



# LAND OFF FURZE HILL ROAD SHIPSTON-ON-STOUR

## A SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITY

PREPARED BY MARRONS ON  
BEHALF OF WILLIAM DAVIS HOMES

FEBRUARY 2023

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Prepared by



on behalf of



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Marrons are working with William Davis Homes to prepare a Vision Document to demonstrate the deliverability of land at Furze Hill Road, Shipston-on-Stour.

The site is a logical and deliverable extension to Shipston-on-Stour, a settlement which is well-placed geographically to provide new homes for the district.

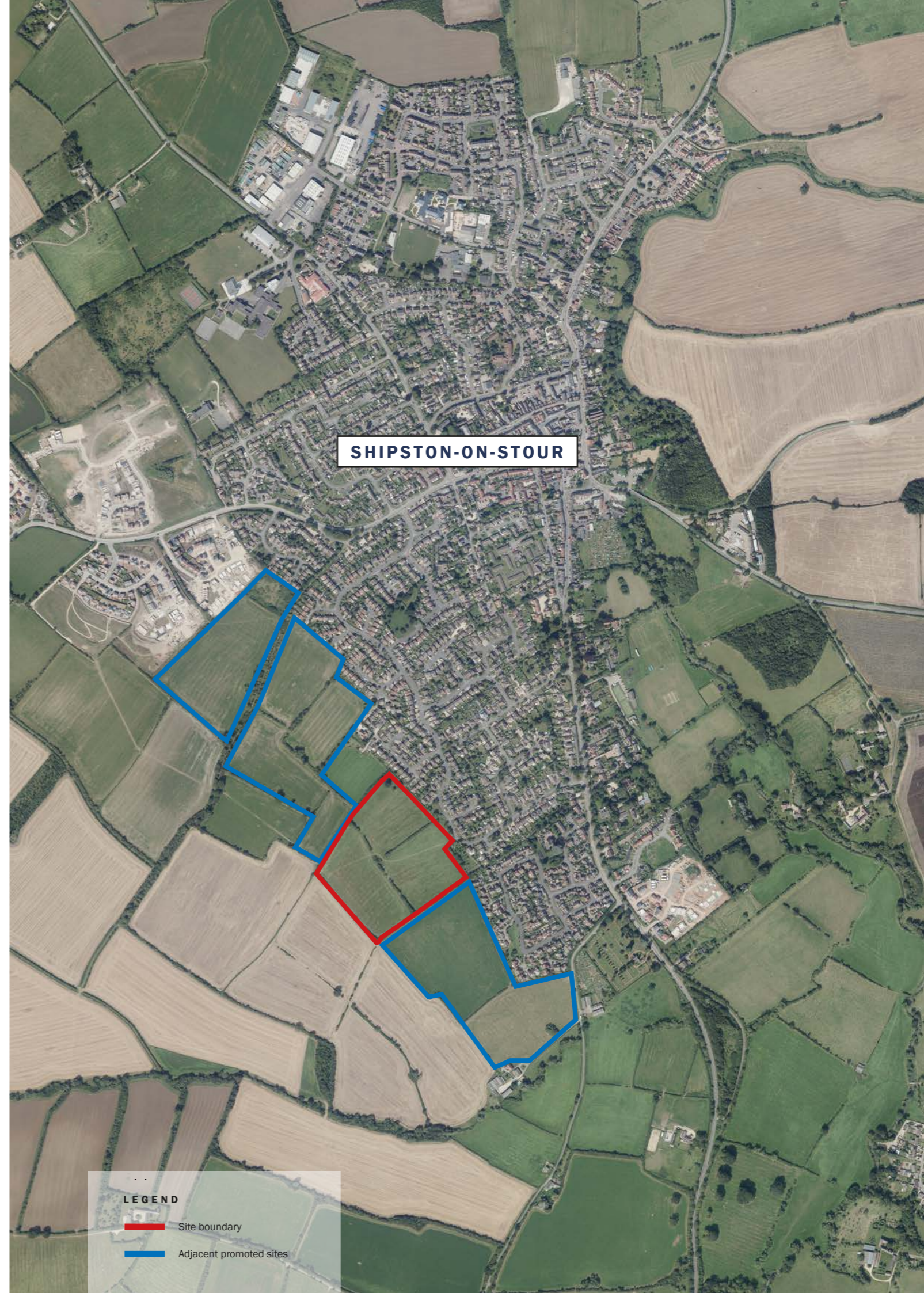
The site is comprised of three agricultural fields, adjoining existing residential development and Furze Hill Road to the northeast. The Site is bounded on all other sides by agricultural land.

The site is unconstrained, benefiting from direct access to the public highway, permanent and defensible boundaries as well as accessibility to public transport and local amenities.



This document demonstrates how the site, having taken into consideration all known opportunities and considerations, is deliverable.

More specifically, analysis of the site's attributes and local context have informed the preparation of an illustrative masterplan included within this document. This in turn demonstrates the ability of the site to deliver new homes.

It is shown within this document that the site is deliverable with the potential to supply much-needed new housing. The site is available now, and is being promoted by a homebuilder with an intention to build it out within the early stages of the plan.



**LEGEND**

-  Site boundary
-  Adjacent promoted sites





FURZE HILL ROAD LOOKING SOUTH TOWARDS SITE ACCESS



## 1.2 THE LOCATION

Shipston-on-Stour is a historic market town located in South Warwickshire, south of Stratford-upon-Avon. Shipston-on-Stour has a distinctive and well established historic core tightly knit around several key streets (Sheep Street, High Street, and Market Place).





















The town grew in size during the 20th Century when development expanded outwards from the historic core into the surrounding countryside. The development site is located adjacent to the south-west of this 20th Century development, approximately 650m from the core town centre.

Shipston-on-Stour benefits from a varied range of amenities, many of which are located within the town's historic centre. Notably, Shipston-on-Stour provides education provision (nursery through to secondary), convenience shopping, healthcare and leisure facilities which serve its residents and those in the wider countryside vicinity.

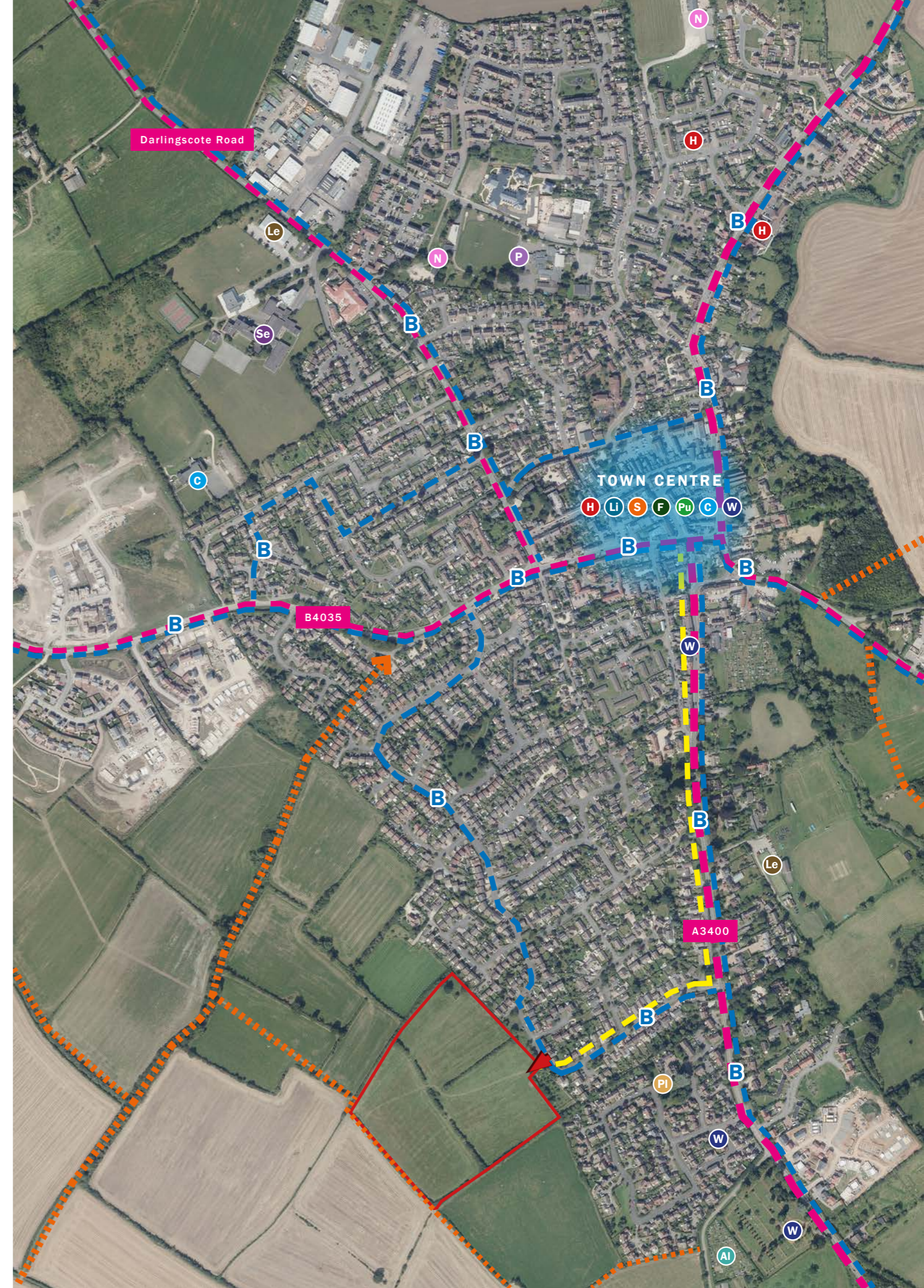
The site benefits from good connectivity. Bus stops with regular routes can be accessed from Furze Hill Road to the north-east of the site, these provide local access and routes to Stratford-upon-Avon. There are also multiple bus stops and routes located elsewhere in Shipston-on-Stour.

Highway access to the site is gained via Furze Hill Road, which connects with the A3400 in the northeast, and B4035 to the north. There are a number of pedestrian routes in the vicinity of the site, including a key public right of way (PRoW), and a proposed permissive route (proposed within the Neighbourhood Plan) adjacent to the site's south-west boundary.

### AMENITIES AND CONNECTIVITY

- |   |                                 |  |                            |
|---|---------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
|  | Site boundary                   |  | Secondary School           |
|  | Key vehicular routes            |  | Shop                       |
|  | Bus routes                      |  | Place of Worship           |
|  | Town centre on-foot desire line |  | Food and Beverage          |
|  | Public rights of way            |  | Play Ground                |
|  | Existing vehicle access         |  | Health Centre or Hospital  |
|  | Bus stops                       |  | Public House               |
|  | Community center & library      |  | Leisure Centre or facility |
|  | Nursery                         |  | Library                    |
|  | Primary school                  |  | Allotments                 |

AMENITIES AND CONNECTIVITY PLAN | not to scale







SHIPSTON-ON-STOUR CENTRE | Sheep Street | High Street | Market Place



# 2 PLANNING MATTERS

## 2.1 PLANNING CONTEXT

The likely scale of development required to meet the needs of South Warwickshire over the Plan period will be substantial. Therefore the Local Plan will need to identify a range of suitable locations for development across the area, including Shipston-on-Stour.

Shipston-on-Stour is identified as a Main Rural Centre in the adopted Stratford-on-Avon Core Strategy 2011-2031 (July 2016). Whilst the town has met its target set out in the adopted Core Strategy, which reflects its nature as a sustainable location, this strategy of growth should continue in the new plan in order to support the population of Shipston-on-Stour and those nearby. Planned growth for the town is especially important since Shipston-on-Stour does not have an allocated reserve site in the adopted Core Strategy or Neighbourhood Plan.

The town benefits from a good range of physical and social infrastructure including education, retail, community and medical facilities. The town is also served by a regular bus service to Stratford-upon-Avon, Moreton-in-Marsh and Chipping Norton, with further development likely to enhance the sustainable transport offer.

The town falls wholly outside of the West Midlands Green Belt, unlike other main rural centres: Alcester, Henley-in-Arden, Studley, and land to the north of the main town Stratford-upon-Avon, as well as many other sustainable settlements within the Warwick District.

The Site has no designation and is not considered sensitive within the adopted Shipston-on-Stour Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) (October 2018). In addition, the site is not impacted by heritage constraints, flooding or any other environmental constraints as is the case with the north, east and west of the town.

Stratford District Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (2021) highlighted potential access concerns. Following detailed consideration and consultation with the Local Highway Authority, a safe and suitable access can be achieved for the site directly via Furze Hill Road, as described in the Access section of this document.

## 2.2 PUBLIC BENEFITS

The Site will deliver around 120 dwellings including a range of types, sizes and tenures, as well as an appropriate level of affordable housing provision to help meet local needs. These are central community priorities identified in the NDP.

The Site will also make provision for a significant amount of public open space including children's play space. Located in an area of the town with limited access to public open space and on land which has no public access at present. This will improve the well-being of existing residents through the provision of additional recreational opportunities, whilst also facilitating community cohesion.

The Site can also assist in the delivery of the permissive path as identified in the NDP as a Consequent Local Project (2.5), as part of the route forms the Site's western boundary. Pedestrian links through the site to connect it with the existing residential area of the town can also be provided. Development of the Site will include a comprehensive landscaping scheme which, along with the retention of existing ecological features, will result in a net gain in biodiversity value.

The Site will make contributions towards improvements of local infrastructure, as appropriate, including to projects listed in the NDP (Consequent Local Project 2.2) such as additional Medical Centre healthcare capacity and support for public transport services.

Development of the Site will also deliver economic benefits, including providing employment opportunities for local people throughout the construction process, and increasing the vitality of the town centre through additional footfall, supporting the NDP (Consequent Local Project 2.1).



# 3 THE PLACE

## 3.1 THE SITE

The 6.2ha site comprises three adjoining agricultural fields, located on the south-eastern edge of Shipston-on-Stour. The site is bound by Furze Hill Road and existing residential development to the north-east, and agricultural land at all other boundaries.

The site slopes up from Furze Hill Road to the north-west corner from 80m AOD to 105m AOD. The crest of Hanson Hill at 116m AOD is located approximately 250m west of the site.

The three fields are sub-divided by hedgerows which border adjacent agricultural land. There are trees located along the hedgerows as well as a clustering of trees at the green verge space to the north-east where the site meets Furze Hill Road. The site lies entirely within Flood Zone 1.

The site is well contained from neighbouring land uses by the land form, existing vegetation and adjoining residential built form.

The Shipston-on-Stour Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2031 (adopted October 2018), highlights the aspiration for an improved public footpath which runs along the south-western boundary of the site and proposals for the site would seek to integrate this within a masterplan layout.



**LEGEND**

- Site boundary
- Adjacent promoted sites







## 3.2 LANDSCAPE

### LANDSCAPE VALUE

The site and its surroundings are not subject to any landscape designations at a local or national level, and is directly adjacent to the existing urban area.

Stratford District Council’s Landscape Sensitivity Study found that residential delivery of this site would have a medium landscape impact, the lowest of any land around Shipston-on-Stour. The study also highlights the importance of this land acting as a backcloth to the west of Shipston-on-Stour, noting that development could be accommodated up to 85m AOD, and that adequate screening landscaping should form part of the site delivery.

It is noted that in the appeal decision for development at Land West of Hornsby, Shipston-on-Stour (APP/J3720/A/12/2181956), the inspector notes that it is the skyline rather than any particular contour which is of significance.

### VISUAL AMENITY IMPACT

A landscape-led ‘Development Capacity Study’ was carried out by GL Hearn in May 2022. This includes an understanding of the area in which the proposed development may be visible, the groups of people who may experience views, the viewpoints where they may be affected and the nature of these views.

This study takes into account the impact of development on the views of various visual receptors. This may include residents, users of public footpaths, and highway users.

#### Highway Users

The views of highway users would be the same, if slightly reduced in impact for all of the locations previously noted.

Further away from the site, occasional and largely obscured views were noted at points to the north-east along the A3400 and at several high points along the B4035.



**Residents**

Several dwelling houses and residents near to the site at Bosley Close, Furze Hill Road and along Hawthorn Way have clear views of the site. Several farm dwellings in an elevated position to the southeast along Shoulderway Lane also have clear views of the site.

Obscured and occasional views of the site are possible from several different points within Shipston-on-Stour. Of these the most obvious are along Callaway Road and Furze Hill Road which run up towards the site from the A3400 in the north-east. Occasional views were also noted along several cul-de-sacs and

secondary roads such as Springfield Road and Hanson Avenue in the adjacent urban area. It is possible that residents will have obscured views from west facing gardens and upper floors within dwelling houses here.

From the conservation area it is possible that some views may occur from upper storeys within taller buildings. However, due to the lie of the land and intervening urban form of the town centre core, impact is considered to be minimal.



**VIEW FROM FURZE HILL ROAD** | prepared by GL Hearn



**VIEW FROM SHIPSTON CEMETERY** | prepared by GL Hearn



**Public Footpaths**

Views from the Public Right of Way (PROW) to the north-east of the site are negligible due to the change in levels between this route and the site.

The proposed permissive route (within the NP) that would run to the rear of the site would naturally be impacted by development, largely due to its immediate proximity. However, due to the existing hedgerows that run along the site boundaries, there would be a considerable level of natural screening provided.

There would be a negligible impact on public realm areas within the conservation area. Due to the tight knit urban form and historic pattern of buildings, views are well concealed.

**Summary**

Overall, it is clear that development of the site would have an impact on views largely due to its elevated position and changes in elevation. However, impact on the conservation area would be negligible, and views for residents, walkers and drivers would be largely obscured in most places. Ultimately, the greatest impact would be limited to a small number of existing houses in the immediate vicinity.

Future proposals should be landscape led, seeking to retain established vegetation where possible and provide ample landscaping to anchor the development into its setting. The site benefits from well established hedgerows and maintaining these where possible will provide ample screening of views nearby and further away,

PROW SS124

Approximate extent of site



VIEW FROM PROW SS124 | prepared by GL Hearn

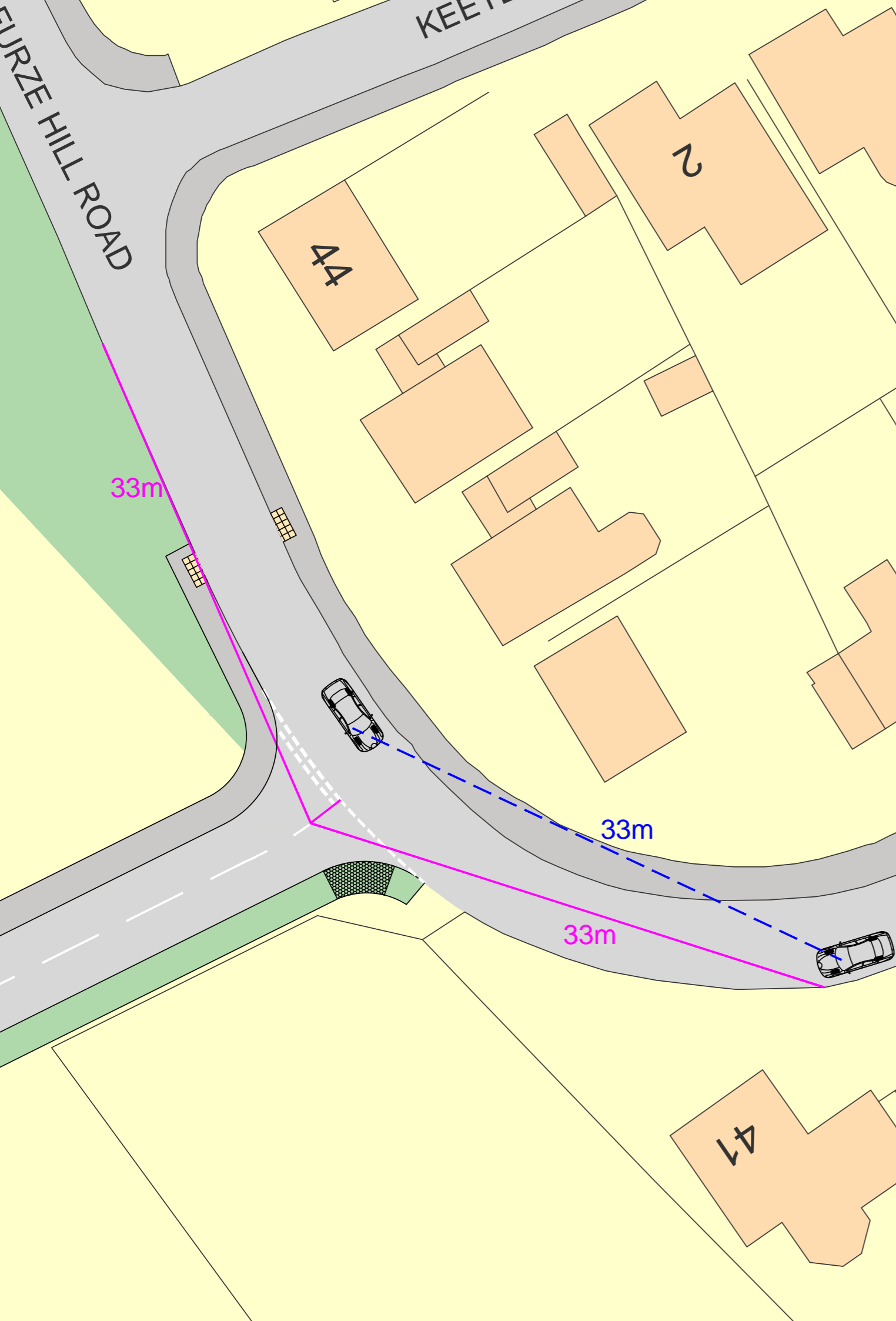
PROW SS124

Approximate extent of site



VIEW FROM PROW SS124 | prepared by GL Hearn





### 3.3 HIGHWAYS AND ACCESS

Highways and access studies were carried out by DTA Consulting to determine potential access to the site, as well as the potential impact of any future development.

#### ACCESS

The existing site access is located at Furze Hill Road, a 30mph highway which acts as a primary cul-de-sac distributor road. A 5.5m wide carriageway, Furze Hill Road is a relatively quiet street with footway provision.

A Road Safety Audit has been carried out to interrogate the existing access arrangements to the site, and make suitable recommendations for access. Resultantly, it is envisaged that a new 5.5m access can be accommodated from Furze Hill Road, with an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing. A paddock access will be maintained and upgraded, and nearby vegetation will be managed for the benefit of pedestrian users.

The local highways authority supports the access strategy.

#### TRANSPORT ASSESSMENT

Furze Hill Road connects up with the A3400 in the northeast, and B4035 to the north. These key routes provide access to other major settlements such as, Stratford-upon-Avon (N), Banbury (E), and Chipping Norton (S).

The nearest bus stops are provided along Furze Hill Road, approximately a 3 minute walk to the north-east of the site. From here the number 9 bus service provides access into Shipston-on-Stour town centre. Further stops, such as those at the A3400 approximately a 5-10 minute walk provide regular routes to Chipping Norton (50 / 3) and Stratford-upon-Avon (50 / 3). The latter having a rail station with regular national services.

Most surrounding roads have 2m footways on both sides, aside for several lanes where the lack of vehicle movements negates the need for provision. The SS124 PROW runs towards the town centre from surrounding agricultural land, and as highlighted in the NP a proposed permissive path to run along the southern boundary of the site would connect up with this to the west.

The National Cycle Network routes 5 and 48 meet within the town centre. 48 runs north to south, connecting up with Moreton-in-Marsh (S) and Middle Tysoe (N), and the 5 runs east to west connecting Long Marston (W) and Banbury (E).





### 3.4 HERITAGE





The Shipston-on-Stour conservation area is located approximately 0.65km to the north-east of the site.

#### HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

Following potential heritage impacts being flagged in Stratford’s SHLAA (2021), a Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment has been carried out by GHC Archaeology and Heritage. The assessment has established that there are no designated heritage assets in the study site and that the proposed development will have no direct impact upon any designated heritage asset. This study has found that only two designated heritage assets are considered to be sensitive to development within the study site; the Grade II Church of St Michael and the Grade II Horsleys Farmhouse. In both cases potential impacts are considered to be negligible and it is considered that any harm could be mitigated by the setting back of development from the south-western edge of the study site.

It is also considered that there is no evidence to suggest that the site contains, or has the potential to contain, archaeological remains of sufficient importance to prevent or constrain development. Under these circumstances, it would be reasonable for any further investigation to be secured by a condition attached to any grant of planning consent.

#### HERITAGE ASSETS

-  Site boundary
-  Conservation Area Boundary
-  Grade II Listed
-  Grade II\* Listed

HERITAGE ASSETS IN SHIPSTON-ON-STOUR | not to scale









### **3.5 ECOLOGY**

A Tree Survey and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and have been prepared by Whartons nature consultancy.

#### **TREE SURVEY**

The tree survey found that several category B and C trees were found on-site. No category A trees were noted on-site. Existing hedgerows were considered to be category B.

#### **PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL**

The report provides general advice on ecological constraints associated with any development of the site and includes recommendations for further survey. The assessment is considered 'preliminary' until any required protected species, habitat or invasive species surveys can be completed as part of future planning applications.

The study finds that further surveys should be considered in support of any application, including a National Vegetation Classification Survey and potentially bat activity surveys.

#### **ENHANCEMENTS**

Any future development should include integrated bat boxes into the brickwork of any new proposed buildings on-site, these should be on south facing elevations. Lighting should also be kept to a minimum, particularly at the peripheries of the site to prevent disturbance of bats. Bird boxes should also be provided, positioned on north-facing aspects and out of direct sunlight. Hedgehog shelters and hedgehog highways should be included to preserve this species.

Any landscaping associated with the new development should consider use of native shrub species, including those which pollinate. An area of the Site is set aside within any proposals for habitat creation, restoration or enhancement. Given that the grassland habitat at the Site appears to have been more botanically diverse historically than it is currently, habitat enhancement works will focus on this.

### **3.6 FLOOD RISK AND DRAINAGE**

A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy has been carried out for the site by Jackson Purdue Lever.

The site is wholly within Flood Zone 1 and there are no known watercourses on site, therefore is considered at low risk of flooding from main rivers and other watercourses. It is also at low risk of surface water, sewer, groundwater or coastal flooding.

A surface water strategy has been prepared for the site to ensure that development would not have an impact on flooding elsewhere.

The proposed development surface water will discharge at reduced rates via the provision of attenuation. Therefore, the development will not increase flooding adjacent to or downstream of the site for the lifetime of the development.

Foul water will be drained via a new gravity system connecting to STWMH 6707 within the existing adopted sewer east of the site.





## 4 OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSIDERATIONS

The opportunities and considerations of the site, as set out in this section and illustrated on the following page, have been taken into consideration when determining development parameters for the site and subsequent illustrative masterplan proposals.

- Existing vehicular and pedestrian access point directly off Furze Hill Road;
- Proposed permissive footpath to the south-west of the site with potential for pedestrian access to the site;
- Change in ground levels increasing from the south-east to the north-west;
- The relationship with existing residential development and Shipston-on-Stour to the north-east;
- Relationship with adjacent greenfields that border the site;
- Existing established hedgerow vegetation providing screening for site;
- Newly proposed hedgerow planting through the site providing visual interest, ecological benefits and natural screening within the site; and
- Natural breaks in hedgerow providing opportunity for key routes and improved pedestrian accessibility.





**OPPS & CONS LEGEND**

- Site boundary
- Existing & proposed site access
- Primary vehicular routes
- Proposed permissive footpath
- Potential pedestrian access points
- Overhead power cables
- Existing residential development and private amenity adjoining the site
- Retained trees
- Retained and enhanced hedgerow planting
- Existing built form
- Site contours
- Site under consideration for housing allocation
- Potential location for attenuation basin
- Potential location for play area

**OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSIDERATIONS PLAN | not to scale**



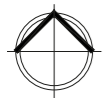
# 5 THE DEVELOPMENT VISION

## 5.1 SITE PARAMETERS

The identified parameters of the site are set out in this section and illustrated on the following page.

- Site area: 6.1 ha / 15 acres;
- Net developable area (NDA): 3.34 ha / 8.25 acres;
- Potential development yield - based on NDA of 3.34 and 35DPH: around 120 dwelling houses
- Policy compliant affordable housing to be delivered on-site;
- Proposed new vehicular and pedestrian access off Furze Hill Road;
- Potential pedestrian links to the proposed public right of way adjoining the site's western boundary;
- Built form proposed, with high quality rural 'green edge' landscaping and open space to the western edge of development;
- Potential play area located to the eastern boundary to allow for use by new residents and existing local residents;
- Proposed sustainable drainage system and attenuation basin;
- High quality existing trees and hedgerows retained and reinforced with new native species planting;
- Retention and enhancement of existing established hedgerow planting through the site providing visual interest, ecological benefits and natural screening within the site; and
- High quality landscaping, green infrastructure and public open space.





**PARAMETERS LEGEND**

- Site boundary
- Residential development parcels
- Furze Hill Road
- Proposed site access
- Illustrative primary vehicular routes
- Illustrative secondary vehicular routes
- Illustrative shared drives
- Proposed permissive footpath
- Existing public footpath
- Proposed pedestrian link
- Illustrative location of SuDS / attenuation ponds (volume TBC)
- Illustrative location of public open space
- Proposed play area provision
- 100m contour line
- Existing & retained hedgerow planting
- Proposed break in existing hedgerow for access

**PARAMETERS PLAN | not to scale**



## 5.2 ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN















An illustrative masterplan is included on the following page, responding to the identified opportunities and considerations of the site and the parameters for development.

- Provision for residential developable area within a new and enhanced landscaped setting;
- Dedicated vehicular access proposed off Furze Hill Road with new tree-lined streets through the development;
- Provision for dedicated routes through the development for pedestrians and cyclists;
- Outward-facing development parcels ensuring visual interest and high levels of natural surveillance of the public realm;
- Provision for high quality landscaped public open spaces and areas of play;
- New and enhanced landscape planting and open space along the western site boundary, with proposed pedestrian links to the proposed public footpath along the site's western boundary;
- Retained and reinforced landscape planting through the site, integrated into the proposed masterplan to create visual interest and ecological benefits;
- Retention of existing landscape boundaries to maintain visual screening; and
- No built form proposed above the 100m contour line in response to the landscape setting and location of the site.





**MASTERPLAN LEGEND**

-  Site boundary
-  Residential development parcels
-  Furze Hill Road
-  Proposed site access
-  Illustrative primary vehicular routes
-  Illustrative secondary vehicular routes (shared surface)
-  Illustrative shared drives
-  Proposed permissive footpath
-  Existing public footpath
-  Proposed pedestrian link
-  Illustrative location of SuDS / attenuation ponds (volume TBC)
-  Illustrative location of public open space
-  Proposed play area provision
-  Potential connection with neighbouring site

**ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN | not to scale**



## 6 DEVELOPMENT PRECEDENT

William Davis Homes has more than eight decades of experience as a quality housebuilder in the Midlands and is currently building its full range of award-winning homes in Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire.

The company has a strong track record of beautifully designed developments situated in either prime village or edge-of-town locations. All feature a range of classic designs, combining the exacting standards of a traditionally built home with the latest technology, in line with today's requirements for efficiency and sustainability.

A privately owned company of around 500 employees, William Davis Homes continues to maintain standards of excellence while supporting and facilitating careers in construction.

William Davis Homes are proud to have secured the industry's gold standard '5 star' status – awarded by the Home Builders Federation seven years running – this achievement is based on customers experience and reflects a policy of consistency in providing a first-class product and service.





## 6 CONCLUSIONS

**This Vision Document demonstrates that the site is suitable, available and deliverable for residential development.**

In doing so, new development will make a valuable contribution to the area's housing land supply and deliver much needed market and affordable housing in Shipston-on-Stour.

The document sets out the opportunities and considerations of the site and identifies key parameters for development. The document then illustrates how these may be brought forward with an illustrative masterplan for development.

Accordingly, for the reasons set out within this document, the site is suitable for allocation within the emerging South Warwickshire Local Plan.



 Marrons