



# Ashes Farm Statement

Development Brief & Delivery Framework

**Submitted To:**  
Mid Suffolk District Council  
November 2016  
Job Number: 500009  
Revision: Rev. C  
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Checked by: IH

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## APPENDIX

Ashes Farm Residential Development Appraisal by Savills

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Document status

Ingleton Wood were engaged by Babergh/ Mid Suffolk District Council in April 2016 to assist in the preparation of a “Delivery Framework” for the Ashes Farm site. Ingleton Wood are lead consultant working in association with the following;

- Wynne-Williams Associates, Landscape Architects
- MTC, Highways Consultants and Civil Engineers
- Savills, Development Agents

It was agreed at the outset, that much of the information previously provided in

the “Concept Statement - Ashes Farm (MSDC 2009)” document is still relevant. Significant sections of this document have been brought up to date and a development concept plan produced. The input of the following parties in the preparation of the 2009 document is therefore acknowledged;

- Core Connections
- Gardner Stewart Architects
- Seventeen Creative Communications

The primary purpose of this document is to facilitate a framework for the delivery of development on the site.

### 1.2 Purpose of the development brief

Stowmarket is located at the confluence of the Rivers Gipping and Rattlesden in Suffolk, and is the largest town in Mid Suffolk District. It is located to the south of the A14 midway between Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds. It is on the main rail line between London and Norwich and the town has an approximate population of 19,000.

Three key development sites have been the subject of detailed development brief

studies to follow-up the work undertaken on the town-wide Stowmarket Masterplan in 2007–8.

#### Stowmarket Area Action Plan

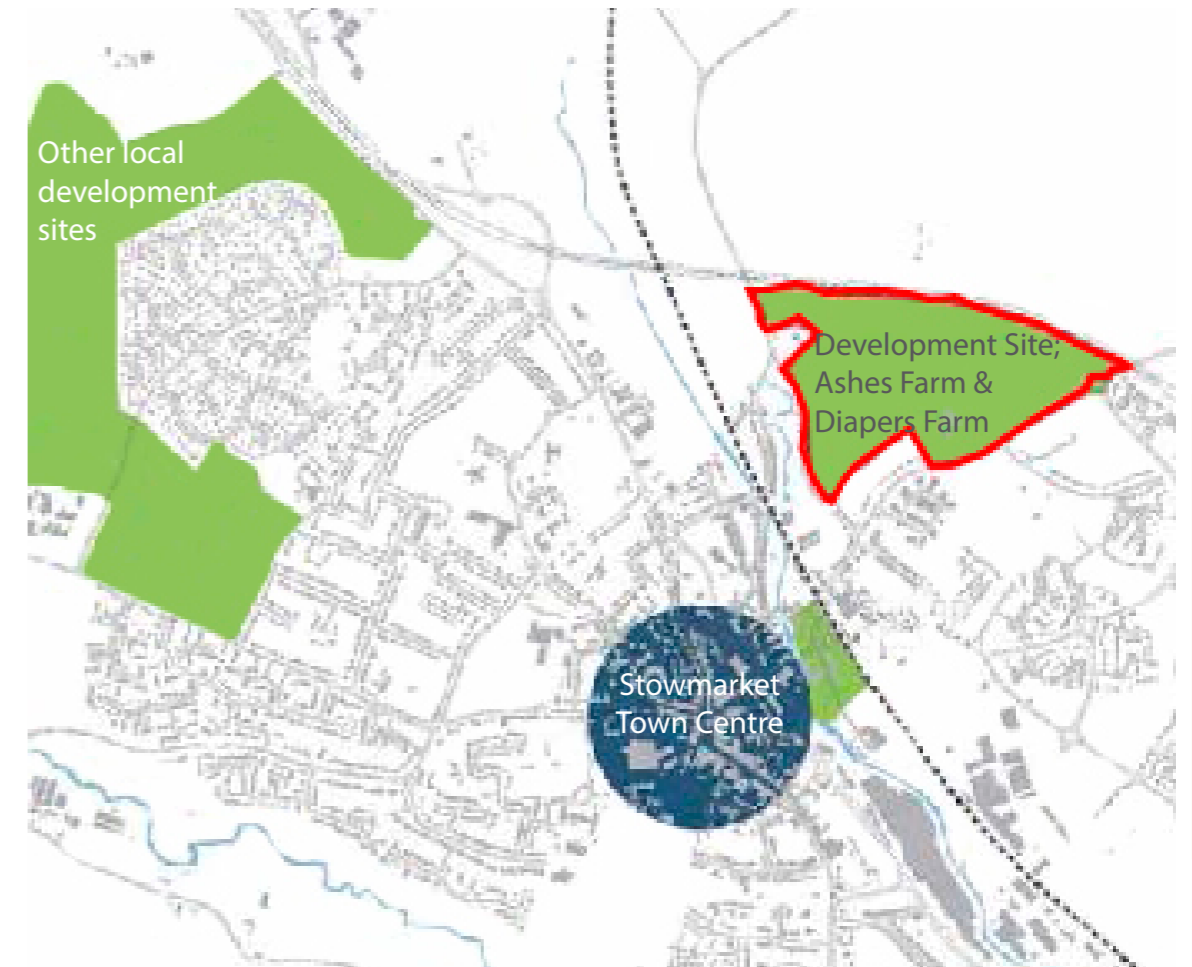
The Stowmarket Area Action Plan (SAAP), is a formal planning policy document that sets out the relevant planning policies to guide the future development in Stowmarket and its immediate surrounding villages.

The Ashes Farm site is allocated in the document, under Policy 6.13, for

residential and open space. It is identified as having capacity to accommodate 400 homes. Policy 6.14 goes on to advise that before an application for planning permission is submitted, it is envisaged that a Development Brief will be produced.



Ashes Farm listed building



Location Plan

### The Ashes Farm Site

Ashes Farm site is one of the key potential new greenfield residential development sites in Stowmarket proposed in the Core Strategy document. It lies to the north-east of the town centre, and is some 10 minutes walk uphill from Stowmarket rail station.

### The Development Brief

This development brief forms a background document to support the Stowmarket Action Area Local Plan. It outlines the essential elements of constraint and opportunity for this site, and gives guidance to developers on the landscape, access, drainage and open space requirements for the site. It is intended that this document will inform the preparation of a planning application.

During the masterplan consultation the need for additional open space for recreational use as the town expands was identified. Parts of the upper plateau of the land in the 2009 Concept Statement, where the landscape environmental assessment has identified that development would have an adverse impact due to its visibility on the plateau separating Stowmarket and Stowupland, was identified as one of several areas of open space suitable for walking and informal recreational use as well as possible sports provision. This brief does not set out a detailed plan for such use, since this is premature at present.

### Content of the Brief

The brief document firstly introduces Stowmarket town in its regional context and the site in the context of the town then analyses the site's key opportunities and

constraints. The document then identifies a key constraint – which is the landscape and the sensitivity of the open countryside and trees on the skyline formed by the ridge line, as viewed in certain places from both the town centre and from Stowupland village. The recent housing development on Starling Way now interrupts the rural nature of this horizon in parts and so whilst the main requirement is for development not to penetrate the sensitive skyline, it would not be out of context if elements of development were integrated at low density using sensitive material choices and maximum mitigation strategies.

The developer of this site will be required to submit detailed landscape analysis and proposals to accompany any planning application.

The brief also sets out the potential locations for main access, and emergency, pedestrian and cycle access. The drainage requirements are set out and the key requirement for this site's development is to avoid an adverse impact on the flood-sensitive residential area to the south west of the site's boundary with Newton Road. A full sustainable urban drainage system demonstrating this mitigation of water run-

off impact onto the surrounding areas will be required for any development here.

### 1.3 Timetable for Consultation & Adoption

The draft brief was available on consultation as a background document to the Stowmarket Action Area Local Plan in summer 2009. It has been amended where necessary following consultation, and issued as guidance to support development of this site. To date initial consultations have taken place with all the key landowners for the site.

The timetable for consultation will be developed through discussion with the Council and key stakeholders in due course. Proposals will be presented to Council members for their endorsement.

In terms of its status, it is intended that the document will be endorsed by Council Members as a material consideration in the determination of planning application on the site.



The eastern Diapers' land part of the site

## A Sense of Place

The town's sense of place is due in part to its setting, and in considering development of this site the following two attributes are important to retaining Stowmarket's distinctiveness:

- Rural valley sides which are visible from a number of locations within the town help reinforce the town's location within a river valley. The views of the open valley slopes to the north of the A14 above the development site are important in providing a setting to the town.
- Open rural landscape between Stowmarket and the surrounding villages form an important physical break and reinforce separation, helping surrounding plateau villages to retain a sense of individual identity.
- This sense of separation is further emphasised by the change in topography from the sloping river valley sides and the elevated relatively flat plateau landscape which surrounds the valleys.

The development brief addresses the change in topography across this site from sloping valley sides to the flat plateau area.

## 1.4 Environmental & Landscape Assessment

The environmental assessment of the town and its surroundings was carried out as a background study for the Core Strategy and the Stowmarket Action Area Local Plan by Alison Farmer Associates in 2007. It assists by defining the key assets and special qualities which should be safeguarded, and informing future decisions on the release of land for employment, residential and open space use. A key element of the work is illustrated in drawing 2067/05: Visual and Landscape Setting Analysis. (This was reviewed by Wynne-Williams Assoc. in 2016 and considered to still be relevant).

The purpose of the analysis is to identify, in a fully integrated way, the role of different areas of townscape and landscape and landmarks in contributing to the distinctiveness and setting of the historic town.

### Key Views

This analysis focuses on key views to



Upper plateau as seen from the roundabout on Stowupland Road (2016)

man-made and natural landmarks both from within the town and from the wider landscape. Analysis also determined which areas of land perform an important role in providing a rural setting to the town.

### Preserving Stowupland's Village Setting

Consideration is also given to defining areas that function as a gap between settlements as well as the character of the existing urban edge and how it sits in the landscape. This analysis was carried out specifically to inform designation and evaluation of potential 'land bids' and to ensure due weight is placed on landscape, townscape and related environmental issues, whilst also recognising that the appropriateness and suitability of any site for development is also strongly dependent on the nature and design of the development proposed.

### The Gipping Valley

For this site the analysis identified that it forms part of the elevated valley sides of the Gipping Valley and adjacent plateau

that are visually significant in forming a rural context in views from the eastern built up areas of Stowmarket.

### Stowupland Road

Also significant is the view along Stowupland Road approaching Stowmarket where leaving Stowupland there is a narrow gap of open agricultural land, the bridge over the A14 and then the urban gateway is reached at the new Cedar's Park roundabout. From the roundabout there are views to the northwest over an open field and to the southwest across Stowmarket to the wider countryside. Following a steep descent into the river valley the historic gateway is reached at the next junction where Victorian terraced housing starts and there are views to St Peter and St Mary's Church spire which enhance arrival and identity. Notable characteristics of this route are the elevated views and steep descent into the town. The rural character (hedge lined) of the route between the two gateways has been diminished in recent years by the construction of the new housing in the Starling Way development.



Western site boundary on the River Gipping valley floor (2016)

### Arrival into Stowmarket

Also of note is the arrival into Stowmarket along Newton Road, an historic route, where this rural lane approaches Stowmarket from the North. The urban gateway is reached at the point the lane passes under the A14 fly-over and the historic gateway closely follows at the start of housing development. Notable characteristics of this route include the views south and west across open meadow and the valley floor poplar trees with St Peter and St Mary's Church spire on the skyline which enhance arrival and identity. The steeply rising land to the west reinforces the valley character, whilst on its eastern side the vegetation above the road and the allotments enable the 'green' character of the lane to penetrate the urban area.

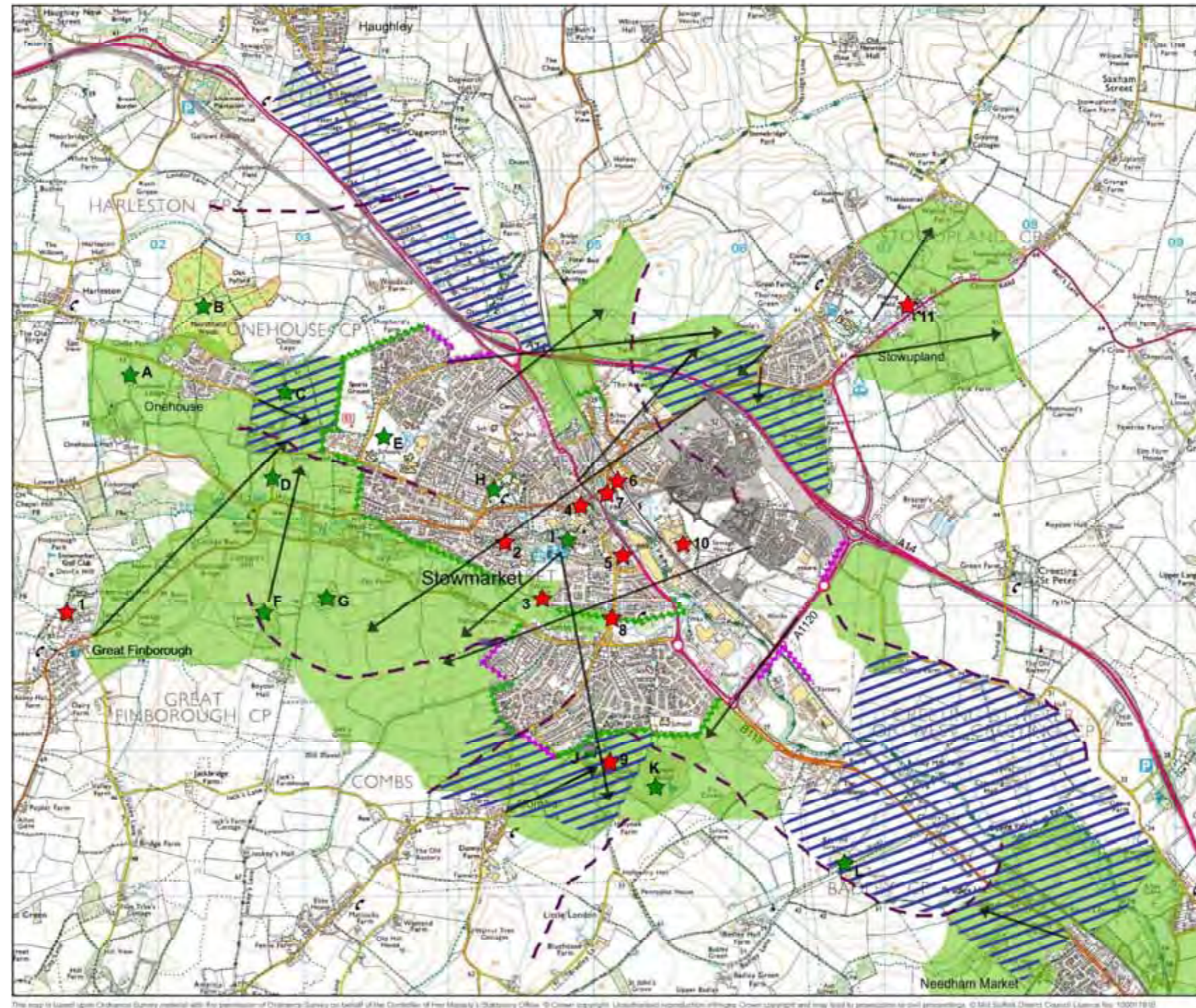
### Existing Views

There are views from Stowupland across to the development at Cedars Park and the nature and character of Stowupland (a relatively dispersed village) gives the impression that Cedar's Park is a further continuation of the village. There is therefore a need to reinforce the perception of separation between settlements in the development of Ashes Farm. The upper slopes of the site area particularly in the east form an important 'plateau' setting to the town of Stowmarket. This should remain open in nature and used strategically as public open space to help retain the sense of separation between settlements.

## Special Qualities & Sensitivities:

- Listed buildings at The Ashes and rural setting
- Semi-rural hedge lined character of Stowupland Road
- Memorable elevated views from highest land out across Stowmarket in the valley to the rural landscape setting beyond
- Visual sensitivity of open 'plateau' landscape above the 55m contour which forms skyline from certain views from surrounding countryside and settlements

There is potential for some development but in certain areas of the site that are adjacent to the higher plateaus and that are visible locally, this should be restricted to low density with areas of open space. The higher plateaus of the site should remain generally open though there is scope for some development in this area. Both these measures aim to avoid adverse impact on the setting of the town and approach routes/gateways.



'Drawing 206706: Visual Analysis and Landscape Setting' from Stowmarket Environmental Assessment 2008

(Note: Although some further development has taken place since 2008, the basic principles remain).

## Stowmarket Environmental Assessment

### Visual Analysis & Landscape Setting

Drawing No. 2067/05

- ★ Distinctive Man Made Landmarks
  1. Great Finborough Church
  2. Water Tower
  3. Windmill
  4. St Peter and St Mary Church
  5. East House / Mailings
  6. Railway Station
  7. East House
  8. Ford Bridge
  9. Combs Church
  10. Silos
  11. Stowupland Church

- ★ Distinctive Natural Landmarks
  - A. Lime Avenue to Onehouse Hall
  - B. Northfield Wood
  - C. Lime Avenue to Chilton Leys
  - D. Sunkin Lane
  - E. Poplar Trees
  - F. Temple Grove Wood
  - G. Dale Wood
  - H. Lime Avenue
  - I. Cedar Trees - Abbots Hall
  - J. Combs Terraces
  - K. Combs Wood
  - L. Keyfield Grove

- Visually Important Ridgelines / Break in Slope
- Open Countryside Visible from within Urban Areas and Adjoining Landscape and Forming an Important Landscape Setting

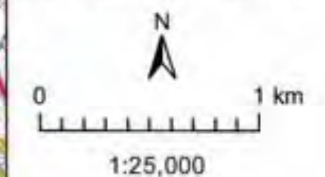
- Abrupt Urban Edge
- Vegetated Urban Edge

- ← Key Views from Urban Areas (inc Edges of Villages) to Wider Landscape and From Landscape Hinterland Towards Stowmarket

- Open Countryside separating settlements

Note: Key views are not exhaustive but represent the main views identified during the work

Data Sources:  
Chilton Hall layout: Lorraine Homes, Ains J, January 2007  
Combs Park layout: Crest Nicholson, Worsley J, August 2007



ALISON FARMER ASSOCIATES

## 1.5 Planning Policy

Since the Development Brief was prepared in 2009, there have been a number of updates to the planning framework, which will impact the future development of the site.

In identifying the planning framework relevant to the site, consideration has been given to Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which states that:

If regard is to be had to the Development Plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Act, the determination must be made in accordance with the Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Adopted Development Plan for the site comprises:

- Mid Suffolk's Core Strategy (2008);
- Mid Suffolk's Core Strategy Focused Review (2012);
- Mid Suffolk Local Plan (1998) (saved policies);
- Stowmarket Area Action Plan (2013).

The updates to the Adopted Development Plan since the original Development Brief was prepared are summarised below.

### Core Strategy Focused Review(2012)

The document was produced by the Council to ensure that updated evidence and guidance was reflected within the Council's strategic planning policies. A key

purpose of the document was to reflect work that had been done in relation to the preparation of the Stowmarket Area Action Plan and to ensure consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework.

In this regard, Policy FC2 – Provision and Distribution of Housing – states that greenfield land is allocated for the development of at least 2,625 homes, over a 15 year period from the 1st April 2012. The Policy goes on to advise that of this figure, 1,525 homes will be built on greenfield land within the Stowmarket area.

### Stowmarket Area Action Plan (2013)

The Stowmarket Area Action Plan (SAAP), is a formal planning policy document that sets out the relevant planning policies to guide the future development in Stowmarket and its immediate surrounding villages.

The Ashes Farm site is allocated in the document, under Policy 6.13, for residential and open space. It is identified as having capacity to accommodate 400 homes. Policy 6.14 goes on to advise that before an application for planning permission is submitted, it is envisaged that a Development Brief will be produced.

Policy 6.14 of the SAAP addresses more detailed matters relating to landscaping, setting and views and states that any proposal must give consideration to:

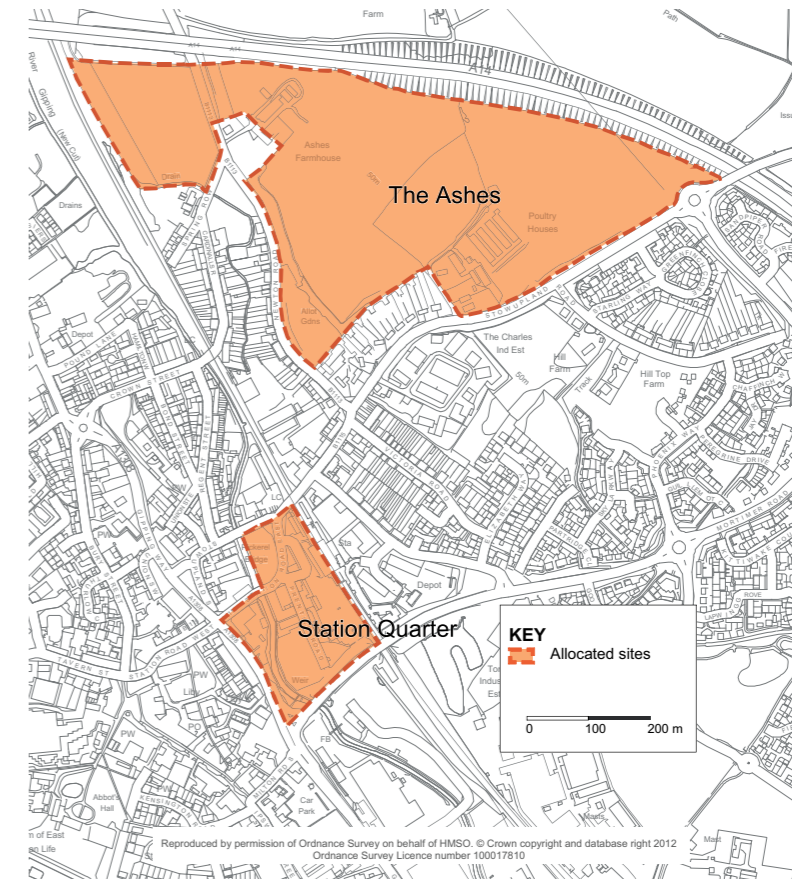
Any future development on this site must

address the:

1. Important visual nature of the area, and retain distant views to and from the site;
2. Need for appropriate structural landscaping and screening across the site;
3. Need to protect, or as a minimum soften, the impact of development on the skyline;
4. Provision of open space to the top of the site;
5. Land to the far west of the site, bounded by Newton Road, Spring Row and the A14, which is designated for open space uses;
6. Retention of existing hedgerows and mature trees;
7. 'gateway' to Stowmarket on the Stowupland Road;
8. Part of the site within Flood Zone 3b;
9. Areas affected by flood risk must be of a use compatible with the NPPF Technical guidance (page 6); and
10. Presence of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats and species.

Policy 6.16 advises that any development must include enhanced transport links between the site and the town. In addition, a proposal will be required to provide suitable access to the site from Stowupland Road and Newton Road, together with enhanced cycle and footpath improvements (either by way of physical provision or financial contribution) to the surrounding area.

The policy envisages that these



Mid Suffolk Stowmarket Area Action Plan (February 2013) - Stowmarket North and Central

improvements will be delivered during the early zones of development.

Policy 6.17 of the SAAP states that it is envisaged that any proposal will obtain the allotments located on the corner of Newton Road and Stowupland Road.

Policy 6.18 deals with more detailed matters that will affect development, such as noise attenuation from the A14 and the potential need to divert existing electricity cables.

The document contains a presumption in favour of sustainable development (Policy 4.1 reflecting guidance contained with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)). The Council state within the policy that it is their intention to work pro-actively with applicants to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, with an aim to secure development and improve the economic, social and environmental conditions in an area.

### Materials Considerations

Since the Development Brief was published in 2009, the Government have published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The document is a material consideration that is afforded significant weight in the determination of planning applications.

At the heart of the document is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. In this regard, paragraph 14 advises that where development proposals accord with the development plan, they should be approved without delay, and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, planning permission should be granted unless:

- Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, or;
- Specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.

Section 4 of the NPPF relates to the promotion of sustainable transport, and encourages solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion. Amongst other things, paragraph 35 states that developments should be designed where practical to give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements, and have access to high quality public transport facilities. Safe and secure layouts should be created to minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians, avoiding street clutter and where appropriate establishing home zones. In addition, facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles are encouraged.

Section 6 deals with the need to deliver

a wide choice of high quality homes, and paragraph 49 requires local planning authorities to consider housing applications in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the Local Planning Authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. In addition, local planning authorities should identify and bring back into residential use empty housing and buildings, in line with local housing and empty homes strategies.

Section 7 emphasises the great importance which the Government attaches to the

design of the built environment, which it considers a key aspect of sustainable development, and consequently indivisible from good planning. Amongst other things, developments should optimise the potential of sites to accommodate development, create sustainable and appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks. In addition, development should respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation. Developments should be visually attractive, as a result of good architecture and appropriate

landscaping. Whilst visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Planning decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.

The role of planning in promoting healthy communities, is set out in Section 8 of the NPPF. Planning decisions should aim to achieve places which promote, amongst other things, safe and accessible development, containing clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and



Illustrative layout for Ashes Farm (Extract from Stowmarket North - Ashes Farm Concept Statement (Peacock Short, 2010))



continual use of public areas.

Section 10 deals with meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change. In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should expect new development to comply with adopted Local Plan policies on local requirements for decentralised energy supply, unless it can be demonstrated that it is not feasible or viable, and take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption. Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk, but where development is necessary, making it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere. Paragraphs 100-104 provide detail on the need to apply the Sequential and Exceptions Tests, and paragraph 104 states that for individual developments on sites allocated in development plans through the Sequential Test, applicants need not apply the Sequential Test.

Section 11 sets out the role of the planning system in relation to conserving and enhancing the natural environment; of particular relevance is the need to provide net gains in biodiversity where possible, and to prevent both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Planning policies and decisions should encourage the effective use of land by

reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value.

Section 12 deals with conserving and enhancing the historic environment, and includes a requirement for applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a particular proposal, including any contribution made by their setting. Local Planning Authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance.

### Five Year Land Supply

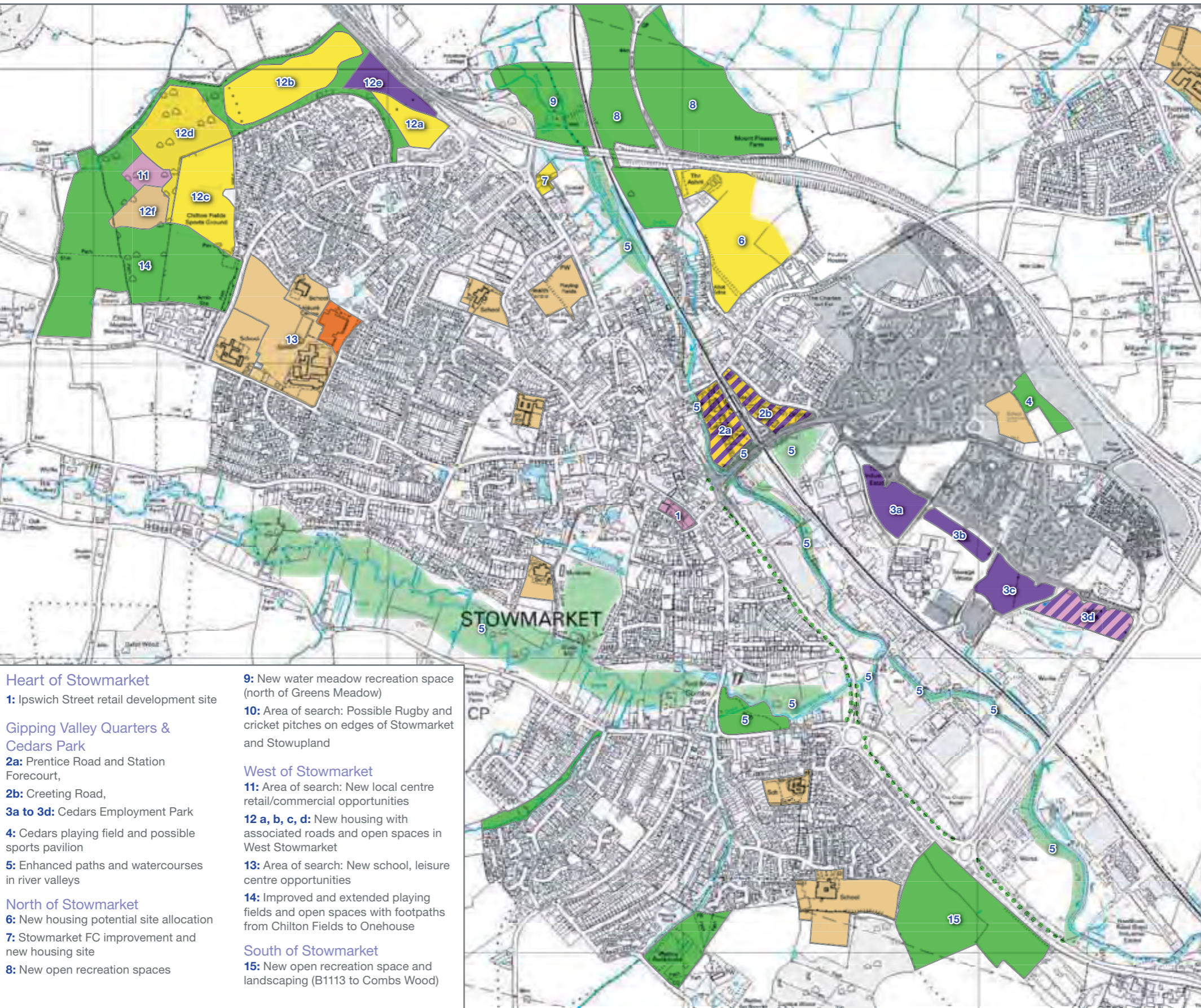
As detailed above, the NPPF requires that local planning authorities demonstrate an up-to date supply of deliverable housing sites.

The Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs), which was published in March 2016 and covers the period 1st April, 15 to 31st March, 16 confirms that Mid Suffolk are currently unable to demonstrate a five year land supply. The identified housing land supply was 3.7 years measured against the 20% buffer.

The development of the Ashes Farm site has the potential to make a significant contribution to the five year land supply.

# Stowmarket: The Masterplan August 2008

- Leisure Centre
- School
- Open Space
- Strategic River Valley Corridors
- Housing
- Mixed Employment/Housing
- Employment
- Mixed Employment/Retail/Restaurant/Hotel
- Retail
- Tree Planting



### Heart of Stowmarket

**1:** Ipswich Street retail development site

### Gipping Valley Quarters & Cedars Park

**2a:** Prentice Road and Station Forecourt,

**2b:** Creting Road,

**3a to 3d:** Cedars Employment Park

**4:** Cedars playing field and possible sports pavilion

**5:** Enhanced paths and watercourses in river valleys

### North of Stowmarket

**6:** New housing potential site allocation

**7:** Stowmarket FC improvement and new housing site

**8:** New open recreation spaces

**9:** New water meadow recreation space (north of Greens Meadow)

**10:** Area of search: Possible Rugby and cricket pitches on edges of Stowmarket and Stowupland

### West of Stowmarket

**11:** Area of search: New local centre retail/commercial opportunities

**12 a, b, c, d:** New housing with associated roads and open spaces in West Stowmarket

**13:** Area of search: New school, leisure centre opportunities

**14:** Improved and extended playing fields and open spaces with footpaths from Chilton Fields to Onehouse

### South of Stowmarket

**15:** New open recreation space and landscaping (B1113 to Combs Wood)

(Note: Although some further development has taken place since 2008, the basic principles remain).

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## 1.6 Flood Risk & Drainage Strategy

The Ashes Farm site is located in Flood Zone 1 on the Environment Agency's Flood Map. This indicates that the flood risk posed to the site from fluvial watercourses is low and that the annual probability of flooding is less than 1%. The site is also considered to be at a low risk of flooding from all other potential sources of flood risk including the sea, surface water, ground water, sewer, and artificial sources.

### Flood Risk to the Surrounding Area

As the site is up to 10.3ha there is potential that its redevelopment could increase the existing level of flood risk to the surrounding area due to the associated increase in impermeable areas that will take place increasing the surface water run off rate from the site unless a suitable drainage system incorporating adequate attenuation volumes to restrict post development discharge rates from the site to greenfield rates and volumes is provided.

### Flood Risk Assessment

A Flood Risk Assessment is required on the grounds that the site exceeds an area of 1Ha despite the site itself being at a low risk of flooding. Whilst the document will be required to provide evidence that the risk of flooding from all sources has been accurately assessed and that the development itself is not at a significant

risk of flooding, in this instance the primary focus will be in developing an outline drainage strategy that demonstrates that run off will be adequately controlled to ensure that there will be no adverse impact upon the off site risk of flooding due to increased run off rates.

### Sustainable Drainage Strategy

In accordance with the Drainage Hierarchy, if suitable infiltration rates are obtained during testing then surface water drainage will be required to be to infiltration systems, whilst failing this the Suffolk Surface Water Drainage (SuDS) Guidance, Standards, and Information (March 2016) will require that post development discharge rates are restricted to the pre development Greenfield QBAR discharge rate during all rainfall events up to and including a 1 in 100 year rainfall event with allowance for climate change for which guidelines currently indicate as an additional 40% allowance. A further 10% addition to impermeable areas is also required to allow for urban creep.

Initial estimations for attenuation volumes indicate that if infiltration systems are used based upon the lowest feasible rate of 5x-6m/s then an attenuation volume of approximately 740m<sup>3</sup> would be required, whilst if a positive drainage system is required then attenuation volumes would be approximately 900m<sup>3</sup> per impermeable Ha. Where open SuDS features such as swales and basins are used then the depth of attenuation should be a maximum

of 0.5m, whilst some of the attenuation should be provided by the base areas to permeable paving.

Development of the site will be completed in zones, and sufficient attenuation for each zone must be provided as part of each zone as development takes place to ensure that there is not temporary increase in the off site risk of flooding as development takes place, whilst a surface water management plan will also be required by the contractor undertaking work at the site to ensure no increase in off site flood risk as a result of compaction of soil during construction activities.

The location of attenuation features will need consideration at an early stage in design of the site layout, with attenuation for each zone required to be in the lower lying land associated with each zone to enable drainage via gravity systems. A final outfall to the River Gipping will also be required, likely via the watercourse that comes under Newton Road in the vicinity of Ashes Farm.

### Surface Water Quality

Adequate pollution treatment will be required for all surface water prior to discharge, with clean discharge such as roof run off requiring a single treatment phase, discharge from lightly trafficked areas requiring two stages, and discharge from more heavily trafficked areas requiring three stages of treatment. Settlement and

adsorption will take place in any ponds or swales providing one treatment phase prior to discharge, whilst use of permeable paving with attenuation wrapped in terram or in the case of adoptable roads a conventional treatment system such as trapped gullies may be used to ensure adequate treatment is provided. Treatment of surface water will also require further consideration in the Sustainable Drainage Strategy.

### The Process

An outline Flood Risk Assessment and Sustainable Drainage Strategy are required at an early stage in the process to inform design of the site masterplan and flood/drainage related constraints. More detailed versions

will then be required as the proposal progresses towards an Outline Planning Application, at which point more detailed calculations will be required along with initial consideration of issues such as the long term maintenance responsibility of SuDS systems proposed. Full detailed drainage design will then be required either at the detailed Planning Application stage for each zone of development or with submission and approval of the detailed drainage design required as a condition to any planning approval granted.



Area west of Newton Rd suitable for an attenuation pond

## 2.0 SITE CONTEXT & ANALYSIS

### Key Issues:

- The site is bordered by three principal movement routes, including the A14, which is a major barrier to north south connections from the site.
- Stowupland Road provides a gateway to Stowmarket from the east and provides access to Stowupland and other villages.
- Junction of Stowupland Road and Newton Road forms the town centre's gateway when approached from the northeast.

### Legibility

- Majority of the site is defined by its green, agricultural character and scrub;
- Junction of Stowupland Road and Newton Road forms the town centre's gateway when approached from the northeast;
- The site is bordered by the principal movement routes, including the A14, which is a major barrier;
- There is a lack of landmarks or destinations within or near to the site, the nearest being Stowmarket station to the south; and
- The railway forms a barrier to movement to the west of the site.

### Movement, Access and Linkages

#### Existing Highways

The Ashes Farm site is bounded to the north by the A14, to the west by Newton Road and to the south and east by Stowupland Road.

The B1113 Newton Road provides access to Stowmarket from the village of Old Newton and other villages to the north and east of Stowmarket. The point at which the A14 passes over Newton Road is a gateway to Stowmarket from this direction and at this point Newton Road changes from a rural road with the national speed limit to a 30mph residential road.

Newton Road has an existing priority junction onto a private driveway access to Ashes Farm in the vicinity of the gateway. There is also a priority junction access to a private drive towards the southern end of Newton Road adjacent to the allotments, providing access to the rear of properties fronting onto Stowupland Road.

The B1151 Stowupland Road provides a gateway to Stowmarket from the east and provides access to Stowupland and other villages. Stowupland Road/ the B1151 is a 30mph road along its length from its junction with the A1120 in Stowupland to

the east to central Stowmarket to the west.

Stowupland Road has a priority junction access at the western end of the dwellings along the northern side which provides access to the Diapers Chicken Farm and three residential dwellings, with a public right of way along this road.

#### Existing Pedestrian and Cycle Access

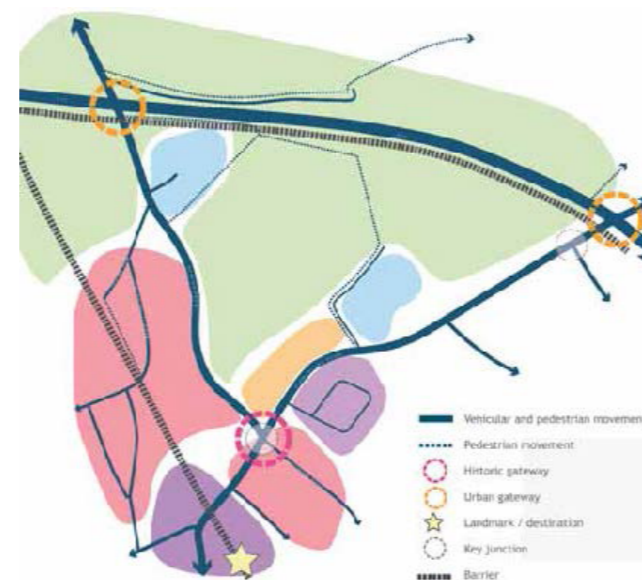
A shared footway/cycleway runs along Stowupland Road along the site frontage.

A public footpath crosses the site from the access on Stowupland Road north to the A14 and then westwards towards Newton Road adjacent to Ashes Farm. However there is no evidence of continued use of this stretch present and the section in the vicinity of Ashes Farm is currently impassable.

#### Existing Public Transport

Existing bus stops are present on the

site's frontage onto Stowupland Road from where Service 384 provides a service to Bury St Edmunds, via Stowmarket railway station, with Service 501 providing a school service to and from Suffolk One Sixth Form College, and High Suffolk Community Transport Services 3 and 6 also stop. A greater level of public transport service is available from Stowmarket Station, which is a maximum 1km walk from the site, and from where services 384/385 to Bury St Edmunds via Woolpit, Beyton and Thurston can be caught with a significantly increased frequency, along with bus 456 to Diss via Mendlesham, Bacton and Eye. The train station is served by firstly the route running from London Liverpool Street to Chelmsford, Colechester, Walton on Naze, Clacton, Harwich, Ipswich, and Norwich, and secondly by the route running from Ipswich through Bury St Edmunds, Cambridge, Ely and Peterborough.



Legibility Diagram



## 2.1 Urban morphology & Landscape

Other than Ashes Farm itself and the chicken farm building, the open nature of the site with very few buildings and structures, other than Ashes Farm itself; The strong frontage formed along Newton Road and Stowupland Road by the line of buildings facing these public highways; The fragmented nature of structures alongside the rail line, reflecting the infill of sites and industrial uses; and The organised nature of the buildings within Charles Industrial Estate, which creates an urban enclosure of its own.

### Land Uses

The overriding land use is residential, which borders the Ashes Farm site and most of the land to the south; There are significant areas containing industrial / utilities uses, particularly within the Charles Industrial Estate, and alongside the railway line; and There are a number of other town centre uses, including pubs and retail, along Stowupland Road, which leads into the town centre.

### Open Space/ Boundaries

- The open space in this area is either agricultural or scrubland.
- The site is divided into separate areas by field boundaries and lines of trees
- Tree planting runs along the A14 Newton Road and much of Stowupland Road

### Existing Building Height

The adjacent plan indicates the heights of buildings around the site.

The majority of buildings are two-storey reflecting the overriding residential land use. There are however a number of 2.5 and 3 storey dwellings adjacent to the Stowupland Road/ A14 roundabout at Mortimer Road and south west of Stowupland Road at Eider Close.

There are also a number of single storey structures, which tend to be those

associated with agriculture or industry buildings comprising a single storey but contained within the equivalent of a two storey structure (i.e. warehouse) are shown as being a two storey structure.

### Building Orientation

The adjacent plan shows the orientation of buildings around the Ashes Farm site.

These are described as 'fronts' and 'backs' and show when a building either faces onto areas of public realm, or turns it's back on them.

The plan shows that the vast majority of public spaces around Ashes Farm are faced by the front, or active side, of buildings. The only area where this pattern breaks

down is around the railway station, which is to the south of Ashes Farm. The fronts to the new properties on Eider Close are set back from Stowupland Road as Eider Close runs parallel to Stowupland Road, providing access to the properties.



Existing Policy Designation



Urban Morphology Diagram



Existing Land Uses



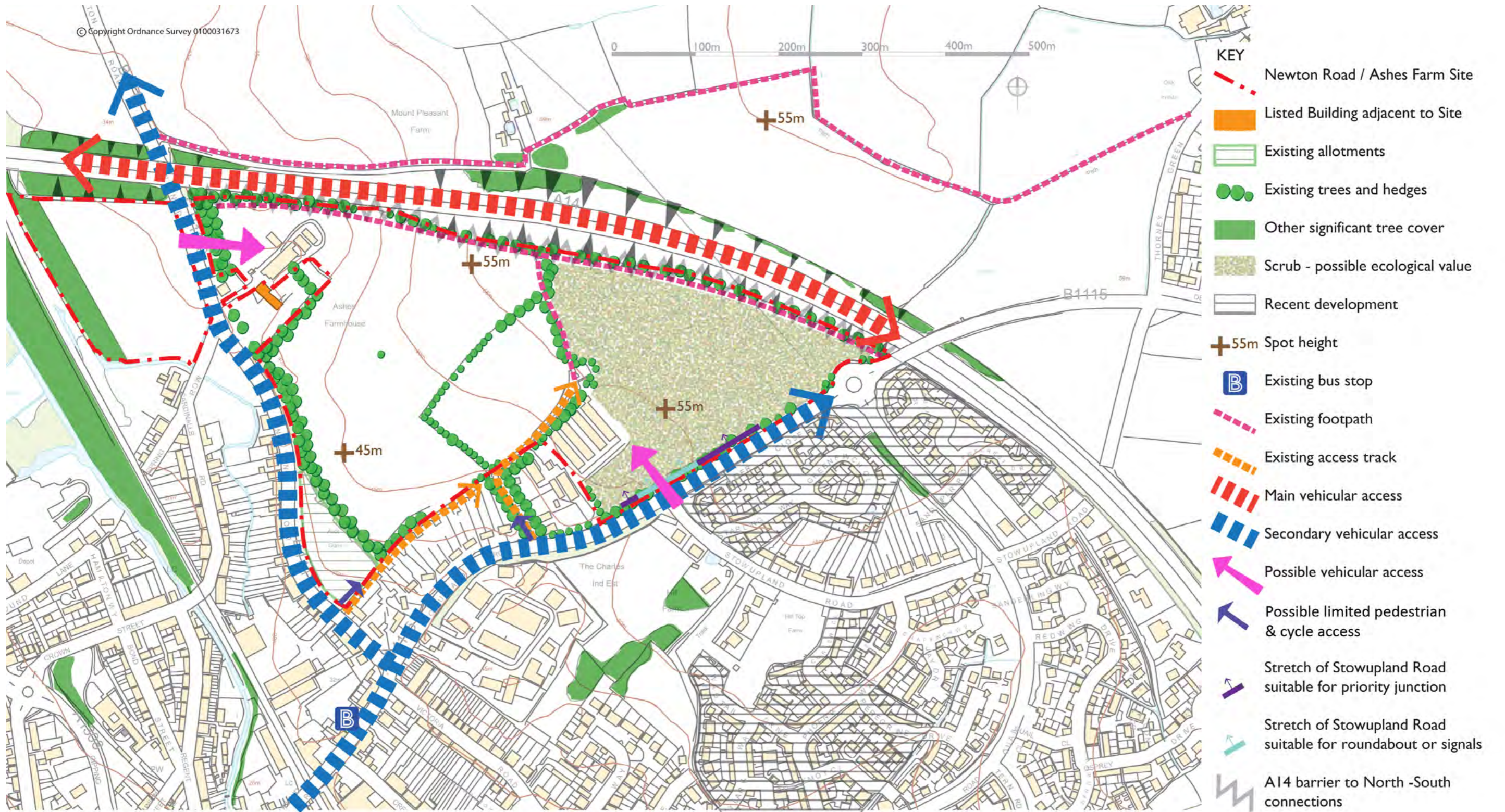
Existing Open Space & Boundary Diagram



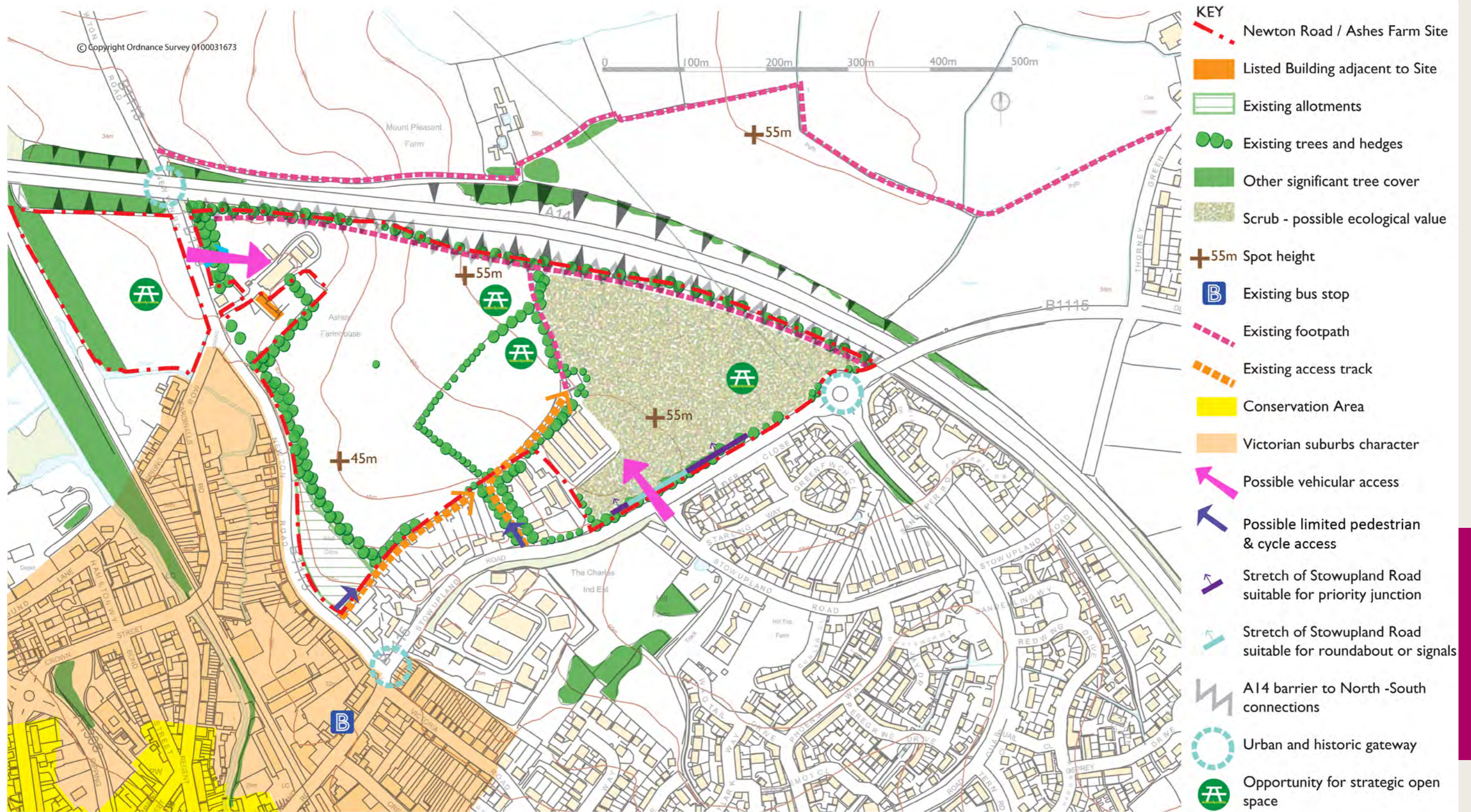
Existing Building Heights



Building Orientation



Access and Linkages



Opportunities and Constraints

## Key Issues:

- High levels of traffic noise from the A14 road
- Key strategic views from Stowmarket & Stowupland
- Requirement to preserve the village identity of Stowupland
- Impact of development would need to ensure that flood risk is not increased in other low lying parts of Stowmarket
- Requirement to define an appropriate urban / rural edge treatment

## Key to plan:

1. Noise from A14
2. Existing Ashes Farm buildings in the centre of the site
3. Steep gradient
4. Existing vehicular access to the site
5. Existing allotments providing a useful community resource
6. Key junction
7. Key views from urban areas (including edges of villages) to wider landscape and from landscape hinterland towards Stowmarket (Taken from Stowmarket Environmental Assessment 2008)

## 2.2 Summary Constraints

### Pedestrian & cycle connections

The site is well located within easy walking & cycling distance from the Station Quarter and the town centre. There are existing public rights of way across the site.

### Topography

The sloping valley-side situation of the south west parts of the site above Newton Road will require a sensitive approach to the design. However the topography could also offer the potential for views out from the site towards the town and possible future public open spaces in the River Gipping Valley.

### The A14

The A14 road to the north of the site is a considerable influence on the site. It forms a barrier to connections directly northwards. Measures to address noise and possibly air quality will need to form part of the residential design proposals.

### Newton Road Allotments

The allotments are well loved and form a useful and sustainable community resource. They also contribute to the site by providing a green edge to the foreground setting for the development.

### Existing Trees & Hedgerows

There are several bands of existing tree screens & hedgerows around and through the site – giving the potential to screen development within parts of the site. These help to compartmentalise the site.

## The Opportunities:

- The site is well located within easy walking & cycling distance from the Station Quarter and the town centre.
- The steep terrain down to Newton Road means that site could enjoy views to other parts of Stowmarket.
- Dwellings on the western part of the site could enjoy views to existing & possible future green spaces beyond the site.
- There are several bands of existing tree screens & hedgerows around and through the site – giving the potential to screen development within parts of the site. These help to compartmentalise the site.
- Opportunity to integrate and soften impact of other adjacent development.
- Careful sectional planning required on the sloping areas of the site and also of the dwellings – such as creating an appropriate roofline.



Constraints key plan



## 3.0 DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

### Key Issues:

Some key transportation issues to consider are:

- Maximising the permeability through the development, in particular for pedestrians and cyclists;
- Maximising accessibility, in particular for pedestrians and cyclists, between Ashes Farm and existing facilities, particularly Stowmarket Rail Station and transport interchange and Stowmarket Town Centre;
- Ensuring all new and existing residents and other users are within reasonable walking distance of a bus service or services with convenient access to Stowmarket town centre and other surrounding areas; and
- Maximising potential for shared parking, bus stops and other facilities between residential, leisure and other uses.

### 3.1 Access & Linkages

#### General Design Guidance and Assessment

Design of all roads, footpaths, cycle paths and access to Ashes Farm from the existing highway network should have regard to the Suffolk Design Guide and the Department for Transport publication Manual for Streets.

Proposed parking should have regard for the Suffolk Advisory Parking Standards and also Mid Suffolk District Council Parking Standards.

Development on the Ashes Farm site will need to be assessed with a Transport Assessment prepared in accordance with “NPPF” transport evidence bases in plan making and decision taking.

Particular emphasis should be placed on ensuring the sustainability of development. Measures should be explored to help ensure that wherever possible people living, working and visiting the site travel to, from and within the site by non-car means.

It is expected that these measures will include assessing the need for new or re-routed bus services to connect Ashes Farm to other parts of Stowmarket. This will include the need to consider whether bus routes through the site are viable for options that provide a link from Newton Road with Stowupland Road, and if so taking buses into account when designing this link.



The A14 road forms the Northern boundary of the site



Newton Road

### 3.2 View Audit

This exercise is key to examining the extent of residential development that would be appropriate for this site.

- The western part of the site lies on a south-west-facing slope above the River Gipping valley. This part of the site is visible from areas of Stowmarket.
- The ridge line & outline of existing mature trees adjacent to Mount Pleasant Farm form an important part of the horizon line as seen from across the valley in Stowmarket town centre.
- Bands of existing trees & hedgerows form important visual screens through and around the site.



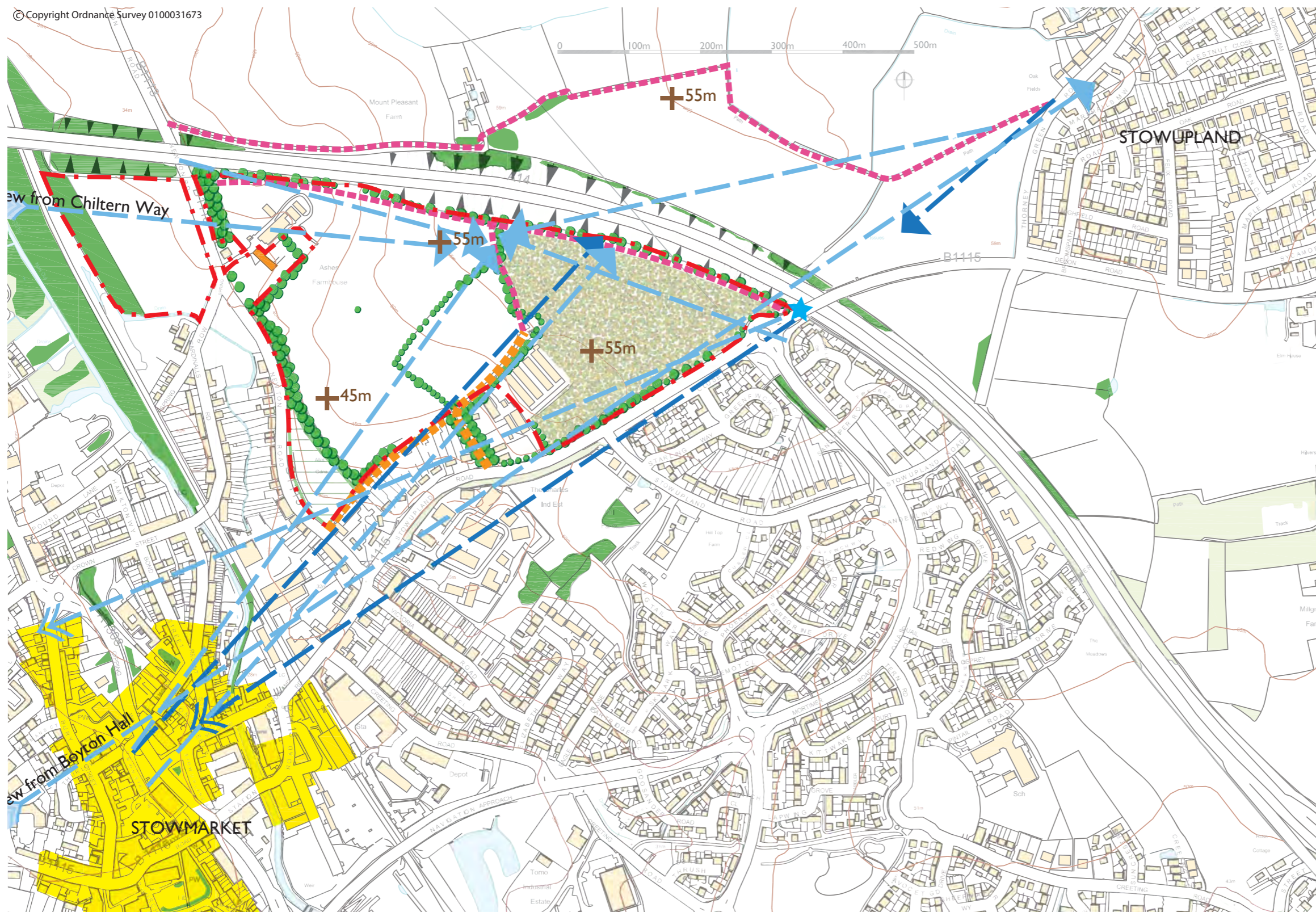
View from Chilton Road to western part of the site



Examples of existing hedges and trees forming visual screens



View from Stowupland Road / Mortimer Road junction to site



- KEY**
- - - Newton Road / Ashes Farm Site
  - Listed Building adjacent to Site
  - Existing allotments
  - Existing trees and hedges
  - Other significant tree cover
  - Scrub - possible ecological value
  - + 55m Spot height
  - - - Existing footpath
  - - - Existing access track
  - Conservation Area
  - ➔ Key strategic view from Environmental Impact Assessment (Feb 2008)
  - ➔ Other strategic view identified
  - ★ First views of Stowmarket from Stowupland Road

View Audit

## View Audit

- The western part of the site has intermittent boundary screening and is visible from the A14 as well as areas of Stowmarket.
- Treetops within the eastern part of the site are visible across the plateau of farmland from the village of Stowupland to the north east, but the site itself is screened.
- The open plateaus, ridge line & outline of existing mature trees form an important setting to the town and can be seen as a long view from across the valley near Boyton Hall.



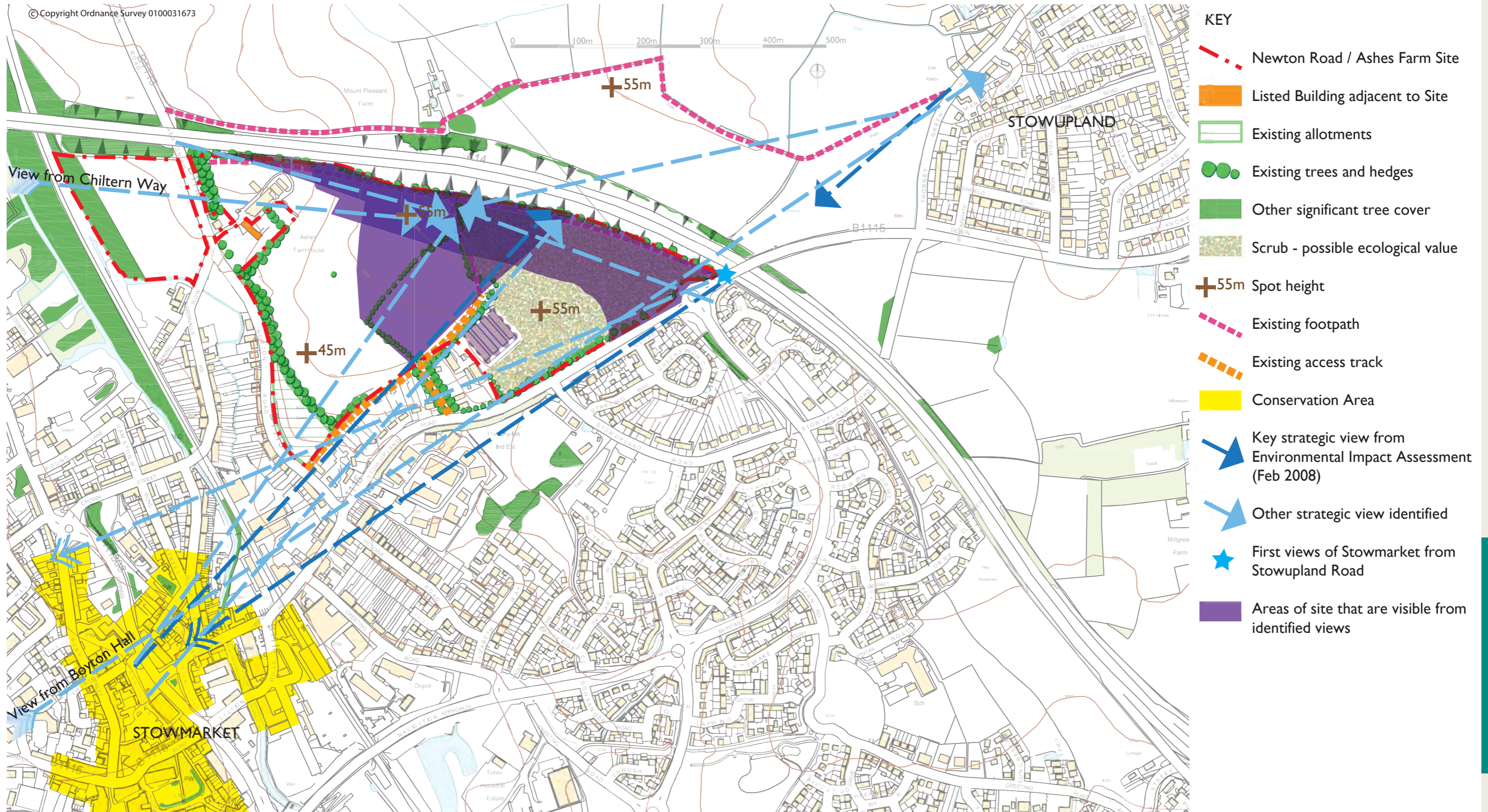
View from PROW near Stowupland to eastern part of the site



View from the A14 through intermittent boundary screening into site



Long view from Boyton Hall looking northeast across Stowmarket to site just below the horizon



Visibility of Site

## Key Issues

- Significant screening planting will be a precondition to development taking place.
- Townscape, building orientation & public open space should be designed together to create a soft, organic edge to the rural surroundings.
- These spaces can provide opportunities to create distinct character areas & can link into wider public open space network.
- New dwellings can enjoy views onto wider rural landscape.
- Possible to incorporate flood relief features as safe, attractive part of the landscape design – such as 'bog garden' for marginal plants.
- Landscape measures such as earth bunding could be considered to assist noise reduction next to the A14, though the road is within a cutting at this point and this feature would alter the horizon line.
- Existing hedgerows & tree screens to be retained where possible. Additional tree / hedge planting to reinforce visual screens.
- Consider taking design influences from local landscape features within Stowmarket.
- Opportunity for recreational space and / or sports facilities on the eastern part of the site.

## 3.3 Landscape Strategy

Landscaped public realm will form an integral part of the structure of the development proposals.

The landscape strategy should incorporate existing bands of tree cover and hedgerows where possible. This can also assist with creating a legible network of public open spaces and routes across the site.

Areas of public open space present opportunities to create new areas of ecological value and wildlife habitat. This helps to increase biodiversity. The plateau above the 55m contour is such a developing habitat and might be retained, in part, within development proposals.



Edge treatment - meadow approach softens the edge of urban and semi-rural



There are bands of existing tree cover around many parts of the site



Newton Road Allotments - create a green foreground setting to the development

## Key Issues

- Key view lines from Stowmarket town taken to the ridge by Mount Pleasant Farm & to the line of existing mature trees adjacent to the Farm.
- Depending on where the view is taken this results in different bands of extent of development.
- It is important to protect Stowupland's distinct identity & village setting. Strategic planting and a sensitive approach to the residential design are required.
- Approximate Ordnance Survey contours used for the purposes of this exercise.

## 3.4 Extent of Development

### Key view from Stowmarket town

In order to assess the appropriate extent of development for this site. The view line from Stowmarket town has been taken to two key features adjacent to the site:

- The ridge by Mount Pleasant Farm
- The outline of existing mature trees at the ridge by Mount Pleasant Farm

### Development phasing

A 'cordon sanitaire' will need to be applied around the existing poultry sheds on Diapers Farm, resulting in a two zone development

Zone One; development takes place outside the area of the cordon sanitaire  
Zone Two; development is completed within the area of the cordon sanitaire

### Designing within these development zones

The phasing diagrams on the following pages both contain two bands relating to potential residential development:

- Category 1 Potential for residential development
- Category 2 Potential for restricted residential development

These represent the level of sensitivity of design response that will be required.

### Category 1

This is presented by the red band Residential design that sensitively addresses key view issues should be relatively straight forward here.

### Category 2

This is represented by the orange band. A more sensitive design response is required here. Issues to be considered are:

- Careful sectional master planning on the sloping areas of the site is required.
- A building massing strategy that delivers good townscape whilst addressing wider views of the site.
- Careful sectional planning of the dwellings – how they sit on or within the site.
- The height of the dwellings themselves and their roof design.
- Residential design that forms an attractive roof-scape.
- A landscape scheme that uses significant layers of planting to break up the impact of development on the slope and create a varied and interesting horizon line.

### Key views from Stowupland

Treetops within the site are also visible across the plateau of farmland from the village of Stowupland to the north east. Here it is important to protect Stowupland's distinct identity & village setting.

Development that falls within Category 2 will also need to be considered in relation to this view and setting and:

- Reinforce existing bands of planting – such as along the A14 road and around the poultry sheds.
- Consider areas of community woodland.
- Careful consideration should be given to the form of the edge of the development.

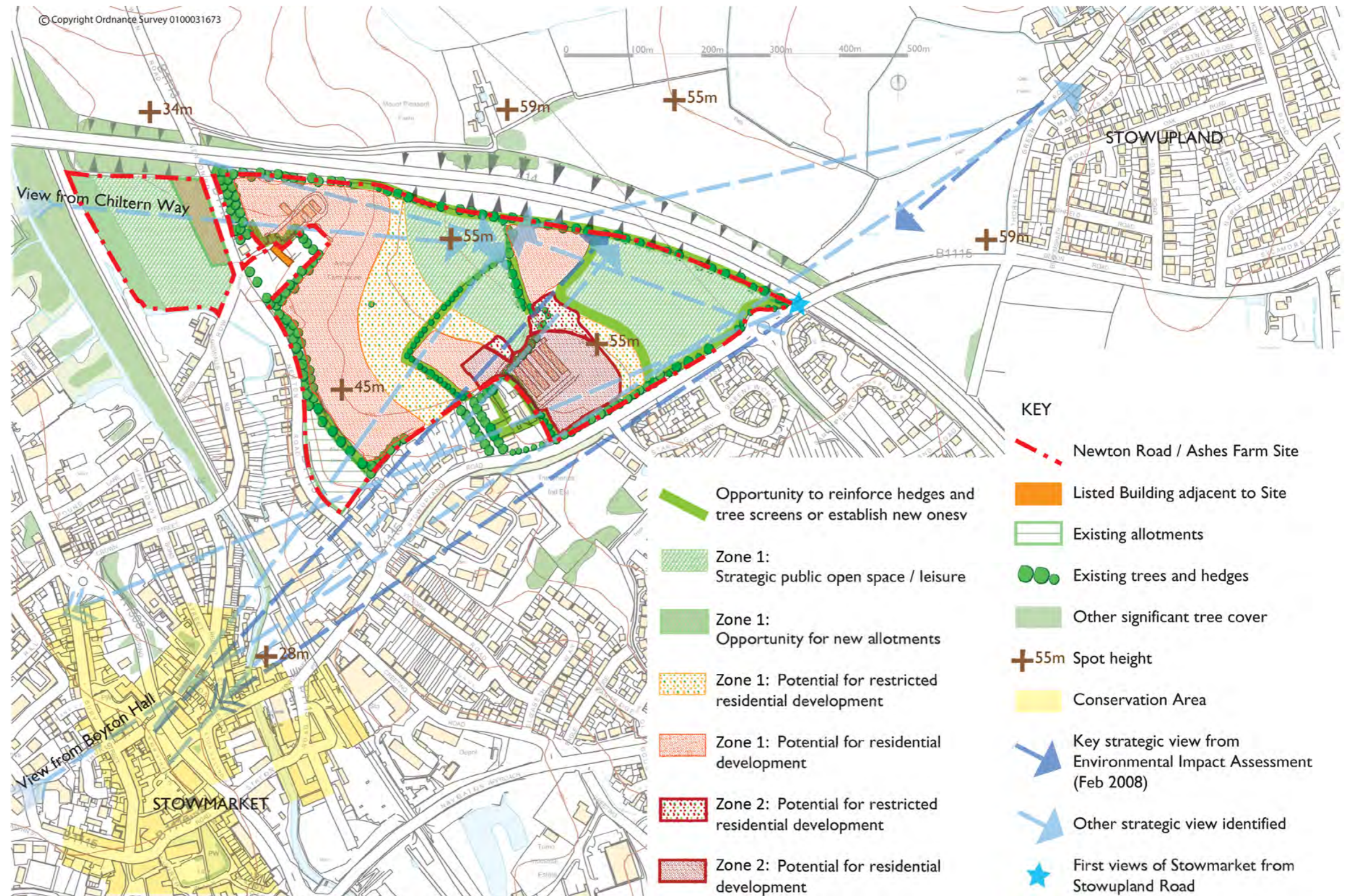


Section running from Newton Road to Stowupland Road through the northern part of the site

## Extent of Development

### Zone 2: part infill of cordon sanitaire

- The majority of the cordon sanitaire is in-filled with development, part of the area is retained as strategic open space to maintain the view from Stowmarket Town Centre.
- Restricted development of low density with considerable layers of planting is sited adjacent to open space and connects through to Zone One development.
- The large part of the cordon sanitaire area is development that is screened by existing trees / hedges or those with the opportunity for reinforcing. This development connects through to Zone One development of a similar type.
- The extent of development edges ensure that the views from Stowmarket to the ridge by Mount Pleasant Farm are preserved.



Design Opportunities - Zone Two



## 4.0 VIABILITY APPRAISAL

### 4.1 Delivery Framework

#### Introduction

In order to develop a Delivery Framework a new development concept has been proposed. This is the outcome of the studies and assessments contained within this document.

The proposed Delivery Framework takes account of the various land ownerships and access constraints. It will also permit the site to be developed in zones with the chicken farm remaining in operation until the final phase of development.

#### Zoning

The site could be developed in three zones. The diagram adjacent indicated the suggested zones.

Zone 1 includes the land to the west. It fronts the A14 to the north, Newton Road and the allotments to the west, the Daiper land to the north east and access road to the rear of properties fronting Stowupland Road to the southeast. This zone skirts Ashes Farm. The site area is approx. 9.2Ha (excluding the allotments at 0.8Ha and land to the west of Newton Road at 3.3Ha).

Zone 2 is to the east of zone 1, it extends to roughly 6.6Ha. The northern extent faces the A14; the eastern side fronts Stowupland Road and the southern boundary skirts the land currently in use by the chicken farm.

Zone 3 comprises the land currently in active use by the chicken farm. It is approx. 2.6Ha in area. In order that flexibility is created to enable the chicken farm to

remain in operation while zones 1 and 2 are delivered, a “cordon sanitaire” should be determined. This has been discussed with Environmental Protection officers. It appears that there are no records of complaints about noise or odour from the chicken farm. It is therefore considered appropriate to establish a cordon sanitaire that would restrict future development to take place no closer than existing properties adjacent to the farm buildings. These properties are approximately 60m from the farm buildings, so this dimension has been used to establish the cordon sanitaire.

#### Development Strategy

The design opportunities section of this document sets out the guidelines for potential development of the site. It clearly defines the sensitive areas that should be retained as open space to protect the views from the town and surrounding areas. It also identifies how the development densities should be handled within the site to assist with minimising the impact of the proposals.

The areas of the site at the higher elevation i.e. adjacent to the A14 and northern end of Stowupland Road are most sensitive and should be retained as public open space. The landscape has matured somewhat and there has been recent development south east of Stowupland Road since the earlier 2009 MSDC Concept Statement. This has had a slight impact on these areas but development should still be restricted.

#### Development Density

For the purposes of this report, we have assumed a nominal development density

of 30-50 dwellings per Hectare. The final densities will be the subject of further discussions, but the proposal appears consistent with planning policy and other recent developments in the locality. Account has been taken of the areas required for the landscape buffers and surface water drainage attenuation swales.

The later section in this document identifies the proposed drainage strategy. Surface water attenuation will require careful consideration due to the contours of the

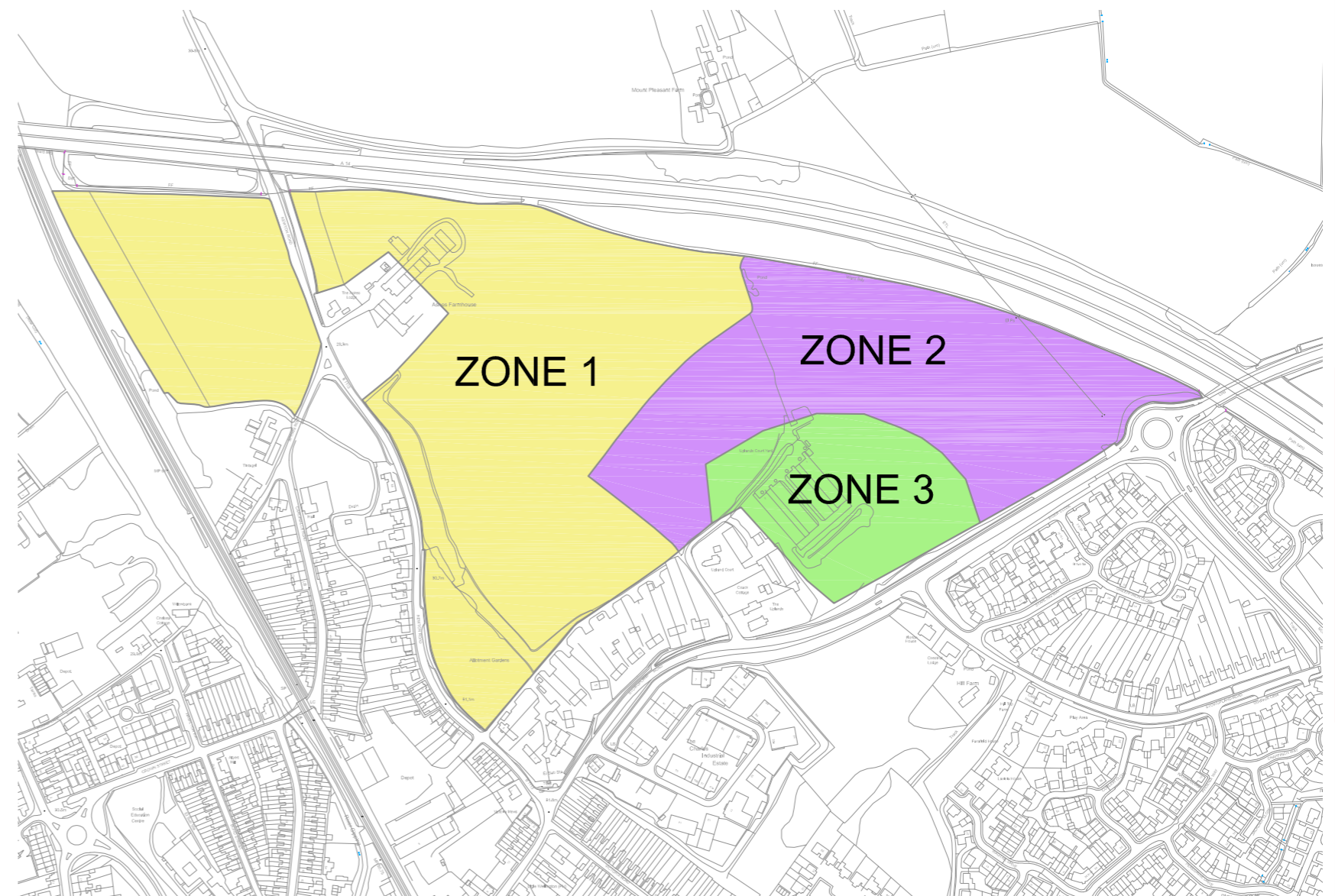
site. Although there are significant areas of public open space within the development, these tend to be at the upper contours of the site and it is therefore not beneficial to locate the surface water attenuation in these areas.

Approximately 12,550m<sup>2</sup> of surface water attenuation swales is likely to be required for the development as a whole. Roughly 4,500m<sup>2</sup> of this can be sited west of Newton Road. The remaining 8,050m<sup>2</sup> will be mostly in areas of the site identified for

development. This has been considered in the calculation for the approximate development potential.

#### Integrated Development

Whilst the Development Brief demonstrates how the Ashes Farm site can be delivered in individual zones, it is expected that an integrated approach is taken to the delivery of the zones to ensure the provision of a coordinated development, as shown on Plan TBC.



### Zone 1

It should be possible to construct a new road into zone 1 from Newton Road, north of Ashes Farm. This will take the form of a loop road through this zone. Subject to various constraints listed in the highway section of this report, no further highway access would be required to serve this zone. A footpath/cycleway link would be provided to the access road to the rear of properties fronting Stowupland Road. It would also be preferable to provide a footpath/cycle link through zones 2 and 3 to Stowupland Road. This however may not be essential.

Considering the areas identified for the higher and lower density in this zone, approx. 225 units in the higher density area and approx. 75 in the lower should be possible. The remaining land is retained as public open space. This will be a lower density than 30-50 DHA, however the limiting factor is likely to be the 300 units maximum suggested by SCC Highways for a single access development.

Potential noise pollution from the A14 has been considered. Following discussions with Environmental Protection officers, it is logical to assume the environment is similar to that which exists east of the site adjacent to the A14 at Woodlark Drive. It is therefore considered practical to build close to the A14 with suitable noise attenuation measures agreed at design stage.

Surface water drainage is discussed on following pages, but a swale of approx. 4,500m<sup>2</sup> should be provided west of Newton Road and a swale of approx. 1,250m<sup>2</sup> to the east and south of Ashes Farm.

It will be important that the design of each zone is undertaken in consideration of the development of the zones adjacent. This can be controlled through the pre-application advice stage in due course.



Zone 1 Concept Plan

## Zone 2

It is likely that the development of zones 2 and 3 could be brought forward via two possible options. Option one would require the construction of a new spine road to link zone 1 with Stowupland Road. This road could follow the boundary of zone 3, skirting the chicken farm. SCC (Highways have suggested this may be suitable for a bus route in due course). If, however, zone 1 is not developed first, it should be possible to bring forward zones 2 and 3 independently. Assuming only one adopted site entrance road is possible from Stowupland Road, it is highly likely that SCC Highways will require a loop road to be constructed within the site (for similar reasons to those noted for zone 1). The development numbers are also likely to be restricted to about 300 for zones 2 and 3 as being the maximum for a single site entrance. Developing zones 2 and 3 in isolation of zone 1 may also have implications for the design of the drainage installation. This is explored later in this report.

The Landscape Impact Assessment on the previous pages provides a balanced opinion of the sensitivity of the site and how development could impact on this. Any planning application will be expected to strike a balance between preserving the landscape setting of the site and maximising the development potential of the site. The proposals for delivery identify opportunities where development could potentially be located and which whilst potentially impacting on the landscape would replicate development to the south of Stowupland Road and create a “gateway” into the town.

It is therefore considered that there is additional development potential in zone 2 than that suggested in the Landscape Impact Assessment earlier in this report.

Approximately 140 units may be possible in the higher density areas plus roughly 39 within the lower density area.

An area of roughly 5000m<sup>2</sup> will be required for surface water swales within this zone. This could be largely accommodated in one landscaped swale feature north of the spine road, with a smaller swale towards the south and east of this zone.

A reasonable amount of public open space is located within this zone. This goes some way to equalising the open space provision between land in the John Wilson Trust ownership and that owned by the Diaper Family.



Zone 1 & 2 Concept Plan

### Zone 3

Once the chicken farm has relocated zone 3 could be developed. The majority of this zone is suitable for higher density development and should yield about 66 units. Approx. 27 units should be possible in the lower density areas. Approximately 1800m<sup>2</sup> surface water swales will be required, and this will be located at the southern extent of this zone.



Zone 1, 2 & 3 Concept Plan

## 4.2 Development Concept Capacity Study



### POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT DENSITY:

ZONE 1:	HIGH DENSITY	225 UNITS
	LOW DENSITY	75 UNITS
ZONE 2:	HIGH DENSITY	140 UNITS
	LOW DENSITY	39 UNITS
ZONE 3:	HIGH DENSITY	66 UNITS
	LOW DENSITY	27 UNITS
POSSIBLE TOTAL UNITS		572 UNITS

Consideration has been given to policy 6.14 of the SAAP in the preparation of the concept strategy as follows:

### SAAP 6.14

1. Important visual nature of the area, and retain distant views to and from the site;	This has been reassessed in preparation of the current proposals and the assessment forms part of this report.
2. Need for appropriate structural landscaping and screening across the site;	This has been identified in the report and incorporated within the proposals.
3. Need to protect, or as a minimum soften, the impact of development on the skyline;	Enhanced landscape proposals are included within the proposals.
4. Provision of open space to the top of the site;	This has been reassessed and provisions made in the development proposals.
5. Land to the far west of the site, bounded by Newton Road, Spring Row and the A14, which is designated for open space uses;	This has been considered as unsuitable for development and will be set aside for open space. A surface water drainage swale for the site will be located in this area. This is not in conflict with the proposed recreational use.
6. Retention of existing hedgerows and mature trees;	The existing trees and hedgerows have been assessed and will be incorporated within any development proposals.
7. 'gateway' to Stowmarket on the Stowupland Road;	The visual impact assessment has identified the need to retain the open views over the site when approaching from Stowupland Road from the north east. New frontage development is proposed along Stowupland Road south of the potential new site entrance. The design of buildings in this location will help form the 'gateway' to the town.
8. Part of the site within Flood Zone 3b;	The report contains a flood risk assessment and strategy for surface water designs for the development.
9. Areas affected by flood risk must be of a use compatible with the NPPF Technical guidance (page 6);	As above.
10. Presence of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats and species.	No formal reports and surveys have been commissioned to date. This can be done at any time, but it would be advisable to undertake this work before development proposals are taken to the next stage.

## 4.3 Highway Strategy

Following discussions with Transport Strategy at Suffolk County Council, an indicative approach to the highway and transportation design has been agreed.

On the basis of the 3 zone development proposed in this document, the strategy is as follows:

### Zone 1

A single vehicular access from Newton Road north of Ashes Farm is likely to be acceptable (subject to a stage one safety audit and agreement with the emergency planners). A loop road to adoptable standards will be required within zone 1. The spine road through the site should be a "local distributor" as defined in the Suffolk Design Guide and should be a minimum of 14.7m wide. The loop road within zone 1 will minimise the risk of access for emergency vehicles being blocked by parked cars. The length of highway between Newton Road and the loop should therefore be as short as possible.

Due to the contours of the land, the gradient of the highways will require careful consideration, particularly the entrance from Newton Road. This would be considered further at detail design stage but it is likely that a maximum gradient of 1 in 15 will be required, but 1 in 40 for the first 15m of the spine road from Newton Road.

Pedestrian and cycle access will be required from zone 1 to the south of the allotments linking to Newton Road. Use can be made of the existing minor access road to the rear of properties fronting Stowupland Road in this area. This should be retained as a permanent feature.

It would also be preferable (though possibly not

essential) to provide a pedestrian and cycle path through zones 2 and 3 to link with Stowupland Road to provide ease of access to pedestrian and cyclists in that direction. This could be constructed on the line of the proposed spine road. SCC Highways appear satisfied that up to 300 units could be developed on zone 1, subject to the comments above.

### Zones 2 & 3

Two possible options exist for the development of zones 2 and 3.

#### Option 1 Zone 2

To facilitate the development of zone 2, the spine road would be extended to Stowupland Road. The likely junction layout and location to Stowupland Road has been established and is indicated on the adjacent drawing.

Zone 2 could be developed with the chicken farm remaining in operation. Vehicular access to the chicken farm could remain as existing or a new access provided from the spine road if required.

#### Zone 3

If the above sequence is followed, the spine road will already be in place ready to serve zone 3.

#### Option 2

As noted on p.27, to achieve greatest flexibility, it may be possible to develop zones 2 and 3 independently to zone 1. Should this be required, a loop road would be incorporated within zones 2 and 3 using the same design criteria as zone 1. This may be led than ideal within zone 2 in isolation, but is feasible if zones 2 and 3 were developed in one phase, i.e. with the relocation of the chicken farm.

### Secondary Roads

It is likely that the secondary roads within the site

will be a mix of adoptable roads, minor access ways and private drives all as set out in the manual for streets and Suffolk Design Guide.

The lower density parts of the development are likely to require the use of greenswards with street trees and landscaping.

The detail designs of the highways will be carried

out at a later stage, but these initial comments should provide a useful basis for progressing design proposals.



Proposed site entrance from Stowupland Road

## 4.4 Drainage Strategy

The diagram adjacent indicates the drainage strategy. All proposed attenuation features are highlighted in blue while the underground system of control structures connecting them is shown as a series of red arrows.

### Zone 1

As the zone 1 development is on the lowest part of the site it will need attenuation at a lower level than the built development which means either the western section of this part of the site or the eastern section of land on the western side of the road that lies outside of Flood Zone 3.

Two separate attenuation features will be required along the western side the high density development to take drainage from this area of zone one. These areas are shaded in blue on the adjacent plan and measure approx. 500m<sup>2</sup> and 750m<sup>2</sup>. These two attenuation features should involve balancing ponds and to minimise areas/volumes required the new soft screening could be designed as planted swales to store/convey water between them.

The reason separate areas are required is because the north western part of the development which is the lowest, is also the steepest and therefore all attenuation cannot be located in this area (ideally as little as absolutely necessary). The detailed level design in raising one side and lowering the other to create ponded areas is not realistic. It would be preferable if an attenuation pond could be created on the northern part of the land on the western side of Newton Road on land currently above 30m AOD which is the approximate extent of Flood Zone on this land as this is much flatter and earth moving works would be minimised. This swale is also shaded in blue on the adjacent plan and the area

marked as 4,500m<sup>2</sup>.

Working on the basis of no infiltration to assume the worst case scenario, approx. 900m<sup>3</sup> of attenuation will be required for every 1Ha of built and drained development (areas of adoptable road, private drive, and dwelling/garage roofs). As basins that would be publicly accessible should be no more than 0.5m deep this means that an area of about 1800m<sup>2</sup> to 2000m<sup>2</sup> will be required per Ha of impermeable development. Some reduction will be possible due to the attenuation provided beneath permeable shared surfaces and private drives.

It would be useful if a swale could run between the higher and lower density section of zone 1 development as this would provide a connection point for the zone 2 and zone 3 development. (It would also be useful if the public open space could be located somewhere other than the highest point of the zone 1 development. However, it is acknowledged that the location of the public open space is pre-determined by visual impact and landscape considerations).

As shown, the narrow swale running between the low and high density development areas of zone one will discharge via a control structure and taken northeast then north and west around Ashes Farm at a restricted discharge rate and then on in to the largest attenuation area. Due to level differences several control structures will be required in total.

### Zone 2

It is recommended that a balancing pond/basin is provided in the public open space between the two sections of zone 2 development to take attenuation from the northern section of development shaded red – again an area of about 1800m<sup>2</sup> to 2000m<sup>2</sup> will be required, subject to reduction by the attenuation provided in permeable paving. This would then connect to the zone 1 drainage via a swale around the southern section of zone 2 development where

the new soft screening is proposed which would be connected to the swale running between the low/high density zone one. The soft screening provided in this zone should be a landscaped swale with suitable planting to create the screen required whilst allowing this to provide attenuation for the section of zone 2 development shaded green. An additional area of attenuation is likely to be required near the proposed site entrance to serve the northern development area. All of the above attenuation areas are likely to need separate control structures.

### Zone 3

The zone 3 development will require attenuation in the lower southwestern corner area of this land

which will need a piped connection to run northeast then southwest along the site boundary to outfall into the swale at the southern corner of the section of zone 2 development, again with a similar area per Ha impermeable space.

As noted on p.28, it may be possible to bring forward zones 2 and 3 in advance of zone 1. Subject to further on site testing, infiltration may be possible for surface water drainage. If this proves not to be the case, a pumped solution may be required to facilitate connection into existing sewers in Starling Way.



Attenuation Plan

## 4.5 Viability Appraisal Executive Summary

### Location

Stowmarket is located approximately mid-way between the County town of Suffolk, Ipswich 19.3km (12 miles) to the south east and the market town of Bury St Edmunds 22.5km (14 miles) to the west. It has a population estimated to be about 19,000 people (2009 figures) but serves a hinterland in excess of 35,000 people.

The Site is situated to the north-east of Stowmarket town centre and Stowmarket rail station is within 10 minutes walking distance. To the north of the site is the A14 trunk road and to the west of the site a short distance away is the Norwich to London mainline railway.

### Description

The subject site has a steep sloping nature, rising from west to east and incorporates two primary ownerships. The site to the west is known as Ashes Farm, and extends to approximately 8.5 Hectares (21 acres). The area to the east is the Diapers' Farm which extends to approximately 9.1 hectares (22½ acres). The total site area therefore extends to approx. 17.6 Ha (43½ acres).

### Planning

Ashes Farm site is one of the key potential Greenfield residential development sites in Stowmarket proposed in the Core Strategy document and MSDC are focused on driving the deliverability of the site.

Initial studies have shown that the site could potentially provide 572 dwellings over several zones.

### Approach to Market Appraisal

We have applied market knowledge to produce likely housing mixes to inform high level appraisals of the indicated dwellings, in order to assess the potential viability of the scheme. Affordable housing is proposed in accordance with the policy contained within the Council's Core Strategy (35%).

We have valued the property using the residual method of valuation upon the Special Assumption planning consent has been granted for residential development. Our opinion of the Gross Development Value of the proposed development has been arrived at using the comparable method of valuation.

### Appraisal Results

We have assessed a residual land value for the site of £7,500,000 which suggests that the scheme is viable based on the high-level assumptions made within our appraisals.





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