatively well-connected for leisure routes, with cycle paths leading to the Saxon Shore Way and Sheerness Way cycle routes. A network of public right-of-way paths offers walking links to the fruit farming countryside to the west and the marshes landscape to the north.

Iwade is served by several bus routes, including no. 334, which provides a regular service between Sheerness and Maidstone via Iwade and Sittingbourne. Additionally, bus no. 321 offers, a service on school days between Iwade and secondary schools in Sittingbourne.

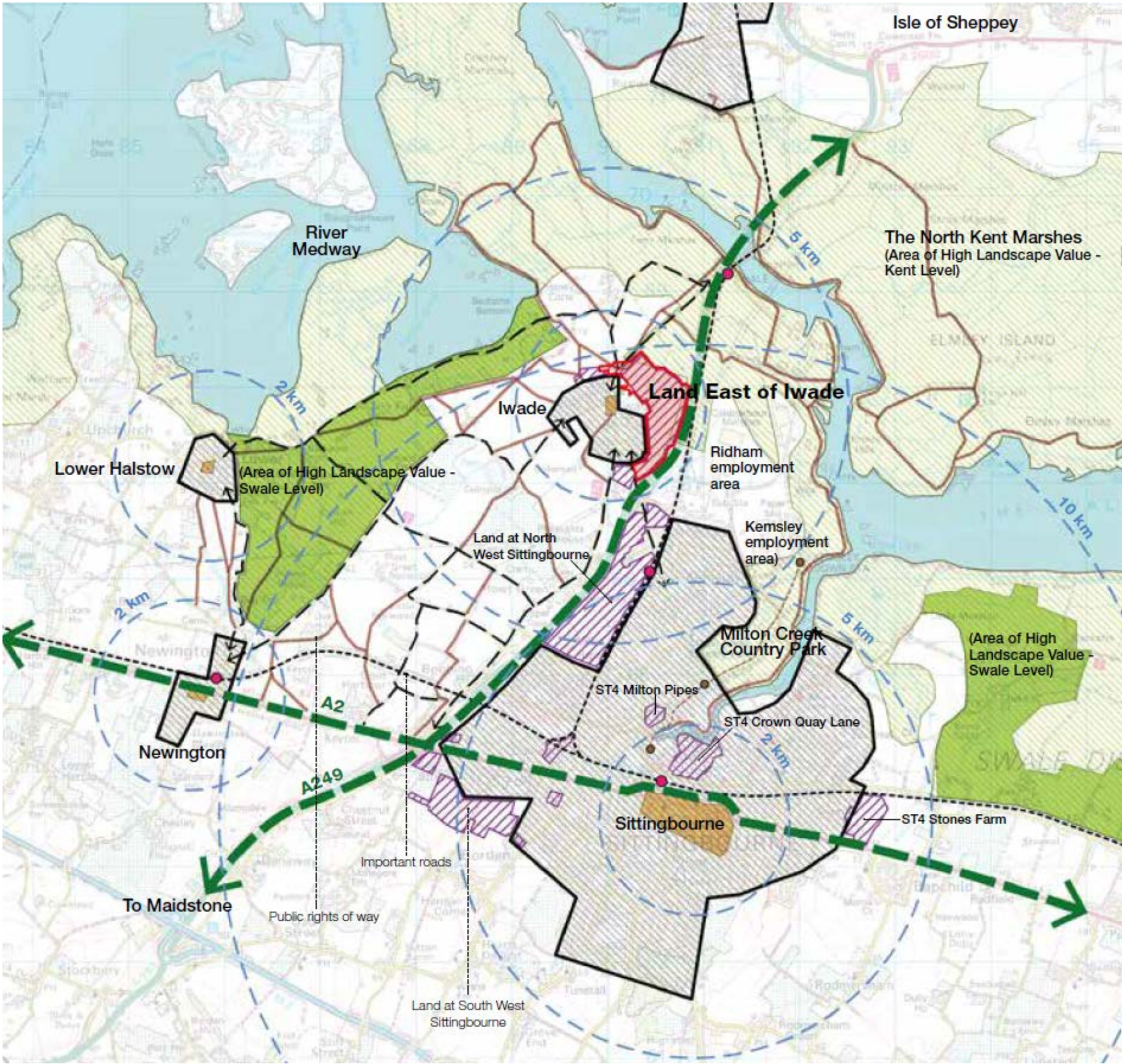
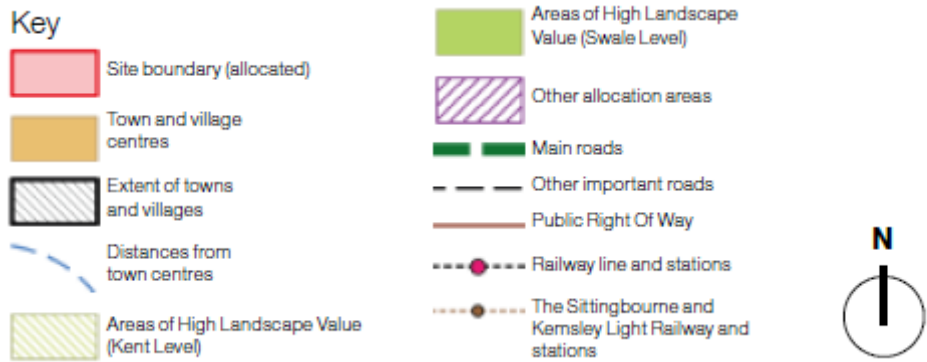
The nearest train stations are Kemsley Station and Swale Station, both about a five-minute bike ride from the site. These stations are on a local line that connects Sheerness-on-Sea to Sittingbourne. From Sittingbourne, there is a direct train line to London, with a journey time of approximately one hour.

Summary:

Iwade is well-connected in terms of vehicular and public transport, with several pedestrian and cycle routes to and around the village.

Action for Design:

The design proposal should, where possible, connect to existing roads and paths, and enhance the provision of cycle and pedestrian links.



SOCIAL CONTEXT

The diversity of its communities – ages, ethnicity, skills, and trades – has been Swale’s strength for centuries.

Population growth in Swale has been, and continues to be, largely driven by migration. However, older population is aging, with a death rate higher than both the Kent and South East averages. The expanding urban populations are mainly a result of younger people and families moving into the area. This influx of younger residents brings a rising birth rate, which helps to balance the aging population and maintain the working-age demographic. Approximately 58% of the population is urban-based, with a significant proportion (42%) living in the rural areas of the Borough.

Iwade primary school is located at the heart if the village, to the west of the site. Secondary school students from Iwade travel to Sittingbourne for their education, attending Westlands School, Borden Grammar School, or Sittingbourne Community College.

Summary:

The Local Plan allocation recognises that Iwade needs to support the increase in population, particularly for younger people and families.

Action for Design:

Housing typologies should be suitable for a variety of occupants, especially younger people and families. Open spaces and play facilities should be designed accordingly.



The Sheppey Crossing, seen from the site



Southern entrance into Iwade village on Grovehurst Road



Iwade Shops along School Lane

ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Present-day industries in Swale, including paper, brick, brewing, cement, steel, and maritime sectors, have historical roots. Swale is involved in manufacturing, agriculture, imports, and transportation, although there are relatively fewer offices, financial, and high-tech businesses compared to other parts of the South East.

Despite occasional oversight, Swale boasts the second-largest agricultural workforce in Kent and makes a significant contribution to UK food supplies, especially in fruit and cereals.

The main economic activity centers in Swale are the town centers and industrial estates in Sittingbourne, Faversham, Sheerness, and Queenborough. Eurolink in Sittingbourne stands out as the largest industrial center, while Sheerness serves as a deep water port with rail freight connections, serving as one of the UK’s largest import points for fruit, timber, paper products, and vehicles.

The site is conveniently located, being a 5-minute drive or 15-minute cycle from main local employment areas such as Ridham and Kemsley, and a 10-minute drive or 20-minute cycle from Sittingbourne town centre. Whilst Iwade does not boast a 'high street', local independent retail are located throughout the village mixed in with residential properties. The planned improvement to the A249 junction at Grovehurst Road will enhance east-west movement, particularly benefiting individuals willing to cycle or walk to work.

Summary:

Iwade, particularly on the east side, is situated near areas of industrial employment and agriculture.

Action for Design:

Ensure that movement into and out of the site is efficient, addressing the needs of residents, and that the character of the development is considerate of the positive aspects of the local industries.

2.1 LOCAL CONTEXT

VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT

Back in 1869, Iwade was just a quaint hamlet housing around 228 individuals, nestled around what we now know as The Street/Ferry Road. Over the decades until the early 1980s, it remained small, witnessing only a gradual uptick in its population. However, the 1980s heralded a significant change as large-scale housing projects commenced, leading to a sudden surge in residents. By 2001, the population had swelled to 1140, ballooning further to 3900 by 2016.

Swale council continues to support the expansion of Iwade to meet identified housing needs in the district. The site is therefore allocated for major housing development in the adopted local plan.

This proposed development entails the addition of 455 new dwellings to the village's east, aligning with the 2017 Local Plan (Policy A17), which identifies this region as prime for new housing.

Summary:

Over the past three decades, Iwade has experienced substantial growth. To address this, the proposal seeks to add 455 homes along with expansive landscaped open spaces, a Country Park, and a community hall, meeting the allocated land requirements.

Action for Design:

The masterplan design approach adheres to Policy A17's criteria and strategically integrates the new developments with existing infrastructure in Iwade, ensuring harmonious coexistence with recent housing expansions.

Since its designation as a growth point in the 1990s, the village of Iwade has seen significant expansion, with approximately 1,200 new homes constructed during this period. This development initiative has brought forth numerous community benefits, including a broader range of housing options, the establishment of new community and commercial facilities, the creation of open spaces for recreational activities such as play and sports, and improved traffic management systems.

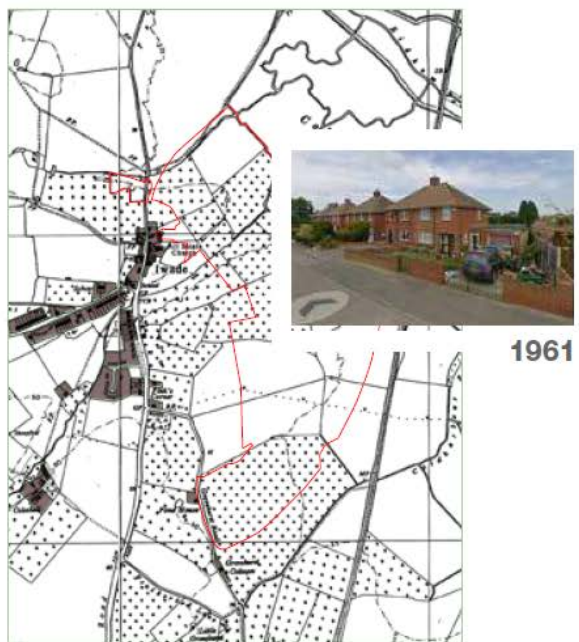
Presently, Iwade boasts a thriving infrastructure that includes a primary school, three nurseries, a health center, a village hall, The Woolpack public house, a combined post office and village shop, two hairdressers, a car repair garage, and a variety of amenities clustered around the village square, such as a mini-supermarket, a café, a pharmacy, and takeaway services.



1869



1938



1961



1984-91



2015



Future

LANDSCAPE OF LAND EAST OF IWADE

The eastern site, encompassing E1, E2 spans 15.9 hectares of land characterised by large arable and pasture fields, with mostly flat to gently sloping terrain. Although adorned with some mature hedgerows and a poplar shelterbelt defining field boundaries, this area remains visually exposed, offering prominent vistas from the A249 and the northern region of Sittingbourne. The current southern and western urban peripheries lack significant greenery, contrasting starkly with the broader landscape influenced by the A249 and its industrial backdrop to the east, as noted in the Local Plan.

The shelter belts, established in 2008, serve to fortify agricultural boundaries and provide shelter. In accordance with Policy A17, these belts delineate the proposed final development extent eastward of the village, aligning with the Swale Borough Local Plan Iwade Expansion plan.

Moreover, the northern boundary of the future Country Park merges with a broader wet meadow expanse, signifying the onset of the Swale marshes historically utilised for livestock farming. Termed as the 'Ridham Marshes', these lands hold prestigious designations including Ramsar Wetland status, recognition as an SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest), SPA (Special Protection Area), and inclusion within the Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV).

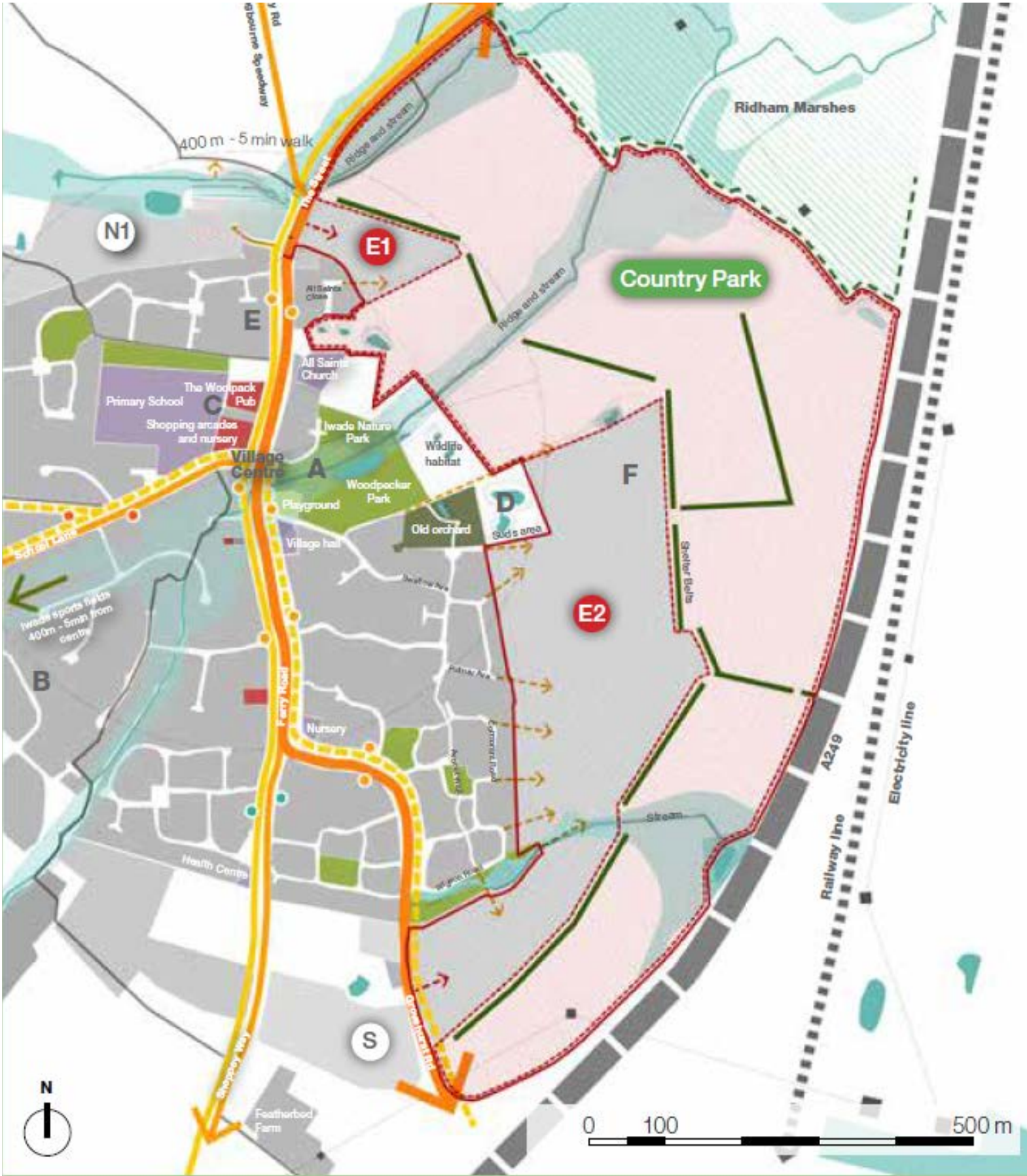


Figure 2.13 from the outline DAS

TOPOGRAPHY

The site slopes from Iwade village in the west towards lower areas in the north and east, with three watercourses running through it.

The Iwade Stream flows through the proposed Country Park from west to east, joining a network of watercourses and drainage ditches to the north. This system feeds into the Ridham Fleet and Swale.

Another watercourse in the southern E2 area collects runoff from existing development to the north, flowing west to east before discharging into a Highways England drainage pond. From there, runoff drains into a watercourse along the eastern boundary.

Development parcel N2 is bordered to the north by an unnamed watercourse, passing under roads before draining north through the proposed Country Park.

A pond on the northern boundary of E2 may be a remnant of agricultural activity, while ponds to the west are linked to adjacent residential drainage.

The site, primarily arable, includes hedgerows, trees, and scrub. A smaller portion near Iwade is designated for housing and a community hall, with a 15-hectare Country Park included.

Adjacent to the site, the Swale SSSI, SPA, and Ramsar Site are designated for their wildlife and habitat. The proposed Country Park acts as a buffer, separating the development from the SPA boundary.

Summary:

The eastern edge of Iwade features diverse existing edge treatments, with views primarily directed towards the A249 and industrial features in the countryside.

Action for Design:

The new development must establish robust landscape connections with both the village center and the new Country Park. Leveraging the existing shelter belts will be crucial in shaping a strong settlement edge while also mitigating views towards the A249 and industrial areas.

1



View from Parcel E2 looking North-West towards Parcel E1.

The development bordering parcel E1 is characterised by rear facades and gardens, with some fairly plain gable ends and a dense hedgerow, along with parking courts at ground level.

2



View from centre of parcel E2 looking West.

Two developments, constructed at separate times, feature predominantly back gardens facing the village edge. Limited potential access points are identified within each development.

3



View from western boundary looking South-West.

Ponds and clusters of trees form a natural visual barrier between Woodpecker Park and the fields to the east.

4



View from Parcel E1 looking North-East towards the Sheppey Crossing.

The views from the site are relatively clear, with hedges and trees occasionally breaking up the visual line.

5



View from outside Parcel E2 within the Country Park looking East towards the A249.

Views across to the A249 are screened by existing hedging and trees, shelter belts add a further buffer.

OPEN SPACES

In the Fruit Belt Landscape Type surrounding Iwade, land has traditionally been utilised for farming, primarily as orchards for fruit production, evolving into more intensive crop cultivation in recent years.

Woodpecker Park:
Situating centrally in Iwade, Woodpecker Park serves as a leisure outdoor area, linking residents to the wider countryside. Its character is mainly informal and rural, featuring remnant orchards and newly created terrestrial habitats (Image A).

Central Village Square:
A relatively new square in the village center, bordered by retail unit blocks and facing Woodpecker Park and the central bus stop. However, its connection with the park is limited due to inward orientation and a small, set-back entrance (C).

Facility Green Spaces:
The church, school, current village hall, and pub each have their parking areas and private green spaces (E).

Residential Developments:
Housing developments from 1984-1991 feature numerous cul-de-sacs, whereas recent ones incorporate greens, squares, shared streets, and playgrounds. Courtyards at the rear of small blocks of flats address parking needs and reduce street congestion (B).

Ponds for Drainage:
Several ponds surrounding the site serve drainage purposes, doubling as pleasant areas for residents to walk and relax (D).

Residential Development Border:
The site allocated for residential development is bordered by shelter belts to the east, occasionally accompanied by informal paths used by residents for dog walking (F).

Summary:
A variety of open spaces within and surrounding Iwade contribute to its green and rural village character, further emphasised by the primary route through the village.

Action for Design:
The new development must uphold the rural ambiance of the area, establish suitable green routes and spaces, and participate in reshaping the gateways to Iwade. This is especially crucial considering the community's aspiration to position the village hall as a prominent feature at the settlement's entrance.



A. The Woodpecker Park



B. Mansfield Drive Square



C. Shopping Square



D. Pond in the old orchard



E. Pub Garden



F. Site: mostly agricultural fields surrounded by shelter belts

GATEWAYS & HIGH STREET

The heart of Iwade village resides along its primary thoroughfare, The Street/Ferry Road, housing essential amenities such as shops, a park, a pub, a post office, and the venerable 'All Saints Church'. This area boasts the oldest housing stock, including the listed church and the pub.

Sheppey Way:
Extending southwards from the village, Sheppey Way was historically the road leading to the A2. The construction of the A249 between Iwade and Queenborough in 2006 elevated Grovehurst Road (A) as a prominent north-south route to and from the village. Sheppey Way also extends northwards to Old Ferry Road.

Traffic Calming Measures:
The main roads into the village—Sheppey Way, The Street, and Grovehurst Road—feature traffic calming measures (B) such as street narrowing and gateposts, designed to slow incoming traffic on the village periphery. These measures double as informal, green village gateways, lushly vegetated and landscaped to preserve a rural character.

Rural Arteries:
These principal arteries retain a rural and verdant ambiance as they traverse Iwade, adorned with green spaces (D), hedgerows (E), and houses set back with front gardens and small trees.

Site Location:
The site lies adjacent to Grovehurst Road in the south (A) and The Street in the north (F), serving as the primary and sole vehicular access points for the developments.



A. Grovehurst Road South before the chicane – country character



B. Southern chicane



C. Grovehurst Road, looking south



D. Ferry Road - Green avenue, urban character



E. The Street - buildings, front gardens and streets create a village character



F. The beginning of The Street just after the northern chicane

2.2 LOCAL VERNACULAR



Swallow Ave - Light blue weatherboarding used



Cormorant Rd - Neighbouring Coach House (FOG)



Cormorant Rd - Neighbouring Residential, Three storey flats

A detailed character assessment of the areas on and around the site and its immediate context has been undertaken, in order to understand the built form, materials and detailing which are prevalent in the area.



The character assessment shows that the surrounding area is characterised by a range of residential properties from 2, to 3 storeys.



Aerial north site photo



Aerial south site photo



Warehouse nearby site



The Street - Mix of Red brick & White Cladding

A detailed character assessment of the areas on and around the site and its immediate context has been undertaken, in order to understand the built form, materials and detailing which are prevalent in the area.



Orchard Meadows, Grovehurst Road - Detached with Carport



Orchard Meadows, Grovehurst Road - Semi Detached



Featherbed Farm - Semi with brick detailing



Featherbed Farm - Tile Hung with attached Garage

The character assessment shows that the surrounding area is characterised by a range of residential properties from 2, to 3 storeys.



Great Grovehurst Farm- Approved development of 115 no. dwellings

2.3 SITE CONSTRAINTS

Drawing from a comprehensive context appraisal of both Iwade and the development site, the ensuing two pages delineate a succinct overview of the principal opportunities and constraints. These elements serve as foundational pillars informing the proposed design concept and principles.

The followings points highlight the site constraints:

ENVIRONMENT:

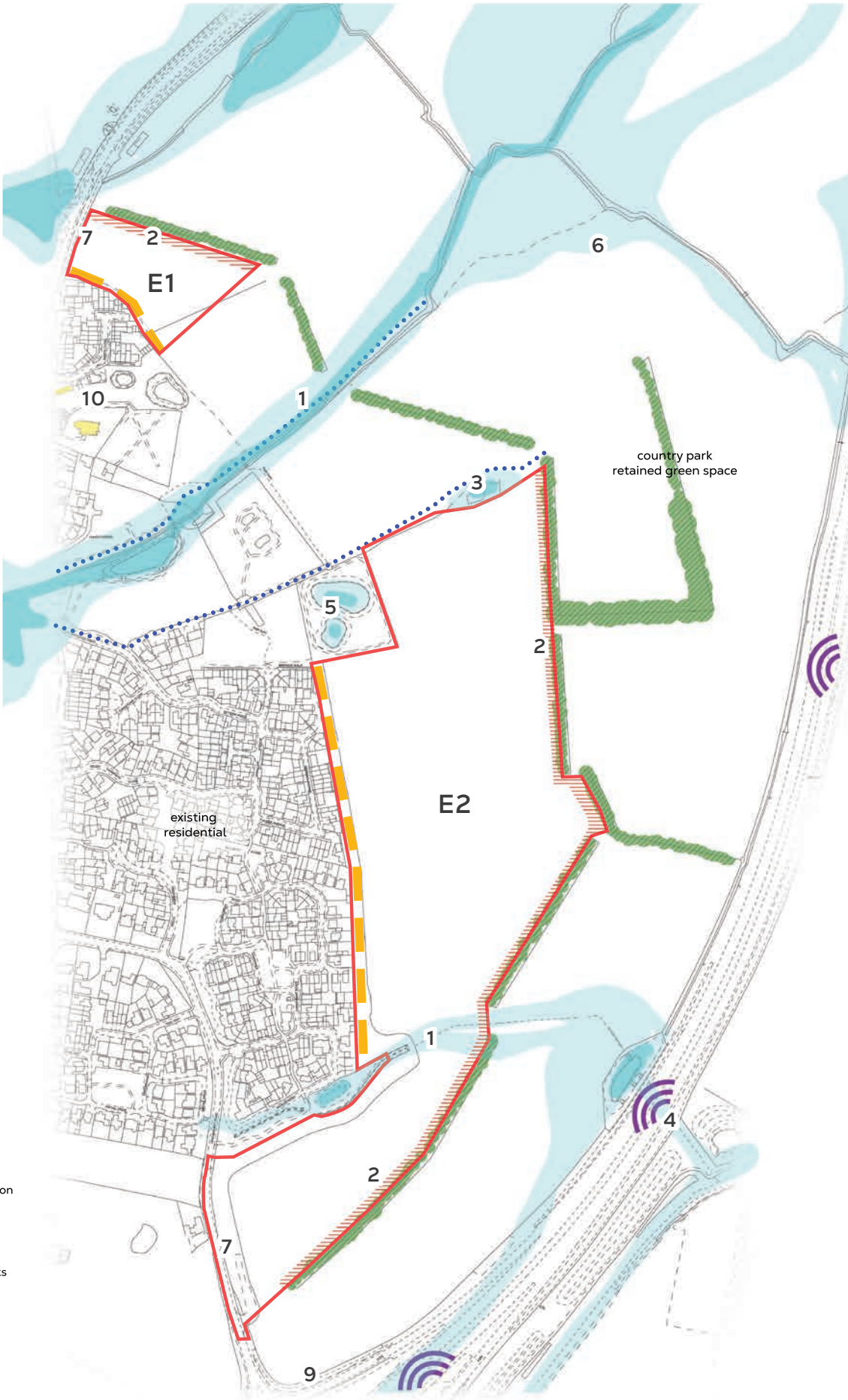
1. Two streams traverse the site, posing flood risk.
2. Dwellings on the development's periphery must maintain setbacks from shelter belts.
3. Existing ponds in close proximity may harbor great crested newts, necessitating mitigation measures.
4. Potential noise, pollution, and vibration from the A249 warrant consideration, particularly in collaboration with shelter belts.
5. Sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) already exist (ponds) and must be integrated into the scheme.
6. Certain low-lying areas face increased flood risk, earmarked for preservation within the Country Park.

ACCESSIBILITY:

7. Limited vehicular access points (one north, one south).
8. Preservation of public rights of way is imperative.
9. Ample space is required to accommodate future A249 junction improvements.

CHARACTER:

10. Proximity to listed buildings necessitates design sensitivity:
 - a. Traditional Agricultural Barn, Grade II
 - b. Church of All Saints, Grade I



2.4 SITE OPPORTUNITIES

The followings points highlight the site opportunities:

ENVIRONMENT:

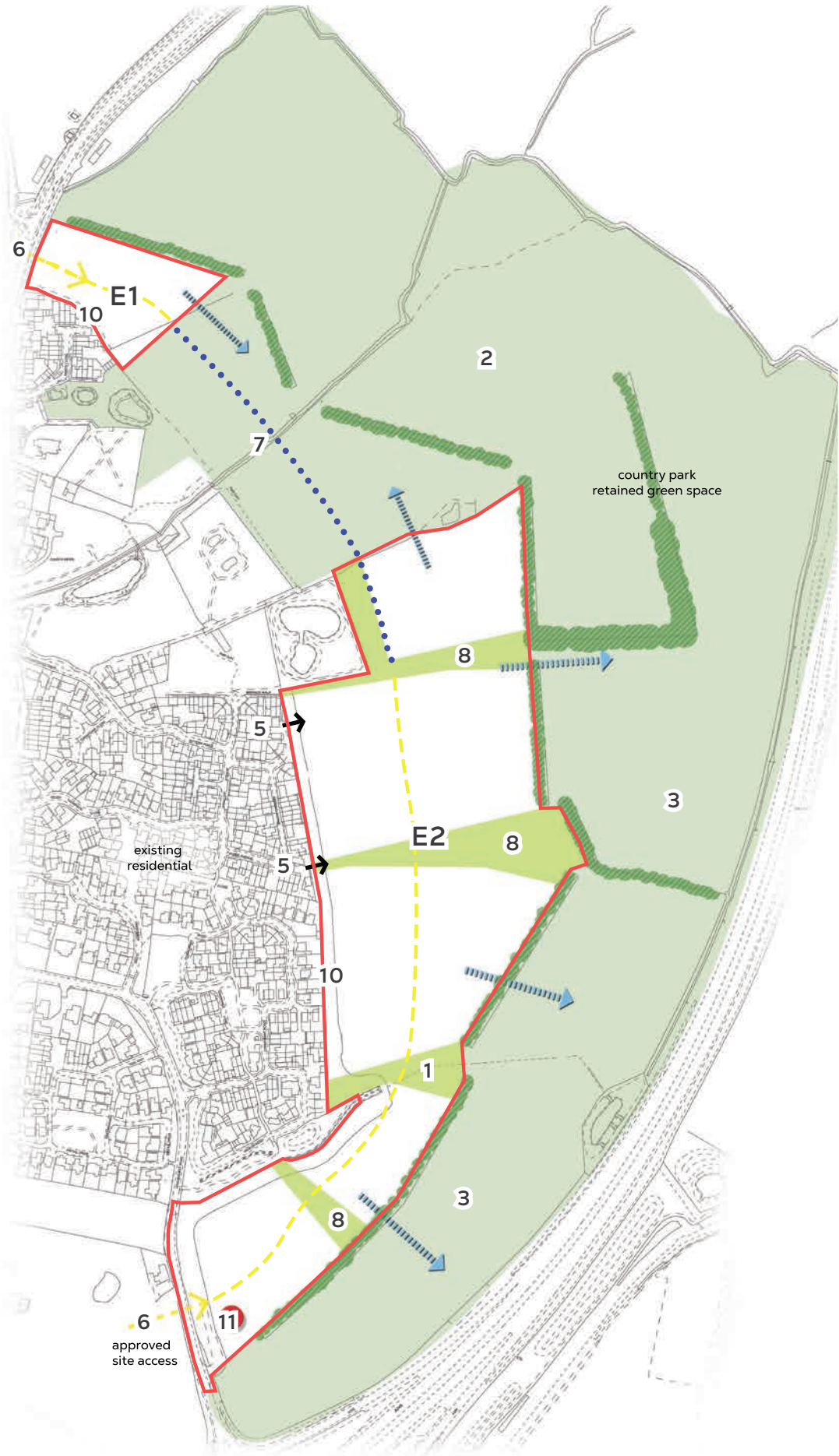
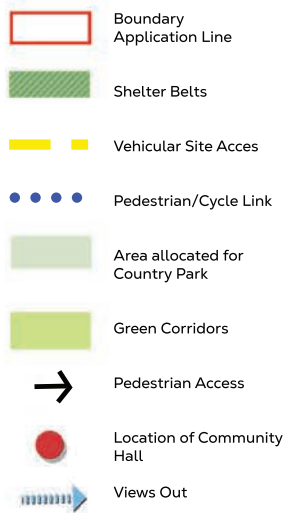
- 1. Opportunity exists to establish green corridors along existing streams and expand Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) features.
- 2. The new Country Park presents a chance to integrate with both the new development and the existing village, enhancing connectivity and amenity space.
- 3. The Country Park serves as a buffer, mitigating road-related noise and pollution while providing a high-quality outdoor recreational area.

ACCESSIBILITY:

- 4. Potential to create links connecting the development to the village center and neighboring homes, as well as to the Country Park.
- 5. Pedestrian connections facilitated via existing avenues such as Swallow Avenue and Fulmar Avenue.
- 6. Vehicular accesses established via The Street and Grovehurst Road
- 7. Opportunities for enhancing pedestrian and cyclist movement throughout the village, within the Country Park, and towards the future A249 improved crossing.
- 8. Potential connections between shelter belt gaps to effectively link the village, development, and Country Park.
- 9. Opportunity to integrate new footpaths with existing rights of way.

CHARACTER:

- 10. Potential for new houses to harmonise with existing rear boundaries, creating appealing enclosed spaces within the development.
- 11. Possibility to redefine village gateways at The Street and Grovehurst Road using a combination of buildings and open spaces, with the new Village Hall in the south serving as a key entrance feature to Iwade.

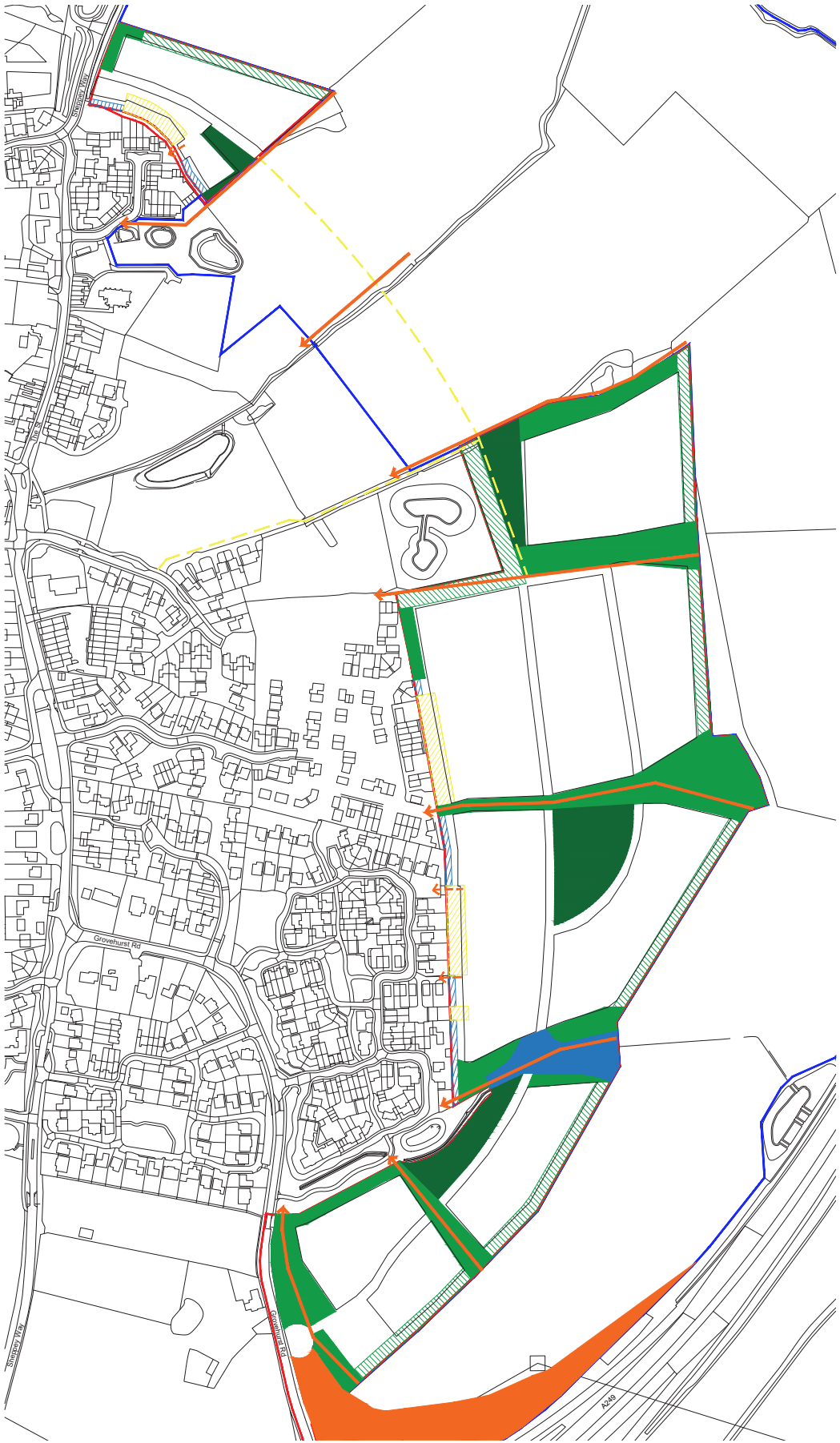


2.5 SITE PARAMETERS

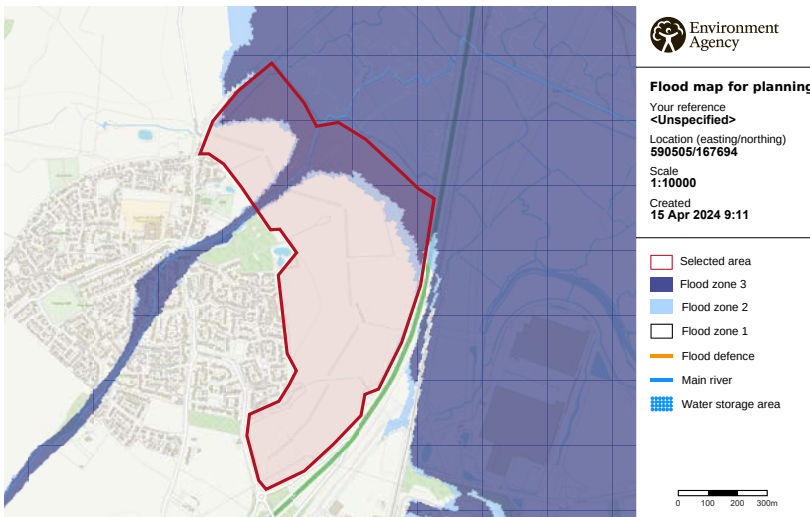
The proposals have considered the development parameters assessed at the outline stage which identifies development areas, green corridors open space, and the necessary offsets from existing structures, buildings, and hedgerows. This careful consideration ensures that the development respects and integrates with the natural and built environment, promoting a sustainable and harmonious layout.

Considering the outline parameters and the site's linear and narrow depth, the development options are limited in terms of layout.

- No buildings 14m
- house fronts recommended
- No buildings 15m
- back gardens recommended
- No buildings 5m
- house sides recommended
- Green Corridors
- no build
- Open space
- no build
- Surface water flooding
- no build
- Safeguarded space for A249
- no build
- Cycle/pedestrian route connection
- indicative (not PROW)
- Proposed Pedestrian/Cycle link
- Potential Links



Map showing areas with restricted or limited building.



Map showing areas of site under the risk of flooding.

03 Willowbrook, Land East of Iwade PLANNING POLICY

3.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

As has been set out, the Site benefits from planning permission for:

Hybrid Application Comprising – Outline Application (All Matter Reserved Except For Access) for up 466 Dwellings and a Community Hall. Full Planning Application for Access from Grovehurst Road and the Street and for a Country Park (app ref 19/503974).

The Country Park element of the development is already consented in Full and therefore does not form part of these proposals. Similarly, the accesses from Groveshurst Road and The Street are also approved, with final details conditioned.

The original planning application was accompanied by a Design & Access Statement (DAS) and various parameter plans. Not all of these are approved with only elements of them needing to be taken into account as part of the development of the reserved matters application, as set out in the planning permission. Notwithstanding, this statement considers how the proposals have responded to the broad design principles considered as part of the original DAS.

PLANNING POLICY

The grant of the permission for the development of the Site follows the Site's allocation in the Adopted Local Plan, 2017, pursuant to Policy A17 "Iwade Expansion". The allocation covers a larger area for a minimum of 572 homes, with this Site forming land "east of Iwade". The essential considerations for "east of Iwade" (as set out in Policy A17) include:

- Secure a Landscape Strategy and Ecological Management Plan;
- Respond to the local landscape character area and distinctiveness, with housing that shall be of two storeys in the north-east of the site, whilst respecting the scale and form of adjoining existing residential development to the west;
- Avoid substantial harm to the setting (and in views to and from) to All Saint's Parish Church;
- Provide a primary access from Grovehurst Road, and secondary access points connecting with existing development to the west; and
- Reserve land for community facilities where identified as appropriate.

As also set out in the accompanying Planning Statement and in addition to the above, the proposals have been developed having regard to other adopted Local Plan policies including the following:

- Policy CP2 – Promoting Sustainable Transport
- Policy CP7 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment – Providing for Green Infrastructure
- Policy DM7 – Vehicle parking
- Policy DM8 – Affordable Housing
- Policy DM14 – General development criteria
- Policy DM17 – Open space, sports and recreation provision
- Policy DM19 – Sustainable design and construction
- Policy DM21 – Water, flooding and drainage
- Policy DM28 – Biodiversity and geological conservation
- Policy DM 29 – Woodland, Trees and Hedges

The following material considerations have also been taken into account including:

- National Design Guide, January 2021
- Planting on New Development SPG, (undated)
- Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal SPD, 2011
- Parking Standards SPD, June 2020

S106

As established in the S106 accompanying the consent, 30 affordable units are to be delivered, comprising 90% (27) affordable rented units, and 10% (3) shared ownership units. Of these 28 are to be M4(2) and 2 M4(3).

Engagement

As set out elsewhere in this Statement, the proposals have been informed by pre-application discussions with Officers from Swale Borough Council and Kent Country Council (KCC) Highways.

04 Willowbrook, Land East of Iwade DESIGN CONCEPT

4.0 THE DESIGN CONCEPT

A strong design concept was developed at the outline application stage which further influenced how the parameters could be intertemperated to deliver a high quality development.

The following section describes each of these design concepts and how they are intended to be brought forward within the designs for the proposed layout.

The 5 key principles are:

1.

MASTERPLAN INTEGRATES SENSITIVELY WITH EXISTING HOUSING ON THE EASTERN SIDE OF IWADE.

A site visit was undertaken to establish both the proposed and potential links through to the existing development to the western boundary.

Three key areas were identified; with a pedestrian link to the north, a pedestrian link to the south and the main pedestrian and cycle link through to Fulmar Avenue in the centre of the site boundary.

These connections are enhanced though the character of the area and landscaping.

The central connection, from Fulmar Avenue, is tree lined and inviting which forms an east-west connection through the site and into the country park.
2.

MASTERPLAN CREATES AN EFFECTIVE EDGE OF THE VILLAGE AND ONTO THE COUNTRY PARK

The character of this area, as explained in further detail within this document, aims to create a transition between the development and the country park.

The outward facing properties are more generously spaced and along with traditional architectural features provide an active visual connection between the two uses.

Car parking is set back behind the front lines of the properties and road finishes softened to create a rural feel which is stepped down to the Country Park

Green vistas and breaks between the buildings allow the country park to merge with the development.
3.

LINEAR GREEN CORRIDORS PULL THE CHARACTER OF THE RURAL COUNTRYSIDE INTO THE SITE AND CREATE EAST-WEST AXIS CONNECTIONS BETWEEN EXISTING STREET BREAKS AND BREAKS IN THE SHELTER BELT NEXT TO THE COUNTRY PARK

Early in the design of the masterplan the east-west connections which were identified in the outline permission were mapped to ensure the scheme reflected the intention.

Several of these connections were through the Country Park itself, however within the site four main east-west vistas were identified.

In the early revisions of the proposal, these were present but had been weakened by the alignment of units and lack of landscaping. This was seen and through further design development enhanced to ensure the connections were strong and obvious which helps to pull the visible attributes of the Country Park through the site and connect them with the existing development beyond.



4. MASTERPLAN STRENGTHENED BY CREATING A PRIMARY PRINCIPLE AVENUE ROUTE BETWEEN THE TWO DEVELOPMENTS VIA THE COUNTRY PARK

This was a key principal established at an early stage with the Principle Avenue route acting as a spine running through the development.

The axis is defined not only through the architecture of the properties but also the relationship to the landscaping and the feeling of the tree lined avenue.

The character of this axis, as explained in further detail within this document, required a constant architectural style to create a coherent style which other areas feed from.

Although the architectural style is constant the route is broken up with different character areas which relate to its surroundings. These include; the north and south gateways, southern and central areas and the area within the heart of the development which frames the open space.

These areas are characterised through their relationship with the landscaping and open space while the architecture and tree lined road remain as the continuous variant.

At the northern boundary of Parcel E2 the connection crosses the Country Park with a cycle and pedestrian link to join up with Parcel E1.

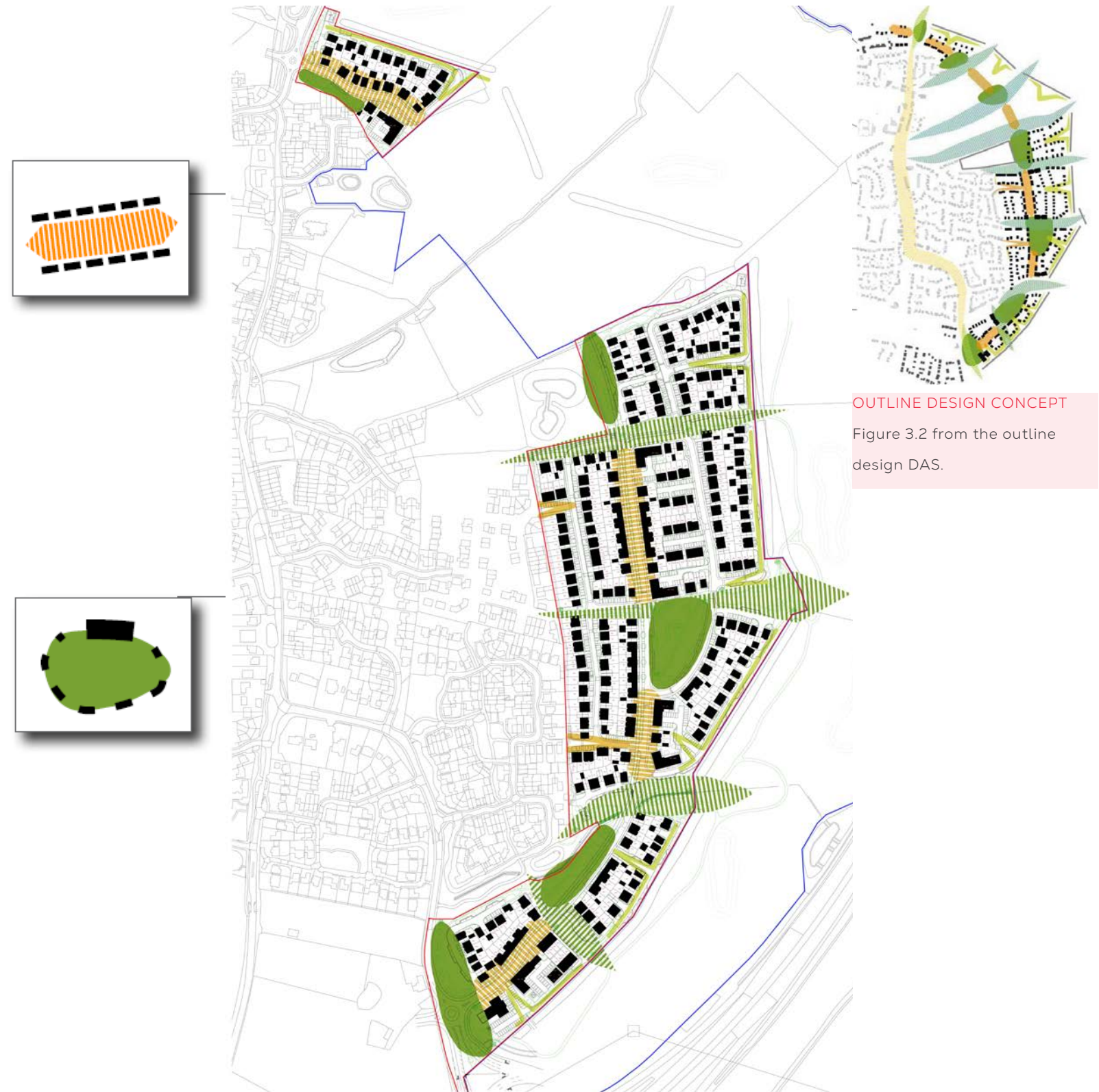
5. PRIMARY ROUTE IS GIVEN CHARACTER AND IDENTITY BY INCLUDING GREEN SPACES OR MOVEMENTS AT THE POINT OF INTERSECTIONS WITH THE EAST-WEST GREEN CORRIDORS.

With the green corridors and a primary Principle Avenue route in place, green spaces have been identified to create character throughout the journey of the site.

These green spaces, as identified at outline application stage, give an identity to each zone at the point of intersection between the primary route and green corridors.

Not only do the areas occur but they also create a feeling of openness and quality by introducing features such as; structured landscaping, active house frontages, traffic calming, changes in road material and a variation of building heights.

The key intersections are further enhanced with three storey buildings creating a focal point of reference and framing the space.



05 Willowbrook, Land East of Iwade PRE-APPLICATION & RESPONSE

5.0 PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

A pre-application meeting was held with Swale Borough Council on 1st May 2004 to discuss the initial reserved matters layout for the site.

A summary of the feedback was as follows;

1. ACCESS

Response: Access from Grovehurst Road as agreed, however access into parcel E2 needs to reflect the consented roundabout to allow access into Parcel N2.

Action: This was taken on board and updated to the consented roundabout

2. PERMEABILITY AND CONNECTIVITY

Response: Layout currently lacks visible connection and integration with the existing housing estate on the eastern edge. This requires further integration

Action: The outline permission detailed certain connections and made suggestions for potential connections to be considered. A further site visit was undertaken to further understand the proposed layout and how these connections could be made / used to enhance both the existing and proposed development.

3. INTERNAL STREET STRUCTURE

Response: The layout comprises of primary, secondary and traffic free routes providing a legible hierarchy of movement. The layout needs to ensure east-west connectivity is considered

Action: This was taken on board and the east-west connectivity strengthened.

4. STREET TYPOLOGIES

Response: Street typologies have been reduced from the outline permission. Layout needs to ensure that the intended character is reflected.

Loop lane is clearly not comparable to the outline in position of feel and needs consideration.

Action: Through layout development the loop road was updated to more closely reflect that within the outline illustrative plan. Character of areas and street typologies were also developed.



5. STREET CHARACTER CHANGES

- Response:

Increased carriageway widths and reduced landscape features alter the relationship between the landscape and the built environment.
- Action:

Following discussions with KCC Highways it was agreed that the proposed carriageway width could be reduce to 6m. This allowed for an increase of landscaping and a strengthened tree lined avenue. Further landscaping relations have also been considered and improved as the layout developed.

Street design comparison within further design development

6. LOSS OF PARKWAY STREET TYPOLOGY

- Response:

The reduction in planting and lack of linear parks diminishes the intended parkways.
- Action:

This was taken on board and linear parks were strengthened. This can be clearly seen in the following parameter comparison diagrams.

7. LANDSCAPING

- Response:

There needs to be a stronger commitment to tree lined streets and planting or applicant must justify lack of trees along street.
- Action:

Following further design development this has been addressed and a commitment to tree lined streets and planting confirmed

8. PARKING STRATEGY

- Response:

The proposed variety of approaches to provide parking is appropriate. The distributor road, loop and parking courts require consideration to avoid unbroken stretches of landscaping. Avoid turning heads jutting into open spaces on perimeter block design. Consider access to flats from distributor road rather than connector streets.
- Action:

The above approach has been considered and reflects in the final design, landscaping has been maximised and turning heads altered. Access to flats from distributor road was considered, however this was not brought forward as this approach meant reduced landscaping and building connectivity along the distributor road which went against the original design philosophy. Keeping the distributor road with building and mass ensures the character of the area is achieved.



9. EMERGENCY ACCESS

Response: The inclusion of pedestrian and emergency access to Fulmar Avenue and Swallow Avenue needs to be clarified.

Action: The revised layout and landscaping design ensures the connections are made and are a key part of the layout.

10: DENSITY & HEIGHT

Response: The proposed density and building heights are in accordance with the outline application.

11. CHARACTER APPEARANCE

Response: Ensure identity, design and character of the layout, buildings and streets build upon the initial submission.

Action: Further design development demonstrates how the proposals respond to the site's different characteristics.

