

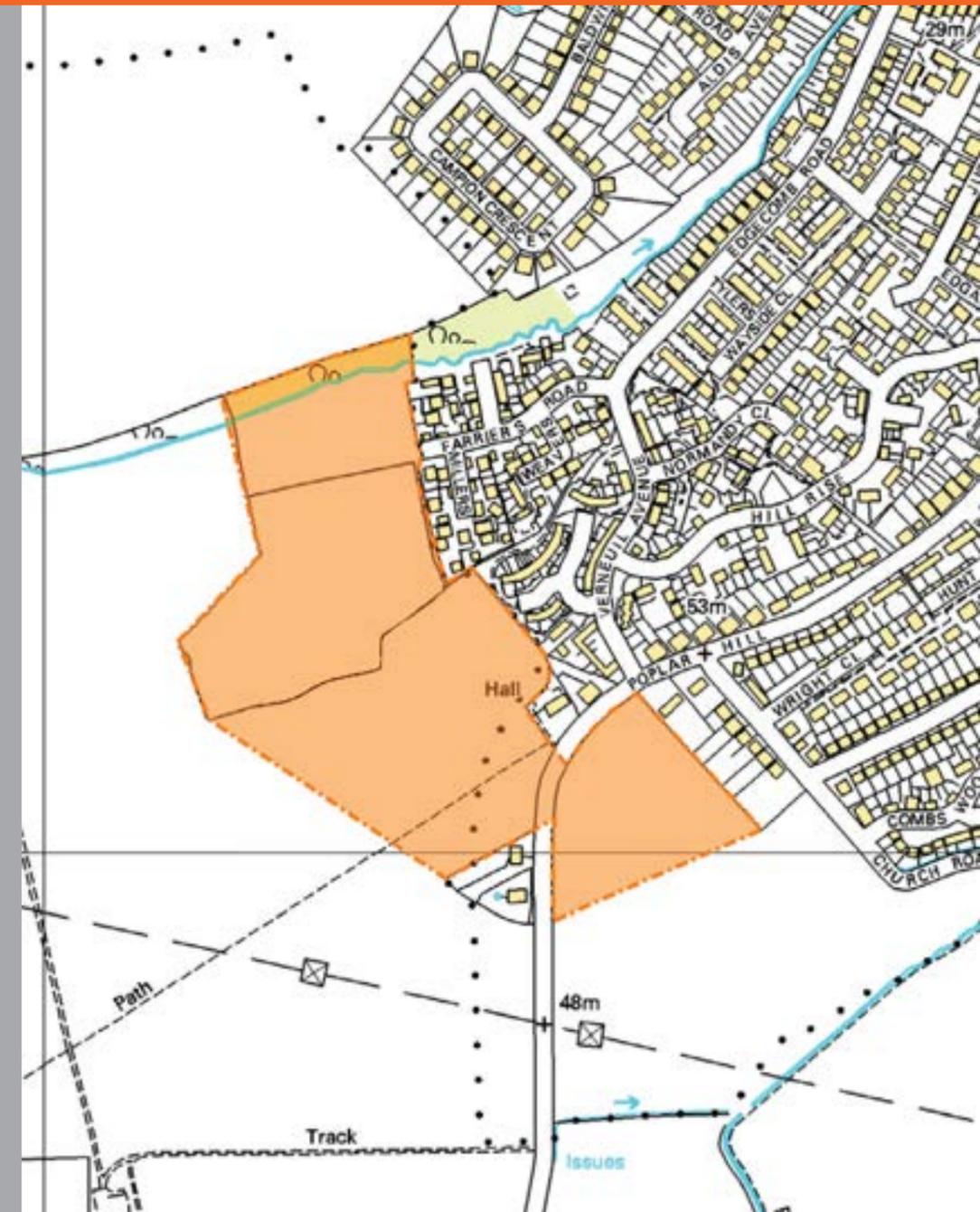
# Edgecomb Park, Stowmarket

Development Brief

Supplementary Planning Document

Prepared by Pegasus Group | for Construct Reason and E.W. Durrant & Son | October 2014 | CAM.0935

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# 01: Introduction & Context

## Planning Context

1.1 This Development Brief has been produced on behalf of Construct Reason Ltd. and E.W.Durrant & Son in order to demonstrate how Edgecomb Park, Stowmarket can be developed in accordance with the Stowmarket Area Action Plan (SAAP).

1.2 The Draft document was available for public consultation between the 20th June and 25th July 2014.

1.3 The Stowmarket Area Action Plan (SAAP) (adopted February 2013) allocated land to the east of Farriers Way and to the north of Poplar Hill (Map 6.7). This area is referred to as Edgecomb Park in the brief.

1.4 Mid Suffolk District Council, following public consultation/consideration of the responses, adopted the Brief (13th October 2014) as a Supplementary Planning Document to provide guidance when determining planning applications. The area to be covered by the SPD is shown (shaded) on the front-cover of this document.

1.5 There have been continual discussions with Mid Suffolk District Council and Suffolk County Council to ensure agreement and compliance with the relevant policies. A public exhibition was held in order to inform residents and interested parties of the emerging proposals.

1.6 A statement of consultation was published with the Draft SPD. This work was undertaken for the preparation of the draft brief and complies with the Councils Statement of Community Involvement (2014) and Planning Regulations.

1.7 A place shaping group consisting of District Council Officers, Town and Parish Councillors and Officers from Suffolk County Council, was formed to ensure that the proposals are in full compliance with planning policy and the needs of the community.

1.8 SAAP Policy 6.20 allocates land at Farriers Road and Poplar Hill (Stowmarket South) for residential development and public open space. The production of this development brief is required as per Policy 6.21 of the SAAP. The proposed layout and design of the development has taken into consideration all of the matters raised in SAAP Policies 6.22 and 6.25 including landscape setting and transport impact. The proposal will comprise up to 185 units including a sheltered/supported housing scheme. The proposal will be predominately bungalows, including 35% affordable housing. Up to 75 dwellings will gain access from Farriers Road and up to 50 from Poplar Hill. There will also be a sheltered/supported housing scheme located in the centre of the development gaining access from Poplar Hill. Edgecomb Park should deliver the following:

- improved public transport linkages between the site, the town centre and the local facilities at Combs Ford;
- provision of affordable housing;
- footpath and cycle improvements linked in with other projects;
- the protection of the River Rattlesden tributary as Visually Important Open Space;
- the provision of strategic landscaping to enhance the perception of separation between Combs and Stowmarket and to screen the effect of the development on long distance views;
- the provision of public open space both within the residential development scheme and on the land to the east of Poplar Hill.

1.9 SAAP Policy 6.22 states that there is a need to maintain separation between Stowmarket and Combs and the retention of an area of undeveloped land between Combs and the edge of the

site has had a significant influence of the proposed layout and strategic landscaping. This will ensure that the views into Stowmarket from the west and the south are not disrupted.

1.10 The site offers an opportunity to provide different types of housing to complement the other SAAP allocations such as sheltered/supported housing for an ageing population. The provision of this type of accommodation will be a valuable community asset and will meet the wide ranging needs of the area in accordance with the 'Strategy for Supporting Older People'. This approach will also reduce the impact of the development on the surrounding road network in terms of the number of movements during peak periods. The affordable housing element of the proposal will be delivered as a priority to ensure that the needs of the community are met.

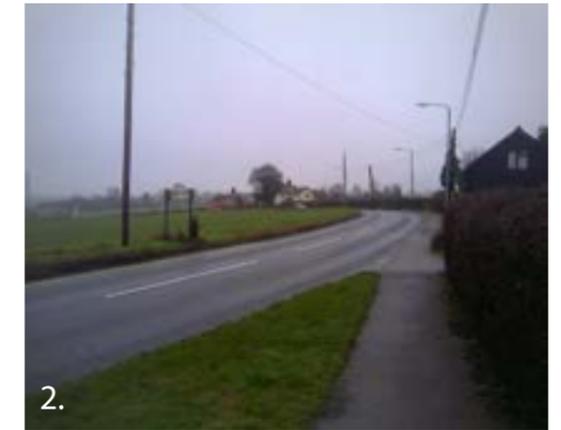
1.11 Due to the requirement for the elderly and affordable accommodation, it is considered that this site can come forward in 2014 to provide this accommodation without compromising the phasing of the SAAP.

# 01: Introduction & Context

## Landscape and Visual Context

1.12 The landscape in this area is traversed by Poplar Hill and a public footpath; is generally open and undulating; is agricultural in use; and demonstrates an 'urban fringe' character including views of built form, pylon lines, signage and street-lighting. The immediate setting of Combs is more mature with significant planting to its edges. This contrasts with the southwestern edge of Stowmarket where urban form is exposed, particularly along Church Road.

1.13 Views across the landscape between Stowmarket and Combs include "slot" and "corridor" views looking south-west (see panorama 2); views from Combs of an exposed urban edge (Church Road, Stowmarket, see panorama 3); and a local topographical ridgeline (panorama 1). From the south, this ridgeline is also illustrated, with isolated properties on Poplar Hill punctuating the landscape (panorama 3). The northern element of the proposed housing allocation contributes little if anything to the perception of open countryside between Stowmarket and Combs as it is at a lower level, and visually contained by existing mature planting. The southern part contributes insofar as it extends to the top of the local ridge line, and accommodates the public footpath.



1. Looking north along Poplar Hill from just north of edge of Combs
2. Looking south along Poplar Lane from Church Hall on edge of Stowmarket
3. Looking west from Church Road
4. Looking north along Poplar Hill from edge of Combs

# 02: Landscape Strategy

## Landscape Design

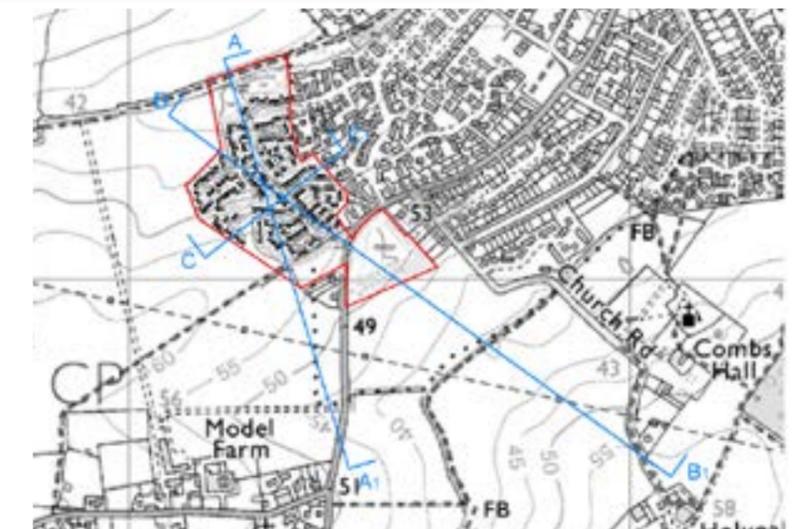
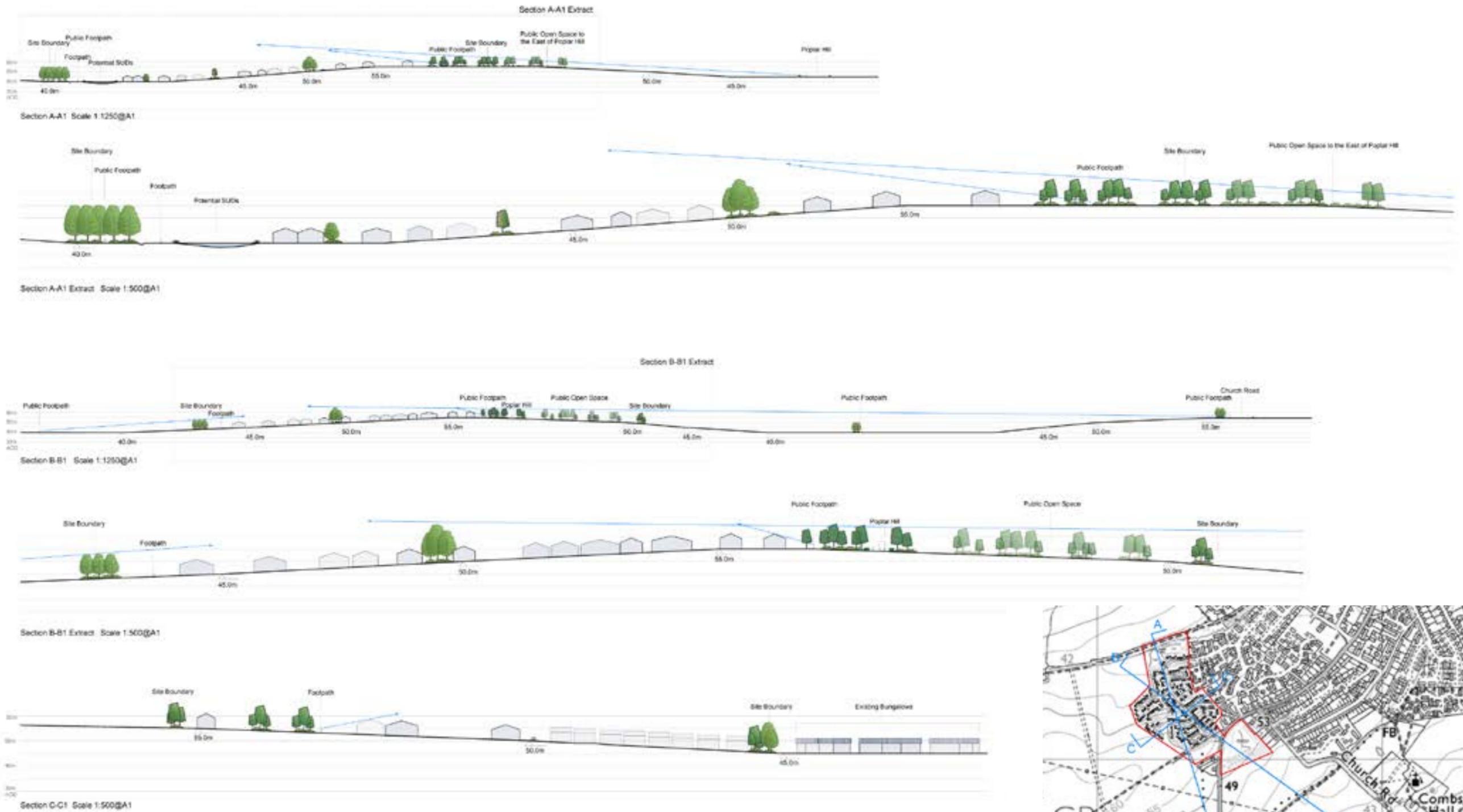
2.1 Built form on the northern part of the site (with retention of a setback from the River Rattlesden tributary) will be visually well contained by the existing perimeter vegetation, with some supplementary planting. In the area west of The Twinings, containing built form towards the northern section of this part of the site, where the levels fall further to the north, will ensure it is set back far enough to avoid being visible on or above the local ridgeline when viewed from the south, as illustrated in long section A-A. By setting back the envelope in this way, and by providing additional tree planting on the southern section, views from the south-east will look towards a semiplanted ridge line as opposed to development extending outwards from Stowmarket, as illustrated in section B-B. The relationship between proposed built form and the rising topography is illustrated in more detail on section C-C. Consequently, the perception of open countryside between Stowmarket and Combs, and an acceptable level of separation, would be retained. The creation of a strong landscape infrastructure to the perimeter of the development envelope in the southern part of the allocation will create visual containment, consistent with that around the northern element, with some smaller scale copse planting further south, on the site boundary. This approach will also retain the open character of the local topographical ridge, with limited additional features. The public footpath that crosses the southern section of the site will remain in an open setting, enhanced with a variety of tree planting, and from which long distance views to the south and west across open countryside will be retained.

2.2 A variety of species, some evergreen, will be used to create a 'gateway' landscape on Poplar Hill into this part of Stowmarket, which is balanced in terms of its presence and also consistent in terms of landscape resources and features. This, and all other strategic planting, can be implemented in advance and will be related to the specific phasing of development; its presence would not be compromised by the implementation of the built form. This approach will assist significantly with the natural softening of proposed development and its visual integration with the surrounding environment.



Landscape Strategy

# 02: Landscape Strategy



Landscape Cross Sections

# 02: Landscape Strategy



# 02: Landscape Strategy



# 02: Landscape Strategy



# 03: Biodiversity & Heritage

## Ecology and Biodiversity

3.1 An extended Phase 1 habitat survey was carried out in 2014. It identified the presence of arable farmland, scrub, hedgerows, scattered trees, broad leaved woodland, semi-improved grassland, tall ruderal vegetation, running water, dry ditches and bare ground on site. Of these habitats running water, hedgerows, and woodland were thought to require particular consideration at the planning application stage.

3.2 The Survey found that proposed works will not directly impact on relevant nature conservation sites because of the intervening distance/presence of existing development. Indirect impact will be discussed with Natural England, and the Local Planning Authority at the planning application stage.

3.3 The work concluded that further more detailed survey and

assessment will need to establish if the following species (including relevant protected and priority species) are present;

- Bats
- Badgers
- Breeding Birds
- Otter and Water Vole
- Great Crested Newts and
- Reptiles

In addition further survey and assessment may be required for the following species;

- Brown Hare
- Stag Beetle
- Terrestrial mammals

This more detailed survey work is underway and initial results have found the following species on the site;

- Small population of grass snake
- Bats utilising the site for foraging
- Great crested newts in ponds within 500 m of the site

3.4 Appropriate schemes of mitigation in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy and the requirements of the Local Validation Checklist will be developed for all the ecological impacts of the development in order that the Local Authority can demonstrate compliance with its duty under the 2006 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act and the relevant European and National

protected species legislation; as well as being in accordance with paragraphs 109 and 118 of the NPPF.

3.5 The detail of the mitigation/ enhancement such as type of planting/ lighting issues will be addressed at the planning application stage.

3.6 This will be enhanced with the incorporation of a number of indigenous native planting mixes (including berry bearing species) that offer enhanced habitat for bats as well as birds and insects.

3.7 Whilst infrastructure landscaping toward the perimeter of the site and at key locations within it will establish a number of primary green links across the proposed development, soft landscape associated with front and rear gardens will also make a contribution to the overall ecological enhancement.

## Heritage & Archaeology

3.8 It is considered that the proposed development will not impact on the character and setting of Stowmarket. There are no listed buildings immediately adjacent to the site which will be impacted. Stowmarket South does not constitute an area which contributes to the setting of Stowmarket and therefore the provision of a new housing setting will not have a detrimental impact on the surrounding area. However there is a more distant group of Grade II listed buildings to the south of Combs and the Grade I Church of St Mary to the east that will need to be considered at a more detailed stage. There is no known archaeological important resources on the site. However a Phase 1 Desk-based Archaeological assessment will be undertaken and submitted with the planning application. Further more detailed archaeological evaluation needs to be considered for a planning application the extent and detail to be agreed by the applicant and LPA in consultation with SCC.



# 04: Masterplanning & Urban Design

4.1 The indicative concept plan has evolved from a consideration of the site's opportunities and constraints and the Policies of the SAAP. It is important to achieve a high standard of design across a proposed development. Successful urban design is dependent upon achieving an appropriate relationship between community needs, development principles, development form and a positive response to local conditions.

4.2 The following considerations have been used to inform the design proposals for the site.

- Location of vehicular access into the site and the requirement for two points of access with no linking vehicle access between.
- Retention of existing trees and hedgerows around the site, particularly those of ecological interest and those that act as wildlife habitats, wherever possible;
- Containment of the development below the ridgeline to the southern part of the site;
- Urban fringe character;
- Minimising the impact of the development on existing residents in the area;
- Retention of open views south westward along Poplar Hill;
- Minimise the visual impact of the proposed development on views from the south west towards Stowmarket;
- Incorporate sheltered/supported housing in central part of the development with access from Poplar Hill;
- Create permeable pedestrian network throughout the scheme that links into those of the existing development;
- Opportunity to mitigate influence of new built form on existing residents with retention and enhancement of existing hedgerows;
- Opportunity to create interesting street scenes;
- To use shared surfaces and variety of surface treatments and visual cues to create a low speed traffic environment;
- Opportunity for convenient footpath links to bus stop on Verneuil Avenue;
- Opportunity for SUDS (Sustainable Drainage System) to the northern part of the development;
- Enhance wildlife corridor to the north of the site; spaces to maintain open views and smooth the transition between urban edge and open countryside.
- Maximise potential for solar gain to allow for photo voltaic and solar thermal panels.



# 04: Masterplanning & Urban Design

## Proposed Bungalow Designs



Southwold



Wisteria



Chatteris



Leiston



Aldeburgh



Waveney



Affordable Unit

# 04: Masterplanning & Urban Design

## Character and Identity

4.3 New development provides the opportunity to establish a distinctive identity to a place which, whilst having its own character, integrates with the surrounding built form and landscape context. The integration of greenspace and wildlife areas along the northern and southern boundaries and other strategically placed areas of open space will present the opportunity for new habitat creation and increased biodiversity.

## Land Use and Quantum of Development

4.4 Edgecomb Park offers an opportunity to provide bungalows for older people and sheltered/supported accommodation. It is anticipated that a portion of the affordable housing element of the scheme will be delivered in the first phase of development. The proposed housing will complement the type of housing to be delivered elsewhere at Stowmarket and enable the scheme to be assimilated into the landscape context. In the light of this approach, the development can be divided into two character areas;

- northern area up to 75 units accessed from Farriers Road;
- southern area up to 50 units and a sheltered/supported housing scheme accessed from Poplar Hill of up to 60 units.

4.5 Dwellings fronting onto open spaces will comprise detached and semi detached units thus creating a less formal broken edge character. Rear gardens will back onto mature existing hedgerows along the eastern site boundary and along the central green link. Dwellings will front onto open spaces offering an attractive outlook whilst providing surveillance and a sense of security. All dwellings within the site will be single storey. A new footpath along the central green link will provide an attractive footpath extension for the existing development and links northward to the wider footpath network.

4.6 The existing Public footpath running through the southern open space will be retained in its existing location as a result of comments received at the public exhibition.

4.7 The scheme utilises existing landscape features and respects the local topography in that proposed housing avoids the higher ground in order to reduce the visual impact to the wider landscape.

4.8 The residential part of the site will comprise large areas of public

open space with opportunities for a Local Equipped Area of play (LEAP) if required.



# 05: Sheltered/Supported Housing

## Sheltered/Supported Housing

5.1 The sheltered/supported housing element of the proposal will provide 40–60 units. There will be a range of 1–2 bedroom units. Each unit will have a parking space suitable for disabled users and there will be adequate visitor parking provided within the sheltered/supported housing element.

5.2 The units will primarily be elderly accommodation and for disabled users. They will all be designed to comply with lifetime homes standards.

## Proposed Designs for sheltered/supported housing Scheme



# 06: Highways & Services

## Vehicular Access

6.1 It is proposed that vehicular access to the Farriers Road development will be provided at two points. The first will be from Farriers Road itself, extending the existing road into the site to serve the northern half of the development. A second, new, access is to be provided from Poplar Hill in the form of a priority junction to serve the southern half of the development. It is not intended to provide a continuous vehicular route between Poplar Hill and Farriers Road. Instead the route will be barred and only pedestrian and cycle movements allowed. It is anticipated that the route between Poplar Hill and Farriers Road may also be used by buses, with an appropriate form of bus gate provided using, for example, rising bollards, to prevent unauthorised use by other types of vehicle.

6.2 The Farriers Road access is intended to serve approximately 75 new dwellings in accordance with the advice and guidance provided by Suffolk County Council. The remaining residential units, including the proposed sheltered/supported housing, will be served by the Poplar Hill access.

## Vehicular Trip Generation

6.3 The proposed development will contain a high proportion of units aimed at retired or older people and a range of sheltered/supported elderly housing. The level of traffic generation for retirement homes and sheltered/supported housing is generally regarded to be significantly lower than that of general housing development. This is especially true of traffic generation in the traditional morning and evening peak periods, where traffic volume on the local highway network will be at its greatest. Primarily, this is because there is a higher proportion of residents that are not in full-time employment and who, consequently, can choose to travel during off-peak times. Using observed traffic generation statistics from similar areas, the 75 residential units to be served directly from

Farriers Road would be expected to generate approximately 50 arrivals or departures in the AM and PM peaks. However, retirement housing generally generates only 25 to 30% of normal residential traffic during the peak hours and this level of traffic demand could reduce depending on the proportion of retired residents. The development of 50 units from the Poplar Hill access would be expected to generate only 35 arrivals or departures in the morning and evening peak hours. This level of traffic generation is unlikely to cause significant impact on local highways close to the site. At Combs Ford centre the additional traffic would represent a small proportion of existing traffic and therefore the impact would also be small.

## Poplar Hill & Edgecomb Road

6.4 Poplar Hill is an important local distributor road providing access into Stowmarket from Combs and other rural settlements located to the south of the town. Poplar Hill also forms the principal road link into the town from the residential area located in the south of the town. Towards its northern end Poplar Hill is flanked by older residential properties which have no off-street parking and therefore some on-street parking takes place although there are double yellow line restrictions in place, particularly close to road junctions. In addition, there are road humps, a gateway chicane feature close to the junction with Hill Rise and a 20mph speed restriction designed to reduce vehicle speeds. All of these features slow traffic and can create a perceived feeling of local congestion in this area, particularly during peak hours. It is for this reason that the highway authority would wish to limit the size of development served from Poplar Hill to around 50 units together with the sheltered/supported housing.

6.5 There are perceived to be on-street parking problems along Edgecomb Road, to the east of Farriers Road, which has an impact on slowing down buses along this route. However, a parking study has been undertaken which shows this is not an issue and these perceived problems have been discussed with Suffolk County Council Highways and it is not considered that this is a constraint to development at Edgecomb Park. The safe and efficient passage of buses along Edgecomb Road is related to the placement or restriction of parking bays which could be managed by the District or County Council.

## Public Transport Links

6.6 Existing public transport is available from the bus stops in Poplar Hill, Verneuil Avenue and Edgecomb Road, each of which will be connected to the site by footways alongside the access roads and a pedestrian/cycle link to The Twinings. Buses currently run clockwise around a loop from Poplar Hill via Verneuil Avenue and Edgecomb Road to the town centre. The existing bus stops will all be within approximately 400m of the proposed housing which is considered to be a 0–6 minute walk. The District Council aims to promote further bus services in the area of the site and the option exists to connect the route between Poplar Hill and Farriers Road with a bus-only link. To facilitate such a bus route operating through the site suitable bus stop locations could be provided on the proposed access roads to increase public transport accessibility in the site. The site layout could make space available for new bus stops to be located within the development and means for a bus to turn around if the potential bus link connecting Poplar Hill to Farriers Road is considered inappropriate. Provision for Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) could be provided at any new bus stops and at the nearby bus stops in Edgecomb Road and Verneuil Avenue, to form part of a wider Stowmarket RTPI scheme.

6.7 The proposed sheltered/supported housing element of the scheme would allow the possibility of provision of a local demand-led bus link from the site to Combs Ford Centre and potentially to Stowmarket Town Centre as well. Care would be needed to ensure that any such provision would enhance public transport linkage and not compete with either the existing or any new bus services operating in this part of the town.

# 06: Highways & Services

## Pedestrian and Cycle Links

6.8 The site will be developed with fully integrated pedestrian and cycle routes provided as either shared or segregated facilities according to the requirements of individual plots or groups of plots. At Farriers Road pedestrian access would be provided by continuation of the footways alongside the highway.

6.9 At Poplar Hill the new development footways would connect to the existing footway alongside the road carriageway on the north side. The full detail of transport mitigation will need to be covered through the transport assessment process, at the planning application stage.



Walk & Cycle Route Plan

# 06: Highways & Services

## Sewage and Drainage

6.10 The site is in an area shown to be in Flood Zone 1 on the Environment Agency's Indicative Flood Risk Map and as such is suitable for all forms of development. The area of the site to be residentially developed currently drains to the watercourse along the northern boundary of the site, a tributary of Rattlesden River, via overland flow and percolation through topsoil. No built development will take place within the 1 in 100 year plus climate change flood plain of the watercourse to ensure no loss of flood storage or adverse impact upon the downstream flood risk, with the 1 in 100 year flood level to be determined by hydraulic modelling of the watercourse.

6.11 The bedrock geology underlying the site is the Crag Group of sands, which is overlain by the Lowerstoft Formation and thus unlikely to be suitable for infiltration systems to be used as a means of disposing of surface water from the proposed development. Surface water drainage will therefore be to the watercourse along the northern boundary of the site via a controlled discharge with swales and attenuation basins used to store surface water whilst also enhancing biodiversity at the site.

6.12 The existing greenfield discharge rate from the site (QBAR) is 2.8 litres per second per hectare. Indicative calculations show approximately 700m<sup>3</sup> of storage will be required per hectare impermeable area to limit post development discharge rates during a 1 in 100 year rainfall event with a 30% allowance for climate change to 2.8 litres per second. Based upon a maximum storage depth of about 0.6 metres in the swales and basins an area in the region of 1100m<sup>2</sup> to 1200 m<sup>2</sup> will be required per hectare impermeable area at the development to provide the storage required. The reduction in discharge rates from the site during extreme rainfall events will reduce the downstream risk of flooding thus providing a significant benefit to the surrounding area.

6.13 It is intended that this site will have a surface run off rate which does not exceed that which occurs naturally and this be achieved through a sustainable drainage system compatible with the ecological and landscape objectives of the site.



This image depicts how the attenuation basin at the site will appear.

# 07: Infrastructure Funding & Delivery

7.1 Infrastructure requirements for sites allocated in the Stowmarket Area Action Plan, including the Farriers Road / Edgecomb Park site, have been discussed through consultation with stakeholders and infrastructure agencies. They are based on those in the Infrastructure Delivery Programme (IDP), in Appendix A of the Stowmarket Area Action Plan.

7.2 In advance of the introduction of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), the developer should demonstrate that the relevant infrastructure needed to mitigate the schemes impacts has either been incorporated into the proposed scheme or is provided through other appropriate means, such as planning obligations.

7.3 It is proposed that infrastructure provision will include the following as part of the Edgecomb Road proposals;

7.4 The District Council and applicant will consider final contributions compliant with CIL Regulations, NPPF, the Development Plan, and other relevant material considerations (for example on education, early years learning, and libraries/other impacts) as part of the planning application process.

INFRASTRUCTURE	PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3	PHASE 4	PHASE 5	PHASE 6	DETAILS
<b>ACCESSIBILITY</b>							
Walking and Cycling		X				X	Early delivery of footpath and cycle routes
Bus stop	X					X	Target to achieve walking distances within 400m from properties
<b>HEALTH AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE</b>							
POS	X			X	X	X	Informal recreation areas, kickabout area in phase 6
Play Equipment			X				Contribution to off site areas
Health	X	X	X	X	X	X	Contribution to primary healthcare in Stowmarket (see Footnote below)
<b>HOUSING</b>							
Affordable Housing	X			X	X		Delivered during phases one, four and five.
Sheltered/supported housing						X	SH delivered in phase 6. Detailed designs to be discussed and finalised prior to submission of detailed planning application for phase 4, 5 and 6.
Sustainable Construction	X	X	X	X	X	X	Renewable Energy and Low carbon targets of 10%, working towards code Level 4 subject to building methods and viability.
<b>GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE</b>							
Landscaping	X					X	Work to be carried out to agreed planting scheme
Tree Planting	X			X		X	Work to be carried out to agreed planting scheme. Native species hedgerow planting to screen northern boundary of phase 1 dwellings against attenuation basin area. Also tree screen planting to the south boundary of the site to take place during phase 4. Orchard planting to phase 6.

1 An example of such a contribution would be the planned expansion of Stow Health. If provision is centred on Stow Health this will present challenges regards sustainable transport. It is acknowledged that the expansion of Stow Health will cause issues in terms of accessing this service from the development that need to be considered more widely.

