

Proposed Development at Hollingworth Road and Rakewood Road, Littleborough

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

JUNE | 2024



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Stantec / 101 Victoria Street / Bristol / BS1 6PU
tel: 0117 929 9677
email: barry.williams@stantec.co.uk

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Date 14.06.2024 Status Draft Rev 10

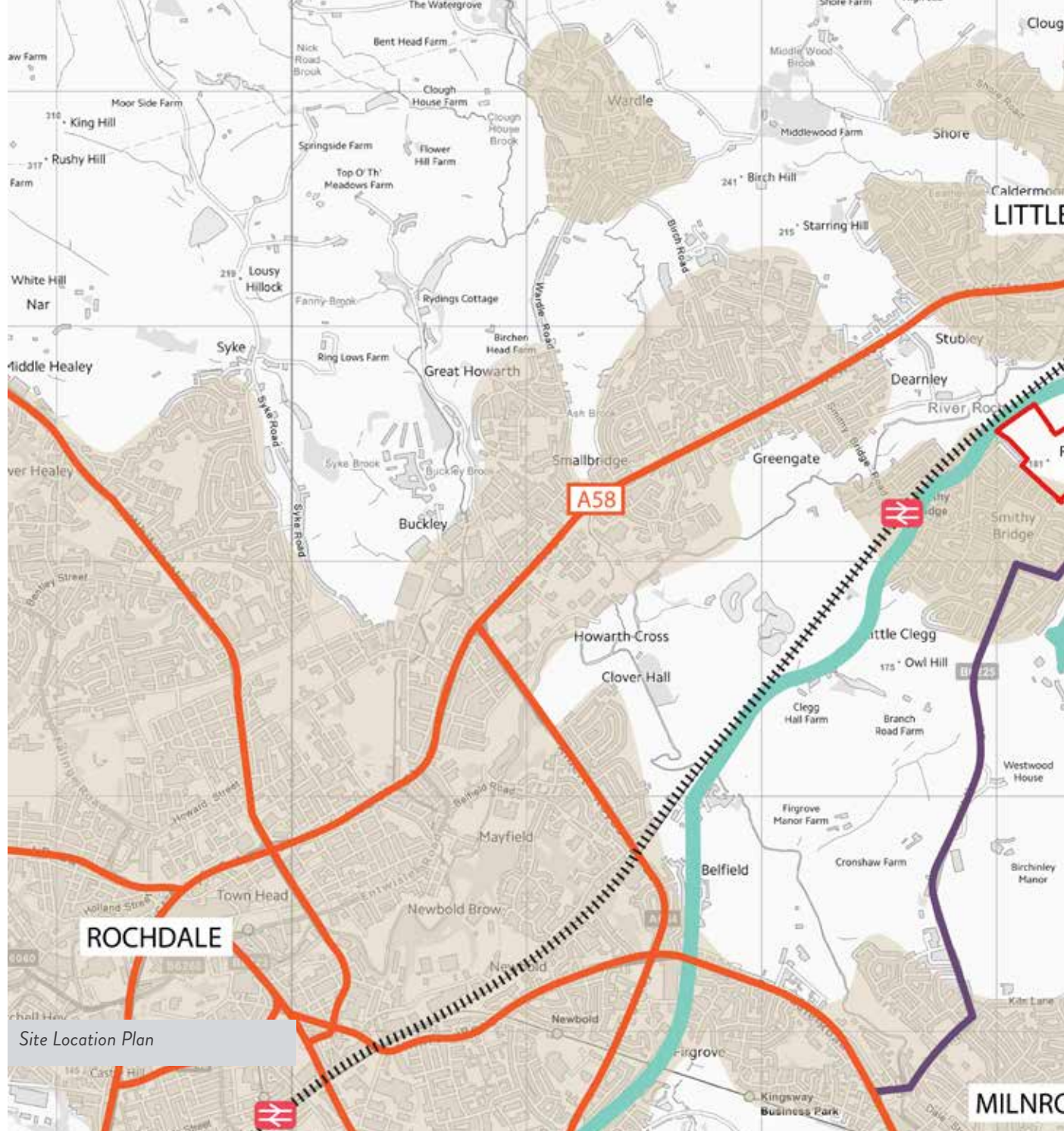
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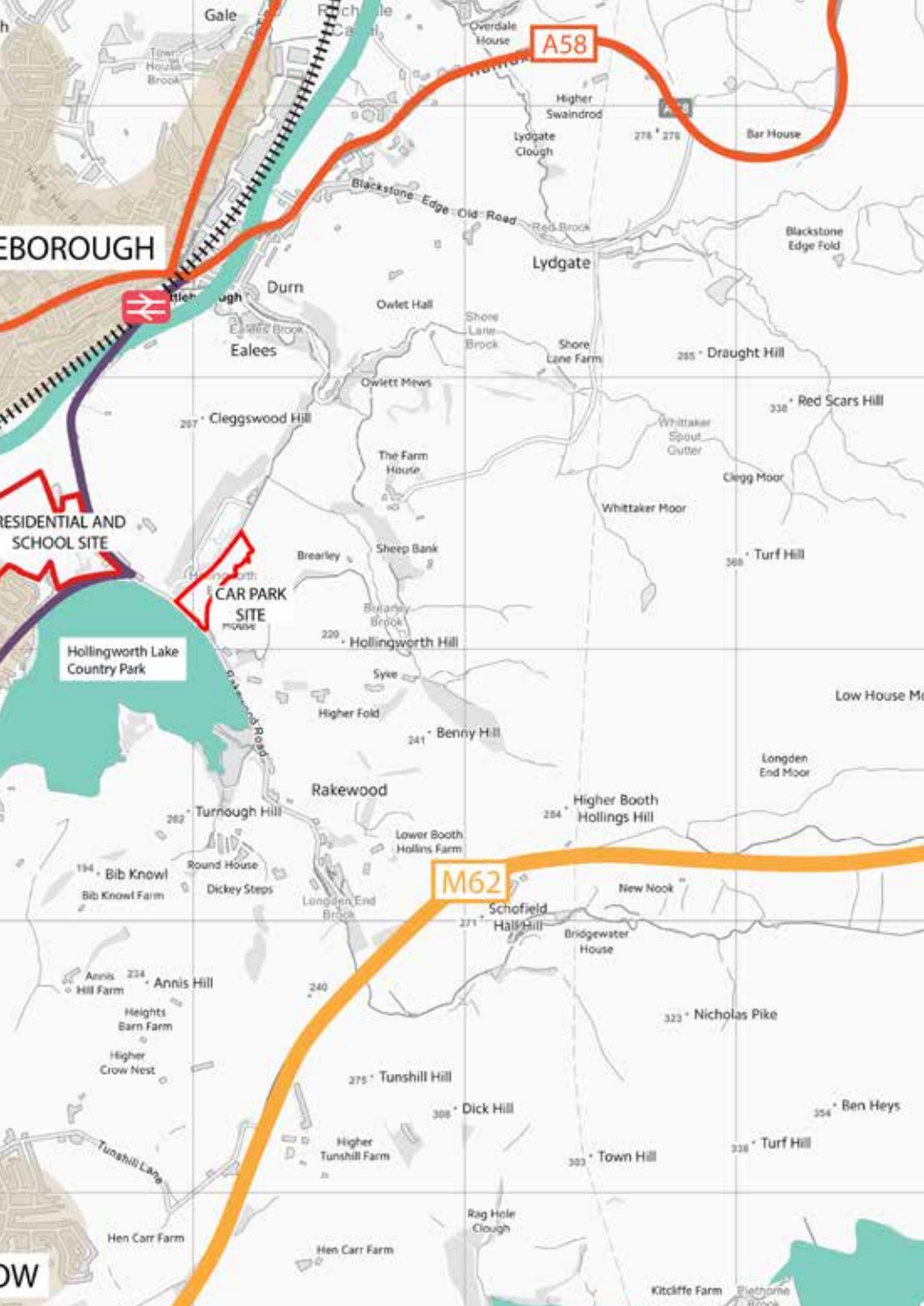
This Design and Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared on behalf of Bloor Homes North West in support of a hybrid planning application for residential development at Hollingworth Road, Littleborough (Residential and School Land Parcel) and a proposed car park extension at Rakewood Road, Littleborough (Car Park Land Parcel).

The DAS sets out and justifies the design rationale for the proposals. The document is part of a comprehensive package of information submitted with the application for planning permission and provides a detailed framework of guidance and specification to guide and control the elements of the development. It will explain the proposals in a concise and structured way to ensure that those assessing the application will understand the rationale that underpins it.

DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

The DAS is divided into two chapters; 'Residential and School Land Parcel' and 'Car Park Land Parcel'.





LAND PARCEL'S LOCATION

The two land parcels are located to the south of Littleborough, with the residential site to the west of Hollingworth Road (B6225), and the car park site to the east of Rakewood Road. The two land parcels lie just south of the Manchester - Leeds railway line and to the north of Hollingworth Lake. To the west of the residential land parcel lies Smithy Bridge housing estate.



Wider Location Plan

LAND PARCELS DESCRIPTION

The two land parcels which this DAS covers are on land to the west of Hollingworth Road and east of Rakewood Road. Both land parcels comprises arable fields, with hedgerows and trees interspersed throughout their boundaries.

Residential and School Land Parcel

The Residential and School land parcel is bounded to the east by Hollingworth Road and the existing housing estate of Smithy Bridge to the west. Hollingworth Road and fields lie to the east, with a railway line to the north of the site, with the town of Littleborough beyond.

The land parcel slopes from north to the south, towards Hollingworth Lake.

Car Park Land Parcel

The main part of the land parcel, which extends to 2.4 ha comprises land which has most recently been used for cattle grazing. The remaining 0.26 ha of land includes an access route to the proposed extended car park from Rakewood Road through the existing Hollingworth Lake Country Park car park, alongside a number of existing car parking spaces, which are proposed to be re-configured as part of the proposals.

Hollingworth Brook is located adjacent to the northern and eastern boundaries of the land parcel. This watercourse has been confirmed as a designated Main River by the Environment Agency ('EA'). Hollingworth Lake Visitor Centre is located to the west of the application site, whilst Hollingworth Lake – a 130-acre reservoir – is located to the south-west. A steep managed embankment adjacent to Rakewood Road separates the site from Hollingworth Lake.

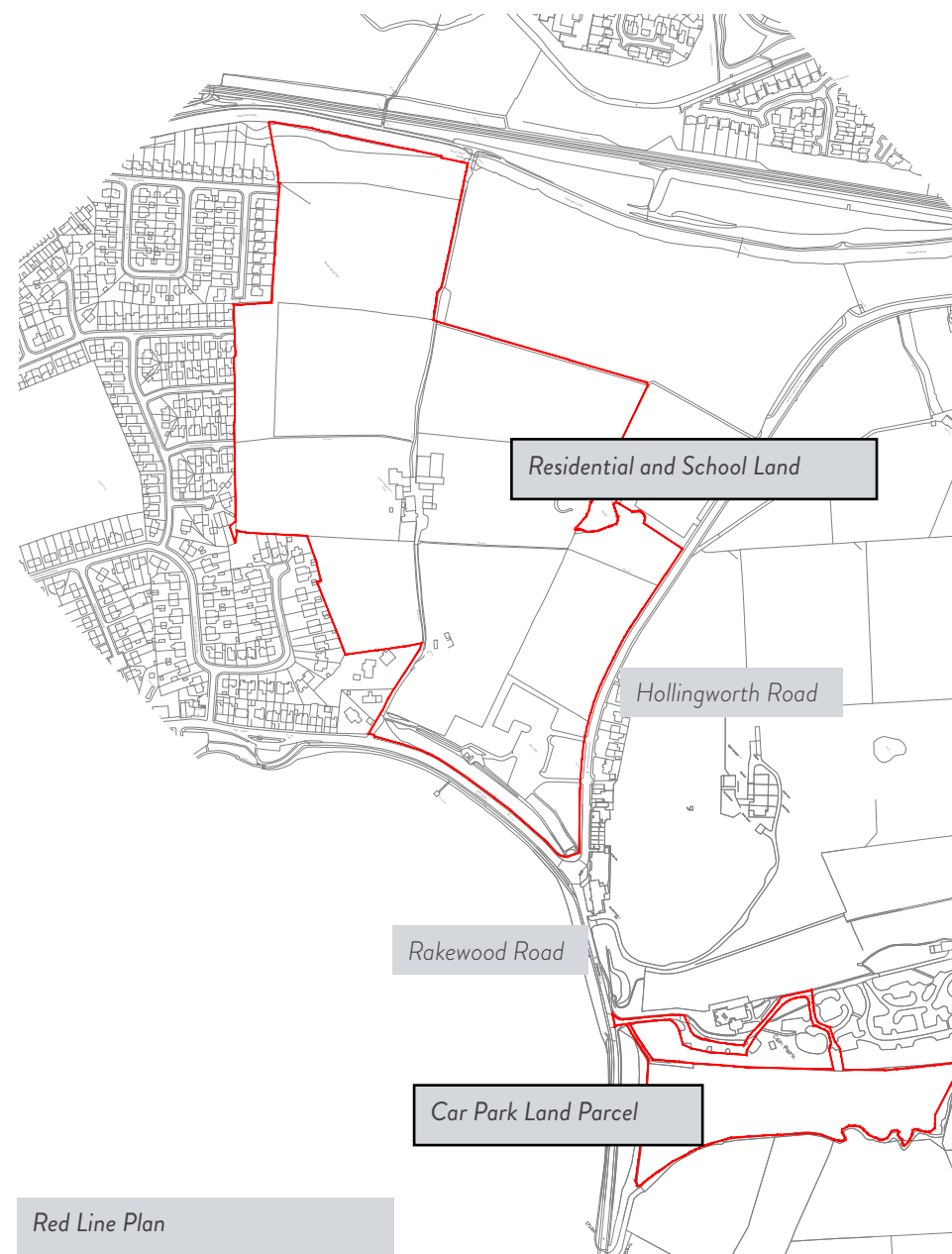




Photo - Residential and School Land Parcel



Photo - Car Park Land Parcel

RESIDENTIAL AND SCHOOL LAND PARCEL

Hollingworth Road, Littleborough

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

The description of the proposed development is as follows:

A Hybrid planning application comprising full application for 312 residential dwellings (including the construction of vehicular/pedestrian accesses, landscape measures, open space and associated works) at Hollingworth Road and alterations to and extension of Hollingworth Lake Country Park car park (including re-configuration of parking spaces at the existing car park, creation of new vehicular parking spaces via the car park extension, a new access ramp, landscape measures and other associated infrastructure) off Rakewood Road; and outline application for the development of a primary school at Hollingworth Road (access into the school site to be considered – all other matters reserved for future approval).

Full planning permission is therefore sought for residential development at the Hollingworth Road land parcel, with outline permission sought for the primary school.





Land Parcel Photo

2. POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 DESIGN POLICY CONTEXT

The National Design Guide has been set up to provide overarching guidance on the preparation of Design and Access Statements and Design Codes. The NDG addresses the question of how we recognise well-designed places, by outlining and illustrating the Government's properties in the form of ten principles. The characteristics work together in a mutually supporting way, interacting to create an overall character of a place.



Context – enhances the surroundings.

The development will provide a natural extension of Littleborough, complementing the housing developments to the north of the land parcel, and the residential development of Smithy Bridge to the west of the land parcel.



Identity – attractive and distinctive.

The existing vegetation, especially the tree and hedge planting within and along the site boundaries of the land parcel, will create a distinct character for the land parcel. New buildings will draw on local references but do so in a manner that leads to a distinctive identity for the land parcel.



Built Form – a coherent pattern of development.

The development will provide a legible pattern of streets and development blocks to achieve a well-designed place to live. The development is proposed to provide clear permeability to open spaces along with recognisable placemaking features to help people to find their way around the land parcel.



Movement – accessible and easy to move around.

The land parcel can be safely accessed, including via the new junctions along Hollingworth Road and the adjacency to the existing bus route and stop along Hollingworth Road. Provision of green infrastructure will promote social interaction whilst the prioritisation and encouragement of walking and cycling is reflected in the provision of footpath connections within the layout.



Nature – enhanced and optimized.

The development will integrate the existing natural features of the land parcel such as existing hedges and boundary trees in the layout and within open spaces. This will enhance the biodiversity of the land parcel but also encourage physical activities and promote health, well-being and social inclusion.



Public Spaces – safe, social and inclusive.

The design of the streets will connect to a large green park which will promote social interaction and contribute to a lively and active public realm.



Uses – mixed and integrated.

The land parcel will provide a policy compliant mix of residential dwellings to be distributed across the land parcel, supporting a tenure blind design approach.



Homes and Buildings – functional, healthy and sustainable.

House types provided on the land parcel will be adequate in size, fit for purpose and stimulate an attractive and positive place to live.



Resources – efficient and resilient.

The site and houses will be developed and designed to reduce carbon emissions and conserve natural resources such as land, water, energy and materials, to minimise the impact of climate change.



Lifespan – made to last.

The houses will be designed to allow for changing needs and evolving technologies. Furthermore, the open space will be well designed to differentiate between public and private spaces which will add to the quality of the development.



2.2 STRATEGIC PLANNING CONTEXT

Stantec has been acting for Bloor Homes North West since 2018 in respect of its proposed residential development scheme at land to the west of Hollingworth Road in Littleborough.

Bloor's was identified as proposed allocation ref: OA16 ('Land to the north east of Smithy Bridge') several years ago, within the original draft version of what was then known as the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework ('GMSF'), now known as Places for Everyone ('PfE').

Bloor's site was carried forward as a proposed allocation in the revised draft version of the GMSF ('Policy GM Allocation 26: Land North of Smithy Bridge'), which was published for consultation in January 2019. The publication version of PfE was published for consultation in August 2021, and Bloor's site was again carried forward as a proposed residential allocation ('Policy JP Allocation 22: Land North of Smithy Bridge').

In February 2022, the publication version of PfE was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination, which commenced in November 2022 and ran until March 2023. The examination session concerning Bloor's site took place in February 2023, and we appeared to confirm Bloor's intention to proceed with its proposed scheme at pace following confirmation of the allocation.

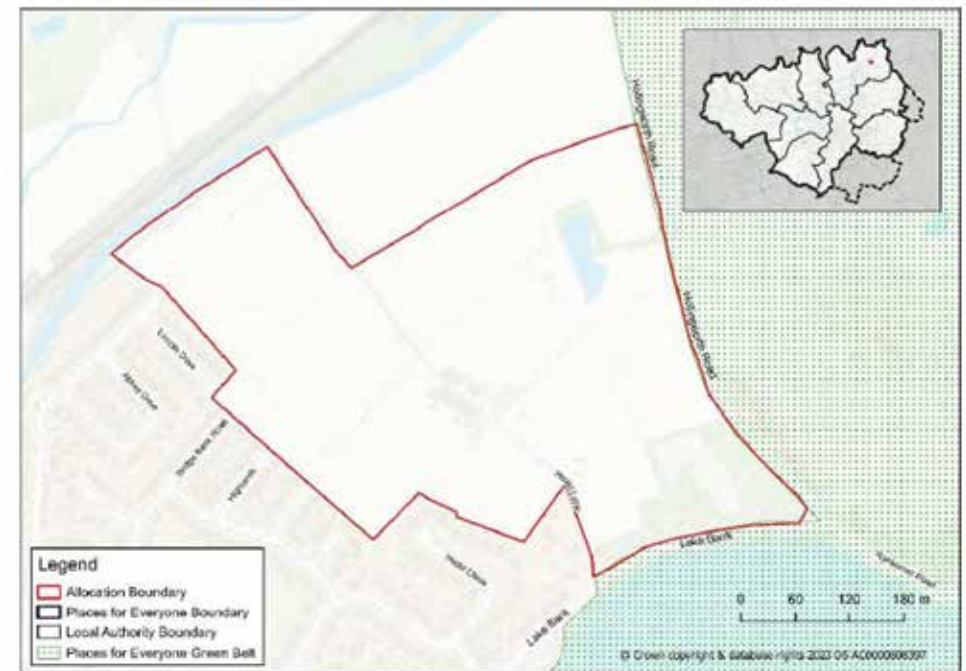
We have made representations at appropriate junctures over recent years to support the proposed allocation. Our representations explained that the site did not make any meaningful contribution to the Green Belt purposes, a position which was endorsed by the Council's own evidence.

As other sections of this document explain, the site has strong locational credentials – being very well related to both Smithy Bridge (to the south-west) and Littleborough (to the north) – and is free from insurmountable constraints that would prevent a development scheme coming forward. Reflecting that position, the site was confirmed as an allocation when PfE was adopted in March 2024. The Hollingworth Road site is therefore no longer within the Green Belt and it is allocated for residential uses as well as a primary school.

Bloor's site is referred to as 'Policy JP Allocation 20: Land North of Smithy Bridge' within the adopted version of PfE, the extent of which is shown on following extract from page 376 of the PfE document:

Policy JP Allocation 20: Land North of Smithy Bridge

Picture 11.32 JPA 20 Land North of Smithy Bridge



The LP Allocation 20 policy wording is reproduced here for ease of reference.

‘Development at this site will be required to:

1. Deliver around 300 new homes, including provision of larger (4, 5 and 6 bedroom) houses, or similar types of larger homes as agreed with the Local Planning Authority, and affordable housing in accordance with relevant local plan requirements;
2. Achieve excellent design and sustainability through masterplanning and the use of design codes for the whole site to ensure comprehensive development;
3. Deliver a landscape-led development, incorporating high-quality green and blue infrastructure, that takes advantage of the site’s attractive setting next to Hollingworth Lake and the Rochdale Canal and reflects and responds to the special qualities and sensitivities of the key characteristics of the Pennine Foothills (West /South Pennines) landscape character type in accordance with policy JP-G1;
4. Define the archaeological potential of the development site through the completion of archaeological evaluation in the form of geophysics, field walking and trial trenching for areas specified in the Land North of Smithy Bridge Historic Environment Assessment 2020. The masterplan must detail where significant archaeology must be preserved in situ and demonstrate how the development has responded sympathetically to this;
5. Make provision for new and improved sustainable transport and highways infrastructure having regard to the indicative transport interventions set out in Appendix D in accordance with policy JP-C8. This should include facilitating high quality, safe and convenient walking and cycling routes through the site to provide improved linkages to key local destinations including Littleborough Town Centre, Hollingworth Lake, Rochdale Canal and the two railway stations – Smithy Bridge and Littleborough;
6. Make provision for compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt in the vicinity of the site in accordance with policy JP-G2;

7. Carry out a project specific Habitats Regulation Assessment in relation to the Rochdale Canal for planning applications of 50 dwellings or more;

8. Mitigate the recreation disturbance impacts on the South Pennine Moors SAC/SPAs with reference to JP-G5, criterion 7 (c);

9. Facilitate the delivery of a new primary school and associated outdoor playing space. Make financial contributions for offsite additional secondary school provision to meet needs generated by the development in accordance with policy JP-P5;

10. Development will be required to retain and enhance the existing visitor car parking spaces on the site, or provide replacement visitor car parking spaces in a suitable location nearby for any existing spaces lost; and

11. Consider the extraction of any viable mineral resources within Mineral Safeguarding Areas, in accordance with Policy 8 of the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan (or any relevant policies in subsequent minerals plans).’

3. ASSESSING THE CONTEXT

3.1 FACILITIES AND MOVEMENT

The land parcel fronts Hollingworth Road/B6225, which is a north-west connection between Littleborough and Hollingworth Lake. The B-road is street lit and subject to a 30mph speed limit, and provides a direct link to the town of Littleborough and onward routes. Hollingworth Road connects to the A58 which offers travel to Halifax to the east and Rochdale, Bury and Bolton to the west.

A footway runs along both sides of the carriageway of Hollingworth Road which connects to existing bus stops along the B6225. The 458 bus runs along this route offering regular services to Rochdale and Littleborough town centres.

Littleborough train station is located approximately a 10 minute walk to the north of the land parcel, and provides frequent services to Rochdale, Manchester, Halifax and Leeds.

Littleborough town centre lies to the north of the land parcel and has many facilities and services, including a supermarket, local shops, restaurants, pubs, primary schools, healthcare services, community facilities, green spaces, and employment opportunities.

The application land parcel provides good connectivity to existing local amenities, public footpath network and public transport links which provides future residents with sustainable alternatives to car journeys to easily access a variety of services and facilities.





3.2 LOCAL CHARACTER

Littleborough

Littleborough is a town that lies to the north east of Rochdale and Manchester, offering good public transport connections to both, as well as other retail and employment areas within the wider context of the town. The town provides a range of key services including employment, education, health and community facilities. The South Pennine Hills surround Littleborough to the east.

Given Littleborough's proximity to the South Pennines, the town has a distinct character typical of the area. The local vernacular is typically sandstone buildings, of a maximum of 3 storeys for domestic dwellings.

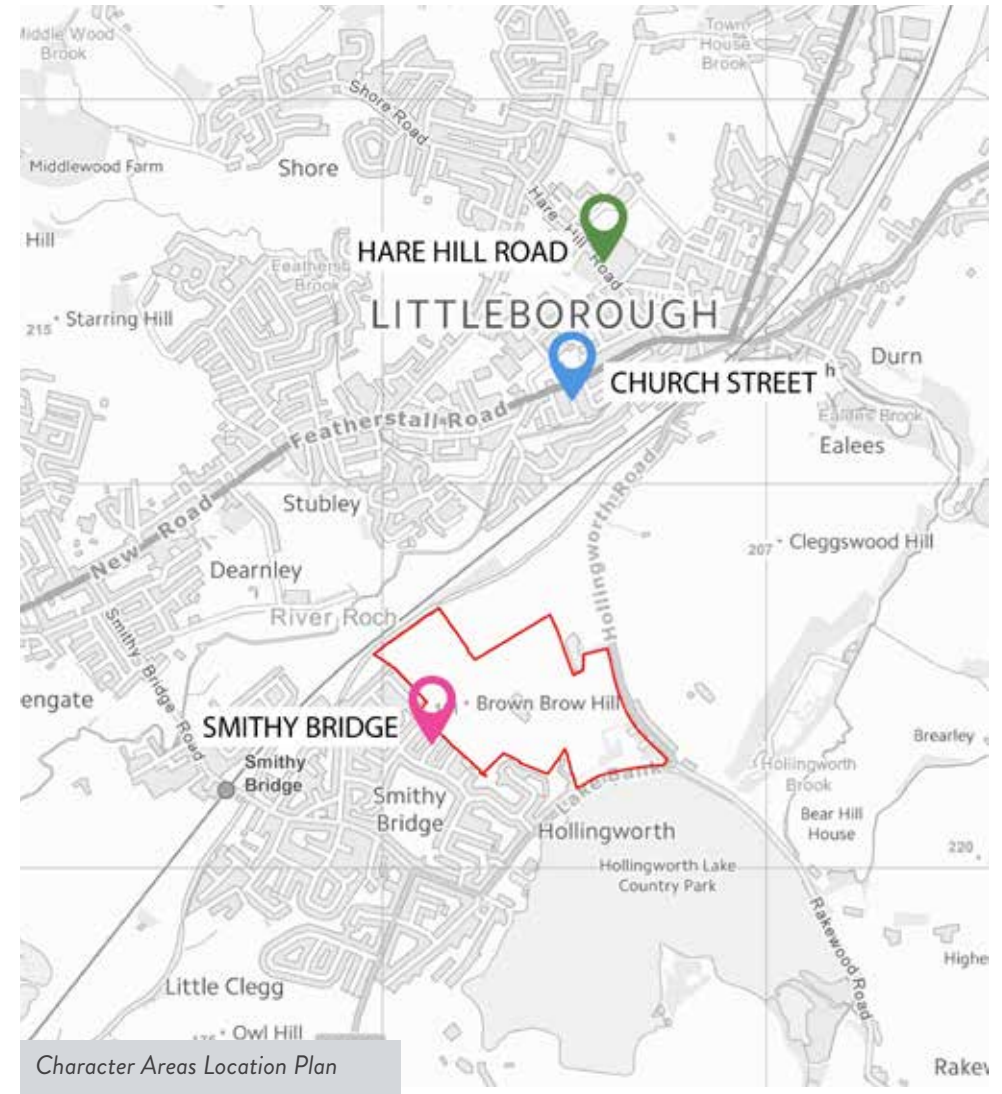
The town evolved and developed as a result of and along the main transport route of the A58. The neighbouring M62 to the south enabled further expansion of Littleborough, and associated towns.

Littleborough has a compact town centre, centered around the Littleborough train station and Halifax Road. Hare Hill Park lies to the north of the town centre with the open countryside to the south and east of the centre.

We have analysed three areas, in order to understand local character:

- The Church Road area to the north of the site
- The eastern side of Smithy Bridge adjacent to the site
- New housing at Hare Hill Road

These areas have been selected based on their close geographical relationship with the land parcel, as well as considering newer development accepted as an appropriate addition to the town.



Smithy Bridge, Littleborough

Scale

- 1-2 storey in height
- Variety of deeper set backs from pavements/parking, many with front gardens
- The residential density is assumed to be medium to lower

Built Form and Materials

- Buff and red brick, neutral render, slate and clay roof tiles
- Predominantly detached with occasional semi detached
- Pitched roofs, with occasional gable ends, which are of domestic scale

Boundary Treatments

- Low level stone and brick boundaries, hedge planting, informal low level fencing and some areas of no boundaries
- Intermittent larger front gardens with planted boundaries

Public Realm and Parking

- Front and side parking with some garages
- Street is comprised of carriageway, pavement and no street trees
- Occasional informal green spaces at the convergence of routes
- Some steep access to properties and sloped/stepped front gardens

Gable fronted orientation

Front gardens with low level boundaries

Off-street parking to side of property



Images of housing at Smithy Bridge



Church Street, Littleborough

Scale

- 2 storey in height
- Variety of shallower set backs from pavements/parking, some with front gardens
- The residential density is assumed to be medium

Built Form and Materials

- Traditional stone walls, buff brick and slate roof tiles
- Mostly shallower setbacks from pavement, some areas with minimal setback
- Predominantly terraced with occasional detached/semi-detached
- Pitched roofs which are of domestic scale, many of which are not gabled fronted

Boundary Treatments

- Low level stone boundaries, hedge planting and informal low level fencing

Public Realm and Parking

- All on-street parking with some garages
- Street is comprised of carriageway, pavement and no street trees

Chimneys and low
pitch rooflines

Front gardens with hedge
and low stone wall boundary

Variety in roof orientation



Images of housing near Church Street



Hare Hill Road, Littleborough

Scale

- 2-3 storey in height
- Variety of shallow set backs from pavements/parking, some with front gardens
- The residential density is assumed to be medium to higher

Built Form and Materials

- Traditional stone walls and slate tiles fronting Hare Hill Road, with red brick and slate roof tiles elsewhere
- All grey windows and doors
- Pitched roofs which are of domestic scale, many of which are not gabled fronted

Boundary Treatments

- Low level stone boundaries fronting Hare Hill Road. Open boundaries with intermittent planting/grass strips for the rest of the development

Public Realm and Parking

- Parking located to the front and rear of properties, with some rear access
- Street is comprised of carriageway, pavement and no street trees

Strong building line of terraced properties

Off-street parking to rear of property

Small front gardens with low level stone boundaries



Images of housing at Hare Hill Road



3.3 DRAINAGE

The Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Management Strategy explains that the Hollingworth Road land parcel is located within Flood Zone 1 and, given that the proposals are mostly residential in nature, the proposed development is classed as ‘more vulnerable’ according to the Planning Practice Guidance. Such development is appropriate within Flood Zone 1, providing there is no increase in flood risk elsewhere as a result of the proposal.

The same report reviews all sources of flood risk both to and resulting from the proposed development and concludes that the proposals are at very low risk from fluvial flood risk and that the risk of flooding associated with the Rochdale Canal is low. Hollingworth Lake reservoir is located less than 100m to the south of the land parcel and is in an elevated position, but the applicant team’s initial enquiries, a review of key publications and discussions with various bodies have not identified any historic flooding issues at the land parcel associated with the reservoir.

The primary flood risk potential at the Hollingworth Road land parcel is therefore considered to be from surface water run-off; this risk varies across the land parcel and is closely associated with the existing topography. The risk associated with surface water flooding will be reduced and sustainably managed post-development, following the implementation of mitigation measures proposed within the Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Management Strategy.

3.4 HIGHWAYS

The Hollingworth Road land parcel is allocated for residential use and a primary school by ‘Policy JP Allocation 20: Land North of Smithy Bridge’ of Places for Everyone (‘PfE’), which became part of the statutory development plan for the nine PfE authorities (including Rochdale) on 21 March 2024. The allocation largely mirrors the Hollingworth Road land parcel, although it also encompasses a small amount of additional land which does not form part of the current planning application.

The Reasoned Justification beneath the main policy wording for Policy JP Allocation 20, on page 378 of the PfE Plan, recognises the sustainable location of the allocation and its accessibility by sustainable modes of transport:

‘11.262 This site provides an excellent opportunity to deliver a high-quality housing scheme and associated facilities which maximises the potential of this sustainable location. Any proposal should take advantage of its setting close to Hollingworth Lake and build on the existing and proposed residential offer within the area.’

11.264 The site is within walking distance of both Littleborough and Smithy Bridge rail stations and adjacent to Smithy Bridge which is an attractive and popular residential area which also includes Hollingworth Lake Country Park. The site is also relatively close to Littleborough town centre which contains a range of local services and facilities. Access between these destinations can be significantly improved through the creation of new routes within this development and the adjoining housing site to the north. Given these important linkages, the masterplanning of the site should have regard to the proposed residential development to the north.’

The Transport Assessment shows that various junctions on the local highway network are predicted to operate with a sufficient amount of residual capacity available in the future, with and without the proposed development in place. Other junctions on the wider highway network are predicted to operate over-capacity in the future year traffic scenarios, including some which are already operating over-capacity. The details of any mitigation that may be required to mitigate highway impacts at such junctions associated with the proposed development will be determined through the planning application process.

3.5 ECOLOGY

No ecological constraints have been identified that would prevent the proposed development being in compliance with relevant wildlife/nature conservation legislation and policy, subject to implementation of the mitigation measures that are identified within the Environmental Statement.

3.6 LANDSCAPE

As other parts of this Design and Access Statement explain, a landscape-led approach has underpinned the design of the proposed development in order to ensure that it integrates successfully with land parcel’s rural character within a Pennine fringe setting. A large swathe of grassland within the centre of the land parcel will be kept free from development, which will ensure that views of the surrounding hills and valleys are protected.

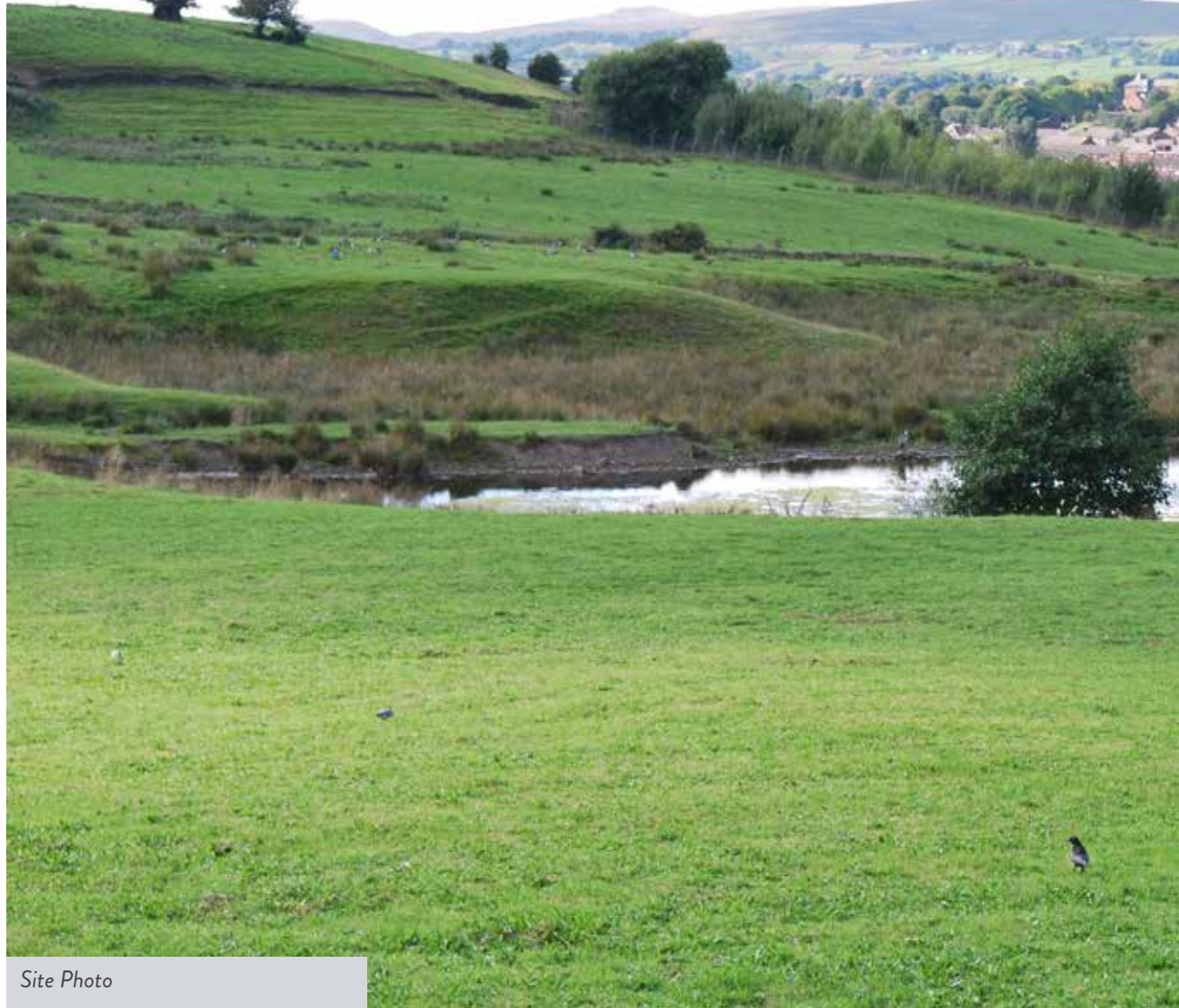
3.7 UTILITIES

Section 13 of the PfE Topic Paper in relation to ‘Land North of Smithy Bridge’ site, which was then (July 2021) a proposed allocation: ‘The development can therefore be easily connected to key utilities. Any upgrades required to accommodate new homes can be made alongside the delivery of the development.’

Based on consultation with relevant utilities providers (Electricity North West, Cadent Gas, United Utilities, BT Openreach and Virgin Media), the applicant’s specialist team agrees with the conclusion in the Topic Paper and considers that there will not be any significant issues in terms of connecting the scheme to required utilities. Formal responses from the utilities companies confirms that all of the main utilities are available within the local area to serve the proposed development. No major reinforcement is required, and connection points are within the local road network, meaning that there will be minimal impact on the surrounding area.

3.8 ARBORICULTURE

The Hollingworth Road land parcel is allocated in the PfE Plan, and so it is accepted that there will be changes to its context, character and associated vegetation. A total of 41 no. individual trees, 20 no. tree groups, 1 no. woodland area and 1 no. hedgerow were recorded on-site during the tree survey which informed the Arboricultural Impact Assessment (‘AIA’), but a guiding principle from the outset of the scheme’s evolution has been to retain existing trees and planting where possible, and to enhance them by additional landscape treatment through street trees, attractive public realm and local green spaces.



Site Photo

4. EVALUATION

4.1 SUMMARY OF OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Analysis of the land parcel and context has identified the following opportunities and constraints relevant to the proposed development at Hollingworth Road, Littleborough.

LAND USE:

- The land parcel boundary totals 18.85 ha of land
- The proposal has been inspired by positive elements of the existing landscape and built form
- Opportunity to respect the privacy and amenity of exiting dwellings and neighbouring developments

ACCESS AND MOVEMENT:

- Access will be achieved via two primary access point off Hollingworth Road. The vehicular accesses will be supplemented by pedestrian footway/cycleway connections from the land parcel access point to the existing footway along the B6625, providing an opportunity to create safe and secure links to existing footway and infrastructure and connections to Littleborough
- There are existing Public Rights of Way (PRoW) that cross the land parcel. There is potential to link with the existing public right of way network to connect to new informal footpaths within the land parcel
- There is potential for the proposed scheme to connect to the housing estate to the west of the land parcel; Smithy Bridge, via pedestrian connections
- Opportunity to enhance connectivity from the land parcel to the existing bus stops along Hollingworth Road

LANDSCAPE:

- Existing trees and vegetation should be retained, where possible, and their setting enhanced where possible
- Landscape buffers will be provided where suitable to create an appropriate setting for the retained hedgerows and trees on the land parcel
- Existing water bodies to be preserved and enhanced as part of proposed public open space

UTILITIES:

- The land parcel falls from a high point towards the south, with steep gradient running through the centre of the land parcel. Drainage areas will be located appropriately
- Existing water and gas line to be retained, with appropriate easements

ECOLOGY:

- No ecological constraints have been identified that would prevent the proposed development being in compliance with relevant wildlife/nature conservation legislation and policy

ARBORICULTURE:

- A total of 41 no. individual trees, 20 no. tree groups, 1 no. woodland area and 1 no. hedgerow were recorded on-site during the tree survey which informed the Arboricultural Impact Assessment





5. INVOLVEMENT

5.1 PLACES MATTER DESIGN REVIEW PANEL PRESENTATION

The proposals for the Residential and School Land parcel have been through two DRP reviews and responded positively to each. A summary is provided below of the key comments and how the plan and wider design proposals have been refined as a result.

DRP SESSION 1 - 29TH JUNE 2022

Summary of key issues and findings:

- *This is a glorious site and it is critical that it should be landscape-led, with the building blocks flowing from that to maximise the potential of the site.*

The scheme has focused more on the public open spaces, celebrating landscape features and responded to the unique site topography.

- *Ensure that the beauty, wildness and character of the context contribute to making this a special and place specific scheme.*

A further context appraisal has been developed that has identified key local characteristics through built form, materials, landscape character and scale in order to interpret these and apply them appropriately to the site.

- *You certainly appear to want to take this in the right direction, but you need to step up a gear to make sure that you bring forward a very special scheme for this site.*

Further work has been undertaken on house types, architectural treatment and materials to ensure the scheme is distinctive.

- *Stretch your Urban Design diagram to see if you can make much more of the connections directly in to Smithy Bridge.*

We have worked hard to develop appropriate and varied connections to Smithy Bridge with the focus on pedestrian/cycle links linking the scheme to the adjacent streets.

- *Everything really needs to emerge in 3D if you are to realise and exploit the topography and setting of this unique place.*

Following the DRP Review a number of specific site sections were developed in order to understand the unique topography and how our design proposals have responded to make the most out of the elevated views across public open spaces.

- *Explore more variety in your housing typologies and use these to exploit the level changes of the site.*

A variety of house types have been developed that aim to respond to site topography, the form of public open spaces, reinforcing main streets and developing a sensitive edge to the central park.

- *Test if the school is in the correct position.*

A school options study was undertaken that explored 4 different locations judged against accessibility, topography and place making. The result was to reinforce the current location as the best place for the school.

DRP SESSION 2 - 21ST SEPTEMBER 2022

Summary of key issues and findings:

- *The Panel commended your energy, but you need to be more refined and do further testing. It remains critical that this should be landscape-led, to maximise the potential of the site and you have made steps in that direction.*

Further work has been undertaken to support the scheme as landscape led, particularly in relation to the detail design of public open spaces, plot boundaries and the treatment of landscape areas.

- *Immerse yourselves in how a Pennine village “frays” away at the moorland edge and reconsider the position and scale of the main street into the site.*

Additional work has been done on considering the physical context particularly around built form, scale and how buildings address the street.

- *Keep referring back to the amazing views and add your designs in 3D to these photographs to really show what the place will look and feel like.*

Site sections have been produced that demonstrate how new homes will benefit from elevated positions.

- *The character areas may be too complex and some have the wrong names, so revisit and test these.*

We have reviewed the character areas and rationalised them to three generated by the landscape, key streets and topography.

- *Conceive things as if you are entering a new Lancashire village and make the place really “sing” by continually referring back to the existing beauty.*

The proposals have been developed to ensure a strong and appropriate gateway both to the site but also Littleborough given its location on the main Hollingworth Road. The gateway has been expressed through scale and position of buildings, landscape treatment and the placement of the school as an important landmark building.

- *Keep exploring more variety in your housing typologies and use these to exploit the level changes of the site.*

A variety of house types have been developed that aim to respond to site topography, the form of public open spaces, reinforcing main streets and developing a sensitive edge to the central park.

- *If you choose to leave the school in its current location then consider giving it a more generous site to retain existing trees.*

The site has been expanded but more detailed consideration will need to be given to the number of trees retained and the detailed size and layout of the school.

5.2 DESIGN EVOLUTION

The design team assessed a range of potential locations for the Primary School in March 2023. The assessment took account of site constraints and considered which location is best suited for a primary school from a place making perspective.

PRIMARY SCHOOL

The design team assessed a range of potential locations for the primary school in March 2023. The assessment took account of site constraints and considered which location is best suited to a primary school from a place making perspective. Locating the new school in the southern part of the Hollingworth Road land parcel was found to be the best option from both a delivery and place making perspective, for the following reasons:

- Locating the school building in the southern part of the site will create a memorable landmark at the entrance to the new development, reinforcing it as a 'gateway'.
- Mature groups of trees within that part of the site will create an attractive setting for the school, and they can also be a valuable learning resource and support good health.
- The southern part of the site is easily accessible off Hollingworth Road, which is a key transport route within the local area and a regular bus route, thereby helping students and parents to access the school more easily.

Having established that the southern part of the Hollingworth Road land parcel is the best location for the school, the design team refined the scheme, taking on board the feedback from Places Matter and the Council's planning, urban design and highways officers during a series of pre-application meetings. Key refinements can be summarised as follows:

- The layout now includes swales within the central open space, which has enabled beneficial alterations to the sizes and positions of the ponds.
- A non-equipped area for play ('NEAP') has now been incorporated within the open space.
- The scheme now features stronger 'green' links than in earlier iterations, and the green space within the eastern part of the site now has a softer edge. The proportion of 2.5 storey dwellings has been increased to 20 per cent of the total, with those properties used as focal points and to maximise views.
- The character areas have been simplified from five to three.
- Meticulous attention has been paid to creating a landscape approach which is in keeping with the site's Pennine fringe setting, with key elements including retention of existing trees and hedges, complemented by native hedgerow buffer planting; low stone walls rather than dwarf brick walls; and extensive wildflower meadows.
- The southern site access has been repositioned further north, which enables retention of existing trees and extension of the school land in the southern part of the site.
- The spine road has been realigned and an additional link from the northern access has been provided.
- Vehicular links into the residential estate to the west of the site have been removed.



Site Photo

6. PARAMETER PLANS

6.1 LAND USE AND ACCESS PARAMETER PLAN

The Land Use and Access Parameter Plan presents the extent of the proposed land uses and access to the land parcel.

Residential

The two vehicular accesses into the land parcel will be off Hollingworth Road. The access points will connect to the existing carriageway and footpaths along Hollingworth Road.

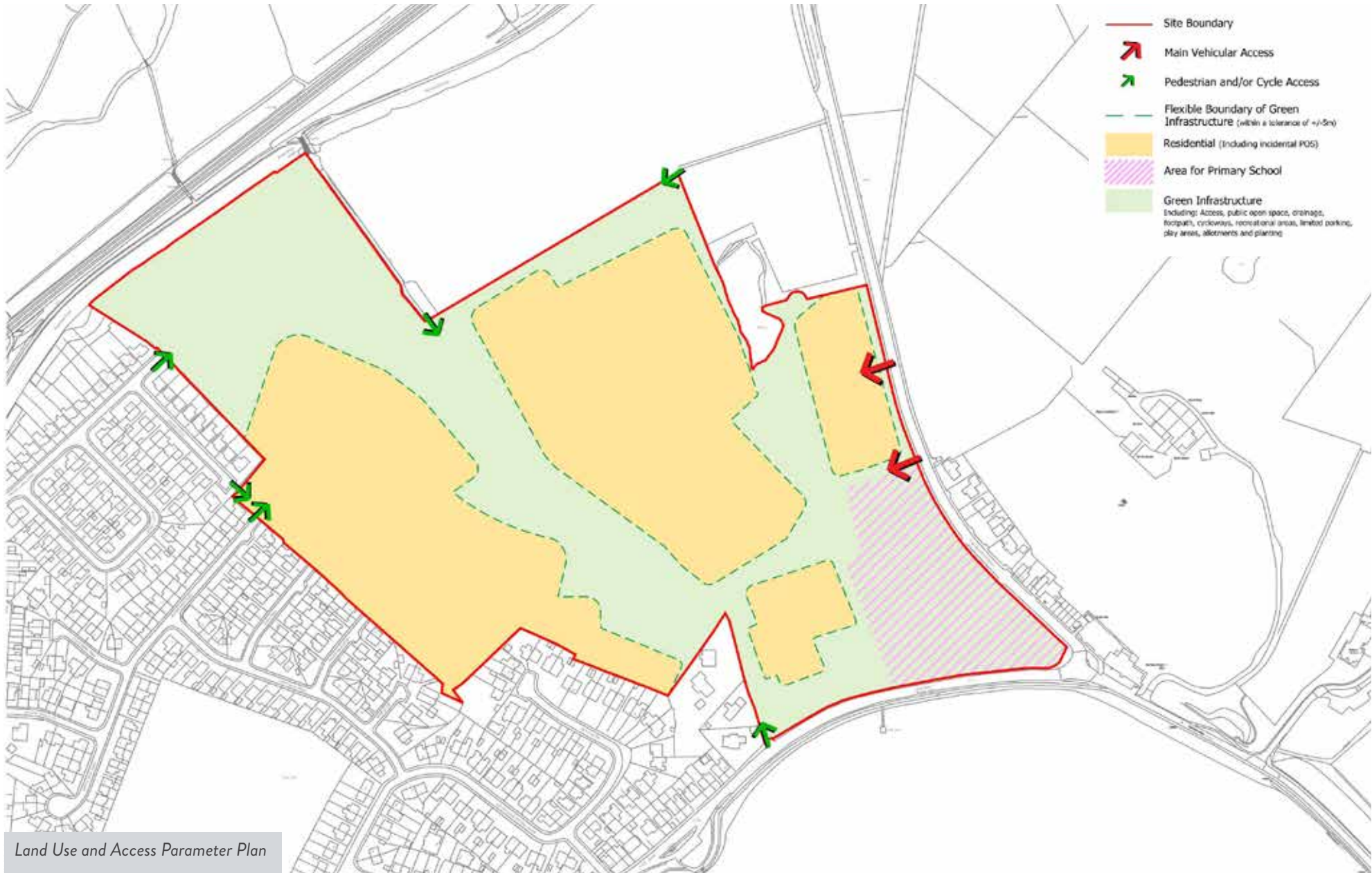
The residential areas will consist of 312 dwellings with incidental open spaces, infrastructure, parking and ancillary planting. The residential areas will comprise a range of dwelling types, scale and tenures. The highest density within the residential area will lie along Hollingworth Road, creating a defined gateway to the land parcel, with lower density areas along the edges of the development.

Primary School

The access into the Primary School area will also lie along Hollingworth Road. The area for the Primary School will cover approximately 1.69 ha, and all further detail is subject to continued investigations. The School building will reinforce the 'gateway' to the site.

Open Space

A well connected and integrated network of open space is proposed which includes the key green open space running from north to south. A number of pedestrian access points will lie across the land parcel, with connections to existing Public Rights of Way, and the existing housing estate, Smithy Bridge, to the west.



Land Use and Access Parameter Plan

6.2 SCALE PARAMETER PLAN

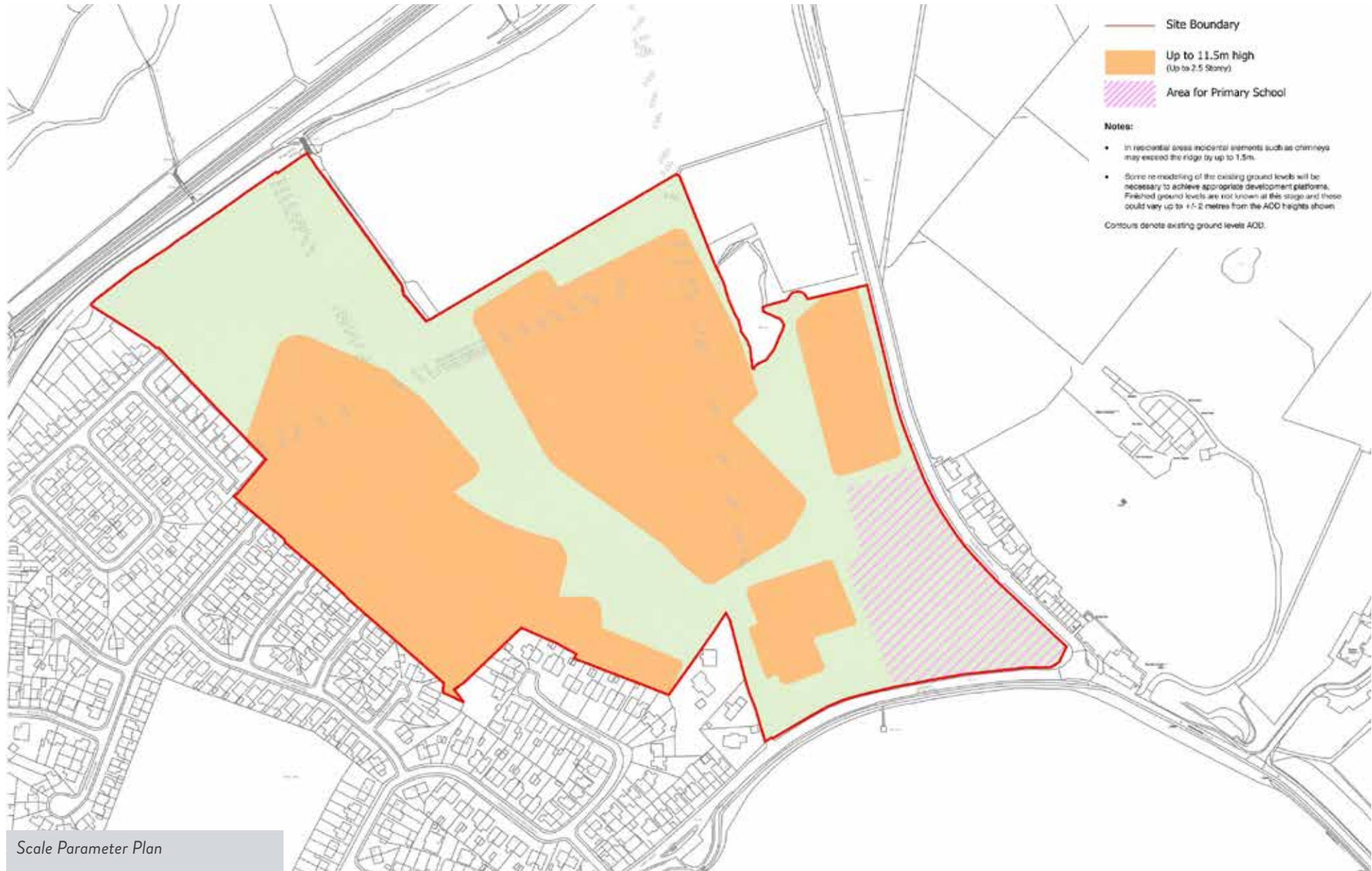
The scale of the residential dwellings and proposed Primary School will define the streets, spaces and public open space, whilst aiding local legibility.

Residential

The development predominantly consists of two storey residential dwellings with areas of 2.5 along Hollingworth Road, and primary routes. The selected locations where the 2.5 storey dwellings will lie will define key locations, terminate vistas or indicate gateway buildings across the development. The edges fronting onto the key green space will be defined by dwellings of 2.5 storey to create a rigor that overlooks and delineate the public open space.

Primary School

The Primary School will mostly be 1-2 storey, which will be subject to detailed design.



Scale Parameter Plan

6.3 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PARAMETER PLAN

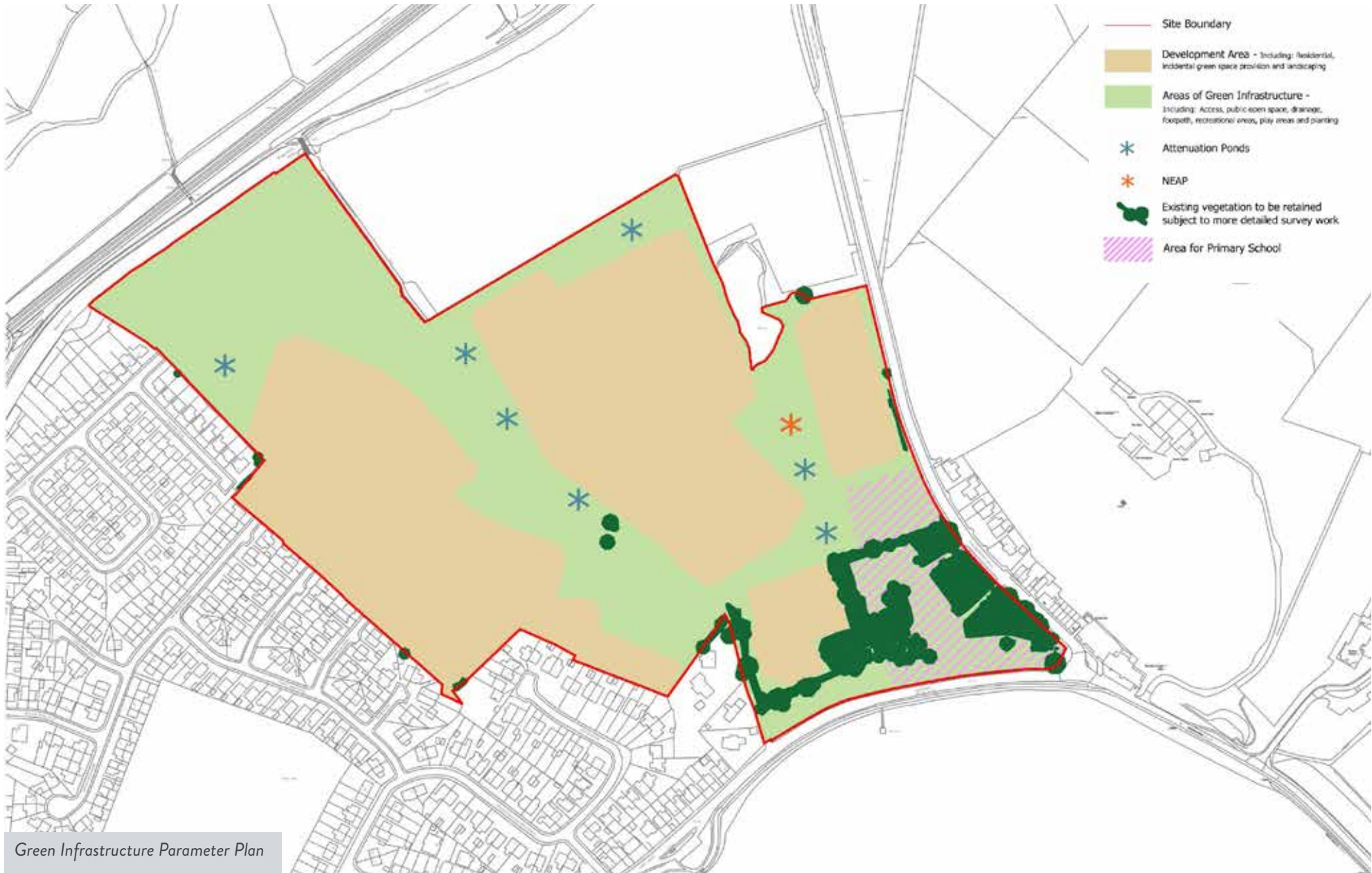
The proposed green infrastructure is presented in the Parameter Plan and presents the existing vegetation, vegetation to be removed, and areas of Public Open Space.

A network of linked open spaces will be accessible to new residents and the existing community. The land parcel will see a network of green infrastructure that will permeate the development, creating a distinct character of open space that is within short journeys of all dwellings. The Public Open Space will include amenity space, provision for a play area, natural and semi-natural areas of open space and attenuation features.

The Parameter Plan shows the retention of most of the existing vegetation, with key trees and hedgerows retained with space around them in the form of green corridors. Some lower quality trees and hedgerows are proposed to be removed around the area of the Primary School.

The School site will incorporate mature trees within the design of the site, whilst creating an attractive plot.

Existing watercourses, attenuation basins and swales are incorporated within the green infrastructure network.



Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan

7. DESIGN CONCEPT AND PRINCIPLES

7.1 DESIGN CONCEPT AND PRINCIPLES

The design concept and principles have been developed following a clear understanding of the opportunities and constraints of the land parcel, and a set of structuring principles that help form:

- Well defined gateways that offer principal pedestrian and vehicular access points to the land parcel.
- Reinforced site boundaries through the retention and enhancement of existing trees and planting, with new landscape buffers and planting.
- A green network that is compromised of retained and proposed planting.
- Legible pedestrian paths which run across the land parcel and create coherent connections.
- The proposed new green space will become a focal point within the development. The green space is easily accessible, well overlooked and offers defined character areas, with the aim to encourage healthy living.
- Key buildings will create a strong building frontage along Hollingworth Road.
- A sympathetic relationship with the neighbouring Hollingworth Lake.
- Retained planting to support character and sense of place, with Public Open Space working alongside the existing and proposed planting.



A strong green network overlooked by housing



Areas of retained planting to support character



Well defined gateways



Concept Plan

8. DESIGN PROPOSALS

8.1 AMOUNT AND LAYOUT

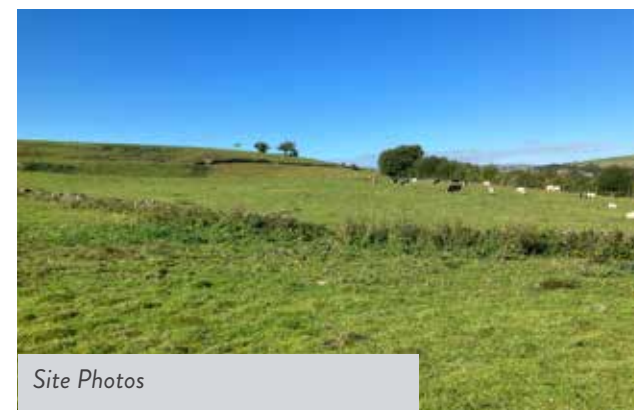
Following analysis of the land parcel's opportunities and constraints, design testing and highways comments, a layout has emerged that supports a rationale of best practice and urban design principles to ensure the creation of a distinctive, sustainable and integrated development.

The proposed development comprises a number of key elements. These include:

- 312 dwellings of varied scale, tenure, and type.
- Two primary vehicular access points off Hollingworth Road.
- The Public Open Space includes the provision of footpaths, play space and biodiversity enhancements.
- The two primary routes within the site feature areas of landscaped edges with boundary treatments designed to ensure a high-quality public realm is created.
- A pedestrian route is proposed which will encourage active pedestrian travel and provide an attractive route for residents, visitors and the local community.



Illustrative Masterplan



Site Photos

8.3 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The scheme layout provides for 15 per cent of the total number of homes to be provided as 'affordable' properties (47 units), all of which comprise shared ownership homes. Such homes will provide opportunities for residents with lower incomes, and first time buyers, to gain a foothold on the property ladder, and be able to live in Littleborough.

The proposed mix of affordable dwellings is:

- 31 no. two-bedroom dwellings
- 16 no. three-bedroom dwellings



8.4 HOUSING MIX

The scheme will see a range of house types and tenures across the site, with the proposal committed to delivering a mixed tenure scheme with the provision of affordable homes.

The land parcel delivers a range of house types of various sizes which comply with the national space standards.

Affordable shared ownership houses, to meet local housing demand, will be provided.

Private				84.9%
Type	Beds	Storeys	No	
Buxton	3	2	1	
Lyford SD	3	2	1	
Kane	3	2	44	
Huxley	3	2	22	
Sherbourne	3	2	7	
Wixham	3	2	6	
Whalton	3	2	6	
McQueen	3	2.5	44	
Locke	4	2	18	
Bewdley	4	2	18	
Wyatt	4	2	8	
Wetton (QA+CL)	4	2	4	
Wollaton	4	2	17	
Watercroft (QA+CL)	4	2	13	
Langley	4	2	6	
Lullingstone (QA+CL)	4	2	5	
Shakespeare	4	2	4	
Oulton (QA)	4	2	3	
Harwood	4	2	7	
Verwood (QA+CL)	4	2	6	
Dawlish	4	2	10	
Dalgety (QA+CL)	4	2	3	
Mere	5	2.5	6	
Raleigh	5	2	2	
Ruabon (QA+CL)	5	2	4	
				265
Shared				15.1%
Type	Beds	Storeys	No	
NSSM-2B4P Sansom-M4(2)	2	2	31	
NSSM-3B5P Sutherland-M4(2)	3	2	16	
				47
Total				312

Housing Mix Table



Housing Mix Plan



- Affordable Rent
- Shared Ownership
- bcp Bin collection point
- X Cycle store
- Existing tree
- Proposed tree
- Landscape buffer

8.5 BUILDING HEIGHTS

The scheme shows a variety of building heights to create interest to the street and aid legibility throughout the development.

Building heights range from 2 storey to 2.5 storey.

LOCATION

Taller and feature buildings are located within key frontages of the land parcel, along Primary routes and facing the open green space. Namely, along Hollingworth Road, creating a defined gateway to the site.



Building Heights Plan

8.6 ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

Two primary accesses will be provided from Hollingworth Road, along the eastern boundary. The two accesses are shown on plans submitted in support of this planning application. The two primary routes will provide defined arrival for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, with subsidiary routes connecting off them.

The land parcel is in a sustainable location, with Littleborough railway station located approximately 1km to the north of the site. The adjacent bus stops along Hollingworth Road provide onward connection to Littleborough and Rochdale.

Pedestrian and cycle routes are proposed within the land parcel with permeable connections to existing links, including Smithy Bridge to the west, and onwards connections.



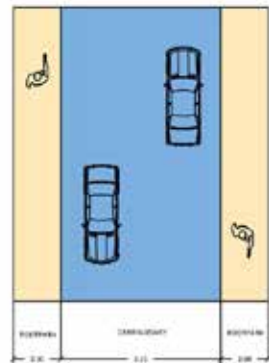
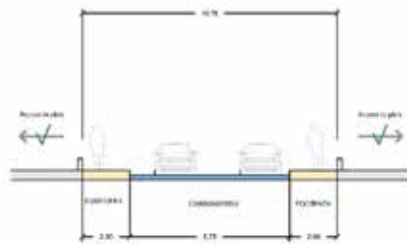
Access and Circulation Plan

8.7 STREET SECTIONS

PRIMARY STREETS

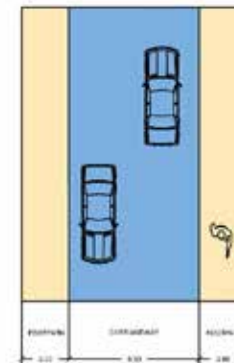
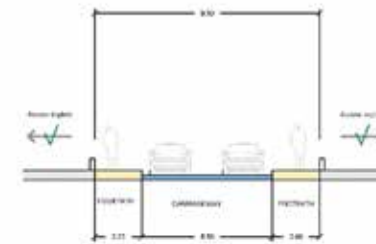
The Primary Streets provides a direct route to the land parcel and forms the spine of the development providing access to secondary streets, and private drives. It is defined by the use of key buildings to delineate gateways, and is a functional and direct route. The street provides a efficient movement route for pedestrians and vehicles, with cyclists using the carriageway.

This route is the most efficient route in and out of the site, assisting the creation of a legible street network for residents and visitors. Surface materials will be bitmac or similar.



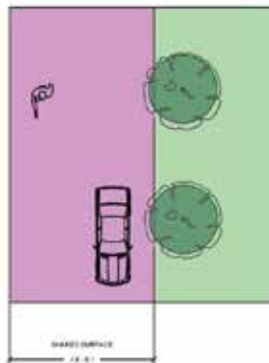
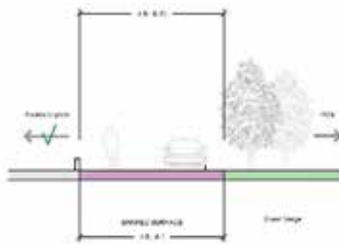
SECONDARY STREETS

Secondary Streets have a character which prioritise the safe movement of pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles. They are defined by varied building typologies along an inconsistent building line with generous sized front gardens. They offer safe movement of pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles. Surface materials will be bitmac or similar.



PRIVATE/SHARED DRIVES

Private drives are informal private area access drives. They deliver a 'soft' edge within the development and will provide access to approximately 5 dwellings. This route is designed exclusively for dwellings fronting them. They will accommodate low traffic levels and have pedestrian/cycle priority, encouraged by the use of shared surface treatments.



8.8 APPEARANCE AND MATERIALS

The scheme layout incorporates a combination of external materials. The material palette has been carefully selected to account for the local vernacular and materials, the local character assessment and proposed character areas, whilst creating distinctive and legible identity.

The materials are summarised on the adjacent plan.

- Main Facing Materials – mix of red brick and reconstituted stone
- Detail brick – red brick
- Roof tile – grey slate or red tile
- External finish – tudor boarding or chalk render



Materials Layout



Facing Brick		
	WIENERBERGER Warm Golden Buff	- OR SIMILAR
	Wienerberger Harvest Buff Multi	- OR SIMILAR
	PORTERRA Clumber Red	- OR SIMILAR
	WSTOCK Baltimore	- OR SIMILAR
	PORTERRA Woodside Mature	- OR SIMILAR
	WIENERBERGER Cadonia Red Multi	- OR SIMILAR
	WIENERBERGER Kinder Mixed Red	- OR SIMILAR
	BEAKSTONE Ironstone	- OR SIMILAR
Detail Brick		
	WIENERBERGER Siena Red	- OR SIMILAR
Roof Tiles		
	PORTCERE SLR Slate Grey Tile	- OR SIMILAR
	PORTCERE SLR Red Tile	- OR SIMILAR
External Finish		
	WEBER MONOCOUCHE RENDER ROUGH CAST - CHALK	
	TUDOR BOARDING CHALK RENDER & OFF BLACK BOARDS	
	TUDOR BOARDING EARTH RENDER & WHITE BOARDS	

8.9 CHARACTER AREAS

The scheme proposes three Character Areas which have been informed by key character drivers and the local character. This aids legibility and helps to differentiate areas of the land parcel.

Key character drivers include:

- The central green space running through the land parcel and associated change in level
- Hollingworth Road
- Existing and proposed water bodies including the small lake in the north east corner

HOLLINGWORTH GATEWAY

Informed by Hollingworth Road and being the arrival gateway to the land parcel, the area responds with a defined building line with key buildings and semi detached units to better define the gateway.

LAKESIDE

Informed by the lake to the east and the relationship to the open parkland to the west, the area is rigorous with a strong building line with detached units along the edges. A mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced units create a tighter grain within the centre of the character area.

HILL VIEW

Informed by the open parkland to the east and occupying higher ground, this area is defined by a variety of house types and varied scales, with units between 2 and 2.5 storeys.

PRIMARY SCHOOL

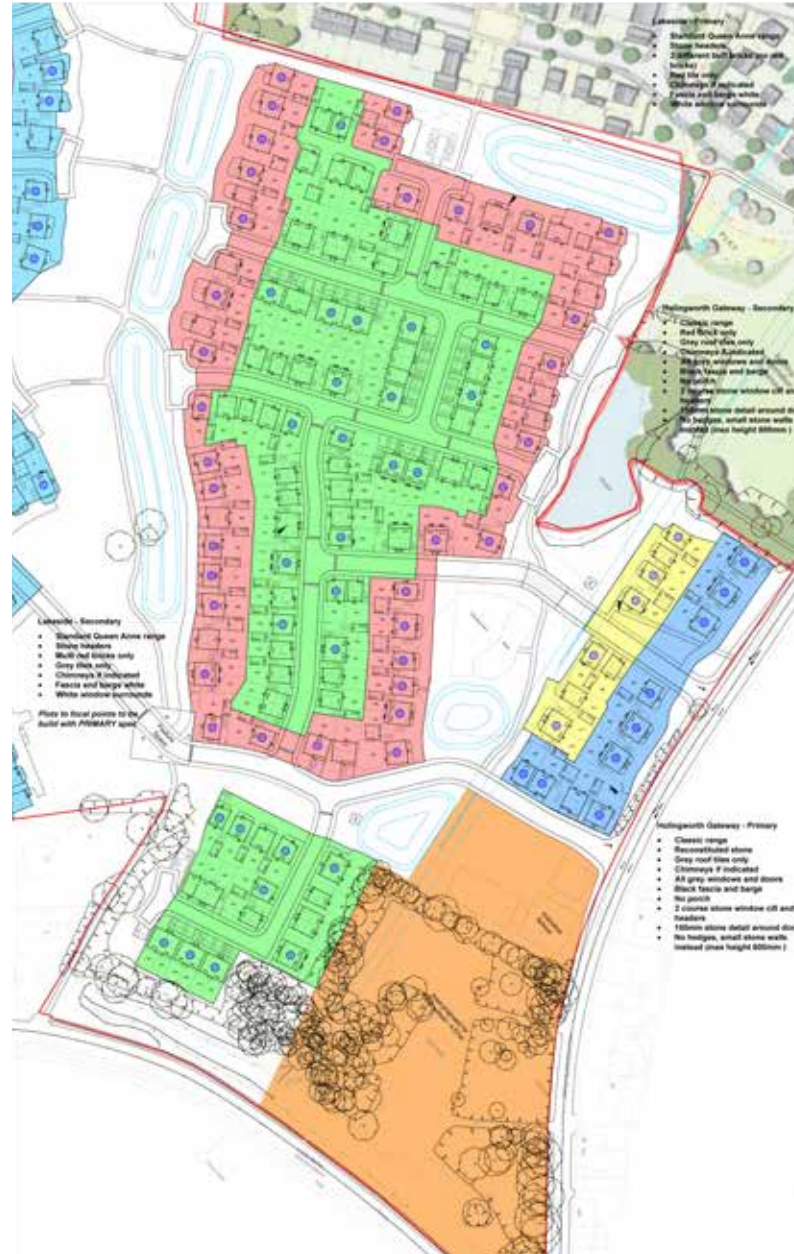
This area is subject to an outline planning application, so all design proposals set out in the DAS are illustrative.



Character Areas Plan



Frontage Plan



- Hollingworth Gateway (PRIMARY)
- Hollingworth Gateway (SECONDARY)
- Lakeside (PRIMARY)
- Lakeside (SECONDARY)
- Hill View (PRIMARY)
- Hill View (SECONDARY)
- School
- Chimney Plots

Hollingworth Gateway

Scale and Density

- Dwellings are 2- 2.5 storeys, with a mix of detached and semi-detached houses
- Medium density

Built Form and Materials

- Primary materials of reconstituted stone and grey slate tile
- Secondary material of red and multi red brick
- Building setbacks to respond to the street hierarchy
- Key buildings fronting Hollingworth Road, to create a defined arrival to the development

Boundary Treatments

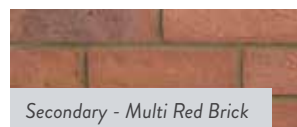
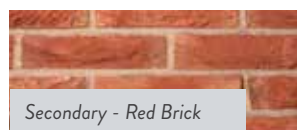
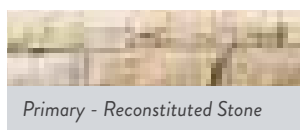
- Low level stone brick walls for key buildings
- Low level planted hedge boundary
- Grass front gardens

Public Realm and Parking

- All side parking, some with garages
- Planted hedges along key roads, with planted shrubs and trees

Architectural Details

- Chimneys on key buildings
- Grey windows including stone heads and cills



Example Primary Housetype Elevations



Example Primary Street Scene



Example Secondary Housetype Elevations



Local Reference Images



Lakeside

Scale

- Dwellings are 2 - 2.5 storey, with a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced
- Medium density, with a tighter grain within the centre of the character area

Built Form and Materials

- Primary materials of buff brick and red tile
- Secondary materials of red brick, multi red brick and grey slate tile
- Building setbacks to respond to the street hierarchy

Boundary Treatments

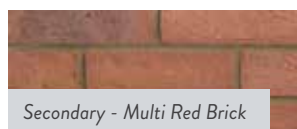
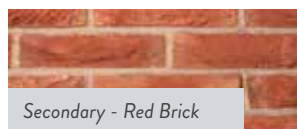
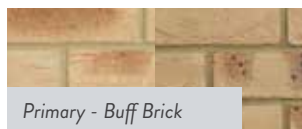
- Low level fencing/railings for key buildings
- Low level planted hedge boundary
- Grass front gardens

Public Realm and Parking

- Side and front parking, with occasional garages
- Planted hedges along key roads
- Private drives fronting the open parkland feature a looser grain and planted shrubs and trees

Architectural Details

- Chimneys on key buildings
- Grey windows including stone heads and cills



Example Primary Housetype Elevations



Example Primary Street Scene



Example Secondary Housetype Elevations



Local Reference Images



Hill View

Scale

- Dwellings are 2 - 2.5 storey, with a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced
- Medium density, with a tighter grain on the western edge to respond to the strong linear form in Smithy Bridge

Built Form and Materials

- Primary materials of red brick and grey slate tile
- Secondary materials of neutral render and reconstituted stone
- Building setbacks to respond to the street hierarchy

Boundary Treatments

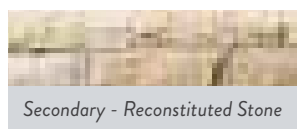
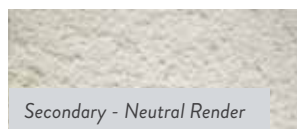
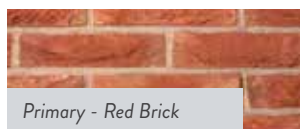
- Low level planted hedge boundary
- Grass front gardens

Public Realm and Parking

- Side and front parking, with occasional garages, and intermittent parking courtyards along the western edge
- Planted hedges along key roads
- Private drives fronting the open parkland featuring a looser grain and planted shrubs and trees

Architectural Details

- Chimneys on key buildings



Example Primary Housetype Elevations



Example Primary Street Scene



Example Secondary Housetype Elevations



Local Reference Images



PRIMARY SCHOOL

The development of the layout of the Primary School and associated land parcel will be informed by the constraints of the land parcel, the setting, and the operation and needs of the school, with design principles subject to further investigation.

School Description

- The school will become a gateway to the land parcel, and the wider land parcel, creating a sense of arrival
- Active frontages will be a priority to the design, with consideration given to the relationship with Hollingworth Road, and the 'public' elevations of the School
- 'Private' elevations of the school will ensure privacy and safety of the students and staff
- Hard play spaces, sports pitches, and informal play spaces will be located adjacent to the school for ease of access and supervision
- Active frontages will be a priority to the design, with consideration given to the relationship with Hollingworth Road, and the 'private' elevations of the School
- Sustainable modes of transport will be promoted, with the provision of cycle parking within easy access from the school
- The building and hard landscaping will intend to have a minimum impact to the existing trees and planting
- Soft landscaping will be a priority to the site, with new tree planting and natural ground level planting, all the be durable and resilient to climate and use



- Boundary treatment will consider the perimeter of the land parcel and the relationship to neighbouring landscaping, housing, Hollingworth Lake, and infrastructure
- Secure parking will be provided, with emphasis on sustainable methods of travel to the school
- The internal layout of the school will prioritise the student and staff users, and their needs, with appropriate classroom, hall, social and ancillary space
- Materiality will consider local vernacular, the neighbouring housing development and the setting





Primary School Precedent Image

8.10 LANDSCAPE PROPOSAL

The proposal has been designed with a landscape led approach and incorporates several measures to ensure the context and quality of the land parcel is retained and celebrated. All street scenes and layouts have been designed with landscaping as a key driver to the land parcel's design, scale, orientation and users.

- Street trees will provide a softer street scape, whilst providing shade and visual buffers.
- The planting strategy will aid in developing various street hierarchies.
- Proposed native and feature trees to enhance the public open space will filter views of the development whilst complementing the lakeside setting.
- Reinforced site boundaries with native planting.
- The open space has been designed to encourage active play and leisure through the inclusion of footways and play spaces, all the promote active movement.
- The hard landscape proposal will play an equal role. Typical hard wearing and high quality materials will be used throughout the street scene and private properties to delineate public and private space.
- The hard landscaping will also include shared spaces where levels, colours, sizes and material choice will assist in creating a safe, attractive, and functional environment for both vehicle and pedestrian users.

Public Open Space

The expansive public open space ('POS') provides an attractive, high quality and safe green space which is accessible for all future residents. The POS proposes trees, grass and planting which will combine to merge with the proposed built environment. The inclusion of paths and play spaces within the POS will encourage social interactive which will promote health, wellbeing, social and civic inclusion.



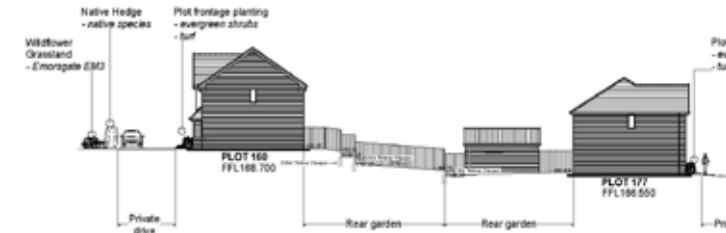


-  Existing trees and hedges to be retained
- to enhance the boundary character
-  Native hedgerow buffer planting
- to enhance local bio-diversity
-  Ornamental hedgerows
-  Proposed Street trees
-  Proposed native POS trees
-  Ornamental shrub planting
-  Proposed built development
-  Roads and pathways
-  Paved shared roadways
-  Private driveways
-  Rear gardens
-  Feature square with focal tree planting
-  Low stone walls
-  Retained grassland
-  Attenuation Basins with wet seed mix and marginal planting
-  Tussock grassland
-  Wildflower meadow
-  Cultivated lawn areas (Front gardens)
-  LEAP Play Area
-  LAP Play Area

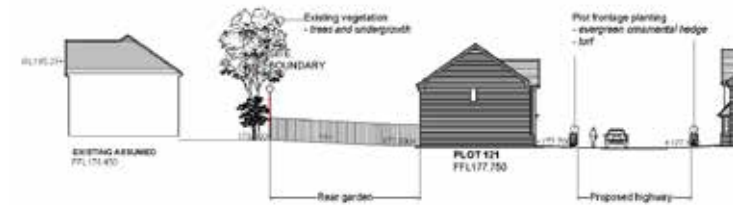
8.11 SECTIONS

The cross sections demonstrate the proposed street scenes across the land parcel. The three sections are across the three Character Areas and give a reflection of the relationship between the dwellings, roads, hard and soft landscaping and POS.

The three sections highlight the topography of the land parcel and how the design responds to the land parcel's topography and character. The sections also demonstrate where the attenuation will relate to the buildings and infrastructure, creating a legible and character driven land parcel.



Section AA



Section BB



Section CC

Vegetation on slopes south of Rookdale Canal to be retained in current condition and managed. No landscape proposals were included within this area.

CAR PARK LAND PARCEL

Rakewood Road, Littleborough

9. INTRODUCTION

9.1 DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

Alterations and extension to Hollingworth Lake Country Park car park, including re-configuration of spaces in the existing car park, new access ramp, landscaping and other associated infrastructure.

Beyond the land parcel's immediate surroundings are agricultural fields and the Peak District moorlands to the east and developed areas of Smithy Bridge and Littleborough to the west and north respectively.

A wooded embankment separates the south-eastern extent of the existing car park from the main part of the land parcel to account for the considerable change in levels in the locality. There is an existing agricultural access at the south-west corner of the land parcel.



Red Line Plan



Land Parcel Photo

10. POLICY CONTEXT

10.1 PLANNING POLICY

The Proposed Development

The vision is to successfully integrate the extension to the existing Hollingworth Lake Country Park car park into the surrounding landscape without compromising the sensitivity of the surrounding landscape or that of the existing habitats within the area. To support this vision, Bloor and its team of specialist advisors have produced an Illustrative Masterplan in support of the planning application.

The physical characteristics of the land parcel were considered from the outset to ensure that any special features of the land parcel's natural context and environment were not only preserved but formed key structuring elements of the design.

A key factor which has informed the design of the scheme is the wooded embankment which separates the south-eastern extent of the existing car park from the main part of the land parcel.

A series of topographical and ecological surveys have been undertaken to inform the location of the new access ramp which will enable access to and from the extended car park. The design of the new access ramp takes account of the changes in levels and seeks to minimise the loss of high-quality trees and the disturbance to badger setts.

As a result, the proposed development is considered to be the optimum design solution. Key features of the scheme include:

- An at-grade car park which provides overflow car parking for Hollingworth Lake Country Park without compromising the sensitivity of the surrounding landscape and existing habitats;
- Vehicle and pedestrian access from the existing car park via a new ramp, alongside a segregated pedestrian footpath linking the main part of the land parcel to the access road off Rakewood Road which currently serves the existing Country Park car park;
- Retention of high quality trees within the land parcel, with new native woodland edge planting to reinforce the existing woodland edge and to provide a protective buffer and create robust green connections through the land parcel and wider landscape;
- Extensive landscaping including the creation of a wildflower meadow and new woodland, creating a tranquil space that supports wildlife. The grassland and wildflower meadow will provide a natural buffer between the extended car park and the Hollingworth Brook;
- Addressing the impacts of climate change by incorporating Sustainable Drainage Systems; and
- Improved legibility and the creation of natural points of interest through the planting of feature trees at key entry locations.

Planning Policy Context

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 provides that:

'... if regard is to be had to the Development Plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the planning acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.'

The development plan for the Borough comprises a combination of the following:

- Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document (March 2024);
- Rochdale Adopted Core Strategy (October 2016);
- Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan and Map (April 2013);
- Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan and Map (April 2012); and
- The 'saved' policies of the Rochdale Borough Unitary Development Plan ('UDP') and Proposals Map (June 2006).

The PFE Proposals Map shows the Rakewood Road land parcel as being designated within Green Belt (Policy JP-G9 'The Green Belt').

Rochdale Adopted Core Strategy (October 2016):

- Policy SP3/P: The Strategy for Pennines
- Policy E5: Encouraging the visitor economy
- Policy E6: Supporting and diversifying the rural economy
- Policy P1: Improving image
- Policy P2: Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage
- Policy P3: Improving design of new development
- Policy G6: Enhancing green infrastructure
- Policy G7: Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity
- Policy G8: Managing water resources and flood risk
- Policy G9: Reducing the impact of pollution, contamination and land instability
- Policy G9: Reducing the impact of pollution, contamination and land instability
- Policy T2: Improving Accessibility
- Policy DM1: General development requirements

Please refer to the Planning Statement for a list of relevant PfE policies.

Principle of Development

Sustainable Development

Paragraph 7 of the NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 then sets out three overarching objectives of sustainable development, namely economic, social and environmental.

Economic Benefits

- Increasing the number of local residents, thereby helping to ensure the vitality and viability of the shops, schools, services and facilities in Littleborough and Smithy Bridge;
- Should a need for additional school places be demonstrated, resulting in a new primary school being built, teaching / support jobs will be created during the operational phase of the development;
- Encouraging visitors to the Hollingworth Lake area, thereby helping to support a prosperous rural economy;
- Reinvesting money raised through additional car park charges into Hollingworth Lake Country Park, thereby helping to sustain and improve this already popular tourist destination;
- Contributing to the needs of the Borough for economic growth through the further expenditure generation and job creation effects of housing development, both directly in construction and indirectly; and
- Generating potential New Homes Bonus revenues to support the delivery of public services.

Social Benefits

- A significant contribution to the supply of high-quality family homes, including both market and affordable homes, at a site that is allocated for residential use in the adopted PfE Plan;
- Approximately 7 hectares of public open space will be created at the Hollingworth Road land parcel within a strong network of green infrastructure, for the enjoyment of the whole community. An additional 0.67 hectares of wildflower meadow will be created at the Rakewood Road land parcel for the public to enjoy;
- Delivery of 140 parking spaces, including parking for disabled people and families, which will continue to enable people to visit and enjoy the Hollingworth Lake area; and
- Appropriate Section 106 financial contributions will be secured towards affordable housing, education, healthcare, open space, highways and recreational disturbance impacts on the South Pennine Moors SAC/SPAs.

11. ASSESSING THE CONTEXT

11.1 DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Transport

As part of the early design process, various access options were evaluated, taking into account existing constraints such as levels, location within the existing car park, ecological limitations, and the presence of existing trees.

Drainage Strategy

The key focus was on the sustainable management of surface water run-off to ensure no increased flood risk results from the development proposals.

The proposals were mimic the existing drainage regime and continue to discharge surface water run-off into Hollingworth Brook located along the northern boundary of the land parcel. The proposals are to utilise a combination of Sustainable Drainage Systems including permeable surfacing, bio-filtration tree pits, along with a conveyance swale to outfall where feasible.

Ecological Value

The horse-grazed, modified grassland fields provide negligible ecological value, with the woodland block comprising the embankment being of local ecological value. The modified fields provide limited value for bats, however, some trees within the woodland support potential bat roosts; the modified fields also provide negligible ecological value for birds, with the woodland providing nesting habitat; the Brook has been surveyed for otter and water vole with no recent evidence of these species.

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment has been undertaken; the baseline value of the land parcel equates to 6.24 habitat units. With the incorporation of the proposed post-development habitats, the site can achieve 12.57 habitat units, which equates to a 101.52% net gain.

Arboriculture

The proposal includes for new tree planting at the boundaries of the land parcel, within the green spaces and internally within the parking areas. Approximately 77 new trees will be planted in addition to areas of new native woodland scrub and native hedgerow sections. Despite the proposed tree losses, it is anticipated that compensatory new native tree planting will contribute towards a net-gain in tree canopy coverage in the long-term.



Land Parcel Photo - Hollingworth Lake

11.2 HERITAGE/ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

Regulatory and Policy Context

1. Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979
2. Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

There are three grades of listing (in descending order):

- Grade I: Buildings of exceptional interest;
- Grade II*: Particularly important buildings of more than special interest; and
- Grade II: Buildings of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve.

3. National Planning

4. Policy Local Planning Policy

- Policy P2: Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage

Designated Heritage Assets

There are no designated heritage assets located within the land parcel. Within the 1km Study Area there are 20 designated heritage assets including 16 Grade II listed buildings and four conservation areas.

The closest designated heritage asset is the Hollingworth Fold conservation area, located approximately 115m to the south of the land parcel, which contains the two grade II listed buildings; 3, Bear Hill and Hollingworth Fold. No conservation area appraisal is available for Hollingworth Fold, however it contains nine buildings with a narrow partially cobbled track way running up the hill away from the lake. An 'Old Quarry' is marked on historic mapping dated to 1892, which may have been a local source of stone for the settlement. The buildings within the conservation area date to the post-medieval period onwards, and the character of the conservation area appears to be that of a small post medieval to industrial period rural settlement. The land parcel is visible from parts of the conservation area, however this is not the case for the majority of the asset, as it is well screened by topography and established wooded areas.

3, Bear Hill is an early 19th century two-storey house constructed in roughly dressed water shot stone with a slate roof. It has a later 19th century brick wing to the rear, but for the most part it retains its historic character. The principal elevation of the building faces south-east, away from the land parcel, and the north-western facing elevations are well screened from the land parcel.

The Hollingworth Fold listed building is dated to 1727 by a date stone on the building, and it is constructed in hammer-dressed water shot stone with a slate roof. It has two storeys, and an additional 20th century out shut has been constructed on the rear of the building. The primary elevation of the building faces south-west, towards Hollingworth Lake, and the asset is well screened to the north-west, towards the land parcel.

- The Rakewood Conservation Area is located approximately 680m to the south of the land parcel. It covers the historic core of the village of Rakewood and extends beyond the Study Area. There are two listed buildings in Rakewood which fall within the Study Area; Freshwater Cottage and Brook Cottage End View Cottage. The closest of these assets (Freshwater Cottage) is located approximately 780m to the south of the land parcel, and there is no clear inter visibility between the land parcel and this asset due to the surrounding topography of the area and no known historic association.
- The Whittaker conservation area is located approximately 515m to the north-east of the land parcel and contains three listed buildings; 1 and 3, Whittaker Fold; the barn immediately north of No's 1 and 3; and the farmhouse west of Whittaker Farmhouse. No conservation area appraisal is available for Whittaker, however it contains nine buildings with the oldest dating to the post-medieval period. The conservation area and its contents are well screened to the south by Whittaker Wood, there is no inter visibility between these assets and the land parcel.
- The Littleborough Town Centre Conservation Area is located approximately 920m to the north of the land parcel and extends along Hare Hill Road and beyond the 1km Study Area. The conservation area covers the historic core of Littleborough and contains four Grade II listed buildings within the Study Area; Littleborough War Memorial; a Railway Viaduct; 6, Church Street (C); and the Roundhouse, Wheatsheaf Buildings. These assets date from the early 19th century onwards, and share no inter visibility with the land parcel due to local topography and no known historic association.

- Other designated assets within the Study Area include four grade II listed buildings on the southern outskirts of Littleborough: The Old Duke; Hillview; 1, Ealees; and Ealees Bridge. These assets are located approximately 870m to the north of the land parcel, and share no inter visibility with the land parcel due to local topography and not share any historic association. In addition to these, abarn, shippon and workshop adjoining Skye House is located approximately 750m to the south-east of the land parcel, again there is no inter visibility or known historic association between the land parcel and this asset

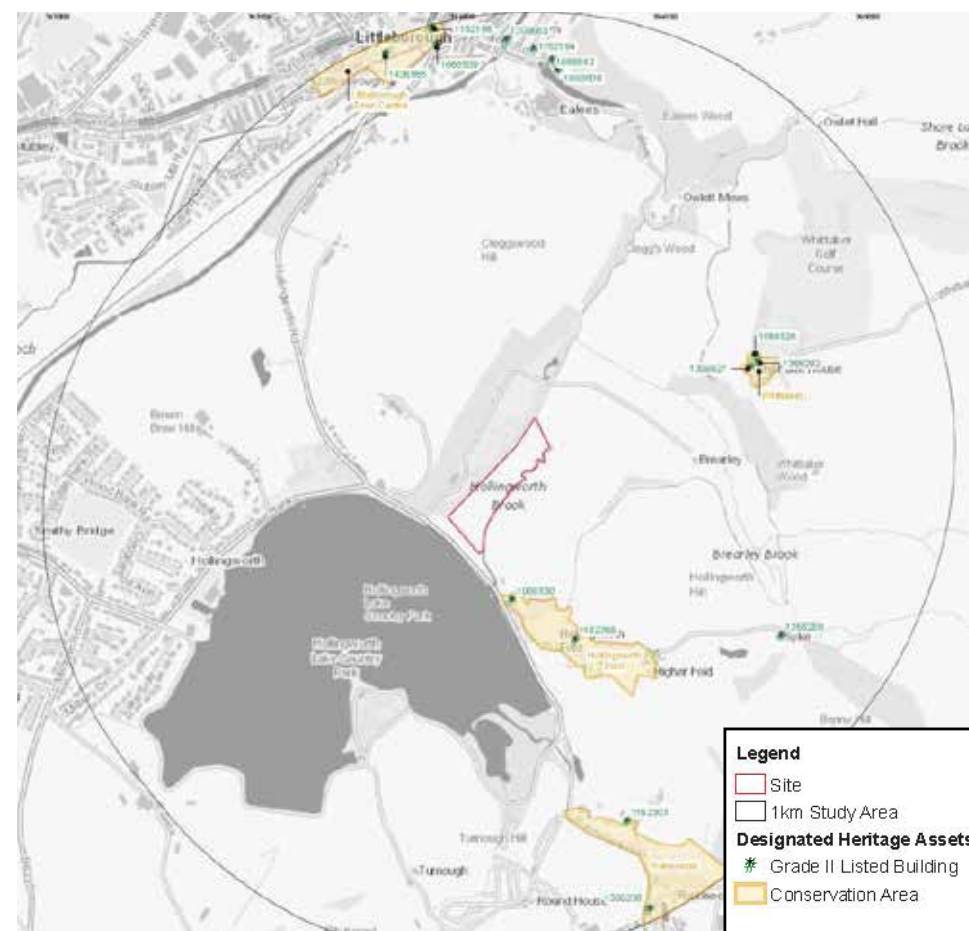
The land parcel is located in a low point within the surrounding area and due to this it shares limited inter visibility with assets throughout the Study Area. There are also no apparent historic associations between the land parcel and any of the nearby designated assets. The Proposed Development will therefore cause no impacts to the setting of any designated heritage asset sand they have been scoped out of further assessment.

Conclusion

The assessment has identified that the land parcel does not contain any known significant archaeological remains, but that it does hold potential to contain further, as yet unknown, archaeological remains. Based upon existing evidence, there is nothing to indicate that there will be any archaeological remains of designable (national) heritage significance present within the land parcel. However, this potential cannot be entirely dismissed in the absence of further archaeological investigation.

Intrusive ground works associated with the Proposed Development will adversely impact (damage or remove) any shallow archaeological deposits present within their footprint.

Appropriate evaluative works are to be determined by GMAAS. The exact scope and timing of any potential evaluation will be subject to agreement with GMAAS (consultation currently being carried out by the Stantec Archaeology and Heritage Team). The results of any potential evaluation will inform the requirements and scope of archaeological mitigation.



Designated Heritage Assets Plan

11.3 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT

Context and Location

The Rakewood Road land parcel is located immediately adjacent to the north-eastern edge of Hollingworth Lake and to the south-east of an area of within which is an existing car park off Rakewood Road. The land parcel is encompassed within the Merseyside and Greater Manchester Green Belt and situated within a 5km buffer zone of the Peak District National Park Special Area of Conservation.

The dominant topographical features in the vicinity of the land parcel are the Pennine foothills that rise from the River Roch valley, which lie at approximately 845m AOD within the local area to the north-west. Hollingworth Lake, to the immediate south of the land parcel, is a man-made reservoir with notable earth dams / embankments to the east and north. The land parcel is surrounded by a ring of low hills including Cleggswood Hill to the north and Hollingworth Hill to the east, with the land parcel located within the shallow valley between these two hills, located slightly lower than the adjacent lake, separated from it by earthworks created in the 1800s to retain the water in the reservoir. The Pennine Hills rise up to the east with Whittaker Moor at a height of 270m AOD, 2 km to the east of the land parcel. The settlement of Littleborough is broadly aligned along and to the north of the River Roch, 145m AOD to the west of the land parcel. Numerous valleys and intervening foothills create an undulating landform pattern within the local landscape that rises further to the notable higher ground within the Pennines in the wider landscape.

Land Parcel Description

The land parcel itself is a roughly linear shaped field of arable land located on a lower lying landform with little in the way of internal vegetation, which is limited to the occasional isolated shrub, and a linear tree belt fronting the northeastern boundary.

The topography and hydrology of the land parcels immediate surroundings have been in part manipulated and dictated by existing development. The construction of Hollingworth Lake and the existing Rakewood car park have resulted in earth bunding bounding the land parcel on two sides. The junction of the B6225 / Hollingworth Road / Lake Bank and Rakewood Road is an important nodal point within the immediate setting of the land parcel and

provides a direct connection between the land parcel and the urban areas of Smithy Bridge, Littleborough and Hollingworth Lake. The existing Rakewood car park provides parking to access the lake, the associated local facilities, and public right of way network that are evidently an attractor within the local area. There are a number of facilities located along the edge of the lake to include a small row of shops, pubs, cafes and water activity centre.

In the immediate vicinity of the land parcel, the vegetation pattern comprises irregular shaped arable fields delineated by a combination of mature field hedgerows, hedgerow trees and drystone walls. Within the locality there are a number of woodland tree blocks, these include an area of woodland within which the existing Rakewood car park is located, Whittaker Wood to the east, and Clegg's Wood and Ealees Wood to the north. A grove of mature trees occupies the lower ridgeline of Hollingworth Fold to the southwest providing screening from isolated residential properties, whilst a steep grassed embankment interfaces Rakewood Road to the east creating a strong degree of separation between the land parcel and the wider area. Additionally, Cleggswood Hill to the north provides a buffer between the land parcel and Littleborough with a transition to the heathlands of the Pennine Hills to the east and south.

The Hollingworth Lake Country Park envelops the land parcel to the north and west with inclusion of the tree belt on the northernmost boundary. The landscape of the study area includes several areas of Ancient Woodland, the closest of which is Ealees Wood, approximately 800m northwest of the land parcel.

Existing Connection

Rakewood Road lies directly south-west of the land parcel, providing a link to the A58 via the B6225, situated approximately 1km north. A minor road provides a connection to the existing car parking facilities to the north-west of the land parcel, extending to a private property in the east. Within the wider context the section of the M62, between Junctions 21 and 22, is located on an elevated position, most notably the bridge section, approximately 1.32km to the south-east at its closest point. The Rochdale Canal and Calder Valley railway line run in parallel within the local area to the north of Cleggswood Hill, providing services between Halifax and Manchester.

There are a number of Public Rights of Way running through the existing car park, with footpath 451 - which also forms part of both Weighver's Way and Rochdale Way Long distance routes (LDR) - providing direct access to the existing car parking facilities, whilst footpaths 468, 471 and 473 create a strong PRow network within the immediate area and connect with further routes within the local and wider area - which also include the Pennine Way LDR. The network of PRow provides a good level of access to the surrounding facilities, with a Countryside Rights of Way Access Area encompassing the Peak District National Park to the east.

Landscape Character Assessments

The land parcel's immediate setting and local area been subject to published assessment at national, county and settlement level. The land parcel is immediately set within Landscape Character Area (LCA) 29 - Rough Hill to Brun Moor with the wider landscape to the west characterised within LCA 28 - Rochdale and Oldham Pennine Foothills. The published assessments set out guidance for future development, which have informed the proposals



Land Parcel Photos

Visual Assessment

There are limited views from the local road network resultant of the existing topography and intervening vegetation. Immediately to the east, an elevated short distance view over the site may be observed through a brief section of Rakewood Road - Photographs 1, although this reflects a transient glimpse in the wider context of the road network and is only representative of the immediate intersection of Rakewood Road and the site.

From a wider context, PRoW 473 passes to the south with views across the land parcel possible, however, the nature of the landform and mature vegetation to the land parcel boundary and within the immediate setting heavily restrict views beyond the land parcel. The view of the site is encapsulated as the edge of the wider panoramic setting at a mid-range view and does not dominate the setting, as illustrated by Photographs 2.

With consideration to the surrounding dwellings and farmhouses to the east, views to the land parcel are largely long distance, with views beyond the site heavily restricted by the embanked earth of Hollingworth Lake, as demonstrated in Photographs 3. The view of the land parcel is experienced as the fringe of the existing arable landscape, sheltered by the elevated woodland belt.



Photograph 1 - Limited views from Rakewood Road



Photograph 2 - Wider panoramaic from PRow 473



Photograph 3 - Existing arable landscape

12. EVALUATION

12.1 LANDSCAPE OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Vision

This document sets out a landscape strategy associated with the development of an extension to visitor car park for Hollingworth Lake, to be located off Rakewood Road in Littleborough.

The proposal for additional car parking fulfils the Council's long standing ambition to improve parking associated with the lake.

The vision is to successfully integrate new car parking without compromising the sensitivity of the surrounding landscapes and habitats within the area.

Protection of the openness of the Green Belt and biodiversity protection is of the utmost importance and this has been considered at every stage of the design. Care has been taken to ensure the retention of high quality trees in addition to mitigating impacts on the river edge and other ecological constraints

Opportunities to enhance biodiversity have been maximised through the reinforcement of the existing woodland edge to provide a protective buffer and create robust green connections throughout the site and wider landscape.

Visitor facilities will be integrated carefully into the existing landscape, where users can enjoy a variety of natural spaces. These spaces will be designed in line with the existing landscape character and provide a safe, welcoming and accessible environment for users.

The following documents can be referred to for further detail on later sections in this report.

Refer to 35025-RG-LD-01 sheets 1 and 2 for detailed general arrangement

Refer to 35025-RG-LD-01 sheet 3 for planting maintenance and schedules

Refer to 35025-RG-LD-02 for illustrative sections

Refer to 35025-RG-LD-03 for illustrative masterplan

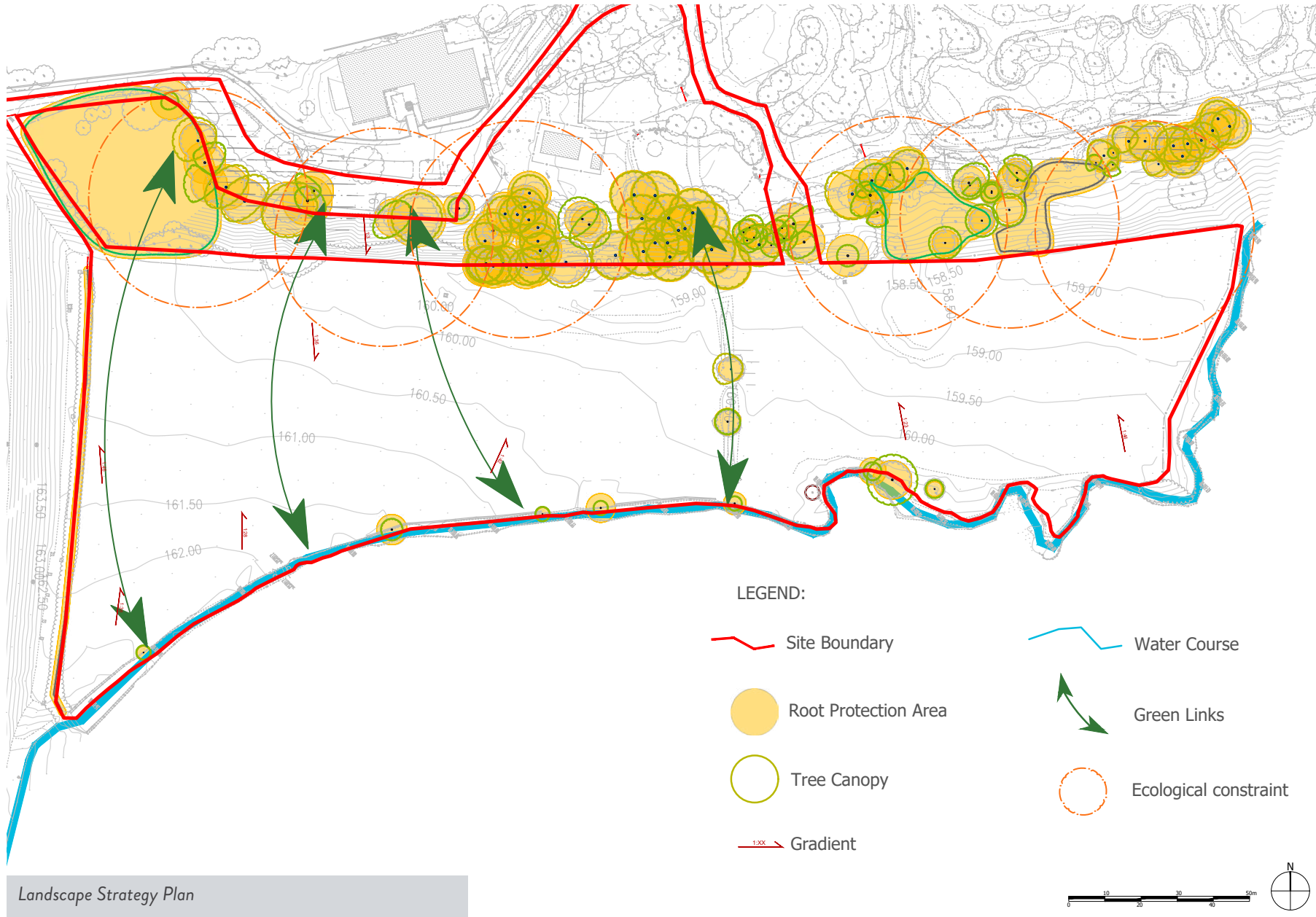
Refer to 35025-RG-LD-04 for typical details

Opportunities and Constraints

The proposals will comprise natural and sustainable materials throughout the design.

Overall, the project is guided by the opportunity to protect and enhance surrounding habitats to improve biodiversity and the wildlife value of the site, providing the infrastructure allowing local communities to use and enjoy the space whilst providing additional car parking spaces.

Ecological constraints will influence the available space for development requiring earthworks and will be considered at all stages. Another factor constraining available development space are the root protection areas under existing trees.



Landscape Strategy Plan

13. DESIGN PROPOSALS

13.1 LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

Provide appropriate mitigation measures in response to the rural character of the surrounding countryside, taking into consideration wider views.

Protect and enhance biodiversity, local character and the natural environment, through woodland and native planting.

The creation of sensitively located woodland edge planting to help assimilate the new car park into the existing setting, whilst maintaining views and the openness of the countryside.

The strengthening of the existing hedgerow along the south western edge of the land parcel, creating a more robust wildlife corridor.

Promote positive management of the landscape by introducing a greater diversity of native flora and fauna to support a sustainable landscape where wildlife can thrive.

Introduce sustainable drainage systems and consideration for flood attenuation if required.

Enhance connections with the local community by promoting the use and active stewardship of the space for the people of Smithy Bridge and Littleborough.



Illustrative Masterplan

13.2 SITE SECTIONS

The right sections have been produced in order to highlight the changes in levels on the land parcel.

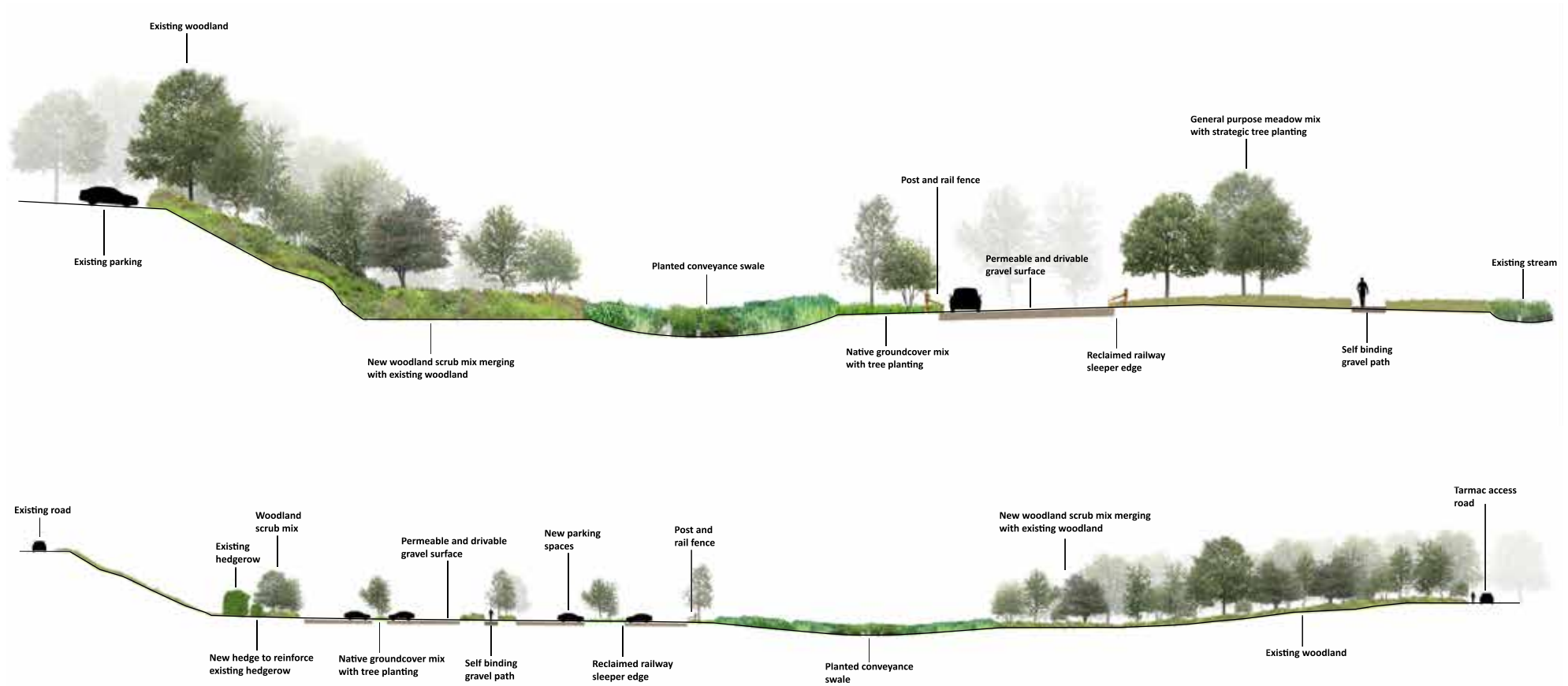
These levels have influenced the location of design interventions on the land parcel such as, parking bays being located on the flattest areas and swales at the lowest points.

These sections also portray the blending of planting typologies, especially the merging of the development with existing woodland using a woodland edge mix.

The strategic placement of larger, high quality trees can also be seen in and around the new parking areas and meadow.

These trees aim to reduce the visual impact of the car park while providing a continual and valuable ecological asset.





Land Parcel Sections

13.3 HARD LANDSCAPE

Car Parking Surfacing

- Gravel will be applied to all drivable areas within the new car park, the permeability of the gravel ensures minimal negative impact in terms of flooding to surrounding areas.
- The gravel will be placed on a stabilisation system allowing cars to drive on it without sinking or redistributing the gravel around the land parcel.

Car Park Edge and Space Division

- Treated wooden sleepers are to be used around the edge of the car park, separating the gravel from the surrounding landscape.
- Short sections of sleepers will also be used to indicate the division of spaces .

Paths

- The paths leading from the car park to the lake and visitor centre will use a self binding gravel with a timber edge. A central camber will be used to prevent collection of water and a pleasant year round walking experience.



Tree Pots

- All trees installed at a standard size will require an excavated tree pit with appropriate subsoil and topsoil, finished with a bark mulch.
- Each tree pit will include an irrigation/aeration pipe to ensure the tree is able to thrive.
- All trees within pits will be staked and provided with a spiral rabbit guard for protection.



Timber Steps

- Timber steps will consist of a railway sleeper edge with self binding gravel applied to the surface.
- A handrail in the style of a timber post and rail fence will ensure the safety of users.



Post and Rail Fence

- A timber post and rail fence will be used in areas where the car park backs onto soft landscape, it will be of suitable height to be visible to drivers, deterring them from driving out of the intended parking area and damaging the surrounding landscape.



13.4 SOFT LANDSCAPE

Wildflower Meadows

- Proposed grassland and wildflower meadows will create tranquil space that supports wildlife.
- An area of wildflower meadow radiates from the southern boundary of the car park, softening its edge and providing a natural buffer between the car park and riverbank.
- The meadow surrounds a large portion of the main path leading from the new car park to the lake, allowing users to be immersed in a colourful and natural space.

Woodland Edge

- An existing mature, broadleaved woodland lies directly to the north of the application land parcel.
- The woodland edge will be enhanced through native woodland edge planting of local provenance, creating a structurally graded aesthetic whilst providing additional habitat benefits for wildlife.
- The mix will consist of both small trees that will eventually grow to continue the existing woodland canopy and also lower, shrubby species to ensure a multi height canopy develops, which will have greater habitat potential for wildlife.



Native Groundcover

- A low mix of native grasses and ferns will be applied to planted islands within the new car park.
- This allows for clear lines of sight throughout the car park discouraging antisocial behaviour, while still continuing a network of native planting across the land parcel.
- This planting will also be utilised as a buffer between the car park and new swales. The low and soft nature of the mix allows maintenance workers to easily access the swale to upkeep its function.



Bolster Planting to Hedgerows

- Existing hedgerows will be retained and reinforced with native species in order to protect and enhance existing habitats, whilst supporting a robust north/south link along the western boundary of the land parcel. Hedge to include tree species to provide height and increase screening of car park from lake edge.
- The reinforcing species will include fruit and nut bearing species which provide both visual appeal and a valuable food source for wildlife.





Tree Strategy

- The tree strategy has been carefully designed to ensure that the land parcel sits seamlessly within its surrounding context.
- Native trees have been proposed to enhance the setting of the car park, carefully positioned to not affect views or the openness of the land parcel.
- Whilst a limited selection of trees will be removed to facilitate access to the car park, new trees will be planted on the land parcel to mitigate this loss.
- A large range of native species have been selected to provide a more varied and natural feel to the land parcel. The selected species also greatly vary in form and size to support this.
- Feature groups of trees will be planted at key entry locations to improve legibility and create natural points of interest around the land parcel.
- Species location has been influenced by site condition to best guarantee their ability to thrive and become a visual and ecological asset. For example, species able to tolerate more damp conditions such as *Alnus glutinosa* and *Salix caprea* are placed closer to swales.
- Larger species are strategically placed closest to Rakewood Road, filtering views and in turn reducing the visual impact of the land parcel.



Alnus glutinosa



Betula pubescens



Carpinus betulus 'Fastigiata'



Sorbus aucuparia



Crataegus laevigata



Quercus robur



Salix caprea



Tilia cordata



Ulmus 'New Horizon'

BLOOR HOMES[®]