



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND  
NATIONAL CHURCH INSTITUTIONS

# Hoo St Werburgh Masterplan Vision

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Corstorphine & Wright

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|          |            |   |

|  |    |  |    |
|--|----|--|----|
| <b>Introduction</b>  | 4  | <b>6.0 Development Strategy</b>                          | 35 |
| <b>1.0 Who We Are</b>                                      | 6  | 6.1 Green Buffer Zones                                   | 35 |
| 1.1 Church Commissioners for England                       | 6  | 6.2 Green Space Network                                  | 36 |
| 1.2 Environmental, Social & Governance                     | 7  | 6.3 Access & Movement                                    | 37 |
| <b>2.0 The Vision</b>                                      | 9  | 6.4 Neighbourhood Characters                             | 38 |
| <b>3.0 Planning Policy Context</b>                         | 12 | 6.5 Rural Town Living in Hoo St Werburgh                 | 39 |
| 3.1 Medway Council - Planning Growth For The Hoo Peninsula | 12 | 6.6 Walkable Neighbourhoods - Interconnected Communities | 40 |
| <b>4.0 Site &amp; Surrounding Area</b>                     | 15 | 6.7 Public Transport                                     | 41 |
| 4.1 Site Location  | 15 | 6.8 Integrated Transport & Mobility                      | 42 |
| 4.2 Site Area and Use                                      | 16 | 6.9 Mobility Hubs  | 43 |
| 4.3 Site Boundaries  | 17 | <b>7.0 Sustainability</b>                                | 45 |
| 4.4 Existing Green Infrastructure                          | 18 | 7.1 Minimising Carbon in Travel                          | 45 |
| 4.5 Noise and Odour Sources                                | 19 | 7.2 Green Infrastructure & Carbon Capture                | 46 |
| 4.6 Vehicular Site Access                                  | 20 | <b>8.0 Concept Masterplan</b>                            | 49 |
| 4.7 Existing Pedestrian and Cycle Links                    | 21 | 8.1 Phase 1  | 49 |
| 4.8 Heritage Assets & Features                             | 22 | 8.2 Concept Quantum - Phase 1                            | 50 |
| 4.9 Views of The Site                                      | 23 | 8.3 Phase 2  | 51 |
| 4.10 Topography and Flooding                               | 24 | 8.4 Concept Quantum - Phase 2                            | 52 |
| 4.11 Utilities   | 25 | <b>9.0 Summary</b>                                       | 54 |
| 4.12 Opportunities and Constraints                         | 26 |  |    |
| <b>5.0 Context Appraisal</b>                               | 29 |  |    |
| 5.1 Density and Character Studies                          | 29 |  |    |
| 5.2 Area One Character Study                               | 30 |  |    |
| 5.3 Area Two Character Study                               | 31 |  |    |
| 5.4 Area Three Character Study                             | 32 |  |    |
| 5.5 Area Four Character Study                              | 33 |  |    |

# Introduction

## Purpose of Report

This document presents a vision for the development of land located to the east of Hoo St Werburgh, within the Hoo Peninsula and has been prepared by Corstorphine & Wright Architects (C&W) on behalf of The Church Commissioners for England (CCfE). The purpose of this document is to develop a masterplan vision to promote through the next stage of the local plan preparation and to inform related discussions with Medway Council.

## Structure of the Report

This document starts with an overview of relevant planning policy and guidance, including the principles of good design and sustainability within national planning policy, the national design guide and Medway's emerging local plan. Similarly, a local context appraisal considers the site history, surroundings and the influence these may have on development and establishing appropriate densities for residential development. A concept design is then developed, that responds to the various site opportunities and constraints to present how development could come forward. An overall strategy is described including the potential development quantum.

## The Consultant Team

In the preparation of this vision document and the supporting concept masterplan, The Church Commissioners for England has drawn on the expertise of an experienced design team including Corstorphine & Wright Architects, Lichfields (Planning Consultants), Pell Frischmann (transport and utilities) and Savills (commercial).

Corstorphine & Wright





# 1.0 Who We Are

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## 1.1 Church Commissioners for England

The Church Commissioners for England (CCfE) is a registered charity that supports the work and mission of the Church of England across the country.

To do this, CCfE manages a £10.3bn investment fund in an ethical and responsible way. This portfolio includes a substantial property element covering commercial, rural land, residential property as well strategic land and forestry.

CCfE seeks to work in partnership with local stakeholders and local communities to deliver sustainable, high-quality developments pro-actively with Local Planning Authorities to assist in the delivery of proposals to meet local need.

The integration of Environmental, Social and Governance factors into CCfE's decision making is at the core of its investment approach. CCfE is at the forefront of responsible investment and is working hard to strengthen the focus on ESG within their property portfolio.

Against this backdrop, the Strategic Land team at CCfE brings forward land across the country, with the aim of creating new and sustainable neighbourhoods. Its aspirations are aligned with global and local agendas and aim to positively contribute in terms of biodiversity creation, minimise carbon emissions and create social and economic opportunities. Place making is at the heart, creating places where communities want to live, work and play.



# 1.1 Environmental, Social & Governance

The Strategic Land team at the CCfE brings forward land for new housing developments across the country. Its aim is to deliver new homes and employment opportunities which support and enhance the local surroundings. It does this by seeking to build new, and strengthen existing communities, helping to create and sustain vibrant and vital places for the long term.

CCfE takes a long-term approach to stewardship and is fundamentally committed to managing its funds in an ethically responsible way. The integration of material Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) factors into its decision making has long been the cornerstone of its investment approach. CCfE continually seeks to remain at the forefront of responsible investment and is working hard to strengthen the focus on ESG within its property portfolio. Strong governance is the foundation which enables effective and holistic ESG integration across its assets.





# 2.0 The Vision

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CCfE is looking to develop 230-hectares of land to the east of Hoo St Werburgh with a view to creating up to 3,200 homes, with up to 2,300 being delivered in the shorter term as Phase 1. This residential-led development will be combined with education, employment and retail uses. The development has the opportunity to form a logical extension to the existing settlement and planned growth in the area.

There is the opportunity to integrate blue and green infrastructure within a landscape-led masterplan, creating an attractive setting for residents which can be further enhanced by maximising views across the existing countryside.

The site is well connected to existing transport infrastructure offering the opportunity to create a sustainable development with reduced car need.

The site is relatively unconstrained and, as such, it has the potential to deliver housing early in the next Local Plan period.



Up to 3200 new homes



230 Hectare site



Logical extension to existing settlement



Landscape-led approach



Biodiversity net gain



Reduced car need



New Primary & Secondary School



Employment Zones

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## 2.0 The Vision

### The development team aims to:

- Create an attractive, landscape-led development
- Deliver a broad range of housing typologies and tenures, including affordable housing.
- Respond to local housing need.
- Provide high-quality employment use such as office space and light industrial to create jobs within the Hoo Peninsula.
- Provide primary & secondary schools that will meet the educational needs and aspirations of the community.
- Integrate blue and green infrastructure into the landscape.
- Connect to the existing movement network.
- Incorporate and connect to pedestrian and cycle routes.





# 3.0 Planning Policy Context

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## 3.1 Medway Council - Planning Growth For The Hoo Peninsula

In July 2024 proposed revisions to the NPPF 2023 were published. This includes restoring national housing targets as 'mandatory'.

The NPPF states the importance of ensuring a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed to support the supply of new homes. Strategic policy-making authorities should have a clear understanding of the land available in their area. From this, planning policies should identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites.

It further states that the supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as significant extensions to existing villages and towns. This is provided that they are well located and designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities (including a genuine choice of transport modes).

The importance of high quality design and good place making in planning is established; and a requirement for LPA's to develop local design codes in line with the National Model Design Code.

### Emerging Local Plan

Medway Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan, this will replace the 2003 Medway Local Plan, which is out of date. The new Local Plan will:

- Guide the development and use of land in Medway up to 2041; and,
- Address the needs of Medway's growing population.

Medway is committed to adopting the new Local Plan by Autumn 2025.

Through this Plan, Medway intends to plan for 28,000 new homes. To achieve this, Medway's stated preferred spatial growth option is 'SGO3 – a blended strategy' – to promote a 'brownfield first' approach supporting urban regeneration, but complemented by greenfield sites in suburban and rural locations to provide for wider housing choice.

The draft Spatial Development Strategy states:

"Outside of the urban regeneration areas, the Council will support the expansion of identified suburban neighbourhoods and villages, where the principles of sustainable development can be met, and where unacceptable impacts on infrastructure and the environment can be avoided. Large scale growth in these

areas will require strategic masterplans to manage and phase the delivery of housing, employment, transport and wider infrastructure, and environmental measures. On such greenfield sites, the Council will require a high standard of design quality and environmental sustainability to contribute to net zero carbon aims, reducing the need to travel and achieving a modal shift from car-based travel. Development will respond positively to the environmental context and realise opportunities to boost biodiversity and resilience."

The draft Plan builds on the responses to the consultation 'Setting the Direction for Medway 2040' held by Medway in Autumn 2023, in defining the vision and strategic objectives for the new Local Plan. The 2041 Vision for Medway includes the following, relevant to this Site:

1. Conserve and enhance Medway's intrinsic cultural and natural heritage and landscapes alongside high quality development to strengthen the area's distinctive character
2. Achieve sustainable growth with development that has responded positively to tackling climate change, providing for healthier and more sustainable choices of homes, transport and workplace
3. Provide homes to meet the needs of all sectors and ages
4. A broad portfolio of employment sites, including Kingsnorth on the Hoo Peninsula as thriving economic hubs

SGO 3 is the basis for the preferred indicative site allocations shown on the Policies Map, this includes CCfE's land at land west of ropers lane (HHH22) and Kingsnorth (HHH35), and wider as shown on the draft proposals map extract below.

The preferred indicative site allocations in Medway's Regulation 18 Local Plan therefore indicate there is potential for development on the Hoo Peninsula as part of the wider growth strategy for Medway.

Medway's alternative option SGO2 would allocate less land through regeneration, excluding sites such as Chatham Docks and some town centre/waterfront opportunity sites not actively being promoted by landowners. This option involves a much higher release of land on greenfield and Green Belt sites, including the Hoo Peninsula.



App 1 Policies Map North East, Medway Council Local Plan 2041 (Regulation 18), July 2024

## 3.2 Medway Council - Planning Growth For The Hoo Peninsula

### Hoo Rural Town

Proposals for housing and economic development on the Hoo Peninsula have been included as options at different stages of consultation on the emerging local plan for many years. This included the publication of the 'Hoo Development Framework in November 2022, for consultation. The draft Framework set out the Council's ambitions for sustainable development of a new rural town at Hoo, which included CCfE's land to the east and west of Ropers Lane, and at Kingsnorth. The draft document showed a draft masterplan and provided development principles which CCfE has had regard to

in preparing this Vision Document and the concept masterplan, these include:

- Principle 1: a landscape led development
- Principle 2: access and movement with connectivity to the wider area
- Principle 3: a vibrant and sustainable neighbourhood
- Principle 4: an attractive and tailored built form





# 4.0 Site & Surrounding Area

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## 4.1 Site Location

The site is located to the east of Hoo St Werburgh in Kent, Southeast England and is at the heart of the Hoo Peninsula. It is 2km north of the River Medway and can be accessed via the A228 Peninsula Way which connects Hoo to Wallend, 8km to the east and Strood, 6km to the southwest. It is also positioned to the southwest of a railway line which connects Wallend and Gravesend to London, 40km to the west.

| Parcel Areas     |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| Parcel A (HHH22) | 72.6 Hectares  |
| Parcel B (HHH31) | 31.1 Hectares  |
| Parcel C (HHH35) | 69.3 Hectares  |
| Parcel D (HHH35) | 57.3 Hectares  |
| Total            | 230.3 Hectares |



# 4.2 Site Area and Use

The site currently comprises four parcels of arable farmland separated from each other by a network of existing roads and roundabouts that connect each site area to the centre of Hoo St Werburgh and the wider area.

The western parcel wraps around Angel Farm, which is used as a base by the local chapter of the Hell's Angels. Angel Farm is to be retained and considered as part of the emerging scheme.

Further south of the site lies the River Medway, Damhead Creek, and Kingsnorth Power Stations.

St Werburgh Primary School and The Hoo Academy are located to the west of the village centre between Hoo St Werburgh and Chattenden.



View 1 - Looking SW from Ropers Lane



View 2 - Looking E from Ropers Lane



View 3 - Looking N from Jacobs Lane



View 4 - Looking W from Kingsnorth Industrial Area



# 4.3 Site Boundaries

The site is bounded to the southwest by Hoo St Werburgh. A Public Right of Way runs along this edge beyond which are the back gardens of houses with some breaks for public open space. There are areas of planting along this boundary which vary in density.

The northwest is bounded by the A228 Peninsula Way and Ratcliffe Highway, which acts as a definitive edge to the site and a physical barrier between the north and south, limiting pedestrian movement beyond this boundary.

Varied levels of planting are found along an existing railway line that lies to the northeast. At the northernmost corner of the site, the land rises gently giving a sense of enclosure.

The Kingsnorth Industrial Estate sits along the edge of the southeast boundary, providing the opportunity to link any proposed employment use in with this existing area.

The individual land parcels are bounded by Roper's Lane and Stoke Road which are demarcated with ditches lending the area an open character affording views across and beyond the site.



View 1 - NW Boundary



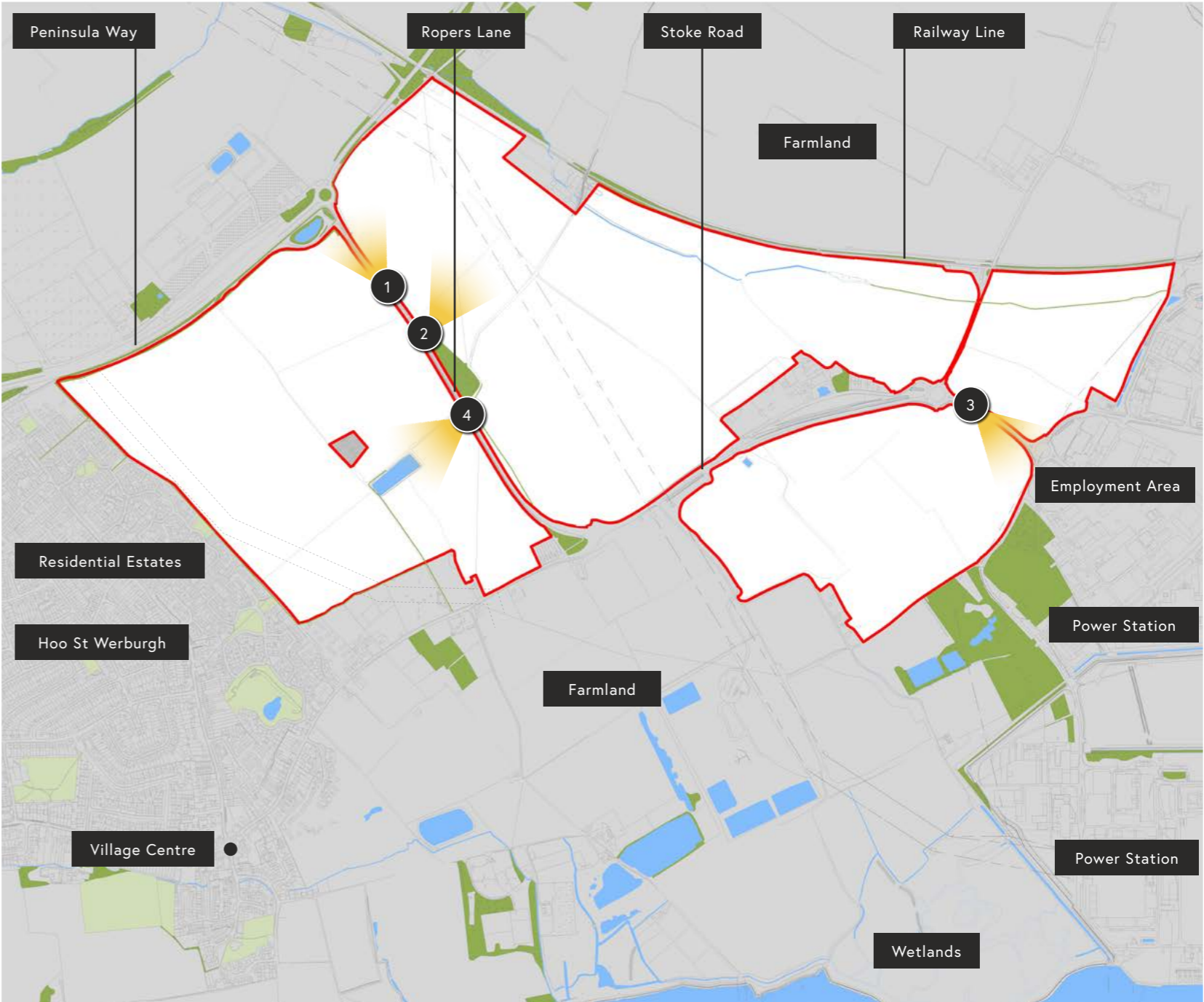
View 2 - NE Boundary



View 3 - SE Boundary



View 4 - SW Boundary



Site Boundaries | 1:15000

# 4.4 Existing Green Infrastructure

A landscape led approach will be taken in the development of the masterplan. Key green corridors are highlighted within this document; following the existing railway line and linking the north of Peninsula Way with the wetlands to the south are adjacent to or, within our proposed site boundary offering opportunities to enhance the existing planted features.

There is mature planting along the edge of the existing railway line near to where it crosses the Ratcliffe Highway (View 1), this continues down the railway line to varying degrees but increases to the south adjacent to the railway line and within the site boundary (Views 3 and 4) with the potential to strengthen this green corridor with additional landscaping designed into the proposed scheme.

There are elements of planting along the boundary with Peninsula Way with some tall poplar trees located between the site boundary and the edge of Hoo St Werburgh (View 2) and low level planting around the pond and to the edges of the roundabout between Peninsula Way and Ropers Lane (View 5).

There are varying degrees of planting along the edge of the proposed site and Hoo St Werburgh, extending through to the recreation ground and smaller areas of open space within the recently developed residential areas.

There is heavy planting to the southwest edge of Ropers Lane adjacent to the site boundary at the junction with Stoke Road. (View 7)

There are additional smaller pockets of mature trees and hedges around and within the site boundaries. A full topographic and arboricultural survey will be commissioned to establish in detail the quality of the existing planting across the site.



View 1 - Extensive planting by railway



View 2 - Planting between site and development



View 3 - Planting line within site



View 4 - Planting within site near railway



View 5 - Planting between site and development



Existing Planted Features | 1:15000

## 4.5 Noise and Odour Sources

Trains running on the existing railway to the northeast of the site, connecting London to the Isle of Grain are an existing noise source which, may need to be mitigated for on the closest land parcels.

Damhead Creek Power Station, Kingsnorth Power Station, and Kingsnorth Industrial area generate noise to the southeast of the site.

Noise surveys will be undertaken to assess the impact of the existing noise sources and any potential increase in noise generated by the development.

At present 25m offset zones to exclude residential development are set out from the railway and Peninsula Way in line with best practise adopted on other, similar developments.

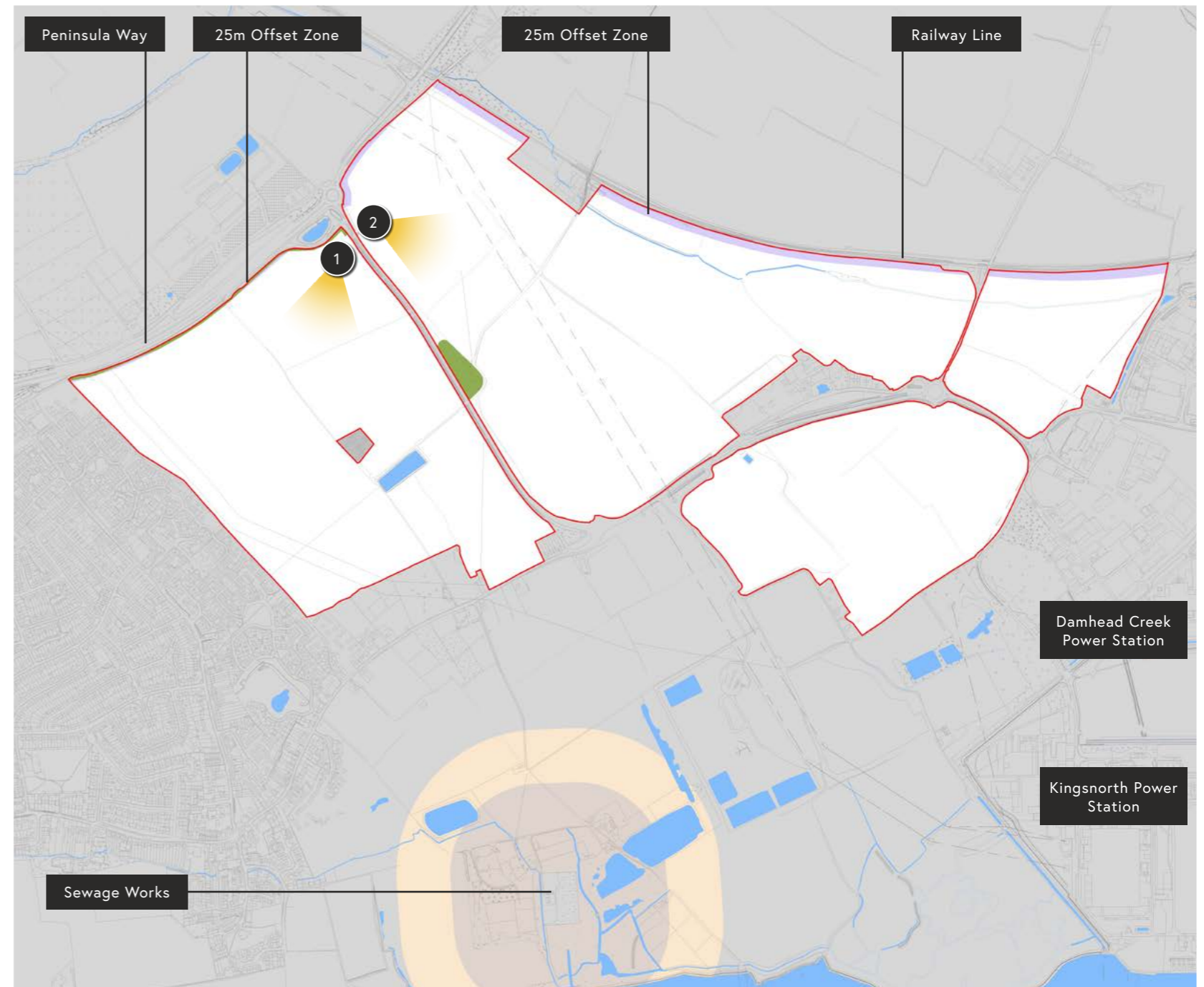
Whilst there is a sewage works located to the south of the site, it is noted that the site is positioned outside the extents of standard odour offset zones of 150m and 400m.



View 1 - Towards Kingsnorth Industrial Estate



View 2 - Towards Power Stations



Noise and Odour Sources | 1:15000

# 4.6 Vehicular Site Access

Main vehicular routes and junctions run between the boundaries of each land parcel.

There are further access points into the individual site areas themselves, particularly from Ropers Lane, which has the potential to provide a connection between residential, employment and education uses via sustainable modes of transport.

The existing access to Angel Farm will be considered within the proposals.

Existing bus routes run along Peninsula Way and along Stoke Road. Currently, bus stops adjacent the site are limited. However, the site will connect and support the wider sustainable transport strategy, proposed for the wider Hoo Rural Town.



View 1 - Access point from Peninsula Way



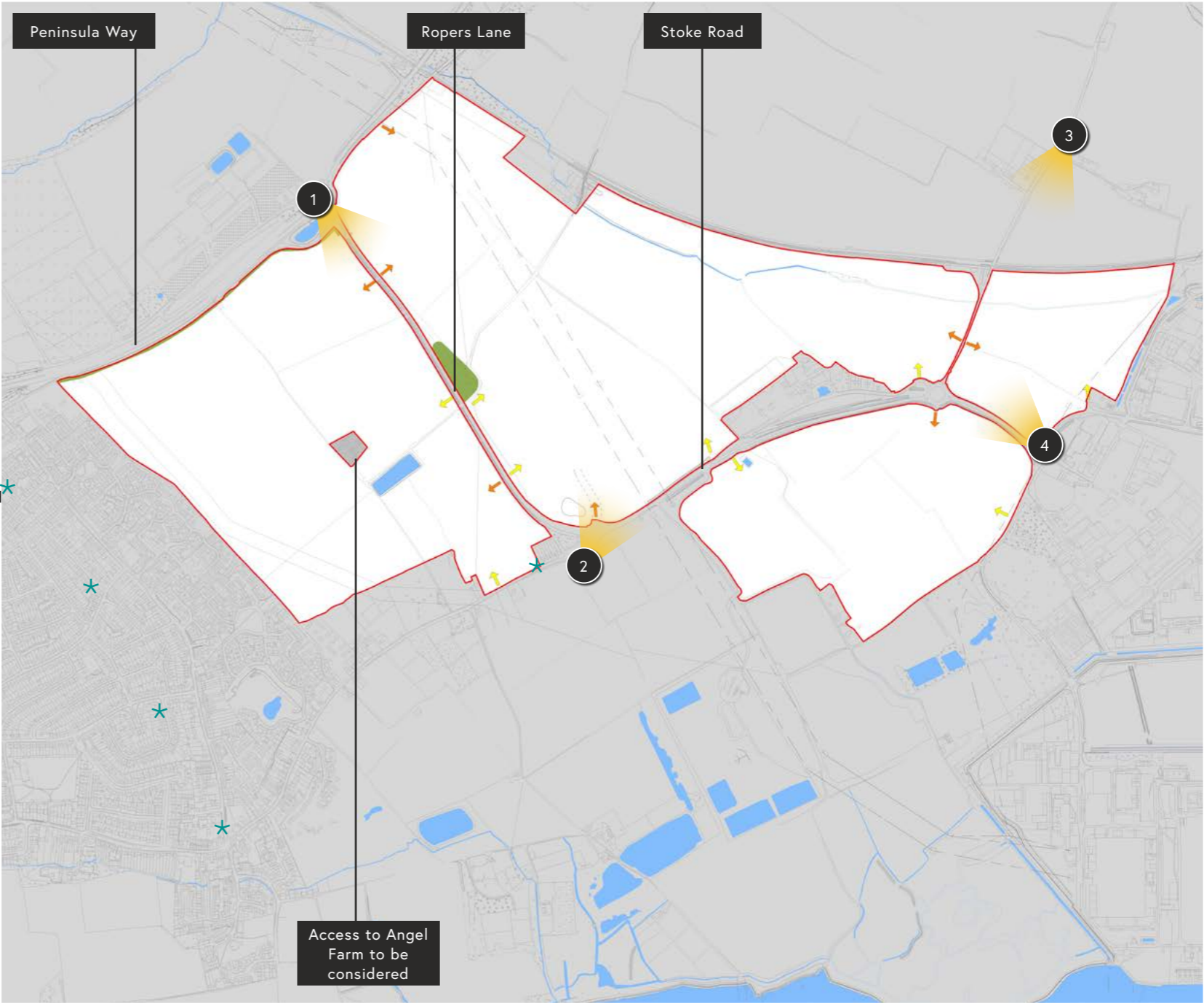
View 2 - Access point from Ropers Way/Stoke Road



View 3 - Stoke Road Access across railway line



View 4 - Access from Eschol Road



Vehicular Site Access | 1:15000

# 4.7 Existing Pedestrian and Cycle Links

There is an existing network of footpaths and cycle routes across each of the land parcels which connect with adjacent sites and the wider area.

There is an existing pedestrian access point from the residential area of Hoo St Werburgh (View 1) which connects through to an unmarked path on the west of the site which, in turn, connects to Peninsula Way.

Currently, there are three pedestrian routes from the site onto Peninsula Way. However, pedestrian connectivity beyond this point is limited due to the volume of traffic.

The relatively dense footpath network which, leads to the coast and into the wider countryside has the potential, with some enhancement to be used as a positive recreational amenity for any new community.



View 1 - Access from existing residential area



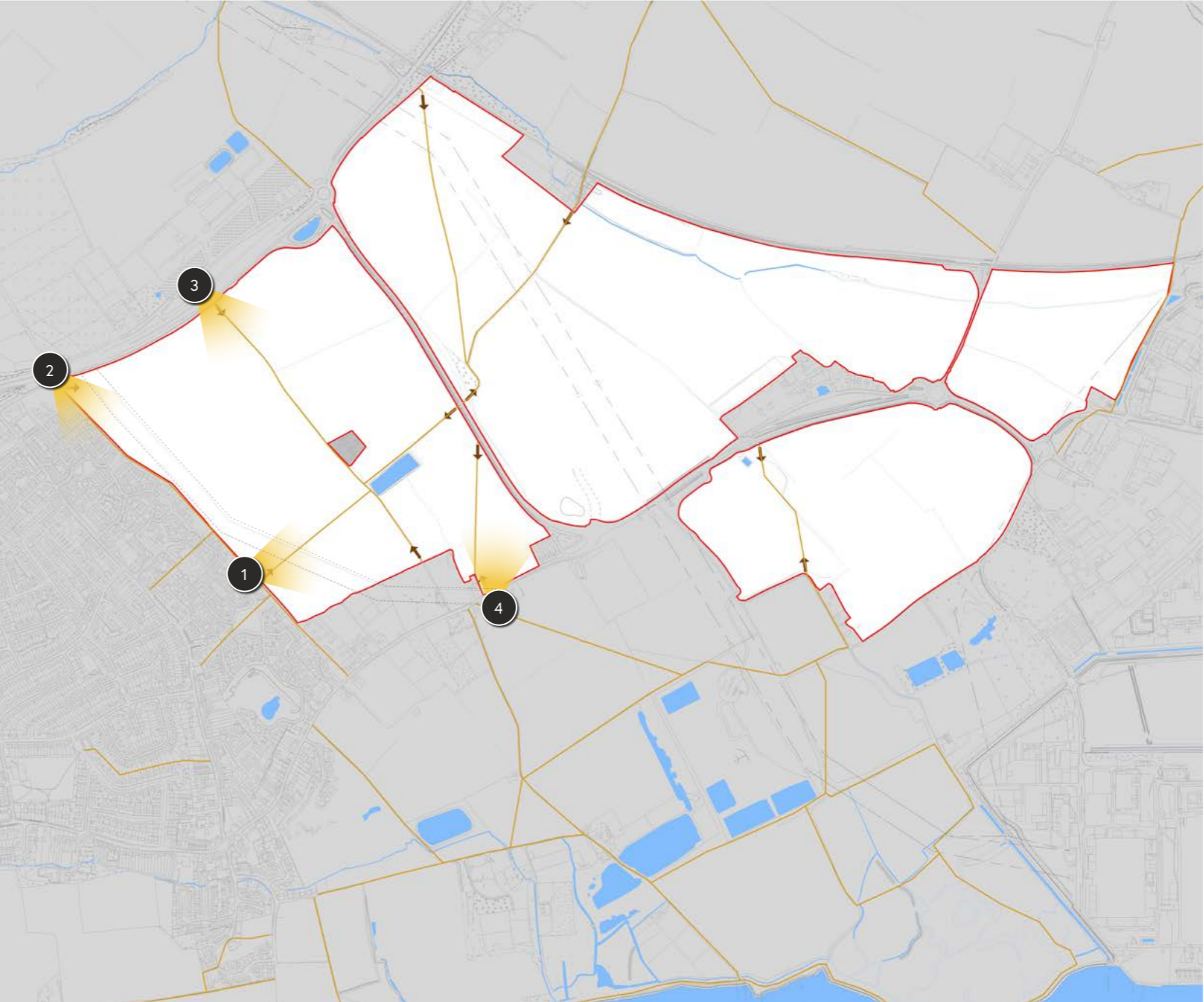
View 2 - Access from Peninsula Way



View 3 - Access from Peninsula Way



View 4 - Access from Stoke Road



Pedestrian and Cycle Links | 1:15000

# 4.8 Heritage Assets & Features

There are a number of heritage assets and buildings in and around the site which contribute to the character of the location and should be considered as part of any redevelopment. The masterplan will be developed giving due consideration to the National Planning Policy Framework – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Directly adjacent to the site edges are existing dwellings, the setting of which will be considered. The character of these buildings can be reflected within the new development to create a site specific response to housing need. Of particular relevance is the Grade II Listed Lances Farm House which, is located adjacent to the southwest boundary.

Other buildings adjacent to the site, such as those on Stoke Road, Ropers Green Lane and Angel Farm currently enjoy open aspects which, can be responded to sensitively.

There are a number of Grade I and II Listed Buildings within the centre of Hoo St Werburgh clustered around the St Werburgh Church, however, distant views of the church spire from the site offer the only visual connection to this area from the site.

Four Grade II Listed World War II pillboxes are located within trees to the rear gardens of properties adjacent to the southwest boundary. These comprise two polygonal Type 24 infantry pillboxes and two Type 28 rectangular gun emplacements which run parallel with the World War II tank stop which, runs from the northwest to southeast within the west parcel of land. A further four assets are located to the south of the site within land to the north of Stoke Road. These comprise two Type 24, one Type 28 pillboxes and a pair of concrete road block plinths.

Key

- 1. Grade II Listed Lances Farm House
- 2. Houses on Jacobs Lane
- 3. Houses and pumpkin farm to the west of Stoke Road
- 4. Houses and garage on Ropers Green



1. Lances Farm House



2. View down Jacobs Lane

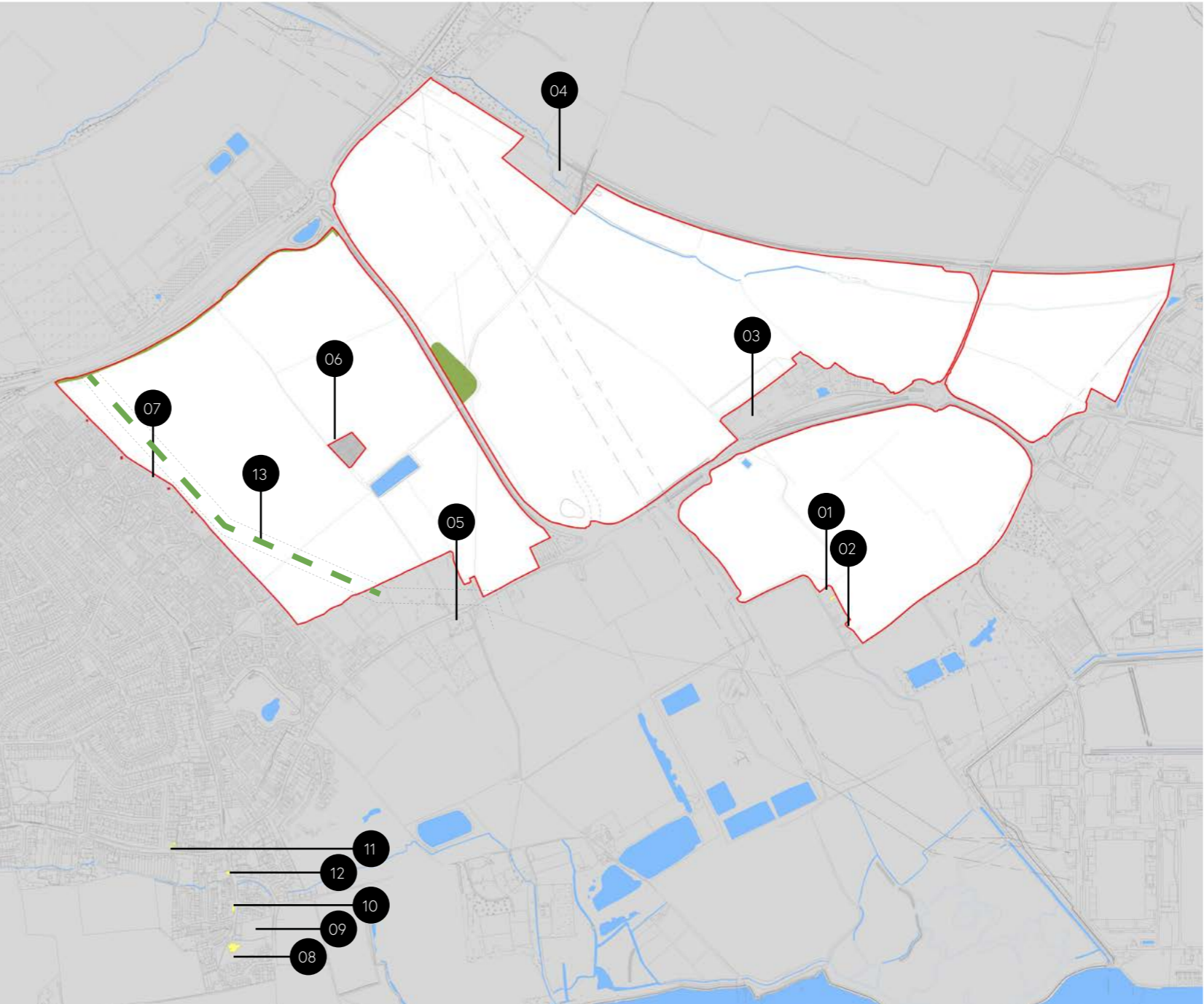


3. Houses to the west of Stoke Road



4. Ropers Green Houses and garage.

- 5. Houses to the east of Stoke Road
- 6. Angel Farm
- 7. Four Grade II Listed WWII pillboxes



Sensitive Existing Features | 1:15000

- 8. Grade II Listed Church of St Werburgh
- 9. Grade II Listed war memorial
- 10. Grade II Listed the Chequers Public House
- 11. Grade I Listed Meadow House
- 12. Grade II Listed Ivy House
- 13. Tank Stop Line & Green Corridor

# 4.9 Views of The Site

Views across the site are generally open in all directions with ridge lines to the north and northeast curtailing views beyond in these directions.

The railway line to the northeast and associated planting offers a level of enclosure to the site along this edge.

There are extensive views across the open fields to the south, with distant views of the River Medway together with the nearby power stations and industrial estate.

There are distant views towards Hoo St Werburgh, with the spire of The Church of Hoo St Werburgh visible.



1. South to the River Medway



2. West to St Werburgh Church



3. East towards railway



Sensitive Existing Features | 1:15000

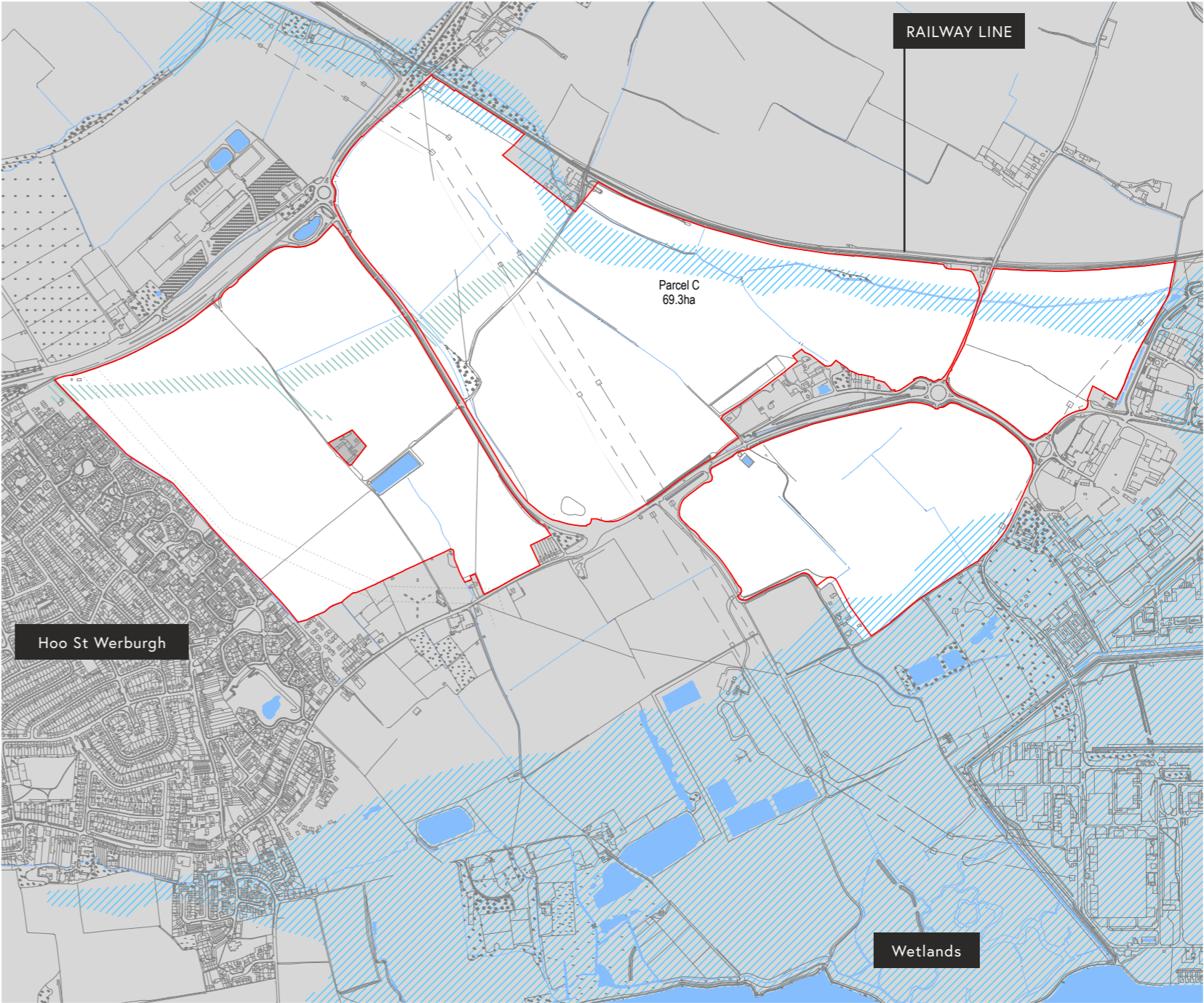
# 4.10 Topography and Flooding

The site slopes from the north and northwest edges down to the south.

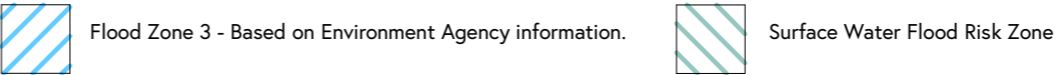
There are a series of water courses and drains across the site which connect back to the existing wetlands and waterways to the south. There is also a rectangular shaped reservoir located within the land parcel to the west of Ropers Lane, south of Angel Farm.

The majority of the site is within Flood Zone 1 and is, therefore, at low risk of flooding. However, the southern edge of the east parcel adjacent to Stoke Road and a strip of land to the northeast edge of the site that broadly follows an open channel and ultimately discharges into the downstream water network are within Flood Zone 3, as described on the Environment Agency Flood Map.

Exact extents of the existing flooding will be subject to a more detailed flood risk assessment and hydraulic modelling.



Flood Map | 1:15000



# 4.11 Utilities

There exists a network of overhead power cables and pylons that run through the centre of the northeast parcel of the site and the edge of the east parcel which, form part of the national grid. An easement is required providing 25m clearance zone measured from the centre of each of these overhead cables.

There is a mast to the southern edge of the site and a series of telegraph poles running through the site towards Angel Farm and along the edge of Stoke Road.

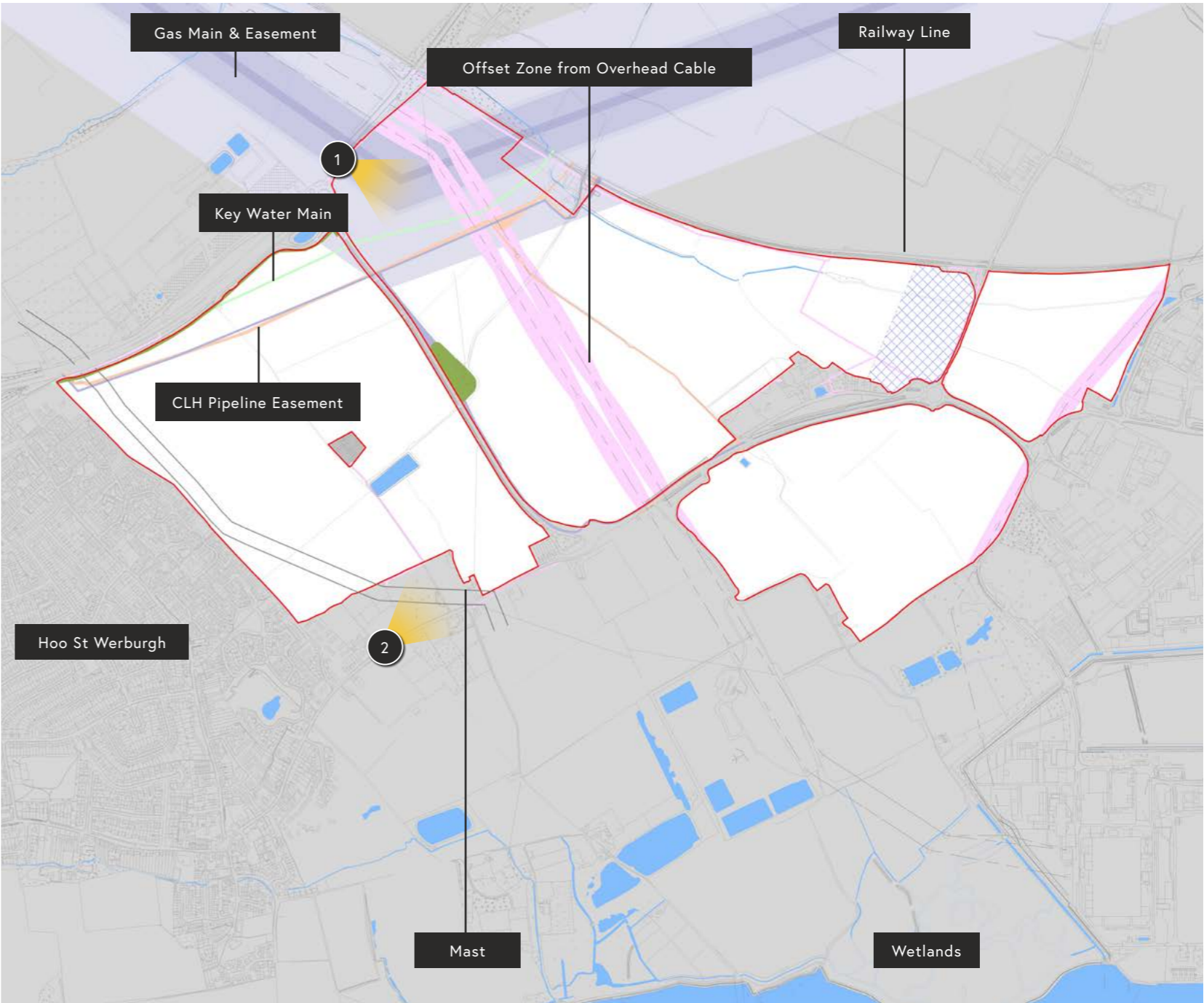
Additional surveys are required for above and below ground utilities - the recent Damhead Creek Power Station is gas fired and there may be pipelines associated with it in the vicinity.



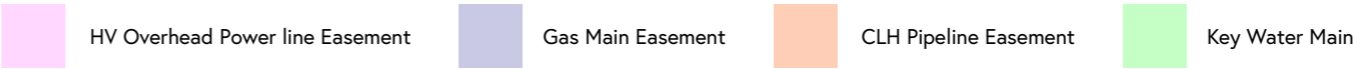
1. Mast and overhead cables along Stoke Rd



2. Overhead power lines from Peninsula Way



Utilities | 1:15000



# 4.12 Opportunities and Constraints

## Site Opportunities

- 1

Ropers Lane provides a direct link from proposed residential parcels through to the employment area, as well as education and retail uses and, therefore, makes for a logical location for a transport hub to provide increased sustainable transport options. That hub can then be surrounded by compatible uses both east and west of Ropers Lane.
- 2

The site is relatively flat which, will reduce restrictions on development.
- 3

Existing planting on northwest edge can provide a buffer to the A228.
- 4

Opportunity for residents in southern areas of the site to benefit from attractive views towards the River Medway.
- 5

Low areas of the site can incorporate SuDS attenuation basins which can be designed to enhance the landscape setting.
- 6

Existing water features, ponds, etc, can be incorporated into the layout and contribute to the landscape setting.
- 7

Historic buildings and landmarks offer the opportunity to create distinct neighbourhoods and a site-specific response.
- 8

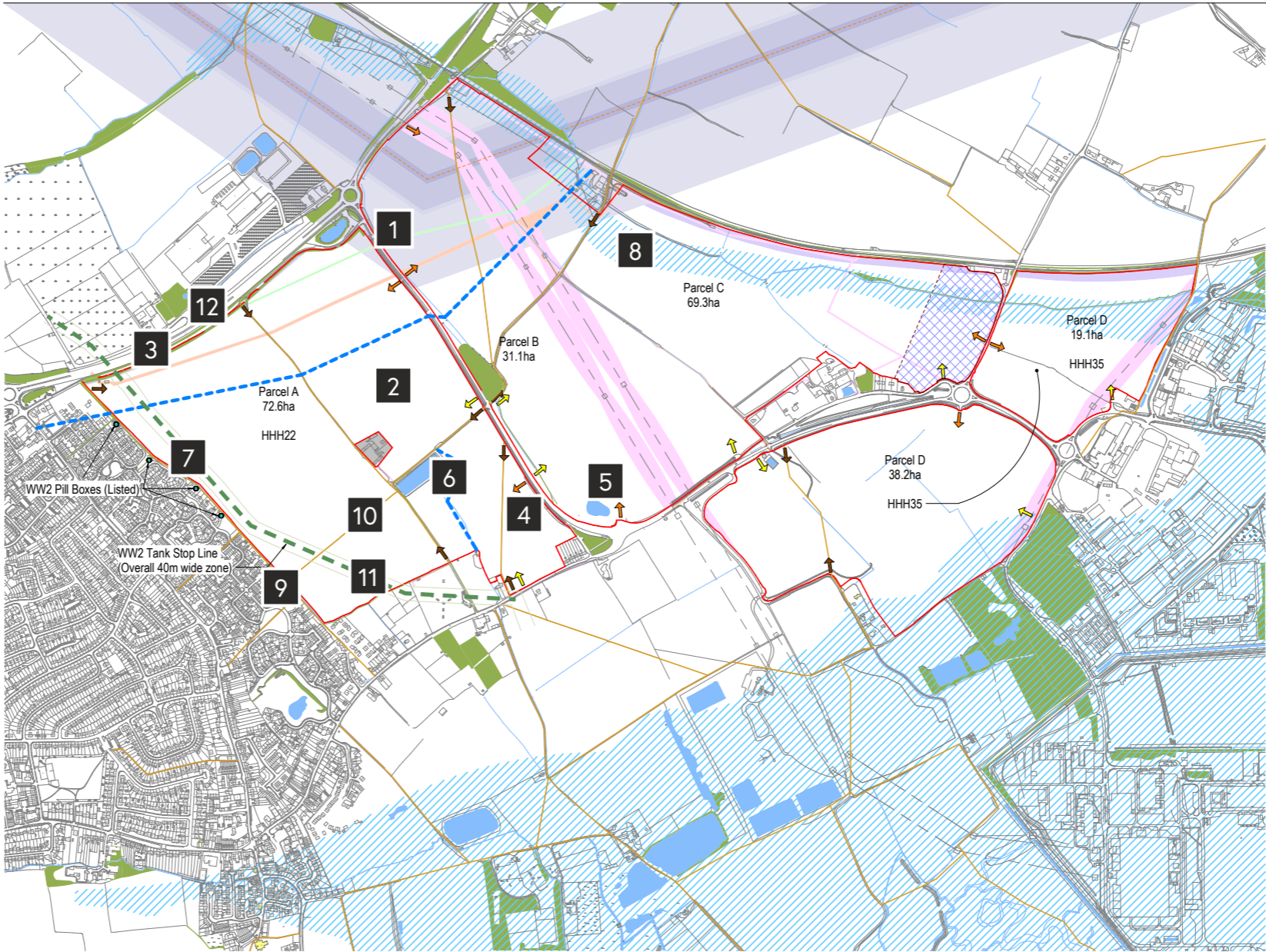
Opportunity to incorporate sustainability initiatives within new development.
- 9

Good pedestrian links to local shops, sustainable transport & mobility hubs.
- 10

Existing Public Rights of Way can be retained and form green corridors and attractive routes connecting the communities and different uses via sustainable modes of transport.
- 11

WWII Tank Stop. The line of this historic feature is to be retained and free of development. This corridor can be attractively landscaped and integrated into the masterplan.
- 12

The creation of an attractive landscaped buffer will also have the effect of mitigating noise from traffic from the A228.

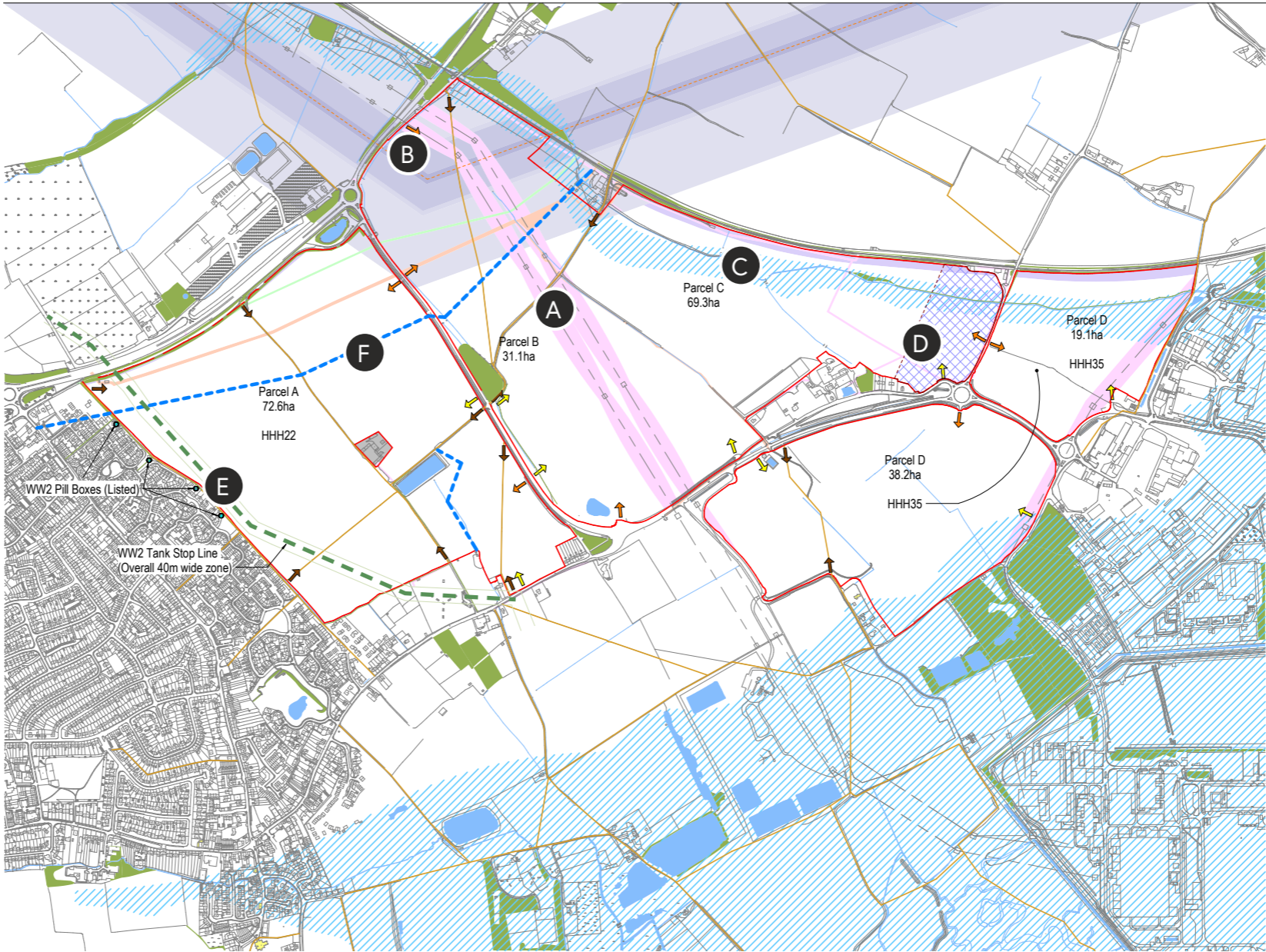


- OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS KEY
- Noise offset zone - 25m from A class carriageway and railway line - TBC
  - Gas pipeline easement
  - Gas transmission pipeline - HSE inner, middle & outer zones
  - HV Overhead power line easement
  - Water pipeline easement
  - CLH pipeline easement
  - HSE Explosive zone (related to historic uses)
  - Flood Zone - taken from EA maps
  - Body of water
  - Areas of POS
  - Tree planting
  - Listed building / structure
  - Potential major access point for review by Pell Frischman
  - Potential secondary access point for review by Pell Frischman
  - Pedestrian access point
  - Public right of way
  - WWII Tank stop line
  - WWII Pill boxes

# 4.12 Opportunities and Constraints

## Site Constraints

- A** The overhead power cables require an easement of 25m to both sides measured from the centre of each cable. The impact of the easement can be mitigated by the creation of a green corridor and planted screening.
- B** The masterplan has been designed to take account of the provisions of any relevant easements.
- C** Flood Zone 3. Most of the site is located within Flood Zone 1 which is at a low risk of flooding. Therefore, the impact of flood risk can be mitigated within the masterplan layout by the provision of green space within areas of higher risk.
- D** HSE explosives zone related to historic use.
- E** WWII Pillboxes. Four Listed pillboxes are located just outside the southwest boundary which, together with the tank stop, formed part of the WWII invasion defences.
- F** Area currently affected by surface water run-off. Able to be mitigated within a future scheme



- OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS KEY
- Noise offset zone - 25m from A class carriageway and railway line - TBC
  - Gas pipeline easement
  - Gas transmission pipeline - HSE inner, middle & outer zones
  - HV Overhead power line easement
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  - Pedestrian access point
  - Public right of way
  - WWII Tank stop line
  - WWII Pill boxes
  - Surface water flood risk