



Vision Document

Land west of Southbourne, West Sussex
May 2026



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A vision for the development of Southbourne:

1.1 “Land West of Southbourne will deliver a landscape-led, sustainable growth in Southbourne, creating a vibrant, attractive and well-integrated new neighbourhood. The development will deliver up to 1,200 homes, providing a mix of sizes and tenures. A landscape-led masterplan, guided by high quality design principles, will respond sensitively to the existing landscape and local context. A strong green infrastructure framework, including the ‘Green Ring’, will deliver welcoming and well-used open spaces, sustainable drainage, biodiversity net gain, and enhanced opportunities for recreation. The development will be well connected to Southbourne through the use of existing streets and public rights of way, complemented by new direct and convenient walking and cycling routes to promote active travel. Enhanced access arrangements will disperse vehicular movements and help to relieve existing local pressures, including the delivery of a new rail bridge crossing. The local centre will include education and flexible non-residential use to support local employment opportunities. Land West of Southbourne will draw on local distinctiveness and context, meet local needs, support health and wellbeing, connect people to nature, offer a diverse living environment and support local cohesion. It will provide a sustainable extension to Southbourne and will be a place for lives to flourish with an ambition for quality of design and placemaking.”

01 Introduction

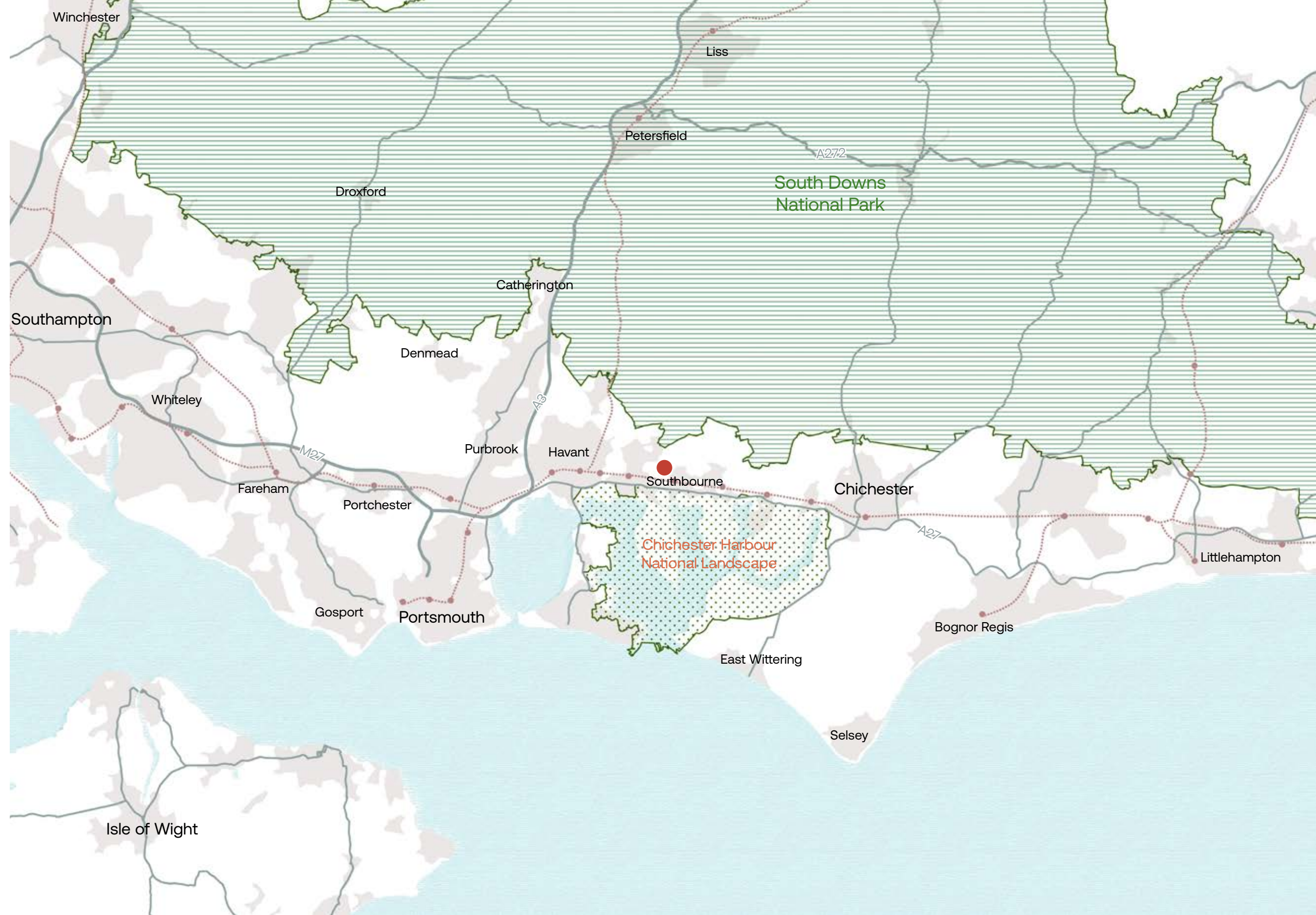


Figure 1.1 Site location in relationship to local settlements

Overview

1.2 The land west of Southbourne (the site) presents a unique opportunity to fulfil the vision set out in the Southbourne Allocation Development Plan Document.

1.3 This Vision Document demonstrates the principles of how this can be achieved on the site, in a logical, sustainable way, responding appropriately to the context to deliver well integrated and connected settlement growth.

1.4 The document has been prepared on behalf of the landowners, Church Commissioners for England. Specialist input has been provided by expert consultants as follows:

tor
&CO

masterplanning and
landscape architecture

LICHFIELDS

planning

Pell Frischmann

transport, drainage and ecology.

About Church Commissioners

1.5 The Church Commissioners supports the Church of England’s ministry, particularly in areas of need and opportunity.

1.6 We do this through responsible and ethical management of the Church of England’s permanent endowment fund, a diverse investment portfolio which enables us to provide financial support for the Church, by helping to ensure funding is intentionally used for mission and growth.

1.7 The Church Commissioners for England’s investment portfolio includes a diverse range of land ownership – and our role as a steward for this land is integral to our approach.

1.8 The portfolio includes land used for agriculture, forestry, commercial spaces, renewable energy production and delivering housing. We work hard to make sure that our land is managed in a way that supports nature, alongside our investment objectives. This is an important part of our responsible and ethical investment practice.



Site Overview

1.9 The approximately 70ha site is located to the north west of the village and currently comprises agricultural land.

1.10 The main portion of the site is bounded to the north by the A27 dual carriageway and is separated by a dense belt of trees. To the west, Stein Road and a mix of residential properties, public park and open space associated with Bourne Community College. The West Coast rail line bounds the southern edge of the main portion of the site, and divides it from the southern parcel.

1.11 Stein Road divides the eastern parcel of the site. This single agricultural field is bounded by tree belts and hedgerows, with the A27 to the north, South Lane to the South and East, and Stein Road on the west.

1.12 The parcel of the site is a narrow sliver of land between Main Road (A259) and the West Coastway rail line.

The Opportunity

1.13 The site has potential to meet the growth needs of the local area, in a sensitive, holistic and sustainable approach. This document presents a scheme that has the potential to deliver the following:

- Provision of up to 1,200 new homes in a range of size and tenures, including affordable homes.
- Creation of circa 35 ha of open space forming a new and attractive green outer ring to Southbourne.
- Provision of community uses including a mix use local centre and potential 2FE primary school to benefit the new and existing communities.
- Improvements to the local movement network, including a new strategic route through Southbourne and promoting sustainable travel with provision of new cycle and walking links to existing and proposed community facilities.
- Biodiversity enhancements to achieve a minimum 10% Net Gain.



Figure 1.2 Aerial view of site



02 Logical site

Logical site

Strategic growth and open space

2.1 The site's location, adjoining the western edge of Southbourne, allows for logical development, consistent with historic growth patterns. Extending the built form in this location allows for a well-resolved settlement envelope, with the potential for creating new strategic connections between existing and proposed development.

2.2 The principle of 'the Green Ring' is well established within the Southbourne Parish Neighbourhood Plan. The vision is to establish a Green Ring 'comprising a variety of green infrastructure assets, including informal open space, allotments, a playing field, a footpath/cycleway network, children's play areas, woodland and land of biodiversity value'. The proposals set out in this document seek to respond positively to this aspiration. Through linking existing green spaces and landscape features within the site, the northern and western sections of the Green Ring can be established.

2.3 It is the intention of this concept strategy to establish a well connected and well integrated extension to the town, with the green ring serving to allow ease of movement and access between neighbourhoods rather than creating a divide between existing and future communities.

2.4 In addition to the Green Ring, which encompasses the existing village edge, an outer green ring is proposed which seeks to provide a landscape setting to the proposed development in perpetuity. This encircling of Southbourne with open landscape serves to protect the green-gap in perpetuity and prevent coalescence of neighbouring settlements over time.

Strategic connections

2.5 The proposals seek to establish a vehicular through-route which links Main Road (A259) to Stein Road. The creation of this route will disperse vehicular movements through the settlement and relieve some pressures from Stein Road and the level-crossing associated with Southbourne rail station. A new rail bridge crossing will provide a safe and reliable alternative to the current rail crossings.

2.6 The new development must be well integrated with the existing settlement, to establish a cohesive place, perceived as a single village. To ensure a well integrated development, the scheme seeks to utilise and incorporate existing street and footpath connections that lead to the site, to create an integrated active travel network, with the Green Ring serving as a connecting feature rather than a barrier.

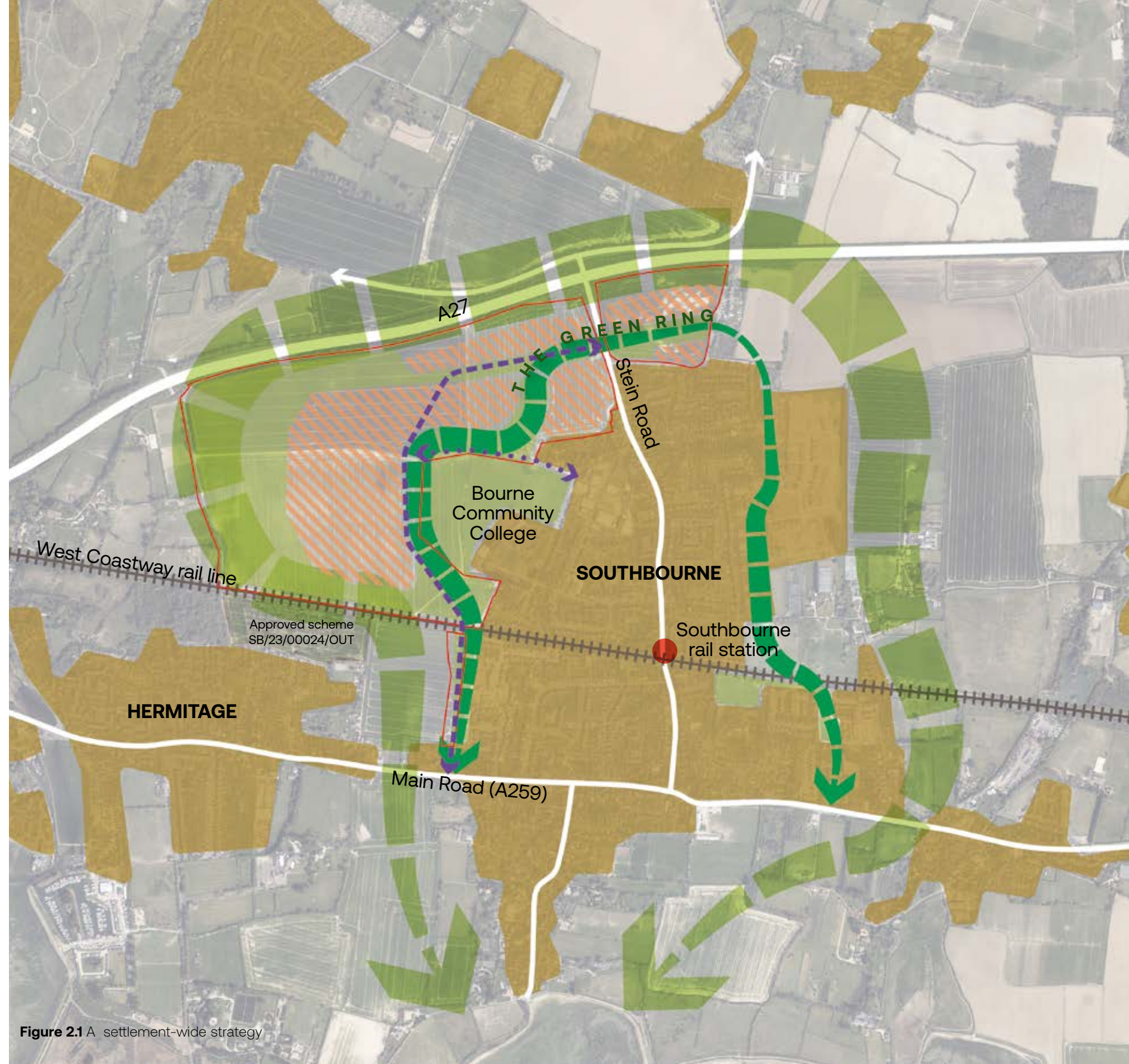


Figure 2.1 A settlement-wide strategy



03 A sustainable site

A well served site

- Education
- Nursery
- Library
- Gym
- Sports
- Place of worship
- Community centre
- Outdoor space / park
- Play park
- Hospital / pharmacy
- Post office
- Public house
- Food shop
- Bus stop
- Bus routes
- Village centre
- Major employment hubs
- Walking / cycling routes
- Train line
- Train station

Figure 3.1 Facilities



Existing facilities

Existing facilities

3.1 The site is well served by existing shops, services, and community facilities.

3.2 The site benefits from its location, lying adjacent to Bourne Community College and Leisure Centre. Currently, the nearest food shop is Tesco Express located approximately 350m east of the site on Stein Road.

3.3 There are many facilities within Southbourne, including local independent shops such as Southbourne farm shop, national shops, pharmacy and health clinic, village hall and a library, all within approximately 1km of the site.



Bourne Community College and Leisure Centre



Tesco Express on Stein Road



Southbourne Pharmacy and Health Clinic on Stein Road



Southbourne Farm Shop on Main Road

Existing connectivity

3.4 The area benefits from public transport and active travel links, with existing bus services providing access to Chichester and Portsmouth, with stops located within comfortable walking distance. The nearest is currently located within an 8 minute walk of the site.

3.5 Southbourne also benefits from a rail station which provides connections to Brighton, Southampton, and London via Horsham on a frequent basis. The rail station is approximately a 12 minute walk from the site.

3.6 Cycle lanes on either side of Main Road provide Southbourne with active travel connections towards Chichester and Portsmouth along National Cycle Route 2.



Southbourne railway station



04 Unconstrained for development

Site features

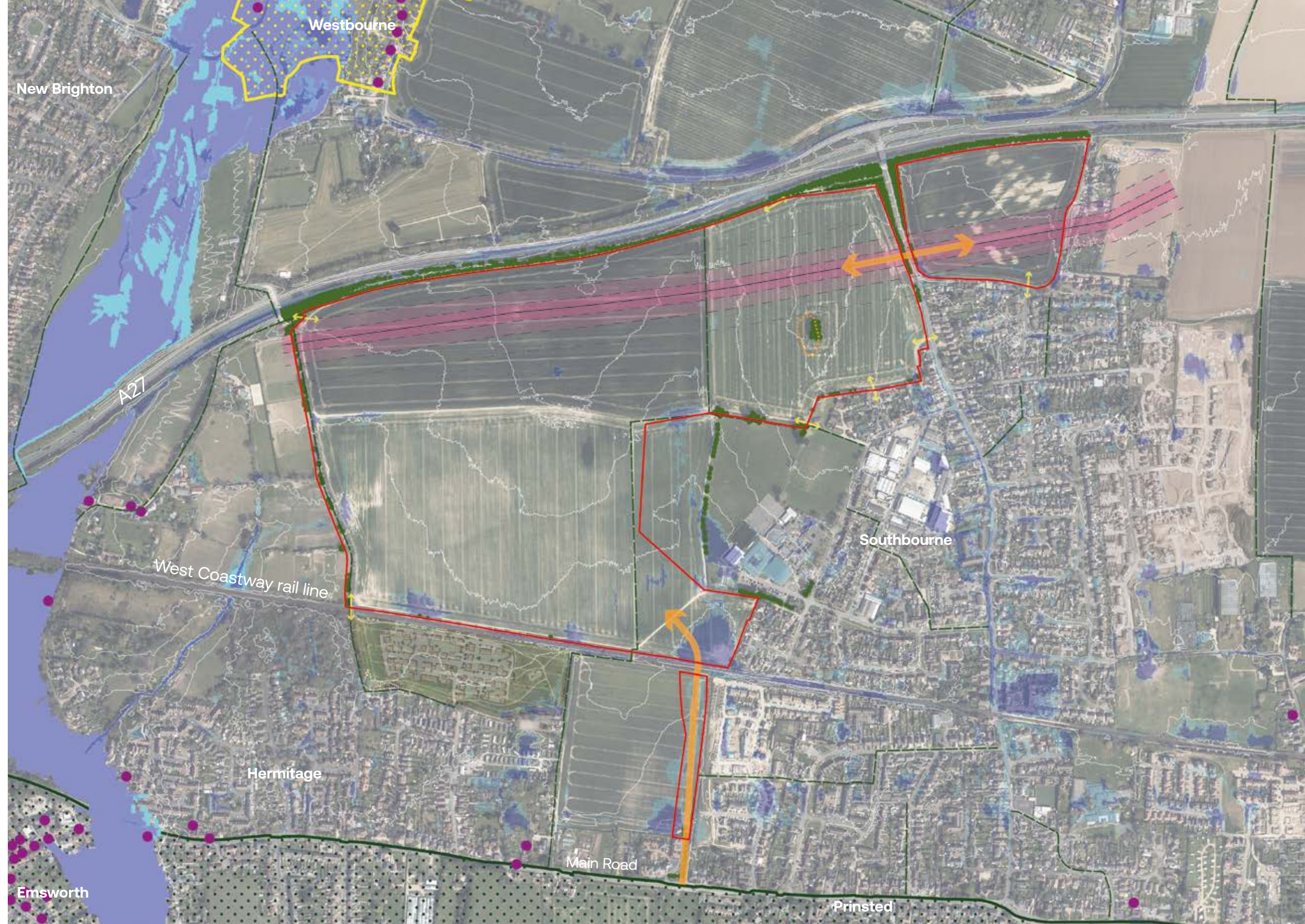
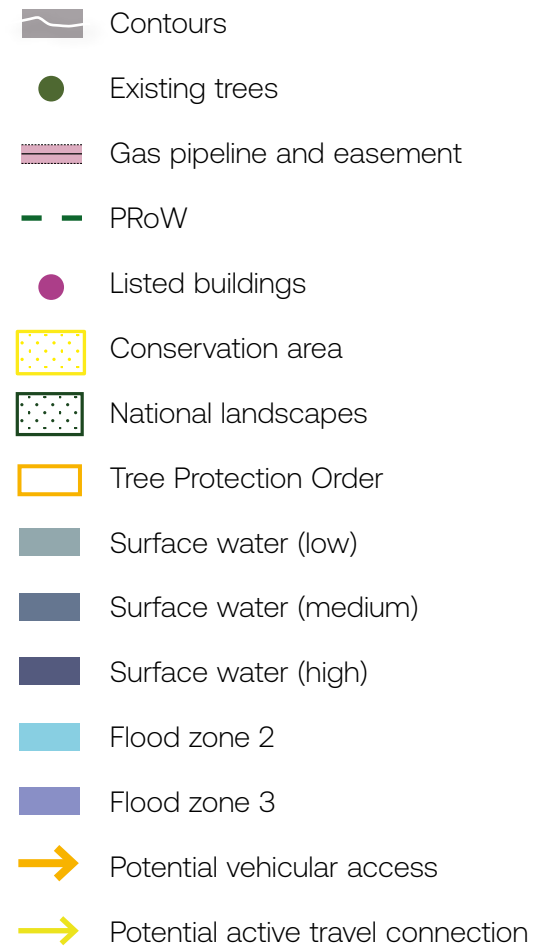


Figure 4.1 Site features plan

Review of constraints and opportunities

Designations:

4.1 There are no designations on the site. The southern edge of the South Downs national park is 1km to the north. Chichester harbour national landscape is bounds Main Road, adjacent to the southern boundary of the site.

Public rights of way

4.2 There are several well used public rights of way footpaths on the site, and connecting to it. These are as follows: 240, 241, 243/1 and 3591.

4.3 With the exception of 241, these public rights of way follow the site boundaries. They provide local walking routes connecting Main Road and Stein Road, and onward to the settlements of Hermitage and Westbourne and the wider public right of way network to the north of the A27.

4.4 The public rights of way on site are to be retained in-situ and incorporated into the proposed active travel network.

Access

4.5 There is potential to create a new vehicular junction on Stein Road, just to the south of the A27 bridge crossing. A roundabout in this location could facilitate access to both east and west of Stein Road. There may also be other opportunities for secondary points of vehicular access from Stein Road.

4.6 There are potential points of vehicular access from South Road into the eastern parcel of the site.

4.7 A new vehicular connection to Main Road presents an opportunity to establish a through-route from Stein Road. This would involve a new rail bridge to ensure safe and convenient crossing of the West-Coastway Line.

Heritage

4.8 No listed builds or conservation areas on, or immediately adjacent to, the site. Prinsted Conservation Area is located approximately 200m from the southern most extent of the site. Westbourne Conservation Area is located approximately 350m north of the northern site boundary.

Flood Risk

4.9 The EA Flood Map for Planning indicates the site is entirely within Flood Zone 1, which is defined as “Land as having a less than 0.1% (1 in 1000) annual probability of flooding”.

4.10 The EA Risk of Flooding from Surface Water (RoFSW) shows that there are areas of surface water flood risk associated with low points and overland flow routes which range from low to high risk. Areas at risk from surface water flooding can be incorporated into open space and managed through SuDS.

Topography

4.11 Link much of the surrounding area, the site is ostensibly flat, with only a very gradual fall from north to south.

Utilities

4.12 An underground high pressure gas pipeline crosses the site, broadly south-west to north-east. There is an easement of 3m (either side of the pipeline) and stand-off zones of 16m within which development is restricted. There are no other known constraining utilities.

Trees and vegetation

4.13 The perimeter field boundaries comprise mature and generally well-treed hedgerows. Wherever possible, these will be retained, enhanced and incorporated into the scheme.

4.14 Contemporary farming practice has seen the removal of several historic internal hedgerows. There may be opportunities to reinstate some of these hedgerows where appropriate.

4.15 There is a stand of mature beech trees located to the north east of the main portion of the site. These are thought to have been planted as a memorial to WW2 American service personnel and are subject to a TPO. Within the sparsely vegetated site, these trees are a significant feature and will be incorporated into the proposals.

Ecology

4.16 The Site is situated within the 5.6km Zone of Influence (Zol) as set for the Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA and Ramsar. The Site is recognised as a secondary support area within the Solent Waders and Brent Goose Strategy (SW&BGS), which covers the above SPA and Ramsar above as well as Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Portsmouth Harbour SPA. A study was undertaken to assess the impact of development upon this habitat. It found that land to the north of the A27 (within CCE ownership). is considered to be a suitable location for a mitigation site. With enhancement to increase its value, it will be suitable to recreate the function of the Secondary Support Area C45 and thus mitigate its loss. There would therefore be no adverse effect on the integrity of any of the Solent SPA or Ramsar sites.

4.17 The Site also lies within the SSSI Impact Risk Zone of the Chichester Harbour SSSI – this SSSI is located 650m south (and spanning across the southeast and southwest) of the Site. The above designations will require appropriate consultation and strategies of avoidance and mitigation in relation to proposed development.

4.18 The proposed scheme will seek to retain and enhance existing areas of valuable ecology habitat where possible and to connect new and existing habitats.



Hedge-line north of West Coastway rail line



Northern boundary



Stand of TPO beech trees with views to South Downs



05 An exciting opportunity

Design principles

Forming responsive design

5.1 The following section sets out high-level design principles that have been established to form a design that responds to the features of the site and its context in a sensitive and appropriate approach.

Green & Blue Infrastructure, and Ecology

5.2 The Green Ring is incorporated around the existing settlement edge. It incorporates existing landscape features such as Southbourne Recreation Ground and the stand of mature beech trees, as well as linking new green corridors.

5.3 Green corridors interconnect through the site, providing continuous, accessible landscape routes linking to key open spaces and land uses.

5.4 An outer ring of green provides a green edge and landscape setting to new development.

5.5 Areas of biodiversity enhancement are integrated within the wider landscape structure. These areas of improved habitat could comprise both areas of public open space areas of improved habitat for wildlife.

5.6 As part of a site-wide water management strategy, drainage basins will be located on areas of lower ground, below development parcels. These basins will be incorporated into multi-functional landscape spaces.

5.7 Swales and bioretention strips integrated into landscape corridors, green streets and open spaces, provide methods of conveying water within the fabric of the scheme.

5.8 On site biodiversity enhancements, comprising a net gain of 10% in line with national requirements.

5.9 Enhancements to increase the ecological value of land under the Commissioners' ownership to the north of the site, to mitigate for the potential on-site loss of Solent Wader and Brent Goose habitat. Please refer to the accompanying Ecology Technical Note: Wintering Birds, prepared by Pell Frischmann, which provides further detail on this. A formal DAS request has been submitted to Natural England in this respect.



Figure 5.1 Landscape principles

Landscape studies

Landscape & Visual Appraisal

5.10 A Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) was undertaken to inform the masterplan proposals. This included a preliminary assessment of the site, its landscape context, capacity to accommodate residential development and to identify the potential effects of the proposed development on key landscape character and visual amenity of the site and its surroundings.

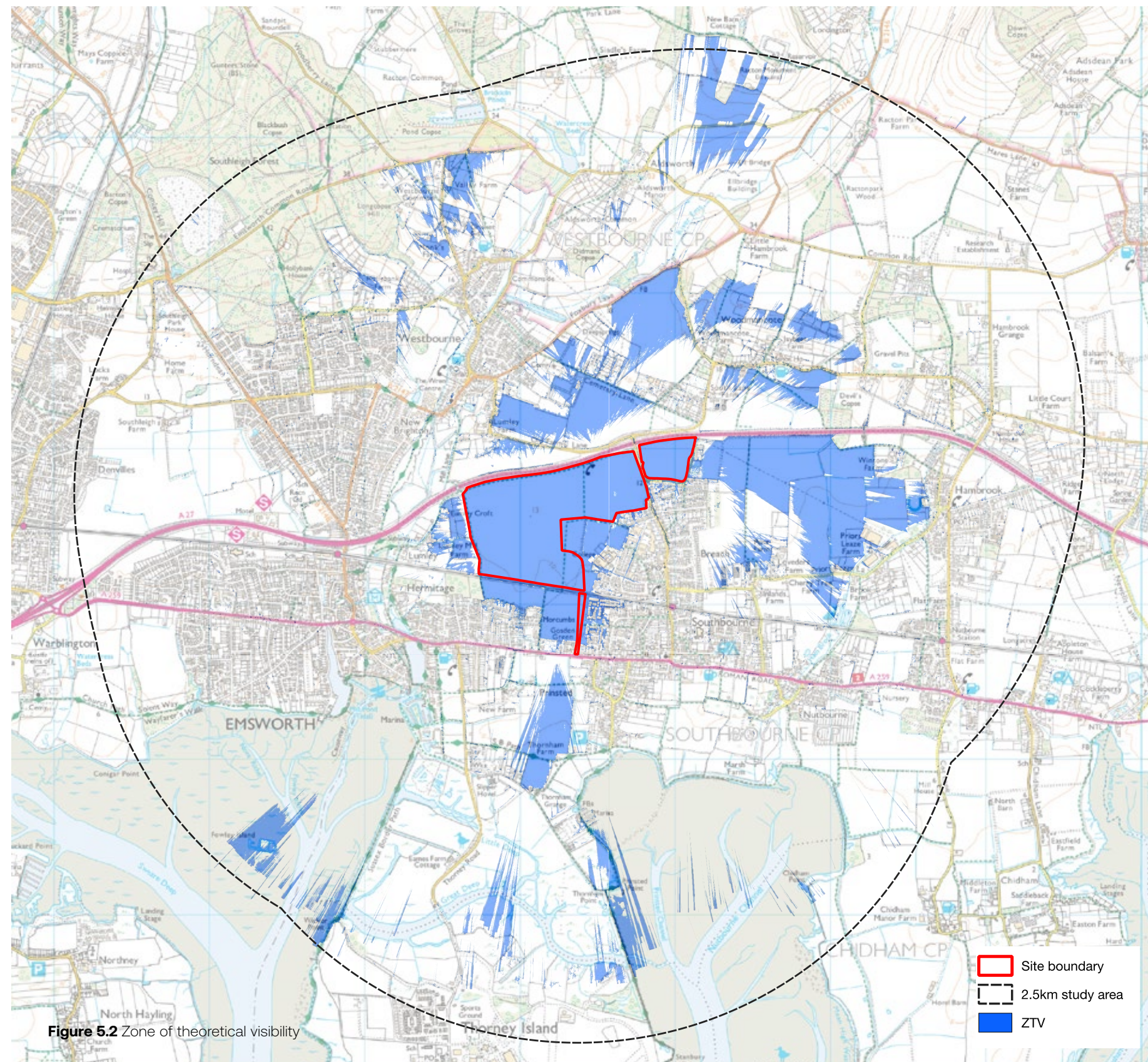
5.11 Due to the broadly level landform of the site and landscape to the south of the A27 and the abundance and strength of the landscapes structure throughout the study area, inter-visibility with the site is limited to locations within 1km of the study area.

5.12 Due to the intervening distance and wooded nature of the South Downs National Park and strength of the landscape structure surrounding the site, the development will not result in any perceptual effects on the SDNP or impact on its Outstanding Universal Value. Equally, the site shares very limited inter-visibility with the Chichester National Landscape to the south. From these locations (a short section of PRoW 205 only), a negligible visual effect was identified during winter months only.

5.13 The study has also appraised any effects associated with the implementation of a new bridge crossing over the West-Coastway Line. Again, such effects from the public realm are limited to users of PRoWs 240, 241 and users of the adjacent residential streets on the western edge of Southbourne only. From these locations, the study found that the bridge will be an urbanising feature that will result in a small additional urbanising effect on a small number of localised receptors only. With time and as associated planting establishes and matures, the bridge will appear in scale and appropriate in its setting.

5.14 The appraisal concluded therefore that any predicted moderate or large visual effects are limited to PRoWs and public highways within or adjacent to the site only. Such adverse effects are particularly limited.

5.15 In summary, the effects on both landscape character and views predominantly restricted to the site itself and its immediate context.



Landscape studies

Settlement gap assessment

5.16 To inform the masterplanning process, a Landscape Gap assessment of a parcel of land that lies to the north and west of Southbourne and north east of Hermitage, as indicated in the Chichester District Landscape Gap Assessment, May 2019.

5.17 The study has assessed the current condition and features of the Hermitage-Southbourne Landscape Gap to identify the relative contribution of its component parts to the physical or perceptual separation of the two settlements. The study has also analysed how development of the Site, as set out on the framework masterplan, will alter the function and integrity of the Gap. The following conclusions have been made:

- The landscape of the gap is relatively indistinct and its contribution to the setting and identity of Hermitage and Southbourne is limited to its semi-rural and agricultural land use.

- The area to the south of the railway line and east of Tuppenny Lane has the strongest association with the settlements of Hermitage and Southbourne and contributes most strongly to their setting. This association decreases to the north of the railway and to the northern boundary of the Site where the A27 exerts the greatest aural influence on the landscape.
- There is a distinct difference, however, between how this gap is perceived to the south and north of the railway line. To the south, the landscape is read as a direct physical open separation between the two settlements. To the north, however, the landscape is perceived as the wider open setting and so plays a reduced role in preventing coalescence.
- The railway line and associated structural planting visually and physically severs to some degree the land to the north and south.

- A linear string of small, loosely nucleated settlements including Hermitage and Southbourne is distributed along the A259 between Havant and Chichester. Scattered post war development has resulted in sporadic, linear expansion of this settlement cluster which has resulted in these settlements being ‘joined’.
- These settlements have a shared identify due to their close associations.
- The distance between the eastern boundary of Hermitage and western edge of Southbourne (excluding development on the A259) is approximately 300m at its narrowest point.
- The fields to the south of the railway line play a key physical role in the separation of the two settlements. To the north, the fields make a lesser contribution to separation and instead are part of the wider setting.

- Currently, the short section of the A259 and the loose linear development that exists along its length results in a weak sense of leaving or entering the settlements.
- The Landscape Gap has limited recreational value

5.18 In its current state, therefore, the Site makes a small contribution to maintaining both physical and visual separation between Hermitage and Southbourne. The Site therefore is a peripheral open arable field that contributes to the wider setting only.

5.19 The distance between the eastern boundary of Hermitage and western edge of Southbourne (excluding development on the A259) is approximately 300m at its narrowest point. This would not be reduced by the promoted development. The remaining area of the Landscape Gap to the south of the railway line would maintain sufficient spatial and visually open separation

between Hermitage and Southbourne to preserve their distinctive identities.

5.20 The development strategy would seek to preserve the wide, important open gap to the south of the railway line. The following landscape mitigation measures and key design objectives would be necessary to ensure any proposals are sensitively developed in the context of the Landscape Gap criteria appraised in the previous section.



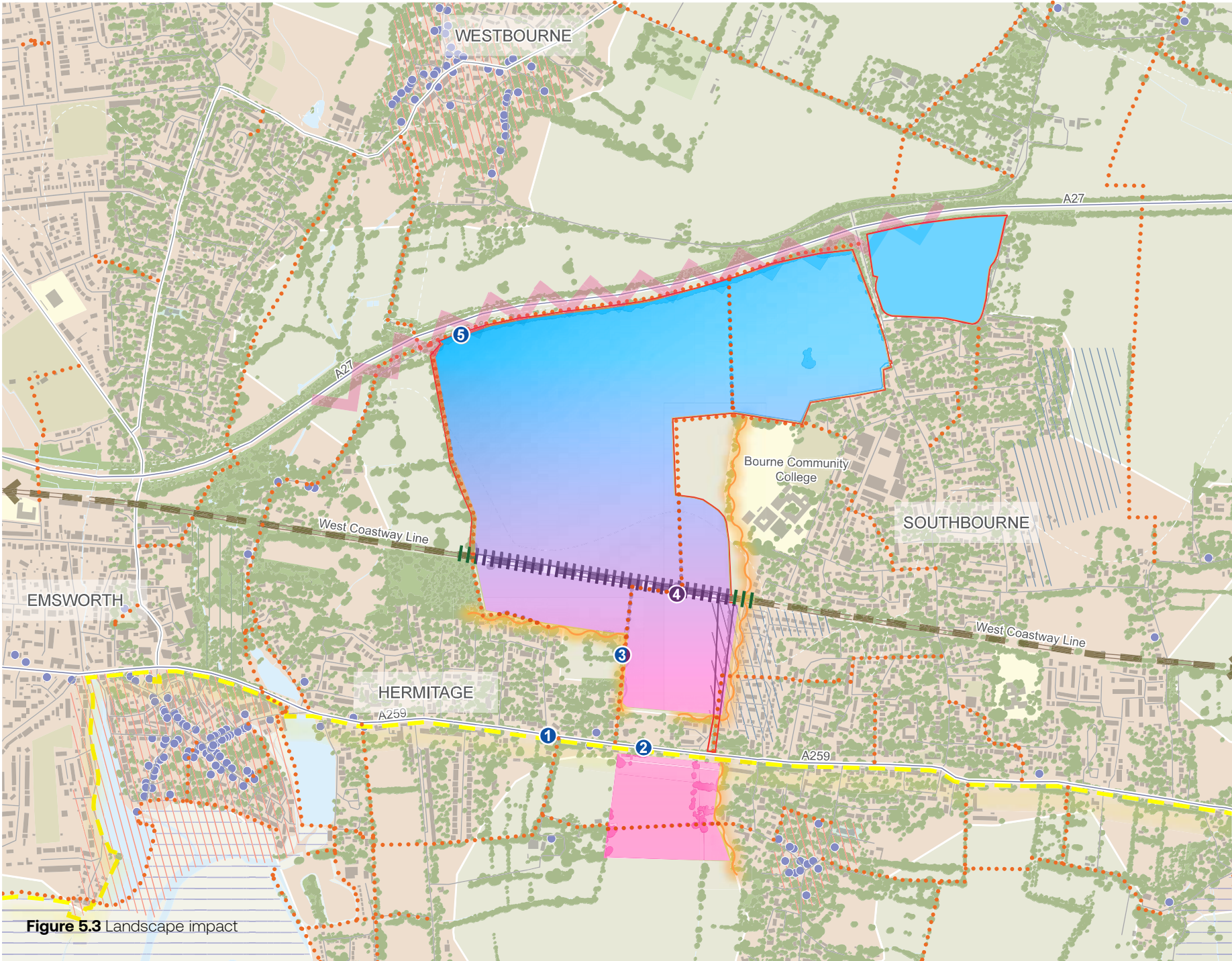
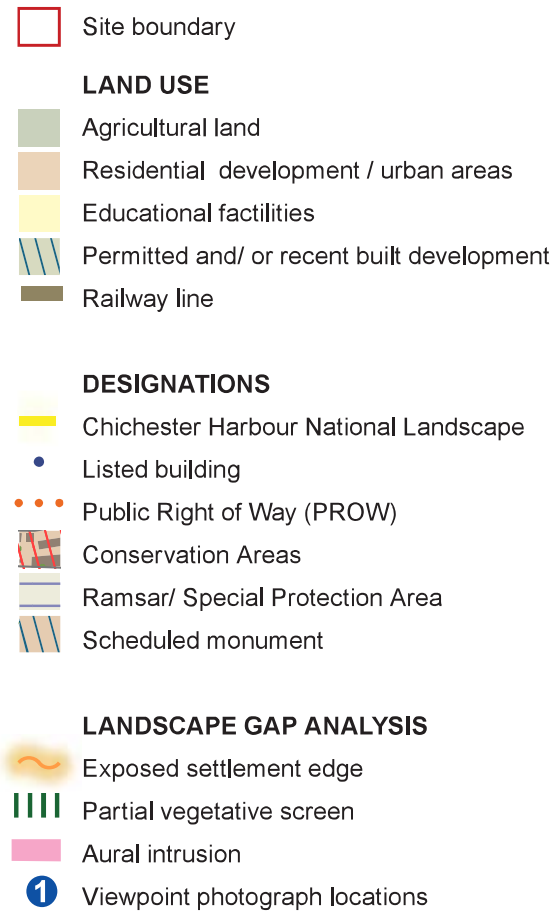
VIEWPOINT 3B: View from Tuppenny Lane looking east towards development at Parham Place and east of Tara Perry Road

Landscape studies

5.21 Any development will need to:

- Retain and protect important landscape resources, which positively contribute to the character and setting of the Site, and which are visually significant.
- Be seen as an extension of Southbourne and give careful consideration to the development’s form, scale, height, massing and character in relation to the settlement edge character and landscape setting.
- Strengthen field boundary vegetation in particular along the Site’s southern boundary by creating appropriate landscape buffers. These buffers should be planted with infill tree planting to create a continuous tree canopy along the railway corridor and provide new enhancement planting such as hedgerows and scrub planting to create improved habitat corridors and to assist in assimilating the development into the immediate landscape and settlement setting.
- Include measures to minimise night-time effects by careful design and location of lighting.

5.22 The area within the Site, with appropriate mitigation, has been identified as having considerable capacity for built / commercial development, factoring landscape character, visual amenity, connectivity and settlement pattern.



Landscape makes a strong contribution to the setting of the settlement / settlement gap

Landscape makes a weak contribution to the setting of the settlement / settlement gap

Design principles

Movement & connectivity

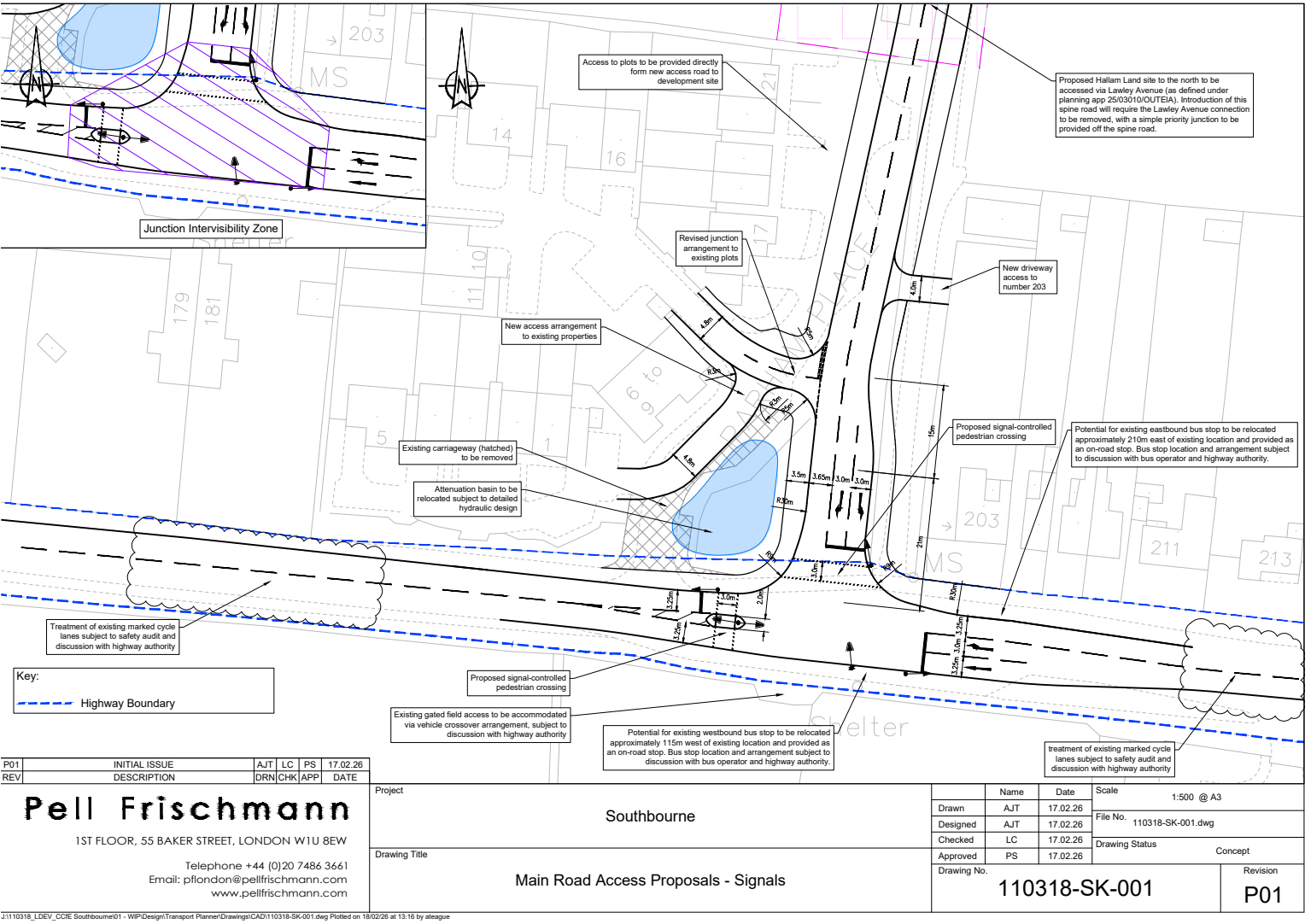
5.23 The new vehicular through-route seeks establish as well-connected and integrated development, with benefits to the existing village. The route will be direct, so as to provide a convenient alternative to Stein Road, but street-like to avoid the creation of a barrier to active travel movements.

5.24 The Green Ring can become a connecting feature, link new and existing residential areas with purpose built active travel routes.

5.25 Utilising and enhancing the existing network of public rights of way and adjoining streets ensures a permeable scheme that seeks to facilitate active travel modes. There is potential for pedestrian and cycle access points at various points on the east of the site, connecting and integrating new development with surrounding residential street networks.



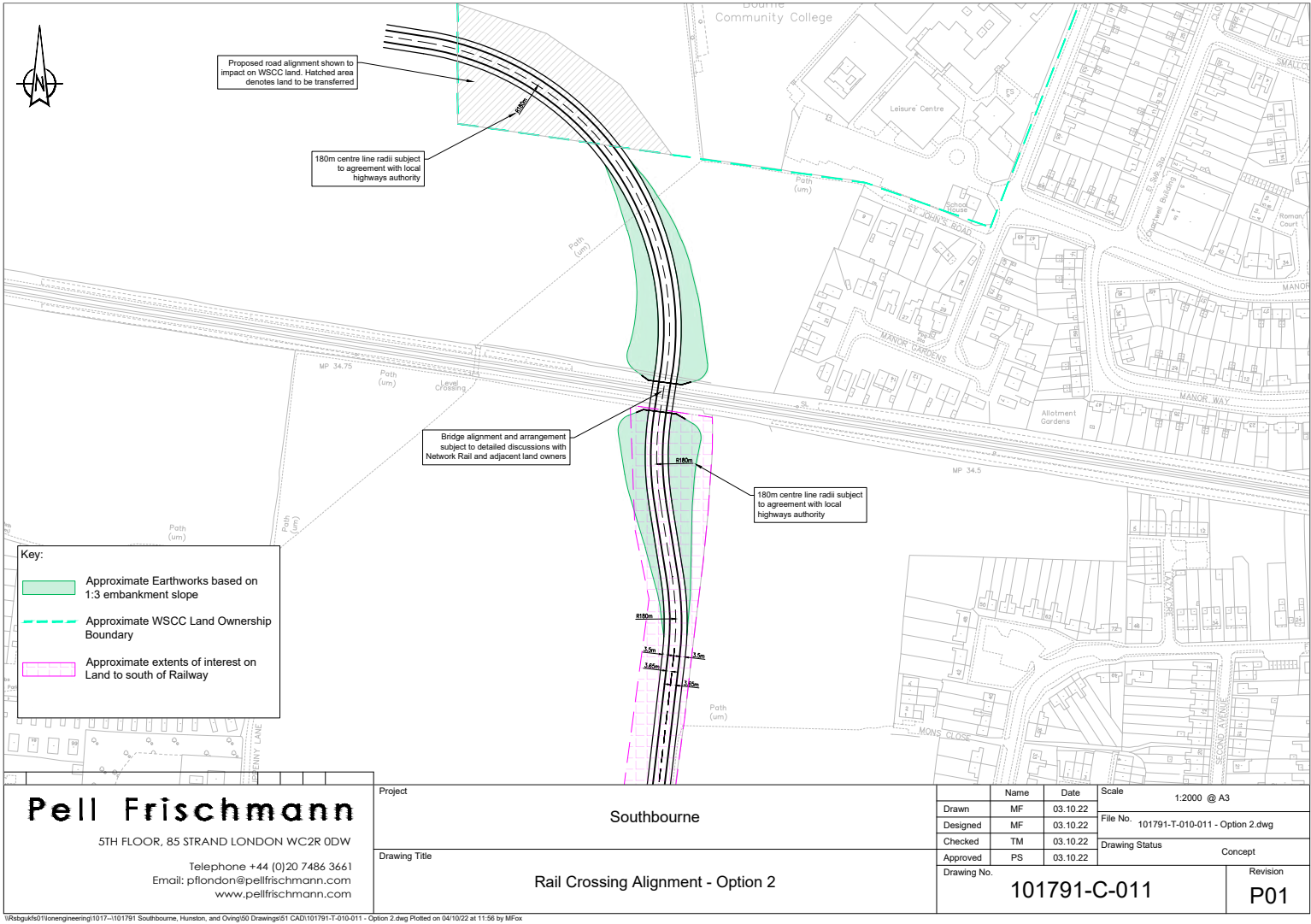
Figure 5.4 Movement principles



Access studies

5.26 A series of technical studies have been progressed to consider access to the site. These studies have concentrated on the junction of Main Road and the bridge over rail crossing.

5.27 The assessment has indicated that viable engineering solutions are available for these critical points of access to the site. However, these proposals will be subject to further technical works to resolve all details, alongside ongoing engagement with WSCC.



Design principles

Townscape

5.28 Residential parcels wrap the northern and eastern areas of the site, punctuated by the green corridors and streets which link through to informal open spaces. The built form is arranged to relate closely to the existing village, while maintaining areas of open space to the south and west, retaining a settlement gap to Hermitage.

5.29 There is potential for a new mixed local centre. This is located to serve both existing and future residents.

5.30 This could comprise a primary school, and a range of non-residential uses such as cafes, shops and a nursery, situated at a nodal point within the scheme, and close to existing community assets of the school and recreational ground.

A flexible response

5.31 Given the sites' relatively large scale and few constraints, along with the options for access, there is a high level of flexibility in the form of development that could be delivered in this location.

5.32 The development must be sympathetic to the landscape context whilst balancing this with the potential for effective use of land and a well connected expansion to Southbourne. Building heights and densities will be a key considered in relation to an appropriate response to the context.



Figure 5.5 Townscape principles

Concept

Principal features of the concept:

- 1** Primary vehicular access provided from a new junction on Stein Road and a new junction on Main Road, with a bridge over the rail line.
- 2** SuDS on lower lying areas of the site, incorporated within landscape scheme.
- 3** New areas of residential development, comprising a mix of types and tenures, including affordable.
- 4** Potential for mixed-use local centre within the core of the residential area and on the through-street.
- 5** Stand of existing TPO beech trees incorporated into central public garden, adjacent to the local centre and forming part of the Green Ring.
- 6** Extensive areas of new public open space, integrating landscape features, recreational spaces, footpaths, and ecological assets.
- 7** Potential location for 2FE primary school, located close to the local centre and primary movement corridors.
- 8** Retaining and incorporating existing pedestrian footpaths and establishing a comprehensive active travel network to facilitate sustainable movement.
- 9** Bioretention strips, rain gardens and swales can be integrated into the network of streets and green corridors to establish a holistic approach to water management.
- 10** The Green Ring is integrated within the wider landscape strategy, with potential on-ward active travel connections.



Figure 5.6 Concept plan

Summary of community benefits



A range of new homes

5.33 Provision of up to 1,200 new homes in a range of size and tenures, including affordable homes.

5.34 This sustainable extension to Southbourne will provide homes for future residents within comfortable reach of existing shops, services, facilities and wider rail connections.



Extensive public open space

5.35 Creation of circa 35 ha of open space forming a new and attractive landscape setting to Southbourne.

5.36 Biodiversity enhancements to achieve a minimum 10% Net Gain.



Improved movement network

5.37 Improvements to the local movement network, including a new strategic street link through Southbourne, relieving pressure on the existing street network and rail crossing.

5.38 The scheme promotes sustainable travel with provision of new cycle and walking links to existing and proposed community facilities.



Potential community assets

5.39 Provision of community uses including a mix use local centre and potential 2FE primary school to benefit the new and existing communities.

5.40 Integrated play spaces and other recreation features will form part of the wider strategy of multifunctional landscape areas.

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