



LAND TO THE WEST OF KING BUSINESS CENTRE,
REEDS LANE, SAYERS COMMON
DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT
NOVEMBER 2025

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Introduction 1.0



1.0 Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared to identify and explain the design process and key decisions that have informed the submission of this Full Planning Application for the erection of 80 new residential dwellings, including affordable housing units, vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access (including new footpath links to the east and west of the site along Reeds Lane), landscaping and open space, parking, sustainable drainage and other related works.

The proposed site is located on land at Reeds Lane, Sayers Common—a small village situated in West Sussex, within the Mid Sussex District of South East England. Sayers Common lies approximately 10 miles north of Brighton and Hove, 2 miles northwest of Hurstpierpoint, and 40 miles south of London. The village benefits from close proximity to the A23, providing convenient access to both the south coast and the wider region.

This document sets out the design intent, which has sought to create a well-considered and high-quality residential development that responds positively to the local character and context.

The drawings enclosed with this Full Planning Application include a Location Plan, Block Plan, Site Layout, dwelling plans and elevations along with Street Scenes and landscape proposals, which collectively explain the proposals.



1.0 Introduction



Extended Aerial Site View



The Site 2.0

2.02 Local Amenities and Accessibility

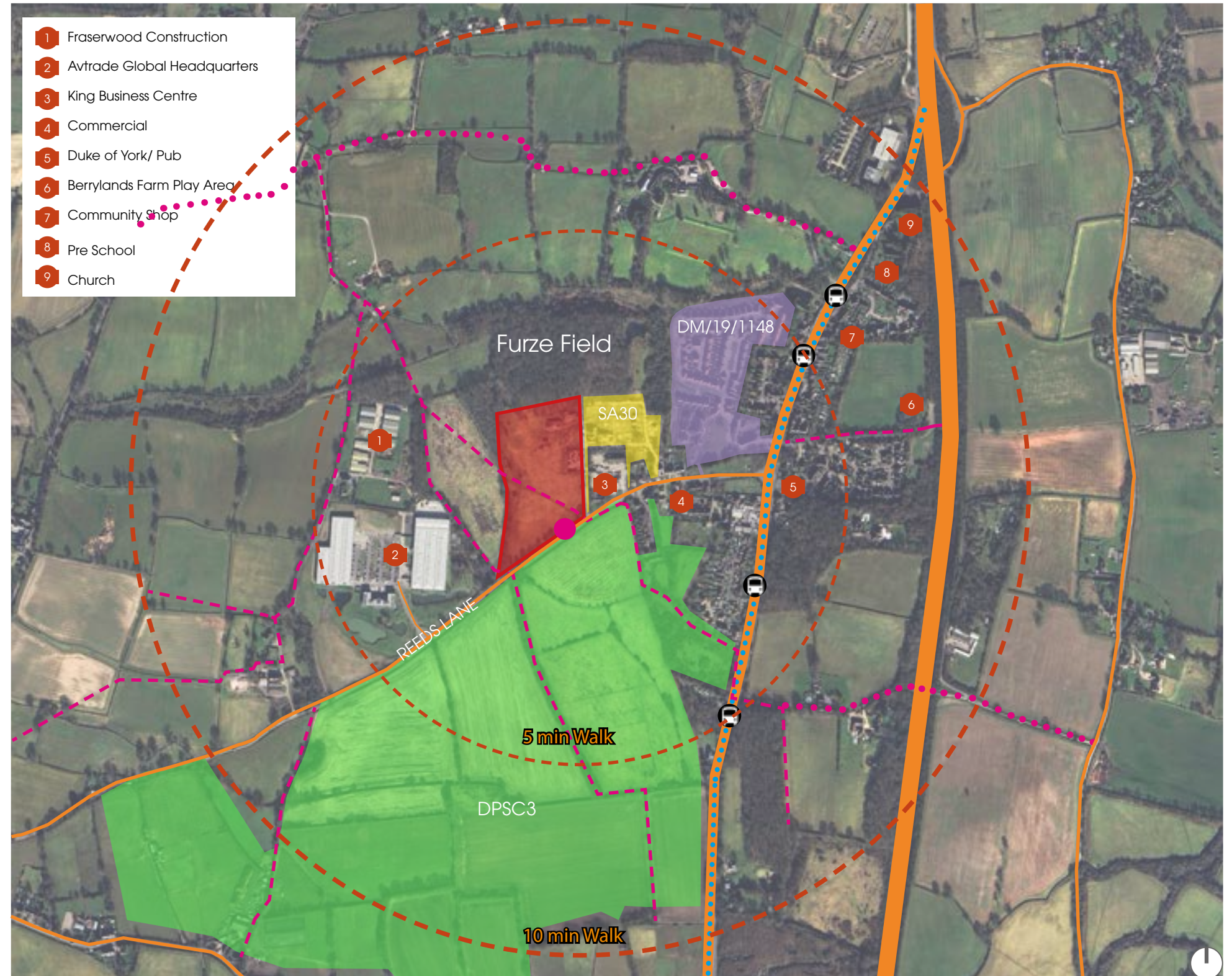
The site is located on the western edge of Sayers Common, West Sussex, to the north of Reeds Lane. It is sandwiched between King Business Centre, the new Elivia Scheme and Avtrade Global Headquarters. Furze Field woodland is to the north. A public footpath (PRoW_1AI) running through the site from south-east to the north-west, connecting to the wider PRoW network.

The site benefits from access to a wide range of amenities. Educational facilities include a primary school in Albourne and several schools in nearby Hurstpierpoint and Burgess Hill. Healthcare is readily accessible, with services available in Hurstpierpoint, Hassocks, and hospitals in Crawley and Haywards Heath. Supermarkets and broader retail options are also available in Hurstpierpoint and Burgess Hill, just 2.5 miles away.

Sayers Common and surrounding towns offer strong employment opportunities, particularly in Burgess Hill, Haywards Heath, Brighton, and Crawley/Gatwick. The area has an extensive selection of shops, cafes, Restaurants, and services. The site is well located for outdoor recreation, with the South Downs National Park just over 2 miles away, and local green spaces such as Berrylands Farm Play Area and Recreation Grounds offering sports and leisure facilities.

The emerging District Plan identifies DPSC3 as the allocation for the Berkeley Latimer scheme, located directly to the south of the proposed site. This significant development will deliver 2,000 new homes alongside extensive supporting infrastructure. The infrastructure proposed by Berkeley includes between 5,000/9,000 sq.m of employment space (Class E), extra care housing, a primary and secondary school, play areas, a library, leisure and healthcare facilities, community spaces, and open green space. Importantly, all these facilities will be located within a 500/600m walk or cycle from the proposed site, ensuring future residents have convenient access to a comprehensive range of amenities directly on their doorstep.

The site is sustainably located with good access to transport links, including pedestrian and cycle routes, bus services, and nearby train stations. Reeds Lane connects to the B2118 and A23, with bus stops for routes 100, 273, and 331 within a 6-minute walk. Burgess Hill and Wivelsfield stations, around 6km away, offer regular services to London, Gatwick, and Brighton. The area also benefits from Public Rights of Way and access to National Cycle Route 20, supporting active travel.





2.03 The Site

The images on this page are capturing the boundary edge of the development, providing an up-close view of the interface between the project site and its surrounding environment. These visuals offer a detailed glimpse of the transition from the development area to adjacent landscapes or properties.



Key Plan



1 - View northwest from Reeds Lane opposite King Business Park



2 - View southeast from public footpath along western site boundary



3 - View southeast from public footpath between the site and Valley Farm to the west

2.03 The Site

Further along, this page captures the surrounding environment, including the mature trees lining Reeds Lane and the open fields extending south of the site. The images illustrate how the site is framed by existing vegetation and rural landscape features, with clear views toward nearby landmarks such as the Avtrade Headquarters and King Business Centre. These photographs emphasise the contrast between the developed edges along Reeds Lane and the open countryside to the south, helping to understand the site's visual containment and its relationship with adjacent land uses. This visual analysis will inform how the development can respond sensitively to its setting, maintaining key landscape features while managing the transition between built form and open space.



Key Plan



1 - View east from Reeds Lane by entrance to Avtrade



5 - View east from Reeds Lane near southwest site boundary



6 - View northwest from public footpath south of Reeds Lane, on the western edge of Sayers Common

2.04 Heritage

The impact of the proposed development on archaeology and built heritage has been considered and a Heritage Desk Based Assessment prepared to support the planning application.

No designated heritage assets lie on or close to the site. The closest Listed Building 'Aymers Sayers' lies approximately 400m east of the study site and is separated from the site by modern development. As a result the proposed development is considered unlikely to impact on the significance of this Listed Building and as such built heritage matters are not considered to constrain any development on the Site.

The Site is not located within an Archaeological Notification Area as defined by Mid Sussex District Council. Based on the available evidence the site is considered to have a low potential for evidence dating to all past periods of human activity and as a consequence the proposed development is considered unlikely to have a significant archaeological impact. Consequently archaeology will not constrain any development on the Site.



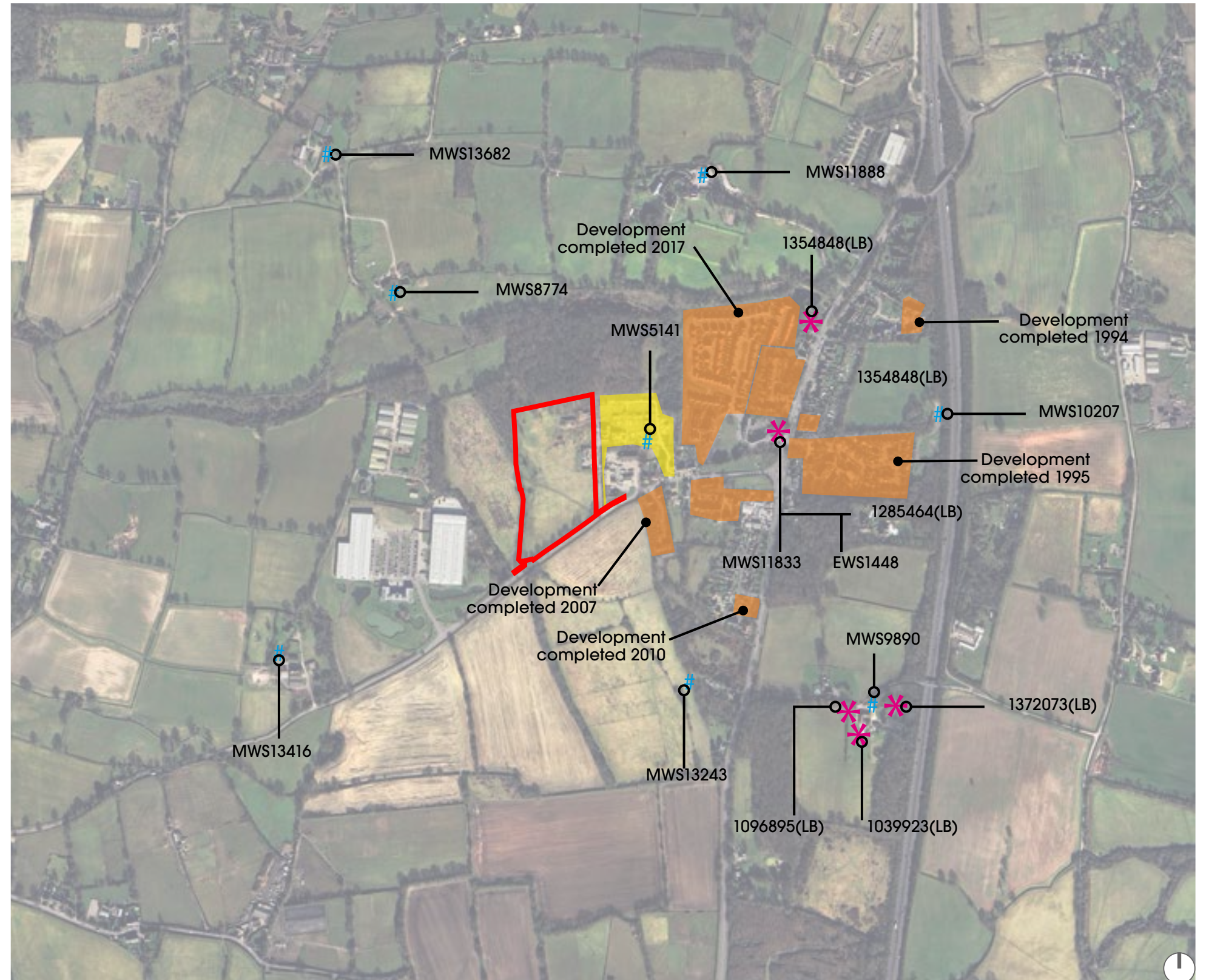
'Aymers Sayers' 1285464 (LB)



'Kingscot' 1354848 (LB)

Key

- # Monument
- * Listed Building
- Recent Residential Developments
- Recently Approved Residential Development under Construction (DM/22/0640)





2.05 Site History

The series of historic maps and the current aerial image illustrate the site's gradual transformation over nearly 150 years. Initially characterised by open agricultural fields, the area began to diversify in the early 20th century with the emergence of small-scale industrial uses such as the brick and tile works identified within the 1909 map. This marked the beginning of a transition from purely rural land to a more mixed-use environment. The current aerial view demonstrates how this evolution has continued, with industrial and commercial development now established to the west and residential growth extending from Sayers Common to the east. Understanding this historical progression helps to contextualise the site's semi-rural character today and supports a design approach that respects its agricultural heritage while responding to contemporary development patterns.

1875

The 1875 map shows the site as predominantly rural farmland, with the settlement of Kingsland situated to the north and scattered farmsteads in the surrounding countryside.

1896

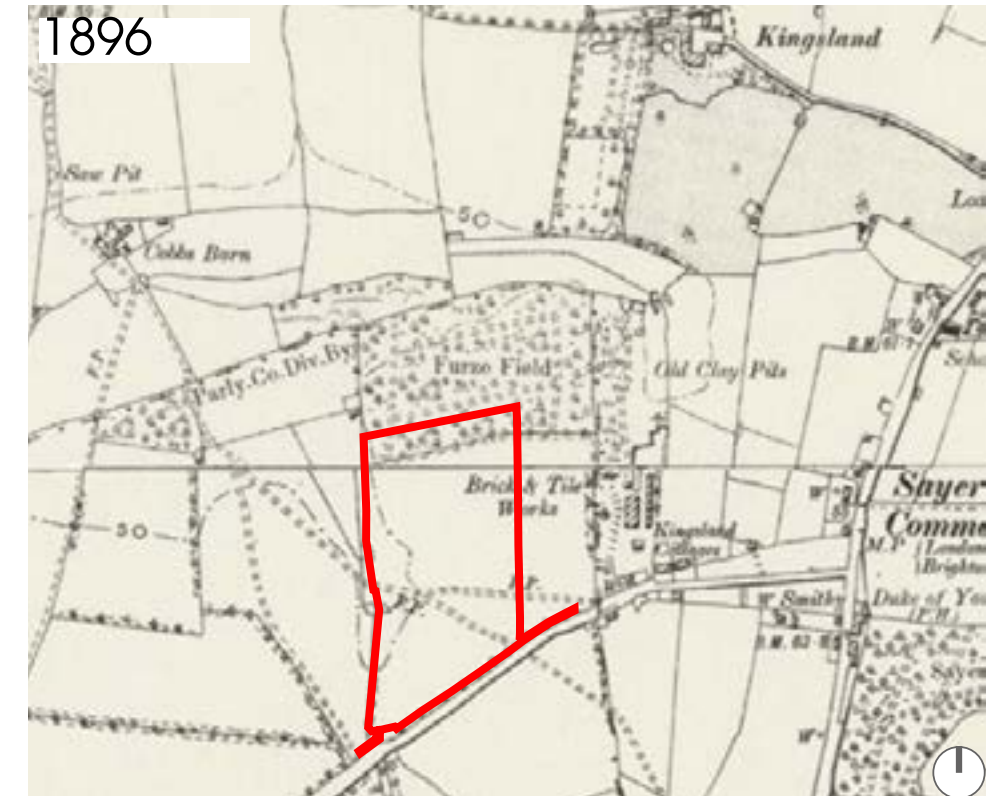
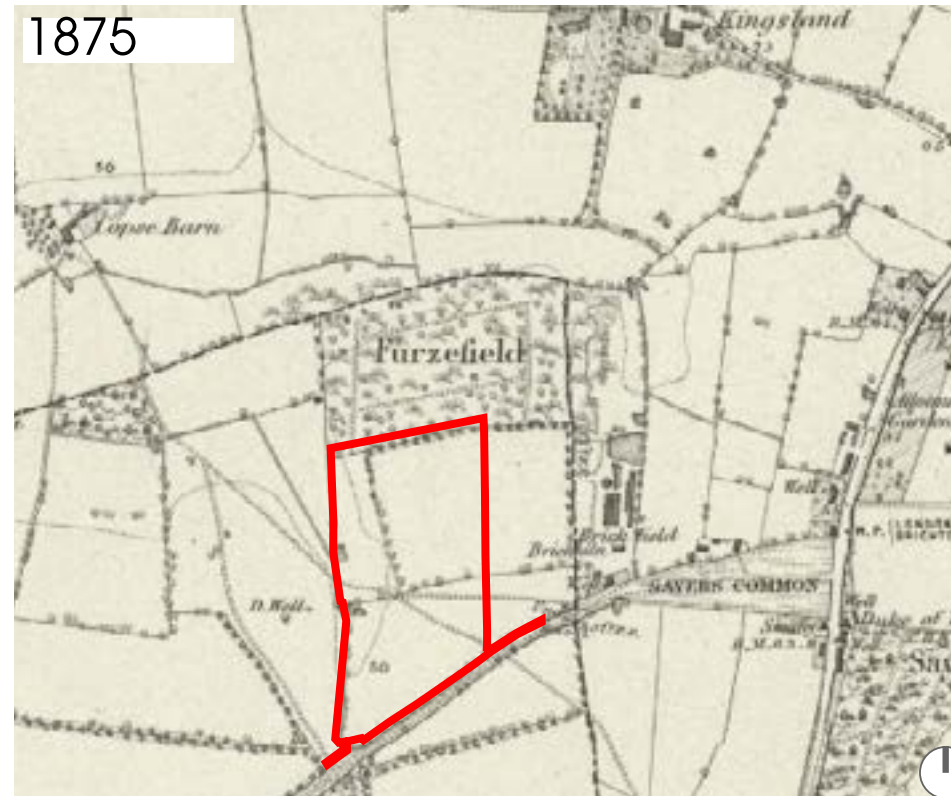
By 1896, the map indicates limited change in land use, with the site continuing to function as farmland. However, there are signs of gradual local development, including the establishment of nearby trackways and small rural enterprises. The surrounding pattern of fields and woodland remains largely intact, maintaining the rural setting of the site.

1909

By 1909, the area had begun to experience modest industrial activity, indicated by the presence of a brick and tile works within the site boundary, reflecting the early stages of development and land use diversification.

Current

In the present-day aerial image, the site appears largely cleared and semi-rural, with remnants of previous industrial activity and adjacent modern development extending southward from Kingsland. This progression illustrates the gradual transition from agricultural to mixed-use land over time, shaped by changing economic and settlement patterns in the area.



2.06 Planning Context

The site forms part of a proposed allocation in the Mid Sussex Draft Local Plan. The draft plan has not yet progressed to formal adoption, therefore the policies and allocations it contains do not hold full weight at this stage. However, it is understood that the Council continues to support the principle of these draft allocations and is committed to bringing these sites forward as proposed.

Policy DPSC6 identifies land to the west of King Business Centre, Reeds Lane, Sayers Common, as a sustainable and deliverable location for development, allocating the site for up to 100 dwellings and supporting the creation of a resilient and inclusive community. This allocation aligns with the Plan's wider strategic objectives to promote sustainable communities by integrating residential development with local employment opportunities and enhanced infrastructure provision.

DPSC6 seeks to contribute to a more walkable, accessible neighbourhood consistent with the "20-minute neighbourhood" principle, whereby residents can meet their daily needs locally. The policy encourages well-connected green infrastructure, sustainable transport links, and access to community services, reinforcing the goal of environmentally responsible growth while enhancing social cohesion and local identity.

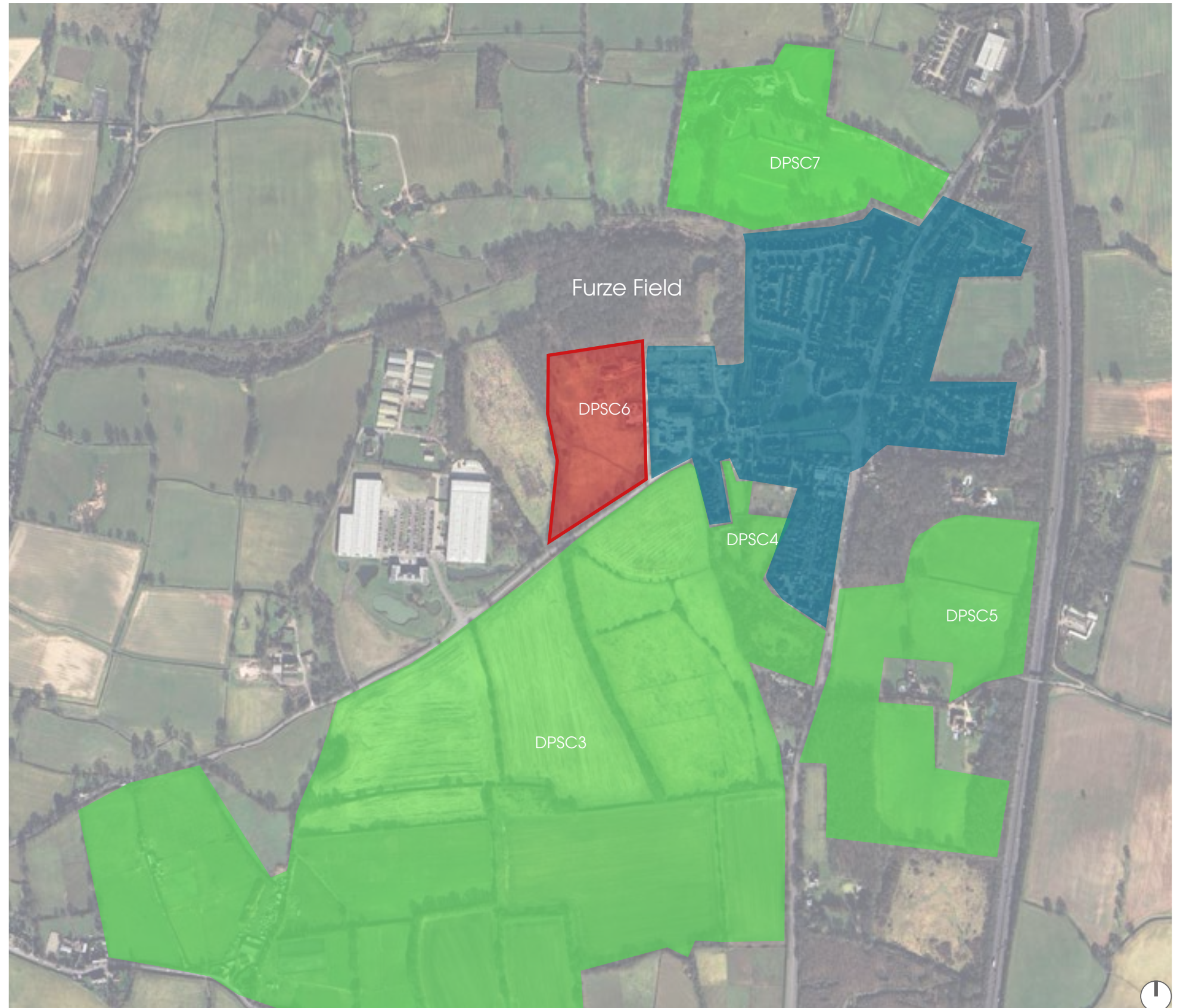
Environmentally, the site will deliver 10% Biodiversity Net Gain, integrate green and blue infrastructure, and respond to climate change adaptation and mitigation through sustainable design principles, in line with DPS1-DPS6 policies.



Map extracted from Mid Sussex District Plan 2021-2039

Key

- Site Location
- Site Allocations
- Existing Built-Up Area Boundary



Map shows allocated sites within the Mid Sussex District Plan 2021-2039



2.07 Local Character

The character of the area is shaped by a mix of building styles and ages, from post-war to modern developments. Common features include predominantly red and buff brickwork, brick detailing, varied roof forms (gables, hips, dormers), and a mix of roof tiles. Other details of note include white-framed windows, occasional chimneys and bay windows, clay tile hanging, flint with brick accents, and horizontal timber weatherboarding, typically in white or black.

A detached dwelling within Berrylands Farm is built from red brick and flint with a gabled roof, featuring brick detailing, a recessed porch, and white window casements. Along Dunlop Close, detached homes use red brick with gabled roofs, incorporating flint, light render, and white casements to add visual interest to the street.



Detached homes along Meadow View are built in red brick with hipped roofs, featuring tile hanging, recessed porches, and square bay windows. Those on Osborn Close include hipped, gabled, and suppressed hip roofs, with dormer windows, gabled porches, and red tile hanging.



A detached home on Dunlop Close is built in red brick with a gabled roof including a drag-down element, red tile hanging, and white window casements. Semi-detached homes at the corner of Reeds Lane and Meadow View feature red brick, half-hip and gabled roofs, and red tile hanging.



Detached homes along London Road include one in buff brick with a gabled roof, white UPVC windows, and dark-stained weatherboarding, and another in red brick and flint with gabled roofs, dark weatherboarding, gabled dormers, and dark window casements.



Site Location



2.08 Arboriculture

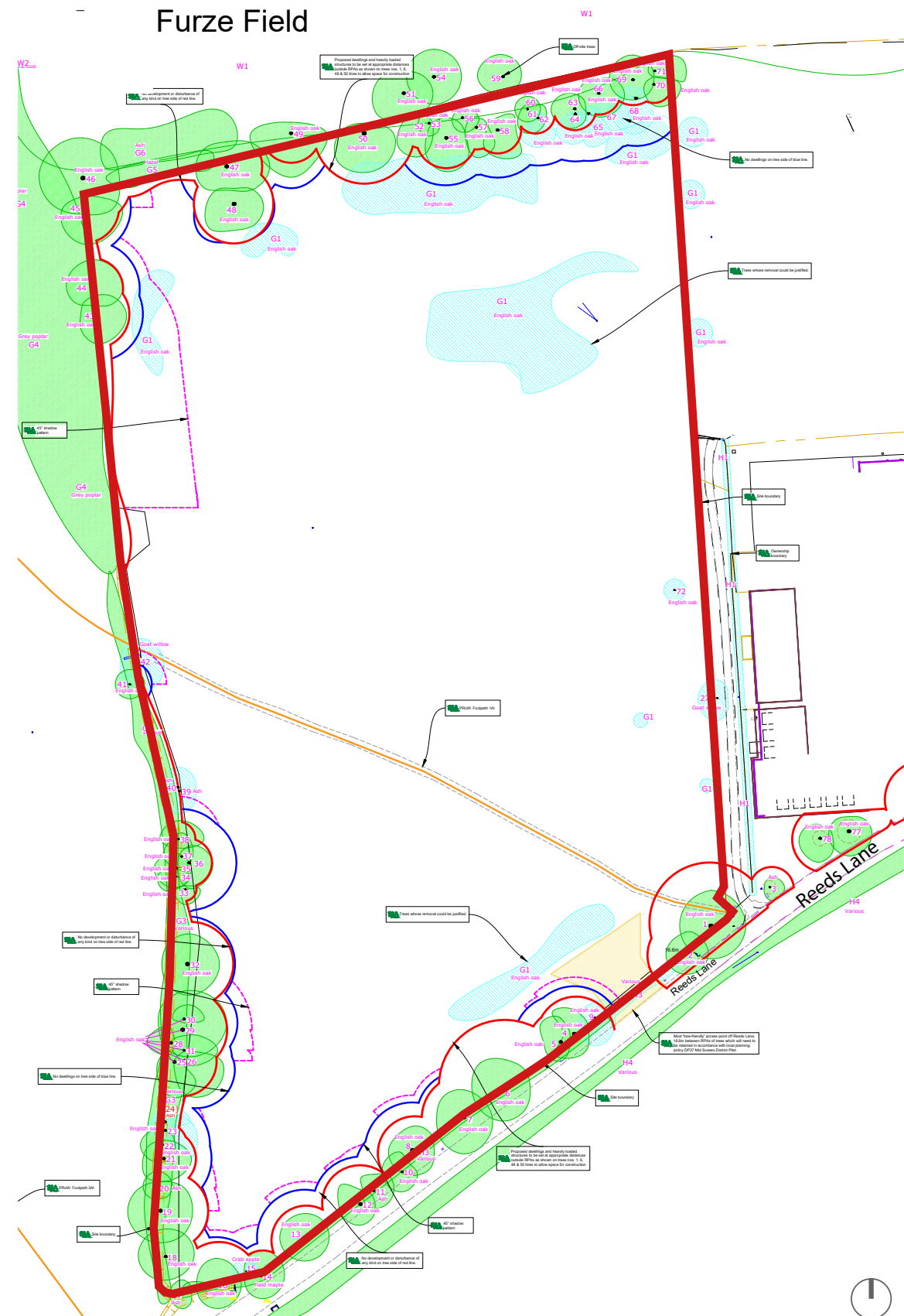
The character of the site can be defined as a tree lined field with mature trees established along the north, west, and south boundaries of the site. The trees are exclusively broad leaved and made up of native species, of which English oak is the most common and dominant in the landscape. None of the trees are covered by Tree Preservation Order, nor are they located within a conservation area. There are no ancient woodlands, veteran or ancient trees on the site or in the immediate locality, but there are several mature oaks that have the potential to be future veterans, these specimens have been provided with enhanced Root Protection Areas.

The arboricultural constraints of the arboricultural features of landscape, historic and wildlife importance have been carefully considered and plotted. The layout has respected the arboricultural constraints where it has been able to and provided suitable mitigation measures where infrastructure is provided within the RPAs. The proposals retain the main arboricultural features of the site and only seek to remove a total of four trees, one group of trees and a section of hedgerow to facilitate the development. Consequently, our assessment of impacts concludes that the proposed removals will represent only a minor alteration to the arboricultural character of the site, which will be mitigated through the proposed tree planting.

The dwellings and their associated amenity space have been designed to promote a positive relationship between future occupiers and visitors and the retained tree canopies. The proposed dwellings are no closer than 6m to any retained tree canopies and no closer than 13m from the trunks of any large-canopied tree species. Furthermore, the dwellings and amenity spaces have designed outside of the shadow patterns of the retained trees. Accordingly, the dwellings have been designed to avoid interference with their reasonable use or enjoyment by incoming occupiers, which might otherwise lead to occupants seeking to inappropriately fell or prune trees.

Key

 Site Boundary



Arboricultural Constraints Plan

2.09 Constraints and Opportunities Plan

As part of the assessment and design process, the constraints and opportunities presented by the site have been analysed, which include:

- Opportunity to deliver a residential development within close proximity to existing amenity and public transport connections, supporting the 20-minute neighbourhood principle, with minimal development constraints;
- Gentle slope of site provides unhindered development opportunities;
- The proposed scheme looks to introduce a new vehicular access from Reeds Lane, which will be carefully considered to take into account the existing landscaping and site topography to achieve the required visibility splays;
- The existing nature of the site presents the opportunity to retain the existing vegetation which borders the site to the north, south and west and provide a 2m wide planting buffer to the east of the site boundary;
- Opportunity to integrate and enhance the existing PRoW that crosses the site, while also providing a connection to PRoW (Route 3_1A1);
- Potential to enhance biodiversity across the site through native planting as part of the landscaping strategy, while retaining existing boundary trees and hedgerows to create green edges that provide screening and added privacy for the proposed dwellings;
- SuDs feature can provide a natural buffer and act as an improved visual amenity for the residents as well as manage surface water runoff, improve water quality, and provide biodiversity benefits;
- Future potential pedestrian link to Reeds Lane to the south and to Elvira Scheme to the east;
- Potential noise sources from Reeds Lane to the south of the site and adjacent King Business Centre;
- Existing overhead cables to be grounded to facilitate development;





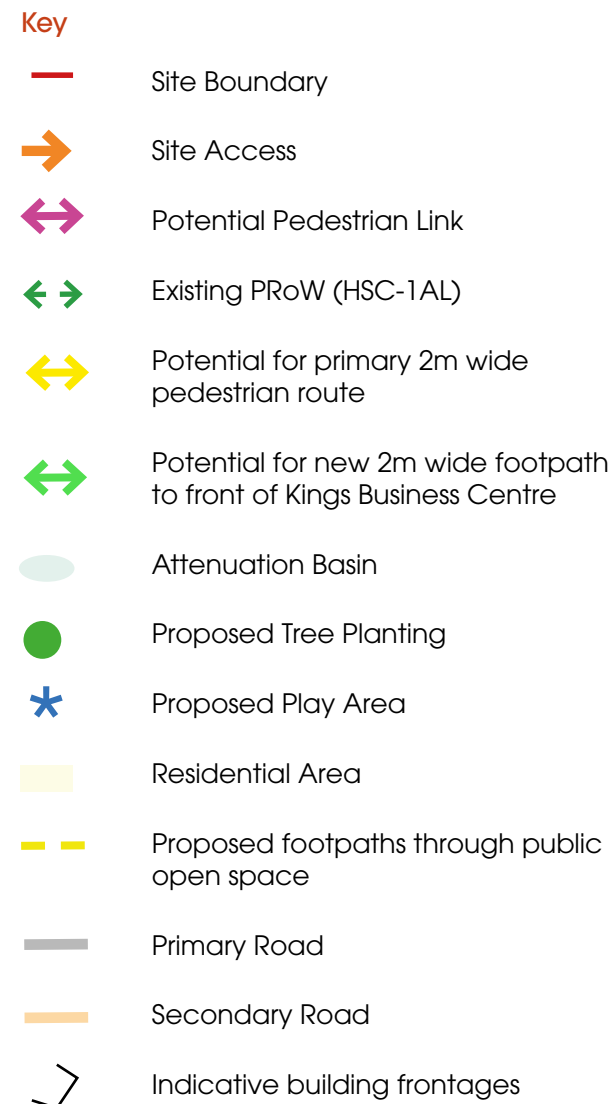
Design Development^{3.0}

3.0 Design Development

The design development has evolved through a clear and logical process, refining the site layout, movement network and landscape strategy to create a coherent and well-considered proposal.

The development is as follows:

- PROW retained and set in a green corridor between the residential parcels.
- New pedestrian footpath along southern site boundary, within site to avoid removal of existing trees.
- Play area to be located within open space area to the west.
- Dwellings to act as perimeter blocks and to face outwards towards the open space areas and the PROW
- Dwellings to back onto the Business Centre to the east
- Main road to connect the two parcels and running to the northern part of the site.
- Secondary shared surface roads to connect from this road, and to provide a clear hierarchy.
- Potential new footpath link to east of site within highways owned land, to allow pedestrian link to village centre.
- Existing planting to site boundaries retained
- Footpath links around the open space to allow for dog walking and connections to the PROW and the access to the south-west site corner.



3.01 Layout Development

A pre-application meeting with MSDC was held in September 2025 where an initial layout was presented with supporting and background information.

Several layout-related considerations and design refinements were identified to ensure the scheme aligns with emerging policy requirements, strengthens pedestrian connectivity, and responds appropriately to site context.

The key points raised from the pre-application are summarised below:

- Wider connectivity should be more comprehensively addressed. Including the provision of a pedestrian pavement along the northern side of Reeds Lane, as well as the introduction of new pedestrian crossings at the south-west corner of the site itself and beyond the north-east corner of the site.
- The layout should be informed by a thorough noise assessment. Ensure that the site layout appropriately mitigates noise impact, particularly on sensitive uses such as residential areas and public open spaces. This evidence-based approach should guide the positioning of buildings.
- The north-west corner should not be blocked. The layout should respond much better to enabling potential future permeability and integration with surrounding uses. The access lane running along the eastern edge of the site requires reconsideration. It should be significantly shortened and designed to be better overlooked in order to improve safety, surveillance, and integration with adjacent uses.
- Front threshold parking dominates the most prominent corner openings. It is recommended to remove front threshold parking along the primary access road. Employ side parking, with garages and rear court parking.
- The layout should enhance legibility by ensuring that key vistas and sightlines are terminated with appropriately designed buildings or landscape features. This will help create a clear and coherent urban structure, improve wayfinding, and contribute to a stronger sense of place within the development.
- The affordable housing mix currently proposed by the applicant will require some amendments to accommodate the required affordable housing mix.



Site Layout shown at pre-application meeting.

3.01 Layout Development

Our response and subsequent layout changes to the pre-application comments are as follows:

1. Links provided to the Elvia scheme to the north-east
2. We have explored an option on how we could side on to the business park, allowing some links through to the footpath along the eastern site boundary and some visibility of the footpath
3. The apartments have been re-aligned to respond more to the vista when entering the site. Other plots such as Plots 9 and 11 terminate views and have been designed with suitable materials and building forms.
4. We have removed the frontage parking for dwellings fronting on to Reeds Lane, whilst also removing frontage parking for the main road within the site. Frontage parking is now limited to some shared surface roads.
5. A footpath link is now proposed along the northern edge of Reeds Lane heading east to connect to the existing footpath
6. Footpath link between the south-west corner of the site to the south-east corner of the site, allowing potential links to the allocated site to the south
7. The mix of affordable housing has been adjusted to meet the Councils requirement. The location of affordable dwellings has also been amended to reduce cluster size and provide open market dwellings between these. The affordable dwellings will be subject to the same level of detail and material as per the open market types to ensure the scheme is tenure blind



Site Layout shown at the Design Review Panel

3.01 Layout Development

The scheme was taken to MSDC Design Review Panel in October 2025, and a few comments were received at that point.

A Public Consultation event was undertaken in October 2025. The Parish Council have also been consulted.

The key points raised at the Design Review Panel are summarised below:

- Increased tree planting along the northern road
- Introducing different identities for areas could aid the design, including focus on key dwellings within the site.
- Adjacent Elvia scheme not of high quality and not to be replicated. Contemporary response may be better and work better with sustainable construction methods
- More accessible footpaths with surfaced finished to be provided and a footpath link around the pond would be beneficial
- It was suggested to increase the height of dwellings in the south-east corner of the site, near the business centre
- Roof forms design to accommodate PVs

Our response and subsequent layout changes to the Design Review Panel comments are as follows:

1. The northern road has been amended to provide a tree lined verge on one side
2. The majority of footpaths around the site are now hard surfaces and a footpath around the pond is provided
3. A short terrace is proposed in the south-east corner of the site to allow for a slight increase in scale
4. Certain dwellings have been detached or have had roof forms amended to ensure every dwelling has a suitable facing roof for PV panels
5. Existing PRoW and been retained, designed around and incorporated within the layout developments.



Proposed Site Layout

3.01 Layout Development

Following these consultations the layout was worked up in more detail, and a few minor changes were then identified as more technical input was worked through with the design team. These include the following:

1.

4 dwellings in the centre of the site rearranged to allow suitable roof forms for future PV panels

2.

Corner dwellings detached to allow suitable roof forms for potential PVs and corner plot moved west due to forward visibility highways requirements. Parking for plots 68-69 also amended due to increase size of the turning head.

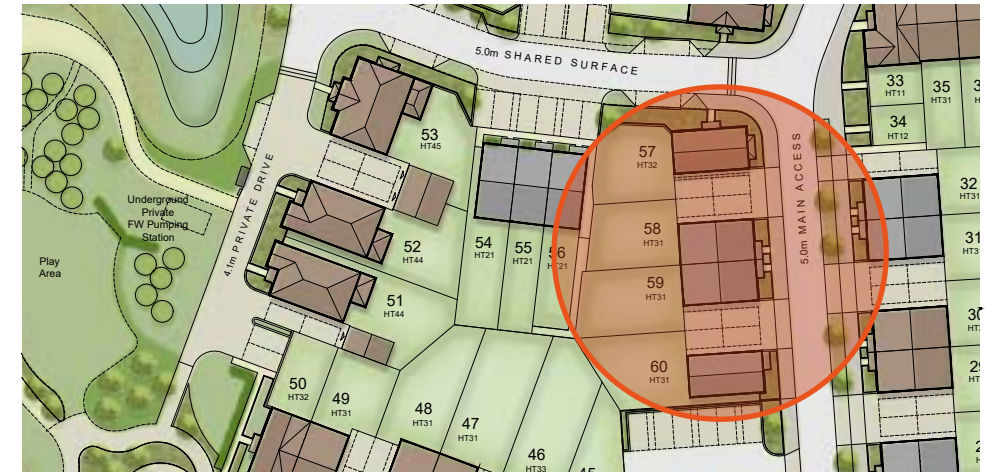
3.

Footpath entrance from Reeds Lane moved and widened to 3.5m

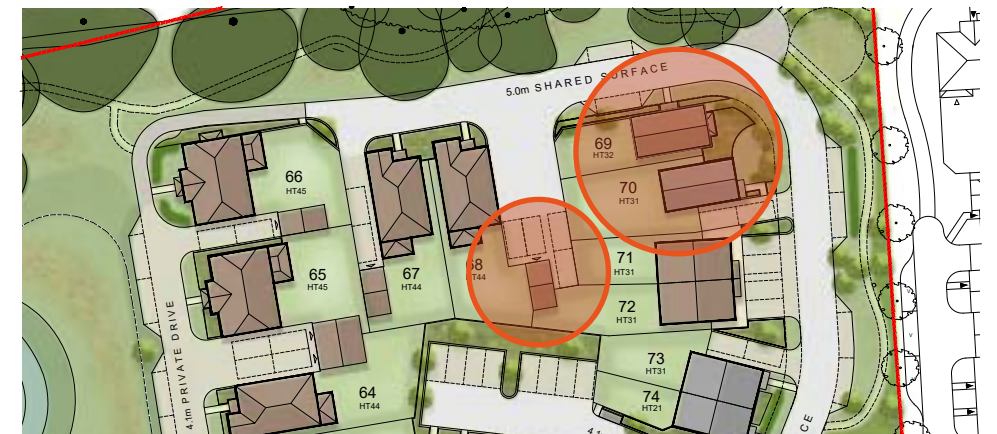
Other minor changes include:

- Kerbs adjusted to Highways tracking input
- Roofs forms amended for potential Solar Panels
- 2.5 Storey dwellings concentrated to one central area
- Reduced frontage parking at site entrance

1.



2.



3.



3.02 Appearance Development

These elevations are from the indicative street scenes shown at the pre-application meeting, while there were no specific comments or concerns at that stage, some changes were made predominantly in terms of materiality.

We are proposing a much higher quality traditional scheme than the adjacent Elvia scheme, as we feel this is in keeping better with the village vernacular. We believe this doesn't preclude any sustainable features that may be required. The design incorporates a transitional approach, retaining traditional forms while introducing modern window arrangements and updated roof profiles to accommodate sustainable features such as photo-voltaic panels.

We are also proposing two different character areas with varying primary and secondary materials in response to a suggestion from the design review panel.

Examples of some of the elevational changes are as follows:

1. Plot 66

The hipped roof was replaced with a barn hipped roof to strengthen the architectural character by giving the building a more traditional rural Sussex form.

2. Plot 62

White weatherboarding has been replaced with black weatherboarding to follow the materials that are specific to each character areas. A limited palette has been used to create a cohesive language for both areas and to support wayfinding throughout the site.

A variety of porch style have been introduced throughout the site to create visual interest within the character areas.

3. Plots 37-44

The black weatherboarding has been replaced with tile hanging to match the other key corner dwellings

Pre-Application Design



1.



2.



3.

Final Proposal





Proposed Scheme Design^{4.0}