

Land to the South of

# Barnhorn Road, Bexhill



## Vision Document

March 2026

A vision for a high quality, well-connected and sustainable new neighbourhood, founded upon an outstanding network of green infrastructure which showcases its rich surroundings

# Contents

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Site Location & Context
- 3 Planning Policy Context
- 4 Technical Considerations
- 5 Design Vision & Concept Masterplan
- 6 Conclusion

Prepared by

**Nick Banks**  
Senior Regional Director, South East  
[nick.banks@richborough.co.uk](mailto:nick.banks@richborough.co.uk)  
07377 717 039

**Rhys Tupper**  
Regional Manager, South East  
[rhys.tupper@richborough.co.uk](mailto:rhys.tupper@richborough.co.uk)  
07940 179 068

**Charlotte Lewis**  
Group Design Director  
[charlotte.lewis@richborough.co.uk](mailto:charlotte.lewis@richborough.co.uk)  
07984 566 920

**Owen Weaver**  
Planning Manager, South East  
[owen.weaver@richborough.co.uk](mailto:owen.weaver@richborough.co.uk)  
07494 390 452

This document is designed to read at A3.  
The contents of this document are not to be copied or reproduced without the written consent of Richborough Estates Ltd

[www.richborough.co.uk](http://www.richborough.co.uk)

## About Richborough

Richborough is one of the country's leading specialist strategic land promotion businesses founded with the aim of working responsibly and in partnership with landowners, local planning authorities and key local stakeholders.

The company's projects are located throughout the country, ranging from residential schemes of around 100 dwellings to large urban extensions, including sites in the Green Belt.

Richborough oversees the entire planning process from start to finish and works closely with local communities, local members and planning officers, statutory consultees and other stakeholders to create the most mutually beneficial schemes for all members of the community.

The internal Richborough team comprises a blend of chartered industry professionals including planners, surveyors, architects, urban designers, ecologists and engineers. This makes Richborough well equipped to deliver market facing schemes which avoid any unintended costs or delays when identifying a development partner.

Richborough are strong advocates of high-quality urban design and their in-house design function ensures the appropriate approach to character and place making are guiding principles in each scheme promoted.

The company believes proper consultation can yield enhanced results. Their philosophy is to engage and consult with stakeholders including parish and town councils, ward councillors, local groups and MPs.

Richborough has worked successfully with the housebuilding community over many years having sold consented sites to the majority of the large national PLC housebuilders and a high number of smaller regional operators.

Richborough's comprehensive approach to the technical and design due diligence of any site promotion is well received by housebuilders as this avoids development delivery delays.



# 1

## Introduction

- 1.1 This Vision Document has been prepared to set out a clear and credible framework for the comprehensive development of land south of Barnhorn Road ('the site') as part of the emerging West Bexhill Growth Area. Its purpose is to demonstrate that the site can deliver a high quality, landscaped extension to Bexhill which responds positively to its local context, addresses the requirements of emerging Policy BX22, and supports the Council's wider strategy for planned growth in this part of the district. In doing so, the document explains how development can be shaped by the site's defining characteristics, including its relationship with the Pevensey Levels, its existing field pattern, vegetation structure, public rights of way network, heritage assets and water environment.
- 1.2 The document also shows how the site can make a meaningful contribution to meeting housing needs by delivering a comprehensive and well-planned scheme that goes beyond the current allocation assumptions, with a second masterplan option incorporating land to the north west that is under Richborough's control. It is intended to demonstrate that this can be achieved in a way which remains sensitive to environmental and landscape considerations, safeguards biodiversity interests, respects the setting of heritage assets, and integrates sustainable drainage and green infrastructure from the outset. In this respect, the document is not simply a capacity exercise, but a structured explanation of how a larger and more effective scheme can be brought forward in a way that is deliverable and aligned with planning policy.
- 1.3 A further purpose of the document is to evidence the site's deliverability. It therefore draws together the technical work undertaken to date on matters such as landscape, heritage, ecology, flood risk, drainage, transport and sustainability, and explains how these considerations can be addressed through a robust design process. This includes setting out a approach to access, and movement, whilst recognising the site's role within the wider West Bexhill Growth Area and the importance of ensuring that development contributes positively to the shared infrastructure and place-making objectives identified by the emerging Local Plan.
- 1.4 The document begins by introducing the site, the wider planning background and the consultant team supporting the promotion of the land. It then explains the site's planning, environmental and technical context before setting out the masterplan framework principles that underpin the proposals. The document concludes by showing how these elements come together in a deliverable vision for a sustainable and well-connected new neighbourhood.

### The Project Team





## 2

# Site Location & Context

## Character & Description

- 2.1 The site measures 50.97 hectares (125.95 acres) and consists of undeveloped greenfield land; it sits immediately south of Ashridge Court care home and an existing row of residential dwellings that run uniformly south of Barnhorn Road.
- 2.2 The site is located within the West Bexhill Growth Area, a cluster of draft allocated sites that are proposed to come forward through a masterplan led approach. The site is well located directly south of the A259 corridor, providing convenient connectivity to nearby services and amenities.
- 2.3 The site includes a large area of mostly greenfield land to the south of Barnhorn Road, comprising agricultural fields at the rear of ribbon development. It also includes, in its eastern section, the Barnhorn Manor Caravan Park and a historic farmstead and Grade II listed building at Barnhorne Manor Lower Barnhorne.

## Services and Facilities in the surrounding area

- 2.4 The site has good accessibility to a range of key services and facilities which are supported by existing sustainable transport connections. A range of local amenities are available at Little Common which is situated approximately 1.4km to the east of the site. This can be reached on foot or by cycle via a range of existing footways and public rights of way. The amenities here include a convenience store, medical facility and a junior school.
- 2.5 The Wider Bexhill Growth Area will deliver further on-site provision including a new primary school, medical centre, retail and community uses. As such, the growth area delivery will directly complement any development on the site to ensure that essential services and amenities are a short distance from the development.
- 2.6 In terms of public transport, the site is serviced by an existing bus route operating along Barnhorn Road. The Route 99 bus provides up to three services each hour in both directions, connecting Bexhill, Hastings and Eastbourne. Rail services are accessible from Cooden Beach, Collington and Bexhill, offering frequent connections to London, Brighton and Ashford most notably. Overall, the site's accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport provides realistic alternatives to the private car for accessing employment, education, retail and leisure opportunities.
- 2.7 There is a network of existing public rights of way on the site, which is highlighted as an opportunity for improvement within the emerging allocation. Richborough's early concept plan responds directly to this. Permeability by way of new pedestrian and cycle paths will link the site to the district centre of Little Common, as well as southeast towards Cooden Beach Station.



▲ Aerial view of the site looking west



▲ Aerial view of the site looking east



Barnhorn Road

The Site

land for potential biodiversity enhancements

land for potential biodiversity enhancements

Persimmon Homes

Charles Church

Bellway Homes

N

Aerial view of the site



# 3

## Planning Policy Context

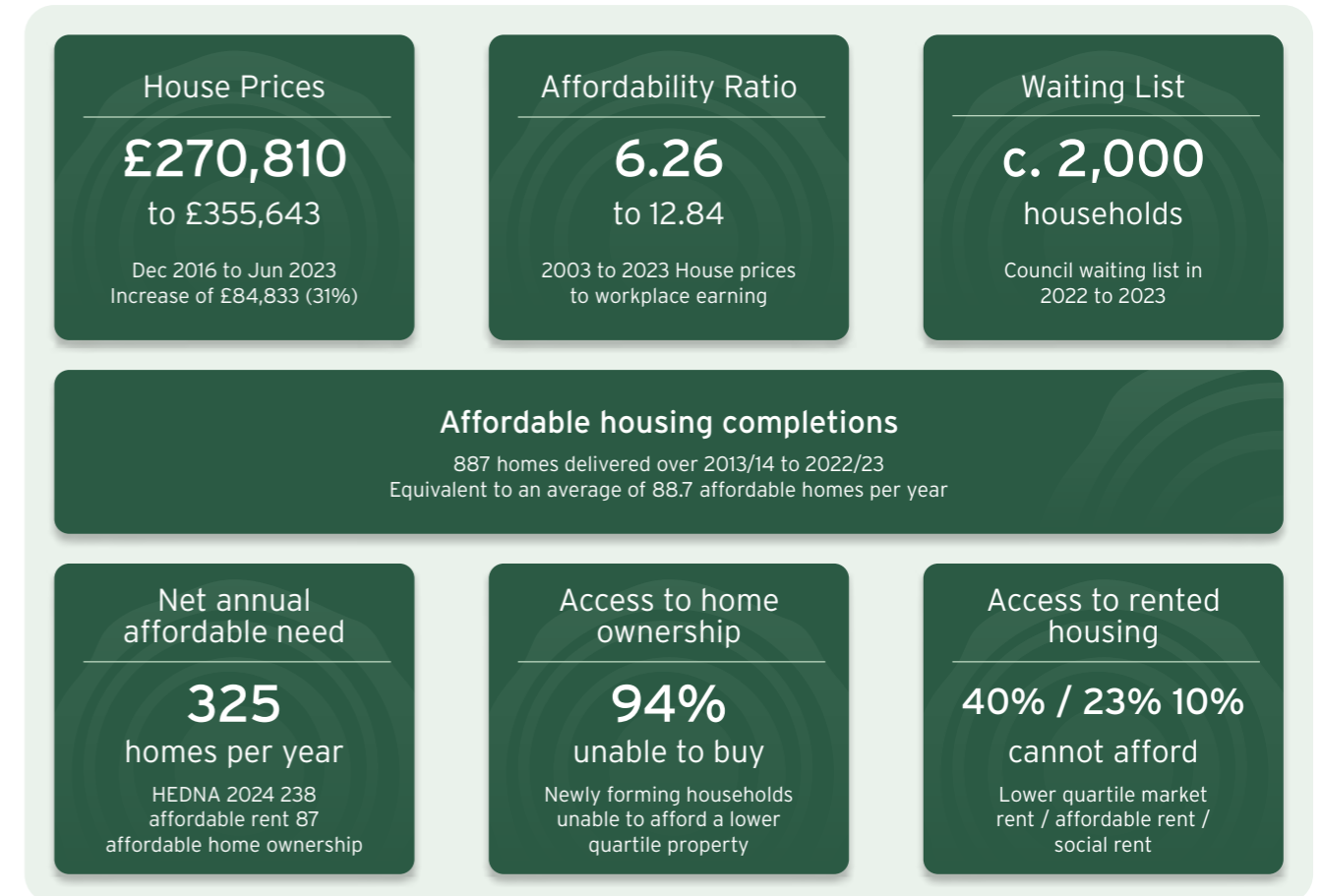
### Emerging Local Plan

- 3.1 Rother District Council is currently preparing a new Rother Local Plan covering the period 2025-2042. The Council has published the current draft for public consultation at Regulation 18 stage which ends on 23 March 2026. This is an early stage consultation in the plan's preparation. The next formal step will be the Proposed Submission version of the Local Plan, which will be subject to a further consultation at Regulation 19, which the Council expects to take place in Summer 2026. Following Regulation 19, the Council intends to submit the Local Plan and supporting documents to the Government, at which point a Planning Inspector will be appointed to carry out an Examination in Public. If the plan is found sound and legally compliant through the examination process, the Council will then be able to adopt it. Once adopted, the new Local Plan will update and replace the Council's Core Strategy (2014) and Development and Site Allocations (2019) plans.
- 3.2 The draft Local Plan is intended to provide a new development strategy for the district responding to identified housing and employment needs while balancing Rother's significant environmental and physical constraints. It seeks to meet need through a combination of development opportunities across the district, including both previously developed land and greenfield allocations where these are considered sustainable and deliverable. Within that strategy, West Bexhill is identified as a key focus for growth, with the plan promoting a coordinated masterplanning approach to deliver new homes, supporting infrastructure, employment space, community facilities and green and blue infrastructure as part of a connected "Live Well Locally" community.

### Local Housing Need

- 3.3 Rother's draft Local Plan highlights a substantial housing need in the district. The Council records that the standard method now identifies a need for 912 homes per year, equivalent to 15,504 homes over the 2025 to 2042 plan period, which is materially above both historic delivery and the housing requirement in the adopted development plan. By comparison, the adopted Core Strategy target is 335 homes per year, while recent delivery has averaged only around 215 homes per year.
- 3.4 Although the Council proposes a lower draft plan target of 8,427 homes or 495 homes per year on the basis of environmental and physical constraints, the emerging strategy still relies heavily on site allocations to meet that target, including 5,051 homes from new and revised allocations compared with 2,830 homes from existing permissions and adopted allocations. In that context, there is a clear policy basis for ensuring that strategic allocations are planned efficiently and that development capacity is optimised where site specific constraints can be properly addressed through masterplanning, infrastructure and mitigation.

3.5 There are acute affordability issues within the District as identified in the following key stats:



### Emerging Site Allocation

- 3.6 The site is allocated within the Regulation 18 Local Plan under draft Policy BX22. This is part of the wider allocation for West of Bexhill, the largest strategic growth location in the District.
- 3.7 The allocation is for a residential-led mixed use development comprising:
  - Some 400 new dwellings;
  - Some 3,000sqm employment floorspace or an equivalent amount of alternative commercial use which could include tourism uses / accommodation;
  - Community uses

3.8 The allocation recommends that the site can deliver an indicative residential density of 40 dwellings per hectare (dph).

3.9 The allocation seeks to deliver a development which:

- Is informed by a landscape sensitivity assessment to determine an appropriate layout, form and detailed design to ensure the protection of the landscape and character of the Pevensey Levels to the south-west of the site and provide an appropriate edge to built development when viewed from the south and south-west
- Includes substantial areas of public open space (including play-space and formal playing pitch(es), subject to demand) and areas for Biodiversity Net Gain across the site in accordance with Local Plan policy;
- Includes provision for the retention and future management of a buffer zone of semi-natural habitat, at least 15 metres wide (which does not include residential gardens), on the boundaries adjoining Cooden Wood, between the edge of development and the ancient woodland;
- Retain and enhance all existing hedgerows, mature trees and areas of woodland within the site and on the site boundaries, except for any short sections of hedgerow which are required to be removed to facilitate access, which should be minimised as far as possible;
- Retain and protect existing ponds, streams and ditches within the site and provide an appropriate buffer to any built development including roadways, as informed by ecological surveys

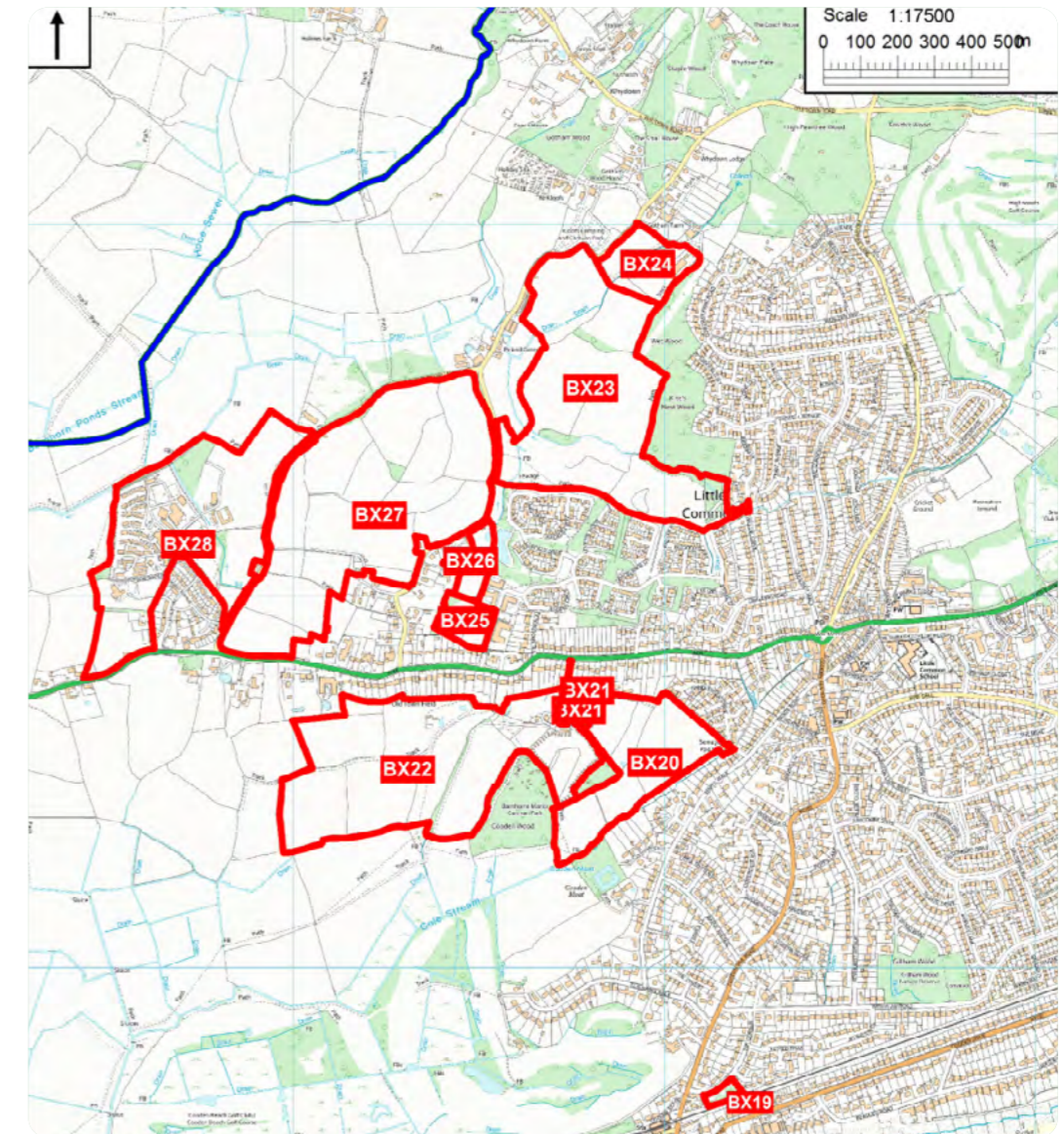
3.10 The allocation states the development should:

- Incorporate appropriate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in accordance with Policy ENV2 of the draft Local Plan (2024) and an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations to demonstrate beyond reasonable scientific doubt that these can be delivered on the site without harming the integrity of the Pevensey Levels Special Area of Conservation/RAMSAR site

3.11 The allocation seeks to ensure that the development should:

- Include vehicular access(es) from Barnhorn Road to include necessary improvements and infrastructure to meet the requirements of National Highways;
- Include new pedestrian and cycle links within the site, linking to existing public rights of way and public highways outside the site, also retaining existing public footpaths within the site;
- Provide improvements to existing local bus stop infrastructure and a financial contribution towards improving local bus services

3.12 The allocation seeks to ensure that the development must “include an assessment and evaluation of the site’s archaeological potential and the implementation of any mitigation measures identified through the assessment including provision for any significant archaeological artefacts identified through a trial trench investigation to be preserved in situ on the site.”



▲ Local plan draft allocation (BX22) and the wider West of Bexhill allocation map

## Overall benefits of the proposals

3.13 Taken as a whole, the proposals for the site would deliver a broad package of planning benefits. Primarily, the site would make a meaningful contribution towards meeting housing needs in Rother, helping to address a clear shortfall between identified need and current delivery. The site also has the potential to support local economic activity through the delivery of employment and commercial floorspace, increased expenditure by future residents, and investment in the local area during both construction and occupation. The proposals would provide new homes alongside accessible green space, play provision, improved walking and cycling connections and the opportunity to support wider community infrastructure across the West Bexhill Growth Area.

3.14 The proposals would also help facilitate the delivery of infrastructure needed to support sustainable growth in this part of Bexhill, including transport improvements, active travel links, drainage measures and wider green and blue infrastructure. Importantly, these benefits can be achieved through a landscape-led and environmentally responsive masterplan, with development directed to the most appropriate parts of the site, sensitive edges protected, flood risk avoided, biodiversity enhanced and sustainable drainage integrated throughout. In this way, the site is capable of delivering not only additional housing, but a high quality and sustainable extension to West Bexhill that aligns with the emerging Local Plan and supports the Council’s wider objectives for balanced growth.



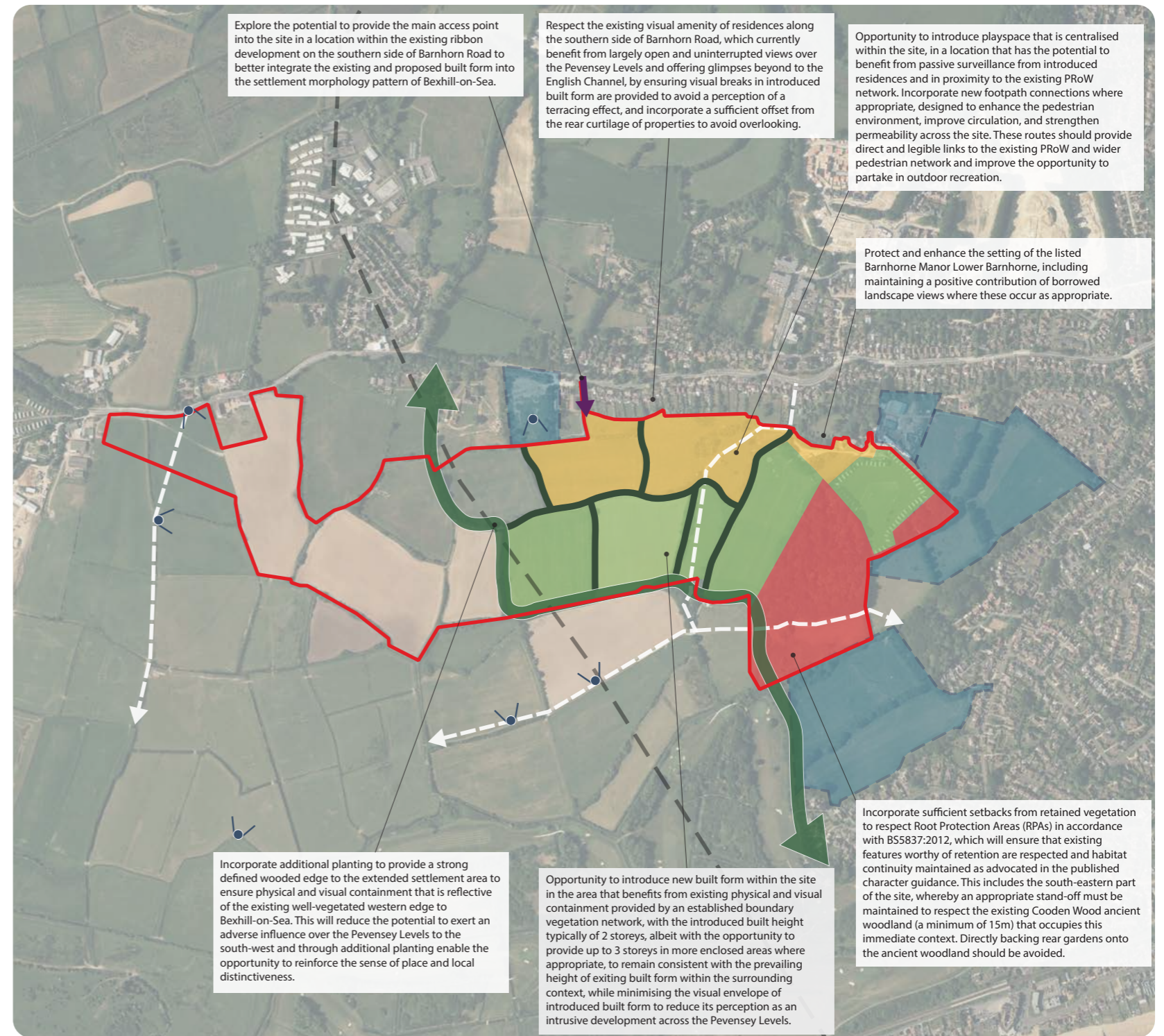
# 4

## Technical Considerations



### Landscape & Visual

- 4.1 The site sits at the meeting point of two distinct landscape character areas. At a national level the site lies on the eastern fringe of the Pevensey Levels and the southern fringe of the High Weald, reflecting a transition between elevated sandstone ridge and low-lying wetland pasture. At the local level, the East Sussex Landscape Character Assessment identifies the Site within LCA 25 Pevensey Levels, noting the importance of slightly raised ground, historic drainage patterns and the intricate network of ditches that define the wider landscape. While the site is not within a designated landscape, the High Weald National Landscape lies approximately 4km to the north, and the south-eastern and south-western edges of the site overlap with the Pevensey Levels Ramsar, SAC and SSSI.
- 4.2 The site falls from around 25m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) in the north to 2m AOD in the south, meaning the higher land forms part of the transition from the sandstone ridge to the flatter alluvial basin of the Pevensey Levels. This topography is important to its character and to how the site is experienced visually. The open nature of the Pevensey Levels gives the site a wider visual envelope to the west, but the central and eastern parts benefit from a strong existing landscape structure, with fields enclosed by dense hedgerows and tree belts that provide a good degree of physical and visual containment. This creates a clear basis for a landscape-led approach, with development focused in the more contained parts of the site and designed to respond carefully to the wider landscape setting.
- 4.3 The emerging proposals (for both options and the new access road to the west of the site) embed a number of landscape principles from the outset. These include retaining important vegetation with appropriate stand-offs to protect root protection areas, maintaining habitat continuity and preserving visual containment. Built form would generally remain at two storeys, with limited opportunities for three storeys in the more enclosed parts of the site where this would assist legibility and remain consistent with surrounding development. The layout would also be designed to protect the amenity of existing residents, including visual breaks within development parcels to avoid an overbearing or terraced appearance.
- 4.4 More broadly, the landscape strategy seeks to minimise visual encroachment into the Pevensey Levels through careful land profiling and a robust planting approach, including belts of woodland planting that reflect the established character of the built form sitting within vegetation on the sandstone ridge. The proposals also provide the opportunity to deliver well-located open space and play provision, integrated with the existing public rights of way network and supported by new pedestrian connections to improve permeability across the site. Overall, the site has the capacity to accommodate development in a way that respects the defining landscape characteristics of both the Pevensey Levels and the High Weald fringe, while reinforcing local distinctiveness and maintaining a strong green framework.



Key:

Site Boundary

Vegetation to be Retained

Woodland Corridor to be Retained and Enhanced

Proposed Vehicular Access

Public Rights of Way

New Development

Sensitive Views

National Character Area Boundary

Sensitivity to Residential Development:

High

Medium

Low



▲ View south within eastern part of the Site towards Cooden Wood



▲ View west from within the Site near Barnhorne Manor



▲ View north from within the Site adjacent to Cooden Wood



▲ View west from within the central part of the Site



▲ View east from within the Site near the northern edge at the rear of 139 Barnhorn Road



▲ View north-west from within the Site in a central area near the southern boundary



▲ View south-west from the elevated western part of the Site



▲ View west from the lower-lying western part of the Site

9



▲ View north-east from PRoW ES | Bexhill | 62b

10



▲ View north-west from PRoW ES | Bexhill | 62b

11



▲ View south from Woodhurst Grove



View point locations plan ▲

- Key:
-  Site Boundary
  -  Key Views
  -  Existing Public Right(s) of Way (PRoW)

12



▲ View north-east from PRoW ES | Bexhill | 74b

13

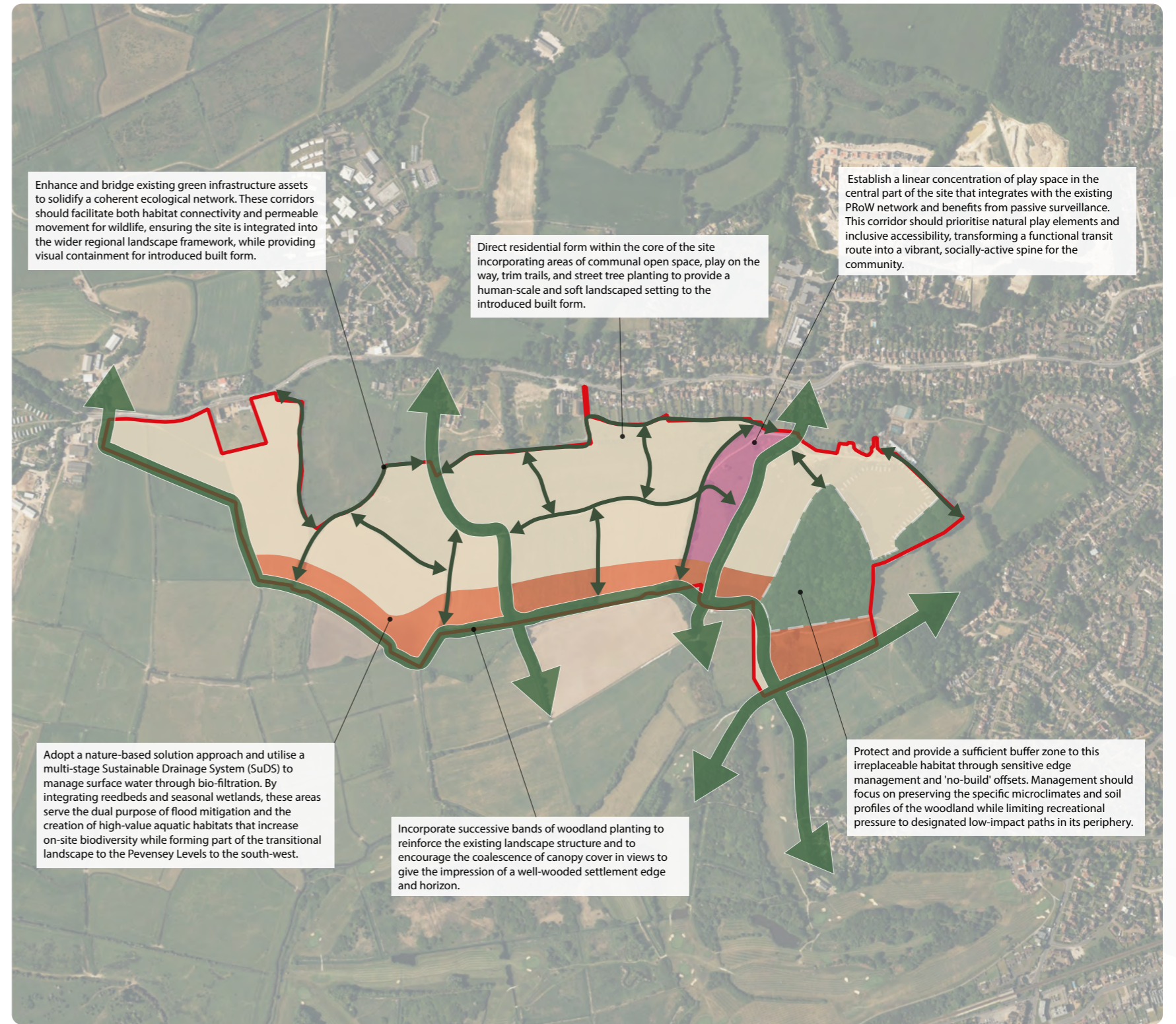


▲ View east from PRoW ES | Bexhill | 55a

14



▲ View south-east from Barnhorn Road and PRoW ES | Bexhill | 55a



Green infrastructure plan ▲



Key:

Site Boundary

Primary Green Infrastructure Corridors

Internal Green Infrastructure Links

Ancient Woodland

Wetland Transitional Edge

Primary Recreational Corridor

Potential Areas for Development

## Heritage & Setting

4.5 Heritage assets in the vicinity of the site have been evaluated through reference to designation descriptions, historic maps and a site visit.

4.8 Heritage is not simply a constraint on the site, but also a factor that can help shape a more distinctive and credible masterplan. By retaining important boundaries, respecting the rural character of movement corridors, and using planting and open land positively around sensitive edges, the scheme responds to local historic character in a way that supports both place-making and deliverability.

### Grade II Listed Barnhorne Manor Lower Barnhorne

4.6 This Grade II Listed building was the original Manor house of Barnhorne. It is a timber framed building, later refaced with flint, with red brick dressings.

4.7 The asset lies north of the eastern area of the site. Whilst the rear of the asset faces towards the site, the context is changed from agricultural land, as it was historically, to a caravan park.

4.8 The masterplans have responded to the asset through the setting back of development and placement of orchard between the asset and the road proposed to the south, which will also have green infrastructure beyond.

### Grade II Listed Barnhorn Manor and non-designated Barnhorn Oast Farm

4.9 Another Grade II Listed building also referred to as Barnhorn Manor lies north of the northern site boundary, further to the west of the other Listed Barnhorne Manor. This was previously known as Upper or Great Barnhorne, and before that as Nutbrowns.

4.10 Whilst formerly a farm, the complex and surrounds are used for glamping. Residential development has been constructed to the east.

4.11 The asset and its plot are separated from the site by a tall hedgerow, screening clear views towards its principal south-facing elevation, although filtered views of the site are anticipated. From further to the south within the site, the asset is screened by topography.

4.12 The asset also has filtered views of the parcel of the site to the south-west, albeit filtered by trees. From there, the oast-house at Barnhorn Oast Farm, which is present on 19th-century mapping and likely to be considered a non-designated asset (Plate 6), is also visible.

4.13 On moving further south-west into this part of the site, the asset is screened due to undulating topography. The oast at Barnhorn Oast Farm remains visible, however, as do the rooftops at modern residential development east of the asset (Plate 7).

4.14 Development in Option 2 would be set back from the asset, to the south beyond intervening pasture/camping areas, and the northern edge of built form will be softened by planting.



▲ Plate 1: Lower Barnhorne's south-western elevation facing over a site parcel proposed as a 'soft setting' to the Listed Building. On concept plan: pink circle indicates location of asset and red arrow indicates location of photo.



▲ Plate 2: The approach to the asset from Barnhorn Road to the north.



▲ Plate 3: The approach to the asset from Barnhorn Road to the north.



▲ Plate 4: The southern elevation of Upper Barnhorn Manor and glamping pods glimpsed through a gap in hedgerow vegetation along the northern site boundary. On concept plan: pink circle indicates location of asset and red arrow indicates location of photo.



▲ Plate 5: View north towards the northern site boundary from further into the site. The chimney to the asset is glimpsed, indicated by red arrow, and rooves at the neighbouring modern housing development to the east is also glimpsed, indicated by extent of yellow arrow. On concept plan: pink circle indicates location of asset and red arrow indicates location of photo.



▲ Plate 6: View north towards Barnhorn Manor, glimpsed in filtered views beyond trees within the site, indicated by red arrow. Barnhorn Oast Farm (non-designated) is also visible to the west, indicated by yellow arrow. On concept plan: pink circle indicates location of asset and red arrow indicates location of photo.



▲ Plate 7: View north towards the asset upon moving further south into the site from above. On concept plan: pink circle indicates location of asset and red arrow indicates location of photo.

### Grade II Listed Barnhorn Cottage Lamb Cottage

- 4.15 The Cottage lies to the north of the northern site boundary at the north-western extent of the site, beyond the Barnhorn Road.
- 4.16 Whilst the site lies beyond the road to the south of the asset, this area is proposed for open space and landscaping, providing a soft setting to the Listed building.
- 4.17 The access roundabout in Concept Plan Option 2 would lie to the south-west of the asset, but this would be largely screened by planting within the plot of the asset, with the road to the south softened by planting to the north.

### Scheduled Monument Medieval Moated Site, Cooden

- 4.18 The Scheduled Monument lies to the south-east of the eastern extent of the site and is enclosed by woodland. From beyond this woodland, the asset is not legible as a moated site or area of historic or archaeological importance. It is accessible via a public footpath which runs through the east of the site and leads towards woodland enclosing the Monument.
- 4.19 Although part of the approach to the asset via the public footpath would be experienced in the context of development within the site, it would be well-separated from development by woodland and a proposed area for ecological enhancements.

### Other assets

- 4.20 Other assets including Grade II Listed Beeches Farm, Grade II Listed Hunter's Moon, Grade II Listed Sandhurst Lodge, and the Scheduled Monument Northeye Deserted Medieval Village are not considered to be sensitive to the proposed development on the basis of a lack of intervisibility.



- ★ Assets
- Plate
- Scheduled Monument

Heritage viewpoints and assets ▲



▲ Plate 8: View from the north-western extent of the site towards the asset's southern elevation, through the stile used for public footpath access into the site.



▲ Plate 9: View north-west from one of the western site parcels proposed for development in concept plan option 2, the asset's southern elevation is visible as indicated by arrow. On concept plan: pink circle indicates location of asset and red arrow indicates location of photo.



▲ Plate 10: Cooden Medieval Moated Site enclosed by woodland

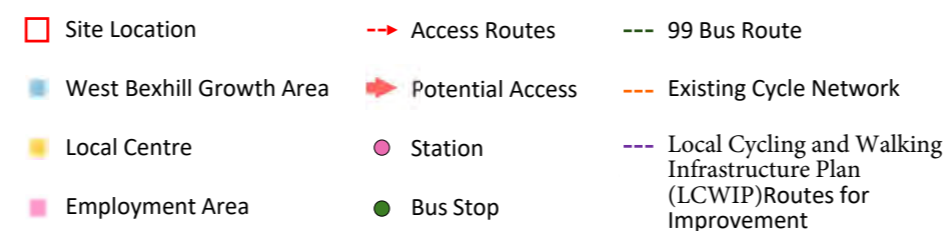
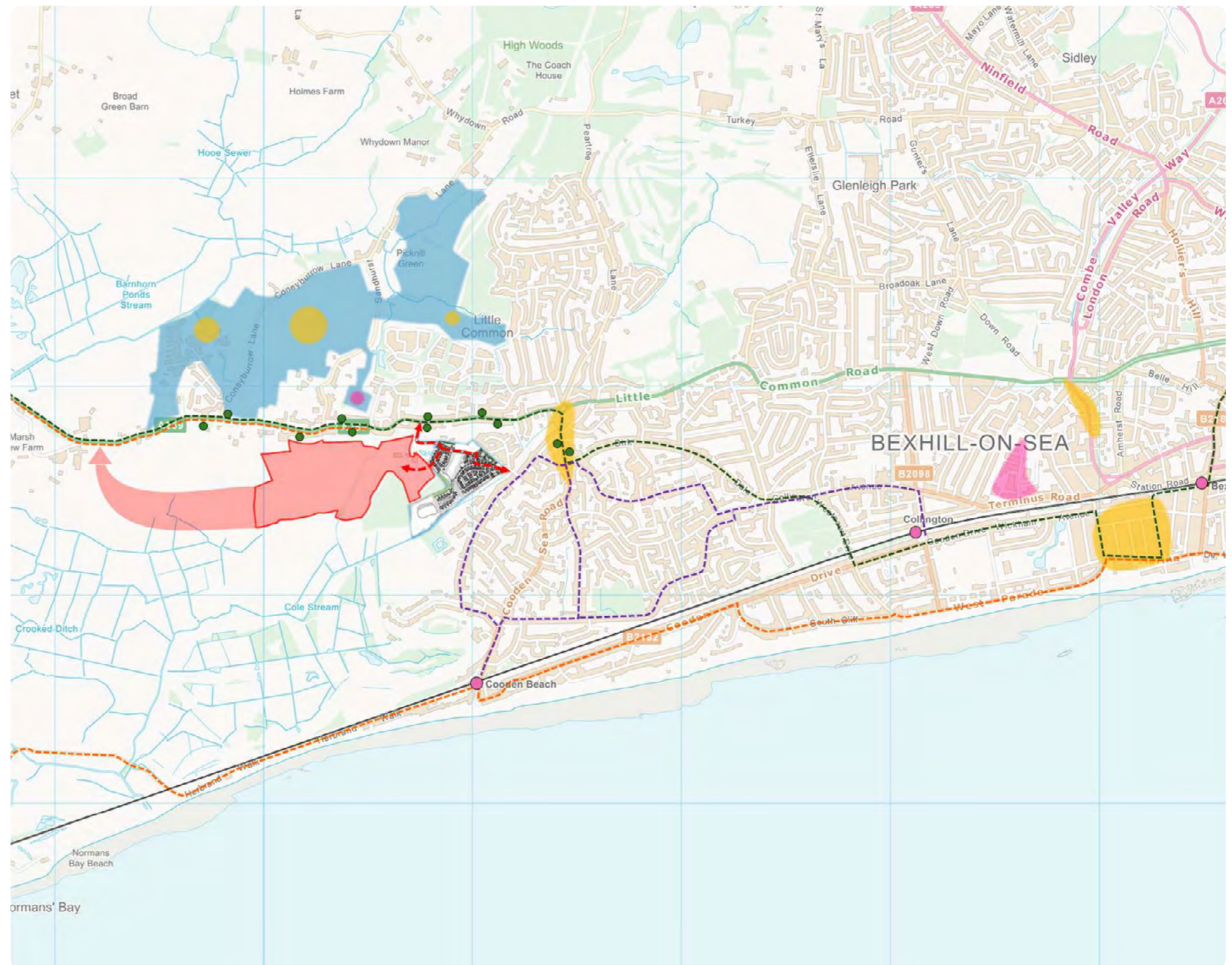
## Ecology

- 4.21 In line with the requirements of Policy BX22, the development must
- Include substantial areas for Biodiversity Net Gain across the site in accordance with Local Plan policy;
  - Include provision for the retention and future management of a 15m wide buffer zone of semi-natural habitat on the boundaries adjoining Cooden Wood;
  - Retain and enhance all existing hedgerows, mature trees and areas of woodland within the site and on the site boundaries, except to facilitate access;
  - Incorporate appropriate SuDS in accordance with Policy ENV2 of the draft Local Plan (2024) and an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations to demonstrate beyond reasonable scientific doubt that these can be delivered on the site without harming the integrity of the Pevensey Levels Special Area of Conservation/Ramsar site;
- 4.22 Proposals will follow the mitigation hierarchy in that impacts will first be avoided. Those that cannot be avoided will be mitigated appropriately, and those that cannot be mitigated for on site will be compensated for off site. This is reflected in Policy BX22 through the applicable BNG wording and through provisions made for the retention and enhancement of all existing hedgerows, mature trees and areas of woodland. This is further secured through Policies ENV5 and LAN2.
- 4.23 Proposals will buffer ponds, streams, ditches and ancient woodlands with appropriate buffers, as stipulated in Policy BX22, which states that development on the site must:
- 'Include provision for the retention and future management of a buffer zone of semi-natural habitat, at least 15 metres wide (which does not include residential gardens), on the boundaries adjoining Cooden Wood, between the edge of development and the ancient woodland;
  - Retain and protect existing ponds, streams and ditches within the site and provide an appropriate buffer to any built development including roadways, as informed by ecological surveys, to be completed'
- 4.24 The water environment and SuDS requirements will be linked with a Habitat Regulation Assessment, particularly in consideration of the Pevensey Levels designated sites. Policy BX22 states that development on the site must:
- 'Incorporate appropriate SuDS in accordance with Policy ENV2 of the draft Local Plan (2024) and an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations to demonstrate beyond reasonable scientific doubt that these can be delivered on the site without harming the integrity of the Pevensey Levels Special Area of Conservation/RAMSAR site;'

 Transport

4.25 The site is capable of being served by a transport strategy that aligns with the emerging Local Plan and supports a sustainable pattern of growth in the west of Bexhill. It benefits from an established range of travel options, including bus services on Barnhorn Road, rail access via nearby stations, existing public rights of way and links into the wider walking and cycling network. The site should also be viewed in the context of the wider West Bexhill Growth Area, where the Council is seeking a coordinated approach to infrastructure, active travel and public transport improvements. In that respect, the proposals are not being advanced as a standalone parcel of development, but as part of a broader pattern of planned growth capable of supporting a more connected and sustainable community.

4.26 In accessibility terms, the site performs well. Bus stops on Barnhorn Road at the northern edge of the site are served by route 99, providing regular connections to Eastbourne, Hastings and Hastings railway station. Rail services are available from Cooden Beach, Collington and Bexhill stations, connecting to destinations including London Victoria, Brighton, Eastbourne, Ore and Ashford International. The public rights of way network also provides an important movement corridor, including pedestrian access towards Cooden Beach station and the wider coast. Little Common is within convenient reach and provides a range of day to day services and facilities. Existing and proposed cycling infrastructure in the area, including links to National Cycle Network Route 2 and the East Sussex Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, further reinforces the site's ability to support non-car travel. Overall, the evidence indicates that the site is well located to accommodate development in a way that supports sustainable movement choices and can integrate effectively with the wider transport strategy for west Bexhill.



Site context ▲

### Proposed Access

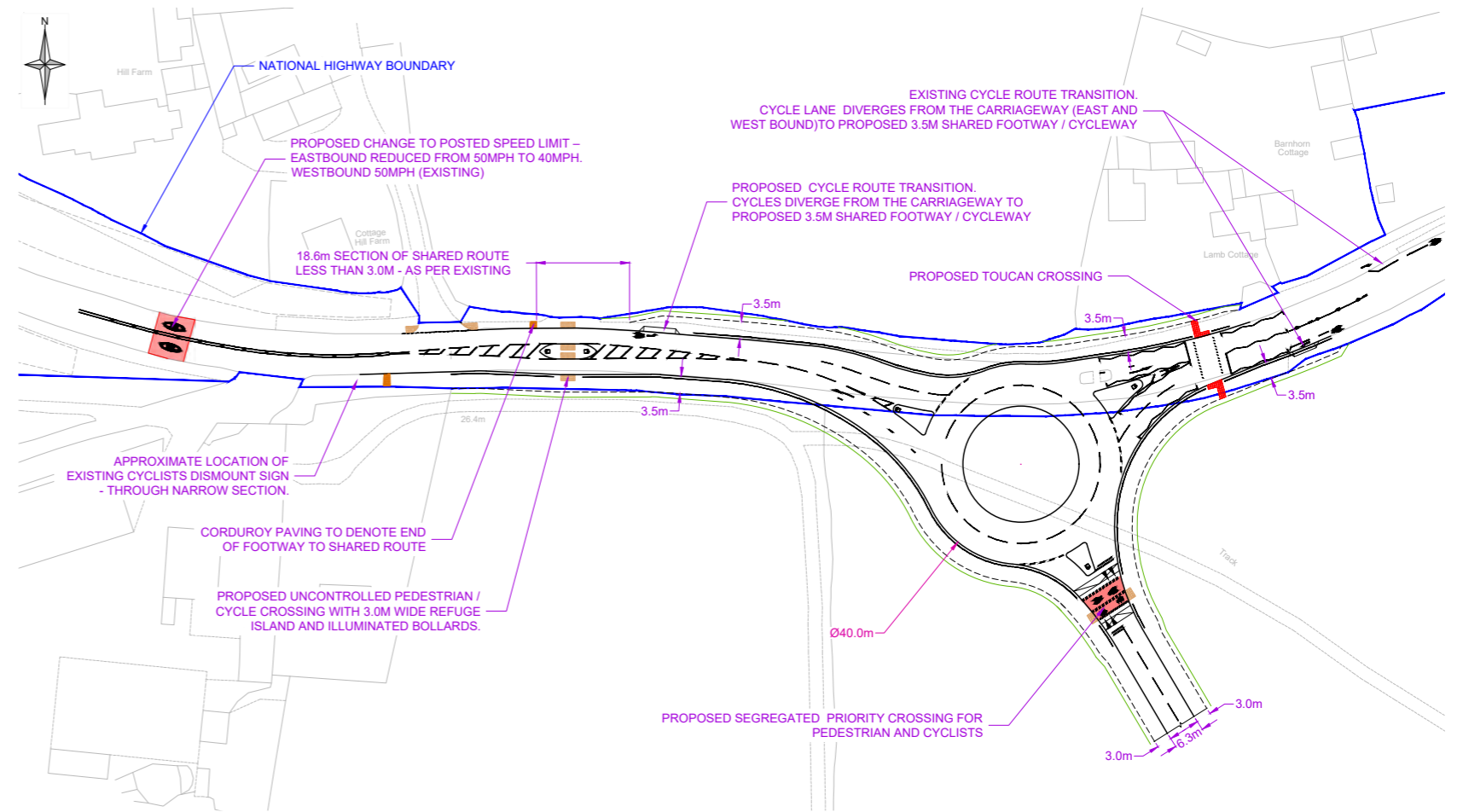
- 4.27 Vehicular access will need to be taken from Barnhorn Road, consistent with the requirements of emerging Policy BX22. The detailed form and position of that access will be informed by further work with East Sussex County Council, National Highways and other relevant stakeholders, but the existing evidence confirms that an access strategy can be developed in a way that responds to the site's context and supports a safe and effective layout. The Council's own draft policy framework recognises the need for access from Barnhorn Road, and the transport work undertaken to date confirms that the site should be considered as part of the wider transport modelling exercise for west Bexhill rather than in isolation.
- 4.28 The proposed access strategy will therefore be progressed alongside the wider Growth Area infrastructure work, including junction capacity testing and consideration of mitigation on the surrounding road network where necessary. As shown in this document, the site could be accessed from a new roundabout option to the west of the site, which is considered to be appropriate in landscape and heritage terms.

### Active travel movement strategy

- 4.29 A key strength of the site is its ability to support a strong non-vehicular movement strategy. Public rights of way already pass through the site and provide a valuable framework for movement, recreation and connection to surrounding destinations. These routes can be retained and enhanced as part of the masterplan, helping to create a network of attractive walking and cycling corridors linking future residents to Little Common, Cooden Beach station, existing bus stops and the wider West Bexhill Growth Area.
- 4.30 This approach is consistent with the earlier visioning work and with the Council's emerging policy direction, both of which place emphasis on creating healthy, well-connected neighbourhoods rather than car-dependent development. The opportunity exists to reinforce existing routes, provide new path connections where appropriate, and ensure that green infrastructure and movement corridors work together as part of a coherent place-making strategy. In this way, the site can support not only safe and convenient access by car, but also a genuine choice of sustainable travel modes, which will be essential to the long-term success and policy compliance of the development.

### Opportunities

- 4.31 An additional access option has been prepared in the form of a three-arm roundabout junction with Barnhorn Road, if considered necessary to serve the site. This would include crossing facilities and links to existing pedestrian and cycle infrastructure.
- 4.32 Should the allocation remain as currently drafted, then access options to Barnhorn Road as shown on the concept masterplan are deliverable and feasible.



Emerging access plan ▲



## Noise & Amenity

- 4.33 The site is not considered to be subject to any abnormal noise constraints that would prevent residential development coming forward in a well-designed and policy-compliant form. The principal existing source of noise is expected to be traffic associated with Barnhorn Road, from which new homes will be well set back from.
- 4.34 Noise associated with the proposed link road will also be modelled using traffic data so that any effects on the most noise-sensitive parts of the development can be properly understood at the design stage. Where guideline levels indicate mitigation is required, this can be addressed through standard and well-established measures, including localised acoustic barriers, careful orientation of buildings and gardens, and enhanced glazing and ventilation where appropriate. On this basis, no significant noise constraints are anticipated that could not be satisfactorily mitigated through normal design responses.



## Arboriculture

- 4.35 Arboricultural considerations can be positively integrated into the masterplanning of the site and do not present a barrier to development. The identified tree groups of high quality together with the veteran tree, can be retained and protected as part of the site layout, with appropriate buffers and construction safeguards to prevent damage to root protection areas and to preserve the setting of the pond.
- 4.36 This approach will ensure that the most important tree features are embedded within the landscape structure of the scheme from the outset. Retention and protection of these features will help shape a strong and distinctive green framework for the development, supporting landscape quality, biodiversity and local character while maintaining a clear and deliverable developable area.



## Air Quality

- 4.37 Air quality considerations do not indicate any in-principle constraint to residential development on the site. The site is not within, or close to, an Air Quality Management Area, and the principal nearby source of pollutants is traffic associated with the A259 and Barnhorn Road. However, the site is set back by approximately 80 metres from Barnhorn Road, which materially reduces direct exposure and supports its suitability for residential use.
- 4.38 Available monitoring information from Rother District Council and Defra mapping indicates that the site is appropriate for residential development, although the detailed layout should ensure that the most sensitive uses are set back from roads where possible in order to minimise exposure to PM2.5.



## Flood Risk

- 4.39 Flood risk and drainage matters are capable of being addressed through a clear sequential approach to the site layout and a robust sustainable drainage strategy. The majority of the site lies within Flood Zone 1, with areas to the south affected by Flood Zones 2 and 3 as a result of tidal and fluvial flooding associated with the Cole Stream and nearby watercourses. Built development, including SuDS attenuation features, can be directed away from these areas, with the masterplan arranged so that development is focused within the parts of the site at lowest flood risk.
- 4.40 The site contains two ordinary watercourses running north to south, with further watercourses and streams located immediately to the south within the Pevensey Levels SSSI. These features will be retained, protected and incorporated into the wider green and blue infrastructure strategy. Surface water flood mapping indicates that the majority of the site is subject to very low surface water flood probability, with existing ditches creating relatively localised pluvial flow routes and areas of ponding that can be avoided through site design. Although the southern part of the site lies within the maximum extent of reservoir failure flooding, this is a residual risk which overlaps with Flood Zone 3, and development can be located outside these areas. Importantly, the proposed access and egress points are located in areas of very low flood risk.

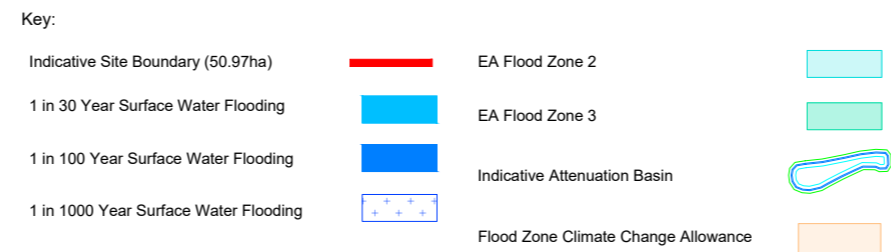
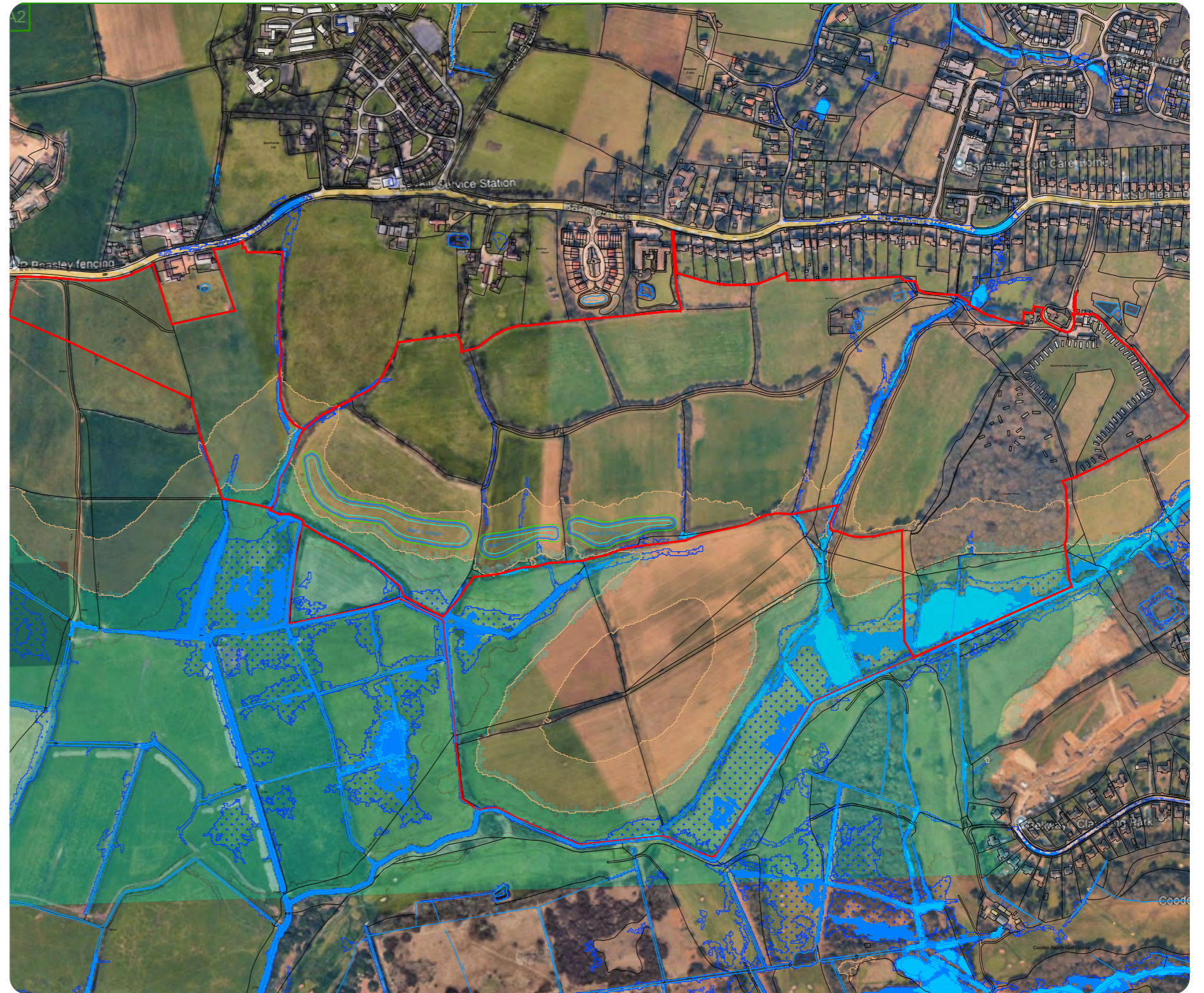


## Sustainability

- 4.41 The site provides an opportunity to deliver a high quality, low carbon and climate resilient neighbourhood supported by an integrated sustainability strategy from the outset. The intention is to minimise whole life carbon through a fabric-first approach, careful material specification, the use of Modern Methods of Construction where appropriate, local procurement, hybrid or electric plant where feasible, and circular economy principles which prioritise low carbon, durable and recycled materials.
- 4.42 Operational carbon and household energy costs can be reduced through highly efficient building fabric supported by low carbon and renewable technologies, including the potential use of air source heat pumps and photovoltaic panels, with future connection to any district heat network explored where appropriate. The development can also incorporate water efficiency measures to reduce household consumption to 125 litres per person per day, with the tighter 110 litres target pursued where achievable, alongside measures to reduce water use during construction and occupation. SuDS, overheating mitigation and resilient infrastructure can be embedded within the masterplan to ensure that buildings and spaces respond effectively to future climate conditions.

## Drainage

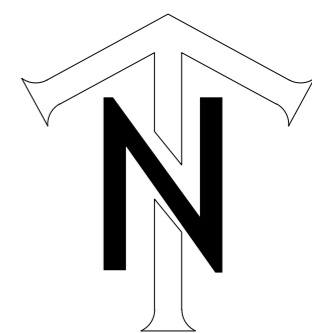
4.43 An appropriate drainage strategy can be implemented to attenuate run-off to the existing greenfield rate and to store additional surface water on site through above-ground sustainable drainage features such as detention basins, swales and rain gardens, designed for the 1 in 100 year event with an appropriate climate change allowance. These features can be integrated into the landscape-led masterplan so as to deliver biodiversity, amenity and water quality benefits alongside drainage functions with an appropriate level of filtration. Foul water can be discharged separately to the public sewer, subject to the usual capacity checks with the sewerage undertaker. Pumping stations will be required due to the site topography, but these can be located at the lowest developable points outside flood risk areas, with an appropriate stand-off to ensure no adverse effect on residential amenity. Overall, neither flood risk, drainage infrastructure, canals nor sewers are considered to present significant barriers to the delivery of the site.



Drainage plan ▲



- Key:**
- Indicative Site Boundary (50.97ha) —
  - Existing LV Electric Cable —
  - Existing Electric Substation ■
  - Existing 11kV Electric Cable —
  - Existing 33kV Electric Cable —
  - Existing SGN LP Gas Mains —
  - Existing BT Overhead Line —
  - Existing BT Underground Cable —
  - Existing Water Main —
  - Existing Storm Drainage —
  - Existing Foul Sewer —
  - 1 in 30 Year Surface Water Flooding ■
  - 1 in 100 Year Surface Water Flooding ■
  - 1 in 1000 Year Surface Water Flooding ■
  - EA Flood Zone 2 ■
  - EA Flood Zone 3 ■
  - Indicative Attenuation Basin ○
  - Indicative Access Location ▲
  - PROW —
  - Road Noise LAeq16h - 55dB-60dB ■
  - Road Noise LAeq16h - 60dB-65dB ■
  - Road Noise LAeq16h - 65dB-70dB ■
  - SSSI ■
  - Existing Vegetation/Woodland ■
  - Listed Building ✖
  - Earthworks Strategy Target Area ■
  - Ancient Woodland ■
  - Scheduled Monument ■
  - Landfill Area (Approx) ■
  - Flood Zone Climate Change Allowance ■



◀ *Technical constraints plan*



# 5

## Design Vision & Concept Masterplan

5.1 The site will be a high quality, well-connected and sustainable new neighbourhood, founded upon the creation of an outstanding network of green infrastructure which showcases its rich surroundings. Taking character cues from Bexhill and surrounding local villages, our design vision aims to create a new place to be proud of, with a lasting legacy. Alongside the emerging local plan's twin overall priorities of 'Green to the Core' and 'Live Well Locally,' our vision aims to create a sustainable, vibrant, and inclusive new environment which promotes healthy, active lifestyles and protects, enriches and creates habitats for wildlife, flora and fauna.

5.2 Our envisioning, centred around living locally, is founded upon the following core principles:

### 1. Retain and enhance existing vegetation

The site's current vegetation consists of hedgerows and trees, as well as notable areas of ancient woodland. The site's existing vegetation creates an attractive environment for new homes, contributing to achieving a biodiversity net gain, and forms a gentle green border for the new development to the open countryside to the south and west. Existing vegetation, as well as newly proposed planting, will aid the integration of new development and soften views through carefully designed edges. Existing landscape will be retained and enhanced wherever possible, helping to respect the historic setting of the listed building Barnhorn Manor and enhancing good design.



### 2.

### Establish a strong green infrastructure network to support biodiversity and promote health and wellbeing

The creation of well-connected, fully accessible and coherently laid out new green space and neighbourhoods, founded upon the retention of existing landscape features, will promote healthy, active lifestyles and a strong community spirit. A network of interconnected greenways provides excellent opportunities to create a variety of greenspace types that could include allotments, community gardens, orchards as well as formal and informal play.

The retention of landscape assets within new green infrastructure, alongside the provision of high quality sustainable drainage designs, will aid biodiversity enhancement and habitat creation.

The design will also seek to deliver appropriate landscape edges, reflecting the site's location on the edge of Bexhill. The initial masterplan seeks to use a combination of the transition of density downwards towards the settlement edge and then using different landscape treatments to mark the change from settlement edge to open countryside. Natural landscaping will also be used to provide a new permanent boundary for the development and the West of Bexhill.



3.

**Create a safe and attractive walking and cycling routes to promote active travel, reduce carbon emissions and promote health and wellbeing**

By utilising and enhancing the existing public right of way network, the site offers excellent opportunities to promote healthy, active travel choices that help reduce car dependency. These routes hold potential to establish an interconnected network of new greenways, with a choice of onward destinations, making walking and cycling an attractive and viable choice for residents.

This will be achieved through a combination of embedding active travel routes within the scheme, along green routes where possible, or as part of safe and multi-modal transport corridor where a more direct route is needed.



5.

**Form a hierarchy of characterful streets**

The development will have a variety of characterful street designs and be a well-connected new place to live. With emphasis on active travel, new streets will offer a clear hierarchy of routes that positively integrate with the sites sloping landform. All streets with have landscape themes, including blue infrastructure design and the doubling up of SUDS provision with landscape features where appropriate.

4.

**Establish a vibrant, balanced and attractive new neighbourhood to be proud of**

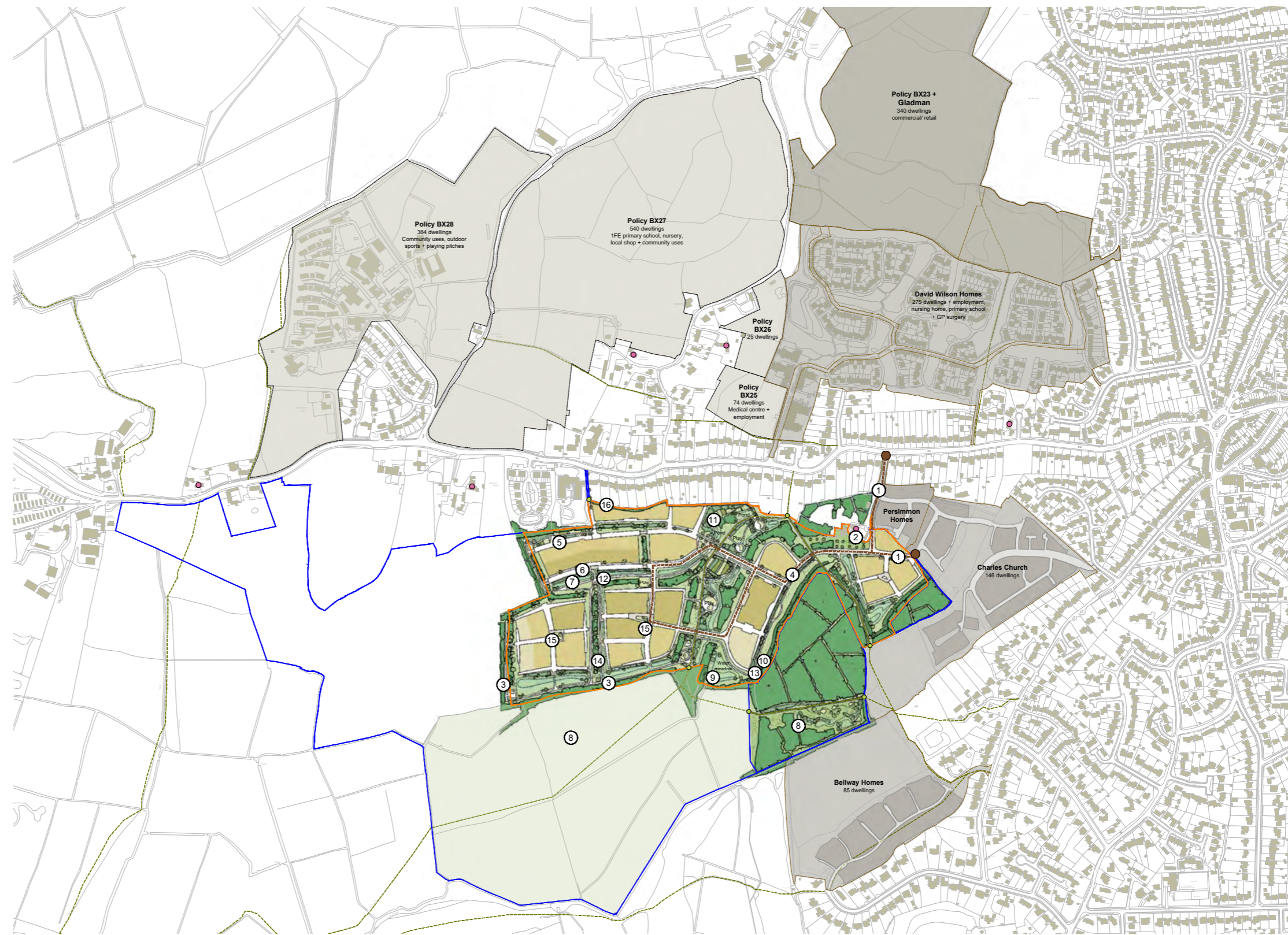
To optimise the site's development potential, a variety of housing densities will be achieved across the site to create character, identity and aid legibility. Locally distinctive designs and beautifully designed homes will be used to form an attractive new neighbourhood which enhances local character and positively assimilates development into its surroundings. Inclusive, tenure-blind and adaptable housing suitable for people at every stage of life, including families, couples, single people and older people will be provided and make efficient use of space.

The density of the scheme will be complemented by large areas of dedicated open spaces which will be connected in to areas of housing.



# Illustrative Concept Plan

- 5.3 An illustrative concept plan, landscape-led, has been prepared to demonstrate how the vision could be interpreted in line with the Council's two overall priorities of 'Green to the Core' and 'Live Well Locally'.
- 5.4 Based on preliminary technical findings, the site has potential to accommodate around 450 new homes within the draft allocation area as identified under Policy BX22.
- 5.5 Allowing for a variety of housing types, sizes and tenures across the site, a gross net density of 40 dwellings per hectare has been initially applied to gauge site capacity as an average across the site.



Other land in ownership	New landscape	Potential pedestrian/cycle connections
Draft Allocation BX22	Sustainable drainage	Listed building
Higher density	Allotments	Other land in control for ecological enhancements
Medium density	Primary street network, and active travel route	Draft allocation sites
Lower density	Public Right of Way	Consented development
Public open space	Development access (all modes)	

Residential development  
 Net development Area: 27.49 Acres/ 11.12 Hectares  
 Proposed number of dwellings: c. 450no. @40dph

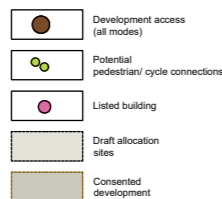
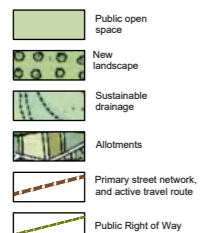
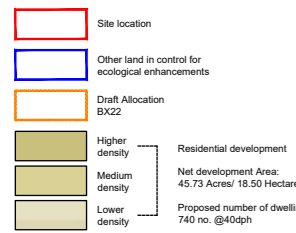
### Design principles

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Development access utilising existing infrastructure     | 9. Water meadow and site low point        |
| 2. Listed building  | 10. Ancient woodland buffer (30m)         |
| 3. Sensitive treated settlement edge                        | 11. Communal food growing and pond offset |
| 4. Circular active travel route utilising existing contours | 12. Recreational corridor                 |
| 5. Upper secondary street                                   | 13. Public Rights of Way integrated       |
| 6. Lower secondary street                                   | 14. Woodland corridor                     |
| 7. On-street blue infrastructure corridor                   | 15. Focal spaces and pocket parks         |
| 8. Area for ecological enhancements                         | 16. Landscape buffer                      |

## Alternative Illustrative Concept Plan

- 5.6 It is imperative to optimise the delivery of housing within the District, given that the Local Plan does not meet the standard method figure for housing in full. Therefore, an alternative development concept plan has been prepared to illustrate how land in wider ownership could be integrated to form a larger scale proposal whilst in keeping with the proposed design vision and core principles.
- 5.7 Allowing for the application of a similar average density, this option would deliver around 740 new homes, involving the formation of an additional roundabout vehicular access via Barnhorn Road in the northwestern area of the site.
- 5.8 Both concept plan options:

- Deliver a variety of inclusive, tenure-blind and adaptable housing types suitable for people at every stage of life, including families, couples, single people and older people in a sustainable location.
- Create compact and connected development, where people can meet their everyday needs within a short walk and cycle journey.
- Achieve appropriate variation in density, pattern and height to create character, identity and aid legibility.
- Protect, enrich and create habitats for wildlife, flora and fauna.
- Align with the Council's two overall priorities of 'Green to the Core' and 'Live Well Locally'.
- Create a responsive, landscape-led design, founded on the retention, protection and enhancement of existing landscape features.
- Deliver an outstanding, fully integrated, multifunctional network of green and blue infrastructure to benefit residents' health and well-being, promote physical, active lifestyles.
- The preceding sections of this document have set out how the use of this land is appropriate in landscape, highways and heritage terms.



### Design principles

1. New roundabout via Barnhorn Road
2. Development access utilising existing infrastructure
3. Soft setting to listed building
4. Landscape buffer
5. Circular active travel route utilising existing contours
6. Upper primary street
7. Lower primary street
8. On-street blue infrastructure corridor
9. Green link and view to Barnhorn Manor
10. Area for ecological enhancements
11. Water meadow and site low point
12. Ancient woodland buffer (30m)
13. Communal food growing
14. Recreational corridor
15. Communal food growing corridor with natural play (site high point)
16. Public Rights of Way integrated
17. Woodland corridor
18. Focal spaces and pocket parks



## 6

# Conclusion

- 6.1 Land south of Barnhorn Road represents a deliverable and sustainable opportunity to support the Council's strategy for the West Bexhill Growth Area. The site is capable of making an important contribution to housing delivery in a district where need is acute and supply remains constrained, while also allowing the Council to secure a more comprehensive and efficient form of development than is currently reflected in the allocation boundary. Through a landscape-led masterplan, the site can accommodate new homes in a way that responds positively to its context, respects environmental and heritage sensitivities, and demonstrates that additional land can be brought forward in a manner which is both deliverable and well planned.
- 6.2 The proposals also offer wider economic and social benefits. In addition to delivering much-needed housing, the development can support local employment and commercial activity, provide new community infrastructure, and help underpin investment in the wider West Bexhill Growth Area. The site's delivery would assist in funding and facilitating improvements to transport, active travel, public realm, green infrastructure and other supporting facilities, helping to create a more connected and self-sustaining community. In this way, the scheme is not simply about meeting housing numbers, but about contributing to a broader pattern of growth that brings tangible benefits for both new and existing residents.
- 6.3 Just as importantly, the Vision demonstrates that these benefits can be realised through a robust and responsible approach to place-making. The site can be delivered with a clear emphasis on sustainability, including climate-resilient design, integrated SuDS, biodiversity enhancement, retained landscape structure and opportunities to encourage travel by walking, cycling and public transport. Taken together, the evidence shows that land south of Barnhorn Road is not only suitable for development, but is capable of delivering a high quality extension to west Bexhill which aligns with the emerging Local Plan, supports infrastructure provision and responds positively to the Council's objectives for sustainable growth.



