



Above: The site in context



Wyke Street

B3081

Le Neighbour Way

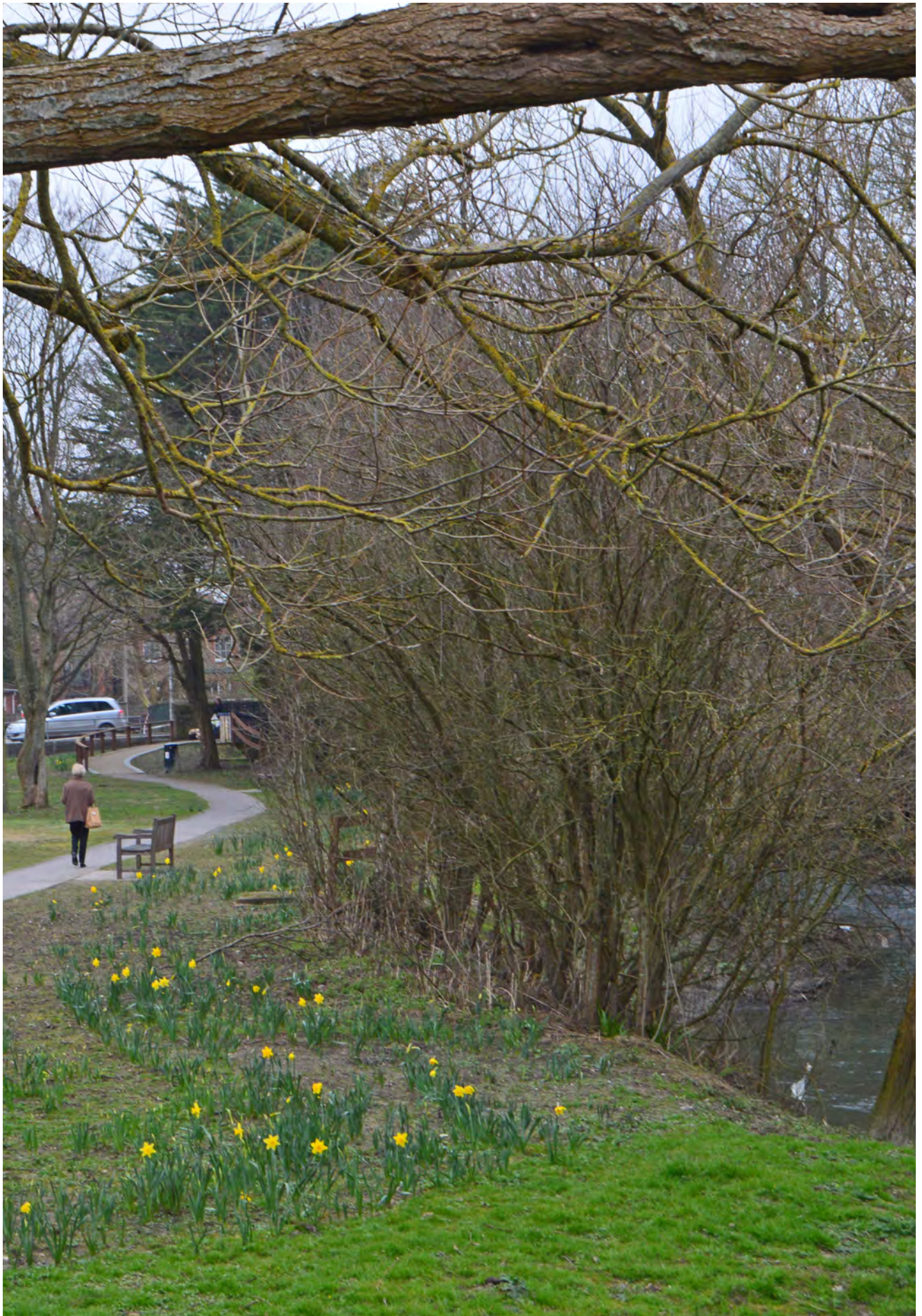
High Street

Waitrose

Asda

Gillingham Station

Railway line



Above: The River Stour looking north towards the High Street

Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
 - 1.1 Background
 - 1.2 Location
 - 1.3 The site
 - 1.4 Site in context
 - 1.5 About the proposal
 - 1.6 Purpose of document
 - 1.7 The application – content
 - 1.8 Scope and structure of document

 - 2.0 Planning
 - 2.1 Planning policy
 - 2.2 Gillingham emerging Local Plan

 - 3.0 Factors shaping development
 - 3.1 Constraints and opportunities
 - 3.2 Ecology and vegetation
 - 3.3 Topography
 - 3.4 Transportation and access
 - 3.5 Utilities
 - 3.6 Flood risk and drainage
 - 3.7 Odour
 - 3.8 Landscape and visual assessment
 - 3.9 Character and building traditions

 - 4.0 The approach
 - 4.1 The vision
 - 4.2 Background
 - 4.3 Concept

 - 5.0 The proposals
 - 5.1 Description of the scheme and key components
 - 5.2 Amount and use
 - 5.3 Scale
 - 5.4 Street hierarchy
 - 5.5 Access
 - 5.6 Parking
 - 5.7 Landscape
 - 5.8 Appearance and sustainable design

 - 6.0 Finally
-

/// Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

① Dorset AONB

② Cranbourne Chase AONB

③ West Wiltshire AONB

■ Environmentally sensitive area

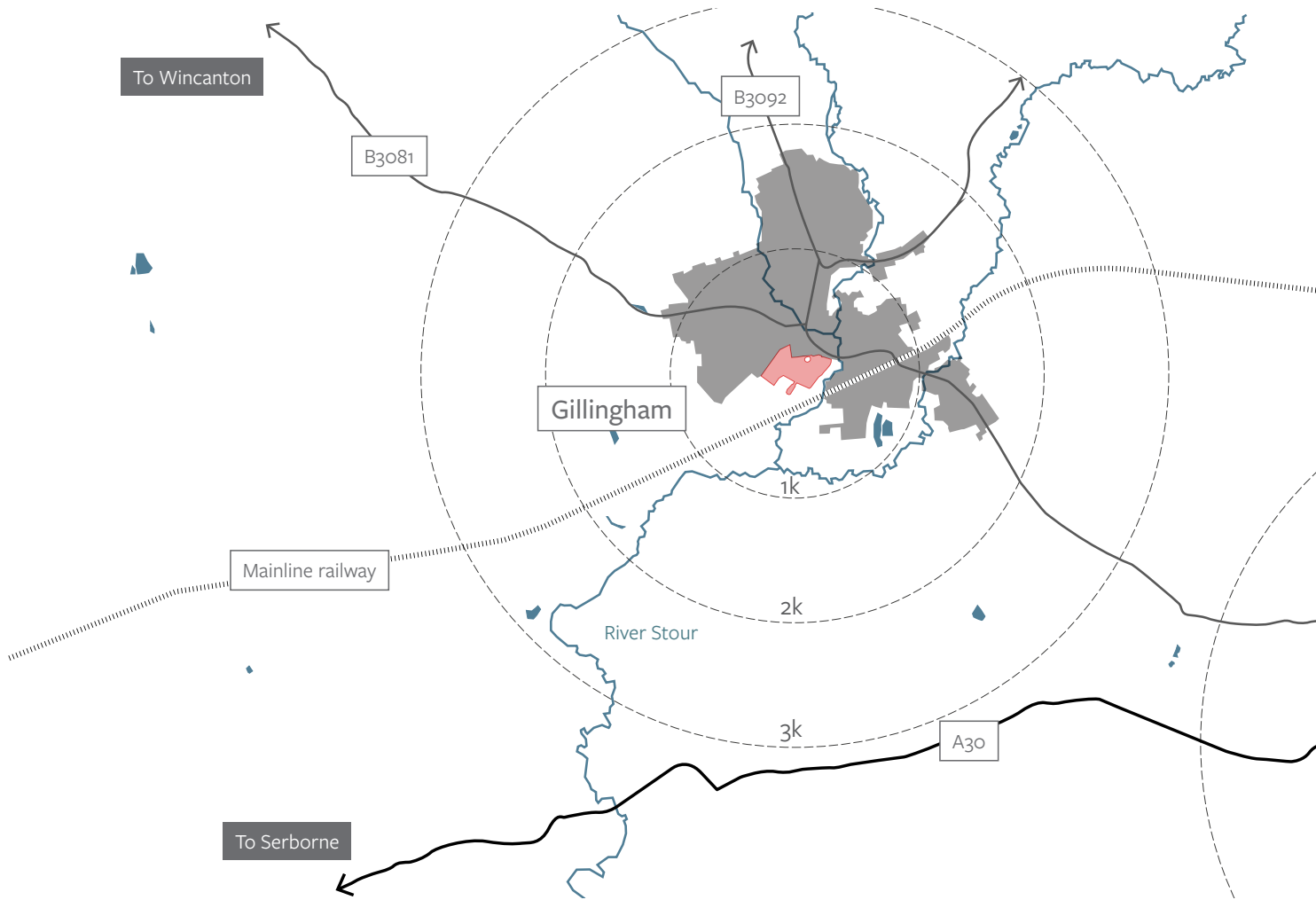


1.0 Introduction

Background, location and proposals

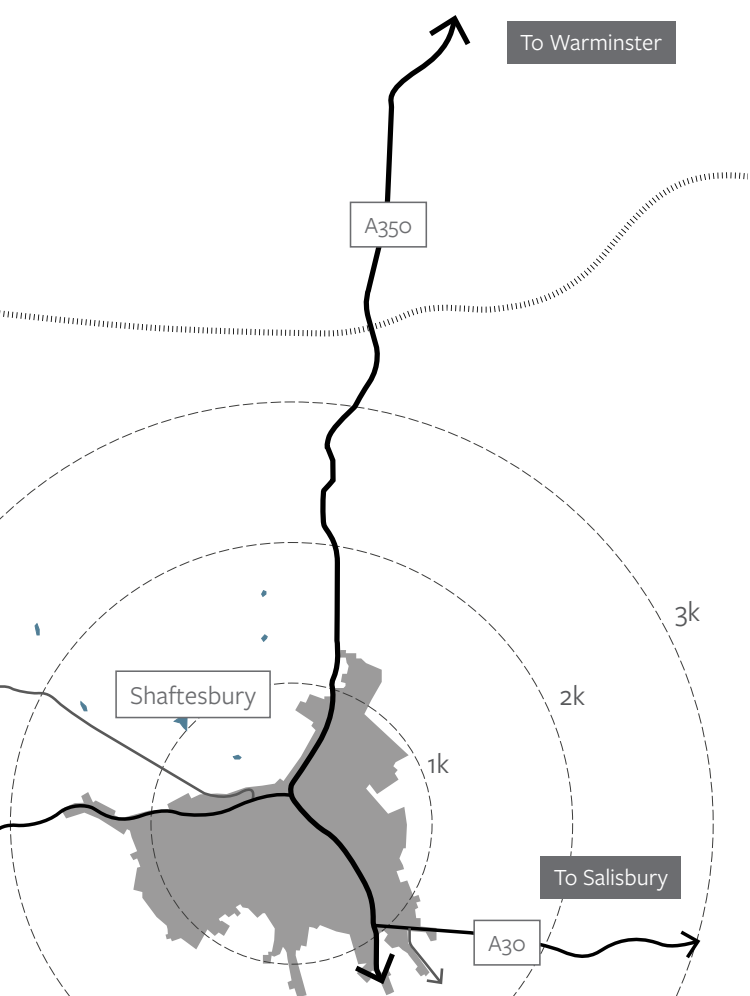
Above: The location of Gillingham in North Dorset

1.0 Introduction



■ Application area





1.1 Background

This Design and Access Statement is in support of a planning application in relation to Land off Le Neubourg Way, Gillingham. It has been prepared by Clifton Emery Design (master planning and landscape design) on behalf of CRUK and Sherborne School with expert assistance from PCL Planning (town planning), PCL Transport Planning (transportation and drainage) and Blackdown Ecology (ecology).

The planning application seeks outline planning permission for the development of up to 336 homes; (up to 35% of which will be affordable), public open space including community allotments and an orchard, associated highways and drainage infrastructure.

The proposal will provide affordable homes for local people; the precise number of which will need to be agreed with North Dorset District Council. The planning application is made in outline with all other matters reserved apart from means of access.

Whilst indicative information is provided in support of the planning application in order to demonstrate how a scheme of the nature proposed could work on the site - details relating to layout, appearance, scale and landscaping will be determined as reserved matters following an approval of outline planning permission.

In terms of the means of access to the development, a single point of connection to the existing highway network is proposed for vehicles. This will be via Le Neubourg Way creating a signalised cross-roads junction with the existing access to the Waitrose store. Several pedestrian access points are proposed and these will connect the development to the extensive wider footpath and cycle network throughout Gillingham. The existing Public Right of Way (PROW) will be enhanced to maintain access from the High Street to the surrounding countryside to the south and south-west.

1.0 Introduction



 Application area

Above: The site in context



1.2 Location

The site lies on the southern edge of Gillingham. It is close to the High Street and local shops and services. Compared to many other existing residential areas in the vicinity it is very favourably positioned in relation to amenities in the centre of town. Gillingham is about 5-6 kilometres north-west of Shaftesbury and 3km south-east of the A303. The A303 is about a 10 minute drive from Le Neubourg Way (B3081) and provides easy road access to Yeovil and Salisbury and in turn to Taunton to the east. The site is bounded by existing dwellings at Church View to the north and dwellings at Common Mead Lane to the west. The London Waterloo Line to Exeter lies to the south and the railway station is a short walk from Le Neubourg Way to the east. The Gillingham Sewage Treatment Works is directly south of the site with the railway embankment separating it from the Brickfields Business Park further to the south east.

1.3 The site

The site comprises four main fields. The most eastern field (south of Le Neubourg Way) runs up to the banks of the River Stour. This flows from north to south along the eastern edge of the site. This area is characterised by the river corridor, a large proportion of which is within a designated floodplain. Low banks, sparse tree cover and scrubby grassland line the edges of the river. Directly to the east of the River Stour is a relatively recent residential three storey development known as Oake Woods.



The most northern and central fields of the site are separated by large mature trees set within a mature hedgebank. In turn mature hedgerows behind these fields separate them from properties to the north and west. There is an existing attenuation pond within central field. This is part of the drainage system for dwellings at Church View. The site rises gently from the river corridor at its lowest to the north western corner where it meets the rear gardens of houses along Common Mead Lane.

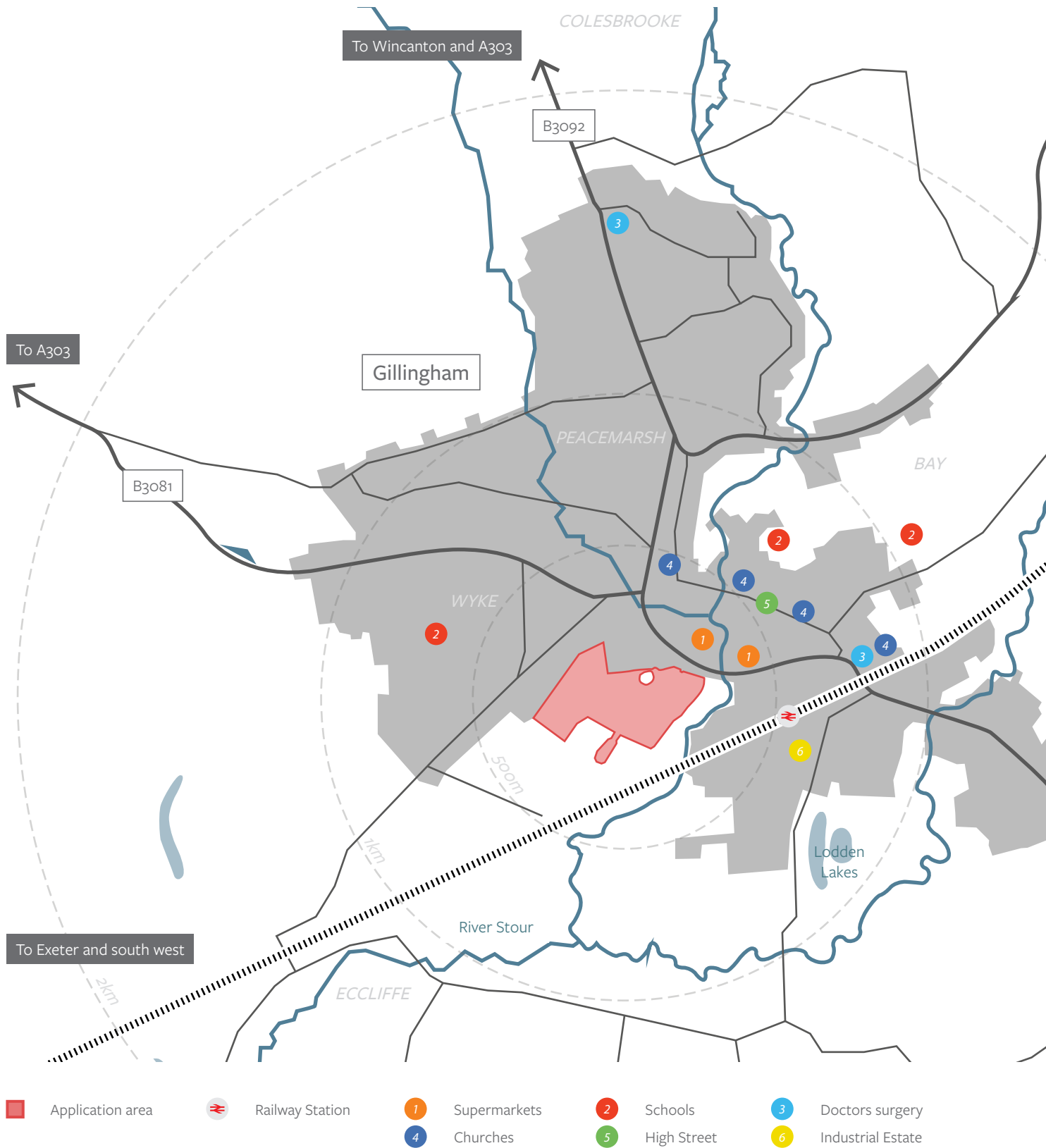
There are a number small tree groups and individual specimens within most of the hedgerows. The railway embankment to the south is heavily planted. The hedgerow network from a connected habitats link to the surrounding countryside.

The centre of Gillingham is within close proximity to the north of the site. The settlement centre includes; a primary school, post office, bus stops, convenience stores, pubs, churches, play areas, and supermarkets.

There are good panoramic views to the south of the site out to the wider countryside. The application site measures 9.96 hectares (24.61 acres).

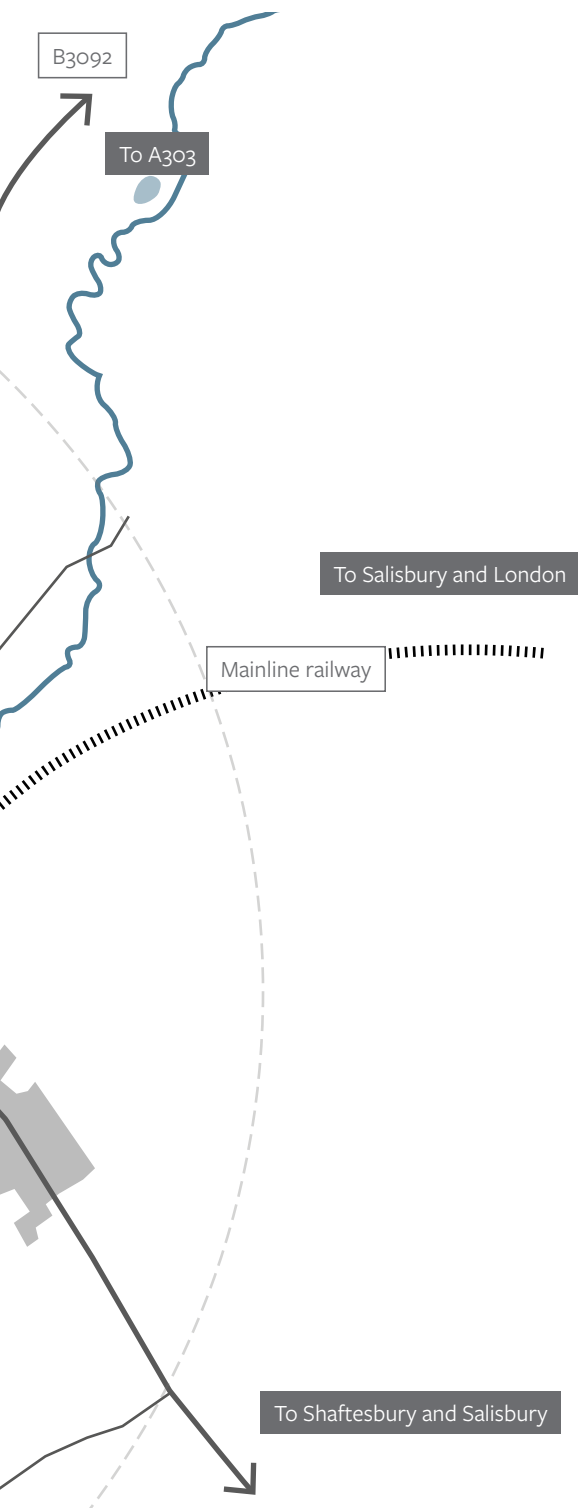


1.0 Introduction



Above: The site in context





1.4 Site in context

Gillingham's population has grown rapidly recent decades. According to census data it has almost doubled since 1970. This is partly because it is a very sustainable location for a growing population. About 35% of the population is recent retired.

The site is well connected and accessible with good road, bus, footpath and cycle links to Yeovil, Salisbury and surrounding villages. It is also well positioned in relation to Taunton and well connected with London and the South West. Salisbury is approximately 30 minutes by train and around 50 minutes by car. Shaftesbury (3-4km) and Motcombe (2km) lie to the south east and east respectively. The small village of Milton on Stour is about 1km to the north.

The centre of Gillingham is concentrated around the High Street about 200m to the north of the site. There are two large supermarkets on Le Neubourg Way opposite the proposed entrance into the site. The Brickfields Business Park and some new housing to the south are separated from the site by the railway line.

The town has 70 shops, and the wider Gillingham education area has 7 primary schools (4 in the town) and 1 secondary school.

1.0 Introduction



1.5 About the proposal

The proposal comprises a residential development providing up to 236 new homes. The illustrative housing mix includes 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom properties and the scheme would include market housing and affordable housing (shared ownership and homes for rent).

There would be large areas of managed open space available for local community use. These would be mainly focused along the river corridor with some space also identified within the developed area. The illustrative proposals also include water attenuation ponds - these will form part of a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) serving the development.

The scheme will provide the following wider benefits:

- New housing in a sustainable location to help North Dorset District Council meet local need and contribute to the delivery of housing of all types (including affordable) in the town and the district;
- New areas of high quality public open space, including children's play areas and landscaped areas accessible to the wider community;
- Opportunities to enhance biodiversity across the site and particularly within the riverside park;
- New and improved pedestrian and cycle connections;
- A comprehensive SUDS serving the development;
- Community allotments and orchards.

Description of proposal

The proposed development comprises:

Housing – up to 236 dwellings on 7.18 hectares (17.71 acres)

Informal public open space 2.78 hectares (6.89 acres) including allotments

Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) and Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAPS).

Highway access, SUDS, landscaping and associated infrastructure.

All matters reserved other than the primary access from Le Neubourg Way.

1.6 Purpose of document

The requirement for Design and Access Statements to support planning applications is set out on DCLG's Guidance on information requirements and validation (March 2010), a response to the recognised need to deliver better quality and more sustainable development through the planning system, an objective embedded in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The legal requirements in relation to Design and Access Statements are clarified in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management procedure) Order 2013. The guidance sets out the role of the Design and Access Statement as being to illustrate the process that has led to the development proposal, and to explain and justify the proposals in a structured way, following an assessment, involvement, evaluation, design process, informed by the site and its wider context.

In illustrating this process the Design and Access Statement sets out and describes the vision for the site, considers the issues inherent to the site and its wider context, the relevant design guidance, planning requirements and policies, and importantly the design principles and parameters that have informed and guided the final design solution.

1.7 The application – content

This Design and Access Statements should be read in conjunction with the suite of supporting documents that accompany the outline planning application. These include for example a:

Planning Statement;
Flood Risk Assessment;
Transport Assessment;
Travel Plan;
Sustainability Statement;
Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal; and,
Statement of Community Involvement.

1.8 Scope and structure of document

The statement sets out to illustrate a clear and logical progression from survey and analysis through to design concept and the development of the illustrated master plan. It is sub-divided into the following sections:

Section 2 Planning Context: Sets out the national and local policy and guidance; analysis of the site's local and regional setting in order to inform the development of a locally responsive design solution.

Section 3 Factors shaping development: Describes the various issues and constraints that have been taken account of in preparing the illustrative master plan. These include technical considerations such as ecology, topography and drainage, as well as an overview of the character of the area and the outcomes of consultation.

Section 4 The Approach: Explains the vision, principles and concepts that have been applied in shaping the illustrative master plan.

Section 5 The Proposal: Outlines the illustrative master plan and explains the proposed land use accommodation schedule, layout, scale, the landscape strategy for the park and open space within the scheme, appearance and access. It also illustrates how these design principles could be translated into an attractive new place.

Pre 1886



1887 - 1938



“Despite its rural setting, Gillingham could claim to be an industrial town. In 1769, the Gillingham Silk Co. established the silk-throwing industry (i.e. the process of preparing raw silk for the weaver). In the early years of the 19th Century, around 160 people were employed in the mill itself. Girl apprentices were often obtained from London workhouses. In 1847, Oake Woods opened their bacon factory. The railway arrived in 1859, closely followed by the Gillingham Pottery, Brick and Tile Co. in 1865. A cattle and stock market developed and this was followed by the emergence of firms still existing today, e.g. Bracher Bros and J.H. Rose & Sons.

The population grew from 1,873 in 1801 to 3,380 in 1901. As well as the new industries, the High Street was furnished with a variety of shops. Important among new industries were several serving the farming community, particularly for dairy products, which could now be dispatched several times daily to London and other large towns to arrive in a fresh condition.

During the first three decades of the 20th Century, the prosperity of the town continued. A market was held every other Monday and the calf market was the second largest in the country. There was a large dairy depot for manufacturing cheese and supplying milk to London, as well as Eden Shute’s butter factory and Slade’s mineral works. After 1945 there was a steady decline and the end of the market in the 1950s seemed to mark the nadir of industrial Gillingham.

However, by the late 1970s, the trend was reversing and new firms – such as Sherman Chemicals, Biokil, Sigma Aldrich, Dextra Lighting Systems, Wessex Fare and Chester Jefferies – came to the town. Land was released for housing developments and the town started to grow again. The ‘Relief Road’, Le Neubourg Way (named after Gillingham’s twin town in Normandy), provided the opportunity for a supermarket, a new library and museum to be built at Chantry Fields. Gillingham Waitrose store soon attained the position of the third busiest Waitrose in the country, and has since become the focal point for the regeneration of the town’s retail trade.”

Gillingham, Dorset - A Potted History (Gillingham Town Design Statement).

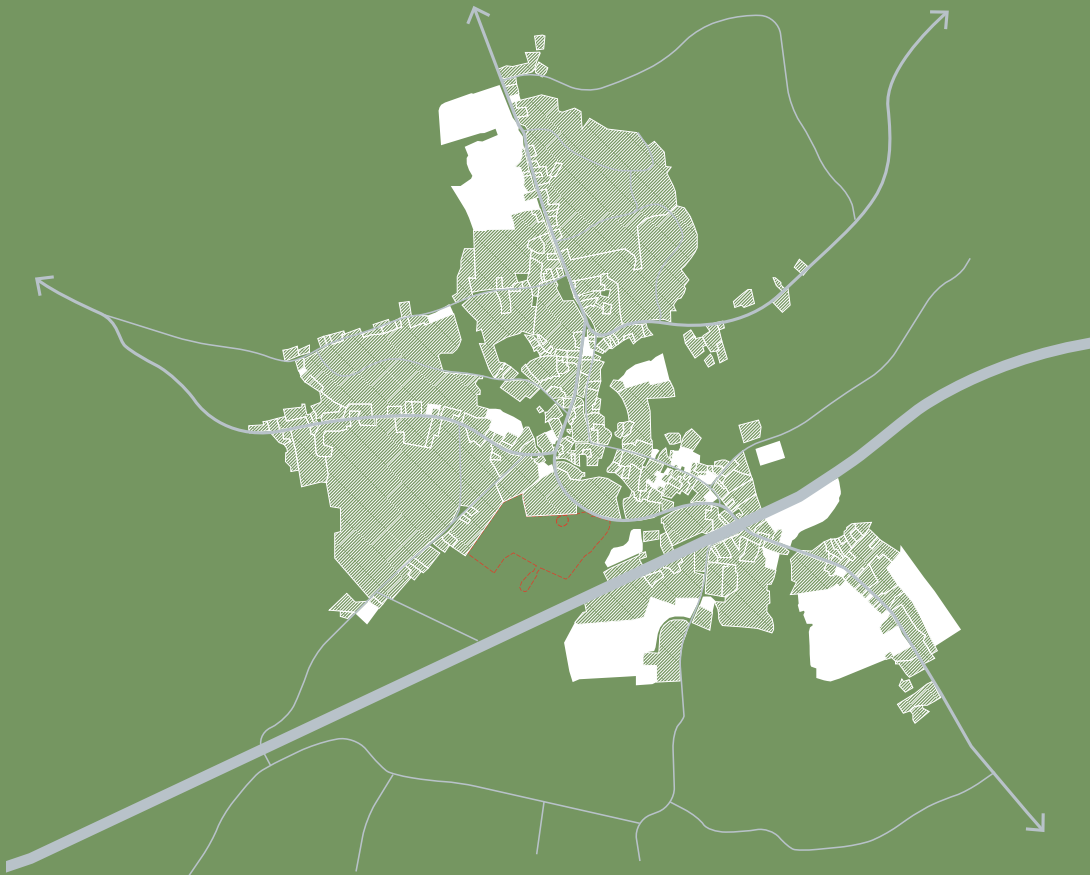
1939 - 1970



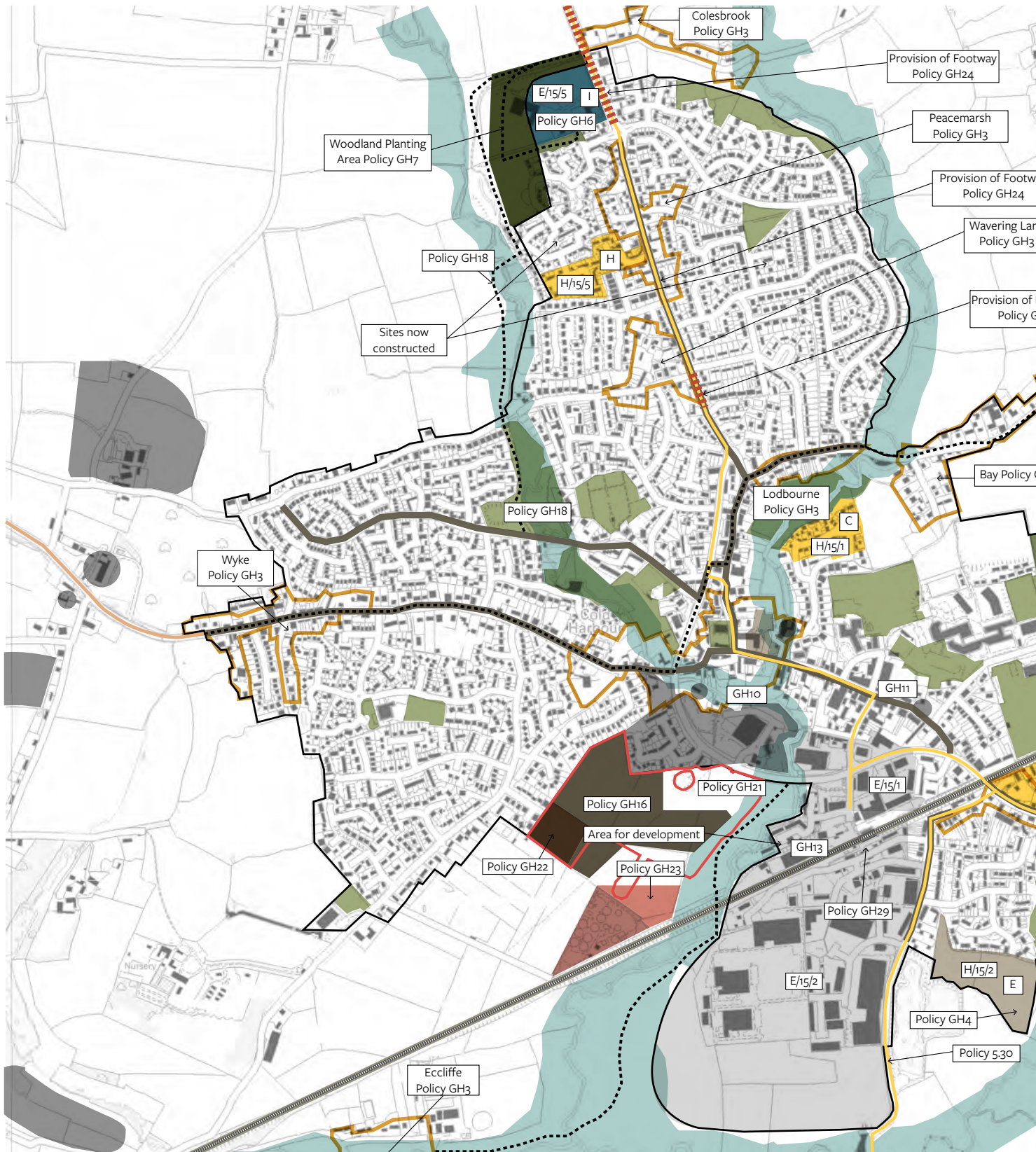
1971 - 2000 A period of significant growth



Post 2000 Expansion continued



2.0 Planning



Above: Gillingham Local Plan period ending 2011.



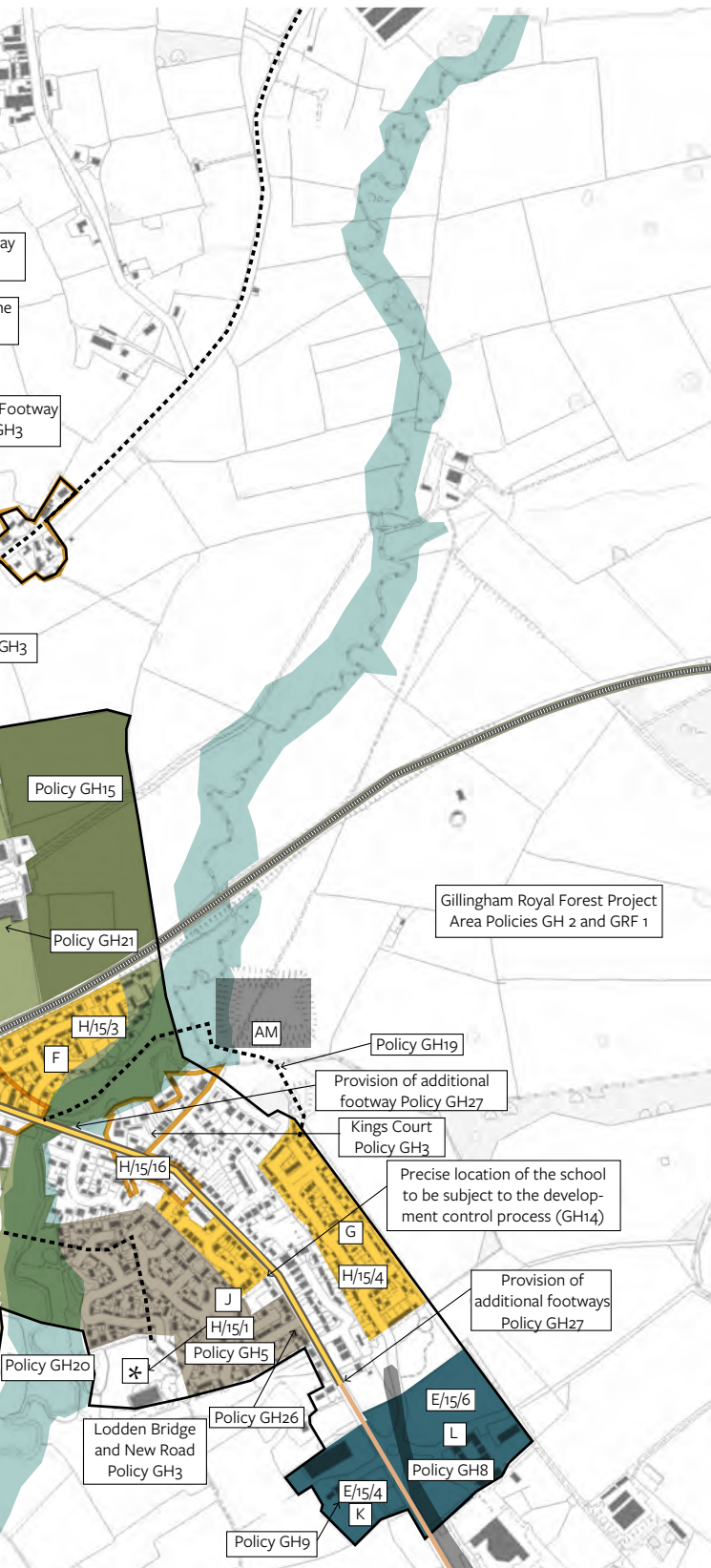
2.1 Planning policy

The Local Plan is the principle strategic planning document for North Dorset. It contains strategic policy to guide development to 2011. Whilst it is now beyond the end date of the plan, the majority of the policies were saved in September 2007, by direction of the Secretary of State. Although a number of policies have not been saved, the majority are still in use - please refer to the Planning Statement prepared by PCL Planning for relevant policies.

The plan opposite identifies the policies relating to the North Dorset District-Wide Local Plan to 2011 (First Revision) (2003).

Government guidance relevant to this planning application is set out in the accompanying Planning Statement. The National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) (2012) sets out the Governments planning principles for England and how these are expected to be applied. The Framework's message is clear in that it provides an emphasis on the need to:

“drive and support sustainable economic development”
[including housing] (paragraph 17).



2.0 Planning



“Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites” (Paragraph 49)(our emphasis)

2.2 Gillingham emerging Local Plan

The Draft Dorset Local Plan - 2011 to 2026 Part 1 was published in November 2013 and public consultation ran until 24th January 2014. NDDC are currently reviewing the representations made to the Local Plan.

The Emerging Draft Local Plan outlines the distribution of housing in Gillingham. It sets out to ensure at least 4,200 net additional dwellings will be provided in North Dorset between 2011 and 2026 at an average annual rate of about 280 dwellings per annum.

The plan opposite illustrates the preferred option sites for additional development in Gillingham and shows that the proposed site is within a more sustainable location in relation to existing key facilities and strategic transport connections.



- Application boundary
- Site Location
- Main street through the development
(and potential bus route)
- Other key streets
- - - Key linkages to be established and/or retained,
primarily for pedestrians and cyclists
- - - Important edges around the flood zone.
Development to front onto green space
- ➔ ➔ Key gateways, special attention in their urban design
- Potential locations for Public Open Space,
integrated within the wider network of Green
Infrastructure
- Important open wooded areas
- Existing employment within the SSA, and areas that
could accommodate carefully designed new
employment development
- River
- Mixed-use local centre, with shops and services to
meet the day-to-day needs of residents and
employees
- Areas that could accommodate carefully designed
housing development. Density to vary accordingly
- Potential location for a new primary school

3.0 Factors shaping development

3.1 Constraints and opportunities

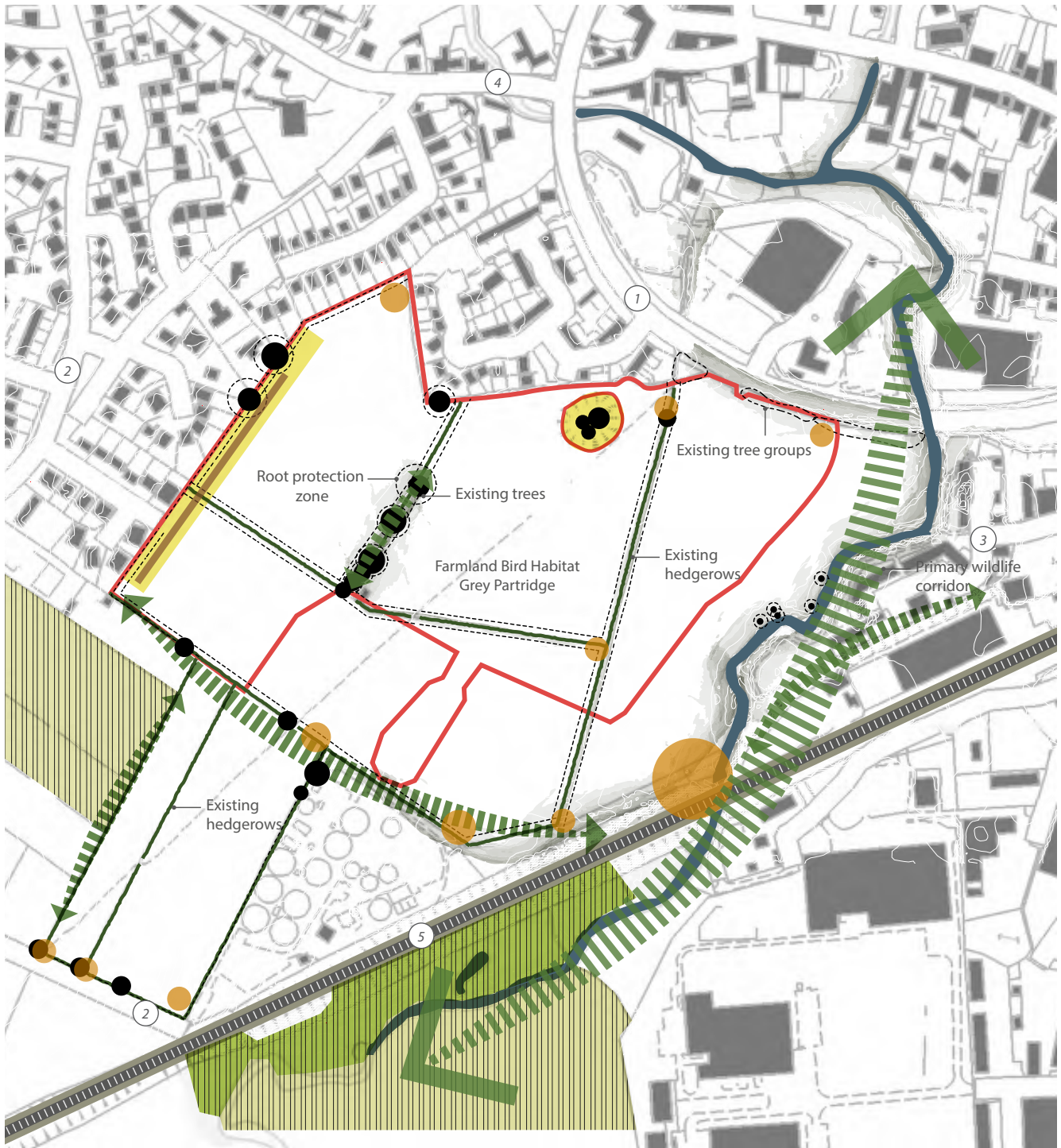
The shape of the indicative master plan that accompanies the outline planning application has been designed in mind of a number of factors that make the site and its surroundings distinctive. The following constraints have had a particular influence upon the shape of the illustrative plan:



Above: Photograph of the site's surrounding context from an unnamed road between Bleet lane and Standpitts Lane looking north

- The intrinsic townscape and architectural character of Gillingham;
- The character of the area immediately adjacent to the site;
- The relationship to neighbouring residential streets and houses;
- The relationship of the development with the River Stour;
- The position of the site in relation to local facilities;
- Pedestrian routes and connections to facilities in the town;
- Access, services and utilities;
- The landscape character of the locality;
- Variety of utilities that criss-cross the site;
- Landscape and visual impact considerations;
- Topography of the site and its surroundings;
- Microclimate issues;
- Drainage, flood alleviation and water attenuation;
- Ecology, trees and hedgerows; and
- Transportation considerations.





- Application boundary
- Primary wildlife corridor
- Secondary wildlife corridor
- Existing hedgerows
- Badger activity near gardens

- Existing trees and root protection zone
- Slow worms present
- Bats present
- Deciduous woodland
- Entry level stewardship

- 1 Le Neubourg Way
- 2 Common Mead Lane
- 3 Oake Road
- 4 Wyke Street
- 5 Railway line



3.0 Factors shaping development

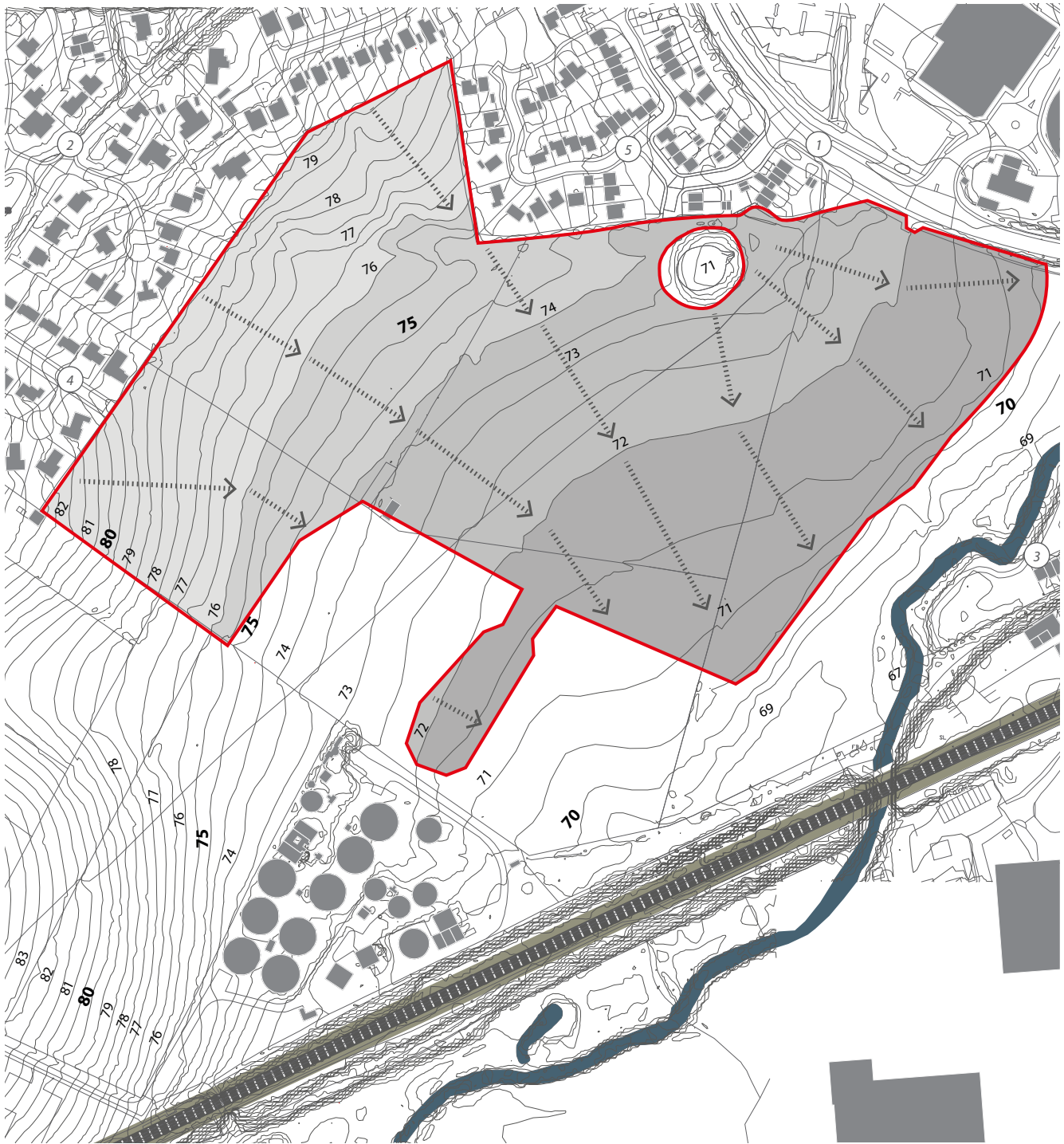
3.2 Ecology and vegetation













An extended phase 1 habitat survey was undertaken during the autumn of 2013. This work was undertaken by Blackdown Environmental and is one of a suite of documents that accompanies the outline planning application.

In summary the survey found:

- A badger sett located on the southern side of the railway embankment with evidence of badgers navigating across the railway line through the site to the hedgerows along the north western boundary (rear of the existing properties along Common Mead Ave);
- No evidence of roosting bats associated with agricultural buildings on the site and with limited numbers of trees offering potential for roosting bats;
- The river and associated banks along the eastern and south eastern edge of the site provided a foraging and commuting habitat for a suite of bats and water voles which have been sighted during further survey work;
- The hedgebank and associated vegetation were suitable bird breeding habitats;
- There are a number of habitats on the site which are suitable for a viable population of reptiles. Slow worms were present along the north western boundary to the rear of existing properties and within the attenuation pond;
- Breeding bird surveys were conducted in April, May and June 2014. A total of thirty one bird species were recorded during surveys, nineteen of which were confirmed as breeding (or considered probably breeding) within or adjacent to the site. Measures to retain areas of nesting and foraging habitat will be incorporated into the project design as well as providing new nesting opportunities for species of conservation concern which nest in association with buildings, such as swifts and house sparrows;
- The hedgerow vegetation provided suitable dormouse habitat and a subsequent dormouse survey was undertaken but none were found.

The report of the survey concludes that the most valuable features on the site were the hedgerows, the River Stour corridor and associated vegetated green corridors. The primary wildlife corridor provides the best natural habitat for a variety of flora and fauna. This area should be managed to protect and enhance the asset and where possible to maintain its relatively diverse wildlife. It's recommended that a buffer zone along the eastern boundary / river corridor is maintained to preserve any existing habitat and restrict immediate access to the river banks.



- | | | | |
|---|----------------------|---|-----------------------|
|  | Application boundary |  | Contours |
|  | Le Neubourg Way |  | Slope direction |
|  | Common Mead Lane |  | Gradient 1:15 - 1:25 |
|  | Oake Woods |  | Gradient 1:25 - 1:30 |
|  | Stour Meadow |  | Gradient 1:30 - 1:50 |
|  | Church View |  | Gradient 1:50 - 1:100 |

Above: Topography



3.0 Factors shaping development

3.3 Topography

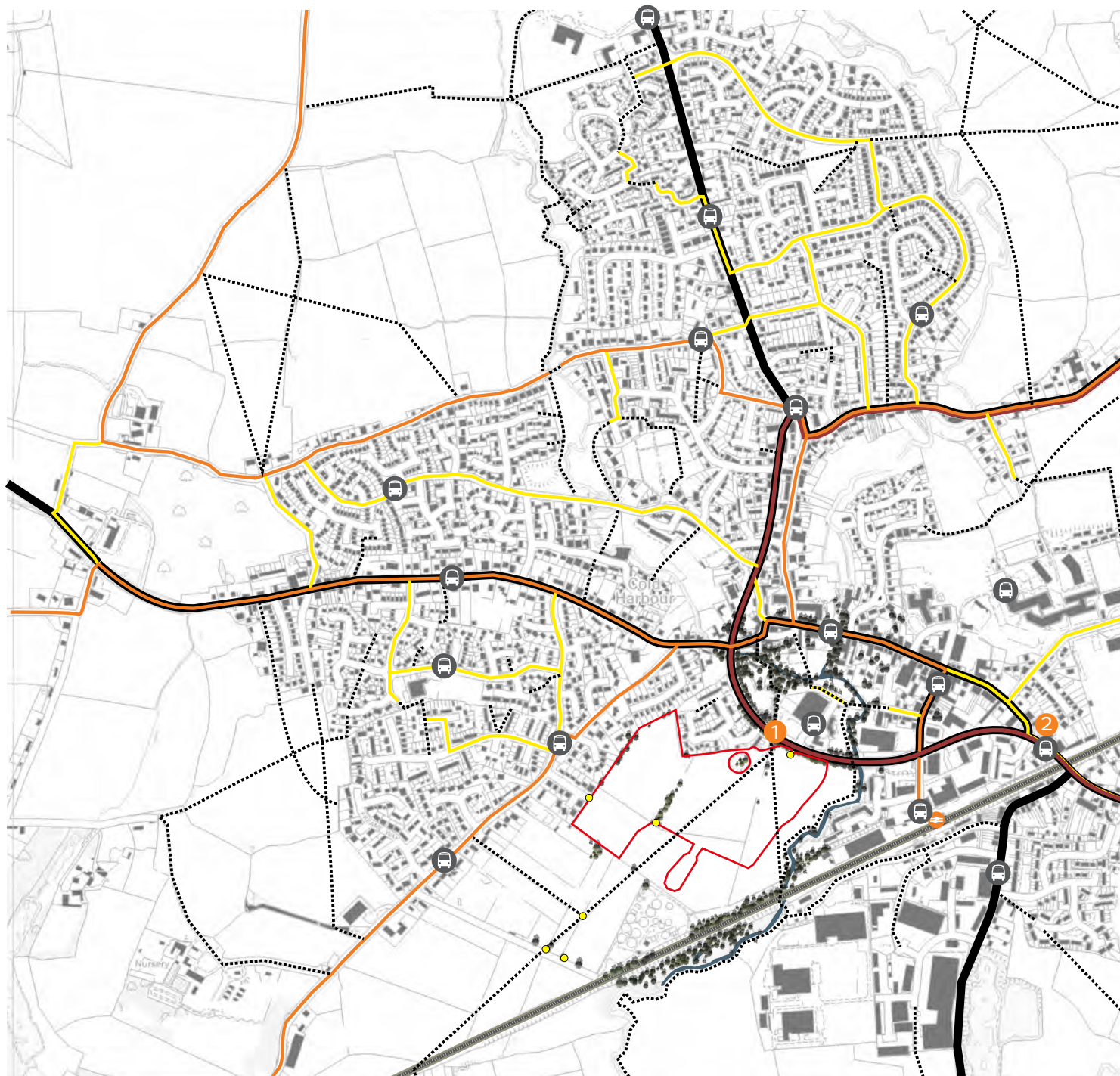
Generally the site is much lower than most of Gillingham. It is characterised by its proximity to the River Stour. The land rises gently west from of the banks of the river along the eastern boundary of the site. This starts at around 69m AOD at its lowest and climbs to 82m AOD where it meets the boundaries of properties at Stour Meadow.

The eastern edge of the site and the lowest part of the river corridor fall within the designated flood area of the River Stour. Within these areas the gradients are very shallow and range between 1:50 -1:100, climbing gently in a westerly direction where gradients steepen slightly, starting at 1:30-1:50 and ending at between 1:15 - 1:20 along the western boundary.

The site itself is characterised by a east facing slope that is at its highest along the western boundary and at its lowest along the watercourse and hedgerow/ scattered trees defining its eastern boundary. The landform is uncomplicated and gradients are slight – the land is almost flat adjacent to the river and there are far reaching views to the south and east.

Topography is not a major issue from a construction perspective although lower areas do coincide wide flood zone areas where development would not be suitable.

3.0 Factors shaping development



- Application area
- ▬ Railway
- ▬ Main Roads
- ▬ Urban Signed Cycle Routes
- Field Gates





3.4 Transportation and access – a sustainable location

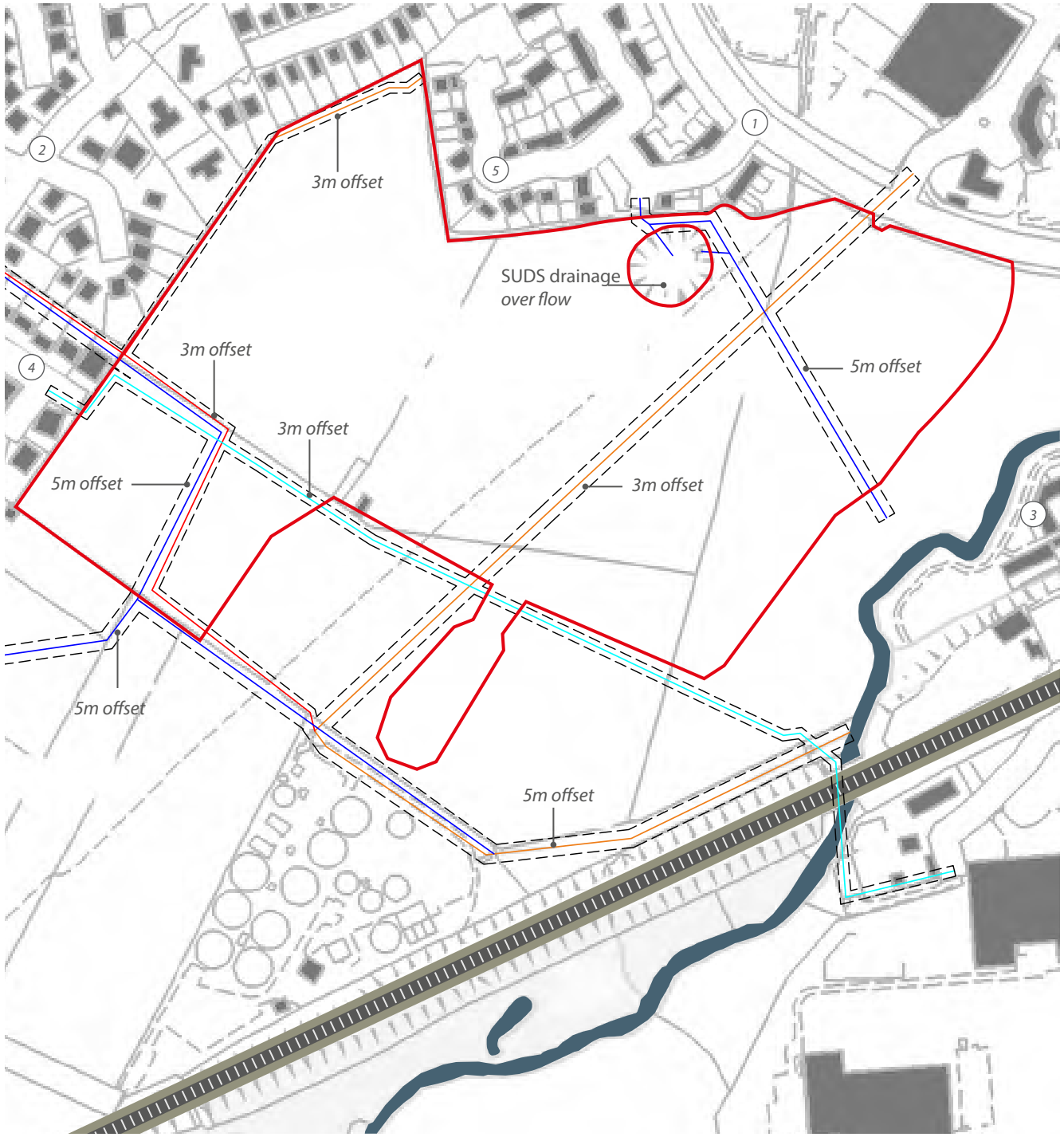
A transport assessment prepared by PCL Transport Planning accompanies the outline planning application. The assessment examines the impacts of the proposed development on the highways network. The scope of the assessment was agreed with Dorset County Council highways officers and includes a review of capacity at Le Neubourg Way, the Le Neubourg Way/Shaftesbury Road junction and the Shaftesbury Road railway bridge pinch point.

The assessment identifies the following issues associated with the development of the site:

- The development site is well-located in terms of pedestrian accessibility to local facilities in Gillingham. Local facilities in easy reach include the local shops, post office, and primary school - all are accessible from the site within a 10-minute walk.
 - Existing bus services from bus stops on Le Neubourg Way, Common Mead Lane and the High Street, together with Gillingham Railway Station provide regular opportunities to travel by public transport into Shaftesbury, Salisbury, Taunton and further afield to the South West and London.
 - The proposed master plan includes multiple points of pedestrian access allowing for a number of options for walking into the centre of Gillingham as well as out to the countryside.
- 1 The proposed site access will be via a fully signalised junction onto Le Neubourg Way combining with the existing access to Waitrose.
 - 2 The additional off-site highway works consists of signalling the existing mini-roundabout from the High Street onto Le Neubourg Way.

From a transport perspective the site is considered to be in a sustainable location. It is proposed that a Travel Plan will be implemented in association with the new development. This will comprise a variety of measures aimed at promoting the use of sustainable modes of travel to and from the development.





- | | |
|---|---|
| □ Application boundary | ■ River |
| ① Le Neubourg Way | — Raising Main Sewers |
| ② Common Mead Lane | — Public Water Mains |
| ③ Oake Road | — Water Main Sewers |
| ④ Stour Meadow | — Gravity Sewers |
| ⑤ Church View | |



3.0 Factors shaping development

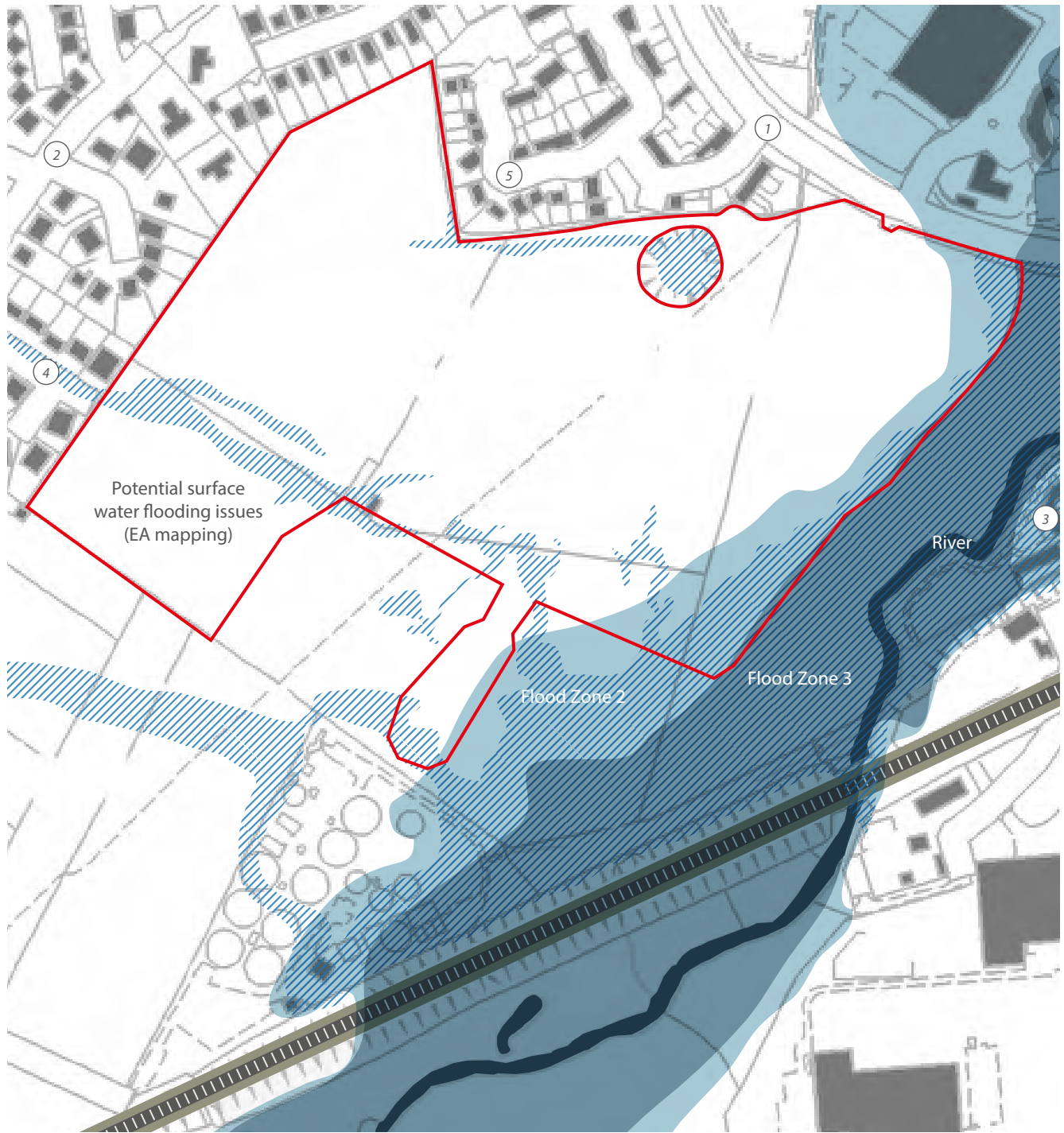
3.5 Utilities











A utilities search was commissioned to understand the extent of the existing water supply and waste water network that may affect the proposed development layout. The proximity of Sewage Treatment Works meant that there will be potential for a complex series of waste and supply pipes to and from the works.

The survey identified that the site is affected by several categories of pipe each requiring a range of different development offsets, these consist of:

- Ø 225 Raising main sewers (waste) - 3m offset
- Ø 225 Public water main - 3m offset
- Ø 300/250/150 Gravity foul sewer - 3m offset
- Ø 525 Water main sewers- 5m offset

The diagram opposite summarises how the various pipes will shape the proposals. The outcome of the utilities search shows that there will be significant effect on the way that the illustrative plan is laid out.



- | | |
|--|--|
|  Application boundary |  River |
|  Le Neubourg Way |  Flood zone 3 - 1:100 |
|  Common Mead Lane |  Flood zone 2 - 1:1000 |
|  Oake Road |  Low surface water flooding |
|  Stour Meadow | |
|  Church View | |



3.0 Factors shaping development

3.6 Flood risk and drainage

A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) prepared by PCL Transport Planning accompanies the outline planning application. In summary the following key points are identified.

The site is designated on the Environment Agency's flood risk map as being within 'Flood Risk Zone 1 & 2 – Low & Medium Risk.' This means that the site is not at risk from flooding from fluvial sources in up to a 1 in 1,000 year return period in the area marked as Zone 1 where as Zone 2 will be subject to this.

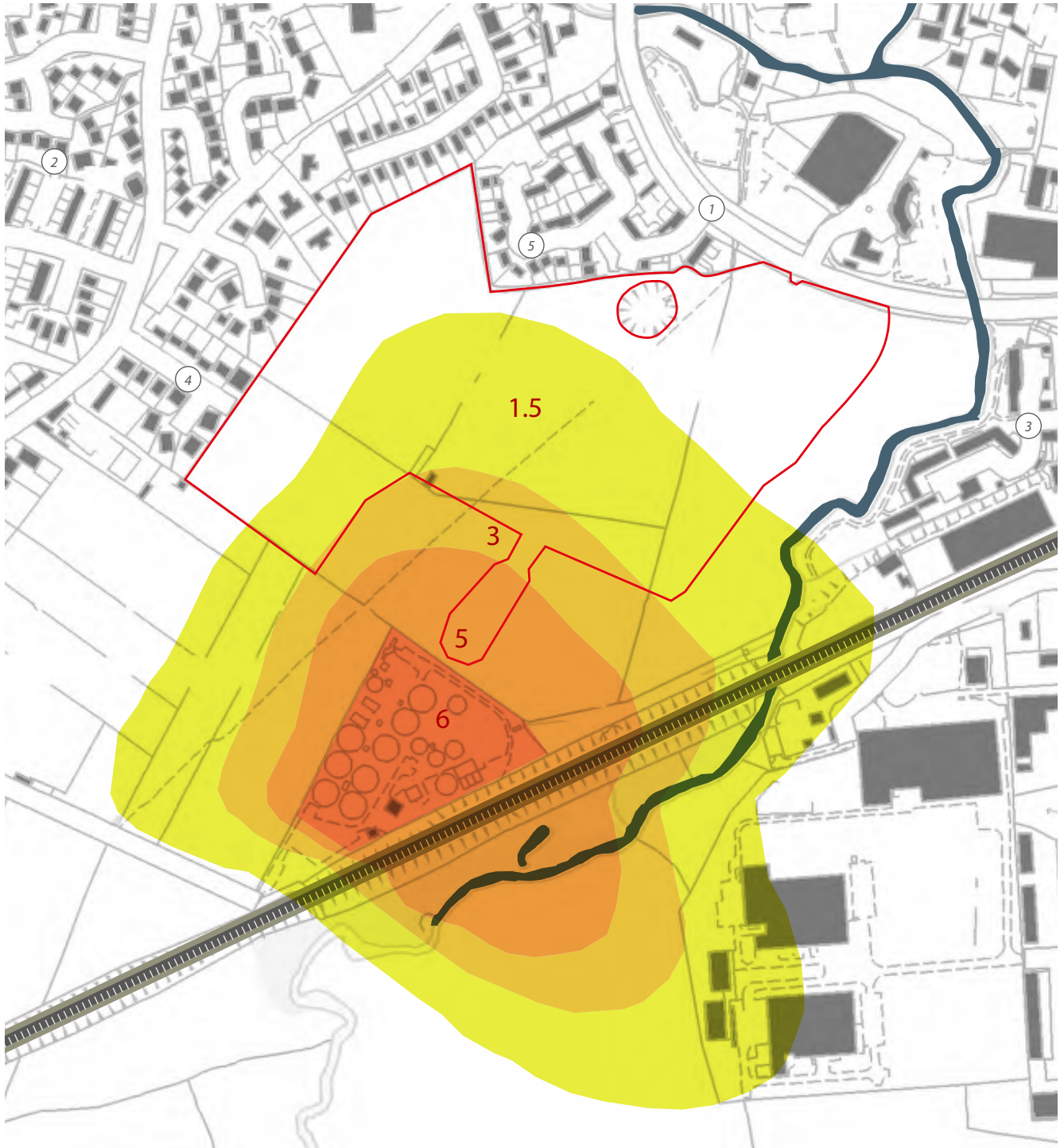
The Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework states that residential developments are best suited to areas located within 'Flood Risk Zone 1'. The majority of the development site falls in this zone.











The Environment Agency's 'Flood Map Surface Water' indicates that there are existing flood conveyance routes that pass through the development site. These run along the existing network of hedgerows that run west-east towards the river.

In lieu of a ground investigation to understand the ground conditions on the site, an assessment has been undertaken to estimate the likely attenuation requirements to enable a greenfield discharge to the existing watercourse which runs adjacent to the eastern boundary. This assessment has determined that there is ample green space to accommodate a 'worst case' attenuation scenario.

The development can be undertaken in a sustainable manner from a drainage perspective and this can be achieved in line with the National Planning Policy Framework and without increasing the flood risk to existing properties within the downstream catchment.

With regard to foul sewerage South West Water has indicated that there is capacity in the public sewerage system for the additional dwellings.



- | | | | |
|---|----------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
|  | Application boundary |  | 6 ou _e /m ³ |
|  | Le Neubourg Way |  | 5 ou _e /m ³ |
|  | Common Mead Lane |  | 3 ou _e /m ³ |
|  | Oake Road |  | 1.5 ou _e /m ³ |
|  | Stour Meadow | | |
|  | Church View | | |



3.0 Factors shaping development

3.7 Odour

An Odour Impact Assessment for the proposed development was undertaken on the 29th November 2013 by Odournet UK on behalf of Entran – environmental & transportation.

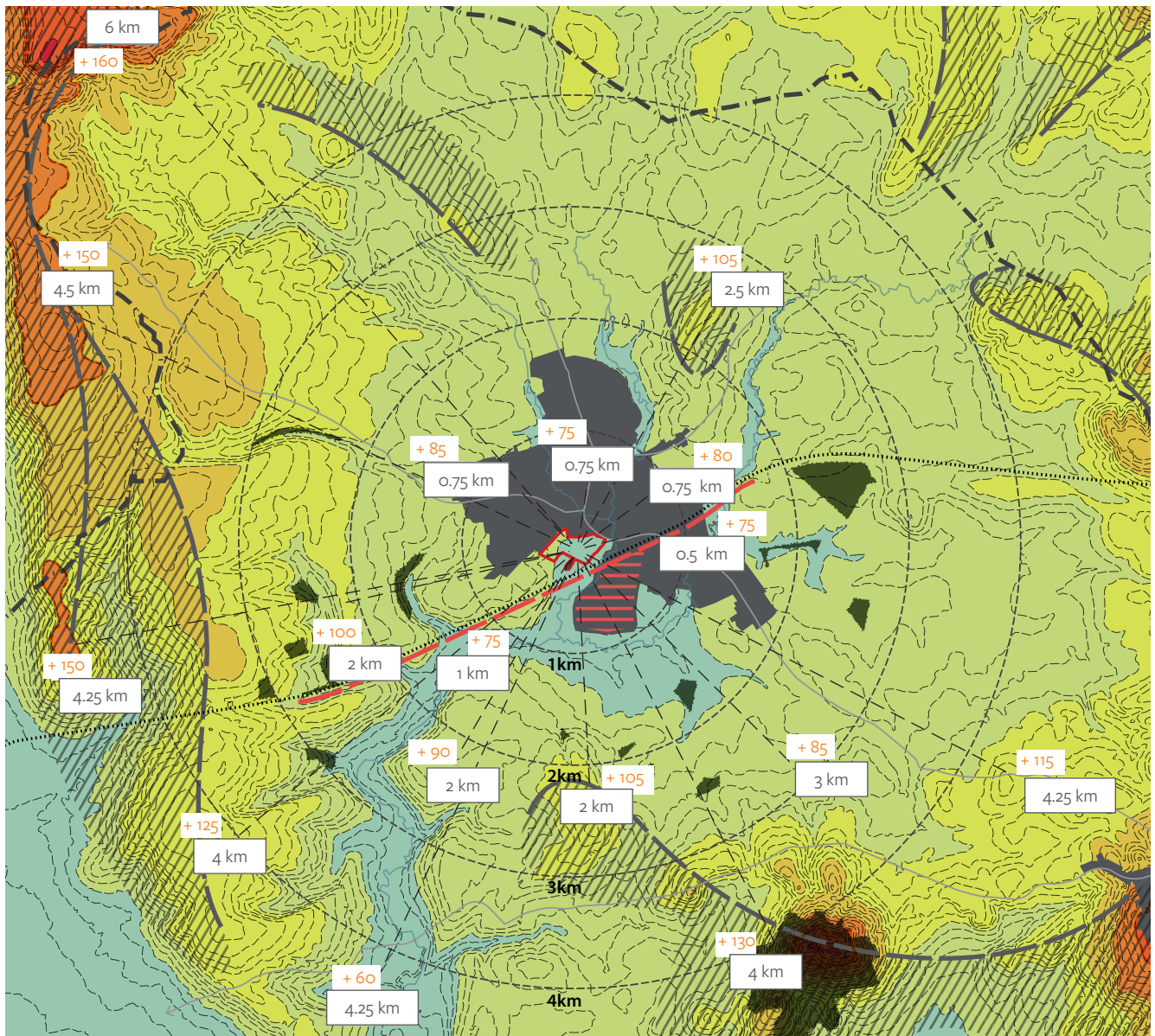
Wessex Water recommended that a detailed odour monitoring and modelling assessment should be carried out to accurately define the acceptable area of residential development on the site.

A range of activities were identified at Gillingham Sewage Treatment Works that have the potential to generate odorous emissions. These include a number of processes with the operations of the works. Odour exposures across the proposed development land range from below C98,1 hour = 1.5 ou^E/m³ to greater than C98,1 hour = 5 ou^E/m³.

The assessment concludes that residential development should be no closer to the sewage treatment works than the area marked as zone 3 illustrated on the odour plan on page 36.

There is potential to reduce emissions from this source by implementation of engineering measures. Tree planting, earthwork re-modelling and upgrading the existing facilities would help reduce its current impact upon the locality.

3.0 Factors shaping development



- Application boundary
- Settlement boundary
- District boundary
- Main hills around the site
- Main Roads
- River
- + 135 Spot heights
- Open or wooded areas
- Visual barrier: Railway embankment
- Visual barrier: Business park
- Ridge Lines
- Hidden views by spot morphology



3.8 Landscape and visual assessment

A Landscape and Visual Baseline Report has been prepared by Clifton Emery design. The report forms part of the suite of documents that accompanies the outline planning application.

The baseline report:

- Assessed the existing landscape character of the site;
- Considered the nature of the visual character of the site within its surrounding context;
- Provided an analysis of the constraints and opportunities revealed by the landscape and visual baseline.

The work demonstrates that a well-designed scheme of residential development on the northern and western side of the site need not generate wider unacceptable or harmful landscape and visual impacts.

This is principally because the site is visually well contained from most public vantage points and identified representative receptors.

3.0 Factors shaping development



Gillingham Methodist Church, High Street



High Street



Wyke Road from Common Mead lane

3.9 Locally distinctive - character and building traditions

Whilst the architectural appearance of the proposed development will be a matter for consideration at the reserve matters stage, the illustrative master plan that accompanies this statement has been designed to provide a foundation for a scheme design that is driven by sustainable solutions and which takes references as appropriate from the local identity of Gillingham.

Considerations for new development:

- Normally no new dwelling should be higher than two storeys;
- New developments should be designed so as not to exclude views of the surrounding countryside;
- Development proposals should include the visual context for the site;
- Any new development should take into account of the specific characteristic of the locations within the town.

The historic development within Gillingham (principally around the High Street and Wyke Road) has a distinctive character and this provides a number of cues for the character and appearance of the new development. The distinctive identity of the town is derived from a scale, grain and use of building materials that has evolved over many centuries.

Whilst there are many areas of post war housing outside of the historic core of the town, housing designs here are generally utilitarian and do not provide design references that are unique to Gillingham.

Scale

Buildings in the area are generally two storeys in height with traditional dual pitched roofs and chimneys. Whilst most houses are two storeys, due to slight topographical changes in the street and varying floor to ceiling heights between houses, there is some variation in eaves heights between buildings. This creates some variety although most houses do present a simple eaves line that is parallel to the street.

Grain

Houses in the older part of the town are generally sited at the back of the pavement with larger rear gardens. Whilst terraces are generally quite long there is variety in the alignment of buildings and this creates a gently meandering street scene. Some houses are set back from the main alignment of the street with generous front gardens – many of these have low stone boundary walls or combination of well maintained hedgerows and stone walls.

Much of the centre of Gillingham is wrapped by the River Stour which cuts through the centre of the town. The large distinctive church tower with pinnacles and castellations marks the western end of the High Street. This part of town is enclosed by the narrow streets and spaces that define the historic layout and intrinsic character.

Houses are mostly in terraces in the historic core of the village. Semi-detached and detached houses are not common. As a result the older streets have good enclosure and a distinctive townscape form. Large trees in the High Street and the densely vegetated meandering river corridor provide unusual breaks in the built form. Vegetation ensures that these are distinctive and clearly visible green areas in the town when viewed from distance. This is a characteristic of the local townscape.

Landmarks

Some buildings in the town stand out from the others because they have a particular form or role in the life on the town. These buildings add to the overall character and sense of place. They include; the St Mary's Church, Gillingham Methodist Church, the Natwest and Lloyds Banks, the secondary school, the post office and the town pubs.

Elevations

Whilst there is some variety in elevation treatments within the core of the town most houses/ cottages are characterised by simple rectangular windows recessed into masonry elevations. The older properties generally have a bigger solid to void ratio than newer houses and there is a mix of symmetrical and asymmetrical elevations. Whilst there is variety between different individual elevations, the historic streets in Gillingham are generally characterised by terraced housing with a distinct overall rhythm.

Landmark buildings in the settlement generally have elevations that are individual – many, such as the St Marys Church and the Parish Hall are finished with locally quarried limestone; this sets them apart from most other buildings in the town.

Materials

Mid 20th Century development displays a number of different contrasting materials but hard salmon brick is most typical of Gillingham. More recent painted smooth rendered houses are also commonplace within the town. Many have brick window surrounds and vary in height and setback. Most modern roofs are slate with a few surviving terracotta examples in the older areas.

Some properties within the High Street and Wyke Conservation Area have natural stone as their main building material. The overall appearance of the historic core of the town is predominantly light coloured masonry and brick often with details such as doors, windows, cills and rainwater goods picked out in darker colours.



St Mary the Virgin Church



Above: The vision - capturing the feeling of the place...

4.0 The approach

4.1 The vision

2020. Living in Riverbank Park means being able to enjoy the best of North Dorset rural living within a 2-minute walk of the town High Street and the local shops, post office, pubs, nursery and schools and other facilities at the heart of Gillingham. Riverbank Park has a sunny aspect and great views to the surrounding countryside – whilst the new housing is designed to the highest of modern standards it also fits with the feel of historic homes in the older parts of the town.

The new place offers a healthy and sustainable lifestyle. Working from home is possible with superfast Broadband now making life much easier for people living and working in Gillingham and the surrounding settlements.

Riverbank Park is in easy reach of the High Street at the heart of the town. Here there are regular bus services connecting to Taunton, London and the South West, and the Waterloo line offers opportunities to make use of the national rail network. It is well connected for working from home, from office space in the town and for getting to the larger employment centres in Dorset and beyond.

From Riverbank Park it is possible to live a life where many aspects of everyday living are available locally or within a short trip. Residents can work from home or in the town; go to the secondary or local primary school; walk, cycle or catch a bus into Barnstaple – catch a bus or train to Exeter, Taunton or London; meet with neighbours and colleagues in the town; get the

















weekly shop from the supermarkets; grow food in the community allotments and community orchards and enjoy leisurely walks along the riverbanks to the town centre and surround the countryside.

What will really set the Riverbank Park development apart will be the ability for people to live a modern lifestyle within an area with a genuinely ‘edge of town’ rural identity right in the heart of a Dorset town.

Modern family homes with generous south facing gardens are sought after by people of all ages. People are attracted to the quality of the place; its modern rural character at the heart of the town; low energy housing resulting in much cheaper energy bills for residents; the convenience of local facilities; the linked open spaces with ponds, diverse flora and fauna on the lovely Riverbank, play areas and circular walks within the Park linking into the fabulous wider network of countryside walks in the locality.

Riverbank Park offers an outstanding lifestyle and standard of living making it very popular for residents of all ages and visitors alike.



- | | | | | | |
|---|----------------------|---|------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
|  | Application boundary |  | Proposed access |  | River Stour |
|  | Le Neubourg Way |  | Primary Street |  | Development parcels |
|  | Common Mead Lane |  | Secondary Street |  | Indicative building footprint |
|  | Oake Road |  | Tertiary/Mews/ Parking court |  | Allotments |
|  | High Street |  | Green Space |  | Attenuation ponds |
|  | Church View |  | Tree Planting | | |

Above: Concept diagram



4.0 The approach

4.2 Background

An indicative master plan has been prepared that provides a spatial representation of the new development on land at Le Neubourg Way – a physical illustration of how the streets, open spaces, parkland, play spaces, ecological areas, land uses and transport routes could be arranged in order to ensure that the vision and concept in this statement can be delivered in the right way.

The design and development strategy seeks to achieve a distinctive and high quality scheme that respects the character of Gillingham and the surrounding countryside, providing generous areas of open space that incorporate existing landscape and ecological features.

The design of the proposed development should seek to build upon the site's inherent qualities, establishing new pedestrian links with important amenities within the town and the High Street.

The site's location on the southern edge of Le Neubourg Way means that most facilities, including bus and train services, are within a 5-minute walk. A good location combined with the qualities of the existing environment provide a great foundation for creating a sustainable layout and an attractive and locally distinctive sense of place.

The structure of the illustrative plan has been shaped by five overarching guiding principles:

- Creating positive pedestrian connections between the proposed development and facilities in the centre of the town;
- Creating affordable and market family homes with decent gardens in a mixed-use environment;
- Creating leafy streets and green open spaces with an enhanced river corridor.

4.3 Concept

A series of objectives have been developed that have set a brief for the proposal. The objectives bring together goals of planning policy; the need to overcome physical constraints of the site; feedback from consultation; the importance of creating a successful place that is locally distinctive; and the necessity of developing a viable and deliverable scheme.

The following design drivers have shaped the form of the illustrative plan:

- A mix of market and affordable housing;
- A range of housing types to respond to housing need;
- Creation of a distinctive and attractive sense of place;
- A development that relates well to the surrounding countryside, to neighbouring residential properties and to the facilities in Gillingham;
- Vehicle access from Le Neubourg Way including improvements to an existing mini roundabout, creating a signalised crossing and controlling traffic from the high street onto Le Neubourg Way itself;
- Safe, attractive and secure pedestrian connections between the development, wider countryside walks and the town centre;
- Enhancing the river corridor and protecting the existing wildlife around the River Stour;
- SUDS including attenuation ponds to control the rates of surface water run-off into the watercourse;
- New community orchards and allotments;
- A community play space at the heart of the scheme;
- Great views out to the countryside
- South facing properties with south facing gardens;
- Low density housing in the south eastern area of the site;
- Provision for children's play space within the developed area;
- Retained features of ecological interest;
- New ecological areas within the fields to the south;
- New circular walks throughout the site; and
- Landscape buffers along the southern and eastern boundaries of the site to feather the development into the wider countryside.



Above: Photograph of the railway bridge over the River Stour

5.0 The proposals

5.1 Description of the scheme and key components

The outline planning application that this design and access statement supports is for up to 236 dwellings with 2.03 ha of public open space.

The public open space is made up of a central space at the heart of the development, play areas, SUDS areas, landscape buffers / dense native tree planting, attenuation ponds, ecology areas and community allotments.

The illustrative master plan shows a single vehicular access point into the site from Le Neubourg Way with additional improvements to the existing mini roundabout between the High Street and Le Neubourg Way. The approach road into the site would be characterised by naturalistic tree and hedgerow planting building on the character of Gillingham with houses set in gardens fronting onto the street. The new housing should be arranged to compliment the character of the historic parts of Gillingham with high quality public realm, green leafy streets and framing views of the surrounding countryside.

The main street into the site would be aligned to capture views out to the south, screening the sewage treatment works but developing panoramic views of the rolling Dorset landscape. – this forms a backdrop to the settlement when viewed from Le Neubourg Way. The main street leads to a new public open space - this would be the focal point for the development with informal play areas and tree planting. The space will be enclosed but still allow glimpse views out. Breaks in the development plots to the east of the main route will allow incidental access to the river corridor and provide landscape links through the proposal.

The mature existing trees in the north - south hedgerow will form a green street leading to the open space. These trees will be reinforced with further tree planting to an important ecological route through the scheme. The character of this street would be informal and intimate with houses addressing the street in different ways.

The illustrative master plan is designed around a network of new vehicle, pedestrian and cycle routes to create a permeable layout and ensure that the new development is well connected to the town and surrounding countryside.

New pedestrian routes are proposed north west at Stour Meadow connecting to Common Mead Lane cycle route, east and south east along the river - for connections into town and

south, towards the countryside.

The layout, landscape, form and massing of buildings, balance of open space and development and the scale of spaces and streets all combine to achieve a scheme that has good quality urban and landscape design credentials.

In order to create a legible environment that responds to its distinctive landscape and village context a hierarchy of development forms is proposed. These comprise lower density housing in the south western area and along the eastern edge of the site, with higher density housing around the public space and at the entrance to the development.

The layout responds to the key factors shaping development as described in section 3 of this statement:

- Ecology and vegetation
- Transport and access
- Flood Risk and drainage
- Landscape visual impact issues
- Topography
- Character and building traditions

The new place will be characterised principally by generous public open space, leafy streets, good sized gardens and strong biodiversity - established by the enhanced network of hedgerows, trees, buffer planting and SUDS features, as well as the setting provided by the surrounding countryside..

Whilst the development has been designed to provide a positive frontage to open space areas south of the development, landscape buffers are proposed to the sewage treatment works on the southern boundary and to the river corridor to the east.



Above: Illustrative masterplan





- A Le Neubourg Way
- B Common Mead Lane
- C Common Mead Avenue
- D Church View
- E Oake Woods
- F Brickfields Business Park
- G Stour Meadow
- H Stour Gardens
- I Chantry Fields

- J Pedestrian routes to town
- Site area

Urban interventions

- 1 Proposed vehicle access from Le Neubourg Way
- 2 Main street
- 3 Route to the river corridor
- 4 Enclosed open space
- 5 Green street / openspace with existing trees retained
- 6 Pedestrian / cycle access to Stour Meadow
- 7 Green open space
- 8 Low density housing
- 9 Higher density housing
- 10 Access to allotments
- 11 Apartments
- 12 New signalised junction to Le Neubourg Way

Landscape interventions

- 13 Community allotments and orchard
- 14 Buffer planting to the sewage treatment works
- 15 Attenuation features with wildflower planting and wetland habitat
- 16 Central open space with SUD's attenuation
- 17 Existing retained trees and hedgerow
- 18 Meadow wildflower planting
- 19 River corridor enhancement
- 20 Children's play area
- 21 Retained hedgerows
- 22 Woodland planting



- Application boundary
- 1 & 2 bed apartments
- 2 bed semi-detached & detached houses
- 3 bed semi-detached & detached houses
- 4 bed semi-detached & detached houses
- Garage

Type	No.	%	Application area:	9.96 ha
1 & 2 bed apart	36	15	Developable area:	7.18 ha
2 bed houses	24	10	Non-developable area:	2.78 ha
3 bed houses	117	50	Average net density:	32.8 dph
4 bed houses	59	25		

Housing Mix
A range of house types and sizes are proposed including 1/2 bed apartments and 2, 3 and 4 bedroom terraced, semi detached and detached houses.

Total dwellings: 236

Public open space: 2.78 ha Square metres comprising; community allotments, strategic planting, open space and children's play space.

There are also a limited number of flats above garages. It is anticipated that the actual mix and allocation of houses would be determined at the reserved matters stage.



5.0 The proposals

5.2 Amount and use

The illustrative layout has been designed to accommodate a variety of residential house types and sizes, providing a broad range of units, from 2 bed flats over garages to 4 and 5 bed detached houses.

A proportion of all homes are proposed to be affordable. These will be distributed across the site. The scheme illustrates a net density of around 32.8 dwellings to the hectare, (this density has been calculated excluding non-residential uses, strategic areas of open space and attenuation ponds). The density enables the creation of a development appropriate to its context that would be characterised by good-sized gardens, good aspect and a green and leafy overall appearance.

Housing types have been arranged to reinforce the character of different areas within the development. For example, at the entrance to the site, housing is arranged in more dense terraced groups and adjacent to the central open space, linear green connections and parkland open space lower density detached and semi detached development is proposed to create a more leafy environment.



- ▭ Application boundary
- 3 storey - Apartments
- 1 storey - Garages
- 2 storey - Houses

Building Heights

Building heights shall be a mix of 1,5 and 2 storeys.

Detached and semi detached houses:

A maximum height of 11m (to ridge line) for 3 storey, 9m for 2 storey, and 6m for 1,5 storey houses. A maximum width of 10m and minimum of 4m (to be determined by location and frontage requirements). A maximum depth of 12m and minimum of 4m (distance from the front of the dwelling to the rear).

Terraced houses:

A maximum height of 9m for 2 storey, 11m for 3 storey and 6m for 1,5 storey houses. A maximum width of 10m and minimum of 4m. A combined terrace dimension of 40m maximum and 12m minimum in a terraced run. A maximum depth of 12m and minimum of 4m.

Bungalows (if required):

A maximum height of 6m. A maximum width of 12m. A maximum depth of 12m.



5.0 The proposals

5.3 Scale

The height of houses is proposed as 2 storey with 3 storey apartments on important corners. This seeks to complement the existing built context of Gillingham to reduce the visual impact of the scheme in its wider setting, and work positively with topographical characteristics of the site.

Buildings that are 2 storey should be a maximum of 9m to ridgeline and a minimum height of 8m to ridgeline. Apartments that are 3 storey should be a maximum of 11m to ridgeline and a minimum of 9m to ridgeline. Ground levels may vary in order to overcome the differences in levels across the site.

Houses should be designed to a maximum width of 10m (wide frontage) and minimum of 4m (determined by the location and frontage requirements). They should have a maximum depth (front facade to rear facade of dwelling) of 12m and a minimum of 4m (to be determined by location and frontage requirements).

These guiding parameters are intended to ensure that the scale of the development is compatible with the scale of the town. As in the town it is likely that some different 2 storey housing types within the development will have different heights to the ridge and eaves.



- Application boundary
 - Primary Routes
 - Secondary Routes
 - Tertiary Routes
 - Footpath
-
- 1 🚗 🚶 Proposed vehicular access from Le Neubourg Way
 - 2 🚶 🚲 Access for pedestrians and cyclists *Connection to the on road cycle route (National Cycle Network Route 25 - on road)*
 - 3 🚶 Pedestrian access to/from Church View
 - 4 🚶 🚲 Pedestrian / cycle access under the railway line to wider footpath links



5.0 The proposals

5.4 Street hierarchy

In order to ensure that the new neighbourhood is legible and easy to find ones way around within - a clear hierarchy of new streets and public open space is proposed.

The principal street through the development would be the main vehicle access route from Le Neubourg Way. This street runs through the middle of the scheme connecting the proposed development parcels. There are a number of secondary and tertiary routes that connect back to the principal street.

A number of pedestrian routes are proposed connecting the development to the town and back out to the wider countryside. Pedestrian access to the north will be via Church View, Le Neubourg Way and under the Le Neubourg Way road bridge. There are also a number of new pedestrian routes within the site. There is a circular footpath around the outside of the development as well as a number of new walking routes through the proposed open space and onto public right of way walking routes to the south.

Overall the new neighbourhood will have a very clear arrangement of public realm that will help to define a successful and attractive built and landscape form. The main elements of the public realm within the development are:

1. A principal vehicular route with naturalistic planting, green space, houses with front gardens and views south to the surrounding countryside.
2. Secondary and tertiary east west / north south routes with south facing houses fronting onto the street.
3. Small scale courtyards.
4. A central public open space characterised by green space, water attenuation features, hard surfaced areas, houses fronting and some car parking.
5. A landscape buffer and informal footpath network wrapping around the eastern and southern edges of the site.

5.5 Access

The planning application is made in outline with all other matters reserved apart from means of access. A single point of vehicle access is proposed and this would be from Le Neubourg Way on the northern edge of the site.

New pedestrian access points into the site are proposed from Stour Meadow, from Church View and connections to existing routes to the south.

5.6 Parking

Parking provision has been carefully considered to ensure an appropriate level of car parking across the site and in a variety of forms. Parking has been integrated into the scheme so that vehicles do not dominate the street scene. Parking is provided on-plot with some properties having garages. On street and courtyard parking is also proposed providing a variety of solutions.

Small parking courts have been illustrated to create successful, secure and attractive spaces in some parts of the illustrative plan. The number of parking spaces in them has been minimised and they would be designed so that entrances are overlooked.

Overall a parking ratio of about two spaces per dwelling is proposed. Visitor spaces are also incorporated throughout the development.

5.0 The proposals



Above: Public open space and landscape



5.7 Landscape

The illustrative master plan has been designed using a landscape led approach. Consequently, generous amounts of open space have been created within and around the proposed housing. In addition, approximately of 2.78 ha of open space is proposed, this represents a significant proportion of the application area. The high quality landscape setting would be easily accessible and benefit the wider Gillingham community as well as residents of the development.

The centrepiece of the new landscape would be the enhanced access to the River Stour corridor along the eastern part of the site. The central open space within the scheme would also be a key feature. It is also proposed to introduce a landscape buffer along the southern edge of the site screening the sewage treatment works from the new neighbourhood and blending the proposed planting into the wider landscape .

Children's play space has been integrated into the illustrative plan to meet policy requirements on the provision of open space. Play space has been designed as an integral part of the scheme which will be distributed around the development to meet the various walk distance, activity space and residential buffer criteria.

The development has been shaped around existing landscape features including where possible the network of hedgerows and existing mature trees. These features would be retained and reinforced by new planting. The choice of species would be native and reflect those found locally; this would enable the development to blend with the character of the surrounding natural landscape. The ecological value of the site would be enhanced as a result of the proposed development through the establishment of new ecological features. These are also likely to include prominent SUDS features including attenuation ponds within the open space.

The indicative master plan also shows good-sized gardens and landscaped green streets. Streets would include new tree planting and hedgerows to give the development a more leafy and green open feel. In combination large plots, green streets and open spaces would help to mitigate the visual impact of the development and allow it to sit comfortably within its context. Overall the landscape approach would provide a signature feature for the scheme as well as supporting biodiversity, giving a strong green feel and establishing a high quality and distinctive character for the development.

The main components of the approach to landscape include:

- 1. A riverbank park.*
- 2. Local equipped areas of play (LEAP).*
- 3. Buffer landscape incorporating green space, hedgerows and trees.*
- 4. Allotments and community orchards.*
- 5. Public green space aiding legibility.*
- 6. Green space incorporating surface water attenuation areas.*
- 7. Ecological mitigation - wildflower meadows, hedgerows and tree planting.*
- 8. Attenuation ponds.*
- 9. Footpath / cycle links to the town and wider countryside*
- 10. Mature trees on boundaries retained.*
- 11. A new green public open space at the heart of the development.*





Above: Material precedents

5.0 The proposals



5.8 Appearance and sustainable design

The illustrative plan indicates detached, semi detached, and small terraces that create structured streets that are attractively landscaped. Housing is set within good-sized gardens.

Development at the reserved matters stage should seek to complement the character of Gillingham and establish a distinct character and sense of place. The proposed architectural language should create a simple and contemporary aesthetic that references the positive building forms that characterise the local area.

The scheme should be designed to achieve modern sustainability objectives and secure high quality living environments. A key objective of the overall design will be to integrate the proposal with the landscape, further enhancing the transition between town and country.

The appearance of the dwellings and public realm should complement each other and where possible employ similar materials, colours, tones and textures. The architectural appearance of buildings should ensure that a consistent and well-considered aesthetic approach is applied throughout the development. A balance of texture and tone maybe used to bed the appearance of the development as a whole within its town and landscape setting.

This will be important in ensuring that the development form relates well to site topography and existing and proposed landscape features. The choice colour in building materials and finishes will have a significant bearing on this.

Boundary treatments should reinforce the character of the development, the role of individual streets and provide clarity about the distinction between public and private realm. Boundary treatments should also ensure private areas are clearly demarcated and defensible and public areas well defined. Some low walling might be appropriate with the majority of public frontages might be defined by hedges in order to reinforce the leafy character of the development.

6.0 Finally

This Design and Access Statement demonstrates that up to 236 new homes can be developed on the site adding positively to the town of Gillingham and to the wider housing supply in North Dorset - in a manner that is sensitive to the existing community and wider countryside setting of the town.

Moreover, the proposed landscape led development will provide an enhanced landscape setting improving biodiversity and will include new community allotments and an orchard, attenuation ponds, ecology areas, and a network of footpaths.

The proposed development has been the subject of public consultation and the outcomes of this are described more fully in the Statement of Community Involvement that forms part of the suite of documents that accompanies the submitted planning application.

Overall the proposed development represents a sensible proposition in an appropriate location for a new housing development. It will provide much needed new and affordable housing as well as a number of other identified, tangible and long lasting benefits for Gillingham in a sustainable location.





