



# LAND AT HIGH HOUSE FARM

NINFIELD ROAD  
BEXHILL-ON-SEA

VISION DOCUMENT

July 2024

Catesby Estates plc

part of Urban&Civic



RURBAN ESTATES



Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex

## OUR VISION

*'The vision for the Site is to deliver a high quality, locally distinctive and sustainable addition to Bexhill-on-Sea.'*

*The new proposals will provide much needed market and affordable housing, generous public open spaces, recreation and play areas, enhanced areas of biodiversity and community infrastructure including new orchard planting, play space, recreational routes, and a communitiy hub/indoor meeting space/shop.'*



Prepared by: For:



Catesby Estates plc

part of Urban&Civic



URBAN ESTATES

In consultation with:



PEGASUS GROUP

LD&A DESIGN



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## Introduction

An overall introduction to Bexhill, the Site and development proposals, including overarching objectives and Vision.

Introduction

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## Context Analysis

A summary of all the site assessment work carried to ensure an informed approach to the design development of the Site.

Context Analysis

3

## Our Vision

Presentation of the Illustrative Masterplan and the design principles and strategies adopted to ensure a robust development proposal.

Our Vision

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## Conclusion

A summary of the key benefits of the proposal and its merit as the next logical location for new development in Bexhill.

Conclusion

# 1

## Introduction

We are delighted to bring forward land at High House Farm, Ninfield Road, Bexhill-on-Sea for residential development to Rother District Council. The proposals set out in this document are supported by a series of technical reports on highways, heritage and landscape, and informed by in depth Site analysis.

The plan opposite identifies its location. This greenfield farmland site is approximately 16 hectares, positioned on the northern edge of Bexhill-on-Sea. A working quarry and cemetery are found to the southwest and south of the Site respectively. To the north of the Site lies a holiday park and the settlement of Lunsford's Cross.

Proposals will promote good, contextual design, aligning with design guidance documents from Rother District Council.

In order to highlight the benefits of this Site, this Vision Document sets out our key aims and objectives for the Site.

### The Vision Document aims to:

- Present our understanding of how future housing needs could be met, and why we feel this Site has a role to play;
- Identify the characteristics of the Site;
- Present our proposals and emerging concept for the Site, and an illustrative masterplan;
- Set out why we think the Site should be allocated in the emerging Local Plan.

Land at Bexhill-on-Sea can deliver the following:



Approximately 250 new, high quality family homes with a range of sizes, types and tenures.



Children's natural play space, promoting outdoor activity and cognitive learning.



New footpaths within the Site, connecting to the existing context.



Enhanced boundary planting, woodland buffers and creation of meaningful open, green spaces.



Enhanced biodiversity features to provide new habitats and protect existing features.



Space for orchard planting and edible hedgerows for food growing community use.



Contributions to local community improvements.



Potential for a community hub/ indoor meeting space and/or shop.

**KEY:**

— Site boundary



0 50 100 150 200 250 m



# 2

## Contextual Analysis

### Planning Policy Context

The Site falls within the administrative area of Rother District Council (RDC) and on the edge of the settlement of Bexhill which is by far the largest settlement within the district. The 2014 Core Strategy directed growth to Bexhill to reflect its position as the most sustainable settlement within the district and to promote economic development.

RDC is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan to set out a strategy for development across the district for the period to 2040 and is seeking views on the overall spatial strategy, the vision and objectives, its supporting evidence base documents and any of the Plan's draft policies, through a Regulation 18 public consultation exercise.

The draft plan's vision is that "bold solutions will have successfully addressed the climate and biodiversity emergencies and the housing crisis." These are translated into two Overall Priorities: "Green to the Core" which

means considering the impact of all planning decisions on the climate emergency, the biodiversity crisis and the High Weald National Landscape, and "Live Well Locally." The latter means considering the goal of creating healthy, sustainable communities, supporting residents in terms of access to jobs, services and facilities, connected and compact neighbourhoods and new places that foster a sense of belonging, identity and shared experience. Figure 1 within the draft Local Plan indicates that the site falls within a potential "Live Well Locally" area.

The Site falls in and amongst a number of committed and planned developments, many of which were allocated as development sites through the 2019 Development and Site Allocations Development Plan Document (the DaSA). Whilst High House Farm was not allocated within the DaSA, it was positively assessed within the 2013 SHLAA which formed part of the evidence base for the development

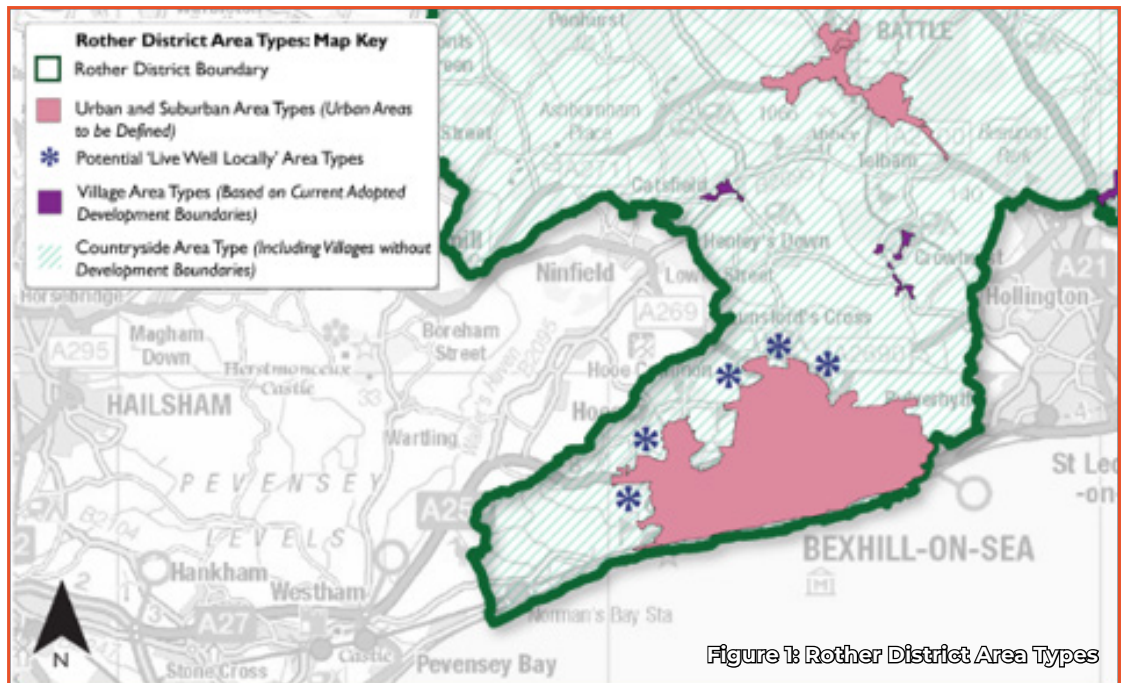


Figure 1: Rother District Area Types

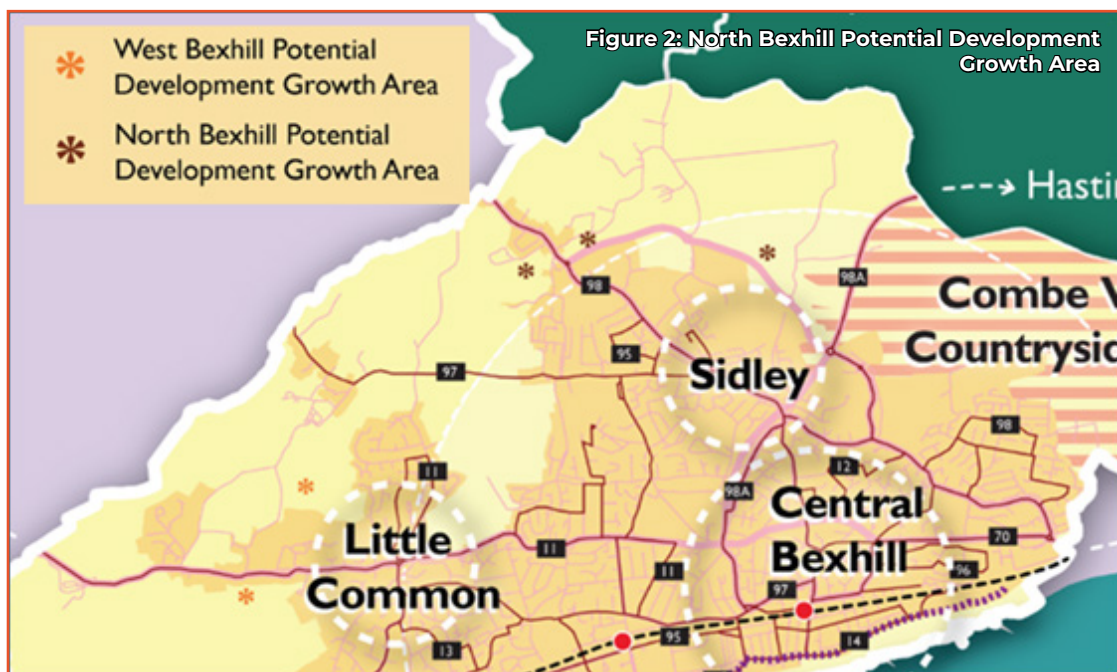


Figure 2: North Bexhill Potential Development Growth Area

plan at the time, and was identified within a preferred 'Broad Location' area (reference BX109). Of note, the description extract relevant to the site is as follows:

*"West of A269 - This area (as highlighted through the Landscape Assessment) are undulating south facing slopes, which are framed by a good ridge-top tree belt to the north. The area is generally well screened from wider views, although it would benefit from additional tree cover in order to enhance the landscape character. The lay of the land helps to contain the area in wider views, although the closer to the brickworks, the more visually exposed the site becomes."*

The emerging Local Plan will be underpinned by a new evidence base which includes a Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA), published in April 2024, which assesses the site under reference BEX0132. In summary it is identified as 'potentially available' for an estimated 250 dwellings, with an anticipated timescale for development within 5 years, subject to further assessment or investigation. According to the HELAA, the site could potentially be suitable for a major residential-led scheme in principle, to link to already committed and potential additional development further east, focused around Haven Brook Avenue.

Rother's proposed development strategy has been split into five spatial sub-areas, each with their own vision statement and identified distribution of development.

Bexhill is identified as the key focus for sustainable growth, within the urban area on brownfield sites and at its edges through 'live well locally' urban extensions on greenfield sites. The proposed strategy seeks to locate development on the northern and western edges of the built-up area of Bexhill to create new compact, connected communities. The site at High House Farm is located within the North Bexhill Potential Development Growth Area, as shown in Figure 2 within the draft Local Plan.

The Site is considered to comprise a logical extension to the already allocated sites in Northern Bexhill, served well by the new road infrastructure in this part of the town. Catesby Estates has entered into a promotion agreement to bring this land forward for housing, it can therefore be considered available. There are no known viability issues, legal or third-party constraints present and there are no impediments to the site being allocated for development commencing early within the Plan period.



**Site BEX0072**  
Site identified for potential residential and employment development

**RR/2021/1059/P**  
Outline application for 32 dwellings  
*Pending*

**RR/2023/1706/P**  
Outline application for 5 dwellings  
*Pending*

**Site BEX0204**  
Site identified for potential residential development

**RR/2023/129/P**  
Outline application for 5 dwellings  
*Pending*

**RR/2022/2131/P**  
Full application for 89 dwellings  
*Pending*

**Site BEX6**  
Site allocated for housing within Local Plan

**RR/2021/1656/P**  
Full application for 210 dwellings  
*Appeal Allowed*

**KEY:**

- Site boundary
- - - Public Right of Way (PRoW)
- - - 2013 Broad Location
- 2024 HELAA potential sites
- Bus stops
- Existing local planning applications
- Local Plan allocations
- 🎓 Schools
- 👶 Nursery
- ⚰ Cemetery
- ⌛ Golf course
- 🏠 Convenience store
- 🛒 Supermarket
- 🏋️ Gym/leisure centre
- ⚽ Sports pitches
- 👥 Community centre
- 🍷 Bar/Pub
- 🍴 Restaurant/cafe/Takeaway
- 🌱 Allotments
- ⚙️ Employment area
- 🌟 Place of worship
- 🛢️ Petrol Station
- ✉️ Post office
- 🏠 Care home
- + GP surgery





Context Analysis



## Site Constraints and Opportunities

The Site is greenfield farmland located to the west of Ninfield Road (A269). All edges of the Site are defined by existing field boundaries marked by hedgerow trees. To the east, the Site is bounded predominantly by and area of Ancient Woodland. The northern boundary runs alongside a Public Right of Way (PRoW).

The western boundary of the Site is bordered by a small area of woodland of mature trees, shrub and hedgerow. This boundary runs along the rear of an active quarry site that is accessed from Turkey Road.

There are further hedgerows and small clusters of existing trees along field boundaries through the Site. These will be retained and enhanced where possible.

A summary of the technical evidence and analysis is summarised here and on the following pages, with a Site Features Plan summarising the existing nature of the Site on pages 14-15.

### Ecology

Phase 2 surveys are being undertaken to identify any important ecological habitats. Existing hedgerows and trees should be retained and enhanced where possible to assist with onsite green infrastructure and to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain. The Site is within the Pevensey Levels Hydrological Zone and therefore an appropriate drainage solution is required to ensure water quality from surface water runoff.

### Flood Risk & Drainage

The Site falls within flood zone 1 (low risk), according to latest Environment Agency data, and is therefore suitable for residential development.

There is evidence of some nominal surface water flooding on Site. In order to mitigate this a SuDS feature through the Site (providing a conveyance channel), will ensure that the surrounding area will be free from surface water flooding.

### Noise

Noise is not considered to be a constraint to development. Ninfield Road on the western boundary is likely to be the main noise source, however effects are expected to be relatively localised and limited to those houses closest to this noise source. Mitigation if required is expected to be limited.

We are aware of the brickworks and quarry adjacent to the south-west boundary of the development and the potential impact of the quarrying works has been considered. The quarry operators are required to mitigate the impact of their work on the adjacent sensitive receptors, particularly in respect of noise, air quality and land stability. However, a further precautionary offset has been provided as part of the proposed development plan which will mitigate any residual impacts.

### Archaeology & Heritage

A Heritage Note has been prepared alongside this Vision Document detailing the heritage assessment and recommendations. The key findings are summarised here.

The Grade II Listed High House lies to the north of the proposed access. This is a late 18th-century or early 19th-century dwelling. Whilst 20th-century mapping suggests a possibly associated farm complex within the site, the earliest available landholding information suggests that the landholding associated with the asset was limited to a relatively small plot extending to the north, which lay beyond the site. All of the extant farm buildings within the site post-date the mid 20th century, and are not considered to be curtilage Listed. These buildings largely screen the rest of the site from the Listed building, although dynamic views along the footpath to the west take in the asset and the site. Historic maps show a larger road splay to the south of High House, which may have been associated with the track extending to the west. The dwelling on the frontage of Ninfield Road within the site is not of historic interest.

The barns, which are of no intrinsic architectural interest, would be demolished, resolving their derelict appearance in the vicinity of the Listed building. The modest historic illustrative value that they hold could be appropriately perpetuated through the provision of a building of agricultural architectural character, such as a shelter, expressing the local vernacular of red brick and clay tile roof.

With regards to archaeology, a Roman ditch and other, undated features were recorded during evaluation works north of the site at Chestnut Meadow Caravan and Campsite. As such, whilst there may be potential for associated remains within the site, there is no current evidence to suggest that remains of a significance that would represent a constraint to development.



Proposed access point from Ninfield Road



PRoW & access track running along northern edge



View from the central hedgerow looking east towards Ninfield Road



The PRoW running along the Northern boundary



View looking south from the northern boundary



View from the western field from the northern boundary looking south

### Landscape

A Landscape and Visual Appraisal report has been prepared alongside this Vision Document, providing details on the landscape assessment and recommendations. The key findings are summarised here.

The Site is well-vegetated, comprising prevalent and established vegetation along its boundaries and within its internal field pattern. This, in combination with the undulating landform, limits visibility between the Site and its surroundings. Bexhill's settlement edge lies to the south, occupying the north-facing valley side. Views of housing are visible along the ridgeline from locations to the north of the settlement and the Site.

The Site offers opportunities to create a landscape-led scheme that would deliver a beneficial addition to the District without undue consequences on landscape character and views. While the Proposed Development will inevitably transform the Site from an open field into a built environment, altering its land use and character, the landscape strategy can prioritise the preservation and enhancement of the Site's established landscape features and ensure that the areas that are more visible from its surroundings are well integrated.

New recreational, play and open areas can be created as part of proposals, permitting new and existing residents the space to gather

and enjoy recreationally, in combination with the development of new pathways through and out of the Site, creating links to nearby settlements and integrating with the broader network of accessible routes.

### Access & Movement

A Transport Technical Note has been prepared alongside this Vision Document, providing details on the landscape assessment and recommendations. The key findings are summarised here.

The Site is located in a sustainable location with ready access to local footpath and cycle networks, allowing for safe pedestrian and cyclist access to the entirety of Bexhill and beyond. The site is located within close proximity to a pair of bus stops that are served at an hourly rate by the Number 98 route and bi-hourly by the Number 95 route, and is located within a 13-minute cycle ride of Bexhill Railway Station, which provides access to London Victoria, Ore, Brighton and Ashford International. The site is also located within suitable walking distance of a number of services and facilities, including a supermarket, convenience store, GP and post office.

Vehicular access to the site will be achieved by way of a new priority junction with the A269 Ninfield Road. This access would incorporate an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing, as well as pedestrian footways measuring 2.0m that will tie into the existing pedestrian infrastructure on Ninfield Road.





Context Analysis

**KEY:**

- Site boundary
- - - Public Right of way (PRoW)
- - - 2013 SHLAA boundary
- ▨ Surface water flooding
- Existing trees/hedgerows (incl. areas of undergrowth) (to be retained where possible)
- Existing Ancient woodland (with 15m buffer)
- Residential boundaries
- Existing bus stops
- Existing buildings to be demolished
- Listed buildings
- Existing Cemetery
- Existing recreation ground
- Existing pond

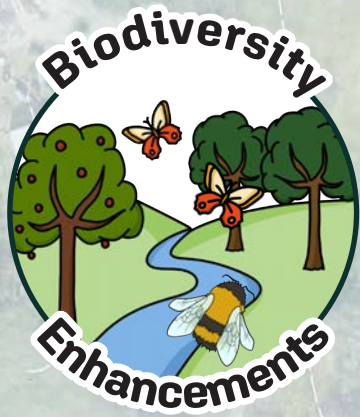
## Understanding the Site

The Site analysis and technical studies have highlighted the key features of the Site which need to be taken into consideration in any future proposals going forward. The Site has the opportunity to deliver new homes set within an existing and proposed landscape setting, responding sensitively to nearby heritage assets. Through careful consideration of existing and new movement routes, proposals could provide a well connected series of pedestrian and cycle friendly streets and pathways to promote active travel, connecting to the existing infrastructure north of Bexhill.



Context Analysis





## Our Vision

The Site provides an opportunity to deliver new homes set within a strong and mature landscape framework. Green and blue corridors protect and enhance existing tree lines and hedgerows, linking to a variety of open spaces for new residents and the surrounding community to enjoy. A landscaped gateway to the east, alongside a barn style shelter creates a sensitive response to existing heritage assets.

A well connected network of routes for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles will link the Site to the existing movement network, to create a highly legible and accessible extension to the neighbourhood. Routes will be designed to promote walking and cycling above the car, with connections to public transport, encouraging healthy lifestyles and sustainable travel. All homes will be within easy reach of a variety of open spaces on their doorstep. Community focused facilities, such as a community hub/meeting space or shop, an area of play and orchard, will be provided to serve the new and existing community.



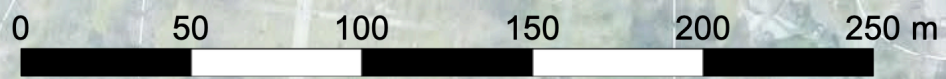




**KEY:**

- Site boundary
- Public Right of way (PRoW)
- Proposed recreational routes
- Green corridors incl. retained and enhanced green and blue corridors
- Residential parcels (a range of characters and densities)
- Gateway into the Site
- Play area
- Attenuation features
- Proposed primary street
- Green focal space
- Potential for a community hub/ indoor meeting space and/or shop
- Landscaped gateway & barn shelter
- 1 Community orchard & wildflower meadow
- 2 Protected Ancient Woodland
- 3 Minor connection to existing track

Net Developable Area (6.91ha) = 250 dwellings at an average density of 35 dph. Note the Site could deliver more homes at a higher density.



# 3

## Our Vision

The illustrative vision masterplan (p.16-17) and the adjacent diagrams summarise one way in which the site could be developed, to deliver 250 homes through a landscape led and sustainable approach.

### A Sustainable Place

A sustainable approach to design has been carefully considered, including:



**Location:** the Site is located in a highly sustainable location on the edge of Bexhill, identified as the most sustainable settlement in the district for growth



**Layout:** The Site layout makes efficient use of land and proposes an average density of 35dph to achieve approximately 250 homes, alongside open space and active travel routes to promote healthy lifestyles through walking, cycling and exploring nature



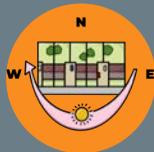
**Green infrastructure:** the landscape led masterplan ensures that green infrastructure and biodiversity are central to the proposals. Existing trees, hedgerows and habitats are retained and enhanced with native planting, supporting biodiversity and ecological resilience.



**Blue infrastructure:** sustainable urban drainage has been integrated into the proposals, aligning with the topography, managing surface water runoff and contributing to biodiversity with rich planted habitats



**Homes for all:** a mix of dwelling sizes and types will allow for a sustainable and diverse community to thrive, including family homes, starter homes, provision for home working and homes suitable for the elderly



**Buildings:** buildings will be designed to be fully compliant with Building Regulation requirements, with high sustainability standards of energy efficiency. The proposed layout promotes east-west streets to support solar gain and use of solar panels



**Live Locally:** the Site has the potential to deliver a community hub, meeting space or shop to serve the new and existing community to reduce the need to travel outside the site for every day activities

### 1. Establishing a Landscape Framework

The proposals respect and enhance the existing natural features of the Site, creating a landscape framework of mature vegetation and varied open spaces, with woodland and mature trees as a backdrop.

Landscape corridors through the Site will accommodate new planting and sustainable drainage, supporting the existing habitats as well as protecting glimpsed sea views southwards.



### 2. Promoting Connectivity & Active Travel

Walking and cycling will be prioritised through the design of direct, safe, people friendly routes as part of a wider movement network, connecting to the existing movement infrastructure in Bexhill. Leisure routes will form part of this network, providing opportunities to explore nature in and around the Site.

A new access point will be design on Ninfield Road, its design and landscaping being sensitive to the proximity of the listed building to the north of the gateway.



### 3. New homes for the district

The proposals will deliver a variety of new homes in a range of sizes and tenures with a character that respects the local vernacular. The density proposed varies across the Site with higher densities of up to 38dph to the east, and lower densities up to 30dph to we west to respect the existing settlement pattern and topography of the Site.

A range of homes would be delivered, with a balance of tenures and sizes, in accordance with local policy to meet local needs.



# 4

## Conclusion

### Benefits of the proposal

This document has set out a Vision for the development of land at High House Farm, Ninfield Road, Bexhill-on-Sea.

The Site has been analysed through technical investigations, site visits and desktop study to understand its constraints and characteristics to inform proposals that realise the potential of the Site in delivering a sustainable residential led development.

The illustrative masterplan presents one way in which the Site could be delivered. Proposals respect and enhance the existing natural features of the Site, creating new homes set within mature and varied landscape.

- Bexhill-on-Sea is a sustainable location and should make a contribution towards meeting future housing needs;
- Land at High House Farm avoids more sensitive areas around the Districts and is well related to existing development and already allocated development sites, rounding off the settlement boundary;
- The land is free of significant constraints and suitable for development of around 250 dwellings;
- The proposals can accommodate significant areas of new tree planting, attractive open spaces and habitat creation to deliver onsite biodiversity net gain; and
- A masterplan has been prepared to show how an attractive residential area could be delivered, with space for recreation, play and nature, and good connectivity to existing services within the settlement.

The Site at High House Farm can deliver the following benefits:



Approximately 250 new, high quality family homes with a range of sizes, types and tenures.



Children's natural play space, promoting outdoor activity and cognitive learning.



New footpaths within the Site, connecting to the existing context.



Enhanced boundary planting, woodland buffers and creation of meaningful open, green spaces.



Enhanced biodiversity features to provide new habitats and protect existing features.



Space for orchard planting and edible hedgerows for food growing community use.



Contributions to local community improvements.



Potential for a community hub/ indoor meeting space and/or shop.



Peartree Lane

Lunsford's Cross

Ninfield Road  
Summer Road

St Mark's Lane

Bexhill-on-Sea

Conclusion

Catesby Estates plc

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