



Stage 1A Report

Proposed Housing At  
Burgh Hill, Hurst Green

Batcheller Monkhouse

November 2019

Job No 02341

[www.hmy.uk.com](http://www.hmy.uk.com)



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## 1.0 Introduction

Hazle McCormack Young LLP has been instructed by Batcheller Monkhouse, acting on behalf of the landowner, to review the feasibility of providing new housing on a 1.7 hectare site in Burgh Hill, east of Hurst Green, East Sussex.

The Burgh Hill site lies to the west of the A21, between Hurst Green and Etchingham and is currently inactive pasture land.

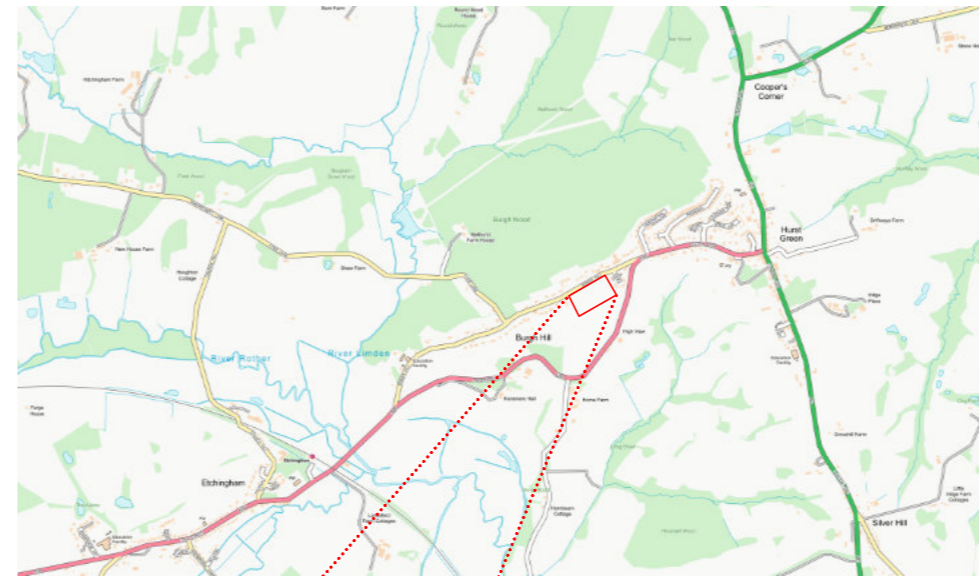
The study comprises a desktop appraisal of the suitability for the site to accommodate residential development and outlines the factors affecting the design of any resultant housing layout.

We have visited the site but have relied on Ordnance Survey and on-line mapping tools to assess the topography and landscape environment of the site. No detailed surveys or investigations have been carried out at this stage.

As can be seen in the images on page 4, the site is bounded by mature planting to the west, north and east aspects and by an area of wetland forming the southern boundary between the site and the open farmland beyond.

The northern boundary is screened from Burgh Hill by a 2m mixed species hedgerow which incorporates two semi mature trees and an access gate as shown in image 4. The boundary to the west, with The White House, is screened by a row of poplar to the full depth of the site and a bank of mature broadleaf trees to the eastern boundary with the properties on south view close.

The ground levels fall away from Burgh Hill by approximately 4-5m and views to the south and south east give long reaching vistas towards Salehurst and Robertsbridge.



Site Location Plan





2.0 Site Images



Image 1



Image 5

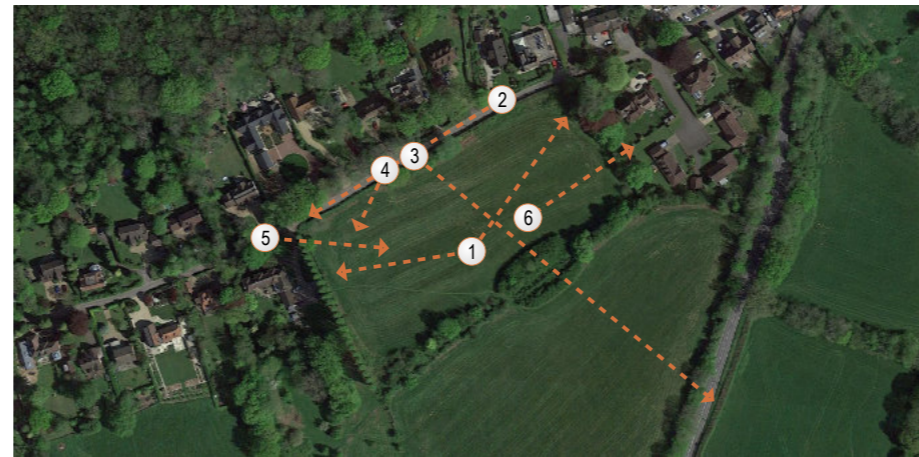


Image 6



Image 2



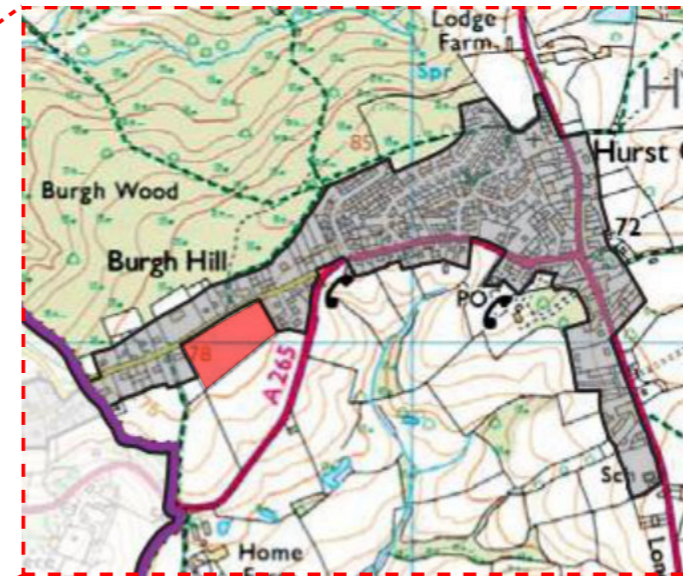
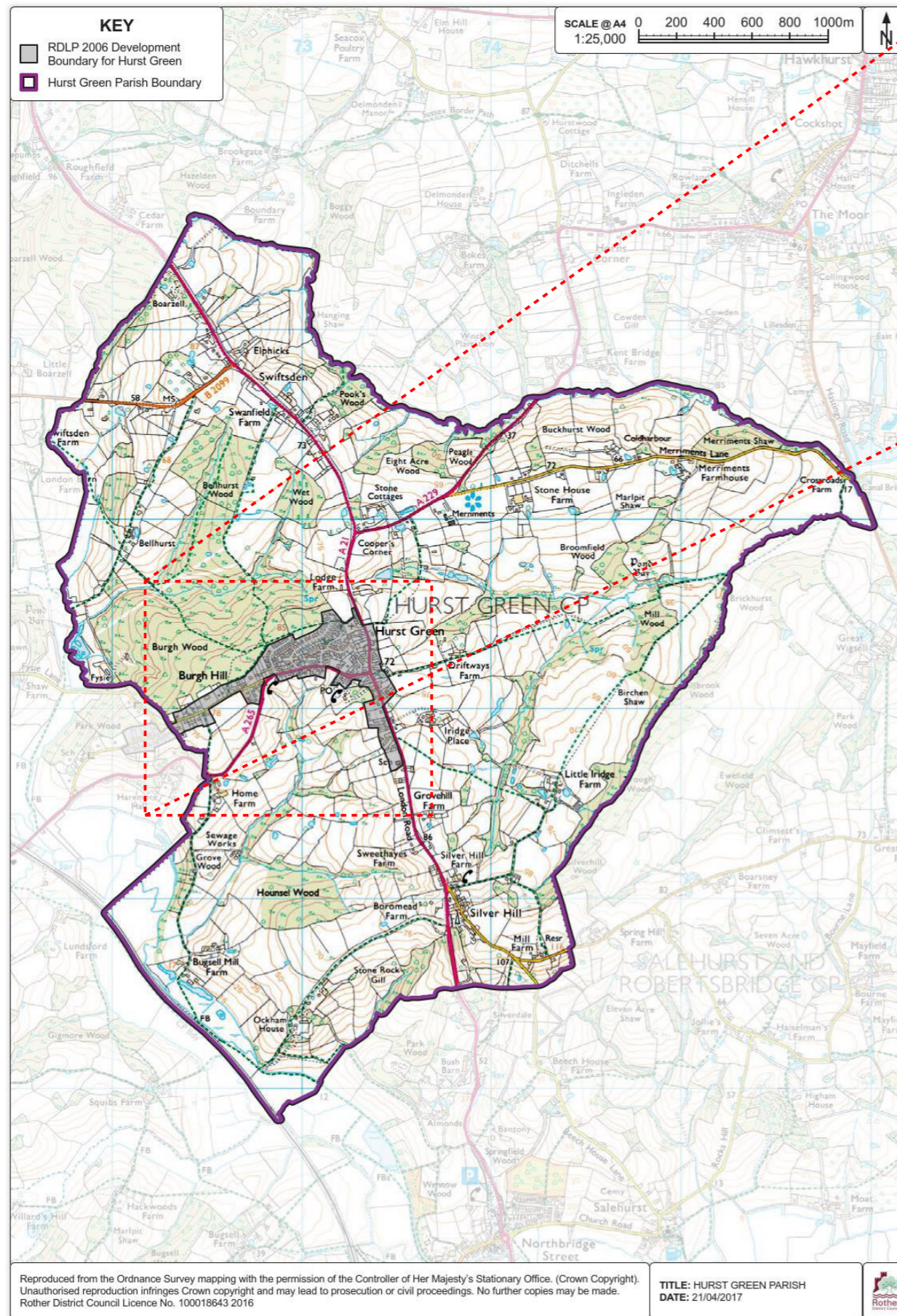
Image 3



Image 4



### 3.0 Site Planning History and Context



The site falls within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and sits adjacent to the Hurst Green Development Boundary, forming a natural infill between existing residential developments to the north, west and east of the site.

The Hurst Green Neighbourhood Plan Housing Demand Survey highlighted a current (2019) requirement for 31 additional homes for current local households in the Hurst Green Parish, 4 of which were in the rural areas. The survey also highlighted an over-supply of non-detached and smaller unit dwellings in the Parish. Of the 31 homes required, the current housing association/council rental demand is approximately 10% at 3 units. In parallel to the Neighbourhood Plan process, the Development and Site Allocations Local Plan highlights a need for an additional 75 dwellings within the Parish of Hurst Green.

As part of the AONB, Policy DEN2 sets out the following requirement: All development within or affecting the setting of the High Weald AONB shall conserve and seek to enhance its landscape and scenic beauty, having particular regard to the impacts on its character components, as set out in the High Weald AONB Management Plan. Development within the High Weald AONB should be small-scale, in keeping with the landscape and settlement pattern; major development will be inappropriate except in exceptional circumstances. 'Major development' will be defined as "taking account of the nature, scale and setting of a proposal and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the AONB was designated".

The 2013 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) reviewed the site as HG11, and registered the land unsuitable for development, citing the following:

*"Clear constraints and obstacles to further ribbon development in AONB. Loss of critical green gap at this fringe location weighs against development. Other sites in Hurst Green relate much better to central core of village services (particularly since Etchingham primary school is relocating). Issues with Core Strategy policies, including EN1, RA1, RA2, TR3, OSS1, OSS3, OSS4, OSS5, in particular."*

The argument for the site being a green gap is flawed due to the layout of the surrounding settlement, which forms an otherwise uninterrupted ribbon of development along the ridge of the valley, opening up to green landscape to the south. An infill of this space is appropriate and reinforces the surrounding grain of the AONB, rather than detracting from it, in accordance with policy DEN1 of the Rother Development and Site Allocations Local Plan.





Site TPOs

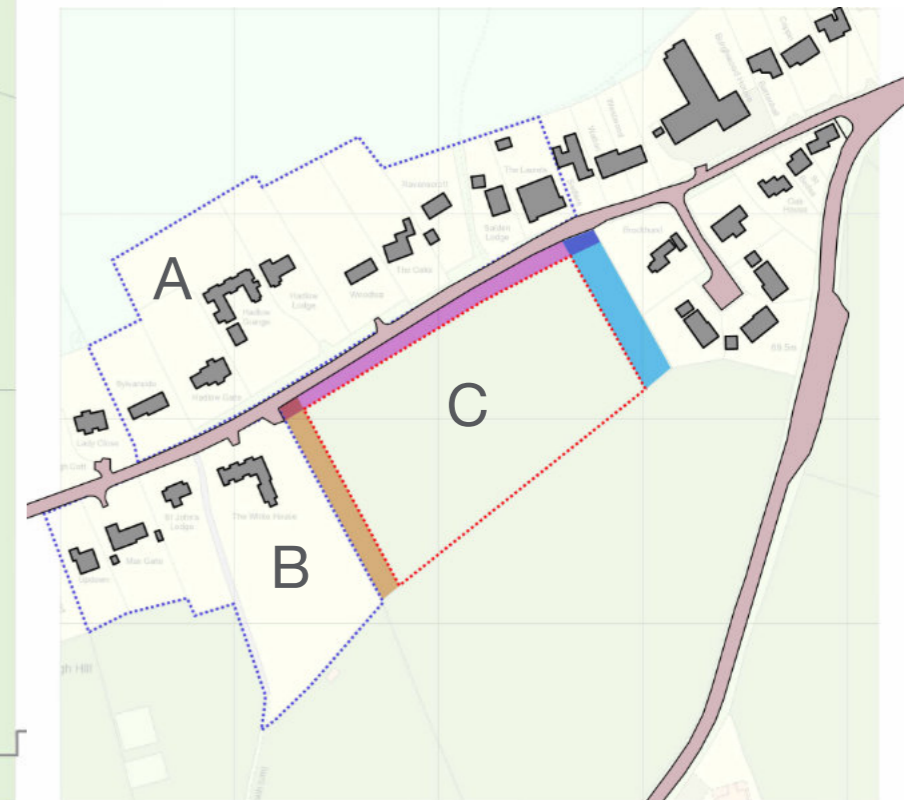


#### 4.0 Site Constraints

The total area within the ownership boundary of the site is 1.7 hectares. The available site for development is reduced due to the requirement to maintain a vehicular and pedestrian route to the farmland to the south of the site from Burgh Hill as indicated by the orange zone and the root protection zone of the mature broadleaf trees to the eastern boundary, which are subject to a blanket tree preservation order as illustrated on the inset graphic.

Several site reviews have highlighted the lack of pedestrian footpaths along Burgh Hill as an obstacle to further development. In order to overcome this, provision of a green space zone has been made between the lane and the assumed northern boundary to enable a green buffer space and potential footpath to be provided. The resultant site area is therefore 1.4 hectares as indicated by area C in the graphic below.

The High Weald AONB policies suggest that future developments should adopt the layout and grain of existing countryside and built developments. Density of the surrounding built developments is 4.7 dwellings in area A and 3.3 dwellings per hectare in area B. A balance between these densities would equate to 4 dwellings per hectare, or 6 new units.







- Single Storey
- Grand 1.5 Storey
- 2 Storey



## 5.0 Location Character Assessment

The immediate context of Burgh Hill features a variety of building styles and scales, with a predominant form of either grand 1.5 storey or 2 storey dwellings. Building materials range from slate roof tiles to plain clay roof tiles to steeply pitched roofs and red stock brickwork, external walls with areas of white or cream render and weatherboarding. Windows are predominantly painted timber or upvc and have vertical proportions.

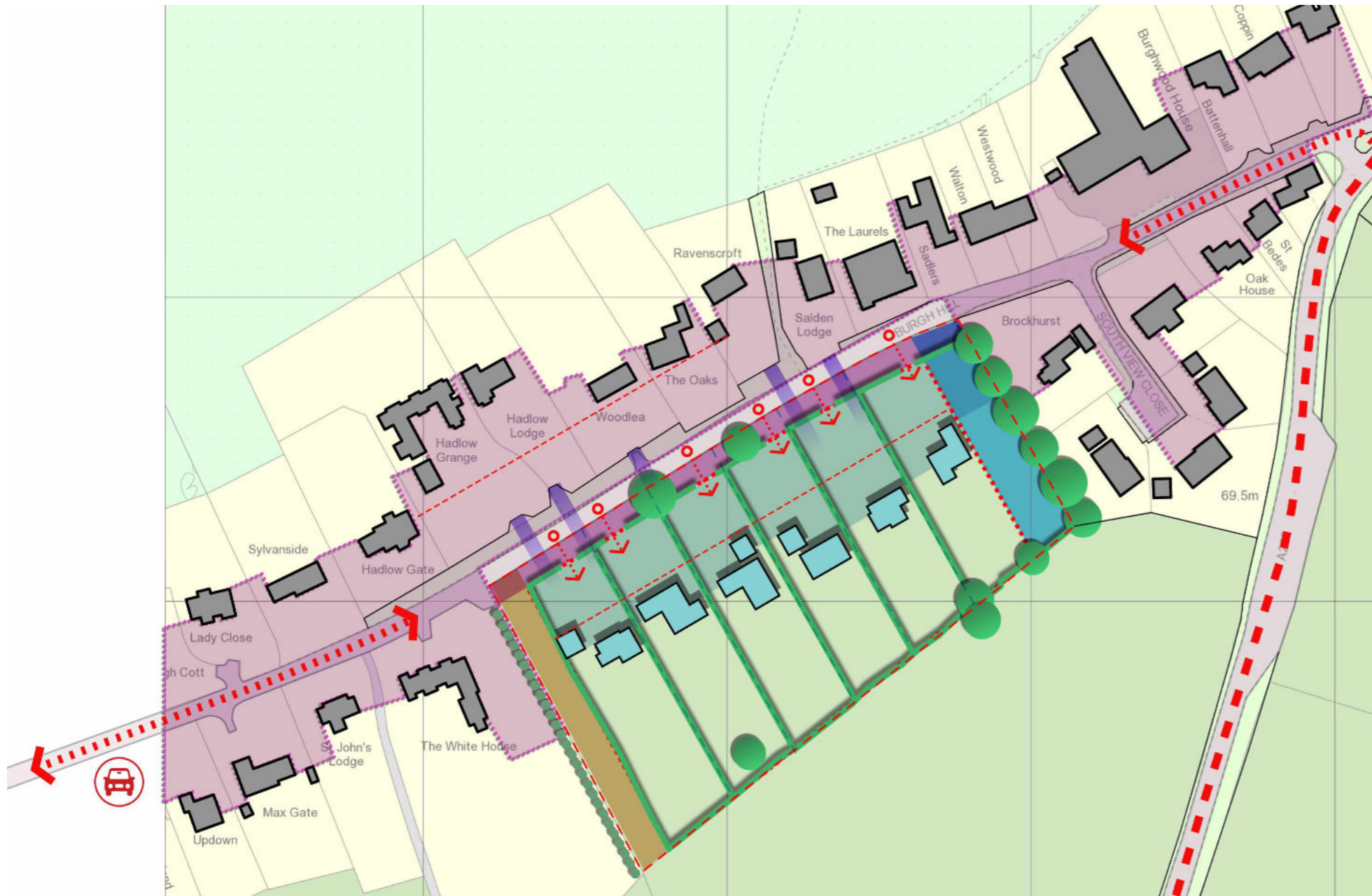
The ground levels of the site fall some 5m to the south across the 100m depth of the site, which increases the view to the Weald from first floor level, above the perimeter planting of the dwellings to the north of Burgh Hill.











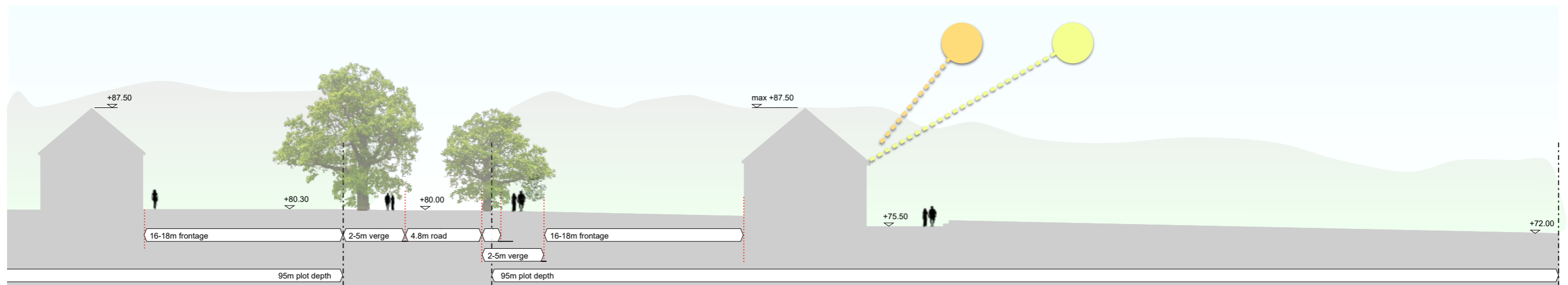
With each dwelling featuring a site area of approximately a quarter of a hectare, the plots will support substantial dwelling sizes of between 4-6 bedrooms.

The footprints shown here rely on two storey builds with some areas of 1.5 storey, or reduced height eaves to two storey properties. The height of the buildings needs to be restricted to approximately 87.5m above datum, with 7.5m above Burgh Hill, to ensure the bank of mature trees is visible from the south in image 1 of page 4 is kept as a feature within the wider landscape.

A frontage depth matching that of the northern properties creates a crenelated 'street elevation' and this alignment is further articulated by the addition of single storey double garage buildings in three of the plots. The other three plots will have parking built into garages within the footprint of the houses.

Perimeter boundaries between the plots will be formed in mixed native species hedgerows, which will wrap at the front and rear boundaries, punctuated by pedestrian and vehicular timber gates to each dwelling entrance.

Site Plan with Proposed Footprints and Boundary Treatments



Concept Design Cross Section, facing east





Aerial view of concept design

## 7.0 Design Concept

The character of the built development will seek to reinforce the principles of the High Weald AONB with a high quality of detailing exemplifying local craftsmanship. Roof pitches will be set at 45 degrees or more with brickwork detailing featured in window lintels and feature bond patterns.

The proposed scheme will aim to significantly improve the sustainability profile of the site through the following means:

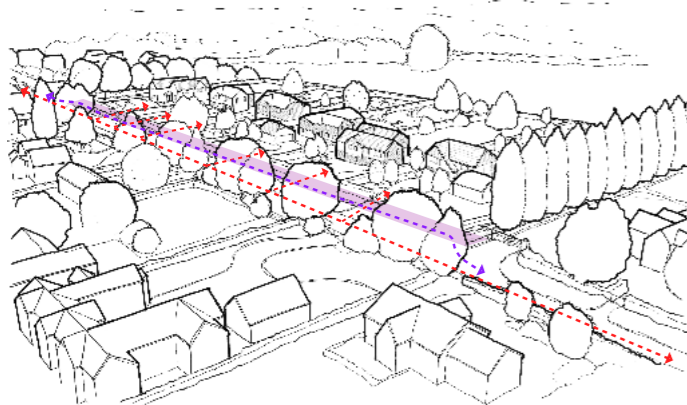
- Minimise energy consumption through the possible use of passive design features
- Maximise daylight whilst minimising unwanted solar gain
- Create visually, thermally and acoustically comfortable environments
- Water conservation

These principles will be implicit in the design of the proposed scheme. Employing a 'fabric first' approach, the principles of sustainable design and construction will be inherently woven into the design of the dwellings across the site.

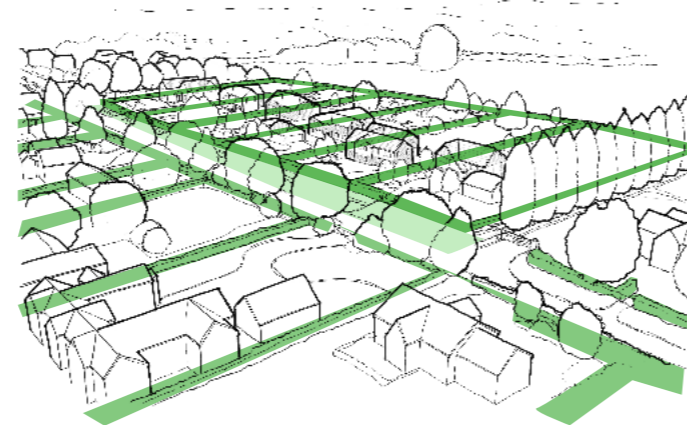
Other façade materials will feature local oak for timber cladding, used both in traditional weatherboard pattern and feature detailing panels to support the individual house designs. Roofing materials will be predominately clay plain tile and natural Welsh slate.

The graphic icons below set out the design principles employed in the scheme layout. Pedestrian routes, running along the roadside, broken by individual entrances to each plot site within a green buffer space between the roadside and the defensible frontages to the houses.

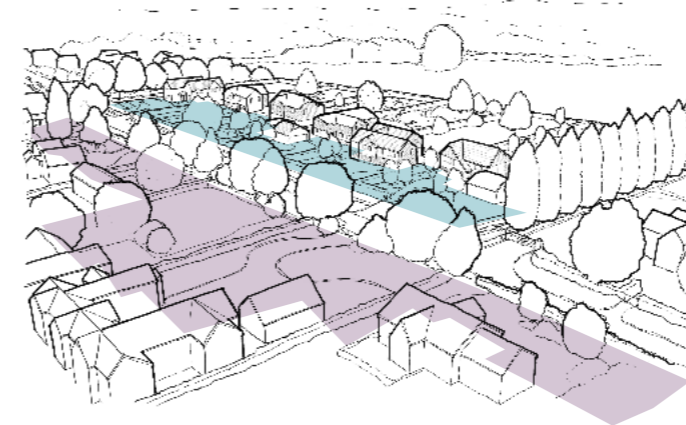
Perimeter and party line hedgerows are employed, both to continue the language of the local landscape and to increase the biodiversity on site. Set-back depths from frontage to built form reflect the neighbouring sites to the north and building scales and massing replicate the character of the Burgh Hill location.



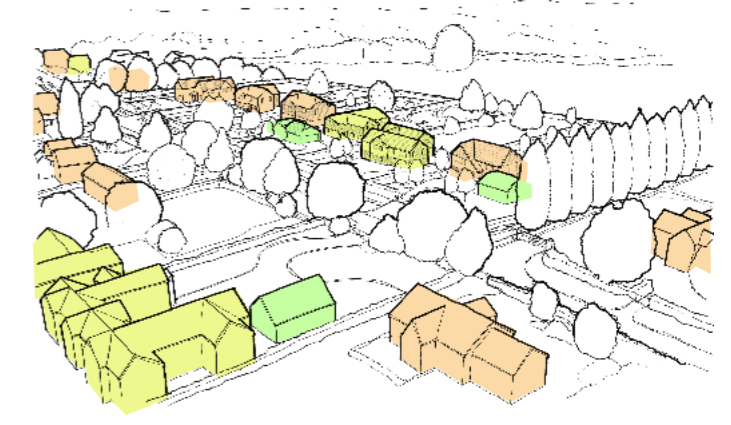
Pedestrian and vehicular movement



Greening to boundaries and buffer zone to Burgh Hill



Set-back depth and articulation of individual frontages



Scale of Built Form