

ARBORICULTURE

- 4.16 An arboricultural impact assessment (AIA) has been carried out by EDP and submitted as part of this application.
- 4.17 The purpose of the AIA is to assess the impacts upon existing trees from the proposed development and demonstrate which trees can be retained and which will require removal. In addition, it provides mitigation measures, such as protective fencing, to ensure the safe, long-term retention of any retained tree should the development be permitted.
- 4.18 The AIA concludes:
- Existing planting on site consisting of: 39 individual trees; 25 groups of trees; and 36 hedgerows.
 - Only 10 category A trees or groups across the site, located either outside or around the periphery.
 - No trees within or adjacent to the site are protected by tree preservation order.
 - The Site is not within a designated conservation area.
 - Existing trees identified for retention will continue to be managed in accordance with BS 5837:2012. This requires implementation of physical protection measures to safeguard the retained trees, including robust protection in the form of a barrier to BS 5837:2012 standards, during construction phases.
 - Masterplanning has been informed by arboricultural recommendations throughout and has resulted in the loss of eight category C items and 1 category U item.
 - New tree planting has potential for longevity within the landscape and will enhance the species diversity for the site, whilst also contributing to the green infrastructure for the area.

Mitigation

- 4.19 Should any trees be affected by the proposed development at the detailed design stage, these will be sensitively worked around to minimise any adverse effects. This can be achieved with the use of ground protection, no-dig technologies, hand digging and access facilitation pruning, where applicable. This level of detail will be assessed during the detailed design stage.
- 4.20 A suitably worded condition can secure any mitigation measures which would be required to minimise harm and ensure safe, long-term retention to trees.



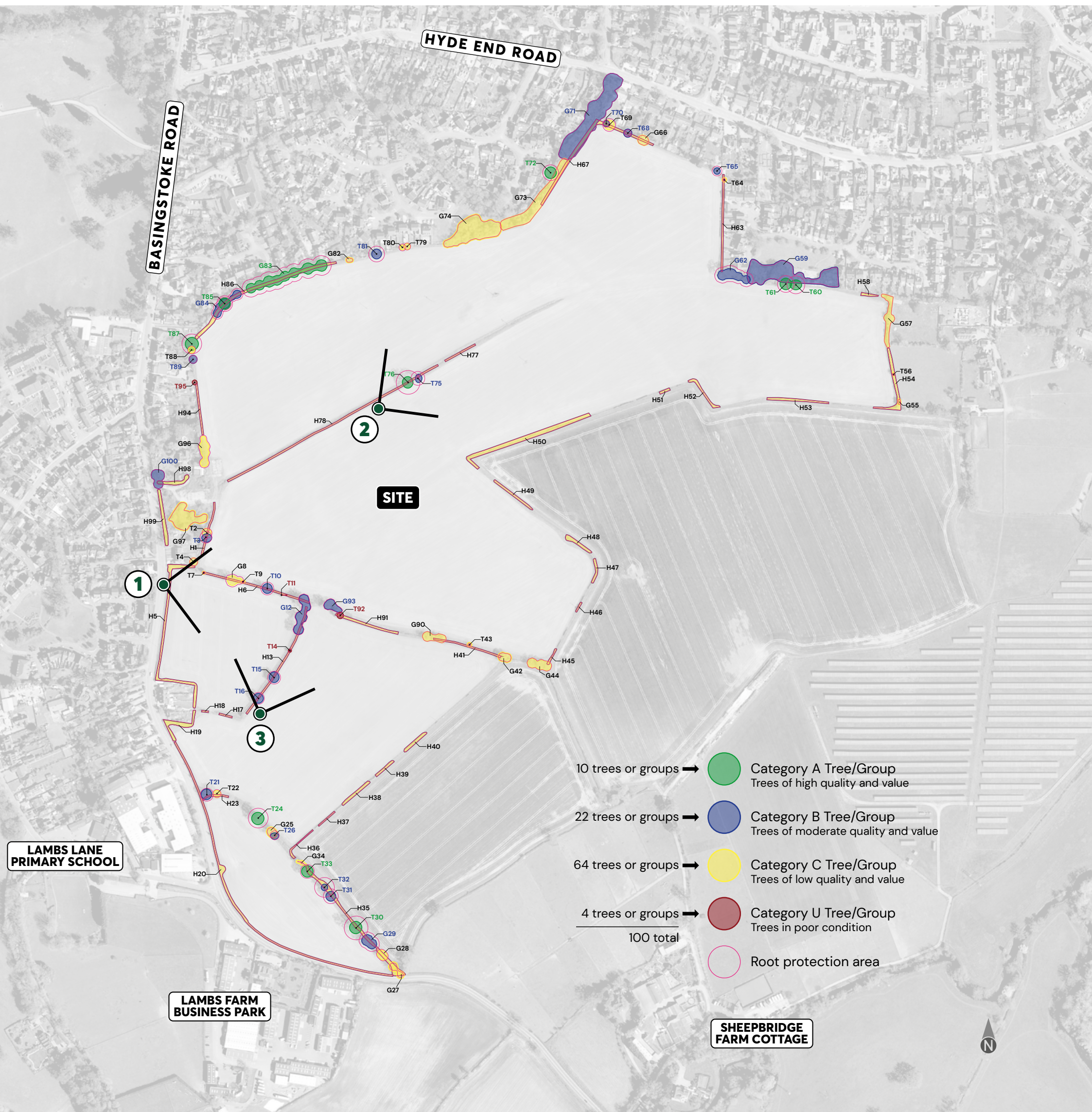
View 1: Looking east from Basingstoke Road along hedgerow H6.



View 2: Looking north-east along hedgerow H78 and trees T75, 76 and 77.



View 3: Looking north-east along hedgerow H13.



ARBORICULTURAL SURVEY | Not to scale

ECOLOGY

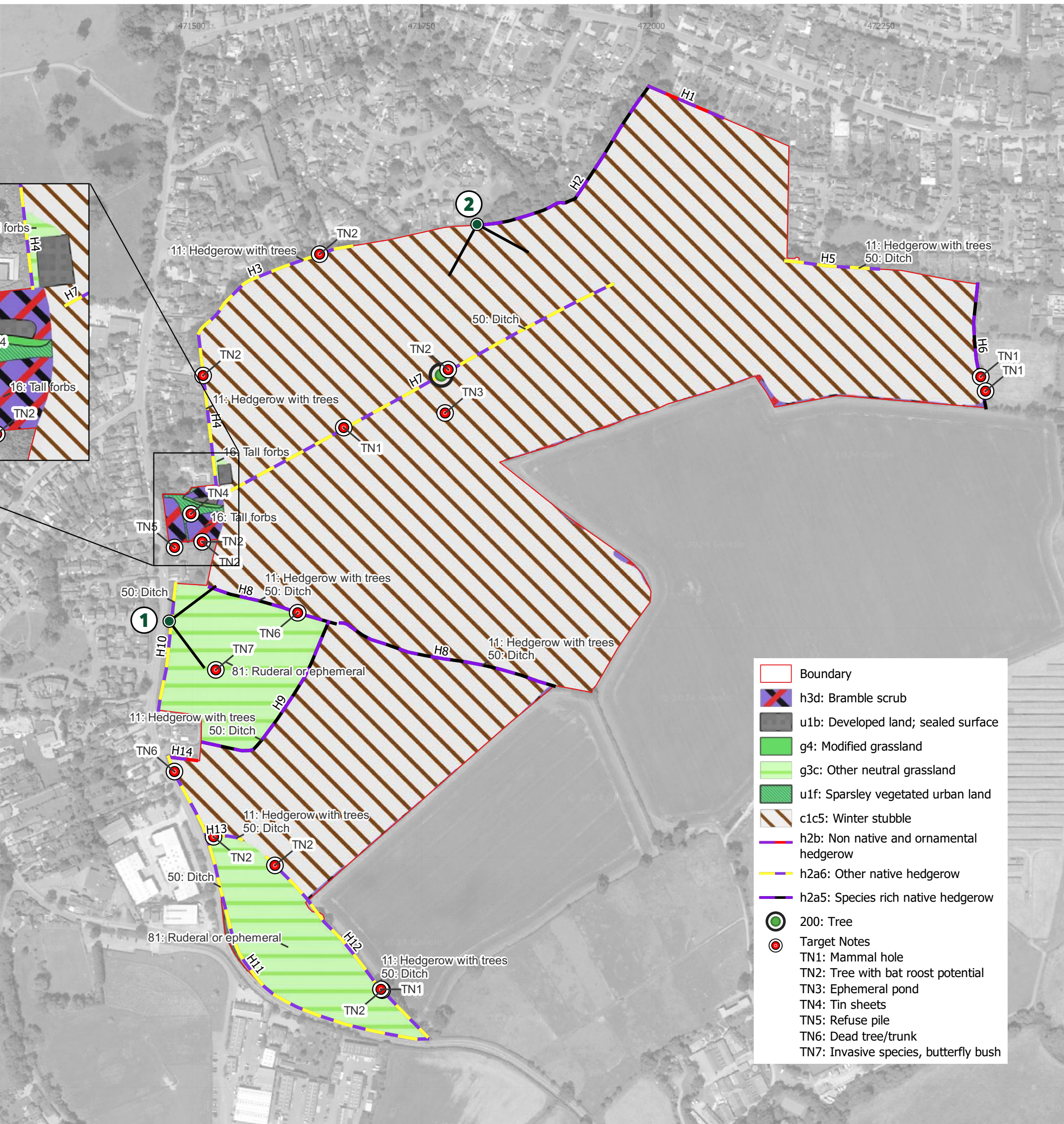
- 4.21 RammSanderson Ecology Ltd have carried out an Ecological Impact Assessment for the site.
- 4.22 The Application Site does not lie within or adjacent to the boundary of a Designated Site for Nature Conservation. The Application Site is however located within 2km of Stanford End Mill and River Loddon Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and 3.5km of the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area (SPA).
- 4.23 The Application Site itself is dominated by arable cropland with minor patches of scrub and agriculturally improved grassland, bounded by hedgerows, ditches and broadleaf trees. Most habitats within the Application Site are of low ecological value; habitats of more notable ecological value would include boundary hedgerows, trees and other boundary habitats.
- 4.24 The Application Site has been identified as having the potential to support great crested newts due to the presence of offsite ponds, water voles and otters within boundary ditches, breeding birds within cropland and boundary habitats as well as foraging and roosting bats along boundary habitats. A suite of protected species surveys has been undertaken across the Application Site to determine presence/absence of species as well as potential population distributions. The resultant survey baseline has been used to inform design constraints and opportunities, as well as ensure legal compliance with wildlife legislation and policy.
- 4.25 For more information, refer to the Ecological Impact Assessment that accompanies the application.

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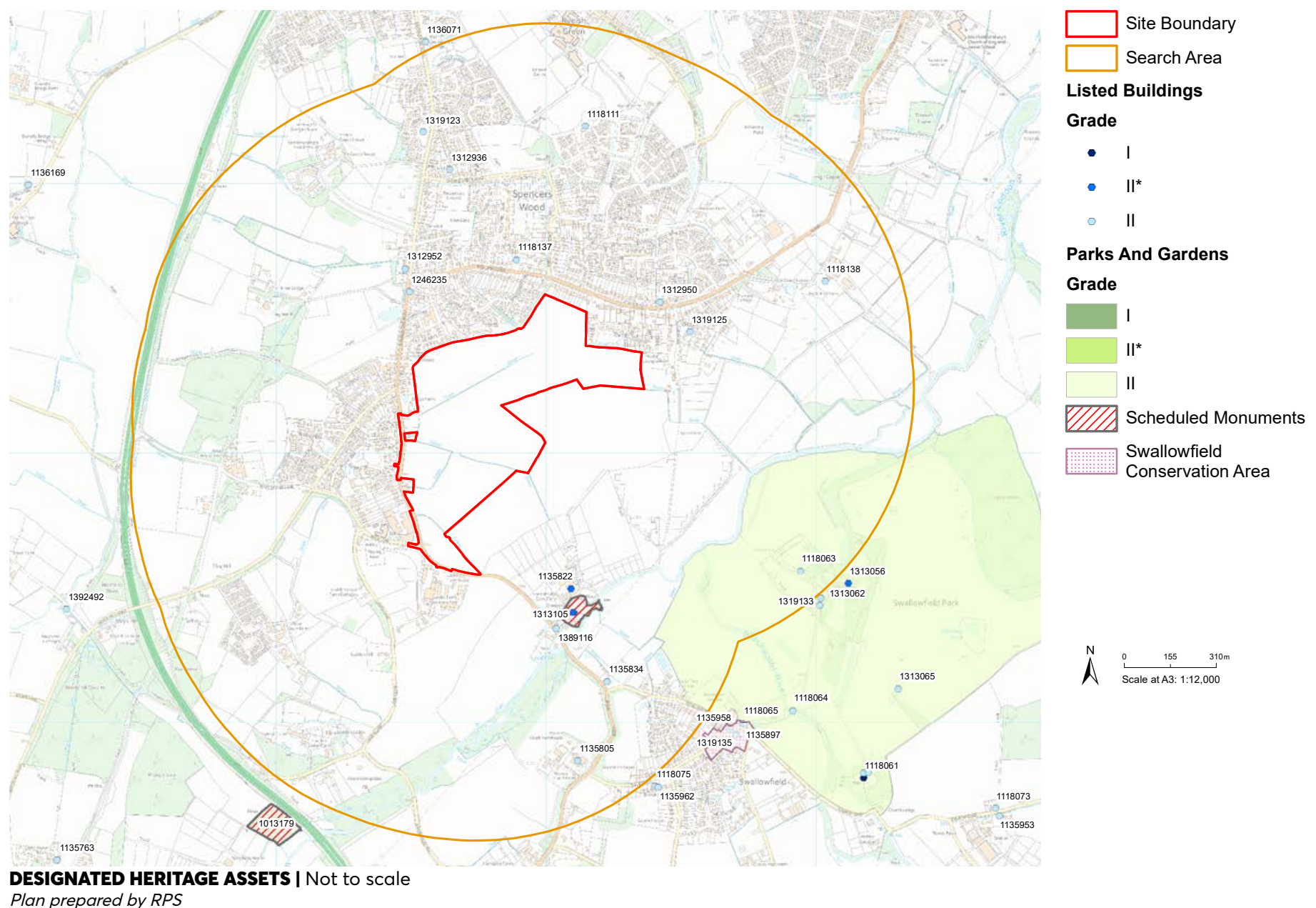




BIA BASELINE HABITAT PLAN | Not to scale
Plan prepared by Ramm Sanderson Ecology

HERITAGE

- 4.26 A built heritage statement has been prepared by RPS to support this application. The report provides an assessment of the built heritage assets potentially affected through the development of the site, addressing the information requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and Wokingham Borough Council's Local Plan in relation to built heritage.
- 4.27 The heritage report finds that there are no designated or non-designated built heritage assets located within the site. The assessment identifies and has considered the potential sensitivity of fifteen Listed Buildings (two Grade II* and Grade II), one Registered Park and Garden (Swallowfield Park) and four non-designated built heritage assets located within a 1km search area surrounding the site.
- 4.28 The report has established that of the above heritage assets, the proposed development has the potential to affect the significance of the Swallowfield Park and Adjoining Stable Block (Grade II* Listed Building-NHLE: 1313056), Swallowfield Park (Registered Park and Garden-NHLE: 1000537) and Sheepbridge Court (Grade II* Listed Building-NHLE: 1313105) through changes within their respective settings.
- 4.29 The remaining Listed Buildings and non-designated built heritage assets are not considered sensitive to the proposed development.
- 4.30 The proposed development will result in a visual change within the setting of Swallowfield Park and Stable Block, but this will not cause harm to how the significance of this Listed Building is appreciated or understood. However, this change has the potential to cause a low degree of harm to the significance of the Swallowfield Park. In the context of the NPPF, this harm would be less than substantial harm and therefore, engage the public benefit tests of paragraph 208.
- 4.31 The proposed development will lead to a visual change within the rural setting of Sheepbridge Court, but the design of the development and landscaping treatments will compensate for this change; and this will not result in a harmful impact on how the significance of this Listed Building is presently appreciated or understood.
- 4.32 The proposed development of the site is therefore in accordance with the statutory duties of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and conforms to the requirements of the NPPF and local planning policy with regard to built heritage.



NOISE

- 4.33 A noise impact assessment (NIA) has been prepared by BWB to support this application.
- 4.34 The assessment considers the impact of existing employment uses and existing road traffic sources on the proposed development and its future residents. The NIA also assesses potential noise impact from proposed road traffic generated noise and other potential sources, such as the proposed sports pitches. Where necessary, consideration is given to appropriate mitigation measures.
- 4.35 A baseline noise survey was undertaken at the site to inform the assessment. The results of the survey and subsequent assessment work have been assessed in accordance with current standards and guidance, following consultation with Wokingham Borough Council.
- 4.36 Based on the results of the assessment, it has been demonstrated that the site is suitable for residential development.

Mitigation

- 4.37 To reduce the noise impact at proposed dwellings and gardens nearest to Basingstoke Road to within acceptable levels, it is recommended that gardens are located on the screened side of dwellings. Should gardens face onto Basingstoke Road, then localised acoustics barriers will likely be required around garden areas. The exact height, location and extent of any barriers required can be determined at detailed design stage.
- 4.38 In order to assess the noise mitigation required to ensure an adequate level of protection against noise, it is appropriate to explore the protection that could be afforded by the sound insulation performance of the external building fabric of the proposed dwellings, and in particular the glazing elements. The final glazing and ventilation design should be finalised on a plot-by-plot basis at detailed design stage, once the final internal layouts and glazing areas for each room are known.

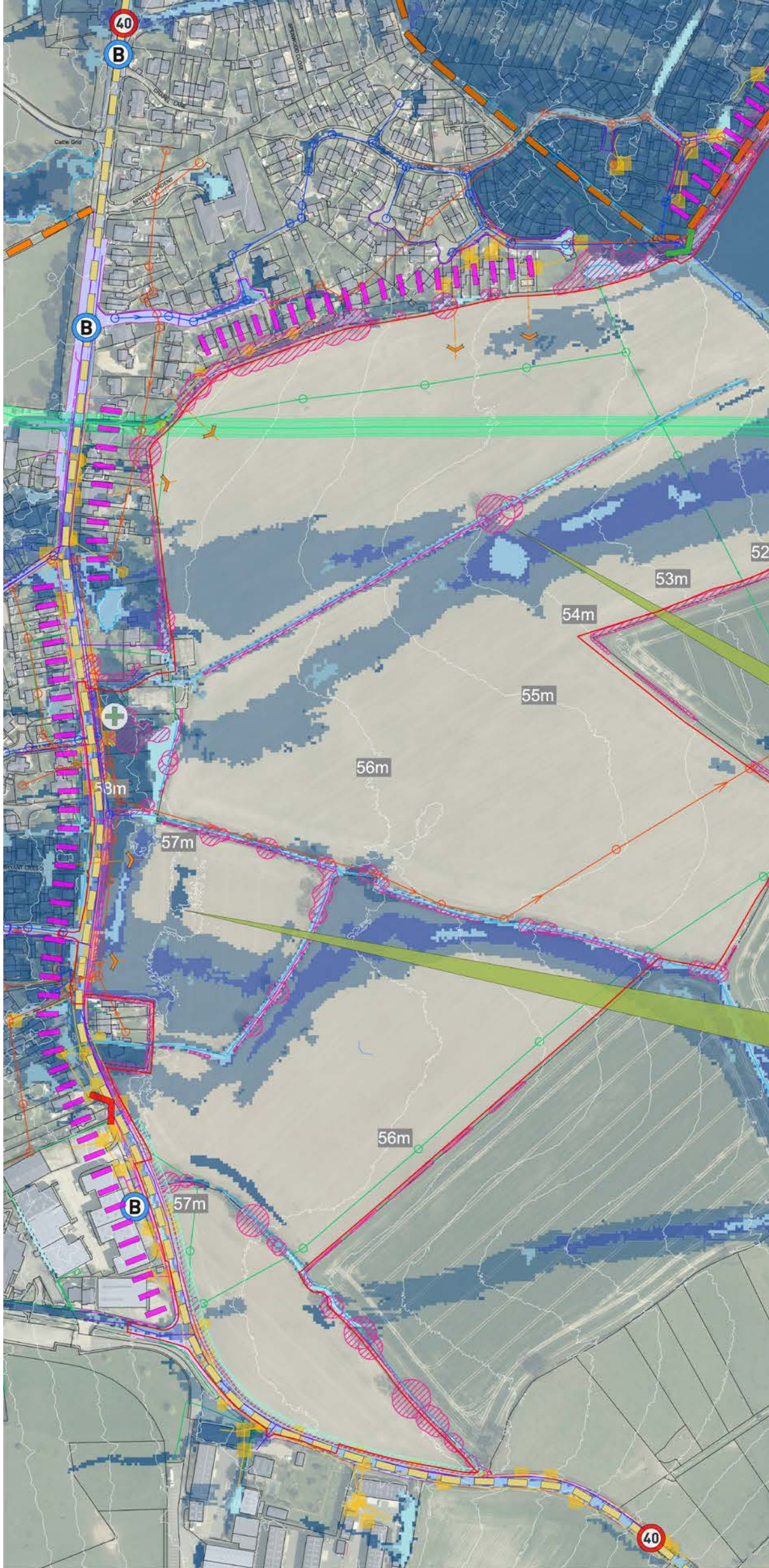
AIR QUALITY

- 4.39 An air quality assessment (AQA) has been prepared by BWB to support this application.
- 4.40 Based on the assessment results, the impact of the proposed development with regards to the current relevant air quality objectives was considered to be not significant.
- 4.41 No further mitigation is considered required, but measures included in the proposed development that may be considered beneficial to air quality include Air Source Heat Pumps and Electric Vehicle charging points. This level of detail will be assessed during the detailed design stage.

SUMMARY OF SITE / CONTEXTUAL
OBSERVATIONS | NTS

LEGEND

- Site Boundary
- Site High Point
- Site Low Point
- Site Access
- Potential Secondary Site Access
- Primary Road
- 40mph Speed Limit
- Bus Stop
- Visual amenity considerations
- Long Distance Views
- Existing Buildline
- Existing Vegetation
- Public Right of Way
- Public Right of Way - Byway open to all traffic
- Existing BT Apparatus - Pole
- Existing BT Apparatus - Box
- Contours - 1m
- Existing Gas Main - LP
- Existing Gas Main - MP
- Existing Electric Apparatus
- Existing Abandoned MOD Pipeline (Can be Removed)
- EXOLUM Kerosene Pipeline with easement(s)
Easement to be 5m+7m (either arrangement)
- Existing gravity storm
- Existing gravity foul
- Existing water main
- Existing pond / Watercourse
- Surface Water - 1in30
- Surface Water - 1in100
- Surface Water - 1in1000
- EA - Flood Risk Zone 2
- EA - Flood Risk Zone 3
- Listed Building
- Arboricultural Constraints
- Extent of Adopted Highway (Wokingham Borough Council 2023)
- 6m Gas Easement (From deeds)





Considerations

- ### Opportunities:

- Retain and enhance green infrastructure where possible;
- Ecological buffer to residential properties along the northern boundary;
- Establish a new community hub or central focus for the development, to bring together new and existing communities in Spencers Wood.
- A network of green corridors and cycle ways to encourage active travel and connect new housing, employment areas and local facilities.
- Sports and recreational facilities and communal food growing to encourage active, healthy lifestyles.
- Outstanding new GI network, surpassing minimum Council requirements.
- Potential cycle and pedestrian links to connect Basingstoke Road with Barracks Lane and Century Drive along the northern boundary;
- Highway improvements along Basingstoke Road which provide gateway opportunities;
- Provide a residential development that offers a series of different housing types, sizes and tenures which respect the local character;
- Create a road hierarchy that is not dominated by vehicular movement and encourages active travel;
- Create outward facing residential frontages to soften the transition from built form to open space and helping to promote self-surveillance and reduce the risk of anti-social behaviour;
- Provide sustainable forms of drainage (SuDS) within both the development and green spaces, providing additional ecological benefits; and
- Create extensive new amenity space, including a 'Country Park' or SANG, multi-functional open space; play areas, a network of footpaths, cycle paths and community orchard within the open space for new and existing residents.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE & DISCUSSIONS

“Local planning authorities should ensure that they have access to, and make appropriate use of, tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development. The National Model Design Code is the primary basis for the preparation and use of local design codes. For assessing proposals there is a range of tools including workshops to engage the local community, design advice and review arrangements, and assessment frameworks such as Building for a Healthy Life. These are of most benefit if used as early as possible in the evolution of schemes, and are particularly important for significant projects such as large scale housing and mixed use developments. In assessing applications, local planning authorities should have regard to the outcome from these processes, including any recommendations made by design review panels.”

(Para. 138, NPPF Dec 2024)

- 5.1 The proposed development was subject to pre-application discussions with Shinfield Parish Council in February 2024 and through a formal request for pre-application advice from Wokingham Borough Council in November 2024, to provide a collaborative and transparent approach to the design proposals.
- 5.2 Richborough's Consultant Team has also engaged with relevant statutory consultees concerning the technical and other matters associated with the potential development of the site.
- 5.3 These discussions have shaped the design proposals presented in Section 6 which has undergone numerous revisions to address comments received during the design evolution process.
- 5.4 A timeline of the development process is shown here.





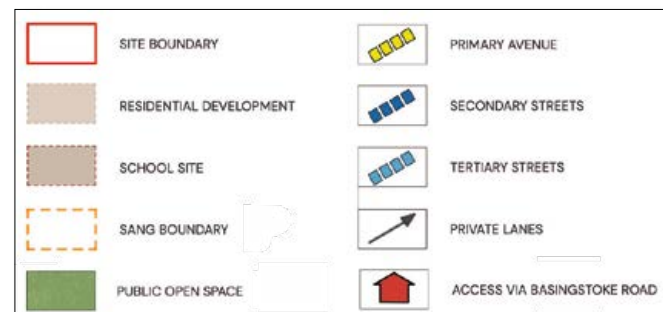
First Issue

01

Project Inception

First iteration of the Development Framework was prepared to align with known opportunities and constraints of the site. Key design proposals included:

- Inclusion of a SANG space.
- 2FE primary school.
- Retention of all existing vegetation on site.
- Key landscape and visual viewing corridors.
- A range of varying POS typologies to meet policy requirements.
- Maximum permeation and connections for all forms of green movement.



02

Revision E following Shinfield Parish Council (26.02.2024)

Ensuring the design and proposals align with the comments made from the Parish Council, a number of key design proposals were amended. These include:

- Further rationalisation of the development edge maximising key views through development in response to development of LVIA work.
- Inclusion of a community local centre which could locate a variety of small businesses to be visible from users along Basingstoke Road and easy access for users along Hyde End Lane.
- Additional public open spaces in the form of a Multi-functional Open Space with pavilion.
- Inclusion of a 3G pitch within the school site with associated parking and changing facilities.
- Proposed commercial land providing a multi-use scheme providing the opportunity for residents to work and live on the development.
- Further refinement of the drainage scheme to help combat flooding concerns raised by the Parish Council.
- Inclusion of retirement living to meet a varying range of needs and requirements of the local population.
- Emergency linkages between the predominant northern and southern parcels removing the singular link along Spencers Greenway.



Revision E

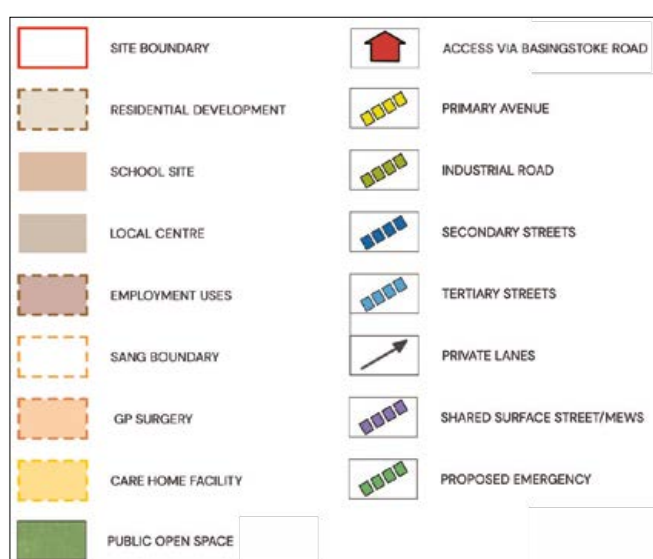
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

"Local communities can play a vital role in achieving well-designed places and buildings and making sure there is a relationship between the built environment and quality of life. Communities can be involved in design processes through approaches such as co-design, design workshops and other engagement techniques, so that places and buildings reflect local community preferences, improve their quality of life and fit well into their surroundings."

(Para. 17, NDG 2021)



Revision L



04

Public Consultation

- 5.5 Richborough were keen to engage with the local community and held a public consultation event to better understand local residents' views on the proposed development and to identify any local issues that may be relevant to, or could be addressed by, the proposals.
- 5.6 The public consultation took place in July 2024 with the following being the main issues raised:
 - **Traffic Congestion** – This was highlighted as an existing issue along the Basingstoke Road heading North towards Junction 11 of the M4. Concern around increased congestion as a result of further development.
 - **Secondary School Capacity** – Residents indicated local secondary schools are already at capacity, with many suggesting the primary school should be replaced with a secondary school or contributions given to the expansion of existing secondary schools.
 - **AWE Burghfield and Emergency Planning** – Many residents suggested that development in this location was not possible due to the site's location within the DEPZ. However, a number of residents reacted positively to the proposals but noted that AWE Burghfield would be a significant barrier to development.
 - **Visual Impact** – Several residents commented that development would result in the loss of their view across the development site. It was also noted that if the proposed solar farm immediately south of the site is approved, long distance views towards the River Loddon and the wider landscape, as indicated on the masterplan, would be lost.
 - **Danger to Wildlife** – Residents highlighted that this development will endanger local wildlife through the loss of natural green space.
 - **Overdevelopment** – Concern that new development, along with other local new developments, will diminish the identity and village character of Spencers Wood.
 - **Healthcare** – Residents were supportive of the potential inclusion of a GP surgery within the proposals given the limited capacity at existing services.
 - **Masterplan** – Generally, residents responded positively to the masterplan. In particular, the significant provision of Public Open Space (POS) and Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) was seen as a key benefit.
 - **Local Centre** – Residents generally supported the inclusion of a local centre, but wanted more detail in relation to which services or facilities would be provided within it. Some suggestions indicated there is no need for an additional village hall, as there is two in the village already. Questions around the level of parking associated with the local centre and sports facilities were also queried.
- 5.7 Full details of this event are set out in the Statement of Community Involvement prepared by Marrons as part of this application.



Concept Masterplan presented to the Design Review Panel

05

Design Review Panel

- 5.8 An in-person Design Review Panel presentation was carried out on 26th July 2024 at the request of Richborough and in accordance with paragraph 138 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) incorporating a site visit to understand the site context.
- 5.9 Following the review panel, the following recommendations were made:
- Early engagement with the local community is supported;
 - The presented background analysis is strong however there may be an opportunity for this to be further improved with a deeper assessment of local built character;
 - The emerging layout is a well-connected and logical response to the site constraints;
 - The key challenge for the scheme may be how to create a distinctive character, given the modest characteristics of the site as it exists now;
 - Setting out an overall vision for the site, which sits above the individual objectives contained within the Design Charter, may be helpful;
 - It may be beneficial to establish linkages and physical connections between the new development and existing settlement;
 - The disposition of land uses indicated on the emerging masterplan is supported but it may be beneficial for selective narrowing of the two green "lungs" to help accentuate north-south connections;
 - It may be helpful for additional work to be undertaken on identifying the combination of uses that it is proposed would constitute the local centre as well as the mechanism for their delivery and subsequent ongoing management;
 - It may be beneficial to consider how the masterplan may be future-proofed against changing legislative requirements around energy and climate change;
 - The proposed Design Coding is supported and it is suggested could cover all elements of the development including greenspace, access points and the commercial area;
 - It may be helpful to consider siting buildings of a larger scale close to the greenspaces to delineate the settlement edge and help increase densities;
 - Further consideration how the points of access may create meaningful "gateways" to the development may be beneficial.