

Lawford Gate

VISION DOCUMENT

May 2025



INTRODUCTION

nineteen47 have been instructed by Davidsons Homes to prepare this vision document for land south of Coventry Road, Long Lawford.

The site is a draft residential allocation in the Rugby BC Local Plan which sets out requirements for approx. 400 dwellings, a small convenience store, potential GP surgery/community facility and connections to the village centre to the north and bridleway to the south.

This document outlines the early technical work undertaken to demonstrate the deliverability of the site and brings to life the vision to create a landscape led extension to the village.



Aerial image of the site

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VISION

Lawford Gate

Lawford Gate is a landscape led, mixed use community providing doorstep access to green space for its residents.

The development will be set within a framework of restored historic hedgerows complimented by rows of new trees, houses and green corridors promoting connectivity, active travel and wellbeing.

A new, sensitive and enduring gateway to the settlement will be defined by the historic hedgerows being restored, with development set back to create a gradual transition from the countryside into the settlement creating an attractive sense of arrival.



Aerial image of the site showing the historic hedgerows

Site BENEFITS

Provide around 400 *locally inspired high-quality new dwellings* in a range of sizes that address local needs and requirements.



Provide a *new retail unit* off Coventry Road to provide door step access to local facilities for residents and passers by.



Deliver policy compliant *affordable housing*.



Provide new, publicly accessible areas of *public open space* integrated into the development.

Restore the field patterns of the *historic hedgerow*



Deliver a *net gain in biodiversity*.



Provide a *doctors surgery* to improve facilities within Long Lawford



Provide a new *pedestrian crossing* to Coventry

Road and enhance pedestrian *connectivity* extending the network of footpaths through the site.



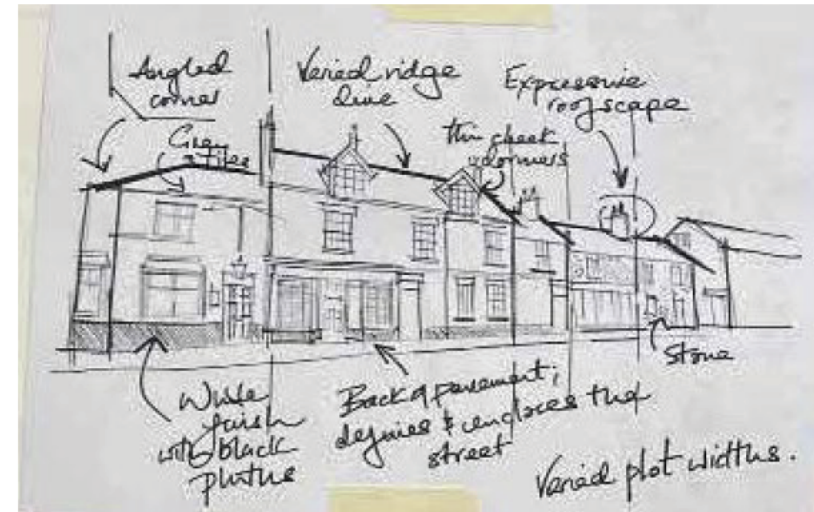
Create a *Circular Walk* around the southern edge of Long Lawford branching from existing routes



Davidsons Homes is a family-owned company based at Ibstock in Leicestershire. Established in 2007, the family has been building homes under a wellknown brand for three generations. Our design approach is based on seeking to reflect the qualities of traditional towns and villages that make places distinctive, memorable and loved. We pride ourselves on delivering well-crafted homes that collectively sit together to create beautiful streets and spaces.

We are high-quality master builders and place makers. We believe in our heritage, deliver quality developments, engage with local communities and have built our company to reflect the same customer-focused service and build quality that the Wilson family have developed over generations of master building.

Our main focus isn't to build new homes at record speed. We take our time to make sure they are right for the surrounding area, paying great attention to the site layout, exterior designs, brickwork and detailing. Each development is built to fit seamlessly into the local area.



Taking time for thoughtful design

Family owned



Reflect the character



Value community well-being

A landscape led approach



Create memorable places



standing THE PLACE

Site Description

The site measures approximately 17.39ha and comprises a series of agricultural fields that gently rise from Coventry Road southwards.

Lawford Heath Lane dissects the site, running broadly north to south, dividing the site into two parcels with a smaller parcel to the west and a larger parcel to the east. This road can provide access on both sides.

A series of hedgerows enclose the boundaries of the fields, including some mature trees. The southern boundary identified in the allocation remains undefined by a physical feature. However, the design process for the site has identified a historic hedgerow which can be reinstated to form a logical boundary.

Coventry Road (A428) runs along the northern boundary and provides an opportunity for access. An existing PROW stops on the opposite side of the road and so a crossing point will need to be established.

Another PROW meets the north east corner of the site and extends across the adjacent cricket ground which abuts the eastern boundary of the site.

A watercourse runs along the western boundary of the site offering sustainable drainage outfalls.

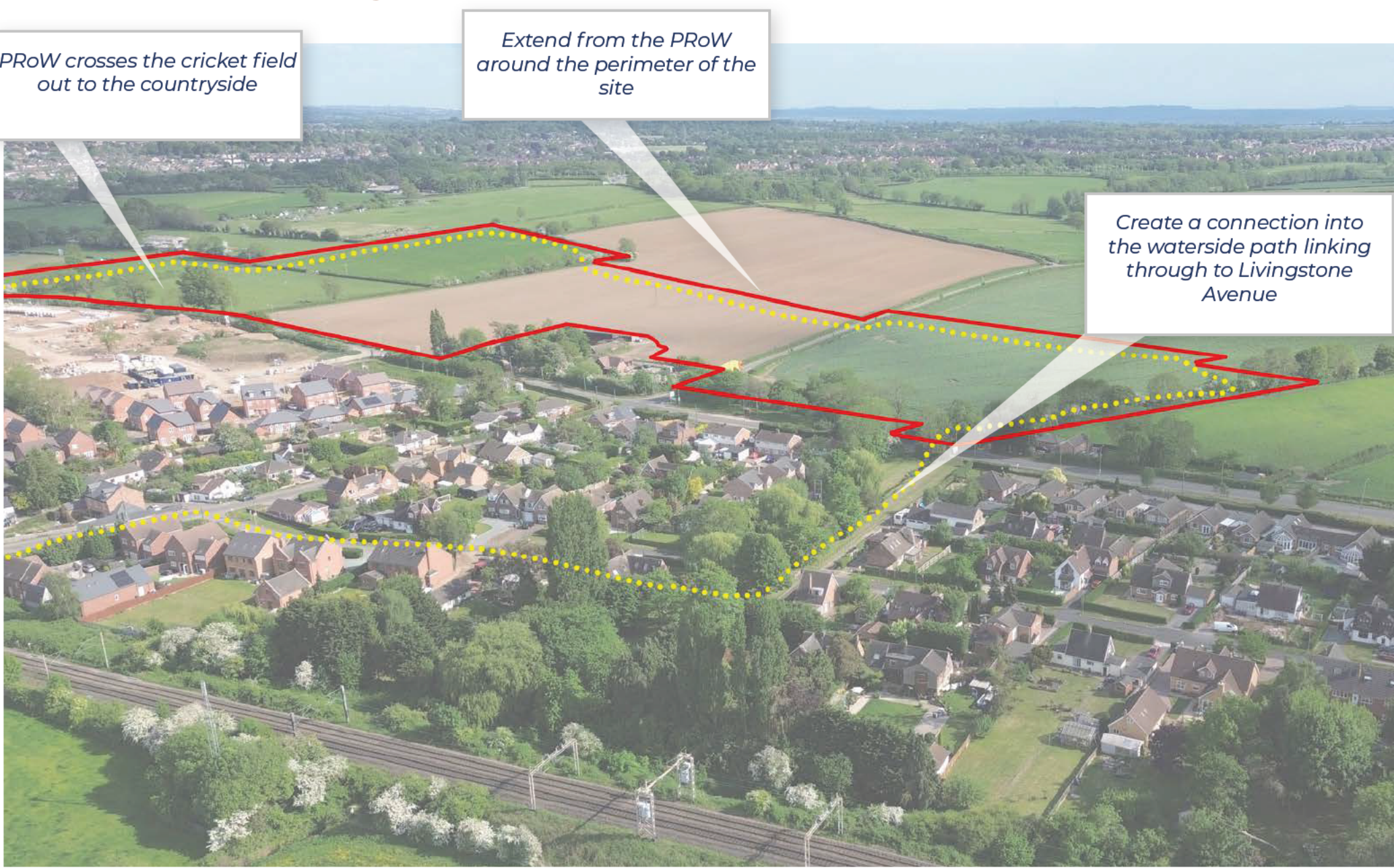


Understanding THE PLACE

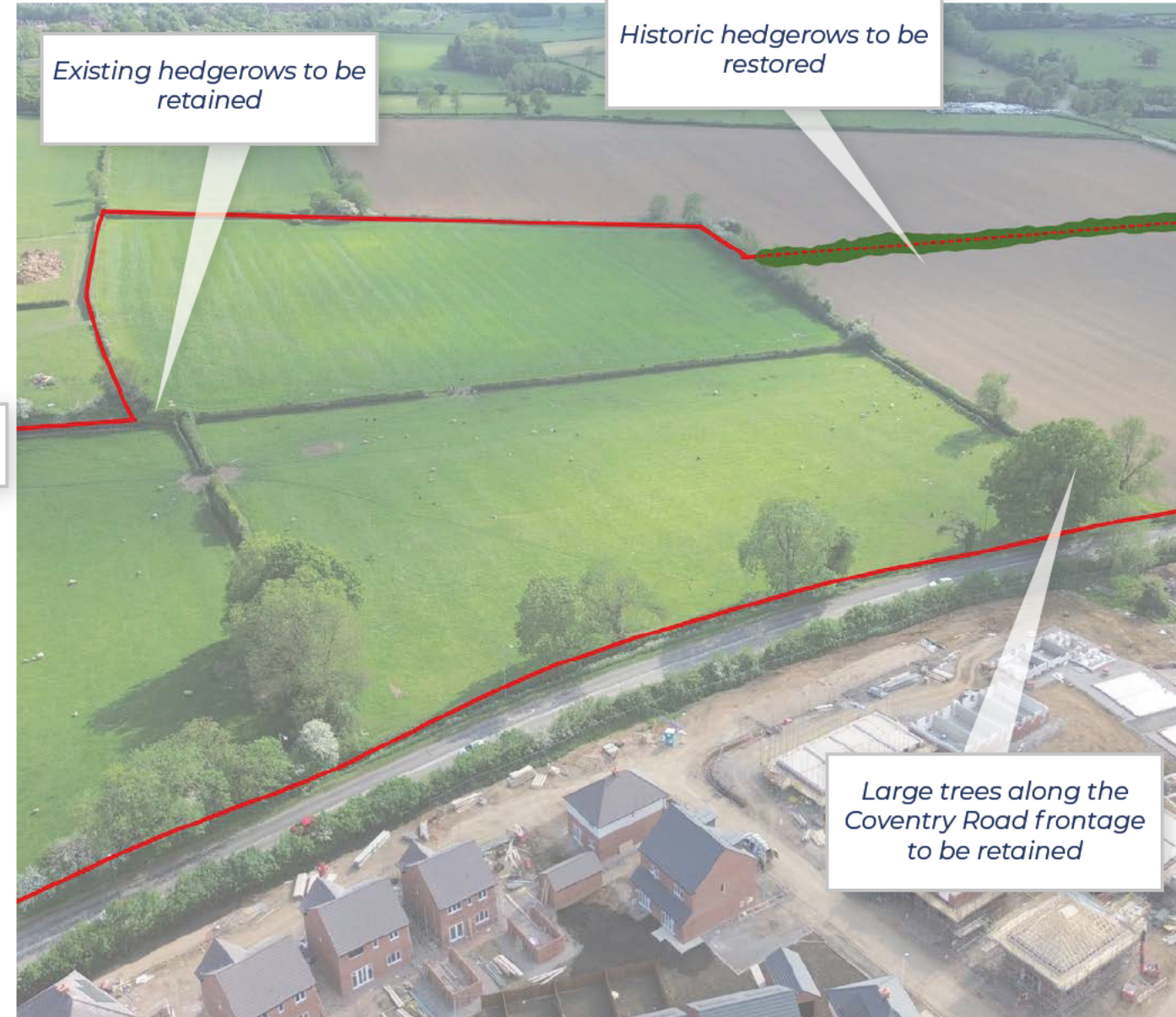
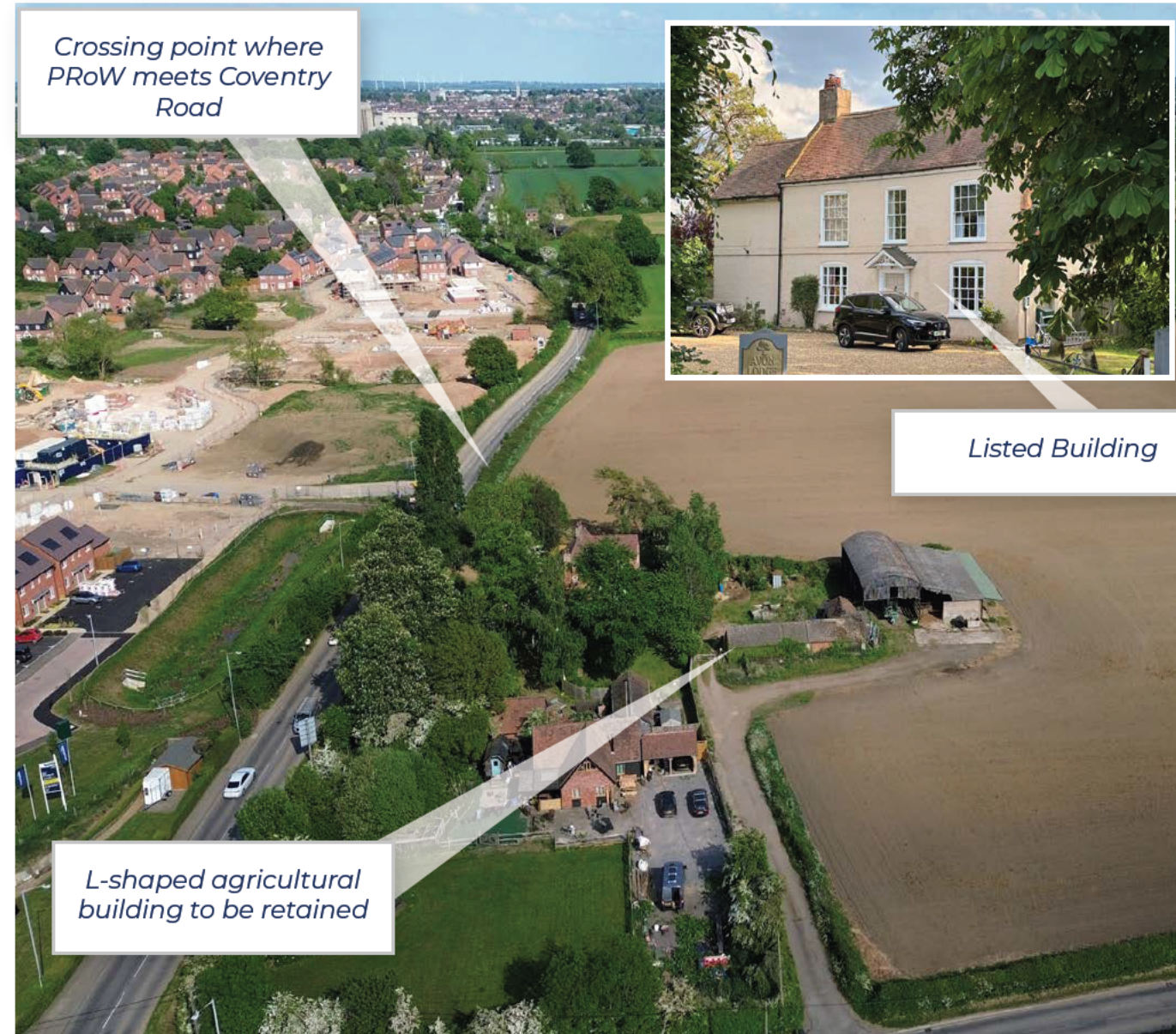
Connections to Local Services



Connections to the Countryside and PROW network



Site Features



Technical CONSIDERATIONS



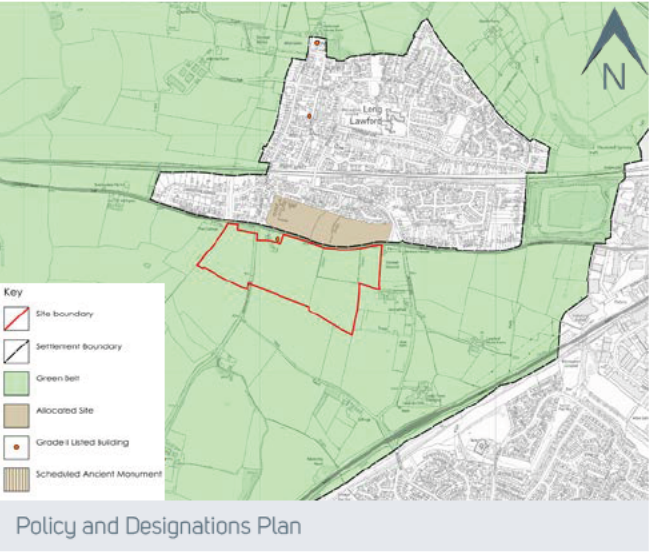
The site is located at the southern edge of Long Lawford set within the Dunsmore Plateau Fringe landscape character type characterised by its gently undulating topography and meandering valleys of the River Avon and Leam. The Dunsmore Plateau Fringe is defined by large arable fields with fragmented and lost field boundaries, and contrasting smaller pocket of pasture with an generally intact hedgerow pattern. The landscape guidelines for the Dunsmore Plateau Fringe seek the reversal of the declining condition and structure of the landscapes associated with the plateau through the planting of hedgerows, tree cover, and woodland.

The supporting landscape review has conformed the findings of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment of Strategic Site Options (LSA) that assessed Site 316 (that includes the Site) as being of Medium to Low landscape and visual value, and in overall terms Medium to Low landscape sensitivity. The LSA

confirms that the sensitivity of Site 316 is transitional, being less sensitivity towards the northern boundary at Coventry Road, and increasing in sensitivity towards the southern boundary at bridleway 216/ R128/2. The site comprises land located within the northern half of Site 316 confirmed as being the least sensitive in landscape and visual terms.

The supporting landscape review sets out a number of recommendations to inform the development of the site and secure the delivery of effective green infrastructure and landscape mitigation. Most notable is the identification of the lost historic field pattern that has been used to the guide the southern boundary of the site. This not only helps to secure the landscape guidelines set out in the LSA but also provides a robust and enduring boundary to the Green Belt. The landscape review seeks the reinstatement of this boundary alongside the following measures:

- The protection and reinforcement of the existing network of boundary hedgerows and tree cover associated with the site. Notably, the setting of mature tree cover associated with the smaller scale pastures at the eastern boundary of the site;
- The protection and enhancement of the existing tree belt and associated watercourse at the western boundary of the site, and inclusion within a wider network of greenspace focussed on the delivery of ecological and biodiversity enhancement;
- The delivery of a robust landscape buffer at the southern boundary of the site, inclusive of the proposed hedgerow reinstatement. This new network of greenspace should secure connection with areas of local green infrastructure offering multi-functional greenspace.
- The delivery of ongoing management to secure a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity.



Green Belt

The supporting landscape review has also considered the setting of the site relative to the Green Belt and its purposes. The site was previously assessed as part of Land Parcel R4 in the Joint Green Belt Study (JGBS). Land Parcel R4 was assessed as a higher performing Green Belt parcel but this included an extensive tract of land extending across the western boundary of Rugby. Land Parcel R4 was assessed with a score of 16 out of 20 sitting in the mid to upper range with low scores in relation to Purposes 1, 3 and 4 of the Green Belt, and higher scores in relation to Purpose 2 that relates to the merging of Towns, and Purpose 5 that relates to the recycling derelict land. In regard to Purposed 5, all greenfield field sites received this score. In regard to Purpose 2, this score was based on the very narrow gap between Rugby and Long Lawford measuring roughly 350m along the A428.

In contrast, the development of the site would result in the expansion of Long Lawford to the south of the A428, not east where the gap is at its narrowest, retaining a gap of at least 590m between the settlements. In addition, the southern expansion of Long Lawford would to some degree be contained



Access



All the necessary facilities for every-day living for the future residents – such as retail, education, leisure and employment - are readily available within a 30-minute journey using a combination of sustainable transport – by walking, cycling and public transport.

There are existing bus stops on the A428 Coventry Road just outside of the Site that are served by the Stagecoach Service 86. This offers good public transport accessibility from the Site in both directions to a range of destinations between Rugby and Coventry. It has an hourly Monday to Saturday service, and a bi-hourly services on a Sunday. The additional patronage from the residents of this Site would help support the long-term viability of these services, benefitting everyone. In addition to the bus services, the Rugby Rail Station is also reasonably accessible, being located within a 30 minute linked trip bus-walk journey, and provides regular quality services to destinations between London and Birmingham.

Davidsons Homes can provide the necessary site access junctions to standard on both the A428 Coventry Road and on Lawford Heath Lane within the land they control, and without needing the highway authority to agree to speed limit changes.

Rugby Borough Council has prepared an Evidence Base to inform the Draft Local Plan, and Site 316 performs reasonably well. With targeted investments in transport, and enhancements where needed, Site 316 can become a highly sustainable location for residential development, promoting active travel, reducing car dependency, and improving overall accessibility.

Ecology



The non-statutory River Avon and Tributaries Local Wildlife Site (LWS) lies along the site's western boundary. Subject to a sensitive scheme design which incorporates a suitable buffer to the LWS, the LWS does not represent an overriding constraint to development of the site. On the contrary, development would present the opportunity to take adjacent land out of arable cultivation and to introduce complementary habitat creation adjacent the LWS, which would be an enhancement.

Subject to a sensitive design and adoption of appropriate mitigation measures, based on a desktop review there are no overriding ecological constraints to development of the site. Any future application for development of the site would be required to deliver a 10% biodiversity net gain. This can be achievable though a combination of on-site, and where necessary off-site, ecological enhancement measures. Additional qualitative biodiversity benefits can also be delivered in conjunction with development of the site, such as enhancement of the LWS.



Drainage



As part of the development of the site, the existing topography and hydrogeology of the site has been reviewed to ensure that the scheme provides appropriate drainage, water treatment and amenity without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

This assessment has shown that the site falls into three distinct drainage catchments, with a western catchment to the west of Lawford Heath Lane and central and eastern catchments draining towards existing ditches within the site, ultimately flowing into a culvert which passes beneath Coventry Road to the north.

Drainage has been designed to mimic the existing flow directions from the site. To ensure that flood risk is managed, each catchment is served by an attenuation basin which stores rainwater collected within the site before discharging slowly at the greenfield (Qbar) rate to the existing ditches. These basins have been designed to store and attenuate up to and including the 1:100year event plus an additional 40% allowance for climate change, providing betterment in large rainfall events.

To ensure that water treatment is provided, the basins are to be designed in accordance with CIRIA 753 "The SuDS Manual", with side slopes at a maximum gradient of 1:3 and appropriate planting to allow them to serve the site functionally, aesthetically and by providing amenity benefits.

Foul sewerage from the site is proposed to the existing sewers alongside Coventry Road.

Heritage



The built heritage considerations have initially focused on the two farm buildings which lie to the north of the site. These buildings date from the 19th and 20th centuries and were historically related to Avon Lodge, a former farmhouse, and Grade II Listed Building (NHLE: 1365094) located to the north of the farm buildings. Aligned with Rugby Borough Council's heritage-based evidence of the emerging local plan's draft allocations, our heritage assessment has focused on understanding the significance of Avon Lodge and the 19th century farm building as a non-designated heritage asset, their settings, and the contribution of the site to this, to help inform the masterplan. The potential sensitivity of further six Listed Buildings and eleven non-designated heritage assets located outside of the site have been considered within our assessment but scoped out from their significance being affected by the proposals.

Although much altered, the farm buildings help contribute to understanding the historic interest of Avon Lodge's significance as a farmhouse, the wider farmland of the site also contributes to this but at a lower weighting. The proposed location of a Children's play space surrounding Avon Lodge and the 19th century farm building provides flexible parameters for adopting appropriate design, spacing, buffering and hard and soft landscaping within the heritage asset's immediate settings.

The proposed development will lead to the loss of farmland surrounding the Avon Lodge and the farm building, leading to a harmful impact on the significance of Avon Lodge. In the context of the NPPF, this harm would be less than substantial harm and engage the public benefit test of paragraph 215: this is in line with the RBC's findings.

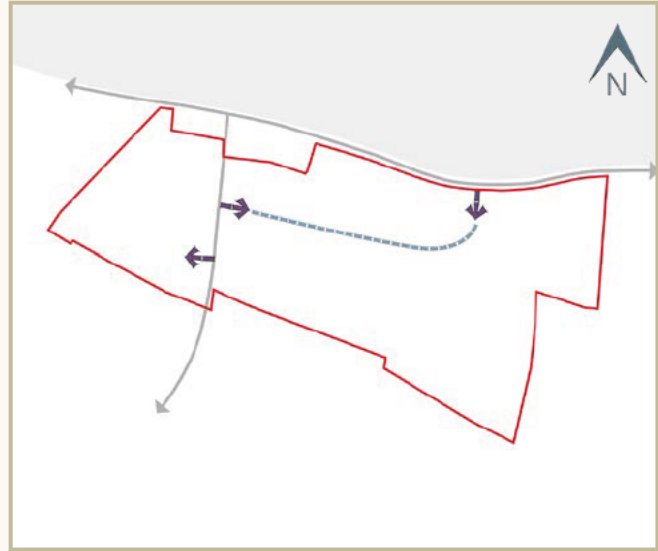
The proposed masterplan can reduce the impact of this harm to the lower end of the harm spectrum. The creation of new pedestrian accesses, green corridors and the preservation and reinstatement of field boundaries will help to manage the transition from the heritage assets, through the proposed development and out to the wider rural setting.

RPS will also be providing an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment and consultancy to assist in assessing the archaeological potential of the site. As part of our initial assessment, a search of Warwickshire's Historic Environment Record has been undertaken. This records no archaeological monuments (e.g. findspots, earthwork features or buildings) located within the site and no previous archaeological investigations. A review of archaeology within the areas surrounding the site will follow at a later date.



Avon Lodge (Listed Building)

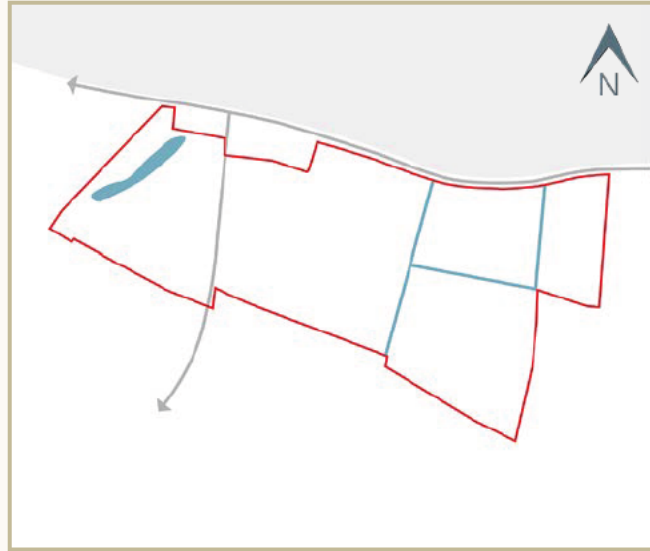
Design PARAMETERS



Access

Access to the site can be taken off Coventry Road, along the sites northern boundary, and connect with Lawford Heath Lane in the west where another access point is proposed. These two access points provide an opportunity for an internal loop road within the site creating a permeable movement network.

A further access point is proposed to the south along Lawford Heath Lane and serves the western part of the site.

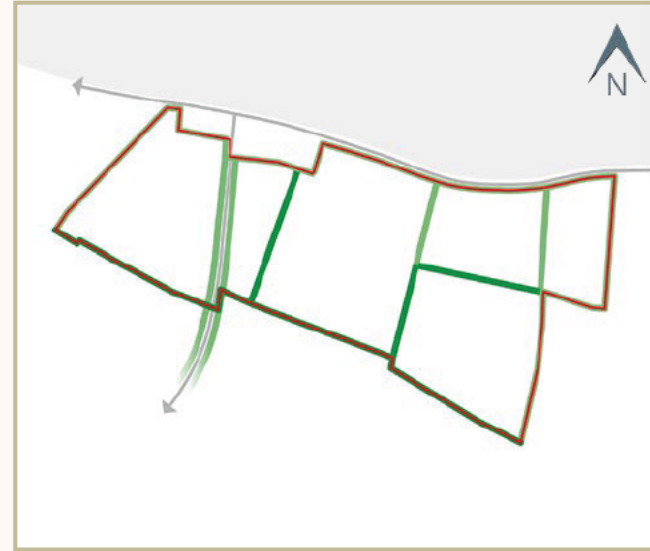


Drainage

Existing watercourses have been identified along some of the sites internal hedgerows and these should be considered throughout the proposals.

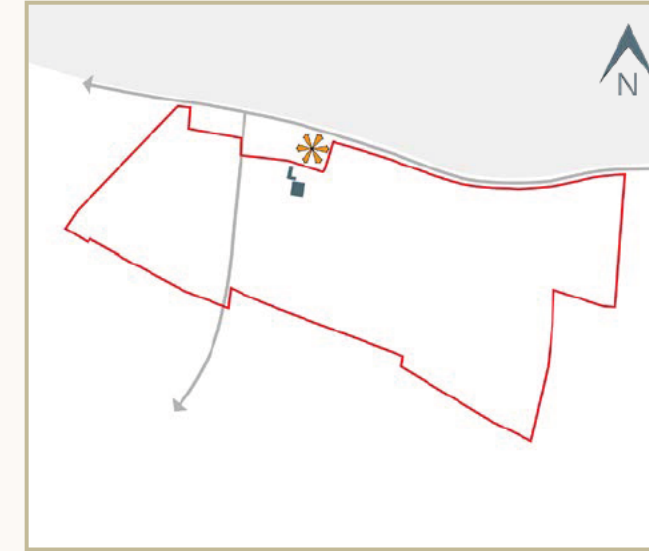
Attenuation basins have been proposed at the low points of the site which are designed to slowly discharge rainwater into the existing ditches.

Foul sewerage from the site is proposed to the existing sewers alongside Coventry Road.



Landscape

Existing landscape features such as trees and hedgerows should be retained and enhanced where possible, with a stand off to the sites southern boundary where it is proposed to reinstate historic hedgerows and field patterns. This provides a robust and enduring boundary to the Green Belt and ties the proposals into it's setting helping to create a landscape led scheme.



Heritage

Two farm buildings are located outside of the site boundary, to the north of the site, which were historically related to Avon Lodge, a former farmhouse, and Grade II Listed Building (NHLE: 1365094) also located to the north of the site.

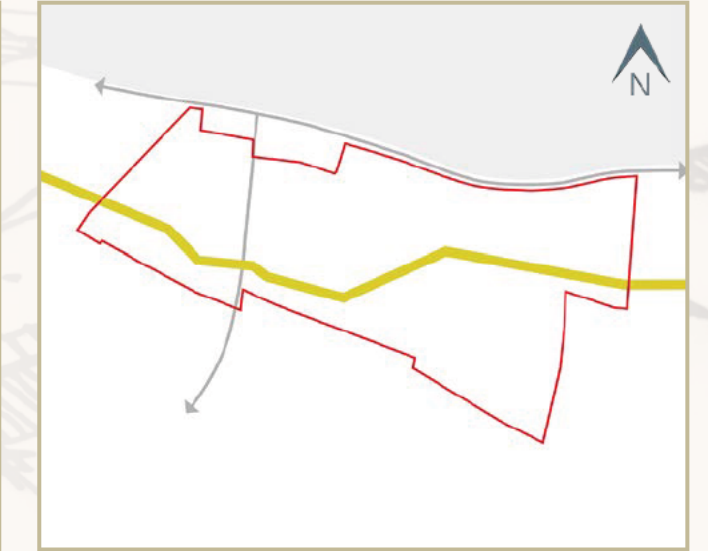
The proposals should respect these buildings and provide appropriate spacing, buffering and hard and soft landscaping to Avon Lodge's immediate settings.



Pedestrian Permeability

There are two existing PRow's immediately to the north of the site on the opposite side of Coventry Road. These existing routes provide an opportunity for the creation of new pedestrian links which tie into the existing.

Additional pedestrian routes can then stitch into the proposals, following the periphery of the site, through areas of open space creating a strong network of internal walking routes connecting into what is already there and promoting a healthy lifestyle.



Utilities

A gas main runs through the site from the west and exits the site along the eastern boundary. This gas main requires a 45ft easement and should be considered in the proposals.

A HV electricity underground cable runs alongside Lawford Heath Lane.

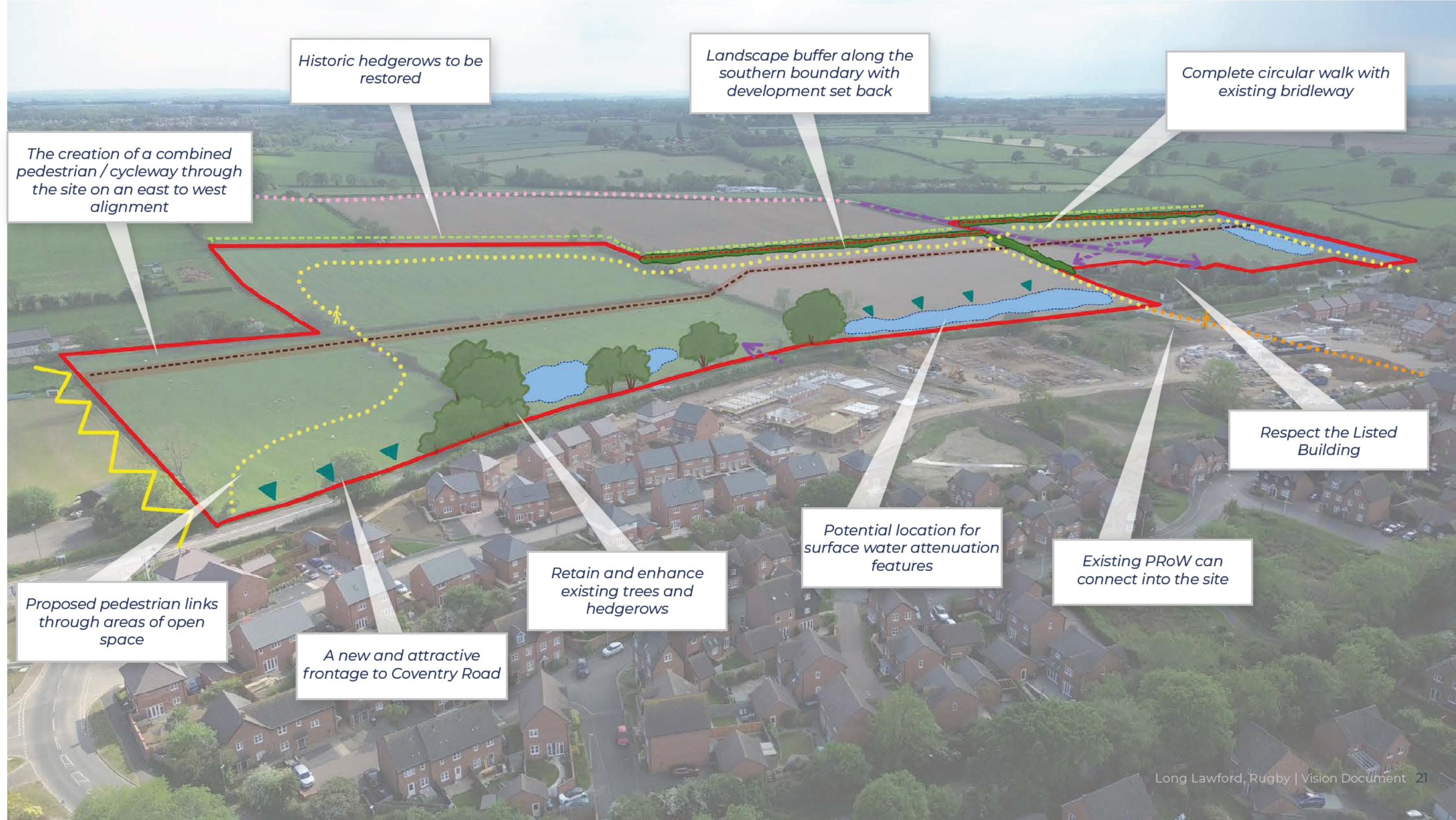
Constraints and OPPORTUNITIES

Constraints

- Existing trees and hedgerows within the site and around its periphery
- Existing watercourse features should be respected with the relevant stand off
- Grade II Listed Building, Avon Lodge, and the farm buildings located to the north of the site should be respected
- A gas main runs through the site from east to west

Opportunities

- Protect and enhance existing trees and hedgerows
- Historic hedgerows can be reinstated to provide a robust boundary to the Green Belt with a robust landscape buffer along the southern boundary
- New access points are proposed which provide a safe and logical location from Coventry Road and Lawford Heath Lane
- Surface water attenuation basins can be provide at the low point of the site
- Opportunity to provide a new gateway to the settlement along Lawford Heath Lane and Coventry Road
- There are opportunities to extend the existing PRow links with new pedestrian routes, creating a circular walk within the site and strengthening walking opportunities and a healthy lifestyle
- The creation of a Doctors Surgery / Retail Unit close to Coventry Road
- Opportunity for a children's play area
- The potential for a combined pedestrian / cycleway through the site, link to the cricket ground in the east
- Opportunity to provide an attractive, outward facing edge to Coventry Road and Lawford Heath Lane





The Masterplan

The masterplan creates a framework for the delivery of a mixed use community including 400 new dwellings and a small Retail Unit / GP surgery. In addition a network of approximately 6.69ha of publicly accessible open space is to be created.

The key features of the masterplan are summarised as follows: -

A robust and enduring new southern boundary has been created by restoring the historic hedgerow which defined this boundary, and creating a 15-20m buffer of green space for planting. In addition the informal building line will soften this edge and work together to create pockets of structural planting and an attractive recreational corridor for new residents.

In addition to the southern boundary other 'north to south' hedgerows have been both retained and restored to creating structuring elements for the masterplan, defining perimeter blocks and creating active travel routes.

The perimeter block structure is designed to create traditional streets, complimented by consistent street trees.

A strong frontage to Coventry Road is proposed, using the surface water attenuation features to set development back from the main road and create a 'waterside' setting for attractively designed frontages designed by the Davidsons architectural team that delivered the landmark frontage at nearby Houlton Park, Rugby.

A series of green spaces are proposed to break up the built form and create opportunities for tree planting that will assimilate the development within the landscape.

The Avenue is the primary street which connects the access points of Coventry Road and Lawford Heath Lane. The design of this street includes a wide tree verge, separating vehicles from a LTN120 compliant active travel 'spine' for the scheme.

A pedestrian crossing is proposed across Coventry Road linking the site with the existing PRow that is stitched through 'The Brambles' (Bloor Homes) development.

A new route then extends into the site running north to south, parallel to a reinstated hedgerow, linking to the southern edge of the scheme, ultimately creating the opportunity to connect with the Bridleway further to the south. This key route passes through the Children's equipped play area. Once entering the site from the pedestrian crossing the route eastward to the Retail Unit / GP surgery is visible, parallel to the waterside edge.

A circular walk is created around the perimeter of the site, extending from the PRow in the north east corner and looping around the site, eliminating at the north west corner of the site, connecting with the open space adjacent to the watercourse at Livingstone Avenue.

The heritage assets adjacent (Avon Lodge and farm buildings) have been carefully considered to ensure an open setting with space around the buildings. This has been created by integrating a Children's equipped play area to create a place for social interaction.

A Landscape led approach



The design ethos for the scheme is focused on reinstating the landscape features, introducing more planting and using this sylvan setting to create a place.

Tree Lined Streets



Tree lined streets are proposed to define the hierarchy of streets and to create a landscape led scheme.

Opportunity for Community Facilities



The proposals create the opportunity to create a new Doctors Surgery / Retail Unit for Long Lawford, enhancing the sustainability of the local area.

A strong frontage to Coventry Road to create a
Sense of Place



Davidsons will create a strong frontage facing Coventry Road, similar to their landmark frontage at Houlton Park, Rugby.

Pedestrian and Cycle
Connectivity



Recreational pedestrian and cycle routes are proposed around the perimeter of the site linking into the existing public right of way creating a circular route around the southern edge of Long Lawford.

Homes for *Everyone*



The opportunity to provide around 400 homes, which will include a mix of house types from 1,2 and 3 bedroom smaller homes for first time buyers to 4 and 5 bed family homes to create a mixed community with a variety of tenures.

Creating a new *Pedestrian Crossing*



The masterplan creates a new pedestrian crossing at the end of the existing PROW extending across Coventry Road next to Avon Lodge and connecting with the network of new routes across the site. This enhances the accessibility of the facilities in the village centre.

Biodiversity
Net Gain



An integrated approach will be taken to green and blue infrastructure with the creation of new habitats to provide a net gain in biodiversity.

A Logical *Expansion*



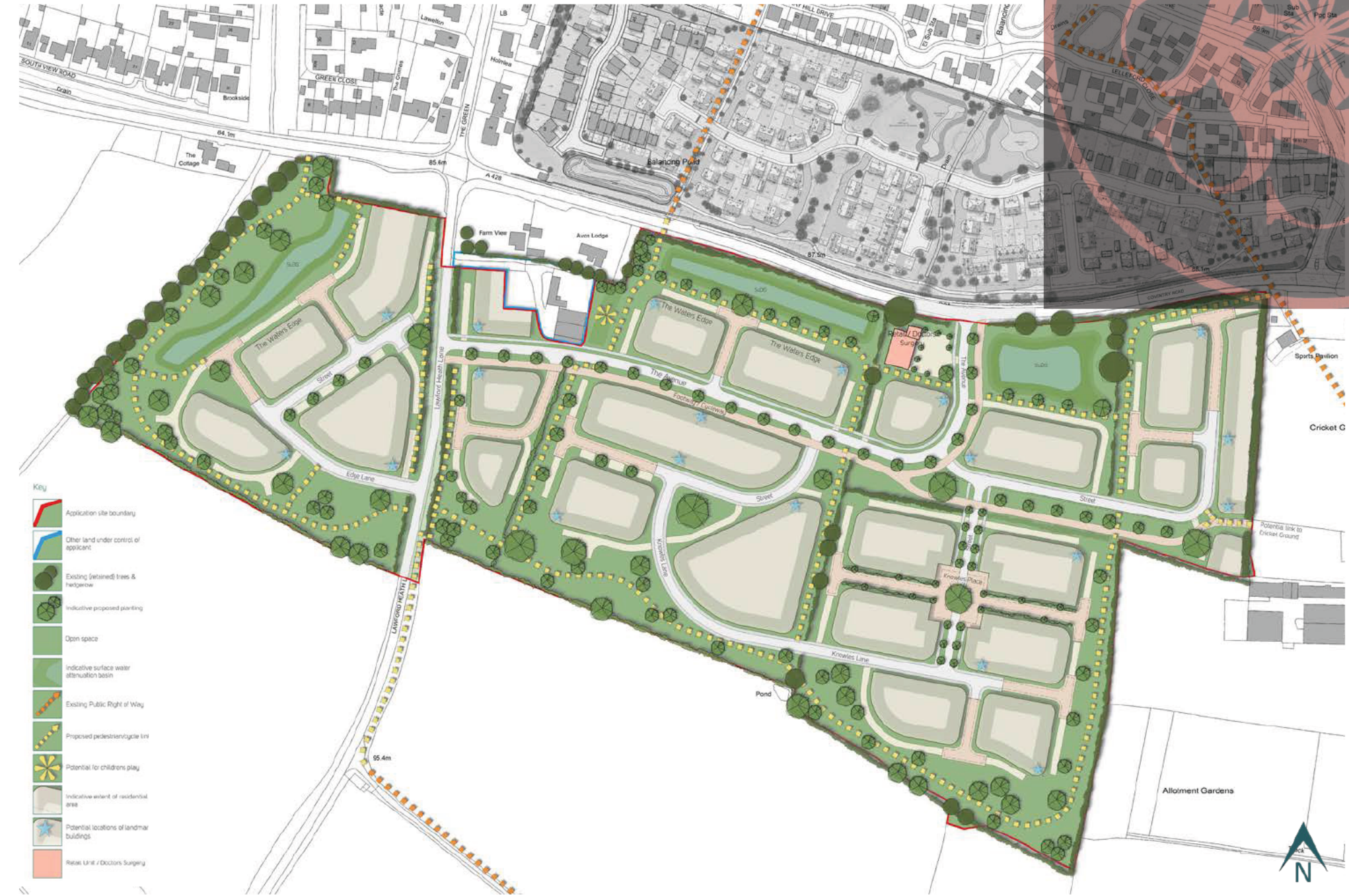
The proposed masterplan represents a logical extension to Long Lawford in an area of low landscape sensitivity, with the reinstated hedgerows creating an enduring and permanent boundary.

Summary

Lawford Gate is a landscape led, mixed use community providing doorstep access to green space for its residents.

The development will be set within a framework of restored historic hedgerows complimented by rows of new trees, houses and green corridors promoting connectivity, active travel and wellbeing.

A new, sensitive and enduring gateway to the settlement will be defined by the historic hedgerows being restored, with development set back to create a gradual transition from the countryside into the settlement creating an attractive sense of arrival.



Masterplan



DAVIDSONS
HOMES

nineteen47
CHARTERED TOWN PLANNERS
& URBAN DESIGNERS