

WEDGEWOOD HOMES

LAND AT HOUGHTON GREEN LANE, PLAYDEN

ACCESS APPRAISAL TECHNICAL NOTE

**REPORT REF.
2601460-ACE-XX-XX-RP-C-0101**

March 2026

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Drawings

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Proposed Access Location

Document Control Sheet

REV	ISSUE PURPOSE	AUTHOR	CHECKED	APPROVED	DATE
-	DRAFT	SS	JE	DRAFT	12/03/26
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Distribution

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Ardent Consulting Engineers (ACE) has been appointed by Wedgewood Homes to advise on highways matters to support representations for the Regulation 18 version of the Draft Rother Local Plan 2025-2042, with regard to Land at Houghton Green Lane, Playden.
- 1.2. This Access Appraisal Technical Note (TN) has been prepared to support representations to Rother District Council (RDC) in their capacity as Local Planning Authority. East Sussex County Council (ESCC) act as the Local Highway Authority.
- 1.3. It is understood that a development of 9 dwellings is proposed at the site, either alone, or in combination with further dwellings on neighbouring land. The site is currently draft allocated alongside neighbouring land for a total of 25 dwellings (10 within the site subject of this report and 15 within the neighbouring site), with a proposed access via the Women's Institute Car Park immediately adjacent to the site's eastern boundary and accessed from Houghton Green Lane.
- 1.4. It is the representatives' intentions to provide vehicular access to the site from Houghton Green Lane, to the north and main pedestrian access from Rye Road to the west. Accordingly, this TN has been prepared to summarise the proposed access arrangements and address their suitability in comparison to alternative options from Rye Road, or the Women's Institute Car Park.
- 1.5. Following this introduction, this report is structured as follows: -
 - **Section 2** outlines the local context and assesses the suitability of different access locations;
 - **Section 3** describes the proposed access; and
 - **Section 4** provides a summary and conclusion.

2. Access Appraisal

Context

- 2.1. Houghton Green Road is a single-track road of varying width, subject to the National Speed Limit (60 mph). Approximately 800m to the northeast of the proposed access location, the road terminates at a 'Y' junction with Houghton Lane, in turn connecting to Military Road to the southeast and Iden village towards the northwest. Approximately 45m to the west of the proposed access location, the road forms the minor arm of a priority 'T' junction with A268 Rye Road, a main road corridor subject to a 40 mph speed limit, providing connections to Rye towards the south, and Peasmarsch towards the west, alongside numerous other locations within the High Weald area. The Rye Road major arm has a ghost island right turn lane into Houghton Green Lane.
- 2.2. A small car park is located to the east of the site, used for a Women's Institute hall located directly north of the site, also on Houghton Green Lane.

Access Comparison

- 2.3. Three alternative locations have been identified for consideration from which to provide access for the site and neighbouring land. These are:
- From the northern edge of the site, off Houghton Green Lane;
 - From A268 Rye Road to the west of the site; and
 - Via the neighbouring WI Hall Car Park to the east of the site.
- 2.4. The remainder of this Section assesses the feasibility of providing access from each of these locations.

Women's Institute Car Park

- 2.5. With respect to access via the Women's Institute Hall car park, it is noted that RDC has draft-allocated the site alongside adjoining land for the potential delivery of 25 units, with access proposed from the car park to the east of the site.

- 2.6. This location is not considered suitable for vehicular access, as the existing use of the car park presents a risk of obstruction from parked vehicles, which could compromise safe and reliable access, including for emergency services.
- 2.7. Implementing this arrangement would therefore require relocation of the Women's Institute car parking, with no identified strategy for providing alternative spaces. The ownership position of the car park is unclear, so it is unknown whether relocation of the parking is feasible.
- 2.8. The existing road into the WI car park is subject to a levels difference requiring a ramped entry. This could present issues when seeking to deliver an accessible access point into residential development.
- 2.9. While this has not been examined in detail, the bend in Houghton Green Road to the east appears to reduce visibility from the WI car park access compared to the alternative proposed access further to the west. To the east of the WI car park, the land banks up, with vegetation and trees also prominent. To achieve good visibility to the east would require tree removal and cutting of the existing land bank. This would likely have a negative impact on the rural character of the street. If tree/vegetation and cutting were to be avoided, visibility to the east would be considerably lower than what is achievable from an access point further west.
- 2.10. The alternative proposed access from the site (covered later in this report) is located circa 45m from the junction between Houghton Green Lane and Rye Road, whilst the WI car park around 75m from the junction. Given the single-track nature of the road, it is considered that vehicle speeds will be higher at the WI access as there is more time for drivers to accelerate after having entered Houghton Green Lane from Rye Road.
- 2.11. It is therefore concluded that this access option is unlikely to be achievable, given the potential displacement of parking facilities for a long-established community use and the associated operational and safety constraints.

A268 Rye Road

- 2.12. Along the site's western boundary, A268 Rye Road presents several constraints that would make access delivery technically complex and likely disproportionate in cost relative to the scale of the proposed residential development.

- 2.13. As a general rule, the Local Highway Authority would tend to favour a minor road, such as Houghton Green Lane, from which to create a new access junction, rather than a strategic route, such as the A268. On such strategic routes, it is normally preferable to keep access points to a minimum to help maintain the function of carrying traffic safely and efficiently between settlements.
- 2.14. The footway is separated from the carriageway by an approximate 3m wide drainage ditch, mature trees, and a layby incorporating a bus stop. Although no arboricultural or topographical surveys have yet been completed, aerial imagery and a site walkover suggests that a compliant access would likely require significant engineering works to culvert or otherwise address the ditch, together with removal of multiple mature trees, raising environmental concerns. The bus stop may also need to be relocated to allow an access to be provided.
- 2.15. Additional constraints include roadside infrastructure such as traffic signs, postboxes, litter bins, telegraph poles, and other street furniture. Relocation would require extensive coordination with the Local Highways Authority, Royal Mail, RDC's waste services team, and BT Group.
- 2.16. A proposed access from Rye Road could require drivers to wait on Rye Road to turn into the site, blocking traffic on a main corridor route in the area. If accessing from Houghton Green Lane as proposed, there is instead an existing ghost island right turn lane into Houghton Green Lane that prevents waiting drivers blocking northbound traffic.
- 2.17. Existing land uses opposite the site, including accesses serving Rye Waterworks Brewery, prevent achievement of DMRB-compliant stagger distances in accordance with CD123 Paragraph 2.22. A non-compliant crossroads type arrangement would have inherent safety concerns.
- 2.18. It should be noted that the section of Rye Road along the site frontage is subject to a 40mph speed limit and, unlike Houghton Green Lane, is neither close to the end of a road nor are speeds naturally restricted through a single-track layout. Subject to speed survey data, visibility splays of 2.4 by 120m may be required from the access, which could be difficult to achieve within land either under the representative's control or within the public highway, particularly to the north.

2.19. It is therefore concluded that Rye Road does not pose a realistically achievable location for vehicular access, based on the above assessment, and the principle of access from this strategic route is unlikely to be supported by the Local Highway Authority where there is an alternative access solution from an existing lower category road.

2.20. Notwithstanding these constraints, a pedestrian access from Rye Road appears feasible and could be delivered relatively simply and cost-effectively. Rye Road offers a direct footway link to Rye, offering a number of amenities and facilities. This would also provide easy access to the regular local bus services available on the site's western frontage for journeys further afield.

Houghton Green Lane

2.21. In comparison to the other access options considered, Houghton Green Lane offers the most practical and deliverable solution for vehicular access to the site. Unlike A268 Rye Road, delivering access from this location is not expected to require significant engineering works, removal of mature trees, or complex coordination with multiple statutory bodies.

2.22. Direct access from Houghton Green Lane can be achieved without the apparent access rights, land ownership, or operational constraints identified at the Women's Institute Car Park. The junction can be constructed entirely within the site boundary under the control of the applicant, directly onto the carriageway. Access from this location additionally reduces the risk of conflict with passing traffic compared to higher-speed main roads such as Rye Road.

2.23. There is already an established access point in this location, providing current and historic access to the site. This has previously served as access to a much larger agricultural land holding to the south and west.

2.24. **Section 3** establishes the suitability of an access from Houghton Green Lane from a geometric perspective.

3. Access Arrangements

- 3.1. As described in the above assessment of junction location suitability, it has been determined that the most suitable location for a vehicular access point into the site is from Houghton Green Lane.
- 3.2. **ACE Drawing No. 2601460-ACE-XX-XX-DR-C-0501A** presents a preliminary access arrangement prepared in accordance with guidance set out in the East Sussex Local Design Guide for Residential Development and Manual for Streets. The proposed junction comprises a 4.8m wide shared surface. As no footway currently exists along Houghton Green Lane, it is considered that pedestrian connectivity would be most appropriately achieved via a link to the existing footway network on A268 Rye Road. This also ties in with natural desire lines towards nearby bus stops on Rye Road and towards the centres of both Playden and Rye to the south.

Visibility

- 3.3. Houghton Green Lane is subject to the National Speed Limit (60 mph), however, the proposed access is located only approximately 45m from the A268 Rye Road / Houghton Green Lane junction and the carriageway is single-track in nature. It is therefore reasonable to expect that vehicle speeds in the vicinity of the access would be substantially below the National Speed Limit.
- 3.4. A visibility splay of 2.4 by 35.9m can be provided to the west, taken 1m off from the flank wall (towards the junction with Rye Road), in accordance with *Manual for Streets (MfS)* guidance. This splay corresponds to the Stopping Site Distances for 85th percentile vehicle speeds of approximately 27.5mph, again based on MfS guidance for calculation of stopping sight distances (SSDs).
- 3.5. A visibility splay of 2.4m by 77.8m can be provided to the east, which corresponds to an SSD for 85th percentile vehicle speeds of approximately 45.7mph if applying MfS guidance or 23.4mph if applying *DMRB* standards.
- 3.6. The splays achievable are consistent with the nature of Houghton Green Lane in the vicinity of the site access.
- 3.7. Houghton Green Lane is a lightly trafficked road serving only a small number of existing dwellings and the Women's Institute Hall. The proposed development of nine dwellings is expected to generate a very modest increase in traffic, which in turn

would be expected to result in very few traffic conflicts. The site is draft allocated for 10 dwellings, which would also lead to a very modest increase in traffic.

Swept Path Analysis

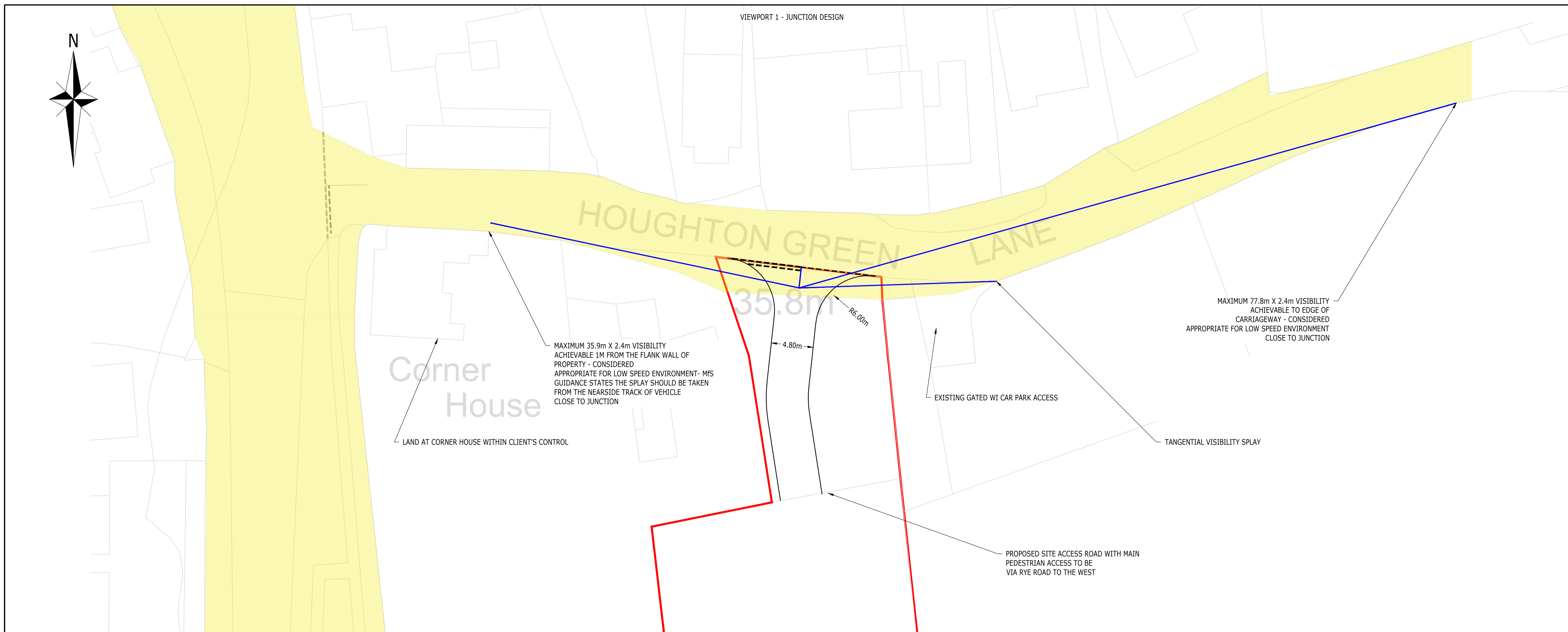
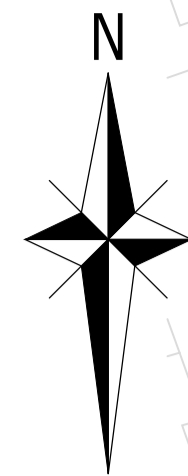
- 3.8. **ACE Drawing No. 2601460-ACE-XX-XX-DR-C-0501A** includes a swept-path analysis for an ESCC standard refuse vehicle entering and exiting the site in forward gear. The analysis shows that the vehicle would encroach into the opposing lane of the minor arm during manoeuvres and that the chassis would hang beyond the edge of the carriageway; however, given that refuse collection occurs infrequently (typically weekly), that the development trip generation would be low, and that there are no pedestrian facilities proposed at this location, this is not expected to create significant highway safety concerns.
- 3.9. It is further considered that the ESCC standard refuse vehicle for swept path analysis is an exceptionally large 12 m-long, 4-axle vehicle with a width of 2.7 m, which would likely exceed the carriageway width on many residential streets and is larger than vehicles typically used. A 4.8 m carriageway width, as proposed, is generally considered sufficient to accommodate passing movements commensurate with a development of this scale, in line with Figure 7.1 of the *Manual for Streets*.

4. Summary and Conclusion

- 4.1. This Access Appraisal TN has been prepared by ACE to support representations to RDC in relation to Land at Houghton Green Lane, Playden, to inform the Regulation 18 version of the Draft Rother Local Plan 2025-2042.
- 4.2. Three options for vehicular access have been considered as part of this TN:
- From Houghton Green Lane;
 - From A268 Rye Road; and
 - Via the WI Hall Car Park.
- 4.3. Due to a range of technical constraints involved with delivering access off A268 Rye Road or the Women’s Institute Car Park, it is considered that Houghton Green Lane is the most suitable location for a vehicular access.
- 4.4. It has been demonstrated in **ACE Drawing No. 2601460-ACE-XX-XX-DR-C-0501A** that a suitable access can be delivered from Houghton Green Lane in accordance with local and national design guidance. On this basis, it is the professional opinion of ACE that all future layout design and development of the site should utilise Houghton Green Lane as the primary vehicular access, with pedestrian connectivity provided to A268 Rye Road.

Drawing

VIEWPORT 1 - JUNCTION DESIGN



- NOTES:
- THIS DRAWING IS TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE RELEVANT SPECIFICATION, INC. RISK ASSESSMENTS AND ALL OTHER RELATED DRAWINGS ISSUED BY THE ENGINEER.
 - DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING. WORK FROM FIGURED DIMENSIONS ONLY.
 - ALL DIMENSIONS SHOWN ON THIS DRAWING ARE IN METRES UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.
 - ALL DIMENSIONS, LEVELS AND SURVEY GRID CO-ORDINATES ARE TO BE CHECKED ON SITE AND THE ENGINEER NOTIFIED IMMEDIATELY OF ANY DISCREPANCIES PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE WORKS.
 - NO DEVIATION FROM THE DETAILS SHOWN ON THIS DRAWING IS PERMITTED WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION FROM THE ENGINEER.
 - ANY WORKS OUTSIDE RED SITE BOUNDARY ARE FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY. UNLESS SPECIFICALLY NOTED, ALL WORKS OUTSIDE THE SITE BOUNDARY WILL BE UNDERTAKEN BY OTHERS UNDER A SEPARATE CONTRACT.
 - SUBJECT TO FURTHER VALIDATION FOLLOWING RECEIPT OF HIGHWAY BOUNDARY DATA, TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY, ARBORICULTURAL SURVEY, AND AUTOMATIC TRAFFIC COUNT SURVEY
 - RED LINE BOUNDARY SHOWN INDICATIVELY
 - SUBJECT TO DISCUSSION WITH ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL AND EAST SUSSEX HIGHWAYS

KEY:

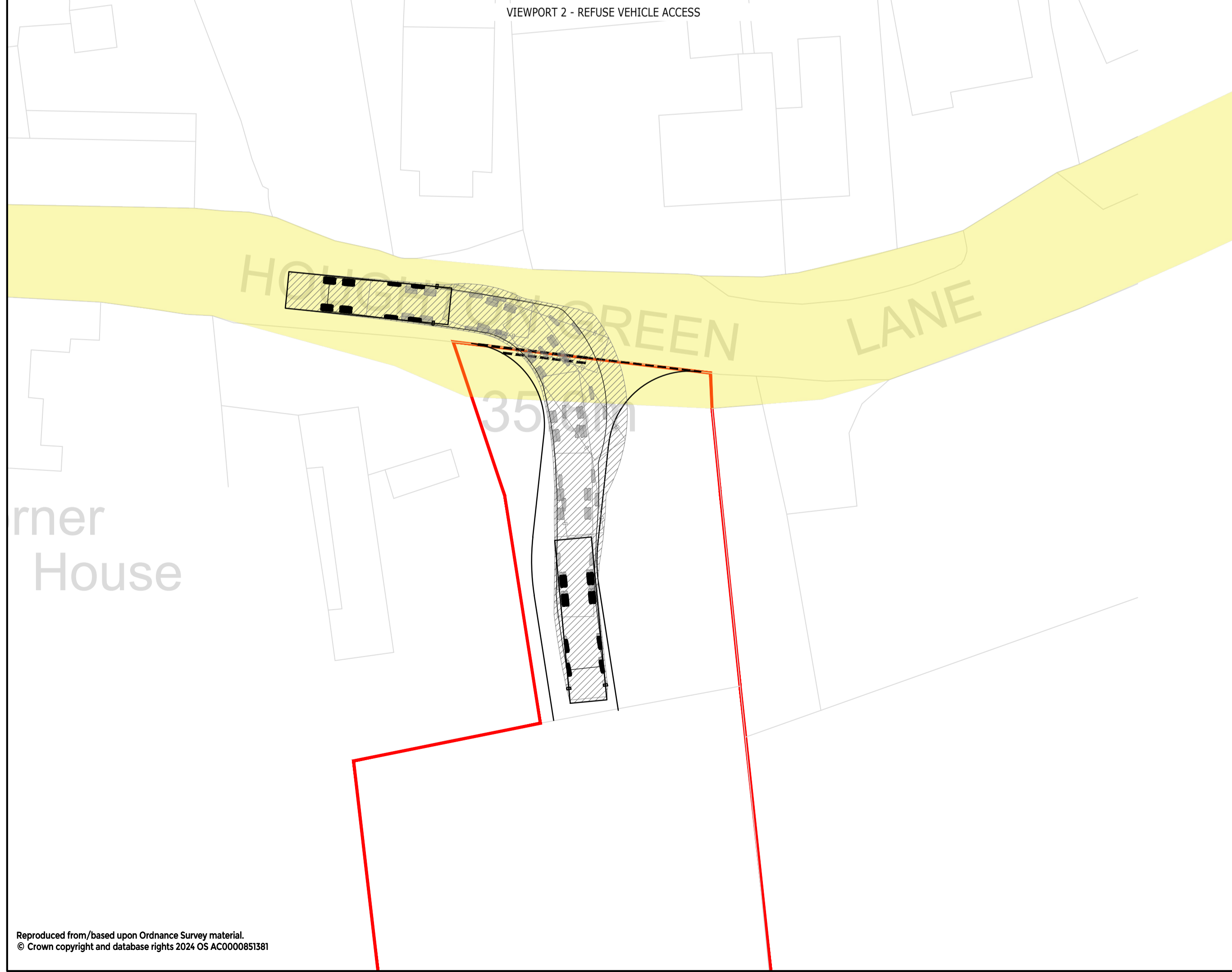
- SITE BOUNDARY
- HIGHWAY BOUNDARY (TRANSCRIBED FROM EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL RECORDS)

VEHICLE USED:

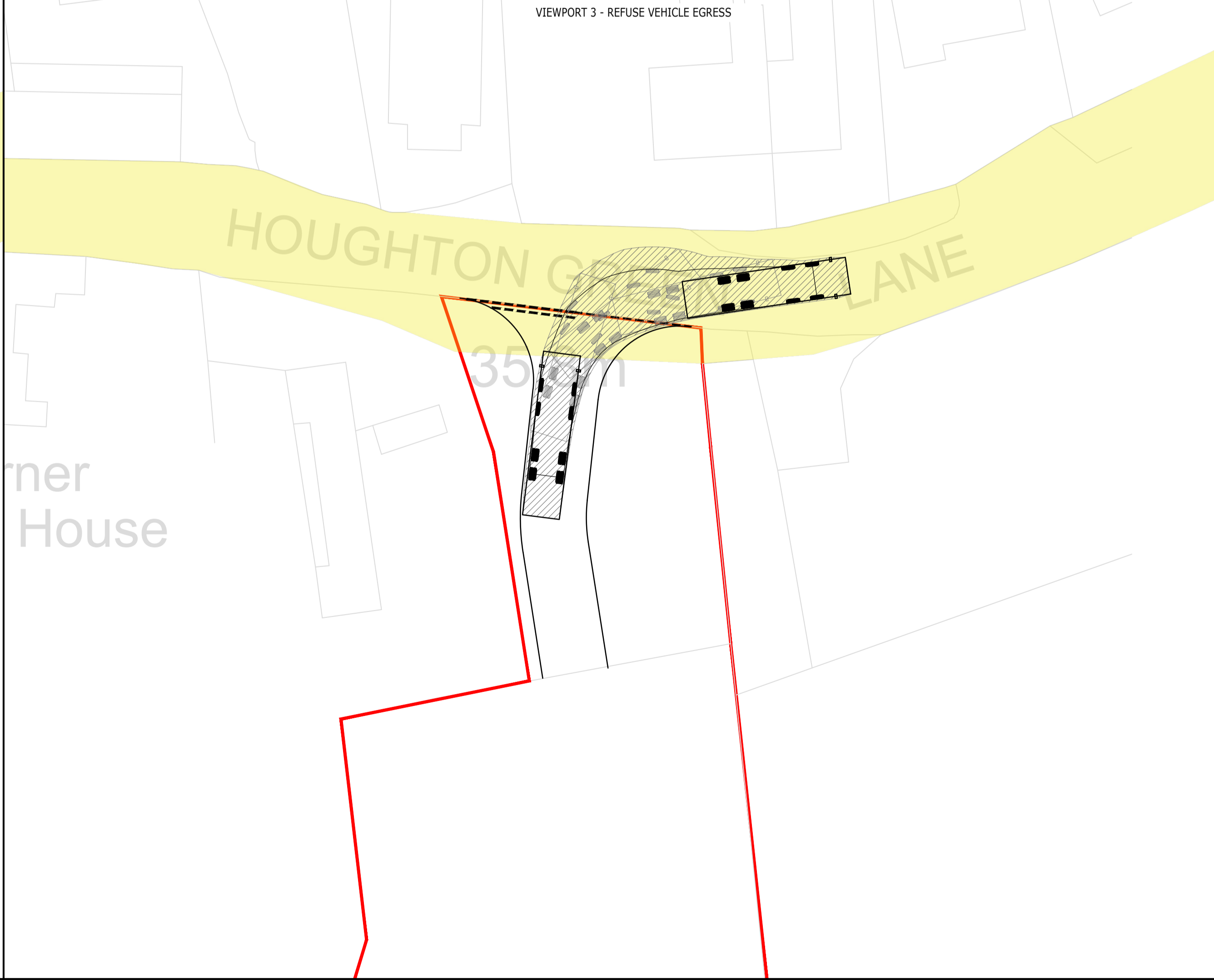
East Sussex Refuse Vehicle

Overall Length	12.000m
Overall Width	2.700m
Overall Body Height	3.769m
Min Body Ground Clearance	0.321m
Max Track Width	2.700m
Lock to lock time	6.00s
Wall to Wall Turning Radius	11.330m

VIEWPORT 2 - REFUSE VEHICLE ACCESS



VIEWPORT 3 - REFUSE VEHICLE EGRESS



A	CLIENT COMMENTS	SS	JE	DRAFT	16.03.26
Rev	Description	Drn	Chk	App	Date
Purpose: DRAFT		Status: -			

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Client
WEDGEWOOD HOMES

Project Title:
**HOUGHTON GREEN LANE,
PLAYDEN**

Drawing Title:
PROPOSED ACCESS LOCATION

Drawn by	Checked by	Approved by	Revision
SS	JE	DRAFT	A
A1 Scale	Date		
1:250@A1	10/03/2026		
Drawing Number 2601460-ACE-XX-XX-DR-C-0501			