

# 5 The Development Proposal



Figure 5.10: Illustrative Perspective View 5 - Existing



Figure 5.11: Illustrative Perspective View 5 - Proposed Aerial Perspective

# Land South of Warren Lane, Long Ashton



Figure 5.12: Illustrative Perspective View 6 - Existing



Figure 5.13: Illustrative Perspective View 6 - Proposed Aerial Perspective Looking North-West

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Figure 5.14: Illustrative Perspective View 7 - Existing



Figure 5.15: Illustrative Perspective View 7 - Proposed Wider Aerial Perspective Looking East

# Land South of Warren Lane, Long Ashton



Figure 5.16: Illustrative Perspective View 8 - Existing

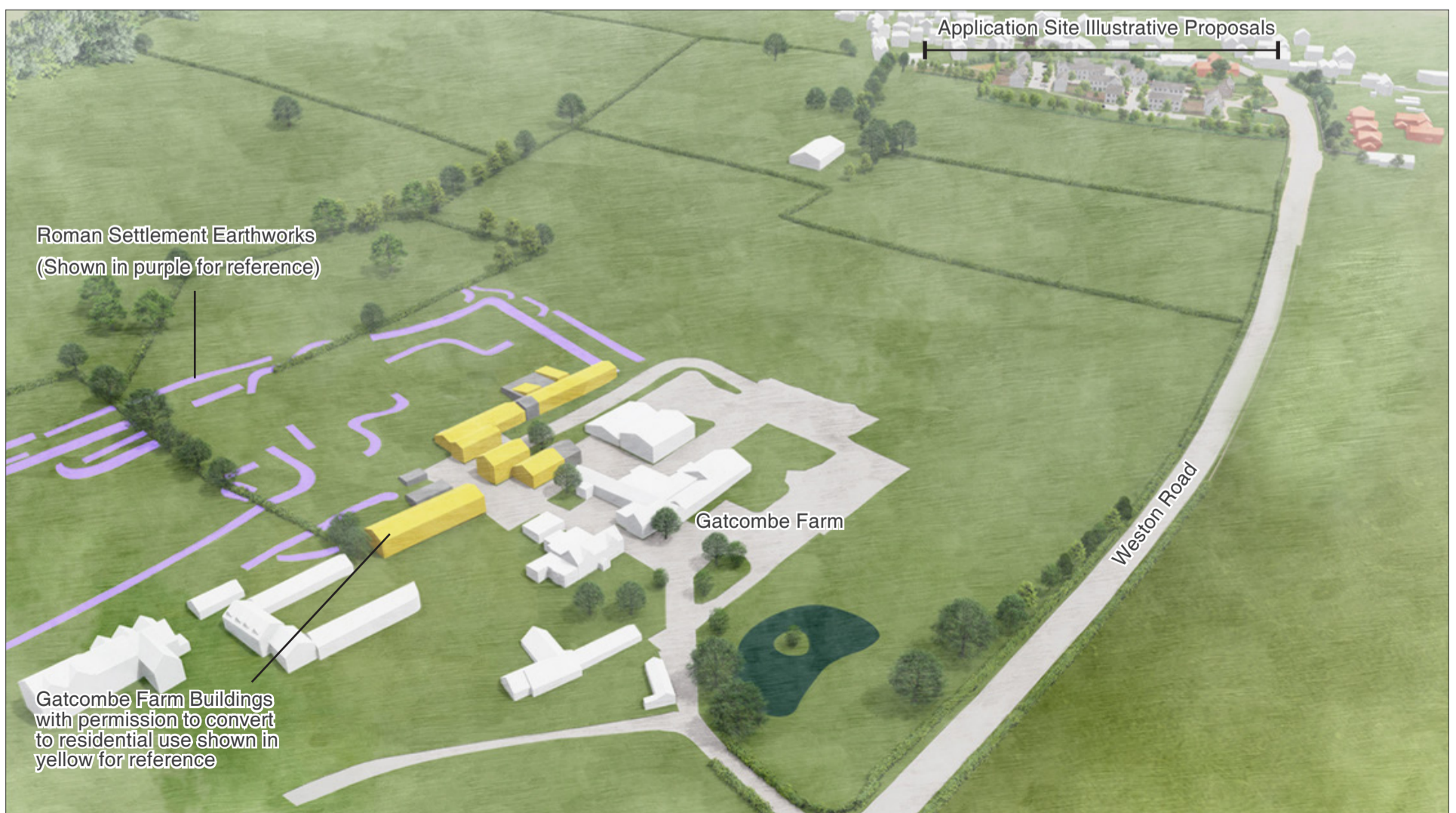


Figure 5.17: Illustrative Perspective View 8 - Proposed Wider Aerial Perspective Looking North-East

# 5 The Development Proposal

## Land Use

- 5.14 The proposals are for residential use, green space and allotments.
- 5.15 See Figure 5.18 for an extract of the Land Use Parameter Plan.



Figure 5.18: Land Use Parameter Plan

# Land South of Warren Lane, Long Ashton

## Building Heights

- 5.16 The site provides the opportunity for development that responds to the characteristics of Long Ashton, with buildings running along the contours, added to the creation of a landscaped set-back along Weston Road.
- 5.17 Predominately 2 storey buildings are proposed across the site with the opportunity for some 2.5 storey focal points marking the entry to the site.
- 5.18 See Figure 5.19 for an extract of the Building Heights Parameter Plan.

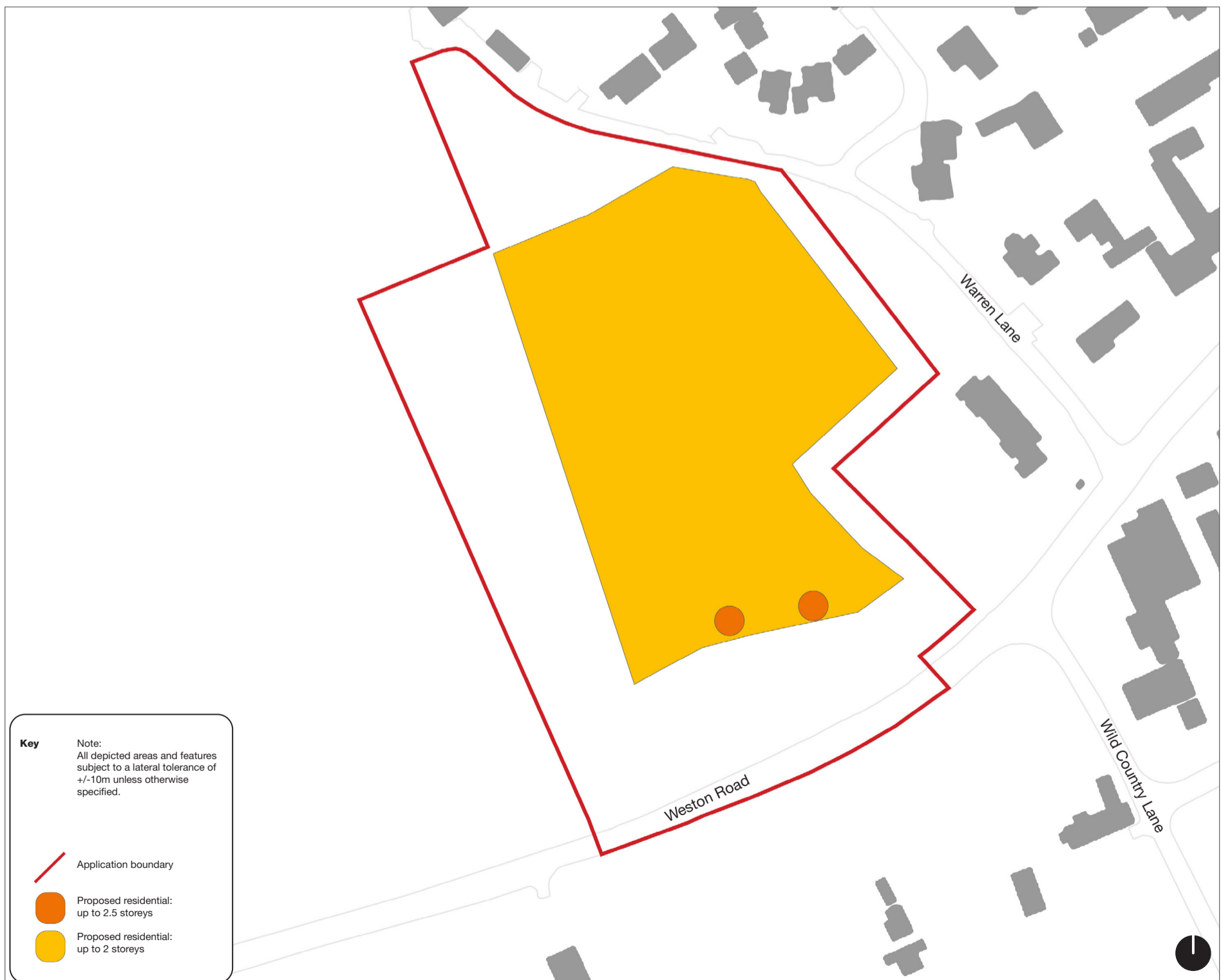


Figure 5.19: Building Heights Parameter Plan

# 5 The Development Proposal

## Access & Movement

- 5.19 Movement within the site ties in with the prominent views that are protected by the proposed development.
- 5.20 A single vehicular access point into the site is proposed, from Weston Road. Vehicles are guided around the site leading up contours with secondary routes running along the contours linking east to west.
- 5.21 Pedestrian routes are proposed from Weston Road, through the site adjacent to the roads, along the western edge, and through to the north, providing access to the allotments.
- 5.22 A new pedestrian link is proposed to Warren Lane which utilises the existing field gate to avoid breaking through the established hedgerow.
- 5.23 See Figure 5.20 for an extract of the Access & Movement Parameter Plan.



Figure 5.20: Access & Movement Parameter Plan

# Land South of Warren Lane, Long Ashton

## Public Realm, Landscape & Ecology

- 5.24 The illustrative proposal is landscape led and shows a landscaped set-back open space within the site to offer options for introducing natural play to complement the existing play areas in Long Ashton.
- 5.25 Supplementing existing wildlife corridors with hedge and tree planting and the re-creation of natural field boundaries help to create a landscaped setting for the development and enhance the habitat.
- 5.26 The provision of community allotments bring an amenity to help address unmet local demand in Long Ashton.
- 5.27 The proposals supplement the green infrastructure and include orchard planting and a rose garden area to the northern section of the site next to the allotments to provide amenity along the footpath connection to Warren Lane.
- 5.28 See Figure 5.21 for an extract of the Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan.



Figure 5.21: Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan



# 5 The Development Proposal

## Parking Strategy

### Car Parking

- 5.29 Car parking can be very dominant on the street scene, so on street parking has been minimised at the site entrance and along the key north-south route.
- 5.30 Parking is located in courtyard areas, grouped bays and areas of parallel parking which are all overlooked by the new dwellings.
- 5.31 Parking provision has been made for allotment users in a dedicated parking bay.
- 5.32 The car parking provision is policy compliant as follows:
  - 1 bed flat - 1.5 spaces minimum
  - 2 bed house - 2 spaces minimum
  - 3 bed house - 2 spaces minimum
  - 4 bed house - 3 spaces minimum
- 5.33 See Figure 5.22 for suggested parking strategy.

### Cycle Parking

- 5.34 Cycle parking could be located in sheds in the rear gardens of the new homes.

## Waste & Recycling Strategy

- 5.35 All external waste and recycling storage will be sited within the rear gardens of the homes.
- 5.36 Waste and recycling can be taken to the front of the property or to a collection point on the required day.
- 5.37 Waste and recycling collection vehicles, through a mix of reversing 12 metres or turning within courtyard areas or turning heads, can be positioned within 15 metres of the collection points.
- 5.38 See Figure 5.22 for suggested waste and recycling vehicle access and collection strategy.



Figure 5.22: Parking and Waste Strategy Overlay on Illustrative Layout Plan

# Land South of Warren Lane, Long Ashton

## Archaeology & Scheduled Monument

- 5.39 An Archaeological Mitigation Report has been prepared by Cotswold Archaeology and is included in the application.
- 5.40 Within the site, assessment has concluded that there is very low potential for below ground archaeological features of more than minimal significance.
- 5.41 See Figure 5.23 for the Illustrative Layout building footprints overlain onto a plan showing the Archaeological Features, Cropmarks, Historic Mapping & Geophysical Survey Results from 2017. The overlay drawing shows the proposed development avoids the areas of archaeological potential.
- 5.42 Proposals will bring management measures for the field immediately adjoining to the west to safeguard any archaeological remains present in this area.
- 5.43 Due regard has been given to the setting of the Scheduled Monument with a wide landscape buffer on the western edge and consolidation of development and a reduction in built footprint across the site.
- 5.44 Cotswold Archaeology's conclusions are that although the proposed development would introduce a degree of change to the setting of the Roman Settlement Scheduled Monument it would result in less than substantial harm (lower end) to the significance. The proposals would not constitute an unacceptable development as defined by planning guidance or local planning policies. In particular, the effect of the proposed development would be significantly below the level of 'substantial harm' as defined by the NPPF to the Scheduled Monument.
- 5.45 The scheme intends to provide public interpretation material about the Schedule Monument, which is hidden and largely unknown.

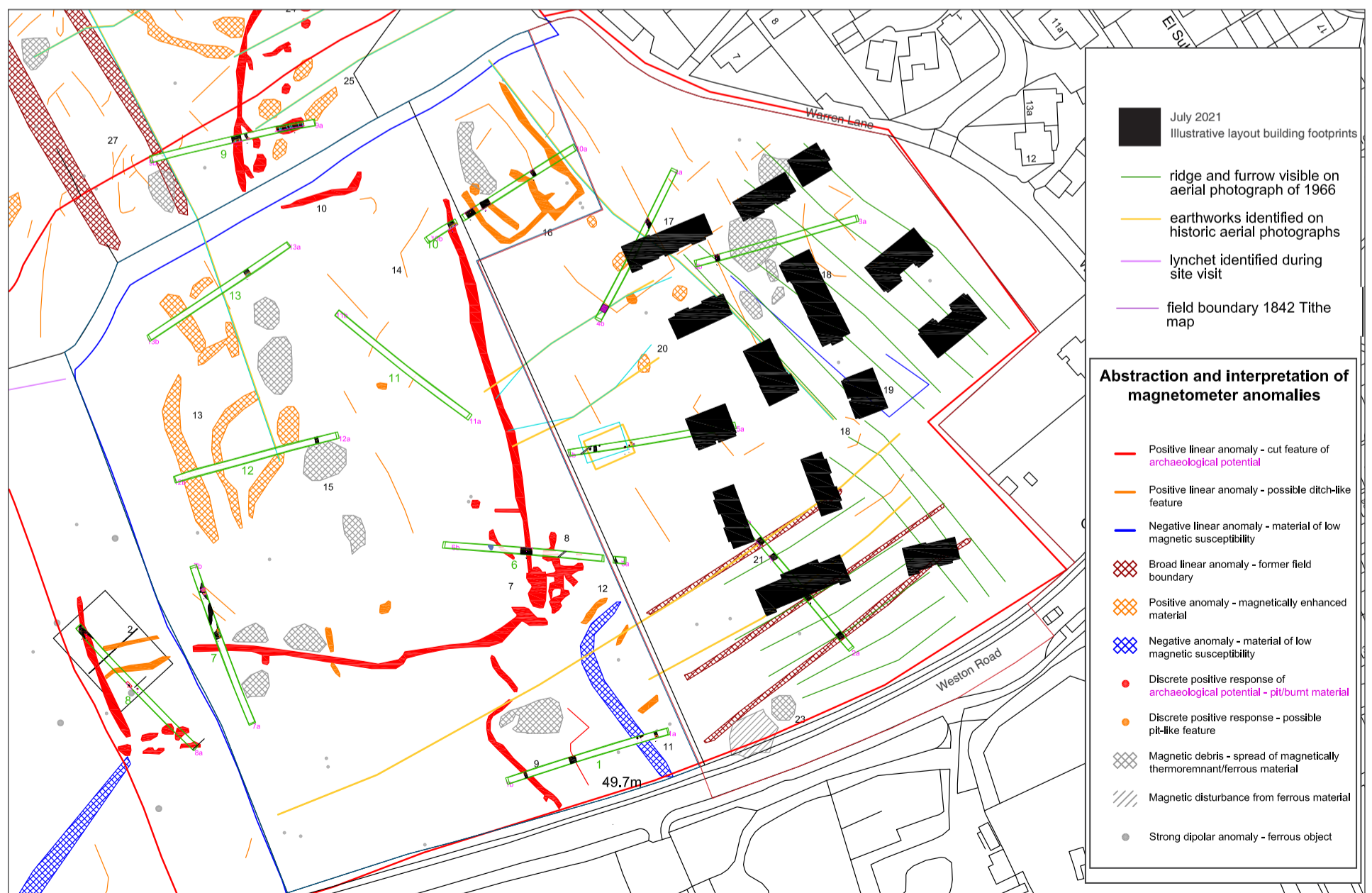


Figure 5.23: Illustrative Layout Building Footprints shown on Archaeological Features, Cropmarks, Historic Mapping & Geophysical Survey Results Plan

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## Flood Risk & Drainage

- 5.46 A Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy has been prepared by Cole Easdon and is included in the application.
- 5.47 This is an outline application but the broad strategy for drainage has been developed
- 5.48 Surface water drainage will use an attenuation based strategy with discharge to the surface water sewer in Pear Tree Avenue. A tanked permeable paving system is proposed within the parking areas, draining into a below ground cellular storage tank.
- 5.49 Foul water drainage will be collected via a pumping station on site and then pumped to the foul water sewer in Pear Tree Avenue.

## Energy

- 5.50 An Energy Statement has been prepared by Buro Happold and is included in the application.
- 5.51 The proposed development can meet the requirements of policy CS1 & CS2 of the North Somerset Core Strategy. This includes the use of renewable technologies to meet 15% of predicted energy use of the development. The policy requirements also stipulate reducing energy demand through passive design and efficient systems and ensuring the development proposals are future proofed and can comply with future changes in energy regulations.
- 5.52 At building level energy efficiency measures are proposed to be incorporated, which include:
  - Highly efficient building fabric
  - Designs that promote winter solar heat gain while avoiding overheating in the summer
  - Thermal mass to avoid overheating
  - Highly efficient lighting design, including daylight linking and presence detection in non-residential buildings
  - Mixed-mode ventilation, with mechanical ventilation and heat recovery
  - Efficient building systems
- 5.53 An assessment of alternative energy technologies has shown that solar technologies as well as heat pumps are the most viable options for the site. Air source heat pumps are able to meet the North Somerset Core Strategy CS2 requirement of 15% of energy demands to be met through onsite renewable technologies alone. Therefore, the use of ASHPs is recommended as this will allow the domestic buildings to improve on the requirements of Part L 2013 and exceed the energy contribution target. This will allow the domestic buildings to improve on the requirements of Part L 2013 by over 11%. The ASH

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## Lighting

- 5.54 A Lighting Assessment has been prepared by Buro Happold and is included in the application.
- 5.55 The lighting design for the street lighting and car park lighting utilises luminaires fixed permanently on 6 Metre columns to illuminate the main access road and 4 Metre columns to parking areas as well as 1 metre bollards to pedestrian pathways to provide a lighting connection through to all building entrances.
- 5.56 The specification of the lighting masts and luminaires has been carefully selected to ensure that the required lighting conditions are delivered with minimal impact to the surrounding areas.
- 5.57 The lighting approach is to provide minimal lighting for a safe and secure ambiance while also control of light spill condition within the site and surrounding area due to the presence of the commuting and foraging bats.

# 6 Planning Assessment

6.1 The previous outline planning application for development to provide 35 affordable homes on the site was refused for three reasons. Given that the current proposal is a repeat application, substantially the same as the previous, but proposing a reduced development footprint and more of the site kept open, these refusal reasons establish the planning matters for consideration in determining the current application. Each is therefore considered in turn.

## Reason for Refusal 1

6.2 The first reason for refusal was:

6.3 *The proposed development, by reason of its location within the North Somerset Green Belt, represents inappropriate development. The Housing Needs Survey and alternative site considerations submitted in support of the application are insufficient to demonstrate that the proposal would provide limited affordable housing to meet local needs under policies in the development plan. There is no Parish Council support for the proposal. The proposed development is therefore contrary to Core Strategy Policy CS17 (a), (b), (c) & (d), the Affordable Housing SPD, and paragraphs 143-145 of the National Planning Policy Framework.*

6.4 The delegated decision report on the previous application concludes that a planning policy position exists whereby a rural exception development proposal in the green belt could be found to be acceptable in principle. However, the reason for refusal contends that it had not been demonstrated that the proposed development would provide limited affordable housing to meet local needs under policies in the development plan. From the decision report it is clear that there were four reasons underpinning this conclusion:

- a Lack of adequate demonstration of need through the Housing Needs Survey (HNS).
- b An absence of support for the proposal from the Parish Council.
- c Lack of demonstration of a sequential approach to site selection and a potential for some or all of the need to be met on one of more smaller sites.
- d A scale of development inappropriate to the location.

6.5 Each of these is considered in turn below.

6.6 It is noted that the reason for refusal refers to NPPF paragraphs 143-145 but these relate to plan-making in respect of green belt boundaries and are not considered to be relevant because the application proposal is for a rural exception site within the green belt.

## Affordable Housing Need

6.7 Taking account of supply factors, the Updated HNS concludes that the annual flow of households in need in Long Ashton is a minimum (housing register based) of 45 dwellings and a maximum (survey based) of 56 households per annum. Over 5 years this equates to a total requirement of 225/280 affordable homes. For reasons stated in the report both numbers probably underestimate the true level of need as not everyone in

need will join the housing register and the HNS cannot take account of a significant number households in need living outside the parish but with a local connection to it.

6.8 Three reasons are given in the decision report on the previous application as justifications for concluding that the HNS did not provide sufficient demonstration of housing need. The first of these was that the HNS lacks detail on how the upscaling of data was weighted and that the local planning authority had concerns regarding the upscaling of data for a survey of this type. No request was made for further information or clarification to address these concerns. However, as set out in the Updated HNS submitted with this application, data weighting or upscaling is common practice, entirely suitable for the HNS given its sampling error of less than +/-5% and is supported by good practice guidance (DETR 2000).

6.9 The second reason given in the decision report for concluding that the HNS does not adequately evidence local housing need was that the homelessness figure in the HNS was inadequately explained and the Council's Housing Needs Officer advised that there were rarely more than 60 homeless households in the whole district. This position is a misreading of the information in the HNS. The technical appendix to the HNS clearly states that step 1 is both homeless households or those with an insecure tenancy, a snapshot of 56 in total. This is not unreasonable given that the census 2011 reported 298 private rented tenancies or people living rent free in the parish. Households will also be insecure if they have mortgage arrears or are living with another household.

6.10 The third reason set out in the decision report as a basis for concluding that local affordable housing need is not adequately evidenced is that the HNS does not follow the methodology in the Council's 'Guidance to Delivering Affordable Rural Housing on Exception Sites'. The report also states that regard has been had to the Council's Home Choice Housing Needs Register, which identifies 18 households within Long Ashton in housing need who wish to remain in the village.

6.11 The Updated HNS includes analysis comparing the HNS to housing register data on a like for like basis and Table 23 has been added, reflecting the Council's guidance and the method for turning snapshot data from a survey and register into an annual flow of households.

6.12 It is the flow of need that is important, with the 18 households in housing need referred to in the decision report being simply a snapshot at a point in time. The annual flow of households is the proper measure of need cited in both the DETR Practice guidance and the NPPG 2019 and 2021.

6.13 The housing need in Long Ashton is analysed within the HNS in terms of the affordability of housing and the size and type of housing needed. The findings are both robust and plausible especially if they are considered alongside the local context of very high house prices, and low proportions of social and private rented housing compared to local and national averages. Further, the lack of supply of suitable housing that people can afford

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leads to large proportions of households leaving the parish on an annual basis, compounded by the fact that in spite of a significant annual flow of households in affordable need, no additional affordable housing has been provided in the parish for a decade.

- 6.14 The HNS submitted in support of this application has been updated to respond to the comments made by the local planning authority in respect of the previous application. The updates are outlined in paragraphs 1.3 – 1.18 of the HNS June 2021. Contrary to reason for refusal 1 and the related analysis in the decision report, the HNS is a robust assessment of housing need that follows good practice and quite clearly identifies a high level of unmet affordable housing need in Long Ashton.

## Parish Council Support

- 6.15 The decision report simply notes that there was no Parish Council support for the previous application and that therefore this policy criterion was not met.
- 6.16 This policy requirement raises the question of the interpretation of planning policy. It creates the possibility for a Parish Council to adopt a position that is contrary to the evidence and to the underlying intent of planning policy to enable delivery of sustainable development. It cannot therefore be a determining requirement in itself. In this respect it is well established through case law that the development plan must be considered as a whole. Therefore, if a development proposal complies with other elements of the development plan and constitutes sustainable development it should be approved, even if this particular criterion is not met.
- 6.17 Having said that, the current application has been the subject of engagement with Long Ashton Parish Council. The applicant was afforded the opportunity to make a presentation on the proposal to the Parish Council's Planning Committee. The Committee is subsequently considering its position and will submit its views when consulted on this application.

## Sequential Approach

- 6.18 Policy CS17 requires rural exception sites to adopt a sequential approach to site selection, with priority given to sites within any settlement boundary, sustainability principles and avoiding sensitive locations. In relation to sustainability principles the supporting text refers to transport accessibility and access to jobs, facilities and services.
- 6.19 The decision report on the previous planning application sets out why the proposal for rural exception housing on the site is not considered to satisfy the requirement for a sequential approach:
- 6.20 'It is considered that the submitted evidence is insufficient to demonstrate that a sequential approach has been taken, or that sustainability principles and impacts associated with the development of the various options available have been adequately assessed and considered before selecting this site. It is further considered that some or all of the affordable housing needs identified via the HomeChoice Register could be delivered on one or

more smaller sites, the discounting of sites due to their capacity is not considered appropriate.'

- 6.21 This reasoning is considered below, using the three components of the sequential approach set out in the supporting text to policy CS17.

## Sites within the Settlement Boundary

- 6.22 There are no sites within the village boundary currently identifiable as suitable for provision of affordable housing. Any that come forward in the future are likely to be small windfall sites for market housing and below the threshold for providing affordable housing. This has been the case with recent residential developments. For example, at Auto Scuderia 142 Long Ashton Road, 1 Providence Lane and 2-12 Long Ashton Road, making no contribution to affordable housing.
- 6.23 The only site within the village identified within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2018 as possibly having potential is at the Vicarage, All Saints Church. This is identified as having a potential development area of 0.3. Whether that is in acres or hectares it would be possible to accommodate only a small number of homes and could not make a meaningful contribution to the need for affordable housing in Long Ashton. Neither this site or any others are allocated for residential development within the Sites and Policies Plan Part 2 – Site Allocations that was adopted in 2018.
- 6.24 A subsequent call for sites was made in 2020 to inform housing allocations for the new Local Plan and the sites put forward are summarised in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment: Interim Report, November 2020 (SHLAA:IR). The sites are identified in Figure 6.2 below and there are none within the settlement boundary of Long Ashton.
- 6.25 As part of the sequential approach it is therefore concluded that there are no sites available within the settlement boundary to provide affordable housing to address the identified need.

## Sustainability Principles

- 6.26 The NPPF identifies three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) and at paragraph 38 requires that local planning authorities '*... work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.*'
- 6.27 Sustainability embraces a range of planning matters and as noted above, the reasons for refusal of the previous planning application establish the planning issues to be considered in respect of the current application. These matters are assessed above and below.
- 6.28 However, it is clear from the supporting text to Policy CS17 that the focus, in terms of sustainability principles when applying this policy, is on spatial sustainability in relation to location, transport and access to jobs, facilities and services. In this respect, there is no other area of