

Land South of Warren Lane, Long Ashton

Constraints & Opportunities

Constraints

- 2.44 The topography within the site is generally sloping, falling by approximately 12m from North to South, with the slope shallowing to the south.
- 2.45 The eastern boundary is defined by an existing mature hedge that partially screens the existing housing when viewed from Weston Road. This boundary is a foraging area for bats and other wildlife.
- 2.46 Weston Road runs along the southern edge of the site, bounded by a small hedge and stone wall, which includes a public footpath/pavement and provides vehicle access to the adjacent field. This road generates traffic noise.
- 2.47 Warren Lane, a narrow road without a pavement, runs along the north-east side of the site and provides vehicular access to the site in the corner via a field gate.
- 2.48 The site is quite prominent when viewed from the west along Weston Road as the western field boundary is defined with a post and wire fence.
- 2.49 The topography positions the site near the bottom of a shallow valley with views up to wooden ridges.
- 2.50 From the site itself, clear views are achieved looking to the west and south.

Opportunities

- 2.51 Supplement and reinforce the eastern boundary hedge to create a dedicated wildlife corridor.
- 2.52 Provide access from Weston Road and create a landscape buffer to reduce the noise impact.
- 2.53 Seek to retain existing southern stone boundary wall and supplement with hedging.
- 2.54 Create new pedestrian routes through the site between Warren Lane and Weston Road and the local network.
- 2.55 The nearby bus stops give access to public transport - a sustainable location for development.
- 2.56 Plant a new hedgerow with trees on the western boundary to soften the appearance and maintain a green approach to the village from Weston Road.
- 2.57 Use taller buildings to act as focal points to create a sense of place, and arrange development to maintain views through and within the site.
- 2.58 Provide people-friendly streets and spaces by promoting the availability of footpaths and connections.
- 2.59 To create a development with a mix of dwellings and tenures for which there is an identified local demand.

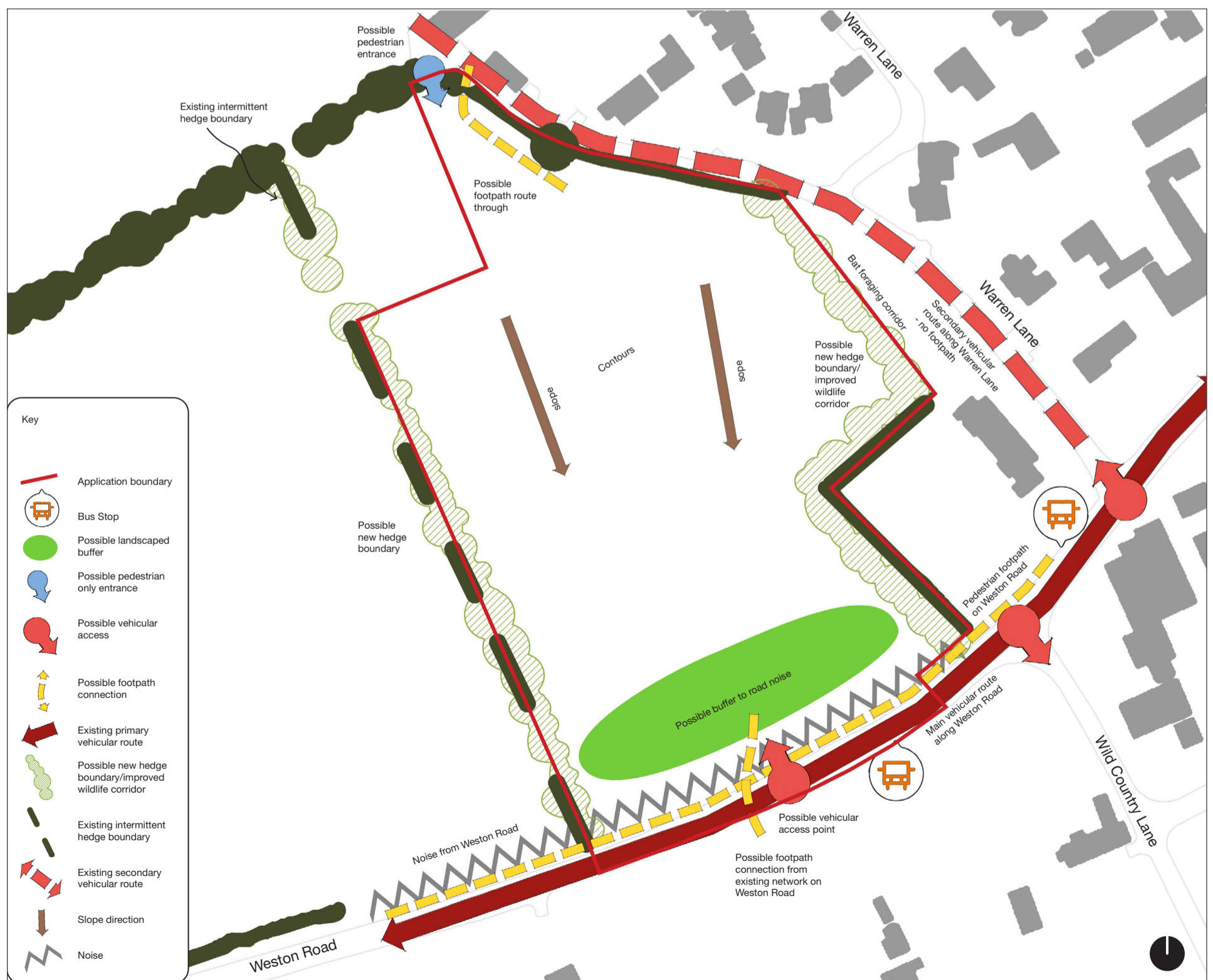


Figure 2.32: Constraints & Opportunities Plan

3 Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) at paragraph 8 sets out the purpose of the planning system as contributing to the achievement of sustainable development through three overarching and interdependent objectives:
- a. Economic – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy.
 - b. Social – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities.
 - c. Environmental – contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.
- 3.2 To deliver sustainable development the NPPF sets out a range of policies and those under the following headings are of particular significance to the proposal for development on land south of Warren Lane, Long Ashton.
- Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
 - Promoting sustainable transport
 - Achieving well designed places
 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
 - Protecting green belt land
 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- 3.3 The NPPF (11) requires decision makers to apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Development Plan

- 3.4 The development plan for the area comprises the North Somerset Core Strategy, Sites and Policies Plan Parts 1 and 2, and the Long Ashton Neighbourhood Development Plan 2013 – 2033.

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North Somerset Core Strategy

- 3.5 **Policy CS1** provides that development should commit to reducing carbon emissions by using good design to reduce demand and utilisation of renewable energy. The policy states that developers should integrate site-wide renewable energy solutions within their proposals, and developments of more than 10 dwellings should increase opportunities for walking, cycling and use of public transport.
- 3.6 **Policy CS2** requires development of 10+ dwellings to provide on-site renewable energy sources or link with/ contribute to available local off-site renewable energy sources, to meet a minimum of 15% of predicted energy use for residential development proposals.
- 3.7 **Policy CS4** seeks to ensure that new development safeguards and enhances natural habitats and features. Where possible, a net gain of biodiversity should be achieved.
- 3.8 **Policy CS5** states that the Council will conserve the historic environment of North Somerset, having regard to the significance of, amongst other things, scheduled monuments and other archaeological sites.
- 3.9 **Policy CS9** seeks to safeguard and improve the network of green infrastructure.
- 3.10 **Policy CS10** seeks to encourage integrated transport networks which allow a wide choice of sustainable modes of transport, by enhancing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, delivering better public transport and reducing adverse environmental impacts of transport by contributing towards carbon reduction.
- 3.11 **Policy CS11** requires adequate parking provision.
- 3.12 **Policy CS12** states that high quality architecture and urban design will be sought in relation to new developments, and proposals which consider the existing context, and contribute to social, economic and environmental sustainability are encouraged. North Somerset's character should be maintained and enhanced, especially in historic rural settlements, particularly those within the Green Belt.
- 3.13 **Policy CS13** provides for the delivery of a minimum of 20,985 new dwellings within North Somerset between 2006–2026.
- 3.14 **Policy CS14** sets out how the minimum housing supply total will be distributed, including 2100 new dwellings within designated service villages and 985 new dwellings within other settlements and the countryside. Long Ashton is the second largest service village in North Somerset (based on population), out of nine service villages in total.
- 3.15 **Policy CS15** seeks to ensure a mix of housing types within communities.
- 3.16 **Policy CS16** provides that within North Somerset the target for the provision of affordable housing is at least 150 dwellings per annum and on-site affordable housing provision will be sought to meet local needs on all residential developments of 10 dwellings or more.
- 3.17 **Policy CS17** provides that housing schemes for 100% affordable housing to meet local needs within small rural communities will be supported where:
- The development meets an identified local need demonstrated by an up-to-date needs survey or other evidence
 - The development is supported or initiated by the parish council
 - The site search has followed a sequential approach with priority given to sites within any settlement boundary, sustainability principles, and avoiding sensitive locations
 - The scale of development is appropriate for the location
 - The affordable housing is provided in perpetuity.
- 3.18 These rural exceptions schemes will be considered acceptable adjacent to the settlement boundaries of Service Villages. They will only be considered acceptable in the Green Belt if justified by very special circumstances.
- 3.19 **Policy CS32** provides that new development within or adjoining the settlement boundaries of Service Villages which enhance the overall sustainability of the settlement will be supported where it results in a high-quality design which respects and enhances the local character, and has regard to housing need. Sites outside the settlement boundary in excess of around 25 dwellings are required to be brought forward as allocations through Local Plans or Neighbourhood Plans.

3 Planning Policy

Sites and Policies Plan Part 1

- 3.20 **Policy DM1** requires consideration of flood risk and requires provision of sustainable drainage.
- 3.21 **Policy DM2** requires development proposals to encourage the incorporation of infrastructure for district heating or CHP where practical and viable. New development is also required to demonstrate the application of renewable and low carbon energy generation as part of an energy statement for the site.
- 3.22 **Policy DM3** seeks to ensure that development affecting the setting of a conservation area preserves those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution.
- 3.23 **Policy DM4** requires development to preserve and where appropriate enhance the character, appearance and special interest of listed buildings, including their setting.
- 3.24 **Policy DM6** requires archaeological assessment and field evaluation and sets out expectations on recording and preservation.
- 3.25 **Policy DM8** seeks to resist proposals that would harm protected species.
- 3.26 **Policy DM9** requires consideration of tree retention and provision of new trees.
- 3.27 **Policy DM10** requires development to not have an unacceptable adverse on designated landscape character, include mitigation where harm is unavoidable and include landscaping and boundary treatments.
- 3.28 **Policy DM12** states that inappropriate development will not be permitted in the Green Belt except in very special circumstances.
- 3.29 **Policy DM24** permits development which does not prejudice highway safety or inhibit necessary access for emergency, public transport, service or waste collection vehicles. Development will only be refused on transport grounds if it is likely to have a severe residual cumulative impact on traffic congestion or on the character and function of the surrounding area, or if it is not accessible by non-car modes.
- 3.30 **Policy DM26** requires a travel plan for all development that will generate significant movement.
- 3.31 **Policy DM28** requires development to meet the Council's standards for the parking of vehicles and bicycles.
- 3.32 **Policy DM32** seeks development design which contributes to the creation of high quality, distinctive, functional and sustainable places where opportunities for physical activity and recreation are maximised. Design should be sensitive to the local character and setting, and aim to enhance local distinctiveness and contribute to the creation of a sense of place and identity.
- 3.33 **Policy DM33** requires the design of the public realm to enable accessibility for everyone.
- 3.34 **Policy DM34** provides that housing mix and type should meet local needs with reference to the latest SHMA or local needs surveys.
- 3.35 **Policy DM36** requires the optimisation of density in residential developments.
- 3.36 **Policy DM42** requires a proportion of dwellings in residential developments to meet Building Regulations Category 2 requirements where there is evidence of need and for all homes to meet the nationally described space standard where practical and viable.
- 3.37 **Policy DM71** provides that planning obligations will be entered into to mitigate development impacts.

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Neighbourhood Development Plan 2013 – 2033

- 3.38 **Policy LC6** requires developments of 10 or more dwellings to provide for allotments.
- 3.39 **Policy ENV1** designates an area of separation between the village and Bristol.
- 3.40 **Policy ENV2** seeks to retain good quality trees.
- 3.41 **Policy ENV3** seeks to retain the existing network of footpaths and consider opportunities to enhance it.
- 3.42 **Policy ENV5** requires development to protect and enhance wildlife, biodiversity and historic assets.
- 3.43 **Policy ENV6** states that water run-off must be addressed at source through sustainable urban drainage.
- 3.44 **Policy T1** seeks to encourage sustainable modes of transport and policy T2 proposes that extension of the Long Ashton park and ride facility should include adequate safe and secure cycle parking provision to cater for cyclists as well as motorists.
- 3.45 **Policy LHN1** provides that development should aim to meet a high level of sustainable design, seeking to address a range of criteria set out in the policy.
- 3.46 **Policy LHN2** requires all new development to comply with the Village Design Statement.
- 3.47 **Policy LHN3** requires that all new housing responds to local needs, including an ageing demographic.
- 3.48 **Policy LHN4** requires that affordable housing is accompanied by a legal agreement giving priority to local residents.

Supplementary Planning Documents

- 3.49 The Development Plan is supported by a number of Supplementary Planning documents and elements of the following are relevant to the application proposal:
- Residential Design Guide - Section 3: Parking Provision North Somerset Parking Standards SPD
 - North Somerset Landscape Character Assessment SPD
 - Biodiversity and Trees SPD
 - Creating sustainable buildings and places SPD
 - Travel Plans SPD
 - Affordable Housing SPD
 - Development contributions SPD
 - North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Guidance on Development: SPD

Summary of Key Planning Policy Issues

- 3.50 In the light of the above policy context, the following are the key policy issues pertinent to the application submission:
- The principle of residential development in the Green Belt
 - The proposed housing mix and tenure.
 - Impact on Heritage Assets
 - Landscape Impact
 - The design of the development proposal
 - Approach to environmental sustainability
 - Transport and movement
 - Ecology
 - Allotments

4 Design Process

4.1 The planning application is in outline with all matters reserved except for access. However, an illustrative masterplanning process has been undertaken to assess the capacity of the site and establish parameters for subsequent design detail through the reserved matters stage. These key design principles follow those from the original planning application but also include one on the setting of the Scheduled Monument.

Key Design Principles

Green Infrastructure

4.2 Figure 4.1 sets out the design principles for the green infrastructure approach to minimise the impact on the landscape.

- Creation of a wildlife corridor along the eastern boundary especially for foraging bats.
- Creation of a deep landscape set-back along Weston Road to maintain the green setting at the arrival to the village.
- Provision of a green margin around the perimeter of the site as a setting for the new houses and transition from the countryside to built village environment.

Views

4.3 Figure 4.2 sets out the design principles for managing the views across the site.

- Frame view corridors along north-south and east-west roads to create glimpsed views of surrounding landscape.
- Creation of frontage along east-west contour roads to create southerly aspect.

Movement

4.4 Figure 4.3 sets out the design principles for making connections and routes across the site.

- Formation of a single vehicular access into development site from Weston Road.
- Simple linear movement runs parallel to contours following the established Long Ashton pattern.
- Creation of pedestrian and cyclist connections to the public footpath network on Weston Road and formation of a new connection on to Warren Lane.

Scheduled Monument Setting

4.5 Figure 4.4 sets out the design principles for responding to the setting of the Scheduled Monument.

- Locate built footprint to eastern side of the site closer to the existing village buildings.
- Minimise built footprint and use semi-detached and terrace types.



Figure 4.1: Design Principle - Green Infrastructure



Figure 4.2: Design Principle - Views



Figure 4.3: Design Principle - Movement



Figure 4.4: Design Principle - Scheduled Monument Setting

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Design Concepts

Protecting the landscape through the design

- 4.6 Following the principle of protecting the setting of the wider green belt, the proposal incorporates green buffers wrapping the site and bounding Weston Road a significant landscaped set-back is proposed.
- 4.7 The opportunity for providing allotments is shown along the northern edge of the site, providing both a green buffer and a community amenity.
- 4.8 Strengthening the existing tree and hedge lines running along the east and west edges, additional tree and hedge planting is proposed to strengthen the green buffers and create wildlife corridors.

Grouped Parking Bays

- 4.9 Car parking to be grouped together in discrete parking areas with opportunities for street trees.
- 4.10 Visibility of car parking to be minimised along main north-south route
- 4.11 Driveway parking avoided to keep front of homes clear.

Extending the landscape within the site

- 4.12 With the landscaped setting to the scheme the proposal further recognises the importance of bringing the green landscape within the site.
- 4.13 The incorporation of both trees within open space and also within garden areas protruding over stone walls has been a key part of the proposed layout. These routes extend the landscape up the contours and within the site.

Accommodating views and topography

- 4.14 The indicative layout has been designed to open out the distant views for enjoyment by all who would use the site. Creating a direct route up the contours frames the view out to the south and reinforces the sense of space and distinct location of the site. The layout has been further broken down to create views within the site to the west.
- 4.15 Using the topography, linked buildings step up the contours, with predominantly the ends of buildings set on the western boundary reducing the visual impact of development on the site and on views looking back towards the village.

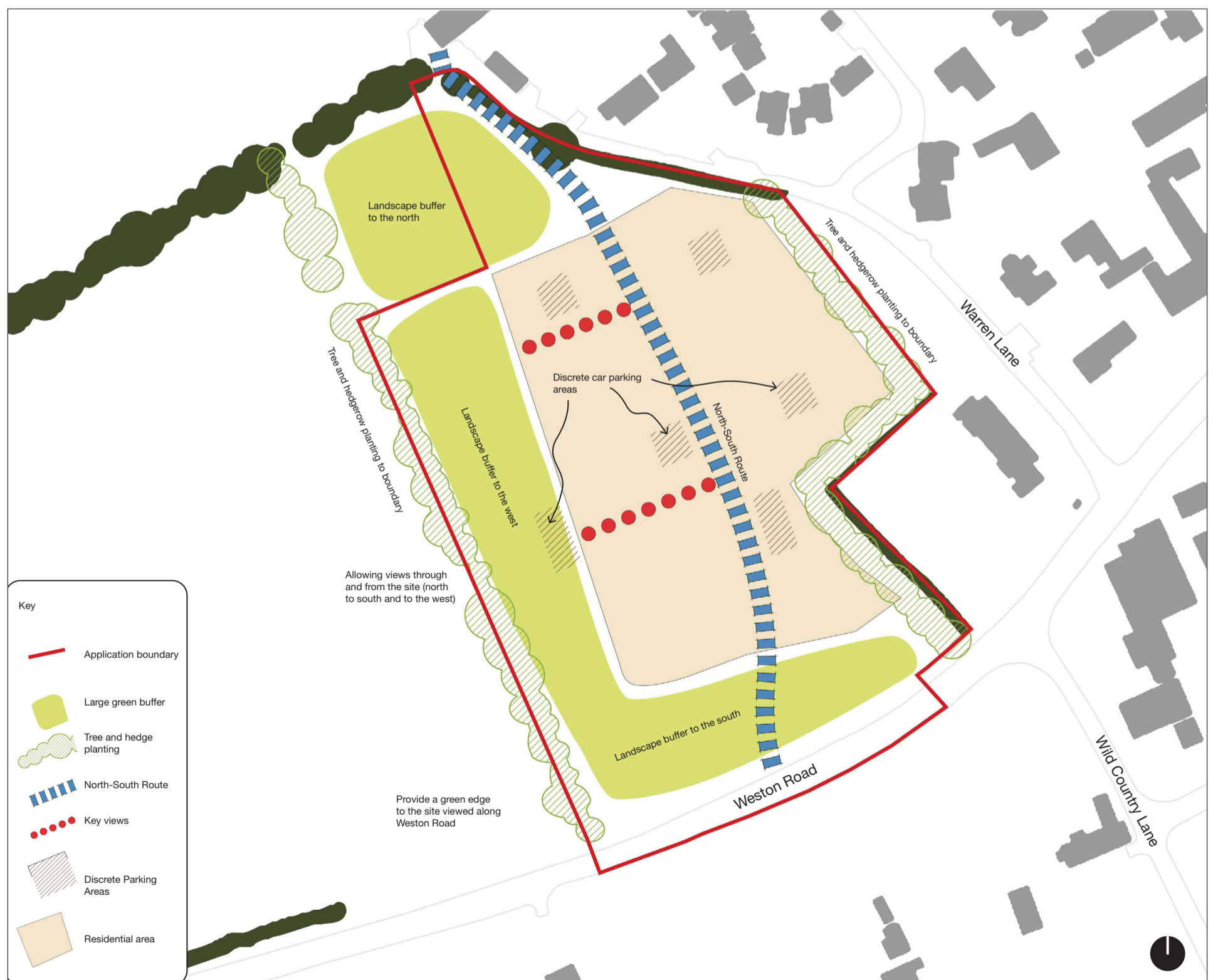


Figure 4.5: Concept Plan

4 Design Process

Design Development

4.16 The original application design went through a number of iterations following local resident consultation events, and engagement with Long Ashton Parish Council and North Somerset Council, which is summarised in this section.

4.17 The design of the illustrative layout for this application has also developed in response to the refusal letter.

Consultation with Parish Council and Residents 2014

4.18 In 2014 an initial engagement exercise was undertaken with the Parish Council, through a number of meetings and a presentation, to gauge opinion on the development of the site.

4.19 A community engagement event was also held in March 2014. The proposal was for a scheme of approximately 150 dwellings and sought to develop a larger area (circa 5 hectares) than the current proposals - see Figure 4.6.

Consultation with North Somerset Council 2014

4.20 In 2014 a detailed pre-application submission was made to North Somerset Council for a development of 150 dwellings.

4.21 The Council advised that the pre-application proposal was contrary to Core Strategy policies CS14 and CS33 in respect of the scale of planned housing and development within infill villages, smaller settlements and the countryside, noting however, that they were at the time remitted for re-examination.

4.22 The Council response also highlighted the need to demonstrate very special circumstances to justify development in the Green Belt and advised that the development would be considered unacceptable because of its location outside of the development boundary.

4.23 In terms of principle, the response also advised that the Council was able to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing land in excess of the requirements for the previously adopted planned housing total. This policy was also, at the time, remitted for re-examination.

4.24 The pre-application response from the Council also set out comments and advice in relation to design and, archaeology, affordable housing, sustainable construction, waste storage, drainage and financial contributions. It concluded by advising against submission of a planning application but also set out requirements for inclusion in any future planning application submission.

Consultation with North Somerset Council 2018

4.25 A second pre-application submission was made, in July 2018 to North Somerset Council.

4.26 The layout (see Figure 4.7) included with this submission showed a much reduced development area (circa 2.4 hectares), in response to the findings of archaeological investigations, and proposed a scheme of 35 dwellings providing 18 affordable homes and 17 market homes.

4.27 The proposals followed a mix derived from the results of the Housing needs assessment carried out by arc4.

4.28 The council said that proposals are discouraged, but if an application is submitted it will require a full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA).

4.29 The council also gave some detailed comments a number of which are highlighted below.

- the proposal is detached in nature from the village to the east and appears to have no connection with Warren Lane (neither vehicle nor pedestrian), albeit it abuts it along part of the northern edge.
- allotments are seldom visually attractive and the position on the western outer edge would not enhance the approach to the village.
- any features of archaeological significance should be avoided entirely by development and preserved in situ.
- plans should take into consideration existing road markings and any new junction design should adapt the road markings to accommodate a right turning lane for the proposed development.
- rear parking courts should be avoided. If in exceptional circumstances rear parking courts are permitted, they should be well lit, overlooked, the same style as other parts of development, and restricted to a maximum of 10 spaces per court. Parking courts should only have one entrance/exit point to ensure that there is no reason for non-residents to travel through the court.
- vehicle access to the potential allotments is not shown.
- there are no turning areas at the cul-de-sacs.

4.30 Following receipt of the pre-application response, the proposed development was amended in line with the comments and policy requirements.



Figure 4.6: Illustrative Layout from 2014 consultation



Figure 4.7: Illustrative Layout from Pre-Application Submission 2018

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Public Consultation 2019

- 4.31 A second public consultation event for the site was held in December 2019 where the amended proposals were shown - see Figure 4.8. Refer to the Statement of Community Involvement for more detail.
- 4.32 The revisions to the proposals include:
- the addition of a pedestrian and cyclist route and connection onto Warren Lane, utilising an existing field gate on the north east corner to avoid removing some of the existing hedgerow.
 - the relocation of the allotments to the north east part of the site to minimise any visual impact on the entrance to the village and to act as a green buffer to the north.
 - a reduction in the development area to avoid any potential features of archaeological significance along the western and north western boundaries.
 - a junction design which accommodates a right turning lane for the proposed development and leaves the existing pedestrian crossing in situ.
 - amendments to the rear parking courtyards to restrict them to a maximum of 10 spaces per court whilst continuing to maintain the principle of avoiding parking on primary routes
 - vehicle access and parking shown to the allotments.
 - turning areas accommodated as required.

Original Outline Planning Application 2020

- 4.33 An Outline Planning application was made in June 2020.
- 4.34 The illustrative layout (see Figure 4.9) with this submission was revised following the consultation event in 2019.
- 4.35 The revisions to the proposals include:
- an increased width of the landscape strip on the western boundary by circa 9m.
 - the pulling back of some of the houses along Weston Road to increase the size of the landscape area.



Figure 4.8: Illustrative Layout from 2019 Public Consultation event



Figure 4.9: Original Outline Application Illustrative Layout 2020

4 Design Process

Second Outline Planning Application 2021

4.36 The Outline Planning application reasons for refusal did not include any specific design-related points. However, the illustrative layout (see Figure 4.10) has been revised to respond to the comments in regard to the Scheduled Monument.

4.37 The revisions to the proposals include:

- pulling back of development on western boundary by circa 18-22 metres.
- arranging development in semi-detached and terraced form, and a reduction in extent of built footprint to minimise impact on the Scheduled Monument and any potential archaeological remains.
- reduction in suggested tree planting on the western boundary to maintain character of field boundary.



Figure 4.10: Second Outline Application Illustrative Layout 2021

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Design Evolution

- 4.38 Figure 4.11 shows the design evolution of site layouts from 2014 to present.
- 4.39 The green line shows the extent of the site boundary and the green hatch shows the illustrative layout building footprints from the 2014 consultation and Pre-Application submission.
- 4.40 For the 2018 Pre-Application submission, the orange line shows the area of the site was substantially reduced as was the amount of development shown with an orange hatch.
- 4.41 The red line shows the site boundary was further reduced on the western edge for the 2019 consultation proposals, which is the same line for the current proposals.
- 4.42 The blue hatch shows the illustrative layout building footprints for the 2019 consultation proposals.
- 4.43 The pink hatch shows the illustrative layout building footprints for the original Outline Planning application with development moved away from the western edge.
- 4.44 The black hatch shows the illustrative layout building footprints for this second Outline Planning application with development consolidated and moved away from the western and southern boundaries.



Figure 4.11: Plan showing the design evolution of site layouts from 2014 to present

5 The Development Proposal

Layout, Unit Mix & Tenure

- 5.1 The aim is to create clearly defined public and private spaces and the buildings are positioned to reinforce this idea.
- 5.2 The illustrative layout shows development set-back from Weston Road with the inclusion of a publicly accessible landscaped area to the front and on the western side.
- 5.3 The site slopes up from south to north and the proposals work with the slope with buildings predominantly located on contour lines.
- 5.4 Development faces both the highway and the pedestrian routes to provide animation, natural surveillance and promote a feeling of safety.
- 5.5 The buildings are arranged in a mix of semi-detached and terraced housing to make best use of the land. They are generally two storeys in height with some single storey bungalows on the eastern side and two and a half storey homes located to emphasize key gateway and provide landmark navigation.
- 5.6 Private amenity space for the residential use, both houses and flats, is provided in the form rear gardens which includes provision for cycle and refuse storage.
- 5.7 Car parking is located away from the main entrance streets where possible to minimise the visual impact of parked cars. Small groups of parking bays and parking courtyards are used.
- 5.8 The illustrative layout incorporates a variety of dwelling sizes ranging from 1 to 4 bed homes with a mix of flats, houses and bungalows as listed below:
 - 4 No. 1 bed flats
 - 6 No. 2 bed houses
 - 4 No. 2 bed bungalows
 - 19 No. 3 bed houses
 - 2 No. 4 bed house
 - 35 No. total homes
- 5.9 The proposed tenure is 100% affordable.

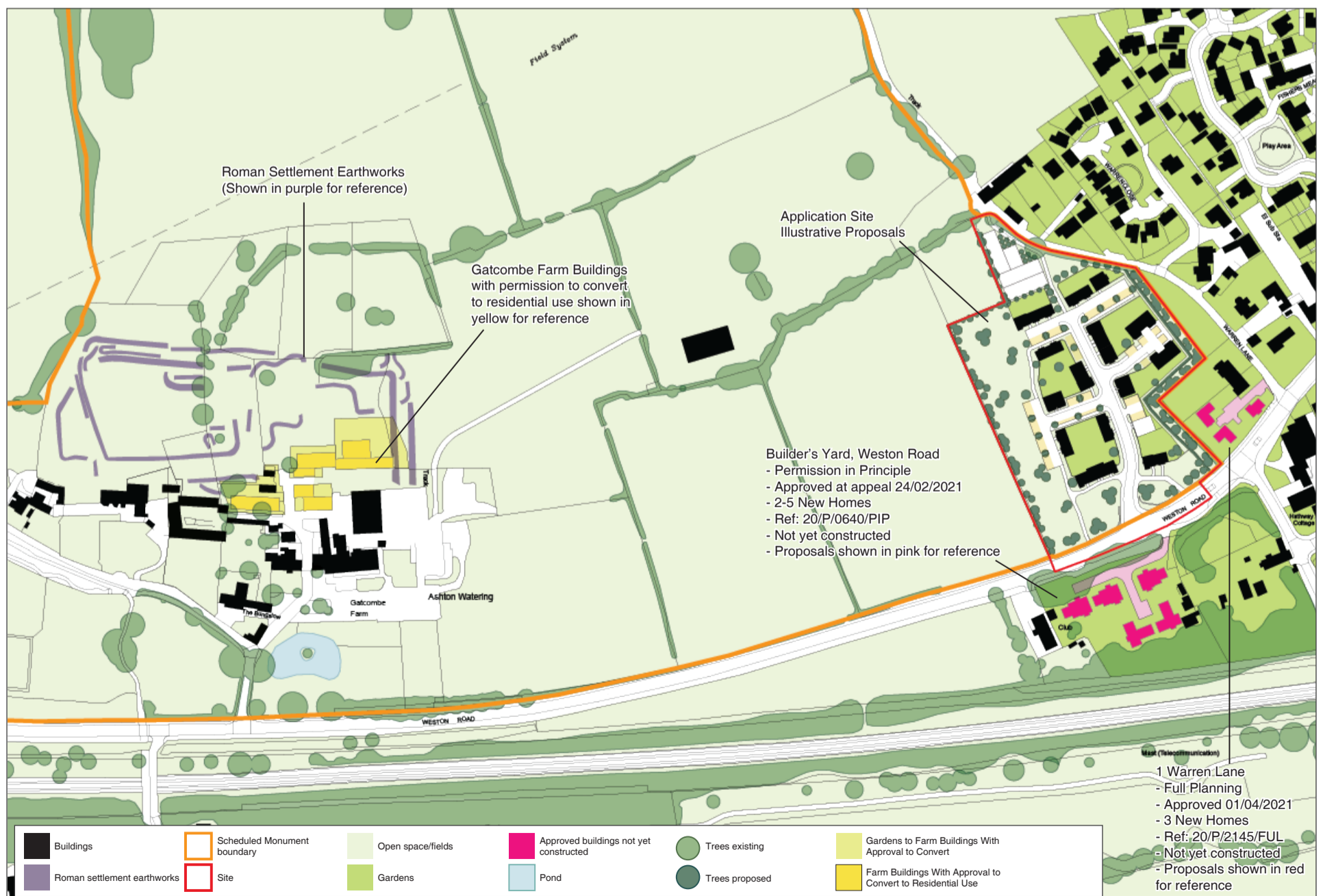


Figure 5.1: Wider Setting Analysis Diagram with Proposals