



# NOCTORUM PLAYING FIELDS PRENTON

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

March 2023

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Noctorum Road, with the site on the right

This updated Design and Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared by Lambert Smith Hampton (LSH) on behalf of Birkenhead School. The DAS accompanies a re-submitted Outline Planning Application for up to 33 homes and associated infrastructure on the site known as Noctorum Playing Fields in Prenton.

## Background

Birkenhead School are proposing to dispose of the currently underutilised Noctorum Playing Fields as they are 1.4km from the main school campus and are consequently no longer used for curriculum sport and physical education. The capital receipt from the sale of the land will be reinvested into the school and local community.

This updated DAS supports the resubmission of the outline application. The illustrative scheme has been subject to a previous appeal, in which the Inspector found;

'As an enclaved and a clearly distinct phase of development of potentially large houses in ample plots, it would maintain a degree of spaciousness and retain a verdant character through retention of the border trees and additional planting. It would make more effective use of the land consistent with examples of infill and redeveloped sites found locally. Accordingly, I find the proposal would have little adverse effect on the recognised pattern of the surrounding development. The effect on the character and appearance of existing local development would therefore be negligible.

For those reasons, I find the site could deliver housing development which preserves the existing character of development in the locality. It would align with the requirements of Policies HS4 and HS6 of the UDP through the preservation of the existing boundary treatments and meet the Framework's requirement to make efficient use of the land taking into account the area's character and setting.'

The illustrative scheme therefore remains unchanged, however this updated DAS expands upon the context appraisal of the site, as well as the illustrative masterplan reaffirming the appropriateness of this scheme in preserving the character of the surrounding area.

## Vision

The vision is to turn the currently private redundant playing fields at Prenton into a new residential neighbourhood with public access that delivers much needed family housing. The new housing will be contextual and will bring active frontage to Noctorum Road and Noctorum Lane located around the edge of the site.

The trees around the site boundary will be retained, apart from some that are in a poor condition and those that need to be removed to allow for safe access from Noctorum Road. With tree planting there will be a net increase of 39 trees on the site. The retained and newly planted trees will partly screen and help the new housing complement the verdant local area.

As part of the proposals new public space will be provided for the new neighbourhood as well as the existing surrounding community. Other public realm improvements are the creation of a network of public pedestrian footpaths around the site that connect into the existing public right of way through the golf course and desire lines in the wider area.

## Project Partners

- Client – Birkenhead School
- Lambert Smith Hampton (LSH) – Planning , Urban Design, Commercial Advice
- Landscape; Arboriculture; Drainage; Ecology; Sustainability; Flood risk; Land contamination – RSK
- Transport – Mode Transport Planning
- Engagement and consultation - Built Environment Communications Group (BECG)

## Technical Reports

The planning application is supported by the following technical reports prepared by the consultant team:

1. Design and Access Statement (this document), prepared by LSH
2. Transport Assessment prepared by Mode Transport
3. Arboricultural Assessment prepared by RSK
4. Flood Risk Assessment prepared by RSK
5. Drainage Strategy prepared by RSK
6. Sustainability Statement prepared by RSK
7. Landscape Impact Appraisal prepared by RSK
8. Ecological Assessment prepared by RSK
9. Preliminary Land Contamination Assessment prepared by RSK

A detailed planning analysis has been set out in the accompanying Planning Statement (PS) also prepared by LSH on behalf of Birkenhead School. The planning application seeks planning permission for "The demolition of the existing pavilion and erection of up to 33 dwellings and associated infrastructure". All matters are reserved with the exception of access."

## National Policy

National guidance is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework [the Framework] (July 2021), and the National Planning Practice Guidance [the Practice Guidance]. Both are material to the consideration and determination of the planning application.

## Development Plan

The Development Plan for the Site comprises 'saved' policies of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan [UDP] which was adopted in February 2000 and covered the period 1986 to 2001. Parts of the UDP have been 'saved' under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The policies and proposals of the UDP were initially 'saved', to remain in force for a period of three years. A number of policies were then subsequently saved in 2007 for an on-going period of time.

## Principle of Development

The pertinent UDP policies relating the principle of development are:

- UDP 'saved' Policy URN1 (Development and Urban Regeneration)
- UDP 'saved' Policy HS4 (New Housing Developments)

The Framework (11c) states that for decision taking, applications for proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan should be granted without delay.

The Framework (38) sets out that decision makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

The Framework (99b) requires that the loss [of playing fields] resulting from proposed developments is replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location.

The Framework (122) sets out that planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land.

## Conclusions on the Principle of Development

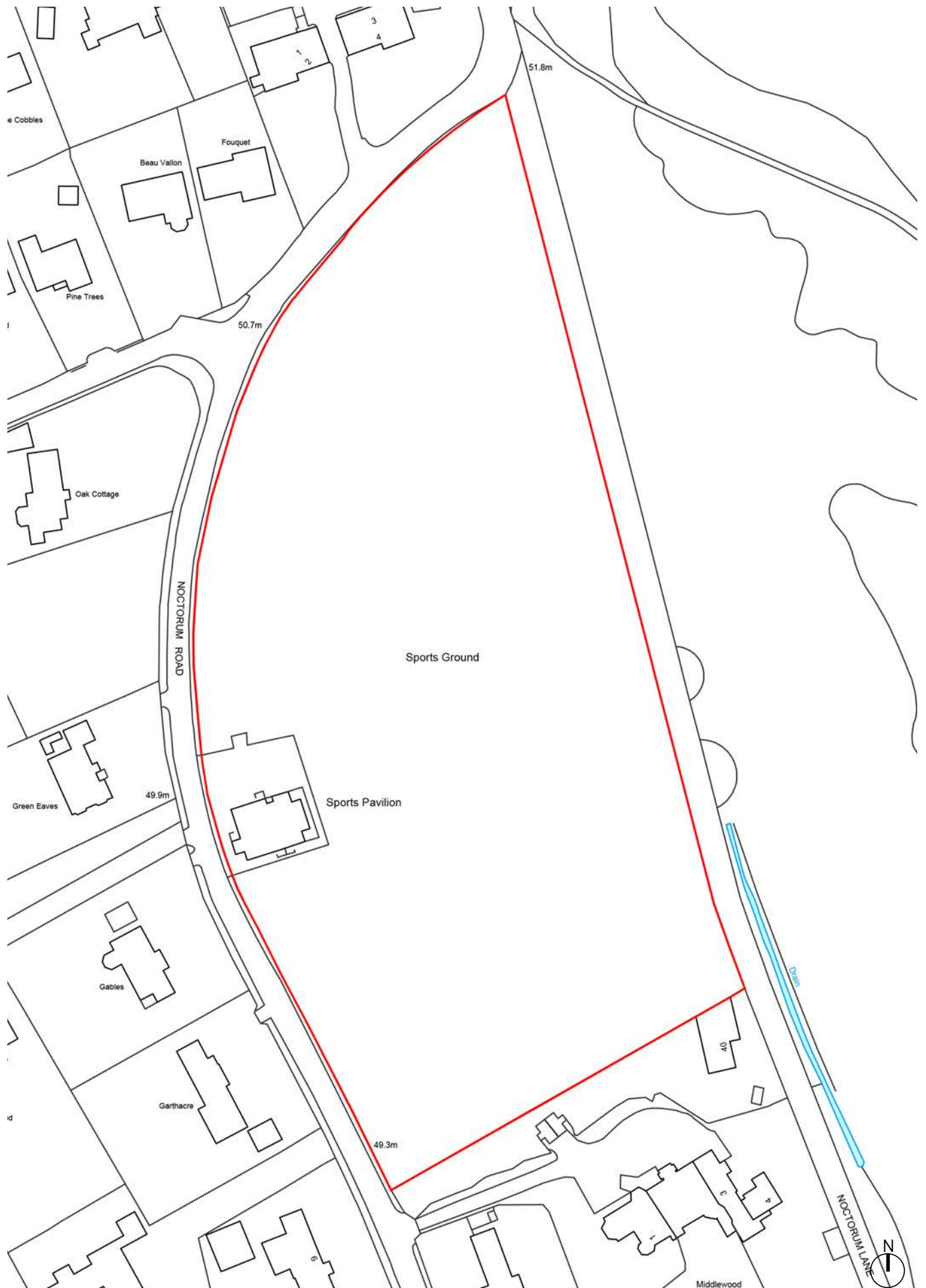
The appeal decision demonstrates that the proposal accords with the adopted Development Plan, and the Framework, other national policy guidance as well as other material considerations in accordance with Section 70(2) of the 1990 Act and Section 38(6) of the 2004 Act with the exception of the adverse impacts arising as a result of the uncertainty surrounding the mechanism for delivery of the proposed quantitative and qualitative mitigation at Prenton RUFC and Old Parkonians RUFC which was found to conflict with the adopted Development Plan.

The supporting Planning Statement unequivocally addresses the only outstanding reason for dismissal of the appeal and provides a clear platform for enabling the positive determination of the application. The proposal therefore complies with the Development Plan, and the Framework.

There are also a number of material considerations which weigh in favour of the proposed development being positively determined including:

- The Site is surplus to requirement both for use by the School and also the local community. Its redevelopment will secure and enable the necessary quantitative and qualitative mitigation at Prenton RUFC and Old Parkonians RUFC to improve existing and increase the provision of facilities to the benefit of the local community. The mitigation proposed at these sites represents a direct response to the Council's adopted Planning Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy ('PPOSS')
- To mitigate the loss of the four grass match wickets as a result of the proposals, the School has replaced the four new grass match wickets at the McAllester Fields. This ensures that they are replaced by better quality facilities that meet the ECB boundary length requirements, and are better located for use by the School
- Capital generated from the sale of the Site will be reinvested into improving the School's existing sports facilities which will be available for use by the community, together with providing a new transformational bursary. A planning application for a new £3.52m Sports Hall at Birkenhead School, Beresford Road campus has been submitted LPA Ref:APP/21/01552. An appeal for non-determination has been submitted (ref: APP/W4325/W/22/3291438). The appeal was allowed

On the basis of the above and in accordance with national and local policies promoting sustainable development, there are no significant demonstrable adverse impacts arising from the proposals that would outweigh the considerable benefits of the scheme. The proposals accord with the Policies contained within the Development Plan, and includes a strategy, that is addressed through a S106 Agreement, relating to the loss of sports pitches. The School therefore consider that planning permission should be granted for the proposed development without delay.



Site Location Plan (1:1250@A4)

# Site and Area Analysis

The application site is located in Noctorum, a suburb of Birkenhead in the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral. The site is well connected to local bus and train services, as well as local schools, shops and services.

## Site Location

The Wider Area Plan on the following page highlights the site being located approximately 1km to the east of Upton Railway Station and 2km to the south of Birkenhead North Railway Station, which provide trains to Liverpool City Centre and other destinations across the region. Bus services are located on Upton Avenue, approximately 500m to the north of the site, with a frequent service to Birkenhead Town Centre, West Kirby and Liverpool City Centre. The Wider Area Plan also identifies various other land uses such as schools and shops within 15min walking distance of the site.

This all serves to demonstrate the sustainable location of the site.



Noctorum Road looking north, with the site on the right



Existing local building in the arts and crafts style to the west of the site on Noctorum Road



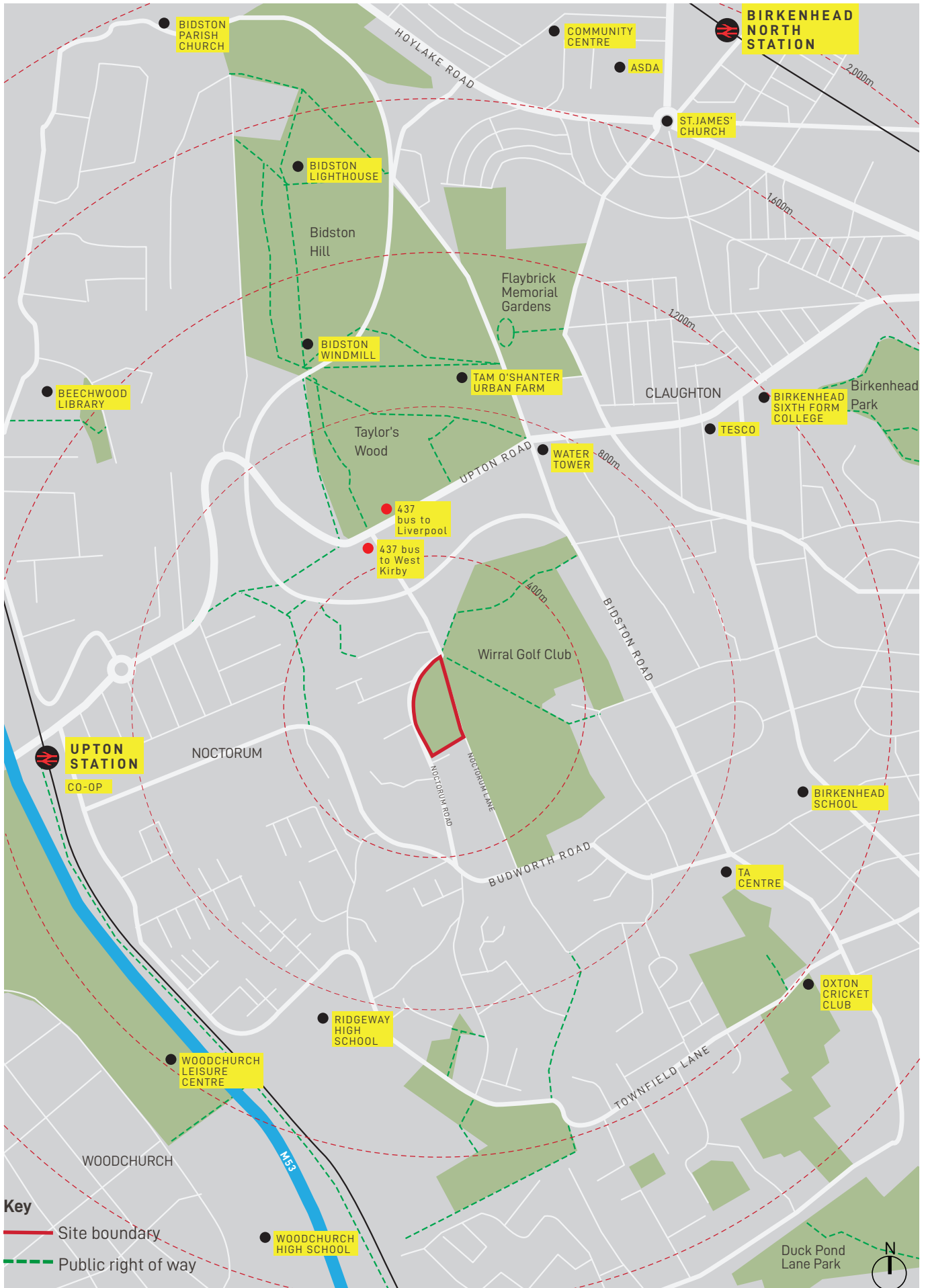
Noctorum Lane looking south, with the site on the right



Houses to the north of the site



Wirral Golf Club and public right of way to the north of the site



## Application Site

The application site is 2.25 hectares and irregular in shape, following the curve of Noctorum Road to a narrow point in the north where it meets Noctorum Lane. The site currently comprises underutilised sports pitches associated with Birkenhead School and a one storey sports pavilion building on the western edge of the site. There is one vehicle access point to the site on Noctorum Road, which serves the pavilion.

The site is approximately 228m in length at its longest point and 115m in width at its widest point. There is approximately a 3m level change across the site from north east to south west.

The site boundary contains a mature tree belt. The entire site is furthermore covered by a group Tree Preservation Order [TPO] (Ref. BK0030A001). A culverted watercourse runs east-west across the south of the site, draining Wirral Golf Course.

The site is not located within a conservation area, nor are there any listed buildings or other designated or non-designated heritages assets on, or adjacent to it.

The site is bounded by:

- To the east of the site is Noctorum Lane, a narrow lane with no footway, with Wirral Golf Course beyond
- To the south of the site is residential development, with a detached dwelling in close proximity to the site boundary
- To the west and north of the site of the site is residential development on Noctorum Road



Looking south west next to the sports pavilion



Looking north from the south of the site with mature boundary tree planting evident



Looking west from the east of the site



Detached house near the southern boundary of the site



Existing Site Plan (1:1250@A4)

## History and Heritage

The name Noctorum is thought to be of old Irish origin mean hill or dry hill. The area is recorded in the Domesday Book in 1086 as being called Chenotrie. The name went on to be a name of a large house in the area in the 1800s and Chenotrie Gardens is the name of a local road.

The timeline below sets out the development of the local area. The timeline is illustrated with the plans and sketches opposite.

- In 1663 the hearth tax records list two dwellings on the site.
- In 1819 Noctorum is described as consisting of two or three farmhouses
- In 1844 the area was sold to William Vaudrey and was divided up into plots for large houses.
- The OS from 1876 shows three houses in open countryside. From north to south these are: Firwood, Chenotrie and Noctorum
- The OS from 1899 shows the same three houses, however now the surrounding land is starting to be developed
- The OS of 1936 appears to show the house at Firwood (named St David's), the house at Noctorum and a new house on the Chenotrie site. In addition there is significant new development with predominantly detached houses on large plots across the area and the golf course is shown
- Further buildings are added through the 20th century. More recent development has subdivided historic large plots with smaller plots on cul-de-sacs, mainly with detached and semi-detached houses – such as on Chenotrie Gardens and Allonby Close – and in other cases apartments – such as on Inveresk Court and Vyner Close



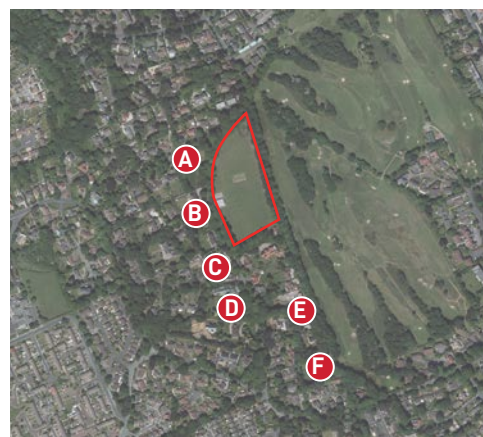
**OS 1876 - Three houses 1. Firwood, 2. Chenotrie and 3. Noctorum in open countryside**



**1899 - Three houses remain as land around them is starting to be developed for detached houses**



**1936 - Further development on Noctorum Road and Noctorum Lane. Golf course developed**



**2019 - Residential development with cul-de-sacs on subdivided sites and terraces to the west of the site**



**Bix Cottage on Noctorum Road**



**Axholme on Noctorum Road**



**House on Noctorum Road**



**Gorsefield Cottage on Noctorum Lane**



**Chenotrie Lodge on Noctorum Road**



**Rathmore on Noctorum Road**

## Around the Site

The area around the north, south and west of the site is residential and mainly consists of detached and semi-detached houses. Many homes are on larger plots with lower densities, however there are several areas with higher densities.

The site is located within Zone 1 (edged blue on the adjacent plan) as identified within UDP Policy HS5. Within this zone there is a wide range of densities, including residential and flatted developments of 13 – 42 dph.

Most of the properties on Noctorum Road are on large plots and are two storey plus roof. The area has a range of architectural styles with buildings dating from the mid 1800s, when the area started to be developed, through to the present day.

The settlement pattern around the site generally consists of larger older houses fronting onto Noctorum Road and Noctorum Lane. Each of these streets also contain cul-de-sacs with more recent development on smaller plots, these include St. Davids Lane, and Chenotrie Gardens.

A number of recently permitted developments within Zone 1 are illustrated below and can be identified in the adjacent plan, demonstrating the range of densities accommodated in the local area within Zone 1.



C - Inveresk Court 45 dph. Source: Google Earth



D - Vyner Close 41 dph. Source: Google Earth



A - West Road 11.7 dph. Source: Google Earth



E - Allonby Close 15 dph. Source: Google Earth



B - 10 Vyner Road South 20 dph. Source: Google Earth



F - Buerton Close 20 dph. Source: Google Earth



Developments Density Location Plan. Source Google Earth
















## Constraints and Opportunities

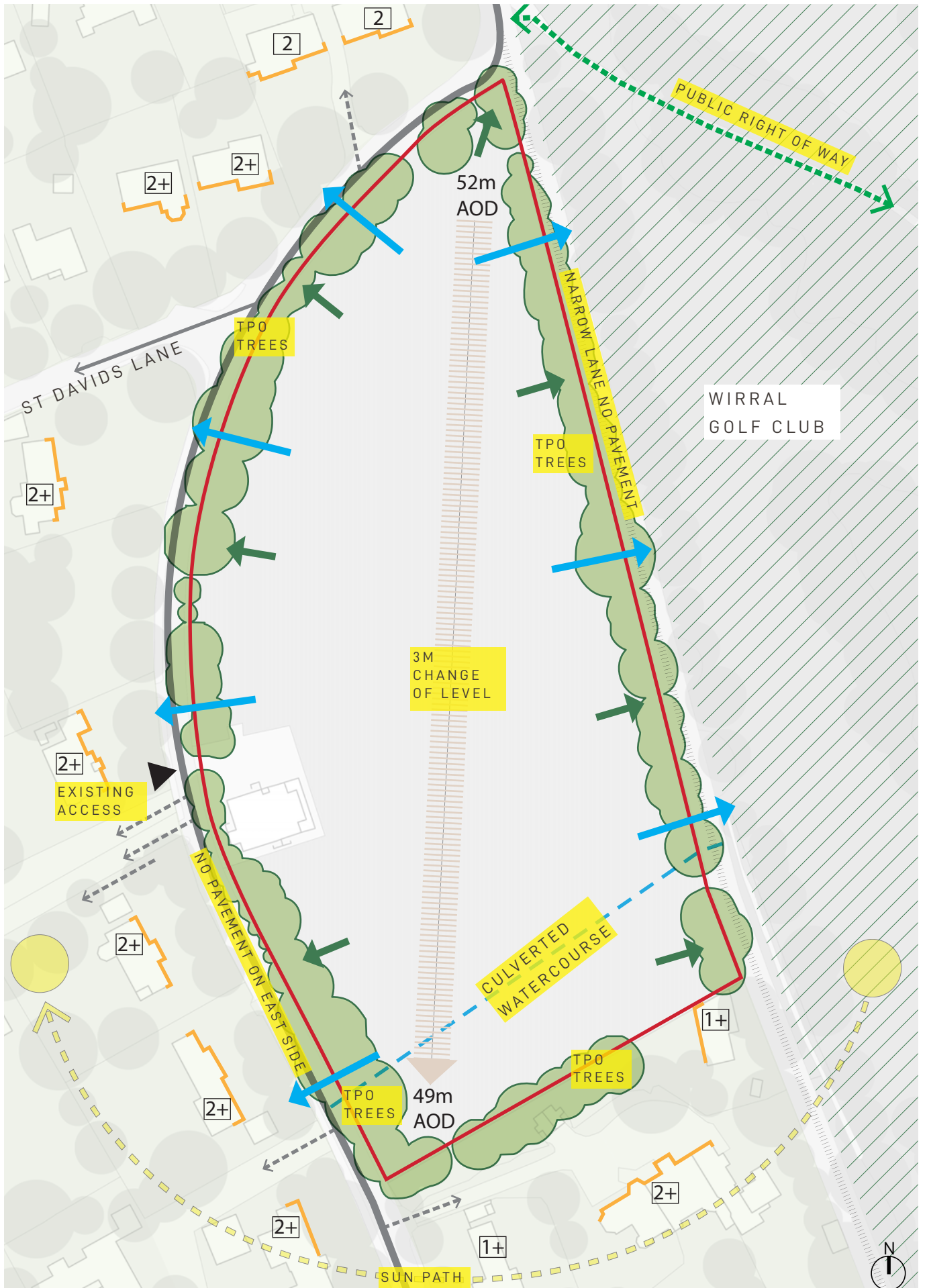
The drawing opposite illustrates the constraints and opportunities on the site. These are summarised below:

1. Public right of way
2. TPO trees around the site boundary
3. 3m change of level across the site from the north east (52m Above Ordinance Datum) to the south west (49m AOD)
4. To set development within a mature landscape setting that complements the verdant character of the surrounding area
5. Landscaped / tree lined edges to mostly face onto
6. Provision of surveillance over Noctorum Road and Lane
7. The site is visually contained by the mature tree lined edge
8. Culverted watercourse from the adjacent golf course
9. Public right of way across the golf course
10. Existing vehicle access on Noctorum Road
11. No pavements and narrow carriageway on Noctorum Lane
12. No pavement on the east side of Noctorum Road
13. Series of cul-de-sacs accessed from Noctorum Road
14. Surrounding residential development with frontages facing the site, including a single storey house on the southern boundary of the site with a small upper floor window
15. Surrounding buildings are 1-2 storey plus roof
16. Sun path

### Constraints and Opportunities

#### Plan Key

-  Site boundary
-  Public right of way
-  Golf club / green space
-  TPO trees
-  Level change
-  Culverted watercourse
-  Existing vehicle access to site
-  Narrow lane
-  Cul-de-sac
-  Fronts of housing
-  Residential storeys (estimated; + = roof storey)
-  Provision of of surveillance of Noctorum Road and Lane
-  Overlook landscaped edges



Constraints and Opportunities Plan (1:1250@A4)

Built Environment Communications Group (BECG), a specialist communications agency, was instructed to oversee the consultation process. The planning application has been subject to extensive pre-application dialogue with the local planning authority (Wirral Council), local politicians, local residents, statutory consultee Sport England and the Rugby Football Union (RFU).

BECG designed and distributed an information leaflet to the 1,000 properties around the Noctorum Field site (please see below). The leaflet also gave the residents the ability to submit feedback. As well as this, residents neighbouring the site were offered the opportunity to attend private, 1-2-1 meetings with the project team, to discuss the proposals in more depth and feedback into the plans.

A freephone information line was also set up for residents to contact the project team, this was open during business hours with an answerphone service in place outside of these times. All feedback received has been logged and where necessary responses have been sent.

BECG offered meetings with local politicians and some within the cabinet at Wirral Council and prepared a newsletter to summarise the background to the project (please see facing page). Each local councillor has been written to, with follow up calls made where possible.

Lambert Smith Hampton met Wirral officers to present proposals for the site at a pre-application meeting in August 2019. Feedback has been taken on board and has helped shape the proposals.

Information leaflet distributed to 1,000 neighbouring properties



# Building for a sustainable, accessible and first-class education

Birkenhead School is beginning to consult on plans to secure outline planning permission to develop land off Noctorum Road.

The site, which is currently under used, will be transformed into around 30 high-quality residential properties, with a mixture of two and three-bedroom and associated gardens.

Birkenhead Schools proposals will help generate capital to make significant improvements to the school's existing sports facilities and create a permanent and sustainable transformational bursary programme.

Birkenhead School is committed to working with the local community in developing its plans for Noctorum Road, and we will be undertaking an extensive community consultation programme before submitting its outline application in early 2020.

### About Birkenhead School

For almost 160 years, Birkenhead School has served the communities of the Wirral, Cheshire, North Wales and Merseyside.

As well as providing a first-class education to the students who reside from Wirral through to South Wales, the School has played an active role in the community by working in partnership with many schools, sports clubs and musical groups and by supporting local charities.

A Birkenhead School education is about academic excellence for all, alongside the development of those with co-curricular interests and values that will be strongly held in an open-minded, confident and forward-thinking members of the local community.



### The vision for the site, is for residential development with approximately 30 homes developed with gardens and associated parking.

Birkenhead School is seeking planning permission for residential development on the site, known locally as Noctorum Field. The School has reviewed its use of the land, and has concluded that the area is largely under-used and contributes very little economic, social, sport or community value.

The School will be submitting an outline application to Wirral Borough Council that will cover the principle of developing the land, the indicative layout of the proposal, and the initial access to the scheme. During this time, the details of the design and layout of the scheme will be refined and finalised.

Birkenhead School will oversee the provision of high-quality, aspirational housing, that is in keeping with the semi-rural nature of the nearby properties. This will help meet the demands for housing within Prenton and will support Wirral Borough Council in meeting housing targets.



### Principle of development

The Unitary Development Plan produced by Wirral Borough Council treats that the site sits within a 'Primarily Residential Area' and does not fall within the Green Belt.

Sports England have been consulted through the process to date and have ruled that the development of the site would be justified, citing its current lack of use and the enhancements of the other facilities that would come from the sale of the land.



### Improvements to sporting facilities

Birkenhead School's ambition is to use the capital generated from the sale of Noctorum Fields to invest and enhance sports provision for the benefit of students and the wider community.

The School has agreed to invest significantly in two local rugby clubs, Old Portians and Prenton, which will improve drainage and infrastructure, and lead to the provision of a new rugby pitch.

The School would invest in four new cricket wickets at its secondary sports site, Mulberry Field, located off Blithen Road, and will commit to the delivery of a new multi-functional Sports Hall on the main campus, located in the heart of Oxton.

Students from primary and secondary schools, alongside local clubs regularly visit the School to use the facilities and participate in festivals and tournaments. All capital invested would further enhance the access to, and quality of sports provision for the local community.

### Case study of bursary student

I joined the Sixth Form at Birkenhead School in 2014, partly as a result of the bursary on offer. My family could not have afforded to send me to the School otherwise, and I was incredibly lucky to receive an Access Scholarship that covered 100% of my fees.

I have taken the skills that I learned at Birkenhead School to support European Youth Parliament (EYP) organisations in many other countries, at the time of writing I am blessed to have received in eight different countries across Europe through EYP.

My time in leadership with EYP saw me recognised by being placed as one of the Top 50 Most Inspiring Graduates of the Year, which in turn led to a two-week internship working in the marketing department at L'Oréal. This was very fortunate for me, as a PSE Degree from the University of Manchester teaches you a lot, but monitoring advertising performance was something not on the syllabus. However, the experience I had acclimating to life at Birkenhead School inspired me with the confidence I needed to be successful at L'Oréal. In particular, the research skills I had learned from the specialist history department at Birkenhead proved to be vital in carving out a niche for myself at L'Oréal. Indeed, those research skills allowed me to secure a First Class honours in my degree.

I know for certain that my life would be radically different were it not for the generosity of donors at Birkenhead School. I can not begin to express how grateful I am for everything I experienced at university, be it my work across Europe or my actual degree. None of this would have been possible without an Access Scholarship at Birkenhead School, and I hope donors continue to support young people like myself.



### Providing opportunities for all

The School is committed to providing opportunities for all through a bursary programme which provides financial support so that no parent or guardian of a child of suitable ability should be dissuaded from applying for a place on the grounds of cost.

The School currently supports approximately 75 students through bursaries, including over 20 students with over 75% fees covered. Access Scholarships into the Sixth Form are also available.

With the increase in revenue following the proposed sale of Noctorum Fields, the School will be in a position to offer a further seven permanent transformational bursaries for young people who would otherwise not be able to access a Birkenhead School education.



### Engaging with the Local Community

On an annual basis, the School enjoys working in partnership with the local community in a number of ways, including operating and hosting events which inspire young children especially, but also the wider community:

- Primary School Sporting Festivals in Burslem, Tap Roots, Holywell, Nethill, Ladbroke and Clislet
- Academic outreach events including Primary and Prep Schools Mathematics Olympiads
- Big Bang Science events where Science staff and student science leaders host hundreds of clubs and brownies
- GCSE Music Day, with GCSE Music students invited across Wirral
- Other Music events including:
  - The annual Festival of Music, featuring a day's rehearsal and evening performance alongside the Birkenhead Community Choir
  - Weekly hosting of Wirral Synchronic Wind Band
  - Chamber Choir performance at the Wirral Bazaar
  - Industry Specific Career Conferences for Year 9 and above across the Wirral in Healthcare, Engineering, Design & Technology, Media & Arts, Finance and Law (conferences will take place in February 2020)
  - Children's author workshops as part of the School's 'Inspiring Talks Series', with invites extended to local primary schools
  - Wirral Historic Annual Fundraising Dinner

In addition, in the 2019/20 academic year, the School hosted workshops as part of the Wirral Queen 100 year commemorations, and on additional performances of the School production West Side Story for Action, Together and The Teen Youth Zone, and set out its meeting and sports facilities including the sports hall and stadium to local clubs and groups, discounted for charities and other schools.

The School supports a number of student-chosen charities every academic year. In 2018/19, through numerous activities emerging from small scale sales to raise money, understanding physical endurance challenges, funds and donations were raised for:

- Music Mates
- Save the Children
- Over 98kg of produce to Wirral Foodbank

- Feed Birkenhead
- Give a Child a Chance
- Carver's Rowers
- So Be a Child May Learn - a Nepalese charity

In 2019/20, the School's chosen local charity will be the Number Seven Café and Suppermarket with funds raised also going further afield to international charities including WaterAid.

Members of the School community also undertake individual charitable activities. In April 2018, the Headmaster ran the London Marathon for Clive House, raising over £5000 and to date over £28,000 has been raised by Birkenhead School for the charity.

Members of our Sixth Form volunteer at a number of local organisations in their own time, but also do so formally through the School and organisations have included Christ Church in Oxton and Ansove Park Hospital.

Birkenhead School has a track record of working with the community and its neighbours:

- We are committed to ensuring that local residents, parents, community representatives and other interested groups are given the opportunity to discuss the proposals, feedback into the application process and meet with key members of the project team.

Birkenhead School has employed the services of a specialist consultation agency that will manage the pre-application process to ensure that it is robust, open and effective.

As well as meetings with councillors, the Member of Parliament and planning officers, our consultation programme will include:

- Meetings with neighbours to the site
- A posted newsletter with postage-paid feedback cards across Oxton and Prenton
- Response engagement with the parents and guardians of our student body
- Media briefings

Birkenhead School will also publish and submit a Statement of Community Involvement alongside the final planning application that will detail all of the consultation undertaken and its findings.



**BIRKENHEAD SCHOOL**  
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The design for the site went through several stages of design development before, during and after local engagement. During design development different approaches were tested using design criteria from current national planning policy.

## Design criteria and testing

As part of the design process, six design criteria were utilised to test different approaches to designing the site. The design criteria are taken from Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which addresses design and how to achieve well-designed places:

**Criteria 1.** Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development.

**Criteria 2.** Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping.

**Criteria 3.** Are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities).

**Criteria 4.** Establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit.

**Criteria 5.** Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks.

**Criteria 6.** Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience

On achieving appropriate densities the NPPF states the following in paragraph 123, which is pertinent as Wirral are currently unable to demonstrate a five year supply of land for housing: 'where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, it is especially important that planning policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities, and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site'.

## Design evaluation

The six design criteria were utilised during design development to test different design approaches, three of which are shown on the facing page.

Option A represents a previous proposal for the site from a different design team. Option B represents a layout which emerged as a result of public engagement. Option C has been developed to respond to the design criteria.

## Precedents

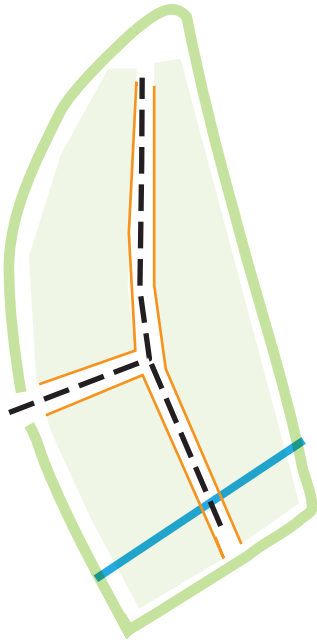
The images below are precedents of recent award winning housing schemes, which, based on the context analysis in Chapter 3, give an impression of the size and types of houses that could be delivered on the site.



Wilton Hill, Salisbury (source: Redrow Homes)



Hertford Grange, Cheshire (source: Redrow Homes)



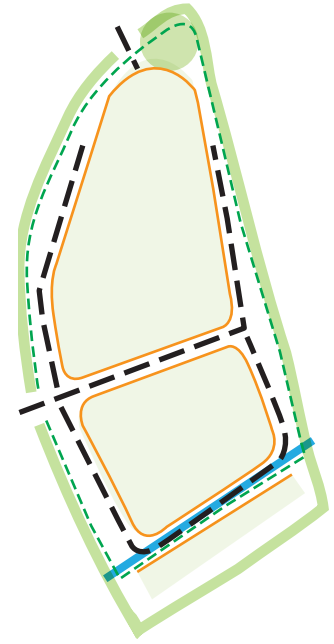
### Option A

- ✗ 1. Street pattern of cul-de-sacs could prove problematic for refuse vehicles. Private development is located on the culverted watercourse, which requires public access
- ✗ 2. Layout retains TPO trees around the edge but there is no effective landscaped public space
- ✓ 3. Retention of the existing vehicle access point and minimal streets within the layout will maximise TPO tree cover and the landscape setting
- ✓ 4. Has potential to achieve a sense of place
- ✗ 5. Unlikely to optimise the potential of the site due to limited street frontage
- ✗ 6. Will require backs of homes facing surrounding streets, therefore creating inactive street frontage and poor natural surveillance



### Option B

- ✗ 1. Unconnected street pattern will not allow for functional movement or refuse collection. Private development is located on the culverted watercourse, which requires public access. Pond in centre of site unlikely to be practical as it is not the lowest point of the site
- ✓ 2. Potential for good architecture and landscape but layout lacks structure
- ✗ 3. Three new access points to the site are proposed, all in areas of TPO tree cover and none of which utilise the existing vehicle access point. It is likely this will require a significant volume of TPO trees to be removed and not respect the landscape setting
- ✗ 4. Poor sense of place as layout will likely require fronts of homes facing backs of other homes, impacting on amenity and legibility
- ✗ 5. Unlikely to optimise the potential of the site due to lack of street pattern
- ✗ 6. It is understood vehicle access cannot be achieved from Noctorum Lane due to highway safety concerns. Will likely require backs of homes facing surrounding streets, therefore creating inactive street frontage and poor natural surveillance



### Option C

- ✓ 1. A connected street pattern with perimeter blocks creates functional movement for private vehicles and refuse vehicles. The culverted watercourse is kept clear of private development
- ✓ 2. Layout retains TPO trees around the edge of the site as a public space and provides a layout with a pocket park in the northern part of the site, which could be overlooked for natural surveillance by new development
- ✓ 3. Retention of the existing vehicle access point and one new vehicle access point to the north will retain the landscape setting
- ✓ 4. Strong sense of place with a connected street pattern, perimeter blocks and a woodland walk helping provide legibility
- ✓ 5. Optimises the potential of the site with perimeter blocks maximising street frontage
- ✓ 6. Active street frontage to surrounding streets and on streets and public spaces within the scheme

The vision for the site is to create a new residential neighbourhood of family housing visually contained amongst the retained trees as well as the creation of open spaces and footpaths around the edge of the site to connect into the existing network of streets and public rights of way.

## Design Principles

The design principles for the new development are summarised below. They have been created to guide and inform the outline planning application. In addition, any future detailed planning applications should have regard to the design principles. The design principles are informed by the constraints and opportunities outlined on pages 12-13 and the design evolution and criteria on pages 16-17.

- Respond positively to the local character of the area by creating a new neighbourhood laid out amongst the retained trees on the site
- Protect the amenity of existing properties and the access rights of the neighbouring golf course over the culverted watercourse in the south of the site
- Utilise the existing access into the site and create an efficient network of streets, which could if required be adopted by the local authority
- Open-up the site to provide open space and footpaths through and around the perimeter of the site

## Framework Plan

The Framework Plan opposite illustrates the key design guidelines for the Outline Planning Application. These key guidelines are described below under the headings of: Layout; Movement and Access; Building Height and Massing; Landscape and Open Space.

## Layout

The Framework Plan provides a layout which retains as many of the trees on the site as possible; the vast majority are around the edge of the site. Retaining most of the existing vegetation coverage along the boundary edges, ensures the character of the surrounding streets will remain landscape dominated. It is therefore proposed that development parcels are provided in the centre of the site. These development parcels maximise opportunities for green views both to the front and rear of properties.

The development parcels dimensions are efficient to allow for perimeter blocks with active frontages facing onto the green edges of the sites and private rear gardens, with sufficient back-to-back distances to protect amenity.

The exception is the southern most development parcel, which provides rear gardens adjacent to the existing properties to avoid overlooking and protect the amenity of existing residents. The parcels avoid building private development on the culverted watercourse in the south of the site, which should be kept free of development to allow for access and maintenance.

## Movement and Access

The Framework Plan utilises the existing vehicle and pedestrian access point serving the site on Noctorum Road. A new vehicle and pedestrian access point in the north of the site is proposed to link into the existing right of way across Wirral Golf Course. A new pedestrian access point in the south of the site allows for a footpath around the site as an alternative route to the eastern side of Noctorum Road, which has no footpath.

The design creates a street network that retains as many of the trees on the site as possible. The most efficient way of retaining trees as well as servicing the development for refuse/ recycling vehicles and fire trucks is to firstly, ensure the trees around the perimeter remain within the public realm rather than be within private rear gardens, and secondly create one loop to the south of the site, incorporating the culverted watercourse, and two cul-de-sacs to the north of the site.

Visibility splays for the two vehicle entrances will require some trees to be removed for safety. However there will be a net gain of 39 trees on the site. Further explanation on the landscape strategy for the site can be found on pages 22-23. The street dimensions and layout have been designed to be adopted by the local authority if required in the future.

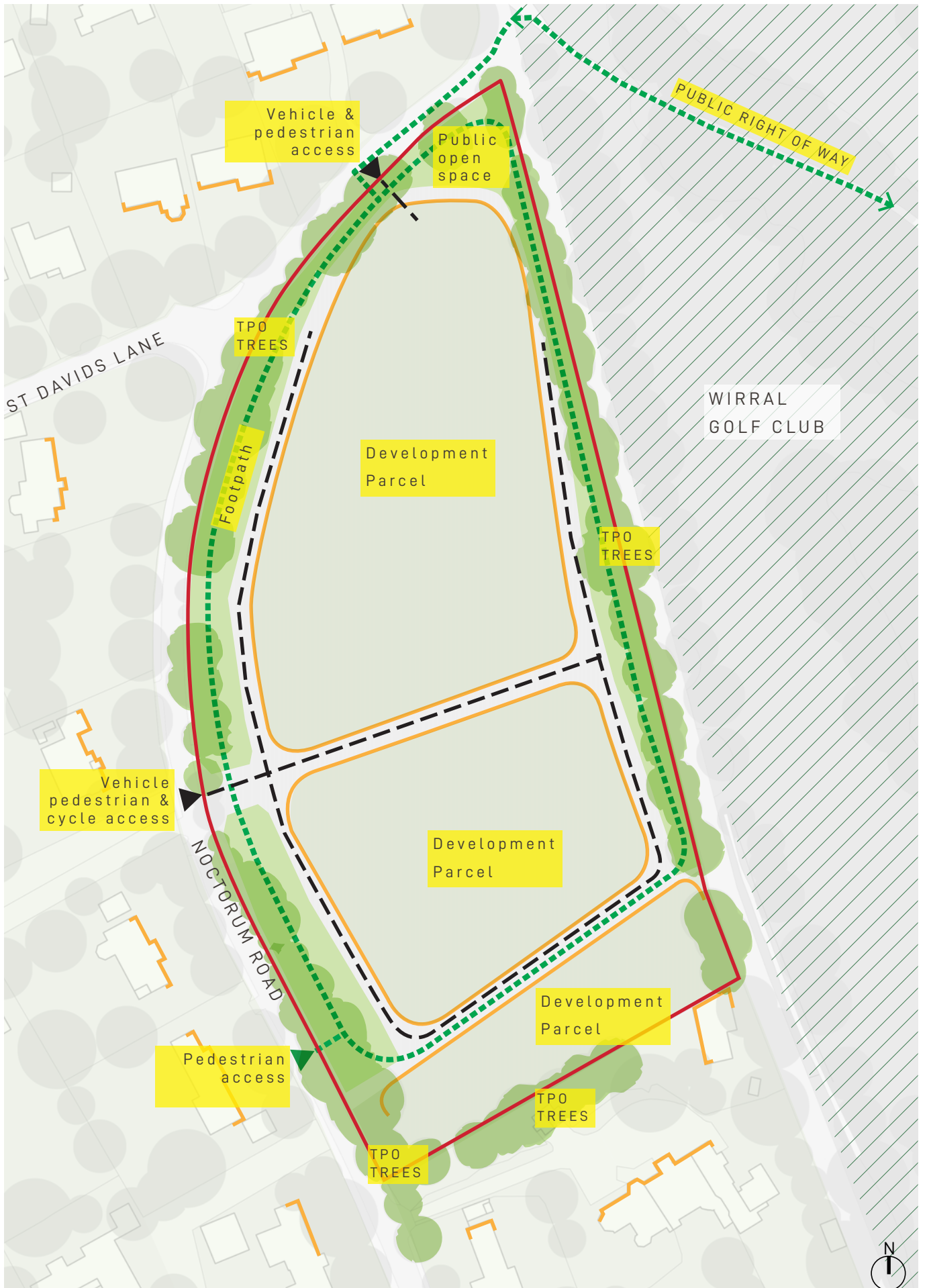
Full details of the proposed conditions and safety provisions regarding the signage strategy, street lighting contribution and visibility splay design can be found in the Transport Statement and The Planning Statement.

## Building Height and Massing

No buildings on the site will be more than two residential storeys with a pitched roof to respond to the surrounding context.

### Framework Plan Key

-  Site boundary
-  Public right of way / indicative woodland walk route
-  Golf club / green space
-  TPO trees
-  Public open space
-  Pedestrian & vehicle access
-  Pedestrian access
-  Street
-  Development parcel



Framework Plan (1:1250@A4)

## Illustrative Masterplan

The Illustrative Masterplan for the Noctorum Playing Fields site is shown opposite. The role of the illustrative masterplan, in an outline planning application, is to show one way the site could be designed and up to 33 homes be accommodated. The illustrative masterplan has the following qualities:

- Providing up to 33 family homes at a density of up to 14.8 homes per hectare

It is acknowledged that Policy HS5 of the UDP identifies the area as part of Zone 1 of the Noctorum Ridge. The policy seeks to protect the environmental quality arising from the existing lower density housing arrangement, the large gardens and mature trees. It seeks to restrict housing density to no greater than 10 homes per hectare. However, due consideration has been had to the existing character and appearance of the surrounding context within Zone 1 as highlighted in Section 3 where various examples of housing and flatted developments between 13 - 42dph have been identified. The proposed scheme at 14.8 dph is at the lower end of the range of densities within Zone 1. In addition, the NPPF is clear that planning decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land.






- A perimeter block layout that protects private amenity and through active frontages maximises resident views over the surrounding treelined landscaped edges as well as providing natural surveillance over the new perimeter footpath network, Noctorum Road and Noctorum Lane
- Protecting the amenity of surrounding residents, especially the house to the south of the site by backing housing and rear gardens onto this boundary
- Retaining within the public realm the vast majority of the trees, apart from those in poor quality and needed for safe vehicle visibility at access points. Net gain of 39 trees
- Retaining the majority of the boundary treatment and its landscape features to maintain the natural characteristics of the site and the area's prevailing character

As illustrated, the layout at the proposed density would maintain a degree of spaciousness and the verdant character of the surrounding context, through retention of the border trees and additional planting. (See pages 22-23 which includes CGI's of what of the proposed housing would be visible from Noctorum Road and Lane.)

At up to 33 dwellings the layout would achieve the optimum use of the land consistent with the examples of infill and redeveloped sites illustrated earlier in Section 3. The proposal could be integrated into the recognised pattern of the surrounding development.

- New public space and footpaths (woodland walk) around the edge of the site, connecting into the existing public right of way and surrounding streets
- Street design that is design-led and functional. Layout allows for green views front and back, sufficient back to back distances and a street design that is capable of being adopted by the local authority
- All residential parking on plot. Visitor parking to be on-street

### Illustrative Masterplan Key

-  Site boundary
-  Indicative vehicle and pedestrian access
-  Indicative pedestrian access
-  Indicative woodland walk
-  Indicative public open space



Illustrative Masterplan (1:1250@A4)

## Illustrative Viewpoints

A number of viewpoints have been taken of the proposed scheme, that illustrate the potential form of development as viewed from the surrounding streets. As demonstrated the scheme (based on the illustrative layout), will have minimal visual impact. The character of the surrounding streets would remain landscape dominated and would exhibit the following features:

- Single vehicular access point
- Almost fully enclosed site
- Visually contained scheme which is effectively 'inward looking'
- The proposed retention and/or enhancement of the boundary tree belt would enclose the proposed scheme, largely screening and filtering the views of the development from the surrounding context
- The proposed scheme seeks to make an effective use of land that is consistent with policy, that is in keeping with recent infill redeveloped sites locally, whilst minimising its visual impact on the surrounding context, to ensure its effect on the character and appearance of existing local development is negligible



**CGI viewpoint location C looking into the illustrative scheme**



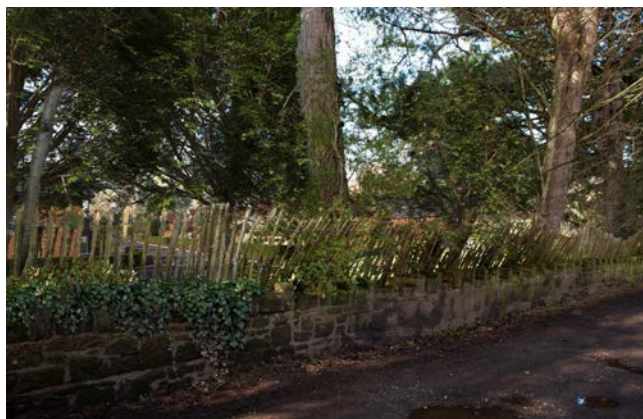
**CGI Viewpoint location D**



**CGI Viewpoint location A**



**CGI Viewpoint location E**



**CGI Viewpoint location B**



CGI Viewpoints location plan. Source Google Earth

## Landscape and Open Space

The landscape vision and strategy for the site is based on its surrounding built form, landscape elements and wider context. The aim of the landscape design is: to retain as many of the trees on the site as possible; to create a desirable and sought after place to live through the enhancement and diversification of current vegetation; and to improve access through and around the site, including linking to the existing public right of way.

The overall landscape design principle is to retain as many trees on the site as possible, only removing trees which are in poor condition or required to be removed to allow for safe driver visibility. Please refer to the Arboricultural Constraints Report by ADAS for detailed information regarding trees to be removed. It has been estimated that 33 trees are to be removed. These have been compensated within the scheme at a ratio 1:2, with a net gain of 39 trees across the application site (72 trees will be replanted across the site) through specimen and mature stock planting.

It is recommended that all trees on site undergo management and maintenance prior to the development this includes but not limited to; crown lifting and thinning with an ongoing management strategy to be implemented.

The illustrated landscape plan is shown on the following page. The illustrative landscape design concentrates on retaining the existing vegetation which acts a natural screening buffer to the surrounding area. Ornamental planting, hedges and specimen trees are located at the entrance to create a sense of arrival.

Along main routes around the scheme garden trees and hedgerows separate individual housing units. Additional tree planting in rear gardens is key along the southern boundary to mitigate views from the existing neighbouring property. Additional understory planting beneath the retained trees, includes shrubs, annuals and wildflower meadow to support biodiversity.

In terms of surface materials, a rumble strip and texture paving is proposed to slow movement of vehicles whilst encouraging shared use of space.



Existing landscape, streets and routes around the site have been utilised to inform the landscape design



Overall design landscape principle - retain as many existing trees on the boundary as possible



Illustrative Landscape Masterplan (not to scale)

### Illustrative Landscape Masterplan Key

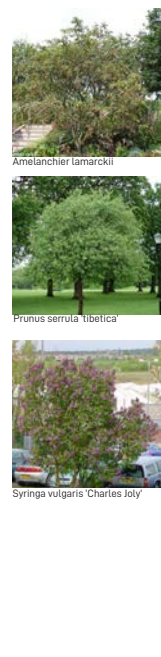
Vegetation	Built form
Front garden	Shared surface and rumble strip
Rear garden	Main access road
Ornamental planting beds	House and driveway
Garden tree	Pedestrian footpath
Specimen tree	
Wildflower and bulb planting	
Shrub layer planting	
Native hedgerow	
Existing mature trees to be retained	

- A** Rear gardens to be grass seeded with one tree per property  
Main avenue with grass turf and evergreen hedging to front of all properties; with a feature tree between each property or located at key nodal junctions
- B** Eastern boundary structure shrub planting suitable for shade to be located under existing trees (approximately a 1-2m wide strip) with pockets of wildflower and bulbs
- C** Shared surface to include a rumble strip and textured paving to slow movement of vehicles and encourage shared use
- D** Southern boundary structure shrub planting with individual trees to mitigate views of the development from the neighbouring property
- E** Main entrance into the site opened up for increased visual splay for vehicles entering and leaving the development. Low level ornamental planting to enhance the entrance
- F** Entrance with low level ornamental planting
- G** Indicative woodland walk around the edge of site
- H**

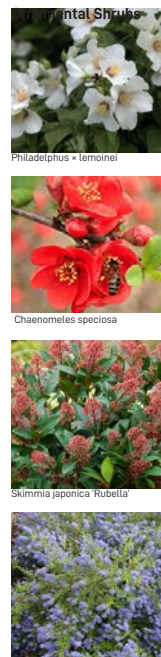
#### Trees



#### Ornamental Trees



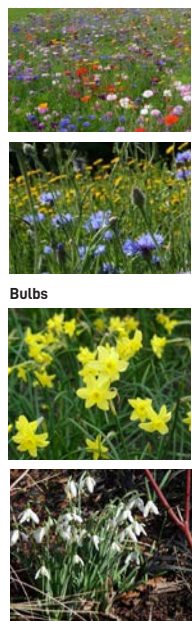
#### Ornamental Shrubs



#### Native Species Hedging



#### Ornamental Planting



### Indicative planting species

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