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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Document

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Ashby Design Ltd on behalf of our clients Wellington Estate, & 3West Developments to support an outline planning application in relation to a residential development at Land North of Sun Lane, Riseley, henceforth referred to as the application site.

The description of the application is as follows:

"Outline application with all matters reserved except for access for the construction of up to 44 dwellings, including affordable housing together with access, landscaping and associated infrastructure (cross boundary application).

The application site equates to 1.98 hectares, and is the subject of proposals for a development of up to 44 dwellings with associated infrastructure.

Whilst only an Outline application as already stated, this document sets out to cover the architectural aspects of the proposal in terms of use, amount, layout, scale and appearance where relevant.

The final details of these elements will subsequently be determined under a future Reserved Matters application.

This document should be read in conjunction with the following drawings and supporting documentation submitted by Ashby Design Ltd and associated consultants.

Application Drawings

- 713_25_OUT_PL1000_Site Location Plan
- 713_25_OUT_PL1001_Existing Site Plan
- 713_25_OUT_PL1002_Constraints Plan
- 713_25_OUT_PL1003_Opportunities Plan
- 713_25_OUT_PL1004_Design Concept Plan
- 713_25_OUT_PL1005_Illustrative Block Plan
- 713_25_OUT_PL1006_Illustrative Site Layout Plan
- 713_25_OUT_PL1007_Illustrative Visuals
- 713_25_OUT_PL1008_Illustrative Visuals

Supporting Documents

- Arboricultural Impact Assessment
- Tree Constraints and Tree Impact Plan
- Landscape Strategy Plan
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy
- Planning Statement
- Preliminary Ecological Assessment
- Habitats Regulations Assessment
- Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA)
- BNG Report & Metric
- Transport Statement & Travel Plan
- Historic Environment Assessment





1.2 Site Location

Application Site

The application site measures 1.98 hectares, forming a single, undeveloped parcel of land positioned immediately north of existing properties on Sun Lane. The site comprises pastoral grassland enclosed by hedgerows, tree belts and informal field boundaries. There are no buildings within the site.

Key boundaries include:

- **South East:** Sun Lane and a row of residential properties including Old Sun House, Whiteways, Holmbrook, Tara and others, fronting Basingstoke Road.
- **South West:** Further residential properties (Woodmans Cottage and Coldharbour Cottage) and associated garden boundaries, with the A33 beyond.
- **North West:** Open rural land transitioning towards woodland and agricultural fields.
- **North East:** Residential properties on Yeofield immediately back onto the application site, with the northern end of Riseley beyond.

The topographical plan (ref: PL1001) confirms that the landform is gently sloping with no steep gradients or significant ground constraints. The site does not lie within a Conservation Area and contains no designated heritage assets, although the wider parish includes multiple listed buildings whose settings require consideration.

2. Site Context and Assessment

2.1 Wider Context

The application site is located to the north of Sun Lane, on the southern edge of the village of Riseley, within Wokingham Borough.

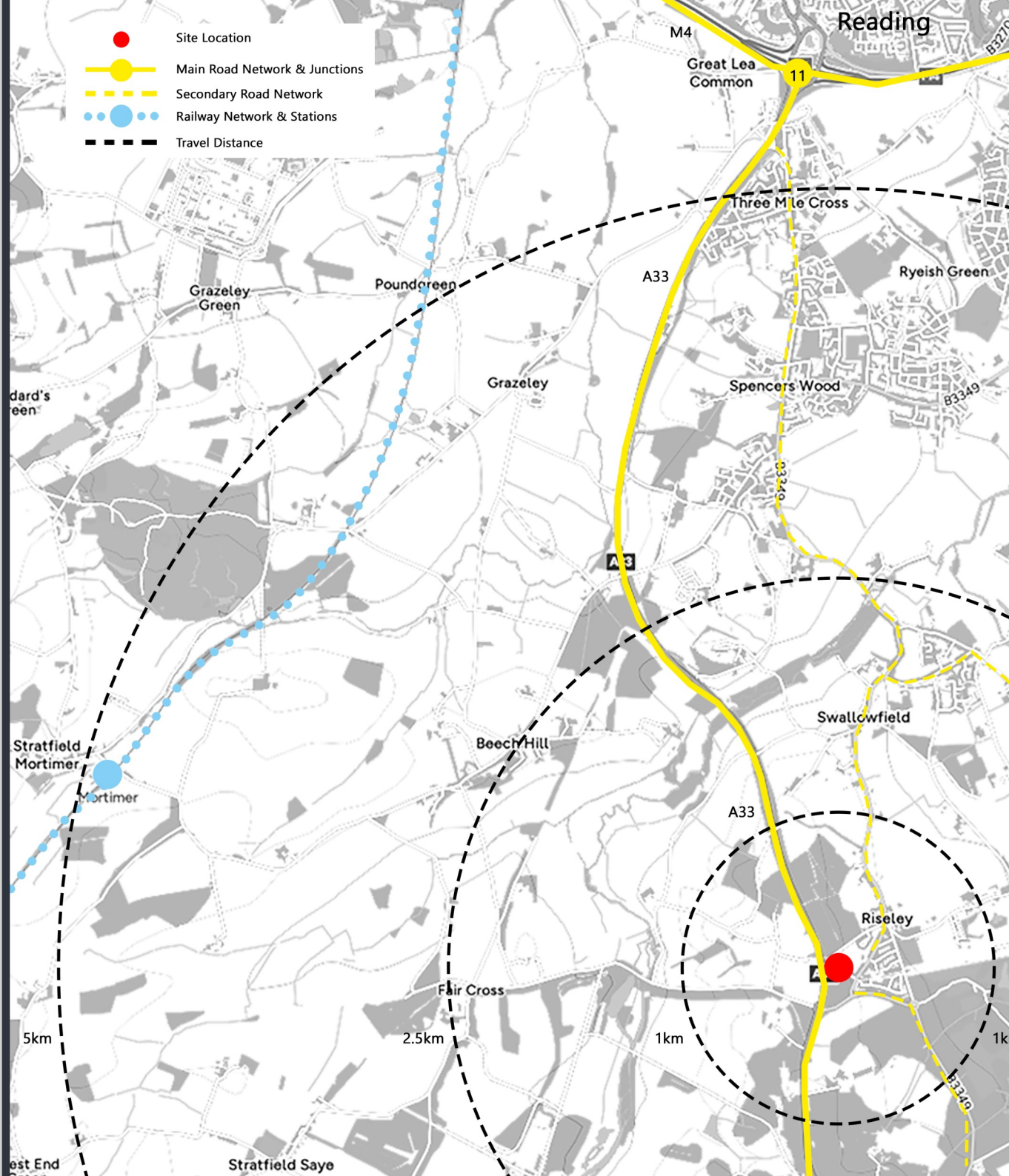
Riseley sits approximately 10km south of Reading and 12km north of Basingstoke, forming part of a rural settlement pattern characterised by small clusters of housing, agricultural land, and areas of woodland.

The site location plan (ref: PL1000) shows the site occupying a village-edge position, with established residential properties lining Sun Lane and Bull Lane to the south and west, and open countryside extending to the north and east.

This confirms the site as part of a transitional area between the built form of Riseley and the surrounding rural landscape.

Riseley itself contains a range of local facilities, including a village hall, community gym, café, playground and tennis courts, all located within short walking or cycling distance of the site.

Larger retail, employment and service centres are accessible in Swallowfield, Spencers Wood, Mortimer, Reading and Basingstoke.





2.2 Local Accessibility

Local Highway Network

Riseley benefits from strong vehicular connectivity. The A33 is located just west of the village, forming the main route linking Reading and Basingstoke. From the A33, M4 Junction 11 can be reached within approximately 10 minutes, enabling onward access to Heathrow Airport, London and the national motorway network.

Locally, the Basingstoke Road connects Riseley with Swallowfield, Spencers Wood, and Mortimer, providing convenient access to additional services and community facilities. Traffic volumes on Sun Lane are typically low, reflecting its function as a residential and rural access lane.

The supporting Transport Assessment will demonstrate that the proposed development can be safely accommodated on the local highway network and that appropriate access arrangements can be achieved.

Rail

The nearest railway station is Mortimer Station, approximately 5.5km to the north-west, providing regular services on the Reading–Basingstoke line. Mortimer enables convenient onward travel to Reading, Basingstoke, and key employment destinations beyond.

Reading Station, approximately 14km away, offers a major regional interchange with high-frequency services across the Thames Valley, London Paddington, the Elizabeth Line, the South West, and the Midlands. Together, these stations ensure residents have effective access to both local and long-distance rail services.

Bus

Riseley is served by local bus routes operating along the Basingstoke Road / A33 corridor, with stops located within walking distance of Sun Lane. Services such as the 600 and 145 connect Riseley with Reading, Basingstoke and surrounding villages. These services provide access to local shops, schools, healthcare facilities, and employment centres without reliance on the private car.

The pedestrian network within Riseley allows for safe, direct travel to nearby bus stops, ensuring public transport is accessible for daily use.

Pedestrian and Cycle Connections

The site is well placed to access local facilities within short walking and cycling distances. Sun Lane provides direct pedestrian links to village amenities including the village hall, play areas, cafés and recreational routes. A network of public footpaths and quiet country lanes connects Riseley to neighbouring settlements and provides opportunities for sustainable travel and leisure use.

2.3 Key Local Facilities

Pubs, Cafés and Local Restaurants

Riseley benefits from local hospitality services within easy reach of the site such as the Village Memorial Hall which incorporates a tea room, and The Bull, situated in the centre of the village, serving as the primary local pub with dining facilities. Additional cafés, restaurants and pubs are located in Swallowfield and Mortimer, all within a short drive or bus journey.

Public Open Space and Public Sports Facilities

The village includes a number of recreational amenities, including:

- Riseley Village Hall and community meeting rooms
- Children's playgrounds and open green spaces
- Riseley Tennis Club with outdoor courts

The surrounding countryside provides extensive opportunities for walking and outdoor recreation, with footpaths and bridleways linking to the wider rural landscape.

Schools

Nearby education facilities accessible from the site include:

- Lambs Lane Primary School
- Farley Hill Primary School
- Riseley Green School

Secondary schools such as Oakbank School and Bohunt School are accessible by car or bus along the A33 corridor. Additional primary and secondary schools are located in Mortimer, Spencers Wood, Reading and Basingstoke.

Shops and Health Care

Local convenience shopping is available in nearby Swallowfield Village Store and Post Office, with further shops, pharmacies, dentists and GP practices located in:

- Spencers Wood
- Mortimer
- Three Mile Cross

Comprehensive retail, medical and leisure facilities are easily accessible in Reading and Basingstoke.



Riseley Memorial Hall Tea Room



Riseley Tennis Club



Wellington Country Park



Key:

1. Recreational Ground
2. Riseley Tennis Club
3. Riseley Memorial Hall
4. Wellington Country Park
5. The Bull at Riseley Pub
6. Riseley Green School
7. Wellington Farm Shop

2.4 Site Conditions and Features

Landscape

The site comprises predominantly open, grassed agricultural land forming part of the rural fringe of Riseley. Its boundaries are defined by a combination of hedgerows, mature trees and informal field margins typical of the surrounding countryside.

The northern boundary transitions toward areas of dense woodland, including ancient and semi-natural woodland blocks that contribute to the wider ecological and landscape character.

The site's landscape quality is typical of managed pasture and hedged field systems, and although it is characteristic of the local area, it is not individually distinctive.

Its position at the edge of the settlement means it provides a gentle rural backdrop to the northern side of the village, and appropriate landscape-led design will ensure a sensitive transition between built form and the countryside.



Ecology

Preliminary ecological understanding indicates the site consists primarily of low-intensity grassland with higher ecological value located within hedgerows, tree belts and woodland to the north.

These features provide habitat connectivity for bats, birds and small mammals. Ancient woodland located north of the site represents an important ecological constraint and will require protective buffers and careful integration of green infrastructure.

A full Ecological Assessment and Tree Survey (BS5837) accompanies the application to identify habitats, protected species considerations, and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement.



Topography

The topographical plan (PL1001) identifies a gentle fall across the site, with no steep gradients or abrupt level changes. Spot levels indicate gradual lowering toward the south-eastern corner. This supports a flexible approach to landform integration and drainage design.

Local Watercourses

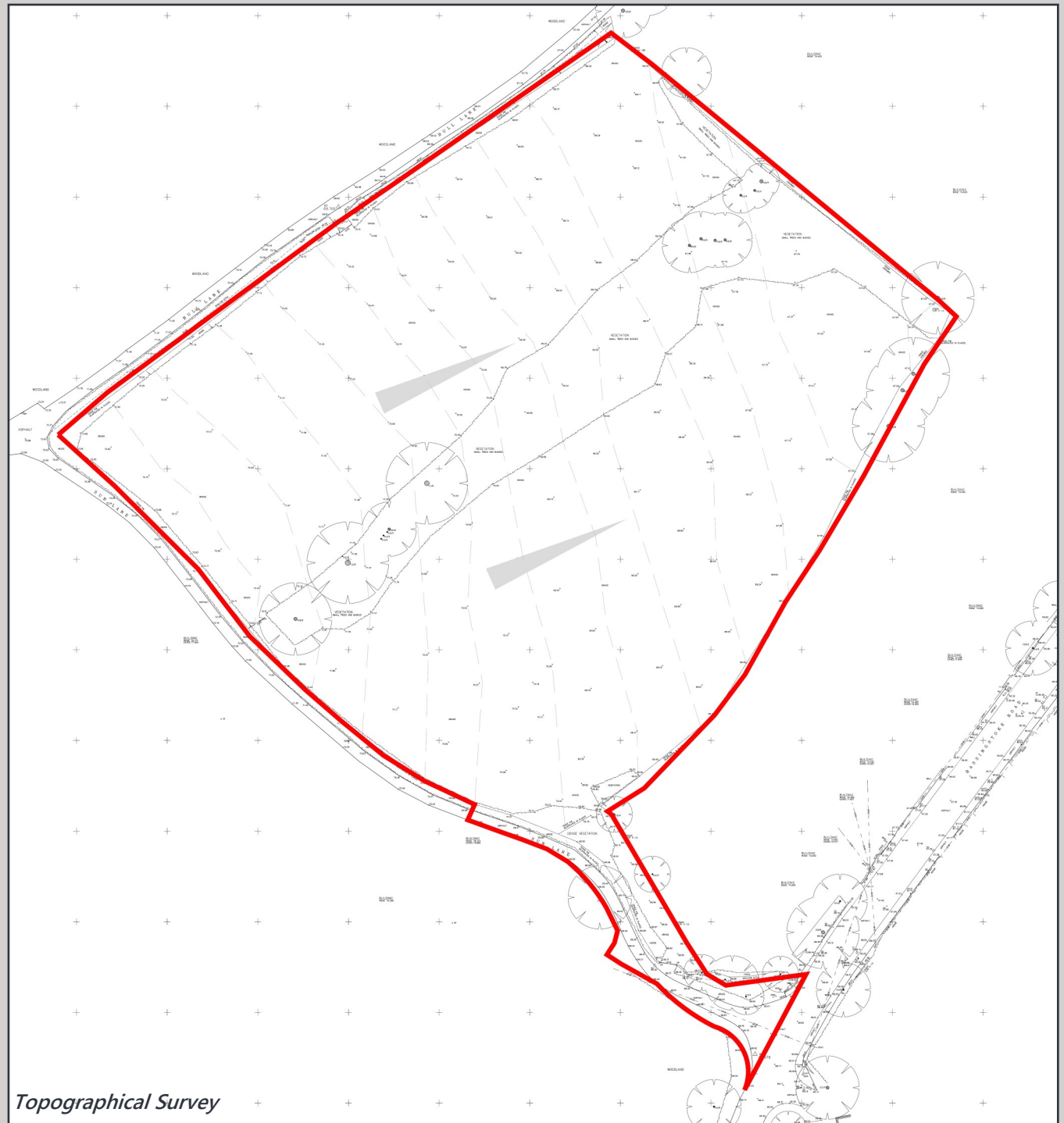
The topographical survey shows no watercourses or ponds within the site. The site lies within Flood Zone 1 and is at low risk of fluvial flooding.

The gentle slope will allow integration of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to manage runoff effectively.

Ground Conditions

No existing built structures are present on the site. The land is in agricultural use and has no known contamination risk.

Standard ground investigations will be undertaken to inform the design of foundations and drainage measures.



2.5 Local Character

Riseley Character Appraisal

The built environment surrounding the site forms part of the village of Riseley, located immediately to the north.

The settlement is characterised largely by mid-to-late twentieth century residential development, arranged in a linear pattern along Basingstoke Road, Odiham Road and Norton Road, with additional small cul-de-sacs and housing clusters extending from these routes.

Architectural styles within the village are varied and generally reflect the period in which each group of dwellings were constructed. The housing stock comprises a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced properties.

Typical building materials include red or orange brick, often incorporating darker brick detailing, alongside instances of render or white-painted brickwork. Roofs are predominantly finished in slate or clay tiles, providing a consistent material palette across much of the village.

Summary of Adjacent Residential Areas

Basingstoke Road

- Mixed-age development with modern homes alongside older and adapted properties.
- Predominantly two-storey detached and semi-detached dwellings.
- Common materials: red brick, slate/tile roofs; detailing includes tile hanging & decorative brickwork.

Sun Lane

- Two storey detached dwellings on large plots, one of which is Listed.
- Red brick, slate/tile roofs; detailing decorative eaves details.
- Listed building is a timber-framed cottage with painted-render infill and thatched roof.

Odiham Road

- Mainly individual two-storey detached houses.
- Red brick and painted white brickwork with tiled roofs.
- Feature brick courses and decorative surrounds used on some dwellings.

Norton Road

- Mix of detached, semi-detached and short terraces with smaller setbacks.
- Varied storey heights, including some single-storey homes.
- Red and brown brick predominates, often with feature brick detailing.

Yeosfield

- Former council housing arranged around a central green.
- Mostly two-storey semi-detached units.
- Varied red brick and white-painted brickwork with tiled roofs.

Portway

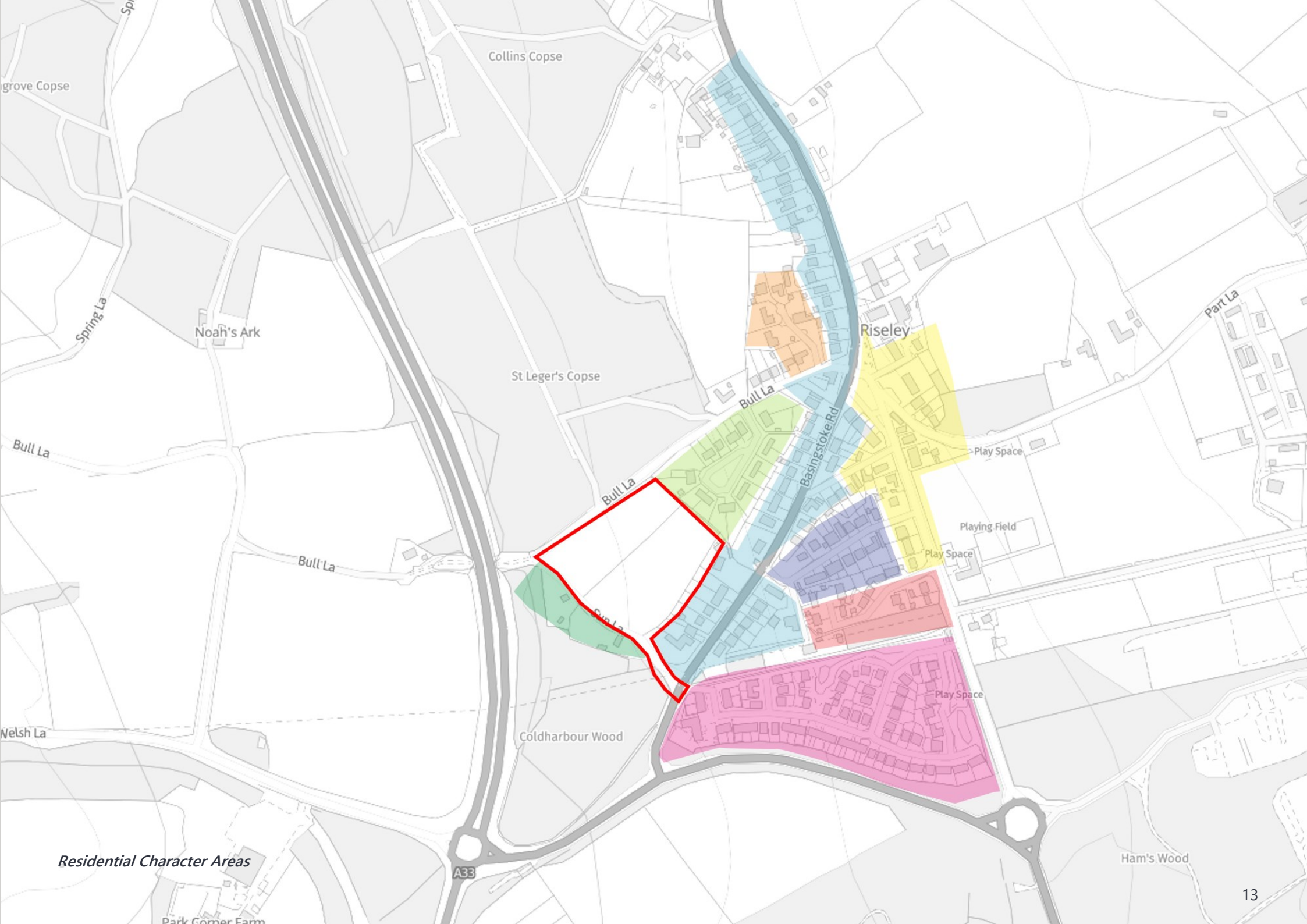
- Close to the site's northern boundary; mix of house sizes including first-time buyer units.
- Materials include red brick, concrete tiles and timber-stained joinery.

Russet Close

- Recent development north of the village on former fields.
- Large, detached dwellings with red/brown/multi-stock brick and tiled roofs.
- Architectural features include brick detailing, half-hipped gables and dormer windows.

Odiham Development

- Recent development south of the village on former fields.
- Mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellings with red/multi-stock brick, tile hanging, render and tiled roofs.
- Architectural features include brick detailing, bay windows and stone features.



Residential Character Areas

2.5 Local Character (cont'd)

Heritage

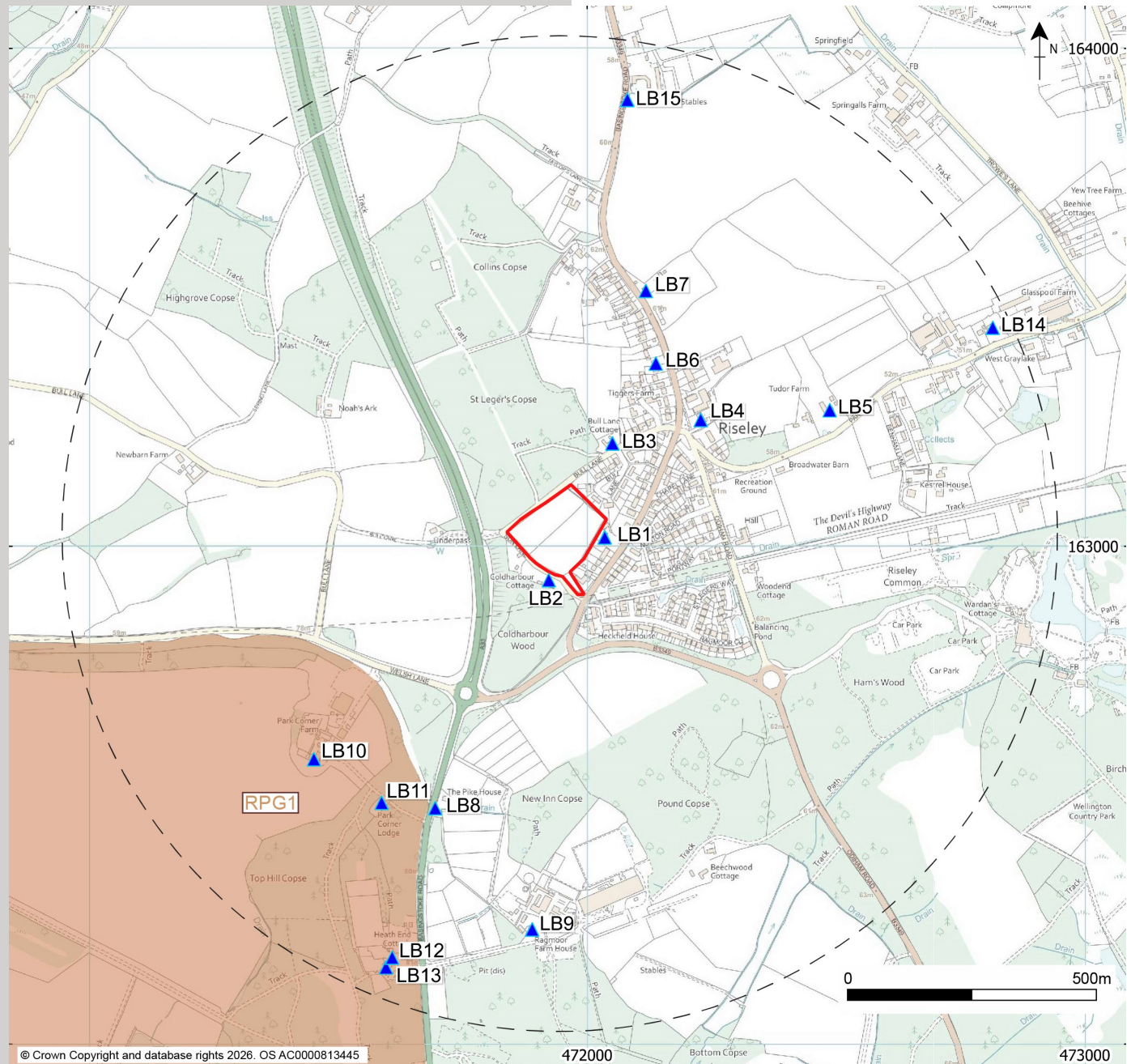
The application site has been in continuous agricultural use since at least the late medieval or early post-medieval period.

Historic mapping, aerial photography and LiDAR analysis identify areas of ridge-and-furrow cultivation within the site, likely of post-medieval date. These features are of limited archaeological and heritage interest and were not appreciable during the site visit.

Historic hedgerows largely pre-dating the 1841 tithe map are present, but are of low local significance; limited breaches required for access would not adversely affect their historic value.

No designated heritage assets are located within the site. The surrounding area contains a number of Grade II listed buildings, including **Pound House** and **Coldharbour Cottage**, both 16th-century cottages located immediately adjacent to the site.

The HEA identifies no known archaeological remains within the site; however, there is moderate archaeological potential due to the site's proximity to the Roman road between London and Silchester (the Devil's Highway), a possible Romano-British roadside settlement to the west, and a confirmed Iron Age settlement to the south-east.



Heritage Map (Extract from HEA)

Listed Buildings

Coldharbour Cottage, Sun Lane

Age & style:	Late 16th-century timber-framed cottage with painted-render infill. Thatched gabled roof with brick gable.
Layout:	Two-storey rectangular plan with a small 20th-century rear extension.
Key features:	Exposed timber frame internally, large curved braces, chamfered beams, shutter grooves, and an inglenook fireplace.
Status:	Grade II listed (listed 14 February 1986), recognized for historic and architectural interest.



Coldharbour Cottage, Sun Lane

Pound House, Basingstoke Road

Age & style:	16th-century core with 19th-century extensions. Timber-framed with painted infill and brick sections; old tile gabled roofs.
Layout:	Two-storey double-depth plan with a rear extension.
Key features:	Exposed internal timber frame; casement and sash windows.
Status:	Grade II listed (listed 14 February 1986), protected for its historic and architectural character.



Pound House, Basingstoke Road

Bull Lane Cottage, Bull Lane

Age & style:	17th-century timber-framed cottage with later 20th-century extension. Thatched roof (gabled and half-hipped).
Layout:	One-and-a-half-storey L-shaped plan.
Key features:	Exposed timber frame internally, 20th-century casement windows, and flanking chimney on south gable.
Status:	Grade II listed (listed 6 February 1981; amended 14 February 1986), significant for historic character and architecture.



Bull Lane Cottage, Bull Lane

3. Planning Context

3.1 Planning History

Relevant Planning History

The application site itself has no recent planning history for built development and remains in use as pastoral grassland. However, relevant context is provided by a comparable residential scheme approved on land at Odiham Road, located within the northern part of Riseley.

Although that site lies within Hart District Council rather than Wokingham Borough, it illustrates the cross-boundary planning considerations that arise in settlements divided between two authorities. Hart's determination of the Odiham Road scheme emphasised the need for high-quality, context-responsive design on the village edge.

During the reserved matters stage, the Council required improvements to elevational treatment, architectural variety and material choices to ensure that new development integrated sensitively with the rural character of Riseley. The approved design adopted varied roof forms, appropriate massing and a locally sympathetic palette.

This precedent is relevant insofar as it reflects Riseley's shared settlement character on both sides of the district boundary. While Wokingham Borough Council's development plan — together with the Riseley Village Design Statement — provides the policy basis for assessing this proposal, the Odiham Road decision demonstrates the established expectations for settlement-edge development in Riseley: modest scale, rural character, landscape-led layout and high design quality.

The cross-boundary nature of the village means that proposals at Sun Lane should continue to respond to this shared context, aligning primarily with Wokingham's planning policies while acknowledging the complementary design principles applied by Hart in recent decisions affecting the same settlement.



Odiham Road Development

3.2 Planning Design Criteria Checklist

Policy Topic	Criteria / Policy Requirement	Y/N	Policy Topic	Criteria / Policy Requirement	Y/N
Settlement Role & Scale	Development reflects Riseley's role as a small rural village (RNP).	Y	Transport & Movement	Safe, suitable access achieved from Sun Lane.	Y
	Scale and density appropriate to village-edge context.	Y		Walkable access to village amenities and bus stops provided.	Y
	Avoids suburban sprawl or ribbon development (RNP/VDS).	Y		Parking provision appropriate to village context (not urbanised).	Y
	Integrates logically with existing built form.	Y		Internal layout maintains rural lane character (VDS).	Y
Design Quality & Local Character	Building heights and massing consistent with surrounding dwellings.	Y	Flood Risk & Drainage	Site lies within Flood Zone 1; safe access and egress.	Y
	Materials reflect local vernacular (timber, brick, rural palette).	*		SuDS integrated to manage runoff appropriately.	Y
	Layout respects Riseley's linear village character.	Y		Surface-water flow paths avoided or mitigated.	Y
	Streetscene maintains visual connection to countryside.	Y		Runoff restricted to greenfield rates.	Y
Landscape, Trees & Ancient Woodland	Existing hedgerows and boundary trees retained where possible.	Y	Housing Mix & Community Benefit	Housing mix to appropriate space standards to meet identified local needs.	*
	Buffer zone provided to ancient woodland to the north.	Y		Affordable housing provided in line with WBC policy.	Y
	New planting uses native species and reinforces field boundaries.	Y		Supports vitality of local facilities (shop, hall, recreation).	Y
Ecology & Biodiversity	Full ecological survey undertaken (Phase 1 + protected species).	Y		Opportunities for community enhancement considered.	Y
	Commitment to Biodiversity Net Gain in accordance with policy, via on-site and off-site means.	Y	Sustainability & Climate Change	High energy-efficiency standards adopted.	*
	Green corridors maintained/enhanced for habitat connectivity.	Y		EV charging + cycle storage integrated.	*
	Lighting strategy protects bat foraging and wildlife movement.	*		Renewable technologies considered (solar, heat pumps, etc.).	*
Heritage & Historic Environment	Effects on setting of nearby listed buildings assessed.	Y		Construction methods minimise carbon impact.	*
	Design reflects Riseley's historic pattern and grain.	Y	Deliverability & Phasing	Site free from physical constraints (topography, access, utilities).	Y
	Boundary treatments and landscaping reinforce rural heritage.	*		Phasing minimises impact on existing residents.	*
				Infrastructure delivery aligned with supporting assessments.	*

* Commitment to being policy compliant, with details to be provided as part of any future Reserved Matters application.

4. Design Proposal

4.1 Constraints & Opportunities

Constraints

The Constraints Plan illustrates a series of environmental, physical, and contextual considerations that have directly informed the development approach for the site.

A key influence is the presence of neighbouring residential properties, which frame the site and establish a sensitive interface with existing settlement patterns.

These dwellings define a varied edge condition, requiring the proposal to carefully manage relationships in terms of privacy, outlook, and amenity.

Appropriate visual distances, respecting existing garden curtilages, and mitigating any potential overlooking or overbearing effects, all form a fundamental part of the design response.

Another significant constraint arises from the extensive network of existing trees and hedgerow groups recorded across the site.

These include a mixture of individual trees and larger groups, several of which are subject to higher arboricultural retention priorities.

Their associated Root Protection Areas present defined no-build zones that limit the extent of ground disturbance and guide the alignment of both proposed building footprints and internal roads or footpaths.

The spatial distribution of these trees, particularly those forming continuous belts along boundaries, creates a strong landscape framework that contributes to local character, biodiversity value, and the wider green infrastructure network. Retention and protection of these features is therefore an essential design consideration.

Topographical variation across the site represents an additional constraint, with spot levels indicating subtle changes in gradient generally within the 68–73 range.

While not extreme, respecting the existing landform supports a more sustainable approach to construction and helps the proposed layout sit comfortably within the rural context.

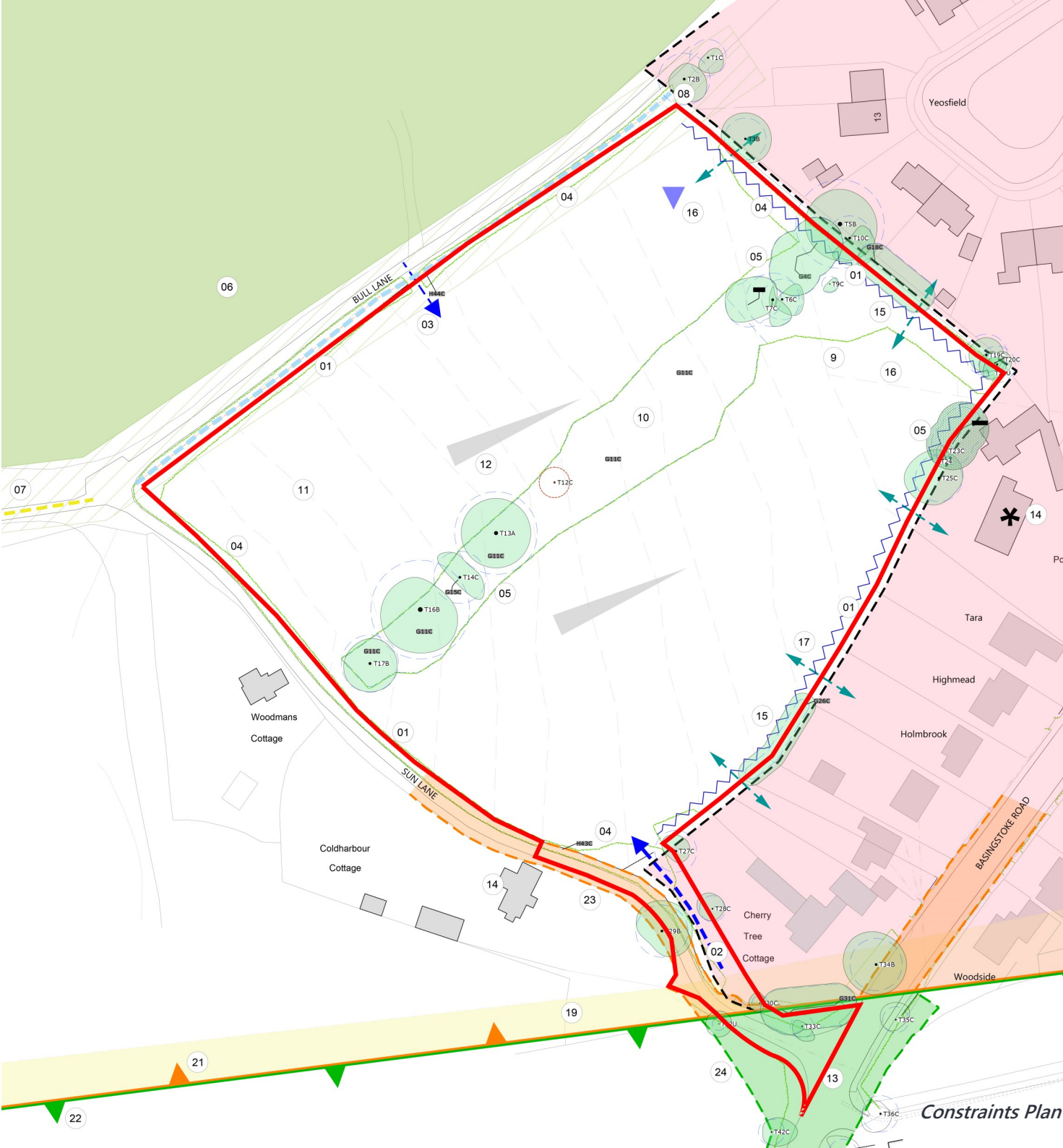
The plan highlights several access-related constraints, including established entrances, driveways, and points of movement along the surrounding road network. These arrows and markers indicate areas where visibility, junction spacing, and local traffic patterns must be carefully considered.

Any new access points, service routes, or pedestrian connections must integrate safely with existing conditions to ensure compliant and legible arrangements for all users.

Boundary conditions including mature vegetation, residential garden limits, and changes between open and enclosed edges, further shape how the site can be accessed and how transitions into neighbouring plots are managed.

Collectively, these constraints set out a clear framework within which the development must operate. They guide decisions on building orientation, spacing, massing, and landscape structure, ensuring that new development responds sensitively to its immediate context.

By addressing the arboricultural, topographical, access, and neighbour-related considerations from the outset, the emerging proposal is able to deliver a layout that enhances local character, protects key environmental assets, and integrates positively with the established settlement pattern.



1. Application Boundary
2. Primary Site Access (Sun Lane Realignment)
3. Existing Secondary Site Access
4. Existing Vegetation/Hedgerows
5. Existing Trees & Associated RPAs
6. Ancient Woodland (St. Ledger Copse)
7. Buffer to Ancient Woodland
8. Existing Ditches
9. On-Site Ecological Habitat Features
10. Commuting Ecological Features
11. Site Contours (at 0.5m intervals)
12. Direction of Sloping Land
13. Telecoms Service Overhead Cables
14. Listed Buildings
15. Sensitive Edge, incl. Back/Side to Existing Development
16. Potential Area for Attenuation Feature
17. Interaction with Existing Dwellings
18. Identified "Built Up Area" of Riseley
19. Archaeological Site - Roman Road (Devil's Highway)
20. A33 to 60-150m West of Application Site
21. Hart District Council Boundary
22. Wokingham Borough Council Boundary
23. Extent of WBC Adopted Highway
24. Extent of HCC Adopted Highway

4.1 Constraints & Opportunities

Opportunities

The site presents a number of clear opportunities that support a well-structured and landscape-led development approach.

A primary opportunity is the provision of main vehicular access from Basingstoke Road at the south-east corner of the site.

This location allows for a logical and legible point of arrival, while also enabling the existing connection to Sun Lane to be retained, maintaining local permeability and continuity of movement.

A defining feature of the site is the central landscape and ecology corridor, which offers significant potential to act as a strong green spine running through the development.

This corridor can form the basis of an integrated green infrastructure network, reinforcing biodiversity value while also creating an attractive setting for new development.

Opportunities exist to incorporate a minimal and carefully designed movement link through this corridor, allowing pedestrian and cycle permeability across the site without undermining its ecological function.

This balanced approach ensures connectivity is achieved while safeguarding the corridor's role as a habitat and landscape asset.



Opportunities Plan

The retention of existing high-quality trees across the site provides an immediate opportunity to embed maturity and character into the proposed layout.

These trees can be incorporated into areas of public open space and boundary landscaping, helping to soften built form, reinforce site structure, and contribute positively to visual amenity.

Their retention also strengthens the ecological credentials of the scheme and supports compliance with planning and environmental objectives.

Additional opportunities for access and connectivity are present along the northern boundary, where a secondary and pedestrian-focused access to Bull Lane can be created.

This connection would enhance walkability, provide alternative routes for non-vehicular users, and better integrate the site with its wider surroundings.

Along this northern edge, the introduction of a 6 metre wide landscape buffer offers scope for meaningful ecological and visual enhancement, while also protecting the adjacent Ancient Woodland and reinforcing the transition between development and sensitive woodland areas.

To the western boundary, a 4-metre landscape buffer presents an opportunity to soften the visual impact of new development when viewed from existing dwellings along Sun Lane.

This buffer can accommodate new planting and retained vegetation, improving screening, enhancing privacy, and ensuring that the proposed built form responds sensitively to neighbouring residential properties.

Finally, the site's natural topography creates a clear opportunity to locate a sustainable drainage (SuDS) feature at the lowest point of the site.

Integrating this feature within an area of open green space allows surface water to be managed in a sustainable and visually attractive manner, while also delivering additional ecological benefits and informal amenity space for future residents.

Together, these opportunities demonstrate the site's capacity to accommodate development that is well-connected, environmentally responsive, and strongly informed by its landscape context.