

1367 Halsnead Farm

Design and Access Statement

Knowsley
November 2025



Introduction

01

Purpose

Introduction:

This document has been prepared by DK-Architects on behalf of Starship to support a full planning submission relating to the proposed development of Halsnead Farm, Fox's Bank Lane, Knowsley.

This application builds upon the information contained within the pre-application for the site - reference 25/00026/PREAPP and an iterative design process carried out with support and reviews from Knowsley Planning Department.

Document Scope:

This design report provides an explanation of the design parameters, concepts and principles that have been applied to the development proposal, detailing how they accord with the parameters set out in the Halsnead Garden Village SPD.

The Halsnead Farm site is the only residential allocation to the south of the M62 within the Halsnead Garden Village masterplan. It acts as the strategic link between the northern housing portions and the significant employment land at Tritax to the south and the anticipated Colliery Country Park which will provide residents of the Garden Village with direct and sustainable access to high-quality public open space. The role of the site in completing the aspirations and connections of the wider SPD is addressed through this document and holistically integrated into the design of the site layout.

The document also highlights the physical constraints of the site and provides explanation of how these constraints have been responded to the benefit of the overall proposal.

Proposal Site

Site Location:

The site is located on the land which is currently home to Halsnead Farm accessed from Fox's Bank Lane.

The site is located south of the M62, 0.8 miles to the east of Junction 6 - Tarbock Island. To the North of the M62 is the main area of residential development, also part of Halsnead Garden Village - currently under construction by Taylor Wimpey. To the east of the site is a undeveloped open farm land. To the south of the site, outside of the site boundary, is a private road providing access to 4 no. existing residential dwellings, including Old Halsnead - a Grade II Listed Building. Beyond this is the Tritax Symmetry Park - a designated employment site as part of the masterplan. To the east of Symmetry Park is the anticipated Cronton Colliery Country Park. Further south is Cronton Road which provide bus links to Liverpool and Warrington. To the west of the site lies open undeveloped land and potential links to a footbridge over the M62 which connects into the western edge of Halsnead Garden Village.

Whiston Train Station is located 1.4 miles to the north of the site, with access to local amenities, schools and community facilities and further public transport connections.

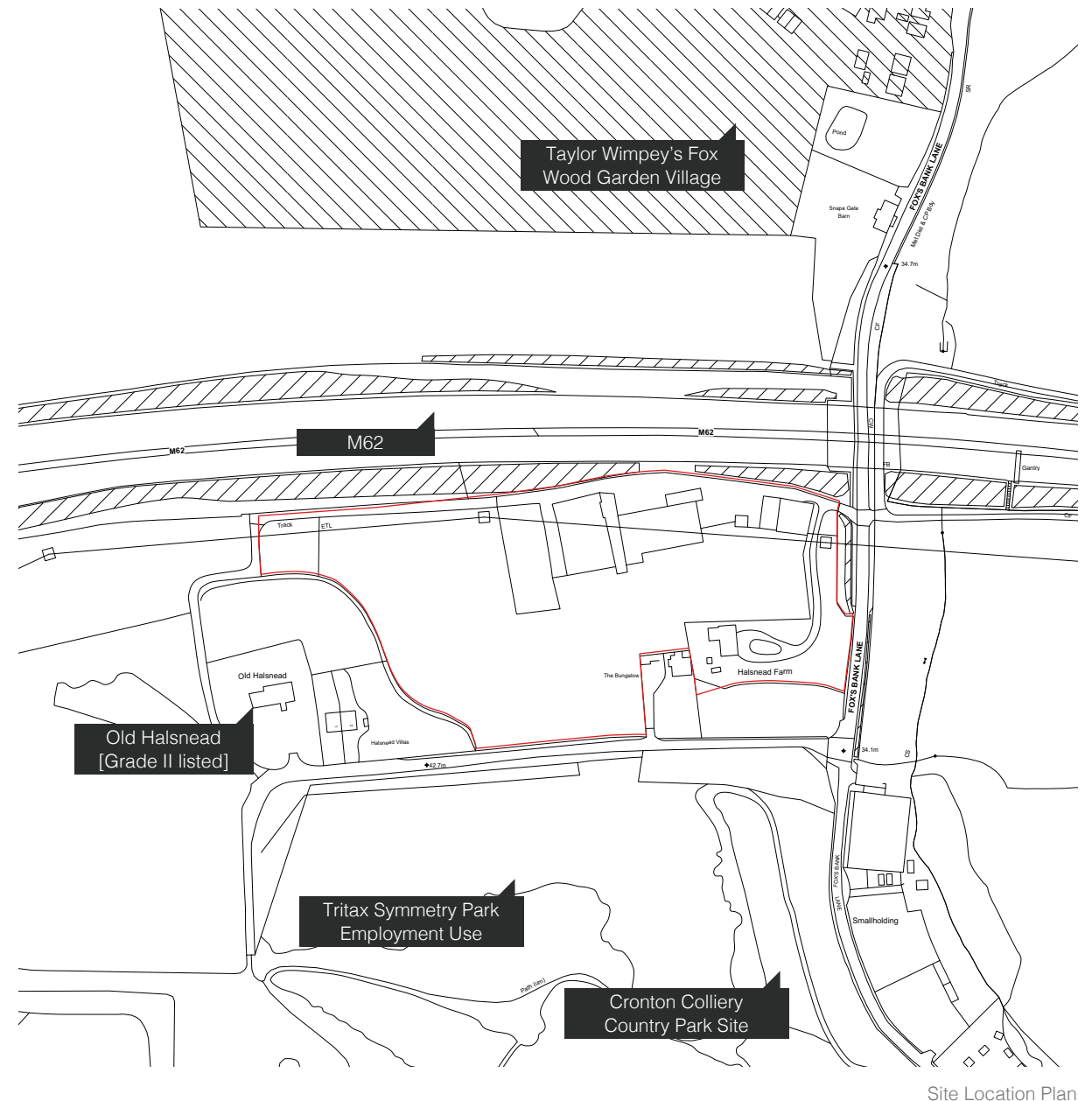
Site Description:

The site is circa 3.42 hectares and comprises of existing redundant agricultural building to the north-eastern boundary, a residential building to the south-eastern boundary both accessed off of Fox's Bank Lane.

The site has a complex topography, with a steady incline from Fox's Bank Lane to the western edge of the site.

The Site includes a high-voltage powerline running in a east-west direction at the north of the site.

The site is also bound by areas of woodland clusters of high value which are to be safeguarded within the design.



Site Location Plan

Project Team

Onward Homes Ltd and Starship Group Ltd are joint applicants and have assembled a broad team of consultants to support the scheme development and subsequent detailed planning application, all with experience of large scale housing and regeneration projects in order to deliver the landscape sensitive Halsnead Farm masterplan.



Starship Group - Developer & Main Contractor



Creating positive spaces

Onward Homes - Social Housing Provider



Eden Planning - Planning Consultant



RIBA #

DK Architects - Project Architect



Layer Studio - Landscape Architect



Amenity Tree - Ecology Consultant



Curtins - Engineering Consultant

Design Guidance

The proposals for the scheme are in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which sets out that planning permission should be determined in accordance with the adopted Development Plan and advocates the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Local Planning Policy

In addition, the development will take account of the following local planning guidance

- Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy (January 2016).

Policy SUE2 of the above has underpinned the design intent of the proposals, stating that *“development within the Sustainable Urban Extension(s) must [...] be of a high design quality which enhances local distinctiveness and identity”*.

Supplementary Planning Documents

Knowsley Council has adopted the following Supplementary Planning Documents [SPDs] which are particularly relevant to the consideration of the current application pursuant to policies within the current development plan:

- New Residential Development SPD (2016) - Updated in September 2018.
- Knowsley Halsnead Garden Village Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (June 2017).
- Halsnead Design Guide

Ensuring High-Quality Design

To accord with Knowsley Council's LPCS Policy SUE2, development proposals will be expected to implement current design guidance and principles from publications and documents from Homes England and Heritage England.

Building for a Health Life (BfHL)

The proposed development will be assessed against the 12 considerations of BfHL, which are organised across three themes, namely:

- Integrated neighbourhoods
- Distinctive places
- Streets for all

These describe the qualities of successful places and how these can be best applied to the individual characteristics of a site and its wider context to ensure that the development can act as a catalyst to improve peoples lives within the local vicinity.

National Design Guide

In addition, the proposed development will address the 10 characteristics of well-designed places as set out in the National Design Guide, which work together to:

- Create the physical character of a place
- Nurture & sustain a sense of community
- Positively address environmental issues affecting climate

The Design Guide emphasises the importance of responding positively to context, creating locally distinctive character, building strong communities, responding to future issues such as climate change and ensuring places sustain their quality:

- Context
- Identity
- Built Form
- Movement
- Nature
- Public spaces
- Uses
- Homes and buildings
- Resources
- Lifespan



National Design Guide

Planning practice guidance for beautiful, enduring and successful places



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government



Halsnead Garden Village Masterplan SPD

Halsnead will become an attractive place of choice offering a **very high quality residential environment** and strategic employment space in a distinctive setting, with immediate access to a range of established community facilities in both the immediate and wider area. Development will capitalise on close proximity to the strategic highway network, Whiston Rail Station and Liverpool John Lennon Airport.

Development will be structured by an overarching framework that guides comprehensive development and aims to rediscover and celebrate the former Halsnead Park estate. Development will create a place of **connected**, publicly accessible landscape and **open space** assets, and be integrated with the existing communities of Whiston. This will provide a high quality of life for a **sustainable** community that **integrates new and existing** residents.

Halsnead's signature will be the extent and quality of **green infrastructure**. This will create a unique backdrop and structure for development, including integration of a new Country Park proposed to south of the M62. Attractive **treelined streets, grass verges, accessible woodlands, water features, play areas, allotments, retained and enhanced planting, green lanes and drainage attenuation** areas will all enhance the experiential quality and sense of place.

Vision Statement

A specific opportunity is to connect **existing woodlands** through clear green links as part of a **coherent landscape structure** that enhances biodiversity and residential amenity. This will include opening up wonderful views across the Mersey Valley and the high quality rural fringes to the east and south.

At the heart of Halsnead, a new primary school that functions for all the community at different times of the day and week will provide a community hub. This will help to provide a key, positive interface with the existing Whiston communities.

The former Halsnead Park estate is of historic interest and has left its mark on the character and atmosphere of the site. Retention and reference to former estate features in the layout and design of new development will help to embed a **distinctive sense of place**.

Strategic employment development to the south of the M62 will support and sustain economic objectives for the wider Liverpool City Region. Proximity to key economic drivers such as Liverpool Superport, Jaguar Land Rover and Knowsley Business Park will ensure that Halsnead is accessible to a wealth of new job opportunities for the wider **community**.

Site Assessment 02



Halsnead Garden Village Masterplan SPD

The area in which the site is located was announced as one of 14 proposed new Garden Villages in 2017. Knowsley provided a comprehensive Halsnead Garden Village Masterplan SPD to guide the development of this aspirational neighbourhood and identify a series of key opportunities to be maximised through the design response.

This strategic site is located within the 'Land

South of the M62' parcel and will serve to knit together the northern portion of the masterplan with the country park to the south - a truly important site for the aspirational connections for the masterplan as a whole. As part of the work carried out on the Halsnead Farm site, we have sought to maximise Knowsley's SPD opportunities and also use the site specific constraints and opportunities to create a high-quality, bespoke housing opportunity that with place-making at its heart.



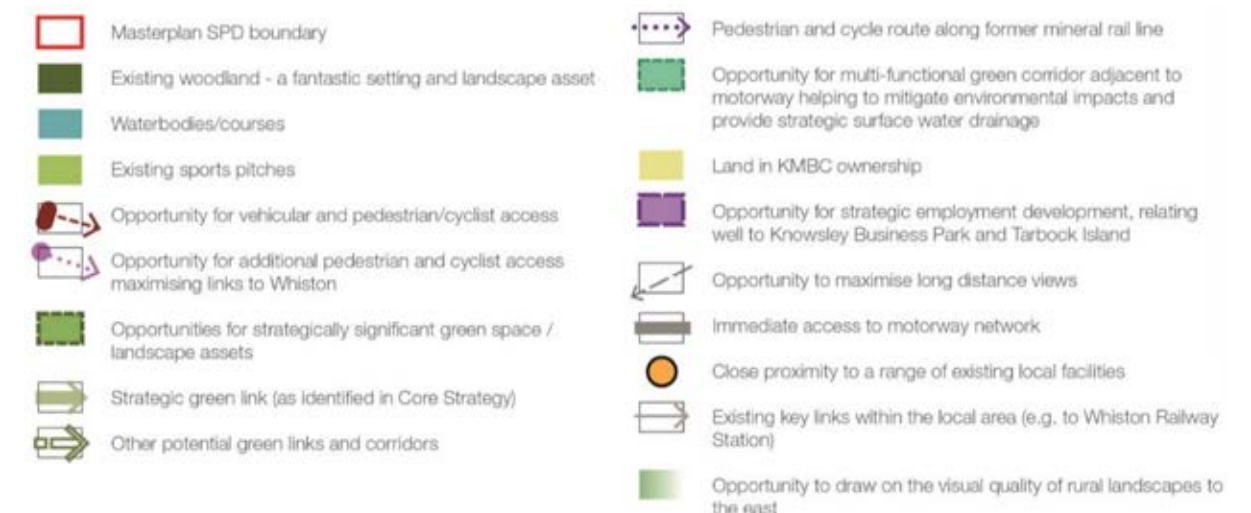
"This will be an exemplary mixed use development that is planned, designed and executed with place-making principles at its heart. It will be the foundation to a distinct yet integrated and sustainable community."

Masterplan Key Opportunities

- Retain and respond to existing woodland
- Opportunity for vehicular and pedestrian/cyclist access
- Opportunity for additional pedestrian and cyclist access to Whiston
- Opportunities for strategically significant green space / landscape assets
- Strategic green links and corridors
- Opportunity for multi-functional green corridor adjacent to motorway helping to mitigate environmental impacts and provide strategic surface water drainage
- Opportunity for strategic employment development, relating well to Knowsley Business Park and Tarbock Island
- Opportunity to draw on the visual quality of rural landscapes to the east

Halsnead Farm Site Opportunities

- Woodland clusters to the south-eastern corner of the site in addition to the western edge adjacent to Old Halsnead
- Access to the site from Fox's Bank Lane subject to visibility splays and existing access route to the Southern edge of the site to be considered.
- Ensure all potential connections are provided within the site layout
- Maximise connections to green spaces and incorporate green space within the layout
- Link site connections into wider green links
- Maximise opportunity for southern edge of M62 through the integration and continuation of the proposed Green Corridor to the North of the motorway
- Provide accessible connections from site and the housing to the north into the strategic employment development site
- Embed the quality and feel of the rural landscape context within the design response



Halsnead SPD - Framework Masterplan



Halsnead SPD - Framework Masterplan

The site, shaded in brown on the attached, is identified as a designated area suitable for residential development.

Contextually this is critical, as the Halsnead Farm site represents the only appropriate residential development south of the M62 and provides opportunities to connect the residential aspects of the masterplan north of the M62 to the strategic employment site and country park to the south.

The Framework Masterplan also highlights an existing on-site pedestrian / vehicular route to be retained running along the southern edge of the site in addition to a pedestrian footpath from the existing entrance to the site running north under the M62.

Halsnead SPD - Access and Movement



Halsnead SPD - Access and Movement

The strategic nature of the site in terms of wider connections is highlighted in this SPD extract. A key connection from the Halsnead Farm development connects along the western edge of Old Halsnead Hall provides access into the 'Tritax' site and onto the Loop Road.

This is noted as:

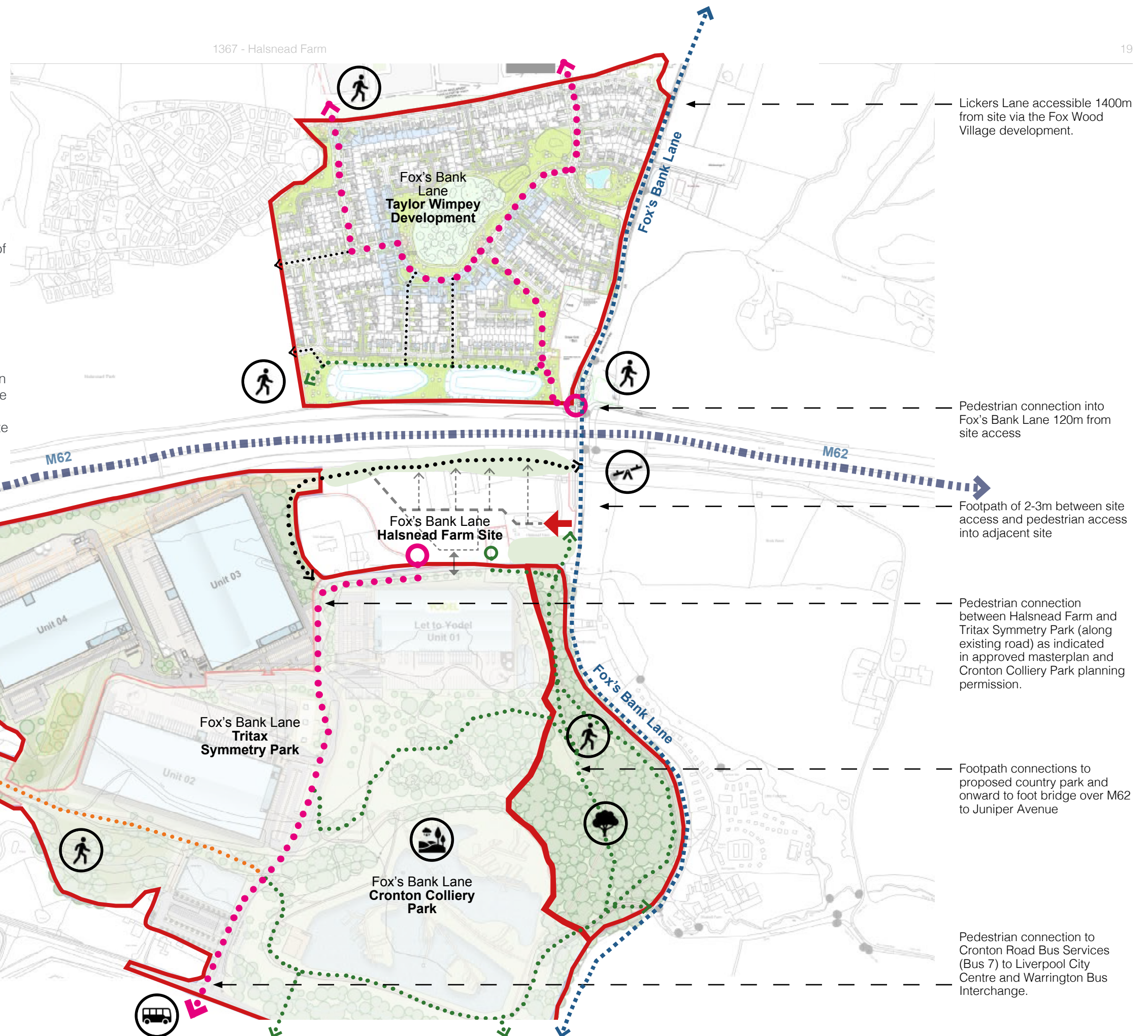
'Potential key internal connections prioritising pedestrian / cyclist movement'

Access from the site into the northern parcel of Halsnead Garden Village is also highlighted directly north of the M62 bridge. This provides pedestrian access into the residential site currently under development by Taylor Wimpey and further north into Whiston.

Wider Context - Wider Pedestrian Connections

A key focus of the SPD in relation to this site lies within its potential to provide strategic connections between the housing to the North of the M62 and the Employment land and country park to the south.

The diagram below highlights this position and draws attention to key moves within the design proposal that will need to be taken to achieve this aim. There are also a number of elements outside of the control of this planning permission that will need to be addressed in order to ensure that wider connections throughout the Garden Village are realised. Details pertaining to the site in relation to the adjacent sites are explored in the Planning Statement.

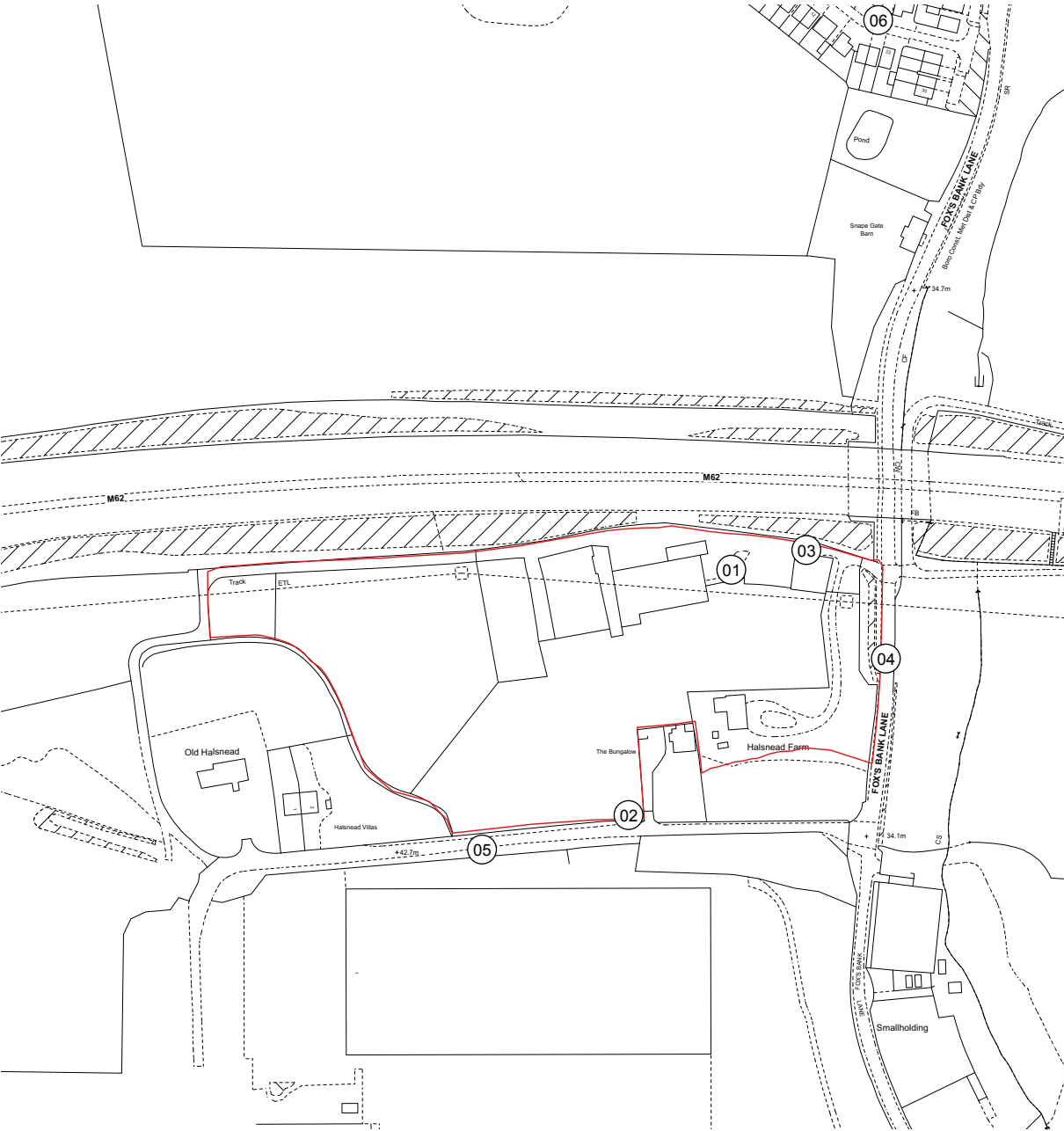


Existing Site Context

A number of site visits, supported by desk top analysis, have been carried out to inform a contextual response to the site. A selection of photos from the site visits have been included highlighting key areas of the site and the surrounding area including:

- 1 - View across the site towards the existing barn.
- 2 - View into the site from the road to the south

- adjacent to the existing retained bungalow.
- 3 - View along the existing track running adjacent to the barn on site.
- 4 - View along Fox's Bank Lane towards the motorway with the existing sandstone wall and plyons.
- 5 - View along the private road to the south of the site.
- 6 - View of the central access area of the Taylor Wimpey site north of the M62.



01.



02.



03.



04.



05.



06.

Site Constraints

The site is constrained in a number of areas which will need to be considered, responded to and opportunities identified as part of the design response to the site:

1 - High-voltage electricity pylons along the northern edge of the site boundary adjacent to the M62. The pylons have a minimum clearance zone and a swing path that limits potential or desirability to include 'private' in curtilage land underneath and prevents buildings and structures of a certain height to sit within this zone.

2 - The M62 runs along the northern edge of the site. This creates a visual and noise constraint on the development of the site. The site levels vary along the length relative to the motorway which will inform a varied response along the site.

3 - A retaining sandstone wall bounds Fox's Bank Lane. This addresses the level difference between the road and the site and is also a local heritage asset.

4 - Existing property bounding the site and impacting the overall geometry of the developable area.

5 - The site has a set of complex levels with an incline from Fox's Bank lane along the length of the site.

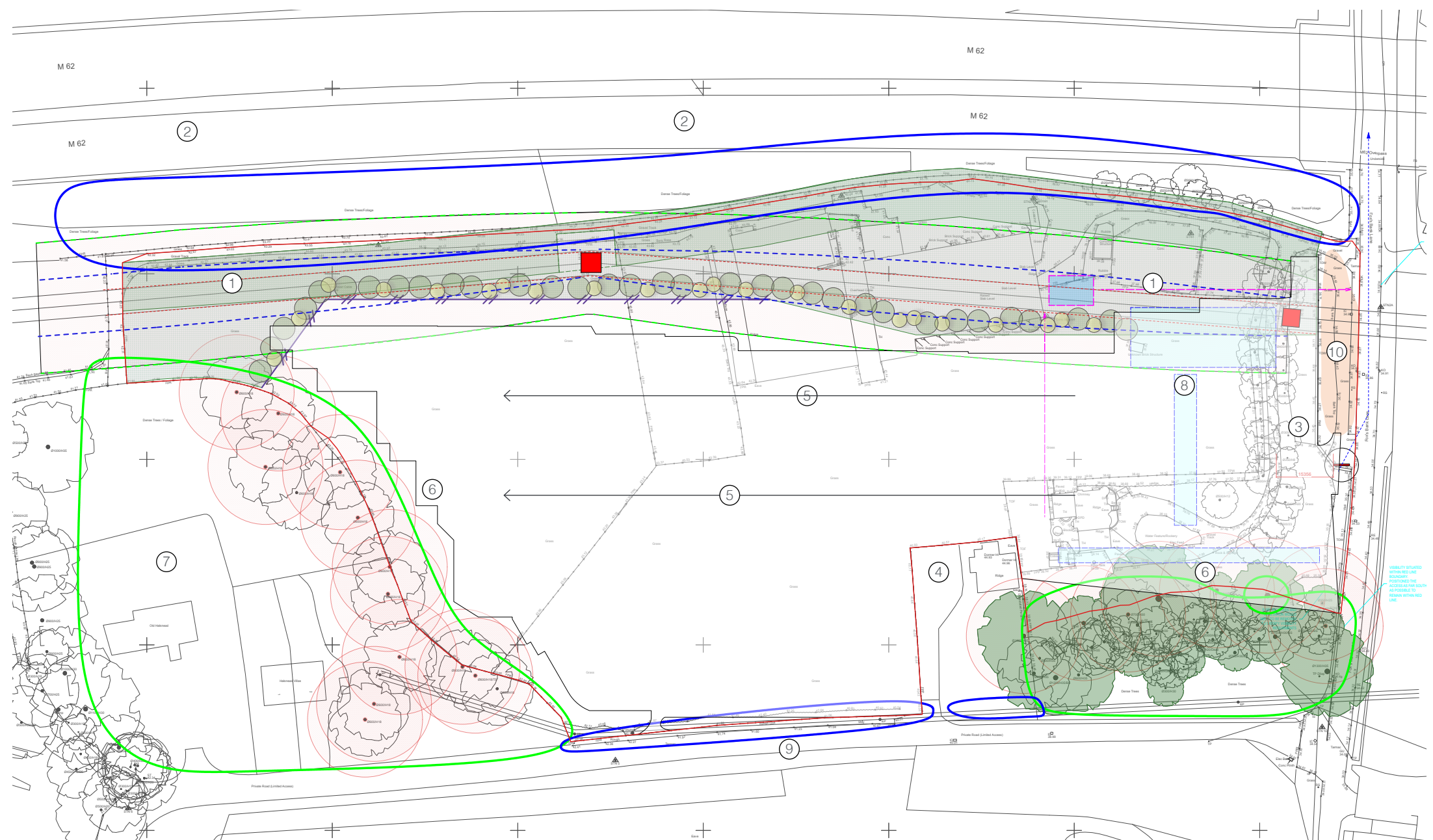
6 - Woodland clusters at each end of the site require a 15m offset.

7 - Old Halsnead is a Grade II Listed building adjacent to the site requiring development offsets and careful consideration of the interface between site and existing property.

8 - The site requires extensive drainage interventions including attenuation and a pumping station.

9 - The site is bound by a private road to the south with limits potential for connections to the employment land and country park to the south in its current condition.

10 - Green verge adjacent to Fox's Bank Lane is outside of the current site ownership.



Site Opportunities

There are a number of key site constraints that, with careful consideration, can be changed to opportunities to ensure that the site response is truly contextual and creates a distinctive and sustainable neighbourhood with a true Garden Village identity:

1 - Maximise the potential of the undevelopable northern edge underneath the pylon swing zone to create a linear park that ties into the desired connections set out within the SPD.

2 - Use the levels of the proposed linear park to create a noise buffer from the motorway and ensure a pleasant outlook for properties fronting this aspect.

3 - The retaining wall will need to be removed in part to create a viable entrance into the site. This can be extended into the site to reinstate the heritage asset and to create a gateway condition appropriate to context

4 - Gateway entrance and a frontage creating 'connected edges' to Fox's Bank Lane.

5 - Pedestrian connections to the wider Halsnead Garden Village masterplan including pedestrian access via Tritax Symmetry Park to the south on to Cronton Road and local public transport connections.

6 - Protection to the existing woodland clusters - with the potential to introduce a woodland walk to the western edge.

7 - Allow the green space from the north to filter into the proposal to create a genuine and characterful 'garden village'.

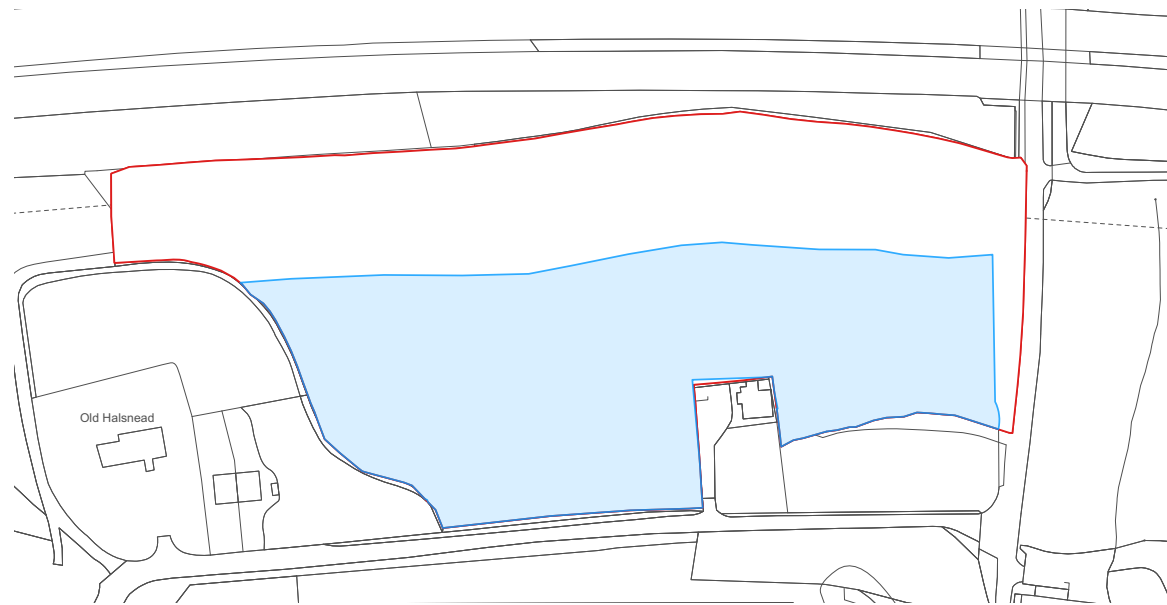
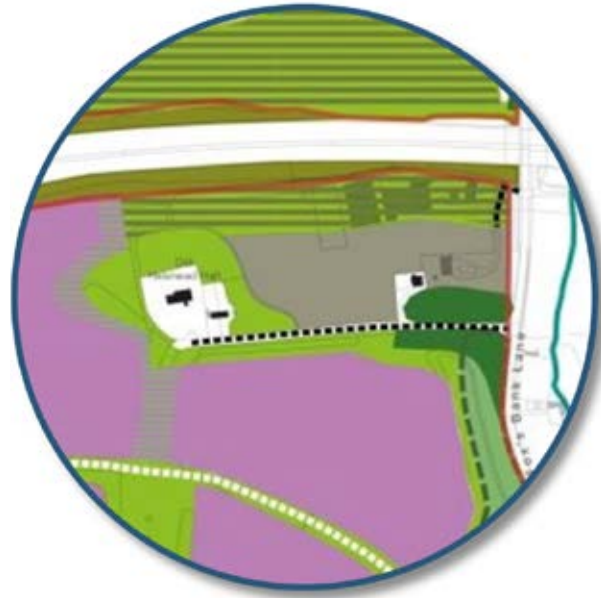
8 - The opportunity to create a distinct and high-quality garden village with a range of house types and tenures all with direct access to employment sites and a country park as part of a wider sustainable residential neighbourhood.



Development Land

The site area shown within the Halsnead Garden Village SPD is indicated in brown on the adjacent extract. The area is bound by the green space to the north, Fox's Bank Lane to the east, woodland and existing highway to the south and Old Halsnead and adjacent properties to the west.

As part of the initial site analysis, a number of constraints were identified within this area which prevent development within parcels of the developable area identified. A series of diagrams below highlight these constraints and the impact on the developable area put forward as part of this application.



The area highlighted in blue is translated from the Halsnead Garden Village SPD extract noted above. This shows the 'developable area' as described within the masterplan for this site.

The combination of all the site's constraints, landscape and existing vegetation result in a lesser area of developable area comparable to the designated area within the Masterplan SPD.

- Red Line Site Boundary
- Developable Area - Halsnead SPD



The western edge of the site is bound by a mature woodland cluster which requires a 15m offset from each tree trunk and is also required to be planted as an evergreen buffer in order to shelter Old Halsnead from the development proposal. This removes a significant portion of this area of developable land from the site plan.

To aid viability and ensure a fair portion of deliverable land is provided as part of the proposal, a 'land swap' has been proposed, adding developable land to the north where pylon cable swings permit in exchange for the areas of land to the east and west to ensure that the woodland clusters are fully retained and to ensure protection and offset from the Grade II listed Old Halsnead.

A similar condition is seen to the east of the site, albeit, without the required evergreen planting requirement.



- Red Line Site Boundary
- Developable Area - Halsnead SPD
- Un-developable Area - due to existing planted woodland
- Extents of proposed development

Design Development 03



Design Development

The design development has been an interactive process with a number of key moves highlighted below:

Site Plan 01

An initial sketch proposal to assess the potential site capacity and an indicative mix of house types to respond the SPD. Detailed site constraints were not known at this stage

Site Plan 01



Site Plan 02



Site Plan 02

Adjustments made to the central highway arrangement and the design approach north of the central road reflected in the southern portion with the inclusion of courtyard houses, shared surface access and winding country roads to further emphasise the Garden Village feel and introduce greater variation across the proposal.

Site Plan 03

Changes made to the eastern portion to increase density to aid viability. Some larger units broken down into 2no. units to add variation to the housing types available.

Site Plan 03



Site Plan 04



Site Plan 04

Alterations to the apartment block at the entrance of the site and houses to the south of the entrance road changed and pulled away from the woodland cluster to protect this asset.

Pre-Application Response

A pre-application was submitted to Knowsley Council for initial engagement and feedback prior to the submission of a detailed planning application.

The adjacent site layout was submitted as part of the proposals, and was subject to an extensive response, as summarised below:

- 1- The principle of residential development on site was considered acceptable, though there were concerns over the number and tenure of the proposal within the context of the site's connectivity, accessibility and constraints.
- 2 - The separation distances, garden depths and amenity spaces fell short of the Amended New Residential Development SPD standards.
- 3 - Some dwellings / adoptable roads had been located within root protection areas (RPAs) of established TPO woodland groupings. A 15m buffer zone around these groups would be required in line with the Masterplan SPD.
- 4 - A buffer of evergreen planting was advised between the proposals and Grade II Listed Old Halsnead Hall.
- 5 - The sandstone boundary wall fronting Fox's Bank Lane is to be considered a non-designated heritage asset when considering access route proposals.
- 6 - Proposed levels are to be submitted, with particular emphasis placed upon the relationship between proposed units facing onto Fox's Bank Lane and the levels adjacent to the existing TPO cluster's RPA.
- 7 - Meaningful overlooking and natural surveillance would be required over the proposed northern greenspace, for the prevention of anti-social behaviour.

8 - Noise mitigation strategies to the northern M62 are to be established and designed to ensure adequate surveillance of the green open space, as above.

9 - Proposed development outside the designated masterplan built development envelope is to be addressed.

In summary - it was considered by all that the essence and feel of the original sketch proposals had been lost in order to respond to the physical and technical constraints that were now better understood. A revised proposal was presented at this meeting that had been developed in response to the written pre-application response. This proposal revisited the original design intent and created a proposal with clear identity, clarity in how it responded to the relevant

SPDs and Design Guide and reinstated the essence of the original sketch proposals.

The final design proposal that forms this Planning Application was positively received by the Local Planning Authority and further design development has ensured that all feedback has been captured and demonstrated.



Proposed Site Layout, as submitted to Knowsley Council as part of a Pre-application enquiry

Design Proposal

Further to the pre-application response, the proposal has been amended to incorporate the feedback and comments, in line with local Policy, SPD and Design Guide requirements, as supported by additional consultant investigations.

The proposal takes its cues from the Halsnead Garden Village Design Guide including:

Clusters

The site is broken into clusters of homes structured around a network of green corridors.

Entrances and Nodes

Additional height and detailing at the entrance to the site and along the main spine road.

Character Areas

Each cluster of the site has a variation in approach to character but with consistency in materials to create an holistic whole. The main spine road of 3-storey gables in brickwork is contrasted to the courtyard clusters and their black cladding with wrap-around brickwork walls.

Landforms and Views

The design responds to the site topography, with each block designed as a whole to incorporate steps and add interest along each frontage. Woodland clusters, landscaping and building forms are used to terminate views and aid wayfinding.

Streets

Variation between street types and materials to create a clear hierarchy.

Building Lines

Building lines are continuous with boundary treatments treated as integral to the built form throughout - linking buildings with material continuity.

Corner Plots

All corner plots are dual frontage, with primary frontages onto all outlooks including the linear park to the north.

Courtyard Clusters

The courtyard clusters to the north make reference to the historic clusters of farm buildings on the former Halsnead Estate. Each cluster is accessed from the main spine road through a 'gateway' created between the 3-storey houses and then opening up to the linear park with the landscaping filtering down into the space.



Proposed Site Layout,

Design Proposal

The adjacent 3D view diagram highlights a series of design aspects around which the overall proposal is structured. These decisions are informed by site analysis, the Halsnead Garden Village masterplan SPD and a desire for a high-quality design that creates an appropriate yet distinct sense of place.

1 - New access point from Fox's Bank Lane to ensure safe vehicular and pedestrian access and visibility splays.

2 - Existing sandstone wall re-built and turned into the site to enable a new access point but retain this heritage asset - and ensure a consistent sense of identity to the wider masterplan.

3 - Woodland buffers - both existing and new to the Fox's Bank Lane frontage to retain the existing character of the lane whilst also allowing the proposal to create a gateway entrance.

4 - Pedestrian and cyclist access along the perimeter park with varied levels, planting and footpaths to create real interest and useable spaces.

5 - Courtyard clusters that allow the green space to the north to filter down into the site.

6 - Courtyard houses to create dual aspect outlooks with private courtyards and terraces diversifying the high-quality housing offer.

7 - Woodland buffer to Old Halsnead with a woodland walk fronted by a small courtyard cluster.

8 - Pedestrian access to the private road to the south providing access to the employment use land and the anticipated country park.



Sketch Visuals



View along Fox's Bank Lane towards the entrance of the site.

The existing woodland cluster maintains the green frontage and the lowered sandstone wall maximises the benefit of this asset whilst also ensuring the character of the site is

visible on approach. A 3-storey block marks the entrance to the site, set back behind mature tree planting. This design move reduces the visual impact of the motorway and existing pylon. The existing sandstone wall is returned into the site framing the new entrance gateway.



View along new access road looking into a courtyard cluster.

The main access road is fronted by 3-storey units that establish a clear identity to the site and provide 4-bed houses diversifying the housing offer. Cars parking spaces

are subtly integrated into the street scene between houses and within the courtyards. The greenery and planting from the linear park filters through into the courtyard clusters with the boundary treatments then formalised along the main spine road through the site.



View along new access road looking to the far end of the site.

The main spine road of the site benefits from a planted rain garden with wide footpaths and varied house types. The 3-storey houses to the northern edge respond to 2.5

storey courtyard houses opposite which then contrast with a series of lowered 2-storey agricultural style buildings - these units echo the language of the courtyard clusters to create a holistic proposal that aids way-finding and with a clear, high-quality range of housetypes.



View towards the linear park frontage.

All houses along the linear park frontage are dual aspect to create an active and overlooked street scene addressing the park. The landscape response will be varied to provide a range of different, yet

useable spaces for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians and further cement the site identity as a landscape driven family neighbourhood. The boundaries between the houses are a continuation of the frontage with matching materials whilst addressing security and noise reduction.

Design Assessment 04



Design Proposals - Vehicular and Pedestrian Connectivity

The proposal ensures that the desired vehicular and pedestrian links as highlighted within the SPD have been achieved, and in some cases, added to as part of the design response. This includes a link to the Taylor Wimpey site to the north, access along the linear park and connections to Symmetry park and the anticipated country park around Old Halsnead and from within the site and onto the private road to the south of the site.

Access to the south connections to Public Transport links.

- Existing Local Network Connections
- - - Local Network Key Connections



Further consideration has been given to the desired connections across the Garden Village masterplan and their suitability of use.

Access through Tritax Symmetry Park to the south provides pedestrian connections to existing local public transport connections on Cronton Road.

- Existing Local Network Connections
- - - Primary Vehicle Connections to be Created
- - - Potential Cycle and Pedestrian Route
- - - Potential Key Internal Connections
- Vehicle Access



Connections to the country park, the private road to the south of the site and onto the pedestrian and vehicular access route within Symmetry Park providing access onto Cronton Road to the site.

- Existing on-site Pedestrian / Vehicle routes to be retained
- - - Proposed Primary Vehicle Routes
- - - Purposed Country Park



A strategic role of this site is the potential to create footpath and cycle path connections from the north to the south of the SPD masterplan. This has been achieved in line with the guidance of the SPD as indicated.

- Strategic Footpath / Cycle Path



Design Proposals - Accessibility - M4(2) and M4(3) units

The site layout has been designed to respond to the existing site topography whilst also ensuring a 'level' approach to all dwellings. Where possible, all approaches to dwellings are designed with a gradient of a maximum of 1:20. Where this is not possible, gradients of 1:15 have been used, but only where the approach is of a short distance. Level thresholds have been applied throughout.

Car parking spaces within curtilage are a minimum of 3.3m width to provide accessible routes alongside cars and have a maximum cross-fall of 1:40. Communal parking courts are positioned within close access of the properties that they serve with a 'level' approach to the primary entrance of each block. Communal bin and bike storage is accessed along level pathways from the communal apartment and own-front-door apartment blocks.

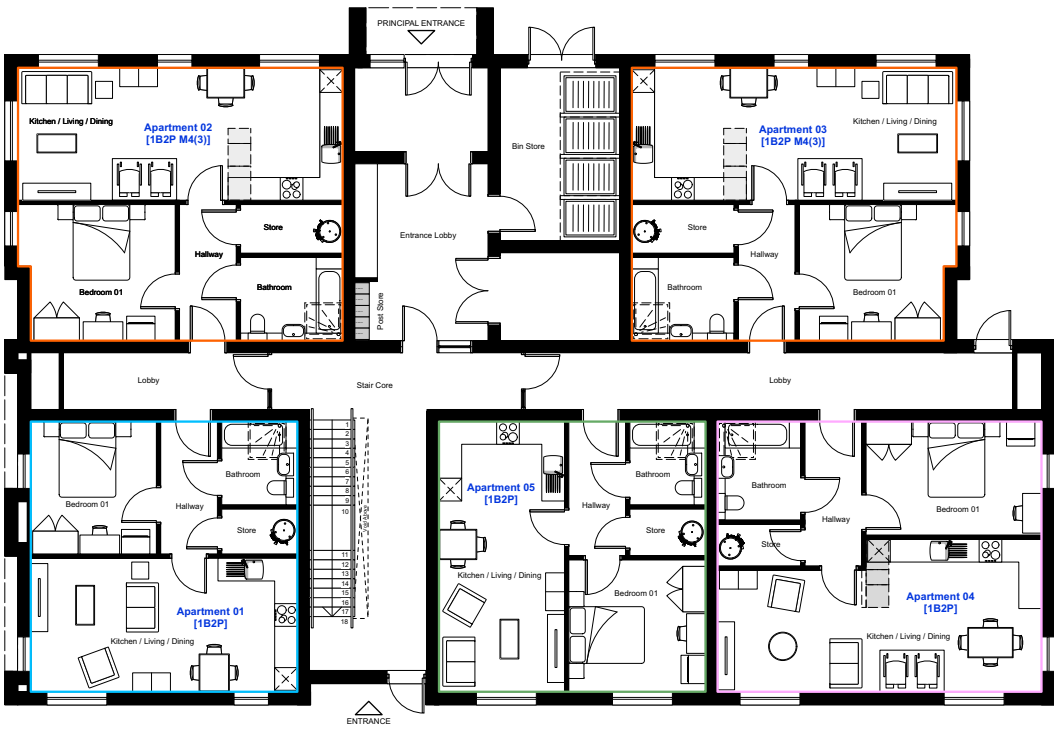
The design includes M4(2) standards throughout with 7no. M4(3) units across the site this is to align with the Halsnead Masterplan SPD SO3, which requires a *"range and quality of houses are on offer, with a mix of accessible homes"*

The proposal provides an all-affordable housing unit scheme of high-quality homes at minimum M4(2) standard. M4(3) units have been accommodated proportionately to the opportunities and constraints that the site provides.

The natural topography of the site renders it in-appropriate for M4(3) provision in places, with units accommodated within ground floor apartment blocks where there is a shallower topographical gradient, to ensure accessibility needs are met.



Proposed House Type Mix



Apartment Block A - Example of M4(2) and M4(3) unit mix

Design Proposals - Safe Green Open Space and Vegetation

Proposed properties have been orientated to provide an active frontage onto the communal open spaces, with window openings articulated across elevations onto the green space to provide natural surveillance and discourage anti-social behaviour.

The existing site context is inclusive of broadleaved mature woodland areas and these areas have been retained and complemented within the scheme.

A green landscaped buffer has been accommodated to the western edge of the site boundary, adjacent to Grade II Listed Old Halsnead. Following on from pre-application discussions, this has been introduced to provide a natural visual buffer from the heritage asset into the proposal site, to minimise any potential impact upon its historical setting.

The design proposals provide a strong green infrastructure strategy for the mitigation and management of ecological and biodiversity impacts to both existing habitats and proposed areas introduced to the site for the enhancement of biodiversity, in accordance with Halsnead Garden Village Masterplan SPD policy 5.26.



Proposed Safe Green Open Space and Vegetation

Acoustics

The M62 runs along the northern boundary of the site creating both a noise and visual amenity consideration. The design response seeks to address a requirement to reduce noise levels and improve outlook within the features of the landscaping and boundary treatments - rather than a technical 'add-on'. Where the height of the electricity cables allow, the ground levels within the linear park have been formed into 'mounds' - this not only adds character and interest to the landscaping but also creates a natural physical barrier to sound transfer from the motorway and improves outlook from the houses along this northern edge.

The houses are arranged along this edge in such a way that the amenity garden space to the rear is semi-protected by the properties and not fully exposed to the motorway outlook. High-linking wall and fences (as shown on the street scenes) ensure a continuous and secure frontage onto the linear park, whilst also further reducing noise impact on the amenity spaces.

Along the north-west edge of the site, where the cables are too low to enable the ground levels to be varied, a slight increase in the fence height is incorporated but to the same design and layout as the other fences in the scheme to ensure that, visually, this has a limited impact and is fully cohesive.



Approach to acoustic treatment

Design Proposals - Access

The proposed development provides access off of existing Fox's Bank Lane, ensuring that visibility is maintained in accordance with Highways safety.

The road layout has amended following Planning Officer pre-application comments, with the adoptable highway re-located outside of the RPA's and canopies of the existing cluster of mature trees to the south-eastern boundary. This is to eradicate the possibility of on-going maintenance and future pressure to fell trees within this protected cluster.

The existing non-designated historical sandstone wall has been retained where

possible, with a small area to be removed to accommodate the new access road. The wall will be made good and incorporated into the entry point of scheme, as annotated in yellow within the adjacent diagram.

Due to the existing level changes fronting Fox's Bank Lane, the entrance wall is to retain earth within the site and incorporate a landscaped banking downwards towards the existing road infrastructure.

The proposals outlined above have been produced to accord with Knowsley Council's policies CS2, CS8, CS19, CS21 and UPD Policy DQ4.

Design Proposals - Levels and Impact upon public realm

The growth of Whiston has typically seen informal character areas of development throughout its history, with differing urban grain and density established to provide a varied architectural landscape and legible residential neighbourhoods.

In accordance with Policy 5.14 of the Halsnead Garden Village SPD, the proposal's massing provides a visually and functionally well-integrated scheme in relation with its existing surroundings. A strong street frontage has been introduced along Fox's Bank Lane, connecting the proposed masterplan with the existing residential context to the north of the motorway.

