

# INTRODUCTION

## WELCOME

Welcome to our exhibition for the residential development proposals on land adjacent to Fenn Street (the site).

This exhibition is an opportunity for us to present and explain our vision, which consists of a detailed application for the delivery of 44 new residential dwellings, to enable the delivery of community focused projects associated with the Fenn Bell Conservation Project and to discuss any issues or concerns you may have. We have a number of representatives from Esquire Developments and our consultant team to address your individual questions.

The residential application (reference MC/24/0291) is currently being considered by Medway Council, and the Community Enhancement Application is currently awaiting validation, this exhibition along with your feedback will help to inform the final scheme.

E: [fennbell@esquiredevelopments.com](mailto:fennbell@esquiredevelopments.com)  
by **2nd April 2024**.

The material on display today is also available to download on our website: [www.consult-esquire.com](http://www.consult-esquire.com) where comments can also be submitted online.

## ESQUIRE DEVELOPMENTS

Esquire Developments is a multi-award winning SME Housebuilder based in Longfield, Kent. Founded in 2011, we have established ourselves through the delivery of high quality bespoke residential developments across Kent and build approximately 120 homes a year. In 2020, we were awarded Gold by What House? as best SME Housebuilder in the Country.

We adopt a tailored approach, adapting designs and layouts to reflect local characteristics, respecting each community's unique needs. This is achieved through our local knowledge and experience, understanding of place, and crucially, engaging with local communities. This positively focusses our approach to planning and design, with a greater experience of the needs and workings of the parish.

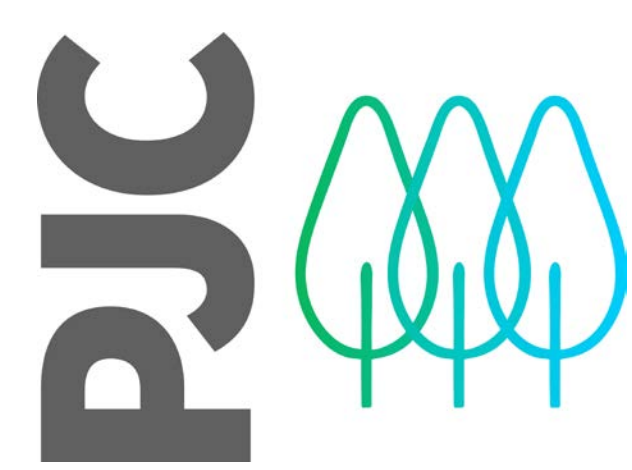
Each of our developments is bespoke, and we do not have fixed house types. This allows us to be totally flexible when it comes to tailoring the right mix and design of each home. Revealed in the high-quality of architecture and materials, this ethos extends to the refinement of open spaces, establishing welcoming and inclusive environments.

As an SME Housebuilder reliant on our reputation, we deliver high-quality homes that bring choice and variation to the housing market, catering for a diverse range of prospective buyers.

We are environmentally conscious and have committed to playing a positive role in addressing the Climate Emergency (see later boards). We also pride ourselves in delivering homes exceeding the minimum sizes and finishes that the general housing market sometimes supplies.



Examples of projects by Esquire Developments





# WHY THE APPLICATION?

## FENN BELL CONSERVATION PROJECT

As many local residents are aware, the Fenn Bell Conservation (FBC) Project works closely with a number of charities and supports the conservation of endangered exotic and native species. A substantial amount of time and effort goes into the project's day to day running, which is extremely costly with limited funds from external sources.

Unfortunately, due to a number of factors over recent years outside the control of the FBC Project, it has become harder and harder to manage and maintain. Issues such as Covid-19, escalating energy prices and interests rates mean that the project requires a number of improvements to help its longer term viability and sustainability.

The ongoing running of the FBC Project is well known locally and numerous attempts have previously been made to raise funds on a more local level. Unfortunately this has proved insufficient to deliver the necessary step change in the project's longer term sustainability and viability.

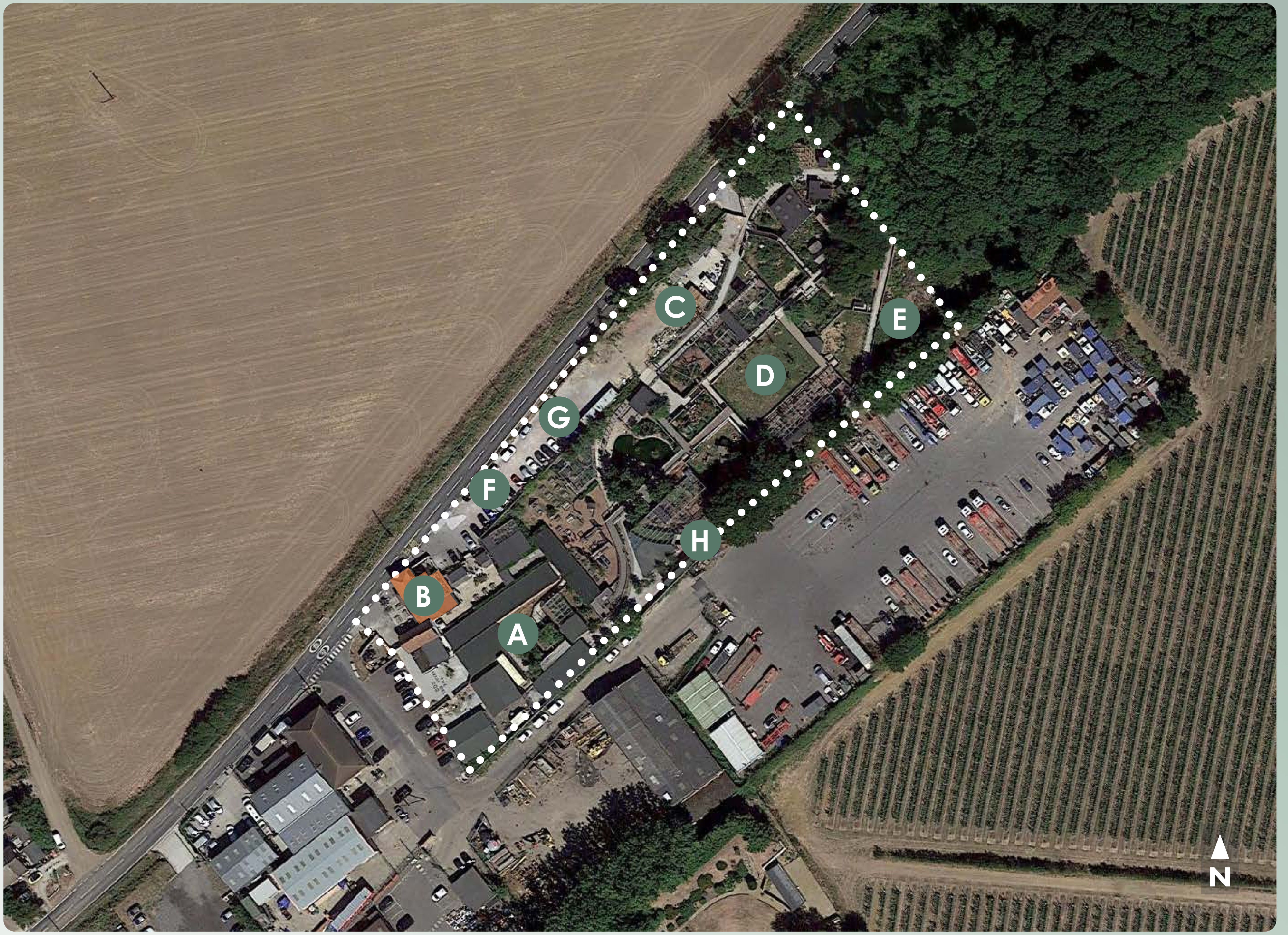
In this regard, the application is being brought forward to deliver the step change in cash injection, the zoo requires to deliver improved facilities that can enhance the ongoing maintenance and energy costs, as well as improvement to the building itself to enhance the attraction of the site to visitors.





# WHY THE APPLICATION?

## CONSERVATION PROJECT COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT WORKS



Aerial showing locations of proposed improvement works

[Google Maps]

The enhancement works include the following projects:

**A Renewable projects**

The conservation project will be investing in renewable projects to increase efficiency, reduce long term costs and future-proof the site. These will include the installation of PV panels on existing structures and the addition of a bore hole on site. These will significantly improve running costs in the long term, reducing reliance on existing local services and significantly lessening emissions.

**B Refurbishment of the Fenn Bell Inn**

The refurbishment of the local community hub and asset serving the expanding local community. This will include the proper insulation of the building which will reduce running costs, new and efficient heating system, upgrade of fire safety features, and improved kitchen facilities.

**C Kitchen and vet-room**

The addition of permanent kitchen and vet-room will enable the appropriate storage of foodstuffs and suitable facilities to quarantine animals. This will provide a dedicated space to care for sick animals as well as enable the transfer of animals with other zoos.

**D New enclosures**

The replacement and upgrading of enclosures to allow for participation in new projects including international conservation programmes.

**E Keeper's lodge**

This will replace outdated existing provision on site with higher quality, purpose built accommodation including kitchen, bathroom, living quarters and office space.

**F Accessible access & parking provision**

The existing gravel paths and unsurfaced parking areas will be improved to deliver dedicated accessible spaces and inclusive surfaces.

**G Septic tank**

The replacement and upgrading of the existing brick septic tank with provision better suited to the scale and use of the site. This will be accompanied by improved drainage to site.

**H Security features**

Installation of necessary security features and enhancements to safeguard the site.

The above improvements are subject to a separate planning application (currently awaiting validation), which will be linked to the main residential application.

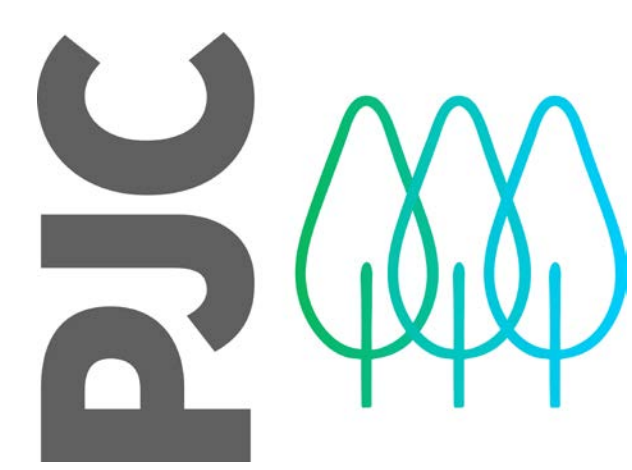
In addition to the enhancement to the Zoo, the scheme also seeks to deliver a residential scheme that will go towards meeting Medway's chronic under delivery of housing. Accordingly, National Planning Policy seeks to apply the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development,' meaning that applications of this nature are required to come forward to help meet wider housing needs.



**B** The Fenn Bell Inn Public House



**D** Existing enclosures





# THE SITE

## SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is approximately 2.22 hectares in size, comprising open grassland with a boundary hedgerow and trees. There are existing disused agricultural buildings on site - a remainder from its former use as stables and pasture.

The site is bound to the north, south and west by the A228 Ratcliffe Highway and Fenn Street. The northern and eastern boundaries are wooded, backing onto commercial buildings to the north, and large detached houses to the east.

Hard-standing has been installed in the north of the site, as an overflow car park for the nearby zoo, as well as a dedicated roadside pedestrian route connecting the site to the pub and conservation project to the north.

The site is located around 1 mile to the east of the village of High Halstow which is the closest settlement, aside from the clusters of mixed development along Sharnal and Fenn Street.



Site Location Plan



[Google Maps]



1 Local shop south of site



2 Fenn Bell Inn Public House



3 Existing site access off Fenn Street



4 Entrance to Bellwood Court

[Google Maps]

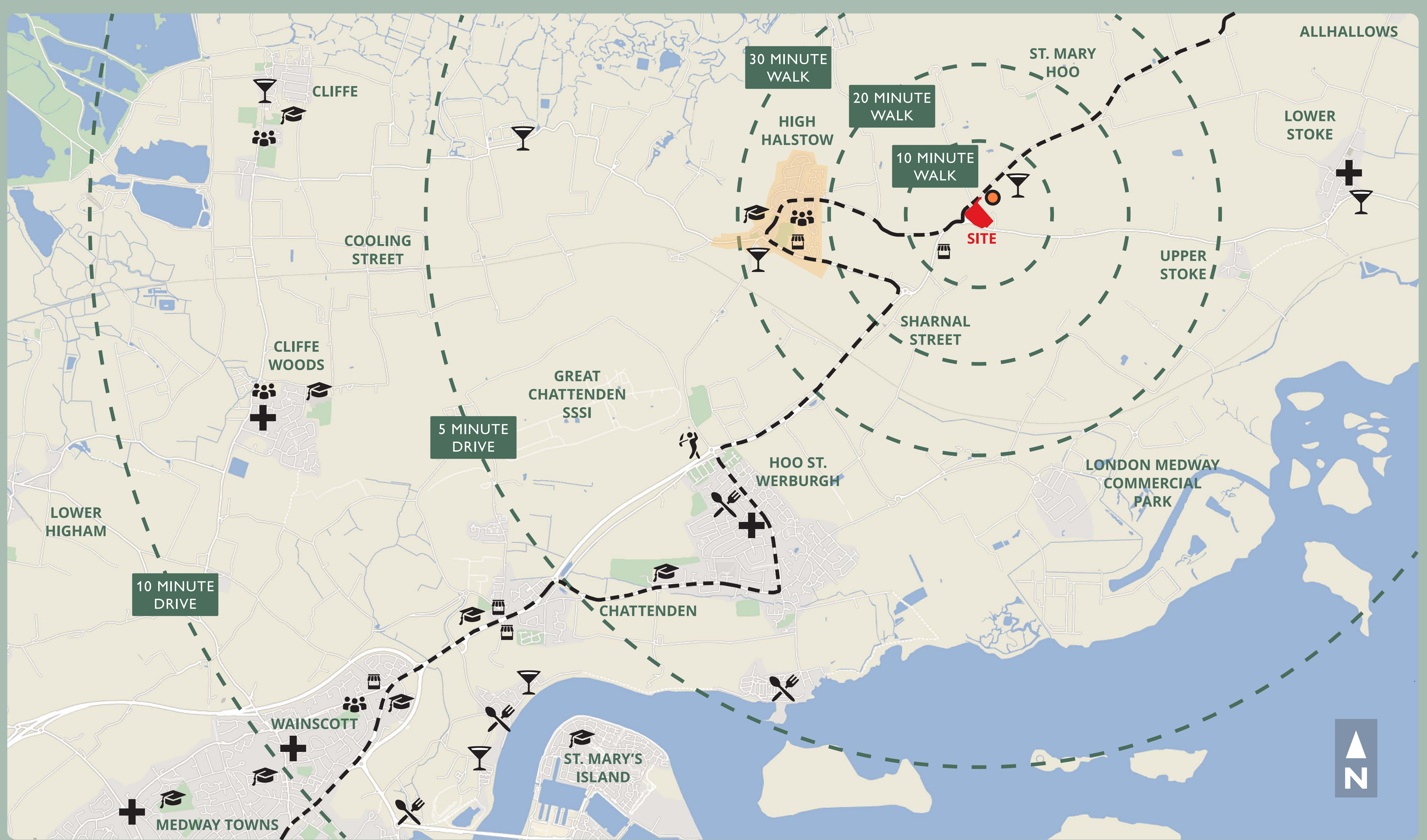


# THE CONTEXT

## LOCAL AMENITIES

The site is located adjacent to a bus route which connects it to High Halstow, the Medway towns, and the wider area. The village centre accommodates a community hall, cricket club, school, shops and other local amenities. Similar amenities are also located in the nearby villages and settlements, with many pubs and schools also in the area.

Rochester is approximately a 15 minute drive south of the site, where the railway station provides high-speed links to London and surrounding towns. This historic city provides abundant amenities including hospitals, schools, universities, supermarkets and other commercial and business hubs.



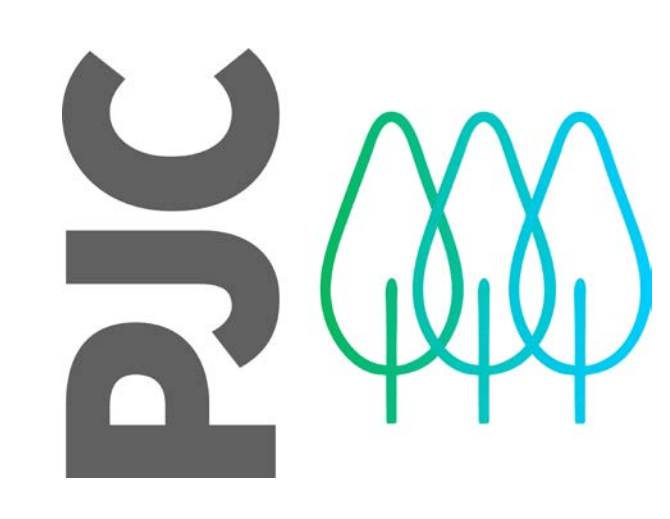
The Site	Outdoor leisure
High Halstow	Community Centre
Built up areas	Pub
191 bus route	Restaurant
Shops	Medical practice
Schools	Fenn Bell Conservation Project

Distances from Site	
High Halstow	20 min (walking)
Rochester	15 min (driving)
London	45 min (train) (from Rochester Station)

## PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SITE



[Google Maps]

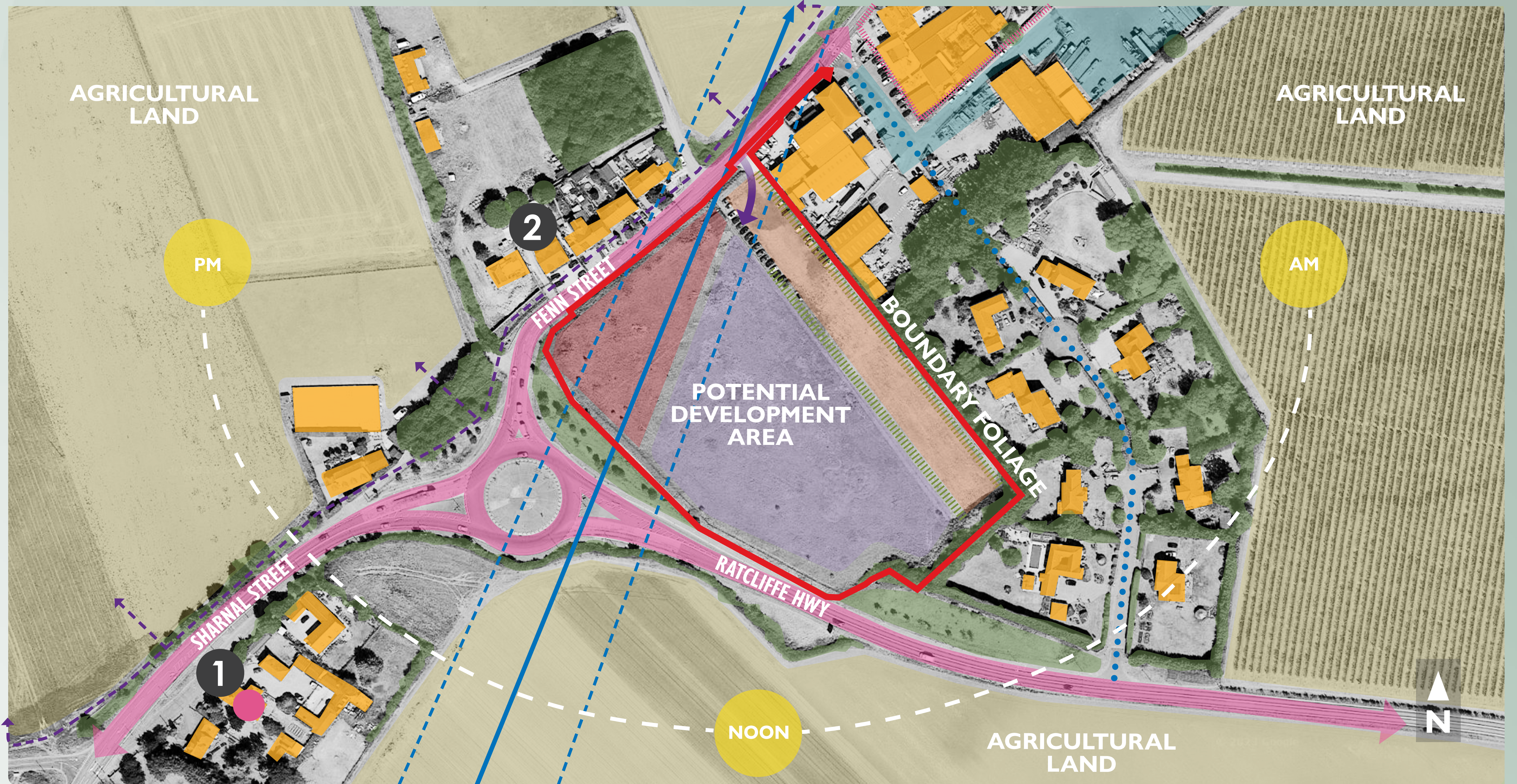




# THE DEVELOPMENT SITE

## DESIGN STRATEGY

Analysis on the site and surrounding area reveals opportunities and constraints which must be addressed to ensure a well-suited and sympathetic addition to the village. These will form the basis of the design strategy, dictating layout, amount, and focal points of the development.



Opportunities and Constraints Diagram

[Google Maps]

- |                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Existing buildings               | Former St. Mary's Church view corridor  |
| Listed Building                  | Reinforced boundary planting            |
| North Kent Marshes SLA           | Overflow parking for Fenn Bell retained |
| Agricultural land                | Potential development area              |
| Boundary planting, trees, verges | Potential noise from heavy vehicles     |
| PROW                             | Potential communal open space           |

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Provide a diverse mix of housing from 1 to 3 bedroom dwellings.
- Produce a well designed development, sympathetic to and enhancing the local character and architectural identity.
- Increase the biodiversity on site through careful landscaping and planting.
- Create a large green space for future residents and local community.
- Provide community electric charging points.
- Potential for off site highways works to slow traffic on Fenn Street.
- Provide new play area accessible for local community and visitors to the Conservation Project.

## CONSTRAINTS

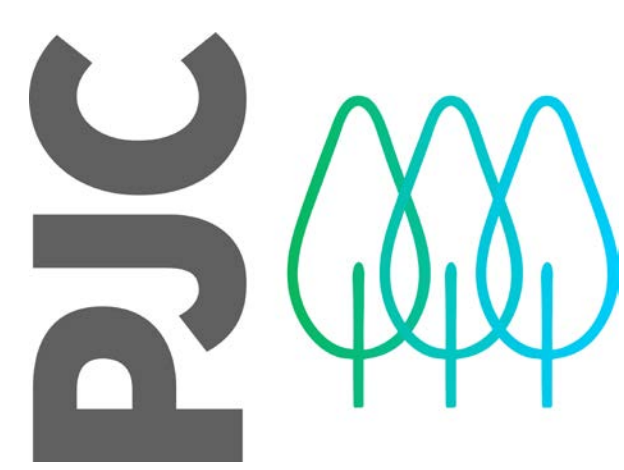
- Retain and enhance boundary planting to maintain screening.
- Proximity to North Kent Marshes Special Landscape Area.
- View corridor to former St. Mary's Church to be retained.



1 Grade II Listed Fenn Street Farm House



2 Dwellings along Fenn Street, facing the site





# PROPOSALS

## ILLUSTRATIVE SITE LAYOUT PLAN



Proposed Layout

[Google Maps]

- 1 Retained car parking (FBC Project)
- 2 Landscape buffers
- 3 New pedestrian access
- 4 Existing access retained
- 5 Play areas
- 6 Landscaped outdoor amenity
- 7 Public EV charging points
- 8 First homes
- 9 Smaller units for local people
- 10 Outdoor seating area

A landscape and Local Area Equipment for Play strategy has been undertaken, this reflects the site's location in terms of landscape character area and proximity to key features. The layout preserves the key views of the nearby landmark of St. Mary in Hoo's tower and provides screening through strategic planting and landscaping from nearby roads and neighbouring dwellings. The proposals draw from both the strip development and rural clusters of farmstead buildings characteristic of the area, which is reflected through layout, landscaping, design and materials.

## PROPOSED MATERIALS PALETTE



Clay tile roofing



Slate roofing



Half-hipped barn style roof



Large barn-style windows



Black timber weatherboarding



Soldier course and brick detail



Red stock brick



Black timber shutters



Black UPVC windows



Timber brackets



LAND ADJACENT TO  
**FENN STREET & RATCLIFFE HIGHWAY**  
ST MARY HOO



# PROPOSALS

## APPEARANCE



Artist's Impression - View A



Artist's Impression - View B

## STREET ELEVATIONS



Street Scene A-A



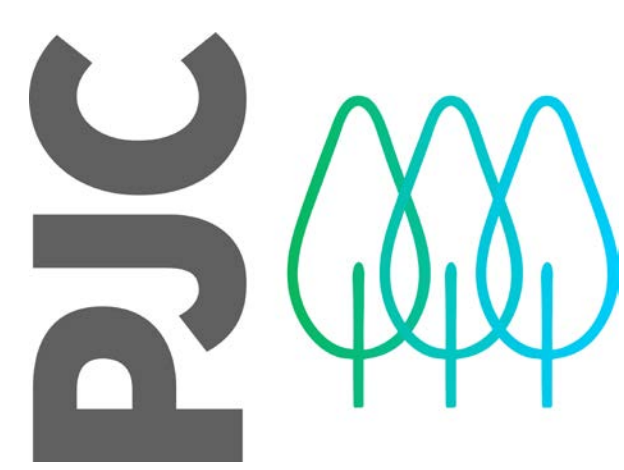
Street Scene B-B



Street Scene C-C



Street Scene D-D





# ACCESS

## HIGHWAYS

Existing vehicular and pedestrian access off Fenn Street is retained from the north western corner. Direct pedestrian access to the site will also be provided from the existing footway infrastructure on the north-eastern side of the Ratcliffe Highway / Fenn Street roundabout, enabling a connection to the existing convenience store located to the south.



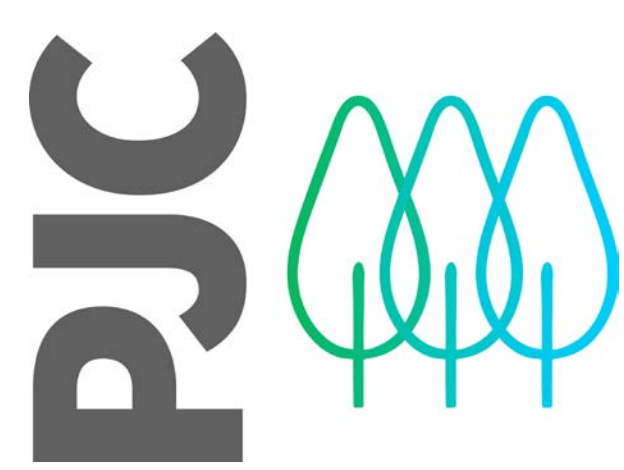
Proposed Access Strategy Plan

[Google Maps]

We are also exploring off site highway works and potential footpath connections to the south west of the site.



Proposed Access Arrangement - Traffic calming





# LANDSCAPE

## LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

A landscape and LEAP strategy has been undertaken by EDLA landscape architects. The proposal reflects the site's location in terms of landscape character area and proximity to key features. The planting is carefully chosen to ensure year round visual interest as well as providing sensory stimulation for children and adults alike.



Proposed Landscape Plan

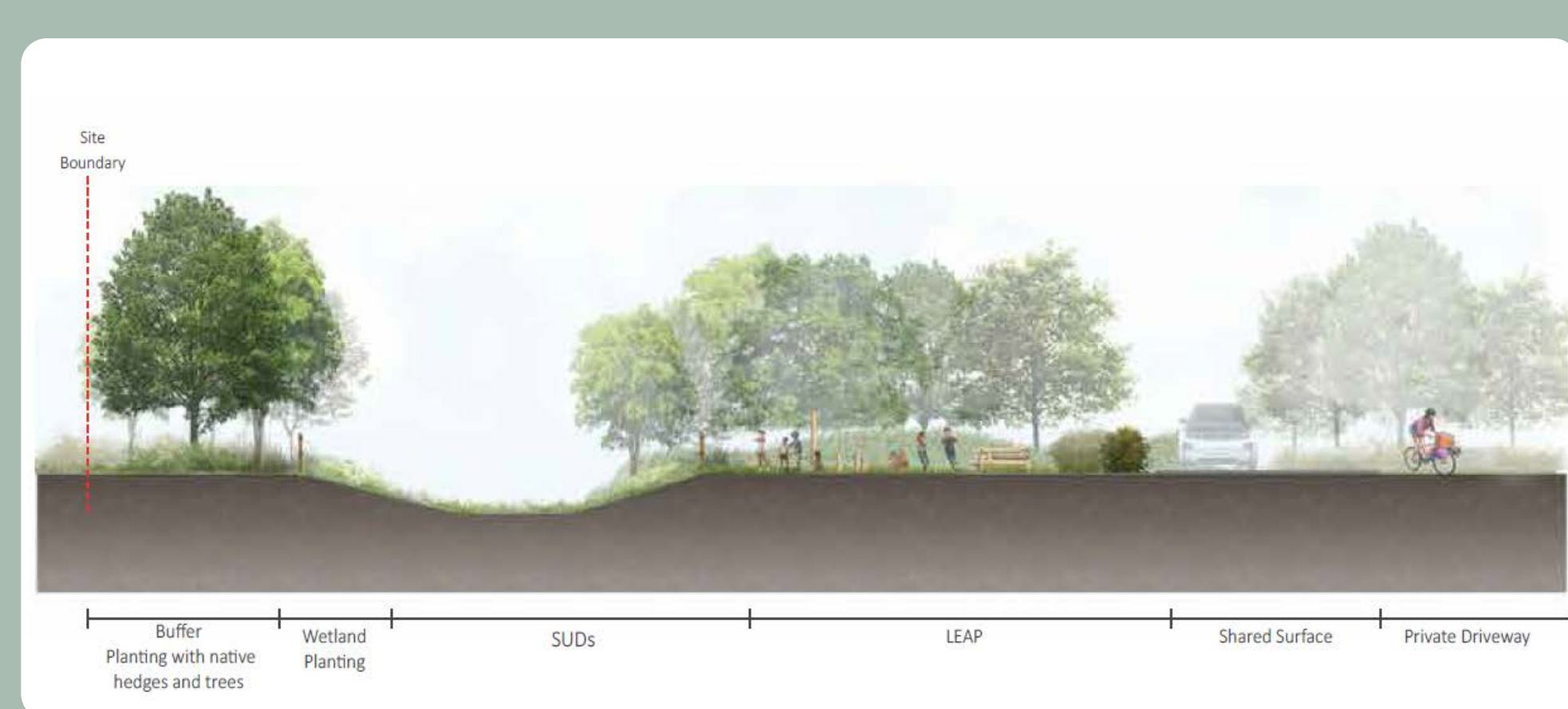
[Google Maps]

## PLAY AREAS AND PLANTING STRATEGY

The landscape design for the play garden is crafted to create an exciting, welcoming, and interactive space. Taking inspiration from the Fenn Bell Zoo, the LEAP is designed with animal themed play equipment. Additionally the sensory planting and the SuDs feature forms a vibrant backdrop for this engaging environment.

The planting proposed consists predominantly of native species with some non-native trees to ensure climate change resilience and enhanced biodiversity.

A palette comprising of sensory plants is proposed to the sensory gardens to stimulate and educate young minds.



Landscape Section 01



Landscape Section 02

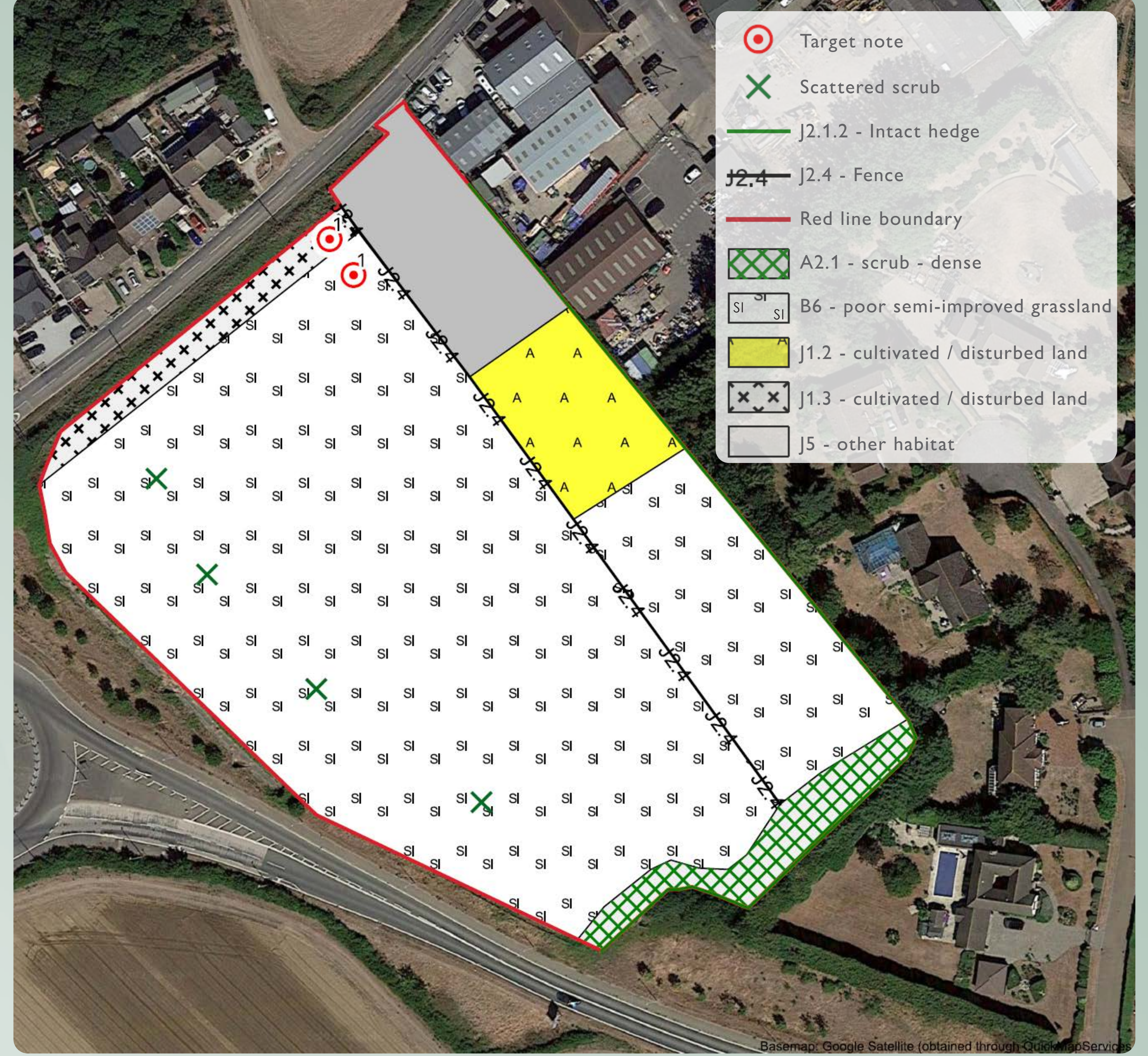


# ECOLOGY & ARCHAEOLOGY

## ECOLOGY

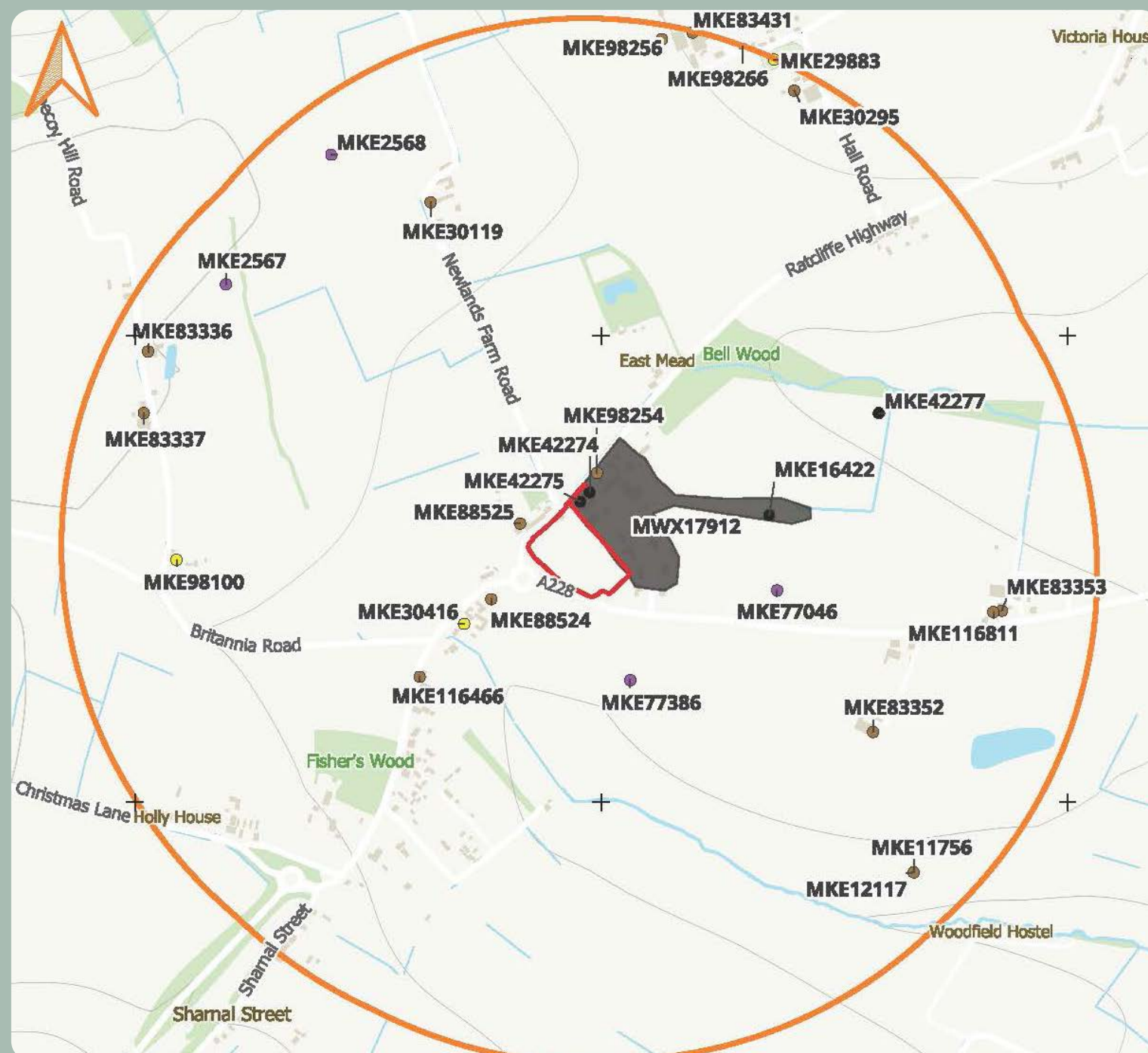
The site was surveyed by PJC Consultancy Ltd. The purpose was to classify the habitats present, highlight the potential of the site to support protected species, and recommend suitable avoidance, mitigation, compensation and ecological enhancement measures where appropriate.

Protected species / habitats	Suitable habitat present	Recommended further surveys	Ecological avoidance, mitigation and compensation
South Thames Estuary and Marshes SSSI impact risk zone.	The site was found to be within the SSSI impact risk zone for South Thames Estuary and Marshes SSSI and falls under the list of development categories	None required.	The LPA has a duty to consult Natural England for advice on the development and how potential impacts on the SSSI might be avoided or mitigated against.
Bats (Foraging and Commuting)	The site was identified as having low habitat suitability to support commuting and foraging bats within the hedge with trees and hedgerow within the site boundary	None required providing the mitigation measures outlined are adhered to.	A sensitive lighting strategy for bats should be implemented during the construction and operational phases of the proposed development to direct new artificial lighting away from suitable bat foraging and commuting routes, creating dark buffer zones.
Badgers	The site was considered to provide some limited foraging and commuting opportunities for badgers.	A pre-works survey should be undertaken immediately prior to any construction works commencing to ensure no new setts have become established.	Further requirements for mitigation, compensation and/or licences may be required for badgers depending on the results of the recommended further surveys.
Reptiles	The site was identified as having potential to support reptiles providing foraging, commuting, basking and hibernating opportunities.	Reptile presence/likely absence surveys should be undertaken over the active reptile season between late March and September inclusive during periods with temperatures between 9-18°C.	Further requirements for mitigation and compensation may be required for reptiles depending on the results of the recommended further surveys

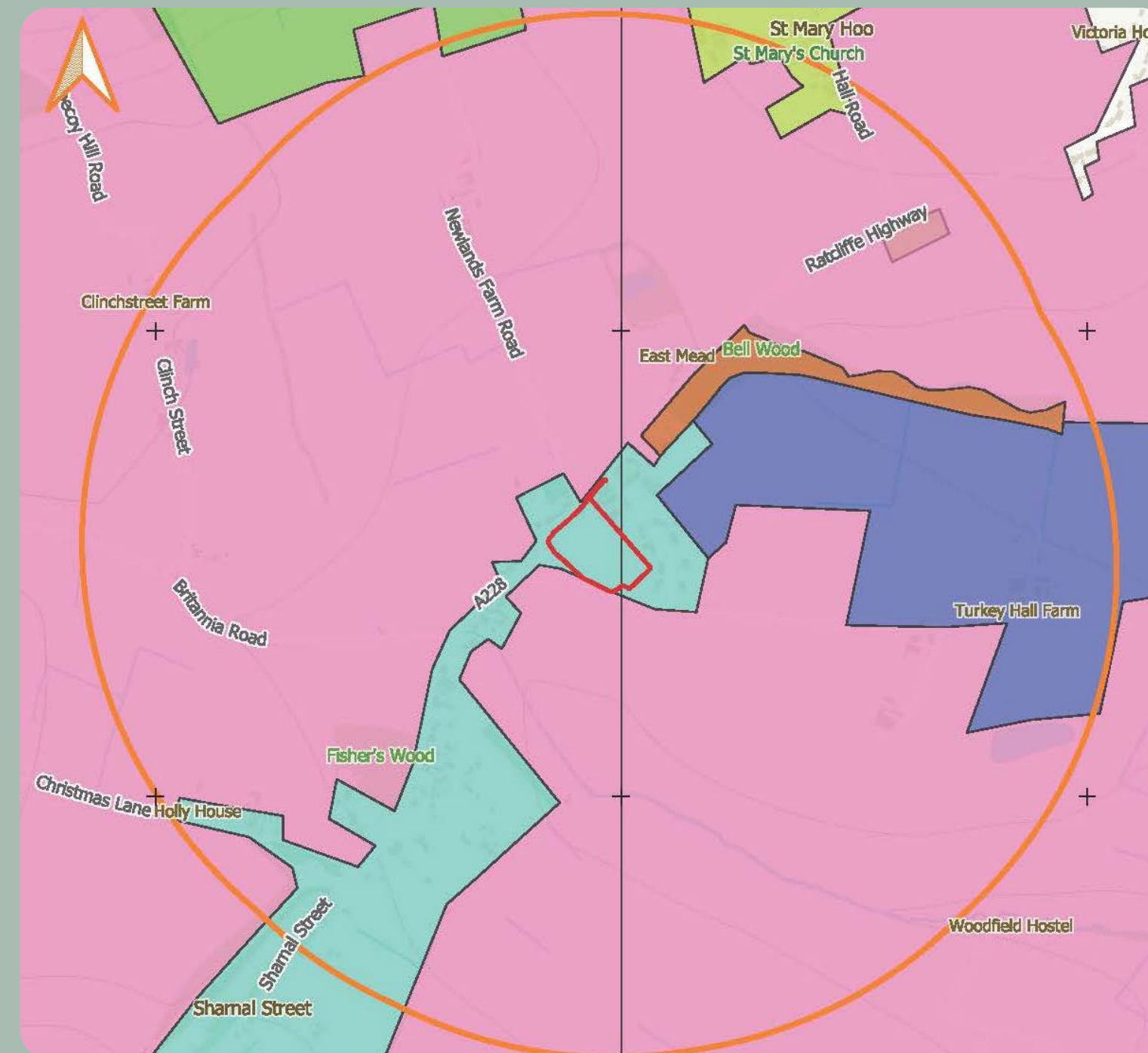
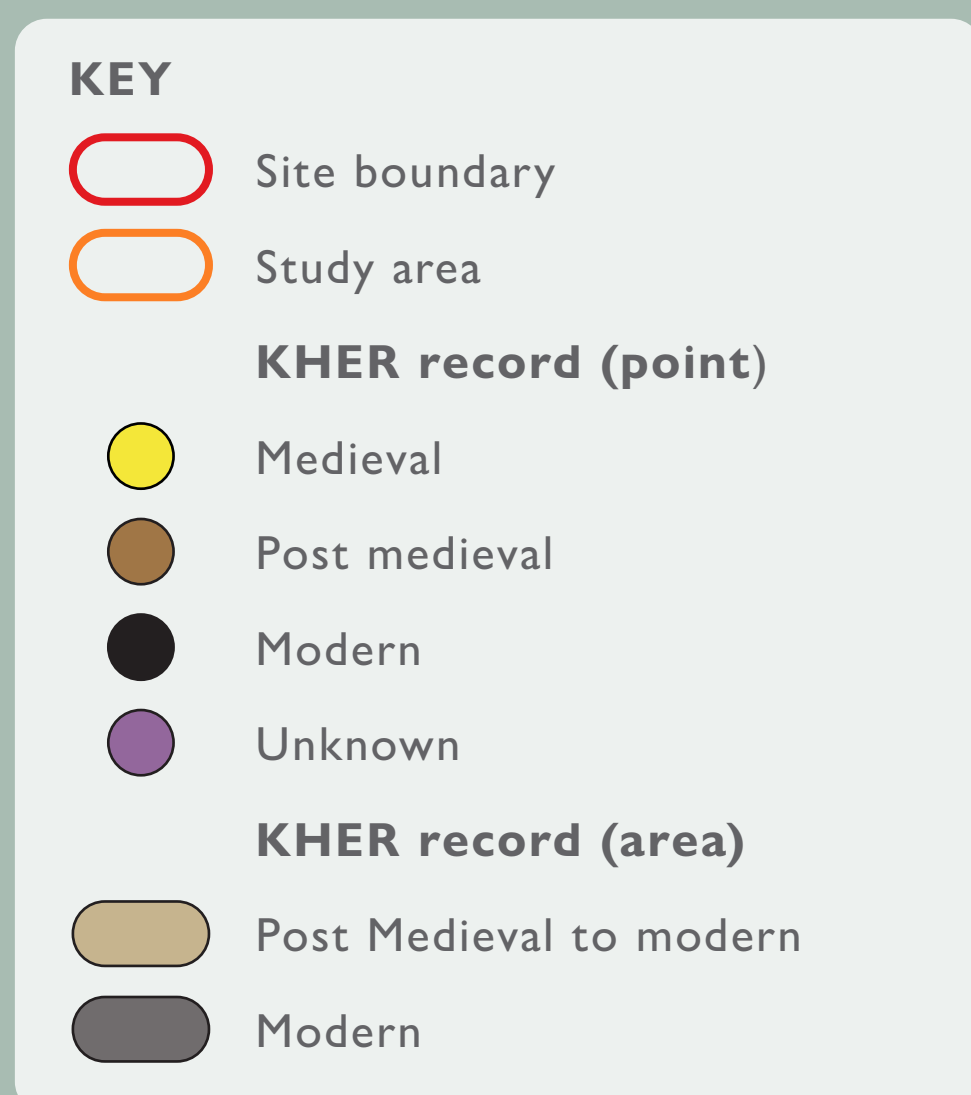


## ARCHAEOLOGY

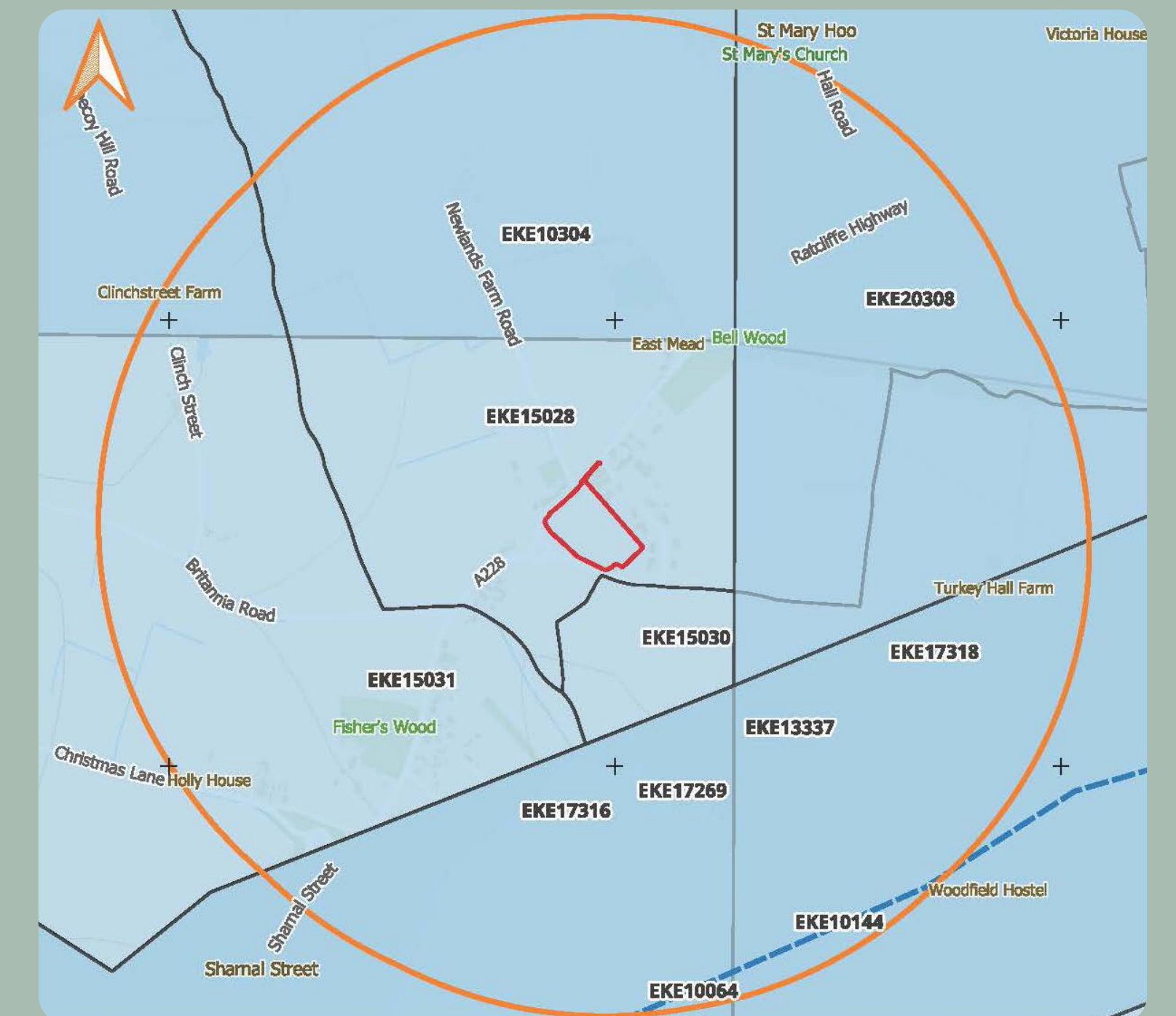
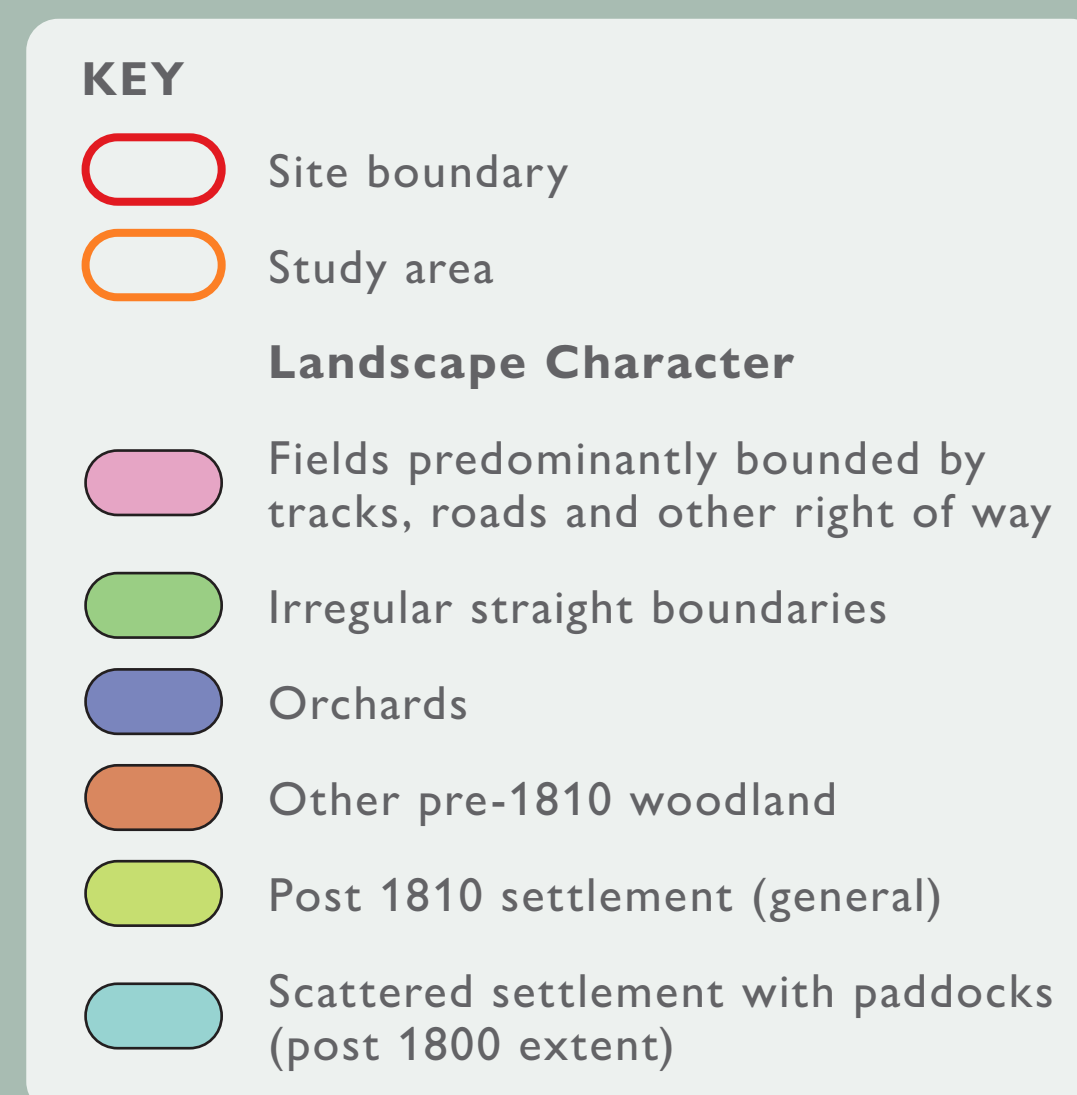
An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment has been produced by HCUK Group. Based on the information within the HER, supplemented by historic mapping, the site is considered to have some potential for archaeological remains. This assessment has identified a low to medium potential for prehistoric to post-medieval remains and a medium to high potential for modern remains to be present within the site.



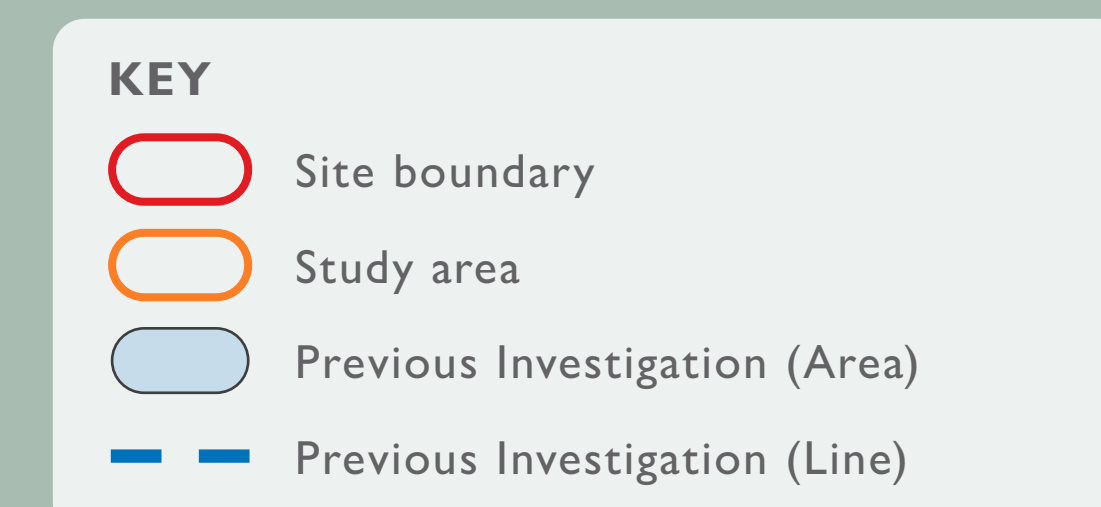
Kent Historic Environments Records within Study Area



Historic Landscape Character



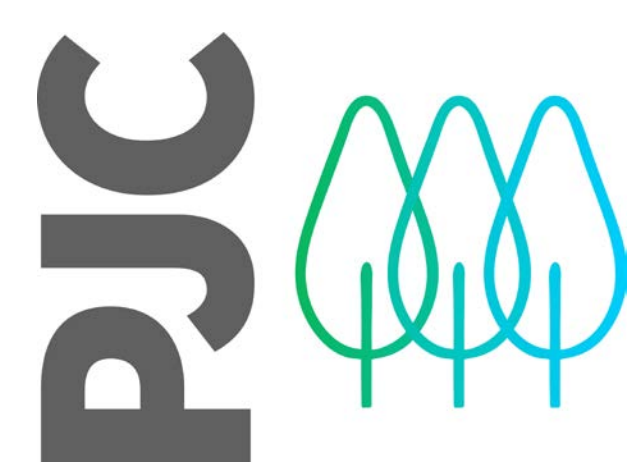
Previous Investigations within Study Area



1839 plan showing parish of St. Mary's in the Hoo Union



1940 aerial image showing gun placements





# CLIMATE ACTION

## SUSTAINABLE DESIGN RESPONSIBILITY

**Fabric first approach to sustainability**

**Extensive Landscaping to benefit biodiversity**

**All houses to have an EV charging point**

**Air Source Heat Pumps installed in all homes**

**High Specification Glazed Windows**

**Electric Only Dwellings**

**Increased Cavity Wall Thickness**

**Natural material utilising local supply chains**

A key part of creating a well designed and attractive development is taking care to ensure sustainable delivery, function, lifespan and community cohesion.

This is one of the central aims of the scheme, with heavy focus on the use of sustainably sourced, and where possible, local materials.

Focus on water and energy conservation are integral to the design.

We also recognise that sustainability is achieved through long-term social incorporation.

The development makes use of the existing community assets in the village, ensuring their continued use. Connections to local amenities and transport links contribute further to its sustainability.

## CLIMATE COMMITMENTS

We take a proactive approach to addressing the climate emergency and recognise that we have an impact on the environment. We wish to minimise this as best we can by committing to deliver ‘electric only’ developments. By installing air source heat pumps and taking a ‘fabric first approach’ we are achieving approximately a 40% carbon reduction in our homes over and above current building regulations.

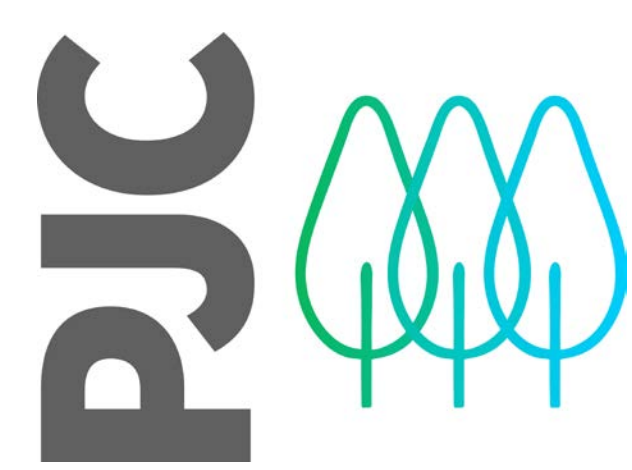
The fabric first approach means that the improved efficiency of our dwellings is inherent within the build meaning that not only is it more efficient, but also safeguarding against removal, resulting in the efficiency of the building being maintained for its lifetime.

We build our homes with greater cavity wall thickness allowing for increased thermal protection, higher specification glazed windows and greater base floor depths.

All our homes come with rapid charge electric vehicle chargers, we feel that we are playing our part in trying to minimise the impacts of our developments on the environment and helping to accelerate the shift to greener living, reducing the amount of fossil fuels used by home and vehicle.

Esquire Developments are confident they can achieve a 40% reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and are proposing to apply the following specifications:

Element	Current Spec	Notes
Ground Floor U-Value	0.17 W/m <sup>2</sup> K	Concrete Slabs, 100mm Insulation.
External Wall U-Value	0.23 W/m <sup>2</sup> K	Traditional build with 100mm fully filled cavity.
Party Wall U-Value	0 W/m <sup>2</sup> K	Fully insulated and suitably sealed.
Roof U-Value	0.099 W/m <sup>2</sup> K	Cold roof, 100mm + 300mm.
Glazing U-Value	1.20 W/m <sup>2</sup> K	Glazing U-Value includes frame (not centre pane only)
Glazing Transmittance	0.72%	g-value.
Door U-Value	1.20 W/m <sup>2</sup> K	Solid door with insulation.
Thermal Bridging	0.03-0.06 W/m <sup>2</sup> K	BRE Library/ Bespoke.
Design Air Permeability	5.00 m <sup>3</sup> /hm <sup>2</sup>	Target varies to ensure compliance.
Heating SAP Default		Air Source Heat Pump System. All Plots include Time and Temperature Zone Controls. Flow temperature no higher than 45 degrees.
Hot Water		From main system. Larger houses include 210 litres. Daily heat loss 1.75 kWh.
Cooling		None
Ventilation		Intermittent extraction fans and trickle vents.
Lighting		SAP2012: 100% Low energy lights. SAP 10.1: 14watt LED Lamps, 125lum/W. SAP10.1: Fed by boiler. Use 9 litres per minute.
Showers		None
Wastewater Heat Recovery		None
Solar thermal & PV Panels		None





# THE WAY FORWARD

## FEEDBACK AND PROGRESSION

Thank you very much for taking the time to view this exhibition. We really appreciate your engagement and comments. By reviewing these, we hope to understand how we can best improve our proposals to ensure that we deliver the best quality and most appropriate addition to the local area.

We would be grateful to receive all of your feedback to review and help shape our proposals as we move forward.

## COMMENTS

Comments can be submitted to us today via a paper form, or sent to us by post or email:

[fennbell@esquiredevelopments.com](mailto:fennbell@esquiredevelopments.com) by **2nd April 2024**. The material on display today is also available to download on our website:

[www.consult-esquire.com](http://www.consult-esquire.com) where comments can also be submitted online.

The window for submitting feedback runs for 2 weeks, after which we will review the responses and address comments wherever we can.



Artist's Impression of the proposed scheme

It is still uncertain when a decision will be made on this application, but given current resources and timescales, it is likely this will be in summer 2024.



**Thank you for taking the time to attend today's event.**