

1. Introduction

WELCOME TO THE CONSULTATION

This is an online public consultation for a proposed landscape-led residential development on land to the north of School Lane, Roxton, comprising up to 50 residential dwellings which will include 30% affordable homes and public open space.

The consultation covers the following topics over 6 boards:

1. Introduction
2. Planning Policy Context
3. Site Analysis
4. Illustrative Masterplan
5. Highways
6. Next Steps

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The site is allocated for residential development in the Local Plan 2030. This means that Bedford Borough Council has identified the site as a location for housing growth.

Manor Oak Homes acquired an interest in the site in mid-2019 and has instructed a team of specialist consultants to conduct the necessary studies and site investigations to inform their proposals for the development of the site. On this basis an Illustrative layout has been produced for the proposed development and pre-application consultation has been undertaken with Roxton Parish Council and Bedford Borough Council's Planning, Highways and Conservation departments.

ABOUT THE SITE

The site is approximately 3.0 hectares in size and is currently in agricultural use. It is bordered by the gardens of residential properties along High Street and School Lane. To the north and east of the site is open agricultural land.

THE TEAM

Our team consists of the following consultants:

- Armstrong Rigg - Town Planning
- rg+p Architects - Masterplanning & Urban Design
- Aspect - Landscape Planning
- MAC - Transport, Highways & Flood Risk
- Asset Heritage Consulting - Heritage
- Wharton - Ecology and Arboriculture
- MOLA - Archaeology
- Professional Consult - Noise
- Redmore Environmental - Air Quality

HOW TO COMMENT

Your views are important to us and we thank you for reviewing this online consultation. We would be pleased to receive any feedback that you are happy to provide and this will be considered prior to the submission of any planning application.

Comments can be made on the website:

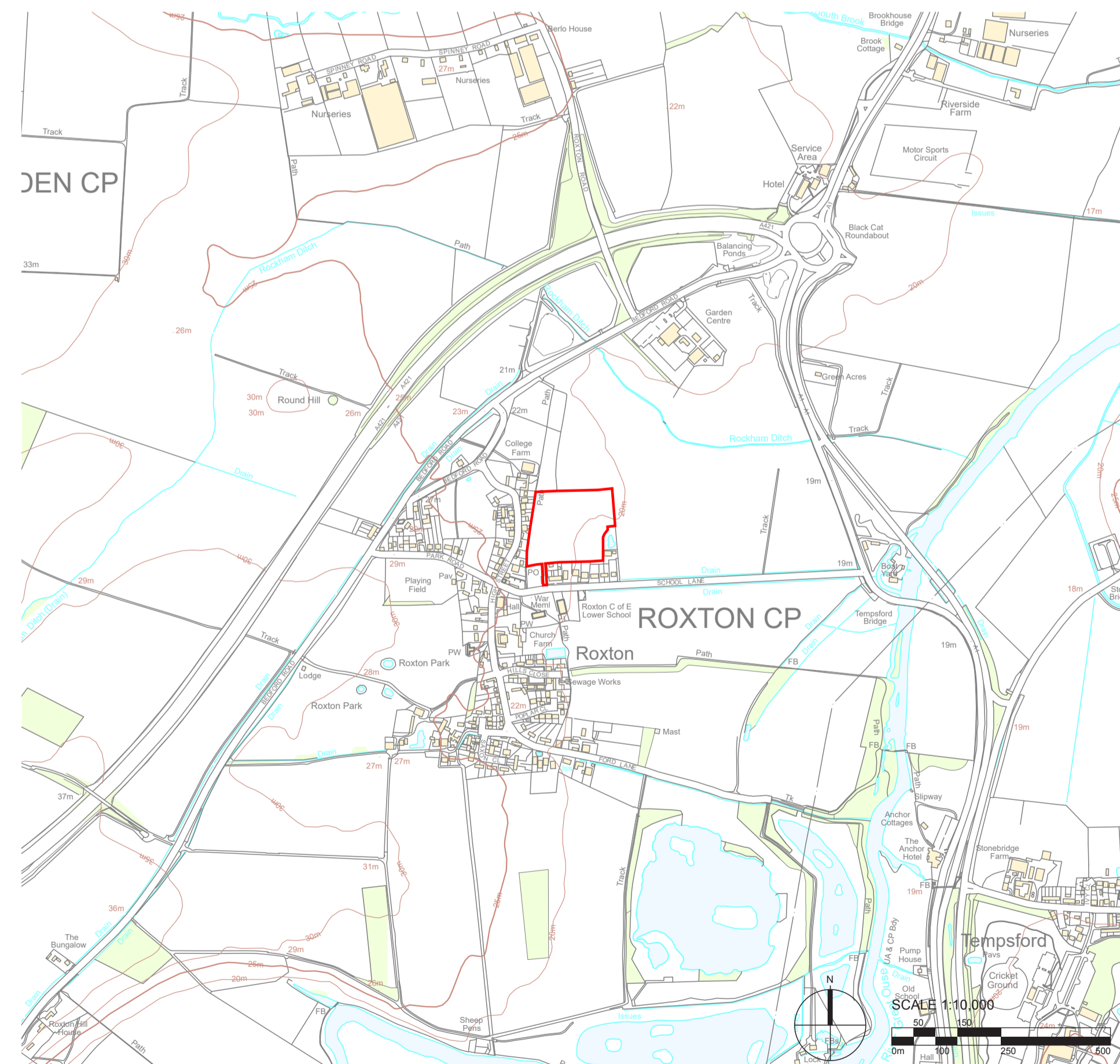
<http://www.manoroakhomes.co.uk/project/rox-062/>

or alternatively send to:

info@arplanning.co.uk

or:

Freepost RUBL-ELJA-EEBK, Armstrong Rigg Planning, The Exchange 60.01, Colworth Park, Sharnbrook, Bedford, MK44 1LZ



SITE LOCATION PLAN



AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF THE SITE IN CONTEXT (NTS)



PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SITE AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

2. Planning Policy Context

PLANNING BACKGROUND

The site is allocated for residential development by Policy 27 – Land north of School Lane, Roxton of the Bedford Borough Council Local Plan 2030. This means that the site has already been identified as being suitable for residential development to meet the needs of the local area. The Local Plan 2030 was subject to several rounds of consultation and an examination by a government appointed Inspector before being adopted as the policy of the Council at the start of 2020.

Policy 27 includes several key principles for the development of the site, including:

- The provision of a range of housing types and sizes;
- The need to protect, preserve and where possible enhance nearby heritage assets including the Roxton Conservation Area, Grade II* listed St Mary Magdalen Church and several other nearby Grade II listed buildings;
- The need for archaeological investigation on the site;
- The provision of a suitable access to meet adoptable standards, the submission of a Transport Statement with the application and the provision of improvements to the School Lane junction with High Street.

PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS

Bedford Borough Council

Pre-application consultation has been undertaken with Roxton Parish Council and Bedford Borough Council's Planning, Highways and Conservation departments.

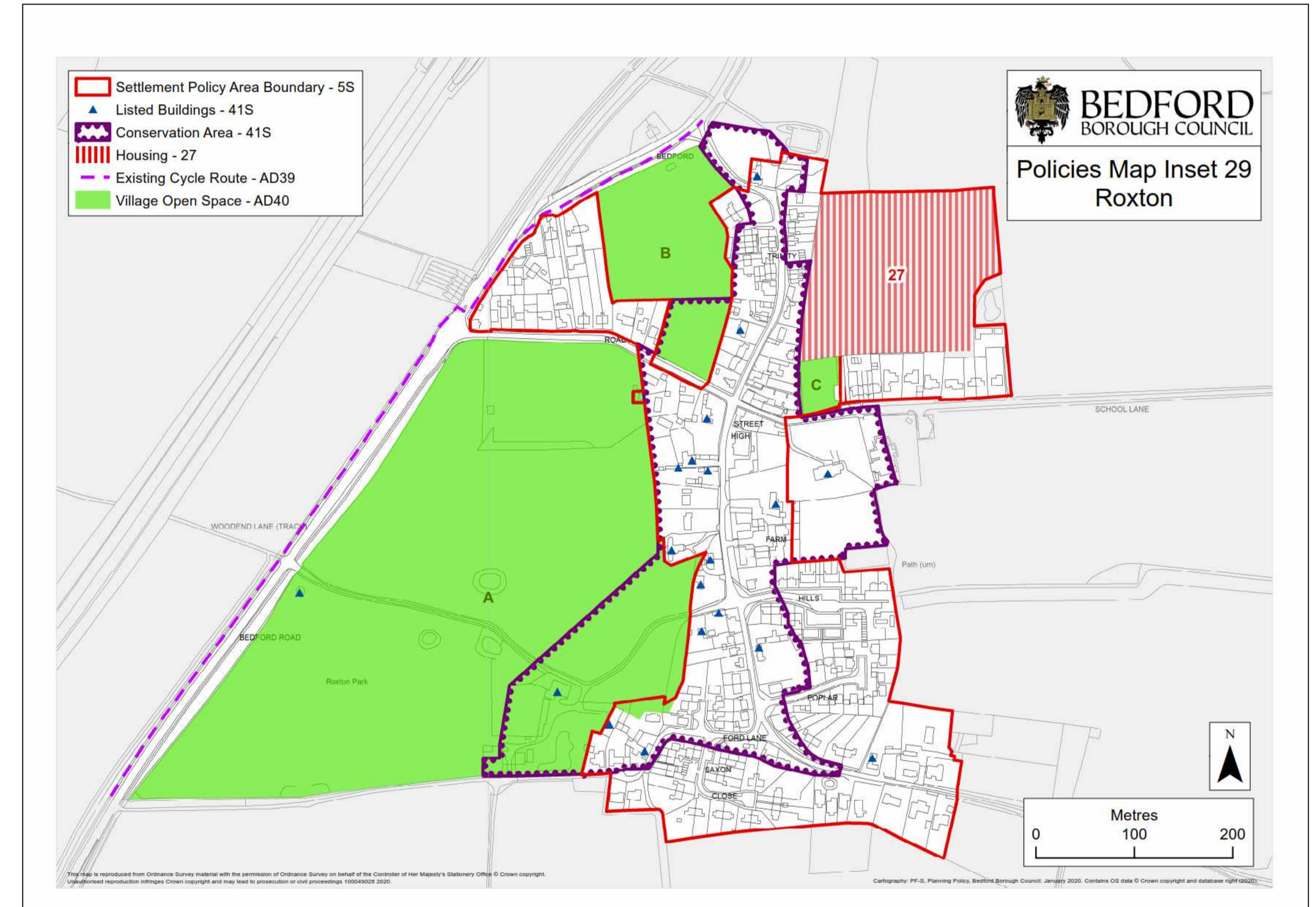
A site visit and meeting was held with officers from Bedford Borough Council in March 2020 which was followed by written advice on matters relating to Planning, Highways and Conservation. This advice confirmed that:

- Bedford Borough Council considers the principle of 50 dwellings on the site is acceptable;
- Officers supported the proposed illustrative layout, subject to key changes to increase the level of visitor parking, provide a play space on the site and locate 'feature buildings' at key locations visible from the High Street and School Lane.
- 30% affordable housing would be required;
- A 19% reduction in carbon emissions above building regulations standards would be required; and
- The proposed access into the site is acceptable and improvements at High Street / School Lane junction would be required.

Roxton Parish Council

A meeting was held with Roxton Parish Council in March 2020 and a follow up meeting in August 2019 to provide an update following the Covid-19 lockdown that started just after the previous meeting. The Parish Council provided feedback on the proposals, requested confirmation of the scope of documents to be submitted with the application and requested that detailed highways and design work be undertaken to support the application.

ROXTON PLANNING POLICIES INSET MAP



3. Site Analysis

TOPOGRAPHY

Within the site there is a localised and gradual fall towards the east of approximately 3m.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT

Views of the site are highly localised. It is considered that the site and receiving environment have the capacity to accommodate sensitively designed residential development that responds to the local context and will not result in significant harm to the landscape character or visual environment.

ECOLOGY

A number of habitats of ecological value (e.g trees and hedgerows) are present, although there is relatively restricted distribution within the site. The site comprises managed arable fields that are unlikely to provide any significant ecological value or constraints/ the retention of individual features of value (along with suitable buffer zones and associated protection measures) would be possible where appropriate in order to safeguard any features of ecological value).

FLOOD RISK

The Environmental Agency (river and sea) flood map shows the majority of the site is located within Flood Zone 1 - the lowest risk.

ARBORICULTURE

A preliminary appraisal of the arboricultural constraints has been undertaken in line with BS5837:2012. The site does not contain any rare, unusual or veteran trees. Hedgerows and trees define the field boundary which softens the views of existing residential development and will soften proposed development views by obscuring views.

ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

The primary road bordering the site is School Lane. Many of the surrounding roads have footways. The site has a Public Right of Way running along the west of the site from north to south.

Cycle routes are on road in the area, with no designated cycle paths. Bus services run near to the site with services to Bedford and St Neots. The nearest trains stations from the site are in Sandy (5.7 miles), St Neots (7.7 miles) and Bedford (8.7 miles).

HERITAGE

Development should protect, preserve and where opportunities arise enhance heritage assets and their setting including: Roxton Conservation Area, Grade II* Magdalene Church and other nearby listed buildings.

In order to respond appropriately to heritage assets, development should not exceed 2 storeys and will be designed sensitively with local materials and architectural characteristics.

The provisions of open space to the west of the site will preserve views towards the church and create a buffer to the conservation area.

VILLAGE CHARACTER

There is a varied mix of architectural styles present in the immediate vicinity of the site and the wider area. This is reflective of the period of construction and available building materials, knowledge of construction methods and prevailing building trends of the day. This is typified by the variety of building typologies and use of building materials.

Along High Street there are a number of high quality buildings which are included within the Roxton Conservation Area. Some of the Grade II listed buildings date back to as early as the 16th century. While there are notable heritage assets in the village, there is also a large amount of modern development with much of it appearing to have been built around the historic village as 19th-20th infill development.

Typical characteristics / materials of the area include:

- Detached and semi detached dwellings;
- 1 and 2 storey buildings;
- Bricks in various red, buff multi and yellow types;
- Render in various off white shades;
- Occasional timber frame and black timber cladding;
- Occasional thatched roofs; and
- Roof coverings include plain clay tiles, pantiles, slates and modern reproduction concrete tiles in grey and red colours

CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES



KEY			
	Site Boundary		Roxton Conservation Area
	Existing Trees and Hedgerows		Listed Building
	Existing Public Right of Way		View towards St Mary Magdalene Church
	Existing Development on Site Boundary		Primary Access from School Lane
	Existing Development		Potential Development Area
	Contours		Potential Pedestrian Link
	Prevailing Gradient		Potential Attenuation Basin

4. Illustrative Layout

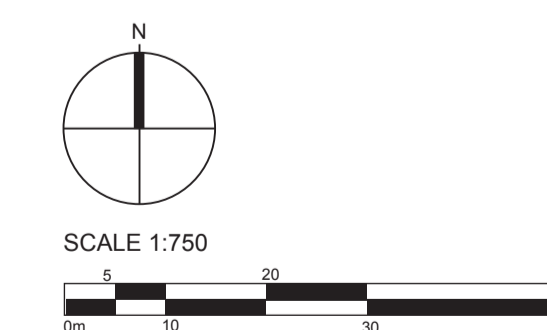
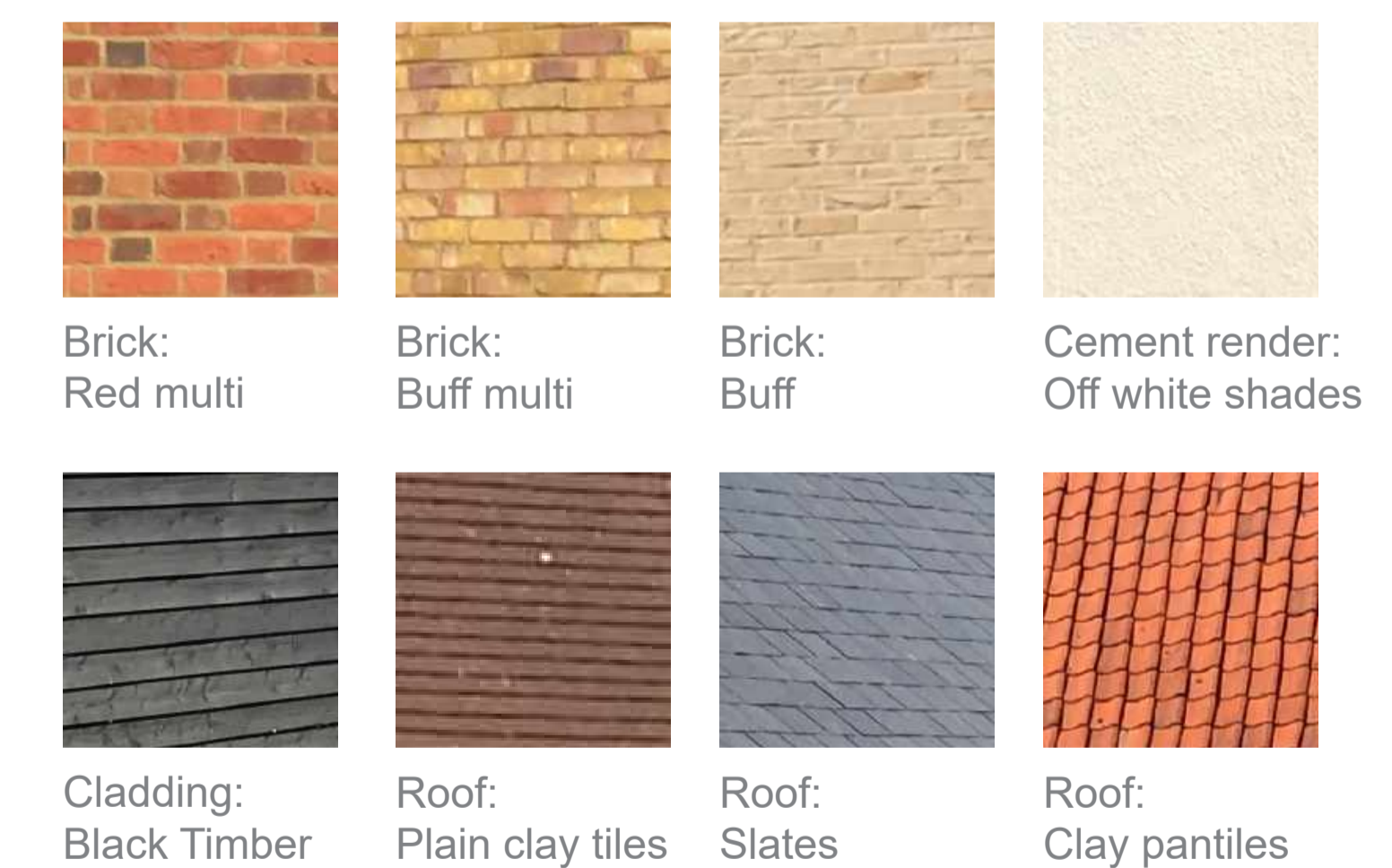


ILLUSTRATIVE LAYOUT

Notes:

- ① Access from School Lane
- ② Existing open space enlarged and expanded into the site
- ③ Potential location for new play area
- ④ Existing Public Right of Way retained
- ⑤ Existing connection to High Street
- ⑥ High quality 'landmark' dwellings
- ⑦ Open space designed to allow views towards St Mary Magdalene Church
- ⑧ Generous back garden depth adjacent to existing dwellings
- ⑨ Internal 'street' with mix of smaller dwelling types
- ⑩ 'Lanes' around the edges of the site with larger dwellings at lower densities
- ⑪ Publicly accessible open space to the north east of the site with circular walking route
- ⑫ Up to 50 dwellings in a mix of types and sizes, including 30% affordable housing.

Suggested Building Materials

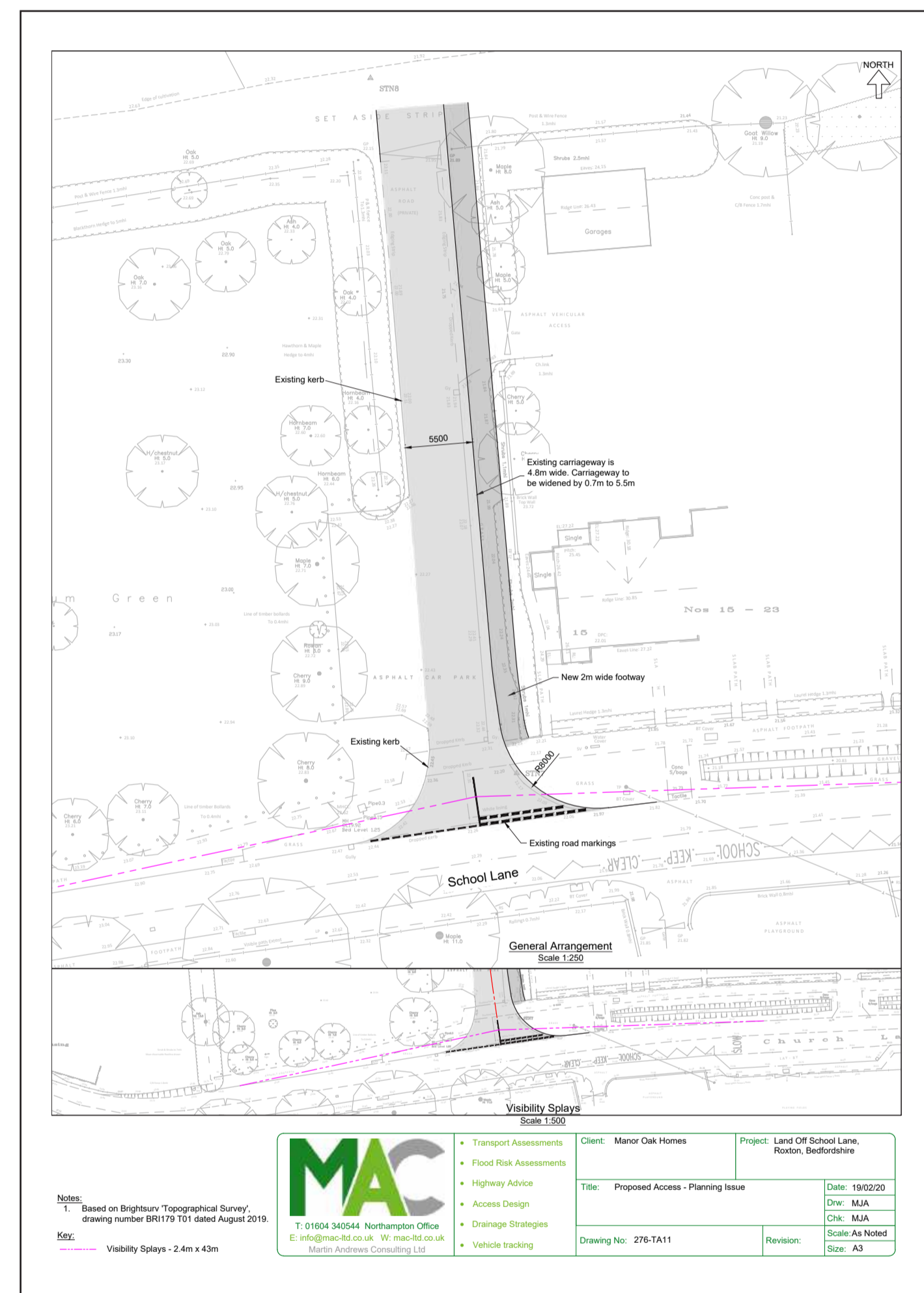


5. Highways

SITE ACCESS

Pedestrian and vehicular access is proposed from School Lane to the south of the site. This will involve widening the existing access to accommodate a 5.5m wide access and 2m wide footway.

PROPOSED SITE ACCESS



IMPROVEMENTS TO JUNCTION OF SCHOOL LANE / HIGH STREET / PARK ROAD

Site allocation Policy 27 requires improvements to the School Lane / High Street / Park Road junction.

As part of the Highways England improvements to the A1 / A421 junction, the School Lane access onto the A1 will be permanently closed. Hence, demand for vehicles not accessing the School will significantly reduce.

Irrespective of this, it is clear that visibility at the current School Lane / High Street / Park Road junction is below standard on some arms of the junction and improvements would be beneficial.

EXISTING JUNCTION

Vehicle priority at the junction is currently from School Lane to Park Road (east / west) with vehicles on High Street required to give-way. The existing achievable visibility splays are below the standard required based on recorded vehicle speeds. The width of School Lane and Park Road through the junction is also narrow at just 5.43m and is not wide enough to provide any improvements using the current priority without compromising the width of the through road.

PROPOSED JUNCTION IMPROVEMENTS

In order to improve visibility and therefore safety, it is proposed to switch the priority of the junction to give priority to High Street such that users of Park Road and School Lane are required to give way. By doing so it is possible to reduce the width of High Street to a minimum of 5.5m by creating buildouts at the new junction with School Lane and Park Road.

The buildouts will mean that visibility splays in all directions can be significantly improved and will also result in wider pedestrian footways. Changing the priority will also serve to slow vehicles entering School Lane such they are travelling more slowly near to the school.

EXISTING SCHOOL LANE / HIGH STREET / PARK ROAD JUNCTION



PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO SCHOOL LANE / HIGH STREET / PARK ROAD JUNCTION



6. Next Steps

NEXT STEPS

Following this virtual public exhibition, Manor Oak Homes will review all the comments received and take them into account as we finalise our proposals for the submission of an outline planning application in Autumn 2020.

Detailed technical work is ongoing and the following suite of documents and drawings will be submitted to support the application:

- Location plan, existing block plan, parameters plans and illustrative layout, elevations and street scenes
- Design and access statement
- Transport statement (including access plans, tracking drawings and off-site highway works)
- Planning statement (including Affordable Housing Statement, Statement of Community Involvement and draft S106 Heads of Terms)
- Heritage statement
- Ecological appraisal
- Landscape Visual Assessment and Landscape Masterplan with indicative planting details
- Tree Survey/ Arboricultural impact assessment
- Flood risk assessment
- Drainage details
- Archaeological assessment – investigations took place on site in September 2020
- Air Quality Assessment
- Noise assessment
- Health Impact Assessment
- Sustainability Statement

DEVELOPMENT TIMESCALES

It is envisaged that the development will follow the following indicative timescales:

- Outline application: c.12 months
- Manor Oak Homes sell site to a housebuilder: c.6 months
- Reserved matters application: c.9 months
- Construction: c.16-18 months (including c.4-5 months for groundworks and show home).

Thank you for taking the time to look at our proposals. Your views on the proposed development are important to us. You can leave feedback on our website here:

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or alternatively send to:

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Comments must be received by 26th October 2020

ILLUSTRATIVE LAYOUT

