

1.0 SITE CONTEXT & ANALYSIS

Immediate Context

Upton Drive leading to Marwick Close is the immediate context to the site, as more modern dwellings arranged in clusters and streetscapes, using local materials and traditional motifs, with prominent gabled porches aligning the approach route southwards towards the site.

The transition from rural to the more 'urban' village centre via tree lined routes is the overriding context, with groupings of agricultural approach buildings, traditional streetscene alignments and more modern dwelling clusters defining the mid Sussex character:-

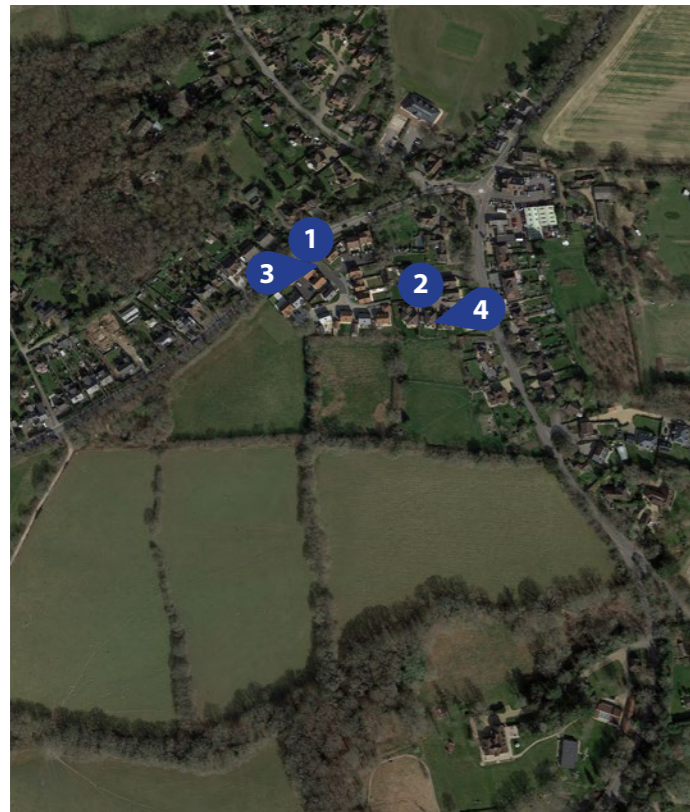
- One and half / two storeys – varied roof heights
- Barn hips/gables – varying ridge alignments
- Brickwork/timber lining/red roof tiles



1. Bolney Road (Upton Drive/Marwick Close)



2. Bolney Road (Upton Drive/Marwick Close)



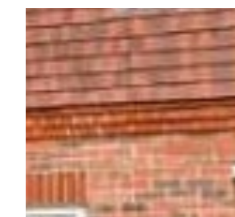
Location Key



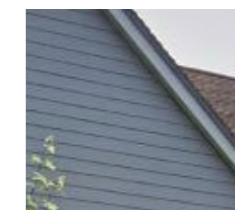
3. Bolney Road (Upton Drive/Marwick Close)



4. Crouch Fields



Brickwork banding and detailing - at material transitions



Timber boarding - horizontally expressed

1.0 SITE CONTEXT & ANALYSIS

1.05 LOCAL CHARACTER

From the character appraisal a palette of local materials and features can be identified to influence the emerging proposals.



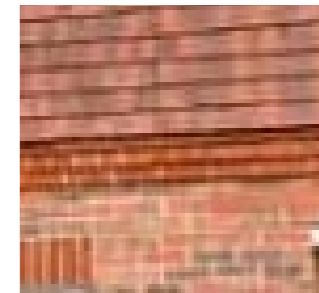
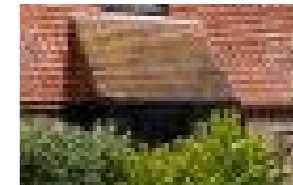
Horizontal timber boarding



Off-white boarding



Brick Quoins



Tile hanging and lean to porches



Tile detailing



Hedgerows

1.0 SITE CONTEXT & ANALYSIS

1.06 SITE CONSTRAINTS

A range of site-specific constraints and opportunities have been identified, each playing a role in shaping the proposed development. A thorough analysis has been undertaken to ensure these factors are fully understood and thoughtfully integrated into the scheme's design. The key constraints are as follows:

- The site features significant topographical variation, with levels falling from the north-east to the south and south-west by approximately 6 metres.
- The site occupies an edge of settlement location with its southern and eastern boundaries fronting the rural edge
- A copse of trees is located in the western corner of the site defining the rural edge and constraining the development envelope.
- Mature treed embankment along Bolney Road, together with established hedgerows to the east and south
- Perimeter drainage wayleave along Bolney Road and across the Marwick Close entrance preventing build development in this location
- Overhead cables traverse site and to be undergrounded as per Marwick Close development
- Public footpath along southern boundary with opportunity to deliver improvements to enhance rural character and access.
- Opportunity to address noise impacts from Bolney Road through good acoustic design
- Ground conditions of Weald Clay inform drainage strategy
- Opportunity to improve pedestrian connections to Bolney Road and the village centre, the existing PROW to the south and provide a new pedestrian and cycle connection to future adjoining development site to the east.



1. View across site from west facing east towards Marwick Close (RPS)



2. View across site from footpath entrance, facing northwest (RPS)



Constraints Plan

1.0 SITE CONTEXT & ANALYSIS

1.07 OPPORTUNITIES

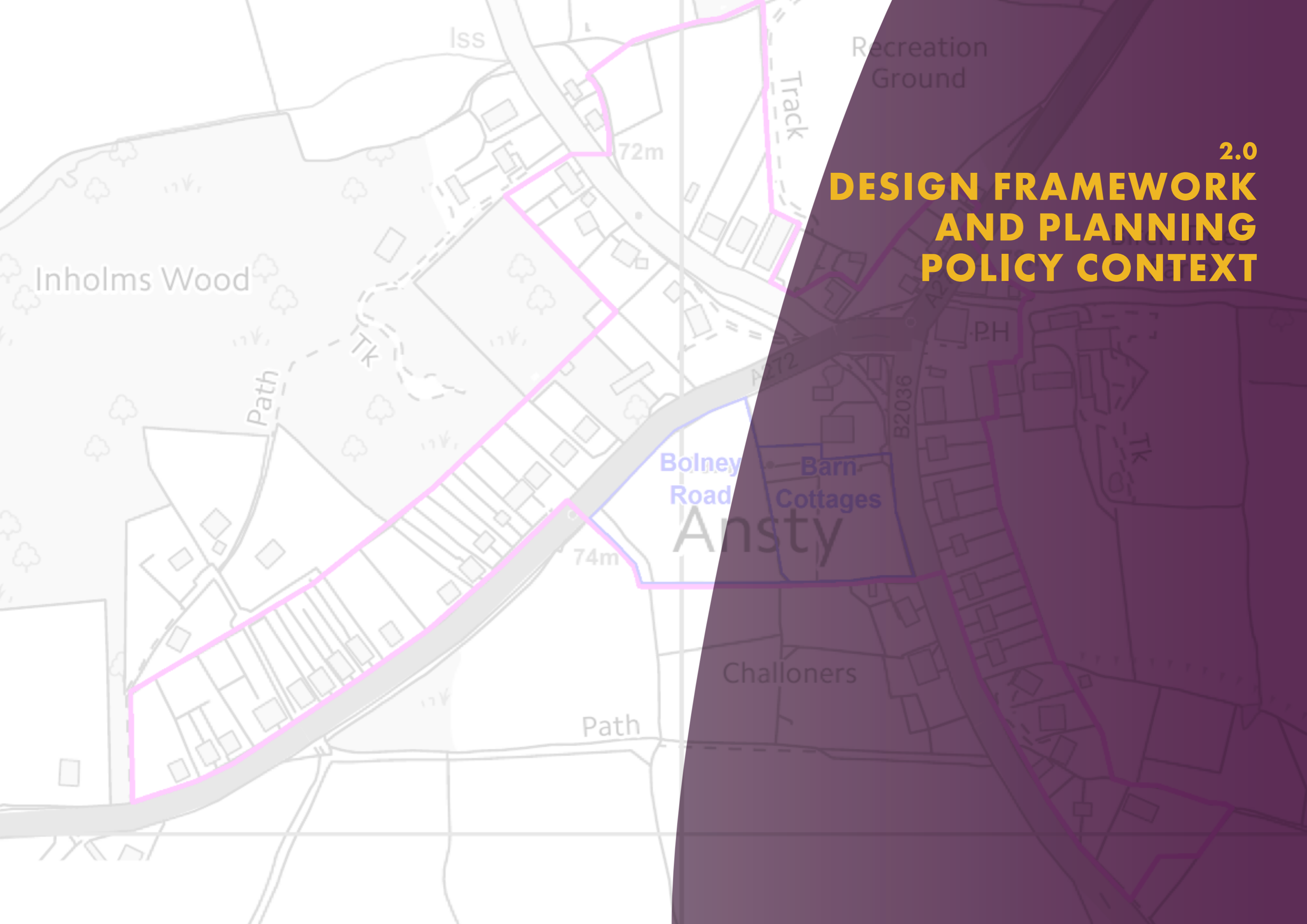
Responding to the site considerations, the design proposal seeks not only to retain the key natural features of the site but also to celebrate them within the scheme's placemaking strategy, ensuring a strong response to local context. The following principles have been incorporated into the design:

- Respecting the drainage wayleave to Marwick Close whilst using this as an opportunity to protect the tree lined character of the road. Further the opportunity is taken to set development back both to mitigate the visual impact of the development on the streetscene and to respond to the existing Bolney Road frontage, with houses facing the street.
- Utilising the topography of the site to enable development to align with the slopes, minimising the need for excavation and reflecting existing patterns of development on Bolney Road and within Marwick Close.
- Retention of hedgerows to the boundaries and safeguarding trees to Bolney Road and copse to the west to reinforce the rural edge and retain screening, whilst delivering landscape and biodiversity enhancements and offering opportunities for informal play and recreation. Overall green infrastructure forms a central aspect of the scheme, with varied open spaces, tree lined verges and an enhanced edge of settlement character.
- Site access gained from Marwick Close in accordance with draft policy DPA17, allowing retention of trees and levels along Bolney Road
- Creation of an inward facing development that allows rear gardens to create a softer transition to the countryside edges, whilst houses to face the street, creating clear legible streets with buildings that are well aligned.
- Incorporation of an area of public open space at the site entrance that creates a focal point whilst connecting the site with the existing development at Marwick Close and potential future development to the east.
- Creation of a hierarchy of streets, with lower key streets to the rural edges.
- Sensitive treatment of car parking, with car parking hidden between buildings where possible.
- The layout is informed by a comprehensive drainage strategy, including a substantial attenuation feature located to the south of the PROW.
- Adoption of modest building heights and use of locally distinctive materials to deliver a development whose character conserves and enhances the local area.



Opportunities Plan

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2.0

DESIGN FRAMEWORK AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

2.0 DESIGN GUIDANCE

2.01 DESIGN GUIDANCE

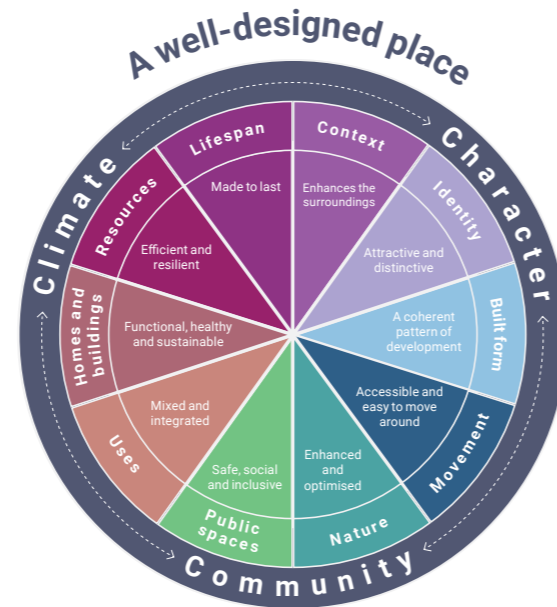
Mid Sussex Design Guide

The Mid Sussex Design Guide has informed the design principles of the development, ensuring a high-quality proposal that responds appropriately to its context. In line with this, the design strategy seeks to create a safe and attractive environment that is sensitive to the distinctive character of Mid Sussex.

The **National Design Guide** outlines ten characteristics that contribute to good design:

- Context – enhances the surroundings.
- Identity – attractive and distinctive.
- Built form – a coherent pattern of development.
- Movement – accessible and easy to move around.
- Nature – enhanced and optimised.
- Public spaces – safe, social and inclusive.
- Uses – mixed and integrated.
- Homes and buildings – functional, healthy and sustainable.
- Resources – efficient and resilient.
- Lifespan – made to last.

Adherence to the NDG guidance forms the basis of the emerging proposals.



2.02 MID SUSSEX LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT (2025)

The Mid Sussex Design Guide document advocates an “architectural integrity” to the design approach, based on appraisal of the local context and sets Ansty village within the High Weald Fringe landscape character area.

The dispersed historical settlement pattern of villages is identified within the ‘Fringe’ character, along with the wooded landscape context.





The linear settlement is clear from the existing figure ground, with fingers of ribbon development emanating from the central cross roads and extending along Bolney Road. Clusters of development define this central area to the south as identified in the Local Plan.

2 Understanding the Context Landscape Character

REFERENCES
The Landscape Character Assessment for Mid Sussex (2005)

Landscape Character Areas and their Characteristics

The landscape character assessment sub-divides the District into ten character areas.


Area	Landform and Landscape	Settlement Pattern	Local Materials
 High Weald	Hilly landscape of ridges and secluded valleys with significant woodland cover and a dense network of hedgerows and copses, creates a sense of enclosure.	Historic settlements on high ridges, hilltops and high ground and connected by twisting lanes. The principal settlement is East Grinstead and some expanded and smaller villages.	Diverse materials including timber framing, Wealden stone and varieties of local brick and tile hanging.
 High Weald Plateau	A plateau landscape with significant woodland cover and a dense network of hedgerows and copses, creates a sense of enclosure.	Main settlements at Copthorne and Crawley Down have expanded through 20th century. Roads busy with ribbon development in places.	Diverse materials including timber framing and varieties of local brick and tile hanging.
 Worth Forest	Densely wooded, plateau landscape with long views over the Low Weald to the South Downs.	Sparse, dispersed settlement pattern of farmsteads.	Diverse materials including timber-framing, Wealden stone and varieties of local brick and tile-hanging.
 Ouse Valley	Rural valley landscape with the watercourse broadening from a stream in the west to a river meandering through water meadows in the east.	No settlements in the valley other than dispersed farmsteads although Haywards Heath, Lindfield and Cuckfield lie on the valley edges.	Diverse materials including timber-framing, Horsham Stone roofing, Wealden stone and varieties of local brick and tile-hanging.
 High Weald Fringes	Densely-wooded southern flanks of the High Weald Forest Ridge.	Dispersed historic settlement pattern, with Cuckfield, Haywards Heath and Lindfield and a few villages and hamlets to the east.	Diverse materials including timber-framing, Horsham Stone roofing, Wealden stone and varieties of local brick and tile-hanging.


MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

Mid Sussex Design Guide

Supplementary Planning Document SPD

Adopted November 2020





2.0 DESIGN GUIDANCE

2.03 MID SUSSEX DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN

Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031

The current adopted plan is the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031. It was adopted in March 2018. Many of the policies remain relevant to the determination of the application

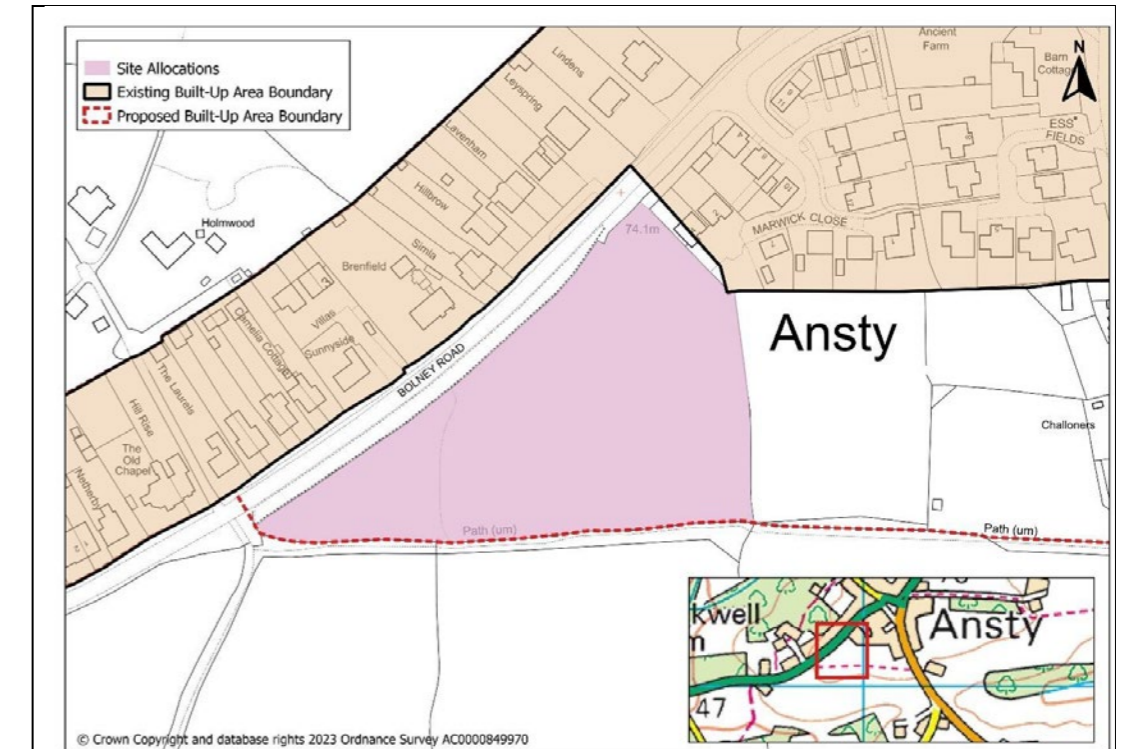
Mid Sussex District Plan Review 2021-2039

The Council is at an advanced stage of creating a new Local Plan, with the plan submitted for independent examination to the Planning Inspectorate in July 2024. Whilst the plans progression has paused, it has recently been announced that examination hearings will recommence in early 2026.

- Land to the West of Marwick Close, Botley Road, Ansty (the site) is recognised by the Council as a sustainable and appropriate site for new housing development owing to its current allocation for 45 residential dwellings (including 30% affordable housing) in the Mid Sussex District Plan (2021 – 2039) Submission Draft, under policy DPA17.
- The draft policy (DPA17) sets out a number of policy requirements that new development on this site is expected to deliver. These requirements include maintaining the existing rural character of the Public Right of Way, maximising tree retention, ensuring that the layout of the site reflects a transition from the built environment to the rural countryside, and ensuring the site is developed with good acoustic design to protect future occupants from noise generated from the A272.
- The site was assessed in the Council's 2022 Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA, site reference 784) which concluded that the site is 'relatively unconstrained' and therefore suitable for residential development, as well as having a 'reasonable prospect' that the site can be developed within the plan period.

DPA17: Land to the west of Marwick Close, Bolney Road, Ansty

Allocation	Housing	Settlement:	Ansty
SHELAA:	784	Number of Dwellings:	45
Gross Site Area (ha):	1.5		
Infrastructure	<p>On-site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural, semi-natural and amenity green space <p>Financial contributions towards the provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Transport • Improvements at Haywards Heath Station • Education • Library • Community buildings • Local Community Infrastructure • Health • Play area • Other outdoor provision • Outdoor sports • Parks and Gardens <p>Provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Transport measures • Highway works 		



Policy Requirements

1. Provide suitable access from Upton Drive and Marwick Close.
2. Retain and enhance the trees and retain the ground levels along the A272 Bolney Road which forms the western boundary of the site.
3. Particular attention should be given to trees and hedgerows on the southern boundary adjacent to the PRoW and in the southwest of the site.
4. Maintain the rural character of the PRoW on the southern boundary of the site.
5. The layout of the site should take into account the location of the trees and allow for their future retention and to prevent overshadowing into private gardens.
6. The design and layout of the site should reflect a transition from the built environment to the rural countryside.
7. The design and layout of the site should reflect the rural character of the settlement and avoid being urban or suburban in character.
8. Integrate development with the site to the east (DPA16) by providing pedestrian and cycling connections and green infrastructure connectivity.
9. Provide good acoustic design to address noise impacts associated with the A272 Bolney Road.
10. Meet the requirements of other relevant development plan policies.

These 10 policy requirements are the basis for considering a residential development on the allocated site.

2.0 DESIGN GUIDANCE

2.04 ANSTY, STAPLEFORD AND BROOK STREET NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Ansty, Stapleford and Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan (NP) was made in February 2017. It provides useful context in regard to the character of Ansty, the vision and objectives of the village and its community and some of the challenges it faces. The long term vision for the community anticipated new housing development within or close to the established settlement boundary.

'In 2031 the villages of Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street will remain distinct communities from the larger nearby towns and villages such as Burgess Hill and Cuckfield, having seen no harmful expansion of their settlements into the surrounding countryside.'

Ansty will have accommodated new housing to help meet the demand and need for new and affordable homes by using land within or close to the established settlement boundary. A mix of housing ensures that smaller houses are available for young families as well as older people wanting to downsize.

The heritage and landscape assets of the area will have been protected, including the Staplefield Conservation Area and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The three small communities continue to thrive and support the community facilities such as the village halls and sport facilities as well as the pubs and other small businesses.

All the settlements are better connected to each other and other surrounding villages through improved cycle routes and and multi-user routes.'

Ansty, Staplefield & Brook Street
Neighbourhood Plan
2015-2031

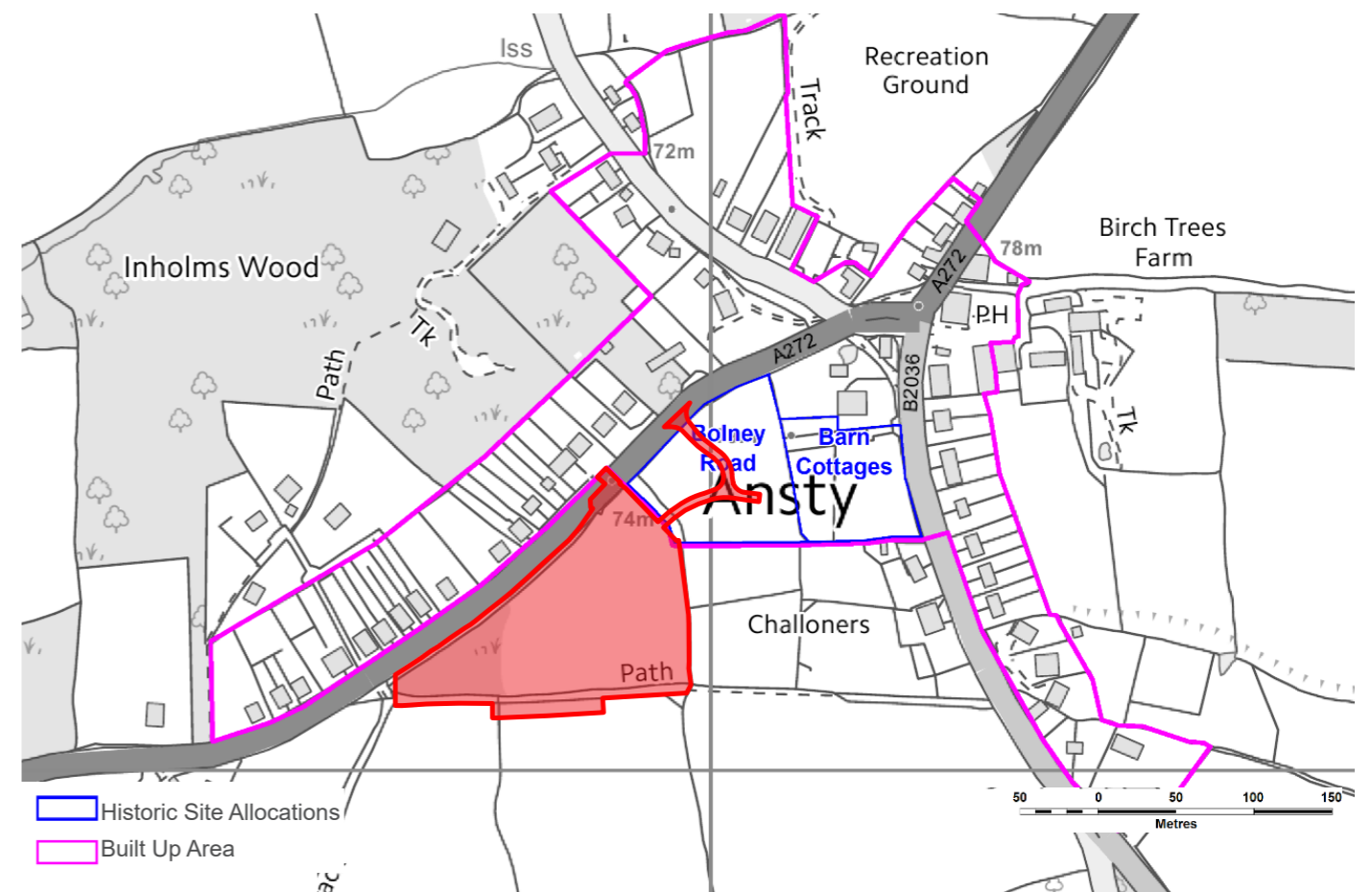


Made Version
February 2017

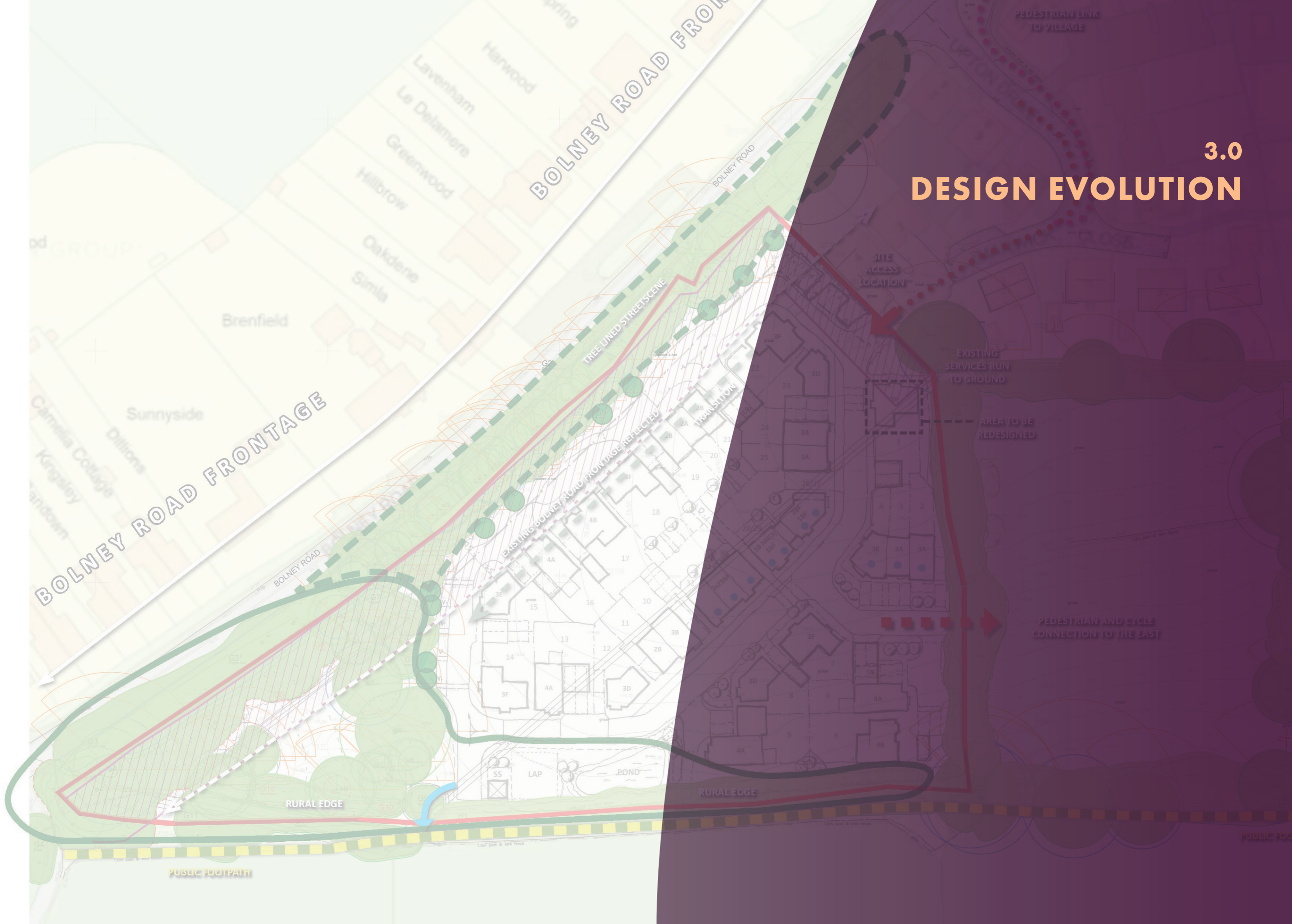


Marwick Close

The NP allocated two sites for housing development in Ansty which included the new residential development at Marwick Close, immediately to the north east of this site. Both the NP sites are now complete. The NP is now 9 years old and is not fully consistent with the language of the NPPF. As such whilst the policies contained within the NP hold weight in decision making, the provisions of paragraph 14 which disenable the tilted balance of the NPPF 11d) do not apply.



DESIGN EVOLUTION



3.0 DESIGN EVOLUTION

3.01 PRE-APPLICATION MEETING AND RESPONSE

A pre-application meeting was convened in May 2024 with the following officer responses:

1. Retention of wooded copse with acceptance that site capacity would fall below 45 units as anticipated by draft policy DPA17
 2. Area for biodiversity enhancement and informal play with opportunities for informal paths and resting places
 3. No requirement for LAP given proximity to existing facilities
 4. Concerns regarding back to back building relationships between a number of the units giving rise to overlooking and awkward building relationships
 5. Rear parking court poorly designed and likely to give rise to amenity concern
 6. Apartments to be dual aspect
 7. Main open space located correctly but is too small
- Layout well thought through with houses and apartments facing the street
 - More street trees are required
 - Introduce elements of play and resting spaces into landscape design throughout
 - Encouragement for the use of flats above garages and car ports
 - Housing mix to be revised to provide a higher number of smaller homes, with a reduction in bigger homes and a consequential increase in density.

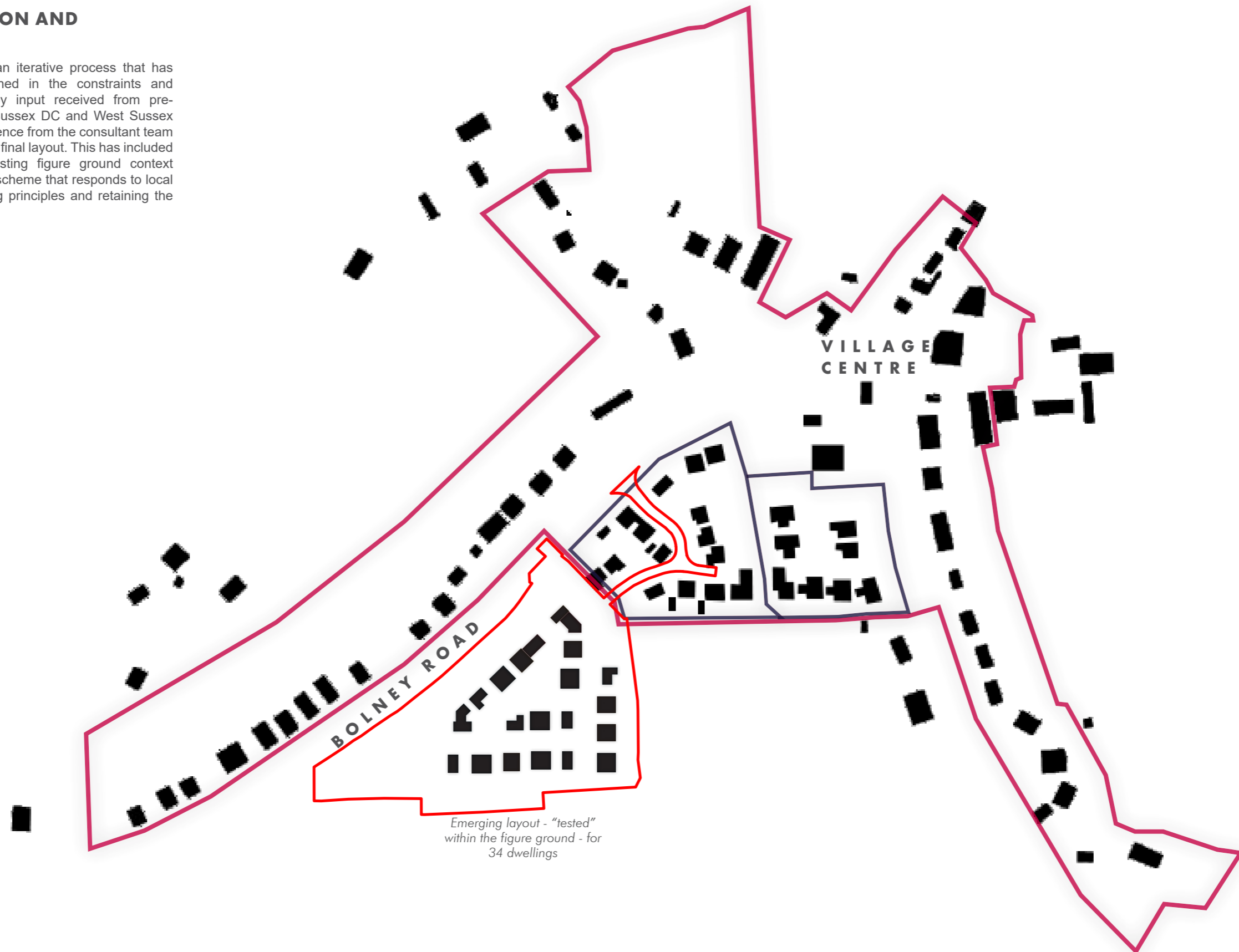


Proposed Illustrative Site Layout

3.0 DESIGN EVOLUTION

3.02 DESIGN EVOLUTION AND CONNECTIVITY

The layout has evolved through an iterative process that has seen the design principles outlined in the constraints and opportunities section, informed by input received from pre-application discussions with Mid Sussex DC and West Sussex CC and technical surveys and evidence from the consultant team all tested and evaluated to deliver a final layout. This has included testing the layout within the existing figure ground context (morphology) of Ansty to deliver a scheme that responds to local context while meeting placemaking principles and retaining the key natural features of the site.



3.0 DESIGN EVOLUTION

3.03 DESIGN RESPONSE

The layout for 34 dwellings has been honed into a central cluster with linear eastern and southern streetscenes, conceived as country lanes. The north eastern aspect reflects the existing properties on Bolney Road, and this, with Marwick Close provides the immediate context as a basis for the aesthetic approach.

The amenity space and footpath connection immediate to the entrance enables the potential for (future) linkage to the east with the treed triangular area providing additional open space amenity to the west.

A footpath linkage is also provided to the north east, onto Bolney Road.

The central parking court in the pre-application proposal has been "designed out", with the layout now predominantly street facing houses. The streetscapes are reinforced by flats over garages and car ports, along country lanes.



The Ancien Farm